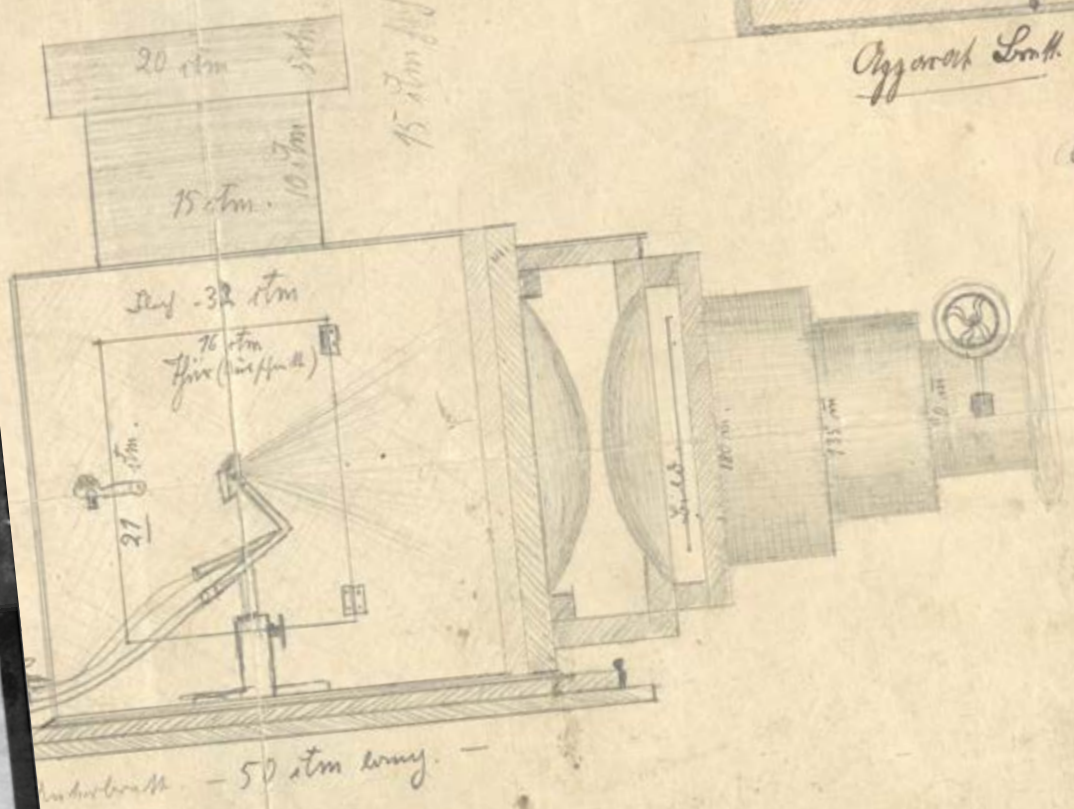


“Did I invent film?”

Max Skladanowsky – Pioneer, Visionary & Impostor



wurfzeichnungen
belbilderapparate

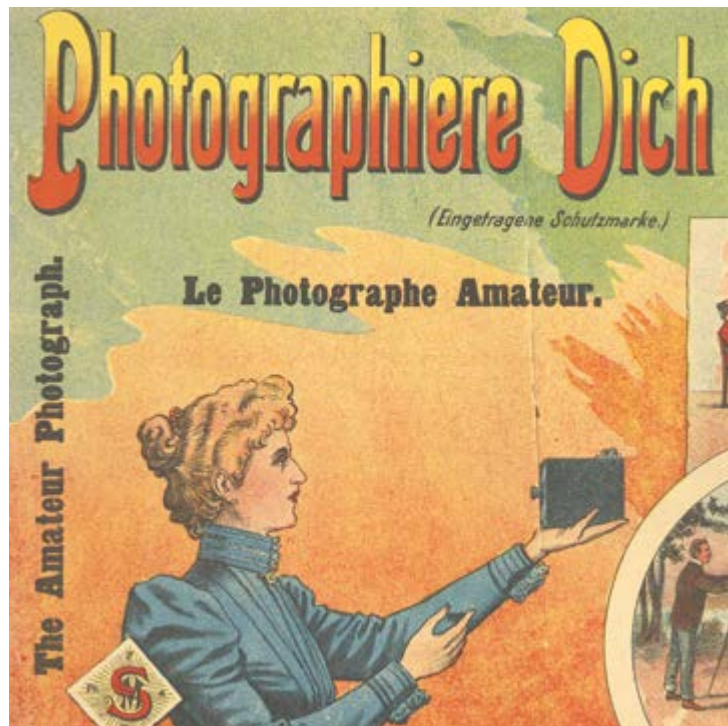
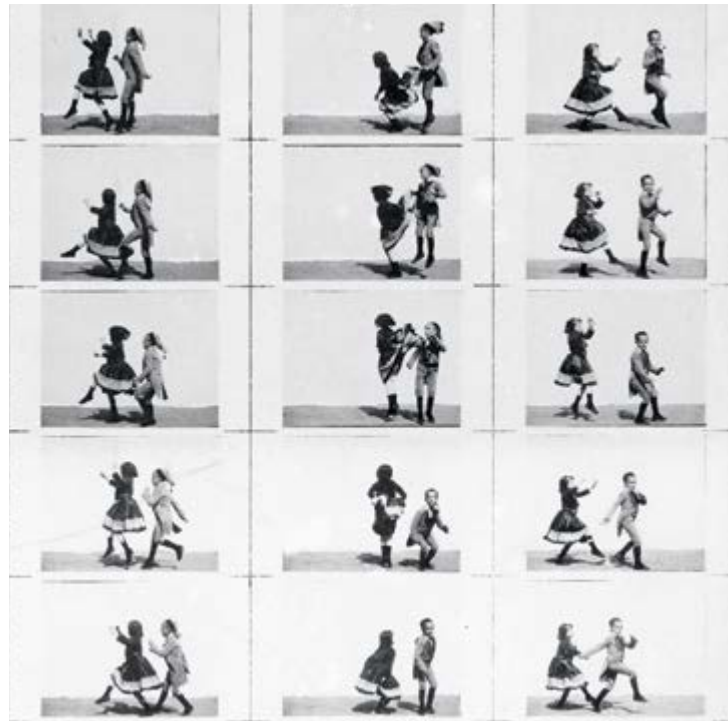


2 Apparate für Kalklicht.

beiden Scharapparate müssen jeweils in den großen Apparat hineinpassen.
beiden Scharapparate müssen die Tische auf immer zur Verfügung
haben.

“Did I invent film?”

*Max Skladanowsky –
Pioneer, Visionary & Impostor*



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Introduction

Max Skladanowsky – Pioneer, Visionary & Impostor

“Did I invent film?” The German film pioneer Max Skladanowsky asked this in an article in the *Hamburger Abendblatt* on 3 August 1934. The question was extensively debated in professional circles at the time and the discussion it provoked in the following decades was driven in good part by Skladanowsky’s own account. The answer to this question can now be answered with a definitive “no”.

His visionary thinking, however, is evident in the magic lantern slides he designed and publicly projected from 1879 onwards, as well as in countless design sketches that testify to his technical sophistication and keen imagination. Although Skladanowsky’s technical film inventions were not successful in the long term, he continues to be regarded as a pioneer in film history who – on his own initiative but always in close collaboration with his family – was making his images come to life by 1895. He also made a number of contributions to the history of film and photography, including specially designed cameras and projection apparatuses, stereographic photographs, “living pictures” in book form (so-called flip books) and his short films of performers and artists and of city views of Berlin. Max Skladanowsky and his brother Emil first presented these films on 1 November 1895 in the *Varieté Wintergarten* in Berlin, after which they toured Germany and Europe until 1897. After these first performances, Max Skladanowsky disappeared into film-historical obscurity for many years before gradually re-emerging in the 1920s.

However, he often misrepresented the historical facts about his inventions. His tendency to exaggerate his role as the sole inventor of film, which bordered on fraud, led to heated discussions in professional circles at the time, driven mostly by film pioneer Oskar Messter, who refused to recognise Skladanowsky’s important role in developing film technology.

Max Skladanowsky did not invent film and the parts of Skladanowsky’s written, cinematic and technical estate that have survived in the Federal Archives do not suggest otherwise. Nevertheless, the exhibition *Did I invent film? Max Skladanowsky – Pioneer, Visionary & Impostor* and this accompanying booklet aim to show the significance of Max Skladanowsky and his work and to invite visitors to discover and rediscover already known and previously unpublished works and documents from the Federal Archives’ holdings. While visitors to the exhibition have the opportunity to marvel at actual documents, technical film equipment and “living pictures”, this booklet provides additional information and presents the life and work of Max Skladanowsky largely chronologically. Magic lantern slides and technical construction drawings, contemporary advertisements and newspaper articles as well as photographs and correspondence from Skladanowsky’s estate are supplemented by insights from employees of the Federal Archives and other experts on the history of early cinema and photography, allowing readers and visitors to immerse themselves in an inventor’s unique biography.

History of the Skladanowsky Estate in the Federal Archives

by Undine Beier

In 1961, the State Film Archive of the German Democratic Republic (SFA) acquired the estate of Max Skladanowsky and the Skladanowsky family. The film historical collection includes the films, written documents, photographs, magic lantern slides, flip books, patents and trademarks, as well as a wide range of technical equipment. The sale was executed by a group of heirs: Max Skladanowsky's daughters Lucie Hürtgen-Skladanowsky and Margot Zimmermann and his son Erich Skladanowsky. After Erich's death, a further purchase agreement was concluded in 1966, stipulating the transfer of the complete collection including "all exploitation rights in all possible forms and throughout the world" to other parties. Some parts of the estate can also be found in other institutions such as the *Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek*, the *Deutsches Filminstitut* and *Filmmuseum Frankfurt* and the *Museum Pankow*.

The collection reached the SFA in a poorly preserved state: For decades, Max Skladanowsky, and later his son Erich, presented representative or visually impressive items in lectures – either to make money or to stake their claim as inventors of film. In 1971, the SFA compiled a preliminary overview of the collection. The technical equipment, such as the Bioscop I, was loaned to the Cinémathèque Française in 1970 for the exhibition on the 75th anniversary of film. Finally, in 1994, following tough negotiations, the collection found its way back to the Federal Archives,

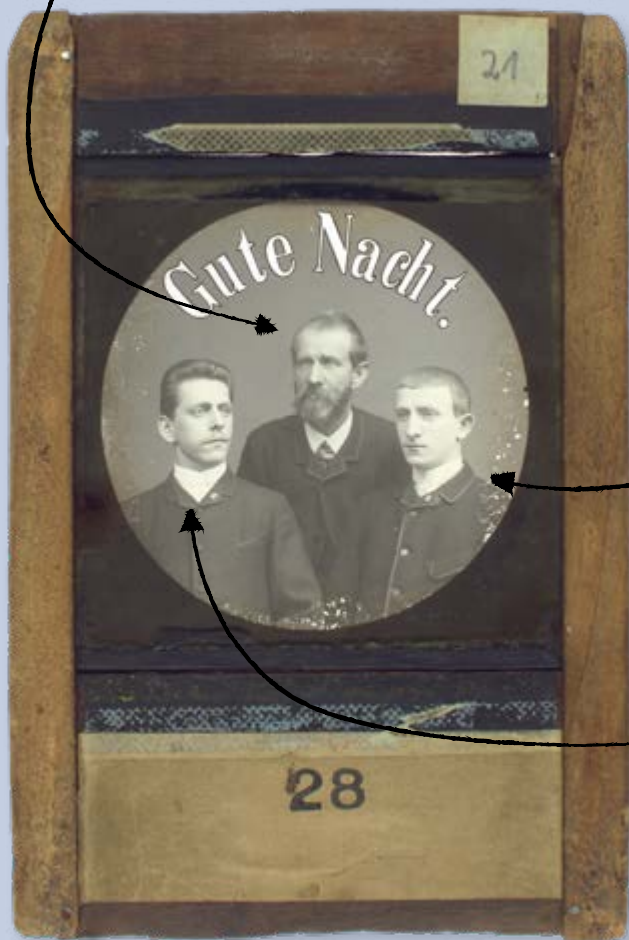


Max Skladanowsky, approx. 1892

BArch, N 1435 Bild-278-012/n.a.

which had taken over the SFA of the GDR in 1990. In 1994, a comprehensive overview and index of all parts of the estate was compiled for the first time in the Federal Archives under reference number N 1435 (*Findbücher zu Beständen des Bundesarchivs Bd. 49*) and presented on the 100th anniversary of the first film screening on 1 November 1895. The finding aid can be accessed online via the Federal Archives' research portal. The documents relating to the sales negotiations can be found in DR 140 (SFA) vol. 478.

Carl Skladanowsky
1830 – 1897



Emil Skladanowsky
1866 – 1945

Max Skladanowsky
1863 – 1939

Good Night (portrait of Carl Skladanowsky & the sons Max and Emil), n.d.
Glass slide in wooden frame
BArch, N 1435 Bild-15-3-021/Skladanowsky, Max

Carl Skladanowsky

Trained in various trades, in 1855, at the age of 25, Carl Skladanowsky opened a factory in Berlin that produced stone cardboard used for decorating interior living spaces. He married Luise Böisinger in 1856 and lived in Pankow near Berlin with her and their five children: Arthur, Eugen, Martha, Max and Emil. Due to wars and failed commissions, the company rapidly failed, bringing an end to Carl Skladanowsky's first career. In 1879, with the support of his sons Max and Emil, he turned his attention to the business of magic lantern shows. The Skladanowskys projected interesting, amusing and educational glass slides onto a screen before a live audience and gave supplementary lectures. Due to the entertaining nature of the presentations, many people referred to Carl Skladanowsky as a "showman" – a term he rejected: He preferred to see himself as a "photographic technician and physicist" and emphasised the scientific basis of his presentations.

Max Skladanowsky

Max Skladanowsky learned craftsmanship and artistic skills through training in photography and glass painting. He deepened these skills by joining his father's lecturing activities and developed them further by creating and producing magic lantern slides. Carl Skladanowsky was responsible for the lectures and Max Skladanowsky for the slide projection.

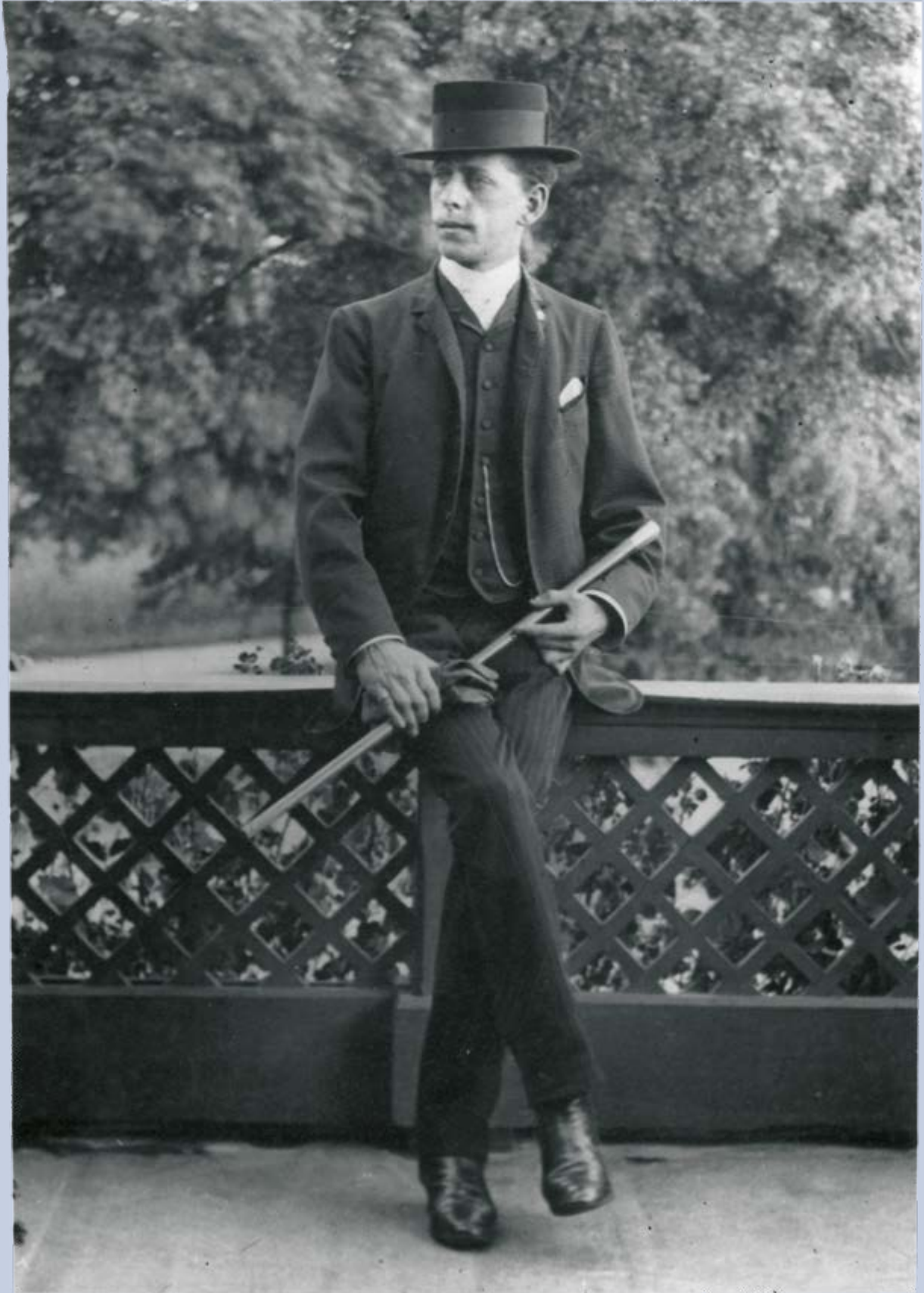
Emil Skladanowsky

It is not known whether Emil Skladanowsky received any formal training. It is assumed that, as the youngest son of Carl Skladanowsky, he received a training similar to that of Max Skladanowsky. He also helped with the magic lantern projections until he later shifted his energies to creating moving images with his brother Max.



Max and Emil Skladanowsky (sitting) with the illustrators Max and Oswald Uecke (standing) on a terrace, approx. 1892

BArch, N 1435 Bild-278-003/n.a.



Max Skladanowsky leaning against a railing, approx. 1892
BArch, N 1435 Bild-277-005/n.a.

Magic Lantern Slides

Magic Lantern Slides and Chromatropes

by Martin Loiperdinger

From 1879, the projection company *Carl Skladanowsky & Söhne* ran magnificent magic lantern shows in variety theatres in Germany and abroad for 15 years. These illuminated images with fading and moving effects, which were created by projecting coloured glass images through a magic lantern, were referred to at the time as “Nebelbilder” or dissolving views. These magic lantern slides, which showed day turning to night or the changing of the seasons, were very popular.

Father Carl invested in Max Skladanowsky’s training; he initially studied photography and glass painting and also learned how to build projection devices. At the first performance of *Carl Skladanowsky & Söhne* on 18 November 1879, 16-year-old Max Skladanowsky operated the *Laterna Magica* and projected self-painted glass pictures measuring 6 × 6 inches onto a screen. Most of the glass pictures preserved in the Federal Archives, however, were produced by other manufacturers.

Max Skladanowsky generally used prints such as those of the Mosburg, an artificial ruin in the palace park in Biebrich near Wiesbaden, as models for his glass pictures. He photographed the originals using the wet plate collodion process: As soon as the contours for the colouring became visible, the development of the exposed 6 × 6-inch plates was stopped. In order to obtain effective cross-fades, the two photographs of the Mosburg, coloured differently for day and night, had to be completely identical. The projection’s enormous magnification mercilessly revealed every inaccuracy.

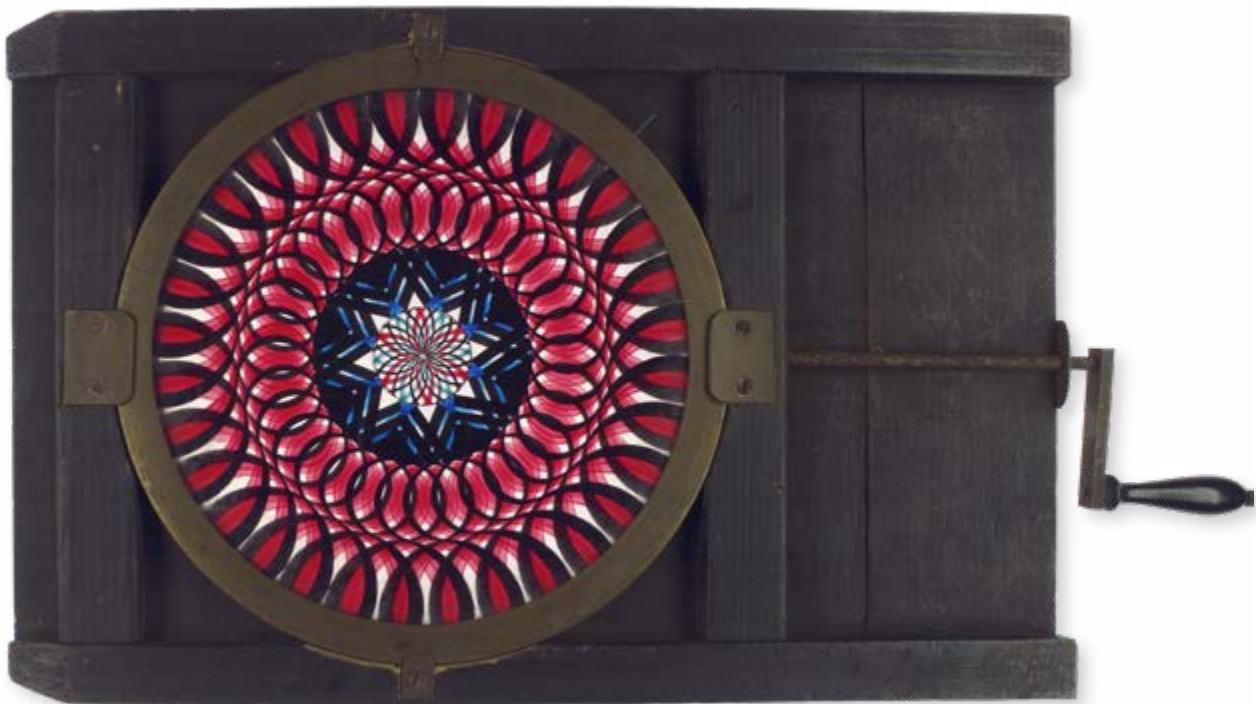
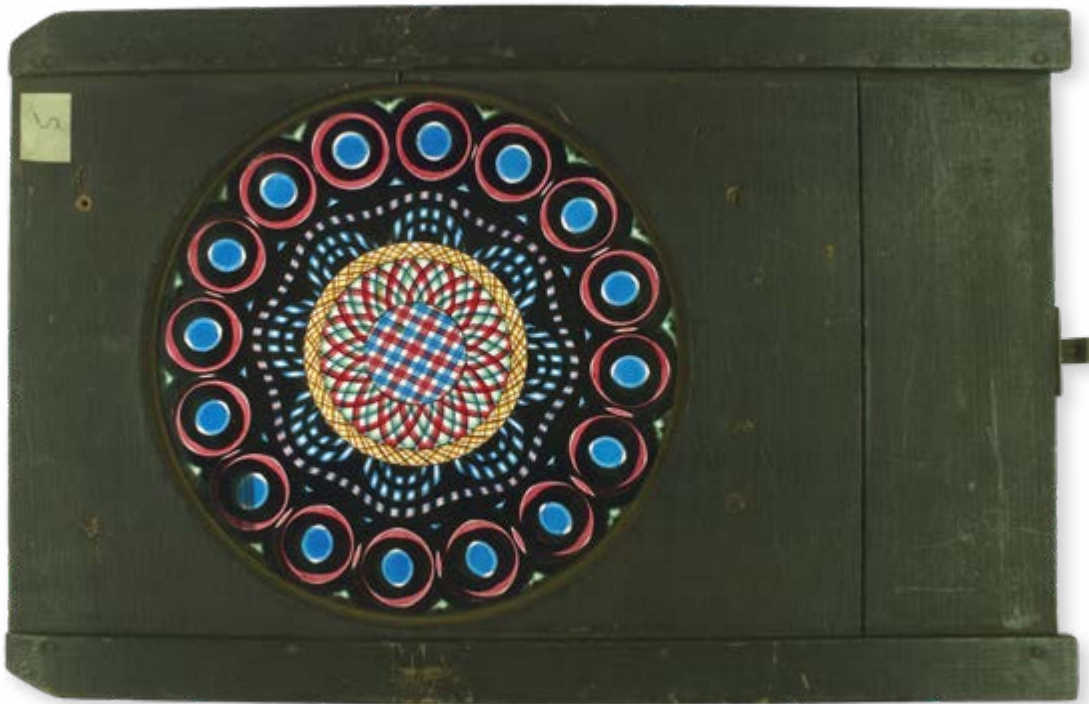
Twenty chromatropes are also preserved in the Federal Archives: Each consists of up to four panes of glass, which Max Skladanowsky painted with abstract patterns according to his own design drawings. When the panes are rotated in opposite directions, shifting cascades of colour appear in the projection, which, depending on the direction of rotation, form a spiral-like vortex from the centre of the image outwards to the edge of the image or vice versa – a fascinating kinetic effect of pure visual pleasure which, as the final act of commercial magic lantern programmes, was highly popular.



