

Chronicles of Lived Time and Three Decades of Magical Optimism

Press Release
8.9.2026

DOK Leipzig to honour Helena Třeštíková, pioneer of longitudinal observation, and Norwegian animation studio Trollfilm with this year's Hommages



Private Universe (Director: Helena Třeštíková) | DOK Leipzig 2026

Once again, DOK Leipzig pays tribute to established artists for their outstanding work in documentary and animated film.

This year's **Documentary Film Hommage** is dedicated to **Helena Třeštíková**, whose primary cinematic material is time. In her longitudinal observations, she captures what fleeting glances overlook: the quiet shifts in everyday life, the ruptures, hopes and losses from which human biographies are formed. Behind these individual stories, panoramas of political, social and cultural upheaval simultaneously emerge.

The filmmaker's life, work and life's work are inextricably intertwined. She has accompanied different people, often over many years, working with great sensitivity and extraordinary intimacy to create portraits of emotional force and social depth that could only be achieved through such sustained closeness.

Helena Třeštíková also has a long-standing artistic relationship with DOK Leipzig. **"The Miracle"** (1975), produced while she was still a student at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague and included in the festival programme at the time, is a tender observation of an expectant mother around the time of the birth of her first child. What began as a 16-minute etude eventually developed into the documentary **"Private Universe"**, which spans 37 years in the life of one family. Both films form part of this year's Documentary Film Hommage. Winner of the Golden Dove in the International Competition in 2008, **"René"** returns to Leipzig cinemas during festival week. The film documents Třeštíková's encounters with a prison inmate over a 20-year period, against the backdrop of sweeping political changes outside the prison walls. The programme is rounded off by **"A Marriage Story"**, which chronicles the marriage of Ivana and Václav over nearly four decades as they navigate turbulent times.

DOK Leipzig will also be presenting Třeštíková's new film **"Bára – Diary"**

69th International Leipzig
Festival for Documentary and
Animated Film

26 October to 1 November 2026

Alena Flemming
Maren Fußwinkel
Julie-Madeline Simon
Sevara Pan
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
Aleksandra Staszal

Place of Performance
Leipzig

Commercial Register
Leipzig, HRB 35 89

VAT Tax ID
DE141498242

of a Rockstar” in the International Competition. Over the course of 50 years, the filmmaker repeatedly returned with her camera to document Bára Basiková’s life and musical career. Past and present converge into a nuanced portrait that navigates the space between public persona and private vulnerability.

Press Release
8.9.2026

Page 2 of 3

“I am thrilled that our upcoming edition is honouring the oeuvre of such an exceptional Eastern European filmmaker. Our programme traces her entire filmography: from her early work in the mid-1970s to her latest—and perhaps final—film,” says festival director Ola Staszal.

In a free public **masterclass** moderated by Grit Lemke at the Zeitgeschichtliches Forum Leipzig on 30 October at 11:00, Helena Třeštíková will share insights into her process, her documentary approach, her methods for managing vast amounts of footage, and the production conditions under which her films were created.

This year’s **Animated Film Hommage** celebrates **Trollfilm**, the Norwegian studio founded by filmmaker Anita Killi, which specialises in multiplane cut-out animation. Operating out of a converted barn within reach of several national parks, Trollfilm has spent more than 30 years using mostly hand-crafted animation to conjure a world that radiates empathy and brims with magical optimism. At the same time, the studio confronts major themes such as domestic violence, intergenerational trauma and war.

“Hopelessness is never an option,” says curator and film critic Marie Ketzscher. “By insisting on empathy with nature and our fellow human beings, the films resist the cynicism of the present day and urge us to change our mindset. In a sense, the mythical nature of the North is reflected in the films: dust shimmers in the backlight, and found objects and materials are brought to life as vulnerable eyes and fluttering little wings. In keeping with the time-intensive stop-motion process—and in defiance of today’s fast-paced world—the narrative unfolds at a slower pace,” she continues.

Another feature many of the films have in common is their attentiveness to children’s perspectives and respect for their unguarded way of seeing the world.

The Animated Film Hommage comprises **two film programmes**: one is dedicated to the work of Trollfilm founder **Anita Killi**, the second showcases **other Trollfilm productions**.

The five films directed by Killi explore the fragility of our planet (“**The Glass Ball**”), Sámi mythology (“**Daughter of the Sun**”), the playful microcosm of children’s lives (“**The Hedge of Thorns**”), a father who harbours a monster within (“**Angry Man**”), and a gentle house spirit (“**Mother Didn’t Know**”).

