Perspectives on the Berlin Sound Movie Operetta (1929-1944): Media, Technology and Reception



STEFANIE AREND

New College

Faculty of Music

University of Oxford

A thesis submitted for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Michaelmas Term 2022

Table of Contents

Table of Contents i
Abstract iii
Acknowledgements v
List of Figures vii
List of Music Examples x
Notes on the Text xi
Introduction: Becoming Acquainted with the Sound Movie Operetta 1
The Sound Movie Operetta: A Mediatised Musical Genre? 15
Technology, Film Sound, and the Negotiation of Discursive Tensions 31
A New Era Ushers in a New Audience 38
Source Situation 45
Outline 49
Chapter I: Sound Movie Hit Songs and the Berlin Mediascape 53
Excursus: Music Consumption as Imagined Reality 59
The Flickers: The Starting Point for a Cross-Media Marketing Campaign 63
Public Broadcasting as Wireless "Department Store" 69
The Sound Movie Hit Song's Effect on the Record Industry 81
Page-turner: Putting a Fresh Sheet on the Music Stand 95
Strike Up The Band! Dance Orchestra Culture in Berlin's Weimar Years 107
Commercialising Sound Movie Hit Songs in Print 111
Conclusion 116
Chapter II: Singing and Playing On and Off Screen: The Combination Orchestra's Opportune Moment and the Downfall of the Cinema Musician 120
The Sudden Death of Film Illustration 125
Preparing the Ground for the Sound Movie Hit Song 145
The Combination Orchestra's Great Entrance 152
The Go-To Film Orchestras 164
Leon Monosson: The Art of Singing a Chorus 170
A Vocal Ensemble for the Movies: Comedian Harmonists 184
Conclusion 191
Chapter III: Negotiating Flicker Aesthetics: Weaving the Social Fabric of Transition Era Film Sound 194
Weaving the Social Fabric of Film Sound 197
The Reality and Fiction of the Studio Space 200
Dr Larifari's Microphone-Placing Schemes and the Mixer's Itch 213

Recording Music 227
Lichtspielhaus sound 236
Parasitic Noises 244
Sonic Experiences in the Cinema 250
Conclusion 254
Chapter IV: Scoring Bombshell Cinema: Franz Grothe's Late German Revue Film Die Frau meiner Träume (*The Woman of My Dreams*, 1944) 258
Scrutinising the Revue Film *Die Frau meiner Träume*..... 267
First Revue: "Die Frau ohne Herz" 278
Mach Dir Nichts Daraus: Swaying, Singing, and Sticking It Out..... 286
Second revue: "Die Frau meiner Träume"..... 294
Resonances 310
Conclusion 315
Bibliography 329

Abstract

This thesis investigates the sound movie operetta and sound movie hit song genres that developed between 1929 and 1933 in Weimar Germany. Understanding these genres as mediatised, (technologically) mediated phenomena, I explore the ways in which they interacted with audiences such that particular reception attitudes were embedded amongst those audiences. In the process, a new social fabric of sound was woven. Evidence is drawn from a wide array of materials ranging from technologies to contemporary press, archival materials, and trade periodicals. All chapters take as case studies a variety of sound movie operettas, hit songs, and artists of the time.

Each chapter zooms in on a different perspective on the sound movie operetta and its interwovenness with other domains and audiences. First, I explore how the cross-referencing network of media channels that emerged around the sound movie operetta and hit song fostered the formation of new reception patterns. Second, I theorise a dichotomy in limbo between the live and recorded to account for the ambiguous boundaries that were created by the increasing mechanisation and mediatisation of music during this time. Ruptures and continuities within prior musical practices of both the cinema and entertainment music worlds further manifested this ambiguous mode of reception. Third, I analyse the disconnect between representations of sound technologies in sound movie operettas and the actual processes of these technologies. Such ambiguities helped accustom cinemagoers to the ever-developing, imperfect sound technologies represented. Finally, I jump forward to the National Socialist period to consider how the sound movie operetta was superseded by the revue film, and how such films were not just

blunt tools of ideological coercion but also allowed for more subversive modes of reception through their incorporation of Weimar Era and other stylistic tropes.

Acknowledgements

When I discovered the yellowed pages of an edition of sound movie hit songs in a collection of bric-a-brac that my dad had accumulated during his childhood, I would never have thought that those songs would take a young Berlin girl on the journey towards doing a doctorate at the University of Oxford.

However, this thesis would not have become what it is without the constant support, love and dedication of a plethora of champions:

First, I am indebted to Prof. Laura Tunbridge. I cannot list all of the myriad ways Laura has contributed to me finishing this thesis and I am honoured to consider her my mentor. Not only is her nut roast the best I have ever tasted, but by her mere presence in my life I was also constantly reminded of the kind of wonderfully inspiring, smart, and gracious scholar that I aspire to be. She provides the most excellent role model. Dr. Joanna Bullivant, Prof. Jonathan Cross, Prof. Peter Franklin and Dr. Yvonne Liao also provided invaluable advice during my transfer and confirmation of status.

From my time at the University of Oxford, I am also indebted to Prof. Eric Clarke, Nick Fowler, Liz Green, Prof. Christian Leitmeir, Jade Murphy, Jasper, Tigger, and Tom, who, at different times, have fed me biscuits, sourced material, or simply offered shoulders to lean on. I also want to thank my extended Oxford cohort: Pablo Infante Amate, Josette Daemen, Lucas-Jan Dörre, William Drummond, Andrew Frampton, Shaobo Gao, Jake Howarth, Sahutchai Gla Inwongwan, Loek Luiten, Fabrice Luyckx, Benjamin Schneider, Emily Tan, Andrew Tzavaras, Shan Wang, and Frances Watson.

Three empowering, incredibly awe-inspiring Oxford graduates have accompanied me as friends and substitute family: I thank Moeko Hayashi for

teaching me that friendship knows no borders and honouring me with being Albert's godmother; I thank Mingyue Li for making wonderful memories all across the world; and I thank Rosebud Campion for sharing warm meals and thrilling ideas.

Over the course of my research, many archivists, collectors, and scholars have helped me along the way, among them, Alexander Schatte from the Franz-Grothe-Archive, who never tired of sending me new music and material; the staff at Deutsche Kinemathek Berlin, Bundesarchiv Berlin, and Staatsbibliothek Berlin; Theo Niemeyer; Thomas Krispens; and Walter Weist. From my time at the University of the Arts Berlin, I am indebted to Christine Siegert, Dörte Schmidt, and Matthias Pasdzierny. I am also grateful to Prof. Nicholas Cook, Prof. John Rink, Ditlev, Harry, Jo, Avital, Diego, Simon, Diane, Esther, Rachel, Michael, and Katharina from my time at the University of Cambridge.

My family and friends from home provided unwavering love, support, comfort, as well as wonderful memories throughout my time at Oxford and in Berlin: I want to thank Marvin Gasser, Kristin Herold, Hanna-Lena Kühn, Nina Szymanski, and Anja Trekel for being my oldest and most wonderful friends and for seeing the distant horizon when I could not. I want to thank Martyn and Eileen Grealey for giving me a home away from home and taking me on unforgettable adventures. I want to thank my mum and dad for never ceasing to instil the belief in me that I should make the most of every moment and opportunity that has been given to me. And I want to thank my incomparable sister, Sindy, who deserves a special mention for constantly reminding me to fight for things that matter – and for the gift of her wonderful laugh.

Finally, I want to thank Patrick for helping me see when I could not, and for taking and holding my hand whenever he knew it needed a little squeeze. These last few months and years have been the best ones because of his love and support.

List of Figures

Figure 1: Cover page, Leo Monosson. *Die Stimme seines Herrn. Illustrierte Monatsschrift für Musikfreunde*, no. 10 (1932)..... 90
Figure 2: Back page, Record catalogue. *Die Stimme seines Herrn. Illustrierte Monatsschrift für Musikfreunde*, no. 10 (1930)..... 90
Figure 3: Cover page and first page of piano score. Heymann, Werner R., *Ein blonder Traum*. Klavierausgabe (Berlin: Ufaton-Verlag, 1932) 103
Figure 4: Cover page. *1000 Takte Tanz. 22 der populärsten Tanz- und Gesangsschlager*, vol. 8, Berlin: Musik-Verlag Alrobi, 1932. 105
Figure 5: Cover page, Edition for violin. *1000 Takte Tanz. 22 der populärsten Tanz- und Gesangsschlager*, Ausgabe für Violine, Berlin: Musik-Verlag Alrobi, 1932..... 106
Figure 6: Cover page. *Ufaton-Bomben: Zwei Jahre Ufaton-Film* (Berlin: Ufaton-Verlag, 1932)..... 106
Figure 7: Still. Leon Monosson and the Comedian Harmonists singing "Liebling, mein Herz lässt dich grüßen". *Die Drei von der Tankstelle*. DVD. 110
Figure 8: Cover page and first two pages. *Berliner Film-Kurier*, "Ein blonder Traum", no. 1834 (1932) 112
Figure 9: Cast of *Ein blonder Traum* on the rooftops of Berlin. Anonymous, “Film auf dem Dach,” *Filmwelt. Das Film-Magazin.* 17.7.1932..... 114
Figure 10: Simplified sheet music excerpt of “Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt’s ein kleines bisschen Glück”. “Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt’s ein kleines bisschen Glück”, *Filmwelt. Das Film-Magazin*, 30.10.1932. 114
Figure 11: Still: Leon Monosson singing “Du bist nicht die Erste” in the movie *Ihre Majestät, die Liebe*. *T-JUBE RADIO*, *YouTube Video* 179
Figure 12: Still: Solo violin player stepping forward during the performance of “Du bist nicht die Erste”. *T-JUBE RADIO*, *YouTube Video*..... 180
Figure 13: Still: Leon Monosson serenading the couple. *T-JUBE RADIO*, *YouTube Video*..... 180
Figure 14: Window decoration in unknown Berlin music shop. *Anne-Marie Vigneron, private photo collection (Leon Monosson)* 182
Figure 15: Still image from *Ein blonder Traum*, Jou-Jou doing her dance routine in front of the camera with a crew behind the blends. *Kurbel TV*, *YouTube Video*. 202

Figure 16: Still image from *Ein blonder Traum*, film producer and film crew disapprovingly glaring at Jou-Jou. *Kurbel TV*, *YouTube Video* 202
Figure 17: Still image from *Ein blonder Traum*: Jou-Jou realising that her voice morphed into a male voice. *Kurbel TV*, *YouTube Video* 203
Figure 18: Still image from *Ein blonder Traum*: Jou-Jou doing her tightrope act with the crew behind the blinds. *Kurbel TV*, *YouTube Video* 203
Figure 19: Still image from *Ein blonder Traum*: film producer aiming to shoot Jou-Jou off stage with a film camera. *Kurbel TV*, *YouTube Video* 204
Figure 20: Diagram of a filming facility. Fritz Fischer, *Tonfilm: Aufnahme und Wiedergabe*, 437 (fg. 369)..... 208
Figure 21: Sound Engineer in a Klangfilm control room. Heinz Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis*, 326 (fg. 230)..... 209
Figure 22: Still image from *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari*: Max in an argument with the director of the movie. *Kurbel TV*, *YouTube Video* 215
Figure 23: Still image from *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari*: Max trying to operate the sound board. *Kurbel TV*, *YouTube Video* 215
Figure 24: Still Image from *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari*: Max realising that his approach to sound engineering does not produce the expected effects. *Kurbel TV*, *YouTube Video* 216
Figure 25: Still image from *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari*: Max admitting his failure. *Kurbel TV*, *YouTube Video* 216
Figure 26: Older model of a Tobis recording device. Heinz Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis*, 363 (fg. 258) 218
Figure 27: Tobis sound engineer operating the older Tobis recording device. Heinz Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis*, 364 (fg. 259)..... 218
Figure 28: Still image from *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari*: Max conducting the Weintraub Syncopators. *Kurbel TV*, *YouTube Video* 228
Figure 29: Electric mixing and overwriting device. Heinz Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis*, 432 (fg. 315) 231
Figure 30: Werner Richard Hermann conducting the Ufa orchestra in a recording room. *Elizabeth Trautwein-Heymann, private sheet music collection (Werner Richard Heymann)* 234
Figure 31: Still image from *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht*: Helmut is checking the functionality of the cinema projector. *Benito Camela*, *YouTube Video* 238

Figure 32: Still image from *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht*: Helmut is checking the functionality of the cinema projector. *Benito Camela*, *YouTube Video* 238
Figure 33: Still image from *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht*: Helmut regulating the volume. *Benito Camela*, *YouTube Video* 239
Figure 34: Still image from *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht*: Anton fixing a speaker behind the screen. *Benito Camela*, *YouTube Video* 239
Figure 35: Overview of plot and succession of musical numbers in *Die Frau meiner Träume* 269
Figure 36: *Die Frau meiner Träume*, autograph score, page one. *Franz-Grothe-Archiv, Berlin* 272
Figure 37: Still image from *Die Frau meiner Träume*: Julia Köster at the end of the first revue sequence. *Klaus von Bülow*, *YouTube Video* 278
Figure 38: Still image from *Die Frau meiner Träume*: Apache dance section. *Klaus von Bülow*, *YouTube Video* 281
Figure 39: Still image from *Die Frau meiner Träume*: Can-Can section of first revue sequence. *Klaus von Bülow*, *YouTube Video* 282
Figure 40: Still image from *Die Frau meiner Träume*: Julia Köster singing “Mach Dir nichts daraus” in the engineers’ canteen. *Klaus von Bülow*, *YouTube Video*. 286
Figure 41: Still image from *Die Frau meiner Träume*: Julia and Erwin waltzing in the canteen. *Klaus von Bülow*, *YouTube Video* 289
Figure 42: Still image from *Die Frau meiner Träume*: Valentin Froman at the beginning of the second revue sequence. *Klaus von Bülow*, *YouTube Video* 294
Figure 43: Still image from *Die Frau meiner Träume*: Dance section at the beginning of the second revue sequence. *Klaus von Bülow*, *YouTube Video* 298
Figure 44: Still image from *Die Frau meiner Träume*: Stylised Chinese music section in the second revue sequence. *Klaus von Bülow*, *YouTube Video* 300
Figure 45: Still image from *Die Frau meiner Träume*: Spanish bolero section in the second revue sequence. *Klaus von Bülow*, *YouTube Video* 304
Figure 46: Still image from *Die Frau meiner Träume*: Tap dance section in the second revue sequence. *Klaus von Bülow*, *YouTube Video*..... 308
Figure 47: Still image from *Die Frau meiner Träume*: waltz finale in the second revue sequence. *Klaus von Bülow*, *YouTube Video* 308

List of Music Examples

Musical Example 1: Revue Scene I: Apache Dance (excerpt). *Autograph Score*, *Franz-Grothe-Archiv* 280
Musical Example 2: Revue Scene I: Can-can, first theme. *Autograph Score*, *Franz-Grothe-Archiv* 283
Musical Example 3: Revue Scene I: Verse, Interlude. *Autograph Score*, *Franz-Grothe-Archiv*..... 284
Musical Example 4: “Mach Dir nichts daraus”, Verse 1 (excerpt). *Autograph Score*, *Franz-Grothe-Archiv* 288
Musical Example 5: “Mach Dir nichts daraus”, Chorus (excerpt, dance interlude). *Autograph Score*, *Franz-Grothe-Archiv* 290
Musical Example 6: Revue Scene II, first verse (excerpt), *Autograph Score*, *Franz-Grothe-Archiv* 296
Musical Example 7: Revue Scene II, first chorus (excerpt), *Autograph Score*, *Franz-Grothe-Archiv* 297
Musical Example 8: Revue Scene II, China Scene (excerpt, second theme), *Autograph Score*, *Franz-Grothe-Archiv* 299
Musical Example 9: Revue Scene II, Spanish Scene (excerpt, second theme), *Autograph Score*, *Franz-Grothe-Archiv* 303
Musical Example 10: Revue Scene II, foxtrot variation “Ich warte auf Dich” (excerpt, brass section), *Autograph Score*, *Franz-Grothe-Archiv* 305
Musical Example 11: Revue Scene II, accompaniment tap dance interlude (excerpt), *Autograph Score*, *Franz-Grothe-Archiv*..... 306
Musical Example 12: Revue Scene II, waltz finale “Ich warte auf Dich” (excerpt), *Autograph Score*, *Franz-Grothe-Archiv* 310

Notes on the Text

The following abbreviations are used to refer to archival collections:

BArch	Bundesarchiv Berlin
BLHA	Landeshauptarchiv Potsdam
B Rep.	Entschädigungsbehörde Berlin (compensation files)
SpkA	Spruchkammer Munich (denazification files)

I have also made use of private collections which are listed in the relevant section in my bibliography.

All translations are my own unless otherwise specified. For reasons of space and readability, I have not included the original text for quotations in the main text, but only my translations.

Throughout my thesis, I refer to the defunct German currency of the Reichsmark (RM) when giving estimates of salaries, costs, etc. The German Bundesbank has compiled a table to compare the purchasing power of German currencies throughout the decades. According to that table, 1 RM equaled these amounts of Euro in the years listed:

1929	3.6
1930	3.8
1931	4.1
1932	4.6
1933	4.7
…	
1944	4.0

However, in their calculation, the Bundesbank states that there is major uncertainty for the amounts given for those years, since several economic crises hit the German population.[1]

[1] https://www.bundesbank.de/resource/blob/615162/13c8ab8e09d802ffcf2e5a8ae509829c/mL/kaufkraftaequivalente-historischer-betraege-in-deutschen-waehrungen-data.pdf (last accessed on 16.01.2023, 7:21 pm).

Introduction: Becoming Acquainted with the Sound Movie Operetta

> Der Tonfilm an sich ist ja schon die erste Vervielfältigung, aber dann, wenn der Schlager durchgeschlagen hat, wird er auf die Schallplatte gebracht und wird vom Radio übernommen in allen möglichen Zusammenstellungen, teils als Schlagerkonzert von heute, teils im Vergleich zu alten Volksliedern, teils an sich selbst, teils im Zusammenhang mit der Operette oder dem Film, in dem er ausgebrütet worden ist – an allen Ecken und Enden steigt der Schlager hervor, trifft unser Ohr, ob wir wollen oder nicht, und wird immer schlagerhafter und immer berühmter und populärer, je öfter wir ihn hören.
>
> The sound movie in itself is already [the schlager's] first replication, but then, when the schlager's success has gone through the roof, it is also pressed on records, picked up by the radio in all kinds of compilations: as part of a schlager concert, in direct comparison to old volkslieder, just by itself, or in connexion with the operetta or film from which it emerged – in every nook and cranny, the schlager rises to the surface, strikes our ears, whether we want it or not, and grows more and more into itself, and keeps growing in popularity and fame, the more we listen to it.[2]

Over the course of 1929 and 1930, the period that marks the transition between the silent movie era and the advent of the talkie, the German film industry created its first sound movie operetta *Liebeswalzer* (*Love Waltz*, 1930).[3] In its combination of sound film and hit songs, the sound movie operetta radically altered the structures that constituted the 1930s entertainment music and film market, and renegotiated audiences' intricate relationship with it. Similar to their stage equivalents, early talkies such as *Liebeswalzer* featured songs and dance numbers as integral parts of their overall narratives. However, contrary to the stage operetta, the sound movie operetta seemingly provided a shattered post-war society with the means and infrastructure to satisfy its ever-growing hunger for accessible entertainment and

[2] Oskar Bie, "Ein Schlager reist durch die Welt," *Skizzen. Illustrierte Monatszeitschrift für Kunst, Musik, Tanz, Sport, Mode und Haus*, no. 5 (1932).

[3] This Ufa-produced movie premiered in Germany on 7th February, 1930 and paved the way for tropes that would become staples of many sound movie operettas to come. As was the case for many of these sound movie operettas, the movie was directed by Wilhelm Thiele, the music composed by Werner Richard Heymann, and the main couple played by Lilian Harvey and Willy Fritsche. However, in its choice of subject and music, this typical comedy of mistaken identity is more firmly anchored in the Viennese and Berlin operetta tradition than many other representatives of the genre (https://www.murnau-stiftung.de/movie/577 (last accessed on 12.1.2023, 2:10 pm)).

participation.[4] What began with the charm of one such sound movie operetta eventually propagated itself through the allure of a thousand mediatised objects, as sound movie hit songs themselves were made visible—and purchasable—in the form of films, records, images, ads, sheet music, concerts, and a series of other well-placed products.[5] As stated by German music journalist Oskar Bie in 1932, and as quoted as the epigraph to this Introduction, early talkies and their Schlager (hit songs) did not only give audiences the opportunity personally to obtain a range of products but also enabled them to share the feeling of ubiquity itself, whether they wanted it or not. Indeed, "in every nook and cranny, the Schlager [rose] to the surface".[6] This thesis will analyse the life of the Schlager, in particular those from sound movie operettas, during the transition era in Weimar Germany. To elucidate the extent of its entanglement with the culture, economics, and everyday life of this time and place will be this thesis' focus.

Within Germany, it was undoubtedly in Berlin where mass media culture flourished most – its unique formula of cultural hybridity, technological progressiveness, and an emerging media-based infrastructure provided the means for democratising the musical experience.[7] The vibrant and appealing aura of the Berlin cinema boulevard found its musical evocation in the media omnipresence of the sound movie hit song, which set something into motion that music scholar Ulrik

[4] Judith Prokasky, "Die späte Weimarer Republik im Spiegel der Tonfilmoperette," in *Wenn ich sonntags in mein Kino geh'. Ton – Film – Musik, 1929-1933*, eds. Rainer Rother and Peter Mänz (Berlin: Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek/Kettler, 2007), 58 ff.
[5] Michael Wedel, "Die Tonfilmoperette. Zugpferd des Tonfilms," in *Wenn ich sonntags in mein Kino geh'. Ton – Film – Musik, 1929-1933*, eds. Rainer Rother and Peter Mänz (Berlin: Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek/Kettler, 2007), 56.
[6] Oskar Bie, "Ein Schlager reist durch die Welt," *Skizzen. Illustrierte Monatszeitschrift für Kunst, Musik, Tanz, Sport, Mode und Haus*, no. 5 (1932).
[7] Marko H. Paysan, "Großstadtlichter. Die Geburt der Tonfilmoperette aus dem Geist des Boulevards," in *Wenn ich sonntags in mein Kino geh'. Ton – Film – Musik, 1929-1933*, eds. Rainer Rother and Peter Mänz (Berlin: Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek/Kettler, 2007), 104.

Volgsten has recently dubbed the "musicalization of everyday life".[8] At all times, sound movie hit songs resonated with the buzzing sound of the urban traffic; one could spot their catchy hooklines on advertising columns and neon signs; they were used as props for the daily *thé dansant* and advertised the latest pantihose on the radio and in magazines. Cascades of entertainment music washed around the keen cinéaste who seemingly could not have his tea dance without simultaneously indulging in the quaint charm of the latest Tonfilmschlager.

As sociomusicologist Simon Frith suggests, popular music genres (such as sound movie hit songs) are not merely cash cows but have primarily social functions, providing possibilities to mediate relationships between the public and the private realm. In their function as such mediators, the sound movie operetta and hit song thus helped provide their audiences with a comprehensive reception identity and, following musicologist Brian Currid's terminology, succeeded in morphing into "organs of experience".[9] By tending to different areas of life and switching between different modes of reception, sound movie hit songs significantly helped to shape a novel kind of recipient, one who understood how to dexterously move between the poles of intermediality that were set out by the genre.[10] What is more, as Schulz explains, as media use became "an integral part of private and social life, the

[8] Ulrik Volgsten, "Mediatization of music, musicalization of everyday life. New Ways of listening to recorded sound in Sweden during the interwar years, 1919-1939," in *Phonographic Encounters. Mapping Transnational Cultures of Sound, 1890-1945*, eds. Elodie A. Roy and Eva Moreda Rodríguez (Milton: Taylor and Francis, 2021), last accessed on 22.12.2022, https://directory.doabooks.org/handle/20.500.12854/91607.

[9] Brian Currid, "Das Lied einer Nacht. Filmschlager als Organe der Erfahrung," in *Als die Filme singen lernten. Innovationen und Traditionen im Musikfilm 1928-1938*, eds. Hans Michael Bock, Wolfgang Jacobson, and Jörg Schöning (Munich: Edition Text + Kritik, 1999), 48.

[10] Henry Jenkins' notion of convergence culture expresses similar sentiments in that it describes a way in which "old and new media collide, where grassroots and corporate media intersect, where the power of the media producer and the power of the media consumer interact in unpredictable ways." (Henry Jenkins, *Convergence Culture: where old and new media collide* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), last accessed on 22.12.2022, Ebook Central, 2). Jenkins describes an active, participatory culture in which "consumers are encouraged to seek out new information and make connections among dispersed media content" (Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, 3).

media's definition of reality amalgamate[d] with the social definition of reality."[11] The relationship between music and listener seemed mainly filtered through the way music was presented via, and appropriated by, various media, and not necessarily only through musical discourse and practice.

In Germany at this time, to borrow David Suisman's words from his exploration of the commercial revolution of American music, "a new music culture took shape[;] it altered the way music was made and heard, bought and sold, as well as effect[ed] other changes that were broader and more subtle, especially the increasing presence and impact of music in the culture at large".[12] However, Suisman, like many others, first and foremost attends to the *creation* of a new musical culture according to a perception of modern music cultures as phenomena that are not driven by consumers but rather by "a new commercial class of music makers".[13] While it is indubitably of great importance to "locate the texts and practices of, say, popular music within the field of their economic determinations", this also often involves neglecting the agency of consumers in the process of appropriating products to their specific demands, tastes and social circumstances.[14] By initiating the abovementioned cross-media marketing campaigns, representatives of major production sites did of course shape the sound movie operetta and aimed to incite audiences to confer specific meanings onto their products. Those production sites will be given space within this thesis in, for instance, the scrutinization of specific distribution channels (film companies, radio stations and others) and technologies. But it is nevertheless incorrect to think that

[11] Winfried Schulz, "Reconstructing Mediatization as an Analytical Concept," *European Journal of Communication*, no. 19 (2014): 89.
[12] David Suisman. *Selling Sounds: The Commercial Revolution in American Music* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2021), 11.
[13] Suisman, *Selling Sounds*, 15.
[14] John Storey, *Cultural Studies and the Study of Popular Culture* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2022), 121.

the examination of those “music makers” alone would provide sufficient information to tell the full story of a popular music film genre and its complex trajectory. Following media scholar John Fiske, I argue that it is important to recognise how audiences activated meaningful potential through the ways in which sound movie hit songs became embedded into lived cultures and people's everyday lives. Uses and meanings that were originally intended by major distribution and production sites might have been replaced by new ones that were shaped by the social and cultural relationships into which the sound movie hit song entered.[15] It is then the interchange between domains, such as institutions and technologies, and audiences that informs the investigation of the sound movie operetta throughout this thesis.

The assumption of a continuous interchange between multiple domains and their audiences is the starting point of my engagement with the sound movie operetta, and underpins each of the chapters of this thesis, which will illuminate in turn:

1. How the sound movie operetta and hit song impacted the way music was consumed through a cross-referencing network of media channels, and how this network and newly emerging reception patterns impacted one another.
2. How the epistemological drama between the live and the recorded that is rooted in the increasing mechanisation and mediatisation of music during this time can, in fact, be characterised as a dichotomy in limbo. This is because prior musical practices of both the cinema and entertainment music worlds

[15] John Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 1-3.

ushered cinemagoers into a mode of reception that blurred the lines between the live and the recorded.

3. How the discourse surrounding film sound and technology was interrogated within sound movie operettas themselves, helping both to reassure and familiarise cinemagoers with an, at times, sonically flawed experience of transition era cinema.
4. How the sound movie operetta and sound movie hit song genres were ultimately translated into the revue movies of the National Socialist period. These films are widely regarded as having been efficient vehicles of propaganda but also succeeded in activating more ambiguous modes of reception by catering to potentially non-National Socialist ideological fantasies and desires.

The sound movie operetta and hit song can thus be conceptualised as a seismograph of, among other things, cultural, historical, technological and media changes of the transition era. Those changes were, however, moulded from moments of public experience and needed to conform to the contemporary zeitgeist to adequately capture the everyday experiences of their target audience. This means that, within the framework of this dissertation, I conceptualise the sound movie operetta and hit song as specific modes of the public and private experience that musically, technically, and medially build on the production and affirmation of specific historical formations of subjective and collective modes of reception. Thus, the sound movie hit song can be understood as a discursive phenomenon that nimbly operated between audience expectations and the requirements of an increasingly mediatised and mechanised cultural sector.

Having briefly suggested what the sound movie operetta and hit song were doing at this historical juncture, it is time to take a step back and ask: What exactly were these sound movie operettas and hit songs in the first place? Let us begin with the sound movie operetta. On the face of it, we might say that this was a bounded cinematic genre defined by a narrative that involved musical numbers, usually in the form of four hit songs. However, genres are never wholly bounded, and so it pays to consider in more detail how this particular genre ostensibly fed into and out of other musical and cinematic genres at that time.[16] Generally, music-infused film genres had been a constant of the cinematic world since the emergence of the silent movie, with operetta films, singer films and opera adaptations being only a few of several such music-infused film subgenres. However, even though the sound movie operetta made use of the denominative marker "operetta" and thus seemingly aligned itself with the stage operetta, it deviated markedly from conventional operetta norms. In contrast to silent movie operettas or film operettas, sound movie operettas were not mere adaptations of stage operettas but were explicitly written and composed for the screen.[17] They differed from traditional operettas not only in

[16] Questions of genre are complicated by the sound movie operetta's hybrid nature: it operates between cinematic and musical notions of genre. As will be explicated later in the introduction, I have utilised Eric Drott's comprehensive definition of genre as a social construction (Eric Drott, "The End(s) of Genre," *Journal of Music Theory* 57, no. 1 (2013): 9). My notion of genre is further informed by Georgina Born's assumption that "genres should be analysed not as embodying any assumed linkage, but as an evolving constellation constituted by the mutual mediation between two self-organizing entities (music, identity formations), *both* reliant on the collective production of memory as well as the emancipation of futures". (Georgina Born, "Music and the Social," in *The Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introduction*, eds. Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert, and Richard Middleton (Florence: Routledge, 2012), 270). However, other publications have informed my understanding of genre in relation to more specific domains (e.g., corporate structures, audiences), for instance, Barry Langford, *Film genre: Hollywood and beyond* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005); Keith Negus, *Music Genres and Corporate Cultures* (London: Routledge, 1999); Jeanne Garane, *Hybrid Genres* (Boston: BRILL, 2018); Marcia Landy, *British genres: cinema and society, 1930-1960* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); Stuart Borthwick and Ron Moy, *Popular Music Genres: An Introduction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2022).

[17] See also the discourse that emerged around the sound movie operetta in the film trade press, highlighting that those movies were not mere adaptations but unique cinematic works: Wilhelm Thiele, "Operette im Tonfilm," *Film-Kurier*, 1.2.1930; Wilhelm Thiele, "Vom Stil der Tonfilm-Operette," *Film-Kurier*, 13.9.1930; Werner R. Heymann, "Tonfilm-Musik als neue musikalische Form," *Lichtbildbühne*, 1.8.1930.

their use of synchronous sound but also in their explicit adaptation of media-specific elements and their integration of jazz and dance music tropes.[18]

The sound movie operetta was, however, akin to the stage operetta, in its synthesis of dialogue, music, and dance so that hit songs were diegetically integrated into the narrative. What is more, thematically many tropes that identified an operetta narrative, such as ironic play with reality and fiction, deception, and mistaken identity, also remained a staple of sound movie operettas.[19] But the term "sound movie operetta" nevertheless remained a rather vague allusion to its stage equivalent; in fact, rather than being just a signifier of the sound film genre's entrenchment in the conventions of that stage operetta tradition, the addition "operetta" might have partly been coined for marketing purposes. One should not underestimate just how much the entanglement of the movie conglomerate Universum Film AG (Ufa), the principal producer of German sound movie operettas, with the trade and film press accelerated the term's transformation into a trademark, rather than just a genre specification. Specifically with the promotion of Ufa's first music-infused sound movies in the trade press, there seemed to be a noticeable urgency for those involved in the making of those movies to firmly establish the term "sound movie operetta" as a diffuse genre and to thus join the ranks of the operetta tradition.[20] In those reviews, the association with the stage operetta and the silent movie operetta is explicitly desired, but only insofar as the new genre can be portrayed as being both steeped in tradition, thus lending it automatic cultural prestige, while also "having created its own distinct style".[21] Without much

[18] Marko H. Paysan, *Großstadtlichter*, 105.
[19] As identified by Michael Wedel, *Der deutsche Musikfilm: Archäologie eines Genres 1914-1945* (Munich: edition text + kritik, 2007), 269-271.
[20] See, for instance, Wilhelm Thiele, "Operette im Tonfilm," *Reichsfilmblatt*, 8.3.1930; Paul Frank, "Tonfilm-Operette," *Reichsfilmblatt,* 27.9.1930.
[21] Paul Frank, "Tonfilm-Operette," *Reichsfilmblatt,* 27.9.1930.

hesitation, critics integrated the new genre denominator into the critical discourse, and the term "sound movie operetta" was henceforth almost a blanket term for any movie that incorporated musical numbers.[22]

However, as we will see in Chapter One of this thesis, what did distinguish the sound movie operetta from other sound film genres was its conscious interaction with media: according to musicologist Michael Wedel, the aesthetic essence of the sound movie operetta was characterised by its intermediality, "because the multi-media juxtaposition of media quotes and elements [was] being converted into a conceptual melting pot whose aesthetic fissures and upheavals open[ed] up new dimensions of experience".[23]

My thesis specifically focuses on the Berlin manifestation of the sound movie operetta, since scholarly publications regard it as the epicentre of its development.[24] Indeed, Berlin seems ideally suited as the geographic focal point of this thesis since it was not only the biggest production site and marketplace for entertainment music, a place where film companies such as Ufa, record companies, publishers, and musicians had their places of business, but it was also a hub for diverse audiences of various ages, genders, nationalities, and tastes. In his 1932 analysis of the German film sector, Alexander Jason states that by the end of 1931 Berlin alone was home to 400 cinemas with 196,307 seats.[25] However, despite its high saturation

[22] Although some terminological variations existed. The sound movie operettas were also dubbed Film-Operette or Tonfilm-Operette. See, for instance, Anonymous, "Drei junge Männer," *Filmwelt*, 14.9.1930; Friedrich Holländer, "Sieg eines neuen Operettenstils. Die Drei von der Tankstelle," *Reichsfilmblatt,* 20.9.1930; Ernst Jäger, "Die Drei von der Tankstelle," *Film-Kurier*, 16.9.1930.
[23] Michael Wedel, "Musikfilm und Musiktheater. Zur Intermedialität der Tonfilm-Operette am Beispiel von 'Die Drei von der Tankstelle'," in *Blickpunkt Bühne. Musiktheater in Deutschland von 1900 bis 1950*, eds. Thomas Steiert and Paul Op de Coul (Cologne: Verlag Dohr, 2014), 199-200.
[24] See, for instance, Marko H. Paysan, *Großstadtlichter*, 80 ff.; Klaus Kreimeier, *Die Ufa-Story*, 30 ff.; Michael Wedel, *Der deutsche Musikfilm*, 50 ff.
[25] Alexander Jason, *Handbuch der Filmwirtschaft* (Berlin: Verlag für Presse, Wirtschaft und Politik, 1930), 61. Germany was home to 5071 cinemas with 1898979 seats. Since cinemas in provinces only offered screenings once or twice a day, the contrast between urban metropoles, such as Berlin and Munich, and provincial areas was even starker.

with cinemas, many people could nevertheless seldomly afford to go to the cinema on a regular basis. A survey from 1934 states that only 16,6% of young people went regularly to the cinema, 48.9% once a month and 34.5% not at all.[26] Nevertheless, despite various obstacles posed by cost and availability, Berlin was the primary hub of the "overwhelmingly urban phenomenon" that was the film universe.[27]

The corpus of works that I will deal with in this thesis is then mostly limited to sound movie operettas that were produced by Ufa between 1929 and 1933.[28] I will zoom in on a few specific films when a more detailed case study is merited. Ufa did not cease to produce sound movie operettas after 1933 (as detailed in the table below) but its most prominent representatives were created in this short time span. With the implementation of National Socialist policies in 1933, Ufa terminated the employment of Jewish employees and many of those early creators of the sound movie operetta were forced into exile.[29] After 1933, the production of dedicated film operettas (direct adaptations of stage operettas) and revue movies took centre stage. In order to reflect on the relationship between Weimar-period sound movie operetta and its offspring, instead of scrutinising the development of the German music film after 1933, Chapter Four jumps straight to the year 1944, to offer a reception-orientated analysis of a film that thematised the audiences' complex relationship to music films, *Die Frau meiner Träume (The Woman of My Dreams,*

[26] Alois Funk, *Film und Jugend: eine Untersuchung über die psychologischen Wirkungen des Films im Leben der Jugendlichen* (Munich: Reinhardt, 1934), 48.
[27] Corey Ross, *Media and the Making of Modern Germany: mass communication, society, and politics from the Empire to the Third Reich* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 122.
[28] Ufa's main producer Erich Pommer would become the most influential figure in Ufa's efforts to shape the sound movie operetta. Pommer had previously worked in American film studios and introduced new production methods to the German studio system, such as shooting schedules, the sedimentation of star personalities, etc. (Ursula Hardt, *From Caligari to California: Erich Pommer's Life in the International Film Wars* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1996, 104).
[29] BArch, R-109-I/1029 a, *Ufa-Vorstandsprotokolle*, vol. 7, Niederschrift 905, 29.3.1933. The protocol listed, among others, the composer Werner Richard Heymann, the producer Erich Pommer, director Erik Charell. With the termination of contracts of gifted set designers, arrangers, sound engineers, etc., Ufa let go of most personnel that had shaped the sound movie operetta.

1944). This revue movie is particularly interesting in that it allows me to illuminate the sound movie operetta's supercession by a new music film genre.[30] By consulting the website of the Murnau foundation, currently the rights holder for all Ufa movies, I have drawn up a list of all sound movie operettas produced by the film company during this pre-war period[31]:

Premiere	**Title**	**Director**	**Composer**
7.2.1930	*Liebeswalzer*	Wilhelm Thiele	Werner Richard Heymann
15.9.1930	*Die Drei von der Tankstelle*	Wilhelm Thiele	Werner Richard Heymann
6.11.1930	*Die blonde Nachtigall*	Johannes Meyer	Willi Kollo, Willy Schmidt-Gentner
16.12.1930	*Einbrecher*	Hanns Schwarz	Friedrich Holländer
9.1.1931	*Ihre Majestät die Liebe*	Joe May	Walter Jurmann
5.2.1931	*Der Mann, der seinen Mörder sucht*	Robert Siodmak	Franz Wachsmann, Friedrich Holländer
3.3.1931	*Ihre Hoheit befiehlt*	Hanns Schwarz	Werner Richard Heymann
31.8.1931	*Bomben auf Monte Carlo*	Hanns Schwarz	Werner Richard Heymann

[30] This specific movie is also interesting in that it is the last revue film produced under the National Socialist regime and is often portrayed as a mere propaganda vehicle – a notion that will be contested in this thesis.
[31] https://www.murnau-stiftung.de/list/movies/letter (last accessed on 7.1.2022, 7:03 pm)

20.10.1931	*Der Kongess tanzt*	Eric Charell	Werner Richard Heymann
22.12.1931	*Ronny*	Reinhold Schünzel	Emmerich Kálmán
19.2.1932	*Zwei Herzen und ein Schlag*	Wilhelm Thiele	Jean Gilbert
21.3.1932	*Der Sieger*	Hans Hinrich, Paul Martin	Werner Richard Heymann
23.9.1932	*Ein blonder Traum*	Paul Martin	Werner Richard Heymann, Gérard Jacobson
28.11.1932	*Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht*	Ludwig Berger	Werner Richard Heymann, Gérard Jacobson
22.2.1933	*Ich und die Kaiserin*	Friedrich Holländer	Franz Wachsmann, Friedrich Holländer
4.10.1933	*Walzerkrieg*	Ludwig Berger	Alois Melichar, Franz Grothe
23.12.1933	*Viktor und Viktoria*	Reinhold Schünzel	Franz Doelle
20.2.1934	*Einmal eine große Dame sein*	Gerhard Lamprecht	Franz Doelle

18.7.1935	*Amphitryon*	Reinhold Schünzel	Franz Doelle
20.3.1936	*Heißes Blut*	Georg Jacoby	Franz Doelle
19.9.1936	*Glückskinder*	Paul Martin	Peter Kreuder

As we can see, the sound movie operetta was primarily shaped by a dozen or so creators and composers, first and foremost composer Werner Richard Heymann who was responsible for Ufa's most famous representatives of the genre before 1933. It is Heymann's sound movie operettas that will predominantly serve as case studies throughout this thesis.

We have established that the sound movie operetta usually consisted of four sound movie hit songs that were iterated throughout the movie's narrative. How did the sound movie hit song distinguish itself from the regular hit song though? In truth, not much. Formally, the hit song conforms to simple structural and harmonic popular song patterns of the time: the alternation of verses and a chorus, the succession of eight-bar periods, a short duration, and the use of basic harmonic progressions. It is then not surprising that the term "Schlager", which is part of the compositum "Tonfilmschlager", has often been translated as "hit" or "hit song", in the original sense of the word describing something that had a vigorous effect economically speaking.[32] Hit songs, and not only those specifically composed for movies, were originally tied to the tradition of stage music, and in their beginnings specifically to the Berlin operetta and revue.[33] The genre of the sound movie hit song, then, is first and foremost a specification of such hit songs for the film universe. However, it was

[32] See, for instance, Peter Wicke, "Schlager," in *Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, ed. Ludwig Finscher (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1994), 1063.
[33] Tobias Becker, "Die Anfänge der Schlagerindustrie. Intermedialität und wirtschaftliche Verflechtung vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg," *Lied und populäre Kultur*, no. 58 (2013): 12.

also an attempt at building on the tradition of recorded songs and dance tunes.[34] By adopting the record-ready shape of the hit song, sound movie operettas were equipped to successfully engage with the wider media market and thus a wider audience.[35]

Most importantly, though, as musicologist Volker Kühn has noted, the sound movie hit song's impressive variability made it an eclectic melting point of various styles and genres.[36] It was this stylistic adaptivity of the sound movie hit song that made it suitable for everchanging trends and tastes. When studying sound movie hit songs, though, it quickly becomes apparent that there are certain constants that mark the sound movie hit song – the genre mainly draws on tropes of popular dance and entertainment music genres, for instance.[37] The dance-like air of the sound movie hit song proves its affinity to fashionable dances, such as the slow fox, the waltz, the tango and the one-step. Indeed, up until 1933, records and sheet music editions of sound movie hit songs were marketed using the designated dance genre. What is more, the sound movie hit song was often played by combination orchestras who succeeded in fusing melodious string arrangements with jazz brass sections and percussion, as will be explicated in Chapter Two.

In the end, however, as we can see from the above, to explicitly define the hit song or the sound movie operetta is practically impossible, since these are, by

[34] Willi Wolff, "Die Geburt des Schlagers," *Film-Kurier*, 3.9.1930.
[35] Anonymous, "Tonfilm-'Schlager'-Technik," *Film-Kurier,* 20.2.1932.
[36] Volker Kühn, "'Man muß das Leben nehmen, wie es eben ist…' Anmerkungen zum Schlager und seiner Fähigkeit, mit der Zeit zu gehen," in *Musik und Musikpolitik im faschistischen Deutschland*, eds. Hanns-Werner Heister and Hans-Günter Klein (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1984), 219.
[37] The use of popular dance forms on screen is further explored in: Astrid Eichstedt, *Wie die Wilden: Tänze auf der Höhe ihrer Zeit* (Berlin: Rotbuch Verlag, 1985); Ulrich Kurth, "'Ich pfeif' auf Tugend und Moral' – Zum Foxtrott in den zwanziger Jahren," in '*Ich will aber gerade vom Leben singen*' – *über populäre Musik vom ausgehenden 19. Jahrhundert bis zum Ende der Weimarer Republik*, ed. Sabine Schutte (Hamburg: Rowohlt Verlag, 1987); Fred Ritzel, "'Hätte der Kaiser Jazz getanzt…' US-Tanzmusik in Deutschland vor und nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg," in '*Ich will aber gerade vom Leben singen*' – *Über populäre Musik vom ausgehenden 19. Jahrhundert bis zum Ende der Weimarer Republik*, ed. Sabine Schutte (Hamburg: Rowohlt Verlag, 1987).

nature, genres whose contents have constantly been re-negotiated: the sound movie hit song, is in this sense, a "concept of rapprochement".[38]

The rest of this introductory chapter will lay out the remaining foundations of this thesis. I will first elaborate in general on the theoretical bases of my thesis, above all as pertains to the mediatisation and mediation of the sound movie operetta genre. Then, I will outline my theoretical perspective on the particular role of technology in the flowering of this genre and its hit song, before considering the ways audiences themselves changed during this era. Lastly, I will clarify the primary sources I have drawn upon my research. Relevant literature from various fields of scholarship will be reviewed throughout.

The Sound Movie Operetta: A Mediatised Musical Genre?

Having defined the generic parameters and corpus of my examination of the sound movie operetta and hit song, it is time to focus on the over-arching theoretical groundwork and methodology that will inform my work. To pre-empt the limitations of my analysis, this thesis is not a comprehensive guide to the sound movie operetta of Weimar Era Berlin. Rather, it seeks to form new perspectives on a genre that had a powerful impact on the ways German people during that time engaged with an ever-changing cultural market and popular music more generally. It is in this sense curious that mass media and its effect on the reception of sound movie hit songs are hardly mentioned, if at all, in the many studies on social, cultural, and political milieux of the Weimar Republic.[39] Media history has all too often been confined to

[38] Daniela Schulz, *Wenn die Musik spielt… Der deutsche Schlagerfilm der 1950er bis 1970er Jahre* (Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2012), 70.
[39] See, for instance, Detlev Peukert, *The Weimar Republic: the crisis of classical modernity* (London: Penguin, 1993); Peter Gay, *Weimar culture: the outsider as insider* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974); Walter Laqueur, *Weimar: a cultural history 1918-1933* (London: Phoenix, 2000); Heidrun Suhr and Charles W. Haxthausen (eds.), *Berlin: culture and metropolis* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990); Stephen Brockmann and Thomas W. Kniesche, *Dancing on the volcano: essays on*

the investigation of particular aspects of media use, production, and distribution. The story of the sound movie operetta and its hit songs provides the opportunity to focus not only on the analysis of technologies, organisational structures, or aesthetic contents of the media, but also to embed these concerns into a more comprehensive study that points towards wider social and cultural developments in musical practices and reception during this transition era.

The theoretical backbone of this thesis is formed by three key interests: mediatisation, technology, and reception. My assertion is that these components, in one way or another, fed into the formation of an attitude towards new genres that were often typecast as the harbinger of cultural pessimists' nightmares.[40] In contrast to that typecasting, this thesis aims to provide a more balanced account of how the commercial architecture behind the sound movie operetta shaped its interaction with domains and audiences beyond its own. Many publications focus on the alleged commodity character of the hit song when trying to define it, and I shall certainly not ignore those voices.[41] However, if one were to give in to the inclination to regard the

---

the culture of the Weimar Republic (Columbia, S. C.: Camden House, 1994); Pamela M. Potter, *Most German of the arts: musicology and society from the Weimar Republic to the end of Hitler's Reich* (New Haven, Ct.: Yale University Press, 1998); Anton Kaes, *Shell schock cinema: Weimar culture and the wounds of war* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

[40] German cultural pessimism as it emerged after the First World War is often associated with Oswald Spengler's "Der Untergang des Abendlandes", which bemoaned the flattening of culture due to the massification of cultural goods (Oswald Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes: Umrisse einer Morphologie der Weltgeschichte* (Munich: Beck, 1981)). In their collected edition of essays on film theory published between 1907 and 1933, Anton Kaes, Nicholas Baer, and Michael Cowan present lesser-known essays by film and media theorists Béla Balázs, Walter Benjamin, Siegfried Kracauer, and Rudolf Arnheim who were infamous for their programmatic writings on the effects of mass culture on film and music during the Weimar Era (Nicholas Baer and Anton Kaes (eds.), *The promise of cinema: German film theory, 1907-1933* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2016)). Theodor W. Adorno's essay "On Popular Music" from 1941 gives further insights into how the standardisation of taste has propelled certain entertainment music genres (Theodor W. Adorno, "On Popular Music," in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture. A Reader*, ed. John Storey (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1998)).

[41] See, for instance, accounts of the Schlager in: Mechthild Mäsker, *Das Frauenbild im Schlager von 1970 bis 1985. Eine repräsentative Textanalyse deutscher Erfolgsschlager* (Dissertation, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität zu Münster, 1999), Michael Hallberg, *Die Liebeskonzeption in bundesdeutschen Schlagertexten der 1970er Jahre* (Marburg: tectum Verlag, 1988); Dietrich Kayser, *Schlager – Das Lied als Ware. Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der Illusionsindustrie* (Stuttgart: J. B. Mezlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1975); Christian Schär, *Der Schlager und seine Tänze im*

sound movie operetta and the hit song *merely* as a kind of ideally pre-destined entertainment product of Adorno's cultural industries, this thesis would repeat many of those arguments that have determined the study of popular music for a long time, while ignoring other aspects of what was going on historically.[42] Throughout this thesis, the overarching force of the post-war Frankfurt school concept of "culture industries", which implies an institutionalised, unidimensional influence of mass media on the public realm, will be challenged and replaced through a more dialectical understanding of mass media.[43]

In this vein, the first point of departure for this investigation is to question in what ways can the sound movie operetta and hit song be understood as mediated, mediatised musical genres. Departing from a historiographical model by which media artefacts are read as mere indicators of change in the entertainment music industry, this thesis considers how the concepts of mediatisation and mediation can inform the analysis of these genres and their functions. My elaborations are based on Vera Zolberg's "the art object as a social process" dictum, which homes in on

Deutschland der 20er Jahre. Sozialgeschichtliche Aspekte zum Wandel in der Musik- und Tanzkultur während der Weimarer Republik (Zurich: Chronos Verlag, 1991).

[42] The institutional effects of such standardisation efforts are highlighted in Adorno and Horkheimer's elaboration on the cultural industries (Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialektik der Aufklärung* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1969)). Many musicologists, such as Simon Frith, have attempted to engage with such questions in more nuanced ways by foregrounding the value of popular music genres for purposes as complex as identity construction, society building, etc. (Simon Frith, *Performing Rites: on the value of popular music* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996); Richard Middleton, *Studying popular music* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1990); Charlie Harding and Nate Sloan, *Switched on Pop: How Popular Music Works, and Why it Matters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020)).

[43] Important early reference points are "medium theory" in the tradition of Innis (Harold A. Innis, *The bias of communication* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1951)), McLuhan (Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: the extensions of man* (London: Routledge, 1964)) and Meyrowitz (Joshua Meyrowitz, *No Sense of Place: the Impact of Electronic Media on Social Behavior* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987)) and the "ecology of communication" as represented by David Altheide and Robert Snow (David Altheide and Robert Snow, *Media Logic* (Beverly Hills, Cal.: Sage Publications, 1979)). Beyond that, the theory is informed by Foucauldian approaches to power "that no longer locate it inside powerful institutions, let alone powerful people, but [see] it being reproduced everywhere in a huge network of linkages, apparatuses and habits within everyday life" (Michel Foucault, *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1979), 24), and Bruno Latour's Actor-Network-Theory (Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the social: an Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005)).

how art mediates between social and cultural domains by helping explain the conditions of its production, distribution, and reception.[44] In addition to this guiding notion, I follow media scholars Sonia Livingstone and Peter Lunt, who helpfully suggest that "mediatization research might usefully reinterpret the many existing findings of mediation research by relocating and integrating them within a historical frame."[45] I will therefore combine focuses on both mediation and mediatisation, analysing media tools in terms of how they construct the social and cultural world in one particular historical phase of culture and society, namely the transition era and Golden Years of the Berlin sound movie operetta.[46] Especially Chapter One of this thesis will zoom in on several different media channels and their interaction with other social domains: focal points of my analysis will be radio broadcasting, the record industry, music publishing, print media and live music culture. If possible, the nature of these specific domains will be further exemplified by zooming in on one specific sound movie hit song ("Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt's ein kleines bisschen Glück") and its relocations within a wider mediatised entertainment music sector.

Mediatisation has become a key concept for understanding the interconnectedness of media and other cultural and social fields.[47] It aims to theorise the ways in which "media in the long run become increasingly important for the social

[44] Vera L. Zolberg, *Constructing a Sociology of the Arts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 79.
[45] Sonia Livingstone and Peter Lunt, "Mediatization: an emerging paradigm for media and communication studies," in *Mediatization of Communication* (= Handbooks of Communication Science), ed. Kurt Lundby (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2014), last accessed on 24.12.2022, http://www.degruyter.com/view/serial/119469, 719.
[46] Historical accounts include Jürgen Wilke, *Von der frühen Zeit zur Medialisierung* (Bremen: Edition Lumière, 2011), Klaus Arnold (ed.), *Von der Politisierung der Medien zur Medialisierung des Politischen* (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2010).
[47] In their ground-breaking article "Mediatization or Conceptual Bandwagon?" (2014) David Deacon and James Stanyer question the conceptual rigour of the notion "mediatization" as it is used in recent scholarship (David Deacon and James Stanyer, "Mediatization: key concept or conceptual bandwagon?," *Media, Culture and Society* 36, no. 7 (2014): 1032-1044).

construction of everyday life, society and culture as a whole".[48] Along these lines, the idea of mediatisation does not imply that media simply usurp other social and cultural domains, but that the negotiation of media with, and the adoption of media by, such domains are interactive processes. According to media theorist Stig Hjavard, mediatisation is thus to be considered:

> [a] double-sided process of high modernity in which the media on the one hand emerges as an independent institution with a logic of its own that other social institutions have to accommodate to. On the other hand, media simultaneously become an integrated part of other institutions like politics, work, family, and religion, as more and more of these institutional activities are performed through both interactive and mass media.[49]

In this dialectical understanding of the term, mediatisation thus describes the continuous interchange whereby media shapes and is shaped by society and culture. Gibson further specifies this continuous interchange by adding that technological and institutional developments, for instance, can shape media's affordances and the path of mediatisation.[50] Since much of what characterises the sound movie operetta's relationship to the public and private realm was determined not only by audiences themselves but also by other institutional forces, such as policy making, music criticism, radio stations, and more, the assumption of a "continuous interchange" draws attention to how the communicative construction of a media network surrounding the sound movie operetta gave the sound movie hit song its unique penetration.

As a major proponent of the institutionalist tradition of mediatisation research, Hjavard proposes an all-encompassing media sociology that explicitly puts media

---

[48] Friedrich Krotz, "Mediatization: A Concept with which to Grasp Media and Societal Change," in *Mediatization: Concept, Changes, Consequences,* ed. Knut Lundby (New York, Oxford: Peter Lang, 2009), 24.
[49] Stig Hjavard, "The Mediatization of Society. A Theory of the Media as Agents of Social and Cultural Change," *Nordicom Review* 29, no. 2 (2008): 113.
[50] James Gibson, *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1979), 12.

institutions at the very centre of every interaction. However, it is important to remember that while media were more than a mere vehicle of the music, it was as much as anything the sound of hit songs, rather than just the way they manifested these new media networks, that drew people in and helped to create a new social fabric of sound. Nina Eidsheim, for instance, broadened our understanding of sound by discussing how "acoustic communities are bound together by shared evaluatory standards of acoustic conventions".[51] Even though, Eidsheim re-focuses on the body as the source and recipient of sound in a more materialist approach, she makes way for a socially constructed understanding of what 'good' or "welcome" sound might be within a given community and how that is shaped by the ubiquity of musical and non-musical sounds which, for instance, emerge from the various relocations of the sound movie hit song. Georgina Born further elaborates on how the interpretation and formation of such everyday sound worlds is not only shaped by the listener and the hit song itself but also by the emergence of specific modes of sound and hearing through particular practices of listening etc., as will be explicated in Chapters Two and Three of this thesis.[52] The result of this process of negotiation is what I call the social fabric of sound that emerges around the sound movie hit song.

The media scholars Couldry and Hepp pick up on this more social-constructivist paradigm, implicitly invoking Bordieuian notions of practice and network concepts as introduced by Latour. For them, mediatisation is a concept

[51] Nina Eidsheim, *Sensing Sound: singing and listening as vibrational practice* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 64.

[52] Georgina Born, *Music, sound and space: transformations of public and private experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 5. In Chapter Three of my thesis, I will foreground how, for instance, advancements in cinema acoustics were influenced by the expectations of listeners. The acoustic and auditory spatiality of sound has been, for instance, also explored in relation to architecture and acoustic and auditory technologies in chapters four and seven of Gascia Ouzounian, *Stereophonica: sound and space in science, technology and the arts* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2020).

"used to analyse critically the interrelation between changes in media and communications on the one hand, and changes in culture and society on the other".[53] This means that, for Couldry and Hope, processes of change in both culture and media are equally important in shaping the discourse, beyond the boundaries of institutional power. Both schools of thought nevertheless identify media as causal historical agents and drivers of changing communicative, social, and cultural practices.[54] The concept of mediatisation is thus the point of departure for structuring my observations on the impact of media on social and cultural developments – developments that are far from being linear: Hepp notes that mediatisation has its "eruptive moments" or "media waves".[55] I recognise one of these eruptive media revolutions in the media change-over of Berlin's Weimar years and the resultant changes in the social fabric of sound.

In light of these considerations, I understand the work of art in question, the sound movie hit song, as the result of various conscious and unconscious *mediation* processes, "a term that defines the media of mass communication as actively creating a symbolic and cultural space in which meanings are created and communicated beyond the constraints of the face to face."[56] In this sense, mediation refers to the process of linking nodal points in a network or an assembled structure where reality is produced or performed.[57] Every mediation process is extended by

---

[53] Nick Couldry and Andreas Hepp, "Conceptualizing Mediatization: Contexts, Traditions, Arguments," *Communication Theory* 23, no. 3 (2013): 197.
[54] Media theorists such as Stewart Hoover (Stewart Hoover, "Complexities: The Case of Religious Cultures," in *Mediatization: Concept, Changes, Consequences*, ed. Knut Lundby, 123-38, New York, Oxford: Peter Lang, 2009) and Friedrich Krotz (Krotz, *Mediatization*) fabricate an intentionally vague and open framework around the term mediatisation.
[55] Andreas Hepp, "The communicative figurations of mediatized worlds. Mediatization research in times of the 'mediation of everything'," *European Journal of Communication*, no. 28 (2013): 625.
[56] Silverstone, Roger, *Media, technology and everyday life in Europe, from information to Communication* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 56.
[57] Brett Nicholls, "Mediation," in *Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*, ed. George Ritzer. Blackwell Publishing 2007. Last accessed on 7.1.2023, 2:06 pm, https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405165518.wbeosm072.pub2.

further responses of audiences to the mediated product. These mediations "range from systems or devices of the most physical and local nature to institutional arrangements and collective frames of appreciation such as the discourse of critics."[58] To understand the sound movie hit song, one has to understand that it is constantly being mediated. Sociomusicologists and sociologists such as Tia DeNora, Antoine Hennion, Anna Tsing, and Georgina Born have emphasized the importance of social mediation in music studies from many different angles.[59] From their sociologically informed point of view, music can be described, in Born's words, as a "multiply mediated, immaterial and material, fluid quasi-object, in which subjects and objects collide and intermingle. It favors association or assemblages between musicians and instruments, composers and scores, listeners, and sound systems."[60] Following Marshall McLuhan's "the medium is the message" dictum, sound movie hit songs can be said to have acquired the status of both social object and subject, deriving their penetrating powers from being subject to a permanent feedback loop. It quickly becomes clear that mediation is a multiplying process that works towards an increasingly fractured "plurality of mediums".

However, media do not only foster the dissemination of musical phenomena through a variety of distribution channels, but can further intensify their reach by means of self-reference.[61] Remediation, a concept developed by David Jay Bolter

---

[58] Antoine Hennion, "Music and Mediation: Towards a New Sociology of Music," in *The Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introduction*, eds. Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert, and Richard Middleton (London: Routledge, 2012), 81.

[59] Tia DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Antoine Hennion, "An Intermediary between Production and Consumption: the Producer of Popular Music," *Science, Technology and Human Values* 14, no. 4, 400-424; Anna Tsing, "Worlding the Matsutake Diaspora. Or, Can Actor-Network Theory Experiment with Holism?," in *Experiments in Holism: Theory and Practice in Contemporary Anthropology*, eds. Ton Otto and Nils Bubandt, 1-11, Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010; Georgina Born, *Music and the Social*.

[60] Georgina Born, "On Musical Mediation: Ontology, Technology, Creativity," *Twentieth-Century Music* 2, no.1 (2005): 7.

[61] Georgina Born, "Afterword: Recording: From reproduction to representation to remediation," in *The Cambridge Companion to Recorded Music*, eds. by Nicholas Cook, Eric Clarke, Daniel Leech-Wilkinson and John Rink (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 286-304.

and Richard Grusin (1999), purports that each new media manifestation incorporates characteristics of its predecessors.[62] According to Bolter & Grusin, "media are continually commenting on, reproducing, and replacing each other, and this process is integral to media".[63] Remediation thus *sensu lato* constitutes a form of media reconfiguration through technical, narrative or aesthetic processes of (re)incorporation. Although Bolter & Grusin predominantly apply their newly developed notion to new digital media, the term can be applied to similar media constellations surrounding the sound movie operetta. I will argue that the sound movie operetta's media catchment area was enlarged by its efficient referencing of formerly predominant media channels, such as sheet music, records, and radio, in movies, and vice versa.

What is more, I will argue that remediation, and therewith the multiplication of media channels, formed a substantial part of everyday commemorative culture, meaning that different modes of engaging with mediatised objects were preserved through changing generations of technology. The process of media recycling stabilised, consolidated, and transformed reception attitudes by presenting audiences with something that was already familiar and translating parts of it into a new medium, in this case the sound movie. In this vein, the sound movie operetta agilely activated media memory, a faculty which, according to Astrid Erll, "can only become collective as part of a continuous process whereby memories are shared with the help of symbolic artefacts that mediate between individuals and, in the process, community across both space and time."[64] With regard to cultural and

[62] Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: understanding New Media* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1999)
[63] Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation*, 55.
[64] Astrid Erll and Ann Rigney, "Introduction. Cultural Memory and Its Dynamics," in *Mediation, Remediation and the Dynamic of Cultural Memory*, eds. Astrid Erll and Ann Rigney (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2009),1.

thereby media memory, it is, as Halbwachs famously claimed, the social networks which ultimately make memories.[65] Tracing the processes of remediation, then, will help illuminate how the activation of familiar media channels eased audiences into the engagement with a new medium and genre.

One of the most obvious implications of prioritising mediation and mediatisation in music studies is the re-conceptualisation of the musical genre. In keeping with Eric Drott's understanding of musical genre, the sound movie hit song "is to be understood as a dynamic ensemble of correlations, linking together a variety of material, institutional, social, and symbolic resources: repertories, performance practices, distinctive formal and stylistic traits, aesthetic discourses, forms of self-representation, institutions, specific modes of technological mediation, social identities and so forth."[66] Indeed, it appears that a highly mediatised genre such as the sound movie hit song is a "grouping" or an "assemblage" of mediations.[67] The genre itself can in fact be dubbed as mediatised, in that it is an enactment and re-enactment of a "specific configuration of texts and contexts" that themselves are marked by their mediatisation. We can consider the sound movie operetta and its hit song as one of Drott's genres, those "fluid groupings that get

[65] Maurice Halbwachs, *La mémoire collective* (Paris: Albin, 1997).

[66] Eric Drott, "The End(s) of Genre," *Journal of Music Theory* 57, no. 1 (2013): 9. In keeping with Drott, Negus (Keith Negus, Music Genres and Corporate Cultures (London, New York: Routledge, 1999)), Brackett (2005), and Born (2012) reveal how genres operate as agents in social life, how they "correspond in discontinuous and complex ways to temporally defined social spaces" (David Brackett, "Questions of Genre in Black Popular Music," *Black Music Research Journal*, no. 25 (2005): 82), and "enable us to understand the way that wider social formations are refracted in music, and that musical genres entangle themselves in evolving social formations." (Georgina Born, "Music and the Social," in *The Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introduction*, eds. Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert and Richard Middleton (New York: Routledge, 2012): 270).

[67] Deleuze's notion of assemblage encompasses the "multiplicity which is made up of heterogenous terms and which establishes liaisons, relations between them ... the assemblage's only unity is that of a co-functioning." (Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues*. Translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (London: Athlone, 1987), 69). An assemblage is a mode of arranging heterogenous entities so that they join forces for a certain time. Georgina Born applies this Deleuzian notion to social processes in music (Born, *Music and the Social*, 270).

made, remade and altered through their many iterations."[68] In this sense, sound movie operettas and their hit songs' success was based on their ability to make use of media appliances in a coherent, repetitive way – in a way that succeeded in conjoining a variety of mediated and mediatised resources that belonged to what we might refer to as a newly created sound movie operetta register of experience.

Research on music and media has undoubtedly benefited from the increasing interest in the history of mass consumption and media culture.[69] Since Walter Benjamin's much-discussed essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1935)[70], mass media and the socio-economic transformation of music have been widely debated in relation to popular culture.[71] However, partly because of the complexities involved and the sheer abundance of unsystematized source material, nobody has drawn together the various research strands that need to be taken into consideration when looking at sound movie hit songs in particular: advertising, print culture, live music culture, record culture, film culture, and lifestyle matters, among others. Media markets of the time were highly differentiated, and audiences played an important role in shaping products. Media use thus emerged

[68] Benjamin Piekut, "Actor-Networks in Music History: Clarification and Critiques," *Twentieth-Century Music* 11, no. 2 (2014): 212. This idea implies that a genre is performative.

[69] Consult recent publications on the commercial interconnectedness of media and popular music culture: Simon Frith, *Popular Music: Critical Concepts in Media and Cultural Studies* (London: Routledge, 2004); Steve Jones, "Music that Moves: popular music, distribution and network technologies," *Cultural Studies* 16, no. 2 (2002), Timothy Taylor, *Strange sounds: the commercial revolution in American Music* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001); Timothy Taylor, *The Sounds of Capitalism: advertising, music, and the conquest of culture* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2012); Jason Toynbee, *Making Popular Music: music, musicians, creativity and institutions* (London: Arnold, 2000).

[70] Walter Benjamin, *The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction*, translated by A. J. Underwood (London: Penguin, 2008).

[71] See Dave Laing, *One Chord Wonders: power and meaning in punk rock* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press,1985); Antoine Hennion, "An Intermediary between Production and Consumption: the Producer of Popular Music," *Science, Technology and Human Values* 14, no. 4 (1989): 400-24; Simon Frith and Andrew Goodwin (eds.), *On Record: Rock, Pop, and the Written Word* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1990).

as one of the major leisure activities of the time and as a prominent catalyst of German national identity.[72]

In his *Media and the Making of Modern Germany: Mass Communications, Society, and Politics from the Empire to the Third Reich* (2008), historian Corey Ross offers an overview of the social, political, and cultural implications that were initiated by a swell of interest in media manifestations.[73] Ross emphasises how the rise of mass media cultivated a climate of intermedial exchange, and how "the actual meaning of media artefacts – like all consumer goods – are not intrinsic but rather a product of social and cultural usage."[74] He is one of the first researchers to engage with musical recordings and ads from this time as source material. However, his research is limited to the reconstruction of only a few distribution mechanisms and patterns of usage among media audiences. Chapter One of this thesis will not only engage with film, radio and print media, as Ross does, but will also take the record and music publishing industry into account, thus factoring in sources that are focussing on the dissemination of music.

---

[72] Most recent collected editions that deal with the issue of Weimar music and identity neglect entertainment music as a whole or exclusively take jazz or folk music into consideration. The collected edition "Music and German National Identity" (2002), edited by Celia Applegate and Pamela Potter, thus unfortunately focuses on the realm of classical music, with Philip Bohlman's article on Weimar folk music being the exception (Celia Applegate and Pamela Potter, *Music and German National Identity* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2002.)). Bryan Gilliam's collection "Music and Performance during the Weimar Republic" (1994) illuminates convincingly that the cultural and political turmoil of the Weimar years had an undeniable impact on musical performance practice. Still, even though technology and its reforming character are the subject of two chapters, these elaborations focus on opera and jazz performance. (Bryan Gilliam, *Music and Performance during the Weimar Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994)). Music in interaction with a given geographical space is another strand of literature that I will take into consideration: the emergence of a new interest in the diversity of musical practices unfolding within particular urban centres will inform my case studies. Different geographical and cultural spaces are marked by musical activities that come to establish a distinctive relationship to their medial surroundings (James Johnson, *Listening in Paris: a Cultural History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), Ingo Bader, "The Sound of Berlin: Subculture and the Global Music Industry," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 34, no. 1 (2010): 76-91; Kate Lacey, *Listening publics: the politics and experience of listening in the media age* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013)).

[73] Corey Ross, "Mass Culture and Divided Audiences: Cinema and Social Change in Interwar-Germany," *Past & Present* 193, no. 1 (2006): 157-195.

[74] Corey Ross, *Media and the Making of Modern Germany*, 8.

A few other publications explicitly deal with the interdependencies between media and music studies. In his monograph *National Acoustics: Music and Mass Publicity in Weimar and Nazi Germany* (2006), Brian Currid provides an account of how music and mass publicity shaped acoustic experiences and cultural mentalities in Weimar Germany and highlights key ruptures that emerged in critical writing on music between Weimar and the Third Reich. Currid thoroughly investigates early German mediascapes, such as print advertising, radio, and cinema, but engages only in passing with institutionalised networks surrounding music publishing, recording, and live music culture. What is more, coming from a media-theoretical background, Currid only occasionally engages with the musical material and its creators themselves. His second chapter "The Schlager and the Singer Films: Organs of Experience and the History of Subjectivity" is nevertheless particularly relevant to my study, since it explores and accentuates how sound movie hit songs and the sound movie operetta were at the very centre of mass culture. Currid depicts Schlager as a "musical allegory for the new commodities awaiting consumption and link[s] the transformation of the public sphere directly to the acceleration of modern forms of consumer life".[75] Currid further stylises Schlager as "organs of experience" and thus pins down the interconnections between music, new media technologies, and the social sphere.[76] This argument resonates well with Wolfgang Mühl-Benninghaus' historical portrayal of Weimar's media infrastructure. In his archival study *Das Ringen um den Tonfilm. Strategien der Elektro – und der Filmindustrie in 20er und 30er Jahren* (1999), he examines the economic entanglement and

[75] Brian Currid, *A National Acoustics: music and mass publicity in Weimar and Nazi Germany* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 82.
[76] Brian Currid, "A Song goes around the World: the German Schlager, as an Organ of Experience," *Popular Music* 19, no. 2 (2000): 147-180.

interdependencies of the early talkies with emerging new media channels such as radio broadcasting.[77]

The force of Currid's and Mühl-Benninghaus' argument is rather convincing, but overall deficient. Their socio-political focus on only a few media channels precludes a differentiated view not only of the mere production-oriented manifestations of sound movie hit songs, but moreover of the institutional and interpersonal musical network that emerged around it. Across this thesis, I aim to offer a detailed breakdown of the entanglement of both these missing vantage points, in order to fill the gap between media and music studies that is sorely felt in any discussion of commercialised music from this time and place.

In addition to publications that cater for media and music researchers, the sound movie operetta and its medial surroundings have mainly been the subject of film studies, which has tended to describe Weimar cinema almost exclusively as a phenomenon that was aesthetically distinct from any other German film era. I confine myself here to a few notable examples relating to film: books such as Siegfried Kracauer's *From Caligari To Hitler* (1947)[78] and Lotte Eisner's *The Haunted Screen* (1969)[79] cast a long shadow over contemporary debates about German cinema of the Golden Era and their cultural and political implications. Although they work through major silent movie productions such as *Metropolis* or *Nosferatu*, they do not include the genre they classified as second-rate: the sound movie operetta. Consequently, most of the subsequent literature that concentrates on film genres of this time mainly focus on what might expediently be called high-

[77] Wolfgang Muehl-Benninghaus, *Das Ringen um den Tonfilm: Strategien der Elektro- und Filmindustrie in den 20er und 30er Jahren* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1999).
[78] Siegfried Kracauer. *From Caligari to Hitler: A Psychological History of the German Film* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947).
[79] Lotte H. Eisner, *The Haunted Screen: Expressionism in the German Cinema and the Influence of Max Reinhardt* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1969).

brow movies. Still, wide-ranging studies such as Thomas Elsaesser's *Weimar Cinema and After* present German cinema differently – among other things as a canny and self-conscious commercial business, in which the artistic gloss of commercially exploited movies resembled the marketable aura of the musical objects that were attached to this business.[80] In these terms, the audiences were buying into a cultural experience larger than the given cultural objects themselves.

In two of its publications, the annual Hamburg CineGraph collections, a film-specific congress series, focused on issues surrounding the sound movie operetta and hit song. In *Musik-Spektakel-Film. Musiktheater und Tanzkultur im deutschen Film 1922–1937* (1998), the contributors analyse the influence of early musical genres, such as revue music, jazz, and operetta music on the development of the sound movie operetta.[81] The book insightfully investigates why and in which ways early cinema culture capitalised on contemporary musical innovations. The topics of the essays dovetail such that they succeed in conveying a vivid picture of early German sound movie operettas and their implications for contemporary performance and reception culture. Its successor *Als die Filme singen lernten. Innovation und Tradition im Musikfilm 1928-1938* (1999) outlines these developments on a European stage.[82] It reconstructs how sound movie operettas were disseminated and commercially exploited on a transnational level. Especially in Great Britain, Austria, and France, one could observe media constellations similar to those one might encounter in Germany.[83] These similarities noticeably simplified

[80] Thomas Elsaesser, *Weimar Cinema and after: Germany's Historical Imaginary* (London: Routledge, 2000).
[81] Katja Uhlenbrok (ed.), *MusikSpektakelFilm: Musiktheater und Tanzkultur im deutschen Film 1922-1937,* Ein CineGraph-Buch (Munich: edition text + kritik, 1998).
[82] Malte Hagener and Jan Hans (eds.), *Als die Filme singen lernten: Innovation und Tradition im Musikfilm 1928-1938* (Munich: edition text + kritik, 1999).
[83] Publications that investigate the British musical film in the 1930s include: Lara Ehrenfried, "Synchronized Sound Technology and the British Musical Film in the 1930s," *The Space Between*, no. 16 (2020): 1-12; Larraine Porter, "The Talkies Come to Britain: British Silent Cinema and the Transition to Sound, 1928-1930," in *The Routledge Companion to British Cinema History*, eds. Ian

the cross-national dissemination of synchronised movies and songs. In these publications, the notion of a cultural Americanisation of Weimar music films has often been neglected. In fact, many sound movie operettas were made at a time when the German cinematic universe both battled against the overarching dominance of Hollywood films and simultaneously tried to emulate them by incorporating shooting practices, cultural motifs, musical genres, and more.[84] Rather than comparatively analysing how a "German Hollywood" was built in Berlin, my thesis will focus on the domestic market and will only allude to transcultural influences when it is necessary.[85] Factoring in such transcultural considerations would not allow me to put the media-specific idiosyncrasies of the sound movie operetta and its hit songs as they pertain to the German media network fully on display.

By prioritising the idiosyncrasies of the network that emerged around the sound movie operetta within Germany, the framework of my research has the potential to reveal a great deal about musico-cultural implications of the sound movie operetta's mediatisation within one distinct marketplace: an urban Berlin setting with a distinct audience.

Hunter, Larraine Porter, and Justin Smith, 87-89, New York: Routledge, 2017; John Mundy, *The British musical film* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007); Paul Mazey, *British film music: musical traditions in British cinema, 1930s-1950s* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).

[84] The cultural Americanisation of German music films has been investigated by various scholars, for instance, Judith Wiemers, *'Das ist die Broadway Melodie': American Cultural Motifs in German Music Film, 1929-1945* (ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2021); Ursula Saekel, *Der US-Film in der Weimarer Republik – ein Medium der 'Amerikanisierung'? Deutsche Filmwirtschaft, Kulturpolitik und mediale Globalisierung im Fokus transatlantischer Interessen* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2011); Thomas J. Saunders, *Hollywood in Berlin: American cinema and Weimar, Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

[85] Anonymous, "Wir könnten das deutsche Hollywood errichten… wenn die Lustbarkeitssteuer nicht wäre," *Der Film*, 1.3.1928.

Technology, Film Sound, and the Negotiation of Discursive Tensions

As stated above, mediatised musical genres such as the sound movie operetta and its hit songs interact not only with dedicated media channels but also with other domains within the public and private sphere. One important domain that audiences had to come to terms with was that of technology, both pertaining to sound production, recording, and transmission. Even the dramatic developments "in musical aesthetics and compositional practice are scarcely explicable without the conceptual and practical stimuli provided by the technologies of sound recording and transmission."[86] The audience's engagement with film technology and sound will be foregrounded in Chapter Three of my thesis, which will exemplify how reality and fiction of the recording, production and screening process are stylised within sound movie operettas themselves. It will focus on how the aestheticisation of technologies in such movies helped audiences to navigate the new challenges that film sound posited, and will elucidate how the reality of sound technology compared to such aestheticised accounts of experiences with sound. It is then not only sound technology itself that merits an exploration but also its interactions with audiences. As already mentioned, in sound movie operettas, technology, sound, and reception are often explicitly put on display as integral part of the narrative. The stylised depiction of technological matrices on screen became the template in which audiences could mould their expectations and reception attitudes. In view of this, my technology-oriented analysis of the sound movie operetta will serve to illustrate that the innumerable technological achievements of the time did not always aim for a faithful sonic depiction of reality. It was often precisely the highlighting of the artificiality of sound that reconciled audiences with film sound that was, in its

[86] Christopher Hailey, *Rethinking Sound*, 22.

beginnings, flawed. Such an exploration draws attention to the overlaps and fissures between reality and fiction that are so prominently pointed out by the sound movie operetta's overt depiction of technology in its narratives. As I will argue, by engaging with the expectations of audiences and their reservations regarding the new medium, an aesthetics of technology thus became an integral part of the cinematic experience and succeeded in establishing its very own experiential and perceptual domain and thus contributed to the weaving of the social fabric of sound that emerged around the sound movie operetta.

Along these lines, in her recently published monograph *The Senses of Modernism: Technology, Reception and Aesthetics,* literary scholar Sara Panius queries the relations of technological change and aesthetics.[87] She argues that technologies seem to be not only technically but also culturally and aesthetically productive. In a similiar vein, media scholar Corinna Müller has coined the notion of a "technologized aesthetics" to describe the abovementioned auto-thematic or self-referential tendencies that early talkies seemed frequently to exhibit.[88] And indeed, between 1929 and 1933, a multitude of music-infused talkies promoted cinema as an event that symbolically fused two realms of experience: the direct encounter with new technologies and their thematisation on screen. Easing spectators into the novelty of technological encounters to foster acceptance of technologically mediated film sound among a wider audience relied, as such, on a communicative exchange between technology and audiences that was mediated on screen. It is this exchange, by which Müller's technologised aesthetics came to be, that will be investigated throughout this thesis.

[87] Sara Danius, *The Senses of Modernism: Technology, Perception, and Aesthetics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2019).
[88] Corinna Müller, *Vom Stummfilm zum Tonfilm* (Munich: Fink, 2003), 314.

My analysis will be informed by Trevor Pinch's and Wiebe Bijker's SCOT model[89] which asserts that technology is socially constructed: "any given technological artifact will have different identities and thereby present different problems to different social groups".[90] This means that how we create and understand technology depends on the socio-culturally specific needs and values of the given moment.[91] When analysing the history of a particular technology, the cultural historian's job is then to trace "how such flexibility was closed down and the identity and design of the artifact stabilized through various 'closure mechanisms'".[92] Such closure mechanisms may be prompted by many different networks, agendas, and attitudes, and often lead to the gradual standardisation of technology and thus, for instance, the "social shaping of sound" through the negotiation of discursive tensions.[93] If one perhaps thinks of closure mechanisms in a less complete way as incremental attempts at closure rather than finite stages of linear development, as but a step on the path toward, in this case, the standardisation of film sound (which is then still subject to how it is reproduced and received), one can further determine how the negotiation of social functions, of representational conventions and patterns of reception, might have contributed to that standardisation.[94] As mentioned above, theorists, practitioners, economic players, and audiences of the transition era alike were part of such negotiations.

---

[89] Trevor J. Pinch and Wiebe E. Bijker, "The Social Construction of Facts and Artefacts: Or How the Sociology of Science and the Sociology of Technology might benefit each other," *Social Studies of Science* 14, no. 3 (1984): 399-441.
[90] Steve Wurtzler, *Electric Sounds: Technological Change and the Rise of Corporate Mass Media* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2007), 12.
[91] See also the collected edition by Simone Tosoni and Trevor Pinch (eds.), *Entanglements: conversations on the human traces of science, technology, and sound* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2017) and also the comprehensive article by Hans K. Klein and Daniel Lee Kleinman, "The Social Construction of Technology: Structural Considerations," *Science, Technology, and Human Values* 27, no. 1 (2002): 28-52.
[92] Steve Wurtzler, *Electric Sounds*, 12.
[93] Helen Hanson, *Hollywood Soundscapes: Film Sound Style, Craft and Production in the Classical Era* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2017), 9.
[94] Steve Wurtzler, *Electric Sounds*, 2-3.

Rick Altman's notion of "crisis historiography", laid out in *Silent Film Sound*, feeds into this notion of regarding technology as both an object, a practice, and a discourse, and invites an analysis of emerging technologies and their representation through attention to the conflicts and competing strategies invoked by different agents over new sound technologies.[95] Altman specifically comprehends the history of film sound as a "crisis of identity", one that was "reflected in every aspect of the new technology's socially defined existence".[96] Altman further elaborates that this identity crisis was shaped by three processes: multiple identification, jurisdictional conflict, and overdetermined solutions.[97] If one takes the shift from silent to sound movies and all the discursive tensions that came in its wake as one such crisis, it quickly becomes apparent that new technologies and understandings of sound were determined by multiple identities, for instance the disc versus the sound-on-film method. Such identities were shaped by a variety of "models provided by existing media", such as the shellac disc and the gramophone player.[98] For competing models to successfully establish themselves, Altman identifies jurisdictional conflicts as vital parts in the negotiation of new methods, e.g., patent litigations between various bigger and smaller players. Finally, competing identities and jurisdictional conflicts lead to the emergence of overdetermined solutions – partly because of crisis settlements.

Applied to the transition era in Weimar Germany, Altman's approach invites a historiography that engages with the in-betweens and back-and-forths of technological reception, production, and the shaping of film sound. In this vein, my thesis proceeds on the basis that the sound movie operetta is an excellent subject

[95] Rick Altman, *Silent Film Sound* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).
[96] Rick Altman, *Silent Film Sound*, 19.
[97] Ibid., 19.
[98] Ibid., 20.

for applying a slightly modified version of Altman's historiography. Its story can be told with reasonable accuracy, and encompasses certain continuities: of genre, of representational and stylistic conventions, and of reliance on established pre-existing technological frames. These continuities make it easier to focus on the crisis that served to disrupt them and which came to be the shaping of 'film sound' itself. The crisis surrounding the sound of the German music film in particular invites us to perform a rather daring interpretative move: to work on the assumption that we can carry over much of what we already understand about the music from other media, such as the gramophone and the radio, to the film universe. In big, prestigious cinemas, for instance, the comparison to other media was invited: there was not only music and speech to be heard in the actual cinema auditorium but also in the hallways, in front of the ticket booths, and sometimes even in the outside area of the cinema. Hans Pander illuminates how a few cinemas utilised additional broadcasting facilities to, for instance, play shellac music to "shorten the waiting time for cinemagoers waiting in line in front of the ticket desks, in the lobbies or during breaks".[99] It is then no surprise that the story of the sound movie operetta is one that cannot be told without simultaneously drawing attention to the embedding of new technologies and conceptions of sound into everyday lives at the time.

