

“Outsiders”

This year's theme is „Outsiders“ and Rotlicht Festival warmly invites artists and photographers to engage with this topic as narrowly or as broadly as they wish: “Outsiders” can be a proud self-description (think of punk culture understanding itself as a micro-society counter to the established and dominant framework), it can be a derogatory term to relegate unwanted individuals to the margins of society (and simultaneously appropriated by marginalized people to empower themselves), or “outsiders” can convey a sense of ambivalence about belonging to a place, a group of people, a family etc. Moreover, the job of the photographer regularly flirts with the notion of being an outsider: Through press photography, the person behind the camera documents war but attempts to stay away from it, paparazzi are rarely invited into the lives of celebrities but they still invade it, and being a working photographer today means that one is often a freelancer, at times precariously so, and is in a complicated relationship with the capitalist labor market. At times, certain photographic technologies have historically been underrepresented and underappreciated, such as the cyanotype and many others, and as a result been ignored by scholars which also makes them “outsiders” to photographic technologies.

Whether tackled culturally, personally, or technologically, we hope that these strands of reflections offer photographers and artists creative channels through which they can present their contributions to Rotlicht Festival 2024.

There are an additional 40 galleries and off-spaces, with their own curated exhibitions, which spread the Rotlicht Festival across almost the entire city.

Our Open Call for submissions 2024 will open this summer for about 6 weeks. More detailed information will follow in the coming weeks.