

German Competitions at DOK Leipzig 2020: Cinematic close-ups and far-sightedness

The competitions for long and short films include works by Andreas Voigt, Jan Soldat, Carsten Rau, Martina Priessner, Bettina Ellerkamp and Jörg Heitmann.



DOK Leipzig 2020 | Borderland (director: Andreas Voigt)

Cinematic panoramas of the state of the world, defiant protagonists, visually engaging works and philosophical views of humanity and the environment: the films of the German competitions at DOK Leipzig have been finalised.

“For the programme of the German Competitions, we’ve been able to draw from a variety of themes and perspectives on the world. Most of all, the range of cinematic styles is highly gratifying; it demonstrates the artistic possibilities of today’s documentary filmmaking. Young talent eager to experiment encounters established artists in the competitions,” festival director Christoph Terhechte says about the selection. “It doesn’t stop at a close look at Germany. A far-sighted cross-border vision of the world testifies to an intense curiosity about international locations and local stories outside of Germany. Some of the films are profoundly exploratory, some are panoramas of vast landscapes, some are strong portraits and explorations of family ties, and a few are simply hilarious.”

The selection committee has chosen a total of 17 productions for the German Competition Long Documentary and Animated Film and the German Competition Short Documentary and Animated Film. Among them are twelve world premieres, one European and four German premieres. In both competitions, the gender ratio of the directors is balanced. The other competitions of the festival, to be announced in the coming weeks, are also gender-balanced in terms of directors.

Some of the films deal with pressing issues of our time, such as the approaching end of nuclear power generation in Germany and the question of permanent storage, the urbanisation of African societies using the ex-

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ample of Addis Ababa, and the perilous flight across the Mediterranean Sea to Europe of people seeking refuge. The latter topic is of current political relevance, as the Sea-Watch reconnaissance aircraft Moonbird, from which the film "Operation Moonbird" was filmed above the Mediterranean Sea, was grounded by the Italian government this month. This is hindering the continuation of the reconnaissance and rescue mission.

Other works encourage reflection on identity, prejudice and discrimination. For example, problematic aspects of the German fascination with North America's indigenous population, the so-called "Indians", and the cultural appropriation associated with this are discussed. A satirical look at the art business calls existing gender roles into question. Stories of emancipation and empowerment emerge for young Egyptian women who lift weights and a Syrian Orthodox nun who asserts her identity in a Muslim environment.

Some of the directors participating this year have previously had films screened at DOK Leipzig. Andreas Voigt, for example, returns to Leipzig with a film about people in the border area between Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic. In 2015 he opened the festival with his long-term observation "Alles andere zeigt die Zeit". Carsten Rau was last represented in Leipzig in 2014 with his very popular film "Willkommen auf Deutsch". Martina Priessner attended the festival's industry platform, DOK Industry, last year with her current production: her film was one of the rough cuts presented at DOK Preview Germany. And animated filmmaker Anne Isensee received the Golden Dove in Leipzig 2017 for her film "Megatrück".

This year's award-winning films will be presented on the Sunday of the festival (1 November 2020). The films in the German Competition Long Film are nominated for a Golden Dove, the films in the German Competition Short Film for a Silver Dove. Members of the jury are film editor and filmmaker Bettina Böhler, actress Anne Ratte-Polle and Alex Moussa Sawadogo, artistic director of the Afrikamera festival.

Some of the films are also nominated for partner awards: the DEFA Sponsoring Prize, the Goethe-Institut Documentary Film Prize, the Ver.di Prize for Solidarity, Humanity and Fairness, the MDR Film Prize, the Gedanken-Aufschluss Prize, the Young Eyes Film Award and the Mephisto 97.6 Audience Award.

A list of all the films nominated in the German Competitions can be found in the attachment.

Images of DOK Leipzig and logos can be found [here](#).

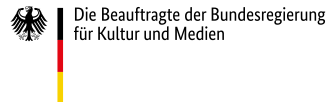
The 63rd edition of DOK Leipzig will be held as a hybrid festival this year. In addition to cinema screenings for the Leipzig audience, a large part of the programme will be shown online throughout Germany. Film talks, podcasts and the industry events of DOK Industry will be available online. Accredited guests are able to view festival films online worldwide.

