



## Press Release

# **Gulf region's first inclusive cinema experience, 'Hero and The Message' today (Thursday) at Ajyal Youth Film Festival**

*Screening of a selection of international short films and one more opportunity to watch the festival's opening film, 'The Idol'*

**Doha, Qatar; December 2, 2015:** Today (Thursday, December 3, 2015), the third Ajyal Youth Film Festival, presented by the Doha Film Institute, marks the first of its kind inclusive cinema experience in the Gulf region on the occasion of the UN International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

At 6 PM at Katara Drama Theatre (K16-DT), the festival will mark the screening of ***Hero and the Message*** (Qatar, 2012), directed by Pawel Borrowski, which can be experienced by visually impaired people through sound alone. The film's audio description transmits not only through dialogue but also the visual elements that cannot be understood through dialogue, music or sound effects.

Deaf and hard of hearing viewers as well as those who have difficulty understanding speech will benefit from subtitles enriched with extra information about sound effects and music. The 'transadapted' version has been developed with the support of the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

*Hero and the Message* has been developed with the support of the Ministry of Youth and Sports through a collaboration between the Doha Film Institute and the Translation and Interpreting Institute at Hamad bin Khalifa University. Students attending the MA programme in Audiovisual Translation have created the audio description and enriched subtitles.

The animated short was produced by Al Rayyan Productions to celebrate Qatar National Day in 2012, and tells the fantastical tale of a Qatari brother and sister, who travel back in time on the prototype of a futuristic train to witness the founding events of the State of Qatar.

In further immersive experiences, the festival will screen in 3D, Academy Award winner Jean-Jacques Annaud's ***Wolf Totem*** (China, France; 2015) at 8 PM at Katara Drama Theatre. The film functions as a modern cautionary tale that warns against meddling with the environment – all set against the magnificence of the steppes of Inner Mongolia.

Seven international short films, in the festival's Bader in-competition section, will be screened at 8.30 PM at Katara 12 – Theatre A. Through 102 minutes, explore compelling short films including: ***Artificio Conceal*** (UK, USA; 2014), directed by Ayoub Qanir; ***Bad Hunter*** (Belgium; 2014) by Sahim Omar Kalifa; ***The Beaten Path*** (India; 2014) by Phurba Tshering Lama; ***By Mutual Agreement*** (France; 2014) directed by Remy Cayuela; ***Footprints*** (USA; 2014) by Bill Plympton; ***Light*** (Canada, Jordan, Lebanon; 2014) by Yassmina Karajah; and ***Light Sounds*** (Qatar; 2015) by Karem Kamal.

At the Ajyal Youth Film Festival on Thursday, film lovers also have one more opportunity to watch the opening film, Academy Award-nominated Hany Abou-Assad's ***The Idol*** (Palestine, UK, Qatar, The Netherlands; 2015) about the life of 'Arab Idol' champion Mohammed Assaf. The film will screen at 11 PM at Katara Drama Theatre. Subsequently, ***The Idol*** will mark its theatrical release on December 24 across the GCC and on January 14 in Lebanon, Palestine and Jordan; it will be distributed by Eagle Pictures with MBC.



For lovers of international cinema, director Anna Muylaert's film, ***The Second Mother*** (Brazil; 2015), will screen at 7 PM at Katara Opera House (K16-OH). A testament to the enduring bond between mothers and their children, it is a tightly written movie that cleverly releases its tension with moments of wry humour.

Written and directed by Naomi Kawase, ***An*** (Japan, France, Germany; 2015) will screen at 9.15 PM at Katara 12 – Theatre B. It is a delicate story of two wounded souls who come together and inspire one another to let go of the past.

The talent associated with ***The Second Mother*** and ***An*** would attend the screenings and address a Q&A session with the audience following the screenings.

A deeply moving Tagalog film ***Scarecrow*** (The Philippines; 2015) will screen at 10 PM at Katara Opera House. Directed by Zig Madamba Dulay, it explores the complicated relationship of social injustice, privilege and familial expectations through the eyes of Belyn, who is widowed, illiterate and terribly poor.

Festival-goers can purchase tickets for all screenings other than 'SONY Cinema Under the Stars' from the Ajyal FNAC Ticket Outlet located in Lagoon Mall in addition to the Ajyal Katara Main Box Office located in Katara Building 12.

The Ajyal Katara Main Box Office will be open from 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM until December 5th. The Ajyal FNAC Ticket Outlet will be open until December 5th from 2:00 PM till 9:00 PM. Tickets can also be purchased securely online through the Festival's website at [ajyalfilm.com](http://ajyalfilm.com).

Tickets are priced at QR 25 for regular screenings, and QR 40 for premium screenings (including the opening and closing night films). QM Culture Pass members get a discount of QR 5 on all regularly priced Festival screenings and events when they present their QM Culture Pass at any Festival ticket outlet. Pass holders can purchase up to two discounted tickets per screening.

For more information on the movie timings and the Ajyal Youth Film Festival, log onto [www.dohafilminstitute.com](http://www.dohafilminstitute.com).

**-ENDS-**

#### **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

Twitter: @DohaFilm; Instagram: @DohaFilm; Facebook: [www.facebook.com/DohaFilmInstitute](http://www.facebook.com/DohaFilmInstitute)

#### **Press Enquiries:**

Menna Gomaa

Communications Associate

+974/55073325

[mgomaa@dohafilminstitute.com](mailto:mgomaa@dohafilminstitute.com)



**MENA Press Enquiries:**

Abbas Moussa / Aileen Andojar

ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller

+974 4423 9222

Abbas.moussa@bm.com / aileen.andojar@bm.com