

# Our pictures are worth it

## „laif Genossenschaft“ takes over the „laif“ photo agency

The „laif Genossenschaft“ of photographers, founded in April 2022, has taken over the prestigious photo agency „laif Agentur für Photos und Reportagen GmbH“ based in Cologne in close coordination with the previous owner, „ddp media GmbH“, as of July 1, 2022.

For the photographers represented by „laif „, this step had become necessary in order to maintain the agency as a premium brand and to continue to position it as sustainable, innovative and culturally significant. For this reason, the „laif Genossenschaft eG iG“ was founded in April of this year on the initiative of the laif photographers, and is now supported by more than 300 members, who have led the „laif „ agency into independence.

The „laif Genossenschaft“ acts as a shareholder, the operational activities of the agency „laif „, are not affected. The existing team with currently 12 experienced employees under the leadership of managing director Silke Frigge will continue to serve customers and photographers in the usual manner as contact persons.

„I am pleased about the initiative and this new and special cooperation with the laif photographers,“ says Silke Frigge as managing director of the agency. „In this unique constellation of agency and cooperative, we can work even more closely with our photographers, share resources, infrastructure and networks more intensively, further consolidate our valued position in the image market and develop new projects. I am very grateful to Ulf Schmidt-Funke and his team for the good cooperation with „ddp media GmbH“, which was characterised by mutual appreciation and collegial support.“

„The purchase of the agency laif should now and above all in the long term enable the photo agency laif to be and remain independent,“ says Andreas Herzau, one of the board members of the laif cooperative. And further: „We think that we can only fulfil the responsibility for our images if we can also exercise control over them independently of outside interests. In this context, we are concerned about the increasing concentration of the press, accompanied by click-driven journalism, which only uses images on the cheapest possible terms and regards them purely as a commodity. The great encouragement that we as a „laif cooperative“ have received from the circle of photographers and parts of the committed civil society in recent weeks allows us to look positively into the future and strengthens us in our efforts to stand up for high-quality, independent and fairly paid photo-journalism, because: Our pictures are worth it,“ says Andreas Herzau.

Christoph Bangert | Andreas Herzau | Manfred Linke  
(Board members of the „laif Genossenschaft“)

Bettina Flitner (Chairwoman) | Ingmar Björn Nolting (Deputy Chairman) | Jörg Gläscher | Dagmar Schwelle | Berthold Steinhilber  
(Supervisory Board members of the „laif Genossenschaft“)

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laif Genossenschaft eG i.G.  
Kurfürstenstrasse 10  
50678 Köln

info@laif-genossenschaft.de  
www.laif-genossenschaft.de

For further inquiries, please send an e-mail to:  
info@laif-genossenschaft.de

**About the agency „laif“:**

laif Agentur für Photos & Reportagen GmbH was founded in 1981 by four photographers in Cologne and today represents more than 400 renowned photographers worldwide, including numerous World Press Photo and Pulitzer Prize winners. With the sale of image licenses for high-quality photo productions and the arrangement of editorial and corporate shootings, especially in an international context, laif is one of the leading photo agencies for photojournalism in Germany. laif also represents more than 40 international partner agencies in German-speaking countries and is a syndication partner of the Société du Figaro and the New York Times.

[www.laif.de](http://www.laif.de)

**About the „laif Genossenschaft eG iG“:**

The „laif Genossenschaft“ was founded in April 2022 by 22 photographers and in June 2022 the cooperative bought the „laif Agentur für Photos & Reportagen GmbH“ from „ddp media GmbH“. The more than 300 members of the cooperative are mainly photographers of the agency „laif“, picture editors, supporters of independent journalism and freedom of the press.

[www.laif-genossenschaft.de](http://www.laif-genossenschaft.de)