The second programme, which highlights an array of animation techniques, filmmakers and themes, all united by their humanistic outlook, includes the 2D animated short film “**I Am Not Afraid!**” by German director Marita Mayer. Among the additional works are “**Is Heaven Blue? #2**”, a collaborative film by Menno de Nooijer (son), Paul de Nooijer (father) and Françoise de Nooijer (mother) about life as a total work of art, the pixilation documentary “**Mum’s Hair**” by Maja Arnekleiv, Anita Killi’s daughter, which won the Golden Dove in 2017, and the cut-out animated film “**Quiet**” by Marianne Bundgaard Nielsen, a metaphorical flick through family photo albums.

As part of the Animated Film Hommage, a **masterclass** moderated by curator Marie Ketzscher will be open to the public free of charge. On 29 October at 11:30 at the Zeitgeschichtliches Forum Leipzig, Trollfilm founder Anita Killi will chart the studio's evolution from its beginnings to the present day, offering a look behind the scenes, from glass plates, cameras and paper objects, to the creative process behind the studio's first feature-length film, currently being animated in Dovre.

Further film series for this year's festival will be presented in the coming weeks.

The films of the Documentary Film Hommage and the Animated Film Hommage can be found in the following film lists.

Press Release
8.9.2026

Page 3 of 3

Hommage: Helena Třeščíková



Bára - Diary of a Rockstar

Documentary Film

Helena Třeščíková
Czech Republic 2026 | 97 min
International Premiere

Eine tschechische Rock-Ikone im Porträt, über 50 Jahre hinweg. Helena Třeščíková, Meisterin der Langzeitbeobachtung, zeigt Bára Basíková's rasante Lebensart mit allen Höhen und Tiefen. – *The portrait of a Czech rock icon over a period of 50 years. A true virtuoso of longitudinal observation, Helena Třeščíková shows Bára Basíková's fast-paced life with all its ups and downs.*

Language Czech
Subtitles English



A Marriage Story

Documentary Film

Helena Třeščíková
Czech Republic 2017 | 102 min
No Premiere

Über drei Jahrzehnte beobachtet Helena Třeščíková die Ehe von Ivana und Vaclav, die scheinbar gewöhnlich verläuft. Bis man merkt, dass es "gewöhnlich" nur für den ungenauen Blick geben kann. – *Over three decades, Helena Třeščíková observes the seemingly ordinary marriage of Ivana and Vaclav. Until we realize that "ordinary" can only exist for the casual observer.*

Language Czech
Subtitles English



The Miracle

Documentary Film

Helena Třeščíková
Czechoslovakia 1975 | 16 min
No Premiere

Das Wunder der Geburt in Großaufnahme. Eine intime Miniatur als Ausgangspunkt einer 37-jährigen Langzeitstudie. Schon in ihrem ersten Kurzfilm zeigt sich Třeščíková's besondere Handschrift. – *The miracle of birth up close. An intimate miniature as starting point for a 37-year-long study. Třeščíková's distinctive style is already evident in her very first short film.*

Language Czech
Subtitles English



Private Universe

Documentary Film

Helena Třeščíková
Czech Republic 2012 | 83 min
No Premiere

Eine ganz normale Familie, 37 Jahre lang im Fokus der Kamera. Im Kleinen wird der Wandel der tschechischen Gesellschaft nachvollzogen, ein Leben zwischen Karel Gott und John Lennon. – *A perfectly normal family, captured on camera for 37 years. Through everyday life, the film traces the changes in Czech society – a life spent between Karel Gott and John Lennon.*

Language Czech
Subtitles English

Hommage: Helena Třeštíková



René

Documentary Film

Helena Třeštíková
Czech Republic 2008 | 83 min
No Premiere

20 Jahre eines Lebens, das sich größtenteils in Gefängnissen abspielt. Ein Mann, der immer wieder neu beginnt, scheitert, Schriftsteller wird und die Regisseurin permanent herausfordert. – *20 years of a life lived mainly in prisons. A man who starts over again and again, fails, becomes a writer and keeps challenging the director.*

Language Czech
Subtitles English

Hommage: Trollfilm



Angry Man

Animated Film

Anita Killi
Norway 2009 | 21 min
No Premiere

Bloß den Papa nicht stören! Sonst erwacht der Wutmann in ihm. Die Geschichte eines mutigen Jungen, der die Spirale der häuslichen Gewalt durchbricht, ohne den Vater zu verteufeln. – *Don't disturb Dad! Otherwise, the angry man inside him might wake up. The story of a brave boy who breaks the cycle of domestic violence without demonising his father.*

