

## Press release for photographic project

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#### **www.re.photos – the free online portal for re-photography**

**What did a building, a location or a person look like in the past when compared to today? Re-photography is a powerful and impressive way to document this kind of comparison. The re.photos portal offers a free platform to anyone who is interested, enabling them to display both historic and contemporary photos in the form of before/after shots to a wider audience, both in Germany and elsewhere.**

#### **A journey through time in two photos**

This special photographic technique achieved greater recognition and popularity at the end of the 1990s with the introduction of the first digital cameras to the market. The basic idea involves juxtaposing a pair of photos in a before/after picture, with a photographer adding additional context to a historic shot that was taken decades before, showing the historic event in a completely new light. The photographer aims to reproduce the exact angle of the original shot as closely as possible, with source material including urban landscapes from old postcards and portrait photos from family albums. When taking the new shot, the photographer must pay extremely close attention in reproducing as many details as possible to be able to show changes over time as clearly as possible. This requires a precise reconstruction of the original shooting location and technical know-how when processing the image. The re.photos website supports the process of editing and publishing the resulting photos.

#### **New image processing and publication options**

The idea for re.photos came about from a project undertaken by Professor Oliver Vornberger and his information technology students at the University of Osnabrück. "The concept is not new and has been used many times before in city chronicles and the like. The historic photos are taken from archives and the contemporary comparison images come from a variety of photographers. Unlike these other projects, our aim is to use the portal to share the re-photographed images with a wide audience," explained Professor Vornberger.

The foundation of the project stems from the Bachelor's thesis by Sören Weber, who now maintains the website as freelancer. The corresponding shots can be uploaded and edited, after which the images are not simply juxtaposed but are combined in a single image instead, with sections of the scene blending seamlessly into each other. The viewer can use a slider to switch from one photo to another and move between the past and the present in a realistic, authentic journey through time.

#### **A platform for publishing and discovering**

Whether the images feature people, interiors, urban landscapes, buildings or aerial shots – re.photos features a huge selection of historical photos and contemporary shots to discover and compare. The website is aimed at an audience that speaks either German or English, but anyone can take part, whether by publishing submissions on behalf of someone else, looking for material for their own project, or sharing their own contrasting photographs.

Website visitors can find examples created by others under the "Browse" section, while the "FAQ" section offers a good place to get started and work out what's going on. By registering with re.photos for free, you can create your own before and after photos using an easy-to-use image transformation tool and adjust the time and location settings. The image transformation options, which are exclusively available via re.photos, ensure that the photos fit together with pixel-perfect alignment. "Identical points in both photos, such as a window or the corner of a building, are identified and labeled in both photos. The program then calculates the most accurate way possible to align the designated points," added Professor Vornberger. Registered users also have the option

of commenting on and rating contributions made by other photographers, or discussing with other portal users via the forum.

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