The 69th edition of DOK Leipzig has opened

Press Release
26.10.2026

Jūratė Samulionytė receives the Saxon Award for the Best Documentary Project by a Female Director

Festival Opening 2025 | © Susann Bargas Gomez

DOK Leipzig officially opened on Monday, 26 October, at the Schauspiel Leipzig with the world premiere of the documentary film “Good Evening, Beautiful” by Ina Borrmann. The short animated film “Cell Buddies” by Melle Windig, Hidde Alberts, Arjen van der Plas, Miquel Reyes and Jurgen de Smit was also screened.

This is the first edition of the festival under Ola Staszel, who has overseen the artistic direction and management of DOK Leipzig since January 2026. Speaking to presenter Nine-Christine Müller, Staszel emphasised: “In a time of increasing social division, political crises and conflicts, DOK Leipzig is a place where people can meet, share their ideas, and even, at times, disagree. The festival confronts us with realities that are ambiguous, uncomfortable, complex and sometimes even burdensome. I am looking forward to films that will surprise us, challenge our points of view and spark conversations that will continue outside the cinema.”

The title of the opening film, “Good Evening, Beautiful”, recalls “Guten Morgen, du Schöne”, a collection of interviews with East German women conducted by Maxie Wander in 1977. After nearly 50 years, the women interviewed for that book reflect once again on the lives of women in the GDR and in the present day as well as on work, relationships, sexuality and ageing. In her remarks, Dr. Skadi Jennicke, deputy mayor of the City of Leipzig tasked with arts and culture, addressed the feminist themes in the film: “Women’s rights cannot be taken for granted. They are hard-won – the right to work, to be financially independent, to have a say in one’s own family planning, and not to be confined to the role of wife and mother. Once again, we find ourselves having to defend these achievements.”

Aline Fiedler, head of the arts division at the Saxon Ministry of Science, Culture and Tourism (SMWK), then presented the Saxon Award for the Best Documentary Project by a Female Director to the Lithuanian filmmaker Jūratė Samulionytė for her project “Two of Us”. The film follows two men, Vitalius (72) and Albinas (87), who met in Lithuania during the Soviet era

69th International Leipzig Festival for Documentary and Animated Film

26 October to 1 November 2026

Maren Fußwinkel
Alena Flemming
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 Staszel

Place of Performance
Leipzig

Commercial Register
Leipzig, HRB 35 89

VAT Tax ID
DE141498242

and were forced to keep their relationship secret for years, and now face the challenges of ageing and a struggle for belated recognition by society. The jury members Stephanie Fuchs, Mónica Hernández Rejón and Beke Rienitz highlighted the rare access Samulionytė was able to gain to her protagonists: “With its sensitive approach, compelling protagonists, and access to an intimate world rarely seen on screen, the project promises a deeply moving film about love, dignity, and the right to be recognised.” Projects by female directors that had been selected for the DOK Co-Pro Market were considered for this award, which was sponsored by the SMWK.

The opening event concluded with the world premiere of “Good Evening, Beautiful” with the film team in attendance. A public screening of the film took place at 20:30 at Hauptbahnhof Osthalle.

DOK Leipzig is screening a total of 217 films and XR experiences from 61 countries from 26 October to 1 November. As usual, DOK Leipzig is screening some of these films free of charge at Hauptbahnhof Osthalle and at the Polish Institute. The Golden and Silver Doves will be awarded on Saturday evening. Ahead of this, a number of partnership awards will be presented during an initial award ceremony in the afternoon.

Each day during the festival, a different feature-length film will be available online throughout Germany on DOK Stream – for 24 hours, from midnight to midnight.

The complete DOK Leipzig programme, including screening dates and tickets: Programme

Wir danken für die Unterstützung
Thank you for your support

Gefördert durch

Stadt Leipzig

SACHSEN
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.

Kreatives Europa MEDIA

Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung

Der Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Kultur und Medien

BUNDESSTIFTUNG AUFARBEITUNG

Kulturstiftung des Freistaates Sachsen

Gold

mdr

ZDF

Silber

arte

BIG cinema
www.big-cinema.de

3sat

mosysteme
mobile brand architecture

SLM
SÄCHSISCHE LANDESMEDIENANSTALT

CineStar
So macht Kino Spaß.

Bronze

german films

MdbK Museum der bildenden Künste Leipzig

PROMENADEN HAUPTBAHNHOF

SÄCHSISCHES STAATSARCHIV | Freistaat SACHSEN

MDRMEDIA

NL Niederlande

Leipziger

Weitere DOK Fördernde und Freund*innen
More DOK Supporters and Friends

- 1o1 Media
- Arsenal Filminstitut e.V.
- Bäckerei & Konditorei Göbecke GbR
- Barbara Hobbie und Richard Mancke
- Das Bundesarchiv
- culturtraeger GmbH
- Computer Leipzig
- DEFA-Stiftung
- D-Facto Motion
- Doc Alliance
- Doris Apell-Kölmel und Michael Kölmel
- Egenberger Lebensmittel GmbH
- Europäische Stiftung der Rahn Dittrich Group für Bildung und Kultur
- Greta & Starks Apps GmbH
- Jugendstrafvollzugsanstalt 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

Förderhinweise Kreatives Europa: Von der Europäischen Union finanziert. Die geäußerten Ansichten und Meinungen entsprechen jedoch ausschließlich denen des Autors bzw. der Autoren und spiegeln nicht zwingend die der Europäischen Union oder der Europäischen Exekutivagentur für Bildung und Kultur (EACEA) wider. Weder die Europäische Union noch die EACEA können dafür verantwortlich gemacht werden. Bundesstiftung Aufarbeitung: Gefördert mit Mitteln der Bundesstiftung zur Aufarbeitung der SED-Diktatur.