Language Norwegian
Subtitles English



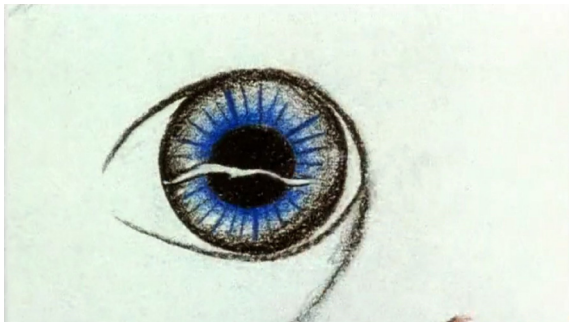
Black Box

Animated Film

Anton Dyakov
Norway 2026 | 10 min
German premiere

Was bleibt, wenn alles vergeht? Ein alter Fotograf sucht in seinen Bildern nach Menschen und Ereignissen, die im Dunkeln verschwinden, wiedergehen und ihn schließlich heimsuchen. – *What is left when everything fades away? An old photographer searches his photographs for people and events that disappear into the dark, return, and eventually haunt him.*

Language without dialogue
Subtitles None



Circle

Animated Film

Laila Rakvåg
Norway 1994 | 6 min
No Premiere

Ein Vogel fliegt über ölverseuchte Meere, durch brennende Wälder, vorbei an toten Insekten – und wird zum Menschen. Ein aktivistisches Plädoyer für mehr Empathie mit unserem Planeten. – *A bird flies over oil-polluted oceans, through burning forests, past dead insects – and becomes human. An activist plea for more empathy with our planet.*

Language without dialogue
Subtitles None



Daughter Of the Sun

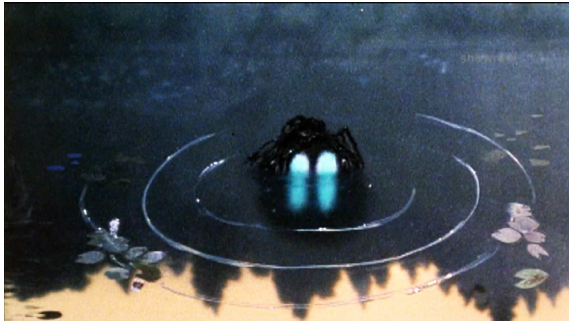
Animated Film

Anita Killi
Norway 1996 | 13 min
No Premiere

Mit einem Halm im Mundwinkel genießt Sami-Junge Alits einen goldenen Herbsttag. Eine Begegnung mit der Sonnentochter schenkt ihm das Joiken, einen Gesang, der Rentiere magisch anzieht. – *A blade of grass in the corner of his mouth, Sámi boy Alits enjoys a golden autumn day. An encounter with the daughter of the sun gifts him the art of joik, a chant that magically attracts reindeer.*

Language Sami
Subtitles English

Hommage: Trollfilm



Far Far Away

Animated Film

Natasha Nikitina, Anita Killi
Norway 1997 | 5 min
No Premiere

Ein junger Held zieht los zum goldenen Palast. Ein Troll erwacht, Gänse steigen in die Lüfte, Nebel wird zu Nacht. Theodor Kittelsens Malerei und Norwegens Landschaften leben auf. – *A young hero sets out for the golden palace. A troll wakes up, geese take flight, fog turns into night. Theodor Kittelsen's paintings and Norway's landscapes come to life.*

Language Norwegian
Subtitles English



The Glass Ball

Animated Film

Anita Killi, Hege Krogvig Bergstrand
Norway 1992 | 4 min
No Premiere

Ein Baseball als Omen: Die lederne Kugel wird zum Erdball und landet plötzlich im Nest eines Vogels. Als MTV-Spot geplant, erinnert die Cut-out-Animation auch heute an die Fragilität unserer Erde. – *A baseball as an omen: the leather ball turns into the globe and suddenly lands in a bird's nest. Originally conceived as an MTV spot, this cut-out animation reminds us of the fragility of earth to this day.*

Language without dialogue
Subtitles None



The Hedge of Thorns

Animated Film

Anita Killi
Norway 2001 | 13 min
No Premiere

Zwischen Marlenes und Florians Zuhause verläuft ein Grenzbach. In ihrer Welt ist er ihr Reich, ein Ort zum Spielen und Träumen, die Grenze quasi unsichtbar – bis der Krieg ausbricht. – *A border stream runs between Malene's and Florian's homes. In their world, it is a kingdom, a place to play and dream, the border virtually invisible – until the war breaks out.*

Language Norwegian
Subtitles English



Ich habe keine Angst!

