

Qumra Talks opens doors for young talents to the power of storytelling and emerging media

Doha, Qatar; March 13, 2018: Young filmmakers at the fourth edition of Qumra, the annual industry event by the Doha Film Institute, gained a glimpse of the evolving trends in media, at the Qumra Talks, a specially curated series of discussions led by industry and media experts.

Reflecting the overarching narrative of Qumra, which focuses on building the storytelling skills of the new voices in cinema, the Qumra Talks on 'Virtual Reality' and 'Content for a Fragmented Media Universe' stressed the value of content and the fast-evolving nature of media platforms.

In his Qumra Talks on 'Content for a Fragmented Media Universe,' presented in partnership with the Northwestern University in Qatar, Jon Kamen, CEO of Radical Media, underpinned the power of storytelling that should cut through the clutter by tailoring it for the respective media, be it print, television, radio or social.

"Understand your audience, understand the production values of the medium you choose," he advised young talents, who were taken through an impressive visual journey of Radical Media's works, including a powerful video the company made for Qatar's 2022 FIFA World Cup host nation bid.

Kamen said that a "fragmented media universe" does not mean the need for generation of "short form content" but the multiplicity of media platforms that have now emerged, giving filmmakers, creative professionals and media practitioners the choice to create value.

He discussed the evolution of communication, highlighting the need to embrace change, especially with the internet and smartphone revolution bringing along disruptive innovation in the media scene. He said that while the possibility of content has evolved – from print, radio and television to screened, experiential, mobile and social – one fundamental aspect remains valid: "Storytelling. It doesn't matter which medium you use," and reminded the audience that good storytelling starts with a clear vision and compelling written words.

In his Qumra Talk on 'Virtual Reality: Storytelling through Emerging Media' presented in partnership with the British Council, transmedia artist Simon Wilkinson highlighted the emerging fields of virtual and augmented realities, and presented the exclusive first public viewing of his latest work, 'The Third Day'.

The key takeaway for young talents at Qumra was how, in the virtual reality era, storytelling will shift with the audience also plays a key role as a participant in the story, "so that they leave with their own version of the story". With audiences becoming a fundamental part of storytelling, the possibilities expand as does the power of young talents to innovate on their content and medium.

Wilkinson detailed the shifts in cultural interactions of individuals – from being centred around television to how gaming is shifting the rules of the game. He said the emergence on playful media and other emerging trends call for the need to have "new story-telling considerations".



The fourth edition of Qumra concludes on Wednesday (March 14), having brought together 150 acclaimed filmmakers, industry professionals and experts to nurture 34 films – the Qumra Projects – by first and second-time filmmakers that are in various stages of development. The six-day event held at Souq Waqif and the Museum of Islamic Art featured Qumra Masterclasses, Qumra Talks and screenings in the Modern Masters and New Voices in Cinema segments.

-ENDS-

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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