

Ruhr Museum



**Commissioned Images.  
Photographs**

**by Ruth Hallensleben**

**1931–1973**

**Ruhr Museum**

**at Zollverein in Essen**

**10 February–24 August 2025**

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For the first time, the Ruhr Museum at the Zollverein UNESCO World Heritage Site is presenting 120 images from the estate of the notable contract photographer Ruth Hallensleben, thereby tracing an impressive panorama of her diverse work. Ruth Hallensleben (1898–1977) began working as a freelance photographer in the early 1930s. She forged a career in Nazi Germany, and after just a short time, she was able to set up her own studio called Lichtbildwerkstatt Ruth Hallensleben, which also employed assistants and apprentices. Except for the immediate post-war period, she continued to prosper as contract photographer in the 1950s and 1960s. Initially residing in Cologne, and later based in Wiehl and Wuppertal, Hallensleben was known for her precisely staged images and



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idealising depictions. As a female photographer whose work was commissioned by the sector for heavy industry, she was perceived primarily as a successful industrial photographer, and her work was exhibited as such. Now the Ruhr Museum is presenting images from almost all genres of her varied work for the first time. The images on display are from the fields of landscape photography and architectural, industrial, portrait, travel and advertising photography. They were taken in the Eifel region, the Ruhr area, East Prussia, Belgium and Italy. The exhibition focuses on her work for her most important clients, such as commissions for the magazine *Das Werk*, produced by the industrial conglomerate Vereinigte Stahlwerke AG, as well as for the publisher Hoppenstedt Verlag, the axle

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manufacturer Bergische Achsenfabrik Fr. Kotz & Söhne in Wiehl, and the mining company Gelsenkirchener Bergwerks-AG (GBAG). Her images reflect more than 40 years of German economic history under two different political systems. The reactions that her photographs elicited in the context of company archives, collections, museums and the art trade are a testament to the tremendous recognition that her work received. With around 38,000 negatives and approximately 1,500 prints, the Ruhr Museum holds the majority of her photographic estate. However, the exhibition is also supplemented by previously little-known photographs from other image archives.

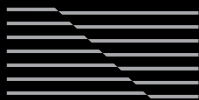
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- 1 Anton Laska, Ruth Hallensleben's nephew, Cologne, 1931
- 2 The actor Harald Leipnitz, Wuppertal, July 1947
- 3 Company sport at the Zeche Minister Stein mine, Dortmund, 1937
- 4 Reconstruction of Cologne Cathedral: view of the cathedral; to the right: remains of the damaged town hall tower, Cologne, September 1947
- 5 Rolleiflex production, Werkstatt für Feinmechanik und Optik, Franke & Heidecke, Braunschweig, June 1950
- 6 Product photograph for the Pickhardt & Siebert wallpaper factory, Gummersbach, March 1957
- 7 Works swimming pool at the Zeche Erin mine, Castrop-Rauxel, June 1956
- 8 Alsatian, unknown location, August 1961



# Ruhr Museum

## **RUHR MUSEUM ADDRESS**

in the Coal Washing Plant  
Zollverein UNESCO World  
Heritage Site  
Gelsenkirchener Strasse 181  
D-45309 Essen

## **OPENING HOURS**

Mon–Sun, 10am–6pm

## **ADMISSION**

€5, reduced €4, children and  
young people under 18, as well  
as pupils and students under 25:  
free admission  
[www.tickets-ruhrmuseum.de](http://www.tickets-ruhrmuseum.de)

## **GUIDED GROUP TOURS**

1 hour, English, €90 plus admission  
per person, groups of students:  
starting at €75, free admission

## **QUIZ FOR FAMILIES**

With children from 6 years of age,  
during opening hours, English,  
approx. 1 hour, free of charge

## **INFORMATION/BOOKINGS**

Ruhr Museum Visitor Service  
[besucherdienst@ruhrmuseum.de](mailto:besucherdienst@ruhrmuseum.de)  
Mon–Fri, 9am–4pm  
Phone: +49 201 24681 444  
[www.ruhrmuseum.de](http://www.ruhrmuseum.de)

## **TRAM LINE 107**

From Essen main station in the  
direction to Gelsenkirchen or from  
Gelsenkirchen main station in the  
direction to Essen (Zollverein stop in  
each case)

## **BUS LINE 183**

From Altenessen station  
or Zollverein-Nord station  
to the Kohlenwäsche stop

## **ADDRESS FOR PARKING**

Parking lots A1 and A2  
Fritz-Schupp-Allee, D-45141 Essen

## **CATALOGUE**

240 pages, more than 270 images  
Klartext Verlag, Essen 2025, €29.95  
ISBN 978-3-8375-2698-1

The exhibition is the second in a  
three-part series devoted to female  
photographers who worked or still  
work in the Ruhr area. The first fo-  
cused on the press photographer  
Marga Kingler; the third will present  
the documentary photographer  
Brigitte Kraemer.

## **PHOTO CREDITS**

All images except for No. 1 (Anton  
Laska) are from the Ruhr Museum's  
photo archive.