Often the story of the transition from silent to sound movie is made out to be a story of the survival of the fittest – a story seemingly unfettered by the differences and similarities between the two media and, furthermore, oblivious of their transitional forms. The notion of defying such examples of reinforced and oversimplifying teleology will be the methodological through-line of this thesis' investigation of film sound, sound technology, and sound reception. Altman

[99] Hans Pander, "Musikübertragungsanlage," *Filmtechnik*, 10.1.1931.

summarises the importance of this approach by purporting that "no fixed trajectory characterizes the interchange, nor is it possible to predict which aspect of the system will influence which other aspect."[100] This defiant momentum fundamentally draws on *Archaeology of Knowledge*, in which Michel Foucault challenges other forms of historiography by emphasising the importance of analysing knowledge from an archaeological point of view. Such an approach attempts to establish those transformations that constitute change without carrying any suggestion of anticipation.[101] Along these lines, German media theorist Siegfried Zielinski delineates an approach to media archaeology that, "on the one hand, avoids idiosyncrasies or subjectivities, and, on the other, doesn't lull itself into isolating media history as a specialized discipline insulated from its discursive historical role".[102] Against this backdrop, my technology-oriented analysis of the German sound movie operetta will aim to avoid getting trapped in progressive narratives and sketching out "awkward histories" that reinforce "technologies[,] simplify historical research and attempt to expound an evolutionary model unhinged from much more than vague (or eccentric) readings of either the canon or its most obvious examples".[103] Rather, it will attempt to illustrate the ways in which innumerable technological achievements not only aimed for a faithful sonic depiction of reality but also contributed to film sound quickly becoming an integral part of the social fabric of sound of the time.

During a technology-defined period such as the early sound movie era, when movies at first glance often seemed like a mere by-product of technological

[100] Rick Altman, *Sound Theory, Sound Practice* (New York; London: Routledge, 1992), 4.
[101] Michel Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge (*New York; London: Harper & Row, 1976).
[102] Siegfried Zielinski, *Deep Time of the Media: Toward an Archaeology of Hearing and Seeing by Technical Means*. Translated by Gloria Custance (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, 2006), 14.
[103] Timothy Druckrey, "Foreword," in Deep *Time of the Media: Toward an Archaeology of Hearing and Seeing by Technical Means*. Translated by Gloria Custance (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, 2006), vii.

experimentation, it was easy to make way for technologically deterministic explanations as to why a movie could not be quite as aesthetically whimsical or avantgarde as its silent predecessors. It is precisely such deterministic explanations that my thesis will seek to problematise. In certain ways, however, this endeavour is complicated by a clear hierarchisation of teleological notions of technological progress presented in the primary sources themselves. For instance, high-performing systems were given more consideration in contemporary publications at the expense of a diverse array of "sub-optimal" or non-standardised technologies. An exacerbating factor in this was the strong economic entanglement of the German electronic and film industries with the publishing sector, which led to a kind of two-pronged market hegemony between these sectors. In other words, the very idea of teleology, of progress towards technological optimisation, was, for various reasons, itself a part of the discourse of the time.[104]

Certainly, then, these discourses must be accounted for, even while critiquing their own teleological tendencies. And indeed, we must attend to the various fields of socio-cultural activity on which these discourses thrived. In his 2005 monograph *Cinema's Conversion To Sound: Technology and Film Style in France and the U.S.,* Charles O'Brien illustrates the importance of taking a case-oriented approach to technology, style, and sound by zooming into differing film editing practices and recording techniques in France and the U.S.[105] By so doing, O'Brien underlines the value of an approach that "situates technologies and techniques within the national film-cultural contexts, the web of practices and commitments, in which they became

[104] Most publications focus on the technologies that were built by a few companies such as Tobis-Klangfilm, Siemens & Halske, and AEG (Heinz Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis seiner Aufnahme, Bearbeitung und Vorführung* (Berlin: Lichtbildbühne, 1932); Fritz Fischer and Hugo Lichte, *Tonfilm: Aufnahme und Wiedergabe nach dem Klangfilm-Verfahren (System Klangfilm-Tobis)* (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1931); *Zehn Jahre Klangfilm: 1928-1938* (Berlin: Klangfilm, 1938); *Tonfilm-Anlagen in Europa: 100% Tonfilm. Klangfilm Tobis System* (Berlin, Tobis, 1931)).
[105] Charles O'Brien, *Cinema's Conversion to Sound: Technology and Film Style in France and the U.S.* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005).

meaningful in specific places and times."[106] An approach that defines the production of culture as determined, if not constrained, not only by technology but also by other decisive factors—such as the relevant laws and legal framework, the market, organizational structures and occupational careers—was pushed to the forefront of stylistic histories of Hollywood cinema as early as 1982, when cultural theorist Richard A. Peterson published his influential essay "Five Constraints on the Production of Culture: Law, Technology, Market, Organisational Structure and Occupational Careers".[107] The same rigour that has long been applied to the history of Hollywood can also benefit the study of other film cultures, such as the emerging culture of sound film in Weimar Germany, so long as the unique characteristics of those cultures are considered. Hence, in addition to analysing the interchange between audiences and technologies in Chapter Three of this thesis, I will also focus on occupational careers and institutions that emerged around new sound technologies.

A New Era Ushers in a New Audience

Much discourse since the advent of reproduction technologies has focused on the alleged split between the live and the reproduced and their varying claims of authenticity.[108] However, the further re-use and recirculation of music in the cinematic context adds a new, historically contingent dimension that does not necessarily fit into this hierarchy, and which thus needs to be addressed in the context of its emergence and reception. This will allow us to better apprehend how

[106] Charles O' Brien, *Cinema's Conversion to Sound*, 105.
[107] Richard A. Peterson, "Five Constraints on the Production of Culture: Law, Technology, Market, Organizational Structure and Occupational Careers," *Journal of Popular Culture* 16, no. 2 (1982): 143-153.
[108] This will be further explicated in Chapter Two of this thesis.

these different presentations of music perhaps did in fact authenticate each other. In Chapter Two of my thesis, the change-over from cinema music to sound-on-screen and its effect on the reception of music, as well as the perception of the live and the mediated, will be explicated. As a result of this transition, not only new reception attitudes emerged but also new understandings of what a popular music performance constituted and how it might oscillate between different modes of the live and the mediated. By encountering the sound movie hit song in several relocations on and off screen, audiences were eased into a reception mode that did not firmly distinguish between the live and the mediated, but operated within what I call a dichotomy in limbo that helped them to navigate between those poles. By first illuminating the fate of cinema musicians and silent movie practices, I will compare those practices to performance modes that entered the cinema with the advent of sound (e.g., the combination orchestra, the crooner, and others). I will highlight how the entertainment music sector and the sound movie operetta successfully merged through the ubiquity of the hit song in both domains. This involves a direct consideration of what happened to audiences during and through the emergence of unfamiliar new modes of reception and musical acts (e.g., Leon Monosson, Comedian Harmonists, Weintraub Syncopators) during the transition era.

In his ground-breaking book *The Practice of Everyday Life*, cultural theorist Michel de Certeau points towards the crux of the matter. By attributing the quality of a "secondary production"-facility to the act of consumption, de Certeau reveals the activity that lies within the act of consumption and therefore within the act of musical reception – even if "the ways of using the products" seem to be "imposed by a dominant economic order".[109] Coming from a scholarly background that grants

[109] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley, California; London: University of California Press, 1988), xii-xiii.

patterns of consumption and reception their own agency, cultural studies scholar John Storey similarly purports a concept of consumption that is an "active, creative and productive process concerned with pleasure, identity and the production of meaning".[110] This is all to say that, while one cannot belittle the success of marketing strategies in fostering certain patterns of consumption and reception, there is always a wider potential for individual movements of appropriation inherent in every act of consumption. As Iain Chambers pointed out in his 1985 monograph on pop music and popular culture:

> after the commercial power of the record companies has been recognised, after the persuasive sirens of the radio acknowledged, after the recommendations of the music press noted, it is finally those who buy the records, dance to the rhythms, and live to the beat who demonstrate, despite the determined conditions of its production, the wider potential of pop.[111]

This is certainly true not only of twenty-first-century audiences, but also of those of the entertainment music culture of the transition era, a culture which in many ways resembles production and consumption patterns of modern-day pop music culture and could indeed be dubbed a prototypical predecessor. Following Storey's approach of defining reception as an active, creative, and productive process, the recipient can be regarded as an essential variable in the perception of what is considered as live or mediated. As Chapter Three of this thesis will show, it was the sound movie operetta audience's particular situatedness between transitionary forms of technologised and live sounds that made an oscillatory movement between those poles possible.

The main challenge of exploring the dynamic qualities of the cinema music scene, live music scene, and audiences' reception of them during the transition era

[110] John Storey, *Cultural Studies,* 123.
[111] Ian Chambers, *Urban rhythms: pop music and popular culture* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1985), xii.

in Weimar Germany is that sources are very scarce. Perhaps unsurprisingly, there have therefore been few relatively attempts to categorise and scrutinise what is available. Carolin Beinroth, however, gives an excellent overview of music in the early German silent movie by analysing its reception through the lens of trade journal articles. Her monograph gives valuable insights into the critical discourse that had emerged around cinema music and its aesthetic evaluation between 1907 and 1925.[112] Karl Heinz Dettke meanwhile has traced the evolution of cinema music and the story of the cinema organ until its swift decline during the sound movie era by consulting trade magazines, newspapers, and contemporary treatises.[113] However, because their analyses mainly focus on earlier years, both Beinroth and Dettke only touch on the early sound movie era in passing and do not engage with the wider entertainment music landscape. Heribert Schröder's monograph from 1990 on dance and entertainment music from 1918 to 1933, *Tanz- und Unterhaltungsmusik in Deutschland 1918-1933*, does attempt to categorise and systematise, for instance, different ensemble types, genres, and relevant policies of this period.[114] Even though there are many academics who have engaged with the changes that occurred after the emergence of the sound movie in 1930, only a few have attempted to scrutinise how changes to the wider musical, social, and socioeconomic infrastructure noticeably not only altered the reception and production of music in films but also set in motion general debates around what constituted a live music experience. In this thesis, I will focus on a particular set of

[112] Carolin Beinroth, *Musik im frühen deutschen Stummfilmkino: eine Untersuchung der zeitgenössischen Rezeption in ausgewählten Fachzeitschriften der Jahre 1907-1925*, Systematische Musikwissenschaft und Musikkulturen der Gegenwart, vol. 6 (Baden-Baden: Tectum Verlag, 2019).
[113] Karl Heinz Dettke, *Kinoorgeln und Kinomusik in Deutschland* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1995). Many of the monographs on cinema music from the 1990s present very thorough historical research on, for instance, cinema organs, but do not use their findings to investigate a wider network of reception modes, changes to the musical infrastructure, and so on.
[114] Heribert Schröder, *Tanz- und Unterhaltungsmusik in Deutschland 1918-1933* (Bonn: Verlag für systematische Musikwissenschaft, 1990).

sources that are, in parts, different from those used by the abovementioned scholars, cross-referencing records, film performances, and other manifestations of performances with reviews and other testimonies.

I have so far made frequent mention of my aim to complicate the live-mediated dichotomy. However, the complication of dichotomies is not the only reason for utilising a reception-oriented approach throughout my thesis: many analyses of the sound movie operetta and its hit songs are steeped in aesthetic categories that both contemporary critics and modern-day theorists have dealt with.[115] Even though such categories, such as high- and low-brow or kitsch, can give valuable insights into parts of a genre's reception history, they can often also inhibit a more objective, comprehensive examination of entertainment music genres. Rejecting the pessimistic cultural elitism that often accompanies the study of entertainment music genres entirely is not the concern of this thesis. Rather, it is to relativise this elitism. I will argue that the entertainment music of the transition era was not only appreciated for its objective economic value, but also most importantly for the highly subjective cultural value that it acquired in the act of reception. The sound movie operetta and its hit song were without a doubt commercialised musical genres. However, that did not necessarily strip them of any aesthetic and cultural value for their audiences. It also did not mean that these audiences, even when later exposed to an overtly totalitarian regime after 1933, could not activate multiple reception modes – at times even those that were not wanted by the political or economic superstructure.

[115] See, for instance, Peter Bächlin, *Der Film als Ware* (Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum Fischer-Taschenbuchverlag, 1975); Klaus Kreimeier, *Die Ufa-Story: Geschichte eines Filmkonzerns* (Munich: Hanser, 1992); Jürgen Spiker, *Film und Kapital: der Weg der deutschen Filmwirtschaft zum nationalsozialistischen Einheitskonzern* (Berlin: Spiess, 1975); David C. Hurst, *Weimar modernism: philosophy, politics, and culture in Germany 1918-1933* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2004).

Indeed, it is along these lines that Chapter Four of this thesis will give a more nuanced insight into how a successor of the sound movie operetta, the revue film, should not only be understood as having been a mere ideological vehicle of National Socialist propaganda and kitsch but also as having allowed for more varied readings and more diffuse ideological effects. My reading of the 1944 revue film *Die Frau meiner Tröume* will utilise Sabine Hake's and Linda Schulte-Sasse's nuanced interpretations of how audiences might have engaged with allegedly propaganda-stricken in a variety of ways, at times even subverting politically intended messages.[116] I will exemplify how the revue section and hit songs that are featured within the movie point towards different reception modes and meanings of the musical text that could have been activated when watching the revue film. The basis of my analysis will be the autograph score of *Die Frau meiner Träume*, the movie and contemporary reports.

That said, the attempt to focus attention on the potential instrumentalisation of entertainment music and film genres can be noted in a myriad of forms in contemporary normative discourse. For instance, the exuberant Schlager-mania concerned cultural pessimists and media theorists alike, who passionately tried to alert the general public to a usurpation of culture through media. Critics of the time included early German film and media theorists such as Siegfried Kracauer. Siegfried Kracauer's *Das Ornament der Masse* (1920) is the first cultural sociological manifesto to describe and analyse the utilitarian ideology of the early entertainment industry. According to Kracauer, cultural commodities are mere perversions of art objects. As a result, the seemingly homogenising powers of the media were seen as a threat to the fundamental task of public education through

[116] Sabine Hake, *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich* (Austin, University of Texas Press, 2021) and Linda Schulte-Sasse, *Entertaining the Third Reich: illusions of wholeness in Nazi cinema* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996).

culture that was espoused by bourgeois conservatives of that time. Following in this wake, Theodor Adorno's infamous critique of musical manifestations of mass culture in his essay "On Popular Music" (1941) represents, according to Simon Frith, "the most systematic and the most searing analysis of mass culture and the most challenging for anyone claiming even a scrap of value for the products that come churning out of the music industry".[117] Adorno's critique rightly points out the dangers of standardisation, passive listening, and the formation of a distracted audience to whom he polemically refers as "social cement".[118] Indeed, sound movie operettas and hit songs did serve the needs of a musical "commodity": attuned to the standards set by the commercial market, its audience, and its producers, both genres were formula-dominated and -oriented, giving their aesthetic form a more ephemeral quality.

The points of stability that the formula is based on directly derive from its reception, however; from its "reading by a socially and historically situated reader".[119] Accordingly, the formula is "an industrial and economic translation of conventions" that emerge outside of these economic systems.[120] Genres such as the sound movie operetta then only enjoy popularity when the standards and conventions that are promoted by them bear a close relationship to the dominant "reading" of the audience. They are in turn affirmed by a network of industrial, ideological, and institutional conventions that is "generously" provided by the creative agents of the entertainment sector. The audience's preferences, and not least its access to media of dissemination, partly determines the success story and

[117] Simon Frith, *Sound Effects: Youth, Leisure and the Politics of Rock* (London: Constable, 1983), 44.
[118] Theodor W. Adorno, "On Popular Music," in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture. A Reader, ed. John Storey* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1998), 206.
[119] John Fiske, *Television Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 117.
[120] John Fiske, *Television Culture*, 111.

aesthetic outlook of a popular, economically restricted musical genre. The sound movie operetta is a case in point: as Klaus Bruhn Jensen explains, it amounts to "packages of content that are available in similar or related media and accessible to different audiences in different contexts of use."[121] As such, then, contemporary critiques of the genres in question will not only serve as primary sources, but also be themselves critiqued, precisely through this thesis' focus on the new audiences that they created.

Source Situation

A variety of material, discursive, institutional, and symbolic sources perpetuate the mediatised "assemblage" that is the sound movie hit song. These things are "mediated and enacted in the world through specific events and materialities".[122] However, since entertainment music has not received the same attention regarding the preservation of influential works and publications, many of these material manifestations of the musical genre have fallen victim either to destruction or oblivion. The collection of many artefacts, such as records, lies firmly in the hands of a few private collectors and afficionados, several of whom I have contacted over the years of my research.[123] The actual material remains of Berlin's buzzing entertainment industry can also provide valuable insights into the workings of the

[121] Klaus Bruhn Jensen, "Intermediality," in *The International Encyclopedia of Communication Theory and Philosophy*. Last accessed on 26.12.2022, 5.55 pm, https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118766804.wbiect170.
[122] Benjamin Piekut, *Actor-Networks in Music History*, 201.
[123] Particularly, the guidance of record collectors has informed my knowledge of the record industry of the transition era. Shellac records from the Golden Twenties are popular collectors' items, mostly for private collectors. It is therefore of the utmost importance to establish and maintain good relations with the collectors' milieu. [redacted], two collectors who own two of the major shellac Schlager collections in Germany, were kind enough to give me access to their private collections and digitised copies of records that are hardly ever reproduced by contemporary labels (many of the formerly influential Schlager label and music publishing houses are now owned by Universal Music who is not keen on republishing the old repertory). Record catalogues and record logs expanded this wealth of knowledge and aided the quick localisation of specific records.

The text originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

film industry. Still, the fragmentariness of these paper documents, and the deterioration of a variety of records, complicates a thorough and complete investigation of these records. In the following section I provide an overview of the primary sources which were of significance for my research.

The original film material of the Ufa sound movie operettas is mostly held by the Murnau foundation, which preserves Ufa, Bavaria, Terra, and Tobis movies for future generations.[124] However, the Murnau foundation does not have a publicly accessible archive for researchers to watch and engage with original footage. It was thus often a strenuous undertaking to watch all the above-mentioned Ufa sound movie operettas (and many other Weimar Era music films for that matter). Some of the movies could, however, be watched in private screening rooms of the Deutsche Kinemathek Berlin, which was an invaluable resource when it came to watching original film footage. Moreover, several archival departments also granted me access to screenplays, photographs, written material, and various trade press publications. Other sound movie operettas circulated within collectors' circles or were increasingly made available on sharing platforms such as YouTube. A few of the more prominent sound movie operettas, such as *Die Drei von der Tankstelle* (*Three from the Gas Station*) are available on DVD.[125] However, even though many Weimar Era silent movies have been immaculately restored, most editions of sound movie operettas are, at times, incomplete or of bad quality.

YouTube was also a treasure trove when it came to the discovery of rare footage of musicians' performances or shellac records. More generally, catalogues and in-house magazines of labels such as Deutsche Grammophon, Electrola, Parlophon, and others informed my search and helped me to get an idea of how

[124] https://www.murnau-stiftung.de/filmbestand (last accessed on 7.1.2023, 6:48 pm)
[125] *Die Drei von der Tankstelle*, directed by Wilhelm Thiele (Friedrich-Wilhelm-Murnau-Stiftung, Universum Film, 2004). DVD.

and by whom sound movie hit songs were performed. I was confronted with a similarly fragmented source situation when looking at the film technology of that time: Even though the cinematheques in both Potsdam and Berlin have archival departments dedicated to film and sound technology, none of the equipment that was relevant to my studies was available, nor were there any manuals and other technical documents available at their archives. Neither was there any material on technical personnel, such as the notable sound engineers Hermann Fritzsching or Fritz Thiery. All the information that is presented in this thesis had to be laboriously puzzled together by consulting trade press publications such as *Filmtechnik*, patent documents, and general Weimar Era publications on film technology. I have additionally contacted several company archives. Among these were the Siemens archive, from whose laboratories many of the early sound engineers came but which sadly did not have any documentation on their work, and the Universal GmbH archives, which are now the right holders of several Weimar Berlin music publishers' catalogues. I could thus only get a full picture of the sound movie operetta's widespread network by consulting additional source material, such as contractual documents and personal files from compensation authorities and business records of major publishing houses, record labels, movie companies, and non-corporate associations (which can largely be found at the Bundesarchiv Berlin); the archives of the compensation authorities; the Archive for Radio Broadcasting (Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv); the Berlin State Library (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin); and the German National Library (Deutsche Nationalbibliothek). The Bundesarchiv also holds the company files of the film company Ufa: Meeting protocols, contractual documents, and other company files have helped me in particular to understand the interwovenness of Ufa with other public domains.

To find out more about the people behind the creation of many Ufa sound movie operettas, I established personal contact with relatives and archive holders of a few renowned composers and musicians who predominantly worked for the movie industry, and succeeded in securing private photographs, letters, and salon orchestra scores.[126] The daughter of Werner Richard Heymann has also informed my knowledge of the famous Ufa composer's personal trajectory and helped me to contact musicians who still perform Weimar Berlin entertainment music repertory. Personal accounts of the lives of composers and musicians were supplemented by in-depth archival research. In some archives, such as those of the Akademie der Künste Berlin, the written legacy of composers, lyricists, actors, and musicians of the Weimar Era is publicly available.[127] However, due to various migratory movements, archive fires, bombings, and the like, documents from before 1933 are difficult to locate. This also means that no autographs of scores, instrumental parts, sketches, or the like were yet found. There was one exception to this: for my examination of the German revue movie *Die Frau meiner Träume*, I was able to consult composer Franz Grothe's original sketches at the Franz-Grothe-archive, which found its temporary home on a few shelves of the main office of the royalty collection society GEMA in Berlin.

Weimar Berlin acquired nationwide recognition as the stronghold for press and editorial products, being the site of many publishing houses. Newspapers, specialist journals, and magazines are thus a key pillar of my investigation of the Weimar media landscape. I differentiate between daily newspapers, music-related

The text originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[126] Particularly, the daughter of Tankstellen-composer Werner Richard Heymann, [redacted], the archivist at the Franz-Grothe-Archiv, and the lawyer looking after the estate of the Comedian Harmonists were very generous with their time and support.

[127] Among them that of Werner Richard Heymann, the Weintraub Syncopators, Robert Gilbert, and many others. Generally, though, the sources that are available are limited to personal and business correspondence after World War II.

and film-related publications, and tabloid magazines. After having conducted the first part of my in-depth research in Berlin's newspaper archives, I identified the following publications as particularly relevant for my dissertation: the early musicological publications *Die Musik* and *Melos*, which convey the normative discourse that emerged around popular music of this time; the culture magazines *Die Weltbühne* and *Die Bühne*; and the four major film magazines *Reichsfilmblatt*, *Film-Kurier*, *Lichtbild-Bühne*, and *Kinematograph* (all of which featured a dedicated music section). Besides these, I selectively consulted reviews and other relevant articles in daily newspapers such as *Berliner Tageblatt*, *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung*, *Vossische Zeitung*, and *B.Z. Am Mittag*. I also looked at several union-affiliated papers of musicians, kapellmeister and the like, such as *Der Führer*. More general journals on entertainment music such as *Der Artist* were also consulted. More specific public trade press publications will receive further scrutiny in the relevant chapters. When necessary, I have also looked at documents outlining state-imposed policies and legislation, such as licensing laws and others.

Outline

This thesis will deal with sound movie operettas and sound movie hit songs from the transition era in Weimar Berlin. I will explain how these genres should be understood as mediatised genres that helped mediate emerging cultural attitudes of this time, often through the remediation of pre-existing forms, to the end that a new social fabric of sound was woven. Understanding these phenomena will involve properly accounting not only for the often-overlooked reception activity of audiences themselves but also the roles played by technologies and other domains in facilitating and transforming reception. Before we begin, let us revisit the key premises that I have set out so far. Over the course of this thesis, media, technology,

and agents from other domains emerge as reifications of human agency. They are ultimately the "congealed actions" of human actors,[128] to borrow Bruno Latour's terminology, and only become concrete in human action.[129] Media and their associated technologies are neither the culmination of nor the driving forces behind music-cultural developments, but rather co-constitutive elements of their histories. The other half of the sound movie operetta's story is its intricate relation to audiences and its ability to usher in new and more nuanced modes of reception. Indeed, the sound movie operetta and hit song present themselves as the loci for the broader study of early mass-media effects on musical genres and thus the study of media networks, both institutional and otherwise. The method of this thesis is to zoom into a single "mediatised world" at a certain point in time to find out why exactly sound movie operettas and hit songs circulated in and interacted with their environment in the ways they did. Hopefully, then, there will be something more general (if not universal) to be understood about mediatisation through this particular case study.

Each one of the chapters of my thesis thus concentrates on a different perspective of this intricate relationship between sound movie operetta and hit song audiences and other domains:

Chapter One introduces the sound movie hit song of the early 1930s as reminiscent of a lifestyle culture that was completely and utterly pervaded by mould-breaking media developments and innovations. By detailing the media network that emerged around the 1932 sound movie operetta *Ein blonder Traum* (*A Blonde Dream*), I will explicate how different nodes in a complex media and musical network contributed to the ubiquity of the sound movie hit song in every aspect of life. The chapter will then point toward how previously existing domains, such as the

[128] Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the social*, 71.
[129] On how media become domesticated, see, for instance, Roger Silverstone, *Media, technology and everyday life in Europe, from information to communication* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

recording industry, were strategically harboured by the film industry to establish a system of references and reception modes that was both new and familiar to audiences.

By focusing on the transition from live music cinema culture, as shaped by silent movies, to new modes of performance triggered by the sound movie operetta, Chapter Two will interrogate how audiences experienced the interwovenness of the live and the mediated as a 'dichotomy in limbo'. A noticeable shift towards new musical practices and the destruction of old ones was not the only process that characterised this transition. It was also defined by other changes in the wider musical infrastructure including the increasing unionisation of professional musicians and the emergence of distinct forms of musical practice (combination orchestras, crooners, and others). These changes will be exemplified by case studies of musical acts (Leon Monosson, Comedian Harmonists, Weintraub Syncopators, Lewis-Ruth-Band) that will further explicate how the oscillatory movement between the live and the mediated was realised on the level of specific musical artists.

Chapter Three will investigate how audiences became familiar with film and sound technologies by exploring how sound recording, sound modulation, and screening processes differed from what was being portrayed on screens. By giving an insight into the real-life technologies, practices, and reception attitudes of the time, I will draw on examples of technological self-referentiality in selected movies to argue that such auto-referential portrayals helped reconcile audiences with an, at times, challenging and flawed medium.

Lastly, Chapter Four further scrutinises how audiences played an essential part in negotiating their own cinematic experiences by introducing the National Socialist revue film *Die Frau meiner Träume* (1944). Contrary to widely held beliefs

that such movies were mere vehicles of propaganda, I will point toward a more intricate dynamic between the movie's assumed effects and the actual, more ambiguous grounding in the spectators' multifaceted system of fantasies, desires, and values.

Chapter I: Sound Movie Hit Songs and the Berlin Mediascape

> Man kann Reklame machen, bis die Zäune von blutroter Farbe strotzen, kann die Straßen mit umherwandernden Plakatkünstlern zustellen, Esel und Affen auf die Straße senden, die ganze Nachbarschaft betäuben, und Leuchtreklamen anbringen bis der ganze Platz, an dem sich dein Kino befindet, sich im Glanz eines Vulkanausbruchs aalt – wenn der Durchschnittspassant etwas Anderes im Kopf hat, wird er sich von deiner Reklame nicht beeindrucken lassen.
>
> You can advertise until the fences drip with blood-red paint, make the streets impassable with walking poster-men, send donkeys and apes on the street, deafen the whole neighbourhood and put up neon lights until the entire square on which your cinema is located basks in the glory of a volcanic eruption – if the average pedestrian has something else in mind he will not be taken in by your advertisement.[130]

Advertising sound movie operettas "until the fences drip with blood-red paint": when reading about seemingly successful cross-media marketing campaigns as pioneered by Berlin's big film companies during the early 1930s, blood-red paint was evidently not considered a measure of last resort but rather the colourful prelude to a fierce battle for the favour and attention of an audience that in many ways remained an unknown variable.[131] As we can infer from G. C. Wallis' appeal above, owners of cinema theatres were already aware of the necessity of making use of comprehensive marketing strategies as early as 1922. In 1930, such efforts reached their apogee when the seemingly almighty economic beasts of Berlin's competitive entertainment market, for example the first horizontally integrated film company Universum Film AG (Ufa),[132] implemented an elaborate multi-media advertising strategy revolving around the sound movie operetta and its hit songs. The efficiency

[130] G. C. Wallis, "Die Psychologie des Theaterpublikums," *Film-Kurier,* 7.8.1922.
[131] Quantitative methods of ascertaining tastes and reception patterns of consumers were still in their infancy, which made targeted advertising difficult and often meant that products, such as the sound movie hit song, had to be nearly ubiquitous to be successful within all strata of society.
[132] In this instance, horizontal integration describes the process of one company acquiring another company that provides products or services on the same level of the supply chain (e.g., Ufa acquiring other film companies). In this way, Ufa was able to increase its market share and to hold a near-monopoly over the German film market. However, as will be explicated throughout this chapter, Ufa also made us of processes of vertical integration by acquiring companies that operated on different levels of the supply chain (i.e., music publishers, distribution agencies, etc.).

of those marketing efforts quickly cast Wallis' doubts as to the potency of advertising aside. According to film historian Thomas Elsaesser, such cross-media marketing campaigns "stretched from gala openings to book-publishing tie-ins, to fully Ufa-designed front-of-house decorations for cinemagoers, illustrated programme notes, magazine features in fashion journals, and endless publicity material for the regional press."[133] Mimicking their great counterparts in Hollywood, the evident winners in this nail-biting marketing race were companies who understood how to utilise musical trends for the benefit of their intricate publicity machinery. With the emergence of the sound movie, the industrial basis and cultural ferment of the German film industry was its blockbuster mentality, with music being the mainstay of its strenuous efforts. While each of the various pre-existing media and advertising channels mentioned by Elsaesser above were in a sense confined to their own context, the sound movie hit songs were notable in that they were threaded between various such contexts, as this chapter will go on to explicate. Indeed, those other channels were often used precisely to thread the hit song even further through public and private realms. As a result, music-infused cinematic genres became the answer to the specific demands of a proto-capitalist film conglomerate and, simultaneously, the seemingly natural consequence of a changing entertainment market and its media of dissemination, distribution, and reception.[134]

This chapter explores the spectrum of media channels that facilitated the sound movie operetta's rise to popularity and success.[135] By focusing on specific strategic actions of companies and institutions such as the German film company Ufa, the main producer of sound movie operettas in Berlin, I will exemplify how a

[133] Thomas Elsaesser, *Weimar Cinema and after*, 125.
[134] Revue movies, operetta movies, singer movies, opera movies, sound and silent movie operettas were at the forefront of Weimar's unofficial film charts (Michael Wedel, *Die Tonfilmoperette*, 31).
[135] This chapter was inspired by my master's thesis (2016) at the University of the Arts, Berlin on the sound movie operetta *Die Drei von der Tankstelle* (1930, *Three from the Gas Station*), which focused on the media manifestations of that specific movie.

network made up of record labels, publishing houses, radio stations, and musicians helped to shape and disseminate the sound movie hit song.[136] My analysis of different media channels, their content, structure, and cultural impact is an endeavour that considers the material products of media together with their social dimension (as constituted by infrastructures, distribution channels, production sites, corporate structures, and such like). It is both necessary and useful not only to undertake the task of analysing the artefacts that are available to us but to also attempt to reconstruct the networks that helped to promote the sound movie hit song and were, in one way or another, altered by it.

I will further scrutinise why the sound movie hit song can be understood as one of the first attempts to introduce multimedia marketing strategies into mainstream music culture. Along these lines, I seek to investigate those "affective alliances"[137] and infrastructures that affirm and reaffirm the "relationship between different musical practices unfolding with a given geographical space."[138] On a micro level, I examine the ways in which cultural commodities circulated within their appropriate markets and cultural terrains in Weimar Era Berlin.[139] As cultural theorist

---

[136] For comprehensive accounts of Ufa-produced sound movie operettas, see Thomas Koebner, "Wenn 'Fortuna winke winke macht'. Die Tonfilm-Operette: das bedeutendste Kino-Genre in der Endzeit der Weimarer Republik," in *Diesseits der 'Dämonischen Leinwand'. Neue Perspektiven auf das späte Weimarer Kino*, ed. Thomas Koebner, 341-372, Munich: edition text + kritik, 2003; Fred Ritzel, "Vom Paradies ein gold'ner Schein – Schlagerrepräsentationen im Tonfilm der Weimarer Republik," *Beiträge zur Popularmusikforschung*, no. 15 (1995): 157-180; Oldrik Scholz, *Der Schlager im Ufa-Film 1933–1945: Einsatz und Inszenierung* (Uelvesbüll: Der Andere Verlag 2011); Jörg Türschmann, "Nationale und internationale Kommerzialisierung von Schlager und Revue im Film der zwanziger und dreißiger Jahre: zur Aporie produktorientierter historischer Rezeptionsforschung," in *Nebensache Musik. Beiträge zur Musik in Film und Fernsehen*, eds. Jan Neubauer and Silke Wenzel, 33-46, Hamburg: von Bockel, 2001 and Michael Wedel, "Musikfilm und Musiktheater. Zur Intermedialität der Tonfilm-Operette am Beispiel von 'Die Drei von der Tankstelle'," in *Blickpunkt Bühne. Musiktheater in Deutschland von 1900 bis 1950*, eds. Thomas Steiert and Paul Op de Coul, 197-238, Cologne: Verlag Dohr, 2014.

[137] Lawrence Grossberg, "Another Boring Day in Paradise: Rock and Roll and the Empowerment of Everday Life," in *Dancing in Spite of Myself: Essays on Popular Culture*, ed. Lawrence Grossberg (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997), 44.

[138] Barry Shanks, "Transgressing the boundaries of a rock'n'roll community," Paper delivered at the First Joint Conference of IASPM-Canada and IASPM-USA, Yale University, 1.10.1988. Quoted from Will Straw, "Systems of Articulation, Logics of Change: Communities and Scenes in Popular Music," *Cultural Studies* 5, no. 3 (1991): 373.

[139] See Bernard Miège, "Les logiques à l'œuvre dans les nouvelles industries culturelles," *Cahiers de Recherche Sociologique* 4, no. 2 (1986): 93-110; Arjun Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things:*

Will Straw explains, cultural commodities "pass through a number of distinct markets and populations in the course of their life-cycles. Throughout this passage, the markers of their distinctiveness and the bases of their value may undergo significant shifts."[140] The main objective of my case study is then to analyse these significant shifts and tie them to alterations of the various musical, media-specific, and socio-cultural shapes of Weimar Berlin's sound movie hit song.

One specific example of such a sound movie hit song is "Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt's ein kleines bisschen Glück" ("Somewhere in the World there is a Bit of Luck") from the 1932 sound movie operetta *Ein Blonder Traum* (*A Blonde Dream*) whose several relocations and remediations across different media channels will be illuminated throughout this chapter. [141] The song was written by Ufa's main composer Werner Richard Heymann.[142] *Ein blonder Traum*, like many other sound movie operettas, constituted the centre of a multimedia marketing campaign that spelled out the commercial potential of its hit songs.[143] My handling of this case study explores the spectrum of media devices that facilitated this sound movie

Commodities in Cultural Perspective (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

[140] Will Straw, *Systems of Articulation*, 374.

[141] This case study is limited insofar as it does not consider the international mediascape that helped spread German sound movie hit songs across borders. After Ufa and other horizontally integrated companies had exhausted the capacities of several national media channels, they switched to aggressively promoting the multi-language versions of sound movie operettas in France, Italy, Great Britain, and many other European countries.

[142] In one of Ufa's meeting protocols from 26th April 1932, it is explicated that composer Werner Richard Heymann took on both the responsibility for the musical direction of *Ein blonder Traum* and was commissioned to compose the music for the movie. He received a fee of 6000 RM for his role as the musical director and 16500 RM for the composition of the movie's score. By signing the contract, Werner Richard Heymann simultaneously signed over the rights to the publication of his music to the Ufaton-Verlag, Ufa's in-house publisher of sheet music. The lyrics were written by Heymann's long-term collaborator Robert Gilbert and the script by author Walter Reisch. (BArch, R-109-I/1028 b, 1-5, *Ufa-Vorstandsprotokolle*, vol. 6, Niederschrift 815, 26.4.1932)

[143] *Ein blonder Traum* was one of the most successful movies of Ufa's 1932/33 season and featured songs that were not only popular during the Weimar years but are known by German speakers to this day: the evergreen "Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt's ein kleines bisschen Glück" ("Somewhere in the World There is a Bit of Luck"), "Einmal schafft es jeder" ("Everyone Succeeds At Least Once"), "Alles versteh'n heißt alles verzeih'n" ("Understanding Everything Means Forgiving Everything"), and "Wir zahlen keine Miete mehr" ("We No Longer Pay Rent") were composed by Werner Richard Heymann, Ufa's most prominent and prolific composer. Since it was the most widespread of the four sound movie hit songs that featured in the movie, "Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt's ein kleines bisschen Glück" will be the focal point of my analysis.

operetta's rise to popularity and success and will furthermore scrutinise its reception. Weimar media and music culture was a construction no less of its contemporary commentators, critics, and essayists "than of its leading artists, intellectuals and filmmakers".[144] Our perception and understanding of the inner workings of the media market of this time have thus been noticeably shaped by the debates that emerged around media-based musical entertainment genres. The social profile of the sound movie hit song could therefore be identified as not only having been shaped by the constraints of costs, technological limitations, content, and design, but also, at times, by its critical reception. In light of this, this chapter will also confront questions of how the depiction and reception of media-based entertainment might be understood through the lens of contemporary notions of mass media and entertainment. After all, those notions also significantly shaped the trajectory of the sound movie hit song within the very media channels that I analyse throughout this chapter.

The first media channel that I scrutinise is film itself. During this section, I will exemplify how sound movie hit songs were embedded into the narrative of sound movie operettas and will explicate how popular and accessible sound movie operettas and cinema more generally were with Weimar Era audiences. I will then move on to radio broadcasting and illuminate the distribution of sound movie hit songs through the radio on a more general level, since the circulation of one specific hit song could not convincingly be traced by consulting radio programmes and other sources of the time. However, insights on audience preferences, institutional infrastructures, and aesthetic debates will further our understanding of how the sound movie hit song and, more generally, entertainment music, were absorbed by audiences and radio functionaries alike. I will then illuminate in which ways the record industry adapted the sound movie hit song and how the distribution strategy

[144] Thomas Saunders. "Reluctant Skeptic: Siegfried Kracauer and the Crises of Weimar Culture," *German History* 36, no. 1 (2018): 124.

that emerged around it rested on recording several different versions of, for instance, “Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt’s ein kleines bisschen Glück”, as well as the increasing stratification of the record industry. Within the framework of these first two sections, the interconnections between the radio and record industry will be dissected.

Subsequently, I will trace the story of the sheet music publisher Ufaton-Verlag who emerged as the main distributor of sound movie hit songs in the early 1930s. Since the Ufaton was a subsidiary of Ufa, this section will also explore how the film company exploited the mechanisms of an entertainment sheet music market that relied on the demands of a vivid live music scene. Next, I will zoom in on how this live music scene, specifically the dance orchestra culture, was a vital ingredient for the further dissemination of the sound movie hit song and its integration into new domains of public experience, e.g., dance bars and other live music venues. Such dance orchestras were then, in turn, featured on screen within the movies themselves. In a final step, I will break down how the sound movie hit song and print media were interwoven in ways that even concrete musical material suffused them. In such ways, print media offered the best conditions for an extensive and socially encompassing propaganda campaign. The channels in question did not merely capitalise on their specific peculiarities but formed productive alliances that can be considered prototypes of today’s media conglomerates. In such ways, Weimar Berlin’s sophisticated dissemination network succeeded in transforming a mere musical commodity into a system of communication administering all social exchange.[145]

Before I delve into my exploration of the abovementioned media channels, I will make a quick excursion to illuminate how music consumption patterns and the

[145] Jean Baudrillard, “For a critique of the political economy of the Sign,” in *Selected Writings*, ed. and introduced Mark Poster (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 2001), 81.

accessibility of certain media channels might have affected the impact of cross-media marketing campaigns. The potential of emerging mass media to promote a cross-media musical genre such as the sound movie operetta was by no means as straightforward as it is widely assumed. Instead, it emerges as an endeavour with an indubitably ambiguous outcome: the impact of "different media varied significantly according to their degree of regulation, their level of development, and their relationship to certain cultural traditions."[146] The expansion of a commercialised, media-promoted musical genre thus tended to entail greater heterogeneity in its reception, content, and uses than expected. On one hand, the genre's penetration of the public sphere certainly drew in new audiences, but on the other hand, it was also its ubiquity that made the sound movie operetta subject to social, financial, and cultural structures and discourses that have determined its aesthetic outlook and appreciation to this very day.

Excursus: Music Consumption as Imagined Reality

Grete flips on her gramophone and cranks up the volume. Ludwig Bernauer's[147] malleable baritone voice carries over the rustling everyday sounds of her dusty, dark tenement block room – the clatter and patter of children's feet, the at times resentful chatter from the newly-weds upstairs, the creaking of the house's old pipes. Grete gently and absent-mindedly hums along to Bernauer's sweet, buoyant lilt. The lyrics

[146] Corey Ross, *Media and the Making of Modern Germany: mass communication, society, and politics from the Empire to the Third Reich* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 186.
[147] Luigi Bernauer, whose real name was Ludwig Bernhuber, is often regarded as one of the most successful Schlager singers of his time. He featured in sound movie operettas such as Liebling der Götter (1930, Darling of the Gods) and recorded for several European record companies, e.g., Odeon and others (Monika Kornberger, "Bernauer (eig. Bernhuber), Ludwig (Luigi, Pseud.e Bert Brand, Fred Lustig, Hans Hellmer, Hans Bauer, Kurt Velten, Georg Walden)," in *Oesterreichisches Musiklexikon online*, ed. Barbara Boisits (last accessed on 13.1.2023, 12:39 pm), https://dx.doi.org/10.1553/0x0001f86d).

weave a story from the old clichés: a forgotten love, a dire friendship, hope in times when there is nothing left to hope for.

Elsewhere in the city, Hans clumsily fiddles with the knob of his newest acquisition, his proudly purchased tube radio. Even though he does not immediately manage to find a signal, he maintains a pious hope in the ability of the radio. Finally, through the muffled sounds of the interference, he hears the last few seconds of his favourite broadcasting format, the daily record hour ("Schallplattenstunde") of the Berlin Funk-Stunde. Both Grete and Hans seem to find their sentiments echoed in the first line of the chorus that resounds in their homes:

Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt's ein kleines bisschen Glück.
Somewhere in the world, there is a little bit of luck for me.

As can be gathered from my fabrication above, many accounts of the audience's engagement with media channels such as the gramophone or radio are prejudiced by a unidimensional understanding of mass culture as a homogenising apparatus. Even influential film critics and theorists such as Siegfried Kracauer humorously describe the magnetic effect of, for instance, listening to the radio as "one of those dreams provoked by an empty stomach: a tiny ball rolls toward you from very far away, expands into a close-up, and finally crashes over you; you can neither stop it nor escape, but lie there chained, a helpless little doll."[148] Kracauer's descriptions of a rather passive "cult of distraction" have profoundly shaped our way of looking at Weimar Berlin's mediascape.[149] The nostalgic clouding of reception experiences, as exemplified in the scene painted above, is only one example of how

[148] Siegfried Kracauer, *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays*, trans., ed. and introduced by Thomas Y. Levin (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995), 280.
[149] Siegfried Kracauer, "Cult of Distraction: On Berlin's Picture Palaces," *New German Critique* 40, no. 40 (1987): 91.

an impartial understanding of personal testimonies and contemporary cultural criticism has often led to fictionalised accounts of listening experiences in popular culture. Up to this day, stylised depictions of Berlin's roaring twenties determine not only popular entertainment shows such as *Babylon Berlin*, but also scholarship.

Both the all-too-simplified domestic portrayal of Hans and Grete's complete and utter devotion to the realm of mechanically reproduced sound, as well as Kracauer's drastic descriptions, only in some ways reflect the various obstacles listeners have grappled with after the advent of sound and film technology and how it is crucial to approach media and its audiences firmly within their historical contexts.[150] Although the 1920s undoubtedly witnessed a significant expansion of media-based entertainment, such portrayals of domestic auditory bliss mostly remained a figment of the imagination, at least for most German households in the Weimar period. It was not until a few years later that the lion's share of the German populace became a permanent part of the media audience by, for instance, being able to acquire radio sets.

What is more, going beyond the level of mere societal consensus is often hindered by source barriers that complicate a more comprehensive and nuanced analysis of the media-facilitated distribution and reception of the sound movie operetta from a contemporary listener's perspective. Rediscovering Berlin's media legacy, however, seems at times a daring exercise in patience and perseverance, not dissimilar to operating a transmitter radio in the 1920s.

There is nothing simple or predictable about the social and cultural impact that commercialised media formats and technologies are said to have had on public taste, aesthetic discourses, and the stratification of the consuming public. The mediascapes of Weimar Germany were in fact highly differentiated and far from

[150] Corey Ross, *Media and the Making of Modern Germany,* 17.

homogeneous: audiences reacted in unforeseeable ways to new cultural and media innovations, the reach of the mass media was not always as broad as has been widely assumed, and state policies often inhibited the extensive dissemination of entertainment culture. As Corey Ross pointed out in his analysis of the Weimar Era mediascape, mass culture during the 1920s was "profoundly shaped by class, age, gender, and milieu."[151] This also meant that, even though in principle media-based entertainment was open to everyone, de facto, financial and time limitations made it almost impossible for ordinary workers to indulge in the offerings of the mass public sphere with great frequency. The availability of film, radio, and records was powerfully moulded by "technological limitations, commercial considerations, ingrained cultural attitudes, and household leisure budgets."[152] For most German households in the Weimar period the regular visit to the cinema or the expensive purchase of a radio or a visit to the cinema were quite simply an extravagance that their tight household budget could not justify.[153] As Führer pointedly remarks, "the existence of modern media of mass usage alone by no means denotes a universal mass culture".[154] Even in Berlin the structure and nature of media in the 1920s clearly reflected the fragmented character of Weimar society and pointed towards exclusion as well as social and cultural diversification. As Ross elaborates, the ways in which the "wider social context influenced the distribution and usage of the media went much further than their sheer availability."[155] How people partook in mass media culture was stipulated by societal and cultural structures that were already in place.

---

[151] Ibid., 141.
[152] Ibid., 122.
[153] One of the most reliable studies of consumption patterns and leisure budgets of audiences during the Weimar Era is presented in Statistik des Deutschen Reiches, *Die Lebenshaltung von 2.000 Arbeiter-, Angestellten- und Beamtenhaushaltungen*, vol. 1 (Berlin: Hobbing, 1932).
[154] Karl-Christian Führer, "Auf dem Weg zur 'Massenkultur'?," *Historische Zeitschrift* 262, no. 1 (1996): 781.
[155] Ross, *Media and the Making of Modern Germany*, 140.

Recent research on Weimar entertainment culture has both reinforced and significantly enhanced the picture of a fragmented cultural sector by showing that audiences were less amorphous and usually not as much at the mercy of cunning marketing campaigners as generally assumed.[156] In light of this, the conservative jeremiads about cultural "massification" should be reassessed, if not dismissed, since they hardly find resonance with the actual consumption patterns of audiences during the Weimar period. As such, my investigation of the media channels' role in the dissemination of the sound movie hit song will also interrogate how regularly audiences might have been exposed to sound movie operettas and sound movie hit songs and how accessible media channels were.

The Flickers: The Starting Point for a Cross-media Marketing Campaign

The simultaneous introduction and expansion of a broad variety of new media and distribution channels in the 1920s-1930s encourages its interpretation as a point of fracture in media history: cross-media exploitation of content made media production profitable on a large scale and contributed to the pervasion of mediatised products and performances. However, it was only with the advent of the sound movie in 1929, the year that marks a more decided transition from the silent movie to the talkie, that the offerings of Berlin's mediascape grew exponentially. With an average of 13.2 annual cinema visits in 1931, Berliners were frontrunners when it

[156] See, for instance, Karl C. Führer and Corey Ross (eds.), *Mass Media, Culture, and Society in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Cynthia Walk, "Cross-Media Exchange in Weimar Culture: Von morgens bis mitternachts," *Monatshefte* 99, no. 2 (2007): 177-193; Lynn Abrams, "From Control to Commercialization: the Triumph of Mass Entertainment in Germany 1900-25?," *German History* 8, no. 3 (1990): 278-293; Helmuth Berking, *Masse und Geist: Studien zur Soziologie in der Weimarer Republik* (Berlin: Wissenschaftlicher Autoren-Verlag, 1984); Brian Currid, *A National Acoustics: Music and Mass Publicity in Weimar and Nazi Germany* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006); Kaspar Maase, *Grenzenloses Vergnügen: der Aufstieg der Massenkultur 1850-1970* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch-Verlag, 2001). Even though it focuses on British mass culture in between the wars, the following monograph also employs a more varied approach to mass media: Dan L. LeMahieu, *A culture for democracy: mass communication and the cultivated mind in Britain between the wars* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988).

came to cinema attendance.[157] In the same year, Berlin was home to 400 cinemas, five of which had a seating capacity of over 2000, 33 of 1001-2000 seats, and 33 of 751-1000 seats.[158] Most of the larger cinemas were Ufa's premiere cinemas, which were more lavishly furnished than small cinemas.[159] However, despite the Berlin cinema landscape offering various opportunities to attend screenings in both smaller and bigger cinemas at different costs, consumption patterns were also seemingly bound to regional loyalties between specific cinema venues and cinemagoers. Contemporary accounts from the film press stress that most Berliner exclusively attended their "regular, local cinema", even if that meant that they watched specific movies much later or missed out on them altogether.[160] As mentioned earlier, the attendance of movie screenings was also bound by household budgets. Economist Alexander Jason points out that, for instance, working class households only had 2.30 RM for leisure time activities at their disposal (at a monthly salary of 250 RM). With cinema ticket prices averaging around 1.01 RM in Berlin in 1930, a visit to the cinema could not have been a regular occurrence for the average Berliner.[161]

The ultimate goal of Weimar film companies must then have been to find the lowest common denominator to appeal to as many cinema owners and audience members as possible. It seems that with the sound movie operetta the German film industry succeeded in drawing in wider audiences than with other cinematic genres. The commercial viability of hit songs is also proven by the fact that between 1930 and 1932, 90% of films that were produced used hit songs to increase the

[157] Jason, *Handbuch der Filmwirtschaft*, 70. In 1926, however, Berliners were already attending the cinema at an average of 11.4 visits.
[158] Ibid., 61. By comparison, all of Germany was home to eleven cinemas that had a seating capacity over 2000.
[159] Führer, *Auf dem Weg zur Massenkultur*, 742.
[160] Anonymous, Wie man's macht," *Reichsfilmblatt*, no. 10 (1928) or Karl-Christian Führer, *Auf dem Weg zur Massenkultur*, 757.
[161] Jason, *Handbuch der Filmwirtschaft*, 66.

commercial appeal of their productions.[162] However, the sound movie operetta seemed particularly popular with audiences and cinema owners: for instance, with the distribution of sound movie operettas from 1930 onwards, Ufa drastically increased their rental revenue from 9.3 million RM in 1927/28 to 18.7 million RM in 1930/31.[163]

Having briefly touched on audience preferences and cinema accessibility during the formative years of the sound movie operetta, it is now time to have a closer look at how sound movie hit songs were embedded into sound movie operettas. *Ein blonder Traum*, a "folk play with music" and the case study for this chapter, premiered at Berlin's Gloria-Palast on 23rd September 1932 and starred Weimar Berlin's darlings Lilian Harvey, Willy Fritsch, and Willi Forst in its main roles.[164] The movie was the only Ufa-film directed by Paul Martin and ranked among the most popular representatives of the genre.[165]

It follows the story of Jou-Jou (Lilian Harvey), a young girl who has been working at a circus for several years and has recently moved to Berlin to make her breakthrough as an actress. Jou-Jou is trying to track down an American agent, called Mr. Merryman, whom she has sent 25 dollars to help her with her Hollywood aspirations. Alas, Jou-Jou's Mr. Merryman soon turns out to be a fraudulent imposter. When Jou-Jou finds herself in a precarious situation, the two window cleaners and best friends Willy I and Willy II decide to look after Jou-Jou. They offer that she can stay with them at a settlement containing discarded railway wagons on

---

[162] Helmut Korte, *Der Spielfilm und das Ende der Weimarer Republik. Ein rezeptionshistorischer Versuch* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), 300.
[163] BArch, R-109-I/I 5755, *Bericht über das Geschäftsjahr 1929/30*, 31.
[164] Anonymous, "Ein blonder Traum," *Berliner Tageblatt*, 24.09.1932. The denomination "folk play with music" was part of the movie's credits and picked up by other critics too (Erna Büsing, "Ein blonder Traum," *Vorwärts*, 24.9.1932). However, most critics placed the movie firmly within the tradition of the sound movie operetta (Aros. "Leuchtendes Dreigestirn. 'Ein blonder Traum' im Gloria-Palast." *Film-Echo, Beilage zum "Montag"*, 26.9.1932).
[165] Hans Wollenberg, "Ein blonder Traum," *Lichtbildbühne*, 24.9.1932 and Georg Herzberg, "Ein blonder Traum," *Film-Kurier*, 24.9.1932.

the outskirts of Berlin. It would not be a sound movie operetta if the two Willys did not fall in love with Jou-Jou soon after.

The sound movie operetta features four hit songs. The hit song "Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt's ein kleines bisschen Glück" is first sung by Jou-Jou right after she meets the window cleaners Willy I and Willy II for the first time (00:14:50-00:16:31).[166] Emphatically, she tries to explain how she had wanted to depart from her career as a flying missile in a circus act for a long time to finally get her big break in Hollywood. She begins a rendition of the song while looking over the rooftops of Berlin. The song's lyrics detail how she had waited for her "little bit of luck" for many days and many nights. Her tale of longing for a better and happy future touches the happy-go-lucky-types Willy I and Willy II, who are themselves trapped in their modest existence as window cleaners but are satisfied with the lives they have created for themselves. Their response to Jou-Jou's fantasies of climbing up the societal ladder is portrayed in yet another sound movie hit song: "Wir zahlen keine Miete mehr" ("We No Longer Pay Rent") whose lyrics and jolly folk tune-like melody highlight how living in their self-sufficient railway wagon settlement, no matter how small and modest their living quarters may be, gives them a sense of independence (00:17:25-00:19:13). Since they "no longer have to pay rent", they are perfectly satisfied with their fate in life. Eventually, Jou-Jou decides to stay with the two Willys.

During her time at the railway wagon settlement, Jou-Jou meets a vagabond with the nickname "Vogelscheuche" (scarecrow) who also lives there. This paternal character is portrayed by Paul Hörbiger as a somewhat disgruntled observer of the amorous confusion that unfolds upon Jou-Jou's arrival. This leads him to sing the bandoneon-accompanied song "Alles versteh'n heißt alles verzeih'n" ("To Understand Everything Means to Forgive Everything") in the style of a typical

[166] Kurbel TV, "Ein Blonder Traum (1932)," YouTube video, 1:18:38, November 5, 2021, The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 3.12.2021, 7:45 pm)

Viennese tavern tune.[167] Though both Willys are infatuated with Jou-Jou, it soon transpires that she prefers one of them, which leads to all kinds of complications and jealousy among the friends. When the Willys decide to spend their savings on buying and refurbishing yet another derelict railway wagon for Jou-Jou, it seems as if the trio is finally satisfied.[168] Yet, there is still conflict brewing between the two friends. Also, even though Jou-Jou is seemingly starting to settle down, she is still haunted by dreams of Hollywood: one of the most remarkable scenes of the movie is Jou-Jou's dream sequence, during which she dreams of travelling all the way to Hollywood in her train carriage (00:34:51-00:40:55). At first, it seems as if a warm welcome awaits her, but soon after she finds herself auditioning for a big Hollywood film producer who eventually literally shoots her off the stage (after she has demonstrated a few humiliating show pieces). After Jou-Jou awakes from her rather traumatising nightmare, she decides to leave her dreams of film stardom behind her. From now on, Jou-Jou spends almost every waking moment with the Willys: during festivities, Jou-Jou cycles through town with them as the two Willys repeat their paroles of perseverance while intonating the last hit song "Einmal schafft's jeder" ("Everyone Succeeds At Least Once").

Eventually, both Willys profess their love for Jou-Jou. Knowing that she could damage their friendship irreparably, Jou-Jou decides to leave for Hollywood after all, even though her heart is lost to Willy I. The final scene, during which Jou-Jou meets the real Mr. Merryman, leads to a big reveal though, during which all

[167] Viennese tropes were a common feature of early sound movie operettas with the Viennese waltz being constant in early sound movie operettas such as *Liebeswalzer* and *Der Kongress tanzt*. Especially the Viennesse Heurigen-tradition of singing in dedicated wine taverns often found its way into movies, with Paul Hörbiger being one of its most prominent representatives. On the interwovenness of Viennese music culture and the Berlin film industry, see: Wolfgang Thiel, "Alt-Wien auf Berlinisch? Anmerkungen zur Tonfilmoperette 'Der Kongreß tanzt' (1931)," in *Wien – Berlin: Stationen einer kulturellen Beziehung,* ed. Hartmut Grimm, 170-177*,* Saarbrücken: Pfau, 2000; Brigitte Mayr, "Budapester Charme und Wiener Ambiente: Der Musikfilm im Exil in Österreich und Ungarn 1933-1938," in *Als die Filme singen lernten. Innovation und Tradition im Musikfilm 1928-1938*, eds. Malte Hagener and Jan Hans, 166-178, Munich: edition text + kritik, 1999.

[168] Obviously, despite its modest exterior, Jou-Jou's lounge car boasts a gramophone.

misunderstandings are cleared up and Jou-Jou and Willy finally declare their love for each other and Jou-Jou gives up on her dreams of going to Hollywood.

Ein blonder Traum opened to predominantly positive reviews: most notably, critics praised the screenwriting by Billy Wilder and Walter Reisch. A critic with the film journal *Lichtbild-Bühne* opined that it was rare to find the "difficult problem of writing an operettaesque, music-infused screen book" so pleasantly solved.[169] In a film supplement of the journal "Montag", a critic under the pseudonym Aros not only highlighted the attraction of the screen book but also alluded to the hit song potential of "Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt's ein kleines bisschen Glück":

> The slowfox "Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt's ein kleines bisschen Glück" electrifies and is wonderfully catchy. This song of longing will soon sound from a thousand records and will become an iron staple of any repertory.[170]

The critic Aros' premonition that the hit song would become an iron staple of any repertory proved right: *Ein blonder Traum*'s most successful hit song "Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt's ein kleines bisschen Glück" was disseminated not only through a variety of different records but radio play and sheet music, and was also played in live music venues and circulated in print media. Despite audiences' different degrees of engagement with the movie itself, Ufa's audio-visual exploitation strategy launched the hit song as a cross-media product nationwide with a minimum of effort and expenditure. In doing so, they successfully made use of an amalgam of many media communication forms, which will be explicated in the next part of this chapter.

[169] H. W., "Lilian Harvey, Fritsch und First: Ein blonder Traum. Ufa/Gloria-Palast," *Lichtbild-Bühne*, 24.9.1932.
[170] Aros, "Leuchtendes Dreigestirn. 'Ein blonder Traum' im Gloria-Palast," *Film-Echo, Beilage zum "Montag"*, 26.9.1932.

Public Broadcasting as Wireless "Department Store"[171]

In a damning commentary from 1927, German author Hermann Hesse characterised the sound of the radio as a "mixture between bronchial mucus and chewed up rubber".[172] He was one of many contemporaries who bemoaned the sound quality of a medium that slowly freed itself from the fetters of its military roots and progressively devoted itself to entertainment and public information. For many years, the accurate, lifelike reproduction of sound remained an elusive objective, though.[173] Despite retailers' often successful efforts to gloss over these problems, among potential customers radio struggled as a luxury medium all the way through Weimar Germany's Golden Years: in 1930, the breakthrough year of the sound movie operetta, only half of Germany's households had access to electricity, which meant that most radio listeners had to, for instance, purchase batteries for their tube radios at an additional cost of 2 RM per month (with monthly broadcasting fees already amounting to 2 RM after 1924).[174] Having no electricity also meant that, even when the more affordable radios with power supply units were released, consumers in provincial areas still had to buy the more expensive, failure-prone, and not user-friendly tube models. On a general note, radio reception was better in big cities where detectors (which, at the time, only allowed reception within a 20 km radius) were more numerous and enabled urban listeners to tune into more than just

[171] Michael Stapper, *Unterhaltungsmusik im Rundfunk der Weimarer Republik* (Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 2001), 44.
[172] Hermann Hesse, *Der Steppenwolf* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1991), 197.
[173] Radio broadcasting and the stratification of audiences during the Weimar Era has been scrutinized in a variety of publications: Konrad Dussel, *Deutsche Rundfunkgeschichte* (Cologne: Herbert von Halem Verlag, 2022); Konrad Dussel (ed.), *Quellen zur Programmgeschichte des deutschen Hörfunks und Fernsehens* (Göttingen, Zurich: Muster-Schmidt, 1999); Nina Heidrich, *Rundfunk in der Weimarer Republik: regionale und nationale Konzepte* (Bielefeld: Aisthesis Verlag, 2018); Carsten Lenk, *Die Erscheinung des Rundfunks. Einführung und Nutzung eines neuen Mediums 1923-1932* (Opladen: Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 1997). Among them are contemporary publications by radio functionaries: Hans Bredow (ed.), *Aus meinem Archiv. Probleme des Rundfunks* (Heidelberg: Vorwinckel, 1950); Ernst Jolowicz, *Der Rundfunk: eine psychologische Untersuchung* (Berlin: Max Hesses Verlag, 1932); Erich Schäfer, "Der Markt in Zahlen. Die soziale Gliederung der deutschen Rundfunkhörer," *Die deutsche Werbung*, no. 28 (1935): 1566-1568.
[174] Anonymous, "Schicksalsfragen des Funkhandels," *Der Radiohändler*, no. 22 (1930): 1163.

one regional station – and even into foreign ones.[175] All of this must have amounted to a rather expensive mediocre listening experience for radio enthusiasts in the provinces.[176]

However, it was not only a financial or technological issue that kept a wide spectrum of people from listening to the radio and thus to sound movie hit songs. Most workers could only tune into radio programmes very early in the morning or in the evening since they had to work the remainder of the day. What is more, the early radio was not easy to use: in a Telefunken market study from 1935—Telefunken was the largest radio producer in Germany—researchers conducted interviews with a thousand respondents to ascertain where customers bought their radios, what their level of familiarity was, what they listened to, and as which social class they classified themselves. Even though this industry-commissioned study must be treated somewhat carefully for its potentially biased objectives and its different historical and political situatedness, it is one of the few publications that looks at early radio listeners in a somewhat comprehensive and objective fashion.[177] With regard to the technical know-how of radio listeners, it establishes that, even in 1935, more than half of the respondents (52.7%) did not have any "understanding of the

[175] Karl-Christian Führer, *Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Rundfunks in der Weimarer Republik* (Potsdam: Verlag für Berlin-Brandenburg, 1997), 65. According to a Telefunken market study from 1935, 59.5% of the thousand respondents wished for long-distance reception, mostly to listen to American and British programmes (Werner Hensel, *1000 Hörer antworten...: eine Marktstudie* (Berlin: Union, 1935), 30-31).

[176] According to a survey of the Federal Office of Statistics from 1932, in 1927/28 a mid-tier employee earned 392.69 RM/month on average while a civil servant's monthly salary averaged at 445.78 RM while a worker only earned around 200-280 RM. (Statistik des Deutschen Reiches, *Die Lebenshaltung von 2.000 Arbeiter-, Angestellten- und Beamtenhaushaltungen*, vol. 1 (Berlin: Hobbing, 1932), 134 f.) With an average radio device costing 110 RM, workers would have had to spend more than half of their monthly salary to afford a radio. Interestingly then, Karl Christian-Führer remarks in his economic history of the radio that the purchase of radios was very seasonal. Even with repayment schemes, the average customer could often only afford to buy a device on a special occasion, for instance when receiving their christmas gratification. (Führer, *Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Rundfunks*, 178.)

[177] The study focused on listeners from Groß-Berlin, which included areas such as Brandenburg an der Havel, Frankfurt am Main, and others. Workers, staffers, low- and mid-level officers, master craftsmen, small and mid-tier tradespersons, manufacturers, high officials, and self-employed people were interviewed. Two thirds of the respondents were male and only one third female. The respondents were mostly aged between 20 and 60. (Hensel, *1000 Hörerantworten,* 9-11)

technical questions" surrounding the operation or handling of their device.[178] Despite these apparent drawbacks, the radio industry quickly entered serial production: radios became more affordable for the average consumer, as in 1930 around 80% of all radios were sold on repayment schemes.[179] In the same year, the number of licence payers reached a peak of 3,509,509 in the whole Reich territory, thereof 878,930 in Berlin alone. While the saturation level for rural areas remained at a consistently low rate, Berlin achieved the highest saturation within Germany, with an average listener quota of 40-60%.[180] Hence, notwithstanding all its shortcomings, such as the tiring problem of surface noise and its lack of operationality, radio broadcasting enjoyed great popularity in Berlin's small-scale entertainment palaces, taverns and in domestic settings where the sound movie hit song had its target audience.

Early German radio broadcasting started out as a state-run institution administered by the federal postal ministry (Reichspost). By the end of 1924, however, the postal ministry had "licensed private firms to operate stations in the established broadcast zones".[181] Despite its noticeable urge to become independent from state interventionism, the government continued to financially benefit from the radio and managed to keep supervisory committees, such as the cultural advisory committees, in place.[182] From 1926, the stations operated under the umbrella organization Reichs-Rundfunk-Gesellschaft mbh (RRG) which would become the

---

[178] Hensel, *1000 Hörerantworten*, 30.
[179] Führer, *Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Rundfunks*, 58.
[180] *Bericht des Rundfunk-Kommissars des Reichspostministers über die Wirtschaftslage des deutschen Rundfunks am 31. Dezember 1930* (Berlin: Reichsdruckerei Berlin, 1930), 6. From 1930, the number of license payers continued to grow on more moderate levels. Because of the worsening economic circumstances, many people struggled to afford a device, even on repayment schemes, let alone paying the monthly fee.
[181] Christopher Hailey, "Rethinking Sound: music and radio in Weimar Germany," in *Music and performance during the Weimar Republic*, ed. Bryan Gilliam (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 13.
[182] Michael Stapper, *Unterhaltungsmusik im Rundfunk*, 36 and Winfried B. Lerg, *Die Entstehung des Rundfunks in Deutschland: Herkunft und Entwicklung eines publizistischen Mittels* (Frankfurt am Main: Knecht, 1965), 400 ff.

collective representative of all licensed stations,[183] particularly when it came to legal conflicts with other institutions such as royalty collection societies.[184] Only the Funk-Stunde AG, which started broadcasting on 29th October 1923, had one of its main offices in Berlin.[185] Due to the geographic focus of this thesis, the following observations will thus mostly be limited to the inner workings of the Berlin Funk-Stunde.

Since the Funk-Stunde was mostly fee-financed, one could assume that it would somewhat absolve the radio station from getting too intertwined with the economic pressures of the entertainment music market, at least during its early years. However, due to its entanglement with state institutions and lobbying organisations, such as representatives of the record industry, the radio was a deeply conflicted medium with an unclear agenda. According to media historian Mühl-Benninghaus, compared to the USA, German radio occupied a special position in that it remained a "half-stately institution that stuck with the governmental and cultural mandate to a special degree".[186] The demands of various institutions made the task of independent radio programming practically impossible. Along these lines, many stations strove to please both their listeners but also attempted to fulfil the educational mandate that was enforced by the government.[187] It was for this reason that the film company Ufa was largely prevented from exerting too much influence

[183] The nine licensed stations were: the Funk-Stunde AG, the Schlesische Funkstunde AG, the Südwestdeutsche Rundfunkdienst AG, the Nordische Rundfunk AG, the Westdeutsche Funkstunde AG, the Ostmarken Rundfunk AG, the Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk AG, the Deutsche Stunde in Bayern GmbH and the Süddeutsche Rundfunk AG (Michael Stapper, *Unterhaltungsmusik im Rundfunk*, 27-28.)

[184] Heinz Pohle, *Der Rundfunk als Instrument der Politik: zur Geschichte des deutschen Rundfunks von 1923/1938* (Hamburg: Verlag Hans-Bredow-Institut, 1955), 45.

[185] Hans Bredow (ed.), *Aus meinem Archiv. Probleme des Rundfunks* (Heidelberg: Vorwinckel, 1950), 61-62.

[186] Mühl-Benninghaus, *Das Ringen um den Tonfilm*, 219.

[187] Initially, radio pioneers aimed to represent the whole stylistic spectrum of Weimar Germany's musical landscape in their programmes. All musical ingredients imaginable were tossed into the stew without much regard for audience expectations. Other than might generally be expected, they did not create a new kind of musical diversity, but vividly showcased an already established stylistic spectrum whose stratification was highly dependent on socio-economic class (Corey Ross, *Media and the Making of Modern Germany*,150-156)

on the broadcasting programme of the major radio stations. However, Ufa sought to tie itself to the radio as much as possible since they recognised it as a new and promising media distribution channel for the sound movie hit song. Consequently, the Ufa executive board decided to circulate their new sound movie formats with the help of radio broadcasting as early as May 1930, since they anticipated that "a strong marketing effect would emerge from it".[188] What is more, at an early stage, the Ufa-affiliated music publisher Wiener Bohème snapped up broadcasting slots at major German radio stations for a small fee.[189]

In their early days, stations seemingly succeeded in broadcasting "aesthetically demanding programme elements that frequently negate the aesthetic trend of the musical taste of the masses".[190] Thus, at first, according to German media historian Konrad Dussel, the entertainment music sector, "although already existent in the 1920s, defrayed a niche existence in radio broadcasting".[191] The apparent diversity of listener expectations would render the art of programming not only for Munich programme director Kurt von Boeckmann an almost unsolvable task for a long time: "the more we focus on the cultural side of our task, the more we alienate ourselves from the majority of listeners, and the more we cater to the wishes and instincts of the great majority, the less we will be able to fulfil our role as bearers of culture".[192] A. Bofinger shifted the focus to an issue that he recognised as inherent to radio broadcasting as a means of entertainment: from his point of view, "the radio does not need to decide whether to create 'artistic' entertainment or none at all, but rather must determine whether it wants to create 'entertaining' entertainment or

[188] BArch R-109-I/1027 a, *Ufa-Vorstandsprotokolle*, vol. 3, Niederschrift 43, 16.5.1930.
[189] Herbert Connor, "Die Schlager-Clique dementiert," *Weltbühne*, 28.7.1931.
[190] Mühl-Benninghaus, *Das Ringen um den Tonfilm*, 260.
[191] Konrad Dussel, *Deutsche Rundfunkgeschichte: eine Einführung* (Konstanz: Universitätsverlag Konstanz, 2004), 61.
[192] K. v. Boeckman, "Grundlegende Fragen der allgemeinen Programmgestaltung," in *Quellen zur Programmgeschichte des deutschen Hörfunks und Fernsehens*, eds. Konrad Dussel and Edgar Lersch (Göttingen, Zürich: Muster-Schmidt, 1990), 40.

none at all".[193] In stark contrast to Bofinger's more lenient view on entertainment music, the official radio broadcasting commissioner stressed the high value of the vaunted educational mission of radio broadcasting by emphasising the belief that, besides its entertainment purpose, which was of the "highest value for a majority of our listeners", radio also played a decisive role in the adherence to "cultural objectives".[194] Musical directors were therefore encouraged to lay out their entertainment programme in such a way that "even by means of pure entertainment true values are mediated".[195]

Such popular education efforts were met with a lack of enthusiasm on the side of the actual audience: broadcasting art music and the classics hardly diminished the entertainment music preference of Berlin's listenership. During the early 1930s, the sound movie hit song's popularity could no longer be ignored. A national audience survey conducted in 1930 showed conclusively that the initially classical music-focused programming provided by the major radio stations did not mirror the demands of a mass audience.[196] Listeners increasingly demanded entertainment music programmes from the heads of network operations by sending letters to radio stations and the like.[197] The aforementioned Telefunken-study further illuminates that there was a strong desire for entertainment music, specifically among workers and employees. One of the respondents emphasised that "he likes

[193] Alfred Bofinger, "Bunte Abende," in *Aus meinem Archiv. Probleme des Rundfunks*, ed. Hans Bredow (Heidelberg: Vorwinckel, 1950), 310. Alfred Bofinger was the general administrator of the Stuttgart radio station.
[194] *Bericht des Rundfunkkommissars*, 12.
[195] Ibid.
[196] Reinhold Scharnke, "Was wollen Sie hören? Das Ergebnis unserer Hörer-Rundfrage," *Funk-Woche,* no. 35 (1930). Reinhold Scharnke was the editor of the programme guide and radio journal *Funk-Woche*. In his book *Wir schalten um!* (*We switch over!*), he wrote about the turmoils and intrigues of the Berlin broadcasting landscape (Reinhold Scharnke, *Wir schalten um!: ein Roman vom Rundfunk* (Berlin: Schildhorn Verlag, 1935)).
[197] Hans von Benda, "Rundfunkprogramm und Rundfunkhörer," *Melos*, no. 1 (1931).

to listen to entertainment music, dance music, beautiful Schlager" but that he mostly did not want to hear any of that "boring music with schis-minor and Allegro".[198]

At times, even the film press enforced this opinion by initiating slander campaigns against, for instance, the intendant of the Funk-Stunde, Hans Flesch:

> Radio serves entertainment purposes! And if that does not fit Mr Flesch's concept, he should go ahead and lease the Kroll-opera and play Schönberg, Hindemith, Krenek and Weill all day long for all that we care! With that said, he will certainly not make the cash tills ring![199]

Because of their extensive commercialisation, audience preferences, and economic pressures, sound movie hit songs had eventually to be given a spot in Weimar's radio programme. However, often the station's high ideals made them strive for the heightening or ennoblement of Schlager's mostly banal subjects. Bearing this in mind, the Berliner Funk-Stunde (Berlin Radio Hour) broadcasted historicising radio shows such as "500 Jahre Schlager" (500 years of Schlager) under the direction of Dr. Albert K. Henschel.[200] In such a way, the Berliner Funk-Stunde sought to establish Schlager as a German cultural asset or treasure. The Funk-Stunde also created dedicated formats for Schlager featuring reputable singers and ensembles: for example, on 11th December 1929, the show "Die neuesten Schlager des Monats" ("The most recent hit songs of the month") was aired for the first time.[201]

What is more, entertainment music and therewith sound movie hit songs were also increasingly represented institutionally: the Funk-Stunde set up a division entirely dedicated to entertainment records and mechanically reproduced music. Under the supervision of the composer Walter Gronostay, a film music composer,

---

[198] This was one answer of respondent C2/608/35 of the Telefunken market study that was mentioned earlier (Werner Hensel, *1000 Hörer antworten*, 53).
[199] Anonymous, "Tonfilm-Lieder, die der Rundfunk boykottiert," *Lichtbildbühne*, 30.8.1930.
[200] Albert K. Henschel, "Schlager," *Die Sendung*, no. 50 (1931). Similar formats can be found on various occassions: On 23rd May 1932, for instance, the Berlin Funkstunde broadcasts a show entitled "Haben Schlager einen künstlerischen Wert?" ("Do hit songs have artistic value?"). (Anonymous, "Sendeprogramm für Mittwoch, den 29. Januar," *Die Sendung*, no. 4 (1930)).
[201] Anonymous, "Sendeprogramm für Mittwoch, den 11. Dezember," *Die Sendung*, no. 49 (1929).

the entertainment division soon flourished, and the Berlin model was soon after adopted by many other German radio stations.[202] From January 1925 onwards, the Berlin stations played entertainment music and specifically dance music in their late-night programmes up to three times a week. Besides studio broadcasts, the stations aired live dance music from local taverns. These live broadcasts were very popular among listeners. Regarding live broadcasts, one commentator stated: "As I could validate while conducting my audience survey, the broadcasting of dance music from good dance taverns is more desirable than those coming from the studio. One takes pleasure in the applause and the vibrancy of the performances."[203] Apart from the actual broadcasting of the sound movie hit songs, shows which featured reviews of the movies in question became a constant in radio programmes such as the series *Zehn Minuten Film* (*Ten Minutes of Film*) of the *Berliner Funkstunde*. Subject specialists invited to give their professional opinions were mostly editors of renowned film journals and "could not ruin their relationships with film producers"; apparently that was why average movies were "more often praised than they actually deserved it."[204]

To give a concrete example of a typical daily radio programme at Berliner Funkstunde, *Die Sendung* (*The Show*), a popular radio programme guide, lists the following programme on 29th January 1930:

11.15 Gramophone records ("Deutsche Grammophon")
14.00 Excerpts from operas
15.20 Experiences of a gentleman-chef
15.40 Max Jungk: Famous theatre scandals
16.05 Technical Weekly Schmoose
16.30 Young Theatre "The Broken Pot" ("Der Zerbrochene Krug")
17.30 Songs
18.20 From the Central-Hotel: entertainment music (Kapelle Arkadi Flato)
19.00 Prof. Dr. Emil Utitz: The Rise and Fall of Our Culture?

---

[202] Michael Stapper, *Unterhaltungsmusik im Rundfunk*, 36.
[203] Anonymous, "Teilnehmerwünsche. Etwas über die abendliche Tanzmusik," *Deutscher Rundfunk*, no. 5 (1928).
[204] Anonymous, "Film im Sender. Auftakt zur Rundfunk-Kritik. Rundfunk-Debatte zwischen Herbert Ihering und Manfred Georg," *Lichtbildbühne.* 8.2.1930.

19.20 Programme of the Current Department
20.00 International March Music
21.10 From the "Theater des Westens": Hotel Stadt Lamberg (2nd and 3rd act)
after the night announcements dance music until 00.30 (from House Gourmenia, Tanzkapelle Manuel Romeo)[205]

By consulting this programme excerpt, one can determine the ambiguous poles that early broadcasting needed to manoeuvre between: on the one hand, the connoisseur of classical music was offered a rather sophisticated afternoon programme; on the other, fans of contemporary dance and entertainment music could enjoy their favourite music during the late evening. Despite Ufa-affiliated journalists' efforts, the radio implicitly established sound movie hit songs as suitable for the masses, but also, culturally speaking, as a second-rate entertainment commodity with unpopular broadcasting slots. As Edmund Nick, the musical director in Breslau pointedly put it in 1929: "it is primarily the evening hours between 8pm and 10pm that determine the artistic physiognomy of the radio, and entertainment music is mostly broadcast before or after this time".[206] However, according to Hans Mersmann, under the impression of a general entertainment music preference, the *Berliner Funkstunde* and the *Deutsche Welle* aired "16 hours of entertainment music" every week by 1931.[207]

During the first period of radio broadcasting, sound movie hit songs found their typical broadcasting slots during the late-night programme, often offering live broadcasts from popular dance halls. The late-morning slots were usually used for marketing the product range of major record labels. At the Funk-Stunde, it was usually the slot from 11:15am to 2pm when records of labels such as Deutsche Grammophon, Electrola, Odeon, Homocord, and Parlophon were played during

[205] Anonymous, "Sendeprogramm für Mittwoch, den 29. Januar," *Die Sendung*, no. 4 (1930).
[206] Edmund Nick, "Unterhaltungsmusik (1929)," in *Aus meinem Archiv. Probleme des Rundfunks*, ed. Hans Bredow (Heidelberg: Vorwinckel, 1950), 305. Edmund Nick was the musical director of the Breslau station.
[207] Hans Mersmann, "Was verbraucht Berlin an Musik?," *Melos*, no. 1 (1931).

weekdays.[208] Due to the short duration of hit songs, entertainment music records could be produced at a higher rate and more cheaply than classical music records, which created more variety within radio programmes. Even though the record industry acknowledged and exploited the advertising possibilities on the radio, the relationship between the broadcasting union and the record industry was strained. In the early 1930s, radio stations took advantage of the unclear exploitation rights for the use of records in radio programmes. When the record industry faced a dramatic sales crisis in 1931, they took legal action to prevent stations from utilising their products and demanded the reduction of so-called record hours and a say in the selection of records.[209] In March 1932, the RRG and the record industry signed an agreement that made provisions for the record industry to receive a lump sum for the use of records during radio programmes.[210] As media historian Karl Christian Führer explicates, this agreement still very much favoured the interests of the RRG.[211] Similar licensing agreements were set up with the royalty collection societies: the question of the payment of license fees was either settled in framework agreements or the societies were given profit participation.[212]

The radio did not just connect to other media by incorporating records or live performances of hit songs into its programmes. Early on, the relationship of listeners to the radio was portrayed in sound movies, and the perils of listening in on the most recent sound movie hit songs were ruthlessly depicted in Schlager lyrics and other entertainment music genres. The radio itself featured as, so to speak, both technological marvel and machine-like companion in many early sound movies (and

[208] Anonymous, "Sendeprogramm für Mittwoch, den 29. Januar," *Die Sendung*, no. 4 (1930). However, most programme guides that I have consulted listed record hours between 11.15am and 2pm.
[209] Wiggers, "Schallplatten contra Rundfunk," *Radio*, no. 25 (1931).
[210] Gerhard Laurisch, *Der Rundfunk als Arbeitgeber* (Jena: Neuenhahn, 1933), 98.
[211] Führer, *Wirtschaftsgeschichte des deutschen Rundfunks*, 174.
[212] Ibid., 179 ff.

late silent movies). In the 1930 sound movie operetta *Einbrecher* (*The Burglar*), for instance, the main character listens to the radio broadcast of a tennis match that has been set to music in the form of a recitative (00:15:53-00:17:11). The camera zooms in on the speaker and shows the main actress physically engaging with the broadcast by rhythmically emulating the movements of tennis players.[213]

Apart from such self-reflective examples of broadcasting's reception, studies of entertainment music and radio of the time can only rely on a few other concrete sources. What was freely available are mainly printed sources, such as the self-publications of radio stations, trade magazines published by the national broadcasting union (RRG), statistical yearbooks, and business records, as well as contemporary music and radio periodicals. Also helpful for gaining an insight into the inner workings of early radio programming are the manifold programme guides of this time. Thomas Bauer gives a comprehensive insight into the German programme press from 1923 to 1941. He emphasises that the programme guide market was a highly competitive one, with every station having its own affiliated programme guide, for instance the Funk-Stunde's self-titled programme guide *Die Funk-Stunde*, published from 18th November 1924.[214] Other publications included *Die Sendung* and *Funk*, as well as free leaflets.[215]

A wholesome alternative to the dance bar next door; that is how technology and dance enthusiasts alike welcomed the national broadcasting of music. A bulwark against the corrupting influences of Berlin's Babylonian entertainment culture; that is how musical directors at radio stations conceived of the radio – an

---

[213] Klaus von Bülow. "Einbrecher (1932) (ganzer Film)." YouTube Video, 1:32:52. February 1, 2021. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (last accessed on 29.11.2022, 11:13 pm)

[214] Thomas Bauer, *Deutsche Programmpresse 1923-1941: Entstehung, Entwicklung und Kontinuität der Rundfunkzeitschriften* (München: Saur, 1993), 59.

