



Press information

CABARET - The Berlin-Musical

July 12 to Sept 15, 2019 / July 31 to September 27, 2020
Tue - Sat 8pm, Sun 7pm

Berlin 1930: The American writer Clifford Bradshaw comes to Berlin, a liberal and open-hearted metropolis with a fascinating artistic scene, but crisis-torn by poverty and political unrest. He lives and writes at the Nollendorfpfatz, and throws himself with the showgirl Sally Bowles into the lascivious nightlife.

Berlin 2019: In TIPI AM KANZLERAMT the legendary BAR JEDER VERNUNFT production by American star choreographer and stage director Vincent Paterson is now being shown again. The story of the happy-go-lucky dancer Sally Bowles in the glittery, seamy milieu of the Roaring Twenties in Berlin, is one that still fits in perfectly to contemporary Berlin. The musical about love, passion and desperation against the backdrop of the rise of fascism is based on the autobiographical stories in the novel *Goodbye to Berlin* by Christopher Isherwood.

The special charm of the Paterson production not only comes from the fact that the musical CABARET has returned after a triumphal tour of the world to the city of its origin, but it is also being performed in a cabaret theatre. It was in the hedonist metropolis Berlin that the British writer Christopher Isherwood (*A Single Man*) encountered the people who spent their time on the eve of the Third Reich dancing along the edges of an abyss. Many of them were to later become characters in his novel *Goodbye to Berlin*, which provided the basis for the worldwide successful show CABARET. "Willkommen, Bienvenue, Welcome", "Maybe This Time", "Bye-Bye, Mein Lieber Herr", and "Life is a Cabaret" have become international classics in music history.

Director and choreographer: Vincent Paterson

Musical director: Damian Omansen

Script by Joe Masteroff - after the play "I am a Camera" by

John van Druten and the stories by Christopher Isherwood

Music by John Kander - Song lyrics by Fred Ebb -

German texts by Robert Gilbert - Stage design: Momme Röhrbein

Production: Thimo Pommerening - Costumes: Stefanie Krimmel

More information at www.tipi-am-kanzleramt.de

Ticket hotline 030-390 665 50 or tickets@tipi-am-kanzleramt.de

Tickets incl. all fees: € 20.00 - 59.50



Vincent Paterson

The director and choreographer of CABARET

In America, choreographer and director Vincent Paterson enjoys the status of a star. After choreographing Lars von Trier's musical film "Dancer in the Dark" (Golden Palm at Cannes, 2000) and producing CABARET in Berlin, he had conquered Europe.

In 2005, he choreographed "The Grand Duchess" at the L.A. Opera under the direction of Garry Marshall. In 2006, he directed and choreographed "Manon" at the L.A. Opera, with Anna Netrebko and Rolando Villazon in the leading roles. 2007 saw his production being performed at Berlin's State Opera.

"The dance numbers are highlights" and "breath-taking choreography" were typical press reactions to the premiere of CABARET in BAR JEDER VERNUNFT. This is thanks to the direction and choreography of Vincent Paterson, who is now well-known in Europe - not only to insiders.

And yet Paterson's career in the USA began almost thirty years ago as leader of the street gang in Michael Jackson's famous video clip for "Beat It", in which he acts and dances the role of the other leader who attacks Jackson with a knife. After filming the video, he became Jackson's personal choreographer and director. With "Smooth Criminal" and "Blood on the Dancefloor", Paterson earned himself a place in the pop music hall of fame.

Madonna was also interested in him. Paterson created the scandalous "Blond Ambition" tour for her thus gaining attention in the highest circles: "Madonna goes on tour and the devil is back", is what Pope John Paul II said of the choreography.

Hollywood calls him. And his list of references reads like a Who's Who of American star directors. He has done the choreography for films like Evita (Director: Alan Parker), The Birdcage (Director: Mike Nichols), Hook (Director: Steven Spielberg) and many more, as well as choreographing the Broadway successes "Lenny" and "Kiss of the Spiderwoman".

He has directed musicals in the USA like Oklahoma, Smokey Joe's Café among others, and for the theatre production Gangsta Love, he won the DramaLogue Best Director Award.



Vincent Paterson_The Producer (2nd page)

Paterson is drawn to Europe, as he feels he has more freedom here for his artistic work. The capital cities of the world receive him with open arms and his name opens the door for any production he works on. The fact that it was Berlin he settled in has to do with the analogies he sees here to his homeland - clear parallels between today's America and the Germany of the twenties. Within this context, the offer to produce the musical CABARET in the marquee of BAR JEDER VERNUNFT was an attractive one. He was immediately drawn to the location and it let his imagination soar. He took the heterogeneous troop of television and theatre stars, young artists and old hands and brought them together to become a committed ensemble that can hardly wait to be on stage together again. "The best advertisement for Berlin there ever was", said the Tagespiegel, summarising more aptly than anyone else the reactions to Paterson's production.

