THE FIRST postwar film to be made in Bavaria recently had a miniature world premier at Munich's once palatial Luitpold Theater, complete with klieg lights and celebrities. No cement footprints of movie stars were made in the lobby. In fact, because of bombing, there was very little lobby. Otherwise it was an event reminiscent of Grauman's Chinese on Hollywood Boulevard.

The film took two months, 1,000,000 marks and many headaches to complete. The reviews were lukewarm but audience reaction was favorable. The Germans liked it because it not only brought back many of their old favorites for the first time since war's end, but it also represented another "first" along the road to recovery. For the Americans interested in the success of the occupation, it was documentary evidence that ingenuity and the skill to improvise were not completely dormant among the Germans.

By John A. Biggs
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On its own merits, the film was good. Taking into consideration the shortages of everything from raw film to talent, it was a production that fell little short of colossal.

"Zwischen Gestern und Morgen" (Between Yesterday and Tomorrow) had been carefully selected from hundreds of submitted scripts because its theme, dealing with the post-war reconstruction of the lives of ordinary people would strike a note of familiarity in the minds of all Germans. In addition to this, in an unobtrusive way it was a powerful diatribe against the evils of Nazism.

Production began in late June, 1947, at Geiselgasteig, the Bavarian Filmkunst, three miles outside Munich.

Much of the cast had to be brought from Berlin, still the theatrical center of Germany. Stage and film talent have always been far more interchangeable in Germany than in America, where New York is the undisputed stage capital, and Hollywood the Mecca toward which cinema neophytes turn their faces.

Scenes in "Zwischen Gestern und Morgen" calling for bombed-out buildings were shot in Munich. The main railroad station and the skeleton remains of the once-internationally

Scenes taken from the film "Zwischen Gestern und Morgen." Players in the photo (left) are Sybille Schmitz, Willy Birgel and Viktor de Kowa, Hildegard Knef and Willy Birgel are shown in the picture (right).
famous Regina-Palast were sufficiently realistic ruins as they stood. However, the huge pre-war lobby of the hotel had to be reconstructed at the studio, and was about 10 feet larger all around than the original. Every stick of wood and brick that went into its building was a monument to the foregoing talents of someone.

Every morning for the two months it took to make the picture the company was faced with the same problem. No one was quite sure whether there would be enough film on hand to complete the day’s shooting schedule. Many a scene was taken with only 65 feet of film remaining in the camera. With this shortage always prevalent, retakes were a luxury in which the cast couldn’t afford to indulge.

Film procured from many sources in a wide variety of different emulsions presented another obstacle to the imported cast offered more difficulties. cameramen. Food and housing for the imported cast offered more difficulties.

As the film progressed, lack of power in one of the driest summers in Bavaria’s history became another handicap. Shooting was held up for days at a time because of complete failure of power, or frequencies too low to operate the high voltage lights and sound equipment.

The picture was completed on schedule, however, and the canned products created prospects of money for the German economy. Switzerland, Belgium, and the Scandinavian countries initiated negotiations for the picture. Lt. Col. William C. Rogers, chief of Film, Theater, and Music Branch, OMGB, has received inquiries from several leading American distributors who have expressed interest in Bavaria’s first picture since the war.

BAVARIA FILMKUNST, where the film was produced, began in 1919 with one rickety shed. Today it offers three large sound stages and one which, upon completion, will be Germany’s largest. It was started during the war.

Until the end of the war this company produced 87 feature films in addition to synchronizing the German to five foreign films. This sound work is being continued today. Since the beginning of the occupation German sound tracks have been added at the Bavarian plant to 12 American films for release in Germany. These included “Anna and the King of Siam,” “You Can’t Take It with You,” “Keys of the Kingdom,” “The Hunchback of Notre Dame,” and “Laura.”

However, Bavaria Filmkunst has gone out of the picture-making business itself. Today the studios at Geiselgasteig are operated on a purely rental basis. Any company with the license and funds can rent the facilities of the film studio to make a picture. Scripts and personnel of all companies must be approved by Military Government. Outside of that, the Film Section of Information Control Division, which maintains offices on the lot, adheres to a strictly hand-off policy, except when aid is requested by the Germans themselves. Otherwise the success or failure of any picture can be considered a purely indigenous affair.

“Lang ist der Weg” (Long is the Way), a picture with an all-Jewish cast, was recently finished and is due for release in a few weeks. Another picture is in production at Geiselgasteig now, and plans are being made to shoot at least three more before the end of the year.

Union Schools Aided

Unions of the American Federation of Labor, the Congress of Industrial Organizations, the Railroad Brotherhoods, and the Union of Railway Conductors and Engineers in the United States have contributed $3,500 for the purchase of CARE packages for German trade union schools in the US Zone of Germany and the US Sector of Berlin.

Schools receiving the packages are the Academy of Labor, Frankfurt, 15 packages per month from December 1947 through July 1948; the Hesse Federation of Labor School, Oberursel, 10 packages per month from December through July; the Bavarian Federation of Labor School, Kochelsee, 10 packages per month from December through June; and Leuschner Haus, Berlin, a trade union school, 10 packages per month from December through July.

University Building Returned

The removal of the dependents’ high school from Erlangen to Nuremberg made possible the return of the Geological-Mineralogical Institute building to the University of Erlangen.