



## Press Release

# Doha Film Institute-supported projects win top honours at 9<sup>th</sup> Asia Pacific Screen Awards

*Director Hany Abu-Assad's **The Idol** wins UNESCO Award; **Frenzy** wins Jury Grand Prize*

**Doha, Qatar; December 2, 2015:** Two films supported by the Doha Film Institute have won top honours at the ninth Asia Pacific Screen Awards (APSA), which recognise and promote the cinematic excellence and cultural diversity of the vast Asia Pacific region.

***The Idol*** (Palestine, UK, Qatar, The Netherlands; 2015) directed by Academy Award-nominated Hany Abu-Assad, and co-financed by the Doha Film Institute, won the APSA UNESCO Award for outstanding contribution to the promotion and preservation of cultural diversity through film. ***The Idol*** was the opening gala of the Doha Film Institute's third Ajyal Youth Film Festival earlier this week, with both Abu-Assad and 'Arab Idol' champion Mohammed Assaf, on whose life the film is based, in attendance.

***Frenzy*** (Turkey, France, Qatar; 2015), a recipient of a Doha Film Institute grant in the Spring 2014 session, directed by Emin Alper, won the APSA International Jury Grand Prize for writing and directing. A political thriller set in Istanbul, the film is about Kadir, who is released after a 15-year prison term and finds a job as an informant. ***Frenzy*** was a project participant in the first edition of Qumra earlier this year - the Doha Film Institute's new industry programme dedicated to the development of emerging filmmakers.

Further, Kirin Kiki, one of the most influential actresses in Japan, won the award for Best Performance by an Actress for her role in Naomi Kawase's ***An*** (Japan, France, Germany; 2015). The film has its Middle East premiere in Doha this week at the third Ajyal Youth Film Festival where Kiki is in attendance with fellow actor Masatoshi Nagase and writer Durian Sukegawa. Kiki is the first Japanese actress to win the honour in the nine-year history of the event.

Fatma Al Remaihi, CEO of the Doha Film Institute and Ajyal Youth Film Festival Director, said: "It is a great honour for the Doha Film Institute that films we supported have gained top recognition at APSA. These awards recognise the best in one of the most vibrant film producing regions and we are honoured to have played a part in bringing these projects to fruition. I offer my heartfelt congratulations to the teams behind ***The Idol*** and ***Frenzy*** and to Kirin Kiki on receiving this prestigious accolade."

Commenting on the award, Abu-Assad said: "Thank you dear jury for this great honour, giving us the UNESCO Award is a courageous decision at this time. The world seems to lose hope in the future. ***The Idol*** is a film about hope and our job as an artist is to keep believing in a better future. Our main job is to let people believe in making the world better, and to believe yourself that you can make a difference."

The APSA awards recognise and promote cinematic excellence and cultural diversity of the world's fastest-growing film region comprising 70 countries and areas, 4.5 billion people, and responsible for half of the world's film output. In 2015, 39 films from 22 Asia Pacific countries and areas received APSA nominations.



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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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