

Find Qatar's Storytellers at Ajyal 2019 'Made in Qatar' Presented by Ooredoo

- *Captivating programme of short form narratives and documentaries that shines a spotlight on Qatari talents and those who call Qatar home*
- *Programme features world premieres of latest Qatari Film Fund recipient projects: Ahmad Al Sharif's **End of the Road** and Kholood Al-Ali's **Fragile***
- *Seven DFI-supported films are part of the competition*

Doha, Qatar; 12 November 2019: Signalling the vibrancy of a strong national film industry, the 7th Ajyal Film Festival, presented by the Doha Film Institute (DFI), will present 22 captivating films by Qatari directors and Qatar based filmmakers in this year's **Made in Qatar** programme presented by Ooredoo.

A highly-anticipated highlight of the Festival, **Made in Qatar** presented by Ooredoo serves as a unique platform for aspiring filmmakers to showcase their works on a global stage, drawing on the immersive power of cinema to tell their stories and establish a creative dialogue with audiences from around the world.

The films will vie for the Made in Qatar Awards, chosen by a jury that includes Sudanese filmmaker Amjad Abu Alala; British actor, Kris Hitchen; and Qatari Architect and Urbanist Fatma Al Sehlawy.

Made in Qatar will once again shine a spotlight on home-grown talents with two film programmes of narratives and documentaries that include the world premieres of recently completed projects from Qatar Film Fund recipients: Ahmad Al Sharif's **End of the Road** and Kholood Al-Ali's **Fragile**.

Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, Festival Director and Chief Executive Officer of DFI, said: "Undoubtedly, Made in Qatar holds a special place in the Ajyal Film Festival program, highlighting our local creative talents and inspiring young filmmakers to find their ambitions in Qatar. This year's impressive slate of 22 accomplished films stands out with bold subjects and brilliant narrative styles, and we are proud of the contributions of our emerging talents to building a vibrant creative industry in Qatar and inspiring their peers."

"The quality of the films being produced in Qatar demonstrates an exciting path that our young filmmakers are taking, and we are excited to present films this year that were shot internationally, attesting to the ever-expanding influence of Qatar's burgeoning film industry. Ajyal Film Festival is pleased to celebrate filmmaking in our country and help audiences find themselves in the stories that form our narrative."

The 2019 **Made in Qatar** section at Ajyal once again presents two programmes of shorts that include narratives, thought-provoking documentaries and reflective essays, inspired by the values that define the nation - its culture, heritage, people and places.

Programme 1: Tuesday (19th November) at 8 PM at Katara Drama Theatre and Thursday (21st November) at 8.30 PM at VOX Cinemas, Doha Festival City:

- Set in 1990's Doha, Ahmad Al-Sharif's **End of the Road** (2019) follows the story of Munir, an honest and God-fearing taxi driver whose journey to his daughter's birthday celebration is disrupted when a mysterious man appears on the road – and he is torn between being a good Samaritan or a good father.
- **Tick Tock** (2019) by Awad Karrar details the story of Ahmed, who is elected president of the student body, only to discover deep administrative corruption that presents him with a troubling ethical decision.
- **The Artist: Yacoub Missi** (2019) by Tony El Ghazal depicts the inspirations that led the Syrian painter and sculptor to pursue his passion for art.
- Mariam Al-Dubhani's **In the Middle** (2019), is a poignant portrayal of Ali who is forced to pick up arms depicting the harsh reality of the ongoing war in Yemen.
- **Falling Leaves** (2019) by Dimitri Yuri follows a young girl's induction to the inner workings of her family's unusual business—embalming dead bodies.
- **Refuge** (2019) by Maha Essid is an insightful short about two Palestinian expats' connection to their homeland, and the ways they try to stay close to their identity, history and culture.
- Abdulnaser Hassan Al Yafei's **F-57** (2018) is a profoundly unsettling story about the nefarious power of social media— disturbed IT genius Yousef, targets kids in his wicked online game.
- **Socotra – The Invisible Island** (2019) by Ching Siew Hua is a sober portrayal of the often-overlooked island of Socotra, situated 400 km off the coast of Yemen. Suffering the indirect consequences of the conflict, the island is facing a devastating environmental crisis.
- A.J. Al-Thani's **The Black Veil** (2019) follows the story of a woman who puts her life at risk to find her freedom- highlighting the struggles of women around the world who suffer under oppression.
- **Fragile** (2019) by Kholood Al-Ali is an animated short film that follows a ceramic girl's journey of self-discovery and reinvention as she sets off to conquer the mountains separating her from the world beyond her home.

