

“Death of a City“ and “The Cervix Pass“ pick up Doc Alliance Awards

Press Release
12 August 2023



Death of a City (director: João Rosas)

The winners of the Doc Alliance Award 2023 have been announced tonight at the award ceremony of DokuFest in Prizren.

The Doc Alliance Award for Best Feature Film, endowed with 5,000 EUR, went to **“Death of a City“** by João Rosas. The film follows the demolition of an old printing workshop in the center of Lisbon to make way for luxury flats. What starts out as a work-centred film turns out to be an evocative account of the director’s relationship with his hometown and the people who build it – a polyphonic narrative made up of their stories of labour and migration, shining a light on the violence and destruction that hide under the progress of our cities.

The jury commended the director “for an intelligently politicised work and its salutary portrayal of the lives of the people therein, an incisive and moving exploration of the face of modern Europe.”

The Doc Alliance Award for Best Short Film, endowed with 3,000 EUR, went to **“The Cervix Pass“** by Marie Bottois. In her film, the director refers to the founding of the MLAC (Movement for Abortion and Contraception Freedom) in France in 1973. In the style of militant and feminist films of the time, she documents the insertion of an intrauterine device inside her own body.

The jury praised the film’s “ability to organize a moving and playful coexistence between life and cinema. Marie Bottois combines in a remarkable way political and cinematographic rigor, courage and humor, frontality and delicacy.”

The winning films were selected by a jury of three film professionals with different experience in the industry: Jonathan Ali, a programmer and curator (Locarno Film Festival, Open City Docs, True/False Film Fest, Sheffield DocFest and Third Horizon Film Festival), Anna Berthollet, CEO at Lightdox (sales and distribution) and programmer Arnaud Hée (Bibliothèque publique d’information du Centre Pompidou).

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Publicist
Nina Kühne
Melanie Rohde
Tel. +49 (0)341 30864 1070
presse@dok-leipzig.de

Leipziger Dok- Filmwochen GmbH
Katharinenstraße 17
04109 Leipzig

Chairwoman of
the Supervisory Board
Dr. Skadi Jennicke

Managing and Artistic Director
Christoph Terhechte

Place of Performance
Leipzig

Handelsregister
Commercial Register, HRB 35 89

VAT Tax ID
DE141498242

“Disturbed Earth“, a feature-length documentary by Kumjana Novakova and Guillermo Carreras Candi, received a Special Mention by the jury. The film was nominated by DokuFest, this year’s guest festival of Doc Alliance.

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“The Cervix Pass“ and “Disturbed Earth“ is available on dafilms.com until 31 August along with a selection of nominated short films and Doc Alliance Award winners from previous editions, which have gone on to enduring success in the world of documentary.

The Doc Alliance network of documentary film festivals supports emerging talent in European documentary film. Each of the seven festivals (CPH:DOX, Doclisboa, DOK Leipzig, FIDMarseille, Ji.hlava IDFF, Millennium Docs Against Gravity FF and Visions du Réel) as well as a guest festival nominates one short and one feature-length documentary film from its past programme. In addition, each festival in the network shows at least three films from the selection in its next edition.

Award winners & jury statements:

Best Feature Film

Death of a City by João Rosas
Nominated by Doclisboa

Jury statement:

“Death of a City begins simply enough, as a diary of the real-estate boom of the filmmaker’s home city, Lisbon, in the aftermath of the financial crisis. Over the course of its almost two-hour runtime, however, this outstanding film patiently opens out to become a deeply felt chronicle not only of a changing city, but also of the migrant workers engaged in its construction, their hopes and dreams, and the communities they belong to. The jury commends João Rosas for an intelligently politicised work and its salutary portrayal of the lives of the people therein, an incisive and moving exploration of the face of modern Europe.“

Best Short Film

The Cervix Pass by Marie Bottois
Nominated by FIDMarseille

Jury statement:

“The Cervix Pass takes a deliberately provocative starting point, and is one of the most significant and impactful feminist works of recent years. It is a reaffirmation of activism, militancy and rights, which seem to us to be very important. But we have chosen the film for its ability to organize a moving and playful coexistence between life and cinema. Marie Bottois combines in a remarkable way political and cinematographic rigor, courage and humor, frontality and delicacy.“

Special Mention

Disturbed Earth by Kumjana Novakova & Guillermo Carreras Candi
Nominated by Dokufest

Jury statement:

“Disturbed Earth remarkably delves into the darkest corners of history, shedding light on the profound tragedy of the Srebrenica massacre. In the visionary collaboration between Kumjana Novakova and Guillermo Carreras-Candi, we witness the unimaginable as they unveil archival

footage captured by the Serbian forces during those fateful days in 1995. With courage and compassion, Novakova and Carreras-Candi juxtapose these haunting images from the past with the present-day landscape, a poignant reminder of the enduring scars borne by the former enclave and its people. Through their artistry, they bridge the gap between history and memory, inviting us to confront the collective grief that lingers and embrace the imperative of healing.“

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