TRACING EUROPEAN CINEMA CITIES: BABELSBERG, PINEWOOD AND CINECITTÀ BETWEEN 1930-1950

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ABSTRACT

TRACING EUROPEAN CINEMA CITIES: BABELSBERG, PINEWOOD AND CINECITTÀ BETWEEN 1930-1950

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This thesis focuses on the history and architecture of European film studio complexes between 1930 and 1950 by examining three major European studio complexes built before the Second World War: Studio Babelsberg in Germany, Pinewood Studios in the UK, and Cinecitta in Italy as case studies. Although film studio spaces have the potential to offer further insight into the history of architecture, politics, and technology, existing studies on the history of studios have mostly focused on the films produced in these places, overlooking the architecture of the studios. Analyzing these film studio spaces through Foucault's heterotopia, this thesis argues that with their architectural layout and wide range of facilities, these film studio complexes acted as isolated, almost self-sufficient cinema cities within cities. This, in turn, made them ideal spaces to repurpose in times of crisis like the Second World War when studios were utilized for non-film-related activities, including storage, production of military equipment or refugee camps, and film technicians and production crews were commissioned to use their skills in wartime efforts. Consequently, these adjustments extended the function of the studios, and they became not only sites of artistic production but also critical components of the war, which

reflects broader socio-political contexts. Analyzing these dynamics, this research aims to highlight the intersection of architecture, cinema, and politics within the layered history of film studios.

Keywords: European Film Studios, Film and Architecture, Heterotopia, Modernity, Second World War

ÖZ

AVRUPA SİNEMA ŞEHİRLERİNİN İZİNİ SÜRMEK: 1930-1950 YILLARI ARASINDA BABELSBERG, PINEWOOD VE CINECITTÀ

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Bu tez, İkinci Dünya Savaşı öncesinde inşa edilmiş üç büyük stüdyo kompleksi olan Almanya'daki Babelsberg Stüdyoları, Birleşik Krallık'taki Pinewood Stüdyoları ve İtalya'daki Cinecittà'yı vaka çalışmaları olarak inceleyerek, 1930 ile 1950 yılları arasında Avrupa'daki film stüdyo komplekslerinin tarihine ve mimarisine odaklanmaktadır. Film stüdyosu mekanları, mimarlık, politika ve teknoloji tarihine daha derin bir bakış açısı sunma potansiyeline sahip olsa da stüdyoların tarihi üzerine yapılan mevcut çalışmalar çoğunlukla bu mekanlarda üretilen filmlere odaklanmış ve stüdyoların mimarisini büyük ölçüde göz ardı etmiştir. Bu tez, söz konusu stüdyo mekânlarını Foucault'nun heterotopya kavramı üzerinden analiz ederek, mimari düzenleri ve geniş tesis yelpazeleriyle bu komplekslerin kentler içinde izole ve neredeyse kendi kendine yeten sinema şehirleri gibi işlediğini savunmaktadır. Bu durum, film stüdyolarının İkinci Dünya Savaşı gibi kriz dönemlerinde yeniden işlevlendirilmeye elverişli mekânlar olmasını sağlamıştır. Savaş sırasında stüdyolar film dışı faaliyetler, depo, askeri ekipman üretimi ya da mülteci kampları gibi farklı işlevler için kullanılmış; film teknisyenleri ve prodüksiyon çalışanları ise becerilerini savaş için kullanmak üzere görevlendirilmiştir. Sonuç olarak, bu düzenlemeler

stüdyoların işlevini genişletmiş ve stüdyolar sadece sanatsal üretim mekanları değil, aynı zamanda daha geniş sosyo-politik bağlamları yansıtan savaşın kritik bileşenleri haline gelmiştir. Bu dinamikleri analiz eden bu araştırma, film stüdyolarının katmanlı tarihi içinde mimarlık, sinema ve politikanın kesişimlerini vurgulamayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Avrupa Film Stüdyoları, Sinema ve Mimarlık, Heterotopya, Modernite, İkinci Dünya Savaşı

To my family and friends...

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFPU	Army Film and Photography Unit
ARP	Air Raid Precautions
DEFA	Deutsche Film-Aktiengesellschaft
MGM	Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer
POW	Prisoner of War
RAF	Royal Air Force
UFA	Universum-Film Aktiengesellschaft
UNRRA	United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aim and Scope of the Research

Cinema is an urban spectacle and can be said to have originated in the city. The birth of cinema coincided with a period of rapid urbanization and industrialization.[1] With the Industrial Revolution, new materials like glass and iron started to be used in architecture to design spaces filled with natural light and protected from natural conditions. These materials made possible the creation of fluid and imponderable spaces, which can also be seen in the design of the first film studios. New urban experiences and shifts in visual perception emerged with these architectural spaces and architectures of spectacular display, along with new technologies of movement like moving walkways and elevators set the stage for cinema's emergence.[2] In this regard, cinema and architecture have been intertwined from the very beginning, both shaping and reflecting modern ways of seeing and experiencing space. This study emerges from this very intersection and aims to bring together architectural history and cinema/media studies by examining film studio spaces.

Until two decades ago, historians and theorists had explored the relationship between film and architecture by mainly focusing either on films' depiction of architectural spaces through set design and use of real-life locations or on architecture's use of cinema as a conceptual or phenomenological design tool.[3] This

[1] Clark Arnwine, "The City Seen: Cinematic Representation of Urban Space" (PhD diss.,University of Southern California, 2003), 2-3.

[2] Brian R. Jacobson, "The 'imponderable fluidity' of modernity: Georges Méliès and the architectural origins of cinema," *Early Popular Visual Culture* 8, no. 2 (2010): 193-194.

[3] See, for instance, Andong Lu and Francois Penz (eds) *Urban cinematics: Understanding urban phenomena through the moving image* (Bristol and Chicago: Intellect, 2011); Elena Gorfinkel and John David Rhodes (eds), *Taking Place: Location and the Moving Image* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011); Richard Koeck, *Cine-scapes: Cinematic Spaces in Architecture and Cities*

exclusive interest has been challenged by the emergence of 'new cinema studies' that shifted the focus from cinematic representations to the spaces and practices of film exhibition and reception.[4] However, the spaces in which films are produced have somewhat remained in the shadows of these themes and have only begun to be addressed within the past decade or so.[5] Although studios have the potential to offer further insight into the history of architecture, politics, and technology, existing studies on the history of studios have mostly focused on the films produced in these places, overlooking the architecture of the studios.

With this gap in literature in mind, in my master's thesis, I would like to focus on the studio architecture between 1930 and 1950 in Europe. With the arrival of sound in the late 1920s, studios built for silent film expanded their facilities and were transformed to provide spaces suitable for sound production. With the outbreak of the Second World War in the late 1930s, film production halted, and many studio buildings were damaged or used for other purposes. In the post-war period, the studios once again went through a process of transformation and renovation in order to return to production and to replace the damaged buildings. Focusing on this turbulent period, this thesis aims to examine the history of film studios and their architectural and spatial characteristics during the early twentieth century in Europe. Although this study primarily focuses on the period between 1930 and 1950, it occasionally traces earlier developments, particularly in the case of Studio Babelsberg. Because the studio buildings on the Studio Babelsberg site started to emerge during the silent era and then transformed with the coming of sound, it is important to trace the studio's foundational period as well. Therefore, exploring the studio's earlier history is not a shift from the

(New York and London: Routledge, 2013); Dietmar E. Froehlich, *The Chameleon Effect: Architecture's role in film*. (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2018).

[4] See, for instance, Ina Rae Hark (ed.), *Exhibition, The Film Reader* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001); Daniel Biltereyst, Richard Maltby, and Philippe Meers (eds), *Cinema, Audiences and Modernity* (New York: Routledge, 2011); Noam M. Elcott, "Dark Theaters," in *Artificial Darkness: An Obscure History of Modern Art and Media* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 47-75; Daniel Biltereyst, Richard Maltby, and Philippe Meers (eds) *The Routledge Companion to New Cinema History* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019).

[5] See, for instance, Brian R. Jacobson, "The 'imponderable fluidity' of modernity: Georges Méliès and the architectural origins of cinema," *Early Popular Visual Culture* 8, no. 2 (2010): 189-207, Brian R. Jacobson, *Studios Before the System: Architecture, Technology, and the Emergence of Cinematic Space* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), Brian R. Jacobson (ed.), *In the Studio: Visual Creation and its Material Environments* (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2020).

focused period but presents the necessary historical background to contextualize the development of the studio complex within the selected time frame. By analyzing the film studio complexes' facilities and architectural layout, the main argument of this thesis is that the film studio complexes functioned as isolated, self-sufficient cities within cities that, in turn, rendered them heterotopias. This is especially evident when these spaces provided an opportunity for the governments and the public in times of crisis, such as the Second World War, by offering a suitable isolated and self-sufficient space to repurpose.

To examine the film studios in Europe in the selected time frame, three film studios, Studio Babelsberg from Germany, Pinewood Studios from the UK, and Cinecittà from Italy, are chosen as case studies. These studios were selected not only for their significance within their individual national cinema industries but also for their different yet comparable approaches to studio planning, spatial organization, and wartime adaptation. Babelsberg, as the earliest example among them, offers a lens into the transformation from the silent to the sound film period. Cinecittà, as a state-sponsored project under Fascism, presents ideological approaches to cinema. In contrast to state-controlled models, Pinewood presents a different context since it was established through a private enterprise initiative. Also, unlike most of their competitors at the time, Babelsberg, Cinecittà, and Pinewood have remained leading production centers in Europe and still continue to host successful and internationally recognized film productions today. Together, these three case studies provide a geographically and politically diverse framework to examine the film studio complexes from an architectural point of view and to explore how their spatial design, infrastructure, and flexible spaces enabled them to adapt to changing political regimes, wartime needs, and technological advancements throughout the twentieth century.

1.2 Methodology, Limitations, and Literature Review

This study follows a qualitative and interpretative research approach, positioned at the intersection of architectural history and film studies. Due to the scarcity of primary sources, limited access to archival materials and language barriers, the thesis is mostly structured around secondary sources. Available primary materials such as maps, architectural drawings, newspapers, journals, photographs, and postcards from both institutional archives and published academic work were utilized

and supported with the secondary literature on the subject. Also, the study is limited to three case studies in Europe and focuses mainly on the period between 1930 and 1950. Although these three studios do not represent the entirety of European studio spaces, they provide a comparative overview that reveals general trends and spatial characteristics. Due to logistical and financial constraints, it was not possible to visit the selected studios in person. The lack of firsthand observation may result in the omission of certain experiential or spatial qualities, but this limitation was handled by using visual sources such as photographs, videos, and aerial images, as well as the descriptions of the visitors and workers from that period.

Studies on film studios, especially from an architectural and spatial perspective, remain an emerging field; therefore, sources are limited. The majority of studies on film studios are focused on Hollywood film studios, which have historically dominated the film industry; in contrast, research on European film studio complexes is more limited. Nevertheless, studies on Hollywood studios are highly valuable in establishing a theoretical and comparative basis for this thesis. Although the historical, political, and cultural contexts differ between the United States and Europe, the spatial strategies developed in Hollywood studios influenced and became the blueprint of those in Europe.

The majority of scholarship on Hollywood studios discusses the development and operation of the classical Hollywood studio system, labor, gender, film-making process and other topics.[6] Nevertheless, when looking at the architectural history of Hollywood studios and studios in general, the studies of Brian R. Jacobson stand out. In the article "Fantastic Functionality: Studio Architecture and the Visual Rhetoric of Early Hollywood," Jacobson analyzes the architecture of film studios in the Los Angeles region during the 1910s. He states that studios needed to be visually pleasing, so architecture played an important role in this period of intense competition. Architects tried to meet the demands of film companies by creating a balance between functionality and symbolic value, and created hybrid structures that have decorative, ornamented façades concealing the modern production spaces inside. Jacobson defines

[6] See, for instance, Douglas Gomery, *The Hollywood Studio System* (London: British Film Institute, 2005); Thomas Schatz, *The Genius of the System: Hollywood Filmmaking in the Studio Era* (University Of Minnesota Press, 2010), Hilary A. Hallett, *Go West, Young Women!: The Rise of Early Hollywood* (University of California Press, 2013), David Bordwell, Janet Staiger, Kristin Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960* (London: Routledge, 2003).

this nature of early Hollywood's built environment as "fantastic functionality," a term that has been widely referenced in other scholarship on studios published after and I also refer to in the following chapters. Additionally, in his other studies, Brian Jacobson discusses film studios in general and argues that key features of nineteenth-century architecture, such as spatial plasticity and fluidity, artificiality, and the control of light, became defining elements of both the architecture of the first film studios and the films created there. Later, by extending this research, Jacobson reveals the role of early film studio design and technological advancements in shaping the practice of filmmaking by approaching studios architecturally and discussing how studio spaces regulate the environment to produce films in the book *Studios Before the System*.[7]

Some movies can also be used as a valuable source for understanding the film studio space. Movies that took place in the studio setting or promotional films made for the film studios offer a glimpse into the film studio space. Movies like *The Studio Murder Mystery* (1929) and *The Voice from the Screen* (1926) reveal the filming process and film studio space during the 1920s, and films like *MGM Studio Tour* (1925) *or Behind the Screen: A Tour of Universal Studios* (1915) offer a more general view of the film studio complex and the different amenities.

Several notable resources and projects approach the European studios from architectural and spatial perspectives. For instance, the project STUDIOTEC focuses on film studios located in important European production sites: Britain, France, Germany, and Italy, during the period of 1930-60.[8] For the investigation of film studios in Britain, Sarah Street and Richard Farmer conducted research for the STUDIOTEC project. Sarah Street's publications about Denham Studios and Pinewood Studios provided a tectonic approach to two of Britain's leading studios at the time. Richard

[7] Brian R. Jacobson, "Fantastic Functionality: Studio Architecture and the Visual Rhetoric of Early Hollywood," *Film History* 26, no.2 "Early Hollywood and the Archive" (2014):52-81, Brian R. Jacobson, "The 'imponderable fluidity' of modernity: Georges Méliès and the architectural origins of cinema," *Early Popular Visual Culture* 8, no. 2 (2010): 189-207, Brian R. Jacobson, *Studios Before the System: Architecture, Technology, and the Emergence of Cinematic Space* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015).

[8] STUDIOTEC project coordinated by the University of Bristol and operated between 2019 and 2024. It offers a comparative analysis of studios from the perspective of film studio tectonics, cultures, and practices, exploring their roles as architectural spaces, diverse workplaces, and centers for innovation. It highlights the studios' key role in the history of filmmaking by structuring the research around four major themes: architecture and infrastructure; creativity, practices, and innovation; politics and economics; and professional and labor relations. For more information, see https://studiotec.info/

Farmer has conducted research on cinema and cinema-going in Britain and film culture during the Second World War. Sarah Street, in her article titled "Designing the Ideal Film Studio in Britain," takes the architecture and infrastructure of film studios and how they were designed as key determinants to support specific production needs and activities. Street uses studio plans, photographs, and maps to approach these production spaces from an architectural point of view. In her book *Pinewood: Anatomy of a Film Studio in Post-war Britain,* Street examines the Pinewood Studios in a more detailed way and discusses how Pinewood came to be Britain's most well-known and long-lasting film studio by referring to studios as material infrastructures. A materialist-focused history of Pinewood highlights how technologies, working practices, and leisure activities organized at the studio played important roles in forming and sustaining Pinewood's studio culture. The book's specific methodology is an approach to film studios using the idea of 'tectonics' to focus on how their design and structure reflect layered and shifting experiences. It explores how studios were shaped by their local surroundings but evolved significantly over time and in response to different circumstances.[9]

For the investigation of film studios in Germany, Eleanor Halsall analyzes Germany's first sound film studio, Tonkreuz built in the UFA Studios, in her article "A Leap into the Dark: Ufa's Tonkreuz, Germany's First Dedicated Sound Film Studio." She examines the building's significance in transitioning to the sound film in Germany and discusses the location of the studio and environmental conditions as well as the materials that were used to regulate the natural environment and eliminate any outside noise. Hallsall also talks about the creative force behind the Tonkreuz building, architect Otto Kohtz, who designed many other buildings in UFA Studios and other structures at Babelsberg and Tempelhof.[10]

For the film studios in Italy, Carla Mereu Keating has made noteworthy studies that approach Italian film studios from a materialistic and architectural perspective under the STUDIOTEC project. In her article "The Spatiality of Film Production and

[9] Richard Farmer, "The English Hollywood that wasn't: Shadow History and Esher's Unbuilt Film Studios," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 43, no.1 (2022): 42-64; Sarah Street, "Designing the Ideal Film Studio in Britain," *Screen* 62, no.3 (2021): 330-358; Sarah Street, *Pinewood: Anatomy of a Film Studio in Post-war Britain* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2024).

[10] Eleanor Anne Halsall, "A Leap into the Dark: Ufa's Tonkreuz, Germany's First Dedicated Sound Film Studio," *Architectural Histories* 12, no.1 (2024): 1-25.

the Politics of Urban Planning: Rome's Pioneering Film Studio Cines (1905–37)," she examines the film production facility Cines from an architectural and spatial perspective. She discusses the studio's relationship with Rome's rapid urbanization and argues that the genesis and longevity of the Cinecittà, which was built after the Cines, can be better understood by considering the Cines' unsustainable expansion. The article highlights the contrast between Cines's limited urban location and Cinecittà's spacious suburban site and emphasizes how cinema production requires an environment separate from urban life. Unlike Cines, which was first built during the silent film era and underwent transformations for sound film, Cinecittà was designed specifically for sound film production. In this regard, Keating's other research, "Acoustic Insulation: Italian Film Studios' Material Transformation to Sound (1929-1943)," explores the spatial changes in studio infrastructure and environments in Italy with the introduction of sound. She points out how the coming of sound to the film industry affected the filming environments in Italy between the 1920s and 1940s has not received enough attention. She examines film studios in two groups: silent film facilities whose physical infrastructure was altered and newly designed studios built purposely for sound shooting.[11]

Almost all of these studies focus on their subject matter from a national perspective taking as their subject matter one country's studio space. Brian Jacobson and Ben Goldsmith and Tom O'Regan use the analogy of the heterotopia to describe studio spaces yet none of studies offer a detailed analysis.[12] Instead, this thesis explores multiple European studios through a comparative angle in relation to a thorough inquiry the concept of heterotopia and its six principles. This approach allows the thesis to present a wider outlook into the common spatial and social aspects of film studios during the given time period.

[11] Carla Mereu Keating, "The Spatiality of Film Production and the Politics of Urban Planning: Rome's Pioneering Film Studio Cines (1905–37)," *Film History: An International Journal* 33, no.3 (2021): 37-65, Carla Mereu Keating, "Acoustic Insulation: Italian Film Studios' Material Transformation to Sound (1929-1943)," in *Retuning the Screen: Sound Methods and the Aural Dimension of Film and Media History*, ed. Simone Dotto, Paolo Villa Maria Ida Bernabei (Milano: Mimesis, 2022), 95-105.

[12] Ben Goldsmith and Tom O'Regan, *The Film Studio: Film Production in the Global Economy* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005), 64 and Jacobson, *Studios Before the System*, 205.

1.3 Overview of Chapters

This study is divided into four main chapters that explore the spatial and architectural dimensions of European film studio complexes during the twentieth century. Firstly, it is important to understand the filming space and trace the film studio architecture and its development. What were the first types of studio spaces, what were their spatial and technical requirements, and which design principles did architects take into account when designing these environments? Therefore, the second chapter presents a general overview of the film studio spaces and explores the architectural transformation of them, beginning with the earliest examples such as Edison's Black Maria and Georges Méliès's glasshouse studio. It also addresses how these primary designs were transformed over time with the coming of artificial lighting and sound technologies. As these spaces expanded and transformed, they began to operate like industrial complexes dedicated to film production. The chapter discusses how they also functioned like micro-cities with various facilities to support both workers and film production. Lastly, the chapter discusses the current condition of the film studios with the advanced technology and alternative mobile spaces used for filmmaking outside of the film studio.

The film studio space can be analyzed through the theoretical approaches of many theorists and thinkers. Therefore, the third chapter focuses on the conceptual framework that forms the basis of this thesis. This chapter discusses Michel Foucault's heterotopia and Jean Baudrillard's simulacrum as the two main guiding concepts of this study. The chapter begins by explaining Foucault's concept of heterotopia, followed by a detailed discussion of the six principles and how film studio spaces can be associated with them. Later, Baudrillard's concept of simulacrum is introduced to support the heterotopia theory and investigate how the film studio complexes mimic the physical and social characteristics of cities. By building on these concepts, the chapter concludes how film studio complexes function as microcosms of cities with their facilities and infrastructure that make them self-sufficient.

The remaining chapters form the main discussion points of the thesis. In the fourth chapter, the three selected studios, Studio Babelsberg from Germany, Pinewood Studios from the UK, and Cinecittà from Italy, are examined, starting from their establishment at the beginning of the twentieth century until the start of the Second World War. Because Studio Babelsberg was established during the silent film era, it

is the oldest among them. Therefore, the examination starts with Babelsberg, then continues with Pinewood and Cinecittà, which were designed specifically for sound film. Their establishment period, architectural layout, facilities, and the social community they formed are examined. These aspects are analyzed through the theoretical lens of heterotopia and simulacra, investigating how each studio space functions not only as a site for film production but also acts like a micro-city that reproduces spatial and social aspects of the city.

Then, the fifth chapter focuses on the situation of the selected film studios during the Second World War. The war was an important and transformative aspect of European history. Therefore, it is also necessary to address the wartime period in this thesis. Cinema served as a powerful tool of propaganda during the war, and as a result, film studios held a strategic importance. But were these sites used only for the production of propaganda films, or were they utilized for other purposes? This chapter aims to explore this question. It begins with exploring how war caused the geopolitical changes and shifted the power dynamics in Europe, as well as how architecture tried to adapt to this extraordinary situation. After that, the chapter analyzes selected studios by starting with Studio Babelsberg, which was occupied by UFA at the time, and continuing with Pinewood and Cinecittà. Investigating studios located in countries on opposite sides of the war offers a unique perspective on how the Allied and Axis powers approached the use of these spaces. Furthermore, the chapter discusses how these cinematic spaces also functioned as a heterotopia where illusion and reality collided during the war.

CHAPTER 2

FILM STUDIO

2.1 What is a Film Studio?

The term studio is often used to describe a workshop or rehearsal space for professions such as artists, photographers, actors, etc. In the context of the film field, however, the term covers a broader definition. It is usually used to refer to the entire set of stages and buildings located on a film company's site as well as the film production company itself (which might not necessarily occupy a designated physical site). Studio spaces often include silent- and soundstages, makeup and dressing rooms, storages, backlots (outdoor areas where large sets are built and exterior scenes are filmed), water tanks, post-production facilities, preview screening spaces, and so on to provide the film crew with suitable spaces for all stages of filmmaking.[13] The filming stages within these studios usually comprise specific architectural and infrastructural features ("high ceilings, insulated walls, lighting grids and additional power considerations") that make them flexible and adaptable enough for a variety of production aspects and activities (sets and set construction, rehearsal, lighting, filming, etc.).[14] Studios, then, constitute the purpose-built material, architectural, and infrastructural environments that house and sustain a variety of filmmaking activities.

Studio complexes are marketed as part of a larger infrastructure package designed to handle large-scale production. This includes not only the construction of physical studios but also the provision of qualified personnel in preproduction, production, and post-production services. Therefore, the studio acts as a "one-stop shop" that covers all the needs of international producers.[15] Ben Goldsmith and Tom O'Regan classified

[13] Goldsmith and O'Regan, *The Film Studio,* xi.

[14] Steven E. Browne, *Film-Video Terms and Concepts* (Stoneham, Mass.: Focal, 1992), 156-57.

[15] Goldsmith and O'Regan, *The Film Studio*, 4.

types of current production spaces under three different models according to their "functional profile and spatial concentration." The first type is the "production precinct." These spaces have one or more stages, workshops, offices, and maybe a backlot, but they can only provide a limited range of production and little or no post-production facilities and services. Toronto Film Studios, Prague Studios, and Leavesden Studios are some of the examples of this type. The second type is called the "cinema city." These studios are organized to offer services for feature films, television drama work, and international television series. This type of studios usually offers various production and post-production services. Warner Roadshow Studios in Australia, MediaPro, and Castel in Romania are some of the examples that fall into this type. The third type is the "media city." These studios contain all the features of the cinema city model but the available production and post-production services are more extensive than the cinema city, including digital animation production and television broadcasting production, such as news, live audience programs, special events, etc. Many media cities also contain public spaces like cinemas, concert halls, theme parks, and studio tours, which increase the studio's public profile.[16] While this categorization belongs to contemporary studios, it gives us clues as to how historically the design of a good majority of these spaces have also aimed for introverted and self-sufficient complexes that function like a city within a city so that film production can proceed without disruption by external factors.

2.2 History of Film Studios

Film studios went through noteworthy transformations since the early days of silent cinema, evolving from workshop and laboratory spaces that operated with basic equipment, simple backdrops, and dependence on natural conditions to big production complexes with extensive facilities. Thus, this section will trace the history of film studios by focusing on the design and architectural aspects of these spaces.

2.2.1 First Film Studio Designs

The earliest films that were publicly exhibited were what is generally referred as 'actualities'(*actualités*), short (one- or two-minute long) non-fiction films that

[16] Ibid., 37-38

showed real-life events, locations, and people. Some examples include *La sortie des usines Lumière* (*Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory*, Lumière Brothers, 1895), *Panorama of Beach and Cliff House* (Herbert J. Miles, 1903), *Ayastefanos'taki Rus Abidesinin Yıkılışı* (*Demolition of the Russian Monument at San Stefano*, Fuat Uzkınay, 1914). While some staging was definitely the case for these films, they more often than not involved location shooting, that is the use of real-world settings for filming activities. Yet, soon enough, the desire for more controlled (in terms of climate, light, human and nonhuman traffic, etc.) environments entailed the emergence of custom-built studios. While usually considered polar opposites, location shooting and studio filming form a spectrum for film production. Most films feature a combination of the two to the extent that studio-produced films may often integrate shooting at actual locations to some degree, while even the most realistically inclined films may occasionally integrate studio shoots and/or build temporary accommodations and sets on actual locations to turn them into semi-controlled environments.

We may be able to trace the history of film studio spaces back to the technological environments that even predated the public exhibitions of location-shot films. The first film technologies were created by scientists, inventors, and technicians in spaces of scientific and technical experimentation, like laboratories and workshops. These spaces also became the earliest sites of both film production and exhibition. In cities like Lyon, Berlin, Leeds, New York, Washington, D.C., and rural New Jersey, inventors and scientists experimented with motion-picture technology within their work environments and these experiments elicited the invention of a variety of cinematic technologies at different locations almost simultaneously (Zoopraxiscope in the United States in 1870, Praxinoscope in France in 1877, Kinetoscope in the US in 1891, Bioscope in Germany in 1895, Cinématographe in France in 1895). To be able to achieve precise and accurate results, scientists had to form a controlled lab environment, ensuring consistent temperature and architectural stability.[17] These principles of environmental and spatial control were later reflected in the architectural design of early film studios.

[17] Brian R. Jacobson, *Studios Before the System* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 3-31.

