****

IDF, PRESS RELEASE, 13 June 2023

**Ex Oriente Film workshop 2023: The documentary laboratory begins its journey at Sunny Side of the Doc in La Rochelle**

**Ex Oriente Film, an international project-based film training programme for documentarists from Central and Eastern Europe, selected 12 feature and 5 documentary series projects. The 1st session of the workshop takes place in June 17-21, 2023 organized in partnership with Sunny Side of the Doc in La Rochelle in France.**

*“The all selected projects have strong international potential and cover a variety of relevant and important topics reflecting the current social, political, human stories and issues coming from talented, passionate, daring and innovative storytellers,”* says **Anna Kaslová**, the Ex Oriente Film project manager about the selected projects.

**Unique programme for documentary series creators**

Ex Oriente Film workshop as a creative laboratory for both established and emerging film professionals, will support the projects from their development until their completion and distribution. Till the last edition training programme includedfeature length projects, but inreaction to the rising global demand for documentary series, it expanded its activity and for the first time will include factual creative documentary series projects.

**Ruth Reid**, producer and leading tutor of Ex Oriente Series explains the specifics of a documentary series: *“Documentary series is a genre with endless possibilities. One that has challenged our industry’s practices and opens new doors to audiences we have never met before with creative documentaries. I’m thrilled to act as lead tutor for this unique pilot programme - the first of its kind in the region.”*

She wants to inspire more filmmakers to consider the series format without it being a versioning afterthought*. “I look forward to working with teams who have an eagerness to interrogate the essence - then elevate the potential of their projects; and to challenge and expand the genre itself. By bringing creative documentary practice to the series format, the sky’s the limit."*

**Building cultural bridges between Central and Eastern Europe and international documentary community**

For this year edition 12 creative feature and also 5 documentary series projects in development and early production stage from filmmakers of Central and Eastern Europe, which challenge genres, format and media boundaries and reflect our reality, starts their Ex Oriente journey in La Rochelle. **Mathieu Béjot**, Head of Strategy & Development of Sunny Side of the Doc comments on the meaning of the partnership: ***"We are thrilled to host the first session of the Ex Oriente workshop this year again. Sunny Side of the Doc has its roots in Europe and the meaningful partnership we have developed with IDF brings exciting projects and talents to our market where they get international exposure and networking opportunities. Sharing experts and mentors and opening Ex Oriente sessions to SSD attendees also contribute to building bridges between participants from Central and Eastern Europe and the international documentary community."***

During the workshop an international panel of tutors composed of directors, curators and producers will help participants to analyze and understand the potential of their subject matter, ideas, and plot, in order to find what is universal within them and to expand on and strengthen story of the film and its protagonists, analyzing the strong and weak points of the project and constructing a basic concept for the strategy of the film’s production and financing and basic orientation within the system of European funding, grants and broadcasters. The first part of the workshop will also offer inspirational sessions by renowned filmmakers as well as film screenings.

The second session will take place for the first time in Germany in October during DOK Leipzig. **Nadja Tennstedt**, the director of DOK Industry at DOK Leipzig comments on our new collaboration: “*Institute of documentary film has been a valuable and trusted partner of DOK Industry for many years. Each year we are continually impressed by the high quality of projects selected for Ex Oriente. Therefore, it brings us great joy to welcome the talented creative teams of documentary feature and documentary series along with the knowledgeable and inspiring professionals who will be guiding and mentoring these teams.”*

The last and final 3rd session will organize the Institute of Documentary Film during East Doc Platform from 22nd till 28th March 2024.

**EX ORIENTE FILM WORKSHOP TIMELINE**

**Ex Oriente Feature**

* 1st session: June 17 - 21, 2023: Sunny Side of the Doc, La Rochelle, France
* 2nd session: October 6 - 10, 2023: DOK Leipzig, Germany
* 3rd session: March 22 - 28, 2024: East Doc Platform, Prague, Czech Republic - in partnership with One World Film IHRDFF

**Ex Oriente Series**

* 1st Session: June 18 - 20, 2023: Sunny Side of the Doc, La Rochelle, France
* 2nd session: 7 - 9, October 2023: DOK Leipzig, Germany
* 3rd session: 26 - 28 March, 2024: East Doc Platform, Prague, Czech Republic - in partnership with One World IHRDFF

**Ex Oriente Film Feature 2023: Selected Projects**

[**Acting Classes**](https://dokweb.net/databaze/filmy/synopsis/7920be86-f45b-4124-a2cf-6b6e785da342/acting-classes)  
dir. Sasha Shegai, prod. Assel Yerzhanova (FilmFilmFilm), Yevgeniya Moreva, KZ

*Vera, 87, is a newcomer to a municipal nursing home, who gets the main part in an amateur theatre play. Rehearsal intrigues, neighbors’ hatred and reflection on life. Can Vera overcome everything and become a local star?*

[**Armenia Phantom**](https://dokweb.net/database/films/synopsis/f6cec595-cb89-4ce2-9a9d-a5d8fc08687c/armenia-phantom)  
dir. Tamara Stepanyan, prod. Céline Loiseau (TS Productions), FR, AM

