



## 5<sup>th</sup> Ajyal Youth Film Festival Presents Record 103 Inspirational Films from 43 Countries including 10 MENA Premieres

- Fifth year of Ajyal to open with ***The Breadwinner***, directed by **Nora Twomey** and Executive Produced by **Angelina Jolie**
- Programme includes **20** Features and **83** shorts; **55** of them from the Arab World; **52** by women filmmakers
- Festival to world premiere next completed projects from the Qatari Film Fund recipients
- Ajyal 2017 recognises the illustrious career of Kuwaiti actor Abdulhussein Abdulredha, and presents a special 'Made in Kuwait' section
- Ajyal Jury comprises of over **550** jurors from more than **45** countries including 29 international jurors

**Doha, Qatar; November 13, 2017:** The fifth Ajyal Youth Film Festival, presented by the Doha Film Institute, will present a compelling slate of **103** films from **43** countries that express the power of storytelling to transform minds, and will inspire the youth and stimulate discussions about real and relevant issues.

The six-day event, to be held from November 29 to December 4 at Katara Cultural Village, will feature **36** public screenings of the films, **18** screenings dedicated to the Ajyal jury, interactive panel discussions, red carpet events, and community-oriented activities that will delight all ages.

Ajyal 2017 will open with the Middle East premiere of ***The Breadwinner*** (Canada/Ireland/Luxembourg, 2017) by Nora Twomey and Executive Produced by Angelina Jolie. An animated Afghan tale of a young girl's will and determination, the film is based on the best-selling novel by Deborah Ellis about Parvana, an 11-year-girl who must resort to creative means so she can work to support her mother and sister after her father is unjustly arrested.

Tickets for the 5th Ajyal Youth Film Festival are available for purchase from November 15 for QR25 for general screenings online at [www.dohafilminstitute.com](http://www.dohafilminstitute.com) and from Ajyal FNAC Ticket Outlet at FNAC (Doha Festival City). From November 18 tickets are available for purchase from the Ajyal Katara Box Office in Katara Building 12. For up-to-date information or more details on the Ajyal Youth Film Festival, please visit [www.dohafilminstitute.com/filmfestival](http://www.dohafilminstitute.com/filmfestival).

Announcing the line-up, Fatma Al Remaihi, Chief Executive Officer of the Doha Film Institute, said: "Films have the unique power to transcend borders. They expand our horizons, nourish our souls, reinvigorate our intellect and enable us to form meaningful, lasting human bonds. Above all, films provide a communality across all divides, and the stories they present provide us with a shared experience. This transformational power of cinema inspired the inception of Ajyal Youth Film Festival five years ago.

"Ajyal is a festival of cinema for the community, for all generations. At the core of this celebration are young people from Qatar and around the world, who come together in a creative and inspiring environment to explore and engage with the many interesting films and subject matters that fuel their curiosity and sparks their imaginations. From 300 Ajyal Jurors in 2013, our jury programme has grown to include over 550 jurors from more than 45 countries. Although these numbers are



extraordinary, what is even more special is how this experience of critical and curious questioning transforms these many jurors' lives."

## 2017 PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS

Other highlights of Agyal 2017 include the MENA premiere of ***Looking for Oum Kulthum*** from celebrated visual artist and filmmaker Shirin Neshat, Qatar premiere of ***Loving Vincent*** – the world's first fully painted feature film, among others, along with world premieres of the next completed projects from the 2015 and 2016 Qatar Film Fund, Aisha Al-Jaidah's ***1001 Days*** and Hamida Issa's ***Elevate*** respectively.

In a rich showcase of unique cinematic experiences, Agyal 2017 will once again present an inclusive experience of Agyal Award Winners – Nora Al Subai's ***Al Johara*** and A.J.Althani's ***Kashta*** to celebrate the UN International Day of Persons with Disabilities. The special 'trans-adapted' screening is presented in collaboration with the Translation and Interpreting Institute of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Hamad bin Khalifa University.

Agyal 2017 also celebrates the evolving art form of animation that represents nearly half of the feature film line-up this year, with international titles including ***In This Corner of the World*** and ***Birds Like Us***, transporting filmgoers into some of the most imaginative worlds to raise awareness about issues of deep concern.

An eclectic shorts programme will introduce hidden gems to the public for the very first time – **16** in the Made in Qatar section, which celebrates work by those who call Qatar home. Together with **50** shorts from across the globe, film lovers will be immersed in this interesting and essential cinematic artform.

## DFI SUPPORTED FILMS

Agyal 2017 will screen **25** films that are supported by the Doha Film Institute through its Grants programme, co-financing, Qatari Film Fund or projects mentored through its labs and workshops. These include feature films: ***Loving Vincent***, ***Looking for Oum Kulthum***, ***Birds Like Us***, ***Disappearance***, ***Wallay***, ***Liyana*** and ***House in the Fields***.

## TRIBUTE AND MADE IN KUWAIT

Agyal 2017 will also celebrate the illustrious career of Kuwaiti actor Abdulhussain Abdulredha, who passed away earlier this year, with an honorary award, and shines a spotlight on Kuwaiti cinematic voices with a special 'Made in Kuwait' section featuring an eclectic and moving selection of short films.

## JURY HIGHLIGHTS

The competition line-up at Agyal 2017 comprises **12** compelling feature films and a series of short programmes. More than 550 jurors from the ages of 8 to 21 who make up the Agyal Competition Jury will watch and analyse a dynamic programme of films under three competitive sections – Mohaq, Hilal, and Bader – followed by discussions and events including panels, workshops and Q&A sessions with filmmakers.



The 2017 Aijal Jury has over **550** jurors from more than **45** countries including **29** international jurors who will travel to Doha for the event from Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iraq, Italy, Jordan, Kuwait, Mexico, Oman, Tunisia, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

## **CREATIVITY HUB**

While Aijal is a celebration of films from all over the world, Aijal Creativity Hub presents a vibrant programme of cultural and creative activities which includes Geekdom – a hub for the community to come together and relive their childhood memories through music, games, competitions, talks and films; and Aijal Talks – intimate and in-depth dialogues on relevant and topical issues that impact youth across the globe.

## **PARTNERS**

2017 Aijal Youth Film Festival's Official Partners include: Cultural Partner, Katara Cultural Village; Principal Partners Occidental Petroleum Corporation and Ooredoo, and Strategic Partner Qatar Tourism Authority.

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### **Note to Editors:**

#### **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 Aijal 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.

#### **About Aijal Youth Film Festival:**

Aijal Youth 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. 'Aijal', Arabic for 'generations', brings people of all ages together through screenings and events that inspire creative interaction and stimulate cinematic dialogue.

Aijal Youth Film Festival builds on the Doha Film Institute's history of community-based programming. Through its' jury programme, youth between the ages of 8 and 21 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. The 5th Aijal Youth Film Festival takes place from November 29 to December 4 2017.

#### **Doha Film Institute**

Twitter: @DohaFilm; Instagram: @DohaFilm; Facebook: [www.facebook.com/DohaFilmInstitute](http://www.facebook.com/DohaFilmInstitute)