

Press Release
Hamburg, October 16, 2025

9th Triennial of Photography Hamburg 2026 International Symposium: Alliance, Infinity, Love

Hamburg, November 7 and 8, 2025
2026.phototriennale.de

Free entry, registration via: www.eventbrite.de
Detailed programme under: 2026.phototriennale.de/en/symposium

For the launch of the **9th Triennial of Photography Hamburg 2026**, an **international symposium** will be held on **November 7 and 8, 2025** in the Deichtorhallen Hamburg and in Halle 424 in the Oberhafenquartier. In lectures and conversations, international speakers will discuss the key concepts of **Alliance, Infinity, Love** and the role of photography with respect to human rights, cultural dialogues and forms of recognition. The symposium is organised in cooperation with the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights and the Tanztriennale 2026.

„The greatest thing you'll ever learn is just to love and be loved in return.“ — *Nature Boy*, lyrics by eden ahbez, performed by Nat King Cole, 1948

This symposium considers how notions such as Alliance, Infinity, and Love within photographic and other artistic practices might be enhanced or mobilised as dynamic forces that work towards greater social and political cohesion, to assist in the building of new forms of coexistence.

In his opening lecture the lawyer **Wolfgang Kaleck** explores the relationship between photography and contemporary discourses within Human Rights. The symposium will critically examine, with the thought of **Aruna D'Souza**, the role of empathy within cultural production and how we see the Global South. D'Souza asks, "Can empathy deliver political change? Does art that elicits emotional identification with others take us where we need to go?"

The symposium is presented as a series of conversations, during which the artist, curator and author **Moshtari Hilal**, the independent researcher and essayist **Sinthujan Varatharajah**, and the activist **Emma Lehbib** will discuss what it means to practice solidarity today. How is it generated, and when are alliances formed across differences? These ideas will be joined by reflections from the artist **Naeem Mohaiemen** on memory, archives and different forms of coloniality. The author **Claudia Rankine** undertakes a reformulation of the concept of "collapse", while in her lecture performance the artist and choreographer **nora chipaumire** will consider the power of infinite knowledge systems held within the Black body.

The symposium acts as a space for interaction and dialogic acts of generosity that signpost different possible ways of being. Critically, it will explore the role that photography and other cultural practices may play in fostering acts of responsibility, love, recognition, and justice. By aligning philosophical, performative, and critical ideas, it aims to explore, through acts of exchange, the relationship between cultural freedoms and ethical responsibilities in these crucial times.

Guest speakers:

Wolfgang Kaleck – Human rights lawyer, founder and General Secretary of ECCHR (European Center for Constitutional Human Rights e.V.).

Aruna D'Souza – Writer and critic focusing on contemporary art, intersectional feminism, and politics.

Naeem Mohaiemen – Artist, film maker and essayist addressing post-colonial memory spaces and left-wing utopias.

Press contact

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Moshtari Hilal – Artist, curator and writer exploring forms of the decolonial aesthetic and solidarity.

Sinthujan Varatharajah – Writer and political geographer exploring questions of displacement and statelessness.

Emma Lehbib – Activist working in international law, refugee camps, exile, and identity.

nora chipaumire – Artist, performer and choreographer committed to knowledge acquisition and exchange beyond given structures.

Claudia Rankine – Award-winning poet, essayist and co-founder of the Racial Imaginary Institute (TRII).

The symposium will open by **Dirk Luckow** (General Director, Deichtorhallen Hamburg), followed by **Jana Schiedek** (State Secretary, Ministry of Culture and Media Hamburg) and **Mark Sealy** (Artistic Director of the 9th Triennial of Photography Hamburg 2026 and Director of Autograph, London).

To the detailed programme for the symposium:

2026.phototriennale.de/symposium/

On the occasion of the symposium the first issue of the **publication series** accompanying the 9th Triennial of Photography Hamburg 2026 will be published. It includes texts from Wolfgang Kaleck and Aruna D'Souza as well as an essay from Mark Sealy on the curatorial direction of the 9th Triennial. The publication is bilingual (German/English), has approx. 48 pages with illustrations, and is available free of charge at the event location.

9th Triennial of Photography Hamburg 2026

International Symposium: Alliance, Infinity, Love

November 7, 2025, 19–22:00, Deichtorhallen Hamburg (auditorium in the Hall for Contemporary Art, Deichtorstraße 1–2, 20095 Hamburg)

November 8, 2025, 10–20:00, Halle 424, Oberhafenquartier (Stockmeyerstraße 43, 20457 Hamburg)

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The symposium is organised in cooperation with the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights e.V. (ECCHR) and the Tanztriennale 2026.

The main sponsor of the 9th Triennial of Photography Hamburg 2026 is the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, Ministry of Culture and Media.



Sony is the official partner in the field of camera technology for the 9th Triennial of Photography Hamburg 2026.

SONY

From June 5 until September 22, 2026 the 9th Triennial of Photography Hamburg 2026 presents, under the title “Alliance, Infinity, Love – in the Face of the Other”, twelve exhibitions in eight renowned museums and exhibition houses in the city of Hamburg. Curated by the Artistic Director Mark Sealy, the festival focuses on a photographic praxis which welcomes diverse and different ways of being, with the aim of generating a sense of community that works against photography’s historical violent regimes.

The Triennial of Photography Hamburg has been held every three years since 1999 in cooperation with the city’s major museums, exhibition houses and cultural institutions and is an important German-wide photo event with an international reach. With a large number of photo exhibitions under a common theme, it illuminates contemporary photographic trends. The Triennial is accompanied by international symposiums. Since 2014 the Triennial of Photography has been organised by the Deichtorhallen Hamburg GmbH.

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