One of the most significant figures in this early period was Thomas Edison and his assistant William Kennedy Dickson. According to Edison's statements obtained from *Century Magazine*, he came up with the idea of designing a machine that would do for the eye what the phonograph does for the ear. In 1887, Thomas Edison built a laboratory in West Orange, New Jersey with big plans for this new project that would eventually culminate in the invention of the Kinetoscope. One room of the new laboratory was set aside for kinetographic experiments.[18] His laboratory assistant Dickson, who was interested in photography, started to work on motion picture experiments in Room #5 of the West Orange laboratory. However, the inadequate lighting of Room #5 and the vibrations caused by the adjacent machine shops and elevator made the space inconvenient for Dickson's experiments. This led him to design an exterior photography area, which was also called the "photographic building," in 1889. For the design of the building, he created a slightly altered version of the photography studios, also known as the "glass rooms." While he used this building to continue his experiments, the space also became a site for image production. In 1891, producing moving images in the photography building became Dickson's main focus. Dickson and his assistant William Heise produced films consisting of white figures placed on a black background, echoing the motion studies of Étienne-Jules Marey. Their success in these initial filming experiments and the advancements in the Kinetoscope, Kinetograph, and film development techniques motivated them to make new efforts to expand film production. While the photographic building provided a controlled environment for filmmaking, Dickson realized that it wasn't an ideal space for large-scale productions. At this point, filming (which requires ample and well-diffused light) involved the use of sunlight as contemporary electric lamps were not powerful enough to film and electrical infrastructures needed for lighting installation were not adequate yet. Given this need for ample amounts of natural light, a major issue with the building was its fixed position relative to sunlight, which caused unwanted side shadows while filming.[19]

[18] Harold G. Bowen, "Thomas Alva Edison's Early Motion Picture Experiments" in *A Technological History of Motion Pictures and Television*, ed. Raymond Fielding (University of California Press, 1967), 90-91

[19] Jacobson, *Studios Before the System*, 35-38.

To solve these problems, he designed another structure known as the Kinetographic Theatre or the "Black Maria" (American slang for a paddy wagon) in 1893 (Figure 1-2). Dickson described the structure as having a peculiar appearance and following no architectural rules. The structure had an irregular oblong shape, rising in the center, where a movable roof was added. Pitch-coated paper studded with nails to a wooden framework constituted the basic configuration of the studio with a pitch black interior and exterior.[20] Even though the new structure had similar characteristics to the previous building, with the usage of completely new material, Dickson abandoned the transparent design of the photographic building. The transparent glasshouses, on the other hand, became a trend in the design of studio spaces in the following decades. The primary design principle in Black Maria was to control the light because Dickson wanted to reflect the light at an exact angle from the figures on the stage to the Kinetograph's lens. For this reason, he moved away from the "glass room" design and instead went for an enclosed structure. He modified the shape of the roof to get the light more properly onto the stage. By taking inspiration from Étienne-Jules Marey's motion studies conducted at his Physiological Station, Dickson replaced the simple black background with a "black tunnel" that reduced light reflection and enhanced contrast.[21] Lastly and perhaps most significantly, Dickson made the studio mobile: the structure could rotate according to the position of the sun to solve the side shadow problem that he faced in the photographic building.[22] Most of the films produced at Black Maria ran for about twenty seconds or so (the lengthiest amount of film the Kinetoscope could hold) and featured performances by dancers, acrobats, and sports figures or excerpts from vaudeville acts with a signature black background owing to the specific design of the studio.[23]

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[20] W.K.L Dickson and Antonia Dickson, *History of the Kinetograph, Kinetoscope, & Kinetophonograph* (New York: Arno Press, 1970), 19-20

[21] For further discussion on the affinities between Marey's Physiological Station and the Black Maria, see Noam Elcott, *Artificial Darkness: An Obscure History of Modern Art and Media* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 17-46.

[22] Jacobson, *Studios Before the System*, 39-43

[23] Kristin Thompson, David Bordwell. and Jeff Smith, *Film History: An Introduction*, Fifth Edition (New York: McGraw Hill, 2022), 7.

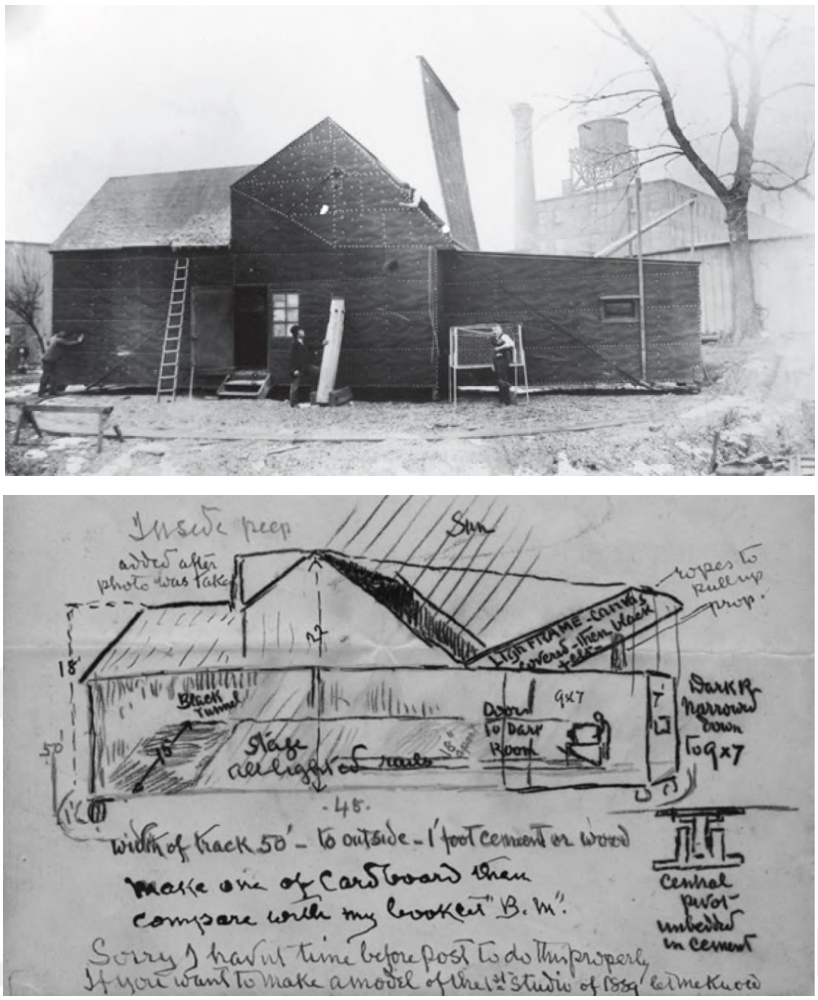


Figure 1-2: Top, Black Maria, circa winter 1893–1894. (Courtesy of U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, Thomas Edison National Historical Park). Reproduced in Brian R. Jacobson, *Studios Before the System* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015). Bottom, W.K.L. Dickson, sketch for the interior of Black Maria, 1933. Earl Theisen Collection, Margaret Herrick Library, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Reproduced in Noam Elcott, *Artificial Darkness: An Obscure History of Modern Art and Media* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2016)

Another early studio design type shaped by environmental control principles was the "glass house" studios that featured iron or wood structural systems spanned by large glass panes to allow ample natural light needed for filmmaking (Figure 3-4). While sharing similar goals with Dickson's Black Maria, glasshouse design emerged from a distinct architectural tradition.[24] The development and the usage of new materials such as iron and glass in architecture followed the technological advancements that came with the Industrial Revolution.[25] The glass was no longer a

[24] Jacobson, *Studios Before the System*, 55.

[25] Brian R. Jacobson, "The 'imponderable fluidity' of modernity: Georges Méliès and the architectural origins of cinema," *Early Popular Visual Culture* 8, no. 2 (2010): 193-194

material that was used to fill wall openings; instead it became a "climatic envelope," as stated by Brent Richards.[26] It acted as a membrane that controlled the environment, encapsulated space, and mediated the light. As argued by Anne Friedberg, the architectural history of the use of glass witnessed a shift in the modern era from a window into a transparent wall, that is the use of large panes of transparent surfaces.[27] This transformation became first evident in the 19th century, when, glass and iron were used in many large-scale public structures.[28] The usage of glass and iron could be observed in large commercial centers like Les Halles (1850s) or Passage de l'Opera (1822) in Paris, and exhibition sites like the Crystal Palace (1851) in London and Galeries des Machines (1889) in Paris, or industrial sites, greenhouses and transportation hubs like The Winter Gardens at Blackpool, Lancashire (1878) and St. Pancras Railway station (1868), which required extensive spaces for large machinery and vehicles. Using glass and iron helped architects and engineers to fill large spaces with natural light while also still sheltering them from snow, rain, wind, and so on.[29] At the same time, as many late nineteenth and twentieth century scholars, architects, and critics such as Sigfried Giedion, Gyorgy Kepes and Wolfgang Schivelbusch argued in varying ways, these new types of spaces ushered new spatial understandings defined by flexibility, plasticity, and transparency.[30] Lother Bucher, for instance, stated how:

> In contemplating the first great building which was not of solid masonry construction spectators were not slow to realize that here the standards by which architecture had hitherto been judged no longer held good. (…) We see a delicate network of lines without any clue by means of which we might judge their distance from the eye or the real size. Instead of moving from the wall at one end to that at the other, the eye sweeps along an unending perspective

[26] Brent Richards, *New Glass Architecture* (London: Laurence Hill Publishing, 2016), 14.

[27] Anne Friedberg, *The Virtual Window: From Alberti to Microsoft* (Cambridge and London: The MIT Press, 2006), 101-139.

[28] Mark Shiel, *Hollywood Cinema and the Real Los Angeles* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 2012), 157-158

[29] Jacobson, "The 'imponderable fluidity' of modernity," 193-194.

[30] See Sigfried Giedion, *Space, Time, and Architecture: The Growth of a New Tradition* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1941), Gyorgy Kepes, *Language of Vision* (Chicago: Paul Theobald, 1944), and Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the 19th Century*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

> which fades into the horizon (…) the transept (…) dissolves into a distant background where all materiality is blended into the atmosphere.[31]

Similarly, according to the French architect Louis-Auguste Boileau, the weightless-looking transparent surfaces of these buildings gave their visitors and viewers the impression of "pure air and light, that is to say, an imponderable fluidity."[32]

The majority of the first film studios in the late nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth century were built by using the same building technologies taking the existing architectural culture of glass and iron structures as their model.[33] "The [glass house] studios that produced cinematic worlds were of the same materials and character as the factories, laboratories, ateliers, hothouses, photography studios, department stores, office buildings, and exhibition halls that were redefining built space and modern experience," as Jacobson puts it.[34] Examples include but are not limited to several glass-enclosed studios built by Pathé around France (the first decade of the twentieth century), Animatograph Works studio in London, UK (1899), Edison Motion Picture Studio in New York City (1907), and Nordisk Film's four glass studios in Copenhagen, Denmark (1908-1914). Even in countries such as Japan and Mexico where such an architectural culture of transparent public structures did not yet exist, some of the first studios were made out of glass following their counterparts in Europe and the US.[35]

According to Brian Jacobson, three building types that shaped early glass studio designs are winter gardens and international exposition structures, photography studios constructed with glass and iron, and industrial spaces that used large glass

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[31] Lothar Bucher, *Kulturhistorische Skizzen aus der Industrieausstellung aller Volker* (1851), quoted in Friedberg, *The Virtual Window*, 112-113.

[32] Boileau, quoted in Jacobson, *Studios Before the System*,

[33] Jacobson, "The 'imponderable fluidity' of modernity," 193-194.

[34] Jacobson, *Studios Before the System*, 86.

[35] For further information, see Diane Wei Lewis, "The Longed-For Crystal Palace": Empire, Modernity, and Nikkatsu Mukōjima's Glass Studio, 1913–1923," in *In the Studio: Visual Creation and Its Material Environments*, ed. Brian R. Jacobson (Oakland: University of California Press, 2020), 23-41 and Rielle Navitsky, "Regulating Light, Interiors, and the National Image: Electrification and Studio Space in 1920s Brazil," in *In the Studio*, 42-62.

windows and iron structures to support them.[36] Not only did these structures shared similar materials and structural features that prompted new spatial understandings but also they tended to blur the boundaries between the actual and the simulated, natural and artificial. In the late nineteenth century, photography studios had become one of the prominent elements of the urban fabric of Paris. Similar to cinema, photography also depended on natural light. Thus, photographers would rent the upper floors or rooftops of the buildings and construct an enclosed space made out of glass and iron to be able to reach suitable lighting conditions for photographing their subjects. These photography studios, like later film studios, also created artificial sets and environments that served as the backdrop of photos therefore blurring the actual (photographed subjects) and simulated (artificial sets).[37] Similarly, another structure that influenced the design of film studios, greenhouses, or hothouses, reproduced nature artificially inside an enclosed glass and iron structure. These spaces were used for displaying plants, especially the exotic and indigenous ones that are cultivated in tropical climates, creating simulated versions of faraway natural terrains within artificial structures. For the preservation of these plants, the space had to precisely replicate the environmental conditions like temperature, humidity, and sunlight of their habitat. Therefore, in addition to allowing a maximum amount of light for the plants, the glasshouse structure also functioned as a protective shell for this special environment from external factors.[38] Likewise, international exposition structures often featured replicas of buildings or building types from other countries for the visitors to see and experience. As argued by Jacobson, in adapting this existing architectural culture, early glasshouse-type studios made use of their spatial characteristics (transparency, flexibility, adaptability) while also furthering their tendency to muddle the artificial and the natural, as well as the simulated and the actual.[39]

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[36] Jacobson, *Studios Before the System*, 55-56.

[37] Ibid., 62

[38] Georg Kohlmaier and Barna von Sartory, *Houses of Glass: A Nineteenth-century Building Type* (The MIT Press, 1990), 3

[39] Jacobson, *Studios Before the System*, 55-86.

One famous example of these production spaces was George Méliès's "glass house" studio, which he built in France in 1897 (Figure 3-4). Méliès imitated these conditions of photography studios and greenhouses as they provided solutions for his problems of lighting and controlling the climate. In the initial design of the studio, Méliès used a wooden frame for the studio's structure. However, the wooden frame could not support the glass panes. As a result, he decided to reinforce the wooden frame with iron rather than building a completely new structure. All sides of the studio were covered with frosted glass, but he left several rows of transparent glass facing the stage, ensuring a direct light source. He positioned the studio in the south-southwest direction, allowing the illumination of the stage frontally at around one o'clock each day. He also placed some cloth shutters to manage the amount and direction of the light.[40] In this studio, Méliès produced his trick films (short silent films that utilize certain early special effects) known for their constantly transforming mise-en-scene reminiscent of the special effects that define the magician-turned-filmmaker Méliès' previous profession. The studio, indeed, also replicated "the stage setup, trap doors, rollers and winches, and electric projectors" used in Méliès' former Théâtre Robert-Houdin.[41]

In films such as *Escamotage d'une dame chez Robert-Houdin* (*The Vanishing Lady*, 1896), *The Four Troublesome Heads* (*Un homme de têtes*, 1898) and *Le voyage dans la lune* (*A Trip to the Moon,* 1902) Méliès used the controlled yet flexible environment of the studio to create on-screen worlds defined by their spatial plasticity. As argued by Jacobson:

> Armed with an imaging technology and a built space that could reproduce, record, and transform the varied and shifting built world, Méliès became an insightful observer of the technological environment of modernity and posed film as an *interpretation* as much as a *representation* of that new technological environment. (…) Filmmakers such as Méliès used the artificial environment of the studio not only to reproduce modern spaces on film but also to build cinematic worlds that were themselves key components of an increasingly artificial, human-built environment.[42]

[40] Jacobson, *Studios Before the System*, 55-61.

[41] Ibid, 61.

[42] Ibid, 56-57; 85.

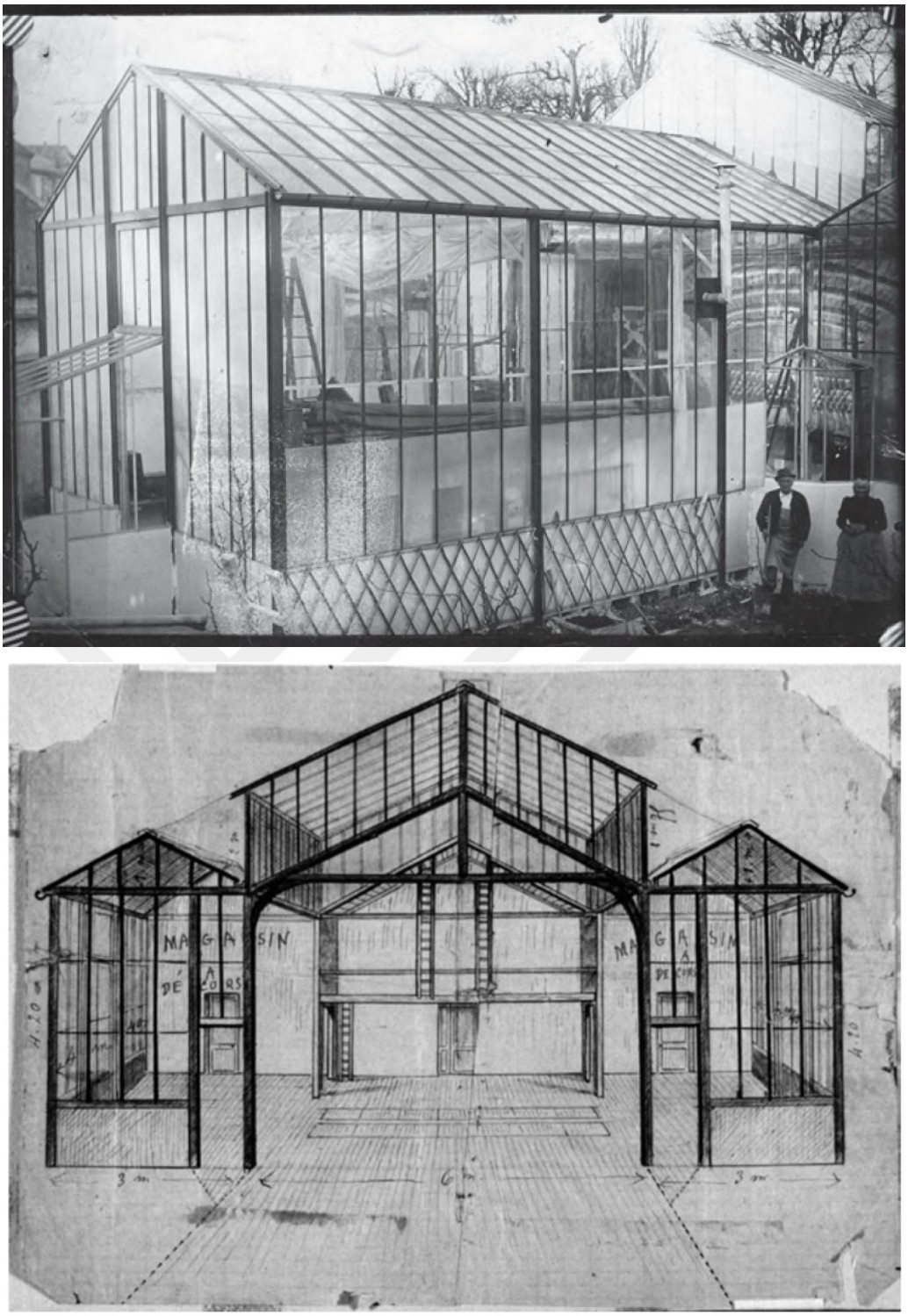


Figure 3-4: Top, Georges Méliès, Studio A (ca. 1897). (Cinémathèque française, Coll. H. Langlois. Bibliothèque du film, Service Iconographique). Reproduced in Brian R. Jacobson, *Studios Before the System* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015). Bottom, Georges Méliès, drawing of first studio, 1899. Ink and colored pencil on paper, mounted on card stock. 7½ × 10⅓ in (19 × 26.2 cm). Cinémathèque Française D083- 27. Reproduced in Noam Elcott, *Artificial Darkness: An Obscure History of Modern Art and Media* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2016).

2.2.2 Coming of Electric Light and Sound

Even though the earlier studio designs by Dickson (Black Maria) and Méliès (glasshouse studio) allowed them to control natural conditions in their favor, reliance on natural conditions could be unpredictable. Therefore, filmmakers later looked for new technologies like artificial lighting to reduce their dependence on natural sources. Since artificial light sources offered more control over the intensity and direction of light, filmmakers had the opportunity to create the atmosphere they wanted and achieve special lighting effects. The very first dark studio to be entirely artificially lit by electric light was designed and built by Biograph Film in New York in 1903. Yet, for more than a decade, studios did not go completely dark and used a mixture of natural (provided by continuing use of glass surfaces) and artificial light. By the 1920s, the majority of big film production companies around the world had switched from the use of glass studios to dark ones that kept out all natural light. In these electric-installed studios, artificial light sources were used to illuminate entire scenes.[43] To the extent that "the same techniques used to create artificial light and to enhance 'natural' illumination in urban architecture more generally allowed architects to develop designs focused on the specific needs of film production," contemporary urban infrastructure played an important role in the design of these studios.[44]

The advent of sound in cinema in the late 1920s caused some significant transformations in directing and acting in films. Many elements of the filmmaking process needed to be revitalized.[45] There were two types of sound filming techniques. The first one was sound-on-disc, where the sound was recorded separately and synchronized with the film later. The second one was sound-on-film, in which the sound was recorded onto the film itself.[46] Bell Telephone had mastered a sound-on-disc motion picture system, which was also known as Vitaphone, by 1925. However, Hollywood studios showed little interest in this technological breakthrough because they thought that talking movies were a risky innovation. Only Warner Brothers,

[43] Thompson, Bordwell. and Smith, *Film History*, 126.

[44] Jacobson, *Studios Before the System*, 88.

[45] Douglas Gomery, *The Coming of Sound: A History* (Routledge, 2005), xi.

[46] Paul Grainge, Mark Jancovich and Sharon Monteith, *Film Histories: An Introduction and Reader* (Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 151.

which was struggling financially at the time, saw the potential of this technology to save money by substituting phonograph recordings for live musicians.[47] The first Vitaphone production facility was the old Vitagraph motion picture studio acquired by Warner Brothers in 1925 in Brooklyn, New York. Warner Brothers started their experiments with sound in this property, benefiting from its proximity to the scientists and engineers at Bell Laboratories. The early sound recordings made at the Vitagraph studio suffered from echoes and excessive reverberation. Thus, they took out carpets from the prop room and draped them around the set, and tried to absorb unwanted sound and improve recording quality. By 1927, Warner Brothers began relocating its operations to soundstages in Hollywood, and other studios in Hollywood followed by constructing new soundstages. They consulted acoustical experts to make sure the studio spaces were soundproof and non-reverberant.[48]

One of the most important elements that underwent transformation during this period was the production spaces. A new type of stage was necessary for film production, which was designed to block external noise and minimize the internal sound coming from hissing lights or air-conditioning systems. The old studios had to be converted to achieve a degree of acoustical control.[49] Based on Carla Mereu Keating's research on the transformation of film studios in Italy to sound shooting, a general conclusion can be drawn about the transformation of studio spaces during this period. She states that while new studios were being built from scratch for sound production, it was also necessary to modify the still-in-use glass and iron structures previously designed for silent film to be suitable for sound film. To convert these studios into soundproof spaces, new walls, ceilings, and doors were built and insulated. Unlike the old studios, which had limited room for modifications, the newly constructed studios allowed for more comprehensive architectural planning. For instance, when designing the layout of the studio complex, facilities such as carpentry

[47] Preston J. Hubbard, "Synchronized Sound and Movie-House Musicians, 1926-29," *American Music* 3, no. 4 (Winter 1985): 429.

[48] Emily Thompson, *The Soundscape of Modernity: Architectural Acoustics and the Culture of Listening in America, 1900-1933* (The MIT Press, 2002), 267.

[49] Emily Thompson, "Dead Rooms and Live Wires: Harvard, Hollywood and the Deconstruction of Architectural Acoustics, 1900-1930," *Isis* 88, no. 4 (1997): 616-619.

and mechanics workshops, which could affect the film shooting with the noise they produce, were placed as far as possible from the sound stages.[50]

In 1928, the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studio consulted Vern Knudsen, who was an acoustical physicist, for their first soundstage design. They explained their demands for soundstages as "We want these two stages, stages A and B, to be insulated from each other so well that you can have gunfire on one stage and record chamber music on the other stage." Knudsen warned that achieving this level of sound isolation would be extremely expensive, but they pointed out that it was a necessary requirement. Under Knudsen's supervision, two soundstages were constructed with heavy-rigid structures with ten-inch concrete walls and a concrete slab ceiling. The studios were located inside this structure, but were structurally separated from the outer shell, and thick layers of sound-absorbing materials were used to enhance acoustics. However, due to the high cost of this construction method, the studios soon looked for a more affordable alternative that could still provide the same level of acoustical control. They discovered that designing soundstages by using multiple layers of materials like plasterboard and fiberboard, separated by air spaces, lining them with sound-absorbing materials, and mechanically isolating them from each other was equally effective. This type of soundstage design later became the industry standard for studios.[51] In addition to the design of soundstages according to acoustical requirements, there was a mixing booth for sound engineers that needed to be carefully designed as well. The sound engineer, also known as the "mixer man" was responsible for altering the sound levels, filtering out the noise, and making sure the recording was high-quality. These people were seated in a monitoring booth located above the soundstage with a direct view of the scene.[52] Although the engineer did not require a large physical space to perform this task, the mixing booth needed to be designed with a great amount of acoustical space that mimics the acoustical environment of a theater. Thus, the mixing booth had

[50] Carla Mereu Keating, "Acoustic Insulation: Italian Film Studios' Material Transformation to Sound (1929-1943)," in *Retuning the Screen: Sound Methods and the Aural Dimension of Film and Media History*, ed. Simone Dotto, Paolo Villa Maria Ida Bernabei (Milano: Mimesis, 2022), 95-100

[51] Thompson, *The Soundscape of Modernity,* 269.

[52] Thompson, "Dead Rooms," 616-619.

to be large enough and treated with acoustical materials to replicate the reverberation time of an actual theater.[53]

Other than the physical construction of soundstages, effective sound control within the studio itself was equally crucial for sound filming. The short documentary film *The Voice from the Screen* (1926) produced by Bell Laboratories, demonstrates the Vitaphone recording process. In the documentary, new sound control techniques applied in the studio during the shooting can be observed. There is a camera positioned in a soundproof booth, three suspended microphones for the recording, and in the background, the drapes were hung to reduce the reverberation (Figure 5).[54] Another example that showcases these alterations in the film production process and studio spaces coming with the sound is the German thriller movie *Der Schuß im Tonfilmatelier* (The Shot in the Talker Studio) from 1930. In the movie, during the shooting on a soundstage, one actress is murdered, and investigators decide that they could benefit from the new sound technology to track down the killer since all the sounds in the studio are recorded.[55] Beyond its narrative, the movie gives the audience a glimpse inside the film studio and reveals how sound film is made. One scene shows the camera positioned in an enclosed space to prevent its noise from interfering with the filming, similar to *The Voice from the Screen* (1926). Another scene shows the sound engineer and his monitoring booth located on the upper floor of the studio space (Figure 6).

[53] Thompson, *The Soundscape of Modernity*, 269-271.

[54] Ibid., 269.