[215] Over the course of many years, there had been debates about whether the relinquishment of the weekly programme to publishers should be free of charge or not. Ultimately, the postal ministry, who distributed the programme, conceded that programmes would be given out against a small administrative fee. (Bauer, *Deutsche Programmpresse*, 70)

independent, fee-financed, educational sonic undertaking with high art music at the heart of its programme. And yet still, in the centre of all of this, there stood a new form of musical reception, an appreciation of mechanically reproduced sound that goes far beyond the mere accommodation of the perks and perils of a new medium. In a 1994 essay, musicologist Christopher Hailey captures this situation in a nutshell by pointing out that the radio, with its enormous potential and significant limitations, "had a profound impact upon the relationship between musicians and audience and their currency of communication: sound."[216] There was also a very pragmatic reason for playing more hit songs: for the radio, "sound movie hit songs constituted a crucial standard in its entertainment music repertory."[217] Sound movie hit songs were very much adapted to the technological limitations and lack of sound fidelity that the radio brought with it in its early days: Composers predominantly fell back on methods of "thin" scoring which proved to be more suitable for radio broadcasts. The microphone's inability to capture timbral finesse "encouraged composers to think in terms of abstract musical ideas".[218] Its deficient rendering of live sound into mechanically reproduced sound redefined "conceptions of instrumental timbre, repertoire, compositional style, performance practice" among other aspects of musical reception and practice.[219] What counted was how the musical text could be mediated best and most transparently. The radio's constrictions "upon style and technique inevitably affected compositional aesthetics."[220] Since the broadcasts are not preserved, the sound of the actual programmes can obviously only be imagined.

It is difficult to ascertain how much the radio contributed to popularising sound movie hit songs among audiences. Even though, from a musical and technological

[216] Hailey, *Rethinking Sound*, 13.
[217] Joachim-Felix Leonhard, *Programmgeschichte des Hörfunks in der Weimarer Republik*, vol. 2 (Munich: Kreuz Verlag 1997), 986.
[218] Hailey, *Rethinking Sound*, 24.
[219] Ibid., 24.
[220] Ibid., 33.

vantage point, hit songs seemed to be ideally suited to the medium, their broadcasting was, as we have seen, still actively limited to certain slots and times.[221] What is more, at the time, consumer surveys were still in the early phase of their development, and samples were furthermore too small and thus unrepresentative of the wide audience's precise composition to make qualified judgements of how many radio listeners preferred listening to sound movie hit songs rather than, for instance, cultural programmes. From what I have described, it becomes clear though that the radio was not only a major disseminator of sound movie hit songs but also the site of aesthetic debates emerging around it. The next section will highlight in which ways the record industry adapted the sound movie hit song and how the aesthetic debate surrounding entertainment music was continued in this domain.

The Sound Movie Hit Song's Effect on the Record Industry

The mass medium record was one of the most influential economic factors within Weimar Berlin's media landscape, promoting sound movie hit songs beyond the border of the city and even Germany.[222] After having enjoyed the most recent sound movie hit song during a visit to the movie palace, a keen music enthusiast "could be sure to find it pressed on a gramophone record by the next day, or even on the day of the movie premiere."[223]

Within a short space of time, the German record industry identified the undeniable potential of closely collaborating with the film industry. It singled out the sound movie operetta and other music film genres as the most significant stimuli to

[221] Corey Ross, *Media and the Making of Modern Germany*, 152.
[222] Kurt Blaukopf, *Massenmedium Schallplatte: die Stellung des Tonträgers in der Kultursoziologie und Kulturstatistik* (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1977), 9.
[223] Anonymous, "Tanz- und Tonfilmschlager auf der Schallplatte," *Sie + Er*, no. 2 (1932).

successfully commercialise single number records that had already been a fixture of most record labels' catalogues but could now be further exploited. In an article from 28th February 1931, an anonymous author of the *Film-Kurier* who had just attended a trade fair in Berlin asserted that the "sound movie has had a particularly favourable effect on the record industry".[224] In 1931 German musicologist Hans Mersmann further contextualised this assertion in the dedicated music journal *Melos*:

> To a large degree, the record industry had always lived off its Schlager. It exploited the genre in two ways: for starters, as an end to promote either the song or the singer, or as everyday music, e. g. as a dance music record.[225]

Much of the coverage in the film press was seemingly clouded by advancing the agenda of the sound movie itself. In an article entitled "Schallplattenreform" ("Record reform") from 22th October 1930, the *Kinematograph* claimed that 50% of the new record releases "drew on the rich spring of the sound movie",[226] and were often released on the day of, or a "maximum of eight days before", the premiere of the movie in question.[227] However, in features such as "Platten der Woche" ("Records of the Week") in the *Reichsfilmblatt* in May 1930, the film trade press did not yet only exclusively feature sound movie hit songs but also opera recordings, all-male choirs, and the like.[228] A few months later though, the focus of such record reviews was almost entirely on the sound movie hit songs, with record labels such as Ultraphon, Orchestrola, Deutsche Grammophon, Odeon, and Electrola being featured as prominent publishers of these songs.[229]

---

[224] Anonymous, "Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft und Elektrola: Schallplattenfabrikant und Messe," *Film-Kurier*, 28.2.1931.
[225] Hans Mersmann, "Schlagerplatte und Persönlichkeit," *Melos*, no. 1 (1931).
[226] Anonymous, "Schallplattenreform," *Kinematograph*, 22.10.1930.
[227] Anonymous, "Wie nutzt der Schaumann den Schlager," *Film-Kurier, Beilage "Der Schaumann*", 30.8.1930.
[228] Kawi, "Die Platten der Woche," *Reichsfilmblatt, Beilage „Kinomusik/Schallplatte*", 10.5.1930.
[229] Peter Zweifel, "Abend mit Schallplatten," *Reichsfilmblatt, Beilage „Kinomusik/Schallplatte"*, 6.12.1930.

An advantage of the sound movie hit song compared to other recorded repertory was that it was particularly suited to the distribution of cheaper single number records rather than albums. These single number records were not only released in increasing numbers to please mass audiences, but also for pragmatic reasons: the short playing time of the most common 78 rpm disc was better suited to the musical concision and thin scoring of the hit song than to long-play musical works. The time duration of roughly three to four minutes for one disc side still dictates the standardised and widely common average length of a chart hit to this day. As mentioned, what further shifted the focus of the record industry towards entertainment music was the fact that early recording technology failed to accurately reproduce the range of timbres and tones that was characteristic of, for instance, symphonic works. In addition, the most popular salon orchestras and jazz bands were—compared to the likes of a whole symphony orchestra—comparatively cheap to hire and easy to record. Due to the strategic distribution of sheet music to ensemble leaders, the most renowned sound movie hit songs were often already an integral part of most dance orchestras' live sets – the record industry simply had to harvest the musical fruit. It was no coincidence then that most record labels affiliated themselves with Berlin-based companies: besides the unceasing availability of cheap labour force and the sales potential that the populous city offered, Berlin was the homestead of most of the public favourites when it came to established musical acts, actors, and so on. The city soon became the pre-eminent stronghold of recording studios and record manufacturing.[230] Hence, most gramophone companies also registered their offices in Berlin.

As Mersmann stated above, the record succeeded in exploiting the sound movie hit song in two ways: for a start, as an end to promote either the song or the

[230] Gerd Braune, *Der Einfluß von Schallplatte und Rundfunk auf die deutsche Musikindustrie* (Berlin: Schaefer, 1934), 31 ff.

singer, or as everyday music, i.e., as a dance music record.[231] The major labels hence increasingly marketed their products around popular singers, actors and actresses, orchestras, and bands. In connection with an increasing focus on the star persona, the record industry also won personalised brand ambassadors. And similarly, singers and musicians often endorsed products. Often popular actors and actresses such as Lilian Harvey or famous singers such as Richard Tauber recorded sound movie hit songs. These so-called Markenplatten (brand records) sold considerably better among West Berlin audiences than the second-rate Kampfplatten or Tanzplatten (combat records), which featured a recorded orchestra version of the song alternating with anonymously recorded chorus singing (Refraingesang).[232] However, according to Strobel, most workmen were inclined to buy the cheaper, anonymously recorded discs since "the money did not suffice" for "better recordings".[233] One of these 25cm- brand records could be purchased for 2 to 3.50 RM, which was more than the monthly radio fee.[234] Some critics perceived these juicy prices as scandalous rip-off, especially the unjustifiably higher price of the so-called Markenplatten. Accordingly, in 1931, Herbert Grünbaum stated in the *Weltbühne* that "there are decent records available for 1.80 RM[!]" and further pointed out that they would essentially not differ from 3.50 RM records when it came to the quality of the records.[235] It was not only important for *customers* to be able to afford records though: after the nationwide 10% price drop for records in 1931, the 3.50 RM records were now sold for 3.15 RM, which, according to Grünbaum had severe effects on the profit margin of the retailers:

---

[231] Hans-Christoph Worbs, *Der Schlager. Bestandsaufnahme, Analyse, Dokumentation; ein Leitfaden* (Bremen: Schünemann, 1963), 12.
[232] Anonymous, "Tonfilmschlager reorganisiert den Musikhandel! Tonfilmflieder, Tonfilmschallplatten bevorzugt," *Film und Ton*, 22.3.1930.
[233] Heinrich Strobel, "Wer spielt Musik?," *Melos. Zeitschrift für Musik*, no. 1 (1931).
[234] Anonymous, "Sanierung der Deutschen Grammophon AG," *Phonographische und Radiozeitschrift*, 15.1.1935.
[235] Herbert Grünbaum, "Schallplatten zu teuer," *Weltbühne*, no. 13 (1931).

> A record of such sort, for which the shop takes 3.15, costs the manufacturer, if he cuts at least three hundred of them, 90 Pfennig, including all licenses for authors and recording devices. Then the wholesaler buys it for 1.50, then the retailer buys it for 2.05, and finally you buy it for 3.15.[236]

In the same breath, Grünbaum also criticises the practice of predominantly publishing entertainment music at lower prices and classical music at special collector rates though.[237]

In 1907, the classical music sector had accounted for 63% of record sales, whereas in 1929 75% came from the entertainment music sector.[238] Nevertheless, it is not easy to deduce whether audiences were equally susceptible to the delights of the sound movie hit song when it came to their buying preferences as they had been to entertainment music records more generally, which had already been around for a few years and were sold in established music shops. Still, from comments and observations in newspaper articles and the like, one can deduce that audiences also bought into the sound movie hit song from comments and observations in newspaper articles and the like. The contemporary press hinted at the conscious interweaving of the sound movie and the record industry for promotional purposes as early as 1930.[239]

In January 1931, the musicologist and music critic Heinrich Strobel conducted an unrepresentative poll among random customers of Berlin's most frequented music shops to establish what audiences preferred to purchase.[240] Strobel detects a noticeable difference between customers in the West and the East of the city.

---

[236] Ibid.
[237] Ibid.
[238] The Berlin-based record label Polyphon for instance sold 100000 records of single Schlager numbers, whereas the recording of Beethoven's 5th Symphony (Philharmonic Orchestra Berlin, conductor: Richard Strauss) merely sold 2400 items ("Die Sanierung der deutschen Grammophon AG," *Phonographische und Radio Zeitung*, 19.1.1935).
[239] See, for instance, Walter Steinhauer, "Der Tonfilm fördert die Schallplatte," *Film-Kurier, Die Film-Musik. Beiblatt zum Film-Kurier*, 24.04.1930; Guido Bagier, "Tonfilm und Schallplatte. Zwei Industrien – Ein Ziel," *Reichsfilmblatt*, 3.5.1930; Anonymous, "Tonfilm und Musiksortiment," *Lichtbildbühne, Film und Ton*, 12.07.1930.
[240] Heinrich Strobel, "Wer spielt Musik?," *Melos. Zeitschrift für Musik*, no. 1 (1931).

Customers at the specialist shellac record shop Alberti at the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church, for instance, would predominantly purchase American Schlager of the "gentle and pliant" variety, or recordings of sound movie hit songs.[241] Even though this was only true for one of the many music shops that Berlin offered, Alberti cannot be underestimated in its representativeness of product ranges in other Berlin music shops: the store was so famous that, in December 1929, it even released its own limited Christmas record for its most valued customers, which gives an insight into which genres might have been *en vogue* at the time. The record featured a humorous take on a typical sales conversation with the store's main salesperson, Isztvan Weiss, along with humorous takes on operetta songs, hit songs, and Berlin chansons, all while more serious genres are waved off as old-fashioned.[242] By contrast, at Kaufhaus Tietz, a speciality store in the East of Berlin that predominantly catered to "workmen", it was most notably records within a price range of 50 pfennig to 2 RM with "Rhine songs, sentimental hit songs, and only the sentimental ones, waltzes and yet again waltzes", that were sold.[243] Strobel interestingly observed that the "effect of current sound movies on the buying power is much more uncommon than in the West" of the city.[244] Customers from provincial areas, however, almost exclusively demanded sound movie hit songs.[245]

Music shops were not the only places where audiences could buy their favourite hit song records: until 18th October 1930, a police ordinance explicitly allowed the sales and distribution of records and other film paraphernalia directly at the cinema, even after opening hours. Shortly after that, however, the Reichsverband des Deutschen Sprechmaschinen- und Schallplattenhandels e.V.

---

[241] Ibid.
[242] HeadHunter131. "Paul Morgan kauft Platten." YouTube Video, 0:1:34. December 24, 2021. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available on ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 15.10.2018, 9:13 pm)
[243] Heinrich Strobel, "Wer spielt Musik?," *Melos. Zeitschrift für Musik*, no. 1 (1931).
[244] Ibid.
[245] Ibid.

(National Association of the German-speaking Machine and Record Trade) obtained a judgment banning cinemas from selling records after opening hours, since this practice was thought to damage the dedicated record retail industry.[246]

The record industry and radio industry thus shared a similarly complicated trajectory. During the days of early radio broadcasting, the record industry often provided radio pioneers with the infrastructure to record and broadcast their music programmes: "the first broadcasting corporation in Germany, the Berliner Funkstunde, was located in the 'Voxhaus'", the recording studio of the record label Vox.[247] It is very likely that this led to an exchange of personnel and technological know-how: technicians, musicians and marketing executives often worked for both record labels and local radio stations. With the advent of radio programming, radio producers were confined to a certain budget: by establishing "record hours" that often took place in the late morning hours, radio stations not only advertised recent record releases to audiences, but also made use of a cheap alternative to their more expensive live broadcasts. 1929, the year of the Great Depression, brought the first severe record sales crisis and concerns about the free use of records for radio broadcasting were voiced by representatives of the recording business: according to them, radio broadcasting contributed to a shift of purchasing power benefiting the radio industry.[248] However, this was only partly accurate: entertainment music records were only played during broadcasting slots that were situated on the margins of the daily programme. Employed and thus affluent customers could not tune in during lunch hours and late-night slots.

[246] Anonymous, "Schallplatten und Ladenschlußzeiten. Der Abendverkauf im Kino ist und bleibt unzulässig," *Phonographische Zeitung*, 15.11.1930.
[247] Ross, *Media and the Making of Modern Germany*, 133.
[248] See, for instance, Führer, *Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Rundfunks*, 174 ff; Gerhard Laurisch, *Der Rundfunk als Arbeitgeber*, 98.

The general sales crisis was partly prevented by presenting records as premium products that, compared to the radio, allowed for more personal freedom: a listener could purposefully purchase their favourite record and listen to it whenever and wherever they wanted to. In 1934, the economist Gerd Braune observed in his thesis that the appeal of buying a record in the early 1030s was that "one could listen to music outside of a firm time schedule" and that records catered to the desire of customers to "play certain melodies, hit songs and the like on one's very own device", again and again.[249] From 1931, another, even more severe sales crisis had the record industry in a tight grip which many contemporaries, once again, attributed to the excessive use of music in radio broadcasting, which eventually resulted in contractual negotiations between the RRG and the record industry. Naturally, the gramophone record was also subject to licensing requirements that were overseen by the German GEMA and the Austrian AKM (German and Austrian Association for the Protection of Rights Associated with Musical Performances) and their subsidiary for the exploitation of mechanical rights, AMMRE. They guaranteed licensors—in most cases the movie company itself—and the song's originators their respective share. For this reason, the movie company had a singular interest in a successful sales revenue.

However, the extensive distribution of sound movie hit songs provoked a negative response from contemporary critics and composers. According to composer Friedrich Holländer, the record boom can be described as a Janus-faced phenomenon: on the one hand, "the possibilities that a record holds on offer shortened Schlager's pathway to popularity, on the other hand the medium accelerated the speed in which a musical piece was sung or played to death."[250] Thus, the transmission medium of the "gramophone record" itself became stylised

[249] Braune, *Der Einfluß von Schallplatte und Rundfunk*, 44.
[250] Friedrich Holländer, "Das Musikproblem im Tonfilm: Los vom Schlager," *Film-Kurier*, 19.8.1930.

as the midwife of Schlager's aesthetic downfall. In an article from December 1930 in *Melos*, Eberhard Preußner criticises how the shellac disc and new audio equipment had contributed to a "technization of kitsch", not only when it came to the musical content but also in the presentation of the products. Preußner elucidates how he came across a disc postcard at the Berlin Funkausstellung that featured a "miniature recording of a hit song in the guise of a shellac postcard".[251] According to Preußner, those postcards "combine the kitsch of the most nauseating picture postcard with the audio-kitsch of poor hit songs".[252]

During the late 1920s and early 1930s, the print press was one of the most efficient ways to advertise new products. Many record labels started producing regular promotional publications that paired overt product placement with features, profiles of musical acts, and lifestyle articles. The distinct emphasis on visual components of the genre made the physical attractiveness of record stars immensely significant. By publishing monthly journals, labels such as Deutsche Grammophon and Electrola further tried to capitalise on the ever-growing star cult surrounding their musical acts.[253] Among the most successful promotional journals were *Die Stimme seines Herren* (*His Master's Voice*) by Deutsche Grammophon, *Skizzen* (*Sketches*) by Electrola, and the seemingly academically oriented but nevertheless promotional *Kultur und Schallplatte* (*Culture and Record*) by the Lindström A. G. The sound movie hit song was a regular topic of conversation and popular interpreters, such as Leon Monosson, were featured on their cover pages (see Figure 1).[254] On the back page of these promotional journals, a genre-specific

[251] Eberhard Preußner, "Kitsch und Technik," *Melos*, no. 12 (1930).
[252] Ibid. A notable manufacturer of such audio-postcards was the "Verlag moderner Tonkunst" Berlin which made the so-called Weco Tonbild-postcard popular.
[253] Anonymous, "Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft und Elektrola: Schallplattenfabrikant und Messe," *Film-Kurier,* 28.2.1931.
[254] Cover page, *Die Stimme seines Herrn. Illustrierte Monatsschrift für Musikfreunde*, no. 10 (1932).

excerpt from the label's record catalogue could often be found, which often featured sound movie hit songs exclusively (see Figure 2).[255]

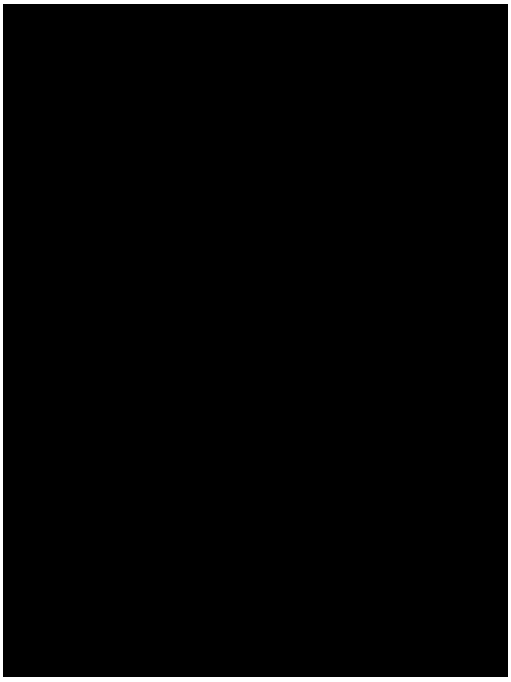


Figure 1: Cover page, Leo Monosson. *Die Stimme seines Herrn. Illustrierte Monatsschrift für Musikfreunde*, no. 10 (1932).

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

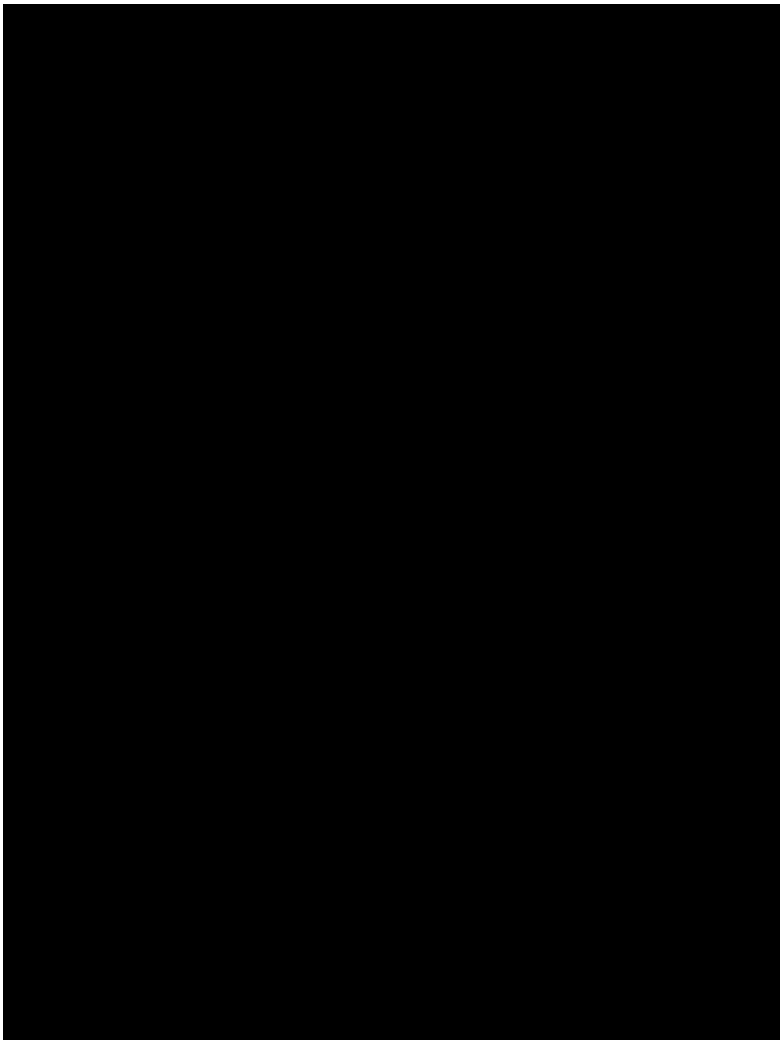


Figure 2: Back page, Record catalogue. *Die Stimme seines Herrn. Illustrierte Monatsschrift für Musikfreunde*, no. 10 (1930).

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[255] Back page, *Die Stimme seines Herrn. Illustrierte Monatsschrift für Musikfreunde*, no. 10 (1930).

In the third 1930s issue of the Deutsche Grammophon publication "Die Stimme seines Herren. Illustrierte Monatszeitschrift für Musikfreunde" there were already listed more than 50 sound movie operetta-specific musical works.[256] However, this information alone does not suffice to estimate the actual sales numbers and therewith, to an extent, the popularity of specific records. The copyright collectives AKM and GEMA lost most of their documents and files in Second World War archive fires (the same goes for the archives of music business-specific associations, such as the German Theatre association and the Union for Stage Artists and Associated Professions, the Association for German musicians, and the Cooperative of German Composers). Yet based on the following table, one can—independently from the actual sales numbers—retrace that the success of a sound movie hit song was also dependent on how many different versions of, in this instance, "Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt's ein kleines bisschen Glück" were pressed onto record and in thus in circulation.[257] These different recordings varied regarding their musical style, line-up, and execution, but in essence did not differ greatly from the basic framework of the version shown in the movie. The most popular type of recording offered the sound movie hit song with a usually male voice singing the chorus (a practice known as Refraingesang):

Orchestra/Ensemble	**Singer**	**Catalogue Number**	**Label**
Ufa-Jazz-Orchester Direction: Gérard Jacobson	Lilian Harvey	B. 49078-I	Parlophon
Comedian Harmonists		E.G. 2607	His Master's Voice

[256] Anonymous, "Tonfilm beeinflußt Schallplattenproduktion," *Lichtbildbühne*, 6.3.1930.
[257] The table provided draws on various sources: the consultation of private collections ([redacted]) and YouTube.

The text originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Die Kardosh Singers[258]		A 1230	Telefunken
Eric Harden Tanzorchester[259]	Luigi Bernauer	Bi 1250	Gloria
Marek Weber and his orchestra	Trio	E.G. 2585	Electrola
Abel quartet[260]		7017	Kristall
Anonymous[261]	anonymous	20239	Audiphon
Berolina orchestra[262]	Anonymous	9002	ORI

In the following paragraphs, a few selected recordings of "Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt's ein kleines bisschen Glück" will be analysed more closely in order to highlight how recorded versions of the same sound movie hit song differed and how they might have catered to different customer preferences.

Lilian Harvey herself recorded a shellac version of her "Sehnsuchtslied". [263] For the first part of the recording, her version essentially adheres to the rendition that she presented in the movie. The record features the Ufa jazz orchestra under the direction of Gérard Jacobson, the long-term assistant and arranger of composer Werner Richard Heymann. The shellac disc was published by ODEON (O-11684)

---

[258] HeadHunter131. "Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt's ein kleines bisschen Glück." YouTube Video, 0:1:04. July 31, 2020. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 14.10.2018, 4:13 pm)

[259] GrafPhono. "Eric Harden: Irgendwo auf der Welt (Luigi Bernauer, 1933)." YouTube Video, 0:1:47. November 25, 2013. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 14.10.2018, 4:57 pm)

[260] GrafPhono. "Abel-Quartett: Irgendwo auf der Welt (1932)." YouTube Video, 0:1:47. December 12, 2014. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 14.10.2018, 2:45 pm). The Abels, another popular German-Hungarian vocal ensemble, also released a stripped-back version of the hit song with Kristall (7017). For the recording of this song, the ensemble was directed by Rudolf Goehr and not its founder Pal Abel. From 1930, the Abels were often listed as "5 Songs" on shellac records. Under this name, they also appeared in two movies: *Es war einmal ein Walzer* (1932) and *Ekstase* (1933).

[261] Radiomuseum Hardthausen. "Eddy Walis Orch., Eric Helgar, Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt's ein kleines bisschen Glück, Slowfox, 1932." YouTube Video, 0:3:04. October 29, 2020. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 17.10.2018, 10:23 am).

[262] HeadHunter131. "Irgendwo auf der Welt – Erwin Hartung." YouTube Video, 0:1:34. July 2, 2008. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 17.10.2018, 11:13 am)

[263] Plattensammler88. "Lilian Harvey – Irgendwo auf der Welt (Slowfox)." YouTube Video, 0:1:47. August 5, 2009. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 14.10.2018, 3:43 pm).

and features a dance break, during which the Ufa jazz orchestra boasts more typical features of a jazzy slow-fox recording, which includes the brass and percussion sections being more prominent and playing witty renditions of the chorus. Especially the oboe and trombone have their shining moments in the more dance orchestra-suited arrangement of the song. This version would have presumably been purchased by fans of the actress Lilian Harvey.

Marek Weber and his orchestra released their interpretation of the song with Electrola (E.G. 2585).[264] Their record features an unknown vocal trio singing the chorus, in keeping with the Refraingesang tradition.[265] Because Marek Weber himself was such an accomplished solo violinist, the introduction to the song starts out with a stripped back solo of the first violin with occasional viola and vibraphone/glass harmonium interjections. Then the rhythm group (guitar, tuba, and piano) enters, establishing the typical 4/4 measure. Other brass players later join in to add texture. Weber's recording would have been more fitted for a high-class dance venue, such as the hotels Esplanade and Adlon.

The label Electrola also published the interpretation of the vocal ensemble Comedian Harmonists (E.G. 2607).[266] Their melody-focused, stripped-back version features a hummed introduction and close-harmony rendition of the chorus, with only the piano adding occasional accents and the lower tenor voice delivering the melodic line. A short modulatory passage then shifts the melodic line to a higher

---

[264] Marek Weber, a classically trained violinist who had made a name for himself in the entertainment live music scene as early as 1909 (when he played at Café Eden and the Hotel Esplanade), recorded his first shellac record with Parlophon in 1919. In 1926 he landed a lucrative long-term deal with the Electrola and secured his orchestra a long-term engagement at the luxurious Hotel Adlon. Due to his conservative education, Marek Weber is rumoured to have insisted on rather straight-forward, string-based arrangements, since jazz music was what he played as and when desired by his audience. (Werner Walendowski, "Marek Weber (1988-1964)," in *CD Booklet, Marek Weber und sein Orchester* (Hamburg: Membran Music Ltd., 2005))

[265] Brillantspecial. "Irgendwo auf der Welt/ Marek Weber & Orchester mit Refraingesang." YouTube Video, 0:4:20. June 15, 2013. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 14.10.2018, 5:15 pm).

[266] Comedian Harmonists – Thema. "Irgendwo auf der Welt." YouTube Video, 0:1:04. July 11, 2015. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 15.10.2018, 3:56 pm).

register. Another hummed modulatory passage imitates the climactic interchange of the brass and the string sections of a dance orchestra. The closing section features the first tenor intonating the last line of the chorus “Irgendwie, irgendwo, irgendwann” in falsetto voice.

These few examples demonstrate how the practice of re-recording songs with different line-ups and stylistic idiosyncrasies catered to many different tastes and thus made it more likely for the sound movie hit song to find resonance with many different groups of listeners. A Marek Weber-enthusiast, for instance, would have preferred the typically string-heavy, rich sound of a Weber-arrangement; dance enthusiasts would have opted for one of the cheaper anonymous dance records with Refraingesang; and fans of Lilian Harvey’s film rendition would have purchased her recording.

The development of the art of recording not only brought about new patterns of musical reception, but furthermore initiated the cultivation of new musical practices. Musicians and singers had to learn to adapt to the challenges that early recording technology imposed on their distinct live-performance-style. Without physical gestures, facial expressions, and the forgiving acoustic of the concert hall, the recorded performance was “less a showcase for interpretation and personality than a vehicle for a text in which the ideal performance was the transparent mediation of that text”.[267] When the live music scene was increasingly suffused with new record-specific performance styles, even Schlager aficionados could not easily differentiate between their favourite record and live artists anymore.

The shellac record was the medium of the gramophone age, but it was an inconvenient one, in that it was “necessary to change records and needles frequently, and unsatisfying in that sound fidelity was greatly diminished by the

[267] Christopher Hailey, *Rethinking Sound*, 34-35.

stubborn problem of the surface noise".[268] But on the other hand, it was revolutionary in that the medium supplied its listenership with a new kind of self-determination, giving it a chance to decide upon their sonic fate within the domestic confinements of their own four walls. In contrast to the state-run Rundfunk, the record industry did take the complexities of audience preferences into account: choosing recordings from the breadth of record catalogues demanded an active audience, not least because the economic fate of record labels depended on it. The increasingly personalised connection to records was also portrayed in sound movie operettas themselves: in *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht* (*I by Day, You by Night*, 1932), for instance, the main character is daydreaming to a recording of the vocal ensemble Comedian Harmonists singing the movie's main hit song "Wenn ich Sonntag in mein Kino geh'" (00:49:00).[269] Ultimately, she takes the gramophone horn to place it on her bedside table and falls asleep to the sound of the recording.

As much as the recording industry adapted the sound movie hit song as its saviour and sure seller in times of crisis, it was the entertainment sheet music industry whose fate was vitally dependent on the success of the sound movie hit song.

Page-turner: Putting a Fresh Sheet on the Music Stand

On 11th November 1929, the renowned entertainment music publishers Alrobi and Wiener Bohème collaborated with the film company Ufa to establish the Ufaton-Verlag, a dedicated publishing house for the sale and distribution of film-specific sheet music and recording rights.[270] Early on, Ufa had identified the potential of at

[268] Ross, *Media and the Making of Modern Germany*, 130.
[269] Benito Camela. "Ich bei Tag und du bei Nacht." YouTube Video, 1:34:20. May 23, 2021. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 23.5.2022, 6:45 pm).
[270] BArch, R-109-I/1028b, *Anhang zu Bericht über Verkaufsverhandlungen der Wiener Bohème Verlag GmbH*, 200.

least partially owning a music publishing house: since Ufa mostly produced music films that, in one way or another, featured hit songs, a lot of potential revenue in sheet music and record sales would otherwise have gone to independent publishers, which Ufa sought to prevent. In a supplementary contractual document from 1931, Ufa specifies what their explicit motives for acquiring shares at a publishing house originally were:

> Firstly, through their relations to musical creators within the film company, the music publisher is supposed to procure composers, lyricists as well as the film rights to musical creations of all kinds. Secondly, the music publisher is supposed to advertise the movie through the dissemination of music. Thirdly, the music publisher is supposed to increase the revenue of the film company by exploiting and disseminating the music outside of the explicit film, particularly by selling sheet music, the fabrication of shellac records etc.[271]

According to this mission statement, Ufa did not only recognise that the dissemination of sheet music could help with promoting their sound movie operettas and other music films but also that owning the rights to musical works could be converted into additional revenue. The first part of the statement potentially hints at why Ufa had paired up with two experienced entertainment music publishers to begin with: through the expertise and knowhow of Alberti and Wiener Bohème, Ufa was hoping both to secure the rights to promising new stage works that could be adapted into movies and harness old and new musical talent in the process. As it turned out, Ufa was not as reliant on its partners' expertise as it originally anticipated. Much of the talent they employed in later film productions was recruited from their very own in-house orchestras which, during the silent movie era, had been staples at their premiere cinemas and occasional interim stage shows.[272]

---

[271] BArch R-109-I/1028b, *Anhang zu Bericht über Verkaufsverhandlungen der Wiener Bohème Verlag GmbH*, 198.

[272] Werner R. Heymann, for instance, had worked as a musical director at Ufa's Zoo-Palast cinema (Werner R. Heymann, *'Liebling, mein Herz lässt dich grüßen': Der erfolgreichste Filmkomponist der großen Ufa-Zeit erinnert sich*, ed. Hubert Ortkemper (Berlin: Henschel Verlag, 2001), 135).

What the music publishers did help with, though, were sales and distribution. Otto Hein's tradition-steeped publishing house Wiener Bohème, hitherto the most successful supplier of entertainment sheet music in Germany, was a co-shareholder of the newly founded Ufaton and had an intricate distribution machinery at its command. During the annual shareholder's meeting on 8th December 1931, Ufa decided to acquire Wiener Bohème and its shares of Ufaton to open a wider range of business opportunities for Ufa and kept Otto Hein as the director of business operations.[273] Within the scope of the contractual negotiations between Ufa and Wiener Bohème, Ufa explicitly identified new business opportunities on the sheet music market that would result from the acquisition of Wiener Bohème.[274]

Over the course of the negotiations, the contractual documents identify four key distribution channels that Ufaton particularly focused on when restructuring its business operations:

1) **the selling of sheet music**

a) of piano versions with voice,

b) and for salon orchestra arrangements for big or small orchestras, brass bands, and specialized instruments such as the zither, harmonica, and others;

2) **the exploitation and protection of copyrights**

a) of performance rights for the performance of company-owned pieces in entertainment venues of all kinds, at concerts, at dance events and through broadcasting shows,

b) and of mechanical reproduction;

[273] BArch R-109-I/1028b, *Ufa-Vorstandsprotokolle*, vol. 6, Niederschrift 780, 8.12.1931.
[274] BArch, R-109-I/1028b, *Anhang zu Bericht über Verkaufsverhandlungen der Wiener Bohème Verlag GmbH*, 195-197.

3) **the right to utilize single numbers** in collected editions and potpourris;[275]

4) **the allocation of foreign publishing rights**.[276]

To maximise the revenue of its music publisher, Ufa controlled Ufaton's strategy with an iron fist. At first, Ufa's strategic considerations seemed to pay off. The prime subject of their assiduous endeavours was the sound movie hit song. "Due to the marketing in cinemas alone", the sheet music shop Bote & Bock's revenue, for instance, was dominated by the sound movie hit song.[277] In his 1932 article "Wer spielt Musik?" ("Who plays music?"), Strobel further characterised the musical preferences of the typical clientele of sheet music shops as gravitating towards entertainment music and, more specifically, sound movie hit songs. In the very same article, Strobel even likens the increased interest in entertainment sheet music to the replacement of Hausmusik-editions:[278]

> What do these facts teach us? To start with, they confirm the slow but steady decay of good middle-class Hausmusik. In the average shop, hardly anyone asks for it anymore. These places have adjusted to the increasing demand for sound movie hit songs and records.[279]

This shift in consumer interests was also noticeable in sales numbers on the sheet music market. High circulation numbers, as they were regularly achieved with music from sound movie operettas such as *Liebeswalzer* (1930, ca. 30000 items sold) and *Die Drei von der Tankstelle* (1930, ca. 75000 items sold), were an exceptional

---

[275] The most prominent collected editions were published by the publisher Albrobi who released compiled editions of hit songs two to four times a year (BArch, R-109-I/1028b, *Anhang zu Bericht über Verkaufsverhandlungen der Wiener Bohème Verlag GmbH*, 196).

[276] BArch, R-109-I/1028b, *Anhang zu Bericht über Verkaufsverhandlungen der Wiener Bohème Verlag GmbH*, 195-197.

.

[277] Bote & Bock were one of the most renowned sheet music shops in 1920s Berlin (Heinrich Strobel, "Wer spielt Musik?," *Melos. Zeitschrift für Musik*, no. 1 (1931)).

[278] Hausmusik (house music) was music that could be played by amateurs within domestic settings (folk songs or piano renditions in simplified arrangements for regional instruments or the piano and violin). Hausmusik underwent a general period of decline when more and more amateur players became radio or gramophone listeners.

[279] Heinrich Strobel, "Wer spielt Musik?," *Melos. Zeitschrift für Musik*, no. 1 (1931).

phenomenon, especially considering the general economic conditions and the declining interest of customers in sheet music editions at this time.[280] In its annual business report from 1932/1933, the sheet music publisher Ufaton lists the sales figures of both their sheet music editions for piano-and-voice and salon orchestra, and of sound movie hit song records themselves:[281]

Release date	**Movie**	**Composer**	**Circulation numbers until 30.9.1933 (piano)**	**Salon orchestra**	**Records sold until 31.12.1932**
February 1930	*Liebeswalzer*	Heymann	32000	23500	614400
April 1930	*Der blaue Engel*	Holländer	14500	16500	460900
September 1930	*Die Drei von der Tankstelle*	Heymann	69000	59000	889000
December 1930	*Einbrecher*	Holländer	9000	30000	316200
March 1931	*Ihre Hoheit befiehlt*	Heymann	10000	11500	291400

[280] BArch, R-109-I/1028b, *Anhang zu Bericht über Verkaufsverhandlungen der Wiener Bohème Verlag GmbH*.
[281] BArch, R-109-I/2657, *Ufaton-Verlagsgesellschaft m.b.H., Berlin. Bericht über das Geschäftsjahr 1932/33*, 5. The report for 1933/34 would have been more informative regarding the sales figures of *Ein blonder Traum*. However, with the remodelling of Ufaton under the National Socialist regime, most composers of the previous years were no longer allowed to be listed. (BArch, R-109-I/2658, *Wiener Bohème Verlag G.m.b.H, Berlin. Bericht über das Geschäftsjahr 1933/34*, 4)

August 1931	*Bomben auf Monte Carlo*	Heymann	23725	44500	758600
September 1931	*Der Kongress tanzt*	Heymann	81225	51000	969600
December 1931	*Ronny*	Kalman	7000	19500	129100
February 1932	*2 Herzen und ein Schlag*	Gilbert	5000	13000	121700
March 1932	*Der Sieger*	Heymann	7000	20000	96500
August 1932	*Das schöne Abenteuer*	Erwin	3000	11000	26400
August 1932	*Quick*	Heymann	4000	7000	51600
September 1932	***Ein Blonder Traum***	**Heymann**	**12000**	**38000**	**79900**
February 1933	*Ich und die Kaiserin*	Heymann	5000	10000	-

The piano-and-voice edition of the four sound movie hit songs from *Ein blonder Traum* sold 12000 copies and the one for salon orchestras 38000 copies.[282] As one can see from the table, sales peaked in 1931, with *Bomben auf Monte Carlo* and *Der Kongress tanzt* being particularly successful. In comparison to the sales

[282] BArch, R-109-I/2657, *Ufaton-Verlagsgesellschaft m.b.H. Berlin. Bericht über das Geschäftsjahr 1932/33*, 5.

numbers for those and other movies, the numbers for *Ein blonder Traum* might pale. However, in 1932, after years of economic strain on private households, consumer goods faced a general sales crisis: with regard to the sheet music market this meant that in the early 1930s sales numbers for sheet music were considered satisfactory when 5000 to 6000 items were sold at an average price of 2 RM.[283] Other music publishers had faced declining sales figures as early as 1930. An employee of Alrobi commented on the situation in a supplement of the *Film-Kurier*: "when it comes to the sale of piano arrangements, only the really popular ones sell well; the moderately popular ones are only in demand with orchestras in the Reich."[284] The exceptional sales figures for sheet music for sound movie hit songs could partly be traced back to various marketing strategies that were implemented by Ufaton early on and which made the most of the sound movie hit song's cross-media marketing potential. For instance, sheet music for featured songs and gramophone records were directly available in cinemas or via wholesalers;[285] complimentary copies were distributed among musicians and bandleaders, both because Ufaton wanted to secure royalties for public and radio performances, which were much more profitable for publishers than the actual sheet music sale, and to enhance the general exposure and circulation of hit songs through records and the like. The in-house sheet music subscription service *Ufa-Notendienst* dealt with the distribution of sheet music among subscription customers, mostly wholesalers or band and orchestra leaders.[286]

[283] BArch, R-109-I/1028b, *Anhang zu Bericht über Verkaufsverhandlungen der Wiener Bohème Verlag GmbH*, 203. 2 RM for a sheet music edition was a rather steep price compared to what you could, for instance, get out of the monthly broadcasting fee of 2 RM.
[284] Anonymous, "Der Tonfilm macht den Schlager," *Film Kurier*, 3.4.1930.
[285] BArch, R-109-I/2661, *Wiener Bohème Verlag GmbH, Ufaton-Verlagsgesellschaft m.b.H, Bericht über das Geschäftsjahr 1936/37*, 10.
[286] Ibid., 3.

By tying them to loyalty schemes and selling salon orchestra editions at particularly advantageous prices to this customer base—or distributing them free of charge—Ufaton soon recognised that their repertory was more likely to be played by ensembles all over the country. What is more, songs that were being played by orchestras were recorded more often by various different labels. However, even the best marketing strategies could not avert the sales crisis that Ufaton faced from 1934 onwards. The financial report for the 1934/35 season does not quite convey the same success story as the one from the year before: there was a noticeable decrease in sales numbers, with the report noting that "especially the sales of piano editions of single numbers actually got worse over the course of the last fiscal year".[287] Ufa, the mother company of Ufaton, was quick to blame the direct "competition of the radio" for the sharp decline in revenue.[288] In fact, the report omitted that, due to the political changes, Ufa had forcefully terminated their contracts with the film company's most successful composers and lyricists in 1933, and that those same composers had also been the top sellers at Ufaton.

Ufaton's music editions for piano-and-voice were mostly eight-pagers that contained simplified versions of those four songs that were included in the given movie. They made use of Ufaton's standardised page layout, onto which composers only needed to add the music and lyrics. The prints were lithographically produced and therefore very cost-effective. A colourful graphic or photograph, which was customised for every edition, usually adorned the cover page. In the case of *Ein Blonder Traum*, the edition was marketed with pictures of the three main characters, with Lilian Harvey being depicted front and centre, apparently being of two minds about the two Willys and her career (see Figure 3). The identities of the skilful

[287] BArch, R-109-I/557, *Ufaton-Verlagsgesellschaft m.b.H. Berlin, Bericht über das Geschäftsjahr 1934/35*, 3.
[288] Ibid.

illustrators and graphic designers who created the well-crafted cover pages are generally not known to us; these unique numbers were mass-produced commodities after all. The authors of the songs and the sales organisation, in most cases the music publishing house itself, are printed below the title of the film. It is not apparent from this edition, but at times there were small gramophone and orchestra ads placed just on the marginal gaps of the inside covers, reaching beyond the fold edge. The back page, on the other hand, was promotionally effective as it was usually adorned with musical excerpts of other in-house sound movie hit songs. The mere appearance of the sheet music editions thus often already functioned as a microcosmic manifestation of cross-reference between different media and products. The piano-and-voice edition was, as was often the case with Heymann songs, arranged by Heymann's long-term musical assistant, Gérard Jacobson, who was also responsible for the musical direction of the Ufa orchestra for several record and film performances.

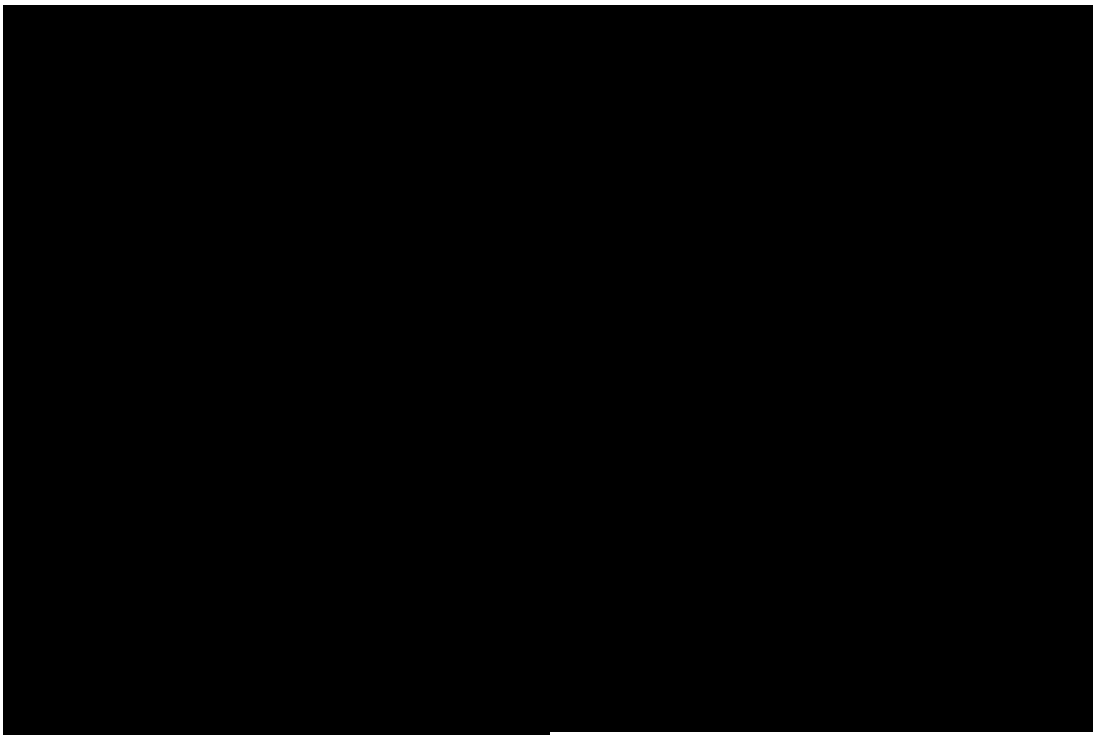


Figure 3: Cover page and first page of piano score. Heymann, Werner R., *Ein blonder Traum*. Klavierausgabe (Berlin: Ufaton-Verlag, 1932).

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Unfortunately, an original print of the salon orchestra edition for “Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt’s ein kleines bisschen Glück” could not be traced, either in private collections or archives. [redacted]

The text originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[redacted] The arrangement by Austrian composer Nico Dostal included voice parts for the piano (direction), a banjo, three saxophones (two alto saxophones and a tenor saxophone), two trumpets, a trombone, an oboe, a flute, and percussion. As I will later expand upon in Chapter Three, these editions were not necessarily used verbatim, as it were, by dance orchestras but often were enhanced with strings and generally altered to fit the unique style of the ensemble. To accommodate the folk music market, Ufaton further released zither and accordion arrangements of their sound movie repertory.

Sound movie hit songs were not just released in single editions but also found entry in several collected editions and potpourris. The music publisher Alrobi incorporated several of Ufa’s sound movie hit songs in its successful collected edition *1000 Takte Tanz* (*1000 Bars of Dance*). The collected edition appeared two times a year and included approximately twenty-two of the most popular hit songs of the season. Volume 8 of *1000 Takte Tanz* (See Figures 4-5) featured piano-and-voice arrangements of both “Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt’s ein kleines bisschen Glück” and “Wir zahlen keine Miete mehr”.[289] The collected edition was also available for solo violin. Such five o’clock tea editions were very popular with customers who were interested in simplified editions that they could themselves play at home or simply use to follow the lyrics. Competing editions were, for instance, *Zu Tee und Tanz*, which was published by the Drei-Masken-Verlag and the Wiener Bohème. In 1932, Ufaton released its first potpourri *Ufaton-Bomben* (see Figure 6)

[289] *1000 Takte Tanz. 22 der populärsten Tanz- und Gesangsschlager*, vol. 8 (Berlin: Musik-Verlag Alrobi, 1932).

in a special edition that featured twelve of its most successful sound movie hit songs in a medley specifically arranged by composer Walter Borchert.[290] *Ein blonder Traum* was not yet included since it was part of Ufa's 1932/33 season output. According to an article in the *Film-Kurier* from 20th January 1932, the medley was successfully performed at a benefit concert in support of Berlin's winter relief campaign at the Berlin philharmonic. This setup of the benefit concert is itself emblematic of the interwovenness of the sound movie hit song's major distribution channels. The benefit was sponsored by the record label Electrola, and featured Ufaton arrangements and appearances from the renowned dance orchestra Marek Weber and the vocal ensemble Comedian Harmonists.[291] Among the more miscellaneous print items that featured the sound movie hit songs in print were, for instance, postcards that included the lyrics of a sound movie hit song, an incipit of the melody, and a photograph. These were published by the postcard publisher Ross-Verlag, the most renowned retailer for picture postcards that featured film scenes, portraits of film stars and singers.[292]

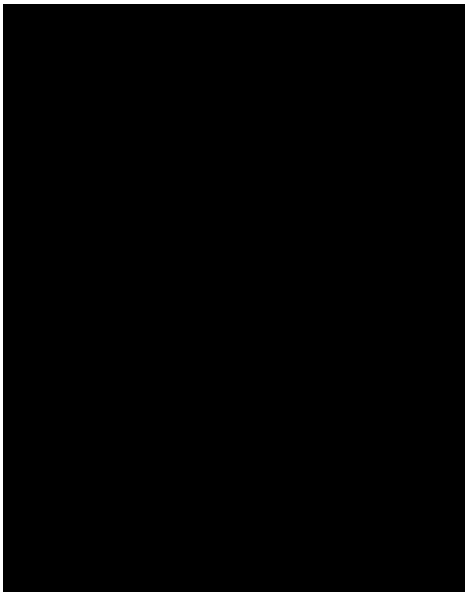


Figure 4: Cover page. *1000 Takte Tanz. 22 der populärsten Tanz- und Gesangsschlager*, vol. 8, Berlin: Musik-Verlag Alrobi, 1932.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[290] *Ufaton-Bomben: Zwei Jahre Ufaton-Film* (Berlin: Ufaton-Verlag, 1932).
[291] Anonymous, "Ufaton-Bomben," *Film-Kurier*, 20.1.1932.
[292] Edith Hamann, "Der Vater der Künstlerpostkarte," *Die Filmwoche*, no. 33 (1930). The Ross-postcards were produced by the Rotophot A.G. Berlin

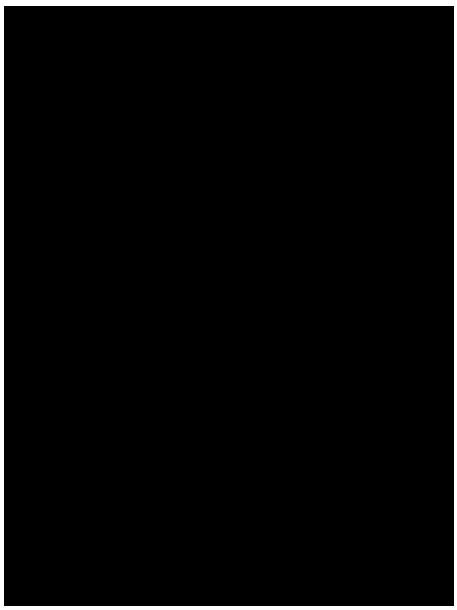


Figure 5: Cover page, Edition for violin. *1000 Takte Tanz. 22 der populärsten Tanz- und Gesangsschlager*, Ausgabe für Violine, Berlin: Musik-Verlag Alrobi, 1932.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

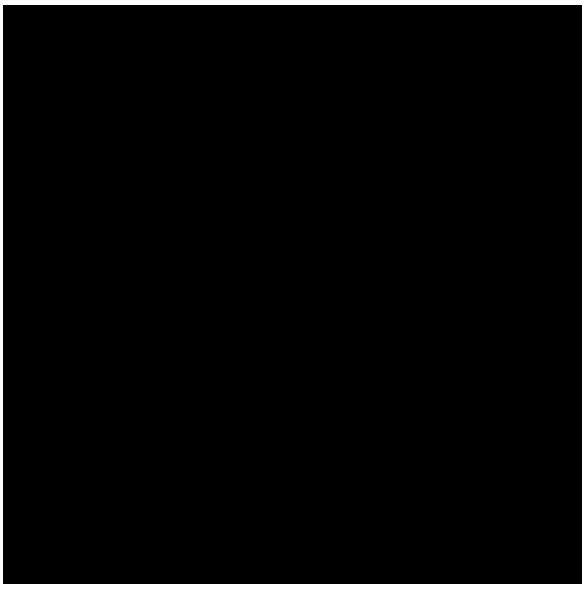


Figure 6: Cover page. *Ufaton-Bomben: Zwei Jahre Ufaton-Film* (Berlin: Ufaton-Verlag, 1932).

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

The examples above illustrate how Ufa succeeded in increasing the effectiveness of the distribution of their sheet music through a quick and cost-effective circulation strategy that catered both to musical professionals and amateur enthusiasts. Both Ufaton's and the affiliated music publisher's editions acquired their position in a complex media configuration by building on the expertise of old players in the entertainment music market, but also by simultaneously enhancing their own possibilities of utilising sound movie hit songs. They thereby provided the basis for the efficient commercialisation of hit songs through other media channels.

Strike Up The Band! Dance Orchestra Culture in Berlin's Weimar Years

On reviewing the past twelve months on New Year's Day 1931, the film journal *Film-Kurier* stated that the "best proof for the pervasiveness of the sound movie" was the fact that its hit songs equally dominated in "coffee houses and the ballroom".[293] Something that was intimately linked with Ufa's commercialisation endeavours was hence the dance orchestra culture, which will be scrutinised in further detail in Chapter Two of this thesis.[294] However, a few brief observations on their entanglement in this economic context will help broaden our view of how several relocations of the sound movie hit song found their way into the entertainment music scene.

By 1931, Ufaton derived most of its revenue from the exploitation of performance rights.[295] Regardless of the rapid growth of the record industry and the ever-growing number of radio listeners, "the salon orchestra's compositions which [were] played in the dance bars remain[ed] a significant constant within the circulation sphere of Schlager music."[296] Dance culture dominated both the nightly entertainment industry as well as the afternoon tea hours in the Weimar Republic. Weimar Berlin's dance craze was deeply rooted in its devotees' voyeuristic curiosity – "seeing and being seen" was the motto of an audience hungering for musical stimuli, and the sound movie hit song was often a staple of dance orchestra's repertory. The audience's desire for distraction, conviviality, light, music, and admiration was soon reflected by the flourishing of institutionalised dance socials,

---

[293] Anonymous, "Der Tonfilm macht die Musik," *Film-Kurier*, 1.1.1930.
[294] Chapter Two will explicate in more detail how a specific type of dance orchestra, namely the combination orchestra, established itself during the late 1920s and was appropriated by early sound movie culture.
[295] Friedrich P. Kahlenberg, "Der wirtschaftliche Faktor 'Musik' im Theaterbetrieb der Ufa in den Jahren 1927-1930," in *Stummfilmmusik gestern und heute*, ed. Walther Seidler (Berlin: Verlag Volker Spiess, 1979), 53.
[296] Christian Schär, *Der Schlager und seine Tänze im Deutschland der 20er Jahre: sozialgeschichtliche Aspekte zum Wandel in der Musik- und Tanzkultur in der Weimarer Republik* (Zurich: Chronos, 1991), 48.

with the infamous Five-o-clock-Tea being its most prominent example. As explicated in Curt Moreck's *Führer durch das lasterhafte Berlin* (*Guide through a Profligate Berlin*), enjoying a cup of tea without engaging in the hullabaloo of dancing was soon considered an almost impossible thing to achieve; "solely at the Hotel Bristol", one of Berlin's strongholds of Prussian demureness, could tea without dancing be had.[297] Fashionable venues such as the Eden Hotel or the Hotel Adlon catered for the needs of a more exclusive audience: those venues mainly hosted orchestras of international standing, such as Marek Weber's dance orchestra.[298] These were the kind of orchestras that featured on the radio and made names for themselves by recording shellac records with prestigious labels. Of course, every other tavern, café, and hotel had its own salon, dance, jazz orchestra, or simply a selection of musicians: some audience members swore by their favourites and followed them wherever they found a new engagement. The number of musicians who were active in Berlin dance bars has been estimated at approximately 21000, including amateur musicians who made music on the side.[299] This impressive figure was clouded by an increased number of unemployed cinema musicians and dire working conditions for musicians more generally.[300] Indeed, as has often been noted, live cinema musicians quickly became obsolete since the sound movie superseded musical practices of the silent movie era, a matter which will receive extended attention in Chapter Two of this thesis.

In tandem with the sound movie hit song, the dance orchestra soon entered the sound movie itself.[301] In 1930, the Ludwig Rüth orchestra (which often appeared under its anglicised name Lewis-Ruth-band), for instance, was one of the most

[297] Curt Moreck, *Führer durch das lasterhafte Berlin*, 54.
[298] Ibid., 57.
[299] Jost Hermand, *Die Kultur der Weimarer Republik* (Munich: Nymphenburger Verlagshandlung, 1978), 421 ff.
[300] The unemployment crisis of cinema musicians will be further illuminated in Chapter Two.
[301] Anonymous, "Das Jazz-Orchester im Tonfilm," *Film-Kurier*, 18.9.1930.

prominent ensembles that featured in early German sound movies.[302] What is more, they and other reputable ensembles also recorded many of the sound movie hit song records that were released. “The jazzy symphonician” Ludwig Rüth signed a record deal with the label Electrola as early as 1929.[303] Electrola soon instrumentalised the ensemble as its commercially effective house and court orchestra.[304] New technical possibilities and arrangements allowed this orchestra, then called the Lewis-Ruth-Band, to produce recordings of remarkable sound quality.

While working for the sound movie industry, the orchestra was also confronted with a variety of new challenges. Instrumentation and line-up questions needed to be adapted to the musical-technological idiosyncrasies of the new medium.[305] Only a few renowned ensembles managed to successfully transition from a pure live orchestra to a studio orchestra. The Lewis-Ruth-Band and others succeeded in further promoting record sales by playing in popular Berlin dance bars. What is more, the sound movie operetta first initiated the practice of something akin to musical cameo appearances. Not only did the very busy and celebrated radio singer Leon Monosson feature in movies such as *Die Drei von der Tankstelle*, so did vocal ensembles such as Comedian Harmonists (see Figure 7). These appearances were often singled out for praise in movie reviews and frequently accompanied by references to commercially available records.[306] Monosson, as will be further analysed in Chapter Two of this thesis, perhaps functioned as the singing emblem of the multimedia interconnectedness of the sound movie hit song industry.

---

[302]Anonymous, “Lewis Ruth-Band mit Meisel-Musik im Kino. Die Lehren des blauen Expreß,” *Film-Kurier*, 29.10.1930.
[303] Herbert Connor, “Lewis Ruth. Der jazzende Symphoniker,” *Skizzen. Illustrierte Monatsschrift für Kunst, Musik, Tanz, Sport, Mode und Haus*, no. 10 (1931).
[304] They acted as the sound movie orchestra in Electrola’s catalogues and Skizzen.
[305] Werner R. Heymann, “Die musiktechnische Frage des Tonfilms. Wie stellen sie ihre Instrumente auf?,” *Film-Kurier*, 3.9.1930.
[306] Anonymous, “Dreiklang des Erfolges,” *Kinematograph*, 16.9.1930.

Monosson adopted many different pseudonyms and could therefore be employed through a variety of record labels and even featured in programmes on the radio. His pleasantly soft and melodious voice featured in eighteen movies, in numerous radio concerts, and on hundreds of recordings.[307]

However, it was not only the musical artists who regularly alluded to the dance music culture of Weimar Berlin's Golden Years. The symbolic value of depicting dance bars, such as the Kit-Kat-Bar in *Die Drei von der Tankstelle*, cannot be underestimated. The film industry picked up on not just the dance craze itself but also on a particular lifestyle that was associated with such establishments. By hearing their favourite hit songs in both the cinema and in dance bars, the audience could begin to associate one with the other. In this way, Schlager functioned as a space-defying common thread in the new social fabric of sound.



Figure 7: Still. Leon Monosson and the Comedian Harmonists singing "Liebling, mein Herz lässt dich grüßen". *Die Drei von der Tankstelle*. DVD.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Ein blonder Traum is an exception in that it does not feature performances of popular musical acts but only those of its main characters. However, even this Depression-era romantic comedy cannot fully make do without allusions to the dance music scene: when wooing Jou-Jou, Willy I exclaims that he will borrow Willy

[307] Anonymous, "Leo Monosson singt in zehn Sprachen," *Film-Kurier*, 15.8.1931.

Il's new patent-leather shoes to take Jou-Jou out dancing, and Jou-Jou's dream sequence features her tap-dancing in glamorous night club attire. What is more, for the orchestral accompaniment of *Ein blonder Traum*, Ufa makes use of the Ufaton orchestra, Ufa's own in-house dance orchestra.[308] The Ufaton orchestra would also feature on Lilian Harvey's own record rendition of "Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt's ein kleines bisschen Glück".

Commercialising Sound Movie Hit Songs In Print

In 1929, an impressive number of 2633 newspapers, magazines, and journals were in circulation in Germany. The number of daily published newspapers peaked at a staggering 147.[309] The vibrant print culture that was emblematic of the Weimar Republic's diversified cultural infrastructure "gave birth to a multitude of reviews, polemics and elaborations on movie culture in the 1920s."[310] The press was the virtual storefront of Berlin's entertainment music market. Buttoned into the flannel-soft, snugly mantle of anonymity, audiences sought the solace of print media, especially with print magazines tailored to fashion, gossip, and the like, featuring not only advertisement for movies but also star profiles, behind-the-scenes coverage, and interviews. Ufa understood how to take advantage of the dedicated film publications as well as glossy magazines: in Ufa's company files, one can find "cooperation agreements across the whole area of literary and musical property acquisition".[311] Indeed, Ufa's overt connections to the trade press, journalists, and the feuilleton were often frowned upon.[312]

---

[308] The Ufaton-orchestra is listed in the opening credits to the movie.
[309] Christian Schär, *Der Schlager und seine Tänze*, 176.
[310] Sabine Hake, "Filmpublizistik der Weimarer Jahre," in *Recherche: Film. Quellen und Methoden der Filmforschung*, eds. Hans-Michael Bock and Wolfgang Jacobsen (Munich: edition text + kritik, 1997), 25.
[311] Elsaesser, *Weimar Cinema and After*, 124.
[312] BArch, R-109-I/1027b, *Ufa-Vorstandsprotokolle*, vol. 4, Niederschrift 667/14, 3.9.1930.

The well-established and highly functional press infrastructure of Berlin offered the best conditions for an extensive and socially encompassing propaganda campaign. The *Illustrierte Film-Kurier* (*Illustrated Film Courier*), for instance, systematically devoted each one of their Berlin and Viennese issues to a recent movie release and marketed the announced movie on six to eight pages, including photographs, score excerpts, movie quotes, and synopses (see Figure 8).[313] When looking through these issues, it is apparent from their visual makeup alone just how strongly the sound movie hit song and the print medium were interwoven. The audience learned about the plot by reading through proliferous quotations taken from sound movie hit songs. In addition to still images of relevant scenes from the movie, the illustrated advertisements incorporated excerpts from the movie's four main sound movie hit songs. Atmospheric pictures were visually skilfully paired, then, with musical material.



Figure 8: Cover page and first two pages. *Berliner Film-Kurier*, "Ein blonder Traum", no. 1834 (1932).

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[313] Anonymous, "Ein blonder Traum," *Berliner Film-Kurier*, no. 1834 (1932). The illustrated film courier was an offshoot of the film journal *Film-Kurier.* It was sold in cinemas and, at times, reached circulation numbers in the millions. The publication was one of the first mass publications that was printed using intaglio printing which made detailed and more life-like imprints of photographs possible.

Other important magazine publications included the illustrated Ufa magazine[314] and the Scherl publication *Filmwelt* (*Film World*), which were among the film magazines that "played an important part in advertisement campaigns specifically tailored for new film productions and contributed decisively to the cult emerging around some movie actors."[315] With the advent of the magazine—a relatively new press format at the time—an extensive expansion of lifestyle journalism was made possible. The movies that were popularised by these magazines fit in with the aspirations of young Berliners who wanted to buy into the trends and lifestyle that were promoted by nationally acclaimed movie stars. Part of buying into the star cult propagated by magazines was also the acquisition of products surrounding their favourite sound movie hit songs, which were, after all, mostly performed by the audience's darlings.

Zooming in on the coverage of *Ein blonder Traum* in *Filmwelt*, the movie was first mentioned as early as 17th July 1932, long before its premiere (see Figure 9). The feature "Film auf dem Dach" ("Movie on the Roof") reported on outdoor shots that took place on the roofs of the old royal stables: the report not only mentions the presence of composer Werner Richard Heymann and the Ufa orchestra on scene but also cites the chorus of the hit song "Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt's ein kleines bisschen Glück".[316] On 4th September 1932, the *Filmwelt* released a teaser of the premiere date with a full-page candid shot of Lilian Harvey and Willy Fritsch.[317] A *Filmwelt* issue from 18th September 1932 published an excerpt from the movie's screenbook: the excerpt features references to what the magazine refers to as the "Sehnsuchtslied" ("Song of Longing"), which is, in fact, the sound movie hit song

[314] The magazine was published from 1926 onwards, see, for instance, Universum-Film AG, *Ufa-Magazin: illustrierte Filmrundschau* (Berlin: Bukwa, 1926).
[315] Sabine Hake, *Filmpublizistik der Weimarer Jahre*, 29.
[316] Anonymous, "Film auf dem Dach," *Filmwelt. Das Film-Magazin*, 17.7.1932.
[317] Anonymous, "Lilian Harvey und Willy Fritsch im Ufa-Tonfilm 'Ein blonder Traum'," *Filmwelt. Das Film-Magazin*, 4.9.1932.

"Irgendwo…" once again.[318] The coverage of *Ein blonder Traum* comes to an end with the print of the piano-and voice-arrangement of the chorus of the song (see Figure 10).[319] This was the Jacobson-arrangement that Ufaton had published in its very own edition.

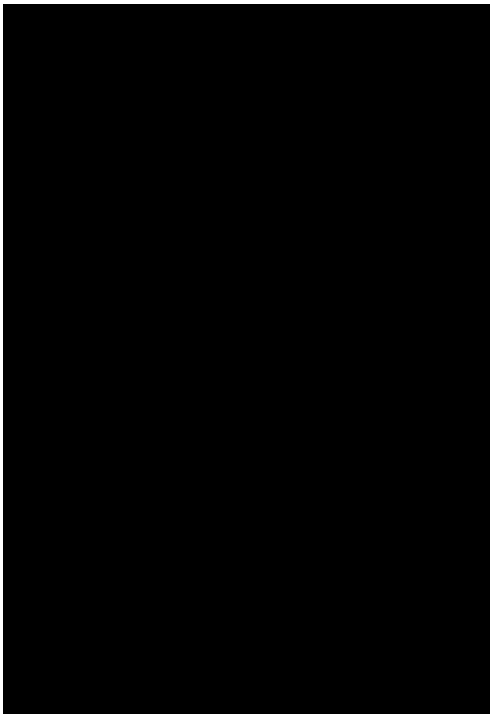


Figure 9: Cast of *Ein blonder Traum* on the rooftops of Berlin. Anonymous, "Film auf dem Dach," *Filmwelt. Das Film-Magazin*. 17.7.1932.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

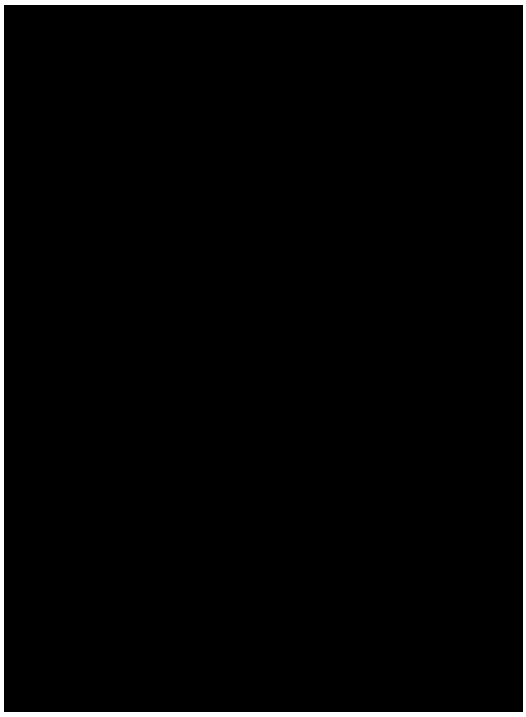


Figure 10: Simplified sheet music excerpt of "Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt's ein kleines bisschen Glück". "Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt's ein kleines bisschen Glück", *Filmwelt. Das Film-Magazin*, 30.10.1932.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

A crucial part in the advertisement and reviewing of sound movie operettas was played by daily published film journals. What is more, German film journals addressed pivotal questions of how the sound movie should or could relate to music at all. Prominent composers, such as Werner Richard Heymann and Friedrich Holländer, as well as musicologists such as Heinrich Strobel, contributed to the debate surrounding the aesthetic outlook of the sound movie operetta. Among the

[318] Anonymous, "Wettfahrt um Lilian," *Filmwelt. Das Film-Magazin*, 18.9.1932.
[319] Anonymous, "Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt's ein kleines bisschen Glück," *Filmwelt. Das Film-Magazin*, 30.10.1932.

most important ones were the *Film-Kurier*, the *Kinematograph*, the *Lichtbild-Bühne*, and the *Reichsfilmblatt*. Most film-related publications started to include supplements that were dedicated to music for sound movies soon after the sound movie emerged.[320] The *Film-Kurier*, for instance, featured a supplement called "Die Film-Musik", which not only reflected on the new aesthetic demands on the music film but also shed light on developments on the national and international music market. The *Film-Kurier*, whose editor Alfred Weiner insisted on maintaining distance from the film and record industry and, above all, the capitalistic conglomerate Ufa, published reviews by, among others, renowned film critic Ernst Jäger. Because of his Jewish ancestry, Weiner had to leave Germany in 1933: from then on, the *Film-Kurier* was no longer regarded as an independent film journal.

The biggest competitor of the *Film-Kurier* was the *Kinematograph*. Formerly a respected film journal, the publication's integrity was increasingly questioned, and it progressively morphed into the "house postil of the Ufa and argued moderately German nationally."[321] In 1923, the *Kinematograph* was bought by Scherl, a publishing house which was a subsidiary of the Hugenberg corporation. Due to the unambiguous relationship of the Hugenberg group to Ufa—Ufa had been acquired by the Hugenberg group in 1927—published articles and reviews were no longer regarded objective evaluations of Ufa productions among journalistic circles. The *Lichtbild-Bühne*, the first German publication that featured film reviews, published its very own weekly supplement "Film und Ton" ("Film and Sound"), which focused on the complex relations of the sound movie to the radio and record industry and on film music and orchestras more generally. The weekly film journal *Lichtbild-Bühne* also published a variety of other supplements that were directed at, for instance,

[320] Similar discussions concerning cinema music and film illustration for silent movies were featured in earlier volumes of these publications.
[321] Gero Gandert, *Der Film der Weimarer Republik: ein Handbuch der zeitgenössischen Kritik* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003), xii.

projectionists, such as “Der Vorführer” (“The Projectionist”). Not least, the more explicit film trade magazine *Reichsfilmblatt* incoprated a supplement called “Kinomusik/Schallplatte” (“Cinema Music/Record”). The supplement featured record reviews and explicated news on the corporate film and music market.

Some of the daily newspapers also featured regular film reviews, with Herbert Ihering at the *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, being one of the most notorious film critics of early sound movies. Rudolf Arnheim, the arts and culture editor at the *Weltbühne*, would not only become a sharp critic of early sound movie productions but also come to define what the work of a film critic was altogether. While lifestyle magazines also contributed to the ubiquity of the sound movie hit song, film journals and the film trade press were often the battlefield for cultural-pessimistic debates on the value of the sound movie operetta and its offshoots. Under the pressure of the prevalent conservative-bourgeois notions of art and culture, the film press either limited itself to the depiction of the sound movie operetta as a musical banality, chiming into discussions of the massification of taste and the mechanisation of music, or, in the case of Ufa-affiliated journals, served the unadulterated promotion of the sound movie hit song.

Conclusion

Using the example of the film company Ufa and its pet project genre the sound movie operetta, this burgeoning entertainment music genre can be identified both as part of one of the first capitalist endeavours to calculatedly take advantage of an audience’s permanent subjection to the media sphere and as one of the first musical genres to fully interact with the modalities and idiosyncrasies of the public sphere. However, we have also seen that the homogenising powers that were often associated with such comprehensive media phenomena were, in fact, counteracted

by processes of consumer stratification that reflected a more diverse public sphere, one shaped by constrictions as much as by the penetrating powers of the sound movie hit song. But have we really not encountered phenomena like this before?

In its immediate and direct influence on patterns of reception *and* musical practice, the sound movie hit song can be regarded as a pioneering musical genre whose success was facilitated by its identity-shaping features. It was undoubtedly in Berlin where mass media culture flourished most in Weimar Germany – its unique formula of cultural hybridity, technological progressiveness, and an emerging media-based infrastructure provided a means of *approximating* universal appeal and ubiquity, even though there is much that we do not know about Weimar Era audiences, their preferences, and their reception patterns.

The sound movie hit song principle, according to which specific manifestations of the sound movie hit song became an integral part of different media and social spheres, can teach us a great deal about the increasingly interwoven relationship between music and media's production, dissemination, and reception history. Hit songs and sound movie operettas, allegedly escapist musical genres that were out of touch with reality, were, as I have shown, at the same time deeply interwoven with several audience-near media channels and thus the everyday lives of their audiences. By suffusing every aspect of culture with relocations of the sound movie hit song, a new social fabric of sound was created that worked with the constant visualisation and sonification of sound movie hit songs in everyday settings. Their assumed inauthenticity acquired authenticity because they were not only parts of the public sphere and therefore of daily reality, but also because they succeeded in becoming, to varying degrees, markers of subjectivity and identity. Consumers who engaged with relocations of the sound movie hit song were not only mirrored by urban media, but increasingly identified with the

production sites of such mirror images themselves: cinemas, magazines, radio, dance venues, and the musically infused domestic realm.

The sound movie hit song principle is also one of the prime examples of mutual music-media adjustment. This was a movement of adjustment that not only affected its musical manifestation, but also its audiences, its creators, and, not least, its inherent consumerist nature. Sound movie operettas enhanced their purely acoustic roots by adding visual, sensual, and sociocultural components to their modes of reception.

However, as we have also seen in this chapter, hit songs' penetration of the public sphere could seemingly not be passed over without cultural pessimists pricking up their ears. In this sense, Brian Currid points out that "Schlager in the late 1920s can be understood as a … main connecting link in the switchboard of what Horkheimer and Adorno termed 'the culture industry'".[322] In the wake of the emergence of sound movie culture, the notion of the corrosive, degenerative powers of sound movie hit songs and operettas became a familiar one in media coverage. Opposition came not only from moralists and intellectuals who particularly targeted the sound movie operetta, but also from critics, theatre purists, and aesthetic theorists. These backlash polemics were well-situated within a long-standing institutional debate over the massification and commercialisation of culture. Overall, there can be little doubt that entertainment music's stereotypical association with the lower orders was as much, if not more, of a reflection of contemporary, bourgeois cultural pessimism than of actual consumption patterns.[323] The sound film and entertainment music aversion among educated and affluent circles was based on the myth that the high/low art divide stemmed from the consuming public's opinion, when it was in fact a narrative that was facilitated by a small circle of critics, musical

[322] Currid, *A National Acoustics*, 66.
[323] Ross, *Media and the Making of Modern Germany*, 141.

directors, and artists. Following a genealogy of media pessimism, this small circle has profoundly shaped our conceptions of Weimar film and entertainment culture – often to the effect that we mistake media-created reality for actual reality. By combining different perspectives and voices, this chapter tried to give a more nuanced insight into the media market that emerged around the sound movie operetta and its hit songs.

Chapter II: Singing and Playing On and Off Screen: The Combination Orchestra's Opportune Moment and the Downfall of the Cinema Musician

> Welch ein sonderbares Verhältnis – das zwischen Komponisten und Kapellmeister. … Und plötzlich über Nacht sind viele tausend Heinzelmännchen da, alle mit einem Taktstock in der Hand, und machen Hokuspokus mit dem Stock und da klingt nun das Lied aus Königsberg und Konstanz und Aachen und Breslau und überall wird man gesungen, gespielt, getrommelt und gepfiffen und wird schrecklich berühmt und verdient lang nicht so viel Geld, wie die Leute immer glauben.
>
> What a peculiar relationship – that between the composer and the kapellmeister. … And suddenly, overnight, there are many thousand gnomes, all of them with a baton in their hand, doing hocus-pocus with it, and there, the song resounds in Königsberg and Konstanz and Aachen and Breslau, and everywhere one[']s music] is sung, played, drummed and whistled and one becomes tremendously famous but is not earning remotely as much money as people always assume.[324]

Werner Richard Heymann was one of many composers within the sound movie realm who quickly realised that it was not only films, shellac records, and radio broadcasts that made hit songs from sound movies travel the world: an essential ingredient to their success, popularity, and pervasiveness was also their ability to adapt to and borrow from the live entertainment music scene, a scene whose main crowd pullers were the kapellmeister[325] and a few selected musical acts. The repertory and style that sound movie hit songs were rooted in—operettas, Schlager, the beginnings of jazz—were already an essential part of different live entertainment music scenes. Early film music composers often learned their craft by having been kapellmeister in dance halls, bars, revue theatres, varieté joints, and the like, and were thus part of the very scene that now carried their music into yet another social

[324] Werner R. Heymann, "Der Kapellmeister," in *Das goldene Buch des Kapellmeisters: ein fachpraktischer Führer durch das Gesamtgebiet der Unterhaltungsmusik*, ed. Georg Maria von Coellen (Düsseldorf: Verlag des "Artist", 1931), 170.
[325] The German word for the leader of an orchestra, choir, or ensemble across all genres.

sphere.[326] The history of the German hit song is thus essentially one of the relocations of a genre of music, namely the sound movie hit song, from dance halls, shellac records, and sheet music onto the screen – and back. Interestingly then, it is exactly this chain of relocations—from live music in cinemas to "live music" on screens, via shellac records and back to the live music venues—which inspired a seemingly inevitable avalanche of epistemological rifts between the live and the recorded, eventually creating hybrids that could be situated on the margins of different epistemological modes of performance. However, the distinctions between live and recorded seemed much less rigid during a time when audiences were seemingly still figuring out the distinctive qualities of both the recorded ("mechanisierte Musik") and the live (which has no corresponding German term during this time). In fact, the explicit term "live" had not yet fully found entry into the critical and aesthetic discourse. The debate, nevertheless, was anticipated by critics, workers' unions, and others who fought the increasing mechanisation of music, essentially invoking similar arguments to those that would shape the academic discussion around the live and the recorded for decades to come.[327]

When scrutinising German audiences of the late 1920s and early 1930s, though, one is perhaps tracing the story of a dichotomy in limbo: it is the story of the conflation of a sense of liveness across all media where different kinds of performances, whether on screen, on disc, or in dance halls, were all in a way perceived as mediated and live at the same time. While so much discourse since the advent of reproduction technologies has focused on the alleged split between

[326] Werner Richard Heymann, for instance, had not only worked as a cinema kapellmeister and film illustrator but had also worked for influential cabarets, for instance, with Max Reinhardt at the infamous Berlin "Schall und Rauch" and "Die Wilde Bühne" (Werner R. Heymann, *'Liebling, mein Herz lässt dich grüßen': Der erfolgreichste Filmkomponist der großen Ufa-Zeit erinnert sich*, ed. Hubert Ortkemper (Berlin: Henschel Verlag, 2001), 127 ff.).

[327] The debate that emerged around the mechanisation of film music in the film trade press during the Weimar Era is illuminated in: Francesco Finocchiaro, "In the Mirror of Criticism: The Film Music Debate on Reichsfilmblatt from 1924 to 1929," *Fontes Artis Musicae* 67, no. 1 (2020): 34-62.

the live and the reproduced and their varying claims of authenticity,[328] the further re-use and recirculation of music in the cinematic context adds a new historically contingent dimension that does not necessarily fit into this hierarchy. These re-uses and recirculations thus need to be addressed in the context of their emergence and reception, in order to fully apprehend how these different presentations of music did in fact authenticate each other.

