

1926



Faust

STATISTICS

Cinemas: 4293
Viewers: 332 million
Feature films: 185

EVENTS

January

Nero film

Producer Heinrich Nebenzahl founds the company 'Nero-Film GmbH' with director and producer Richard Oswald. Among the first projects are films by and with Harry Piel. In 1927, the company converts into a stock corporation. It develops into one of the most renowned production companies of the Weimar Republic. G. W. Pabst and Fritz Lang later worked as directors for Nero-Film.

January 22

Pommer leaves Ufa

Ufa parts company with Erich Pommer. The management holds him responsible for the cost overrun of the METROPOLIS project. Instead of the calculated 1.5 million Marks, more than 5 million Marks were incurred. Ufa has financial difficulties. Pommer leaves for America in February. At the end of 1927, Ufa brings him back.

January 25

Gloria Palace

Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau's film TARTÜFF opens the Berlin 'Gloria-Palast' (1,200 seats). Celebrities at the festive event: Eric Charell, Richard Eichberg, Karl Grune, Lilian Harvey, Leopold Jeßner, Alfred Kerr, Fritz Lang, Paul Leni, Lya de Putti, Olga Tschechowa, Pamela Wedekind, and Friedrich Zelnik.

March 18

Eisenstein in Berlin

Soviet director Sergei M. Eisenstein comes to Berlin with his cameraman Eduard Tissé to prepare the German premiere of his film PANZERKREUZER POTEMKIN. They visit the shooting of Murnau's FAUST and Lang's METROPOLIS. Above all, Eisenstein discusses the POTEMKIN music with Edmund Meisel. In mid-April the guests return to Moscow.

April 29

BATTLESHIP POTEMKIN

Official German premiere of Eisenstein's PANZERKREUZER POTEMKIN at the Berlin 'Apollo Theater'. In the afternoon, the Prussian Minister President, the Berlin Police President and the Chief Reich Prosecutor view the film and approve the screening. After targeted provocations, the film is banned on July 12 and released again in a reworked version at the end of July. The POTEMKIN debate is a centerpiece of Weimar Republic's culture wars.

June 7

Fox Europe

The German-American film relations of the 1920s included strictly regulated import and export quotas. In order to comply with the legal requirements, American companies join forces with German partners and produce so-called quota films. Fox establishes a European subsidiary in Berlin and brings in cameraman Karl Freund as head of production. He has to ensure the production of cheap films, but also allows himself some experiments, such as the cross-section film BERLIN. DIE SINFONIE DER GROSSSTADT and the episodic film K 13513. DIE ABENTEUER EINES ZEHNMARKSCHEINS.

June 10

Entertainment tax reorganized

A decision of the Reichsrat (Imperial Council) standardizes the entertainment tax rates for the whole of Germany, which until then had been set very arbitrarily by the cities and municipalities. In the future, they will be set at a maximum of 15% and will be reduced if the cinema program includes films of educational or artistic value. The fight for a corresponding reduction in taxes is the dominant theme of film politics in the 1920s.

October 14

World premiere of FAUST

Festive premiere of F. W. Murnau's FAUST film in Berlin's 'Ufa-Palast am Zoo'. Guests include Reich Chancellor Wilhelm Marx, Foreign Minister Gustav Stresemann, Reichsbank President Hjalmar Schacht, Max Reinhardt, Erich Kleiber, and Leopold Jeßner. Murnau has already left for America.

FILMS OF THE YEAR

January 25

TARTÜFF

Directed by F. W. Murnau. Screenplay: Carl Mayer. Cinematography by Karl Freund. Sets: Robert Herlth, Walter Röhrig. With Emil Jannings, Werner Krauß, Lil Dagover, Lucie Höflich. - Mayer came up with a frame story for the Molière comedy: Film within a film and a doubling of the attempted hierarchy. The main play is set in Prussia at the time of the Old Fritz.

