

Doha Film Institute's Qumra 2022 goes live with over 150 global film professionals nurturing 45 new projects

- *Qumra plays a key role in the successful careers of emerging and established filmmakers in the Arab world and beyond, says Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, CEO of the Doha Film Institute*

Doha, Qatar; March 19, 2022: Qumra 2022, the annual talent incubator event by the Doha Film Institute, went live online on Friday with over 150 film industry professionals from across the world joining in to nurture 45 film projects by emerging filmmakers in the Arab world and beyond.

Despite the global pandemic, Qumra 2022 will continue its mission to support independent cinema voices on their script-to-screen journey, in two streams of virtual programming: the first comprising tutorials, workshops, consultations, and virtual meetings for projects in development; and the second featuring work-in-progress screenings and feedback sessions for projects in post-production. In addition to feature narratives, documentaries, and shorts, Qumra 2022 also includes series for video-on-demand and online platforms, expanding audience access for projects beyond conventional platforms to a wider population.

Welcoming the delegates and industry experts, Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, CEO of the Doha Film Institute and Director of Qumra 2022, said: "Our strategic priority remains maintaining meaningful and valuable support for creative expression, and we are committed to nurturing authentic new independent voices in cinema. Although we meet virtually this year, we are united in our contribution to the new generation of talent, and finding creative new ways to seed inspiration."

She added: "Over the past seven editions, Qumra has played a crucial role in supporting the diversely rich and inspiring films of emerging and established filmmakers in the Arab world and beyond, several of which have gained global accolades and are a great source of pride for the Institute. This year's stories of resilience and triumph, shaped by contemporary geopolitics, continue to make important statements about the human experience and shape the way perspectives are represented in cinema."

Elia Suleiman, Artistic Advisor, Doha Film Institute shared his experience of heading the jury at the recent Luxembourg International Film Festival, where a number of films supported by the Doha Film Institute were in competition. Asserting his own independent position in not being involved with any funding decision by the Institute, he said it is matter of pride to see new film projects coming to life, especially following the pandemic and with the war in Ukraine. "Qumra gives me hope; the abundance of projects demonstrates the continuity in the film industry, and give us hope that things will turn more positive."

Hanaa Issa, Director of Strategy and Development at the Doha Film Institute and Qumra Deputy Director, said among the 45 projects from 27 countries at Qumra this year, 26 have participated in a workshop or lab organised by the Institute in addition to having received financial support. "This number is growing over the years and it shows that we are delivering to make a difference. Qumra indeed marks the convergence of a lot of work we do at DFI year-round, and through our support, we aim to shorten the distances and connect to humanity through the cinematic voices."

There are 45 projects participating in Qumra 2022 including 28 features, 6 series, and 11 short film projects, with 6 narrative and documentary features from Qatar. Of these, 39 are recipients of Doha Film Institute Grants, and 26 are supported by DFI training programmes. In all, there are 11 feature projects, 17 features in post-production, 6 in Qumra Series, and 11 in Qumra Shorts. 20 of the selected projects across shorts, features and series are helmed by women directors.

Industry professionals from 35 countries include acclaimed directors, producers, writers, film festival representatives, fund managers, distributors, digital platforms and broadcasters, and expert consultants, and sales and acquisition heads, who will provide expert consultancy to participants.

This year's Qumra project Mentors include DFI Artistic Advisor and filmmaker Elia Suleiman and internationally acclaimed filmmakers Kamal Aljafari, Rithy Panh, Ghassan Salhab, Tala Hadid, Talal Derki, and Annemarie Jacir.

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