

# PRESSEMITTEILUNG PRESS RELEASE

53. Internationales Leipziger Festival für Dokumentar- und Animationsfilm  
53<sup>rd</sup> International Leipzig Festival for Documentary and Animated Film  
18 – 24 October 2010



**Press Release #9/2010**

27 September 2010

## ***Daring to Be Democratic – Honouring Democracy*** **Peaceful Revolution Foundation presents new award at DOK Leipzig**

*It was the longing for social change and the commitment of the citizens that moved the people in the autumn of 1989 to take to the streets in East Germany. For the sake of democracy people were willing to risk their lives, health and freedom. The Peaceful Revolution of 1989 changed not just Germany and Europe, but the whole world.*

“The people of Leipzig showed the world that social systems can be changed non-violently with civil courage. The Peaceful Revolution Foundation has vowed to work in this same spirit,” emphasizes chairmain Dr. Rainer Vor. “With the film award we hope to motivate people to take on social responsibility and to set responsibility processes in motion. Our society needs this more urgently than ever,” comments Rainer Vor.

With the Award of the Peaceful Revolution Foundation, which includes a cash prize of 5,000 euros, the foundation would like to honour an artistic documentary film that demonstrates a commitment to democracy and human rights in an exemplary manner or that was created in the face of resistance and limitations to freedom of the press and opinion due to great personal dedication and courage on the part of the director.

“The award fits perfectly into DOK Leipzig, as traditionally the Leipzig festival has always promoted films that advocate peace and human dignity. This is to be seen and felt in the numerous documentary and animated films that we present every year,” explains festival director Claas Danielsen. “The self-assured, upright democratic proclamation ‘We are the people’ of the people of East Germany opened a new chapter in history and radically changed this country. In many countries oppression and political abuse still reign and human rights are violated on a daily basis. Documentary film makers all over the world are uncovering these injustices and are making broad audiences aware of them, often with great personal dedication. DOK Leipzig supports the Peaceful Revolution Foundation in its attempts to support democratic movements all over the world and to inspire people – also in Germany – to show civil courage and a stronger commitment to democracy.”

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Ten recent documentary films were nominated for the award, including works from Finland, New Zealand, Canada and the Ukraine. The spectrum of subjects ranges from the conflict between Russia and Georgia (SOMETHIING ABOUT GEORGIA), to the protests of the Iranian people (TWENTY DAYS THAT SHOOK TEHRAN) or to the murder of human rights activists in Russia (LOVE ME, PLEASE!). One film follows the attempt to get to the truth of an unsubstantiated Stasi accusation in Finland (IN THE SHADOW OF DOUBT). Another film shows the consequences of Israel's siege on Gaza during which no foreign media was allowed to report (GAZA ON AIR). An independent jury consisting of Jakob Hoffmann (INTERFILM), Thomas Bohne (SIGNIS) and Dr. Gerlinde Frey-Vor (Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk) will select the award winner.

"The works nominated tell powerful stories," states festival director Danielsen, "and approach their issues in a unique way. These films are realised in an outstanding and surprising manner, they explore the boundaries of the genre and – in their narrative approaches – have the potential to inspire broader interest in the cause of democracy."

The award will be presented at a special ceremony on 22 October 2010 at 7 pm by the Peaceful Revolution Foundation in cooperation with DOK Leipzig. The event will be held at the Nikolai Church in Leipzig – the place from which the legendary Monday demonstrations got on their way.

### Films nominated for the Peaceful Revolution Award 2010

In the Shadow of Doubt, D: Pekko Lehto, Finland, 2010

How to turn a respected Finnish presidential candidate into an outlaw overnight by means of unproven Stasi allegations. A Kafkaesque nightmare.

Something about Georgia, D: Nino Kirtadze, France, 2010

An inquiry into the events of 7 August 2008: Georgia, Russia and Ossetia. All parties have their say, including President Saakashvili: a look behind the scenes of power.

There Once Was an Island: Te Henua e Noho, D: Briar March, New Zealand, 2010

Climate change. A tiny atoll in the Pacific and a Polynesian culture literally going under. Breathtaking visuals and the dramatic attempt of the inhabitants to rescue themselves.

Twenty Days that Shook Teheran, D: Ali Razi, France/Iran, 2010

Tehran, May 2009, a city in a state of emergency. Filmed in the streets, at rallies and in all political camps. An authentic document of rebellion.

Nach der Revolution [After the Revolution], D: Dörte Franke, Marc Bauder, Germany, 2010

East German civil rights activists talk about the short period of utopia, when a new society seemed possible at the Round Table, between the autumn revolution of 1989 and the union of East and West Germany.

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### Casino Jack and the United States of Money, D: Alex Gibney, U.S.A., 2010

Lobbyism: the incredible story of Jack Abramoff or the links between finance and politics. A horror thriller by Academy Award winner Alex Gibney.

### All That Glitters, R: Tomas Kudrna, Czech Republic, 2010

A gold mine in Kirgizia, a Canadian corporation, a hushed up environmental disaster, lots of post-Soviet pioneer folklore and a swamp of corruption. A grotesque.

### How to Start Your Own Country, D: Jody Shapiro, Canada, 2010

A journey through the undiscovered world of micro nations. One man kingdoms and an oil platform country, shrill and eccentric. And the serious question: what makes a state a state?

### Gaza on Air, D: Samir Abdallah, Egypt/Palestine/France, 2010

The Gaza that we never saw. The horror, filmed by Palestinian cameramen during the war, and a reflection about the medium and the images, politics and power.

### Love Me, Please!, D: Valeriy Balayan, Ukraine, 2010

The murder of two human rights activists in Russia forms the starting point of a research that leads deep into the structures of Russian nationalist and fascist movements.

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## DOK Leipzig thanks:

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