

“Peacemaker” by Ivan Ramljak receives the Golden Dove in the International Competition Documentary Film at DOK Leipzig

Press Release
1 November 2025

Feature-length animated film “Endless Cookie” receives Golden Dove |
Feature-length film “Active Vocabulary” wins the German Competition |
Audience jury honours “Cutting Through Rocks”



Winners of the Golden and Silver Doves 2025 | © Susann Bargas Gomez

The award-winning films of the 68th edition of DOK Leipzig have been announced. The seven Golden and two Silver Doves as well as various Partnership Awards were presented at the Schaubühne Lindenfels in Leipzig on Saturday.

In the **International Competition Documentary Film**, the **Golden Dove Feature-Length Film** went to Ivan Ramljak for “**Peacemaker**” (Mirotvorac | Croatia). This award-winning film looks at the beginnings of the war between Serbia and Croatia and a chief of police in Slavonia who was determined to mediate between the conflicting parties. “A specific event in a specific region was made into a film of universal importance,” the jury said in its statement. The 10,000-euro Golden Dove is sponsored by Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk. The award was presented by Thomas Beyer, editor in the documentary department at MDR.

The 3,000-euro **Golden Dove Short Film** went to Matilde-Luna Perotti for “**After the Silence**” (Después del silencio | Canada), about domestic sexual abuse. “This minimalist approach prioritizes listening to the unspoken, and the difficulty of receiving such a heavy testimony within a family setting,” said the jury.

The films that have earned Golden Doves in the International Competition Documentary Film qualify for nomination for the annual Academy Awards®, provided they meet the Academy’s standards.

The **Silver Dove Feature-Length Film**, sponsored by 3sat and awarded to the best feature-length documentary film by an emerging director, went to Gregor Brändli for “**Elephants & Squirrels**” (Switzerland). Sri Lankan artist Deneth Piumakshi Veda Arachchige discovers the collection of one of her country’s indigenous communities in Switzerland and gets involved in its restitution. The jury praised the film “for portraying step by step an ultimately successful struggle”. Markus Dillmann (3sat) presented the

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6,000-euro award to the filmmaker.

The 1,500-euro Silver Dove Short Film, sponsored by the independent Saxon State Media Agency (SLM) and awarded to the best short documentary by an emerging director, went to **“String Pieces”** (Garak | South Korea) by Vatae Kimlee. In this film, a student comes across a recording of a conversation in which her grandparents talk about their past in the South Korean city of Incheon. The jury highlighted the film for “creatively mixing animation and documentary.” The award was presented by Katja Röckel from the SLM’s Media Council.

The winners of the International Competition Documentary Film were selected by Heleen Gerritsen, Alain Kassanda, Annie Ohayon-Dekel, Kazuhiro Soda and Jim Stark.

In the **International Competition Animated Film**, the 3,000-euro **Golden Dove Feature-Length Film** went to Seth Sriver and Peter Sriver for **“Endless Cookie”** (Canada). They visualise their story with originality and a great deal of wit: one of the half-brothers lives in Toronto, the other in Shamattawa, a community of the Indigenous Cree people. “This is a film that draws strength and hope from the chaos of everyday life. A story about filmmaking, intergenerational wisdom and love,” said the jury members Betina Kuntzsch, Aneta Ozorek and Jonatan Schwenk.

The **Golden Dove Short Film**, which includes 1,500 euros, went to Matea Radic for **“Paradaiz”** (Canada). In this film, the director looks back on her childhood during the war in Bosnia and on the fond and traumatic memories she associates with that time. “The film stands out for its vulnerability, its imaginative and relatable visuals and the playfulness in its approach. A touching voice given to all who had to leave their home because of war,” the jury said in its statement.

The film that earns the Golden Dove Short Film qualifies for nomination for the annual Academy Awards®, provided it meets the Academy’s standards.

In the **German Competition Documentary Film**, the **Golden Dove Feature-Length Film** went to **“Active Vocabulary”** (Germany) by Yulia Lokshina. Based on a story of a young teacher, Yulia Lokshina’s “Active Vocabulary” examines how the Russian state uses schools to further its own agenda. “With great precision and skill, Yulia Lokshina translates experiences in the struggle for truth into a powerful cinematic language, creating a space that challenges us to resolutely confront our fear of surveillance,” praised the jury. This 10,000-euro award is donated by Doris Apell-Kölmel and Michael Kölmel.

The **Golden Dove Short Film**, which includes 1,500 euros, went to Jana Rothe for **“Boma a Bopa”** (Luxembourg, Germany), an observation of everyday life and a journey back in time to the youth of her own grandparents. “Precisely framed, the film documents spaces that point beyond the visible, spaces where time seems to stand still. A film that faces the end of life with great tenderness – poignant, playful, touching,” said jury members Maike Mia Höhne, Gerd Kroske and Ines Weizman.

The short film **“Cold Call”** (Germany) by Stefanie Schroeder received an honorary mention.