The two hand-coloured glass slides from 1893 show the ruins of Mosburg Castle by day and by night

During the magic lantern presentation, one slide was faded into the other, creating the illusion of change from day to night

Top: BArch, N1435
Bild-15-2-003/Skladanowsky, Max; bottom: BArch, N1435 Bild-15-2-004/Skladanowsky, Max



Two chromatropes, approx. 1879-1897

Chromatropes usually consist of up to four painted glass slides that are rotated in opposite directions. This creates a vibrant play of colours in the projection. This technique was popular in Europe from the middle of the 19th century.

Top: BArch, N 1435 Bild-15-6-005A/Skladanowsky, Max; bottom: BArch, N 1435 Bild-15-6-001C/Skladanowsky, Max

Magic Lantern Slides



Designs for chromatropes by Max Skladanowsky, n.d.

Top left: BArch, N 1435-16-0012/Skladanowsky, Max; top right: BArch, N 1435-16-0022/Skladanowsky, Max;

bottom: BArch, N 1435-16-0014/Skladanowsky, Max



African tropical landscape, approx. 1879–1897

Some magic lantern presentations hint to a world view influenced by the racist and colonial thinking of its time.

BArch, N 1435 Bild-15-4-005A/Skladanowsky, Max

Magic Lantern Presentations

by Janelle Blankenship

On 18 November 1879, *Carl Skladanowsky & Söhne* organized a magic lantern show at the Flora in Berlin, where the “greatest sights on earth” were presented, including magnificent buildings, churches, statues and “extraordinary landscapes with transformations.” Max Skladanowsky had painted some of the images with oil paints, while others were supplied by the *Optisches Institut A. Krüss* in Hamburg. The Skladanowskys took the enigmatic name “Diphrama” from the Franco-Belgian showman M. Morieux, who had been touring Germany with a mechanical theatre since the 1850s.

The projection device was hidden behind a white cotton curtain, which had to be moistened with water to increase the transparency of the images. Behind this screen, Max Skladanowsky operated two magic lanterns made of sheet iron, which he combined to form a double projector. A shutter allowed the glass images to fade gently into each other. Carl Skladanowsky gave the accompanying lecture, while his son Emil provided the sound effects.

The magic lantern showmen continued to make guest appearances in leading German and European variety theatres until the 1890s, where the “world theatre” took its audiences to China, Japan, Spain and America, among other places. An exemplary programme from 1888 shows the whole range of presentations that could be admired: astronomical wonders and historical moments such as the fall of Babylon, a solar eclipse or the discovery voyages of an African explorer in the newly conquered German colonies. An excursion into fairyland was followed by humorous magical pictures and chromatropes.

In the 1890s, the Skladanowsky brothers – now without their father Carl – redesigned their magic lantern shows as part of a colourful children’s theatre or as an “electro-mechanical-pyrotechnical” water show. The brothers also ventured a look into the future: In 1894 they presented a new series, the “Flight of Man”, which was later followed by photographs of modern wonders such as X-rays and Nansen’s spectacular journey to the North Pole. The artist names “M. and E. Hamilton” and “Prof. Morieux”, under which they now appeared, were borrowed from their British and Franco-Belgian colleagues.

Programm an der Kasse.

Berliner Flora.

Große Friedrichstraße 218, im großen Saale.

Dienstag, den 18. November und Mittwoch, den 19. November 1879,
Nachmittags um 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ Uhr:

Volks- und Schüler-Vorstellung.

Neu! Zum ersten Male in Berlin: Neu!

Anerkannt größtes

West-Diaphrama,

kann über 25 Fuß im Durchmesser dargestellt werden,
geleitet vom Physiker **C. Skladanowsky**,
hier angekommen aus den Niederlanden (Holland) von Rotterdam und
der schönen Residenzstadt Haag.

Vorführung der besten Kunstfachen von deutschen Künstlern der Gegenwart,

sowie
der berühmten alten Niederländischen Malerei,
in 3 Abtheilungen.

Die größten Sehenswürdigkeiten der Erde vom Norden bis zum Süden.

Verschiedene herrliche Kirchen, Klöster und Kapellen in prächtiger
Bauart mit brillanter Kirchenmalerei, hervorgehoben durch magische
Lichtreflexe,
außerordentliche Landschaften mit Veränderungen,
Sculpturen und Architecturen,
plastische Gruppen,
sowie hervorragende deutsche Männer und Frauen der Vergangenheit
und Gegenwart.
Humoristische Zauberbilder,
Chromatropen (Farbenspiele) u. s. w.

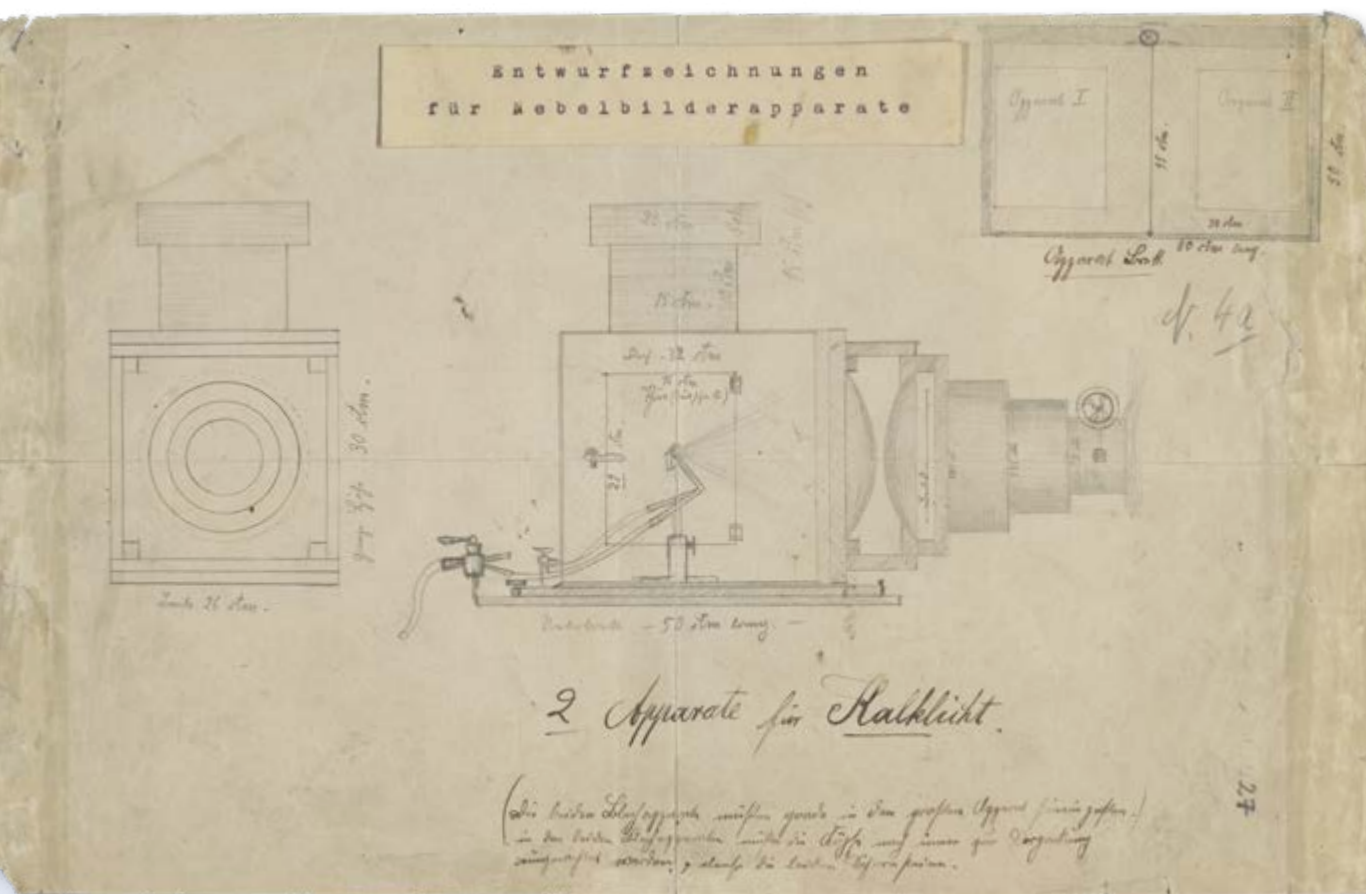
Anfang 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ Uhr.

Entrée ermäßigt.
Erster Platz 25 Pf. Zweiter Platz 15 Pf.
Kinder unter 5 Jahren haben keinen Einlaß.

Die Direction.

Verlag v. G. Schönbucher, Berlin.

Carl Skladanowsky's first magic lantern presentation at the Flora in Berlin, 18/19 November 1879
Hand-painted glass slides were used to display reproductions of paintings and landscapes from
around the world, as well as trick pictures and colour plays ("chromatropes").
BArch, N 1435-17-0002



Construction drawing of the magic lantern around 1895
 This magic lantern projector was used for shows at the Circus Renz and at other venues.
 BArch, N 1435-212-0002/Skladanowsky, Max



Admission ticket to a magic lantern presentation by Carl Skladanowsky and his sons Max and Emil, n.d.
 BArch, N 1435-6-0004

→

Magic lantern motif: The Flood, n.d.
 These hand-coloured glass slides depict the story of the Flood from the Old Testament. They illustrate the construction of Noah's Ark and how Noah's family and the land animals survived.

Magic Lantern Slides



Building the Ark

BArch, N 1435 Bild-15-1-069/Skladanowsky, Max



Climbing the Ark

BArch, N 1435 Bild-15-1-002/Skladanowsky, Max



Rescue attempt

BArch, N 1435 Bild-15-1-003/Skladanowsky, Max



The Ark is stuck

BArch, N 1345 Bild-15-1-007/Skladanowsky, Max



The sinking of water

BArch, N 1435 Bild-15-1-006/Skladanowsky, Max



The Ark after the flood

BArch, N 1435 Bild-15-1-008/Skladanowsky, Max

Concert-Haus. (Ostwall 135)

Freitag, 20. Januar und Samstag, 21. Januar 1888, Nachmittags 5 Uhr
zu besonders ermäßigten Eintrittspreisen:

Schüler- und Familien-Vorstellung.

Nur die Höhe und Größe des Saales macht es möglich, die Bilder
aus der Sternwelt zum ersten Male hier vorzuführen.

Zweimaliges Balletspiel
der Herren
C. Skladanowsky
und Söhne



mit ihrem
**Welt-
Theater.**

(Original-Riesen-Welt-Tableau),
bestehend aus weit über 300 Verwandlungen, welche die neuesten Erfindungen der Wissenschaft und die großartigsten Schöpfungen der Natur
und Kunst zur Darstellung bringen. Nach der Natur aufgenommen und hervorgehoben durch elektrische Beleuchtung, nebst einem leicht fasslichen
Vortrag. Diese ganze Vorführung ist eine der neuesten englischen Erfindungen.

1. Abtheilung.
Die in Berlin gemalten und mit großem Beifall aufgenommenen

Bilder aus der Sternwelt.

Zum ersten Male hier.

Der Mond, seine wunderbare Oberfläche und die Erde,
darin anziehend plastische Landschaftsbilder, welche die wunderbarsten Landschaften der Natur in effektvoller Weise illustriren und gleich-
zeitig die von dort zu beobachtenden brillantesten Himmelserscheinungen in voller Farbenpracht zur Anschauung bringen.

Der Mond der Sternwelt. Umlauf der Planeten um die Sonne. Die Sonne und ihre totale Finsternis. Die ringförmige Sonnenfinsternis. Merkur- und Venusbahn. Kugelgestalt der Erde. Der Hauer Meer.	Der Jupiter, der größte Planet. Der Saturn mit seinen Ringen. Phasen des Mondes. Trübung der Erde um ihre Achse. Mondlaufzeit. (Wachende Sonne.) Trübung der Erde um die Sonne. Die Sonnenfinsternis am 19. Aug. 1887.	Entstehung von Mond- u. Sonnenfinsternis. Ebbe und Fluth. Sternbild des großen Bären. Kometenbahn. Fensterfall. Sternbild des jüdischen Kreuzes. Das große Fernrohr.
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*** Die Sonnenfinsternis am 19. August 1887.
Genau Darstellung der totalen Sonnenfinsternis vom 19. August 1887, beobachtet und aufgezeichnet in der Sternwarte zu Wien in Rußland,
Aufgang der Sonne, Vorübergang des Mondes vor der Sonnenscheibe, Verhüllung der Atmosphäre u. alle in naturgetreuer Nachahmung.

2. Abtheilung.

Die Zerstörung und der Untergang Babylons.

Zeichnet die kühnen Gärten, die nach der Sage von Semiramis angelegt wurden. Der Kampf und die Zerstörung des babylonischen Thurmes
Befreiung der Gefangenen durch den Heros König Cyrus. Dann zunächst Rom mit seinen Kunst- und allen Bauwerken, hierauf die
Schweiz mit ihren Gebirgen, Wasserfällen, Eisenbahnbrücken u. a. m. Alles bei überraschender Tages-, Abend- und Nachtbeleuchtung.

Königs-Phantasien. Prachtschlösser König Ludwigs II. von Bayern: Hohenschwangau, Neu-Schwainstein etc.
In unseren deutschen Colonien.
Entdeckungsgeschichte der berühmtesten Entdecker Dr. Nachtigall, de Bruzza, Stanley und Lieutenant Wissmann.

Christi Leiden. Die Kreuzigung Christi's. Erscheinung der Engel u. Prachtvolle Gemäldedarstellungen von ergreifender Wirkung.

3. Abtheilung.

Eine Wanderung durch's Märchenland.

Die Abreise der Kinder ins Märchenland. Gefährdung d. Kinder am Weihnachtsabend. Der kleine Täuschling u. seine Geschwister. Der geschickte Vater.	Rothkäppchen und der Wolf. Aschenputtel und der Königsohn. Im Gullenspiegels's Schwermuthsreise. Zwanzwittchen und die sieben Jünger.	Robinson Crusoe. Zwanzwittchen und das verzauberte Schloß. Gulliver und die Lilliputier. Rückkehr der Kinder aus dem Märchenlande.
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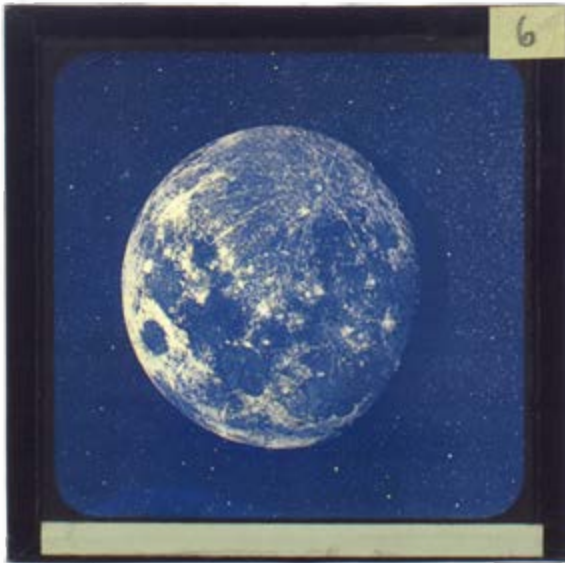
Zum Schluss: Neu! Phantasmagorien. Neu!
Humoristische Janerbilder und musikalische Ornamente von wunderbarer Farbenpracht.

Kassenöffnung 4 1/2 Uhr. Preise der Plätze: Anfang 5 Uhr.
Sperrsitze 40 S. Parquet 30 S. Gallerie 20 S. Billet-Vorverkauf an der Concert-Haus-Kasse von 12-1 Uhr.
Der Theatersaal ist gut geheizt. Ermäßigte zahlen dieselben Preise.

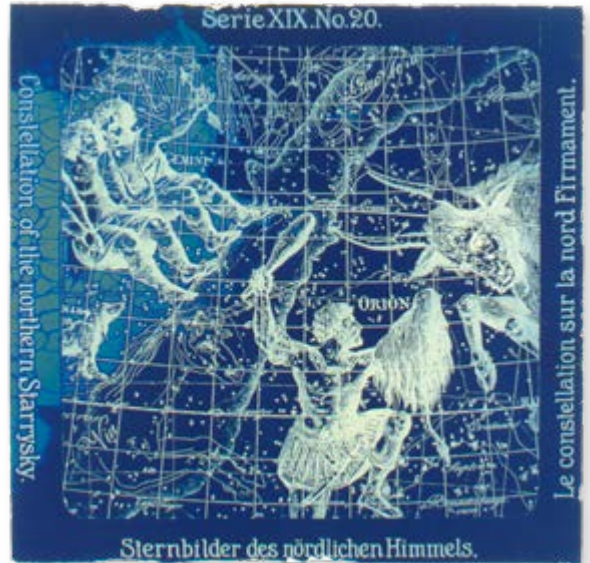
Wiss! Der Sternentempel, welcher die Schöpferhand des großen Schöpfers der Natur hervorzuheben will, im der Fälle seiner herrlichen Werke, ist es noch mehr,
der Mensch in dem Sinne der erste und wichtigste Schöpfung, weil, in dem dem der Mensch mit seinen Erfundungen diesen ersten Schöpfung
gegenüber steht. Diese Darstellung mit einem herrlichsten Vortrag begleitet, wird ein immerwährender Nutzen für das ganze Leben bleiben, wenn man dabei immer
einen Blick nach dem Sternentempel richtet, nicht mehr selbstständig erachtet, um auch den jüngeren Schülern Gelegenheit zu bieten, diese Vorführung selbst zu
sehen. In der 3. Abtheilung die Reise ins Märchenland u. folgende.
Buchhaltung

C. Skladanowsky & Söhne
Phototechniker und Physiker.
Mitglieder der Internationalen Gesellschaft J. A. M. in Berlin.

Announcement of a magic lantern presentation on 20 and 21 January 1888
Among other things, the series "Bilder der Sternwelt" and a drawing of the solar
eclipse of 19 August 1887 were shown.
BArch, N 1435-49-0002



Moon in Space, n.d.
BArch, N 1435 Bild-15-7-006/Skladanowsky, Max



Constellations in the Northern Sky, n.d.
BArch, N 1435 Bild-15-7-019/Skladanowsky, Max



The Orion Nebula, n.d.
BArch, N 1435 Bild-15-7-020/Skladanowsky, Max

Die Wunder der Sternenwelt!

Betrachtet man sich am einem heiteren Abend,
 den Himmel mit einiger Aufmerksamkeit
 so werden wir leicht entdecken, daß die
 meisten Sterne, wie man sich das junge
 Himmelsgewölbe von Osten nach Westen
 zu bewegen scheint, ihre gegenseitige Lage
 zu einander nie verändern, daher
 nennt man sie die stillen, festen Sterne oder
 Fixsterne, und die nur einige wenige
 unter diesen Fixsternhimmel beständig
 ihre Lage um Himmel verändern, welche
 sie fast alle Wandelsterne oder Planeten
 nennt, die sich hier auf dem sonderbaren
 Weg befrüchtel haben. Diese Himmel-
 Körper, gehören zu unserm Sonnensystem

The first of seven pages of the manuscript for "Die Wunder der Sternenwelt" (The Wonders of the Starry World), 1888, Berlin
 Lecture text recited live to accompany the magic lantern presentation.
 BArch, N 1435-8-0004

The wonders of the starry world!

If we look at the sky on a bright evening,
with some attention,

we will soon discover that

while the whole

celestial vault seems to move from east to west,

most stars never change their relative position

to one other, hence

the ancients called them stable stars or

fixed stars, and since only a few

under this fixed starry sky continually

change their position in the sky,

they were called

wandering stars or planets, which

persists to this day. These celestial

bodies belong to our solar system



Humorous magic pictures (moving mouth and nose areas), approx. 1879–1897

The Skladanowskys brought the magic lantern images to life using simple mechanical tricks. In these two pictures, a lever is used to shift the visible section of the image: The nose becomes a trunk. The Skladanowskys called these illusions "phantasmagorias".

Top: BArch, N 1435 Bild-15-4-015A/Skladanowsky, Max; bottom: BArch, N 1435 Bild-15-4-015B/Skladanowsky, Max

UTRECHTSCH E SCHOUWBURG.

WOENSDAG 15 FEBRUARI 1888,
TOT ZEER VERMINDERDE ENTREEPRIJZEN.

Voorstelling voor Scholieren en Familiën,
Namiddags van half 3 tot 4 uur,

Eene Enkele GASTVOORSTELLING
van de Heeren C. SKLADANOWSKY & ZONEN

MET HUN

WERELD-THEATER.
(Origineele Reuzen Wereld-Tableaux).

bestaande uit ver meer de 300 verschillende Tableau's, welke de nieuwste ontdekkings der Wetenschap en de wonderlijke Schepingen der Natuur en Kunst ter aanschouwing geven. Naar de Natuur opgenomen en vóórgebragt door Eerw. Verlichting met een zeer duidelijke uitlegging. Deze gehele Voorstelling is een der nieuwste Engelsche uitvindingen.

1^{ste} Afdeling.

De in Weenen geschilderde en aangebragt gezichte.

BEELDEN UIT DE STERRENWERELD,
In AMSTERDAM in het Grand Theater met 9 1/2 uren bijvoel begroot.

VOOR DE EERSTE MAAL ALMEER.

De Maan, zijne wonderbare Opperflakte en de Aarde,

door in aansluitende plastische Landschapsbeelden, welke den onbegrijpen vreesen natuurtoestand der Maan op eerbiedvolle wijze illustreeren en te gelijker tijd de bestaanswijze derliefde Hemelwonderingen in volle klaarheid aanschouwelijk maken.

<p>Het Wonder der Sterrenwereld. Omschep der Planeten om de Zon. De Zon en hare totale verduistering. Da. ringvormige Zonsverduistering. Mercurius en Venus. De Planeten Mars.</p>	<p>Jupiter de grootste Planeet. Saturnus met zijne ringen. Schijngestalte der Maan. Breedte der Aarde om hare As. Een Landschap op de Maan (Prachtige Beeld). Wandeling der Aarde om de Zon.</p>	<p>Het bestaan v. Maan- en Zonsverduisteringen. Ebbe en Vloed. Het Sterrenveld van den grooten beer. Kometenbaan. Vuurspiegel. Sterrenveld der zuidelijke hemelkring. De nieuwe Verrigting.</p>
--	--	---

2^{de} Afdeling.

De Zonsverduistering op den 19^{den} Augustus 1887

Geheele aanschouwing der totale Zonsverduistering van den 19den Augustus 1887, gezien en opgetekend in de Sterrenwacht te Willem in Ruiland, opening der Zon, voorbijtrekken der Maan voor de Zonsonne, Verduistering der Atmosfeeren, alsoo in uitzonderingse aanvijwing.

3^{de} Afdeling.

DE VERSTROOING EN DEN ONDERGANG VAN BABYLON.

De heugzame tijden der oudheid zagen van Semiramis bergafwaarts varen. De strijd en de verwoesting der Babylonische Toren. Beroeping der Mesopotamische door den Griekischen Koning Cyrus. Den tijt Rome met zijne Kunst- en wader Bouwwerken. Daarna Zolentend met zijne Burgen, Waterwerken, Spoorwegstelsel, enz.; alsoo bij verrassende Dag-, Afschad- en Maanlichtvertooning.

KONINGS-FANTASTIEN: De prachtige Kasteelen van Koning Lodewijk II van Beieren: Hohenschwangau, Neu Schwanstein, enz.

DE NIEUWE KOLONIËN IN AFRIKA.

Ontdekkingsreizen van de beroemde Afrika-Ontdekkers Dr. Nachtigal, de Heeren Stanley en Luitenant Wissmann.

4^{de} Afdeling.

EENE WANDELING DOOR HET LAND VAN SPROOKJES.

