

Black Life in Germany

A series on identity
Press Release - For immediate release
October 15, 2022



German Cultural Center Goethe-Zentrum Atlanta looks at Black Life in Germany

Did you know that more than a million Germans identify as Afro German? In a series of programming, Goethe-Zentrum Atlanta in cooperation with the African Diaspora Art Museum of Atlanta (ADAMA), and various groups and individuals in Germany, aims to examine the historic and contemporary challenges of Black Germans and highlight their many contributions to German society.

Because many Black Germans have grown up in German cities and towns in which they were the only Black resident, they have often lacked access to Black communities and, consequently, many have reported having had difficulty with their identity formation. There are no Black studies departments at German universities. And not many think of Blackness when they hear "Germany." The Goethe Cultural Center emphasizes through its programming the interrelatedness between Germanness and Blackness. What does it mean to be Black and German? How are Black Germans' experiences similar to and different from being Black in Atlanta and the United States?

Goethe-Zentrum Atlanta, the German Cultural Center for Atlanta and the Southeast, aims to explore these questions and design programming that highlights Black German lives and experiences.

Curator for this project is Onyx Henry, a Black Atlanta native and doctoral candidate of German studies at the University of Michigan. Onyx's research interest deals with the representation of Blackness in postwar German children and youth literature. She has just returned from a fellowship research year in Berlin.

The Black Life in Germany series will kick off with two exciting projects, drawing the arc from the past to contemporary Black Life in Germany.

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November / December (ongoing) Video Portrait Series of Afro Germans - In collaboration with the African Diaspora Art Museum of Atlanta (ADAMA), a portrait series of Afro Germans will be conducted and exhibited as a video installation. The installation will provide insight in Black Life in Germany in the Here and Now.

November 17, 12pm: Berlin Street Names and their Colonial Past - Black Life in Germany will host a hybrid talk that examines a contemporary issue in Berlin: the renaming of streets that honor Germany's colonial past. The Tanzanian-born speaker, Mr. Mnyaka Sururu Mboro, is a teacher, activist, and regular tour guide through Berlin's so-called "African Quarter." Mr. Mboro, a founding member of Berlin Postcolonial, and a board member of the alliance Decolonize Berlin, will be available for Q&A following his expert presentation on the grassroots efforts of lobbying for visible decolonial action in Berlin.

Any resemblance to the discussion of how to deal with monuments, street and school names in Atlanta and beyond is intended.

For 2023, further projects on BLACK LIFE IN GERMANY are in the making.

- **Black representation in German (children's) literature**
- **Afro-Zensus of Black German life** – results and consequences from the first ever federally funded survey trying to capture and better understand structural racism — and tackle it.
- **Movie and documentary series**
- **Black Lives Matter Germany**

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About Goethe-Zentrum Atlanta

Our mission is to deliver language courses and programs that foster communication, education, collaboration, and cultural exchange for passionate learners for whom German is not their first language, natives of German-speaking countries, and people residing in the southeastern United States interested in or affiliated with Germany or Europe through heritage, career, or personal experience.