

Press Release

New Photographic Exhibition At Fair Halls: “Sports And Integration”

Hamburg, 26 January 2021 – From 27 January until presumably the end of March 2021, Hamburg's exhibition halls will once again become one of the longest galleries in the heart of the city. In times of a pandemic, this popular exhibition site obtains new significance. The photo exhibition “Sport und Integration” (sports and integration) by Marion von der Mehden (photos) and Sarah Beckmann (texts) can be seen by day and by night, walking along the glass façade of the exhibition halls in Karolinenstrasse. A total of 34 photos of 17 athletes of various nationalities practising a variety of sports disciplines are on display. The first twelve portraits had previously been shown at the ‘Oberstdorfer Fotogipfel 2020’ exhibition dedicated to sports photography.

"People with a migration background enrich sports clubs, bringing along enthusiasm, talent and cultural variety. Giving these people visibility, making them stand out, and showing their history and their connection with various sports disciplines in powerful images is what this exhibition is all about," says photographer Marion von der Mehden.

"From the very first moment I was fascinated by this photo project, and we are pleased to contribute to the cultural enrichment of the public space with this new exhibition along our hall façades," says Bernd Aufderheide, President and CEO of Hamburg Messe und Congress GmbH. "Instead of just an empty glass surface, passers-by are presented with a public gallery inviting them to stop and reflect. In the current situation, this is more important than ever."

Hamburg's State Secretary for Sports, Christoph Holstein is impressed by the exhibition and its concept: "The biographies of the depicted athletes demonstrate the power of sports and what sports can do to support integration. Sport enables a sense of community without borders where the individual is the focus of attention and where there is no room for racism, anti-Semitism or violence."

With its artful close-ups and sparing use of words, the exhibition gives impressive and at the same time touching testimony of the importance and motivational power of sports in a democratic society, Holstein continues. Presenting this message in such a well-frequented and exposed location in the globally-minded ‘Active City’ of Hamburg is a great idea, he adds.

The Vice President of the German Bundestag, Claudia Roth, likewise gave positive feedback on the photographic project. Viewers of the exhibition will be able to read her comments on-site.

The local athletic organisation Hamburger Sportbund had made "Integration durch Sport" one of its themes and put the photographer in touch with the athletes featured in this photo project. "My heartfelt thanks to the company CEWE for furnishing the high-quality prints, and of course to all others who have contributed to making this exhibition possible," said Marion von der Mehden.

Marion von der Mehden is a freelance photographer who has been living and working in Hamburg for more than 20 years. Her work focuses on portraying people. She creates stills for cinemas and television, as well as portraits, business and press photos.

For a selection of photos from this exhibition for downloading go [here](#) (at Hamburg Messe_Fotoausstellung / Photo Exhibition).

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