

1929



Pandora's Box

STATISTICS

Cinemas: 5078
Viewers: 328 million
Feature films: 183

EVENTS

January 28

Degeto

In Berlin, the 'Deutsche Gesellschaft für Ton und Bild' (Degeto) is founded as a non-profit association. Its purpose is to promote the sound image in the service of science, art, education and popular learning.

March 13

Tobis sound film

'Tonbild-Syndikat AG' and 'Klangfilm GmbH' sign a contract, according to which Tonbild-Syndikat is responsible for film production and the distribution of recording equipment, while Klangfilm is responsible for the production of recording and playback equipment. From now on, the recording process is called System Tobis-Klangfilm, the playback process System Klang-film-Tobis.

April 3

Censorship case: Polizeibericht Überfall

The short film "Police Report Assault" by Ernö Metzner is banned by the Film Review Board because the "portrayal of the crime in the movie is an end in itself". As a dramatized newspaper report, the film is a masterpiece.

April 25

Terra-United Artists

The German production and distribution company 'Terra-Film' and the American company 'United Artists' enter into a joint distribution agreement. Terra receives a distribution monopoly for top American films in Germany and in return secures a market segment in America.

May 16

Oscar for Emil Jannings

At the first Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Awards ceremony in Hollywood, German actor Emil Jannings receives the award for Best Actor for his performances in THE LAST COMMAND and THE WAY OF ALL FLESH. The statuette is later named the 'Oscar'. Jannings is not present at the awards ceremony. After a two and a half years stay in America, he returned to Germany on May 14.

May 18 until July 7

Exhibition in Stuttgart

On the occasion of the international exhibition 'Film und Foto' of the Deutscher Werkbund in Stuttgart, Hans Richter puts together a program of 'avant-garde films', 'auteur films' and innovative Kulturfilms. The exhibition is considered a milestone of modernism in film.

June 1

Special issue

On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the *Film-Kurier*, a special issue is published with contributions by Béla Balázs, Paul Dessau, Emil Jannings, Fritz Lang, G. W. Pabst, Lupu Pick, Erich Pommer, Hans Richter and Dsiga Wertow, among others.

June 3

Sound film

The premiere of the first American sound film, *THE SINGING FOOL*, takes place in Berlin's 'Gloria Palast'. Al Jolson plays the leading role. Sound system: Vitaphone (needle tone). The screening had only been made possible at noon by the lifting of an injunction by Telefunken against National and Western Electric. However, the legal disputes over patent rights continue.

September 2

Paul Leni †

Director and production designer Paul Leni dies of heart disease in Hollywood at the age of 44. His best-known films include *HINTERTREPPE* (together with Leopold Jessner) and *DAS WACHSFIGURENKABINETT*. Producer Carl Laemmle had brought him to Hollywood in 1927. There he shot *THE MAN WHO LAUGHS* and *THE LAST WARNING*.

September 24

Sound film studios in Neubabelsberg

Ufa presents four modern sound film studios in Neubabelsberg. The 'Tonkreuz' consists of the 600 square meter North and South studios and the 450 square meter East and West studios. Shooting of *THE BLUE ANGEL* begins in the Great Hall on November 4.

October 15

World premiere of WOMAN IN THE MOON

The festive premiere of Fritz Lang's film *FRAU IM MOND* takes place at the 'Ufa-Palast am Zoo'. The facade of the cinema is decorated with a starry night sky and a rocket taking off for the moon. The late silent film becomes a great success.

December 21

Ufa Palace in Hamburg

The 'Ufa-Palast' in Hamburg opens: with 2,667 seats, it is the largest cinema in Europe. At the opening *THE WHITE HELL OF PIZ PALÜ* by Arnold Fanck is shown.

FILMS OF THE YEAR

February 9

DIE BÜCHSE DER PANDORA / PANDORA'S BOX

Directed by G. W. Pabst. Written by Ladislaus Vajda. Cinematography: Günther Krampf. Sets: Andrei Andreev, Bohumil Hes. variations on Frank Wedekind's Lulu. Louise Brooks brings ruin to three men and herself becomes the victim of a fourth. The men are Fritz Kortner (Dr. Schön), Carl Goetz (Schigolch), Franz Lederer (Alwa Schön) and Gustav Diessl (Jack the Ripper). In rare agreement, all Berlin critics criticize the leading actress. She only later becomes a myth.

