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PHOTO: SUER CELINA

DokuFest as a Space for Reflection and Hope in a World Fragmented by Contradictions

In a world that feels increasingly fragmented, filled with contradictions and tensions that often leave us feeling powerless, DokuFest emerges as a rare window or a space where we can pause to see, to listen, and to reflect on what we so often choose to ignore.

In this harsh reality, where bad news, gossip, conflict, and indifference dominate the day, the festival invites us not to be neutral witnesses of our time, but active participants in a dialogue that seeks not only to inform us, but to awaken us.

This year's theme, Endless Greed Mental Void, is a powerful call from the organizers to resist the emptiness, the deep mental and spiritual void that accompanies endless greed and indifference toward the fate of others.

In an era where truth risks becoming a manipulated language, where words lose their weight and meanings shift according to narrow interests, DokuFest becomes the stage where both sorrowful and joyful stories unfold, stories that carry the dream of a better life with one another and in harmony with nature.

The films presented, the conversations held, and the music that accompanies the evenings all arrive as forms of protest respectfully calls for unity in the face of fear and despair. They urge us not to retreat into our shells of safety, but to challenge the silence and refuse to let forgetting become the way forward.

At this festival, it has long been proven that art and culture are bridges that connect communities and nations as a chance to better understand the world beyond our own prejudices. They are the lights piercing through the darkness of our time, illuminating a path toward a future where space for change and the spread of love is not merely a dream, but a reality being urgently and deliberately built.

DokuFest reminds us that even in a world seemingly divided by deep contradictions, there is always space for profound reflection. A space where we can confront the hardships of reality without falling into indifference. A space where history, truth, and emotions walk hand in hand with hope and the desire to build a better world.

In the effort to rescue language from manipulation, to resist numbness, DokuFest invites us to be more than mere spectators. It calls on us to become participants in conversation, attentive listeners, and carriers of the voice that seeks justice, empathy, and change. At this festival, every film, every debate, every musical note gradually becomes a call to action for equality and justice so that humanity can offer a stronger foundation for the generations to come.

That is why this year, too, DokuFest comes as a call not to give up but to stay awake, to keep alive that inner light that allows us to see, to understand, and to love the world around us more deeply. Because, at the end of the day, it is love that can heal the void, build bridges where there were once walls, and make us all part of a story greater than ourselves.

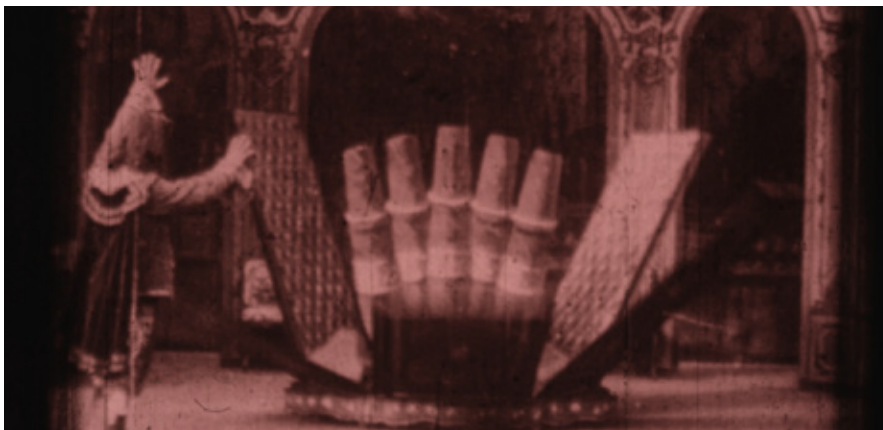


Unë jam ai që do të kaljë.

