

## International Competitions and Camera Lucida at DOK Leipzig 2021: places, borders and questions of identity

PRESS RELEASE  
7 October 2021

The Golden Dove and the Silver Dove in the feature film competition will be awarded by Grit Lemke, Anocha Suwichakornpong, Katarína Tomková, Alex Szalat and Raed Yassin



DOK Leipzig 2021 | Our Quiet Place (director: Elitza Gueorguieva)

The films in the International Competitions have been finalised, as have the films of the Camera Lucida section, which presents unconventional entries out of competition. The DOK Leipzig film programme is now complete. The International Competition Long Documentary and Animated Film convenes numerous new voices from the documentary field who have a distinctly artistic style. Of the 14 films, 12 will be having their world or international premiere at DOK Leipzig.

In **Words of Negroes**, Sylvaine Dampierre juxtaposes footage of the day-to-day work in a sugar refinery in her native Guadeloupe with a re-enactment of nearly two-hundred-year-old testimonies of slaves against their brutal master. For **KRAI**, his first feature-length film, Aleksey Lapin returns to his village in Ukraine and generates an endearing, semi-fictional and absurdist portrait of the place. With a curious eye, Chivas DeVinck turns his attention to a different region: the Nevada desert. **The Great Basin** captures a microcosm that reveals the economic, social and ecological marginalisation of the rural United States. A remote area is the focus of **Veins of the Amazon**. Peruvian directors Álvaro and Diego Sarmiento and Finnish anthropologist Terje Toomistu observe what happens on a cargo ship on the Amazon which brings passengers and goods to isolated communities in the Peruvian rainforest.

Numerous filmmakers will be presenting their first works in Leipzig, among them French filmmaker Cléo Cohen, whose first feature-length film, **May God Be with You**, focuses on her own identity. In an attempt to reconcile her Arab and Jewish selves, she charmingly poses questions to her grandparents, who emigrated from the Maghreb to France. In **A Custom of the Sea**, Fabrizio Polpettini tells not only of Muslim pirates who plagued the Mediterranean Sea, enslaving Europeans, until the 19th century, but also of Eurocentrism, colonial history and conflicts between Christian and Islamic countries. In her debut film, **Water Has No Borders**, Maradia Tsaava

64th International Leipzig  
Festival for Documentary and  
Animated Film

25 October to 31 October

Press Office  
Julia Bierstedt  
Jan-Philipp Kohlmann  
Nina Kühne  
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  
Christoph Terhechte

Place of Performance  
Leipzig

Handelsregister  
Commercial Register, HRB 35 89

VAT Tax ID  
DE141498242

looks at a dam in Georgia that forms the border with the independent region of Abkhazia. Time and again, the film crew is denied entry into Abkhazia. The result is a reflection on man-made territorial borders.

PRESS RELEASE  
7 October 2021

page 2 of 4

The films in the International Competition include some of the latest works by well-known filmmakers. In **Conversations with Siro**, Lebanese filmmaker Dima El-Horr gives cinematic form to a friendly relationship with an artist from her native Beirut, which also prompts reflections on her life in exile in France. In **A Bay**, Murilo Salles explores the bay of Rio de Janeiro visually and acoustically in eight cinematic fables. With this film, the renowned Brazilian filmmaker returns to Leipzig; in 1978 he was awarded a Silver Dove for his first feature film, **These Are the Weapons**. Sarah Noa Bozenhardt has also previously had works screened at DOK Leipzig. She presented this year's competition entry **among us women**, co-directed with Daniel Abate Tilahun, at DOK Preview Germany in 2020. This film observes a young pregnant woman, her midwife and medical staff in rural, patriarchal Ethiopia, where traditional midwifery clashes with medical obstetrics. Diana El Jeiroudi, co-founder of the DOX BOX initiative to promote Arab-African documentary filmmakers, will be taking part in the competition with her autobiographical debut feature **Republic of Silence**.

Also taking part in the feature-film competition is Chinese director Wei Deng, whose film **Father** about his grandfather and father presents a portrait of a generation and tells of tradition and change in Chinese society. **Bucolic** by Karol Pałka observes a mother and her daughter in their secluded life in the Polish countryside.

Two films in the International Competitions which will have their world premiere at DOK Leipzig were made as part of STEPS' Generation Africa project, which works with emerging African directors and producers to create films with new narratives about migration – from the perspective of young people from Africa, whose voices are too often absent from global discourse. In **Fati's Choice**, Fatimah Dadzie tells the story of a woman who, after a perilous journey to Italy, chooses to return to Ghana, for which she's criticized in her home country. In the short film **Stay Up** by Aïssata Ouarma from Burkina Faso, the protagonist uses dance in an attempt to overcome her traumas caused by multiple instances of sexual abuse.

The International Competition Short Documentary and Animated Film includes 24 works that, through their multifaceted aesthetic approaches, touch on such themes as utopia and dystopia – as in **The Congress** by Clément Villiers – or on attempts to discover the truth, as in **Saint Marietta** by Ben Young. Emotions that are hard to grasp are given an artistic treatment, as in Akane Murata's **Open One's Mouth** and in **Everyday Is Like Sunday** by Alberto Dexeus. The problematic nature of political systems is also dealt with, as in **Kelasi** by Congolese visual artist Fransix Tenda Lomba.

