

# Museum Folkwang

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**Statement by Klaus Schäfer, Chairman of the Board of Management of E.ON Ruhrgas AG  
Press Conference, Museum Folkwang, 30 September 2010, 11 a.m.**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of E.ON Ruhrgas I would like to welcome you to this press conference. It is the first time I have the opportunity to take part in the opening of a major art exhibition here at the Museum Folkwang. Most of you will not know me – let me therefore begin with a few words about myself.

My name is Klaus Schäfer, and I have been Chairman of the Board of Management of E.ON Ruhrgas for about one and half months. Before that I worked in various positions at E.ON and its predecessor companies for 14 years. Most recently I headed the Group's energy business in Italy. Being chairman of the management board of E.ON Ruhrgas is a challenging and fascinating task: firstly because the international gas business is currently changing very rapidly and E.ON has to prove itself in a new environment: And secondly because Ruhrgas is a well-known traditional company here in the Ruhr region. It can look back on a long and successful development and is an important employer for many people. This is why the long-standing partnership with the Museum Folkwang has such special significance for me.

So I am new to the Ruhr area, and I am discovering this region in what are very exciting times. 5 million inhabitants, 53 very different cities, the third largest conurbation in the EU – and this entire region was named Capital of Culture. "We are a Metropolis" – the slogan for Ruhr.2010 sums it up: the desire of the Ruhr region to give itself a new image in Europe and to use culture for long-term economic and urban development.

It pleases me all the more to be able to represent E.ON Ruhrgas as one of the main sponsors of the Capital of Culture here today. We could not have found a better project than the exhibition *Images of a Capital – The Impressionists in Paris* opening today. This exhibition deals with the development of a metropolis. Its focus is Paris, the first modern metropolis.

Between 1860 and 1900 the city changed fundamentally as a result of numerous construction projects; it attracted a large number of new inhabitants and encouraged an urbane way of life. The Impressionists and their contemporaries observed this transformation of Paris and captured it in their works of art. It was not a matter of documenting new views of the city, but also the ways of life of the people in this transformation. Masterpieces of modern painting and photography were produced in this artistic exploration.

While not as extensive in terms of construction, we are living through a similar process of new self-discovery through the Capital of Culture Year in the Ruhr region. The exhibition's theme takes up directly the metropolis idea of Ruhr.2010. E.ON Ruhrgas itself has added an architectural highlight to urban development in Essen. In two weeks we will be moving into our new headquarters on Brüsseler Platz. Just this evening a part of the preview for this exhibition will be taking place in the new building, inaugurating it in an especially charming way.

We hope that the desired transformation through culture will happen. A common understanding as a Metropolis Ruhr would simplify decision-making and administrative processes and have a positive effect on the economy. A metropolis is particularly attractive for investors and skilled workers. As a company we stand to benefit from this. This is why we have been providing such a continuous level of support for local culture.

This is already the second exhibition that we have supported as one of the principal sponsors of Ruhr.2010. We have deliberately concentrated on our long-standing partner – the Museum Folkwang. For more than 25 years we have been working together to support the arts. Together we have realized a series of major international exhibitions: at first against the background of anniversaries with our most important gas supplier countries, and then very quickly as independent projects. They have strengthened relations with Russia, Norway and the Netherlands, enriched cultural life in the Ruhr region and helped build the museum's reputation.

Today, the Museum Folkwang plays a prominent role among the cultural institutions in Germany. Dr. Fischer and his team have succeeded in making a brilliant start into the Capital of Culture Year. The museum opened in its spectacular new building by David Chipperfield Architects on schedule. The first major special exhibition, which we sponsored - *"The Most Beautiful Museum in the World" – Museum Folkwang until 1933* – attracted around 336,000 visitors. With this, the Museum Folkwang demonstrated its profile as a true "metropolis museum". We are once again proud to be able to contribute to this success story.

The exhibition *Images of a Metropolis – The Impressionists in Paris* has brought an unusually large number of internationally known works of art to Essen. Many of them are being shown in Germany for the first time. We naturally, therefore, hope for another popular success. Today, I can promise you an artistic treat and at the same time wish you an enthralling exploration of the question of what makes a metropolis. I wish you all a pleasant tour of the exhibition.

Check against delivery.