[55] "Der Schuß im Tonfilmatelier (1930) – Filmanfang," filmportal.de, accessed March 8, 2025, https://www.filmportal.de/video/der-schuss-im-tonfilmatelier-1930



Figure 5-6: On the left, Recording a Vitaphone sound motion picture in the Manhattan Opera House, New York, 1926. Photo #W4991, AT&T Archives. Reproduced in Emily Thompson, *The Soundscape of Modernity: Architectural Acoustics and the Culture of Listening in America, 1900-1933* (The MIT Press, 2002), 268. On the right, still from *Der Schuß im Tonfilmatelier (1930).*

The shift to completely artificial lighting and the introduction of new soundproofing techniques transformed the studio environments into highly controlled spaces, bringing new strategies for environmental control but also raising new concerns about the limitations of that control. The electrical systems required for studio lighting and audio recording systems brought new sources of heat and sparks, and the materials used for shading and soundproofing were highly flammable, which created a hazardous environment in the studio and increased the risk of fires. Therefore, while new technologies like artificial lighting and sound shooting facilitated the filmmaking process, they also introduced new challenges that will affect both shooting and the safety of workers and actors.[56]

2.2.3 Studios as Industrial Sites

In France, the term "studio" did not come into use until the 1910s. Instead, the terms "théâtre" and "atelier" were used to describe these spaces. At the same time, the word "usines," which means factories, was also used to refer to studios. In the early 20th century, for the design of film studios, architects were inspired by spaces with controllable and flexible working environments like factories.[57] With the

[56] Brian R. Jacobson, "Fire and Failure: Studio Technology, Environmental Control, and the Politics of Progress," *Cinema Journal* 57, no.2 (Winter 2018): 22-43

[57] Jacobson, *Studios Before the System*, 9-12.

modernization of studios and the emergence of new technologies, the cinema studio not only looked like a factory but also operated like one. These wide-ranging facilities included power stations to support studio lighting and machinery, factory floors dedicated to manufacturing both filming devices and other equipment, and specialized areas for processing and storing film stock. There were also ateliers where artists created painted backdrops, sets, and poster art, and storehouses to keep these artworks, costumes, and props created by artisans.[58] As Jacobson puts it for the case of Hollywood studios:

> Hollywood and its concrete studios would house a filmmaking utopia, or "dream factory system," that used functional techniques of modern manufacturing to create cinematic "dream" worlds. The latent tension between the "dream" and the "factory," the fantastic and the functional in Hollywood's concrete, glass, and "dark" studios mirrored the blending of pragmatism, utopianism, and a romantic vision of American industrial modernity in modern architecture.[59]

Indeed, the term "factory" was also used in the Holywood film industry. Film studios were classified as light industry and are included in Los Angeles city and county industrial employment assessments. According to the statements of William Johnston of *Motion Picture News* in 1926, the least realized fact about the movie industry is that it is an industrial machine and operates like any other large-scale industry. Filmmaking involves a production process similar to that of the automobile, clothing, or food industries. Thus, while films were often presented as artistic products, their production followed industrial models, incorporating Taylorist and Fordist principles, which transformed filmmaking into a mass-production industry and the studio architecture followed suit.[60]

2.2.4 Film Studios as a Micro-City

The second decade of the twentieth century witnessed the emergence of some major film studios around the world as well as the consolidation of Hollywood as the

[58] Ibid., 127.

[59] Ibid., 124.

[60] Mark Shiel, *Hollywood Cinema,* 136.

location for mainstream filmmaking activities in the United States. One of the main reasons behind the move of filmmaking studios from the east coast locations such as New York, New Jersey, Philadelphia, and Chicago to Los Angeles in the early tens was the city's environmental and climatic conditions that both allowed shooting of exterior shots of a variety of landscapes all year round as well as favorable lighting conditions for glass house studios still in use.[61] At the same time, these companies were able to bypass patent restrictions imposed by Edison company at play in New York City.[62]

Also, during this decade large-scale studio complexes began to emerge starting with Babelsberg Studio in Potsdam-Babelsberg right outside of Berlin in 1912. Usually located on the outskirts of existing cities and featuring a large variety of amenities both for filmmaking purposes as well as workers' needs, these film studio complexes can be understood as a microcosm of cities with their extensive infrastructure and social setting. Their distant and isolated location from city centers and their extensive facilities to meet the needs of the film and production crew made them self-sufficient microcosms of cities. Like the glass house studios that drew their material and conceptual principles from existing architectural culture, these large-scale studio complexes display some similarities with some utopian urban planning ideals of the early twentieth century, especially those of Ebenezer Howard's Garden City movement.

Howard proposed the Garden City model as a solution to the problems of both the cities and the countryside. In cities, overcrowding caused unhealthy living conditions with a lack of sanitation and a sufficient water supply for workers. On the contrary, the countryside was experiencing depopulation. People started to migrate to cities due to the absence of proper drainage systems, high costs of imported fertilizers, and declining prices for agricultural products. Also, the houses were too old and musty. Howard envisioned the Garden City as the ideal solution to reconnect people with nature while keeping the qualities of the cities that attracted people. Howard's proposed design included a garden placed in the middle of the city, and six boulevards extended from the garden and divided the city into six parts. Public buildings where

[61] Thompson, Bordwell. and Smith, *Film History*, 30-31.

[62] Ibid, 26-31.

people gathered together, such as city halls, libraries, museums, hospitals, and other community centers, surrounded the central garden. When creating this utopian model, Howard imagined that every section of the city functions like a town and forms a self-sufficient Garden City that offers workers comfortable and fair working conditions.[63]

These types of utopian ideals were intended to encourage and allow residents to reach their individual potential within communities that are healthy, self-determining, ecologically sustaining, supportive, safe, satisfying, and enjoyable.[64] A similar approach can be seen in the architect Hans Poelzig's initial plans for an unbuilt film city project (1930). Poelzig's proposal illustrated facilities arranged in a circular layout for developing, editing, and copying film prints, along with spaces for workshops, prop storage, dressing rooms, and other film production activities.[65] Another example was Helmut Junge's *Plan for Film Studios* (1945), a utopian work of thought that tries to imagine how studios in Britain could reach their best performance. Junge's plans for a British studio complex included "studio groups" near Pinewood and Denham, featuring shared workshops, a film school, and technical resources, while ensuring that production flowed smoothly from planning to post-production. He proposed building a new town nearby for 50,000 workers, including housing, schools, and recreational spaces, inspired by the "Garden City" model but created for the film industry.[66] These models aim to create a carefully organized and controlled environment where all the facilities are within easy reach to ensure a seamless film production.

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[63] Brett Clark, "Ebenezer Howard and the Marriage of Town and Country," *Organization & Environment* 16, no.1 (March 2003): 91-93, https://doi.org/10.1177/1086026602250258

[64] Ann A.Wilcock,"Occupational utopias: Back to the future," *Journal of Occupational Science* 8, no.1 (2001): 5.

[65] "German Film Studios of the Imagination," STUDIOTEC, accessed November 21, 2024, https://studiotec.info/2023/11/08/german-film-studios-of-the-imagination/

[66] Sarah C. J. Street, "Designing the Ideal Film Studio in Britain," *Screen* 62, no.3 (2021): 353.

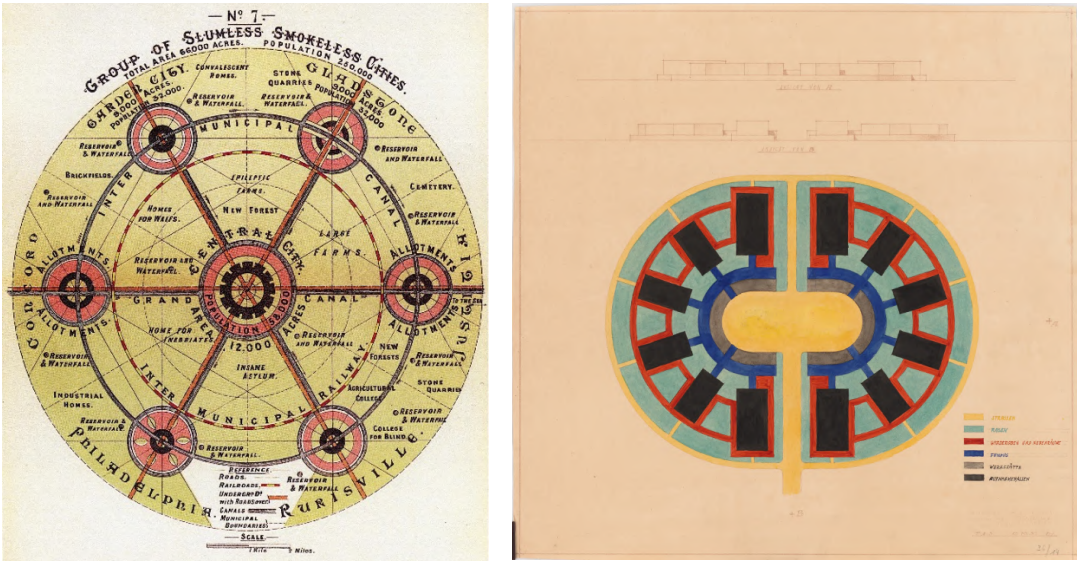


Figure 7-8: On the left: Diagram No.7 showing group of Garden Cities, To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform, London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., Ltd., 1898, accessed August 7, 2025 via Wikimedia Commons. On the right, Hans Peolzig's drawing for unbuilt film city project. Poelzig Hans (1869-1936), Tonfilmatelier (Filmstadt), Berlin-Gatow: Grundriss. Lichtpause aquarelliert auf Papier, 46,00 x 47,00 cm (inkl. Scanrand). *Architekturmuseum der Technischen Universität Berlin* Inv. Nr. HP 036,014. Reproduced in "German Film Studios of the Imagination," STUDIOTEC, https://studiotec.info/2023/11/08/german-film-studios-of-the-imagination/

Mark Shiel, in his book *Hollywood Cinema and the Real Los Angeles,* mentions some movies that depicted a detailed picture of the facilities of film studios in Los Angeles and how these complexes were like small cities within the city. The earliest example is *Behind The Screen: A Tour of Universal Studios* (1915). The movie shows facilities including the makeup and costume department, the properties room, a set that portrays a Middle Eastern street setting, and a cafeteria with the staff and stars. Another one is the *MGM Studio Tour* (1925). The movie showcases 14 filming stages and surrounding buildings that are connected by paved streets. The studio had its own powerhouses and generators. The movie also presents the facilities of the studio related to film production, like dressing rooms, costume departments, carpentry, art department, camera repair shop, film laboratories, and other auxiliary facilities such as the studio hospital, hairdresser, restaurants, and offices.[67]

[67] Shiel, *Hollywood Cinema,* 139.



Figure 9: Stills from the *MGM Studio Tour (1925)* showing costume workshop, power house, emergency hospital and restaurant.

Some studios went even further in creating self-contained environments. William Fox Studios provided bungalow dressing rooms for actors/actresses. According to the postcard depicting the William Fox Studios' "Stars" Bungalows, there were also special spaces built for the stars' daily activities. In the postcard, a handball court and a boxing ring specially built for the daily workouts of actor Tom Fix can be seen (Figure 10).[68] There were also spaces for animals used in films and for their handlers. For example, in Universal City, another major studio complex in Hollywood, there was a zoo containing lions, camels, rhesus monkeys, and other species to be used in films.[69] Since film studios were large complexes, transportation between backlots, studios, and other facilities was also an important aspect of maintaining a smooth production process. Accessible historical examples show that buses or trams were preferred for studio tours for visitors, and rail systems were preferred for transporting props and equipment between studios. For instance, in the 1960s, Universal Studios started to invite tourists into the studio to experience the

[68] Tommy Dangcil, *Hollywood Studios* (Arcadia Publishing, 2007), 64.

[69] Ibid., 42.

Hollywood moviemaking process. The iconic red and white 'Glamor Trams', which are still in operation today, offered visitors a special tour of the backlots.[70] Another example is that, in Studio Babelsberg, during the time it was operated by the Decla company, there was a 3.5-kilometer-long rail line used for transporting equipment.[71] These examples reveal how the studio complexes were designed as fully autonomous and almost self-sufficient cities tailored with internal transportation systems, purpose-built facilities, recreational areas, and even zoos to meet the demands of film production and the everyday lives of those working in it.

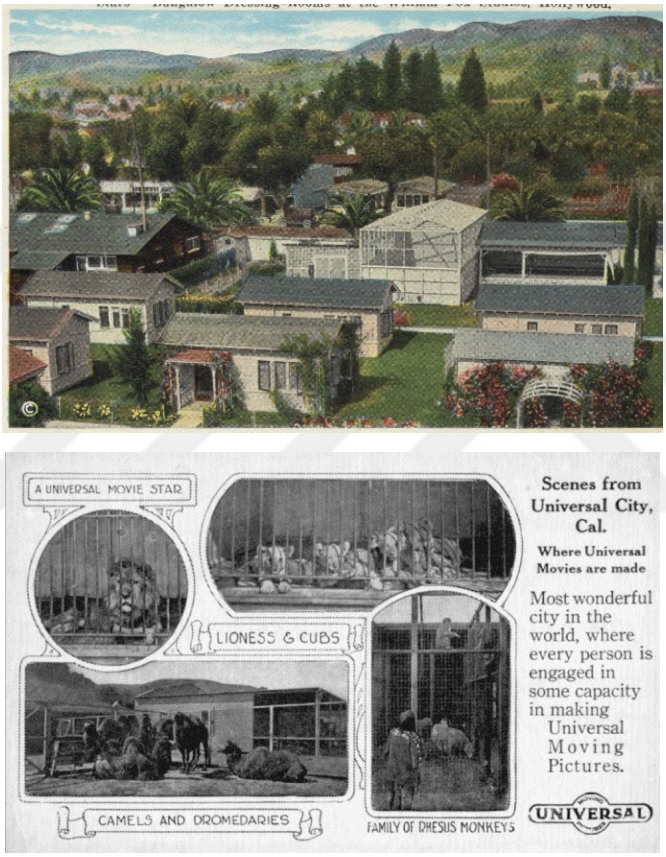


Figure 10-11: Top, "Stars" bungalow dressing-rooms at the William Fox Studios, Hollywood — 1920s, California State Library, https://californiastatelibrary.tumblr.com/post/714499576643600384/stars-bungalow-dressing-rooms-at-the-william-fox. Bottom, Universal Zoo, Tommy Dangcil, *Hollywood Studios* (Arcadia Publishing, 2007), 41.

[70] "Universal Studios Hollywood Reissues Iconic Glamor Trams as World-Renowned Studio Tour Celebrates a Milestone 60 Years with New and Nostalgic Enhancements," NBC Universal, accessed August 1, 2025, https://www.nbcuniversal.com/article/universal-studios-hollywood-reissues-iconic-glamor-trams-world-renowned-studio-tour-celebrates

[71] Wolfgang Jacobsen, *Babelsberg: Das Filmstudio* (Berlin: Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek; Berlin: Argon Verlag GmbH, 1992), 35.

2.3 Current Condition

Technology continues to shape the transformation of film production spaces. New scientific and technological developments changed the traditional filmmaking processes and studio spaces. The emergence of the concepts like virtual reality, mixed reality, and the Metaverse has created new opportunities for filmmakers. Virtual production in filmmaking improves and transforms traditional film production techniques through advanced digital and intelligent technologies and beyond conventional green screen practices.[72] Director Jan Favreu experimented with virtual technology in several of his films. For his new project, he wanted to solve the issues he had with green screens, and he applied virtual production technology, StageCraft, in the Disney+ streaming series *The Mandalorian* (2019). StageCraft is a technology created by Epic Games and Industrial Light & Magic (ILM). They constructed a special soundstage called "the Volume," which is a circular stage covered with LED panels, and combined it with StageCraft technology. The Volume set for The Mandalorian was approximately 23 meters in diameter and 6.5 meters high. LED walls of the Volume set display realistic environments generated in real-time using Unreal Engine and at the same time offer realistic lighting, which eliminates the limitations of green screen with reflective materials like glass and metal. Additionally, unlike physical sets, which require extensive rebuilding, StageCraft allows filmmakers to adjust environments instantly. Without physically moving cameras or actors, directors can shift the digital backdrop and lighting.[73] Technologies like StageCraft are not just changing traditional filmmaking techniques but are also redefining the architectural necessities of film studios. Since virtual production stages provide integrated lighting and easily adjustable digital backgrounds, the need for multiple set construction and external lighting setups is diminishing. While traditional movie studio complexes consist of large backlots and multiple soundstages to house large-scale set constructions, with advancing technology, it is becoming possible to create different sets in a single location. Therefore, movie studios may become more compact in the

[72] Xinyi Shan and Jeanhun Chung, "Comparison of the Characteristics of Green Screen and LED Wall in Virtual Production System," *International Journal of Advanced Smart Convergence* 11, no.2 (2022): 65-66.

[73] Dave Gottwald, "Total Cinema, Total Theatre, Total World: From Set as Architecture to Set as Virtual Performer," *Disegno - The Journal of Design Culture* 6, no.1 (2022): 21-25

future. Moreover, with fewer set construction and location shooting, film studios can follow a more sustainable approach by minimizing material waste and logistical demands.

2.4 Unconventional/Alternative Film Production Spaces

In addition to the permanent, stationary film studios, there existed some unconventional mobile film production alternatives. For example, Metro Goldwyn Mayer Studio had trackless trains traveling across the United States and around the world to promote their films. These trackless trains started operation in 1926 in the Culver City Studios of MGM and traveled all the way to New York in the US. From there, it proceeded to England, France, Belgium, Germany, and Italy.[74] One of the trains was called "The Globe Trotter," which was a travelling motion picture studio (Figure 12). It was seventy feet long and nine feet wide. The train housed a fully functioning sound film recording studio along with a projection booth that showed films on a rear projection screen measuring six by five feet. In the mid-thirties, MGM sent The Globe Trotter on a world tour to offer the public an exclusive look into the filmmaking process. After touring the train, visitors could watch a film on the projection screen installed at the back of the studio car. The Globe Trotter was also used for searching for new talent. They would hold auditions in local theaters and then invite the most promising candidates for recording sessions in the traveling studio. The Globe Trotter stopped operating in 1937, and the locomotive was eventually scrapped as part of the build-up to World War II.[75]

Another similar approach was Alexander Medvedkin's Film Train in the USSR in the early thirties. For this project, three long-distance train carriages were equipped as a mobile film studio. This traveling studio contained an editing room, animation studio, archive, screening room and printing press. In addition to its technical facilities, the train also had living spaces, a dining room, a kitchen, and a shower for the workers.

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[74] "M.G.M.'s Trackless Train Arrives Brisbane March 28," *Everyones* 9, no.420, March 21, 1928, 14. https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-565254511/view?sectionId=nla.obj-576951526&partId=nla.obj-565385991#page/n13/mode/1up

[75] "The Train that Came Down Main," Sumner Historical Society, accessed July 23, 2025, https://www.sumnerhistoricalsociety.com/ewExternalFiles/Sumners%20History%20Book%20MGM%20Train.pdf

An additional storage carriage held filmmaking equipment containing sixteen lighting units and two portable electrical generators, three professional and three automatic cameras, and five portable projectors for screening the film train's productions and some other films. From January to October 1932, Medvedkin's Film Train traveled around the country, collecting the on-site events from places he visited and turning them into short films like a documentary.[76] These projects exemplify the innovative and alternative approaches to film production and promotion in the early 20th century. These mobile film studios increase the cinema's relationship with the public by extending its reach beyond fixed film studio spaces.



Figure 12: Travelling Motion Picture Studio, Tommy Dangcil, *Hollywood Studios* (Arcadia Publishing, 2007), 58.

[76] Robert Bird, "The Film Train Stops at Mosfilm: Aleksandr Medvedkin and the Operative Film Factory," in *In the Studio: Visual Creation and its Material Environments*, ed. Brian R. Jacobson (University of California Press, 2020)

CHAPTER 3

FILM STUDIOS AS HETEROTOPIAS

3.1 What is a Heterotopia?

The studio is a space where ideas are transformed into films, and for these films, the studio stage can become any place, whether real or imagined. Ben Goldsmith and Tom O'Regan state that this environment of the studio space can be described through Michel Foucault's concept of "heterotopia."[77] The word heterotopia is derived from the Greek roots *hetero*, meaning "other" or "different," and *topos*, meaning "place." According to Heidi Sohn, heterotopia is a medical term, and Foucault took the term and integrated it into his studies. Beginning in the 1920s, the term heterotopia started to appear more frequently in medical literature, and it was used to describe a condition in which a tissue is developed in an 'other' anatomical location without affecting the functioning of the organism.[78] Foucault establishes a connection between this medical condition and spatial experiences and approaches heterotopic spaces as an 'other' space. He argues that all societies produce heterotopias, each shaped by distinct forms and functions according to their cultural and historical contexts.[79]

Foucault explained the concept of heterotopia on three different occasions. He first introduced this concept in the preface to his book, *The Order of Things (Les Mots et les choses)*, published in 1966. Later, he talked about it in a radio program that focused on the theme of utopia and literature. Finally, he discussed it in a lecture he

[77] Goldsmith and O'Regan, *The Film Studio*, 64.

[78] Heidi Sohn, "Heterotopia: anamnesis of a medical term," in *Heterotopia and The City: Public Space in a Postcivil Society*, ed. Michiel Dehaene and Lieven De Cauter (New York: Routledge, 2008), 41.

[79] Ebru Şevik and Olgu Çalışkan, "Heterotopyanın Alansallığı: Heterotopolojinin Temel Mekânsal Koşulu Olarak Kentsel Eşikler," (paper presented at the Türkiye Kentsel Morfoloji Araştırma Ağı II. Kentsel Morfoloji Sempozyumu, Istanbul, November 2, 2018), 889.

gave to a group of architects in Paris in 1967.[80] The book *The Order of Things*, where he first mentioned heterotopia, originated from questioning a passage by Jorge Luis Borges. In the passage, Borges mentions an unusual animal classification cited from a Chinese encyclopedia that divides the animals as:

> (a) belonging to the Emperor, (b) embalmed, (c) tame, (d) sucking pigs, (e) sirens, (f) fabulous, (g) stray dogs, (h) included in the present classification, (i) frenzied, (j) innumerable, (k) drawn with a very fine camelhair brush, (l) et cetera, (m) having just broken the water pitcher, (n) that from a long way off look like flies[81]

Foucault questions how such a classification could be possible. He argues that the only common link between these animals is the alphabetical arrangement. This alphabetical order brings together things that are incompatible based on the logic of sameness and rational thought.

Thus, the list presents a 'non-place' where rational and imaginary things exist side by side with a disturbing effect. Foucault defines this plane of thought as 'heterotopia' in which time and language intersect.[82]

In 1966, Foucault participated in two radio broadcasts named *Les Hétérotopies* and *Le Corps utopique.* Different than his book *The Order of Things*, in these talks he employed the concept of heterotopia in relation to space rather than language. In his first talk, he discussed "localized utopias" and gave children's games as an example to explain the concept. Children play games in the garden, attic, or their parents' bed. These spaces become different places in the imagination of the kid. For instance, the kid can imagine the bed as an ocean by swimming between the sheets, or it turns into a forest where a kid can hide. Then he continued his talk with "counter-utopias," which are created by adults. These utopias are actual places that exist outside of everyday spaces. They are meant to efface, neutralize, or purify the spaces they contrast with. Foucault referred to them as "heterotopias." He explains that heterotopias can

[80] Peter Johnson, "Unravelling Foucault's 'different spaces,'" *History of the Human Sciences* 19, no.4 (2006): 75-76, https://doi.org/10.1177/0952695106069669

[81] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994).

[82] Berfin Güzel, "Screen in The Urban Void: Open Air Cinemas of Izmir From 1950s to The 1980s" (Master's thesis, Middle East Technical University, 2024), 41-42, https://hdl.handle.net/11511/108289

challenge ordinary spaces by either exposing reality as an illusion, like a brothel, or by creating an ideal and ordered real space, like a colony, while the rest is disordered and chaotic. Foucault presents the ship as the ultimate example of heterotopia and describes this space as both real and illusory. He argues that civilizations without ships are like a child without a big bed to play games. Foucault suggests that such societies will lose their ability to dream, they will replace adventure with spying, and the police will overshadow the beauty of brave pirates.[83]

In the second broadcast he participated, Foucault starts his talk by recalling Proust, who each morning had to confront the fact that he could not get out of his body; it was always there looking at him from the mirror. By using this example, Foucault explains that adults create utopias to escape the limits of their physical bodies and dream of an eternal body that is more attractive and stronger than the actual. These utopias become imaginative non-places where people can escape and fantasize about being more than their personified selves. Yet the body resists such effacement by developing its own utopias. Foucault explains that the body is both visible and invisible. An individual can only see the image of the body indirectly and in fragments, such as in the reflection of a mirror. By using tools such as masks, makeup, and tattoos, the body reflects itself onto other spaces to create its own utopias. These changes performed on the body are merely utopian images created by the reflection in the mirror.[84]

Following these radio talks, in 1967, Foucault was invited to give a lecture to a group of architects in Paris. The lecture was published under the title *Des Espaces Autres* and translated into English as *Of Other Spaces* and *Different Spaces*.[85] Foucault begins this lecture by saying that in the 19th century, there was a great obsession with history. He states that the present day is, in contrast, more concerned with space than history. However, he argues that space is not a new concept; it has a history in Western thought. Therefore, the intersection of time and space cannot be ignored. In the Middle Ages, space was organized according to a hierarchical order. This hierarchical and

[83] M. Christine Boyer, "The many mirrors of Foucault and their architectural reflections," in *Heterotopia and The City: Public Space in a Postcivil Society*, ed. Michiel Dehaene and Lieven De Cauter (New York: Routledge, 2008), 54-55.

[84] Boyer, "The many mirrors of Foucault," 55.

[85] Johnson, "Unravelling Foucault's 'different spaces,'" 76.

confrontational positioning of spaces in the medieval era is defined by Foucault as the "space of emplacement." With Galileo's discovery of the earth revolving around the sun, a sense of limited space was replaced with an infinite and infinitely open one, which Foucault terms "extension."[86] In the modern epoch, this understanding of space as extension is replaced with the "site", which is defined by the proximity relationships between points or elements that can be described as series, trees, or grids. He states that we don't live in a void, which can be filled with objects and individuals. Instead, we live in sites formed by a web of relations. These sites are not homogeneous and cannot be defined with one common plane of thought. Foucault states that among these sites, he is curious about specific ones, which he explains as follows:

> I am interested in certain ones that have the curious property of being in relation with all the other sites, but in such a way as to suspect, neutralize, or invent the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect. These spaces, as it were, which are linked with all the others, which however contradict all the other sites, are of two main types.[87]

The first type is the utopias, which are not real spaces. They are the representation of the perfected form of society. In contrast, the second one is what he calls the counter-sites, which are real spaces yet differ from all other sites that they reflect and refer to. Foucault defines these spaces as "heterotopia." In the rest of the lecture, he elaborates on this concept by explaining heterotopias through six principles. He uses a new type of intellectual approach, which he refers to as "heterotopology."[88]

3.1.1. Film Studio in Relation to the Six Principles of Heterotopia

As stated by Foucault, **the first principle** of heterotopia is that it exists in all cultures. Every society creates heterotopias, but their forms and functions vary. Thus, they cannot be expressed through one universal form, but Foucault notes that they can still be explained under two types. The first type is "crisis heterotopias", which are

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[86] Elif Gülce Özmen, "Staging Architecture As Illusion: From Mirror To Digital Heterotopia" (Master's thesis, Middle East Technical University, 2020), 23-24, https://hdl.handle.net/11511/45204

[87] Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias," trans. Jay Miskowiec*, Architecture /Mouvement/ Continuité,* (October 1984): 1-9.

[88] Foucault, "Of Other Spaces"

privileged or sacred spaces designated for people in a state of crisis, like adolescents, pregnant or menstruating women, the elderly, and others in primitive societies. According to Foucault, in modern society, these heterotopias are vanishing, but there are still some examples, such as boarding schools, military service, or the honeymoon trip of the married couple. These spaces are sacred, secluded, or forbidden and symbolize the state of change or transformation. Foucault explains the second type as "heterotopias of deviation", which, according to him, replace the crisis heterotopias that are disappearing today. These spaces are for individuals who behave outside of societal norms, such as rest homes, psychiatric hospitals, and prisons.[89]

Although film studios are not a space reserved for people in a state of crisis, when analyzed in line with the first principle of heterotopia, they can be considered a space that symbolizes transformation and change. During the filming, actors or actresses detach themselves from their everyday lives and personalities and put on an 'other' persona in an 'other' space. Charlotte L. Doyle describes how the actors prepare themselves to get into character in theater plays, but it can be applied to the film production stage as well. Doyle states that when actors put on costumes and makeup and look into the mirror, they witness their transformation from their everyday identities to imaginary characters. They also act out lines from the play or specific expressions and movements of their character before going to the stage to increase the realism of the transformation.[90] As Foucault explains in his radio talk *Le Corps utopique,* the body reflects itself onto other spaces by using tools like masks, makeup, and tattoos to create its own utopias. Thus, in this state of transformation, a filming studio becomes a heterotopia where the physical body is reimagined, and identity is temporarily displaced.

