



**Leopoldina**  
Nationale Akademie  
der Wissenschaften

# NOVA ACTA LEOPOLDINA

Neue Folge, Supplementum 25

New Images of Age(ing)  
Photo Contest and Exhibition



**Deutsche Akademie der Naturforscher Leopoldina –  
Nationale Akademie der Wissenschaften, Halle (Saale) 2011**

Wissenschaftliche Verlagsgesellschaft Stuttgart

# NOVA ACTA LEOPOLDINA

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NEUE FOLGE

SUPPLEMENTUM

NUMMER 25

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## New Images of Age(ing)

Photo Contest and Exhibition

Editor:

Ursula M. Staudinger (Bremen)

Vice-President of the Academy

With 81 illustrations



Deutsche Akademie der Naturforscher Leopoldina –  
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## Message of Greeting

Annette Schavan

Aging is a topic that is becoming increasingly important in our society. People live longer and stay healthy longer. Older people today are increasingly active, and are making a greater contribution to society. We need to understand that the perceptions of former

generations no longer apply to today's elderly.

In the context of aging, our society's idea of this phase of life plays a vital role. The photo project of the Leopoldina shows a new image of old age. It focuses on different life plans and aspects of aging. The perception of old age in society contributes decisively to how long people hope to live and determines the quality of the second half of life.

The time has come to better prepare our society for this change, in education and research, in life-long learning, in the working environment, in designing our neighbourhoods and in health care. We must provide information about aging – in particular about conditions and opportunities to positively influence this process. One of the most urgent tasks of research is to further decode the process of aging scientifically.

We expect science to provide a central momentum, for example when it comes to maintaining

the intellectual agility of the elderly or to preventing age-related diseases and providing therapies in order to enhance quality of life in old age.

Science needs highly qualified and experienced staff who are willing and able to innovate in all stages of life; the same applies to families, communities, volunteer organizations, political associations, schools and universities of the third age, and not least to science and research. The "New Images of Age(ing)" exhibition shows this phase of life in a new way and sheds new, optimistic light on people's personal experience with parents, grandparents and other older people.

Prof. Dr. Annette Schavan, MdB  
Federal Minister of Education and Research

# Foreword

Jörg Hacker



When it comes to the themes of aging, change, continuity, and time transitions, the Leopoldina feels particularly addressed. In uninterrupted existence since 1652, the Leopoldina is the oldest academy in the world. It has seen many historical eras and has repeatedly redefined the role of science in society. The Leopoldina owes its existence and success to the fact that it has always looked for the most significant and relevant topics and recruited the most brilliant scientists as members. Since 2008, the Leopoldina is the German National Academy of Science and a current prime concern is to enable the public to inform itself on controversial societal issues through the means of excellent scientists articulating their views on the matters.

One of the major social issues in Germany is the demographic change, which particularly affects the well-being and structure of the individual and society. Because of this, after three years of work on the project “Aging in Germany”, the Leopoldina has set up a permanent commission on the topic “Demographic Change”. This commission addresses the conditions and consequences of a longer life expectancy as well as the decline in fertility in Germany.

And so it is very exciting for us as an academy, but also for the general public, to see the dialogue develop between the images gathered here and their photographers on the one hand and the scientific findings and demystifications on the other. Our

scientists asked whether the aging of society represents more of a burden – socially, economically, and individually, or if these gained years represent an opportunity. We emphasize this opportunity, acknowledging what we still have to do in order to realize this chance, which is also shown in the photos. A multitude of disciplines has participated, from medicine to neuroscience, and from psychology to economics, to name a few. We have discussed the topic of aging with many sectors of society as well as several decision-makers from governments, businesses, and the civil society. From this background information we know that the changes our society needs in order to cope with the demographic change must also be initiated from below – and they already are.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jörg Hacker".

Jörg Hacker

XXVI. President

# New and Old Images of Aging

## – It Concerns Us All!

Ursula M. Staudinger



Aging as we know and experience it today is only a snapshot. Human development and aging are not set in the laws of nature, but arise from the continuous interaction between biology and culture. Aging can be affected, even on its biological components (keyword: epigenetics), by societal and individual influences while remaining within biological boundaries. The enormous potential to change can be seen, for example, in the increase of life expectancy by around 30 years in the last 100 years.

Our image of aging and the age-related assignment of roles are still characterized by the traditional notions. They originate from a time where our life expectancy, the quality of the last third of life, and the distribution of tasks across age were drastically different from what they are today and from those we will need tomorrow. The large gap between fundamental changes and traditional ideas is one of the largest obstacles preventing individuals and society from unfolding the (scientifically proven) potential of an aging population to benefit all.