Turning towards classical materials and operas gives Paterson the opportunity to build a bridge between the USA and Europe. The premiere of "The Grand Duchess" directed by Garry Marshall took place at the L.A. Opera in 2005. In 2006, Paterson was responsible for directing and choreographing "Manon" by Massenet at the L.A. Opera - with Anna Netrebko and Rolando Villazon in the leading roles. This production was also brought to Berlin State Opera in 2007. Paterson has worked several times with the Russian diva Netrebko: in 2004 he choreographed her DVD, which brought opera arias closer to a larger public, resulting in Anna Netrebko's cult status. The mixed reaction among the critics is nothing new for Paterson. Blending opera and pop is a personal goal he has achieved, with the aim of bringing opera to people who would normally not have anything to do with this type of music.

In 2010, he produced the musical "Viva Elvis" for Cirque du Soleil. Parallel to this he worked on a musical version of Duke Ellington's "Jump for Joy" as well as the stage version of Lars Von Trier's "Dancer in the Dark".

2012 saw the release of "The Man behind the Throne", a Swedish documentary about the life and work of Vincent Paterson.



The Project

The musical CABARET returns to its place of origin! In the 2004/2005 season, BAR JEDER VERNUNFT released its production of the world-famous musical in Berlin, thus dealing with material that was created and took place in the European metropolis of the "Golden Twenties" - Berlin.

If there were a "Big Five" of musical classics, CABARET would definitely be in the top league. The story surrounding nightclub singer, Sally Bowles, in the bohemian milieu of pre-War Berlin became one of New York's biggest Broadway hits in 1966 with Lotte Lenya in one of the leading roles, and went on to become a world success when it was filmed with Liza Minnelli in 1972.

Subsequent productions of this story about love in the shadow of emerging fascism proved the power of this dramatically strong work and the French premiere in Paris in the 1980s became one of the greatest triumphs in Ute Lemper's career.

CABARET wrote theatrical history, both as a stage version and as a film and, with its forceful imagery, established the historical and political Berlin worldwide as a city existing between glamour and abyss, between dream and trauma.

Only few theatre pieces have been associated so strongly with a city as CABARET is with Berlin. And, vice versa, CABARET is linked worldwide to Berlin. A stroke of luck that is only outmatched by the fact that the song "Willkommen, Bienvenue, Welcome" provided the city of Berlin with a meaningful slogan.

The production in BAR JEDER VERNUNFT brings this piece, which is based on real occurrences that took place in the late twenties, back to its roots.



Christopher Isherwood

Goodbye to Berlin, A Single Man

Christopher (William Bradshaw) Isherwood was born on 26 August 1904 as the son of an officer in Disley/Cheshire. He studied history and medicine in Cambridge and London. From 1929, with the exception of a short stay on the island of Rügen, he worked as a language teacher in Berlin until he left Germany in 1933 after the Nazis came to power. He then spent extended periods travelling in Europe and went to China with W. H. Auden in 1938.

In 1939, he finally emigrated to California where, in 1946, he was given US citizenship. From 1959 to 1962, he was visiting professor for modern English literature in Los Angeles.

Isherwood died in January 1986 in Santa Monica/California.

Christopher Isherwood's episodic novel describes the atmosphere in Berlin at the beginning of the thirties. With the book, the author created a semi-autobiographical novel that looks at and documents the political happenings and the cultural atmosphere of the capital city of the German Reich with journalistic sensitivity and seismographic precision. He portrayed a city of splendid boulevards and cafés, of night-time revellers and dreamers, of guilty pleasures and intrigues, of millionaires and the suffering masses - a panorama of Berlin on the eve of Hitler's rise to power. Like many other foreigners, he was fascinated by the liberal, open-hearted capital where, ten years after World War One, lascivious nightlife and the artistic avant-garde were in full swing. Unlike in their straight-laced home country of England, Isherwood and his friend, the English poet W. H. Auden, encountered openness and tolerance in Berlin. As well as more than 100 tolerated meeting places for men.

Isherwood's short story "Sally Bowles" was released in England in 1937, shortly before the book "Goodbye to Berlin", which contained a series of six episodes that Isherwood released as a book in 1939. The stories are fragments of a large novel that the author began during his four-year stay in Berlin under the title "The Lost", but which was never finished.



Background

Berlin brings forth a variety of simultaneous realities like almost no other city in the world. Even today, when crossing the line daily that marks where the Wall stood, one can still feel the scars it has left and the atmospheric difference between the two parts of the city goes beyond measurable phenomena like per capita income, the state of buildings and brand name awareness. An island cosmos unique in the history of the world, cut into sections like a cake, centre of the fascist terror, the Weimar Republic - inner turmoil and discontinuity still remain the historical leitmotif of the city's history read backwards.

As such, CABARET describes and magnifies a period of transition: Berlin as the tolerant, artistic and hedonistic metropolis on the one hand, and on the other, the afflicted, crisis-torn capital in which political unrest, demonstrations and street fights are the order of the day. Berlin on the verge of an almost utopian artists' paradise on the way to the darkest hours in its history.

In his autobiographical, episodic novel "Goodbye to Berlin", Christopher Isherwood gave us a fascinating picture of the hedonistic metropolis Berlin on the eve of the Third Reich.

