

1925



Die freudlose Gasse / The Joyless Street

STATISTICS

Cinemas: 3878
Feature films: 212

EVENTS

March 16

World Premiere of WAYS TO STRENGTH AND BEAUTY

The Kulturfilm "Wege zur Kraft und Schönheit" by Wilhelm Prager premieres at the 'Ufa-Palast am Zoo'. Part documentary, part fiction, the film propagates fitness, health, and a modern physical culture as antidotes to the nervous modern lifestyle.. Bavaria is against the public screening because of the "immoral overall effect". However, the film censorship board only orders the removal of two scenes.

May 3

The absolute film

At the 'Ufa-Theater am Kurfürstendamm' in Berlin, a sold out matinee of 'The Absolute Film', takes place. The program includes experimental works by Hirschfeld-Mack, Hans Richter, Viking Eggeling, Walther Ruttmann, Fernand Leger and René Clair. The program will be repeated one week later.

May 22

Production of METROPOLIS begins

Shooting of the film METROPOLIS, directed by Fritz Lang, begins in Babelsberg. It lasts until October 30, 1926. With eight leading roles, 750 smaller roles, and tens of thousands of extras, the film becomes the most expensive production of the Weimar Republic. In the end, it cost more than five million Reichsmarks.

June 30

Crisis Report

"The top organization of the German film industry had a memorandum written that gives food for thought in places. Here are just a few figures. In 1914, there were about 30 film factories, about 50 film distributors and about 125 distributors in Germany. By 1922, these numbers had risen to 300, to 350, and to 375. Then there was a standstill and a decline. There were bankruptcies, insolvencies, stoppages of payments, mergers. In 1922, 64% German and 36% foreign - mostly American - films were played, in 1924/25 only 46% German and 54% foreign. In 1921, about 600 German films were produced, in 1923 only 285." (*Die Weltbühne*, 30.6.25).

September 17

Ufa newsreel

First issue of the 'Ufa-Wochenschau', created from the merger of the 'Deulig-Woche' and the 'Messter Woche'. It covers a wide variety of events. "The music has to change a bit here. You can't play the same lively march to the scenes showing the misery of the Optanten [those who opted to remain Germans abroad] as you do to the departure of the cruiser 'Berlin'". (Film-Kurier).

September 25 - October 5

KIPHO

The Berlin Funkhaus is the venue for the Film and Photo Exhibition (KIPHO). This exhibition is a major event for the entire film industry and appeals to the general public. Films are shown in a giant movie theater (4,000 seats) and in a "Urkino" (from 30 years ago). The stars of German film are present, and international conferences bring out-of-towners to the city. More than 100,000 people attend.

December 17

Sound film test

The screening of the first Ufa sound film DAS MÄDCHEN MIT DEN SCHWEFELHÖLZERN is a flop due to technical problems. Nevertheless: "Every professional should realize that film is generally a silent art and should remain so, but it often lacks the word, the sound. Think of the highly dramatic moments whose language is still expressed today in titles of varying length that break the mood. And think of a degree of perfection that no new thing had when it came out, in order to realize the respect that the 'talking movie' can claim for itself". (Film-Kurier, 12/19-25).

December 19

Parufamet contract

The Parufamet contract is signed. The heavily indebted Ufa agrees on a distribution cooperation with the American companies Paramount and Metro-Goldwyn: It takes over 20 films per season from each of the two partners and guarantees them 75% of the screening time in its cinemas. In return, the Americans take over 10 Ufa titles each and grant the German company a loan of four million dollars. This is not enough to restructure Ufa.

December 19

Prometheus

In Berlin, Willi Münzenberg, head of propaganda for the KPD, founds Prometheus Filmverleih und Vertriebs GmbH. It is dedicated to the distribution of Soviet films in Germany and also produces its own feature films and documentaries between 1926 and 1932.

FILMS OF THE YEAR

February 11

ZUR CHRONIK VON GRIESHUUS / THE CHRONICLE OF GRIESHUUS

"Zur Chronik von Grieshuus" is directed by Arthur von Gerlach. Screenplay: Thea von Harbou, based on a novella by Theodor Storm. Cinematography: Fritz Arno Wagner. Sets: Robert Herlth, Walter Röhrig Hans Poelzig (exterior designs). With Paul Hartmann, Rudolf Forster, Lil Dagover. - Two brothers fight to the death over the inheritance of Grieshuus. Only in the next generation will peace return. An archaic drama from the Frisian heath of the 17th century. For Kracauer, among 'Triebfilme' "a brilliant latecomer".

March 16

WEGE ZU KRAFT UND SCHÖNHEIT / WAYS TO STRENGTH AND BEAUTY

Kulturfilm by Wilhelm Prager. Camera: Friedrich Weinmann, Eugen Hrich, Friedrich Paulmann et al. - A film about modern physical culture, which pleads for general conscription. Dedicated to 'the invaluable strengthening of youth'. With La Jana and Leni Riefenstahl. Rated 'educational for the volk' (volksbildend).

