

Ajyal Film Festival 2024 to Share Moments That Matter Through 66 Thought-Provoking Films from 42 Countries

- 2024 Ajyal theme reflects Qatar's sentiment for peace, understanding, and justice, focusing on the themes of cultural exchange, self-empowerment, and empathy
- A tribute to the power of youth to make a positive difference, "Sudan, Remember Us" by Hind Meddeb to open the festival
- Special tribute to cinema born out of struggle with two dedicated programmes that highlight the need for genuine human understanding, compassion and empathy
- The programme includes 18 Features and 48 shorts; 26 Arab films; 24 films by women filmmakers and 14 films supported by the Institute

Doha, Qatar; November 04, 2024: The theme of the 2024 edition of Ajyal Film Festival presented by Doha Film Institute (DFI), 'Moments that Matter' will pay tribute to the profound impact that cinema from diverse voices have on enhancing the interconnection in our lives, presenting stories that inspire understanding, fostering unity, and empowering individuals.

To be held from November 16 to 23, Ajyal 2024 will feature a selection of 66 thought-provoking films from 42 countries depicting themes that will resonate with and inspire audiences with stories of resilience, hope and community empowerment. Also featured will be interactive discussions, inclusive screenings, film exhibition, Qatar's largest pop-culture event – Geekend. Events will be held across key locations, including Katara, Sikkat Wadi Msheireb, Lusail and VOX Cinemas Doha Festival City.

Ajyal 2024 will open with an inspiring feature documentary that highlights the youth activism to transform society through cultural advocacy, poetry, and unity. A Doha Film Institute supported film, ***Sudan, Remember Us*** (Tunisia, France, Qatar) directed by emerging female director Hind Meddeb presents a masterful depiction of compelling young activists in their fight for freedom using words, poems, and chants. The film aptly conveys the power of dreams, hope, and creativity to challenge oppressive forces.

Two special programmes curated to highlight the grave injustice and violent aggression faced by people in the region include ***Voices from Palestine*** and the ***Intaj: From Ground Zero Experience***, which will amplify the vibrant creative voices of Palestinians as they persist against censorship, misrepresentation and extermination.

Tickets to the screenings are available for online purchase starting November 4, 2024. More details about the screenings and ticketing are available at www.dohafilminstitute.com/filmfestival/films.

At the official press conference of Ajyal 2024, **Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, Festival Director and Chief Executive Officer of Doha Film Institute**, said: “Art is a form of defiance, and the 2024 edition of Ajyal reminds us that it cannot be silenced. While the level of horrific human suffering unleashed against innocent people in the region is infinitely disturbing, it is also fuel for our determination to protect and promote genuine human understanding, compassion and empathy to guide our actions.”

She added: “In a world facing immeasurable pain and division, Ajyal serves as a crucial platform where stories can bridge divides and bring us closer together. Through films that inspire conversations, challenge perceptions, and reinforce our shared humanity, Ajyal’s Moments That Matter is a reminder of the values we need to cultivate to help us all heal and move forward towards lasting peace.”

Ajyal 2024 Programme Highlights

Special Screenings

The 2024 Ajyal Film Festival Special Screenings programme is an exciting showcase of cinematic experiences that demonstrate the limitless capability of the medium of film to expand perspectives, celebrate culture, and inspire people of all abilities.

The programme will feature renowned Cambodian director and screenwriter Rithy Panh’s latest project *Meeting with Pol Pot*, the exclusive premiere of an episode from *The Apprentice: ONE Championship Edition Season 2*, powered by Media City Qatar and filmed right here in Qatar, ahead of the official season launch just days away, open-air cinema under the beautiful night sky of Doha and a special showcase on short films from Morocco.

Ajyal 2024 will also host a special screening of the award-winning animated feature *Flow* by Gints Zilbalodis for our young guests from Palestine in Qatar as part of the school screening initiative.

Special Guests

Special guests at Ajyal this year include Palestinian actors Saleh Bakri and Hiam Abbas, Egyptian actor Khaled El Nabwy, Turkish actor Esra Bilgic, Palestinian actor and director Mohamed Bakri, French actor and director Cyril Guei, Thai entrepreneur Chatri Sityodtong, Cambodian filmmaker Rithy Panh, Tunisian filmmaker Meryam Joobeur, Palestinian musician Anees, Sudanese musician Mustafa the Poet, Nigerian photographer and filmmaker Misan Harriman among others.

Made in Qatar

One of the most popular screenings at the festival, the Made in Qatar programme includes 5 films by Qatari and Qatar-based filmmakers. Ajyal 2024 will also introduce Made in Qatar Shabab, a

new initiative that provides emerging talents with the essential tools and industry insights they need to thrive in the world of filmmaking.

