

Museum Folkwang

Leonard Freed – *Made in Germany* 11 May – 1 September 2013

Essen, May 10 2013 – Museum Folkwang proudly announces the presentation of Leonard Freed's (1929 – 2006) extensive documentation "Made in Germany", focusing on the early days of the Federal Republic of Germany. The pictures were taken by the US American photographer and member of the legendary "Magnum" agency, mainly in 1965. On show at Museum Folkwang as of 11 May 2013, the exhibition will present this seminal photographic essay in 111 vintage prints and selected texts.

"In twenty-five years from now France will still be France, England will remain England and what can we expect to change in Italy ... but Germany, what will be of Germany in twenty-five years?" These are the words used by Leonard Freed in the foreword to his photographic series, "Made in Germany". The eponymous reportage was subsequently published by Grossman Publishers in 1970.

Made in Germany stands in the tradition of photographic travelogues undertaken by Western photographers who were keen to see what had become of Germany after the atrocities of National Socialism, a country once so rich in culture that had now become so alien. In the mid-1950s New York photographer Leonard Freed, son of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe, travelled to the Federal Republic of Germany for the first time. He took pictures of everyday life in Germany, capturing people in their social environment, at work, during leisure time, at fun fairs and all types of social gatherings. One particular focus of his photographs was on daily life in the Ruhr region. What especially fascinated him about West Germany during the reconstruction years was the coexistence of tradition and modernity. The photographer paints a haunting picture of a socially and politically divided Germany, a country experiencing an economic boom but equally plagued by a conflict between its rebellious youth and the incorrigible generation of its parents and war veterans. In what direction would German society be heading 20 years after the end of the war – both politically and intellectually? – Freed's wonderfully observed and focused volume of photographs leaves the question open.

The acquisition of Leonard Freed's photographs was made possible by the support of the Presse-Haus NRZ Foundation and by a donation of a number of works by Brigitte Freed. The exhibition is sponsored by Kunststiftung NRW (Arts Foundation of North Rhine-Westphalia). A reprint of the original edition of "Made in Germany" has been published by Edition Folkwang/Steidl (38 Euro)

Images are available for downloading at www.museum-folkwang.de

Opening Hours Tue – Sun 10 a.m. – 6 p.m., Fri 10 a.m. – 10.30 p.m., Closed Mondays

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