

Marlene Dietrich Collection Berlin is a division of Filmmuseum Berlin - Deutsche Kinemathek

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Dear friends and fans,

we enjoyed the Berlinale and all the films we could see at the retrospective screening of "New Hollywood". And we take note of the winner of the AGICOA "Blue Angel" award - a price which is given in memory of Marlene - to the director Björn Runge for the Swedish film OM JAG VÄNDER MIG OM which means something like "At the break of day". What has Marlene to do with Agicoa, what in the world is Agicoa and what has MDCB to do with the award. To get this straight and even:

There was a time when people in Berlin were crazy about doing something "in honor of Marlene". That is why this price was named "Blue Angel Award". Otherwise it has nothing to do with Marlene.

Agicoa is an abbreviation for "Association de Gestion Internationale Collective des Oeuvres Audiovisuelles". It seems to be a company which handles copyright. They donate the money for the price which is nice. Otherwise the company has nothing to do with Marlene. And MDCB has nothing to do with the price nor with Agicoa but a lot with Marlene. So we come full circle – I mean, not really full circle but who cares anyway?

We made a complaint in our last Newsletter that nobody showed any reaction to Alexandre Andres DVD list. Loris Ferrai from Switzerland made a good point in his answer. The list - he says - is for hard boiled collectors; the normal collector is quite on ease in having just one DVD for each film. Right. And Loris continues speaking directly to Alexandre: "...keep up the good work, do not search for gratitude, the world does not say thanks anymore, but Marlene, from somewhere, will appreciate it, and says thanks to you, I am sure!"

And here is a letter from Krista:

Thank you again for another informative and sometimes humorous newsletter, I appreciate your ability to deal with the picayune requests for information (most recently regarding Marlene's favored mode of transit) and your reviews of books which sometime dwell a little too deeply on the baser animal impulses and

cheap fantasy images. Bravo! I am writing you regarding your note in the latest newsletter regarding Quentin Tarantinos "Kill Bill Vol.1", looking for the connection between the film and Dietrich. The release date of "Kill Bill Vol. 2" has been pushed back to allow for the DVD release of "Vol. 1" before the première, and I am certain many of us will be keeping an eye out for the connection. I enjoyed the first movie for what it was, and am looking forward to answering the question regarding the connection.

With admiration, Krista.

Krista, this really is a most charming way of telling us that you saw the movie and couldn't see any connection to Marlene. But we have been trained by our university studies (ah - the golden days...) that there has to be a connection if somebody says so. But who in the world said it? Krista, keep on searching and tell us what you've found.

And now for the serious part:

Mika from Helsinki wants to know where the latest photograph of Marlene was published. Answer: The latest photograph taken in 1988 by her grandson Peter Riva was published both in Bunte and Paris Match in May 1992.

Herta Koch



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Burt Bacharach, Marlene and Herta Koch in Edinburgh September 6th 1964

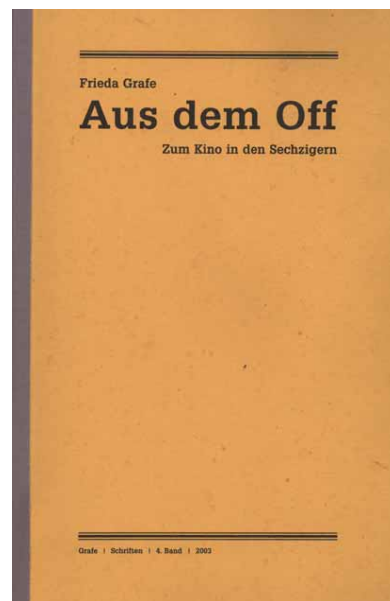
Herta who? Herta Koch was the lyricist for the song „In den Kasernen“. It has been a few days that we pulled out the files on this lady and we thought, well, why not let you know what's in there:

