Doha Film Festival 2026 hosts filmmakers of Qatar's golden age of cinema

Doha, Qatar; November 24, 2026: Qatari filmmakers and producers called on the country's emerging talent to explore more feature filmmaking, adding that a golden era is beginning and new filmmakers need the courage to take the first step. They also called on producers to back young talent.

"Filmmaking in Qatar has become more serious in recent years," said Ahmed Al Baker, producer of the Katara Studios series ***Elzam*.** "A whole generation has come through Doha Film Institute's workshops and financing, growing from one feature film in 2025 to four this year at Doha Film Festival is a huge step. If producers keep supporting young filmmakers, even when it doesn't make business sense, we can build a real movement of content made in Qatar."

"***Elzam*** follows falconers on their journeys, here in Qatar and around the world," said Jassim Al Romaihi. "We shot all eight episodes of the first season to a high international standard, with a global team. Falconry is a heritage we are proud of and it has not been documented enough." The series will be telecast on Yango Play in January 2027.

Hamad Al Hajri, director of ***When the News Breaks You***, said: "We are building an industry of making content here, and we are proud of who we are. We want to export our identity and carry the voices of Arab journalists in their own words." The film looks at journalists reporting from war zones across the Middle East. "After watching 120 hours of footage, I had to decide how much to show," he said. "I want the film to stay in people's memory."

Jamal Al Khanji, director of ***Jodari Meno***, said: "The support here in the country is huge. Our job is to tell human stories rooted in our heritage. For anyone starting out, this is the beginning of a golden era." Al Khanji also acts in *Jodari Meno*, which follows his attempt to land a world-record dogtooth tuna. "The hardest part was how personal it was, as it was a documentary of my life."

Rodrigo Vazquez Salessi, director of ***First to Fly*,** said voices from the Global South have been underrepresented. "Our stories deserve to be told," he said. "We have to create our own pathways and not wait for external validation." His film follows Qatar's first two gymnasts who were also the first from their own countries to compete at the Rhythmic Gymnastics World Championships. "Only Qatar could bring together a Russian coach and a Syrian gymnast," he said.

Media City Qatar supports *Jodari Meno*, *A Very Ordinary Life* and *First to Fly*. *Jodari Meno* and *When the News Breaks You* received Doha Film Institute grants and took part in mentorship at Qumra 2025.

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