

Camp Brothels. Forced Sex Labor in Nazi Concentration Camps

An Exhibition by the Ravensbrück Memorial

Technical Information

The exhibition consists of:

- 8 foldable panels (2m high, 0,5m wide)
- 6 table tops with stands (2m x 5m – demountable)
- 1 small table (0,7m x 0,5m – not demountable)
- 13 foldable chairs

Attached to the tables tops are:

- 10 A4 folders
- 4 A5 folders
- 3 audio stations including headphones



View of the exhibition shown at the Ravensbrück Memorial, August 2012. Photograph by Britta Pawelke, Mahn- und Gedenkstätte Ravensbrück/Stiftung Brandenburgische Gedenkstätten

Transportation and Expenses

The dimensions of the packed exhibition are 2.1m x 0.9m x 1.1m, and the boxes can be transported by minivan. The exhibition is available for loan without charge, although borrowing institutions will have to cover the transportation costs.

Consultation and Technical Support

The exhibition's difficult subject matter may present borrowing institutions with certain dilemmas in planning and conducting opening and accompanying events for the exhibition. The Ravensbrück Memorial will be happy to provide consultation on these matters, as well as further literature or presentations on the subject. In addition, the Memorial can also give technical assistance concerning transportation and assembly of the exhibition.

Contact

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Konzentrationslager Dachau
Schutzhaftlager

Der _____ Häftl.Nr. _____

geb.am _____ Bl. _____

Arbeitskommando: _____
bittet gehorsamst das Bordell
besuchen zu dürfen.

Dachau, den _____

_____ Unterschrift _____

Kontrollabschnitt: _____

Häftl.Nr. _____

Dachau, den _____

Application form for visiting a brothel from the Dachau concentration camp, Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site Archives

Camp Brothels. Forced Sex Labor in Nazi Concentration Camps

The existence of brothels in certain concentration camps has long been the subject of specific historical discussions. In 1942 the head of the SS, Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler, issued an order calling for the establishment of brothels inside concentration camps. The camp brothels were intended to motivate male prisoners to work harder, and the system was ultimately expanded to include ten camps. The building of 'Sonderbauten' (special constructions) – as the SS referred to them – became part of a bonus system introduced across the camps in 1943. Over 200 female prisoners were sexually exploited in these camp brothels. Most of them had originally been inmates of the Ravensbrück women's concentration camp.



Brothel barrack of the Gusen concentration camp. Photograph by the SS, Museu d'Història de Catalunya, Barcelona/Amical de Mauthausen

The Exhibition

The exhibition presents the history of the concentration camp brothels from a three-fold perspective: SS documents showing the bureaucratization of sexual violence; accounts from victims detailing the everyday realities of forced sex labor; and accounts from male prisoners presenting the perception of the camp brothels by the (male) inmates.

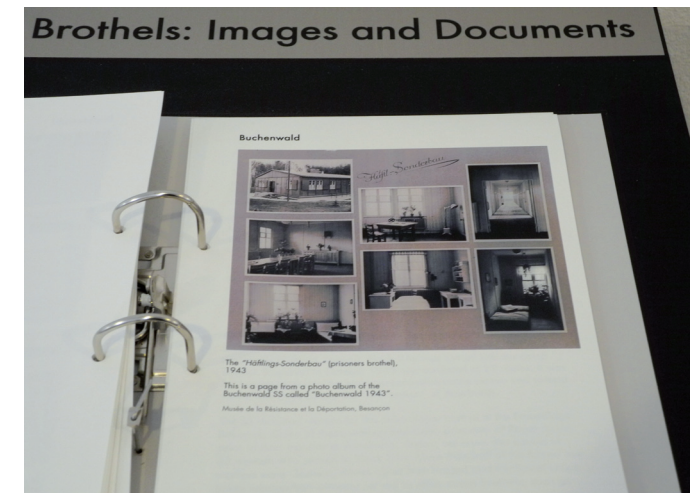
The exhibition comprises more than 150 facsimiles of historical documents and photographs, as well as original testimonies from former sex slave workers and brothel visitors.

The testimonies are accessible in oral form at the exhibition's audio points, and as written documents. The various topics are introduced through a set of panels. Corresponding tables offer the possibility of exploring the topics in greater depth. Reproductions of documents, architectural drawings, and testimonies of survivors and perpetrators can be found in folders displayed on the tables.

Four Subject Areas

The exhibition covers four subject areas, displayed in an area of approximately 60 square meters (650 sq. ft.). While we recommend setting up the exhibition in a single space, it is also possible to show various subject areas in different rooms. The subject areas are as follows:

1. The Establishment of Camp Brothels
2. Women in Camp Brothels
3. Male Prisoners and Camp Brothels
4. Camp Brothels and their Aftermath



View of a folder from the exhibition showing copies of photographs of the Buchenwald brothel. Photograph by Norbert Günther