<p>Het wagenrijzen der kinderen uit het sprookjesland. Botseling der Kluisen op den Heiligen Kerkstond. Klein Duitje en zijn Zuster.</p>	<p>De gekleurde Kat. Roedekje en de Wolf. Aasvogelrijzen en den Koningszoon. Tyl Uilenvogelrijzen's Schelmsontreken. Boswielje en de zevent Dwaazen.</p>	<p>Riddincken Cruus. Doornroosje en het betoverde Snot. Oxaliver en de Lijpuiters. Terzichden der kinderen uit het sprookjesland.</p>
--	--	---

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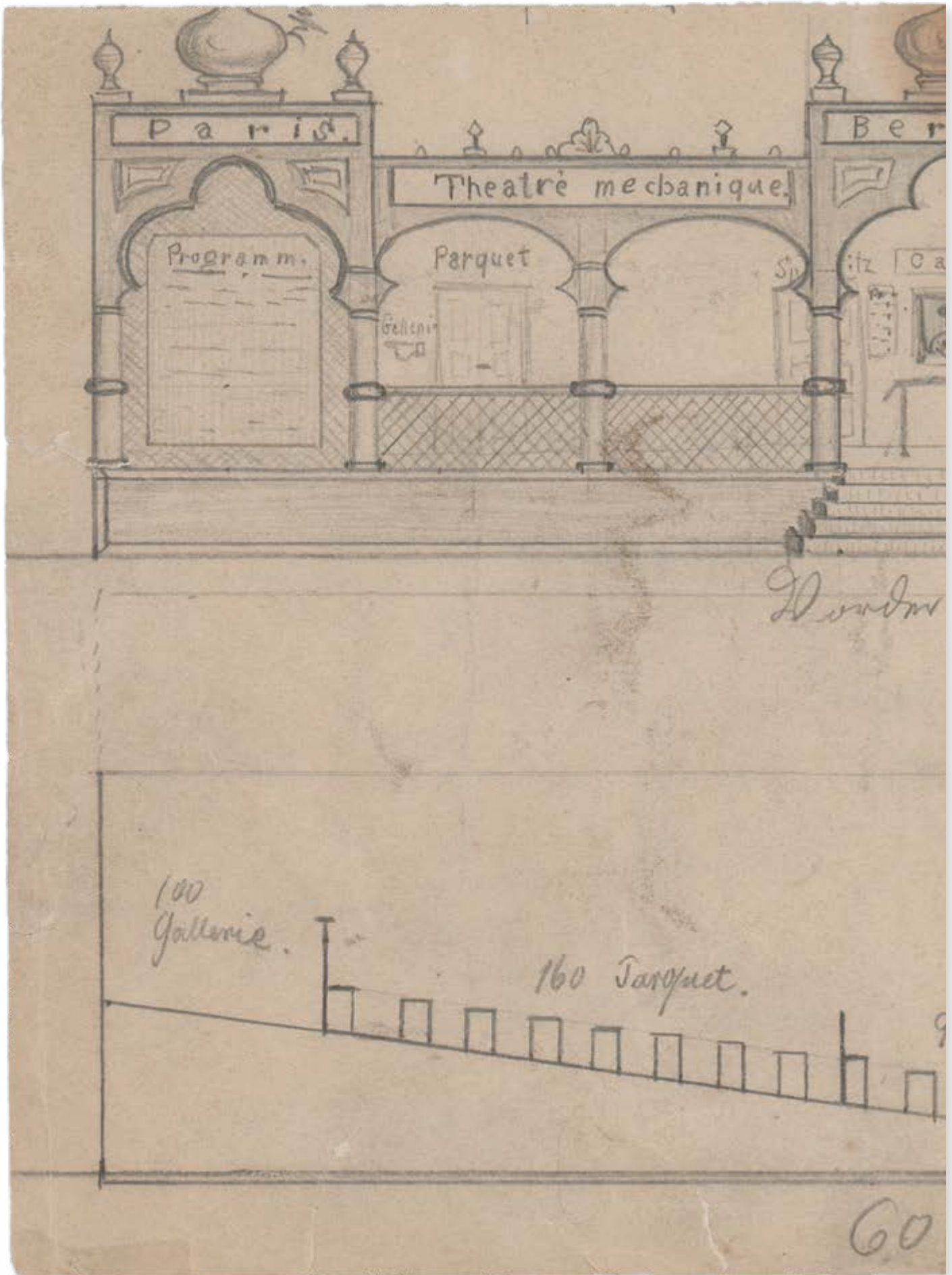
AVIS! De Sterrenwacht welke de hand des Scheppers, als het grooten behelzen der Natuur had voornemen, in het veld zijne bestellende werelden, is nog leden het schone dat in het kind tot de vrees en wachtinge indrukken waken. Ja, voor den mensch met zijne drang naar kennis dit alles raadselachtig tegensover staat. Deze afbeeldingen zijn een interessante Voorrecht begrip tot een ooverwinnende indruk voor het gehele leven achter laten en als men den late sijn dik tot den Overvloed omhoog rijk, zal deze niet meer raadselachtig toespelingen. Om ook de jongere Scholieren gelegenheid te hebben deze Voorstelling te kunnen bezien is in de 3de afdeling de reis in het sprookjesland enz. bijgevoegt.

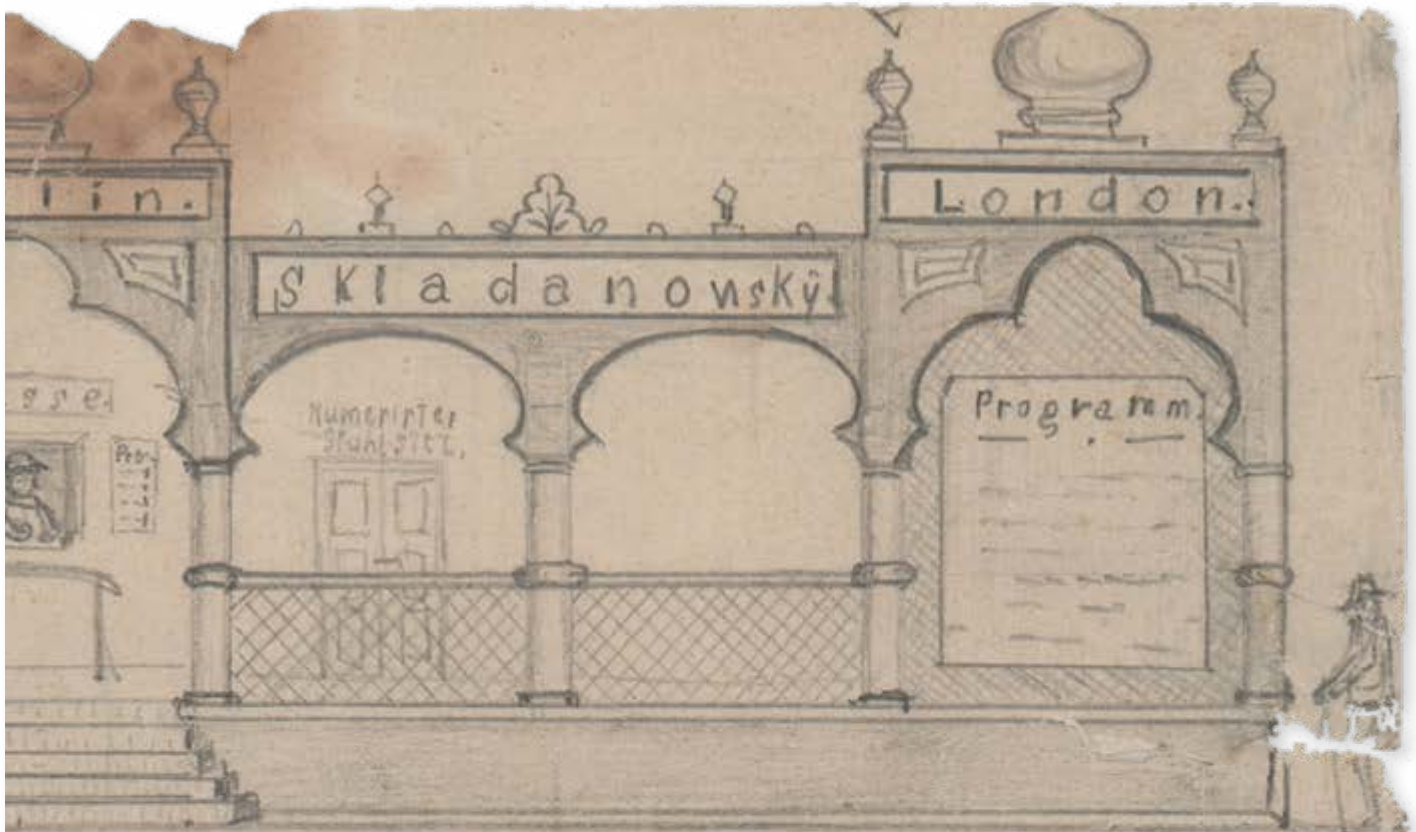
Wij maken voor! hierop opmerkzaam dat slechts ééne Voorstelling plaats vindt.

C. Skladanowsky & Zonen,
Phototechnisch en Physiker,
Lid van het Afrikaansche Genootschap.

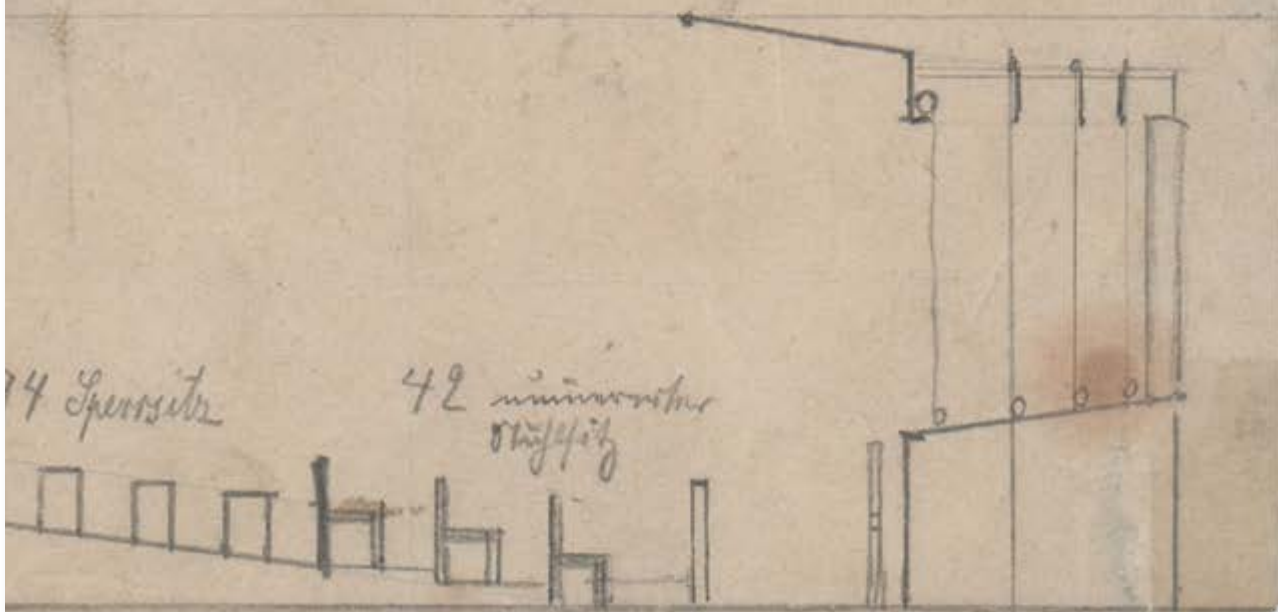
Hollandsche Schouwburg, Utrecht, 1888.

Announcement of a magic lantern show in Utrecht in 1888
At that time, the Skladanowskys were touring parts of Europe with their magic lantern.
They performed in the Netherlands and Sweden, among other places.
BArch, N 1435-50-0002





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Theatre is quickly set up; it occupies but little space behind the
stage or the podium. The proscenium is 5 meters in breadth and

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The occult mechanism of the figures, carriages, ships, trains etc. is worked in a most original way quite unique of its kind.

The humorous and serious representations which take place on an open Scene have been carefully copied from Nature and this in a manner as to ensure the most realistic effect for everything seen seems tangible.

Hamilton Theatre consists of 4 parts: (The illuminative effects shed on the dissolving views are of an entirely inexpressible magnificence.)

1. The morning light depicts street-life in all its various forms. Remarkable Shapes cross the stage, their gait and bearing is quite life-like. Young men and women the former skimming on bicycles the latter riding on tricycles pass to and fro through an animated crowd the bustling throng separating as the machines approach.

Suddenly a carriage appears but the horse most respectfully declines to move from the spot.

Cabby seizes the whip and lashes the horse as hard as he can but without the desired effect for the obstinate maybe worn out animal only shakes its mane in a contemptuous way. The occupant of the carriage now rises to his feet being terribly frightened. Suddenly the horse bolts and Cabby and the occupant are thrown out into the road. The spirited Rossinante having attained its object trots off with the cab on first rate style. This rare conveyance having rolled off the stage, the above scene is followed by another intermezzo. But hark! what's that? From afar the roll of the drums is heard: „The Patrol is approaching. The regiments band strikes up an martial air and the march past that follows is one of unequalled precision.

2. The dissolving views begin moving and the spectator gazes on the life of the mountains. A painter has put up his easel and commences to portray the lovely landscape. A hunter all of a sudden appears on the scene in quest of venison. A stag hushes by but the hunters bullet is quicker by far. The wounded animal makes an effort to escape a few steps more and it breathes its last. — The huntsman's lads carry the dead animal away with them.

The shades of night veil mount and wood, the guardsman ascends his signal box he lights the lamps then quits his box and draws up the danger signal's red flaring light. The noise and puffing of the locomotive of an approaching train is heard, which becomes louder as it draws nearer; with a noise that makes the welkin roar, the train, the carriages of which are lighted dashes past at a tremendous rate of speed, gradually the tumbling noise decreases as the train disappears in the distance over a wooden bridge and through a tunnel.

A whirlwind announces the approach of a thunderstorm the inevitable fall of rain follows and which as it comes dropping down is distinctly heard. (This unique effect is produced by the Raining machine). One flash of lightning succeeds the other. — The bridge is struck the beams are set ablaze they tumble together and a heap

of smoking ruins indicate the spot where the bridge formerly stood.

The Sun gradually rises, day begins to dawn, the snow decked tops of the mountain are shaded by a purple lustre. (Illuminative effect by means of the dissolving views and the light regulator).

3. New wonders are depicted to our entranced vision by the dissolving views which move onward. High nideed rocks the vasty deep, a trading vessel is tossing to and fro on the waves at a distance. The atmosphere is darkened by an approaching storm. The beacon of the light-house flashes forth a deep red danger signal light across the surging waters and thus warns the steamer entering the port. The heavily hanging black clouds are being lit up by intermediate flashes of vivid lightmig. (Light effect by means of the dissolving views) for one single moment this picture of terror is lit up by an extraordinary vivid flash of lightning attended by thunder.

The sea is running high a tremendous flash of lightning strikes the steamer, and the grand vessel is reduced to fragments, the wreck becomes the victim of the pitiless elements and slowly sinks.

4. The last part is however of a humorous description. — New York and the gigantic bridge spreads before our gaze veiled by the morning fog. New York life in its various shades is depicted to us in the harbour.

Ships arrive and depart, a signal is heard and a rowing and sailing regatta glides past. How the crews are rowing just as if the world depended on their efforts, the sailing vessels share in the strife and do their utmost in order to obtain the laurels of victory.

Darkness circumvallates the earth, the lanterns are lit up on the gigantic bridge, high up in the sky the moon sheds a silvern lustre on the lovely scenery. (Sensational light effect by means of the dissolving views).

A steamboat with lighted cabins passes the harbour.

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The Secret of all dramatic succes the basis of it is **mechanical**. The inspired moments are instantaneous. The body of actors and actresses ought to see this entertainment for there they will behold the framework of the art they love. They will then own that the first principle of acting is pantomime.





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Koole-Orchester
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Musikalische Excentriques und Zauber-Parodisten.
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5. **Mstr. Percy Harvay**
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Program of the First Frankfurt Orpheum from 1 to 16 February 1893

The First Frankfurt Orpheum called itself the 'largest and finest speciality stage'. In addition to tightrope walking, 'bravura gymnasts,' 'magic parodists,' musical interludes and a trained cockatoo, the Skladanowsky brothers also performed there with their so-called 'electro-mechanical-pyrotechnical water show theatre.' Among other things, they showed a series of magic lantern presentations of New York Harbour, a sea storm and Kaiser Wilhelm's voyage to Nordland.

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Zweiter Theil.

8. **Mlle. Leodiska**
 mit ihren vorzüglich dressirten Kakadus. Das Vollendetste der Dressur.

9. **Ella Percy and Albin**
 The three little Stars. Das Vollendetste der Drahtseilkunst!

10. **Geschwister Franklin (4 Damen)**
 Bravour-Turnerinnen.

11. **Herr Paul Ybbs**
 Musikalischer Clown, Imitator.

12. **Gebrüder Skladanowsky**
 Electro-mechanisch-pyrotechnisches Wasserschauspiel-Theater.
 1. Abtheilung: Hafen von New-York mit der Brooklyn Brücke. 2. Abtheilung: Auf
 hoher See. 3. Abtheilung: Meeressturm. 4. Abtheilung: Bombardement von Alexandrien.
 Zum Schluss: Kaiser Wilhelms Nordlandfahrt (Kaisersdier, Nordcap, Mitternachtssonne).

13. **Danbenthaler-Marsch**, componirt von **C. Herchet.**
 Capellmeister.

Musikdirector **C. Herchet.**

in die Direction, das Programm zu ändern. ←→

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Bitte die Rückseite zu beachten!



Program for the performance in Prague in October 1893

While in Skladanowsky's day Prague's third oldest theatre was mainly used as a variety theatre, today it is known for its musicals and operettas.

BArch, N 1435-87-0002

PROGRAMM.

Sonntag den 29. October 1893.

Nachmittags 3 Uhr.

Dirigent: Herr V. Prax.

Regisseur: Herr J. Negri.

I. Abtheilung.

- *1. „Barataria-Marsch“ von Komzák.
2. „Cypressen-Walzer“ von Ph. Fahrbach.
3. Damen-Octett: **LES RAMONEURS.**
4. **Mr. CRAFFORD**, Pyramidenkünstler.
5. Herr **A. TACIANU**, Damenimitator u. Sopransänger.
6. **TROUPE MONTROSE**, Parterreacrobaten.

P a u s e.

II. Abtheilung.

7. Serbischer Marsch von Schulze.
8. **Die WELTREISE des Erzherzogs Franz Ferdinand** und andere Tableaux.
9. **Mlle. MARTHE MARTHY**, Chanteuse française, Originalité vocale.
10. **Frères KULPER**, Musikacrobaten.
11. **GODEFROI RASSO**, Athletentrio.
12. „Yarscha,“ Polka-Mazur von Rott.
13. **The DUNBARS**, Luftpotpourri.
14. **Gebr. SKLADANOWSKY**, elektro-mechanisch-pyrotechnisches **Wasserschauspiel-Theater.**
 1. Abth.: Hafen von New-York mit der Brooklyner Brücke.
 2. Abth.: Auf hoher See.
 3. Abth.: Meeressturm.
 4. Abth.: Bombardement v. Alexandrien. — Zum Schluss: Die Weltausstellung in Chicago am Tage und bei Illumination. (Das Hauptausstellungsstück: Die »Santa Maria des Columbus« passirt den Hafen.)
15. **Variété-Marsch** von Rudolf Tichý.



* Alle im Théâtre Variété gespielten Musik-Pièces sind in der Musikalienhandlung *H. Weiner*, Obsigasse 4, zu haben.

Theater-Nachricht.

Familienblocks zu 12 Parterre-Entrées, Preis 5 fl. 5. W., sind in der Theaterkanzlei, I. Stock, Vormittag von 9—12 Uhr und Nachmittag von 2—4 Uhr erhältlich. Die 12 Entréekarten können innerhalb eines Monats vom Tage der Lösung in beliebiger Zahl täglich (mit Ausnahme von Sonn- und Feiertagen) benützt werden.

Etwaige Beschwerden bittet man der Direction anzuzeigen.

Heute Abends 8 Uhr

 **grosse Vorstellung.** 

Telephon 840.

Druck von A. 200 Renn in Prag.

Living Photographs

Max Skladanowsky's Early Film Recording Technology – Kurbelkasten I

by Egbert Koppe

Recording a moving scene frame by frame on a light-sensitive film strip requires the repetition of two phases: In the first phase, the respective image in a series of images is exposed; in the second phase, the film is transported further with the aperture darkened. This is followed by the exposure of the next image and the subsequent transport of the film again, creating the process of intermittent or gradual film transport.

Inventors around the world – including Thomas A. Edison in the United States, William Friese-Greene in England and Léon Guillaume Bouly in France – had attempted to develop various technical methods of intermittent and film transport in the late 1880s. Max Skladanowsky successfully applied for a patent for a “technical device that could intermittently advance the film for photographic serial apparatus and bioscopes.” The *Kaiserliches Patentamt* (Imperial Patent Office) granted the patent on 1 November 1895 under the number 88599. The device could be used in a film projector as well as for image capture, and Skladanowsky used the technology when capturing the image with the *Kurbelkasten I* and projecting it with the *Bioscop I*.

Although contradictory statements exist, Max Skladanowsky probably took the first test shots with this serial camera on the roof of the building at Schönhauser Allee 146 in Berlin in the summer of 1894. The actor in front of the camera was his brother Emil, who stepped into the picture from the right. He removed his hat, threw his left and then his right leg sideways into the air and then bowed once to the front left and once to the right in front of an imaginary audience. Although a large part of this sequence of images has not survived, around 50 are believed to have originally existed. This assumption is supported by the fact that some of Skladanowsky's later flip book originals were also taken with the *Kurbelkasten I* and they each contain 48 images. The best-known images produced with the *Kurbelkasten I* in the summer of 1895 were probably the variety acts projected in the Berlin *Wintergarten* on 1 November 1895.

The device developed by Max Skladanowsky had several problems, however. Because the *Kurbelkasten* was designed to transport only unperforated negative film and the mechanism was very imprecisely manufactured, the spacing of the images exposed on the film strip was quite uneven. It was therefore not possible to transfer the images directly to a projectable positive film. In addition, the variant of the intermittent mechanism chosen by Skladanowsky caused excessive vibrations.



Kurbelkasten I
Max Skladanowsky shot the first 'films' with this self-built serial camera.
BArch/Witzel

The introduction of the Maltese cross – a new step-by-step mechanism for moving the film strip that continues to be used today – and the perforated negative film made this earlier

process obsolete. Henceforth Max Skladanowsky turned his attention to developing new filming and projection equipment.



Emil Skladanowsky doing gymnastic exercises on the roof of the house at Schönhauser Allee 146; the shot was probably filmed in 1894

These serial images were taken on the roof of photographer Wilhelm Fenz's studio at Schönhauser Allee (Berlin-Pankow). The movement of his brother Emil Skladanowsky, captured on film by Max Skladanowsky, is considered the first recording of its kind in Germany.

