

International Conference
**DIFFERENT
SHADES
OF WHITE**

Interdisciplinary Perspectives
on the Albinotic Body

**WONDROUSLY
WHITE?**

Contemporary photographs
of Persons with Albinism

EXHIBITION
5. Sept. 14–17h
6.–8. Sept. 9–17h
9. Sept. 14–17h

Schule des Sehens

JGU, Jakob-Welder-Weg 18, 55128 Mainz

6. - 8. SEPTEMBER 2018

Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Germany

Contact: albinism@uni-mainz.de / Organizers: Matthias Krings, Kathrin Hoff and Christopher Hohl

Photo: Gustavo Lacerda

Foreword

Several phenomena have contributed to the increased attention paid to albinism in the past decade. The incredible atrocities inflicted on persons with albinism in Eastern Africa made international headlines. In response, local and global actors – from the Tanzania Albinism Society to Under the Same Sun to the United Nations – have increased and/or started campaigning against such human rights violations. A social movement by and for people with albinism emerged. Another development grew shortly after: While the first fashion models with albinism had already worked during the 1990s and the early 21st century, it was ten years ago when the most famous ones – Shaun Ross and Diandra Forrest from New York City – forged their careers. They, too, have made international headlines. Both phenomena contributed to a wider circulation of knowledge, texts and images about and of albinism. They also emphasize the fact that albinism is much more than only a medical phenomenon. Albinism has come into focus today as a social and aesthetic reality. Repulsion and attraction are, nevertheless, not new reactions toward hypopigmented bodies. From the Enlightenment era, through freak shows in the 19th and 20th century, to Hollywood films, they were interpreted as racially transgressive, wonders, oddities or even otherworldly figures.

At the conference, participants present papers that discuss albinism in historical, social, aesthetic and/or political perspective. We are interested in the varying perception, performance, representation, framing and treatment of albinism across different times and in several locales. How does the presentation of albinism differ in medicine, art photography, fictional literature or in the humanities and social sciences? The conference brings together experts from inside and outside academia to foster dialog and exchange about practical, political, artistic and scholarly perspectives.

In addition to lectures and presentations, the conference also comprises a World Café session for all participants. An exhibition of photographs and videos by several international artists portraying persons with albinism complements the conference.

We welcome guests, who are asked to send their request to: albinism@uni-mainz.de

Conference language will be English.

Conveners of the conference are the members of the research project *Un/doing Albinism: Recodings of a bodily difference through historically shifting frames* at the Department of Anthropology and African Studies, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz. Prof. Dr. Matthias Krings coordinates the project; Kathrin Hoff and Christopher Hohl are research assistants. The project is itself a subproject of a larger multidisciplinary DFG Research Unit *Un/doing Differences. Practices in Human Differentiation*, established in 2013.

Website: www.ifeas.uni-mainz.de/eng/1261.php

Conference Timetable

Thursday, September 6th:

15:00 – 16:30 h	exhibition & registration	Schule des Sehens
16:30 – 17:00 h	WELCOMING REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Thomas Bierschenk (dean)– His Excellency Abdallah S. Possi, Ambassador of the United Republic of Tanzania (guest of honor)– Matthias Krings (host)	conference hall
17:00 – 17:30 h	KEYNOTE The Albinotic Body in Human Rights Advocacy: Intersectionality in Context Ikponwosa Ero, United Nations Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights by persons with albinism	
17:30 – 18:15 h	KEYNOTE Challenging Dangerous Speech: Shifting Discourses of Albinism in Africa Charlotte Baker, Lancaster University	
18:30 h	departure for restaurant	
19:00 h	dinner	HDW

Friday, September 7th:

08:30 – 09:00 h	coffee & tea	
09:00 – 10:30 h	SESSION 1: ALBINISM AROUND THE WORLD Colour and Essence. Albinism as a Troubling Anomaly Enrico Pasini, University of Turin	conference hall

	<p>Perceptions and Representations of Persons with Albinism in Some Cameroonian Cultures.</p> <p>Medard Djatou, Ruhr-University Bochum</p>	
10:30 – 11:00 h	coffee & tea break	
11:00 – 12:30 h	<p>SESSION 1: ALBINISM AROUND THE WORLD (CONT.)</p> <p>Albinism in Yoruba Worldview: Negotiating Myth, Mysticism and Metaphysics</p> <p>Oluwole Coker, Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife</p> <p>“Nyerere Said ‘If You Eat Human Flesh You Cannot Stop Doing It’”: Music Tunes and Embodiment of Albinism Between Life Trajectories and Media Communicability.</p> <p>Giorgio Brocco, Free University Berlin</p>	
12:30 – 14:30 h	lunch break	Baron
14:30 – 16:45 h	<p>SESSION 2: POLITICS OF ALBINISM</p> <p>Humanizing the Albinotic Body: Social Activism in Tanzania</p> <p>S. Kathrin Hoff, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz</p> <p>The Situation Surrounding People with Albinism in Sub-Saharan African Countries - Break the Silence Campaign</p> <p>Josephat Torner, Josephat Torner Foundation Europe, Mwanza</p> <p>Bringing Irregular Bodies into Normalcy</p> <p>Charles Carnegie, Bates College, Lewiston</p>	conference hall
16:45 – 19:00 h	coffee & tea in our World Café	Schule des Sehens
19:00 h	departure for restaurant	
19:30 h	dinner	Proviant Amt

Saturday, September 8th:

09:00 – 09:30 h	coffee & tea	
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09:30 – 11:00 h	SESSION 3: REPRESENTATIONS OF ALBINISM	conference hall
	The ‘White African’. Genesis, Dynamics and Mediality of a Cultural Figuration (1709–2018)	
	Matthias Krings, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz	
	Reflecting on the Complexities of the Question of Representation of Albinism in Media	
	Thando Hopa, model, lawyer and activist, Johannesburg	

11:00 – 11:30 h	coffee, tea and sandwiches	
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11:30 – 13:00 h	SESSION 3: REPRESENTATIONS OF ALBINISM (CONT.)	
	Albinism and Pacific Fictions	
	Nadja Gernalzick, University of Vienna	
	Mothering the Starving Albino Child Body: The Biafra War 1967–1970, Boko Haram (2002–present) and War Photography	
	Arturo Beckles, University of Edinburgh	

13:00 – 14:00 h	FINAL DISCUSSION	
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14:00 h	departure	
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15:00 h	optional tour through our exhibition	Schule des Sehens
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