

Doha Film Institute in collaboration with Qatar Animation Center partners with acclaimed Toon Boom Animation to host advanced animation workshops for local talent

- *Primetime Emmy® Engineering Award winning organisation to share insights on high-quality animation through hands on training workshops*
- *Training opens opportunity for local talents to explore career opportunities in the fast-growing animation industry sector in the Middle East*

Doha, Qatar; October 26, 2016: Doha Film Institute in collaboration with the Qatar Animation Center (QAC) has entered into a partnership with Primetime Emmy® Engineering Award winning Canadian entity Toon Boom Animation for intensive workshops on advanced animation, to support the development of the animation industry sector in Qatar.

The partnership will provide intensive training sessions on Harmony and Storyboard Pro software for professionals within Qatar's film and creative industries. The program includes two sessions of three workshops each that will introduce the participants, from beginner to advanced concepts, and help them create efficient and high quality assets, animations, and drawings.

In addition to receiving a certificate on completion, participants also receive a one-month pre-training session software license, and consultancy services for animation film projects led by the Doha Film Institute.

Toon Boom Animation has an outstanding track-record in animation, and this is its first-of-its-kind partnership in the Arab world. Over the past two decades, it has been the go-to organisation for premiere storyboarding and animation software that have been deployed for high-profile productions by the world's leading studios.

Fatma Al Remaihi, Chief Executive Officer of Doha Film Institute, said: "Cultural shifts among the region's young people have spawned a tremendous creative energy, who are both driving and fulfilling demand for local content. The rise in interest in animation is a recent development that is powered by the demand for original Arabic content, a growing interest from regional television stations and an internet savvy population. From film to advertising and social media engagement, animation offers exciting career opportunities and has the potential to evolve into something much bigger. Our partnership underlines our commitment to provide the best in knowledge & resources to the Qatari community, and to strengthen their skills in an industry that is undergoing a fascinating transformation."

The first workshop organised by the entities as part of the agreement was held to overwhelming response from the participants. Led by Stacey Eberschlag, Consultant/Senior Animation Instructor at Toon Boom Animation Inc., the workshop is the first of its kind in the region that opens the opportunity for participants to contribute to the fast-growing animation industry sector.

Abdulla Al Mosallam, Director of the Qatar Animation Center said, "We are excited to partner with the Doha Film Institute to host these workshops that help filmmakers explore the vast opportunities

available within the animation industry sector in Qatar and the region. Organisations in the region now see animation as big business, with new animation companies and talented creatives gaining international attention for their inspirational characters and shows that focus on life and culture in the Middle East. Even though the Qatari animation industry is still in the formative stages, the interest the medium has gained from local filmmakers signals strong growth over the coming years and we are confident they will pave the way for a major presence in the global market.”

The roster of films that used Toon Boom Animation’s Harmony and Storyboard Pro software include *Family Guy*, *The Inner World*, *Hannibal*, and *Princess & The Frog*, among others. In 2005 and 2012, it was honoured by the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences with the Primetime Emmy® Engineering Award for its software's significant impact on the industry.

Stacey Eberschlag added: “I am delighted with the fantastic response from the Qatari community to our training programme in partnership with the Doha Film Institute and the Qatar Animation Center. There is amazing filmmaking talent in Qatar, and their interest in understanding the nuances of animation is truly remarkable. Over the years, we have set an exceptional track-record globally in redefining the parameters of animation, and we are excited to share our knowledge and resources with the Qatari talent to help nurture the next generation of animation professionals here.”

The Intermediate Course offered by Toon Boom Animation on Harmony takes participants through paperless production, as they are introduced to advanced concepts to create highly efficient and high quality animations and drawings. The course programme covers areas such as advanced use of line art and colour art, advanced cutters and deformers, lip-sync animation, working on Storyboard Pro, and inking and painting, among others. The next workshop is planned for January 2017.

The participants were enthusiastic about their experience of attending the workshop. Abdulrahman Al-Thani said: “I had a positive experience and was eager to learn about the software and how to use it to further enhance my skills. I have gained industry relevant information and I now feel confident to create unique content that resonates with pan-Arab audiences.”

Ghada Al-Suwaidi expressing her gratitude to the Institute and QAC for the opportunity, said, “The workshop gave me an understanding of how I can use the software to create compelling content in my own voice. I had the opportunity to learn about the functioning’s of the evolving animation industry and how I can contribute to its advancement in Qatar, to develop my passion into a profitable business.”

Eberschlag brings over two decades of experience in the animation industry, assuming such positions as Director, Creative Director, Overseas Animation Supervisor, Animator, and Character Builder. He has worked on many critically acclaimed programs including *Choose Your Own Adventure*, *Ron White Animated Show*, *Secret World of Benjamin Bear*, and the Emmy® Award-winning *Tutenstein*. His animation work was featured in *Jimmy Two-Shoes*, *Mischief City* and *Kick Buttowski*, a Walt Disney series.

For more details, please log on to: www.dohafilminstitute.com

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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 Youth 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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About Qatar Animation Center:

Qatar Animation Center is a youth center established in June 2014 under the Ministry of Culture and Sports to help kick start the animation industry in Qatar, by offering a creative space for the youth to express their selves and launch their creativity by developing their skills in the industry. The center supports the production of animated films by offering training courses throughout the year in the field of animation and production in an atmosphere full of creativity.