

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

If you want your fellow fans to receive this newsletter or if you just want to add informations write to mdcb@filmmuseum-berlin.de . If you want to support the work of the Filmmuseum Berlin-Deutsche Kinemathek of which Marlene Dietrich Collection Berlin is a division you can do so by joining the "Friends and Supporters of Filmmuseum Berlin". Just go to <http://www.fffb.de>

Dear friends and fans,

a lot of great events were happening the last three weeks at Filmmuseum Berlin. We opened a big exhibition on TV under the title „TV makes you happy“ and got some rave reviews which in return did make us happy. Also two days ago we opened a small presentation about the newly acquired Hildegard Knef archive. And third German born actor Hardy Krüger visited the Filmmuseum Berlin with the french ambassador in Berlin Claude Martin.

Hardy Krüger was especially interested in Hildegard Knef and Marlene Dietrich. Last year Hardy Krüger was honored by Claude Martin as Officier de la Légion d' Honneur. Marlene Dietrich and Hardy Krüger were the only german speaking actors who were honored with this french decoration.

Filmmuseum Berlin will do a homage on Hardy Krüger and present a selection of 12 films . Among them are also some french films which are mostly unknown in Germany like „Le Franciscaïn de Bourges“ by Claude Autant-Lara from 1967.



Hardy Krüger with french ambassador in Berlin, Claude Martin (r.), and head of Filmmuseum Berlin, Hans Helmut Prinzler (l.).

In our last issue we discussed the new biography on Marlene Dietrich and mentioned Steven Bachs book Peter Riva gives us his point of view on Steven Bach:

In your newsletter 47 you say: "...until Steven Bach's biography appeared. Bach did extensive research on his subject and layed open the sources from which he quoted. Thus the appendices he supplied to his book layed the traces for those other biographers."

Well, yes and no. Any biography should, as a litmus test of its authenticity, rely on source, proof and reasonable conclusion. As a person directly involved in Marlene's life and being the first of her grandsons to get married and have children, I was able to accurately check elements of his so-called biography that I was directly involved with. What was surprising was the degree of complete and utter nonsense he wrote concerning publically known facts. He got my marriage date wrong (it was published in the London Times, Daily Telegraph as well as the NY Times and several weekly international magazines, who all got the date right). He overlooked the birth of Marlene's 1st great grandson in 1976 in favor of our second son born in 1979 (all of which were public announcements). From these mistakes he make conjectures which were similarly falsehoods. There were dozens of similar, all be they trivial, mistakes. Nevertheless, these were mistakes that were on public record and not, one would assume, open to conjecture by a so-called historian. And they were footnoted giving the illusion of accurate fact-finding. So what does that say about all his other so-called facts?

When checking further, members of my family came up with scores of similar mistakes. Even Meri von Sternberg stopped counting the mistakes he made in writing, long ago. When I asked why, she said "Joseph thought he was never a very good student, so why would you think he would be a better writer?"

I guess that about sums Bach up as a biographer. As a writer of fiction or a novelist perhaps his MD book has some merit. But as a guide to any real appreciation of Marlene? Utterly useless, riddled with errors, unless, of course, you appreciate Bach as a self-

promoted historian, perpetuated by the MDCB's close personal relationship and their mention of his book at every opportunity. Just because someone is cloaked in the respectability of academia, doesn't mean he actually has anything accurate to say. Here's a replacement, for fans who may want to know of a much more accurate book to refer to: Sheridan Morley's "Marlene Dietrich." It is out of print but a treasure if you can find it.

Having read that you, dear friends and fans, feel free to discuss openly in the Newsletter.

New Books



Marcellus Schiffer: Heute nacht oder nie.
Tagebücher, Erzählungen, Gedichte,
Zeichnungen
 Edited by Viktor Rotthaler, Weidle Verlag in cooperation with Stiftung Archiv der Akademie der Künste Berlin; Bonn 2002, 245 pp.

Marcellus Schiffer was the husband of Margo Lion who as you certainly know was a lifetime friend of Marlene. Margos niece donated the papers of Marcellus Schiffer to Berlins Academy of Fine Arts. Viktor Rotthaler who also edited the booklet for Bear Family's Hollaender CD-Edition had the privilege to study the Schiffer-papers and comes up with this wonderful book full of funny stories and rare photographs. An absolut „Must Have“ for lovers of german culture in the Weimar Republic.