This chapter will argue that both the performance modes in cinemas at this time and the sound movie hit song itself were sites of this dichotomy in limbo. The complex chains of reproduction and relocation of musical performances that were inherent both to cinema music culture and the hit song invite questions of how an audience who was already vaguely familiar with certain modes of reproduction—i.e., shellac records and a diverse set of musical automations—might have still considered heavily mediated performances as inherently live, and vice versa. Behind these questions lies also the story of an audience and a musical infrastructure that had already become increasingly familiar with a wide spectrum of live and mechanised music through cinema music. Using shellac records to accompany a silent movie, for instance, was not the only attempt at introducing mediated music to audiences in a quasi-live setting.[329] Indeed, Tobias Plebuch

[328] See, for instance, Philip Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* (London: Routledge, 2008); Peggy Phelan, *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance* (London: Routledge, 1993); Paul Sanden, *Liveness in modern music: musicians, technology, and the perception of performance* (New York: Routledge, 2013); Amanda Bazley (ed.), *Recorded Music: Performance, Culture, and Technology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Michael Chanan, *Repeated Takes: A Short History of Recording and Its Effects on Music* (London: Verso, 1995); Nicholas Cook, "Between Process and Product: Music and/as Performance," *Music Theory Online* 7, no. 2 (2001), http://www.societymusictheory.org/mto/ issues/mto.01.7.2/mto.01.7.2.cook.html (last accessed on 9 January, 2023, 4:05 pm); Nicholas Cook, Eric Clarke, and Daniel Leech-Wilkinson (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Recorded Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Andrew Crisell, *Liveness and Recording in the Media* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

[329] Tobias Plebuch, "Zeitarbeit. Das Zusammenspiel von Maschinen und Musik in der Entwicklung von Tonfilmtechniken," in *Spiel (mit) der Maschine. Musikalische Medienpraxis in der Frühzeit von Phonographie, Selbstspielklavier, Film und Radio*, ed. Marion Saxer (Bielefeld: transcript-Verlag, 2016), 190.

fittingly states that the "DJ was born in the cinema" when he describes how early operators and phono-mixers[330] serviced and compiled different shellac discs live on scene in order to accompany a movie.[331] Before that, however, there had already been an array of mechanical instruments, such as the orchestrion and other apparatuses, which did not necessarily require the intervention of a musician per se, but always that of at least one operator live on the scene.[332]

I thus understand this chapter primarily as an attempt to showcase how conceptions of "liveness" can be said to have shifted, merged, and oscillated when viewed through the lens of Weimar entertainment music history, most importantly during the transition from silent to sound movies, and how this transition influenced contemporary music-making and reception on a wider scale. I will also exemplify how shifts in both the economic market and in policymaking further fuelled and stirred these changes. This chapter will further argue that once on-screen music, more specifically "live music" performance on screen, was introduced to the sound movie, a chain of new reproduction technologies, relocations, and perceptual modes came to inspire an expansion of the scope of what was widely considered a live performance. This went hand in hand with a widening of the audience's understanding of what was to be considered live or recorded, as well as socio-economic rifts within the labour market and the wider musical infrastructure, and, not least, an aesthetic re-evaluation of mechanised music. This chapter will further chart how the transferal of an already flourishing jazz and entertainment music scene and its conventions onto the screen, and the simultaneous elimination of the highly specialised live cinema music culture and its attached personnel (cinema musicians, kapellmeister, and organists), led to the re-organisation and, to an

[330] Anonymous, "Ein neuer Beruf: Der Phono-Mixer," *Reichsfilmblatt*, 14.9.1929.
[331] Tobias Plebuch, *Zeitarbeit,* 190.
[332] As will be further explicated in Chapter Three of my thesis.

extent, the standardisation or convergence of performance styles, instrumentation, and ensemble configurations in all areas of entertainment musicking.

A brief outline of this chapter's structure will be helpful. Firstly, this chapter will trace how cinema music of the 1920s, namely that which accompanied silent movies, was, despite being almost fully eradicated by the mid-1930s, a significant factor in preparing the ground for the sound movie hit song to slot into a scene that facilitated grey spaces between the live and the mediated. I will also show how the transition from cinema to on-screen film music set an array of changes in motion that not only altered the cinematic medium but also had a wide-ranging impact on the labour market, musical infrastructures, and the audience's reception patterns. Secondly, by drawing on reviews of performances, records of performances on- and off-screen, and shellac records, this chapter will scrutinise the journey and reception of four popular music acts that appeared across all relevant media and live on stage. These acts exemplify the idiosyncrasies of the musical landscape of the time, allowing us to carve out what made such music particularly suited to the oscillation between the live and the mediated. The acts in question are the so-called combination orchestras The Lewis Ruth Band and The Weintraub Syncopators; the "Stimmungssänger" and proto-crooner Leon Monosson; and the acapella ensemble Comedian Harmonists. These case studies also invite the analysis of wider issues regarding the entertainment and film music sector, in particular the evolution of the combination orchestra and its popularity both on and off screen. By further scrutinising different actual and presumed performances of sound movie hit songs from different movies across different media, this chapter will then draw attention to how a "conflated" sense of liveness might have been manifested by the incorporation of sound movie hit songs into different functional contexts – all the

while generating a distinct stylistic sphere that embraced the new but built on a rich catalogue of old entertainment music tropes.

The Sudden Death of Film Illustration

In order to understand the massive shifts in the film and entertainment music scene that were brought about by the sound movie, I will first look at how the cinematic music scene was constituted in the run-up to the transition to sound. From this, it will become clearer how early audio recording and cinema music had arguably already started constituting a more intricate dynamic between the live and the mediated. During the constitutive years of the silent movie, its culture allowed a whole new array of specialised musical professions and related infrastructures to emerge.[333] Throughout this section, I will not only look at cinema music in Berlin but, as a point of comparison, also in the provinces. As I noted in the introduction, Berlin in particular is an auspicious case study because of its status as *the* German cinema hub at the time; a contextual consideration of other, less urban parts of Germany will help cast the example of Berlin itself into sharper relief as well as offer a more comprehensive view of Weimar German cinema music culture.

Cinema music of the time was very diverse, with every cinema boasting at least one musician who accompanied movie screenings with often very formalised film illustrations. The art of illustrating silent movies, as set out in popular treatises and manuals such as Ufa's famous conductor and composer Hans Erdmann's

[333] Cinema music, as opposed to film music, is to be understood as music that was played in cinemas and did not feature within the movies themselves. See, for instance, Karl Heinz Dettke, *Kinoorgeln und Kinomusik in Deutschland* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1995). Similar infrastructures emerged in most countries and are described in Julie Brown and Annette Davison (eds.), *The sounds of silents in Britain* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Rick Altman, *Silent Film Sound* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004); Hannah Lewis, *French musical culture and the coming of sound cinema* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).

Allgemeines Handbuch der Filmmusik,[334] was very much one that had become increasingly formulaic and modularised over time.[335] Hence, even with the art of film illustration, which was approached differently by every cinema orchestra, musician, organist, or pianist, a certain tendency to standardise and categorise the repertory used began to emerge during the 1920s. With it, to a certain extent, also came an urge to conventionalise the style in which silent movie accompaniment was delivered. Kinotheken, cue sheets, treatises, and the like became increasingly popular and shaped the way in which kapellmeister in cinemas approached their work. In the same vein, film journals started publishing dedicated supplements for cinema music which often contained Musikaufstellungen (comprehensive music scripts) and general suggestions by particularly renowned musical directors.[336] As with early sound movies, and as it will be described in further detail within the next chapter, the quality of music must have differed greatly from cinema to cinema.

At this point, one might be able to hypothesise that, by 1930, cinema audiences were accustomed to a highly modularised and standardised repertoire that was, allegedly, mostly being presented by musicians of, as will be further discussed below, modest abilities and/or means. Still, since the cinema ranked among the most affordable and accessible leisure time activities of the day, it was often only during the movies that audiences were exposed to live music at all. Those formative experiences with live music in the cinemas thus have to be taken into consideration when considering why it was that the sound movie and the cinema

[334] Becce's, Erdmann's, and Brav's companions included excerpts from approximately 3000 musical pieces that could be used to illustrate certain film situations and emotional states within the silent movie cosmos. This helped to establish a canon of motives and standardised music fragments to go with certain narrative or visual clues (Hans Erdmann, *Allgemeines Handbuch der Film-Musik* (Berlin: Schlesinger, 1927); Eduard Bote and Ludwig Brav, *Thematischer Führer durch die Orchestermusik des Verlages Ed. Bote und G. Bock: zum besonderen Gebrauch für Film, Bühne, Konzert* (Berlin: Edition Bote & G. Bock, 1928)).
[335] Plebuch, *Zeitarbeit*, 203.
[336] Those music scripts were featured in dedicated sections of film journals such as the *Film-Kurier* or the *Kinematograph*.

would become the first sites for a conflation of the live and the recorded. Moreover, there was seemingly a hunger for above-average musical experiences in the cinema[337] (leaving aside the magnificent film illustrations or rare original music that were presented by orchestras in premiere cinemas). The below-average live music performances audiences would have been used to implied the possibility of an alternative, something that was, paradoxically, more real in its degree of proficiency and pervasiveness, thereby already anticipating the mediated character of later on-screen performances being perceived as more real, insofar as of a higher standard.

So, what can be said about the quality of cinema music during this time? There were voices that spoke out against the alleged inferior musical abilities of cinema musicians and kapellmeister: Dr. Hans Kayser, for instance, claimed that the majority of cinema kapellmeister "stemmed from the milieu of a musical demimonde that grew up in the vapour of the coffee house literature and often did not go through any kind of musical education".[338] Kayser further continues his damning evaluation of the profession by opining that when choosing adequate musicians for the cinema, "musical respectability" was often regarded as an impediment to a successful trajectory in the cinema world; what was more important was "speed, being perpetually on the qui vive, constantly corrupting the musical text, continuous half sight-reading while keeping one's eyes both on the kapellmeister and the score". Kayser's was one of many voices that denied that many cinema musicians had any ability to artistically interpret music.[339]

One could also argue that it was, however, not a lack of engagement or hard work that led to unsatisfying musical experiences in cinemas but mostly the sober

[337] Frigo, Conrad, "Das liebe Publikum. Beachtenswerte Winke für den Theaterbesitzer." Reichsfilmblatt, 17.12.1927.
[338] Hans Kayser, "Aus der Praxis der Filmmusik," *Anbruch, Monatsschrift für Moderne Musik*, no. 3 (1929).
[339] Ibid.

working conditions under which cinema music was created. For example, in a cinema music-specific supplement of the prestigious film journal *Lichtbildbühne* entitled "Das Kino-Orchester" ("The Cinema Orchestra"), prolific film illustrators such as Hans Erdmann gave advice to fellow cinema kapellmeister:

> One only has to go and visit cinemas on the periphery of the city. Indeed, there are some undeniable difficulties which hamper the execution of the goal, and the piano still has to be the pillar of film music; at most, one goes as far as to hire a trio that occasionally is enhanced by a percussion instrument (!). But even given these modest means, more could be done than is actually done. Too often, in small cinemas one experiences a kind of music that is firmly placed below the threshold of what is worth debating.[340]

The undeniable difficulties that the author is referring to indeed gravely impacted the musical practice of most cinema musicians and leads one to question whether provincial cinemas and smaller Berlin cinemas could have been the breeding ground for any kind of great musical innovation within the live music scene.

In a rare first-hand account, Berlin cinema kapellmeister Franz Götzfried details what the workday of a cinema kapellmeister in provincial areas looked like and how his tight work schedule effected the quality of his musical performances: on regular weekdays, a cinema kapellmeister was often compelled to work from "3pm in the afternoon until 11pm in the night with only short breaks in between exhibitions".[341] On top of his active duties during the screenings, he[342] was required to prepare illustrations for new movies and organise and procure the sheet music for his ensemble.[343] Götzfried points out that "after having played the old programme two or three times in a row, at 11pm at night rarely anyone could mobilise the vigour

[340] R. H., "Kann man der Filmmusik an der Peripherie helfen?," *Lichtbildbühne,* 18.08.1928.
[341] Franz Götzfried, "An unsere prominenten Filmkapellmeister," *Der Führer*, no. 10 (1929).
[342] The profession of the cinema kapellmeister was an exclusively male domain at the time.
[343] Since the "Doppelschlager"-system, namely the screening of two movies during one sitting, was still very popular in the late 1920s, kapellmeister and their ensembles often did not even catch a break after the first movie was over. The "Doppelschlager"-system also pressured ensembles into playing quite hastily and, perhaps, superficially, since cinema owners tried to squeeze two movies into the screening time that was usually allotted for only one (Wolfgang Mühl-Benninghaus, *Das Ringen um den Tonfilm*, 198)

to analyse a new film clearly and logically." Usually kapellmeister were expected to "quickly assemble a good film illustration during the late-night hours or the morning". He acknowledges that it was rarely possible to make time for rehearsals in between playing music and working on illustrations for new movies. Because of time constraints, many kapellmeister fell back on ready-made illustrations that were published in abovementioned catalogues or trade journals. Often these illustrations contained musical pieces for which sheet music had to be purchased. Their "limited financial means did not allow every kapellmeister to own the collection of 2000 to 5000 pieces" that was often required to emulate pre-made illustrations, which often meant that kapellmeister had to find substitute pieces which were often not fit for purpose but affordable.[344]

Apparently, Götzfried not only drew up an account of his own experience but also attended exhibitions in a dozen provincial cinemas to gain better knowledge of just how much film illustrations differed from cinema to cinema. Using colourful descriptions, he also concluded that almost no kapellmeister could really make proper use of rare, original film illustrations, either due to a lack of sheet music or because they merely had a duo, trio, quartet, or quintet at their disposal. However, most film illustrations were conceptualised for much larger ensembles which led to unsatisfying results when used by smaller ensembles.[345] His professional colleague Theo Freitag echoed Götzfried's sentiments, emphasising that illustrations were often conceived with a large orchestra in mind. In the face of ever-shrinking orchestras, kapellmeister in provincial areas actually pulled off a major feat by accommodating film illustrations to their modest means.[346] Even though the famous film illustrator quoted above, Erdmann—who himself had access to a large

[344] Franz Götzfried, "An unsere prominenten Filmkapellmeister," *Der Führer*, no. 10 (1929).
[345] Ibid.
[346] Theo Freitag, "Ein verfehlter Zweck," *Der Führer*, no. 1 (1930).

ensemble, an assistant, and a sheet music library—was aware of the modest means that most cinema musicians had to make do with, he probably underestimated just how precarious was the situation of most professionals. This was further substantiated by the average weekly salary for a kapellmeister, for instance, which amounted to only around 75 RM, from which "he had to buy sheet music and dress properly".[347]

In a similar account, kapellmeister Theo Freitag, employed at the "Imperial" cinema in another urban centre, Munich, shines light on how the situation further deteriorated with the advent of the sound movie. Freitag complains that, soon after, his employer laid off the whole orchestra and required him to accompany the entire afternoon and evening programme on the grand piano all by himself.[348] Even though this new arrangement meant a substantial increase of his workload, he "was not paid a single pfennig more". He recounts:

> We have screened movies during this time during which I sat at the grand piano for 1 ¾ to 2 hours without intermissions, and that was repeated four times a day. While doing so, the eye did not once look away from the movie and one had to work in a miserably ventilated theatre – I mean, by doing that, you really earned your keep.[349]

Apparently, Freitag's work relationship with his employer became so abusive and sour that the cinema asked him to accompany not only the Bühnenschauen (live varieté or revue shows that were often shown during intermissions) but also the advertisements etc., which Freitag categorically declined. However, this personal account also shows that the cinema had not only been the space for live music when it comes to film illustration but also when it came to the presentation of actual show programmes live on stage. By 1927, the practice of offering audiences varieté or

[347] Adolf Daus, "Debatte um Peltz: Bessere Arbeitsbedingungen – bessere Kinomusik," *Film-Kurier*, 27.7.1929.
[348] Theo Freitag, "Ist das der neue Ton?," *Der Führer*, no. 2 (1930).
[349] Ibid.

revue acts in between film programmes became very common.[350] Of the, at the time, approximately 380 Berlin cinemas, around a hundred established fairly regular stage shows.[351] However, there were some limits to what cinemas were allowed to show. Since cinemas only received the so-called small theatre license, as opposed to the big theatre license that theatres were usually granted, they were only allowed to stage acts and revues in loose progression, "without some kind of continuous plot and connecting dialogue".[352] Since there had been intense pushback from theatres, the authorities policed cinemas that put on Bühnenschauen more frequently than other venues in order to minimise the competition for theatre venues. Nevertheless, many contemporaries thought of the Bühnenschauen as a good outlet for acts that had previously been starring in theatre revues and whose seasonal programmes could be recycled and presented to new audiences.[353] The *Reichsfilmblatt* even created its own supplement for "Kino-Varieté", detailing the most striking programmes of the Berlin cinema scene. For instance, on 31.12.1927, programmes in Berlin featured acts ranging from jongleurs, slow motion dancers, magicians, opera singers from the ensemble of the Berlin state opera, revue numbers, comedians, dance, and dog training acts, to name but a few.[354] There was also the occasional appearance of a Schlager singer.[355]

In addition to the impromptu work that kapellmeister usually had to invest into arranging film illustrations for changing film programmes, the Bühnenschauen seemingly posed another challenge to both the musical director and their respective ensembles. In a letter to the film journal *Reichsfilmblatt* from 14.09.1929, a Berlin

[350] One of the most prolific musical directors for Bühnenschauen was Max Goldberg who was also the representative of the cinema varieté subgroup within the international varieté theatre directors' union (Internationaler Varieté-Theater-Direktoren-Verband) (Anonymous, "Kino-Varieté," *Reichsfilmblatt*, 31.12.1927).
[351] Conrad Frigo, "Polizei und Kinovarieté," *Reichsfilmblatt*, 15.10.1927.
[352] Ibid.
[353] Ibid.
[354] Anonymous, "Kino-Varieté," *Reichsfilmblatt*, 31.12.1927.
[355] Anonymous, "Kino-Varieté," *Reichsfilmblatt*, 29.10.1927.

kapellmeister named Friedrich Feiix bemoaned how acts who had been hired for Bühnenschauen often only provided scores or sheet music that had already been tampered with by other ensembles and were thus full of at times contradictory changes, modifications, and annotations.[356] Since there was almost never time for a proper run-through rehearsal, Feiix demanded that the kapellmeister "should be entitled to refuse to accept such tempered-with sheet music and demand scores that every musician could easily sight read without further instructions".[357] A Bühnenschau would usually feature two to three acts and last for a duration of twenty minutes and was thus an added creative task that was not to be underestimated.[358] Many cinemas ceased to put on Bühnenschauen after 1930, except from a few premiere cinemas who continued to stage them for prestige reasons: to have live acts at the cinema considerably helped to elevate the cinematic experience. From 1931, Ufa started to film its cabaret programmes, which picked up on the concept of the Bühnenschauen by trying to showcase cabaret and varieté acts in short movies that could be shown before the screenings of long feature films.[359]

From the information presented so far, it is clear that even before the sound movie entered the scene, cinemas could already be regarded as the ultimate melting

---

[356] Friedrich Feiix, "Was es noch zu ändern gilt! Winke für die Bühnenschau," *Reichsfilmblatt*, 14.09.1929.
[357] Ibid.
[358] Conrad Frigo, "Das liebe Publikum. Beachtenswerte Winke für den Theaterbesitzer," *Reichsfilmblatt,* 17.12.1927.
[359] https://www.murnau-stiftung.de/filmtheater/kinoprogramm/ufa-kabarett-programm-kind-ich-freu-mich-auf-dein-kommen (accessed on 15.11.2022, 4:23 pm). The website of the Murnau foundation, which is the license holder of the Ufa movies of that time, details the content of the first six cabaret programmes on its website. Cabaret programme no. 6, for instance, featured a dance parody, the singer Maria Ney presenting the Friedrich Holländer tune "In St. Pauli bei Altona", a Schlager duet, and singer Luigi Bernauer singing "Jeder Tag hat 24 Stunden" accompanied by the Fred Bird orchestra. (https://www.murnau-stiftung.de/movie/16807, accessed on 15.11.2022, 4:37 pm). An excerpt from the cabaret programme no. 1, which, among others, featured infamous *chansonnette* Trude Berliner and Siegfried Arno singing Erwin Strauß's "Es muss Abend sein", presumably accompanied by the Dajos Béla orchestra. (Jozef Sterkens. "Musikstadt Berlin 1931 Tonfilm – Trude Berliner & Siegfried Arno, Kabarett-Programm (1931)." YouTube Video, 0:1:47. September 26, 2013. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 15.11.2022, 4:40 pm)).

pot when it came to facilitating the emergence of hybrids between the live and the recorded. Audiences were exposed to a variety of cinema music, which was, to a varying degree of proficiency, most often played live by cinema musicians – except from the occasional use of gramophone discs or specifically tailored apparatuses to accompany silent movies.[360] Even though the increasingly standardised practice of illustrating films made cinema ensembles seemingly interchangeable or even replaceable, it was probably also exactly those modest circumstances bemoaned by critics that made for rather spontaneous and not-run-of-the-mill performances and preserved a sense of liveness in cinemas. However, this kind of cinema music, played by musicians who were mostly invisible anyway and who performed under modest circumstances and working conditions, could have created a hunger for wider access to good music among audience members – especially since audiences could compare the quality of film illustrations with how popular songs were being presented on record by only the best performers. This vacuum was later filled by several relocations of the sound movie hit song that were neither firmly rooted in the live or the mediated but rather integrated aspects of both in its offshoots. What is more, many film screenings were interspersed with Bühnenschauen, which were accompanied by cinema musicians but perceived as more traditionally live since they featured actual stage acts and employed music from the cabaret, varieté, and entertainment music realms. The Bühnenschauen thus helped to further muddy the waters of liveness at the cinema, adding more complex notions of the live and the recorded to the equation. This was further complicated not only by *filmed* cabaret programmes and Bühnenschauen replacing actual stage shows at a later stage. It is also implied by stage shows remaining a fixture in renowned premiere cinemas designed to elevate the cinematic experience.

[360] Often those in and of themselves mediated manifestations of music were, however, dependent on professionals who knew how to operate or modulate sound, e.g., phono-mixers, etc.

In conjunction with the sense of an increasing conflation of the live and the mediated during this time, a crisis unfolded among musicians that both impacted cinema music and lead to the re-structuring of the entertainment music market. This crisis was not only fuelled by the sound movie and the record, as is often claimed, but was arguably also the result of economic strains and failed policies and unionisation efforts that were not able successfully to counter the near-total abolishment of live music in the narrower sense in cinemas by 1930.

It is important to stress that the plight of professional musicians was not only apparent to those at the centre of the controversy surrounding the unemployment crisis of musicians. It was also a debate among wider parts of society and, significantly for our purposes, even thematised in films themselves. For example, in 1931, the music film *Gassenhauer*, directed by Lupu Picks, depicted the fate of a group of unemployed musicians who stubbornly and successfully defy the chains of poverty by tirelessly performing a hit song ("Gassenhauer") in the gloomy backyards of the city until the song eventually becomes a popular hit song.[361] Even though this rags-to-riches story might strike viewers as a fairly romanticised depiction of the musicians' crisis, it at least drew attention to the economic circumstances and policies that made their lives especially difficult at this juncture.

Professional cinema musicians were perhaps among the professions hit hardest during the economically dire year 1929, except from the rare lucky ones who were hired as sound technicians or were part of the few sound movie orchestras (which, then again, were mostly constituted of dance orchestra musicians). In 1930, Berlin conservatories were quickly trying to adapt to the new requirements of the sound movie world. In an article in the kapellmeister union periodical *Der Führer*

[361] Also mentioned by Siegfried Kracauer in his excursus on the sound movie operetta (Siegfried Kracauer, *Von Caligari zu Hitler: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des deutschen Films* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1958), 221).

from April 1930, the already-established film music department of the reputable Klindworth-Scharwenka conservatory advertised a new curriculum to cater for musicians who sought to re-educate themselves in "everything sound movie".[362] The first year of the general music course was succeeded by a specialised sound movie course that introduced keen students to "the specifics of microphone placement and technique, acoustics, room acoustics and sound, sound editing, sound montage, amplifiers and adjustment techniques as well as the musico-aesthetic requirements of the sound movie."[363] In addition to those theoretical seminars, the Klindworth-Scharwenka wanted to bring students into the film studios to learn from actual practitioners.[364]

However, such opportunities were only open to a handful of cinema musicians: especially cinema musicians of an older generation and cinema organists who had earned their bread during the peak time of the craft of film illustration were now thrown into a world that no longer seemed to have a need for their set of very specialised skills. Indeed, even before the actual crisis unfolded, the situation of professional musicians was dire: as early as 1926, in one of the few attempts to scrutinise the situation of musicians more categorically and in depth, the Deutscher Musiker-Verband Berlin (DeMuV, German Musicians' Union), the largest unionized musicians' organisation at the time, commissioned the sociologist Amadeus Prietzel to write an evaluation of the current situation of professional musicians.[365] What emerged was less of a factual exploration than a recommendation as to which areas of musicians' lives merited further scrutiny in order to be able to paint a full picture of the current work and living circumstances

[362] Anonymous, "Verschiedenes," *Der Führer*, 3.4.1930.
[363] Ibid.
[364] Ibid.
[365] Amadeus Prietzel, *Wissenschaftliche Erforschung und Durchleuchtung des Musikerberufes: eine Aufklärungsschrift zur Beurteilung der Verhältnisse im Musikerberuf*. Sonderdruck aus der Deutschen Musiker-Zeitung (Berlin: Verlag des Deutschen Musiker-Verbandes Berlin, 1926).

of musicians and encourage reforms. Nevertheless, Prietzel was one of the first ones to provide a quasi-academic testimony that professional musicians often not only had to put up with dire working conditions, namely "faulty rehearsal spaces and accommodation, a general lack of space, artificial lighting, drafts, adverse climatic conditions of any kind and predominantly sedentary lifestyle", but had also, above all, been for a long time part of an entertainment music precariat which allowed only a few professionals a decent salary and proper working conditions. [366]

This is further substantiated by Prietzel drawing attention to a severe yet mostly undetected health crisis. According to statistics of the Deutscher Bühnenverein (German Stage Organisation) and the DeMuV, musicians relatively seldomly called in sick, which Prietzel attributes to their "pronounced conscientiousness" but which was probably more to do with a deep-seated fear of losing rare employment opportunities on an already over-stretched job market.[367] What is more, Prietzel emphasised that this situation was further aggravated by the fact that even highly-competent professional musicians were faced with fierce competition from military musicians, civil servants, and amateurs who were often musically inclined and highly skilled but not dependent on music as a steady source of income, especially on "Saturdays, Sundays and holidays".[368]

Early on, the precarious situation of professional musicians sparked a wave of unionisation efforts.[369] It quickly became apparent, though, that the ideally united force of musicians that was required to influence federal or state legislation instead petered out into a sea of fragmented and scattered organisations. This was partly

[366] Ibid., 19.
[367] Ibid., 21-22.
[368] Ibid., 23.
[369] Similar efforts were made in, for instance, Great Britain, as elucidated in: Annette Davison, "Workers' Rights and Performing Rights: Cinema Music and Musicians Prior to Synchronized Sound," in *The Sounds of Silents in Britain*, eds. Julie Brown and Annette Davison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 243-262.

due to the structural obstacles that the German legal system posed for any organised efforts at unionising workers, but also had to do with turf wars between art and entertainment musicians, ensemble leaders and regular ensemble members, cinema musicians and radio musicians, and so on and so forth. By way of example, the music author Eberhard Preußner pointed out in 1931 that unions did exist, but that "they did not convey the impression of strong collective groups". He further emphasised that he did not see the fault being on the side of the unions' leadership but on that of the musicians themselves, who "were mostly satisfied with being led in *some kind of way*" but were overwhelmingly insensitive to any kind of political direction.[370] In unions such as the DeMuV, by far the strongest musicians' union during that time, he mostly recognised members who were moved to join for private reasons – for instance, to fight for the improvement of their own economic welfare after the dramatic unemployment crisis.[371]

In April 1930, the DeMuV put a pamphlet into circulation that shone further light on the precarious situation of the musical profession and attempted to increase awareness and solidarity among musicians of different specialisations. The union was quick to nominate a suitable bogeyman by portraying the emerging sound movie as the true catalyst of the worsening unemployment crisis among musicians. However, unemployment among musicians had already been at an all-time high due to theatre closures before the sound movie even entered the scene. Under the slogan "Der Tonfilm. Eine Gefahr für den Musikerberuf und für die Musikkultur" ("The sound movie. A threat to the musical profession and the musical culture"), the union publicly denounced the sound movie and "electro capital", meaning the big electronic industry companies such as AEG or Siemens & Halske, as the alleged puppeteers behind the scenes, the "ruler over the sound movie", for mercilessly

[370] Eberhard Preußner, "Kollektiver Musikverbrauch," *Melos*, no. 1 (1931).
[371] Ibid.

forcing canned music ("Konservenkunst") onto audiences and cutting out those musicians that were deeply entangled with the aesthetics and practices of the silent movie and thus live music world.[372] In this vein, the sound movie was likened to a substandard, pastiche product that paled compared to live music performances in cinemas:

> Sound movie is simply bad theatre, fake silk or margarine. The complete sound movie is nothing else but the complete stultification of audiences. Audiences must pay more money for a substandard product than for the quality product "Stummfilm" [silent film] with live music.[373]

The alleged culprit, the electro companies, only very subtly undermined the efforts of musicians' unions to defame the sound movie: for instance, by placing advertisements in magazines that praised their products precisely for their independence from the actual presence of musicians. In one advertisement for a multifunctional radio, the electronic company Blaupunkt emphasises that selling point of their product is "Music but no musicians" and states on a side note "That is rightly what you wish for".[374]

The effort to put a halt to the seemingly merciless rise of mechanised music as opposed to a vivid live cinema music culture was not only spearheaded by musicians' unions but also found resonance with unions of affiliated professions. In April 1930, the union of Musikinstrumenten-Industrieller (Large-scale Manufacturers of Musical Instruments) bemoaned a steady decrease in sales of musical instruments which they attributed to, among others, a decline in live music performances. Other publications drew further attention to how the emergence of the radio, the gramophone, and the sound movie had altered the market for musical

[372] Deutscher Musiker-Verband, *Der Tonfilm. Eine Gefahr für den Musikerberuf und für die Musikkultur* (Berlin: Deutscher Musiker-Verband, 1930), 3.
[373] Ibid., 8.
[374] "Blaupunkt Werbung," *Film-Kurier*, 22.10.1930.

instruments. Gerd Braune, for instance, remarked correctly that the harmonium, which had been a staple in cinemas during the silent movie era, was hardly ever used in other performance contexts anymore. Formerly popular in smaller salon orchestras—for instance, to make up for the lack of wind players—the harmonium had now been replaced with a more fashionable jazz brass section.[375] Since most ensembles, especially after the popularisation of the sound movie hit song, added at least some jazz elements to their performances in order to be more attractive to music venues, the demand for saxophones and other instruments allegedly increased – however, those instruments were often acquired from foreign companies, with musicians assuming that an American model would guarantee a more authentically jazzy sound.[376]

Despite the general crisis of many pillars of the musical infrastructure, it was especially the relatively specialised profession of the cinema musician which was embattled by the emergence of the sound movie. As of 1930, the union estimated that roughly 12000 musicians were employed in cinemas throughout the country, with some of them having been members of long-standing cinema orchestras for a long time and some of them having been employed in smaller cinemas as cinema organists or members of smaller ensembles.[377] If we believe in the accuracy of the abovementioned DeMuV pamphlet, which for obvious reasons had a strong political undercurrent and motivation, the union reckoned that approximately 4000 of those cinema musicians had lost their (often salaried) positions by the time the pamphlet was published in April 1930 and were forced to find short-term work in an already over-saturated job market.[378]

[375] Heribert Schröder, *Tanz- und Unterhaltungsmusik*, 150.
[376] Anonymous, "Deutsche Musikinstrumente," *Film-Kurier*, 3.4.1930.
[377] Deutscher Musiker-Verband, *Der Tonfilm. Eine Gefahr,* 1.
[378] Ibid., 3.

Responsibility for the precarious situation of the musical profession as a whole was attributed to not only a general move towards mechanised music but also to time-honoured scapegoats, namely civil servants and amateurs who were playing paid gigs during their leisure time and where thus allegedly contributing to dumping the general fee level, as well as foreign musicians who were competing for a handful of high-earning jobs.[379] Even though it is safe to assume that the loan lowering that was made possible by civil servants casually taking on gigs in their spare time accelerated the worsening situation of professional musicians, there is no evidence that an increased influx of foreign musicians contributed in any kind of way to the increasingly desolate situation of musicians. The pamphlet concluded by demanding for the state to assume its regulatory powers and regard it as its honorary duty to protect musicians, the "disseminators and producers of musical culture", from complete destitution.[380] By referencing the allegedly successful efforts of musicians and audiences from England and the US to keep the silent movie alive, the pamphlet is also a call-to-arms: an attempt at further politicising German musicians and audiences for the union's cause:[381]

> The professional musicians of Germany join into the fiery protests of musicians' unions across the world against the increasing mechanization of art through the sound movie and expect audiences to support them in their fight against the sound movie by withholding the electro capital their allegiance. The German musicians lay their complaint before the land of poets and thinkers.[382]

In this vein, the pamphlet also argued for the implementation of a few legal measures: for instance, to oblige public entertainment venues to pay a standard sum into a fund supporting professional musicians, to further prohibit any commercial activities of double- and side-earners to eight hours per month as was

[379] Ibid., 14.
[380] Ibid.
[381] Ibid., 9.
[382] Ibid., 14.

laid out in the Arbeitszeit-Notgesetz (working hours emergency law), and to limit the issuing of work permits to foreigners to an absolute minimum and only with the approval of the musicians' union. None of these proposed legislative changes were implemented before 1933, after which the entire musical infrastructure was re-organised by the National Socialist's Reich Chamber of Music. Musicians who were employed in cinemas, cafés, bars, and the like more specifically asked for a trade agreement that would unify the guidelines according to which fee levels were adjusted for musical professionals.[383] There already had been formalised wage agreements in different constituencies between representatives of the DemuV and different employers' associations before, but it was widely felt that those agreements were largely a drop in the bucket.[384]

The DemuV's demands were anticipated by the kapellmeister union in its trade publication *Der Führer* as early as November 1929. In the lead article of the November issue, the anonymous author discussed the future of kapellmeister unions (of which there were several different ones in the late 1920s) by, among other things, accentuating how strong unions could positively affect legislation. In a similar vein to the DeMuV's pamphlet, the author argued that strong regulatory state interventions were needed to deter amateurs and foreigners from entering the job market. What is more, the author proposed that unions should be granted a say in debates revolving around social security issues, the professional training and certification of the up-and-coming generation of musicians, and questions of copyright.[385]

Kapellmeister unions had been quick to pick up on the sentiment against musicians' unions voiced in many film journals. In the "Mitteilungen des

[383] Ibid., 15.
[384] Ibid.
[385] Anonymous, "Die Zukunft der deutschen Kapellmeisterorganisationen," *Der Führer*, no. 11 (1929).

Reichsbunds deutscher Kapellmeister" it is stated that during a membership meeting on 4th December 1929, members of the kapellmeister unions had voiced concerns over the lack of support for their plight being voiced by film journals.[386] In her comprehensive analysis of the reception of silent movie cinemas in specialised trade papers, the musicologist and film scholar Carolin Beinroth reviews how the film trade press reacted to publications of, for instance, the DeMuV. At the beginning of the unemployment crisis, journals such as *Kinematograph* had been sympathetic to the fate of the cinema musicians but had also been suspicious of the DeMuV's aggressive persecution of the sound movie.[387] And indeed, in a 1930s issue of said trade journal, an anonymous author argued that the replacement of manual labour by machines had been a regular fixture of the early twentieth century, with locksmiths and qualified office workers alike falling victim to the relentlessly grinding wheels of mechanisation.[388] As far as he was concerned, cinema musicians were simply next in a long line of professions that had been rendered obsolete by emerging technologies.[389] In a short *Der Führer* feature, Berlin kapellmeister and film composer Bernhard Homola furthered this line of argument by pointing out that musicians were not dissimilar from other people in presumably possessing more than one talent and thus being equipped to find jobs in other professional areas. He emphasises that truly gifted musicians would always find a way to "assert themselves" in the musical world, whereas the fact of less gifted musicians leaving the job market would not "mean a great loss to the world"[390] – a sentiment that was echoed in several other publications.[391]

[386] Anonymous, "Mitteilungen des Reichsbunds deutscher Kapellmeister," *Der Führer*, no. 1 (1930).
[387] Beinroth, *Musik im frühen deutschen Stummfilmkino*, 174.
[388] Anonymous, "Das Problem der Kinomusiker," *Der Kinematograph*, 10.7.1930.
[389] Ibid.
[390] Bernhard Homola, "Mein erster Tonfilmeindruck," *Der Führer*, no. 7/8 (1929).
[391] Those publications often anticipated the Darwinist sentiments of those musical professionals who would later, like Homola, benefit immensely from the exclusive policies of the National Socialists.

On top of that, the negative backlash against musicians in the trade press worsened, when unions started to directly attack the sound movie. On 10th January 1931, for instance, the weekly addendum of the influential film journal *Lichtbild-Bühne* published an article in response to the pamphlet campaign of the DeMuV entitled "Musikerkampf contra Tonfilm im Urteil des Publikums" ("Musicians' fight contra sound movie in the eye of the audience").[392] The article states that the musicians' union's efforts to blame the unemployment crisis among cinema musicians on the sound movie, the radio, or the record industry—and thus also on consumers—is to be considered as misled. It is not surprising that the trade press, whose existence was dependent on keeping up with the latest developments within the film universe, would not betray its rising star, the sound movie, and the electro industry so easily.

Carolin Beinroth further points out that pronouncements such as "The sound movie is kitsch", which had been a regular fixture in union-issued pamphlets, were deemed illegal and persecuted soon after the first pamphlets were brought into circulation, as they were deemed defamatory.[393] This was further proof of how the electro industry as a whole sharply undercut any criticism of the sound movie early on, even resorting to litigation. On 16th August 1930, *Kinematograph* published a headline article entitled "Der Tonfilm ist kein Kitsch. Artisten-Loge und Musiker-Verband dürfen nicht mehr schimpfen" ("The Sound movie is not kitsch. Artisten-Loge and Musiker-Verband are not allowed to rant any longer").[394] In the article, the anonymous writer emphasises how *Kinematograph* had, early on, defended the sound movie against the allegedly defamatory claims of the musicians' union and challenged the union of cinema owners (Reichsverband Deutscher

[392] Lowies, "Musikerkampf contra Tonfilm im Urteil des Publikums," *Lichtbildbühne*, 10.1.1931.
[393] Beinroth, *Musik im frühen deutschen Stummfilmkino*, 174.
[394] Anonymous, "Der Tonfilm ist kein Kitsch. Artisten-Loge und Musiker-Verband dürfen nicht mehr schimpfen," *Kinematograph*, 16.8.1930.

Lichtspieltheater) to sue them. Consequently, several law suits were filed: the Magdeburg cinema owner Artur Mest, for instance, obtained an interim order against the union to refrain from opining publicly that "the sound movie is kitsch, that it's economic and cultural suicide, that it spoils the hearing, that it is badly imitated theatre with inflated entrance fees and that 100 per cent sound movie was 100 per cent dulling of the mind".[395] However, publishing the most important appeal of the musicians' unions for audiences to boycott cinemas that no longer employed a live orchestra was not prohibited. This small win was only a drop in the ocean, though, since musicians' unions had already lost the fight against the sound movie and for the preservation of live music in cinemas.

Thus, the efforts of musicians to accentuate the qualities of a live performance, the musicians' employment crisis and failed unionisation efforts brought this shift into the public consciousness: cinema music did not vanish unseen and unheard but with a highly publicised swan song. Even though the trade press and litigation first regarded the crisis of cinema music with sympathy, the discourse quickly shifted when the sound movie itself, and thus the pillar of cinema's new economic infrastructure, came under attack. The musicians' inefficient and, at times, belated efforts to save a complex musical infrastructure from death thus led to further (legal) combat with the institutional powerhouses behind the sound movie. The audiences were aware of this tension and were largely perceived to side with the sound movie since, despite its mishaps and failures, it introduced an audience that was used to mediocre live performances to a polished, professional, and standardised mode of performance that, despite being mediated in many ways, probably better cohered with the idea of a successful live performance that audiences were used to from listening to records. What is more, audiences now got

[395] Ibid.

not only to enjoy the music they experienced in cinemas on screen, with visuals emphasising the immediacy of musical performances, but also buy into a kind of extension of liveness by experiencing the same sound movie hit songs performed in dance halls, on record, and so on. These hit songs thereby pervaded both private and public realms of experience.

Preparing the Ground for the Sound Movie Hit Song

Only a few cinema musicians were lucky enough to find a position in and around the sound movie music machinery. Even contemporary critics stated that only the more "prominent Berliner premiere cinema-conductors and parts of their orchestras" landed contracts with film companies such as Ufa, Terra, Emelka, or Tobis.[396] What is more, many of the larger premiere cinema orchestras already had one toe in the entertainment music world since many of the live varieté programmes that had been integral components of screenings in urban premiere cinemas included performances of Schlager, dance songs, and the like. The fact that so few musicians could find a footing in the post-silent movie music world was all the more shocking, since many voices in the music press believed that cinema musicians were overall the more agile and flexible choice for both the sound movie and live music in coffee houses. In 1933, the music journalist Otto Jcks stated in the ensemble music journal *Der Artist* that the capacity of ensemble musicians to nimbly adapt to a diverse set of genres and styles could generally be attributed to how former cinema musicians had been exposed to an astonishingly extensive repertoire whilst accompanying an array of silent movies.[397] Jcks bemoans that many of those exceptionally qualified

[396] Anonymous, "Ungewisse Zeiten gegenüber der Tonfilmentwicklung! Die Situation der Musikerschaft," *Film-Kurier*, 31.8.1929.
[397] Otto Jcks, "Gute Musik im Kaffeehaus," *Der Artist. Zentral-Organ für das gesamte Gebiet der Ensemble-Musik*, 3.2.1933.

musicians were now forced to work in coffee houses despite their abilities being in no way inferior to those of musicians working in prominent recording orchestras around the country.[398] Jcks further stated:

> As a result of playing at the movie theatres, the craftsmanship of ensemble musicians has, if nothing else, expanded in its tremendous versatility since especially through accompanying silent movies, the musician becomes acquainted with a ginormous repertory. … From the smallest intermezzo through to the symphonic poem: everything that could be played with five to twenty musicians, was played.[399]

More generally, as discussed before, the skills of former cinema musicians were often in question, though. Also, as mentioned above, the job market was already over-saturated and only those musicians and musical directors could hope to get hired for sound movie work who could had other skills that set them apart in this "rivalry between man and machine".[400] Musical director Carl Maria Haslbrunner, among others, emphasised that "the pleasant accentuation of the personal, thespian abilities of the musician contributed to the audience's sense of the value of face-to-face musical direction".[401] The manners, attire, background narrative, and showmanship seemed to give certain live musicians the edge over more conventionally performing colleagues.

As early as August 1929, articles such as "Mechanised Music" by Haslbrunner were arguing that "mechanical instruments, the radio, shellac discs and synchronized film music" posed a real danger to every professional musician.[402] Voices such as Haslbrunner's anticipate the danger of likening the fate of other professions to those of musicians by pointing out that a lack of regulatory intervention might lead not only to a crisis of unemployment but also to the

[398] Ibid.
[399] Ibid.
[400] Carl Maria Haslbrunner, "Mechanisierte Musik," *Der Führer*, no. 7/8 (1929).
[401] Ibid.
[402] Ibid.

impoverishment of live music culture.[403] Haslbrunner emphasised the importance of the kapellmeister being able to distinguish themselves from the machine and thus accentuating the liveness of the musical performance by bringing attention to the personal presence and unique qualities of a kapellmeister. Haslbrunner recommended that a distinguished kapellmeister should carefully adhere to a specific code of conduct, dress properly, display genteel manners, and, most importantly, please his audience.[404] According to Haslbrunner, now, more than ever, was it important not to idly indulge in the requirements of art but those of the audience.[405]

Many acts that had been in close interaction with audiences for years—at dance venues such as coffee houses, hotels, bars, and the like—now also had the ability to bring their carefully curated showmanship to the screen. The relative anonymity of cinema musicians who were mostly not hired for their flair when performing but rather their discipline, repertory knowledge, and musical agility, now got the short straw. What the sound movie world needed were already established household names who had a track record of releasing successful shellac records with big labels such as Deutsche Grammophon and who were frequently featured on radio broadcasts. This way, film companies such as Ufa could make sure that the musicians were both excellent live musicians who had their fingers on the pulse of the times but were also already familiar with the intricacies of the recording process itself. As a bonus, the engagement of the artists favoured by audiences ensured that audiences would not only be attracted by the novelty of sound itself but also by the acts who created the sound. The less than favourable conditions under which music had been performed during the 1920s led many critics and audiences

[403] Ibid.
[404] Ibid.
[405] Ibid.

to believe that shellac records were the most opportune way to set the tone in cinemas: Along these lines, in his article "The orchestra in the Tischkasten" from 9th August 1930, Waldemar Lydor stated that "shellac music was always a substitute but an ideal one, because on records you could record every orchestra of world reputation that you have instant access to and who are going to play at their best spirits at all times". He further added that cinema audiences preferred mechanical music over bad performances by a "living orchestra".[406]

However, even though the live orchestra was shunned from the cinemas, it remained a constant of the entertainment music scene. When flicking through the pages of Curt Moreck's *Ein lasterhafter Führer durch Berlin*, a travel guide through the brooding underbelly of Berlin's nocturnal entertainment establishments, one encounters many places that not only feature raunchy night club entertainment but also dance music and, naturally, Schlager music – from both the movies and elsewhere. Repertory from the sound movie realm was played in a variety of different locations throughout the city of Berlin: for five-o-clock teas at elegant hotels such as the Adlon or the Esplanade, at coffee houses, at spa hotels, at bars, and at clubs. These establishments varied in size and in the socio-economic standing of their respective customer bases. Moreck explains:

> There are dance floors that span from one square meter to one square kilometer, and what is arranged around it, that ranges from a simple joint to a dance palace. Similarly varied are the customers.[407]

What is more, the way music was played also significantly depended on the financial largesse of the establishment. Until 1929, owners of venues that offered opportunities to dance had to apply for a dance license daily. Depending on the size of the venue, owners had to pay an administration fee of up to 5 RM – with bigger

[406] Waldemar Lydor, "Das Orchester im Tischkasten," *Reichsfilmblatt*, 9.8.1930.
[407] Curt Moreck, *Führer durch das lasterhafte Berlin*, 116-117.

venues paying as much as 20 RM per day for their dance licenses. Only in November 1929 were police administrations finally authorised to issue licenses for an entire year *en bloc*, with the fee being capped at 500 RM a year and a minimum fee set at 50 RM. This new legislation was particularly favourable for smaller music venues, for whom the hiring of dance orchestras had been made conditional on the approval of a dance.[408] Perhaps this was also a reason why live bands received a significant push around that time. Often not only cinemas but also "Konzert-Cafés" (concert coffee houses) had already replaced orchestras by installing a radio or gramophone with a speaker system that played either broadcasted live performances of orchestras in bigger venues (with renowned dance orchestras often being recorded during their regular gigs at hotels and in clubs) or shellac records. By 1929 Stephan Richard stated in "Die Film-Musik" that "not only small but also bigger and big establishments had switched to this kind of entertainment".[409]

What added to the stresses of both entertainment venues and musical professionals were the ongoing disputes between the rival royalty collecting societies. Coffee houses, bars and other smaller live music venues which served food were increasingly overwhelmed with financial obligations towards these societies.[410] Both the GEMA and the Gesellschaft Deutscher Tonkünstler (Society of German Composers, G.D.T.) catered to a different clientele of composers, with GEMA looking after the royalties of mostly entertainment music composers and the G.D.T. after those of classical music composers. In 1929, however, the G.D.T. offered entertainment music venues a lucrative Meistbegünstigungsvertrags (contract based on the "Most Favourable" Principle) that allowed entertainment music venues to play an unlimited number of works from the G.D.T. catalogue

[408] Anonymous, "Erleichterung bezüglich der Tanzlizenzen," *Der Führer*, no. 11 (1929).
[409] Stephan Richard, "Tonfilm, Gema kontra G.D.T. Vom Standpunkt des Kapellmeisters ausgesehen," *Film-Kurier*, 28.11.1929.
[410] Anonymous, "Die Musikabgaben der Gaststätten und Vereine," *Der Berufsmusiker*, 24.01.1931.

against the payment of a blanket fee. Some venue owners thus had to artificially limit the repertory of hired musicians in order to avoid paying additional fees to the GEMA. Critics such as Rudolf Stephan bemoaned this development for the repertory restrictions it imposed on ensembles but also for basically forcing kapellmeister to buy the "very, very expensive sheet music of the G.D.T. repertory".[411]

To recap: cinema musicians and cinema music were becoming increasingly obsolete as a rank of musical acts from the entertainment music world, which had a pre-established reputation for being both accomplished live music acts and successful recording artists, came to the fore of the film world. Despite cinema musicians having often been highly skilled, their specialised knowledge and expertise were no longer needed, or at least not in great quantities, as the sound movie's focus shifted towards hiring a handful people who were presentable and recognisable as part of a more elite outfit. Parallel to these processes, recorded music had been making its way into more traditionally live spaces, further blurring the lines between manifestations of the live and the mediated. The intricate entanglement between the entertainment live music scene and the record had started before the emergence of the sound movie but was propelled to new heights when sound movies added a visceral, near-live visual component to the equation. This had not only to do with the successful cross-media marketing strategy that was employed by conglomerates such as Ufa but was further expedited by conflicts that arose around policies, legislation, and the like, with smaller venues being further muscled out of the explicit live music business by an increase of royalty costs, license fees, and restrictions on the repertory dictated by different royalty collecting societies' catalogues. This probably also led to smaller venues' music programmes

[411] Stephan Richard, "Tonfilm, Gema kontra G.D.T. Vom Standpunkt des Kapellmeisters ausgesehen," *Film-Kurier*, 28.11.1929.

being further standardised, since venue owners had to resort to playing music of either the GEMA or the G.D.T. catalogues. Overall, the traditional modes of liveness that remained were increasingly restricted or else put to the service of the record and by extension the sound movie: the most prominent dance venues mostly housed ensembles that were in one or another form known through either records or their appearance in sound movies.

During this time, many of the principles that had affected the interplay between live performance culture and the record were now being played out on a larger scale. However, the battle between mechanised music and live music was put to rest for a brief period: by bringing hit songs from the dance bars onto the screens and turning them into records which were then emulated in live performances, the abovementioned conflation of the live and the mediated dominated the way sound movie hit songs were consumed by audiences. However, it was only a few select dance orchestras, singers, and vocal ensembles doing most of the work of introducing performances that oscillated between the live and mediated to the entertainment music and film scene. Those scenes were now increasingly commanded by the affordances of the record but also shaped by on-screen performances of hit songs which brought certain markers of record-specific or film-specific performance styles onto the live stage. Those markers were then copied and re-iterated by generations of entertainment musicians and recording artists to come.

In order to exemplify how performances of sound movie hit songs oscillated between the live and the recorded, this chapter will soon turn to three case studies elucidating how combination orchestras, Schlager singers, and vocal ensembles, who had been on the scene since jazz was introduced to the entertainment music realm, were particularly favoured by the early sound movie universe, and had an

additional push of popularity among audiences through their promotion of sound movie hit songs. First, it will profit to consider directly what these combination orchestras were, and how they themselves were changing during the transition era. I will then present famous combination orchestras such as the Weintraub Syncopators and the Lewis Ruth band and explicate how they helped to further popularise sound movie hit songs through different performance channels, e.g., the record and “live music” performances on screen. I will then move on to illuminate how singers such as Leon Monosson moved between different media channels all the while performing the same sound movie hit songs and thus contributed to the further blurring of the live and the recorded. The vocal ensemble Comedian Harmonists will be my last case study, which will not only help to further explain how the waters between the live and the recorded were muddied but also highlight how this dichotomy in limbo was implicitly touched upon by contemporary critics.

The Combination Orchestra’s Great Entrance

The question of how the combination orchestra became a staple of the early sound movie does not yield a straightforward answer. However, it is a fact that for a few years, it was the combination orchestra and a few selected vocal acts that determined how music was presented in movies, on records, and in live music venues.

When Alfred Baresel publishes his jazz treatise *Das neue Jazz-Buch*, a “handbook for musicians, composers, arrangers, dancers and friends of jazz music”, the so-called combination orchestra had already established itself as a mélange between the salon orchestra of the Viennese and Berliner tradition and the jazz

band.[412] Consequently, the line-up of the combination orchestra was heavily influenced by American role models such as Paul Whiteman's orchestra.[413] Indeed, the result was a kind of music that Paul Whiteman would perhaps have played if he had been inclined to join the German Schlager scene. The combination orchestra, as it manifested itself during the late 1920s, could, on smaller scale, potentially also be seen to anticipate the orchestra line-up that would a few years later define Metro Goldwyn Mayer's film music aesthetic, with its heavy string sound. The ubiquity of the combination orchestra was also the result of sheer economic restrictions on ensemble sizes, styles, and instrumentation during that time, though. Ensembles had to be versatile in their ability to cater for different musical styles and functions. However, despite its alleged ubiquity, the combination orchestra is not explicitly mentioned in many of the common encyclopaedia and handbooks that are concern themselves with entertainment or jazz music; one must rather consult contemporary sources.[414] Only a few publications on the wider German entertainment music scene during 1918 and 1933 attempt to explicate the phenomenon.

---

[412] Alfred Baresel, *Das neue Jazz-Buch. Ein praktisches Handbuch für Musiker, Komponisten, Arrangeure, Tänzer und Freunde der Jazz-Musik* (Leipzig: Musikverlag Wilhelm Zimmermann, 1929), 11.

[413] Paul Whiteman's orchestra had been popular with German audiences throughout the 1920s, particularly with his 1926 performance at the Berlin Großes Schauspielhaus (Oskar Bie, "Whiteman, Großes Schauspielhaus," *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, 26.6.1926). The 1930 movie *Der Jazzkönig* (*The King of Jazz*), which was modelled after the infamous bandleader, opened in German cinemas in October of the same year (Anonymous, "Whitemans musikalische Ausstattungsrevue," *Film-Kurier*, 16.10.1930).

[414] Most publications that scrutinise the German entertainment music scene are characterised by a certain kind of terminological indecisiveness that has, to an extent, to do with the hybrid and dynamic nature of the formation of ensemble types during that period of stylistic variety (Michael Stapper, *Unterhaltungsmusik im Rundfunk der Weimarer Republik* (Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 2001); Cornelius Partsch, *Schräge Töne: Jazz- und Unterhaltungsmusik in der Kultur der Weimarer Republik* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2000); Arbeitskreis Studium Populärer Musik, *'Es liegt in der Luft was Idiotisches…': populäre Musik zur Zeit der Weimarer Republik: Referate der ASPM-Jahrestagung vom 27. bis 29. Januar 1995 in Freudenberg* (Baden-Baden: CODA-Musikservice, 1995); Jonathan O. Wipplinger, *The Jazz Republic: Music, Race and American Culture in Weimar Germany* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017)). Heribert Schröder, for instance, traces the emergence of the combination orchestra back to economic constraints, which could partially be traced back to a general economic crisis that affected theatres, cinemas, dance venues, and the like, and necessitated a pragmatic approach to music programming. (Schröder, *Tanz- und Unterhaltungsmusik*, 26)

Heribert Schröder's *Tanz- und Unterhaltungsmusik in Deutschland 1918-1933* provides the most comprehensive account and categorisation of the musical landscape of the German entertainment music scene during the period. This "compromise orchestra", as he calls it, was a dominant feature of both early sound movie aesthetics and the entertainment music world as a whole.[415] There were many practical and aesthetic reasons why the combination orchestra emerged as an organic offshoot of Weimar Berlin's live music scene: resourceful kapellmeister who wanted to meet both the demands of a younger, more progressive audience that had slowly but surely turned towards jazzy dance music and those of an older generation that was used to the string-heavy sound of the salon orchestra, added jazz wind instruments to the salon orchestra line-up (saxophones, trombones, and trumpet players often replaced the harmonium player).[416] This practice gave ensembles the opportunity to play conventional salon orchestra repertory during, for instance, tea time hours at hotels, but to switch over to jazzy dance music when catering for dance events in the evenings. However, even contemporaries were already aware of the fact that a big share of the jazz music that these ensembles played had nothing to do with the music modern listeners would consider jazz. Most combination orchestras featured no improvising soloists playing polyphonic lines but were moulded after the model of American big bands, such as Paul Whiteman's orchestra, whose "occasional jazz incursions" were solidified into formulas that "arrangers and composers had already worked into the music".[417] In a way, the live music performances of combination orchestras were very similar to how film

[415] Schröder states that the "combined ensemble" became the most widely disseminated type of Kapelle in Germany during the late 1920s and traces its popularity back to it being the result of a separation of the concert and dance repertory which occurred as a "fusion of audience wishes and venue owner's interests" (Ibid., 52-54). In his comprehensive analysis of job listings in "Der Artist", Schröder draws attention to how this practice influenced how musicians marketed themselves: they announced themselves as being used "to combined work" to indicate that they could work both in concert and jazz settings if required. (Ibid., 56).
[416] Ibid., 47.
[417] Baresel, *Das neue Jazz-Buch,* 12.

illustrations were approached, in that they were often pre-arranged and made use of standardised musical tropes – although, of course, the solidified formulas differed from one another in the selection of material and styles.

Despite already being sought after for re-imagining musical pieces for film illustrations etc., the work of a few selected and skilled arrangers became more and more important, as the hit songs from the movies were covered in a myriad of different ways – depending on the size, style, and the proficiency of each orchestra. In *Das goldene Buch des Kapellmeister*, a comprehensive guide to the work of the kapellmeister within the entertainment music realm, Leopold Weninger points out that "there are only editions for salon orchestras in circulation that are supposed to sound immaculate in any line-up".[418] The arrangement had to sound "full", even when played only by a duo, which reminds of the struggles cinema kapellmeister where faced with.[419] The way in which combination orchestras were staffed was rooted in the salon orchestra, jazz band and cinema music traditions.[420] Early on, it became clear that salon orchestra arrangements above all needed to be adaptable to different ensemble sizes and instrumentations. The arranger Leopold Weninger, who was responsible for the arrangement of an incredible number of salon orchestra pieces, accentuated that the particular challenge for arrangers who specialised in salon orchestras was to craft arrangements that would sound pristine with almost

[418] Leopold Weninger, "Der 'Bearbeiter' im Wandel der Zeiten," in *Das goldene Buch des Kapellmeisters: ein fachpraktischer Führer durch das Gesamtgebiet der Unterhaltungsmusik*, ed. Georg Maria von Coellen (Düsseldorf: Verlag des "Artist", 1931), 24.
[419] According to Weninger, at the time of the publication of the book in 1931, 55 arrangers were listed with the GEMA, which he took "as proof that this profession was not as underrepresented as one might assume" (Ibid., 24).
[420] According to an article in the compendium "Das Goldene Buch des Kapellmeisters" from 1931 by Richard Grünfeld, the secretary of the Austrian kapellmeister union at that point in time, it was only "around 1900 when editions for complete salon orchestras with a clarinet, trumpet, trombone, and later the oboe", were published, later known as the "French Besetzung". The so-called Parisian and Berliner instrumentation only differed from the French one in its lack of a harmonium voice; the voice of the harmonium was rather replaced by other additional voices such as a violin II, a viola, etc. (Richard Grünfeld, "Von den Anfängen der Wiener Salonkapelle bis zur heutigen Weltgeltung," in *Das goldene Buch des Kapellmeisters: ein fachpraktischer Führer durch das Gesamtgebiet der Unterhaltungsmusik*, ed. Georg Maria von Coellen (Düsseldorf: Verlag des "Artist", 1931), 10).

any available instrumentation, "from a duo upwards".[421] Because in practice, most German entertainment venues could not afford to hire ensembles of six to eleven musicians, they were forced to make do with a trio, a quintet, or even just a violin player.[422] Weninger emphasised that such a task was only to be successfully achieved by a handful of gifted specialists. He further declared that as late as 1931 there were 55 arrangers or "Bearbeiter" listed with the royalty collection society GEMA, which he described as proof that the "caste of arrangers was not as weak" as he had previously assumed.[423] Georg Nettelmann, a Berlin kapellmeister, also addressed the challenge that varying ensemble sizes posed to the successful balancing of harmonies by pointing out that not "everyone had a Whiteman-ensemble at their disposal", which was why salon orchestra arrangements had to sometimes be further adjusted by the ensemble leader to carve out the harmonic texture "without leaving everything to the piano at all times".[424] However, it also meant that the arrangers had to write arrangements that could be adapted to almost any kind of line-up and setting.

Hence, many of the prominent dance orchestras, hired the most proficient arrangers: the Dajos Béla dance orchestra, for instance, employed a young Franz Grothe (who would, during the National Socialist period, be responsible for the scoring of many music films such as *Die Frau meiner Träume* (1944)) to arrange unique versions of popular hit songs.[425] When doing dance orchestra arrangements for sound movies, authors such as H. A. Ploetz urged arrangers to arrange hit songs in such a way that they were neither "tantalizing" or "distracting[,] but discreet":

---

[421] Leopold Weninger, *Der 'Bearbeiter' im Wandel der Zeiten*, 24. Unfortunately, Weninger would become a member of the NSDAP as early as 1st February 1932 and become the most sought-after arranger of National Socialist songs, among them several Sturmabteilung marches.
[422] Schröder, *Tanz- und Unterhaltungsmusik*, 47.
[423] Weninger, *Der 'Bearbeiter' im Wandel der Zeiten*, 24.
[424] Georg Nettelmann, "Der Kapellmeister," in *Das goldene Buch des Kapellmeisters: ein fachpraktischer Führer durch das Gesamtgebiet der Unterhaltungsmusik*, ed. Georg Maria von Coellen (Düsseldorf: Verlag des "Artist", 1931), 187.
[425] H. A. Ploetz, "Tanzkapellen im Tonfilm," *Reichsfilmblatt*, 2.8.1930.

> Such restraint when accompanying movies posited much greater challenges to the orchestra and their musical directors than it used to be the case for silent movies. Only the best dance orchestras qualify.[426]

Such discreet arrangement techniques had been a heritage from the cinema music scene.

The prominent kapellmeister Marek Weber, who was not only a sought-after act for broadcasting events, shellac records, and movies but also for some of the most prominent live music venues, described in a rare first-hand account in the monthly publication *Anbruch, Monatsschrift für Moderne Musik* how, due to financial constraints and the common instrumentation practice for modern hit songs, it was common at most venues to obligate orchestras to play in a "doubly staffed" line-up – that is, a combination orchestra.[427] According to Schröder, in 1926-27 Marek Weber's ensemble thus featured one to two saxophones (with the saxophonists usually being able to play the clarinet if necessary), one to two trumpets, two to three violins (with the third violin often playing the viola), a banjo, a piano, a tuba, and a drum set.[428] Weber pointed out that the differing ensemble line-ups "required a peculiar instrumentation technique":[429]

> For instance, today's jazz music requires a certain individuality in one's approach and it became common practice that every dance orchestra of a certain standing re-arranges Schlager in their own fashion, or at least scores them.[430]

Sadly, Weber and other sources do not go into detail as to how a handful of arrangers grappled with the often-daunting task of drafting multiple arrangements of the same song for different orchestras at the same time. Nevertheless, it can be inferred that renditions of sound movie hit songs in live music settings became

---

[426] Ibid.
[427] Marek Weber, "Salon- und Jazzmusik," *Anbruch, Monatsschrift für Moderne Musik*, no. 3 (1929).
[428] Schröder, *Tanz- und Unterhaltungsmusik*, 42.
[429] Marek Weber, "Salon- und Jazzmusik," *Anbruch, Monatsschrift für Moderne Musik*, no. 3 (1929).
[430] Ibid.

further jazzified in a live setting. In the spirit of Whiteman's big band arrangements, a constant alternation of tonal colours while maintaining the integrity of the melodic line, a certain kind of formal simplicity nevertheless combined with the incorporation of unique stylistic twists, were seemingly what made for an interesting arrangement at the time. Of course, it was also the humorous instrumental effects and witty conversational tone in the interplay between instrumental sections that would become the hallmark of a good hit song arrangement. Because of Weber's training as a classical violinist, his dance orchestra put particular emphasis on prominent melodic lines in the violin section that were executed by Weber himself as first violinist and kapellmeister of the orchestra.

As can be deduced from consulting both combination orchestra arrangements of dance music and records of that time, the part of the piano player or the first violin were usually given the role of the "directorial voice" (Direktionsstimme).[431] According to Wilhelm Stauder, it was common practice for the part of either one of those instruments to feature cue notes that gave the respective players an overview of the most important accompanying and solo parts, simultaneously making it possible for the musical director to potentially play the voices of missing instrumentalists.[432] Weber was, perhaps, one of the most prolific "Stehgeiger", a fusion of virtuosic soloist and musical director, that the Weimar music scene had to offer. In smaller or more provincial establishments, it was not uncommon for the violinist to make the rounds in the audience and to play whichever piece a customer wanted to hear, which qualified those musicians who were "willing to stoop to such levels" as "Tisch- oder Schmusgeiger".[433]

---

[431] On title pages of salon orchestra editions, those arrangements were often branded as editions for "Salonorchester mit Jazzstimmen" (salon orchestra with jazz voices).
[432] Wilhelm Stauder, "Tanzmusik," in *Hohe Schule der Musik. Handbuch der gesamten Musizierpraxis*, ed. Josef Müller-Blattau (Potsdam: Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft Athenaion, 1938), 276.
[433] Marek Weber, "Salon- und Jazzmusik," *Anbruch, Monatsschrift für Moderne Musik*, no. 3 (1929).

Weber further establishes that orchestras were faced with a further dilemma when playing a diverse range of repertory on a diverse set of instruments; they also had to pacify both audiences and critics. Weber points out that "when he played a light programme, he received countless thank you-notes from all parts of the audience but did not receive praise from the press, and vice versa, when he chose pieces that were to the press' liking, the audience was not all too enthusiastic."[434] Weber pointedly carves out the tension that resulted from both catering to economic pressures and the audience's taste when choosing repertory and attempting to pacify the more serious demands of the critics. In a rare account, Weber goes on to describe what kind of programme was to be expected from a "combined ensemble" such as his:

> During my year-long stints at the hotels Adlon and Esplanade I preferably chose the elegant Viennese waltzes, the snappy Viennese waltzes, the lightly perfumed French chanson, excerpts from a variety of popular operas, classical pieces (menuets, single movements from standard works of the musical canon), folk songs and Weisen from everywhere in the world, and, last but not least, the fashionable Schlager …]When it comes to dance music, I prefer the predominantly American pieces, however, without neglecting those new German dance pieces after an American fashion. The success with a selected international audience was proof that this kind of programme design was right.[435]

In his excellent analysis of job listings in *Der Artist*, the most prominent journal for entertainment music and artistry during that time, Schröder also draws attention to how combined orchestras demanded musicians that could play several different instruments in order to fit into both the jazz and the more conservative concert line-up.[436] According to Schröder, it was especially musicians who played the obligato violin, the cello, the bass, or the harmonium had to learn a side instrument, often a brass instrument such as the saxophone.[437] In other words, those instrumentalists

[434] Ibid.
[435] Ibid.
[436] Schröder, *Tanz- und Unterhaltungsmusik*, 59-63.
[437] Ibid., 59.

learned a second instrument that could sub in for the respective voice part or general function of the first instrument within the musical arrangement.

Not everyone who worked in the wider entertainment music or "light music" sector was pleased with the developments. More conservative composers and musical directors, such as Paul Lincke, the creator of the Berlin operetta *Frau Luna* (1899), demanded that kapellmeister should strive for the reinstatement of the traditional salon orchestra line-up. Lincke claimed that "en-vogue-Schlager" would be as effective when played by a conventional salon orchestra, "at times even more pleasant since the melody was showcased more efficiently than with a jazz line-up with its many variations and diverse instrumentation."[438] If the immense popularity of hit songs had proven anything, however, it was that even before the emergence of the sound movie audiences and entertainment businesses had grown too fond of the variety and adaptability that combination cinema orchestras had offered. Maybe it was also the compromise between the old and the new that made it widely appealing. Having recorded with reputable record labels, for instance, was increasingly considered a ticket to getting hired by the most fashionable venues. This was further illustrated by the fact that the agencies who had formerly arranged contracts between venue owners and musical acts were beginning to lose this mediating function in the entertainment music scene. In *Der Berufsmusiker*, one of the dedicated German news and listing journals for professional musicians, a legal announcement stated that agencies were no longer permitted to mediate job offers between venues and musicians from the beginning of 1931 onwards.[439]

[438] Paul Lincke, "Der Kapellmeister," in *Das goldene Buch des Kapellmeisters: ein fachpraktischer Führer durch das Gesamtgebiet der Unterhaltungsmusik*, ed. Georg Maria von Coellen (Düsseldorf: Verlag des "Artist", 1931), 180.
[439] Anonymous, "Gewerbsmäßige Stellenvermittlung," *Der Berufsmusiker. Nachrichten- und Anzeigenblatt für Kapellmeister und Berufsmusiker*, 22.3.1930.

Nevertheless, in the wake of the dissemination of the combination orchestra came a set of new expectations. Ensemble leaders of dance orchestras, for instance, were often even more exposed to the judgement of demanding audiences than cinema ensembles had been. The ensemble leader Joseph Rose, as well as other contemporaries, emphasised that the real challenge for the modern kapellmeister was no longer to demonstrate his prowess in musical direction alone but rather also to realise a particular stage vision. Instead of conventional rehearsals, musical directors would schedule "Regieproben" (stage rehearsals) in order to "speak through, trial and revise the mode of presenting a musical piece whether it was a potpourri a Schlager or an intermezzo".[440] Another kapellmeister, the aforementioned Georg Nettelmann, opined that a "gepflegtes Äußeres" (neat appearance) was also increasingly valued as part of a winning performance.[441] The dance kapellmeister Julian Tomaszwski-Tomsen further specified these new demands on the congeniality of the orchestra leader by stating that the kapellmeister "should refrain from displaying any worries by making ghastly faces" on stage.[442] In a similar vein, his peer von Evorgy bestowed great importance on aspects of this new dimension of leadership competence that one would now describe as "Publikumswirksamkeit" (effect on audiences). A significant component of this was "the treatment of the guest who, above everything, wanted to encounter a friendly face, an affable demeanour and someone taking into account the explicit and implicit wishes of the audience".[443] Von Evorgy continues by cautioning kapellmeister

[440] Joseph Rose, "Der Geiger-Kapellmeister als Solist," in *Das goldene Buch des Kapellmeisters: ein fachpraktischer Führer durch das Gesamtgebiet der Unterhaltungsmusik*, ed. Georg Maria von Coellen (Düsseldorf: Verlag des "Artist", 1931), 39.
[441] Nettelmann, "Der Kapellmeister", 187.
[442] Julian Tomaszwski-Tomsen, "Tanzkapellmeister," in *Das goldene Buch des Kapellmeisters: ein fachpraktischer Führer durch das Gesamtgebiet der Unterhaltungsmusik*, ed. Georg Maria von Coellen (Düsseldorf: Verlag des "Artist", 1931), 193.
[443] von Ervogy, "Etwas über Fachkritik," in *Das goldene Buch des Kapellmeisters: ein fachpraktischer Führer durch das Gesamtgebiet der Unterhaltungsmusik*, ed. Georg Maria von Coellen (Düsseldorf: Verlag des "Artist", 1931), 72.

against underestimating their audiences. Since most of them were "eager and frequent listeners of shellac records", they were used to a certain standard of salon orchestra sound that had been formed by repeatedly listening to the best ensembles on the radio.[444] Live music performances of the best combination orchestras of the country were hence the standard to which live music performances were henceforth measured.

Another colleague, Mario Iseglio, argues similarly by emphasising that "it had never been as hard to meet the expectations of audiences than these days", which made it even more important for an ensemble leader to ascertain the taste levels of each audience depending on the locality and the character of the establishment.[445] Peer advice on how to be a successful kapellmeister of the 1930s which was compiled in *Das Goldene Buch des Kapellmeisters* (*The Golden Book of the Kapellmeister*) also included suggestions along the lines of keeping a close eye on the off-stage behaviours of musicians. Gustav Riess, a board member of the Berlin varieté and theatre directors' union, demanded that kapellmeister should make sure that their ensemble members were not smoking while playing, alluding, for instance, to pianists "that could not even let go of their cigarettes when playing on stage".[446] They should further not be allowed to bring their "dames" to gigs or demand their pay earlier than other employees of the establishment.

Despite those growing expectations, musicians were not necessarily better off than cinema musicians had been during the unemployment crisis, except from a few very well-paid acts that had made a name for themselves. The problems of low

[444] Ibid.
[445] Mario Iseglio, "Der Kapellmeister," in *Das goldene Buch des Kapellmeisters: ein fachpraktischer Führer durch das Gesamtgebiet der Unterhaltungsmusik*, ed. Georg Maria von Coellen (Düsseldorf: Verlag des "Artist", 1931), 171.
[446] Gustav Riess, "Der Kapellmeister," in *Das goldene Buch des Kapellmeisters: ein fachpraktischer Führer durch das Gesamtgebiet der Unterhaltungsmusik*, ed. Georg Maria von Coellen (Düsseldorf: Verlag des "Artist", 1931), 189.

salary levels, precarious working conditions, and temporary contracts persisted. According to Prietzel's evaluation from 1926, professional musicians who were contracted as employees by establishments such as "private theatres or orchestras, in cinemas, coffee houses" earned between 200 and 300 RM on average per month. It proved an almost impossible task to estimate the monthly income of a freelancing musician or the income of those who pursued music only as a side profession.[447] However, in an article from July 1929, Adolf Daus states in the *Filmkurier* supplement "Die Film-Musik" that the weekly salary for musicians averaged between 30 and 40 RM, so that the musicians "thought more about how to feed their families" during their shifts than their actual performances. Professional musicians and unions continued to fight long and hard to establish social security for hired musicians. In 1930, the Reichsarbeitsministerium (Reichs Employment Ministry) decided that, "according to current legislation, musicians were only charged for employee insurances when they were, in fact, employed, for instance as members of the usual concert ensemble that was regarded as employed directly by the venue owner, the landlord, or the like."[448] They were also given the status of a proper employee if they were employed by a dedicated concert agency that provided venue owners with kapellen.[449]

Combination orchestras thereby became the figureheads of the sound movie both due to their stylistic flexibility, their suitability for recording, and their established prominence. However, the new kind of professionalism that was expected from them did not necessarily entail significantly greater prosperity for most of the musicians, despite union efforts. The kapellmeister of those orchestras had to start accounting for front-facing aspects of their performances while simultaneously managing the

[447] Prietzel, *Wissenschaftliche Erforschung und Durchleuchtung,* 23.
[448] Adolf Daus, "Debatte um Peltz: Bessere Arbeitsbedingungen – bessere Kinomusik," *Film-Kurier*, 27.7.1929.
[449] Ibid.

behaviour of their ensemble musicians. Their stylistic flexibility is a reminder of the agility that was expected from cinema musicians, yet they also clearly typified the more brand-oriented professionalism that was coming to dominate the entertainment music and sound movie scene. These ensembles had to build a reputation for themselves and repeatedly give stand-out performances, since they were increasingly measured by their records and radio broadcasts. With this kind of professionalism, a certain degree of standardisation when performing was required, which pushed more traditional live performances further into the realm of the recorded.

The Go-To Film Orchestras

Now we have become acquainted with combination orchestras, it is time to consider some of their notable contributions to sound movie operettas themselves. This will help demonstrate just how prominent these ensembles became in this genre, which will, in turn, help us better understand the ways this involvement helped keep the live-recorded dichotomy in limbo.

Most often, combination orchestras provided the background music to movies on-set but were not necessarily pictured on screen. During the early 1930s, there were, however, a few notable exceptions that made audiences increasingly aware of the interwovenness of the entertainment music and film music scene. The "jazzy symphonician" Ludwig Rüth (whose anglicised name was Lewis Ruth)[450] led one of the dance orchestras, the Lewis Ruth Band, that was in great demand after they had successfully featured in the premiere of Kurt Weill's and Bertolt Brecht's *Die*

[450] During the 1920s and 1930s, it was quite common for European musical acts to anglicise their stage names.

Dreigroschenoper (*Three-Penny Opera*) in the summer of 1928.[451] After the success of the film adaptation in 1931, they were also often referred to as "Dreigroschenoper-Band" on records.[452] The orchestra went on to provide the music for almost twenty film productions and had cameo appearances in the sound movie operettas *Die Drei von der Tankstelle* and *Ein Tango für dich* (*A Tango for You*, 1930). They also played the background music for other successful music films that featured hit songs, such as for *Ein Herr auf Bestellung* (*A Mister to Order*, 1930), and *Das Lied ist aus* (*The Song is Over*, 1930). The songs they played were not only recorded for the movies themselves but also for several different labels, thus accessible to audiences on and off screen. In 1928, the record label Electrola, for instance, signed the Lewis Ruth Band and released around 400 shellac records under the ensemble's name, many of which featured sound movie hit songs.[453] Like many other successful sound movie orchestras, the Lewis Ruth Band also continued to play in live music venues, among others, in different dance bars, but was most prominently the house orchestra of the Berlin Metropol theatre.[454] Berlin audiences were thus able to listen and see the band not only during its on-screen and recorded performances but also live on stage. What is more, the band was not only a sought-after live music act but also a frequent guest at radio shows: on 6th April 1932, for instance, they played a "Tanz-Abend" (dance evening) with the singer Leon Monosson, with whom they also recorded several shellac discs.[455] What connected all these instances of performances was the sound movie hit song which was the staple in their repertory across all media channels and whose several relocations

[451] Their musical director, Ludwig Rüth, a classical flautist and conductor by training, had switched to the saxophone in the 1920s and started his own jazz band, presumably around 1925.
[452] Anonymous, "Im Tonfilm spielt auf: Lewis-Ruth-Band," *Film-Kurier*, 15.8.1931.
[453] Ibid.
[454] Ibid.
[455] [redacted]

The text originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

led to a further blurring of which performances of hit songs were perceived as live or mediated.

It was specifically the style and instrumentation of jazz and combination orchestras that lend itself to further manifesting the aforementioned dichotomy in limbo: in his article "Das Jazz-Orchester im Tonfilm" ("The Jazz Orchestra in the Sound Movie"), Fritz Hock emphasises that the jazz orchestra was particularly adept to feature across various different media channels since the "instrumentation and number of players can be varied without losing the fullness of sound". The size of the ensembles and the de-emphasising of the string sound also made them suitable for sound recording (for both shellac records and sound movies).[456] Apparently, the Lewis Ruth Band was also the go-to ensemble for film music composer Edmund Meisel, moving them not only closer to the tradition of live entertainment music but also cinema music. In October 1930, the ensemble accompanied one of the rare silent movie screenings of *Die Lehren des blauen Expreß* (*The Teachings of the Blue Express*, 1929), for which Meisel wrote the score. In a review in the *Film-Kurier*'s supplement "Die Film-Musik", the ensemble is lauded for its versatility and its ability to alternate between different instruments to create an astonishingly full sound with only thirteen musicians.[457] The review details the line-up: one alto saxophone (also playing the baritone saxophone, flute, or clarinet), a tenor saxophone (also playing the clarinet and second violin), an alto saxophone (also playing the first violin and clarinet), two trumpets, a trombone, a sousaphone, two drummers, a banjo (also playing the guitar, the bandoneon, and the Hawaiian steel guitar), two pianos, and a musical saw.[458]

[456] Fritz Hock, "Das Jazz-Orchester im Tonfilm," *Film-Kurier*, 18.9.1930.
[457] Anonymous, "Lewis-Ruth-Band mit Meisel-Musik im Kino. Die Lehren des blauen Expreß," *Film-Kurier,* 29.10.1930.
[458] Ibid.

As Judith Wiemers points out, it was not only the combination orchestra's recordability and versatility that made them a lucrative musical act for sound movie operettas but also the depiction of conventional live music *settings* within sound movie operettas that further blurred the lines between the live and recorded. [459] There are several concrete instances within sound movie operettas where we can observe the blurring of the live and recorded: The Lewis Ruth Band, for instance, is seen performing in a dance sequence from the movie *Eine Nacht im Paradies* (*One Night in Paradise*, 1931/32) which draws attention to the instrumental versatility of the combination orchestra but also alludes to the sound movie hit song's rootedness in live music settings.[460] Interestingly, when the sequence starts, the twelve-man band is first seen in a traditional "Stehgeiger" foxtrot setup, with Rüth himself playing the solo violin and a traditional combination orchestra line-up with the brass section and the violin alternating. The visuals of the scene blend into a stylised tango milieu with the band playing a tango version of the instrumental interlude. Then, not only the solo violinist but also two bandoneon players take centre stage. Some of the remaining musicians also seem to have swapped instruments; for instance, instead of the ukulele a mandolin is played. The scene then transports its audience to a stylised Russian set, with the musicians now playing balalaikas and the accordion. Finally, the scene is transported to the fictional Chery bar where a tap dance number is accompanied by a more traditionally orchestral combo, including the harp and more traditional percussion elements. The depiction of such stylistic versatility would have been familiar to audiences from live music settings and records (with potpourri records often featuring several different line-ups and styles to deliver the same song).

[459] Wiemers, *Das ist die Broadway Melody*, 174.
[460] Alparfan. "'Lewis Ruth Band' musiziert im Film 'Eine Nacht im Parsdies' 1931/32." YouTube Video, 0:1:50. August 17, 2013. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 20.10.2022, 11:30 am).

The band also appears in the final sequence, the encore, of *Die Drei von der Tankstelle*, starting at 01:28:00 of the video, in which the band plays a potpourri of the hit songs that feature the ensemble on stage.[461] Interestingly, the diegetic stage scene seems to have been recorded live: the sound quality noticeably differs from the previous scene in that the brass instruments noticeably reverb, and the stomping noises of the dancers feature prominently in the foreground of the scene. There are noticeable cuts, however, which probably means that the scene had to be repeated and the best versions cut together. The 'liveness' character of both the setting and the sound of the on-screen-performance further pushed an ostensibly mediated performance into the realm of liveness.[462]

However, it was not only combination orchestras such as the Lewis Ruth Band, Marek Weber's orchestra, and Dajos Béla's illustrious orchestra but also jazz ensembles in the narrower sense that were employed for sound movie operettas. The Weintraub Syncopators, the band who was responsible for the musical accompaniment of movies such as *Der blaue Engel* (*The Blue Angel*, 1930), was often featured both in movies that were of a more serious tone as well as movies that featured slapstick-infused scenes.[463]

---

[461] Klaus von Bülow. "Die Drei von der Tankstelle (1930) (ganzer Film)." YouTube Video, 1:29:42. February 2, 2021. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 24.11.2022, 11:43 am).

[462] As mentioned above, the Lewis Ruth Band also provided the background music to the successful hit songs of *Der Herr auf Bestellung*. In a trailer for the film, rare footage of the band playing under the direction of operetta composer Robert Stolz is shown, depicting sixteen musicians playing an animated potpourri of the hit songs featured in the movie in a live music setting. One can identify the usual line-up of a combination orchestra with an unusually large string section. Both the first violinist and the solo brass instruments get a solo each. The interplay between the string and the brass sections within the arrangement makes for a varied tone colour, elevating an otherwise simple sound movie hit song and catering to the conventions of the combination orchestra (Parlophonman. "Willi Forst, Robert Stolz & the Lewis Ruth Band!" YouTube Video, 0:1:04. March 8, 2014. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 20.10.2022, 12.16 pm)).

[463] The 1930 movie *Der blaue Engel*, directed by Josef von Sternberg, is one of the most internationally renowned films of the Weimar Era, not least because its star Marlene Dietrich soon after became famous in America. As will be further elucidated in the next chapter, in 1930 the Weintraub Syncopators were also featured in the music film *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari* where they are seen auditioning for a fictional sound movie.

