

PRESS RELEASE

UFA Film Nights Open with a Ramble Through Berlin in the ‘Wild ‘20s’

- **Richard Oswald’s offbeat silent film classic A CRAZY NIGHT is presented for the first time in a digitally restored version**
- **Bertelsmann and UFA attract fans of silent film to Berlin’s Museum Island with open-air cinema and live music on three evenings**
- **WOMAN IN THE MOON and MADAME DUBARRY complete the program**

Berlin, August 21, 2019 – For today’s opening of the UFA Film Nights 2019 in Berlin, Bertelsmann and the UFA present an offbeat journey back through time to the German metropolis in the “Wild ‘20s.” This evening, nearly a thousand film fans will flock to Berlin’s Museum Island for the open-air screening of Richard Oswald’s freshly restored silent-film classic *A CRAZY NIGHT* (German: *Eine tolle Nacht*, 1926/27) – a turbulent ramble through the infamous nightlife of 1920s Berlin. The movie will be accompanied by the film orchestra The Sprockets, who will perform a new composition by Frido ter Beek and Maud Nelissen commissioned by ZDF/ARTE. On Thursday, the UFA Film Nights continue with Fritz Lang’s visionary 1929 masterpiece *WOMAN IN THE MOON* (German: *Frau im Mond*), featuring a new musical interpretation by DJ legend Jeff Mills. On Friday, the last evening of the silent-film festival, Ernst Lubitsch’s revolutionary epic *MADAME DUBARRY* (1919) will be on the program, with musical accompaniment provided by Ekkehard Wölk and the Ensemble Ancien Régime.

This year’s UFA Film Nights on Kolonnadenhof in front of the Alte Nationalgalerie are again proving to be a crowd-puller: The first and second evenings are already sold out, and only a few remaining tickets are available for the third evening.

The fascination of silent movies

Thomas Rabe, Chairman & CEO of Bertelsmann, said: “Silent films have lost nothing of their fascination in over a century. They still delight and inspire people today, as can be seen from the extremely positive response of Berlin film fans to the ninth UFA Film Nights. As Europe’s largest media company and the entrepreneurial home of UFA, Bertelsmann feels a special responsibility to preserve the creative achievements of past generations. That is why we actively work to safeguard Germany’s silent-movie heritage, by digitally restoring silent films threatened by decay and presenting them to a broad audience.”

UFA CEO Nico Hofmann added: “I’m delighted that the UFA Film Nights have become such a popular brand in Berlin’s summertime cultural scene. With this event series, we provide a prominent platform for the unique visual, aesthetic and technical innovativeness of Weimar film, which UFA played a major role in shaping at the time.”

Before the screening on Berlin’s Museum Island, Bertelsmann and the UFA will welcome nearly 400 guests to a reception at Bertelsmann Unter den Linden 1. Their guests include numerous well-known actresses and actors, cultural figures, and personages from politics

and society. Besides the actor Uwe Ochsenknecht, who will introduce the first movie, and the celebrated DJ Jeff Mills, actors Sebastian Koch, Jonas Nay, Dennesch Zoudé, Samuel Finzi, Daniel Donskoy, Burghart Klaußner, Inka Friedrich, Maria Ehrich and Hans-Werner Meyer have also confirmed their attendance. Other well-known representatives of the cultural scene including the President of the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation, Prof. Dr. Hermann Parzinger, and the artistic director of the Berliner Ensemble, Oliver Reese, as well as the Chairman of the Board of Axel Springer SE, Mathias Döpfner, several ambassadors, and other prominent media representatives also plan to attend.

In the opening film **A CRAZY NIGHT**, an insecticide manufacturer from the provinces goes to Berlin, following a vaudeville star he has a crush on, and gets caught up in a maelstrom of voluntary and involuntary adventures. The movie from 1926/27, long believed lost and only recently rediscovered in the Russian state film archive Gosfilmofond, was digitally restored this year by Omnimago. This is the first time it will be screened in its restored version. The premiere will be enhanced with a new musical score by Frido ter Beek and Maud Nelissen. Actor Uwe Ochsenknecht will present the movie to the audience, highlighting its significance in cinematic history.

Anyone who didn't manage to get a ticket can watch a live stream of the opening night on the Facebook channels of ARTE Concert, Bertelsmann, and UFA, starting at about 9 p.m. ARTE will also televise the restored silent film with the new music on August 26, 2019.

On Thursday evening, the UFA Film Nights continue with Fritz Lang's epochal and technically visionary masterpiece **WOMAN IN THE MOON**, one of Ufa's most famous movies. The music is played by DJ Jeff Mills, who has reworked his score for the film for the occasion. This time, Friedemann Beyer, film historian and curator of the UFA Film Nights, will give the audience an overview of the historical context and importance of the movie.

