



RÜCKBLENDE

50x DOKFILMFESTIVAL LEIPZIG

Amir Labaki +++ Festivaldirektor „It's All True“, Brasilien

In October 1997 I visited Leipzig for the first time. Two years earlier I had written a book of interviews with Santiago Alvarez and - knowing how Leipzig was one of the dearest festivals for him, and how his health was sadly declining (he died of Parkinson's eight months later) - I couldn't miss the opportunity offered me by the festival to talk in the 40th anniversary official conference about his groundbreaking work.

The festival managed to put together a wonderful retrospective with highlights from four decades of supporting international independent documentaries. Even more impressive was the guest list. Among the visitors was a great master I had seen once before: Richard Leacock.

One afternoon we were briefly introduced and started talking. It would be more exact to say: he talked, I listened. Pure fascination. People passed by for "hellos" and "how-do-you-dos?", as always in-between festival programs, and we got some time to kill. I had hit the jackpot. I listened a lesson for life during his recollection of the esthetical and technological revolution that made possible the development of Direct Cinema, a process he catalysed along with Robert Drew, Al Maysles and D. A. Pennebaker. The lesson was related to the idea that, following Direct Cinema steps, the new digital technology, as a cheaper and easier way for producing films, would start a new film "Renaissance". "Violin is also a simple instrument", Ricky said. "Four chords, a bow. Just try it. Very few get real art from it".

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