

PRESS RELEASE

UFA Film Nights in Berlin: Showtime for Silent-Film Classics From Early Hollywood

- **Sold-out opening of the 2026 UFA Film Nights featuring Ernst Lubitsch's Oscar Wilde adaptation "Lady Windermere's Fan"**
- **Bertelsmann welcomes more than 300 guests from society and culture to a reception at Bertelsmann Unter den Linden 1**
- **Thomas Rabe: "Preserving cultural heritage and making history visible is a priority for Bertelsmann. That is what the UFA Film Nights are all about."**

Berlin, August 27, 2026 – The 15th UFA Film Nights in Berlin opened to a sell-out audience last night with Ernst Lubitsch's made-in-Hollywood comedy of manners "Lady Windermere's Fan" (*"Lady Windermere's Fächer"*). Around 1,000 people gathered in the Colonnade Courtyard on Museum Island for the silent film, which earned high praise when it premiered in 1925. The screening was accompanied by the all-female ensemble The Roaring Dames, led by Luiza Labouriau, performing a new score by Tobias Schwencke.

Before the screening on Museum Island, Thomas Rabe, CEO of Bertelsmann, welcomed around 300 guests to the rooftop terrace of Bertelsmann Unter den Linden 1. He said: "Preserving cultural heritage, making history visible, and making it accessible to a broad audience is a key priority for Bertelsmann. That is what the UFA Film Nights are all about – and they continue to evolve from year to year. This year, for the first time, our spotlight is on Hollywood. We present three masterpieces by German directors who went to the United States in the 1920s and went on to achieve major artistic and commercial success there."

Numerous prominent actors, cultural figures, as well as representatives from politics and public life attended the summer reception. Among them were this year's patron of the UFA Film Nights, choreographer, dancer, and actress Nikeata Thompson, as well as actors Katja Riemann, Sönke Möhring, Inka Friedrich, Gisa Flake, Knud Riepen, Jeanette Hain, Jaeckie Schwarz, Dominic Raacke, Maximilian von Pufendorf, Adriana Altaras, Suri Abbassi, Ercan Durmaz, Tom Keune, Shaolyn Fernandez, Saro Emirze, Carlotta Bähre, Daniel Steiner, Marc Dumitru, and Anton Dreger; and lawyers and TV actors Ingo Lenßen and Lennart Hartmann. Also in attendance at the opening of the UFA Film Nights 2026 were Prof. Dr. Marion Ackermann, President of the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation; artist Christiane Kubisch; Çağla İlk, Artistic Director of the Gorki Theater; Dr. Aviel Cahn, Artistic Director of the Deutsche Oper; Dr. Susanne Pfab, Secretary General of ARD; and film producer Wolf Bauer.

Photos from last night are available at www.bertelsmann.com/ufafilmnights.

The UFA Film Nights continue today with Paul Leni's "The Cat and the Canary" ("*Spuk im Schloss*") from 1927, shot at the legendary Universal Studios of German-Jewish Hollywood pioneer Carl Laemmle. Ensemble Spooky Tune, conducted by George Morton and featuring Carolina Eyck on theremin, will perform a score by Neil Brand commissioned by Photoplay Productions for Channel 4.

The UFA Film Nights conclude tomorrow with Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau's 1927 Hollywood debut, "Sunrise" ("*Sonnenaufgang*") – a film still widely regarded as his undisputed masterpiece. The melodrama, based on a novella by Hermann Sudermann, won three Academy Awards. The screening will be accompanied by Ekkehard Wölk & The Silent Light Orchestra.

A limited number of tickets are still available at the box office for tonight - the performance of "Sunrise" is sold out.

The UFA Film Nights 2026 program at a glance:

Wednesday, August 26, 2026 – Film starts at 9:00 p.m.

"Lady Windermere's Fan" ("*Lady Windermere's Fächer*," 1925)

Director: Ernst Lubitsch (based on Oscar Wilde)

Cast: Irene Rich, May McAvoy, Bert Lytel

Production: Warner Bros.

Runtime: 82 min.

Music: World premiere of a new score by Tobias Schwencke, performed by The Roaring Dames under the direction of Luiza Labouriau

Thursday, August 27, 2026 – Film starts at 9:00 p.m.

"The Cat and the Canary" ("*Spuk im Schloss*," 1927)

Director: Paul Leni

Cast: Laura La Plante, Creighton Hale, Tully Marshall

Production: Universal Pictures

Runtime: 108 min.

Music: Ensemble Spooky Tune, conducted by George Morton and featuring Carolina Eyck on theremin, performs a score by Neil Brand

Friday, August 28, 2026 – Film starts at 9:00 p.m.

"Sunrise" ("*Sonnenaufgang*," 1927)

Director: Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau

Cast: George O'Brien, Janet Gaynor, Margaret Livingston

Production: Fox Film Corporation

Runtime: 106 min.

Music: Ekkehard Wölk & The Silent Light Orchestra

The UFA Film Nights are presented by Bertelsmann in cooperation with UFA. Partners include the Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau Foundation, the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation, and Velomax. Ströer, Yorck Kinogruppe, radio3, and Maz&Movie are media partners.

As a creative content company with a history spanning more than 190 years, Bertelsmann engages in cultural activities on multiple levels – both nationally and internationally. The focus of its Culture@Bertelsmann initiatives is to support cultural diversity and preserve important cultural heritage. Bertelsmann has been organizing the successful UFA Film Nights silent-film festival in Berlin for many years and has repeatedly served as the principal sponsor of digital restorations of significant silent-era films. The Group also owns the Archivio Storico Ricordi in Milan, which holds a rich collection of unique materials documenting 200 years of Italian opera history. Bertelsmann is cataloguing and digitizing the archive according to the latest standards, making thousands of documents, stage and costume designs, libretti, and pieces of business correspondence freely available online. For more than 20 years, Bertelsmann has also provided authors with a prominent platform for presenting their latest works through its literary series “The Blue Sofa.” The Culture@Bertelsmann initiative is dedicated to making culture accessible to a broad audience.

About Bertelsmann:

Bertelsmann is a media, services, and education company with more than 75,000 employees that operates in some 50 countries around the world. It includes the entertainment group RTL Group, the trade book publisher Penguin Random House, the music company BMG, the service provider Arvato Group, Bertelsmann Marketing Services, the Bertelsmann Education Group, and Bertelsmann Investments. The company generated revenues of €19 billion in the 2025 financial year. Bertelsmann stands for creativity and entrepreneurship. This combination promotes first-class media content and innovative service solutions that inspire customers around the world.

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