



original Third Reich nude photo books

Offered in this category are rare original photo books from the Nazi nudist movement, i.e. by Wilm Burghardt, Hans Suren, Hermann Wilke, "Geist und Schönheit", etc.

The cult of the naked body had its origins in Germany in the early 1900s. Especially in the more tolerant Prussia many "FKK" clubs were founded. FKK stands for "Freikörperkultur" (Bare or Open-Air Body Culture). By exposing their naked bodies to the air, light and sun the nudists wanted to get back in harmony with nature and believed by doing so to improve health, strength and beauty. The National Socialist government was initially suspicious of the nudist movement but in a way appreciated that nudism had the same goals as National Socialism, namely the physical improvement of the individual German and the Volk (People) as a whole. Even though Hermann Göring passed a decree on March 3, 1933 which described the naked culture movement as "one of the greatest dangers for German culture and morality". This made the German FKK clubs illegal. But there was little concerted effort to close down naturist associations or to arrest individual activists. In fact, without a definitive order from the Führer, Germany's naturists existed in a semi-legal limbo for much of the 1930s. In 1934 the FKK clubs were declared legal again but they had to expel the "non-Aryan" members and were incorporated into the Nazi organization "Bund für Leibesziehung". This organization was strongly supported by Heinrich Himmler and mainly because of him existed until spring of 1945. The purpose of the "Bund für Leibesziehung" was "rassische, gesundheitliche und sittliche Hebung der Volkskraft" (improvement of the German people by means of race, health and Sitte). Many National Socialists regarded the clothes-free lifestyle with contempt, but there were elements within the Nazi state, and particularly within the SS, which could see significant benefits from celebrating "the instinct for bodily nobility and its beauty in our Volk (People)". A mutual desire to de-eroticize nudity helped cement the bond between Heydrich, Himmler and naturist leaders. The main characters in the Third Reich nudist movement were Hans Suren, Wilm Burghardt, Hermann Wilke and Kurt Reichert. Reichert along with Gerhard Riebicke, were the two most important naturist photographers from the post-Weimar period in Germany. Riebicke's images were widely printed in Germany as well internationally in magazines, newspapers and books. He was published also in several issues of the famous German photography yearbook "Das Deutsche Lichtbild". His images were also included in the legendary avantgarde photography show "Film and Foto" (FiFo) 1928 in Stuttgart and 1930 in Vienna. Hans Suren and Hermann Wilke also used Riebicke nude photographs in their books. The Riebicke photo archive in Berlin was destroyed in large parts during the war.

Hans Suren was a former high rank official in the Reich Labor Service (Reichsarbeitsdienst or RAD) and then in charge of the physical education in the Wehrmacht Infantry schools. He published a series of books on physical exercises, preferably with little or no clothes. He published several books before the National Socialists came to power but his style of writing changed a lot and in his book "Mensch und Sonne - Aryan Olympischer Geist" (Man and Sun - Aryan Olympic Spirit). He was in line with the racial ideology of the Nazi Party and was one of the main promoters of the nudist movement in Third Reich Germany.