March 24

GEHEIMNISSE EINER SEELE / SECRETS OF A SOUL

Directed by G. W. Pabst. Written by Colin Roß and Hans Neumann. Cinematography: Guido Seeber, Curt Oertel. Sets: Ernö Metzner. With Werner Krauß, Ruth Weyher, Jack Trevor, Ilka Grüning. - A case for Sigmund Freud: A chemistry professor's pathological fear of stabbing weapons is psychoanalytically cured. Krauß is the patient. Images from the life of the soul are also challenges for the cameramen. Because the film has an educational mission, it is distributed by UFA's Kulturabteilung.

May 2

DIE ABENTEUER DES PRINZEN ACHMED / THE ADVENTURES OF PRINCE ACHMED

Silhouette film by Lotte Reiniger. Collaboration: Walther Ruttmann, Berthold Bartosch, Alexander Kardan. - Stories from 1001 Nights with Aladdin and his magic lamp, Dinarsade, the daughter of the Caliph, and Paribanu, the ruler of the magic island. The first feature-length animated film: three years in production; of 250,000 frames shot, about 100,000 are used in the film.

October 14

FAUST

Directed by F. W. Murnau. Script: Hans Kyser, based on motifs by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Christopher Marlowe and the old folk tale. Cinematography: Carl Hoffmann. Sets, costumes: Robert Herlth, Walter Röhrig. With Gösta Ekman, Emil Jannings, Camilla Horn, Wilhelm Dieterle. - 'A German Folk Tale'. Murnau directs a fantastic team of intuitive technicians who can think of a solution to every problem. "Of all his films, FAUST has the most to do with painting, because the struggle between light and shadow is its theme." (Eric Rohmer, Murnau's Faustfilm, Munich 1980).

MORE FILMS

March 10

DER GEIGER VON FLORENZ / THE FIDDLER OF FLORENCE

Directed and written by Paul Czinner. Cinematography: Adolf Schlasy, Arpád Viragh. Sets: Erich Czerwonski, O. F. Werndorf. With Conrad Veidt, Nora Gregor, Elisabeth Bergner, Walter Rilla. - Bergner, in a trouser role, falls in love with a painter.

March 22

DIE BRÜDER SCHELLENBERG / THE BROTHERS SCHELLENBERG

Directed by Karl Grune. Script: Willy Haas, Grune, based on the novel by Bernhard Kellermann. Cinematography: Karl Hasselmann. Sets: Karl Görge, Kurt Kahle. With Conrad Veidt (in a double role), Lil Dagover, Liane Haid. - Drama about two brothers who get involved with two women who are attracted to two other men.

April 1

MENSCHEN UNTEREINANDER / PEOPLE AMONG THEMSELVES

Directed by Gerhard Lamprecht. Script: Luise Heilborn Körbitz, Eduard Rothauser, Lamprecht. Cinematography: Karl Hasselmann. Sets: Otto Moldenhauer. With Alfred Abel, Aud Egede Nissen, Paul Bildt, Eisa Wagner, Käte Haack. – Stories from a Berlin tenement.

September 6

DIE UNEHELICHEN / CHILDREN OF NO IMPORTANCE

Directed by Gerhard Lamprecht. Script: Luise Heilborn-Körbitz, Lamprecht. Cinematography: Karl Hasselmann. Sets: Otto Moldenhauer. With Ralph Ludwig, Alfred Grosser, Margot Misch, Bernhard Goetzke, Elsa Wagner, Paul Bildt. - Drama about children from a poor background who suffer under heartless parents.

October 1

KREUZZUG DES WEIBES / THE WOMAN'S CRUSADE

Directed by Martin Berger. Screenplay: Dosio Koffler, Berger. Cinematography: Sophus Wangöe, A. O. Weitzenberg. With Conrad Veidt, Maly Delschaft, Werner Krauß, Harry Liedtke. – Political film (Tendenzfilm) against anti-abortion § 218.

October 25

DER STUDENT VON PRAG / THE STUDENT OF PRAGUE

Directed by Henrik Galeen. Screenplay: Hanns Henz Ewers, Galeen. Cinematography: Günther Krampf, Erich Nitzschmann. Sets: Hermann Warm. With Conrad Veidt, Werner Krauß, Elizza La Porta, Agnes Esterhazy, Fritz Alberti, Ferdinand von Alten. - Second filming of the doppelgänger story "Der Student von Prag," more elaborate than the first version from 1913.