PHOTO: LUKA KNEZEVIC

DAILY PICKS

IN FRONT OF GUERNICA
(DIRECTOR'S CUT) / 126'
SPECIAL SCREENINGS



SHTËPIA E KULTURËS

16:00

LOST HIGHWAY / 134'
BLAST FROM THE PAST



DOKUKINO

17:30

COEXISTENCE, MY ASS! / 95'
VIEW FROM THE WORLD



DOKUKINO PLATO

20:30

2000 METERS TO ANDRIIVKA / 107'
VIEW FROM THE WORLD



KINO LUMI

22:30

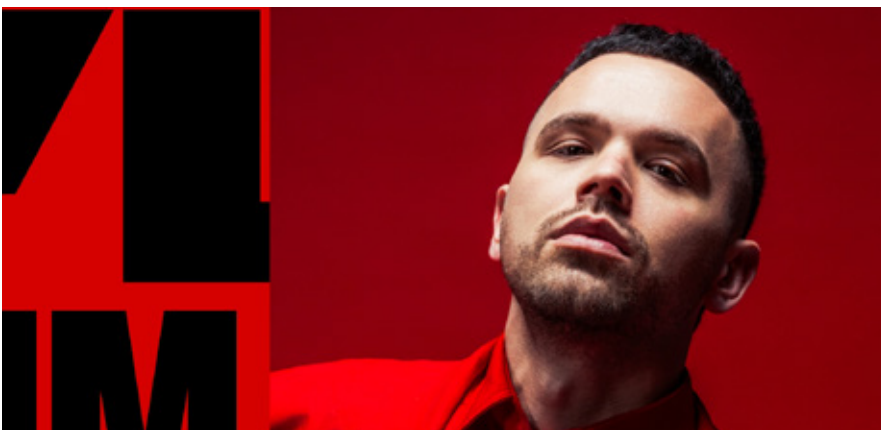
REASSEMBLED: COLLAGE, MEMORY,
AND THE HYBRID IMAGE
DOKUTALKS



SHKOLLA E MUZIKËS 'LORENC ANTONI'

17:00

YLL LIMANI
DOKUNIGHTS



SONAR STAGE

22:30

MASTERCLASS

From Observation to Imagination: Igor Bezinović on Crafting *Fiume o Morte!* at DokuFest



PHOTO: FERDI LIMANI

At the 24th edition of DokuFest, acclaimed Croatian filmmaker Igor Bezinović offered a rare deep dive into his creative evolution during a masterclass titled “How I Shot *Fiume o Morte!*” Moderated by film writer and programmer Thomas Logoreci, the conversation traced Bezinović’s path from activist documentary beginnings to the stylized hybrid world of his latest feature, a film that reimagines a surreal episode of European history in the city he calls home.

In *Fiume o Morte!*, Bezinović revisits the city of Rijeka to tell a story both deeply personal and politically charged, the bizarre 1919 occupation of the city by Italian poet, soldier, and fascist precursor Gabriele D’Annunzio, who declared it an independent state governed by artistic, proto-fascist ideals. For Bezinović, this tale of radical politics, absurd theater, and myth-making presented the perfect opportunity to blend fiction, documentary, animation, and archival material into one wildly inventive cinematic statement.

The film, ten years in the making, had its world premiere at International Film Festival Rotterdam, marking the culmination of a long and emotionally taxing creative process. “At one point, I thought I was making a complete disaster,” Bezinović admitted during the talk. “I watched the rough cut so many times, I lost faith. But the support of my core team and others carried me through.”

Bezinović’s path into filmmaking began in his mid-20s with the feature documentary *Blockade* (2012), a politically charged, cinéma vérité-style account of the student occupation of the University of Zagreb’s Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in protest against the commercialization of education. The film, urgent, raw, and observational, became a landmark moment in his career.

“I wasn’t just there to document it,” Bezinović explained. “I knew I wanted to construct a story. That’s when I understood that filmmaking was my path.”

Though formally trained at the Academy of Dramatic Arts in Zagreb, Bezinović’s roots lie in philosophy, sociology, and literature, disciplines that continue to inform his work. His hybrid sensibilities took further shape through summer residencies at an artists’ festival, where he was often the only filmmaker among graphic novelists, musicians, and designers. “Those years were formative. I found more inspiration among them than among other filmmakers. Their freedom and experimental attitude had a huge impact on me.”

