

Invitation to press view
on Wednesday 8 February 2023 at 11am

Progress as a Promise: Industrial Photography in Divided Germany

10 February to 29 May 2023

In the European Month of Photography Berlin (EMOP Berlin)

Dear Colleagues,

We are delighted to invite you to participate in the press view on
Wednesday, 8 February 2023 at 11am
in the **Pei-Building** at the German Historical Museum

with

Raphael Gross, President of the German Historical Museum
Carola Jüllig, curator and Head of the Photography and Postcard Collection
Stefanie Regina Dietzel, curator

Dramatically lit factories, glowing steel, seemingly endless conveyor belts, broad smiles on sooty faces: the stock-in-trade of industrial photography is the promise of more and better. Better working conditions and a better standard of living. More attractive, more functional, more plentiful consumer goods. In short, progress. Photographers have been capturing the world of work since the 1850s, and have forged a specific visual canon.

The exhibition shows photographs taken for industrial enterprises in East and West Germany between 1949 and 1990. They are exhibited for the first time in the contexts in which they were originally used, the diverse print media of the steel, chemical, textile and car industries. The exhibition reveals the ideas associated with the historic visual sources, drawing out differences and similarities between East and West in their depictions of progress – and thus in their promise of a better life.

The photographs are a product of their time. While West Germany experienced an unprecedented economic boom from the 1950s, the East German economy was heading for bankruptcy by the 1980s. Such commissioned photographs were always produced to communicate a message – about the enterprise, the industry, the nation and its people. They do not necessarily tell us a great deal about real working conditions or the actual state of industry. What they show is a staged reality designed to convey promises of progress and narratives of growth.



**DEUTSCHES
HISTORISCHES
MUSEUM**



Deutsches Historisches Museum

Presse- und Öffentlichkeitsarbeit
Daniela Lange
Unter den Linden 2
10117 Berlin

T +49 30 20304-410
presse@dhm.de

www.dhm.de

Please note the following:

- **Accreditation will begin at 10.30 am on the first floor of the Pei building. The viewing will end at 2 pm.**
- Please **register in advance**. Unregistered attendees will only be able to participate if capacity permits.
- **Interviews will be given by arrangement**. Please contact presse@dhm.de in advance with **film and interview requests**.
- Please observe the current Covid guidance. **We recommend you wear a mask (medical or FFP2):** <https://www.dhm.de/besuch/ihr-besuch/>

Please register your participation by 5 pm on Tuesday, 7 February 2023 at <https://www.dhm.de/en/accreditation-press-tour-industrial-photography/>