

DOXS RUHR



REALITIES

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DOXS RUHR – press release Bochum, October 7 2024

YES! Think Tank on Docs for Young Audiences - Defining Steps to Move Forward

YES-Young European Realities initiative invites film professionals to a Think Tank during the 12th edition of DOXS RUHR Film Festival on 28 October 2024.

In a time where young audiences are atomised and rarely use traditional media, while threats to freedom of information and free speech are increasing, what can we do to reach them?

What kind of documentaries should we be making that not only engage young audiences but also provide them with a view of the world beyond their own?

How can we better support the creation of documentaries for young people? What needs to change, and in which direction(s) can we evolve and collaborate?

Starting Point

In 2022, with the support of Goethe Institute, DOXS RUHR Film Festival initiated a network meeting in Bochum called REALITIES to exchange experiences and perspectives among representatives of the European children documentary industry scene. Broadcasters, festival and market

representatives, distributors and producers discussed the development, production and distribution of creative documentary films for younger audiences across the audiovisual landscape in Europe.

As a continuation of this discussion, REALITIES participants, among others, formed an alliance called D4K. The aim of D4K is to strengthen networks and foster knowledge transfer at the European level to drive change. The alliance has 12 founding members from the industry, including 9 institutions and associations from 5 different European countries.

YES-Young European Realities

Think Tank

Out of the aforementioned necessity the DOXS RUHR Film Festival in collaboration with other members of the D4K alliance, is hosting a Think Tank called YES-Young European Realities. The Think Tank will delve into story development, production, distribution, and networking of creative documentaries for younger audiences (and everybody else). Two workshops with different approaches will take place; the first focuses on production and development and building strategies for including young, future viewers in the co-creation process, whereas the second explores distribution, networking structures and synergies. The Think Tank will question how we can improve the framework conditions for the production; what current structures and distribution mechanisms dominate the documentary market for children and young people, as well as broader and dominant audiences.

A selected group of 25 filmmakers, producers, editors, distributors, festival curators, film funding representatives, and marketing experts will join the workshops. Hosts are Karolina Śmigiel (Let's Doc, PL), Viola Gabrielli and Zofia Horszyczak (Young Horizons Industry, PL) in collaboration with festival director Gudrun Sommer (DOXS RUHR, DE) and the members of the D4K alliance.

Over the summer, a working group gathered production data to inform this Think Tank. Research interviews with industry representatives on their experiences with children documentaries are accompanied by a questionnaire encouraging participants from across Europe to share their insights into country-specific conditions for a comprehensive status report (<https://forms.gle/32nexcQdkh2erjEZ7>). This report will be used as a lobbying and advocacy tool for creating and updating conditions for production and distribution of works for young audiences across Europe.

Public Panel

The Think Tank will also include a public panel entitled “**The Power of Purpose**”, moderated by Johanna Faltinat (script consultant / diverse storytelling, DE). The topic of this discussion questions how documentaries for younger audiences can challenge preconceived notions and will connect content and aesthetic considerations with questions of representation and responsibility. Guest speakers are Farnaz Sassanzadeh (FilmMachtMut / Vision Kino Berlin, DE), Niki Padidar (filmmaker and curator / IDFA, NL), and Ömer Alkin (media scholar and cultural theorist, DE).

Coming Up

YES-Young European Realities initiative is starting point of a series of events that will focus on creative documentaries for younger audiences. It features a wide range of get togethers that bolster constructive and critical exchange and create platforms for industry professionals to not only connect with each other but strengthen a voice and demands for steps to move forward.

Mission of the Alliance

We:

- are committed to ensuring that the production and distribution of documentaries for young audiences (and everybody else) is taken seriously on a professional level in Europe and beyond.
- ask for more visibility of the documentary films in festivals, cinemas and other distribution channels.
- believe in the power of storytelling.
- believe that creative documentaries are a fundamental tool to establish cultural awareness.
- believe they can create and shape the cultural identity to challenge preconceived notions while sharing perspectives, and giving insight into the nuances of different lived experiences.

Members of the Alliance

Anne Rethfeldt, DAE (Documentary Association Europe), DE

Anne Schultka and Elisabeth Wenk, Golden Sparrow Festival / Kids Regio, DE

Davide Tosco, AIACE, IT

Gudrun Sommer, DOXS RUHR / ECFA, DE / BE

Karolina Śmigiel, Andrzej Wajda Center for Film Culture / LET'S DOC, PL

Margret Albers, ECFA / Förderverein Deutscher Kinderfilm, BE / DE

Meike Statema / Marije Veenstra, IDFA, NL

Viola Gabrielli, Young Horizons, PL

Supporters

YES-Young European Realities is supported by Landesinitiative Europa-Schecks des Ministers für Bundes- und Europaangelegenheiten, Internationales sowie Medien and Chef der Staatskanzlei des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen. With a special thanks to Alfred Toepfer Stiftung FVS, AG DOK, Filmbüro NW and Vision Kino.

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