

Anna Luise Kiss

# THE CINEMATIC STREETSCAPE IN POTSDAM

Palimpsest—Cultural Arena—  
Performative Space

With Contributions by Johann Pibert







AVINUS



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## Table of Abbreviations

AG	stock company (Aktiengesellschaft)
cf.	compare (confer)
DEFA	Deutsche Film Aktiengesellschaft
dpa	German Press Agency (Deutsche Presse-Agentur)
DVD	Digital Versatile Disc
ed.	edition
ed./eds.	editor/editors
e.g.	for example (exempli gratia)
et al.	and others (et alii/et aliae)
etc.	and so forth (et cetera)
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
GDR	German Democratic Republic
GmbH	limited liability company (Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung)
ibid.	in the same place (ibidem)
i.e.	that is (id est)
IMDb	Internet Movie Database
LED	light-emitting diode
no.	number
PDF	portable document format
PDS	Party of Democratic Socialism (Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus)
SED	Socialist Unity Party of Germany (Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands)
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
Ufa	Universum-Film Aktiengesellschaft
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
vol.	volume
vs.	versus
x	crossed with

# PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book is about 42 streets in the city of film Potsdam named after filmmakers—such as the actress and producer [Asta Nielsen](#), the actor [Günther Simon](#), and the director, screenwriter, and producer [Quentin Tarantino](#). The book tells the story of the genesis and history of the cinematic street names as well as the story of the film-historical personalities to which the street signs refer. It explores how cinematic street names contribute to the presentation of Potsdam as a city of film. To this end, the cinematic streetscape is quantitatively analyzed and interpreted as a palimpsest, as a cultural arena, and as a performative space. During this process, older, overlooked, and forgotten layers of the streetscape will come to light, and it will become clear how the practice of naming has changed over the decades. Memory–political disputes about street names in Potsdam will be reconstructed. As the exploration proceeds, it will become clear how the cinematic streetscape, together with other cinematic elements and due to different echo effects, creates a filmic-induced urban space.<sup>1</sup> Together, the cinematic elements and the filmic urban space shape the image of Potsdam as a city of film. By looking back at the contexts in which the cinematic streetscape came into being and by naming some of the discursive gaps and problematic assumptions and omissions, this book aims to contribute to the further development of Potsdam as a film city.

Important parts of the research for this publication were carried out in close cooperation with citizens of the city of Potsdam. Therefore, it is important to me that the results are presented in a form that appeals not only to a narrow circle of film and media scholars, but also to a broader public. Accordingly, this book is an open-access publication freely available on the Internet and thus accessible

<sup>1</sup> I have already introduced the term of “filmic” or “film-historically induced urban space” (own translation) in the context of an image analysis of a filmic mural found near the [Studio Babelsberg](#); see Anna Luise Kiss: Film und (Stadt)Raum. Eine Analyse von filmischen Bildern im städtischen Raum, in: Raphaela Kogler, Jeannine Wintzer (eds.): [\*Raum und Bild: Strategien visueller raumbezogener Forschung\*](#), Wiesbaden 2021, 227–240, here 228.

to all interested parties. Accessibility is further enhanced by the publication's availability in English and German. Furthermore, the book was designed in such a way that it exceeds the scope of a purely academic work. In the following section, "Structure and Handling of the Book," I explain the function of the various parts and explore the publication's unique structure and possible uses. I hope that it will be particularly useful for those who wish to read the book not only as a scientific investigation but also as a kind of walking map through the cinematic streetscape of Potsdam, by means of which they can learn about the many filmmakers honored in the biographical texts. A further special feature of the book is the way in which it combines citizen research, film history—i.e., humanities research—, social science methods, a scientific–artistic writing concept, and a revisionist perspective. This combination allows for multiple perspectives and a transdisciplinarity that give the book an experimental character.

Precisely because important aspects of the publication are based on results that were developed with the participation of a citizens' research network, I would like, at the beginning, to acknowledge their efforts and offer my thanks. In film studies, citizen research projects are still a rarity.<sup>2</sup> That being so, it was all the more remarkable to experience the way in which the citizens of Potsdam became enthusiastically involved in the experiment. In particular, the cooperation with the *Groß Glienicker* civic working group "Movies and Their Times" ("*Filme und ihre Zeit*") evolved during the project into an important pillar of the research. In this context, the following persons should be mentioned by name: Dieter Dargies, Holger Fahrland, Meinhard Jacobs, Karl Laier, Axel Lüttich, Moritz Lüttich, Birgit Malik, and Winfried Sträter. It was an extremely enriching, motivating, and memorable experience to work with the members of "Movies and Their Times" and other citizens (who wish to remain anonymous) and, in doing so, to encounter their expertise concerning the history and topology of the city of Potsdam. I would also like to acknowledge the support I received from student assistants, Svenja Milautzki and Hyejin Lee. Thanks to the research

<sup>2</sup> Another citizen research project in film studies has been being carried out at the *University of Erfurt* since 2019. Together with citizens, research is being conducted on cinema in the German Democratic Republic (GDR); see University of Erfurt: *Kino in der DDR*, in: *projekte.uni-erfurt.de*.

commitment of the citizens and the support of the meeting center “oskar,” the Potsdam Civic Foundation, the membership corporation “proWissen Potsdam,” the “Science Floor (WIS) at the Education Center ‘Bildungsforum’” (“WIS: Wissenschaftsetage im Bildungsforum”), the Potsdam Adult Education Center, the newspaper *Potsdamer Neueste Nachrichten*, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Potsdam, as well as of colleagues from “Citizens Create Knowledge” (“Bürger schaffen Wissen”) and the Citizen Science Center Zurich, the project has become deeply rooted in the culture of the city. The research project received outstanding support from the Marketing Department of the City of Potsdam. The head of the department, Sigrid Sommer, and her colleague, Anke Lucko, were important partners who contributed to the success of the project in both its conception phase and in its later evolution. Further assistance was provided by the UNESCO Creative City of Film Potsdam—Lisa Nawrocki and Sebastian Stielke deserve special mention—the Potsdam City Archive, the Infrastructure and Road Administration Division of the City of Potsdam, PMSG Potsdam Marketing and Service GmbH, the Studio Babelsberg, the Film Museum Potsdam, the DEFA Foundation, and the Deutsche Kinemathek. I would also like to thank the Potsdam street-name expert, Klaus Arlt, for providing me with his street-name index.

This publication was produced as part of the research project “The Cinematic Face of Cities” (“Das filmische Gesicht der Städte,” from December 1, 2019 to September 30, 2021). It was funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research as part of the initiative “Small Disciplines—Great Potential” (“Kleine Fächer—Große Potenziale”). Against the background of the COVID-19 pandemic, the project was confronted with a number of substantial obstacles and challenges. Without the excellent support of Alla Nevshupa and Claudia Henseler from the DLR Projektträger (a project executing organization), the flexible support of my colleagues in the (Third-Party) Funding Administration as well as the Research, Human Resources & Legal, Finance & Procurement, and Library departments of the Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF—namely Susann Grille, Stella Donata Haag, Saskia Jaretzke, Kathrin Lorsch, Jana Meyer, Kirsten Otto, Johanna Quenzel, Daniela Rumbach, and Susanne Zimmermann—the research work and the publication would not have been possible, especially under such difficult conditions. I owe collegian food for

thought first and foremost to Susanne Eichner, Britta Hartmann, and Andy Räder as well as Francesco Bono, Christoph Büttner, Elisa Cuter, Senem Duruel Erkiliç, Guido Kirsten, Hanna Prenzel, Eileen Rositzka, Boukary Sawadogo, and Inga Selck.

An initial and important impetus for the emergence of the publication was the street-sign installation *The Cinematic Face of the City of Potsdam (Das filmische Gesicht der Stadt Potsdam)* (Figure 1), which I created, and which received a significant amount of financial support from the city of Potsdam. The installation was on display in front of the [Film Museum Potsdam](#) from September 8 to October 4, 2020, as part of the main celebrations for the German Unity Day and was also available online in virtual form. It presented the 31 publicly accessible cinematic streets currently to be found in Potsdam and introduced the honored filmmakers with short biographies. The 10 streets on the [Babelsberg](#) studio lot and the recently named [Hedy-Lamarr-Platz](#) were not part of the installation. In an introduction that was made accessible to the general public, three approaches to critical street-name studies were outlined—palimpsest, cultural arena, and performative space—and numerous questions were raised, especially about mechanisms of exclusion. In the installation itself, these mechanisms of exclusion could potentially be perceived by the visitors, but the questions raised were not pursued. Attention was, instead, focused on the biographies.

On the research side, an initial data collection, quantitative analysis, and contextualization as well as the development of preliminary interpretative approaches were carried out to facilitate the realization of the street-sign installation. The book draws on this preliminary work but goes well beyond the initial impetus provided by the installation. This later work included more intensive data collection, the quantitative analysis being finalized, a more comprehensive contextualization, and an enhanced process of interpretation. The 31 existing biographies were also revised for the book and supplemented by the addition of 11 new ones.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> This means that there are numerous indirect and direct self-citations in the book parts I, II, IV, and V. With this note, the explicit designation of the individual citations is omitted.



Figure 1: The open-air installation *The Cinematic Face of the City of Potsdam* (*Das filmische Gesicht der Stadt Potsdam*) presented filmmakers honored with a street name in front of the **Film Museum Potsdam** from September 8 to October 4, 2020.

Johann Pibert, Svenja Milautzcki, Anastasia Voloshina, Dieter Chill, and the **communication agency P3** contributed to the success of the installation through their diverse work. It was a particular pleasure for me that the publication made it possible to work with some of them again. I would like, in particular, to highlight the work of Johann Pibert. He not only researched dozens of biographies of film personalities for the installation and the present book—in the process composing texts according to his own scientific–artistic concept—but also took over the central proofreading and editing of the English and German versions of this publication. Johann Pibert also contributed his social science expertise. Together we wrote the methodological part. I would also like to mention Julia Dittmann. She supported the project’s engagement with the citizens and brought her expertise on revisionist film studies and her extensive research to the realization of the project. Svenja Milautzcki was instrumental in locating cinematic artifacts, which we found together with citizens in Potsdam, by means of a digital map of the city. She was also responsible for the analysis of the street-name index, supported by Johann Pibert. Its hundreds of entries, and many other valuable attributes carried out by Svenja Milautzcki, form a remarkable conceptual and methodological feat of patience and perseverance. Anastasia Voloshina was

responsible for the graphic illustrations and the design of a digital city of film. In the latter, the cinematic artifacts discovered were clustered by location and this arrangement was used for digital city tours—an attempt to interpret the cinematic artifacts interactively together with citizens. It was a pleasure for me to experience how work in the humanities, social sciences, and creative design were creatively combined in unexpected ways. I would also like to thank the students Lena Böckmann, Johanna Kunze, and Noah Meskina for their support during the last months of the book project. Not least, I would like to thank Dieter Chill for many of the photographs shown here, for accompanying me in the field research, and much more.

The possibility of realizing a book in the field of film studies as a public-interest publication—i.e., as a scientific publication that tries to reach a broader readership—I owe to the trusting, experimental, and supportive cooperation of the members of [AVINUS Verlag](#), especially Linda Kutzki, Anna Wiehl, Jasmin Kermanchi, and Thomas Weber.

# NOTES ON THE ENGLISH VERSION

Since the release of this book's [German version](#) in early 2022, there have been some changes regarding the cinematic streets: In September 2022, the cultural committee of the city of Potsdam recommended to the city council to rename Heinrich-George-Straße and Emil-Jannings-Straße to Lotte-Loebinger-Straße.<sup>1</sup> This recommendation was followed by the city council on October 5, 2022. According to the corresponding resolution, the name of the actor Heinrich George was to be included in a street-name pool<sup>2</sup> and to be "reused in a suitable place," while the name of the actor Emil Jannings "will not be reused."<sup>3</sup> In addition to questions of construction and new street design, a key factor in the decision was that Jannings's career "in the Nazi times" was perceived as "tainted," which is why the name was deemed "no longer acceptable"<sup>4</sup> today.

With the renaming (Figure 2), a deliberate step was taken to reduce the number of historically problematic street names in Potsdam. Furthermore, the renaming after the actress Lotte Loebinger means a slight improvement in the existing gender imbalance. It is precisely these issues of remembering questionable personalities through street names and the problematic underrepresentation of certain groups involved in the city's film history that this book highlights and

<sup>1</sup> See Stadtverordnetenversammlung der Landeshauptstadt Potsdam: Niederschrift der 26. öffentlichen Sitzung des Ausschusses für Kultur vom 22.09.2022, [Potsdam City Council's online information system](#), printed matter no. 22/SVV/0585, 1–13,

here 9–10. The documents stored in Potsdam City Council's online information system can be easily found by entering the corresponding number of the printed matter as a search criterion in the search field.

<sup>2</sup> The street-name pool can be found here: [https://vv.potsdam.de/vv/oe/1730101000\\_00008226.php#tab-links](https://vv.potsdam.de/vv/oe/1730101000_00008226.php#tab-links).

<sup>3</sup> Stadtverordnetenversammlung der Landeshauptstadt Potsdam: Niederschrift der 32. öffentlichen Sitzung der Stadtverordnetenversammlung der Landeshauptstadt Potsdam vom 05.10.2022, [Potsdam City Council's online information system](#), printed matter no. 22/SVV/0585, 1–63, here 25, own translation.

<sup>4</sup> Stadtverordnetenversammlung der Landeshauptstadt Potsdam: Umbenennung der Heinrich-George-Straße und der Emil-Jannings-Straße in "Lotte-Loebinger-Straße" (Beschlussvorlage), 22.06.2022, [Potsdam City Council's online information system](#), printed matter no. 22/SVV/0585, 1–4, here 3, own translation.



Figure 2: In the fall of 2022, the Potsdam City Council decided to rename Heinrich-George-Straße (a) and Emil-Jannings-Straße (b) to Lotte-Loebinger-Straße.

criticizes. Therefore, I am pleased to see that in the aftermath of the [German publication](#), new impulses have been given to the naming practice in Potsdam. However, whether the renaming can be traced back directly to the German book cannot be determined. What is certain, though, is that the city council's resolution is rooted in a greater critical sensitivity for the act of street naming and its connection to the public space as a site of representation and remembrance.

The short period of time between the German and the English release of this book did not allow the inclusion of the overwriting of Heinrich-George-Straße and

Emil-Jannings-Straße with Lotte-Loebinger-Straße in the quantitative analysis and further interpretation of the cinematic streetscape. The English version thus shows the status of the cinematic streetscape before the renaming. However, there are no longer 42 but 41 streets named after filmmakers in Potsdam. Moreover, there have been minor shifts in the gender imbalance in favor of female filmmakers as well as a slight reduction in the remembrance of persons with questionable connections to Nazi film production. All in all, despite the latest renaming, the results of this book—in particular, its critical position and the recommendations for further development of the cinematic streetscape in Potsdam—remain valid. Most importantly, the model of the circular film-related spatial practice constituting cities of film, which is presented in this book, can be applied in the analysis of other film cities, completely independently of the developments in Potsdam.

To make Lotte Loebinger visible, the English version offers an updated district map of Babelsberg as well as Loebinger's short biography.<sup>5</sup> I would appreciate the opportunity to add more short biographies in the future so that the recommendations of the book can be realized in the long run. Hopefully, the English version of the book will further contribute to the development of Potsdam as a city of film, as well as stimulate developments of other film cities.

I would like to thank the proofreader of the English version, Johann Pibert, as well as Patrick Jennings for additional proofreading. I also thank Johann Pibert for editing, Svenja Milautzcki for additional editing, and Melanie James (from “Take it as read”) for final editing.

Johann, without you this book would not have been possible. Thank you for your precision and persistence.

<sup>5</sup> I created Loebinger's short biography in collaboration with Johann Pibert.

# STRUCTURE AND HANDLING OF THE BOOK

This book is composed of five parts. Part I consists of two chapters that are introductory in nature. Chapter 1 takes a bird's eye view by presenting the film cities of the world as a global assemblage. Chapter 2 zooms in on a local assemblage, the UNESCO city of film Potsdam. It treats this assemblage as a case study, thus introducing the actual object of investigation: the cinematic streetscape of the Brandenburg state capital.

The main body of the book spans Parts II–IV and is devoted to the history of the cinematic streetscape of Potsdam. To give an account of this history, it is necessary to lay some groundwork: In Theory (Part II), two research strands, within which the present work is embedded, are outlined. These comprise city-centered film studies (Chapter 3) and critical street-name studies (Chapter 4). Both strands are brought together in Chapter 5, where both the book's objective and the research questions are formulated.

In Methodology (Part III), the quantitative analysis of the cinematic streetscape is undertaken. First, Chapter 6 presents the database, which consists of a street-name index, archival materials, publicly available information (accessed via the Internet), and the previously mentioned short biographies which were written especially for this purpose. The construction of the data set from the material supplied in the database is also presented. Thereupon, street-, person-, and film-related characteristics are analyzed (Chapter 7) and correlations between the characteristics are calculated (Chapter 8). Both operations attempt to answer the first research questions.

Building on these foundations, the actual history of the cinematic streetscape is told in Part IV. Against the backdrop of three essential approaches to critical street-name studies, the cinematic streetscape in Potsdam is interpreted as a palimpsest (Chapter 9), as a cultural arena (Chapter 10), and as a performative space (Chapter 11).

From the perspective of the palimpsest, the cinematic streetscape appears as an expanding and successively evolving text that is also characterized by overwritten passages. These overwritten passages include the no longer existing **Peter-Heuser-Straße**, named after a former cigarette entrepreneur

who entered the film business in the 1910s and became a serious competitor for the Universum-Film Aktiengesellschaft (Ufa). Moreover, the cinematic streetscape as a palimpsest displays many of the central features of classical film historiography.

From the perspective of the cultural arena, it becomes clear how parts of the cinematic streetscape generated memory–political disputes between the members of the Potsdam City Council. Here, streets—named after the actors Heinrich George and Emil Jannings as well as the directors Heiner Carow and Quentin Tarantino—become occasions for a struggle centered on the question of the value of recounting the evolution of National Socialist filmmaking and the preservation of East German film history.

And finally, the perspective of the performative space makes it possible to determine how cinematic street names echo in the urban space to produce clusters of artifacts.

In Chapter 12, the remaining research questions are answered by means of a summary of the results: The cinematic streetscape can be understood as part of a process resulting in the formation of three artifact clusters—a film-specific motif cluster, a person- or movie-character-specific motif cluster, and a material cluster. Furthermore, the relationship between the cinematic streetscape and the local assemblage in the city of film Potsdam is described. Together with many other mutually enabling cinematic elements, the cinematic streetscape contributes to the induction of the urban space and to the formation of an image of Potsdam as a city of film—a process which, in turn, enables the further evolution of the film city. Thus, the cinematic streetscape is part of a circular film-related spatial practice. This insight comes to fruition in the articulation of a new perspective on the global assemblage of cities of film. Finally, possible approaches for a continuation of the research work are sketched out and hints are given as to how the results can be used practically by those who see themselves as players in the development of the concept and practice of cities of film.

Part V consists of a presentation of the biographical texts of those filmmakers who were honored with a street name in Potsdam, each of which is assigned to the following districts: Groß Glienike (Chapter 13), Drewitz (including Kirchsteigfeld) (Chapter 14), and Babelsberg (Chapter 15). These texts, however,

are not conventional portraits tracing the evolution of individual artistic lives but original works created in a scientific–artistic procedure by Johann Pibert. The history and stories of each filmmaker were rearticulated—i.e., brought forth anew. The focus was not on the chronology or completeness of the biographies but on presenting the filmmakers to the citizens in a way that is close to the present. The scientific–artistic concept behind the texts is explained in Chapter 16. Another special feature of the biographies is that they provide an important component of the database for this book.

In this book, you are invited to move back and forth between the main text and the short biographies. In this way, you can independently supplement the main text with biographical information. The hyperlink structure will help you to do this: By clicking on the names of the filmmakers for whom biographical texts are available, you will have access to the biographies in question. Thus informed, you can return to the original place in the main text by clicking on the back symbol << at the end of the biographies. The names of the cinematic districts [Groß Glienicke](#), [Drewitz](#), [Kirchsteigfeld](#), and [Babelsberg](#) are also linked to the corresponding district maps. With the help of the maps, you can extend the reach of the text by orientating yourself geographically. At the same time, the biographical part of the book and the maps invite you to read the book not only as a study of the cinematic streetscape of Potsdam, but also encourage you to make practical use of it as a local walking map. In addition, the links to institutions and source materials as well as the comprehensive index enable you to read in a targeted way.

# I. INTRODUCTION

## 1. Cities of Film as Local Cinematic Assemblages

Cities of film exist all over the world. Los Angeles is a prominent example. The [Hollywood Sign](#) stands for the US dream factory, its history, and Hollywood's present standing as the quintessential city of film. The film studios, the [Academy Museum of Motion Pictures](#), the [Walk of Fame](#) on Hollywood Boulevard, the [TCL Chinese Theatre](#) with the hand and shoe prints of movie stars in the entrance area, the [John Wayne](#) statue in Beverly Hills—these are just the most obvious ways in which both the visitors to Hollywood and its residents encounter the film in the urban space. Numerous film festivals and other cinematic events as well as attractions such as studio tours and bus trips to the homes, villas, and mansions of the Hollywood stars attract tourists by the planeload. The landmarks and monuments as well as the cinematic institutions, events, and attractions are strategically framed by urban marketeers as an irresistibly attractive characteristic of the city.<sup>1</sup> Such attractions are supplemented by offers organized by civic film initiatives.<sup>2</sup> The whole ensemble is surrounded by manifold texts (such as, for instance, travel literature<sup>3</sup>) that highlight the way in which Los Angeles and film are inextricably linked.

In addition to the city of stars, there are many other medium-sized and small cities of film worldwide. In the Turkish city of Adana, for example, there is a walk of fame ([Şöhretler Kaldırımı](#))<sup>4</sup> and a film museum (Adana Sinema Müzesi). In the latter, an entire room is dedicated to [Yılmaz Güney](#), one of the most important Turkish filmmakers. More generally, one can get to know film personalities related to the city of Adana. Adana also hosts the international [Golden Boll Film Festival](#) (Altın Koza Film Festivali), which is of great importance to the Turkish film industry.

<sup>1</sup> For example, the official guide to Los Angeles promotes the [Starline Tours of Hollywood](#).

<sup>2</sup> One example of such an initiative is the [Secret Movie Club](#).

<sup>3</sup> Travel literature is understood here in the broadest sense: as printed travel guides, travel guides and blogs on the Internet, and also, for example, travel recommendations in the form of videos.

<sup>4</sup> However, this walk of fame honors not only filmmakers but also prominent citizens of Adana who come from other industries.

In Burkina Faso, Ouagadougou sees itself as the “capital of African film.”<sup>5</sup> In addition to cinemas, film production companies, and the film school Institut Imagine, the most important and largest film festival in Africa, the Pan-African Film and Television Festival of Ouagadougou (Festival panafricain du cinéma et de la télévision de Ouagadougou), takes place here.<sup>6</sup> In 2019, a statue was inaugurated in honor of the Cameroonian director, screenwriter, and actor Jean-Pierre Dikongué-Pipa.<sup>7</sup> In Ouagadougou’s city center, there is, in addition, another monument consisting of circular forms reminiscent of film reels and camera lenses, erected to pay tribute to the country’s filmmakers (Figure 3).



Figure 3: A monument in Ouagadougou pays tribute to Burkina Faso’s filmmakers.

The city of Bradford in Great Britain is another good example. The city hall and its historic prison wing have been specially adapted to accommodate film shootings. Plaques have been placed at locations in the city center to mark the

<sup>5</sup> Ruth Maclean: “Capital of African film”: the Burkina Faso festival celebrating continent’s movies, in: *The Guardian*, Feb 27, 2017.

<sup>6</sup> The mayor of Ouagadougou opened the festival in 2017 with the words, “This is the city of creativity, the city of culture, and the capital of African film”; *ibid*.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Valentin Kabore: Cinéma africain: Une statue immortalise Jean-Pierre Dikongué-Pipa à Ouagadougou, in: *LeFaso.net*, Feb 25, 2019.

spots where film shootings have taken place and free film screenings have become an important element in the creation of a cultural program aimed at senior citizens. The local [National Science and Media Museum](#) makes a point of addressing the emergent history of filmmaking in Bradford. These and other film-related activities (such as the placement of references to the movies in public spaces) received an enormous boost when Bradford became the first city to successfully apply for the title of [UNESCO Creative City of Film](#) in 2009.

Seventeen other cities, including Bradford, are gathered under the umbrella organization [UNESCO Cities of Film Network](#), among them Busan (South Korea), Mumbai (India), Qingdao (China), Rome (Italy), Santos (Brazil), Sofia (Bulgaria), and Wellington (New Zealand). These cities are characterized by a common orientation toward the world of film. They are home to film studios or film production infrastructure and host cinematic institutions such as film museums or film schools; they share the various characteristics that have come to define a city of film: hosting cinematic events, promoting and developing cinematic tourist attractions, embedding reference to film in public spaces, creating institutionalized marketing departments oriented toward film, and promoting travel literature thematically linking the city with film.

However, it is not only the prominent cinematic institutions, events, and attractions as well as the strategic marketing institutions, the film-related initiatives, and the various texts and publications that promote each of the above places as a city of film. In addition, cities of film often name streets, avenues, and squares after filmmakers or with another reference to film. In Los Angeles, there are, for example, streets named after [Fred Astaire](#), [Judy Garland](#), and [Hedy Lamarr](#), among others. In Adana, a park is named after the artist and filmmaker [Abidin Dino](#). In Ouagadougou, a street was dedicated to [Ousmane Sembène](#), a central founding figure of African cinema. A square bears the name Place des cinéastes (Filmmakers' Square). Bradford is an exception to this trend of linking particular public spaces with film or film personalities. However, it is considered a good idea and thought is being given to how the city's film history can be acknowledged in this way.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> According to information provided by David Wilson, director of [UNESCO Creative City of Film Bradford](#), in a social media message dated Sep 6, 2021, to Lisa Nawrocki, director of [UNESCO Creative City of Film Potsdam](#).

Nothing has yet been said of cinematic artifacts which, when embedded into the public space of the city, constitute a potent addition to the sense of a city being explicitly associated with film. Cinematic artifacts include landmarks, monuments, and those painted images and graphic collages in the public space for which movie stills<sup>9</sup> served as templates. Cinematic artifacts also include autograph cards and movie posters, displayed, for example, on the wall of a restaurant or café; star portraits of actors used as decorative elements in the creation of a promotional ambiance in a clothing store; behind-the-scenes pictures<sup>10</sup> used for much the same purpose in a hotel lobby; or old film canisters or spotlights used as decorative elements in an assortment of public spaces. In addition, one should include in this category those restaurants and hotels that have named themselves after a movie or an actor. This means that the adoption of film titles or names of filmmakers beyond street names also counts as cinematic artifacts. In many ways, cinematic street names and cinematic artifacts refer to the (local) film history and to film in general.

All of the characteristic elements of the city of film thus far referenced—prominent cinematic institutions, events, attractions, strategic marketing institutions, film-related initiatives, and various texts and publications—form, together with the cinematic street names and cinematic artifacts, an extremely heterogeneous cinematic assemblage. This assemblage constitutes an accumulative combination of elements that are linked to film in manifold ways, many of which are firmly anchored in the everyday lives of the residents. In this regard, no two cities of film are alike; each local cinematic assemblage is constituted in its own way and evolves at its own pace. When we compare Los Angeles as a city of film with, for example, Adana, Ouagadougou, or Bradford, we are referencing, in each case, a completely different cultural milieu and one, moreover, that inter-

<sup>9</sup> Movie stills are photographs taken during the production of a movie and used by production companies to promote their product. They are recreations of movie scenes intended to give an impression of what the movie will look like and who will be in it. For more information on the history of movie stills, see Anna Luise Kiss: Die Spur der Bilder, in: Anna Luise Kiss, Dieter Chill (eds.): *Pathenheimer: Filmfotografie. DEFA Movie Stills*, Berlin 2016, 174–181.

<sup>10</sup> Behind-the-scenes pictures are photographs taken during the production of a movie and showing the movie team at work or during breaks from shooting.

acts with film in its own particular and often peculiar way. That said, we are still justified, however, in designating the whole conglomerate of film cities as a worldwide global cinematic assemblage because they are united each by their common connection with and involvement in an international network of cities steeped in cinematic lore and committed to the art of film and its promotion. This international assemblage is in constant flux as the cities of film continue to evolve. With every new film-related location, every new event, every new cinematic artifact or artifact cluster, the local cinematic assemblages change and the global assemblage follows suit. The converse also follows: when cinematic references at the local scale are lost or overwritten, the larger assemblage is depleted. Each description of a city of film thus represents ‘only’ a snapshot in a continuous process of change.

## 2. The Cinematic Streetscape in Potsdam as an Object of Investigation in Film Studies

This book takes the global cinematic assemblage of cities of film described in the previous chapter as a starting point and returns to it at the end. However, the study focuses on Potsdam as a local cinematic assemblage which has been part of the [UNESCO Cities of Film Network](#) since October 2019. Potsdam is home to the [Studio Babelsberg](#)—a film production lot where movies have been made since 1912. The history of the studio can be roughly grouped into five periods: After an initial period during which it established itself in film production (1912–1921), the studio was associated with the movie company Universum-Film Aktiengesellschaft (Ufa) (1921–1933) and Nazi film production (1933–1945). After World War II, Deutsche Film Aktiengesellschaft (DEFA), the German Democratic Republic's (GDR's) central production studio, used the lot (1946–1992). After the end of the GDR and after German reunification, the studio remained a film and television production facility and is now operated by the Studio Babelsberg AG (1993–present).<sup>1</sup> Numerous media companies have settled at the lot so that the studio is now regarded as part of the [Media City Babelsberg](#).<sup>2</sup> Potsdam is also home to the [Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF](#), the [Film Museum Potsdam](#), the “Sehsüchte” and “moving history” film festivals, and the theme park [Film Park Babelsberg](#). The [Marketing Department of the City of Potsdam](#) and the [PMSG Potsdam Marketing and Service GmbH](#) focus on the topic of film as an essential part of the city's brand in their publications and events. Tourist publications also encourage visitors to discover, explore, and enjoy Potsdam as a city of film.

<sup>1</sup> A chronological arrangement of studio history based on film history or the studio's development can only be made roughly. The transitions between the individual periods are fluid due to personnel and stylistic continuities, among other things. In this chapter, the periods have been adopted from [Michael Wedel, Chris Wahl, and Ralf Schenk](#); see [Michael Wedel, Chris Wahl, Ralf Schenk \(eds.\): \*100 Years Studio Babelsberg. The Art of Filmmaking\*](#), Kempen 2012.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. anonymous: [Media Location. Dream Factory Babelsberg](#), in: [potsdam.de](#).

For this project, Potsdam's cinematic streetscape, as part of its local cinematic assemblage, was chosen as the central object of investigation. Just as the local cinematic assemblage as a whole can be seen as a sub-assemblage of the global assemblage, the cinematic streetscape of Potsdam can be seen as a sub-assemblage of the local cinematic assemblage. The decision to focus on cinematic streets was motivated by three factors: Firstly, as far as city-centered film studies are concerned, cinematic streetscapes have not yet received scholarly attention (see Chapter 3). Similarly, no study has been devoted to streets named after film personalities in critical street-name studies (see Chapter 4). This book addresses this twofold research gap.

Secondly, street naming is a topical issue. Starting from the US Civil Rights Movement<sup>3</sup> and continuing to the contemporary Black Lives Matter movement,<sup>4</sup> the act of naming in the context of the public space has become the object of sharp critical attention. The same is true of public monuments and other forms of urban honorary signification. This is the case not only in the USA but also in Germany and other countries.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> For more information on the critical discussion of street naming in the context of the US Civil Rights Movement, see Derek H. Alderman: *A Street Fit for a King: Naming Places and Commemoration in the American South*, in: *Professional Geographer*, vol. 52, no. 4, 2000, 672–684 and Derek H. Alderman, Joshua Inwood: *Street naming and the politics of belonging: spatial injustices in the toponymic commemoration of Martin Luther King Jr*, in: *Social & Cultural Geography*, vol. 14, no. 2, 2013, 211–233.

<sup>4</sup> For more information on the critical discussion of street naming in the context of the Black Lives Matter movement, see Brianne McGonigle Leyh: *Imperatives of the Present: Black Lives Matter and the politics of memory and memorialization*, in: *Netherlands Quarterly of Human Rights*, vol. 38, no. 4, 2020, 239–245.

<sup>5</sup> One example of this topic attracting public attention also in Germany is the front page of the newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung* from July 19, 2020, which features a street sign of Mohrenstraße in Berlin that has been pasted over. Moreover, a feature article is devoted to the naming history of Straße der Pariser Kommune in Berlin and a cartoon parodies the debates about street naming; see Patrick Bahners: *Die Straßen der Kommune. Grenzen der Geschichtspolitik*, in: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung*, Jul 19, 2020, 33–34 and Ahoi Polloi: *Richtig & Falsch. Cartoon*, in: *ibid.*, 8.

Thirdly, the decision to designate the cinematic streetscape as the object of investigation is based on a pragmatic research consideration: the cinematic streetscape is a well-defined sub-assemblage of the local cinematic assemblage—unlike, for example, the cinematic artifacts, many of which can be found in large numbers in Potsdam. This pragmatic research consideration does not mean that the other elements of the local cinematic assemblage are left out of study. On the contrary, the overall goal is to integrate the reflection on the relations of the cinematic streetscape with the other elements of Potsdam’s cinematic assemblage and, indeed, with the global assemblage of cities of film. This process of integration is undertaken at the end of the book.

As was said earlier, the designation of cinematic streetscapes as the object of investigation uncovers a research gap of considerable topicality within the discipline of city-centered film studies and critical street-name studies. The study of Potsdam’s cinematic streetscape opens the possibility of developing an understanding of the interplay between the heterogeneous elements of Potsdam’s local cinematic assemblage and generating a new perspective on the global cinematic assemblage of cities of film.

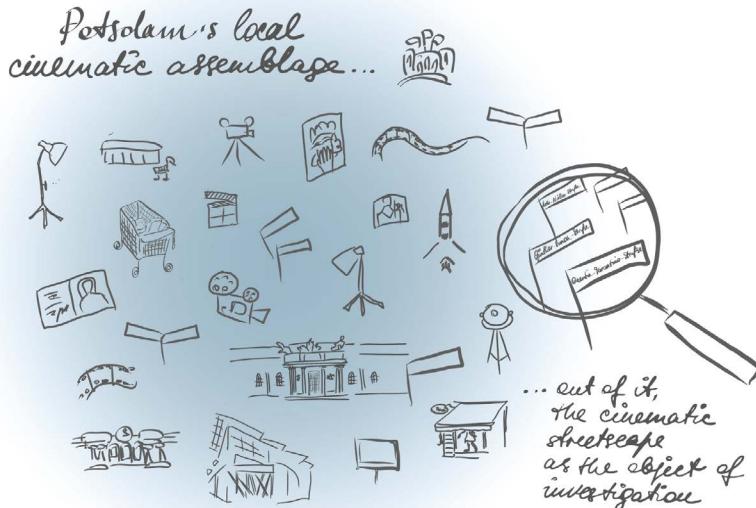


Figure 4: Out of Potsdam's heterogeneous cinematic assemblage, the cinematic streetscape was chosen as the object of investigation.

## II. THEORY

The study of the cinematic streetscape of Potsdam takes place against the backdrop of two research strands: The first strand is constituted by various film-studies publications on the topic of “film and the city”—with the sub-topics “the city in film” and “film in the city.” This strand has, by now, evolved into the comprehensive approach “film and space.” The second strand originates in the corpus of critical research on street naming, a research orientation that has become more extensive in recent years. In the following, both research strands are first outlined separately (Chapters 3 and 4) and then combined; following this, the research questions and the objective of the book are formulated (Chapter 5).

### 3. City-Centered Film Studies

The relations between film and the city are not only manifold; there is talk of a real “symbiosis”<sup>1</sup> between them, of film and the city having “inscribed”<sup>2</sup> themselves on each other in the process, making each a necessary condition for the other.<sup>3</sup> This symbiosis exists, on the one hand, because of the parallel development of the modern metropolises and cinema as a primarily urban phenomenon<sup>4</sup> and, on the other hand, because of the spaces of perception and experience that movies and cities have generated in their mutual interaction as well as the commonality of aesthetic principles that has followed from this interaction.<sup>5</sup> **Ackbar Abbas** describes this phenomenon as a shared “aesthetic of movement where instability

<sup>1</sup> Joachim Peach: Das Sehen von Filmen und filmisches Sehen. Zur Geschichte der filmischen Wahrnehmung im 20. Jahrhundert, in: Knut Hickethier (ed.): *Filmgeschichte schreiben. Aufsätze, Entwürfe und Methoden. Dokumentation der Tagung der GFF 1988*, Berlin 1989, 68–92, here 72, own translation.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., own translation.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Peter Podrez: *Urbane Visionen. Filmische Entwürfe der Zukunftsstadt*, Würzburg 2020, 150–153.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 153–157.

becomes paradoxically the principle of structure”<sup>6</sup> and goes on to explain: “It would be hard to imagine the existence of cinema without the experience of cities.”<sup>7</sup> It is for this reason that film studies are intensively researching the thematic field of “film and the city.”<sup>8</sup> The work on the various facets of this symbiosis is so extensive that it is possible to speak of a distinct research strand within film studies—city-centered film studies. The cultural theorists Siegfried Kracauer and Walter Benjamin are considered the founding fathers of city-centered film studies. Within this research domain, the sub-topic “the city in film,” in particular, has received much scholarly attention to date.<sup>9</sup>

When scholars address the sub-topic “the city in film,” the focus is often on the representation of urban landscape in feature movies and documentaries—a tendency that in many cases presents its object in the mode of historical progression.<sup>10</sup> Other film studies are dedicated to specific major cities such as Hamburg, Istanbul, Cologne, London, Los Angeles, Munich, or New York, and their cinematic representation.<sup>11</sup> As an example, Abbas’s contribution to a critical

<sup>6</sup> Ackbar Abbas: Cinema, the City, and the Cinematic, in: Patrice Petro, Linda Krause (eds.): *Global Cities. Cinema, Architecture, and Urbanism in a Digital Age*, New Brunswick, New Jersey 2003, 142–156, here 144.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Anna Luise Kiss: Film und (Stadt-)Raum. Eine Analyse von filmischen Bildern im städtischen Raum, in: Raphaela Kogler, Jeannine Wintzer (eds.): *Raum und Bild: Strategien visueller raumbezogener Forschung*, Wiesbaden 2021, 227–240.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Abbas: Cinema, the City, and the Cinematic, 144 and Kiss: Film und (Stadt-)Raum, 230.

<sup>10</sup> For more information on this, see Hanno Möbius, Guntram Vogt: *Drehort Stadt. Das Thema „Großstadt“ im deutschen Film*, Marburg 1990, Guntram Vogt: *Die Stadt im Kino. Deutsche Spielfilme 1900–2000*, Marburg 2001, Eva-Maria Warth, Gisela Welz (eds.): *Großstadtdarstellungen im amerikanischen Dokumentarfilm*, Amerikastudien/ American Studies, vol. 37, no. 1, 1992, Laura Frahm: *Jenseits des Raums. Zur filmischen Topologie des Urbanen*, Bielefeld 2010, and François Niney, François Barré: *Visions urbaines. Villes d’Europe à l’écran*, Paris 1994.

<sup>11</sup> See Michael Töteberg: *Filmstadt Hamburg. Von Hans Albers bis Wim Wenders, vom Abaton zu den Zeise-Kinos: Kino-Geschichte(n) einer Großstadt*, Hamburg 1997, Mehmet Öztürk: *Sine-Masal Kentler: Modernitenin İki “Kahraman” Kent ve Sinema Üzerine Bir İnceleme*, İstanbul 2005, Christa Aretz, Irene Schoor: *Köln im Film*.

interpretation of Ang Lee's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2000) and Kar-Wai Wong's *In the Mood for Love* (2000) can be cited. Abbas interprets both movies as a cinematic response to a Hong Kong that can no longer be comprehended by man as a whole.<sup>12</sup> For Abbas, film proves to be the only medium still capable of capturing a city like Hong Kong, for "the exorbitant city can be represented only as the cinematic city."<sup>13</sup>

Specific urban film genres such as city symphonies and street films<sup>14</sup> or genres in which cities play a central role are also the subject of investigation in the context of the sub-topic "the city in film."<sup>15</sup> Likewise, individual city-specific themes are analyzed, such as the cinematic staging of the contrast between city and countryside<sup>16</sup> or border demarcations within cities.<sup>17</sup> In addition to the transformation of the bodily experience of the city into filmic experience, numerous

*Filmgeschichte(n) einer Stadt*, Cologne 2004, Maurizio Cinquegrani: The Cinematic Production of Iconic Space in Early Films of London (1895–1914), in: Richard Koeck, Les Roberts (eds.): *The City and the Moving Image. Urban Projections*, Basingstoke 2010, 169–182, Silke Roesler-Keilholz, Sascha Keilholz (eds.): *AugenBlick. Konstanzer Hefte zur Medienwissenschaft. Heft 59. Virtuelle Topografien: Los Angeles multimedial*, Marburg 2014, Ingo Tornow: *München im Film*, Munich 1995, Silke Roesler: *Doing City. New York im Spannungsfeld medialer Praktiken*, Marburg 2010, and David I. Grossvogel: *Scenes in the City. Film Visions of Manhattan Before 9/11*, New York 2003.

<sup>12</sup> See Abbas: Cinema, the City, and the Cinematic, 143.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> See, e.g., Chris Dähne: *Die Stadtsinfonien der 1920er Jahre. Architektur zwischen Film, Fotografie und Literatur*, Bielefeld 2013, Patrice Petro: *Joyless Streets. Women and Melodramatic Representation in Weimar Germany*, Princeton, New Jersey 1989, and Bastian Heinsohn: *The Language of the Urban Street in German Culture*, Ann Arbor 2009.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Podrez: *Urbane Visionen*, 160–163.

<sup>16</sup> For more information on movies that address the duality of city and countryside in African cinema, see Boukary Sawadogo: *West African Screen Media. Comedy, TV Series, and Transnationalization*, East Lansing 2019, 40–42. See also Stefan Rehm: *Stadt/Land. Eine Raumkonfiguration in Literatur und Film der Weimarer Republik*, Würzburg 2015.

<sup>17</sup> For more information on this, see Walburga Hülk, Stephanie Schwerter (eds.): *Mauern, Grenzen, Zonen. Geteilte Städte in Literatur und Film*, Heidelberg 2018.

works deal with cinematic visions of future cities.<sup>18</sup> Movies such as *Metropolis* (1927, directed by Fritz Lang), *Blade Runner* (1982, directed by Ridley Scott), *Brazil* (1985, directed by Terry Gilliam), and *The Matrix* (1999, directed by Lana and Lilly Wachowski) serve as quintessential case studies in this context.<sup>19</sup> Other works examine a particular film era, the Nouvelle Vague for example, in terms of its representation of the city.<sup>20</sup>

In addition, film scholars repeatedly turn to specific directors and their representations of the city—for example, Pier Paolo Pasolini’s projection of the attributes commonly associated with the act of prostitution onto the city of Rome in *Mamma Roma* (1962);<sup>21</sup> or Jean-Luc Godard’s critique of modernist urban planning on the example of a Parisian suburb in *2 or 3 Things I Know About Her* (1967);<sup>22</sup> or Yilmaz Güney’s cinematic mapping of the city of Adana;<sup>23</sup> and Eric Rohmer’s Paris movies which are interpreted as a form of a cinematographic map.<sup>24</sup> In these works, directors are often understood as cartographers of the city, a metaphor linked to reflections on the so-called mapping impulse of film.<sup>25</sup> This

<sup>18</sup> See the concise overview in Podrez: *Urbane Visionen*, 14–16.

<sup>19</sup> Cf., e.g., Peter Sands: Global Cannibal City Machines. Recent Visions of Urban/Social Space, in: Petro et al. (eds.): *Global Cities*, 129–141.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Stefano Baschiera: At Home with the Nouvelle Vague: Apartment Plots and Domestic Urbanism in Godard’s *Une femme est une femme* and Varda’s *Cléo de 5 à 7*, in: Stefano Baschiera, Miriam De Rosa (eds.): *Film and Domestic Space. Architectures, Representations, Dispositif*, Edinburgh 2020, 171–187, here 172–173. An overview of studies devoted to the city as a subject of film is provided by Podrez: *Urbane Visionen*, 157–160.

<sup>21</sup> See Andri Gerber: *Architektur und Film bei Pasolini und Godard: Ein metaphorisches Bordell!*, in: Johannes Binotto (ed.): *Film/Architektur. Perspektiven des Kinos auf den Raum*, Basel 2017, 172–187, here 176.

<sup>22</sup> See *ibid.*, 172–187.

<sup>23</sup> See Olgı Yiğit: *Mapping the Cinematic City: Adana in Yilmaz Güney’s Film*, in: *Communication & Methods*, vol. 1, no. 2, 2019, 209–220.

<sup>24</sup> See Richard Misek: Mapping Rohmer: Cinematic Cartography in Post-war Paris, in: Les Roberts (ed.): *Mapping Cultures. Place, Practice, Performance*, Basingstoke 2012, 53–67, here 53.

<sup>25</sup> For more information on this, see Teresa Castro: *Cinema’s Mapping Impulse: Questioning Visual Culture*, in: *Cartographic Journal*, vol. 46, no. 1, 2009, 9–15.

impulse is enabled through the ability of film to visually conceptualize space and to make it understandable, for example, by using specific camera movements in a manner comparable with the act of mapping the urban or rural landscape.<sup>26</sup> The question as to which cities in particular are represented in film and how this process unfolds in cinematic terms is of continuing relevance. As Hellmut Fröhlich and Andreas Hepp have shown, the cinematic representation of cities influences our conception of space and its appropriation.<sup>27</sup> Movies, “in their appropriated form as elements of everyday conceptions of space, are an integral part of human geography.”<sup>28</sup>

A complementary direction has been added to city-centered film studies by the New Film History—a film-studies paradigm that established itself in the late 1970s<sup>29</sup> and over the following years expanded the thematic field of “film and the city.” The new paradigm emerged due to an increase in “dissatisfaction”<sup>30</sup> with the publications on film history available until then—retrospectively referred to as classical film historiography or “old film history.”<sup>31</sup> These are linearly narrated historical accounts<sup>32</sup> in the “tradition of comprehensive historical narratives since

<sup>26</sup> Cf. ibid., 13 and 15. An overview of studies that deal with urban filmmakers is provided by Podrez: *Urbane Visionen*, 160.

<sup>27</sup> See Hellmut Fröhlich: *Das neue Bild der Stadt. Filmische Stadtbilder und alltägliche Raumvorstellungen im Dialog*, Stuttgart 2007 and Andreas Hepp: *Netzwerke der Medien. Medienkulturen und Globalisierung*, Wiesbaden 2004.

<sup>28</sup> Fröhlich: *Das neue Bild der Stadt*, 345, own translation. See also Kiss: Film und (Stadt-)Raum, 230.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Malte Hagner: *Where Is Cinema (Today)? The Cinema in the Age of Media Immanence*, in: *Cinéma & Cie*, vol. 11, no. 2, 2008, 15–22, here 15.

<sup>30</sup> Gabriele Jutz, Gottfried Schlemmer: Vorschläge zur Filmgeschichtsschreibung. Mit einigen Beispielen zur Geschichte filmischer Repräsentations- und Wahrnehmungskonventionen, in: Hickethier (ed.): *Filmgeschichte schreiben*, 61–67, here 61, own translation.

<sup>31</sup> Thomas Elsaesser: The New Film History, in: *Sight & Sound*, vol. 55, no. 4, 1986, 246–251, here 247.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Peter Bosma: *Filmkunde. Een inleiding*, Nijmegen 1991, 138.

the 19<sup>th</sup> century.”<sup>33</sup> In an orderly sequence of movies and male filmmakers,<sup>34</sup> film scholars worked their way through “‘history-making’ examples.”<sup>35</sup> Without transparency and according to questionable selection criteria, movies were compiled into canons<sup>36</sup> of outstanding “firsts,”<sup>37</sup> thus reducing the complex development of cinema to a few, mostly European and US movies.<sup>38</sup> The film historiography available until then gave “the illusion of a homogeneous whole,”<sup>39</sup> although it was a matter of constructed continuities. Peter Bosma describes classical film historiography as “a bird’s eye view on the peaks of film history, which were thus declared to be the only content worth knowing.”<sup>40</sup> According to Bosma, in classical film historiography, male authors had endeavored to connect the peaks of film history

as harmoniously as possible; from this perspective the development of the art of film proceeded along a clear and straight line, with the intention of avoiding detours and omitting what was deemed not to fit in.<sup>41</sup>

Furthermore, classical film historiography was characterized by a clear focus on feature movies and heteronormative trends. As a result, the history of documentaries, amateur and experimental movies, and that of queer cinema received little to no attention.

In the 1980s, there was a proliferation of voices declaring that film history should not be told solely “as a story of the best and most incisive examples, but

<sup>33</sup> Knut Hickethier: Filmgeschichte zwischen Kunst- und Mediengeschichte. Zur Einleitung, in: Knut Hickethier (ed.): *Filmgeschichte schreiben*, 7–22, here 15, own translation. On the structural reasons for this type of film historiography, including lack of or limited access to archival materials and movies, see Bosma: *Filmkunde*, 143–148.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Elsaesser: The New Film History, 247 and Bosma: *Filmkunde*, 137.

<sup>35</sup> Hickethier: Filmgeschichte zwischen Kunst- und Mediengeschichte, 14, own translation.

<sup>36</sup> For more information on this, see Heinz-B. Heller: Kanonbildung und Filmgeschichtsschreibung, in: Hickethier (ed.): *Filmgeschichte schreiben*, 125–133.

<sup>37</sup> Elsaesser: The New Film History, 248, 249.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Hickethier: Filmgeschichte zwischen Kunst- und Mediengeschichte, 14.

<sup>39</sup> Jutz et al.: Vorschläge zur Filmgeschichtsschreibung, 61, own translation.

<sup>40</sup> Bosma: *Filmkunde*, 137, own translation.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., own translation.

also as one of hindrances and oppressions, of failures and misdevelopments.”<sup>42</sup> Increasingly, alternatives to the criticized teleological or purpose-oriented forms of representation were being considered.<sup>43</sup> Film scholars also wanted to move away from the previous sole concentration on the concept of the star,<sup>44</sup> from male-oriented and gendered narratives of winners, from “tales of pioneers,”<sup>45</sup> and from the compilation of lists of best movies, all of which went hand in hand with the presentation of movies as “products of one author,”<sup>46</sup> even though they were, in actuality, collective works.<sup>47</sup> Reflections also emerged on the need for an international perspective in film historiography that would do justice to the interconnected nature of film production and move away from Eurocentrism and the focus on US production.<sup>48</sup>

The New Film History initially advocated a revision of the accounts previously written on the subject of the prehistory of film and its early evolution.<sup>49</sup> The term New Film History goes back to Thomas Elsaesser.<sup>50</sup> In an anthology review in 1986, he described the new tendency in film studies to no longer tell film history through formal or historical aspects of movies alone. He recognized that instead, film scholars had begun to examine how film aesthetics was invariably influenced by technological, economic, and social factors and, under certain

<sup>42</sup> Hickethier: *Filmgeschichte zwischen Kunst- und Mediengeschichte*, 14, own translation.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. ibid., 18 and James Chapman, Mark Glancy, Sue Harper: Introduction, in: James Chapman, Mark Glancy, Sue Harper (eds.): *The New Film History. Sources, Methods, Approaches*, Basingstoke 2007, 1–10, here 3.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Werner Faulstich: Filmanalyse als Filmgeschichte: Prinzipien einer konstruktivistischen Filmgeschichtsschreibung, in: Hickethier (ed.): *Filmgeschichte schreiben*, 153–162, here 156.

<sup>45</sup> Elsaesser: *The New Film History*, 246.

<sup>46</sup> Jutz et al.: Vorschläge zur Filmgeschichtsschreibung, 62, own translation.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Andrew Spicer: The Author as Author: Restoring the Screenwriter to British Film History, in: Chapman et al. (eds.): *The New Film History*, 89–103, here 89–90.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Hickethier: *Filmgeschichte zwischen Kunst- und Mediengeschichte*, 16.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Paul Kusters: *New Film History. Grundzüge einer neuen Filmgeschichtswissenschaft*, in: *montage AV*, vol. 5, no. 1, 1996, 39–60, here 39 and 56.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Chapman et al.: Introduction, 5.

circumstances, how these factors even determined it.<sup>51</sup> The New Film History shifted the focus from the often anecdotal stories about brilliant male filmmakers and their masterpieces to works about the diverse creative professionals who played a significant role in shaping movies from behind the camera.<sup>52</sup> One of the results of this shift was research explicitly focused on filmmaking by women.<sup>53</sup>

With the emergence of the New Film History, a novel understanding of scholarly film sources was also developed: from then on, it was not only movies, film reviews, and published interviews with male directors that were consulted, but an increasingly broad range of nonfilmic materials, consisting of various production documents, historical statistics, letters from readers, or interviews with contemporary witnesses.<sup>54</sup> It was precisely this tendency to search for the undiscovered and often small-scale source materials, which was put together in the process of writing as a mosaic-like theoretical assemblage, that gave rise to comparisons with archaeology.<sup>55</sup> An interest in the—figuratively speaking—“close-up rather than the long shot,”<sup>56</sup> and in “micro-history”<sup>57</sup> as well as in the local film history<sup>58</sup> developed. All in all, the question of what was worth researching was answered anew.<sup>59</sup>

Revolutionized in this way, film historians began to focus on different production and exhibition practices. The varying contexts and circumstances of film production, distribution, and reception became the object of research. Thus, the

<sup>51</sup> Cf. ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. ibid., 6, James Chapman, Mark Glancy, Sue Harper: Authorship, in: Chapman et al. (eds.): *The New Film History*, 69–71, here 69, and Laurie Ede: Art in Context: British Film Design of the 1940s, in: ibid., 73–88, here 86.

<sup>53</sup> See, e.g., Melanie Bell: *Movie Workers. The Women Who Made British Cinema*, Champaign 2021.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Chapman et al.: Introduction, 7 and James Chapman, Mark Glancy, Sue Harper: Reception, in: Chapman et al. (eds.): *The New Film History*, 181–183.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Thomas Elsaesser: *Film History as Media Archaeology. Tracking Digital Cinema*, Amsterdam 2016 and Chapman et al.: Introduction, 7.

<sup>56</sup> Chapman et al.: Introduction, 1.

<sup>57</sup> Elsaesser: The New Film History, 248. On micro-history, see also Bosma: *Filmkunde*, 150.

<sup>58</sup> See, e.g., Anne Peach: Von der Filmgeschichte vergessen. Die Geschichte des Kinos, in: Hickethier (ed.): *Filmgeschichte schreiben*, 41–49, here 42.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Ede: Art in Context, 73.

concrete spatial–material side—i.e., the specific locations of film production and viewing—precipitated an interest in the question of how these venues became part of urban landscapes.<sup>60</sup> Researchers such as Anne Peach turned their attention to a site long forgotten by classical film historiography—the cinema itself.<sup>61</sup> With this new focus on the physical aspects of film production, distribution, and reception, which included a consideration of archival materials, the research field of “film and the city” was expanded to include the sub-topic “film *in the city*.”

The consumption of movies and, more generally, audiovisual content has ceased to be confined to the arena of cinema and television. We encounter audiovisual content at every step and especially in cities: for example, on public transport displays, on billboards, and in shop windows. Since the 1990s, various strands of research in media studies have been investigating the presence of audiovisual media in the urban space under the concept of the mediatized city.<sup>62</sup> One of these strands investigates the strategic use of audiovisual content on LED displays situated in public spaces to attract the attention of passersby. In examining this phenomenon, parallels are drawn with early cinema, the so-called cinema of attractions, which attempted to captivate its audience in similar ways—namely, with brevity, “bang effects,” and pointedly.<sup>63</sup>

Given the displacement of the cinema as the primary site of moviegoing experience and the multiplication of spaces where we encounter movies—described by Francesco Casetti as the “explosion of cinema”<sup>64</sup>—, film scholars are asking

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Kusters: *New Film History*, 46–49 and Chapman et al.: Introduction, 7.

<sup>61</sup> See Peach: Von der Filmgeschichte vergessen, 41.

<sup>62</sup> See Andreas Hepp, Sebastian Kubitschko, Inge Marszolek: *Einleitung: Die mediatisierte Stadt. Kommunikative Figurationen des Urbanen*, in: Andreas Hepp, Sebastian Kubitschko, Inge Marszolek (eds.): *Die mediatisierte Stadt. Kommunikative Figurationen des urbanen Zusammenlebens*, Wiesbaden 2018, 1–16. On the critique of the term mediatization, see ibid., 2–3 and 5–8. A summary of the critical discourse can be found in Kiss: Film und (Stadt-)Raum, 238–239.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Fred Truniger: *In der Stadt der bewegten Bilder. Der öffentliche Raum als Kino der Attraktionen*, in: Binotto (ed.): *Film/Architektur*, 222–237 and Kiss: Film und (Stadt-)Raum, 238–239.

<sup>64</sup> Francesco Casetti: *Die Explosion des Kinos. Filmische Erfahrung in der post-kinematographischen Epoche*, in: *montage AV*, vol. 19, no. 1, 2010, 11–35, own translation.

