

Doha Film Institute Celebrates Local Film Talent with Spotlight on Documentary at 'Focus on Qatar 2016'

*Event Highlights Advancement of the Qatari Documentary Film Industry and
Promotes Achievements of Homegrown Talent*

Doha, Qatar; 1 October, 2016: Doha Film Institute is celebrating local filmmaking talent with a spotlight on the art of documentary at this year's 'Focus on Qatar' to be held from October 5 to 7 at the Museum of Islamic Art.

A special showcase that highlights the vision and talent of Qatari filmmakers, 'Focus on Qatar' puts the spotlight on homegrown talents that have contributed to the growth of film culture in Qatar. This year's event will not only screen compelling documentaries by local filmmakers but also foster insightful discussion on the art and future of documentary filmmaking, and includes a dedicated section that pays tribute to Al Jazeera Documentary channels contribution to promoting the craft of documentary filmmaking in the region.

Fatma Al Remaihi, Chief Executive Officer of the Doha Film Institute, said: "Focus on Qatar is a celebration of filmmaking in Qatar, and highlights the achievements of our talented film community. The event presents the evolution that Qatar has seen in shaping a vibrant local film industry, and is inspired by the filmmakers whose work we aim to nurture through this initiative.

"This year's event shines the spotlight on documentary filmmaking, a compelling art form that has the power to inspire and provoke, and change our view of the world. 'Focus on Qatar 2016' highlights the remarkable strides our filmmakers have made in this medium of cinematic expression, that has gained significant popularity among Qatari filmmakers to address relevant and important issues and act as a catalyst for change."

'Focus on Qatar' 2016 will flag off on October 5, 7.30 PM, with the screening of a collection of noteworthy short documentaries that Qatar has produced in the past years, either through the Institute's training programmes or by independent directors or by students of Northwestern University in Qatar. Audiences will have the opportunity to interact with filmmakers after the screenings.

The documentaries to be screened include: **Bader** (Qatar, USA, Syria/2012) directed by Sara Al-Saadi, Maaria Assami and Latifa Al-Darwish; **Al 7amal** (Qatar/2015) by Amal Al Muftah; **The Palm Tree** (Qatar/2015) by Jassim Al-Rumaihi, which won the 'Made in Qatar' award for best documentary at Ajyal Youth Film Festival 2015; **Inside Out** (Qatar/2015) by Fahad Al-Obaidly and Salwa Al Khalifa; **To My Mother** (Qatar/2015) by Amina Ahmed Al Bloshi; The Notebook (Qatar/2015) by Amna Al-Binali; and **Mubarak Al Malik** (Qatar/2016) by Aisha R. Al Muhannadi.

Celebrating the contribution of the team at Al-Jazeera Documentary Channel in driving the documentary landscape in the region, on Oct. 6, 'Focus on Qatar' will have a special 'Al-Jazeera Documentary Network Showcase' at 7.30 PM. It will present a special screening of the channels acclaimed feature documentary, *Cities of Anxiety* by Mohamed Hashem, which examines the intrinsic role cities play in defining the soul of its inhabitants in times of change and uncertainty, focusing on key cities of Beirut, Baghdad and Cairo.

The final day of 'Focus on Qatar' on Oct 7 will be dedicated to the industry with two panel discussions and an informal reception for production companies. The first panel on **'The State of Documentary in the Gulf'** at 4 PM will discuss funding opportunities, theatrical release, film festivals, television, online portals and other new broadcast platforms to help independent Gulf filmmakers. The discussion will also explore if the current state of documentary filmmaking is evolving or not within the Gulf region and includes panelists Mohammed Soueid from MBC, Jamel Dallai from Al Jazeera Documentary Channel, Filmmaker Hafiz Ali Ali and DFI CEO Fatma Al Remaili.

The second discussion at 7.30 PM on **'Next Generation of Documentary Filmmakers'** is an open forum for local talent to discuss their experiences throughout the filmmaking process including writing, directing and editing their films. It will highlight the various opportunities available to filmmakers in Qatar including the Doha Film Institute workshops, grants and the Qatar Film Fund, which promotes local filmmaking in Qatar.

The Production company reception highlights the support extended by local production houses and introduces the filmmakers, talent and film enthusiasts to key production companies and skilled professionals based in Qatar to encourage future collaborations.

All events and screenings are free for the public. For more details, please visit www.dohafilminstitute.com

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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 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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