

Mark Sealy appointed Artistic Director of the 9th Triennial of Photography Hamburg 2026

Director of Autograph (Association of Black Photographers) London to lead conception and planning of the Hamburg photography festival.

Mark Sealy will become the artistic director of the 9th Triennial of Photography Hamburg, taking place from June 4th to September 30th, 2026. The London-based curator impressed with his concept proposal, "Alliance, Infinity, and Love in the Face of the Other," and assumes responsibility for the entire exhibition and event program of the internationally renowned photography festival. The festival will involve not only the Deichtorhallen Hamburg but also the Bucerius Kunst Forum, the Hamburger Kunsthalle, the Kunsthaus Hamburg, the Kunstverein in Hamburg, the Museum am Rothenbaum (MARKK), the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe (MK&G), the Hamburg Museum of Work, and the Hamburg photography scene.

In the summer of 2025, an international symposium will mark the beginning of the festival, offering a first insight into the diverse exhibition program.

Dr Mark Sealy was born in London 1960 and is an internationally acclaimed curator and author. Throughout his career, he has primarily advocated for the decolonization of the Western gaze and the promotion of marginalized voices in international photography. As Director of Autograph ABP (Association of Black Photographers) since 1991, Sealy has initiated and produced numerous exhibitions, residency projects, and publications. He is the author of "Decolonising the Camera: Photography in Racial Time" and "Photography: Race, Rights and Representation" and obtained his PhD, which focused on photography and cultural violence, from Durham University UK. Sealy's position as Professor of Photography Race and Rights at the University of the Arts London further underscores his influence on the field.

Most recently, he served as the led curator of the 18th FotoFest Biennial 2020 in Houston, a significant citywide photography festival. His ground-breaking curatorial work extends worldwide, including exhibitions such as "*The Unfinished Conversation: Encoding/Decoding*" for the Power Plant Toronto, 2015 and Sunil Gupta's critically acclaimed retrospective and prize-winning publication titled "From Here to Eternity", presented at The Photographers Gallery London 2020. In recognition of his outstanding contributions to photography, Sealy was honoured as a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) in 2013. In 2022, he was awarded Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for his services to the arts.

Dr. Carsten Brosda, Senator for Culture and Media: „The great strength of the Triennial of Photography Hamburg lies in its collaborative approach. United under a thematic umbrella, the major photography institutions and exhibition venues join forces with the city's photography scene to create an exceptional festival of photographic art that resonates far beyond the borders of Hamburg. I am very pleased that we were able to secure the internationally experienced and renowned curator Mark Sealy to lead the 9th Triennial in the summer of 2026. His artistic approach, focusing on connection and exchange, will further broaden our perspective and thus make an important contribution to mutual understanding. “

Mark Sealy: "It's an exciting and challenging opportunity to be invited to take on the role of Artistic Director for the 9th Triennial of Photography Hamburg. I'm truly honoured to be invited to be part of this journey. With Hamburg's rich visual history and range of amazing artistic and cultural spaces, I'm looking forward to sharing and developing a programme that I sincerely hope will both build on and enhance the brilliant work that has gone before in making this Triennial one of the world's most influential and critically engaging photographic events. Collaborating with such an incredible creative and cultural community provides a fantastic opportunity to develop photographic dialogues that hopefully will resonate across the city and beyond. Never before has the photographic image had so much to say. The Triennial provides a fantastic platform to help us think through our times' challenging, complex and wonderful prospects."

Prof. Dr. Dirk Luckow, Artistic Director of Deichtorhallen Hamburg: "The upcoming 9th Triennial of Photography will once again establish Hamburg as a significant hub for photography nationwide in the summer of 2026, strengthening the city's position as an international photography destination. With Mark Sealy as artistic director, we have acquired a renowned curator and author whose decades-long commitment to social justice and political change has been groundbreaking. Sealy's work at Autograph in London has set standards for the current discourse in photography and demonstrates his visionary leadership in the areas of decolonization, humanism, and human rights. His curatorial concept, which is based on dialogue and collaboration, will radiate the 9th Triennial of Photography both in terms of content and form beyond the city's borders."

Bert Antonius Kaufmann, Commercial Director of Deichtorhallen Hamburg: "I am eagerly looking forward to the upcoming edition of the 9th Triennial of Photography. With Mark Sealy as artistic director, we can expect an outstanding thematic direction for the photography festival. The diverse exhibition program across numerous museums, exhibition halls, and innovative new photo venues is bound to spark excitement. I am convinced that the 9th Triennial will contribute to strengthening Hamburg's role as a nationally and internationally recognized cultural metropolis, benefiting both locals and visitors alike. The organization is being carried out as usual by Deichtorhallen Hamburg GmbH."

Since 1999, the Triennial of Photography has been held in Hamburg in collaboration with Hamburg museums, exhibition halls, cultural institutions, galleries, and other organizers. The widely acclaimed photography festival showcases a large number of photo exhibitions on current photography themes. The 9th Triennial will be organized, as before, by Deichtorhallen Hamburg.

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