The changeability – plasticity as the psychologists say – of aging is moving in both directions. On the

one side, the current 60-year-olds are medically about five years younger than those from the generation before them; older people are beginning new careers, starting volunteer initiatives and are physically active. However, on the other side, a negative view of one's own age decreases one's life by around 7 years, and this is regardless of social or health status. When one expects only terrible things from aging, one loses the will to reach this age. It is society's task to encourage greater parts of the aging population and give them the opportunity to integrate more and receive recognition for this.

This expanded and altered last third phase of life has no historical precedence.

- We are living longer than ever before in human history and this in better health and fitness. Life expectancy has doubled in just over 150 years; every other girl who will be born in 2050 will be over 100 years old.
- At the same time, fewer children are being born, and the age structure is shifting so that the elderly are more prevalent in the country. In Germany alone, there are already more people over 60 years than under 20 years of age.
- Lifestyle and culture are increasingly more beneficial for human development and aging: a

healthier lifestyle (exercise, nutrition, forgoing smoking or alcohol), improved medical care and prevention, life courses rich in changes, life-long learning, and wide-spread optimizing technology ensure that mental and physical abilities can be preserved into old age.

- Together with skillful work organization, these factors already allow older workers to be as, and in some cases even more, productive than younger workers. However, employers do not yet utilize this potential, causing the “young old” who no longer work to turn to volunteer positions as an alternative. Currently, the highest growth rate in volunteering is among 60- to 70-year-olds.

It appears that we still lack the imagination and conditions to provide room for the individual and social facets of large age diversity. We urgently need to utilize the potential of the last third of one’s life for the benefit of society and individuals. Without the institutional and organizational support to nourish and direct it, this potential dissipates.

Research has shown that people who never stop challenging themselves, and who are willing to invest their time and energy into these challenges, grow old more fulfilled and healthier. It is possible to maintain social welfare and prosperity with an aging population as long as individuals work longer, either employed or as volunteers.

This is only possible if the world of work is transformed to take into consideration the strengths and weaknesses of each age group. The point is to foster, and not exhaust, the development of

every individual within the work environment and through the opportunities of staying active.

The “New Images of Age(ing)” collected in this catalog, combine “new” and “old” impressions as is clearly visible in Chapter 1 (Aging – old and new). The photographs reflect the diversity of lifestyles and competencies in people around the same age of 60, 70, 80, or 90 years old, a diversity that is much higher than that in children or adolescents. They also show that many no longer meet the traditional expectations of aging, however, many are still pinned to it and withdraw into their domestic niche. The exhibition is divided into the following sections: Couples – Intimacy; Generations; Alone – Together; Work – Activity; Exercise – Sports – Leisure Activities; Expressions of Age – Body; More Years, More Life – Finiteness. At the beginning of each section one finds a short introductory text. Reflecting the two sides of old age, the photographs not only focus on active aging, but there is also space for the *vita contemplativa*, as well as protection and support for those who no longer can or wish to work.

Aging is moved into the focus of our society and its photographers through rising life expectancy, improved health and performance of the aging population, as well as the increased share of elderly in the total population. Let us use our imagination and cultural richness to mold the aging process so that the increasing life expectancy is a real benefit to people and society. We hope that the following collection of photographic images of aging stimulates to reflect, discuss, and perhaps even to act. We all will decide how the aging of tomorrow will look!



# The Exhibition

## Aging – Old and New

Every generation ages differently than the one before. In addition, with increasing age the diversity of individual competencies found within a generation also grows. In contrast, children of the same age tend to be more similar in their abilities, interests, and developmental stages. Each person's life experiences and perspectives affect him or her differently; each person is biologically and individually unique. This results in many different pathways of aging. However, there are also historical influences that affect lifestyle, such as education, health, environment, life quality, and validity of social norms and values. They play out in how actively seniors choose to live their additional years. Activity and age are connected in our minds: people seem younger if they are more active and independent and older if they appear to be more limited.

Some photos reflect stereotypical impressions of "age-appropriate" behavior and appearance. We are in the midst of societal transformations of such age-related norms: the first part of this chapter depicts people withdrawing into their private spheres. Their attempts to fill their time

and deal with increasingly limited lives is depicted for instance by the repetitive activity of solving crossword puzzles. Though increasing their puzzle-solving skills, it does not help to prevent general age-related decline in cognitive abilities. The second part, on the other hand, shows seniors who maintain apparently youthful interests such as dancing in clubs, riding motorcycles with friends, becoming politically active, or playing the newest video games (Wii) – the latter is currently extremely popular among residents of retirement homes as it combines socializing with exercise. This is the illustration of the current transformation of what it means to be old: exercise, social togetherness, meaningful tasks and new experiences are the keys to aging well.

