

## Six Doha Film Institute Supported Films selected at Cannes 2024

- Latest co-financed project by Qumra Master and long-term collaborator Rithy Panh selected to the Cannes Premiere section in the festival's Official Selection
- Selection recognises a wide range of projects from Arab and global talent, auteurs and promising creatives supported by the Institute

**Doha, Qatar; 11 May, 2024:** Six films supported by the Doha Film Institute (DFI) have been selected to the 77<sup>th</sup> Cannes Film Festival being held from May 14-25. The Institute continues to uphold its proud legacy of supporting compelling films from across the globe this year too, with its latest co-financed project '*Rendez-vous avec Pol Pot*' (Meeting with Pol Pot) by renowned Cambodian director and screenwriter Rithy Panh, selected to the Cannes Premiere section in the Official Selection.

Diverse projects supported by the DFI Grants programme will screen for global audiences, including three projects in the parallel section of Critics' Week (Semaine de la Critique) and two in Director's Fortnight (Quinzaine des cinéastes).

Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, Chief Executive Officer of DFI, said: "Once again, the eclectic selection of DFI backed projects selected at Cannes this year demonstrates the Institute's commitment to support compelling voices and powerful stories that have the potential to shape world cinema. We are honoured to partner with internationally renowned creative visionaries and emerging talent from the Arab world and beyond to offer a captivating window into different cultures and perspectives to foster a sense of global unity."

"I am especially proud that celebrated auteur and DFI's long-term mentor and collaborator Rithy Panh's new film will premiere at the prestigious festival. Rithy's films offer creative cinematic representations of significant social and historical events that forever changed our world, and his unbounded passion for storytelling with a rare and striking authority, portrayed in *Rendez-vous avec Pol Pot*, an important and timely film will resonate with all."

### Cannes Premiere, Official Selection:

Co-financed by DFI, '*Rendez-vous avec Pol Pot*' (France, Cambodia, Taiwan, Qatar, Turkiye) by critically acclaimed filmmaker and Un Certain Regard Grand Prix Winner Rithy Panh draws from his moving personal experiences to revive unrecorded memories of his native Cambodia. Based on a true story, the film recounts the adventurous journey of three French journalists invited to Cambodia by the Khmer Rouge in 1978 to meet with Pol Pot.

Panh directed numerous internationally acclaimed films, including *The Rice People*, selected for the Official Competition of the Festival de Cannes in 1994 and *The Missing Picture*, nominated for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film in 2013 and winner of the Grand Prix in the Un Certain Regard section at the Festival de Cannes. His most recent directorial effort, *Exile*, once again considers the

grave crimes and abuse of the Khmer Rouge regime and won wide critical and public acclaim at Cannes in 2016.

**Critics' Week (Semaine de la Critique):**

- ***The Brink of Dreams*** (Egypt, France, Denmark, Saudi Arabia, Qatar), by Nada Riyadh and Ayman El Amir, tells the story of a group of Coptic girls who refuse the roles forced upon them by forming an all-female street theatre troupe.
- ***Locust*** (Taiwan, France, USA, Qatar) by KEFF is set in Taiwan, where a mute twenty-something struggles to find meaning in the injustice of everyday life.
- ***Across The Sea*** (Morocco, France, Belgium, Qatar) by Saïd Hamich Benlarbi in Séance Speciale follows Nour who immigrated illegally to Marseille in 1990. With his friends, he lives a marginal and festive life.

**Director's Fortnight (Quinzaine des cinéastes):**

- ***East of Noon*** (Egypt, Netherlands, Qatar) by Hala Elkoussy is a fable about musician Abdo, who rebels against his elders, seeking freedom through his art in a confined world outside of time.
- ***To a Land Unknown*** (Palestine, UK, Greece, Netherlands, France, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Qatar) by Mahdi Fleifel is about two Palestinian cousins who are forced to take extreme measures to escape a hopeless environment before it is too late.

Three other DFI supported projects will participate in industry platforms during the Festival including ***The Myth of Mahmoud*** (Palestine, USA, Lebanon, Kenya, Yemen, Jordan, Qatar) by Mayar Hamdan & Shaima Al Tamimi and ***My Father's House*** by Mahdi Fleifel in the Cannes Docs programme; and ***L'Mina*** (Morocco, France, Qatar, Italy) by Randa Maroufi in the Focus Work in Progress section organised by the Short Film Corner.

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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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