

*..Wehe, wehe, blut'ge Brüder!
Wehe, wehe, blut'ges Thal!
Beide Kämpfer stürzen nieder –
Einer in des andern Stahl.*

*Viel Jahrhunderte verwehen,
Viel Geschlechter deckt das Grab;
Traurig von des Berges Höhen
Blickt das öde Schloß herab.*

*Aber nachts am Thalesgrunde
Wandelt's heimlich, wunderbar!
Wenn da kommt die zwölfte Stunde,
Kämpfet dort das Brüderpaar.*



Nördlingen



Deutschland von oben. Das Land, in dem wir leben oder gelebt haben.
Deutschland, ein kleines Land, aber ein schönes Land. Es macht nur 0,07% der
Erdoberfläche aus, aber es ist die Heimat von ca. 82 Millionen Menschen.
„Aus der Luft betrachtet mögen wir winzig sein, aber jeder von uns ist eben doch
einer von vielen.“

Burg Hohenzollern



The Philadelphia Cultural Fund
Support provided in part
by the
Philadelphia Cultural Fund.

THE GERMAN SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Friday Film Fest Series



Deutschland von oben - Der Kinofilm 2012

By Petra Höfer & Freddie Röckenhaus

April 19th

• 6:30 PM •

Film, Food & Discussion

Donations \$15, Members \$12

The German Society of PA

611 Spring Garden St.

215-627-2332

Deutschland von oben - Der Kinofilm 2012

Director: Petra Höfer, Freddie Röckenhaus
Screenplay: Petra Höfer, Freddie Röckenhaus
Music: Boris Salchow
Helicopter-Camera: Peter Thompson
Narrator: Benjamin Völz
Production: Germany 2012
Length: 114 Minutes
Locations: Spain, Southern France, Zürich, Lübeck, München, Köln

.: *Commentary by Karl Moehlmann* .:

Material:

In 2010 Petra Höfer and Freddie Röckenhaus produced the Terra-X- Series *Deutschland von oben* by culling 270 minutes from 300 hours of footage taken during 600 flight hours by helicopter. Each of the two DVDs was divided into three parts (Stadt, Land und Fluss). The series premiered on ZDF (Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen), attracting five million viewers. The documentary was nominated for the Deutsche Fernsehpreis 2010, the Grimme-Preis 2011 and received the Deutsche Kamera-Preis in 2011. A special remote control helicopter camera system was developed just for this movie. In 2012, the directors condensed this material to feature film length (114 minutes) and released it as a film shown in movie theatres around Germany last year. It is available with German and English sound tracks.

Content:

To enable us to know our *unbekanntes Land*, the directors set forth a seasonal smorgasbord of Germany, proceeding chronologically from January through December. Seeing Germany in this unique and poignant way evokes the sentiments of T. S. Eliot: *... to arrive where we started And know the place for the first time.* From the “Wattenmeer” in the Northsea to the Watzmann mountain top, from the “Kölner Dom” to the resurrected “Frauenkirche” in Dresden, from the last steel works at the Rhein near Duisburg to the gigantic “Braunkohle-Tagebau” in the Lausitz region of Eastern Germany, from the “Steinböcke” in the German Alps to the newly born seals on the Helgoland-Dune, the panoramas are a continual source of delight and surprise.

GPS navigation data show some of the most amazing annual migration patterns in the world. We fly shoulder to shoulder with “Kraniche, Seeadler, Schwäne und Störche”. Storks embark on a 10000 km flight to Southern Africa across Spain and Gibraltar or from Turkey and the Middle East. We follow wild geese in March to the arctic circle in Siberia as they pursue the receding winter. We

witness an amazing scene in November when up to 20000 “Sing-Schwäne” come to the Brandenburg region of Linum near Neuruppin from Iceland and Scandinavia or from the Taiga and the Tundra, crossing paths with geese returning from Siberia and cranes leaving for Africa.



This literal birds eye view also reveals remarkable patterns of the 2000 year old history of German cities such as Regensburg, which was founded as camp “Castra Regina” along the Danube by the Romans. Computer animation gives us a time lapse narrative as the old city gradually morphs back to the foundation of the Roman camp and then again forward through history, tracing the *Trampelpfade* through

the ancient ruins right up to the street pattern of modern day Regensburg.

A much more gripping and visceral image is the satellite animation footage of the bombardment of Hamburg (“Operation Gomorrha”) during the Second World War. Witnessing the effects of the allied carpet bombing, which reduced most target cities to rubble and cinder, rekindles the memory of the unimaginable pain and suffering of the helpless victims, as well as the monumental reconstruction efforts after the war which restored many of our beautiful medieval cities. In the case of Rothenburg ob der Tauber, where nearly half of the famous old city was destroyed, the rebuilding was done with American donations. One of the last cities to be bombed was Würzburg on March 16, 1945, just a month after the horrors of Dresden.

Did you know that Germany still hosts 400 wild horses in Dülmen near Münster in an area twice the size of Monaco? Or that more than half of Germany is still used for agriculture with GPS guided tractors harvesting and plowing the fields? Or that Germany invented flying without an engine because after World War I the Versailles Treaty outlawed motorized aircrafts? When was the last time you saw the Binnenalster in Hamburg solidly frozen as in 2010 at -18 degree Celsius. Or did you know that the 1000 free standing stone needles in the Elbsandsteingebirge near Dresden were formed at the bottom of an ocean?

There are many famous castles in this movie (Neuschwanstein, Burg Hohenzollern, Wartburg), but perhaps the most intriguing ones are the castles of Liebenstein and Sternberg near Bingen am Mittelrhein. These castles belonged to two brothers who, unlike many of their contemporaries, didn't fight over levying passage tolls. Instead, they opted to quarrel over a woman. *Dummköpfe!* As any sensible businessman could have told them, there is no profit margin in such a venture. Inevitably, the quarrel ended in a tragedy. But the upside to this episode is that it inspired Heinrich Heine to write his famous poem “Die feindlichen Brüder“: