



PREFACE

The quintessential classic of Weimar cinema, *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* was the first film to break with the naturalism inherent in the medium in favor of the artistic freedom typified by Expressionist painting. Though originally a marketing gimmick, the artificiality of the sets and exaggerated acting style shocked the film world. It influenced the European avant-garde and American film noir. *Caligari* has resonated with each generation in new ways. With the advent of digital technology, Weimar classics like *Caligari* circulate freely online; they can be viewed, reworked, and used as material for new creations at any time. Today, it may no longer be enough to ask what a film means, but what people do with it.

CREDITS

For *Caligari's* full credits in English with hyperlinks to director, actors, etc., click [here](#) and select ALL CREDITS and VERSIONS.

For its film-historical context, consult Hans Helmut Prinzler's *The Chronicle of German Film (1918-1933)* [here](#).





Caligari opened at the illustrious Marmorhaus Theater (on the right)



Dr. Caligari's Cabinet as a fairground booth and quasi-movie theater

RESTORATION

May 28, 2015

"Caligari" Restoration Wins at FOCAL Awards.

The restoration of "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" has been honored at the FOCAL International Awards. The digital version, celebrated at the Berlinale in 2014, won in the "Best Archive Restoration" category.

Fritz Lang's "M" by TELEFilms Film Restoration & Preservation Services (Germany) and "The Color of Pomegranates" (Sayat Nova, 1946) by The Film Foundation / L'Immagine Ritrovata (USA/Italy) were also nominated there.

"We are especially pleased to receive this coveted honor at the FOCAL International Awards by professionals. It is a recognition for all those who have contributed to the digital restoration and made it possible for this classic to be available again in the best possible quality. For this, my thanks to our team and all our partners," says Ernst Szebedits, Chairman of the Murnau Foundation.

For the restoration, the Murnau Foundation collaborated with the Bundesarchiv-Filmarchiv in Berlin and other archives. L'Immagine Ritrovata - Film Restoration & Conservation in Bologna was commissioned with the technical implementation. Scanning, digital image restoration and mastering in 4K resolution took place there. In addition to Bertelsmann as the main sponsor, the VGF Verwertungsgesellschaft für Nutzungsrechte an Filmwerken mbH and the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media also supported the project. The FOCAL International Awards honored the use, restoration and accessibility of archived films and materials in 17 categories. There were 265 entries from 24 countries for the 12th FOCAL International Awards. The awards ceremony was held in London on May 21.

Available in stores are the new DVD or Blu-ray editions of "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" from Universum Home Entertainment.

On the restoration of "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari"

The restoration, led by Anke Wilkening, spanned from April 2012 to January 2014. For this purpose, the Murnau Foundation brought together for the first time all available film sources, specifically materials from national archives (Bundesarchiv-Filmarchiv in Berlin, Deutsche Kinemathek - Museum für Film und Fernsehen in Berlin and Filmmuseum Düsseldorf) as well as international archives (Archivo Nacional de la Imagen-SODRE, Montevideo; Cineteca di Bologna; British Film Institute, London; Cinémathèque française, Paris; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Cinémathèque Royale de Belge, Brussels; Fondazione Cineteca di Milano). The materials were analyzed and compared in Wiesbaden. L'Immagine Ritrovata - Film Restoration & Conservation in Bologna was commissioned with the technical implementation. There, scanning, digital image restoration and mastering in 4K resolution took place.

The restored version celebrated its world premiere at the Berlinale on February 12, 2014, in cooperation with the Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau Foundation, the Berlin International Film Festival, the Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek, the Stiftung Berliner Philharmoniker and ZDF in collaboration with ARTE and Zeleven | | contemporary music projects.

About the film

"The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" was shot by Decla-Film-Gesellschaft Holz & Co., which was taken over by the then Universum Film (Ufa) in 1922. Filming, the exact dates of which have not survived, probably took place from September 1919 at the Lixie studio in Berlin-Weissensee.

The film tells the story of the sinister Dr. Caligari (Werner Krauß), who puts a prophesying sleepwalker named Cesare (Conrad Veidt) on display at the Holstenwall fair. The latter predicts death to an inquisitive visitor and indeed Alan (Hans-H. v. Twardowski) is murdered at night. Francis (Friedrich Fehér), his best friend and rival for the beautiful Jane (Lil Dagover), suspects Caligari and Cesare and starts investigating on his own.

More unsolved murders occur, and finally Jane is to be killed by Cesare at Caligari's behest. A chase ensues, during which Cesare collapses, Jane is rescued and Dr. Caligari flees to an insane asylum. There, his pursuer Francis must discover that Dr. Caligari is the director of the asylum. Apparently, the latter,

inspired by a mystical case from the 18th century, went mad himself in an effort to impose his will on a sleepwalker. Eventually, Caligari is put in a straitjacket.

But the film does not end with this narrated internal plot. For in the frame story, Francis, the narrator, returns to the insane asylum, where he encounters all the participants as inmates - as well as Caligari, who, as a benevolent asylum director, now claims to know the key to Francis' cure. What is true and who is insane - Caligari or Francis - is ultimately left open by the film.

Reception

Even before its premiere on February 26, 1920 in Berlin's Marmorhaus cinema, the film caused a sensation. The phrase "You must become Caligari" was widely advertised in Berlin - initially without any indication that it was about a film. The announcement that it would be the first "expressionist film" raised high expectations of artistic quality. With a few exceptions, the film met with enthusiastic press response. It was also very well received by audiences and ran for four weeks straight at the premiere theater.

