

## 8<sup>th</sup> Ajyal Film Festival Opens with Cinematic Celebration of Resilience and Perseverance

- The Ajyal 2020 theme 'The Show Goes On' draws on power of film to inspire us to adapt, overcome and work towards a bright future
- Festival opened with acclaimed **Sun Children** by Iranian director Majid Majidi, which debuted in Venice and calls attention to the issue of child labour

**Doha, Qatar; November 18 2020:** The first-ever hybrid edition of the 8th Ajyal Film Festival, presented by the Doha Film Institute (DFI) from November 18- 23, opened with a glamorous red carpet event at Katara Cultural Village last night.

In line with government guidelines and with the health of all Ajyal participants as the top priority, the six-day event will be delivered with a mix of virtual and in-person elements.

On occasion of the festival opening, H.E Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Chairperson of the Doha Film Institute, addressed the youth: "Ajyal 2020 offers a unique opportunity for you to connect with peers around the world who share your passion for learning and discovery through cinema. Our culture's rich history of literature, art, music and performance serves to preserve our past and informs our unique identity and perspective as Arabs and as modern-day storytellers. Now it's your turn to shine, as creative role models for the generations of the future."

Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, Festival Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Doha Film Institute, said: "In previous years, the size of our audiences were limited to the number of seats available; Ajyal 2020's new hybrid format breaks these limitations and enables audiences from around the globe to join in cinematic celebration of culture and creative expression from wherever they are. I want to thank all our local and international participants for their support and trust in the unwavering spirit of Ajyal. This year's Festival theme 'The Show Goes On' aptly reflects the essence of that spirit – one of vibrant creativity, community, and resilience. We are very proud to embrace youth from all backgrounds and cultures as they explore individual freedom of thought, imagination and expression in the environment of intercultural understanding and respect of Ajyal."

Delivering important messages of humanity, the Festival opened with **Sun Children** (Iran/2020) by Iranian director Majid Majidi, which made its debut at the 77th Venice International Film Festival earlier this year. The film highlights the resilience and creativity of youth, which when nurtured brings lasting social change and inspires great innovators and problem-solvers of tomorrow.

This year, the Festival will showcase a diverse programme of **22** features and **58** shorts, including **31** from the Arab World and **30** by women directors. Bringing together award-winning filmmakers from across the globe, Ajyal Film Festival continues to amplify powerful voices and rouse all generations through cinema.

Expanding audience access across the region via an online streaming platform and exciting new Drive-In Cinema in Lusail, Ajyal 2020 brings back the highly-anticipated **Made in Qatar** programme presented by Ooredoo, to celebrate emerging film talents who call Qatar home.

**AJYAL FILM FESTIVAL 2020**

**مهرجان أجيال السينمائي ٢٠٢٠**

**THE SHOW  
GOES ON**

**يستمّر  
GOES ON**

**العرض يستمر  
GOES ON**

For up-to-date information and ticket reservation, visit: [www.dohafilminstitute.com/festival](http://www.dohafilminstitute.com/festival).

2020 Ajyal Film Festival's Official Partners include: **Katara Cultural Village Foundation** – Cultural Partner; **Qatar National Tourism Council** – Principal Partner; **Novo Cinemas, Ooredoo** – Strategic Partner, **Msheireb Properties, Lusail, Qatari Diar** – Signature Sponsors.

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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 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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