

## “The Rhine Flows to the Mediterranean Sea” by Offer Avnon will open DOK Leipzig 2021

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**5 October 2021**

The Israeli director reflects on the contemporaneousness of the Holocaust in his documentary film | International premiere in Leipzig



DOK Leipzig 2021 | “The Rhine Flows to the Mediterranean Sea” (director: Offer Avnon)

The 64th edition of DOK Leipzig will open on 25 October 2021 with the international premiere of **The Rhine Flows to the Mediterranean Sea**, a documentary by Offer Avnon. This film describes the impressions the director had while living in Germany and the way his perspective changed when he returned to Israel. Avnon, the son of a Polish survivor of the Shoah, lived in Germany for ten years. “Never, not for a single day” was he able to forget the Holocaust during that time.

In associative montages of images and conversations with people in Germany, Poland and ultimately in Israel, this film explores persistent traumas, mechanisms of repressing the pain, and attempts at reconciliation. What kind of dialogue is possible between relatives of perpetrators and victims? How does one’s identity or membership in a community mould one’s awareness and perception? With these questions in mind after his return, Avnon also takes a different view of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is visibly inscribed in the social space of his home town of Haifa.

“**The Rhine Flows to the Mediterranean Sea** attempts the Sisyphean task of a localization between philo- and anti-Semites, the anxious and the indifferent, those who remember and those who suppress. Not an image or sentence that doesn’t trigger a multitude of associations. The devil is in the detail: This film opens our eyes to this,” Festival Director Christoph Terhechte states in the festival catalogue. “Offer Avnon gives fragmentary answers and each raises new questions. The search for the ‘uncanny’ he began with his film is far from over.”

Director Offer Avnon previously dealt with trauma and remembrance in his film **Burden** (2015). He studied acting, visual communication and film in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. For ten years, he lived in Cologne, where he took part in theatre, video, photography and street art projects.

64th International Leipzig  
Festival for Documentary and  
Animated Film

25 October to 31 October

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With its themes and its dialogue-based approach, the opening film of the 64th edition of the festival allows connections to be drawn to other works in this year's DOK Leipzig programme. The Retrospective entitled "The Jews of the Others: Divided Germany, Distributed Guilt, Dissected Images" looks at portrayals of Jewishness and treatment of the Shoah in German and German-language film productions.

The Homage to documentary film director Avi Mograbi entitled "Secret Agent Avi" and the film **The Good Soldier** by Silvina Landsmann in competition for the Audience Award are further productions from Israel in the programme that focus on the Middle East conflict in the past and present.

DOK Leipzig's opening ceremony will be held at 7 pm on 25 October 2021 at CineStar 8 with director Offer Avnon attending. Additionally, there will be a free public screening of **The Rhine Flows to the Mediterranean Sea** at 8:30 pm at Leipzig Central Station (Osthalle), which the filmmaker and the festival director will also attend.

You'll find more information about the opening film here: [The Rhine Flows to the Mediterranean Sea](#)

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).

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