

Qumra Screenings 2023 to present eight outstanding feature films supported by the Doha Film Institute

- *Special showcase celebrates new voices in cinema from the region and beyond*
- *Public audiences can gain access to Qumra Screenings and Masterclasses through purchase of the Qumra Pass for QAR 500*

Doha, Qatar; February 22, 2023: Qumra 2023, the Doha Film Institute's annual industry incubator event for emerging talent from around the world, will celebrate new voices in cinema with eight outstanding feature films supported by the Institute's initiatives. The screenings take place March 10th to 15th at the Museum of Islamic Art Auditorium.

Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, Chief Executive Officer of the Doha Film Institute, said: "We are delighted to share these incredible films that have deeply impacted cinema lovers across the world. From Qumra Master Apichatpong Weerasethakul's award-winning film, *Memoria*, to works representing our region's rich history and complex present, Qumra Screenings provide crucial cultural and artistic context to both Qumra delegates and public audiences of independent films. Qumra Screenings are an integral part of the mission of our annual industry event to nurture emerging filmmakers through their script-to-screen journey."

On March 10, at 7.00 PM, the Qumra Screenings will kick off with ***The Dam*** (France, Sudan, Lebanon, Germany, Serbia, Qatar) by Lebanese visual artist and filmmaker Ali Cherri. Set in North Sudan's Merowe dam, the film is about Maher, a seasonal worker employed in a traditional brickyard downstream. Each evening, Maher secretly wanders off into the desert to erect a mud construction. One day his creature disappears, and his life turns strange.

Under The Fig Trees (Tunisia, Switzerland, Qatar, France) by Erige Sehiri will be screened at 9.30 PM. It is about Melek and her friends who work in the field during the summer to pay for their education and help their families. Between the fig trees, under the gaze of older workers and young men, they reveal themselves on the threshold of an adult life which will remain forbidden to them.

Tug of War (Tanzania, South Africa, Germany, Qatar) by Amil Shivji is about a runaway Indian-Zanzibari bride who forms a strong bond with a young communist in the winding alleyways of 1950s British colonial Zanzibar, leading to the escalation of love and resistance. The screening is on March 11 at 7 PM, on the same night as ***Mediterranean Feve*** (Palestine, France, Germany, Qatar) by Maha Haj, which will screen at 9:30 PM. The film is about a 40-year-old Palestinian man from Haifa, trying to be a writer. He is unhappily married with children and is deeply depressed. He befriends his neighbour and gradually convinces him to assist him in committing suicide.

Riverbed (Lebanon, Qatar) by Emmy award-winning scriptwriter and director Bassem Breche narrates the story of Salma and her returning daughter Thuraya, and their attempt to preserve, maintain and reconstruct their lives with and against each other. The past does not let go of Salma and brings back Thuraya, defeated, divorced, and pregnant. The screening will be on March 12 at 7.30 PM followed by a Q&A session with the director/ talent.

Watch the marvellous *Faye Dayi*

Qumra Master Apichatpong Weerasethakul's directorial venture with David Bauduin, *Memoria*

The final Qumra Screening, on March 15 at 7.30 PM, is that of the mesmerising film, *The Last Queen*

Multi-award-winning British playwright, screenwriter, and director Christopher HamptonThe Father, Dangerous Liaisons, Atonement); veteran film, TV and theatre producer David ParfittThe Father, Shakespeare in Love, My Week with Marilyn, Loving Vincent); visionary costume designer Jacqueline WestDune, The Revenant, The Curious Case of Benjamin Button); award-winning Scottish filmmaker Lynne RamsayWe Need to Talk About Kevin, You Were Never Really Here, Ratcatcher); and critically acclaimed British filmmaker Michael WinterbottomThe Road to Guantanamo, A Mighty Heart, Welcome to Sarajevo) are this year's Qumra Masters.

Qumra Masterclasses and Qumra Screenings are accessible to the public through purchase of the Qumra Pass priced at QAR XXX. Tickets for individual Qumra Screenings can be purchased for QR35 online at 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 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 44 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 financing programmes from across the world. 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.

The Arabic term ‘qumra’ is popularly said to be the origin of the word ‘camera’, 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.