

PRESS RELEASE

## Post-Restoration, ‘The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari’ Shines in Digital Cinema Quality

- **Bertelsmann’s funding of the project sends a signal for the digitization of film heritage in the digital media age**
- **Murnau Foundation: Restoration a complete success thanks to camera negative and state-of-the-art digital technology**

Berlin, January 27, 2014 – Almost a century after its premiere, the 1920 silent movie classic “The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari,” directed by Robert Wiene, can now be experienced in digital cinema quality (4K). With its comprehensive digital restoration, the Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau Foundation, which owns the rights, and the international media company Bertelsmann as the main sponsor, have ensured the preservation of one of the world’s most important silent movies. Regarded as a milestone of expressionist cinema, it continues to inspire filmmakers to this day. The two partners presented results from the restoration in Berlin on Monday, and took the opportunity to advocate the preservation of German movie heritage.

The digitally restored version of “The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari,” a ZDF/ARTE co-production, celebrates its world premiere on 9 February at the Berlinale (Berlin Film Festival) with music by John Zorn, and three days later on the cultural TV channel ARTE. The movie is available for rental from the Murnau Foundation as a DCP (digital cinema package) for movie theaters, festivals and event organizers, from 17 February. Home entertainment editions on DVD and Blu-ray will follow. Without the digital restoration, in the years ahead the movie from UFA’s inventory would be limited to screenings at only a few theaters that still use analog technology.

“‘The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari’ is undoubtedly one of the most important movies not only in the Murnau Foundation’s extensive inventory, but of the overall genre,” said the Chairman of the Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau Foundation, Ernst Szebedits. “This makes it all the more regrettable that despite several attempts at restoration in the 1980s and 90s, until recently there was no suitable-quality version of this expressionist masterpiece. Fortunately this has now changed thanks to the existence of the camera original, state-of-the-art digital technology, precision craftsmanship, and financial support from Bertelsmann and others. The movie has been restored to a whole new brilliance and picture quality, and can now be distributed on all contemporary channels.”

“As a media company that lives by and for creativity, we care not only about the latest works, but also about significant works of earlier days – especially when it comes to preserving them and making them available to today’s audiences,” said Bertelsmann CEO Thomas Rabe. “By doing this we particularly want to draw attention to the much-needed digitization of our cinematic heritage. The German Federal Film Archives must not be left alone with this task, otherwise we risk forgetting or even losing valuable movies.” The Bertelsmann CEO referred to other, similar cultural activities the company is pursuing in other areas, such as the Ricordi Archive in Milan, acquired in 1994, whose valuable testimonies to European opera culture Bertelsmann has been indexing, digitizing and – since 2013 – making available to the European public. “Significant historical cultural assets – masterpieces of music, cinema and literature – deserve to be carefully handed down for posterity,” said Rabe.

Szebedits described the restoration work: “This was the first time we were able to use the almost entirely preserved camera negative from the German Federal Film Archive (Bundesarchiv-Filmarchiv), which allowed us to achieve a result in unprecedented quality. Thanks to various rental and archive copies from the 1920s and 30s, the movie is also more complete now than before. A lot of time-consuming detail work went into restoring jumps and missing frames in the various scenes. Digital methods also enabled a more convincing reproduction of the historic coloring and the expressionist title cards than in previous restored versions,” said the Chairman of the Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau Foundation.

The Foundation is collaborating with the German Federal Film Archive in Berlin and other archives for the restoration. In addition to Bertelsmann as the main sponsor, the Verwertungsgesellschaft für Nutzungsrechte an Filmwerken (VGF) and the German Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media helped to fund the project.

The restoration work under the supervision of restorer Anke Wilkening was carried out from April 2012 to January 2014. The Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau Foundation in Wiesbaden gathered all available film sources for the first time, specifically material from national archives (Bundesarchiv-Filmarchiv in Berlin, Deutsche Kinemathek – Museum für Film und Fernsehen in Berlin and Filmmuseum Düsseldorf) and international archives (Archivo Nacional de la Imagen-SODRE, Montevideo; Cineteca di Bologna; British Film Institute, London; Cinémathèque française, Paris; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Cinémathèque Royale de Belge, Brussels; Fondazione Cineteca di Milano). The material was analyzed and compared in Wiesbaden. L'Immagine Ritrovata – Film Restoration & Conservation, a Bologna based specialist company, was commissioned with the technical implementation and carried out the scanning, digital image restoration and mastering in 4K resolution.

The digitally restored version of the movie celebrates its world premiere at the 64<sup>th</sup> International Film Festival in Berlin on 9 February 2014, as a highlight of the Berlinale Classics. The renowned jazz musician John Zorn will accompany the silent movie live with a new, partly improvised score on the organ in the Grand Ballroom of Berlin's Philharmonie. The presentation is an International Film Festival in Berlin collaboration with the Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek, the Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau Foundation, the Berliner Philharmoniker Foundation, ZDF, ARTE and Zeeven || zeitgenössische musikprojekte.