The desire to experiment led Bezinović into fiction with *A Brief Excursion* (2017), a loose adaptation of a Croatian novel following a group of wanderers in search of medieval frescoes. “It was guerrilla filmmaking,” he said. “I used my friends as actors. Two of them

are now politicians!” Despite its unconventional style, the film won the Big Golden Arena at the Pula Film Festival, which is Croatia’s top prize for fiction, confirming his instinct that formal boundaries could be pushed.

This spirit of hybridity carried into *Fiume o Morte!*, where archival materials are collaged with reenactments and surrealist flourishes.

His collaboration with animator Ivana Pipal on the short film *Micro-cassette – The Smallest Cassette I’ve Ever Seen* (2020) was also pivotal. “We used every creative method possible — animation, fiction, documentary. That experience gave me the freedom to do the same with *Fiume o Morte!*”

Interestingly, when Bezinović first pitched *Fiume o Morte!* for development in 2015, he had no concrete idea of how the film would be structured. “I just knew I wanted to tell this story about my hometown, and I knew it had to be unconventional. But the exact shape came later.”

Production began just before the COVID-19 pandemic, forcing a year-long pause that ironically gave the team more time to secure funding and improve aspects like costuming. What began as a low-budget experiment evolved into what Bezinović calls a “spectacle documentary”, an ambitious, high-concept retelling of history with theatrical flair.

The process, however, wasn’t without its burdens. “The producers gave me complete freedom, which also meant a lot of responsibility deciding who to include, how to spend the budget, managing everything. It was overwhelming at times.”

Despite missing out on a Venice premiere, *Fiume o Morte!* was warmly received at Rotterdam. Yet by then, Bezinović was emotionally exhausted. “The last few months of post-production were brutal. I was doubting everything. But now, I don’t look back. I tell myself I did the best I could in that moment in life.”

Asked what comes next, the director was refreshingly candid: “I don’t want to think about the next project. I feel like I’ve completed a circle — political, non-political, political again. The next question is: do I engage again with politics or turn inward?”

Whatever direction he chooses, Bezinović showed that he is a filmmaker unafraid to dismantle boundaries, between genres, between disciplines, and between history and imagination.

DOKUTALKS

When Memory Refuses to Die



In a time marked by crisis, wars, forced migration, state censorship, and emotional fatigue, some filmmakers choose to keep documenting, not despite the chaos, but because of it. This year's DokuTalk titled "Against the Void: How Artists Resist Numbness", held at the Music School Lorenc Antoni, offered a deeply human, sometimes harrowing, and surprisingly hopeful look into the lives and creative processes of three powerful filmmakers: Alisa Kovalenko, Sebastián González Mendez, and Roisin Agnew. Moderated by Dea Gjinovci, the conversation peeled back the layers of what it means to create films in, and about, moments of collapse.

Alisa Kovalenko's story is one of personal and national resilience. Known for *My Dear Théo*, she recounted how, in the face of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, she didn't choose between being a filmmaker or a fighter, she became both. Camera in one hand, weapon in another, Kovalenko filmed fragments of life in the trenches, not intending to make a film, but to preserve emotional memory for her son. What emerged from this unintended archive was a powerful portrayal of war's quieter, more intimate front: the psychological toll, the invisible wounds, and the stubborn presence of love and light amidst darkness. "This lightness," she said, "is a part of our resilience."

Her story isn't just about documenting war; it's about surviving it through storytelling. For Ukrainian filmmakers, she noted, cinema has become a mirror through which individuals and society can finally see themselves clearly, perhaps for the first time.

Sebastián González Mendez, co-director of *Unwelcomed*, took the audience to the north of Chile, where thousands of Venezuelan migrants traverse dangerous terrain seeking refuge, only to face discrimination, abandonment, and brutality. What began as a journalistic impulse soon evolved into a mosaic of human struggle. With no funding and only a handful of allies, Mendez and co-director Amílcar Infante stitched together elements of suffering and solidarity, reflecting not just on migrant hardship, but on the systemic failure of the Chilean state.

Their film is layered and empathetic, balancing moments of despair with glimpses of compassion, such as local organizations stepping in where governments have failed. "The people rejecting migrants are also victims of a broken system," he said. It's this duality of perpetrators and victims living side by side that makes *Unwelcomed* not just a documentary, but a reckoning.