The second principle of heterotopia is that heterotopia's function can change over time. The same kind of space can serve different functions in different historical periods, depending on the historical and cultural context. Foucault gives the cemetery as an example. He states that cemeteries have always existed and have been connected with the city and society, but over time, people's perceptions of these spaces have

[89] Ibid.

[90] Charlotte L. Doyle, "Multiple Realities: The Changing Life Worlds of Actors," *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology* 47, no.2 (2016): 120, https://doi.org/10.1163/15691624-12341310

changed. Until the end of the 18th century, cemeteries were usually located next to churches in city centers. However, by the end of the 18th century, death began to be associated with illness, and cemeteries, located in city centers close to where people lived, were perceived as propagating death. For this reason, cemeteries started to be moved to the outskirts of cities in the early 19th century. Thus, cemeteries were no longer considered as the 'sacred and immortal heart of the city' but became 'other' spaces where people had their own dark burial place.[91]

In line with Foucault's second principle of heterotopia, film studio spaces served different purposes at different times. For example, European studio spaces and the film crew were used for non-film-related activities during the Second World War. Studios were utilized for the storage and production of military equipment or as refugee camps, and film technicians and production crews were commissioned to use their skills in creating traps and fake devices to deceive enemy forces.[92] These adjustments transformed the studios from sites of artistic production to critical components of the war. Thus, the illusory environment of the film studio space temporarily became an 'other' space associated with politics, propaganda, and tragedy. The repurposing of film studios during wartime will be examined in more detail in Chapter 5.

In **the third principle** of heterotopia, Foucault explains that heterotopia is a single real place where several places that are incompatible with each other are juxtaposed, and he gives cinema and theater as examples. In the theater, a series of unrelated places can be shown on the same stage, and in the cinema, the two-dimensional flat screen shows the illusion of a three-dimensional world.[93] Similarly, studio spaces contain different sets that are incompatible next to each other. Siegfried Kracauer described this environment in his essay "Calico World," which he wrote after his visit to UFA Studios in Neubabelsberg in 1926. He states that sets represent different periods, peoples, and styles stored together in warehouses, and describes the studio space as:

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[91] Foucault, "Of Other Spaces"

[92] Sarah Street, "Requisitioning film studios in wartime Britain," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 43, no.1 (2023): 66-68.

[93] Foucault, "Of Other Spaces"

> Near Japanese cherry trees, which shine through the corridors of dark scenery, arches the monstrous dragon from the Nibelungen, devoid of the diluvial terror it exudes on the screen. Next to the mockup of a commercial building, which needs only to be cranked by the camera in order to outdo any skyscraper, are layers of coffins which themselves have died because they do not contain any dead. When, in the midst of all this, one stumbles upon Empire furniture in its natural size, one is hard pressed to believe it is authentic. The old and the new, copies and originals, are piled up in a disorganized heap like bones in catacombs.[94]

Foucault also gives the example of Persian gardens as heterotopias in addition to theater and cinema for the third principle. These gardens were designed to represent the world in a small space, acting as microcosms. Its four sections symbolize the four parts of the world, and a sacred space in the middle symbolizes the "navel" of the world.[95] Likewise, it can be argued that the film studio complexes acted as physical and cultural microcosms or reflections of cities with their layouts, extensive facilities for both the production and the needs of the employees, and the social community they created. For instance, in its advertisement poster from the early 1930s, Fox Film Company introduced its new Movietone City studio complex as a "city complete in itself" and a "world in miniature." The advertisement mentioned that the studio city has its own parks, clubhouse, bungalows, and even police and fire departments (Figure 13).

[94] Siegfried Kracauer, "Calico World: The Ufa City in Neubabelsberg." In *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays*, by Siegfried Kracauer, ed. and trans. Thomas Y. Levin (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1995), 282.

[95] Foucault, "Of Other Spaces"

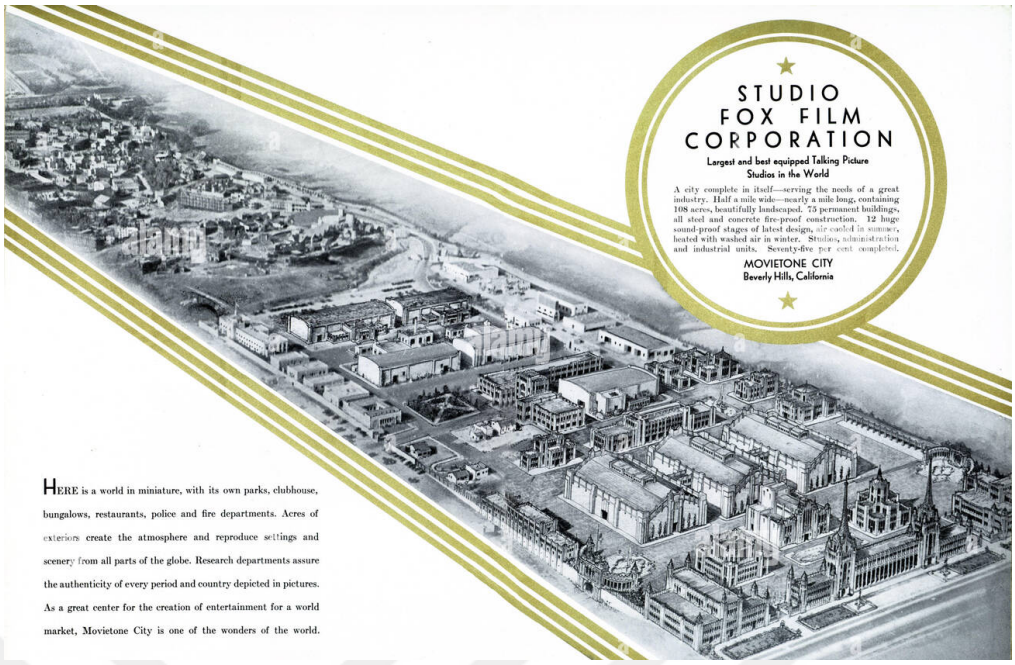


Figure 13: Advertisement of Fox Film's Movietone City, Beverly Hills, California. Early 1930s, Alamy Stock Images

The fourth principle of heterotopia emphasizes heterotopia's relation to slices in time, a concept Foucault refers to as "heterochrony." He illustrates the connection of heterotopia to time in two ways. In the first type, time is accumulated in heterotopias, as seen in spaces like museums and libraries. While in museums, there is a historical accumulation by collecting and preserving artifacts from various periods, libraries represent the accumulation of knowledge through texts and records. In these heterotopias, time never stops and continues to build up by collecting. Conversely, the second type of heterotopia is associated with time that is transitory and fluid. Foucault exemplifies this type with fairs and festivals that are organized at specific time intervals and offer temporary pleasure.[96]

Likewise, a film studio can be considered a heterotopia where time accumulates since it contains sets belonging to different time periods in one space. At the same time, visitors can gain a fluid perception of time by moving between these sets through studio tours. For example, in Cinecittà, there are several permanent sets that represent various timeframes. Urban American district set with streets, stores, and

[96] Foucault, "Of Other Spaces"

green areas; Ancient Rome set with the replicas of buildings in the Roman Forum; 20th-century Italian city set with civic buildings, mansions, suburbs, and even a church, located side by side in the backlot of the complex, and presents a glimpse into different times.[97] As another example, Kracauer's "Calico World" can be mentioned again. In his essay, Kracauer observes that new sets and backdrops are constructed via the reuse of older set pieces belonging to different historical epochs. Thus, a single space contains multiple layers of time fragments that reflect different functions, parallel to Foucault's explanation. Kracauer describes this environment as:

> The remains of modern houses have been integrated into an old-fashioned alley, an anachronism that does not seem to disturb anyone. Political interests play no role in such reorganizations, no matter how violent the latter may be. A Bolshevist guardroom turns into a peaceful Swedish train station, which is subsequently transformed into a riding school and today is used to store lamps.[98]

The fifth principle of heterotopia is that they operate with a system of opening and closing, which makes them isolated but also permeable spaces. People cannot enter these spaces freely like public spaces. According to Foucault, in some cases, it is mandatory to enter these spaces, such as barracks or a prison, or access to these spaces is granted if one goes through certain rituals and purifications. Nevertheless, there are other heterotopias that appear as open and easily accessible, but this openness is just an illusion; they often disguise forms of exclusion. Foucault illustrates this form of heterotopias by giving guest rooms on farms in Brazil and other parts of South America as an example. The travelers and visitors could spend the night there, but they are excluded from the family's private quarters. Despite being inside the space, they remain as outsiders.[99]

Studio complexes are not generally best accommodated in urban or heavily populated areas. Most of the large studio complexes built in Europe after the Second World War were located on the outskirts of the city centers. These complexes were

[97] "Permanent Sets & Backlots," Cinecittà, accessed July 17, 2025, https://cinecitta.com/en/studios/spazi/permanent-sets-backlot/

[98] Kracauer, "Calico World," 283.

[99] Foucault, "Of Other Spaces"

isolated but still easily accessible from the city center.[100] While generally inaccessible to the public, from time to time, these isolated spaces of the film studios could become semi-permeable with the admission of some visitors. According to Sarah Street and Eleanor Halsall, the studios in Britain and Germany occasionally opened their facilities to visitors, yet only to some extent, in order not to ruin the illusory effect of the films. The studios were mostly visited by important guests like film directors, financiers, critics, members of the civil service, royalty, etc. However, at times, visitors of lower status or those outside of the studio and film network were also allowed to tour the facilities. For instance, in Germany, Studio Babelsberg was only accepting visitors via official government requests or the winners of competitions organized by magazines to meet with the stars.[101] This selective admission process reflects Foucault's description of the fifth principle of heterotopia. The entry to studio space is controlled by specific requirements or certain rituals to pass through, like entering a contest. Also, although the visitors are welcomed to the studio, they do not have access to the whole space, as in the case of the Brazilian farmhouse. They are never fully part of the studio space; their presence is temporary and controlled.

Sometimes, film studio spaces became accessible not physically but visually to the public through movies about movies or promotional films made for the film studios.[102] Movies like *The Studio Murder Mystery* (1929) from Hollywood or *Der Schuß im Tonfilmatelier* (1930) from Germany that revolve around incidents that take place in the studio setting, or movies about the film industry and film personas like *Show People* (1928) from Hollywood or *Shooting Stars* (1928) from the UK offer a glimpse into the filmmaking process of the late 1920s and reveal the film studio space to put the spectators into this imaginary environment. In addition to these movies, promotional films like *MGM Studio Tour* (1925) *or Behind the Screen: A Tour of Universal Studios* (1915) provide a broader perspective on studio complexes by showcasing different buildings, facilities, backlots, and set constructions. Thus, it can

[100] Goldsmith and O'Regan, *The Film Studio*, 23-24.

[101] "Who wouldn't want to have a peak?' Studio Tours in Britain and Germany," STUDIOTEC, accessed November 21, 2024, https://studiotec.info/2022/10/10/who-wouldnt-want-to-have-a-peek-studio-tours-in-britain-and-germany/

[102] Shiel, *Hollywood Cinema,* 172-173.

be said that the audience gains access to the film studio space through the ritual of going to the cinema and watching the film.

The sixth and last principle of heterotopia states that heterotopias have a function related to all other remaining spaces, and Foucault explains this principle under two opposite types. What Foucault explains in this principle parallels the ideas he explained in his radio talk *Les Hétérotopies*. Firstly, some heterotopias function as spaces of illusion that reveal reality through illusion, like brothels. Secondly, some heterotopias operate as spaces of compensation that are meticulously ordered environments contrasting with the disorder and messiness of our world. For this type of heterotopia, he gives colonies as an example.[103]

As is the case with Foucault's conception of heterotopias as "spaces of compensation," film studio complexes were at least initially planned as ordered alternatives to their neighboring cities. These complexes aimed to create a carefully organized and controlled environment where all the facilities are within easy reach to ensure a seamless film production. Within these tightly structured spaces, films, where narrativized and thus ordered versions of the actual world unfolded, were made. As the sixth principle suggests, film studios can also present reality through illusion with set designs and fictional narratives. For example, during the Nazi era in Germany, because some of the footage of the 1934 party convention was technically inadequate, Hitler ordered the reshot of the scenes in the studio. Albert Speer recalled that in the Berlin-Johannisthal studios, he created replicas of the podium, lectern, and some portion of the convention hall. He described the fake convention filmed in the studio as:

> Hess arrived and was asked to perform first. Just as he had done in front of 30,000 spectators at the Party Convention, he raised his hand solemnly. With genuine emotion he turned to where Hitler was, of course, conspicuously absent and, standing at rigid attention, called out, "My Führer, I welcome you in the name of this convention. The convention will now proceed. The Führer speaks!" (...) I was thoroughly annoyed. Frau Riefenstahl, however, found the staged shots better than those made at the actual event.[104]

[103] Foucault, "Of Other Spaces"

[104] Kreimeie, *The UFA Story*, 253.

Therefore, in this example, the film studio space functioned as a heterotopia by imitating the real convention hall. Accordingly, the reshot scenes replaced the original, and the audience experienced reality through illusion. The sixth principle of heterotopia closely relates both to the concept of simulacrum and the simulated environments of film studios that blur the boundaries between what is actual and what is simulated.

3.2 Film Studios as Simulacrum

Mark Shiel states that the film studios mimicked the physical and social characteristics of the cities with their design based on his examination of the relationship between Hollywood's film industry and Los Angeles. While studios were dependent on the city in which they were located, at the same time, they isolated themselves and tried to act as an independent system.[105] This description of film studio space by Shiel resonates with how Peter Johnson defines the heterotopia. As stated by Elif Gülce Özmen, Johnson describes heterotopia as:

> Heterotopias are worlds within worlds, mirroring and yet upsetting what is outside. (...) Heterotopias disturb time, place and our sense of self. They 'reflect', 'represent', 'designate', 'speak about' other sites but at the same time 'suspend', 'neutralize', 'invert', 'contest' and 'contradict' those sites.[106]

According to this quotation, while heterotopias reflect the world beyond them, they also mask what is outside. Heterotopias challenge our understanding of self and allow us to create alternative realities that are simulations of the 'other'.[107] By building on Shiel and Johnson's descriptions, the examination of film studio space through Foucault's concept of heterotopia can be supported with another important theory, "simulacrum". Shiel argues that film studios can be identified with Jean Baudrillard's

[105] Mark Shiel, *Hollywood Cinema and the Real Los Angeles* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 2012), 128.

[106] Peter Johnsson, Karen Browning, "50 Years on Mirror Enchantment, Self-reflection and Disruption," *heterotopiastudies*, March 14, 2017, quoted in Özmen, "Staging Architecture," 26.

[107] Özmen, "Staging Architecture," 26.

concept of simulacrum because movie studios create a simulated reality that becomes more 'real' than the actual city.[108]

The concept of the simulacrum was developed mainly by three thinkers: Pierre Klossowski, Gilles Deleuze, and Jean Baudrillard. Klossowski took the term from the church fathers' criticisms of the immoral presentation of the gods on the Roman stage. Klossowski explains simulacrum as an attempt to represent phantasm, which is an inner image that comes from our unconscious desires that we cannot fully explain or share, through literature, painting, sculpture, or a philosophical idea. Deleuze redefined the concept in *Difference and Repetition* to define differential systems where different elements associate through their differences. Finally, Baudrillard adapted the term to explain the 'hyperreal' status of contemporary culture, where simulations replace reality itself.[109]

In the *Precession of Simulacra*, Baudrillard starts by mentioning a fable by Borges. In the fable, cartographers draw up a map so elaborately that it ends up the same size as the Empire itself. Over time, as the Empire declines, the map deteriorates as well. According to Baudrillard, this fable is a great metaphor for simulation, and he uses this example to explain how the relationship between simulation and reality has changed. Back then, abstractions like maps were used to understand the territory or reality, but today we create our reality through simulations and models.[110] The map (or simulation) now comes before reality and produces it, which Baudrillard refers to as the "precession of simulacra." He explains that simulation no longer produces copies of reality, but it creates a 'hyperreal' that is generated by models that have no origin in actual reality.[111]

Baudrillard gives Disneyland as an example of simulacra; it is filled with illusions and phantasms. But he argues that what really draws the crowd to Disneyland is the fact that this theme park creates a social microcosm, a miniaturized version of

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[108] Shiel, *Hollywood Cinema,* 128.

[109] Daniel W. Smith, "The concept of the simulacrum: Deleuze and the overturning of Platonism," *Continental Philosophy Review* 38, (2005): 89-90, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11007-006-3305-8

[110] Annika Larson, "Simulacra and Simulation Hypothesis: How Real is Our Reality?" (Senior thesis, Claremont McKenna College, 2023), 18, https://scholarship.claremont.edu/cmc_theses/3262

[111] Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation,* trans. Sheila Faria Glaser (The University of Michigan Press, 1994), 1.

real America. He argues that all of Los Angeles and America is like Disneyland, and Disneyland's role is to present the illusion that a real country still exists outside the theme park, masking the fact that the whole of America has actually been transformed into hyperreality.[112]

Mark Shiel discusses the relationship between the city of Los Angeles and Hollywood film studios by following Baudrillard's example of Disneyland. Shiel claims that the simulated space Baudrillard noticed at Disneyland, which was founded in 1955, actually has a history dating back to the mid-1910s in Los Angeles. He states that there was a reciprocal relationship between the film studios and the real city, continually transforming each other. He argues that the Hollywood film industry's and studios' influence converted the city itself into a simulacral landscape. He explains this as: "...simulacral 'effects' of the movie studios spilled out across the urban landscape and, by a kind of osmosis, made *it* simulacral too."[113] He gives the example of houses of movie stars that started to appear around Hollywood Hills, Beverly Hills, Brentwood, and Malibu as the film industry developed. These houses spread the characteristics of the movie studios across the city physically with their architectural style and visually with photos and articles about the private spaces of movie stars.[114] Additionally, Shiel mentions how the media portrayed Hollywood as well. For instance, *Life* magazine refers to the city of Los Angeles as "lives in the minds of its visitors as Hollywood's largest suburb"; while the *Los Angeles Times* defined Hollywood as "a City within a city."[115] Similar to Baudrillard's explanation in the *Precession of Simulacra*, the illusion created by Hollywood precedes the real city of Los Angeles and produces the city itself. Just like in Borges's fable, where the map spread across the entire Empire, Hollywood extended across the whole of Los Angeles.

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[112] Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation,* 12.

[113] Shiel, *Hollywood Cinema,* 128-129.

[114] Ibid., 192.

[115] Ibid., 182



Figure 14: Exterior of Harold Lloyd's 'Greenacres' estate showing the Italianate villa with its courtyard and fountain, Benedict Canyon, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, CA, built 1926–9. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, HABS CA-2192.
https://www.loc.gov/resource/hhh.ca0198.photos/?sp=6

Another example of Baudrillard's concept of the simulacrum within studio space can be the 'Berlin Street' set in Studio Babelsberg, which became a visual symbol of the Nazi past. Many internationally known films portraying the Nazi era and the Holocaust, like *The Pianist* (2001), *The Reader* (2008), and *Inglourious Basterds* (2009), used this set as a backdrop. The set was built in 1998 to represent a typical Berlin street setting. The aim of the set was to produce a visual deception so that the audience feels like they see history as it really was.[116] However, the Berlin Street set is not a reconstruction of any specific place that existed, but rather a stylized combination. The set is not the city of Berlin itself, but it becomes what audiences associate with Berlin and the Nazi past. Thus, the set replaces the real with the simulation.

[116] Tobias Ebbrecht-Hartmann, "Goebbels's Fear and Legacy: Babelsberg and Its Berlin Street as Cinematic Memory Place," in *Persistent Legacy: The Holocaust and German Studies*, ed. Erin McGlothlin and Jennifer M. Kapczynski (Boydell & Brewer, 2016), 230-234.

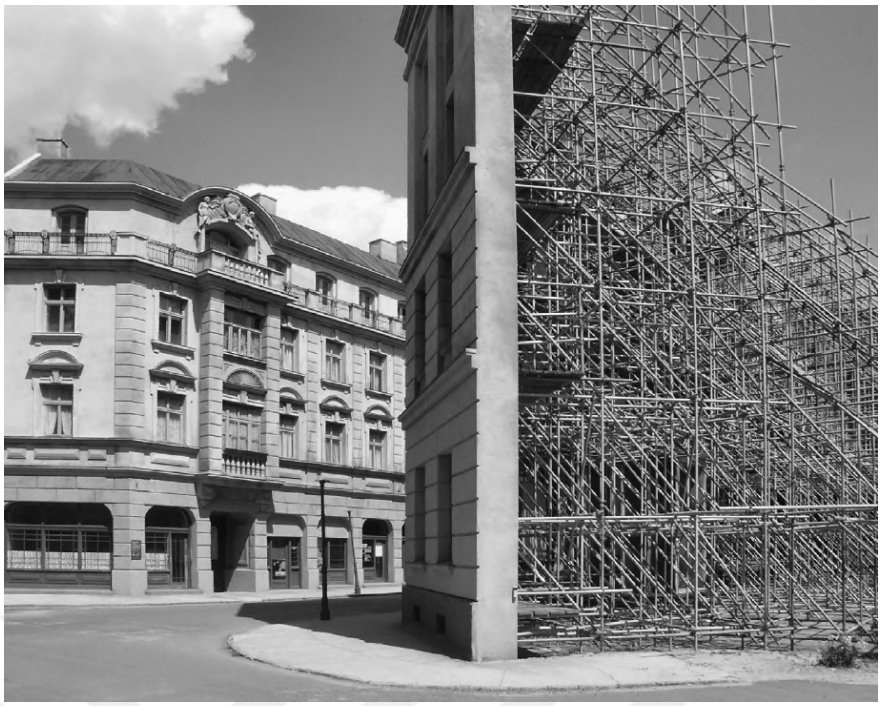


Figure 15: View of the movie set Berlin Street in Babelsberg, Studio Babelsberg AG. Reproduced in Tobias Ebbrecht-Hartmann, "Goebbels's Fear and Legacy: Babelsberg and Its Berlin Street as Cinematic Memory Place," in *Persistent Legacy: The Holocaust and German Studies*, ed. Erin McGlothlin and Jennifer M. Kapczynski (Boydell & Brewer, 2016), 232.

3.3 Conclusion

> Heterotopias open up the opportunity for exploring in detail the possibilities that such connections present; they have the capacity to occupy a deeper 'place' than theatre already offers. They demonstrate how the layers of spatiality – both the concrete spaces that architecture provides as well as the abstract spaces and places that a specific production creates – articulate meaning in their own right, let alone through overlap between and among these layers. In so doing, they attend to spatial ordering, leaving open the chance to reveal and rethink existing structures of power and knowledge.[117]

In the third principle of heterotopia, Foucault gives theatre and cinema as examples of heterotopic spaces. Joanne Tompkins expressed the above-mentioned comments about the theater to argue that examining the theatre space through heterotopia reveals that theater is not only a stage but a space that produces meaning through a multi-layered spatiality. While the theater is a space formed by architectural elements, at the same time, each play creates its own abstract spaces formed by

[117] Joanne Tompkins, *Theatre's Heterotopias: Performance and the Cultural Politics of Space* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 17.

fictional worlds and characters. These two layers of spatiality produce meaning both on their own and in relation to each other. A film studio setting can be viewed as similar to the theatre space in this regard. Film studios, on one hand, function as industrial complexes comprised of sound stages, backlots, and production facilities; on the other hand, they produce imaginary environments constructed through set design and virtual production. Thus, exploring the film studio space through Foucault's heterotopia can reveal new ways of understanding production space and how it functions as a site where the boundaries between reality and illusion are reconstructed and redefined.

Furthermore, in the third principle, Foucault also gives the Persian Garden example as the microcosm of the world, which resonates with Mark Shiel's argument about the film studios being the simulacrum of cities. As self-sufficient micro-cities designed for maintaining a smooth production process without external dependence and a healthy working environment, European film studio complexes of the first half of the twentieth century provide us with especially apt cases to analyze film studios through the concept of heterotopia. These complexes are not only centers for film production, but also spaces where a community is formed and social relations are spatially restructured. This multifaceted structure makes it possible to consider them both as sites of production and as spaces of living. As such, these film complexes emerge as heterotopic spaces where the boundaries between real (spaces of social life) and simulated (spaces and sets of filmmaking) were continually blurred, remade, and reconsidered.

CHAPTER 4

EUROPEAN FILM STUDIOS

Some of the biggest film studio complexes in Europe built before the Second World War were the Studio Babelsberg in Germany, Pinewood Studios in England, and Cinecittà in Italy. In this thesis, these three important film studios will be examined in terms of their relationship with the city, their spatial organization, and architecture. Accordingly, this chapter will assess how these film studio complexes were designed and operated as somewhat self-sufficient cities with facilities and infrastructure that allowed them to function autonomously that, in turn, turned them into heterotopias.

4.1 Studio Babelsberg in Germany

The Studio Babelsberg is located in Potsdam, Germany, and is one of the largest film studio complexes in Europe. Currently, it comprises twenty-one soundstages, extensive backlots for outdoor filming, and a range of production facilities and services. The studio has hosted legendary productions like *Metropolis* (1927) and *Blue Angel* (1930), as well as internationally successful and well-known major productions such as *The Pianist* (2001), *V for Vendetta* (2005), *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (2013), and *The Hunger Games* (2014).[118] The studio also holds historical significance, as it housed important leading German production companies, UFA before the Second World War, and DEFA after the war. Additionally, Studio Babelsberg was honored as one of the "Treasures of European Film Culture" by the European Film Academy, and it is the only film studio that is included in this list.[119]

[118] "About Us: References," Studio Babelsberg, accessed July, 23. 2025, https://www.studiobabelsberg.com/about-us/references/

[119] "Studio Babelsberg honored as Treasure of European Film Culture," Studio Babelsberg, July 10, 2022, https://www.studiobabelsberg.com/about-us/press-and-news/studio-babelsberg-treasure-european-film-culture0/

4.1.1 Establishment of the Studio

Studio Babelsberg was constructed in a town called Potsdam, located 25 kilometers to the southwest of Berlin, by the Deutsche Bioskop company. By the 1910s, Berlin's development and density had negatively affected film production, and there was not enough space for expansion for the studios. The Deutsche Bioskop was searching for a less crowded space outside of Berlin that had clean air and access to railway networks and roads. The company's technical director and chief cameraman, Guido Seeber, discovered an ideal site that was suitable for the studio's requirements in a small town called Nowawes, neighboring Potsdam. Nowawes was a center of manufacturing and later became the largest industrial region in the state of Brandenburg. Therefore, there were plenty of factories and workshop areas, but it still offered enough space for expansion.[120] The site that Seeber discovered had the advantage of meeting safety regulations because there were fewer residential buildings in the area, which minimized the risk of endangering the surroundings in case of a fire in the studio. It also contained a two-storey high unused artificial flower production factory building, *Kunstblumenfabrik*, which was later used as an administration building for the Ufa Studios.