May 18

DIE FREUDLOSE GASSE / THE JOYLESS STREET

Directed by G. W. Pabst. Screenplay: Willy Haas, based on the novel by Hugo Bettauer. Cinematography: Guido Seeber, Curt Oertel. Sets: Hans Söhnle, Otto Erdmann. With Werner Krauß, Greta Garbo, Asta Nielsen, Valeska Gert. - The novel was a tearjerker from the Vienna inflation era. "But I knew exactly what appealed to Pabst, with his unerring flair for the contemporary: it was the lurid social picture of inflation, the bankruptcy of the old-established patrician circles of officials and academics, the corruption, the moral decay, such as we had also experienced in Berlin." (Willy Haas, Die Literarische Welt, Munich 1955). Greta Garbo's only film in Germany.

November 16

VARIETE / VARIETY

Director, screenplay: E. A. Dupont. Cinematography: Karl Freund. Production design: O. F. Werndorff. With Emil Jannings, Lya de Putti, Warwick Ward. - After ten years in prison, trapeze artist Boss tells his life story, which culminated in a jealousy drama in which he stabbed his rival. "A success of direction, photography, acting. There are sequences of images in VARIÉTÉ that are virtually exemplary for film in general; exemplary for its special position, for its difference from word drama." (Herbert Ihering, Berliner Börsen-Courier, 17.11.25).

December 18

EIN WALZERTRAUM / A WALTZ DREAM

Directed by Ludwig Berger. Script: Robert Liebmann, Norbert Falk. Cinematography: Werner Brandes. Sets: Rudolf Bamberger. With Mady Christians, Willy Fritsch, Xenia Desni. - A love triangle in which a princess and a chapel mistress compete for the love of the same man. Unsuspecting, they support each other until the competition is revealed. The musician renounces. In 1931, Lubitsch turns the material into an early sound film: THE SMILING LIEUTENANT. In Berger's silent film, the music is heard in the pictures.

MORE FILMS

May 12

LEBENDE BUDDHAS / LIVING BUDDHAS

Directed by Paul Wegener. Screenplay: Wegener, Hans Sturm. Cinematography: Guido Seeber, Reimar Kuntze. Sets: Hans Poelzig, Botho Höfer. With Wegener, Asta Nielsen, Käte Haack, Gregori Chmara. - Two English professors on the trail of a Tibetan sect.

June 26

DER FILM IM FILM / THE FILM IN THE FILM

Directed by Friedrich Porges. Screenplay: Porges, Stefan Lorant. Consulting: Curt Thomalla. - A look behind the scenes. Educational film about the development of cinematography, with footage of E. A. Dupont, Emil Jannings, Fritz Lang, Paul Leni, Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau, Asta Nielsen, Henny Porten, among other.,

August 29

DIE VERRUFENEN / SLUMS OF BERLIN

Directed by Gerhard Lamprecht. Screenplay: Luise Heilborn-Körbitz. Cinematography: Karl Hasselmann. Sets: Otto Moldenhauer. With Bernhard Goetzke, Aud Egede Nissen, Arthur Bergen. - A milieu piece, based on the experiences of Heinrich Zille. It is the only film in which Zille himself appears.

October 22

DER FARMER AUS TEXAS / THE FARMER FROM TEXAS

Directed by Joe May. Written by May, Rolf E. Vanloo, based on the comedy Kolportage by Georg Kaiser. Cinematography: Carl Drews, Antonio Frenguelli. Sets: Paul Leni. With Lilian Hall-Davis, Willy Fritsch, Mady Christians. - The story of a mesalliance in a prelude and six acts.

October 23

DIE LEUCHE ASIENS / THE LIGHT OF ASIA

Directed by Franz Osten. Script: Niranjan Pal. Cinematography: Willi Kiermeier, Josef Wirsching. With Himansu Rai, Seeta Devi, Sarada Uki. - A German-Indian coproduction: about Gotama Buddha's struggle for love and renunciation.

FILM BOOKS

László Moholy-Nagy

Malerei, Photographie, Film

Munich: Albert Langen. 133 p. - Volume 8 of the 'Bauhaus Books'. A programmatic demarcation between painting (as 'pure design of color') and photography (as 'design of representation') to 'reflectively cast light play' with kinetic images. Numerous illustrations.

Willi Münzenberg

Erobert den Film! (Conquer the movies!)

Berlin: Neuer Deutscher Verlag. 28 S. - A programmatic treatise outlining the organizational prerequisites for a cinematic propagation of the socialist model of society. It follows Lenin's dictum that film is "the most important of all arts." Münzenberg (1889-1940) pleads for investments to make independent proletarian cinema work possible with production and distribution. In the same year, the 'Prometheus-Film GmbH' was founded.