

Press Release

Qumra to mark much-awaited screening of Academy Award-nominated *Timbuktu* on Monday

Modern Masters Screening will be followed by audience Q&A session with the film's director Abderrahmane Sissako

Following popular demand an additional screening of Timbuktu will be on March 11 In New Voices in Cinema Screening, watch the powerful film, Memories on Stone, about the genocidal campaign on the Kurds of Iraq

Doha, Qatar – 8 March, 2015: *Timbuktu*, one of the most awaited films in the Modern Masters section at Qumra, the new event by the Doha Film Festival, will be a highlight of Monday (March 9, 2015), as its director Abderrahmane Sissako joins for an audience Q&A following the screening at 7.00 PM at the Drama Theatre, Building 16 in Katara Village.

Timbuktu (France, Mauritania, Mali, Qatar; Arabic, French and Tamashek; 2014), nominated for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film this year, is a striking and unsettling cry for help against intolerance as well as a powerful celebration of human dignity.

Sissako, a Qumra Master, who is in Doha to offer valuable insights in filmmaking with emerging filmmakers, chooses a subtle, patient tone for *Timbuktu*. He uses powerful metaphors to bring the terror that has crept into the minds and souls of the gentle people of the city in Mali, which has been taken over by foreign terrorists who impose draconian rules.

"In no way am I looking to over-emotionalise these events for the purpose of a making a movie," says Sissako. "What I want to do is bear witness as a filmmaker. I will never be able to say, 'I didn't know.' Because of what I know, I felt compelled to tell this story in the hope that no child may ever have to learn this same lesson in the future – that their parents might be killed, simply because they love each other."

Following the overwhelming public response to the movie, the Doha Film Institute will host an additional screening of *Timbuktu* on March 11, Wednesday.

On Monday, audiences can also watch *Memories on Stone* (Iraq, Germany, Qatar; Arabic, Kurdish, German; 2014), part of the New Voices in Cinema screenings. Supported by the Doha Film Institute's grants programme and directed by Shawkat Amin Korki, the film is about fictional film director Hossein Hassan's attempt to make a story on the genocidal campaign against the Kurds of Iraq.

Anything that can go wrong will go wrong, as the director and his crew battle a lack of funds, in-family conflicts and trigger-happy border guards to get their film made. Walking the line between comedy and tragedy, Amin Korki maintains a light tone for the narrative.

Tickets are priced QR35; students have a discounted price of QR25. They can be bought at Qumra Box Office in Building 16 at Katara Village or online at www.dohafilminstitute.com/qumra

Qumra hosts more than 100 leading film industry professionals coming together for a series of bespoke mentorship labs, master classes, meetings and film screenings, to nurture regional talent. In all, 29 projects in various stages of production have been chosen to participate in the intensive industry programme designed to take them to the next stage.

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About Qumra:

Qumra is an initiative that seeks to provide mentorship, nurturing and hands-on development for filmmakers from Qatar and around the world, alongside a series of screenings for Doha audiences featuring films by international masters and recipients of support from the Institute.

** 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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