In 1911, the company applied for a building permit to construct a glasshouse as an extension of the existing factory building. In 1912, the first glasshouse studio started operation; it was the first of its kind in Germany.[121] The glasshouse studio in Babelsberg was built by following the example applied in Pathé Studios. In the early days of film production in Paris, filming typically took place in rooftop studios, but then the idea of building a glasshouse on the ground floor with movable walls came about and was first implemented by Pathé. Inspired by this design, the German Bioscop company adopted Pathé's model as the blueprint for its own studio in Neubabelsberg.[122] The first glasshouse studio on the site was designed by the Berlin company specializing in the construction of photo studios, C. H. Ulrich. This studio

[120] Eleanor Anne Halsall, "A Leap into the Dark: Ufa's Tonkreuz, Germany's First Dedicated Sound Film Studio," *Architectural Histories* 12, no.1 (2024): 5-6, https://doi.org/10.16995/ah.10407

[121] Wolfgang Jacobsen, *Babelsberg: Das Filmstudio* (Berlin: Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek; Berlin: Argon Verlag GmbH, 1992), 9.

[122] "25 Jahre Filmatelier," *Der Kinematograph,* January 1932, Media History Digital Library, https://mediahistoryproject.org/reader.php?id=kinematograph-1932-01

was built at ground level and had a 300 square meter floor area. Building the studio at ground level also eliminated the dependence on an elevator to transport furniture and decorations, which was necessary for elevated studios built on high floors to get better light. With the help of sliding doors, trucks could drive directly into the glass house studio and unload the furniture, decorations, and equipment necessary for filming without any delays. The adjacent old factory building was also transformed to ensure a smooth filming process. The spaces on the ground floor of the factory were turned into dressing rooms, prop rooms, carpentry and painting workshops, and a canteen that provided quick and easy access to facilities for the film crew. The first and second floors of the factory, in turn, were reserved for secondary spaces that do not require direct access to the film production space such as office areas or post-production facilities like negative and positive development areas, film drying, etc. At a proper distance from the first glasshouse studio to not cast a shadow, a second bigger glasshouse studio was built with an adjoining two-storey film copying building. The copying building's exterior façade was designed in two different styles to be used as a backdrop for different film productions. On the left side of the front door, there were modern windows and on the right side, there were gothic windows. Even the different parts of the roof were covered with tiles shaped to resemble German, Italian, and Spanish roofs.[123] This unique design ensured that the film crew could easily create the look of different European settings without needing to construct new sets.

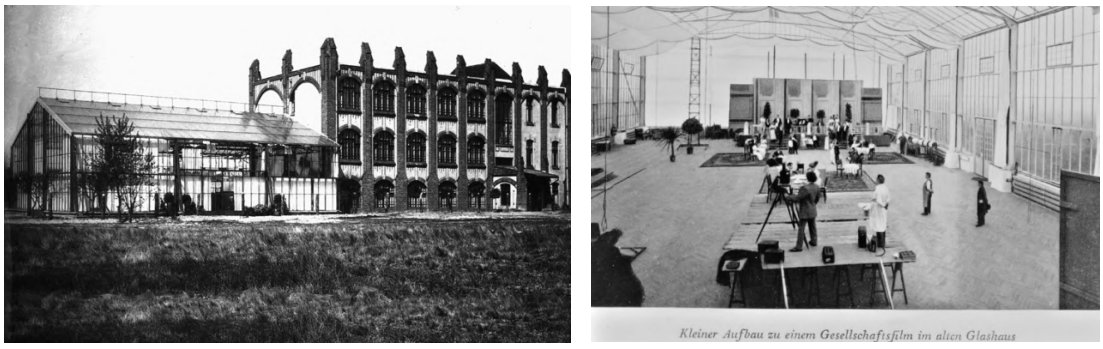
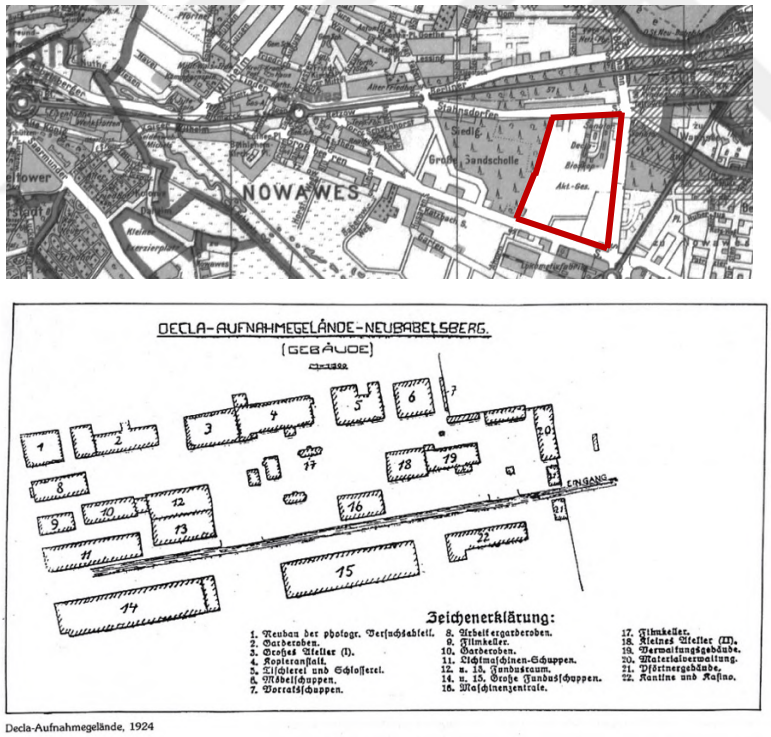


Figure 16-17: Top, glasshouse studio next to the old factory building. Bottom, film production in the Glasshouse studio. "History," Art Department Studio Babelsberg, accessed August 7, 2025, https://www.ad-sb.de/en/about-us/history/

[123] Jacobsen, *Babelsberg,* 9-12.

4.1.2 Architectural Layout of the Studio in Early Years

Following the end of World War One, the Deutsche Bioskop company merged with Decla, which was founded in 1915 by Erich Pommer, and became Decla-Bioskop. The film studio complex started to grow and Babelsberg became an important site for German film production.[124] According to a map of Potsdam from 1920 and a plan of the studio from 1924, after the company merged with Decla, the main entrance of the studio was from Stahnsdorfer Street. On the plan, there was a main road that divided the complex into two. On the right after entering the complex, there was the old factory building, which was used as the administration building, and adjacent to it was the first glasshouse studio. The second glasshouse and film copying building, which was built later, was located diagonally across the first studio. Along with the studios, there were dressing rooms, carpentry and metal workshop buildings, prop storage buildings, and a power plant for generating electricity for the studio. On the left side of the main road, the canteen and cafe building and warehouses were located.



Decla-Aufnahmegelände, 1924

Figure 18-19: Top, Silva-Übersichtsplan von der Stadt Berlin 1925, Site of Decla-Bioskop Film Studio (Current Studio Babelsberg) annotated by the author. Digitale Sammlungen der Zentral- und Landesbibliothek Berlin, accessed July 23, 2025 via Wikimedia Commons. Bottom, Decla filming site, 1924. Wolfgang Jacobsen, *Babelsberg: Das Filmstudio* (Berlin: Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek; Berlin: Argon Verlag GmbH, 1992).

[124] Halsall, "A Leap into the Dark," 7.

According to Alex Kossowsky, Decla's main principle was to produce everything within the studio as far as possible without depending on outside suppliers.[125] Therefore, there were diverse and specialized facilities for both film production and for the workers. The studio housed fully equipped workshops for tailors, painters, carpenters, and locksmiths for the design and construction of sets and costumes. For storing and processing films, there were 20 underground film chambers. Only their roofs and ventilation shafts were visible above ground. These chambers had double walls and one wall was designed to collapse inward in case of explosions to direct the gases outward through ventilation shafts and prevent damaging adjacent chambers. To minimize the fire risk, the windows were used for lighting rather than artificial lighting. For emergency situations, there was a modern medical room and a dedicated fire department composed of trained personnel, supported by fire pumps and equipment for smoke-related emergencies. There were some facilities for the maintenance and storage of the vehicles as well. For instance, near the administration building, there was a petrol station for cars along with the sheds for storing bicycles and carriages. Further highlighting its self-contained nature, the studio had a canteen where employees, directors, technical staff, and workers ate in separate areas but received equally affordable and high-quality meals.[126] Altogether, even in its early days, the studio operated as a production city where all aspects of filmmaking were managed internally.



Figure 20: View of the UFA grounds from the unfinished roof of the "Großen Stummen Halle," 1926, "History," Art Department Studio Babelsberg, accessed August 7,2025, https://www.ad-sb.de/en/about-us/history/

[125] Jacobsen, *Babelsberg,* 35.

[126] Ibid., 33-43.

In June 1922, Decla-Bioscop company officially merged with Universum Film AG, or in short UFA.[127] UFA was established in 1917 as a strategic response to the growing dominance of foreign film and propaganda. According to a letter sent to the Ministry of War by Erich Ludendorff, who was the First Quartermaster to the Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army, World War I showed that picture and film are important tools of education and influence. In this letter, he stated that other nations were using these instruments to their advantage, and this situation caused serious harm to Germany. Most of the film literature defines this letter as the "founding document of UFA.[128] This strategic merger with Decla-Bioscop not only expanded the UFA's distribution network with two new companies but also gave them access to the studio complex in Neubabelsberg.[129]

4.1.3 Transition to Artificial Lighting and Sound Filming

In the 1920s, a number of new and modern film studios were established across Berlin such as Jofa Studio in Johannisthal, the Phoebus Studio in Hasenheide, the Efa Studio at the Zoo, and the Zeppelin Hall in Staaken. When compared to these studios, the Babelsberg studios were very small and inadequate to meet the demands of UFA's rapidly growing production program. Therefore, UFA had to outsource parts of its film production to the Efa studios. Also, the outdoor shooting areas in Babelsberg had reached full capacity. As a result, the excessive production costs of *Metropolis* (1927) combined with poor management, and the accumulation of prestige films with no prospects on the foreign market led UFA into crisis in 1926.[130]

The UFA board decided to reorganize the studio and build a new large artificial-light studio. In 1926, a new filming hall designed by Carl Stahl-Urach, called the *Großе Halle* (later renamed as *Marlene Dietrich Halle*), was constructed. This solidly bricked new studio was 123 m long, 56 m wide, and 14 m high up to the running floors. The studio space was divided by movable walls so that several productions

[127] Klaus Kreimeie, *The UFA Story* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1999), 72.

[128] Kreimeie, *The UFA Story*, 8.

[129] Ibid., 72.

[130] Jacobsen, *Babelsberg,* 57

could be carried out at the same time. On the upper floor of the east side, there were 40 dressing rooms for stars, directors, operators, and set designers, along with ten projection booths, a large hairdressing salon, and six bathrooms. The ground floor on the same side included the entrance hall, rooms for extras, toilets, showers, and other facilities. On the other hand, the west side was designated for the storage of props, lighting equipment, and other related equipment. The filming hall and all the adjoining rooms were heated, which provided a significant advantage over other studios such as the unheated *Zeppelin Hall*.[131]



Blick in die „Große Stumme Halle" zur Zeit der Stummfilmaufnahmen, als die drei Ateliers durch Verschieben der Wände miteinander verbunden werden konnten

Figure 21: View into the "Große Halle" during the silent film era, when the three studios could be connected to each other by moving the walls. "History," Art Department Studio Babelsberg, accessed August 7,2025, "https://www.ad-sb.de/en/about-us/history/

With the emergence of sound film production and its gradual spread around the world, during the winter of 1928-1929, UFA sent one of its team to Britain and another to the United States to study the construction and design of sound studios in these countries.[132] The existing studio facilities at Babelsberg did not meet the new technological requirements for sound film production. The glasshouses and studio halls were not suitable for sound filming and soundproofing these spaces would have

[131] Ibid., 58.

[132] Halsall, "A Leap into the Dark," 4.

required significant structural effort. Therefore, the second glasshouse studio was completely rebuilt for the sound filming. However, due to its massive dimensions, a special solution had to be found for the conversion of the Central Hall (*Mittel Halle*) of the *Große Halle* to sound filming. The entire interior of the Central Hall was emptied, and a fully-equipped sound film studio was built into the remaining space, which created double-layered walls with air spaces that provided excellent sound insulation for both the Central Hall and the adjacent sound studios located on the north and south sides.[133]

In addition to these alterations, UFA also invested in a totally new and revolutionary studio unit in Babelsberg. In 1929, the new studio building *Tonkreuz* which means 'sound cross' was constructed. The building was significant for its innovative design and the use of new technology, as well as contemporary sound insulation materials. The *Tonkreuz* was designed by Otto Kohtz, along with many of the buildings in UFA Studios.[134] This project is often considered Kohtz's most accomplished work. He had to overcome a completely new challenge since sound film studios had never been built in Germany before. When designing the studio, simple and functional forms suitable for a factory design were used since the production of films was also an industrial process. The client requested a cruciform arrangement of four halls, so the layout was relatively simple.[135] The studio building was divided into four soundstages named after four cardinal directions. On the intersection of the four studios, there was a square atrium surrounded by a corridor that connected soundstages.[136] According to architectural drawings of the studios drawn by Otto Kohtz obtained from TU Berlin Architekturmuseum, on the ground floor, there were dressing rooms, hairdressing rooms, and toilets adjacent to the north and south soundstages. On the upper floor, there were office spaces, ateliers, and monitoring rooms with windows overlooking the soundstages where sound technicians supervise the recordings. In terms of exterior architectural design, the windowless façade of the

[133] Jacobsen, *Babelsberg,* 147.

[134] Halsall, "A Leap into the Dark," 10-13.

[135] "Otto Kohtz' Tonfilm-Werkstatt" *Wasmuths Monatshefte für Baukunst und Städtebau,* no.14 (1930): 129-134, Digitale Landesbibliothek Berlin, https://digital.zlb.de/viewer/image/14192921_1930/121/

[136] Jacobsen, *Babelsberg,* 147.

four studios created contrast with the open dressing rooms. The interior was designed with the need for frequent and quick cleaning in mind. Even the furniture was covered with washable cretonne covers to quicken the process of cleaning makeup stains.[137]

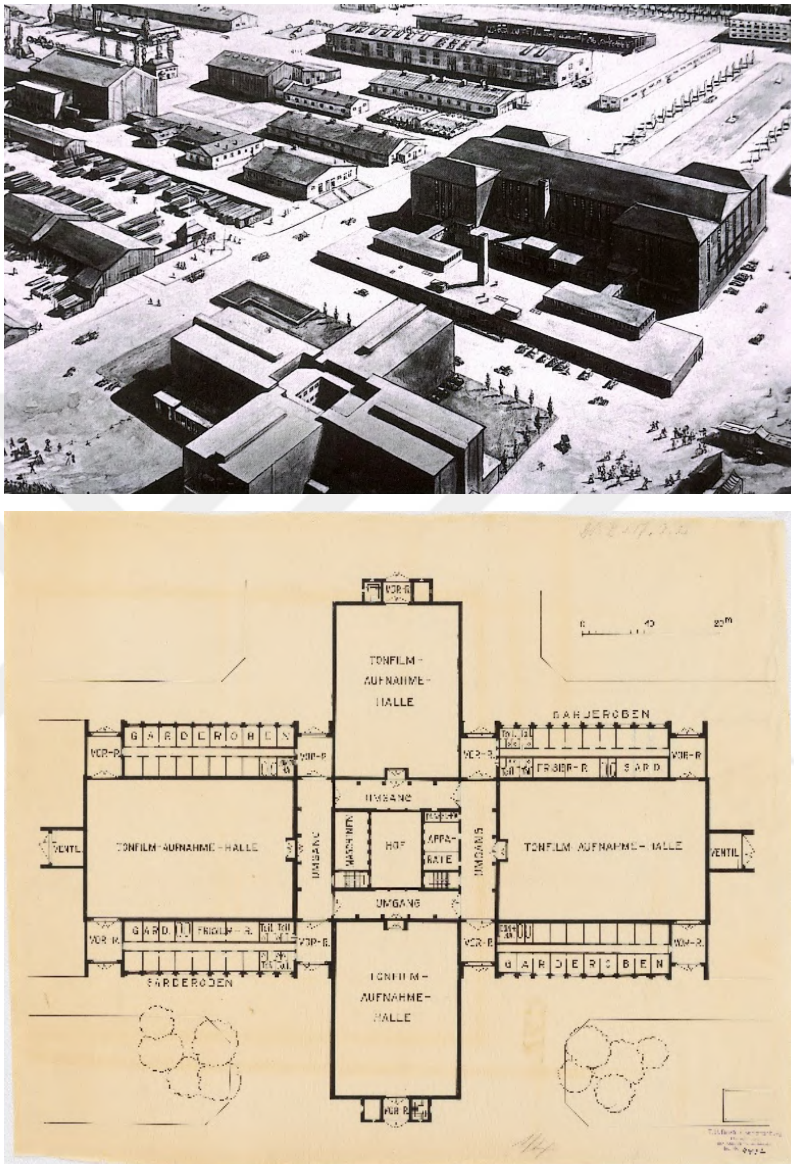


Figure 22-23: Top, Tonkreuz and Große Halle, Wolfgang Jacobsen, *Babelsberg: Das Filmstudio* (Berlin: Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek; Berlin: Argon Verlag GmbH, 1992), 148. Bottom, Ground floor plan of the Tonkreuz Studio, Otto Kohtz (1880-1956), Tusche auf Transparent 48,5 x 57,8 cm, *TU Berlin Architekturmuseum*, Inv. Nr. 9472.

[137] "Otto Kohtz' Tonfilm-Werkstatt," 129-134.

The idea that a studio needs to be surrounded by double-layered walls with sound-insulating air gaps to be soundproof from outside noise has been disproved with the construction of this soundstage. According to the technical report of Heinz Umbehr published in the journal *Filmtechnik*, only the outer walls of the studio were constructed with thick bricks, and thanks to their special construction technique, the walls are completely vibration-free, thereby blocking sound transmission from outside to interior. Umbehr also mentioned that even the sound of airplanes and the rain is totally absorbed.[138] This success of sound insulation was further confirmed in 1931 when UFA Studios began renovating the studios in Tempelhof for sound film production under the direction of architect Otto Kohtz. As part of this process, UFA took some tests in Neubabelsberg to determine the extent to which the roof and wall coverings of the Neubabelsberg soundstages transmit sound. For the test, UFA rented an airplane that circled over Neubabelsberg and placed a highly sensitive sound recorder under the roof of the soundstage. However, no sound was detectable to the human ear from inside the studio and the only sound recorded on the film strip was the annoyed question from Dr. Meyer, who came from the Heinrich Hertz Institute for sound measurements: *"Zum Donnerwetter, wo bleibt denn das Flugzeug?"* "For heaven's sake, where is the airplane?"[139] This humorous test shows the effectiveness of soundproofing at Neubabelsberg, that even Dr. Meyer doubted the plane's presence.

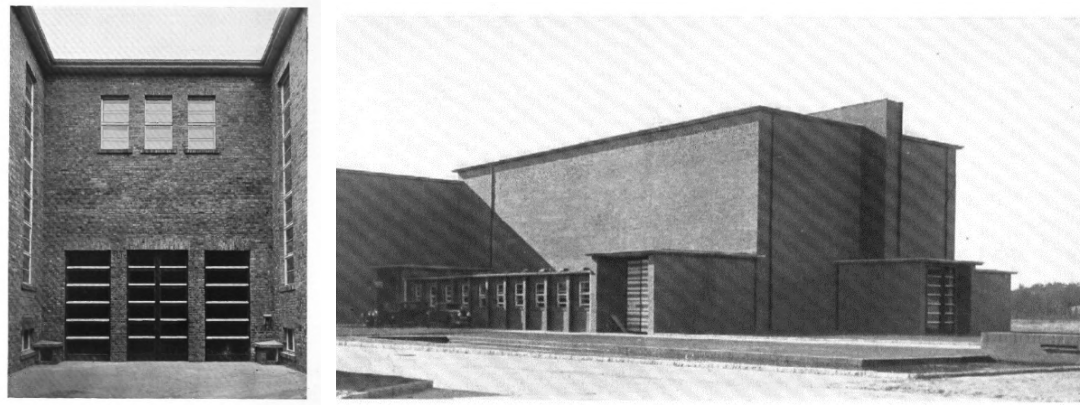


Figure 24-25: On the left, courtyard of the Tonkreuz studio. On the right, windowless façade of the studio creating contrast with the open dressing rooms. "Otto Kohtz' Tonfilm-Werkstatt" *Wasmuths Monatshefte für Baukunst und Städtebau*, no.14 (1930): 129-134, Digitale Landesbibliothek Berlin

[138] Jacobsen, *Babelsberg,* 148.

[139] "Die Ufa-Ateliers Tempelhof als Tonfilm-Ateliers" *Der Kinematograph*, April 1931, Media History Digital Library, https://mediahistoryproject.org/reader.php?id=kinematograph-1931-04

4.1.4 Otto Kohtz's Vision for Babelsberg

Otto Kohtz was a German architect, architectural theorist, and writer. He designed many buildings in Berlin and the surroundings. In addition to the revolutionary Tonkreuz soundstage, he also designed the UFA studios in Tempelhof, the animation studio in Babelsberg, and the *Nachwuchs* (new talent) studio, where UFA's archive, library, and *Lehrschau* were also located.[140] UFA *Lehrschau* was an educational center, and it was opened on January 31, 1936, by Ludwig Klitzsch. This center included an archive, library, and exhibition and the principles of *Lehrschau* were to give filmmakers insight into basic elements and provide study opportunities, to educate young talent, to help teachers, archivists, and researchers to gain knowledge about the production process of films, to support the press through events and discussions, and lastly to convey a vivid picture of the leadership and aspirations of German film to the public.[141]

Kohtz made some drawings for the redesign of the studio complex as *Filmstadt* (Film City), which was a National Socialist project intended to help German film to achieve global dominance, but only the new talent studio was physically implemented.[142] The design of the new talent studio (Nachwuchs) building and the drawings Otto Kohtz made for the redesign of the complex show the use of semi-open spaces with monumental columns reminiscent of Roman temples (Figure 26-27). It is known that Hitler considered Ancient Rome as the only true empire, and he stated that it was his inspiration for the Nazi building programme. He saw architecture as a tool to reflect the state's power, and his architectural vision was focused on monumentality that would even surpass the ancient Egyptian and Roman structures.[143] Hitler respected classical antiquity, but instead of copying it, he wanted to create a new style that would itself become historical.[144] Therefore, Nazi architecture was influenced by classical

[140] Halsall, "A Leap into the Dark," 10.

[141] Jacobsen, *Babelsberg,*, 235.

[142] Halsall, "A Leap into the Dark," 10.

[143] Jochen Thies, "Nazi Architecture - a Blueprint for World Domination: the Last Aims of Adolf Hitler," in *Nazi Propaganda: The Power and the Limitations*, ed. David Welch (London and New York: Routledge, 2015)

[144] Alex Scobie, *Hitler's State Architecture: The Impact of Classical Antiquity* (The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990), 153.

antiquity, particularly the Roman imperial style, which represented the power and control of the long-lasting empire that dominated the ancient world.[145] It is possible that the new structures designed for the *Filmstadt*, which was a project of the Nazi regime, were influenced by Hitler's architectural vision.

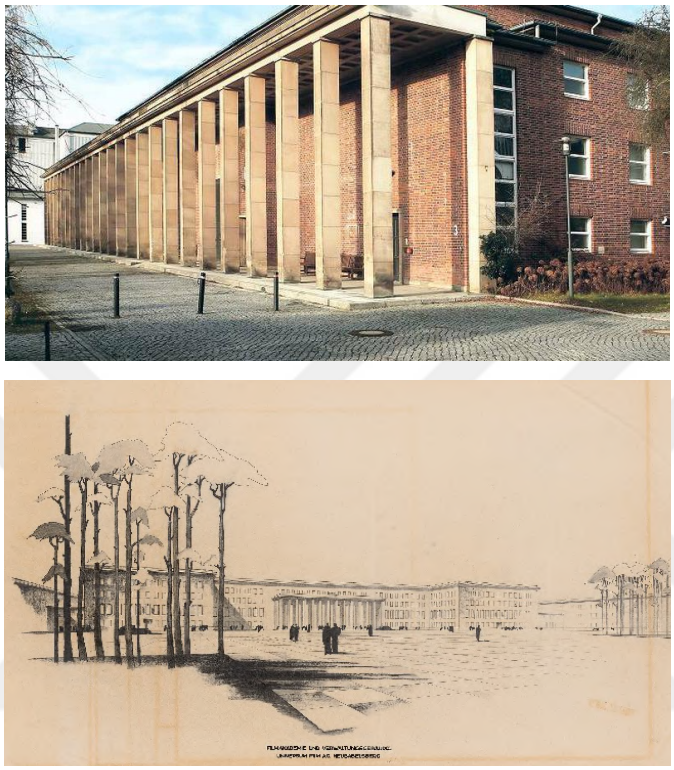


Figure 26-27: Top, New talent studio building (Nachwuchs). https://www.tagesspiegel.de/potsdam/landeshauptstadt/ein-vergessener-7310323.html Bottom, perspective view from Böckmannstraße, Otto Kohtz (1880-1956), Tusche, Bleistift auf Transparent 83,7 x 149,7 cm, *TU Berlin Architekturmuseum*, Inv. Nr. 9517.

According to an architectural site plan of the studios drawn in 1939 by Otto Kohtz obtained from TU Berlin Architekturmuseum, the architect planned to arrange different facilities to the right and left of a main axis where the entrance and two important studio buildings, *Große Halle* and *Tonkreuz*, are located. Instead of a compact layout, Otto Kohtz preferred a more spread-out layout and connected the buildings using streets and plazas. A main square was planned at the entrance, and it was surrounded by office blocks, a film academy, as well as apartments for officials and academy students. After entering through the main gate, there was a smaller square

[145] Scobie, *Hitler's State Architecture*, 5.

with an underground parking lot. There was also a designated parking area for motorcycles and bicycles behind the office blocks. Film and dubbing studios are located on the right and left sides of this square. Proceeding along the main axis leads to *Große Halle* and *Tonkreuz*. Kohtz has also planned smaller studios and canteen buildings around these studios. Each studio building was designed with adjacent supporting facilities such as dressing rooms, prop rooms, or workshop spaces. The cluster of buildings located at the far end to the left of the main axis was designated for film copying, editing, and storing areas. In addition to buildings related to film production, Kohtz also included other facilities such as a gymnasium, fire and first aid departments, a kindergarten, a power plant, and so on. Although this vision of Otto Kohtz was not implemented completely, it is visible that the aim was to create a small film city that has all the facilities to meet the needs of the employees, which minimizes the dependence on external resources. Thus, by making the cinema studio complex self-sufficient, the obstacles that would affect the production flow were tried to be eliminated.