*where* cinema is today.<sup>65</sup> The presence of audiovisual content in all its modes is ubiquitous in public space and its effect is intensified by the general profusion of media. A by no means exhaustive list would include digital recording processes, various distribution channels (DVD, video on demand, YouTube, etc.), mobile devices, the integration of movies into product universes, and the utilization of cinematic forms in the art world.<sup>66</sup> We can, with some confidence, state that film and cinema have lost their “material, textual, economic and cultural stability”<sup>67</sup> and have achieved a “status of fluidity.”<sup>68</sup> We live in a “metacinematic universe”<sup>69</sup> in which film and cinema are part of our everyday life. They shape our thinking and our being such that:

Our experience—our memory and subjectivity, our percepts and affects—are always already mediatised, so in a certain way we are in the cinema, even if we are not physically in the cinema.<sup>70</sup>

Based on such considerations, one can speak of a radical turn to space in film studies since about the mid-2000s—a topological turn.<sup>71</sup> Using terms such as “cinematic geography, cartographic cinema, cinematic cartography, cinematic urbanism, urban cinematics, urban projections, movie mapping, cinetecture, city in film, cinematic city,”<sup>72</sup> the role of film in diverse spatial constellations as well as processes of space production and appropriation are investigated. The interrelationships between film, city, country, and space as well as the manifold

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Hagener: [Where Is Cinema \(Today\)?](#) and Stefano Baschiera, Miriam De Rosa: Introduction, in: Baschiera et al. (eds.): *Film and Domestic Space*, 1–15, here 2.

<sup>66</sup> For more information on this, see Hagener: [Where Is Cinema \(Today\)?](#), 16–17.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 18. On the terms experience and affect, see the film-psychological experience matrix in Johann Pibert: [Grundzüge einer affektiv-integrativen Filmpychologie](#), in: *ffk Journal*, no. 4, 2019, 141–154, here 150, Table 1 and Johann Pibert: [Infinite Disco vs. Studio 2054. Toward a Film Psychology of Virtual Concerts in the COVID-19 Pandemic](#), in: *ffk Journal*, no. 7, 2022, 92–107, here 97, Table 1.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Baschiera et al.: Introduction, 1.

<sup>72</sup> Julia Hallam, Les Roberts: [Film and Spatiality: Outline of a New Empiricism](#), in: Julia Hallam, Les Roberts (eds.): *Locating the Moving Image. New Approaches to Film and Place*, Bloomington 2014, 1–30, here 1.

connections of cinematic and physical spaces, are examined. This is the case in studies on film-induced tourism,<sup>73</sup> but above all in numerous works in which strategies of mapping, localization, and visualization of the relationship between film and space are employed.<sup>74</sup> These often diverse works have an interdisciplinary orientation in common.<sup>75</sup> With the displacement of film's traditional spaces, film studies, too, have had to leave their disciplinary realms and adopt a more fluid and dynamic mode. By collaborating with urban geographical and architectural studies as well as digital humanities, and by adopting some of their methods, the approach "film and space" and its sub-topics "the city in film" and "film in the city" have productively merged into the comprehensive and open-ended approach "film and space." That said, it is noticeable that an investigation into cinematic streetscapes and the interplay of the various cinematic elements that come together to create a city of film has not been encountered in city-centered film studies to date.

<sup>73</sup> See, e.g., Anne Marit Waade: *Nordic Noir Tourism and Television Landscapes: In the Footsteps of Kurt Wallander and Saga Norén*, in: *Scandinavica*, vol. 55, no. 1, 2016, 41–65, Sue Beeton: *Film-Induced Tourism*, Clevedon 2005, and Hallam et al.: *Film and Spatiality*, 9.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Hallam et al.: *Film and Spatiality*, 2–3 and 8.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 6–7.

## 4. Critical Street-Name Studies

In the meantime, street-name studies have emancipated themselves from what was, initially, a practice of encyclopedic cataloging. Until the 1980s, researchers assumed that street names could be interpreted as mirrors<sup>1</sup> or objective indicators<sup>2</sup> of the cultural history of a place. The prevailing view was that a compilation of past and present street names associated with a particular place could paint a complete picture of the culture that had evolved and persisted there over time. Street-name catalogs were considered suitable material for the methodical reconstruction of the history of a place and its inhabitants.<sup>3</sup> Place-name studies (toponymy) were understood as an objective cultural indicator.<sup>4</sup>

Gradually, but by no means in a teleological way, new approaches have accumulated in a growing number of scholarly works to justify the presence of a distinct critical turn.<sup>5</sup> In addition to individual essays on case studies in various countries, there have so far been, in particular, two anthologies that have described this development.<sup>6</sup> Street names are no longer seen as “innocent spatial

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., Dietz Bering: Grundlegung kulturwissenschaftlicher Studien über Straßennamen: Der Projektentwurf von 1989, in: Jürgen Eichhoff, Wilfried Seibicke, Michael Wolffsohn (eds.): *Name und Gesellschaft. Soziale und historische Aspekte der Namengebung und Namenentwicklung*, Mannheim 2001, 270–281.

<sup>2</sup> One example of a study in which street names are understood as indicators is Lawrence M. Baldwin, Michel Grimaud: *Washington, Montana, the Dakotas—and Massachusetts: A Comparative Approach to Street Naming*, in: *Names*, vol. 37, no. 2, 1989, 115–138.

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., Reuben Rose-Redwood, Derek Alderman, Maoz Azaryahu: The urban streetscape as political cosmos, in: Reuben Rose-Redwood, Derek Alderman, Maoz Azaryahu (eds.): *The Political Life of Urban Streetscapes. Naming, Politics, and Place*, Abingdon 2018, 1–24, here 3–4.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. ibid., 4.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. ibid., 5.

<sup>6</sup> See Lawrence D. Berg, Jani Vuolteenaho (eds.): *Critical Toponomies: The Contested Politics of Place Naming*, London 2009 and Rose-Redwood et al. (eds.): *The Political Life of Urban Streetscapes*.

references or passive artifacts”<sup>7</sup> that can be collected and ‘simply’ questioned for a complete picture. With the critical turn, the focus shifted from street names as simple indicators to the power-political constellations at work in the naming of streets to the disputes over questions of representation in the cityscape as well as to the reception and appropriation of street names in the everyday lives of street users.<sup>8</sup> Some works, for example, examine the inscription of political conflicts in the streetscapes of Israel,<sup>9</sup> while others investigate the absence of the representation of people of color in the streetscapes of certain US cities, tracing structural racism in naming practice and spatial organization.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, studies show how unauthorized renaming of streets is used as a form of political protest,<sup>11</sup> how participatory renaming of streets as a performative act can contribute to recon-

<sup>7</sup> Derek H. Alderman, Joshua Inwood: *Street naming and the politics of belonging: spatial injustices in the toponymic commemoration of Martin Luther King Jr.*, in: *Social & Cultural Geography*, vol. 14, no. 2, 2013, 211–233, here 212.

<sup>8</sup> For more information on the history and development of street-name studies, see Reuben S. Rose-Redwood: *From number to name: symbolic capital, places of memory and the politics of street renaming in New York City*, in: *Social & Cultural Geography*, vol. 9, no. 4, 2008, 431–452, here 432, Reuben Rose-Redwood, Derek Alderman, Maoz Azaryahu: *Geographies of toponymic inscription: new directions in critical place-name studies*, in: *Progress in Human Geography*, vol. 34, no. 4, 2010, 453–470, and Arndt Kremer: Namen schildern: Straßennamen und andere Namensfelder im DaF-Unterricht, in: Marc Hieronimus (ed.): *Historische Quellen im DaF-Unterricht*, Göttingen 2012, 135–176, here 135 and 138.

<sup>9</sup> See Maoz Azaryahu, Rebecca Kook: *Mapping the nation: street names and Arab-Palestinian identity: three case studies*, in: *Nations and Nationalism*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2002, 195–213 and Amit Pinchevski, Efraim Torgovnik: *Signifying passages: the signs of change in Israeli street names*, in: *Media Culture & Society*, vol. 24, no. 3, 2002, 365–388.

<sup>10</sup> See Alderman et al.: *Street naming and the politics of belonging*, Derek H. Alderman: *A Street Fit for a King: Naming Places and Commemoration in the American South*, in: *Professional Geographer*, vol. 52, no. 4, 2000, 672–684, and Owen J. Dwyer: *Symbolic accretion and commemoration*, in: *Social & Cultural Geography*, vol. 5, no. 3, 2004, 419–435.

<sup>11</sup> See, e.g., Maoz Azaryahu: *The power of commemorative street names*, in: *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, vol. 14, no. 3, 1996, 311–330.

ciliation and healing in traumatized societies,<sup>12</sup> and how street names are dealt with in everyday life.<sup>13</sup>

Accordingly, the critical turn has produced three approaches that coexist in critical street-name studies today. The first approach is that of the palimpsest. This term was initially used to describe an ancient written document that had been successively overwritten. As an approach to street-name research, however, the term is more than just a metaphor.<sup>14</sup> Underlying such usage is an understanding of the city as a text<sup>15</sup> written by multiple authors and received by multiple readers, where “the reading of a city-text is embedded into everyday activities.”<sup>16</sup> Cities as texts are never read as a whole,<sup>17</sup> nor do they tell chronological stories; text passages from different historical phases and contexts are placed in them not one after the other or side by side but transversely across the plane.<sup>18</sup> If a streetscape is understood as a palimpsest, then attention should be drawn to the fact that it is not a closed document but rather a texture that is continually being

<sup>12</sup> See, e.g., Kris Brown: *Commemoration as Symbolic Reparation: New Narratives or Spaces of Conflict?*, in: *Human Rights Review*, vol. 14, no. 3, 2013, 273–289.

<sup>13</sup> See, e.g., Remus Crean, Philip W. Matthews: *Popular responses to city-text changes: street naming and the politics of practicality in a post-socialist martyr city*, in: *Area*, vol. 48, no. 1, 2016, 92–102 and Duncan Light, Craig Young: *Habit, Memory, and the Persistence of Socialist-Era Street Names in Postsocialist Bucharest, Romania*, in: *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, vol. 104, no. 3, 2014, 668–685.

<sup>14</sup> Cf., e.g., Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson: *Reading City Streets*, in: *The French Review*, vol. 61, no. 3, 1988, 386–397, Rose-Redwood et al.: *Geographies of toponymic inscription*, 459–460, and Rose-Redwood et al.: The urban streetscape as political cosmos, 8.

<sup>15</sup> The analysis of the city as a text is common not only in street-name studies but also in other humanistic disciplines dealing with urbanity. This anthology is a recent example: Claudia Öhlschläger (ed.): *Urbane Kulturen und Räume intermedial. Zur Lesbarkeit der Stadt in interdisziplinärer Perspektive*, Bielefeld 2020.

<sup>16</sup> Azaryahu: *The power of commemorative street names*, 324. On the embedding of street names in people’s everyday lives, see also Maoz Azaryahu: *Hebrew, Arabic, English: the politics of multilingual street signs in Israeli cities*, in: *Social & Cultural Geography*, vol. 13, no. 5, 2012, 461–479, here 464 and 476.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Azaryahu: *The power of commemorative street names*, 324.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Ibid., 327.

written on and permanently expanded. New text passages are added, older layers are erased and overwritten. However, the lower layers can still be traced with the aid of special techniques.<sup>19</sup> For example, a review of old address books or a search of municipal archival materials can provide clues to previous layers of the palimpsest. In a figurative sense, the erased layers remain present.

From the perspective of the palimpsest, the naming of streets after personalities, in particular, is about inscribing one's own version of history in the cityscape.<sup>20</sup> This inscription process is a political instrument of control<sup>21</sup> because it interweaves the desired version of history "with daily life and thus gains the appearance of naturalness; a most desired effect in the light of the function of history as a legitimizing factor"<sup>22</sup> for those in power. In short, the powerholders inscribe their versions of history in the cityscape. By doing so, they contribute to creating "texts of identity"<sup>23</sup> convenient for them and serving their own interests. The writing on the palimpsest is inspired by and enabled on their ambition to anchor their visions of regional and national identity, of the past, but also of the future in people's everyday lives as a normative.<sup>24</sup> In this way, the palimpsest conveys less about the actual past of a place than it does about those wielding administrative power. The palimpsest is a record of the motivation of those who undertook the street naming. The act of naming is an expression of their values and intentions as well as their ideas about what past should be remembered and retold; as such, it is also a description of what they believe can be anticipated and foretold of the future.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>19</sup> As a representative example of studies that deal with overwritings in the streetscape, one can mention: Laura Šakaja, Jelena Stanić: *Other(ing), self(portraying), negotiating: the spatial codification of values in Zagreb's city-text*, in: *Cultural Geographies*, vol. 18, no. 4, 2011, 495–516.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Azaryahu: *The power of commemorative street names*, 314.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. ibid. On street naming as a political instrument of control, see also Pinchevski et al.: *Signifying passages*, 366–367.

<sup>22</sup> Azaryahu: *The power of commemorative street names*, 321.

<sup>23</sup> Azaryahu et al.: *Mapping the nation*, 195.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Azaryahu: *The power of commemorative street names*, 328.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Karen E. Till: *Places of Memory*, in: John Agnew, Katharyne Mitchell, Gerard Toal (Gearóid Ó Tuathail) (eds.): *A Companion to Political Geography*, Malden,

The second approach is that of the cultural arena—an arena in which street names are negotiated.<sup>26</sup> Street naming has been a cultural practice embedded in administrative structures since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, but since then it has increasingly been turning into a political technology.<sup>27</sup> The choice of street names is directly related to the changing (memory-)political framework at the local, national, and global levels. Studies have shown that politicians repeatedly use(d) the renaming and rebranding of streets and squares to manifest their respective versions of the past, their visions of the future, and their concepts of identity.<sup>28</sup> Instinctively, they know that names in the public space can be used to unleash normative forces in people's everyday lives.<sup>29</sup> References to a past, future, and identity that do not fit the current political discourse are erased, and new, 'more appropriate' ones are installed.<sup>30</sup> The new values are established prominently in the cityscape. Under the auspices of dictatorships and in situations in which regime change is achieved by force, these interventions are quickly embedded in people's everyday lives. In this context, Maoz Azaryahu writes: "Aimed at reconfiguring the symbolic landscape of the city, the process of changing street names that commemorate the former regime belongs to the symbolic politics of regime change."<sup>31</sup>

Massachusetts 2003, 289–301 and Karen E. Till: *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place*, Minneapolis, Minnesota 2005.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Derek H. Alderman: *Street Names as Memorial Arenas: The Reputational Politics of Commemorating Martin Luther King in a Georgia County*, in: *Historical Geography*, vol. 30, 2002, 99–120 and Alderman et al.: *Street naming and the politics of belonging*.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Azaryahu: *The power of commemorative street names*, 314 and Rose-Redwood et al.: The urban streetscape as political cosmos, 1, 3, and 11–13.

<sup>28</sup> See, e.g., Maoz Azaryahu: *German reunification and the politics of street names: the case of East Berlin*, in: *Political Geography*, vol. 16, no. 6, 1997, 479–493.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Alderman: *A Street Fit for a King*, 681 and Rose-Redwood et al.: The urban streetscape as political cosmos, 1–2.

<sup>30</sup> Yoram Bar-Gal provides an example of such a renaming by examining how streets in Israeli cities were renamed after the 1948 War of Independence; see Yoram Bar-Gal: *Cultural-Geographical Aspects of Street Names in the Towns of Israel*, in: *Names*, vol. 37, no. 4, 1989, 329–344.

<sup>31</sup> Maoz Azaryahu: *Renaming the past in post-Nazi Germany: insights into the politics of street naming in Mannheim and Potsdam*, in: *Cultural Geographies*, vol. 19, no. 3,

In situations where democratic structures prevail, the struggle for the manifestation of the different visions and versions of the past, future, and identity to which the various parties aspire takes place, for the most part, in the designated committees of the administrative structures.

However, it is by no means only those in political power who have recognized the normative power of street naming and use it as a means to their political ends. Civic, marginalized, and discriminated groups, as well as activist groups, are also organizing to open up public space for more linguistic diversity, the dismantling of racism, and the representation on the grounds of cultural diversity.<sup>32</sup> Many political and civic groups try to consciously implement reconciliation processes within society and in the urban space through street (re)naming.<sup>33</sup> Underlying these efforts is the understanding that those who have remained unnamed have not simply been passively forgotten but are actively ignored in the process of textual and material inscription, resulting in the social exclusion of the unnamed.<sup>34</sup> In addition to petitions and protests, artistic interventions<sup>35</sup>—often nonpermanent and symbolic—expand hegemonic space.<sup>36</sup>

Place naming as a cultural arena [functions] for [...] ethnic minority struggles to reshape the identity of landscapes, the contours of social memory, and the larger sense of political membership and social inclusion communicated within the public realm.<sup>37</sup>

2012, 385–400, here 388. In this article, Azaryahu compares the processes of renaming streets after 1945 that were previously named after Nazis in a West and an East German city, namely Mannheim and Potsdam.

<sup>32</sup> See Alderman: [A Street Fit for a King](#). On the critical reflection on languages excluded from the street naming process, see Azaryahu: [Hebrew, Arabic, English](#).

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Brown: [Commemoration as Symbolic Reparation](#).

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Rose-Redwood et al.: The urban streetscape as political cosmos, 12.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Azaryahu: [The power of commemorative street names](#), 315–316. On painting over names as an act of resistance, see Azaryahu: [German reunification and the politics of street names](#), 485.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Rose-Redwood et al.: [Geographies of toponymic inscription](#), 462–466.

<sup>37</sup> Alderman et al.: [Street naming and the politics of belonging](#), 213.

The streetscape is therefore not a neutral field—even when the streets are ‘only’ numbered. It is always and already a site of cultural negotiation<sup>38</sup> where various political opinions and worldviews, different priorities, and often conflicting interests and ideologies meet. In this process, the representatives of each perspective or orientation compete with each other, sometimes to the point of tangible conflict.

The third approach is that of the performative space. Since the 2000s, a performative turn has been unfolding within critical street-name studies.<sup>39</sup> Starting with geographers Brenda Yeoh<sup>40</sup> and Doreen Massey,<sup>41</sup> an understanding of the streetscape as a palimpsest/text and as a cultural arena has been supplemented by the concept of the streetscape as a performative space. In taking this perspective, the performative space approach distances itself, even more clearly than that of the cultural arena, from the understanding of the streetscape as a written and read text. The performative space approach focuses, instead, on everyday actions and interactions in, with, and through the streetscape. The actual appropriation and use of street names are examined through written and oral surveys of everyday language use. In the process, the normative power attributed to street names is relativized to some degree. Noam Shoval, for example, was able to demonstrate that in the Israeli city of Acre a process of renaming streets and squares had taken place to promote tourism, but that these renamings were not manifested in the everyday language use of the residents.<sup>42</sup> Just because they

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Rose-Redwood: *From number to name*, 447. On the different modes of numbering streets and the supposed neutrality of numbered streets, see Reuben Rose-Redwood, Lisa Kadonaga: “The Corner of Avenue A and Twenty-Third Street”: Geographies of Street Numbering in the United States, in: *The Professional Geographer*, vol. 68, no. 1, 2016, 39–52.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Rose-Redwood et al.: The urban streetscape as political cosmos, 16.

<sup>40</sup> See Brenda S. A. Yeoh: *Street Names in Colonial Singapore*, in: *Geographical Review*, vol. 82, no. 3, 1992, 313–322.

<sup>41</sup> Massey offers a critical position on the exclusive application of a textual understanding to the study of space and place; see Doreen Massey: *For Space*, London 2005.

<sup>42</sup> See Noam Shoval: *Street-naming, tourism development and cultural conflict: the case of the Old City of Acre/Akko/Akka*, in: *Transactions of the Institute of British*

daily encounter the renamed streets does not mean that they adopt the new names.

An example of this can also be found in Potsdam: Brandenburger Straße is one of the central shopping streets in Potsdam's old town. Named thus in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and officially registered in 1809, it was renamed **Klement-Gottwald-Straße** in 1955 on the occasion of the "Week of German–Czechoslovak Friendship."<sup>43</sup> **Klement Gottwald** (1896–1953) was the Communist president of Czechoslovakia from 1948 until his death. As a Stalinist, he was responsible for political persecution and murders. After German reunification, the street was renamed Brandenburger Straße in 1990. If Potsdam residents are asked what they called the street after its (first) renaming, no uniform picture emerges. Some accepted the new name, others shortened it to the name Klemi,<sup>44</sup> while others stuck with Brandenburger Straße and thus ignored the renaming: "Everyone knew which street was meant."<sup>45</sup> Broadway, another name for the shopping street also came into use.<sup>46</sup> On the theoretical side, **Remus Crețan** and **Philip W. Matthews** have shown that new street names take time to catch on in everyday language. The reasons for this are manifold: they range from politically motivated deliberate rejection to simple habit, which, ordinarily, takes quite a while to change.<sup>47</sup>

One method within the performative space approach that is not yet widespread is the inclusion of various elements of the environment adjacent to a particular street. Sociologist **Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson** is one of the few

*Geographers*, vol. 38, no. 4, 2013, 612–626. This study is one of the few on the everyday use of street names.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. **Klaus Arlt**: *Die Straßennamen der Stadt Potsdam. Geschichte und Bedeutung* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Potsdam 2010, 35 and anonymous: **Das zweite Ende von Klement Gottwald**, in: *Potsdamer Neueste Nachrichten*, Jan 5, 2010.

<sup>44</sup> These and the following names are taken from conversations with (former) Potsdam residents.

<sup>45</sup> From a conversation with a former Potsdam resident.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Volker Oelschläger: **So sah der Potsdamer "Bummelboulevard" vor 40 Jahren aus**, in: *Märkische Allgemeine*, May 1, 2019.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. **Crețan** et al.: **Popular responses to city-text changes**. Along the same lines is the study by Light et al.: **Habit, Memory, and the Persistence of Socialist-Era Street Names in Postsocialist Bucharest, Romania**.

scholars who have observed and described the transfer of street names to cafés and supermarkets, for example.<sup>48</sup> Ferguson's observations show that in addition to the appropriation of street names in everyday language use, other adoptions of street names can also occur. As has been the case within city-centered film studies, there is no work in the corpus of critical street-name studies that is specifically devoted to cinematic street names.

<sup>48</sup> See Ferguson: *Reading City Streets*.

## 5. Synthesis, Objective, and Research Questions

Just as a space is not simply a given<sup>1</sup> but a “product of interrelations,”<sup>2</sup> a city of film is defined as the product of a local cinematic assemblage. A cinematic assemblage consists of heterogeneous cinematic elements. These include cinematic institutions such as film museums, film studios, and production companies, cinematic events such as film festivals, and, where applicable, tourist attractions such as those offered by the [Film Park Babelsberg](#). The cinematic assemblage also includes strategic marketing institutions that address the topic of film in publications and other forms of media. Film-related initiatives such as movie clubs and online networks as well as the production, distribution, and reception of film-related texts are also part of the cinematic assemblage. Examples might be travel literature and Wikipedia entries that present a city as a city of film. The cinematic assemblage also contains cinematic street names and diverse artifacts such as monuments, information boards, names with film references, or various photographs of filmmakers and movie characters embedded in various ways within the urban space. The individual elements of the cinematic assemblage mutually define each other in their relational structure. More precisely, cities of film are the result of the relationships that exist between the assemblage elements. As “territorially conceived and conceptualized social spaces,”<sup>3</sup> they do not simply exist or result solely from the considerations and actions of the protagonists of institutionalized city marketing but are based on “relational structures in which things and people are positioned in relation to one another in specific ways.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On space, see Georg Glasze, Annika Mattissek: Vorwort, in: Georg Glasze, Annika Mattissek (eds.): *Handbuch Diskurs und Raum. Theorien und Methoden für die Humangeographie sowie die sozial- und kulturwissenschaftliche Raumforschung* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Bielefeld 2012, 7–9, here 7.

<sup>2</sup> Doreen Massey: *For Space*, London 2005, 9. See also ibid., 10.

<sup>3</sup> Michael Schillmeier, Wiebke Pohler: *Topologie von (Un-)Sicherheitsstrukturen. Zur Kosmo-Politik viral er Infektionen*, in: Tobias Conradi, Heike Derwanz, Florian Muhle (eds.): *Strukturierung durch Verflechtung. Akteur-Netzwerk-Theorie(n) und Automatismen*, Paderborn 2013, 51–71, here 55, own translation.

<sup>4</sup> Christoph Michels: *Parkour Erleben: Wie Atmosphären inszeniert werden*, in: Conradi et al. (eds.): *Strukturierung durch Verflechtung*, 113–128, here 115, own translation. As

The mutual definitional process at work in the cinematic assemblage can be clarified with the help of [Francesco Casetti](#)'s definition of the cinematic dispositif: originally, film scholars assumed that the dispositif of cinema was characterized by a dark hall, a screen, and a film projection.<sup>5</sup> The cinema was understood as a stable complex of components that assigned viewers a relatively fixed position—one sat in a cinema seat in front of the screen.<sup>6</sup> Anything that deviated from this constellation was not considered cinema,<sup>7</sup> but something else, usually an inferior derivative of ‘real’ cinema. In the course of and as an extremely important impulse within the topological turn in film studies, [Casetti](#) replaced this “rigid”<sup>8</sup> concept of dispositif with an understanding of cinema as a flexible and permanently self-adjusting assemblage. The dispositif of cinema now appeared as an assemblage “of heterogeneous elements [...], which coalesce based on circumstance.”<sup>9</sup> This combination of individual elements does not occur fortuitously but arises in reaction to what is already present as an assemblage.<sup>10</sup> In their response to the existing relational assemblage, the new elements and those elements with which they interact are subject to a transformation that also changes the relational assemblage as a whole. In this way, the cinema’s assemblage is in a permanent process of transformation. Continuous recreation and restructuring occur,<sup>11</sup> and it is precisely for this reason that the cinematic

the last two quotes show, the definition of the cinematic assemblage formulated here is compatible with the actor-network theories that have emerged since the 1980s; cf. *ibid.* One of their central aspirations is to develop a new “view of the disorganized relational and material practices in this world” in which the “subject/object dichotomy” would dissolve; [John Law: Akteur-Netzwerk-Theorie und materiale Semiotik](#), in: Conradi et al. (eds.): *Strukturierung durch Verflechtung*, 21–48, here 22, Renate Wieser: [Labore der Kunst. Über unmögliche Anatomie und einen Milchglas-Fetisch](#), *ibid.*, 129–147, here 131.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. [Francesco Casetti](#): [The Lumière Galaxy. Seven Key Words for the Cinema to Come](#), New York 2015, 10.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 10, 69, and 75–76.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 69.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 75.

experience is preserved. The dispositive of cinema has thus always proven to be adaptable.<sup>12</sup> It will, therefore, not simply dissolve if, at some point, there would hardly be any classical movie theaters left. Even if today we watch movies and other audiovisual productions via video-on-demand platforms, on tablets while commuting, in the context of performances in galleries, or as part of theater productions, they are not inferior derivatives of *the* only ‘true’ cinematic experience but rather cinema’s assemblages that have emerged from processes of mutual interaction and continual readjustment of their elements.<sup>13</sup>

Casetti’s understanding of an assemblage entails the dissolution of hierarchies between the elements that belong to the assemblage. According to the old understanding of the dispositive, spectators were assigned the passive role of the defined. They had to bow to the specifications of the fixed cinema complex. In the new understanding of the dispositive, enabled through the topological turn, spectators also receive movies in reaction to what is already available in terms of cinematic experience but they are not determined by the assemblage.<sup>14</sup> All elements of the assemblage—and thus the spectators as well—react actively to the existing assemblage and at the same time have an effect on the relational structure of the assemblage.<sup>15</sup> This is a dialectical principle of action: new elements enter a relationship with the current assemblage, whereby they are shaped retroactively to a certain degree but, at the same time, contribute to a successive redefinition of the assemblage.<sup>16</sup> This is why, despite openness and flexibility, new and relatively stable assemblages of cinema can emerge again and again—for example, the reception of movies with the comfort of a sofa and a large flat screen.<sup>17</sup> “The assemblage is coherent and solid without being inflexible; it determines its components without being a trap from which nobody and nothing can escape.”<sup>18</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 69.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 10 and 69.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 10 and 76.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 10 and 87.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 10, 69, and 75.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 81.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

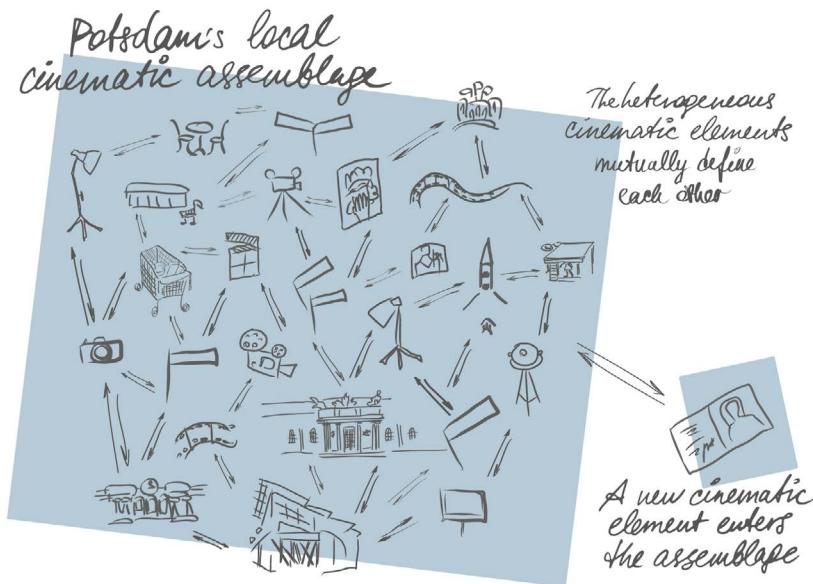


Figure 5: Model of Potsdam's local cinematic assemblage. The symbols represent the many heterogeneous cinematic elements found in Potsdam. When a new cinematic element enters the assemblage, it is defined by the assemblage's pre-existing relational structure. At the same time, the new element contributes to the definition of the relational structure.

Following Casetti's definition of the assemblage of cinema, the cinematic elements of the local cinematic assemblage of a film city are understood as being equivalent to each other. The cinematic institutions, events, and attractions, the strategic marketing institutions, the film-related initiatives, and the various texts—as well as the cinematic street names and artifacts—mutually define each other in their interrelationships. Thus, the model developed here rejects the notion that larger institutions or strategically acting protagonists are the primary determinants of the profile of a film city. The function and meaning of each element of a cinematic assemblage—even if it is the autograph card of an actor pasted to a wall or pinned to a board behind the counter of a bar—is shaped by the existing interconnections within the assemblage. At the same time, the autograph card contributes to the development of the cinematic

assemblage (Figure 5). If cinematic elements drop out, this also has an impact on the overall assemblage. The profile of a city of film is not the result of a central defining force acting from a position beneath, behind, or above the elements; rather the elements themselves define each other in an interactive process embedded within a set of relationships. From the interplay of the elements of the cinematic assemblage, the city of film emerges in the form of its currently existing and specific profiles. Thus, like an assemblage of cinema, an assemblage of a film city is open to change and at the same time presents a coherent, relatively fixed, and describable profile.

Through an understanding of the relational structure of the cinematic streetscape in Potsdam, this book aims to take up the question “Where is cinema?” and reformulate it in a way enabled on a new relational narrative: “Where is the cinema in the cities of film?” In other words, this is not a search for *the* cinema—i.e., a search for the locations where films are actually played—but a search for the interrelated cinematic elements that create the city of film in the first place. The intensive investigation of the cinematic streetscape as a sub-assemblage ultimately serves as a basis for specifying the principles of the interplay of the various cinematic elements that contribute to the production of the film city of Potsdam as a whole, and also as a basis for adopting a new perspective on the global assemblage of cities of film.

One arrives at this new understanding by disentangling the relational structure of the cinematic streetscape. Following the interdisciplinary impulses of film studies after their topological turn, social-scientific methods are used here for this purpose in a first step (Part III). The research approach can be described as explorative: without assumptions, one openly engages with the relational structure of the cinematic streetscape in Potsdam. There are no hypotheses to be tested. Instead, the given definition of the assemblage is used as a starting point for the creation of a database which is then further processed to a data set. In the process, the data are not only organized but also quantified, and correlations are calculated to derive insights into the relational structure of the cinematic streetscape. Also, in the spirit of the interdisciplinary impulses generated within film studies after their topological turn, the three approaches utilized by critical street-name studies are put to use in a second step (Part IV) to further disentangle and interpret the streetscape as a sub-assemblage.

The following research questions guide the study of the relational structure of the cinematic streetscape in Potsdam:

1. How many cinematic streets were and are there in Potsdam?
2. When and under which circumstances were the cinematic street names established?
3. Which characteristics of the cinematic streets and the filmmakers after whom they are named can be identified?
4. Which quantitative statements can be made about the individual characteristics?
5. Which correlations exist between the individual characteristics?
6. Which features distinguish the relational structure of the cinematic streetscape in Potsdam?
7. What is the relationship between the cinematic streetscape as a sub-assemblage and Potsdam's local cinematic assemblage?

While the following methodological part (III) mainly addresses research questions 1 to 5, the interpretation in Part IV builds on this and addresses research questions 6 and 7 as well.

### III. METHODOLOGY

To answer the research questions, a database on the cinematic streetscape in Potsdam was generated and processed into a data set. In particular, the aim was to identify relevant characteristics of the cinematic streets and the filmmakers (e.g., Naming), to form meaningful attributes within the characteristics (e.g., 1988 [Drewitz](#) I, 1998 [Babelsberg](#) I, etc.), and to assign the filmmakers to these attributes. In this way, qualitative data (e.g., archival materials) were quantified to determine the absolute and relative frequencies of the characteristics' attributes. After this, correlations between the characteristics were calculated. In the following, the methodological path from the database to the data set is described (Chapter 6), three types of identified characteristics—street-, person-, and film-related—are presented (Chapter 7), and the results of the calculation of the correlations are given (Chapter 8).<sup>1</sup>

#### 6. From the Database to the Data Set

The database—i.e., the totality of sources for the quantitative analysis and the interpretation that follows in Part IV—is composed primarily of a street-name index, archival materials, publicly available information on the Internet, and the short biographies presented in [Part V](#). To identify the cinematic streets, [Klaus Arlt](#)'s street-name index<sup>2</sup> was used (Database I). The index not only lists Potsdam's streets but also provides brief notes on the background of the process of naming. In the case of person-related streets, information is provided on the profession or job of the honored persons. For example, for [Conrad-Veidt-Straße](#) one can read: "Street named after the actor [C. Veidt](#) (1893–1943) in 1988 in the residential area [Drewitz](#)."<sup>3</sup> Or on [Bruno-Taut-Straße](#): "Street named after

<sup>1</sup> The Methodology (Part III) was coauthored by Anna Luise Kiss and Johann Pibert.

<sup>2</sup> [Klaus Arlt](#): *Die Straßennamen der Stadt Potsdam. Geschichte und Bedeutung* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Potsdam 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 34, own translation.

the architect **B. Taut** (1880–1938) in 2001 in the Nedlitzer Straße development area, whose new buildings are inspired by Taut's ideas.”<sup>4</sup>

To identify street-related characteristics and to reconstruct the context of the genesis of the street names, the [Potsdam City Archive](#) and the [Potsdam City Council's online information system](#) were consulted (Database II). Among other things, all resolutions and other city council documents concerning street naming are stored in the city archive. Identical documents can be consulted in the online information system from 2004 onward. The archival materials provide information on whether, when, and in what form cinematic street naming was discussed in the administrative or political structures of the city, and when, in what manner, and by whom corresponding resolutions were passed. Scientific literature on the architectural history of the city of Potsdam served as a supplementary source of information and as a help in the process of reconstructing the circumstances whereby the streets were named in relation to film and thus became “cinematic.” Subsequently, on-site inspections provided information on the accessibility of the streets.

As a matter of course, the identification of cinematic street names is based on film-historical knowledge. For a public-interest publication, publicly available film-historical information on trustworthy Internet portals<sup>5</sup> (Database III), such as [imdb.com](#) (Internet Movie Database) or [filmportale.de](#), is particularly suitable. There you can find, among other things, short biographies tracing the artistic life of those associated with film chronologically, filmographies, and a host of biographical details that a broad readership can consult and comprehend.

Since publicly available information on individual filmmakers is neither free of contradictions nor mutually comparable, uniquely developed biographical texts on the honored filmmakers were utilized as the central film-historical

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 37, own translation.

<sup>5</sup> Internet portals are classified as trustworthy if they have existed for a long time, provide transparent information on their data quality, make their statements traceable through detailed source information, are operated by established institutions such as the [Kinematheksverbund](#) (an association of 12 institutions that preserve film-cultural heritage in Germany) or museums, or were created and are maintained by (film or media) scholars.

database (Database IV). These short texts were drawn from film studies and biographical literature as well as trustworthy Internet sources. The advantage of the short biographies is that they follow a common dramaturgy or form that was developed in a transparent scientific–artistic process. Consequently, this form can be comprehended intersubjectively (see Chapter 16).

For the quantitative analysis of Potsdam’s cinematic streetscape, five successive data sets were constructed from the entire database—as spreadsheets of an Excel file<sup>6</sup> (Total Data Set). First, Arlt’s street-name index (Database I), which he had provided as a Word document, was converted to Excel. This resulted in a list of all 1,435 existing *and* no longer existing—i.e., renamed or erased—street names in Potsdam (Data Set I). Removing the no longer existing street names resulted in a list of 1,109 existing street names (77.3 percent) (Data Set II). From the existing street names, 386 person-related street names (34.8 percent) were then extracted (Data Set III). For 5 of these street names (Haseloffweg, Kaiserstraße, Königsdamm, Königstraße, Königsweg), it was unclear to whom they referred, so they were rejected, leaving 381 person-related street names. Arlt’s information on the profession or job of the honored persons made it possible to form 53 profession groups. Furthermore, the “gender of the street name” was determined in each case: in addition to “male” and “female,” the attribute “family” was used because some streets are named after families (e.g., Glumestraße or Ribbeckweg).

The two street-name characteristics—profession group and gender of the street name—were then cross-tabulated. In a cross-table, the absolute frequencies of combinations of attributes of two characteristics are given, such as “architecture x male” or “film x female.” Table 1 shows an extract of the cross-table with the 10 most frequently represented profession groups. With 35 filmmakers out of 381 persons or families (9.2 percent), film ranks prominently in third place in the long list of 53 profession groups. Another finding concerns the proportion of

<sup>6</sup> The Excel file can be made available on request sent to the email address [mail@anna-luise-kiss.de](mailto:mail@anna-luise-kiss.de). For this purpose, it is necessary to provide a justification for use. The data of the project will be made available for noncommercial use only. The decision on forwarding the data lies with Anna Luise Kiss. Any use is only possible through individual clarification and acquisition of the necessary rights.

5 female (14.3 percent) to 30 male filmmakers, which is reflected in the proportion of 46 women (12.7 percent) to 317 men for all persons (excluding families).

Table 1: Extract of the Cross-Table “Profession Group x Gender of the Street Name”

		Gender of the Street Name			Total
		Male	Female	Family	
Profession Group	Writing	49	5	2	56
	Architecture	35	1	0	36
	Film	30	5	0	35
	Landscaping	15	0	5	20
	Politics	16	3	0	19
	Painting	19	0	0	19
	Nazi Victims and Resistance Fighters	10	6	2	18
	Physics	16	1	1	18
	Music	13	1	1	15
	Aristocracy	4	8	1	13
...		...	...	...	...
Total		317	46	18	381

Some 6 of the 53 profession groups concern creative professionals, which is why a further data reduction was made (Data Set IV). Table 2 shows the corresponding cross-table. Not only do creative professionals occupy the first three places of all profession groups (see Table 1), with 166 persons or families (43.6 percent), they clearly illustrate the main focus of Potsdam’s practice of street naming. In relation to all creative professionals, the 35 filmmakers (21.1 percent) are of great importance. The proportion of women among them, at 8.0 percent (13 women to 149 men), is, however, considerably lower.

Table 2: Cross-Table “Creative Professionals x Gender of the Street Name”

		Gender of the Street Name			Total
		Male	Female	Family	
Creative Professionals	Writing	49	5	2	56
	Architecture	35	1	0	36
	Film	30	5	0	35
	Painting	19	0	0	19
	Music	13	1	1	15
	Sculpting	3	1	1	5
	Total	149	13	4	166

In the next step, the 35 filmmakers were extracted. Since Arlt’s index only includes the data up to December 2009, the 7 filmmakers added since 2010 were taken into account so that, all in all, 42 cinematic streets in Potsdam could be recorded in September 2021. Valuable information on new cinematic street names came from citizens of Potsdam who participated in a citizen research project on cinematic artifacts in Potsdam initiated by Anna Luise Kiss in early 2020.<sup>7</sup> This was supplemented by online research in regional newspapers on the topic of street naming. In addition, according to Data Set I, there are three cinematic streets that no longer exist: Peter-Heuser-Straße (mentioned in the 1930s), Filmakademiestraße (1938–1945), and Ufastraße (1938–1948). They are not part of the quantitative analysis because they do not belong to the current cinematic streetscape. However, they will be addressed in the interpretation (see Section 9.1).

Based on archival materials, publicly available information on the Internet, and the short biographies (Database II–IV), a total of 14 relevant characteris-

<sup>7</sup> On the focus and interim results of the citizen research project, see the following three-part publication: Anna Luise Kiss: Citizen Science: “Try Again. Fail Again. Fail Better” (Part 1). Definitions, seeming citizen science hype, my conceptualization, in: *IAMHIST Blog*, Sep 22, 2020, Anna Luise Kiss: Citizen Science: “Try Again. Fail Again. Fail Better” (Part 2). Project description and implementation of basic requirements on citizen science projects, *ibid.*, Oct 6, 2020, and Anna Luise Kiss: Citizen Science: “Try Again. Fail Again. Fail Better” (Part 3). Course of the project, experiences and interim conclusion, *ibid.*, Nov 1, 2020.

tics—3 street-related, 5 person-related, and 6 film-related—were identified for the currently existing 42 cinematic streets (see Table 3) and their namesakes. After that, attributes within the characteristics were formed and the filmmakers were assigned to these attributes (Data Set V). The following chapter presents the characteristics as well as the absolute and relative frequencies of the corresponding characteristics' attributes.

Table 3: Currently Existing Cinematic Streets in Potsdam<sup>8</sup>

Albert-Wilkening-Straße	Fritz-Lang-Straße	Käthe-Haack-Weg
Alfred-Hirschmeier-Straße	Guido-Seeber-Weg	Konrad-Wolf-Allee
Asta-Nielsen-Straße	Günther-Simon-Straße	Lilian-Harvey-Straße
Billy-Wilder-Platz	G.-W.-Pabst-Straße	Maly-Delschaft-Weg
Conrad-Veidt-Straße	Hans-Albers-Straße	Marlene-Dietrich-Allee
Edith-Schollwer-Weg	Hedy-Lamarr-Platz	Oskar-Meßter-Straße
Eduard-von-Winterstein-Straße	Heiner-Carow-Platz	Paul-Wegener-Straße
Emil-Jannings-Straße	Heinrich-George-Straße	Quentin-Tarantino-Straße
Erich-Engel-Weg	Heinz-Rühmann-Weg	Robert-Baberske-Straße
Erich-Pommer-Straße	Heinz-Sielmann-Ring	Slatan-Dudow-Straße
Ernst-Busch-Platz	Hertha-Thiele-Weg	Willi-Schiller-Weg
Ernst-Lubitsch-Weg	Ida-Wüst-Weg	Willy-A.-Kleinau-Weg
Friedrich-Holländer-Straße	Joe-May-Straße	Wolfgang-Staudte-Straße
Friedrich-W.-Murnau-Straße	Joseph-von-Sternberg-Straße	Zarah-Leander-Straße

<sup>8</sup> In the following cases, the spelling of the street name differs from that of the namesake: G.-W.-Pabst-Straße for Georg Wilhelm Pabst, whose name is spelled out in this publication, Joseph-von-Sternberg-Straße for Josef von Sternberg, whose name is misspelled on the street sign, and Willi-Schiller-Weg for Willy Schiller, for whom the same applies.

## 7. Street-, Person-, and Film-Related Characteristics

Each of the 14 determined characteristics is based on a question that was considered significant. These questions are to be understood as specifications of the **research questions**. In the case of the *street-related characteristics*, the questions were about when the cinematic streets were named (Naming), which district they belonged to (District), and whether they are publicly accessible (Access). Archival materials (Database II) were used primarily to answer these questions, supplemented by on-site inspections. Table 4 shows the absolute and relative frequencies of the characteristics' attributes formed in the course of this investigation. The absolute frequencies were obtained by counting of the cinematic streets. The corresponding relative frequencies can be read as percentages. For example, a relative frequency of 0.476 represents 47.6 percent.

Table 4: Absolute Frequencies (AF) and Relative Frequencies (RF) of the Street-Related Characteristics' Attributes

Characteristic	Attribute	AF	RF
Naming	1988 Drewitz I	20	0.476
	1990s Studio Lot I	9	0.214
	1998 Babelsberg I	3	0.071
	2000 Drewitz II	1	0.024
	2009 Studio Lot II	1	0.024
	2010 Kirchsteigfeld	1	0.024
	2011 Babelsberg II	1	0.024
	2012 Groß Glienicke I	1	0.024
	2017 Groß Glienicke II	4	0.095
	2019 Babelsberg III	1	0.024
District	Drewitz	21	0.500
	Babelsberg	15	0.357
	Groß Glienicke	5	0.119
	Kirchsteigfeld	1	0.024
Access	Publicly Accessible	32	0.762
	Not Publicly Accessible	10	0.238

The earliest—and at the same time most—namings of the cinematic streets that still exist today have their origin in a decision by the Potsdam City Council in March and May 1988. At that time, Potsdam was still part of the GDR. This was also the most prolific period, during which there were 20 namings in the [Drewitz](#) district. After that, 9 namings took place on the [Studio Babelsberg](#) lot. It is unclear when exactly the studio management undertook the namings of the streets and squares, but it must have been carried out in the 1990s.<sup>1</sup> Together, these 29 namings account for nearly 70 percent of all namings. Apart from 3 streets in [Babelsberg](#), named at the same time in 1998 outside the studio lot, and 4 more in [Groß Glienicke](#), named in 2017, these are individual namings. This includes the most recent cinematic street naming—2019 in [Babelsberg](#). [Drewitz](#)—and not [Babelsberg](#), as one might think because of the studio—has the highest number of cinematic streets. Here we find 21, or half, of Potsdam's currently existing cinematic streets, followed by 15 streets in [Babelsberg](#), 5 in [Groß Glienicke](#), and one in [Kirchsteigfeld](#). The majority of the cinematic streets (32 or 76.2 percent) are publicly accessible.

The cinematic streets were marked on an online map by Google Maps,<sup>2</sup> which included cinematic artifacts found in Potsdam as part of the citizen research project. The project was accompanied by multiple on-site inspections and the detailed documentation of the cinematic artifacts as a process of systematic field research. With the help of the map, it was possible to gain an overview of the allocation of the cinematic streets and artifacts in the urban space. Furthermore, an abstractly designed digital city of film Potsdam was created,<sup>3</sup> which depicted sites where

<sup>1</sup> According to Bianca Makarewicz, head of corporate communications at the [Studio Babelsberg](#), in an email dated Feb 10, 2021, to Anna Luise Kiss.

<sup>2</sup> Linking to or displaying the online map is not possible for legal reasons. However, the web address of the map can be provided upon request sent to the email address [mail@anna-luise-kiss.de](mailto:mail@anna-luise-kiss.de). The decision on forwarding the data lies with Anna Luise Kiss. Any use of the online map on Google Maps is only possible through individual clarification and acquisition of the necessary rights.

<sup>3</sup> For legal reasons, the abstractly designed digital city of film Potsdam is no longer available online. However, a PDF document of it can be acquired by sending a request to the email address [mail@anna-luise-kiss.de](mailto:mail@anna-luise-kiss.de), including a justification for use. The decision on forwarding the data lies with Anna Luise Kiss. Any use is only possible through individual clarification and acquisition of the necessary rights.

### Filmische Artefakte im städtischen Raum



Figure 6: The abstractly designed digital city of film Potsdam depicts sites in Potsdam where cinematic artifacts were found repeatedly.

cinematic artifacts were found repeatedly (Figure 6). By clicking on the sites, it was possible to view each bundle of cinematic artifacts located within public spaces, including a suburban train station, several restaurants, a supermarket, several clothing and jewelry stores, and a few hotels.

In the case of the *person-related characteristics*, questions were asked about the country in which the filmmakers were born (Country of Birth), whether they were deceased or still alive (Life) as well as their gender, sexual orientation, and skin color. In order to form the characteristics' attributes and assign the filmmakers to them, we mainly used publicly available information on the Internet (Database III), supplemented by corresponding information from our own short biographies of the filmmakers. Table 5 shows the absolute and relative frequencies of the characteristics' attributes formed.

Table 5: Absolute Frequencies (AF) and Relative Frequencies (RF) of the Person-Related Characteristics' Attributes

Characteristic	Attribute	AF	RF
Country of Birth	Germany	25	0.595
	Austria	5	0.119
	Poland	3	0.071
	Great Britain	2	0.048
	France	1	0.024
	Switzerland	1	0.024
	Czechoslovakia	1	0.024
	Bulgaria	1	0.024
	Denmark	1	0.024
	Sweden	1	0.024
	USA	1	0.024
Life	Deceased	41	0.976
	Alive	1	0.024
Gender	Male	32	0.762
	Female	10	0.238
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual	39	0.929
	Not Heterosexual	3	0.071
Skin Color	White	42	1.000

Most filmmakers (25 or 59.5 percent) were born in Germany. A total of 5 were born in Austria, 3 in Poland, and 2 in Great Britain. One person comes from each of the other countries. Except for Great Britain, Bulgaria, Sweden, and the USA, these are Germany's immediate neighbors. Apart from Quentin Tarantino, all filmmakers are already deceased. This corresponds to the common practice of naming streets only after deceased personalities.<sup>4</sup> Ten streets (23.8 percent) are named after women. The proportion of women remains low, but it has increased

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Klaus Arlt: *Die Straßennamen der Stadt Potsdam. Geschichte und Bedeutung* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Potsdam 2010, 90.

by 9.5 percent since 2010. References to other gender attributes could not be found. Almost all honored persons (39 or 92.9 percent) are publicly presented as heterosexual. The data on the remaining 3 cases—[Friedrich W. Murnau](#), [Lilian Harvey](#), and [Marlene Dietrich](#)—are not differentiated enough, so they have been combined in the attribute Not Heterosexual. All the filmmakers are white. Since the characteristic Skin Color does not vary, it cannot be statistically correlated with the other characteristics and should therefore be excluded from further analysis. As an additional—not categorical, but metric—person-related characteristic, the age reached by the filmmakers was taken into account (in the case of [Tarantino](#), the age at the time of release of this book's German version). The filmmakers honored in Potsdam reached an average age of 73, with an age range between 42 and 98.

In order to quantify the honored personalities' work in the movie industry, six *film-related characteristics* were formulated. The aim was to clarify which film professions the honored personalities primarily pursued (Profession), which movie type they worked for (Movie Type), whether the movies they were involved in had a connection to Potsdam or Berlin as a production site (Local Connection), whether they were performers of the first or second rank based on their professional status (Rank, e.g., leading vs. supporting roles), to which film-historical phase they can primarily be assigned (Phase), and how they dealt with Nazi Germany if their careers were affected by it (Exile). To answer these questions, we mainly consulted our own biographical texts (Database IV), supplemented by publicly available information on the Internet.

Compared to the street- and person-related characteristics, the formation of the attributes and the assignment of the filmmakers were more challenging in the case of the film-related characteristics. The attributes of the characteristic Phase, for example, were developed in an iterative process—i.e., in a step-by-step, repetitive, and thereby also repeatedly rejecting approach. Here, film-historical phases are understood as periods that merge or overlap and can be distinguished by specific temporal and spatial as well as film-aesthetic, technological, economic, and political constellations.<sup>5</sup> The filmmakers were assigned to the film-historical phases that

<sup>5</sup> The factors of the constellations are inspired by [Thomas Elsaesser](#)'s so-called determinant chain; see [Thomas Elsaesser](#): The New Film History, in: *Sight & Sound*, vol. 55, no. 4, 1986, 246–251.

were distinctive for them individually—not simply to the established film-historical epochal styles<sup>6</sup> or the developmental steps of the *Studio Babelsberg*.<sup>7</sup> However, a good third of the filmmakers could not be assigned to *one* phase but to several; these filmmakers are therefore found in a separate attribute. In the case of the characteristic Exile, on the other hand, it was less a matter of the distinctness of the characteristic's attributes or assignments, but rather of the fact that the relevance of the topic only became apparent through the analysis of the short biographies and thus at a late point in the research process. Table 6 shows the absolute and relative frequencies of the characteristics' attributes formed for the film-related characteristics.

Almost half of the honored filmmakers (20 or 47.6 percent) are actors. Furthermore, there are 11 directors (26.2 percent) and 2 each of producers, cinematographers, and scenographers (or architects). In addition to a composer and a studio director, there are also 3 filmmakers—[Billy Wilder](#), [Ernst Lubitsch](#), and [Joe May](#)—who held several primary film professions: [Wilder](#) was a screenwriter and director, [Lubitsch](#) and [May](#) were screenwriters, directors, and producers. Thus, among the filmmakers honored in Potsdam, there are none who were only screenwriters. Moreover, all filmmakers worked for feature movies, apart from [Oskar Meßter](#), who realized documentaries, and [Heinz Sielmann](#), an expert in the field of wildlife movies.

The majority of the filmmakers (37 or 88.1 percent) who are part of Potsdam's cinematic streetscape worked for productions realized in Potsdam, even if some of them also worked in Berlin. [Edith Schollwer](#), [Ernst Busch](#), [Billy Wilder](#), and [Heinz Sielmann](#) worked in Berlin but not in Potsdam. [Hedy Lamarr](#)—the most recent naming—was not honored primarily as an actress but as a scientist. She neither worked in Potsdam nor in Berlin, which is why she has no local connection to the cinematic streetscape in Potsdam at all.

<sup>6</sup> On the usefulness of classifying film history into epochal styles as well as on the critical discourse that has been conducted on this form of classification, see Christoph Hesse, Oliver Keutzer, Roman Mauer, Gregory Mohr: *Filmstile*, Wiesbaden 2016, 18, 27–28, 30, 32, 40, and 45–47.

<sup>7</sup> A possible chronology of *Studio Babelsberg*'s development can be found in Michael Wedel, Chris Wahl, Ralf Schenk (eds.): *100 Years Studio Babelsberg. The Art of Filmmaking*, Kempen 2012.

Table 6: Absolute Frequencies (AF) and Relative Frequencies (RF) of the Film-Related Characteristics' Attributes

Characteristic	Attribute	AF	RF
Profession	Actor	20	0.476
	Director	11	0.262
	Multiple	3	0.071
	Producer	2	0.048
	Cinematographer	2	0.048
	Scenographer/Architect	2	0.048
	Composer	1	0.024
	Studio Director	1	0.024
Movie Type	Feature	40	0.952
	Documentary	2	0.048
Local Connection	Babelsberg/Potsdam (And Possibly Berlin)	37	0.881
	Berlin	4	0.095
	None	1	0.024
Rank	First Rank	31	0.738
	Second Rank	11	0.262
Phase	Early Cinema Pioneers	3	0.071
	Experts of Silent Movies	6	0.143
	Talkie Pioneers	5	0.119
	Resistance in the Weimar Republic	2	0.048
	Nazi Filmmaking	1	0.024
	Classical Hollywood	1	0.024
	FRG	2	0.048
	DEFA	6	0.143
	Contemporary Hollywood	1	0.024
	Experts of Transitions	15	0.357
Exile	Career Not Affected by Nazi Germany	15	0.357
	Remained in Nazi Germany	15	0.357
	Went into Exile without Return to Germany	7	0.167
	Went into Exile with Return to Germany	5	0.119

Of the 42 filmmakers, 31 (73.8 percent) can be described as first-rank performers based on their professional status, while 11 can be classified as second rank.

For example, an actor such as [Asta Nielsen](#) was predominantly seen in leading roles, or a director such as [Konrad Wolf](#) staged highly regarded movies. In contrast, actors such as [Käthe Haack](#) or [Maly Delschaft](#) were very active but primarily cast in high-profile supporting roles.

Some 27 filmmakers could be clearly assigned to the 9 film-historical phases that were formed. The experts of silent movies are represented just as frequently as DEFA filmmaking with 6 persons, followed by 5 talkie pioneers and 3 early cinema pioneers. Two persons each are assigned to cinematic resistance in the Weimar Republic and filmmaking in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), while Nazi filmmaking, classical Hollywood, and contemporary Hollywood are represented by one person in each case. Some 15 filmmakers (35.7 percent)—and thus the majority—are experts of transitions. Several of them—such as [Hans Albers](#) and [Ida Wüst](#)—primarily managed the transition from silent movies to talkies or—like [Robert Baberske](#) and [Willy Schiller](#)—worked during the Nazi film era, under the implementation of Nazi film policy, and later at DEFA. Others—such as [Eduard von Winterstein](#), [Käthe Haack](#), and [Heinz Rühmann](#)—worked for the film industry for several decades and thus spanned many phases. [Heinz Rühmann](#), for example, enjoyed great success during the talkie period at Ufa, during the Nazi film era, and in the FRG.

The careers of 15 filmmakers (35.7 percent) were not affected by Nazi Germany because most of their work lay outside the 1933–1945 time period. Of the 27 personalities affected, 15 remained in Nazi Germany and continued to work in movies, 7 persons (16.7 percent) went into exile and did not return to Germany, while 5 others (11.9 percent) returned.

## 8. Correlations between the Characteristics

The present study of Potsdam's cinematic streetscape has an exploratory character. Therefore, no hypotheses were formulated about potential correlations between characteristics. Instead, all possible correlations between pairs of characteristics were calculated. In the following, all correlations are displayed—i.e., even those that are obvious, irrelevant, or of secondary interest—, before those taken as relevant for the interpretation in Part IV are presented.

The given data quality required so-called Fisher's exact tests as analysis procedures, which were carried out with the software SPSS Statistics 21.<sup>1</sup> Table 7 shows all significant—i.e., actually given—correlations between the characteristics. In addition to the characteristic Skin Color, which was excluded from the analysis due to the absence of variance, the characteristics Life, Sexual Orientation, and Movie Type are not reported because they do not show any significant correlations with other characteristics. In all three cases, it can be assumed that too little variance is responsible.

