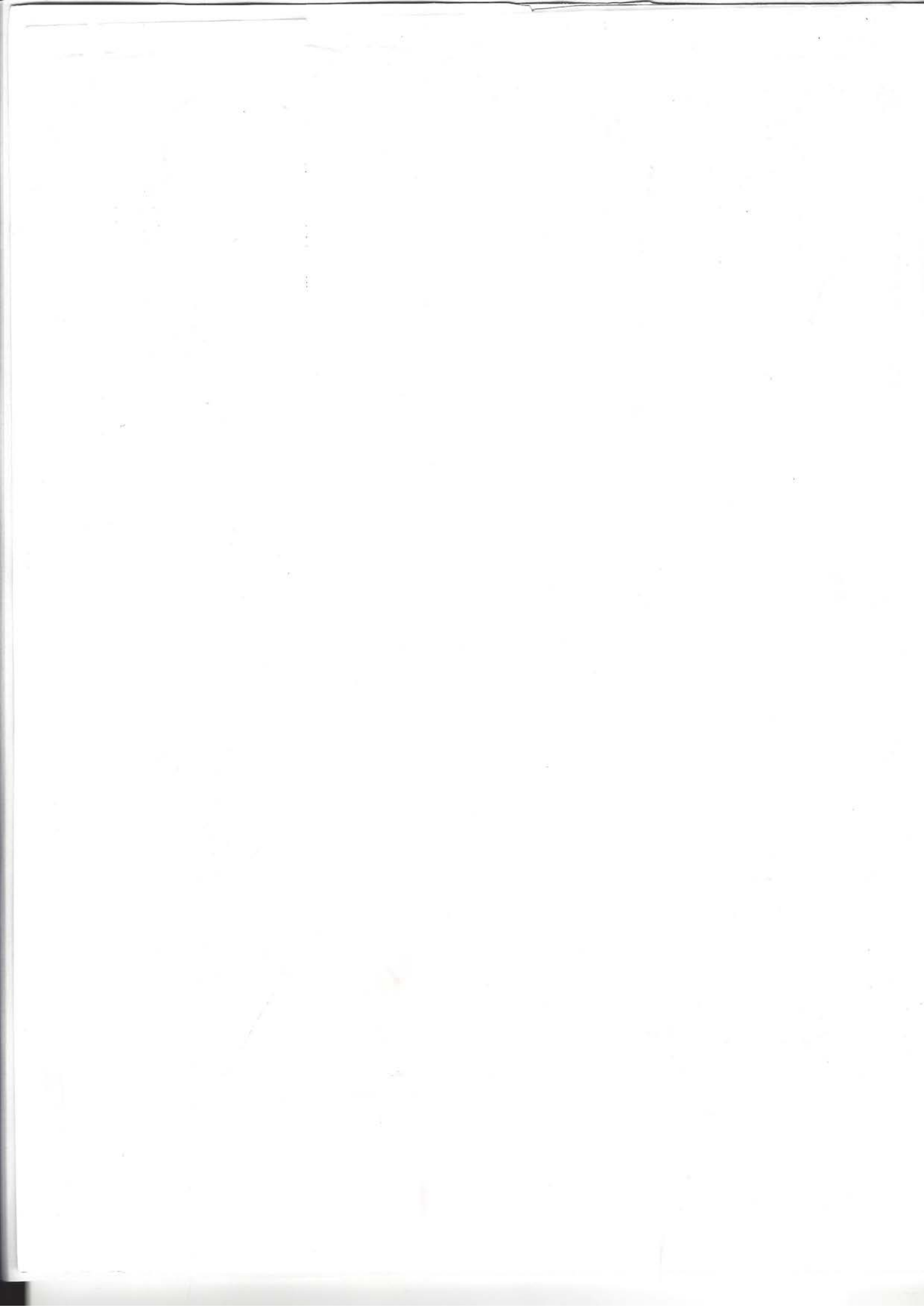


HIMMSTADT



WEIBENSEE





Over this school year 2017 -18 Berlin Bilingual School participated for the 5th time in 'Denkmal Aktiv' the schools programme of the Deutsche Stiftung Denkmalschutz. The school teamed up with restorer parent Heino Handelsmann and worked on a project about Filmstadt Weißensee. We made a number of visits to buildings in the local area to explore the history and legacy of Filmstadt Weißensee and how these are preserved in a contemporary context. We would like to thank the team at 'Denkmal Aktiv' in particular Dr Braun and Herr Koch for their support with this project.

Participating students:

Amelie, Emil, Henriette, Jacob, Jan, Johannes, Jonas, Rahul, Rocco, Sirian, Fritzi, Nils, Leo, Emma-Lily, Esther, Finneigh, Fritzi, Lio, Lula, Phi Long, Uendi



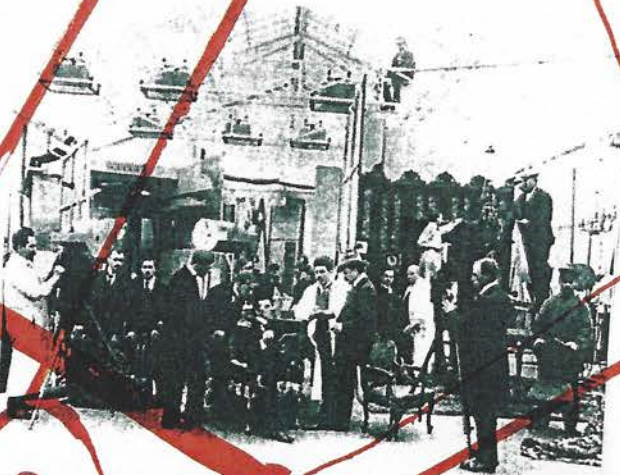
# Filmsta

IN THE 1920'S, FILMSTADT WEIßENSEE, THE NOW QUIET AREA IN NORTHERN BERLIN WAS ONCE THE CITY'S CULTURAL HOTSPOT. STARS LIKE MARLENE DIETRICH AND FRITZ LANG WERE THERE, AT CALIGARIPLATZ AND ON THE GUSTAV-ADOLF STRASSE, WHICH AT THAT TIME WAS LINED WITH BRIGHT LIGHTS AND 20 CINEMA HOUSES. NOT ONLY WERE THERE A HUGE NUMBER OF PLACES TO CONSUME FILM BUT THE STUDIOS WHERE THEY WERE FILMED AND THE WORKSHOPS WHERE THE FILMS WERE PHYSICALLY MADE WERE ALSO IN THIS AREA. IN THIS PROJECT WE RESEARCHED ABOUT THE HISTORY OF FILMSTADT WEIßENSEE, MADE VISITS TO THREE BUILDINGS WHICH STILL EXIST TODAY AND ARE UNDER 'DENKMALSCHUTZ' - LISTED UNDER HISTORICAL PROTECTION. WE MET THE OWNERS OF THESE BUILDINGS TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE HISTORY OF FILMSTADT WEIßENSEE, AS WELL AS THE HISTORY AND LEGACY OF THE BUILDINGS THEMSELVES.





