



NEWSLETTER No. 44

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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.fff.de>

Dear friends and fans,

this newsletter is devoted entirely to the exhibition „Forever Young“ at the Hollywood Entertainment Museum. We thank the tireless crew from the Goethe-Institute Los Angeles, especially Ute Kirchhelle and our good friend Margit Kleinman, Chris Horak from Hollywood Entertainment Museum and his staff as well as the sponsors who made this exhibition possible. Kristina Jaspers and Nils Warnecke came from Berlin to help with their knowledge and experience; Gero Gandert was the official representative of the Filmmuseum Berlin. We wished we were there, but you can until December 2 at Hollywood Entertainment Museum, 7021 Hollywood Blvd (closed on Wednesdays).



And here is a report by Ute Kirchhelle, director of Goethe-Institute Los Angeles on the opening of the exhibition and other activities surrounding the event:

„450 guests attended the grand opening of „Forever Young“ at the Hollywood Entertainment Museum. The event sure

looked like a big birthday party. An elaborate birthday buffet with specialties from California was set up in the middle of the hall. Little candle towers and flowers surrounded an ice sculpture in the shape of a big birthday cake decorated in translucent elegance with Marlene's signature and the date of September 5 2002.

As you know, openings tend to serve as an opportunity for people to get together and talk. This event was different. People came and looked at the exhibition pieces discussed them and had a real good time celebrating Marlene. Among the visitors were diplomats from ten different European countries, among them Joseph Beck - Acting Consul of Germany, Nadia Boubalova - Consulate of the Czech Republic, Bitra Rasoulia - Deputy General Consul of Austria, Jean-Luc Sibuide - Consul General of France, politicians from Los Angeles, film buffs and –experts alike and to our great honor a lot of people from the German-Jewish émigré community. Among them being Lupita Kohner, her grandson film director Chris Weitz („About a Boy“), Melodie Hollaender, Yvonne Jurmann, Bob and Sarah Koster Koster, Nicholas von Sternberg and many others. The highlight of the evening was the appearance of Maria Riva and her sons David and Paul with their respective families.



Maria with Paul (left) and David Riva.

After the museum president Phyllis Haver had greeted her guests, she was presented with an certificate of recognition from their City councilman. The acting German consul general read a word of greeting from the mayor of Berlin Klaus Wowereit and then presented Maria Riva with the document of Marlene's honorary citizenship. Ute Kirchhelle, director of the Goethe-Institute, thanked the various sponsors and all who made this exhibition possible. She introduced Gero Gandert the Senior Curator of the Filmmuseum Berlin whose speech we provide in this newsletter. He introduced the last speaker, Maria Riva, Marlene Dietrich's daughter. Maria held a breathtaking free speech, pointing out that Americans had no conscience of history and that no archive in the US had been interested in the collection. Knowing that the Marlene Dietrich Collection is now in Berlin makes her feel real good, she said and added, that the exhibition served as the proof of the excellent care the Filmmuseum Berlin takes of the collection. Maria warned the movie industry not to treat movie history carelessly and discard its documents, but instead to regard their work as part of world culture and preserve it. And then the party began.

On every corner of Hollywood there are banners of two meters height with the picture of Marlene Dietrich. 25.000 postcards with the logo of the Marlene Dietrich exhibit will be delivered at places of public interest in the Hollywood area and 500 posters as well as other memorabilia are available at the Hollywood Entertainment Museum shop.



There is also a flyer by Goethe-Institute and a newsletter by the Hollywood Entertainment Museum promoting the exhibit.

Goethe Institute and the Los Angeles County Museum will show 20 films by and on Marlene from September 26 to October 12. And on November 12 at 9.30 pm there will be a special screening at the American Film Institute of the german silent film „Die Frau, nach der man sich sehnt“ (Germany 1928; D: Kurt [Curtis] Bernhardt) in the presence of the Mayor of Berlin Klaus Wowereit and (hopefully) Maria Riva.



Ute Kirchhelle, Nicholas von Sternberg, Gero Gandert and Margit Kleinman

Speech of Gero Gandert:

Dearest Maria
 Dear David and Paul,
 almost eleven years ago, a group of lawyers, government officials, and film historians began to discuss with the Riva family the possibility of incorporating the artifacts and memorabilia of Marlene Dietrich into the archives of the Deutsche Kinemathek, now called the Filmmuseum Berlin. After months of meetings the group succeeded in convincing you, Maria, and your husband and sons, to entrust the museum with this fabulous treasure – the largest collection ever assembled by a motion picture star.

I had the unique opportunity and honor to be a member of this group. So, it is really a touching moment for me to be here tonight, in Hollywood, the capital of world cinema, to represent the Filmmuseum Berlin in opening jointly with our partner the exhibition “Forever Young“.

For this display, we had the luxurious difficulty of choosing from among the collection's 16.000 photographs, approximately 4.000 textile objects, 300.000 pages of paper (including Marlene's correspondence with countless prominent contemporaries - from General de Gaulle to Ronald Reagan), about 2.500 sound recordings, and 130 pieces of sumptuous travel gear.

We asked ourselves what would Marlene's 100th birthday party – she was born in 01- be like? For instance: whom would she invite? The family, friends and lovers, cultural celebrities, and even her dearest enemies. One of the missions of the Filmmuseum Berlin is to document the lives and works of the German-speaking film professionals who decided or were forced to leave the Third Reich and found a new home overseas, especially in Los Angeles.

Marlene Dietrich was not a refugee. She was invited to Hollywood in 1930, two years prior to the end of the Weimar Republic. However, during those dark years of Hitler and his gang, she stood on the just side of the barricades and became a symbol of another, a better Germany. She refused repeated, phenomenal offers from Dr. Goebbels, Reichsminister of People's Enlightenment and Propaganda, to return to Berlin. Often at great personal risk, she entertained American G.I.s with her U.S.O. shows immediately behind the front lines.

Though Marlene Dietrich was certainly a product of her Prussian upbringing from head to toe (her friend Ernest Hemingway called her, endearingly, „The Kraut“), she was a Prussian who contradicted the stereotype. In reality she was not rough, but delicate. She didn't wear a hard, spiked helmet, but soft, outrageous hats. In fact, she set fashion trends for several generations of women. Not to mention her other talents and positive attributes – the attentive friend, the down to earth homemaker and, in her second career, the internationally celebrated chanteuse.

Permit yourself to be seduced by the incomparable magic of Marlene, worldwide the most famous German woman of the last 100 years.

For more information go to www.hollywoodmuseum.com ,
for more photos go to www.soundslkemarlene.de/News/HEM/hem.html

End of Newsletter