Table 7: Significant Correlations between the Characteristics

Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 Naming										
2 District	0.000									
3 Access	0.000	0.000								
4 Country of Birth			0.005							
5 Gender	0.010	0.012								
6 Profession			0.043		0.035					
7 Local Connection	0.005									
8 Rank	0.007	0.001					0.049			
9 Phase	0.005	0.008	0.003			0.020	0.004			
10 Exile								0.044	0.000	

Notes: Fisher's exact tests, two-sided significance values < 0.050 reported, population: 42 filmmakers, no missing values.

<sup>1</sup> For more information on this, see Jürgen Janssen, Wilfried Laatz: *Statistische Datenanalyse mit SPSS. Eine anwendungsorientierte Einführung in das Basisprogramm und das Modul Exakte Tests* (9<sup>th</sup> ed.), Berlin 2017, 264–265, 815–816, and 819.

The characteristics are numbered for a better overview—e.g., in order that their labels do not have to be repeated in the first line. The gray fields in the diagonal of the table stand for the respective correlation with itself and must remain empty. The fields to the right of the diagonal are also empty, so that the correlations are not listed twice: the correlation between, for example, District and Rank is, of course, identical with the correlation between Rank and District. Of the 45 possible correlations (9 plus 8 plus 7 plus 6, etc.), 19 or 42.2 percent are significant. The entries in the corresponding cells of the table are probabilities indicating that the respective correlation *does not* exist or, in other words, that the data have been obtained by chance. A correlation is considered significant or given if such a probability is less than 5 percent—i.e., less than 0.050.

Taking into account the 3 types of the characteristics—street-, person-, and film-related—the correlations can be assigned to 6 groups: street-related characteristics with each other (Correlations I, marked purple), person-related characteristics with each other (Correlations II, orange), film-related characteristics with each other (Correlations III, pink), street- x person-related characteristics (Correlations IV, yellow), person- x film-related characteristics (Correlations V, green), and street- x film-related characteristics (Correlations VI, blue). Thus, one can ‘go through’ the table of the significant correlations along the diagonal: first purple, orange, and pink, then yellow and green, and finally blue.

*The Correlations I are obvious.* If several cinematic streets were named at the same time, this always happened for the same district, so Naming and District are correlated. The not publicly accessible cinematic streets were—except for [Quentin-Tarantino-Straße](#)—named at the same time (Naming x Access) and are all located in [Babelsberg](#) on the studio lot (District x Access). To a certain extent, the characteristic Access is contained in the characteristic District, which, in turn, is contained in the characteristic Naming. For this reason, the street-related characteristics are to some degree interchangeable with the person- and film-related characteristics when calculating the correlations. However, Access has an exclusive correlation with Country of Birth, Naming with Local Connection (see Table 7).

*The Correlations II are irrelevant with regard to the research questions.* The only possible correlation among the categorical person-related characteristics considered—between Country of Birth and Gender—is not significant. However, it

should be noted that the metric characteristic Age is correlated with Gender<sup>2</sup> because female filmmakers reached an average age of 83 and male filmmakers of 69. In addition, the districts differ in terms of the age reached by the filmmakers: [Drewitzers](#) lived to an average age of 67, [Babelsbergers](#) to 75, [Groß Glienickers](#) to 89, and [Heiner Carow](#) died at the age of 67. Last but not least, Age is correlated with Local Connection: filmmakers who focused their work in Potsdam lived to an average age of 70, those who worked in Berlin lived to 91, and [Hedy Lamarr](#)—the actress with no local connection—lived to 85.

*The Correlations III are relevant in terms of content but, for the most part, not of primary interest.* For instance, the correlation between Profession and Phase is due to specific constellations of professions and phases occupied by only a few persons—actors and directors were represented in almost all phases. Phase and Local Connection are correlated because the filmmakers of classic Hollywood ([Billy Wilder](#)) and the FRG ([Edith Schollwer](#), [Heinz Sielmann](#)) worked in Berlin, while those of almost all other phases worked in Potsdam. Local Connection and Rank are correlated because the movies in which persons of the first rank were involved tended to be realized in Potsdam, while those with the participation of persons of the second rank tended to be realized in Berlin. The correlation between Rank and Exile is quite meaningful compared to the other correlations in this group. Therefore, Table 8 shows the corresponding cross-table. As already depicted in [Chapter 6](#), a cross-table shows the absolute frequencies of combinations of attributes of two characteristics.

<sup>2</sup> The correlations with the metric characteristic Age were calculated using Eta coefficients; for more information on this, see Janssen et al.: [Statistische Datenanalyse mit SPSS](#), 280.

Table 8: Cross-Table “Rank x Exile”

		Rank		Total
		First Rank	Second Rank	
Exile	Career Not Affected by Nazi Germany	13	2	15
	Remained in Nazi Germany	9	6	15
	Went into Exile without Return to Germany	7	0	7
	Went into Exile with Return to Germany	2	3	5
		Total	31	42

Half (9 out of 18) of the first-rank filmmakers whose careers were affected by Nazi Germany remained there—compared to two-thirds (6 out of 9) of those of the second rank. Furthermore, after exile, all 3 second-rank filmmakers returned to Germany, while only 2 of 9 (i.e., about one-fifth) of the first rank returned. Finally, the correlation between Exile and Phase can be attributed to the fact that the careers of those filmmakers who belonged to early phases were more likely to be affected by the Nazi era and its film policy.

While the correlations of the first three groups were classified as obvious, irrelevant, or mostly of secondary interest, *the correlations of the last three groups are central to the interpretation to come in Part IV*, which is why all the corresponding cross-tables (with one exception) are presented.<sup>3</sup> Table 9 shows the cross-table “Access x Country of Birth” for the first correlation between street- and person-related characteristics (Correlations IV).

<sup>3</sup> As a matter of course, the correlations just reported for groups I to III (apart from “Age x Gender”—and other reported correlations with the metric characteristic Age) could be comprehended using the corresponding cross-tables. However, these tables are not presented due to their low relevance or simplicity.

Table 9: Cross-Table “Access x Country of Birth”

		Access		Total
		Publicly Accessible	Not Publicly Accessible	
Country of Birth	Germany	23	2	25
	Austria	3	2	5
	Poland	2	1	3
	Great Britain	0	2	2
	France	1	0	1
	Switzerland	1	0	1
	Czechoslovakia	0	1	1
	Bulgaria	1	0	1
	Denmark	1	0	1
	Sweden	0	1	1
	USA	0	1	1
Total		32	10	42

Of the 32 filmmakers to be found in the public area of the streetscape, 23 (71.9 percent) were born in Germany. Besides that, Austria with 3 and Poland with 2 persons occur, as well as—exclusively in the public area—France, Switzerland, Bulgaria, and Denmark with one person each. In the [Studio Babelsberg](#), which is not publicly accessible, Great Britain stands out as a country of birth that appears exclusively here with 2 persons as well as Czechoslovakia, Sweden, and the USA with one person each. Furthermore, there are 2 filmmakers each from Germany and Austria and one person from Poland. Thus, 8 out of 10 filmmakers (80 percent) were not born in Germany. Table 10 shows the cross-table of the characteristics Naming and Gender.

Table 10: Cross-Table “Naming x Gender”

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Naming	1988 Drewitz I	18	2	20
	1990s Studio Lot I	7	2	9
	1998 Babelsberg I	2	1	3
	2000 Drewitz II	1	0	1
	2009 Studio Lot II	1	0	1
	2010 Kirchsteigfeld	1	0	1
	2011 Babelsberg II	1	0	1
	2012 Groß Glienicke I	1	0	1
	2017 Groß Glienicke II	0	4	4
	2019 Babelsberg III	0	1	1
Total		32	10	42

It is the year 2017, the naming year of the streets in **Groß Glienicke**, in which for the first time 4 streets at once were named after women—**Edith Schollwer**, **Ida Wüst**, **Käthe Haack**, and **Maly Delschaft**. In the other naming years, however, only 2 female filmmakers were honored with a street name (1988 **Asta Nielsen** and **Hertha Thiele**, 1990s **Lilian Harvey** and **Zarah Leander**), or only one (1998 **Marlene Dietrich**, 2019 **Hedy Lamarr**). No streets were named after female filmmakers in the remaining naming years (2000, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012). Table 11 shows the cross-table of the characteristics District and Gender.

Table 11: Cross-Table “District x Gender”

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
District	Drewitz	19	2	21
	Babelsberg	11	4	15
	Groß Glienicke	1	4	5
	Kirchsteigfeld	1	0	1
Total		32	10	42

In Kirchsteigfeld, with the singular Heiner-Carow-Platz, there is logically no cinematic street named after a woman. In Drewitz, out of a total of 21 streets, 2 are named after women (9.5 percent or just under one-tenth), in Babelsberg 4 out of 15, and in Groß Glienicke 4 out of 5. Thus, in Babelsberg and Groß Glienicke, most streets are named after female filmmakers, although the percentage in Groß Glienicke is higher: in Babelsberg, the percentage is 26.7 percent or a good quarter, and in Groß Glienicke, it is 80.0 percent or four-fifths. Table 12 shows the cross-table “Gender x Profession”—the only one from the group of the person- and film-related characteristics (Correlations V).

Table 12: Cross-Table “Gender x Profession”

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Profession	Actor	10	10	20
	Director	11	0	11
	Multiple	3	0	3
	Producer	2	0	2
	Cinematographer	2	0	2
	Scenographer/Architect	2	0	2
	Composer	1	0	1
	Studio Director	1	0	1
	Total	32	10	42

All 10 women after whom cinematic streets are named are persons who have become known primarily as actresses. In contrast, the 32 male namesakes are characterized by the fact that they include 10 actors (i.e., almost one-third), 11 directors (also one-third), 2 producers, cinematographers, and scenographers each, one composer, one studio director as well as 3 multitalented persons who have exercised several film professions to equal effect. Table 13 shows the cross-table “Access x Profession”—the first from the group of the street- and film-related characteristics (Correlations VI).

Table 13: Cross-Table “Access x Profession”

Profession	Access		Total
	Publicly Accessible	Not Publicly Accessible	
Actor	18	2	20
Director	8	3	11
Multiple	1	2	3
Producer	2	0	2
Cinematographer	2	0	2
Scenographer/Architect	1	1	2
Composer	0	1	1
Studio Director	0	1	1
Total	32	10	42

It can be stated that actors (18 out of 32 or 56.3 percent) and directors (8 out of 32 or a quarter) dominate in the public area of the cinematic streetscape. As further professions, 2 producers and 2 cinematographers appear exclusively in the public area as well as, not exclusively, one scenographer and one multitalented person. The streets of the [Studio Babelsberg](#) that are not publicly accessible exclusively present one composer and one studio director. In addition, not exclusively, 3 directors, 2 actresses, 2 multitalented persons, and one scenographer are represented. In Table 14, the characteristics Naming and Local Connection are cross-tabulated.

Table 14: Cross-Table “Naming x Local Connection”

		Local Connection			Total
		Babelsberg/ Potsdam (And Possi- bly Berlin)	Berlin	None	
Naming	1988 <i>Drewitz I</i>	20	0	0	20
	1990s Studio Lot I	8	1	0	9
	1998 <i>Babelsberg I</i>	3	0	0	3
	2000 <i>Drewitz II</i>	0	1	0	1
	2009 Studio Lot II	1	0	0	1
	2010 <i>Kirchsteigfeld</i>	1	0	0	1
	2011 <i>Babelsberg II</i>	1	0	0	1
	2012 <i>Groß Glienicke I</i>	0	1	0	1
	2017 <i>Groß Glienicke II</i>	3	1	0	4
	2019 <i>Babelsberg III</i>	0	0	1	1
Total		37	4	1	42

It is evident that the namings after filmmakers with a connection to Potsdam's film history form a clear majority with 37 out of 42 (88.1 percent). Furthermore, one can see that in *Groß Glienicke* half of the namings are found that have a connection to Berlin. In addition, *Hedy Lamarr*, who has no connection to Potsdam or Berlin film history, can be considered as a single instance. Table 15 shows the cross-table of the characteristics Naming and Rank.

Table 15: Cross-Table “Naming x Rank”

		Rank		Total
		First Rank	Second Rank	
Naming	1988 Drewitz I	17	3	20
	1990s Studio Lot I	7	2	9
	1998 Babelsberg I	3	0	3
	2000 Drewitz II	0	1	1
	2009 Studio Lot II	1	0	1
	2010 Kirchsteigfeld	1	0	1
	2011 Babelsberg II	1	0	1
	2012 Groß Glienicke I	0	1	1
	2017 Groß Glienicke II	0	4	4
	2019 Babelsberg III	1	0	1
Total		31	11	42

In 7 out of 10 naming years, the namings of filmmakers of the first rank dominate. Of the remaining 3 naming years, 2017 stands out because in **Groß Glienicke** no less than 4 persons of the second rank—**Edith Schollwer**, **Ida Wüst**, **Käthe Haack**, and **Maly Delschaft**—were chosen as namesakes. Already in 2012, **Groß Glienicke** had distinguished itself by honoring **Heinz Sielmann**, also of the second rank. In Table 16, Rank is cross-tabulated with District.

Table 16: Cross-Table “District x Rank”

		Rank		Total
		First Rank	Second Rank	
District	Drewitz	17	4	21
	Babelsberg	13	2	15
	Groß Glienicke	0	5	5
	Kirchsteigfeld	1	0	1
Total		31	11	42

In **Drewitz** (17:4), in **Babelsberg** (13:2), and in **Kirchsteigfeld** (1:0), the majority of streets were named after prominent filmmakers. Only in **Groß Glienicker** are all 5 streets dedicated to persons who can rather be assigned to the second rank.

The fact that Naming and Phase are correlated is primarily due to specific constellations of naming years and phases occupied by only a few persons. For example, all 3 streets named after early cinema pioneers were named in **Drewitz** in 1988. The corresponding 10x10 cross-table is the only one that is not shown in the central groups of correlations IV to VI due to its display complexity. In terms of content, a similar situation can be observed for the correlation between District and Phase. Table 17 shows the corresponding cross-table.

Table 17: Cross-Table “District x Phase”

		District				Total
		Drewitz	Babelsberg	Groß Glienicker	Kirchsteigfeld	
Phase	Early Cinema Pioneers	3	0	0	0	3
	Experts of Silent Movies	4	2	0	0	6
	Talkie Pioneers	0	5	0	0	5
	Resistance in the Weimar Republic	2	0	0	0	2
	Nazi Filmmaking	0	1	0	0	1
	Classical Hollywood	0	1	0	0	1
	FRG	0	0	2	0	2
	DEFA	3	2	0	1	6
	Contemporary Hollywood	0	1	0	0	1
	Experts of Transitions	9	3	3	0	15
	Total	21	15	5	1	42

In the **Drewitz** district, the names of the honored persons exclusively represent the phase of the early cinema pioneers (3 persons: **Asta Nielsen**, **Guido Seeber**, **Oskar Meßter**) as well as the phase of the cinematic resistance in the Weimar Republic (2 persons: **Ernst Busch**, **Hertha Thiele**). **Drewitz** is also home to two-thirds of the experts of silent movies (4 out of 6), and the **DEFA** is strongly

represented with half of the persons (3 out of 6). Moreover, 60.0 percent (9 out of 15) of the filmmakers who cannot be attributed to one specific phase but are experts of transitions can be found in *Drewitz*. In *Babelsberg*, we find exclusively the talkie pioneers (5 persons: *Emil Jannings*, *Friedrich Holländer*, *Josef von Sternberg*, *Lilian Harvey*, *Marlene Dietrich*) as well as (with one person respectively) filmmakers of the Nazi era (*Zarah Leander*), classical Hollywood (*Billy Wilder*), and contemporary Hollywood (*Quentin Tarantino*). In *Groß Glienicke*, the phase of FRG filmmaking is found exclusively (2 persons: *Edith Schollwer*, *Heinz Sielmann*). Table 18 shows the cross-table “Access x Phase”—the last from the group of street- and film-related characteristics.

Table 18: Cross-Table “Access x Phase”

		Access		Total
		Publicly Accessible	Not Publicly Accessible	
Phase	Early Cinema Pioneers	3	0	3
	Experts of Silent Movies	4	2	6
	Talkie Pioneers	2	3	5
	Resistance in the Weimar Republic	2	0	2
	Nazi Filmmaking	0	1	1
	Classical Hollywood	0	1	1
	FRG	2	0	2
	DEFA	4	2	6
	Contemporary Hollywood	0	1	1
	Experts of Transitions	15	0	15
		Total	32	10
				42

While early cinema pioneers, persons of the cinematic resistance in the Weimar Republic, FRG filmmakers, and experts of transitions are exclusively present in the public space, Nazi filmmaking, classical Hollywood, and contemporary Hollywood are exclusively present in the nonpublic space. Two-thirds of the experts of silent movies and of the DEFA filmmakers can be found in the public space, while three-fifths of the talkie pioneers cannot be found there.

With the analysis of the street-, person-, and film-related characteristics as well as the calculation of the correlations between the characteristics, Research Questions 1, 3, 4, and 5 could be answered completely and Research Question 2 partially. In order to be able to clarify under which circumstances the cinematic street names were established (Research Question 2), which features distinguish the relational structure of the cinematic streetscape in Potsdam (Research Question 6), and how the cinematic streetscape as a sub-assemblage relates to Potsdam's local cinematic assemblage (Research Question 7), further interpretative work is required, which will be done in the following Part IV.

## IV. THE CINEMATIC STREETSCAPE IN POTSDAM AS ...

Taking up the findings elaborated in Part III, the following part tells the story of Potsdam's cinematic streetscape. In doing so, the critical street-name studies' approaches—palimpsest (Chapter 9), cultural arena (Chapter 10), and performative space (Chapter 11)—are used to further disentangle and interpret the relational structure of the streetscape. Subsequently, Chapter 12 summarizes the results and answers the remaining research questions.

### 9. Palimpsest

Naming a place and inscribing that naming to orient oneself in the world is a cultural practice that goes back to the beginning of human history. Inscribing mythical or historical personalities into landscapes to memorialize them and evoke their collective significance was already common in ancient times. Naming evolved in more diverse ways as the centuries passed. In medieval towns, for example, streets were no longer named only after religious patrons, churches, or geographical peculiarities but also after the local craft guild or a population group.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the gradual officialization of this cultural inscription practice began to be incorporated into official administrative processes. In Paris, for example, the first centralized administrative regulations for naming important streets were issued in 1605. The French capital was also one of the first cities to systematically assign street names to the walls of houses. Other cities followed suit with the naming of street intersections and major thoroughfares along with the numbering of houses. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the assignment of street names and house numbers became established as a legal administrative act regulated by statutes. The authorship of the city as a text was thus assigned to the sphere of those in power. Against the backdrop of the increasing complexity of urban life, the officialization of the streetscape made it possible to collect taxes on a regular basis, enact communal-political decisions, regulate postal traffic, establish medical care, carry out police operations, and to establish, in a more general way, forms of social structure. Through officialization, however, the inscription of

visions and versions of the past, future, and identity into the everyday environment of the people by political and administrative forces was likewise cast into a legal form. The officialization of street naming thus gave an institutional framework to inscriptions motivated by memory politics or ideology.<sup>1</sup>

In Potsdam, the official naming of streets began in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Responsibility for the approval and implementation of the street naming has changed over the decades.<sup>2</sup> Today, the power to name streets lies with the mayor in consultation with the city council (called “Stadtverordnetenversammlung” nowadays and “Rat der Stadt” in GDR times). For a street to be named, there had to be, and still has to be, a draft resolution that must be approved by a majority vote in the municipal decision-making body.<sup>3</sup> Nowadays, street-name proposals can be submitted by the members of the city council, those of the district advisory councils, investors, property developers, Potsdam’s inhabitants, or on official grounds—i.e., by municipal employees as a result of administrative necessity. In the case of street naming in a city district, a vote is first held in the respective district advisory council. This is followed by a discussion and vote in

<sup>1</sup> On the historical development of street naming, see Reuben Rose-Redwood, Derek Alderman, Maoz Azaryahu: The urban streetscape as political cosmos, in: Reuben Rose-Redwood, Derek Alderman, Maoz Azaryahu (eds.): *The Political Life of Urban Streetscapes. Naming, Politics, and Place*, Abingdon 2018, 1–24, here 8–9.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Klaus Arlt: *Die Straßennamen der Stadt Potsdam. Geschichte und Bedeutung* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Potsdam 2010, 14.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. ibid. On the history of street naming in Potsdam after 1945, see—in addition to Arlt’s monograph—Maoz Azaryahu: Renaming the past in post-Nazi Germany: insights into the politics of street naming in Mannheim and Potsdam, in: *Cultural Geographies*, vol. 19, no. 3, 2012, 385–400. On the history of street naming and street numbering, see Maoz Azaryahu: The power of commemorative street names, in: *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, vol. 14, no. 3, 1996, 311–330, here 313–314. Cf. Peter Glasner: Vom Ortsgedächtnis zum Gedächtnisort: Straßennamen zwischen Mittelalter und Neuzeit, in: Jürgen Eichhoff, Wilfried Seibicke, Michael Wolffsohn (eds.): *Name und Gesellschaft. Soziale und historische Aspekte der Namengebung und Namenentwicklung*, Mannheim 2001, 282–302 and Fernando Sánchez Costa: Street names, politics of memory and social debate in Republican Barcelona (1931–1936): A theoretical reflection and case study, in: *Catalan Journal of Communication & Cultural Studies*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2012, 3–19, here 5–6.

the cultural committee and finally in the city council.<sup>4</sup> In Potsdam, proposals for street names that cannot be implemented immediately are included in a street-name pool<sup>5</sup> and, if applicable, taken into consideration in future naming processes.<sup>6</sup> Municipal bodies do not need to be involved in namings on a private territory or company lot.

Numerous personalities have been honored with street names in Potsdam, with filmmakers being prominently represented. Of all the streets named after persons or families, 9.2 percent are named after filmmakers, which puts them in third place (see Table 1 in Chapter 6). Moreover, 21.1 percent of creative professionals honored in Potsdam are filmmakers (see Table 2 in Chapter 6). This means that Potsdam's streetscape as a whole is markedly influenced by the topic of film.

The cinematic streetscape, taken out and understood as a palimpsest, was inscribed in Potsdam in four phases. These inscription phases mark (partly historical) periods of time in which different authors with different interests and at different locations in Potsdam have established or further developed the cinematic streetscape. The first inscription phase encompasses those processes through which the first cinematic streets appeared in Potsdam (Section 9.1). The second inscription phase covers a period at the end of the 1980s when a significant expansion of the cinematic streetscape occurred (Section 9.2). The third phase began in the 1990s (Section 9.3), while the fourth and most recent phase, related to the district of Groß Glienike, includes the years 2012 and 2017 (Section 9.4). In the following, the four inscription phases are reconstructed, and an interim conclusion is drawn (Section 9.5).

<sup>4</sup> According to Christian Loyal-Wieck, [street administration clerk for the city of Potsdam](#), in an email dated Aug 11, 2020, to Anna Luise Kiss.

<sup>5</sup> The streetname pool can be found here: <https://vv.potsdam.de/vv/oe/17301010000008226.php#tab-links>. Currently, 68 persons are listed in it, including 15 women (22.1 percent).

<sup>6</sup> According to Christian Loyal-Wieck, [street administration clerk for the city of Potsdam](#), in an email dated Aug 11, 2020, to Anna Luise Kiss.

## 9.1 First Inscription Phase

In contrast to most inscriptions from the 1980s onward, those of the first phase were not permanent. The very first known inscription attempt of a film-related street name, [Peter-Heuser-Straße](#) in [Babelsberg](#), is no longer present in the streetscape today. Regarding this street, [Klaus Arlt](#) states: “Name mentioned in the 1930s for the former entrance to the [Studio Babelsberg](#) from Stahnsdorfer Straße, presumably after the film economist, silent movie writer, and director [P. Heuser](#), who was active from 1919 to 1927.”<sup>7</sup>

Born in 1880, [Peter Heuser](#) came from Cologne and initially worked in the cigarette industry.<sup>8</sup> In the 1910s, he became extensively involved in the film industry.<sup>9</sup> As a result, [Heuser](#) emerged as general director of [Rheinische Lichtbild AG](#). This Cologne film company was “launched [1918] as a ‘counter-Ufa’”<sup>10</sup> and consisted of an amalgamation of movie theaters, distribution companies, and smaller production companies.<sup>11</sup> [Rheinische Lichtbild AG](#) subsequently absorbed the production company [Deutsche Bioscop GmbH](#) and the [Babelsberg](#) studio lot.<sup>12</sup> In 1919, this became [Deutsche Bioscop AG](#), the headquarters moved to Berlin,<sup>13</sup> and [Heuser](#) moved into a villa in [Neubabelsberg](#).<sup>14</sup> In the meantime, [Heuser](#)’s company became, after Ufa, the “second largest [...] film empire in Germany with numerous distribution companies, copying houses, movie theaters, and film

<sup>7</sup> [Arlt: Die Straßennamen der Stadt Potsdam](#), 88, own translation.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Kurt Weiden: [Neubabelsberg. Die historische Entwicklung der Villen-Colonie Neubabelsberg](#), Potsdam 2016, 135.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Corinna Müller: [Licht-Spiel-Räume](#), in: Wolfgang Jacobsen (ed.): [Babelsberg. 1912 Ein Filmstudio](#) 1992, Berlin 1992, 9–32, here 28.

<sup>10</sup> Corinna Müller: Variationen des Kinoprogramms. Filmform und Filmgeschichte, in: Corinna Müller, Harro Segeberg (eds.): [Die Modellierung des Kinofilms. Zur Geschichte des Kinoprogramms zwischen Kurzfilm und Langfilm \(1905/06–1918\)](#), Munich 1998, 43–75, here 70, own translation.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Wolfgang Mühl-Benninghaus: [Vom Augusterlebnis zur Ufa-Gründung. Der deutsche Film im 1. Weltkrieg](#), Berlin 2004, 330.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Müller: Variationen des Kinoprogramms, 70.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Mühl-Benninghaus: [Vom Augusterlebnis zur Ufa-Gründung](#), 332.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Weiden: [Neubabelsberg](#), 135.

factories.”<sup>15</sup> Since the focus was primarily on the distribution of movies and not on their production, the film company conglomerate put Heuser’s accounts into the red. Heuser sold his share package in Rheinische Lichtbild AG at the end of 1919 and withdrew from the management.<sup>16</sup> Deutsche Bioscop AG merged with Decla (Deutsche Eclair), so the company became Decla-Bioscop AG. In 1921, Decla-Bioscop became part of Universum-Film AG (Ufa), founded in 1917, and the Babelsberg studio lot was also incorporated into Ufa.<sup>17</sup> Heuser had already sold the cinemas he still owned to Ufa a year earlier.<sup>18</sup>

Due to a lack of sources, one can only speculate as to who named the street after Peter Heuser and when it was erased. It can at least be assumed, however, that Heuser himself pushed for the naming in 1919 to symbolically take possession of the studio lot in Babelsberg as a competitor to Ufa. The name was probably removed when, in 1922, the Heuser film companies and cinemas were absorbed into the Ufa group, and the studio lot was transferred to Ufa. That said, the Cologne entrepreneur Peter Heuser remains the first person in Potsdam to introduce the idea of inscribing film (as well as his own significance as a film entrepreneur), into the streetscape.

Filmakademiestraße and Ufastraße, which were located in the Babelsberg district, also no longer exist. Both streets received their cinematic names in 1938<sup>19</sup> and are associated with the plans of Reich Minister for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, Joseph Goebbels (1897–1945), to bring the German film industry under National Socialist control, as well as with the joint plan of Goebbels, local politicians, and the Ufa management to build a gigantic film city in Babelsberg. With the rise to power, the National Socialists aimed to centralize and bring the German film industry into line through laws, decrees, blackmail, dismissals, and professional bans.<sup>20</sup> “The canon of methods of state control and regulation of the

<sup>15</sup> Christian Dirks: Alfred Rosenthal: Hugenbergs bester Mann, in: Irene Stratenwerth, Hermann Simon (eds.): *Pioniere in Celluloid. Juden in der frühen Filmwelt*, Berlin 2004, 80–91, here 83, own translation.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Müller: Licht-Spiel-Räume, 28.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Arlt: *Die Straßennamen der Stadt Potsdam*, 30, 46, 101, and 105.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Almuth Püschel: “... die bedeutendste der Welt.” Das Projekt der Filmstadt

film industry also included the creation of a film academy,”<sup>21</sup> for which National Socialist Chancellor, Adolf Hitler, issued a corresponding decree on March 18, 1938: the German Film Academy, with its location in Babelsberg, was to be established “to ensure the further development of the film industry, especially the art of film in the spirit of National Socialism,” under the direct “supervision of the Reich Minister for Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda.”<sup>22</sup>

The creation of the German Film Academy continued to develop in parallel with those plans to extensively remodel and expand the Babelsberg studio lot. In turn, Ufa’s plans for expansion coincided with the plan to make the studio lot an original film city. This was initially a request of local politicians and officials. The various ideas for expansion culminated in a joint call for bids under the protectorate of Goebbels.<sup>23</sup> On June 16, 1938, architects were invited to participate in the call to design a film city.<sup>24</sup> The first prize went to Emil Fahrenkamp.<sup>25</sup> Besides the German Film Academy, the construction plans for the film city were to include, according to historian Almuth Püscher,

the Institute for Cultural Filmmaking, Ufa’s headquarters, another institute that serves cultural purposes, the dormitory for the academy’s students, a city hall, a civic center, a railroad station building, a central post office,

Babelsberg 1937–1943, in: Dietrich Eichholtz (ed.): *Brandenburg in der NS-Zeit. Studien und Dokumente*, Berlin 1993, 139–168, here 141, Ulrike Bartels: *Die Wochenschau im Dritten Reich. Entwicklung und Funktion eines Massenmediums unter besonderer Berücksichtigung völkisch-nationaler Inhalte*, Frankfurt 2004, 9–10, and Peter Meyers: *Film im Geschichtsunterricht. Realitätsprojektionen in deutschen Dokumentar- und Spielfilmen von der NS-Zeit bis zur Bundesrepublik. Geschichtsdidaktische und unterrichtspraktische Überlegungen*, Frankfurt 1998, 75–78.

<sup>21</sup> Püscher: “... die bedeutendste der Welt,” 141.

<sup>22</sup> Adolf Hitler, Joseph Goebbels: *Erlaß des Führers und Reichskanzlers über die Errichtung der Deutschen Film-Akademie. Vom 18. März 1938*, in: *Reichsgesetzblatt. Teil I*, Mar 25, 1938, own translation. See also Püscher: “... die bedeutendste der Welt,” 141.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Almuth Püscher: Drehort Babelsberg—Die Filmstadt, in: Förderkreis Böhmisches Dorf Nowawes-Neuendorf e.V., Almuth Püscher (eds.): *Neuendorf—Nowawes—Babelsberg. Stationen eines Stadtteils*, Horb am Neckar 2000, 109–121, here 115.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Püscher: “... die bedeutendste der Welt,” 142–143.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. ibid., 147.

Red Cross's executive building, the film hotel, commercial and residential buildings, cinemas, stores, restaurants, etc.<sup>26</sup>

The architect **Fahrenkamp** envisioned that the “film city [...] should become the most important in the world.”<sup>27</sup> Likewise, the mayor of **Babelsberg**, **Kurt Benz**, had a German Hollywood in mind.<sup>28</sup> Filmakademiestraße was conceived as the “main thoroughfare for the film city.”<sup>29</sup> Ufastraße was also designated as part of the film city in the jury’s statement of reasons for the architectural competition.<sup>30</sup> The German Film Academy was already closed down in about 1940 due to excessive costs and dissatisfaction with the management, among other things.<sup>31</sup> The construction of the film city also came to a standstill due to World War II.<sup>32</sup> In 1945, Filmakademiestraße became **August-Bebel-Straße**<sup>33</sup> and in 1948, Ufastraße became Stahnsdorfer Straße.<sup>34</sup>

## 9.2 Second Inscription Phase

After the first cinematic inscription attempts in **Babelsberg**, it took about 40 years for a second phase of cinematic street namings to begin. At the end of the 1980s, no fewer than 20 streets in the **Drewitz** district of Potsdam were named after filmmakers. The **Drewitz** district was one of the last new housing developments in the GDR and a so-called “complex-housing construction,”<sup>35</sup> a term that goes

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 143, own translation.

<sup>27</sup> **Fahrenkamp** in a letter dated Jan 22, 1942, to the chief construction officer Stephan, as cited in ibid., 164, own translation.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. ibid., 154.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 146, own translation.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. ibid., 147.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Clemens Zimmermann: Filmwissenschaft im Nationalsozialismus—Anspruch und Scheitern, in: Armin Kohnle, Frank Engehause (eds.): *Zwischen Wissenschaft und Politik. Studien zur deutschen Universitätsgeschichte*, Stuttgart 2001, 203–217, here 214 and anonymous: *Die Ufa-Lehrschau und die Deutsche Filmakademie*, in: *filmportal.de*.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. **Püschel**: “... die bedeutendste der Welt,” 158–164.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. **Arlt**: *Die Straßennamen der Stadt Potsdam*, 30 and 46.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. ibid., 101 and 105.

<sup>35</sup> Rat des Bezirkes Potsdam: Bestätigung der Bebauungskonzeption zur Ergänzung der Aufgabenstellung Wohnkomplex Potsdam-Drewitz (Beschluß), Beschluß-Nr. 0221/86,

back to the concept of the Socialist housing complex.<sup>36</sup> This form of housing construction was part of a program that the GDR had been pursuing since the 1970s with the intention of increasing the number of apartments and improving the quality of living.<sup>37</sup> The “complex-housing construction” consisted of industrially produced new housing developments in which nothing was to be lacking: from supermarkets and doctors’ offices to kindergartens, schools, and leisure facilities as well as retirement homes. As early as the planning stage, a specific theme was set which was intended to wind its way like a red thread through the new housing areas utilizing street names, names for leisure facilities, and art adjacent to or on buildings. The aim was to give the new housing complex a cultural identity through the comprehensive thematic design.

While authors and poets were chosen as the theme for Potsdam’s new housing development Waldstadt I and Communists and Socialists for Waldstadt II, film was the leitmotif for *Drewitz*.<sup>38</sup> The corresponding planning documents state that “the buildings are to be effectively designed by means of architectural elements and open spaces with the inclusion of architecturally inspired art” to create “pleasant living conditions for the future residents in the housing area.”<sup>39</sup> In the “Design Concept Visual and Applied Arts”<sup>40</sup> presented for *Drewitz*, the choice of

Beschluß-Tag 15.10.1986, *Potsdam City Archive*, accession no. Soz/04180, 55–56, here 56, own translation. An accession number may contain several documents that are not numbered and (may) have their own page numbers. In such a case, all sheets belonging to one accession number are additionally numbered consecutively in the archive folder concerned. In order to avoid misunderstandings, in this and in the following, similar archive sources not the page numbers of the respective document are given but the sheet numbers of the corresponding accession number. In other cases, the documents are numbered, which is why these numbers take the place of the sheet numbers, e.g., “printed matter no. 00/0733.”

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Frank Betker: “*Einsicht in die Notwendigkeit.*” *Kommunale Stadtplanung in der DDR und nach der Wende (1945–1994)*, Stuttgart 2005, 145–146.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. ibid., 129, 146, and 193–195.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. *Arlt*: *Die Straßennamen der Stadt Potsdam*, 13.

<sup>39</sup> Rat des Bezirkes Potsdam: Bestätigung der Bebauungskonzeption zur Ergänzung der Aufgabenstellung Wohnkomplex Potsdam-Drewitz, 56, own translation.

<sup>40</sup> See Heinz Fürstenberg, Werner Gottmann, Wolfgang Haupt, Hans Joachim Kölling: Potsdam—Wohnkomplex Drewitz. Gestaltungskonzeption bildende und angewandte

theme was justified with the argument that Potsdam was the place of activity of the “Socialist film production, DEFA,” which had “found its place of work in the traditional, and at the same time contradictory, studios of German film.”<sup>41</sup> This argument was made, as advisers, by representatives of the DEFA Studio for Feature Films, the Association of Film- and Television-Makers, the Academy of Film and Television as well as the former, longtime DEFA director [Albert Wilkening](#).<sup>42</sup> They made reference to the beginnings of the [Studio Babelsberg](#) in 1912 and stated: “The terms [Babelsberg](#) and Film Production achieved international reputation. Important personalities of the world’s film art were at home or worked here”<sup>43</sup> until the National Socialists appropriated the studio. After 1945, “the Socialist film art of the GDR”<sup>44</sup> developed in Potsdam. “All of these are, in brief, reasons that really demand an appreciation of personalities, movies, movie heroes, and events in the public, social life of a film city like Potsdam.”<sup>45</sup>

The design concept for [Drewitz](#) included, among other things, a “walk-in fountain” that was to be “dedicated to film fun.”<sup>46</sup> Film comedians were to be present in the public space “with caricaturistically exaggerated small sculptures of expressive colorfulness in ceramics and enamel.”<sup>47</sup> It was considered that the appreciation of comedians “could possibly go beyond the national framework” and that a “gap could be bridged to the international history of lighthearted film.”<sup>48</sup> It was planned to name a restaurant after the talkie classic *The Blue Angel* (1930, directed by [Josef von Sternberg](#)), a youth club after the proletarian movie *Kuhle Wampe or Who Owns the World?* (1932, directed by [Slatan Dudow](#)), and a preschool facility after the children’s movie *Alfons Wobblecheek* (1966, directed by [Konrad Petzold](#)). The documentary director [Andrew Thorndike](#) was considered

Kunst, Stand November 1988, *Potsdam City Archive*, accession no. Soz/04180, 108–124, own translation of the title.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 111, own translation.

<sup>42</sup> See *ibid.*, 108.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 111, own translation.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 112, own translation.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., own translation.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 114, own translation.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., own translation.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 122, own translation.

as the inspiration for the naming of a high school and the actress Henny Porten for a retirement home.<sup>49</sup> By naming the building after Porten, it was intended to honor “a great actress of German film” and “help the residents to identify themselves in a positive way.”<sup>50</sup> In the restaurant “Der blaue Engel” (“The Blue Angel”), a “cinema bar” was planned “to enable modestly sized screenings for children’s movies and movie club events.”<sup>51</sup> The young people in the new housing area were to be given “the opportunity to watch movies.”<sup>52</sup> Moreover, it was discussed to design the flooring of the planned walkway in Drewitz “as a perforated filmstrip.”<sup>53</sup> In general, the original planning was characterized by the desire to implement the theme of film through reference “to outstanding personalities of progressive film history”<sup>54</sup> who were to be honored in Drewitz. Furthermore, the theme of film was to be made present for the residents through a reminder “of important movies of the past and present” as well as through “typical associations to terms of film art and film technology.”<sup>55</sup>

The planned facilities, however, were never built in Drewitz and many of the film-inspired namings never took place. The collapse of the GDR along with the reunification of Germany meant that the housing complex and, in particular, the plans for the cultural leitmotif were not implemented to their full extent. In actual fact, a row of prefab houses is called Reel today<sup>56</sup>—the walkway was originally to bear this name—and many of the cinematic street names were inscribed and have remained. Based on the 1988 draft resolution, 20 streets in

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Rat der Stadt Potsdam: Beschuß zur Benennung der Straßen im 1. Teilkomplex des Neubaugebietes Drewitz (Beschußvorlage), 18.05.1988, *Potsdam City Archive*, accession no. A1./1490, 92–103, here 95.

<sup>50</sup> Fürstenberg et al.: Potsdam—Wohnkomplex Drewitz, 121, own translation.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 120, own translation.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 112, own translation.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 122, own translation.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 113, own translation.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., own translation.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. ProPotsdam: Wir schaffen völlig neue Angebote. Jörn-Michael Westphal, Geschäftsführer der GEWOBA, über die Sanierung der Drewitzer “Rolle,” in: *Wohnen in Potsdam. Das GEWOBA-Servicemagazin, März 2016*, 20.



Figure 7: Street sign of **Asta-Nielsen-Straße** as an example of the appreciation of early cinema pioneers in **Drewitz**.

**Drewitz** are named after filmmakers today.<sup>57</sup> In September 2000, **Ernst-Busch-Platz** was added,<sup>58</sup> which indirectly belongs to the second inscription phase.

The 21 filmmakers found in **Drewitz** can best be ordered according to the characteristic Phase (see **Table 17** in Chapter 8). Following the original goal of the GDR planners to depict Potsdam's film history, three early cinema pioneers or founding figures of the **Studio Babelsberg** are honored with street names in **Drewitz**: Oskar Meßter, Guido Seeber, and **Asta Nielsen**. In the draft resolution of the city council from 1988, **Meßter** and **Seeber** are explicitly presented as film pioneers<sup>59</sup>—the former because of his “self-invented [film] devices,”<sup>60</sup> the latter because he “had the first glass studio built in **Babelsberg**.<sup>61</sup> **Nielsen** (Figure 7) stands for the founding of the Studio Babelsberg and the beginning of feature film production in 1912 with her role in *The Dance to Death* (1912, directed by

<sup>57</sup> See Rat der Stadt Potsdam: Beschuß zur Benennung der Straßen im 1. Teilkomplex des Neubaugebietes Drewitz.

<sup>58</sup> See Stadtverordnetenversammlung der Landeshauptstadt Potsdam: Benennung des Stadtplatzes in Potsdam Drewitz (Beschußvorlage), 21. August 2000, *Potsdam City Archive*, accession no. 12/0471, printed matter no. 00/0733.

<sup>59</sup> See Rat der Stadt Potsdam: Beschuß zur Benennung der Straßen im 1. Teilkomplex des Neubaugebietes Drewitz, 99 and 100.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 99, own translation.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 100, own translation.



Figure 8: Street sign of Friedrich-W.-Murnau-Straße as an example of the appreciation of experts of silent movies in Drewitz.

Urban Gad)—the first feature movie to be shot in Babelsberg. Paul Wegener can also be placed in the same context: although he can be considered an expert of transitions due to his work for the early silent and the later Nazi movies, he was to be honored as an early founder of “film as art.”<sup>62</sup>

The film-historical timeline continues with the experts of silent movies Erich Pommer, Ernst Lubitsch, Friedrich W. Murnau, and Fritz Lang. They helped the studio achieve international fame with their major film productions of the 1920s, which are still recognized worldwide today. Lubitsch’s *Madame DuBarry* (1919), Murnau’s *The Last Laugh* (1924), and Lang’s *Metropolis* (1927), the last two produced by Pommer, are worth mentioning. The draft resolution states, for example, that Murnau (Figure 8) was considered a “German film genius”<sup>63</sup> and that Lang had helped “German film achieve world renown before 1933.”<sup>64</sup>

Hertha Thiele (Figure 9) and Ernst Busch were to refer to the “short phase of proletarian–revolutionary feature movies in the Weimar Republic.”<sup>65</sup> Thiele

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 101, own translation.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 99, own translation.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 98, own translation.

<sup>65</sup> Michael Duchardt, Marc Silberman, Burkhardt Lindner, Raimund Gerz, James K. Lyon: *Filme und Drehbücher*, in: Jan Knopf (ed.): *Brecht-Handbuch. Prosa, Filme, Drehbücher* (vol. 3), Stuttgart 2002, 417–478, here 435, own translation.



Figure 9: Street sign of Hertha-Thiele-Weg as an example of the appreciation of filmmakers belonging to the resistance in the Weimar Republic in Drewitz.

starred in *Mädchen in Uniform* (1931, directed by Leontine Sagan)—a movie realized by a team of women in which same-sex love is the theme—and Ernst Busch starred alongside Thiele in *Kuhle Wampe*—a decidedly proletarian movie.

Nazi filmmaking is only implicitly represented in Drewitz by the experts of transitions (see Table 17). In particular, the actor Hans Albers stands out as a veritable star of the National Socialist film system. In contrast, the aforementioned film personalities—the producer Erich Pommer, the director Fritz Lang, and the actress Hertha Thiele—emigrated from Germany as staunch opponents of National Socialism. Moreover, the screenwriter, director, and producer Ernst Lubitsch turned against Nazi Germany in his film work and the actor Conrad Veidt—another expert of transitions—turned his back not only on National Socialism but also on all other forms of intolerance.

The central pillar in Drewitz is DEFA filmmaking. With Slatan Dudow, a protagonist of the Socialist film studio's first generation of directors is honored. The 1988 draft resolution states that with *Kuhle Wampe* he realized one of the “most ideologically consistent proletarian movies in Germany” and “after his return from emigration” made movies that “shaped DEFA's Socialist profile,”<sup>66</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Rat der Stadt Potsdam: Beschuß zur Benennung der Straßen im 1. Teilkomplex des Neubaugebietes Drewitz, 97, own translation.

such as *Our Daily Bread* (1949). With the naming of a street after the actor Günther Simon, a cinematic milestone was marked, at least from the perspective of GDR cultural policy. As a star of Socialist film art, Simon portrayed the workers' leader and chairman of the Communist Party of Germany Ernst Thälmann in the major productions of the same name *Ernst Thälmann: Son of the Working Class* (1954, directed by Kurt Maetzig) and *Ernst Thälmann: Leader of the Working Class* (1955, directed by Kurt Maetzig). Konrad Wolf also occupies a prominent position. As the draft resolution states, he was not only the "director of DEFA feature movies with a defining profile,"<sup>67</sup> that attracted attention far beyond the GDR, but also developed "cultural-political effectiveness, for instance, as president of the Academy of Arts of the GDR."<sup>68</sup> His position is singled out because an avenue was dedicated to him that runs completely through the housing area. From this avenue, various cinematic streets branch off (Figure 10).

The focus on DEFA, however, does not solely result from these three filmmakers, all of whom can clearly be assigned to DEFA, but also from six other personalities who can be considered experts of transitions. One of the founding figures of DEFA, the scenographer Willy Schiller, who had already worked for the film industry under the National Socialists, is part of the palimpsest. The cinematographer Robert Baberske also worked for both Ufa and DEFA. For the latter, he shot over a dozen anti-Fascist and proletarian movies, some of which are still recognized today, and he received the National Prize of the GDR. The 1988 draft resolution states that he was "from 1948 onward [...] one of DEFA's distinguished cinematographers."<sup>69</sup> Eduard von Winterstein was always a very active actor who managed the transition from silent movies to talkies and from Ufa to DEFA. He was awarded the National Prize of the GDR three times as well as the Goethe Prize in East Berlin. A street was dedicated to Wolfgang Staudte, the director who made the very first DEFA movie, *The Murderers Are among Us* (1946), even though he used to commute between the East and the West until 1955, when he started to work in the West exclusively. The theater and film director Erich Engel had already been active as a director during the

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 102, own translation.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., own translation.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 97, own translation.



Figure 10: Konrad-Wolf-Allee, from which various cinematic streets branch off, runs through the Drewitz district.

Nazi era but settled old scores with the Nazi dictatorship in a remarkable and award-winning way with the DEFA coming-to-terms movie *The Blum Affair* (1948). Although he too turned his back on DEFA, a street is dedicated to him as well. The draft resolution mentions that he had made himself “available” “in both parts of Germany” after World War II for the “reconstruction of film and theater work.”<sup>70</sup> Like Staudte and Engel, the actor Willy A. Kleinau was a com-

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., own translation.

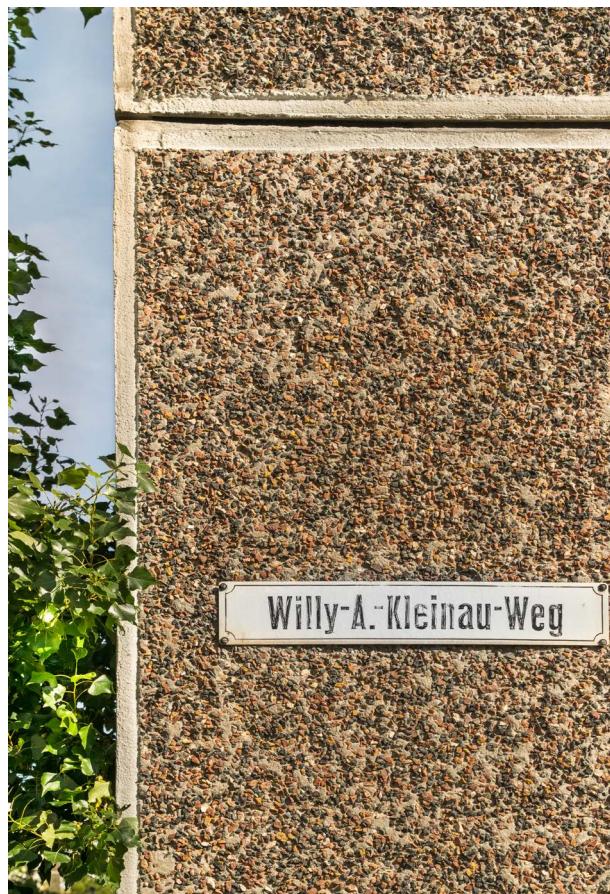


Figure 11: A path in [Drewitz](#) is dedicated to the actor [Willy A. Kleinau](#).

muter between the East and the West. However, according to the [Drewitz](#) draft resolution, he was to stand out as “one of the most distinctive DEFA actors in the 1950s”<sup>71</sup> (Figure 11).

It is noteworthy that the naming of a central square in [Drewitz](#) after [Ernst Busch](#) in 2000—i.e., a decade after German reunification—strikingly emphasized the orientation of the cinematic streetscape toward anti-Fascist and Socialist film-making as a guiding force for identification and identity in the everyday lives of

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 98, own translation.



Figure 12: Street sign of **Ernst-Busch-Platz** in **Drewitz**.

the residents (Figure 12). With his artistic work—including, as mentioned, his participation in *Kuhle Wampe*—the actor and singer **Busch** initially placed himself in the service of the anti-Fascist struggle and later in that of the GDR’s Socialism.

### 9.3 Third Inscription Phase

The palimpsest was significantly expanded in the 1990s in **Babelsberg**, when the studio management named 10 streets on its lot—all of them not publicly accessible—after filmmakers. Here, too, a tribute was paid to film personalities who are linked to the history of the studio and for whom—as for the majority of filmmakers in **Drewitz**—a local connection to Potsdam can be stated. With the director **Georg Wilhelm Pabst** (Figure 13) and the director, screenwriter, and producer **Joe May**, two experts of silent movies have been honored on the studio lot, and with the actress **Lilian Harvey** (Figure 13), the director **Josef von Sternberg**, and the composer **Friedrich Holländer**, three talkie pioneers. With **Zarah Leander**, a street was dedicated to an actress who is associated with Nazi filmmaking. In contrast, the screenwriter and director **Billy Wilder**, to whom a square was dedicated, emigrated from Germany as a staunch Nazi opponent and represents classical Hollywood. With the scenographer **Alfred Hirschmeier**, the director **Heiner Carow** and the longtime DEFA director **Albert Wilkening**, the DEFA history of the studio was also taken into account.



Figure 13: Street signs for the director Georg Wilhelm Pabst and the actress Lillian Harvey on the Studio Babelsberg lot.

Over the years, five more streets were added to the [Media City Babelsberg](#): three in 1998, one in 2011, and one in 2019. Beyond the studio lot but still near enough to count, an avenue was named after the actress [Marlene Dietrich](#) in 1998 (Figure 14). Once again, the naming was accomplished with the participation of the studio management, but this time the decision was made officially by the city council.<sup>72</sup> Furthermore, the actors [Emil Jannings](#) and [Heinrich George](#) were honored with a street near the studio lot,<sup>73</sup> intensifying the focus on the talkie pioneers. In particular, the production *The Blue Angel* stands out because in addition to the director [Sternberg](#) and the composer [Holländer](#) (Figure 15), the leading actors [Dietrich](#) and [Jannings](#) then also received a distinguished honor.

The expansion of the streetscape in 1998 resulted in a simultaneous shift of emphasis toward the Nazi era: after [Zarah Leander](#), a star of Nazi film, had been assigned a street in the 1990s (Figure 15), two more Nazi stars, [Emil Jannings](#) and [Heinrich George](#), were now added. This trend was reinforced when a path near the [Babelsberg studio](#) and the [film park](#) was named after [Heinz Rühmann](#) in 2011, this time proposed by the [Filmpark Babelsberg GmbH](#) and approved

<sup>72</sup> See Stadtverordnetenversammlung der Landeshauptstadt Potsdam: Niederschrift der 54. öffentlichen Sitzung der Stadtverordnetenversammlung am 28.01.1998, *Potsdam City Archive*, accession no. 12/0113, printed matter no. 98/087, 56.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. *ibid.*



Figure 14: Marlene-Dietrich-Allee is located directly at the [Studio Babelsberg](#).

by the city council. Rühmann was a prominent protagonist in the Nazi film industry but at the same time—like George—can be seen as an expert of transitions: he had already advanced to stardom at the time of the Babelsberg talkie operettas, and he remained one of Germany’s most famous actors even after the end of World War II.

Despite a Nazi focus, the third inscription phase in Babelsberg also forms a clear counterweight to Nazi filmmaking: Billy Wilder, Friedrich Holländer, Joe May, Lilian Harvey, and Marlene Dietrich, who had been chosen as namesakes on



Figure 15: Zarah-Leander-Straße next to Friedrich-Holländer-Straße on the studio lot in Babelsberg.



Figure 16: This square in Babelsberg was named after Hedy Lamarr.

the studio lot or in its immediate vicinity, were film personalities who had set an example against the Nazi regime through emigration and, in part, through their film work. Furthermore, in 2019, a square in Babelsberg was named after the actress and inventor Hedy Lamarr (Figure 16)<sup>74</sup> who was particularly active as a

<sup>74</sup> See Stadtverordnetenversammlung der Landeshauptstadt Potsdam: Hedy-Lamarr-Platz in Potsdam (Antrag), 03.04.2019, *Potsdam City Council's online information system*, printed matter no. 19/SVV/0333. The documents stored in Potsdam City

scientist against the Nazi regime. She was honored at the suggestion of the conservative faction from the Christian Democratic Union of Germany and the Action Alliance Potsdam North/West, another party from the conservative spectrum.

#### 9.4 Fourth Inscription Phase

Another major expansion of the cinematic palimpsest took place in [Groß Glienicke](#) in 2012 and 2017. The district was divided into two parts at the time of the Berlin Wall. Since 2003, the former Eastern part of [Groß Glienicke](#) is incorporated into Potsdam. The former Western part belongs to the Berlin district of Spandau. The connections to film are manifold for both parts: in addition to shootings that took place in [Groß Glienicke](#) time and again,<sup>75</sup> there were filmmakers from Ufa and DEFA who lived here permanently or had summer houses or *dachas* because of the proximity to the [Studio Babelsberg](#). Among the residents of [Groß Glienicke](#) were, for example, the actors [Carl Raddatz](#), [Maly Delschaft](#), and [Olga Tschechowa](#), the screenwriter and director [Egon Günther](#), the cinematographer and director [Ernst Laude](#), the screenwriter, dramaturge, and director [Dieter Scharfenberg](#), and the author and screenwriter [Helga Schütz](#).<sup>76</sup> [Schütz](#) is

Council's online information system can be easily found by entering the corresponding number of the printed matter as a search criterion in the search field.

<sup>75</sup> For example, parts of the Nazi movie [Kolberg](#) (1945, directed by [Veit Harlan](#)) were shot in [Groß Glienicke](#). Houses of the town of Kolberg, the central location of the action, were built here and set on fire in front of the camera; cf. Alexander Vogel, Marcel Piethe: [Filmstadt Potsdam. Drehorte und Geschichten](#), Berlin 2013, 177–179. Moreover, scenes for [The Avenger](#) (1960, directed by [Karl Anton](#)), one of the three parts of the [Edgar Wallace](#) crime series, were shot in the then Western part of [Groß Glienicke](#); cf. ibid. Furthermore, the director [Egon Günther](#) used the forest landscape at the so-called [Groß Glienicker](#) Bullenwinkel for his last directorial work in the GDR, the German–Swiss literary adaptation [Ursula](#) (1978); according to [Helga Schütz](#) in a telephone conversation of Aug 5, 2020, with Anna Luise Kiss and in an email dated Aug 6, 2020, to the same.

<sup>76</sup> On the residents of [Groß Glienicke](#), see Annelies Laude: Etwas über die Einwohner unseres Ortes, in: Annelies Laude, [Ernst Laude](#) (eds.): [Groß Glienicke. Geschichte und Geschichten](#), Groß Glienicke 2005, 69–71. The information on [Dieter Scharfenberg](#) was provided by [Helga Schütz](#) in an email dated Aug 6, 2020, to Anna Luise Kiss.



Figure 17: A circular street in Groß Glienicke is dedicated to the wildlife filmmaker and environmental activist Heinz Sielmann.

the only woman among the current 42 honorary citizens of Potsdam. She lived in Groß Glienicke from 1962 to 1980.<sup>77</sup>

In 2012, the decision was made to name a circular street after Heinz Sielmann in a new high-priced housing area in Groß Glienicke (Figure 17). The main street was to be given

a name with a local or regional connection, but one which would also be recognized beyond the region, to make the housing area, which is located in the outskirts of Potsdam, better known.<sup>78</sup>

Sielmann can be considered a representative of the film and television production of the FRG. As a prominent wildlife filmmaker and environmental activist, he campaigned for animal and environmental protection in his movies and on television throughout his whole career.

In 2017, the district advisory council, together with the developer of the new housing area, decided to name four more streets after film personalities to make

<sup>77</sup> According to Helga Schütz in a telephone conversation of Aug 5, 2020, with Anna Luise Kiss and in an email dated Aug 6, 2020, to the same.

<sup>78</sup> Stadtverordnetenversammlung der Landeshauptstadt Potsdam: Straßenbenennung im OT Groß Glienicke in 14476 Potsdam, B-Plan GG Nr. 11A “Waldsiedlung”—Heinz-Sielmann-Ring (Beschlussvorlage), 02.05.2012, *Potsdam City Council's online information system*, printed matter no. 12/SVV/0247, own translation.

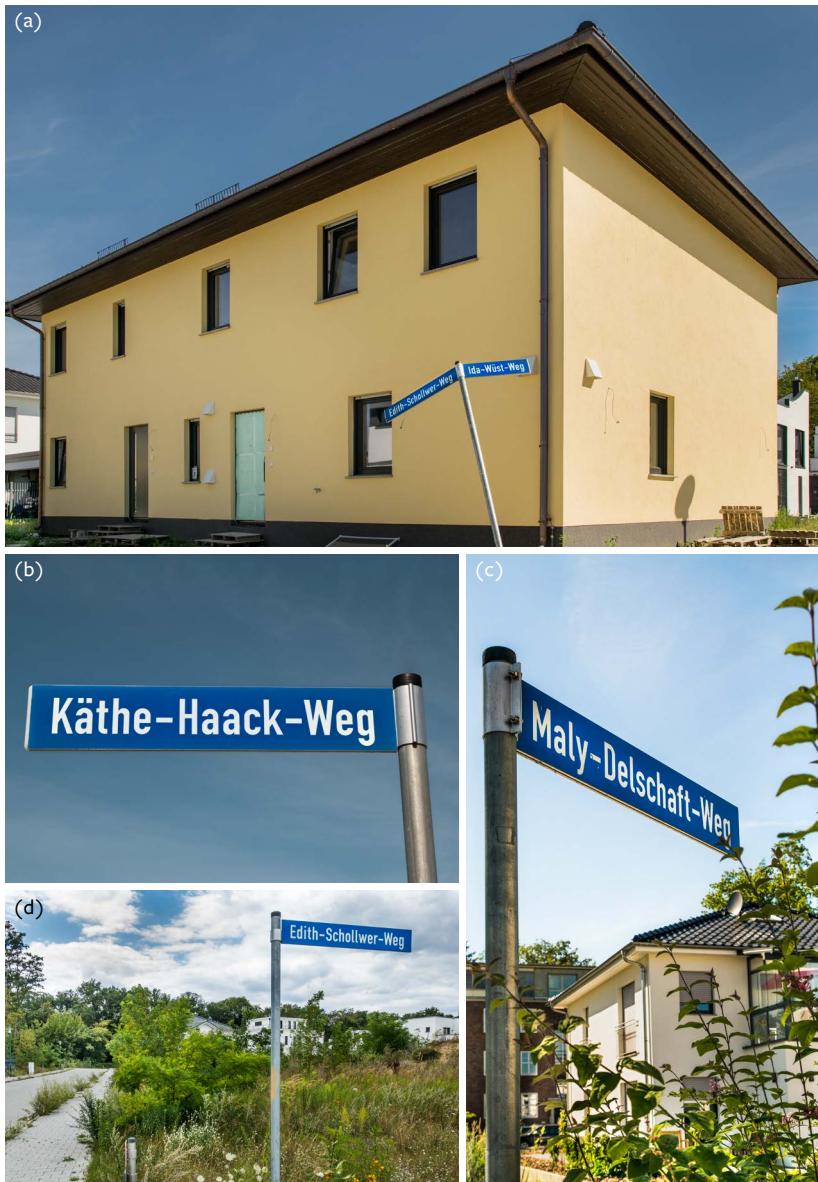


Figure 18: Street signs in Groß Glienicker with the names of the actresses Ida Wüst (a), Käthe Haack (b), and Maly Delschaft (c) as well as the cabaret artist and actress Edith Schollwer (d).

visible the history of **Groß Glienicker** as a place of residence and inspiration for filmmakers as well as to emphasize the relationship with the **Studio Babelsberg**. The district spokesperson **Winfried Sträter** states:

Because many creative professionals and especially filmmakers lived south of the old village center in **Groß Glienicker** since the 1930s, several streets in the southern part of the forest housing area now bear names of filmmakers.<sup>79</sup>

The actresses **Ida Wüst**, **Käthe Haack**, and **Maly Delschaft** as well as the cabaret artist and actress **Edith Schollwer** were given street names (Figure 18). The first three are experts of transitions, as they made the switch from silent movies to talkies and into Nazi film production and were very active actresses even after 1945. **Edith Schollwer** starred in numerous feature movies from 1931 to 1991, appeared on stage and above all on radio, and later also worked for television. Her career as a West Berlin star is closely linked to the German–German division and the media history of the FRG during the Cold War.

As with the filmmakers in **Drewitz**, the long careers of the actresses in **Groß Glienicker** highlight various phases of the local film history, including Nazi film-making. Taking up the history of the district, which, as a border area, was divided over decades, the film personalities were selected also because their careers told something about the German–German division and the media history of the FRG in a special way (see **Table 17** in Chapter 8).

In contrast to the previous inscriptions, **Groß Glienicker** did not rely on the very big names of the local film history. **Edith Schollwer**, **Ida Wüst**, **Käthe Haack**, and **Maly Delschaft** are second-rank actresses who appeared less in leading roles and more in countless supporting roles (see **Table 16** in Chapter 8). In this case, memorability was no longer primarily based on being a member of the first rank—i.e., on being a pioneer or on occupying other forms of film-historical celebrity—but on the success of a long-lasting and multifaceted career in high-profile supporting roles in film and television productions. With **Heinz Sielmann**, also of second rank, a filmmaker was inscribed into the streetscape for the first time who is probably known to many today primarily through his work for television and who, moreover, represents not feature movies but documentaries.

<sup>79</sup> **Winfried Sträter** in an email dated Mar 1, 2020, to Anna Luise Kiss, own translation.

Furthermore, in [Groß Glienicke](#)—as in the case of [Hedy Lamarr](#) in [Babelsberg](#)—a certain detachment from the [Babelsberg](#) studio history was achieved despite the predominant local connection. On the one hand, the actresses worked at the [Studio Babelsberg](#) but also had a strong connection to other production locations. On the other hand, there is no direct relationship between [Heinz Sielmann](#) and the [Studio Babelsberg](#). In his case, the local connection was to the Brandenburg landscape, for which he was a preservationist.

Finally, the expansion of the palimpsest in [Groß Glienicke](#) is accompanied by a remarkable shift: the honorees are predominantly women. In 2017, more women were honored in [Groß Glienicke](#) than in any previous naming year (see [Table 10](#) in Chapter 8), increasing their number in the cinematic palimpsest from five to nine at that time. Today, of the districts in which cinematic street names can be found, [Groß Glienicke](#) has just as many women as [Babelsberg](#)—namely four—although the proportion of women in [Groß Glienicke](#) is significantly higher at 80.0 percent than in [Babelsberg](#) at 26.7 percent (see [Table 11](#) in Chapter 8).

## 9.5 Interim Conclusion: A Text of Success-Oriented Remembrance

[Peter-Heuser-Straße](#), probably named in the 1910s, anticipates the consolidation of the [Studio Babelsberg](#) as a large-scale production site. [Filmakademiestraße](#) (1938–1945) and [Ufastraße](#) (1938–1948) were part of a wave of new street names with which the National Socialists attempted to solidify their ideology in the everyday lives of the residents.<sup>80</sup> The new street names were accompanied by anti-Semitic, homophobic, and xenophobic erasures of street names.<sup>81</sup> At the same time, [Filmakademiestraße](#) and [Ufastraße](#), as hidden layers of the palimpsest, testify to the extent to which the centralization policy in the film indus-

<sup>80</sup> For more information on this, see—on the example of the city of Nuremberg—Herbert Maas: [Nürnberger Straßennamen. Die Problematik der Straßenbenennung einer modernen Großstadt](#), in: Verein für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg (ed.): [Mitteilungen des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg](#) (vol. 81), Nuremberg 1994, 119–217, here 160–167.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

try and the attempt to compete with Hollywood through the *Babelsberg* film city were characterized by ideologically motivated gigantism, which could have expressed itself in radical constructional and streetscape-reshaping measures.

Potsdam's first three cinematic street namings, from the 1910s and 1930s, are characterized by local authorship concerned with an explicit and clear inscription of entrepreneurial, ideological, and political will to rule—with establishing facts on site that were not to be materialized in the long run, however. The erasure of *Peter-Heuser-Straße*, for example, expresses the definite will to oppose the specific inscription attempts—and to do so from the perspective of Ufa as a more successful film company, both entrepreneurially and politically. The renamings of *Filmakademiestraße* and *Ufastraße* are, in turn, part of a long-lasting phase of the streetscape's denazification and of symbolic reparation through street names after 1945.<sup>82</sup> In particular, the naming of *Filmakademiestraße* after *August Bebel*, the founder of Social Democracy, in 1945 set a clear signal of political change and symbolic new beginning against the Fascist gigantism that had characterized the plans for the *Babelsberg* film city.

The first large wave of namings in the *Drewitz* district, which still characterizes the cinematic streetscape as a palimpsest, marked specific periods of Potsdam's film history as worthy of remembrance in a gesture of retrospection. Through the street names, the beginnings of film and production at the *Studio Babelsberg* were connected to the experts of silent movies and the resistance in the Weimar Republic as well as to the then present period of DEFA filmmaking. The version of the local film history manifested in *Drewitz*, in which the stars of Nazi filmmaking were almost completely omitted and the achievements of DEFA were strikingly emphasized, reveals authorship that was guided by an ideologically based politics of memory: Socialist filmmaking was to be placed in the everyday lives of the residents as a guiding force for identification and identity.

Nevertheless, this naming practice cannot be said to be purely doctrinaire politics of memory, because with nine experts of transitions, *Drewitz* also honored those personalities who had worked for the Nazi film industry, and especially

<sup>82</sup> For more information on this, see *ibid.*, 167–173. See also Ingrid Kühn: Umkodierung von öffentlicher Erinnerungskultur am Beispiel von Straßennamen in den neuen Bundesländern, in Eichhoff et al. (eds.): *Name und Gesellschaft*, 303–317, here 307.



Figure 19: Ernst-Lubitsch-Weg in Drewitz.

those who worked for Western production companies or even preferred living and working in the West rather than in the GDR. Both the personnel continuities that existed between Ufa and DEFA and the fact that some filmmakers came into conflict with the ideological guidelines of Socialist filmmaking were not concealed by these namings. Furthermore, with the experts of silent movies Erich Pommer, Friedrich W. Murnau, Fritz Lang, and above all Ernst Lubitsch, filmmakers who later made a career in Hollywood were honored, so that the recognition of film-historical achievements took precedence over the fact that these filmmakers were active in a Capitalist film system (Figure 19).

The Babelsberg street namings since the 1990s deepen existing basic features of the cinematic palimpsest as they were laid out in Drewitz because the Babelsberg authorship focused—like that of Drewitz—on presenting milestones of studio history and on bridging film-historical gaps. Moreover, a concentration on stars of feature film history took place here as well (see Table 16 Chapter 8). Furthermore, in Babelsberg—as in Drewitz—male filmmakers are in the majority. Among the total of 36 film personalities after whom streets are named in Babelsberg and Drewitz today, there are only 6 women (see Table 11 in Chapter 8). They are all known primarily as actresses, despite their various activities in the film industry—e.g., as producers. Female filmmaking is thus completely reduced to working in front of the camera. In contrast, male filmmakers represent the professions of actor, director, producer, cinematographer, scenographer, composer, or even studio director (see Table 12 in Chapter 8).

Furthermore, the namings in *Babelsberg* perpetuated the palimpsest being all-white. Admittedly, the contexts of origin of this palimpsest cannot be compared with those that led to the systematic and racially motivated exclusion of African Americans, people of color, and indigenous people from the streetscapes in the USA. Nevertheless, it should be noted that nonwhite filmmaking has been written out of the representational structure.<sup>83</sup> Finally, the focus of the namings in *Babelsberg* and *Drewitz* is on European and US filmmakers, even if the namings on the—not publicly accessible—studio lot in *Babelsberg* are more international, in contrast to the publicly accessible part of the streetscape (see Table 9 in Chapter 8).

All in all, the namings in *Babelsberg* and *Drewitz* reproduce to a certain extent the paradigm of classical film historiography. At the risk of overstating the case, the cinematic streetscape in *Babelsberg* and *Drewitz* presents itself in a form similar to the works of classical film historiography, which can be described as “guides through a heroes’ cemetery”<sup>84</sup> (see Chapter 3). This commonality is remarkable because the cinematic streetscape was written in two very different systems, at two different points in time, by different authors, and thus under very different conditions.

However, the reproduction of the classical film-historiographical paradigm is relativized by two aspects: On the one hand, professions that have remained underrepresented in classical film history, such as scenography, composition, and studio management, are appreciated in *Babelsberg*—presumably due to the namers’ closer connection to film practice (see Table 13 in Chapter 8). This brings into view, to some extent, the many departments that are necessary for film production besides the acting, directing, and producing departments. On the other hand, *Babelsberg* and *Drewitz* build a palimpsest that cannot be accused of

<sup>83</sup> Cf., analogously, Derek H. Alderman, Joshua Inwood: *Street naming and the politics of belonging: spatial injustices in the toponymic commemoration of Martin Luther King Jr.*, in: *Social & Cultural Geography*, vol. 14, no. 2, 2013, 211–233, here 219.

<sup>84</sup> Gabriele Jutz, Gottfried Schlemmer: Vorschläge zur Filmgeschichtsschreibung. Mit einigen Beispielen zur Geschichte filmischer Repräsentations- und Wahrnehmungskonventionen, in: Knut Hickethier (ed.): *Filmgeschichte schreiben. Ansätze, Entwürfe und Methoden. Dokumentation der Tagung der GFF 1988*, Berlin 1989, 61–67, here 62, own translation.



Figure 20: With Conrad-Veidt-Straße, the 1919 milestone of queer cinema *Different from the Others* is indirectly present in the cinematic streetscape.

a purely heteronormative inscription. Through Conrad Veidt, Hertha Thiele, and Heiner Carow, essential milestones of queer cinema—*Different from the Others* (1919, directed by Richard Oswald), *Mädchen in Uniform*, and *Coming Out* (1989, directed by Heiner Carow)—are indirectly present from today's perspective (Figure 20). Moreover, Friedrich W. Murnau, Lilian Harvey, and Marlene Dietrich contributed to queer equality beyond the film industry through the film aesthetics they created, their lifestyle, or their star personas.



Figure 21: Since a path in Drewitz had already been named after Guido Seeber, the management of the Studio Babelsberg could not use this name.

There is a striking difference to Drewitz in the Babelsberg continuation of the cinematic streetscape as a palimpsest: the text was expanded to include prominent protagonists of Nazi filmmaking. In a certain sense, the namings in Babelsberg fill the film-historical gap that can be found in Drewitz—apart from Hans Albers—concerning the stars of the Nazi regime. The question why the authors in Babelsberg decided to name several streets after stars of the Nazi era, including Zarah Leander, Emil Jannings, Heinrich George, and Heinz Rühmann, can only be answered speculatively: One practical reason may have been that the new street names should not duplicate the existing ones in the city area. Given the large number of prominent names in Drewitz, the studio management and the Filmpark Babelsberg GmbH no longer had a whole series of personalities from the studio history and local film history available for naming. In particular, the studio's founding figures such as Oskar Meßter, Guido Seeber, Asta Nielsen, and Paul Wegener as well as the experts of silent movies such as Erich Pommer, Ernst Lubitsch, Friedrich W. Murnau, and Fritz Lang had already been used (Figure 21).

Another reason might have been the conviction that a commemorative acknowledgment of the studio's Nazi past was also necessary; or the idea that film-historical personalities should be honored even if their significance was overshadowed by prominent involvement in Fascist film productions. In such a speculative context, the honoring of those filmmakers who refused to work



Figure 22: On the studio lot in **Babelsberg**, the anti-Fascist director **Billy Wilder** was honored with a square.

with the **Hitler** regime and chose instead to emigrate might have been seen as an important counterbalance. This group included **Joe May**, **Billy Wilder**, **Marlene Dietrich**, **Friedrich Holländer**, **Lilian Harvey**, and **Hedy Lamarr**. **Billy Wilder** and **Hedy Lamarr**, for example, were honored by having their names associated with squares, while **Marlene Dietrich** had an avenue named after her. These namings recognize and elevate the achievements of anti-Fascist filmmaking, embedding it within the local text in a gesture of relativization in comparison to the simultaneous remembrance of Nazi movie stars (Figure 22).

Marketing strategy considerations such as the international fame of **Emil Jannings**, **Heinrich George**, **Heinz Rühmann**, and **Zarah Leander** may also have played a role in the decision to honor these stars despite their status in the Nazi film industry. It can be assumed that the authors had different expectations concerning the namings of the **Babelsberg** streets than was the case in **Drewitz**. The **Drewitz** authors primarily pursued the goal of creating a guiding force for identification between the new residents and the district that conformed to the cultural policy of the time. Ideologically motivated, the authors sought to inscribe the achievements of Socialist filmmaking in the everyday lives of the residents. The situation in **Babelsberg** was different. According to my thesis, the usage of the street names was certainly motivated by a concern, purely internal to the company, to encourage its employees to identify with the location and its history; above all, however, the namings were a marketing instrument that would have an

external effect on potential producers, entrepreneurs, and investors. The Studio Babelsberg and the adjacent Film Park Babelsberg had, after all, been privately owned enterprises since the 1990s. Moreover, the site as a whole is promoted by local economic politicians as the Media City Babelsberg.<sup>85</sup> Based on this logic, it makes sense to highlight an international blockbuster such as *The Blue Angel*, or the first Oscar winner for acting, Emil Jannings, and world-famous actors like Heinrich George, Heinz Rühmann, and Zarah Leander—even if their careers are sometimes evaluated more than ambivalently with regard to their Nazi past.

This thesis is supported by a renaming that took place on the Babelsberg studio lot in 2009, when Heiner-Carow-Straße became Quentin-Tarantino-Straße. With this renaming, the studio management wanted to “cultivate the image”<sup>86</sup> and to work toward the Studio Babelsberg being “perceived as a contemporary film studio.”<sup>87</sup> By naming a street after a still-living and extremely popular US director, an explicit connection was made to contemporary Hollywood. This supplemented the already existing connections to classical Hollywood established by those filmmakers who, after emigrating, made their careers in the USA. Exactly 10 years later, this approach was taken up and strengthened by political decision-makers through the naming of a square after Hedy Lamarr, who had advanced to become a ‘film goddess’ in Hollywood.

In comparison, the authors of the palimpsest in Groß Glienicker took a very different approach. There was a certain detachment from the studio history, the media history of the FRG began to receive more attention, no longer only the first rank—i.e., the stars of the local film history—were honored, and for the first time the focus was placed on naming streets after women. Thus, the namings in Groß Glienicker followed a more critical public reflection on the act of street naming.<sup>88</sup> In particular, there was a locally grown critical sensitivity for the fact

<sup>85</sup> See Landeshauptstadt Potsdam (ed.): *Medienstandort Potsdam*, Potsdam 2013, 3.

<sup>86</sup> dpa/JaHa: *Quentin Tarantino bekommt Straße in Babelsberg*, in: *Potsdamer Neueste Nachrichten*, Jul 28, 2009, own translation.

<sup>87</sup> Studio Babelsberg's spokesperson Eike Wolf, as cited in ibid., own translation.

<sup>88</sup> Derek H. Alderman and Joshua Inwood provide several examples of how cities deliberately renamed and redesignated streets to give marginalized groups in society more public visibility; see Alderman et al.: *Street naming and the politics of belonging*, 216.

that in the majority of Potsdam's street namings after historical personalities, men had been selected until then.<sup>89</sup>

In order to counteract the proportion of 46 women (12.7 percent) to 317 men (see Table 1 in Chapter 6),<sup>90</sup> the Potsdam City Council decided in 2015 to give priority to naming streets after women in the subsequent five years and to add names of female personalities to the street-name pool.<sup>91</sup> The motion's justification noted a "considerable desideratum in the area of street names" and called for the "work" of women to be "brought out of the shadows of history."<sup>92</sup> Accordingly, 20 female and 10 male street names were added in Potsdam between 2015 and 2020.<sup>93</sup> However, the four namings after female film personalities in *Groß Glienicker* did not break the tendency to limit the remembrance of female filmmaking to the profession of actress. While the naming after the wildlife filmmaker and environmental activist *Heinz Sielmann* contributed to a

<sup>89</sup> On the critical reflection on the dominance of street namings after male personalities in Potsdam, see Henri Kramer: *Nur wenige Straßen nach Frauen benannt. Ungleichgewicht in Potsdam*, in: *Potsdamer Neueste Nachrichten*, Oct 26, 2019.

<sup>90</sup> With this proportion, Potsdam is no exception. Evidence shows that in many other cities around the world, it was predominantly men who were honored with street names, for example in Helsinki; for more information on this, see Kari Palonen: *Reading Street Names Politically*, in: Kari Palonen, Tuija Parvikko (eds.): *Reading the Political: Exploring the Margins of Politics*, Helsinki 1993, 103–121. On the gender-specific exclusion, see also Reuben S. Rose-Redwood: *From number to name: symbolic capital, places of memory and the politics of street renaming in New York City*, in *Social & Cultural Geography*, vol. 9, no. 4, 2008, 431–452, Linda Poon: *Mapping the Sexism of City Street Names*, in: *bloomberg.com*, Nov 4, 2015, Alderman et al.: *Street naming and the politics of belonging*, 213, and Rose-Redwood et al.: *The urban streetscape as political cosmos*, 13.

<sup>91</sup> See Stadtverordnetenversammlung der Landeshauptstadt Potsdam: Frauennamen für Potsdamer Straßen. Beschluss der 9. öffentlichen Sitzung der Stadtverordnetenversammlung der Landeshauptstadt Potsdam am 01.04.2015, *Potsdam City Council's online information system*, printed matter no. 15/SVV/0047.

<sup>92</sup> Stadtverordnetenversammlung der Landeshauptstadt Potsdam: Frauennamen für Potsdamer Straßen (Antrag), 28.01.2015, *Potsdam City Council's online information system*, printed matter no. 15/SVV/0047, own translation.

<sup>93</sup> According to Christian Loyal-Wieck, *street administration clerk for the city of Potsdam*, in an email dated Feb 16, 2021, to Anna Luise Kiss.

diversification of the professional repertoire of male film personalities honored, the recognition afforded to female filmmaking remained confined to the acting profession.

All in all, the current cinematic streetscape of Potsdam can be described as a text that has been shaped by four major inscription phases as well as various authorships with different motivations. The naming practice has been modified again and again: from a practice oriented toward an entrepreneurial and ideological manifestation of power in the 1910s and 1930s to a likewise ideologically based practice of constructing Socialist film history as a guiding force for identification between the new residents and the district. This was followed by a practice aimed at international marketing of the location and another one that attempted to tell the story of a special district on the outskirts of the city through the filmmakers' personalities.

It is noteworthy that today's cinematic streetscape as a palimpsest is—in the overall view—a text of classical film historiography, although it was written at different times, in the context of different political systems, and starting from different motivations. One reason for this is that classical film historiography, with its construction of pioneer and star narratives, provided a convenient template for the marketing-oriented namings used to promote the media site after German reunification. However, the classical texture of the palimpsest also refers to the fact that the approaches and achievements of New Film History only gradually began to gain acceptance in the academic context when a large part of the cinematic namings were already planned and decided in the 1980s. It takes time for new scholarly findings and approaches to manifest themselves in public memory-political contexts.

The gap between the namings and the new paradigm of film studies, which has been successively developed since the late 1970s, has quite striking consequences: due to the focus on success-oriented remembrance, there has been no place for commemoration in Potsdam's cinematic streetscape. This is especially relevant in the case of those film personalities who were prevented from their professional development by gender-specific or racist exclusion mechanisms or whose careers were even destroyed by the National Socialists. These personalities have not yet been given a place in the palimpsest. Because of the focus on success, the stories of those affected by National Socialism are primarily told through

stories of those who—thanks to their prominence or contacts—were able to go into exile and continue their careers abroad (see [Table 8](#) in Chapter 8). However, the namings in [Groß Glienicke](#) make it clear that each new naming represents an opportunity to break open the palimpsest and give it a new direction.

## 10. Cultural Arena

Street naming represents a potentially “political technology”<sup>1</sup> that has an immediate impact on people’s everyday lives. Therefore, the streetscape is not a neutral field, but can rather be seen as a cultural arena.<sup>2</sup> Here, different political opinions and worldviews, denominations and ideologies, conservative and progressive currents, established structures and the avant-garde, minorities and majorities, marginalized and power-hungry groups are constantly struggling for representation. Especially in the wake of the US Civil Rights Movement and the Black Lives Matter Movement, questions about the normative representational and exclusionary mechanisms of street naming and monument setting have become the subject of public debate (see [Chapter 2](#)).

In Potsdam, the resolution of the city council to counteract the underrepresentation of women in the streetscape, mentioned in the previous chapter, can be seen as a debate within the cultural arena. The 2015 resolution represents an immediate revisionist reaction to the minuscule number of namings after women and led to a backlash: when three historical streets were to be named in 2019 on the site of a demolished University of Applied Sciences building in Potsdam’s city center (Figure 23), a renaming back to the street names from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries or a renaming in honor of three outstanding women from Potsdam’s history were put forward for debate. The decision was made to name the streets after [Maria von Pawelsz-Wolf](#), [Anna Zielenziger](#), and [Anna Flügge](#). This naming prompted a protest by the citizens’ initiative “[Mitte schön!](#)”<sup>3</sup> on the grounds that “politically motivated street names do not belong in a city center because they are subject to changing times.”<sup>4</sup> On the blog of the

<sup>1</sup> Reuben Rose-Redwood, Derek Alderman, Maoz Azaryahu: The urban streetscape as political cosmos, in: [Reuben Rose-Redwood, Derek Alderman, Maoz Azaryahu \(eds.\): \*The Political Life of Urban Streetscapes. Naming, Politics, and Place\*](#), Abingdon 2018, 1–24, here 1.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. ibid., 1, 3, and 11–13.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Henri Kramer: [Die Initiative Mitte schön kündigt Protest an. Straßenumbenennungen](#), in: [Potsdamer Neueste Nachrichten](#), Sep 27, 2019.

<sup>4</sup> Mitte schön! Initiative “Bürger für die Mitte”: [AUFRUF!](#), in: [mitteschoen.de](#), Sep 27, 2019, own translation.



Figure 23: When three historical streets were to be named in 2019 on this site of a demolished University of Applied Sciences building in Potsdam's city center, public disputes ensued. Photograph of the construction site from 2020.

project “Potsdam—Stadt für alle” (“Potsdam—City for Everyone”), however, people spoke out in favor of the naming after the three female personalities and argued, among other things, that the street names from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries—Schlossstraße (Castle Street), Kaiserstraße (Emperor Street), and Schwertfegerstraße (Sword Cutler Street)—, which “Mitte schön!” preferred, would also be political street names.<sup>5</sup>

On the basis of archival materials, traces of disputes over questions of representation can be discovered in Potsdam regarding two naming processes after filmmakers: first, in the form of problematization of the appreciation of the Nazi film industry’s stars (Section 10.1) and second, as a struggle to preserve the film-cultural heritage of the GDR (Section 10.2). In the interim conclusion (Section 10.3), the two described processes are used to show the extent to which the namings after filmmakers in Potsdam relate to questions of local history and its representation.

<sup>5</sup> See Potsdam—Stadt für alle: [Namensstreit in der neuen Mitte](#), in: *potsdam-stadt fuer alle.de*, Oct 29, 2019.

## 10.1 Problematization of the Appreciation of the Nazi Film Industry's Stars

In the late 1990s, today's [Media City Babelsberg](#) was structurally expanded. In this process, the investors and property developers Euromedien Babelsberg GmbH and Studio Babelsberg GmbH laid out three new streets around the [Studio Babelsberg](#) and the [Film Park Babelsberg](#) and handed the streets over to the city of Potsdam so that they could be designated as public streets—a common procedure in many cities and towns. When private companies build streets, it is also a common practice for the investor to make recommendations for namings. In the case of the new streets in the media city, [Marlene-Dietrich-Allee](#), [Emil-Jannings-Straße](#), and [Heinrich-George-Straße](#) were proposed. These suggestions had to pass through the city's usual committees. In the records of the main committee—the body that prepares drafts for the city council until they are ready for decision—short biographies of the three actors were available for inspection.<sup>6</sup>

The biography of [Marlene Dietrich](#) states that the actress was discovered in 1929 by the director [Josef von Sternberg](#) as Lola Lola for [\*The Blue Angel\*](#) (1930) and appeared in numerous Hollywood movies from 1930 to 1935. She became an American citizen in 1939. During World War II, she supported “anti-Fascist organizations”<sup>7</sup> and was active in the care of troops. After the war, she celebrated “great triumphs as a singer of socially critical songs”<sup>8</sup> and appeared in other important movies.

All that can be learned about [Emil Jannings](#) is that he was born in Rorschach, Switzerland, and brought to the theater in Berlin by [Max Reinhardt](#). [Ernst Lubitsch](#) introduced him to the movies in 1916, “where he portrayed both powerful and subtle heroes.”<sup>9</sup> Because of his successes in Germany, [Jannings](#) was employed in Hollywood for a while and won an Oscar. He returned to Germany and played alongside [Dietrich](#) in 1930 in [\*The Blue Angel\*](#). Then it is said that

<sup>6</sup> See Hauptausschuß: Straßennamen in Potsdam-Babelsberg (Beschlußvorlage), 10.12.1997, *Potsdam City Archive*, accession no. 12/0221, printed matter no. 98/087, 116–118, here 118.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., own translation.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., own translation.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., own translation.

Jannings died in 1950, and a year later his autobiography was published. No mention is made of the facts that he rose to stardom in Nazi cinema from 1933 onward,<sup>10</sup> was the producer of the prestigious Nazi project *Uncle Kruger* (1941, directed by Hans Steinhoff), and was banned from the profession for life by the Allies. Only from the selection of the movies listed and their dates can it be indirectly deduced that Jannings continued to work as an actor in the Nazi film industry.

Regarding Heinrich George, it is reported that he was the artistic director of the Schiller Theater in Berlin, where he played “heroic and character roles.”<sup>11</sup> He was married to the actress Berta Drews and appeared on various stages in Berlin. The movie selection includes *Berlin-Alexanderplatz* (1931, directed by Phil Jutzi), *The Stationmaster* (1940, directed by Gustav Ucicky), *Dreimal Hochzeit* (1941, directed by Géza von Bolváry), and *Destiny* (1942, directed by Géza von Bolváry).<sup>12</sup> Finally, it is declared that he was “arrested by the Soviet occupation forces, and that he died in the Sachsenhausen internment camp on September 26, 1946.”<sup>13</sup> It is not mentioned that George took part in the Nazi propaganda movies *Our Flags Lead Us Forward* (1933, directed by Hans Steinhoff), *Jud Süß* (1940, directed by Veit Harlan), and *Kolberg* (1945, directed by Veit Harlan), that he became a “star actor of the regime”<sup>14</sup> and that, at the same time, he used his position as artistic director to protect threatened artists from persecution by the National Socialists.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Friedemann Beyer: *Die Gesichter der UFA. Starportraits einer Epoche*, Munich 1992, 208.

<sup>11</sup> Hauptausschuß: Straßenbenennung in Potsdam-Babelsberg, 118, own translation.

<sup>12</sup> See ibid. It should be noted that in George’s short biography, the release years of *Dreimal Hochzeit* and *Destiny* are swapped, and the title of the former movie is incorrectly listed as *Die Hochzeit*.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., own translation.

<sup>14</sup> Ulrich Gregor, Enno Patalas: *Geschichte des Films*, Munich 1973, 154, own translation.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. anonymous: *Nachlässe von Heinrich George und Berta Drews in der Akademie der Künste*, in: *Akademie der Künste*, Jan 9, 2006, Ralf Schenk: “Bei ihm zu spielen, war eine Auszeichnung.” Götz George im Gespräch, in: *film-dienst*, no. 21, 2006, 22–24, here 23, and anonymous: *Heinrich George*, in: *Stiftung Gedenkstätte Berlin-Hohenschönhausen*.



Figure 24: The naming of streets after the actors Emil Jannings (a) and Heinrich George (b) led to disputes in the city council.

Despite the sketchy biographies, a protocol note indicates that the activities for the Nazi film industry nevertheless became an issue in the main committee.<sup>16</sup> A faction member of the left-wing Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) “remarked that he had problems with the street names—especially against the background of Mr. George’s and Mr. Jannings’s activities in the Third Reich.”<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, the draft was passed on to the city council with eight votes in favor and five abstentions.<sup>18</sup> When it arrived for approval, there was time pressure because the first residents were soon to move into the houses in the new streets. It was initially planned to vote on all three namings at the same time, but at the request of the PDS faction, the street names were decided on separately.<sup>19</sup> While *Marlene-Dietrich-Allee* and *Emil-Jannings-Straße* were approved by a majority of votes, the following can be read about *Heinrich-George-Straße*: “approved with 18 votes in favor and 16 votes against”<sup>20</sup> (Figure 24).

## 10.2 Struggle to Preserve the Film-Cultural Heritage of the GDR

The records from the city council also document a dispute over the naming of a central square in the *Kirchsteigfeld* district after the DEFA director Heiner Carow. Time and again, the Socialist state’s policy of prevention and censorship put obstacles in the way of his movie projects. However, the great success of *The Legend of Paul and Paula* (1973), which continues to this day, and the first GDR movie about homosexual love—*Coming Out* (1989)—secured him a place on Wikipedia’s list of important DEFA directors.<sup>21</sup> In the 1990s, a private street on the studio lot in *Babelsberg* was named after him. In 2009, however, the studio management decided to name a street after US director Quentin Tarantino,

<sup>16</sup> See Protokoll der 69. Sitzung des Hauptausschusses am 11. Juni 1997 in der Wahlperiode 1993/98 (Auszug), *Potsdam City Archive*, accession no. 12/0221, 119.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., own translation.

<sup>18</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> See Stadtverordnetenversammlung der Landeshauptstadt Potsdam: Niederschrift der 54. öffentlichen Sitzung der Stadtverordnetenversammlung am 28.01.1998, *Potsdam City Archive*, accession no. 12/0113, printed matter no. 98/087, 56.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., own translation.

<sup>21</sup> See Wikipedia: *DEFA*, in: [wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org/).

whose production *Inglourious Basterds* (2009), which was largely produced at the studio, had helped promote Babelsberg as a location for international film productions. An existing street name had to give way for the naming—and Heiner-Carow-Straße was chosen.

Tarantino's presence at the ceremonial dedication of his street generated a corresponding media echo in the regional and national press. City council members of the left-wing faction DIE LINKE became aware of the renaming. They first requested a review of the process through the Legal Department of the City of Potsdam. The review showed that the renaming of the private street had been legal and that there was no need for the city to be involved.<sup>22</sup> In the fall of 2009, DIE LINKE then submitted a request to name a street in Potsdam after Heiner Carow as a replacement, arguing:

The previous Heiner-Carow-Straße in the media city was recently renamed to Tarantino-Straße. This insensitive procedure should be counteracted by naming a public street after the Potsdam film director in the near future to honor his artistic work, with which he made film history.<sup>23</sup>

The records document that, according to the responsible municipal department, no street could be found as a replacement in Babelsberg, which is why the central square in Kirchsteigfeld was proposed for naming after Carow.<sup>24</sup> The members of the city council followed this suggestion, so that the naming was implemented in 2010 (Figure 25).<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup> See Stadtverordnetenversammlung der Landeshauptstadt Potsdam: Beschluss der 16. öffentlichen Sitzung der Stadtverordnetenversammlung der Landeshauptstadt Potsdam am 03.03.2010, *Potsdam City Archive*, accession no. 12/0751, printed matter no. 10/SVV/0094, 1–2, here 2.

<sup>23</sup> Stadtverordnetenversammlung der Landeshauptstadt Potsdam: Heiner-Carow-Straße (Antrag), 02.09.2009, *Potsdam City Council's online information system*, printed matter no. 09/SVV/0678, own translation.

<sup>24</sup> See Stadtverordnetenversammlung der Landeshauptstadt Potsdam: Straßenbenennung nach Heiner Carow (Mitteilungsvorlage), 07.10.2009, *Potsdam City Council's online information system*, printed matter no. 09/SVV/0918.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Der Oberbürgermeister, Christian Loyal-Wieck (Sachbearbeiter): Benennung eines Platzes nach Heiner Carow (Beantwortung der Anfrage), 04.05.2011, *Potsdam City Council's online information system*, printed matter no. 11/SVV/0365.



Figure 25: After Heiner-Carow-Straße on the studio lot in Babelsberg was renamed Quentin-Tarantino-Straße, the naming of a central square in Kirchsteigfeld after the DEFA director followed with some delay.

However, DIE LINKE faction considered the naming inappropriate on the grounds that the central square was a parking lot which “in no way does justice to the work and creativity of Heiner Carow.”<sup>26</sup> It was also criticized that the square had been named “in complete silence and without public participation,”<sup>27</sup> while the mayor would take his time in the case of other namings. The latter then declared that “the absence of a special tribute is to be considered an omission”<sup>28</sup> and assured the public that a dedication would be held at a later date. In March 2012, more than two years after the erasure of Heiner-Carow-Straße on the Babelsberg studio lot, the naming of the central square in Kirchsteigfeld after Heiner Carow was ceremoniously celebrated. The occasion was the commemoration of the premiere of *The Legend of Paul and Paula* in March 1973. In his short welcoming speech, the city’s councilor for urban development emphasized that “the city of film Potsdam would do well to honor Heiner Carow on this day.”<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Stadtverordnete Müller, Fraktion DIE LINKE: Benennung eines Platzes nach Heiner Carow (Anfrage), 27.04.2011, *Potsdam City Council's online information system*, printed matter no. 11/SVV/0365, own translation.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., own translation.

<sup>28</sup> Der Oberbürgermeister et al.: Benennung eines Platzes nach Heiner Carow, own translation.

<sup>29</sup> Anonymous: *Feierliche Namensgebung für den Heiner-Carow-Platz. Pressemitteilung Nr. 196 vom 29.03.2012*, in: *potsdam.de*, own translation.

### 10.3 Interim Conclusion: Memory–Political Disputes about the Nazi Film Industry and the Film-Cultural Heritage of the GDR

In both cases, it was left-wing political forces that expressed their misgivings about Emil Jannings and Heinrich George or became active against the handling of the memory of Heiner Carow. The PDS was the successor party to the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED).<sup>30</sup> In turn, DIE LINKE arose from a merger of the Linkspartei.PDS with The Electoral Alternative Labor and Social Justice.<sup>31</sup> The former PDS and DIE LINKE are parties that position themselves as anti-Fascist through their political convictions and because of their history, and thus identify strongly with the history of the GDR and its preservation.

The misgivings of the PDS about Emil Jannings and Heinrich George show that discussions about street naming can occur not only between political decision-makers and citizens but also between different factions within municipal bodies that can react differently to naming or renaming proposals. The dispute within two municipal bodies, the main committee and the city council, thus confirms what the street-name scholar Reuben Rose-Redwood has noted: it is too simplistic to assume disputes in the cultural arena only between powerholders and marginalized groups.<sup>32</sup> The request not to have a joint vote on the anti-Fascist Marlene Dietrich and the two Nazi stars Jannings and George can be seen primarily as a symbolic act. It expressed rejection, at least in the concrete proportion of votes in each case and, in consequence, in not ‘waving through’ Jannings and George in the slipstream of Dietrich as a recognized opponent of National Socialism. This process makes it clear that cinematic street names do not mean the same thing to everyone but are assessed differently depending on one’s political opinions and worldviews and the information available. The naming of a street after

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Klaus Schubert, Martina Klein: *Das Politiklexikon. Begriffe—Fakten—Zusammenhänge* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.), Bonn 2018, as cited in Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung: *Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus (PDS)*, in: *bpb.de*.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> See Reuben S. Rose-Redwood: *From number to name: symbolic capital, places of memory and the politics of street renaming in New York City*, in *Social & Cultural Geography*, vol. 9, no. 4, 2008, 431–452, here 447.

a filmmaker is—like every other naming—always a question of what the person stands for and what is additionally honored along with this person.

This is also expressed in the disputes over the naming of a street after Quentin Tarantino to the disadvantage of Heiner Carow. The efforts to have this procedure legally reviewed and to find a suitable replacement naming after Carow, as well as the reference to the lack of sensitivity in the renaming and the insistence on a ceremonial dedication, indicate that the renaming of the street was seen here as symptomatic of the way in which the cultural history of the GDR was dealt with. The renaming of street names in the so-called new federal states after German reunification had already triggered heated debates because the feeling was conveyed that this was a form of cultural expropriation and reinterpretation by the West.<sup>33</sup> Quentin-Tarantino-Straße with its tribute to a Hollywood director, provoked a similar backlash as other appropriation processes by the West after the fall of the Wall. Furthermore, DIE LINKE reacted to a phenomenon that can be observed in other cities—namely, that a replacement naming alone does not mean that a ‘healing’ effect can unfold. It is also important that the replacement naming is done in a place that is perceived as appropriate for the reclaiming group.<sup>34</sup> The misgivings, activities, and insistence of the PDS and DIE LINKE can be interpreted as “requests to speak of the cultural memory”<sup>35</sup> of a city that, by means of its cinematic street names, repeatedly struggles to position itself vis-à-vis its volatile sociopolitical history and in relation to the question of remembering or forgetting.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Ingrid Kühn: Umkodierung von öffentlicher Erinnerungskultur am Beispiel von Straßennamen in den neuen Bundesländern, in: Jürgen Eichhoff, Wilfried Seibicke, Michael Wolffsohn (eds.): *Name und Gesellschaft. Soziale und historische Aspekte der Namengebung und Namenentwicklung*, Mannheim 2001, 303–317.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Rose-Redwood et al.: The urban streetscape as political cosmos, 7.

<sup>35</sup> Arndt Kremer: Namen schildern: Straßennamen und andere Namensfelder im DaF-Unterricht, in: Marc Hieronimus (ed.): *Historische Quellen im DaF-Unterricht*, Göttingen 2012, 135–176, here 155, own translation.

## 11. Performative Space

The approach to understand Potsdam's cinematic streetscape as a performative space leads us away from the understanding of the streetscape both as a palimpsest and as a cultural arena and redirects our attention to the question of how we interact with the cinematic streetscape. This question will be answered based on observations of the spatial context of the streets. During the citizen research project, the cinematic streets as well as the cinematic artifacts found by the citizens and the project team were marked on an online map by Google Maps (see [Chapter 7](#)). It became apparent that the cinematic artifacts, some of which are presented below as examples, manifested themselves in the cinematic streets (Section 11.1), near cinematic institutions (Section 11.2), and completely independently of them (Section 11.3). Based on the observations made, the interim conclusion describes the emergence of the artifacts as a series of echo effects and identifies the clusters associated with the artifacts (Section 11.4).

### 11.1 Cinematic Artifacts in the Cinematic Streets

In [Drewitz](#), a meeting center took up the street name of its address, [Oskar-Meßter-Straße](#), and bears the name “[oskar.](#)” (Figure 26). Moreover, the facade of the “iCafé im Park” in [Konrad-Wolf-Allee](#) was decorated with a movie camera, a filmstrip, and floral elements (Figure 27). Above all, however, [Konrad-Wolf-Allee](#) features an unmistakable reference to its namesake: the row of prefab houses, called Reel, features, in large letters, the titles and release years of important movies by the director [Konrad Wolf](#), including *I Was Nineteen* (1968) and *Solo Sunny* (1980). This architectural “homage”<sup>1</sup> was realized as part of an extensive process of transformation of the entire district: Since 2009, [Drewitz](#) has been being transformed into a climate-friendly garden city, with the goal of becoming Potsdam's first emission-free district.<sup>2</sup> To achieve this goal, the municipal housing stock has to become CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral by 2025. The comprehensive redesign of

<sup>1</sup> Ingo Seligmann: Adieu, Tristesse!, in: [alocco aface](#), vol. 13, no. 2, 2019, 8–14, here 13, own translation.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. anonymous: [Gartenstadt Drewitz](#), in: [potsdam.de](#).



Figure 26: The logo of the meeting center “oskar.” The name goes back to the address of the facility which is located in [Oskar-Meßter-Straße](#).



Figure 27: A mural on the facade of the “iCafé im Park” in Konrad-Wolf-Allee shows a movie camera and a filmstrip.

Figure 28: A jamb wall in Drewitz is a tribute to [Konrad Wolf](#) and his movies.

the district, which aims at energy efficiency and enhancement of living quality, affected the row of houses 13 to 63 in [Konrad-Wolf-Allee](#). As of 2015, the Reel was partially demolished; its remaining part was completely renovated and provided with a special jamb wall.<sup>3</sup> A jamb wall is an exterior wall that belongs to the attic and is built above the last upper floor. If one stands in front of the renovated row of prefabricated houses today and looks up, one can see the references to [Wolf](#)'s film work (Figure 28). The letters are meant to recall the movable letters that movie

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Seligmann: *Adieu, Tristesse!*, 13–14.



Figure 29: Anyone walking through the [Marlene](#) supermarket with a shopping cart is accompanied by a reference to Hollywood.



Figure 30: An oversized clapboard serves as a signpost to the stores in [Marlene-Dietrich-Allee](#).

theaters used to use to advertise the changing program.<sup>4</sup> The facade colors white, gray, and black are also a reference to Konrad Wolf; they are supposed to “reflect his life with its highs and lows.”<sup>5</sup>

When a supermarket was opened in [Marlene-Dietrich-Allee](#) in Babelsberg, the decision was made to use the name [Marlene](#), and the theme of film was chosen as the decorative leitmotif. Anyone using a shopping cart will discover the district name [Babelsberg](#) on its handle, designed like the [Hollywood Sign](#) in Los Angeles (Figure 29). The bakery in the supermarket is called Fetching Lola, after a song from [The Blue Angel](#) (1930, directed by Josef von Sternberg), and the interior is adorned with star portraits of [Marlene Dietrich](#). The supermarket’s logo was inserted into the image of a clapboard. Another, larger clapboard serves as a signpost to the supermarket (and a drugstore located at the same site) (Figure 30).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Robert Lassenius: [KONRAD-WOLF-ALLEE](#), Potsdam, in: [lassenius.de](#).

<sup>5</sup> Seligmann: Adieu, Tristesse!, 14, own translation.



Figure 31: Atelier Allgaier's sketch for the design of a facade in Babelsberg based on a movie still from *The Blue Angel*.

Graphic filmstrips run as a consistent motif throughout the interior and exterior design of the supermarket.

On a facade of the housing complex Campus at the Film Park, which is located between Stahnsdorfer Straße and Marlene-Dietrich-Allee, Atelier Allgaier installed—at the request of the property developer—a large-sized image of Marlene Dietrich as Lola Lola in *The Blue Angel* (Figure 31) and the motif of Machine Maria from *Metropolis* (1927, directed by Fritz Lang), which had served as a template for the logo of the Studio Babelsberg.<sup>6</sup> Smaller graphic realizations of movie stills can be found on other facades of the housing complex, for example, from the Asta Nielsen movie *The Dance to Death* (1912, directed by Urban Gad), from Friedrich W. Murnau's *The Last Laugh* (1924), and from *Three from the Filling Station* (1930, directed by Wilhelm Thiele) with Lilian Harvey. More recent productions are also represented, including *The Pianist* (2002, directed by Roman Polanski), *Valkyrie* (2008, directed by Bryan Singer), and *The Hunger Games* (movie series since 2012, directed by Gary Ross, Francis Lawrence). The movie characters of contemporary actors such as Adrien Brody, Tom Cruise, and Jennifer Lawrence are featured. Furthermore, the mailboxes of the new buildings are decorated with images of historical movie cameras.

<sup>6</sup> For more information on this, see, e.g., Sebastian Stielke: *100 Facts about Babelsberg. Cradle of Film and Modern Media City*, Berlin 2021, 34.

In Emil-Jannings-Straße, there is an elongated transformer box next to the Fröbel Kindergarten at the Film Park, which is painted with a filmstrip and movie scenes. Moreover, seven city villas in the Art Deco style were being built in the same street at the time of this book's writing. They are said to bear the first names of movie stars of the 1920s and 1930s, including Marlene Dietrich, Emil Jannings, Lilian Harvey, and Zarah Leander.<sup>7</sup>

## 11.2 Cinematic Artifacts near Cinematic Institutions

Not located in a cinematic street, but at the corner of August-Bebel-Straße and Großbeerenerstraße and thus close to the Studio Babelsberg and the Film Park Babelsberg, there is a gas pressure facility that the company Art-EFX has painted with a collage of movie characters from the studio history: Among others, Marlene Dietrich as Lola Lola, Hans Albers in the role of Baron Munchhausen from the same-named movie (1943, directed by Josef von Baky), and the Sandman, a character from children's television, can be seen, as well as movie characters from DEFA history such as Manfred Krug as Hannes Balla, the head of a work brigade, from *Trace of Stones* (1966, directed by Frank Beyer), Gojko Mitić in one of his roles in the so-called DEFA Indianerfilme (movies on heroic Native Americans),<sup>8</sup> and the children's movie character Mook from *The Story of Little Mook* (1953, directed by Wolfgang Staudte). The movie characters are surrounded by graphic elements, such as a director's chair, a movie camera, a filmstrip, and a spotlight. Art-EFX also designed a transformer building, which is painted as if it were a movie-theater entrance (Figure 32).

A research facility near the studio is called the Erich Pommer Institut, and a vacation apartment, also in the neighborhood of the studio and the film park, is called Vacation Apartment at the Film Park. The owners have chosen a film reel and a filmstrip as their logo. In the hotel Anno 1900, autograph cards of actors

<sup>7</sup> See VERIMAG: THE SEVEN. Filmreif Wohnen in Babelsberg, in: [theseven-babelsberg.de](http://theseven-babelsberg.de).

<sup>8</sup> The term DEFA Indianerfilme is used to describe a series of internationally successful movies starring Gojko Mitić as "Winnetou of the East"; dpa: "Winnetou des Ostens": Gojko Mitić für Lebenswerk geehrt, in: *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, Dec 13, 2019, own translation of the title.



Figure 32: A transformer building in **Babelsberg** near the **Studio Babelsberg** and the **Film Park Babelsberg** was designed by the company **Art-EFX** as if it were a movie-theater entrance.



Figure 33: One of the **Asta Nielsen** star portraits in the **Seminaris Avendi Hotel** at the Griebnitzsee suburban train station.



Figure 34: In the dining room of the [Lili Marleen Film Hotel](#), one wall and the tables have a cinematic design.

are displayed in a picture frame at the reception area. The [Seminaris Avendi Hotel](#) at the Griebnitzsee suburban train station—both hotels belong to the area surrounding the studio and the film park—also uses the theme of film. Here, the focus is on [Asta Nielsen](#) and the DEFA film history. Star portraits of Nielsen adorn the walls (Figure 33) as well as stills from DEFA movies such as *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1976, directed by [Egon Günther](#)), *Gritta of Rat's Castle* (1985, directed by [Jürgen Brauer](#)), and *Half of a Life* (1985, directed by [Herrmann Zschoche](#)). In addition, historical movie cameras and spotlights are used as decorative objects in the hotel bar.

The [Lili Marleen Film Hotel](#) is also located near the studio and the film park. It is named after the title of a song performed by, among others, [Marlene Dietrich](#) in the 1940s. A poster for *The Blue Angel* hangs by the reception desk and another one in the dining room, next to a series of star portraits of [Dietrich](#). Moreover, a wall in the dining room is painted with a director's chair, a movie camera, and spotlights. In addition, under glass plates on the tables, there are numerous movie stills and star portraits as well as film-accompanying materials from movies with, for example, [Hans Albers](#) and [Heinz Rühmann](#) (Figure 34). Additional decorative objects include film canisters, movie projectors, and a clap-board. The ceiling features a kind of Hollywood sky from which various movie stars look down on the guests, including [Alfred Hitchcock](#), [Charlie Chaplin](#), [Humphrey Bogart](#), [James Dean](#), and [Marilyn Monroe](#). The menu, which hangs



Figure 35: Historical movie posters decorate the exit from the **Babelsberg** suburban train station that leads to the **Thalia** movie theater. The photograph shows a poster for *The Hoodlum* with Mary Pickford.

in a display case outside the hotel, is designed in the form of a filmstrip and shows the movie posters for *The Blue Angel* and *Metropolis* next to the food on offer. Movie posters and star portraits also embellish the walls of the hotel rooms. In one of the rooms, a poster for *The Blue Angel* and photographs of Dietrich are featured again. In other rooms, there are posters for the movies *The Kid* (1921) and *The Great Dictator* (1940), both by and with Chaplin, as well as photographs of Doris Day and Greta Garbo or posters for more recent Hollywood movies. References to the movie *Casablanca* (1942, directed by Michael Curtiz), starring

Bogart, are repeatedly encountered. The hotel's conference room features a poster for *Metropolis*, one for *The Punch Bowl* (1944, directed by Helmut Weiss), and a still from *Fridericus* (1937, directed by Johannes Meyer). Furthermore, Dietrich as Lola Lola, Little Mook, and Gojko Mitić in one of his roles can be seen on a wall near the film hotel.

In the Café Konsum, located inside Potsdam's Thalia art-house movie theater, stills from the DEFA movies *Trace of Stones*, *Hot Summer* (1968, directed by Joachim Hasler), and *The Legend of Paul and Paula* (1973, directed by Heiner Carow) hang on the wall, among others. The exit from the Babelsberg suburban train station that leads to the Thalia movie theater presents numerous historical movie posters from the 1920s, for example, for *The Hoodlum* (1919, directed by Sidney Franklin), *Mit dem Auto ins Morgenland* (1926, directed by Willy Achsel), *The Woman from Till 12* (1927, directed by Erich Schönfelder), and *The Girl from the Provinces* (1929, directed by James Bauer) (Figure 35). Also near the Thalia movie theater, there is the Youth Hostel Potsdam, where the corridors show posters for various movies and several past exhibitions of the Film Museum Potsdam. The television room, called Film Lounge, is decorated with stills from the Ufa movies and a spotlight. Two restaurants just around the corner from the Thalia movie theater are dedicated to Italian film. The restaurant La Strada was named after the movie *La Strada* (1954) by Federico Fellini. Two posters for this movie can be found inside. In the FiDeLe restaurant, photographs of actors Anita Ekberg, Fernandel, and Sophia Loren, among others, hang on the wall.

The restaurant GenussWerkstatt next to the Film Museum Potsdam, which is the institution for the presentation of cinematic artifacts, also exhibits movie stills and star portraits with a direct connection to Potsdam's film history, as well as a small statue of Machine Maria as a reference to *Metropolis*. The movie stills and star portraits are arranged to be representative of Ufa, DEFA, and contemporary film productions at the Studio Babelsberg: Marlene Dietrich once again appears as Lola Lola, along with Manfred Krug as Hannes Balla and Gojko Mitić in one of his roles. In addition, one can see the actor Adrien Brody and the director Roman Polanski at the shooting of *The Pianist* as well as Brad Pitt in *Inglourious Basterds* (2009, directed by Quentin Tarantino). Behind the film museum, an electrical pillar box is painted to look like a clapboard, and another one is dedicated to the Sandman. There is a "cinebar" in the Mercure hotel, which is within sight



Figure 36: In the [Mercure](#) hotel, a historical movie projector draws the attention of guests to the [Film Museum Potsdam](#) and its technology collection.

of the film museum. Moreover, the hotel's restaurant features an [Oscar](#) statue at the entrance and is probably named after the American film award. The dining room is decorated with movie stills and behind-the-scenes pictures as well as star portraits and movie posters, mainly from DEFA movies. Furthermore, a historical movie projector references the film museum's technology collection (Figure 36), and on the way to the restroom, one encounters a stylized filmstrip with images of old movie-theater lettering.

### 11.3 Independent Cinematic Artifacts

In Potsdam, many cinematic artifacts can be found in situations and places that are completely independent of cinematic streets and institutions. For example, an ice-cream parlor on Platz der Einheit is called La Dolce Vita and is decorated with lobby cards for Federico Fellini's same-named movie (*La Dolce Vita*, 1960). Lobby cards, which show a movie still and the movie title, were used to advertise movies in the lobbies and outdoor display cases of movie theaters. In the ice-cream parlor, there is also a wooden model of a movie-theater entrance. Potsdam's restaurants—whether Italian, French, or Indian—make numerous connections to their own national film cultures, especially through portraits of their movie stars. The actors Bud Spencer, Monica Bellucci, and Sophia Loren (Italy), Catherine Deneuve and Jean Gabin (France), as well as Aishwarya Rai



Figure 37: The coffee roaster [Buena Vida Coffee Club](#) in Potsdam prints a quote from a Quentin Tarantino movie on some of its to-go cups.

and [Shah Rukh Khan](#) (India) are all present. US cinema is also represented, for example, in the [Buena Vida Coffee Club](#), where guests are given to-go cups with the phrase “THIS IS SOME SERIOUS GOURMET SHIT” (Figure 37)—a quote from [Quentin Tarantino’s \*Pulp Fiction\*](#) (1994). Two painted images of [Tarantino](#)’s movie characters hang on the wall matching the cups. In addition to the dining facilities, cinematic artifacts—including star portraits of actors, especially from the 1950s and 1960s, as well as decorative objects such as spotlights and clapboards—can be found in another hotel, a shoe store, and a bookstore. Above all, however, there are several fashion and jewelry stores in the city center in which star portraits—not of [Marlene Dietrich](#), but of [Marilyn Monroe](#) and [Audrey Hepburn](#)—are used as decorative objects.

#### 11.4 Interim Conclusion: Echo Effects and Artifact Clusters

According to the observations made on the cinematic artifact structure in Potsdam, the dialectical process determining the relation between the cinematic elements in the local cinematic assemblage can be described as echoes with multiple effects within the relational structure of the assemblage. First of all—and this follows from the observations on the palimpsest and the cultural arena—the cinematic streets themselves are the result of an echo: In fact, they owe their existence to the resonance of the [Studio Babelsberg](#) as a cinematic institution and to the

narratives on the local film history that were available at the time of their naming. These narrative elements, embedded within the local cinematic assemblage, had a formative influence on the respective processes of naming. Another echo effect lies in the fact that some cinematic streets have, in turn, led to an echo: In [Drewitz](#) and [Babelsberg](#), the cinematic street names were not ‘only’ perceived but actively taken up and appropriated, although with some delay. [Oskar-Meßter-Straße](#) and [Konrad-Wolf-Allee](#) in [Drewitz](#) as well as [Marlene-Dietrich-Allee](#) and [Emil-Jannings-Straße](#) in [Babelsberg](#) have directly contributed to the emergence of cinematic artifacts. The artifacts located in the cinematic streets are evidence of a productive interaction with the cinematic streets that goes beyond mere geographical orientation, showing itself as a film-related spatial practice.

