



‘The DNA of Telling a Good Story is Common to All of Us,’ says Steven Soderbergh at Doha Film Festival

- ***American director Steven Soderbergh and British actress Michaela Coel attended a media briefing ahead of the MENA debut of their film***

Doha, Qatar; November 24, 2025: Oscar® winning American director Steven Soderbergh, speaking to members of the media at Doha Film Festival (DFF), highlighted the power of film festivals in keeping the tradition of cinema alive.

“As a species, human beings are wired for stories. Cinema, when it emerged over a hundred years ago, quickly became the most dominant art form in the world. Film festivals are one of the ways that cinema continues to reach people,” said Soderbergh, adding, “The DNA of telling a good story is common to all of us.”

As part of its programming from November 20-28, the festival hosted the acclaimed filmmaker and actress Michaela Coel for a press briefing on their film, *The Christophers*, ahead of its regional premiere.

“This will only be the second time the film has been seen anywhere; we’re anxious to watch it with a new audience in a different part of the world,” said Soderbergh.

Dark comedy *The Christophers*, also starring Sir Ian McKellen, James Corden, and Jessica Gunning, follows the estranged children of a renowned artist who hire a forger to complete and sell his unfinished paintings.

A prolific filmmaker, cinematographer, producer, and screenwriter, Soderbergh in 1989 became the youngest solo director to win the Palme d'Or with his debut film. He went on to direct the Academy Award-winning films *Erin Brockovich* (2000) and *Traffic* (2000), alongside the Ocean's trilogy (*Ocean's Eleven*, *Ocean's Twelve*, *Ocean's Thirteen*) and other audience favourites.

Coel, a groundbreaking actress, director, producer, and screenwriter, is best known for two television series she created, wrote, and starred in: *Chewing Gum* (2015-2017), which earned her a BAFTA for her performance, and *I May Destroy You* (2020), with which she made history as the first Black woman to win a Primetime Emmy for outstanding writing for a limited series.



Reflecting on her creative process, Coel shared: “When you dare to write your own darkness, you are, through that process, brought into a light. I can only encourage anybody to do the same.”

On her first visit to Doha, Coel highlighted the city’s potential to nurture international collaboration. “A lot of studios in America have their eye on Doha and I hope to be a part of that relationship.”

Taking place from 20-28 November 2025, Doha Film Festival (DFF) marks the bold next chapter in Doha Film Institute's mission to nurture regional talent and champion urgent and authentic stories in cinema. For more information, visit www.dohafilm.com.

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