

Strong showcase of captivating films supported by Doha Film Institute to screen at prestigious Berlin International Film Festival

Doha, Qatar; February 8, 2017: Eight films from across the world supported by the Doha Film Institute have been chosen for the 67th Berlin International Film Festival (Berlinale), one of the most acclaimed and established film festivals in the world, to be held from February 9 to 19, 2017. The high quality line-up of films supported by Qatar to be screened at the renowned festival includes feature fiction, experimental and documentary films, as well as a short film.

Seven of these films will have their world premieres while ***Off Frame AKA Revolution Until Victory*** by Mohanad Yaqubi premiered at the 2016 Toronto International Film Festival.

Two feature narratives have been selected for the Panorama segment including ***HEAdBANG Lullaby*** by Hicham Lasri (Morocco, Qatar / 2017), and ***Ghost Hunting*** by Raed Andoni (Palestine, France, Switzerland, Qatar / 2017). The 47th Forum section will showcase the feature documentaries; ***City of the Sun*** by Rati Oneli (Georgia, USA, Netherlands, Qatar / 2017) and ***House in the Fields*** by Tala Hadid (Morocco, Qatar / 2017).

In the Forum Expanded segment, the feature experimental film ***Experimental Summer*** by Mahmoud Lotfy (Egypt, Qatar / 2017), feature essay ***Off Frame AKA Revolution Until Victory*** by Mohanad Yaqubi (Palestine, France, Qatar / 2016) and the short experimental ***Turtles are Always Home*** by Rawane Nassif (Lebanon, Qatar / 2017) will be screened. ***Wallay*** by Berni Goldblat (Burkina Faso, France, Qatar / 2017), a feature narrative, will be screened in the Generation section.

Fatma Al Remaihi, Chief Executive Officer of the Doha Film Institute, said: "This is another strong achievement for the Institute, that underlines our mandate to support high quality films, especially by emerging talents, from the region and the world. It is exciting to see these films mark their world premieres at Berlinale, a Festival renowned for celebrating independent and art house productions with compelling content. Through our Grants programme, we will continue to support projects that reflect the cinematic ambitions of the next generation, and contribute to world cinema through their captivating story-lines and unconventional aesthetic styles."

HEAdBANG Lullaby, recipient of the Spring Grants 2016, is set in Casablanca, June 11, 1986 – the day of the World Cup. For embittered cop Daoud, the day is made up of absurd waiting and improbable encounters under the giant shadow of a monarch whose passage disturbs the delicate balance of the population.

City of the Sun is a recipient of DFI Spring Grants 2016. It follows the lives, dreams and destinies of several extraordinary characters, which unfold amid the grand ruins of the once-glorious Soviet architectural and technological achievements in the semi-abandoned mining town of Chiatura.

A recipient of DFI Spring Grants 2016, ***Experimental Summer*** is a fantasy into the world of filmmaking. It talks about Mahmoud and Zeinab who join in the search for the original version of an Egyptian film that

was made back in the 1980s, all copies of which were confiscated for unknown reasons by the government film agency at the time.

A 2016 Qumra project and Spring Grant 2015 recipient, ***Ghost Hunting*** is about director Raed Andoni and a group of ex-inmates of Al-Moskobiya investigation centre who start a journey in which they rediscover the shape of their old prison, try to face the consequences of being under absolute control, and attempt to re-enact a story that took place inside the centre's walls.

Fall Grants 2016 recipient, ***House in the Fields*** examines the life of a rural Amazigh community isolated in the High Atlas Mountains. It follows the lives of two teenage sisters, one who must give up school to prepare for her wedding, and the other who dreams of becoming a lawyer.

Off Frame AKA Revolution Until Victory is a recipient of Fall Grant 2013; it narrates the story of Palestinian revolutionary cinema by following the life of the Palestine Film Unit, a group that was established in 1968 and that developed with the revolution until the Israeli invasion of Beirut in 1982.

Wallay, recipient of Fall Grants 2016, is about Ady, a French-Burkinabe adolescent, who is sent by his father to the family village in Burkina Faso, but what he had imagined to be a holiday abroad will soon turn into a forced stay.

Turtles are Always Home world premieres in the Forum Expanded segment. The short experimental is a personal journey about the meaning of home and the perpetual search for it. The project participated in the DFI 2016 Short Filmmaking Lab.

Doha Film Institute's film funding initiatives offer creative and financial support to filmmakers based in Qatar and around the world, helping them to unlock their artistry, manage their productions effectively and make high-quality films. Its Grants Programme provides development, production and post-production funding to filmmakers from Qatar, and first- and second-time filmmakers from around the world.

The Doha Film Institute Co-Financing invests in film production through strategic partnerships with film projects that are culturally relevant and commercially viable. The Institute has also launched the Qatari Film Fund, dedicated to supporting short and feature filmmaking by Qatari directors.

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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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