The judges praised the work of one of the youngest photographers in the contest, the sixteen-year-old Paul Loges (Mrs. Thomas, 2010). He participated together with four other members of a photo club from the high school Klotzsche in Dresden. While exploring the theme of aging, they visited a senior home where the photo was taken.



**Katja Schreiber**  
Which horse wins, 2009



**Paul Loges**  
Mrs. Thomas, 2010, honorable mention



**Jan Schildhauer**  
Fritz, from the series "Pensioners", 2006



**Jan Schildhauer**  
Fritz, from the series "Pensioners", 2006





**Birgit Petrasek**  
Life stage with 7 letters, 2010



**David Lohmüller**  
Strike – senior bowling with Nintendo Wii, 2009, 3<sup>rd</sup> place





**Christine Skiba**  
Forever young, 2009



**Lars Collin**  
Provocative against the war, because we experienced it, 2006



**Sophie Aigner**

Untitled, from the series "Evi, Pensioner, Berlin", 2009



**Günter Dudde**  
Bikers, 2009





**Sergey Zhuravlev**  
Memories, 2009

## Work – Other Activities

Although the retirement and pre-retirement period has been originally introduced in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to protect the elderly, it has increasingly been turning into the opposite: it is hindering people who would like to continue to work from actually doing so. As a result, the “young old” typically enter self-employment, volunteer work, or low-paying jobs such as newspaper delivery. We are still missing a well-suited model that individualizes the transition to retirement, including the possibilities of part-time work to allow for a new combination of interests, as well as returning to work after a certain time in full-time retirement. The possibility of a recognized and paid occupation is an important motivator for lifelong learning. Contrary to common stereotypes, seniors are capable of learning and open to new technology, and, if work is organized well, are no less productive than younger employees.

For freelancers, entrepreneurs, and farmers, there has never been a binding age limit that ends the active phase. In the exhibition, one can see farmers and artists mustering continuous strength in their jobs. In his series, “Art as life task,” *Stefan Postius* depicts the artists in front of their art. He sees these artists as

the prototype for the new elderly. They seek to be publicly visible as artists, and they are active in the regional art and culture scene.

The winegrowers, Marianne and Hans Weber, (from *Renate Maucher*) are 79 and 80 years old and still work in their vineyard. Their children and grandchildren regularly join for the harvest.

*Klaus Meier* portrays the 82-year-old retired mechanic Josef Sedlak. He stands next to the old clockwork of the city clock of Kirchenberg an der Jagst, which he was able to repair in only a week’s work. The clock is now displayed as a working model in the city museum. An example of a successful activity change is illustrated in the series by *Anna Mutter*. She won second place with her photo “Gerlind Pusch” in 2009 from the series “Sunset”. The clown depicted belongs to a new group of performers between 50 and 77 years of age, who, after a completely different occupation, participated in a clown training course and eventually switched over to being professional comedians. Since then, this group performs together and draws on its humor to relate its life experiences to the audience.



**Ann-Kathrin Kampmeyer**  
Surfing, 2010



**Janis Kanga**  
Independent, 2010





**Renate Maucher**

Hans and Marianne Weber, 2007



**Lars Collin**  
Experience is the potential of the elderly, 2006



**Evi Lemberger**

Mr. Hermann Schwoaz, Lambach, 2008





**Evi Lemberger**  
Mrs. Brandl, Eggersberg, 2007



**Artur Wiese**  
Will Brands in an interview, 2007



**Markus Altmann**  
Fred Robinson, 80, Glider instructor, 2008



**Dr. Dietmar Eisenhammer**  
Senior volunteer in Europe, 2009





**Klaus Meier**  
Active for a good cause, 2010





**Sergey Zhuravlev**  
Hobby, 2010



**Stefan Postius**

from left to right: Dieter Hermann, Ilse Fark, Irene Blaschke, from the series "Art as life task", 2010



**Eric Schütt**

Eva Lützenkirchen – artist, 2009



**Eric Schütt**  
Maria-Anna Griebbaum – farm maid, 2009



**Anna Mutter**

Ekkehard Rieger, from the series "Sunset", 2009, 2<sup>nd</sup> place





**Anna Mutter**  
Gerlind Pusch, from the series "Sunset", 2009, 2<sup>nd</sup> place



**Anna Mutter**

Barbara Zöffel, from the series "Sunset", 2009, 2<sup>nd</sup> place

## Exercise – Sports – Leisure

Early and lifelong prevention, in addition to a balanced diet, physical exercise multiple times a week, is considered the best recipe for a long and healthy life. A healthier life style and higher average education contribute to explain why the elderly of today are biologically and physically around five years younger than the seniors of the generation before them. The first phase of old age today, like never before, is associated with health rather than sickness.

