

Qumra 2018 concludes with Sandy Powell's inspiring masterclass on the behind-the-scenes of captivating filmmaking

34 Qumra Projects by 25 first- and second-time filmmakers mentored by six Qumra Masters and 150 industry professionals

Doha, Qatar; March 14, 2018: The fourth edition of Qumra, the annual industry event by the Doha Film Institute that focuses on building new voices in cinema, concluded with an inspiring masterclass by Qumra Master Sandy Powell, Order of the British Empire (OBE), Oscar® winning British costume designer (*The Young Victoria*, *The Aviator*, *Shakespeare in Love*).

The masterclass, which offered a behind-the-scenes look at some of the captivating films she had worked on, brought to close six days of lively discussions, interactions, mentoring sessions and workshops through which 34 Qumra Projects by first- and second-time filmmakers from 25 nations, were nurtured by six Qumra Masters and over 150 industry experts.

Moderated by Richard Pena, the Sandy Powell masterclass was highlighted by show-reels of some of her masterful works that brings out Powell's versatility and ingenuity as one of the world's renowned costumed designers.

Powell said she discovered her passion for costume design while working on theatre and going on to "learn from mistakes". Her advice for young talents is to understand the art of costume design with the fundamental approach that "you are creating characters and making them believable".

She discussed her debut work as film costume designer for Derek Jarman's *Caravaggio*, after having worked with him on music videos. "I didn't know what I was doing," she said, with the average age of the crew at 25, and each of the member learning by doing. "It was real learning."

With an accomplished oeuvre that includes several period films, fairytales and historic set-pieces such as *Orlando*, *Shakespeare in Love*, *Gangs of New York*, *The Aviator*, *Hugo*, and *Cinderella*, Powell said that while it is important to work with the team, she also goes by her instinct and intuitive understanding of the character.

She said her priority in choosing a project is its script, and that is open to work in Bollywood, adding the industry "has a number of good designers already". She does background research on the costumes from paintings as well as from contemporary fashion, "as there is always something one can take inspiration from it", creates mood-boards for the characters, and then decides on the colours, contrasts and fabrics.

Powell said she is not overly attracted to working in science fiction films because "I am not attracted to them. I am not interested in creatures, aliens, and superheroes," and she has taken delight in doing independent, low budget films because "they push you creatively" to work within the resources. Her advice, from her personal experience as costume designer, is to "work instinctively not intellectually".

This year, Qumra hosted six modern legends in cinema, who mentored young filmmakers through their Masterclasses and one-on-one sessions. They included: Oscar® winning actor Tilda Swinton (*Isle of Dogs*, *Michael Clayton*, *We Need to Talk about Kevin*); Sandy Powell, Order of the British Empire (OBE), Oscar® winning British costume designer (*The Young Victoria*, *The Aviator*, *Shakespeare in Love*); Oscar® nominated director Bennett Miller (*Capote*, *Moneyball*, *Foxcatcher*); Venice Golden Lion winning Russian director and writer Andrey Zvyagintsev (*Leviathan*, *Loveless*); Cannes Palme d'Or winning Thai filmmaker and visual artist Apichatpong Weerasethakul (*Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives*); and the only documentary director to win the Berlinale Golden Bear, Italian director Gianfranco Rosi (*Fire at Sea*).

Qumra 2018 also had Modern Masters screenings of films by Qumra Masters and the New Voices in Cinema screenings by young talents, including Qatari directors. The Qumra Talks, a series of insightful discussions led by acclaimed photographer Brigitte Lacombe, renowned artist Simon Wilkinson, and new media expert Jon Kamen, gave insights on new trends in cinema and media.

Qatar Museums, the Museum of Islamic Art and Souq Waqif were the Cultural Partners of Qumra 2018, while the event was supported by Culture Pass, the Translation and Interpreting Institute (TII) and FNAC the leading French Cultural store. SONY was the Official Electronics Partner and Souq Waqif Boutique Hotels by Tivoli was the Official Hotel Partner.

Extending support as 'Friends of Qumra' were: Sarajevo Film Festival, the French Embassy in Qatar, Northwestern University in Qatar, and L'Institut Français du Qatar, as well as The British Council. Screen International was the Media Partner.

-ENDS-

Note to Editors:

About Qumra

Directors and Producers attached to thirty-four projects in development and post-production are selected to participate in the event. They will include a number of emerging filmmakers from Qatar, as well as recipients of funding from the Institute's Grants Programme. The robust programme will feature industry meetings designed to assist with propelling projects to their next stages of development, including master classes, work-in-progress screenings, bespoke matchmaking sessions and tailored workshops with industry experts. This creative exchange will take place alongside a programme of public screenings curated with input from the Qumra Masters.

The event is organised in three main sections: The **Qumra Master Classes** are daily sessions; each led by one of the Masters. The participating filmmakers have full access to these sessions, which are also open to accredited industry guests to attend in an observational capacity.

The **Qumra Meetings** are a series of one-on-one meetings, workshops and tailored mentoring sessions between representatives from the selected projects and seasoned industry experts.

The **Qumra Screenings** are open to the public and feature projects funded by the Institute through its grants and co-financing initiatives, as well as a series of films chosen by the Qumra Masters accompanied by Q&A sessions.

The Arabic term 'qumra' is popularly said to be the origin of the word 'camera', and to have been used by the scientist, astronomer and mathematician Alhazen (Ibn al-Haytham, 965-c.1040 CE), whose work in optics laid out the principles of the camera obscura.

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

Twitter: @DohaFilm; Instagram: @DohaFilm; Facebook: www.facebook.com/DohaFilmInstitute