

AJYAL FILM FESTIVAL 2020

مهرجان أجيال السينمائي ٢٠٢٠

THE SHOW
GOES ON

يستمر
GOES ON

العرض يستمر
GOES ON

Ajyal Film Festival Presents Optimistic Urban Take on Global Plastic Pollution

Doha, Qatar; November 14, 2020: The 8th Ajyal Film Festival, presented by Doha Film Institute's (DFI), virtually hosted two acclaimed directors associated with **Microplastic Madness**, offering a hopeful 'take action' message on global pollution told through the voice of youth.

Making its MENA premiere and screening in the Mohaq category for jurors aged 8-12 at Ajyal, **Microplastic Madness** (USA/2019) is the story of go-getting fifth grade students from Brooklyn, USA who become citizen scientists, community leaders, and advocates as they diligently collect environmental data, lead community outreach programmes, and use their impressive research to inform public policy.

At an online press briefing, Debby Lee Cohen, director and plastic-free activist, said: "With Ajyal, having a youth jury for a youth-made film is a huge honour and truly unique. Everything started from amidst the community, from children who started looking at their own neighbourhoods and homes to understand how the issue of pollution connects all of us."

Responding to the increased use of single-use plastic during the pandemic, Cohen said: "In the process of making change, it's always two steps forward and one step back. Despite this, we hope that the film brings greater awareness for people to look at their own consumption and make a change - and to take the next step and think about how we can lead a deeper, systemic action."

Winner of the Grand Jury Award at Greenpoint Film Festival 2020, the film extends an alarming, yet charming narrative, told through stop-motion animation, heartfelt kid commentary, and interviews of experts and renowned scientists who are engaged in the most cutting-edge research on the harmful effects of microplastics.

Co-director and producer, Atsuko Quirk, spoke about the community school programme that inspired the film: "The story originated from our New York City-based non-profit, Cafeteria Culture, which aims to teach children about the journey of waste and microplastic pollution to work towards zero waste schools and to inspire change on a global scale."

Microplastic Madness makes light of a topic of universal relevance, while highlighting the increasing importance of youth voices as global citizens, community advocates and future leaders. All 56 fifth graders from P.S. 15 in Red Hook, Brooklyn who feature in the film live on the frontline of the climate crisis, and their voices have the power to inspire audiences of all ages.

For up-to-date information and ticket reservation, visit: www.dohafilminstitute.com/festival.

2020 Ajyal Film Festival's Official Partners include: **Katara Cultural Village Foundation** – Cultural Partner; **Qatar National Tourism Council** – Principal Partner; **Novo Cinemas**, **Ooredoo** – Strategic Partner, **Msheireb Properties**, **Lusail**, **Qatari Diar** – Signature Sponsors.

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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.

Doha Film Institute

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