

Doha Film Institute's Qumra 2024 Welcomes Film Auteurs and Global Industry Experts to Nurture Emerging Talents in Cinema

- *10th annual edition brings together over 200 international industry professionals to nurture 40 projects by first- and second-time filmmakers*
- *DFI remains dedicated to realising important stories and amplifying unheard voices that connect us in our shared humanity, says Fatma Hassan Alremaihi*

Doha, Qatar; March 1, 2024: The tenth annual edition of Qumra, the Doha Film Institute's talent incubator event for Arab and international cinema, commenced on Friday with film auteurs and international industry experts gathering to nurture emerging voices in cinema through exclusive mentorship sessions, in-depth workshops, along with a screening series of exceptional films that have made decisive impact on audiences.

Welcoming over 200 industry experts and the talents associated with over 40 Qumra projects, **Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, Chief Executive Officer of Doha Film Institute**, said: "Qumra is an extension of the Institute's commitment to support promising filmmakers to overcome the various challenges of telling authentic stories. While we celebrate the progress that we have made in nurturing new voices in cinema, we are also confronted with the genocide in Gaza and the ongoing attempts to silence the voices crying out against it. This cultural genocide is a profound reminder of our responsibility as a global community to ensure that all voices are heard, and all lives are treated with dignity and respect."

She added: "While the situation continues to worsen in Palestine and countries throughout the region including Yemen, Lebanon, Sudan and Syria, providing a platform to acknowledge the courage and resilience of those fighting against oppression becomes even more important. The Doha Film Institute has always been and will remain dedicated to realising important stories and amplifying unheard voices that connect us in our shared humanity. We are proud to be on the journey with these bold and evocative projects that will impact our societies for years to come."

Addressing the delegates, Doha Film Institute's Artistic Advisor Elia Suleiman, said: "Qumra offers the opportunity to ask what must be done to take responsibility, and a moral and ethical position on what films enable us to discuss about genocides, massacres and horrible violence around the world. Here we have the benefit of distance from what is going on [in the region]. It allows the questioning of what must be done in the context of storytelling, and in the context of asking cinematic questions as we tell our stories. This is the right time to contemplate, meditate and take a solemn moment but also start to converse and discuss aesthetics to somehow have some inspiration and creativity."

On the opening day, Qumra Master **Toni Collette** (*The Sixth Sense, Knives Out, Hereditary*) presented her Master Class taking the audience through her cinematic vision and creative journey. She joins acclaimed eminent filmmakers **Leos Carax** (*Bad Blood, The Lovers on the Bridge, Holy Motors, Annette*); **Claire Denis** (*Trouble Every Day, Stars at Noon, Both Sides of the Blade*); **Atom Egoyan** (*The Sweet Hereafter, Seven Veils*); **Jim Sheridan** (*My Left Foot, In the Name of the Father, Brothers*) and renowned sound editor and sound designer **Martín Hernández** (*Birdman, The Revenant*) as the Qumra Masters this year.

As part of its mission to accelerate the success of filmmakers from the region and beyond, Qumra 2024 will offer networking and development opportunities for more than 40 projects from emerging filmmakers from over 20 countries. The Qumra projects this year include 13 feature narratives, 11 documentaries, 11 shorts and 7 web/TV series in various stages of production. Among the projects, 11 are helmed by Qatari or Qatar-based directors, including seven by nationals.

Among the selected projects, 32 are recipients of Doha Film Institute's Grants programme, and three are supported through the Qatari Film Fund. Underlining the year-round support offered by the Doha Film Institute to new and independent voices, 15 projects have earlier participated in DFI Training Programmes such as the Hezayah Scriptwriting Lab, Producers Lab, Shorts Script Lab, Doc Lab with Rithy Panh, Series Lab, and First Cut Lab.

All selected projects will receive tailored creative mentorship on all areas related to filmmaking including scripting, directing, editing, cinematography and sound, among others, based on the specific needs of the project. They will also receive advice on financing and co-production strategy, marketing & packaging, project positioning, festival, and distribution strategies, pitching and matchmaking.

The talents associated with the projects will participate in intensive mentoring sessions until March 6 in Doha and then take part in online sessions from March 9 to 11, providing them with an extended period of training and networking opportunities.

A limited number of Qumra Passes will be available to the public for purchase on a first-come, first serve basis to attend all Masterclasses and Qumra Screenings in-person in Doha. Tickets to individual screenings and Masterclasses are also available at www.dohafilminstitute.com.

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