

Press Release

## **Doha Film Institute Unveils Expanded Film Grants Programme** ***DFI Grants to Nurture Emerging Filmmaking Talent from Around the Globe;*** ***Announces Recipients of 2013 Spring Grants for MENA Filmmakers***

- *Eligibility extended to all nations*
- *Regional criteria apply to Middle East and North Africa; OECD's DAC list countries; rest of the world*
- *From July 2013, grant applications accepted for first and second-time filmmakers only*

**Cannes, XX May, 2013:** Doha Film Institute (DFI) today unveiled at the Cannes Film Festival a significant expansion to its existing grants programme, which will allow it to support new talent from around the world. DFI Grants has truly global reach, as film projects from all nations are now eligible for funding from the Institute.

The expanded programme is open to first- and second-time filmmakers only. Applications are accepted from three regions: the Middle East and North Africa (MENA); the OECD's Development Assistance Committee list of countries (DAC); and the rest of the world. Different submissions criteria apply for each region.

DFI Grants will retain its emphasis on supporting filmmakers from the MENA region, while at the same time opening its programme to emerging talent from around the world. Under the new criteria, all projects by directors and screenwriters from the MENA region are eligible for submission. Any narrative features from DAC countries are also eligible. All other submissions are by invitation only.

Abdulaziz Al-Khater, Chief Executive Office of DFI, said: "The expanded DFI Grants programme marks our commitment to developing a new talent pool of international filmmakers, regardless of location, and to creating a portfolio of what we call 'global films'. This will further establish Qatar as a global hub of filmmaking."

Filmmakers from 22 countries in the MENA region and some 94 DAC nations stand to benefit from the new initiative, which will also foster ongoing exchange among filmmakers, especially through the new DFI Grantee Alumni Programme, a network that provides support for filmmakers during and beyond the grant phase.

In total the programme will support up to eight narrative and four documentary features from all regions and up to eight further projects from the MENA region in each grant cycle. There are two grant cycles per annum.

Further details on the eligibility criteria will be available on DFI's website ([www.dohafilminstitute.com](http://www.dohafilminstitute.com)) from mid-June. Submissions for the next grant cycle will be accepted from 15 July, 2013.

Meanwhile, in the final cycle of DFI's MENA Grants programme, 19 new projects have been selected for the 2013 spring session, including 11 fiction and 8 documentary films selected from 236 applicants. A

significant increase in applications from North Africa was noted this round, as well as a marked rise in co-production applicants.

Paul Miller, Head of DFI Film Financing, said: “It’s fantastic to see the originality and range of themes and topics that our 19 recipients have shown in this round of submissions, as well as the large number of female and first- and second-time directors. This round of applicants impressed us with their highly personal stories that reflect the complex social and cultural realities of contemporary life in the MENA region. We look forward to working with them to bring these new projects to life.”

Miller concluded: “We have decided to expand our grants programme to allow DFI to have a hand in discovering the next generations of film talent from around the world. In the future, our grants scheme will allow for ever-increasing creative and cultural exchange among MENA recipients and talented individuals who represent film culture around the world”.

Grantees for the Spring 2013 session are:

#### **Feature Narrative – Development Grants**

- *Honey Cigar* (Kamir Ainouz, Algeria)
- *James Dean and Me* (Sameh Zoabi, Palestine)
- *Nawara – The Light Blue Satin Robe* (Alain Sauma, Lebanon)
- *Son of a Dog* (Alain Sauma, Lebanon)

#### **Feature Narrative – Production Grants**

- *2 Rooms and a Parlor* (Sherif El Bendary, Egypt)
- *Tramontane* (Vatche Boulghourjian, Lebanon)
- *Wooden Rifle* (Alfouz Tanjour, Syria)

#### **Feature Narrative – Post-Production Grants**

- *Ghetto Child* (Guillaume Tordjman and Uda Benyamina, Tunisia/Morocco)
- *Wolf* (Naji Abu Nowar, Jordan)

#### **Short Narrative – Production Grants**

- *Mariam* (Faiza Ambah, Saudi Arabia/France)
- *Survival Visa* (Nadia Rais, Tunisia)

#### **Feature Documentary – Development Grant**

- *Ahmed in Wonderland* (Erige Sehiri, Tunisia/France)

#### **Feature Documentary – Production Grants**

- *The Coming Attraction* (Nidal Al Dibs, Syria)
- *Executioners Never Tell Their Stories* (Ali Essafi, Morocco)
- *The Foreign Son* (Abdallah Badis, Algeria/France)
- *Jeanne d’Arc Masriya* (Iman Kamel, Egypt)
- *My Uncle the Terrorist* (Elias Moubarak, Lebanon)
- *Out/In the Streets* (Jasmina Metwaly and Philip Rizk, Egypt)
- *The Rise of the Gulf/Beyond Black Gold* (Frederic Compain, UAE/France)



Since 2010, DFI has supported 138 regional filmmakers with grants distributed to reflect the diversity of voices within the region. With the launch of the new DFI Grants programme, DFI aims to take film financing and talent development to the next level of growth.

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**About Doha Film Institute:**

Doha Film Institute (DFI) is an independent cultural organisation established in 2010 to incorporate Qatar's film initiatives under one banner; organically supporting the growth of the local film community by enhancing industry knowledge, cultivating film appreciation and contributing to the development of sustainable creative industries in Qatar. DFI's year-round platforms include funding and production of local, regional and international films, educational programmes and film screenings.

With culture, community, education and entertainment at its foundation, DFI serves as an all-encompassing film hub in Doha, as well as a resource for the region and the rest of the world. DFI is committed to supporting Qatar's 2030 vision for the development of a knowledge based economy.

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