

Qumra 2019 continues to encourage stories and voices of emerging talent

- *Talents attached to 36 Qumra Projects, including 15 from Qatar, to participate in bespoke industry sessions*
- *Over 100 international film professionals to contribute to the continued development of the regional film industry*

Doha, Qatar: 15 March 2019: The Chief Executive Officer of the Doha Film Institute (DFI), Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, welcomed delegates to the fifth edition of Qumra, a one-of-a-kind film initiative that seeks to provide mentorship, nurturing, and hands-on development for the next generation of filmmakers from Qatar and around the world, taking place in Doha until 20 March.

Qumra 2019 brings together more than 150 delegates including filmmakers and industry professionals from over 32 countries to support the development of 36 projects in various stages of development by first- and second-time filmmakers from 19 countries.

Speaking to delegates and the filmmakers behind the Qumra Projects at this year's meet and greet event at the Museum of Islamic Art, DFI's CEO Fatma Hassan Alremaihi highlighted the importance of initiatives like Qumra in helping to bring bold new voices to cinema, especially in the Arab world.

She said: "I am proud that Qumra continues to be a unique platform for learning, inspiration, and progress for filmmakers and industry professionals. I urge emerging filmmakers to continue to participate in events such as Qumra, which is an important space for the development of authentic perspectives and independent thought. It is up to you to ensure that your true voice is heard – not one that is skewed by what others want to hear. We need your stories and voices to help us remain optimistic and hopeful – and to revive our souls."

Elia Suleiman, Artistic Advisor at DFI, also spoke at the event. He said: "Qumra is a fantastic initiative and each year it gets bigger and better. I am looking forward to spending the next few days as a visitor finding out about these new and exciting projects."

Over six days, Qumra's new filmmaker delegates will take part in bespoke industry sessions designed to progress their projects and prepare them for international markets, in addition to the masterclasses and mentoring sessions by the Qumra Masters. There are 15 Qumra projects by Qatar-based talent, including eight films by Qatari nationals, driving Qumra's mission to expand support for the development of home-grown emerging filmmakers. While six of the Qatar-based projects are works-in-progress, the others are in development stage. In all, 18 projects are in development and 18 projects are in post-production. There are 15 fictions, 11 documentary features and 10 shorts. Of the 36 projects, 26 are recipients of the Doha Film Institute's Grants programme.

Day one of Qumra also saw the first Qumra Masters screening– a showcase of films presented by this year’s Qumra Masters. A packed audience enjoyed a screening of 2019 Qumra Master Agnès Varda’s **The Gleaners and I** – a documentary about French subcultures by the French New Wave cinema legend.

Throughout the six-day initiative, the Qumra Masters share their experience with the filmmakers behind the 36 projects supported by DFI, providing invaluable feedback by drawing on their own inspiring journeys through the cinematic world in Qumra Masterclasses. 2019 Qumra Masters include Academy Award® winning Mexican production designer Eugenio Caballero, winner of the Grand Jury prize at the 2014 Cannes Film Festival, Italian writer and director Alice Rohrwacher; prolific Japanese director and writer Kiyoshi Kurosawa; Polish auteur Pawel Pawlikowski; and a special masterclass honouring the French new wave Master Agnes Varda.

Hanaa Issa, Director of Strategy and Development DFI and Qumra Deputy Director, said of this year’s initiative: “It is great to introduce another exciting edition of Qumra, which is just one of the many initiatives we organise at DFI to help emerging and aspiring filmmakers. I am so pleased to welcome all the new filmmakers to this year’s Qumra and hope that they take full advantage of the experience of our Qumra Masters and other industry experts who have come here to Doha to support them.”

The second day of Qumra 2019 will host the first Qumra Talk with Franklin Leonard, the renowned film development executive and founder and CEO of The Black List – an innovative network that has connected more than 400 scripts with buyers and distributors – at 5 PM. The second Qumra Masters screening – Guillermo del Toro’s *Pan’s Labyrinth* – takes place at 7 PM. 2019 Qumra Master Eugenio Caballero won the Academy Award® in Production Design for the film is.

Further details about ticket prices and sales for the screenings are now available on www.dohafilminstitute.com.

-ENDS-

Note to Editors

About Qumra

Directors and Producers attached to thirty-six projects in development and post-production are selected to participate in the event. They will include a number of emerging filmmakers from Qatar, as well as recipients of funding from the Institute’s Grants Programme. The robust programme will feature industry meetings designed to assist with propelling projects to their next stages of development, including master classes, work-in-progress screenings, bespoke matchmaking sessions and tailored workshops with industry experts. This creative exchange will take place alongside a programme of public screenings curated with input from the Qumra Masters.

The event is organised in three main sections: The **Qumra Master Classes** are daily sessions; each led by one of the Masters. The participating filmmakers have full access to these sessions, which are also open to accredited industry guests to attend in an observational capacity.

The **Qumra Meetings** are a series of one-on-one meetings, workshops and tailored mentoring sessions between representatives from the selected projects and seasoned industry experts.

The **Qumra Screenings** are open to the public and feature projects funded by the Institute through its grants and co-financing initiatives, as well as a series of films chosen by the Qumra Masters accompanied by Q&A sessions.

The Arabic term ‘qumra’ is popularly said to be the origin of the word ‘camera’, and to have been used by the scientist, astronomer and mathematician Alhazen (Ibn al-Haytham, 965-c.1040 CE), whose work in optics laid out the principles of the camera obscura.

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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