Would you like to be accredited for DOK Leipzig 2020? Please, register with a new account on [myDOK](#) by 18 October and use [this form](#) to apply for your online accreditation.

Wir danken für die Unterstützung

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German Competition Long Documentary and Animated Film



80.000 Schnitzel

(International title: 80.000 Schnitzels)

Hannah Schweier

Germany 2020 | German premiere

Monika has a new dream: She fights tirelessly to preserve her grandmother's ailing inn and farm. The film confronts us with the universal question when it is the right time to live one's dreams and how quickly this time may pass.



Atomkraft Forever

(International title: Nuclear Forever)

Carsten Rau

Germany 2020 | World premiere

This look at the issue of nuclear power begins where Germany is currently standing: with shutting it off. A safe final nuclear waste repository is not in sight. And yet, boosted by the coal phase-out, many people seem to see "clean" nuclear energy as an option again.



Grenzland

(International title: Borderland)

Andreas Voigt

Germany, Poland 2020 | World premiere

Movements and stories in the border region between Poland and Germany – Andreas Voigt's new film takes up the themes of his 1992 work "Borderland – A Journey". The charged term "homeland" stirs up (trouble in) the minds and hearts of the people.



Lift Like a Girl

(Original title: نيتباك اي شراع)

Mayye Zayed

Denmark, Egypt, Germany 2020 | European premiere

Mayye Zayed has followed the Captain's student Asmaa, who was fourteen at the start, for four years. Asmaa fights her way to the global top league matches of weightlifting.



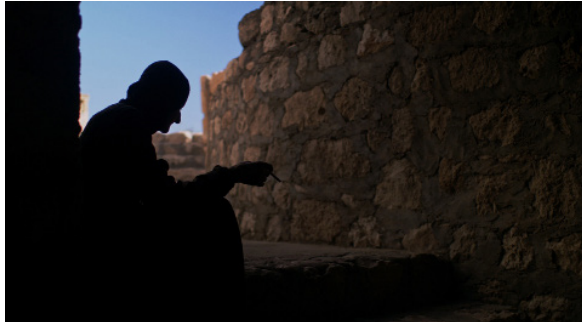
Rift Finfinnee

Daniel Kötter

Ethiopia, Germany 2020 | World premiere

At the periphery of the rapidly growing East African metropolis Addis Ababa: a composition about the dynamics of an urban turbo modernisation and people who are forced to experience the impetuous urbanisation of African societies the hard way.

German Competition Long Documentary and Animated Film



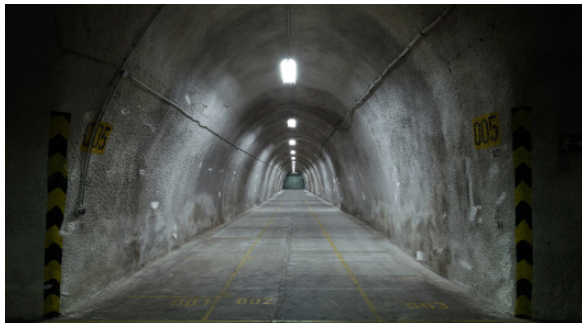
Die Wächterin

(International title: The Guardian)

Martina Priessner

Germany 2020 | World premiere

A Syrian Orthodox nun lives in a dilapidated estate in south-eastern Turkey. Despite hostilities from the Muslim neighbourhood: she won't be driven out, for she has sworn to protect the church and not to leave the sacred place.



Wir wollten alle Fiesen killen

(International title: We Wanted to Kill All Nasty Ones)

Bettina Ellerkamp, Jörg Heitmann

Germany 2020 | World premiere

Rothenstein, south of Jena. A mountain, hollowed out, built on and impossible to sell. Bizarre energy fields and plans of U.S. preppers meet facticities of National-Socialist exploitation and forced labour, stories of flight from the 1930s, and the military history of the GDR.