For Roisin Agnew, resistance takes the form of subversive storytelling. Her film *The Ban* dives into a bizarre and chilling moment in British-Irish history, when voices associated with the Irish Republican Army were banned from the media. Instead, actors were hired to dub their words, a censorship strategy that ironically turned into cinematic absurdity. Agnew unearthed this forgotten era not only to expose the strange logic of state control but to highlight how governments craft the category of the "terrorist" to delegitimize dissent.

Her archival excavation speaks to more than the past. It parallels today's global crackdowns on activists and protest. From Gaza to Britain, the silencing mechanisms remain, she noted. "Terrorism" is not just a threat; it's a label used to erase entire narratives.

Yet, Agnew reminded the audience of the power of satire and absurdity. Humor, she believes, is a tool for survival, and her film uses it liberally to challenge who gets to tell stories, who gets to be heard, and who is reduced to silence.

What bound these three filmmakers together wasn't just their subjects, but their methods: deep empathy, emotional risk, and a refusal to look away. From Ukraine's front lines to Chile's deserts and Ireland's censored broadcasts, these artists are resisting numbness by bearing witness. In doing so, they remind us that cinema is not just entertainment. It is memory, rebellion, therapy, and above all, connection.

As Kovalenko put it, "We all try to reflect on something important for us, like a patchwork of our feelings, to understand our reality."

And sometimes, understanding is the most radical act of all.

Written by Shefket Bujari

INTERVIEW WITH REDON KIKA

The First Journey as a Form of Freedom and Self-Understanding



Director and actor Redon Kika invites us into a sensitive and deeply personal narrative through his first feature film, *I Have Never Been on an Airplane*. In this interview, he shares his experience transitioning from acting to filmmaking, the challenges of working with close friends as characters in the film, and how a simple sentence in his personal diary transformed into a multidimensional journey exploring borders, anticipation, identity, and isolation.

DD: Tell us more about your experience as a film director. This is your first time directing a feature film, while you're also an actor. How does that feel?

RK: Yes, the first film I ever made was in 2020 when I created a short film, which became the starting point for the feature film. When I decided to start experimenting with film, I never imagined that it would be so well received, nor did I believe I would continue making films. However, as the process progressed, I realized that I'm deeply interested in telling stories through film. Throughout the process, I saw that this medium gives you space to express yourself creatively and let your imagination run free. It's very different from acting, where your role is more defined. You take a script or dramatic text and work within the boundaries that the text and the director provide. In filmmaking, you're involved in far more aspects—from research and observation to emotion, shooting, concept development, and finalization. As an actor, I've often felt restricted and always knew I needed more creative freedom. Directing during this time has fulfilled that need.

Despite this, I'm first and foremost a professional actor, and that remains my primary choice. I believe my acting experience helps me greatly in constructing narrative structures and characters in my films.

You can see this especially in my film, where my main focus was working with the characters—Jeta Veseli, Atdhe Behluli, and Tringa Sefedini.

For me, it has been very important to tell their stories in the most honest, and the most open way possible. Working with them throughout the film has been the most beautiful part of these years.

DD: You belong to a generation of Kosovar youth who have fully absorbed the political, cultural, and social weight of how narratives about identity are presented, and the interplay between what is possible and what is impossible. Do you feel this weight in your directorial voice, or are you coming from a completely different perspective?

RK: Certainly, there's a level of responsibility in speaking about topics that concern us. I must say that when I made the short film, the way it was received—especially among Kosovar audience—was very surprising. People felt deeply represented by the film.

We know how much representation matters, especially when an artist or creator articulates something everyone thinks but few discuss. In that sense, there is a responsibility—but I can't say that responsibility was my main motivation for starting this project.

Rather, I needed to address a harsh reality—a truth that needed to be told—without necessarily conveying any explicit message in the film. The project began from a need to engage in the conversation about freedom of movement, and maybe freedom in general. Growing up in Kosovo, it felt like I was watching my life pass by while moving forward with little opportunity to participate in decision-making.