*To find my cinematographic ancestors, I return to Soviet Armenian Cinema (1923-1990) to decode and question the images they made and I ask myself how these male-made images have influenced the female filmmaker I am today.*

[**Becoming Roosi**](https://dokweb.net/database/films/synopsis/af5059dd-0e2e-48c7-bff0-01ed9df981ea/becoming-roosi)dir. Margit Lillak, prod. Margit Lillak (Tiny Desk Productions), co-prod. Dirk Manthey (dirk manthey film), Hõbe Ilus (Tiny Desk Productions), EE, DE

*Coming of age at the end of the world.*

[**Birdie**](https://dokweb.net/database/films/synopsis/c906d5d5-f23d-430d-bc55-266737c1bbf5/birdie)  
dir. Aneta Ptak, prod. Małgorzata Staroń (Staron Film), PL

*A cathartic visual diary of loss and longing. A poetic story about the journey of inner emancipation stimulated by the sudden death of a father and a marriage brake-up reflected in intimate mother–daughter conversations.*  
[**Do Magic**](https://dokweb.net/database/films/synopsis/c6d1517f-b91d-4f1c-92fe-e4710216f163/do-magic)dir. Vera Lacková, prod. Peter Drössler (Golden Girls Film), AU, SK

*Hoping to break an ancient family curse, a Roma film director sets out to find a real witch of her people. Along the way, she discovers that she is looking for cures for a different kind of curse: Prejudice and racism.*  
  
[**How I Became a Hijacker**](https://dokweb.net/database/films/synopsis/932edb29-200f-4be8-8761-55bed3e060c7/how-i-became-a-hijacker)  
dir. Andrew Carter, prod. Aleksandra Szczesna, PL, DE

*After a simple escape plan goes terribly wrong, an East German waitress hijacks a plane, and lands up in the middle of a Cold War trial.*

[**Keepers of the Ruins**](https://dokweb.net/database/films/synopsis/c553edd5-8f9f-41d7-8855-b45eb0ddeadb/keepers-of-the-ruins)  
dir. Mariia Shevchenko, prod. Ella Shtyka (New Kyiv), PL, UA

*The film is about Kharkovians giving the war in their city a new meaning*.

[**Letters**](https://dokweb.net/database/films/synopsis/5c3314c9-ba00-480f-b238-0c0babd3cbb7/letters)  
dir. Andrei Kutsila, prod. Sofiia Zadorozhna, PL, BY

*When the streets are quiet and people are afraid to even discuss politics, letters can give us an insight into the feelings of pain, despair, love, and hope.*

[**Lights**](https://dokweb.net/database/films/synopsis/047d6bfc-598b-4cde-b61f-f4b1998acc87/lights-working-title)  
dir. Mila Teshaieva, prod. Marcus Lenz, DE, UA

*They find themselves in the middle of a war disaster: a teenage girl, a freshly married couple, a town official, a yoga teacher. They handle it with strength and solidarity, but how will war trauma affect their life?*

[**Man Under the Ice**](https://dokweb.net/database/films/synopsis/348075c3-ccf8-4ca5-a41b-5c4d5308d905/man-under-the-ice)  
dir. Eva Tomanová, prod. Michal Kráčmer (Analog Vision), Veronika Kührová (Analog Vision), Kenan Aliyev, CZ

*A film about breath, cold and dreams.*

[**The Poor Cry Too**](https://dokweb.net/database/films/synopsis/3f971264-d79d-4072-a7e6-1bd15d12f3f3/the-poor-cry-too)  
dir. Viktorija Mickute, Ieva Balsiunaite, prod. Dagne Vildziunaite (Just a Moment), LT, MX

*Factories halted in the post-Soviet countries when Mexican telenovelas were on air in the 1990s, while Mariana became a very popular baby name because of viewers’ love for the main character of The Rich Cry Too.*

[**What About Little Peter?**](https://dokweb.net/database/films/synopsis/f55d805b-72c6-4cea-be75-d74e12b57b42/what-about-little-peter)dir. Martin Trabalík, prod. Jan Bodnar (GNOMON PRODUCTION S.R.O.), CZ

*Despite his circumstances, a widowed father tries to keep his family together and care for his autistic son Peter and daughter Vanesa. Is love enough to manage all of his new responsibilities?*

**Ex Oriente Series 2023: Selected Projects**

[**Exit Only**](https://dokweb.net/database/films/synopsis/f1f6adbb-60d6-466a-871b-af545b8b782d/exit-only)  
dir. Timo Novotny, prod. Tereza Horská (Hypermarket Film), CZ, AT

*Documentary series about the catastrophic effects of energy production on our planet. The destruction and violence with which we humans affect the earth creates frightening cinematic aesthetics.*