One of the most striking instances of them starring on screen is *Die zärtlichen Verwandten* (*The Tender Relatives,* 1930), in which main actor Kurt Lilien leads the jazz band into the chambers of a newlywed couple. They not only feature prominently in this scene when it comes to them merely playing but are also themselves the subject of the song "Wenn heut' Nacht die Jazzband spielt!" ("When The Jazz Band Plays Tonight!").[464] The humorous performance of the sound movie hit song is wittily accompanied by an equally vivid performance by the Syncopators. Remarkably, the Syncopators also provide a vocal accompaniment to the last chorus in the style of the Comedian Harmonists, a vocal ensemble who will themselves be examined later in this chapter. Even though the Syncopators were regarded as one of the most notable German jazz bands of the time when it came to their status as recording artists and live performers, it is remarkable that they were not only featured as anonymous musicians on screen but that the movie piggybacked on their fame as recording artists by firmly establishing their identity. Sound movie operettas thus overtly utilised the status of, for instance, the Syncopators as a live and recording act to further disseminate the sound movie hit song and push it into the realm of liveness.[465]

[464] Parlophonman. "Wenn heut' Nacht die Jazzband spielt!" YouTube Video, 0:1:04. March 28, 2008. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 24.11.2022, 1:17 pm).

[465] On a side note: except from a few notable actresses, the early sound movie music scene was mostly dominated by male performers. However, during the Weimar years, female musicians did feature in specific orchestra formations, most notably in the "Damenkapellen", ensembles that featured women and men who were often married and travelled the country together. In the sound movie operetta *Ein Lied, ein Kuss, ein Mädel* (*A Song, A Kiss, A Girl*, 1932), the popular operetta singer Martha Eggerth is featured as being accompanied by the "Singing Colibris", a fictional all-female orchestra that was, in fact, a stand-in for the successful and all-male Dajos Béla orchestra who actually played the music. When they did feature, women were invariably framed for the benefit of the male gaze. For instance, during a scene depicting a recording session, the owner of a record label, Peter Franke (Gustav Fröhlich), is shown nonchalantly flirting with and winking at several of the female musicians. The fictional female musicians are being further objectified by a tracking shot of their bare legs. Accomplished female musicians were rarely hired by the early sound movie industry, and when they were, they were invariably portrayed in merely humorous or sexually suggestive ways (Alparfan. "Singing Colibris/Orch. Dajos Bela – 'Sie will ja' Gesangszene: 'Ein Lied, ein Kuss, ein Mädel' 1932." YouTube Video, 0:1:04. July 24, 2013. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 24.11.2022, 12:05 pm)).

Leon Monosson: The Art of Singing a Chorus

It was not just combination orchestras such as the Lewis Ruth Band that found wider recognition through music films; it was also the finest hour for singers such as Leon Monosson, who appeared in tandem with the most reputable ensembles across all media and in live music venues. The career and singing style of Monosson, who primarily performed under the name Leo Monosson, gives further proof of how intertwined the live and the mediated were in the minds of contemporary audiences in the early stages of the sound movie.[466] In this vein, Monosson was one of the artists who could be described as a mediator of the relocations of the sound movie hit song, given his sheer ubiquity and popularity, his voice permeated all offshoots of the entertainment music scene of this time.

[redacted] Before he made himself a name as one of the best

The text originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[466] Much of the information that is presented here on Monosson was either obtained by consulting his file at the compensation office in Berlin, which oversees the compensation claims that were filed by Monosson's relatives after the Second World War; his emigration documents at the state archive Potsdam; film journals; advertising material of labels; record catalogues; and the like. However, the enlightening conversations with Berlin shellac record collector Walter Weist, who has specialised on Monosson's life and oeuvre, have helped immensely. Weist's unpublished collection of materials (Walter Weist, *Leo Monosson. Der König der Refrainsänger. Versuch einer Bio-Discographie* (Berlin: unpublished, 2010)) has contributed a great deal to this section, as have his published articles in the shellac afficionado journal *Fox auf 78* (Walter Weist, "König der Refrainsänger – Leo Monosson," *Fox auf 78*, no. 26 (2011): 4-13 and no. 27 (2013): 89-97). Weist also kindly provided scans of photos and leaflets that he had secured from two collection albums that relatives of Monosson had preserved [redacted]

Siegfried Schapira, "Die Herren Refrainsänger." *Funk-Woche*, 11.9.1932.

[468] B Rep. 078, Reg. Nr. 65.937, Entschädigungsamt Berlin, *Antrag auf Grund des Gesetzes über die Entschädigung der Opfer des Nationalsozialismus, Rentenakte Leon Leo Monosson*, 29.1.1952.

[469] [redacted]

Stimmungssänger of the Weimar Republic,[470] Monosson had successfully completed several stage engagements, among others in 1925 and 1926 as the leading tenor in Ernö Rapée's Bühnenschauen at the premiere Ufa cinema Zoo-Palast – which is where he presumably first met the composer Werner Richard Heymann, who was Rapée's assistant at the time and with whom he would later collaborate on several movies. One of the several Bühnenschauen that Monosson appeared in was at the Berlin Metro palace, which ran from 9th to 12th July 1926, in which Monosson performed under the pseudonym Leo Monosti as one of its main attractions: among the works that Monosson sang were Lehár's "Gern hab ich die Frauen geküsst" and Kálmán's "Grüß mir mein Wien".[471] Monosson's repertory was hence originally not restricted to Schlager music but encompassed several operetta and even opera classics. After 1930, Monosson continued to feature in several stage shows. For instance, he appeared in two winter seasons of the infamous Haller revue, taking a leading role in *Der Tokaier* with Emil Jannings; in the Rudolf Nelson-revue; and with dance orchestras on several occasions.[472] Apparently, Monosson also continued to feature in Bühnenschauen throughout the early 1930s. From 24th to 26th November, for instance, Monosson made guest appearances at Bühnenschauen at the Ufa-palace Königsstadt.[473] In February 1932, he also featured in a Bühnenschau tour with Dajos Béla and his orchestra with appearances at the Berlin cinemas Piccadilly, Elysium, and Luna.[474]

It was not only before the stage, at dance venues, and on radio broadcasts that enthusiasts of Schlager music were able to enjoy Monosson's voice. On record

The text originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[redacted]

[470] Stimmungssänger or "mood singers" were hired to present unique and impactful interpretations of songs that would be particularly suited to animate audiences.
[471] The playbill of said Ufa-Bühnenschau at the Berlin Metro Palace is part of Leo Monosson's private photo collection (*Anne-Marie Vigneron, private photo collection (Leon Monosson)*).
[472] B Rep. 078, Reg. Nr. 65.937, *compensation file Leon Monosson.*
[473] Ibid.
[474] Ibid.

labels ranging from Deutsche Grammophon (which reserved exclusive rights to use his pseudonym Leo Monosson) to Electrola, Monosson appeared on a variety of record labels. By 1933, the *Künstler-Almanach des Rundfunks* (Almanac of Radio Artists) estimated his number of recordings at a staggering 1400 shellac records.[475]

The text originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

.[476] Monosson worked under a staggering number of other pseudonyms, for example Leo Frank, Leo Moll, and Leo Mossner, each of which was tailored to be used for a specific label. This cunning marketing ploy gave him the opportunity to expand his sources of income despite having signed exclusive contracts with, for instance, Deutsche Grammophon and Electrola. Oddly enough, the labels occasionally did not shy away from also using his pseudonym for records made by other singers such as Luigi Bernauer or Max Mensing, who were themselves very popular singers. At the peak of his career, from 1929 to 1933, Monosson worked with some of the greatest dance orchestras: with Paul Godwin for Deutsche Grammophon, with Dajos Béla for Lindström, with Marek Weber and, not least, with the Lewis Ruth Band for Electrola.[477] He further collaborated with many renowned vocal ensembles such as the Comedian Harmonists, The Four Admirals, and Two Jazzers. On scrutinising the recording protocols of a few of the labels he was recording for, it becomes apparent that Monosson must have had several different recording sessions at different venues with different orchestras every week.[478]

[475] Gerd Fricke and Otto Frickhoeffer (eds.), *Künstler-Almanach des Rundfunks* (Berlin: Rothgießer & Diesing AG, 1933), 77.
[476] B Rep. 078, Reg. Nr. 65.937, *compensation file Leon Monosson.*
[477] Also listed in Monosson's compensation file (B Rep. 078, Reg. Nr. 65.937, *compensation file Leon Monosson*).
[478] Ibid.

Monosson, however, was not simply a particularly ubiquitous yet anonymous chorus singer, even though he started out that way, but was described as a versatile live performer "who makes do without the common flirtations with the Stimmungstremolo"[479] and as an impactful record interpreter who sang "in his unostentatious performance style". Particularly the "lustre of his falsetto voice" seemingly fascinated audiences who were used to the more blatant and poignant singing style of cabaret and operetta singers.[480] Contemporaries report that Monosson was "boisterously celebrated" whenever he appeared since his "whispered ariettas and songs were the crowning achievement of smaller-scale performing arts".[481] Monosson pre-dominantly rose to fame as a "whispering" chorus singer, delivering crooned versions of sound movie hit songs with "an everyday, casual, off-the-street and into-your-living-room voice".[482] Much has been written on this new style of singing and its seeming ability to transcend the machine and the medium of the record by creating an immediate bond between the performer's voice and his audience.[483] Al Jolson, the famous American vaudeville singer and star of the first sound movie smash hit *The Singing Fool* (1929), which had become very popular with German audiences, was the spearhead and role model for a wave of German crooners.[484]

As Jolson's Monosson's singing style was very much tailored to the affordances of early recording technique: his subtle, consonant-heavy, and mostly vibrato-free mode of delivering hit songs was determined by what microphones of that day and age could convincingly capture, but also proved to be a way to create

[479] Anonymous, "Leo Monosson. Der Plattensänger," *Film-Kurier*, 7.2.1933.
[480] Anonymous, "Leo Monosson," *Magdeburger Volksblatt,* 16.4.1930.
[481] Anonymous, "Stimmungssänger," *Hannoversches Tageblatt*, 18.8.1929.
[482] Michael Pitts and Frank Hoffmann, *The Rise of the Crooners* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2002), 14.
[483] Allison McCracken, *Real men don't sing: crooning in American Culture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015).
[484] Thomas Saunders, *Hollywood in Berlin: American cinema and Weimar Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 225-26.

a kind of immediate intimacy that live performances were not yet able to emulate. As it is pointed out in the *Grove Dictionary of American Music*, recording with microphones "required singers to apply less breath to the vocal cords rather than forcefully project, resulting in a softer, more confidential and conversational sound."[485] Performers, such as Monosson also "gradually discovered as well that the use of head or mixed chest-head voice in lower registers (where operatic and theatrical singers had used only chest) aided the production of quiet singing and equalized notes across the range", which made for smooth transitions and greater melodic and rhythmic precision.[486] This technique was increasingly not only employed on records and in movies but also on stage.

In a testament to his renown, on 3rd November 1931, an entire broadcast was dedicated to the versatility of Monosson's voice.[487] Accompanied by Wilhelm Grosz on the piano, Monosson presented a "whispered Schlager", a Gassenhauer (tradition Berlin hit song), a belcanto song ("Nina" by Pergolesi), and a dramatic opera aria ("Hüll dich in Tand nur" by Leoncavallo). The adaptability that he cultivated through his live performances and regular recording sessions also served him well on film with Monosson being able to sing a variety of songs in different languages and styles and lending his voice to several different actors.

Since Monosson infamously sang "in ten different languages"—at least that is how the marketing experts of Deutsche Grammophon branded him—export discs of several major German labels were able to travel the world, with his French renditions of sound movie hit song renditions being particularly successful.[488] In

---

[485] Howard Goldstein and Allison McCracken, "Crooning," *The Grove Dictionary of American Music* (2013), Web.
[486] Goldstein and McCracken, "Crooning".
[487] The dates of many radio broadcasts were included in the newspaper snippet collection that Monosson had to submit with his compensation file (B Rep. 078, Reg. Nr. 65.937, *compensation file Leon Monosson*).
[488] Anonymous, "Leo Monosson singt in zehn Sprachen. Der Double im Hintergrund," *Film-Kurier*, 15.08.1931.

radio broadcasting, Monosson was also frequently stylised as the singer who can sing in ten different languages, as was made explicit in a programme for a Berlin station on 31st January 1930:

"Ein Sänger – zehn Sprachen" tenor: Leo Monosson, piano: Hans Sommer

1. A. Baer, J. Caesar, J. Schuster: Blue Hawaii
2. J. D. Alemany: Ay querisa
3. L. Vycpálek: Chodil sem po lesi
4. J. Engel: Kaddisch (Yiddish)
5. S. Tschernickowski – J. Engel: Omrim, jeschna erez (Hebrew)
6. M. Lermonton – A. Gretschaninow: Wiegenlied (Russian)
7. A. Buzzi-Peccia: Torna amore (Italian)
8. St. Niewiadomski: Otwo'rz. Janka (Polish)
9. Bergerette aus dem 18. Jahrhundert: Maman, dites-moi (French)
10. H. Heine – R. Schumann: Ich grolle nicht (German)[489]

Monosson's ability to sing in multiple languages was also useful for his appearances in the movies. During the early 1930s, it was common practice to shoot multiple-language versions of the same movie, most often in French and English, for which Monosson contributed multiple-language versions of the featured hit songs.[490] What is more, he also often lent his voice to actors who did not have a suitable singing voice – often without being named. For *Liebeswalzer*, he sang in the place of the main actors of multiple different language versions of movies; for instance, Willy Fritsch and Georg Alexander[491], whose singing voices were, at the time, not considered adequate for Ufa's first big talkie. In other movies, Monosson often appeared as himself under the guise of a bar singer or a "Stimmungssänger". Reviewers, however, often recognised Monosson's unmistakable timbre and identified him as the voice behind the stars.[492]

[489] Presumably the same programme that he sang during his performance at *Schlesische Funkstunde* in June later that year, which was entitled "L. Monosson sings and whispers in ten different languages" (B Rep. 078, Reg. Nr. 65.937, *compensation file Leon Monosson*).
[490] Anonymous, "Leo Monosson singt deutsch, französisch und englisch in den Filmen 'Zigeuner der Nacht' und 'Ich bei Tag und du bei Nacht'," *Lichtbildbühne*, 3.11.1932.
[491] B Rep. 078, Reg. Nr. 65.937, *compensation file Leon Monosson.*
[492] Anonymous, "Leo Monosson singt in zehn Sprachen. Der Double im Hintergrund," *Film-Kurier*, 15.08.1931.

However, despite Monosson's versatility, he often only lent his voice to the delivery of the chorus of a hit song, which was to do with conventions of the time. During the 1920s and the 1930s, it was common practice for entertainment music singers to only vocalise the chorus of songs on shellac records, in films and during live performances at dance events – a practice which created another connection between records and live performances, since the format of early hit song recordings was very much tailored to their use in dance bars where they sought to emulate the live performance of a dance orchestra. Often these so-called "Tanzplatten", or dance records, were issued for the purpose of people dancing to the sounds of their beloved orchestras; hence, merely the catchy chorus received vocal attention and was otherwise paired with instrumental verses and interludes. Shellac discs of this nature were often branded with the addendum "mit Refraingesang" ("with chorus singing") or simply "mit Gesang" ("with singing"), and many singers who worked as refrain singers remained either anonymous or worked under a pseudonym.[493] Authors such as Hans Mersmann often called shellac discs with no notable singer personality attached to it "Gebrauchsplatte": a disc to be used for functional purposes, such as providing accompaniment for dance events. Such discs focused on the "fixed metrics" of the dance rather than the "affectations of the tenor",[494] and were rooted in the performance practices of an entertainment music scene that catered to the ever-growing dance craze of a young Weimar audience.

Since audiences were not focusing on simply listening to those records it was not the mere acousmatic presence of the shellac record that drew attention to its mediated nature. It can be presumed that listening was mostly still happening in social, not solitary settings. Renditions of sound movie operettas' hit songs were

The text originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[493] [redacted] (B Rep. 078, Reg. Nr. 65.937, *compensation file Leon Monosson*).
[494] Hans Mersmann, "Schlagerplatte und Persönlichkeit," *Melos*, no. 1 (1931).

played in venues that either offered enough visual or other distractions, allowing the audience not to obsess over the source of the music, or allowed for some form of activity, i.e., dancing, that gave listeners the chance to physically interact with the music, even though they were merely listening to a record. [495]

To sum up: even before Monosson featured in movies, he confidently donned a new tech-enabled vocal style that he utilised to span different styles and formats. His activity as a chorus singer, for instance, also allowed him to not only perform as a singer in entertainment music settings but also the treatment of his recordings as quasi-live sets to dance to. What is more, he sang both live and on record in several different languages, which made him extremely versatile. By performing under the guise of several different pseudonyms, Monosson became something akin to the centre of the entertainment music universe. His foray into sound movies further extended his ubiquity, and in doing so further tangled the web of the live and non-live that had emerged around the hit song.

From 1929 onwards, Monosson also increasingly lent his face to the film universe and appeared as his singing self in several cameos in notable music films, such as *Liebeswalzer* (*The Love Waltz*, 1930), *Die Drei von der Tankstelle* (*Three from the Gas Station*, 1930), *Ihre Majestät die Liebe* (*Her Majesty, Love*, 1931) and *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht* (*I by Day, You by Night*, 1932). [redacted]

The text originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[redacted].[496]

In *Ihre Majestät, die Liebe*, Monosson performs, among other songs, the tango “Du bist nicht die Erste“ (“You Are Not The First One”) in a “mit

[495] In his article “The Impact of Recording on Listening”, Eric Clarke argues that the absence of the visual component, “the awkward consequences of sourcelessness” when listening acousmatically, might make listeners feel at a loss because our perceptual systems usually operate in an integrated manner (Eric Clarke, “The Impact of Recording on Listening,” *Twentieth-century Music* 4, no. 1 (2007): 64).
[496] B Rep. 078, Reg. Nr. 65.937, *compensation file Leon Monosson.*

Refraingesang"-version, accompanied by the Ben Berlin orchestra under the musical direction of star trumpet player Louis de Vries.[497] At the beginning of the sequence, a couple can be seen alone on the dance floor of, yet again, a dance bar.[498] The song starts with a simple, string-heavy instrumental verse over two conservations and segues into the cheeky lines of the chorus.[499] Once the chorus starts (at 00:00:52), the camera pans to Monosson, who starts to sing the chorus in his unmistakable consonant-stressing yet smooth singing style.

In the background right-hand corner, one can detect de Vries hovering over Monosson conducting the orchestra, characteristically facing the audience. One can also make out at least four string players and a drummer behind Monosson. The first and second violin and a muted trumpet, which only appears on screen at 00:01:29 when the camera focuses on the entire orchestra for the first time, alternate between supporting the melodic line and adding prominent tango interjections. Towards the end of the song, the string-heavy arrangement, fitting for a tango, is supplemented by the brass section that latches onto the melodic line. As far as one can tell, the timing of the music is entirely synchronised with the visuals of the orchestra, which makes it likely that the scene was not post-synchronised in its entirety but at least partially played live on scene. As we have observed in a similar scene with the Lewis Ruth band, the mediated sound of such live recordings further blurred the lines between the live and the recorded.

This particular scene is very special in that it features a song in its entirety and with various interludes, whereas in other movies usually only snippets of a song

[497] Louis de Vries was a Dutch jazz trumpeter who was considered one of the best European jazz trumpeters of his time.
[498] The actors Franz (Francis) Lederer and Käthe von Nagy embody, respectively, the charmer and potential heir of an engine factory Fred von Wellingen and the Hungarian-German bar maid Lia Török. During this scene, Fred pretends to get engaged to Lia in order to shock his family into forgetting about their arranged marriage to a wealthy heiress.
[499] T-JUBE RADIO. "Leo Monosson & Franz (Francis) Lederer: Du bist nicht die Erste." YouTube Video, 0:3:47. January 26, 2018. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 15.11.2022, 12:03 pm).

are performed in a live music setting emulated on screen. It is also special in that the singer, Monosson, goes off the stage and serenades the dancing couple around 00:03:14 by repeating the last line of the chorus with more dramatic gestures and full vocals, while the dancing couple sinks into a passionate kiss. In this scene (see Figures 11-13), Monosson is hence depicted technologically on screen singing a "live" version of something that was in real life normally only experienced in music venues or on recordings. As such, it is another example of the constant blurring of conventions surrounding the live and the mediated.



Figure 11: Still: Leon Monosson singing "Du bist nicht die Erste" in the movie *Ihre Majestät, die Liebe*. *T-JUBE RADIO*, *YouTube Video*.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.



Figure 12: Still: Solo violin player stepping forward during the performance of “Du bist nicht die Erste”. *T-JUBE RADIO*, *YouTube Video*.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.



Figure 13: Still: Leon Monosson serenading the couple. *T-JUBE RADIO*, *YouTube Video*.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

This blurring was intensified by Monosson recording his performance of the same hit song with a different orchestra, which would itself presumably have been put to use at dance functions. In a sense, his performance, though originally on screen, has been returned to its “proper”, so to speak, habitat. The mere acousmatic presence of the shellac record that had been a pillar of both the private and the

public entertainment music culture for a few years before the sound movie emerged is, in the case of the sound movie hit song, now complemented, though, with a visual of a performing Monosson. Listeners might have even been able to imagine this visual when listening to the shellac records as they danced, even while recorded versions of songs might have differed from one another. Under his pseudonym Leo Moll, Monosson recorded the song for Electrola with Juan Llossas and his tango orchestra (catalogue number: E. G. 2202) with more overt tango metrics and tropes—a bandoneon interlude is featured—and a speedier tempo. Even though the interpretation on record does not differ much from that in the movie, Monosson's voice sounds smoother, more intimate, and withdrawn, especially when singing the last iteration of the chorus.[500]

Aside from performances in sound movie operettas themselves, radio broadcasts helped to further promote the circulation of hit songs during so-called "Plattenvorstellungen" ("record presentations"). The Berliner Funk-Stunde, for instance, regularly featured new sound movie hit songs in a show called "Aus den neuesten Tonfilmen" ("From The Newest Sound Movies"), during which they played new shellac records and named relevant catalogue numbers and labels. On 21st February 1931, the Funk-Stunde introduced the hit songs "Ich denk' an Mädi" and "Du bist nicht die Erste" by Electrola with the Ben Berlin orchestra in their show.[501] From a photograph that can be found in Monosson's private collection (see Figure 14), one can infer that often much-anticipated radio broadcasts were used to promote the sales of records and vice versa. The photograph of a display window of a Berlin department store suggests that when it came to buying records,

[500] 78Upm. "Du bist nicht die Erste." YouTube Video, 0:1:04. May 2, 2010. (accessed on 15.11.2022, 01:01 pm). Interestingly enough, the arranger Ettlinger is explicitly named on the actual record as having written the arrangement for Juan Llossas and his tango orchestra – even before the lyricists Bernauer und Österreicher are named.
The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.
[501] Anonymous, "Sendeprogramm für den 21.2.1931," *Funk-Stunde*, no. 7 (1931).

audiences also bought into the very desirability of the product and with it a special kind of experience that superseded distinctions between the live and the recorded. What is more, by appearing in radio broadcasts, acts such as Monosson and Paul Godwin and his orchestra received a seal of excellence.

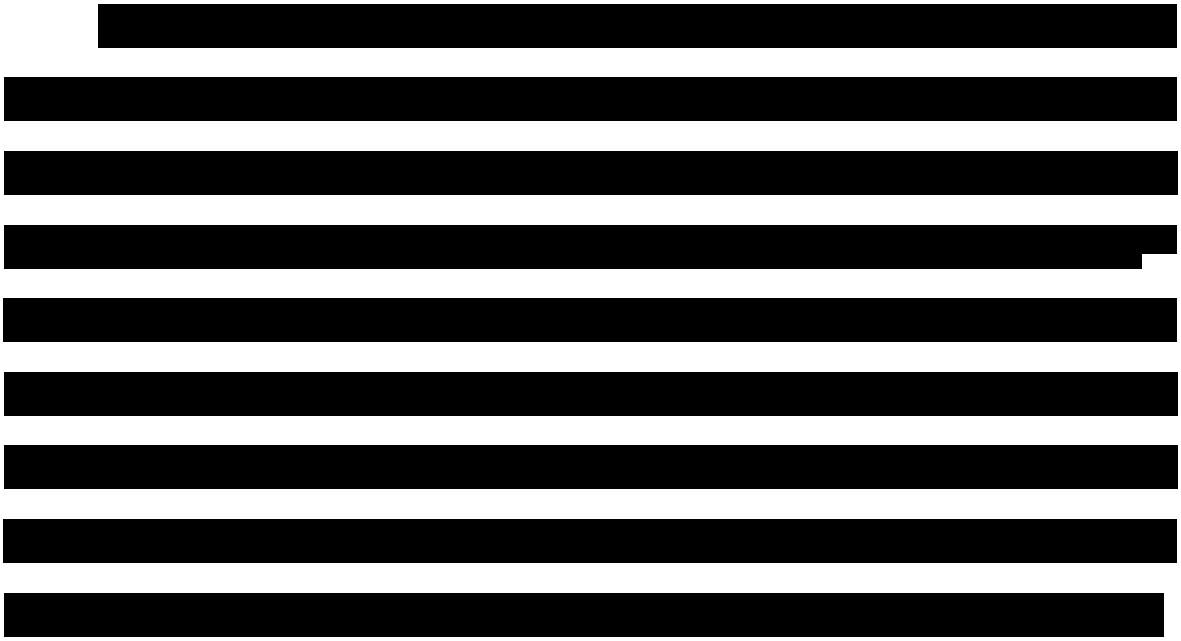


Figure 14: Window decoration in unknown Berlin music shop*. Anne-Marie Vigneron, private photo collection (Leon Monosson).*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

When consulting the broadcasting journal *Die Funk-Stunde* for the year 1931, it becomes apparent that Monosson's newly acquired popularity also made him a frequent live performer on radio programmes. Most often, these programmes were either broadcast directly from prominent music venues or were pre-recorded sessions – in both formats, Monosson was accompanied by the most famous dance

orchestras.[502] He featured in more than 145 radio broadcasts and received a fee of 150 to 300 RM per appearance.[503] In fact, he was such a regular guest in radio features that the journal *Funk-Woche*, which detailed the radio programme of each week, used his portrait on the front cover of an issue in April 1931.[504] Monosson also continued to dazzle in Berlin's most reputable entertainment music venues. A collection of programme leaflets from his private collection is testament to his immense popularity with Berlin audiences: Monosson sang live at the luxury department store Karstadt, gave Schlager evenings at the hotels Excelsior, Esplanade, and Adlon (most often with the Dajos Belá orchestra), and sang at the dance bars Casaonva and Femina, the Weidenhof casino, the Scala, the Haus Vaterland, and other prominent entertainment music venues.[505]



The text originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[502] On 28th December 1930, for instance, he sang at a matinee the Großes Schauspielhaus, Berlin, accompanied by Dajos Béla and his orchestra, singing, among others, the Grothe hit songs "Alles für euch, ihr Frauen" or "Warum vergißt du mich?". There were also concerts broadcasted from the Hotel Adlon, cinemas such as the Lichtburg, and other venues (Rep. 078, Reg. Nr. 65.937, *compensation file Leon Monosson*).
[503] Ibid.
[504] Anonymous, "Cover page," *Funk-Woche*, 26.4.1931.
[505] Among others, Monosson seemingly submitted his own hit song "Ewiger Mai strahlt in Hawaii" into a schlager competition that took place at the Berlin Scala on 25th October, 1931. The competition was hosted by the daily newspaper *8-Uhr-Abendblatt* (B Rep. 078, Reg. Nr. 65.937, *compensation file Leon Monosson*).
[506] BLHA, Staatsarchiv Potsdam, Rep 36A A3000, *Oberfinanzpräsident – Devisenstelle – Leopold Monosson, A 74400 A, Anlage 9*.

[redacted][507] Monosson had typified the new kind of star performer who had featured in movies, the radio, on records, and in dance venues as opposed to the hordes of anonymous cinema musicians that had been making cinema music, and his pay level typified this too. Ultimately, his style was right at the centre of German culture and taste at that time, allowing him to be the linchpin of the changes and relocations that were discussed earlier. His versatility and adaptability, as well his oscillation between different realms of the live and the mediated, allowed him to be everywhere and, by doing so, to drag the dichotomy around with him, helping leave it in limbo.

A Vocal Ensemble for the Movies: Comedian Harmonists

The vocal sextet Comedian Harmonists, which featured three tenors, a baritone, a bass, and a piano player, were famous for their impeccable harmonies, humorous delivery, sleek looks, and witty sounds, formed after the example of the American vocal quartet, the Revelers.[508] In the literary estate of Robert Biberti, who had been the bass voice of the Comedian Harmonists all the way through the Second World War, traces of the ensemble's entanglement with the sound movie world can be found which will be used throughout this section.[509] The ensemble most notably featured in *Die Drei von der Tankstelle* with their record success "Liebling, mein

[507] B Rep. 078, Reg. Nr. 65.937, *compensation file Leon Monosson.*
[508] The German record label Electrola marketed the records of the American vocal quartet under the name "The Revelers" (even though their name was actually "The Revellers") and with the added label "Negergesang", featuring, among others, the hit song "I'm gonna Charleston back to Charleston".
[509] Staatsbibliothek Berlin, Nachlass Robert Biberti, N. Mus. NL 86.

Herz lässt Dich grüßen". They quickly built a rapport with Ufa and its court composer Werner Richard Heymann, with whom the Comedian Harmonists worked most often, appearing in a multitude of movies scored by Heymann between 1930 and 1933. Their cameo appearances further popularised the vocal style of the sextet, which was characterised by close harmonies, the accentuation of the melodic line, dynamic agility even in the pianissimo register, accuracy in rhythmic delivery, the cunning imitation of instruments, and a certain inimitable mellifluousness.

What started as an attempt at repeating the success story of The Revelers in Germany soon became its own mass phenomenon with its very own copycats. Ensembles such as the Abels, the Kardosch Sänger, and Die Harmony Boys sprung up like mushrooms; even an all-female vocal ensemble called Singing Babies made a name for itself. However, contemporary reviews mostly focused on the Comedian Harmonists and lauded the "admirable restraint" with which they performed live: "with not much vocal cord and lung, soft and smooth".[510] In the same breath, the reviewer praised the ensemble's uncanny ability to imitate instruments:

> Such vocal imitation of instruments is an elevation of the instruments themselves, which can go so far as one could reconcile with and be convinced that this music can indeed be more than commonly felt; with time one does not shake one's head quite so helplessly and doubtfully when faced with it. … They struck like lightning, the "songs of the moment" of those highly qualified interpreters and mediators of such mass expression.[511]

Calling them "interpreters and mediators of such mass expression" emphasised both their ability for extreme subtlety and their imitative skills when singing "songs of the moment". In a way, they were the perfect ensemble to complicate, or overcome, the boundaries between live and non-live when audiences saw/heard them via technology of one kind or another, since, by way of their performance style,

[510] Ch., "Die Comedian Harmonists," *Tilsiter Zeitung*, 16.4.1931.
[511] Ibid.

they were perfectly suited to feature across various media channels. Like Monosson's, their subtlety was enabled by their engagement with the recording process in such a way that their recording style of performing morphed into the template for their traditional live performances.

Despite their popularity with critics and audiences alike, it is obvious from the contemporary reviews that the ensemble's repertory was not always looked at with fondness. Another critic emphasised in a concert review from 23th April 1932 in the *Danziger Volksbühne* that the ensemble's programme, made up of Schlager, dance, and operetta songs, "had nothing to do with art", and that their success rather had to be attributed to their "artistry often being enchanting".[512] The review further bemoaned the "sentimental kitsch that the masses unfailingly fell for" and was quick to point out that the ensemble, which had been made famous by regular radio broadcasts and shellac discs, could have been enjoyed better at home by listening "in front of the speaker or gramophone" without the unrest of the concert hall, since the inclined listener would then be better able to enjoy the Comedian Harmonists in their "purer" form.[513] Similar allusions to the fact that the Comedian Harmonists had first and foremost reached their popularity through mediated performances can be detected in other reviews. An anonymous reviewer in the *Kieler Zeitung* from 30th October 1931 stated that a concert in Kiel was staged at a venue where there had been a screening of *Bomben auf Monte Carlo* (*Bombs On Monte Carlo*, 1932) weeks before, in which the group had made a cameo, and emphasised that "it was quite nifty that the group of artists first had manifested itself on the screen and only then into real life".[514] Another reviewer remarked that a whole range of entertainment music forms, such as hit songs and chansons, had been performed by the

[512] Anonymous, "Die 'Comedian Harmonists'," *Danziger Volksbühne*, 23.4.1931.
[513] Ibid.
[514] F. B., "Die Comedian Harmonists singen!," *Kieler Zeitung*, 30.10.1931.

Comedian Harmonists “in order to transform into living gramophone apparatus”.[515] The anonymous reviewer went even further to draw comparisons to experiencing the vocal ensemble on shellac disc versus live by stating that the audience had now “heard and seen them after the Tonfilm-Idee” and now must do with “simply hearing” them.[516]

The sextet first appeared on screen in *Die Drei von der Tankstelle* on 19th July 1930, alongside Leo Monosson and the Lewis Ruth Band. Dressed up as barkeepers in a nightclub, their take on the melodious Schlager “Liebling, mein Herz lässt Dich grüßen” (“Darling, My Heart Greets You”, written by Werner Richard Heymann and Robert Gilbert) does not only features close-harmony singing but also an arrangement that makes rare use of a Hawaiian guitar and a prominent solo violin line. Leo Monosson lends his voice to the solo part. Several cover versions of the song were put into circulation. Among the most notable recordings were:

1. A shellac record released by ODEON (O-2991 b) featuring a fairly boppy foxtrot version by Dajos Béla & Tanz-Orchester, with singing by Leo Frank (a pseudonym of Leo Monosson) and harmonies sung by the vocal ensemble Four Admirals.
2. A slow-fox version released by GRAMMOPHON (C 40171) by the Ben Berlin Orchestra and Leo Monosson that, from what can be told, featured chorus singing by Marcel Wittrisch.
3. A version recorded for His Master’s Voice (E.G. 2036) by Marek Weber and his orchestra.

[515] Anonymous, “Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde e.V. Coburg, Konzert der Comedian Harmonists,” *Coburger Zeitung*, 20.10.1931.
[516] Ibid.

There are other versions with different orchestras and popular chorus singers such as Luigi Bernauer and Kurt Mühlhardt. As we can see, Leo Monosson featured on many of those recordings as well as on some of the French and English recordings. This example further proves that a sound movie hit song's reach also depended on it being re-recorded in as many versions and by as many musical acts as possible to enhance its cultural reach. The more often it was recorded, the more often it was incorporated into live programmes of combination orchestras and used in dance venues that utilised records.

[redacted]

The text originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[517] Staatsbibliothek Berlin, Nachlass, N. Mus. NL 86 Robert Biberti, B, 4, 464, *contract with the Universum-Film-Aktiengesellschaft,* 24.12.1931.

[518] [redacted]

[redacted]

At the peak of their popularity, the Comedian Harmonists appeared in six Ufa sound movie operettas from 1930 to 1933 – either only with their vocals or on-screen. Their vocals-only features include the following: in *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht*, they sing a rendition of "Wenn ich sonntags in mein Kino geh'" ("When I Go To My Cinema On Sundays") in the opening sequence of the movie – their singing carries over a slow tracking shot of the Berliner rear houses.[519] They also appeared as singing cooks in *Ihre Hoheit befiehlt* (*Your Majesty Commands*, 1931) alongside the Lewis Ruth Band.[520] The first few scenes of the movie show a "Gesindeball" (servants ball) at a local dance hall where the two love interests meet for the first time (under false pretenses). The song which features, "Bisschen dies und bisschen das" ("A Little Bit Of This, A Little Bit Of That"), did not appear on record but was only featured in the movie – in several different versions. In *Bomben auf Monte Carlo*, they sing the seafarer's love song and slow fox "Wenn der Wind weht über das Meer" ("Over the Blue") a capella. Some lines of the song are delivered in French, Russian, and Italian with the respective accompanying instruments. In *Der falsche Ehemann* (*The Wrong Husband*, 1931), the vocal ensemble sings the Schlager "Hasch mich, mein Liebling hasch mich ("Catch Me, My Darling, Catch Me"), wearing their usual concert attire and thus presumably doing a cameo

[redacted] (Staatsbibliothek Berlin, Nachlass, N. Mus. NL 86 Robert Biberti, E, 129, 28, *letter from the Funkstunde*, 7.7.1930).

[519] In this video, the Comedian Harmonists' shortened rendition of the song is featured from 00:05:08 to 00:06:05: Benito Camela. "Ich bei Tag und du bei Nacht." YouTube Video, 1:34:20. May 23, 2021. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 23.05.2022, 6:45 pm).

[520] Unfortunately, the video only features an acoustically tainted rendition of the song: RareFilme. "1931 Ihre Hoheit befiehlt." YouTube Video, 1:24:58. September 2, 2022. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 3.11.2022, 10:15 am) from 00:15:35 to 00:17:30.

appearance as themselves.[521] They are accompanied by a dance orchestra (that only briefly appears in the background of the scene screen). Not only does this version of the song display some of the ensemble's most unique performance characteristics, namely the witty interplay with the orchestra and each other, but it also features them in the setting of a dance event at a night club.

Despite their success, the ensemble's career came to a halt after 1933, when half of the group was forced into exile by National Socialist legislation. After their re-formation with a partially different line-up, they occasionally appeared in feature films such as *Meistersextett* (*Master's sextet*, 1936) but were not able to emulate their original success. The exiled singers also formed a new vocal ensemble under the names "Comedian Harmonists" or "Comedy Harmonists" and went on to tour Europe, America, and Australia. Both Comedian Harmonists reformations retained their characteristic sound and the exile formation was, contrary to Monosson, partially successful abroad. However, this was mainly to do with them expanding their repertory, now including songs that had been made famous by American vocal groups.

Like Monosson, the Comedian Harmonists were ubiquitous across different media channels, had a recording-specific singing style, and appeared in various films and on various recordings of songs from those films, often crossing over with other artists covered in this chapter. All this illustrates that the sound movie operetta and hit song culture was one dominated by a handful of major artists, and was basically a swamp of constant rearticulations and relocations of initially simple materials: the hit songs themselves.

[521] Hoffmannjazz Hoffmann. "1931 Comedian Harmonists – 'Der Falscher Ehemann' film clips." YouTube Video, 0:5:01. September 17, 2012. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 3.11.2022, 10:55 am).

Conclusion

When looking at the most popular music acts of the Weimar period, such as the artists addressed in this chapter, it quickly becomes apparent that they were firmly situated at the margins between the live and the mediated and were perceived as mediators of the sound movie hit songs' various relocations. Ensemble configurations such as the combination orchestra, who had already been a staple of a changing entertainment music world, were successfully integrated into the earliest sound movies, partly due to their suitability for records but also because they were able to accommodate or co-opt the exploding popularity of jazz elements in the live music domain. The main locale of the negotiation between the live and the mediated was thus the sound movie hit song: repetitions of a hit song were embedded in early sound movies, often quite naturalistically and semi-diegetically depicted as part as on-screen performances. In turn, they begat other fixed forms, most notably multiple recordings of the same song, which nevertheless varied between one another, creating a sense of spontaneity while all the time being modular, thus sedimenting a sense of fluctuation between the live and the mediated – the dichotomy in limbo I have mentioned. Hence, a song featured in a popular film could be relocated in various arrangements and thus become embedded into the wider social fabric of sound, giving birth to blurred modes of performance that could be situated on the margins of different epistemological modes between the live and the recorded. This also meant that the cinema was no longer the only locale of film-specific music. Rather, the sound movie hit song came to pervade both traditional live music settings as well as other media.

Cinema music as it was practiced before the emergence of the sound movie was presented as something live and embodied – or, in the case of using shellac discs to accompany movies, as something dead and canned that was presented in

a live setting. Since cinema musicians made use of rather formulaic and standardised repertoire, and since the quality of their performances was impeded by dire working conditions, audiences might have perceived the “liveness” of cinema music as mediocre in comparison with the ostensibly non-live nature of the film itself. Meanwhile, the record had set a precedent for musical performances that were, in comparison, considered of the highest standard and, in many ways, cohered better with the idea of a successful live performance. At the same time, due to royalty battles and misguided policies for live entertainment, recorded music also made its way into traditionally live spaces such as dance halls, further blurring the lines between the live and the non-live. With the advent of the sound movie, the tradition of playing film illustrations in cinemas and interspersing them with curated stage shows was replaced by a complex set of relocations of the sound movie’s hit song whose main site was no longer the cinema alone but a wide array of relocations, whose reach hinged on the popularity of a few musical acts. It is the audience’s needs and desires that are being catered to by these relocations as much as it is those relocations that are defining those desires and needs. In the vein of this change, the cinema musician’s employment crisis led to a re-structuring of the musical infrastructure surrounding movies and the cinema, with cinema music being firmly replaced by set pieces of the recording industry and the live entertainment music scene. Inefficient unionising attempts and the on-going fight against the mechanisation of music were not successful, and their instrumentalisation by the film press might have led to audiences taking sides with the sound movie rather than the musicians.

It is not the case, however, that live music in cinemas immediately ceased to exist once the sound movie hit song entered the scene. As Karl Heinz Dettke rightly points out, building on the tradition of having interim varieté live performances

(Bühnenschauen) between movie screenings, live music was occasionally still played in selected cinemas.[522] Prestige cinemas, such as Ufa's premiere cinemas, in particular held onto their orchestras to elevate the cinematic experience for the audience. A live orchestra at a cinema was hence still appreciated as a memento of the tradition of cinema music. However, that is what it was: a memento. It was a faint memory of a tradition that was no longer artistically productive but that had been replaced by a new sense of the ubiquitous sound, whose catalysts were the sound movie hit song and its prominent interpreters. While the fracture between the live and the mediated is something audiences were already tuned into, the sound movie hit song nevertheless narrates the story of the conflation of a sense of liveness across all media where different kinds of performances, be it on screen, on disc or in dance halls, were all, in a way, perceived as mediated and live at the same time.

[522] Dettke, *Kinoorgeln und Kinomusik*, 83.

Chapter III: Negotiating Flicker Aesthetics: Weaving the Social Fabric of Transition Era Film Sound

> Dem Laien mutet es wie höhere Zauberei an. Er muss sich darauf beschränken, mit dem Kopf zu nicken, wenn ihm neben dem Filmstreifen herlaufende Tonstreifen gezeigt wird, der wie ein Spektrum aus lauter Strichen besteht. Der schmale Streifen ist nach dem Urteil der Fachleute einer Photographie der Schallwellen, in die er wieder zurückverwandelt wird. Zur gesamten Metamorphose ist, wie es heißt, eine elfmalige Transformation erforderlich. Die Eingeweihten werden genau Bescheid wissen. Jedenfalls übertrumpft die Esoterik der Technik heute bereits die der eleusinischen Mysterien.
>
> To the complete layman it must seem like sorcery. He must confine himself to simply nod when the soundtrack, which is comprised of long stripes like a spectrum, and moves parallel to the filmstrip, is shown to him. According to the judgement of professionals, the small stripe is a photograph of those sound waves which it will eventually be transformed back into. To complete the whole metamorphosis, one says, an elevenfold transformation is required. Those initiated will know all about it. In any case, these days the esotericism of technology does surpass that of the Eleusinian mysteries.[523]

The alleged esotericism of technology that renowned film critic Siegfried Kracauer refers to in this pointed remark not only occupied critics and audiences of the transition era but continues to be a major issue for cultural historians of technology.[524] The fable of the complete layman at the mercy of technological development strikes a chord with audiences through different eras and cultures who, at times, appear both suspicious and highly critical of technology, and of the elite creators, operators, and structures behind the scenes. As film scholar Donald Crafton noted in his monograph *The talkies: American cinema's transition to sound, 1926-1931*, one reason for this kind of suspicion might be that many of those technological processes which were pivotal for the development of film sound were "neither detected" or considered a point of interest by the average audience, but

[523] Siegfried Kracauer, "Tonbildfilm," *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 12.10.1928.
[524] The term transition era or conversion era commonly refers to the period during which the film world transitioned from silent to sound movie. During these constituting years, sound movies not only superseded silent movies but also came into their own by eliminating quirks of sound technology and opening up to experimentation.

were rather, perhaps deliberately, clouded in mysticism.[525] Since there are also only a handful of first-hand accounts about how film sound was actually received by average audiences—leaving aside the multitude of reviews and commentaries that lend force to the narrative of film sound as a disturbance, nuisance, or problem child—it seems as if the finer nuances of how exactly film sound was heard and understood have been mostly drowned out by a cacophony of empty platitudes.[526] Still, it is hard to ignore that emerging film sound—which was profoundly influenced by technological mediation, even if unrecognised by many—was, in fact, also part of "a larger culture of sound",[527] indeed a newly configured social fabric of sound. This meant that, even if audiences were oblivious to the exact changes and practices that modulated sound, they indirectly took part in modulating that fabric.[528]

The social shaping of sound, however, was strongly associated not just with audiences but also with organising networks, structures, and agendas, most of which were themselves shaped by pre-existing cultural, economic, and genre-specific structures – not to mention, of course, technological frames.[529] Besides, user groups, to utilise a term that Rick Altman coins in his monograph *Silent Film Sound*, included not just spectators or producers, "the obvious players in the cinema

[525] Donald Crafton, *The Talkies: American Cinema's Transition to Sound, 1926-1931*. History of the American Cinema, vol. 4 (New York; London: Scribner, 1997), 227.
[526] Especially the aesthetic rivalry between silent films and talkies, as it was manifested by critics, theorists, and musicians alike, led to synchronous sound being regarded as a step backwards. The alleged regressive aesthetic qualities of the talkie were seemingly further enforced by not only the technological hiccups that an audience would be confronted with during its early years but also by a foregrounding of mechanical music for its own sake.
[527] Steve Wurtzler, *Electric Sounds: Technological Change and the Rise of Corporate Mass Media*. Film and Culture Series (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 9.
[528] Even though Emily Thompson does not focus on the relationship between media and technology itself, her book *The Soundscape of Modernity* does offer a comprehensive insight into an era's culture of listening that was shaped and formed by certain representational practices (Emily Ann Thompson, *The Soundscape of Modernity: Architectural Acoustics and the Culture of Listening in America, 1900-1933* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002)).
[529] Hans Klein and Daniel Lee Kleinman, "The Social Construction of Technology: Structural Considerations," *Science, Technology & Human Values* 27, no. 1 (2002): 28-52. Klein and Kleinman suggest that "technological frames are not likely to emerge de nuovo in the case of each new technology." (40) They are instead more likely to build on pre-existing technological frameworks that resonate within the cultural and social fabric of society.

production cycle", but rather "all those whose lives [we]re affected by the new technology".[530] Hence, weaving the social fabric of sound was ultimately not just an issue of how film sound was received in film theatres, seemingly the end point of film sound's journey, but also of how film sound was created, manipulated, and edited in studios, as well as of the ways musicians, composers, technicians, set designers, and so on were involved in the shaping of sound. While it is important to acknowledge that any attempt at surveying film sound's journey through the lens of all these various user groups would be futile, at least within the scope of this chapter, it is nevertheless worth noting that the social fabric of sound was woven in this way by many people, often with differing interests.[531]

It is also important to reiterate another obvious complication when tackling this analytical task: especially with regard to German talkies, the available source material on sound is scarce, incomplete, and often ambiguous. If sound was part of a social fabric, then, how did a piece of fabric that, at first glance, retrospectively seems so threadbare and sheer look in its original state? By highlighting and elucidating changing and competing attitudes, this chapter will scrutinise how film sound was constantly altered, refashioned, and customised, with technology often being a significant issue but one that has often been overlooked in historical accounts of the period. Reconstructing the social fabric of sound therefore must start with a brief interlude explaining how, with the help of modern theorists, early twentieth century understandings of film sound shall be investigated in this chapter.

[530] Rick Altman, *Silent Film Sound* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 22.
[531] Altman, *Silent Film Sound*, 22.

Weaving the Social Fabric of Film Sound

As discussed in the Introduction, this chapter will work with Rick Altman's assumption that the transition from silent to sound movies can be dubbed as a "crisis" that merits further historiographical investigation with regard to how the introduction of new technologies was reflected in every aspect of their socially defined existence. Following Trevor Pinch's and Wiebke Bijker's notion that "a given technological artifact will have different identities and thereby present different problems to different social groups", this chapter will specifically focus on both the realities of film sound technology of that time and the negotiation of the social functions, representational conventions, and patterns of reception that these technologies invoked.[532] A comparison of selected scenes from sound movie operettas will enhance the picture by highlighting how technology was presented to audiences, and how such trepidations that both critical and lay audiences had were dexterously addressed within the movies themselves. Since sound movie operettas very heavily featured musical numbers, this chapter will zoom in on scenes from selected films, including *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari* (*The Cabinet of Dr Larifari*), *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht* (*I By Day, You by Night*) and *Ein blonder Traum* (*A Blonde Dream*). Since films such as *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari* exhibited an inclination to ironically showcase the error-prone practice of recording film sound, telling scenes from said movies will exemplify how what the audience thought the recording of sound entailed differed greatly from what was actually common practice in film studios. The aestheticised depiction of technology within the films themselves thus helped familiarised audiences with film sound and technologies.

[532] Wurtzler, *Electric Sounds*, 12.

In keeping with such heavily case-specific investigations of film sound and technology, this chapter will first detail the processes, sites, and agents that the production of a German transition era sound movie necessitated. It will start with a description of the production site, the sound movie studio, focusing mainly on Ufa's Neubabelsberg studios, which were unanimously hailed as state-of-the-art facilities by representatives of the contemporary trade press.[533] By, firstly, detailing the assumed furnishings of the Neubabelsberg "high-tech" studio, prominent characteristics of the room acoustics of an original studio space and their effect on the recording process will be inferred. This chapter will then go on to explore one specific recording, mixing and projection system, the Tobis-Klangfilm or Klangfilm-Tobis system, which was used at the Neubabelsberg production site and was a product of the rather tumultuous marriage between the giants of the German electrical industry giants, Siemens Halske AG and AEG, their subsidiary Klangfilm GmbH, and the film industry heavyweight Tobis.[534] In this chapter, their sound-on-film system (or: double-system recording) will be exemplified, both from the perspective of the sound engineer and the contemporary film technology researcher and from that of the (presumably) technologically naïve spectator. Competing German film recording systems, namely the disc method or Lignose Breusing system, shall only be mentioned when and if acutely relevant to the selected case studies, since they were much less commonly used than the sound-on-film-system.

---

[533] See, for, instance, R. Schultz, "Entwicklung der Tonfilmaufnahme," *Filmtechnik*, 26.12.1932 and Heinz Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis seiner Aufnahme, Bearbeitung und Vorführung* (Berlin: Lichtbildbühne, 1932), 436.

[534] In 1932, Alexander Jason stated in his comprehensive movie industry manual that 48% of Germany's cinemas conducted their operations with illegal equipment ("Schwarzapparaturen") that either made use of equipment that was not licensed by the leading electrical companies or did not pay license fees for the production and screening of films. Looking at the contemporary trade press, one finds many accounts of non-licensed equipment being the root of the new medium's bad reputation. On the other hand, it is safe to say that the double-edged pricing of the electro-monopoly forced many cinema owners into the black market when faced with declining numbers of visitors. (Alexander Jason, *Handbuch der Filmwirtschaft* (Berlin: Verlag für Presse, Wirtschaft und Politik, 1930), 60).

The main focuses of this discussion will be microphone placement and handling, the recording of music, and the on-site mixing of sound as conducted by the sound engineer or sound technician.

The second part of this chapter will then focus on the screening of talkies in film theatres. The emergence of room acoustics as a discipline shall be discussed against the backdrop of a wave of modifications in cinema architecture. The importance of the projectionist, as well as similar cinema-to-cinema variances such as the capabilities of the available projection apparatus and the arrangement of loudspeakers, will also be discussed in detail. Throughout this chapter, the focus will also be on the cinema audience itself, its listening habits, and its presumed reception of the talkie as a new medium. To tie these threads together, I will then summarise how the weaving of the social fabric of film sound was mediated by circumstances (technologies, policies, etc.), reflexive conceptions of cultural activity (musical genres, performance styles, etc.), and newly emerging reception patterns. To support this contention, the second part of this chapter will also track the shifting relationship between sound (and music), technology, and sensory experiences of the time and will illustrate how these factors "shaped not only [audiences'] attitudes toward mechanical recording and representation" but also film technology itself.[535]

Looking at the transition era, the story of the German music film is well-suited to retracing the practices and effects that formed a new social fabric of sound in this period. The film industry and its personnel helped guiding spectators into a new age of sound by incorporating familiar musical forms and by overtly depicting sound (re)production practices and effects within sound movie operettas. Utilising music as a bridge between technologies of sound (re)production and audiences was not only a pragmatic and intelligent choice in terms of film's general inclination towards

[535] Wurtzler, *Electric Sounds*, 8.

musical genres,[536] but also facilitated what Jonathan Sterne calls "the imagined correspondence between live and reproduced" sound/image.[537] Viewers were thereby eased into the era of sound cinema and into "a set of procedures and aesthetics" that would "stand in for reality within the system of reproduced sounds".[538] From a reception-oriented vantage point, they were christened into a non-realistic system of aesthetic experience where the role of music was disproportionately large. All of this was a response to, and was limited by, the technological developments and possibilities of the time, with which arrived new and disorienting epistemologies. Habitual modes of listening, seeing, and knowing were challenged by the filmic staging of new technologically mediated sensory experiences.[539]

The Reality and Fiction of the Studio Space

As outlined in Chapter One, in *Ein blonder Traum*, from 1932, a young woman named Jou-Jou, formerly a human missile in a touring circus, has ambitions to become a great star but falls victim to a fraudulent film producer, Mr Merryman, who promises to land her a career in Hollywood. The film's complex dream sequence, which follows on from her first few weeks of living in the railway waggon colony with Willy I and Willy II (and her becoming increasingly fed up with its seemingly suffocating simplicity), offers this chapter's first example of how technology and the personnel operating it behind the scenes were presented to contemporary audiences. At first glance, it seems as if *Ein blonder Traum* implies to audiences

[536] The history of film is very much suffused with examples of a myriad of musical genres and tropes hijacking the screen (silent operas, shorts inspired by vaudeville acts, operettas, singer films, etc.).
[537] Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 285.
[538] Ibid.
[539] James Lastra, *Sound Technology and the American Cinema: Perception, Representation, Modernity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 2.

that sound technology and the making of sound, among other production processes, entailed the rather threatening de-subjectification and de-humanisation of its subjects. When scrutinising the sequence in further detail, however, it quickly becomes apparent that *Ein blonder Traum* portrays the creation of film sound as something chaotic, threatening, and claustrophobic, almost as the work of an army of pitiless technicians and creative personnel.

Jou-Jou's dream sequence starts out by showing the discarded railway waggons coming back to life and setting out on a journey to Hollywood (with the train proceeding on its journey even through the Atlantic and passing by a waving Statue of Liberty). To great applause, Jou-Jou eventually arrives in Hollywood. However, when confronted with a film producer styled as a Prussian general, she must immediately face up to a rather torturous audition. She starts executing her dance routine, all while the shapes of lighting technicians, camera operators, and sound technicians are cast on the screen in the background (see Figure 15). A short cut back to the Prussian general-cum-film producer illuminates a crew of all-male operators, all dressed alike, gazing disapprovingly at Jou-Jou (see Figure 16). Jou-Jou defiantly breaks out into song (and of course, the song is the film's ubiquitous hit song "Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt's ein kleines bisschen Glück"). When getting to the song's last line, her voice suddenly morphs into that of a man, an occurrence that ignites a burst of laughter among the clone-like crew (see Figure 17). Jou-Jou finds herself understandably puzzled and horrified and decides to knock out her tightrope act as a last resort (see Figure 18). The act also does not seem to find the film producer's approval and eventually he abruptly aims a sound camera-turned-projectile at her and literally shoots her off the stage (see Figure 19). Scared to death, Jou-Jou wakes from her dream soaking with sweat.



Figure 15: Still image from *Ein blonder Traum*, Jou-Jou doing her dance routine in front of the camera with a crew behind the blends. *Kurbel TV, YouTube Video.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.



Figure 16: Still image from *Ein blonder Traum*, film producer and film crew disapprovingly glaring at Jou-Jou. *Kurbel TV, YouTube Video.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.



Figure 17: Still image from *Ein blonder Traum*: Jou-Jou realising that her voice morphed into a male voice. *Kurbel TV, YouTube Video.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.



Figure 18: Still image from *Ein blonder Traum*: Jou-Jou doing her tightrope act with the crew behind the blinds. *Kurbel TV, YouTube Video.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.



Figure 19: Still image from *Ein blonder Traum*: film producer aiming to shoot Jou-Jou off stage with a film camera. *Kurbel TV, YouTube Video.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Despite this sequence being clearly marked as a dream sequence, it is easy to imagine that the rare presence of technical equipment and its rather hostile depiction would have had an influence on how an audience would have conceptualised the potentialities and components of the filming process. Even though the sequence is framed with all the usual signifiers that point towards it being a product of the realm of dreams, such as blurry shooting frames, the technological equipment and the technical personnel operating it were also shrouded in such mysticism in real life that the distinction between fictionalised reality and stylised fiction must have been a hard one to draw or even recognise. According to the sequence, a wide studio place, a liberated camera, several lightning technicians, and a multitude of crew members were seemingly necessary to shoot a dance and music sequence of such scope (interestingly though, an orchestra is, unlike in other movies, nowhere to be seen). The technicians themselves, as well as the director,

are portrayed as an anonymous mass, as rather alien and gruesome creatures, guiding and weaponising technology at their whim. The climax of this clash of the technological world and its naïve and tampered-with victim, in this case Jou-Jou, is the actual "seizure" of Jou-Jou's voice. The mysterious metamorphosis of Jou-Jou's voice is not further explicated and leaves the audience with a bitter aftertaste of arbitrary mysticism and esoteric horror.

When it comes to demystifying the recording process and the technological equipment behind it, scenes such as this offer an excellent basis for examining under which circumstances films were shot and what the actual limits of sound manipulation through technological processes were. The impression of merciless and highly objectifying technology was very much grounded in a much less illustrious reality that encompassed rather discreet, systematic, even virtuosic processes, affording each person involved a significant amount of agency in the shaping of sound. This side of the recording process, however, was mostly kept out of sight and mind of the audiences. What, then, could contemporary audiences falsely infer from such depictions – and in which processes were transition era recording processes actually grounded? The next section will illustrate how recording spaces greatly differed from what is shown in, for instance, *Ein blonder Traum*, and how recording technology and its operators were in fact well-oiled pieces of a machine that counted on the delicate adjustment and gratification of everyone involved.

Compared to the stylised recording/audition space presented to us in *Ein blonder Traum*, even a 1930 high-end film studio could not keep up with the myriads of technicians and artistic personnel that the movie's Hollywood dream studio housed. The Neubabelsberg film ateliers, which perhaps were the closest German equivalent to a Hollywood studio, were univocally hailed as the peak of German film

studio architecture by contemporary practitioners and theorists of the transition era.[540] With their nine studios of varying sizes (which allowed for the disturbance-free parallel shooting of scenes or movies), several smaller sound booths elevated in the centre of the so-called Tonkreuz (sound cross), several machine rooms that housed transmitters and amplifiers and much more, the newly erected studio complex could not only compete with its American rivals in size but also in its abundance of modern technological equipment.

When building the new studio complex, Ufa consulted with leading scientists of the time, one of them being the engineer Fritz Thiery who advised them on how to build an acoustically pristine studio complex. Most importantly, the transmission of sound from the outside to the inside area had to be strictly prevented. Hence, the new studios were built as "houses without windows".[541] The outside walls of the conversion era studios were reinforced with thick layers, factoring in that its construction also had to ensure a vibration-free recording environment. The walls were further insulated by lining them with layers of damping materials, such as Celotex,[542] and by leaving air spaces in between the multiple layers. The studios

[540] The Neubabelsberg film studios is one of the few studio complexes that is mentioned and described in greater detail in contemporary literature on conversion era film recording technology and practice. The first edition of Heinz Umbehr's comprehensive monograph "Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis seiner Aufnahme und Wiedergabe" (1930) and Fritz Fischer's "Tonfilm: Aufnahme und Wiedergabe nach dem Klangfilm-Verfahren" (1931) are among the few publications that include small sections on the spatial layout and organisation of the Neubabelsberg film studio. (Heinz Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis seiner Aufnahme und Wiedergabe* (Berlin: Verlag der Lichtbildbühne, 1930); Fritz Fischer und Hugo Lichte, *Tonfilm: Aufnahme und Wiedergabe nach dem Klangfilm-Verfahren (System Klangfilm-Tobis)* (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1931)). The second edition of Umbehr's collection describes also describes other Berlin-based film studios (Heinz Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis seiner Aufnahme, Bearbeitung und Vorführung* (Berlin: Lichtbildbühne, 1932)). It is hardly surprising that the Neubabelsberg lot is singled out as a subject of interest: The studios were the shooting location for Germany's most successful and sizeable production company, the Universum Film A.G. (Ufa). Ufa exclusively relied on highly modern equipment and systems, including the famous Klangfilm-Tobis recording system, and collaborated with the most advanced practitioners and laboratories. The Klangfilm GmbH furnished the studios according to the most recent discoveries of the Siemens laboratories on how to create adequate acoustic conditions for recording film sound etc.

[541] Fischer, *Tonfilm: Aufnahme und Wiedergabe*, 440. The old silent movie ateliers and the glass houses that had been used during the silent era, and were still part of the plot's vast premises, were refurbished and equipped with special acoustic barriers.

[542] Celotex was a type of thermal insulation board.

were equipped with double doors that were made from heavy iron.[543] A new, almost inaudible ventilation system supplied the often tropically hot studios with fresh air.[544] The battery rooms that supplied the equipment with three-phase current[545] (which was necessary to avoid undesirable electrical interferences between the many different devices that might involuntarily lead to the occurrence of parasitic noises) were safely located further away from the studios.[546] Not to be neglected were innovations in indoor lighting: the infamous arc light of the silent movies, which was produced "by creating a DC spark between a carbon and a steel rod",[547] gave way to incandescent light.[548] The sizzling noises that the arc light gave off was thus replaced by noise- and distraction-free models. The spotlights used in *Ein Blonder Traum*, for instance, were not as commonly used in German studio systems but made for a rather aesthetically distinct shadow imprint in the background of the scene.

Fritz Fischer's illustrations of the Neubabelsberg film studio, which can be found in his monograph *Tonfilm: Aufnahme und Wiedergabe nach dem Klangfilm-Verfahren* (*Sound Movie: Recording and Screening with the Klangfilm-Procedure*), provide further information about the spaces used for filming. An exemplary outline of one of the nine studios shows that the main space of the filming facility was occupied by the studio where the actual shooting took place (see Figure 20).[549] The room acoustics of those studios which had high ceilings, which were at times necessary for shooting fake outdoor scenes, had to be artificially regulated by adding sound absorbent materials to the ceilings and cladding the walls with heavy

[543] Fischer, *Tonfilm: Aufnahme und Wiedergabe*, 440.
[544] Ibid.
[545] Paul Hatschek, *Grundlagen des Tonfilms.* Die Bücher des Lichtspielvorführers, vol. 6 (Halle (Saale): Verlag von Wilhelm Knapp, 1931), 24.
[546] Fischer, *Tonfilm: Aufnahme und Wiedergabe*, 448.
[547] Crafton, *The Talkies*, 227.
[548] Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis,* 340.
[549] Fischer, *Tonfilm: Aufnahme und Wiedergabe*, 437.

sliding curtains.[550] The scenery and the number of practitioners present on the film set further reduced unwanted reverberation effects. The sound engineer, the director, and the set designer worked together in adjusting the room acoustics according to the demands of the respective scene. Were it an indoor scene, for instance, an artificial salon with a ceiling had to be created to imitate the acoustic conditions of a small room. Having said that, playing music or acting in a studio that was considered too "dead", or heavily damped, would result in a tone that "will still possess the fundamental tone and some of its harmonics", but the "characterizing overtones will be suppressed", leaving the sound engineer with an overall rough and bodyless sound.[551] In other words, the task of achieving a realistic sound in such spaces was a delicate, technologically complicated one that was highly dependent on other factors such as set design.

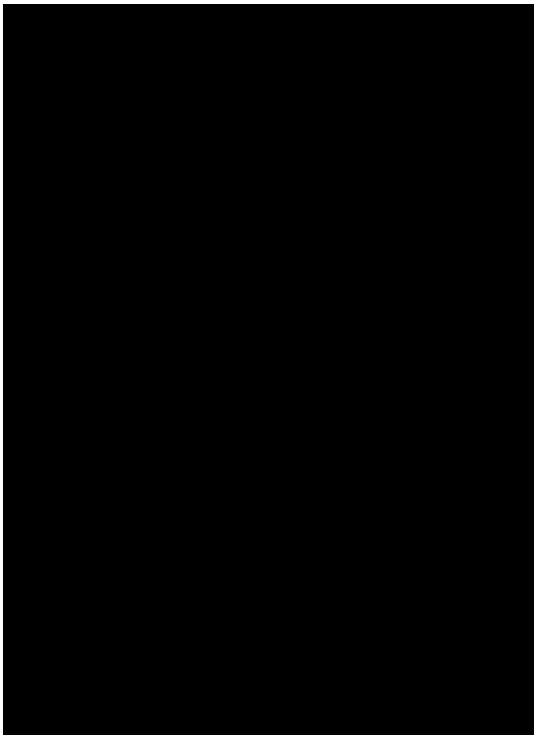


Figure 20: Diagram of a filming facility. Fritz Fischer, *Tonfilm: Aufnahme und Wiedergabe*, 437 (fg. 369).

The diagram originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[550] Fischer, *Tonfilm: Aufnahme und Wiedergabe*, 440.
[551] William Francis Elliott, *Sound-recording for films: a review of modern methods* (London: Pitman, 1937), 72.



Figure 21: Sound Engineer in a Klangfilm control room. Heinz Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis*, 326 (fg. 230).

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Each studio boasted nine microphone outlets that could be regulated with the help of four switchboards positioned in each one of the studio's corners (right next to those switchboards that allowed the regulation of the outlets for the cameras). The ribbon microphones that were used in the Neubabelsberg film studios had to be connected to the switchboards with reinforced cables that were mostly unreceptive to electrical interferences (such as that, for instance, created by the lighting cables).[552] What is more, those special cables had to be hung from the ceilings to avoid any interference with other power cables.[553] This made it possible to arrange each scene that was to be shot on a specific day to be recorded with greater agility and flexibility. A signal device that allowed for communication between the director and the sound engineer, who was located outside of the actual

[552] Fischer, *Tonfilm: Aufnahme und Wiedergabe*, 441.
[553] Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis*, 366.

film studio in his sound booth, could be stationed flexibly to account for where the scene took place.

Adjacent to the studio space was the aforementioned sound-proof sound booth or control room. From here, the sound engineer had to monitor, adjust, and approve what was being picked up by the microphones to then redirect it through a series of amplifiers and transmitters to the actual recording camera (Tonkamera). This camera, located in a separate room, transformed the incoming energy (through a series of steps) and photographed it upon the film, thereby inscribing the soundtrack upon the film strip with, in the case of the Klangfilm system, the variable density method.[554] Through a double-glassed window the sound engineer had an open view of the studio, which helped with visually monitoring what was happening in the scene. The sound booth was equipped with a switchboard that allowed the sound engineer to regulate the functionality of each connected microphone and each respective pre-amplifier. If necessary, the sound engineer could also correct distortions. An output meter or modulation meter located in the centre of the switchboard allowed the sound engineer to objectively ascertain what the true output of the amplifying system was.[555] The sound booth was further fitted with a monitoring loudspeaker which enabled the sound engineer to follow what the microphones picked up in real time (since the sound booth was absolutely soundproof, his acoustic perception was not deceived by what background noises he might have picked up from the actual studio space).

Though it is generally assumed that the monitoring speaker was the sound engineer's only means to control the output volume of the amplifying system, other

[554] Erich Löllhöffel von Löwensprung, *Wie ein Tonfilm entsteht*. Die Bücher des Lichtspielvorführers, vol. 12 (Halle: Knapp, 1933), 6. The soundtrack on the film appears as a narrow strip with lines of varying darkness passing across it. The higher the note recorded, the quicker the fluctuation between bright and dark lines appears, which results in smaller lines. The bigger the difference between the brightest and the darkest colouration, the louder is the volume of the photographed tone.
[555] Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis*, 442.

more accurate devices were also available: another method was to "actually watch … the light beam which is being recorded upon the film".[556] What is more, the sound engineer not only had a line of direct communication to the director but was also able to contact the professional machine operators in the machine room by using the control room's very own signal device. In most cases, the director and the camera operator could listen to the scene's recorded sound via headphones while the scene was being shot, therefore hearing the direct result of the sound engineer's work.[557] To allow for a clean and audible recording of the sound on film, the signals picked up by the microphones had to be pre-amplified and run through a booster amplifier in an adjacent room that was entirely dedicated to housing such machinery. The room was furnished with nine amplifiers, each responsible for amplifying the sound picked up by one of the ribbon microphones that was used on set. The machine room (Apparateraum) accommodated not only the sound camera and other equipment that was necessary to record sound on film but also the output amplifier, signalling equipment (Signalanlage), the synchronous telegraph that was necessary to engrave the reel with synchronicity markings, and other devices. The devices in the machine room were operated by sound assistants who were directly instructed by the sound engineer from the control room. Each machine room was not necessarily connected to just one studio: any of the studios could be linked with one of the machine rooms by interconnecting them via a switchboard in the control room (Umschaltraum).[558] In the stylised depiction of a film shoot in *Ein blonder Traum*,

---

[556] James R. Cameron and John Francis Rider, *Sound Pictures, and trouble shooters manual* (Manhattan Beach, Brooklyn, N. Y.: Cameron, 1930), 640.
[557] Wolfgang, Martini, *Tonfilmtechnik in Frage und Antwort. Mit 23 Abbildungen und 76 Zeichnungen*. Bücherei des Kinematographen, vol. IV (Verlag Scherl: Berlin, 1933), 63.
[558] After wrapping up a day's work, the production team was able to evaluate the synchronicity and quality of the recording by pre-screening the material of the recorded scene in the demonstration room (Vorführraum). Instead of connecting the loudspeaker, the demonstration room also allowed for the switchboards in the sound booths/control rooms to be connected to the playback devices – for instance, when background music had to be added to a scene that did originally not contain any on-set live music. Not least, the synchronisation room allowed for the silent projection of scenes and their post-synchronisation. The filmstrip was projected into the film studio where musicians, voice

neither the director nor any of the other personnel involved in recording the scene are equipped with any of the devices that would have been necessary to produce an adequate shot. On the contrary, to allow for a more dynamic unfolding of the movie-scene-within-a-movie-scene, the presumed film professionals are seemingly stripped of any technological responsibilities.

It is apparent from the design of the studio set-up that the actual processes of sound capture and their application to sound films were extremely intricate, delicate, and multifaceted. At several stages during the recording process, the transmission and capture of sound could have been interrupted or altered. Many of these processes heavily relied on the in-the-moment agency of numerous professionals—directors, technicians—and indeed of the technologies themselves. Yet, when looking at the processes in greater detail, the technicians' work was not clouded in mysticism, as depicted in *Ein blonder Traum*, but rather a multifaceted process dictated by rigidity. The professionals involved had to be extremely vigilant and work together collaboratively to keep everything balanced. In short, by depicting the technological expertise involved in recording sound as both simple and alienating, films such as *Ein blonder Traum* exaggerated the powers of technical personnel and simultaneously obscured them in mystery. The next case study, *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari*, will add to this picture by again; it not only depicted the recording process, admittedly with more faithfulness than *Ein blonder Traum*, but also introduced devices that were, by the time the movie was shot, considered outdated. By satirising the struggles early sound technicians were facing, *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari* also demonstrates how the often-unsatisfactory sound quality of early films was a topos that found entry into films themselves, thus

actors, or such like could visually keep track of the scene while recording a new soundtrack. This procedure could also be reversed: by filling the studio with pre-recorded sound, actors, dancers, etc. were able to silently "re-play" their respective scenes. In a different part of this chapter, the possibilities of cutting and mixing different soundtracks at that time shall be further scrutinised.

encouraging audiences to be conscious of technological processes in the making of sound movies.

Dr Larifari's Microphone-Placing Schemes and the Mixer's Itch[559]

The self-referential 1930 silent-movie-persiflage and musical comedy *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari* tells the story of three friends who want to jump on the bandwagon of the 1930s sound movie operetta craze by starting their own film company. Quickly, the vigilant spectator realises that their undertaking is doomed to fail; but en route we can enjoy gloriously corny parodies of operetta-esque Rhine idylls, Viennese farces, and hyperbolic singer movies.[560] The three wastrels are inspired by the overwhelming success of the diegetic sound movie operetta *Das blonde Donaukind vom Rhein* (*The Blonde Danubian Child from the Rhine*). During the last scene of *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari*, we witness what first appears to be a normal dinner between a family of three generations. A very young girl makes a markedly witty and uncommonly mature comment. Suddenly, we hear an offstage voice shouting: "Hahahaha! Shush! Hahahaha! No kid talks like that!" The camera zooms out and we realise that this domestic family scene really is a scene being filmed in a film studio. The film camera is surrounded by three operators, one of them focussing on the camera itself, the other two operating something that appears to be a switchboard. All of them wear headphones (which are attached to the switchboard via connecting cables). As it soon turns out, it was the man operating the switchboard, Max—one of the friends—who brazenly interrupted the scene with his laughter, to the disapproval of the director who expects strict silence when recording a scene. When the sound technician dares to tell Max off for ruining the

[559] "Mixer's Itch" is the American name for "the vice of attempting to follow modulation with the volume control while the sound is being recorded" (William Francis Elliott, *Sound-Recording for Films*, 62).
[560] Anonymous, "Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari," *Lichtbildbühne*, 2.8.1930.

recording, the latter exclaims: “You better take care of your sound camera!” The sound technician, of course, does not stand for such disrespectful behaviour. He turns away brusquely and quits. Max’s two business colleagues immediately grasp the gravity of the situation and rebuke Max by pointing out that they “cannot shoot the rest of the movie silently”. Max belittles the worries of his friends and proclaims that he himself shall operate the sound camera henceforth.

When they proceed to shoot the dinner scene, we immediately realise that something is terribly wrong: the steps of the maid sound like little earthquakes, the slurping of the soup is comically inflated, and when grandmother blows her nose, a loud horn sound can be heard instead. But mere sounds are not the only thing that seem awkwardly off: when the father and daughter sing a little lullaby, the young child appears to sing with a grown man’s bass voice and the father resounds with the child’s soprano. When the assistant sound engineer cannot help but bemoan this outrageous scenery, Max finally realises that it takes more to be a sound engineer than randomly pushing some buttons and turning some knobs. With his unsuccessful attempt at emulating the sound engineers’ skills, the film is set to fail.

As we can see from the images below (see Figures 22-25), in the fictional world of the film the sound engineer and his sound board (which happens to look more like a simple switch board) are situated right next to the actual camera operator and the director (who wears a pair of headphones to be able to follow the acoustic tone of the scene as it unfolds). Max simply operates a few switches and setting dials to create abovementioned effects. Of course, the strangely sonorous pick-up of background noises such as the steps of the maid and the slurping of soup could have been an effect of Max accidentally dialling up the respective microphones, though not necessarily to such an extent, and not with the effect of making the harmless blowing of a nose sound like a horn.



Figure 22: Still image from *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari*: Max in an argument with the director of the movie. *Kurbel TV*, *YouTube Video.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.



Figure 23: Still image from *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari*: Max trying to operate the sound board. *Kurbel TV*, *YouTube Video.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.



Figure 24: Still Image from *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari*: Max realising that his approach to sound engineering does not produce the expected effects. *Kurbel TV*, *YouTube Video.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.



Figure 25: Still image from *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari*: Max admitting his failure. *Kurbel TV*, *YouTube Video*.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Obviously, the sound in this scene has been manipulated to create a comical effect that derives its impact on the audience from the perceived mismatch between

sound and image. In this movie, sound technology and sound processing were exhibited to both pick up on the discourse that developed around the deficiency of sound in early talkies and to present the audience with a narrative on how important sound became within the studio setting. In what follows, I will explain in which ways the presentation of sound processing during the scene is a fictionalised, out-dated, and simplified account of how the work of a sound engineer might have unfolded in a contemporary film studio.

The equipment portrayed in *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari* was one of the most renowned Tobis recording devices that had been used for the earliest sound movies, one which had not been fundamentally modified since those early days. The camera, sound booth, and sound recorder were "spatially condensed" in such a way that they were all mounted on a small cart (see Figures 26-27).[561] This manageable cart could be positioned right next to the scene, thereby eradicating the spatial distance between the sound engineer and the setting of the scene. The cart had two loudspeaker outlets, one for the sound engineer and one for his assistant, which allowed for steady monitoring of the film sound as well as its synchronicity.[562] The cart was further equipped with control instruments for the amplifiers, as well as overload indicators and volume controls for the microphone outlets. For the purposes of its depiction in the film, equipment was presumably chosen that was compact enough for the viewer to see all the tinkering being done in one place; in reality, however, the industry had already moved onto more elaborate and subdivided technologies, with sound booths being altogether removed from the scene – as described in the account of Ufa's Neubabelsberg studios provided above.

[561] Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis,* 363.
[562] Ibid., 365.



Figure 26: Older model of a Tobis recording device. Heinz Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis*, 363 (fg. 258).

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

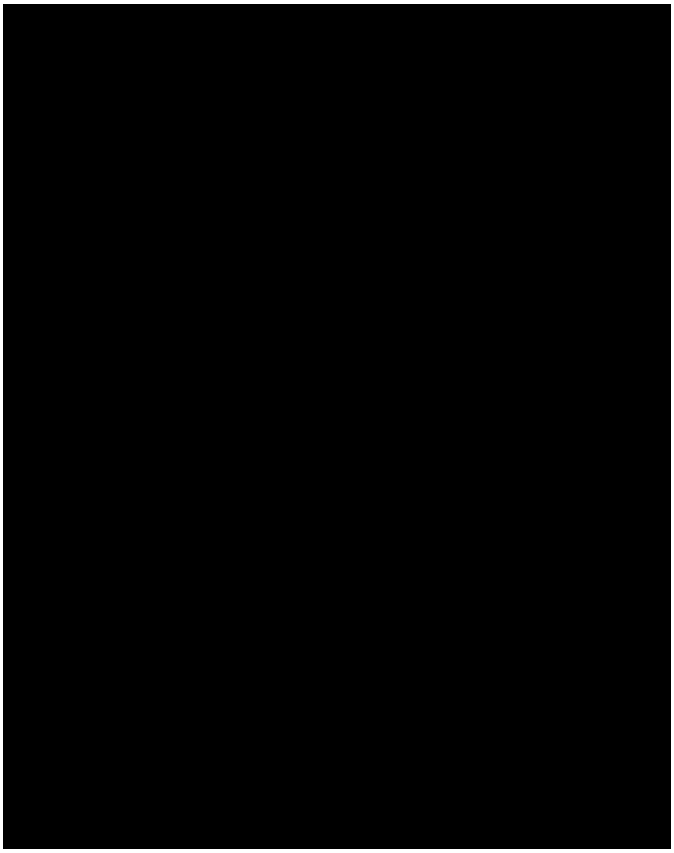


Figure 27: Tobis sound engineer operating the older Tobis recording device. Heinz Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis*, 364 (fg. 259).

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Despite the movie's failure to realistically separate in presentation the tasks of the director from those of the sound engineer (who is evidently not even present yet, and whose work is conflated in the persons of the director, the camera operator, and the sound assistant), in real life the profession of the sound engineer swiftly made its way to the top of the studio hierarchy. According to a small announcement in the trade journal *Filmtechnik*, a German periodical for technical professionals working in the film industries, a Berlin association for recording engineers working in film was established as early as 20th May 1930.[563] Even though German film companies had only started introducing synchronised sound to a broader audience in 1929, among other things, this hurried institutionalisation of the profession suggests the unprecedented importance of early sound engineers during the conversion era. It is also proof of their degree of professionalisation, which was furthered through the establishment of dedicated training courses for those interested in learning the craft.[564] According to the third volume of Alexander Jason's *Handbuch der Filmwirtschaft* (1932), in 1929 merely six sound engineers were listed in the nation's trade directory as having worked on sound movies for listed film companies. By 1930 this number had jumped up to thirty, although it dropped again slightly to twenty-eight in 1932.[565]

What we can infer from these quite negligible numbers is that, in its early years, this niche profession was, on a professional level, confined to a few experts.[566] Ufa's own first sound engineer, Fritz Thiery, who had been involved in

---

[563] Anonymous, "Verband filmschaffender Tonmeister gegründet," *Filmtechnik*, 14.6.1930. One of the committee members was Ufa's prodigy sound engineer Fritz Thiery who had been responsible for the excellent sound design in works such as *Der blaue Engel*, *Der Kongreß tanzt*, *Viktor und Viktoria*, etc.

[564] Anonymous. "Die neuen Herren. Fritz Thiery." *Film-Kurier*, 14.2.1931.

[565] Jason, *Handbuch der Filmwirtschaft*, 108.

[566] Early sound engineers included Victor Behrens; Hermann Birkhofer; Dr. Bittmann; Kurt Breusig; Dr Brinkmann; Karl Brodmerkl; Dr. M. Dietrich, Dipl.-Ing.; F. W. Dustmann; Hermann Fritzsching; Dr. G. Goldbaum; Hans Grimm; Hermann Heller; Eugen Hrich; Adolf Jansen; Max Kagelmann; C. E. Kroschke; Erich Lange; Dr. Erich Leistner; Richard Masseck; Charles Métains, Dipl.-Ing.; W. Morhenn; M. Müller; Dr. Neumann; Alfred Norkus; Carlo Paganini; Walter Rühland; M. Safra; E.

making movies such as *Melodie des Herzens* (*Melody of the Heart*, 1929), *Einbrecher*, *Der blaue Engel*, and *Liebling der Götter* (*Darling of the Gods*, 1930), has been hailed as the spearhead for a generation of sound engineers right up until the 1950s.[567] His professional trajectory is an example par excellence of a typical transition era sound engineer, and is worth a brief digression here.

After studying electrical engineering, Thiery worked in the central laboratories of the Siemenswerke, the main Berlin factory of the electro company Siemens. His area of work involved the further development of electro-acoustic equipment, specifically that of loudspeakers and recording devices for sound-on-film and disc recording systems. In 1928, the year of the film technology company Klangfilm's formation, Thiery was tasked with field-testing the results of years and years of research by taking over the position of Klangfilm's adviser for the remodelling of Ufa's Neubabelsberg studios. Under his guidance, the first state-of-the-art sound movie studio was built, and he was also appointed its first sound engineer. In a brief newspaper column about his work from 14.2.1931, he is described as a gifted instructor who trained the first generation of Ufa's sound engineers, among others Hermann Fritzsching (*Die Drei von der Tankstelle*, *Bomben auf Monte Carlo*, *Ihre Hoheit befiehlt*), Dr. Erich Leistner (*Liebeswalzer*, *Der Schuß im Tonfilmatelier*) and Walter Tjaden (*Ihre Majestät die Liebe*).[568] Most of those early sound engineers had themselves been recruited from the laboratories of companies in electrical industry sectors, mainly AEG and Siemens & Halske. Thiery's importance is further highlighted by him being one of the few professionals who is featured in regular trade press publications. The *Film-Kurier*, for instance, dedicates an entire series of

Schmidt; F. Schröder; Fritz Seeger; Dr. Fritz Seidel; Emil Specht; Dr. Stör; Bruno Suckau; Fritz Thiery; and Walter Tjaden. (Jason, *Handbuch der Filmwirtschaft*, 108-109)

[567] Anonymous, "Die neuen Herren. Fritz Thiery,' *Film-Kurier*, 14.2.1931, and Jason, *Handbuch der Filmwirtschaft*, 108.