And over time, that passivity becomes exhausting—not just for you, but also for those around you, whether they're aware of it or not. I believe I was inspired by the events around me, but also by an inner feeling that demanded a response.

DD: The film was made during a time when travel for Kosovar citizens was difficult and often prohibited. How would you describe this experience of movement as a fundamental right?

RK: As Tringa says in the film, "Isolation is a dark thing," and I know it is—because it was part of my everyday reality.

For me, isolation touches every aspect of your life; it colors every concept of you and the world around you. Isolation makes you think that you're not worthy enough to be part of it. It infiltrates your perception of yourself—your relationship with possibility, with love, with mental health, with imagination, and with what you see as achievable.

This was a feeling shared between me and the film's characters. I believe I could have made this film with many other Kosovars who have never boarded an airplane, but I chose Atdhe, Tringa, and Jeta—not only because they are my close friends, but precisely because isolation was causing them personal difficulties as they struggled to find their identities in a world that did not accept them.

I knew they had much more to say than just a desire to get on a plane or visit another country. Every conversation, every experience, every uncertainty, every possibility—or impossibility—was shaped by isolation.

I could see it in the way they spoke about travel—as if it were a completely distant, unattainable world. For Tringa, for example—she struggled to visit her partner in Berlin and didn't want to wait any longer.



But I must say: not everyone understands how dark isolation can be. For some, it might even seem ridiculous. But for us, isolation was like a silent killer.

DD: The film explores not only the issue of movement, but also other social phenomena, such as group travel. How do you see this collective will in a foreign geography? Does it divide or unite people?

RK: Every moment during the filming was unique. Certainly, while preparing for the first journey, the film's characters were experiencing a whirlwind of emotions. As a director, I was curious to see how they would relate to this first trip—but I have to say, it wasn't what I expected.

When we travelled to Berlin, even though they were very excited and happy, being in a city as vast as Berlin scared them more than expected.

Simple things—like navigating trains across the city, not being used to using online maps—created great confusion, leading to very intense emotions during the film.

It wasn't filled with just hugs and good memories when Tringa visited Florian for the first time in Berlin. She felt overwhelmed by the pace of a big city—knowing no one, not knowing any street. As for Atdhe, despite having many online friends, he never met them because he was afraid to step away from us. For Jeta, it was equally difficult to navigate the city alone.

That anxiety faded once we reached Lisbon—they felt much more relaxed there. But I'd say that growing up isolated your entire life makes you less individual, because you become used to relying on others.

During the Q&A Jeta shared the experience that how even today, when she travels, she experiences a kind of inexplicable anxiety—because the freedom to move is still very fresh.

DD: How was your relationship with your friends, considering this documentary portrays their lives? Were there any acting elements? How do you see the interaction between who they are in real life and the characters they are on film?

RK: From the start, they felt like they were part of something important. Of course, at the beginning of filming it was difficult because they weren't actors and their personal lives were being shown. They chose to share themselves with us, and it took some

time to find our rhythm and start trusting each other.

The entire process was emotional from beginning to end. There were days when things flowed naturally, and there were times when we had to leave everything paused for months until something was truly genuine.

We never used any acting techniques per se—I didn't instruct them to behave in any specific way. The only exception was the scenes where they directly face the camera; in those moments, there was a bit of guidance. But overall, I structured the filming space according to what I felt was needed for the film, without pushing them to perform.

Working with close friends is a joy, but it also poses challenges. As a director, you always want to go deeper, but you also need to know where the boundaries are.

For me, it was crucial that they appear as they are in real life, and I believe we succeeded in authentically conveying who Jeta, Tringa, and Atdhe truly are.

DD: This film began with a phrase in your diary, which is why it feels so personal. How would you describe this interplay between personal experience and the documentary's linear structure?

RK: It all happened during the pandemic. I believe we were sitting in a café in Prishtina, and during that time I was trying to write much more. I don't remember when or how—I just know that when I was looking for an idea for a short film, I knew I'd find it in my diary.

Among many other lines, I found: "I Have Never Been on an Airplane." From there, the process unfolded very organically. It felt instinctual—I wasn't asking too many questions. I love that feeling when desire outweighs fear, so I followed it.