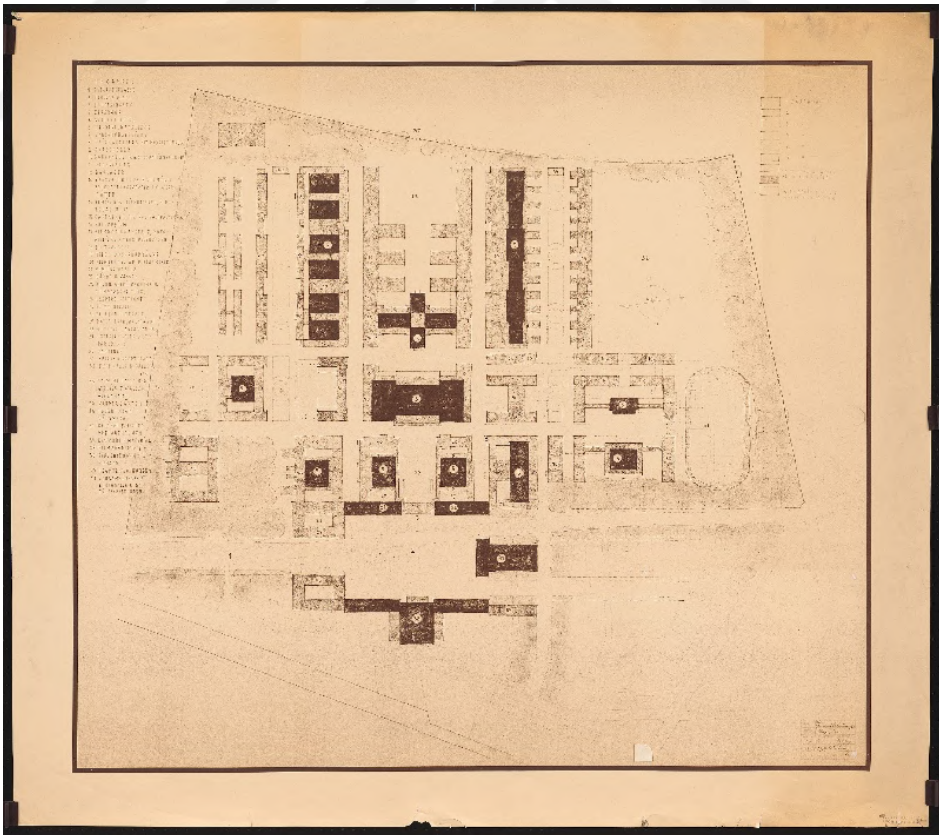


Figure 28: Site plan drawing of UFA (Universum Fim AG), 1:1000, Otto Kohtz (1880-1956), Lichtpause auf Papier 113 x 128,3 cm, *TU Berlin Architekturmuseum*, Inv. Nr. 9549.

4.2 Pinewood in the UK

Pinewood Studios is located in Iver Heath, to the west of London, and is considered the largest film studio in the UK. Currently, the studio is comprised of twenty-nine soundstages, an underwater filming studio, an exterior tank, and three studios for TV production. Additionally, five more soundstages are planned to be built in the southern part of the complex.[146] Successful feature films and television shows in history have chosen Pinewood Studios for film production. It was used for the filming of early post-war classics like *Great Expectations (1946)*, *Black Narcissus (1947)*, and *Oliver Twist (1948)*. The studio has also hosted internationally renowned movie franchises and series like *Superman, James Bond, Star Wars, Jurassic World, Marvel Cinematic Universe*, and so on. The famous "007 Stage" in Pinewood was built for *The Spy Who Loved Me (1977)* and remains one of the largest sound stages in Europe.[147]

4.2.1 Establishment of the Studio

During the 1930s, there were many film studios in London and its surroundings, such as Beaconsfield, Denham, Ealing, Elstree, Shepperton, Southall, and some others. Unfortunately, they started to be closed one by one due to old and poorly designed facilities and they could no longer meet the filmmakers' demands. Also, the British film industry struggled to compete with the dominance of American productions. Charles Boot, an English businessman, was drawn into the film world with the ambition of establishing a British film studio that could compete with the ones in Hollywood.[148] Together with his friend Sir Auckland Geddes, who visited Hollywood and was astonished, and Sir John Henry, who had valuable industry connections, they bought land at Elstree. However, the project failed. Charles Boot did not give up on his interest in film despite the failure. He traveled to Hollywood and studied the needs of a sound film studio. Accordingly, he developed a project that he

[146] "Pinewood Studios," TV Studio History, accessed June 13, 2025, https://tvstudiohistory.co.uk/londons-film-studios/pinewood-studios/

[147] "Credits," Pinewood Group, archived April 12, 2019, https://web.archive.org/web/20190412001611/https://www.pinewoodgroup.com/pinewood-today/credits

[148] Gareth Owen and Brian Burford, *The Pinewood Story,* (Surrey: Reynolds & Hearn Ltd, 2000), 9-11.

believed was an improvement on those he had seen in Hollywood. The Heatherdan Hall, located in the village of Iver, offered a suitable environment for Boot's desires. The estate's location was close to London, provided a fog-free open air and nearly a hundred acres of open land, all available at a relatively cheap price.[149] According to Sarah Street, the studio relied its visual identity on the historic appearance of Heatherdan Hall. Later, the mansion housed the Pinewood Club, a social and residential space with luxurious amenities like a Turkish bath, library, gym, swimming pool, and gardens for the members of the British film industry.[150] Heatherdan Hall is also listed as a Grade II building in the National Heritage List for England, which means that it has a special architectural or historical significance and is legally protected.[151] The video *A Stately Home of England* (1931) from British Pathé's archive depicts the Heatherdan Hall before it became part of the Pinewood Studios. Facilities of the house, like the bath and swimming pool, as well as the huge gardens and the greenery that attracted Charles Boot can be seen in this video.



Figure 29: Stills from *A Stately Home of England (1931)* showing the Heatherdan Hall, swimming pool and its gardens

As Charles Boot was developing his vision for Pinewood Studios, an important meeting took place with Joseph Arthur Rank. Rank saw the film as a powerful tool for spreading religious values to a wider audience and established the Religious Film Society in 1933. Later he founded British National Films in 1934 and filmed movies

[149] George Perry, *Movies from the Mansion: a History of Pinewood Studios, rev*. ed (London: Elm Tree Books/Hamish Hamilton Ltd, 1982), 16-20.

[150] Sarah Street, *Pinewood: Anatomy of a Film Studio in Post-war Britain* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2024), 5-7

[151] "Heatherden Hall, Pinewood Studios" Historic England, accessed July 27, 2025, https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1414431?section=official-list-entry

at some of the existing studios in Britain. However, he was not impressed by the studios he had seen. A common issue among most British studios was the need to stop production in order to build new sets, which disrupted workflow. He believed that there was a need for a completely new and modern studio complex that could produce films compatible with Hollywood. That was the motivation behind his collaboration with Booth and the creation of Pinewood Studios.[152] Booth even chose the name 'Pinewood' because the second syllable 'wood' evokes the American film center, while 'Pine' refers to the many trees grown in the area.[153]

Construction of the new studio began in December 1935, and every three weeks, the construction of one stage was completed. The opening ceremony of Pinewood was held on 30 September 1936 and was conducted by the Parliamentary Secretary of Trade, Dr. Leslie Burgin. More than 1200 guests gathered for the event. Guests were provided with a guided tour of the studio's facilities like sound stages, dressing rooms, powerhouse, workshop areas, administrative offices, as well as the clubhouse and surrounding gardens. At the time of the opening, the studios had already begun production and *London Melody* (1937) by Herbert Wilcox was under filming. Thus, the guests had a preview of the first film produced at the newly opened studio.[154]

4.2.2 Architectural Layout of the Studio

Following one of his inspiring visits to Hollywood, Charles Boot appointed James Sloan as general manager. Sloan then became the driving force behind Pinewood's innovative design. In Sloan's design, the stages were planned as compact units consisting of offices, dressing rooms, and other facilities. The original plan intended for eight such units, but only the first five stages were constructed according to this layout.[155] The architect of the studio complex was A. F. B. Anderson. Anderson was in partnership with architect Robert Atkinson who was known for his Art Deco designs. However, for the design of the Pinewood Studios, Art Deco style was not

[152] Perry, *Movies from the Mansion,* 22-23.

[153] Owen and Burford, *The Pinewood Story*, 16.

[154] Ibid., 17-19.

[155] Perry, *Movies from the Mansion*, 20.

picked.[156] In Heatherdan Hall, numerous bedrooms and bathrooms were transformed into executive offices, and a new administration block was built behind the mansion, echoing the hall's design and aesthetic. Also, the house and its gardens including an ornamental lake and bridge served as a backdrop for many productions.[157] Two new entrances were given to the complex from Fulmer Road, which was later renamed as Pinewood Road. One was the Tudor-style double lodge main entrance and the second one was designed for larger vehicles. Despite these new additions, the original entrance still existed and was used occasionally.[158]



Figure 30: Main entrance of the Pinewood Studios. George Perry, *Movies from the Mansion: a History of Pinewood Studios*, rev. ed. (London: Elm Tree Books/Hamish Hamilton Ltd, 1982), 12.

Pinewood had five main stages with a total floor space of 72,000 sq ft. The stages were constructed with a steel skeleton system with concrete walls and a soundproofed ceiling. Each stage was air-conditioned by fans mounted on the roof. Two of the stages had a floor tank that could be flooded or heated. The studio has its own powerhouse located away from the art department and stages to prevent noise.[159] On the opposite side of the soundstages were the series of seven separate spaces that attached to the main corridor that connects four soundstages (A,B,C,D stages). Four of them were two-storey high dressing rooms. Two of the four were for star suits that

[156] Street, *Pinewood,* 5-7.

[157] Perry, *Movies from the Mansion*, 20.

[158] Owen and Burford, *The Pinewood Story*, 16.

[159] Street, *Pinewood,* 11-13.

had a reception room, dressing room, maid's room, and a bathroom. The other two were for accommodating approximately 1,500 extras.[160] According to the plan of the studio, the remaining three were designated for the research library, administration, and hair and makeup. Soundstages were located very close to each other and inner courtyards between them were created. The architect might have made this choice due to London's weather conditions or to enhance productivity by controlling the movement of the workers. Sarah Street also mentions that covered walkways between the workshops and stages created fast and easy access between spaces and also shelter from weather conditions. However, stage five's location made the studio less convenient, because it was cut off from the four grouped stages. Another problem was the location of the scene dock and timber store, which caused noise from trucks passing by the nearby dressing rooms, administrative offices, and club buildings.[161] There were also many innovations in the design of Pinewood like the decision to suspend all electrical equipment from ceiling grids which allowed to keep the floor clean from cables.[162]

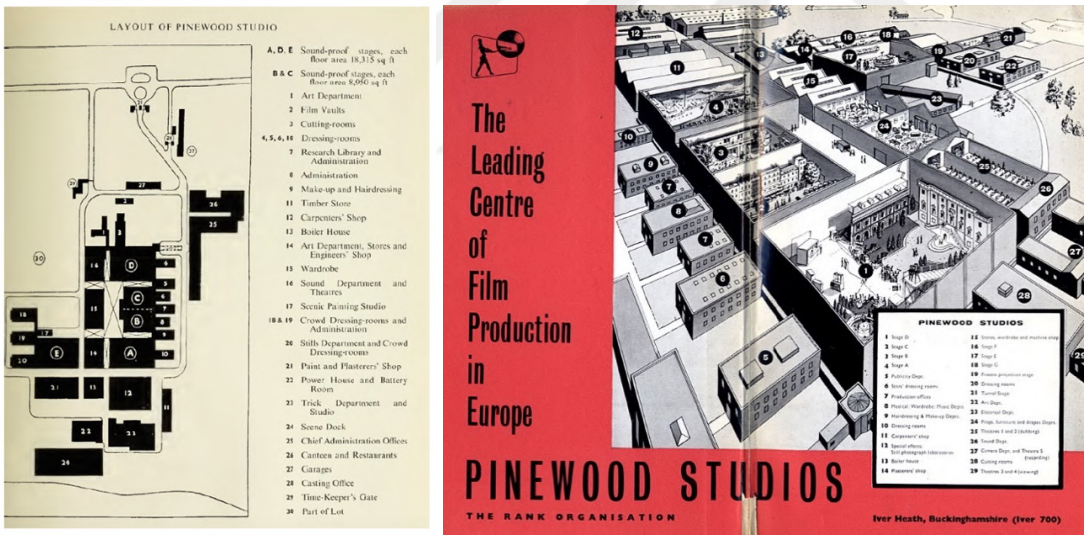


Figure 31-32: On the left, the layout of Pinewood Studios. Sarah Street, *Pinewood: Anatomy of a Film Studio in Post-war Britain* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2024). On the right, the layout of Pinewood Studios. "Pinewood Studios," TV Studio History, accessed August 7, 2025, https://tvstudiohistory.co.uk/londons-film-studios/pinewood-studios/

[160] Owen and Burford, *The Pinewood Story*, 17.

[161] Ibid., 11-13

[162] Perry, *Movies from the Mansion,* 20.

4.2.3 Microcosm of Urban Social Life

Pinewood had a vibrant studio culture outside of working hours. Although Pinewood does not imitate a city in terms of its architectural layout, it can be said that it functions as a microcosm of urban social life with its facilities and cultural activities, which fosters a sense of identity and belonging among workers. The employees of the studio bonded through sports and social groups, musical and film groups, exhibitions, etc.[163] For the leisure time of the employees, one room of the Heatherden Hall was converted into a cocktail bar, and the adjacent ballroom was turned into a restaurant where fresh vegetables grown in the gardens were served at lunch (Figure 33). The upper floor of the mansion housed other entertainment rooms such as an art gallery, a writing room, a drawing room, a billiard room, and others (Figure 34).[164] The surviving magazine "Pinewood Merry-Go-Round," published monthly from August 1946 to December 1947, offers a rare glance into the vibrant studio culture that evolved outside of working hours.[165] The magazine also highlights the undesirable conditions and complaints of the workers. One issue of the magazine touched upon the complaints about poor transport links to Pinewood, making it difficult for workers from London to come to the studio. This transportation issue also affected workers' participation in social activities, as they were concerned about getting home after events. The magazine also included proposals made by employees to solve these complaints. An idea published in 1945 recommended a new town for studio workers of both Denham and Pinewood. Another worker conveyed the vision of a "Pinewood Settlement" with houses and shops, creating a strong sense of community and becoming a model of a happy communal life.[166] These complaints show that although Pinewood Studios' remote and isolated location from the city center was useful during wartime, it created difficulties for the workers when production was ongoing. By proposing projects to solve this problem, workers showed their desire to transform the studio into a space where professional and personal lives could seamlessly intersect.

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[163] Street, *Pinewood*, 129-130.

[164] Perry, *Movies from the Mansion,* 31.

[165] Street, *Pinewood*, 129-130.

[166] Ibid., 137-138.



Figure 33-34: On the left, The Heatherden Hall ballroom transformed into a luxurious restaurant, George Perry, *Movies from the Mansion: a History of Pinewood Studios*, rev. ed (London: Elm Tree Books/Hamish Hamilton Ltd, 1982), 31. On the right, the Picture Gallery located on the upper floor. "Heatherden Hall," House and Heritage, accessed August 7, 2025, https://houseandheritage.org/2018/05/15/heatherden-hall/

4.3 Cinecittà in Italy

Cinecittà is located in Rome, Italy and it is one of the leading production facilities in Europe since it offers filmmakers a one-stop shop with facilities like pre- and post-production, special effects, distribution, and promotion that cover the whole filmmaking process. Currently, the studio complex has 20 soundstages, one of them is an LED volume set for virtual production, large backlots, permanent sets for outdoor filming, and a pool to shoot underwater scenes. The soundstages are fully soundproof and equipped with modern amenities, including air conditioning, electrical, and lighting systems. Each studio also has auxiliary spaces like dressing rooms, offices, makeup rooms, and workshops. Many world-famous films like *Ben-Hur* (1959), *Life is Beautiful* (1997), *Ocean's Twelve* (2004), *Mission: Impossible 3* (2006), and *Angels and Demons* (2009), have chosen Cinecittà Studios for filming.[167] Cinecittà also houses one of Europe's most significant film and photographic archives. It includes not only its own productions but also materials acquired from private collections and various other sources. This audiovisual archive is recognized by UNESCO and registered in the "Memory of the World" programme.[168]

[167] *Cinecittà Studios Brochure* (Rome: Cinecittà Luce), accessed June 13, 2025, https://cinecitta.com/public/cinecittastudios_brochure.pdf

[168] "About Us," Cinecittà Studios, accessed July 27, 2025, https://cinecitta.com/en/chi-siamo/

4.3.1 Establishment of the Studio

Mussolini recognized the need for a state-driven global project that would involve all aspects of cinema from production and film screening to film criticism and professional training, to secure widespread support for the regime. This project was envisioned as the Italian alternative to the state cinema of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia and aimed to have similar results in shaping public opinion and reinforcing state power through cinema.[169] Mussolini together with his son and the entrepreneurship of Luigi Freddi, wanted to revitalize Rome's film industry with this project. Luigi Freddi had traveled to Hollywood to observe the studios that spread out the land beyond the city.[170] Freddi was appointed as the General Director of Entertainment and quickly moved on to the implementation phase but there was a need for someone with proven industrial capabilities and sufficient capital to support the construction of film production facilities, as well as loyalty to the Fascist regime. A proposal was sent to Carlo Roncoroni who was a construction industrialist and also the owner of Cines Studio.[171] At the time, the rapid urbanization of Rome affected the expansion and production capacity of the former film studio Cines located in the Appio Quarter. Cines could not support the desired production levels which also led to the establishment of a new cinema city in the barely populated suburban area in Rome. On September 26, 1935, a fire broke out in the Cines Studio. According to Luigi Freddi's memoirs, the fire destroyed the lighting and sound recording equipment, cameras, electric cables, and expensive set materials. This unfortunate incident also accelerated the construction of Cinecittà.[172]

On 29 January 1936 Mussolini laid the foundation stone of the Cinecittà along with the general director of cinema Luigi Freddi, Foreign Minister Galeazzo Ciano, the president of the Cines company Carlo Roncoroni, and others. A large temporary

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[169] Mario Pacelli, *Cinecittà: La pupilla del Duce* (Rome: Graphofeel Edizioni, 2022),

[170] Noa Steimatsky, "Backlots of the War: Cinecittà 1942-1950," in *In the Studio: Visual Creation and its Material Environments*, edited by Brian R. Jacobson (University of California Press, 2020), 124.

[171] Pacelli, *Cinecittà,*

[172] Carla Mereu Keating, "The Spatiality of Film Production and the Politics of Urban Planning: Rome's Pioneering Film Studio Cines (1905–37)," *Film History: An International Journal* 33, no.3 (2021): 56-58.

wall was constructed for the ceremony and the slogan "Cinema is the most powerful weapon" was painted on it. On top of it, a cut-out image of Mussolini operating a movie camera was placed.[173] Cinecittà was constructed in record time and showcased Rationalist architecture with its up-to-date equipment and services. It occupied a six hundred thousand square meters plot. The site also benefited from the attractive locations nearby for filmmakers, such as the villas of Tivoli, the dunes and beaches of Sabaudia and Ostia, monumental aqueducts, and the Apennine Mountains.[174] The inauguration ceremony of Cinecittà took place on 28 April 1937. The ceremony was held during the filming of *Scipione l'Africano* (1937) to showcase the intense production work currently ongoing at Cinecittà.[175]



Figure 35-36: On the left, temporary wall and the slogan 'cinema is the most powerful weapon' painted on it. "E Carlo Maria varò la Cinecittà di Cassino (di M. Molisani)," Alessio Porcu, accessed August 7, 2025, https://www.alessioporcu.it/politica/carlo-maria-cinecitta-molisani/. On the right, Mussolini at the inauguration ceremony of Cinecittà. "La nascita di Cinecittà," Genova Palazzo Ducale, accessed August 7, 2025 https://palazzoducale.genova.it/la-nascita-di-cinecitta-fotografie-dal-fondo-di-luigi-freddi/

4.3.2 Italian Rationalist Architecture and Cinecittà

In the early 20th century, Italy was still not influenced by the architectural movements that were spreading across Europe. Swiss journal *Das Werk* criticised this situation by saying, "Today's Italian architecture has not yet been touched by the major movements and discussions of the rest of Europe." Seven young architects from Milan

[173] Stephen Gundle, *Mussolini's Dream Factory: Film Stardom in Fascist Italy* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2013), 19.

[174] Steimatsky,"Backlots of the War," 124.

[175] Pacelli, Cinecittà,

changed this situation by adopting the Rationalist architecture movement. This group, also known as the Gruppo 7, was formed by Ubaldo Castagnoli, Luigi Figini, Guido Frette, Sebastiano Larco, Gino Pollini, Carlo Enrico Rava, and Giuseppe Terragni. In December 1926, they published a series of manifestos that brought the modern movement, also known as the International Style, to Italy. They were mostly inspired by Le Corbusier's *Vers une architecture* (1923) and Walter Gropius's *Internationale Architektur* (1925).[176]

Gruppo 7 was looking for modern parallels of some of the historical elements, like column and arch, which can be considered as the fundamental components in architecture.

> Today, from new needs and from a rational use of materials, a few forms ... have already been born that, representing the perfect and unique solution of the postulated needs, can be considered thus an international patrimony in the same way that the element "column" and the element "arch" were fundamental in past architectures.[177]

By examining modern buildings, they came up with five aesthetic factors that constitute the absolute components of a new architecture. The first factor is that the new Rationalist architecture should be free of unnecessary ornamentation. This "antidecorative tendency" advocated utilizing the surfaces and textures of modern materials such as sparkling glass and shiny metal instead of traditional materials such as mosaics, marble, and gold. The second one was the emphasis on "perfect proportion" and "abstract rhythm" that gives the sense of naked and abstract beauty. The third one was the expression of structural skeleton, which means that instead of hiding the structural system, new buildings display it openly. The remaining fourth and fifth 'absolutes' were the use of cantilevers and corner windows, which demonstrate the 'absolute' forms that can be achieved with reinforced concrete.[178]

In Rome, Rationalist architecture examples embraced modernism, but at the same time connected to the city's historical architectural language. Rationalist

[176] Richard A. Etlin, *Modernism in Italian Architecture, 1890-1940* (The MIT Press, 1991), 225.

[177] Etlin, *Modernism in Italian Architecture, 1890-1940,* 250.

[178] Ibid., 250.

architects in Rome were inspired by primary geometric forms, convex and concave designs, projecting and receding masses that form Rome's architectural heritage, and created buildings that can harmonize with the existing historical texture.[179] When looking at the architectural language of Cinecittà, the design choices of Roman Rationalist architects can be observed. The use of basic geometric shapes, along with concave and convex forms, resonates with the Roman Rationalists' approach to blend their design with the architectural language of the historic city. For instance, in Peresutti's drawing that depicts the main square of Cinecittà, the semi-circular forms surrounding the central space stand out (Figure 40). Similarly, several buildings within the complex had curvilinear forms and corner windows. These examples show similarities with important Rationalist architectural examples in Rome, such as Post Office building by Mario Ridolfi, Cinema Jolly by Francesco De Intinis or the Casa del Cannocchiale that utilizes concave and convex forms (Figure 37-38-39). The buildings in Cinecittà not only reflected the design preferences of Roman Rationalist architects but also exemplified the 'absolutes' outlined by Gruppo 7. The use of curved forms and corner windows showcases the new possibilities introduced to architecture by reinforced concrete. Also, the use of non-ornamental design language supported with geometric harmony and proportional balance, echoes the first and second principles outlined by Gruppo 7.

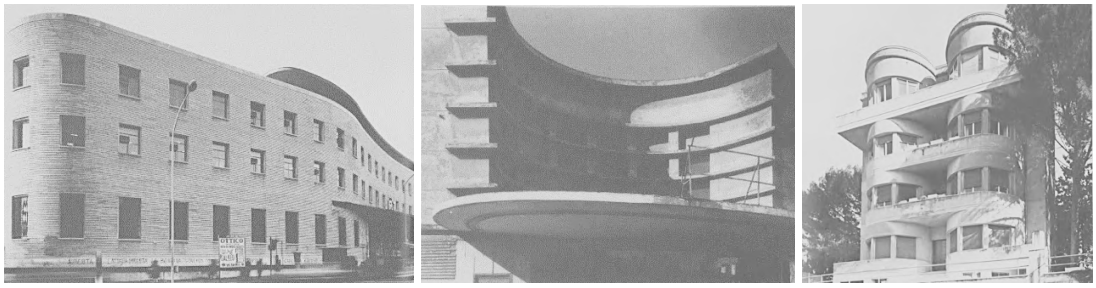


Figure 37-38-39: From left to right, Post Office building by Mario Ridolfi, Cinema Jolly by Francesco De Intinis and the Casa del Cannocchiale. Richard A. Etlin, *Modernism in Italian Architecture, 1890-*1940 (The MIT Press, 1991)

[179] Ibid., 271- 272

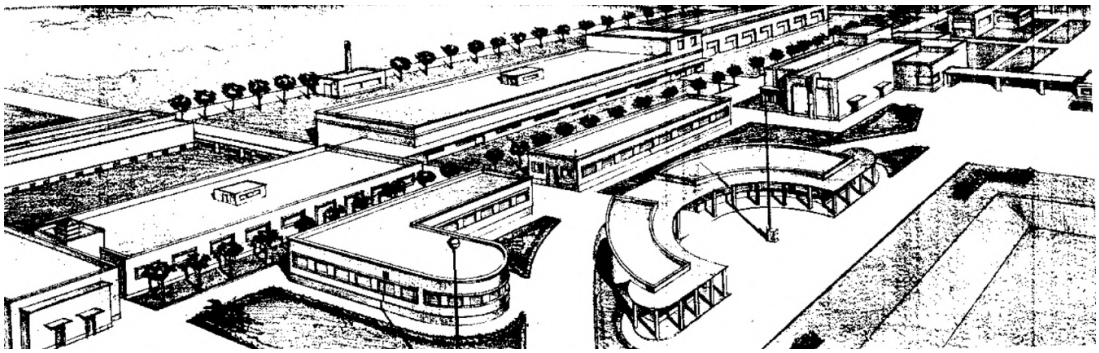


Figure 40: Drawing of Cinecittà by Gino Peresutti, Gino Peresutti, "Cinecittà," *Cinema* 1, no.20 (April 25, 1937): 302-306, https://fondazionecsc.b-cdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/CN_1937_20.pdf

Diane Yvonne Ghirardo argues that the Italian Rationalist architecture movement and Fascist regime were deeply intertwined and had a mutually beneficial relationship. Mussolini declared that "For me, the greatest of all the arts is architecture, because it embraces them all," which shows his belief in architecture as a medium of propaganda to display the Fascist regime's modern image. In return, rationalist architects received fame, money, and commissions.[180] Therefore, Cinecittà, which was the Fascist regime's project to use cinema as a tool to shape public opinion, functioned as both an architectural and cinematic stage for Fascist ideals.