# dt Weißensee





# THE bEgInNING of

# fiLm StAd TwEißeNstEe

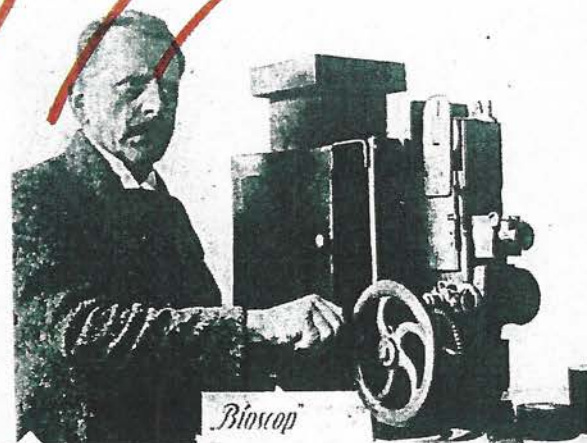
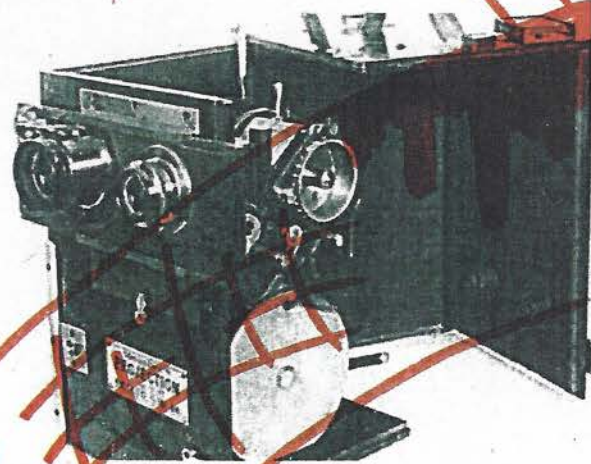
The beginning of German cinema started with two inventions: 'The Bioscope Projector' invented in 1895 by Max and Emil Skladanowsky, followed by the 'Kine-Messter-Kamera' invented in 1900 by Oskar Messter. Most of the short films that were made were of street scenes, historical memories and comedies. From appearance and narrative these had more in common with theatre or opera. These initial films were shot in the street or in some of the big glass studios in the centre of Berlin near Friedrich Strass.





The first German film company *Bioscop GmbH* were also first to build new purpose built premises outside of Berlin. In 1911 they set up the first film production facility outside of Berlin at Neubabelsberg, which today is known as Studios Babelsberg.

Actually people became more and more fascinated in this new medium and by the end of 1911, script writers, directors and producers started to explore the potential of the new medium. With an increasing public interest in film the glass studios of the time were soon unable to keep up with the production demand and sort of space in the surrounding area of





# The beginnings of

A branch of an American film company run by Jules Greenbaum, moved to Weißensee and set up a film production facility on Franz Joseph Str 5 - 7 (today Liebermannstr 24 - 28). Shortly after this though he left the American company and set up his own called 'Greenbaum-Film GmbH' and took over the whole complex!



There was also another company 'Continental-Kunstfilm GmbH' who moved into Franz Joseph Str 9. Two of the big characters in this company were the director Joe May and the actor / author Ernst Reicher. They also left their company to set up their own 'Stuart Webbs-Film company May & Reicher'. Joe May then went off to fight in WWI before returning in 1915 to set up his own company 'May-Film GmbH'. The three companies (underlined) were the ones that drew the rich talent of famous actors, actresses, directors and writers to Weißensee.

allllllll



# Filmstadt Weipensee

1913-1918

With the outbreak of WWI citizens found solace and distraction in the world of cinema. As well as the street scenes and comedies of early cinema new genres of film were emerging such as romance and adventure films. Filmstadt Weipensee became famous for a new genre of the detective film. The Greenbaum-Film released a version of an Arthur Conan Doyle story 'The Hound of the Baskervilles' (1914) and Reicher & May developed a very popular series of films based around the detective character Stuart Webb with such films as 'Die Toten Erwachen' (1915) and 'Der Gestreifte Domino' (1915)



Detective Genre



collle







# Open Years

IN 1918 GERMANY LOST THE WAR AND PEOPLE MORE THEN EVER, WANTED TO LOSE THEMSELVES IN THE FAR OF EXOTIC PLACES AND TIMES THAT FILMS COULD OFFER THEM.

THE FILMSTADT CONTINUED TO GROW AND IN 1919 A NEW COMPANY MOVED IN, THE 'DECLA-FILM-GESELLSCHAFT' INTO THE STR. WITH THEM THEY BROUGHT A GROUP OF NEW YOUNG TALENT SUCH AS THE DIRECTORS ERICH POMMER, ROBERT WIENE AND THE YOUNG AND MOST FAMOUS DIRECTOR OF EARLY CINEMA FRITZ LANG.





WITH THE INTEREST OF EXPRESSING THE SUBJECTIVE INNER WORLD OF EMOTIONS AS OPPOSED TO AN OBJECTIVE EXTERIOR WORLD, 'THE CABINET OF DR CALIGARI' BECAME A FAMOUS WORK OF THE EXPRESSIONIST PERIOD WHICH WAS POPULAR AMONGST WRITERS, POETS AND ARTISTS OF THIS PERIOD.

