

THE GERMAN SOCIETY OF
PENNSYLVANIA

Friday Film Fest Series



**Winnetou
Der letzte Kampf**

Directed by Phillip Stölzl

March 15, 2019

● 6:30 PM ●

Film, Food & Discussion

The German Society of PA

611 Spring Garden St.

215-627-2332

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



Winnetou. Der Mythos lebt. Teil 3: Der letzte Kampf

Director: Phillip Stölzl
Screenplay: Jan Berger, Alexander M. Rümelin
Production: Christian Becker, Christoph Müller, Matthias Wendlandt, Felix Wendlandt
Music: Martin Böttcher
Heiko Maile
Camera: Sten Mende
Cut: Sven Budelmann
Year: 2016
Cast: **Wotan Wilke Möhring** as Old Shatterhand
Nik Xhelilaj as Winnetou
Milan Peschel as Sam Hawkens
Iazua Larios as Nscho-tschi
Gojko Mitic as Intschu-tschuna
Michael Maertens as Santer Junior
Mario Adorf as Santer Senior
Commentary: Karl Moehlmann



hundreds of years before in a mysterious lake. In order to find the legendary treasure, El Mas Loco kidnaps Nscho-tschi and commands her to lead them to the lake. She succeeds with the help of a bald eagle who guides them in the right direction.

In the meantime, the Indian boy Mavi takesh finds the old trapper Sam Hawkens in Roswell and tells him about the kidnapping. They immediately set out to enlist the help of Old Shatterhand. They free the enslaved Apaches, and together with Winnetou and Hawkens, Old Shatterhand sets out in pursuit of the Mexican bandits. At the lake they try to free Nscho-tschi but are captured instead.

The bandits force them to search the bottom of the lake. Nothing is found on the lakebed but Old Shatterhand eventually finds the entry to a hidden cave. After traipsing through a labyrinth of pathways, they finally reach the treasure. In the chaos of the *Goldrausch*, El Mas Loco and his men inadvertently allow Winnetou and Nscho-tschi to escape. Ultimately, Old Shatterhand is rescued by Winnetou, and the pursuing bandits receive their just recompense when the cave collapses on them and the treasure.

Returning to the village of the Apaches, Old Shatterhand asks Nscho-tschi to marry him and they are wed in a traditional Apache ceremony. Winnetou shows Old Shatterhand a piece of land where they can build a house and live.

Part 3: Der letzte Kampf

Old Shatterhand and his wife settle down on their farm. For the building of a new barn, he hires a few Polish craftsmen. Soon they celebrate the completion of the *Scheune* with a communal Christmas dinner in a scene that is highly reminiscent of the famous Amish barn raising scene in "Witness" with Harrison Ford. The strong support of the community suggests the possibility of harmony between the individual and the larger group and a world of peace between the American Indian Tribes and the ever expanding frontier of the White settlers.

But the idyllic interlude doesn't last long. While digging a well, Old Shatterhand and Winnetou accidently hit an oil gusher. Given the increasing importance of oil in the rapid industrialization in the second half of the 19th century, an existential conflict with the preindus-

Summary Part 2: Das Geheimnis vom Silbersee

Old Shatterhand has been living as a guest with the Apaches since he helped them destroy the railroad bridge that would have violated their holy grounds. Winnetou's sister Nscho-tschi and Old Shatterhand have fallen passionately in love. But Old Shatterhand has doubts as to whether he is capable of living as an Apache. He misses working in his profession as an engineer and still harbors dreams of using his skills to help build a new society in the New World.

One morning he sneaks out of the village without saying goodbye to Winnetou or Nscho-tschi.

While Old Shatterhand finds a new job as an engineer with a project in Santa Fe, the Apaches are brutally attacked by a Mexican gang led by the notorious bandit El Mas Loco. They are looking for the treasure of the Apaches, the legendary *Schatz im Silbersee*, buried

trial life of the Native Americans is inevitable. The gusher cannot be kept secret for long. It comes to the attention of Santer Junior, the inept and outcast son of one of the richest and most influential men in America, Santer Senior, played brilliantly by the great German actor **Mario Adorf** (Adorf had also played Santer in the first adaptation of the story in 1963 entitled Apache Gold by director Harald Reinl).



Mario Adorf

Santer Senior owns the third largest oil company, so his son finally senses an opportunity to impress his father. He offers Old Shatterhand a large sum of money for his land, but when he and Nscho-tschki reject the offer, Santer Junior's greed leads him to use more radical and unscrupulous methods. This sets the stage for the final battle not only for Old Shatterhand and the Apaches but for the survival of all Native Americans. Realizing that the Apaches cannot win this fight alone, Winnetou seeks the help of the hostile Comanches and ultimately forms a great alliance with the other Native American tribes, including the Cree, the Navajo, the Sioux, the Hoopa and the Kiowa. A united force offers a better chance to win the looming battle, the *letzte Kampf* for the survival of the Native Americans. Der letzte Kampf concludes the Winnetou trilogy.

