



Capharnaüm, What Walaa Wants and Zoo win Best Film Awards at 6th Ajyal Film Festival

- *Best Short Film Awards go to **Transformation**, **Killing Hope** and Qatari film **Gubgub***
- *Nobel Peace laureate Kailash Satyarthi presented Honorary Award for his global contribution to preventing the exploitation and violence against children*

Doha, Qatar; December 3, 2018: The sixth Ajyal Film Festival, hosted by the Doha Film Institute at Katara Cultural Village, concluded with a colourful closing gala, where the winners of the Ajyal Competition were announced.

Over 550 young Ajyal Jurors selected the Best Films and Best Short Films in the **Bader** (voted by jurors aged 18 to 21), **Hilal** (13 to 17 years), and **Mohaq** (8 to 12 years) categories. Representing 55 countries, they included 25 international jurors who came to Doha for the event from Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Spain, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

The winners are:

Bader:

- **Best Film: *Capharnaüm*** (Lebanon/2018) directed by Nadine Labaki
- **Best Short Film: *Transformation*** (Kuwait/2017) by Yousef Al Bagshi

Hilal:

- **Best Film: *What Walaa Wants*** (Canada, Denmark/2018) directed by Christy Garland
- **Best Short Film: *Killing Hope*** (France/2017) by Julia Retali and Natacha Grangeon

Mohaq:

- **Best Film: *Zoo*** (Ireland, UK/2017) directed by Colin McIvor
- **Best Short Film: *Gubgub*** (Qatar/2018) by Nouf Al Sulaiti

Capharnaüm also won the Audience Award, while ***Gubgub*** had earlier bagged the inaugural 'Abdulaziz Jassim Award for Best Performance', instituted this year in honour of the late legendary Qatari actor, for Fatima Al Nahdi, at the Made in Qatar Awards. This year, the Ajyal Film Festival competition showcased 33 shorts, including eight 'Made in Qatar', and 13 thought-provoking feature films.

At the closing ceremony, Nobel Peace laureate Kailash Satyarthi, who was at Ajyal for the screening of the film ***The Price of Free*** (USA/2018), which documents his life and work, was presented with an Honorary Award by the festival, for his global leadership and remarkable contribution to the prevention of exploitation and violence against children. Under the aegis of his organisation, 'Bachpan Bachao Andolan' (Save the Childhood Movement), more than 87,000 children have been rescued from the scourge of bondage, trafficking and exploitative labour till date.

Satyarthi also rallied the support of children in Qatar with the young Ajyal Jurors joining him in taking the pledge to support the 100 Million for 100 Million Campaign, which he had launched in 2016 to mobilise 100 million youth for shaping a better and promising future for 100 million not so privileged children.



Addressing the Ajyal Jurors at the closing ceremony of the festival, Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, Festival Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Doha Film Institute, said: “As we commenced the sixth edition of the Ajyal Film Festival, our goal was to create a cinema event that represents ‘A Voice for Generations.’ You are that generation. You are the people who will continue the legacy of the past forward. With your words and deeds, you can heal the world, bring peace, stability and sustainability. As global citizens of the world, you are the ambassadors of positive change.”

Fatma Hassan Alremaihi also thanked the public and private sector partners for their support to hosting the event as well as the filmmakers and audiences. “This year, the underlining themes that the festival celebrated were hope, courage and resilience. The films also helped reconnect audiences with their roots in today’s fast-paced tech-era. Further, through interactive art by our local community, insightful discussions and colourful activities for the family, we highlighted the focus of Ajyal to be a community event that fosters understanding, mutual respect and togetherness.”

In all, Ajyal’s diverse film programme had 23 features and 58 shorts, including 24 from the Arab World and 44 by women filmmakers. The festival opened with ***Freedom Fields*** (Libya, UK, USA, Netherlands, Canada, Lebanon, Qatar/2018), a gutsy and inspiring documentary on how courage can overcome cultural and societal stereotypes in the pursuit of dreams.

An inspiring journey through the ups and downs of three women’s efforts to build a football team in post-revolution Libya, its screening at Ajyal coincided with the symbolic handover year of the World Cup from Russia to Qatar, and complemented the vision of the Supreme Committee for Qatar 2022 to deliver the first-ever FIFA World Cup™ in the Middle East. Six short films ‘Made in Russia’ were also screened at Ajyal this year to mark the Qatar-Russia Year of Culture.

A highlight of Ajyal this year [RE]ACTION, an interactive art exhibit featuring the works by 12 of Qatar’s most promising filmmakers and artists. It was an artistic tribute to the courage and resilience of Qataris and those who call Qatar home, for weathering a storm and coming out stronger together because of it.

The Ajyal Talks this year featured Khaled Mouzanar, the producer and composer of *Capharnaüm*, and eL Seed, the French-Tunisian ‘calligraffiti’ artist, while Geekdom, one of the largest pop-culture events in Qatar, featured cool cosplay days, edge-of-your-seat video game tournaments, and film screenings. At the event, Qatar’s character designers, concept artists, storyboard artists and fan artists showcased their skills and shared their arts and products with the community.

Notes on the award-winning films:

Bader

Best Film:

- ***Capharnaüm*** by Nadine Labaki retraces the journey of 12-year-old Zain, who decides to sue his parents for having brought him into this world when they clearly can’t give him the care he so desperately needs.

Best Short Film:

- ***Transformation*** by Yousef Al Bagshi is about a young disabled man who lives with his mother and struggles to come to terms with his limitations.



Mohaq

Best Film:

- ***What Walaa Wants*** by Christy Garland is about Walaa, raised in a refugee camp in the West Bank, while her mother was in prison. The film follows her journey from 15 to 21 years, highlighting her determination to become one of the few women in the Palestinian Security Forces.

Best Short Film:

- ***Killing Hope*** by Julia Retali and Natacha Grangeon is set in Syria, amid the tragic civil war, where Al-Basha stands for something bigger than himself; he is the last clown of Aleppo.

Hilal

Best Film:

- ***Zoo*** by Colin McIlvor is about young Tom and his misfit friends, who fight to save 'Buster', the baby elephant during the German air raid bombings of Belfast in 1941.

Best Short Film:

- ***Gubgub*** by Nouf Al Sulaiti is about an adventurous young girl who goes crab hunting with her family, and sets out to win the approval of her father.

2018 Ajyal Film Festival's Official Partners include: Katara Cultural Village – Cultural Partner; Ooredoo – Principal Partner; Novo Cinemas – Strategic Partner and St. Regis Doha – Signature Sponsor.

-ENDS-

Note to Editors:

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 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.

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

About Ajyal Film Festival:

Ajyal Film Festival is an annual celebration of film designed to nurture young minds and support the development of mindful global citizens and thoughtful future leaders in a creative and educational environment. 'Ajyal', Arabic for 'generations', brings people of all ages together through screenings and events that inspire creative interaction and stimulate cinematic dialogue. Through its' jury programme, youth between the ages of 8 and 21 are given an opportunity to watch, analyse and discuss global cinema and culture, developing self-confidence, independent critical thinking skills, self-expression, and an appreciation of cinema. 6th Ajyal Film Festival takes place from the 28th of November to the 3rd of December.

Twitter: @AjyalFilm; Instagram: @ajyalFilm, #ajyal18



أجيال

مهرجان أجيال السينمائي
Ajyal Film Festival