Furthermore, cinematic institutions such as the [Thalia](#) movie theater or the [Film Museum Potsdam](#) are the result of an echo because they were realized in response to previously established cinematic elements. At the same time, like the cinematic streets, they encourage and enable the production and display of cinematic artifacts in the local cinematic assemblage. Moreover, cinematic artifacts that are completely independent of cinematic streets or institutions and scattered around the city center originate from an echo that film unfolds more generally as a conveyor of (inter)national identities and beauty ideals and as a consumer product with positive connotations. In addition, the independent artifacts are promoted by an echo that has shaped the existing image of Potsdam as a city of film. To give an example: the existing image of Potsdam as a city of film encourages entrepreneurs in the city center to use the theme of film in general as a decorative leitmotif for their stores. All in all, each cinematic element of the assemblage emits an echo and therefore has a determining effect on the other elements, while being structured by them at the same time. The metaphor of the echo does not abolish the equivalence of the cinematic elements because it implies that the newly created elements have a restructuring effect on the relational structure of the assemblage—just as an echo returns to its starting point.

The metaphor of the echo also implies that the existing cinematic streets or institutions often produce cinematic artifacts with a delay. Furthermore, it can be observed—in terms of a decreasing volume—that the artifacts’ connection to the local film history becomes less pronounced as the distance to the cinematic streets or institutions increases. Located in the cinematic streets or near cinematic

institutions, the cinematic artifacts explicitly take up the already given references to the local film history that are available for use. With increasing distance, however, they become more diverse and heterogeneous. In particular, this is evident in the city center of Potsdam, where the cinematic artifacts are dedicated to movie nations and stars other than those of the local film history.

In line with the thesis that there is a delay in the manifestation of cinematic artifacts, it is probable that the artifacts associated with the latest namings in *Groß Glienicker* and the most recent one in *Babelsberg* after *Hedy Lamarr* will soon make their appearance. It can also be assumed that the planned Boulevard of Film will cause a change in the cinematic artifact structure in Potsdam's city center: According to the plans of the city of Potsdam, 50 granite slabs are to be embedded in the floor of the central walkway to pay homage to important movies of the local film history. An expert commission has already selected the movies; the floor slabs are to be installed in the next few years in the course of the planned redevelopment of the walkway.<sup>9</sup> The honored movies will trace a path from the beginnings of the local film history to the present: beginning with *The Dance to Death*, through *Metropolis*, *The Blue Angel*, *Mädchen in Uniform* (1931, directed by Leontine Sagan), *The Murderers Are among Us* (1946, directed by Wolfgang Staudte), *Trace of Stones*, *I Was Nineteen*, to *Inglourious Basterds*, and ending with *Bridge of Spies* (2015, directed by Steven Spielberg). The idea for the Boulevard of Film is once again the result of an echo, as it is directly related to the designation of the city of Potsdam as a UNESCO Creative City of Film.<sup>10</sup> It is very likely that this new cinematic street will, in turn, generate an echo that will partially replace the heterogeneity of the cinematic artifacts in the city center and align them more closely with the local film history.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Erik Wenk: *Ideen für den Boulevard des Films gesucht. Sanierung der Brandenburger Straße*, in: *Potsdamer Neueste Nachrichten*, May 7, 2021, Kay Grimmer: *Brandenburger Straße erhält Hollywood-Flair. Siegerentwurf für Boulevard des Films steht*, in: *Potsdamer Neueste Nachrichten*, Aug 26, 2022, and Marco Zschieck: *Unterirdisch geht es voran. Brandenburger Straße*, in: *Potsdamer Neueste Nachrichten*, Apr 3, 2023.

<sup>10</sup> For more information on this, see anonymous: *Gestaltungswettbewerb für den Boulevard des Films startet. Pressemitteilung Nr. 239 vom 03.05.2021*, in: *potsdam.de*.

Through the expanded spatial observation that the understanding of the cinematic streetscape as a performative space entails, it can be concluded that the echoes of the cinematic elements produce three artifact clusters in the publicly accessible urban space: a film-specific motif cluster, a person- or movie-character-specific motif cluster, and a material cluster (Figure 38).<sup>11</sup> The film-specific motif cluster includes a variety of graphic images: director's chairs, movie cameras, projectors, spotlights, clapboards, film canisters, film reels, and filmstrips as well as the many related decorative objects. As a sub-cluster, these motifs present the subject of film in the analog form even though film production has long been digitalized. Moreover, the film-specific motif cluster includes recurring references to the science fiction classic *Metropolis* and the talkie classic *The Blue Angel*, to the DEFA children's movie *The Story of Little Mook*, the banned DEFA movie *Trace of Stones*,<sup>12</sup> and the DEFA *Indianerfilme*, as well as to the Hollywood blockbuster *Inglourious Basterds*. As a sub-cluster, these references serve as reminders of the successes of the *Studio Babelsberg* in the 1920s and 1930s, of DEFA, and of the studio's current international orientation. Furthermore, recurring references to Italian film form a distinct sub-cluster within the film-specific motif cluster. The film-related decoration of Italian restaurants is not an exclusive phenomenon of the city of Potsdam but a form of interior design common in many cities worldwide: in many cases, the stereotypes used to evoke a longing for Italy in the cinema of the 1950s and 1960s are reused here to provide a quick entry into a 'suitable' mood.

When streets are named after filmmakers who, in addition, repeatedly appear in the publicly accessible urban space through various artifacts, we can speak of a person- or movie-character-specific motif cluster: *Asta Nielsen*, *Marlene Dietrich*, *Quentin Tarantino*, and others stand out prominently in the city of film Potsdam. *Nielsen* represents the early history of the *Studio Babelsberg*, *Dietrich* with her character Lola Lola the successes of the studio in the 1920s

<sup>11</sup> The three artifact clusters represent an analogy to the film-, person-, and street-related characteristics of the cinematic streets and their namesakes (see [Chapter 7](#)).

<sup>12</sup> Banned DEFA movies are primarily those movies that were banned or not completed after the 11<sup>th</sup> Plenum of the Central Committee of the SED in 1965; cf. Andreas Kötzting: *Portentous for Art. Forbidden Films in the GDR*, in: *Goethe-Institut*, Dec 2015.



Figure 38: Model of the artifact clusters of the city of film Potsdam. The echoes of the cinematic elements produce a film-specific motif cluster, a person- or movie-character-specific motif cluster, and a material cluster.

and 1930s, and Tarantino the production of contemporary Hollywood movies in Babelsberg. Although no streets are named after them, the duo of Marilyn Monroe and Audrey Hepburn can be seen as another sub-cluster of the person- or movie-character-specific motif cluster. Being represented through decorative objects in, for example, clothing and jewelry stores, the two serve as style icons who, as contrasting types of women, are supposed to inspire customers to make purchases. Within the person- or movie-character-specific motif cluster, the large number of female stars and movie characters is striking. Concerning the various artifacts, a reversal of the male-dominated naming practice within the cinematic streetscape can be observed because its visual cosmos is dominated by female stars and movie characters. Thus, the honor of being remembered for their life's work, once they had made a name for themselves, is reserved for male filmmakers, while female filmmakers tend to be remembered for their 'decorative' prestige. In this context, 'decorative' prestige can be understood in two senses: as a visual form that is supposed to be aesthetically pleasing and as a form of social

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recognition that has been achieved through the explicit presentation of normative ideals of beauty.

Another cluster becomes apparent with regard to the materiality of the artifacts. Most of the cinematic artifacts are former film-accompanying materials that are being used as decoration in the publicly accessible urban space, today. Recourse and reconfiguration are thus an essential feature of the relational structure of the local cinematic assemblage. The artifacts that are former film-accompanying materials always reach back to their origin. This means, for example, that the image of *Marlene Dietrich* as Lola Lola on the wall of a house establishes a relationship to the day on which the iconic still was taken on the set of *The Blue Angel*.<sup>13</sup> The assemblage permanently incorporates new artifacts that, due to their functional past, enrich the relational structure with connections to film history. At the same time, echo effects within the assemblage ensure that the former film-accompanying materials are given a new, decorative function. The material constitution of the cinematic streets and artifacts provides a “certain stability”<sup>14</sup> for the references of the city of Potsdam to film. *John Law* has pointed out that it is “a good organizing strategy” when “a set of relations is embodied in durable materials.”<sup>15</sup> Applied to the city of film, it can be stated: since relationships to film are “embodied in durable materials” such as street signs, movie stills, star portraits, or wall collages, there is an “organizing strategy” at work that provides a “certain stability” over time between Potsdam and film.

<sup>13</sup> See the central example in Anna Luise Kiss: Film und (Stadt-)Raum. Eine Analyse von filmischen Bildern im städtischen Raum, in: Raphaela Kogler, Jeannine Wintzer (eds.): *Raum und Bild: Strategien visueller raumbezogener Forschung*, Wiesbaden 2021, 227–240.

<sup>14</sup> *John Law*: Notizen zur Akteur-Netzwerk-Theorie: Ordnung, Strategie und Heterogenität, in Andréa Belliger, David J. Krieger (eds.), *ANThology. Ein einführendes Handbuch zur Akteur-Netzwerk-Theorie*, Bielefeld 2006, 429–446, here 439, own translation.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., own translation.

## 12. Conclusion

In the methodological part of this book (see Part III), Research Questions 1 to 5 were addressed: The number of cinematic streets, both those existing and those that no longer exist (Research Question 1), and the periods or years of their naming (part of Research Question 2) could be determined. In addition to the street-related characteristics such as the accessibility of the streets, person- and film-related characteristics were identified in relation to their namesakes (Research Question 3) and substantiated with quantitative statements (Research Question 4). This made it possible to find out, among other things, how many streets were named after women and men, to which phases of film history the filmmakers can be assigned, and whether there is a local connection to Potsdam or Berlin for the productions in which they participated. Correlations between the individual characteristics were calculated (Research Question 5) forming an essential basis for further interpretative work. In Chapter 9 and Chapter 10 of the interpretation (see Part IV), it was possible to clarify under which circumstances the cinematic street names were established, thus answering Research Question 2 in full.

With the help of the three approaches of critical street-name studies—palimpsest (see Chapter 9), cultural arena (see Chapter 10), and performative space (see Chapter 11)—it is now possible to answer the remaining research questions. Research Question 6 addresses the features that distinguish the relational structure of the cinematic streetscape in Potsdam (Section 12.1). Research Question 7 investigates the relationship between the cinematic streetscape as a sub-assemblage and Potsdam's local cinematic assemblage (Section 12.2). Summarizing all findings, cities of film are presented as predigital ‘explosions of cinema’ (Section 12.3). The interpretation concludes with an outlook, setting out the practical benefits of the present scientific study (Section 12.4).

### 12.1 The Relational Structure of the Cinematic Streetscape in Potsdam

As the first inscription attempts show, the cinematic streetscape in Potsdam is directly related to the establishment of the film industry at that location. Initially, though not permanently, it was shaped by authors who wanted to demonstrate

their importance as filmmakers or to manifest their ideologically based visions of the location by naming streets. The competitive confrontations among film entrepreneurs and between Nazi film policy and Hollywood were driving factors. Changing authors shaped the cinematic streetscape in the following decades up to the present. The different inscription phases document the changing socio-political contexts that the city experienced after the end of World War II, including the establishment of the GDR and, after German reunification, of a new social and economic system. Moreover, the inscription phases reflect the corresponding changing motivations of the authors in the selection of filmmakers who were to serve as namesakes.

Despite the very different contexts in which the cinematic streetscape was written, it is, in general, influenced by the paradigm of classical film historiography. The focus on locally rooted male film pioneers and popular “movie stars,” some with international reputations, contributed to the formation of a patriarchal, white, and Euro-/US-centered assemblage of success-oriented remembrance—rather than commemoration. In this assemblage, male filmmaking appears quite diverse in terms of film professions, while female filmmaking is completely reduced to working in front of the camera. Moreover, the variety of movie types are not represented. At least, important milestones of queer cinema are indirectly present. The most recent inscriptions also hint at a change because the naming practice sets new impulses with regard to the visibility of female filmmaking and to alternatives to the sole focus on stars.

The shifts in the naming practice are linked to the way in which the cinematic streetscape is affected by disputes over questions of representation. Interwoven with the city’s historical developments, the streetscape raised questions about how to deal with Nazi filmmaking and the film-cultural heritage of the GDR: about what should be remembered and what should be forgotten—a discourse that is still present in Potsdam, concerning, for example, major construction projects.<sup>1</sup> The fact that women are given greater consideration than before in the most recent namings in *Groß Glienike* and *Babelsberg* shows the connection of the cinematic streetscape to the overall streetscape of Potsdam as a cultural arena.

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., Bernhard Wiens: *Schmucke Fassade vor schmutzigen Feldzügen*, in: *TELEPOLIS*, Apr 17, 2021.

Disputes that have been waged over the inadequate representation of women have penetrated the cinematic streetscape as a new sensibility for the appreciation of female filmmaking. Thus, the cinematic streetscape is inextricably linked to developments in the overall streetscape as cultural arena.

The cinematic streetscape is pervaded by cinematic artifacts. Some of them have been created by echo effects starting from the cinematic street names. These artifacts show that the cinematic streetscape does not only provide a mere orientation but is also productively appropriated. This appropriation is a constitutive part of a film-related spatial practice. The echo effects emanating from the cinematic elements of the assemblage produce three artifact clusters in the publicly accessible urban space: a film-specific motif cluster, a person- or movie-character-specific motif cluster, and a material cluster. However, the echo effects of the cinematic streets are of limited scope because their effect diminishes with increasing distance. This is why the relationship between female and male filmmaking was not transferred to the artifact structure. In the latter, unlike in the cinematic streetscape, it is the actresses and their movie characters who dominate. Moreover, other movie nations and completely different movie stars come into play here. Although stereotypical images of movie nations are reproduced, at least the focus on Potsdam's local film history is clearly broken up, and the references to film become more heterogeneous. The relational structure of the assemblage is characterized by recourse primarily to film-accompanying materials as well as by their reconfiguration. Furthermore, the cinematic streets and artifacts contribute to a certain stability in the relational structure of the assemblage through their materiality.

All in all, the cinematic streetscape in Potsdam is characterized by relationships to the city's volatile sociopolitical history as well as to its film history. It is also influenced by the way film history was conceived and written until the 1980s, and in some cases still is. Finally, there are links to various questions of representation that move the city as well as to processes that shape the urban space on a material basis.

## 12.2 The Relationship between the Cinematic Streetscape as a Sub-assemblage and Potsdam's Local Cinematic Assemblage

The already expanded spatial observation that the understanding of the cinematic streetscape as a performative space entails, is expanded again by the inclusion of various elements explicitly referring to the topic of film or to Potsdam as a city of film: cinematic events and attractions, strategic marketing institutions including their events and publications, film-related initiatives (e.g., by citizens or associations) as well as various texts. Together with the cinematic streets, institutions, and artifacts, they form the local cinematic assemblage in which each group of elements contributes its own genesis and is shaped by different authorships, disputes over questions of representation, and performative spatial processes. Through echo effects, the elements expand or solidify—or do both at the same time—the motifs that run like red threads through the local assemblage, as well as the materiality of the assemblage.

Potential expansion and solidification take place through film festivals. These cinematic events create temporary but recurring spaces for intensive engagement with movies, and show, for example, international student productions (“*Sehsüchte*”), movies on specific historical topics (“*moving history*”), on sustainability (“*Ökofilmtour*”), and present Israeli filmmaking or movies that address Jewish life (*Jewish Film Festival Berlin and Brandenburg*). The same applies to the events, exhibitions, and projects of the *Film Museum Potsdam* which provides background information on well-known personalities and movies from Potsdam’s film history as well as illuminates unknown aspects of film history and highlights current film productions. The attractions of the *Film Park Babelsberg* also extend and solidify the motifs of the local assemblage because guests can, for example, attend a stunt show, walk around in a street from a western, or visit the gardens of Little Mook from *The Story of Little Mook* (1953, directed by Wolfgang Staudte).

An expansion and solidification of the motifs and the materiality of the assemblage also occurs through city marketing events, such as the 2016 screening of the movie *Metropolis* (1927, directed by Fritz Lang) in the courtyard of *Brandenburg's Parliament*, accompanied by the *German Film Orchestra Babelsberg*. The many events organized by various city institutions under the auspices of the

city's marketing department in 2012 to celebrate [Studio Babelsberg](#)'s centennial probably also had an expanding and solidifying effect, reproducing the sub-clusters of motifs described above. The same is true of the film-related city tours offered to the Potsdam residences of "film greats."<sup>2</sup> In addition, the publications of the [Marketing Department of the City of Potsdam](#) and the [PMSG Potsdam Marketing and Service GmbH](#) contribute to an intensification of the connotative charge of Potsdam as a city of film. For example, the marketing department emphasizes that Potsdam is the "cradle of German film."<sup>3</sup> The PMSG reports that [Asta Nielsen](#), [Marlene Dietrich](#), and the "Hollywood greats"<sup>4</sup> [Steven Spielberg](#) and [Quentin Tarantino](#) have all filmed in the "Babelsberg dream factory"<sup>5</sup> and highlights movies such as *Metropolis*, *Melody of the Heart* (1929, directed by [Hanns Schwarz](#)), *The Blue Angel* (1930, directed by [Josef von Sternberg](#)), and *The Punch Bowl* (1944, directed by [Helmut Weiss](#)).<sup>6</sup> Finally, an expansion and solidification of the motifs of the local assemblage can be expected from the planned Boulevard of Film.

Film-related initiatives such as the Polish Movie Club ([Polski Klub Filmowy](#)) at the [University of Potsdam](#), the projects of the [Babelsberg Secondary School for Motion Pictures](#), and Potsdam's [Star Trek Roundtable](#) also expand and solidify the motifs that shape the local assemblage and the assemblage's materiality. The same applies to the civic working group "Movies and Their Times" ("[Filme und ihre Zeit](#)"), which on the one hand shows contemporary and historical film productions at various locations in Potsdam, and on the other hand brings the city's film-cultural heritage to the fore with its film-historical work. In addition, network organizations such as [transfermedia](#), [media:net berlinbrandenburg](#), and [Media Tech Hub](#) with their focus on current developments in filmmaking in the media city can be seen as expanding and solidifying elements.

<sup>2</sup> PMSG (ed.): *Unterwegs in Potsdam. Öffentliche Führungen 2019* (Flyer), Potsdam 2018, own translation.

<sup>3</sup> City of Potsdam (ed.): *Filmstadt Potsdam* (Flyer), Potsdam 2020, own translation.

<sup>4</sup> PMSG (ed.): *Potsdam, Insel großer Gedanken. Reise-Inspirationen*, Potsdam 2019, 29, own translation.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 28, own translation.

<sup>6</sup> See ibid., 29.

Publications such as *Babelsberg—Gesichter einer Filmstadt*,<sup>7</sup> *Filmstadt Potsdam. Drehorte und Geschichten*,<sup>8</sup> *100 Years Studio Babelsberg. The Art of Filmmaking*,<sup>9</sup> *Komm mit ins Kino! Die Geschichte der Potsdamer Lichtspieltheater*,<sup>10</sup> and *100 Facts about Babelsberg. Cradle of Film and Modern Media City*<sup>11</sup> solidify and expand the existing motif clusters. Travel literature also uses the city's motif clusters, which, in turn, reinforces them. For example, visitors can learn that Guido Seeber is credited with the "birth of the German dream factory"<sup>12</sup> by having discovered the studio site.<sup>13</sup> Above all, Asta Nielsen is repeatedly linked "with the rise" of the *Studio Babelsberg* to become "the largest European film studio."<sup>14</sup> Her participation in the movie *The Dance to Death* (1912, directed by Urban Gad) is described as "the birth of 'German Hollywood.'"<sup>15</sup> Such an introduction is usually followed by a historical overview that draws on the same names that are present in the cinematic streetscape.<sup>16</sup> Current productions are summarized with accounts of, for example, Roman Polanski's *The Pianist* (2002) or Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds* (2009).<sup>17</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Film Museum Potsdam (ed.): *Babelsberg—Gesichter einer Filmstadt*, Berlin 2005.

<sup>8</sup> Alexander Vogel, Marcel Piethe: *Filmstadt Potsdam. Drehorte und Geschichten*, Berlin 2013.

<sup>9</sup> Michael Wedel, Chris Wahl, Ralf Schenk (eds.): *100 Years Studio Babelsberg. The Art of Filmmaking*, Kempen 2012.

<sup>10</sup> Jeanette Toussaint: *Komm mit ins Kino! Die Geschichte der Potsdamer Lichtspieltheater*, Potsdam 2020.

<sup>11</sup> Sebastian Stielke: *100 Facts about Babelsberg. Cradle of Film and Modern Media City*, Berlin 2021.

<sup>12</sup> Kristine Jaath: *Potsdam. Mit Ausflügen nach Werder und ins Havelland*, Berlin 2014, 156, own translation.

<sup>13</sup> See, e.g., Maren Richter, Winfried Sträter: *Potsdam. Der historische Reiseführer*, Berlin 2015, 52.

<sup>14</sup> Jaath: *Potsdam*, 158, own translation.

<sup>15</sup> Richter et al.: *Potsdam*, 53, own translation. Cf. Silke Herz, Michael Scherf: *Potsdam Kompakt. Der Kultur-Stadtführer* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), Berlin 2008, 49, Kristine Jaath: *Berlin mit Potsdam (CityTrip PLUS)* (12<sup>th</sup> ed.), Bielefeld 2017, 215, and Stefan Krull: *CityTrip Potsdam* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), Bielefeld 2015, 104.

<sup>16</sup> See, e.g., Jaath: *Potsdam*, 156–157, Richter et al.: *Potsdam*, 53, and Tom Wolf: *111 Orte in Potsdam, die man gesehen haben muss*, Cologne 2015, 30.

<sup>17</sup> See, e.g., Jaath: *Potsdam*, 158 and Wolf: *111 Orte in Potsdam, die man gesehen haben muss*, 30.

The individual elements of the local cinematic assemblage mutually determine each other in their relational structure through echo effects and exhibit different degrees of stability. The echo effects of the cinematic elements produce a film-specific motif cluster, a person- or movie-character-specific motif cluster, and a material cluster, which give rise to an explicitly filmic urban space—i.e., an urban space in which film is present in a variety of ways. Together, the motifs and the materiality as well as the filmic urban space that emerges from them shape an image of Potsdam as a city of film.

Based on the results obtained, the image of Potsdam as a city of film can be described as follows: Of all the cities of film, Potsdam is one of the oldest, having been founded by Guido Seeber's discovery of the later film studio's site in 1911 and by Asta Nielsen's movie *The Dance to Death* in 1912. The fame associated with Nielsen continued through world-class productions such as Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*. Potsdam is where the talkie *The Blue Angel* was made—starring the towering diva Marlene Dietrich who remains a defining icon of the film city today. Potsdam is closely associated with other popular movie stars such as Hans Albers and Heinz Rühmann as well as with the name of the production company Ufa. The film city also stands for the history of DEFA which produced outstanding children's movies such as *The Story of Little Mook*, so-called *Indianerfilme*, not-to-be-missed banned movies such as *Trace of Stones* (1966, directed by Frank Beyer), as well as several GDR classics. After German reunification, the studio's success story gained momentum once again with productions such as *The Pianist* and *Inglourious Basterds*. Today, Potsdam is home to numerous US and international productions.

The image of Potsdam as a city of film is itself an element of the local cinematic assemblage that feeds back on its relational structure over time. Daniel Miller has noted in relation to objects that, in the same process in which we bring forth objects, they also bring forth us.<sup>18</sup> Applied to Potsdam as a city of film, it can be stated: in the same process in which we contribute to bringing forth the film city, the film city also brings forth us as elements of the assemblage.<sup>19</sup> For

<sup>18</sup> See Daniel Miller: *Stuff*, Cambridge 2010, 60.

<sup>19</sup> This also applies to this publication: along with its authors, it contributes to the production of its own object of investigation.

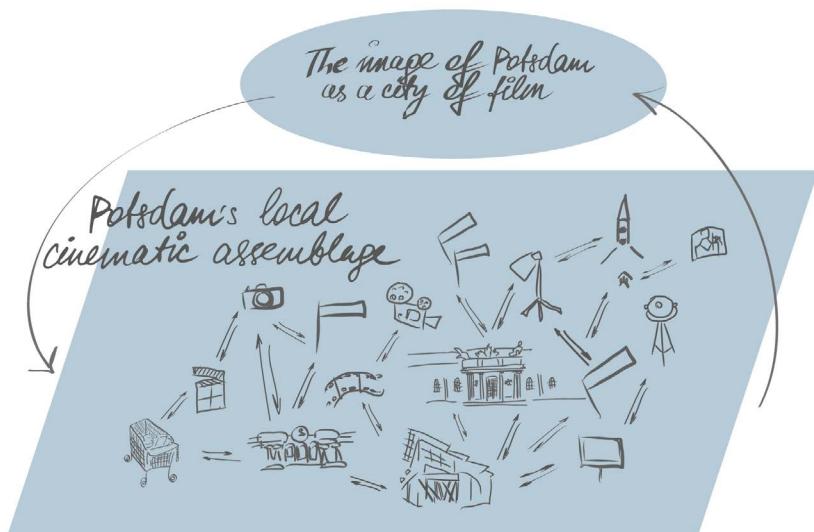


Figure 39: Model of the circular film-related spatial practice of the city of film Potsdam. The local cinematic assemblage contributes to the formation of an image of Potsdam as a city of film. This image, in turn, shapes the local cinematic assemblage.

this reason, one can describe the process as a circular film-related spatial practice (Figure 39) in which the materiality of the cinematic streetscape provides stability. The cinematic streetscape's influence from classical film historiography and its local film-historical orientation also provide definitional power. However, the determinative scope of the cinematic streetscape—together with the cinematic institutions—is limited, so that, in the city center, the artifact structure turns out to be much more heterogeneous, expanding the motifs and the materiality found in Potsdam. It remains to be seen how the relational structure of the assemblage will develop, for example, given the planned Boulevard of Film: will the heterogeneity of the artifacts in the city center be successively dissolved in favor of the dominant motifs, or will the diversity be recognized as an additional quality that can be more strongly emphasized in the future promotion of the film city?

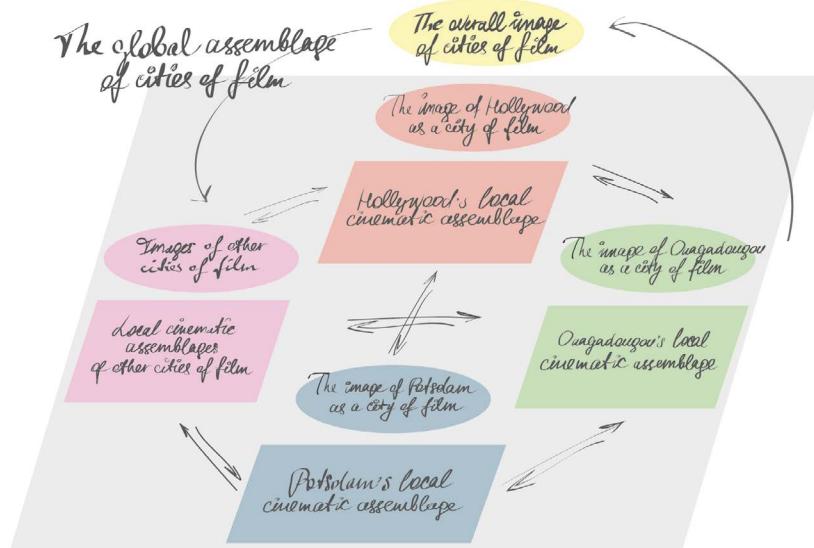


Figure 40: Model of the global assemblage of cities of film formed by local cinematic assemblages. The global cinematic assemblage contributes to the formation of an overall image of cities of film. This image, in turn, shapes the global cinematic assemblage.

### 12.3 Cities of Film as Predigital ‘Explosions of Cinema’

From the results of my analysis of the city of film Potsdam as a local assemblage, a new perspective on the global assemblage of cities of film can be derived: Cities of film emerge as local assemblages out of the described, circular film-related spatial practice, each with a specific profile. Together, they form a global assemblage in which they mutually define each other (Figure 40). Strong echo effects emanate especially from Hollywood—a film city to which many cinematic elements of other film cities refer. In addition, the UNESCO Cities of Film Network contributes to mutual processes of learning, innovation, and strategic adaptation between the cities of film gathered there.

In sum, the global assemblage’s cities of film represent—in the words of Francesco Casetti (see Chapter 3)—, to a certain extent, predigital ‘explosions of cinema.’ It is not only in the context of digital production, distribution, and reception as well as of cinematic forms in public space or the art world, that

film has assumed a fluid status; rather, in the cities of film, the presence of film in everyday life, in all its variety of place and form, has already become a common, constitutive spatial practice. In the cities of film, film has long since left its ancestral forms of space and is helping to create new ones. The cities of film can be seen as precursors of the digital metacinematic universes as they surround us and as they are described by film scholars in the wake of the topological turn.

## 12.4 Outlook and Practical Benefits

How the metacinematic universes will continue to develop—how they, too, will be shaped in the future by inscription attempts, by disputes over questions of representation, by echo effects and artifact clusters, as well as by processes of reconfiguration and stabilization—could be investigated in an analysis of further cities of film. In addition, a systematic investigation of other elements of an individual local cinematic assemblage, such as film festivals, would be desirable in subsequent research in order to better understand the overall relational structure of this assemblage in its subtleties. In this regard, the analysis of those artifacts that do not directly relate to the respective local film history promises to be fruitful. For example, the design of Italian restaurants utilizing movie stills and star portraits, often sourced from within the epochal style of Italian neorealism, is a common phenomenon that also occurs beyond cities of film. This raises questions about film-based processes of stereotyping and opens up points of connection to research on the topic “film and stereotypes.”<sup>20</sup> Moreover, the ubiquitous utilization of representations of *Marilyn Monroe* and *Audrey Hepburn* in Potsdam’s fashion and jewelry stores, which is only mentioned in passing, brings into play the question, not taken up here, of how ideals of female beauty are conveyed through the medium of film and its paratexts. This question would be worth investigating in studies on gender representations.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> For more information on this, see, e.g., Jörg Schweinitz: *Film und Stereotyp. Eine Herausforderung für das Kino und die Filmtheorie. Zur Geschichte eines Mediendiskurses*, Berlin 2006.

<sup>21</sup> For more information on this, see, e.g., Susanne Weingarten: *Bodies of Evidence. Geschlechts-repräsentationen von Hollywood-Stars*, Marburg 2003 and Elizabeth M. Matelski: *Reducing Bodies. Mass Culture and the Female Figure in Postwar America*, New York 2017.

Furthermore, the analysis of the cinematic streetscape could be combined with an in-depth study of those texts that were published on Potsdam as a city of film, in order to elaborate the artifact structure in an even more differentiated way. Based on the present project, an empirical study of the actual reception and appropriation of the cinematic street names would also be useful. In this context, a research question on the persistence of the names' connotative meanings could be important, given the street-name studies' findings that the original connotative references and interpretations are lost and, if necessary, modified or replaced over time, just as the understanding and acceptance for a naming can be lost over time.<sup>22</sup>

All further approaches mentioned above would lend themselves to a comparison with noncinematic namings in Potsdam. In this way, differences and similarities could be discovered with regard, for example, to the practice of naming streets after aristocrats. This could lead to a comparison with the characteristics of the assemblage that makes Potsdam stand out as a Prussian "city of parks and palaces"<sup>23</sup> today. Both assemblages, the cinematic and the Prussian, could be brought into view as being based on potentially competing principles of spatial construction. An important further step would be an analytical comparison between Potsdam and other film cities, addressing both the sub-assemblage of the cinematic streetscape and the entire local cinematic assemblage. It remains to be hoped that the indicated shortcomings will inspire corresponding scholarly work.

This book's upgrading of a cinematic streetscape to an object of investigation in film studies as well as the development of a unique model of film-related spatial practice allow not only further scholarly work but also strategic conclusions for the future development of film cities, which have practical benefits. For example, overwritten layers of a film city can be extracted from previous inscriptions in order to make them visible for residents and visitors. Moreover, projects on cinematic street naming and monument setting can be made open for participatory cocreation by citizens in order to consciously use the discursive potentials that lie dormant in the cultural arena. The citizens of Potsdam, for

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Maoz Azaryahu: *The power of commemorative street names*, in: *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, vol. 14, no. 3, 1996, 311–330, here 322–324.

<sup>23</sup> Anonymous: *Discover Potsdam*, in: *potsdam.de*.

example, were directly involved in the design of the granite slabs of the planned Boulevard of Film<sup>24</sup> in order to promote the visibility of the project at an early stage and prompt the citizens' identification with it.

Furthermore, a strategic placement of cinematic elements in the city can provoke echo effects in the longer term. These can, in turn, contribute to a strengthening of already existing motifs and a corresponding filmic induction of the urban space. With regard to cinematic streets, a strategic choice of location and the linking of names with the attributes "Allee" and "Platz" can provoke further adoptions of cinematic offers of meaning. The relational structure between the cinematic elements of a city can also be deliberately strengthened by explicitly interweaving previously existing groups of elements. In relation to Potsdam, this could be done, for example, by incorporating specific sub-clusters of cinematic artifacts—such as those found in an Italian, French, or Indian restaurant—into cinematic events, such as city tours, that have so far primarily targeted cinematic institutions. In the context of the street-sign installation *The Cinematic Face of the City of Potsdam (Das filmische Gesicht der Stadt Potsdam)*, such linkage work was attempted by offering bicycle tours from the [Film Museum Potsdam](#) to, among other places, the cinematic streets in [Drewitz](#).<sup>25</sup>

Above all, the strategic protagonists of the film cities should realize that every new cinematic element represents an opportunity to strengthen the assemblage in its orientation, but also to change it. Since there is, meanwhile, an extensive body of research in the spirit of New Film History, and film studies have a pronounced consciousness of knowledge transfer—i.e., more and more research results are being made publicly available—, authors writing on film cities only need to access this knowledge. The material is available, it can be used for the next inscription phases to add new chapters to the respective assemblages—also beyond classical film historiography. Furthermore, a strategic analysis of the urban space can make visible cinematic elements that already contribute to a breakup of existing motifs in order to strengthen them in a targeted way. In

<sup>24</sup> For more information on this, see anonymous: [Gestaltungswettbewerb für den Boulevard des Films startet. Pressemitteilung Nr. 239 vom 03.05.2021](#), in: [potsdam.de](#).

<sup>25</sup> For more information on this, see anonymous: Medienstadt Babelsberg und Gartenstadt Drewitz: Neue Filme, Neue Bauten (Geführte Radtour), in: [potsdam.de](#).

particular, film cities that have so far been characterized by a relational structure that places a focus on success-oriented remembrance rather than commemoration, and those where gender imbalances or a lack of diversity can be observed, can—by including results from film studies—strengthen certain groups of cinematic elements as well as promote participatory processes and new impulses in the construction of space. Following this idea, it remains to be hoped that, after the successful identification of discursive gaps and problematic assumptions and omissions in the cinematic streetscape in Potsdam, concrete proposals for future cinematic namings in the public space will be developed in the spirit of revisionist film studies.

This book invites you to use it as a local walking map through the cinematic streetscape of Potsdam. Perhaps, it can inspire you to take a walk through *Groß Glienicker*, *Drewitz/Kirchsteigfeld*, or *Babelsberg*, to discover the many cinematic artifacts in the city center, to visit the *film museum*, the *film park*, or one of Potsdam's film festivals—or even to make your own contributions to the further development of the film city. Film cities are, after all, not solely a product of marketing strategy considerations or subject to interpretive sovereignty of cinematic institutions. Rather, they are the result of a relational structure in which everyone can enter as an active element.

# V. BIOGRAPHIES OF THE FILMMAKERS HONORED WITH A STREET NAME IN POTSDAM

The biographical part of this book presents all 42 filmmakers honored with a street name in Potsdam. On the one hand, the short biographies represent the central film-historical database for the quantitative analysis of the cinematic streetscape (see [Chapter 6](#) and [Chapter 7](#)). On the other hand, they are original works I wrote in a uniquely developed scientific–artistic procedure.<sup>1</sup> Just as Anna Luise Kiss variously accessed the film personalities in her interpretive disentanglement of the streetscape’s relational structure (see [Part IV](#)), I also offer an independent approach: From a revisionist perspective, I give precedence to Groß Glienike (Chapter 13)—i.e., to the female filmmakers [Edith Schollwer](#), [Ida Wüst](#), [Käthe Haack](#), and [Maly Delschaft](#), as well as the wildlife filmmaker [Heinz Sielmann](#), all of whom, moreover, can be considered second-rank persons (see [Section 9.4](#)). Afterward, the [Drewitz](#) film personalities will be presented (Chapter 14), because most as well as the oldest cinematic streets existing today are in Drewitz. Furthermore, I would like to make visible some of the milestones of queer cinema present in [Drewitz](#) (see [Section 9.5](#)), including [Conrad Veidt](#) and [Hertha Thiele](#), as well as [Heiner Carow](#), whose place is located in the nearby [Kirchsteigfeld](#). Finally, I turn my attention to [Babelsberg](#) (Chapter 15), where the most recent naming after [Hedy Lamarr](#) can be found. While the individual persons are sorted alphabetically within the districts, [Quentin Tarantino](#), as the last placed, is given a particular position: apart from being the only living person among those honored, his street sign tells a metahistory of Potsdam’s filmmakers.

The short biographies are intended to both entertain and inform you about the film personalities in question. In addition, the numerous references

<sup>1</sup> While I created most of the biographies on my own, the biographies on [Heinz Sielmann](#), [Maly Delschaft](#), [Guido Seeber](#), [Günther Simon](#), [Hans Albers](#), [Konrad Wolf](#), [Wolfgang Staudte](#), [Heinrich George](#), and [Heinz Rühmann](#) were composed in collaboration with Anna Luise Kiss, those on [Robert Baberske](#) and [Heiner Carow](#) in collaboration with Anna Luise Kiss and Dieter Chill.

aim to encourage you to conduct more in-depth research on your own. The hyperlinks—as far as possible offered in the footnotes—will enable you to access the sources directly. Furthermore, you will find maps for each of the districts, which, together with the biographical texts, invite you to make practical use of the book as a local walking map. The biographies also mention 96 film works, which you can take as recommendations.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, I provide you with hyperlinks to musical works—instead of the hyperlinks to institutions that are usual for the other parts of the publication. In this way, I would like to lend weight to the close interconnections between film and music, which stand out in Potsdam’s streetscape, using the examples of [Edith Schollwer](#), [Ernst Busch](#), [Heinz Rühmann](#), [Friedrich Holländer](#), [Marlene Dietrich](#), and [Zarah Leander](#), among others. Finally, in Chapter 16, I reveal the scientific–artistic concept developed specifically for the short biographies. Reading at least some biographies is advisable before learning about their intended effect and function.

<sup>2</sup> There are 87 movies and series, including 6 current ones, and 9 documentaries, including 4 current ones.

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*Potsdam*

*Groß  
Glienicke*

Seeburger Chaussee

Seeburger Chaussee





# EDITH SCHOLLWER



*The islander does not lose his cool  
The islander does not love no fuss  
[...]  
The islander hopes undeterred  
That his island will become a beautiful mainland again<sup>1</sup>*

These lines sung by Edith Schollwer (1904–2002) have attained cult status. From the winter of the Berlin Blockade in 1948–1949, they rang out for 16 years in the cabaret radio program *The Islanders* (*Die Insulaner*), created by Günter Neumann and broadcast on the West Berlin station RIAS.<sup>2</sup> The ‘Islanders,’ which included a total of 10 artists, were not only anti-Communist but, to a certain extent, also anti-Capitalist<sup>3</sup>—an unusual circumstance that made the show famous in both the West and the East. Although the *Islanders’ Song* (*Insulanerlied*) was varied again and again as the theme song, the defiant refrain lines “with a cheerful rolling R”<sup>4</sup> were always catchy. During the Cold War, they became the slogan of perseverance and the “secret anthem”<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “Der Insulaner verliert die Ruhe nich / Der Insulaner liebt keen Jetue nich / [...] / Der Insulaner hofft unbirrt / Daß seine Insel wieder ’n schönes Festland wird,” own translation.

<sup>2</sup> For more information on this, see Andreas Hiepko: Der Insulaner, in: *Zeitschrift für Ideengeschichte*, vol. 2, no. 4, 2008, 54–58, here 55–56 and Stefanie Eisenhuth, Martin Sabrow: “West-Berlin.” Eine historiographische Herausforderung, in: *Zeithistorische Forschungen*, vol. 11, no. 2, 2014, 165–187, here 176.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Uwe Prell: *Berlin: Bühne des Wandels. Ein Reisebericht* (PhD thesis), Berlin 2004, 326 and 447.

<sup>4</sup> Christian Schröder: *Seh’n Se, das war Berlin. Die letzte “Insulanerin”*: zum Tod von Edith Schollwer, in: *Tagespiegel Online*, Oct 4, 2002, own translation.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., own translation.

of the West Berliners holding out in an enclave. The *Islanders' Song* represents uniquely “the typical Berlin combination of ‘a big mouth with feeling’”<sup>6</sup>—Edith Schollwer’s trademark. The universally popular cabaret artist and actress, who once described herself as a “natural talent,”<sup>7</sup> was involved in numerous, often comedic productions in theater, radio, film, and television. Between 1931 and 1991, she starred in about 30 motion pictures and 30 television movies, as well as several television series, with the last 30 years of her long career concentrated on television.<sup>8</sup> Schollwer belonged to the so-called folk actors with the Berlin snout (Berliner Schnauze), who were gladly hired for the true-to-milieu portrayals of the West Berlin family series.<sup>9</sup> Due to her outstanding cultural achievements, she was awarded the Order of Merit of Berlin in 1994.

<sup>6</sup> Anonymous: [Schauspielerin Edith Schollwer ist tot](#), in: *Rheinische Post*, Oct 3, 2002, own translation.

<sup>7</sup> Anonymous: [Die möcht ich sehn! Edith Schollwer](#), in: *HÖRZU*, Apr 22, 1956, own translation.

<sup>8</sup> See filmography in anonymous: [Edith Schollwer](#), in: *IMDb*.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Knut Hickethier: [Die gemütliche Durchhalte-Gemeinschaft. West-Berlin in Serien des deutschen Fernsehens](#), in: *Zeithistorische Forschungen*, vol. 11, no. 2, 2014, 337–348, here 339.



# HEINZ SIELMANN

“I, for one, my dear viewers, can think of no better monument to a German–German border that would have been overcome than a large national park stretching from the Baltic Sea to the Thuringian Forest.”<sup>1</sup> When Heinz Sielmann (1917–2006) spoke these words into the camera for *Tiere im Schatten der Grenze* (*Animals in the Shadow of the Border*) in 1988, he had no idea that the Iron Curtain would soon be history. Together with nature conservation organizations, he was committed to transforming the former border strip into a “Green Belt,”<sup>2</sup> making his vision a reality. The politicians listened to the animal and environmental activist Sielmann because he had been the voice and face of nature conservation in Germany since the 1960s. In 1938, the avid birdwatcher had made his first wildlife movie *Vögel über Haff und Wiesen* (*Birds over Lagoons and Meadows*)<sup>3</sup> as a self-taught filmmaker. His assignment to film birds in Crete for the Natural History Museum of Berlin saved him from deployment to the Front.<sup>4</sup> British soldiers captured him, but they let him continue working on his movie in Crete and later in London. In 1947, they even supported him to establish himself as a wildlife filmmaker in Germany.<sup>5</sup> First came commissioned works for educational movies and the International Zoological Film Encyclopedia, shown on the BBC. In Great Britain, the audience appreciation index of his movie *Woodpecker*

<sup>1</sup> Heinz Sielmann in *Sielmanns Vision: Biotop statt Todesstreifen* (NDR television feature from Sep 23, 2019), 00:31–00:45, own translation.

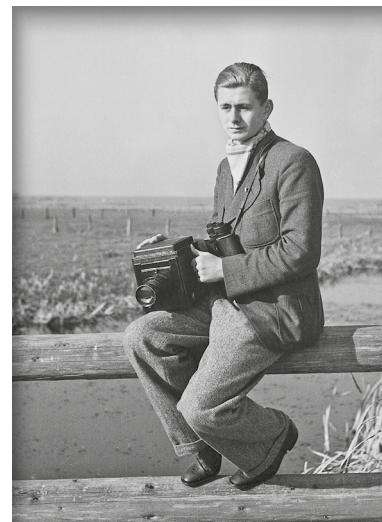
<sup>2</sup> Ulrich Simmat, Peter Nitschke: Sielmanns Naturlandschaft Döberitzer Heide, in: Michael Succow, Lebrecht Jeschke, Hans Dieter Knapp (eds.): *Naturschutz in Deutschland. Rückblicke—Einblicke—Ausblicke*, Berlin 2012, 277–281, here 277, own translation.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Michael Sutor: Zeitspuren im historischen Naturfilm. *Galapagos: Ankunft in Eden* von Heinz Sielmann, in: Wilfried Köpke, Peter Stettner (eds.): *Filmerbe. Non-fiktionale historische Bewegtbilder in Wissenschaft und Medienpraxis*, Cologne 2018, 80–97, here 85.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. John F. Burton: *Heinz Sielmann: Oral History Transcription*, in: *CiteSeerX*, 2004.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Erika Steinhausen: *Heinz Sielmann. Naturforscher und Tierfilmer (1916–2007)*, in: *Portal Rheinische Geschichte*.

(1955) even outmatched that of the 1954 FIFA World Cup final.<sup>6</sup> The cinema movie *Masters of the Congo Jungle* (1958), in which he documented hornbills and gorillas,<sup>7</sup> expanded his international fame.<sup>8</sup> Sielmann recognized the potential of television early on.<sup>9</sup> In *Expeditionen ins Tierreich* (*Expeditions into the Animal Kingdom*), from 1965 to 1991, he conveyed his fascination with the animal world to a broad audience and sensitized his “dear viewers” to environmental protection.<sup>10</sup> Anyone who wants to understand what motivated Sielmann’s tireless cinematic and eco-political commitment to animals and nature should not miss visiting the Döberitzer Heide, a natural landscape maintained by the Heinz Sielmann Foundation.



- <sup>6</sup> Cf. Stephen Moss: [Heinz Sielmann. Wildlife film-maker who pioneered the practice of placing cameras inside birds' nests](#), in: *The Guardian*, Oct 21, 2006.
- <sup>7</sup> Cf. anonymous: “[Herrscher des Urwalds](#)”: [Heinz Sielmanns Traum von Afrika wird wahr](#), in: *Heinz Sielmann Foundation*.
- <sup>8</sup> Cf. Sutor: [Zeitspuren im historischen Naturfilm](#), 85.
- <sup>9</sup> Cf. Burton: [Heinz Sielmann](#).
- <sup>10</sup> Cf. anonymous: [18. April 1965: “Expeditionen ins Tierreich” startet](#), in: *Westdeutscher Rundfunk*, Apr 18, 2015.



# IDA WÜST



Ida Wüst (1884–1958) was a courageous companion. Between 1921 and 1956, the very active actress played in around 150 movies,<sup>1</sup> alongside the biggest stars of her time.<sup>2</sup> Among them are *Tragedy of Love* (1923, directed by Joe May) with Emil Jannings, *The Beaver Coat* (1937, directed by Jürgen von Alten) with Heinrich George, and *Request Concert* (1940, directed by Eduard von Borsody) with Ilse Werner. Movies with Wüst were “not always great cinema,”<sup>3</sup> but she herself was pretty popular with the audience.<sup>4</sup> She embodied wives, mothers, mothers-in-law, aunts, and grandmothers who are “sometimes true vixens but always amusing.”<sup>5</sup> In a recent retrospection, it is said, “as a resolute mother-in-law and folksy mom who doesn’t take any crap, she’s unsurpassed.”<sup>6</sup> Ida Wüst went through two major upheavals that could hardly have been more different. The transition to talkies in the early 1930s turned out to be a “lucrative field of activity”<sup>7</sup> for her, while her ex-husband, also an actor, not only failed professionally like many others but even committed suicide because of it.<sup>8</sup> She herself was hurt by the end

<sup>1</sup> See filmography in anonymous: [Ida Wüst](#), in: [filmportal.de](#).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Christoph Gunkel: “[Huppa, huppa, muppa, muppa.](#)” Frühe Tonfilme in den Zwanzigern, in: [Spiegel Online](#), Feb 3, 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Heinz Fiedler: [Spezialität: Schwiegermütter](#), in: [Sächsische Zeitung](#), Dec 7, 2019, own translation.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Adolf Heinzelmeier, Berndt Schulz: *Lexikon der deutschen Film- und TV-Stars*, Berlin 2000, 398, own translation.

<sup>6</sup> Fiedler: [Spezialität: Schwiegermütter](#), own translation.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, own translation.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *ibid.* and Gunkel: “[Huppa, huppa, muppa, muppa.](#)”

of National Socialism. Because of her close contacts with the Nazis—including correspondence with **Adolf Hitler** in 1938–1939<sup>9</sup>—she was already “not much appreciated”<sup>10</sup> by her colleagues during the Nazi era. At the court hearing for her denazification in 1947, she was then laughed at, her defense attempts were called impertinent, and the request was rejected.<sup>11</sup> The artist, “guiltily–innocently entangled in propaganda movies,”<sup>12</sup> appealed and was finally granted unrestricted accreditation as an actress in 1949.<sup>13</sup> Today, Ida Wüst is one of the “forgotten movie stars of Groß Glienicker,” whose history the civic working group “Movies and Their Times” (“Filme und ihre Zeit”), founded in 2019, would like to reappraise.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>9</sup> See Princeton University Library: [Wüst, Ida, 1938–1939; Adolf Hitler Collection, 1912–1946](#), in: *Princeton University Library*.

<sup>10</sup> Fiedler: [Spezialität: Schwiegermütter](#), own translation.

<sup>11</sup> See anonymous: [Appellantin: Ida Wüst](#), in: *Der Spiegel*, Sep 26, 1947.

<sup>12</sup> Heinzlmeier et al.: *Lexikon der deutschen Film- und TV-Stars*, 398, own translation.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Fiedler: [Spezialität: Schwiegermütter](#).

<sup>14</sup> See Birte Förster: [Die vergessenen Filmstars von Groß Glienicker. Bürgerprojekt](#), in: *Potsdamer Neueste Nachrichten*, Jul 29, 2020, own translation.



# KÄTHE HAACK



If there had been a competition for the longest film career, Käthe Haack (1897–1986) would not have won the first prize—but the 70 years she spent in front of the camera are undoubtedly worthy of high praise. After her cinema debut “as a blond bimbo”<sup>1</sup> in *The Cats’ Bridge* (1915, directed by Max Mack), she starred in about 250 movies, although she was mainly seen on television during the last 30 years of her career.<sup>2</sup> Over time, she advanced to become an “irreplaceable character actress of high-profile supporting roles.”<sup>3</sup> In doing so, she was extremely versatile. After some 75 silent movies, she managed the transition to talkies with ease in the early 1930s, combining it with an image change from “a cheerful, naive girl”<sup>4</sup> to “a more mature woman.”<sup>5</sup> When she moved into television in the mid-1950s, she changed her role again to that of “a friendly (sometimes quirky) older lady from better circles.”<sup>6</sup> Käthe Haack’s specialty was “motherliness in every shape.”<sup>7</sup> In the romantic comedy *Seinerzeit zu meiner Zeit* (1944, directed by Boleslaw Barlog), she embodied an understanding mother who catches her daughter, supposedly out with a girlfriend,

<sup>1</sup> Friedemann Beyer: *Die Gesichter der UFA. Starportraits einer Epoche*, Munich 1992, 50, own translation.

<sup>2</sup> See filmography in anonymous: [Käthe Haack](#), in: *IMDb*.

<sup>3</sup> Adolf Heinzlmeier, Berndt Schulz: *Lexikon der deutschen Film- und TV-Stars*, Berlin 2000, 137, own translation.

<sup>4</sup> Beyer: *Die Gesichter der UFA*, 50, own translation.

<sup>5</sup> Anonymous: [Käthe Haack](#), in: *filmportal.de*, own translation.

<sup>6</sup> Beyer: *Die Gesichter der UFA*, 50, own translation.

<sup>7</sup> Heinzlmeier et al.: *Lexikon der deutschen Film- und TV-Stars*, 137, own translation.

on a date and forgives her for the lie without reproach.<sup>8</sup> Haack's actual daughter portrayed the daughter character.<sup>9</sup> Shot toward the end of the Nazi regime, *Seinerzeit zu meiner Zeit* was not the only Nazi entertainment movie in which Käthe Haack participated. Her career stayed unaffected. In a US secret report on artists remaining in Germany, her husband is listed as a Nazi,<sup>10</sup> but she is said "to have behaved particularly decently and faithfully to old friends during the Nazi era, according to various statements."<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Cf. anonymous: *Seinerzeit zu meiner Zeit*, in: *Friedrich-Wilhelm-Murnau-Stiftung*.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> See Carl Zuckmayer: *Geheimreport* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), Göttingen 2002, 94–95.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 94, own translation.

# MALY DELSCHAFT



Maly Delschaft (1898–1995) was a passionate sidekick. In *Danton* (1921, directed by Dimitri Buchowetzki), she first appeared in front of the camera with Emil Jannings.<sup>1</sup> In the course of subsequent collaborations, she showed great versatility when, in 1924, she first embodied Jannings's teenage niece in *The Last Laugh* (directed by Friedrich W. Murnau) and, only one year later, was cast as his wife, already battered and betrayed by life, in *Variety* (1925, directed by Ewald André Dupont).<sup>2</sup> Her final breakthrough came with *The Wife's Crusade* (1926, directed by Martin Berger).<sup>3</sup> She portrayed a teacher—"her favorite role from those years"<sup>4</sup>—who becomes unintentionally pregnant as a result of rape and has an illegal abortion;<sup>5</sup> a highly political movie that openly denounced the abortion Paragraph 218.<sup>6</sup> A review in *Film-Kurier* pointed out that Maly Delschaft, "eschewing elegant toilets and the so-called 'beautiful face,' depicts women as life creates them."<sup>7</sup> One was sure that the viewers would never forget "her uncomprehending vegetating after the degradation."<sup>8</sup> This success could have been repeated: Emil Jannings

<sup>1</sup> Cf. anonymous: *Maly Delschaft: Schauspielerin*, in: *CineGraph*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Cornelie Usborne: *Cultures of Abortion in Weimar Germany*, New York 2007, 34.

<sup>4</sup> Frank Burkhard: Stummfilmstar und DEFA-Pionier. Maly Delschaft starb 96jährig in Berlin, in: *Neues Deutschland*, Sep 1, 1995, own translation.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Usborne: *Cultures of Abortion in Weimar Germany*, 33.

<sup>6</sup> For more information on this, see *ibid.*, 31–34.

<sup>7</sup> Anonymous: Ihre schwerste Rolle, in: *Film-Kurier*, vol. 1927, no. 156, Jul 5, 1927, as cited in anonymous: *Maly Delschaft: Schauspielerin*, in: *CineGraph*, own translation.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, own translation.

wanted her at his side again, but when director Josef von Sternberg, at Jannings's request, wanted to offer Delschaft the role of Lola Lola in *The Blue Angel* (1930), she was unavailable.<sup>9</sup> Finally back home, another woman—Sternberg's favorite, Marlene Dietrich—had triumphed at the audition.<sup>10</sup> And yet, “Delschaft unconsciously established the ‘type Marlene’ before she herself became famous.”<sup>11</sup> The “Marlene-like”<sup>12</sup> artist was nevertheless destined for a further heyday. At DEFA and on GDR television, she once again became a very active character actress.<sup>13</sup> However, after the Berlin Wall was built, the path to demanding roles was literally blocked for her as a West Berliner, which is why she simply retired after a fulfilling professional life.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Klaus U. Reinke: Als Achtjährige spielte sie ‘Anna Kareninas Sohn.’ Im Düsseldorfer Filminstitut erzählte die 80 jährige Maly Delschaft aus ihrem Leben, in: *Film-Korrespondenz*, no. 4, Apr 14, 1981, Christina Tilmann: Marlene vor der Marlene. Sie sollte anstelle der Dietrich der Blaue Engel sein: Eine Filmreihe erinnert an die vor 100 Jahren geborene Diva Maly Delschaft, in: *Der Tagesspiegel*, Dec 23, 1998, and anonymous: *Maly Delschaft: Schauspielerin*, in: *CineGraph*.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Tilmann: Marlene vor der Marlene.

<sup>11</sup> Wolfgang Mielke: “Sie hat Marlenenhaftigkeit.” Diese Diva hätte die Dietrich werden können: Das “Arsenal” erinnert an Maly Delschaft, in: *Die Welt*, Dec 24, 1998, own translation.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. and Tilmann: Marlene vor der Marlene, own translation.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Mielke: “Sie hat Marlenenhaftigkeit” and Burkhard: Stummfilmstar und DEFA-Pionier.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. ibid. and Frank-Burkhard Habel: Maly Delschaft. Nachruf, in: *Film und Fernsehen*, no. 6, 1995, 59.

Nuthstraße

# Potsdam

Stern-Center

Gerlachstraße

Gerlachstraße

Eduard-von-Winterstein-Straße

Zum Kirchsteigfeld

## Drewitz

Robert-Baberske-Straße

Oskar-Meister-Straße

Konrad-Wolf-Allee

Ricarda-Huch-Straße

Johanna-Just-Straße

Priesterweg

Ricarda-Huch-Straße

Nuthestraße



200 m



# ASTA NIELSEN



Asta Nielsen (1881–1972) is considered to be the first ever movie star. The silent film diva, who starred in over 70 dramas and comedies in the 1910s and 1920s, was the first person in the then still young but already globalized film industry whose name had been established as an international brand.<sup>1</sup> Her movies were produced in series, drawing audiences and guaranteeing success—“a deal for the world,” as a producer involved once said.<sup>2</sup> In local ads, her name was often printed larger than the movie titles, which were sometimes omitted altogether.<sup>3</sup> There were numerous merchandise items, including a perfume, movie theaters bore her name, and even an Asta Nielsen waltz was composed.<sup>4</sup> Wherever she appeared, the superlatives came thick and fast. The press called her “the most wonderful thing in cinematographic art,”<sup>5</sup> showering her with enthusiastic verdicts: “Through her, the concepts of film and art began to converge until she succeeded in uniting them.”<sup>6</sup> She played women of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Martin Loiperdinger: [Importing Asta Nielsen Database. Quellen zu globalem Vertrieb und lokalen Aufführungen des frühen Filmstars Asta Nielsen in Branchenblättern und Tageszeitungen](#), in: Alexander Geimer, Carsten Heinze, Rainer Winter (eds.): *Die Herausforderungen des Films. Soziologische Antworten*, Wiesbaden 2018, 297–311.

