

## DOXS RUHR – press release Round About Realities N° 11 | 25.10. – 5. 11. 2023

Bochum, 21<sup>st</sup> August 2023

### Real crises and virtual realities: Films on Climate, War and AI at DOXS RUHR.

**Program preview for the 2023 festival. Registrations are now open.**

Whether climate crisis, the war in Ukraine, artificial intelligence, or diversity - at the 11th edition of the documentary film festival for children and youth there is room for uncomfortable and explosive topics. What stands out this year is the tendency of documentary cinema to focus on itself: "Many filmmakers are reacting to the possibilities and uncertainties of digital manipulation with unconditional transparency," says festival director Gudrun Sommer. "Never before have we had so many films in the program that are convincing, not only with their subject matter, but also in the way they co-tell their own process of creation." The focus on "film in film" cuts across all ages, genres, and sections in the program.

The curatorial network that spans the Ruhr Region, **kino.for you**, dedicates a special film evening to "self-reflective films" - from the cinematographic beginnings to the AI-generated vision of a cinema in the future. This section of the program, titled **Second Life**, allows pupils and students to curate films themselves and present them at the festival. The locations and design of the various film evenings are entirely in the hands of the young curators. After each screening, there will be an opportunity to discuss the content of the films with guests. More information (in German): [doxs-ruhr.de/kino-for-you](https://doxs-ruhr.de/kino-for-you)

Also, for the second time, the ECFA DOC Award will be presented on Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> October at the KoFabrik in Bochum. To round off the festival offerings, an online program including media-educational materials in plain language, are available until 5<sup>th</sup> November for schools to access.

### Kick-off in mark of the climate | 25<sup>th</sup> October 2023 in Dortmund

The opening on 25<sup>th</sup> October at the Schauburg DORTMUND is dedicated to the climate crisis. In the opening film **Planet B** by director Pieter Van Eecke, everything revolves around the struggle for a (better) future. "We are peaceful, what are you?!" Climate activists Bo and Luca want to save the planet from destruction. They discuss, demonstrate, laugh and despair together. Along the way, the close-knit teenagers grow up. "It's so much... and it's so complicated". They wonder why the National People's Army

(former armed forces of Germany) left behind so much contaminated soil and how long the African forest elephants will survive. Time and again they find courage and in doing so are met with a lot of support from society; and the more radical the actions, also with lack of understanding, resistance and police. The opening at the Schauburg in Dortmund is already sold out, accreditation holders can sign up to the waiting list. Contact: kontakt@doxs-ruhr.de

### Digitalisation and self-reflection

Alongside the climate crisis, the topics of artificial intelligence and digitalisation are shaping this year's program for schools. Where are the boundaries between the real and virtual world drawn. Can we even distinguish between realities anymore? In the film **Let's be Friends** by Arno Coenen and Rodger Werkhoven, AI-generated characters reflect on themselves and ask annoyed: "First you invented me, and then you all started acting scared of me." What are the consequences of AI for the art of acting. What is artistic authenticity and how do we recognise it?

In the Swiss contribution **Crushed**, we get to know director Ella Rocca. Ella has a crush, desiring another person so strongly that there is no room left for anything else. Ella searches for answers - on the internet and in personal conversations. Analog and digital spaces intermingle, communication levels oscillate in multi-layered cinematic images.

**Safiya the Movie** is a "film in film". Director Huibert van Wijk accompanies eleven-year-old Safiya during the shooting of the film about her own story. Her parents divorced when she was one year old, and since then she has lived in a "bonus family." The film shows how difficult it is for Safiya to live with her new family whilst also keeping in touch with her biological father. Playfully, it tells of misunderstandings and disappointments, but also of shared positive experiences.

### ECFA DOC Award

After last year's successful premiere, the ECFA DOC Award will be presented for the second time on 27<sup>th</sup> October in Bochum. An international jury of experts will select the winner from six European productions aimed at audiences between the ages of 6 and 14. The award at DOXS RUHR also acts as a nomination for the ECFA DOC Award of the members at the Berlinale 2024.

### Online participation

A selection of documentaries will again be accessible on filmfriend, the streaming portal used by libraries in Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Luxembourg. Press representatives and schools can also enjoy the DOXS RUHR-online program, which will be available from 25<sup>th</sup> October to 5<sup>th</sup> November 2023 via on-demand streaming. For an accreditation please get in touch with Lara Kuom: programm@doxs-ruhr.de. Tel: +49 (0) 234-966 42423

The complete program for all DOXS RUHR venues is available to download at [www.doxs-ruhr.de/programm](http://www.doxs-ruhr.de/programm); you will find free visual material relating to the festival under <https://www.doxs-ruhr.de/downloads>, alternatively email us and we will gladly send you the materials.

### Press contact

Gudrun Sommer, Stefan Schröer  
kontakt@doxs-ruhr.de  
kommunikation@doxs-ruhr.de  
+49 234 966 42423  
doxs-ruhr.de