4.3.3 Architectural Layout of the Studio

Cinecittà was designed by architect Gino Peressutti and it was specifically designed for sound film production. With the introduction of sound in Italy, the infrastructure of existing studios like Cines was altered for sound production, or newly designed studios built purposely for sound shooting. The main difference between newly built studios and the old ones was their spatial arrangement. The pre-determined design of the old studios and the lack of space made it difficult to execute major infrastructural changes. On the other hand, new studios allowed architects to plan the facilities with sound sensitivity in mind. For instance, noisy buildings like carpentry

[180] Diane Yvonne Ghirardo, "Italian Architects and Fascist Politics: An Evaluation of the Rationalist's Role in Regime Building," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 39, no.2 (May 1980): 109-127, https://www.jstor.org/stable/989580

and mechanical workshops could be positioned far from soundstages to avoid disrupting the filming process.[181]

Architect Peresutti designed the complex with a grand entrance and a symmetrical layout along a central axis, featuring two parallel roads projecting from the front area, with its administrative offices and formal lawns. As stated by Noa Steimatsky, with this layout, Cinecittà resembled the First National Studios in Burbank, but unlike American timber structures, Cinecittà was constructed using reinforced concrete, steel, and brick.[182] In the layout, the soundstages were considered the core of the complex, and the supporting facilities were arranged around them according to their functional relation to filming. In a 1938 issue of *Cinema* journal, architect Gino Peressutti explained that he organized the complex into six groups in terms of the functions of the buildings.[183]

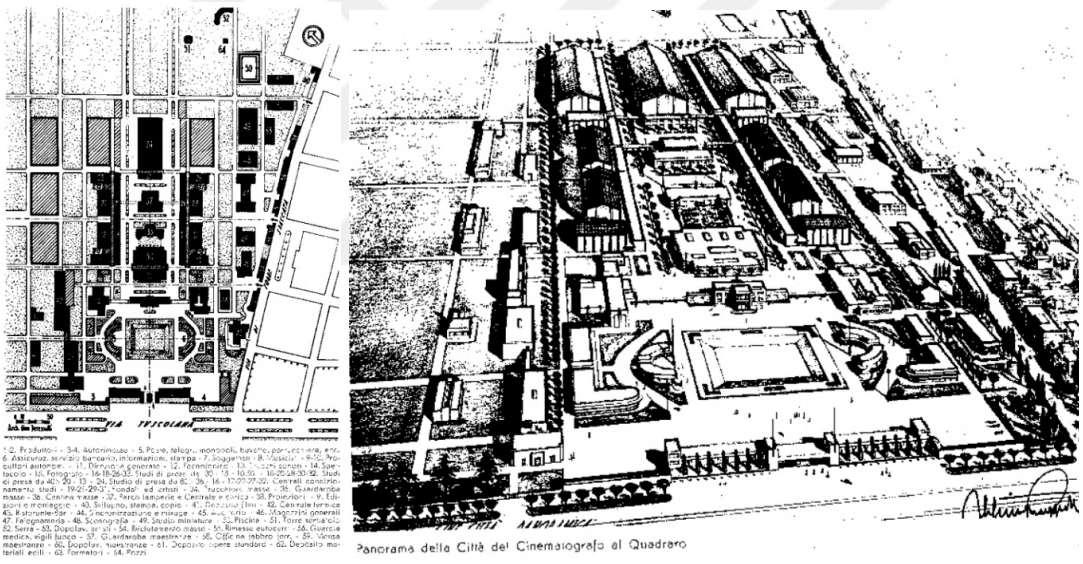


Figure 41-42: Layout of Cinecittà complex, Gino Peresutti, "Cinecittà," *Cinema* 1, no.20 (April 25, 1937): 302-306, https://fondazionecsc.b-cdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/CN_1937_20.pdf

[181] Carla Mereu Keating, "Acoustic Insulation: Italian Film Studios' Material Transformation to Sound (1929-1943)," in *Retuning the Screen: Sound Methods and the Aural Dimension of Film and Media History*, ed. Simone Dotto, Paolo Villa Maria Ida Bernabei (Milano: Mimesis, 2022), 98.

[182] Steimatsky,"Backlots of the War," 124.

[183] Gino Peresutti, "Cinecittà," *Cinema* 1*,* no.20 (April 25, 1937): 302-306, https://fondazionecsc.b-cdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/CN_1937_20.pdf

The **first** group was the buildings for general services around the entrance square. The main entrance facing the Via Tuscolana consisted of buildings reserved for the producers because they had to be in contact with the public and suppliers. In these buildings, there were sixteen groups of offices for the producers with other necessary services like waiting rooms, cloakrooms etc. To the right and left of the main axis, next to the Producers' offices, there were parking areas for cars and fuel/lubricant distribution services. After passing through the entrance, one reaches the central square on the main axis. Around the square, two semi-circular buildings were located. The buildings consisted of postal and telegraph offices, a hairdresser, a haberdashery, a bank, information buildings, and some others. Behind these buildings, designated spaces for the musicians and screenwriters were separated by a greenery. Lastly, when we pass the central square on the main axis, we find the general directorate building which includes the presidency, general management, administration, and accounting services.[184]

The **second** group of buildings was the soundstages. There were nine soundstages and one of them was equipped with a tank for underwater shootings. There were also two-storey high buildings attached to the soundstages for the artists and storing backdrops. Eight soundstages measuring 20x40x12 and 15x30x10.5 were arranged in two symmetrical rows on the left and right sides of the main axis. The central main studio Teatro 5 measuring 36x80x16 was located at the end of the main axis.[185]

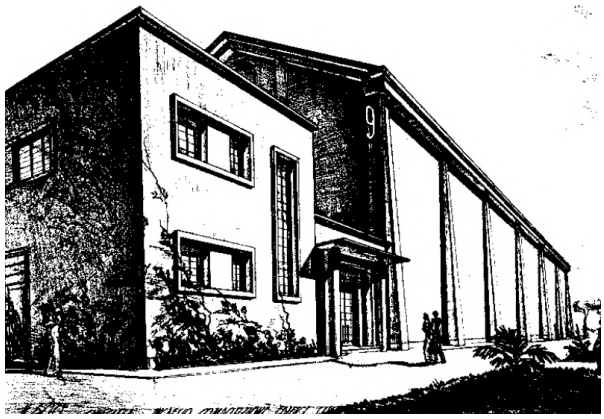


Figure 43: Studio building and attached two-storey high building, Gino Peresutti, "Cinecittà," *Cinema* 1, no.20 (April 25, 1937): 302-306, https://fondazionecsc.b-cdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/CN_1937_20.pdf

[184] Ibid.

[185] Ibid.

The **third** group was the buildings on the main axis between the studios and they were designated to support the production in studios such as dressing rooms, makeup, etc. The wardrobe department was comprised of warehouses, clothing rooms, armories, and costume production ateliers to ensure quick and easy access to a wide range of clothes and accessories during filming. A tailoring shop and design studio were also integrated into this facility. Separated from the wardrobe department with greenery there was a refreshment and rest space for extras. Further, along the same axis, there was a power plant to supply necessary electric power to the studio.[186]

The **fourth** group of buildings, located on the left side of the main axis, was assigned to post-production services, including editing, montage, film development, printing, and others. The first building in this group was the Projection building, which housed projection rooms, battery rooms, and other facilities. Adjacent to it there was an Editing and Montage building where darkrooms, spaces for cutting and montaging films, editing rooms, and offices were located. Connected by a passageway there was a Printing and Copying building, and parallel to it Film Storage building.[187]



Figure 44: Film storage spaces in Cinecittà, 1952, LUCE Archive, https://patrimonio.archivioluce.com/luce-web/detail/IL3000014945/12/marazza-ed-altri-parlamentari-visitano-magazzino-cinecitta-cui-sono-conservate-pellicole-film.html?startPage=120

[186] Ibid.

[187] Ibid.

The **fifth** group consisted of the buildings located on the right side of the main axis from the intersection of Via Tuscolana with Via di Torre Spaccaca to the last buildings on that side. This group was assigned to acoustical, manufacturing, and auxiliary services. The main restaurant is the first building of this group and was located on the right side of the central square. The building consisted of a large bar space, a restaurant reserved for artists, and a private dining area. The building was surrounded by greenery that ensured a fresh and relaxing environment for the users. Another facility in this group was the Synchronization and Mixing building. This two-storey structure housed a large projection room, post-production services for sound, and archives. The Studio Auditorium building was another facility and it consisted of a large orchestral hall designed according to modern acoustic standards, rehearsal spaces, technical rooms, and a terrace for outdoor performances. There were also atelier spaces for the set design and backdrops in this group. There was carpentry, buildings for set designers, painters, and cartoonists, miniatures and art tricks building, and facilities for model-making, sculpting, etc. Lastly, at the southern edge, there was an outdoor pool for underwater scenes, a water tower, and a greenhouse.[188]



Figure 45-46: On the left, Cinecittà's modern deco bar, sketch by architect Peressutti (Martin 2013: 156), https://studiotec.info/2020/06/12/eating-in-the-studios-dining-with-the-stars/. On the right, Cinecittà water tower, Sara Martin, "Cinecittà. Genesi ed elaborazione del progetto della Città del Cinema," *Bianco e Nero*, no. 573 (2012): 80.

[188] Ibid.

Lastly, the **sixth** group arranged along the Via di Torre Spaccata. Other than the main entrance there were three special entrances given from Torre Spaccata for extras, workers, and outdoor services. Next to the first entrance, there was an Artist's *Dopolavoro* building.[189] *Dopolavoro*, meaning "after work," was an organization established in Fascist Italy to provide recreational and educational activities for workers during their leisure time. Local *Dopolavoro* organizations provided facilities like billiard rooms, libraries, film screenings, radio, tennis courts, sports fields, and other leisure activities.[190] When it came to the second entrance, on the left, there was a depot for trucks, a medical emergency room, and a fire department for possible accidents. On the right, there were dressing rooms for the workers. Continuing along the Via di Torre Spaccata, there were buildings for mechanical workshops and lastly a canteen and a *Dopolavoro* for the workers.

Consequently, the layout of the studio is composed of plazas, streets that divide the studio into certain zones and green areas, mimicking urban planning principles. At the same time, the studio had facilities to support its operation without depending on outside sources which made the complex self-sufficient. For example, the complex had its own central electric unit and water supply system. Also, the fact that Cinecittà had manufacturing facilities for the backdrops and props used in the film sets and post-production services such as editing and developing films was another factor that further reduced the complex's external dependence. Additionally, the complex provided social facilities such as restaurants, bars, and after-work recreational institutions that foster a sense of community among workers. Unfortunately, the layout also reveals underlying social hierarchies within the production process. For instance, while the restaurant/bar and *Dopolavoro* facilities for artists were located close to the main square and entrance of the complex; the canteen and *Dopolavoro* for workers were located at the back of the complex, around the farthest entrance.

[189] Ibid.

[190] Randolph Harrison, "Italian National Leisure Time Society," *Monthly Labor Review* 40, no. 2 (1935): 266–278. https://www.jstor.org/stable/41814344

4.4 Comparison of the Studios

Unlike Cinecittà and Pinewood, which were specifically designed for sound filming, Babelsberg was established during the silent film era and is older than the other two studios. For this reason, it had to transform its soundstages or build new ones for sound filming. Both Babelsberg and Pinewood studios were established on a site that featured an existing historical building. Babelsberg Studios' site had an unused artificial flower factory building and Pinewood Studios' site had an old Victorian mansion called Heatherdan Hall. Both structures were built with ornamental and decorative styles. These existing structures were then adapted and integrated into the design of the studio facilities around them. Building a modern studio building next to a historic building created a contrast resembling the "fantastic functionality" concept used by Brian Jacobson to describe the early Hollywood studios' hybrid structures that have decorative, ornamented façades concealing the functional modern production spaces. At the same time, this coming together of buildings from different periods, along with the suggestion of multiple time periods through the film sets renders these studio complexes heterotopias (fourth principle).

In terms of architectural layout, Babelsberg and Cinecittà were designed with a more spread-out layout, while Pinewood had a more compact design. These differences may have been influenced by climatic conditions. In the UK, where rainfall is frequent, a compact layout is more practical. On the other hand, Italy has a Mediterranean climate, which is generally warm and sunny, so a more expansive layout with many open and green areas was preferred. Each of these examples creates a well-structured and tightly controlled environment to regulate both the film production and its industrial efficiency as well as workers' lives during labor hours. In this respect, these complexes act as well-ordered microcosms of their neighboring cities (sixth principle of heterotopia).

Babelsberg, Pinewood, and Cinecittà each indeed reflect the "studio-city" ideal through their facilities and architectural layout. These complexes all had their own manufacturing workshops, independent electric and water supply facilities, restaurants, bars and social amenities for both workers and artists, post-production facilities, and more. These facilities allowed these studio complexes to operate like self-sufficient micro-cities similar to utopian ideals imagined for workers discussed in Chapter 1 (third principle of heterotopia). However, different from utopian models,

these complexes did not offer accommodation facilities for workers. Although there were some considerations and projects for accommodation and demands from workers, these plans were never realized. Yet, these spaces still managed to bring together the real (social life and its spaces) and the simulated (filmmaking and its sets and settings). Despite their differences and similarities, all three studios not only contributed significantly to the global film industry and played an important role in the history of filmmaking but also emerged as heterotopic and micro versions of cities.

CHAPTER 5

STUDIOS GOING TO WAR

5.1 Importance of World War II in European history

The Second World War was a pivotal and devastating event in European history. It transformed the political, social, and cultural textures of Europe. As the war came to an end, new power dynamics emerged, and Europe's borders and alliances were redefined. There were significant geopolitical changes, including the disappearance of states like Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, or the division of Germany into East and West by the "Iron Curtain."[191] After Germany's surrender, the Allies gathered to discuss the future of Germany. At the beginning, all the sides agreed on eliminating the Nazism ideology and punishing war criminals. At the Potsdam Conference, they confirmed their commitment to reeducating and rebuilding Germany on democratic principles, distinguishing the German people from the Nazi regime, and they divided Germany into four occupation zones between Allied forces, including France.[192] The division of Germany into East and West is a critical point in European history. The division of Germany created an artificial border in the center of Europe that affected the entire continent and became a symbol of the physical and ideological distinction of the Cold War.

Both the First and Second World Wars reshaped global power dynamics. The power and impact of major European countries have decreased, except for Russia, which was considered an extra-European power. With the Cold War, it was clear that only two nations had emerged from the war with increased power and global influence,

[191] A.W Purdue, "The Transformative Impact of World War II," in *European History Online (EGO)* (Mainz: Leibniz Institute of European History, 2016), https://www.ieg-ego.eu/purduea-2016-en

[192] Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1999), 237.

which were the USA and the Soviet Union.[193] The USA believed that in order to withstand the spread of Soviet power, Europe needed to recover and strengthen itself economically. Therefore, they established the initiative "The Marshall Plan," also known as the European Recovery Program, to provide aid to Europe. European countries and the Soviet Union met in Paris to discuss this issue and reach a consensus. The Soviet Union opposed accepting this aid, worried that the Marshall Plan would bring Europe under American control. After the meeting, all European countries except for the ones in Eastern Europe, which were under Soviet pressure, responded positively to the aid. Thus, this aid further highlighted the growing division between Eastern and Western Europe.[194] As the Soviets suspected, there was a growing "Americanization" of European society and culture in the post-war period. American popular culture, films, and products were influential, and consumerism gained momentum. Hollywood cinema was the primary tool for American influence in Europe. According to A.W. Purdue, it can be seen as the "cultural arm of the Marshall Plan". These films offered a vision of an individualistic consumer society and a lifestyle that many Europeans aspired to.[195]

The Second World War not only changed the power dynamics and economies in Europe, but it also affected the architecture and urban texture of major cities. The war caused a colossal loss of life and left much of Europe in ruins. Especially the bombing campaigns of Allies during 1944 and 1945 and the continuous progression of the Red Army from Stalingrad to Prague caused the greatest damage. The coastal towns of France, like Royan, Le Havre, and Caen were heavily bombed by the U.S. Air Force. In Germany, Hamburg, Cologne, Düsseldorf, and Dresden, and other cities were destroyed.[196] People described Central Europe after the war as a "lunar landscape dotted with enormous heaps of rubble and bomb craters."[197] During the war, in response to the constant threat of aerial bombing, people developed strategies to adapt

[193] Purdue, "The Transformative Impact of World War II."

[194] Çağrı Erhan, "Ortaya Çıkışı Ve Uygulanışıyla Marshall Planı," *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi* 51, no.1 (January 1996): 275-280, https://doi.org/10.1501/SBFder_0000001907.

[195] Purdue, "The Transformative Impact of World War II."

[196] Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2005), 16.

[197] Purdue, "The Transformative Impact of World War II."

architecture rapidly to wartime conditions. These strategies included protecting or disguising existing buildings from the attacks, preserving historical monuments, or building shelters. Therefore, the following section discusses how architecture responded to the devastating effects of war and what type of defensive strategies were used.

5.1.1 Architectural Adaptation during the Second World War

According to Jean-Louis Cohen, the Second World War was a more industrial war than the First. Workers supported the war by producing weapons, vehicles, etc. In 1943, a significant portion of the population of countries like the UK, Germany, and the USSR was involved in military or industrial fields. Despite heavy bombing, industrial production continued. To increase production, either the existing large factories, such as aircraft and car factories, were converted to be used for the production of military equipment and armaments, or new factories were built for the manufacture of warplanes and vehicles. Civil engineers and architects played an important role in the construction of new production sites. In most countries, these new factories were built far from major cities to be able to protect them from bombing attacks during the war. For instance, in France during the 1930s, new factories were built as far as possible from the borders in order to protect them from aerial bombing. Similarly, Nazi's moved their production sites away from the western front and relocated toward the center or eastern parts of the country, where they were less vulnerable to bombing.[198] In the later stages of the war, with the intense Allied bombing campaigns on factories in Germany, some of the production sites were transported below the surface. A network of underground factories was created by utilizing existing galleries from abandoned mines.[199]

During the Second World War, architects also took part in protecting existing buildings from attacks. They began developing technical solutions based on the different types of threats each country faced. While in France, the importance was given to the evacuation of the civilians, in Germany, they focused on enhancing

[198] Jean-Louis Cohen, *Architecture in Uniform: Designing and Building for the Second World War* (Canadian Centre for Architecture, 2011), 81-85.

[199] Cohen, *Architecture in Uniform,* 105.

protective measures in shelters.[200] In early 1938, following the tragic experiences of the Spanish Civil War, European governments realized the importance of ensuring the safety of the civilian population throughout the war. It was not possible to completely protect all the people from the heavy bombs. For this reason, it was necessary to examine the locations where bombs could fall, their types, and their distances. In light of these examinations, C.G. Flebus stated that the classification that guided shelter designs in wartime was shaped around three main types developed against light, medium, and heavy bombing threats. Light bombproof shelters were designed to provide protection against explosion pressure, splinters from bombs, falling chunks of antiaircraft shells, and direct impact of light bombs. This type was usually preferred for private and domestic use. The second type, medium bombproof shelters, were designed to resist the impact of high-explosive bombs up to 550 pounds at their highest possible speed. This type was mostly used for places that need shelter space occasionally, like hotels, stores, etc. Lastly, heavy bombproof shelters were designed to withstand all types of bombs, and they were chosen for places that have strategic importance, such as factories, municipal shelters, public buildings, and others.[201] The fear of possible air raids also led to a reinterpretation of existing urban spaces and infrastructure for shelter purposes. For instance, in Britain, some proposals suggested building underground car parks beneath public squares that can be used as shelters during an emergency. However, the underground car park proposal was not deep enough to offer protection against air raids, and there were also concerns about flooding. Another main point of debate in Britain was the London's metro line, the Underground. The government prioritized keeping the subway system operational for transportation over its use as shelters, but people often escaped to the Underground stations to take shelter informally during air raids on London.[202]

[200] Ibid., 146.

[201] C.G Flebus, "Air Raid Shelters," *The Military Engineer* 33, no. 187 (January-February 1941): 37-38, https://www.jstor.org/stable/44555538

[202] Adam Page, "Planning permanent air raid precautions: architecture, air war and the changing perceptions of British cities in the late 1930s," *Urban History* 43, no.1 (2016): 128-132, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0963926815000164.



Figure 47: The London Underground as Air Raid Shelter, London, England, 1940, *Imperial War Museums*, via Wikimedia Commons, accessed July 23, 2025, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:The_London_Underground_As_Air_Raid_Shelter,_London,_England,_1940_D1675.jpg&oldid=560697692

There were efforts to protect historical and sacred structures as well, including advance planning, on-site protective measures, and the identification and relocation of valuable cultural assets. The sandbagging technique was widely used as an on-site protection method because sandbags would trap bullets and debris. The most famous example of sandbagging was Da Vinci's *The Last Supper,* located in Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan. When the roof of the room where the wall painting is located and the neighboring wall were affected by the air attacks, sandbags strengthened the survival of the artwork. In Pisa, sandbagging was used for protecting five bronze doors, two marble pulpits, and two frescoes located in the cathedral and the baptistery. In Rome, to preserve the Column of Marcus Aurelius, a layered protection technique was used. In the inner layer, sandbags were placed, and a wall was built around the sandbags as a secondary layer. While immovable elements required on-site protection, movable objects like paintings, sculptures, and other cultural objects were transported to the deposits. But there were some rare cases where architectural elements were also removed and stored elsewhere. For instance, in Florence, stained-glass windows were

removed from six churches and the Laurentian Library and kept in a villa located on the outskirts of the city.[203]



Figure 48: Column of Marcus Aurelius, Rome, c. 180-185 CE, protected during World War II with an inner layer of sandbagging and an outer barrier made from bricks. Photo: National Archives, RG 239-PA, College Park, MD. Reproduced in Cathleen Hoeniger, "The Protection of Monuments and Immoveable Works of Art from War Damage: A Comparison of Italy in World War II and Ukraine during the Russian Invasion," *Arts* 13, no.2: 65 (2024): fig.2.

Another precaution to protect the buildings from air raids was concealing potential targets with various methods. For instance, camouflage techniques were used to hide buildings during daytime attacks, while blackouts were executed during the nighttime to make it harder for enemy planes to see their targets.[204] During the First World War, camouflage was mostly done by artists, but in the Second World War, professionals from other fields, such as biologists, chemists, and film set makers, also took part in the practice. There was also a desire to include architects in camouflage work to encourage the designing of buildings that have self-concealing qualities. A booklet, *Concealment of New Buildings*, was published at the beginning of 1942 by Britain's Camouflage Directorate to guide architects in camouflage work. The manual noted that three main factors must be taken into account to achieve a successful

[203] Cathleen Hoeniger, "The Protection of Monuments and Immoveable Works of Art from War Damage: A Comparison of Italy in World War II and Ukraine during the Russian Invasion," *Arts* 13, no.2: 65 (2024): 7-15, https://doi.org/10.3390/arts13020065

[204] Cohen, *Architecture in Uniform,* 187.

concealment. The first one was "Siting." According to the booklet, buildings should not be located near prominent features like intersections of roads, rivers, or railways. These areas are easily spotted from the air and can make buildings easy targets for enemy attacks. The second one was "Layout." The booklet suggested that geometric and grid-like layouts make the building more noticeable from above and recommended building structures that will integrate with the surroundings. The last factor was "Constructional Form." The buildings are hard to camouflage because of their form, which is designed with function and ease of construction in mind. The booklet recommended designing buildings that are partially buried or flat-roofed structures with sloping banks to blend into the landscape.[205]

As a precaution from the bombs, many manuals about air raids were published, and also life-size models of cities were built to train emergency response teams. For example, in Los Angeles, a replica of a town, called 'Central City' or 'Bombville,' was erected by the Warner Brothers studios in 1943, following the recent bombing of Hamburg.[206] A similar approach can be seen in Britain as well, not for the training but for misleading the enemy. For daytime targeting of the German air forces, 'K-site' decoys, which were replicas of airfields with dummy aircraft that could be seen from typical bomber flying heights, were created. For the nighttime, 'Q-sites' that had paraffin flare paths and electric lights to simulate an airfield at night, along with moving car headlights to replicate a taxiing plane, were built. There were also so-called 'Starfish sites' or 'SF sites.' They were specifically designed to protect cities and manufacturing sites from air raids. These decoy sites would simulate a site or building on fire after a bombing, since German bombers usually drop extra bombs into growing fires that they see from above.[207] According to Sarah Street, film technicians and staff not called up for military service provided useful and transferable technical and craftsmanship skills that could be utilized in creating traps and fake devices to deceive

[205] James Robinson, "'Hiding the Assets': 'Self-concealing' Architecture and the British Landscape During the Second World War," in *Ordnance: War + Architecture & Space*, ed. Gary A. Boyd and Denis Linehan (Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2013), 89-99.

[206] Cohen, *Architecture in Uniform,* 150.

[207] K.D. Wisniewski et al., "Multi-disciplinary site investigations of WW2 allied aerial bombing decoy sites in North Staffordshire, UK," *Journal of Conflict Archaeology* 20, no.1 (2025): 33–56, https://doi.org/10.1080/15740773.2025.2464568

enemy forces.[208] In the BBC's 'WW2 People's War' online archive, where people share wartime memories, someone shared memories of their father in Starship sites. He served in the RAF and described his visit to decoy sites and film crew working there as:

> HQ was located at Shepperton Film Studios under Col. (later Sir) John Turner. The film studios are used to creating a world of make believe, so they were the obvious people to design and set up our sites.(...)When I was trucked onto Farleigh Common Starfish site for the first time that late December morning, the film crews were already busy erecting a series of skeletal structures all over a valley farm, covering an area of about one mile by a quarter with scaffolding towers and blocks of wire baskets.(...)Patterns of fire baskets were arranged to look like blocks of buildings. Each basket, about the size of a tea chest was made of wire mesh and stuffed with oil soaked wood shavings or similar inflammable materials, each wired up for controlled ignition.[209]

These examples indicate that film technicians and film studio companies took part in different parts of wartime efforts, from creating camouflage for existing buildings to constructing decoy sites to mislead the enemy. But what about the studio sites themselves? These big complexes, usually located far from city centers and equipped with flexible, spacious facilities, could offer a suitable space to use for different purposes during the war.



Figure 49: Decoy oil fire being tested at Shepperton. https://www.getsurrey.co.uk/news/nostalgia/nostalgia-wwii-decoy-role-shepperton-7910356. Reproduced in Sarah Street, "Requisitioning film studios in wartime Britain," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 43, no.1 (2023): fig. 1

[208] Sarah Street, "Requisitioning film studios in wartime Britain," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 43, no.1 (2023): 66-68.

[209] "City Defences include Starfish, RAF Decoy Sites," BBC – WW2 People's War, last modified December 2, 2003, https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/60/a2100060.shtml

5.2 European Film Studio's during the Second World War

Tracing the micro-histories of European film studios during the war can offer a unique lens to the multi-layered history of this turbulent period. The self-sufficient nature of film studios, their location, and facilities made it possible to use them for different purposes during a time of crisis. Thus, this chapter examines how the Second World War affected and transformed film studios in Europe through the three case studies examined in the previous chapter. The first subsection is about the transformation of Studio Babelsberg, which was occupied by the UFA film company during this period, under Nazi rule. The second subsection analyzes the role of Pinewood Studios in wartime propaganda and how it was requisitioned to house military and governmental organizations. The third subsection explores how Cinecittà utilized and transformed under the control of Nazi and Allied powers. Therefore, these three case studies provide a glimpse into the different political sides of the war through film studios. During this period, film studios, which were typically isolated and non-permeable spaces to maintain the illusory environment inside, became intertwined with the tragedy and chaos of the war, turning the studio space into a 'heterotopia' where reality and illusion collided. Thus, the last sub-chapter discusses how this transformation of film studios during the Second World War further highlighted the heterotopic qualities that had always been embedded in the studio space in a different way.

5.2.1 UFA Stadt Babelsberg

With the Nazi party coming to power, the state gained control over the film industry. Head of the Propaganda Ministry, Joseph Goebbels, implemented actions to align film production with the National Socialist goals.[210] On March 28, 1933, Goebbels gave a speech to filmmakers in Kaiserhof Hotel to outline the basic principles of the Nazi regime's future film policy. One day after the speech, the UFA board declared that contracts with Jewish employees and officials should be terminated if possible.[211] In July 1933, the film chamber *Die Reichsfilmkammer* (RFK) was

[210] Kreimeie, *The UFA Story,* 221-223.

