

10 films supported by the Doha Film Institute at the 45th International Film Festival Rotterdam

Doha, Qatar; January 25, 2017: Ten films from across the world supported by the Doha Film Institute have been chosen for the 45th International Film Festival Rotterdam, one of the largest audience and industry-driven film festivals in the world, to be held from January 25 to February 5, 2017.

This marks the largest to date contingent of films supported by Qatar to be screened at the renowned festival that curates a high quality line-up of fiction and documentary films, short films and media art.

Two feature narratives have been selected for in-competition programmes including the prestigious Harvest in Hivos Tiger and Bright Future Award, while a short experimental film screens in the Picture Palestine segment.

Fatma Al Remaihi, Chief Executive Officer of the Doha Film Institute, said: "This is truly historic as 10 films supported by the Institute are marking their presence at the prestigious Rotterdam festival. The selection underlines our commitment to supporting high quality projects both from the Arab world and globally.

"Over the past years, we have seen a remarkable increase in the number of films supported by the Institute making headlines at international festivals. We will continue to encourage emerging talents who make impressive contributions to film, thereby enhancing the pride of the Institute and Qatar."

Chosen for the Harvest in Hivos Tiger Competition is **Rey** (Chile, France, Netherlands, Germany, Qatar/ 2017), directed by Niles Atallah. The film is based on a true story about a 35-year-old Frenchman, who explores Araucania, an autonomous region of southern Chile in 1860, and is elected as king by the people.

Vying for the Bright Future Award is **Cactus Flower** (Egypt, UAE, Norway, Qatar/2017) directed by Hala Elkoussy. The film is about Aida, a struggling actress who comes to Cairo from the Delta as a university student, and her extraordinary friendships. **Rey** and **Cactus Flower** mark their World Premiere at the International Film Festival Rotterdam.

Within Bright Future, four films supported by the Institute are screening out-of-competition. These include: **Burning Birds** (Sri Lanka, France, Netherlands, Qatar/ 2016) by Sanjeewa Pushpakumara. The film is about Kusum, who must fight to look after her eight children and mother-in-law all by herself. The film world premiered at the 2016 Busan International Film Festival and won the Special Jury Prize at the 17th Tokyo FILMEX International Film Festival.

By the Time It Gets Dark (Thailand, France, Netherlands, Qatar/ 2016) by Anocha Suwichakornpong tells the interwoven stories of several characters and how their lives are loosely connected by almost invisible threads. The film had its world premiere at the 2016 Locarno Film Festival.

Directed by Ala Eddine Slim, **The Last of Us** (Tunisia, UAE, Lebanon, Qatar/ 2016) charts the story of N, who crosses the desert to North Africa to obtain illegal passage to Europe. Marking its world premiere at

the 2016 Venice International Film Critic's Week, the film won the Lion of the Future (Luigi De Laurentis) Venice Award for a Debut Film at the 73rd Venice Film Festival. **Mimosas** (Spain, Morocco, France, Qatar/ 2016) by Oliver Laxe is set in the High Atlas Mountains about a caravan of travellers searching for a pass that will allow them to return an ailing elderly Sufi master to his home to die. The film world premiered at the Cannes Critics Week (Semaine de la Critique) and won the 2016 Nespresso Grand Prize, and the Golden Pyramid for Best Film and Best Actor awards at the 2016 Cairo International Film Festival.

Chosen for the main programme of the Voices segment is **The Idea of a Lake** (Switzerland, Argentina, Qatar/ 2016) by Milagros Mumenthaler, about a photographer, who is expecting a child and is in an emotionally vulnerable state. The film made its world debut at the 2016 Locarno Film Festival.

Two films will be screened in the Voices (Limelight) segment: **Tramontane** (Lebanon, France, UAE, Qatar/ 2016) by Vatche Boulghourjian, about a visually challenged man who lives in a small village in Lebanon who is searching for clues about his own identity. The film had its world premiere at the 2016 Cannes Critics Week and won the Prix Special du Jury at the 16th Festival Cinéma Méditerranéen Bruxelles. **White Sun** (Nepal, USA, Netherlands, Qatar/ 2016), directed by Deepak Rauniyar is about an anti-regime partisan who must travel to his remote mountain village when his father dies. The film world premiered at the 2016 Venice Film Festival and won Best Film at the 2016 Silver Screen Awards, which concluded the 27th Edition of the Singapore International Film Festival.

Screening in the Picture Palestine segment is the short experimental film **In the Future They Ate from the Finest Porcelain** (Palestine, UK, Denmark, Qatar/ 2015) directed by Larissa Sansour. Marking its world debut at the 2016 Dubai International Film Festival, the film resides in the cross-section of sci-fi, archaeology and politics, is a counter-measure to the politicized archaeology used to justify confiscation of Palestinian lands.

Doha Film Institute's film funding initiatives offer creative and financial support to filmmakers based in Qatar and around the world, helping them to unlock their artistry, manage their productions effectively and make high-quality films. Its Grants Programme provides development, production and post-production funding to filmmakers from Qatar, and first- and second-time filmmakers from around the world.

The Doha Film Institute Co-Financing invests in film production through strategic partnerships with film projects that are culturally relevant and commercially viable. The Institute has also launched the Qatari Film Fund, dedicated to supporting short and feature filmmaking by Qatari directors.

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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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