



4th Ajyal Youth Film Festival opens on a powerful note with the message of films for positive change

Doha, Qatar; November 30, 2016: The fourth Ajyal Youth Film Festival, presented by the Doha Film Institute, kicked off on a powerful note with a red carpet ceremony to mark the screening of the inspiring Kazakh film, *The Eagle Huntress* (Mongolia, UK, USA/ 2016), and a call to draw on the power of films to drive positive social change.

Fatma Al Remaili, Festival Director and Chief Executive Officer of Doha Film Institute, welcomed guests from around the world, including over 550 young Ajyal Jurors from 10 countries.

She said: “Films remind us that we are part of a universe bigger than ourselves. By instilling an understanding of the world and its realities, through films, we prepare our young people for the future. Our young jurors breathe life into this community event. By embracing the festival and bringing their positive energy to it, they also inspire us to better ourselves every year.”

Fatma Al Remaili said that Ajyal serves a bigger purpose to the society. “With Ajyal, we engage our youth through compelling and meaningful films, enhancing awareness of the world around them, and inspiring them to see humanity from fresh perspectives. That is why we have curated a diverse selection of films this year that talk about social issues that touch young people globally.

“Each film reflects our time and space, and even when discussing disturbing subjects, they rekindle hope and restore confidence in humanity. These filmmakers have gone great lengths to accomplish their dreams, and they do us a service by opening up new horizons. Even though doing so is sometimes uncomfortable and challenging, they urge us to take simple yet meaningful steps that leave behind a positive legacy.”

This year, Ajyal has a carefully curated selection of 70 films from 33 countries that address issues ranging from women empowerment to the global displacement crisis, the loss of loved ones, financial dependence, separation and every day struggles. These are presented with an underlying spirit of optimism and hope that will warm the hearts of the viewers.

In addition to Otto Bell, director of *The Eagle Huntress* and its actress Aisholpan Nurgaiv, the red carpet ceremony was attended by Margus Paju, director of *Secret Society of Uptown*; actress Olivia Viikant; Choi Soo-in (*The World of Us*); Babek Anvari, Narges Rashid and Lucan Tohn (*Under the Shadow*), and actress Haifa Hussein and director Khalifa Al Obeidly (both Made in Qatar jury members), among others.

Talents showcasing their films in the Made in Qatar programme attended the red carpet. They included: Nora Al Subai, Abrar Sabt, Hassan Saqer, Rasha Mkachar, AJ Al Thani, Ahmed Afif, Hamida Issa, Khalifa Al Marri, Bahyan Dahdah, Jassim Al Rumaihi, Noor Al Nasr, Alanood Al Kuwari, Noor Al Khaldi, Mostafa Sheshtawy, Shouq Saheen, Dana Almeer, Aisha R Al Muhannadi, and Amer Jamhour, among others.



Other cultural leaders, artists and social influencers who attended the event include: Abdulaziz Jassem, Saad Burshid, Asma Al Hamadi, Amal Abdel Malek, Ali Abdulsatar, Ahmed Iraj, Tarek Al Arabi, Karim Fouad, Khulood Ahmed, Hedaya Saeed, Rabeea Alkuwari, Mohammed Al Hajji, Omar Hussein, Dana Mado, and Bin Baz, among others.

In addition to regular screenings, the six-day festival also features Special Screenings, Thematic Tributes, Cinema Under the Stars, Family Weekend activities, Ajyal Talks and a Creativity Hub.

Tickets are priced QR25 for general screening, and are available for purchase 24 hours a day at ajyalfilm.com or from the Ajyal Katara Main Box Office in Katara Building 12 or Ajyal FNAC Ticket Outlet, FNAC Qatar (at Lagoona Mall).

Katara is the Cultural Partner and Oxy Qatar is the Principal Partner for the 2016 edition. Qatar Tourism Authority is the Signature Partner of the festival this year. For more details on the Ajyal Youth Film Festival, please visit www.dohafilminstitute.com/filmfestival

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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 Youth 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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