

Films of empowerment and triumph tomorrow (Friday) at the 5th Ajyal Youth Film Festival

*Popular showcase of local short films at
Made in Qatar Programme 2*

Doha, Qatar; Nov 30, 2017: Tomorrow (Friday Dec 1) the 5th Ajyal Youth Film Festival, presented by the Doha Film Institute, will screen a strong series of films demonstrating its commitment to empowering youth and belief in the power of film to spread awareness of global issues.

Directed by Kate McLarnon and actress/activist Sky Neal, ***Even When I Fall (UK / 2017)*** explores the harrowing world of Nepali children sold by their parents into Indian circuses. Forced to perform as acrobats, children fortunate enough to be rescued usually face uncertain futures. In a cruel irony, the only option for many is to make use of the very skills they developed in captivity. The film follows one such group of rescued child, who attempt to reintegrate into Nepali society by joining Circus Kathmandu, the country's first contemporary circus. Their international success allows them to contribute to the rehabilitation of Nepal following the devastating earthquakes of 2015. **Screening on Fri 1 Dec / 4:00 PM**

Berni Goldblat's ***Wallay (France, Burkina Faso, Qatar / 2017)*** explores what happens when a troubled French teen, 13-year-old Ady, steals from his father and is sent to live under the care of his authoritarian uncle in Burkina Faso. Immersed in a new country, where he experiences a different type of familial love, far stronger than anything he felt at home, Ady begins to refashion his French outlook, integrating African inflections and in the process, developing the compassion that will one day make him a better global citizen. **Screening on Fri 1 Dec / 8:30 PM**

Aaron and Amanda Kopp's ***Liyana (Swaziland, Qatar, USA / 2017)*** is magnificent, heart-warming tribute to creativity, imagination and the healing power of storytelling. Set in Swaziland, a country where the AIDS epidemic has left hundreds of thousands of children to fend for themselves, it follows orphans attending a storytelling workshop come up with a young, fictional, female character. Drawing on their own experiences, as they create their central character and her adventures, they find themselves banishing their own fears at the same. **Screening on Fri 1 Dec / 9:15 PM**

What begins as a gentle tale of country life in 1930's and 40's Japan ends as a powerful indictment of horrors of war, and in particular, of the effects of the devastating atomic bombings of Nagasaki and Hiroshima. Based on a popular manga of the same name Sunao Katabuchi's ***In This Corner of the World (Japan / 2016)*** follows 18-year-old Suzu as goes to live with her new husband's family in Hiroshima. As the war begins and life becomes increasingly difficult, with shortages and other privations, the inhabitants face adversity with resilience and creativity, proof that even at the worst of times, hope and even happiness, will survive. **Screening on Fri 1 Dec / 10:00 PM**

There is also the chance to catch Pablo Iriburu and Migueltxo Molina's ***Walls (Spain / 2015)***, a powerful portrayal of the borders and other imaginary lines that divide us from each other, as

seen through the lives of people on either side of three contemporary international borders.
***House in the Fields* Screening on Fri 1 Dec / 7:45 PM. *Walls* Screening on Fri 1 Dec / 8:00 PM**

From skeleton-like, robotic creatures engaged in a pointless and seemingly endless war and a dreamy contemplation of the ever-changing urban landscape of Doha to a parable about the foolishness of isolation and bullying, ***Made in Qatar Programme 2***, presented by Occidental Petroleum Qatar, amply illustrates the growing maturing, vision and ability of the local film community. **Screening on Fri 1 Dec / 8:30 PM**

Between the films, there's plenty to do. The **Ajyal 2017 Family Weekend**, open from 3 PM to 10 PM on Katara Esplanade offers activities for children and adults alike. Over at Katara Buildings 18 and 19, **Geekdom**, a pop culture feast of comics, competitions, cosplay, movies, TV series and video games and **LeBlockade**, a multimedia celebration of Qatar's cultural resilience, take place from 2 PM to 10 PM.

For a rousing discussion, head to Katara Drama Theatre at 6 PM for the second round of **Ajyal Talks**. Two members of the Qatari film community, Shoug Shaheen, Abdulaziz Youssef and director of the Sarajevo Film Festival, Mirsad Purivatra will share their experience of how periods of struggle can spark social movements and inspire compelling works of art in **'How Art Beats Adversity.'**

Tickets are priced QR25 for general screening, and are available for purchase 24 hours a day at ajyalfilm.com or from the Ajyal Katara Main Box Office in Katara Building 12 or Ajyal FNAC Ticket Outlet, FNAC Qatar at Doha Festival City.

The Ajyal Youth Film Festival is made possible thanks to its partners: Katara Cultural Village as its Cultural Partner; Qatar Tourism Authority is the Strategic Partner, and Occidental Petroleum Corporation and Ooredoo are the Principal Partners. For more details on the Ajyal Youth Film Festival, please visit www.dohafilminstitute.com/filmfestival

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About Doha Film Institute:

The 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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