

Virtual edition of Doha Film Institute's Qumra 2021 goes live to expand its support for promising film talent

- *150 industry leaders from 41 countries mentor 48 projects helmed by first-and second-time filmmakers*
- *'Qumra serves as a beacon of hope and confidence assuring uninterrupted support to cinematic voices,' Fatma Hassan Alremaihi*

Doha, Qatar; March 12, 2021: Qumra, the Doha Film Institute's (DFI) annual talent incubator for Arab cinema, took its largest virtual edition live today with more than 150 industry experts from 41 countries converging to mentor 48 cinematic projects directed by first and second-time filmmakers.

Welcoming the filmmakers at this year's virtual opening, Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, Chief Executive Officer of the Doha Film Institute, said: "As an initiative launched to strengthen the powerful connection between the creative energy of the Arab world and industry communities around the world, Qumra continues to serve a central role in identifying and nurturing cinematic talent.

"After an incredibly challenging past year not only for the film industry, but for all of humanity, our focus has been to ensure that our support to promising cinematic voices remains uninterrupted. This year's virtual edition underlines that no matter where we are in the world and the turmoil we are experiencing, the medium of cinema will continue to uphold freedom of expression, bring understanding across cultures and backgrounds, and inspire optimism for the future."

She said the real credit for the success of Qumra goes to the young filmmakers, who prove their determination to pursue their passion for cinema. "I salute their commitment and dedication to the art of film, and I am confident that Qumra will serve as a beacon of hope and confidence that together we will overcome the challenges and build ourselves stronger. We are also extremely humbled by the unfailing commitment of our 2021 Qumra Masters and Filmmaking Mentors, without whose contribution, Qumra would not be possible."

Palestinian filmmaker and DFI's Artistic Advisor Elia Suleiman said he hopes to be inspired from Qumra this year, having been working personally on his new film in the past months, and had been impatiently waiting for this edition.

Presenting new perspectives from emerging filmmakers from the Arab world and beyond, Qumra 2021 serves as a vibrant platform for dialogue among young and experienced filmmakers. The Qumra 2021 programme includes projects from 21 countries including 30 features, 12 shorts and six series including five new Qatari features in development. The sessions are presented in two parts: tutorials, workshops, consultations and one-on-one meetings for projects in development; and work-in-progress screenings and feedback sessions for projects in post-production. Qumra supports the script-to-screen journey and beyond, and with the inclusion of VoD and online platforms, allowing filmmakers explore conventional and unconventional platforms to take their projects to a wider audience.



A one-of-a-kind professional incubator, Qumra is a part of DFI's mission to nurture the success of filmmakers from the region and beyond and prepare them to bring their projects to audiences around the world. Legendary French auteur Claire Denis, BAFTA and Academy Award® nominated cinematographer Phedon Papamichael, internationally celebrated director and Cannes veteran James Gray, Silver Lion winning film director and screenwriter Jessica Hausner and Academy Award® winning sound designer Mark Mangini are the Qumra Masters this year, who will share their invaluable insights with the participants during their master-classes.

Guests also include acclaimed film directors, producers, film festival directors, programmers, consultants, fund managers, sales professionals, acquisition heads, script experts, distributors, video on demand (VoD) platforms and broadcasters, and other industry professionals. Qumra has now evolved as the premiere talent hub and project incubator for new voices and compelling stories in Arab and world cinema.

Qumra 2021's virtual format allows film lovers from across the globe to participate in diverse programmes with the Qumra Pass, including fascinating Master Classes with luminaries in contemporary cinema, inspiring talks with distinguished artists, and a selection of screenings for audiences in the MENA region showcasing works of new and seasoned Arab film talent supported by the Doha Film Institute. To buy the Qumra Pass, view the entire programme and ticket details please visit: www.dohafilminstitute.com/qumra/qumrapass.

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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 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.

About Qumra

Directors and Producers attached to 48 projects in development and post-production are invited 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.