

The 65th edition of DOK Leipzig has begun

Svitlana Lishchynska received the Saxon Award for the Best Documentary Project by a Female Director



Festival opening 2021 | photo: Viktoria Conzelmann

DOK Leipzig opened on Monday, 17 October, at the CineStar with the German premiere of the long animated film „No Dogs or Italians Allowed“ by Alain Ughetto.

For Christoph Terhechte, this marks the beginning of his third festival edition as director of DOK Leipzig. In his welcome speech, he reflected on the role of art in dealing with world political events and referenced the current protests in Iran: “Art has to face reality, and it needs the interaction with its audience. That is what we are there for as a festival. Hence, we regret not having the time to react with our programme planning to the protests in Iran. Nevertheless, we wish to express our solidarity with the courageous women in Iran and all those who finally have the prospect of shaking off decades of oppression and asserting elementary human rights. DOK Leipzig, too, stands for these values.”

Saxon State Minister for Culture and Tourism Barbara Klepsch also spoke at the festival opening. She emphasised the importance of the festival as an in-person event: „I am very pleased that DOK Leipzig will be able to welcome guests and international filmmakers to Leipzig again this year in the usual way. Especially after the two difficult years for culture due to the Corona pandemic, it’s even more meaningful that direct encounters and exchanges are possible again on site.“

Barbara Klepsch then presented the Saxon Award for the Best Documentary Project by a Female Director, worth 5,000 euros, to Ukrainian filmmaker Svitlana Lishchynska for her project „A Bit Of A Stranger“. It tells the story of Svitlana’s mother, daughter and granddaughter — three generations of a family from Mariupol who have lost their national identity due to the long-term imperial policy of Moscow and are currently facing the Russian war of aggression.

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65th International Leipzig
Festival for Documentary and
Animated Film

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The jurors Sarah Anderson (Chicken & Egg Pictures), Vesna Cudic (Sky Studios) and Babette Dieu (European Film Market) were impressed by Lishchynska's „courage in filming and sharing the experience of her family in this way“. In their laudatory speech, they underlined: „We believe that the project has a great potential to engender empathy for the protagonists and the people involved, to heal and to facilitate a debate on universal issues.“

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Projects by female directors selected for the DOK Co-Pro Market were eligible for the award, which was donated by the Saxon State Minister for Culture and Tourism. „I am very pleased that we are once again supporting the development of film projects from a female perspective with this prize,“ Barbara Klepsch said.

Greeting the crowd via video message, Leipzig Mayor Burkhard Jung congratulated the festival on its 65th edition and added: „Many interesting insights, discussions and clear political commitments — that's what I wish for to achieve open diversity and ultimately also peace in this world, which the DOK festival dove also represents.“ As focal points of this year's festival edition, Jung highlighted the initiative to support Ukrainian filmmakers and the new „Panorama“ section with films from Central and Eastern Europe.

Afterwards, the short film „Anscht“ by Matthias Huber was shown, followed by the introduction of the selection committee and juries for DOK Leipzig 2022.

The opening event concluded with the screening of the long animated film „No Dogs or Italians Allowed“, introduced by a conversation between Christoph Terhechte and the film's director Alain Ughetto. In the stop-motion film, French director and screenwriter Alain Ughetto traces the lives of his grandparents from Northern Italy to their migration to France in the first half of the 20th century.

Parallel to the opening event at the CineStar, „No Dogs or Italians Allowed“ was screened in the Leipzig Central Station, where it was also introduced by the filmmaker and festival director.

DOK Leipzig will present a total of 255 films and XR experiences from 55 countries in 11 different venues through Sunday, 23 October. Included among the venues for the first time is the cinema Kinobar Prager Frühling in southern Leipzig. Once again this year, some of the films will be presented by DOK Leipzig with free admission in the Osthalle at the Central Station and the Polish Institute. The Golden and Silver Doves will be awarded on Saturday evening. Prior to that, numerous partner awards will be presented at a separate ceremony in the afternoon.

Following the festival week, ten award-winning films will be shown online via DOK Stream throughout Germany from 24 to 30 October. The film selection will be published on the festival Sunday.

Further information on the festival programme can be found here:

[Programme & Tickets](#)

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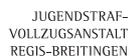
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