

## Doha Film Institute Launches First Edition of Regional Producers Lab

- *Intensive lab covers key topics for producing documentary and narrative films, and provides tailored mentorship to selected projects*
- *Advisors include Dora Bouchoucha, Jad Abi Khalil, Jovan Marjanović, Mohamed Hefzy and Violeta Bava*
- *15 selected projects include 10 from Qatar and five from the GCC region (UAE, Bahrain and Saudi)*

**Doha, Qatar; 12 November, 2016:** The Doha Film Institute is launching an intensive Producers Lab that will mentor emerging talent from the region through a 6-day workshop covering diverse aspects of producing films. The program is the first of its kind in the region, and will cover key areas to support the development of documentary and narrative films in the region.

The Lab is an opportunity for emerging local and Gulf-based producers to develop their skills with the mentorship of noted industry experts, and focuses on the creative, artistic and strategic aspects of producing short or feature-length documentary and fiction films.

Fifteen projects, including ten from Qatar, have been selected to take part in the Lab. Five feature narratives, five feature documentaries and five short narratives will be mentored through the programme, with Qatari projects participating in all three categories.

Fatma Al Remaihi, Chief Executive Officer of Doha Film Institute, said: "Doha Film Institute recognises the rise of emerging talent in the region and the fundamental role producers play in defining, supporting and influencing the voice of filmmakers. The first Producers Lab highlights our commitment to nurture the next generation of filmmakers, and help them cultivate a refined sensitivity to balance between the creative and financial aspects of filmmaking. The 15 projects have been chosen for their high creative standards and the vision of the filmmakers & producers to push the boundaries and present strong stories that have global resonance. Through the Producers Lab, we aim to strengthen co-productions in the region, expand networking opportunities for emerging talents, and enhance the overall quality of their productions."

Evaluated by an expert panel of judges, the selected projects are distinguished by their diversity of themes; compelling documentary and narrative approaches; and distinctive cinematic treatment and format. The Lab aims to enable the talents associated with these projects to address important and nuanced questions related to script development, executive production, finance and budget plans, marketing, pitching and distribution.

The chosen projects include:

### **Feature Narratives:**

- **Iter Baghdad** - Alaa Alasad (producer - Jordan)

- **Coming of Age** - Ania Wójtowicz (producer - Poland/America) & Sara Al-Obaidly (director-Qatar)
- **Five Days of Grace** - Saleh Nass (director/producer - Bahrain)
- **You Will Die at Twenty** - Amjad Abu Alala (director/producer - Sudan)
- **The Sense of Emptiness** - Oksana Shumylo (Ukraine)

**Feature Documentary:**

- **To the Ends of Earth** - Hamida Al Kawari (director/producer - Qatar)
- **A Man on Fire** - Louai Haffar (producer - Lebanon)
- **Jamharics: The Children of Zion** - Nadine Drummond (producer - UK)
- **Stuck in My Name** - Muhammad Refaat (producer - Egypt)
- **Absence** - Fatma Riahi (producer - Tunisia)

**Short Narratives:**

- **The Dog's Children** - Layan Abdul Shakoor (producer - Saudi Arabia)
- **The Play** - Fahad Al-Obaidly (director/producer Qatar)
- **Spot** - Latifa Al Darwish (director/producer Qatar)
- **Is That All There Is?** - Eiman Merghani (director - Sudan) & Ghouna Jaber (producer – Jordan)
- **The Left Shoe** - Ibrahim Korayem (producer – Egypt/Canada)

From November 12 to 17, they will attend the Producers Lab led by industry experts including **Dora Bouchoucha**, renowned producer and the founder of the Carthage Film Festival Projects Workshop; **Jad Abi Khalil**, the Head of the Beirut Cinema Platform; **Jovan Marjanović**, the Head of Industry at Sarajevo Film Festival; **Mohamed Hefzy**, one of the most prominent scriptwriters and producers in the Arab world; and **Violeta Bava**, co-founder of BAL, a leading co-production market for Latin American films and a programmer of the Buenos Aires International Film Festival.

With a focus on intensive discussions, the Producers Lab will have Master Classes by Dora Bouchoucha on 'The Chronology of the Development Process and the Role of the Producer & Creative Producer;' by Mohamed Hefzy on 'How the Money Works' and by Jovan Marjanović on 'Sales Distributions and Markets.'

There will be one-on-one advising meetings with the mentors, group working sessions and pitch training, and project pitch presentations in addition to the screening and case studies on **Hedi** by Mohamed bin Attia (Tunisia) produced by Bouchoucha, the first Arab film to win in the official competition at Berlinale in two decades; and Mohamed Diab's **Clash** (Egypt) that opened the Un Certain Regard strand at 2016 Cannes and is produced by Mohamed Hefzy.

Through intensive training exercises, group tutorials, tailor-made one-on-one meetings and master classes, participants will gain deeper insight into various elements of film producing and come to truly understand the role of a producer.

The Producers Lab is among the year-round training activities undertaken by the Doha Film Institute. Earlier this year, the Institute hosted two Short Filmmaking Labs; a Short and a Feature Scriptwriting Labs with Torino Film Lab; the La Fémis Gulf Summer University for aspiring young filmmakers to train in Paris; and Master Classes with Patrick Doyle, Teresa Cavina, Stella Bruzzi and Alix Madigan.

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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 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

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