It's personal because I didn't want to know about the political situation or the absurd reasons keeping us isolated. I needed to understand the why and the how. I needed to feel it, in my own way. I needed to engage with it, to analyse it emotionally, and create something from it.

DD: What does the future hold for Redon? Another film?

RK: I have several film projects coming up as an actor next year. I don't know if I would make a documentary again, especially a feature one (laughs), but I have many ideas for short fiction films that I believe I'll begin with very soon.

I think film is my love, both as an actor and as a director, and I hope to continue being part of it for a long time.

INTERVIEW

"Palace of Youth": Between promises and paradoxes.

A conversation with Maddie Gwinn



Last night at DokuFest, the open-air cinema of DokuKino Plato was packed for the screening of *Palace of Youth*, a documentary that's already making waves far beyond Prishtina. Set against the backdrop of Kosovo's prolonged visa restrictions and the aftermath of the liberation movement, the film tackles one of the most urgent and tender questions of the region: what does it mean to grow up in a country that still feels like it's waiting?

As the audience took in the poetic and powerful portrayal of Kosovo's youth, entrapped in "many dimensions of sparkling possibilities and hurtful entrapments", director Maddie Gwinn stood quietly to the side, visibly moved. "You guys know the most about it, and you can see through it," she told the audience after the screening. "For me, this was the test. Was it an authentic portrayal? That's something only this audience can judge. But I had to build trust and I did, and that leads the path to authenticity."

Gwinn's relationship with the region began unexpectedly. A post-grad fellowship brought her to the former Yugoslav archive in Belgrade in 2019, where she was researching post-communist cultural waves for her thesis on philosophy and film. "I honestly didn't know what I was doing," she laughs. "I was couch-surfing, traveling from Sofia to Skopje, and there I met a philosopher who told me: 'You need to go to Prishtina. What you're talking about is happening now, there.'" That advice sent her on a bus to Kosovo, with no plans but a strong instinct.

What she found was something she hadn't seen anywhere else in Europe: "I've traveled a lot. I lived in Germany, the Czech Republic, but I've never met people like this. It wasn't just one person, it was multiple people in a group that I instantly felt connected to. I felt like I was already friends with them."

This initial spark turned into deep collaboration, recording hours of conversations with local artists, musicians, and thinkers—many of whom would later become central to the *Palace of Youth*. "We started developing a film called *Millennial Kosovo*. We pitched it everywhere," she recalls. "Then COVID happened. I was supposed to move to Kosovo in summer 2020 and just shoot it myself, but everything was on pause."

The film's title draws from the real Palace of Youth in Prishtina, a hulking cultural complex that once served to train young Yugoslavs in music, art, and athletics. "The name always struck me," says Gwinn. "To me, a palace is something that feels contained, beautiful on the outside, but trapped on the inside. And I realized, the youth here are like that too. Everyone thinks Kosovo's youth are full of hope and potential, but they're also stuck. Looking out of the palace, they want freedom. They don't want to be trapped in some perfect image."

The documentary captures this contradiction: freedom found in art and music, but hemmed in by the politics of movement. Visa liberalization was finally announced while Gwinn was filming, and the moment became a pivotal part of the narrative. "I knew we were witnessing the last year of isolation. That made the camera even more urgent. The film had to freeze this moment before it passed."

Filming didn't come without challenges. As Gwinn embedded herself with a group of musicians, she quickly became both friend and filmmaker, roles that blurred and clashed. "They'd say, 'Turn off the camera, we need to talk for real.' But that's exactly what I wanted: the real moments." Her dual identity: Maddie with a camera vs. "Maddie without" became a tension point. Eventually, many began to self-censor, hiding from the camera, disappearing for days.

"The most emotional footage? It was all shot early on," Gwinn admits. "Because back then, they still thought I was just passing through. When I stayed, it became more real, and they got scared. They realized: 'Oh shit, people might actually see this.'"

