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John Christmas: From Banking Whistleblower To Award-Winning Filmmaker

📅 October 21, 2025 👤

The documentary *Bankers Game*, directed and co-produced by John Christmas, has earned two prestigious awards at the Madrid International Film Festival 2025 — Best Editing of a Documentary and Best Short Documentary.

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The festival, organised by Film Fest International, has supported independent filmmakers from across the world since 2005.

The 2025 winners were officially announced on 18th October, during the festival's awards dinner. (filmfestinternational.com)

For John Christmas, this recognition represents a major milestone in his journey from banking insider and whistleblower to filmmaker and advocate for transparency.

His documentary Bankers Game investigates the activities of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and exposes alleged corruption and money-laundering networks connected to the Putin Regime.



Picture shows John Christmas,
The documentary Bankers
Game, directed and co-
produced by John Christmas,
has earned two prestigious
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International Film Festival
2025 Best Editing of a
Documentary and Best Short
Documentary. (newsX)

Picture shows John Christmas, undated. The documentary Bankers Game, directed and co-produced by John Christmas, has earned two prestigious awards at the Madrid International Film Festival 2025 — Best Editing of a Documentary and Best Short Documentary. Note: Licensed photo. (newsX)

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A Film with a Global Reach

His interview was filmed in London, while two other interviews were conducted in Brussels.

Christmas said: “My editor put this all together smoothly, including subtitles so viewers could understand everything.

“The most exciting film footage includes a superyacht and villa in Italy. There was challenge and risk for our drone operator to capture those objects, which are guarded by police – and the results were excellent.”

Recognition and Responsibility

Christmas noted that the level of competition at the Madrid International Film Festival was exceptionally high, with accomplished filmmakers from Europe, the USA, and Japan.

He said: “I was impressed by the high level of competition.

“At the awards dinner, I was convinced Bankers Game covered the most explosive topic of any documentary at the festival – the explanation of how the London-based EBRD ran frauds to protect Vladimir Putin’s money-launderers.”

When Bankers Game was announced as the winner in two categories, Christmas said he was “overjoyed and thinking that maybe these awards will finally get the EBRD–Putin Regime fraud into the public spotlight.”

He explained that in a series of transactions across several countries, corrupt governments were caught secretly paying the EBRD to act as a straw owner of Putin Regime banks.

This, he claims, concealed embezzlement and enabled money-laundering – allowing Russian oligarchs access to US dollar correspondent accounts used for large-scale international financial transfers.

Bringing Whistleblowing to the Screen

Picture shows the awards, undated. The documentary Bankers Game, directed and co-produced by John Christmas, has earned two prestigious awards at the Madrid International Film Festival 2025 Best Editing of a Documentary and Best Short Documentary. (newsX)

In late January 2025, Bankers Game was privately screened in one of the historic Committee Rooms of the UK Parliament’s House of Commons.

The event was sponsored by MP Jim Shannon and attended by political activists, journalists, members of the financial community, and people interested in whistleblowing.

During the session, Christmas discussed his mission to expose systemic corruption and the link between his earlier novel KGB Banker and Bankers Game.

He said: “Through my book KGB Banker and now Bankers Game, I’ve been able to do my bit to expose corruption and money laundering happening before our eyes.”

A Voice for Transparency

For John Christmas, Bankers Game is more than a film – it’s a continuation of his long-standing campaign to bring accountability to global banking.

As a whistleblower who exposed large-scale misconduct at Parex Bank in Latvia, he now uses the medium of documentary filmmaking to inform and engage the public.

Christmas explained: “Documentaries like Bankers Game can help people understand the systems that allow corruption to thrive.

“My hope is that awareness leads to reform.”

With two international awards already earned and growing global recognition, Bankers Game stands as a striking example of how storytelling can inspire truth and accountability.

And judging by its impact, this is unlikely to be the last time John Christmas’s work is recognised on the world stage.

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