

Doha Film Institute Announces Acclaimed Masters of Cinema Andrey Zvyagintsev, Apichatpong Weerasethakul and Gianfranco Rosi for Qumra 2018

Doha, Qatar, December 14, 2017: Venice Golden Lion winning Russian director and writer Andrey Zvyagintsev (*Leviathan*, *Loveless*), Cannes Palme d'Or winning Thai filmmaker and visual artist Apichatpong Weerasethakul, and the only documentary director to win the Berlinale Golden Bear Italian director Gianfranco Rosi are confirmed as the first three Masters of the Doha Film Institute's dedicated industry event Qumra 2018.

In the 4th edition of Qumra in 2018, Andrey Zvyagintsev, Apichatpong Weerasethakul and Gianfranco Rosi will deliver Master Classes to upcoming filmmakers from Qatar and around the world, providing them with unique professional development opportunities through the mentoring sessions and development workshops led by film industry experts.

In addition, defining films by Andrey Zvyagintsev, Apichatpong Weerasethakul and Gianfranco Rosi will be screened to public audiences, sharing artistic inspirations of world-renowned masters of cinema. For the filmmakers that make up the Qumra delegates, the programme provides invaluable access to the finest works in global cinema by true vanguards of the industry.

Fatma Al Remaihi, CEO of Doha Film Institute said: "The 4th edition of Qumra is blessed to welcome three distinguished auteurs of world cinema, true masters who have presented standout films that reflect our world today through thought-provoking messages and discussions. It is an honour to host Andrey Zvyagintsev, Apichatpong Weerasethakul and Gianfranco Rosi, filmmakers who have redefined storytelling. We look forward to their participation at Qumra 2018, which will greatly benefit our filmmakers and enable them to further their own valuable contributions to the industry."

Elia Suleiman, Artistic Advisor added: "Films by such masters touch the soul unlike any other. Apichatpong Weerasethakul's films express a rich poetic beauty that can only come with deep contemplation and meditation. A profound window into modern Russian society, Andrey Zvyagintsev's films shine with an unsettling narrative brilliance. Gianfranco Rosi presents a gritty reality with a gravitas that holds you to an unavoidable empathy. All three Masters are exceptional filmmakers who define what it is to continuously elevate the standards of world cinema."

Andrey Zvyagintsev

Russian auteur Andrey Zvyagintsev represents the new generation in Russian cinema with accomplished works such as *Leviathan* (2014) winner of the Jury Prize at Cannes and nominated for the Academy Award and took the Jury Prize at Cannes in 2017 with *Loveless* (2017), which also won Best Film in the Official Competition at London Film Festival.

Born in Siberia, he graduated from the drama school in Novosibirsk, and continued to study at the Russian Academy of Theatre Arts. After a career as actor in film and theatre, he worked for REN TV, directing three episodes of the television series *The Black Room*. His feature film debut, *The Return*

(2003) won the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival along the Lion of the Future. His sophomore film *The Banishment* (2007) was nominated for the Palme d'Or at Cannes Film Festival.

Elena (2011) won the Un Certain Regard Prize in Cannes, while *Leviathan* went on to win the Golden Globe® Best Foreign Language Film and received the Oscar® nomination for Best Foreign Language Film. He served as the jury president of the Shanghai International Film Festival and only the second director to win the Best Film at the London Film Festival twice, for *Loveless* and *Leviathan*.

Apichatpong Weerasethakul

Apichatpong Weerasethakul is one of the most distinctive voices in contemporary cinema. His work has garnered widespread international recognition and numerous awards, including a Cannes Palme d'Or in 2010 for *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives*. *Tropical Malady* won the Cannes Jury Prize in 2004 and *Blissfully Yours* won the Cannes Un Certain Regard Prize in 2002. *Syndromes and a Century* (2006) was recognised as one of the best films of the last decade in several 2010 polls. His first feature, *Mysterious Object at Noon* (2000), has been restored by Martin Scorsese's World Cinema Foundation.

Apichatpong began making films and video shorts in 1994 and completed his first feature in 2000. He has also mounted exhibitions and installations in many countries since 1998 and is recognised as a major international visual artist. His art prizes include the Sharjah Biennial Prize (2013) and the prestigious Yanghyun Art Prize (2014). Lyrical and fascinatingly enigmatic, his film works are non-linear, referencing memory and in profound ways that invoke personal politics and social issues.

Gianfranco Rosi

Born in Asmara, Eritrea, Gianfranco Rosi won the Orizzonti Prize at Venice Film Festival with his first feature film, *Below Sea Level* (2008), shot in Slab City, California. The film also went on to win the Grand Prix and the Prix des Jeunes at the Cinéma du Réel festival in 2009.

In 2010, *El Sicario, Room 164* - a film-interview about a killer turned informer from the Mexican drug cartels - won the FIPRESCI Prize at Venice International Film Festival. In 2013, his documentary feature *Sacro Gra* won the Golden Lion, becoming the first documentary to ever to do so. He has presided over the jury of the 67th Locarno Festival in 2014.

In 2016, his documentary, *Fuococoamare (Fire at Sea)* won the Golden Bear at the 2016 Berlinale, as well as the European Film Award for best documentary. In 2017, the film received the Oscar® nomination for Best Documentary. Gianfranco graduated from the New York University Film School, and following a journey to India, he produced and directed his first documentary film, *Boatman* (1993), which screened with success at international film festivals including Sundance, Locarno and Toronto.

Previous Qumra Masters

Previous Qumra Masters include Argentina's eminent Lucrecia Martel (*The Swamp, The Holy Girl/ The Headless Woman*); internationally acclaimed Portuguese producer Paulo Branco; Best Foreign Language Film Oscar® winning Iranian master Asghar Farhadi (*A Separation/ The Salesman*); French auteur Bruno Dumont (*P'tit Quinquin*); Cambodian creative documentarian Rithy Panh (*The Missing Picture*); Mexican actor/ director/ producer Gael Garcia Bernal (*Amores Perros/ No/ Deficit*), Best Foreign Language Film Oscar® nominated Mauritanian director Abderrahmane Sissako (*Timbuktu*); Romanian auteur and Palme d'Or winner Cristian Mungiu (*4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days/ Beyond the Hills*); Best Foreign Language

Film Oscar® winning Bosnian writer/director Danis Tanović (*An Episode in the Life of an Iron Picker/ Tigers, No Man's Land*); Palme d'Or winning Turkish director Nuri Bilge Ceylan (*Once Upon a Time in Anatolia, Winter Sleep*); Cannes Grand Prix winning Japanese filmmaker Naomi Kawase (*The Mourning Forest*); Oscar® nominated director Joshua Oppenheimer (*The Act of Killing / The Look of Silence*); Cannes Best Screenplay winning writer James Schamus (*The Ice Storm*) and Aleksandr Sokurov (*Russian Ark/ Francofonia*).

There are two remaining 2018 Qumra masters to be confirmed.

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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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