

press release  
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### Ten years of the three-day war that has been going on for three centuries

The 21st Docudays UA International Human Rights Documentary Film Festival will be held in Kyiv on 31 May–6 June. The screenings and events will take place in the Zhovten Cinema (Kostiantynivska Str., 11B), the House of Cinema (Saksahanskoho Str., 6), and in the [DOCUSPACE Online Cinema](#). You will be able to find the festival schedule and buy tickets on the Docudays UA website starting on 24 May. Exclusively, after the festival ends, the audience can attend screenings during three Audience Days on 7–9 June. We will screen the winners of competition programmes and the festival hits again.

We will present 62 films from 34 countries, from Chile to Taiwan. The programme will also include 19 Ukrainian films: 10 national premieres and 9 world premieres. The audience will also have a chance to see art installations and attend relevant discussions. Docudays UA will bring together over 150 participants, including 25 international guests.

The central theme of the 21st Docudays UA is *Ten years of the three-day war that has been going on for three centuries*. This year, we will reflect on historic memory, its fragility and constant attempts by our enemies to change and rewrite it. We will think about the cyclic nature of history, about the preservation and search for identity. We will also talk about responsibility: punishment for war criminals as well as the responsibility of those who hide behind the word 'peace' and avoid the word 'justice.' Because it is memory that shapes our sense of responsibility for our choice and confidence in the correctness of our actions.

The theme of the 21st Docudays UA is creatively reflected in the visual solution and the main festival trailer which uses the image of crystal – whimsical, gleaming, fragile like memory itself. While creating the visual solution for the 21st Docudays UA, we were inspired by the art practice of the artist Mykhailo Alekseyenko, who has created the awards for Docudays UA winners this year.

#### FILM PROGRAMME

The festival will open with a Ukrainian film, *Intercepted* by Oksana Karpovych. The film asks questions about the nature of Russian imperialism, the role of propaganda in the invasion, and the collective responsibility of Russians. It is based on intercepted phone conversations between Russian troops and their family members, which opens the world's eyes not only to the course of the so-called 'special operation,' but also to the process of moral decay of its perpetrators. The film premiered at the 74th Berlin Film Festival, where it received two special mentions.

Traditionally, Docudays UA films will compete in the **DOCU/WORLD**, **DOCU/UKRAINE** and **DOCU/SHORT** competitions. 10 films from all festival programmes have also been nominated for the RIGHTS NOW! Award. It will be awarded to a creative documentary film which explores the contemporary world and makes a significant contribution to the discussion of human dignity, freedom and equality. Every competition programme is judged by a separate **jury** that includes international and Ukrainian experts, documentary filmmakers, and human rights advocates. The **Student Jury** will

also award its own price. An innovation at the 21st Docudays UA is the **jury from the Union of Ukrainian Film Critics**, who will pick their own winner in the national competition.

The **DOCU/UKRAINE** programme includes 5 films which depict Ukraine's difficult path to independence and the country's present through personal stories. The competitors are ***Fragments of Ice*** by Maria Stoianova, ***Elevation*** by Maksym Rudenko, ***A Bit of a Stranger*** by Svitlana Lishchynska, ***Nice Ladies*** by Mariia Ponomarova, and ***Everything Needs to Live*** by Tetiana Dorodnitsyna and Andrii Lytvynenko.

The **DOCU/SHORT** programme is back in its usual international format. This year the competition features 14 films from 10 countries, including 6 films by Ukrainian filmmakers. The competitors are ***Our home*** by Anna Yutchenko, ***Under the Sign of Anchor*** by Taras Spivak, ***Tale of the Three Flames*** by Juliette Menthonnex, ***On April 22, 2023, from 13:05 to 13:11 nothing happened in Irpin*** by Ania Na, ***Position*** by Yurii Pupirin, ***Walk*** by Daria Zhuravel, ***The Most Beautiful Corner in the World*** by Robo Mihály, ***The Kiosk*** by Daniel Stopa, ***Incident*** by Bill Morrison, ***Near Light*** by Niccolò Salvato, ***Boots on the Ground, Hands in the Soil*** by Karolina Uskakovych, ***Kathmandu Monsoon*** by Ngima Gelu Sherpa, ***Testudo Hermanni*** by G. Anthony Svatek, and ***New Facades*** by Kay Hannahan.

The international competition **DOCU/WORLD** presents 10 feature-length films, including one Ukrainian film. These are the films ***Machtat*** by Sonia Ben Slama, ***Grasshopper Republic*** by Daniel McCabe, ***Rowdy Girl*** by Jason Goldman, ***Magic Mountain*** by Mariam Chachia and Nik Voigt, ***Knit's Island*** by Quentin L'helgoualc'h, Ekiem Barbier and Guilhem Causse, ***A Golden Life*** by Boubacar Sangaré, ***Bigger Than Trauma*** by Vedrana Pribačić, ***Body*** by Petra Seliškar, ***The World According to My Dad*** by Marta Kovářová, and ***Fragments of Ice*** by Maria Stoianova.