It is never too late to start exercising. At every age, exercise promotes positive effects. It has been proven, for example, that among the older age groups exercise has an even stronger impact than in younger age groups on decreasing the chances of diabetes. New research has also found that physical endurance training such as Nordic Walking, running, swimming, biking, and dancing, multiple times a week improves the mental abilities by regenerating the aging brain, as it were. Participating in sports is, due to its health benefits, not only the basis of an independent life in old age, but also the basis for social activity and joy.

For many seniors, sport plays a large role in their lives. The pictures from *Angela Archilla* and *Walter Spiegel* as well as the photo from Günter M. in the gym (photo from *Margot Eppinger*), show that the elderly also follow more recent sport trends.

For the dancer from the series by *Christine Rühmann*, a former dancer herself, movement and the physical presence is the precondition of her success. The photographer documents physical aging and changes in the movements of former professional dancers between 50 and 90 years of age. She showed that aging did not force the end of a dancer's career nor did it restrict her to certain dance forms. On the contrary, they have developed additional abilities to express themselves in their later years as well as gained more occupational freedom. Hilke Klith, born in 1949, had a career as a soloist and a choreographer, and now continues to work as a dancer. Marlis Grünberg, born in 1924, was not only a soloist but also one of the youngest balletmasters, and now runs a dance studio in Bonn.





**Christine Rühmann**

Hilke Kluth, from the series “Dancers”, 2009



**Christine Rühmann**  
Marlis Grünberg, from the series "Dancers", 2009



Erika Ehlerding  
84, 2010



**Frank Waßerführer**  
Tennis player, 2008



**Walter Spiegel**  
Gymnastics, 2008





**Angela Archilla**  
Looking for new waves, 2009





**Margot Eppinger**

Günter M. in the fitness studio, 2010

# Generations

The exchange between generations is, historically seen, a new phenomenon. At the beginning of the last century it was very uncommon to be in contact with people over 65 years of age, one of the reasons being that few lived this long. The picture from *Simon Eberli* and *Andrea Mantel* shows great-grandmother and great-grandchild, and is depicting a new, more futuristic, yet also already current, image of aging. One mostly finds generations together in either the family setting or in the private sphere. Later in one's life, one puts increasing importance on passing on advice and caring for those younger than oneself. Children, teenagers, and young adults often prefer advice from their grandparents over that from their own parents. Regardless of whether in a large city or a small town, multiple generations of a family often live nearby. One of the reasons for this is the support provided by older generations to younger ones. Up to old age, the elderly are more generous with regards to giving money, time, and support than what they receive back.

Generations are holding together unabatedly. Furthermore, there is no indication that the cross-generational identity, perhaps of political nature, is decreasing in comparison to generation-specific identity. A clash of generations is not imminent.

*Daniela Risch* won third place with her series "Helga." Her picture deals with identity and influences throughout a lifetime. She depicts herself in the clothes of her mother Helga and in her home. Is she able to identify with her mother? Does she remain unfamiliar regardless of all her assimilations?

The photograph "R.D." by *Thomas Dachs* focuses on solidarity in the face of the changes across generations. The photographer is the grandchild of the stitching woman. He is holding on to the dying out hobby of stitching (left picture) and has even transformed a photo into a stitching design (right picture) that the grandmother is stitching. After the recent death of the grandfather, the grandchild seeks to give her a new activity that also allows him to get to know his grandmother better, whom he sees as the center of the family.

*Simon Koy* portrays his ninety-four-year-old grandfather, of whom he found an unfocused portrait in the bedroom (right picture). Although the pictured man is still alive, the grandchild is already dealing with future memories (that he might have after the grandfather's death).



**Daniela Risch**  
Untitled, from the series "Helga", 2008, 3<sup>rd</sup> place



**Daniela Risch**  
Untitled, from the series "Helga", 2008, 3<sup>rd</sup> place





**Horst Neuendorf**  
Climbing with 8 and 80, 2008



**Peter E. Rytz**  
Two sides of aging, 2005





**Annett Körner**  
Grandchild-grandma, 2006



**Simone Eberli / Andrea Mantel**  
Great-grandmother and great-grandchild, 2010



**Thomas Xaver Dachs**  
R. D., 2008



**Simon Koy**  
Grandpa 1, 2008



**Simon Koy**  
Grandpa 2, 2008





## Alone – Together

Loneliness or companionship is in our times a question of family bonds. Therefore, we find childless eighty-year-olds, who on average have two social contacts, while others of the same age with children have 12 similar contacts. However, personal relationships are not restricted to those organized through family. The plethora of already-practiced alternatives ranges from renting grandparents, reading godparents, home-task assistance, to communal care and regular visits from preschool and school children to senior residence homes. Authorities and foundations can work to promote and fill neighborhood centers with life and not just visiting hours. Other ways to foster social contacts outside of the family include continuing to work as long as possible, volunteering, and becoming a member of a club.