Inclusive Screenings

Ajyal 2024 will present the adapted screening of *Ode to Our Land* by Amal Al-Muftah and Rawda Al-Thani for people with hearing, visual or speech comprehension challenges. Presented in collaboration with the Translation and Interpreting Institute (TII) of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), the programme highlights the power of film as a tool for inclusion that transcends physical limitations.

Ajyal 2024 is committed to creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for all, and our special screenings for children with autism and different abilities reflect this dedication. Students from 10 private and public schools in Qatar will participate in a special screening programme of short films, thoughtfully designed to ensure every child has the opportunity to experience the magic of cinema in a way that caters to their needs.

Voices from Palestine

Ajyal 2024 will present the next installment of the timely **Voices from Palestine** film series to shed light on the ongoing challenges faced by the Palestinian people. Through two features and four shorts, Palestinian filmmakers document their experiences of loss, survival, and resistance, offering deeply moving insights into life under occupation.

Titles in the programme include *Undr* by Kamal Aljafari, *Janin Jenin* by Mohamed Bakri and *From Ground Zero* - a compelling project that brings together 22 short films created by talented filmmakers from Gaza. This initiative, launched by renowned Palestinian filmmaker Rashid Masharawi, was born against the backdrop of the conflict and aims to provide a platform for young artists to express themselves through their craft.

Intaj: From Ground Zero Experience

Ajyal 2024 will present the *Intaj: From Ground Zero Experience* at Msheireb Properties, that offers a unique opportunity for audiences to discover deeply personal perspectives on life in Gaza, capturing its challenges, tragedies, and moments of resilience through the 22 short films.

Open Air Screenings

Ajyal's popular open-air screenings returns with Cinema Under the Stars at the Museum of Islamic Art Park and Cinema by the Sea at Westbay Beach with a curated programme of animated features and family-friendly classics, including *Babar the Movie* by Alan Bunce, *The Borrowers* by Peter Hewitt, *Hansel and Gretel* by Richard Slapczynski and *Little Nemo* by Masami Hata and Milliam Hurtz among others.

Qatar-Morocco Year of Culture

To mark the Qatar-Morocco 2024 Year of Culture, Ajyal will offer a rich, authentic glimpse into Moroccan life and its evolving cultural landscape in the Made in Morocco programme with six short films that explore tradition, identity, and societal change with project by Faouzi Bensaidi.

Geekend

Get ready for an epic weekend as Geekend 2024 takes over Qatar from November 20 to 23. Whether you're into gaming, comics, or animation, this is the ultimate event to celebrate all things geeky. Join fellow enthusiasts for a weekend filled with creativity, culture, and community at Qatar's largest and one-of-a-kind pop-culture event during Ajyal.

Partners

Ajyal 2024's Official Partners include Cultural Partner-Katara; Principal Partner-Media City Qatar, Visit Qatar; Signature Partner- Elan, Katara Hospitality Official Hotel Partner, Fairmont Hotel, Raffles Hotel, Qatar Museums, Year of Culture, Msheireb Properties; Contributing Partner-Vox Cinemas; Friends of the Festival- Aldo Coppola, Giffoni, Raw'a, TII, Westbay Beach; Social Media Partner-Qommunication and Media Partner-I Love Qatar and Qatar TV.

Through its expansive programme, Ajyal 2024 reaffirms the role of cinema in fostering understanding and empathy, creating moments that matter for audiences long after the festival ends.

-END-

About Doha Film Institute

Doha Film Institute is an independent, not-for-profit cultural organisation. It supports the growth of the Arab film community through cultivating film appreciation, enhancing industry knowledge and contributing to the development of sustainable creative industries in Qatar and the region. 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.

About Ajyal Film Festival

Ajyal Film Festival is an annual celebration of film designed to nurture young minds and support the development of mindful global citizens and thoughtful future leaders. 'Ajyal', Arabic for 'generations', builds on the Institute's history of community-based programming, and brings people of all ages together through screenings and events that inspire creative interaction and stimulate cinematic dialogue. Through its' jury programme, youth between the ages of 8 and 25 are given an opportunity to watch, analyse and discuss global cinema and culture, developing self-confidence, independent critical thinking skills, self-expression, and an appreciation of cinema, while making new friends and discovering global cultures.

Doha Film Institute:

Twitter: @DohaFilm; Instagram: @DohaFilm, @AjyalFilm; Facebook: www.facebook.com/DohaFilmInstitute