



Press Release

26 Diverse Films by Women Directors take Centre Stage at 2012 DTFF

Doha, Qatar; November 10, 2012: Women filmmakers are increasingly playing an active role in the Arab world's film industry bridging the gender divide that had been cited as a challenge faced by regional cinema. Evidence to the dramatic strides made by Arab women filmmakers is highlighted at the fourth Doha Tribeca Film Festival, the annual cultural celebration of Doha Film Institute (DFI), to be held from November 17 to 24, 2012, which opens with accomplished filmmaker Mira Nair's ***The Reluctant Fundamentalist***.

Eight Qatari films are helmed by women directors, eleven films by Arab women filmmakers are screened in the Festival's Arab Film Competition, while the Contemporary World Cinema, Special Screenings, and Tribute to Algerian Cinema feature another six films directed by women, in addition to the opening gala. The films are distinct in their thematic and narrative approach, highlighting the imprint made by women filmmakers globally.

In the Arab Film Competition segment are Maggie Morgan's ***Asham: A Man Called Hope***, which narrates the stories of six couples at different stages in their relationship, set against the lead up to the 25 January Revolution; and Hanan Abdalla's ***In the Shadow of a Man***, that presents the personal revolutions of four women from different backgrounds in post-revolution Egypt.

Also in competition are Tamara Stepanyan's ***Embers***, a touching tribute to the memory of the filmmaker's grandmother; ***A Deep Long Breath*** by Tahani Rached which documents the 18 days that brought about the end of dictatorship in Egypt; ***Rafea: Solar Mama*** by Jehane Noujaim and Mona Eldaief, which follows the story of a Jordanian Bedouin mother, who leaves her home to travel to India to obtain an education; ***The Lebanese Rocket Society*** co-directed by Joana Hadjithomas– a reflection of the reawakening of hopes in the wake of the Arab spring; ***Sanctity*** by Ahd Kamel, which documents the story of Areej, a pregnant, young Saudi widow, who will endure anything to protect her unborn child; ***L'Mrayet*** by Nadia Rais is about a man who is hired to write the future; ***Ismail*** by Nora Alsharif is about a young Palestinian boy living in a refugee camp who struggles to escape imminent death when he and his little brother stray into a minefield; ***When They Slept*** by Maryam Touzani is about the relationship between a grandfather and a granddaughter and ***The Wall*** by Odette Makhoul Mouarkech is about living everyday life in Beirut during the civil war.

'Made in Qatar,' includes Amna Al-Khalaf's ***Brains of Empowerment***, an experimental film about the empowerment of women in the Middle East; and ***Lyrics Revolt*** by Shannon Farhoud, Ashlene Ramadan, Melanie Fridgant and Rana Khaled Al Khatib, a documentary that started as a student project at Northwestern University in Qatar, exploring the events of Arab Spring through hip hop artists of the Middle East in addition to ***Ghazil - The Story of Rached & Jawaher*** by Sarah Al-Derham, ***Rain*** by Rehab El Ewaly, ***The Worker*** by Manal Ahmed, ***His Name*** by Hend Fakhroo, ***Bader*** by Sarah Al-Saadi, Maaria Assami, Latifa Al-Darwish and ***Crazy Calm*** by Noor Ahmed Yaqiub.



As part of the Contemporary World Cinema line-up, DTFF will screen ***Children of Sarajevo*** by Marija Pikić and Ismir Gagić, the story of two siblings living in the harsh battle-scarred Sarajevo, Dominga Sotomayor's ***Thursday Till Sunday***, narrates the story of 10-year-old Lucia, her parents, and brother and their holiday in the north of Chile, which results in broken familial bonds, ending in an emotional farewell and a family in crisis and ***Venus and Serena*** by Maiken Baird and Michelle Major, document the story of the greatest tennis champions in the world.

The dedication to women filmmakers under the Special Screenings' segment includes Naomi Kawase's ***Traces***, an unusual personal documentary focusing on the aging foster mother of the filmmaker; ***The Tsunami and The Cherry Blossom*** by Lucy Walker, a stunning, moving visual poem about the ephemeral nature of life and the healing power of Japan's most beloved flower and Assia Djebar's ***The Nouna of the Women of Mount Chenoua***, under the 'Tribute to Algerian Cinema,' segment, documenting conversations with Algerian women, 15 years after the end of the war for independence.

Mira Nair will also lead a panel on the making of ***The Reluctant Fundamentalist***.

With an expanded Festival format this year, DTFF 2012 will showcase over 87 films from across the globe under distinct themed sections including Arab Film Competition, Made in Qatar, Contemporary World Cinema, Special Screenings and Tribute to Algerian Cinema.

DTFF 2012 provides audiences a comprehensive and enriching cultural experience with new screening venues across Doha. Indoor and outdoor screenings will take place at Katara Cultural Village, Museum of Islamic Arts (MIA), and Souq Waqif.

Public participation will be central as the Festival is hosting an array of large community events, including Family Days, panel discussions, networking events and educational filmmaking programmes including Doha Talks and Doha Projects.

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About Doha Film Institute:

Doha Film Institute (DFI) is an independent cultural organisation established in 2010 to incorporate Qatar's film initiatives under one banner; organically supporting the growth of the local film community by enhancing industry knowledge, cultivating film appreciation and contributing to the development of sustainable creative industries in Qatar. DFI's year-round platforms include funding and production of local, regional and international films, educational programmes, film screenings, and the annual Doha Tribeca Film Festival (DTFF).

With culture, community, education and entertainment at its foundation, DFI serves as an all-encompassing film hub in Doha, as well as a resource for the region and the rest of the world. DFI is committed to supporting Qatar's 2030 vision for the development of a knowledge-based economy. DFI has established a number of strategic cultural partnerships with leading local and international organisations including Tribeca Enterprises, World Cinema Foundation, Maisha Film Lab, Katara Cultural Village and Giffoni Film Festival.