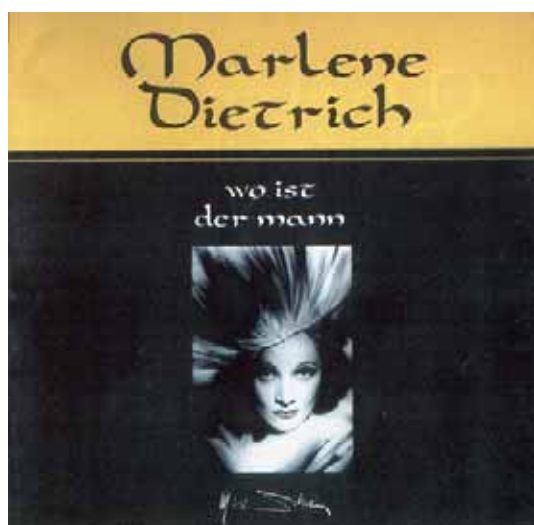
Marlene Dietrich (see arrow) with Margo Lion in Marcellus Schiffer's musical comedy „Es liegt in der Luft“ (1928)



The German Cinema Book
 Edited by Tim Bergfelder, Erica Carter and Deniz Göktürk; British Film Institute, London 2002, 291 pp.

The book is a general reader on german film history until today and includes these main chapters: Popular Cinema, Stars, Institutions and Cultural Contexts, Cultural Politics, Transnational Connections. Well, you guessed it, it is academic but it is not that academic. Within the “Stars” chapter Erica Carter writes on “Marlene Dietrich. The Prodigal Daughter” and she draws on the quite interesting subject how long Dietrich in her Hollywood films was identified by being somehow “german” and thus was a star which Nazi-Germany wanted to lure back to Germany. Carter mixes contemporary (which means thirties) german definitions of stardom with reactions to Dietrich

films in the Nazi-press. Although the dreams of getting Dietrich back to Germany shattered in 1939 (with the beginning of World War II and "Destry Rides Again") Carter still notices a desire in the Germany of the nineties of identifying Dietrich as an actress strongly linked to "German" feelings. Quote: "Most extraordinarily, Villsmaiers ['Marlene'] film in fabricating as the object of Dietrichs true love a German officer involved in the resistance, revives the 1930s fantasy of Dietrichs symbolic belonging to an ethically unsullied German nation." (p 79) That makes a good point and thank God, she doesn't mention that there is a Marlene Dietrich Collection in Berlin and tries to define our symbolic belonging.



We forgot to give you the cover of the russian Marlene Dietrich CD which we mentioned in our last Newsletter. But – als – we did not find it at www.amazon.de

Questions, Offerings and Curiosities:

My name is John Wapelhorst and I came across this web page while searching for some information on two of Marlene Dietrich's television performances. I noticed that these performances were listed, and I was wondering if you had any idea as to how I may obtain copies of them on VHS for a personal collection. The performances are: Marlene Dietrich TV Performance, Galakrall Pa Bern 1960, Produce by Arne Ambam Marlene Dietrich in concert Introduction by Karl Gethard and TV interview 1970, taped in Tivoli Copenhagen by Swedish TV Marlene Dietrich Interview. I appreciate any assistance you can provide and if you are aware of any related costs as well.

If anybody can help please contact WapelJoh@exchange.uk.ml.com.

I have a friend who owns authentic Marlene Dietrich furniture. She is interested in selling it. Are you able to advise of an organization who might be interested or where would be the best place to advertise or sell it? Thank you. Ann Burke, Annibe9477@aol.com

Peter Döbrich made us aware to some very evident mistakes in new books: "Screen Lovers" edited by Orbis Verlag, Germany, shows a well known Marlene photo from "Seven Sinners" but declares it as being from "Shanghai Express". In "Die großen Stars des deutschen Kinos" (Great stars of german cinema) by Adolf Heinzlmeier, Jürgen Menninger and Berndt Schulz you can find a still of "Flame of New Orleans" showing Marlene and "Clark Gable". Of course it's Bruce Cabot. Beside the movie was produced in 1941 (not 1940). Henzlmeier also wrote abiography on Marlene published in 2000. A nother expert...

Peter Döbrich also informed us about the theatrical play "Der graue Engel" by Moritz Rinke which was put on stage at the Kammerspiele in Düsseldorf with Ernie Reinhardt's alias Lilo Wanders acting as the old Marlene - no doubt an event of a very special kind. For those not familiar with German TV: Lilo Wanders has a very successful show at german TV called "Liebe Sünde" (Dearest sin).

"Marlene Dietrich Legend":

If you are interested in listening to an interview with Werner Sudendorf, head of the Marlene Dietrich Collection Berlin, go to <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/arts/sunmorn/stories/s742028.htm> section past programs and click on December 8 2002 "listen first hour".

For those travelling in Berlin and Germany during Christmas holidays:

Filmmuseum Berlin will be closed December 23rd and 24th. It will be open December 25th from 10 am to 6 pm; December 27th from 10 am to 8 pm, from December 28th to December 30th from 10 am to 6 pm, December 31st from 10am to 4pm and January 1st from noon to 6 pm.

If you are travelling in the Dresden area you may see the yellow Las Vegas dress of Marlene at the exhibition "Mensch und Tier" (Man and animal) at the Deutsches Hygiene Museum. Website www.dhmd.de

To all of you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. May you fall in love again....

End of Newsletter