[**Tito. The West's Favorite Dictator**](https://dokweb.net/database/films/synopsis/2f28733c-6874-4a6f-8c9e-8401cfe55e96/tito-the-west-s-favorite-dictator)dir. Bence Máté, prod. Gunnar Dedio (Looks Filmproduktionen GmbH), Regina Dr. Bouchehri (Looks Filmproduktionen GmbH), DE, AT, HR, IT

*In Tito. The West's Favorite Dictator, we tell the rise and fall of Yugoslavia through the life story of its controversial president and use his biography as a mirror of the 20th century world history.*

[**Unhero or a Falling Star**](https://dokweb.net/database/films/synopsis/35f81d12-8735-4177-92ee-e2711bffe734/unhero-or-a-falling-star)dir. Georgi Tenev, prod. Martichka Bozhilova (Agitprop Ltd.), BG

*A scandalous film actor is about to fail, threatened with going to prison. As he tries to restart his life, he is drawn into an investigation of a mysterious death of a graffiti artist with a powerful social message.*

[**The Murderers of Anna Labancz**](https://dokweb.net/database/films/synopsis/5998ca1f-a662-46fa-a9f1-dab94afa08a2/the-murderers-of-anna-labancz)dir. Balázs Dudás, prod. Balázs Dudás, HU

*Hungary’s most notorious unsolved murder case – true crime from behind the Iron Curtain.*

[**She Is Not in the Business of Making Friends**](https://dokweb.net/database/films/synopsis/9cdb8ef5-fc5a-4ee8-97d6-0b5ced496f22/she-is-not-in-the-business-of-making-friends)dir. Monica Lăzurean-Gorgan, prod. Monica Lăzurean-Gorgan (Manifest Film), Elena Martin (Manifest Film), RO

*A political thriller that tells a complex and layered story of conniving, illegal operations, betrayal, media manipulation and political espionage.*

**Links**

[**Ex Oriente Film Open Program**](https://dokweb.net/activities/ex-oriente-film/2023/open-program)  
[**Ex Oriente Film Tutors**](https://dokweb.net/database/persons?personActivity%5Bid%5D=bc96375b-a5d0-41e9-a945-33c04719ead6&personActivity%5Byear%5D=2023&filmActivity%5Bid%5D=&filmActivity%5Byear%5D=)

**Socials**[**Facebook**](https://www.facebook.com/IDFPrague/)[**Instagram**](https://www.instagram.com/institute_of_documentary_film/)[**Linkedin**](https://www.linkedin.com/company/institute-of-documentary-film-prague/)

**Hashtags**[#ExOrienteFilm](https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/exorientefilm?__cft__%5B0%5D=AZUdLAefcDimq12dqymGqy-ffoWNoOvkHn80WdXVV_tdbqpY0ijr9AJhm6bZXVD0gSDdje2UBNUfdCvOFY4u8hW9WehYeVP21VqsuYhbCAwp8rxgVhy2itlzd-avD86jOO0&__tn__=*NK-R) [#ExOrienteFilm2023](https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/exorientefilm2023?__cft__%5B0%5D=AZUdLAefcDimq12dqymGqy-ffoWNoOvkHn80WdXVV_tdbqpY0ijr9AJhm6bZXVD0gSDdje2UBNUfdCvOFY4u8hW9WehYeVP21VqsuYhbCAwp8rxgVhy2itlzd-avD86jOO0&__tn__=*NK-R) [#exoriente](https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/exoriente?__cft__%5B0%5D=AZUdLAefcDimq12dqymGqy-ffoWNoOvkHn80WdXVV_tdbqpY0ijr9AJhm6bZXVD0gSDdje2UBNUfdCvOFY4u8hW9WehYeVP21VqsuYhbCAwp8rxgVhy2itlzd-avD86jOO0&__tn__=*NK-R) [#exo2023](https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/exo2023?__cft__%5B0%5D=AZUdLAefcDimq12dqymGqy-ffoWNoOvkHn80WdXVV_tdbqpY0ijr9AJhm6bZXVD0gSDdje2UBNUfdCvOFY4u8hW9WehYeVP21VqsuYhbCAwp8rxgVhy2itlzd-avD86jOO0&__tn__=*NK-R)

**Contacts**

Anna Kaslová, Manager of Ex Oriente Film   
[kaslova@dokweb.net](mailto:kaslova@dokweb.net)  
  
Tereza Plavecká, PR Manager   
[plavecka@dokweb.net](mailto:tplavecka@dokweb.net)

**Supported by**

[Creative Europe MEDIA](https://culture.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/creative-europe-media-strand)

[Czech Film Fund](https://fondkinematografie.cz/english/)[Ministry of Culture Czech republic](https://www.mkcr.cz/en)

[American Film Showcase](https://americanfilmshowcase.com/)  
[U.S. Embassy in Prague](https://cz.usembassy.gov/)

**Project partners** [Sunny Side of the Doc](https://www.sunnysideofthedoc.com/)  
[DOK Leipzig](https://www.dok-leipzig.de/en)  
[One World IHRDFF](https://www.oneworld.cz/films)  
[Ciclic](https://ciclic.fr/international)