

German Competitions at DOK Leipzig 2021: Introspection and global perspectives

Jurors Maria Speth, Gudrun Sommer and Carsten Möller will decide who gets the Golden and Silver Dove in the competitions for feature-length and short films



DOK Leipzig 2021 | *Nasim* (director: Ole Jacobs, Arne Büttner)

In 2021, the films in the German Competitions at DOK Leipzig once again represent a wide variety of cinematic approaches, in terms of both their themes and their formal criteria. The film-makers' works document current political crises, seek out historical vestiges and sketch introspective portraits.

The selection committee has nominated a total of 15 productions for the German Competition Long Documentary and Animated Film and the German Competition Short Documentary and Animated Film. Among them are eleven world premieres, one European and three German premieres. Female film-makers are heavily represented in the German Competition, having directed seven of the eight long documentary films nominated.

This year as usual, some of the productions focus on current political issues. Topics include the situation of refugees in Camp Moria on the Greek island of Lesbos (***Nasim***), the migration factor for families in the Dominican Republic (***Los cuatro vientos***) and the protests against Alexander Lukashenko in Belarus (***Handbook***). Some films draw a connection between political and aesthetic discourse, for example in works about female body hair (***Happytrail***), a socialist monument in the Prenzlauer Berg district of Berlin (***Head Fist Flag – Perspectives on the Thälmann Memorial***) and the colour of the 100 yuan note (***Pink Mao***), the largest denomination of Renminbi banknotes in the People's Republic of China. Historical vestiges, memories and traditions are traced by two other films in present-day Silesia (***Time Before Land***) and in the jungles of Vietnam (***Dust of Modern Life***).

Other works in the competitions portray extraordinary individuals and are partly the result of intimate relationships. Two films, for example, deal in very different ways with the documentary images of a past love (***Everyman and I and Reality Must Be Addressed***). They reflect upon how

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64th International Leipzig
Festival for Documentary and
Animated Film

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the camera creates intimacy and distance, play and authenticity in the rapport between the film-maker and those filmed. Two other works focus on soundscapes by portraying a musician (**A Sound of My Own**) who continues her father's legendary band project Embryo, and a passionate instrument-maker (**75/1**).

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Some of the directors involved have previously had films screened at DOK Leipzig. Katharina Pethke, for example, returns to Leipzig with **Everyman and I**, a personal work about and involving actor Philipp Hochmair. In 2011 she had received the Golden Dove in the German Competition for the film **Louisa**; last year, the director was a guest at DOK Industry, the festival's industry platform. This time Betina Kuntzsch presents **Head Fist Flag – Perspectives on the Thälmann Memorial**, after her film **Spirit Away** was awarded the Golden Dove in the International Competition Animated Documentary in 2015. Other film-makers such as Malte Stein (**Flood**, German Competition Short Film 2018) and Johanna Seggelke (**Bibi Must Go**, co-directed with Marie Zrenner, German Competition Short Film 2020) have previously been nominated in Leipzig.

This year's jury consists of film-maker Maria Speth, festival director Gudrun Sommer and film lecturer and director Carsten Möller. The jurors will jointly determine the winning films of the Golden and Silver Dove in the German Competitions of DOK Leipzig.

The feature and documentary film director Maria Speth had an entry in the German Competition of DOK Leipzig in 2010 with **9 Lives** and was awarded the DEFA Sponsoring Prize. In 2021, she received a Silver Bear at the Berlin International Film Festival for her documentary **Mr Bachmann and His Class**, which has been showing in cinemas across Germany since 16 September. Gudrun Sommer founded and directs doxs!, the documentary film festival for children and young people in Duisburg. Together with Christian Koch, she was also in charge of the Duisburg Film Week in 2019 and 2020. Carsten Möller is a creative associate in video art at the Leipzig Academy of Visual Arts. He teaches film editing, screenwriting and cinematography, and also creates his own films and screenplays.

This year's award-winning films will receive their honours on the Saturday of the festival (30 October 2021). The films in the German Competition are nominated for a Golden Dove, the films in the German Competition Short Film for a Silver Dove.

Certain films have also been nominated for awards sponsored by partners: the DEFA Sponsoring Prize, the Goethe-Institut Documentary Film Prize, the ver.di Prize for Solidarity, Humanity and Fairness, the "Leipziger Ring" Film Prize from the Stiftung Friedliche Revolution, the Young Eyes Film Award and the mephisto 97.6 Award for best animated film.

The Golden Dove in the Competition Long Documentary and Animated Film is granted by Weltkino Filmverleih GmbH.

Please find the film selection here: [German Competitions DOK Leipzig 2021](#)

The 64th edition of DOK Leipzig will take place on site from 25 to 31 October. Accredited visitors worldwide can also view the majority of the

film programme online. After the festival, a selection of films will also be available online in Germany in the DOK Stream format from 1 to 14 November. This year, the DOK Industry section will also take place for the first time in hybrid format — both online and on site.

Would you like to be accredited for DOK Leipzig 2021?

Please, use [this form](#) to apply for your online accreditation by 18 October.

Logos, this year's poster design, festival impressions, and portraits of the programme directors can be found in the [press download area](#).

You can request film stills for your coverage of DOK Leipzig 2021 at presse@dok-leipzig.de.

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