

‘Made in Qatar’ Directors underline the Value of Doha Film Institutes Support In Their Cinematic Journey

Young filmmakers in Qatar present bold themes of loss, resilience and complex personal relationships through their films

Doha, Qatar; November 21, 2024: Qatari and Qatar-based filmmakers, whose films are screening in the ‘Made in Qatar’ programme at 2024 Ajyal, underlined the value of Doha Film Institute’s year-round support in shaping their cinematic aspirations.

Ali Al-Hajri, the Qatari director of *Lay for You to Sleep* said DFI’s support through workshops, courses, and mentoring sessions, as well as through Ajyal, has been invaluable. He said his film is a contemplative experimental narrative. “The death of my father when I was eight years old inspired the idea of the project. I wanted to send a message that death is not the end, nor is it a bad or dark thing as many believe. It is a blessing with important positive aspects of spirituality..”

Obada Jarbi, the director of *Breshna*, a Palestinian/Jordanian resident in Qatar, narrates the story of a woman, who reflects on her journey marked by loss, resilience, and hope for peace, after finding refuge in Qatar scarred by a violent attack in Kabul. “The reality that the Arab and Islamic world is experiencing, and even the world in general, is tragic. It is not surprising that most films attempt to reflect this harsh reality,” said Jarbi. He said through the film he wants people “to know that we are looking for peace. We want to have hope for the future and to have a normal life.”

Karim Emara, director of *Cochlea*, created with the support of the Ministry of Public Health of Qatar, about the reunion of a divorced mother with her son, said the film brings a personal concept of gentleness and grace. “I wanted to explore this through cinematic language. Making the film taught me how to make decisions on the go, to rely on improvisation and to embrace the organic nature of filmmaking.”

Paul Abraham, the director of *Alkaline*, also supported by the Ministry of Public Health, said: “Cinema is an expressive tool and a means of communication that connects people. Making the film, which deals with the story of my relationship with my father, helped me explore and understand why he was so obsessed with his health, and I am grateful for this opportunity to better understand him.” He said filming parts in Doha and the post-production here was seamless with support from DFI, in terms of resources and equipment.

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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 Arab film community through cultivating film appreciation, enhancing industry knowledge and contributing to the

development of sustainable creative industries in Qatar and the region. The Institute's platforms include funding and production of local, regional and international films; skills-sharing and mentorship programmes; film screenings; the Ajyal 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.

About Ajyal Film Festival

Ajyal Film Festival is an annual celebration of film designed to nurture young minds and support the development of mindful global citizens and thoughtful future leaders. 'Ajyal', Arabic for 'generations', builds on the Institute's history of community-based programming, and brings people of all ages together through screenings and events that inspire creative interaction and stimulate cinematic dialogue. Through its' jury programme, youth between the ages of 8 and 25 are given an opportunity to watch, analyse and discuss global cinema and culture, developing self-confidence, independent critical thinking skills, self-expression, and an appreciation of cinema, while making new friends and discovering global cultures.

Doha Film Institute:

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