IT WAS A SHORT PERIOD IN CINEMA AND BY THE MID 1920'S IT WAS OVER. OTHER FAMOUS FILMS OF THIS PERIOD INCLUDE 'GOLEM' (1920) 'DAS WACHS FIGUREN KABINETT' (1923/4)

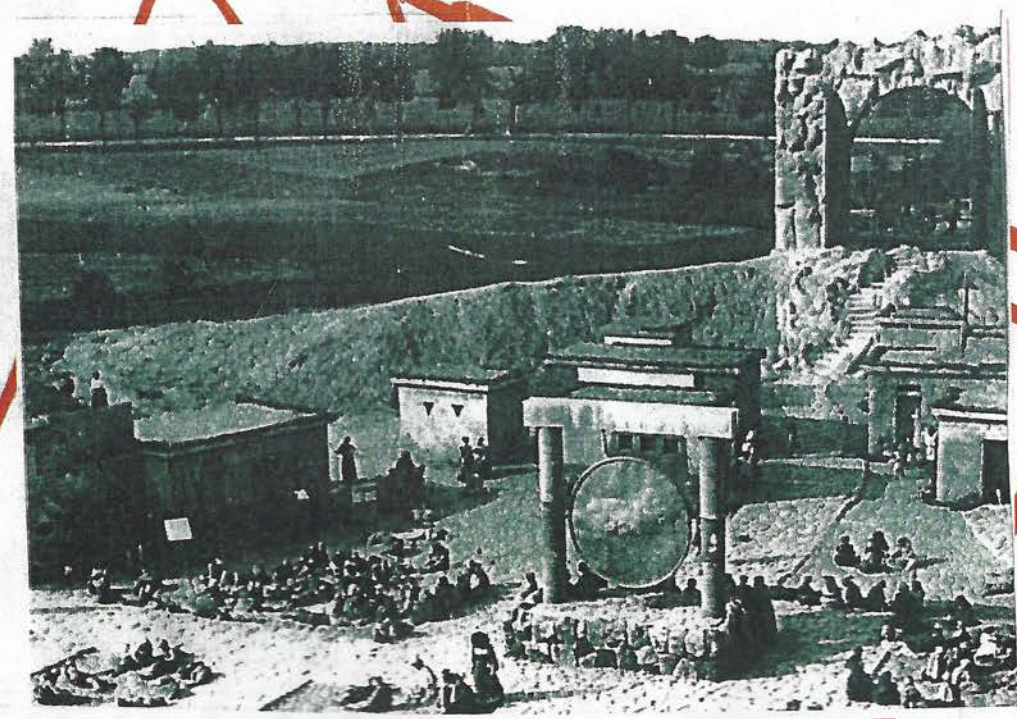
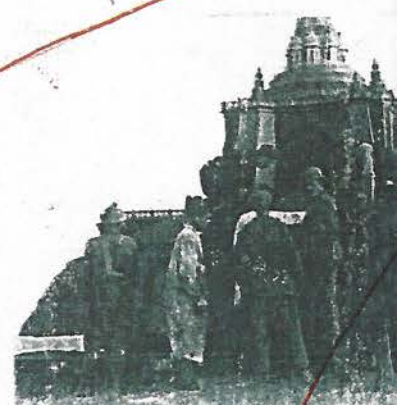
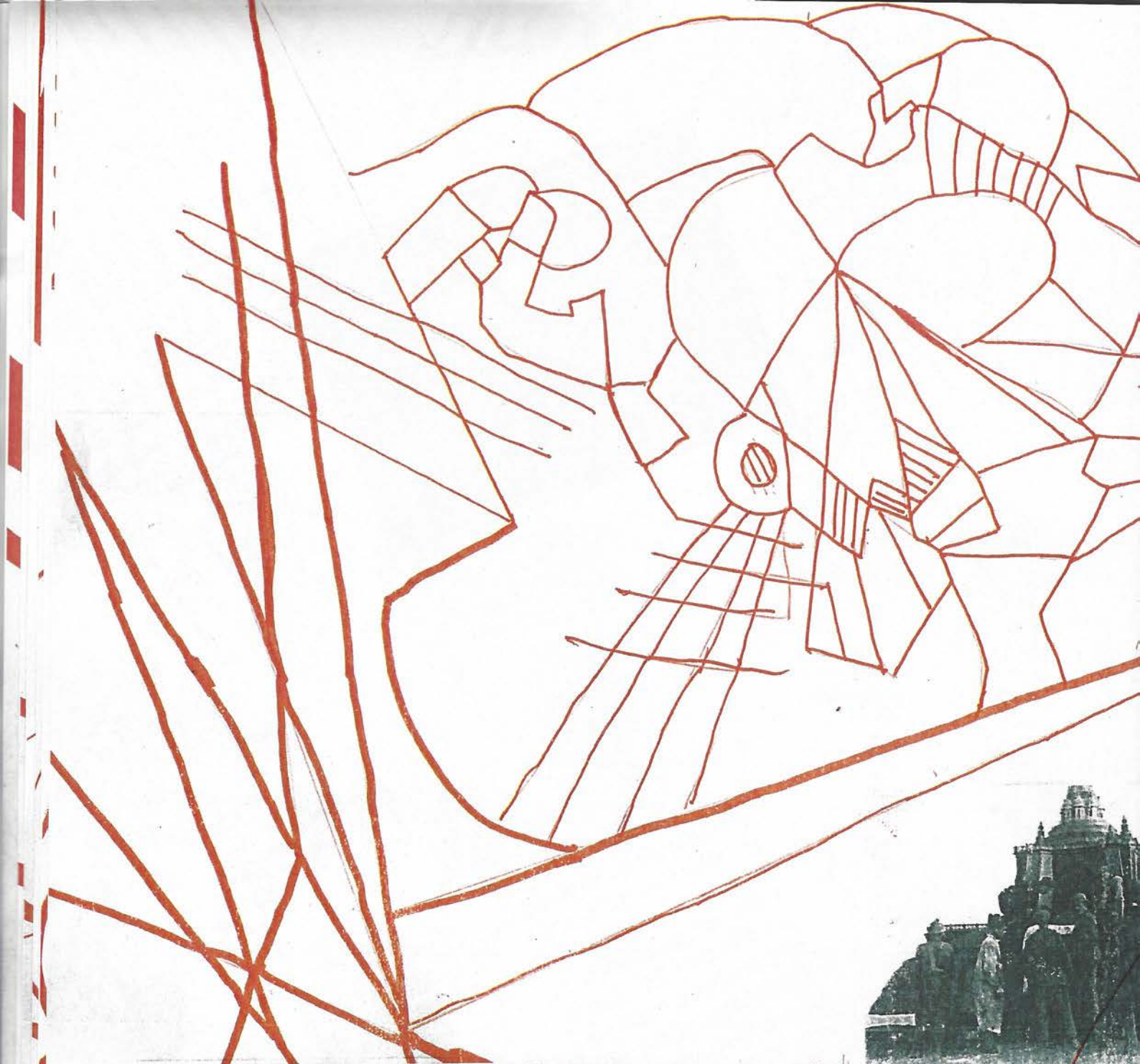