[568] Anonymous, "Die neuen Herren. Fritz Thiery," *Film-Kurier*, 14.2.1931.

articles to his and Walter Tjaden's reflections on sound.[569] Hence, this nascent profession was, in 1930, genuinely exclusive and esoteric, and its pioneering practitioners the subject of interest in the trade press. By hyperbolically emphasising the extent to which the sound engineer's expertise was needed to create a satisfactory result, *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari* gives a nod to this often neglected yet vitally important profession.

As can be inferred from the exemplary scene from *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari*, an important part of the sound engineer's work was also the proper handling of microphones (even though in the scene themselves the actual microphones are, yet again, not explicitly shown but only referred to). If they were too positioned too closely to the sound source, one could hear background noises, such as the slurping of soup or footsteps, too clearly. As mentioned before, each studio boasted nine microphone outlets that could be regulated with the help of four switchboards that were in each one of the studio's corners. Even though in today's film-making manuals the single-microphone method is referred to as indispensable for creating high-quality film sound,[570] back then multiple microphones were needed to pick up dialogue and atmospheric background noise. In fact, to emulate the spatial qualities and perspective that the human ear is used to associating with certain settings, a whole "microphone park" was necessary.[571] It was the sound engineer's responsibility to obtain the desired tonal outcome by coordinating the intensities of different microphones on set in consultation with the director.[572] Those microphones were often particularly sensitive to specific frequency ranges depending on where

[569] The new series of articles featured in one of the supplements of the trade journal *Film-Kurier*, the "Kinotechnische Rundschau". The series was titled "What impairs the playback process? Sound engineers Fritz Thiery and Walter Tjaden speak out" and detailed how several factors could impair the sound quality of a movie. They discussed issues ranging from the projector to the equaliser. (Anonymous, "Neue Artikelserie des FK. 'Was verschlechtert die Wiedergabe?' Tonmeister Fritz Thiery und Walter Tjaden äußern sich," *Film-Kurier*, 29.11.1930).
[570] O'Brien, *Cinema's Conversion to Sound*, 124.
[571] Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis*, 352.
[572] Ibid., 351.

they were placed in relation to the camera. The mixer thus switched different microphones on and off, let them connect in parallel, or connected them in series, always in relation to the principal microphone.[573] The microphones that recorded the atmospheric noises that lent the set, and thus the recording, acoustic weight and perspective usually hung from the soundstage rafters in heights of 3 to 3.5 meters, to make sure that they only picked up atmospheric noise.[574] As to the microphone placement, no definite rules can be given, since the recording process was very much determined by a variety of different factors that were unique to any given scene and shooting location.[575]

Ufa's sound engineers almost exclusively employed ribbon microphones when recording film sound.[576] One can presume that Ufa's sound engineers would have used the Siemens & Halske ELM 25 which went into serial production in 1929. This ribbon microphone distinguished itself from earlier microphones by bestowing the recordings with a natural and warm timbre. Ribbon microphones had an "inherent, high-frequency roll off that is similar to the way people hear".[577] As a result, ribbon microphones were presumably suited to picking up low-frequency sounds but neglected a certain range of high-frequency sounds that could cause a pick-up loss of high frequency tones during dialogue (especially when recording the female voice[578]).

---

[573] Ibid., 350.
[574] Ibid., 352.
[575] Nonetheless some general rules were to be taken into consideration such as avoiding placing "microphones on floors, and in walls, corners, or enclosures, because of the accentuation of low frequencies in such locations" (Cameron, *Trouble Shooters Manual for Sound Pictures*, 629).
[576] Before the introduction of the ELM 25, the most widely used microphone type was the carbon-granule microphone, more specifically the Reiss microphone. If a current is flowing through a layer of carbon granules, its resistance changes with pressure upon its diaphragm. Hence, different sound impulses make for constantly varying resistances and thus different currents. Until 1931, most American film companies preferred condenser microphones (Müller, *Vom Stummfilm zum Tonfilm,* 232).
[577] Frank Beacham, "Ribbon Microphones Make a Full Circle in Audio History," 24.5.2017, https://www.thebroadcastbridge.com/content/entry/8667/ribbon-microphones-make-a-full-circle-in-audio-history (last accessed on 10.1.2023, 12:49 pm).
[578] Anonymous, "Die Frauenstimme im Tonfilm," *Kinematograph*, 10.5.1931.

A ribbon microphone capsule "features a folded 'ribbon' of aluminium, anchored at the top and bottom, surrounded by a magnet".[579] When recording a sound, the sound waves make the ribbon move back and forth. This motion "causes electricity to be induced to it", with the resultant voltage depending on the speed of the ribbon's movement (with high-frequency sounds generating more movement and thus more voltage).[580] According to contemporaries, the ribbon microphone had a few advantages compared to condenser microphones and other competing technologies. They possessed an advantageous sensitivity threshold and were thus able to pick up variations in shade and volume of the subtlest sounds (all the while being relatively insensitive to external interferences).[581] What is more, the microphone had "strong directional properties since sound waves that originate in the plane of the ribbon arrive at the front and back edges in phase, and therefore no resultant force is produced."[582] Its directionality, and the lack of accidental pickups from the sides or even the back of the mic, produced its "distinctive heart-shaped pickup pattern".[583] Furthermore, the clarity of consonants was improved as it did not pick up reverberation.[584] For the microphone placement this mattered insofar as the more directional a microphone was, the more pronounced the proximity effect it

[579] Ian Corbett, *Mic It!: Microphones, Microphone Techniques, and Their Impact on the Final Mix* (London: Routledge, 2020), 80.
[580] Ibid.
[581] Löllhöffel von Löwensprung, *Wie ein Tonfilm entsteht*, 14. German Siemens & Halske engineers Dr. Walter H. Schottky and others invented the first ribbon microphone in 1924. According to the patent application Schottky filed, the inventors claimed the "ribbon diaphragm for ribbon loudspeakers or ribbon microphones, characterized in that that the membrane is extended beyond the area of the strong magnetic field, so that the pinching points of the ribbon diaphragm are located in places with much heavier fields." The acoustic result of this improvement was that one could reduce disturbances in the sound reproduction, such as "clinking or rattling" which often occurred "in the case of loudspeakers and microphones with air-light diaphragms". (Walter Schottky, "Band membrane for band loudspeakers or band microphones," *Patent application DE434855C*, issued on 1.10.1926, https://patents.google.com/patent/DE434855C/en, last accessed on 10 January, 1:40 pm). In America, RCA's PB-31 ribbon microphone soon gained wide recognition as the go-to microphone from 1931 onwards.
[582] Andrew Butterfield and John Szymanski, "Ribbon Microphone," in *A Dictionary of Electronic and Electronic Engineering* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 0.1093/acref/9780198725725.001.0001.
[583] Crafton, *The talkies*, 237.
[584] Ibid.

prompted was. A directional microphone used up close was like a zoom lens on the camera; it focused on the snippet of sound right in front of it. For specific scenes with differing demands on the frequency ranges, different microphone types were combined to achieve a fuller sound (condenser microphones, for instance, were considered better for low frequencies whereas ribbon microphones were preferred for high frequencies).[585]

The sound engineer's main objective was to "position microphones so as to endow the recorded voice with spatial qualities compatible with the image".[586] Thus, the principal microphone, the one that picked up spoken dialogue or singing, was usually positioned somewhere in the vicinity of the main sound source. Early sound engineers insisted that more than one principal microphone would not only muddle the sound but also skew the stereophonic sound by unbalancing the listener's sound perspective.[587] The principal microphone was either placed on a stand or suspended from a boom, which German sound engineers quite morbidly referred to as "Galgen" (gallows). It is likely that the principal microphone would have had to be furnished with a filter of some kind when recording particularly loud scenes or outside. Scenes in which a lot of movement occurred were particularly difficult to record, especially when singing and dancing was involved. The skilled operation of the boom, from which the microphones were suspended, could enable an experienced sound engineer and his team to still capture most of the sound in a satisfactorily manner. One of Ufa's sound engineers, Charles Métain, for instance, explains how he fashioned his personalised boom by installing it on a trick car that had previously been used to shoot driving shots and enabled him to follow the

[585] Müller, *Vom Stummfilm zum Tonfilm*, 232, and Franz Skaupy, *Die Grundlagen des Tonfilms* (Berlin: Union, 1932), 29 ff. The frequency spectrum of microphones from this era theoretically ranged from 30 to 10000 hertz (Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis*, 345).
[586] O'Brien, *Cinema's Conversion to Sound*, 100.
[587] Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis*, 354.

camera.[588] A 1930 behind-the-scenes feature from the set of *Die Drei von der Tankstelle* details how special gadgets were fashioned to lower and raise microphones from the ceilings:

> To be able to fully capture the whole staircase on which the scene unfolds, microphones have to be hung up very high on their gallows-like arms; this was also sufficient in terms of volume, since the father's calls for his daughter were substantially louder than the following short conversation. After the actors stood together approximately in the centre of the staircase and continued their conversation in a normal fashion, on their long arms the microphones were lowered closer to their heads, since the image section did not encompass much more than the actors' heads.[589]

The proper arrangement and balancing of microphones, however, was meant not only to guarantee clarity of sound but also to invoke something that contemporary sound engineer Dr. Erich Leistner called tone colour (Klangcharakter), which was created by those shades of sound that were determined by the presence or absence of reverb and echo. Leistner already purported in January 1931 that "such effects were very crucial to conveying a feeling for a scene's space and atmosphere to the listener".[590] A total lack of reverb would render a film studio und thus a movie "acoustically dead".[591] Hence, early damping materials such as Celotex, which absorbed sound equally across the whole spectre of frequencies and still allowed for a slight reverb effect, were considered essential for creating natural-sounding soundtracks.

The sound engineer had to equip the setting of a scene in such a way that it allowed for a levelled frequency response. This could be achieved by keeping movable walls and curtains at the ready to be able to freely regulate the degree of reverb that was natural for a scene (an outdoor scene, for instance, would have not

---

[588] Charles Métain, "Wie mein Galgen wurde," *Filmtechnik*, 10.01.1931.
[589] Anonymous, "Deutsche Tonfilmarbeit. Neubabelsberg und Geiselgasteig. Mikrophone in Bewegung," *Film-Kurier*, 21.7.1930.
[590] Erich Leistner, "Akustisches vom Aufnahmeraum," *Filmtechnik*, 10.1.1931.
[591] Ibid.

demanded any reverb whereas for a scene in a church a high degree of reverb would have been deemed realistic). Dr. Leistner also shines light on how the size of a room was acoustically simulated in a big film studio: to emulate a small room's acoustic and diminish reverb effects, he would, for instance, loosely drape pieces of cloth across the ceiling.[592]

The portrayal of the sound engineer's work in *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari* is thus two-sided. On the one hand, the difficulty that Hansen has in managing the sound indicates the immense complexity of the reality of the profession. This impresses the viewer with the sense that sound engineering is a highly difficult, rather mysterious process whose workings are not as intuitive as Hansen (and by extension many viewers, presumably) might have assumed. This impression was partly due to the nicheness of the profession but also had to do with the difficulty, if not impossibility, of satisfactorily depicting all the elaborate setups and mixtures of technologies actually required to achieve a degree of fidelity. By the same token, the particular mistakes that Hansen does make in the scene are actually still very fantastical; the deliberate, spontaneous swapping of the man's and child's voices, for instance, would have still been nearly impossible, no matter how complicated the process appeared to be (admittedly, several mistakes in the recording or screening process could lead to the lowering of the voice). In this way, the mysteriousness of sound in the movies was, yet again, smuggled into the film: through the depiction of the otherwise quite realistic complexity of the technologies and the high skill level of its operatives. *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari* is, then, a step removed from the stylised depiction of recording processes in *Ein blonder Traum*, in that actual recording devices are portrayed and the complexity of the operational aspects of the recording process are given credit. One can also assume that such humoristic takes on early

[592] Erich Leistner, "Akustisches vom Aufnahmeraum," *Filmtechnik*, 10.1.1931.

sound recording flaws would not only have invited audiences to think about the making of sound in the first place but also further reconciled them with the flawed nature of the processes involved.

Recording Music

Another scene from *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari* introduces the established salon orchestra, the Weintraub Syncopators, auditioning to feature in the aforementioned movie-within-the-movie *Das blonde Donaukind vom Rhein*.[593] According to Max, the seven musicians (a pianist, a percussionist, a guitar player, a tuba player, two saxophone players, and a trumpeter) lack "jazzappeal" or the "Toscanini", which is why he temporarily takes over the position of the band leader and bursts out into singing the Robert Stolz Schlager "Mein kleiner Bruder träumt von Ihnen Tag und Nacht" ("My Little Brother Dreams of You Day and Night"). The scene (beginning at 00:51:40) is a particularly good example to demonstrate how the on-set recording of a dance orchestra might have taken place.

First, a little background information on the setup of this scene and how it might have mirrored the reality of the studio space will be helpful. The placement of the musicians according to their instrumental groups alone could have a huge impact on the acoustic quality of the recording. Most of the time, the pianist, percussionist, and low brass players were placed in the rear (in this instance, slightly elevated on a small platform; see Figure 28) – since strings do not feature in this scene, the high brass instruments and the guitar were positioned right in front of them. Hence, the Weintraub Syncopators are indeed, at first glance, positioned in a way that would have been conducive to the balancing of instruments.

[593] Schellack_Tuari. "Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari mit Max Hansen – Weintraubs Syncopators – 1930 – Full Movie." YouTube Video, 1:10:14. November 22, 2015. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 12.12.2021, 12:21 pm).



Figure 28: Still image from *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari*: Max conducting the Weintraub Syncopators. *Kurbel TV*, *YouTube Video.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

In this scene, it is obvious that, since there are several image and sound cuts within the orchestra scene (for instance, the song does not carry over into the dialogue between the other two company holders), the respective soundtracks and images were retroactively cut together. It can be assumed that balanced levels of sound throughout the entire scene, especially the dialogue, could not be maintained when attempting to record both at the same time. What is more, this leads us to assume that, at this time, the respective soundtracks of both the dialogue and the music potentially also could not have been mixed together after the fact to ensure the music's continuity throughout the scene.

The text originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[redacted]. [594]

It is interesting that the intricacies of early mixing techniques are scarcely mentioned in contemporary trade press or scientific publications of that time, which is why early German sound editing must remain a bit of a black box. Only Heinz Umbehr describes early sound editing equipment in the 1932 edition of his monograph on film technology. Mixing techniques were introduced into German film making as early as 1929 but were seemingly not often applied. They differed from each other in the degree of their sophistication and the goal of their application. Some mixing techniques aimed at fusing two tracks that had been recorded separately; some tried to balance the volume levels of different sources of sound and blend them in to each other; some tried to increase or decrease the volume level of different sound snippets.[595] These techniques could be utilised either during or after the recording. In its early years, the complex background processes of the sound-on-film method made it difficult to "fix" sound retroactively. When certain combinations of sound had to be fused for dramatic effect, sound engineers thus often had to resort to playing different pre-recorded tracks simultaneously through loudspeakers and re-recording them in their entirety while levelling out the volume relations and reverb effects. Contemporaries often describe early German sound editing practices as behind the times, since German sound engineers had to rely on cutting rather than mixing techniques to meet the complex demands of, for instance, blending different sounds together.

In an article from 7th February 1931, tech journalist Hans Passavant introduces and elaborates on the tasks of the sound cutter.[596] According to

[594] Schriftgutarchiv, Deutsche Kinemathek, *Notizbuch von Erich Engel*.
[595] Müller, *Vom Stummfilm zum Tonfilm*, 215.
[596] Hans von Passavant, "Technik des Tonschnittes," *Filmtechnik*, 7.2.1931.

Passavant, it was, for instance, relatively easy to retrospectively insert pre-recorded music if it had been synchronised to the images during the recording process. Passavant added for consideration that the sound editor and cutter had to be intimately acquainted with the demands of the cutting of the image in order to avoid unpleasant jumps or asynchronicity between sound and image.[597] This was particularly important for film scenes where movements had to be synchronised with music. In a later article in *Filmtechnik* from 16th May 1931, Passavant elaborated on how the composer could simplify the work of the sound cutter by conceptualising his music in such a way that it was easy to split up.[598] He continues by saying that "there were, of course, boundaries to that", since merely following technical demands of the director could "endanger" if not "destroy" the "musical work of art".[599] Even from a technological point of view, it seems obvious that formally simple music, such as the sound movie hit song and its repetitions, was best-suited for post-production tasks. In the early years of the sound movie, the cutting and sound/image-matching seemed less difficult when using both vocalised and structurally straightforward music.

Since the cutting of sound took a long time and was naturally a failure-prone undertaking, Klangfilm-Tobis quickly worked on supplying cutters and sound engineers with specific devices to simplify their mixing work. With the help of Klangfilm's re-recording and mixing device, which boasted three sound projectors with playback devices that were powered by a synchronous motor and a bevel gear, one could, for instance, automatically rerecord three soundtracks.[600] Throughout the process, the individual soundtracks that were picked up by the re-recording device could be adjusted according to the desired balance levels before being fed into the

[597] Ibid.
[598] Hans von Passavant, "Die Kunst des Tonschnittes," *Filmtechnik*, 16.5.1931.
[599] Ibid.
[600] Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis*, 432-433.

sound recorder via the output amplifier.[601] According to Umbehr, the main task of this device was hence to fuse multiple soundtracks into one and copy it onto the film's soundtrack.[602] This technique was, for instance, partially applied to movies such as *Ein blonder Traum*. When looking at our *Larifari* example though, the predominant practice of cutting rather than mixing sound creates interruptions between the dialogue and music sections, implying that the music was not actually recorded when the dialogue was (even though both happen at the same time and in the same space). In other words, the particular capabilities of the German film industry, which were considered behind the time with regard to mixing techniques, required sound engineers to divide the music and dialogue sections, even though early mixing devices would have already enabled the music and dialogue to be performed at the same time. In this, then, we have another instance of technological compromises being masked on screen.



Figure 29: Electric mixing and overwriting device. Heinz Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis*, 432 (fg. 315).

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[601] Ibid., 433.
[602] Ibid.

Returning to the Weintraub Syncopators scene from *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari*: as the action continues, the musicians, seemingly instructed to do so by Max's business partners, gradually get up from their chairs and leave the frame. When only the tuba's heavy timbre and Max's voice remain, the spectator can perceive the clear increase in reverberation. The scene's microphone placement and the set had obviously been adjusted to the presence of seven musicians and one singer on stage (more reverberation for the bass instruments than for the "treble" usually made for a livelier sound). With them missing, the listener can get an inkling of what it might have meant to level a variety of microphones for such a complex scene. The increase of reverberation, however, was realistic from the listener's perspective because it sounded as if the listener was in the, now emptier, recording space. Skilled operation of the boom or a strategic positioning of the microphones on the sound stage rafters must have still enabled quite good coverage. The advantage of the simultaneous recording of music and image, as opposed to post-synchronisation techniques, was that the perspective of the sound was generally true.

How did the recording of music generally fit into conversion era movies though? Since instrumental interludes, the performance of hit songs, dance scenes, and such like were an essential feature of the sound movie operetta genre, music and musicians must have been a permanent fixture on set. Surprisingly enough, there are not many first-hand accounts of what it was like to record music for sound movies from the perspectives of orchestra members or musical directors. There are only a few hints as to what the recording process must have been like for everyone involved. In his 1931 article "Sound Image and Microphone Disposition", sound engineer Dr. Erich Leistner, for instance, merely commented on the recordability of

different instruments saying that “string instruments with resonating bodies, such as the violin or the piano, had low directional qualities whereas conical brass instruments, such as the trumpet and the clarinet, as well as the human voice had strong directional qualities”.[603] Such differing directional qualities complicated the work of early sound engineers: if they failed to achieve the right balance between the instruments and voices, the audience themselves would have perceived an unnatural mismatch between different instrumental timbres.

When recording music for post-production purposes—that is, for scenes that had already been shot—the task was equally difficult if a bit more manageable. The microphone had to be positioned six to fifteen metres away from the orchestra in front of the wall that had the best sound-absorbing properties, which was usually the wall that was directly opposite the musical ensemble.[604] When recording orchestral pieces, big dynamic differences had to be avoided since it was technically not possible to accurately render them without disturbances (the basic noise level that will be examined at a later stage in this chapter, for instance, made the rendering of very quiet sounds almost impossible, whereas early recording and playback equipment tended to overdrive very loud sounds).[605] Still, for a lot of complex music sequences post-synchronisation became quite a common alternative. In order to make speech more intelligible, or to add atmospheric sounds or music, many post-synchronisation methods were in use.[606] The American sound engineer Constantin Mic stated a lecture held in front of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers, which had been translated into German for the German trade press, that post-

[603] Erich Leistner, “Klangbild und Mikrophoneinstellung,” *Filmtechnik*, 7.3.1931.
[604] J. P. Maxfield, “Aufnahmekontrolle,” *Filmtechnik*, 2.5.1931.
[605] Erich Leistner, “Die Objekte der Tonaufnahme,” *Filmtechnik*, 30.5.1931.
[606] A lot of post-synchronisation techniques were implemented early on to facilitate the swift production of multiple-language versions of movies, for instance the Toboly method which worked with a synchronisation disc with markings that helped the dubbing actor to accurately lend their voice to movies.

synchronisation techniques were commonly used for dubbing films in different languages or for recording complicated musical and dance numbers. However, Ufa seemingly did not make use of many of those techniques. Yet studios such as the Neubabelsberg studios did incorporate dedicated rooms for simultaneously projecting film material and re-recording music to an already-existing scene, or vice versa. If, for instance, a dance number had to be recorded at a slower speed in order for the dancers to be able to carry out a complex choreography, or the speed of the movements had to be steadily increased, the music was recorded beforehand and the images shot at a lower image-to-second ratio than 24 images/second.[607] Mic also clearly stated that, when recording music, the musical number ideally had to be simply structured and make use of a manageable orchestration.[608]



Figure 30: Werner Richard Hermann conducting the Ufa orchestra in a recording room. *Elizabeth Trautwein-Heymann, private sheet music collection (Werner Richard Heymann).*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[607] Constantin Mic, "Nachsynchronisierung," *Filmtechnik*, 8.3.1930.
[608] Ibid.

In instances when post- or pre-recordings of a musical piece were necessary, the kapellmeister and the soloists were often the ones facing the screen and thus synchronising the musical accompaniment with the movie's action. The musicians, on the other hand, were often seated facing the opposite wall, a wall that was usually sufficiently kitted out with damping materials. When faced with the everyday routines of filmmaking, inexperienced musical personnel and technical staff were often faced with several problems that required fast solutions: for instance, dynamic changes from pianissimo to forte mostly had to be avoided since they often led to the overdriving or distortion of recordings. Even practised kapellmeister and singers underwent natural fluctuations in tempo when recording music, especially under the nerve-straining condition of the film studio, and this too had to be prevented. Special markings on the film roll that were projected on a screen during the post-synchronisation sessions, such as crosses, specified the rhythm of the musical numbers (which was particularly handy for recording singers in close-ups).[609]

These observations show that the process of combining music, image, and dialogue was very complex and fraught with many difficulties. However, Ufa's and Tobis' sound engineers nevertheless managed to create scenes that, to a contemporary viewer, were very convincing in their sound-image relations. In this vein, a scene like the one with the Weintraub Syncopators is, on the one hand, an example of the successful recording of an orchestra (in that all the cracks were covered over to create the impression of a natural, diegetic performance), with the result that audiences might even have overestimated the abilities of the recording technologies used in film. On the other hand, scenes like this still bear the marks of the same technology's apparent failures; for instance, with the noticeable reverb shift when the musicians leave the scene or the interruptions between dialogue and

[609] Ibid.

music sections. However, such incidents were also precisely what helped audiences to notice the true “realness” of the musical performance that was being presented to them on screen, meaning that certain breakdowns of fidelity—where, for instance, the progressively inadequate microphone placement was exposed—served to emphasise precisely the live character of the music played in this scene. We do not know whether this was due to deliberate aesthetic decisions of the sound engineer or merely had to do with the deficiencies of the recording process. However, it was not only the production site of sound recording that sound movie operettas drew attention to but also the realities of the cinematic experience. As the next section will show, the conditions of how, where, and by whom films were screened often mattered as much as, if not more than, the diligence with which sound engineers themselves attempted to capture sound.

Lichtspielhaus sound

The light-hearted musical comedy *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht* (*I by Day, You by Night*)—the, so to say, last Weimar sound movie operetta that was largely the product of German Jewish talent—playfully interrogates modes of musical and media-related penetration of the public and private sphere and successfully puts an aesthetics of technology at the forefront of its narrative. The plot is easily retold – spoiler alert: Billy Wilder's *The Apartment* was not the only story about the sharing of a bed in quite an unconventional way. In *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht*, against their better judgement and common hygienic standards, the relief waiter Hans and the charming manicurist Grete share the same bed; only, she sleeps in it during the night hours, and he does so during the day. Without ever having met—the bed-sharing contract is executed under the watchful eye of their shrewd landlady—Hans and Grete dread each other, but one day meet in disguise and, through a succession

of misunderstandings, fall madly in love. Inevitably, they eventually become bedfellows in the proper sense. Despite its remarkably witty and complicated plot, the movie is exemplary for embodying an aesthetics of technology. Consequently, Germanists such as Christian Rogowski purport that this particular sound movie operetta is one of the first to thematise new technology and its reception – and it is, I would add, the first to do so with some flair.[610]

The movie starts out with a sequence of shots that illustrate the workings behind the scenes of a small cinema (see Figures 31-34). A voice from offstage shouts: "Stop!", followed by "Anton!". The camera zooms in on a machine. At first, we cannot really tell what kind of machine it is. A man's head enters the frame and operates a few control knobs; the camera follows the projectionist's movements all the way to the front of the machine. To a modern viewer it becomes quite clear that the machine in question is a cinema projector. Suddenly, music starts playing rather loudly. The camera zooms in on two loudspeakers at the ceiling of the projection booth, the music's source. The projectionist Anton, whose offstage voice seems to sound from somewhere far away, proclaims in a thick Berlin accent to his colleague: "Helmut! Darn! To be sure, one of the loudspeakers is broken!" Anton is shown on a ladder holding a big speaker. What is striking about this camera shot is that we do not actually see Anton; rather, he appears as a shadow puppet behind the screen of the small cinema. The camera then switches back to Helmut in his projection booth who, prompted by Anton's verdict, fiddles with a knob on the side of the

[610] See, for instance, Christian Rogowski, "Strange Bedfellows: The Politics of Sound in Ludwig Berger's 'Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht' (1932)," *Colloquia Germanica* 44, no. 3 (2011): 332; Jörg Schweinitz, "'Wie im Kino.' Die autothematische Welle im frühen Tonfilm. Figurationen des Selbstreflexiven," in *Diesseits der 'Dämonischen Leinwand'*, eds. Thomas Koebner, Norbert Grob, and Bernhard Kiefer (Munich: edition text + kritik, 2003), 373.

projection booth. He exclaims: “Like this?” and the music softens. Anton replies with an affirmative: “Yessir!”



Figure 31: Still image from *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht*: Helmut is checking the functionality of the cinema projector. *Benito Camela*, *YouTube Video.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.



Figure 32: Still image from *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht*: Helmut is checking the functionality of the cinema projector. *Benito Camela*, *YouTube Video.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.



Figure 33: Still image from *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht*: Helmut regulating the volume*. Benito Camela, YouTube Video.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.



Figure 34: Still image from *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht*: Anton fixing a speaker behind the screen*. Benito Camela, YouTube Video.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

The scene suggests that loudspeakers were often the wellspring of unsatisfactory film sound. However, even though they were in bad odour with transition era audiences since they were believed to be the obvious and familiar source of parasitic noises, loudspeakers were not usually the most delicate component within the circle of film-recording and -screening. As early as 1930, cinemas switched from electromagnetic and electrostatic loudspeakers to the more talkie-appropriate electrodynamic or moving-coil loudspeakers. These loudspeakers were built based on the moving-coil system and, if handled properly, facilitated the rendering of frequency- and amplitude-congruent, distortion-free film sound.[611] Generally, though, loudspeakers had to be positioned in such a way that their scattering angle afforded a uniform distribution of frequencies and volume throughout the entire auditorium.[612] In addition, the directional properties of loudspeakers of that time would have determined the balance between high- and low-frequency sounds that each audience member would have perceived depending on their place in the auditorium. For instance, if the speakers were placed at a certain wrong angle, audience members in the front might have been confronted with a rather muffled sonic experience while people in the back were exposed to tinnier timbres. Under no circumstances were loudspeakers to be positioned in a way that they would direct sound waves towards the ceilings or the floor, since this led to unfortunate resonances.[613]

It was not only the positioning of loudspeakers that could influence the sonic experience of cinemagoers but also the type. Contemporary authors distinguished between four different types of electrodynamic loudspeakers: the Rice-Kellogg speaker (which was first built by General Electrics), the Blatthaller by Siemens &

[611] Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis*, 186.
[612] Umbehr posits that the average scattering angle of the loudspeakers should be 90 degrees in the horizontal and 45 degrees in the vertical (Ibid., 198).
[613] Erwin Gerlach, "Der Stand der Lautsprecherentwicklung," *Filmtechnik*, 13.12.1930.

Halske, the Riffelfalte (riffle fold), and the Hornlautsprecher (cone loudspeaker). The efficiency of a loudspeaker was generally measured by how much electric energy it was able to convert into sound waves. In 1930, however, most loudspeakers only had an efficiency factor of 2-4% (i.e., the Rice-Kellog and the riffle fold), whereas the big cone loudspeaker could reach efficiency levels of up to 20%, a rather remarkable achievement for a loudspeaker of that era.[614] As mentioned above, the different types of electrodynamic loudspeakers emphasised different aspects of the sonic experience. [615] Generally, large-scale loudspeakers had the odd idiosyncrasy to sharply blast high-frequency sounds to the front, so that, for instance, in the centre of the auditorium the frequency spectrum would be shifted upward whereas on the side it would be shifted downward.[616] The abovementioned Rieggersche Blatthaller, for instance, was an electrodynamic large-scale loudspeaker whose first prototype had been built as early as 1923 and which was predominantly used to address large outdoor gatherings. In the cinema, it was necessary to attach the Blatthaller, especially if it was connected to a chassis, to a stiff wall, otherwise speakers of that type were not always able to adequately cover low-frequency sounds. Generally, two types of Blatthaller were used: the Riesenblatthaller (54 x 54 cm, up to 600 watts) and the smaller Blatthaller (20 x 54 cm, up to 300 watts).[617] The giant

[614] Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis*, 190 ff. In 1930, the *Hornlautsprecher* or cone loudspeaker, was widely praised as the electrodynamic loudspeaker with optimum efficiency (up to 20%). The efficiency of the cone loudspeaker and the spectrum of frequencies it could render depended on the size of the cone's mouth opening as well as its curvature (with an exponentially increasing curvature being the ideal type since it did not suppress or weaken low-frequency sounds). However, exponentially curving funnels and large mouth openings also meant that early cinema cone speakers boasted substantial funnel lengths and mouth openings measuring several square meters. (Ibid., 200).

[615] Usually, the Rice-Kellog loudspeakers, as really any cone loudspeaker, had to be built into a baffle, so that an equalisation of pressure on both sides of the membrane when transmitting low frequencies could be prevented. The small coil-driven loudspeaker baffled with a broad midfrequency range and was widely considered the best "hornless speaker". The Rice-Kellog loudspeaker was one of the first models that did not rely on resonance for volume but rather on an amplifier that was capable to inject enough power into the speaker system. (Fritz Fischer, *Tonfilm: Aufnahme und Wiedergabe*, 176.)

[616] Eduard Rhein, "Liegt es an den Lautsprechern?," *Filmtechnik*, 8.3.1930.

[617] Fischer, *Tonfilm: Aufnahme und Wiedergabe*, 174.

membrane surface “causes a relatively high sound radiation resistance”, which made for a rather sizeable sound power.[618] The riffle fold loudspeaker was yet another electrodynamic, large area loudspeaker that did not use the coil system but was an “all-metal direct-radiator speaker with an electrodynamic single conductor drive that supplied power through the riffled tinfoil membrane itself”.[619] Instead of the coil, this loudspeaker utilised a rigid tinfoil ribbon that was positioned within an electromagnetic field to transform electric energy into sound waves.

As early as 1931, researchers and practitioners recommended the utilisation of loudspeaker combinations in order not only to increase their efficiency but also to cover the entire frequency spectrum. Klangfilm’s Europa combination, for instance, which is also to be spotted in the abovementioned scene from *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht*, employed three different kinds of loudspeakers in order to do this: a large-scale loudspeaker that was able to cover low frequencies with great precision and clarity, such as the riffle fold, was matched with two funnel loudspeakers that adequately covered the high frequency sounds. One of these funnel loudspeakers is the apparent culprit in *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht*. Often, these early loudspeaker combos had an integrated circuit that allowed for low-frequency sounds to be funnelled through the large-scale loudspeaker only and vice versa.[620] When looking at their position within the film theatre, usually loudspeakers were positioned relatively closely to one another in case more than one was used, and were, in the case of one speaker, either centred vertically and horizontally behind the projection screen or, in the case of two loudspeakers or loudspeaker combos, positioned on opposite sides behind the projection screen. The use of the more favourable

[618] Ibid.
[619] Ibid., 175.
[620] Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis*, 202. It was, however, also possible to combine several funnel loudspeakers that were calibrated in such a way that they covered different frequency ranges.

loudspeaker combinations, as depicted in the "handtowel" cinema (which boasted long and small auditoriums) in *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht*, was a rare exception. In *Tonfilmtechnik in Frage und Antwort*, technician Wolfgang Martini clearly states that for cost and maintenance reasons, only a few cinemas used loudspeaker combinations. Almost all small cinemas were equipped with only one loudspeaker, which would most often be an electrodynamic, coil-operated loudspeaker with a funnel of some kind, which effectively meant that frequency ranges varied widely depending on the spectator's position within the auditorium, whereas a few big cinemas betted on the penetrating powers of a large area loudspeaker.[621] As a result, background music and hit songs performed in films—which were much more sensitive to the cutting off of low frequency ranges than language—often sounded characteristically wispy. On the other hand, speech sounded strangely muffled when high frequencies were cut off or, more often, characteristically tinny when the output of the loudspeaker was not sufficient to transmit low-frequency sounds.

One can assume that this is how most visitors of small provincial so-called "handtowel" cinemas must have heard movies. In general, sound controllers in film theatres could already make use of equalisers to subsequently balance out the frequency ranges that could be perceived in the auditorium. This, however, required exact measurements of which frequency ranges were neglected or artificially enhanced in each respective cinema auditorium. More often than not, sound controllers who were not musically trained did use equalisers as a quick fix to artificially boost lower frequency sounds or the like.[622]

Given the size of the cinema in which the projectionists Anton and his colleague Helmut from *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht* are shown to be working and

[621] Wolfgang Martini, *Tonfilmtechnik in Frage und Antwort. Mit 23 Abbildungen und 76 Zeichnungen.* Bücherei des Kinematographen, vol. IV. (Verlag Scherl: Berlin, 1933), 14.
[622] Erwin Gerlach, "Der Stand der Lautsprecherentwicklung," *Filmtechnik*, 13.12.1930.

its location in a simple working-class neighbourhood, to afford such high-maintenance and high-cost equipment would have been impossible. What is more, the presence of several different operators in the back and front of the cinema was something only big premiere cinemas could afford. Even though the devices and practices shown in *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht* were realistic depictions of screening devices and loudspeakers used in cinemas, they were nevertheless not accurate representations of what these practices would have looked like in cinemas that most contemporary cinemagoers had access to. One could even argue that Ufa purposefully depicted the proficiency of the Klangfilm-Tobis-system as immaculate in films such as this in order to demonstrate that it was not the technology itself that was flawed but rather the circumstances of the everyday cinematic experience. In this vein, the fissure between the reality of the cinema experience and its fictionalised portrayals neglected to draw attention to how many variables had to align to make for a worthwhile sonic experience at the cinema.

Parasitic Noises

Already we can see that variances in loudspeaker capabilities and arrangements had potentially significant effects on the cinema-to-cinema sonic experiences of contemporary audiences. Indeed, it is safe to say that the acoustic experience, even more so than the visual experience, must have varied immensely between cinemas – and loudspeakers were not the only factor. As American sound engineer W. F. Elliott stated in his comprehensive guide to sound recording for films: "the demand for better equipment arose slowly, but kept pace with the improvement in public taste, and the growth of the public's critical faculty".[623] The average Berlin cinema

[623] William F. Elliott, *Sound-recording for films*, 12.

attendee went to the cinema 13.2 times during the year 1931[624] and on average paid 0.88 RM for a ticket.[625] A visit to the cinema was considered as much less luxurious than a visit to the theatre or opera; but, especially in rural areas, it was still considered a special occasion.

It does come as something of a surprise to find that audiences nevertheless expected cinemas and movies to adhere to certain acoustic standards and vocally expressed their frustration with the new medium when exposed to a cacophony rather than an enjoyable evening's entertainment. For instance, in 1930, a reader of the film journal *Film-Kurier*, Mücka, wrote to the editorial team to voice his anger by stating that they could not even understand 20% of the dialogue of *Der blaue Engel*.[626] German film theorist and critic Rudolf Arnheim reinforced this claim in 1932 by stating that "the sound reproduction of the film equipment was still fairly deficient, especially in small provincial film theatres."[627] According to his verdict, in a middle-sized cinema 60-80% of the movie was incomprehensible. He went on to describe more specifically in which ways film sound was flawed: voice registers were distorted, reverberating extraneous noises inhibited intelligibility, individual consonants translated poorly, intradiegetic noises were portrayed wrong in their intensity and character.[628] As Corinna Müller rightly reminds us, though, the perception of sound in cinemas depended on where a critic or visitor was seated within the auditorium, since early cinemas could not ensure an even distribution of sound. This would also provide an explanation for differing reviews of the sound quality of movies on the same night.[629] What is more, one cannot help but notice

[624] Jason, *Handbuch der Filmwirtschaft*, 70.
[625] Ibid., 66. As opposed to an average ticket price of 0.72 RM in the rest of the country.
[626] Anonymous, "Das Publikum protestiert. Nur 20% des Tonfilms zu verstehen. Brief an die Redaktion des Film-Kurier vom 10.7.1930," *Film-Kurier*, 12.7.1930.
[627] Rudolf Arnheim, *Film als Kunst*, ed. Helmut H. Diederichs (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1979 [1932]), 258.
[628] Ibid.
[629] Müller, *Vom Stummfilm zum Tonfilm*, 251.

how much the sonic (and, of course, visual) experience of transition era cinema must have been tied to the socioeconomic background and means of any cinemagoer as well as their respective place of living. Urban centres were home to well-equipped premiere and gala cinemas whereas provincial towns had to make do with either "handtowel" or mobile cinemas.

Modern-day audiences are accustomed to the fairly standardised architectural settings and room acoustics of big chain cinemas. Sound in these modern cinemas permeates the cinema hall almost uniformly, with a balanced mixture of high- and low-frequency sounds and, above all, clarity. Not so much in 1930: as the engineer Otto Sandvik noted, audiences had to endure an array of "parasitic noises". Such sonic disturbances could stem from mistakes anywhere in a line of complex technical procedures.[630] The most penetrating "parasitic noise" was probably the "Grundgeräusch" or basic noise level, whose characteristic sizzling, crackling, and buzzing modern audiences usually associate with the sonic ambience of old movies. However, this "Grundgeräusch" cannot be compared to what a modern audience experiences when watching old movies from the comfort of their own (electro-acoustically well-equipped) homes. According to several accounts from the contemporary trade press, the basic noise level was described as so pervasive that, depending on where a person was seated in the cinema, entire dialogues could often not be heard.[631] This must have made for a rather exhausting sonic experience. It must have also limited the recording process and therefore the creative liberties of the director and the sound engineer: the basic noise level determined the dynamic range of any given scene as well as the minimum volume

[630] Otto Sandvik, "Das Grundgeräusch," *Filmtechnik*, 8.2.1930. See also Helmut Grajetzky. *Untersuchungen über das Grundgeräusch bei der Tonfilmwiedergabe nach dem Lichttonverfahren*. (Berlin: Springer, 1934); Charles Métain, "Analogie mit der Kamera. Der Störspiegel," *Film-Kurier*, 8.8.1930; Max Brenzinger, "Das Grundgeräusch," *Filmtechnik*, 25.8.1931.
[631] See, for instance, M. R. Franz, "Guter Ton: lächelnder Theaterbesitzer, schlechter Ton: Publikum will Geld zurück," *Der Film*, 3.10.1930.

scenes had to be shot in to still successfully translate to an audience during its screening.[632] One could even go so far as to say that the basic noise level necessitated producing movies with a soundtrack that was recorded on a consistently middle-high volume. The dominance of sound movie operettas and other musical film genres during the early sound movie era can thus partially be traced back to the need to feature less dialogue in movies. Music and songs communicated to an audience even if its exact lyrics were not comprehensible.

The basic noise level could be traced back to multiple procedures during the recording, copying, and projection process. It could be as simple as dust particles on the film material which were bigger than the silver bromide crystals that were formed during the development of the film and thus made for a 'grainy sound'. Heinz Umbehr presented a procedure to diminish the basic noise level in the 1932 edition of his book: it was widely recognised that the basic noise level that occurred during the Intensitätsverfahren was much less noticeable the more the soundtrack was blackened. By using a specific appliance that regulated the density of the soundtrack, the new Klarfilm-procedure allowed for stretches with low volume to be blackened more than stretches with high volume. As a result, even during low-voiced scenes, sounds, voices, and music were audible and not covered up by parasitic noises.[633]

The basic noise level was not the only sonic disturbance that a contemporary audience had to endure. Multiple manuals and trade articles published during that time offered advice to projectionists on how to identify certain malfunctions according to which sounds came with them.[634] An expert's auditory education

[632] Müller, *Vom Stummfilm zum Tonfilm*, 206.
[633] Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis*, 127. See also Anonymous, "Klangfilm-Klarton ist da," *Der Film*, 29.10.1931.
[634] See, for instance, Walter Meinel, *Hilfsbuch für die Prüfung des Kinovorführers in Frage und Antwort* (Berlin: Scherl, 1925); Paul Hatschek, *Grundlagen des Tonfilms.* Die Bücher des

seemed required to operate sound equipment on an even keel. In 1930 article, electrical engineer Fritz Kleffel itemised which sounds could be traced back to which malfunctions:[635]

1. **variations in tone**: contamination of the Tonfenster (sound gate), asynchronous powering of the machines, inaccurate insertion of the film, mechanical commotion of the Filmzelle;
2. **variations in volume**: fluctuations in the electricity supply, fluctuations in the light of the exciter lamp;
3. **noise interferences**: bad or grainy copies of sound-on-movie films;
4. **constant, "singing" noises**: sounds emanating from the tubes as a result of a severe vibration of the photocell's amplifier or the basic amplifier;
5. **slowly swelling whistling sounds**: feedback of one of the basic amplifiers or photocell's amplifiers tubes that is amplified by an external source or the control loudspeaker;
6. **bell-like, periodically occurring side tones**: photocell has been brought out of his original position, i.e., the photocell is vibrating and exposes the film material infrequently;
7. **rhythmically occurring cracking sounds**: self-charging of the film material with static electricity in the film drum, which leads to sparking in a rhythmical pulse of half a second to one second;
8. **occasional clanking sounds**: putting loudspeakers into overdrive by playing the sound on much too high a volume;
9. **muffled sound**: commonly referred to as "potato eating" in the trade press, this could be traced back to the wrong use of the equaliser or the incorrect calibration of the light slit; high frequencies could also be cut out if the film was played back too slowly.

Because of the complexity of the machinery and the varying factors involved, in the early days of the talkies projectionists had to be versed in at least the basic principles of acoustics, preferably also have a musical ear, and ideally would be trained as sound engineers. Since the detection of malfunctions as well as the modulation of sound depended so much on the skills of the projectionist, it does not come as a surprise that 1930s projectionists had to undergo specialist training and sit examinations.

Lichtspielvorführers, vol. 6 (Halle (Saale): Verlag von Wilhelm Knapp, 1931); Fritz Kleffel, *Die Bedienung der Tonfilmmaschinen* (Halle: Knapp, 1931).

[635] Fritz Kleffel, "Störungen im Tonfilmtheater," *Filmtechnik*, 23.8.1930.

Still, most often non-professionals were forced to tackle the precise procedures involved in the screening process and adjust settings for finely tuned equipment that they were not familiar with. More often than not, faulty sound could thus be traced back to the inadequate usage of admittedly temperamental components such as the equaliser or the loudspeakers. Since the fidelity of the sonic experience depended on more than just perspective maintenance during the recording process itself, some prestigious film theatres, such as Berlin's Ufa am Zoo, Gloria-Palast, and Universum, actually flaunted the control panels in their auditoriums, from whence sound controllers could adjust the volume of the sound on-site, factoring in such parameters as the occupancy rate of each performance, the acoustic conditions of the cinema, and the volume fluctuations that were inherent to the movie itself.[636] To this end, some directors actually coordinated with the well-trained sound controllers on site and crafted a sound script for the premiere screening of their movies. Medium-scale cinemas at least had a volume regulator installed at the side of their auditoriums to absorb the most abrasive fluctuations in volume and prevent the overdrive of the loudspeakers. The projectionist, who already had his work cut out in the projection booth, monitoring the equipment, and so on, could not operate the volume control in the auditorium, which is why, theoretically, in early cinemas a second pair of hands and ears was needed. This second pair of hands is depicted in the person of Helmut in *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht* who is helping with repairs; however, most cinemas would have had to do with just one, scarcely trained pair of hands. The stylised depiction of the sound projectionists' work at a small cinema in *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht* is thus yet another instance of a sound movie operetta presenting conflicted messages about technology as shown on screen and in reality.

[636] Eduard Rhein, "Liegt es an den Lautsprechern?," *Filmtechnik*, 8.3.1930.

Sonic Experiences in the Cinema

Cinema sound was also significantly impacted by the acoustics of cinema buildings themselves, the majority of which had very much remained in the silent movie period, with their arched balconies, wall ornaments, and domed ceilings. This was because pre-existing buildings were mostly adapted for sound rather than built new. Werner Gabler, the director of Klangfilm's permanent consultation service for acoustic and constructional matters (Ständige Beratungsstelle für alle akustischen und bautechnischen Fragen), in a summary of his annual report, revealed how the service had been established by Klangfilm in 1931 to "make expert knowledge available to theatre owners and to prevent costly experiments and unconfident testing when faced with exceptionally complex outlier cases".[637] According to Gabler, at first the efforts of the new consultation service were not taken to kindly by the theatre owners, who were sceptical of the technical usefulness of scientific findings in the field of cinema acoustics. After a few selected Berlin cinemas agreed to risk an attempt at acoustically optimising their auditoriums, the consultation service was able to resume work on a much larger scale.[638] As part of its ground-breaking work, the consultation service first determined how many of the 268 domestic and foreign cinemas they randomly picked for examination met the requirements for screening sound movies. Only 33 of them were deemed "acoustically well-equipped" for screening movies, whereas 72 were deemed "acoustically adequate", and a whopping majority of 153 was considered "unfavourable" (partially so bad that speech intelligibility was lost).[639] Klangfilm's consultation service also helped with measuring, for instance, the reverberation time

[637] Werner Gabler, "Erfahrungen in der Theater-Akustik (Jahresbericht der akustischen und bautechnischen Beratungsstelle der Klangfilm GmbH)," *Filmtechnik*, 28.5.1931.
[638] Ibid.
[639] Ibid. The experiments were conducted with one third to half of the percentage of seats occupied. The exact criteria of the assessment of the acoustic quality of the cinema's auditoriums were not conveyed.

of a specific sound within an auditorium and gave advice on how to reduce it. This was done by blowing a whistle or shooting an alarm pistol behind the projection screen and measuring with the help of a stopwatch how long it took for the sound to fully dry up.[640] A reverberation time over one-and-a-half seconds was already considered disadvantageous.[641] They helped with issuing 147 professional acoustic evaluations in 1931 alone.[642] Cinema owners not only refurbished already existent cinemas following the acoustic guidelines of Klangfilm but built new ones that met the criteria of a good-sounding movie theatre. The Berlin premiere cinema Titania-Palast, for instance, was remodelled according to most recent findings in the field of cinema acoustics and was subsequently hailed as one of the Berlin cinemas with the best acoustic setup.[643]

In their 1931 compendium *Lichtspielhäuser, Tonfilmtheater*, Paul Zucker and Georg Otto Stindt surveyed a few of Germany's most prominent cinemas, providing detailed descriptions, photographs, and ground plans.[644] They also listed some fundamental requirements for an acoustically conscious construction of cinemas. First, they recommended a closed-form approach to conceptualising cinemas, with a rectangular or round ground plan of the auditorium with no dead angles and no contortions of any kind to reduce reverberation and echo effects.[645] One common problem was that sound carried with decreasing volume and intensity towards cinema attendees who were seated in the stalls right beneath the first balcony.[646] To counteract this, the space between the stalls and the balcony had to be sufficiently ample to allow for the sound waves to travel through to the very last

[640] Ibid.
[641] Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis*, 477.
[642] Werner Gabler, "Erfahrungen in der Theater-Akustik (Jahresbericht der akustischen und bautechnischen Beratungsstelle der Klangfilm GmbH)," *Filmtechnik*, 28.5.1931.
[643] Werner Gabler, *Die Akustik des Tonfilmtheaters*, Bücher des Lichtspielvorführers (Halle: Knapp, 1932), 13.
[644] Georg Otto Stindt and Paul Zucker, *Lichtspielhäuser, Tonfilmtheater* (Berlin: Wasmuth, 1931).
[645] Stindt and Zucker, *Lichtspielhäuser*, 11-12.
[646] Gabler, *Die Akustik des Tonfilmtheaters*, 10.

row.[647] H. Schiffer adds for consideration that the ceiling underneath the gallery should ideally slope down from the front to the back since this increased the probability of the sound waves being reflected from the ceiling to the last rows.[648] Additionally, small gallery openings with high ceilings should be avoided under any circumstances since they were prone to create their own resonance-heavy sound spaces.

Also considered to be instrumental in creating the adequate acoustic setting was also the right distribution of seats in the auditorium (or the placement of the first tier, should one be necessary) and the right construction and treatment of the walls and ceilings.[649] If sound hit bent or crooked areas it could, given the wrong radius of curvature, be reflected in such a way that it clustered in a specific area, meaning that visitors sitting in certain areas of the cinema would notice a particularly strong echo or perceive sound interferences that would create the effect of a decrease in volume.[650] According to Schiffer, an adequate (mostly short) reverberation time of the cinema was essential for an enjoyable cinematic experience.[651]

The sound permeability of the projection screen was also an issue that was debated in trade journals. H. F. Hopkins, for instance, highlights how modern projection screens should feature dedicated air holes. The arrangement and size of these air holes should be determined according to the total surface area of the screen and its fabric.[652] Positive effects on the sound quality of the cinema could be achieved even by small changes, such as upholstering the undersides of seats in

[647] H. Schiffer, "Verbesserungen der Akustik," *Filmtechnik*, 10.1.1931. Low and deep galleries were usually very disadvantageous to an even distribution of frequencies and volumes.
[648] Ibid.
[649] Stindt and Zucker, *Lichtspielhäuser*, 11-12.
[650] Umbehr, *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis*, 476.
[651] H. Schiffer, "Verbesserungen der Akustik," *Filmtechnik*, 10.1.1931
[652] H. F. Hopkins, "Schalldurchlässigkeit," *Filmtechnik*, 12.7.1930.

the auditorium. If a seat was unoccupied and thus tipped up, its cushioned bottom side would further reduce reverberation.

For various reasons, the sonic experience of the everyday cinemagoer could vary wildly, depending on all sorts of variables: the quality of the technological equipment, the quality and training of the projectionist, the design and architecture of the auditorium, the position of the cinemagoer within the auditorium, to name but a few. It is then safe to assume that audiences would have been accustomed to often below-average, variable experiences when they attended the cinema. In that light, the scene with projectionist Anton from *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht* can be read as having fed into the audiences' frustrations as, perhaps, a knowing joke between the audience and the filmmaker: it, once again, presents the audiences with all-too-familiar sonic problems while also deceiving them about how easy it was to fix those issues. The fictitious projectionist and his colleague cast the profession of the projectionist as that of a skilled technician. Such scenes, then, almost defiantly counter audiences' sonic frustrations by showing not only how eager professionals worked towards solving issues but also the kinds of technological difficulties early sound cinema was grappling with. However, they neglected to showcase how under-equipped "handtowel" cinemas, such as the one depicted in *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht*, would, even under ideal circumstances, have been unable to emulate the sound quality that is alluded to within the movie.

However, not all was fraught in this cinematic world. Apparently, there were attempts to standardise the sonic experience of the average cinemagoer and to make additional provisions; already during the transition era, cinemas not only made provisions for the improvement of sound but also for its accessibility. On Friday 5th December 1930, the Berlin premiere cinema Universum introduced a new installation that enabled the hearing-impaired to attend the cinema: the Deutsche

Akustik-Gesellschaft had "equipped an entire row of seats with headphones for the hearing-impaired".[653] Dr. Erich von Lolhöffel further remarked on the functionality of the installation: directly from the amplifier output a line was channelled off which led to a voltage divider that was inconspicuously installed in the auditorium. From here, "simple lines were directed to the seats that were intended for the hearing-impaired, to which up to twenty headphones could be attached. Each single unit boasted a double headphone and a volume control knob."[654] This shows that, despite the often dire acoustic conditions in cinemas, technicians and architects were aware of the problems their audiences were grappling with and even accounted for those with special needs. Ultimately, what both the real and fictionalised account of film sound had in common was the willingness of a myriad of professionals to identify the technology's hiccups and limitations, and work towards adapting them to audiences' needs.

Conclusion

When film scholar Richard Griffith asserts that the soundscape of silent movies was never actually substantiated but counted on the acoustic imagination of its audience to "fill in auditory gaps", to co-create the film universe, he hints at a mode of reception that was fundamentally altered by the advent of the talkie. Indeed, in the era of the silent movie—or, as film theorist Michel Chion would later call it, "deaf cinema"—"[t]he suggestion of sound was in the air at the time: it play[ed] an important role in poetry, fiction, even painting, and especially in the music of the early twentieth century."[655] When synchronised sound entered the cinematic

[653] Anonymous, "Das erste deutsche Kino für Schwerhörige," *Filmtechnik*, 13.12.1930.
[654] Erich von Lolhöffel, "Schwerhörigenanlagen," *Filmtechnik*, 27.6.1931.
[655] Michel Chion, *Film, a Sound Art*, trans. Claudia Gorbman (Chichester: Columbia University Press, 2009), 5.

universe, it thus first had to establish itself with audiences. To suddenly be presented with on-screen sound and its hiccups must have been quite a jarring change to the overall experience of going to the cinema. In the early 1930s, audiences lay in wait for sound technology to reveal itself "as a novelty or a freak" and to disclose its flaws compared to the silent movies that had, to an extent, worked with the mere sonic imagination of its audiences.[656]

It is thus not surprising that early sound movies playfully anticipated negotiations with sound and early sound technology *on their own terms*. The process of putting real and fictionalised reception attitudes, reception modes, genre conventions. and technology on display—in a hyperbolic and satirised fashion—offered opportunities to play with sound and music as thematic backbones for early talkies. Indeed, in sound movie operettas and other music films, we find synchronised sound's crisis of identity uncovered as, for instance, Max Hansen involuntarily reveals the complex technology and professionalism behind the recording of sound in *Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari* or when the depiction of the projectionists Helmut and Anton in *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht* draws attention to the acoustic conditions in cinemas and their technologies of reproduction. When such procedures and processes were revealed to audiences, contemporaries might have progressively gained a better understanding of how complex was the journey of film sound from the set to the cinema. By, in some cases, fashioning an at times more simplified or even idealised version of the 'truth', as could be seen with the stylised depiction of a studio space in *Ein blonder Traum*, cinematic presentations of sound technology and sound professionals helped both to pacify audience's expectations and familiarise them with the complexities of the sonic universe that was being presented to them.

[656] Altmann, *Silent Film Sound*, 6.

The depiction of technological objects and practices in sound movie operettas is thus embedded into a network of representational practices that, as Wurtzler argues, "seek to discipline the ways individuals and society envision their possibilities, as well as talk and think about, use, and consume technological objects or technologically mediated texts."[657] Equally, the industry managed to influence public perceptions of synchronous sound "by focusing on the ways in which technological change was presented to the public."[658] The movies thus sedimented a new kind of experiential relation of the individual to the conditions of production, reproduction, and their own reception. Cinematic self-reflection is a direct consequence of this function because by observing and portraying themselves, the people using media and technologies observe a significant sector of social and cultural life. German film musicals and sound movie operettas not only self-ironically interrogated their aesthetic value and standing but also satirically depicted media of audio-visual reproduction and patterns of mass media reception in grand style. What helped with the process was the incorporation of familiar forms into the medium od film: first and foremost, the integration of musical forms, as observed with the Weintraub Syncopators in *Das Kabinett des Dr Larifari*.

Such cinematic negotiations of discursive tensions, according to film historian Helen Hanson, also "mark[ed] the gradual integration of technical and production cultures" into the audience's framework of what cinematic sound was and entailed.[659] At the same time, such negotiations with audiences as well as debates among sound engineers, critics, the industry, and others, "led to the establishment of representational conventions" for sound/image relationships.[660] By, for instance,

[657] Wurtzler, *Electric Sounds*, 14.
[658] Ibid., 16.
[659] Helen Hanson, *Hollywood Soundscapes: Film Sound Style, Craft and Production in the Classical Era* (London: Palgrave, 2017), 12.
[660] Wurtzler, *Electric Sounds*, 6.

screening a scene from *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht*, in which the sonic experience within a "handtowel" cinema could easily be improved by adjusting a few things here and there, audiences were indirectly introduced to certain sonic expectations. This means that the identity and design of cinema sound was stabilised by outlining, by means of contrast, what good cinema sound was supposed to be – on every level, from the recording to the screening process.

Thus, the humorous and light-hearted depiction of sonic hiccups in sound movie operettas did not only invite audiences to forgive the flawed nature of their cinematic reality and but also helped with negotiating sonic standards that would shape cinema sound for years to come. An archaeological exploration of technological systems and their evocation of production, performance, and reception modes, as produced above, then seemed almost inevitable.[661] Such an exploration has mainly drawn attention to the overlaps and fissures between reality and fiction that are so prominently pointed out by the sound movie operetta's self-reflexive nature whilst arguing for an aesthetics of technology as integral part of the cinematic experience.

[661] Like Müller's technology-guided approach to early talkies, film scholar Hans J. Wulff approaches the ubiquitous presence of technologically mediated sound and image in German Schlager movies of the 1950s (Hans J. Wulff, *Musik gehört dazu: der österreichisch-deutsche Schlagerfilm 1950-1965* (Münster, New York: Waxmann, 2019)). He purports her notion of a music- and film-oriented aesthetics of technology by identifying patterns that visualise technologically mediated musicking in Schlager movies as more real and visceral than live performances. However, the visualisation of flawed technology on and off screen also contributes to that visceral quality being simultaneously negated. Early music film culture then depends on a paradox: something looks like actual musicking and is still a mere reproduction or simulation of it.

Chapter IV: Scoring Bombshell Cinema: Franz Grothe's Late German Revue Film *Die Frau meiner Träume* (*The Woman of My Dreams*, 1944)

On 28th March, 1933, Reich's Film and Propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels outlined the programmatic foundations of the new National Socialist regime's film policies and thus seemingly inaugurated a new era of film-making that was supposed to break with the conventions of the Weimar Era.[662] One day later, the Ufa board convened for an extraordinary meeting during which they "dissolve[d] [their] contracts with Jewish employees".[663] Many of the film company's best creatives who had shaped the sound movie operetta, such as Werner Richard Heymann and Erich Pommer, fell victim to this politically motivated wave of layoffs within the film industry. Against the backdrop of these events, the sound movie operetta did not immediately cease to exist but significantly declined in prominence.[664] Movies such as *Viktor und Viktoria* (1933), *Amphitryon* (1935) and *Glückskinder* (*Children of Luck*, 1936) are some of the last representatives of the genre. Even though the sound movie operetta had guaranteed Ufa its biggest commercial successes, another music-infused cinematic genre came to dominate the screens during the National Socialist period: the revue movie.[665] With remarkably successful representatives of the genre such as *Wir tanzen um die Welt* (*We Dance Around the World*, 1939), *Kora Terry* (1940), and *Frauen sind doch*

[662] Joseph Goebbels, "Rede im Kaiserhof am 28.3.1933," in *Der Film im Dritten Reich*, ed. Gerd Albrecht (Karlsruhe: Doku-Verlag, 1979), 26.
[663] BArch, R-109-I/1029 a, *Ufa-Vorstandsprotokolle*, vol. 7, Niederschrift 905, 29.3.1933.
[664] Robert Müller, "Epilog. Die Tonfilmoperette nach 1933 in Deutschland und im Exil," in *Wenn ich sonntags in mein Kino geh'. Ton – Film – Musik, 1929-1933*, eds. Rainer Rother and Peter Mänz. (Berlin: Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek/Kettler, 2007), 142.
[665] The last successful Ufa sound movie operetta is considered to be *Glückskinder* (*Children of Luck*) which had its premiere in 1936. After this, Ufa increasingly focused on explicit revue formats.

bessere Diplomaten (*Women are Better Diplomats After All*, 1941) ringing in a new era of film entertainment, that pristine Weimar recipe for success, the sound movie operetta, quickly became obsolete. However, the revue film can be understood as not having replaced the sound movie operetta per se, but rather as being an extension of the sound movie operetta genre in terms of its degree of mediatisation and the modes of reception it invoked. From a structural point of view, the masterstroke of both genres was their capability to convincingly merge loosely linked musical tropes under the umbrella of the most established, easily marketable popular music genre of the time: the sound movie hit song.

I will not discuss the late sound movie operetta's or the early revue film's trajectory further within this thesis since the aim of this chapter is to carve out reception attitudes towards a new music film genre at its peak – taking the 1944 revue movie *Die Frau meiner Träume* (*The Woman of My Dreams*) as representative of already firmly established conventions of the revue film genre and audiences that were intimately familiar with them.[666] What is more, it will be interesting to zoom in on how, more than a decade after the sound movie operetta's zenith, producers and audiences alike continued to make use of the catchy tunes and well-oiled distribution and marketing networks that the sound movie operetta had established.

Before I will go on to sketch out the outline of this chapter, it will be useful to trace what changed in the transition from the sound movie operetta to the revue film. The focus of the German music film more generally shifted from the depiction of a

[666] According to a Reichs Film Chamber assessment report from 13th November 1944, "The Woman of My Dreams" ranked eighth on a list of the most popular Third Reich entertainment movies (only 41 movies were considered as successful enough to be listed; they must have grossed at least 5 million RM to qualify). By far the most successful movies listed were *Die Goldene Stadt* (*The Golden City*), *Der Weisse Traum* (*The White Dream*), *Immensee* and the Zarah Leander melodrama *Die große Liebe* (*The Great Love*). (BArch, R 55/20.729, assessment report from 13.11.1944). *Die Frau meiner Träume* is the only movie listed that has only been released in 1944.

"musical narrative" to that of a succession of lavishly staged revue numbers showcasing extensive choreographies, as American film production companies such as Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and RKO introduced backstage and revue musicals to German audiences. Following the embargo on American movies in 1939, German producers increasingly focused on "revue-within-revue" formats, which were uncannily reminiscent of the American backstage musicals.[667] However, the revue film was not only rooted in American cinema exports but also in a Weimar Era stage tradition. During the 1920s, Berlin impresarios such as Hermann Haller and Erik Charell had introduced stage revue formats to German audiences, including its infamous girl rows, with audiences being introduced to illustrious revues with evocative titles such as *On and Off*, *Beautiful and Fashionable*, *Mouth-to-Mouth*, and *There is Something in the Wind*.[668] These more extravagant Ausstattungsrevuen (décor revues) were shaped by outrageous settings, a pinch of naked flesh, and consumerist tropes, with most of them depicting different domains of lifestyle activities such as shopping sprees in department stores, or outings at the fun fair or in a fashionable new car.

What also changed in the transition from sound movie operettas to revue films was the instrumentation and musical style of hit songs. Hit songs—which were originally crafted for dance hall settings—were now adapted in more conventional orchestrations particularly suited to the elaborately choreographed numbers that were a dominant feature of such films. The combination orchestra's embrace of jazz and swing elements made way for a more orchestra-oriented instrumentation, as will be explicated later in this chapter. However, even though arrangement practices

[667] According to Schäfer, the last American film musical production *Irrwege der Liebe* was screened on 25.7.1940. (Hans D. Schäfer, *Das gespaltene Bewußtsein: Über deutsche Kultur und Lebenswirklichkeit 1933-1945* (Berlin: Ullstein, 1984), 40).
[668] Marita Berg, "'Det Jeschäft ist richtig!' Die Revueoperetten des Erik Charell," in *Im Weißen Rössl. Zwischen Kunst und Kommerz*, ed. Ulrich Tadday (Munich: edition text + kritik, 2006), 60.

changed, sound movie hit songs were still typically based on popular dances such the tango (but increasingly emphasised waltz and swing tropes).

The revue movie *Die Frau meiner Träume*, which will be the case study for this chapter, was roughly crafted in the vein of late Weimar Ausstattungsrevuen. It features a succession of loosely linked musical numbers that are only vaguely connected to the overall narrative (despite it being dubbed a film operetta in the opening credits of the movie). The revue setting furthermore provides space for a variety of exotic locations (with France, Spain, and China being musically "portrayed" in the movie's opulent revue scenes). What the German revue movie in general borrowed from its American equivalent were its behind-the-scenes portrayal of the revue star, its adaptation of the swing style and its extensive staging of two stand-alone revue shows within the movie. In *Die Frau meiner Träume*, the first of these is "Die Frau ohne Herz" ("The Woman Without a Heart"), and the second "Die Frau meiner Träume" ("The Woman of my Dreams").

The aim of my exploration of *Die Frau meiner Träume* is to explain how revue films of the National Socialist period succeeded in accentuating the broader experiential, rather than just the overtly political, dimensions of the cinematic event by establishing what film scholar Sabine Hake calls a "higher manifestation of reality in the viewing experience".[669] Through this idea, the substantiation of cinematic effects is understood as depending on the recipient's potential to ground their experience in both the satisfaction of their pop-cultural desires and fantasies and the internal reality of their emotions. Hake argues that National Socialist's cinema's approach to realism established a frame of reference that "could dissolve the boundaries among fiction, fantasy and lived experience into the authentic terms of film folklore" while also sustaining the image of an entertainment culture that was

[669] Sabine Hake, *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich* (Austin, University of Texas Press, 2021), 173.

untouched by politics.[670] Along these lines, film production during the National Socialist period is often considered as embedded in the illusion of a popular culture untouched by political ideology.

In my exploration of *Die Frau meiner Träume* it is then interesting to observe how an eclectic synthesis of references, pointing to a variety of popular culture trends that were not necessarily an explicit part of National Socialist ideology, can be understood not only as having been a means for popular culture to continue to participate in the "ongoing transformation of mass culture and modernity, including in an international context", but also a means for activating emotionally charged notions of belonging.[671]

Within the scholarly discourse, this sense of belonging has been characterised in a myriad of ways. Film scholar Eric Rentschler suggests that the implied response to Third Reich popular cinema was one that "implicate[d] viewers in the diegesis, sweeping them up into the onscreen-movement, erasing the distance between spectator and spectacle."[672] However, this interpretation rests on the popular theme of National Socialist cinema catering to the mere extension of political spectacle. In Linda Schulte-Sasse's reception-oriented investigation of Third Reich cinema, Rentschler's somewhat reductive image of a fusion of the subject and object in the reception process is transformed into the more intricate notion of an "aesthetic experience of wholeness". Schulte-Sasse conjures the notion of a "subject effect of wholeness" that, according to her, is not pre-dominantly situated in the political content of such movies but in their evocation of "imaginary experiences",[673] an idea that resonates with Hake's affect-oriented "higher

[670] Ibid., 174.
[671] Ibid., 22.
[672] Eric Rentschler, "The Use and Abuse of Memory: New German Film and the Discourse of Bitburg," *New German Critique* 36, no. 36 (1985): 74.
[673] Linda Schulte-Sasse, *Entertaining the Third Reich: illusions of wholeness in Nazi cinema* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), 17.

manifestation of reality in the viewing experience".[674] Following Schulte-Sasse, this "aesthetic experience of wholeness" is achieved by transforming "modernity's experience of void" and isolation into one of pleasure, by establishing a harmony between one's own gaze and the benevolent gaze of "the organic being"[675] that is the state, resulting in the "fusion with a cohesive social body".[676] According to Schulte-Sasse, this aesthetic experience of wholeness is not exclusive to the subject's relation to the state but also "compensates the spectator's exclusion from the site of production with mechanisms of identification that restore to the subject a sense of imaginary wholeness."[677] On the face of it, Schulte-Sasse and Rentschler seem to express similar sentiments. However, Schulte-Sasse's idea of an aesthetic experience of wholeness seems more useful because it views the spectator as not quite losing their subjectivity altogether (in the sense of Rentschler's fusion of subject and object) but rather as bringing that subjectivity into alignment with the cohesive social body in such a way that they nevertheless retain their individuality.

The intention of revue films to latch onto the viewer's emotions, as emphasised both by Hake and Schulte-Sasse, is also apparent in the writings of National Socialist film functionaries themselves. Fritz Hippler, the head of the film department in the Propaganda Ministry, stated in the article collection "Betrachtungen zum Filmschaffen" ("Oberservations on the Film Industry"): "The final effect is the main thing. And it has to have an effect as if it were reality."[678] With these words, Hippler not-so-indirectly hinted towards the way in which filmic realism became conditioned by the rule of a "primacy of affects", becoming, as such, a function of reception.[679] Notions of an affective charging of reality designed to create

[674] Hake, *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich*, 173.
[675] Schulte-Sasse, *Entertaining the Third Reich*, 27.
[676] Ibid., 43.
[677] Ibid., 33.
[678] Fritz Hippler, *Betrachtungen zum Filmschaffen* (Berlin: Max Hesse, 1943), 39.
[679] Hake, *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich*, 177.

"a new magical way of looking at real life" also resonated with National Socialist film theorists of the time, such as Gunter Groll, Peter von Werder, and Georg Herzberg.[680] As Hake notes, Herzberg saw this new notion of filmic realism fulfilled "by [movies] creating an artificial, but nonetheless believable, external reality while anchoring its meaning in the internal reality of emotions".[681]

However, to pick up on Hake's concept of film folklore and further developing Schulte-Sasse's sense of imaginary wholeness, revue films often further facilitated feelings of social cohesiveness by implementing references to seemingly regime-critical tropes: for instance, international entertainment music trends. In this vein, it was not the mere evocation of a sense of belonging that negotiated ideological tensions between fiction and lived reality and contributed to this sense of wholeness, but also mechanisms of sonic and visual "othering"; for instance, the stereotypical portrayal and adaptation of American or Chinese music trends. These modes of "othering", be it of certain genders, identities, or whole cultures, will be of particular analytical interest throughout this chapter.

According to film scholar Antje Ascheid, Schulte-Sasse and other film scholars are not alone in "investigating the obvious discrepancies between doctrinal National Socialist ideology and cultural production".[682] The historian Hans Dieter Schäfer possibly hits on an auspicious expedient for understanding these discrepancies: he advocates for a dialectic engagement with National Socialist popular culture and reception that assumes a "split consciousness" of its audiences.[683] Modern consumer goods and international trends like Coca-Cola,

---

[680] Georg Groll, *Film, die unentdeckte Kunst* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1939); Peter von Werder, *Trugbild und Wirklichkeit im Film. Aufgaben des Films im Umbruch der Zeit* (Leipzig: Schwarzhäupter Verlag, 1943); Georg Herzberg, "Der Film darf nicht doppelte Illusion bieten," *Film-Kurier*, 4.1.1940.
[681] Hake, *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich*, 181.
[682] Antje Ascheid, *Hitler's Heroines: stardom and womanhood in Nazi cinema* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002), 17.
[683] Hans D. Schäfer, *Das Gespaltene Bewußtsein,* 174.

Hollywood movies, and foreign dance forms survived and even thrived because of what Schäfer called the regime's "tolerance" toward an "unpolitical sphere".[684] The parallelism of reception preferences, i.e., the accommodation of seemingly inconsistent regime-friendly and potentially subversive cultural attitudes, was thus not at all an exception but a presumably generally held attitude, one that helped audiences to fill the uncomfortable void between that which had been intimately familiar over several years or even decades, and that which was now seemingly being spoon-fed to them. All art, but perhaps especially that which is conceived specifically with the intention of *belonging* to a particular historical moment, is shaped by the tensions inherent to its circumstances, and Schäfer's "split consciousness", such as that which underpinned NS-era reception attitudes, is one way of managing these tensions.

Film scholar Stephen Lowry further elaborates on Schäfer's notion of the National Socialist regime's assumed tolerance toward an unpolitical sphere. According to Lowry, entertainment during the late war years was intended to promote certain values and attitudes, such as conscientiousness, patriotism, perseverance, and the willingness to make sacrifices, that were not specifically or exclusively National Socialist but were nevertheless essential to the preservation of the National Socialist system.[685] The ideological nature of entertainment movies was thus often not overtly apparent; in keeping with Goebbels' "invisible propaganda" efforts, entertainment movies subtly impinged on personal and national sentiments, on people's behaviour and self-images.[686] Such propaganda efforts often aimed at regimenting aspirational family values, gender roles, and

[684] Ibid., 175.
[685] Stephen Lowry, "Der Ort meiner Träume? Zur ideologischen Funktion des NS-Unterhaltungsfilms," *Montage/av. Zeitschrift für Theorie und Geschichte audiovisueller Kommunikation*, no. 2 (1994), 57.
[686] Ibid., 58.

notions of identity and subjectivity. The transformation of the Weimar-ear femme fatale into the domestic woman of one's dreams is only one such notion that found its way into the basic premises of *Die Frau meiner Träume*.

Following these ideas of split consciousness and the subtlety of ideological control makes one question whether instead of merely reading revue movies as actual propaganda devices, one could argue that those movies in fact melodiously (and visually) digested the unappeased consumerist desires and yearnings of the German populace and thus rather more indirectly contributed to the creation of a sense of wholeness and belonging within the National Socialist regime. Building on a reception-oriented premise that revue movies facilitated the dissolution of the boundaries between reality, fiction, and imagined experience, I will in this chapter not only understand audiences of revue movies as having engaged with National Socialist ideas of belonging, wholeness, and othering, but also analyse the potential for subversion in the references of these films to a wider popular culture – specifically, at times, that of the Weimar Era. In other words, I will argue that the musical conventionality of, for instance, the Weimar Era was transported into the realm of Third Reich cinema, and as such potentially undermined some of the cornerstones of National Socialist ideology insofar as those references did not revive a merely musical past but also therewith a nexus of cultural values, attitudes, and sentiments. In this view, light film music can be understood as having had the potential, to repurpose Naomi Cummings' words, to "contribute not only to the expression but also to the formulation/formation of a broader set of values surrounding the role of a 'subject' and its expression in a given era".[687]

I understand revue movies of the National Socialist era (or music movies of this time more generally) as having taken up and fused together several musical

[687] Naomi Cumming, *The Sonic Self: musical subjectivity and signification* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 249.

references from other times and places, some of them ideologically pre-structured, some of them independent from the intentions of their creators, and some of them updated or changed during their reception. In this sense, the revue film and its hit songs became part of culture as a lifestyle article – something that exceeded the specificity of the cinematic situation and the experience of it and extended into general cultural identity. *Die Frau meiner Träume* and its composer Franz Grothe will provide a sense of just how much the composition of entertainment film music was entangled in a net of institutional, ideological, and artistic tensions and the extent to which it was emblematic of a popular culture that was grappling with a strained nexus of split-consciousness reception attitudes.

Scrutinising the Revue Film *Die Frau meiner Träume*

On 25th August 1944, Germany's propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels, seemingly out of touch with day-to-day proceedings (if not already altogether lost in a self-deceiving realm of megalomaniacal fantasy) approved the premiere of the first German colour revue film, *Die Frau meiner Träume*, at Berlin's fabled Marmorhaus.[688] While Le Tricolour flapped once again on the Eiffel Tower, 878 kilometres to the east a war-shaken German audience queued up for their own taste of escape.

Director Georg Jacoby's *Die Frau meiner Träume* does not pursue psychologically complex story lines. Its plot is as clichéd as its musical structure is surprising: revue star Julia Köster (played by the National Socialist cinema's revue poster child Marika Rökk)[689] is weary of the pomp and circumstance of the theatre scene and escapes the tight clutches of a possessive theatre impresario by fleeing

[688] Helga Belach, "…als die Traumfabrik kriegswichtig wurde," in *Wir tanzen um die Welt: Deutsche Revuefilme 1933-1945*, ed. Helga Belach (Munich: Hanser, 1979), 188.
[689] Marika Rökk, a Hungarian show personality, starred in several German film musicals and was, next to Zarah Leander, one of the most prominent actresses of the National Socialist period.

to Tyrol. Clothed in a silk negligée and a luxurious fur coat, Köster eventually ends up right in the middle of a railway track in front of the magnificent backdrop of a mountain blasting instalment. Two rival engineers, Peter Groll (Wolfgang Lukschy) and Erwin Forster (Walter Müller), Peter admittedly rather grudgingly, come to her rescue and give her shelter in their mountain lodge. Peter, who at first is seemingly immune to Julia's feminine charms, quickly becomes her favourite. To woo the unpretentious engineer, the shining revue star of the fictitious revue extravaganza "The Woman Without a Heart" slowly but surely mutates into the ideal homemaker. All the while, her female resistance is controversially worn down by numerous indignities (including her being dunked in a wooden bathtub[690]). Eventually, through a series of escapades, Julia returns to the revue stage, now starring as the elegant woman of Peter's dreams, and succeeds in winning over Peter once and for all.

The straightforward plot of *Die Frau meiner Träume* is framed by lavish revue numbers and Erich Kettelhut's extravagant set designs (at one point, several harpists dressed in salmon-coloured togas provide the background for Julia's dance exploits or the Tyrol setting looks like an idealised toy train set). Into the film are woven three hit songs: the sassy "In der Nacht ist der Mensch nicht gern alleine" provides the motivic fundament to the first revue "The Woman Without A Heart"; the folky song "Mach Dir nichts daraus" functions as Peter and Julia's love theme and is reminiscent of both Durchhalteschlager (morale-boosting hit songs) such as "Es wird einmal ein Wunder gescheh'n" ("Someday A Miracle Will Happen") from the 1942 melodrama *Die große Liebe* (*The Great Love*) and simple volkslieder; and the extravagantly adorned, schmaltzy love duet "Ich warte auf Dich" passes through a succession of wondrous musical transformations within the framework of the second revue-within-a-revue "The Woman Of My Dreams" . The second revue features

[690] A scene that visually invokes a similar setup from *Ein blonder Traum*, in which Lilian Harvey is the one who is bathing in a wooden bathtub.

intricate flamenco, pentatonic, and “Swing Time” variations of the hit song, the highlights of the film’s intricate orchestration and arrangement work.

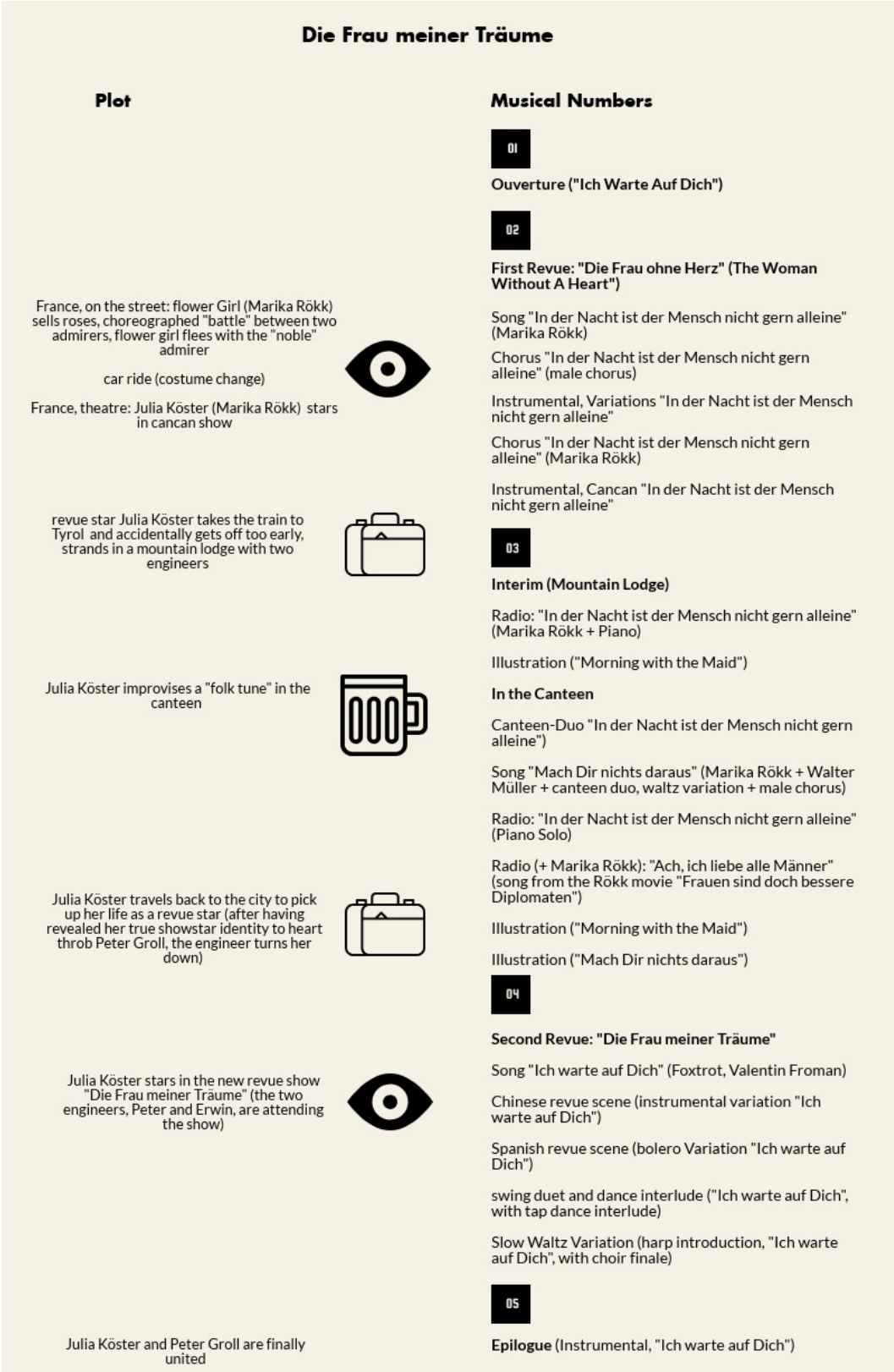


Figure 35: Overview of plot and succession of musical numbers in *Die Frau meiner Träume.*

As one watches the Hungarian starlet Rökk, alias the revue's grande dame Julia Köster, tap-dancing and pirouetting her way through several strangely exoticist revue scenes, the music sets the stage for a somewhat anachronistic and highly stylised cinematic experience that fuses musical influences, stereotypical plot lines, and tropes that had become familiar to audiences from decades of enculturation. The eclectic assemblage of waltz tropes and pentatonic pan-Asian themes, castanet rhythms and Hungarian dance moves in front of either Grecian or Wagnerian mise-en-scènes may seem odd to modern audiences; it is entirely plausible, however, when one recalls the several, at times opposing, generic and musical influences that this genre characteristically subsumed within itself. It is all the more plausible if we keep in mind that this kind of eclecticism could still speak to Schulte-Sasse's and Hake's notions of wholeness and emotionally evocative imaginary experience, in that the spectator could activate both potentially regime-friendly and/or subversive readings as they watched and listened.