The musical paints in unusual form a gloomy but glamorous picture of contemporary Berlin at the end of the thirties just before the Nazis came to power, using cabaret, vaudeville and musical as a sophisticated drama within a drama. At its centre we have the fascinating figure, showgirl Sally Bowles, whose greatest number ends with the defiant (or cynical) lines "Life is a cabaret". A love story destined for disaster develops between a decadent demimonde, hopeless day-to-day existence and emerging racial hatred - a critical swan song to the much-cited Golden Twenties.



CABARET celebrated its Broadway premiere 52 years ago. The film version with Liza Minnelli is also more than 40 years old, and yet the musical is as fresh as ever. **CABARET** is an early, but always significant coming to terms with the dialectics of hedonism and barbarism.

Sally Bowles, Clifford Bradshaw and Fräulein Schneider really did exist back then in the Berlin of the Weimar Republic. Even the dubious conférencier had a real life role model.

Christopher Isherwood (1904 to 1986) came to Berlin in 1929 as a young author hungry for experience and in search of material for a novel. Like many other foreigners, he was fascinated by the liberal, open-hearted capital where, ten years after World War One, lascivious nightlife and the artistic avant-garde were in full swing. Unlike in their straight-laced home country of England, Isherwood and his friend, the English poet W. H. Auden, encountered openness and tolerance in Berlin. As well as more than 100 tolerated meeting places for men.

Isherwood rented a room near Nollendorfplatz from Fräulein Meta Thureau, who he immortalised in his "Berlin Stories" as Fräulein Schroeder, who later became Fräulein Schneider, the elderly landlady in **CABARET**. The woman on whom Sally Bowles was based also lived in the same rooming place. Her real name was Jean Ross, an Englishwoman seeking adventure, who had turned her back on her rich family to perform as a singer in a seedy Berlin night club. Isherwood portrays his purely platonic relationship with her in the short story "Sally Bowles". He took her name from Paul Bowles, an American author (*The Sheltering Sky*) who was staying in Berlin at that time with the composer Aaron Copland and who belonged to the circle of acquaintances around Isherwood and Jean Ross.

Isherwood's story "Sally Bowles" appeared in England in 1937, shortly before the book "Goodbye to Berlin", in which Isherwood collected more stories about Berlin's scene together with his own autobiographical impressions. He actually wanted to write a long novel about Berlin and its inhabitants titled "The Lost", but it never came to be - like so many other works planned by Isherwood.

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Christopher Isherwood returned to England from Berlin in 1933 and then emigrated to the USA in 1939, where he remained until his death. In the USA, he met English author **John van Druten** (1901 - 1957), who had made a name for himself there with successful plays and film scripts. Friends of Isherwood suggested to van Druten that he adapt the book "Goodbye to Berlin" for the stage, mainly in order to help Isherwood earn some money, as he was not particularly well-off financially.

Van Druten used the short story "Sally Bowles" for the play as well as other stories by Isherwood and made up a new love story for two Jewish characters from the Berlin stories.

The play premiered in 1951 in New York with the title "I am a Camera" - a famous quote from Isherwood's book.

The production was a great success and Isherwood not only profited financially, but also became popular as an author again. The British "Observer" sent him to post-War Berlin where he met his former landlady Fräulein Thureau. The play was filmed four years later, directed by Henry Cornelius.

The idea for the musical CABARET came from producer and director **Harold Prince**, one of the most innovative figures in the world of Broadway musicals. He wrote musical history with productions like "West Side Story" and "Anatevka" - not only in commercial, but above all in artistic terms. At his suggestion, the librettist and author **Joe Masteroff** adapted the play "I am a Camera" by John van Druten.

The idea of making a musical version of "I am a Camera" came from Harold Prince in 1963, because he recognised parallels between "the spiritually bankrupt Germans of the twenties and the USA of the sixties", between the Nazi hatred of the Jews and racial hatred in the USA.

Prince and his authors moved away from the usual, straight-line narrative of the musical and jumped instead between the naturalistic plot and the satirical, grotesque cabaret scenes. The scenes in Berlin's Kit-Kat Club acted as a symbolic microcosm commenting on the demise of the German spirit. This division between conventional musical plot including two love stories on the



one hand, and a plot-free, reflective level on the other was a highly daring and at the same time pioneering innovation in CABARET.

The world premiere of CABARET took place on 28 November 1966 in New York's Broadhurst Theatre. The stars were Joel Grey as the conférencier and the great Lotte Lenya as Fräulein Schneider. Kurt Weill's widow brought authenticity to the Berlin atmosphere and she was celebrated triumphantly in this role.

And of course, the musical's great success attracted attention in Hollywood. In 1972, CABARET was filmed by the famous director and choreographer **Bob Fosse**.

The film received 8 Oscars, including for best director and best acting performances for Liza Minnelli and Joel Grey.

The German-language premiere took place in 1970 in the Theater an der Wien. The translation was by Robert Gilbert, the most original and most talented of all German musical translators, who had already written the song-texts for the highly popular operetta "The White Horse Inn" before Hitler came to power.

CABARET is seen as one of the first concept musicals because it is conceptualised more around an idea than around a plot. Even today, the more than forty-year-old classic is still a shining example of how qualitative and deeply impressive works of modern, entertaining musical theatre are capable of being.