<sup>2</sup> The quote from producer [Paul Davidson](#) can be found in CineGraph: [Asta Nielsen](#), in: [filmportal.de](#), own translation.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Loiperdinger: [Importing Asta Nielsen Database](#), 304.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Kinothek Asta Nielsen: [Press Release 02/2007](#), in: *Deutsches Filmmuseum*.

<sup>5</sup> The quote originates from the *Vossische Zeitung* and is cited (without date) in Jürgen Schebera: *Damals in Neubabelsberg...: Studios, Stars und Kinopaläste im Berlin der zwanziger Jahre*, Leipzig 1990, 25, own translation.

<sup>6</sup> V. G.: [Asta Nielsen](#), in: *Zappelnde Leinwand*, vol. 1923, no. 31, Zurich, 4–6, here 4, own translation.

strong character, mainly in conflict with the social norm, developing her own aesthetics.<sup>7</sup> Her acting is characterized by extraordinary facial expressions and perfect body choreography. Her sudden, surprising movements, with which she grabs objects and people, have been scientized as “assaults and fisticuffs.”<sup>8</sup> Her stagecraft is even said to be able to make us hear and to create bang effects.<sup>9</sup> A new business model, a new aesthetics—Asta Nielsen’s work is often associated with innovation. It was, for example, the growing production of her movies that led Guido Seeber, the technical director of Deutsche Bioscop GmbH, to purchase a plot of land in Nowawes, today’s [Babelsberg](#), and build a glass studio in 1911.<sup>10</sup> The foundation stone for the world’s first film studio had been laid.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Jürgen Kasten: [Nielsen, Asta Carla Sofie Amalie](#), in: *Deutsche Biographie*.

<sup>8</sup> Christine N. Brinckmann: Übergriffe und Handgreiflichkeiten, in: Heide Schlüpmann, Eric de Kuyper, Karola Gramann, Sabine Nessel, Michael Wedel (eds.): [Asta Nielsen, vol. 1: Unmögliche Liebe. Asta Nielsen, ihr Kino](#), Vienna 2009, 153–159, own translation.

<sup>9</sup> See Katharina Sykora: [Figurenspiele. Texte zum Film](#), Marburg 2013, 17–19.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Schebera: [Damals in Neubabelsberg...](#), 24–26.

# CONRAD VEIDT

When *Different from the Others* was released in 1919, the ensuing scandal was inevitable. Conrad Veidt (1893–1943) played a gay violinist who is convicted under Paragraph 175 and commits suicide. Richard Oswald's sex education movie was the first to deal with the subject of homosexuality—amid an absence of film censorship that lasted only one and a half years—and vigorously advocated for gay rights.<sup>1</sup> While Oswald had a box office success and Veidt was inundated with fan mail, right-wing extremists disrupted screenings with stink bombs and even live mice.<sup>2</sup> A pastor found that “the brazen claim” to equal rights of “these pathologically degenerate people” had to be fought off “by all means.”<sup>3</sup> The controversy was to become the central characteristic of Veidt's work. The characters he embodied in over 110 movies between 1916 and 1943 were often villains, eccentric and polarizing, mysterious and bizarre,<sup>4</sup> which is why he has been called the “demon of the screen.”<sup>5</sup> Veidt was a staunch opponent of National Socialism. With his Jewish wife, he emigrated to the United States via Great Britain. His movie *Jew Süss* (1934, directed by Lothar Mendes), the first one produced in British exile, is “a political statement,”<sup>6</sup> which, in contrast to the anti-Semitic hate movie *Jud Süß* (1940, directed by Veit Harlan), “did

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Helga Belach, Wolfgang Jacobsen: *Anders als die Andern* (1919). Dokumente zu einer Kontroverse, in: *CineGraph*. For more information on this, see the documentary *Queer Cinema: Eine Reise durch 100 Jahre deutschen Film* (2021, directed by Daniel Konhäuser), 01:04–05:08.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Pat Wilks Battle: Biography, in: John T. Soister: *Conrad Veidt on Screen. A Comprehensive Illustrated Filmography*, Jefferson, North Carolina 2002, 7–25, here 11.

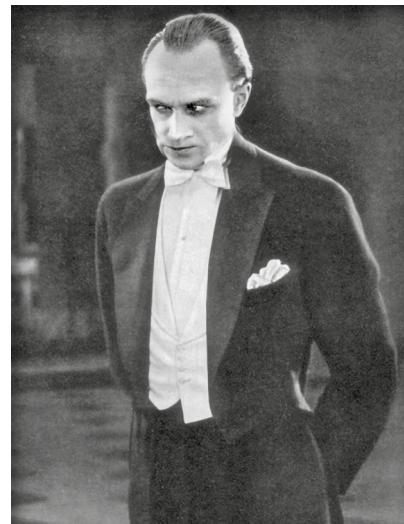
<sup>3</sup> Pastor Martin Cornils: *Ruf nach Zensur*, in: *Kieler Nachrichten*, Sep 7, 1919, own translation.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. anonymous: *Conrad Veidt*, in: *filmportal.de*.

<sup>5</sup> For example, in the title of a recent biography by Sabine Schwientek: *Dämon der Leinwand. Conrad Veidt und der deutsche Film 1894–1945*, Marburg 2019.

<sup>6</sup> Wolfgang Jacobsen: *Veidt, Hans Walter Conrad*, in: *Deutsche Biographie*, own translation.

not paint a racially distorted picture of Joseph Süß Oppenheimer.”<sup>7</sup> Conrad Veidt spent his life fighting bigotry and intolerance.<sup>8</sup> The Conrad Veidt Society, founded in California in 1990, carries on his “humanitarian legacy of treating all people—regardless of nationality, skin color, or religion—with respect without reservation.”<sup>9</sup>



<sup>7</sup> Anonymous: Conrad Veidt, in: *filmportal.de*, own translation. For more information on this, see Volker Baer: Der andere *Jud Süß*. Zu Lothar Mendes' Film aus dem Jahre 1934, in: *Der Tagespiegel*, Oct 20, 1973, reprinted in Ralf Schenk (ed.): *Worte Widerworte. Volker Baer. Texte zum Film 1959–2007*, Marburg 2009, 151–153.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Battle: Biography, 8.

<sup>9</sup> R. Peter Stens: Conrad Veidt Society, in: *Conrad Veidt Society*, own translation.

# EDUARD VON WINTERSTEIN



Eduard von Winterstein (1871–1961) was an outstanding master of adaptation. From the countless Berlin film studios, once derided as “a stomping ground of Afa, Befa, Cefa, Efa, etc.”<sup>1</sup> because of their similarity in name, he went to Ufa and later to DEFA, from Nazi to GDR film. He even excellently managed the transition from silent movies to talkies, which many actors failed to do. Winterstein spent 70 years on the theater stage<sup>2</sup> and 50 years in front of the movie camera. An obituary reads: “Eduard von Winterstein has outlasted the heyday, the great moments, and the crisis years of the theater, as well as generations of actors.”<sup>3</sup> Accordingly, his filmography includes over 240 entries.<sup>4</sup> As the leading actor in the DEFA movie *The Sonnenbrucks* (1951, directed by Georg C. Klaren), which was partly filmed in Potsdam, the “doyen of acting” won the Best Actor Award of the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival toward the end of his career.<sup>5</sup> In the 1950s, he was awarded the National Prize of the GDR three times,<sup>6</sup> and in 1955

<sup>1</sup> Alfred Polgar: *Berlin, Sommer 1922*, in: *Das Tage-Buch*, vol. 3, no. 29, Jul 22, 1922, 1031–1033, here 1032, own translation.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. anonymous: *70 Jahre auf der Bühne*, in: *Nordwest-Zeitung*, Oct 1, 1959.

<sup>3</sup> Anonymous: *Schauspieler Eduard von Winterstein gestorben. Der Älteste der alten Garde starb kurz vor seinem 90. Geburtstag*, in: *Nordwest-Zeitung*, Jul 25, 1961, own translation.

<sup>4</sup> See anonymous: *Eduard von Winterstein*, in: *IMDb*.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Frank-Burkhard Habel, Volker Wachter: *Lexikon der DDR-Stars. Schauspieler aus Film und Fernsehen*, Berlin 1999, 367.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. ibid.

the **Goethe** Prize in East Berlin.<sup>7</sup> In 1957, however, his appointment as an honorary member of the Deutsches Theater in Göttingen ended in a scandal: his award ceremony had to be canceled—because of many protests, “threatening statements,” and the accusation that “he had allowed himself to be used as a figurehead in the Soviet zone after the war.”<sup>8</sup> Shortly after that, the artistic director in charge was “sharply reprimanded” by the city council because the appointment was carried out without consultation.<sup>9</sup> Even if Winterstein’s “transformations” suggest an apolitical tenor, he consciously chose to live in the GDR, which he described as a “choice for the better.”<sup>10</sup> However, this also included film censorship interventions in various movies, such as *The Sonnenbrucks*.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Cf. anonymous: **Goethepreis für Annette Kolb**, in: *Nordwest-Zeitung*, Aug 29, 1955.

<sup>8</sup> Anonymous: **Hilpert sagt Ehrung für Winterstein ab**, in: *Nordwest-Zeitung*, Jan 11, 1957, own translation.

<sup>9</sup> Anonymous: **Rüge für Hilpert**, in: *BILD am SONNTAG*, Jan 20, 1957, own translation.

<sup>10</sup> See Eduard von Winterstein: **Wahl des Besseren**, in: *Neues Deutschland*, Jul 25, 1961, own translation.

<sup>11</sup> See Thomas Heimann: **Erinnerung als Wandlung: Kriegsbilder im frühen DDR-Film**, in: Martin Sabrow (ed.): *Geschichte als Herrschaftsdiskurs. Der Umgang mit der Vergangenheit in der DDR*, Cologne 2000, 37–85, here 42.



# ERICH ENGEL

The film career of the eminent theater director Erich Engel (1891–1966) began late and ended due to adverse circumstances. It was not until the introduction of sound at the end of the 1920s that he became interested in film, but then, he was completely hooked so that he directed movies exclusively between 1930 and 1935.<sup>1</sup> Under his artistic leadership, some of the most successful German comedies were produced in this period.<sup>2</sup> During the National Socialist regime, he directed entertainment movies.<sup>3</sup> In doing so, Engel, whose anti-Fascist and pro-Communist views were well known, cleverly escaped control by the Propaganda Ministry.<sup>4</sup> Despite some concessions to Nazi censorship, he succeeded in endowing his characters with individualism and free will.<sup>5</sup> In 1948, Engel settled old scores with Fascism: *The Blum Affair*, shot in Babelsberg, is DEFA's third coming-to-terms movie, which, unlike its emotionally charged predecessors, focuses not on the victims but—analytically and from a distance—on the perpetrators.<sup>6</sup> Based on a true story of a Jew falsely accused of murder, the movie uncovers the latent anti-Semitic social sentiment that paved the way to the Nazi dictatorship in the 1920s.<sup>7</sup> Although Engel received the National Prize of the GDR for *Blum*, he parted ways with the increasingly ideologizing DEFA in the early 1950s after several quarrels and defeats<sup>8</sup> and went to Hamburg. But

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hans-Michael Bock: [Erich Engel](#), in: [filmportal.de](#).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Ines Walk: [Erich Engel](#), in: [DEFA Foundation](#).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Liz-Anne Bawden, Wolfram Tichy (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon. Regisseure, Schauspieler, Kameraleute, Produzenten, Autoren* (vol. 4, Personen A–G), Reinbek bei Hamburg 1978, 951–952.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Walk: [Erich Engel](#).

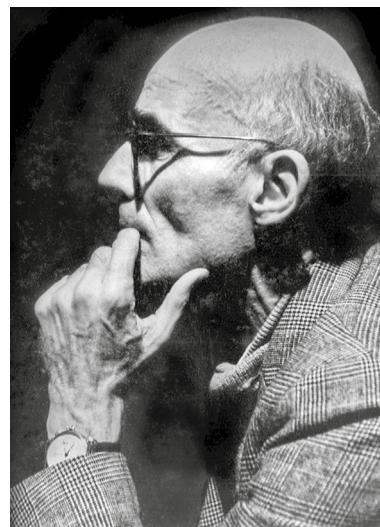
<sup>5</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Wolfgang Gersch: [Film in der DDR. Die verlorene Alternative](#), in: Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes, Hans Helmut Prinzler (eds.): *Geschichte des deutschen Films*, Stuttgart 1993, 323–364, here 328 and Dagmar Schittly: *Zwischen Regie und Regime. Die Filmpolitik der SED im Spiegel der DEFA-Produktionen*, Berlin 2002, 36 and 38.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Schittly: *Zwischen Regie und Regime*, 36–38.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 36 and 38, and Walk: [Erich Engel](#).

the streak of bad luck continued with various script and production problems in such a way that a colleague described him as “a tragic figure in the hands of the film managers.”<sup>9</sup> “The German film industry had no interesting tasks for a progressive director like Erich Engel,”<sup>10</sup> thus he turned his back on it after 25 years.



<sup>9</sup> The quote comes from the author **Hans Werner Richter** and is included in Michael Töteberg: “Eine tragische Figur in der Hand der Filmmanager.” Hamburger Episoden im Filmschaffen von Erich Engel, in: *Hamburger Flimmern*, no. 22, 2015, 38–43, here 43, own translation.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., own translation.



# ERICH POMMER



Erich Pommer (1889–1966) made film history. He produced world-famous classics such as *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920, directed by Robert Wiene), *Metropolis* (1927, directed by Fritz Lang), and *The Blue Angel* (1930, directed by Josef von Sternberg).<sup>1</sup> Around 1920, he pushed for the merger of small production companies, convinced that only large corporations were competitive in the world market.<sup>2</sup> Thus Decla, which he had founded, fused first into Bioscop and then into Ufa, with Pommer becoming its production manager.<sup>3</sup> Ufa's success in the early 1920s proved him right. But then, the production of *Metropolis* swallowed up four times the original budget, Ufa ran into financial difficulties,<sup>4</sup> and Pommer left for Hollywood.<sup>5</sup> After only one year, he was recruited back and from then on took care of the talkies' success.<sup>6</sup> The production of several language versions—*The Blue Angel*, for example, was shot in German and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Erich Pommer Institut: *Über uns. Erich Pommer*, in: *Erich Pommer Institut*.

<sup>2</sup> See Erich Pommer: *Bedeutung der Konzerne in der Filmindustrie*, in: *Das Tage-Buch*, vol. 1, no. 35, Sep 11, 1920, 1039–1041.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Liz-Anne Bawden, Wolfram Tichy (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon. Regisseure, Schauspieler, Kameraleute, Produzenten, Autoren* (vol. 5, Personen H–Q), Reinbek bei Hamburg 1978, 1267.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Friedemann Beyer: *Die Gesichter der UFA. Starportraits einer Epoche*, Munich 1992, 14 and 16.

<sup>5</sup> There are conflicting accounts as to whether his contract was not renewed or whether he resigned of his own accord; see, respectively, Wolfgang Jacobsen: *Pommer, Erich*, in: *Deutsche Biographie* and Anton Kaes, Nicholas Baer, Michael Cowan (eds.): *The Promise of Cinema. German Film Theory 1907–1933*, Oakland, California 2016, 314.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Kaes et al. (eds.): *The Promise of Cinema*, 314.

English<sup>7</sup>—made international sales possible, so that Pommer was able to realize his visions around 1930.<sup>8</sup> He contrived to resolve the opposition between art and commerce by focusing on “spectacular but artistically sophisticated film.”<sup>9</sup> Pommer participated creatively in his projects: he designed, for example, an inventive advertising campaign for *Caligari*<sup>10</sup> or added a happy ending in *The Last Laugh* (1924, directed by Friedrich W. Murnau) to make the movie more commercial.<sup>11</sup> In addition to a flair for creative collaboration, he possessed an “extraordinary gift for discovering talent.”<sup>12</sup> Being a Jew, he had to emigrate to the United States in 1933. After the war, Pommer was appointed as a film officer by the US Military Government and was responsible for reconstructing the German film industry.<sup>13</sup> At that time, he stated, “A suitable story, turned into a good and entertaining movie, played by German actors against a German background, can serve our goals more than the best propaganda or documentary movie.”<sup>14</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Anton Kaes: *Film in der Weimarer Republik. Motor der Moderne*, in: Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes, Hans Helmut Prinzler (eds.): *Geschichte des deutschen Films*, Stuttgart 1993, 38–100, here 96.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Kaes et al. (eds.): *The Promise of Cinema*, 314.

<sup>9</sup> Jacobsen: *Pommer, Erich*, own translation.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Ursula Hardt: *Erich Pommer: Film producer for Germany*, Ann Arbor 1989, 79–80.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Liz-Anne Bawden, Wolfram Tichy (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon. Filmbeispiele, Genres, Länder, Institutionen, Technik, Theorie* (vol. 2, Filme K–S), Reinbek bei Hamburg 1978, 384 and James C. Franklin: *Teaching Culture Through Film: Der letzte Mann*, in: *Die Unterrichtspraxis/Teaching German*, vol. 13, no. 1, 1980, 31–38, here 37.

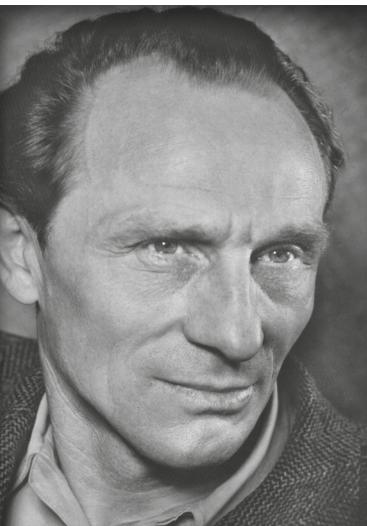
<sup>12</sup> Bawden et al. (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon* (vol. 5), 1267, own translation.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Jacobsen: *Pommer, Erich*.

<sup>14</sup> As cited in Fritz Göttler: *Westdeutscher Nachkriegsfilm. Land der Väter*, in: Jacobsen et al. (eds.): *Geschichte des deutschen Films*, 171–210, here 177, own translation.



# ERNST BUSCH



*So left, two, three!  
So left, two, three!  
To the work, that we must do.  
March on in the workers' united front,  
For you are a worker too.<sup>1</sup>*

The *Song of the United Front* (1934, *Einheitsfrontlied*), interpreted by Ernst Busch (1900–1980), is a workers' song. The singing of the labor movement's songs has been included in Germany's Intangible Cultural Heritage since 2014.<sup>2</sup> The battle songs, written with Bertolt Brecht (lyrics) and Hanns Eisler (music) in the “most creative trio of political art and agitation in Germany,”<sup>3</sup> were not aimed at commercial success—they were conceived as weapons in the class struggle.<sup>4</sup> The typical combination of philosophical arguments and catchy choruses<sup>5</sup> is characterized by clarity and aggression,<sup>6</sup> which Busch perfectly implemented “with a bright metallic and hard voice.”<sup>7</sup> The singer and actor’s mode of expression

<sup>1</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> International Brigade: *Battle-Songs*, Madrid 1937, 32.

<sup>2</sup> See anonymous: *Singing the Songs of the German Labour Movement. Nationwide Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage*, in: *German Commission for UNESCO*.

<sup>3</sup> Adolf Heinzlmeier, Berndt Schulz: *Lexikon der deutschen Film- und TV-Stars*, Berlin 2000, 58, own translation.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. David Robb: *Ernst Busch, Rio Reiser, and Gerhard Gundermann. Examples of Proletarian Narrative Role-Play in German Political Song*, in: *Lied und populäre Kultur/Song and Popular Culture*, vol. 60/61, 2015/2016, 227–245, here 229.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Margaret R. Jackson: *Workers, Unite! The Political Songs of Hanns Eisler, 1926–1932*, Tallahassee 2003, 16–17.

<sup>7</sup> Heinzlmeier et al.: *Lexikon der deutschen Film- und TV-Stars*, 58, own translation.

“was a mixture of genuine sorrow and sarcasm, irony, personified anger, and deliberately calculated lecturing.”<sup>8</sup> Ernst Busch was mainly seen in the cinema especially in the early 1930s. In 1932, he played in *Kuhle Wampe or Who Owns the World?* (directed by Slatan Dudow), the only Communist movie of the Weimar Republic.<sup>9</sup> Due to his political views, he went into exile in 1933—with stops in various countries, including Spain, where he performed in front of the Communist-led International Brigades during the Civil War in 1937–1938 and fought against the Fascists with his songs.<sup>10</sup> In 1940, he fell into their hands and, as a result, spent five years in various prisons. During this time, he failed in an escape attempt, suffered a severe head injury during an air raid that led to paralysis of the left side of his face, and only just evaded the death penalty when he was convicted of high treason.<sup>11</sup> Despite all these traumatic experiences, Busch knew only one direction throughout his life: forward. Accordingly, *Kuhle Wampe* ends with the *Solidarity Song* (*Solidaritätslied*) and its last lines:

*Forward, march on to power,  
Thru the city, the land, the world.  
Forward, advance the hour!  
Just whose city is the city?  
Just whose world is the world?*<sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., own translation.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Liz-Anne Bawden, Wolfram Tichy (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon. Filmbeispiele, Genres, Länder, Institutionen, Technik, Theorie* (vol. 2, Filme K–S), Reinbek bei Hamburg 1978, 373 and Gal Kirn: *Kuhle Wampe: Politics of Montage, De-montage of Politics?*, in: *Film-Philosophy*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2007, 33–48, here 33.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. anonymous: *Biografie*, in: *Ernst Busch-Gesellschaft*.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. ibid. and anonymous: *Ernst Busch*, in: *Gedenkstätte Deutscher Widerstand*.

<sup>12</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> International Brigade: *Battle-Songs*, 31.



# ERNST LUBITSCH

Ernst Lubitsch (1892–1947) was an all-rounder of cinematography. Shortly after starting out as an actor in 1913, he wrote screenplays, worked as a producer, directed, or performed several of these tasks at the same time.<sup>1</sup> With the historical costume movie *Madame DuBarry* (1919), shot mainly in Potsdam, the exceptional director helped “German film to achieve its first worldwide recognition”<sup>2</sup> and ... went to Hollywood. Over time, he worked there for four of the major studios known as the Big Five. “Through a choreographic direction of the characters, a dramatically well-considered editing technique, and a decorative effort,”<sup>3</sup> he succeeded in becoming one of Hollywood’s most sought-after directors. Lubitsch increased the value of comedy over drama,<sup>4</sup> professionalized and popularized it. He assumed that people did not want to see the seriousness of life, but glamor and glow,<sup>5</sup> and thus, he became a master of the art of distraction. To outwit film censorship, he developed a unique style called the ‘Lubitsch touch’—“an ironic technique of allusion, omission, and indirect commentary,”<sup>6</sup> which delighted audiences. With *To Be or Not to Be* (1942), he created one of the first movies to ridicule the Nazis. At that time, when the Nazi reign of terror was still in full force, this was an extremely dangerous undertaking.<sup>7</sup> By cleverly blurring reality and illusion,<sup>8</sup> Lubitsch was able to deconstruct Nazi power and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. anonymous: *Ernst Lubitsch*, in: *filmportal.de*.

<sup>2</sup> Heinrich Fraenkel: *Unsterblicher Film. Die große Chronik. Von der Laterna Magica bis zum Tonfilm*, Munich 1956, 97, own translation.

<sup>3</sup> Manfred Kreckel: *Lubitsch, Ernst*, in: *Deutsche Biographie*, own translation.

<sup>4</sup> See Artur Vieregg: “*Unvergleichlich schwerer*”: *Ernst Lubitsch zur Misere des Filmlustspiels*, in: *Lichtbild-Bühne*, vol. 12, no. 28, Jul 12, 1919.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Kreckel: *Lubitsch, Ernst*.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., own translation.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Liz-Anne Bawden, Wolfram Tichy (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon. Filmbeispiele, Genres, Länder, Institutionen, Technik, Theorie* (vol. 3, Filme T–Z), Reinbek bei Hamburg 1978, 669.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Gerd Gemünden: *Space out of Joint: Ernst Lubitsch’s To Be or Not to Be*, in: *New German Critique*, no. 89, 2003, 59–80, here 64.

make contemporary US viewers aware of Hollywood's role in the fight against Hitler.<sup>9</sup> Despite all this, the then critics attacked *To Be or Not to Be* for "making fun of a serious subject."<sup>10</sup> From today's perspective, the well-worth-watching comedy is "possibly Lubitsch's most famous and most popular work."<sup>11</sup>



<sup>9</sup> Cf. ibid., 80.

<sup>10</sup> Anonymous: [Ernst Lubitsch](#), in: [filmportal.de](#), own translation.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., own translation. See also Deutsches Filmmuseum: [To Be or Not to Be](#), in: [filmportal.de](#).



# FRIEDRICH W. MURNAU

Friedrich W. Murnau (1888–1931), born Friedrich Wilhelm Plumpe, was a soft-spoken individual. He was a “spiritual man”<sup>1</sup> who expressed disapproval of his parents who condemned his homosexuality by using the pseudonym Murnau from 1909.<sup>2</sup> In a similar fashion, he had “quite inconspicuously [...] proved to be one of the most important directors in Europe.”<sup>3</sup> In contrast to many of his colleagues, he loved the “variety in the choice of his projects.”<sup>4</sup> With *Nosferatu, a Symphony of Horror* (1922), he directed the very first vampire movie.<sup>5</sup> With *Phantom* (1922), shot in Babelsberg, he filmed the feuilleton novel of the same name by Gerhart Hauptmann,<sup>6</sup> and he brought Goethe’s *Faust* (1926) to the screen in a loose interpretation.<sup>7</sup> In doing so, he did not feed his artistic aspirations from literary models and did not borrow from the theater, but rather drew from the cinematic means themselves.<sup>8</sup> Friedrich W. Murnau was very fastidious in choosing his collaborators<sup>9</sup> and therefore worked with the best artists.<sup>10</sup> It is thus hardly surprising that with *The Last Laugh* (1924), also shot in

<sup>1</sup> Heinrich Fraenkel: *Unsterblicher Film. Die große Chronik. Von der Laterna Magica bis zum Tonfilm*, Munich 1956, 156, own translation.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. anonymous: [F. W. Murnau](#), in: [filmportal.de](#).

<sup>3</sup> Fraenkel: *Unsterblicher Film*, 156, own translation.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 157, own translation.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Liz-Anne Bawden, Wolfram Tichy (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon. Filmbeispiele, Genres, Länder, Institutionen, Technik, Theorie* (vol. 2, Filme K–S), Reinbek bei Hamburg 1978, 463 and Stacey Abbott: *Celluloid Vampires. Life After Death in the Modern World*, Austin, Texas 2007, 44–45.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. anonymous: [Phantom](#), in: [filmportal.de](#).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Anton Kaes: *Film in der Weimarer Republik. Motor der Moderne*, in: Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes, Hans Helmut Prinzler (eds.): *Geschichte des deutschen Films*, Stuttgart 1993, 38–100, here 91.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. ibid., 54.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Fraenkel: *Unsterblicher Film*, 156.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Liz-Anne Bawden, Wolfram Tichy (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon. Regisseure, Schauspieler, Kameraleute, Produzenten, Autoren* (vol. 5, Personen H–Q), Reinbek bei Hamburg 1978, 1218.

Babelsberg, he and his team produced “one of the most interesting and courageous movies of the silent era.”<sup>11</sup> The movie depicts—without conventional intertitles, with a previously unknown moving camera, and a daring happy ending—the social decline of an aging doorman who is demoted to a washroom attendant and, most importantly, stripped of his self-esteem-boosting uniform.<sup>12</sup> *The Last Laugh* paved Murnau’s path to Hollywood, where he had relocated in 1926 but he was killed in a car accident after five years and four movies.<sup>13</sup> Only a few people went to his funeral because of the accusation that he was supposed to have caused the accident himself as a result of having sexually satisfied his driver: this was later proved to have been just a rumor.<sup>14</sup>



<sup>11</sup> Fraenkel: *Unsterblicher Film*, 157, own translation.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Kaes: *Film in der Weimarer Republik*, 57–58 and Bawden et al. (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon* (vol. 2), 384.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Bawden et al. (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon* (vol. 2), 384 and ibid. (vol. 5), 1219.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Daryl Chin: *Murnau, Friedrich Wilhelm (1888–1931)*, in: *glbtqarchive.com* and Kenneth Anger: *Hollywood Babylon*, London 1986, 172.



# FRITZ LANG

Some 310 shooting days and 60 shooting nights, 8 main roles and 750 smaller roles, 36,000 extras, including 750 children, and an additional 1,100 unemployed who were willing to have their heads shaved by 150 specially hired hairdressers<sup>1</sup>—the “überfilm”<sup>2</sup> *Metropolis* (1927), directed by Fritz Lang (1890–1976), exceeded all bounds. Even today’s *Marlene Dietrich* Hall on the Studio Babelsberg lot, then called the Great Hall, being the largest film studio in Europe, was built in 1926 specifically for this purpose.<sup>3</sup> The production nearly drove Ufa to financial ruin,<sup>4</sup> but the dystopian vision of a futuristic metropolis in which the working class is driven by machines and ruled by the rich went down in film history as a cinematic architectural milestone.<sup>5</sup> The sensational artistic success of the science fiction genre’s “first major fear projection”<sup>6</sup> resonates to this day in numerous works inspired by it.<sup>7</sup> Fritz Lang was a perfectionist. For him, “the supreme law was that one must be deeply obsessed and moved by a creation, by one’s work itself.”<sup>8</sup> In addition to *Metropolis*, the “most imaginative

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Heinrich Fraenkel: *Unsterblicher Film. Die große Chronik. Von der Laterna Magica bis zum Tonfilm*, Munich 1956, 203.

<sup>2</sup> Anton Kaes: *Film in der Weimarer Republik. Motor der Moderne*, in: Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes, Hans Helmut Prinzler (eds.): *Geschichte des deutschen Films*, Stuttgart 1993, 38–100, here 64.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. anonymous: *Alles bewegt sich: Babelsberg in der Weimarer Republik*, in: *filmportal.de*.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Friedemann Beyer: *Die Gesichter der UFA. Starportraits einer Epoche*, Munich 1992, 14 and 16.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Kaes: *Film in der Weimarer Republik*, 64–65 and Liz-Anne Bawden, Wolfram Tichy (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon. Filmbeispiele, Genres, Länder, Institutionen, Technik, Theorie* (vol. 2, Filme K–S), Reinbek bei Hamburg 1978, 413.

<sup>6</sup> Bawden et al. (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon* (vol. 2), 584, own translation.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Kaes: *Film in der Weimarer Republik*, 65.

<sup>8</sup> The quotation comes from Lang himself (1924) and is included in Norbert Grob: *Fritz Lang. „Ich bin ein Augenmensch.“ Die Biographie*, Berlin 2014, 7, own translation.

film director [...] in the era of the Weimar Republic”<sup>9</sup> realized other masterpieces of German silent cinema, such as *Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler* (1922) or *Die Nibelungen* (1924), but he was also able to shine with his first talkie *M* (1931). Joseph Goebbels is said to have offered him “to become a kind of Reich artistic director”<sup>10</sup> in 1933, but Lang refused<sup>11</sup> and emigrated—without his wife, Thea von Harbou, with whom he had written countless screenplays but who was close to National Socialism—via France to the United States, where he was able to continue his career successfully.<sup>12</sup> Despite all of his innovative power and adaptation to a new language and different genres, he remained true to himself in theme, style, and craftsmanship.<sup>13</sup> However, perfectionism had its price: Fritz Lang was notorious for his “sadistic behavior”<sup>14</sup> on the set.



<sup>9</sup> Rolf Badenhausen: *Lang, Fritz*, in: *Deutsche Biographie*, own translation.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., own translation.

<sup>11</sup> For more information on this, see Gösta Werner: *Fritz Lang and Goebbels. Myth and Facts*, in: *Film Quarterly*, vol. 43, no. 3, 1990, 24–27.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Liz-Anne Bawden, Wolfram Tichy (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon. Regisseure, Schauspieler, Kameraleute, Produzenten, Autoren* (vol. 5, Personen H–Q), Reinbek bei Hamburg 1978, 1128–1129.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Patrick McGilligan: *Fritz Lang. The Nature of the Beast*, New York 1997, 1.



# GUIDO SEEBER

The first name that comes up when the film city of Potsdam's story is told is Guido Seeber (1879–1940).<sup>1</sup> As the technical director of the Bioscop film company, he recognized the site of today's Studio Babelsberg as an ideal location for the production of movies.<sup>2</sup> In 1911, he laid the foundation stone for the current media city by overseeing the construction of a glass studio.<sup>3</sup> Seeber also worked as a cinematographer<sup>4</sup> for Bioscop and shot the first movie made in *Babelsberg*—*The Dance to Death* (1912, directed by Urban Gad) with Asta Nielsen.<sup>5</sup> Thanks to the invention of “groundbreaking camera tricks,”<sup>6</sup> the “strong light and shadow effects”<sup>7</sup> he created, and his “artistic imagination,”<sup>8</sup> he made a significant contribution to establishing film as an art form in the years that followed. Guido Seeber was also one of the first to understand that film and cinema have a history that must be preserved. The new medium was only 30 years old when he already advocated the “establishment of a proper cinematographic museum.”<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., Film Museum Potsdam (ed.): *Babelsberg. Gesichter einer Filmstadt*, Berlin 2005, 12.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Guido Seeber: Als Babelsberg entstand, in: *Filmtechnik Filmkunst*, vol. 1930, no. 3, reprinted in Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek (ed.): *Das wandernde Bild. Der Filmpionier Guido Seeber*, Berlin 1979, 58–63, here 58–60 and Michael Wedel: The Beginnings (1912–1921), in: Michael Wedel, Chris Wahl, Ralf Schenk (eds.): *100 Years Studio Babelsberg. The Art of Filmmaking*, Kempen 2012, 234–251, here 238.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Seeber: Als Babelsberg entstand, 60–62 and Wedel: The Beginnings, 238 and 240.

<sup>4</sup> On Seeber's work as a cinematographer, see, e.g., Guido Seeber: Kameramannes Leiden, in: *Film-Kurier*, vol. 1925, no. 118, 129, 141, supplement “Kinotechnische Rundschau,” reprinted in Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek (ed.): *Das wandernde Bild*, 119–122.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Wedel: The Beginnings, 240.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 244.

<sup>7</sup> Jerzy Toeplitz: *Geschichte des Films* (vol. 1, 1985–1928, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), Berlin 1979, 175, own translation.

<sup>8</sup> Erich Zeiske: *Unsere Künstler*, Berlin 1913, 13, as cited in Wedel: The Beginnings, 244.

<sup>9</sup> Guido Seeber in 1925, as cited in Iris Zoe Schlepfer, Katharina Störrle: Der Film entdeckt seine Geschichtlichkeit. Die “Kino- und Photo-Ausstellung” (KIPHO) 1925 in Berlin,

He laid the groundwork for this with the exhibition *On the History of the Living Photograph (Zur Geschichte des lebenden Lichtbildes)*,<sup>10</sup> which he put together in 1925 for a highly attended trade fair<sup>11</sup> of the German cinema industry.<sup>12</sup> Film technology, biographies of film pioneers, and exhibits on early screenings of films gave the audience an understanding of how excellently the new art form had developed.<sup>13</sup> The cinematographic museum is one of the few projects that Seeber was not able to realize,<sup>14</sup> and yet, there is a tie between him and contemporary museal practices: as he himself is an essential part of film history, the Film Museum Potsdam commemorates Guido Seeber's contributions to the film city of Potsdam's founding and its artistic reputation in the permanent exhibition *The Dream Factory: 100 Years of Film in Babelsberg*.



in: Rolf Aurich, Ralf Forster (eds.): *Wie der Film unsterblich wurde. Vorakademische Filmwissenschaft in Deutschland*, Munich 2015, 101–109, here 107, own translation.

<sup>10</sup> For more information on this, see A. Kossowsky: Rundgang durch die Kiphö. Die historische Ausstellung, in: *Film-Kurier*, vol. 1925, no. 233, reprinted in Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek (ed.): *Das wandernde Bild*, 148–149 and anonymous: Der Schlager der Kiphö, in: *Korrespondenz für Wissenschaft und Technik im Film*, vol. 1925, no. 13, reprinted in *ibid.*, 148. Cf. Schlepfer et al.: Der Film entdeckt seine Geschichtlichkeit, 103.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 106.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Rolf Aurich, Ralf Forster: Vom Werden der Filmgeschichte in Deutschland: eine Einführung, in: Rolf Aurich, Ralf Forster (eds.): *Wie der Film unsterblich wurde*, 17–25, here 19.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Schlepfer et al.: Der Film entdeckt seine Geschichtlichkeit, 104.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Ulrich Döge: Ein verlorener Schatz. Das LBB-Archiv von Karl Wolffsohn, in: Aurich et al. (eds.): *Wie der Film unsterblich wurde*, 42–48, here 44.



# GÜNTHER SIMON

“Unforgotten ‘Thälmann,’”<sup>1</sup> was the headline of an obituary for the actor Günther Simon (1925–1972). In this and in other obituaries, it was clear that he would be remembered by an audience of millions as *Ernst Thälmann*.<sup>2</sup> As a result, the authors highlighted what Simon tried in vain for two decades to resolve: the primary association of himself with the portrayal of the Communist murdered by the National Socialists in the DEFA two-parter *Ernst Thälmann* (1954; 1955, directed by *Kurt Maetzig*). Simon delighted the SED leaders at the premiere<sup>3</sup> because, in their view, he had done everything right. Not least because of his particular acting style, the movie follows Socialist realism—and thus, the guideline issued at the SED’s first film conference (1952).<sup>4</sup> Simon gives the prime example of the positive hero, “who, with his fist thrust forward and his eyes prophetically fixed on the future, knows without fail how to make the right decisions.”<sup>5</sup> The showcase project earned him several national and international awards as well as roles in more than 60 film and television productions,<sup>6</sup> but at the same time, he was pinned down to play class-struggle worker heroes.<sup>7</sup> The Socialist showcase star was rarely allowed subversive or controversial

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Unvergessener “Thälmann.” Zum Tode des Schauspielers Günther Simon*, in: *Neue Zeit*, Jun 28, 1972

<sup>2</sup> Cf. anonymous: *Günther Simon gestorben*, in: *Neues Deutschland*, Jun 26, 1972 and anonymous: *Genosse Günther Simon. Nachruf des Zentralkomitees*, in: *Neues Deutschland*, Jun 27, 1972.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. anonymous: *Dank allen Künstlern und Mitarbeitern. Vom Empfang beim Präsidenten*, in: *Neues Deutschland*, Mar 11, 1954 and anonymous: *Festlicher Empfang der Regierung. Hohe Gäste im Hause der Ministerien*, in: *Neues Deutschland*, Oct 8, 1955.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Ulrich Gregor, Enno Patalas: *Geschichte des Films*, Munich 1973, 400 and Politbüro des Zentralkomitees der SED: *Der Film ist die wichtigste aller Kunstarten*, in: *Berliner Zeitung*, Jul 29, 1952.

<sup>5</sup> Gregor et al.: *Geschichte des Films*, 401, own translation.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. anonymous: *Günther Simon*, in: *filmportal.de*.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Ines Walk: *Günther Simon*, in: *DEFA Foundation*.

interpretations of his roles.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, he tried again and again to escape the limited role options.<sup>9</sup> Of all movies, *Sun Seekers* (directed by Konrad Wolf), in which Simon was able to create one of his most differentiated characters shortly after his *Thälmann* success, was banned and not released until 1972, instead of 1958 as planned—three months after his death. Perhaps Günther Simon would have managed to have a more versatile career if the movie had been allowed to premiere before the momentous formation of his Thälmann image.



<sup>8</sup> Cf. Sebastian Heiduschke: *East German Cinema. DEFA and Film History*, New York 2013, 29.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Walk: [Günther Simon](#).



# HANS ALBERS



Hans Albers (1891–1960) became etched into cultural memory as *Baron Munchhausen* (1943, directed by Josef von Baky). For contemporary film critics, he was the epitome of “masculinity,”<sup>1</sup> the “archetype of a folk hero”<sup>2</sup> who victoriously confronts every danger with “peppiness”<sup>3</sup> and, in doing so, remains “pert” and “neat.”<sup>4</sup> His characters “[treat] women like underage children who, fortunately, are finally met by a man with overview, strength, and experience.”<sup>5</sup> But before his career as a gentleman,<sup>6</sup> Albers was known to Berlin theater audiences as a boyish “sweet-tempered lover”<sup>7</sup> and had played mainly burglars and elegant villains in countless silent movies.<sup>8</sup> In 1922, as *Lumpaci the Vagabond* (directed by Carl Wilhelm), he was still far from the image of a humdinger.<sup>9</sup> With his stature rather gangly, he bounced

<sup>1</sup> Siegfried Kracauer: Ein feiner Kerl. Analyse eines Ufa-Films, in: *Frankfurter Zeitung*, Oct 10, 1931, as cited in Siegfried Kracauer: *Von Caligari zu Hitler. Eine psychologische Geschichte des deutschen Films*, Frankfurt 1984, 505–507, here 506, own translation.

<sup>2</sup> Siegfried Kracauer: Zwei große Filmpremieren, in: *Frankfurter Zeitung*, Nov 28, 1932, as cited in ibid., 563–567, here 567, own translation.

<sup>3</sup> Siegfried Kracauer: Der weiße Dämon, in: *Frankfurter Zeitung*, Jan 29, 1932, as cited in ibid., 562–563, here 563, own translation.

<sup>4</sup> Siegfried Kracauer: Berliner Filmchronik, in: *Frankfurter Zeitung*, Jan 6, 1931, as cited in ibid., 473–474, here 473, own translation.

<sup>5</sup> Bärbel Dalichow: Hans Albers. Ein Bild von einem Mann, in: Film Museum Potsdam (ed.): *Hans Albers. Ein Leben in Bildern*, Berlin 1997, 7–15, here 13, own translation.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Kracauer: Ein feiner Kerl, 506.

<sup>7</sup> Rudolf Arnheim: Hans Albers, in: *Die Weltbühne*, vol. 27, no. 36, Sep 8, 1931, 383–384, here 383, own translation.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Kracauer: *Von Caligari zu Hitler*, 223.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Siegfried Kracauer: Die verflossene Tonfilmsaison, in: *Die neue Rundschau*, vol. 42, no. 8, 1931, as cited in ibid., 462–465, here 465.

and jumped happily through the fairy-tale movie. It was not until the late 1920s that Ufa systematically portrayed Hans Albers as a broad-chested hero, especially for the emerging talkies.<sup>10</sup> From the beginning, he used the new possibilities of sound to give his heroic characters an extraordinary habitus: “He didn’t purely speak his lines, he mumbled consolation noises, he scattered unintelligible stuff between the lines, all kinds of acoustic sweepings, half words, little sighs, satisfied humming.”<sup>11</sup> His ability to turn script pages into improvised and natural-sounding speech is one of the reasons why audiences and critics loved him,<sup>12</sup> but also why he didn’t leave the country like others to escape working for the Nazi film. Ufa would have liked to cast Albers in English versions of his movies, but the results were not convincing.<sup>13</sup> He was not able to act as well in a foreign language.<sup>14</sup> He also knew that he could not take his natural style of speech with him into exile—he would have lost his unique hero type there.<sup>15</sup> Hans Albers eventually committed himself to a “complex combination of adaptation and rejection” and became the “biggest star of a system whose representatives he despised.”<sup>16</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Chris Wahl: *Multiple Language Versions Made in BABELsberg. Ufa’s International Strategy, 1929–1939*, Amsterdam 2016, 82–90.

<sup>11</sup> Arnheim: Hans Albers, 384, own translation. Cf. Willy Fritsch: *... das kommt nicht wieder. Erinnerungen eines Filmschauspielers*, Zurich 1963, 104, as cited in Michaela Krützen: *Hans Albers. Eine deutsche Karriere*, Weinheim 1995, 80.

<sup>12</sup> For more information on this, see Krützen: *Hans Albers*, 86–94. Cf. Dalichow: Hans Albers, 7.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Wahl: *Multiple Language Versions Made in BABELsberg*, 90–101.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 96.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 98.

<sup>16</sup> Krützen: *Hans Albers*, 241, own translation.



# HERTHA THIELE



What if...? The life of the highly skilled actress Hertha Thiele (1908–1984)<sup>1</sup> can be aptly reflected by this question. In her film debut, *Mädchen in Uniform* (1931), she played a highly sensitive officer's daughter who, after her mother's death, is sent by her aunt to an all-girl boarding school riddled with “tyrannical discipline,”<sup>2</sup> falls in love with her young female teacher, and nearly perishes as a result. Written by a lesbian author (*Christa Winsloe*), directed by a woman (*Leontine Sagan*), and cast exclusively with women,<sup>3</sup> the movie subtly interweaves the schoolgirls' rebellion against repressive educational methods with the emancipation of same-sex love.<sup>4</sup> The homoerotic attraction is so ambiguous due to the different ideas of the filmmakers<sup>5</sup> that contemporary critics ignored it completely,<sup>6</sup> a film encyclopedia dismissed it as a misunderstanding in the mid-1970s,<sup>7</sup> while, at the same time, a lesbian magazine proclaimed

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Friedemann Beyer: *Die Gesichter der UFA. Starportraits einer Epoche*, Munich 1992, 136.

<sup>2</sup> Liz-Anne Bawden, Wolfram Tichy (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon. Filmbeispiele, Genres, Länder, Institutionen, Technik, Theorie* (vol. 2, Filme K–S), Reinbek bei Hamburg 1978, 394, own translation.

<sup>3</sup> For more information on this, see the documentary *Queer Cinema: Eine Reise durch 100 Jahre deutschen Film* (2021, directed by Daniel Konhäuser), 05:08–06:58.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Anton Kaes: *Film in der Weimarer Republik. Motor der Moderne*, in: Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes, Hans Helmut Prinzler (eds.): *Geschichte des deutschen Films*, Stuttgart 1993, 38–100, here 94.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Heide Schlüpmann, Karola Gramann: *Momente erotischer Utopie—ästhetisierte Verdrängung. Zu Mädchen in Uniform und Anna und Elisabeth*, in: *Frauen und Film*, no. 28, 1981, 28–47, here 30.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 32.

<sup>7</sup> See Bawden et al. (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon* (vol. 2), 394.

the movie, shot in Potsdam, as the first lesbian production<sup>8</sup> and subsequently turned it into a cult film.<sup>9</sup> Hertha Thiele, however, with her “boyish body coupled with a Madonna-like face,”<sup>10</sup> was stylized throughout her film work as a love object for women—from the outside world and without any interest of her own.<sup>11</sup> Not only did this prevent her from fully exploiting her talent;<sup>12</sup> but also, after only 11 roles, her prolific career came to an end in 1933 when she refused to star in a Nazi propaganda movie, which is why the Nazis eventually banned her from the profession.<sup>13</sup> Thiele strongly rejected Joseph Goebbels’s previous ingratiations, called the Nazi rise to power “an error of the German people,” separated from her husband because he cooperated with the Nazis, and went into exile.<sup>14</sup> Professionally, she would never recover from this.<sup>15</sup> What if—instead of the Nazi era—emancipation had succeeded?<sup>16</sup>

<sup>8</sup> See Janet Meyers: *Dyke Goes to the Movies*, in: *DYKE*, no. 2, 1976, 37–38.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Schlüpmann et al.: *Momente erotischer Utopie—ästhetisierte Verdrängung*, 28 and 32.

<sup>10</sup> Adolf Heinzlmeier, Berndt Schulz: *Lexikon der deutschen Film- und TV-Stars*, Berlin 2000, 347, own translation.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Schlüpmann et al.: *Momente erotischer Utopie—ästhetisierte Verdrängung*, 30.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Kerstin Kollecker: *Thiele, Hertha*, in: *leipzig.de*, 2017.

<sup>14</sup> For more information on this, see Karola Gramann, Heide Schlüpmann: *Gegenbewegung. Hertha Thieles Emigration*, in: *Frauen und Film*, no. 26, 1980, 17–21; the quotation is on page 18, own translation.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Heinzlmeier et al.: *Lexikon der deutschen Film- und TV-Stars*, 347.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Schlüpmann et al.: *Momente erotischer Utopie—ästhetisierte Verdrängung*, 31.



# KONRAD WOLF



Many of his colleagues called him Koni<sup>1</sup> and still tell us today how deeply working with him was characterized by the feeling of security. Konrad Wolf (1925–1982) had always been concentrated, quiet, and almost taciturn, but not without humor.<sup>2</sup> He had succeeded in evoking this “mental concentration” in the team members as well, whom he motivated to always look for something that could be improved.<sup>3</sup> In this working atmosphere, 14 movies were made. Many of them are biographically influenced: in 1933, Wolf emigrated from Germany to the Soviet Union with his family, volunteered for the Red Army, and participated in the liberation of Berlin as a lieutenant.<sup>4</sup> The movies he directed in the GDR, his adopted homeland, sparked social debates because they addressed Fascism and war, contradictions in Socialist reality, and the struggle to make political decisions.<sup>5</sup> Konrad Wolf was able to realize such differentiated movies because, as a Communist and influential cultural official, endowed with the closest ties to the GDR’s Main Directorate for Reconnaissance,<sup>6</sup> he cultivated

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ingrid Poss, Peter Warnecke (eds.): *Spur der Filme. Zeitzeugen über die DEFA* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Berlin 2006, 238 and 274.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. ibid., 235, 237, 278, and 296–298.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 298, own translation.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. anonymous: **Konrad Wolf**, in: *filmportal.de*.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Rolf Richter: Konrad Wolf. Geschichte und Gegenwart, in: Rolf Richter (ed.): *DEFA-Spielfilm-Regisseure und ihre Kritiker* (vol. 2), Berlin 1983, 250–287, here 251.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. anonymous: **Konrad Wolf**, in: *filmportal.de*.

a privileged relationship with the SED and its institutions.<sup>7</sup> However, this could not save him from censorship conflicts and could not prevent his movie *Sun Seekers* (1958; 1972) from being banned for 14 years.<sup>8</sup> Wolf's unavoidable agreement with the SED's policies<sup>9</sup> did not lead to "unrestricted conformity."<sup>10</sup> He wanted to see film in the service of building a better Socialist world, but at the same time called for a more open and critical discussion of filmmaking in the GDR.<sup>11</sup> Likewise, he actively supported his colleagues and their movies.<sup>12</sup> His elaborate artist's portrait *Goya* (1971) is considered an allegory<sup>13</sup> of an artist's external and internal conflicts "between honesty and calculation, conscience and power, art and politics, truth and reason of state."<sup>14</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Matthias Braun: Konrad Wolf—legendärer Präsident der Akademie der Künste der DDR zwischen "Kahlschlag-Plenum" und "Berliner Begegnung," in: Michael Wedel, Elke Schieber (eds.): *Konrad Wolf. Werk und Wirkung*, Berlin 2009, 189–211, here 208.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Ulrich Gregor, Enno Patalas: *Geschichte des Films*, Munich 1973, 402 and Poss et al. (eds.): *Spur der Filme*, 130.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Braun: Konrad Wolf, 192.

<sup>10</sup> Wolfgang Mühl-Benninghaus: "Konrad, der macht sich einen Kopf für zwei Völker und zwei Staaten." Zur Publizistik von Konrad Wolf, in: Wedel et al. (eds.): *Konrad Wolf*, 213–221, here 218, own translation.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. ibid., 219–220.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Larson Powell: *The Films of Konrad Wolf. Archive of the Revolution*, Rochester, New York 2020, 158.

<sup>14</sup> Helmut Pfügl: Goya im Film. Leben und Werk des Malers in den Goya-Filmen von Konrad Wolf und Carlos Saura, in: Wedel et al. (eds.): *Konrad Wolf*, 247–261, here 258, own translation.



# OSKAR MEßTER



When he wanted to get permission to film imperial celebrations in early 1897, Oskar Meßter (1866–1943) was “sent from pillar to post,” because a license was available for the cameras of newspaper photographers but not for Meßter’s “infernal machine,” as he called his camera.<sup>1</sup> A few months earlier, on June 15, 1896, the optician—as he was by profession—sold his first cinema projector to a Russian showman; this date is considered the beginning of the German film industry.<sup>2</sup> In the same year, the “undoubtedly most important German film pioneer”<sup>3</sup> opened an artificial light studio in Berlin’s Friedrichstraße<sup>4</sup> and founded a film production company.<sup>5</sup> His competitors quickly recognized the advantages of a studio— independence from the weather and manipulation of light—and followed suit.<sup>6</sup> Meßter’s first production company had some successors, including the separation of cinema technology and film production in 1913, until

<sup>1</sup> See Wolfgang Jacobsen: *Frühgeschichte des deutschen Films. Licht am Ende des Tunnels*, in: Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes, Hans Helmut Prinzler (eds.): *Geschichte des deutschen Films*, Stuttgart 1993, 13–37, here 22, own translation.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. anonymous: *Oskar Meßter*, in: *filmportal.de* and Ursula Saekel: *Der US-Film in der Weimarer Republik—ein Medium der “Amerikanisierung”? Deutsche Filmwirtschaft, Kulturpolitik und mediale Globalisierung im Fokus transatlantischer Interessen*, Paderborn 2011, 133.

<sup>3</sup> Corinna Müller: *Frühe deutsche Kinematographie. Formale, wirtschaftliche und kulturelle Entwicklungen 1907–1912*, Stuttgart 1994, 8, own translation.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Jacobsen: *Frühgeschichte des deutschen Films*, 24.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Liz-Anne Bawden, Wolfram Tichy (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon. Regisseure, Schauspieler, Kameraleute, Produzenten, Autoren* (vol. 5, Personen H–Q), Reinbek bei Hamburg 1978, 1199.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Jacobsen: *Frühgeschichte des deutschen Films*, 26.

his companies merged in 1917 into Ufa, of which he was one of the founders.<sup>7</sup> Between 1896 and 1921, he produced more than 950 movies,<sup>8</sup> many of them short movies of the early days of cinema, and shaped some stars, such as [Henny Porten](#).<sup>9</sup> The inventive spirit of Oskar Meßter was immense. In addition to his more than 100 patents,<sup>10</sup> including, for example, shooting from a moving train,<sup>11</sup> the “eager experimenter” developed the close-up, the time lapse,<sup>12</sup> the colored film (by hand or with stencils)<sup>13</sup> and, in particular, the so-called *Tonbilder* (sound pictures), in which he synchronized the projector with the phonograph.<sup>14</sup> Even if the *Tonbilder*, which were also produced in [Babelsberg](#), ultimately remained only an episode between 1903 and 1913,<sup>15</sup> the documentary street scenes in front of the Brandenburg Gate in his first recording form the origin of the documentary film.<sup>16</sup> And if you watch weekly news today: this, too, is Meßter’s invention.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Cf. ibid., 24 and Bawden et al. (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon* (vol. 5), 1200.

<sup>8</sup> See filmography in anonymous: [Oskar Messter](#), in: [filmportal.de](#).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Heinrich Fraenkel: *Unsterblicher Film. Die große Chronik. Von der Laterna Magica bis zum Tonfilm*, Munich 1956, 68 and 81.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Eberhard Spiess: [Messter, Oskar](#), in: *Deutsche Biographie*.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Jacobsen: [Frühgeschichte des deutschen Films](#), 24.

<sup>12</sup> Bawden et al. (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon* (vol. 5), 1200, own translation.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Jacobsen: [Frühgeschichte des deutschen Films](#), 24.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. ibid., 19.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. ibid., 20 and Albert Narath: Oskar Messter and His Work, in: Raymond Fielding (ed.): *A Technological History of Motion Pictures and Television*, Berkeley, California 1979, 109–117, here 115.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Klaus Kreimeier: [Dokumentarfilm, 1892–1992. Ein doppeltes Dilemma](#), in: Jacobsen et al. (eds.): [Geschichte des deutschen Films](#), 391–416, here 393.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Bawden et al. (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon* (vol. 5), 1200.



# PAUL WEGENER



The screenwriter, director, and actor Paul Wegener (1874–1948) loved the fantastic. In contrast to many of his theater colleagues, he recognized very early the artistic possibilities of film, especially for depicting the mystical and demonic.<sup>1</sup> In his first film role, he appeared as *The Student of Prague* (1913, directed by Stellan Rye), who sells his mirror image to the devil and causes mischief.<sup>2</sup> Partly shot in Babelsberg, the movie was the first one to use the doppelganger motif<sup>3</sup> and is today considered one of the first artistically significant feature movies.<sup>4</sup> Wegener not only cowrote the script but also shaped the movie's supernatural aesthetics.<sup>5</sup> He believed that film technique must influence the choice of content and thus argued for a “kinetic lyricism.”<sup>6</sup> In his subsequent movies, he was to remain faithful to the fantastic genre.<sup>7</sup> He formed an image of the ‘exotic,’ embodying Far Eastern heroes,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Liz-Anne Bawden, Wolfram Tichy (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon. Regisseure, Schauspieler, Kameraleute, Produzenten, Autoren* (vol. 6, Personen R–Z), Reinbek bei Hamburg 1978, 1450.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Liz-Anne Bawden, Wolfram Tichy (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon. Filmbeispiele, Genres, Länder, Institutionen, Technik, Theorie* (vol. 2, Filme K–S), Reinbek bei Hamburg 1978, 638 and Paul Wegener: *Die künstlerischen Möglichkeiten des Films* (Vortrag 1916), in: *filmportal.de*, 9.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Christina Hoor: *Paul Wegener 1874–1948*, in: *Lebendiges Museum Online*, Sep 14, 2014.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. ibid. and anonymous: *Paul Wegener*, in: *filmportal.de*.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Bawden et al. (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon* (vol. 2), 638.