Herta was working in Graz (Austria) for Austrian public radio. Feeling underestimated like so many other free-lance poets she thought that Marlene might consider one of her lyrics for a song. So Herta wrote to Marlene in 1963 and offered her „In den Kasernen“. Her friend Professor Resch wrote some musical notes for the song which were also sent to Marlene. Three weeks later Herta received a letter by Marlene stating that she would sing the lyrics but would not use the music which in Marlenes opinion resembled too much „Down Mexico Way“. The music eventually was written by Philippe Gerald. Herta did not mind the music as long as Marlene would sing her lyrics; actually the day Marlenes letter arrived was one of the great days in Hertas life. From that day on Herta became one of Marlenes most devoted fans in Austria. In her letters to Marlene she states how much she adores her singing, her acting, her whole persona. She even confesses that Marlene is the center of her daily life and „Ich liebe Sie“. Did Marlene love that? We have our doubts. Anyway, why did Marlene choose „In den Kasernen“? It seems that Marlene needed another „protest“ song, one that would accuse „the world“ and „the times“ - nothing less, and even more important, nothing specific. Herta sent a lot of other lyrics to Marlene (among others one song which is called „The Heavy Drinking Lady“ - rejected by Marlene). Marlene offered her to do the translation for the lyrics which later became „Wenn die Soldaten...“ but „In den Kasernen“ remained the only Herta song that made it. When Marlene received too many „protest songs“ by Herta she desperately wrote: „Forget the idea of songs accusing the world“. A record that would make her audience miserable and desperate was not Marlenes idea of a Marlene-record.

The recording of „In den Kasernen“ was done in London on September 8 1964 with Burt Bacharach conducting. Herta was invited to be present at the last day of Marlenes Edinburgh show. Hotel and flight were payed by Marlene. Herta was present when the recording was made. These were the days Herta later on would describe as being the happiest days in her life. It also meant the correspondence and the close contact between the two would come to an end.

Herta Koch of whom we neither have date of birth nor date of death spent the rest of her life in Graz. She was a poor old lady at the end of her days and lived her days by the memory of having written one song for Marlene.

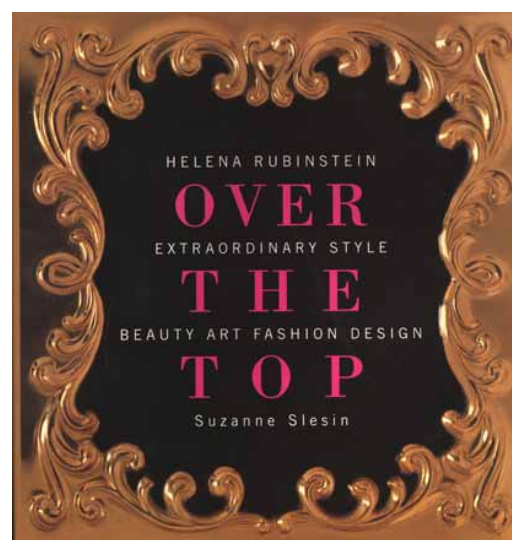
New books



Frieda Grafe: Aus dem Off. Zum Kino in den Sechzigern

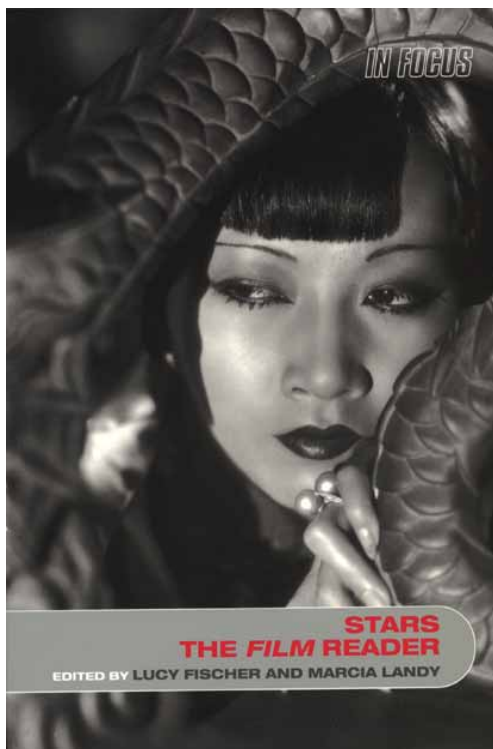
Ausgewählte Schriften in Einzelbänden: Vierter Band. Herausgegeben von Enno Patalas. Verlag Brinkmann & Bose, Berlin 2003, 198 pp.

This is the fourth volume of the writings of Frieda Grafe and it reprints her famous essay on „Svengali Joe“ from 1967 as well as a review of Sternbergs autobiography. Included are excerpts of her private correspondence with Josef von Sternberg from 1967 till 1969 – the year Sternberg died. Because of its unspectacular design it is easy to overlook– but once you start to read you will cherish the book as one of your lifetime friends.



