

## DOK Leipzig 2025 attracts 53,000 festivalgoers

Christoph Terhechte's final edition of the festival a big success

**Press Release**  
**4 November 2025**



Christoph Terhechte, DOK Leipzig 2025 | © Susann Bargas Gomez

The 68th edition of the documentary and animated film festival DOK Leipzig came to a close on Sunday. The festival was a resounding success, having attracted a total of 53,000 attendees this year. More than 2,000 accredited guests attended the film screenings and events.

One item on this year's festival programme is still to come. The third part of the Retrospective titled "Un-American Activities: Films from the 'Other America' at the Leipzig Documentary Film Week from 1962 to 1989" will be held on 7 and 8 November at the Luru Cinema in the Spinnerei.

"The fact that so many festivalgoers and accredited guests once again flocked to the cinemas, to DOK Neuland and to the DOK Industry events continues to show how great the demand is for artistic engagement with global political issues and diverse lifestyles," concludes festival director Christoph Terhechte. "This year, we observed a striking number of film talks in which the audience not only asked questions but also engaged in lengthy and lively discussions about the films. There is a thirst for dialogue held face-to-face – and it remained respectful throughout the festival. This is the approach to discourse we like to see."

The short film reels, the films in the German Competition, the master classes and the Animation Perspectives and Animation Night events were particularly well-attended. Among the highlights of the festival were the free screenings at Leipzig Central Station, which attracted more than 300 people every evening, and the DOK Neuland XR exhibition. A total of 1,577 people came to Leipzig's West Side to see the interactive and immersive media works at the Heilandskirche/Westkreuz.

With 12 awards presented this year, a gratifyingly large number of honours went to film projects presented at DOK Industry. Among the highlights of this platform for industry professionals were the DOK Talks "Doc Together: Documentary as Resistance" and "Anidox Lab – The Alchemy of Animated Documentaries". In addition, a further increase in one-on-one meetings at the DOK Co-Pro Market was observed.

68th International Leipzig  
Festival for Documentary and  
Animated Film  
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Publicists  
Nina Kühne  
Alena Flemming  
Sevara Pan  
Melanie Rohde  
Tel. +49 (0)341 30864 1070

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

Over the course of seven days, DOK Leipzig 2025 presented 225 films and works of extended reality from 55 countries. On the Saturday of the festival, the seven Golden and two Silver Doves, along with numerous partnership awards, were presented.

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The 68th edition of the festival was the last under Christoph Terhechte. Since taking the helm as festival director in January 2020, he streamlined the breadth of film screenings in favour of a clearer programme structure and expanded the prestigious International Competition Documentary Film.

One of his primary objectives was to give feature-length animated films a more prominent role at the festival and to strengthen the ties between the documentary and animated film industries. In 2023, he introduced the first Golden Dove for feature-length animated films and established a new competition structure in its wake. Alongside the Audience Competition with its jury of cinema enthusiasts and fans of the festival, he created the sections "Panorama: Central and Eastern Europe" with its regional focus and "Camera Lucida" for films that challenge the conventions of cinema.

Christoph Terhechte also considered the promotion of young talent to be one of the festival's main tasks. Under his leadership, the festival awarded not only the Golden Doves, but also two Silver Doves, one for a feature-length film and one for a short film, each by an up-and-coming director, in the International Competition Documentary Film. This was intended to give equal attention to both emerging and established filmmakers in the international competitions.

The hybrid edition of the festival held in the pandemic year 2020 gave rise to DOK Stream, an online film offering in which current films can be viewed online throughout Germany during the week of the festival. Nevertheless, under Terhechte, the festival's emphasis remained squarely on cinema screenings and in-person events.

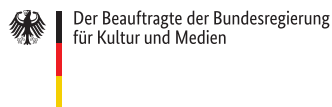
Since 2020, the festival has also expanded various activities held at other times of year. The DOK Leipzig Summer Cinema, organised in cooperation with various cinemas in Leipzig, holds outdoor screenings of popular films from previous editions of the festival every year. The monthly DOK Days bring documentary and animated films to neighbourhood cinemas in Leipzig and other cities in Saxony.

On 1 January 2026, Ola Staszal will take up her position as festival director and managing director of Leipziger Dok-Filmwochen GmbH. The 69th edition of DOK Leipzig will be held from 26 October to 1 November 2026.

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