Before I delve deeper into a closer reading of the movie and its score, I want to contextualise both the material and historical conditions of my analysis. The autograph score to *Die Frau meiner Träume* is located at the Franz Grothe Archive and represents one of the few examples of an intact autograph entertainment film music score from the time. This fact alone makes the revue movie a particularly promising subject for a case study. Annotations in the score help not only to document the composition process generally but also to give insights into why particular musical choices were made. Overall, the score comprises almost three hundred pages, including 28 pieces of "Nachsynchronisationsmusik" ("extra-diegetic music that was recorded after the film had been shot"[691] with cues such as the "morning mood interlude"), two revues (subdivided into eight numbers

[691] Stefan Schmidl and Timur Sijaric, *Die Frau meiner Träume*, Filmmusik in historisch-kritischen Editionen, vol. 1 (Wien: verlag filmarchiv austria, 2021), 241.

respectively, including full scores and directional instructions with separate voice parts for separate playback recording of the vocal parts), and film-specific arrangements of the hit songs “Mach dir nichts daraus” and “Ich warte auf Dich”. Throughout the movie, the film music requires the following instruments (in different variations): three flutes (flute three doubling as piccolo), two oboes (oboe two doubling as English horn), three B-clarinets (III as a bass clarinet in B flat), two bassoons, four horns in F, four trumpets in B flat, three trombones, one tuba, percussion) including side drum, bass drum, cymbal, siren, glockenspiel, triangle, tambourine, tam-tam, bells, gong, vibraphone, xylophone, castanets), a timpanist, two guitar players, two pianos, a celesta, three harps, up to three accordion players, one solo violin, fourteen first violins, ten second violins, eight violas, six cellists, four contrabassists, and a choir. Interestingly, the score does not feature any saxophones despite Grothe’s fondness for this instrumental group, proven in the orchestration of other scores for films such as *Der Weiße Traum* (*The White Dream*, 1943) or *Glück bei Frauen* (*Having Luck with Women,* 1944).

The text originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[692] After years of engaging with Grothe’s autograph material, a historical-critical edition of the film score was published by Stefan Schmidl and Timur Sijaric in cooperation with the film archive Austria in 2021, an edition that offered useful material for comparison with my own analysis of the autograph score. However, Schmidl’s and Sijaric’s edition is essentially a text-critical examination of the movie, to which I will add more contextualised information.

As detailed above, most of the music is diegetically inserted into the narrative of the movie. However, the autograph score (see Figure 36) also features some incidental, nondiegetic music which I will not analyse further, since specifically the

[692] SpkA K/4732, H/299249, denazification file Franz Grothe, [redacted], 17.5.1946.

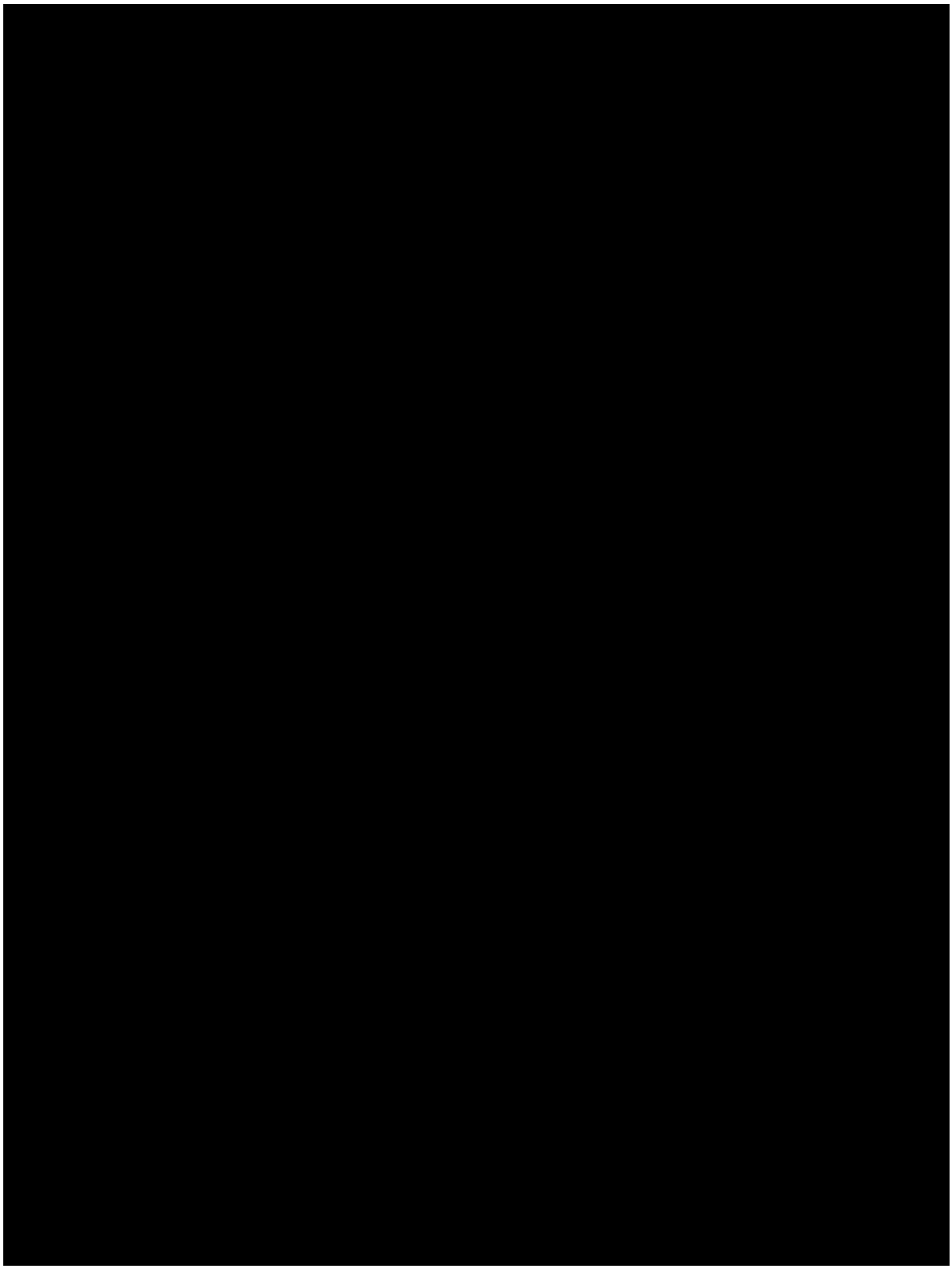


Figure 36: *Die Frau meiner Träume*, autograph score, page one. *Franz-Grothe-Archiv, Berlin*.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

hit songs are the focus of my thesis. The autograph score often includes detailed timings of how long specific scenes and transitions had to be, which further proves

that much of the music was further adapted after the scenes had been shot. [redacted]

The text originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[redacted].[693] [redacted]

[redacted].[694] If one takes a closer look at Grothe's score and sketches for *Die Frau meiner Träume* it becomes apparent how much composers of film music had to compose after the film's actual shooting, often in a very short timeframe.

Composer of the score for *Die Frau meiner Träume* was the exceedingly productive tone poet Franz Grothe (1908-1982), whose compositions found their way into several popular revue movies of his time (among them, *Hab Mich Lieb* (*Love Me*, 1942) and *Frauen Sind Doch Bessere Diplomaten*. [redacted]

The text originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[redacted].[695] According to an interview from 1940, it seems that Grothe's vision for the revue film was primarily to do justice to the film footage and to incorporate "new creations" that would "abundantly breathe life into the movie and its narrative".[696] In this vein, music was to be understood as an aesthetic pillar equal in importance to the film's images, one which not only further enhanced the appeal of the movie but actually created new layers of musical complexity. This aspect of the revue film genre removed it from the aesthetic premise of the sound movie operetta, which offered musical interpretations that only made use of a few instruments and tropes.

---

693 Ibid.
694 Ibid.
695 SpkA K/4732, H/299249, denazification file Franz Grothe, [redacted], 17.5.1946; Anonymous, "Der Komponist. Franz Grothe," *Film-Kurier*, 24.10.1931; Erich Urban, "Wieder Metropol!," *BZ am Mittag*, 17.9.1926.
696 Hans M. Cremer, "Besuch bei Franz Grothe. Zellers 'Vogelhändler' und seine musikalische Filmbearbeitung für 'Rosen in Tirol'," *Film-Kurier*, 9.7.1940.

In another interview, this time with the *Film-Kurier* journalist Fritz Siege in 1942, Grothe further details his creative selection process and explains that, when presented with a new script, he would only agree to add a soundtrack to it if he was immediately able to melodise significant events and knew intuitively when a musical number or the insertion of incidental music would be necessary.[697] He would then draft a music script and talk through different musical sections with the director. Grothe emphasises that "everything else", any "further elaboration, instrumentation etc. was more a question of technical skills".[698] Along these lines, it was customary to employ arrangers and orchestrators to undertake the task of orchestrating the final version of the film score. It was common for arrangers and orchestrators to remain anonymous. However, there is evidence that Grothe's right-hand man was the composer and kapellmeister Alfred Strasser. [redacted]

The text originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[699] [redacted] [700] Despite Strasser's work adding layers of

[697] Fritz Siege, "Wie entsteht ein Schlager? Franz Grothe über seine Arbeit," *Film-Kurier*, 8.9.1942.
[698] Ibid.
[699] Spruchkammer Munich, SpkA K/4732, H/299249, denazification file Franz Grothe, [redacted], 17.5.1946.
[700] Spruchkammer Munich, SpkA K/4732, H/299249, denazification file Franz Grothe, [redacted], 11.10.1947.

complexity to the revue music and thus elevating the hit song, it was not only the adequate arrangement of hit songs that occupied Franz Grothe's mind.

In his 1934 article "Die Musik im Unterhaltungsfilm" ("Music in Entertainment Movies") Grothe further specified that the motivation behind his work within the entertainment film music sector was not only to elevate the hit song but also the creatives behind them. However, such wishes were often undermined by the conditions under which scores were produced. Grothe bemoans that entertainment film music composers were "frequently hired just a few days before shooting started, after the author of the script and the director had already finished preliminary work".[701] What is worse, production companies often expected composers to write a hit song within a limited time frame of as short as only 24 hours.[702] With incidental music often being based on exactly this hit song, Grothe deplored such practices and championed an approach that granted the composer more agency in the creative process:

> By truly collaborating one can avoid that the film's Schlager, frequently arranged with the very same instrumentation over and over again, is being repeated in every suitable and unsuitable moment, simply because the composer cannot do better work or because he opines that it is the movie's responsibility to hammer his hit song into the audience's ears until it, indeed, becomes a hit song. The composer is supposed to prove in his incidental music that he can compose more than just a hit song.[703]

Grothe further comments on the quandary with which composers of light film music were confronted.[704] Often marginalised within the scholarly discourse despite being commercially immensely successful, Grothe and his fellow sufferers had no other place to express their discontent about how deficient working conditions in the film

[701] Franz Grothe, "Die Musik im Unterhaltungsfilm," *Film-Kurier,* 19.04.1934.
[702] The popular film music composer Werner Bochmann raises this issue in more explicit words: "I would like to have more than a week to compose a score for a film – just once." (Walter Gronostay, "Wünsche eines Komponisten," *Film-Kurier*, 21.5.1935)
[703] Franz Grothe, "Die Musik im Unterhaltungsfilm," *Film-Kurier,* 19.04.1934.
[704] Ibid.

industry effected the quality of their compositional work than in film dailies. Grothe, among other composers, fought tirelessly for a re-evaluation of popular music in film, bemoaning the lack of attention that the musicological discourse, the music press, and even the film industry paid to this ever-present and crowd-pleasing phenomenon.

However, it is safe to say that, in Grothe's case, the lack of critical recognition was compensated for financially. As one of the most sought-after and accomplished film composers within the industry, he presumably received a salary of not-less than 15000 RM per movie.[705] Only months before the end of World War II, he managed to get a raise for his most recent project, *Die Puppe* (*The Puppet*).[706] A letter from 12th January 1945, to newly appointed Reichs Film Intendant Hans Hinkel makes a request for an "appropriate" raise of composer Franz Grothe's flat-rate fee of 15000 RM per movie (presumably what he received for his extensive compositional work on *Die Frau meiner Träume* to 20000 RM. On 2 February 1945, Hinkel grants the raise, stressing that this was a "singular incident" and only granted because of the distinguished workmanship of the composer. [redacted][707]

The text originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[705] A Reichsfilm Chamber assessment report from 26th August 1936, states that composers of movies that featured Schlager only received a mere 2000 RM (plus an extra 500 for every featured hit song). Through-composed operettas, however, could earn an entertainment film music composer as much as 12000 RM. By 1944, composers could obviously charge a considerably larger composition fee (presumably due to the popularity and economic success of their work). (BArch, R 56 VI/010, *Reichs Film Chamber report*, fiche 2, 26.8.1936). Later contracts with sought-after composers such as Friedrich Schröder and Peter Kreuder exemplify that the standard fee for the illustration of a music film mushroomed to a steep 15000 RM.

[706] Franz Grothe signed his last contract on 9th February 1945, for the feature film project *Die Puppe* (*The Puppet*) which eventually was never made (BArch, R-109-II/47, *Vertrag mit dem Komponisten Franz Grothe für den Film "Die Puppe"*, 9.2.1945).

[707] BArch, R 109-I/2713, *lawsuit with Bavariaton Verlag*, 1943-1955.

What facilitated fair and (often) standardised payment rates for light film music composers were the new regime's fondness of clear contractual laws and unified bureaucratic procedures. On 11th November 1936, the film rights committee of the Reichs Film Chamber discussed drawing up a standard contract between production companies and composers to be applied throughout the Reich.[708] Accordingly, Ufa drafted just such a contract that was effective until the end of the war. Standard contracts of film music composers elucidate their obligations in greater detail:

[redacted][709]

The text originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[redacted].[710] Contrary to our expectations, then, it is a miracle that some of Grothe's film and operetta scores lived through the years of war (even though many instrumental parts, for instance, are missing). [redacted]

The text originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[redacted][711]

[708] BArch, R 56/010, *Sitzungsplanung für 20.11.1936*, 11.11.1936.
[709] BArch, R 109 II/47, *Vertrag mit dem Komponisten Franz Grothe für den Film "Die Puppe"*, 9.2.1945.
[710] Ibid.
[711] Spruchkammer Munich, SpkA K/4372, H/299249, denazification file Franz Grothe, *letter to Grothe from Hans Hinkel*, 6.12.1944.

Having contextualised the creation and material conditions of the music, I will now detail how differing reception modes might have been activated through the implementation of various musical and visual references within the three key sections of the *Die Frau meiner Träume*: the first revue "Die Frau ohne Herz", the staging of the hit song "Mach dir nichts daraus", and the second revue "Die Frau meiner Träume".

First Revue: "Die Frau ohne Herz"



Figure 37: Still image from *Die Frau meiner Träume*: Julia Köster at the end of the first revue sequence. *Klaus von Bülow*, *YouTube Video*.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

After the timpani-roll-accompanied opening credits,[712] the film directly segues into the first revue "Die Frau ohne Herz", whose musical backbone is the hit song "In der Nacht ist der Mensch nicht gern alleine" that, as Schmidl notes, will

[712] The movie's opening credits are accompanied by an overture that builds on the main hit song of the movie, "Ich warte auf Dich", and is essentially a foreshadowing of the waltz variation that is later part of the second revue section.

"monothematically determine the subsequent revue section".[713] At the beginning of the scene, Marika Rökk, alias Julia Köster, delivers the "chanson fox" in its entirety in the fictional space of a French harbour promenade.[714] Rökk's Eliza Doolittle-turned-French-prostitute rendition features a variation of the pronounced syncopated changing notes that also shape the verses and the chorus of the song.[715] Despite the song's overt foxtrot character, Grothe also employs all the tell-tale features of a French tango: the dramatic minor key beginning (in A minor), the rhythmical Habanera variations, the tango cancíon-inspired melodic lines, the textural emphasis on the piano, violin, and accordion in the orchestration, and, not least, the expressive depiction of love and life in highly pessimistic, fatalistic, and often pathologically dramatic terms in the lyrics.[716] Rökk's delivery of the chorus segues into an all-male choir variation delivered by a group of suitors (which is specified as a group of students in the autograph score). The initially simple delivery of the song is followed by a variation that features another anachronistic reference: the Apache dance, a nod to a peculiar Parisian fashion dance. Grothe's arranger Strasser captioned the section as "Apachentanz" in the autograph score (see Musical Example 1).

Around 1900, the Apache dance had emerged as a global showstopper phenomenon. It was a dance created to depict the perceived savagery of street gangs, prostitutes, and pimps in fin-de-siècle Paris. Members of the Parisian

---

[713] Schmidl and Sijaric, *Die Frau meiner Träume*, xv.

[714] Surprisingly enough, the hit song "In der Nacht ist der Mensch nicht gern alleine" also accommodates one of the most popular American (and, as a matter fact, European) dance genres: the foxtrot, yet another dance genre. Being intrinsically rhythmically variable, the foxtrot lends itself to any 4/4-time variation: with the primary accent on the first beat of the measure, its musical gist is particularly present during the major key chorus of the song.

[715] In the autograph score, the singer's melodic lines are additionally doubled or counterpoised by witty chromatic clarinet interjections which are not part of the recorded film version.

[716] Interestingly though, in the autograph score, the accordion had been struck from the beginning of the revue section to be potentially played by the clarinet section. However, in the film version, the accordion is heard. The autograph score includes many of these potential deletions of instrumental parts, potentially because it was not clear whether specialised musicians would be available toward the end of the year 1944.

underworld, who went by the name of Apache, cultivated the dance, often in the form of a stylised and violent fight between a girl (most commonly a prostitute) and her boyfriend (or pimp). A common variation involved the introduction of a jealous rival. The dance featured in famous movies such as Charlie Chaplin's *City Lights* (1931) and *Charlie Chan in Paris* (1935), as well as one of the first Messter biophon pictures *Apachentanz* from 1906. Many of those movies specifically employed Jacques Offenbach's 1860 "Valse des rayons" as musical accompaniment.

Musical Example 1: Revue Scene I: Apache Dance (excerpt). ***Autograph Score***, ***Franz-Grothe-Archiv***.



The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

In *Die Frau meiner Träume*, the Apache dance interlude dance features Rökk and two suitors engaging in a staged fight over her (see Figure 38). One can recognise some of the distinctive and very theatrical moves seen in French ballroom tango (just simple walking, rocking, and turning steps) combined with a series of mock-combat moves and artistic manoeuvres (including the literal throwing, punching, and slapping of Rökk). But this danced statement of French machismo soon turns into a sparky demonstration of female dominance. In her discussion of womanhood in National Socialist cinema, Antje Ascheid juxtaposes the "state's ideological essentialism" of motherhood and maidenhood and alternative blueprints of womanhood that persisted "in the field of fantasy production" that was National

Socialist entertainment".[717] In the first revue section of *Die Frau meiner Träume*, one might recognise Rökk's character as the embodiment of such an alternative representation of womanhood, one which essentially invokes Weimar Germany's role models of progressiveness. However, this temporary adoption of seemingly inconsistent ideals of womanhood is, as mentioned above, to be understood within the trajectory of the movie, in which the aim is the transformation of Julia Köster into a domesticised housewife. Nevertheless, audiences would presumably not only have activated readings that conformed to this rather constricted framework. As we will see, the reference of specific musical tropes that are firmly situated outside of overt National Socialist ideology could have also instigated other associations.



Figure 38: Still image from *Die Frau meiner Träume:* Apache dance section. *Klaus von Bülow*, *YouTube Video.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

One example: the tango variation of the cheeky "In der Nacht ist der Mensch nicht gern alleine" segues into a lavishly staged can-can (see Figure 39). Grothe

[717] Ascheid, *Hitler's Heroines*, 23.

customises the main theme of the song in such a way that it accommodates the lively 2/4-time dance form (see Musical Example 2). With thirty female dancers at hand, the unfolding scene displays a cascade of lifted skirts, frills, cartwheels, rondes de jambe, ports d'armes, and high kicks, evoking the image of a frivolous and festive Gründerzeit Paris in which pleasure, fun, and freedom are highlighted. The rollicking *Galop Infernal* and Franz Lehars' *Merry Widow* can-can act as the models for Grothe's take on the Paris dance hall style and inspire the brass-infused finale of "Die Frau ohne Herz". Naturally, the scene ends with Rökk snatching a diamond ring from her suitors and escaping into the background of the scenery, in true femme fatale fashion. As Schmidl rightly observes in the introduction to the score's critical edition, it was particularly the prominent utilisation of the triangle during that revue section that moved it nearer to Offenbach's original.[718]



Figure 39: Still image from *Die Frau meiner Träume*: Can-Can section of first revue sequence. *Klaus von Bülow*, *YouTube Video.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[718] Schmidl and Sijaric, *Die Frau meiner Träume*, xv.

Musical Example 2: Revue Scene I: Can-can, first theme. *Autograph Score*, *Franz-Grothe-Archiv.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.



Offenbach was, without a doubt, one of Grothe and Strasser's main inspirations for the first revue "Die Frau ohne Herz", which is surprising in that Offenbach, the alleged founding father of the French-German operetta, and his music were frowned upon during the National Socialist era and were black-listed by the fascist regime soon after 1933. However, many of the overt Offenbachian tropes are still very much present in the musical structure of many revue films. In this case, it is of particular interest that Offenbach references are part of the "Weimar vamp" revue whose main purpose seems to be the depiction of the rather spoiled, non-housewifely, dissolute lifestyle of the showgirl Köster (in opposition to the film's final revue "The Woman of My Dreams", which will mark the successful transformation of the former vamp into an abiding housewife).[719] One could ask the question of whether Offenbach's utilisation is an inherently ideological one; one that fosters the "othering" of specific kinds of music and, in this specific instance, womanhood. However, film scholars such as Thomas Brandlmeier have argued that audiences

[719] As proposed in Lowry, *Der Ort meiner Träume*, 61.

might have perceived the display of formerly well-known and popular music patterns from the Weimar Era as a nostalgic and welcome reminder of what used to be, thereby subverting the intended musically signified "othering" of regime critical forms of womanhood.[720] Rökk's often chansonesque or parlando-style delivery of the song (see Musical Example 3) emphasises yet another popular genre of the Weimar period that had been associated with female empowerment: the chanson. The style of the original chanson réaliste, with its declamatory manner of delivery, pervades Rökk's cheeky interpretation of the song.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Musical Example 3: Revue Scene I: Verse, Interlude. *Autograph Score*, *Franz-*



As we can infer from Grothe's stylistically altered employment of several culturally engrained dance types from the Weimar Era, and from the scene's generally ambiguous undertones, Grothe, knowingly or not, played on the somewhat

[720] Thomas Brandlmeier, "Die Frau meiner Träume," in *Der NS-Film. Stil-Epochen des Films*, ed. Norbert Grob (Ditzingen: Reclam, 2018), 414.

standardised yet split reception attitude of his audiences. In its conscious retreat to the past, the music both reactivated musical and visual images of progressive forms of womanhood, and indeed conventionalised transgression, while simultaneously sedimenting them in opposition to the second revue scene. As such, the performance of gender stereotypes against the backdrop of past-reminiscent musical numbers could have catered for two different purposes, depending on the audience's reading: the defiance of gender stereotyping (that of the housewife) or its fetishised exaggeration (that of the harlot). The fetishisation of the female other, and its eroticised and exoticised display in revue numbers such as this, could have offered an "experience of chaotic, off-centred behaviour in the midst of a presumably ordered and controlled world."[721] Along these lines, dance historian Susan Reed confirms that "exoticization takes many forms, and the representation of the exotic "other", especially women, has been an important feature of both dance performances and visual representations of dance".[722] One could assume that the intricate intertwinement of the Weimar vamp and the exotic "other" in this revue movie might have alerted political functionaries in 1944, but one has to be aware of the cultural situatedness of the film's "othering": exoticism and the othering of the female body were not only integral parts of Weimar revue and varieté culture but were also themes present in almost every European or American performance piece of that time.[723] In these ways, the interwovenness of Offenbach-reminiscent music, old dance forms, and the theme of the vamp-turning-housewife was not as coincidental as it might seem at first glance, but was rather a direct manifestation of the "split consciousness" of audiences that this kind of music had to cater for.

[721] Holly Maples, "Embodying Resistance: Gendering Public Space in Ragtime Social Dance," *New theatre quarterly* 28, no. 3 (2012): 252.
[722] Susan A. Reed, "The Politics and Poetics of Dance," *Annual Review of Anthropology 27*, no. 1 (1998): 509.
[723] Jana F. Bruns, *Nazi Cinema's New Women* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 106.

Mach Dir Nichts Daraus: Swaying, Singing, and Sticking It Out



Figure 40: Still image from *Die Frau meiner Träume*: Julia Köster singing “Mach Dir nichts daraus” in the engineers’ canteen. *Klaus von Bülow, YouTube Video.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Throughout *Die Frau meiner Träume*, the war is present mainly through its conspicuous absence. When Julia slurps half of a watered-down portion of pea soup in the engineers’ canteen or tailors an evening gown out of old curtains, one can get a rather euphemistic inkling of the German populace’s strained living situation, even though this is somehow curtailed by the movie’s display of extravagant wardrobes and props. Yet the second of the film’s hit songs, “Mach Dir nichts daraus” (“Don’t Give it a Second Thought”), does not adhere to the revue genres’ structural and artistic patterns. In many ways, the folky simplistically accompanied song “Mach Dir nichts daraus” is a somewhat out-of-place yet effective musical number. While the film’s love duet “Ich warte auf Dich” (“I Wait For You”)—nota bene: the waiting housewife was a popular topos for hit songs that were composed during the Second World War—reminds us of Werner Richard Heymann’s infamous 1929 operetta

tearjerker “Liebling, mein Herz lässt Dich grüßen”, and while the winking, coquettish revue number “In der Nacht ist der Mensch nicht gern alleine” has a definite Charell revue feel to it, “Mach Dir nichts daraus” is rather an interesting fusion between folk and Viennese tavern song.

Some further background information as to how the song fits into the overall narrative will be useful. During her time at the log cabin, as mentioned the revue star Julia eventually casts off the allures of the lavish revue world and grows accustomed to the life of an unassuming housewife. Clothed in a sober boiler suit, Julia and engineer Erwin eventually enter a rustic canteen to share some of Erwin’s food rations. The wooden surroundings (and rather wooden workmen in the background) put Viennese taverns and Tyrolean pubs into the viewer’s mind. Erwin and Julia sit down to share the aforementioned portion of diluted pea soup, to which the “changed” Julia responds a nonchalant “How wonderful!”, while her object of desire, Peter Groll, grudgingly watches them. Suddenly, a reduced arrangement of “In der Nacht ist der Mensch nicht gern alleine” suffuses the cosy tavern. A folk duo volunteers the song without knowing that its famous interpreter herself is present. Absorbed in her thoughts, Julia joins in Erwin’s rendition of the song whereupon Erwin and the workmen demand an encore. Julia instead offers to sing a song from a collection of volkslieder, stating that “she would not want to sing anything by this Köster person”. The folk duo furnishes Julia with a simple score and an accordion. Despite being specifically composed for the movie, the entire exchange conveys the impression that “Mach Dir nichts daraus” already is part of the collective memory and treasure trove of age-old volkslieder (as proven by the sheet music that is being handed to Köster). The first few lines are directly addressed to Julia’s love interest, the seemingly jealous and grumpily mumbling Peter. They follow basic melodic, rhythmical, and harmonic periodical patterns (see Musical Example 4):

Etwas schlechte Laune, mein lieber Freund, die gibt es jeder Zeit,
aber solch‘ ein Gesicht geht mir schließlich doch zu weit.
Seh‘ ich das noch lange, mein lieber Freund, dann werd‘ ich rabiat
Und darum gebe ich Dir den gut gemeinten Rat!

In a bit of a bad mood, my dear friend? That happens all the time,
But a face as miserable as yours is a bit too much after all.
Should I see this any longer, my dear friend, I will get furious
And that is why I am giving you some helpful advice.

Musical Example 4: “Mach Dir nichts daraus”, Verse 1 (excerpt). *Autograph Score*, *Franz-Grothe-Archiv*.



The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Its lyrics are worryingly explicit while at the same time being completely banal:

Don't look back, don't look forth, just look straight ahead,
And whatever comes out of it, don't give it a second thought.
Even if at times you don't have a clue what to do, don't take it too hard,
don't give it a second thought.

For a short while, Julia directs her plea “to simply look straight ahead” towards Peter, the wholesome engineer, who gradually overcomes his inhibitions. For the second part of the chorus, the camera zooms into Julia’s face who seems to directly look at the camera as she winks at an invisible audience when singing “Don’t give it a second thought”. After a shortened second verse, Erwin joins Julia and supports her performance with simple vocal harmonisation. Soon after, Julia animates the workmen to sing along. They happily oblige, the folk duo takes over, and the incognito revue star and Erwin indulge in an impromptu, simply choreographed waltz intermezzo (see Figure 41, see Musical Example 5). Even a few Tyrolian Schuhplattler movements are integrated into the performance (the Schuhplattler being one of the most popular folk dances in Bavaria and Tyrol, in which performers clap their shoes, thighs, and knees with their flat hands). The chorus of workmen adds to the atmosphere of folkish bliss.



Figure 41: Still image from *Die Frau meiner Träume*: Julia and Erwin waltzing in the canteen. *Klaus von Bülow*, *YouTube Video.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Musical Example 5: “Mach Dir nichts daraus”, Chorus (excerpt, dance interlude). *Autograph Score*, *Franz-Grothe-Archiv.*



The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

The musical style of “Mach Dir nichts daraus” is deliberately folkloristic – the simple accordion accompaniment, the easily picked up melody of the chorus, and the choreographed all-male swaying in the mountain cabin give a hint of how notions of a social cohesive body and aesthetic wholeness were more explicitly invoked using folk music tropes in the movie. Clearly, “Mach Dir nichts daraus” stands in the tradition of World War II Durchhalteschlager (morale-boosting or perseverance Schlager). For this movie, it is undoubtedly this unusual escape into the folkloristic that can be read as a more comprehensive and overt attempt to musically signify Nazi ideals of populism and universalism. Very early on, National Socialist high functionaries were aware of the potential powers of a well-composed and -delivered hit song; Ufa diva Zarah Leander’s dramatically delivered Durchhalteschlager are probably the best examples of the regime’s not-so-subtle attempts at infiltrating popular culture. Along these lines, Joseph Goebbels and the Reich’s Film Intendant Hinkel had set up Schlager competitions with mottos such as “Optimistic Hit Songs”

as early as 1941, with Grothe himself numbering amongst its winners.[724] However, it is important to note that audiences were far from being monolithic in their tastes and dispositions, meaning that the evocation of folk traditions and social cohesiveness in *Die Frau meiner Träume* cannot necessarily have rung true for each and every single audience member.

Indeed, despite their obvious popularity within the urban centres of Germany (predominantly among metropolitans and adolescents) revue movies and their hit songs in general did not resonate with all strata of the German populace. The "Geheimen Lageberichte des Sicherheitsdienstes der SS" (Secret Reports of the Security Force of the SS) prove that several strata of the population were adamantly opposed to the enforced light-heartedness of hit songs. One account explains that, after a particularly devastating aerial attack on Essen, the first thing the Cologne radio station broadcasted was not the news but Friedrich Schröder's 1937 evergreen "Ich tanze mit Dir in den Himmel hinein" ("I Dance With you Into The Skies") from the screwball comedy *Sieben Ohrfeigen* (*Seven Slaps in the Face*, 1937).[725] Listeners who had witnessed the consequences of the bombardment in Essen first-hand perceived the dissonance between their depressing wartime reality and the regime's make-believe world as sheer "ridicule". And this is only one example of an attitude that seemed to command the feelings of a majority of "older people in medium-sized and small towns, pre-eminently in rural areas, of women and the strained productive workforce."[726] Thus, at times, audiences pined after music that was more aligned with their actual emotional states rather than artificially

[724] BArch, R 55/767, *Optimistische Schlager*, 6.11.1941.
[725] Heinz Boberach (ed.), *Meldungen aus dem Reich. Die geheimen Lageberichte des Sicherheitsdienstes der SS 1938-1945*, vol. 13 (1.3.1943-30.5.1943) (Herrsching: Pawlak, 1984), no. 368, 18.3.1943, 4970.
[726] Ibid., no. 375, 12.4.1943, 5109.

elevated ones.[727] The "bigger part of the home front" yearned for "sedate and restorative music" that one could listen to as one's workday background music.[728]

It is worth keeping this in mind when looking at the rather eclectic musical models that form the foundation of the revue numbers featured in the movie: they were meant to be suited to different moods, settings and audiences, which partially explains their chameleon-like behaviour. What is more, the supposedly overt ideological tenor of the entertainment movie was not as clearcut as is often portrayed. In fact, with *Die Frau meiner Träume* we have a movie that was condemned for its "vulgarity" by prominent Nazi functionaries yet praised by audiences for its musical inventiveness. Higher authorities such as Joseph Goebbels did not find "The Woman of My Dreams" particularly praiseworthy. He made no bones about the fact that he thought the new colour film "unfortunately went pear-shaped".[729] He thus concluded that the film was "too vulgar and clumsy in its means to appeal to the finer artistic sentiments".[730] In a secret press memo from 28th August 1944, the propaganda minister's reservations were put into more concrete directives: "as requested by and following the earlier directive of the regime's Film Intendant, the entertainment movie *Die Frau meiner Träume* starring Marika Rökk (Ufa) is not considered suited for review."[731] With this in mind it is hardly surprising that the eminent film dailies and newspapers did not feature any reviews, behind-the-scene articles, or any other coverage revolving around the movie, much

[727] Ibid., no. 366, 11.3.1943, 4929.
[728] Ibid., *SD-Berichte zu Inlandsfragen*, 12.8.1943, p. 5602.
[729] Joseph Goebbels, *Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels. Teil II, Diktate 1941-45*, vol. 11 (Januar bis März 1944), ed. Elke Fröhlich (Munich: Saur, 1993), 16.1.1944, 103.
[730] Ibid.
[731] BArch, ZSG 109/51, collection Oberheitmann, *directive from 26.8.1944*, f. 54 (S.I. (Sonderinformation), r. 31/44. The collection of press memos (issued within the framework of Goebbels' weekly press briefings) originates with the executive editor of the *Weilburger Tageblatt*, Theo Oberheitmann, who received the memos from the Reichs Propaganda department Hessen-Nassau in Frankfurt on the Main and collected them against actual instructions.

to the regret of cinema owners who nonetheless celebrated record sales on account of “unanimously delighted audiences” in cities such as Dresden.[732]

In her anecdotal 1974 memoir, Marika Rökk claimed to know the real reason for the propaganda minister’s unease: the flamenco scene featured in the second fictitious revue showcases Rökk’s body in a rather revealing dress, as she engages in an eroticised flamenco choreography with dance partner Valentin Froman, a newly introduced character that stands in for engineer Peter in the dream sequence. After having watched a first version of the movie (Goebbels insisted on being the first one to watch every new offering), Goebbels is said to have opined that the scene was “frivolous” and that “a true German woman” would not dance as Rökk did in this particular scene. Goebbels’ grumbling had wide-ranging consequences: not only did the director Georg Jacoby reshoot the scene in a more modest manner, but Rökk also additionally had to tone down the degree of sensuality with which she performed the scene. However, the National Socialist’s male fantasy of the desexualised housewife, a proclaimed sublimation of the Weimar revue vamp, did not resonate too well with German audiences (even though there were actresses like Ilse Werner who were typecast to promote exactly this idealised version of the domestic). Knowing the audience’s expectations, Rökk insisted on wearing that very same saucy dress and keeping the Weimar-reminiscent musical numbers.[733] In the hierarchy of ideologies it would appear that the commodification of the body along capitalist lines could potentially defeat the command of the body ordered by National Socialist lines.

---

[732] BArch, R-109-II/vorl. 66, Deutsche Filmvertriebs GmbH, *letter to Dr. Müller-Goerne*, Reichsfilmintendanz, film report r. 28, 16.12.1944.

[733] The “flamenco incident” drove up the production costs considerably (additional costs of approximately 78000 RM). Even though a first version was ready to go through the censoring process as early as December 1943, ministerial functionaries demanded four subsequent versions before they approved of the movie, which delayed its release until August 1944. (BArch, R-109-II/vorl. 3, *Niederschrift über eine (64.) Geschäftsführersitzung der Ufa-Film-Kunst GmbH beim Reichsbeauftragten für die deutsche Filmwirtschaft*, 13.4.1944).

Second Revue: “Die Frau meiner Träume”



Figure 42: Still image from *Die Frau meiner Träume*: Valentin Froman at the beginning of the second revue sequence. *Klaus von Bülow*, *YouTube Video.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Die Frau meiner Träume’s second revue section is centred around the beguilingly sentimental, string-heavy love duet “Ich warte auf Dich” (“I Wait For You”), the true musical pinnacle of the movie. Ushered in by an MGM-reminiscent Schlager arrangement of said song, the scene’s kick-off number sets the tone and course for a succession of elaborately crafted musical variations, ranging from a swing waltz to a Spanish-coloured bolero variation. The archetypal revue film recipe of cramming as many exotic places and fantasies as possible into one seemingly never-ending musical number meets its match in a roundelay of musical shapeshifting. Pan-Asian and Spanish themes acquire particular significance by indicating spatial remoteness, while, as in the first revue, the usage of popular Weimar dance forms and American film music tropes (swing, MGM schmaltz) foster

a certain kind of familiarity (Weimar-reminiscent tropes) with universality (ubiquitous, world-conquering American styles).

The second revue, “Die Frau meiner Träume”, is probably most suited to explaining how Hake’s fantasy worlds and imaginary experiences found resonance within the viewer’s internal reality of emotion, thus subtly contributing to the strengthening of Nazi-approved sentiments. It also, however, thrives on mechanisms of “othering”, with stereotypical depictions of both European and non-European musical cultures contributing to a feeling of belonging and wholeness via contrasting a cohesive social body with elements that were characterised as counterdrafts. These sentiments are not overtly depicted but camouflaged in an eclectic array of musical variations.

The revue gets off to a syrupy start when Valentin Froman, a Russian dancer and former forced labourer at Deutsche Oper Berlin, descends the stairs of a stylised Greek revival, neoclassical colonnade, elegantly clothed in a white tailcoat. Interestingly, the revue’s musical eclecticism is somewhat foreshadowed by the clash of hackneyed props, among them contemporary chandeliers, Hellenistic architectural elements, and extravagant gold-plated floral arrangements. Already at this point, the viewers sense that the choreographed revue scene that follows will visually and sonically take them into an idyllic world of make-believe. The scene’s setting, vaguely alluding to the counterfeit neoclassical style of late Speer buildings, sees Froman against the backdrop of a painted starry night sky, light-footedly serenading. In fact, it is instead the popular singer Rudi Schuricke’s voice that we hear, and which was pre-recorded for this scene. After the string-accompanied, yearningly chromatic 8-bar introduction (which, of course, features the obligatory other-worldly celesta interjections), the upward-swinging, urgent first lines of the

verse are uttered that establish the sentiment which pervades the following fourteen minutes of music (see Musical Example 6):

> Täglich stehe ich vor Deinem Fenster, warte ich vor Deiner Tür,
> nur um Dich zu sehen, leis' Dir nachzugehen.
> Ach, wie vieles hätt' ich Dir zu sagen, doch fehlt mir der Mut dafür,
> Was mich so erregt und was mein Herz bewegt.
>
> Day in, day out, I stand in front of your window, wait in front of your door,
> Only to see you, only to be near you.
> Alas! How much I would have to tell you, though I lack the courage,
> Of what excites me and what moves my heart.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Musical Example 6: Revue Scene II, first verse (excerpt), *Autograph Score, Franz-Grothe-Archiv.*



With a longingly outstretched arm, Froman viscerally directs himself through the first, periodically structured verse until he musingly alights on the last few steps of an impressively ample staircase. Up to this point, the musical accompaniment remains faithful to the stereotypical Hollywood string sound that we encounter in so many contemporary American movies (specifically Prince Charming's "One Song" from the opening section of Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves* (1937) is uncannily similar in its usage of string tropes). The forceful melody is, for the most part, paralleled by a lulling homophonic string section. The seemingly simplistic yet effective accompaniment suffuses the first section's tapestry of sound with delicate, unobtrusive chromatic voice leading. The cliché of the "knight in white" who quite literally, yearningly (and sighingly), pursues the woman of his dreams finds its

pendant in a musical section that surprises with masterfully crafted, sparsely innovative sonority.

Froman then segues into the song's chorus, which is heavily imbued with chromatically descending melodic lines; lines that vividly purport an unfulfilled, sentimental longing. This is further intensified by the first line's transposition and a melodically and rhythmically invigorating insertion. Said triplet-driven insertion melodically climaxes at the word "dreams" (see Musical Example 7).

> Ich warte auf Dich, Du bist das Glück für mich, mein Herz ruft nur nach Dir!
> Kein Traum geht dahin, wo ich nicht bei Dir bin, Dein Bild ist stets in mir!
> Du weißt genau, was meines Lebens Sehnsucht ist,
> dass Du die Frau in allen meinen Träumen bist.
> Ich warte auf Dich, das Leben wird schöner für mich, allein durch Dich, ja Dich!
>
> I wait for you, you are happiness to me, my heart cries out for you!
> No dream passes without you being with me, your image is always within me!
> You do know exactly what my life's longing is,
> that you are the woman in every single one of your dreams.
> I wait for you, life's is going to be more beautiful to me, by virtue of you, yes, you alone!

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.



The chorus' blatantly mawkish message is that of the young forlorn suitor who cannot help but dream of finally being united with at least the very image of the subject of his desire, a sentiment that was no doubt sincerely shared by many war-separated lovers. Without a doubt, mention of the beloved's image reminds us of similarly sentimental musical accounts of adoration, with Tamino's infamous "Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön" probably being the most notable. The instant Froman mentions his happiness-inducing love interest, Rökk gradually materialises in the shadow of the colonnade. Dressed in a sheer, pale pink chiffon dream of a dress and holding onto a silver balloon (see Figure 43), she executes a most peculiar gymnastics routine. At the mention of the word "dreams" towards the end of the song, Rökk fades into the background, only to emerge at the other end of the colonnade to cheekily throw her balloon towards Froman. The balloon bursts and an intricate silk scarf drops out of it. Said scarf depicts the woman of Valentin's dreams, only this time cloaked in pseudo-Chinese garments.



Figure 43: Still image from *Die Frau meiner Träume*: Dance section at the beginning of the second revue sequence. *Klaus von Bülow*, *YouTube Video.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

The next thing we see is Froman, himself dressed in pan-Asian garments, as if he had been inserted into the embroidered scene and is now actually integral feature of this first of many dream worlds. Set against the background of a traditional Chinese guóhuà brush-and-ink-painting and a Chinese pavilion, the scene showcases Rökk in a highly stylised costume, with her skirt, for instance, imitating the upturned eaves on Chinese roof corners (see Figure 44). The music (see Musical Example 8) is stripped of its lyrics and makes excessive use of an F pentatonic scale. Strasser reduces the orchestral forces to high-register, metallically fluttering instruments: two harps, his universal weapon the celesta, and a reduced string apparatus for the first eight bars, augmented by piccolos, flutes, chimes, and a soprano choir for the next eight bars. The atypical 8 bar-long, chromatically ascending interlude features woodwinds, a vibraphone and quavering flutes. Rökk's vowel-based, high-pitched melodic lines iridescently levitate over this ethereal tapestry of sound and fuse with the orchestral forces.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Musical Example 8: Revue Scene II, China Scene (excerpt, second theme), *Autograph Score, Franz-Grothe-Archiv*





Figure 44: Still image from *Die Frau meiner Träume*: Stylised Chinese music section in the second revue sequence. *Klaus von Bülow*, *YouTube Video.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

What is particularly striking about this musical number's visual overlay is that it seemingly tries to lay claim on its own sonic authenticity and faithfulness. By making use of our imagination, we can potentially identify a Chinese plucked zither (guzheng), a Chinese lute (pipa) and traditional string instrument (erhu) when looking at the instruments Rökk's all-female entourage plays. The counterfeiting of an imagined Asian sonic world finds its visual equivalent in the yellowfacing of the actors and dancers featured in the "Chinese Scene", a practice of racial cosmetology wherein non-Asian actors are "made up" to appear of Asian heritage (a practice that continues to prominently and controversially feature in American blockbusters such as *Anna and the King of Siam* (1946) or *Ziegfeld Follies* (1946)).[734] Accompanied by an alternating succession of the two Chinese main themes, Froman and Rökk engage in yet another dance duet. Pirouetting her way

[734] Krystin E. Moon, *Yellowface: Creating the Chinese in American Popular Music and Performance, 1850s-1920s* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press 2005).

through the musical number, the scene comes to an end, when Rökk, once again, disappears under a larger, shielding version of the embroidered scarf from the beginning.

The pentatonic treatment of the main melodic themes, as well as the reduction of the orchestral forces to instruments with Western connotations of an Orientalist China, makes for an assured signification of spatial remoteness. The ethereal, iridescent soundscape squints towards an other-worldly idyll or sonic utopia that neither finds its home in a National Socialist aesthetics nor in a Chinese one, but is, rather, consistently, necessarily atemporal. This sense of timelessness is a cliché of orientalist depictions: scholars such as Matthew Head have pointed out that orientalist musical representations of, for instance, China, simplify these regions into timeless and continuing identities and imaginaries that bear no resemblance with the cultural reality of said regions, and further adds that similar strategies were also mirrored by the "Western Culture's habit of Othering its own musical practices", which becomes apparent with, for instance, the use of Offenbach in an earlier section.[735] Jonathan Bellman goes even further by stressing that orientalism can be defined as a "species of decoration" that strives to "evoke distant locales or frames of reference."[736]

Such modes of musical "othering" are also part of the revue scene's next section: shortly after the China section, Rökk disappears from the scene through a black lace curtain, and the viewer sees a dozen red-clad female dancers ascending a winding show staircase. Accompanied by the stoically pulsating rhythm of the string section, a bolero-esque musical variation unfolds. With the bolero and the flamenco being two of the most heavily appropriated dance forms to lend Spanish

[735] Matthew Head, "Musicology on Safari: Orientalism and the Spectre of Postcolonoal Theory," *Music Analysis* 22, nos. 1-2 (2003): 216.
[736] Jonathan D. Bellman, "Musical Voyages and their Baggage: Orientalism in Music and Critical Musicology," *Musical Quarterly* 94, no. 3 (2011): 419.

allure to a musical piece, it does not seem surprising that Grothe employs these tell-tale markers of stylised Spanishness.

This was far from being a stylistic innovation: in many Weimar Schlager lyrics the image of an "exotic Other", and with it many orientalist musical tropes, had prominently featured. Sonically and visually, these scenes in *Die Frau meiner Träume* do what Victoria Sturtevant describes as "defining through difference the legitimacy of the dominant subjects and playing out fantasies of eroticism, naturalness, spirituality, and violence that are repressed in European and American bourgeois culture".[737] Bolero authenticity, however, is, if at all possible within this context, buried under what Stephen Pennington, in another context, has described as a "non-threatening sentimentality like a nostalgic echo of a time past which is linked to white Western conceptions of the dark Other, not to a radical questioning of those representations".[738] In his chapter on the appropriation of Spanish dance tropes, James Parakilas rightly points out that Europeans knew "the bolero … already by 1800[;] in Boieldieu's Le calife de Bagdad, they were expected to recognise 'Spain' when a character picked up a guitar and strummed a bolero rhythm in a catalog aria of national styles".[739] European audiences were thus particularly accustomed to immediately recognising othering tropes: standardised silent movie catalogues of musical themes early on made vast use of country-specific tropes.

Generally speaking, the bolero arrangement of "Ich warte auf Dich" is simply structured around two main themes, one of them being the chromatically

[737] Victoria Sturtevant, "Spitfire: Lupe Velez and the Ambivalent Pleasures of Ethnic Masquerade," *The Velvet Light Trap*, no. 55 (2005): 21.
[738] Stephen Pennington, "Reading Uncle Bumba and the Rumba: The Comedian Harmonists and Transnational Youth Culture at the End of the Weimar Republic," *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, no. 140 (2015): 410.
[739] James Parakilas, "How Spain got a Soul," in *The Exotic in Western Music*, ed. Jonathan Bellman (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998), 143.

descending line from the chorus, the other a counterfeit of the famous Ravelian theme (see Musical Example 9).[740] In his instrumentation of the main themes, Grothe makes ample use of the conspicuous orientalist nineteenth-century instruments such as the oboe or the horn. The backbone of the triple time dance is its distinct rhythmical form, with a triplet on the second beat of each bar. The modified variation of the traditional bolero rhythm that Grothe employs is still very much indicative of its inspiration.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Musical Example 9: Revue Scene II, Spanish Scene (excerpt, second theme), *Autograph Score*, *Franz-Grothe-Archiv.*



After engaging in yet another dance duet, with Rökk wearing her infamous, provocatively revealing bolero dress (see Figure 45), Rökk (who would have anticipated it?) flees the scene. With increasing frustration and despair, Froman fights his way through several toreros, only to end up falling from a balcony through

[740] Michael Lanford, "Ravel and 'The Raven': The Realisation of an Inherited Aesthetics in Bolero," *Cambridge Quarterly*, no. 40 (2011): 243-265.

a sky full of clouds and back into the first scene's setting. Cheekily, Rökk emerges from the shadows of the colonnade and throws herself into the arms of Froman. A dialogue unfolds:

> F.: There you are! I have been looking for you everywhere!
> R.: Me? Did you?
> F.: Yes, in my dreams.
> R.: You dream of me. That I would have never dreamt of! But I permit it…
> F.: Permit it?
> R.: Yes, that you dream all by yourself that is. If you already dream of me, then you should dream with me!



Figure 45: Still image from *Die Frau meiner Träume*: Spanish bolero section in the second revue sequence. *Klaus von Bülow*, *YouTube Video.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Dream with me indeed. What is the viewer to make of this? They have been paraded through a fantastical world where time and space collapses, where "others" are reductively rendered in the imagination, as are the pre-National Socialist significations by which means this rendering takes place. On first glance, this seems a long way from the values the regime would have wanted to impress its viewers

with. However, as detailed above, they potentially functioned as more diffuse nods to National Socialist ideas of “wholeness” and “universality”.

The next musical variation of “Ich warte auf Dich”, meanwhile, leans towards a swing-infused big band arrangement. Penetrating brass progressively adds to the broad string sound from the beginning (see Musical Example 10). Also striking are Rökk’s rhythmically complex tap-dance interjections, accompanied by either cheeky brass melodies or atmospheric string insertions. This common time tap-dance number (see Musical Example 11) very much resembles Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers’ interpretation of Cole Porter’s “Begin the Beguine” from MGM’s *Broadway Melody of 1940*. Markus Spieker’s analysis of how Hollywood cinema maintained the presence of American entertainment tropes in National Socialist everyday

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Musical Example 10: Revue Scene II, foxtrot variation “Ich warte auf Dich” (excerpt, brass section), *Autograph Score*, *Franz-Grothe-Archiv.*



culture alludes to how the integration of references to such movie tropes were not necessarily a mode of "othering" but a natural expression of a universal popular culture.[741] What is more, as Karsten Witte points out, up until 1939 German audiences were able to watch American revue movies.[742] Only after the release of the antifascist movie *Confessions of a Nazi Spy* (1939), an embargo on the export of American movies was imposed by Ufa, leading to a monopoly of German revue films on the market.[743] German revue films still increasingly adopted American revue film tropes to satisfy the preferences of audiences that had formerly preferred to watch movies made by the American competitors.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Musical Example 11: Revue Scene II, accompaniment tap dance interlude (excerpt), *Autograph Score*, *Franz-Grothe-Archiv.*



[741] Markus Spieker, *Hollywood unterm Hakenkreuz. Der amerikanische Spielfilm im Dritten Reich* (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 1999).
[742] Karsten Witte, "Gehemmte Schaulust. Momente des deutschen Revuefilms," in *Wir tanzen um die Welt: Deutsche Revuefilme 1933-1945*, ed. Helga Belach (Munich: Hanser, 1979), 21.
[743] BArch R-109-II/1033b, *Ufa-Vorstandsprotokolle*, Vorstandssitzung vom 17.1.1939, no. 1350/7.

As clear signposts of Americanism, swing tropes and arrangements were unwanted by government officials, much as orientalist dance forms were technically banned from the musical public sphere. [redacted]

The text originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[redacted] [744] The moderate adoption of Duke Ellington-esque swing tropes in this scene was thus an integral component of Grothe's compositional work: not only in his choice of melodic and rhythmical patterns, but, first and foremost, in his instrumental choices. In this vein, the autograph score suddenly explicitly demands a jazz drummer and an enhanced brass section (four trumpets, three trombones, and one tuba are to join) for the foxtrot-swing version of "Ich warte auf Dich".

After this elaborate tap dance interlude, featuring a multitude of background dancers (see Figure 46), the scene dissolves in mawkish bliss, with pastel-coloured balloons raining from the ceiling (possibly epitomising the saccharine dreams of the film's audiences). By this point, the narrative, such as it is, is ready to resolve, and Rökk and Froman's lovers ready to unite. After a short intermission, in which vows are made, tickets are re-appropriated, and friendships are forged, the last scene starts out with the much-anticipated wedding celebrations between the two. After the marriage vows are spoken, a mesmerising beam of light finds its way into the setting and the proverbial gates of heaven open behind the wedding congregation. No fewer than six harp players cloaked in angelic costumes and long blonde wigs play delicate arpeggios against the backdrop of a painted sky (see Figure 47).

The score notes three harps, the biggest string section thus far (with the first violins being divided into two separate sections), and the celesta. The common time

[744] Spruchkammer Munich, SpkA K/4732, H/299249, denazification file Franz Grothe, *curriculum vitae*.



Figure 46: Still image from *Die Frau meiner Träume*: Tap dance section in the second revue sequence. *Klaus von Bülow*, *YouTube Video.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.



Figure 47: Still image from *Die Frau meiner Träume*: waltz finale in the second revue sequence. *Klaus von Bülow*, *YouTube Video.*

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

harp introduction slowly segues into a Straussian waltz (see Musical Example 12), with the flutes, oboes, and clarinets adding to the playful yet gentle atmosphere. The

Viennese operetta waltz finale, probably most prominently featured in Oscar Straus' *Ein Walzertraum* (1907), employs all the tell-tale musical idiosyncrasies typical of the form: an added chorus towards the end (including added dance couples), full orchestra with percussion (including timpani, bells and cymbals), the re-affirmation of the hit songs' chorus, the climactic harmonic build-up towards the end, the occasional "Wiener Nachschlag" (the slight pronouncement of the second beat), and, not least, timpani and a strong brass flourish. These features of waltz finales were not only common elements in earlier sound movie operettas but were also frequently employed in Hollywood movies such as *Swing Time* (1936). Especially the dream-like set and the inflated string section (twenty-four first violins, twelve second violins, ten violas, eight violoncelli, and six basses) are more reminiscent of Hollywood movies of the 1930s and 1940s than Weimar Era productions (probably with the notable exception of the sound movie operetta *Amphitryon* (1935)). And above all, it is the costumes that push the waltz scene further into the realm of Hollywood fantasies. Froman's black tailcoat and Rökk's glittery white tulle dress are remarkably redolent of the famous Astaire-Rogers costume aesthetics. The mirrored tile floor adds to the general atmosphere of heavenly otherworldliness. Indeed, poising in an intricate lift position, the film ends with Rökk and Froman seeming eventually to vanish into the realm of dreams.

It is in this final waltz sequence, where the two lovers literally dissolve into the realm of fantasies and imagination that the ideas of a grounding of the viewing experience in the internal reality of emotions and the idea of belonging is best expressed. The ascension of the viewer into the realm of dreams and their dissolution in a mass of dancing bodies is cinematically simulated. The digression to the previous American tap dance sequence that accentuates the universality of

popular culture segues into a more conventionally Austro-German waltz finale, thus ending the movie on a more expressively regime-friendly note.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Musical Example 12: Revue Scene II, waltz finale “Ich warte auf Dich” (excerpt), *Autograph Score*, *Franz-Grothe-Archiv.*



Resonances

In January 1945, a Danzig cinema owner reported that the rush to see *Die Frau meiner Träume* was so immense that he had to account for “several injured people and broken windows” whenever he screened the movie.[745] Even a month later, a Ravensburg critic stated that everyone was still “whistling and singing those

[745] BArch, R-109-II/vorl. 66, *Filmbericht, no. 31*, 26.1.1945.

melodies".[746] Notwithstanding those few indicators of the revue film's success with audiences, it is not easy to estimate how exactly the response of Third Reich cinemagoers to the movie was. This is partly to do with the Reich's Film Chamber declaring it unfit to be reviewed in the film press at the time of its release but also with the film press' tendencies to politicise audiences' responses to movies in reviews.[747] In a state-issued film report of the time, it becomes obvious that the movie was indeed very successful, "breaking cinema records across the country".[748] The same article stated that it was thus a "pity that the movie was not deemed fit to be reviewed". However, one rare journalistic account draws attention to the movies' more visceral effects on audiences, stating that it made cinemagoers "dream with open eyes", of themselves and their "longings".[749]

However, from the information I have gathered in this chapter, there are still some things that can be inferred about audiences during that time: on a broader scale, from what can be learned from secondary sources, sketches, transcriptions and, not least, the movie itself, the choice of musical topics and forms displayed in *Die Frau meiner Träume* caters to Schäfer's "split consciousness", in that it offers audiences a musical window into spatial and temporal remoteness, all the while camouflaging the promotion of National Socialist ideals. By so catering to that split consciousness, the film's score can be understood as a ramification or enhancement of the audience's reception attitudes, attitudes that could not always be equated with those of the regime. However, it was exactly entertainment music's intricate entanglement with the broader popular culture, and the effectiveness of its

[746] Ibid.
[747] Belach, "…als die Traumfabrik kriegswichtig wurde", 190.
[748] BArch, R-109-II/vorl. 66, *Filmbericht, no. 28*, 16.12.1944.
[749] Ilse Heinschke, "Sehnsüchte. Die Frau meiner Träume im Marmorhaus," *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung*, 28.8.1944.

reception, that might have made it, in some instances, a tool of ambiguous force for the governmental steering of taste after all.

Along these lines, one could argue that *Die Frau meiner Träume* meets Matei Călinescu's criteria of escapist or diverting kitsch and sentimentality: it takes the viewers or listeners back in time ("to a personal past, … the idyll of history or an adventurous future by means of clichés") and space ("to the most diverse imaginary and exotic lands").[750] Călinescu further argues that kitsch art—and I think it is safe to say that the same is valid for music—operates under the "principle of mediocrity" and "dizzying eclecticism".[751] In the case of the revue film, the compatibility of seemingly heterogenous elements and their standardisation helped guarantee the favourable reception of musical works. However, it is after all the listener who involuntarily, in a parody of a supposedly proper aesthetic response, turns tunes into sentimental artifacts through nostalgic interpretation and escapist modes of reception. In recent scholarship, aesthetic escapism is, then, often too simplistically, directly associated with ideological diversion.

This chapter has argued for a more intricate understanding of National Socialist revue movies. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, for audiences back then, those movies were probably not as straightforwardly deceptive as one might assume. References to spaces and times (through jazz and swing tunes, sexually ambiguous dance forms, exoticised music, Weimar and Offenbachian operetta, for instance) that were, for years, officially shunned from the public sphere suddenly found their way back into people's empirical and emotional world. Music that, wittingly or unwittingly, plays with tropes of distant places and bygone times can then find itself caught between two different effects: the wished-

[750] Matei Călinescu, *Five Faces of Modernity. Modernism, Avant-Garde, Decadence, Kitsch, Postmodernism* (Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, 1987), 245.
[751] Ibid., 244.

for appeasement of escapist and ideological desires and longings, and the revival of a cultural nostalgia that contradicts those very desires. It is exactly that evocation of a long-lost background structure of desires and beliefs that makes a symbolic reference to cultural archetypes that were in opposition to the values of the NS regime, particularly symbolic figures from the preceding Weimar period, such as visual, musical, and narrative references to the sound movie operetta. The Weimar-reminiscent symbolic spine that runs through *Die Frau meiner Träume* provides an escape into the idyll of history where set conventions are still valid, and by doing so tangentially alludes to a world of non-convention within National Socialism's cultural vacuum. It is certainly true that the visual overlay and even the music itself often overtly flirt with National Socialist symbolism, but even here, the music stimulates choreographed scenes of unconventional laxity; the ideological rigidity of National Socialism is rarely if ever unidimensionally expressed. That is to say that the movie takes its spectators not only visually but also musically into lands of spatial and temporal remoteness to strengthen notions of "otherness", be that through stylised depictions of an imagined Pan-Asian land or Weimar-reminiscent Apache dances. Indeed, *Die Frau meiner Träume* endorses a sense of conventionality, a repetition of the familiar, and a grounding in an affirmation of the everyday that was firmly anchored in the spectators' internal reality of emotions and contributed to what Schulte-Sasse called an "aesthetic experience of wholeness".

These days, the genre of the old German revue film is as good as dead. *Die Frau meiner Träume* and its composer Franz Grothe rarely find their way into modern day discourses.[752] A possible explanation lies at the heart of the movie's appeal: its playful employment of a contemporary audience's knowledge of musical

[752] This was partly because of the composer's assumed involvement with National Socialist politics. Though recently, a collection of essays occupied with Franz Grothe's life have been published: Theresa Henkel and Franzpeter Messmer (eds.), *Franz Grothe*. Komponisten in Bayern, vol. 64 (Munich: Allitera Verlag, 2019).

traditions. A modern-day listener will probably never fully understand how contemporary audiences might have responded to such monuments of outdated eclecticism. It is therefore of the utmost importance to reconstruct practices and reception patterns of the time to better understand the seemingly lost musical conventions and the affective responses they elicited. One thing that contradicts this assumption, though, is that all of Rökk's revue movies were hailed as trophy films in the Soviet Union after 1947, i.e., colour films that were seized by the Soviet Union after the Second World War and commercially disseminated among Soviet satellite states. In 1947, the revue film was released in Soviet cinemas under the title *Devuška moej mečty* to great success and was henceforth savoured by generations of Russians.[753] According to Olga Bulgakova, the film was successful throughout the decades and regularly screened on Soviet television until the late 1980s.[754] There probably hides another chapter on the activation of specific reception attitudes in the explanation as to why a music film that catered for a wartime German audience was also suited to a post-war Soviet audience.

[753] Weertje Willms, "'Hinreißende, bezaubernde Marika'. Die bemerkenswerte Rezeption des Films Die Frau meiner Träume mit Marika Rökk in der Sowjetunion nach 1945," *Das Wort. Germanistisches Jahrbuch Russland*, no. 1 (2012/2013): 123.
[754] Oksana Bulgakowa, "Deutsch-russische Filmträume," in *Berlin-Moskau. Moskau-Berlin. Chronik 1950-2000*, eds. Pawel Choroschilow and Jürgen Hart (Berlin: Nicolai, 2003), 199.

Conclusion

After the Second World War, calls for a clear break with the old and a radical new start were brought forward by proponents of the zero-hour theory, who claimed that this cesura was to be treated as not only a dramatic political break but also as an opportunity for cultural rejuvenation.[755] However, despite the Allies' and German reformists' efforts to break with not only the political but also the cultural past of a National Socialist Germany, a wholesale rejuvenation of German cinema in all its different manifestations failed to materialise in the years immediately after the war, even though debates about realism, history, and class consciousness gave rise to the development of a few new non-musical genres.[756]

The trajectory of the German music film was characterised by astounding continuity and persistence: even after 1945, it continued to be *the* genre that critically shaped the German cinematic universe and audiences' imaginations.[757] One could further argue that the music film continued to usher audiences into familiarity with new media and technologies. As much as the commercial potential of the sound movie operetta helped Weimar Era audiences to acquaint themselves with, for instance, the sound movie, it was the offshoots of that cinematic heritage and intricate network that continued to acquaint generations to come with an ever-growing network of media channels, with television and the vinyl record being its latest additions. At first, revue films such as *Die Frau meiner Träume*, as discussed in Chapter Four, remained the model for the production of new music films in West Germany.[758] While those movies were increasingly pushed further towards the

[755] Hake, *German National Cinema*, 92.
[756] Ibid.
[757] Daniela Schulz, *Wenn die Musik spielt… Der deutsche Schlagerfilm der 1950er bis 1970er Jahre* (Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2012), 30.
[758] The GDR did not establish its own variation of the music film, which was partly to do with the regime importing West German *Schlagerfilme* up until the early '60s but also with the manifestation of a different film aesthetics that was oriented more towards Socialist Realism. The nationalised film

Heimatfilm spectrum—Heimatfilme being a genre somewhat reticent and pointedly escapist in their post-war manifestations[759]—in the early 1950s the revue movie was superseded by a new music film genre: the so-called Schlagerfilm.[760]

The one constant in the post-war evolution of the German music film remained the hit song. What is more, its hybrid nature gave music-infused Schlagerfilme of the 1950s and 1960s a new musical canvas on which to project the sensibilities of changing audiences and corporate interests.[761] In contrast to the Weimar Era or revue film hit song, the Schlager or hit song of the movies of the 1950s and 1960s became more and more interlinked with television culture, which was the melting pot for a myriad of emerging popular music styles, ranging from rock'n'roll to swing and country music.[762] What is more, within the Schlagerfilm, the hit song was no longer staged in lavish settings and with complex choreographies, but was delivered in mundane settings such as school halls and hospitals – further emphasising their presence in and relevance for the everyday. The popularity of hit songs during this time was enhanced by the advent of the vinyl record, which became the new and more affordable medium of the hit song.[763]

company DEFA (Deutsche Film Aktien Gesellschaft) produced movies that were occupied with the depiction of Socialist and anti-fascist ideals. However, GDR audiences revelled in old Ufa sound movie operettas, which were immensely popular and regularly screened on television. There are some apparent parallels to what I have described in the fourth chapter, with an entertainment music market being seemingly in the grip of state-run structures but audiences shying away from movies that mould public thought in overtly political ways (Judith Prokasky, "'Wes Brot ich ess, des Lied ich sing… Nachspiele und Neuanfänge der deutschen Musikkomödie nach 1945," *film-dienst*, no. 25 (2013): 32).

[759] *Heimatfilme* were generally considered sentimental films whose narratives were set in idealised regional settings such as the Alps (Hake, *German National Cinema*, 97).

[760] The genesis of the *Schlagerfilm* centred around certain stars who defined the trajectory of the genre: some of the most prominent are Peter Alexander, Freddy Quinn, Conny Froboess, and Peter Kraus.

[761] Daniela Schulz, *Wenn die Musik spielt… Der deutsche Schlagerfilm der 1950er bis 1970er Jahre* (Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2012), 23 ff.

[762] Ibid., 126-127.

[763] Hans J. Wulff, "Medialisierung der Musik und Medienkritik im Schlagerfilm der 1950er Jahre," in *Populäre Musikkulturem im Film. Inter- und transdisziplinäre Perspektiven*, eds. Carsten Heinze and Laura Niebling (Wiesbaden: Springer, 2016), 295 ff.

Despite these media-induced ruptures, audiences seemingly pounced on the feeling of historical continuity that the hit song and the German music film seemed to provide. However, such continuity in the appreciation of music films and hit songs had not only to do with their popularity among German audiences but also with the preservation of an established creative infrastructure: as was true for many areas of post-war cultural life, due to the alleged non-political activities of many film professionals and composers, the denazification procedures did not fully replace the creative workforce that had shaped the German music film over the years but rather kept most structures in place.[764] What is more, with the return to Germany of many composers, musicians, screenwriters, and directors who had been forced into exile after 1933, there were even direct attempts at reviving the tradition of the sound movie operetta. Interestingly, then, the post-war years were not only determined by the continuation and development of the tradition of music films in general, but also by a cultural renaissance of specifically Weimar Era genres.[765]

Perhaps the most obvious expression of this nostalgia were films that remade old ones, modernising them in the process. In 1955, the Berolina-Film GmbH, for instance, released its remake of *Die Drei von der Tankstelle*.[766] It featured members of the original team: composer Werner Richard Heymann, lyricist Robert Gilbert, and producer Willi Forst, all of whom had returned to Germany and who were trying to build on their earlier successes.[767] Even though the films were not quite as successful as the new Schlagerfilme, they were still astonishingly popular with

[764] Hake, *German National Cinema*, 94 ff.
[765] Prokasky, *Wes Brot ich ess*, 30 f.
[766] https://www.filmportal.de/film/die-drei-von-der-tankstelle_8ae2dda7724a42fb9c6797042abb5c04 (last accessed on 5.1.2023, 12:14 pm).
[767] Even everybody's Weimar Era darling, actor Willy Fritsch, features in the remake.

audiences. This also had to do with the fact that the hit songs that were featured in the remakes were still largely remembered by generations.[768]

By way of conclusion, I would like to offer some explanations for the enduring popularity of the sound movie hit song with audiences, as revealed by the chapters of my thesis:

In Chapter One, I elucidated how sound movie operetta hit songs expanded beyond the films they featured in and became embedded into a prototypical lifestyle culture that fed on extensive dissemination and marketing strategies. By explicating how relocations of the sound movie hit song were shaped by institutional networks and aesthetic debates within media channels, I highlighted how the prototypical instance of an entertainment music genre such as the sound movie hit song impacted the way music was consumed. By foregrounding how those media channels and newly emerging reception patterns impacted one another, I have scrutinised Weimar Berlin's audiences' elaborate entwinement with its cultural products. My analysis of film, radio broadcasting, the record industry, the music publishing industry, print media, and entertainment music culture through the lens of the sound movie hit song "Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt's ein kleines bisschen Glück" thus considered the material products together with their social dimension. By explicating that several media channels provided different degrees of accessibility and catered to different preferences, I have also accentuated that the Weimar Era lifestyle culture entailed greater heterogeneity in its reception, content, and uses than expected, and was not free of competing interests that were articulated and negotiated by different streams of media, audiences, and other forces.

[768] The film's hit songs largely remained the same, except from Werner Richard Heymann adding the two songs "Das mach ich alle mit der linken Hand" ("I Do All Of That With My Left Hand") and "Ich bin dagegen" ("I Am Against That").

Chapter Two of my thesis worked under the assumption that the distinction between the live and the mediated was still a nascent one during a time of change, one complicated by the endless relocations and media combinations that brought the sound movie operetta hit song to life. In the wake of such oscillating modes of performance came an increasing tendency of audiences to search for a more reliable quality of both recorded and live performances. The rise in importance of a few key acts associated with fixity of quality and intermediality (such as Leon Monosson, the Comedian Harmonists, and the combination orchestras and their musical directors discussed in Chapter Two) typified the extensive relocations that sedimented the dichotomy in limbo that I conceptualised in this chapter. I have also shown that wider changes in contemporary music-making within both cinemas and the entertainment music scenes, changes on the labour market and wider policy-changes have fuelled and stirred these transformations, with one example being the shift from cinema music practices to on-screen sound.

Chapter Three of my thesis has argued for the importance of the engagement of scholars with sound and film technology. By foregrounding the notion of technology as socially constructed, mediated, and negotiated, I have analysed both the social shaping of sound and the self-reflexivity of sound movie operettas, which is expressed in the ways that they portray and play out the workings of sound technology on screen. Such an open approach has allowed me to highlight how technologies and their intricate relationship to the sound movie operetta can only be adequately understood when organisational structures, occupational careers, spaces, and other domains are also factored in, since they helped to facilitate and navigate the discourse surrounding film sound in music films. By accounting for the reality of sound production and reproduction, the actual technologies and processes behind them have been revealed and thus freed from the mysterious and mystical

aura with which they were often bestowed by Weimar Era audiences, critics, producers, and later film scholars. What is more, the comparison of film scenes from *Ein blonder Traum*, *Das Kabinett des Dr Larifari*, and *Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht* with the reality of sound production has illustrated the extent to which expressive liberties were taken when putting an aesthetics of technology on display.

Even though the temporal distance between the Weimar Era sound movie operetta and the National Socialist revue film focused on in Chapter Four might be considered quite a jump in time, it was important to show how a phenomenon such as the sound movie hit song continued to interact in unforeseen and unpredictable ways with audiences, even when placed into a different cinematic subgenre during a politically tainted time. The transition of the sound movie operetta to the revue film then further highlighted how music films were not necessarily the ideological bludgeons and capitalist blunders they were assumed to be but, due to their interwovenness with people's everyday lives, rather had the potential to activate a multitude of meanings – meanings which variously supported and subverted National Socialist ideology. In a sense, the story of the National Socialist revue film and its use of a diverse set of musical materials exemplifies how the German music film latched onto musical threads that were still intact from an otherwise fraying Weimar Era social fabric of sound – and continued to do so after the Second World War. This brings us thematically back at the importance of the audience in all these discussions: theirs is the subversive potential, as it is they who are able to interpret.

As we can see from the summaries above, throughout my thesis, I have foregrounded an approach to historiography that has not merely accounted for production sites, technologies, or media alone but also helped explicate the audience's continuous interchange and negotiation with these domains through their daily engagement with the sound movie operetta and its hit songs. By

accounting not only for those production sites and other domains but also for the crucial if elusive factor of the audiences themselves, this thesis counteracts the tendency to write audiences out of film music histories of the time.

Although sources are scarce, as I have shown, by drawing together findings from fields as diverse as the history of technology or performance history, we can still infer a great deal about audience responses. It is the information that can be found in between the lines that often reveals the most about the continuous interchange between audiences and other domains, as we have for instance seen from looking at old projectionist's manuals, as I have done in Chapter Three. At first glance, this source might be targeted exclusively at the professional behind the projector, but such sources also reveal a great deal about which sounds were, for instance, perceived as disruptive by audiences.

However, it is not only a more creative engagement with the information that historical sources offer that broadens the ways in which we can conceive of the continuous interchange between audiences and other domains. It is also the conceptual insight that such an interchange was, indeed, happening at all. Based on a productive engagement with the concepts of mediation and mediatisation, the assumption of a continuous interchange between media and other social institutions within the framework of this thesis has paved the way for a more balanced reading of the sound movie operetta, which has in the past too often been portrayed solely as a commercial and hence aesthetically inferior product. While still accounting for concepts such as cultural pessimism as historical phenomena, it has been important to avoid assumptions and ideological biases that might have steered my reception-oriented analysis of the sound movie operetta and hit song towards certain, arguably reductive readings. Instead, this thesis has allowed for a more varied reading of the sound movie operetta as a "multiply mediated, immaterial and material, fluid quasi-

object, in which subjects and objects collide and intermingle."[769] In the same vein, my multidimensional approach to the sound movie operetta has allowed me to avoid other overly deterministic narratives, such as those of technological determinism. The hypothesis that transitionary technologies alone were shaping the fate of the German music film must be regarded as outdated, since it was in fact, once again, the negotiation of discursive tensions between audiences, production sites, technologies, and the movies themselves that shaped the story of the transition era and the social fabric of film sound. As we have seen, sound movie operettas can be understood to have catered to both the technological uneasiness and curiosity of audiences by presenting what were, in a sense, coping mechanisms within their very own narratives.

It was also vital to get to the heart of discursive tensions between different disciplines to carve out as much historical detail as possible to allow for an informed interpretation of, for instance, the technological or institutional processes behind the sound movie operetta. This thesis has thus merged historiography with insights from music studies, reception studies, media studies, the history of technology, film studies, performance studies, and others to adequately account for the interdisciplinarity of the genre itself and its interwovenness with a variety of public and private domains. It nevertheless retained a focus on music, sound, and performance as the focal points of all of its chapters. It is thus one of the few offerings in this field of research that zooms in on more music-specific issues (such as different manifestations of music in media, performance culture, sound technology, and more general conceptions of the live and the mediated) while also accounting for offerings from other disciplines.

[769] Born, "On Musical Mediation", 7.

Since the sound movie operetta and its intricate embeddedness in turbulent times—politically, technologically, medially, and culturally—invite such an array of potent research questions, it was not an easy task to rein in the scope of this project. In the later stages of my engagement with this specific music film phenomenon, there was always the question lingering of which other avenues might have been fruitful and important to explore. Like any keen film and music enthusiast, I also struggled with the question of which of the many films I have watched, which performers, and which musical material should eventually be incorporated into the final thesis – since there were so many fascinating examples to choose from. Eventually, my research questions narrowed down the material I was to look at. However, there remains room to explore certain issues related to this thesis' concerns within the scope of future projects. I have identified two of those issues as particularly fertile for future studies on the sound movie operetta and adjacent music film genres.

Firstly, from an exile studies vantage point, it would be illuminating to examine the lives of exiled composers and lyricists such as Werner Richard Heymann in more depth and to scrutinise why their distinct composition style was often not successful in Hollywood and other American film and music metropoles. Despite the success of Heymann's *Bluebeard's Eighth Wife* (1938), his particular style—which was largely shaped by the Weimar entertainment music scene and the sound movie operetta—mostly did not translate well for American audiences.[770] Most of the formerly thriving and now exiled musical professionals thus were doomed in Hollywood to an existence as arrangers or orchestrators of instrumental film music. In this vein, it would also be fruitful to examine the remigration of exiled artists to

[770] Heymann, *Liebling, mein Herz*, 209.

Germany after 1945.[771] As mentioned above, composers such as Heymann returned to Germany in the 1950s and 1960s and were part of the remake culture that emerged during this time.

Another avenue to pursue would be the wider global production and dissemination network that emerged around the sound movie operetta. Ufa quickly realised that it was worthwhile shooting multi-language versions of the same movies in German, French, and English to target markets outside of the narrow confines of the German-speaking world. The French-language version of Die *Drei von der Tankstelle*, for instance, was released to great success as *Le Chemin Du Paradis*, with the hit songs' French versions being known in France to this very day.[772] Often, these multi-language versions were adapted to the national tastes of audiences in subtle ways, especially when it came to the way hit songs were performed. By analysing these changes, insights can be gained into different national attitudes/preferences.

To further sketch out a more internationally oriented, comparative study, one would most certainly also have to analyse the transatlantic relations between Germany and America in particular. In 2021, Judith Wiemers published her dissertation on *American Cultural Motifs in German Music Film, 1929-1945*, which zooms in on how American popular culture suffused not only the German music film but also inspired new styles of recording, etc.[773] Along these lines, it would be

[771] Such accounts have been offered for cabaret and WMA composers. See, for instance, Matthias Pasdzierny, *Wiederaufnahme? Rückkehr aus dem Exil und das westdeutsche Musikleben nach 1945* (Munich: edition text + kritik, 2014) and Nils Grosch, *Zwischen den Stühlen: Remigration und unterhaltendes Musiktheater in den 1950er Jahren* (Münster: Waxmann, 2012).
[772] One good starting point for this undertaking is Chris Wahl's monograph *Sprachversionsfilme aus Babelsberg. Die internationale Strategie der Ufa 1929-1939*, which investigates the ways in which sound movie operettas acquired international appeal through the parallel shooting of almost identical multi-language versions of sound movie operettas. Even though Wahl provides a very thorough and well-researched account of the workings behind Ufa's multi-language system, he only looks perfunctorily at the music and its means of dissemination. (Chris Wahl, *Sprachversionsfilme aus Babelsberg. Die internationale Strategie der Ufa 1929-1939* (Munich: edition text + kritik, 2008).
[773] Wiemers, *Das ist die Broadway Melodie*.

interesting to investigate how a film company such as Ufa navigated being both at war with major Hollywood studios and major electro companies while also trying to cater to an audience that was increasingly infatuated with the American cinematic universe and lifestyle.[774]

These days, music and dance hardly feature in German films; at most, they appear in niche projects directed at film enthusiasts such as *Ich war noch niemals in New York* (*I have never been to New York*, 2019). It seems as if the mixture of humour, subversion, and music that had suffused the Weimar sound movie operetta has rather been pushed back onto the stage, from which it originally came. Berlin operetta currently is enjoying a renaissance on German stages, with opera houses, such as the Komische Oper Berlin, staging operettas by Oscar Straus and Paul Lincke. There are even attempts to adapt sound movie operettas for the stage: the Theater Lüneberg, for instance, has included a stage adaptation of *Die Drei von der Tankstelle* into its season schedule for 2023.[775]

However, the stage does not seem to be the only place where sound movie operettas receive increased attention: there also seems to be a renewed interest among modern cinemagoers to not only rediscover the heritage of the silent movie world, with restoration efforts being focused on films that were produced before 1929, but also that of light music entertainment of the Weimar Era more generally. With German hit television series such as *Babylon Berlin* depicting, among other things, a replica of the Ufa film universe in its third season, audiences are increasingly encountering Ufa films of that time, as well as documentaries.[776] With

---

[774] Ursula Saekel, *Der US-Film in der Weimarer Republik – ein Medium der 'Amerikanisierung'? Deutsche Filmwirtschaft, Kulturpolitik und mediale Globalisierung im Fokus transatlantischer Interessen* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2011); Thomas J. Saunders, *Hollywood in Berlin: American cinema and Weimar, Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

[775] https://www.theater-lueneburg.de/stuecke/die-drei-von-der-tankstelle/ (last accessed on 5.1.2023, 2:09 pm) Similar adaptations were put on by the Hoftheaterbühne Hamburg in 2018 and others.

[776] The third season depicts a murder series on the set of a revue film that is being shot in the Babelsberg film studios. However, since the season is set in 1929, many of the technological

performers such as Max Raabe and the Moka Efti orchestra adapting Weimar Era hit songs to new styles, the music by itself is also receiving renewed attention in wider popular culture, even among English-speaking audiences. Original recordings are still only widely available on platforms such as YouTube, and the Berlin-based record label Duo-Phon is releasing curated collections of historical recordings of Weimar Era hit songs, with its edition *Berliner Musenkinder*[777]

Cinemas and film museums have also refocused on the heritage of the sound movie operetta. The Deutsche Kinemathek Berlin, for instance, put on a retrospective during their 2007/2008 season that was entirely dedicated to exploring the history of the German sound movie operetta.[778] The exhibition was accompanied by a film series at the arthouse cinema Arsenal that also featured several expert talks on the topic.[779] The exhibition even featured three reconstructions of Weimar Era cinemas.[780] Such immersive and audience-oriented approaches to exhibiting the sound movie operetta are a welcome addition to a scholarship that can often merely capture an impression of something bygone, rather than emulate the experience of watching original footage under conditions similar to those audiences would have encountered in the 1920s and 1930s.