There are also five non-competition programmes, the traditional **DOCU/BEST**, **DOCU/ART** and **DOCU/YOUTH**, as well as special programmes: the central ***Ten years of the three-day war that has been going on for three centuries*** programme and the programme made in partnership with the Taiwan International Documentary Festival (TIDF), ***Prism of Society: Taiwanese Documentaries Focus***.

Each of the 6 films in the main programme considers the culture of memory in the face of war and the global fragility of the world. ***Intercepted*** by Oksana Karpovych seeks to capture the coordinates in which the Russia-Ukraine war unfolds. ***The Kyiv Files*** by Walter Stokman raises the question of personal responsibility under dictatorship, addressing the period when Ukraine was in the system of Soviet totalitarianism. ***Invisible Nation*** by Vanessa Hope depicts the ideological and political realities in which Taiwan exists, facing the military threat of China. ***Henry Fonda for President*** by Alexander Horwath masterfully demonstrates how cinema can shape our ideas about our history and ourselves. ***The DNA of Dignity*** by Jan Baumgartner describes the painstaking process of restoring dignity to those who lost their lives by recording the public memory about the tragic experience of the Balkan Wars. ***Mission 200*** by Volodymyr Sydko considers how we can save the dead from oblivion and invest our own effort in preserving memory.

The special programme ***Prism of Society: Taiwanese Documentaries Focus*** includes 6 films which offer a perspective on the complex history of Taiwan and its society. ***Taste of Wild Tomato*** by Kek-Huat LAU is based on the testimonies of eyewitnesses and their descendants who have preserved the memory of oppression. ***And Miles to Go Before I Sleep*** by TSAI Tsung-Lung describes a migrant crisis and the need for new economic and security systems, revealed by a horrible story about the death of a migrant worker at the hands of a police officer. ***A Performance in the Church*** by HSU Chia-

wei delves into the subject of maritime exploration and the colonisation of Taiwan. ***A Holy Family*** by Elvis A-Liang Lu is a portrait of rekindled family bonding despite differences, and an unflinching tale of self-discovery through filmmaking. ***In Their Teens*** by Yu-En LIN is about being forced to grow up and engaging in high-risk labour for the dream of turning one's life around. ***The Catch*** by Hsu Che-Chia overcomes the difficulties and unpredictabilities of living in a harsh land.

The variegated **DOCU/BEST** programme presents 5 films, each with a lot of fans. ***Smoke Sauna Sisterhood*** by Anna Hints forms a space of candour where the protagonists share their deepest secrets and feelings in the darkness of a sauna. ***Monogamia*** by Ohad Milstein is a thrilling journey into the world of love and intimacy in a long-term relationship. In 2023, the film won the Critics Grand Prix at the Locarno Film Festival. ***The Gullspång Miracle*** by Maria Fredriksson is an eerie story of family reunification which questions the boundaries between fantasy and reality. ***While the Green Grass Grows*** by Peter Mettler is a statement about our shared human fate in the form of an extremely personal audiovisual diary. ***A Picture to Remember*** by Olga Chernykh is an essay film about the war from the perspective of three generations of women. The film combines violence in the Donbas with the destruction in this region during the Second World War. It is the first Ukrainian film in history to become the opening film of IDFA.

The **DOCU/ART** programme features three films which offer exercises in preserving cultural memory. ***Nathan-ism*** by Elan Golod grows out of an observation of a unique witness to the Nuremberg Trials and becomes a fascinating exploration of the function of art as an archive. In ***Kim's Video***, the directing duo of David Redmon and Ashley Sabin launches a documentary investigation into the fate of a legendary New York video rental store that has closed. ***Behind Closed Doors*** by João Pedro Bim is about the military dictatorship in Brazil; it combines audio evidence of the restrictions of rights and freedoms with archival video footage of propaganda.

The **DOCU/YOUTH** programme dives into the exploration of the internal state of the protagonists facing their first serious choice. ***KIX*** by Bálint Révész and Dávid Mikulán is a 12-year-long coming-of-age odyssey. ***Girls' Stories*** by Aga Borzym is a film about two friends who search for themselves and explore the world with its absurdity of the school system, imposed rules, and the dilemmas of growing up. The multilayered and funny Dutch short ***Nelson the Piglet*** by Anneke De Lind van Wijngaarden is a festival hit about never giving up and fighting for what is important to you.

