



PRESS RELEASE

March 8, 2017

“Lights, camera, action!” On location in Potsdam Discover 100 years of movie history in the birth place of German cinema

Potsdam is the cradle of German cinema. The pictures first started moving in Potsdam Babelsberg in 1911. Only one year later, the silent movie “Der Totentanz” (The Dance to Death) was produced here. Since then, more than 3000 pictures have been made in Babelsberg. Marlene Dietrich, Greta Garbo and Heinz Rühmann stood in front of the camera here and began their journey to fame and fortune. Fritz Lang made movie history with “Metropolis”, now a part of UNESCO’s audiovisual world heritage. With a wealth of events, exhibitions and guided tours, Potsdam gives its visitors a chance to immerse themselves in the world of the moving image, both past and present.

The birth place of German cinema – movie history in the Filmmuseum Potsdam

In 2012, the film studio Babelsberg celebrated its 100th birthday. The birth place of German cinema, Potsdam still remains a buzzing cinema metropolis. Over 3000 movies have been made in Babelsberg film studio by the biggest film producers of their time (including Bioscop, Ufa and DEFA). In all this time, the film factory has been the manufacturer of both dreams and political propaganda. It survived five political systems from German empire to globalisation and was deeply affected by both the Third Reich and the DDR.

A visit to the Film Museum’s exhibition “Dream factory – 100 years of movie history in Babelsberg” promises an intimate experience of cinematic history with a true treasure trove of original exhibits. Apart from its permanent exhibition on the origin of film, this season the museum tempts with its programme of special exhibitions, while its own cinema offers a programme of themed films for children and adults, including silent films accompanied on the museum’s original cinema organ.

Film and media are daily life in Babelsberg

Steeped in movie history, Babelsberg’s film studios have now become a modern media and high tech centre. In 20 studios and workshops, as well as on 156,000 square metres of exterior sets, cinema and television are produced every day. German and international films, award-winning in Berlin, Cannes and Hollywood, have all been filmed here. These include



blockbusters such as “The Reader” with Kate Winslet and Ralph Fiennes and “Valkyrie” with Tom Cruise. Some of the world’s best known movie directors have worked here, among these Volker Schlöndorff, Roman Polanski, Tom Tykwer and Roland Emmerich, as well as Quentin Tarantino with “Inglourious Basterds“. Visitors can take studio tours to see parts of Babelberg’s media city not normally accessible to the public.

A touch of cinematic flair can also be felt in Potsdam’s city centre, as movies were made not just in the city’s film studios but also in Potsdam itself. As the “Alte Fritz”, Otto Gebühr strolls through the gardens of Sanssouci, Matt Damon is chased through the city in “The Bourne Supremacy”, and Tom Cruise portrays Claus von Stauffenberg, chief actor of the Hitler assassination plot, in Potsdam’s Löwenvilla, while Tom Hanks trades Cold War agents across the “Bridge of Spies” in the 2015 Oscar-winning Spielberg movie of the same name. Even Potsdam’s famous Dutch Quarter was transformed into a film set in 2016, as it played host to Claire Danes and the crew of the multi-award winning US TV series “Homeland“.

“Sehnsüchte“ – International Film Festival for budding filmmakers

The media city’s most impressive symbol of cinema’s future is the Konrad Wolf Film University, Babelsberg. Each year, its futuristic building plays host to the big International Student Film Festival “Sehnsüchte”, this year from April 26 to May 1. Under the theme “Surfaces“, the best new talent in the industry will present their latest works to the public, as well as to a jury of experts, which will give out 10 different awards. The festival attracts around 7,000 visitors each year. Selected cinemas and the entire Sehnsüchte-Campus offer exciting events, workshops, panel discussions and guided tours through the film university and film studios. A highlight not only for film experts of all generations, but also for amateur enthusiasts.

Stuntshows and action cinema at the Filmpark Babelsberg

Today’s media city, once Europe’s largest film location, is also the home of Filmpark Babelsberg’s multimedia experience, which attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. Here, in an arena in the shape of an extinct volcano, Babelsberg’s stunt crew presents high octane shows, featuring car crashes, high speed car chases or vertigo-inducing falls. A further attraction is “Dreamworkers“, where visitors can take a tour of the studio’s workshops and meet the people behind the scenes who create true movie magic. Visitors can experience the cutting edge of movie technology in the park’s 4D cinema. The original movie set of “Boomer – the Submarine” offers a simulated trip on a Russian submarine. All those who have ever wanted to be a news reporter or weather man can indulge their dream in the interactive



experience of TV studio 1. The tricks of the trade are revealed in the Western Street and the Medieval town, both used many times as the backdrop for cinema productions. In June, children and those young at heart will be enchanted, when Grimm's fairy tales are brought to life at the children's party special event. In October, Horror Nights will send a shiver down the spines of Halloween fans and horror aficionados. Just next door to the Film Park, the Metropolis Hall offers 3000 square metres of floor space for shows and TV events.

Guided tour "Babelsberg – Filmstars, villas and a glimpse of world history"

Stars and starlets once lived close to Babelsberg's film studios in opulent villas by the shores of the Griebnitzsee. The city tour "Babelsberg – Filmstars, villas and a glimpse of world history" gossips about those UFA legends and tells stories of the famous villa quarter of Neu-Babelsberg. The 3-hour tour runs every first and third Sunday of the month from April to October 2017.

Details of guided tours, walks and sightseeing tours can be found on the tourism website of the city of Potsdam.

Find further information at: www.filmpark-babelsberg.de, www.metropolis-halle.de, www.filmmuseum-potsdam.de.

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