

208

# THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53 STREET, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900

September 30, 1957

You are cordially invited to attend a private screening of SKY WITHOUT STARS (HIMMEL OHNE STERNE), one of the new, unreleased German films to be premiered at the Museum of Modern Art during the week beginning October 23.

Monday, October 7.....11 a.m.

Please use business entrance  
Museum of Modern Art  
21 West 53 Street  
New York 19

Fourth floor projection room.

105 minutes

A reply card is enclosed.

"A drama of the German lives which have been shattered to bits by the frontier between East and West," SKY WITHOUT STARS is a Neue Deutsche Filmgesellschaft production, Georg Richter, producer; written and directed by Helmut Käutner; camera, Kurt Hasse; sets, Hans Berthel; music, Bernhard Eichhorn. The cast includes Erik Schuman as Carl Altmann; Eva Kotthaus as Anna Kaminski; Georg Thomalla as Willi Becker; Host Buchholz as Mischa Bjelkin; and Gustav Knuth as Otto Frieze.

The film will be shown, prior to national distribution, in the major Museum cycle, "Past and Present: a Selection of German Films, 1895 to 1957." The enclosed release provides further information.

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FOR RELEASE

Wednesday, October 2, 1957

No. 99

## WEEK OF NEW GERMAN FILMS TO LAUNCH MAJOR CYCLE AT MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

A week of new German films never before shown in the United States will be presented by the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, October 24 - October 30, the first time the Museum's Film Library has been privileged to premiere so large a body of films prior to public release. The films have been made available to the Museum through the courtesy of Export-Union of the German Film Industry, the German equivalent of the Motion Picture Association of America.

His excellency, Mr. Heinz L. Krekeler, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, will inaugurate the films at a gala opening on the evening of October 23.

Selected by Richard Griffith, Curator of the Film Library, the week of new films will include the heralded Reaching for the Stars (Griff nach den Sternen), directed by Carl-Heinz Schröth. "It underlines the artist's pursuit of unattainable perfection," said Mr. Griffith, "through a juggler's fruitless attempt to master by practice a feat he once did by accident." Turrell, the juggler, is played by Erik Schuman; Christine, his wife, by Lielotte Pulver, now with Universal Studios.

Also to be shown is the Helmut Klotner film, Sky Without Stars (Himmel ohne Sterne). A dramatic treatment of contemporary Germany, Mr. Griffith calls it "a drama of the German lives which have been shattered to bits by the frontier between East and West." Eva Kotthaus, Erik Schuman, Georg Thomalla and Horst Buchholz are featured.

Other new films to be premiered will be announced within a few days.

The week of new films will launch the largest retrospective German film cycle ever held in this country, "Past and Present: a Selection of German Films, 1885 to 1957." Planned to coincide with the Museum's major fall exhibition, "German Art of the Twentieth Century," the films will provide an inclusive view of the period. Various movements in painting and sculpture - Expressionism, Die Neue Sachlichkeit (New Realism) and Surrealism - are paralleled in cinematic forms.

All films are provided by the Export-Union of the German Film Industry through its New York representative, Mr. Munio Podhorzer. Cooperation was extended by the Federal Republic of Germany, German Federal Railroads, and by Lufthansa German Airlines, which is flying the films to New York.

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In the 13 weeks of retrospective, more than 40 films will be shown, among them German classics which revolutionized film technique by insistence on a unified concept of treatment, an innovation in the days when movies were made by more slapdash methods. After the first world war German studios constituted the only major threat, both commercial and artistic, to the American film industry. Hollywood, in tribute to the ingenious craftsmanship of the German studios, imported almost all the important directors and actors. Lubitsch, Murnau, Leni, Pommer, Freund, Bedit, Jannings, Lederer and Pola Negri became as well known for their American films as for their German.

John Adams, Assistant to the Curator of the Film Library, who assembled the retrospective portion of "Past and Present," says: "The show has been selected to provide a new look at German film production. Of the many classics now so well known to film connoisseurs in this country, three have been selected to ensure the necessary connection with our traditional estimate of German film history - The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari, The Last Laugh and Olympia. Around these famous works have been grouped a number of minor classics and, most important, exceptional films little seen in recent years."

An animated precursor of motion pictures, Skladanowsky Primitives (c1879-95), reconstructed from lantern slides, is the earliest production. Expressionism is represented along with Caligari (1919) by the long unseen Backstairs (1929), the only film by Leopold Jessner, the stage director who succeeded Reinhardt as the outstanding man of the German theater. Two long unseen motion pictures produced by Erich Pommer after his return from Hollywood are the hard-boiled Asphalt (1928) and the rococo love story, The Lie of Nina Petrowna (1929). The New Realism finds its parallel with the painter George Grosz in the little-known Diary of a Lost Girl (1929) by G. W. Pabst, with the American star Louise Brooks, who was invited to play the amoral Thimian after the director had seen her "flapper" roles in American movies.

To document the Nazi period, in addition to the renowned two-part film of the 1936 Olympic Games, a historical pageant of Frederick the Great of Prussia, The Old and the Young King (1935) subtly incorporates the ideals of the new regime.

Of the postwar films, perhaps the most interesting are the two experimental essays, In Any Country at the Present Time (1952), made by students in Munich inspired by student filmmaking at UCLA; and No More Fleeing (1954) with narrative contribution by Albert Camus, which has one of the most advanced sound tracks of any film to date, a combination of speech, sound effects, "cool jazz" and twelve-tone music, integrated as a conscious piece of musique concrete.

A complete listing will be available shortly.

For stills and additional information please contact Herbert Bronstein, Assistant Publicity Director, Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, N. Y. CI5-8900