IN 1919 DECLA-FILM PRODUCED ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS SILENT FILMS OF ALL TIME "THE CABINET OF DR CALIGARI". IN THE FILM A SHADY TRAVELLING SHOWMAN OWNS A SLEEP WALKER CALLED "CESARE" WHOM HE USES AS AN INSTRUMENT OF DEATH. WITH A TWISTING NARRATIVE THE STORY HAS AN UNCLEAR ENDING AND PRESENTS ITSELF AS A FRAGMENT OF THE IMAGINATION. THIS AS MANIA AND OBSESSION IS EXTENDED BY THE FILMS PRODUCTION: EXTREME TONAL CONTRASTS, IRREGULAR PERSPECTIVES & PROPORTIONS AND THE EXAGGERATIONS OF ACTORS PERFORMING.







# EPIC FILMS

THE EARLY 1920'S SAW AN INTEREST IN MONUMENTAL FILMS THAT DEPICTED FAR OFF TIMES AND PLACES. THE FIRST OF THESE 'VERITAS VINCIT' WAS PRODUCED IN 1913/17 BY JOE MAY WHICH STARRED HIS WIFE MIA MAY IN THE LEADING ROLE. MUCH OF THIS FILM WAS PRODUCED ON A PIECE OF LAND NEAR FRANZ JOSEPH STR BUT HE ALSO BOUGHT LAND IN WOLTERSODORF NEAR ERKNER TO PRODUCE THE EVER MORE ELABORATE SERIES OF FILMS 'DIE HERRIN DER WELT'. HE STARTED BUILDING VAST SETS AND STARTED BORROWING EXOTIC ANIMALS FROM THE ZOO.

AT THE SAME TIME FRITZ LANG STARTED PRODUCING A SERIES OF EXOTIC ADVENTURE STORIES CALLED 'DIE SPINNEN'. (1919/20) WHERE MILLIONAIRE KAY HOOG GOES IN SEARCH OF TREASURE IN SOUTH AMERICA. IT WAS EXTREMELY POPULAR AT THE TIME AND HAS BEEN VISUALLY REFERENCED BY MANY LATER ADVENTURE FILMS SUCH AS INDIANA JONES.



„VERITAS VINCIT“ Der große Frunkfilm

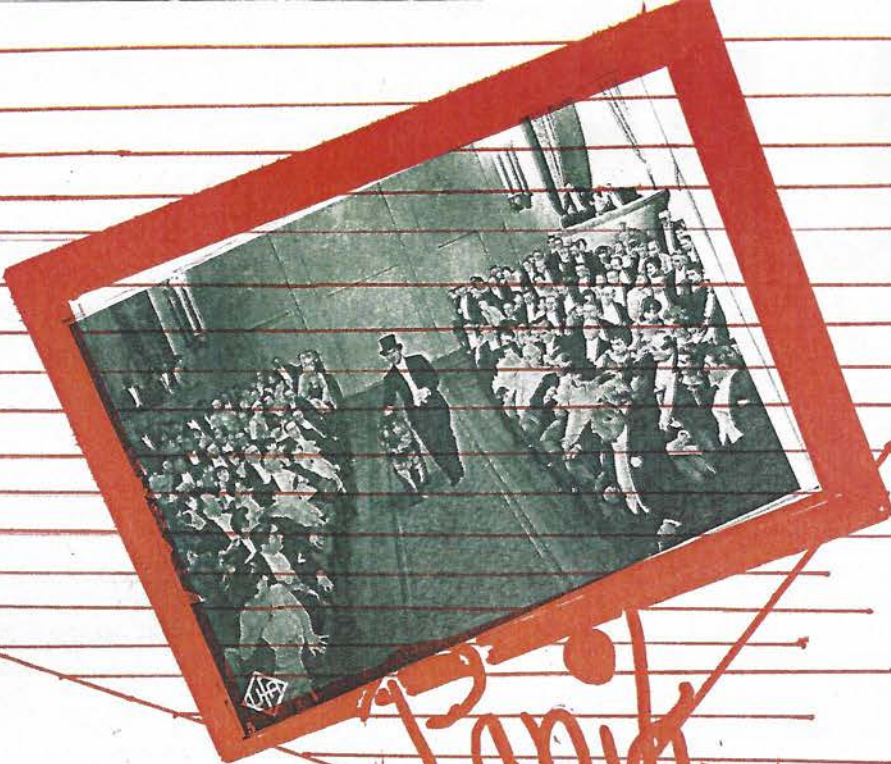


Mia May



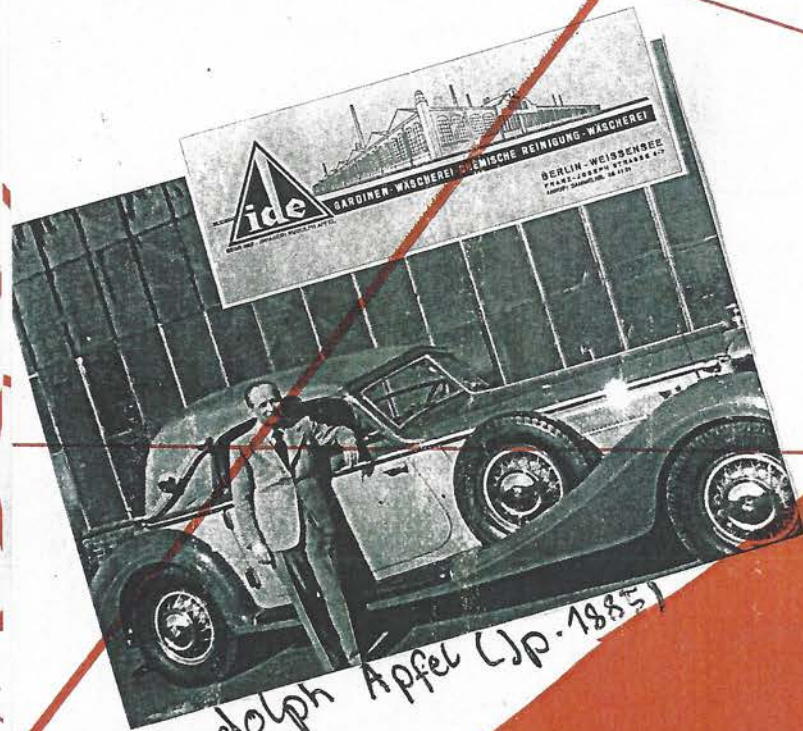
OTHER FAMOUS EPIC FILMS OF THIS PERIOD INCLUDED 'DIE PEST IN FLORENZ' DIRECTED BY FRITZ LANG AND THE 'INDISCHES GRABMAL' DIRECTED BY JOE MAY. THE LATTER OF WHICH WAS A HUGE SUCCESS IN THE CINEMAS AND MADE MAY A FORTUNE WITH WHICH HE BOUGHT ALL THE STUDIOS AT FRANZ JOSEPH STRASSE.



