

UK release of *Naza*: “a marriage between investigative journalism and cinema” exposing Israel’s crimes in Gaza

Paul Mitchell
20 October 2026

Naza, the investigative documentary by Israeli journalists and filmmakers Yuval Abraham and Rachel Szor, was released in UK cinemas on October 15, with a livestreamed Q&A with the filmmakers.

The film shows how Israeli military violence is planned, justified and executed, exposing the Zionist state’s dehumanisation of the Palestinian people and raising troubling questions about silence and complicity within Israeli society. *Naza* has achieved remarkable box-office success despite mainstream and major independent distributors refusing to screen it.

The title *Naza* refers to the words “Nezek Agavi”, the term used by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) for “collateral damage”, civilian casualties deemed acceptable in the IDF’s bombing and assassination operations. Filmed in secret on Tel Aviv rooftops under cover of darkness, the documentary features interviews with 24 former Israeli military personnel, including intelligence analysts, drone operators and snipers, whose identities have been concealed. Their testimony exposes the technological and bureaucratic infrastructure underpinning Israel’s targeted killings.

Perhaps the most horrifying revelation concerns the military’s accepted “error rate” for civilian deaths: between 15 and 20 percent, with as many as 500 civilians regarded as an acceptable price for the assassination of a single Hamas leader. The scale of the documented slaughter is staggering. More than 73,000 Palestinians have been killed, while only 17 percent of the dead were identified by the Israeli military database as combatants.

Especially damaging for Israel is that these revelations come not from its critics, but from former members of its own military and intelligence apparatus. Their testimony lays bare the internal mechanisms of genocide.

The official response has been ferocious. Benjamin Netanyahu’s government has moved to strip the filmmakers of their citizenship on grounds of “treason”, while introducing legislation aimed at criminalising alleged

“defamation” of the IDF. Far-right mobs have taken to the streets chanting, “Death penalty for traitors.”

Guardian editor-in-chief Katharine Viner hosted the livestreamed Q&A after the UK premiere at the Ritzy Picturehouse in Brixton, featuring the film’s directors, Abraham and Szor. They were joined by three of the film’s producers: Paul Lewis, the *Guardian*’s head of investigations; Jim Wilson, a two-time BAFTA-winning and Oscar-nominated producer; and Jonathan Glazer, the Oscar-winning and two-time BAFTA-winning writer-director.

Abraham said the 24 former military and intelligence personnel on screen represent only a fraction of those who contributed to the investigation, “We relied on more than 100 who are the backbone of the reporting and information.”

He explained that *Naza* emerged from a years-long investigation into the Israeli military’s use of AI-assisted targeting and mass surveillance systems in Gaza. “The film is based on many years of work, close to three years of investigative journalism that we’ve done together with *The Guardian*, together with *+972 Magazine*, where I also write [which is] an Israeli-Palestinian media outlet.”

Szor said the project was not initially conceived as a documentary, “But at some point we understood that there is an opportunity, that there are some soldiers and officers who agree to actually speak in front of a camera.”

The strength of their testimonies, combined with Abraham and Szor’s visual treatment, attracted Lewis, Wilson and Glazer. Glazer said he was struck by “the power of the testimonies” but also by their “cinematic and eloquent” presentation. The three helped realise the directors’ vision, bringing editorial, production and filmmaking expertise to transform years of reporting into what Lewis described as “a marriage between investigative journalism and cinema.”

Lewis exposed the incoherence of the Netanyahu regime’s response to *Naza*. On the one hand, the government claims the film is “false”, “misrepresentative”, and full of lies. On the other hand, Netanyahu argues that those appearing in it

should be prosecuted for revealing state secrets: “Those two things don’t really make sense.”

The directors’ account of the film’s visual language revealed much about daily life in Israel. Szor explained how their decision to film on Tel Aviv’s rooftops emerged from the maddening experience of living in a city where “you don’t see anything of what’s happening 60 kilometres from there.”

She said, “Of course you see posters of the hostages, demonstrations ... but there is no sense, there is no recognition of what’s happening.”

This explains the film’s movement between the rooftop interviews and the illuminated apartments below, where residents watch television, practise yoga and go about their daily routines. The contrast raises the question: how can ordinary life coexist with industrialised killing, and what social and political conditions make such silence possible?

Abraham insisted, “This is a film about systems of mass killing. But we are also looking at the mechanisms that allow human beings to do this to other human beings.”

He described language as facilitating this process, drawing attention to the technical and depersonalised terminology employed by military planners, intelligence personnel and targeters to describe anticipated civilian deaths. Rather than saying that “15 people will be killed, men, women and children”, they speak of “15 Naza”.

Demolishing the comforting fiction that those who carry out such operations do not know what they are doing, Abraham said, “Intelligence officers, not always, but often, can open the microphone of the phone in the house that is being bombed. They can listen in, and they hear the family, or they hear children. And so that’s very intimate kind of knowledge about the people you are about to kill.”

Much of the discussion focused on the technology used to facilitate genocide. Abraham related this to the history of dispossession and occupation, “Palestinians have been under Israeli military occupation for a very long time. That creates, in the digital era, an opportunity for mass surveillance.”

Quoting one of the soldiers interviewed in the film, he recalled: “You’re like God, you can hear everything they say.” From this he drew a broader warning. The technologies and methods documented in *Naza* threaten “a very dangerous direction that not only Israel and Palestine, but the world could be heading to.”

Glazer, who also directed *The Zone of Interest* (2023) about Rudolf Höss, the Nazi commandant of Auschwitz, spoke about similar themes in *Naza*, “Both films deal with dehumanisation,” he told the audience. “That’s the main thrust of it all, and how we get to where we do as a species, really, is by othering and dehumanising.”

But Glazer’s comments provide no basis for

understanding either the Holocaust or Israel’s genocide in Gaza. They abstract both from their concrete social and political origins and instead locate them in an allegedly universal human tendency toward dehumanisation. The result is a deeply pessimistic and ultimately reactionary conception that blocks any effective struggle against the system that gives rise to war, genocide and fascism.

It is not “the human species” that has dehumanised the Palestinians. The genocide is the outcome of the ethno-nationalist programme of Zionism, backed by the imperialist powers. The atrocities documented in *Naza* reflect not timeless human failings, but social relations produced by imperialist rot and decay.

The genocide has provoked the largest international protest movement in decades, involving millions of people across the world. Polling in the United States, Europe and elsewhere has registered mass popular opposition to the slaughter, while support for Zionism has been shattered, including among millions of Jews. Explaining such crimes primarily through an unchanging human propensity for dehumanisation diverts attention from the social forces and political interests responsible for genocide and weakens the struggle against them.

Szor’s sober observation that *No Other Land*—co-directed by Abraham—had won an Academy Award while “still, in the last month, communities are still destroyed” lingered over the discussion. Recognition, she suggested, is no substitute for action.

Naza has exposed the routinised and systematic mass killing carried out by the Zionist state against the Palestinian people and, by implication, the complicity of the major imperialist powers that have armed, financed and politically defended it. That Abraham, Szor and their collaborators have courageously pursued this work despite intense vilification and being branded traitors within Israel is itself a measure of the film’s significance.



To contact the WSWs and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact