

## Doha Film Institute to host 'Beginners Screenwriting Lab' Led by Qatari Filmmaker

*Qatari Mentor Fahad Ahmed Al-kuwari to Focus on Developing Storytelling Techniques in Arabic language; introduce aspiring filmmakers to the creative process of writing for the screen*

**Doha, Qatar; 16 July 2019:** The Doha Film Institute (DFI) will host a creative writing workshop in Arabic, the Screenwriting for Beginners Lab, from 24-28 August 2019. The five-day lab led by Qatari writer and art director Fahad Ahmed Al-kuwari, aims to introduce aspiring filmmakers to the creative process of writing for the screen and will focus on developing dialogue and storytelling techniques in the Arabic language. An English version of the lab will be offered to non-Arabic speakers from 3-7 August 2019.

The aim is for participants to come out of the lab with a minimum of one scene of their screenplay. They can continue to work with DFI's development team after the lab and work towards applying for other labs or grants. The deadline for applications to the lab is 20 July 2019. Between eight and 12 participants will be selected for each lab, which will cost QAR 500 per person. To apply please submit applications to: [development@dohafilminstitute.com](mailto:development@dohafilminstitute.com) and for more information visit: [www.dohafilminstitute.com](http://www.dohafilminstitute.com)

Fahad Ahmed Al-kuwari will mentor participants through a mixture of lectures, assignments, and group discussions. The English session of the lab will be hosted by Palestinian screenwriter Dana J. Atrach, Assistant Professor in Residence at Northwestern University in Qatar, where she teaches screenwriting.

The lab will complement the existing screenwriting programmes offered by the Institute, Hezayah for development of feature screenplays and the Short Scriptwriting Lab and will be an entry point to guide budding creatives into the basic principles of storytelling.

Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, Chief Executive Officer of the Doha Film Institute, said: "Screenplay story structure is probably the most important component in the creation of original and compelling content. Our screenwriting lab for beginners will help participants learn how to tell a story, develop a story concept and write a screenplay, especially in the Arabic language. We are excited that a local filmmaker like Fahad is leading the workshop and will bring in his filmmaking experience in Qatar to mentor the next generation of aspiring writers. This will be a first step for our young emerging talent to learn the skills of developing a good story and creating content that will engage with the audiences."

Fahad Ahmed Al-kuwari is an award-winning writer and art director who began his career in filmmaking on the sets of Mira Nair's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. As an Art Director with the Doha Film Institute, Fahad worked on several Qatari Film Fund short films including *Aljohara*, *Our Time is Running Out*, and *A Journey to from Love*. He also wrote and directed *Ruqya* and wrote the screenplay for *I*. Fahad is the joint recipient of a Merit Award from The CIDA Awards for Excellence for developing a production design curriculum for the Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar, where he is a guest lecturer.

The Screenwriting for Beginners Lab will cover all aspects of writing and be divided into two parts. The first part is focused on the architecture of screenplays and covers the foundations of storytelling, screenwriting guidelines, non-verbal storytelling, and characterisation. The second part is focused on formatting scripts, looking at visual grammar and the use of software programmes like Celtx and Final Draft. The lab will follow the same format in both English and Arabic.

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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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