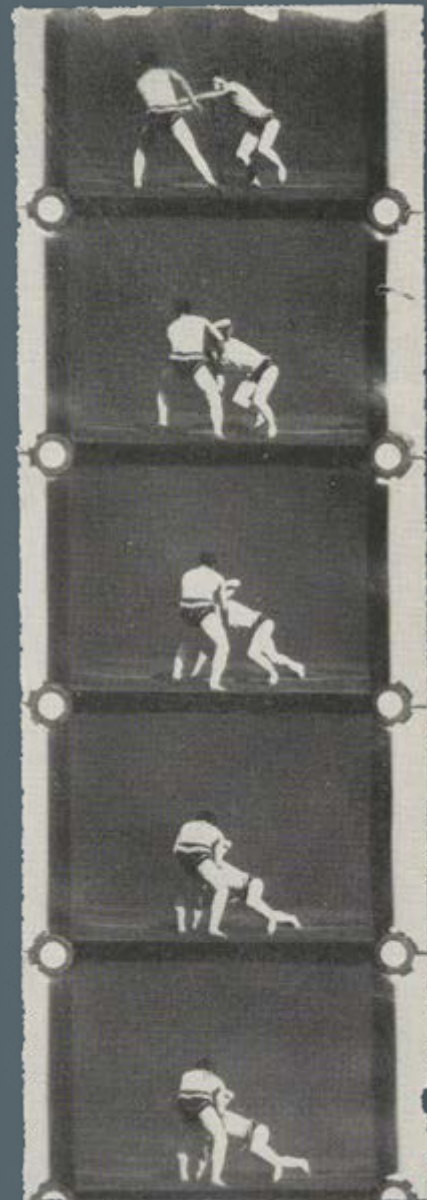
Left: BArch, N 1435 Bild-118-001/Skladanowsky, Max; middle: BArch, N 1435 Bild-118-002/Skladanowsky, Max; right: BArch, N 1435 Bild-118-003/Skladanowsky, Max



'Kamarinskaya' Negative, 1895

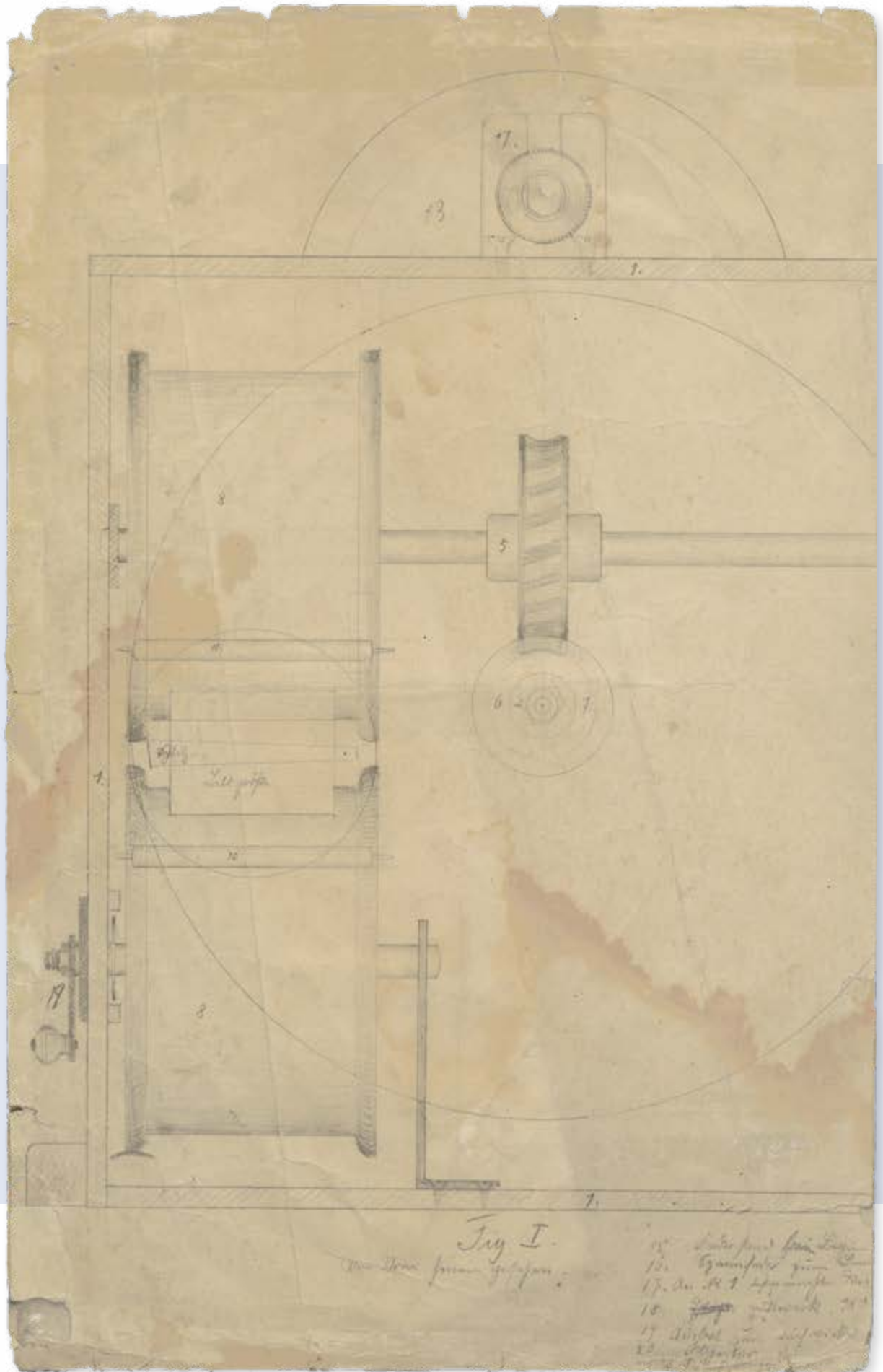
Skladanowsky took up to 48 individual images on a 1.5-metre-long thin roll film without perforations. The distance between the images varied.

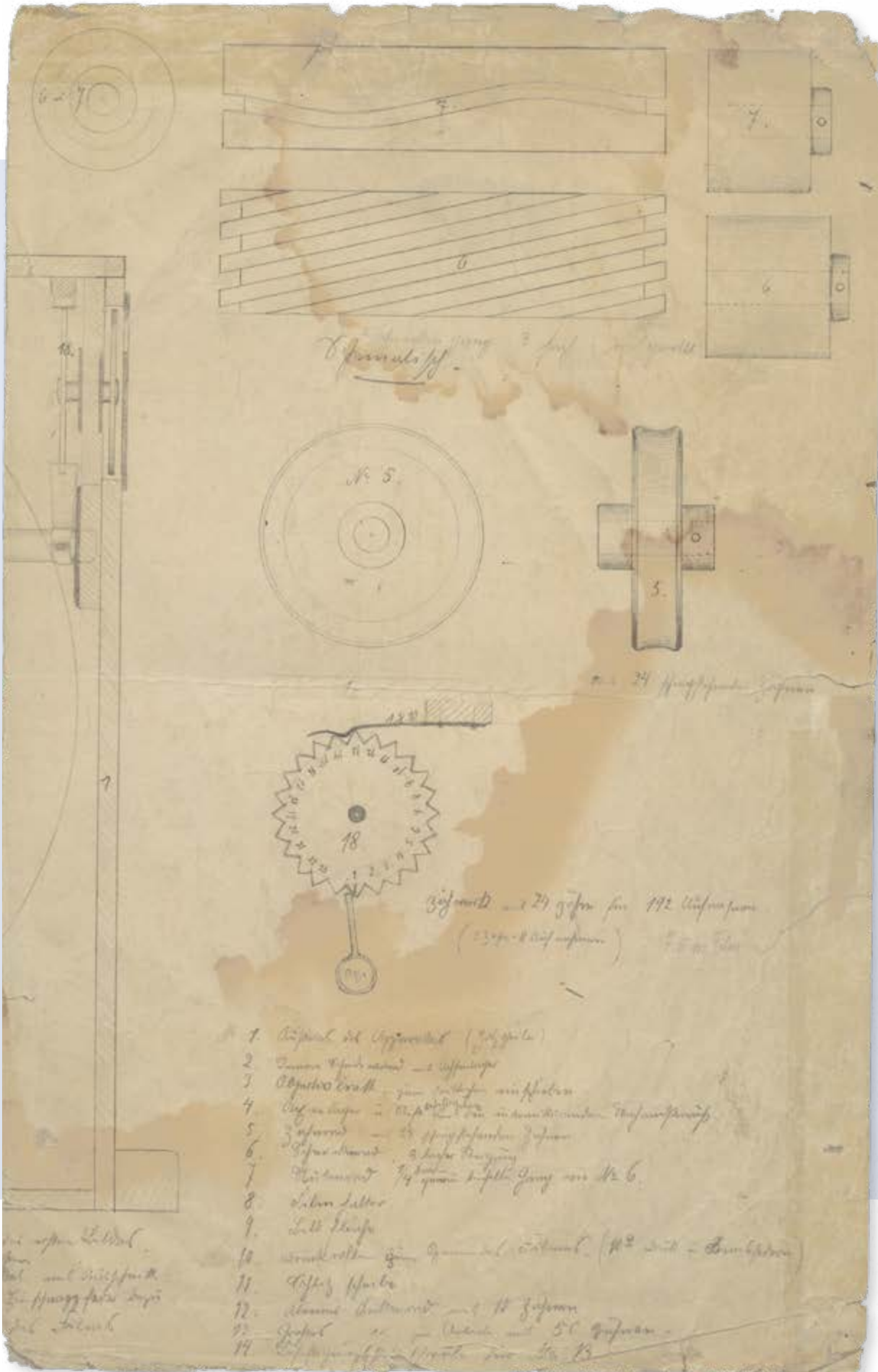
BArch, N 1435-264-0013/Skladanowsky, Max

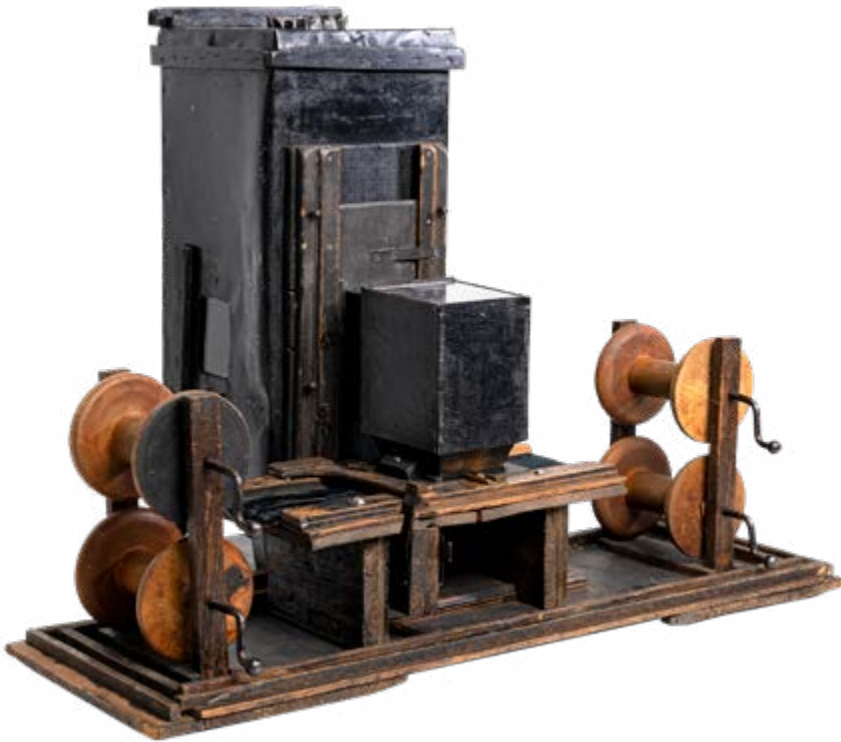


'Ringkampf' (Wrestling), Positive, 1895

BArch, N 1435-264-0013/Skladanowsky, Max







Printing Machine (Measurements in cm: 56 x 37 x 20 / L x W x H / Material: softwood frame, walnut storage rack, hardwood cranks, glass, black felt)

Skladanowsky designed the printing machine to produce positive prints for projection from the developed negative films. This wooden device made it possible to copy individual images in steps: The negative film was moved manually and exposed onto positive film under a light source (initially a kerosene lamp, later an incandescent spirit lamp) with a mirror device. This image-by-image copying process was very time-consuming: Skladanowsky needed eight hours at the beginning and later, with the improved light source, four hours to print 25 metres of film.

BArch/Witzel



Development Drum (Measurements in cm: 135 x 34 x 35 / L x W x H / Material: softwood frame, drum made of hardwood, metal bars and rods)

Skladanowsky constructed this apparatus from a drum-mounted cylinder with a rotary crank drive and immersion tank to fix and wash both the positive and negative film. Twenty metres of film could be mounted on the drum so that the entire film strip could be immersed in the developing bath and developed.

BArch/Witzel

"Die Wachparade kommt! Unter den Linden in Berlin." Positive, 1896

Image of a 65 mm positive film of the "Second Programme" with perforations punched into the side. Later on incorrectly dated to 1895 by Max Skladanowsky.

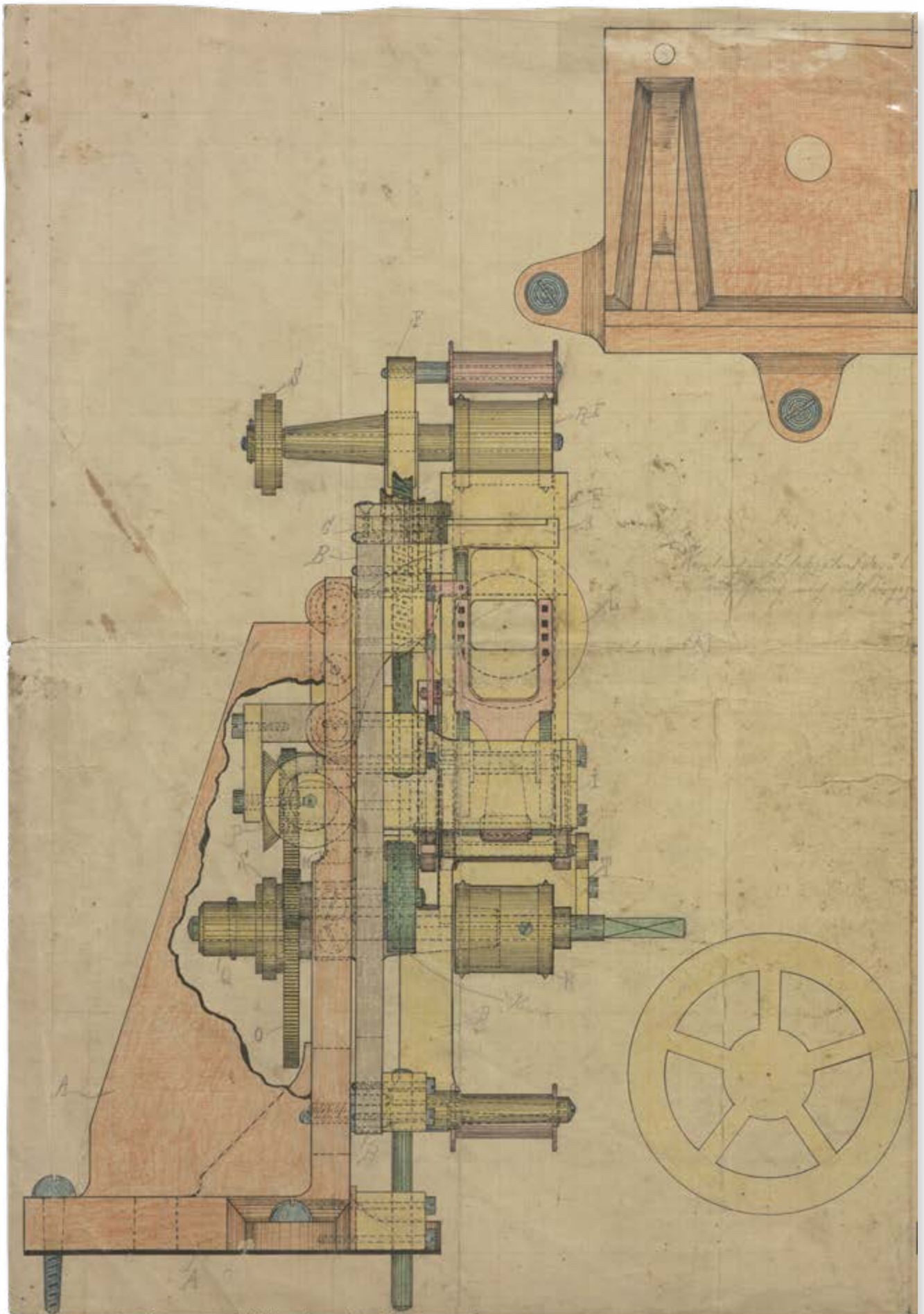
BArch, N 1435-264-0015/Skladanowsky, Max

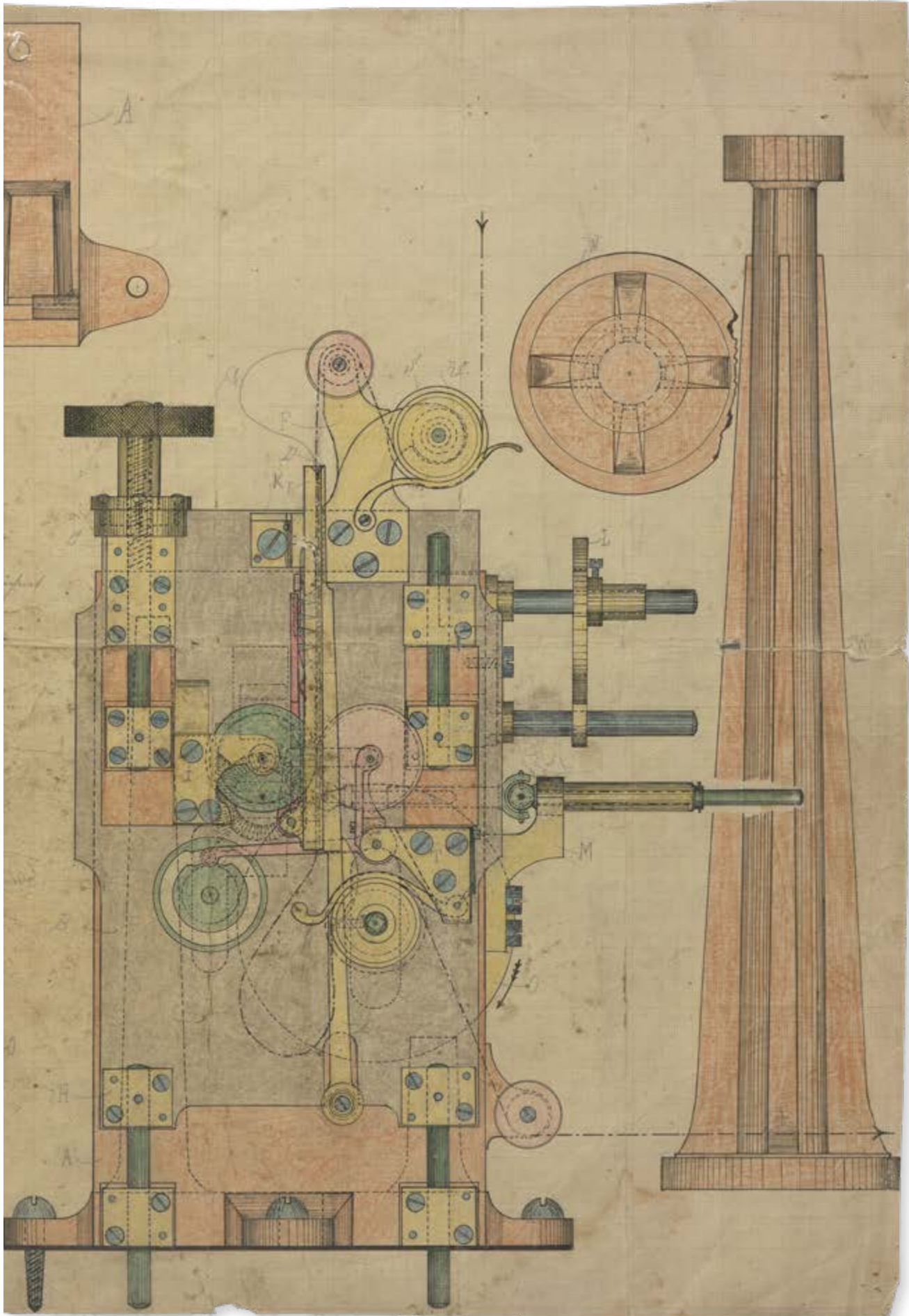


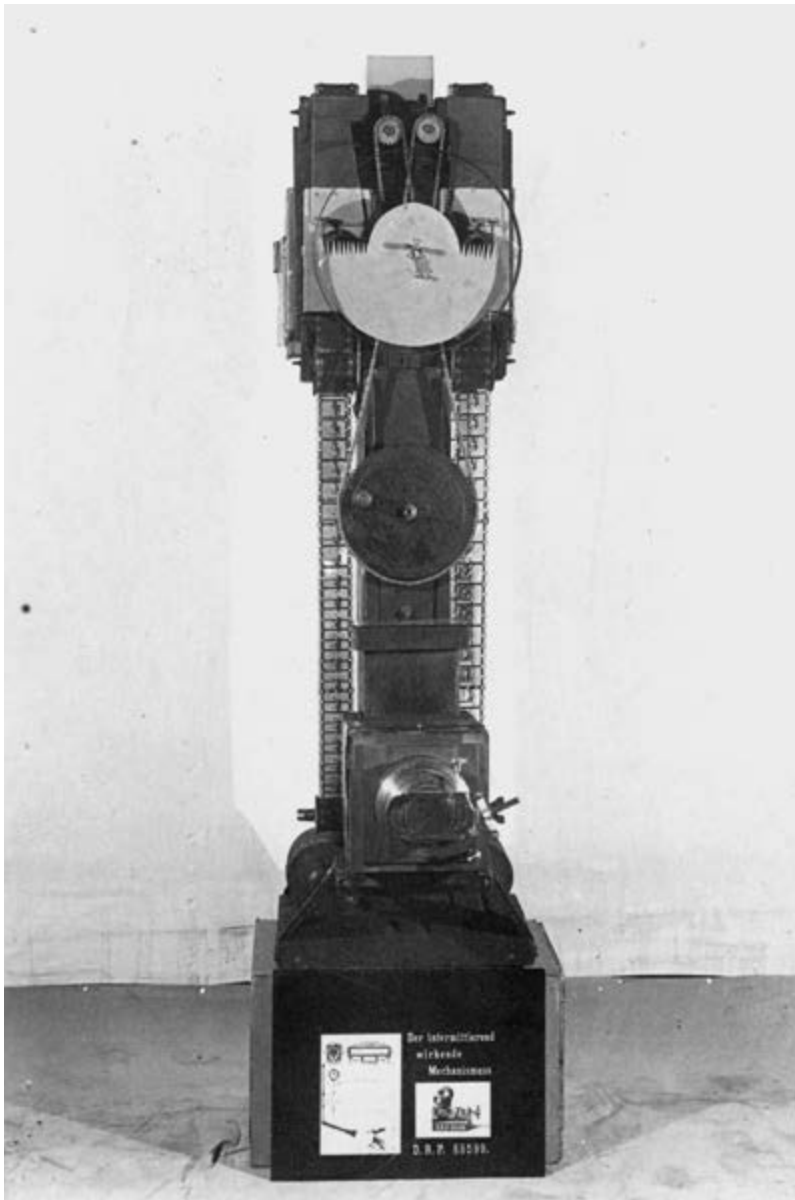
Perforation Machine (Measurements in cm: 35 x 16,5 x 28 / L x W x H / Material: softwood, walnut/ beech/hardwood, painted sheet metal)

This mechanically crank-operated device was used to punch the perforation holes into the film strips. Max Skladanowsky used perforated negative film with a width of 63 mm on both sides for the first time for the shooting of the "Second Programme" (Reise- und Berlin-Bilder). Skladanowsky built a machine from various components which conformed to the system of the paper perforator, making it possible to use an intermittent mechanism to perforate the film and move it forward evenly during recording and projection. Two perforation holes were punched into both sides of the negative film and additional perforation holes were added at the edge of the 65-mm-wide positive film.

BArch/Witzel







Bioscop I, 1893–1895

BArch, N 1435 Bild-273-010/n.a.

Bioscop I

Max Skladanowsky had already produced two prototype projectors, but they both had problems with the brightness and frame rate of the film projection, which caused individual images to flicker. With the Bioscop I, completed in 1895, he achieved a technical innovation that initially solved this problem: A double projection of two projectors linked together was able to

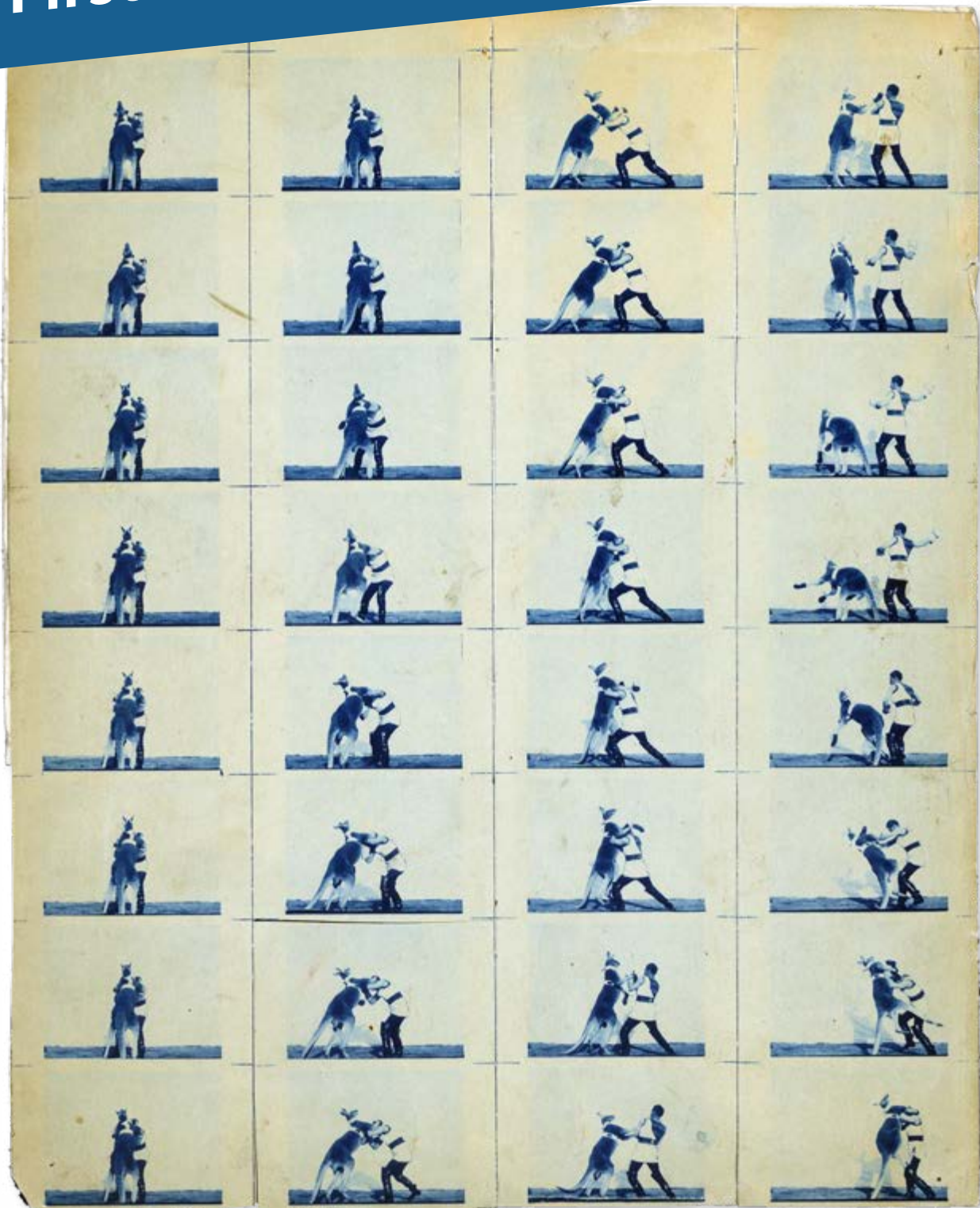
increase the image frequency with the help of the cross-fading technique that had been used for the magic lantern projection, thus bridging the dark phase between the individual images. This prevented flickering by means of optical compensation. In research on early cinema, opinions vary as to whether the frame rate of the Bioscop I was 8 or 16 frames per second.