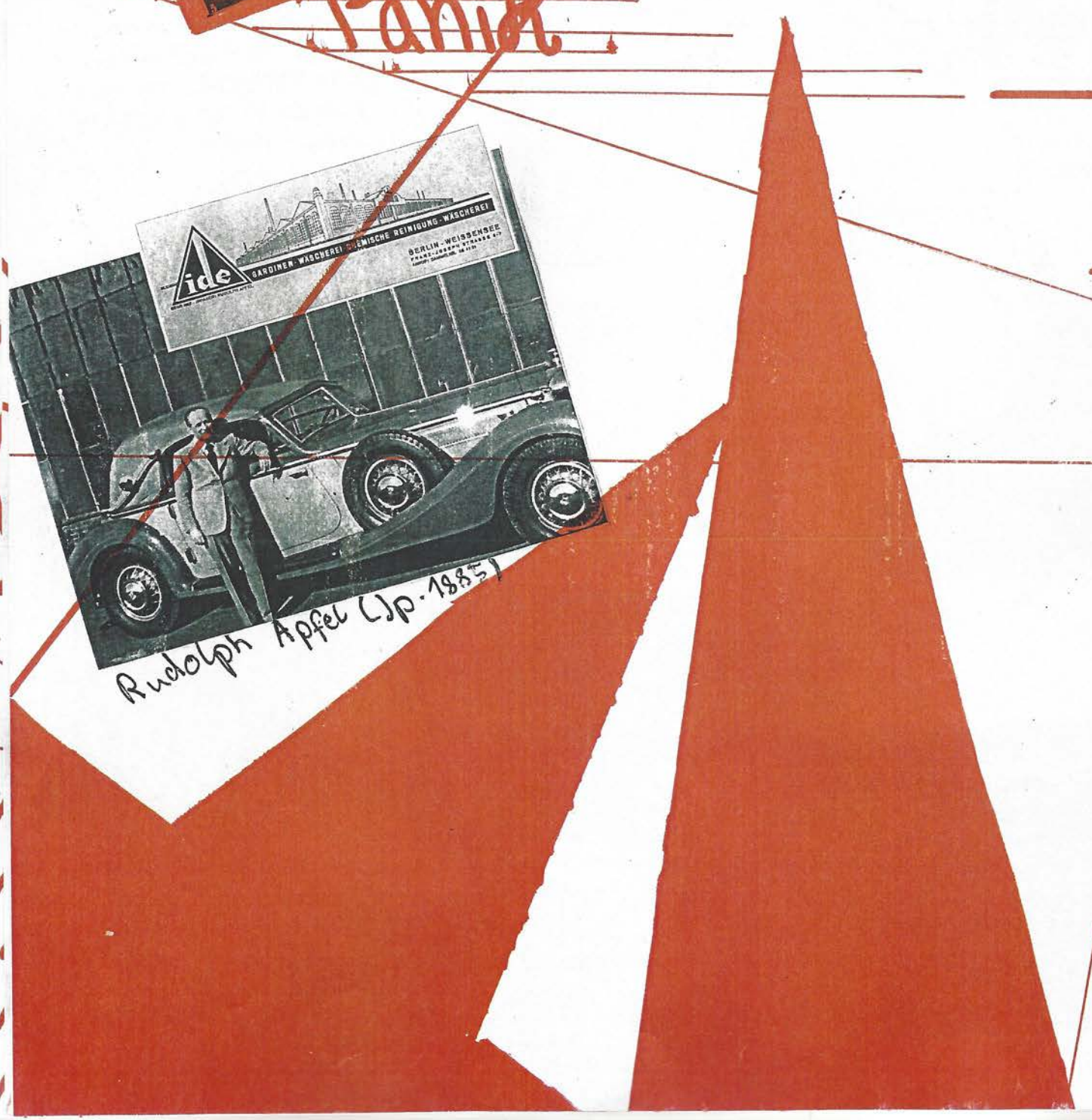


Panik

The

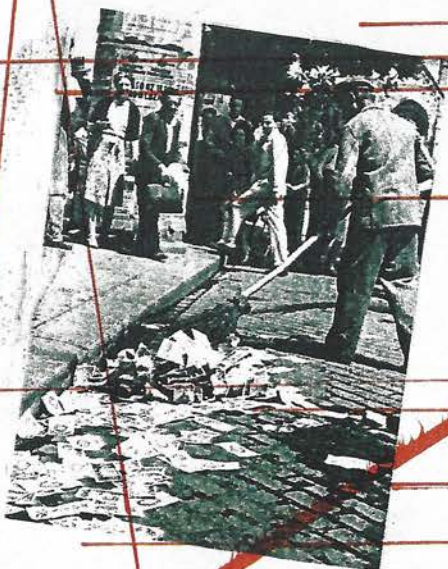


Rudolph Apfel (Jp. 1985)





