

## **Qumra helps identify new talents and promote ‘inter-festival’ collaboration, says international film fest directors**

**Doha, Qatar; March 4, 2017:** Qumra, the industry initiative by the Doha Film Institute to nurture the new generation of filmmakers, helps in promoting inter-festival collaboration by providing insights into promising new voices from the Middle East region, said directors of leading international film festivals.

At a networking session, industry delegates associated with Cannes, Venice, Rotterdam, Busan, Edinburgh and Dublin film festivals described the emphasis they place identifying emerging talents and lauded the role of Qumra in serving as a window into new works from the region.

The session moderated by Paolo Bertolin, Correspondent at Venice Film Festival, underlined the intensely competitive nature of international film festivals, with programmers having to sift through hundreds of films before they make the final cut.

Yet, most festival directors said they are increasingly open today to identify first- and second-time directors, the cross-section of talents that Qumra too nurtures. “We are looking to expand our reach and have a larger geographic presence, especially this part of the world,” said Kim Young-woo, Programmer at Busan International Film Festival.

Grainne Humphreys, Festival Director of Dublin International Film Festival, said the fest seeks to address the absences in distribution and help filmmakers to find new audiences for their films.

Christophe Leparc, Managing Director of Director’s Fortnight and Director of Cinemed, said the selection for the Director’s Fortnight at Cannes is “very eclectic and has no specific rules” – with the films chosen to range anything from comedy to experimental.

While most festivals do not insist on having final cuts for their selection process, Bero Beyer, Festival Director of the International Film Festival Rotterdam, said that a foremost consideration is to pick films that are “ought to be seen.” Humphreys added: “We hope for our films to go beyond our own festival and we are always looking for something special.”

Every year is a new year in the selection process, said the directors, although one bottom line is that the “the films make a connection with the audience.”

The directors said the key challenge today is to attract young audiences – to festivals and to have their entries – and rely on advisors and scouts in finding new talents. Qumra, they said, presents the opportunity to identify and engage with the new voices in filmmaking, adding that a number of Qumra Projects have been selected for the international film festivals.

The industry networking sessions will continue through the duration of Qumra in addition to one-on-one script tutorials for selected Qumra Projects, rough cut consultations, and group tutorials.

Today (Sunday, March 5), the event will host a Master Class by Bruno Dumont, who has defined a new narrative idiom in world cinema at 10.30 AM at the Museum of Islamic Art Auditorium.

From 3 to 5, the first Qumra Talk on 'International Digital Distribution and Marketing' will be held. Under the Milky Way CEO Pierre Alexandre Labelle, Front Row Filmed Entertainment Managing Director Gianluca Chakra, and Iflix Head of Middle East and North Africa Nader Sobhan will share insights on the direction of the digital film distribution value chain and how independent producers can best use emerging platforms to both finance productions and recoup on their investment.

This session will provide a general overview of the VOD industry, present specific case studies and discuss the role, limits and future of digital distribution as a long-term solution to reach wider and more engaged audiences in the MENA Region.

At 7.30 PM, watch the Modern Masters Screening of *The Missing Picture* (Cambodia, France/2013), directed by Qumra Master Rithy Panh. The film employs an astonishing device – painstakingly handcrafted miniature human figures – to describe the horrors of life for prisoners under the Khmer Rouge.

Visit [www.dohafilminstitute.com](http://www.dohafilminstitute.com) for online and in person ticketing details for the screenings.

Qumra hosts leading international filmmakers, producers, industry experts and professionals, for intense brainstorming, knowledge-sharing and nurturing sessions with talents associated with 34 films from 25 countries. Directors and producers attached to 18 narrative feature films, 7 feature documentaries and 9 short films are participating in the event being held until March 8 at Souq Al Waqif and the Museum of Islamic Arts.

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#### **Note to Editors:**

##### **About Qumra**

Directors and Producers attached to thirty-four projects in development and post-production are selected to participate in the event. They will include a number of emerging filmmakers from Qatar, as well as recipients of funding from the Institute's Grants Programme. The robust programme will feature industry meetings designed to assist with propelling projects to their next stages of development, including master classes, work-in-progress screenings, bespoke matchmaking sessions and tailored workshops with industry experts. This creative exchange will take place alongside a programme of public screenings curated with input from the Qumra Masters.

The event is organised in three main sections: The **Qumra Master Classes** are daily sessions; each led by one of the Masters. The participating filmmakers have full access to these sessions, which are also open to accredited industry guests to attend in an observational capacity.

The **Qumra Meetings** are a series of one-on-one meetings, workshops and tailored mentoring sessions between representatives from the selected projects and seasoned industry experts.

The **Qumra Screenings** are open to the public and feature projects funded by the Institute through its grants and co-financing initiatives, as well as a series of films chosen by the Qumra Masters accompanied by Q&A sessions.

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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