October 28

DIE ABENTEUER EINES ZEHNMARKSCHEINS / THE ADVENTURES OF A TEN MARK NOTE

Directed by Berthold Viertel. Written by Bela Balazs. Cinematography: Heimar Lerski, Robert Baberske. With Agnes Müller, Oskar Homolka, Walter Franck, Werner Fuetterer. - Episodic film about the circulation of the banknote K 13513. No copy preserved.

November 2

ÜBERFLÜSSIGE MENSCHEN / SUPERFLUOUS PEOPLE

Directed and written by Alexander Rasumny, based on novellas by Anton Chekhov. Cinematography: Otto Kanturek, Karl Attenberger. Sets: Andrei Andreyev. With Engen Klöpfer, Camilla von Hollay, Heinrich George, Albert Steinrück. - Fates in a small Russian town. First German-Soviet co-production.

November 11

DIE KEUSCHE SUSANNE / THE CHASTE SUSANNE

“Die keusche Susanne” was directed by Richard Eichberg. Book. Hans Sturm after the operetta by Jean Gilbert and Georg Okonkowski. Cinematography: Heinrich Gärtner. Sets: Jack Rotmil. With Lilian Harvey, Willy Fritsch, Ruth Weyher, Werner Fuetterer, Hans Junkermann. - At home Susanne Pomarel is model of virtue, but when she goes to Paris she meets René, a philanderer, who, however, falls in love with the attractive Jacqueline. The final encounter of the three lovers takes place at the Moulin Rouge.

December 17

DER HEILIGE BERG / THE HOLY MOUNTAIN

Director, writer: Arnold Fanck. Cinematography: Heimar Lerski, Hans Schneeberger, Sepp Allgeier. With Leni Riefenstahl, Luis Trenker, Ernst Petersen. - Two mountaineers rival for a dancer. “Der heilige Berg” is an example of Weimar’s popular “Bergfilm” genre.

FILM BOOKS

Rudolf Harms

Philosophie des Films

Leipzig: Felix Meiner. 192 pp. - The author (1901-1984) understands film "as an art of its own, formed from moving light in spaceless darkness." Largely detached from social, political and economic issues, Harms systematizes the production process of film as a "step-by-step sequence of artistic creation" and finds "basic aesthetic types and basic norms" that he demarcates against the other arts. The book is based on his dissertation in art history: 'Untersuchungen zur Ästhetik des Spielfilms' (Leipzig 1922).

Rudolf Kurtz

Expressionismus und Film

Berlin: Verlag der 'Lichtbild-Bühne'. 135 pp. - The first stylistic history of postwar German film, written by the editor-in-chief of 'Lichtbild-Bühne' (1884-1960). Dedicated to Emil Jannings. In 2016, Christian Kiening and Ulrich Johannes Beil co-edited a new edition (translated by Brenda Benthien) and added a lengthy, well-researched afterword.

Curt Moreck (i.e. Konrad Haemmerling)

Sittengeschichte des Kinos

Dresden: Paul Aretz. 284 pp. - A book that wants to be more than the author can redeem. Printed on exquisite paper, equipped with unusual illustrations - but the text is more indebted to the moralizing cinema reformers than to the pioneers of a differentiated eroticism of the cinema.

Kurt Mühsam/Egon Jacobsohn

Lexikon des Films

Berlin: Verlag der 'Lichtbild-Bühne'. 194 pp. - A biographical reference work, based on a questionnaire survey, supplemented by the editors' own research. Considered are actors, directors, writers, cinematographers, architects, producers. Focus: Germany, but also international names. With current address information.

Rudolf Pabst (Ed.)

Das Deutsche Lichtspieltheater in Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft

Berlin: Prismaverlag. 239 pp. - The focus is on the chapter 'Das Lichtspieltheater, sein Ursprung und sein Entwicklungsgang' by Herbert Richter. Other contributions: 'Kino und Weltgeschichte' (by Alexander von Gleichen-Rußwurm), 'Die Entwicklung der technischen Kino-Einrichtung' (Hans Adolf Rodde), 'Vom Werden unserer Filmdramatik' (Willy Rath), 'Kinotechnik und Filmherstellung' (company portraits). Many illustrations.