More recently, the Zeughauskino, a cinema attached to the Deutsches Historisches Museum Berlin (German History Museum), has put on the curated film series “Das Lied ist nicht aus. Die Weimarer Tonfilmoperette und die Folgen” (“The Song is not over. The Weimar sound movie operetta and its repercussions”), screening rarely shown representatives of the music film genre, such as *Der Herr*

innovations that are portrayed in the episodes were only developed much later, as was the genre of the revue film.

[777] These well-researched historical editions also feature liner notes that inform audiences about the historical background and the lives of the performers.

[778] https://www.deutsche-kinemathek.de/de/besuch/ausstellungen/wenn-ich-sonntags-mein-kino-geh-ton-film-musik-1929-1933 (last accessed on 4.1.2023, 7:57 pm).

[779] https://www.arsenal-berlin.de/kino/programmarchiv/2008/filmreihe/deutsche-tonfilmoperetten/ (last accessed on 2.1.2023, 1:57 pm).

[780] Carmen Böker, “Ein kleines bisschen Glück,” *Berliner Zeitung*, 22.12.2007.

auf Bestellung.[781] Other than that, it is most notably the cinema of the Murnau foundation that screens sound movie operettas publicly. In addition to these efforts, it would be promising to see a renewed interest in the sound movie operetta displayed not only in exhibition efforts but also in film restorations and music editions. Even though the source situation tends not to allow for the production of historical-critical editions in the more conventional way, a thorough reconstruction of the film scores could open up promising new avenues of research. A film music edition of the score that was occupied with a multimedia phenomenon such as the sound movie operetta could also consider several of its relocations.

What we can infer from the ready emergence of such wide and expansive new avenues of research and screenings is that the sound movie operetta and, more generally, the German music film merit greater attention within the field of music studies and adjacent disciplines. Since they invite the application of several different methodologies and concepts, they can not only highlight how prevalent the engagement of music scholars with different media, disciplines, and concepts is but also encourage the field of music studies itself to navigate beyond the disciplinary confinements of subdisciplines such as music theory, sound studies, performance studies, ethnomusicology – while still maintaining their integrity.

It is my hope that this thesis has shown what a fascinating time and tradition the Weimar Era sound movie operetta represents. For my part, having known these movies all my life—from encountering them as a child, to enthusiastically consuming them in my young adulthood, to studying them in the academic context of this very thesis—these films and songs have never failed to intrigue, move, confound, and, at times, frustrate me. Like any historical artifact, these films and songs are more

[781] In 2019, the British Film Institute screened a few selected sound movie operettas and other Weimar movies during its curated film series “Beyond Your Wildest Dreams: Weimar Cinema 1919-1933” (https://shop.bfi.org.uk/seasons/beyond-your-wildest-dreams-weimar-cinema-1919-1933.html (last accessed on 10.1.2023, 12:46 pm).

than windows into the past: they are bridges to a better understanding of myself and past sound movie operetta enthusiasts and critics. Unlike Jou-Jou nightmarishly travelling to an imaginary Hollywood in the dream sequence from *Ein blonder Traum*, I have always enjoyed exploring the fascinating horizons that the sound movie operetta has opened up to me. I hope you have too.

Bibliography

Films

Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari (*The Cabinet of Dr. Larifari*)	1930
Das Lied ist aus (*The Song is Over*)	1930
Die blonde Nachtigall (*The Blonde Nightingale*)	1930
Die zärtlichen Verwandten (*Tender Relatives*)	1930
Drei von der Tankstelle (*Three from the Gas Station*)	1930
Einbrecher (*The Burglar*)	1930
Liebeswalzer (*Love Waltz*)	1930
Bomben auf Monte Carlo (*Bombs on Monte Carlo*)	1931
Der Kongreß tanzt (*The Congress Dances*)	1931
Ihre Hoheit befiehlt (*Your Majesty Commands*)	1931
Ihre Majestät die Liebe (*Your Majesty, Love*)	1931
Liebeskommando (*Command to Love*)	1931
Ronny	1931
Der Sieger (*The Winner*)	1932
Ein blonder Traum (*A Blonde Dream*)	1932
Ein Lied, ein Kuß, ein Mädel (*A Song, a Kiss, a Girl*)	1932
Fünf von der Jazzband (Five from the Jazzband)	1932
Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht (*I by Day and you by Night*)	1932
Zwei Herzen und ein Schlag (*Two Hearts and a Beat*)	1932
Ich und die Kaiserin (*Me and the Empress*)	1933
Viktor und Viktoria	1932
Walzerkrieg (*Waltz War*)	1933
Amphitryon	1935
Glückskinder (*Lucky Children*)	1936
Kora Terry	1940
Wir machen Musik (*We Make Music*)	1943
Liebespremiere (*Love premiere*)	1943
Die Frau meiner Träume (*The Woman of My Dreams*)	1944

I. PRIMARY SOURCES

Archival Sources

BArch R-109-I/1027a, *Ufa-Vorstandsprotokolle*, vol. 3, Niederschrift 43, 16.5.1930.

BArch, R-109-I/1027b, *Ufa-Vorstandsprotokolle*, vol. 4, Niederschrift 667/14, 3.9.1930.

BArch R-109-I/1028b, *Ufa-Vorstandsprotokolle*, vol. 6, Niederschrift 780, 8.12.1931.

BArch, R-109-I/1028b, *Ufa-Vorstandsprotokolle*, vol. 6, Niederschrift 815, 26.4.1932.

BArch, R-109-I/1028b, *Anhang zu Bericht über Verkaufsverhandlungen der Wiener Bohème Verlag GmbH*, 195-222.

BArch, R-109-I/1029 a, *Ufa-Vorstandsprotokolle*, vol. 7, Niederschrift 905, 29.3.1933.

BArch, R-109-I/2657, *Ufaton-Verlagsgesellschaft m.b.H. Berlin, Bericht über das Geschäftsjahr 1932/33*.

BArch, R-109-I/2658, *Wiener Bohème Verlag G.m.b.H, Berlin. Bericht über das Geschäftsjahr 1933/34*.

BArch, R-109-I/557, *Ufaton-Verlagsgesellschaft m.b.H. Berlin, Bericht über das Geschäftsjahr 1934/35*.

BArch, R-109-I/2661, *Wiener Bohème Verlag GmbH, Ufaton-Verlagsgesellschaft m.b.H, Bericht über das Geschäftsjahr 1936/37*.

BArch, R 109-I/2713, *lawsuit with Bavariaton Verlag*, 1943-1955.

BArch, R-109-I/I 5755, *Bericht über das Geschäftsjahr 1929/30.*

BArch R-109-II/1033b, *Ufa-Vorstandsprotokolle*, vol. 17, Vorstandssitzung vom 17.1.1939, Niederschrift 1350/7.

BArch, R-109-II/vorl. 3, *Niederschrift über eine (64.) Geschäftsführersitzung der Ufa-Film-Kunst GmbH beim Reichsbeauftragten für die deutsche Filmwirtschaft*, 13.4.1944.

BArch, R-109-II/vorl. 66, *Filmbericht*, no. 28, 16.12.1944.

BArch, R-109-II/vorl. 66, *Filmbericht,* no. 31, 26.1.1945.

BArch, R-109-II/47, *Vertrag mit dem Komponisten Franz Grothe für den Film "Die Puppe"*, 9.2.1945.

BArch, R 55/767, *Optimistische Schlager*, 6.11.1941.

BArch, R 56 VI/010, *Reichs Film Chamber report*, fiche 2, 26.8.1936.

BArch, R 56/010, *Sitzungsplanung für 20.11.1936*, 11.11.1936.

BArch, ZSG 109/51, collection Oberheitmann, *directive from 26.8.1944*, f. 54 (S.I. (Sonderinformation), r. 31/44.

BLHA, Staatsarchiv Potsdam, Rep 36A A3000, *Oberfinanzpräsident – Devisenstelle – Leopold Monosson, A 74400 A, Anlage 9*.

B Rep. 078, Reg. Nr. 65.937, Entschädigungsamt Berlin, *Antrag auf Grund des Gesetzes über die Entschädigung der Opfer des Nationalsozialismus, Rentenakte Leon Leo Monosson*, 29.1.1952.

Schriftgutarchiv, Deutsche Kinemathek, *Notizbuch von Erich Engel*.

Spruchkammer Munich, SpkA K/4732, H/299249, denazification file Franz Grothe, [redacted], 17.5.1946.

The text originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Spruchkammer Munich, SpkA K/4732, H/299249, denazification file Franz Grothe, [redacted], 11.10.1947.

Spruchkammer Munich, SpkA K/4732, H/299249, denazification file Franz Grothe, *curriculum vitae*.

Spruchkammer Munich, SpkA K/4372, H/299249, denazification file Franz Grothe, *letter to Grothe from Hans Hinkel*, 6.12.1944.

Staatsbibliothek Berlin, Nachlass, N. Mus. NL 86 Robert Biberti, B, 4, 464, *contract with the Universum-Film-Aktiengesellschaft,* 24.12.1931.

Staatsbibliothek Berlin, Nachlass, N. Mus. NL 86 Robert Biberti, E, 129, 28, *letter from the Funkstunde*, 7.7.1930

Staatsbibliothek Berlin, Nachlass, N. Mus. NL 86 Robert Biberti, E, 129, 29, *letter from Erich-Pommer-production*, 19.7.1930.

Private Collections

[redacted]

The text originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

[redacted]

Historic Magazines and Newspapers

Anonymous. “Cover page.” *Funk-Woche*, 26.4.1931.

Anonymous. “Das erste deutsche Kino für Schwerhörige.” *Filmtechnik*, 13.12.1930.

Anonymous. “Das Jazz-Orchester im Tonfilm.” *Film-Kurier*, 18.9.1930.

Anonymous. “Das Problem der Kinomusiker.” *Der Kinematograph*, 10.7.1930.

Anonymous. “Das Publikum protestiert. Nur 20% des Tonfilms zu verstehen. Brief an die Redaktion des Film-Kurier vom 10.7.1930.” *Film-Kurier*, 12.7.1930.

Anonymous. “Der Komponist. Franz Grothe.” *Film-Kurier*, 24.10.1931.

Anonymous. “Der Tonfilm ist kein Kitsch. Artisten-Loge und Musiker-Verband dürfen nicht mehr schimpfen.” *Kinematograph*, 16.8.1930.

Anonymous. “Der Tonfilm macht den Schlager.” *Film Kurier*, 3.4.1930.

Anonymous. “Der Tonfilm macht die Musik.” *Film-Kurier*, 1.1.1930.

Anonymous. “Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft und Elektrola: Schallplattenfabrikant und Messe.” *Film-Kurier*, 28.2.1931.

Anonymous. “Deutsche Musikinstrumente.” *Film-Kurier*, 3.4.1930.

Anonymous. “Deutsche Tonfilmarbeit. Neubabelsberg und Geiselgasteig. Mikrophone in Bewegung.” *Film-Kurier*, 21.7.1930.

Anonymous. “Die ‘Comedian Harmonists’.” *Danziger Volksbühne*, 23.4.1931.

Anonymous. “Die Frauenstimme im Tonfilm.“ *Kinematograph*, 10.5.1931.

Anonymous. “Die Musikabgaben der Gaststätten und Vereine.” *Der Berufsmusiker*, 24.01.1931.

Anonymous. “Die neuen Herren. Fritz Thiery.” *Film-Kurier*, 14.2.1931.

Anonymous. “Die Zukunft der deutschen Kapellmeisterorganisationen.” *Der Führer*, no. 11 (1929).

Anonymous. “Drei junge Männer.” *Filmwelt*, 14.9.1930.

Anonymous. “Dreiklang des Erfolges.” *Kinematograph*, 16.9.1930.

Anonymous. “Ein blonder Traum.” Berliner Film-Kurier, no. 1834 (1932).

Anonymous. “Ein blonder Traum.” *Berliner Tageblatt*, 24.09.1932.

Anonymous. “Ein neuer Beruf: Der Phono-Mixer.” *Reichsfilmblatt*, 14.9.1929.

Anonymous. “Erleichterung bezüglich der Tanzlizenzen.” *Der Führer*, no. 11 (1929).

Anonymous. “Film auf dem Dach.” *Filmwelt. Das Film-Magazin*, 17.7.1932.

Anonymous. “Film im Sender. Auftakt zur Rundfunk-Kritik. Rundfunk-Debatte zwischen Herbert Ihering und Manfred Georg.” *Lichtbildbühne,* 8.2.1930.

Anonymous. “Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde e.V. Coburg, Konzert der Comedian Harmonists.” *Coburger Zeitung*, 20.10.1931.

Anonymous. “Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt’s ein kleines bisschen Glück.” *Filmwelt,* 30.10.1932.

Anonymous. “Kino-Varieté.” *Reichsfilmblatt*, 29.10.1927.

Anonymous. “Kino-Varieté.” *Reichsfilmblatt*, 31.12.1927.

Anonymous. “Klangfilm-Klarton ist da.” *Der Film*, 29.10.1931.

Anonymous. “Lilian Harvey und Willy Fritsch im Ufa-Tonfilm ‘Ein blonder Traum’.” *Filmwelt,* 4.9.1932.

Anonymous. “Leo Monosson.” *Magdeburger Volksblatt,* 16.4.1930.

Anonymous. “Leo Monosson. Der Plattensänger.” *Film-Kurier*, 7.2.1933.

Anonymous. “Leo Monosson singt deutsch, französisch und englisch in den Filmen ‘Zigeuner der Nacht’ und ‘Ich bei Tag und du bei Nacht’.” *Lichtbildbühne*, 3.11.1932.

Anonymous. “Leo Monosson singt in zehn Sprachen,” *Film-Kurier*, 15.8.1931.

Anonymous. “Lewis Ruth-Band mit Meisel-Musik im Kino. Die Lehren des blauen Expreß.” *Film-Kurier*, 29.10.1930.

Anonymous. “Mitteilungen des Reichsbunds deutscher Kapellmeister.” *Der Führer*, no. 1 (1930).

Anonymous. “Neue Artikelserie des FK. ‘Was verschlechtert die Wiedergabe?’ Tonmeister Fritz Thiery und Walter Tjaden äußern sich.” *Film-Kurier*, 29.11.1930.

Anonymous. “Sanierung der Deutschen Grammophon AG.” *Phonographische und Radiozeitschrift*, 15.1.1935.

Anonymous. “Schallplattenreform.” *Kinematograph*, 22.10.1930.

Anonymous. “Schallplatten und Ladenschlußzeiten. Der Abendverkauf im Kino ist und bleibt unzulässig.” *Phonographische Zeitung*, 15.11.1930.

Anonymous. “Schicksalsfragen des Funkhandels.” *Der Radiohändler*, no. 22 (1930).

Anonymous. “Sendeprogramm für den 21.2.1931.” *Funk-Stunde*, no. 7 (1931).

Anonymous. “Sendeprogramm für Mittwoch, den 29. Januar.” *Die Sendung*, no. 4 (1930).

Anonymous. “Sendeprogramm für Mittwoch, den 11. Dezember.” *Die Sendung*, no. 49 (1929).

Anonymous. “Stimmungssänger.” *Hannoversches Tageblatt*, 18.8.1929.

Anonymous. “Tanz- und Tonfilmschlager auf der Schallplatte.” *Sie + Er*, no. 2 (1932).

Anonymous. “Teilnehmerwünsche. Etwas über die abendliche Tanzmusik.” *Deutscher Rundfunk*, no. 5 (1928).

Anonymous. “Tonfilm beeinflußt Schallplattenproduktion.” *Lichtbildbühne*, 6.3.1930.

Anonymous. “Tonfilm-Lieder, die der Rundfunk boykottiert.” *Lichtbildbühne*, 30.8.1930.

Anonymous. “Tonfilmschlager reorganisiert den Musikhandel! Tonfilmflieder, Tonfilmschallplatten bevorzugt.” *Lichtbildbühne*, 22.3.1930.

Anonymous. “Tonfilm-‘Schlager’-Technik.” *Film-Kurier*, 20.2.1932.

Anonymous. “Tonfilm und Musiksortiment.” *Lichtbildbühne,* 12.07.1930.

Anonymous. “Ufaton-Bomben.” *Film-Kurier*, 20.1.1932.

Anonymous. “Ungewisse Zeiten gegenüber der Tonfilmentwicklung! Die Situation der Musikerschaft.” *Film-Kurier*, 31.8.1929.

Anonymous. “Verband filmschaffender Tonmeister gegründet.” *Filmtechnik*, 14. Juni 1930.

Anonymous. “Verschiedenes.” *Der Führer*, 3.4.1930

Anonymous. “Wettfahrt um Lilian.” *Filmwelt*, 18.9.1932.

Anonymous. “Whitemans musikalische Ausstattungsrevue.” *Film-Kurier*, 16.10.1930.

Anonymous. “Wie nutzt der Schaumann den Schlager.” *Film-Kurier, Beilage “Der Schaumann”*, 30.8.1930.

Anonymous. “Wir könnten das deutsche Hollywood errichten… wenn die Lustbarkeitssteuer nicht wäre.” *Der Film*, 1.3.1928.

Aros. “Leuchtendes Dreigestirn. ‘Ein blonder Traum’ im Gloria-Palast.” *Film-Echo, Beilage zum “Montag”*, 26.9.1932.

B., F. “Die Comedian Harmonists singen!” *Kieler Zeitung*, 30.10.1931.

Bagier, Guido. “Tonfilm und Schallplatte. Zwei Industrien – Ein Ziel.” *Reichsfilmblatt*, 3.5.1930.

Bie, Oskar. “Ein Schlager reist durch die Welt.” *Skizzen. Illustrierte Monatszeitschrift für Kunst, Musik, Tanz, Sport, Mode und Haus*, no. 5 (May 1932).

Bie, Oskar. “Whiteman, Großes Schauspielhaus.” *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, 26.6.1926.

Böker, Carmen. “Ein kleines bisschen Glück.” *Berliner Zeitung*, 22.12.2007.

Bofinger, Alfred. “Bunte Abende.” In *Aus meinem Archiv. Probleme des Rundfunks*, ed. Hans Bredow, 310, Heidelberg: Vorwinckel, 1950.

Brenzinger, Max. “Das Grundgeräusch.” *Filmtechnik*, 25.8.1931.

Büsing, Erna. “Ein blonder Traum.” *Vorwärts*, 24.9.1932.

Ch. “Die Comedian Harmonists.” *Tilsiter Zeitung*, 16.4.1931.

Connor, Herbert. “Die Schlager-Clique dementiert.” *Weltbühne*, 28.7.1931.

Connor, Herbert. “Lewis Ruth. Der jazzende Symphoniker.” *Skizzen. Illustrierte Monatsschrift für Kunst, Musik, Tanz, Sport, Mode und Haus*, no. 10 (1931).

Cremer, Hans M. “Besuch bei Franz Grothe. Zellers ‘Vogelhändler’ und seine musikalische Filmbearbeitung für ‘Rosen in Tirol’.” *Film-Kurier*, 9.7.1940.

Daus, Adolf. “Debatte um Peltz: Bessere Arbeitsbedingungen – bessere Kinomusik.” *Film-Kurier*, 27.7.1929.

Feiix, Friedrich. “Was es noch zu ändern gilt! Winke für die Bühnenschau.” *Reichsfilmblatt*, 14.09.1929.

Franz, M. R. “Guter Ton: lächelnder Theaterbesitzer, schlechter Ton: Publikum will Geld zurück.” *Der Film*, 3.10.1930.

Freitag, Theo. “Ein verfehlter Zweck.” *Der Führer*, no. 1 (1930).

Freitag, Theo. “Ist das der neue Ton?” *Der Führer*, no. 2 (1930).

Frigo, Conrad. “Polizei und Kinovarieté.” *Reichsfilmblatt*, 15.10.1927.

Frigo, Conrad, “Das liebe Publikum. Beachtenswerte Winke für den Theaterbesitzer.” *Reichsfilmblatt*, 17.12.1927.

Gronostay, Walter. “Wünsche eines Komponisten.” *Film-Kurier*, 21.5.1935.

H., H. “Kann man der Filmmusik an der Peripherie helfen?” *Lichtbildbühne. Das Kino-Orchester*, 18.08.1928.

Hamann, Edith. “Der Vater der Künstlerpostkarte.” *Die Filmwoche*, no. 33 (1930).

Haslbrunner, Carl M. “Mechanisierte Musik.” *Der Führer*, no. 7/8 (1929).

Heinschke, Ilse. “Sehnsüchte. ‘Die Frau meiner Träume’ im Marmorhaus.” *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung*, 28.8.1944.

Herzberg, Georg. “Der Film darf nicht doppelte Illusion bieten.” *Film-Kurier*, 4.1.1940.

Herzberg, Georg. “Ein blonder Traum.” *Film-Kurier*, 24.9.1932.

Heymann, Werner R. “Die musiktechnische Frage des Tonfilms. Wie stellen sie ihre Instrumente auf?” *Film-Kurier*, 3.9.1930.

Heymann, Werner R. “Tonfilm-Musik als neue musikalische Form.” *Lichtbildbühne*, 1.8.1930.

Homola, Bernhard. “Mein erster Tonfilmeindruck.” *Der Führer*, no. 7/8 (1929).

Holländer, Friedrich. “Sieg eines neuen Operettenstils. Die Drei von der Tankstelle.” *Reichsfilmblatt,* 20.9.1930.

Hopkins, H. F. “Schalldurchlässigkeit.” *Filmtechnik*, 12.7.1930.

Jäger, Ernst. “Die Drei von der Tankstelle.” *Film-Kurier*, 16.9.1930.

Jcks, Otto, “Gute Musik im Kaffeehaus.” *Der Artist. Zentral-Organ für das gesamte Gebiet der Ensemble-Musik*, 3.2.1933.

Kayser, Hans. “Aus der Praxis der Filmmusik.” *Anbruch, Monatsschrift für Moderne Musik*, no. 3 (1929).

Kleffel, Fritz. “Störungen im Tonfilmtheater.” *Filmtechnik*, 23.8.1930.

Kracauer, Siegfried. “Tonbildfilm.” *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 12.10.1928.

Lowies. “Musikerkampf contra Tonfilm im Urteil des Publikums.” *Lichtbildbühne*, 10.1.1931.

Frank, Paul. “Tonfilm-Operette.” *Reichsfilmblatt,* 27.9.1930.

Gabler, Werner. “Erfahrungen in der Theater-Akustik (Jahresbericht der akustischen und bautechnischen Beratungsstelle der Klangfilm GmbH).” *Filmtechnik*, 28.5.1931.

Götzfried, Franz. “An unsere prominenten Filmkapellmeister.” *Der Führer*, no. 10 (1929).

Grünbaum, Herbert. “Schallplatten zu teuer.” *Weltbühne*, no. 13 (1931).

Henschel, Albert K. “Schlager.” *Die Sendung*, no. 50 (1931).

Hock, Fritz. “Das Jazz-Orchester im Tonfilm.” *Film-Kurier*, 18.9.1930.

Holländer, Friedrich. “Das Musikproblem im Tonfilm: Los vom Schlager.” *Die Film-Musik. Beilage zum Film-Kurier*, 19.8.1930.

Kawi. “Die Platten der Woche.” *Reichsfilmblatt, Beilage „Kinomusik/Schallplatte*.” 10.5.1930.

Leistner, Erich. “Akustisches vom Aufnahmeraum.” *Filmtechnik*, 10.1.1931.

Leistner, Erich. “Die Objekte der Tonaufnahme.” *Filmtechnik*, 30.5.1931.

Leistner, Erich. “Klangbild und Mikrophoneinstellung.” *Filmtechnik*, 7.3.1931

Lydor, Waldemar. “Das Orchester im Tischkasten.” *Reichsfilmblatt*, 9.8.1930.

Maxfield, J.P. “Aufnahmekontrolle.” *Filmtechnik*, 2.5.1931.

Mersmann, Hans. “Schlagerplatte und Persönlichkeit.” *Melos*, no. 1 (1931).

Métain, Charles. “Analogie mit der Kamera. Der Störspiegel.” *Film-Kurier*, 8.8.1930.

Métain, Charles. “Wie mein Galgen wurde.” *Filmtechnik*, 10.01.1931.

Mic, Constantin. “Nachsynchronisierung.” *Filmtechnik*, 8.3.1930.

Pander, Hans. “Musikübertragungsanlage.” *Filmtechnik*, 10.1.1931.

Preußner, Eberhard. “Kitsch und Technik.” *Melos*, no. 12 (1930).

Preußner, Eberhard. “Kollektiver Musikverbrauch.” *Melos*, no. 1 (1931).

Rhein, Eduard. “Liegt es an den Lautsprechern?” *Filmtechnik*, 8.3.1930.

Richard, Stephan. “Tonfilm, Gema kontra G.D.T. Vom Standpunkt des Kapellmeisters ausgesehen.” *Film-Kurier*, 28.11.1929.

Sandvik, Otto. “Das Grundgeräusch.” *Filmtechnik*, 8.2.1930

Schapira, Siegfried. “Die Herren Refrainsänger.” *Funk-Woche*, 11.9.1932.

Scharnke, Reinhold. “Was wollen Sie hören? Das Ergebnis unserer Hörer-Rundfrage.” *Funk-Woche,* no. 35 (1930).

Schiffer, H. “Verbesserungen der Akustik.” *Filmtechnik*, 10.1.1931.

Schultz, R. “Entwicklung der Tonfilmaufnahme.” *Filmtechnik*, 26.12.1932.

Siege, Fritz. “Wie entsteht ein Schlager? Franz Grothe über seine Arbeit.” *Film-Kurier*, 8.9.1942.

Steinhauer, Walter. “Der Tonfilm fördert die Schallplatte.” *Film-Kurier*, 24.04.1930.

Strobel, Heinrich. “Wer spielt Musik?” *Melos*, no. 1 (1931).

Thiele, Wilhelm. “Operette im Tonfilm.” *Reichsfilmblatt*. 8.3.1930.

Thiele, Wilhelm. “Vom Stil der Tonfilm-Operette.” *Film-Kurier*, 13.9.1930.

Urban, Erich. “Wieder Metropol!” *BZ am Mittag*, 17.9.1926.

von Benda, Hans. “Rundfunkprogramm und Rundfunkhörer.” *Melos*, no 1 (1931).

von Lölhöffel, Erich. “Schwerhörigenanlagen.” *Filmtechnik*, 27.6.1931.

von Passavant, Hans. “Die Kunst des Tonschnittes.” *Filmtechnik*, 16.5.1931.

von Passavant, Hans. “Technik des Tonschnittes.” *Filmtechnik*, 7.2.1931.

W., H. “Lilian Harvey, Fritsch und First: Ein blonder Traum. Ufa/Gloria-Palast.” *Lichtbild-Bühne*, 24.9.1932.

Wallis, G. C. “Die Psychologie des Theaterpublikums.” *Film-Kurier,* 7.8.1922.

Wiggers. “Schallplatten contra Rundfunk.” *Radio*, no. 25 (1931).

Wollenberg, Hans. “Ein blonder Traum.” *Lichtbildbühne*, 24.9.1932.

Wolff, Willi. “Die Geburt des Schlagers.” *Film-Kurier*, 3.9.1930.

Zweifel, Peter. “Abend mit Schallplatten.” *Reichsfilmblatt*, 6.12.1930.

II. INTERNET SOURCES

Multimedia Sources

78Upm. “Du bist nicht die Erste.” YouTube Video, 0:1:04. May 2, 2010. (. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 15.11.2022, 01:01 pm).

Alparfan. “‘Lewis Ruth Band’ musiziert im Film ‘Eine Nacht im Parsdies’ 1931/32.” YouTube Video, 0:1:50. August 17, 2013. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 20.10.2022, 11:30 am).

Alparfan. “Singing Colibris/Orch. Dajos Bela – ‘Sie will ja’ Gesangszene: ‘Ein Lied, ein Kuss, ein Mädel’ 1932.” YouTube Video, 0:1:04. July 24, 2013. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 24.11.2022, 12:05 pm).

Benito Camela. “Ich bei Tag und du bei Nacht.” YouTube Video, 1:34:20. May 23, 2021. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 23.5.2022, 6:45 pm).

Brillantspecial. “Irgendwo auf der Welt/ Marek Weber & Orchester mit Refraingesang.” YouTube Video, 0:4:20. June 15, 2013. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 14.10.2018, 5:15 pm).

Comedian Harmonists – Thema. “Irgendwo auf der Welt.” YouTube Video, 0:1:04. July 11, 2015. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 15.10.2018, 3:56 pm).

GrafPhono. “Abel-Quartett: Irgendwo auf der Welt (1932).” YouTube Video, 0:1:47. December 12, 2014. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 14.10.2018, 2:45 pm).

GrafPhono. “Eric Harden: Irgendwo auf der Welt (Luigi Bernauer, 1933).” YouTube Video, 0:1:47. November 25, 2013. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 14.10.2018, 4:57 pm).

HeadHunter131. “Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt’s ein kleines bisschen Glück.” YouTube Video, 0:1:04. July 31, 2020. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 14.10.2018, 4:13 pm).

HeadHunter131. “Irgendwo auf der Welt – Erwin Hartung.” YouTube Video, 0:1:34. July 2, 2008. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 17.10.2018, 11:13 am).

HeadHunter131. “Paul Morgan kauft Platten.” YouTube Video, 0:1:34. December 24, 2021. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 15.10.2018, 9:13 pm).

Hoffmannjazz Hoffmann. “1931 Comedian Harmonists – ‘Der Falscher Ehemann’ film clips.” YouTube Video, 0:5:01. September 17, 2012. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 3.11.2022, 10:55 am).

Jozef Sterkens. “Musikstadt Berlin 1931 Tonfilm – Trude Berliner & Siegfried Arno, Kabarett-Programm (1931).” YouTube Video, 0:1:47. September 26, 2013. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 15.11.2022, 4:40 pm).

Klaus von Bülow. “Die Drei von der Tankstelle (1930) (ganzer Film).” YouTube Video, 1:29:42. February 2, 2021. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 24.11.2022, 11:43 am).

Klaus von Bülow. “Einbrecher (1932) (ganzer Film).” YouTube Video, 1:32:52. February 1, 2021. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 29.11.2022, 11:13 pm).

Kurbel TV. “Ein Blonder Traum (1932).” YouTube Video, 1:18:38. November 5, 2021. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 3.12.2021, 7:45 pm).

Parlophonman. “Wenn heut’ Nacht die Jazzband spielt!” YouTube Video, 0:1:04. March 28, 2008. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 24.11.2022, 1:17 pm).

Parlophonman. “Willi Forst, Robert Stolz & the Lewis Ruth Band!” YouTube Video, 0:1:04. March 8, 2014. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 20.10.2022, 12.16 pm).

Plattensammler88. “Lilian Harvey – Irgendwo auf der Welt (Slowfox).” YouTube Video, 0:1:47. August 5, 2009. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 14.10.2018, 3:43 pm).

Radiomuseum Hardthausen. “Eddy Walis Orch., Eric Helgar, Irgendwo auf der Welt gibt’s ein kleines bisschen Glück, Slowfox, 1932.” YouTube Video, 0:3:04. October 29, 2020. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 17.10.2018, 10:23 am).

RareFilme. “1931 Ihre Hoheit befiehlt.” YouTube Video, 1:24:58. September 2, 2022. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 3.11.2022, 10:15 am).

Schellack_Tuari. “Das Kabinett des Dr. Larifari mit Max Hansen – Weintraubs Syncopators – 1930 – Full Movie.” YouTube Video, 1:10:14. November 22, 2015. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 12.12.2021, 12:21 pm).

The Phonograph Stop. “RARE Comedian Harmonists Actual 1931 Footage (Original Ensemble).” YouTube Video, 0:1:30. May 23, 2022. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 2.11.2022, 5:45 pm).

T-JUBE RADIO. “Leo Monosson & Franz (Francis) Lederer: Du bist nicht die Erste.” YouTube Video, 0:3:47. January 26, 2018. The link originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. (accessed on 15.11.2022, 12:03 pm)

Internet Sources

Arsenal Berlin, Programmarchiv, https://www.arsenal-berlin.de/kino/programmarchiv/2008/filmreihe/deutsche-tonfilmoperetten/ (last accessed on 2.1.2023, 1:57 pm).

BFI, Retrospektive, https://shop.bfi.org.uk/seasons/beyond-your-wildest-dreams-weimar-cinema-1919-1933.html (last accessed on 10.1.2023, 12:46 pm).

Deutsche Kinemathek, Ausstellung, https://www.deutsche-kinemathek.de/de/besuch/ausstellungen/wenn-ich-sonntags-mein-kino-geh-ton-film-musik-1929-1933 (last accessed on 4.1.2023, 7:57 pm).

Murnau-Stiftung, Database of movies, https://www.murnau-stiftung.de/list/movies/letter (last accessed on 7.1.2023, 7:03 pm).

Murnau-Stiftung, Liebeswalzer, (https://www.murnau-stiftung.de/movie/577 (last accessed on 12.1.2023, 2:10 pm).

Murnau-Stiftung, Film Collections, https://www.murnau-stiftung.de/filmbestand (last accessed on 7.1.2023, 6:48 pm)

Murnau-Stiftung, Kabarett-Programm, https://www.murnau-stiftung.de/filmtheater/kinoprogramm/ufa-kabarett-programm-kind-ich-freu-mich-auf-dein-kommen (last accessed on 15.11.2022, 4:23 pm).

Theater Lüneburg, https://www.theater-lueneburg.de/stuecke/die-drei-von-der-tankstelle/ (last accessed on 5.1.2023, 2:09 pm).

III. SCORES AND SHEET MUSIC

1000 Takte Tanz. 22 der populärsten Tanz- und Gesangsschlager, vol. 8, Berlin: Musik-Verlag Alrobi, 1932.

Ufaton-Bomben: Zwei Jahre Ufaton-Film. Berlin: Ufaton-Verlag, 1932.

Heymann, Werner R., *Ein blonder Traum*. Klavierausgabe. Berlin: Ufaton-Verlag, 1932.

Schmidl, Stefan and Sijaric, Timur, *Die Frau meiner Träume*. Filmmusik in historisch-kritischen Editionen, vol. 1. Wien: verlag filmarchiv austria, 2021.

IV. SECONDARY SOURCES

Abrams, Lynn. "From Control to Commercialization: the Triumph of Mass Entertainment in Germany 1900-25?" *German History* 8, no. 3 (1990): 278-293.

Adorno, Theodor W. "On Popular Music." In *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture. A Reader.* Edited by John Storey, 197-209, Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1998 [1941].

Adorno, Theodor W. and Horkheimer, Max. *Dialektik der Aufklärung*. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1969.

Altheide, David and Snow, Robert. *Media Logic*. Beverly Hills, Cal.: Sage Publications, 1979.

Altman, Rick. *Silent Film Sound*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.

Altman, Rick. *Sound Theory, Sound Practice*. New York; London: Routledge, 1992.

Arbeitskreis Studium Populärer Musik (ed.). *'Es liegt in der Luft was Idiotisches…': populäre Musik zur Zeit der Weimarer Republik: Referate der ASPM-Jahrestagung vom 27. bis 29. Januar 1995 in Freudenberg*. Baden-Baden: CODA-Musikservice, 1995.

Arnheim, Rudolf. *Film als Kunst*. Edited by Helmut H. Diederichs. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1979 [1932].

Ascheid, Antje. *Hitler's Heroines: stardom and womanhood in Nazi cinema*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002.

Appadurai, Arjun. *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

Applegate, Celia, and Potter, Pamela. *Music and German National Identity*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2002.

Arnold, Klaus (ed.). *Von der Politisierung der Medien zur Medialisierung des Politischen*. Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2010.

Auslander, Philip. *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*. London: Routledge, 2008.

Bader, Ingo. "The Sound of Berlin: Subculture and the Global Music Industry." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 34, no. 1 (2010): 76-91.

Bächlin, Peter. *Der Film als Ware*. Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum Fischer-Taschenbuchverlag, 1975.

Baer, Nicholas and Kaes, Anton (eds.). *The promise of cinema: German film theory, 1907-1933*. Oakland: University of California Press, 2016.

Baresel, Alfred. *Das neue Jazz-Buch. Ein praktisches Handbuch für Musiker, Komponisten, Arrangeure, Tänzer und Freunde der Jazz-Musik*. Leipzig: Musikverlag Wilhelm Zimmermann, 1929.

Baudrillard, Jean. "For a critique of the political economy of the Sign." In *Selected Writings*. Edited and introduced by Mark Poster, 75-88, Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 2001.

Bauer, Thomas. *Deutsche Programmpresse 1923-1941: Entstehung, Entwicklung und Kontinuität der Rundfunkzeitschriften*. München: Saur, 1993.

Bazley, Amanda (ed.). *Recorded Music: Performance, Culture, and Technology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Beacham, Frank. "Ribbon Microphones Make a Full Circle in Audio History." 24.5.2017, https://www.thebroadcastbridge.com/content/entry/8667/ribbon-microphones-make-a-full-circle-in-audio-history. Last accessed on 10.01.2023, 12:49 pm.

Becker, Tobias. "Die Anfänge der Schlagerindustrie. Intermedialität und wirtschaftliche Verflechtung vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg." *Lied und populäre Kultur*, no. 58 (2013): 11-39.

Beinroth, Carolin. *Musik im frühen deutschen Stummfilmkino: eine Untersuchung der zeitgenössischen Rezeption in ausgewählten Fachzeitschriften der Jahre 1907-1925*. Systematische Musikwissenschaft und Musikkulturen der Gegenwart, vol. 6. Baden-Baden: Tectum Verlag, 2019.

Belach, Helga. "…als die Traumfabrik kriegswichtig wurde." In *Wir tanzen um die Welt: Deutsche Revuefilme 1933-1945*. Edited by Helga Belach, 139-207, Munich: Hanser, 1979.

Bellman, Jonathan D. “Musical Voyages and their Baggage: Orientalism in Music and Critical Musicology.” *Musical Quarterly* 94, no. 3 (2011): 417-438.

Benjamin, Walter. *The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction*. Translated by A. J. Underwood. London: Penguin, 2008.

Berg, Marita. “‘Det Jeschäft ist richtig!’ Die Revueoperetten des Erik Charell, in *Im Weißen Rössl. Zwischen Kunst und Kommerz*. Edited by Ulrich Tadday, 59-79, Munich: edition text + kritik, 2006.

Berking, Helmuth. *Masse und Geist: Studien zur Soziologie in der Weimarer Republik*. Berlin: Wissenschaftlicher Autoren-Verlag, 1984.

Bericht des Rundfunk-Kommissars des Reichspostministers über die Wirtschaftslage des deutschen Rundfunks am 31. Dezember 1930. Berlin: Reichsdruckerei Berlin, 1930.

Blaukopf, Kurt. *Massenmedium Schallplatte: die Stellung des Tonträgers in der Kultursoziologie und Kulturstatistik*. Wiesbaden: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1977.

Boberach, Heinz (ed.). *Meldungen aus dem Reich. Die geheimen Lageberichte des Sicherheitsdienstes der SS 1938-1945*, vol. 13 (1.3.1943-30.5.1943). Herrsching: Pawlak, 1984.

Boeckman, K. v. “Grundlegende Fragen der allgemeinen Programmgestaltung.” In *Quellen zur Programmgeschichte des deutschen Hörfunks und Fernsehens*. Edited by Konrad Dussel and Edgar Lersch, 40, Göttingen, Zurich: Muster-Schmidt, 1990.

Bolter, Jay and Grusin, Richard. *Remediation: understanding New Media*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1999.

Born, Georgina. “On Musical Mediation: Ontology, Technology, Creativity.” *Twentieth-Century Music* 2, no.1 (2005): 7-36.

Born, Georgina. “Music and the Social.” In *The Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introduction*. Edited by Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert and Richard Middleton, 261-274, New York: Routledge, 2012.

Borthwick, Stuart and Moy, Ron. *Popular Music Genres: An Introduction*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2022.

Bote, Eduard and Brav, Ludwig. *Thematischer Führer durch die Orchestermusik des Verlages Ed. Bote und G. Bock: zum besonderen Gebrauch für Film, Bühne, Konzert*. Berlin: Edition Bote & G. Bock, 1928.

Born, Georgina. “Music and the Social.” In *The Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introduction*. Edited by Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert and Richard Middleton, 261-274, Florence: Routledge, 2012.

Born, Georgina. *Music, sound and space: transformations of public and private experience*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

Brackett, David. “Questions of Genre in Black Popular Music.” *Black Music Research Journal*, no. 25 (2005): 79-92.

Brandlmeier, Thomas. “Die Frau meiner Träume.” In *Der NS-Film. Stil-Epochen des Films*. Edited by Norbert Grob, 412-424, Ditzingen: Reclam, 2018.

Braune, Gerd. *Der Einfluß von Schallplatte und Rundfunk auf die deutsche Musikindustrie*. Berlin: Schaefer, 1934.

Bredow, Hans (ed.), *Aus meinem Archiv. Probleme des Rundfunks*. Heidelberg: Vorwinckel, 1950.

Brockmann, Stephen and Kniesche, Thomas W. *Dancing on the volcano: essays on the culture of the Weimar Republic*. Columbia, S. C.: Camden House, 1994.

Bruns, Jana F. *Nazi Cinema’s New Women*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Bulgakowa, Oksana. “Deutsch-russische Filmträume,” In *Berlin-Moskau. Moskau-Berlin. Chronik 1950-2000*. Edited by Pawel Choroschilow and Jürgen Hart, 99-203, Berlin: Nicolai, 2003.

Butterfield, Andrew and Szymanski, John. “Ribbon Microphone.” In *A Dictionary of Electronic and Electronic Engineering*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, 0.1093/acref/9780198725725.001.0001. Last accessed on 23.12.2022, 5:56 pm.

Călinescu, Matei. *Five Faces of Modernity. Modernism, Avant-Garde, Decadence, Kitsch, Postmodernism.* Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, 1987.

Cameron, James R. and Rider, John Francis. *Sound Pictures, and trouble shooters manual*. Manhattan Beach, Brooklyn, N. Y.: Cameron, 1930.

Chambers, Ian. *Urban rhythms: pop music and popular culture.* Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1985.

Chanan, Michael. *Repeated Takes: A Short History of Recording and Its Effects on Music*. London: Verso, 1995.

Chion, Michel. *Film, a Sound Art*. Translated by Claudia Gorbman. Chichester: Columbia University Press, 2009.

Clarke, Eric. “The Impact of Recording on Listening.” *Twentieth-century Music* 4, no. 1 (2007): 47-70.

Corbett, Ian. *Mic It!: Microphones, Microphone Techniques, and Their Impact on the Final Mix*. London: Routledge, 2020.

Cook, Nicholas. “Between Process and Product: Music and/as Performance.” *Music Theory Online* 7, no. 2 (2001), http://www.societymusictheory.org/mto/issues/mto.01.7.2/mto.01.7.2.cook.html. Last accessed on 9.1.2023, 4:05 pm.

Cook, Nicholas and Clarke, Eric and Leech-Wilkinson, Daniel (eds.). *The Cambridge Companion to Recorded Music*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Couldry, Nick and Hepp, Andreas. “Conceptualizing Mediatization: Contexts, Traditions, Arguments,” *Communication Theory* 23, no. 3 (2013): 191-202.

Crafton, Donald. *The Talkies: American Cinema’s Transition to Sound, 1926-1931*. History of the American Cinema, vol. 4. New York; London: Scribner, 1997.

Crisell, Andrew. *Liveness and Recording in the Media*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

Cumming, Naomi. *The Sonic Self: musical subjectivity and signification*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000.

Currid, Brian. *A National Acoustics: music and mass publicity in Weimar and Nazi Germany.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

Currid, Brian. “Das Lied einer Nacht. Filmschlager als Organe der Erfahrung,” In *Als die Filme singen lernten. Innovationen und Traditionen im Musikfilm 1928-1938*. Edited by Hans Michael Bock, Wolfgang Jacobson and Jörg Schöning, 48-60, Munich: edition text + kritik, 1999.

Currid, Brian. “A Song goes around the World: the German Schlager, as an Organ of Experience.” *Popular Music* 19, no. 2 (2000): 147-180.

Danius, Sara. *The Senses of Modernism: Technology, Perception, and Aesthetics*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2019.

Davison, Annette. “Workers’ Rights and Performing Rights: Cinema Music and Musicians Prior to Synchronized Sound.” In *The Sounds of Silents in Britain*. Edited by Julie Brown and Annette Davison, 243-262, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Deacon, David and Stanyer, James. “Mediatization: key concept or conceptual bandwagon?” *Media, Culture and Society* 36, no. 7 (2014): 1032-1044.

de Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life.* Berkeley, California; London: University of California Press, 1988.

Deleuze, Gilles and Parnet, Claire. *Dialogues*. Translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam. London: Athlone, 1987.

DeNora, Tia. *Music in Everyday Life*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Dettke, Karl Heinz. *Kinoorgeln und Kinomusik in Deutschland*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1995.

Deutscher Musiker-Verband. *Der Tonfilm. Eine Gefahr für den Musikerberuf und für die Musikkultur.* Berlin: Deutscher Musiker-Verband, 1930.

Dussel, Konrad. *Deutsche Rundfunkgeschichte: eine Einführung*. Konstanz: Universitätsverlag Konstanz, 2004.

Dussel, Konrad. *Deutsche Rundfunkgeschichte*. Cologne: Herbert von Halem Verlag, 2022.

Dussel, Konrad (ed.). *Quellen zur Programmgeschichte des deutschen Hörfunks und Fernsehens*. Göttingen; Zurich: Muster-Schmidt, 1999.

Ehrenfried, Lara. "Synchronized Sound Technology and the British Musical Film in the 1930s." *The Space Between*, no. 16 (2020): 1-12.

Eichstedt, Astrid. *Wie die Wilden: Tänze auf der Höhe ihrer Zeit*. Berlin: Rotbuch Verlag, 1985.

Eidsheim, Nina. *Sensing Sound: singing and listening as vibrational practice*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2015.

Eisner, Lotte H. *The Haunted Screen: Expressionism in the German Cinema and the Influence of Max Reinhardt*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1969.

Elliott, William Francis. *Sound-recording for films: a review of modern methods*. London: Pitman, 1937.

Elsaesser, Thomas. *Weimar Cinema and after: Germany's Historical Imaginary*. London: Routledge, 2000.

Erdmann, Hans. *Allgemeines Handbuch der Film-Musik.* Berlin: Schlesinger, 1927.

Erll, Astrid and Rigney, Ann. "Introduction. Cultural Memory and Its Dynamics." In *Mediation, Remediation and the Dynamic of Cultural Memory*. Edited by Astrid Erll and Ann Rigney, 1-11, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2009.

Finocchiaro, Francesco. "In the Mirror of Criticism: The Film Music Debate on Reichsfilmblatt from 1924 to 1929." *Fontes Artis Musicae* 67, no. 1 (2020): 34-62.

Fischer, Fritz and Lichte, Hugo. *Tonfilm: Aufnahme und Wiedergabe nach dem Klangfilm-Verfahren (System Klangfilm-Tobis)*. Leipzig: Hirzel, 1931.

Fiske, John. *Understanding Popular Culture*. New York: Routledge, 2010.

Fiske, John. *Television Culture*. New York: Routledge, 2011.

Foucault, Michel. *Archaeology of Knowledge.* New York; London: Harper & Row, 1976.

Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1979.

Fricke, Gerd and Frickhoeffer, Otto (eds.), *Künstler-Almanach des Rundfunks*. Berlin: Rothgießer & Diesing AG, 1933.

Frith, Simon and Goodwin, Andrew (eds.). *On Record: Rock, Pop, and the Written Word*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1990.

Frith, Simon. *Performing Rites: on the value of popular music*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996.

Frith, Simon. *Popular Music: Critical Concepts in Media and Cultural Studies*. London: Routledge, 2004.

Frith, Simon. *Sound Effects: Youth, Leisure and the Politics of Rock.* London: Constable, 1983.

Führer, Karl C. "Auf dem Weg zur 'Massenkultur'?" *Historische Zeitschrift* 262, no. 1 (1996): 739-782.

Führer, Karl C. and Ross, Corey (eds.). *Mass Media, Culture, and Society in Twentieth Century Germany.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.

Führer, Karl C. *Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Rundfunks in der Weimarer Republik.* Potsdam: Verlag für Berlin-Brandenburg, 1997.

Funk, Alois. *Film und Jugend: eine Untersuchung über die psychologischen Wirkungen des Films im Leben der Jugendlichen*. Munich: Reinhardt, 1934.

Gabler, Werner. *Die Akustik des Tonfilmtheaters*. Bücher des Lichtspielvorführers. Halle: Knapp, 1932.

Gandert, Gero. *Der Film der Weimarer Republik: ein Handbuch der zeitgenössischen Kritik*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003.

Garane, Jeanne. *Hybrid Genres*. Boston: BRILL, 2018.

Gay, Peter. *Weimar culture: the outsider as insider*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974.

Gibson, James. *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin 1979.

Gilliam, Bryan. *Music and Performance during the Weimar Republic.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1994.

Goebbels, Joseph. *Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels. Teil II, Diktate 1941-45*, vol. 11 (Januar bis März 1944). Edited by Elke Fröhlich, Munich: Saur, 1993.

Goebbels, Joseph. "Rede im Kaiserhof am 28.3.1933." In *Der Film im Dritten Reich*. Edited by Gerd Albrecht, 25-28, Karlsruhe: Doku-Verlag, 1979.

Goldstein, Howard and McCracken, Allison. “Crooning.” *The Grove Dictionary of American Music* (2013), Web.

Grajetzky, Helmut. *Untersuchungen über das Grundgeräusch bei der Tonfilmwiedergabe nach dem Lichttonverfahren*. Berlin: Springer, 1934.

Grimm, Hartmut (ed.). *Wien – Berlin: Stationen einer kulturellen Beziehung.* Saarbrücken: Pfau, 2000.

Groll, Georg. *Film, die unentdeckte Kunst*. Munich: C. H. Beck, 1939.

Grosch, Nils. *Zwischen den Stühlen: Remigration und unterhaltendes Musiktheater in den 1950er Jahren*. Münster: Waxmann, 2012.

Grossberg, Lawrence. “Another Boring Day in Paradise: Rock and Roll and the Empowerment of Everday Life.” In *Dancing in Spite of Myself: Essays on Popular Culture*. Edited by Lawrence Grossberg. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997.

Grünfeld, Richard. “Von den Anfängen der Wiener Salonkapelle bis zur heutigen Weltgeltung.” In *Das goldene Buch des Kapellmeisters: ein fachpraktischer Führer durch das Gesamtgebiet der Unterhaltungsmusik*. Edited by Georg Maria von Coellen, 9-11, Düsseldorf: Verlag des “Artist”, 1931.

Hagener, Malte and Hans, Jan (eds.). *Als die Filme singen lernten: Innovation und Tradition im Musikfilm 1928-1938*. Munich: edition text + kritik, 1999.

Hailey, Christopher, “Rethinking Sound: music and radio in Weimar Germany.” In *Music and performance during the Weimar Republic*. Edited by Bryan Gilliam, 13-36, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Hake, Sabine. “Filmpublizistik der Weimarer Jahre.” In *Recherche: Film. Quellen und Methoden der Filmforschung*. Edited by Hans-Michael Bock and Wolfgang Jacobsen, 25-36, Munich: edition text + kritik, 1997.

Hake, Sabine. *Popular Cinema of the Third Reich*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2021.

Halbwachs, Maurice. *La mémoire collective*. Paris: Albin, 1997.

Hallberg, Michael. *Die Liebeskonzeption in bundesdeutschen Schlagertexten der 1970er Jahre*. Marburg: tectum Verlag, 1988.

Hanson, Helen. *Hollywood Soundscapes: Film Sound Style, Craft and Production in the Classical Era*. London: Palgrave, 2017.

Harding, Charlie and Sloan, Nate. *Switched on Pop: How Popular Music Works, and Why it Matters*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.

Hardt, Ursula. *From Caligari to California: Erich Pommer’s Life in the International Film Wars*. Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1996.

Hatschek, Paul. *Grundlagen des Tonfilms.* Die Bücher des Lichtspielvorführers, vol. 6. Halle (Saale): Verlag von Wilhelm Knapp, 1931.

Head, Matthew. “Musicology on Safari: Orientalism and the Spectre of Postcolonoal Theory.” *Music Analysis* 22, nos. 1-2 (2003): 211-230.

Heidrich, Nina. *Rundfunk in der Weimarer Republik: regionale und nationale Konzepte.* Bielefeld: Aisthesis Verlag, 2018.

Henkel, Theresa and Messmer, Franz Peter. *Franz Grothe*. Komponisten in Bayern, vol. 64. Munich: Allitera Verlag, 2019.

Hennion, Antoine. “An Intermediary between Production and Consumption: the Producer of Popular Music.” *Science, Technology and Human Values* 14, no. 4 (1989), 400-424.

Hennion, Antoine. “Music and Mediation: Towards a New Sociology of Music.” In *The Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introduction*. Edited by Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert and Richard Middleton, 80-91, London: Routledge, 2012.

Hensel, Werner. *1000 Hörer antworten...: eine Marktstudie*. Berlin: Union, 1935.

Hepp, Andreas. “The communicative figurations of mediatized worlds. Mediatization research in times of the ‘mediation of everything’,” *European Journal of Communication*, no. 28 (2013): 615-629.

Hermand, Jost. *Die Kultur der Weimarer Republik*. Munich: Nymphenburger Verlagshandlung, 1978.

Hesse, Hermann. *Der Steppenwolf*. Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1991.

Heymann, Werner R. “Der Kapellmeister,” In *Das goldene Buch des Kapellmeisters: ein fachpraktischer Führer durch das Gesamtgebiet der Unterhaltungsmusik*. Edited by Georg Maria von Coellen, 170, Düsseldorf: Verlag des “Artist”, 1931.

Heymann, Werner R. *‘Liebling, mein Herz lässt dich grüßen’: Der erfolgreichste Filmkomponist der großen Ufa-Zeit erinnert sich*. Edited by Hubert Ortkemper. Berlin: Henschel Verlag, 2001.

Hippler, Fritz. *Betrachtungen zum Filmschaffen*. Berlin: Max Hesse, 1943.

Hjavard, Stig. “The Mediatization of Society. A Theory of the Media as Agents of Social and Cultural Change.” *Nordicom Review* 29, no. 2 (2008): 105-134.

Hoover, Stewart. “Complexities: The Case of Religious Cultures.” In *Mediatization: Concept, Changes, Consequences*. Edited by Knut Lundby, 123-138, New York, Oxford: Peter Lang, 2009.

Hurst, David C. *Weimar modernism: philosophy, politics, and culture in Germany 1918-1933*. Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2004.

Innis, Harold A. *The bias of communication*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1951.

Iseglio, Mario. “Der Kapellmeister.” In *Das goldene Buch des Kapellmeisters: ein fachpraktischer Führer durch das Gesamtgebiet der Unterhaltungsmusik*. Edited by Georg Maria von Coellen, 171-172, Düsseldorf: Verlag des “Artist”, 1931.

Jason, Alexander. *Handbuch der Filmwirtschaft*. Berlin: Verlag für Presse, Wirtschaft und Politik, 1930.

Jenkins, Henry. *Convergence Culture: where old and new media collide*. New York: New York University Press, 2006. Last accessed 22.12.2022, 5:34 pm. Ebook Central.

Jensen, Klaus Bruhn. “Intermediality.” In *The International Encyclopedia of Communication Theory and Philosophy*, https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118766804.wbiect170. Last accessed on 26.12.2022, 5.55 pm.

Johnson, James. *Listening in Paris: a Cultural History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

Jolowicz, Ernst. *Der Rundfunk: eine psychologische Untersuchung*. Berlin: Max Hesses Verlag, 1932.

Jones, Steve. “Music that Moves: popular music, distribution and network technologies.” *Cultural Studies* 16, no. 2 (2002): 213-232.

Kaes, Anton. *Shell schock cinema: Weimar culture and the wounds of war*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.

Kahlenberg, Friedrich P. “Der wirtschaftliche Faktor ‘Musik’ im Theaterbetrieb der Ufa in den Jahren 1927-1930.” In *Stummfilmmusik gestern und heute*. Edited by Walther Seidler, 51-71, Berlin: Verlag Volker Spiess, 1979.

Kayser, Dietrich. *Schlager – Das Lied als Ware. Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der Illusionsindustrie.* Stuttgart: J. B. Mezlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1975.

Kleffel, Fritz. *Die Bedienung der Tonfilmmaschinen*. Halle: Knapp, 1931.

Klein, Hans and Kleinman, Daniel Lee. “The Social Construction of Technology: Structural Considerations.” *Science, Technology & Human Values* 27, no. 1 (2002): 28-52.

Koebner, Thomas. “Wenn ‘Fortuna winke winke macht’. Die Tonfilm-Operette: das bedeutendste Kino-Genre in der Endzeit der Weimarer Republik.” In *Diesseits der ‘Dämonischen Leinwand’. Neue Perspektiven auf das späte Weimarer Kino*. Edited by Thomas Koebner, 341-372, Munich: edition text + kritik, 2003.

Kornberger, Monika. “Bernauer (eig. Bernhuber), Ludwig (Luigi, Pseud.e Bert Brand, Fred Lustig, Hans Hellmer, Hans Bauer, Kurt Velten, Georg Walden).” In *Oesterreichisches Musiklexikon online*. Edited by Barbara Boisits, https://dx.doi.org/10.1553/0x0001f86d. Last accessed on 13.01.2023, 12:39 pm.

Korte, Helmut. *Der Spielfilm und das Ende der Weimarer Republik. Ein rezeptionshistorischer Versuch*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998.

Kracauer, Siegfried. “Cult of Distraction: On Berlin’s Picture Palaces.” *New German Critique* 40, no. 40 (1987): 91-96.

Kracauer, Siegfried. *From Caligari to Hitler: A Psychological History of the German Film*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947.

Kracauer, Siegfried. *Von Caligari zu Hitler: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des deutschen Films.* Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1958.

Kracauer, Siegfried. *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays*. Translated, edited, and introduced by Thomas Y. Levin. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995.

Kreimeier, Klaus. *Die Ufa-Story: Geschichte eines Filmkonzerns.* Munich: Hanser, 1992.

Krotz, Friedrich. “Mediatization: A Concept with which to Grasp Media and Societal Change.” In *Mediatization: Concept, Changes, Consequences.* Edited by Knut Lundby, 21-40, New York, Oxford: Peter Lang, 2009.

Kühn, Volker. “‘Man muß das Leben nehmen, wie es eben ist…’ Anmerkungen zum Schlager und seiner Fähigkeit, mit der Zeit zu gehen.” In *Musik und Musikpolitik im faschistischen Deutschland*. Edited by Hanns-Werner Heister and Hans-Günter Klein, 215-242, Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1984.

Kurth, Ulrich. “‘Ich pfeif’ auf Tugend und Moral’ – Zum Foxtrott in den zwanziger Jahren.” In *‘Ich will aber gerade vom Leben singen’ – über populäre Musik vom ausgehenden 19. Jahrhundert bis zum Ende der Weimarer Republik*. Edited by Sabine Schutte. Hamburg: Rowohlt Verlag, 1987.

Lacey, Kate. *Listening publics: the politics and experience of listening in the media age*. Cambridge: Polity, 2013.

Laing, Dave. *One Chord Wonders: power and meaning in punk rock*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press,1985.

Landy, Marcia. *British genres: cinema and society, 1930-1960*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.

Lanford, Michael. “Ravel and ‘The Raven’: The Realisation of an Inherited Aesthetics in Bolero.” *Cambridge Quarterly*, no. 40 (2011): 243-265.

Langford, Barry. *Film genre: Hollywood and beyond*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005.

Laqueur, Walter. *Weimar: a cultural history 1918-1933*. London: Phoenix, 2000.

Lastra, James. *Sound Technology and the American Cinema: Perception, Representation, Modernity*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000.

Latour, Bruno. *Reassembling the social: an Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Laurisch, Gerhard. *Der Rundfunk als Arbeitgeber*. Jena: Neuenhahn, 1933.

LeMahieu, Dan L. *A culture for democracy: mass communication and the cultivated mind in Britain between the wars.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988.

Lenk, Carsten. *Die Erscheinung des Rundfunks. Einführung und Nutzung eines neuen Mediums 1923-1932*. Opladen: Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 1997.

Leonhard, Joachim-Felix. *Programmgeschichte des Hörfunks in der Weimarer Republik*, vol. 2. Munich: Kreuz Verlag 1997.

Lerg, Winfried B. *Die Entstehung des Rundfunks in Deutschland: Herkunft und Entwicklung eines publizistischen Mittels*. Frankfurt am Main: Knecht, 1965.

Lincke, Paul. “Der Kapellmeister.” In *Das goldene Buch des Kapellmeisters: ein fachpraktischer Führer durch das Gesamtgebiet der Unterhaltungsmusik*. Edited by Georg Maria von Coellen, 180-181, Düsseldorf: Verlag des “Artist”, 1931.

Livingstone, Sonia and Lunt, Peter. “Mediatization: an emerging paradigm for media and communication studies.” In *Mediatization of Communication* (Handbooks of Communication Science). Edited by Kurt Lundby, 703-724, Berlin: de Gruyter, 2014, http://www.degruyter.com/view/serial/119469. Last accessed on 24.12.2022, 8:33 am.

Löllhöffel von Löwensprung, Erich. *Wie ein Tonfilm entsteht*. Die Bücher des Lichtspielvorführers, vol. 12. Halle: Knapp, 1933.

Lowry, Stephen. “Der Ort meiner Träume? Zur ideologischen Funktion des NS-Unterhaltungsfilms.” *Montage/av. Zeitschrift für Theorie und Geschichte audiovisueller Kommunikation*, no. 2 (1994): 55-72.

Maase, Kaspar. *Grenzenloses Vergnügen: der Aufstieg der Massenkultur 1850-1970*. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch-Verlag, 2001.

Maples, Holly. “Embodying Resistance: Gendering Public Space in Ragtime Social Dance.” *New theatre quarterly* 28, no. 3 (2012): 243-259.

Mäsker, Mechthild. *Das Frauenbild im Schlager von 1970 bis 1985. Eine repräsentative Textanalyse deutscher Erfolgsschlager*. Dissertation, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität zu Münster, 1999.

Martini, Wolfgang. *Tonfilmtechnik in Frage und Antwort. Mit 23 Abbildungen und 76 Zeichnungen*. Bücherei des Kinematographen, vol. IV. Berlin: Verlag Scherl, 1933.

Mayr, Brigitte. "Budapester Charme und Wiener Ambiente: Der Musikfilm im Exil in Österreich und Ungarn 1933-1938." In *Als die Filme singen lernten. Innovation und Tradition im Musikfilm 1928-1938*. Edited by Malte Hagener and Jan Hans, 166-178, Munich: edition text + kritik, 1999.

Mazey, Paul. *British film music: musical traditions in British cinema, 1930s-1950s*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020.

McCracken, Allison. *Real men don't sing: crooning in American Culture*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2015.

McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media: the extensions of man*. London: Routledge, 1964.

Meinel, Walter. *Hilfsbuch für die Prüfung des Kinovorführers in Frage und Antwort*. Berlin: Scherl, 1925.

Meyrowitz, Joshua. *No Sense of Place: the Impact of Electronic Media on Social Behavior*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Middleton, Richard. *Studying popular music*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1990.

Miège, Bernard. "Les logiques à l'œuvre dans les nouvelles industries culturelles." *Cahiers de Recherche Sociologique* 4, no. 2 (1986): 93-110.

Moon, Krystin E. *Yellowface: Creating the Chinese in American Popular Music and Performance, 1850s-1920s*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2005.

Moreck, Curt. *Führer durch das lasterhafte Berlin*. Leipzig: Verlag Moderner Stadtführer, 1931.

Mühl-Benninghaus. Wolfgang, *Das Ringen um den Tonfilm: Strategien der Elektro- und Filmindustrie in den 20er und 30er Jahren*. Düsseldorf: Droste, 1999.

Müller, Corinna. *Vom Stummfilm zum Tonfilm*. Munich: Fink, 2003.

Müller, Robert. "Epilog. Die Tonfilmoperette nach 1933 in Deutschland und im Exil." In *Wenn ich sonntags in mein Kino geh'. Ton – Film – Musik, 1929-1933*. Edited by Rainer Rother and Peter Mänz, 134-149, Berlin: Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek/Kettler, 2007.

Mundy, John. *The British musical film*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007.

Negus, Keith. *Music Genres and Corporate Cultures*. London, New York: Routledge, 1999.

Nettelmann, Georg. “Der Kapellmeister.” In *Das goldene Buch des Kapellmeisters: ein fachpraktischer Führer durch das Gesamtgebiet der Unterhaltungsmusik*. Edited by Georg Maria von Coellen, 187, Düsseldorf: Verlag des “Artist”, 1931.

Nicholls, Brett. “Mediation.” In *Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*. Edited by George Ritzer. Blackwell Publishing 2007. Blackwell Reference Online, https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405165518.wbeosm072.pub2. Last accessed on 7.01.2023, 2:06 pm.

O’Brien, Charles. *Cinema’s Conversion to Sound: Technology and Film Style in France and the U.S.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005.

Ouzounian, Gascia. *Stereophonica: sound and space in science, technology and the arts.* Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2020.

Parakilas, James. “How Spain got a Soul.” In *The Exotic in Western Music*. Edited by Jonathan Bellman, 137-193, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998.

Partsch, Cornelius. *Schräge Töne: Jazz- und Unterhaltungsmusik in der Kultur der Weimarer Republik.* Stuttgart: Metzler, 2000.

Pasdzierny, Matthias. *Wiederaufnahme? Rückkehr aus dem Exil und das westdeutsche Musikleben nach 1945*. Munich: edition text + kritik, 2014.

Paysan, Marko H. “Großstadtlichter. Die Geburt der Tonfilmoperette aus dem Geist des Boulevards.” In *Wenn ich sonntags in mein Kino geh‘. Ton – Film – Musik, 1929-1933*. Edited by Rainer Rother and Peter Mänz, 80-105, Berlin: Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek/Kettler, 2007.

Pennington, Stephen. “Reading Uncle Bumba and the Rumba: The Comedian Harmonists and Transnational Youth Culture at the End of the Weimar Republic.” *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, no. 140 (2015): 371-416.

Peterson, Richard A. “Five Constraints on the Production of Culture: Law, Technology, Market, Organizational Structure and Occupational Careers.” *Journal of Popular Culture* 16, no. 2 (1982): 143-153.

Peukert, Detlev. *The Weimar Republic: the crisis of classical modernity*. London: Penguin, 1993.

Phelan, Peggy. *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance*. London: Routledge, 1993.

Piekut, Benjamin. “Actor-Networks in Music History: Clarification and Critiques” *Twentieth-Century Music* 11, no. 2 (2014): 191-215.

Pinch, Trevor J. and Bijker, Wiebe E. “The Social Construction of Facts and Artefacts: Or How the Sociology of Science and the Sociology of Technology might benefit each other.” *Social Studies of Science* 14, no. 3 (1984): 399-441.

Pitts, Michael and Hoffmann, Frank. *The Rise of the Crooners*. Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2002.

Plebuch, Tobias. “Zeitarbeit. Das Zusammenspiel von Maschinen und Musik in der Entwicklung von Tonfilmtechniken.” In *Spiel (mit) der Maschine. Musikalische Medienpraxis in der Frühzeit von Phonographie, Selbstspielklavier, Film und Radio*. Edited by Marion Saxer, 177-210, Bielefeld: transcript-Verlag, 2016.

Pohle, Heinz. *Der Rundfunk als Instrument der Politik: zur Geschichte des deutschen Rundfunks von 1923/1938.* Hamburg: Verlag Hans-Bredow-Institut, 1955.

Porter, Larraine. “The Talkies Come to Britain: British Silent Cinema and the Transition to Sound, 1928-1930.” In *The Routledge Companion to British Cinema History*. Edited by Ian Hunter, Larraine Porter and Justin Smith, 87-98, New York: Routledge, 2017.

Potter, Pamela M. *Most German of the arts: musicology and society from the Weimar Republic to the end of Hitler’s Reich*. New Haven, Ct.: Yale University Press, 1998.

Prietzel, Amadeus. *Wissenschaftliche Erforschung und Durchleuchtung des Musikerberufes: eine Aufklärungsschrift zur Beurteilung der Verhältnisse im Musikerberuf*. Sonderdruck aus der Deutschen Musiker-Zeitung. Berlin: Verlag des Deutschen Musiker-Verbandes Berlin, 1926.

Prokasky, Judith. “Die späte Weimarer Republik im Spiegel der Tonfilmoperette.” In *Wenn ich sonntags in mein Kino geh’. Ton – Film – Musik, 1929-1933*. Edited by Rainer Rother and Peter Mänz, 58-79, Berlin: Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek/Kettler, 2007.

Prokasky, Judith. “‘Wes Brot ich ess, des Lied ich sing… Nachspiele und Neuanfänge der deutschen Musikkomödie nach 1945.” *film-dienst*, no. 25 (2013): 30-33.

Reed, Susan A. “The Politics and Poetics of Dance.” *Annual Review of Anthropology 27*, no. 1 (1998): 503-32.

Rentschler, Eric. “The Use and Abuse of Memory: New German Film and the Discourse of Bitburg,” *New German Critique* 36, no. 36 (1985): 67-90.

Riess, Gustav. “Der Kapellmeister.” In *Das goldene Buch des Kapellmeisters: ein fachpraktischer Führer durch das Gesamtgebiet der Unterhaltungsmusik*. Edited by Georg Maria von Coellen, 188-189, Düsseldorf: Verlag des “Artist”, 1931.

Ritzel, Fred. "'Hätte der Kaiser Jazz getanzt…' US-Tanzmusik in Deutschland vor und nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg." In *'Ich will aber gerade vom Leben singen' – Über populäre Musik vom ausgehenden 19. Jahrhundert bis zum Ende der Weimarer Republik*. Edited by Sabine Schutte. Hamburg: Rowohlt Verlag, 1987.

Ritzel, Fred. "Vom Paradies ein gold'ner Schein – Schlagerrepräsentationen im Tonfilm der Weimarer Republik." In *Beiträge zur Popularmusikforschung*, no. 15 (1995): 157-180.

Rogowski, Christian. "Strange Bedfellows: The Politics of Sound in Ludwig Berger's 'Ich bei Tag und Du bei Nacht' (1932)." *Colloquia Germanica* 44, no. 3 (2011): 331-348.

Rose, Joseph. "Der Geiger-Kapellmeister als Solist." In *Das goldene Buch des Kapellmeisters: ein fachpraktischer Führer durch das Gesamtgebiet der Unterhaltungsmusik*. Edited by Georg Maria von Coellen, 38-41, Düsseldorf: Verlag des "Artist", 1931.

Ross, Corey. "Mass Culture and Divided Audiences: Cinema and Social Change in Interwar- Germany." *Past & Present* 193, no. 1 (2006): 157-195.

Ross, Corey. *Media and the Making of Modern Germany: mass communication, society, and politics from the Empire to the Third Reich*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Saekel, Ursula. *Der US-Film in der Weimarer Republik – ein Medium der 'Amerikanisierung'? Deutsche Filmwirtschaft, Kulturpolitik und mediale Globalisierung im Fokus transatlantischer Interessen*. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2011.

Sanden, Paul. *Liveness in modern music: musicians, technology, and the perception of performance*. New York: Routledge, 2013.

Saunders, Thomas. *Hollywood in Berlin: American cinema and Weimar Germany*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.

Saunders, Thomas, "Reluctant Skeptic: Siegfried Kracauer and the Crises of Weimar Culture." *German History* 36, no. 1 (2018): 124-125.

Silverstone, Roger. *Media, technology and everyday life in Europe, from information to communication*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005.

Scharnke, Reinhold. *Wir schalten um!: ein Roman vom Rundfunk*. Berlin: Schildhorn Verlag, 1935.

Schäfer, Hans D. *Das gespaltene Bewußtsein: Über deutsche Kultur und Lebenswirklichkeit 1933-1945*. Berlin: Ullstein, 1984.

Schäfer, Erich. "Der Markt in Zahlen. Die soziale Gliederung der deutschen Rundfunkhörer." *Die deutsche Werbung*, no. 28 (1935): 1566-1568.

Schär, Christian. *Der Schlager und seine Tänze im Deutschland der 20er Jahre. Sozialgeschichtliche Aspekte zum Wandel in der Musik- und Tanzkultur während der Weimarer Republik*. Zurich: Chronos Verlag, 1991.

Scholz, Oldrik. *Der Schlager im Ufa-Film 1933–1945: Einsatz und Inszenierung*. Uelvesbüll: Der Andere Verlag, 2011.

Schottky, Walter. "Band membrane for band loudspeakers or band microphones." *Patent application DE434855C*. Issued on 1.10.1926, https://patents.google.com/patent/DE434855C/en. Last accessed on 10.1.2023, 1:40 pm.

Schröder, Heribert. *Tanz- und Unterhaltungsmusik in Deutschland 1918-1933*. Bonn: Verlag für systematische Musikwissenschaft, 1990.

Schulte-Sasse, Linda. *Entertaining the Third Reich: illusions of wholeness in Nazi cinema*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1996.

Schulz, Daniela. *Wenn die Musik spielt… Der deutsche Schlagerfilm der 1950er bis 1970er Jahre*. Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2012.

Schulz, Winfried. "Recontructing Mediatization as an Analytical Concept." In *European Journal of Communication*, no. 19 (2014): 87-101.

Schweinitz, Jörg. "'Wie im Kino.' Die autothematische Welle im frühen Tonfilm. Figurationen des Selbstreflexiven." In *Diesseits der 'Dämonischen Leinwand'*. Edited by Thomas Koebner, Norbert Grob and Bernhard Kiefer, 372-93, Munich: edition text + kritik, 2003.

Silverstone, Roger. *Media, technology and everyday life in Europe, from information to Communication*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005.

Skaupy, Franz. *Die Grundlagen des Tonfilms*. Berlin: Union, 1932.

Spengler, Oswald. *Der Untergang des Abendlandes: Umrisse einer Morphologie der Weltgeschichte*. Munich: Beck, 1981.

Spieker, Markus. *Hollywood unterm Hakenkreuz. Der amerikanische Spielfilm im Dritten Reich*. Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 1999.

Spiker, Jürgen. *Film und Kapital: der Weg der deutschen Filmwirtschaft zum nationalsozialistischen Einheitskonzern.* Berlin: Spiess, 1975.

Stapper, Michael. *Unterhaltungsmusik im Rundfunk der Weimarer Republik*. Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 2001.

Statistik des Deutschen Reiches. *Die Lebenshaltung von 2.000 Arbeiter-, Angestellten- und Beamtenhaushaltungen*, vol. 1. Berlin: Hobbing, 1932.

Stauder, Wilhelm. "Tanzmusik." In *Hohe Schule der Musik. Handbuch der gesamten Musizierpraxis*. Edited by Josef Müller-Blattau, 271-291, Potsdam: Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft Athenaion, 1938.

Sterne, Jonathan. *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.

Stindt, Georg Otto and Zucker, Paul. *Lichtspielhäuser, Tonfilmtheater*. Berlin: Wasmuth, 1931.

Storey, John. *Cultural Studies and the Study of Popular Culture*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2022.

Straw, Will. "Systems of Articulation, Logics of Change: Communities and Scenes in Popular Music." *Cultural Studies* 5, no. 3 (1991): 368-388.

Sturtevant, Victoria. "Spitfire: Lupe Velez and the Ambivalent Pleasures of Ethnic Masquerade." *The Velvet Light Trap*, no. 55 (2005): 19-32.

Suhr, Heidrun and Haxthausen, Charles W. (eds.). *Berlin: culture and metropolis*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990.

Suisman, David. *Selling Sounds: The Commercial Revolution in American Music*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2021.

Taylor, Timothy. *Strange sounds: the commercial revolution in American Music*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001.

Taylor, Timothy. *The Sounds of Capitalism: advertising, music, and the conquest of culture*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2012.

Thiel, Wolfgang. "Alt-Wien auf Berlinisch? Anmerkungen zur Tonfilmoperette ‚Der Kongreß tanzt' (1931)." In *Wien – Berlin: Stationen einer kulturellen Beziehung*. Edited by Hartmut Grimm, 170-177*,* Saarbrücken: Pfau, 2000.

Thompson, Emily A. *The Soundscape of Modernity: Architectural Acoustics and the Culture of Listening in America, 1900-1933*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002.

Tomaszwski-Tomsen, Julian. "Tanzkapellmeister." In *Das goldene Buch des Kapellmeisters: ein fachpraktischer Führer durch das Gesamtgebiet der Unterhaltungsmusik*. Edited by Georg Maria von Coellen, 192-93, Düsseldorf: Verlag des "Artist", 1931.

Tonfilm-Anlagen in Europa: 100% Tonfilm. Klangfilm Tobis System. Berlin: Tobis, 1931.

Tosoni, Simone and Pinch, Trevor (eds.). *Entanglements: conversations on the human traces of science, technology, and sound*. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2017.

Tsing, Anna. "Worlding the Matsutake Diaspora. Or, Can Actor-Network Theory Experiment with Holism?" In *Experiments in Holism: Theory and Practice in Contemporary Anthropology*. Edited by Ton Otto and Nils Bubandt, 1-11, Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

Türschmann, Jörg. “Nationale und internationale Kommerzialisierung von Schlager und Revue im Film der zwanziger und dreißiger Jahre: zur Aporie produktorientierter historischer Rezeptionsforschung.” In *Nebensache Musik. Beiträge zur Musik in Film und Fernsehen*. Edited by Jan Neubauer and Silke Wenzel, 33-46, Hamburg: von Bockel, 2001.

Universum-Film AG. *Ufa-Magazin: illustrierte Filmrundschau*. Berlin: Bukwa, 1926.

Uhlenbrok, Katja (ed.). *MusikSpektakelFilm: Musiktheater und Tanzkultur im deutschen Film 1922-1937.* Ein CineGraph-Buch. Munich: Edition Text + Kritik, 1998.

Umbehr, Heinz. *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis seiner Aufnahme, Bearbeitung und Vorführung.* Berlin: Lichtbildbühne, 1932.

Umbehr, Heinz. *Der Tonfilm: Grundlagen und Praxis seiner Aufnahme und Wiedergabe*. Berlin: Verlag der Lichtbildbühne, 1930.

Volgsten, Ulrik. “Mediatization of music, musicalization of everyday life. New Ways of listening to recorded sound in Sweden during the interwar years, 1919-1939.” In *Phonographic Encounters. Mapping Transnational Cultures of Sound, 1890-1945*. Edited by Elodie A. Roy and Eva Moreda Rodríguez. Milton: Taylor and Francis, 2021, https://directory.doabooks.org/handle/20.500.12854/91607. Last accessed on 22.12.2022, 7:45 pm.

von Ervogy. “Etwas über Fachkritik.” In *Das goldene Buch des Kapellmeisters: ein fachpraktischer Führer durch das Gesamtgebiet der Unterhaltungsmusik*. Edited by Georg Maria von Coellen, 71-72, Düsseldorf: Verlag des “Artist”, 1931.

von Werder, Peter. *Trugbild und Wirklichkeit im Film. Aufgaben des Films im Umbruch der Zeit*. Leipzig: Schwarzhäupter Verlag, 1943.

Wahl, Chris. *Sprachversionsfilme aus Babelsberg. Die internationale Strategie der Ufa 1929-1939*. Munich: edition text + kritik, 2008.

Walk, Cynthia. “Cross-Media Exchange in Weimar Culture: Von morgens bis mitternachts.” *Monatshefte* 99, no. 2 (2007): 177-193.

Weber, Marek. “Salon- und Jazzmusik.” *Anbruch, Monatsschrift für Moderne Musik*, no. 3 (1929).

Wedel, Michael. *Der deutsche Musikfilm: Archäologie eines Genres 1914-1945*. Munich: edition text + kritik, 2007.

Wedel, Michael. “Die Tonfilmoperette. Zugpferd des Tonfilms.” In *Wenn ich sonntags in mein Kino geh‘. Ton – Film – Musik, 1929-1933*. Edited by Rainer Rother and Peter Mänz, 34-57, Berlin: Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek/Kettler, 2007.

Wedel, Michael. “Musikfilm und Musiktheater. Zur Intermedialität der Tonfilm-Operette am Beispiel von ‘Die Drei von der Tankstelle’.” In *Blickpunkt Bühne. Musiktheater in Deutschland von 1900 bis 1950*. Edited by Thomas Steiert and Paul Op de Coul, 197-238, Cologne: Verlag Dohr, 2014.

Weist, Walter. “König der Refrainsänger – Leo Monosson.” *Fox auf 78*, no. 26 (2011): 4-13.

Weist, Walter. “König der Refrainsänger – Leo Monosson.” *Fox auf 78*, no. 27 (2013): 89-97.

Weist, Walter. *Leo Monosson. Der König der Refrainsänger. Versuch einer Bio-Discographie*. Berlin: unpublished, 2010.

Weninger, Leopold. “Der ‘Bearbeiter’ im Wandel der Zeiten.” In *Das goldene Buch des Kapellmeisters: ein fachpraktischer Führer durch das Gesamtgebiet der Unterhaltungsmusik*. Edited by Georg Maria von Coellen, 24-25, Düsseldorf: Verlag des “Artist”, 1931.

Wicke, Peter. “Schlager.” In *Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*. Edited by Ludwig Finscher, 1063-1070, Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1994.

Wiemers, Judith. *‘Das ist die Broadway Melodie’: American Cultural Motifs in German Music Film, 1929-1945*. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2021.

Wilke, Jürgen. *Von der frühen Zeit zur Medialisierung*. Bremen: Edition Lumière, 2011.

Willms, Weertje. “‘Hinreißende, bezaubernde Marika’. Die bemerkenswerte Rezeption des Films Die Frau meiner Träume mit Marika Rökk in der Sowjetunion nach 1945.” *Das Wort. Germanistisches Jahrbuch Russland*, no. 1 (2012/2013): 121-134.

Wipplinger, Jonathan O. *The Jazz Republic: Music, Race and American Culture in Weimar Germany*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017.

Witte, Karsten. “Gehemmte Schaulust. Momente des deutschen Revuefilms.” In *Wir tanzen um die Welt: Deutsche Revuefilme 1933-1945*. Edited by Helga Belach, 7-52, Munich: Hanser, 1979.

Worbs, Hans-Christoph. *Der Schlager. Bestandsaufnahme, Analyse, Dokumentation; ein Leitfaden.* Bremen: Schünemann, 1963.

Wulff, Hans J. “Medialisierung der Musik und Medienkritik im Schlagerfilm der 1950er Jahre.” In *Populäre Musikkulturem im Film. Inter- und transdisziplinäre Perspektiven*. Edited by Carsten Heinze and Laura Niebling, 291-308, Wiesbaden: Springer, 2016.

Wulff, Hans J. *Musik gehört dazu: der österreichisch-deutsche Schlagerfilm 1950-1965*. Münster, New York: Waxmann, 2019.

Wurtzler, Steve. *Electric Sounds: Technological Change and the Rise of Corporate Mass Media*. Film and Culture Series. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007.

Zehn Jahre Klangfilm: 1928-1938. Berlin: Klangfilm, 1938.

Zielinski, Siegfried. *Audiovisions: Cinema and Television as Entr'actes in History*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1999.

Zielinski, Siegfried and Custance, Gloria. *Deep Time of the Media: Toward an Archaeology of Hearing and Seeing by Technical Means*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, 2006.

Zolberg, Vera L. *Constructing a Sociology of the Arts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.