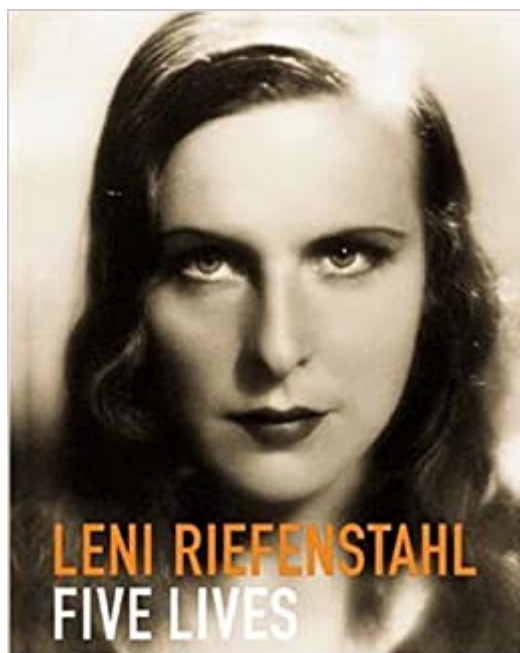


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# Leni Riefenstahl-Five Lives: A Biography In Pictures (Photobook)



## Synopsis

One remarkable woman, five remarkable careers: Leni Riefenstahl is the exception to the rule. From dancer to actress to film-maker to photographer to diver, she has excelled in each field and is one of the most important and controversial artists of the 20th century. Her contributions to the art and technique of film-making were vast, most notably in her epochal film "Olympia" (1938). Critically acclaimed during the 1930's for her work under the Hitler administration and harshly criticized after the war, Riefenstahl surged on, completing the famous "Tiefland" in 1954. In the 1960s and 70s she traveled to Africa and extensively photographed East Africa and the Nuba tribes in Sudan, publishing three books. Ready for yet another change, she took up deep-sea diving at the age of 71, beginning a new chapter as an underwater photographer. Though she has attracted much attention throughout her life and has been the subject of many books, articles, and films, Leni Riefenstahl Five Lives is the first book to showcase her entire career in pictures. Produced in collaboration with Riefenstahl herself, the book includes her most famous images as well as many previously unpublished pictures from her private archives. The main body of the book features photographs (without text) spanning Riefenstahl's entire set of careers, with pictures of her on stage as a dancer and on the set as an actress and film-maker, as well as film stills and her own photographs (precise commentaries about the pictures can be found in the comprehensive appendix). The illustrated biography, international bibliography, and detailed filmography complement the illustrative section with extensive information about her personal and professional lives. Fans and critics alike will be impressed with this sweeping visual tribute.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Leni Riefenstahl: Five Lives traces the fascinating and controversial life and work of the famous German photographer-filmmaker. Riefenstahl started her creative career as an aspiring dancer in the 1920s in Germany and then became a movie actress. She starred in a number of films, taking challenging roles that were sometimes dangerous and physically rigorous, such as the ice-bound and skiing roles in *Storm over Mont Blanc*, *The White Flame*, and *SOS Iceberg*. These outdoor films foretold the spirit of adventure that later guided Riefenstahl's photography career. The crux of controversy that overshadows Riefenstahl's career is her handpicked appointment by Adolf Hitler to direct the infamous Nazi party rally film *Triumph of the Will*. Although, according to her memoirs, Riefenstahl tried to withdraw from the film, she created a work that depicted Hitler's plane descending from the clouds as if it carried a god, and she has been accused "of having significantly increased, by means of this film, the emotional bond of the Germans to Hitler." Riefenstahl then went on to direct the German film *Olympia* covering the 1936 Olympics. With WWII came great change and Riefenstahl's eventual imprisonment by the French. In her later years, she continued her photography career by documenting her trips to Africa and getting her scuba license in her 70s. Her close-up underwater pictures of sea life float like a dream in vivid color. For as damning as her association with the Nazis is, Riefenstahl is a complex and talented artist. This book is full of remarkable images of her acting and directorial career as well as her still photography, and it includes a detailed biography of her life and career--complete with family and personal pictures.

