

## The 67th edition of DOK Leipzig has begun

Ana Kvichidze receives the Saxon Award for the Best Documentary Project by a Female Director



Festival opening | photo: Sophie Mahler

DOK Leipzig opened on Monday, 28 October at the CineStar in Leipzig with the world premiere of Thomas Riedelsheimer's documentary film "Tracing Light". Further highlights of the evening included a screening of the short film "The Diffusion Pilot" by Aurelijus Čiupas and two pieces performed by musician Barbara Morgenstern, the protagonist in "Barbara Morgenstern – Doing It for Love".

In his welcoming speech, festival director Christoph Terhechte emphasised the importance of film as a medium that facilitates understanding: "We aspire to be a festival guided by a willingness to listen to one other. We firmly believe that cinema allows us to tolerate opposing viewpoints and enables dialogue between them. Only by doing this can we come together to promote peace and coexistence."

Dr Skadi Jennicke, Deputy Mayor for Culture and Arts of the City of Leipzig, also spoke at the opening: "At a time when the world has in many respects become more complex, more conflict-ridden and more convoluted, DOK Leipzig has a pivotal role to play. The films screened here don't explain the world to us; they show it to us. More than ever, we as a society must be prepared to look, listen and be receptive to the diverse perspectives that will once again be expressed in Leipzig this year."

Claudia Maicher, Chairwoman of the Committee for Science, Higher Education, Media, Culture and Tourism in the Saxon State Parliament, then presented the 5,000-euro Saxon Award for the Best Documentary Project by a Female Director to Ana Kvichidze for her project "Oh, Heart Don't Be Afraid". Filmed in the country of Georgia, this work follows Dachi, a 20-year-old queer, who stands out in their community as they grapple with their gender identity. Also Dachi's family, heavily influenced by the archbishop,

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struggles to accept their child. Through an unusual friendship, Dachi finds solace in magic and starts to explore their identity and aspirations.

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The jury members Anna Berthollet, Themba Bhebhe and Eleni Chandrinou were impressed by the film's originality and uncompromising approach, calling it "a powerful narrative of isolation and yearning for a place of acceptance that is steeped in a dream-like mysticism." Projects by female directors selected for the DOK Co-Pro Market were eligible for this award donated by the Saxon Ministry of Science, Culture and Tourism.

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The opening event concluded with the screening of "Tracing Light" with the film team attending. This film explores the phenomenon of light, creating a dialogue between two disciplines – art and physics – that approach it in different ways.

Parallel to the opening event, "Simply Divine" by Mélody Boulissière and Bogdan Stamatina and "Flowers of Ukraine" by Adelina Borets were screened in the East Hall of Leipzig Central Station.

From now until Sunday, 3 November, DOK Leipzig is screening a total of 209 films and XR experiences from 55 countries. DOK Leipzig will once again be presenting some of the films free of charge in the East Hall of Leipzig Central Station and at the Polish Institute. The Golden and Silver Doves will be awarded on Saturday evening. Prior to this, numerous partnership awards will be presented in a first award ceremony in the afternoon.

Each day during the festival week, from 29 October to 3 November, films can be viewed online throughout Germany in the DOK Stream.

Further information on the festival programme: [Programme](#)

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