The sad and painful experience of the loss of home which many Ukrainian teenagers are going through right now is captured by Vadym Makarov's short ***Plasticine Dreams***. The film ***Girl Away From Home*** by the Oscar-nominated director Simon Lereng Wilmont and the director Alisa Kovalenko is a touching tale of resilience, friendship, and the ability of sports to be a support and to bring people together. ***Madeleine*** by Raquel Sancinetti is a hybrid documentary which uses animation, plays with reality and fiction, and reflects on life and death.

Special festival events include the world premiere of the film ***Witnesses. Captivity Kills*** by Maryna Roshchyna and Tetiana Symon. It is the second film from the *Witnesses* series, based on materials from the Ukraine War Archive.

There will also be an exclusive screening of a selection of shorts *Stratcom of the AFU x Ukraine War Archive: Films from the Frontline*. This is truly unique footage from the front, and the people featured in them will be special guests at the event.

The 21st Docudays UA will close with a screening of *Mission 200* by Volodymyr Sydko. It is a quiet, almost detached observation which captures the audience's attention until the last second. The film's protagonist put her tourism business on hold, used her own money to buy a refrigerator truck, and began transporting the bodies of fallen soldiers. Like the mythological Charon, she covers thousands of kilometres without stopping or sleeping to transport those who are going on their last journey 'on the shield.'

During the Awards Ceremony, we will also present the winners of **Doc Alliance Award 2024**, which you will have a chance to watch during the Audience Days on 7–9 June.

### **DOCU/CLASS**

The DOCU/CLASS programme traditionally offers public discussions about the production, curation, and distribution of documentaries from the professionals of the Ukrainian film industry. This year, we offer you to meet the festival jury and invite you to discuss the trends in the development of Ukrainian documentary cinema during the ten years of the war. We offer you to think how the most important people – Ukrainian and international audiences – interact with our films.

### **DOCU/PRO**

DOCU/PRO presents **13 powerful discussions, masterclasses, and networking meetings** for the industry which will take place on 1–6 June. Three of these events will be open to everyone. On Saturday, 1 June, there will be a public conversation where we, together with representatives of various cultural fields, will discuss how to effectively speak about the war abroad. The event will be held in the 1818 Rooftop space with free access.

At the next event, Jacques Pelissier, a distributor from France, will share advice on film distribution and talk about how Ukrainian films can effectively reach the European market. The event is open to everyone and will be held at KINO42. On 6 June, there will be a **public conversation between the directors from the DOCU/UKRAINE competition and the director Maryna Stepanska**. Svitlana Lishchynska, Maria Stoianova, Mariia Ponomarova, and Tetiana Dorodnitsyna will contemplate the breaks in reality and time through which films grow.

The holders of industry accreditation passes will be able to attend **10 closed masterclasses and networking meetings**, figure out the nuances of editing (a case study with Michael Oglund and a case study of *Intercepted* by Charlotte Turre), working with sound (a masterclass by Vasyl Yavtushenko), and property rights to films (a masterclass by Karine Riahi). Representatives of Suspilne Television will also discuss the opportunities for cooperation between the public broadcaster and Ukrainian independent filmmakers.

This year we are bringing back **Meet Professionals**, meetings with sales agents and broadcasters, as well as a representative of The Guardian Documentaries. These meetings will allow the holders of industry accreditation to expand their professional network and find new opportunities for their projects.

For the first time, the DOCU/PRO platform will host **RAW DOC**, a programme created for filmmakers working on the rough cuts of their films who want to have a test screening for experts in the international film industry and receive professional feedback. During the closed screenings, the participants

will have a chance to talk to potential partners, including representatives of European public broadcasters, sales agents, and festivals.

### DOCU/SYNTHESIS

The DOCU/SYNTHESIS interdisciplinary art programme will focus on memory, archives, and shared spaces. The events of the programme will be held on 31 May–6 June at the Zhovten Cinema and the House of Cinema.

The Zhovten space will host the installation by Volodymyr Kuznetsov titled **Anthology of Ukrainian Cuisine 2022–2024**, created from the documentation of stories from life and acts of solidarity and based on video materials from the Ukraine War Archive as well as the artist's own video and audio recordings. The project captures the moments of volunteering and mutual social support, testifying to the tireless work of volunteers during the war.

The DOCU/SYNTHESIS programme includes collaborations with invited curators. The first one is with the Ukho Music Agency. **Listening to absence: Sound archives of (non-)empty rooms** is a series of audio installations based on documentary recordings collected in Kyiv and nearby during 2011–2024. Its participants are Oleh Shpudeiko, Ian Spektor, Kachna Baraniewicz and Maryna Osnach, and Illia Kovalenko / ctrl-i. You will be able to visit the project on 31 May–2 June at the House of Cinema. On 4 June, we invite you to the moderated artist talk with the participants at the Zhoven Cinema.

