

1924



Der letzte Mann /The Last Laugh

## STATISTICS

Cinemas: 3669  
Feature films: 220

# EVENTS

February 14

## **World premiere of DIE NIBELUNGEN: SIEGFRIED.**

For the premiere of the first part of NIBELUNGEN, Berlin's VIPs gather at the 'Ufa-Palast am Zoo'. At the subsequent banquet in the Hotel Adlon, Foreign Minister Gustav Stresemann gives an enthusiastic dinner speech. The second part premieres on April 26.

June

## **Lichtbild-Bühne celebrates 30 years of cinema**

On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of cinematography, *Lichtbild-Bühne* publishes a 'luxury issue' with contributions from pioneers of the industry and a foreword by the German Chancellor Wilhelm Marx. The main section is made up of numerous company advertisements.

October

## **Lang and Pommer travel to America**

Erich Pommer and Fritz Lang travel to New York and Hollywood to represent Ufa and to familiarize themselves with American production methods. In Hollywood they meet with Charles Chaplin, Douglas Fairbanks, Samuel Goldwyn, David W. Griffith, Ernst Lubitsch and Mary Pickford, among others. They are impressed by the high technical standard of the studios.

December 11/12/13

## **American impressions**

In three articles in the *Film-Kurier*, Fritz Lang describes his impressions of the trip to America, beginning with pictures of the first evening in New York. He is fascinated by the vastness of the landscape during the sixty-hour drive to Los Angeles and is happy about the many encounters in Hollywood.

December 23

## **World Premiere of DER LETZTE MANN**

The premiere of the film THE LAST LAUGH takes place in the 'Ufa-Palast am Zoo'. Emil Jannings plays the leading role under the direction of F. W. Murnau. Karl Freund is responsible for the 'unleashed camera'. There was already a press screening of the film in New York on December 5. The premiere in the U.S. was on January 25, 1925 at the Rialto Cinema in New York. Title: THE LAST LAUGH. The film is very successful.

# FILMS OF THE YEAR

January 3

## **SYLVESTER**

Directed by Lupu Pick. Screenplay: Carl Mayer. Cinematography: Karl Hasselmann, Guido Seeber. Sets: Klaus Richter, Robert A. Dietrich. With Eugen Klöpfer, Edith Posca, Frida Richard. - The tragedy of one night. A café owner suffers from the discord between his wife and his mother. He kills himself on New Year's Eve, while in the front room people are celebrating boisterously. A psychodrama in 54 pictures. "Never has German film been so close to an absolute cinematic art as here." (Herbert Ihering, Berliner Börsen-Courier, 4.1.24).

February 14

## **DIE NIBELUNGEN (I): SIEGFRIED**

Directed by Fritz Lang. Screenplay: Thea von Harbou. Cinematography: Carl Hoffmann, Günther Rittau. Sets: Otto Hunte, Erich Kettelhut. With Paul Richter, Margarethe Schön, Hanna Ralph, Hans Adalbert Schlettow. - Part One: SIEGFRIED: "To the German People", as the opening credits say. Stages from mythology: Siegfried's apprenticeship with Mime the blacksmith, the fight with the dragon, the victory over Alberich, the conquest of the Nibelungen treasure and the magic cap, the proposal to Kriemhild at the Worms court, the courtship of Brunhild for King Gunther, the double wedding, the quarrel of the queens, the murder of Siegfried by Hagen of Tronje. Built nature, symmetrical choreography, stylized myth.

April 26

## **DIE NIBELUNGEN (II): KRIEMHILD'S REVENGE**

Second part: KRIEMHILDS RACHE. The sinking of the Nibelungen treasure in the Rhine, Kriemhild's marriage to Etzel, the king of the Huns, the feast at the royal court, which turns into a terrible scene of revenge, death and ruin. The ornamental order of the first film turns into bottomless chaos in the second. The massacre at the end lasts about 45 minutes. The last (sixth) act could not be shown at the premiere: it had not yet been edited.

September 26

## **MICHAEL**

Directed by Carl Theodor Dreyer. Script: Thea von Harbou, Dreyer, based on the novel by Herman Bang. Cinematography: Karl Freund, Rudolf Mate. Sets: Hugo Häring. With Walter Slezak, Benjamin Christensen, Nora Gregor, Grete Mosheim. - The story of a renunciation: the famous painter Zoret loses his model, the youth Michael, to the beautiful Alice Adelskjold. "Not the homosexual, idealistic relationship between the master and the pupil, the classicist painter and his model is meant. The woman re-enters the scene. The boy turns his spiritual father's art into money for the expensive mistress. An intangible film in the complexity of its articulations." (Frieda Grafe, Süddeutsche Zeitung, 1/18/74).

November 5

**DIAGONALE SINFONIE / DIAGONAL SYMPHONY**

Experimental short film by Viking Eggeling. 'Eidodynamism' is what Eggeling calls a visual theory, which he concretizes in one - his only - film. It is about the relationship between form, light and movement. "Opposing relationships of direction, light intensity, proportions, positions, speed, etc. develop and change in the strictest lawful sequence. Certain directions or forms dominate. The dominant alternates." (B.G. Kawan, Film Courier, 11/22-24). The premiere takes place before an invited audience, the first public performance is on May 3, 1925. Eggeling dies 16 days later.

