

## **Qatari Filmmakers in Cannes Explore the World of Cinema and Present their Stories**

***Doha Film Institute hosts upcoming local talents at the prestigious event to support them in advancing their filmmaking careers***

**Doha, Qatar; May 18, 2016:** The Doha Film Institute is hosting emerging Qatari filmmakers at the 69<sup>th</sup> edition of the Cannes Film Festival, where they are participating in a series of targeted workshops, networking events and industry meetings, to support them in advancing their filmmaking careers.

The young Qatari directors **Amna Al-Binali** and **Jassim Al Rumaihi**, have had an opportunity to connect with their peers from the global entertainment industry and learn from some of the world's most prominent film experts at this international gathering. During the week-long educational programme, the talented duo took part in workshops, script development advisory sessions and one-on-one meetings, in addition to attending the screenings of the most-awaited films from across the world.

Fatma Al Rumaihi, Chief Executive Officer of the Doha Film Institute, said: "Apart from the significant showcase of films supported by the Doha Film Institute that will screen at Cannes, we are delighted to host our own Qatari talent and our 'Made in Qatar' films at the world's premier film event. Through this, we aim to strengthen the skills of our young filmmakers, and highlight their creative works to the world. The networking sessions and the screenings at Cannes will help the participants to gain deep insights into the newest trends in filmmaking, which they can apply in their creative pursuits and add to the pride of Arab cinema."

Amna Al-Binali's *The Notebook* had won the Special Mention in the documentary category at Ajyal Youth Film Festival 2015. It is a diarist film that explores the limits of personal boundaries and the complicated dynamics of inner lives through the life of Nora who is trying to make a film for the first time.

Al-Binali graduated from Qatar University with a degree in English Literature and Linguistics, and directed her first short film, *Doctor's Office* at the La Fémis Gulf Summer School in 2015. She is currently developing *The World Is Blue*, which was selected for Qumra this year.

In discussing the development sessions attended by the group Amna Al-Binali said: "It truly is an honour to participate at the Cannes Film Festival and to showcase my film in the reputed Shorts Film Corner. As one of the most-respected film events, Cannes offers amazing insights into the world of movies. The opportunity to meet with the world's best in filmmaking and to listen to them will help in further building my skills in filmmaking. This is a great initiative by the Doha Film Institute and I feel I have gained a lot throughout the meetings that have been organised for us."

Jassim Al-Rumaihi's *The Palm Tree* won the Best Documentary Film at Ajyal Youth Film Festival 2015 and was also the opening film for the Emerging Voices segment of Qumra 2016. It is an observational documentary that shows how unnatural nature can be and unearths the science fiction in reality.

Al-Rumaihi works as a reporter at Al Jazeera News channel, covering news from Tunisia to Nepal. While studying at Northwestern University in Qatar, he took several classes in film production. He is currently working on *Amer: The Arabian Legend*, a documentary about one of Qatar's most famous racehorses, which was selected for Qumra this year.

"I am looking to build relationships with broadcasters, distributors, documentary experts, festivals and labs, and also seek mentorship opportunities through my participation at Cannes. It's very important to share stories from Qatar with the world, and as filmmakers it's our responsibility to present our voices to them and help them discover our culture and heritage. Doha Film Institute has extended tremendous support to me in shaping my film career, and the visit to Cannes will enrich my understanding of world cinema that will add value to my own works," he said.

As part of Qatar's presence at Cannes 2016, the Doha Film Institute presented a special Made in Qatar showcase of short films from Qatar at the Shorts Film Corner. The film line-up included *The Palm Tree* by Jasim Al Rumaihi; *Asfoora* by Mayar Hamdan; *Good as New* by Jaser Alagha; *Yellow Nights* by Abdullah Al Mulla; *The Notebook* by Amna Al-Binali; *Light Sounds* by Karem Kamal; *Veganize It* by Khalid Salim; *To My Mother* by Amina Ahmed Al Bloshi; and *Inside Out* by Fahad Al Obaidly.

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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 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

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