For the first time in Central America

ANTIGUA: Our United Buddy Bears are in Guatemala - and it is their first visit to Central America.

Since 25 April 2019, a total of 144 bears have stood together in the world heritage city of Antigua in the Parque Central on Plaza Mayor. The exhibition can be seen until 12 May.

Following this, between 17 May and 2 June the bears will visit the culture festival hosted by Guatemala City (Festival Cultural del Paseo de la Sexta) and will present their message of tolerance and international understanding on the Plaza de la Constitución.

“For the first time, the United Buddy Bears exhibition brings a world-class cultural event to Central America”, said the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany in Guatemala, Harald Klein, at the ceremonial opening that drew large numbers of visitors. “Approx. 40 million people have already witnessed this event on five continents”. The bears were invited to Central America at his instigation.

Each of the 2m large sculptures represents a country in the United Nations and was designed by an artist from the respective country. The United Buddy Bear that represents the country of Guatemala, received its garment from the Guatemalan artist Mayra Fernández de Schäfer in 2006, and has already made an appearance at many exhibitions. It was named “Kartutscho” (after a Guatemalan flower) and is therefore a symbol for the “country of eternal Spring”.

Central America will also showcase previously unseen bears:

Created by the artist Isamuko Rotimi Isaiah, the country representative of Nigeria will be on show in its new garment. And for the first time the bear from Guatemala’s neighbouring country Belize, created by Pen Cayetano, will also take part.

Whether familiar, or new and unknown: Except for the Guatemalan bear, everyone arrived as strangers - and will leave as friends!

On the first day, approx. 15,000 visits, including around 4,000 tourists (primarily from the USA, Canada, Europe and the Far East), visited the exhibition and heard the message of the United Buddy Bears:

“We need to become better acquainted with one another ... that way we can better understand each other, trust each other and live better together.”

A variety of people from all over the world flowed into the Plaza Mayor in Antigua’s Parque Central (in the background: the Cathedral of Santiago.)
A highlight for the audience and the press was the unveiling of both bears from Guatemala and Germany, who were presented hand-in-hand at the head of the exhibition.

Eva Herlitz, Ambassador Harald Klein and Antigua’s mayoress Susana Asencio Lueg (right photo, from left to right) shared the great enthusiasm for this special moment.

The Guatemalan artist of the Guatemalan bear „Kartutscho“, Mayra Fernández de Schäfer, explained her creation to the press.
¿Por qué osos? Why bears?

ANTIGUA: The exhibition, which is free of charge and can be accessed at all times, is based on the dedicated work of many. We would particularly like to thank our partners and sponsors (see logos on the left), for their support with the exhibitions of the United Buddy Bears in Antigua and Guatemala City in 2019. The Antigua Viva Cultural Institute, which is committed to the prevention of violence in Guatemala and is one of our local partners, published a whole page on the question “Why bears?”. At the end, it was clear to everyone that the United Buddy Bears are “Berliners” as well as being a symbol for our tolerant and cosmopolitan city (photo below, in the centre). Our partner San Martín, a popular Guatemalan bakery, baked bear cookies on the occasion of the opening event (photo bottom left).

Press and social media

GUATEMALA CITY: The German Embassy in Guatemala has set up its own Facebook page called “United Buddy Bears Guatemala”. The page will show you a range of photos and videos relating to the exhibition, its preparation, opening and all accompanying events: Press conferences, painting activities for children, open air art with artists from around the globe, classic as well as pop folklore concerts and dance performances, deepen exchange within the circle of cultures and support the youngest in our society.

On our website www.buddy-bear.com you can view other news and press products from the leading media in Guatemala such as Prensa Libre, Guatevision, La República, La Hora, publinews, Radio TGW (in Spanish).

publinews issued a special edition on the day of the opening (photo to the left).
The Federal Cross of Merit for Eva and Klaus Herlitz

BERLIN: On 17/01/2019, Eva and Klaus Herlitz were appointed to Member of the Order of Merit at the behest of the Federal President by the governing Mayor of Berlin, Michael Müller: “In the many years since their founding in 2001, the Buddy Bears have become a global symbol for a tolerant and friendly Germany, for human rights and for peace around the globe. That is what the bears, who are also ambassadors of our city, stand for. It is clear to everyone in the outside world: The Buddy Bear is a Berliner”, said Müller at the celebratory event.

New African Buddy Bears

MALAWI: Heidi Hetzer travelled around the world... and on the 1st March she presented a small Buddy Bear to the German Ambassador of Malawi, Jürgen Brosch. In return, he showed her the brand new 2m sculpture in front of his Embassy. The name of the bear is “Mzathu” and means “friend” in Chewa, the main language in Malawi. A few weeks later, the Grande Dame of motors sports died in her home city of Berlin.

NAMIBIA: On 22/02/2019, the German Embassy in Windhoek opened the #germanweeks2019 with the unveiling of a Buddy Bear on the UNAM Main Campus. The bear, which the Embassy first presented to the public on German Unification Day in 2017, was painted by the Namibian artist Trianus Nakale.

NIGERIA: In January, Isamuko Rotimi Isaiah designed the new United Buddy Bear for Nigeria. The artwork on the bear displays Nigerian symbols for unity, tolerance, freedom and love.

Isamuko Rotimi Isaiah is an artist, who has specialised in painting, textile design and sculpture. He is the Director of the Rotizo Art Gallery in Ibadan, Nigeria.
#BearForEU: A Buddy Bear for a Europe campaign

From left to right The #BearForEU has already visited Berlin, Dresden, Marseilles and Istanbul to name a few.

BERLIN/PARIS: The Jacques-Delors Institute Berlin, Centre for European Affairs at the Hertie School of Governance, launched a campaign with their own specially created Buddy Bear, in order to illustrate the many links between Europeans: #BearForEU "...stands for a united Europe, that has overcome barriers and broken down walls. During the weeks and months preceding the European elections, the bear will be passed on from one European to the next, photos will be taken of him in various cities and posted with the hashtag #BearForEU. In this way, he will become a symbol for a free Europe of short distances.”

Buddy Bear Berlin is even more committed to children

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.

Charity

Since 20 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

2,319,200 EUR (April)

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 Jugend-zentrum or Buddy Bear Help e.V.

Children hug the Einstein Bear in Antigua.