

## Press Release



### Berlinale Mourns the Loss of Claude Lanzmann

French director and author Claude Lanzmann has passed away.

“Claude Lanzmann was one of the great documentarists. With his depictions of inhumanity and violence, of anti-Semitism and its consequences, he created a new kind of cinematic and ethical exploration. We mourn the loss of an important personality of the political-intellectual life of our time,” says Berlinale Director Dieter Kosslick.

Claude Lanzmann's film *Shoah* (1985) made cinematic history as an unparalleled masterpiece of commemorative culture. The nine-and-a-half-hour documentary on the genocide of European Jews was screened in the Berlinale *Forum* in 1986 and received numerous international awards.

Born in Paris in 1925 to Jewish parents, Claude Lanzmann fought in the Résistance, studied philosophy in France and Germany, and held a lectureship at the then newly founded Freie Universität Berlin in 1948/49. His exploration of the Shoah, anti-Semitism and political struggles for freedom infuse both his cinematic and journalistic work.

His first film was made in 1972, the documentary *Pourquoi Israël (Israel, Why; France 1973)*, in which he illustrates the necessity of Israel's founding from the Jewish perspective. In the film *Tsahal*, which screened in the 1995 Berlinale *Forum*, he focuses on women and men who serve in the Israeli Army. *Sobibor, 14 octobre 1943, 16 heures* (France 2001), about the 1943 revolt in the Sobibor extermination camp in Poland, was also screened in the Berlinale *Forum*, in 2002.

In 2013, the Berlinale honoured him with an *Homage* and awarded the Honorary Golden Bear for lifetime achievement.

Press Office  
July 5, 2018

**69. Internationale  
Filmfestspiele  
Berlin  
07. – 17.02.2019**

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