

Find the World Through 13 Acclaimed International Films at 7th Ajyal Film Festival

- *Films in Ajyal Jury Competition line-up include festival favourites Sorry We Missed You, For Sama, The Farewell, You Will Die at Twenty and 1982*
- *Two Doha Film Institute Grants supported films in competition*

Doha, Qatar; 07 November 2019: An eclectic selection of 13 thought-provoking feature films from across the globe will present diverse perspectives of life and inspire audiences at the 7th Ajyal Film Festival, taking place from November 18 to 23 at Katara Cultural Village.

Delivering inspirational stories of hope, resilience and courage using powerfully creative narratives, the selected films will be assessed across three distinct juries - Mohaq, Hilal and Bader. Each jury is presented a selection of carefully curated feature and short films that echo this year's theme in focus '*Find Film, Find Life*'. Ajyal jurors will analyse and deliberate on films in their respective categories, awarding Best Film prizes accordingly.

Two feature films screening in competition are supported by the Doha Film Institute, underlining the Institute's commitment to unlock creative voices and support quality film productions and reinforcing Qatar's continued focus on promoting distinctive and compelling narratives of universal resonance.

"Contemplative, encouraging and thought-provoking – this year's feature films help us find the nature of life and identity and our place within an ever-changing, deeply interconnected world," said Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, Festival Director and Chief Executive Officer of DFI. "With their powerful narratives and complex storytelling techniques, each of the films strike a delicate balance between hope and introspection, ultimately inspiring a sense of unity among inquisitive jurors across all age categories. We are excited to become part of their week-long debates and deliberations while they find the different ways to experience, feel and overcome the challenges of life through cinema."

In the Mohaq segment for jurors aged 8 to 12 are ***Ailo's Journey*** (France, Finland/2018) by Guillaume Maidatchevsky; ***Jacob, Mimmi and the Talking Dogs*** (Latvia, Poland/2019) by Edmunds Jansons; Oualid Mouaness's ***1982*** (Lebanon, USA, Norway, Qatar/2019) and ***The Arctic Camels*** (Norway, Mongolia/2019) by Karl Emil Rikardsen.

Ajyal Jurors ages 13 to 17 in the Hilal category will watch and evaluate ***Honeyland*** (North Macedonia/2019) by Ljubomir Stefanov and Tamara Kotevska; ***Land of Ashes*** (Costa Rica, Argentina, Chile, France/2019) by Sofía Quirós Ubeda; ***The Farewell*** (USA, China/2019) by Lulu Wang and Gints Zilbalodis's ***Away*** (Latvia/2019).

Ajyal's Bader Jurors, aged 18 to 21, will choose a winner among ***For Sama*** (Syria, UK/2019) by Waad al-Kateab and Edward Watts; ***Give Me Liberty*** (USA/2019) by Kirill Mikhanovsky; ***Sorry We Missed You*** (UK, France, Belgium/2019) by Ken Loach; ***Children of the Sea*** (Japan/2019) by Ayumu Watanabe and Amjad Abu Alala's ***You Will Die at Twenty*** (Sudan, France, Egypt, Germany, Norway, Qatar/2019).

The Mohaq Selection:

- ***Ailo's Journey*** is a heart-warming tale of a baby reindeer and its mother as they overcome incredible obstacles to complete their first migration through the white frozen expanses of the polar circle.
- In ***Jacob, Mimmi and the Talking Dogs***, two kids try to overcome the impossible to save a local parkland from a businessman's evil construction plans - and find unexpected help from a pack of local dogs that can talk!
- ***1982*** is about a young boy who struggles to reveal his true feelings to his classmate at the time of a war in Beirut.
- ***The Arctic Camels*** narrates the story of two siblings in Arctic Norway and their efforts to train their pet camels and build a camel centre.

The Hilal Selection:

- Set in an isolated mountain range in the Balkans, ***Honeyland*** narrates the story of Hatidze Muratova and her ailing mother, the last in a long line of Macedonian wild beekeepers and the first to be threatened by a neighbouring family's rival beekeeping business.
- ***Land of Ashes*** is a tender and humane coming-of-age story about Selva, a thirteen-year-old girl tasked with the sole care of her elderly grandfather, whose only wish is to stop living.
- ***Away*** is a fairy-tale like adventure in which a young boy finds himself pursued by a malevolent creature across a mysterious land, crossing barren desserts and lush forests.
- ***The Farewell*** is a darkly comedic yet uplifting tale about a family that comes together under the joyful guise of a fake wedding to say goodbye to their beloved matriarch -- the only person that doesn't know she only has a few weeks to live.

The Bader Selection:

- Set during years of turmoil and uprising in Aleppo, ***For Sama*** tells the retrospective story of a mother's impossible choice between protecting her daughter's life and fighting for her country's freedom.
- ***Give Me Liberty*** is a comical and endearing portrait of American dreams and disenchantment, following medical transport driver Vic's eventful journey to deliver his grandfather and a dozen elderly Russians to a funeral.
- Placed in the aftershock of the 2008 financial crisis, ***Sorry We Missed You*** is a captivating film about a British family that is forced into 'zero-hour' contract work to make ends meet in the face of mounting debt.
- ***Children of the Sea*** follows the story of young Ruka, who forms a friendship with two brothers, who were raised in the ocean and attained incredible abilities to swim like fish and communicate with sea creatures. Together, they follow a strange call into the depths of the sea.

- ***You Will Die at Twenty*** takes a poignant look at the life of a boy cursed by a Dervish prophecy that he will die at the age of twenty, and how an old cinema projector opens a window to a whole new world for him.

Tickets for the 7th Ajyal Film Festival are available for purchase at the Ajyal Main Box Office located in Katara Building 10; at the Ajyal Box Office at VOX Cinemas Doha Festival City for screenings taking place at VOX Cinemas; and from the Novo Cinemas Box Office for screenings at Novo Cinemas, the Pearl. For ticket purchase and up-to-date information on the Ajyal Film Festival, please visit:

<https://www.dohafilminstitute.com/filmfestival/ticketinformation>

<https://www.dohafilminstitute.com/filmfestival/films>

2019 Ajyal Film Festival's Official Partners include: **Katara Cultural Village** – Cultural Partner; **Qatar National Tourism Council** – Principal Partner; **Novo Cinemas, Ooredoo** – Strategic Partner, **St. Regis Doha** - Signature Partner.

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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 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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