

## QATAR HAS FIRST FILM IN OSCAR® CONSIDERATION

Oscar®-nominated Filmmaker, Rithy Panh, attached as Filmmaker Mentor

*Documentary Short Subject AND THEN THEY BURN THE SEA, also shortlisted for IDA Award, will screen as part of The Short Contenders at USC with filmmaker Majid Al-Remaihi in attendance*

**November 13, 2022 Doha, Qatar** -- Produced by DOHA Film Institute, the documentary short subject, **AND THEN THEY BURN THE SEA**, from Director Majid Al-Remaihi is Qatar's first ever Oscar®-qualified film in consideration for Academy Award.

Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, Chief Executive Officer of the Doha Film Institute, said: "It gives us great pride to see young filmmakers from across the region emerge as creative leaders of a new wave of filmmaking, who craft compelling stories with global resonance. This is an incredible achievement for a promising young Qatari and Arab filmmaker and marks a milestone in the evolution of the country's film industry. Majid's film in consideration for an Academy Award™ will inspire more young talent to pursue cinematic ambitions and make an imprint in the global film community through authentic stories that reflect our nation's culture and traditions.

"We thank Master Rithy Panh for his invaluable contribution; not only to Majid, but also to the many aspiring filmmakers he has empowered to push creative boundaries. Their creative prowess and dedication to the arts is indicative of the state of Arab cinema today. This recognition further emphasizes our mission at Doha Film Institute to support powerful storytelling and amplify important new voices in cinema, by providing a platform for exciting creative talents from around the world to realise their cinematic aspirations while fostering cultural diversity."

The film, a poetic, visual essay of love and loss as experienced by the filmmaker through his mother's gradual, terminal memory loss, was also Qatar's first at 2021 Locarno Film Festival, and won Best Short at Vienna Shorts as well as the Silver Tanit Award at Carthage Film Festival. The film has also been shortlisted for the IDA Documentary Awards (nominations to be announced November 11, 2022).

Majid Al-Remaihi said: "7 years ago, I began to feel an endless sea drive a wedge between myself and my mother as her struggle with Alzheimer's continued to chip away at her sense of being. At nineteen, there was no specific way for me to reconcile with this continuous and incremental loss, of what it had robbed, and what it continues to rob of the futures and pasts that are suddenly irretrievable—but cinema, and this film, helped me piece together

abstractions and unfinished conversations as a result of my need for gestures to mourn and heal. I am quite honored to have this love letter to my mother receive this recognition as it marks a critical part of my life and honors the myriad contributions of mentors and collaborators that allowed for it to happen.”

Filmmaker Majid Al-Remaihi will be attending the screening of his film as part of “The Short Contenders” program at USC, in Los Angeles on November 14, 2022. Al-Remaihi, who left his film studies at Middlebury College in his senior year to care for his mother, was mentored throughout his creative process by the Oscar®-nominated Cambodian filmmaker, Rithy Panh (*The Missing Picture*).

“I had the privilege to be Majid’s mentor on his compelling and very personal story that clearly resonates with global audiences,” recalled Panh. “His voice is universal while remaining true to his culture roots, and his exceptional courage in being uncompromising with his cinematic vision will inspire talented emerging filmmakers from around the world to believe in their own cinematic ambitions.”

Produced by the DOHA Film Institute, **AND THEN THEY BURN THE SEA** represents the institute’s mission to empower emerging filmmakers from the region.

“I am always proud to work with the Doha Film Institute in support of their efforts to identify and future promising, independent new voices in cinema,” added Panh, “and the attention given to Majid for **AND THEN THEY BURN THE SEA** shows the boundless potential emerging Qatari and Arab filmmakers have to pave their own journey to the international audience.

“Congratulations to Majid, and DFI, on qualifying **AND THEN THEY BURN THE SEA** for the Oscar®-consideration from the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Science.”

**AND THEN THEY BURN THE SEA** is represented by Wouter Jansen of Square Eyes for sales and distribution.

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#### **About Director Majid Al-Remaihi**

Majid Al-Remaihi is an award-winning filmmaker from Doha, Qatar. His short film “And Then They Burn the Sea” was Qatar’s first film at Locarno Film Festival (2021), and went on to win Best Short at Vienna Shorts; the Silver Tanit at Carthage Film Festival, and screened globally at more than thirty global festivals, garnering multiple awards at Palm Springs ShortFest, Dublin Int’l Film Festival, FrontDoc Italy, Malmö Arab Film Festival, among others. Al-Remaihi’s work focuses on unraveling the complexity of historical narratives and their reconstructions in the Arabian Gulf.

#### **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 and the MENA region. 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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