



13 Compelling Features to Spark Curiosity and Bridge Cultures at Ajyal Film Festival Competition

- Competition line-up includes Festival Opening Night Gala **Freedom Fields**, Cannes Jury Prize winner **Capharnaüm**; and Sundance Winner **The Price of Free**, a docu-drama on Nobel Laureate Kailash Satyarthi
- Four films in competition supported by the Institute through the grants and co-financing programme

Doha, Qatar; November xx, 2018: An eclectic selection of 13 thought-provoking feature films that present diverse perspectives of life will compete for the top honours at the Ajyal Film Festival to be held from November 28 to December 3 at Katara Cultural Village.

Set to inspire youth audiences in the three jury categories of Mohaq, Hilal and Bader, this year's rousing feature films curated from across the globe celebrate this year's themes of hope, courage and resilience using creatively powerful narratives. All Ajyal jurors watch and analyse feature and short films in their respective categories, awarding Best Film prizes in all categories.

Underlining Doha Film Institute's commitment to support quality film productions, four films in competition are backed by the institute, reinforcing Qatar's continued focus on promoting distinctive and compelling narratives of universal resonance.

"Our selection of feature films this year stands out for their bold themes, creative narratives and superb production value," said **Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, Festival Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Doha Film Institute**. "What makes them incredibly compelling is how they resonate with a global audience in evocative story-telling. Bringing us tales from far and near, these inspiring stories reflect a slice of real life often overlooked by mainstream storytellers. The chosen films highlight the healing power of storytelling and will spark dialogue and debate through their poignant takes on life and the human spirit."

In competition in the Mohaq segment for jurors aged 8 to 12 are **Next Door Spy** (Denmark/2017) by Karla von Bengtson; **Supa Modo** (Kenya, Germany/2018) by Likarion Wainaina; **The Night I Swam** (Japan, France/2017) by Kohei Igarashi and Damien Manivel; and **Zoo** (Ireland, UK/2017) by Colin McIvor.

Ajyal Jurors aged 13 to 17 in the Hilal category will watch and evaluate four feature films **Leave No Trace** (USA/2018) by Debra Granik; **Mirai** (Japan/2018) by Mamoru Hosoda; **The Price of Free** (USA/2018) by Derek Doneen; and **What Walaa Wants** (Denmark, Canada/2018) by Christy Garland.

Ajyal Bader Jurors, aged 18 to 21, will choose a winner from five feature films: **Capharnaüm** (Lebanon/2018) by Nadine Labaki; **Central Airport THF** (Germany, France, Brazil/2017) by Karim Aïnouz; **Freedom Fields** (Libya, UK, USA, Netherlands, Canada, Lebanon, Qatar/2018) by Naziha Arebi; **On Happiness Road** (Taiwan/2017) by Hsin-Yin Sung; and **Weldi** (Tunisia, France, Belgium, Qatar/2018) by Mohamed Ben Attia.



The Mohaq Selection:

- **Next Door Spy** is a visually stunning story with hints of classic film noir. It is about 'AC', who dreams of being a detective.
- In **Supa Modo**, Jo, a nine-year-old girl, is diagnosed with a terminal illness, so her mother decides to bring her home to live out the remainder of her life. Her village decides to make the little girl's dreams come true and turn Jo into a real-life superhero.
- **The Night I Swam** is set in the beautiful snow-covered mountains of Japan, where a fisherman makes his daily trip to the market in a nearby town. One day, still in a daze, his young son wanders off the beaten path into the snowy landscape for a big adventure.
- In **Zoo**, young Tom and his misfit friends fight to save 'Buster' the baby elephant during the German air raid bombings of Belfast in 1941. Inspired by true events, it serves as a reminder that integrity and courage can come from the most unlikely places.

The Hilal Selection:

- **Leave No Trace** narrates the story of a father and daughter, who live an isolated and reclusive life in Forest Park, an idyllic nature reserve near Portland, Oregon. When a small mistake tips them off to authorities, both are put into social services.
- **Mirai** is an emotionally soaring adventure about the ties that bring families together and make us who we are. The film follows Kun, a four-year-old boy who is struggling to cope with no longer being the centre of attention following the arrival of a little sister.
- **The Price of Free** (previously titled *Kailash*) follows the work of Nobel Peace Prize winner, and long-time crusader against child labour and slavery - Kailash Satyarthi. Taking the viewer inside the hidden factories of India, it tells the story of children forced into slave labour.
- In **What Walaa Wants**, Walaa, who is raised in a refugee camp in the West Bank, while her mother was in prison, is determined to become one of the few women in the Palestinian Security Forces.

The Bader Selection :

- **Capharnaüm**, which won the Jury Prize at the 2018 Cannes Film Festival, is a gritty film about a child who rebels against the life imposed on him and launches a lawsuit against his parents.
- **Central Airport THF** is set in Berlin's historic Tempelhof Airport, with its massive hangars used as one of Germany's largest emergency shelters for asylum seekers, like 18-year-old Syrian student Ibrahim and Iraqi physiotherapist Qutaiba.
- Ajyal's opening film, **Freedom Fields**, is a dynamic group of women in post-revolution Libya, who come together to play football. A DFI granted film, it was filmed over five years, and follows three brave women and their efforts to build a team.
- **On Happiness Road** is about Chi, who returns home for the funeral of her grandmother. Back with her family on Happiness Road in Taiwan, she begins to reminisce about the life she left behind to pursue her dream abroad.
- In **Weldi**, Riadh is about to retire from his work at the port of Tunis. The life he shares with his wife Nazli revolves around their only son Sami, who is preparing for his high school exams. The boy's repeated migraine attacks, which are a cause of much worry to his parents, turns out to be the symptom of a impending tragedy.



Tickets go on sale on November 13th in FNAC stores (Lagoon Mall and Doha Festival City) and on November 17th in Ajyal Katara Main Box office, Building 12. Online ticket sales starts on November 13th at www.dohafilminstitute.com/filmfestival.

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Note to Editors:

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.

Twitter: @DohaFilm; Instagram: @DohaFilm; Facebook: www.facebook.com/DohaFilmInstitute

About Ajyal Film Festival:

Ajyal Film Festival is an annual celebration of film designed to nurture young minds and support the development of mindful global citizens and thoughtful future leaders in a creative and educational environment. 'Ajyal', Arabic for 'generations', brings people of all ages together through screenings and events that inspire creative interaction and stimulate cinematic dialogue. Through its' jury programme, youth between the ages of 8 and 21 are given an opportunity to watch, analyse and discuss global cinema and culture, developing self-confidence, independent critical thinking skills, self-expression, and an appreciation of cinema. 6th Ajyal Film Festival takes place from the 28th of November to the 3rd of December.

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