

Doha Film Institute brings the best of Masters and New Voices in Cinema with 2016 Qumra screenings

- *New Voices in Cinema strand includes four compelling works by emerging Qatari and international talent*
- *Masters Screenings celebrate mastery of the cinematic craft by veteran filmmakers*
- *Academy Award, Cannes Film Festival and Ajyal Youth Film Festival winners among the selection of nine movies*
- *Tickets go on sale Feb. 18*

Doha, Qatar; February 16, 2016: The second edition of Qumra, the industry development event organised by the Doha Film Institute, will present a highly engaging selection of movies by five Qumra Masters and a selection of emerging talent during daily screenings and question-and-answer sessions from March 4 to 8. The selection includes Academy Award, Cannes Film Festival and Ajyal Youth Film Festival award winners.

Doha Film Institute CEO Fatma Al Remaili said: "This year, the Qumra Screenings will showcase the work of five esteemed masters of cinema alongside some tremendously talented emerging filmmakers. By presenting these two spectrums of cinematic works, Qumra will offer audiences highly engaging film experiences that will present new insights into the language of cinema and the process behind the creation of compelling films. They will also be educational and inspirational, underlining our commitment to strengthening film culture in Qatar by promoting access to and appreciation of world cinema."

The Masters screenings, accompanied by question-and-answer sessions with the visiting Qumra Masters linked to each film are ***The Look of Silence*** (Denmark, Indonesia, Finland, Norway, UK / Indonesian, Javanese /2014) by Qumra Master Joshua Oppenheimer, ***Once Upon a Time in Anatolia*** (Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina / Turkish / 2011) by Qumra Master Nuri Bilge Ceylan; ***Russian Ark*** (Russian Federation, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Japan / Russian / 2002) by Qumra Master Aleksandr Sokurov; ***The Mourning Forest*** (Japan, France / Japanese / 2007) by Qumra Master Naomi Kawase; and ***Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*** (Taiwan, Hong Kong, USA, China / Mandarin / 2001) by Ang Lee, co-written and produced by Lee's longtime collaborator and Qumra Master, James Schamus.

The 'New Voices in Cinema' screenings include two feature films granted by the Doha Film Institute: ***Mediterranea*** (Italy, France, Germany, Qatar/ Arabic, English, French, Italian; 2015) by Jonas Carpignano; ***Roundabout in my Head*** (Algeria, France, Qatar/Arabic/2015); and two award-winning short films ***Waves 98*** by Ely Dagher (Lebanon, Qatar / Arabic / 2015), winner of the Palme d'Or for Best Short Film at the 2015 Cannes Film Festival and ***The Palm Tree*** (Qatar, No Dialogue, 2015) by Jasim Al Rumaihi, winner of the 2015 Ajyal Youth Film Festival Made in Qatar Award for Best Documentary.

The Qumra Masters Screenings will commence with ***Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*** on Friday, 4 March at 7 PM. Named 'Best Picture of the Year' by 100 critics US-wide, it tells the epic tale of two master warriors (Chow Yun Fat and Michelle Yeoh) who are faced with their greatest challenge when the treasured Green Destiny sword is stolen. A young aristocrat (Zhang Ziyi) prepares for an arranged

marriage, but soon reveals her superior fighting talents and her deeply romantic past. As each warrior battles for justice, they come face to face with their worst enemy – and the inescapable, enduring power of love. The film is the winner of four Academy Awards for Best Foreign Language Film, Art Direction, Original Score and Cinematography.

Once Upon a Time in Anatolia (screening on Saturday, 5 March, 7:00 PM) has at its core a straightforward tale but one that gives rise to a complex reflection on life. It depicts a group of men – among them a doctor, a prosecutor, a few village policemen, some locals armed with shovels and a murder suspect in handcuffs – driving about in several cars, searching for an elusive crime scene late at night on a dimly lit Anatolian steppe. Cited as the director's masterpiece, it tells a small but intricately detailed story that ultimately reminds us of our own humanity. The film won the Grand Jury Prize at the 2011 Cannes Film Festival.

