

Press Release:

Ismaning, February 25th, 2026

PERFORMANCE DAYS © functional fabrics fair
produced by Design & Development GmbH Textile Consult
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PERFORMANCEDAYS
FUNCTIONAL FABRIC FAIR

Creative Area @PERFORMANCE DAYS

Melting Performance into Fashion

When PERFORMANCE DAY opens its doors from March, 18-19, 2026, the Creative Area comes back with a new face. Celebrating its premiere at the Autumn show, PERFORMANCE DAYS expands its format by adding a clear design perspective to its established focus on functional fabrics, sustainability and innovation. Developed in collaboration with TheCube Archive and curated together with Luca Zanatta, Head of Fabrics & Materials Research at Diesel, the Creative Area creates a dialogue between archival garments, vintage performance wear and contemporary material innovation.

Integrating Fashion into a Functional Platform

The strategic intention behind the Creative Area was to embed fashion more structurally into the concept of PERFORMANCE DAYS. Clarissa Stadelmann, Head of Product at PERFORMANCE DAYS, explains: “Our objective was to integrate fashion structurally into PERFORMANCE DAYS. Together with Luca Zanatta, we defined key material themes for the upcoming season. TheCube Archive translated these themes into a curated selection of archival pieces. This creates a direct link between innovation and design application.” Performance textiles and fashion have never been separate worlds. Technical development has always influenced design and vice versa. “The development of performance textiles has always been closely linked to fashion,” Stadelmann adds. “PERFORMANCE DAYS has strong roots in both. The Creative Area makes this relationship visible.”

From Specifications to Storytelling

PERFORMANCE DAYS differentiates itself from traditional fashion trade shows through strict exhibitor standards, a strong educational program and long-standing sustainability expertise. Viktoria Strehle, Head of Visitor Management, states: “As regulatory and transparency requirements increase, fashion brands need reliable sourcing partners. The Creative Area extends our framework by translating performance materials into a creative context.”

Rather than positioning itself as a fashion fair, PERFORMANCE DAYS acts as an interface between material innovation and design application.

Technical fabrics are often communicated through specifications and performance data. The Creative Area shifts the perspective. “Storytelling moves the focus from pure performance metrics toward application and creative interpretation,” says Viktoria Strehle. “By presenting fabrics within a curated garment context, we highlight their design potential.”

TheCube Archive: Research as a Forward-Looking Tool

TheCube Archive operates as a research platform positioned between inspiration and innovation. Since 2020, it has combined physical garments with digital access to support international brands and fashion schools during collection development. Marius Hordijk and Corinna Chiassai, TheCube Archive, emphasize: “The archive is not retrospective, it is a

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forward-looking research tool.” Within the Creative Area, this approach becomes spatially tangible: past, present and future of performance textiles meet in one curated environment.

Fashion Tables & Trend Forum: Material Themes

The Fashion Tables, developed with Luca Zanatta, translate material research into tangible design directions. They are visible both in the Creative Area and the Trend Forum.

Key themes include:

- **CHECK**
Checks are reimagined across contrasting surfaces such as bouclé, fleece and flat constructions. Texture transforms the classic pattern, adding depth and technical dimension.
- **DEVORÈ**
Selective burn-out techniques create transparency and layered effects. The interplay between solid and sheer surfaces turns texture into a central design element.
- **GARMENT DYE**
Surfaces inspired by garment dyeing emphasize irregular color, softness and a lived-in character. For performance textiles, this direction bridges technical innovation with authenticity and immediate wearability.
- **DENIM**
Denim is reinterpreted through printed illusions, jersey denim optics, jacquard structures and coated surfaces. Its recognizable identity is translated into lightweight, functional constructions, preserving cultural relevance while enabling technical advancement.

With the Creative Area, PERFORMANCE DAYS complements its strong focus on sourcing, compliance and sustainability by adding a clear design-oriented dimension.

Performance remains rooted in function, but fashion gives it context and meaning.

The Creative Area demonstrates that material innovation and design evolution are no longer separate processes, but interconnected drivers of progress within the textile industry.

TheCube Archive // A hybrid archive combining physical and digital research to support forward-looking design development.

Save the Date:

PERFORMANCE DAYS // March 18-19, 2026 // Messe München
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