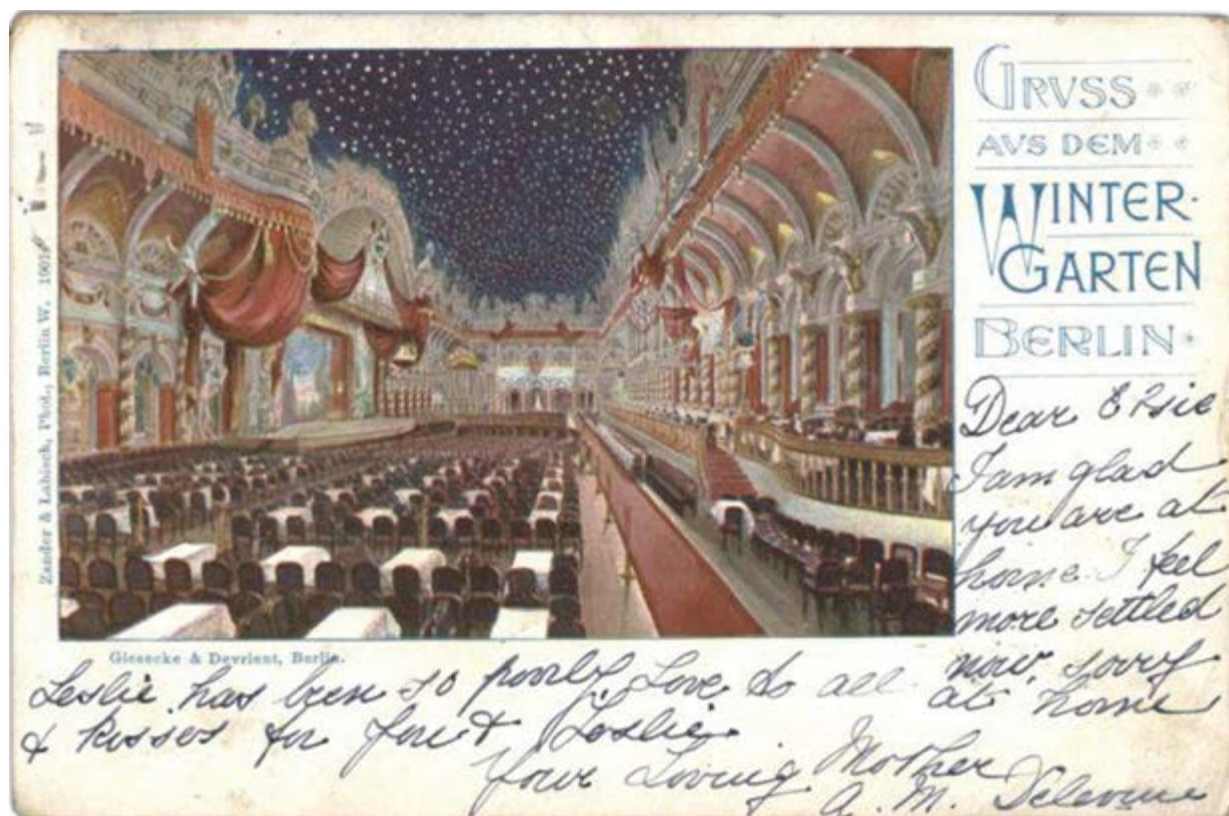
Patent certificate No. 88599 by Max Skladanowsky for the "Device for intermittently advancing the image position for photographic series, apparatus and bioscopes",
1 November 1895

BArch, N 1435-192-0002

First Film Screenings



“Das boxende Känguruh” (The Boxing Kangaroo), May 1895
Contact prints for the film of the Wintergarten programme
BArch, N 1435 Bild-094-002/Skladanowsky, Max



Postcard from the Wintergarten in Berlin, n.d.
 Top: BArch, N 1435-278; bottom: private loan



Berlin, Friedrichstraße, corner of Dorotheenstraße, destroyed variety theatre “Wintergarten”, approx. March / April 1945

BArch, Bild 183-J31399/n.a.

Wintergarten

The *Wintergarten* established itself as a variety theatre in the conservatory of the *Central-Hotel* Berlin – one of the largest and most luxurious establishments located near Friedrichstraße Station in the burgeoning city. In 1880, the year the hotel opened, the first concerts were held in the 1700 m² hall. From 1888 onwards, the stage increasingly became a variety theatre with performances by internationally renowned artists and a popular entertainment venue for all strata of society in Berlin. An evening at the *Wintergarten* was always an event full of music, dance, sensations and, of course, food and drink. Guests could experience back-to-back performances by “Mr. Tompson” and his three elephants, a duo of Tyrolean singers, gymnasts, jugglers or a singing horsewoman.

Always on the lookout for the newest sensations, the two theatre directors, Julius Baron and Franz Dorn, hired the Skladanowskys, who presented

their water show, a kind of mechanical theatre with electrical and pyrotechnical effects, in October 1895. From 1 November 1895, they appeared in the *Wintergarten* with what was described in an advertisement in the Berliner *Lokal-Anzeiger* as “the most interesting invention of modern times”, the Bioscop and the “living pictures”. Their performance did not take place on the large main stage, but rather on the smaller side stage.

The *Wintergarten* remained one of the leading variety theatres in Berlin and throughout Europe into the 1940s. With seating for more than 3,000 guests, it hosted performances by Josephine Baker and many other national and international stars. The *Wintergarten* and the *Central-Hotel* were destroyed in a bombing raid on 21 June 1944. In 1992, the *Wintergarten* Variety Theatre reopened in Potsdamer Straße in Berlin in the tradition of the original *Wintergarten* and has been a venue for variety, revue, burlesque and acrobatics ever since.



The showcase is recreated.

„Italienischer Bauerntanz“ of the children’s group Ploetz-Larella, 1895
BArch, N 1435 Bild-096/Skladanowsky, Max

„Akrobatisches Potpourri“, Grunato family of gymnasts, 1895
BArch, N 1435 Bild-092-022/Skladanowsky, Max



Watch the entire Wintergarten program in the Digitaler Lesesaal:

WINTERGARTEN 1 November 1895



At the Wintergarten, the small stage is being prepared for the showing of a novelty, which will be highly talked about, among the common people as well as in scientific circles. A Berlin inventor has achieved to perfect the Kinetoscope in a way Edison had tried to without success for the past year. It is still a secret how exactly this curious invention will be able to address a large audience at the same time.

Berliner Börsen-Zeitung, Nr. 499, 24.10.1895

Serpentintänzerin Mademoiselle Ancion

A film, which only later became part of the programme.

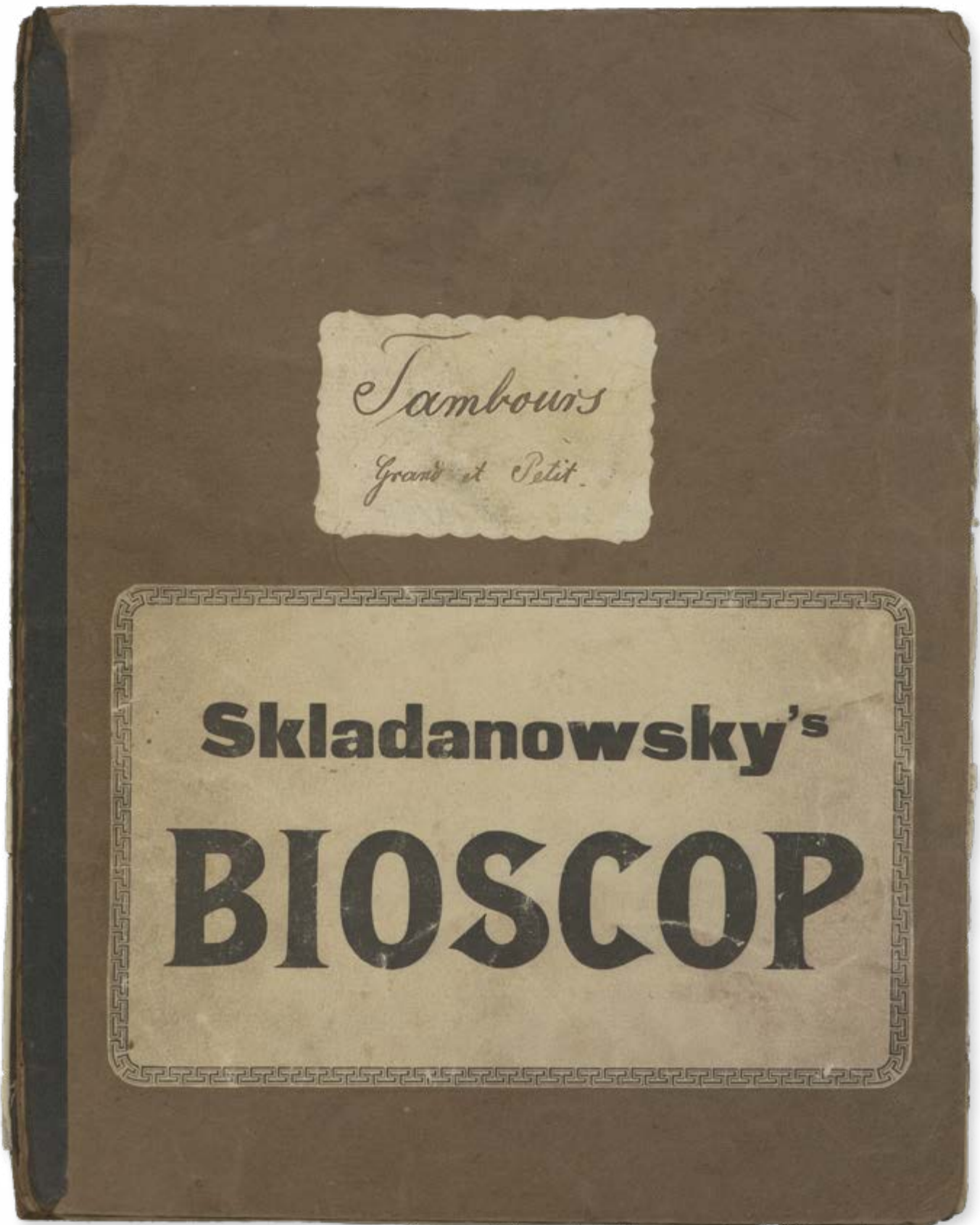


The final act of the show switches over to the "Bioscop" on the smaller stage. The inventive technician uses extraordinary momentary photograms and can make them seen enlarged, not still, but alive. The devil knows, how he achieves that.

Staatsbürger-Zeitung, Nr. 519 B, 5.11.1895

Of particular interest is the Bioscop, shown on the small stage. This invention by the brothers Skladanowsky shows us living scenes as known from Edison's Kinetoscope, but highly enlarged. Presented were among others a dance performed by children, an equilibrist, two equestrians, a Russian dance, etc. Lastly the inventors themselves appear on screen.

Berliner Intelligenzblatt, Nr. 267, 13.11.1895



Musical Score of the Wintergarten programme, 1895

A special score was composed for the film screening in the Wintergarten and premiered on 1 November 1895.

BArch, N 1435-100-0004

Introduction
Cello

And^{te} = mosso 6/8 *f. marcato* *f.* *cresc.* *f.* *riten.* *f.*

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.

Introduction Cello
BArch, N 1435-100-0022

The World’s First Film Music

by Burkhard Götze

Both in terms of film history and musicology, 1 November 1895, the day that Max and Emil Skladanowsky first screened their moving pictures at Berlin’s *Wintergarten*, marks a turning point that has received little scholarly attention.

Special music was composed for the Skladanowskys’ projections at the *Wintergarten* and performed live by the Great Orchestra of the *Wintergarten* in synchronisation with the films. This was one of the very first film scores ever created in music history. Many of the music scores used for the performances of the “living pictures” in the *Wintergarten* have been preserved almost in their entirety in the Federal Archives and in the document archive of the *Deutsche Kinemathek*.

The music opens with an overture played in advance of the film’s beginning, a mysterious-sounding tremolo in the low strings and a hunting motif in the trombones and horns. Gradually developing into a grand central motif in the basses and wind instruments, it is accompanied by cascading sixteenth notes in the woodwinds and strings. It is a majestic scene that wonderfully sets the mood for the grand event.

The following short scenes all feature their own musical accompaniment. First, a polka underlying the “Italienischer Bauerntanz”; a gallop plays during the “Komisches Reck” and the “Jongleurs”; surprisingly, a Spanish march accompanies “Das boxende Känguruh”. The “Gymnastikerfamilie Grunato” is accompanied by the “Maskengalopp”; the “Kamarinskaya” by an original Kamarinskaya, a Russian national dance; the “Ringkampf” is accompanied by a march, followed by the short finale, also a march-like piece of music, which has no specific template and was likely composed especially for this event. It is not surprising that

the music consists mainly of dances, as several of the film recordings in the programme depict dances. In order to ensure that the music was perfectly synchronised with the dance movements on screen, the conductor and his orchestra had to perform with utmost precision.

Determining whether the pieces are original compositions or arrangements would require further research. There are no references to the composer or arranger on the handwritten scores, except for the stamp of the band leader F. Hoffmann, who was probably not the conductor of the performance, but rather the arranger or orchestrator. In a newspaper article from 1955, Max Skladanowsky’s son, Erich Skladanowsky, cites Kapellmeister Ernst Krüger as the composer of the music, however this has been proven incorrect for many pieces. Thanks to the new edition of the surviving sheet music, three pieces have been clearly identified thus far, namely the “Tritsch-Tratsch-Polka” (op. 214) by Johann Strauss (son) as accompanying music for the „Der Jongleur Paul Petras“, the Spanish march “Der Stierkämpfer” by Hermann Reh for “Das Boxende Känguruh,” and the Kamarinskaya (1848) by Michael Glinka. The “Maskengalopp” bears a different copyist’s handwriting than that of the other pieces and, as with nearly all of the works, the name of the composer and a stamp are missing. The introduction and finale are the only pieces that may be new compositions produced specifically for the *Wintergarten* programme.

With Burkhard Götze’s reconstruction, adaptation and arrangement of the music based on the surviving sheet music, the world’s first film score is now being performed again for the first time in 130 years by the Metropolis Orchestra Berlin as part of the exhibition “Did I invent film?”

Violino II^{do}

Introduktion.

And^{te} mosso

Handwritten musical score for Violino II, titled "Introduktion." The score is written on ten staves. It begins with a treble clef, a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#), and a 6/8 time signature. The tempo is marked "And^{te} mosso". The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are several dynamic markings, including "f." (forte) and "ff." (fortissimo). The score includes fingerings (e.g., 1-6, 0, 0, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8) and articulation marks like accents and slurs. The paper is aged and shows some wear, with a faint circular stamp in the upper right corner.

Introduction Violine 2
BArch, N 1435-100-0015

Sensationelle Neuheit!
Gesetzlich geschützt.

Sensationelle Neuheit!
Gesetzlich geschützt.

Gebrüder Skladanowsky's BIOSCOP

**Die amüsanteste und interessanteste Erfindung
des 19. Jahrhunderts!**

Am Schlusse unseres Jahrhunderts war es uns vorbehalten, der staunenden Welt das sensationelle Schauspiel zu geben, die Wiedergabe des Lebens in voller Natürlichkeit durch eigens zu diesem Zweck erfundene Maschinerien und complicirte Apparate, durch blitzschnelle Projection zahlreicher Moment-Photographien vor grossen Zuschauerkreisen zur Darstellung zu bringen.

Seit Jahren sind Forscher mit hochklingendem Namen bemüht gewesen, der Lösung dieses ganz besonders schwierigen Problems näher zu kommen, bisher vergeblich. Der bekannte Forscher MEYBRIDGE zu Philadelphia nannte dieses Problem seine Lebensaufgabe und hat bis heutigen Tages 120 000 Mark darauf verwendet, ohne diesem Räthsel einen Schritt näher zu kommen als EDISON, welcher laut den gedruckten amerikanischen Reclamen 1 Million dafür verwendet haben soll; die Darstellungen seines Kinetoscopes lebensgross zu projectiren, ist ihm nicht gelungen. Zwei Jahre seines Lebens verwendete er für diese Aufgabe, vergeblich, die lebensgrosse Wiedergabe von Serienaufnahmen durch phänakistoscopischen Effect hielt er endlich für unmöglich.

Zu gleicher Zeit mit EDISON betraten auch wir diesen Pfad, und uns ist es gelungen, das schwierige Problem zu lösen. Am 30. October 1895 wurde unsere Erfindung, das Bioscop, dem Patentamte unterbreitet und hat den gesetzlichen Schutz erhalten. Gleich darauf, am 1. November, fand die erste öffentliche Darstellung des Bioscopes im »Wintergarten« zu Berlin statt, begleitet von einem enthusiastischen Erfolg, wie ihn der »Wintergarten« selten erlebt hat.

Durch diesen beispiellosen Erfolg wurde Gebr. Skladanowsky's Bioscop sofort für PARIS »Folies Bergères« engagirt; darauf folgten die Verpflichtungen für LONDON »Empire-Theater« — Blackpool Tower. Wohl der beste Beweis für die Vorzüglichkeit und eminente Neuheit der Darstellung von Skladanowsky's Bioscop.

„Man muss das Bioscop gesehen haben“, war der Ausspruch sämtlicher Zeitungen Berlins.

Gebr. Skladanowsky's Bioscop hat gegenwärtig folgendes Repertoire:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Italienischer Bauernanz, ausgeführt von 2 Kindern. 2. Komisches Reck (Brothers Milton). 3. Das boxende Känguruh (Mr. Delaware). 4. Jongleur (Petras). 5. Acrobatisches Potpourri (8 Personen). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Kammarintzky, russ. Nationaltanz (3 Gebr. Tschernpanoff). 7. Serpentintanz (Mlle. Ancion). 8. Ringkampf zwischen Greiner und Sandow. 9. Apotheose (Gebr. Skladanowsky).
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Ein volles Variété-Programm in 15 Minuten.

NB. Die lebensgrossen Darstellungen im Bioscop sind die Projectionen eigener Original-Serien-Aufnahmen, sie geben genau das Leben in voller Natürlichkeit vermittelst der Electricität wieder, man glaubt die Wirklichkeit vor sich zu haben, so greifbar plastisch ist die Wirkung des Bioscopes.

Zur Zeit PARIS „Folies Bergères“.

Hochachtungsvoll
Gebr. Skladanowsky.

Adolf Friedländer's Ignorée, Hamburg, St. Pauli.

Announcement of the Bioscop presentation, December 1895

BArch, N 1435-109-0002

Skladanowsky Brothers'

BIOSCOP

The most amusing and interesting invention
of the 19th century!

In this advertisement for the Bioscop screening at the Folies Bergère in Paris, the Skladanowsky brothers' invention is celebrated for its outstanding technical innovation and ability to create a natural reproduction of life in images before a large audience. Their competitors, such as Meybridge (sic) and Edison, had yet to achieve this. They are described as having spent vast amounts of money and time trying to project life-size images without success. The text further claims that the Skladanowskys' invention was patented on 30 October 1895 and that soon after, on 1 November 1895, the first public screening was held at the "Wintergarten" in Berlin. Their tremendous success there led to an engagement with the Folies Bergères in Paris and the Empire Theatre in London.

Skladanowsky Brothers' Bioscop currently
has the following repertoire:

1. "Italienischer Bauerntanz" performed by 2 children.
2. "Komisches Reck" (Brothers Milton).
3. "Das boxende Känguru" (Mr. Delaware).
4. "Jongleur" (Petras).
5. "Acrobatisches Potpourri" (8 persons).
6. "Kammarintzky", Russian national dance (3 brothers Tscherpanoff).
7. "Serpentinentanz" (Mlle Ancion).
8. "Ringkampf" between Freiner and Sandow.
9. "Apotheose" (Skladanowsky brothers).

A complete variety show in 15 minutes.

Paris

After their successful performance at the Wintergarten in Berlin in November 1895, the Parisian theatre Folies Bergère engaged the Skladanowskys for January 1896; they travelled to Paris at the end of December 1895 where they attended a film screening by the Lumière brothers – and discovered that the Lumière invention was technically superior to their own. This was probably why the Folies Bergère terminated the contract with the Skladanowskys, but continued to pay their fee. The Skladanowskys were now available for new performances.



"Alarm der Berliner Feuerwehr im Hofe der Hauptwache in der Lindenstraße"
(Alarm of the Berlin Fire Department in the Courtyard of the Hauptwache in Lindenstraße)
Film still from "Reise- und Berlin-Bilder der Gebrüder Skladanowsky", 1896/1897
Bundesarchiv, Reise- und Berlinbilder, 63364



"Leben und Treiben am Alexanderplatz in Berlin" (Life and bustle at Alexanderplatz in Berlin)
Film still from "Reise- und Berlin-Bilder der Gebrüder Skladanowsky", 1896/1897
Bundesarchiv, Reise- und Berlinbilder, 63364



Watch all films
in the Digitaler
Lesesaal:



“Einfahrt eines Eisenbahnzuges” (Arrival of a Train)

Film still from “Reise- und Berlin-Bilder der Gebrüder Skladanowsky”, 1896/1897

Bundesarchiv, Reise- und Berlinbilder, 63364

The Skladanowsky Brothers’ Travel and Berlin Pictures

The Skladanowskys shot the “Second Programme”, the footage referred to as the Skladanowsky brothers’ “Travel and Berlin Pictures”, in August/September 1896 with the *Kurbelkasten II* in Berlin, Stockholm and Copenhagen. The frame rate of filming and projection was 16 frames per second (the *Wintergarten* programme is believed to have been 8 to 16 frames per second). The content of the recordings also differed from the *Wintergarten* programme: Instead of focusing on the attractions of a variety programme and individual artists, this work presented views of the city and short comic scenes in public spaces. In March 1897, the two brothers also made recordings in Szczecin with the *Kurbelkasten II*, which they subsequently showed on location – unfortunately, the piece titled “Am Bollwerk in Stettin” is the only work to have survived.

In a memo written by Max Skladanowsky and preserved in his estate, he recalls the production of the scenes “Alarm der Berliner Feuerwehr” and “Ausfahrt der Berliner Feuerwehr” (cf. N 1435/271). In consultation with the chief of the fire brigade, Max Skladanowsky was able to prepare these films in advance with a length of 30 to 40 seconds: After arranging the camera, the alarm in the fire department was triggered by a signal that allowed Max Skladanowsky to film the fire department’s exit with the *Kurbelkasten II*. As with the work of other film pioneers, the staging and documentation are closely interwoven – from the very beginning of filmmaking, the documentary aspect of film recording was inseparable from the planning and preparation phase.

Bioscop II

Possibly inspired by the technical innovations of the Lumière brothers, Max Skladanowsky built another projector, called Bioscop II, to project the cityscapes he produced throughout 1896. The projector was designed for a single-strip 65 mm film and equipped with a Maltese cross for an intermittent film transport. Evidence of the use of this new projector exists only for the Skladanowskys' engagement in Szczecin in March 1897. This was the only time this "Second Programme" of travel and Berlin pictures was shown. These screenings in Szczecin marked the end of their first film career and, soon thereafter, the end of the personal and business relationship between the brothers Max and Emil Skladanowsky.

The picture below, in which Max Skladanowsky is seen posing with the Bioscop II, was probably taken in the mid-1920s. The text beneath the photo misleadingly declares the projector to be the "first cinematograph from 1895", but the year stated is wrong. In later years, Skladanowsky frequently dated his films and technical film inventions incorrectly as a way to inflate the significance of his role in developing film technology.



