

10 films supported by the Doha Film Institute selected to Cannes Film Festival 2022

- *Five films will screen in Un Certain Regard, four are part of the Directors' Fortnight and one is part of the ACID section*
- *An additional three films, also supported by the Institute, chosen for Cannes' Cinéfondation Atelier*

Doha, Qatar; May 11, 2022: The Doha Film Institute has set another milestone with an impressive slate of ten films supported by the region's leading film organisation selected to the prestigious Cannes Film Festival 2022.

The Institute continues to uphold its proud legacy of supporting compelling films from across the globe that make headlines in the international film festival circuit this year too with one of the largest representations at Cannes 2022 being held from May 17 to 28. Of the films selected, five will screen in the Un Certain Regard, while four are part of the Directors' Fortnight and one film will screen in the ACID section. In addition, three films by Qatar based and regional talent, promoted by the Institute, have also been selected for Cannes' Cinéfondation Atelier.

Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, Chief Executive Officer of the Doha Film Institute, said: "For the past several years, films supported by the Institute have made headlines at Cannes Film Festival, underpinning the quality of the projects we nurture. This year, with an impressive selection of films, including by first-time directors, we are further contributing to global cinema through captivating films that have universal resonance. Our mission is to celebrate independent voices in cinema and the proud selection to Cannes, regarded as the epitome of great filmmaking, is a testament to our commitment to supporting important voices in films."

Among the films screening in Un Certain Regard are:

- ***All The People I'll Never Be*** (France, Germany, Belgium, South Korea, Romania, Qatar) by Davy Chou, about 25-year-old Freddie, who gets back for the first time to South Korea to reconnect with her origins. The headstrong young woman starts looking for her biological parents in a country she knows so little about.
- ***Plan 75*** (Japan, France, Philippines, Qatar) by Hayakawa Chie, is set in a Japan of the near future, the government program "Plan 75" encourages senior citizens to be voluntarily euthanized in order to remedy a super-aged society. An elderly woman whose means of survival are vanishing, a pragmatic Plan 75 salesman, and a young Filipino laborer face choices of life and death.
- ***Domingo and the Mist*** (Costa Rica, Qatar) by Ariel Escalante Meza, a project nurtured at Qumra, the annual talent incubator event by the Doha Film Institute. The film is about 65-year-old Domingo whose town is threatened by thugs hired by a developer to expel its inhabitants and pave the way for the construction of a mega highway. But his land hides a secret—the ghost of his deceased wife who visits him within the mist.
- ***Mediterranean Fever*** (Palestine, France, Germany, Cyprus, Qatar) by Maha Haj, also a Qumra nurtured project, is about Waleed, a Palestinian man, who lives comfortably in his sea-view home in Haifa with his wife and children. One day, Waleed is introduced to his new neighbour, who soon becomes the most critical person in his life.

- **Harka** (Egypt, France, Tunisia, Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, Qatar) by Lotfy Nathan, is a modern-day parable about resistance, 'Harka' centres on the story of Ali, a young Tunisian who dreams of a better life while making a precarious living selling contraband gas at the local black market. When his father suddenly dies, Ali is forced to take charge of his two younger sisters and their impending eviction. What ensues is a fight for dignity—the voice of a generation trying to be heard.

The three films screened in the **Directors' Fortnight (Quinzaine des réalisateurs)**, an independent selection at the Cannes Film Festival, are:

- **Ashkal** (Tunisia, France, Qatar), directed by Youssef Chebbi, is set in the gardens of Carthage, a new district where modern buildings are juxtaposed with abandoned sites and wastelands, where the body of a caretaker is found calcined in the middle of a construction site.
- **Under the Fig Trees** (Tunisia, Switzerland, Qatar, France) by Erige Sehiri is about Melek, Sana, Fidé and Meriem, who work long days in the fields as a way to be together and escape the monotony of their life in the countryside. They are always finding ways to have fun, sometimes at the expense of others.
- **The Dam** (Lebanon, France, Sudan, Germany, Serbia, Qatar) by Ali Cherri, is set in Merowe Dam in North Sudan, the film is about Maher, who works in a traditional brickyard fed by the waters of the Nile. Every evening, he secretly wanders off into the desert to build a mysterious construction made of mud.
- **1976** (Chile, Qatar) by Manuela Martelli is about Carmen, a bourgeois housewife whose life is interrupted when the priest at the church where she does charity work asks her to take care of a young revolutionary, a man he is giving asylum to, who has just been hurt.

The **Association du Cinéma Indépendant pour sa Diffusion (L'ACID)** parallel programme at Cannes is dedicated to exceptional independent films. This year, DFI-supported film **Polaris** (France, Greenland, Qatar) by Ainara Vera, will screen at ACID. It is about Hayat, an expert sailor in the Arctic, navigates far from humans and her destructive family past in France. When her little sister Leila gives birth to a baby girl Inaya, Hayat faces a dilemma. How much is she willing to compromise her life to break free from the malediction of her family and offer a future to the new generation?

The three films at **Cannes' Cinéfondation Atelier**, supported by the Institute, have been selected for the quality of their directors' earlier works and the potential of their current projects. The chosen films are:

- **Cotton Queen** (Sudan, Qatar), by Suzannah Mirghani. It is about 15-year-old Nafisa, who lives a simple life in a village famous for growing cotton. She spends her days picking cotton with her friends, and her heart is fond of a boy in the village.
- **Hamlet from the Slums** (Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Qatar) by Ahmed Fawzi-Saleh, is an adaptation of Shakespeare's tragedy, the film is set in contemporary Egypt and is steeped in the unique and rarely filmed universe of Sufi mysticism.
- **Al Baseer – The Blind Ferryman** (Iraq, Switzerland, Qatar), by Ali Al-Fatlawi is about a blind ferryman Ayoub, who lives in the southern Iraqi marshes. He knows how to find his way around despite his lack of eyesight, earning his money by ferrying people and goods around the wetlands.

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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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