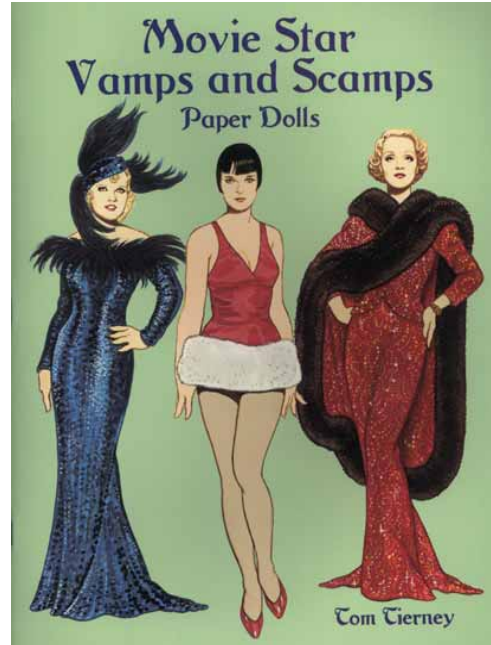
Over the Top. Helena Rubinstein: Extraordinary Style. Beauty, Art, Fashion, Design

Edited by Suzanne Slesin. Pointed Leaf Press, New York 2003, 216 pp.
 When looking at the new books in our favourite book store in Berlin we opened this one just out of curiosity. And instantly we got lost and forgot about the time and place we were in. This is a masterpiece in design and it shows (as just one of many examples) what to do with photographs which lost their colour. You just print them as they are and they tell you their own story. Besides all those beautifully little details the book luckily has some photographs of Marlene and Helena Rubinstein at the Dior fashion show 1960. Even if you don't care about Helena Rubinstein or Marlene at all this is a must- have for all book lovers. Worth every cent.

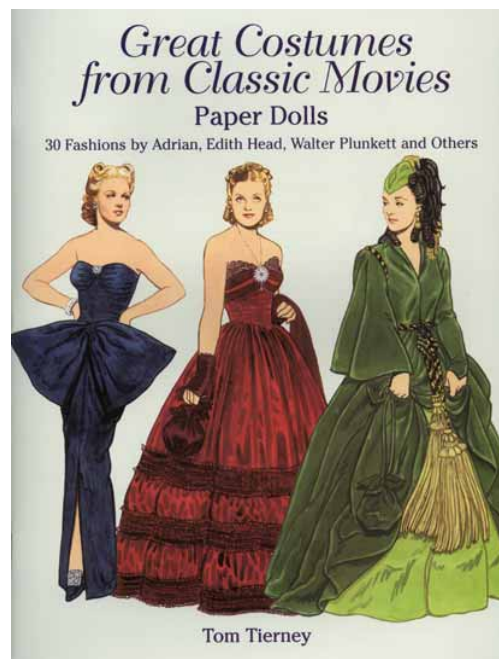


Stars, The Film Reader

Edited by Lucy Fischer and Marcia Landy
 Routledge, New York 2004, 300 pp
 Again it's Anna May Wong on the cover, but the book aims to be nothing less than "a comprehensive overview of stardom across the world". Oops, is that all? So it is clearly more than just Anna May. Yes, there is a lot of academic and intellectual writing in here but even if Lucy Fisher in her contribution on "Marlene. Modernity, Mortality and the Biopic" (meaning Maximilian Schells Marlene) starts off with a discussion of Susan Sontag and André Bazin she makes some very good and interesting remarks comparing Maximilian Schells film to "Sunset Boulevard". If she would have taken into account the files MDCB has on the production of Schells film her essay might have been perfect. Now it isn't.



Movie Star Vamps and Scamps Paper Dolls
 Tom Tierney, Dover Publications New York 2003



Great Costumes from Classic Movies. Paper Dolls
 30 Fashions by Adrian, Edith Head, Walter Plunkett and Others
 Tom Tierney, Dover Publications New York 2003

Are these books, are these toys or is this just merchandising? Anyway, in the never-ending series of Paper Doll Books Marlene finally made it into these two. A collectors item, nothing more, nothing less.

End of Newsletter