

HAMBURG FOUNDATION

— for politically persecuted persons

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Press release

Tatsiana Tkachova, photojournalist from Minsk (Belarus), new scholarship holder at the Hamburg Foundation for the Politically Persecuted.

Hamburg, 17, 2021

As the first of three new guests of the Hamburg Foundation for the Politically Persecuted this year, Tatsiana Tkachova arrived in Hamburg yesterday (Wednesday) evening. The 34-year-old photojournalist from Minsk wants to use her one-year stay on the Elbe primarily to come to terms with the traumatic experiences of the past months and to devote herself fully to her artistic projects again.

Like many of her colleagues, Tatsiana Tkachova had come under increased pressure since the rigged presidential election last August. Instead of the pro-regime pictures ordered by the editor-in-chief of "Zviazda," she first photographed the peaceful demonstrations, then the violent persecution by Belarusian special forces and arbitrary arrests of protesters. Finally, in October 2020, the award-winning photographer quit her permanent job at the state-owned daily newspaper:

"Being a journalist in Belarus was a dangerous profession even before the presidential elections. But since August 2020, we have been systematically arrested, beaten, imprisoned or sentenced to heavy fines."

According to Reporters Without Borders, a good 300 Belarusian media professionals were detained in the second half of 2020 alone.

In addition to her work as a photojournalist, Tatsiana Tkachova has made an internationally respected name for herself as a socially critical observer of her homeland. Her photo series deal with topics such as women's rights, national borders, identity and isolation. For her work "Between Right and Shame" on the subject of abortions in Belarus, she was awarded the World Press Foto Award in 2020.

The photographer Tchakova now wants to continue working on these and similar projects in Hamburg. She hopes for good contacts in Hamburg and German artist and photographer circles, but also wants to report at public events about the desperate situation, but also the unbroken courage of the Belarusian opposition.

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