German Competition Short Documentary and Animated Film

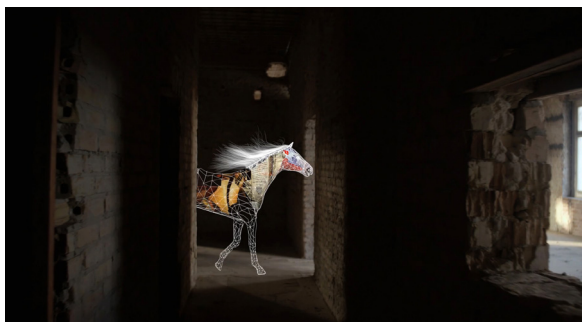


AIVA

Veneta Androva

Germany 2020 | World premiere

AIVA is an artist, animated by algorithms. But above all she is the soberingly limited male tech vision of what more diversity in the arts could look like. A naive and cliché-ridden "art documentary" lets us participate in her work.



Appropriation Takes You on a Weird Ride

Nina Fischer, Maroan el Sani

Germany 2020 | World premiere

A media-historical interrogation of the German fascination with the colonialist construct of "Red Indians" which leads right up to its instrumentalization by the "New Right". The backdrop are the ruins of the former U.S. embassy in East Berlin, where an exhibition on the subject took place in 1986.

German Competition Short Documentary and Animated Film



Dark Matter

Viktor Brim

Germany, Russia 2020 | German premiere

Quiet, dark shots of nocturnal fog, of a mine, a dump truck or a wreck, of huge earth craters and new surface contours created by excavation tell of raw material extraction, economisation and exploitation of nature. Post-industrial landscapes become post-apocalyptic.



Dieser Film heißt aus rechtlichen Gründen Breaking Bert (International title: Due to Legal Reasons This Film Is Called Breaking Bert)

Anne Isensee

Germany 2020 | World premiere

Most accidents happen at home. Thus the appeal to one's personal political responsibility comes as a surprise. Randomly reading a Brecht text inspires to take action – a pointed film full of humour.



Elefantin

(International title: Bibi Must Go)

Marie Zrenner, Johanna Seggelke

Germany 2020 | World premiere

A trauma therapy on film for an uprooted elephant cow: Born in Zimbabwe, Imported by the East Berlin zoo and deported to the Halle zoo. The story of a social creature that, like all of us, needs security and a home to form stable relationships.



Erwin

Jan Soldat

Austria, Germany 2020 | German premiere

58-year-old Erwin introduces himself as "old but horny". He has declared the mobile home in his front garden his favourite refuge, where he has everything he needs: a computer, a bed, a coffee machine. Two webcams link Erwin to other men who satisfy his carnal desires.



Haeberli

Moritz Mueller-Preisser

Germany 2019 | World premiere

Is he insane or a genius? An impoverished messie or a millionaire? Many legends surround Adolf Haeberli, who is over eighty years old. In the middle of the luxury spa town of St. Moritz he lives in his dilapidated and cramped house. A humorous, but never compromising portrait of a lateral thinker.

German Competition Short Documentary and Animated Film



Operation Moonbird

Dustin Lose

Germany 2020 | World premiere

A gloomy filmic contribution to sea rescue and a concentrated revelation of the mechanisms of systematic flight prevention in the Mediterranean and the people responsible for it. This is not a film about the alleged refugee problem but one about the problem called Europe.



Der Schornsteinsegler

(International title: The Chimney Swift)

Frédéric Schuld

Germany 2020 | German premiere

England, mid-19th century: children keep the flow of air going in narrow, sooty chimney flues. Their fear of falling is as strong as their fear of the master's punishment. The report of a chimney sweep of the time is brought to life by pencil drawings.



Verwundene Fäden

(International title: Riven Threads)

Deborah Jeromin

Germany 2020 | World premiere

What's the parallel between a Leipzig allotment club and the Wehrmacht's invasion of Greece? This cinematic search for traces takes us from silkworm breeding in a Leipzig allotment garden to the island of Crete and German war crimes.