In general social relationships are a protective resource in old age. It is also scientifically proven that these social contacts have a positive effect on life expectancy and health. However, physical health is not a prerequisite for maintaining social interaction. For immobile individuals, for example, the internet provides a welcomed alternative with chats and video

conferences. The eighty-year-old mother of *Katja Schreiber* remains in contact with her children and uses the internet to access daily information. Depicted alone, the eighty-four-year-old dancer, Lisa Lehmann, (photo by *Manuela Gangl*) is very energetic and physically mobile. She, on the other hand, finds her community through dance. Additionally, she instructs dancing and exercises in a residential home.

The photo of the bare room in which Horst Kaufmann lives (photo from *Marco Warmuth*) is characterized by the passivity that is reinforced in a traditional senior home, and stands in contrast to *Nathalie Mohadjer's* photo of a homeless shelter. What is it like to grow old as a homeless person? The series from 2006 shows a refuge that most inhabitants only leave to go to the next kiosk. Although they live in a type of community within the shelter, they carry out most of their life experiences in separate, isolated worlds. The pensioners of large cities are also “lonely together” as captured by *Sebastian Marek* in a café during winter in Berlin. In the normal, anonymous room in which they chose to stay, their loneliness does not seem unusual.





**Mayk Wendt**  
Aging alone, 2009



**Mayk Wendt**  
Aging together, 2008



**Sebastian Marek**  
Big city pensioners, 2009



**Franz-Xaver Ochsenreiter**  
Helma and her sisters, 2009



**Manuela Gangl**  
Untitled, from the series "Lisa Lehmann", 2009





**Manuela Gangl**  
Untitled, from the series "Lisa Lehmann", 2009



**Marco Warmuth**  
Horst Kaufmann 02, 2009



**Nathalie Mohadjer**

Bernd's room, homeless shelter Ettersburg, from the series "Admirals", 2007



**Katja Schreiber**  
One never stops learning, 2009



**Susanne Werdin**  
Father, 2009





**Yasmin Obst**

80-year-old with dog in A1 residential home, 2008

## Couples – Intimacy

The winning photo of the photo contest, “Ursula and Siegfried M.” by *Gerhard Weber*, 2009, combines the intimacy of a couple with its physical and erotic presence. The freelance photographer from Grimma, Saxony, had asked people from his surroundings to share a glimpse into their private lives. In this way he managed to capture sexuality, one of the great taboo themes of growing old, in an artistic and outstanding manner. The couple is presented in a sympathetic, authentic, and unbiased fashion. The picture pays tribute to a happy relationship, which emphasizes the maintained pleasures of physical and sexual contact.

In every life phase, the intimacy, which we seek, is meaningful for our lives and wellbeing. Intimacy also impacts other areas positively such as physical fitness and agreeableness. In old age, sexuality and physicality become no less important. The taboo of physical closeness in old age, however, negatively influences older couples and singles. Due to the pressure of social norms, many give up their sexuality too early. Human beings remain to be sexual creatures throughout the entire lives.

Couples rediscover themselves with age. Forms of living together are heavily determined by the characteristic of a generation. For example, the wave of liberalization during the 1960’s continued through to old age. The cohabitation of couples found many new forms, such as in living communities and multi-generation houses. These living arrangements can provide important alternatives, especially with regards to support in case of sickness, which becomes increasingly important in old age. Divorce is also no longer a blemish that must be avoided at all cost. The increasing amount of working women enables them to free themselves from unloving dependencies even at the age of 70. The prospect of many, healthy years with an own rhythm, potentially a new relationship, and a new environment gives this separation the charm of a new beginning.

The following pictures of the couples, however, highlight the ideal of long relationships. One couple has even been married for 60 years (Diamond anniversary from *Silvia Zinsli*). Only the title “Outlook for more” by *Tanja Beate Heuser* emphasizes how such long-standing relationships may change with retirement.