This question of ethical documentary-making has haunted her since a formative moment years earlier, when she was mentored by the legendary Jane Campion in Bologna. "She told me, 'This isn't good, Maddie. I know you can go deeper.' And I did. I spent the whole night just talking with someone I was supposed to film. We ended up recording our conversation, after I asked permission, and that became the best part. It was raw and real."

Beyond being a snapshot of Prishtina's vibrant underground scene, *Palace of Youth* is also a meditation on a generation stuck between eras: between post-war reconstruction and digital globalization, between analog dreams and algorithmic futures. "We're this weird transition generation," says Gwinn. "And here, that feeling is amplified. There's this sense of time being warped, like the past, present, and future are all tangled together."

Though the film is deeply tied to Kosovo, it resonates far beyond it. "Even when nothing changes politically," she reflects, "documentary gives us a way to remember, to reflect. Not to replace history, but to add layers to it. That's why it matters."

DOKUNIGHTS

Last night, free from the chaos of the city below, two stunning sound artists took to the Sonar stage of Kalaja and turned it into a living, breathing organism.

upsammy, crouched down next to a shifting square panel of kaleidoscopic light responding to her every move, conjured up a gathering in a Petri dish, all sprawling microtextures and collapsing crescendos. This was a live, audiovisual rendering of her acclaimed 2024 album *Strange Meridians*, a heady session of scattered ambience, frisson-inducing glitch and fizzy, unsyncopated beats, turning the minimalist into the colossal over the course of a transcendent hour. Dressed in black, the stage dimmed, she refused the spotlight, instead letting her creation grow and take on a mind of its own. The result was a brilliant synthesis of the natural and the cyber: an amoeba arising from deep underwater, traversing twitching shards of noise, and serenely floating in the digital ether.

Under The Microscope

This amoeba took flight with LUXE, flute in hand, accompanied by Amira de Bourg and the soft, evocative cadence of her viola. Swimming in reverb and thick with atmosphere, LUXE let the energy blossom, lulling the crowd into a blissful trance, before unleashing a voice from the depths: a jolt of electricity, a smack of euphoria, the purest of vocals. If upsammy's performance was a pointillist painting in motion, all dotted melodies building to an exquisite whole, this was a Renaissance painting set aflame, her classical instrumentals and heavenly vocals set against the backdrop of vestiges of techno, pockets of garage and swooning drone.

Tonight is special: in one of the most exciting moments of this edition of the festival, DokuNights is proud to welcome Kosovo superstar Yll Limani, one of the most genuine and accomplished artists of his generation. Making a lasting impact on Albanian music, Ylli's songs have become anthems of emotion and experience for different generations across the Albanian-speaking world—now, he treats us to another one of his astonishing performances of heartfelt ballads and vibrant pop. Hope you managed to get a ticket in time!



PHOTO: ELMEDINA ARAPI

INTERVIEW WITH IPKO

Empowering Culture Through Technology and Commitment



PHOTO: LUKA KNEZEVIC

For many years, IPKO has been more than just a sponsor of DokuFest — it has been a dedicated partner deeply invested in nurturing Kosovo's vibrant cultural scene. By seamlessly integrating advanced technology with artistic expression, IPKO as a Golden Sponsor of festival is helping to amplify voices, foster creativity, and make culture accessible to all. In this conversation, with Afrika Zyferi, Head of Communications at IPKO Telecommunications we explore how this unique partnership has evolved, the significance of this year's theme "Endless Greed Mental Void," and the meaningful impact of initiatives like the "NextGen Filmmakers" workshop. From providing cutting-edge connectivity for festival visitors to supporting artists and activists, IPKO shares its vision for a future where technology serves society and culture thrives.

DD: Your collaboration with DokuFest spans many years: can you tell us about the benefits of this partnership and how it influences the cultural climate?

AZ: Since the very first edition, IPKO has stood by DokuFest—not as a typical sponsor, but as a true companion on this journey. We believe that technology is not a parallel reality to art, but a tool that, when placed in service of it, gives art a stronger, more accessible, and more vibrant voice. This partnership has helped to strengthen a culture that doesn't stand still, but moves forward—a culture that questions, challenges, and transforms. In a country like Kosovo, where art often emerges from courage and passion, we see this collaboration as part of our mission to support every form of expression that strives for a freer and more open-minded society.