The feature-length films in the International Competition are nominated for a Golden Dove and a Silver Dove for the best film by an up-and-coming director. This year, the winning films will be selected by filmmaker, publicist and curator Grit Lemke, who has been with DOK Leipzig for years, most recently as programme director until 2017. Also on the jury are director and producer Anocha Suwichakornpong, producer Katarína Tomková, and Alex Szalat, head of Docs Up Funds which support documentaries dedicated to human rights, as well as artist and musician Raed Yassin.

The jury for the International Short Film Competition is comprised of film artist Izabela Plucińska, who in 2021 will present her animated short **98 kg** in the competition for the Audience Award; Marina Kožul, a curator and expert on animated and experimental film; and Gugi Gumilang, executive director of the non-profit organisation In-Docs, which promotes activist cinematic positions on social and justice issues. The jury members will select the recipients of the Golden Dove Short Animated Film and the Golden Dove Short Documentary Film.

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**7 October 2021**

**page 3 of 4**

The award-winning films will be announced on 30 October at the presentation of the Golden and Silver Doves at CineStar.

Five films not in competition that challenge the conventions of cinema will be shown in the Camera Lucida section. In grainy black and white, Payal Kapadia's **A Night of Knowing Nothing** poetically tells of political protests that originated at an Indian film school. Miko Reverezza and Carolina Fusilier fuse documentary and science fiction in **The Still Side**, a portrait of an abandoned Mexican island. Arata Mori's **A Million**, a journey through an imaginary city shot along the former Silk Road, also blends reality and illusion. In **Our Quiet Place** by Elitza Gueorguieva, a writer who moved from Belarus to France and began speaking a different language reflects on words, making oneself understood, portrayal and patchy childhood memories. Last but not least, in **The Shadow Workers** by Annelein Pompe, a dove, always the symbol of the Leipzig festival, tells of a Belgian good-for-nothing and the absurdities of the human condition.

In-person film discussions will be held at cinemas with those filmmakers who are able to travel to Leipzig. As a platform for dialogue, DOK Speaks Up invites filmmakers to participate in moderated discussions that explore topical issues raised by the films currently in competition at the festival. The talk "Deconstructing the Image" examines images, texts and stories from the colonial era and asks whether filmmakers can reimagine the narratives suggested by such footage. In a second talk, titled "Walk a Mile in My Shoes", directors explore the issue of filming in places and communities to which they themselves do not belong. The third talk, "Elephant on the Wall", discusses what changes when a camera is present and why the illusion of documentary immediacy is still so often upheld. "Deconstructing the Image" will be shown online as a live stream. The other two discussions will be held at the Zeitgeschichtliches Forum; they be recorded and made available on the DOK Leipzig website during the week of the festival.

A total of some 170 films and XR works from 44 countries, including 37 world and 13 international premieres, will be screened to audiences at nine different venues in Leipzig. Included for the first time is the Regina Palast in Leipzig's East End. This year, DOK Leipzig will again present some of the films with free admission in the East Wing of the main railway station and at the Polnisches Institut.

At all public events during the festival, the "3G" regulation for protection against COVID-19 will apply. Patrons aged 12 and over will need to show proof that they have been vaccinated or have recovered from the disease. Alternatively, admission will be possible with a negative test taken the same day at an official testing centre (no self-testing). Exceptions are the opening event at CineStar and the screenings at the Polnisches Institut, to which only vaccinated and recovered persons will be allowed entry. A nose and mouth covering must be worn at all venues prior to taking one's seat.

Immediately after the week of the festival, a selection of this year's festival films will be available online throughout Germany for two weeks in the DOK Stream.

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**7 October 2021**

**page 4 of 4**

The Golden Dove in the Competition Long Documentary and Animated Film in combination with €10,000 is sponsored by MDR. The Silver Dove in the Competition Long Documentary and Animated Film in combination with €6,000 is sponsored by 3sat.

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](mailto:presse@dok-leipzig.de).

# Wir danken für die Unterstützung

## Thank you for your support

### DOK Hauptförderer



### DOK Premium Partner



### DOK Advanced Partner



### DOK Classic Partner



### DOK IT-Partner



### DOK Kino-Partner



### DOK Medienpartner



### DOK Kooperationspartner



### Kooperationspartner DOK Nachwuchs



### DOK Förderer



### Weitere DOK Förderer und Freunde

- Barbara Hobbie und Richard Mancke
- D-Facto Motion GmbH

- DEFA Stiftung
- Egenberger Lebensmittel
- Europäische Stiftung der Rahn Dittrich Group für Bildung und Kultur
- ils Medientechnik GmbH

- Leipziger Stadtbau AG
- LUKAS Bäcker
- Petersbogen Leipzig
- Sächsisches Staatsarchiv
- Sächsisches Staatsministerium der Justiz

- Saxonia Entertainment
- Sennheiser
- Staatliche Porzellanmanufaktur Meißen
- Swiss Films