<sup>6</sup> See Wegener: *Die künstlerischen Möglichkeiten des Films*, 9 and Wolfgang Jacobsen: *Frühgeschichte des deutschen Films. Licht am Ende des Tunnels*, in: Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes, Hans Helmut Prinzler (eds.): *Geschichte des deutschen Films*, Stuttgart 1993, 13–37, here 32, own translation.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Adolf Heinzlmeier, Berndt Schulz: *Lexikon der deutschen Film- und TV-Stars*, Berlin 2000, 379.

magicians, animal men, or demons.<sup>8</sup> His “broad, edged face”<sup>9</sup> with the “narrow eyes and protruding cheekbones”<sup>10</sup> was, from the perspective of the time, tailor-made for this purpose. The introduction of talkies and the Nazi rise to power caused him to fade into the background as a filmmaker in the early 1930s.<sup>11</sup> After supporting left-wing groups in the late 1920s, he quickly came to terms with the Nazis, so that he soon appeared in their entertainment movies—but also in some propaganda movies, mostly as an antihero.<sup>12</sup> Although he was involved in the Nazi morale-boosting movie *Kolberg* (1945, directed by Veit Harlan), after World War II, he was one of the first to receive permission from the Soviet Military Administration to perform again and was even appointed president of the Chamber of Cultural Workers (Kammer der Kulturschaffenden).<sup>13</sup> What was his standpoint? In a US secret report, Paul Wegener’s response to a Nazi chairman’s invitation to a Nazi actors’ convention in 1933 is recorded: “Kiss my ass, along with your Führer, I’ll go to the monastery.”<sup>14</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Cf. ibid. and Friedemann Beyer: *Die Gesichter der UFA. Starportraits einer Epoche*, Munich 1992, 272.

<sup>9</sup> Heinzelmeier et al.: *Lexikon der deutschen Film- und TV-Stars*, 379, own translation.

<sup>10</sup> Beyer: *Die Gesichter der UFA*, 272, own translation.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. anonymous: [Paul Wegener](#), in: [filmportal.de](#).

<sup>12</sup> Cf. ibid. and Beyer: *Die Gesichter der UFA*, 272.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Hoor: [Paul Wegener 1874–1948](#) and Heinzelmeier et al.: *Lexikon der deutschen Film- und TV-Stars*, 379.

<sup>14</sup> Carl Zuckmayer: [Geheimreport](#) (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), Göttingen 2002, 47, own translation.



# ROBERT BABERSKE

*One, Two, Three: Corona* sounds like a macabre joke in 2023, but in 1948, it was the title of a DEFA postwar movie (directed by [Hans Müller](#)). For this production, the cinematographer Robert Baberske (1900–1958)—called Barbi by his colleagues<sup>1</sup>—was the first to shoot scenes in the studios on the Studio Babelsberg lot, which had not been able to be used again until then.<sup>2</sup> He knew his way around the former Ufa studios because this is where his career had begun in the 1920s: Anyone who wanted to work in film at that time had to gain experience in shooting and initially prove themselves as an assistant. His training took place alongside [Karl Freund](#),<sup>3</sup> the inventor of the so-called unleashed camera,<sup>4</sup> and in the productions of the great directors of the time.<sup>5</sup> He soon stood behind the camera himself and made a reputation for being a master of lighting. It has been said that he did not need a light meter “for assessing light and shadow.”<sup>6</sup> But perhaps, retrospectively, Robert Baberske would have wished for a real-life meter because when he was offered the chance to accompany his teacher [Karl Freund](#) to the United States, he declined.<sup>7</sup> Although he witnessed numerous artists leaving the country, he signed a permanent contract with Ufa in 1934.<sup>8</sup> For 51 of its productions, he provided technically perfect images,<sup>9</sup> including, in particular,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Heinz Kahlau: DEFA-Kameraleute plaudern. Unser Mitarbeiter Heinz Kahlau hört zu, in: *Filmspiegel*, vol. 1955, no. 8, 9.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Ingrid Poss, Peter Warnecke (eds.): *Spur der Filme. Zeitzeugen über die DEFA* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Berlin 2006, 22.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Wolfgang Fischer: Robert Baberske: Eine deutsche Karriere hinter der Filmkamera, in: *CameraMagazin*, no. 1, 2000, 5–16, here 6 and Kahlau: DEFA-Kameraleute plaudern.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. anonymous: [Karl Freund](#), in: [filmportal.de](#).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Klaus Kreimeier: *The Ufa Story. A History of Germany's Greatest Film Company 1918–1945*, Berkeley, California 1999, 365 and Fischer: Robert Baberske, 6.

<sup>6</sup> Fischer: Robert Baberske, 11, own translation.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 8.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 10–11.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 6.

entertainment movies, but also Nazi propaganda movies.<sup>10</sup> After 1945, he again rejected the offer to work elsewhere and took up a permanent position anew, this time at DEFA.<sup>11</sup> At his “ancestral workplace,”<sup>12</sup> *One, Two, Three: Corona* was the first of 14 movies he made for the reorganized studio, including anti-Fascist and proletarian movies.<sup>13</sup> Once again, Robert Baberske’s “photographic signature”<sup>14</sup> placed him among the greatest in his craft. Accordingly, in 1950, he was awarded the National Prize of the GDR for his contribution to *Our Daily Bread* (1949, directed by Slatan Dudow),<sup>15</sup> the GDR’s first Socialist movie.<sup>16</sup> A former assistant recalls, “He wanted to make movies, and if a movie interested him, anything could happen.”<sup>17</sup>



<sup>10</sup> Cf. ibid., 10–11 and anonymous: Robert Baberske, in *filmportant.de*.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Fischer: Robert Baberske, 12.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., own translation.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. ibid., 6 and 12.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 6, own translation.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. M. H.: Robert Baberske verstorben, in: *Deutsche Filmkunst*, vol. 1958, no. 11.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Dagmar Schittly: *Zwischen Regie und Regime. Die Filmpolitik der SED im Spiegel der DEFA-Produktionen*, Berlin 2002, 36.

<sup>17</sup> The assistant Günter Haase in Fischer: Robert Baberske, 16, own translation.



# SLATAN DUDOW

DEFA's leading director for a time, Slatan Dudow (1903–1963),<sup>1</sup> was a specialist in contemporary themes and social criticism.<sup>2</sup> In 1932, he shot the first and last Communist movie of the Weimar Republic (*Kuhle Wampe or Who Owns the World?*)<sup>3</sup>—before the Nazi rise to power, which forced him into exile. In 1949, he delivered GDR's first Socialist movie (*Our Daily Bread*)—a few years after his return to Berlin and just in time for the GDR's founding.<sup>4</sup> His movies are “documents of the will to rebuild and the optimism”<sup>5</sup> of a new society, and mainly “reflect the true conviction of the filmmakers.”<sup>6</sup> In *Destinies of Women* (1952), his most successful DEFA movie,<sup>7</sup> several women fall for the West Berlin *bon vivant* Conny, who takes advantage of them and then discards them.<sup>8</sup> Narcissistic need satisfaction is associated here with Western consumer culture and rejected.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, the movie develops “comprehensible stories” against the backdrop of the “exposed postwar situation in which many women had to live without men” and was therefore extremely popular with contemporary audiences.<sup>10</sup> The political class, however, condemned *Destinies of Women* as

<sup>1</sup> Cf. anonymous: *Slatan Dudow*, in: *filmportal.de*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Dagmar Schittly: *Zwischen Regie und Regime. Die Filmpolitik der SED im Spiegel der DEFA-Produktionen*, Berlin 2002, 59.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Liz-Anne Bawden, Wolfram Tichy (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon. Filmbeispiele, Genres, Länder, Institutionen, Technik, Theorie* (vol. 2, Filme K–S), Reinbek bei Hamburg 1978, 373 and Gal Kirn: *Kuhle Wampe: Politics of Montage, De-montage of Politics?*, in: *Film-Philosophy*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2007, 33–48, here 33.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. anonymous: *Slatan Dudow*, in: *filmportal.de* and Schittly: *Zwischen Regie und Regime*, 36 and 59.

<sup>5</sup> Schittly: *Zwischen Regie und Regime*, 60, own translation.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., own translation.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. anonymous: *Slatan Dudow*, in: *filmportal.de*.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Elizabeth Mittman: *Fashioning the Socialist Nation. The Gender of Consumption in Slatan Dudow's Destinies of Women*, in: *German Politics and Society*, vol. 23, no. 4, 2005, 28–44, here 28.

<sup>10</sup> Wolfgang Gersch: *Film in der DDR. Die verlorene Alternative*, in: Wolfgang Jacobsen,

atypical—despite numerous propaganda clichés.<sup>11</sup> The controversy was based on a principle: what was in line with the SED bored people, whatever produced public approval made the SED dissatisfied.<sup>12</sup> Since *Kuhle Wampe*, as is known, the freedom-oriented film culture of the former labor movement had given way to a doctrine geared toward the expansion of power and oppression,<sup>13</sup> of which Dudow increasingly became an accomplice.<sup>14</sup> He realized that this was at the expense of quality when he wrote in 1961, “In the art of film, we are years behind.”<sup>15</sup>



Anton Kaes, Hans Helmut Prinzler (eds.): *Geschichte des deutschen Films*, Stuttgart 1993, 323–364, here 330, own translation.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. ibid. and Schittly: *Zwischen Regie und Regime*, 60.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Schittly: *Zwischen Regie und Regime*, 97.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Klaus Kreimeier: *Dokumentarfilm, 1892–1992. Ein doppeltes Dilemma*, in: Jacobsen et al. (eds.): *Geschichte des deutschen Films*, 391–416, here 404.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Gersch: *Film in der DDR*, 330 and Schittly: *Zwischen Regie und Regime*, 91.

<sup>15</sup> Slatan Dudow: *Die Filmkunst vor großen Entscheidungen. Ein Diskussionsbeitrag von Slatan Dudow*, in: *Neues Deutschland*, Mar 30, 1961, own translation.



# WILLY A. KLEINAU

The film career of Willy A. Kleinau (1907–1957) was out of the ordinary in several respects. The extremely talented actor<sup>1</sup> shot *Second Hand Destiny* (1949, directed by Wolfgang Staudte), his first movie, in Hamburg, and at the same time attracted the attention of DEFA.<sup>2</sup> When he then made his DEFA debut, *The Blue Swords* (1949, directed by Wolfgang Schleif), he had about 20 years of stage experience, including the founding of a theater.<sup>3</sup> No wonder that from then on he became the “most active actor at DEFA,”<sup>4</sup> a film actor in a class of his own,<sup>5</sup> who “gave an excellent quality to almost every role he played.”<sup>6</sup> The frequent comparison with Heinrich George because of the bulky appearance—“a heavy stature, a beefy guy”<sup>7</sup>—falls short because “most of it is Kleinau’s peculiarity.”<sup>8</sup> Moreover, he was a multifaceted “master of the ambivalent,”<sup>9</sup> who could be both serious and witty, clumsy and nimble.<sup>10</sup> What is most remarkable, however, is that he was “the only real star to play prominent film roles in both parts of Germany at the height of the Cold War.”<sup>11</sup> Although the Iron Curtain was no obstacle for him,<sup>12</sup> Willy A. Kleinau was not immune to censorship either. *Die Schönste* (1957, directed by Ernesto Remani), in which he starred as a rich West Berlin

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Heinz Fiedler: [Wie der echte August](#), in: *Sächsische Zeitung*, May 20, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Ines Walk: [Willy A. Kleinau](#), in: *DEFA Foundation*.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. ibid. and anonymous: [Willy A. Kleinau](#), in: *filmportal.de*.

<sup>4</sup> K. Bü.: [Erinnerung an Willy A. Kleinau im Filmmuseum](#), in: *Potsdamer Neueste Nachrichten*, Nov 15, 2007, own translation.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Heinz Fiedler: [Welch' dramatisches Ende](#), in: *Sächsische Zeitung*, Feb 7, 2020.

<sup>6</sup> K. Bü.: [Erinnerung an Willy A. Kleinau im Filmmuseum](#), own translation.

<sup>7</sup> Norbert Wehrstedt: [Vor 100 Jahren ist Willy A. Kleinau geboren, einer der Defa-Stars der 50er, tödlich verunglückt vor 50 Jahren. Ein zweiter Heinrich George](#), in: *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, Nov 12, 2007, own translation.

<sup>8</sup> Fiedler: [Wie der echte August](#), own translation.

<sup>9</sup> Walk: [Willy A. Kleinau](#), own translation.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. ibid. and Wehrstedt: [Vor 100 Jahren ist Willy A. Kleinau geboren](#).

<sup>11</sup> Peter Warnecke: [Willy A. Kleinau](#), in: *Film Museum Potsdam*, own translation.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. anonymous: [Schauspieler tödlich verunglückt](#), in: *Nordwest-Zeitung*, Oct 21, 1957.

businessman whose existence goes off the rails, became DEFA's first banned movie in 1959 after being reworked several times.<sup>13</sup> The aim was to show the “fragility of the economic miracle, the true being behind the beautiful glow”<sup>14</sup>—and yet, even a new version with agitational elements failed with the SED leaders.<sup>15</sup> Kleinau, who was killed in a car accident after filming *Die Schönste*, would certainly have been happy to see the end of the German–German conflict and the movie's premiere in 2002.<sup>16</sup>



<sup>13</sup> Cf. Norbert Wehrstedt: “*Die Schönste*”: Der erste Defa-Zensurfall im Kino der DDR wurde rekonstruiert und ist auf zwei DVD erstklassig zu verfolgen. Der Westen leuchtet—aber nicht zu sehr und nicht zu bunt, in: *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, Jan 16, 2004.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., own translation.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. ibid.

<sup>16</sup> See hema: Immer noch “*Die Schönste*”: Uraufführung nach 45 Jahren, in: *Tagesspiegel Online*, May 26, 2002.



# WILLY SCHILLER

There were times when “film architecture was considered something that was actually below the belt.”<sup>1</sup> It is all the more remarkable that the scenographer Willy Schiller (1899–1973) was one of the founders of DEFA, which was ceremoniously granted a Soviet license to “produce movies of all kinds”<sup>2</sup> on May 17, 1946. The founding members—experienced filmmakers with a Communist past—had come together in the fall of 1945 to form the so-called Filmaktiv, whose goal was to prepare the new start of film production.<sup>3</sup> In particular, the Filmaktiv initiated a meeting with about 40 filmmakers in the half-destroyed Hotel Adlon,<sup>4</sup> at which it was proclaimed “that the new film must be anti-Fascist and free of Nazi lies and incitement of the people. It must be imbued with the spirit of humanism, international understanding, and true democracy.”<sup>5</sup> The anti-Fascist Willy Schiller, who was able to continue working under the Nazis despite restrictions,<sup>6</sup> made an impressive career: Trained as a theater painter, he rose in film from set painter first to set designer, then to film architect. With the founding of DEFA, he eventually became its technical director<sup>7</sup> and chief architect.<sup>8</sup> Between 1927 and 1965, he created buildings for around 100 movies,<sup>9</sup> almost 50 of which were produced in Babelsberg, including, for example, *The City of Anatol* (1936, directed by Viktor Tourjansky), *The Sonnenbrucks* (1951, directed by Georg C.

<sup>1</sup> Alfred Hirschmeier, as cited in Ingrid Poss, Peter Warnecke (eds.): *Spur der Filme. Zeitzeugen über die DEFA* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Berlin 2006, 115, own translation.

<sup>2</sup> Jerzy Toeplitz: *Geschichte des Films* (vol. 5, 1945–1953), Berlin 1991, 364, own translation.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Dagmar Schittly: *Zwischen Regie und Regime. Die Filmpolitik der SED im Spiegel der DEFA-Produktionen*, Berlin 2002, 25.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Toeplitz: *Geschichte des Films* (vol. 5), 362.

<sup>5</sup> Schittly: *Zwischen Regie und Regime*, 26, own translation.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Toeplitz: *Geschichte des Films* (vol. 5), 363.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Schittly: *Zwischen Regie und Regime*, 27.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Poss et al. (eds.): *Spur der Filme*, 22.

<sup>9</sup> See anonymous: [Willy Schiller](#), in: [filmportal.de](#).

Klaren), and *Ernst Thälmann* (1954; 1955, directed by Kurt Maetzig).<sup>10</sup> Part of his work was elaborate streetscapes, including street signs. One can only wonder whether Willy Schiller made any mistakes, such as spelling his first name with an “i” instead of a “y” on the street sign in Drewitz.



<sup>10</sup> See anonymous: Filmographie Willy Schiller. Filme aus den Studios in Babelsberg, in: *Film Museum Potsdam*.



# WOLFGANG STAUDTE



“500,000 deutsche marks wanted for a film project.”<sup>1</sup> Wolfgang Staudte (1906–1984) was desperate to get his movie *The Murderers Are among Us* made, but since no one in the Western occupation zones was willing to support him, he hoped to get ahead by placing an ad in a newspaper. Nobody was to respond to the ad, but a culture officer from the Soviet occupation zone was finally convinced by the script.<sup>2</sup> World War II had just ended when Staudte’s screenplay already addressed the destructive consequences of war trauma and the unchallenged return of war criminals to society. While Staudte was shooting his movie in the Althoff Studios in Babelsberg on May 17, 1946, he received unusual visitors: the guests of the DEFA founding celebration that had just taken place next door.<sup>3</sup> The visitors were proud to see that DEFA had already made half of the very first postwar movie.<sup>4</sup> An amicable working relationship with DEFA continued in the following years, as Staudte provided it with recognition for *The Murderers Are among Us* and other outstanding movies. As far as geographic proximity was concerned, however, he kept his distance. His commute always took him across the sector border as he remained resident in West Berlin and also carried

<sup>1</sup> Ingrid Poss, Peter Warnecke (eds.): *Spur der Filme. Zeitzeugen über die DEFA* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Berlin 2006, 35, own translation.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. ibid., 22.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Volker Baer: Wolfgang Staudte ist einer Erinnerung wert, in: *Der Tagesspiegel*, Jun 26, 1988, reprinted in Ralf Schenk (ed.): *Worte/Widerworte. Volker Baer. Texte zum Film 1959–2007*, Marburg 2009, 221–222, here 221.

out film projects there.<sup>5</sup> By insisting on cross-border team constellations<sup>6</sup> and addressing an all-German audience in his movies,<sup>7</sup> he wanted to counteract the increasing tension between the East and the West.<sup>8</sup> Both sides alternately appropriated Staudte as one of their most valuable artists—or denigrated him.<sup>9</sup> In the GDR (founded shortly afterwards), film officials intervened to censor one of his other postwar works, *Rotation* (1949),<sup>10</sup> and in the FRG, *The Kaiser's Lackey* (1951) was not allowed to be shown for several years.<sup>11</sup> When he was unable to finish one of his movies in 1955,<sup>12</sup> he stopped working for DEFA. He remained a prolific director, thereafter working mainly for West German television.<sup>13</sup> Wolfgang Staudte is remembered as a “free spirit floating above the fronts”<sup>14</sup> who helped German film to rise to a new artistic heyday after World War II.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Ulrike Weckel: Wolfgang Staudtes Filme und deren Rezeption im Kalten Krieg, in: Thomas Lindenberger (ed.): *Massenmedien im Kalten Krieg. Akteure, Bilder, Resonanzen*, Cologne 2006, 25–47, here 27.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. ibid., 29.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Poss et al. (eds.): *Spur der Filme*, 23.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Weckel: Wolfgang Staudtes Filme und deren Rezeption im Kalten Krieg, 30.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. ibid., 28–29.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Poss et al. (eds.): *Spur der Filme*, 26 and 55.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Weckel: Wolfgang Staudtes Filme und deren Rezeption im Kalten Krieg, 33.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Poss et al. (eds.): *Spur der Filme*, 100–103.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. CineGraph: *Wolfgang Staudte*, in: *filmportal.de* and Baer: Wolfgang Staudte ist einer Erinnerung wert, 221.

<sup>14</sup> Weckel: Wolfgang Staudtes Filme und deren Rezeption im Kalten Krieg, 30, own translation.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Poss et al. (eds.): *Spur der Filme*, 19–27.



**Potsdam**

**Kirchsteigfeld**

straße

Zum Teich

Grundschule  
im Kirchsteigfeld

Marie-Hannemann-Straße

Treibiner Straße

Kirchstraße

125 m

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# HEINER CAROW



Heiner Carow (1929–1997) faltered again and again. His directing work for DEFA was marked by years of shooting pauses, by no means self-inflicted. Film scripts were developed, and new projects were planned during these times, but the momentum of the first 10 years of feature movies was over by *The Russians Are Coming* (1968; 1987) at the latest. Not only was this movie banned for supposedly psychologizing Fascism,<sup>1</sup> but even fellow filmmakers distanced themselves from Carow: “No one voted for the movie, everyone was against it.”<sup>2</sup> This was hardly bearable for a director<sup>3</sup> who always viewed his movies self-critically,<sup>4</sup> and before *The Russians Are Coming* had made a consistent “departure from functionalism and a superficially sociological dramaturgy.”<sup>5</sup> Once again, it took years to move on. In between were, among others, *The New Sorrows of Young W.*, a script that sought to focus on the conflicts of the younger generation. But DEFA rejected the scenario—an unmade movie.<sup>6</sup> Then, however, came *The Legend of Paul and Paula* (1973). The heroine and hero’s “desire for happiness”<sup>7</sup> may also have applied to Heiner Carow: “all or nothing, irreverent, and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Heinz Kersten, as cited in Christel Drawer (ed.): *So viele Träume. DEFA-Film-Kritiken aus drei Jahrzehnten von Heinz Kersten*, Berlin 1996, 294, own translation.

<sup>2</sup> Heiner Carow in: Ingrid Poss, Peter Warnecke (eds.): *Spur der Filme. Zeitzeugen über die DEFA* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Berlin 2006, 239, own translation.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 239–240.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Hermann Herlinghaus: Heiner Carow, in: Rolf Richter (ed.): *DEFA-Spielfilm-Regisseure und ihre Kritiker* (vol. 2), Berlin 1983, 52–76, here 56.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 55, own translation.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 57.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 59, own translation.

filled with the ideal of love.”<sup>8</sup> In the power vacuum of the SED between Walter Ulbricht and Erich Honecker,<sup>9</sup> the director achieved a precision landing: three million viewers. Despite this success, he did not seem to be able to go on without interventions in his work and without his screenplays being rejected.<sup>10</sup> “Over my dead body,” were the words the DEFA chief executive exclaimed to prevent the filming of *Coming Out*.<sup>11</sup> But Heiner Carow prevailed and, once again, set an example for love—in the midst of the AIDS crisis. On November 9, 1989, on the evening of the premiere of the first GDR movie about homosexuality, the Berlin Wall fell.<sup>12</sup> The movie, which advocated social awakening, was absorbed by just that.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., own translation.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Ulrich Plenzdorf in: Poss et al. (eds.): *Spur der Filme*, 283.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Erika Richter in: ibid., 425.

<sup>11</sup> Guido Berg: *Schwulsein in der DDR*, in: *Potsdamer Neueste Nachrichten*, Jun 7, 2011, own translation. See also Heiner Carow in: Poss et al. (eds.): *Spur der Filme*, 453–454.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. ibid., 455–456. For more information on this, see the documentary *Queer Cinema: Eine Reise durch 100 Jahre deutschen Film* (2021, directed by Daniel Konhäuser), 17:16–19:22.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Berg: *Schwulsein in der DDR*.

Domstraße

Goethestraße

Lessingstraße

# Potsdam

Rudolf-Breitscheid-Straße

Stahnsdorfer Straße

# Babelsberg Süd

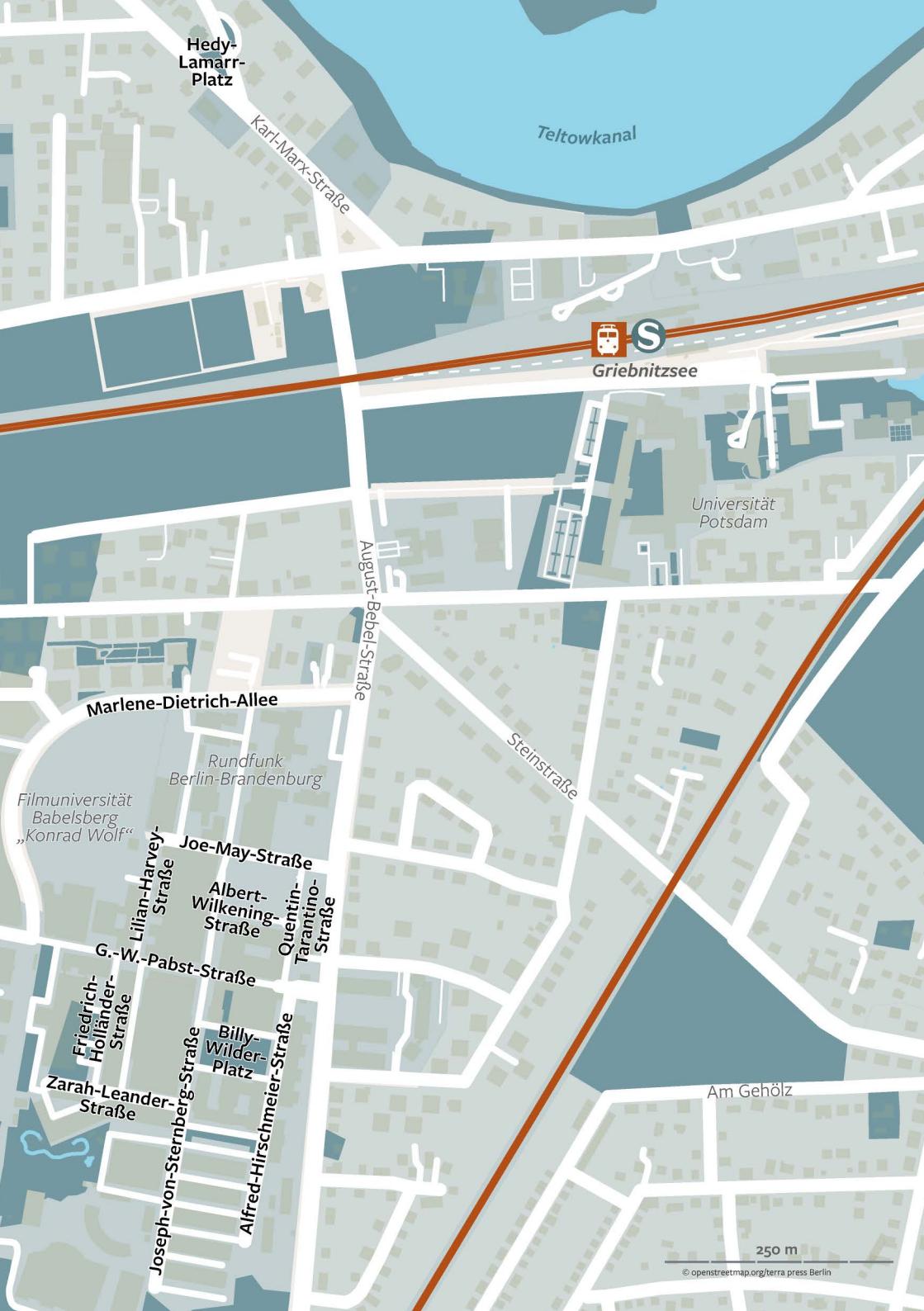
Rosenstraße

Heinz-Rühmann-Weg

Großbeerensstraße

Lotte-Jöbinger-Straße  
Emil-Jannings-Straße  
Filmpark Babelsberg

Heinrich-  
George Straße





# ALBERT WILKENING



The outstanding film manager Albert Wilkening (1909–1990) knew how to combine theory with practice. In 1948, the law graduate founded the magazine *Bild und Ton*, from whose “leading articles a media history of the GDR” can be derived.<sup>1</sup> In 1954, he participated in the founding of today’s Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF, where he was professor and head of the camera department from 1956 to 1970.<sup>2</sup> He wrote numerous essays and several monographs over the years,<sup>3</sup> including the first DEFA company history.<sup>4</sup> “Politically unencumbered,”<sup>5</sup> he joined DEFA from its very beginning in 1946 and became first its technical director, then head of production, director of production and technology, and finally chief director in 1956.<sup>6</sup> Even when the SED was dissatisfied with the DEFA productions around 1960 due to “ideological ambiguities,”<sup>7</sup> blaming Wilkening personally for this and removing him from the top post

<sup>1</sup> Michael Grisko (ed.): *Albert Wilkening. Der Gentleman der DEFA*, Frankfurt 2012, 233, own translation.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Peter Warnecke: *Biographie Albert Wilkening*, in: *Film Museum Potsdam*.

<sup>3</sup> See Grisko (ed.): *Albert Wilkening*, 247–250.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 17.

<sup>5</sup> Wolfgang Gersch: *Film in der DDR. Die verlorene Alternative*, in: Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes, Hans Helmut Prinzler (eds.): *Geschichte des deutschen Films*, Stuttgart 1993, 323–364, here 324, own translation.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Warnecke: *Biographie Albert Wilkening* and anonymous: *Wilkening, Albert. Biographische Angaben aus dem Handbuch “Wer war wer in der DDR?”*, in: *Bundesstiftung zur Aufarbeitung der SED-Diktatur*.

<sup>7</sup> Dagmar Schittly: *Zwischen Regie und Regime. Die Filmpolitik der SED im Spiegel der DEFA-Produktionen*, Berlin 2002, 115, own translation.

in 1961,<sup>8</sup> he remained at DEFA, and in 1969 again became chief director—until his retirement in 1976.<sup>9</sup> Albert Wilkening, referred to in the title of a recent study as “the gentleman of DEFA,”<sup>10</sup> “sat at the levers of power for decades,”<sup>11</sup> deciding on scripts, production budgets, casts, and influencing the careers of numerous filmmakers.<sup>12</sup> He was both a promoter and a preventer.<sup>13</sup> Accordingly, memories of him are mixed: while director **Rainer Simon** portrays him as an “implacable inquisitor” who kicked a camera student out of university for political reasons and overturned, with prudishness as a pretext, several film projects,<sup>14</sup> production manager **Gert Golde** sees him as a realist capable of criticism, willing to compromise and take risks, who took into account the unique characteristics of the filmmakers and promoted their strengths, especially their individuality.<sup>15</sup> Albert Wilkening dedicated his life to DEFA, “personally negating [his own] outstanding individuality.”<sup>16</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Cf. ibid., 113, 115, 116, and 303, and Grisko (ed.): *Albert Wilkening*, 42–47.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Warnecke: Biographie Albert Wilkening and anonymous: Wilkening, Albert. Biographische Angaben aus dem Handbuch “Wer war wer in der DDR?”, in: *Bundesstiftung zur Aufarbeitung der SED-Diktatur*.

<sup>10</sup> Michael Grisko (ed.): *Albert Wilkening. Der Gentleman der DEFA*, Frankfurt 2012.

<sup>11</sup> H. Jäger: Förderer und Verhinderer. Über Albert Wilkening, den Gentleman der Defa, in: *Potsdamer Neueste Nachrichten*, May 12, 2012, own translation.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Grisko (ed.): *Albert Wilkening*, 17.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. ibid. and Jäger: Förderer und Verhinderer.

<sup>14</sup> See the oral history interview with **Rainer Simon** in Grisko (ed.): *Albert Wilkening*, 287–298; the quotation is on page 288, own translation.

<sup>15</sup> See the oral history interview with **Gert Golde** in ibid., 254–255.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 22, own translation. For this reason, Grisko does not describe his study as a biography in the conventional sense but as “an approach to the life and work of Albert Wilkening”; see ibid., own translation.



# ALFRED HIRSCHMEIER

Contemporary and historical movies, science fiction and fairy tales, movie operettas and television series—"the outstanding scenographer of DEFA,"<sup>1</sup> Alfred Hirschmeier (1931–1996), did not need a distinctive signature.<sup>2</sup> Instead, by entering the production process at an early stage, he was able to help shape and bring to fruition the visions of the directors.<sup>3</sup> This resulted in long-lasting creative collaborations, especially with Frank Beyer (e.g., *Star-Crossed Lovers* from 1962 or *Held for Questioning* from 1983) and Konrad Wolf (e.g., *Goya* from 1971 or *Solo Sunny* from 1980).<sup>4</sup> With his detailed image designs, he helped determine the atmosphere in more than 70 cinema and television movies and thus contributed significantly to the success of numerous works.<sup>5</sup> One scholarly paper even says: "Hirschmeier's commitment to the optical script, in which dramaturgical content was illustrated shot by shot using a wide variety of techniques, had a central influence on the development of DEFA scenography."<sup>6</sup> Even if the optical script—in *Goya*, for example, there were around 1,600 shots<sup>7</sup>—was later abandoned

<sup>1</sup> Mariana Ivanova: Die Prestige-Agenda der DEFA. Koproduktionen mit Erich Mehls Filmfirma Pandora (1954–1957), in: Michael Wedel, Barton Byg, Andy Räder, Skyler Arndt-Briggs, Evan Torner (eds.): *DEFA international. Grenzüberschreitende Filmbeziehungen vor und nach dem Mauerbau*, Wiesbaden 2013, 217–232, here 229, own translation.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Ines Walk: *Alfred Hirschmeier*, in: *DEFA Foundation*.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *ibid.* and anonymous: *Alfred Hirschmeier*, in: *filmportal.de*.

<sup>6</sup> Dorett Molitor: *Zur Entstehung und zum Bestand der Szenographie-Sammlung des Filmmuseums Potsdam. Einblick in die Produktion und das Szenenbild des gescheiterten Filmprojekts Mutter Courage und ihre Kinder* (1955) von Wolfgang Staudte, in: *kunsttexte.de*, 2014, no. 1, 1–14, here 4, own translation. Cf. Günter Agde: 30 Jahre CineGraph Babelsberg e.V. Erinnerung an den Filmarchitekten Alfred Hirschmeier: Gastgeber und Mitbegründer von CineGraph Babelsberg, in: *Filmblatt*, no. 75, 2021, 2–6, here 4.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Annette Dorgerloh: *Scenographic Turn. Vom Plot zum Raumbild. Ein Forschungsprojekt zur Geschichte der Filmszenographie der DEFA und ihrer Vorläufer*, in: *kunsttexte.de*, 2010, no. 2, 1–7, here 5.

because it restricted the filmmakers too much,<sup>8</sup> there were hardly any limits to Alfred Hirschmeier's continuous dedication to scenography and film architecture. As a student of [Willy Schiller](#), he cultivated the craft tradition from the very beginning<sup>9</sup> and decades later, after the end of the GDR, campaigned to save the Babelsberg scenographic tradition.<sup>10</sup> One day, he literally saved drafts from a flooded DEFA cellar, and dried and ironed them at home.<sup>11</sup> As late as 1990, being a founding professor at today's Film University and its head of scenography,<sup>12</sup> he regretted the low esteem in which the latter was held.<sup>13</sup> Thus, it is all the more important that, at the same time, he was honored with a personal exhibition by the Academy of Arts of the GDR.<sup>14</sup> However, he did not receive the honorary German Film Award for his life's work—in keeping with the late recognition of scenography—until 1996, posthumously.<sup>15</sup>



<sup>8</sup> Cf. Walk: [Alfred Hirschmeier](#) and anonymous: [Alfred Hirschmeier](#), in: *filmportal.de*.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Molitor: [Zur Entstehung und zum Bestand der Szenographie-Sammlung des Filmmuseums Potsdam](#), 4.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Walk: [Alfred Hirschmeier](#).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Molitor: [Zur Entstehung und zum Bestand der Szenographie-Sammlung des Filmmuseums Potsdam](#), 3.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Walk: [Alfred Hirschmeier](#).

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Molitor: [Zur Entstehung und zum Bestand der Szenographie-Sammlung des Filmmuseums Potsdam](#), 1.

<sup>14</sup> For more information on this, see Agde: 30 Jahre CineGraph Babelsberg e.V. Erinnerung an den Filmarchitekten Alfred Hirschmeier, 3–4 and anonymous: [Spielräume: Aus der Werkstatt des Filmszenographen Alfred Hirschmeier](#), in: *Film Museum Potsdam*.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Hans Helmut Prinzler: [Chronik, 1895–2004. Ereignisse, Personen, Filme](#), in: Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes, Hans Helmut Prinzler (eds.): [Geschichte des deutschen Films](#) (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Stuttgart 2004, 567–616, here 610 and anonymous: [Alfred Hirschmeier](#), in: *filmportal.de*.

# BILLY WILDER

Billy Wilder (1906–2002) was a master of sarcasm, behind which lay human kindness.<sup>1</sup> Having started as a screenwriter in Berlin in 1929 (*People on Sunday*, 1930, directed by Robert Siodmak and Edgar G. Ulmer), he emigrated to France in 1933, where he made his first directorial effort (*Bad Seed*, 1934, codirected with Alexander Esway).<sup>2</sup> He then traveled on to the United States, where, after a difficult beginning, he made his breakthrough in 1938—with screenplays for his idol, Ernst Lubitsch.<sup>3</sup> From 1942, he was allowed to direct himself in Hollywood and quickly advanced to become one of the best studio directors.<sup>4</sup> His world-famous movies, including *Sunset Blvd.* (1950), *Some Like It Hot* (1959), and *The Apartment* (1960), are “prime examples of the classic American studio cinema of the period.”<sup>5</sup> A philosopher illustrates Wilder’s trademark, the “biting humor against the backdrop of an essentially tragic situation,”<sup>6</sup> as follows: “His scripts, written with I. A. L. Diamond, become more and more wicked, burlesque, brilliant, garish, bilious, venomous, razor-sharp, lustful, delightful, funny, as does his direction, balancing impact and irony, drive and an aggressively mutated Lubitsch touch.”<sup>7</sup> Billy Wilder was a consistent team player. He cultivated long-term working relationships not only with screenwriters and directors but

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Nicolaus Schröder: *50 Klassiker: Filmregisseure. Von Georges Méliès bis Zhang Yimou*, Hildesheim 2003, 113.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Liz-Anne Bawden, Wolfram Tichy (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon. Regisseure, Schauspieler, Kameraleute, Produzenten, Autoren* (vol. 6, Personen R–Z), Reinbek bei Hamburg 1978, 1465–1466.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Schröder: *50 Klassiker: Filmregisseure*, 117 and anonymous: *Billy Wilder*, in: *filmportal.de*.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Bawden et al. (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon*, 1466.

<sup>5</sup> Schröder: *50 Klassiker: Filmregisseure*, 114, own translation.

<sup>6</sup> Bawden et al. (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon*, 1466, own translation.

<sup>7</sup> Harry Tomicek: *In der Nacht auf Donnerstag ist der Filmregisseur Billy Wilder im Alter von 95 Jahren in seinem Heim in Los Angeles einer Lungenentzündung erlegen*, in: *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, Mar 30, 2002, own translation.

also with actors, whom he tied to himself and turned into stars.<sup>8</sup> On his sets, which were described as “calm, balanced, European,” he tolerated their proposed changes to the extent that he would shoot them “with the camera running but without the film in” if necessary.<sup>9</sup> His consistency was also expressed in the fact that he ignored fashions such as neorealism or the Nouvelle Vague.<sup>10</sup> All in all, it’s hardly surprising that he was one of the few to receive his honorary Oscar not as a consolation prize: he already had six Oscars before, three of them for just one movie, *The Apartment*—as the first person ever.<sup>11</sup>



<sup>8</sup> Cf. Schröder: *50 Klassiker: Filmregisseure*, 115.

<sup>9</sup> Hellmuth Karasek: *Der k. u. k. King von Hollywood*. SPIEGEL-Redakteur Hellmuth Karasek über den achzigjährigen Filmemacher Billy Wilder, in: *Der Spiegel*, May 18, 1986, own translation.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Schröder: *50 Klassiker: Filmregisseure*, 114–115.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Karasek: *Der k. u. k. King von Hollywood*.



# EMIL JANNINGS

When American soldiers stormed the villa of Emil Jannings (1884–1950) at Lake Wolfgang in 1945, “they couldn’t believe their eyes”<sup>1</sup>: they found an Oscar—and not just any Oscar, but the first Oscar ever awarded for acting, which Jannings had won in 1929 for *The Way of All Flesh* (1927, directed by *Victor Fleming*) and *The Last Command* (1928, directed by *Josef von Sternberg*).<sup>2</sup> To this day, he is the only German to have received the Academy Award for Best Actor in a Leading Role.<sup>3</sup> As a result of a brilliant Ufa career in which he played mainly “decadent ruler personalities”<sup>4</sup> and gained popularity among American audiences,<sup>5</sup> he went to Hollywood in 1926, where he was celebrated as the “German Film Genius.”<sup>6</sup> Jannings was “one of the most significant exports of German cinema.”<sup>7</sup> The introduction of the talkies, however, forced him to return to Germany because of his poor command of English<sup>8</sup>—even before the official Oscar ceremony.<sup>9</sup> The talkie *The Blue Angel* (1930, directed by *Josef von Sternberg*) was then shot in

<sup>1</sup> Sarah Levy: *Gierhals, Scheusal, Genie. Filmstar Emil Jannings*, in: *Spiegel Online*, Oct 17, 2012, own translation.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Friedemann Beyer: *Die Gesichter der UFA. Starportraits einer Epoche*, Munich 1992, 208.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Levy: *Gierhals, Scheusal, Genie*.

<sup>4</sup> Beyer: *Die Gesichter der UFA*, 208, own translation.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Liz-Anne Bawden, Wolfram Tichy (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon. Regisseure, Schauspieler, Kameraleute, Produzenten, Autoren* (vol. 5, Personen H–Q), Reinbek bei Hamburg 1978, 1081. See also Herbert Iheling: *Emil Jannings. Baumeister seines Lebens und seiner Filme*, Heidelberg 1941, 18–19.

<sup>6</sup> Mordaunt Hall: *Mr. Jannings's Latest; German Film Genius Inspires All Those Working With Him*, in: *The New York Times*, Jul 3, 1927.

<sup>7</sup> Heinrich Fraenkel: *Unsterblicher Film. Die große Chronik. Von der Laterna Magica bis zum Tonfilm*, Munich 1956, 102, own translation.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Beyer: *Die Gesichter der UFA*, 208.

<sup>9</sup> The winners were announced three months earlier, and Jannings received his trophy before the award ceremony because of his return trip to Germany; see Gerd Gemünden: *Emil Jannings. Translating the Star*, in: Patrice Petro (ed.): *Idols of Modernity. Movie Stars of the 1920s*, New Brunswick, New Jersey 2010, 182–201, here 182–183.

Babelsberg with [Marlene Dietrich](#), who “outplayed” him and “went to where he came from.”<sup>10</sup> From that point, his career stagnated until after 1933, when he rose to become one of the National Socialist cinema’s biggest stars.<sup>11</sup> Emil Jannings did not care about politics but about his wealth, which he was able to increase with his admirer [Joseph Goebbels](#)’s help through Nazi propaganda movies.<sup>12</sup> In 1940, the Nazis even made him head of Ufa.<sup>13</sup> After the war, he tried in vain to fight the lifelong professional ban imposed on him by the Allies.<sup>14</sup> The steep rise and sharp fall—that Jannings embodied on the screen—also applied to him personally. In [Carl Zuckmayer](#)’s secret report on artists and intellectuals remaining in Germany, written in 1943–1944 at the Office of Strategic Services’ request, he is assigned to the category “special cases, partly positive, partly negative.”<sup>15</sup>



<sup>10</sup> Film Museum Potsdam: *The Dream Factory: 100 Years of Film in Babelsberg* (permanent exhibition), Potsdam 2023, own translation.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Beyer: *Die Gesichter der UFA*, 210.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Levy: [Gierhals, Scheusal, Genie](#). Jannings’s attitude toward money is described in Fraenkel: *Unsterblicher Film*, 103.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Bawden et al. (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon* (vol. 5), 1083.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Levy: [Gierhals, Scheusal, Genie](#).

<sup>15</sup> See [Carl Zuckmayer](#): *Geheimreport* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), Göttingen 2002, 16 and 136–145.



# FRIEDRICH HOLLÄNDER



Friedrich Holländer (1896–1976) was in the right place at the right time. When the talkies had their breakthrough around 1930, he composed the music for *The Blue Angel* (1930, directed by Josef von Sternberg) and wrote four tailor-made film songs for Marlene Dietrich as Lola Lola<sup>1</sup>—most notably *Ich bin von Kopf bis Fuß auf Liebe eingestellt*. “This chanson immediately created the atmosphere that the material forcefully demanded.”<sup>2</sup> As *Falling in Love Again*, the track was released in the United States even before the English version of the movie.<sup>3</sup> It went around the world<sup>4</sup> and brought Holländer international success.<sup>5</sup> The “musical child prodigy”<sup>6</sup> stayed with film and made his directorial debut in 1933 with the talkie operetta *The Empress and I*, in which music itself sets the tone for the plot: a dying marquis is brought back to life by a song and subsequently searches for the unknown lady who sang it for him. Shortly after the premiere, Holländer emigrated, because of his Jewish origins, via France to Hollywood, where he “soon became one of the most successful representatives of his guild with his more than 150 film scores,”<sup>7</sup> until he returned to the FRG in 1955. Friedrich Holländer was a (musical) jack-of-all-trades.<sup>8</sup> But he had

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Volker Kühn: *Ich bin von Kopf bis Fuß auf Liebe eingestellt. Ein Schimmel geht um die Welt*, in: *bpb.de*, Aug 3, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., own translation.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Steven Bach: *Marlene Dietrich: Life and Legend*, Minneapolis, Minnesota 2011, 521.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Kühn: *Ich bin von Kopf bis Fuß auf Liebe eingestellt*.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. anonymous: *Friedrich Hollaender*, in: *filmportal.de*.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., own translation.

<sup>7</sup> Volker Kühn: *Friedrich Hollaender*, in: *Lexikon verfolgter Musiker und Musikerinnen der NS-Zeit*, own translation.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. anonymous: *Friedrich Hollaender*, in: *Stiftung Deutsches Kabarettarchiv* and Kühn: *Ich bin von Kopf bis Fuß auf Liebe eingestellt*.

particularly distinguished himself as the “twentieth-century genius of chanson”<sup>9</sup> in the Berlin of the Golden Twenties with his cabaret music—a “mélange of literary, political, and erotic satire.”<sup>10</sup> At the same time, he was also able to grasp his profession theoretically: “A cabaret without aggression, without pugnacity, is unfit for life. It is the given battlefield, where, with only the clean weapons of polished words and loaded music, those murderous ones made of iron can be put to flight.”<sup>11</sup> To this day, the feminist movement (and the series *Babylon Berlin*<sup>12</sup>) quotes a song he wrote in 1926 for the lesbian cabaret artist Claire Waldoff:

*Chuck all the men out of the Reichstag  
 and chuck all the men out of the courthouse  
 Men are the problem with humanity  
 they're blinded by their vanity  
 Women have passively embraced them  
 when we could have easily outpaced them  
 Yes we should have long ago replaced them  
 or better yet erased them*<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Anonymous: *Friedrich Hollaender*, in: *Stiftung Deutsches Kabarettarchiv*, own translation.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., own translation.

<sup>11</sup> Friedrich Hollaender: Cabaret, in: *Die Weltbühne*, vol. 28, no. 5, Feb 2, 1932, 169–171, here 170, own translation.

<sup>12</sup> Season 3, 2020, directed by Tom Tykwer, Achim von Borries, and Hendrik Handloegten.

<sup>13</sup> “*Raus mit den Männern aus dem Reichstag, / und raus mit den Männern aus dem Landtag, / und raus mit den Männern aus dem Herrenhaus, / wir machen draus ein Frauenhaus! / Raus mit den Männern aus dem Dasein, / und raus mit den Männern aus dem Hiersein, / und raus mit den Männern aus dem Dortsein, / sie müßten längst schon fort sein,*” translated by Jeremy Lawrence; Bernart Bartleby: *Raus mit den Männern! Friedrich Hollaender*, in: *antiwarsongs.org*. For more information on the translation, see David Mermelstein: *Cabaret That Shocked, Shocked the Nazis*, in: *The New York Times*, Mar 16, 1997. For more information on the feminist movement, see Gabriele Abels: *90 Jahre Frauenwahlrecht. Zum Wandel von Geschlechterverhältnissen in der deutschen Politik*, in: Gabriele Abels (ed.): *Deutschland im Jubiläumsjahr 2009. Blick zurück nach vorn*, Baden-Baden 2011, 197–219, here 205–206. The German lyrics quoted by Abels do not exactly match the original Waldoff recording cited here.



# GEORG WILHELM PABST

Georg Wilhelm Pabst (1885–1967) had a “burning ambition.”<sup>1</sup> When he moved from theater to film in 1921 in his mid-thirties, he advanced—after a brief orientation phase as a supporting-role actor, screenwriter, producer, and assistant director<sup>2</sup>—to become one of the most important directors of the Weimar Republic. In his Expressionist debut, *The Treasure* (1923),<sup>3</sup> he already applied the “motif of the entanglement of sex, money, and power”<sup>4</sup> that is characteristic of his work. *The Joyless Street* (1925), his third movie, this time socially critical and realistic, depicting the “miserable milieu of a Viennese whore alley,”<sup>5</sup> was a great success with audiences and critics despite censorship difficulties.<sup>6</sup> Pabst retained “the critical eye for social conditions”<sup>7</sup> when he “took up pacifist themes” and cemented “his reputation as the ‘red Pabst’”<sup>8</sup> with his first talkies, notably *Westfront 1918* (1930) and *Comradeship* (1931). In addition, he was involved in the founding of the left-wing National Association for Film

<sup>1</sup> Carl Zuckmayer: *Geheimreport* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), Göttingen 2002, 127, own translation.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. anonymous: G. W. Pabst, in: *filmportal.de* and Hans-Michael Bock: *Georg Wilhelm Pabst*, in: *CineGraph*.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Wolfgang Jacobsen: *Pabst, Georg Wilhelm*, in: *Deutsche Biographie*.

<sup>4</sup> Bock: *Georg Wilhelm Pabst*, own translation. Cf. Margareta Saary: *Pabst, Georg Wilhelm*, in: *Oesterreichisches Musiklexikon online*.

<sup>5</sup> Heinrich Fraenkel: *Unsterblicher Film. Die große Chronik. Von der Laterna Magica bis zum Tonfilm*, Munich 1956, 147, own translation.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. ibid., 147–148, anonymous: G. W. Pabst, in: *filmportal.de*, and Bock: *Georg Wilhelm Pabst*.

<sup>7</sup> Liz-Anne Bawden, Wolfram Tichy (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon. Regisseure, Schauspieler, Kameraleute, Produzenten, Autoren* (vol. 5, Personen H–Q), Reinbek bei Hamburg 1978, 1245, own translation.

<sup>8</sup> Bock: *Georg Wilhelm Pabst*, own translation. See also Hilmar Hoffmann: *The Triumph of Propaganda. Film and National Socialism, 1933–1945*, Providence, Rhode Island 1996, 56–57.

Art (Volksverband für Filmkunst) in 1928<sup>9</sup> and was known for treating his actors with particular humanity.<sup>10</sup> However, Georg Wilhelm Pabst also had a reputation as an opportunist.<sup>11</sup> This was bestowed upon him when, in 1939, after several years in France, he did not complete his attempts to leave for the United States and instead remained in Germany after being detained there during his mother's farewell visit.<sup>12</sup> The movies that followed, especially the historical dramas *The Comedians* (1941) and *Paracelsus* (1943), were seen by the Nazis on the one hand as a "welcome cultural figurehead"<sup>13</sup> and were awarded several prizes.<sup>14</sup> On the other hand, Pabst "cunningly" prevented a propaganda movie commissioned by Joseph Goebbels "by rewriting the script again and again"<sup>15</sup> and energetically directed several coming-to-terms movies after the end of the war.<sup>16</sup> What he stood for as a whole is difficult to comprehend retrospectively. Accordingly, it is said that he "laughed so loudly and so much *with his mouth—but never with his eyes.*"<sup>17</sup>



<sup>9</sup> Cf. ibid., 56, Bock: *Georg Wilhelm Pabst*, and Anton Kaes: *Film in der Weimarer Republik. Motor der Moderne*, in: Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes, Hans Helmut Prinzler (eds.): *Geschichte des deutschen Films* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Stuttgart 2004, 38–98, here 77–78.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Blair Stannard: *Georg Wilhelm Pabst. IMDb Mini Biography*, in: *IMDb*.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Zuckmayer: *Geheimreport*, 335, anonymous: *G. W. Pabst*, in: *filmportal.de*, and Bock: *Georg Wilhelm Pabst*.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Jacobsen: *Pabst, Georg Wilhelm*, own translation.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Saary: *Pabst, Georg Wilhelm*.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., own translation.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Zuckmayer: *Geheimreport*, 128, own translation (italics in the original).



# HEDY LAMARR



Hedy Lamarr (1914–2000) was a *Bombshell*. This is the title of a documentary by Alexandra Dean (2017), which impressively shows that behind the actress's divine, “exotic–romantic”<sup>1</sup> beauty was a pioneering inventive spirit.<sup>2</sup> With her fifth European movie, *Ecstasy* (1933, directed by Gustav Machatý), the 18-year-old Viennese actress caused a veritable scandal: she delivered the first nude scene in film history<sup>3</sup> and, moreover, mimed an orgasm.<sup>4</sup> Shortly thereafter, an enforced career break followed in the face of marriage to a Nazi-affiliated, tyrannical arms manufacturer who treated her merely as a trophy wife.<sup>5</sup> In 1937, Lamarr escaped this toxic masculinity by fleeing via Paris and London to the United States, where she was promoted as “the most beautiful woman in the world” but intellectually

<sup>1</sup> Liz-Anne Bawden, Wolfram Tichy (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon. Regisseure, Schauspieler, Kameraleute, Produzenten, Autoren* (vol. 5, Personen H–Q), Reinbek bei Hamburg 1978, 1125, own translation.

<sup>2</sup> For more information on the documentary, see Alexandra Mölleken: *Hedy Lamarr: Leinwandgöttin und Erfinderin*, in: *Deutsche Welle*, Aug 16, 2018 and Thilo Wydra: *Die Verkannte. Arte-Film über Hedy Lamarr*, in: *Tagespiegel Online*, Oct 15, 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Richard Brem, Theo Lighart: Hommage à Hedy Lamarr, in: Gerfried Stocker, Christine Schopf (eds.): *ARS ELECTRONICA 98. INFOWAR. information.macht.krieg*, Vienna 1998, 186–191, here 186 and Derek Sayer: How We Remember and What We Forget: Art History and the Czech Avant-garde, in: Dariusz Gafijczuk, Derek Sayer (eds.): *The Inhabited Ruins of Central Europe. Re-imagining Space, History, and Memory*, Basingstoke 2013, 148–177, here 166.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Emma Wiepkink: *Hedy Lamarr: Hollywood-Star, Sexsymbol, verkanntes Genie*, in: *musikexpress.de*, Mar 8, 2021, Danny Kringiel: *Sexbombe in geheimer Mission. Filmdiva Hedy Lamarr*, in: *Spiegel Online*, Aug 3, 2011, and Barbara Creed: *Orgasmology: What Does the Orgasm Want?*, in: *Feminist Formations*, vol. 28, no. 2, 2016, 144–151, here 145.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Kringiel: *Sexbombe in geheimer Mission*.

belittled.<sup>6</sup> She wanted to be a character actress,<sup>7</sup> but Hollywood was always “more interested in her beautiful shell than her acting talent.”<sup>8</sup> She achieved another stroke of liberation in 1946 when she produced her own movie, *The Strange Woman* (directed by Edgar G. Ulmer).<sup>9</sup> Hedy Lamarr was an overlooked pioneer.<sup>10</sup> Of her ingenious inventions<sup>11</sup>—she had a lab bench at home and even a small lab in her trailer on set<sup>12</sup>—one stands out in particular: Together with the composer George Antheil, who was like her a staunch Nazi opponent, she developed the frequency hopping method for secret communication between submarines and torpedoes for the Allies, which was patented in 1942 but not used until 1962—after the patent had expired.<sup>13</sup> Today, it forms the basis for modern communication technology: “GPS, WiFi, Bluetooth, and smartphones would be virtually impossible without this principle.”<sup>14</sup> It was only in 1997 that Hedy Lamarr received “a kind of technology Oscar,”<sup>15</sup> without ever having earned any money for it.<sup>16</sup> The fact that the late recognition of her scientific achievement is described as a “biased mythologization as a genius of science,” and that *Bombshell* is dismissed as populist,<sup>17</sup> is an indication that the time is still not quite ripe enough for women to be both beautiful as well as intelligent.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. anonymous: *Hedy Lamarr*, in: *Informatik Aktuell*, Nov 9, 2020.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *Bombshell* (Prime Video version), 00:49:16.

<sup>8</sup> Wiepkking: *Hedy Lamarr*, own translation.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Romina Dehenauw: *Hedy Lamarr*, in: *filmportal.de* and *Bombshell*, 00:49:19–00:50:21.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Wiepkking: *Hedy Lamarr*. On the notion of “structural overlooking” of women in film historiography, see helma schleif, gertrud koch, eva hillier: *alice guy—die erste filmmacherin. auszüge aus ihrer autobiographie*, in: *Frauen und Film*, no. 12, 1977, 29–37; the quotation is on page 29, own translation.

<sup>11</sup> For more information on this, see *Bombshell*, 00:28:30–00:30:12.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. ibid., 00:27:32–00:28:05.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Kringiel: *Sexbombe in geheimer Mission* and Jan Björn Potthast: *Geburtstag von Hedy Lamarr/Tag des Erfinders. Erfinderische “femme fatale,”* in: *Deutsches Patent- und Markenamt*.

<sup>14</sup> Potthast: *Geburtstag von Hedy Lamarr/Tag des Erfinders*, own translation.

<sup>15</sup> It is the Pioneer Award by the Electronic Frontier Foundation; Anna Masoner: *Vom Hollywoodstar zur Erfinderikone. Zum 100. Geburtstag von Hedy Lamarr am 9. November*, in: *fm4v3.orf.at*, Nov 11, 2014, own translation.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Wydra: *Die Verkannte* and Potthast: *Geburtstag von Hedy Lamarr/Tag des Erfinders*.