Moderne Märchen

Karl May's stories represent a romantic and glorified picture of the "Wild West" that originated purely in the author's imagination. However, May enhanced his imagination with travel reports from the 19th century. From May 1832 until August 1834, the German *Naturforscher* Prinz Maximilian zu Wied (1782-1867), together with ranger David Dreidoppel and the Swiss painter Karl Bodmer, led an expedition into the American West that brought them as far as Fort McKenzie in Montana and in touch with many of the indigenous people of America. His 1200-page diary and many wildlife samples, as well as paintings and drawings by Bodmer, created a significant repository of documentation about the Native Americans and their endangered way of life.

Karl May read Wied's reports and was inspired by them, but May's stories have little to do with the real life of the American Indians of one hundred and fifty years ago. When Karl May was incarcerated in 1870 as a swindler, imposter and thief, no one would have predicted that four years later upon his release from the *Zuchthaus Waldheim* near Chemnitz that he would embark upon a writing career that would make him one of the most successful German writers ever. To date he has sold more than 200 million books worldwide. Some of the reasons for this success might be adduced from the following considerations:

- A German engineer leaves his *Heimat* and seeks a role in building a new world in a wide open, unsettled and wild country. Many people stuck in their small, predictable, controlled and repressive environment at home can identify with this adventurous endeavor and life on a new frontier.
- By creating the positive figure of a Native American in the character of Winnetou, May continues the tradition of the noble savage, *der edle Wilde*, who since Rousseau and the Enlightenment has served as a symbol of a belief in the pristine beginnings of human history. May describes many American Indians as strong, quick and agile, their faces having beautiful features and noble expressions. Life in nature is portrayed as free, unspoiled and self-determined. May juxtaposes this idealized natural state of the American Indians with the perverted and *zivilisationskranken Europäer* and the evil, ugly and corrupted *Bleichgesichter* of the American frontier.
- The simplified dichotomy of good and evil is a common trope for many fairy tales. May not only gives us the good Apaches versus the barbaric and evil Comanches, but also the good White men like Old Shatterhand and Sam Hawkens versus the evil Santer Jr. and others. Character nuances, flaws and developments do not exist for May, since such complicating factors would only distract the audience from the more simplistic, but emotionally powerful contrast which his stories serve up for us.
- When Winnetou and Old Shatterhand become close friends and seal their bond with a blood ritual, May simply transplants the

old Germanic *Blutsbrüderschaft* into the Wild West. Having Old Shatterhand marry Winnetou's sister, thus becoming the *Häuptling der Apachen*, completes the narrative arc in the best tradition of fairy tales – we have no doubt that Old Shatterhand and his wife will ultimately live happily ever after.



- There are many realistic elements embedded in May's stories, like the building of the railroads, the expansion of the settlements, the intrusion into American Indian territories, the violations of treaties with the American Indians, and the discovery of oil, as in the last episode. Yet all these historically accurate aspects merely serve to enhance the illusion that May's stories are describing real events and circumstances, when in reality, the characters, conflicts and outcome remain solely the product of Karl May's fertile imagination.

Calendar of Events

March

- Sun. Mar. 17 "Wister and More!" presents Pyxis Piano Quartet with baritone Grant Youngblood, 3:00pm
 Tue. Mar. 19 KA EXTRA: The Effects of Immigration on German-American Politics with Martin Kaiser, 7:00pm
 Wed. Mar. 20 Humboldt through our Eyes: Discussion with comments from Prof. Harry Liebersohn, 6:00pm

April

- Sat. Apr. 6 Hamburger Abend, 7:00pm
 Wed. Apr. 10 Konversationsabend: GSP Update with President Tony Michels, 6:00pm
 Sat. Apr. 13 Buchclub, 1:30pm
 Sun. Apr. 14 "Wister and More!" presents the Casimir Trio, 3:00pm
 Fri. Apr. 26 Friday Film Fest: *Honig im Kopf*, 6:30pm

May

- Sat. May 4 Spring Luncheon, 12:00pm
 Wed. May 8 Konversationsabend: Mal was Lustiges with Karl Moehlmann, 6:00pm
 Sat. May 11 Buchclub, 1:30pm
 Sun. May 12 "Wister and More!" presents EStrella Piano Duo
 Fri. May 17 Friday Film Fest: *3 Tage in Quiberon*, 6:30pm
 Sat. May 18 500 of Lager Brewing: the German Tradition and the American Dream, 2:00pm
 Sat. May 18 Frankfurt in May, 3:00pm

June

- Sun. June 2 Annual Members Meeting and Elections, 3:00pm