Programme 2: Wednesday (20th November) at 8 PM at Katara Drama Theatre and Friday (22nd November) at 8.30 PM at VOX Cinemas, Doha Festival City:

- Abdulaziz Mohammed Khashabi's **The Unlucky Hamster** (2019) follows hilarious misadventures of Fluffy—a cute hamster in a pet shop dreaming of a new home. But his dream soon turns into a nightmare when a mysterious man adopts him.
- **Revive the Lira's Glory** (2019) by Alessandra El Chanti follows a young Lebanese artist, who paints portraits of national icons on his country's banknotes in an effort to metaphorically give them back their value.

- **Desert Bounty** (2019) by Yassine Ouahrani is about a young girl's journey in the Arabian desert in search of water to heal her mother.
- Sana Al-Ansari's **Batch 10** (2019) is an enlightening look at the military service in Qatar, following two recruits and their personal experience in the service.
- **Ana Bas** (2019) by Tony El Ghazal and Ayah Awartani is about an Egyptian rapper, caught between his first-ever album release and his personal life.
- **Beit Byoot** (2019) by Mayar Hamdan tackles issues of conformity versus individuality. Set in a dystopian dollhouse, little Jameela must choose between being odd and fitting in.
- Dhabya AlMuhannadi's **Maha'mel** (2018) is a silent study on the precision engineering and expert craftsmanship involved in the creation of Qatar's iconic Dhow boats.
- Nada Bedair's **Paper Kite** (2019) follows the story of two catholic schoolgirls on a kite-making mission.
- **Doubled** (2018) by Rana Al Khouli is a personal and inspiring portrait of a student as she tenaciously pursues her academic dreams between her two homes Damascus and Doha.
- **Ghassan's Green Door** (2019) by Lubna Mohsin and Munera AlDosari is an insight into Ghassan Hajar's incredible antique collection.
- Majdy Naeem Al-Sukhnii's **Oh Ya Maal** (2019) takes viewers on a journey to discover Qatar's rich maritime heritage, the festival of "Mahamel", and the process of manufacturing traditional fishing boats.
- **Beyond Boundaries** (2019) by Hemanth Madupu is a documentary about the cricket scene in Doha, and how the much-beloved sport manages to transcend national borders.

Tickets for the 7th Ajyal Film Festival are available for purchase at the Ajyal Main Box Office located in Katara Building 10; at the Ajyal Box Office at VOX Cinemas Doha Festival City for screenings taking place at VOX Cinemas; and from the Novo Cinemas Box Office for screenings at Novo Cinemas, the Pearl. For ticket purchase and up-to-date information on the Ajyal Film Festival, please visit:

<https://www.dohafilminstitute.com/filmfestival/ticketinformation>

<https://www.dohafilminstitute.com/filmfestival/films>

2019 Ajyal Film Festival's Official Partners include: **Katara Cultural Village** – Cultural Partner; **Qatar National Tourism Council** – Principal Partner; **Novo Cinemas, Ooredoo** – Strategic Partner, **St. Regis Doha** - Signature Partner.

- END -

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 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.

مؤسسة الدوحة للأفلام

DOHA FILM INSTITUTE

Doha Film Institute

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