

Acclaimed filmmakers to share experience with emerging talents

Doha Film Institute announces Asghar Farhadi, Bruno Dumont and Rithy Panh as first Masters for Qumra 2017

- *Academy Award winner Asghar Farhadi's films are internationally acclaimed for their nuanced portrayals of social realism*
- *Festival de Cannes Grand Prix winner Bruno Dumont's works are known for their visual splendour, dark humour and evocative emotionality*
- *Critically acclaimed documentarian and Un Certain Regard Grand Prix Winner Rithy Panh draws from his moving personal experiences to revive unrecorded memories of his native Cambodia*

Dubai, UAE; December 10, 2016: Contemporary Iranian master Asghar Farhadi; French auteur Bruno Dumont; and Cambodian creative documentarian Rithy Panh are confirmed as the first Masters of Qumra 2017, the Doha Film Institute's industry event dedicated to the development of emerging talent with a focus on first- and second-time filmmakers.

An initiative that provides mentorship, nurturing, and hands-on development for filmmakers from Qatar and around the world, the third edition of Qumra will be held from March 3-8, 2017, in Doha.

Fatma Al Remaili, Chief Executive Officer of Doha Film Institute, said: "We are deeply honoured to welcome three visionaries of contemporary world cinema – Asghar Farhadi, Bruno Dumont and Rithy Panh – who bring their diverse approaches to filmmaking to Qumra 2017. A close-knit industry event that is set on nurturing the skills of emerging filmmakers, Qumra will gain tremendous insight from these three internationally acclaimed writer-directors. We are excited at the prospect of welcoming these Masters and look forward to engaging interactions among them and the participating filmmakers."

Artistic Advisor to Doha Film Institute, Elia Suleiman added: "The third edition of Qumra insists on remaining faithful to its essence and ideal; to being precise, consistent and sincere. Bruno Dumont, Asghar Farhadi, and Rithy Panh are three artists who will greatly enhance this concept and philosophy. These three filmmaker poets will present their work and expand on their diverse ways of seeing: Farhadi's hyper-real visual interpretation of social settings; Dumont's masterful and painterly cinematic tableaux; and Panh's tender, personal explorations of past cruelties. Qumra promises to persist as a space of surprise and a place of discovery, thereby preserving its identity as the hidden side of the creative process."

Qumra is designed to provide creative and professional support to directors and producers attached to as many as 25 features and 10 shorts in development or post-production. These include a number of emerging filmmakers from Qatar, as well as regional and international recipients of funding from the Institute's Grants Programme.

MASTER PROFILES:

Qumra Master Asghar Farhadi

Asghar Farhadi made his first short film at age 13 in a youth cinema club. In 2002, he wrote and directed his first feature film, *Dancing in the Dust (Raghss Dar Ghobar)* (2003), which won awards for Best Actor at the 25th Moscow International Film Festival and the Russian Society of Film Critics' Best Film award, and also won Best Screenplay and Best Director prizes at the 48th Asian Pacific Film Festival.

A year later, Farhadi made *Beautiful City (Shahre Ziba)* (2004), a social genre which was a rarity at the time. Following *Fireworks Wednesday (Chahar Shanbe Souri)* (2006), he made *About Elly (Darbareye Elly)* (2009), which had simultaneous world premieres at the Berlin International Film Festival and the Fajr Film Festival. It went on to win the Silver Bear for Best Director in Berlin and the Crystal Simorgh for Best Directing in Fajr.

Farhadi's next film, *A Separation (Jodaeiye Nader Az Simin)* (2011) took the Golden Bear for Best Film, and two Silver Bears for its performers when it was screened at the Berlin International Film Festival. It went on to win more than 70 awards, among them the César for Best Foreign Film and both the Golden Globe and Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film.

In the same year, he was named one of *Time* magazine's 100 most influential people in the world, and began work on the screenplay for *The Past*, (2013), which won the Best Actress Award at the Festival de Cannes and was nominated for Golden Globe and César Awards.

The second of Farhadi's films to be produced by Alexandre Mallet-Guy for Memento Films Production, *The Salesman* (2016) was selected for the Official Competition of the Festival de Cannes.

