

Ajyal Film Festival Closing Ceremony Celebrates Best of Films in 2019 Competition

- *Winners of Ajyal Jury Competition and Made in Qatar announced in the presence of HE Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani and HE Salah bin Ghanem Al Ali*
- *Abbas Riaz won the Abdulaziz Jassim Award for Best Performance in the Made in Qatar Competition*

Doha, Qatar; 24 November 2019: The seventh Ajyal Film Festival, hosted by the Doha Film Institute (DFI) at Katara Cultural Village, concluded with a festive closing ceremony, where the winners of the Ajyal Jury Competition and Made in Qatar Competition were announced.

Addressing the assembled jurors at the closing ceremony, HE Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Chairperson of the Doha Film Institute, said: "Ajyal was created by the Doha Film Institute for you - but you are the true creative essence that will continue to make this festival bigger and better each year. I encourage you to keep your passion and curiosity alive and always experience the world with open minds and open hearts, being true to your humanity. This is not where your journey ends but rather where it begins, and I look forward to taking pride in your contributions to making the world a better place for all."

Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, Festival Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Doha Film Institute, thanked the leadership, public and private sector entities, sponsors, volunteers, filmmakers, and members of the jury for their support in hosting the event, she said: "We celebrate our youth as part of a vibrant cultural community but also as engaged global citizens, who can draw on the power of film to amplify a voice for generations. Through interactive community events for the whole family, this year's edition of Ajyal continues to foster understanding, mutual respect and togetherness. We are grateful for the participation of the exceptional creative community from Qatar and around the world that made this edition the great success that it was."

Ajyal's flagship programme **Made in Qatar** presented by Ooerdoo included 22 narratives, documentaries and reflective essays by 23 Qatari and Qatar-based filmmakers in celebration of the growing national film industry. The **Made in Qatar** jury was comprised of Sudanese filmmaker Amjad Abu Alala, British actor Kris Hitchen and Qatari architect and urbanist Fatma Al Sahlawi.

The winners of the Made in Qatar Competition Awards presented by HE Salah bin Ghanem Al Ali, Minister of Culture and Sports and Ooredoo Director CSR, Sponsorship and Media, Ms. Moza Al Muhannadi:

- Special Jury Award: **Beit Byoot** (Jordan, Qatar/2019) by Mayar Hamdan
- Special Jury Award: **The Unlucky Hamster** (Qatar, Indonesia/2019) by Abdulaziz Mohammed Khashabi
- Abdulaziz Jassim Award for Best Performance: Abbas Riaz for his role in Ahmad Al-Sharif's **End of the Road** (Qatar/2019)
- Best Documentary Award: **In the Middle** (Qatar/2019) by Mariam Al-Dubhani
- Best Narrative Award: **Falling Leaves** (Qatar/2019) by Dimitri Yuri

The 2019 Ajyal Film Festival Audience Award presented by HE Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani:

- **You Will Die at Twenty** (Sudan, France, Egypt, Germany, Norway, Qatar/2019) by Amjad Abu Alala

The **Ajyal Jury Competition Awards** winners were chosen by over 450 young Ajyal Jurors representing 45 countries, including 48 international jurors, who travelled to Doha for the event from Armenia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Italy, Iraq, India, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Mozambique, Oman, Palestine, Turkey, Tunisia and the United Kingdom. Jurors were divided into three age categories: Mohaq (8-12 year olds), Hilal (13-17 year olds), and Bader (18-21 year olds) to evaluate a selection of shorts and feature films.

The winners of the Ajyal Jury Competition Awards are:

Mohaq:

- Best Short Film Award: **Child of the Earth** (Switzerland, USA/2018) by Claudio Fäh
- Best Feature Film Award: **1982** (Lebanon, USA, Norway, Qatar/2019) by Oualid Mouaness

Hilal:

- Best Short Film Award: **Maradona's Legs** (Germany, Palestine/2019) by Firas Khoury
- Best Feature Film Award: **The Farewell** (USA, China/2019) by Lulu Wang

Bader:

- Best Short Film Award: **Ostrich Politic** (France/2018) by Mohamad Houhou
- Best Feature Film Award: **For Sama** (Syria, UK/2019) by Waad al-Kateab, Edward Watts

Bariq:

- Best Short Film Award: **Cat Lake City** (Germany/2017) by Antje Heyn

2019 Ajyal Film Festival's Official Partners include: **Katara Cultural Village** – Cultural Partner; **Qatar National Tourism Council** – Principal Partner; **Novo Cinemas, Ooredoo** – Strategic Partner, **St. Regis Doha** – Signature Partner.

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DOHA FILM INSTITUTE

About Doha Film Institute

Doha Film Institute is an independent, not-for-profit cultural organisation. It supports the growth of the local film community through cultivating film appreciation, enhancing industry knowledge and contributing to the development of sustainable creative industries in Qatar. The Institute's platforms include funding and production of local, regional and international films; skills-sharing and mentorship programmes; film screenings; the Ajyal Film Festival; and Qumra. With culture, community, learning and entertainment at its foundation, the Institute is committed to supporting Qatar's 2030 vision for the development of a knowledge-based economy.

Doha Film Institute

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