Doha Film Festival 2026 Creative Excellence Awards Honours Nandita Das and Taim Hasan

- *Festival celebrates two extraordinary talents whose work has shaped the cinematic and cultural landscape of world cinema*

Doha, Qatar; 16 November 2026: Doha Film Festival (DFF) 2026 will honour acclaimed Indian filmmaker and actor Nandita Das and renowned Syrian actor Taim Hasan with its 2026 Creative Excellence Awards during the opening ceremony. The award recognises exceptional contributions to cinema in enduring artistic influence and powerful human stories that resonate across cultures.

Both recipients are leaders in storytelling, exploring identity, history and the complexities of human experience through performance. They represent the vital role of artists in challenging perspectives, fostering dialogue and building deeper connections across borders.

Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, CEO of **Doha Film Institute** and **Festival Director** of **Doha Film Festival, said:** "Cinema transcends borders, challenges perceptions and brings us closer to our shared humanity. Nandita Das and Taim Hasan represent the very best of this power. Their remarkable artistry, courage of expression and unwavering commitment to authentic storytelling resonates far beyond geographical and cultural boundaries. They remind us that cinema is a force that can shape how we see, understand and connect with one another. We are honoured to recognise these two artists at Doha Film Festival whose creative legacies continue to inspire audiences and a new generation of filmmakers."

Nandita Das is an actor, filmmaker and social advocate. Over the last three decades, she has acted in more than 40 feature films across 10 languages, working with eminent directors such as Mrinal Sen, Shyam Benegal, Deepa Mehta, Adoor Gopalakrishnan, Rituparno Ghosh and Mani Ratnam. She made her directorial debut in 2008 with 'Firaaq', which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and won wide critical acclaim. Her second film, 'Manto' (2018), based on the life of writer Saadat Hasan Manto, premiered at the Cannes Film Festival, where she has also twice served as a juror. Her book, 'Manto & I', chronicles the six-year journey of making the film.

In 2016, she founded Nandita Das Initiatives, a creative platform that co-produced 'Manto' and her third film, 'Zwigato' (2023), which follows a food delivery rider and his family and premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival. She was conferred the Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters by the French Government and holds a master's degree in social work. She continues to advocate for human rights and social justice, and is currently

developing her fourth feature film, exploring the dynamics of marriage in contemporary society.

Taim Hasan is one of the Arab world's most acclaimed screen actors. Born in Tartus, Syria, in 1976, he studied at the Higher Institute of Dramatic Arts in Damascus, and while still a student made his mark in Hatem Ali's historical epics 'Al-Zir Salem' (2000) and 'Saladin' (2001), in which his portrayal of the Fatimid Caliph Al-Adid became his breakthrough. He went on to take the title roles in 'Nizar Qabbani' (2005), as the celebrated Syrian poet, and 'King Farouk' (2007), as Egypt's last king, a performance that earned him the Gold Medal for Best Actor at the Cairo Arab Media Festival.

From 2017 to 2021, he led all five seasons of 'Al Hayba' as Jabal Sheikh Al Jabal, a role that made him a household name across the region and reached international audiences on Netflix. His recent work includes 'Taj' (2024), as a boxer resisting the French occupation of Syria, 'Under the Seventh Ground' (2025) and 'Mawlana' (2026), the latter two earning him consecutive Murex d'Or awards. Across a quarter of a century, his range and depth have brought the region's history and stories into homes across the Arab world and beyond.

The Creative Excellence Awards reflect Doha Film Festival's commitment to celebrating visionary artists whose work expands the possibilities of cinema and enriches the global creative landscape.

Key Partners of Doha Film Festival include Katara, Media City Qatar I Film Committee and Visit Qatar. Taking place from 19–27 November 2026, Doha Film Festival brings together filmmakers, audiences and industry voices from the region and beyond to honour original storytelling and important voices in film. For more information, visit www.dohafilm.com.

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