Abroad, "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" also generated a great deal of attention. The film was shown in Paris, London and New York to great public acclaim. Particularly among former opponents of the First World War, which ended in 1918, the first successful film of Weimar cinema was polarizing, and the term "Caligarism" was coined to describe its novelty.

"The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" counts among the canon of film classics. Siegfried Kracauer's social psychological book "From Caligari to Hitler" (1947), which believed to recognize in films of Weimar cinema a collective longing of Germans for a tyrant, shapes the perception of the film to this day.

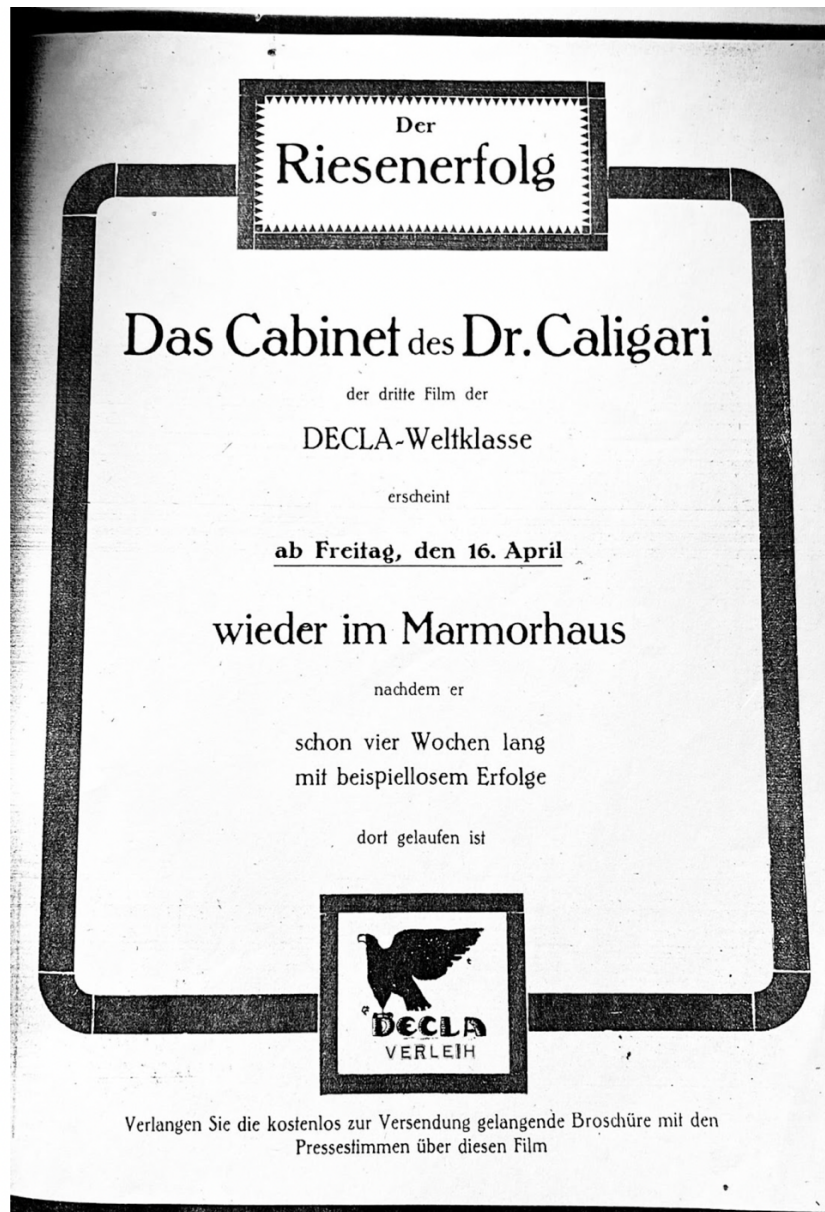
Memories and anecdotes disseminated by the film's contributors, especially the screenwriters and architects, contributed significantly to the legend surrounding "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari." Documents that surfaced later, such as the original screenplay, made it possible to deconstruct many myths.

Source: Filmportal/ www.murnau-stiftung.de

See also

- [A Classic Goes Digital](#)
- [Post-Restoration: “The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari” Shines in Digital Cinema Quality](#)
- [Friedrich-Wilhelm-Murnau Foundation](#)

For a brief Making-of a Restoration video, click [here](#). (Turn on Automatic translation)



Der
Riesenerfolg

Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari


der dritte Film der
DECLA-Weltklasse

erscheint

ab Freitag, den 16. April

wieder im Marmorhaus

nachdem er
schon vier Wochen lang
mit beispiellosem Erfolge
dort gelaufen ist


DECLA
VERLEIH

Verlangen Sie die kostenlos zur Versendung gelangende Broschüre mit den
Pressestimmen über diesen Film

HOME VIEWING



DVD/Blu-ray

For the US market, we recommend the Kino Lorber DVD or blu-ray edition, based on the award-winning 2014 restoration by the F.W. Murnau Foundation. It has optional English subtitles. Bonus materials include a booklet essay by Kristin Thompson and the documentary "Caligari: How Horror Came to the Cinema" (52 min).

STREAMING

For streaming, we recommend the above 2014 restoration from Lorber's [KINO NOW](#) or from [Kanopy](#), which requires a library card or university affiliation.