With ***The Mourning Forest*** (Sunday, 6 March, 7 PM), director Naomi Kawase returns to her signature themes of broken families, lost loved ones, nature and mourning, in a work that is quietly moving and punctuated with moments of childlike joy. The liberal use of a handheld, observational camera gives the film an extraordinarily naturalistic and intimate feel as we accompany two tormented souls on a journey to peace. ***The Mourning Forest*** was awarded the Grand Jury Prize at the 2007 Cannes Film Festival, where Kawase has enjoyed ongoing acclaim for her work since winning the Camera d'Or in 1997.

Russian Ark (screening on Monday, 7 March, 7:00 PM) depicts a group of revellers in 18th-century formal dress entering St. Petersburg's Hermitage Museum. A bewildered voice behind the camera – that of director Aleksandr Sokurov himself – wonders where he is and how he came to be here, and is soon joined by another, presumably dead, man – the Marquis de Custine, a French travel writer best-known for his visit to Imperial Russia in the late 1830s. Perhaps the film's best-known element is its single, 90-minute shot. Gloriously enigmatic and endlessly engaging, Sokurov's film is nothing short of a cinematic tour-de-force. *Russian Ark* was nominated for the Palme d'Or at the 2002 Cannes Film Festival and received the Visions Award at the 2002 Toronto International Film Festival.

In ***The Look of Silence*** (screening on Tuesday, 8 March, 7:00 PM), Qumra Master Oppenheimer revisits the subject of his path-breaking film, *The Act of Killing* set in 1965 in Indonesia when almost one million citizens were butchered by death squads accused of being 'communists.' Oppenheimer this time follows an unnamed man in his 40s whose brother Ramli was a victim of the killings. An optician, he watches footage shot by Oppenheimer during the making of *The Act of Killing*, some of which features men describing in detail how they executed his brother. The film is nominated for Best Documentary Film at the 88th Academy Awards taking place on February 28th.

The New Voices in Cinema strand opens with ***The Palm Tree*** by Jasim Al Rumaihi, winner of the 2015 Ajyal Youth Film Festival Made in Qatar Award for Best Documentary, on March 4, Friday at 4.00 PM. Mainly shot using disorienting close-ups, it is an observational documentary that shows us how unnatural nature can be, and unearths the science fiction in reality.

This will be followed by the screening of ***Mediterranea*** (Italy. France, Germany, Qatar/ Arabic, English, French, Italian; 2015) also screening in the 4 PM session. The film opens in Algeria, where Ayiva and his friend Abas climb onto a truck packed to bursting with migrants and their belongings, bound for the coast of Libya. The friends have travelled this far from Burkina Faso; their hoped-for destination: Europe. Given the horrifying migration situation the world is facing today, the film acts as an urgent call to treat migrants and refugees with dignity, respect and compassion.

On Saturday, March 5 at 4 PM, watch ***Roundabout in my Head*** by Hassan Ferhani, a Doha Film Institute Grants supported project. It is set in the largest slaughterhouse in Algiers, where men live and work close to the throbbing rhythms of their tasks and dreams. Hope, bitterness, love, paradise, hell and stories of football are set to the Chaabi and Rai melodies that permeate their world.

This will be preceded by ***Waves 98*** by Ely Dagher (Lebanon, Qatar / Arabic / 2015), a 15-minute short that won the Palme d'Or for Best Short Film at the 2016 Cannes Film Festival. It explores the complex relationship of contemporary Beirutis to their troubled home city. Distinguished by an intriguing mix of animation and live-action footage, 'Waves '98' is a moving meditation on the contradiction of feeling lost at home.

All screenings will be at the Museum of Islamic Art Auditorium with sale of tickets commencing on February 18, 12 PM. Visit www.dohafilminstitute.com for online and in person ticketing details.

-ends-

Notes to Editors

About Qumra

Directors and Producers attached to up to twenty-five projects in development or post-production will be invited 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, and will also be 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 25 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

Twitter: @DohaFilm; Instagram: @DohaFilm; Facebook: www.facebook.com/DohaFilmInstitute



مؤسسة الدوحة للأفلام

DOHA FILM INSTITUTE

For All Enquiries:

MENA Press Enquiries:

Majid Wasi / Abbas Moussa

ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller

+9714 4507 600

Majid.Wasi@bm.com / Abbas.Moussa@bm.com

International Press Enquiries:

Cathy Dunkley

freuds

+44 203 003 6355

cathy.dunkley@freuds.com