

4th Qumra commences in Doha with modern masters and industry leaders focused on nurturing new talents in cinema

Tilda Swinton Masterclass and Modern Masters Screening of Gianfranco Rosi's 'Fire at Sea' mark the opening day of the annual industry event by the Doha Film Institute

Doha, Qatar; March 9, 2018: The fourth edition of Qumra, the annual industry event by the Doha Film Institute, has commenced in Qatar, bringing together more than 150 acclaimed filmmakers, industry professionals and experts to nurture 34 films – the Qumra Projects – by first and second-time filmmakers from 25 countries that are in various stages of development. The six-day event is held at Souq Waqif and the Museum of Islamic Art.

Fatma Al Remaihi, Chief Executive Officer of the Doha Film Institute, said: “Qumra is founded upon a commitment to the mentorship and creative development of emerging filmmakers from across the world. As in earlier editions, the Qumra Projects by young filmmakers present compelling stories that need to be heard, especially at a time when film and story-telling are used to distort reality and negatively impact the world. We believe that while films are a source of entertainment, they are also a powerful tool to build empathy and bring people together. That further underlines the need to support new voices in cinema, as storytelling is both an artform and a growing responsibility. If we do not tell our stories, others will, in a manner that suits them.”

She added: “The young filmmakers at Qumra will benefit from the deep experience of our Qumra Masters and industry experts who guide them to take their projects to a global level. Over the past editions, Qumra has helped push the boundaries of first and second-time filmmakers, who may otherwise do not have the opportunity to tell their bold tales with conviction and integrity, and have enabled them to gain international acclaim for their films. We are confident that the Qumra talents this year too will emerge from this six-day event with stronger insights on the industry. This is our humble contribution to the world of cinema – to invest in new talents and to watch them grow.”

This year, Qumra is headlined by six modern legends in cinema mentoring the young filmmakers in their role as Qumra Masters. They are: Oscar® winning actor Tilda Swinton (*Isle of Dogs*, *Michael Clayton*, *We Need to Talk about Kevin*); Sandy Powell, Order of the British Empire (OBE), Oscar® winning British costume designer (*The Young Victoria*, *The Aviator*, *Shakespeare in Love*); Oscar® nominated director Bennett Miller (*Capote*, *Moneyball*, *Foxcatcher*); Venice Golden Lion winning Russian director and writer Andrey Zvyagintsev (*Leviathan*, *Loveless*);

Cannes Palme d'Or winning Thai filmmaker and visual artist Apichatpong Weerasethakul (*Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives*); and the only documentary director to win the Berlinale Golden Bear, Italian director Gianfranco Rosi (*Fire at Sea*).

There is also an exciting showcase for the public, who can watch the Modern Masters screenings of films by Qumra Masters and the New Voices in Cinema screenings by young talents, including Qatari directors. They can also attend the Masterclasses by the Qumra Masters and take part in Qumra Talks, a series of insightful discussions led by acclaimed photographer Brigitte Lacombe, renowned artist Simon Wilkinson, and new media expert Jon Kamen.

The fourth edition of Qumra started off on an inspiring note with the first Modern Masters screening on Thursday of ***Okja*** (South Korea, USA/2017) directed by Bong Joon-ho, featuring Tilda Swinton. Interacting with the audience after the screening, Swinton discussed the making of the film and shared her views on the compelling narratives that it puts forth – on human compassion, nature, corporate profiteering and more.

“A true master in her craft, the diversity and range of Swinton’s work is inspirational to both audiences and filmmakers alike,” said Fatma Al Remaihi. “The participation of our Masters is integral to Qumra. While very different in their approach to making films, each are renowned for their innovative approach to their craft, and are an inspiration to us all.”

On Friday, Tilda Swinton held the first Qumra Masterclass this year, moderated by Cameron Bailey, Artistic Director of the Toronto International Film Festival. The Modern Masters Screening of ***Fire at Sea (Fuococoammare)*** (Italy/2016) directed by Qumra Master Gianfranco Rosi, was also held. A Masterclass by Rosi will be held on Saturday (March 10) at 10.30 AM at the Museum of Islamic Art Auditorium.

Apart from the preparatory meetings and workshops for the talents associated with the Qumra Projects, on Saturday (March 10) the public can join in screening of Qumra Short films in the New Voices in Cinema segment at 4.30 PM, and the Modern Masters screening of ***Footprints*** by Qumra Master Apichatpong Weerasethakul, at 7 PM, both at the MIA Auditorium.

Six short films will be screened including four by Qatari directors and filmmakers who call Qatar home. These are: ***Tshweesh*** (Lebanon, Germany, Spain, Qatar/2017) by Feyrouz Serhal; ***The President’s Visit*** (Lebanon, USA, Qatar/2017) by Cyril Aris; ***Language*** (Iraq, Qatar/2017), by Iraqi novelist Mortada Gzar; ***1001 Days*** (Qatar/2017) by Aisha Al-Jaidah; ***Domestic Acoustics***

(Qatar/2017) by Majid Al-Remaihi; *Chaos Antidote* (Qatar/2017) by Hadeer Omar and Idris Elhassan; and *Embodiment* (Qatar/2017) by Khalifa AlMarri.

Visit www.dohafilminstitute.com for online and in-person ticketing details. Tickets are priced QAR 35.

-ENDS-

Note to Editors:

About Qumra

Directors and Producers attached to thirty-four projects in development and post-production are selected 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, which are also 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 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

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