An archival film programme **SİNEMA TRANSTOPIA. Fragments** by the curatorial duo of Galo E. Rivera and Bethan Hughes. We will watch and discuss the films **Guestworker's Road** by Tuncel Kurtiz (Sweden / Turkey, 1978) and **One Hundred Children Waiting for a Train** by Ignacio Agüero (Chile, 1988). In addition to the series of installations and film screenings, there will also be discussions with artists, curators, and experts.

### RIGHTS NOW! HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRAMME

This year, the events of the RIGHTS NOW! Human Rights Programme will be held on 1–6 June. Every day from morning until late night, we offer you to attend events in the Coffee with Partners format, public readings at the Living Library, Ukraine War Archive events, and evening conversations of RIGHTS NOW!.

During the **Coffee with Partners** event series, we will learn how to protect children from online sexual violence, find out what problems hide in the legislation on collaboration with the enemy, think about the support for people who care for wounded veterans, and consider the role of young people in decolonisation. We will also watch documentaries from the Radio Liberty project *Crimea.Realities* and an investigation by Mykhailo Tkach of *Ukrainska Pravda*.

**Ukraine War Archive**, a project by NGO Docudays and Infoscope, will present the new instruments of the platform and offer a number of discussions about the politics of memory, misinformation and artificial intelligence, bringing Russia to responsibility for environmental crimes, and the connection between hate speech and war crimes. Just like last year, the cinema will host a viewing room of the Ukraine War Archive. And the special event will be the premiere of *Witnesses. Captivity Kills*, a film based on materials from the Ukraine War Archive.

We also invite you to the **Living Library** to consider various facets of Ukrainian identity at public readings with prominent experts in history, literature, music, visual arts, and cinema.

At **RIGHTS NOW! discussions**, we will talk about security alliances and the prospects of the international community coming together to help Ukraine. We will consider the transformations of our economy for sustainable development, the lessons which the war teaches to Ukraine and the world, and we will learn about the ways to bring back Ukrainian children kidnapped by Russia.

### **DOCU/CLUB**

On 1 and 3 June, the DOCU/CLUB Film Club Network will hold a series of events on the occasion of its **10th anniversary**. We will discuss how film clubs popularise documentary cinema in the regions, which films become long-term favourites of club screenings, how documentaries encourage audiences to come together and achieve change in their communities. We will also announce the beginning of a joint information campaign with NGO Magnolia on the subject of counteracting online sexual violence against children.

### **ACCESSIBILITY**

Just like every year, almost all films in the festival programmes of the 21st Docudays UA have descriptive subtitles, and 15 films will have audio description. The films will be available both at the offline screenings in the Zhovten Cinema and KINO42, and online on the DOCUSPACE platform. All the events of the RIGHTS NOW! Human Rights Programme will also have sign language interpretation.

### **DOCUSPACE**

On 2–7 June, you will have a chance to watch 12 films from the DOCU/UKRAINE, DOCU/YOUTH, DOCU/ART programmes and the Central Festival Programme in the DOCUSPACE Online Cinema. 7 feature-length releases at 60 UAH per screening and 5 shorts at 30 UAH per screening. The films will be published gradually and available during one day for viewing in the Ukrainian territory only. All DOCUSPACE films will have descriptive subtitles and audio descriptions. You can find the schedule of online releases on our website and on the DOCUSPACE Instagram page.

### **LOCATIONS AND FORMATS**

Festival screenings will be held at the Zhovten Cinema, KINO42 Cinema, and on DOCUSPACE. Some of the DOCU/SYNTHESIS installations will be located at the House of Cinema. During the Audience Days on 7–9 June, you will also have a chance to watch the winners of competition programmes and festival hits in cinemas. The schedule of screenings and events as well as the tickets can be found on the festival website from 24 May.

For more detailed information about the festival and for organising interviews, please email:

- **Maria Matiashova**, Festival Press Coordinator: [maria.matiashova@docudays.ua](mailto:maria.matiashova@docudays.ua);
- **Anastasiya Ankovich**, Festival Media Partner Coordinator: [anastasiya.ankovich@docudays.ua](mailto:anastasiya.ankovich@docudays.ua);
- **Iryna Pavliukovska**, Communications Manager of the Human Rights Department: [iryna.sydenko@docudays.ua](mailto:iryna.sydenko@docudays.ua).

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# DOCU DAYS UA

## INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL

31/05–9/06 . 2024

www.docudays.ua

for correspondence:  
11 Mala Zhytomyrska str.,  
office 10, Kyiv 01001, Ukraine

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### За підтримки



### Партнери



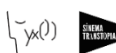
### Комерційні партнери



### Партнери Архіву війни



### Партнери DOCU/СИНТЕЗ



### Партнери Мережі DOCU/CLUB



### Медіапартнери



### Інформаційні партнери



### Інформаційні партнери DOCU/СИНТЕЗ



### Партнери правозахисної програми



### Інформаційні партнери правозахисної програми



### Лекції



### Організатори