November 13

**DAS WACHFIGURENKABINETT / WAXWORKS**

Directed and set by Paul Leni. Written by Henrik Galeen. Cinematography: Heimar Lerski. - The triad of German character actors as horror figures from the panopticon: Emil Jannings plays Harun al Raschid, Conrad Veidt Ivan the Terrible, Werner Krauß Jack the Ripper. They are imagined by Wilhelm Dieterle as a dreaming poet who is supposed to make up stories for a show booth owner. Leni does not let any thought of reality arise.

December 23rd

**DER LETZTE MANN / THE LAST LAUGH**

Directed by F. W. Murnau. Written by Carl Mayer. Cinematography by Karl Freund. Sets: Robert Herlth, Walter Röhrig. With Emil Jannings, Maly Delschaft. - The tragicomedy of an aging hotel porter who is demoted to bathroom attendant and keeps his fate from his relatives and neighbors. The revolving door and the uniform are of central importance. A main role is played by the 'unleashed' camera. Willy Haas writes (varying Goethe): "Children, from here and today begins a new epoch in the history of cinematography." (Film-Kurier, 12/24/24).

## MORE FILMS

January 7

### **DIE FINANZEN DES GROSSHERZOGS / THE FINANCES OF THE GREAT ARCHDUKE**

Directed by F. W. Murnau. Screenplay: Thea von Harbou. Cinematography: Karl Freund, Franz Planer. Sets: Rochus Gliese, Erich Czerwonski. With Mady Christians, Harry Liedtke, Alfred Abel. - Love, intrigue and revolution in an operetta state.

May 10

### **DER BERG DES SCHICKSALS / THE MOUNTAIN OF DESTINY**

Directed, written by Arnold Fanck. Cinematography: Fanck, Hans Schneeberger, Sepp Allgeier a.o. Sets: Leopold Blonder. With Hannes Schneider, Erna Morena, Frida Richard, Luis Trenker. - Love drama in the Alps.

November 24

### **NJU**

Directed by Paul Czinner. Script: Czinner, based on the stage play by Ossip Dymow. Cinematography: Axel Graatkjaer, Reimar Kuntze. With Elisabeth Bergner, Emil Jannings, Conrad Veidt. - The story of a misunderstood woman.

December 5

### **DER MANN OHNE NERVEN / THE MAN WITHOUT NERVES**

Directed by Harry Piel. Screenplay: Edmund Heuberger, Herbert Nossen. Cinematography: Gotthardt Wolf, Georg Muschner. Sets: Fritz Kraenke. With Harry Piel, Dary Holm, Albert Paulig, Marguerite Madys, Denise Legeay. - The adventures of the author of sensational novels on earth and in the air.

## FILM BOOKS

Béla Balázs

### **Der sichtbare Mensch oder die Kultur des Films**

Vienna, Leipzig: Deutsch-Österreichischer Verlag. 167 PP. - The first, major draft of a film theory by the Hungarian author (1884-1949). Alfred Polgar: "Like the church, cinema spans the world, sends its missionaries to the remotest zones of inhabited earth, needs a certain amount of darkness to work, engages the minds and imaginations of its congregation, works miracles, teaches how virtue is rewarded and vice scorned, enriches the priests who serve it, speaks in signs and symbols comprehensible to people of any idiom, and also already has its evangelist, St. Balázs Béla, who in the perceptive and brilliant book 'The Visible Man' seduces those of good will to believe in the delightful and redemptive magic of cinema." (*Das Tage-Buch*, 5/31/24)

Ernst Eckstein

**Deutsches Film- und Kinorecht**

Mannheim, Berlin, Leipzig: J. Bensheimer. 510 pp. - In its five chapters, the Berlin lawyer explains 'Film Copyright Law', 'The Law of Film Production', 'Film Exploitation', 'Cinema Law' and deals with various 'Balance Sheet and Tax Issues'. In the appendix: sample contracts, antitrust regulations and guidelines.

Edgar Beyfuss, Alexander Kossowsky (eds.)

**Das Kulturfilmbuch**

Berlin: Carl P. Chryselins'scher Verlag. 384 pp. - A collection of essays on non-fictional cinema (so-called Kulturfilm) in education, medicine, industry, etc. With contributions by Oskar Kalbus, Fritz Lang ('Kitsch - Sensation - Culture in Film'), Willy Haas, Walther Günther, Willy Rath, Hans Pander, Richard Oswald, Asta Nielsen, Lotte Reiniger, Hans Cürlis, Ernö Metzner, Alfred Rosenthal, Klaus Pringsheim, Richard Ott, Heinrich Fraenkel and others. No aspect of Kulturfilm is omitted.

Heinrich Pfeiffer (Ed.)

**Das deutsche Lichtspielbuch**

Berlin: August Scherl. 49 pp.- With contributions by Edwin Redslob, Alexander von Gleichen-Rußwurm ('Dichter und Film'), Joe May ('Filmregie'), Emil Jannings ('Filmdarstellung'), Ernst Lubitsch ('Film- Internationalität'), Guido Seeber ('Ehrenrettung des Filmtechnikern'), Alfred Richard Mayer, Carl Forch, Albert Hellwig, Curt Wesse, Alfred Rosenthal a.o. Illustrated with drawings by Arthur Wittig in cubist style.

Georg Otto Stindt

**Das Lichtspiel als Kunstform**

Bremerhaven: Atlantis. 118pp.- The author, a versatile, nationally conservative writer and dramaturge, aims to "crystallize the form and effect laws of cinematic art from the content of consciousness." He does this on the one hand with the premises of an idealistic aesthetic, and on the other hand with an open mind to the laws of the market and the commodity character of film. This contradiction makes the book (which is "dedicated to Otto Gebühr in friendship") an interesting contemporary document.