

Courage, communication, and planning: Qumra Master Eugenio Caballero shares the secrets of his cinematic success

- *Academy Award® winning production designer tells Qumra delegates that they need to be brave and embrace their creative ideas*

Doha, Qatar: 17 March 2019: Having the courage to pursue bold ideas is one of the most important traits of successful filmmakers, 2019 Qumra Master Eugenio Caballero told a packed audience of emerging filmmakers in Doha, Qatar.

At the second Masterclass at the fifth edition of Qumra – the annual industry event by the Doha Film Institute (DFI) that aims to nurture the talents of first and second-time filmmakers – the Academy Award® winning production designer provided an overview on the importance of shape and colour in films through his work on : *Pan's Labyrinth* (2006), *The Impossible* (2012), *The Limits of Control* (2009), *A Monster Calls* (2016), and *Roma* (2018).

Caballero said: “A production designer’s role is to realise the director’s vision. You need to conceptualise and contribute your artistic ideas and creativity to the unique world of the film. To do this well, you need to be brave and really embrace your own storytelling abilities. It’s vital that you believe in what you are doing”.

Equally important in the filmmaking process, according to Caballero, are communication and planning. Caballero told his Masterclass audience how he led a team of 600 people during the production of J. A. Bayona’s *The Impossible* (2012), and the challenges involved in large scale productions. He added: “The collaborative nature of filmmaking is the key reason I am so passionate about what I do. As a production designer, you are responsible for supporting the director and their vision for the film. To do this, you need to be a really good communicator and be clear with your crew about what it is that you want and how to make it happen.”

Another key factor in Caballero’s approach to his craft is rigorous planning. He shared examples of intricate drawings and physical miniatures of film sets he has worked on as well as the colour palettes of his previous work on films such as *Roma*, *The Impossible* and *The Limits of Control* . “When I work on a film, the first thing I work on is conceptualisation. Then, I take into consideration the practicalities involved in different set locations, physical spaces, and technology. It is like assembling a puzzle and the planning phase can take many months before shooting starts.”

Caballero final words of wisdom to the audience had to do with working with small budgets: “The location that you choose will be really important. For all films, the location should help to tell your story. You also need to balance this with the budget you have available. If you are not able to invest in building a large-scale set, you need to get closer to the action through careful camera work. And be creative! I take inspiration from everywhere and I would encourage young filmmakers not to put limits on themselves in terms of what’s possible.”

This year, Caballero is joined in Doha by fellow Qumra Masters: Italian writer and director Alice Rohrwacher; prolific Japanese director and writer Kiyoshi Kurosawa; and Polish auteur Pawel Pawlikowski.

Their role is to share their insights with the young talent attached to 36 Qumra Projects by providing invaluable feedback on projects in consultation sessions and highlighting their own inspiring journeys through the cinematic world in Masterclasses.

The fifth edition of Qumra brings together more than 150 acclaimed filmmakers, industry professionals and experts to nurture the 36 projects by first and second-time filmmakers in various stages of development. The six-day event takes place 15–20 March at Souq Waqif and the Museum of Islamic Art, and features Qumra Talks and screenings in the Qumra Masters and New Voices in Cinema series, alongside the Qumra Masterclasses.

Further details about ticket prices and sales for the screenings are now available on www.dohafilminstitute.com.

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Note to Editors

About Qumra

Directors and Producers attached to thirty-six 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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