Max Skladanowsky with his "Bioscop", n.d.
BArch, N 1275 Bild-088/n.a.

Gertrud Anna Pauline Skladanowsky
1874 – 1930

Max Skladanowsky
1863 – 1939

Gertrud Skladanowsky
1891 – 1954



The Skladanowsky family, n.d.

Max Skladanowsky with his second wife Gertrud Anna Pauline Skladanowsky and daughter Gertrud Skladanowsky from his first marriage
BArch, N 1435 Bild-278-008/n.a.

Family Life

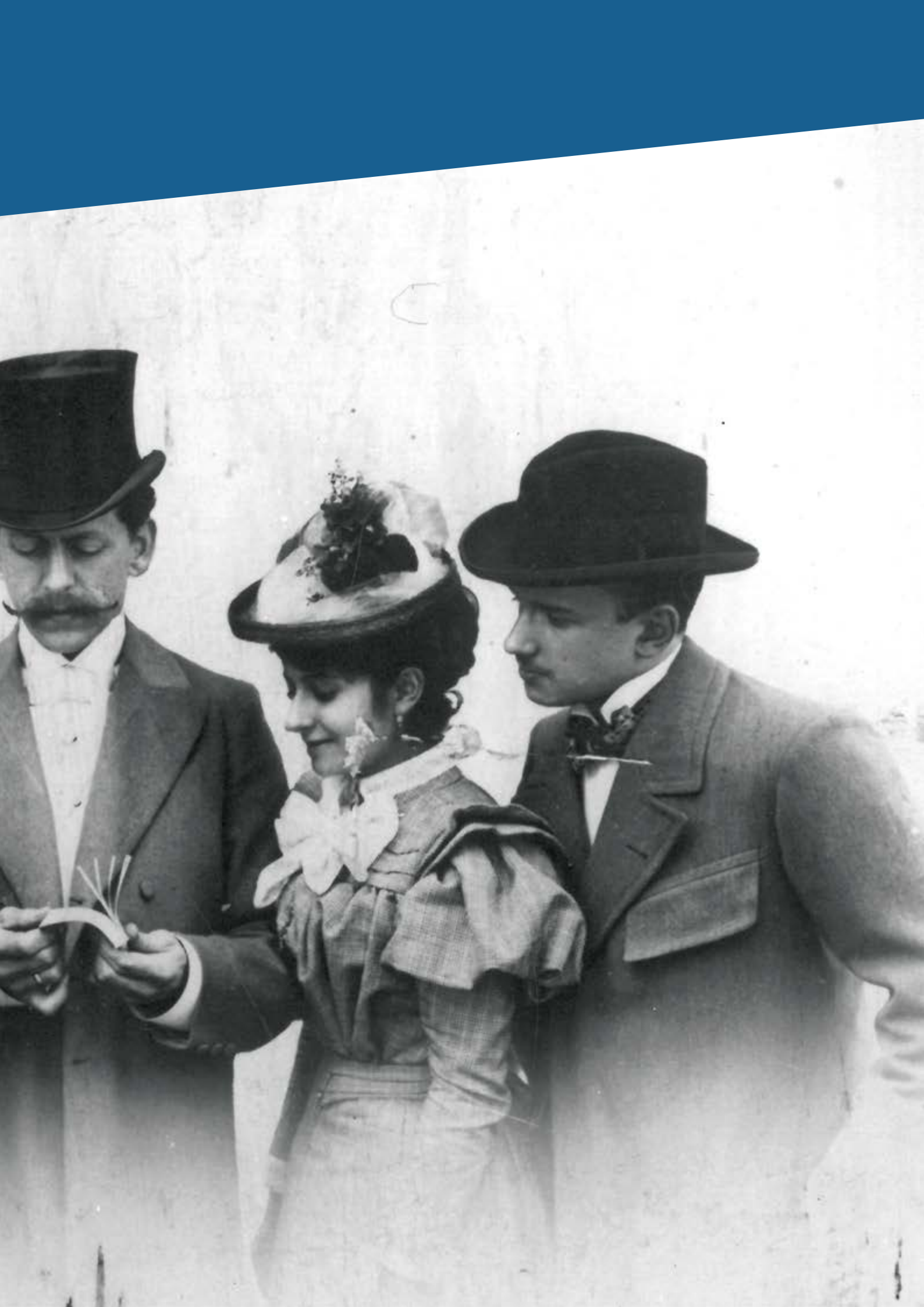
Max Skladanowsky's first marriage in 1880 was with Else Nadolek (or Nadolny), who sadly died during childbirth of their first daughter, Gertrud. With his second wife, Gertrud Anna Pauline Marx, whom he married in 1896, he had three children: Erich, Lucie and Margot. When his daughter Gertrud was five years old, she appeared in one of her father's films, which was published in 1896 as a flip book under the title "Die kleine Puppenköchin". At the time, her father referred to her as the world's first film actress. After Max Skladanowsky's death, his children Lucie and Erich preserved their father's legacy. After the Second World War, Erich Skladanowsky, who worked with his father throughout his lifetime, referred to himself as a film historian and became head of the film department at the East Berlin Akademie der Künste in 1952. He researched early film history and, until his death in 1966, strove to accentuate his father's historical significance. Lucie († 2001) was interviewed in the DEFA film "Die Wiege des boxenden Känguruhs" (GDR 1987) and in Wim Wenders' "Die Gebrüder Skladanowsky" (GER 1995).



The living room of the Skladanowsky family at Schwedterstr. 35 a, Prenzlauer Berg, Berlin approx. 1890
BArch, N 1435 Bild-303-003/Skladanowsky, Max

Flip Books, Plastographs & “Projektion für Alle”





Two flip books from the estate of Max Skladanowsky, “Kaiser Wilhelm” (left) and “Die kleine Puppenköchin” (right), n.d.
 Left: BArch, N 1435 Bild-122-523/Skladanowsky, Max; right: BArch, N 1435 Bild-120-524/Skladanowsky, Max



Flip Books

by Joachim Castan

By 1897, the Skladanowsky brothers' career as film pioneers was over. With flip books, which Max Skladanowsky called “cinema in your pocket” or “living photographs in book form”, he believed he still had a chance to make a name for himself on the now overcrowded market for “living pictures”. On 9 June 1908, Max Skladanowsky wrote to F. Paul Liesegang: “When I returned to Berlin from my long travels in 1897, I published the small Living Photographs in book form, which [as with the projector] found countless imitators, and which I distributed all over the world.” He thus claimed to be the inventor of the pocket cinematograph.

On 18 March 1868, J. B. Linnett received a British patent for his “Kineograph”, a booklet with sheets printed with successive images on one side. In the English-speaking world, these popular books were sold at street vendors as “penny books”. One could argue that Max Skladanowsky was the first to use photographs instead of drawings in these flip books, but this is only partly true: Hermann Casler had already been successful in the United States with his mechanised flip book in 1895/1896. Max Skladanowsky was the pioneer of photographic flip books, at least in Germany. On 3 April 1897, he submitted a model to the Imperial Patent

Office for “copies of a photographic series attached in book form.” The brothers Max and Emil Skladanowsky began manufacturing and selling flip books together in early 1897. The business with flip books proved to be very lucrative.

Max Skladanowsky drew on his experience in constructing the *Kurbelkasten I* serial camera and the *Kurbelkasten II* film camera to create the camera for flip books. He used this camera not only for his own personal recordings, but also had it mass-produced for sale. At the turn of the century, self-made flip books, his flip book camera and small amateur film projectors were bestsellers at Skladanowsky's photo article factory. The exposed negative film was either printed on photographic paper or used as a print template. The books were subsequently produced from these image templates. The small flip books could be mass-produced cheaply. Special luxury editions were printed on real photographic paper and bound in leather. Max Skladanowsky was able to earn significant profits with these handheld “films”. The distribution of the flip books was first handled by the Archimedes publishing house; later, Skladanowsky distributed them through his company *Projektion für Alle*. (Projection for all). The Archimedes publishing house was offering some 20 different titles by Skladanowsky, including the famous “Boxende Känguruh”.

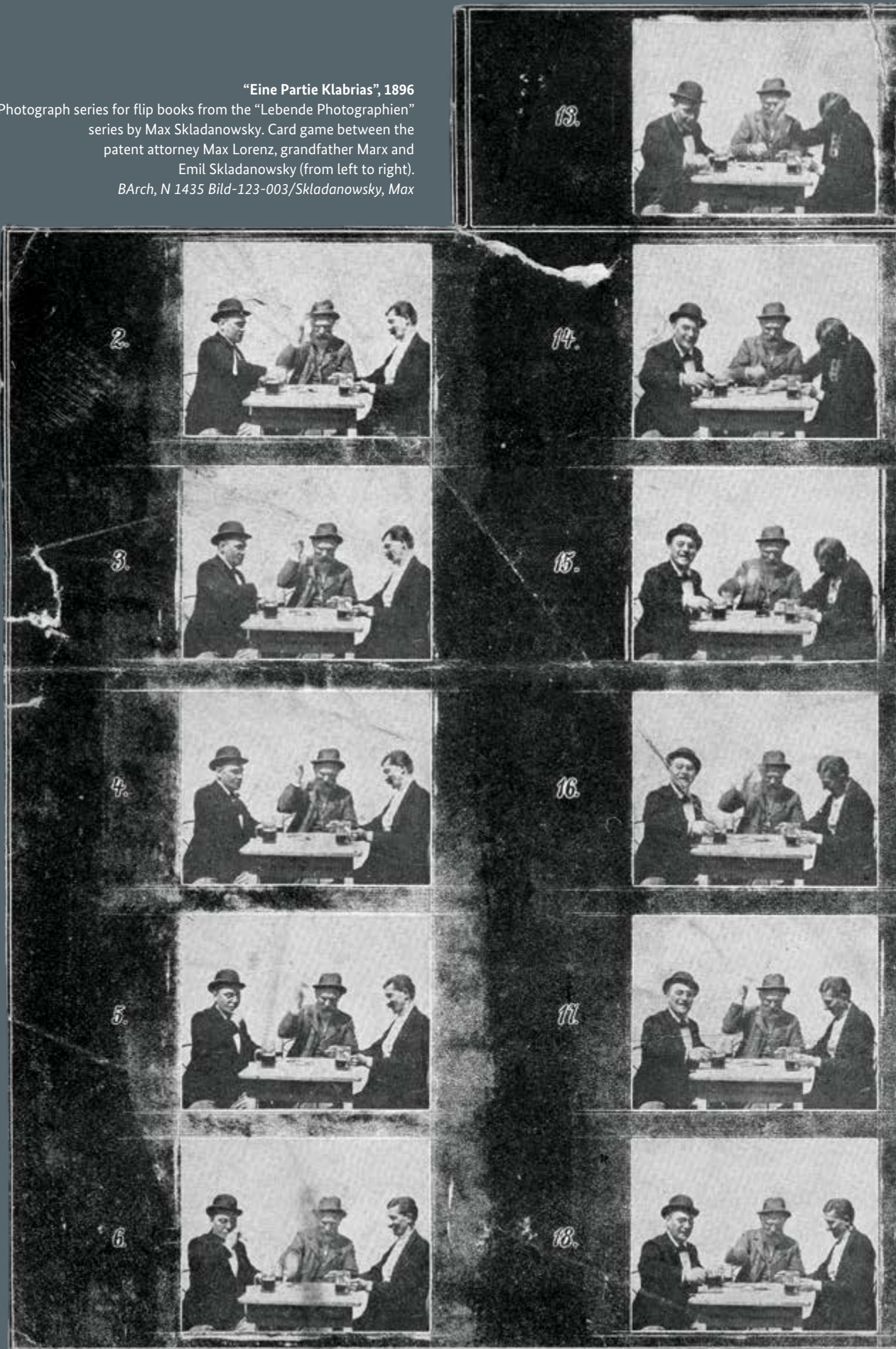


Advertising leaflet for Max Skladanowsky's "Lebende Photographien" in book form / flip books, n.d. BArch, N 1435-138-0002

National themes were also popular at the time. These included various flip books with actors portraying well-known monarchs or politicians. The people portrayed covered the entire political spectrum: Monarchists as well as conservatives and socialists walk around with their idols in their pockets. In them, the actor Stahl dressed up as Bismarck, Eugen Richter, Ludwig Windthorst and August Bebel and imitated these politicians' typical gestures behind a podium. Max Skladanowsky was also able to set high-ranking figures in motion. There were pocket cinematographs of the Prince of Wales, Emperor Frederick III, Emperor Wilhelm II and the Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph. The topics selected for the pocket cinematographs clearly reflected popular tastes in Germany at the time. Congratulatory books were nice little souvenirs. National figures promoted national pride, and the Social Democrats were not left on the sidelines.

In 1897, after breaking off from his brother, Max Skladanowsky continued to run the lucrative business with pocket cinematographs on his own. In the following period, a multitude of different companies were founded, all of which can be traced back to Max Skladanowsky. In 1896, Max Skladanowsky began listing himself as "photographer" in the local address book. By 1899, he ran a "novelty distribution company", which he used to sell his flip books.

"Eine Partie Klabbias", 1896
Photograph series for flip books from the "Lebende Photographien" series by Max Skladanowsky. Card game between the patent attorney Max Lorenz, grandfather Marx and Emil Skladanowsky (from left to right).
BArch, N 1435 Bild-123-003/Skladanowsky, Max



25.



37.



26.



38.



27.



39.



28.



40.



29.



41.

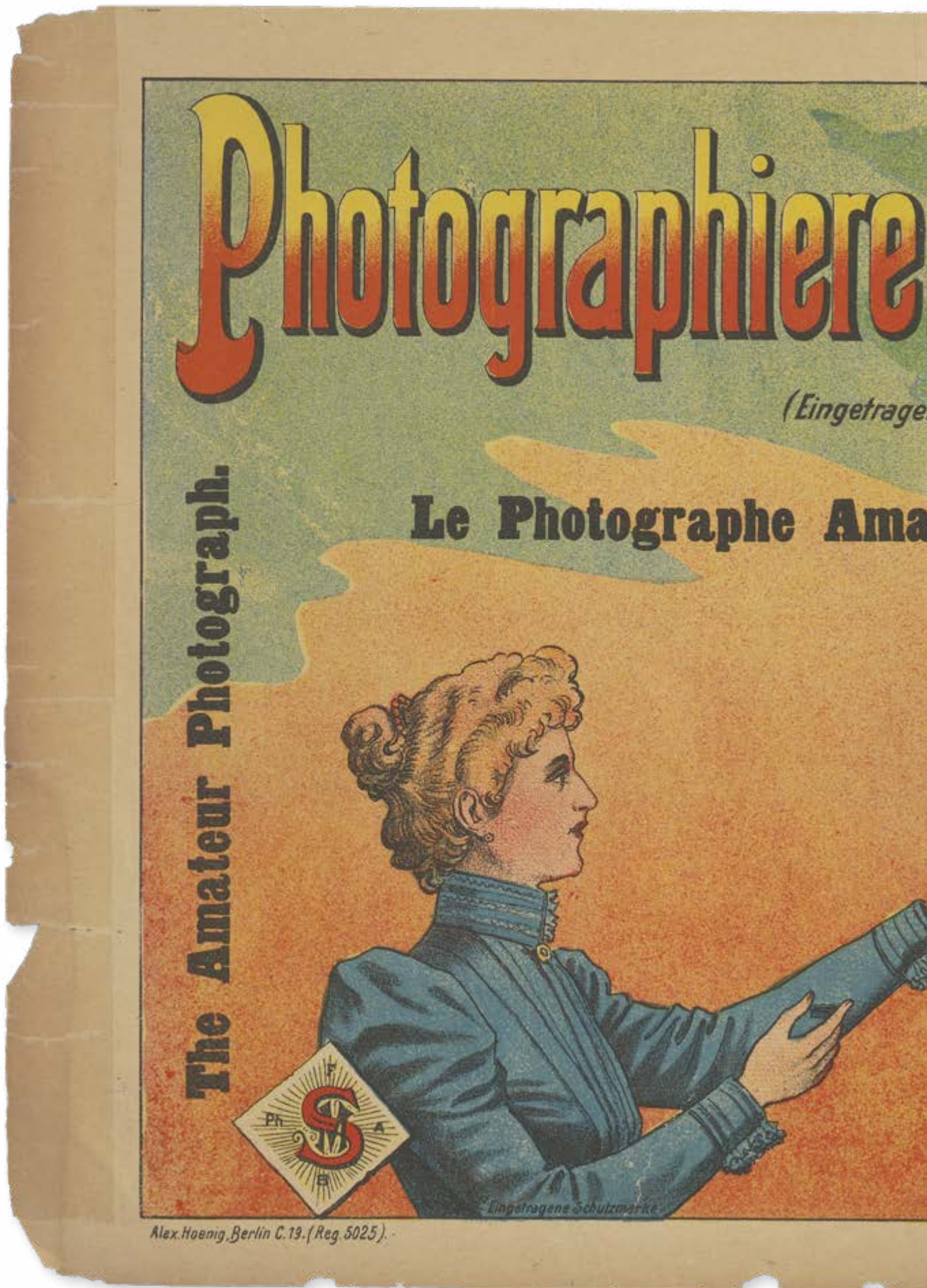


30.



42.

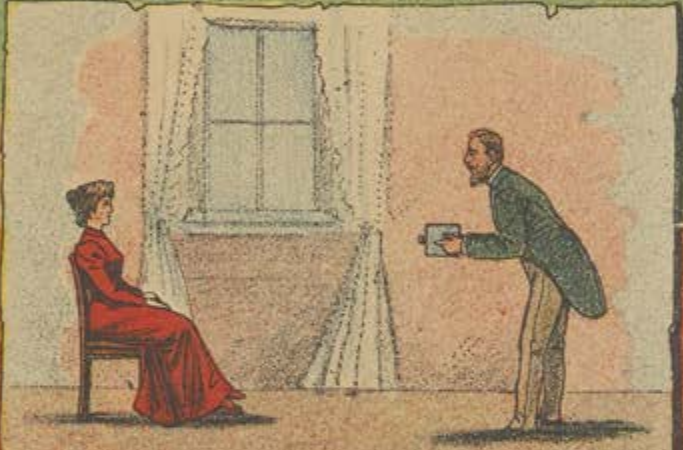




Dich selbst!

(eine Schutzmarke.)

teur.





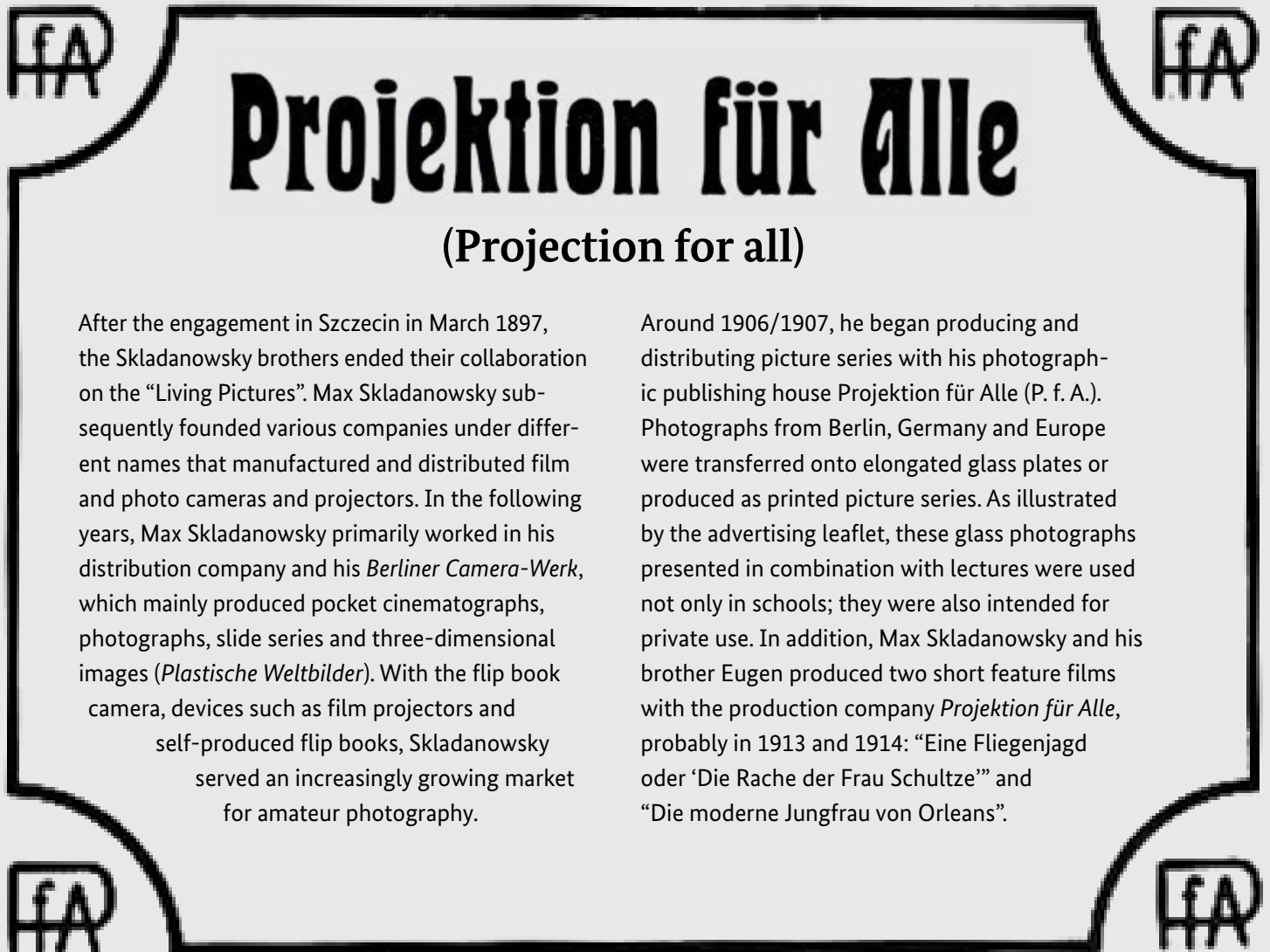
Berlin, Alexanderplatz and Berolina, Plastography No. 9, approx. 1903–1918
 BArch, N 1435 Bild-162-005/Skladanowsky, Max

Plastographs

In 1902, Max Skladanowsky became involved in stereoscopy, the process of reproducing two-dimensional images that convey spatial depth. He also began selling “stereoscope apparatuses” and the corresponding glass photographs (slide positives). In the subsequent years, Max Skladanowsky developed the so-called *Plastograph* a less expensive and handy model that targeted a broader clientele. The mass-produced red and green cardboard goggles and the three-dimensional picture series with motifs from Germany and Europe were available in bookshops. Next to city views, some series of pictures, which were labeled as “frivolous”, featured women in underwear or nightgowns. While these are not explicit pornography, they do manifest the sexist worldview of the time.

Using the anaglyph process (colour stereoscopy), three-dimensional images printed with red and green contours initially appeared blurred, but when viewed through the special glasses they appeared almost three-dimensional. At a certain distance, the left eye registered the images through the green eyepiece and the right eye through the red eyepiece.

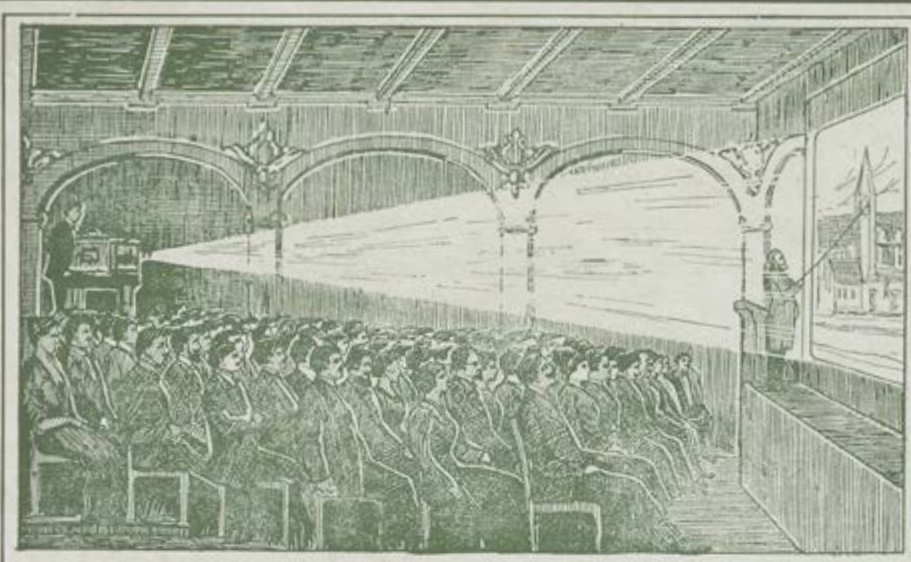
→
 Advertising “Plastische Weltbilder”, n.d.
 BArch, N 1435-164-0012



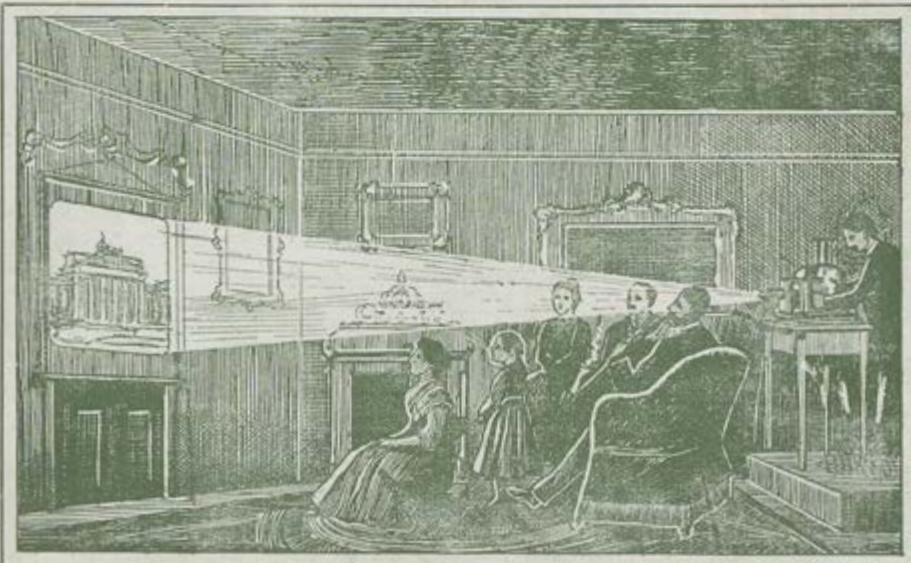
Empty announcement picture with the signet "P.f.A", frame for captions and texts during presentations, approx. 1900

BArch, N 1435 Bild-15-8-024/Skladanowsky, Max

→
P.f.A. überall Cover page, 1, n.d.
BArch, N 1435-169-0018



P. f. A.
überall



Projektion für Alle

Serie 43.No11.



