GUATEMALA CITY: From May 17 through June 2 the UNITED BUDDY BEARS were on display at the Cultural Festival of Guatemala City.

700,000 visitors in Guatemala City added to the count at the previous exhibition in Antigua in April (Newsletter 2/2019), meaning about 1.1 million people have enjoyed the UNITED BUDDY BEARS and their message of tolerance and international understanding in Guatemala.

The Guatemalan media reported almost daily in the newspapers, on the radio and on television; 180 digital advertising signs were erected across the capital; and a 50-page special supplement to the most widely read newspaper - Prensa Libre - was published.

The opening ceremony included a fireworks display, a concert, and the unveiling of a brand new Buddy Bear, created by a young local artist, Darwin Osiel Martínez. His Buddy Bear features the portrait of a Maya (see picture on the right below).

In addition, an auction of pictures by various artists took place to support the Guatemala City Neurological Children’s Hospital; the proceeds of about 7,000 dollars have been donated to the hospital.
Weitere Impressionen
GUATEMALA: The Foreign Minister of Guatemala, Sandra Erica Jovel Polanca, wrote about the two exhibitions in Guatemala in her welcome address: "Guatemala is excited to welcome the traveling UNITED BUDDY BEARS exhibition, which embodies Germany's cultural values, characterized by peace, tolerance and, especially, friendship with all peoples. It should be noted that culture is an essential ingredient in shaping societies, and this exhibition inspires us to continue to strengthen our multiculturalism and to work on the key challenges the 21st century increasingly demands."

SAN SALVADOR: The two exhibitions in Guatemala attracted visitors from neighboring countries, too.

In San Salvador, the local German Embassy and the General Secretariat of the Central American Integration System, SICA, organized a regional painting competition called "Pinta el Buddy Bear por la paz y la integración centroamericana" – Paint a Buddy Bear for Peace and Central American Integration!

The occasion for the exhibition was two-fold: Central American Integration Day on 14 October and the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. Participants included artists from the eight member countries of SICA (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Belize and the Dominican Republic). Guatemalan art teacher Marvin Tablas won the competition and then produced his winning Buddy Bear design in El Salvador.

The Buddy Bear was unveiled this November by the Secretary-General of SICA and former President of Guatemala, Vinicio Cerezo, and the Counsellor and Co-President of the German Embassy of El Salvador, Norbert Eichler, in the presence of Member States' ambassadors before being handed over to SICA.
OSNABRÜCK: From 22nd of June through 28th of July, 2019, the United Buddy Bears - The Minis were at the Osnabrück Zoo. The 1m-tall sculptures represented 93 countries of the United Nations on the plaza in front of the Apes Temple.

The exhibition was opened by Federal President a. D. Christian Wulff and the Lower Saxony Minister of the Interior Boris Pistorius. Each politician gave a speech on the well-known theme of the United Buddy Bears - "The Art of Tolerance" - and emphasized the importance of this principle in modern times.

About 100 invited guests took part in the opening ceremony, including representatives from politics and business. School classes from the Franz-Hecker-Schule and Rosenplatz-Schule added a musical note to the proceedings with pieces about understanding and tolerance between peoples.

The managing director of the zoo, Andreas Busemann, was able to find 70 “godparents” for the Bears: each had donated 2,500 euros, of which 2,000 euros went to the zoo to enlarge the lion's enclosure, for a total of 140,000 euros, and 500 euros, totaling 35,000 euros, went to the Foundation "A Future for Children" by Children's Ambassador John McGurk.

Quotes on the art of tolerance

"Especially in times when many emphasize the divisions between people, and advocate for isolation and exclusion, such projects are particularly important. Global challenges such as wars, famine or climate change affect us all, and we can only master them together. The United Buddy Bear project builds on this: It connects people and cultures, brings us together and builds bridges," said Federal President a.D. Christian Wulff.