March 11

ASPHALT

Directed by Joe May. Written by Fred Majo (d.i. May), Hans Szekely, Rolf E. Vanloo. Cinematography: Günther Rittau. Sets: Erich Kettelhut. With Gustav Fröhlich, Betty Amann, Albert Steinrück. – An Ufa film of the Erich Pommer production, set in Berlin. A policeman is seduced by a jewel thief and falls under suspicion of murder. Crime fiction as great melodrama.

October 14

TAGEBUCH EINER VERLORENEN / DIARY OF A LOST WOMAN

Director: G. W. Pabst. Written by Rudolf Leonhard, based on the novel by Margarethe Böhme. Cinematography: Sepp Allgeier. Sets: Ernö Metzner, Emil Hasler. - The second Pabst film with Louise Brooks. She plays the pharmacist's daughter Thymian, who is seduced by Fritz Rasp and ends up in the reformatory for girls at risk. Many scenes then take place in the brothel, which brings it into conflict with censorship office. After several cuts, 855 meters are lost.

October 14

FRAU IM MOND / WOMAN IN THE MOON

Directed by Fritz Lang. Screenplay: Thea von Harbou. Cinematography: Curt Courant et al. Sets: Emil Basler, Otto Hunte, Karl Vollbrecht. With Willy Fritsch, Gerda Maurus, Gustav von Wangenheim. - Science fiction and melodramatic love story. With six passengers, a rocket travels to the moon where gold is discovered. Only two astronauts return. Lang's technical advisors were Hermann Oberth and Willy Ley, two established rocket scientists.

October 22nd

DIE WEISSE HÖLLE VON PIZ PALÜ / THE WHITE HELL OF PIZ PALÜ

Director: Arnold Fanck, G. W. Pabst. Screenplay: Fanck, Ladislaus Vajda. Cinematography: Sepp Allgeier, Richard Angst, Hans Schneeberger. Sets: Ernö Metzner. With Gustav Diessl, Leni Riefenstahl, Ernst Petersen. - A love triangle during the ascent of Piz Palü. The trio gets into trouble. The loner becomes a victim, the other two can be saved. The world of the mountains as an eternal challenge, where people can only fail. Only the aviator - far away from danger - is able to shine. Ernst Udet, the famous daredevil pilot, shows his art. A snow -and-ice mountain film that is an overwhelming success.

December 30

MUTTER KRAUSENS FAHRT INS GLÜCK / MOTHER KRAUSEN'S JOURNEY TO HAPPINESS

Direction, camera: Piel Jutzi. Screenplay: Jan Fethke, Willy Döll. Sets: Robert Scharfenberg, Carl Haacker. With Alexandra Schmitt, Holmes Zimmermann, Ilse Trautschold, Friedrich Ganß, Gerhard Bienert. - Stories by Zille denouncing the housing misery in Berlin's proletarian neighborhoods. Mother Krause, the newspaper carrier, takes her own life after her son Paul embezzles the subscription money. A naturalistic melodrama of the communist Prometheus production, still silent. The young generation is called to organize.

MORE FILMS

February 14

DER LEBENDE LEICHNAM / THE LIVING CORPSE

Directed by Fedor Ozep. Written by B. Gussman, Anatoly Marienhof, based on the play by Leo Tolstoy. Cinematography: Anatoly Golovnya, Piel Jutzi. Production design: Sergei Kozlovsky, Vsevolod Simon. With Vsevolod Pudovkin, Maria Jacobini, Viola Garden. - Tragedy of a husband who does not want to stand in the way of his wife's happiness and therefore decides to kill himself.

March 7

FRÄULEIN ELSE

Directed by Paul Czinner. Written by Czinner, based on the novella by Arthur Schnitzler. Cinematography: Karl Freund. Sets: Erich Kettelhut. With Elisabeth Bergner, Albert Bassermann, Albert Steinrück. - Tragedy of a beautiful daughter who helps her indebted father and perishes over it.