The Wright Aeroplan.

Aeroplan Wright.

Die Wrightmaschine.

Original-Größe 83 X 83 mm

**Komplette Lichtbildserien mit Aufbewahrungs-Nutenkasten und Vortrag
Original-Glasphotographien! :: Bestes Material!**

„P. f. A.“-Serien sind ein vorzügliches Unterhaltungsmittel für die Familie und für Vereine. Sie stellen ein beherrschendes und geistbildendes Anschauungsmaterial für Unterrichtsanstalten dar. Die enorme Billigkeit bei erstklassiger Ausführung ist staunenerregend.

Der Kreis der Freunde der „P. f. A.“-Serien ist ungeheuer groß und wächst ständig weiter. Die dauernde Nachfrage nach neu erschienenen Serien kennzeichnet die Beliebtheit der „P. f. A.“-Serien. Darum

projiziere „P. f. A.“ – Bilder!

„P. f. A.“-Serien sind in der ganzen Welt verbreitet, überall finden sie begeisterte Aufnahme. Das reichhaltige Repertoire bietet jedem passende Auswahl.

Jede Serie besteht aus

24 Bildern mit Vortrag

und kostet
inkl. Aufbewahrungs - Nutzenkasten

nur 5.- Mark

P.f.A. überall Back cover, 2 & 3, n.d.

Left: BArch, N 1435-169-0019; right: BArch, N1435-169-0020

Die Serien **Nr. 1—20** werden auch in

„P.f.A.“-Laterna magica-Streifen



geliefert. Wie der stetig enorm wachsende Umsatz beweist, ist mit Herausgabe dieser Serien einem sich längst fühlbar gemachten Bedürfnisse abgeholfen worden. Die Bilder zeigen volle Naturwahrheit und bilden, mit Hilfe des fesselnden Vortrages, den Geist des Kindes. Es ist unzweifelhaft, daß die Kinder durch diese, die Wirklichkeit genau wiedergebenden

Original-Glasphotographien

ihre geographischen Kenntnisse ganz bedeutend erweitern.

Hervorragende Schulmänner haben schon längst den **erzieherischen Wert der Lichtbild-Projektion** erkannt und die Einführung derselben in Schulen bewirkt.

Die Jugend war bisher auf die gewöhnlichen, in schlechten Farben ausgeführten Abziehbilder angewiesen, da die photographischen Glasbilder zu teuer waren. Durch ein ganz neues Verfahren ist es nun gelungen, diese Glasphotographien so billig herzustellen, daß sie auch der Jugend zugänglich sind. Es ist nun den Kindern Gelegenheit gegeben, selbst interessante Vorführungen zu veranstalten, zu welchen sie ihre Freunde, Bekannten und Verwandten einladen.

Eine Projektion dieser Bilder ist nicht nur für Kinder, sondern auch für Erwachsene hochinteressant.

Wegen ihrer kolossalen Schärfe halten diese Bilder eine starke Vergrößerung aus.

Die Projektion der „P.f.A.“-Serien schafft Freude in jedes Haus!

Jede Serie besteht aus 6 Streifen à 4 Bilder
in dauerhaftem Nutzenkasten

Preis per Serie inklusive Vortrag in

4 cm - Streifen

M. 2,—

5 cm - Streifen

M. 3,—

6 cm - Streifen

M. 3,50



Film stills from "Eine Fliegenjagd oder 'Die Rache der Frau Schultze'", probably 1913

Cinematography: Max Skladanowsky;
Screenplay und Director: Eugen Skladanowsky;
Actors: Frida Cortelli and Eugen Skladanowsky
There are two versions of this film in the Bundesarchiv, which differ in the shot sizes, set design and editing. The film stills were created from the raw scan, which originates from a 16mm positive print (BSP-9141).

BArch, "Eine Fliegenjagd oder 'Die Rache der Frau Schultze'", 65924

Eugen Skladanowsky

1859 – 1945

*A long time ago, when I was born,
I was destined for something,
To bring joy to mankind,
To spread jest and humour among the people.*

Excerpt from Eugen Skladanowsky’s poetic curriculum vitae

BArch N 1435-283-0013

Max’s brother Eugen Skladanowsky began his career as a circus performer at an early age and was part of several circus ensembles. He was a skilled horseman, trapeze artist and tightrope walker. He also entered the film business with his brothers Max and Emil, both as an actor and as a writer, and was involved in the creation of three short feature films: “Der nächtliche Freier”, “Eine Fliegenjagd oder ‘Die Rache der Frau Schultze’” and “Die moderne Jungfrau von Orleans”. He often referred to himself as “Germany’s first film actor.”



Photo album, photo of Eugen Skladanowsky in a clown costume, 1890

BArch, N 1435-283-0085/n.a.



Watch the entire film in the
Digitaler Lesesaal of the Bundesarchiv



Film stills from Skladanowsky's "Die moderne Jungfrau von Orleans", probably 1914
Cinematography and Director: Max Skladanowsky; in the lead role Eugen Skladanowsky as Johanna
BArch, Die moderne Jungfrau von Orleans, 61198



Watch the entire film in the Digitaler Lesesaal of the Bundesarchiv



Inventor's Dispute

Following the introduction of their first film projections in the years 1895–1897, the Skladanowsky's importance in film history was soon forgotten. Max Skladanowsky did not receive public attention again until the 1920s. However, during lectures on his inventions, such as the one held at the *Deutsche Kinotechnische Gesellschaft* (DKG) on 23 November 1920, he often presented his later films and technical devices from 1896 as the very first films and devices from 1895, thereby exaggerating his status as the inventor of cinema.

With the large *Kino- und Photoausstellung* (Kipho), a film and photography exhibition celebrating the 30th anniversary of the earliest film projections in 1925, Max Skladanowsky became known to a wider audience again. However, his erroneous claim that the Bioscop II was his first projector from 1895 set off a long dispute among experts about the origins and significance of his inventions and films. Oskar Messter, his biggest opponent, explained the reasons for the clash in a letter to his son in 1941: "In 1920, Skladanowsky lied to and deceived the DKG, which I had co-founded. Since then, I have been fighting for the truth to raise the reputation of the DKG."

In the following years, these discussions escalated into the so-called "inventor's dispute", with the National Socialists supporting Skladanowsky from 1933. A German inventor of cinematography was a perfect match for their nationalist aims, and Skladanowsky enjoyed the fame and attention he received. While Oskar Messter, camera pioneer Guido Seeber and Max's brother Emil Skladanowsky tried to challenge this narrative, Prof. Carl Niessen, a young up-and-coming academic and leading theatre scholar, and his son Erich offered him their support. The discussions in the public discourse escalated to such a degree that in late 1934, the *Reichsfilmkammer* felt compelled to pass the so-called *Maulkorberlass*, a decree similar to a gag order that muzzled freedom of expression. This put an end to serious and open debate.

An official tribute to Max and Emil Skladanowsky and the unveiling of a commemorative plaque by the *Reichsfilmkammer* on the 40th anniversary of the first film screening was held in Berlin's Wintergarten on 1 November 1935. In 1942, three years after Max Skladanowsky's death, Oskar Messter was still demanding that the memorial plaque be donated to a metal processing plant and used for war purposes.



Drawing by Max Skladanowsky, n.d.
The inventor and visionary envisions „Projektion für Alle“ on the living room wall.
BArch, N 1435-15-0006/Skladanowsky, Max

Fernsprecher:
Notden. Nr. 543

Telegraph. - Adresse:
Max Skladanowsky
Berlin

MAX SKLADANOWSKY

Fabrik photographischer und optischer Artikel

DIAPOSITIV-WERK

Geschäftszeit:
von 8-12 u. 2-6 Uhr

Bank-Konto:
Deutsche Bank
Dep. - Kasse B


BERLIN N. 58, den 30 Juli 1922
Schönhäuser Allee 56

Bitte ersuchen Sie Messer!

Antwortlich für gefälligen Zuspruch v. 19. d. M. wurde
Ihren außer Material selbst die zur Bearbeitung
über die Schnittstelle Kinematographie vorhanden Kinemat.
Auftrag den unvollständigen Brief zum Fortschritt
der Vorgeschichte der Bioscop's, den ich nicht nur in
früheren Jahren für die Kinematographen habe,
finden die außer mich einen Brief den ich am
21. November in der Photographischen Chronik der
Jahres 1915 erschienen ließ, zu Ihrer gefälligen Beachtung.
Die Kinematographen an die ich selbst gewordenen
Jahre meine Vorarbeiten erfüllen mich immer mit
tiefem Dank, ich habe mich ganz davon, weil ich
dennoch von keinem Dritten Unterstützung fand, in
Gegensatz, die Kinematographie für ein
Erfindungsgegenstand sein. Dieses Jahr früher meine
sprach die Kinematographie schon zu verstehen.
Darin älteste Tochter Gertrud (jetzt 31 Jahre alt)
war als kleines Kind die erste Filmschauspielerin
der Welt, für kleine Rollen, die ich für die Filme,
aufnahm in Auftritte.
Zu weiteren Fortsetzungen gern bereit
Ihrer Zuspruchswill
Max Skladanowsky

Projektion für Alle

P. f. A. P. f. A.



Kompl. Lichtbildserien mit Vortrag
und Aufbewahrungs-Nutenkasten

STEREO - DIAPOSITIVE
in allen Größen

DIAPOSITIVE
zur stereoscopischen Projektion

STEREOSCOPE
für Glasbilder
in verschiedenen Größen

**Original-
Photo-Lehrkameras**

NEU! Der NEU!

P.f.A.-Film

Eigene Ur-Darstellung der
„Lebenden Photographien“
mit dem ersten Apparat,
eigener Erfindung,
„Bioscop“ D. R. P. 88599
am 1. November 1895

Letter from Max Skladanowsky to Oskar Messter dated 30 July 1922

The Skladanowsky company's own stationery is not sparing with references to its own products and inventions.

BArch, N 1275-560-0014/Skladanowsky, Max

MAX SKLADANOWSKY

Fabrik photographischer und optischer Artikel

DIAPOSITIV-WERK

Geschäftszeit
von 8-12 u. 2-6 Uhr

Konto-Nr. 110
Deutsche Bank
Dep.-Kasse B

Dear Mr Messter,

In response to your kind letter dated the 19th of this month,

I am enclosing material that you can use for your treatise
on German cinematography.

In addition to the detailed written account explaining
the history of the Bioscop, which I have written from
memory for you, enclosed
you will also find an essay I published on
21 November in the Photographic Chronicle of
1915, which you may use as you like.

The memories of the years of my preliminary work, which have now
always fill me with
become history,
deep sorrow. I do not like to talk about them because
I did not receive any support from anyone at the time;
on the contrary, the emerging cinematography was seen as
delusional at the time.

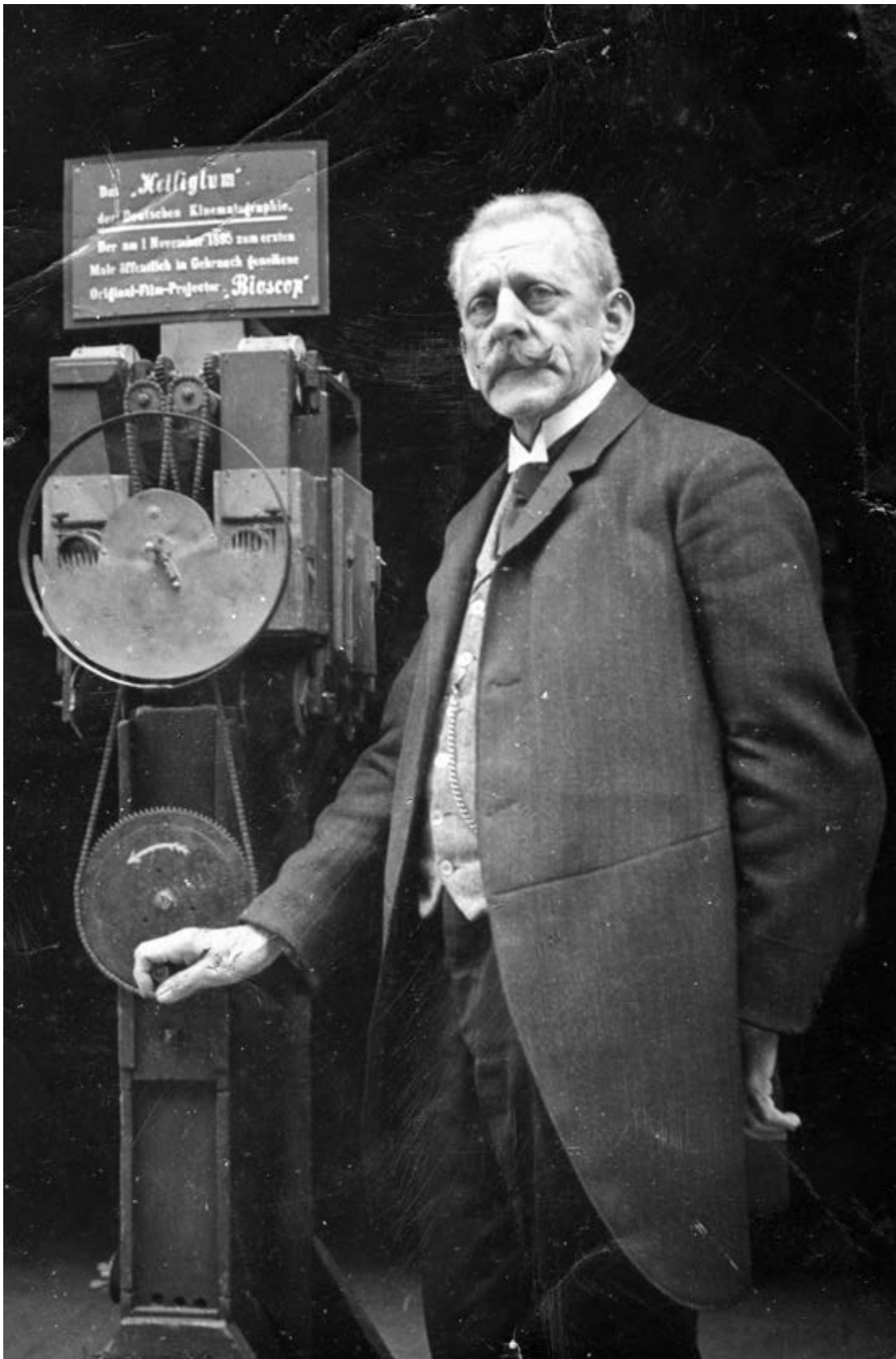
Cinematography could have arrived several years earlier.

As a small child, my eldest daughter Gertrud (now 31 years old)
was the world's first film actress,
playing small roles that I rehearsed with her for the film shoot.

I am happy to discuss this with you further.

Yours sincerely,

Max Skladanowsky



Max Skladanowsky next to his Bioscop Projector, approx. 1936

The text on the sign above the projector reads: "The 'treasure' of German cinematography. The original Bioscop film projector, which was put into public use for the first time on 1 November 1895." This text shows both the role that Max Skladanowsky claimed for himself and the image that the *Reichsfilmkammer* propagated.

BArch, N 1435 Bild-276-017/n.a.



Oskar Messter, n.d.

Oskar Messter (1866–1943), the son of an optician, also joined the ranks of German film pioneers and defended his importance – especially against his opponent Max Skladanowsky. He is known as one of the first German cinema entrepreneurs and as the inventor of the Maltese cross switch, a mechanism designed to ensure the continuity and stability of the projected image.

BArch, N 1275 Bild-001/n.a.

"Hamburger Tageblatt", Hamburg
vom 3. August 1934

Habe ich den Film erfunden?

Von Max Skladanowsky

Wir haben vor einigen Zeit ausführlich über die Erfindung des Films geschrieben. Inzwischen ist die Sache aber schon so allgemein bekannt, daß eine nochmalige Besprechung nicht mehr notwendig ist. Wir haben aber in der Zwischenzeit eine Menge von Anfragen erhalten, die uns zeigen, daß die Sache noch nicht so allgemein bekannt ist, wie wir es annehmen dürfen. Deshalb haben wir uns entschlossen, die Sache noch einmal zu besprechen. Wir werden uns dabei auf die wichtigsten Punkte beschränken, die für die Entscheidung der Sache von Bedeutung sind. Wir werden uns dabei auf die wichtigsten Punkte beschränken, die für die Entscheidung der Sache von Bedeutung sind.

Die Erfindung des Films ist eine der größten Erfindungen der Menschheit. Sie hat die Welt verändert und die Menschheit in eine neue Welt geführt. Die Erfindung des Films ist eine der größten Erfindungen der Menschheit. Sie hat die Welt verändert und die Menschheit in eine neue Welt geführt.

Am 1. November 1895 habe ich in Berlin die ersten Filme gezeigt. Diese Filme waren die ersten Filme der Welt. Sie waren die ersten Filme der Welt. Sie waren die ersten Filme der Welt.

Die Erfindung des Films ist eine der größten Erfindungen der Menschheit. Sie hat die Welt verändert und die Menschheit in eine neue Welt geführt. Die Erfindung des Films ist eine der größten Erfindungen der Menschheit. Sie hat die Welt verändert und die Menschheit in eine neue Welt geführt.

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"Habe ich den Film erfunden?" (Did I invent film?), 1934
An article by Max Skladanowsky in the Hamburger Tageblatt of 3 August 1934.

BArch, N 1435-260-0002

Die Gegenüberstellung meiner „Ersten Filme der Welt“ mit den bekanntesten ersten Aufnahmen der Gebrüder Lumière in zwei Hamburger Uraufführungstheatern gibt mir die Gelegenheit, den auch in einigen Besprechungen wiederum angeführten „ollen Kamellen“, mit denen mein Erfindungsanspruch zugunsten der Franzosen eingeschränkt wird, endlich einmal selbst einige Tatsachen und Folgerungen entgegenzusetzen, Tatsachen, die dokumentarisch belegt sind — und Folgerungen, die jeder Volksgenosse aus einfachem Verstande heraus ziehen kann.

Von Max Skladanowsky

Herr Skladanowsky hat uns daraufhin den folgenden Artikel geschickt, in dem er seinen Anspruch noch einmal begründet. Wir geben seinen Ausführungen gern Raum, möchten aber betonen, daß wir sie nur als Diskussionsbeitrag ansehen. Da Skladanowskys Ausführungen an entscheidenden Stellen in grundsätzlichen Widerspruch stehen zu den bis heute von der Forschung vertretenen Anschauungen, haben wir in einer Reihe von Anmerkungen das kurz zusammengefaßt, was gegen Skladanowskys Anspruch geltend gemacht wird. Wir sind allerdings der Meinung, daß die Frage dringend der endgültigen Klärung bedarf, und wollen deshalb die mit diesem Artikel begonnene Diskussion

Nun frage ich: Welchen Leistung ist vollkommener und frühzeitiger, die des deutschen Filmpioniers Max Skladanowsky, der am 1. November 1895 in öffentlicher Vorführung auf Positivfilm kopierte Filmszenen vorführte, die von heute noch lebenden Zuschauern gesehen und von heute noch lebenden Künstlern gestellt wurden — oder die der französischen Gebrüder Lumière, die zwei Monate später, am 28. Dezember desselben Jahres vor geladenen Zuschauern²⁾ einige Aufnahmen, auf Negativfilm kopiert, zeigten.

die ganze Photographie vom Lichtbild bis zum Tonfilm deutschen Ursprungs. Der Arzt Johann Heinrich Schulze stellte — hundert Jahre vor Niepce und Daguerre — im Jahre 1727 in Halle das erste kopierte Lichtbild her, — ich zeigte mit dem Bioskop am 1. November 1895 öffentlich meine ersten Filme, — und im September 1923 führte die Tri-Ergon-Erfindergruppe Bogt-Engl-Masolle im Berliner Gloriapalast den ersten Licht-Tonfilm vor. Alle drei in Deutschland gemachten Erfindungen sind freilich nicht industriell ausgewertet worden. So ist dreimal die technische Grundlage für eine Kulturmacht als deutsches Geistesgut entstanden und unbenutzt vergangen.

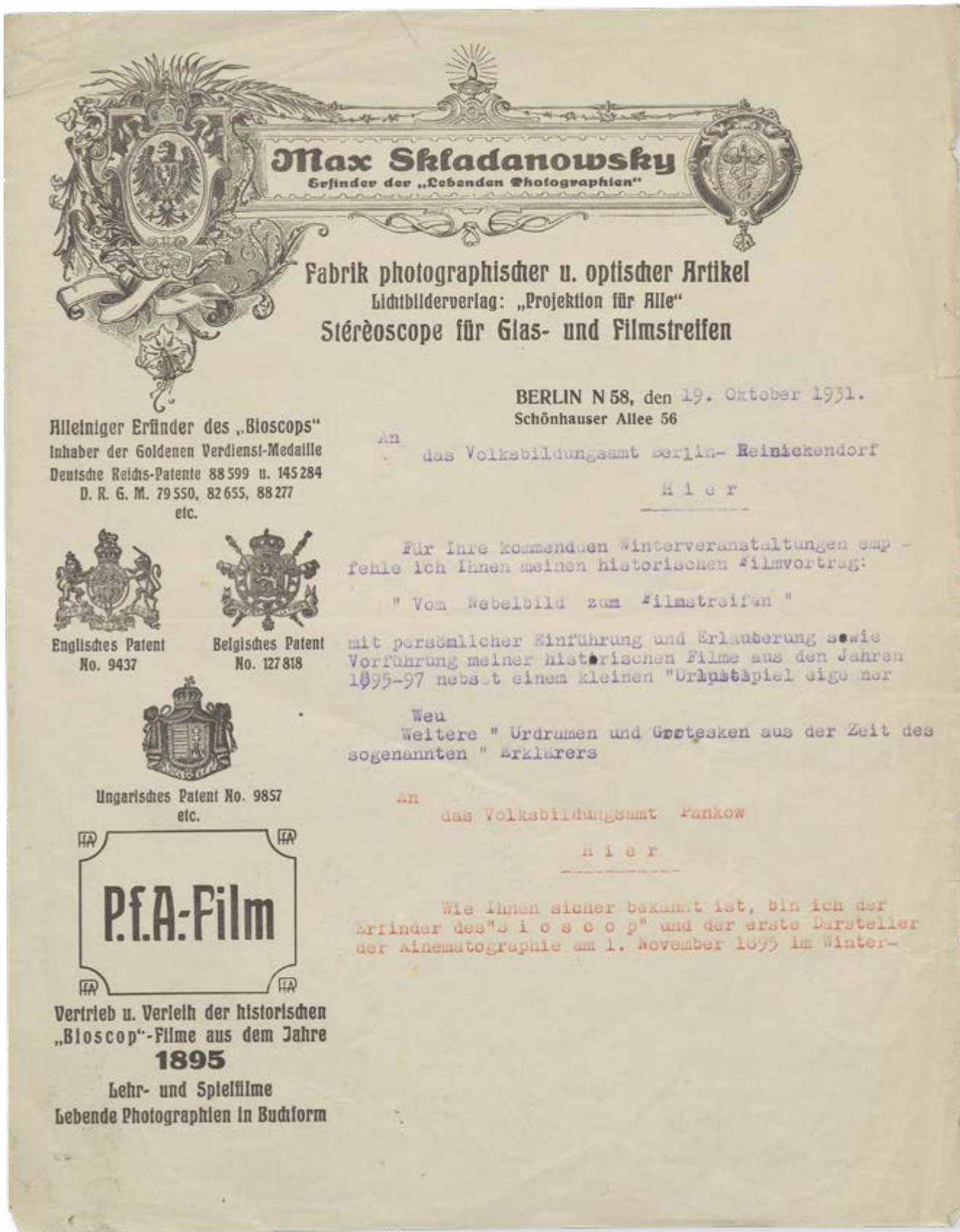
In this article in a daily newspaper from 3 August 1934, Max Skladanowsky asks the crucial question: “Did I invent film?” In a brief preface, the paper distances itself from the views expressed by Max Skladanowsky. It notes that they do not reflect the opinions held by the paper or the scientific consensus, and are merely a contribution to the ongoing discussion on the question of who really invented film.