"The most dangerous ‘Weltanschauung’ is that of people who have never seen the world,” said the Lower Saxony Minister of the Interior Boris Pistorius, quoting the great Alexander von Humboldt, and made clear: "The exhibition shows that diversity offers great opportunities and thus a clear sign of tolerance and international understanding [...] We want to live in a tolerant society, which is solidary and compassionate, and understands differences not as a problem, but as an opportunity.”
„I am a Bearliner!“

BERLIN-SCHÖNEBERG: FRIEDA, the only Bear-dedicated magazine!
“May I introduce myself? I’m FRIEDA, the only Bear in the world who has a magazine dedicated to her...it’s really exciting! A Berliner is open-minded towards fellow bears, of course, as well as to people like you! We just understand each other: for a Buddy Bear like me, tolerance, respect and cosmopolitanism are part of the DNA!” That’s the foreword to the August/September issue of "Frieda. The local magazine for Friedenau".

Frieda is currently traveling around Friedenau. These days you find her in front of the Friedrich-Bergius-Schule.

BERLIN-WILMERSDORF / BERLIN-MITTE: The initiative "wirBERLIN" in Wilmersdorf, springs from the citizens' platform "Stadtgespräch Berlin", which honors a particularly successful initiative with a Buddy Bär trophy every year, part of a Berlin-wide day of action. On 15th of October the SV Rot-Weiss Viktoria Mitte e.V. won the prize. The football club not only promotes sports activities around the neighborhood, but also encourages environmental awareness among children and adolescents through annual cleanups, garden projects and upcycling workshops. The award ceremony took place outdoors on the club’s football pitch, attended by Stephan von Dassel, district mayor of MITTE, and Dr. Klaus Herlitz, Managing Director of BUDDY BEAR BERLIN GmbH, who both expressed their appreciation to the club.

BERLIN-TEMPELHOF-SCHÖNEBERG: For the ninth time, the Bezirksamt Tempelhof-Schöneberg has awarded the Green Buddy Award. The Green Buddy Award provides a platform for dedicated companies who have incorporated ecology and sustainability into their corporate philosophy – as well as dedicated project teams or individuals who have made outstanding contributions towards sustainable development through their exemplary initiatives.

The awards ceremony for the GREEN BUDDY AWARD took place in the Tempelhofer Malzfabrik on the 6th of November. The jury of the Environmental Award had to evaluate and then vote on five innovative ideas, and presented the ‘Bear-ish’ trophies to the following winners: the Sneaker-Rescue, the Infrest Infrastructure eStrasse GmbH, the Supermarché Fair Fashion GmbH, the WEAR FAIR project from the Georg-Büchner-Gymnasium, and MINT Engineering GmbH.

District Mayor Angelika Schöttler and Presenter Boussa Thiam.
OSNABRÜCK: On 23d of November the second annual Osnabrück "Children's Charity Gala" took place. Representatives of SOS Children's Villages received a check for a donation of 35,000 EUR. In addition, an auction took place in which two 1m-tall Buddy Bears each brought in 4,200 euros. In total, the auction raised more than 25,000 euros. Half of the proceeds from the gala will go to the "Future for Children" Foundation, the other to the Zoo Osnabrück.

Buddy Bär Berlin engagiert sich für Kinder

BERLIN: Buddy Bear Berlin has stood up for the youngest in our society from day one and has continued to expand its support since 1 January 2019: 5% of all net revenue generated in the web shop is given to children's aid organisations. This applies to all sales at the stated retail price. Large Buddy Bear sculptures can also be purchased for a preferential price by donating to one of the following children’s aid organisations (at the amount specified on the website): TrauerZeit - Zentrum für trauernde Kinder und Familien; Die Arche - Kinder- und Jugendzentrum or Buddy Bear Help e.V.

Charity

Since 20st of June 2001, when the first Buddy Bears sprung up on Berlin streets and squares, Buddy Bear activities have been intrinsically linked to helping needy children. Buddy Bears are frequently auctioned off at charity events in support of UNICEF and other children’s aid organisations. The total funds generated to date amount to over 2.380.000 EUR (November 2019)