**Mechthild Michalski**  
Vacation couple, 2001



**Gerhard Weber**  
Ursula and Siegfried M., 2009, 1<sup>st</sup> place



**Nathalie Mohadjer**

Margarete and Tom, homeless shelter Ettersburg, from the series "Admirals", 2007





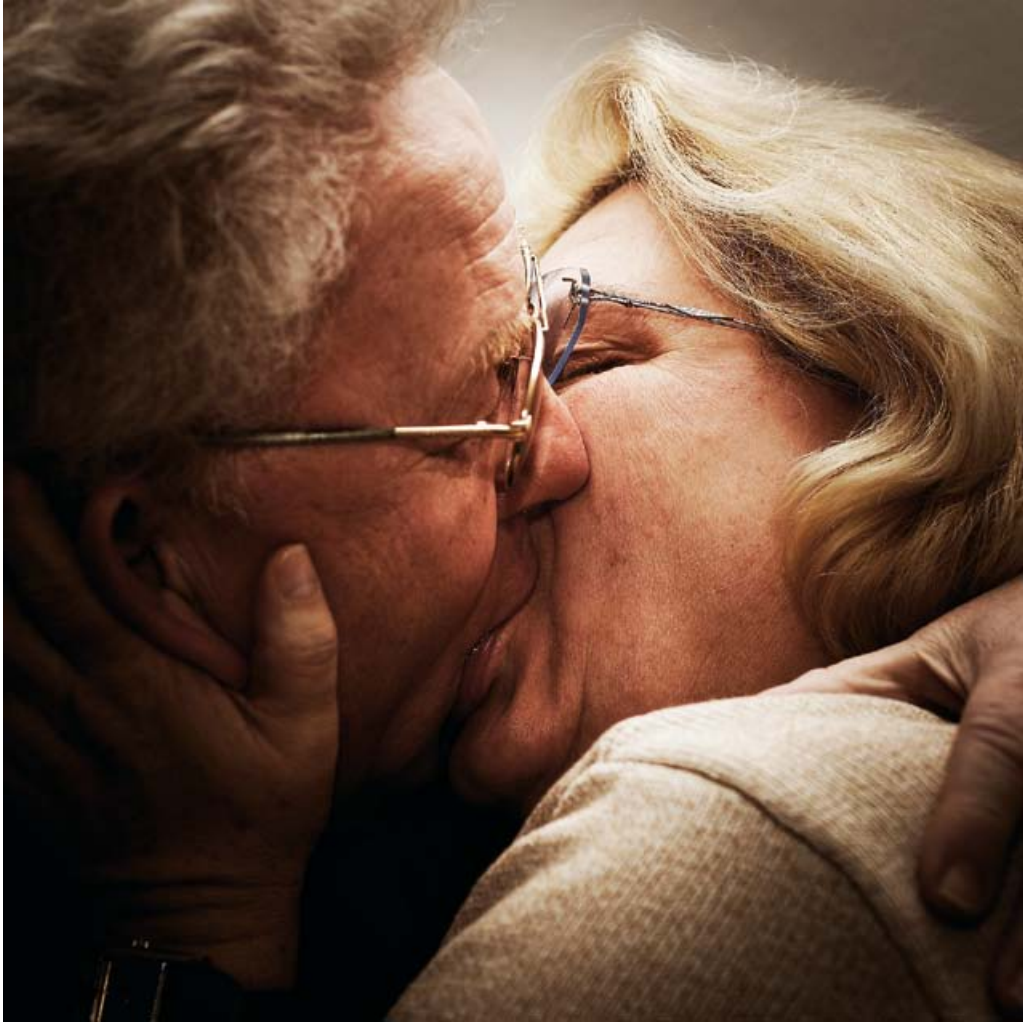
**Karel Stipek**  
Love forever, 2007



**Silvia Zinsli**  
Diamond anniversary, 2010



**Manuel Capurso**  
Untitled, 2007



**Marco Armbrorst**  
Kiss, 2010



**Tanja Beate Heuser**  
Outlook for more, 2008



**Sabine Plamper**

Mrs. and Mr. Richter, from the series "Married couples 70+", 2009

## Expressiveness with Aging

The many facets of aging are not only displayed by the palette of lifestyles and activities, but also in the expressions and beauty of the aging body. This variety extends from the portrait of the very aware, 100-year-old woman (photo from *Paula Holtz*) to the typically mild and smooth face of a dementia patient (Safeness by *Christiane Grosewa*).

Society is still discovering the beauty of aging. The aging population practices the ideals of youth not only in their youthful self-awareness and presentation, but also in the multitude of social roles that are also displayed by physical appearance.