Skladanowsky argues that his screening at the *Wintergarten* predated the screening of the Brothers Lumière and that his presentation was open to the public, in contrast to the Lumière screening, which was by invitation-only. He paints a picture of himself as a poor inventor, unlike the Lumières, who came from a wealthy industrial family and were able to patent their inventions much earlier.

Lastly, he acknowledges the importance of scientific research on this topic and his willingness to contribute to it – even under the new National Socialist government. He sees himself in the tradition of German inventors such as Johann Heinrich Schulze, who Skladanowsky regards as the inventor of photography, and the Tri-Ergon-Group, which presented the first film in Germany accompanied by a visual soundtrack.



Postcard by Max Skladanowsky, n.d.
 While touring various cities, Skladanowsky celebrated himself as the “inventor of film”. He was convinced that he had achieved great things.
 Postcard to the Wieslang family, Berlin-Pankow: “What Wagner is to music, I am to film! Hundreds of thousands live from his and my work today!”
 Top: BArch, N 1435-188-0002; bottom: BArch N 1435-188-0003



Max Skladanowsky

Erfinder der „Lebenden Photographien“

Fabrik photographischer u. optischer Artikel

Lichtbilderverlag: „Projektion für Alle“

Stereoscope für Glas- und Filmstreifen

BERLIN N 58, den 19. Oktober 1931.

Schönhauser Allee 56

An
das Volksbildungsamt Berlin-Reinickendorf

Hier

Alleiniger Erfinder des „Bioscops“

Inhaber der Goldenen Verdienst-Medaille

Deutsche Reichs-Patente 88 599 u. 145 284

D. R. G. M. 79 550, 82 655, 88 277

etc.



Englisches Patent
No. 9437



Belgisches Patent
No. 127 818



Ungarisches Patent No. 9857
etc.



Vertrieb u. Verleih der historischen
„Bioscop“-Filme aus dem Jahre
1895

Lehr- und Spielfilme
Lebende Photographien in Budiform

Für Ihre kommenden Winterveranstaltungen empfehle ich Ihnen meinen historischen Filmvortrag:

" Vom Nebelbild zum Filmstreifen "

mit persönlicher Einführung und Erläuterung sowie
Vorführung meiner historischen Filme aus den Jahren
1895-97 nebst einem kleinen "Urkaustspiel" eigener

Weu

Weitere " Urdramen und Grottesken aus der Zeit des
sogenannten " Erklärers

An
das Volksbildungsamt Pankow

hier

Wie Ihnen sicher bekannt ist, bin ich der
Erfinder des "b i o s c o p" und der erste Darsteller
der kinematographie am 1. November 1895 im Winter-

Recommendation of the lecture "Vom Nebelbild zum Filmstreifen" to the Pankow and Reinickendorf (Berlin) public education offices on 19 October 1931

On his letterhead, Max Skladanowsky calls himself the "Inventor of 'Living Photographs'", the "Sole Inventor of the 'Bioscope'" and lists all his patents.

BArch, N 1435-181-0002

Der Präsident der Reichsfilmkammer

Berlin W 35, den 27. Dez. 1934
Bendlerstr. 33
Fernspr.: Sammel-Nr. B 2 Höhe 8891
Postfach-Ronto: Berlin 62007
Bankkonto: Dresdner Bank, Dep.-Kasse 52
Berlin W 9, Potsdamer Straße 20

Gleichlautend an:

- Herrn Geh.Rat Dr. Forch
- Herrn Professor Thun
- Herrn Dr. Traub
- Herrn Guido Seeber
- Herrn Oskar Messter ✓
- Herrn Max Skladanowsky

*Schreib-
Brett
Genehmigung!*

Geschäftszeichen: T/Kl/14023
(In der Antwort anzugeben)

Die Besprechung in der Reichsfilmkammer am 14.d.M. hat leider zu dem angestrebten Ergebnis einer Beilegung des Streites über die Erfindung der Kinematographie nicht geführt. Es muss auf Grund dieser Besprechung auch bezweifelt werden, dass eine weitere Fortsetzung der Aussprache zum Erfolg führen würde. Dabei sei nochmals klar gestellt, dass die Reichsfilmkammer es sich nicht zur Aufgabe macht und auch nicht machen kann, von sich aus eine Entscheidung über diese der Wissenschaft vorbehaltenen Frage zu fällen. Andererseits darf seitens der für die Förderung des Ansehens des deutschen Filmwesens eingesetzten Stelle nicht tatenlos zugesehen werden, dass die Austragung dieses Streites in der Öffentlichkeit Formen annimmt, die diesem Ansehen im In- wie im Ausland Abbruch zu tun geeignet sind.

Da ich annehme, dass alle Beteiligten von dem ernstesten Willen getragen sind, die Wahrheitsfindung in dieser Streitfrage auf einem einwandfreien Wege zu gewährleisten, richte ich an Sie die Aufforderung, mir schriftlich zu erklären, dass in Zukunft alle öffentlichen Vorlautbarungen in dieser Angelegenheit, seien sie schriftlich oder mündlich, von Ihrer oder von einer von Ihnen beeinflussten Seite erst erfolgen werden, nach-

Vorher!

-2-

dem sie meine Genehmigung gefunden haben. Das bedeutet, dass mir Vorträge, die gehalten werden, ebenso wie die Aufsätze, die zur Veröffentlichung in der Fach- oder Tagespresse bestimmt sind, vorher vorgelegt werden müssen.

Ich hoffe, auf diese Weise -ohne selbstverständlich in irgend einer Weise die wissenschaftliche Behandlung der Angelegenheit schmälern zu wollen- allen Beteiligten zu dienen, indem ich unsachliche und persönliche Angriffs- und Verteidigungsmittel verhindere. Sollte eine Zustimmung zu dieser meiner Anregung nicht erreicht werden, so darf ich darauf hinweisen, dass mir Möglichkeiten zu Gebote stehen, um im Wege des Zwanges die Öffentlichkeit vor unerwünschten Auseinandersetzungen zu bewahren.

Ich wäre Ihnen dankbar, wenn Sie mir Ihre Antwort bis zum Jahresende zugehen lassen würden. Falls es sonst noch erwünscht scheint, dass die Reichsfilmkammer ihre Vermittlung zur Schlichtung des Streites zur Verfügung stellt, so bitte ich, mir mit Anregungen näher zu kommen.

In Vertretung:

Maeter

Communication from the President of the Reichsfilmkammer dated 27 December 1934

Also known as the so-called "Maulkorb-Erlass", which was intended to stop the ongoing public discussion about the invention of cinematography, as this was not conducive to the national reputation at home and abroad.

left: BArch, N 1275-563-0246; right: BArch, N 1275-563-0248

Skladanowsky's legacy



Emil and Max Skladanowsky in front of the unveiled memorial plaque at Wintergarten Berlin on the occasion of the first public film screening 40 years ago on 1 November 1895

BArch, N 1435 Bild-281-001/n.a.

→
Programme for the ceremony to unveil
the memorial plaque on 1 November 1935

BArch, N 1275-563-0174

40 Jahre Kinematographie

1. November 1895 — 1. November 1935

Feierstunde

zur Enthüllung der Gedenktafel
am Eingang des Wintergartens Dorotheenstraße 16
für die Brüder Skladanowsky.

Musik aus den „Meistersingern von Nürnberg“ Richard Wagner

Ansprachen:

- Hans Weidemann, Vizepräsident der Reichsfilmkammer
- Dr. W. Rahts, Vorstandsmitglied der Deutschen Kintotechnischen Gesellschaft
- Ludwig Schuch, Direktor des „Wintergarten“

Deutschland-Lied — Horst-Wessel-Lied

- Es spielt das Musikkorps der Leibstandarte SS Adolf Hitler unter Leitung von Obermusikmeister Hermann Müller-John

Die Gedenktafel wurde nach einem Entwurf von
Prof. Paul Scheurich in den Werkstätten Max Sperlich gegossen
und hat folgenden Wortlaut:

„In diesem Hause
fanden am
1. November 1895
die ersten öffentlichen
Filmvorführungen
in Europa durch
Max und Emil Skladanowsky
statt
mit Hilfe eigens aufgenommener Filme
und selbst erfundener Apparate des
Max Skladanowsky“

*11 K = 21 W.
Kriegsfilme*



Berlin, den 1. November 1935, 14,30 Uhr

Reichsfilmkammer

Hotelbetriebs-A.-G.

Wintergarten G. m. b. H.

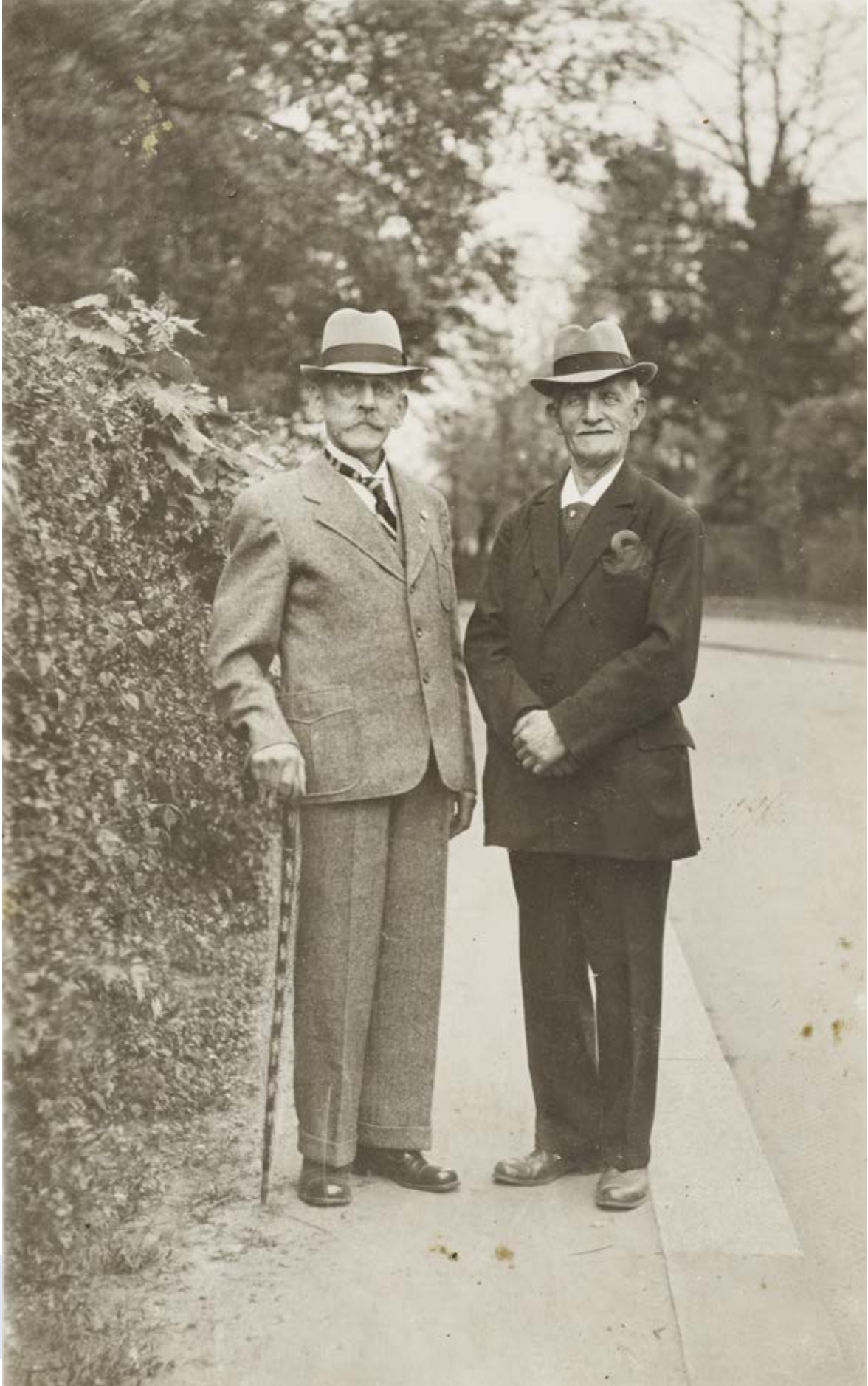


Obituary on the death of Max Skladanowsky (30 November 1939) by his son Erich Skladanowsky

After suffering from cancer and being cared for by his family, Max Skladanowsky died on 30 November 1939 in his house in Berlin-Niederschönhausen. Shortly afterwards, the funeral took place in a neighbouring cemetery, for which the entire street was closed off.

BArch, N 1435-264-0002

→
Max and Emil Skladanowsky, n.d.
BArch, N 1435 Bild-278-006



Historisches Archiv Max Skladanowsky

Aufstellung der Ausstellungsgegenstände.

1. Persönliche Bilder, Fotos, Selbstbildnisse usw.
2. Nebelbilderprogramme, Plakate, Werbematerial. u.a. Das Programm 1879
3. Zeichnungen, Entwürfe für Nebelbilderapparate, Theaterbau usw.
4. Broschüre über Kalklicht v. Max Skladanowsky
5. Entwurfzeichnungen für die 4 und 6 Zoll Nebelbilder
6. Handgemalte, beweglich gestaltete Nebelbilder. (4 und 6 Zoll)
7. Nebelbilderprojektoren.
8. Demonstrationsmodelle für den Filmtransport u.a, auch das Patentmodell D.R.P. 88599 nebst Handzeichnungen, Blaupausen.
9. Der Filmaufnahmeapparat Bioscop I. aus dem Jahre 1893 mit dem Patentgetriebe nebst ausführlichen Handzeichnungen und Konstruktionszeichnungen in Originalgrösse, Programmen, Plakaten usw. sowie Original-Patentschrift.
- X 10. Der historische Doppelprojektor Bioscop I. mit am 1. November 1895 die ersten Bioscopfilme vorgeführt wurden, und zwar im Berliner Wintergarten. (Mit Original-Orchesternoten und Dia=Titel.) sowie Pressestimmen 1895.
11. Detail- und Konstruktionszeichnungen in Originalgrösse zu dem historischen Bioscop-Projektor.
12. Die Aufnahme-Camera Bioscop III 1896 mit Malteserkreuz.
13. Werkzeuge zur Bearbeitung der Bioscopfilme 1895 -1897
 - a. Aufroller. Filmrollen usw.
 - b. Die Filmtailmaschine (nur noch im Foto
 - c. Die Perforiermaschine
 - d. Die Kopiermaschine für Petrol - und Spirituslicht
 - f. Die Entwicklungs-, Fizzier- und Waschrömmel
 - g. Die Nischplatte für Verstärkeröfen.
14. "Max Skladanowsky, s Lebende Photographien in Buchform " Originalblatterbücher, Einrichtungen und Druckstöcke. Plakate usw.
15. Zeichnungen und Modelle von Bioscopapparaturen, Cameras und Projektoren, die durch den Neuheitsvertrieb Max Skladanowsky fabrikmässig erzeugt und in den Handel zu Exportzwecken gebracht wurden.

Mindestgrösse des Ausstellungskabinetts 40 Qm

Abdruck
am Rande
je

List of exhibits from the estate of Max Skladanowsky by his son Erich Skladanowsky, n.d.

As early as the 1950s, Erich Skladanowsky worked in the GDR to preserve the memory of his father's legacy. Describing himself as a film historian, he made various objects and equipment available for exhibitions and dedicated himself to his father's work in his own manuscripts.

BArch, N 1435-296-0002

Max Skladanowsky Historical Archive

List of Exhibition Items

1. Personal pictures, photos, self-portraits, etc.
 2. Magic lantern programmes, posters, advertising material, incl. the 1879 programme
 3. Drawings, designs for magic lantern devices, theatre construction, etc.
 4. Brochure about limelight by Max Skladanowsky
 5. Design drawings for 4- and 6-inch magic lantern slides
 6. Hand-painted, animated magic lantern slides (4 and 6 inch)
 7. Magic lantern projectors
 8. Demonstration models for film transport, including the patent model D.R.P. 88599 with sketches and blueprints
 9. The film recording device Bioscop I from 1892, with patented mechanism, detailed sketches, construction drawings (to scale), programmes, posters, and original patent documentation
 10. The historical double projector Bioscop I, used for the first Bioscop film screening at the Wintergarten in Berlin on 1 November 1895 (with original orchestral sheet music and title slides). Also includes press reviews from 1895
 11. Detailed construction drawings (to scale) of the historical Bioscop projector
 12. The Bioscop III recording camera from 1896 with a Maltese cross mechanism
 13. Tools for processing Bioscop films from 1895–1897:
 - a. Rewinder, film reels, etc.
 - b. The film splicing machine (only available as a photo)
 - c. The perforating machine
 - d. The printing machine for petroleum and spirit light
 - e. The developing tubes and washing drum
 - f. The alignment plate for amplifier cards
 14. “Max Skladanowsky’s Living Photographs in Book Form” – original page books, equipment and printing blocks
 15. Drawings and models of Bioscop apparatuses, cameras and projectors produced by Max Skladanowsky’s innovation distribution and introduced into commercial trade for export purposes
- Minimum size of exhibition cabinet: 40 sqm

Afterword

Afterword

Until 1939, Max Skladanowsky continued to tour Germany and Europe, sharing his version of the invention of film. Numerous memos preserved in his estate show that until his death, Skladanowsky persevered to establish and consolidate his reputation, especially as the “sole inventor of the Bioscop”. The National Socialists were also strongly interested in propagating Max Skladanowsky as “the German inventor of film”. After his death, his children Erich and Lucie used publications, exhibitions and lecture tours to secure Skladanowsky’s legacy and assure him a permanent place in film history.

There is no question of the important role that Skladanowsky played in developing film technology – alongside many other film pioneers of his time – but his inventions did not have a lasting influence. Research into the history of moving images continues to encounter unanswered questions and contradictions that can only be resolved through a synopsis of regional, national and international sources, the corresponding devices and mutual influences and references.

The exhibition “Did I invent film? Max Skladanowsky – Pioneer, Visionary & Impostor” and this accompanying booklet from the Federal Archives cannot definitively answer the question of who invented film. It can, however, provide a framework for showing and discussing documents from the estate of an important visionary and designer. In preparation for the exhibition, numerous documents, films and photographs from Skladanowsky’s estate have been digitised for the first time, making them accessible to the public and providing new, revealing insights into film history.



Berlin street sign, n.d.

In 1951, Wrangelstraße in his former home of Berlin-Pankow was renamed Skladanowsky-Straße. Memorial plaques on Schönhauser Allee / Kastanienallee and at Berliner Straße 27 commemorate the film pioneer Max Skladanowsky.

BArch, N 1435 Bild-278-013/n.a.

The Federal Archives

The Memory of Society

The Federal Archives stands for open access to archival material and invites users to form their own differentiated view of German history. The preserved sources create bridges between the past, present and future and help make history more understandable. The Federal Archives thus strongly distinguishes itself from the state-directed politics of remembrance pursued in other countries.

Founded in 1952, it preserves archival material that originated primarily in central offices of the German Confederation (1815–1866), the German Reich (1867/71–1945), the post-war occupied zones (1945–1949), the German Democratic Republic (1949–1990) and the Federal Republic of Germany (since 1949). In addition to state sources, the Federal Archives preserves the estates of important figures in contemporary history as well as documents from parties, associations and societies of supra-regional significance. Documents, photos, maps, films and audio documents are preserved in both analogue and digital form. The work of the Federal Archives is heavily influenced by the needs of users. For this reason, it places strong emphasis on the expansion of digital services.

In January 2019, the Federal Archives accepted the documents of the Wehrmacht Information Centre (WASit). The new department on “Personal Data Related to World War I and II” provides information on former military personnel and helps clarify their fates. On 17 June 2021, the Federal Archives also assumed responsibility for the records of the GDR State Security Service. On the basis of the Stasi Records Act (*Stasi-Unterlagen-Gesetz*, StUG), the archive continues to make these files accessible to citizens, academics and the media.



Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, 2017

Interior view of a storage building ("Ernst-Posner-Bau") with mobile shelving system.
BArch, 198 Bild-2017-0328-006/Hacke, Mila

130 Years of German Film History

Acquiring, preserving, and making accessible – the Audiovisual Media Department of the Federal Archives preserves films and film-related materials of historical and cultural value. It continuously catalogues old and new films and film-related material and adds them to the Federal Archives database. This enables users to research all archived films.

From the invention of cinematography in 1895 to this year’s winners of the German Film Prize – the film archive is a comprehensive collection of German film production that is unique in size and function. The digitisation of its holdings is one of its central tasks, ensuring long-term preservation and accessibility.

The holdings of the Audiovisual Media Department in the Federal Archives consist of many different collections. These include:

- Films produced by federal authorities such as the Bundespresseamt and the Bundeswehr
- The holdings of the Reichsfilmarchiv of the National Socialists and the State Film Archive of the GDR
- Archival backup copies of films made with public funding
- Safekeeping of donations from private individuals and institutions

The Federal Archives also holds many film-related materials, including images, posters, sound recordings and official film censorship documents.

A central aim of the Federal Archives is to make the archive material publicly accessible. The Digital Reading Room was opened in 2024 and offers a research and presentation platform where users can research the Federal Archives’ film holdings online and view available material. The complete archive holdings of the Federal Archives will eventually be made accessible via the Digital Reading Room.

The Federal Archives is a cooperation partner for many film events and film festivals and invites visitors to engage with film history through film education programmes and a variety of lectures on various topics.



Film editing table, 2023

Film still from "Serpentintänzerin" by the Skladanowsky brothers, 1895.

BArch/Stange

Appendix

IMAGE CREDITS

FRONT COVER:

„Apotheose“, Max and Emil Skladanowsky, 1895
BArch, Bild 183-C31914/Skladanowsky, Max

Construction drawing Magic Lantern Projector, approx. 1895 (detail)

BArch, N-1435-212-0002/Skladanowsky, Max

CONTENTS:

Mosburg by day, 1893

BArch, N1435 Bild-15-2-003/Skladanowsky, Max

“Italienischer Bauerntanz” of the children’s group Ploetz-Larella, May 1895

BArch, N1435 Bild-092-024/Skladanowsky, Max

Advertising leaflet for “Photographiere Dich selbst!”, n.d.

BArch, N 1435-157-0005

P. 24/25:

Design drawing for an independent theatre building with projection hall, n.d.

The hall was intended to seat just under 400 spectators.

BArch, N 1435-223/Skladanowsky, Max

P. 26 – 29:

Advertising brochure for the Hamilton-Theatre, 1890–1892

Under the stage names E. and M. Hamilton, the Skladanowsky brothers toured without their father.

BArch, N 1435-83-0004

BArch, N 1435-83-0012

BArch, N 1435-83-0013

BArch, N 1435-83-0014

P. 38/39:

Construction drawing of the Kurbelkasten, approx. 1892

BArch, N 1435-224/Skladanowsky, Max

P. 42/43:

Design drawing for a projector, n.d.

BArch, N 1435-233-0002/Skladanowsky, Max

P. 66/67:

The Skladanowsky family with flip book, 1896

BArch, N 1435-278/no information

P. 72/73:

Advertising leaflet for “Photographiere Dich selbst!”, n.d.

BArch, N 1435-157-0005

FEDERAL ARCHIVES HOLDINGS USED FOR RESEARCH

N 1435 Estate Max Skladanowsky

Undine Völschow (ed.), Nachlass Max Skladanowsky – Bestand N 1435, Findbücher zu Beständen des Bundesarchivs, Band 49, Koblenz, 1995.

N 1275 Estate Oskar Messter

Stach, Babett (ed.), Nachlass Oskar Messter – Bestand N 1275, Findbücher zu Beständen des Bundesarchivs, Band 28, Koblenz, 1994.

DR 140 Staatliches Filmarchiv der DDR

– contains files on the purchase of the Skladanowsky estate by the Staatliches Filmarchiv of the GDR as well as its utilisation, distribution and processing.

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Die Geschichte der Kinematographie und ihrer
Vorläufer. Berlin, 1956.

**CONCEPT UND TEXTS
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