

Qumra 2019 to screen a selection of award-winning films by Qumra Masters and new film talents

- *Watch masterpiece works by Qumra Masters Agnès Varda, Alice Rohrwacher, Kiyoshi Kurosawa, Paweł Pawlikowski and Eugenio Caballero at the Qumra Master Screenings*
- *'New Voices in Cinema' returns to showcase upcoming local and regional talent*

Doha, Qatar; March 10, 2019: The Doha Film Institute (DFI) is set to screen 15 thought-provoking films as part of Qumra 2019, its annual industry event from 15th-20th March, at Souq Waqif and the Museum of Islamic Art. The screenings, open to the public and Qumra Pass holders, are distinguished into two segments – Qumra Masters Screenings, featuring outstanding works of the Qumra Masters; and New Voices in Cinema, to showcase feature-length and short films supported by the Institute.

Fatma Al Remaihi, Chief Executive Officer of the Doha Film Institute, said:

“Each year, the Qumra screenings provide a fantastic opportunity for film enthusiasts and the general public alike to enjoy the works of some of the most celebrated filmmakers in world cinema today in addition to discovering emerging creative talents from Qatar and the region. The films screened during Qumra showcase authentic stories from our part of the world celebrates the works of the Qumra Masters. These screenings aim to nurture a culture of film appreciation and I am incredibly proud of the work of the rising talents that DFI supports both across the Middle East and internationally.”

This year, the Qumra Master Screenings present the works of five eminent personalities in global cinema: French filmmaking legend Agnès Varda, Award-winning Italian director and screenwriter Alice Rohrwacher, Japanese film director Kiyoshi Kurosawa, Oscar® winning Polish filmmaker Paweł Pawlikowski and Academy Award winning Mexican production designer Eugenio Caballero. Following the Master screenings, audience members are invited to explore their thoughts through an engaging Q&A session with the filmmakers.

The Modern Master Screenings include:

- ***The Gleaners and I*** (France/2000) directed by Agnes Varda, regarded by critics as one of the greatest documentaries of all times, follows Varda on a timeless and empathetic look at a seldom acknowledged subculture of modern France. Taking her inspiration from impressionist art and dictionary definitions, Varda sets out to discover how today's gleaners have endured and adjusted to the modern world.
- ***Happy as Lazzaro*** (Italy/2018) by Alice Rohrwacher is set in the arcadian hills of Inviolata, a rural village untouched and sheltered from the passage of time and tells the tale of young farmhand Lazzaro and his unlikely friendship with nobleman Tancredi. Rohrwacher's sweet, kind-hearted comedy belies a poignant social message that brims with an impressive mix of classic Italian

cinema pedigree. The film won the Best Screenplay prize in the Official Competition at the 2018 Cannes Film Festival.

- **Tokyo Sonata** (Japan, Netherlands, Hong Kong/2008) winner of the 2008 Un Certain Regard Jury Prize, by Kiyoshi Kurosawa—acclaimed master of the slow burning psychological horror—turns his attention instead to “Gendai-geki” (films dealing with contemporary life). A portrait of a seemingly ordinary Japanese family, the film follows hard working husband Ryuhei, his dutiful wife Megumi and their two sons, Kenji and Takashi.
- **Ida** – (Poland/2013) by acclaimed director Pawel Pawlikowski (*Last Resort, My Summer of Love*) returns to his homeland for this moving and intimate drama about a young nun in 1960s Poland who, on the verge of taking her vows, discovers a dark family secret. The film won the 2015 Best Foreign Language Film Oscar®.
- **Pan’s Labyrinth** (Mexico, Spain, USA/2006) by Guillermo Del Toro is a dark, twisted and beautiful adventure, that seamlessly blends the real and supernatural in a visually stunning fantasy about Falangist Spain. Eugenio Caballero won the Oscars® for Production Design for the *Pan’s Labyrinth* at the 2007 Academy Awards®.

The four feature films to be screened in the New Voices in Cinema segment are:

- **Constructions** (Argentina, Qatar/2018) by Argentinian filmmaker Fernando Martín Restelli tells the story of an ageing security guard who patrols a deserted construction site in Argentina. Despite the difficulties he faces as a single father, this affecting debut documentary presents an intimate glimpse into the everyday life on a non-traditional family.
- **Sofia** (Morocco, France, Qatar/2018), the feature debut of Moroccan filmmaker Meryem Benm’Barek, is about the namesake protagonist who lives with her parents in a modest apartment in Casablanca and discovers she is about to give birth, while having lunch with her family one day. The film won the prize for Best Screenplay in the Un Certain Regard sidebar competition at the 2018 Cannes Film Festival.
- A 2019 Academy Award® nominee for Best Documentary Feature, **Of Fathers and Sons** (Syria, Germany, Qatar/2017) by Syrian filmmaker Talal Derki is an affecting and disturbing documentary that demonstrates that jihadism is a learned behaviour – one that in some arenas is being handed down with paternal authority to vulnerable minds. Talal previously won the World Cinema Grand Jury Prize at the 2014 Sundance Film Festival for his documentary ‘Return To Homs’.
- **Still Recording** (Syria, Lebanon, France, Qatar/2018) by Saeed Al Batal and Ghiath Ayoub is an insider view of Syria’s civil uprising and the aftermath of the events in the besieged city of Douma. Using the Syrian War as its backdrop, it is a powerful reminder of the vital importance of making films as documentary evidence for history.

The six short films to be screened in the New Voices in Cinema segment are:

- **Wake** (Jordan, Qatar/2018) by Zahed Bata showcases the story of an old woman, Samaa, and her son Sari who are at odds on the appropriate burial for 'The White Box'. While Samaa's reaction to the disposal is sentimental, Sari is pragmatic and dismissive of his mother's emotions.
- **Hope** (Syria, Iraq, France, Qatar/2018) by Mohammed Shaikhow tells the story of Hévi and Walat, a Kurdish-Syrian refugee couple in their thirties who meet a human trafficker and try to cross an undefined border.
- **Sh'hab** (Qatar/2018) by Amal Al-Muftah tells the story of a young girl, whose curiosity is sparked upon hearing a myth about falling stars. She sets out in her father's boat to find some. The film won the Best Narrative Award at the 2018 Ajyal Film Festival.
- **Gubgub** (Qatar/2018) by Nouf Al-Sulaiti follows the story of an adventurous girl who goes crab-hunting with her family. Discouraged when her father undervalues her accomplishments compared to her brother's, she sets out to win his approval. The film's lead Fatima Al Nahdi won the inaugural '**Abdulaziz Jassim Award for Best Performance**' at the 2018 Ajyal Film Festival.
- **Amphitheater** (Qatar/2018) by Mahid Ali Ali is about Sarah, a professional Qatari photographer, who stumbles upon a rebellious young girl and her family. Fascinated by the girl's defiant behaviour, she begins to follow them.
- **Just Another Memory** (Qatar/2018) by Mariam Al-Dhubhani is an exploration of what it feels like to be displaced by war; torn between being 'safe' and 'away' with the emotional burden that entails. The film won the Best Documentary award at the 2018 Ajyal Film Festival.

Qumra 2019 industry events include workshops for first- and second-time filmmakers with international film industry professionals in personalized mentorship labs; the Qumra Master Classes, led by acclaimed industry specialists; Qumra Screenings of feature films presented by the Qumra Masters and recipients of funding from the Doha Film Institute, followed by Q&A sessions and the Qumra Talks.

Further details about ticket prices and sales for the screenings are now available on www.dohafilminstitute.com, priced at QAR 35 for this year.

-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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