



HELSINKI  
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FESTIVAL

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## DocPoint's New Finnish Documentary Films series shows various sides of Finland

The programme for the 14th DocPoint – Helsinki Documentary Film Festival is out! The festival will show a total of 166 documentary films, including 11 new films from Finnish directors in the New Finnish Documentary Film series. The festival will open with Markku Heikkinen's *Men of Talvivaara Mine*, which delves into the everyday life of miners in the infamous Talvivaara mine in Northern Finland. Descriptions of all the films in 2015 DocPoint are available now on [www.docpoint.info/en/](http://www.docpoint.info/en/)

In 2015 the New Finnish Documentary Films series examines Finland from a variety of perspectives. According to the jury, which compiled the series, many films look into social problems that are examined through the lives and stories of individual people. The stories grow out of their everyday lives and what was personal amplifies into political issue.

This year the board included actress **Minna Haapkylä**, Member of Parliament **Leena Harkimo**, director **Petri Luukkainen** and director **Hamy Ramezan**. DocPoint's Artistic Director **Ulla Simonen** operated as the chairperson of the jury.

- The films often look beyond the city and, instead of sleek urban life, the portrayals focus on various sides of Finland. Many films approach topics through strong personalities, and surprisingly often through the directors' own immediate social circle. The close relationship between the directors and their subjects can be seen in the intimate stories and many times we were startled by how perfect the choices of subjects were. We were especially delighted by the return of politics into the Finnish documentary scene, asserts the jury.

### Critic of Variety magazine chooses his Finnish favourites

This year DocPoint's programme will include *The Critic's Choice*, where American film critic **John Anderson** chooses his three favourites from the New Finnish Documentary Films. Anderson writes film reviews for *Variety*, *New York Times* and *Washington Post* among others, and he is a member of the notable National Society of Film Critics. He also operated as the chairman of the New York Film Critics Circle in 2011.

*The Critic's Choice* is meant to assist in distributing Finnish documentary film abroad by gaining visibility for the films already during their premier in Finland. John Anderson will remain a guest of DocPoint for the duration of the whole festival week. The critic's choices will be announced on on 1<sup>st</sup> February.

## New Finnish Documentary Films includes:

### *Becoming Me*

Director: **Mina Laamo** (Finland 2014)

The gist of one blog are ribs that are disturbingly visible through the skin when another one introduces pictures of cupcakes and outfits. This stylish documentary goes beyond the computer screen, into the minds of three young women who live in different parts of Finland.

### *Destination Home*

Directors: **Veera Lehto-Michaud, Maria Seppälä** (Finland 2014), premiere at DocPoint

*Destination Home* is a film of a Liberian refugee family. After ten years of living in Ghana, the family members are separated from each other: The mother moves with one daughter to the United States while the father stays in Ghana with the other. After five years of separation, the family is once again reunited.

### *The Fast of the Forest*

Director: **Antti Jääskeläinen** (Finland 2014)

Road racing driver Juha Kallio wants to compete at the legendary Isle of Man TT Race. It seems like a faraway dream, especially when on the Finnish circuits, a win only gets you some gas vouchers worth a couple of tenners.

### *Golden Age*

Director: **Maija Blåfield** (Finland, 2014), premiere at DocPoint

Maija Blåfield filmed documentary material for years, only to end up with a relic, junk, a treasure or a burden – often telling a completely different story than what she intended to capture. Hilarity ensues, when the images and a new soundtrack is combined into a whole new story.

### *HOME. Somewhere.*

Director: **Lotta Petronella** (Finland, 2014), premier at DocPoint

Lotta Petronella's camera is focused on three men who have spent their lives near and at the mercy of the sea. They experience rootlessness, perhaps because of the proximity of the infinite sea. Through their experience the viewer can also re-examine their own views of home and its significance.

### *Kihniö*

Director: **Saija Mäki-Nevala** (Finland 2014), premiere at DocPoint

"There's only one road across the village, a one-minute ride on a rigged moped." Kihniö, population 2084 and going down. The documentary takes on time, place and belonging in a small village in the Pirkanmaa region in Finland.

### *The Land of Smiles*

Director: **Heikki Häkkinen** (Finland 2014), premiere at DocPoint

Old friends set off to find **Tuomas Kela** living in Thailand. Tuomas has drunk his money, house, family and now finally his health. Will the help of friends be enough to rescue a man so beaten down by alcoholism?

### *Leaving Africa – A Story About Friendship and Empowerment*

Director: **Iiris Härmä** (Finland 2014), premiere at DocPoint

Sixtysomethings **Riitta** and **Catherine** provide sexual education for Ugandans. In class everything's fine, but the women's whole operation is in the hands of officials who don't look kindly on them.

### *Men of Talvivaara Mine*

Director: **Markku Heikkinen** (Finland, 2014), premiere at DocPoint

DocPoint's Opening Film does not recap old facts from news, but shows the ordinary life of a mineworker in Talvivaara. What is it like to get up every morning to go to work in the most hated facility in Finland.

*My Neighbour Tuula*

Director: **Henriikka Hemmi** (Finland/Sweden, 2014), premiere at DocPoint

Henriikka Hemmi presents in her film the life of her neighbour **Tuula**. Tuula is a spirited woman who has always had contact with alcohol. She has sobered up, but now her life revolves around her alcoholic husband **Esko**.

*Who the Devil Can See in the Dark*

Director: **Mari Soppela** (Finland 2014), premiere at DocPoint

The grandfather of director Mari Soppela was a German soldier, who her grandmother took up with during World War II. Together with her father, Soppela sets out to investigate who this mysterious man really was.

*The 14th DocPoint – Helsinki Documentary Film Festival will take place 27.1.–1.2.2015. Accreditation is open until Jan 19th in <http://docpoint.info/en/media-industry-2/accreditation/>*

**Information, pictures and interview requests:**

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