Finally, on Friday evening – 100 years to the month after its premiere as the Berlin Zoo Palast's opening movie – Ernst Lubitsch's revolutionary epic **MADAME DUBARRY** (retitled **PASSION** in the United States) is on the program. Ekkehard Wölk and his Ensemble Ancien Régime will perform the music, a new composition by the Berlin-based silent-film and jazz musician. Friedemann Beyer will introduce this movie as well.

For many years, Bertelsmann has been engaged in a variety of cultural initiatives both in Germany and internationally. The Group's "Culture@Bertelsmann" activities comprise exhibitions, readings and concerts, the "Blue Sofa" literary format, as well as a commitment to preserving Europe's cultural heritage. For instance, Bertelsmann owns the Archivio Storico Ricordi in Milan, a music archive that contains a wealth of unique testimonies to Italian opera history. Bertelsmann is indexing the archival holdings to meet the latest standards and making the cultural treasures accessible for a wide audience. As a company with a long history in filmmaking, Bertelsmann also supports and sponsors the restoration, digitization and screening of major silent films. In 2014, the Group provided substantial funding for the digital restoration of Robert Wiene's silent classic "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" (German: *Das Kabinett des Dr. Caligari*), in 2016 for the Fritz Lang film "Destiny" (German: *Der müde Tod*) and in 2018 for Paul Czinner's "The Fiddler of Florence" (German: *Der Geiger von Florenz*).

This year's UFA Film Nights in Berlin are being held with the kind support of ARTE, the National Museums in Berlin (*Staatliche Museen zu Berlin*), the Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau

Foundation, Maz & Movie, and Gegenbauer Facility Management. Stroer, radio eins, and RBB Kulturradio are the event's media partners.

The UFA Film Nights hosted by Bertelsmann and UFA will be held in the European capital of Brussels as well, on September 26 to 28, 2019.

The program at a glance:

Wednesday, August 21st, 2019. Doors open at 8:30 p.m., screening starts at 9:00 p.m.

EINE TOLLE NACHT – A CRAZY NIGHT (1926/27), Director: Richard Oswald

With Ossi Oswalda, Harry Liedtke, Henry Bender, Paul Graetz, Kurt Gerron

Production: Richard Oswald-Produktion, Length: 83 min.

Music: New composition by Frido ter Beek and Maud Nelissen, commissioned by ZDF/ARTE. The film orchestra The Sprockets will perform the musical accompaniment.

Thursday, August 22nd, 2019. Doors open at 8:30 p.m., screening starts at 9:00 p.m.

FRAU IM MOND – WOMAN IN THE MOON (1929), Director: Fritz Lang

With Gerda Maurus, Willy Fritsch, Klaus Pohl, Gustav von Wangenheim, Fritz Rasp

Production: Fritz Lang Film for Ufa, Length: 156 min.

Music: Jeff Mills performs a new musical interpretation

Friday, August 23rd, 2019. Doors open at 8:30 p.m., screening starts at 9:00 p.m.

MADAME DUBARRY (1919), Director: Ernst Lubitsch

With Pola Negri, Emil Jannings, Reinhold Schünzel, Harry Liedtke, Eduard von Winterstein

Production: Paul Davidson Produktions-AG "Union" (PAGU) for Ufa, Length: 114 min.

Music: New composition by Ekkehard Wölk. Performed by: Ekkehard Wölk and the Ensemble Ancien Régime.

More information is available at www.ufa-filmnaechte.de, www.bertelsmann.de or on Twitter, Facebook and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com) under the hashtag [#UFAFilmnaechte](https://twitter.com/UFAFilmnaechte)

A few remaining tickets are still available at €15 each (includes advance booking fee):

Online: www.ufa-filmnaechte.de/en/ or www.ticketmaster.de

Phone: 01806 999 0000 (0.20 €/call from German landlines / max. 0.60 €/call from German mobiles)

About Bertelsmann

Bertelsmann is a media, services and education company that operates in about 50 countries around the world. It includes the broadcaster RTL Group, the trade book publisher Penguin Random House, the magazine publisher Gruner + Jahr, the music company BMG, the service provider Arvato, the Bertelsmann Printing Group, the Bertelsmann Education Group and Bertelsmann Investments, an international network of funds. The company has 117,000 employees and generated revenues of €17.7 billion in the 2018 financial year. Bertelsmann stands for creativity and entrepreneurship. This combination promotes first-class media content and innovative service solutions that inspire customers around the world.

About UFA

UFA is one of the oldest and best-known entertainment brands in the world and today does business as a powerful creator of entertainment content that has steadily expanded its market leadership as a film and television producer in Germany over the years. The company has evolved from a creator of programs and TV producer into a content specialist that delivers a range of solutions for digital and multimedia content exploitation – for all major broadcasters in Germany as well as for many other partners. The UFA FICTION, UFA SERIAL DRAMA and UFA SHOW & FACTUAL production units operate under the UFA umbrella. UFA is part of the global media and entertainment company Fremantle, which operates the worldwide production business of Bertelsmann-owned RTL Group.

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