--J.P. Cohen

Produced in collaboration with the artist, now 98, the latest in Taschen's oversized photographers' series showcases Riefenstahl's undeniably unique life here called "lives" as a dancer, actress, photographer, filmmaker, and, most recently, deep-sea diver. Mostly, it is a collection of reproductions of stills from her films and photos from her various books (*Last of the Nuba* and others have been reissued by St. Martin's in recent years). Although her talent is clear and the work speaks for itself in many ways, larger questions invariably arise. She is certainly one of the most controversial figures in 20th-century arts, and it is nearly inconceivable to discuss her without also examining her connection to Hitler and her years as his favorite filmmaker. Yet the contributors here either gloss over such troubling historic issues or take the artist at her word. In this regard, the book

recalls Riefenstahl's dissembling 1995 memoir, though it would best be paired in library collections with the critical biographical film *The Wonderful, Horrible Life of Leni Riefenstahl*. Still, this is a fine, affordable choice for libraries that don't already own Riefenstahl's individual photography books. Douglas McClellmont, New York Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.

If you are a fan of Ms Riefenstahl you will like this book . The pictures are big 12 and 3/4 inches tall and 10 and 1/4 inches wide. The pictures are shown large and then again in the back smaller , with notes of each shot . I gave it 4 stars instead of 5 because I do not like the way Angelika Taschen printed the pictures in a sort of matte finish. The pictures come out a little fuzzy and could have been much sharper if they would have been printed differently. But if you are a big fan of Ms Riefenstahl I would buy it .

A biography in pictures of arguably the most influential female film-maker in the history of the medium...though all too many people in the industry are afraid to admit to it. Made the greatest propaganda film in history (unfortunate choice of subject matter) and the most important and influential sports documentary of all time (*Olympia*). Dancer, actress, director, producer, still photographer, underwater cinematographer...an astounding list of accomplishments driven by a desire to perceive and record the world around her has compelled Leni Riefenstahl since the beginning of the twentieth century. Oversized, handsomely produced volume (typical Taschen quality) is packed with rare photographs and fascinating commentary. Note: sparkle in eyes of 19-year old dancer and 99-year old legend is exactly the same.

Under difficult circumstances Riefenstahl and Furtwangler managed to live full lives. An inspiration for us in these dark ages.

Very happy with this purchase. The book was in even better condition than stated!

I knew about her work during the thirties but not about her early life nor her later life. She is one of the most talented and interesting people of the 20th Century.

This is a marvelous coffee table book displaying the work of Leni Riefenstahl as I, for one, have never seen it. From her early film work, to her Nazi work, to her work in Africa and her underwater shots, this book will amaze all of us who connect Ms. Riefenstahl solely with Nazi Germany. It is a

fascinating look at the long, long career of this no-doubt interesting and resilient woman.

The striking front cover on this book is publicity still as Junta, in the movie "The Blue Light" 1932. As impressive as the cover is, it gets better when you open it to reveal hundreds of artistically shot photos. Dr. Ruth says bigger is not necessarily better. However in this case it is; something about the size of the photographs add to their striking appearance. Most are in grainy black and white with some color sections. This book is just a wee to large to fit in my oversized bookshelf. So I am making a larger shelf to display the books front view. Just as you assume that this is a great coffee table book you will find that there is more to it. Luckily the pictures are not cluttered or distracted by alpha pneumonics. All the descriptions are in a separate section. The title of the book is appropriate as it portrays the different vocations of Leni. (Dancer, Actress, Director, Photographer, Diver) This book also enhances the viewing experience of Leni's films.

One remarkable woman, five remarkable careers. A dancer, actress, film-maker, photographer and deep-sea diver, Leni Riefenstahl, 98 years old and one of the most influential artists of the 20th century, has excelled in each field of endeavor. Her contributions to the art and technique of film-making were vast, most notably in her 1938 film Olympia. Critically acclaimed for her work under Nazi rule but harshly criticized after the war, Riefenstahl persevered, completing in 1954 Tiefland, which she starred in, directed and edited. In the 1960s and 70s she traveled to the Sudan and extensively photographed the Nuba tribes, publishing three books of this work. Ready for yet another challenge, Riefenstahl took up deep-sea diving at the age of 71, beginning a new chapter as an underwater photographer. Though she has attracted much attention throughout her life and has been the subject of many books, articles, and films, LENI RIEFENSTAHL- FIVE LIVES is the first book to showcase her entire career in pictures. Produced in close collaboration with Riefenstahl herself, the book includes famous images as well as many previously unpublished pictures from her private archives. The book features photographs that show all of Riefenstahl's careers; on stage as a dancer, on the set as an actress and film-maker, and includes film stills and her own photographs. The biography, international bibliography, and detailed filmography complement the illustrated section with extensive information about Riefenstahl's personal and professional life. Precise commentaries about the pictures can be found in the comprehensive appendix. Admirers and critics alike will be impressed with this sweeping visual tribute.

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