# Last New Years



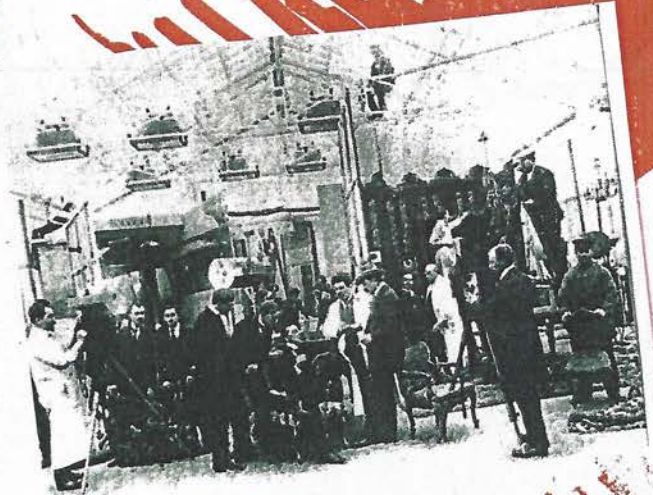
Joe May's evermore elaborate productions and couldn't be sustained in last May-Film production the didn't cover its costs at box office. In 1926 the production studios were put up for sale. Following the companies closure, Joe May worked with UFA at Babelsberg along with Fritz Lang. It was here that the most famous film of the silent era produced 'Metropolis' (1927). They both started producing a number of films with sound but with the rise of the Nazi party the power in the emigrated to America with a host of other cultural practitioners.

In 1928 the final film came out of Filmstadt Weihenstephan appropriately titled 'Parik' from Henry Piel. Shortly after its release Franz Joseph sold to a housing association and the Franz Joseph Strasse 5 and sold to laundry company called 'I.d.e.' - 7 was



# Liebermann Str

A branch of an American film company run by Jules Greenbaum, moved to Weißensee and set up a film production facility on Franz Joseph Str 5 - 7 (today Liebermannstr 24 - 28). Shortly after this though he left the American company and set up his own, called 'Greenbaum-Film GmbH' and took over the whole complex! There was also another company 'Continental-Kunstfilm GmbH' who moved into Franz Joseph Str 9. Two of the big characters in this company were the director Joe May and the actor / author Ernst Reicher. They also left their company to set up their own 'Stuart Webbs-Film company May & Reicher'. Joe May then went off to fight in WWI before returning in 1915 to set up his own company 'May-Film GmbH'. The three companies (underlined) were the ones that drew the rich talent of famous actors, actresses, directors and writers to Weißensee.





# 24-28



Ernst Reicher



Greenbaum



Joe May

Between 1913 and 1923 more than 50 films were produced  
The first studio complex was made of an office building, two "glasateliers" and the biggest "kopierwerk". In 1913

During the first world war even more films were produced  
In 1919 the most famous german silent film "Das Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" was filmed in the Lixie-Atelier which was part of Franz Joseph Str 5-7.

The preparation and filming of the Cabinet of Dr. Caligari only took one and a half months  
The "Marktplatz von Florenz" was made on the property of Franz-Joseph Str 9  
Joe May bought the studios on Franz-Joseph Str 5-7 and built his film company with inspiration from America with bigger and more elaborate set constructions

With the onset of financial issues and the conglomerates of film companies in Babelsberg 1928 saw the last film produced at the studios which was Harry Piel's "Panik"  
In 1933 Rudolph Apfel bought the property 5 - 7 Franz Joseph Str and established the l.d.e laundry and dyeing company  
Today a relative of Rudolph - Antje Apfel runs the buildings on the site as a series of studios for artists and craftsmen.

There is a commemorative plaque on the new block of flats of Franz - Joseph str. 9-12.



# KINO TONI



Die staatlichen Stellen organisierten eine umfangreiche Sanierung. Die Bezirksfilmdirektion Berlin wurde für das Kino verantwortlich. Die Rangtreppe, Kassenraum und das Foyer, wurde völlig neu gestaltet. Das Foyer und Bildwerferraum vergrößert. Ein Büro und neue Sozialräume. Eine Bühne ermöglicht es, auch andere Veranstaltungen durchzuführen. Das Kino öffnete am 23.07.82 mit dem DEFA-Film „das Fahrrad“. Es gab nun eine Theaterleiterin vor Ort. Das Kino wurde eines von fünf Premierenkinos der Stadt. Nun gab es 275 Plätze, eine Garderobe, neue Leuchtreklame mit dem neuen Namen KINO TONI.

1946 zeigte Kinobetreiber Herbert Bendel Interesse und bekam einen Prachtvertrag. Herbert Bendel organisierte Wetterfestmachung, Ausbau und Renovierung. Auf dem Geschäftspapier stand „Film-Bühne“ und „Toni“ wurde dazu gesetzt. Am 1. Weihnachtsfeiertag 1948 wurde mit dem Film „Zirkus Renz“ eröffnet, das Kino verzeichnete täglich 1600 Besucher. Das Außenbild des Kinos musste auch verbessert werden, dies sollte aber eine Weile dauern. 1945 gab es Mittel aus der „Berliner Bärenlotterie“. Es wurde Leuchtschrift und neue beleuchtete Schaukästen angebracht. Das war ein Lichtpunkt am Antonplatz und lockte Menschen ins Kino. Das war dann doch zu viel Staatliche Unterstützung an die privaten Kinobetreiber. So wurde 1956 beschlossen, den privaten Kinos das Premierenrecht zu entziehen, so gingen die Besucherzahlen drastisch zurück.

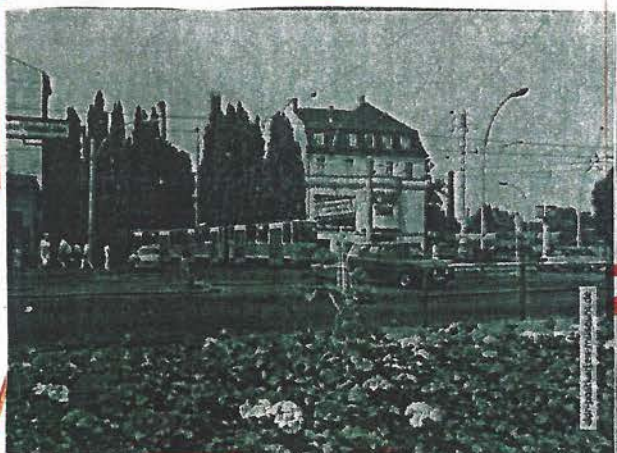




Das Kino Toni wurde 1919 als Stummfilmkino mit Klavierbegleitung auf einer kleinen Bühne gebaut. Damals hieß Kino Toni, UFA Theater am Antonplatz. Die Filme wurden zunehmend kriegswichtig und auch in ihrer Sprache deutlicher, so auch in „Urlaub auf Ehrenwort“. Dann begannen Stromabschaltungen und Fliegeralarm zum Alltag zu gehören und führten dadurch zu verkürzten Spielzeiten. April 1945 standen sowjetische Raketenwerfer auf dem Antonplatz. Häuser am Antonplatz lagen in Trümmern, aber das UFA Kino blieb stehen. Der Befehl kam das Kino für einen Neuanfang zu öffnen. Das Kino ging an einen sowjetischen Filmverleih. Es blieb dem Verfall preisgegeben, niemand wollte für die fehlende Bestuhlung aufkommen. Es regnete auch in den Saal