Bertelsmann expects to welcome several hundred guests to Bertelsmann Unter den Linden 1 in Berlin at a reception following the premiere, including many prominent personalities from the cultural and arts scene, business and society.

### **About the movie**

“The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari” was shot by Decla-Film-Gesellschaft Holz & Co, which was acquired by the then Universum Film (Ufa) in 1922. The exact dates it was filmed are not recorded, but it was probably shot at Lixie-Atelier in the Weissensee district of Berlin from September 1919.

The movie tells the story of the sinister Dr. Caligari (Werner Krauss) who puts a prophetic somnambulist named Cesare (Conrad Veidt) on show as a fairground attraction in the village of Holstenwall. Cesare prophesies the death of an inquisitive visitor, Alan, (Hans-H. v. Twardowski) who is actually murdered that night. Franzis (Friedrich Feher), the deceased's best friend and rival for the lovely Jane (Lil Dagover), suspects Caligari and Cesare and decides to investigate on his own account.

More unexplained murders occur, and in the end Jane is to be killed by Cesare at the behest of Caligari. This leads to a chase during which Cesare collapses, Jane is rescued and Dr. Caligari flees into a mental asylum, where his pursuer Franzis discovers that Dr. Caligari is the director of the institution. It turns out that Caligari was inspired by a mystical case from the 18<sup>th</sup> century and that he was driven insane during his attempts to impose his will on a sleepwalker. Finally, Caligari is put into a straitjacket.

However, the movie is not over once this story has been told in flashback, because in a twist the narrator Franzis is actually an inmate in the asylum, along with the other characters from the story, including Caligari, who as the benevolent director of the institution now claims to know the key to curing Franzis. The movie ultimately leaves open what is true and who is now insane – Caligari or Franzis.

### **Response to the movie**

The movie created a stir even before its premiere at Berlin's *Marmorhaus* movie theater on 26 February 1920. It was extensively advertised in Berlin with the slogan "*Du musst Caligari werden*" (You must become Caligari) - initially with no indication that it was about a movie. The announcement that it was to be the first "expressionist movie" aroused high expectations about its artistic quality. With very few exceptions, the movie received an enthusiastic response from the press and was also very popular with the public, enjoying a four-week consecutive run at the *Marmorhaus*.

"The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" also attracted a great deal of attention abroad. The movie was very popular with audiences in Paris, London and New York. The first hit movie of Weimar cinema especially polarized Germany's former enemies from the First World War, which ended in 1918, and the term "Caligarism" was coined to describe its novelty.

"The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" belongs to the canon of movie classics. Siegfried Kracauer's social psychology volume "From Caligari to Hitler" (1947), which postulates that a collective longing of the Germans for a tyrant can be seen in the movies of Weimar cinema, influences perceptions of the movie to this day.

Recollections and anecdotes by people involved in the making of the movie, especially the writers and architects, contributed significantly to the creation of legends around "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari." Documents that later surfaced, such as the original script, helped to deconstruct many of these myths.

NOTE: Bertelsmann has set up a special site featuring extensive background material and footage on the topic (<http://www.bertelsmann.de/news-und-media/specials/das-cabinet-des-dr.-caligari/>).

### **About Bertelsmann**

Bertelsmann is an international media company whose core divisions encompass television (RTL Group), book publishing (Penguin Random House), magazine publishing (Gruner + Jahr), services (Arvato), and printing (Be Printers) in some 50 countries. In 2012, the company's businesses, with their more than 100,000 employees, generated revenues of €16.1 billion. Bertelsmann stands for a combination of creativity and entrepreneurship that empowers the creation of first-rate media, communications, and service offerings to inspire people around the world and to provide innovative solutions for customers.

### **About the Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau Foundation**

As an archive and rights holder the Murnau Foundation curates a significant part of Germany's movie heritage. Its most important endowment is the unique, cohesive movie stock, which comprises copies and material as well as rights from the former production companies UFA, Decla, Universum-Film, Bavaria, Terra, Tobis and Berlin-Film. This outstanding inventory of cultural and film history – more than 6,000 silent movies and sound films (feature films, documentaries, short movies and commercials) – covers the period from the beginnings of motion pictures to the early 1960s, and includes movies by important directors such as Fritz Lang, Ernst Lubitsch, Detlef Sierck, Helmut Käutner and Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau, the namesake of the foundation. The best-known titles include THE CABINET OF DR CALIGARI (1919/20), METROPOLIS (1927), THE BLUE ANGEL (1929/30), DIE DREI VON DER TANKSTELLE (1930), MÜNCHHAUSEN (1942/43) and GROSSE FREIHEIT NR.7 (1943/44).

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