



freiraum für
fotografie

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f³-freiraum für fotografie presents

Ruth Orkin – A Photo Spirit

Exhibition: September 4 – November 21, 2021

With its first solo exhibition in Germany, f³-freiraum für fotografie honors the American photographer Ruth Orkin, a chronicler of the 1940s and 1950s.

Everyday scenes, cityscapes, portraits. Ruth Orkin's photographs tell stories. Of the up-and-coming America of the post-war period, of the attitude to life of a society on the upswing and of women conquering new roles beyond that of housewife and mother. Her humorous yet serious view of the world is evident in the details of the images, in her sense of movement, timing and composition.

Ruth Orkin is one of the few professional women photographers of the 1940s and 1950s. Although she published in numerous newspapers and magazines such as the *New York Times*, *Life* or *Look* and her photographs were part of the legendary MOMA exhibition *The Family of Man*, she is still little known internationally. In contrast to many of her male colleagues, whose works are among the icons of street photography.

Ruth Orkin began taking photographs at the age of ten. In 1939, she produced her first major photographic work. At the age of 17, she crossed the USA by bicycle and with the camera, once from L. A. to New York for the World's Fair. She moved there in 1943.

With the publication of a photograph in *Star magazine*, her career as a freelance photographer began in 1945. Ruth Orkin was commissioned by *Life* to travel to Israel in 1951. She documented the young country and its (newly arrived) inhabitants as well as life in the kibbutz. This trip was one of her most important personal experiences.

One of her most famous images is the photograph *American Girl in Italy*. For the photograph, she portrayed her travel acquaintance Ninalee Craig (Jinx Allen) surrounded by men in Florence in 1951. Jinx became her friend and muse, inspiring her to create an entire series that shows, with an ironic eye, what it was like to travel alone as a woman in the 1950s.

Throughout her life and work, Ruth Orkin has experienced, reflected and subverted society's expectations. Her photographs are modern, free and perceptive commentaries on those times. Ruth Orkin would have turned 100 on September 3, 2021.



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The exhibition has been curated by Katharina Mouratidi, Artistic Director f³-freiraum für fotografie, and Nadine Barth, Consultant Photography Hatje Cantz.

ACCOMPANYING PROGRAM

Opening: September 3, 2021, 7 pm

Speakers: Katharina Mouratidi (Artistic Director f³-freiraum für fotografie), **Nicola von Velsen** (Management Publisher Hatje Cantz) and **Nadine Barth** (Consultant Photography Hatje Cantz).

FOTO-FÜHRUNGEN

Every first Sunday and every third Wednesday of the month, we offer guided tours of the exhibition. We give insights into the curatorial concept, provide background information on the exhibits and shed light on the context in which the photographs were taken.

Admission 5 € | reduced 3 €. Bookings: <https://fhochdrei.org/tickets/>

DATES: Sunday 5. Sept., 3. Oct. and 7. Nov., 11 am

Wednesday 15. Sept., 20. Oct. and 17. Nov., 7 pm

PUBLICATION

The book of photographs of the same name will be published by Hatje Cantz in August 2021. The publication will be available during the exhibition at f³-freiraum für fotografie.

Ruth Orkin. A Photo Spirit.

Edited by Nadine Barth, Mary Engel, with contribution from Kristen Gresh, Mary Engel, Ruth Orkin. Design by Julia Wagner, grafikanstalt. Hatje Cantz, english, hardcover, 240 pages, 38 €.



Supported by:



f³ – freiraum für fotografie

Waldemarstraße 17 | 10179 Berlin

Öffnungszeiten: Mi – So, 13 – 19 Uhr

Eintritt: 5 € | erm. 3 €

www.fhochdrei.org | #fhochdrei #ruthorkin

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PRESS IMAGES

The press images may only be used for current editorial reporting on the exhibition. The images may not be modified, cropped or overprinted. f³-freiraum für fotografie, the artist as well as the location and dates of the exhibition and the caption must be stated when publishing.

High-resolution print data are available for download here:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/05b095dc275pnyr/AADXBXJv1K_q7a_VOZGQYt1Ya?dl=0



Alfred Eisenstaedt: Ruth Orkin, London, Great Britain, 1951. © The Estate of Alfred Eisenstaedt.



Geraldine Dent, Cover of McCall's, New York City, 1949. © Orkin/Engel Film and Photo Archive; VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2021.



American Girl in Italy, Florence, Italy, 1951. © Orkin/Engel Film and Photo Archive; VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2021.



Jinx and Justin on Scooter, Florence, Italy, 1951. © Orkin/Engel Film and Photo Archive; VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2021.



Jewish Refugees, Lydda Airport, Tel Aviv, 1951. © Orkin/Engel Film and Photo Archive; VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2021.