<sup>17</sup> See Esther Buss: *Zum Sternweichen. Hedy Lamarr im Zeughauskino*, in: *Tagespiegel Online*, Aug 7, 2019, own translation. Cf. Angela Gruber: *Verführerin mit Erfindergeist*, in: *Spiegel Online*, Dec 30, 2016.



# HEINRICH GEORGE

“I do not doubt George’s great art of performance; but he is not the bearer of the role, he adapts the role to himself.”<sup>1</sup> Such was the review of Heinrich George (1893–1946) as Franz Biberkopf in the film adaptation of the novel *Berlin-Alexanderplatz* (1931, directed by Phil Jutzi) by Siegfried Kracauer. If one considers the movies in which George was involved during the Weimar Republic, a pattern can be discerned: stocky proletarians characterized by “a dark mixture of bodily instincts, benevolence, and brutality.”<sup>2</sup> These film characters and George’s work on left-wing theater stages express his political stance. One of his most famous roles from this period is as the labor leader Grot in *Metropolis* (1927, directed by Fritz Lang). At the end of the Weimar Republic, Heinrich George began to adapt not only the roles to himself but also himself to the new political circumstances. In *Our Flags Lead Us Forward* (1933, directed by Hans Steinhoff), he still plays a good-natured proletarian Communist who, however, is set on the ‘right’ track by his Nazi son.<sup>3</sup> Joseph Goebbels was optimistic that the movie would have the same effect on the audience.<sup>4</sup> Soon, George’s adaptation seemed to be perfect. He advanced to become the “star actor of the regime,”<sup>5</sup> whose heroic characters are “victims of dark urges,” wrestle with a “mysterious skill,”<sup>6</sup> or are ready, in a propaganda-like manner, to give everything for the fatherland. But George also knew how to subversively exploit his status which had grown

<sup>1</sup> Siegfried Kracauer: “Berlin-Alexanderplatz” als Film, *Frankfurter Zeitung*, Oct 13, 1931, in: Siegfried Kracauer: *Von Caligari zu Hitler. Eine psychologische Geschichte des deutschen Films*, Frankfurt 1984, 508–510, here 510, own translation.

<sup>2</sup> Siegfried Kracauer: Bemerkungen zu Tonfilmen, *Frankfurter Zeitung*, Nov 25, 1939, in: ibid., 454–456, here 456, own translation.

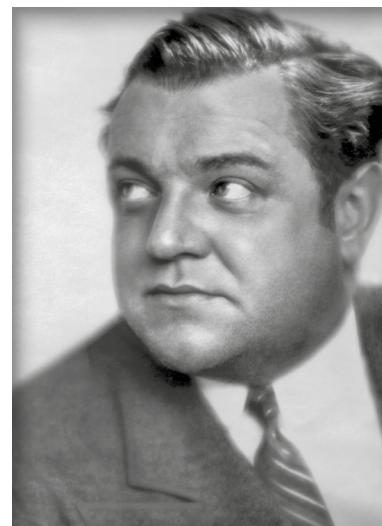
<sup>3</sup> Cf. Philipp Stiasny: *Hitlerjunge Quex* (D 1933, Regie: Hans Steinhoff). *Filmeinführung vom 13. September 2011*, in: *Stiftung Deutsches Historisches Museum*.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Jerzy Toeplitz: *Geschichte des Films* (vol. 3, 1934–1939, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Berlin 1982, 255.

<sup>5</sup> Ulrich Gregor, Enno Patalas: *Geschichte des Films*, Munich 1973, 154, own translation.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., own translation.

out of his adaptation. As the artistic director of the Schiller Theater in Berlin, he protected endangered colleagues from persecution and deployment to the Front.<sup>7</sup> After the end of the war and his internment, he was both incriminated and exonerated by witnesses<sup>8</sup> and rehabilitated by Russia in 1998.<sup>9</sup>



<sup>7</sup> Cf. anonymous: [Nachlässe von Heinrich George und Berta Drews in der Akademie der Künste](#), in: *Akademie der Künste*, Jan 9, 2006, Ralf Schenk: "Bei ihm zu spielen, war eine Auszeichnung." Götz George im Gespräch, in: *film-dienst*, no. 21, 2006, 22–24, here 23, and anonymous: [Heinrich George](#), in: *Stiftung Gedenkstätte Berlin-Hohenschönhausen*.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Ulrich Eisenberg: [Über Vollzugsbedingungen im sowjetischen Internierungslager Sachsenhausen. Eine fragmentarische Darstellung anhand eines Einzelschicksals](#), in: Wolfgang Feuerhelm, Hans-Dieter Schwind, Michael Bock (eds.): *Festschrift für Alexander Böhm zum 70. Geburtstag am 14. Juni 1999*, Berlin 1999, 819–833, here 826–828.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Volker Baer: [George-Nachlass](#), in: *film-dienst*, no. 14, 2006, 4.



# HEINZ RÜHMANN



When [Lilian Harvey](#) learned that, at the end of *The Empress and I* (1933, directed by [Friedrich Holländer](#)), she was to be paired with the character Didier, played by Heinz Rühmann (1902–1994), she is said to have proclaimed, “I won’t do the whole movie if I don’t get Veidt!”<sup>1</sup> She wanted a happy ending with [Conrad Veidt](#)—an attractive male star—and Rühmann, in her eyes, was far from that.<sup>2</sup> He could probably only laugh at this, for with his unique blend of physical slapstick, verbal wit, and singing,<sup>3</sup> he had already set standards for the new genre of the talkie operetta<sup>4</sup> and was clearly on the way to becoming a popular actor.<sup>5</sup> However, his movie-star image never became that of a romantic hero into whose arms the heroine lustfully falls at the end. Instead, he was the witty little man<sup>6</sup> at the side of the great masculine hero.<sup>7</sup> Heinz Rühmann remained a popular actor after 1945 despite his privileged position under the

<sup>1</sup> [Friedrich Holländer](#): *Von Kopf bis Fuß. Revue meines Lebens*, Berlin 2001, 249, own translation.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. [Chris Wahl](#): *Multiple Language Versions Made in BABELSberg. Ufa’s International Strategy, 1929–1939*, Amsterdam 2016, 132.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. [Sabine Hake](#): [Heinz Rühmann und die Inszenierung des “kleinen Mannes,”](#) in: *montage AV*, vol. 7, no. 1, 1998, 33–56, here 35–36.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. [Michael Wedel](#): *Der deutsche Musikfilm. Archäologie eines Genres 1914–1945*, Munich 2007, 269.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. [Hake](#): [Heinz Rühmann](#), 36.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. [Christian Maintz](#): “Könntest du einen Mann lieben, der so klein ist wie ich?” Der Körper des Komikers—die Komik des Körpers, in: [Knut Hickethier](#) (ed.): *Komiker, Komödianten, Komödienspieler. Schauspielkunst im Film: Viertes Symposium (2000)*, Remscheid 2005, 38–53, here 45.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. [Hake](#): [Heinz Rühmann](#), 36.

National Socialists.<sup>8</sup> He appeared in countless successful movies until the early 1980s<sup>9</sup> and is today one of the “most liked German actors of all time”<sup>10</sup> because he had repeatedly thwarted the Nazi’s authoritarian ideals of masculinity<sup>11</sup> and managed the transition to the serious genre.<sup>12</sup> He became the little melancholic man,<sup>13</sup> in whose quiet humor the past resonates. Rühmann would probably have laughed about it, too: it is just *his* hit song from *Five Millions Seek an Heir* (1938, directed by **Carl Boese**) whose chorus many people can sing today, even though they’ve never seen the movie:

*I break the hearts of the proudest women  
Cause I’m a wild one and passion-driven  
Just a woman’s look into my eyes  
Is all it takes to blow her mind!*<sup>14</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Cf. anonymous: **Heinz Rühmann**, in: *filmportal.de*.

<sup>10</sup> Alexander Vogel, Marcel Piethe: *Filmstadt Potsdam. Drehorte und Geschichten*, Berlin 2013, 158, own translation.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Hake: **Heinz Rühmann**, 38–39.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 37.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> “*Ich brech’ die Herzen der stolzesten Frau’n / Weil ich so stürmisch und so leidenschaftlich bin / Mir braucht nur eine ins Auge zu schaun / Und schon isse hin!*”, own translation. Torsten Körner also ends an article about Heinz Rühmann with a reference to the chorus of this hit song; see **Torsten Körner**: Kleinlauter Herzensbrecher, “schüchterner Draufgänger.” Heinz Rühmann als komischer Liebhaber, in: Hickethier (ed.): *Komiker, Komödianten, Komödienspieler*, 66–73, here 72.



# JOE MAY



The director, screenwriter, and producer Joe May (1880–1954), real name Julius Otto Mandl, was a pioneer of Weimar cinema. After Continental-Filmkunst GmbH had hired the Vienna-born director in Berlin in 1911, he achieved such a high output in a very short time that the May department was founded.<sup>1</sup> In 1913, he initiated the highly successful crime series about detective Stuart Webbs<sup>2</sup> and in 1915—after some discord and in direct competition—the Joe Deebs series, which he produced and directed via his own company.<sup>3</sup> Today, May is rightly considered one of the pioneers of the detective film<sup>4</sup> and serial storytelling.<sup>5</sup> His flair for talent led, among other things, to the discovery of the couple Fritz Lang and Thea von Harbou;<sup>6</sup> he also propelled his wife, Mia

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Joschka César: [Joe May](#), in: *filmportale.de* and Hans-Michael Bock: [Joe May. Stationen einer Karriere](#), in: Hans-Michael Bock, Jan Distelmeyer, Jörg Schöning (eds.): *Filmzionier und Mogul. Das Imperium des Joe May*, Munich 2019, 11–16, here 11.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Heinrich Fraenkel: *Unsterblicher Film. Die große Chronik. Von der Laterna Magica bis zum Tonfilm*, Munich 1956, 388 and 391. See also Wolfgang Jacobsen: [Frühgeschichte des deutschen Films. Licht am Ende des Tunnels](#), in: Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes, Hans Helmut Prinzler (eds.): *Geschichte des deutschen Films* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Stuttgart 2004, 13–37, here 34.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. César: [Joe May](#).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. anonymous: [Joe May. Regisseur und Produzent](#) (Beschreibung), in: *CineGraph*.

<sup>5</sup> For more information on this, see Thomas Brandlmeier: [Die Herrin der Welt und der „Herr der Welten.“ Joe May als Serien-Hersteller](#), in: Hans-Michael Bock et al. (eds.): *Filmzionier und Mogul*, 29–38.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. César: [Joe May](#), anonymous: [Joe May. Regisseur und Produzent](#) (Beschreibung), in: *CineGraph*, and Nicolaus Schröder: *50 Klassiker: Filmregisseure. Von Georges Méliès bis Zhang Yimou*, Hildesheim 2003, 43 and 48.

May, to stardom.<sup>7</sup> After World War I, his company grew into an empire,<sup>8</sup> with its own studios in Berlin-Weißensee and an outdoor site in Woltersdorf.<sup>9</sup> Focusing on social dramas in the 1920s,<sup>10</sup> he achieved great heights in Weimar cinema with *Homecoming* (1928) and *Asphalt* (1929),<sup>11</sup> the latter shot in Babelsberg. Joe May thought big all his life. According to an anecdote, the “grand seigneur” went to London one day—together with a valet who shaved him and put a fur blanket over his feet—only pretending to do business: in truth, he wanted to get shirts and ties in a luxury store.<sup>12</sup> Professionally, this attitude culminated in the epic film, in particular, the eight-part series *The Mistress of the World* (1919–1920) and the ‘exotic’ two-parter *The Indian Tomb* (1921), in which “elephants, tigers, and rats—the latter to gnaw through the hero’s shackles”<sup>13</sup>—blew the budget. In stark contrast to this are the shackles of relegation to being a B-movie director in Hollywood, which May had to accept after his emigration in 1933.<sup>14</sup> He is said to have spent his twilight years “completely impoverished.”<sup>15</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Thomas Brandlmeier: *Im Porträt: Regisseur Joe May*, in: *filmdienst.de*, Dec 3, 2018.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. anonymous: *Filmpionier und Mogul. Das Imperium des Joe May* (Beschreibung), in: *edition text+kritik*.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. ibid. and César: *Joe May*.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. anonymous: *Joe May. Regisseur und Produzent* (Beschreibung), in: *CineGraph*.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Brandlmeier: *Im Porträt: Regisseur Joe May*, César: *Joe May*, and anonymous: *Filmpionier und Mogul. Das Imperium des Joe May* (Beschreibung), in: *edition text+kritik*.

<sup>12</sup> See Fraenkel: *Unsterblicher Film*, 75–76; the expression “Grandseigneur” is on page 76.

<sup>13</sup> Liz-Anne Bawden, Wolfram Tichy (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon. Regisseure, Schauspieler, Kameraleute, Produzenten, Autoren* (vol. 5, Personen H–Q), Reinbek bei Hamburg 1978, 1192–1193, own translation.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. César: *Joe May*.

<sup>15</sup> Brandlmeier: *Im Porträt: Regisseur Joe May*, own translation.



# JOSEF VON STERNBERG



The name of the American, Vienna-born director Josef von Sternberg (1894–1969) is inextricably linked with that of the actress [Marlene Dietrich](#). Sometimes, they are even referred to as “one of the most famous working couples in the history of film.”<sup>1</sup> [Dietrich](#) was the result of Sternberg’s “hunt for the female star”<sup>2</sup> for his only movie shot in Germany—in Babelsberg to be exact—*The Blue Angel* (1930). The immense and lasting success of this Ufa prestige production led, among other things, to Sternberg receiving the German Film Award for his life’s work in 1963<sup>3</sup> and sometimes being referred to as a German director.<sup>4</sup> In fact, he took [Dietrich](#) to Hollywood, where he developed her into his character actress at Paramount in six more movies, including *Morocco* (1930) and *Shanghai Express* (1932). Sternberg proved to be a master of “subtle effects of light and shadow, designed to emphasize the sophisticated eroticism of his female protagonist.”<sup>5</sup> His other merits include *Underworld* (1927), one of the first gangster

<sup>1</sup> Anonymous: [Josef Sternberg](#), in: *weltbild.de*, own translation.

<sup>2</sup> Anton Kaes: [Film in der Weimarer Republik. Motor der Moderne](#), in: Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes, Hans Helmut Prinzler (eds.): *Geschichte des deutschen Films* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Stuttgart 2004, 38–98, here 93, own translation.

<sup>3</sup> Film ribbon in gold for “long-standing and excellent contribution to German film (honorary award)”; see anonymous: [Historie](#) (Jahr 1963), in: *Deutscher Filmpreis*, own translation.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Katja Nicodemus: [Josef von Sternberg, Meister über Licht und Schatten. Vor 50 Jahren gestorben](#), in: *deutschlandfunk.de*, Dec 22, 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Wolfgang Jacobsen: [Sternberg, Josef von](#), in: *Deutsche Biographie*, own translation. Cf. Nicodemus: [Josef von Sternberg, Meister über Licht und Schatten](#).

movies,<sup>6</sup> with which he shaped the new genre,<sup>7</sup> and *The Last Command* (1928), with which he helped Emil Jannings win the very first Oscar awarded for acting in film history.<sup>8</sup> However, Josef von Sternberg was a strict autocrat. “He cultivated a pose of egotistical arrogance that bore clearly Fascist traits in his interactions in the studio.”<sup>9</sup> Thus he occasionally appropriated other people’s achievements<sup>10</sup> and claimed, for example: “Marlene Dietrich was not a myth, maybe for others, not for me. The true myth, that was me behind the camera, making what they call the myth of Marlene.”<sup>11</sup> Perhaps this attitude is one of the reasons why he had little success beyond his time at Paramount (from 1927 to 1935). In the last 16 years before his death, Sternberg did not make a single movie.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Cf. ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Michaela Kipp: *Josef von Sternberg 1894–1969*, in: *Lebendiges Museum Online*, Sep 14, 2014.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Nicodemus: *Josef von Sternberg, Meister über Licht und Schatten* and anonymous: *Josef Sternberg*, in: *weltbild.de*.

<sup>9</sup> Liz-Anne Bawden, Wolfram Tichy (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon. Regisseure, Schauspieler, Kameraleute, Produzenten, Autoren* (vol. 6, Personen R–Z), Reinbek bei Hamburg 1978, 1376, own translation.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. ibid.

<sup>11</sup> As cited in Kaes: *Film in der Weimarer Republik*, 93, own translation. See also Linde Salber: *Marlene Dietrich*, Reinbek bei Hamburg 2001, 153.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Nicodemus: *Josef von Sternberg, Meister über Licht und Schatten*; the author’s statement “15 years long” is inaccurate.



# LILIAN HARVEY



A young woman dates three young men at the same time, who are also best friends. Sounds absurd? It is! Because the plot of the extremely successful talkie operetta *Three from the Filling Station* (1930, directed by Wilhelm Thiele), shot in Babelsberg, was basically, as with similar movies, banal, trivial, and completely irrelevant.<sup>1</sup> Buffeted by the economic crisis and political instability, people in the early 1930s longed for escapism.<sup>2</sup> Its central figure was ideally embodied<sup>3</sup>—with “the verve and libertinage of the twenties”<sup>4</sup>—by the most popular German actress of the time, Lilian Harvey (1906–1968).<sup>5</sup> Her oeuvre includes 53 comedies, musicals, and dramas,<sup>6</sup> but her greatest success came with the 12 movies she made between 1926 and 1939 as the partner of the “boyish Mr. Sunshine,”<sup>7</sup> Willy Fritsch, including, in addition to *the Filling Station*, *Congress Dances* (1931, directed by Erik Charell) or *Lucky Kids*

(1936, directed by Paul Martin).<sup>8</sup> The “two lovers in inextricable symbiosis” were celebrated as “the screen dream couple par excellence.”<sup>9</sup> Harvey “could dance,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Anton Kaes: *Film in der Weimarer Republik. Motor der Moderne*, in: Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes, Hans Helmut Prinzler (eds.): *Geschichte des deutschen Films* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Stuttgart 2004, 38–98, here 94–96.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. anonymous: *Vor 50 Jahren starb Ufa-Star Lilian Harvey*, in: *Die Rheinpfalz*, Jul 27, 2018 and Kaes: *Film in der Weimarer Republik*, 96.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Adolf Heinzlmeier, Berndt Schulz: *Lexikon der deutschen Film- und TV-Stars*, Berlin 2000, 147.

<sup>4</sup> Friedemann Beyer: *Die Gesichter der UFA. Starportraits einer Epoche*, Munich 1992, 58, own translation.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Antje Ascheid: *Nazi Stardom and the “Modern Girl”: The Case of Lilian Harvey*, in: *New German Critique*, no. 74, 1998, 57–89, here 57.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 58.

<sup>7</sup> Anonymous: *Vor 50 Jahren starb Ufa-Star Lilian Harvey*, in: *Die Rheinpfalz*, Jul 27, 2018, own translation.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *ibid.*   <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, own translation.

tightrope walk, fence, sing, play, tap-dance,”<sup>10</sup> and speak many languages, so that she often performed her scenes—with iron discipline<sup>11</sup>—in French and English subsequent to the German version,<sup>12</sup> while **Fritsch** took a break when colleagues were acting as his double.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, during her stay in Hollywood in 1933–1934, she did not enjoy much success with the four movies in which she starred.<sup>14</sup> Ufa promoted Lilian Harvey as “the sweetest girl in the world.”<sup>15</sup> The lanky, androgynous woman, whose characters always seemed mechanically cheerful<sup>16</sup> and never underwent any development, fitted neither the image of a film diva nor that of a young Nazi girl.<sup>17</sup> The Nazis, from whom she fled to France in 1939 and to the United States in 1941,<sup>18</sup> had previously tried to rewrite her image but failed because of her idiosyncratic manner.<sup>19</sup> After several unsuccessful relationships with men—even she and **Fritsch** were “strangely unerotic film lovers”<sup>20</sup>—Lilian Harvey was in a relationship with a woman at the end of her life.<sup>21</sup> She just could not be forced into preconceived roles.

<sup>10</sup> Katja Nicodemus: *Das Mädchen von nebenan der 1930er-Jahre. 50. Todestag von Lilian Harvey*, in: *deutschlandfunk.de*, Jul 27, 2018, own translation.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. anonymous: *Über Lilian Harvey. Ein Glückskind schuftet für seine Karriere und hat Pech in der Liebe*, in: *Film Museum Potsdam*.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Nicodemus: *Das Mädchen von nebenan der 1930er-Jahre*.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Film Museum Potsdam: *The Dream Factory: 100 Years of Film in Babelsberg* (permanent exhibition), Potsdam 2023.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Christiane Habich: *Lilian Harvey. Materialien zu einer Biographie*, in: Christiane Habich (ed.): *Lilian Harvey*, Berlin 1990, 9–99, here 39–48 and anonymous: *Lilian Harvey*, in: *filmportal.de*.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Karsten Witte: *Too Beautiful to Be True: Lilian Harvey*, in: *New German Critique*, no. 74, 1998, 37–39, here 37 and Peter Warnecke: *Lilian Harvey*, in: *Film Museum Potsdam*; “das süßeste Mädel der Welt,” Witte’s translation.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Heinzelmeier et al.: *Lexikon der deutschen Film- und TV-Stars*, 147 and Witte: *Too Beautiful to Be True*, 37.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Ascheid: *Nazi Stardom and the “Modern Girl”*, 59–61, 71–73, and 88–89.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Habich: *Lilian Harvey*, 60–62 and 64–65, and anonymous: *Lilian Harvey*, in: *filmportal.de*.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Ascheid: *Nazi Stardom and the “Modern Girl”*, 67 and 80–83.

<sup>20</sup> Anonymous: *Vor 50 Jahren starb Ufa-Star Lilian Harvey*, in: *Die Rheinpfalz*, Jul 27, 2018, own translation.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Else-Pitty Wirth: *Dreizehn Jahre mit Lilian Harvey*, in: Habich (ed.): *Lilian Harvey*, 101–126, Alice A. Kuzniar: *The Queer German Cinema*, Stanford, California 2000, 275, and Claudia Prinz, Lucia Halder: *Lilian Harvey 1907–1968*, in: *Lebendiges Museum Online*, Jul 3, 2015.



# LOTTE LOEBINGER

The actress Lotte Loebinger (1905–1999) embodied the symbiosis of art and politics. She “began to hate the war”<sup>1</sup> as a child and, having just come of age, joined the Communist Party of Germany.<sup>2</sup> Soon, she was not only participating in demonstrations but organizing them.<sup>3</sup> Following her political convictions as well as enthusiasm for acting, she became a student of Erwin Piscator, one of the central figures of political—strictly speaking, proletarian—theater in the Weimar Republic.<sup>4</sup> In his experiments turning the theater stage into a movie screen,<sup>5</sup> Loebinger initially encountered film. In 1931, she debuted as a movie actress in a supporting role in *M* (directed by Fritz Lang).<sup>6</sup> After the Nazis had banned the Communist Party, the so-called half-Jew Loebinger joined the anti-Fascist resistance and, in late 1933, fled via Poland and Czechoslovakia into Soviet exile.<sup>7</sup> There, a team of mainly German émigrés realized *The Struggle* (1936, directed by Gustav von Wangenheim),<sup>8</sup> starring Loebinger as a “poignant, militant” “proletarian mother”<sup>9</sup> who succeeds in mobilizing the masses against the Fascists.<sup>10</sup> Lotte Loebinger kept her pacifist attitude throughout her life.

<sup>1</sup> Myriam Sello-Christian: *Stationen eines Weges. Wahlen gestern und heute. BZ sprach mit Lotte Loebinger*, in: *Berliner Zeitung*, Jun 14, 1967, own translation.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Christina Jung: *Moskau mit einem Lächeln. Annäherung an die Schauspielerin Lotte Loebinger und das sowjetische Exil*, in: *Augen-Blick. Marburger Hefte zur Medienwissenschaft*, no. 33, 2002, 9–38, here 12.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. ibid., 13.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. ibid., 14.

<sup>5</sup> For more information on this, see, e.g., Panja Mücke: *Musikalischer Film—Musikalisches Theater. Medienwechsel und szenische Collage bei Kurt Weill*, Münster 2011, 88 and 179.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Hans-Michael Bock: *Lotte Loebinger*, in: *filmportal.de*.

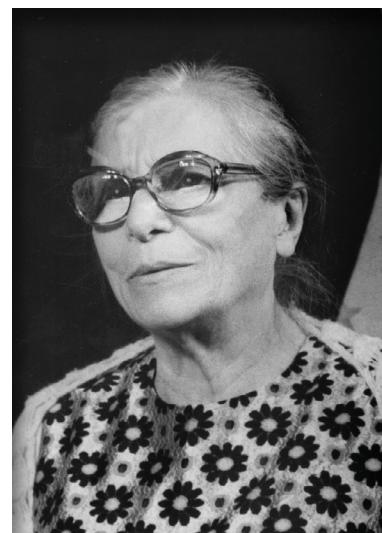
<sup>7</sup> Cf. Jung: *Moskau mit einem Lächeln*, 20–22.

<sup>8</sup> For more information on this, see ibid., 25–26 and 13. internationales forum des jungen films: *Borzy. Kämpfer*, in: *arsenal-berlin.de*.

<sup>9</sup> Curt Trepte: *Lotte Loebinger: dreifache Jubilarin*, in: *Neues Deutschland*, Oct 10, 1975, own translation.

<sup>10</sup> On the orchestration of the masses in *The Struggle*, see Günter Agde: *Kämpfer. Biographie eines Films und seiner Macher*, Berlin 2001, 193 and 194.

As a young “enthusiastic Soviet citizen,”<sup>11</sup> she was shocked by Joseph Stalin’s persecution of political enemies<sup>12</sup> that affected many members of *The Struggle*’s team.<sup>13</sup> After her return to Germany in 1945—to the Soviet occupation zone and later GDR, needless to say—she campaigned intensively against the forgetting of “this crime against the Jews, [of] Auschwitz.”<sup>14</sup> In the fall of 1989, the then 84-year-old, popular theater, cinema, and television actress<sup>15</sup> vividly took part in the Peaceful Revolution, joining—as a member of the SED—the public protests on the streets against the state leadership.<sup>16</sup> Lotte Loebinger regretted the decline of the GDR and believed in the renewal of Socialism, stating, “All those who still have something in mind with Socialism, must understand one thing: that Socialism cannot be decreed and dictated.”<sup>17</sup>



<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 77, own translation.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Ernst Schumacher: *Seid freundlich, das kostet doch nichts. BZ-Gespräch mit Lotte Loebinger, die am 10. Oktober 85 Jahre alt wird*, in: *Berliner Zeitung*, Oct 6/7, 1990.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Agde: Kämpfer, 195–196.

<sup>14</sup> Schumacher: *Seid freundlich, das kostet doch nichts*, own translation.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Ralf Schenk: *Ein geheimnisvolles Leben. Zum 100. Geburtstag der Schauspielerin Lotte Loebinger*, in: *DEFA Foundation*.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Jung: *Moskau mit einem Lächeln*, 33–34.

<sup>17</sup> Schumacher: *Seid freundlich, das kostet doch nichts*, own translation.



# MARLENE DIETRICH

Marlene Dietrich (1901–1992) was a living legend. She had her breakthrough as Lola Lola in *The Blue Angel* (1930)—a fetching vaudeville performer who sings, in provocative costumes, to her audience, including a high school professor (*Emil Jannings*) whom she seduces and plunges to his doom.<sup>1</sup> On the very evening of the premiere of the movie shot in Babelsberg, she followed the director *Josef von Sternberg*, her discoverer, to Hollywood, where he made six more movies with her and cemented her worldwide fame.<sup>2</sup> In her roles, she was stylized as “beautiful, perverse, and apparently mastering all kinds of seductive arts.”<sup>3</sup> Her pan-erotic charisma, masculine singing voice, and self-determined attitude made her an identification figure for men as well as women.<sup>4</sup> Marlene Dietrich was a declared opponent of National Socialism. Her abhorrence of the Nazis was expressed in, among other things, the fact that she declined every lucrative offer to return to the German film industry, demonstratively accepted American citizenship in 1939, and, starting in 1943, appeared on a support tour for US soldiers—in Europe, as close to the Front as possible.<sup>5</sup> After that, she made only occasional movies and prioritized her singing career.<sup>6</sup> When she went to West Germany

<sup>1</sup> See the comprehensive dossier on the film in Werner Sudendorf (ed.): *Marlene Dietrich. Dokumente/Essays/Filme/Teil 1*, Munich 1977, 63–132 and the exhibition booklet no. 8 from Deutsches Historisches Museum/Rainer Rother (ed.): *Die Ufa 1917–1945. Das deutsche Bilderimperium*, Berlin 1992.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Friedemann Beyer: *Die Gesichter der UFA. Starportraits einer Epoche*, Munich 1992, 42.

<sup>3</sup> Liz-Anne Bawden, Wolfram Tichy (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon. Regisseure, Schauspieler, Kameraleute, Produzenten, Autoren* (vol. 4, Personen A–G), Reinbek bei Hamburg 1978, 924, own translation.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Adolf Heinzlmeier, Berndt Schulz: *Lexikon der deutschen Film- und TV-Stars*, Berlin 2000, 74.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. anonymous: *Marlene Dietrich*, in: *filmportal.de*.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Bawden et al. (eds.): *rororo Filmlexikon* (vol. 4), 924.

in 1960 as part of a European tour, she was, on the one hand, warmly received,<sup>7</sup> but on the other, insulted as a “traitor to the fatherland.”<sup>8</sup> Even at her funeral 32 years later, when her body was taken from Paris, her last domicile, to her hometown of Berlin, there were some protests.<sup>9</sup> Immediately after her death, *Marlene Dietrich by Her Daughter*<sup>10</sup> was published, a biting biography to which *Alice Schwarzer* attested “pervasive obtuseness and spitefulness.”<sup>11</sup> But the myth of Marlene Dietrich lives on unbroken to this day. And if you look up *Diva* in the Duden dictionary, you’ll find only one example of the term: “Marlene Dietrich, the great German diva.”



<sup>7</sup> See, for example, *Deutschlandspeigel 68/1960* (film periodical from May 27, 1960), 02:49–03:13.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Andreas Conrad: *Wie man den Nachlass von Marlene Dietrich online erforschen kann. 90 Jahre “Der Blaue Engel,”* in: *Tagesspiegel Online*, Apr 1, 2020. For more information on this, see Werner Sudendorf (ed.): *Marlene Go Home! Briefe und Flugblätter zur Deutschlandtournee im Mai 1960*, in: Sudendorf (ed.): *Marlene Dietrich*, 20–24.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Ute Scheub: *Marlene, wir lieben dir! Die letzte Ehre für eine “Vaterlandsverräterin,”* in: *taz Berlin*, May 14, 1992.

<sup>10</sup> Maria Riva: *Marlene Dietrich by Her Daughter*, London 1992.

<sup>11</sup> *Alice Schwarzer: Die Abrechnung einer Tochter*, in: *EMMA*, Mar 1, 1993, own translation.



# ZARAH LEANDER

Usually, multiple meanings are art's necessary and sufficient characteristic. When Zarah Leander (1907–1981) sang *I Know, a Miracle Will Happen One Day!* (*Ich weiß, es wird einmal ein Wunder geschehn!*) at the height of her Nazi career in the propaganda movie *The Great Love* (1942, directed by Rolf Hansen)—the most successful German movie up to that time with 27 million viewers<sup>1</sup>—the ambiguity went so far that the Nazis and the soldiers in the Third Reich were enriched by a slogan of perseverance and final victory,<sup>2</sup> while others—including concentration camp prisoners—were enriched by a glimmer of peace.<sup>3</sup> Born in Sweden, Leander made a conscious decision in 1936 to pursue a career in Nazi Germany, although she could have gone to Hollywood or England.<sup>4</sup> She was systematically built up as a superstar by Ufa “to prove the cosmopolitanism” of the Nazi state<sup>5</sup> but ultimately functioned as a Marlene Dietrich substitute.<sup>6</sup> “She always played only one role: to be Zarah Leander and to love the love,”<sup>7</sup> trying to unite the contradictory images of a wickedly independent diva and a self-sacrificing, relinquishing mother.<sup>8</sup> Her deep voice, the rolled R, the “elegiac songs,” the “languishing look,”<sup>9</sup> her “renunciation poses,” and not least,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Karsten Witte: *Film im Nationalsozialismus. Blendung und Überblendung*, in: Wolfgang Jacobsen, Anton Kaes, Hans Helmut Prinzler (eds.): *Geschichte des deutschen Films* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Stuttgart 2004, 117–166, here 145 and Friedemann Beyer: *Die Gesichter der UFA. Starportraits einer Epoche*, Munich 1992, 88.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Adolf Heinzlmeier, Berndt Schulz: *Lexikon der deutschen Film- und TV-Stars*, Berlin 2000, 219.

<sup>3</sup> For more information on this, see the documentary *Hitlers Frauen: Zarah Leander: Die Sängerin* (2001, directed by Jörg Müllner and Ricarda Schlosshan), 36:00–38:08.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. ibid., 07:00–08:05.

<sup>5</sup> Beyer: *Die Gesichter der UFA*, 88, own translation.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. ibid. and Witte: *Film im Nationalsozialismus*, 129–130.

<sup>7</sup> Heinzlmeier et al.: *Lexikon der deutschen Film- und TV-Stars*, 218–219, own translation.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Antje Ascheid: *A Sierckian Double Image: The Narration of Zarah Leander as a National Socialist Star*, in: *Film Criticism*, vol. 23, no. 2/3, 1999, 46–73, here 56, 65, and 67.

<sup>9</sup> Beyer: *Die Gesichter der UFA*, 88, own translation.

her “glorified eroticism”<sup>10</sup> made the “super-female”<sup>11</sup> an idol. However, Zarah Leander did not take responsibility. In 1943, when Ufa could no longer pay her in Swedish krona, her Berlin villa was bombed,<sup>12</sup> and after Joseph Goebbels had previously offered her German citizenship along with the title of State Actress in vain,<sup>13</sup> she secretly returned to Sweden. In 1974, she nevertheless said, “Goebbels was a highly interesting man. [...] And ... what else he did is not my business.”<sup>14</sup> After the war, she had a brilliant career as a singer, “was in demand until old age,”<sup>15</sup> and even became a gay icon. This image has recently attracted widespread scholarly interest, especially given her Nazi past.<sup>16</sup>

And yet, as Wilhelm Busch once said:



*Music is pleasant to listen to,  
But it need not last forever.*<sup>17</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Heinzlmeier et al.: *Lexikon der deutschen Film- und TV-Stars*, 219, own translation.

<sup>11</sup> The expression (“Überweib,” Ascheid’s translation) comes from the 1943 supplement to the *Political Service for SS and Police (Politischer Dienst für SS und Polizei)* and is quoted in Ascheid: *A Sierckian Double Image*, 68; the translation is on page 71.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Beyer: *Die Gesichter der UFA*, 90 and Ascheid: *A Sierckian Double Image*, 68.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *Die Akte Zarah Leander* (2013, directed by Torsten Striegnitz and Simone Dobmeier), 28:07–29:02 and Heinzlmeier et al.: *Lexikon der deutschen Film- und TV-Stars*, 218.

<sup>14</sup> *Hitlers Frauen: Zarah Leander: Die Sängerin*, 22:08–22:27 and *Die Akte Zarah Leander*, 18:44–18:55, own translation.

<sup>15</sup> Hans Helmut Prinzler: *Chronik, 1895–2004. Ereignisse, Personen, Filme*, in: Jacobsen et al. (eds.): *Geschichte des deutschen Films*, 567–616, here 600, own translation.

<sup>16</sup> See, e.g., Alice A. Kuzniar: *Zarah Leander and Transgender Specularity*, in: *Film Criticism*, vol. 23, no. 2/3, 1999, 74–93 and Andres Mario Zervigon: *A Magnificent Distraction? The Drag Cult for Nazi-Era Film Diva Zarah Leander*, in: *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Art*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2005, 89–113.

<sup>17</sup> “Musik ist angenehm zu hören, / Doch ewig braucht sie nicht zu währen,” own translation. See Wilhelm Busch, Thomas Kluge (ed.): *Wilhelm Busch für Boshafté*, Berlin 2003, Chapter “Begabung und Beruf.”



# QUENTIN TARANTINO



Quentin Tarantino is a real phenomenon. Born in the United States in 1963, the director wanted his own street at the Studio Babelsberg—and he got it! Just in time for the German premiere of his “masterstroke”<sup>1</sup> *Inglourious Basterds* (2009), which was shot there, Quentin-Tarantino-Straße was inaugurated on the studio lot,<sup>2</sup> rendering him the only living filmmaker honored with a street name in Potsdam. “Inglourious Bastards”—that would be the orthographically correct spelling<sup>3</sup>—is an idiosyncratic rearticulation of the Nazi past, in which Jews murder Nazis<sup>4</sup> and World War II is ended by virtue of the art of cinema.<sup>5</sup> And this is meant literally because Tarantino has Adolf Hitler, Joseph Goebbels & Co. perish in a cinema in flames at a Nazi premiere,<sup>6</sup> for which the colossal, extraordinary production required

<sup>1</sup> Michael Wedel: Studio Babelsberg Today (1993–2012), in: Michael Wedel, Chris Wahl, Ralf Schenk (eds.): *100 Years Studio Babelsberg. The Art of Filmmaking*, Kempen 2012, 16–49, here 18.

<sup>2</sup> For more information on this, see dpa/JaHa: *Quentin Tarantino bekommt Straße in Babelsberg*, in: *Potsdamer Neueste Nachrichten*, Jul 28, 2009. Cf. Wedel: Studio Babelsberg Today, 16 and 18.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Hans-Ulrich Pönack: “*Inglourious Basterds*.” Hans-Ulrich Pönack über Tarantinos Nazi-Spektakel, in: *Deutschlandfunk Kultur*, Aug 19, 2009 and Chris Fujiwara: “A slight duplication of efforts”: redundancy and the excessive camera in *Inglourious Basterds*, in: Robert von Dassanowsky (ed.): *Quentin Tarantino’s Inglourious Basterds. A Manipulation of Metacinema*, New York 2012, 37–55, here 54.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Srikanth Srinivasan: *The grand illusion*, in: von Dassanowsky (ed.): *Quentin Tarantino’s Inglourious Basterds*, 1–13, here 3–4.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. ibid., 9–10.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Imke Meyer: *Exploding cinema, exploding Hollywood: Inglourious Basterds and the limits of cinema*, in: von Dassanowsky (ed.): *Quentin Tarantino’s Inglourious Basterds*, 15–35, here 18–20.

“several explosions” of a cinema exterior and two burning cinema interiors at different locations, in the studio and in Rüdersdorf.<sup>7</sup> His comment on the shooting: “I’m a film expert, I’m a film scholar, so to be in a film studio where all the great films of the 1920s were made, a time which I consider to be one of the highpoints of cinema history … it’s just magnificent!”<sup>8</sup> Quentin Tarantino is a master of metacinema.<sup>9</sup> His oeuvre, including cult movies such as *Pulp Fiction* (1994), *Jackie Brown* (1997), and the two-parter *Kill Bill* (2003; 2004), is full of film-historical quotations and cross-references.<sup>10</sup> In *Basterds*, the name G. W. Papst appears on the cinema board<sup>11</sup> and a playing card;<sup>12</sup> a lieutenant—a former film critic—has also written a book about the director;<sup>13</sup> Lilian Harvey is insulted by Goebbels as “not an actress”;<sup>14</sup> and Emil Jannings is present at the premiere in the cinema.<sup>15</sup> For this reason, Quentin Tarantino’s street sign tells a metahistory of Potsdam’s filmmakers and occupies a special position. Meanwhile, he is an absolute exception in another respect, too. Because, in his opinion, directors do not get better in the course of their careers, he insists he will retire after his tenth movie.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Michael Düwel: *Art Department Studio Babelsberg. Design, Concept and Realisation of Unique Objects and Decorative Sets for Film, TV, Events, Exhibits, Theatre and Private Clients*, Babelsberg 2016, 77.

<sup>8</sup> Quentin Tarantino: Introduction, in: Wedel et al. (eds.): *100 Years Studio Babelsberg*, 4.

<sup>9</sup> For more information on this, see Robert von Dassanowsky: *Introduction. Locating Mr. Tarantino or, who’s afraid of metacinema?*, in: von Dassanowsky (ed.): *Quentin Tarantino’s Inglourious Basterds*, vii–xxiii.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Srinivasan: *The grand illusion*, 1 and, on Tarantino’s current, ninth film *Once Upon a Time … in Hollywood* (2019), a reinterpretation of Hollywood, Christian Buß: *Bei diesen Filmen und Serien hat Tarantino geklaut. “Once Upon a Time in Hollywood,”* in: *Spiegel Online*, Aug 17, 2019.

<sup>11</sup> *Inglourious Basterds* (Prime Video version), 00:39:24–00:41:12.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 01:25:56–01:31:11.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 01:05:54–01:06:26.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 01:01:51–01:02:02, own translation (due to missing subtitles).

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 01:50:21–01:51:10.

<sup>16</sup> For more information on this, see Roisin O’Connor: *Quentin Tarantino says he’s definitely retiring after his next film*, in: *The Independent*, Jun 26, 2021.

## 16. The Essence of Being—the Being of the Essence: A Commentary on the Rearticulation of the City of Potsdam’s Cinematic Face

Usually, authors of artistic works reveal neither the strategies of their creation nor the experience and meaning they intend to offer. Art lives from ambiguity—and this should not be limited by any authorial intentions, especially since there are effects that were not originally planned. In the case of scientific–artistic works, the situation is different since objectivity—at least in the form of intersubjective comprehensibility—must be ensured as a quality criterion of research. Because the short biographies represent the central film-historical database for the quantitative analysis of the cinematic streetscape (see [Chapter 6](#) and [Chapter 7](#)),<sup>1</sup> the concept according to which they were written will now be made transparent.

In a press release on the open-air installation *The Cinematic Face of the City of Potsdam* (see “[Preface and Acknowledgments](#)”), I summarized the concept of the short biographies in simple terms as follows:

On the one hand, they are based on scientific research and follow academic standards. On the other hand, their dramaturgy is intended to create tension in order to encourage independent interpretation and further research.<sup>2</sup>

This objective is based on a psychological impact model (Figure 41), which is inspired by the affective–integrative film psychology I developed (hereafter referred to as film psychology for short)<sup>3</sup> and the so-called affective events paradigm I established in customer satisfaction research.<sup>4</sup> According to the psychological

<sup>1</sup> In a supplementary publication to this book, I conducted an additional analysis focusing on the rearticulation of film-historical censorship cases in the city of Potsdam’s cinematic face; see Johann Pibert: *Filmpychologie und Zensur. Zur Reartikulation filmhistorischer Zensurfälle im filmischen Gesicht der Stadt Potsdam*, in: *ffk Journal*, no. 8, 2023, 133–150.

<sup>2</sup> Johann Pibert: *Filmuniversität zeigt “Das filmische Gesicht der Stadt Potsdam,”* in: *BMBF Rahmenprogramm Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften*, Sep 8, 2020, own translation.

<sup>3</sup> See Johann Pibert: *Grundzüge einer affektiv-integrativen Filmpychologie*, in: *ffk Journal*, no. 4, 2019, 141–154.

<sup>4</sup> See Johann Pibert: *Der Einfluss der Dienstleistungsinteraktion auf die Kundenzufriedenheit*

impact model, text modules of the short biographies—understood as affective events—should trigger emotions in the recipients, which, in turn, should lead to their satisfaction. If the recipients like the biographies, it is likely that they will (continue to) engage with them—in the form of behavior that can be summarized under the concept of performance.

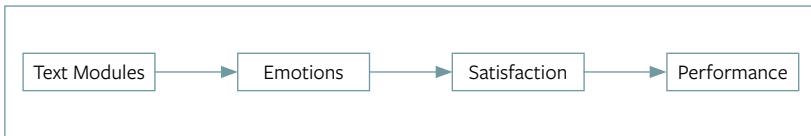


Figure 41: Psychological Impact Model of the Short Biographies.

The dramaturgical function model (Table 19) records how the specific text modules are supposed to evoke emotions. The text modules with their various functions are borrowed from songwriting,<sup>5</sup> assuming that biographies are most exciting when they function like songs. The modules Intro, TELL I, SHOW I, Bridge, TELL II, SHOW II, and Outro serve not only to trigger emotions such as interest, joy, positive surprise but also negative surprise, anger, or contempt.<sup>6</sup> They also ensure that the biographies follow a uniform dramaturgy and therefore have a comparable form and length: as a rule, two stories are presented—one generally and one specifically formulated—so that the recipients are ‘moved’ in two arcs of tension.<sup>7</sup> The guiding idea here is that the communication of historical information is not only promoted by emotions and feelings but can be set in motion in the first place:

*und die Kundenbindung—dargestellt am Beispiel des Verkaufshauses Mannheim der Peek & Cloppenburg KG Düsseldorf* (unpublished diploma thesis), Mannheim 2011.

- <sup>5</sup> For more information on songwriting, see, e.g., Pat Pattison: *Writing Better Lyrics. The Essential Guide to Powerful Songwriting* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Cincinnati, Ohio 2009.
- <sup>6</sup> I adopted the emotion concept from my customer satisfaction research; see Pibert: *Der Einfluss der Dienstleistungsinteraktion auf die Kundenzufriedenheit und die Kundenbindung*, 94–97.
- <sup>7</sup> In exceptional cases, the two-part structure was deviated from to bring some diversity into the overall body of biographies. In addition, the order of general and specific story was varied repeatedly.

Interest, boredom, curiosity, irritation, sadness, pity, disgust, fascination are only some of the many feelings that accompany our encounter with history and can shape our understanding of past people and their fates. [...] Discussions on history quickly lead to the insight that feelings are a substantial part of historical culture. [...] Sometimes [emotions] are specifically modeled or even deliberately suppressed in historical learning processes. Moreover, feelings are part of the past itself: the stories of past people and times tell of love, hate, anger, grief, trust, or fondness—emotions that apparently played a significant role in determining the course of historic events.<sup>8</sup>

The essence of a film personality's being can therefore best be grasped affectively.

The prime importance of emotions in film psychology is anchored in the basic assumption of precedence—i.e., primacy—of emotions over cognitions.<sup>9</sup> Feeling is more important than thinking. In the dramaturgical model, this can be seen in the function descriptions. In the impact model, this becomes apparent in the fact that, on the one hand, satisfaction, which is defined “as an attitude in the sense of a positive [...] evaluation judgment”<sup>10</sup> and thus as cognition, is subordinate to emotions, and, on the other hand, information conveyance is not even explicitly modeled. The evocation of certain emotions is supported by numerous stylistic devices, especially repetitions and rhymes, as well as by the

<sup>8</sup> The quote comes from the introduction to an anthology devoted entirely to the role of emotions in communicating history; Juliane Brauer, Martin Lücke: Emotionen, Geschichte und historisches Lernen. Einführende Überlegungen, in: Juliane Brauer, Martin Lücke (eds.): *Emotionen, Geschichte und historisches Lernen. Geschichtsdidaktische und geschichtskulturelle Perspektiven*, Göttingen 2013, 11–26, here 11, own translation. The authors do not make a distinction between emotions and feelings. However, this is essential, since feelings such as love and hate are distinguished from emotions such as joy and anger primarily by cognitive—i.e., mental—components; cf. Pibert: *Grundzüge einer affektiv-integrativen Filmpychologie*, 148: footnote 58.

<sup>9</sup> See Pibert: *Grundzüge einer affektiv-integrativen Filmpychologie*, 147–148. Film psychology is not only affective–integrative, but also situational and processual–dynamic, which is also anchored in the scientific–artistic concept of short biographies; cf. ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Pibert: *Der Einfluss der Dienstleistungsinteraktion auf die Kundenzufriedenheit und die Kundenbindung*, 68, own translation.

length, rhythm, and melody of the sentences. In a few cases, correct grammar even had to give way to sentence melody.

Table 19: Dramaturgical Function Model of the Short Biographies

Text Module/ Function	Function Description
Intro	The intro is a concise introductory information piece, which should trigger the emotions of attention, interest, and, if necessary, positive surprise. Here, the overall message of the short biography can be crystallized or anticipated. It depends on the intro, which is also called doorknob using a German metaphor, <sup>11</sup> whether the recipients will read the text.
TELL I	The first TELL module talks about the person in a way that creates an overall impression. The emotions to be evoked are interest and joy.
SHOW I	The associated SHOW module illustrates the overall impression in an exciting way, for example, with a (self-)quote. In addition to joy, positive surprise can be evoked in particular.
Bridge	The bridge introduces a second story in the same way as the intro but can be a negatively surprising turning point if information is subsequently presented that limits the overall portrayal, for example, in the case of problematic personalities with regard to the Nazi era.
TELL II	In the second TELL module, more information about the person is presented, but it is more concrete and has a greater impact. This is to maintain interest and joy in reading. In the case of a turning point, the emotions of sadness, anger, and contempt may occur.
SHOW II	The corresponding SHOW module illustrates the information as it is in the first story. With a turning point, negative surprise can be triggered in addition to sadness, anger, and contempt.
Outro	The outro addresses the recipients more or less directly in order to encourage them to think, discuss, or research further. For this purpose, the emotion of self-confidence should be evoked.

The effects that the short biographies are meant to unfold can be systematized using Francesco Casetti's performance approach: there are three traditional practices (affective, cognitive, and sensory) that have been reoriented in the wake of

<sup>11</sup> For more information on this, see Edith Jeske, Tobias Reitz: *Handbuch für Songtexter. Mehr Erfolg durch professionelles Schreiben und Vermarkten* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), Berlin 2019, 136–140.

the topological turn (see [Chapter 5](#)), and four new, conative—i.e., coming from their own impulse—, practices (technological, textual, relational, and expressive).<sup>12</sup> In addition to triggering emotions (affective practices) and conveying information (cognitive practices), it was possible to observe, for example, in the open-air installation: sensory experience of the biographies by touching the faces of the filmmakers (sensory practices) and appropriation of the biographies by photographing them (technological practices). Moreover, when liking, i.e., when satisfaction is high, it can be assumed that performance can occur even after reception: for instance, retelling and quoting (textual practices), discussing and watching movies together (relational practices), or personally recommending and linking via social media (expressive practices). Such behaviors, by the way, do not only depend on satisfaction but are related to the habits of the recipients.<sup>13</sup>

The reception of the short biographies belongs to the approach of performative space (see [Chapter 11](#)) because it represents an interaction with the cinematic streetscape of Potsdam. The biographies—and also you as the recipient—are elements of the local cinematic assemblage (see [Section 12.2](#)). Furthermore, the biographies are to be understood as cinematic artifacts with a changing status. For example, the 31 biographical texts exhibited in the street-sign installation *The Cinematic Face of the City of Potsdam* in front of the [Film Museum Potsdam](#) from September 8 to October 4, 2020, were temporary cinematic artifacts near a cinematic institution (see [Section 11.2](#)). The 22 biographies (21 Drewitz filmmakers plus [Heiner Carow](#)) presented in the poster exhibition *The Cinematic Face of Drewitz* from September 19 to 26, 2021, as part of the [Drewitz Film Festival](#) in [Konrad-Wolf-Allee](#),<sup>14</sup> were temporary cinematic

<sup>12</sup> See Francesco Casetti: *Die Explosion des Kinos. Filmische Erfahrung in der post-kinematographischen Epoche*, in: *montage AV*, vol. 19, no. 1, 2010, 11–35, here 25–26 and Francesco Casetti: *The Lumière Galaxy. Seven Key Words for the Cinema to Come*, New York 2015, 186–189.

<sup>13</sup> Casetti's systematization is absorbed in the film-psychological approach to the practices of audiovisual experience, according to which practices represent habits; see Johann Pibert: *Praktiken audiovisueller Erfahrung. Möglichkeiten filmpsychologischer Untersuchung und Theoriebildung*, in: *ffk Journal*, no. 5, 2020, 237–253, here 244–247.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Lena Schneider: [Was Film kann. Defa-Festival in Drewitz](#), in: *Potsdamer Neueste Nachrichten*, Sep 17, 2021.

artifacts in a cinematic street (see [Section 11.1](#)). The same occurs when you use this book as a walking map through the cinematic streetscape of Potsdam.

The information conveyed and the stories told in the short biographies can be understood as a public rearticulation of a specific part of Potsdam's film history:<sup>15</sup> the stories of the namesakes of cinematic streets are retold, brought forth anew, and newly performed with the goal of being appropriated, used, and for their part performed by recipients, for example, in discussions or through film viewings.<sup>16</sup> From a sensory and affective point of view,<sup>17</sup> one did indeed encounter the faces of filmmakers in the street-sign installation (see [Figure 1](#)) and the poster exhibition. But actually, "the cinematic face" is a metaphor for how the filmmakers as a whole present themselves to the recipients in the rearticulation.<sup>18</sup>

This presentation should be close to the present. Therefore, it was my intention to put the [Groß Glienicker](#) honorees [Edith Schollwer](#), [Ida Wüst](#), [Käthe Haack](#), [Maly Delschaft](#), and [Heinz Sielmann](#) before the others in order to make female filmmaking, the genre of documentary film as well as film personalities of the second rank (more) visible. In the biographies of [Conrad Veidt](#), [Hertha Thiele](#), and [Heiner Carow](#), I have also brought out milestones of queer cinema that are inseparably linked to Potsdam's film history: [Different from the Others](#) (1919, directed by [Richard Oswald](#)) as the world's first gay movie, [Mädchen in Uniform](#) (1931, directed by [Leontine Sagan](#)) as the world's first lesbian movie,

<sup>15</sup> My understanding of the rearticulation of film history also goes back to [Casetti](#); see [Francesco Casetti: The relocation of cinema](#), in: *NECSUS. European Journal of Media Studies*, vol. 1, no. 2, 2012, 5–34, here 21–26.

<sup>16</sup> A remarkable example of appropriation, use, and performance is the adoption of the biographies of [Edith Schollwer](#), [Ida Wüst](#), [Käthe Haack](#), and [Maly Delschaft](#) by the [Groß Glienicker](#) civic working group "Movies and Their Times" ("Filme und ihre Zeit") for presentation on its website.

<sup>17</sup> That is, in terms of sensory and affective practices within performance; see above.

<sup>18</sup> Analogously, I recently proposed the film-psychological metaphor of the face for contemporary screens—i.e., as a current screen metaphor—to emphasize (audio)visual encounters with fellow humans or with (one's own) avatars on social media; see [Johann Pibert: Vertikale Musikvideos. Filmpychologische Analyse der Wirkung des Hochformats in Lena Meyer-Landrut's Don't Lie to Me](#), in: *ffk Journal*, no. 6, 2021, 216–228, here 223.

and *Coming Out* (1989, directed by Heiner Carow) as the GDR's first (and last) gay movie. Although these visibility efforts—as well as the entire scientific–artistic concept of the biographies—conform to the paradigm of New Film History (see Chapter 3),<sup>19</sup> the biographies oscillate between New Film History and classical film history. The mention of firsts does not just have the character of the classical paradigm. As Anna Luise Kiss found out, “the cinematic streetscape in *Babelsberg* and *Drewitz* presents itself in a form similar to the works of classical film historiography” (see Section 9.5). For this reason, it is hardly possible to reinvent the wheel when rearticulating the history and stories of Potsdam's filmmakers.

Following this understanding, the scientific sources of the short biographies include not only film-historical monographs, anthologies, and journal articles that reflect the current state of research but also film-historical works from the time of classical film historiography. In addition, extensive use was made of biographies, encyclopedias, exhibition catalogs, newspaper and magazine articles, and trustworthy Internet sources (see Chapter 6), while autobiographies were hardly used considering possible biases in self-assessment. The fact that the research and production phase of the short biographies partly coincided with the closure of libraries due to the pandemic turned out, in the end, to be an advantage in terms of public-interest publication: the majority of the sources, whether scientific or not, are publicly available on the Internet. Finally, the strategy of writing 11 of the 42 biographies in teams according to the present scientific–artistic concept—with Anna Luise Kiss or Dieter Chill making a start—ensured that it was an intersubjectively comprehensible procedure that could also be used in the future. Thus, it is to be hoped that the history of Potsdam's filmmakers will be continued.

<sup>19</sup> My film-psychological paradigm, on which the scientific–artistic concept of biographies is based, is compatible with New Film History but not with classical film history.

# APPENDIX

## Index of Persons

This index lists all persons mentioned in the running text and in the supplementary information in the footnotes. Members and institutional supporters of the research project as well as authors of used sources who are not discussed further are not listed. The index of persons was compiled by Johann Pibert.

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### Movies and Series' Abbreviations for Countries

A	Austria
AUS	Australia
B	Belgium
CDN	Canada
CH	Switzerland
CHN	China
CS	Czechoslovakia
D	Germany (before the founding of the GDR and after German reunification)
E	Spain
F	France
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany (in GDR times)
GDR	German Democratic Republic
HK	Hong Kong
I	Italy
IND	India
J	Japan
PL	Poland
TW	Taiwan
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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In the city of film Potsdam, there are 42 streets named after filmmakers. This book tells the story of Potsdam's cinematic streetscape together with a short biography of each of the film personalities involved. The cinematic streetscape is quantitatively analyzed and interpreted as a palimpsest, as a cultural arena, and as a performative space. Older, overlooked, and forgotten layers of the streetscape come to light, and it is outlined how the practice of street naming has changed over the decades. Memory-political disputes about street names in Potsdam are reconstructed. The results of the book show how the cinematic streetscape, together with other cinematic elements and due to different echo effects, creates a filmic-induced urban space, characterized by overwriting, disputes over questions of representation, and processes of interaction with the cinematic streetscape.

For the first time in film studies, a model of a circular film-related spatial practice constituting cities of film is presented, enabling a new understanding of them as assemblages. Furthermore, this book relates city-centered film studies with critical street-name studies and combines citizen research, film history—i.e., humanities research—, social science methods, a scientific-artistic writing concept, and a revisionist perspective. Numerous illustrations and district maps enable identification of the cinematic streets, while graphics make the often complex scientific modeling comprehensible. A hyperlink structure links the main text with the short biographies of the filmmakers, allowing access to linked institutions and sources and producing a film-studies publication that also functions as an experimental public-interest publication.