Thus, in *Paula Muhr's* series "Tata" (Serbian for father), an impressive image portrays her father as he tries on various clothing ensembles at his home. His pose, on the one side, imitates the posture of a runway model, and on the other side, radiates his own personality. He attempts to simultaneously present his image of a "businessman" and a "star athlete." An increasingly sought-after image for elderly men is the agile, in shape, older gentleman.

*Joanna Nottebrock's* photos from the series "In old age" display the exact opposite trend. Instead of aggressively exposed, the faces of her models are hidden by objects from their favorite activities. We tend to use the face of an elderly individual to identify his or her age; we are usually wrong. But even if we are correct, the age does not really provide us with any useful information. The photographer is, therefore, challenged to focus the viewer on the personality of the individual and inspire interest for seniors, who still receive relatively little attention or acknowledgement from society.

*Charli Schluchter* found an alternative to the classical photographs in his series "Back portraits – the hidden face." It focuses more on the sensuality of the aging body.

In the last picture of this chapter, *Christel Linkerhäger* captures in a collage the breadth of expressions of a changing face over a period of three minutes. The facial expressions of the eighty-three-year-old Martha L. reveal a very outgoing, communicative, and lively individual.



**Verena Grieb**

Portrait of older generations (Mrs. Bungenstock, 86), 2007



**Paula Muhr**  
Untitled, from the series "Tata", 2006-08



**Charli Schluchter**

Untitled, from the series "Back portraits – the hidden face", 2007





**Charli Schluchter**

Untitled, from the series "Back portraits – the hidden face", 2007



**Paula Holtz**  
100 years, 2009



**Christiane Grosewa**  
Safeness, 2009



**Joanna Nottebrock**  
Untitled, from the series "In seniority", 2009



**Ferdinand Jendrejewski**  
Applause, 2009





**Christel Linkerhäger**  
Three minutes with Martha L., 83 years, 2008

## More Years, More Life – Finiteness

For every person, life expectancy indeed has risen. Although death and dying are undeniable parts of life, they are rarely discussed and, due to fear of one's own finiteness, often suppressed. We have not, as of yet, developed a dignified way of dealing with dying.

As the end of one's life approaches and enters more into our awareness, either in old or young age, our life goals change. Emotionally fulfilling goals take priority. This reflects the increasing wish for generational relationships in the second-half of one's life. Also part of these new or reinforced goals is to confront the meaning of one's own life. In younger years, certain tasks in the professional or family realm can completely absorb a person and distract from the long-term perspective and conscious saving and provision. Perhaps in the future we will find a better way to deal with life and death without living life in the shadow of aging and death. *Ruth Knecht* and *Annette Günter* contrast these poles of life and death. The headstone in Annette Günter's photo, transforms the increased

longevity from an abstract number to reality for the viewer.

One of the oldest contestants at 72 years, *Ute Görnandt*, won one of the two honorable mention prizes for her entry "The path to light", 2009. Looking up and ahead, the old woman represents an active lifestyle up into very old age. The photographer was particularly impressed by her positive attitude towards life, as the woman climbed a snow-covered mountain in the Freiburg region and praised her crutches for allowing her to have this nature experience. To focus on the present, positive experiences throughout our entire lives, is a mindset of our time.

Whether light, darkness, or just nothing follows life and what meaning is ascribed to it by each person, is a question that has been answered differently throughout history. At present, people care more about independence throughout old age and the manner of death than about the personal fate in a larger context that continues beyond death.



**Annette Günter**  
Untitled, 2010





**Ruth Knecht**  
 What remains?, 2009

**Ute Görnandt**

The path to light, 2009, honorable mention



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# Places of Exhibition

## **Haus der Wissenschaft Braunschweig**

September 7 – 24, 2010

## **vhs-Photogalerie Stuttgart**

September 30 – October 31, 2010

## **Technische Universität München**

November 11 – 25, 2010

## **AOK-Bundesverband Berlin**

Atrium, Rosenthaler Str. 31

January 19 – April 16, 2011

## **Schloss, Isny / Allgäu**

June 2 – July 10, 2011

## **Theater Rudolstadt und KulTourDiele, Rudolstadt**

September 17 – October 2, 2011

## **Representation of Saxony-Anhalt, Brussels**

October 6 – November 27, 2011

## **Bremische Bürgerschaft, Bremen**

February – April 2012

As of July 2011.

Further exhibitions planned. Information at

[www.altern-in-deutschland.de](http://www.altern-in-deutschland.de) and [www.artae.de/aktionen](http://www.artae.de/aktionen)

# The Contest

These photographs originate from the photo contest “New Images of Age(ing)” organized by the Deutsche Akademie der Naturforscher Leopoldina (German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina), since 2008, the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina. The Federal Minister for Education and Research, Annette Schavan, took over the patronage of the contest.

