

Contemporary Music, Performances and Film Highlights Light up the Ajyal Film Festival Stage

- *Selection of contemporary short films from up-and-coming Indian directors celebrate 'Qatar-India Year of Culture'*
- *Watch the highlights of nine previous 'Made in Qatar' films at 'SONY Cinema Under the Stars'*
- *Inclusive Screening of trans-adapted films gives visually and hearing-impaired audiences tools to experience the power of film*
- *Meet local and international underground artists at 'Ajyal Tunes'*

Doha, Qatar; 21 November 2019: The 7th edition of the Ajyal Film Festival, the annual cinema event hosted by the Doha Film Institute (DFI), presents a host of cultural and creative events for audiences of all ages to experience the power of storytelling across multiple mediums.

The fourth festival day (21 November) continues with interactive exhibitions and performances at the Ajyal Creativity Hub. Visitors will have a chance to get up-and-close with an exclusive line-up of Qatar-based performers and internationally acclaimed musicians at **Ajyal Tunes** from 21-23 November. Located at the Ajyal Jurors' Hub in Katara Cultural Village, the underground musical spectacle is free to the public.

This year's **SONY Cinema under the Stars** will present nine short film highlights, which have been part of previous **Made in Qatar** competitions. Audiences will be taken on a voyage through some of Qatar's greatest home-grown film productions, highlighting the journey of Qatari cinema over past Ajyal editions. The short films programme is free to the public and will screen at 7 PM at the Museum of Islamic Art Park:

- ***Al-Johara*** (2016) by Nora Al-Subai is a local take on the classic Cinderella fairy-tale, highlighting Arabic traditions with a modern twist
- ***Al Muqana3*** (2012) by Tarek Abu-Esber tells the story of Ahmed, who leaves his majlis every day to drive around in his breathtakingly designed car, decorated with ornaments, lights and flags
- ***Where Are You Right Meow?*** (2018) by Maysam Al-Ani introduces us to Ayako, who gets lost searching for her cat Beru
- ***The Palm Tree*** (2015) by Jassim Al-Rumaihi explores nature and how modern science has created 'unnatural nature', turning science fiction into reality
- ***Smicha*** (2016) by Amal Al-Muftah delves into the powerful bond between a grandfather and his grandchild
- ***The Fishermen*** (2017) by Obada Yousef Jarbi lets viewers join the quest of local fishermen as they try to catch fish to sell at the local market
- ***Makh'bz*** (2015) by Aisha Al Muhannadi allows an intimate view of the breadmaking process and the time, energy, and craft necessary to ensure that Doha residents get to enjoy their daily bread
- ***Kashta*** (2016) by A.J. Al-Thani tells the story of two brothers and the far-reaching consequences seemingly small arguments can have

- ***Voices from the Urbanscape*** (2017) by Shaima Al Tamimi and Mariam Salim is a poetic journey into Doha's everchanging urban landscape and personality

Presented in partnership with the Translation and Interpreting Institute (TII) of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Hamad bin Khalifa University, **Made in Qatar: An Inclusive Experience** will screen a hand-picked selection of five films that are specially curated to reflect the theme of the festival and make film accessible, regardless of physical obstacles. Screening at Katara Drama Theatre (Building 16) at 7.30 PM are: Rawan Al-Nassiri and Nada Bedair's ***Treasures of the Past*** (2017), ***1001 Days*** (2017) by Aisha Al-Jaidah, ***Amer: An Arabian Legend*** (2016) by Jassim Al-Rumaihi, ***Fragile*** (2019) by Kholood Al-Ali, and ***Sh'hab*** (2018) by Amal Al-Muftah.

Ajyal marks the **Qatar-India 2019 Year of Culture** with an exciting programme of eight short narrative and documentary films by up-and-coming Indian directors that present fascinating insight into the country's filmmaking trends, culture and people. Curated by the Institute's cultural partners, The Mumbai Academy of Moving Images (MAMI), the programme will screen at 8.30 PM at Katara Opera House (Building 16). Please note that the screening is rated PG-18. In addition, Ajyal 2019 will present a special screening of acclaimed actor, director and animator Gitanjali Rao's ***Bombay Rose*** (India, France, UK, Qatar/2019), a DFI Grant production, at 9 PM at VOX Cinemas Doha Festival City.

Families and children can visit a special sing-along screening of Don Bluth and Gary Goldman's ***Anastasia*** (USA/1997) at the Geekdom pavilion at Katara Building 18 at 4 PM. It recounts the touching story of Anastasia, the only surviving family member of the Russian Czar family.

A thrilling selection of feature films will be screened throughout the day:

- Today is the last opportunity to attend a screening of Elia Suleiman's DFI-supported film ***It Must Be Heaven*** (France, Qatar, Germany, Canada, Turkey, Palestine/2019) at VOX Cinemas Festival City at 8.30 PM. Please note that the screening is rated PG-18.
- ***Ailo's Journey*** (France, Finland/2018) by Guillaume Maidatchevsky is a heart-warming tale of a baby reindeer will screen at VOX Cinemas Festival City at 6 PM.
- Winner of the Audience Favourite Award at the Sundance Film Festival: London 2019, ***The Farewell*** (USA, China/2019) by Lulu Wang will screen at 5.30 PM at VOX Cinemas Doha Festival City and is rated PG-15.
- Winner of the Grand Jury Prize for Best Documentary Film at the Sundance Film Festival 2019, ***Honeyland*** (North Macedonia/2019) by Ljubomir Stefanov and Tamara Kotevska is screening at 6 PM at Novo Cinemas, the Pearl.
- ***To the Ends of the Earth*** (Japan, Uzbekistan, Qatar/2019) by Kiyoshi Kurosawa takes us on the journey of Yoko, a young Japanese woman, and will screen at 5.30 PM at Novo Cinemas, the Pearl. Please note the screening is rated PG-15.
- ***Give Me Liberty*** (USA/2019) by Kirill Mikhanovsky is a comical and endearing portrait of American dreams and disenchantment. The screening will take place at 9 PM at NOVO Cinemas, the Pearl, and is rated PG-18.

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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.

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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.

Doha Film Institute

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