Animated Film

Marita Mayer
Germany, Norway 2022 | 7 min
No Premiere

Beim Versteckenspielen im dunklen Hof gruselt sich Vanja vor den vielen Schatten. Er verwandelt sich in einen gefährlichen Tiger und sieht: Selbst die Großen haben manchmal Angst! – *Playing hide-and-seek in the dark courtyard, Vanja is frightened by the many shadows. He transforms himself into a dangerous tiger and discovers that even the big ones are scared sometimes.*

Language Norwegian
Subtitles English

Hommage: Trollfilm



Is Heaven Blue? #2

Animated Documentary

Menno de Nooijer, Paul de Nooijer
Norway, Netherlands 2023 | 17 min
No Premiere

Fast 50 Jahre künstlerische Familienarbeit münden in eine überbordende Selbst-Hommage: Die de Nooijers feiern das Leben – und den Tod – als finales, gemeinsames Gesamtkunstwerk. – *Almost fifty years of artistic family collaboration culminate in an exuberant self-homage: The de Nooijers celebrate life – and death – as a final joint total work of art.*

Language without dialogue
Subtitles None



The King Who Wanted More Than a Crown

Animated Film

Randall Meyers, Anita Killi
Norway 1999 | 30 min
No Premiere

Der König ist verschwunden! Kommandant, Schlossherr, Hofnarr und Stellvertreter machen sich auf die Suche nach einem neuen Herrscher. Eine trügerische Fabel mit schrulligen Charakteren. – *The King has vanished! The commander, the chamberlain, the jester and the deputy go in search of a new ruler. A deceptive fable with quirky characters.*

Language Norwegian
Subtitles English



Mother Didn't Know

Animated Film

Anita Killi
Norway 2020 | 12 min
No Premiere

Ein einsames Mädchen versinkt in dunklen Gedanken, bis ein Hausgeist ihr einen versehrten Vogel schickt, damit beide das Fliegen lernen. Ein magisch-düsterer Film über kindliche Depression. – *A lonely girl is drowning in dark thoughts, until a house spirit gives her an injured bird so that both of them learn how to fly. A magical and dark film about childhood depression.*

Language without dialogue
Subtitles None



Mum's Hair

Animated Documentary

Maja Arnekleiv
Norway 2017 | 6 min
No Premiere

Während der Chemo verwandeln Maja und ihre Geschwister die Haar-Transformation ihrer Mutter Anita Killi in einen liebevollen Pixilation-Film – Gewinner der Goldenen Taube 2017. – *While Anita Killi is undergoing chemotherapy, Maja and her siblings turn their mother's hair transformation into a warm-hearted pixilation film – winner of the 2017 Golden Dove.*

Language without dialogue
Subtitles None

Hommage: Trollfilm



Quiet

Animated Film

Marianne Bundgaard Nielsen
Norway 2018 | 7 min
No Premiere

Ein intimer Cut-out-Animationsfilm blättert metaphorisch im Familienalbum und zeigt, welche Dramen sich hinter den gestellten Fotos wirklich abspielten: Streit, Alkohol und Einsamkeit. – *An intimate cut-out animation leafs metaphorically through the family album and reveals the dramas that unfolded behind the staged photos: arguments, alcohol and loneliness.*

Language without dialogue
Subtitles None

Wir danken für die Unterstützung

Thank you for your support

Gefördert durch



Gefördert durch das Sächsische Staatsministerium für Wissenschaft, Kultur und Tourismus. Diese Einrichtung wird mitfinanziert durch Steuermittel auf der Grundlage des vom Sächsischen Landtag beschlossenen Haushaltes.



Der Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Kultur und Medien



Gold



Silber



Bronze



Weitere DOK Fördernde und Freund*innen

More DOK Supporters and Friends

- 101 Media
- Arsenal Filminstitut e.V.
- Barbara Hobbie und Richard Mancke
- Das Bundesarchiv
- culturtraeger GmbH
- Computer Leipzig
- DEFA-Stiftung
- D-Facto Motion

- Doc Alliance
- Doris Apell-Kölmel und Michael Kölmel
- Europäische Stiftung der Rahn Dittrich Group für Bildung und Kultur
- Jugendstrafvollzug Regis Breitingen
- Leipzig Stiftung
- Gangart Werbung GmbH
- Ils Medientechnik GmbH

- MH Müller Handels GmbH, (Filiale Leipzig Petersstraße)
- Petersbogen Leipzig
- Sächsisches Staatsministerium der Justiz
- Staatliche Porzellanmanufaktur Meißen
- Stiftung Friedliche Revolution
- ver.di Filmunion