The contest sought photographs depicting life styles and perspectives of aging today as well as in the future. The gains in average life expectancy, in health, and in capabilities of older people were the guiding themes. Which situations and opportunities do we wish for ourselves as we grow old? Do we have role models in sight? How can the potential of the elderly be efficiently incorporated into society? The submitted photos should deal with social or individual ideas of aging.

The announcement found great enthusiasm. More than 400 photos were submitted by professional photographers, artists, and amateurs. The age spectrum was correspondingly wide: from 16 to 83 years of age. People from all German Federal States as well as other European countries, the USA, Canada, and Asia participated. The jury chose four award winners and two honorable mention prizes for the youngest and oldest participant.

The works of the award winners are displayed on the next pages. However, they have also been integrated into the logic underlying the exhibition.

In addition, the jury chose around 80 photos from 61 participants for the exhibition and the catalog. The jury consisted of:

Dr. Andreas Krase, Curator for Photography and Cinematography, Technical Collection, Dresden, Museums of the city Dresden

Prof. Dr. Wolf-Dieter Lukas, Federal Ministry for Education and Research

Christian Schwägerl, Der Spiegel

Dr. Johannes Stahl, Cologne, Visiting Professor for Art History, Burg Giebichenstein, Halle

Prof. Dr. Ursula M. Staudinger, Jacobs University Bremen, Vice-President of the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina

Sabine Aichele-Elsner, M. A., and Dr. Katja Patzwaldt supervised the competition, the exhibition, and the catalog. Warm thanks to all aforementioned individuals, as well as the participants and supporters.

# The Winners



**Gerhard Weber**  
Ursula and Siegfried M., 2009, 1<sup>st</sup> place



**Anna Mutter**  
Gerlind Pusch, from the series  
"Sunset", 2009, 2<sup>nd</sup> place



**Daniela Risch**  
Untitled, from the series  
"Helga", 2008, 3<sup>rd</sup> place



**David Lohmüller**  
Strike – senior bowling with  
Nintendo Wii, 2009, 3<sup>rd</sup> place

# The Joint Academy Initiative “Altern in Deutschland” (“Aging in Germany”)

The contest followed up on the recommendations “More Years, More Life” from the Joint Academy Initiative “Altern in Deutschland” (Aging in Germany), which were handed over to the German President Horst Köhler in 2009. This group was funded by the Jacobs Foundation and initiated by the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina in collaboration with the German Academy of Science and Engineering acatech. It combined 30 first-class scientists from medicine, economics, psychology, sports science, sociology, computer science, philosophy, and other disciplines. They examined the consequences of population aging for the economy, the cohabitation of generations, and every individual in Germany.

The polemics often used in discussions on the “clash of generations” or the “aging society” are futile. The achievements of a welfare state can be, in principle, maintained with an aging and shrinking population just like the standard of living. However, this requires an increase in the numbers of employees and their productivity. Undoubtedly, the German labor market has productivity reserves in the over 55-year-olds, women, and immigrants. However, one must also adapt the national economy, individual businesses, the system of training and continuing education, and health care. The same is true for elements of civil

society such as volunteering. How can we activate these reserves?

The sustainability of a society with an aging population depends on its willingness to change. The suggestions of the interdisciplinary Joint Academy Initiative identify important steps to change the outdated regulations of the educational system, the labor market, and the economy, in the communities, families, civil society and politics, in the mind of the people, and in everyday practice. The demographic change must be accompanied by institutional, social, and cultural change in order to become a demographic opportunity.

The Joint Academy Initiative was co-chaired by Prof. Dr. Jürgen Kocka, former President of the Social Science Research Center Berlin (Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung – WZB) and Prof. Dr. Ursula M. Staudinger. The recommendations are freely available in the internet at [http://www.altern-in-deutschland.de/pdf/NAL372\\_bd09\\_recommendations\\_2010.pdf](http://www.altern-in-deutschland.de/pdf/NAL372_bd09_recommendations_2010.pdf)

In their recommendations, the scientists refute some of the major myths about aging, ranging from allegedly declining productivity and learning ability to the burdens on the health care systems. Eight scientific volumes document the materials collected by the Joint Academy Initiative in detail (next page).



The scientific work of the Joint Academy Initiative “Altern in Deutschland”  
(Aging in Germany) appeared in the series Nova Acta Leopoldina N. F.

*Bd. 99*, Nr. 363 – Altern in Deutschland Band 1

**Bilder des Alterns im Wandel**

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aktuelle Perspektiven

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