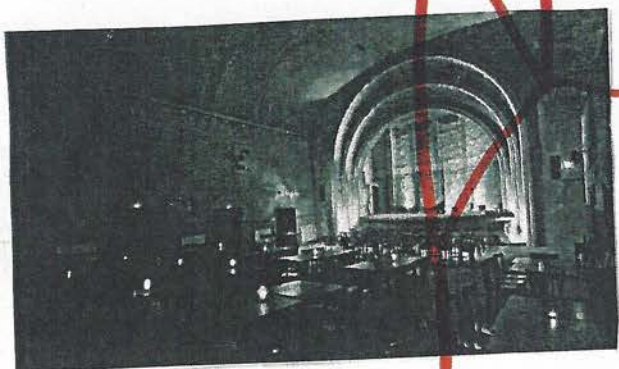


Das Toni wurde als Erstaufführungstheater für östliche Filmkunst und Dokumentarfilme benutzt. Die Veranstaltungen waren Regelmäßig und ausverkauft und Diskussionen gingen bis weit in die Nacht. Mit dem Film „Insel der Schwäne“ war endgültig Schluss. Es wurden sämtliche Vorführungen abgesagt. Es konnten aber weiterhin bisher Verbotene Sowjetische Filme gezeigt werden. Nach der Wende begann die Zeit der Ideensuche nach einer unabhängigen Filmkultur. Die Nutzungskonzeption und der mit dem Senat ausgehandelte unterschreibtreife Pachtvertrag wurde unter Androhung einer Schadenersatzklage von der Treuhand verhindert und auf Eis gelegt.



Der Bundesfinanzminister entschied das die Kinos verkauft werden müssen. 1991 wurde das Toni ausgeschrieben. Da die Eintrittspreise gestiegen sind wurde die Besucherzahl halbiert. Gründer der Initiative Freies Kino bewarben sich für den Kauf ihres ihrer Kinos. Alle anderen Kinos waren schon verkauft. 1992 gab es endlich interessierte für das Kino TONI. Dr. Michael Verhoeven kaufte das Kino und betreibt es seit dem 01.07.1992. Er ließ 1994 die Fassade renovieren, das Kino wurde auch mit der modernsten Technik ausgestattet. Das Kino TONI wurde am 22.01.1997 wieder eröffnet. Es gab während der Bauphase nur 3 Wochen Spielunterbrechung. Die beiden Kinosäle bekamen die Namen TONI & TONINO. 2007 zerstörte den Saal TONINO komplett. Er musste komplett neu aufgebaut werden. 2008 gab es eine feierliche Wiedereröffnung. Das Programm des Kino TONI zeichnete sich durch Vielfalt aus.

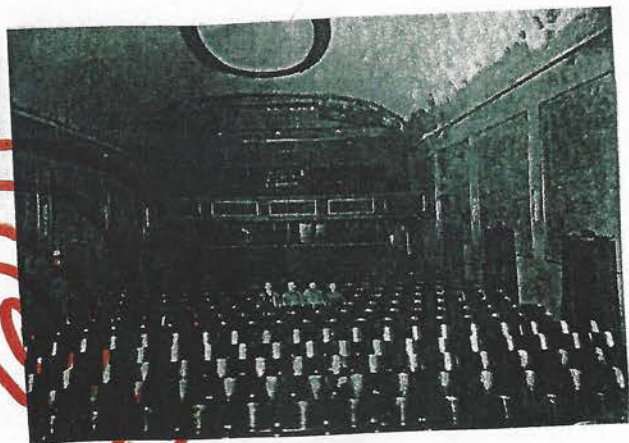




AMONG THE FINEST AND MOST POPULAR OF THE CINEMAS THAT WERE WAS THE FORMER SILENT-MOVIE THEATER DELPHI. DIRECT ON CALIGARIPLATZ, THIS RELIC RESTS LIKE A HIDDEN JEWEL, UNRECOGNIZABLE FROM THE OUTSIDE, AND EVEN UNKNOWN TO MOST BERLINERS. THIS BUILDING WAS ONE OF THE FIRST CINEMAS OF ITS SIZE IN THE WORLD.

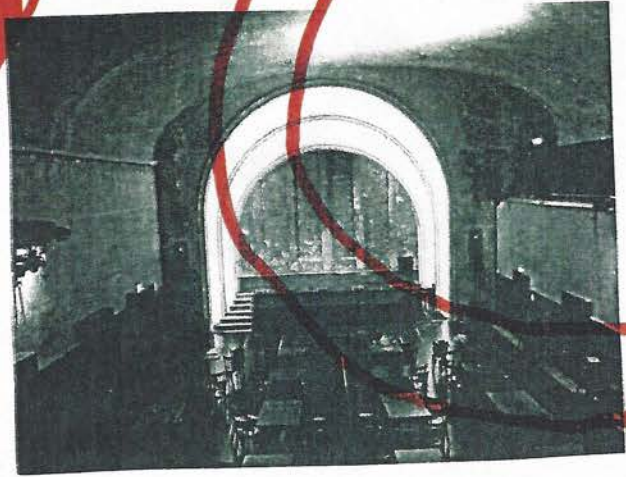
### 1920's & 30's

ON THE 2ND JANUARY 1929 THE BUILDER JULIUS MECKEL SUBMITTED A BUILDING APPLICATION FOR THE BUILDING OF A LARGE CINEMA WITH ROOM, FOYER AND A RANK. THE BUILDING STARTED ON THE 23 JULY FOLLOWING THE DESIGN OF THE ARCHITEKT JULIUS KOST, IN STYLE OF 'NEUEN SACHLICHKEIT'.



