



**PHOTOPIA
HAMBURG**

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Press Release

PHOTOPIA Premiere in Hamburg

HMC CEO Bernd Aufderheide: "A project we have taken to our hearts"

New festival dedicated to Imaging trend topic to take place from 23 to 26 September

Hamburg, 27 July 2021 – Life is finally returning to Hamburg's exhibition campus. From 23 to 26 September, PHOTOPIA Hamburg will open its doors for the very first time. The four-day festival featuring the entire Digital Imaging industry caters to photography professionals as well as hobby photographers, smartphone users and anybody else whose business or just plain enthusiasm focuses on photography and filming. In parallel with the PHOTOPIA Summit held at the exhibition complex, there will be photography events and installations at many places throughout the city. In our interview, Bernd Aufderheide, President and CEO of organiser Hamburg Messe und Congress (HMC), speaks about the ongoing preparations against the background of the coronavirus pandemic, about managing expectations, and strong support from the industry.

Mr. Aufderheide, PHOTOPIA Hamburg starts in two months. The first fully physical HMC-organised event since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic is actually a premiere. Can you describe the mood at your company and within your team?

Aufderheide: Needless to say, we are all very excited and looking forward to the launch of PHOTOPIA Hamburg with great anticipation. Planning has been anything but straightforward. For the past 18 months we have been experiencing a global crisis of previously unknown dimensions, so we cannot pretend everything is just fine now. Nevertheless, the low current incidence rate, the progressing vaccination campaign and a wide range of available testing options all help us make the launch of this project, which we have taken to our hearts, a reality this year. The industry truly appreciates this.

What makes you believe that?

Aufderheide: We want PHOTOPIA Hamburg to send a strong signal over the coming years and join hands with the industry to develop it into something great. This means we have to make a start now, whatever the conditions. While we still have to accept some limitations here or there, we are proud to offer a rich programme to all stakeholders. Then, in 2022, we will go all out for a full-fledged show, hopefully in a more or less normalised situation.

Did you ever discuss cancelling this year's event?

Aufderheide: Of course there were moments in these recent months where we felt unsure whether PHOTOPIA Hamburg would be able to go ahead as planned. But we did not waver – after all, as trade fair organisers we are optimists by design. We have developed a comprehensive hygiene concept which we are sure will allow us to carry out events safely and smoothly. Of course, under normal circumstances it would have been our goal to include a larger number of exhibitors in this debut than were ultimately willing to commit. But I think in a situation such as this, it doesn't hurt to be a bit humble. All the big

companies will be part of it, which makes us extremely happy, even though our inaugural event will not be able to reflect the full bandwidth of the imaging industry as we originally hoped.

What encouraged you to go on with your preparations?

Aufderheide: The PHOTOPIA motto “share your vision” expresses our mind-set: For someone planning an event as huge as PHOTOPIA Hamburg in challenging times like these, you not only need a healthy amount of idealism and passion but also, and especially so, unconditional trust in your strong partners and supporters on the exhibitors’ side. We have received heaps of praise from all parts of the industry for PHOTOPIA and its innovative concept. We’ve even been commended by companies who ultimately decided against participating in this year’s event. All this positive feedback has shown us clearly that we are on the right track. What is more, we have been able to recruit a formidable team of true industry luminaries for PHOTOPIA Hamburg, from the internationally renowned stage designer Jens Weber who developed the decoration concept for the exhibition halls, to our artistic director Christian Popkes, and through to our honorary patron, the world-famous fashion photographer Ellen von Unwerth. We have received plenty of praise from professional circles for this, as well. Finally, I would like to express my appreciation for the strong support we are getting from the government and the entire city.

What are your thoughts about comparing PHOTOPIA Hamburg with Photokina?

Aufderheide: I don’t believe this is actually a fair comparison, and I don’t think it makes sense. I still remember Photokina from my time at KölnMesse. It was designed as an event for the photo industry. PHOTOPIA, in contrast, is based on the vision of a festival with an entirely modern concept. It brings together everybody: Industry experts and professionals, hobby photographers, drone operators, ‘gear freaks’, artists, music lovers and international megastars. We are setting up this festival for all these people, offering them appropriate stages, spaces and options. In the long term we would like to put a stronger emphasis on Virtual Reality and Artificial Intelligence while also engaging with young smartphone users. Together with our partners and exhibitors, we want to make Hamburg Germany’s next ‘capital of photography’.

What in particular can potential visitors of PHOTOPIA Hamburg look forward to?

Aufderheide: First of all, the spectacular exhibition hall concept, which pays homage to Hamburg as the gateway to the world. More than 350 cargo containers will combine to compose a unique world of shapes, figures and perspectives for photo enthusiasts to immerse themselves. Then there is the actual trade fair which includes major manufacturers of cameras and accessories. Furthermore, together with our partners – including the Reeperbahn Festival and the Online Marketing Rockstars – we have developed a multifaceted programme of keynote speeches, experts presentations, masterclasses, exhibitions, workshops and much more which will be presented on two separate stages.

What other features does the event offer, either to professional visitors or to the wider public?

Aufderheide: We want to be a festival for everyone. There will be a four-day conference specifically for photography and creative professionals: The Creative Content Conference will show current trends in professional photography and video production and provide a perfect networking platform in an inspiring environment. We will also be present outside the exhibition halls to make photography tangible. There

will be photography displays in public spaces, along with events and special photo walks. Even before PHOTOPIA Hamburg opens its doors, photography enthusiasts will be given the opportunity to embark on dedicated 'photography launches' in Hamburg harbour to cruise the port in the presence of photography trainers who will show them how to take better shots. I am fully convinced that this premiere provides a very varied package that will inspire visitors and exhibitors alike, deliver positive impetus to the imaging sector, and whet people's appetites for more.

Tickets:

Tickets for PHOTOPIA Hamburg will be available at a price of 19 euros. Single-day tickets for the Creative Content Conference will cost 119 euros, and an All-in Ticket for all four days costs 269 euros. All conference tickets include admission to PHOTOPIA Hamburg. All tickets may be purchased online at www.photopia-hamburg.com. The same website provides continuous updates on the event programme as well as up-to-date information relating to the pandemic situation.

About PHOTOPIA Hamburg

PHOTOPIA Hamburg will take place at the Hamburg exhibition complex and throughout the city from 23 to 26 September for the first time. The innovative live event hosted by Hamburg Messe und Congress is a triad composed of the PHOTOPIA Summit, the PHOTOPIA City, and PHOTOPIA 365, a permanent online platform for sharing views, content and information. It attracts enterprises from the entire world of imaging, showcasing their products and services. The event is open to all photography and filming professionals and enthusiasts. Apart from dealers, professionals, semi-professionals, hobby photographers and all those with a strong interest in photographic culture, the target audience expressly includes smartphone owners who like to use their devices for recording, editing and sharing photos and videos.

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