The **Golden Dove** in the **Audience Competition** was presented to the

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documentary film **“Cutting Through Rocks”** (Uzak yollar | USA, Iran, Germany, Netherlands, Qatar, Chile, Canada) by Sara Khaki and Mohammadreza Eyni. the protagonist Sara advocates feminist values in her rural community in northwestern Iran and decides to be the first woman in the history of her community to run for the local council. “The film tells Sara’s story from the most intimate and private angles, creating moments of lightness and heaviness, enthusiasm and disappointment showing that ‘unconventional actions have consequences,’ as the protagonist herself puts it,” said the jury members Henry Engelberg, Fine Fritzsche, Lara Goldberg, Višnja Jurić-Krappmann and Moritz Mahltig. This 3,000-euro award is granted pro rata by Leipziger Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Filmkunst e. V. and the Leipzig Stiftung.

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The award-winners of the Golden and Silver Doves at a glance:

International Competition Documentary Film

Golden Dove Feature-Length Film:
“Peacemaker” (dir. Ivan Ramljak | HR 2025)

Golden Dove Short Film:
“After the Silence” (dir. Matilde-Luna Perotti | CA 2024)

Silver Dove Feature-Length Film:
“Elephants & Squirrels” (dir. Gregor Brändli | CH 2025)

Silver Dove Short Film:
“String Pieces” (dir. Vatae Kimlee | KR 2024)

International Competition Animated Film

Golden Dove Feature-Length Film:
“Endless Cookie” (dir. Seth Scriver, Peter Scriver | CA 2025)

Golden Dove Short Film:
“Paradaiz” (dir. Matea Radic | CA 2025)

German Competition Documentary Film

Golden Dove Feature-Length Film:
“Active Vocabulary” (dir. Yulia Lokshina | DE 2025)

Golden Dove Short Film:
“Boma a Bopa” (dir. Jana Rothe | LU, DE 2025)

Audience Competition

Golden Dove:
“Cutting Through Rocks” (dir. Sara Khaki, Mohammadreza Eyni | US, IR, DE, NL, QA, CL, CA 2025)

Partnership Awards

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Earlier, on Saturday afternoon, ten Partnership Awards were presented at the Schaubühne Lindenfels.

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Patience Nitumwesiga received the 2,000-euro **ver.di Prize for Solidarity, Humanity and Fairness** for “**The Woman Who Poked the Leopard**” (UG, ZA, DE, US). The filmmaker was also awarded the 4,000-euro DEFA Sponsoring Prize granted by the DEFA Foundation.

The 3,000-euro **MDR Film Prize** for an outstanding eastern European documentary film went to Anastasiya Miroshnichenko for “**Welded Together**” (FR, NL, BE).

The 2,000-euro **Prize of the Interreligious Jury** went to Srđan Kovačević for “**The Thing to Be Done**” (Ono što treba činiti | HR, RS, SI). This award is sponsored by the VCH Hotel Michaelis in Leipzig as well as the Interreligious Round Table and the Oratorium Leipzig. The jury also gave a special mention to Jennifer Chiu for “Clan of the Painted Lady”.

The **Young Eyes Film Award** was presented to “**Fantastique**” (BE, FR, NL) by Marjolijn Prins. This 2,000-euro award is sponsored by the European Foundation of the Rahn Dittrich Group for Education and Culture and presented by the youth jury in cooperation with LFD – Fachstelle für Medien und Bildung.

The Prize of the International Film Critics (**FIPRESCI Prize**) went to “**The Red Moon Eclipse**” (L'éclipse de la lune rouge | BE) by Caroline Guimbal.

The **mephisto 97.6 Award** went to the short animated film “**Once in a Body**” (Una vez en un cuerpo | CO, US) by María Cristina Pérez.

For the first time, the jury comprised of prisoners at the Juvenile Detention Centre Regis-Breitlingen presented two awards. The **Gedanken-Aufschluss Documentary Film** award went to “**Sediments**” (Sedimente | CH, DE) by Laura Coppens. The **Gedanken-Aufschluss Animated Film** award went to “**Clot**” (Klonter | BE) by Levi Stoops.

The **film.land.sachsen Prize for Film Culture in Rural Areas**, presented in cooperation with the Filmverband Sachsen e.V., went to Karoline Rößler for “**Intersection – It's Political**” (Intersection – Alles ist politisch | DE).

The **Film Prize Leipziger Ring** honours an outstanding documentary film about human rights, democracy or civil engagement. It is granted by the Stiftung Friedliche Revolution and has a value of 2,500 euros. This award was presented to Juan Camilo Cruz for “**A Simple Soldier**” (UA, US, UK) on Saturday morning at the Academy of Fine Arts Leipzig (HGB).

Twelve awards had already been presented during the week of the festival as part of the industry platform DOK Industry ([see the press release from 30 October](#)).

Altogether, 32 awards were presented at DOK Leipzig. At the 68th edition of the festival, 252 films and extended reality works from 55 countries were screened at the venues around Leipzig.

All jury statements can be found below.

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