WITH THE SCREENING OF THE SILENT FILM 'HOCHVERRAT' THE DELPHI CINEMA OPENED ITS DOORS ON GUSTAV ADOLF STRASSE ON 26TH NOVEMBER 1929. ABOVE THE ENTRANCE WAS A NEON-LIT LOGO OF THE CINEMA. INSIDE, THE AUDITORIUM ACCOMMODATED UP TO 900 GUESTS, AND BELOW THE SCREEN AN EIGHT-METER WIDE STAGE. ALTHOUGH FILM PRODUCTION FINISHED IN THE AREA IN 1923 THE CINEMA REMAINED A POPULAR PLACE TO WATCH FILMS THROUGHOUT THE 1930'S.





#### DURING THE WAR

SHORTLY BEFORE THE END OF THE WAR IN 1945, THE NATIONAL SOCIALISTS THE PRO WAR FILM 'KOLBERG' IN THE DELPHI CINEMA. THE THEATER MIRACULOUSLY SURVIVED THE HEAVY DESTRUCTION THE CITY EXPERIENCED IN WORLD WAR II

#### GDR

THE BUILDING REMAINED CLOSED DURING THE GDR PERIOD AND WAS USED AS A STORAGE FACILITY. AS A RESULT OF THE DIVISION OF BERLIN THE OWNER OF THE LEASE LIVED IN WEST SECTOR OF THE CITY AND THE CINEMA WAS SUBORDINATE TO THE 'BERLINER PEOPLE'S HOUSING ASSOCIATION' IN THE 1950S, THE CINEMA FELL INTO DISREPAIR. AFTER A PIECE OF THE CEILING BROKE LOOSE AND FELL INTO THE AUDITORIUM, THE CINEMA CLOSED ITS DOORS IN FEBRUARY 1959. DUE TO A LACK OF FUNDS THE CINEMA NEVER CAME TO THE POINT OF DEMOLITION.

# DELPHI





PRESENT

IT REMAINED CLOSED TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC UNTIL THE ARTIST TEAM PER ASPERA E.V. RE-OPENED THE SPACE IN 2012. IN 2013 THEY SIGNED A 20 YEAR RENTAL CONTRACT, AND WHEN THE BUILDING WENT UP FOR SALE IN 2016, THEY ENTERED IN A PARTNERSHIP WITH THE EDITH MARYON STIFTUNG, A SWISS FOUNDATION WHO BOUGHT THE BUILDING TO SECURE IT FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT AND PERMANENT USE AS A PUBLIC CULTURAL VENUE UNDER THE DIRECTION OF PER ASPERA E.V. THROUGH THE CONTRACT OF A LONG-TERM LAND LEASE.





DENKMAL SCHUTZ

THE BUILDING IS UNDER 'DENKMALSCHUTZ' 'DEUTSCHE STIFTUNG DENKMALSCHUTZ' IS A FOUNDATION WHICH WORKS TO PRESERVE GERMAN MONUMENTS AND THEIR LEGACY. MANY THINGS IN THE CINEMA ARE UNDER DENKMALSCHUTZ AS WELL AS THE BUILDING ITSELF FOR EXAMPLE: THE SURFACE OF THE WALLS, THE ORIGINAL SPEAKERS IN THE CINEMA AND THE MECHANISM FOR LOWERING THE SCREEN ON THE STAGE. IT IS THE TENANTS RESPONSIBILITY TO MAINTAIN THESE PARTS OF THE BUILDING.





1895 - 'Bioscope' Projector invented Max & Emil Sclanowsky

1900 - 'Kine-Messter-Kamera' invented by Oskar Messter

1911 - First German film production complex set up 'Bioscop GmbH' Babelsberg, Potsdam.

1913 - First film production complex set up in Weissensee 'Vitascop GmbH' Franz Joseph Str 5-7

1914 - Continental Films establishes in Franz Joseph Str 7-9

1915 - Stuart Webb Series





1921 - 'Das Indische Grabmal' released directed by Joe May

1919/20 - 'Cabinet of Dr. Caligari' is filmed and released, directed by Robert Wiene

Expressionist  
Films

1926 - Complex at Franz Joseph Str put up for sale

1928

1928 - 'Frank' directed by Harry Piel is the last film to come out of Filmstadt Weissenhof.



Mia May  
wife of J  
appeared  
his film  
'Die Ge  
Villa'  
'Hilde  
der To  
'Indisch  
(1921).  
suicide  
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# Ernst Reicher



Ernst Reicher

Ernst Reicher and Joe May were good friends and after leaving Continental they made a new company called Stuart Webbs Film Company. Joe May being a director and Erich Pommer being an actor they started making a film series of an detective called Stuart Webb. But then Joe May went to war and Erich Pommer had to keep the company going by himself. As Joe May came back a few months later he did not rejoin but made his own company called May-Film GmbH.







Mia May

# People



Erich Pommer

Erich Pommer

Erich Pommer was one of the founders of the Decla film company and saw himself as an artistic producer wanting to expand the boundaries of film. A few famous directors who were working for him were F.W.



Fritz Lang

Fritz Lang

Fritz Lang was a young director who started making his first films in Filmstadt Weisensee and becoming very famous for them. His first film was called HALBLUT which was released in 1919. As Filmstadt Weisensee collapsed he went to Babelsberg and went on making films. As he became even more famous he went to Hollywood where he reached the highest point of his career.

Joe May

Originally worked for Continental Kunstfilm GmbH and moved into Franz Joseph Str 9 with the company in 1914. As a director he often worked with Ernst Reicher and set up their own company Stuart Webbs Film company May & Reiche, following the success of their 'Stuart Webb' detective stories. In the same year 1914 May went to serve in WWI returning only a year later to set up his own company May-Film GmbH. He produced many epic films with huge budgets until following the Great Depression he was not able to cover his ever expanding costs, with the film company closing in 1932. The following year he moved to America where he sort a career in Hollywood. He never managed to realise this and died in poverty in 1954.



Joe May



Jules Greenbaum

Jules Greenbaum set up the first film complex on Franz Joseph Str 5 - 7 in 1913 for the film company 'Vitascope'. Shortly afterwards he left Vitascope and set up his own company Greenbaum Film GmbH and took over the whole complex.