March 12

MELODIE DER WELT / MELODY OF THE WORLD

Montage film by Walther Ruttmann. Cinematography by Wilhelm Lehne, Rudolph Rathmann, Reimar Kuntze, Paul Holzki. With Ivan Koval-Samborsky, Renée Stobrava. - The first feature-length German sound film.

March 15

HUNGER IN WALDENBURG

Directed by Piel Jutzi. Screenplay by Leo Lania. With Hohnes Zimmermann and unnamed workers. – Semi-documentary feature film about the unemployed son of a weaving couple who cannot find happiness even in the city.

April 15

DIE WUNDERBARE LÜGE DER NINA PETROWNA / THE WONDERFUL LIE OF NINA PETROWNA

Director: Hanns Schwarz. Written by Hans Székely. Cinematography: Carl Hoffmann. Sets: Robert Herlth, Walter Röhrig. With Brigitte Helm, Franz Lederer, Warwick Ward. - The melodrama of an endangered love ends with blackmail and death.

April 28

BRÜDER / BROTHERS

Director, screenplay: Werner Hochbaum. Cinematography: Gustav Berger. With amateur actors. - During the Hamburg dockworkers' strike of 1896, two brothers - a laborer and a policeman - are initially hostile to each other.

April 28

DIE FRAU, NACH DER MAN SICH SEHNT / THE WOMAN YOU LONG FOR

Directed by Kurt Bernhardt. Script: Ladislaus Vajda, based on the novel by Max Brod. Cinematography: Curt Courant, Hans Scheib. Sets: Robert Neppach. With Marlene Dietrich, Fritz Kortner, Uno Henning. - Crime film and psychological chamber play about a fascinating woman.

May 31

DURCHS BRANDENBURGER TOR / THROUGH THE BRANDENBURG GATE

Directed by Max Knaake. Book: Charles Stumar. Sets: Knaake, Fritz Maurischat. With Paul Henckels, June Marlowe, Aribert Mog, Fritz Kampers - Berlin between 1914 and 1929 from the perspective of a shoemaker's family.

October 10

JENSEITS DER STRASSE / BEYOND THE STREET

Directed by Leo Mittler. Screenplay: Jan Fethke, Willy Döll. Camera: Friedl Behn-Grund. With Lissi Arna, Paul Rehkopf, Fritz Genschow, Siegfried Arno. - A tragedy of everyday life, from the harbor milieu.

October 28

ATLANTIC

Directed, written by E. A. Dupont. Cinematography by Charles Rosher. With Fritz Kortner, Elsa Wagner, Lucie Mannheim, Franz Lederer. - A ship disaster as a hundred percent sound film. The most successful film of the 1929/30 season, produced in Great Britain in German, English and French versions.

December 14

MELODIE DES HERZENS / MELODY OF THE HEART

Directed by Hanns Schwarz. Screenplay: Hans Székely. Cinematography: Günther Rittau, Hans Schneeberger. Music: Werner Richard Heymann. With Dita Parlo and Willy Fritsch. - The first feature-length Ufa sound and talkie film.

FILM BOOKS

Edmund Bucher/Albrecht Kindt (eds.)

Film-Photos wie noch nie

Giessen: Kindt & Bucher. 255 pp. - 1,200 illustrations. Texts by Asta Nielsen, Lilian Gish, Greta Garbo, Carl Theodor Dreyer, Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton, Harold Lloyd, Joe May, Karl Grune, Emil Jannings, Conrad Veidt, Brigitte Helm, Willy Fritsch, Lilian Harvey, Gloria Swanson, Douglas Fairbanks, etc. We may speculate about the origin of the texts.

Hans Richter

Filmgegner von heute - Filmfreunde von morgen

Berlin: Hermann Reckendorf. 125 pp.- The German avant-gardist (1888-1976) writes this book for the International 'Film and Photo Exhibition' of the Deutscher Werkbund in Stuttgart. He is responsible for the film section there. His plea for the 'artistic film', which should be free in the use of its means, is at the same time an aggressive rejection of commercial film and narrative cinema.