DD: This year's theme, "Endless Greed, Mental Void," speaks, among other things, to the courage it takes to take meaningful stands. How does this theme resonate with you?

AZ: "Endless Greed, Mental Void" is more than just a theme—it's a diagnosis. In a reality oversaturated with noise, fast news, and algorithms that influence our behavior, the risk of losing the essence is high. Technology—the same force that can empower individuals—can also distract, manipulate, and trap us in a vacuum of unconscious thought. At IPKO, we don't ignore this complexity—we face it every day. Every decision we make, every partnership we build—like the one with DokuFest—is grounded in the belief that technology should serve society, not control it. And that takes courage: the courage to take clear positions, to draw lines between what is useful and what is harmful, to protect the space for free thought in a world that often sees it as a luxury. That's why this theme resonates deeply with us—because it is a call for awareness. And we want to stand with those who choose to speak out, even when silence would be more comfortable.

DD: How do you see the impact of your collaboration with DokuFest over the years? And especially this year?

AZ: This collaboration has been continuous but never the same—because each year brings new dynamics, fresh ideas, and new generations eager to express themselves. This year, that impact took a special form through the "Next-Gen Filmmakers" workshop within #DokuKids, where young people learned how to tell impactful stories using advanced technology. Thirteen youth aged 12-15 were taught how an idea can become a documentary, going through all creative stages—from concept development to final editing. This is our most important investment: not in equipment or infrastructure, but in the minds and voices of the new generation. Creating conditions for young people to speak up and tell their stories is the best way to positively influence a cultural scene that never stops evolving.

DD: What conveniences are you offering DokuFest visitors this year?

AZ: A cultural experience should have no barriers—and technology can make it more accessible, easier, and more personal. This year, IPKO has provided full 5G network coverage in the main festival areas, enabling visitors to enjoy fast internet, free Wi-Fi, and instant access to information, programs, and digital content.

When you see people sharing a film moment, a sudden emotion, or a deep reflection in real time—you know that behind it stands a technology that works quietly but has a strong impact. For IPKO, supporting art without making it accessible to everyone simply doesn't make sense.

DD: Your support for art and culture is noticeable and consistent. Could you tell us more about the success of supporting events like DokuFest over the years?

AZ: In a country where art often advances only through the passion of individuals, institutional support becomes irreplaceable. For us, this is not a PR project—it is a long-term mission. IPKO has always been committed to bringing the most advanced technological innovations to Kosovo—from 3G to 5G and eSIM—not only to improve daily life but to assist those who create: artists, directors, musicians, activists. Fast internet is not just a convenience—it is a tool to share realities, build communities, and influence the narratives circulating in society. This is what makes our support for art sincere and sustainable.

INTERVIEW WITH IPKO

Empowering Culture Through Technology and Commitment



DD: Can you tell us how you feel about this collaboration that over the years has gained significant international visibility?

AZ: Being part of a success story that has crossed Kosovo's borders is both a privilege and a responsibility. DokuFest has managed to attract the attention of international critics, foreign media, and film professionals from around the world—and we, as supporters of this success from the very beginning, feel a special pride.

This partnership has shown that together we can build something that not only serves the local audience but also places Prizren and Kosovo at the center of the global cultural map. It is proof that when technology, art, and dedication come together, borders disappear.

DD: We live in challenging times for art and culture. How do you think these conveniences resulting from collaborations like this will reflect in the future?

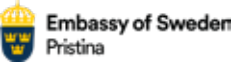
AZ: The future is not abstract—it is built by the decisions we make today. When a company like IPKO decides to invest in art, it is not just financing an event—it is planting seeds for a healthier, freer, and more sustainable culture.

At a time when art often relies more on enthusiasm than infrastructure, we want to be the partners who offer stability, continuity, and vision. Collaborations like this one with DokuFest are not just temporary alliances—they are functional models of how the private sector can take a leading role in cultural development. And this is the path we have chosen: not to remain passive, but to be an active part of a future where creativity is valued and supported.

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