Qumra Master Bruno Dumont

Hovering on the border between realistic drama and the avant-garde, the films of Bruno Dumont have defined a new narrative idiom in world cinema. Known for writing complete novels that form the basis of his films, Dumont is deeply influenced by the fine arts that are reflected in the visual richness of his cinema. Deeply influenced by Greek and German philosophy, his films are festival favourites.

Born in 1958 in France, Dumont taught philosophy before his debut in cinema, when he wrote and directed *The Life of Jesus (La Vie de Jésus)* in 1997. The film won the FIPRESCI Prize at the Chicago International Film Festival, a Caméra d'Or Special Mention at the Festival de Cannes and was named Best New International Feature at the Edinburgh International Film Festival, among other honours.

His second film, *Humanité* (1999) won the Grand Prix for both Best Actor (Emmanuel Schotté) and Best Actress (Séverine Canele) at the Festival de Cannes, while *Flanders* (2006) clinched the Grand Prize of the Jury at Cannes. In addition to several shorts, Dumont has directed nine feature-length films, the most recent being *Slack Bay (Ma Loute)* (2016), starring Juliette Binoche. He served as the President of the Caméra d'Or jury at the Festival de Cannes in 2008.

Qumra Master Rithy Panh

Rithy Panh is a Cambodian-French filmmaker, writer and producer. Born in Cambodia, he studied filmmaking at the Institut des Hautes Études Cinématographiques (IDHEC) in France. His work as a filmmaker focuses primarily on the contemporary fallout resulting from the genocide committed by the Khmer Rouge regime in his homeland. Rooted in his first-hand experience of living in a remote labour camp, where he witnessed untold hardships and suffered irreparable losses, Panh's works have a rare and striking authority.

He has directed numerous internationally acclaimed films, including *The Rice People*, which was selected for the Official Competition of the Festival de Cannes in 1994; *The Land of Wandering Souls* (2000), which won several awards, including the Robert and Frances Flaherty Award at the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival; the influential *S21: The Khmer Rouge Death Machine*, (2004), which took numerous awards around the world, among them the Albert Londres Award; *Paper Cannot Wrap Embers* (2007), *The Sea Wall* (2008) and *Duch, Master of the Forges of Hell* (2012).

In 2013, Panh directed *The Missing Picture*, which was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film and won the Grand Prix in the Un Certain Regard section at the Festival de Cannes. His most recent directorial effort, *Exile*, once again considers the grave crimes and abuse of the Khmer Rouge regime. It won wide critical and public acclaim at Cannes in 2016.

Panh is dedicated to helping rebuild the Cambodian film industry. In 2006, with fellow Cambodian film director Ieu Pannakar, he opened the Bophana Audiovisual Resources Centre in Phnom Penh to collect audiovisual testimonies of the Cambodian people and make this heritage accessible to all. He is also a principal founder of the Cambodian Film Commission, an industry development organisation that includes the CFC Film Lab, a professional film training programme for Cambodians.

Previous Qumra Masters:

Previous Qumra Masters include Mexican actor, producer and director Gael García Bernal (*Amores Perros; No; Deficit*); Turkish auteur Nuri Bilge Ceylan (*Once Upon a Time in Anatolia; Winter Sleep* – Palme d'Or winner at the Festival de Cannes in 2014); Japanese director Naomi Kawase (*The Mourning Forest* – winner of the Cannes Grand Prix in 2007); Romanian director Cristian Mungiu (*4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days* – 2007 Palme d'Or winner; *Beyond the Hills*); acclaimed Denmark-based documentarian Joshua Oppenheimer (*The Act of Killing* – nominated for the Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature in 2013; *The Look of Silence* – nominated for the same award in 2015); legendary US indie producer James Schamus (co-writer and producer – *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*; producer – *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind; Lost in Translation*); Mauritanian filmmaker Abderrahmane Sissako (*Timbuktu* – nominated for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film in 2015); Russian master Aleksandr Sokurov (*Russian Ark, Francofonia*); and Bosnian director Danis Tanović (*An Episode in the Life of an Iron Picker; Tigers; No Man's Land* – winner of the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film in 2001).

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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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