

## Diverse voices from around the world in the 5<sup>th</sup> Ajyal Youth Film Festival's inspiring short film programmes

*Strong stories with universal appeal bring key global issues to the forefront*

**Doha, Qatar; Dec 2, 2017:** Directors of nine of the short films selected for screening at the 5<sup>th</sup> Ajyal Youth Film Festival, attended one-on-one discussions with members of the local and international press at Katara Cultural Village. The directors talked about their films, taking part in Ajyal and in some cases, showing their films for the first time in the Arab world.

Ahmad Saleh, director of animated short ***My Second Eye (Germany, Jordan, Palestine/2017)*** an animation based on a traumatic real-life event he witnessed at a refugee camp talked about bringing his vision to life. "At first, I couldn't even imagine what I would do with it, the event was so shocking. I'm glad I could transform it into a story that people are now able to watch."

Katja Benrath, who directed her co-production ***All of Us (Germany, Kenya 2017)*** which deals with an incident in 2015, when a bus of Muslim and Christian Kenyans was attacked by Al-Shabab terrorists, as a graduation project, said that she was especially pleased that her film would be judged by a youth audience. "I was here five years ago and I was impressed by the young jurors and how knowledgeable they were. I really like the idea of educating through film and it is amazing that the youth are learning from the festival this way."

Elina Fessa, who tells two separate but intersecting stories that will change the lives of those involved in ***Tracks (Greece/2017)*** was excited to be showing her film in the Middle East. "It's the first screening at a festival focussed on youth rather than other filmmakers, so I'm expecting the reactions to be more raw. It's amazing to be given the opportunity to reach such a genuine audience."

The shorts are all showing in two of the three programmes dedicated to international film that are part of the 5<sup>th</sup> Ajyal Youth Film Festival: **Abstract Visions** (Sunday Dec. 3/8:00 PM) and **Home** (Sunday Dec. 3/8:30 PM).

Tickets are priced QR25 for general screening and are available for purchase 24 hours a day at [ajyalfilm.com](http://ajyalfilm.com) or from the Ajyal Katara Main Box Office in Katara Building 12 or Ajyal FNAC Ticket Outlet, FNAC Qatar at Doha Festival City.

The Ajyal Youth Film Festival is made possible thanks to its partners: Katara Cultural Village as its Cultural Partner; Qatar Tourism Authority is the Strategic Partner and Occidental Petroleum Corporation and Ooredoo are the Principal Partners. For more details on the Ajyal Youth Film Festival, please visit [www.dohafilminstitute.com/filmfestival](http://www.dohafilminstitute.com/filmfestival)

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### About Doha Film Institute:

The 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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