[211] "Nation geschlossen'- Babelsberg im NS-Regime" Filmportal.de, accessed July 5, 2025, https://www.filmportal.de/thema/nation-geschlossen-babelsberg-im-ns-regime

established. Anyone who wanted to take on a role in the German film industry was required to become a member of this chamber. Additionally, a decree issued by the *Reichsministeriums für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda* (Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda) stipulated that anyone wishing to participate in German film production had to be of German origin and a German citizen. As a result of this decree, many Jews lost their jobs. Some of them fled abroad or were sent into exile. Those who could not escape, such as Kurt Gerron, Paul Morgan, Otto Wallburg, and Max Erlich, were killed by the Nazis.[212] The departure of so much talent devastated the creative and international reputation of the German film industry. In September 1937, the Nazis merged the settlements of Nowawes and Neubabelsberg to form Babelsberg and also renamed the studio complex in this area "UFA Stadt Babelsberg." From mid-1942, private film production ceased entirely in the studio. Both film production and distribution were taken under complete state control. As Klaus Kreimeier highlighted in *The UFA Story*:

> The name "Ufa" was now a synonym for German film; just as the swastika symbolized Hitler's Germany, so the Ufa rhombus symbolized everything that had to do with cinema in the Reich and in the countries it conquered.[213]

Even though Goebbels saw the film as a tool to influence the masses, only a small portion of the films produced during the Third Reich were propaganda films.[214] Films like *Jews without Masks* (1937), *The Rothschilds* (1940), and the documentary *The Eternal Jew* (1940) were some of the propaganda films that were produced to shape the people's perspective on Jews.[215] The majority of the films were entertainment films like *Münchhausen* (1946) and *Die Feuerzangenbowle* (1944) to distract and keep the people engaged.[216]

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[212] "Die Reichsfilmkammer," Filmportal.de, accessed July 5, 2025, https://www.filmportal.de/thema/die-reichsfilmkammer

[213] Kreimeie, *The UFA Story,* 321.

[214] Peter Zander, "Als die Nazis in Babelsberg die Regie übernahmen," *Berliner Morgenpost,* July 27, 2011, https://www.morgenpost.de/kultur/article105055546/Als-die-Nazis-in-Babelsberg-die-Regie-uebernahmen.html

[215] Filmportal.de, "Nation geschlossen."

[216] "Commitment and History," Studio Babelsberg, accessed July 5, 2025, https://www.studiobabelsberg.com/about-us/commitment-and-history/

With the outbreak of the Second World War, the UFA board of directors complained about the situation of the workers, because UFA employees had been reassigned to other institutes for wartime employment. Unfortunately, among UFA employees called up for service, 53 employees lost their lives by the end of 1940. According to Dr. Almuth Püschel, prisoners of war were employed as forced laborers at UFA studios due to a lack of workers. He states that there is mention of a prisoner-of-war barrack repurposed from a costume and prop barrack in a document dated 1941, and in 1942, UFA acquired two neighboring areas directly adjacent to the sports field and built a barracks camp that could accommodate approximately 600 residents.[217] These transformations not only reveal the exploitation of forced labor within the film industry but also show the dual role of film studios by emphasizing how spaces designed for cultural production were utilized for the Nazi regime's war strategies.

In April 1945, air raids on Potsdam damaged parts of UFA's Babelsberg Studios too.[218] In the evening of April 14, 1945, 490 aircraft dropped approximately 1,700 tons of bombs on Potsdam. The target area contained part of the city center and extended to Babelsberg and Hermannswerder. Numerous residential buildings were also hit.[219] Diaries of the British RAF Bomber Command describe the bomb attack on Potsdam as:

> This was the last raid of the war by a major Bomber Command force on a German city. The aiming point was the centre of Potsdam and the intention was to destroy the local barracks (depot of the old German Guards regiments) and the railway facilities. The attack was reasonably successful and severe damage was caused in Potsdam but bombs also fell in the nearby northern and eastern districts of Berlin. No information is obtainable from Potsdam (now in Eastern Germany) but a figure of 5,000 dead has been mentioned. This high figure, if true, was caused by the fact that the people of this community had seen Berlin and not themselves bombed so often that they failed to take proper cover when the sirens sounded.[220]

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[217] Almuth Püschel,"Gefangen in der Filmstadt – Zwangsarbeit in den Studios Babelsberg," Filmportal.de, accessed December 24, 2024, https://www.filmportal.de/material/gefangen-in-der-filmstadt-zwangsarbeit-in-den-studios-babelsberg

[218] Kreimeie, *The UFA Story*, 362-363.

[219] "Station 14 - Folgen des Luftangriffs," Arado Rundgang, accessed July 14, 2025, https://www.arado-rundgang.de/stationen/station-14-folgen-des-luftangriffs

[220] Martin Middlebrook and Chris Everitt, *The Bomber Command Diaries: An Operational Reference Book 1939-1945* (Midland Publishing Limited, 1996), 695-696.

According to historian Hans Werner Mihan, the purpose of the bombings was military-focused. The main targets were Potsdam's main train station, which was one of the few remaining east-west transportation links to organize the supply of ammunition and troops, and the Arado-Flugzeugwerke GmbH (Arado Aircraft Factory), which was used for the production of military weapons and equipment.[221] The UFA Stadt Babelsberg was located close to the east of the main targets. The fact that the UFA studios were also damaged during these attacks may have been due either to the architectural layout and scale of the studio resembling an industrial complex, making it appear as a potential target, or to navigational errors that led to the misdirection of bombs and the destruction of the surroundings of the main targets.

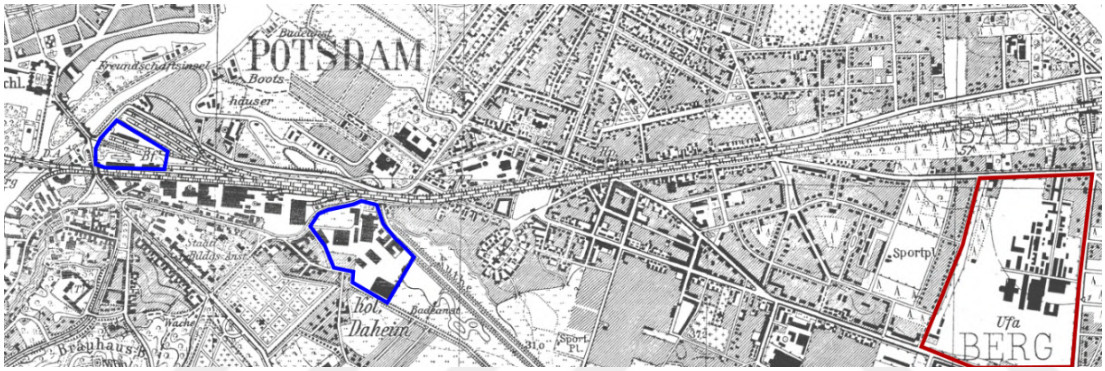


Figure 50: Karten des Deutschen Reiches 1 : 25.000, Main bombing targets annotated with blue and UFA Stadt Babelsberg annotated with red by the author. https://geobasis-bb.de/lgb/de/geodaten/historische-karten/deutsches-reich-1-25000-%281901-1945%29/#

After the bombing attacks, many artists, camera and sound crew, technicians, and office workers fled to a 1,000-person shelter. The facilities of UFA Studios served other purposes. For instance, German Army stragglers took civilian clothes from the studios' costume rooms. Then, on April 24, UFA Studios was occupied by Soviet troops.[222] Heinz-Otto Weichenhan described the condition of the studio after the bombings in the book *Babelsberg: Das Filmstudio*. He stated that the fences of the complex were badly damaged so that anyone could enter the studio area. The barracks were burned out, most of the buildings were damaged by the bombs, and could not be

[221] Philipp Oswalt, "Die Nacht von Potsdam," Lernort Garnisonkirche, May 8, 2021, https://lernort-garnisonkirche.de/die-nacht-von-potsdam/

[222] Kreimeie, *The UFA Story*, 362-363.

accessible without personal danger. The floors were covered with broken glass, window and door frames, pieces of wood, etc. Wind and rain sweep in through empty window openings and damaged roofs. Some of the film cellars and basements were flooded. Rotting war tools, old car parts, destroyed guns, collapsed film sets, piles of filmstrips, aircraft pieces, rusted spotlights, and other prop and furniture items were lying around in the complex.[223] The Red Army started to clean out all the equipment, cameras, spotlights, editing tables, cranes, emergency lights, and generators. What was left of the cleanup was transported to the Soviet sector and from there to Moscow.[224]



Figure 51-52: Destroyed Studio Buildings, Wolfgang Jacobsen, *Babelsberg: Das Filmstudio* (Berlin: Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek; Berlin: Argon Verlag GmbH, 1992),

Following the collapse of Nazi Germany in 1945 and the division of the country into four occupation zones, the film industry was taken over by the Allied forces. In the Soviet zone, film production started quickly in the form of newsreels for denazification and the reeducation of society. On May 17, 1946, the state-owned film company, DEFA, was founded by the German Democratic Republic.[225] DEFA took over the film studios and facilities of UFA Studios and utilized existing contacts and the network of UFA, aiming to maintain its reputation as Europe's largest and most

[223] Jacobsen, *Babelsberg,* 271.

[224] Kreimeie, *The UFA Story*, 362-363.

[225] Sebastian Heiduschke, *East German Cinema: DEFA and Film History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 9-10.

productive studio. However, being a state-owned socialist film company quickly changed the perception of the DEFA studios.[226]

5.2.2 Pinewood

According to Sarah Street, during the Second World War, many studios in Britain were used for other purposes, including storage, aircraft production, and emergency accommodation. She states that the studios' remote location from the city centers was one of the reasons that made them suitable for repurposing during the war. Since the factories, warehouses, and industrial sites located near the city centers were potential bombing targets, they were not suitable areas for wartime needs. When not used for filming, studios offer empty spaces that could be easily adaptable for other needs.[227]

Pinewood was also requisitioned during the Second World War. The Army was using the facilities for storage, the Royal Mint moved onto one of the stages for striking coins, and Lloyd's of London was installed in the Heatherdan Hall and administration building. Some of the members of Lloyd's had received ARP (Air Raid Precautions) training in London before the war was declared. These trained people became the core of the emergency response team that handled the fire, first aid, and wardens' tasks. However, at the time, Pinewood Studios had no air-raid shelters, so when a warning was sounded, the staff was told to scatter into the surrounding greenery. During the early stages of the war, which was often referred to as 'Phoney War,' there were no land operations on the Western Front. This rather quiet time of the war gave Pinewood an opportunity to address its safety precaution problems. With the establishment of the Local Defence Volunteers -also known as the Home Guard- Pinewood also gathered its own unit.[228] Also, the administration building, the dressing rooms, and offices were painted with abstract swirls for camouflage.[229]

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[226] Mariana Zaharieva Ivanova, "DEFA and East European Cinemas: Co-Productions, Transnational Exchange and Artistic Collaborations" (PhD diss., The University of Texas at Austin, 2011), 1-2.

[227] Street, "Requisitioning film studios," 66-68.

[228] Owen and Burford, *The Pinewood Story*, 27.

[229] Perry, *Movies from the Mansion,* 55.

Commercial feature film production was stopped at Pinewood, but it continued to be used for propaganda films. In 1941, the Crown Film Unit, the Army Film and Photography Unit (AFPU), the Royal Air Force (RAF) Film Unit, and the Polish Air Force Film Unit made their base at Pinewood and had use of the studio and general production area. To separate the Heatherdan Hall and gardens, which were used by the Lloyd's, from the main studio area, a wire fence was constructed. Dubbing Theatre 1 was taken over by the RAF sound technicians. Theatre 2 was shared by the AFPU and Crown Film Unit, but Crown Film brought their own equipment and projector since the existing studio setup was not compatible with their system. Many documentaries like *Desert Victory* (1943), *Burma Victory* (1945), *A Harbour Goes to France* (1945), *The True Glory* (1945), and *Journey Together* (1945) were produced at Pinewood to illustrate wartime Britain. Among them, *The True Glory* (1945) stood out for covering all phases of the war in Europe from events leading up to the Normandy invasion, often referred to as D-Day, to the surrender of the German forces on May 4, and finally the official end of the war in Europe on May 8. A large amount of film editing work was required for this documentary. To handle this situation, additional film cutting rooms were built along the corridor next to the D Stage.[230]

Throughout the war, Pinewood did not suffer from significant damage. However, during air raids in London, at least one bomb fell near the studio. Even one studio worker stated that a blast near the studio shattered the window where he was working. In another incident, with the effect of the missile attack, a ceiling collapsed and one person was knocked unconscious. Thus, as a precaution, additional fire-watching tasks were assigned on the roof of A Stage, which offered a clear sight toward London, where future air raids were likely to come from. Other than these incidents, the environment at Pinewood was relatively calm, and war often seemed distant. Towards the end of the war, regular film screenings of current films by RAF projectionists and lunchtime musical recitals prepared by Ken Cameron, who was the chief of sound for the Crown Film Unit, took place in Theatre 1.[231]After the war, Pinewood's return to commercial operation was gradual and slow, as its reputation for excellent equipment and facilities made it difficult to dislodge the Ministry of

[230] Owen and Burford, *The Pinewood Story*, 27-30.

[231] Ibid., 29-32.

Information occupying the studio, and the studio was designated as a Protected Area for secret work. By 1946, Pinewood was fully restored to civilian use.[232] As the pre-war infrastructure was considered outdated, an urgent investment program was launched in the sound department. Two dubbing halls were refurbished with new mixing consoles and recording equipment, as well as a new recording theater was constructed for sound effects and dialogue post-synchronization. [233]




Figure 53-54: On the left, Fire-watching on A Stage, Gareth Owen and Brian Burford, *The Pinewood Story*, (Surrey: Reynolds & Hearn Ltd, 2000). On the right, RAF and WAAF officers dancing at the Sergeant's Party at Pinewood Studios, https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/nostalgia/images-reveal-how-pinewood-studios-31580548

5.2.3 Cinecittà

In June 1940, Italy entered the Second World War alongside Germany, later allied with Japan, against the Allies formed by France, Great Britain, Russia, and the United States. By 1943, many Italian cities were bombed by English and American planes, and on July 19, 1943, Rome was the target of the bombs. Cinecittà, located in the southeast of Rome, was also damaged significantly during these attacks throughout 1943 and 1944; many of the soundstages were struck by bombs.[234] Following the fall of Mussolini and the end of the Fascist regime in Italy, film production in Rome was stopped. In Cinecittà, although a few productions continued through August 1943,

[232] Street, "Requisitioning film studios," 77-78.

[233] Owen and Burford, *The Pinewood Story*, 35.

[234] Mario Pacelli, *Cinecittà: La pupilla del Duce* (Rome: Graphofeel Edizioni, 2022)

most of them were halted. Filming only continued at several private studios.[235] Film production at Cinecittà completely stopped with the armistice and the German occupation in September 1943; the place was abandoned, and all workers were dismissed.

Noa Steimatsky argues that before the German occupation and the transformation of Cinecittà into a displaced persons camp, there were prisoner-of-war camps not mentioned in any film history. She presents some documents dated 1942 and 1943 as evidence. In one document, Cinecittà is referred to as "Concentration Camp No. 122" and asked to be prepared to house 400 prisoners. A document from 1943 mentions that the number of prisoners reached 793, almost double the designated capacity. Steimatsky suggests that these people were probably held in an isolated area in the backlot of the studio, surrounded by wire fences. Also, Steimatsky states that prisoners were used as laborers on film sets at Cinecittà. A document entitled "Use of negro [*negri*] POWs in film work" mentions the use of prisoners of war as extras in the film *Bayer 205* -later released under the name *Germanin*- which was being shot at Cinecittà at the time. *Germanin* (1943) was a German colonial story produced by UFA for propaganda purposes, and it tells the story of a German scientist and his assistant's journey to Africa to find a cure for sleeping sickness. They utilized Cinecittà for exterior shots because they needed a sunny climate, exotic set construction, and black extras to be used in the film.[236] Thus, Cinecittà was the perfect site that fulfilled their demands for the production of this film. Although the film portrayed German colonialism as helpful and humane toward African people, the fact that they used black war prisoners for the filming contradicts the principles they were trying to convey to the public.

[235] Stephen Gundle, *Mussolini's Dream Factory: Film Stardom in Fascist Italy* (New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2013), 261-262.

[236] Steimatsky,"Backlots of the War," 129-133.



Figure 55: Extras in Germanin: The Story of a Colonial Deed (Max Kimmich, prod. Ufa, 1943). Reproduced in Noa Steimatsky,"Backlots of the War: Cinecittà 1942-1950," in *In the Studio: Visual Creation and its Material Environments*, edited by Brian R. Jacobson (University of California Press, 2020), fig. 6.3

The Quadraro quarter, where the Cinecittà was located, was the hub of the anti-fascist resistance movement.[237] In April 1944, a military roundup, also known as the *Unternehmen Walfisch* (Operation Whale)**,** was executed by Nazi forces in Quadraro. Under the direction of Herbert Kappler, the Gestapo and the fascist police went house to house searching for partisans, stragglers, and Resistance collaborators. Around two thousand people were caught and taken first to the Quadraro cinema, then gradually transferred into the Cinecittà studios.[238] Facilities of Cinecittà were used for storing military supplies and as a transit camp for prisoners by the German military.[239] During this time, 900 people arrested on the outskirts of Rome were imprisoned in the Cinecittà. The soundstages of the complex became dormitories for the captured people while waiting for their deportation to Germany. Cinecittà's technical equipment was seized with plans to transport it to Germany. Luigi Freddi managed to save some of the equipment and redirected them to Venice, where a temporary filming site called

[237] Tiziano De Marino, Yuri Chung and Alessandra Crotti, *Rome and the Memory of WWII* (Sapienza Universita di Roma, 2018), 55.

[238] "Storia del Quadraro: Cronologia della resistenza al Quadraro nel 1944," ilquadraro.it, accessed July 14, 2025, https://www.ilquadraro.it/il-quadraro/storia-del-quadraro/15-cronologia-della-resistenza-al-quadraro-nel-1944

[239] Noa Steimatsky,"Backlots of the War: Cinecittà 1942-1950," in *In the Studio: Visual Creation and its Material Environments,* ed. Brian R. Jacobson (University of California Press, 2020)

"Cinevillaggio" was set up.[240] The relocated Cinecittà studios settled in the Giardini di Castello and used the pavilions of the Venice Art Biennale for filming. This operation continued until April 1945.[241]

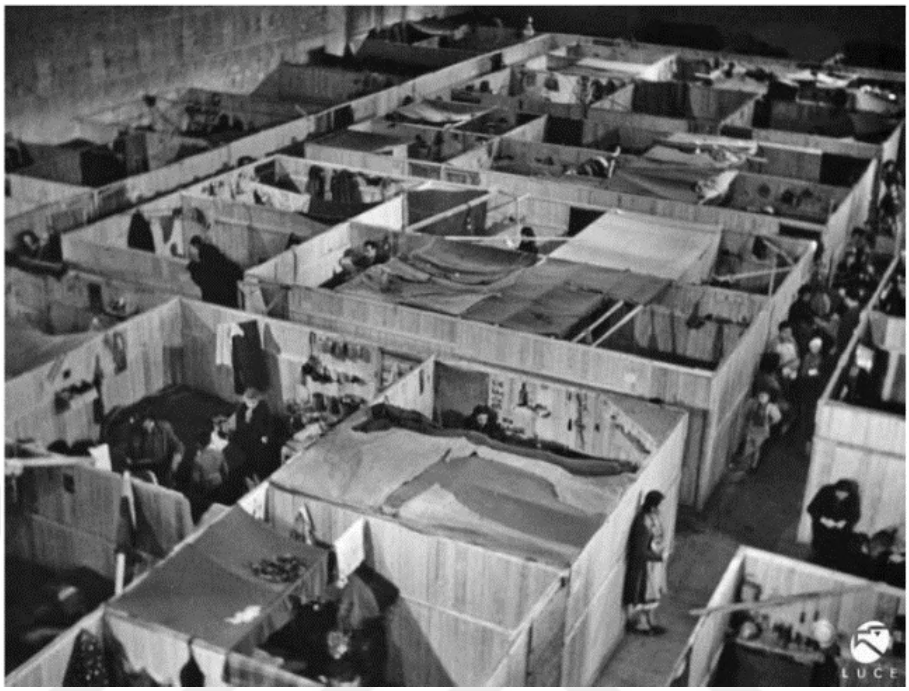


Figure 56: Refugee housing within Cinecittà's great soundstage, Teatro 5, Noa Steimatsky,"Backlots of the War: Cinecittà 1942-1950," in *In the Studio: Visual Creation and its Material Environments*, ed. Brian R. Jacobson (University of California Press, 2020)

On June 4, 1944, the Allies entered Rome, and 2 days later on June 6, the Allied Control Commission claimed possession of Cinecittà. British Intelligence headquarters, along with a camp for special prisoners, were established in the studio grounds by utilizing some of the existing structures. The camp was used to detain and interrogate important Nazi and Fascist war prisoners. Apart from it, a large displaced-persons camp was set up at Cinecittà, housing thousands of people, including survivors of bombings and concentration camps. The camp had two sections: an international camp run by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) and an Italian camp. Unfortunately, both sides of the camp struggled with overcrowding, epidemics, theft, violence, suicide, and other problems. The large

[240] Pacelli, *Cinecittà*

[241] "From the beginnings until the Second World War," La Biennale di Venezia, accessed July 5, 2025, https://www.labiennale.org/en/history/beginnings-until-second-world-war

spaces of soundstages were divided into small cubicles that were partly furnished with the remains of studio equipment and props to accommodate the refugees, turning the illusory setting of the film studio into a haunting reflection of loss and displacement.[242] The movie, *Umanità* (Humanity), directed by Jack Salvatori in 1946, offers glimpses into the Cinecittà refugee camp. For instance, the interior and exterior shots in the film show that the studio spaces housing the refugees have several small windows. Normally, when designing production spaces, designers avoid using windows to control sound and light transmission into the space. Thus, these windows were likely added to provide ventilation and lighting for the refugees after the war. According to Noa Steimatsky, documents show that during the years 1946 and 1947, Cinacittà sent several letters to the ministry in charge of post-war relief for the 'liberation' and 'restitution' of the studio. A note from the Prime Minister's office dated August 19, 1947, declares that the grand Teatro 5 could be returned to the cinematographic industry within twenty days. Following this, in August and September 1947, refugees were displaced from the Italian part of the camp, but the UNRRA camp continued to use the studio facilities until the summer of 1950.[243]



Figure 57: Cinecitttà Refugee Camp -1947, Noa Steimatsky,"The Cinecittà Refugee Camp (1944-1950)," *October* 128 (2009): 23–50

[242] Steimatsky,"Backlots of the War," 125-128.

[243] Noa Steimatsky, "The Cinecittà Refugee Camp (1944-1950)," *October* 128 (Spring 2009): 42-47.

5.3 The ‘other’ space

As already discussed in Chapter 3, the film studio space can be defined through Foucault’s ‘heterotopia’ theory, since it can turn into other spaces under the imaginary and illusory effects of different sets. The setting of the film studio during the war emphasized the heterotopic atmosphere of the film studio space from a different perspective. As Foucault states in the second principle of heterotopia, the function and perception of a heterotopic space can change over time depending on cultural and societal conditions. In this context, during the Second World War, the film studio space was no longer a space for artistic creation but rather associated with politics and propaganda, transforming it into a space where fantasy and reality collided.

Both UFA Studios in Babeslberg and Cinecittà housed war prisoners and used them as forced laborers in the production of films. Additionally, in the aftermath of the war, Cinecittà’s facilities were used to house refugees. This situation can be linked to the first principle of heterotopia, which Foucault divided into two as “crisis heterotopias” and “heterotopias of deviation.” In that case, the studio spaces functioned as a “crisis heterotopia” since they temporarily accommodated individuals in a state of transition and displacement. War prisoners and refugees were in a liminal situation, where they were removed from their national and social contexts, waiting for their uncertain future. Furthermore, in Cinecittà, the props and set pieces that had once formed the illusionary settings at Cinecittà were repurposed to furnish refugee shelters. Therefore, soundstages became heterotopic spaces where things that are incompatible with each other could coexist, which Foucault explains in the third principle of heterotopia. A similar juxtaposition can be seen in UFA Stadt in Babelsberg as well. For instance, after the bombing attacks, the fact that things that are unrelated to each other, like set decorations and war equipment piled together in the same space in the UFA studio complex echoes the animal classification from the Chinese Encyclopedia that Foucault questioned in *The Order of Things*. Normally, there’s no logical connection between airplane pieces, weapons, and things like movie equipment, lights, and set decorations. Nevertheless, as a result of this extraordinary occasion, the film studio provided a common ground where these unrelated elements could coexist.

On the Allies' side of the war at Pinewood Studios, the atmosphere was somewhat different from the other two studios. Throughout the war, Pinewood did not suffer from significant damage, or used as a camp for POWs or displaced people. Nevertheless, similar heterotopic qualities can be seen in Pinewood Studios, where entertainment and crisis intersect in one space. Within the same studio complex, propaganda films were produced to support the ongoing war, but at the same time, regular film screenings and music recitals were held at the studio. The propaganda films presented the war to the public as an illusion by controlling and distorting reality. Concurrently, it tried to offer the workers an 'other space' that was more peaceful and sheltered from the disordered and chaotic exterior with entertainment activities. Thus, the studio offered an illusion not only to the outside world but also to those working there. Pinewood's effort to provide relaxation and distraction from the ongoing war can be tied to UFA's focus on producing entertainment films during the same era. These films were strategically used to distract the public and maintain morale during a time of crisis. Consequently, in all three cases, the film studio functioned as a heterotopic space. By tracing these micro-histories, this research highlights the architectural and functional flexibility of film studio space and reveals underlying spatial, political, and cultural dynamics.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This thesis focused on the history and architecture of European film studio complexes during the first half of the twentieth century. Through a comparative analysis of Studio Babelsberg, Pinewood Studios, and Cinecittà, this study explores the foundations of European film production and provide a broader understanding of the development and transformation of studio systems across Europe. The main argument of this study is that film studios were self-sufficient complexes and acted as a microcosm of cities with their wide range of facilities, architectural layout, and the social environment they created for workers. After tracing the development of film studio architecture from the first basic designs to big industrial complexes in Chapter 1, the features that allowed film studio complexes to function as micro-cities were discussed. When examining non-film-related facilities within studio complexes, such as restaurants, emergency rooms, and even zoos, along with the internal infrastructures, including transportation systems and independent energy supplies, it becomes evident that these environments were designed to operate with minimal dependence on the outside world and indeed function as isolated, almost self-sufficient reflections of the cities.

Building on this perspective, several theoretical approaches were examined to understand the film studio space further and support the argument that the film studios function as microcosms of cities. The thesis discusses how these aspects of the studios can be analyzed through Michel Foucault's concept of heterotopia, as well as, and in relation to this, Baudrillard's concept of simulacrum. Foucault already gave cinema and theatre as examples of heterotopia in the third principle of heterotopia. Thus, the study explores whether film studios, which show similarities with these two spaces, could also be considered heterotopic spaces. Based on the architect and scholar Johnson's definition of heterotopia as "worlds within worlds" and Foucault's example

of the Persian gardens as a microcosm, as explained in the third principle, it was questioned whether film studios could also be evaluated as microcosms of cities, functioning like a city within a city. Baudrillard's concept of simulacrum was also introduced to support this argument. By creating simulated realities with set designs, film studios replace reality and engender environments that spectators come to associate with actual places. At the same time, film studios during production periods become spaces where workers and stars spend more time than in real cities. Thus, like the map in the fable cited by Baudrillard in *Simulacra and Simulation,* the real city is replaced by a simulated one that mimics its functions.

After presenting the theoretical framework, in the fourth chapter, each of the selected studio complexes was analyzed. By starting from their establishment until the Second World War, their development, architectural style, and spatial arrangement were examined. Both Babelsberg and Cinecittà served as part of the plans of the state to spread its ideologies to the public. They embodied these agendas not only through the propaganda films they produced, but also with the architectural style. Pinewood Studios offers a different model as a private enterprise and had a more commercially oriented path, since from the beginning it was planned to compete with Hollywood and its effect on the British film industry. Even its name was chosen to resemble Hollywood. The design and facilities of these three studios also show that film studios are self-sufficient complexes, offering an isolated space for their workers where all their needs can be met. However, the absence of an accommodation facility disrupts this vision of complete self-sufficiency. Even studio workers complained about this situation from time to time, mentioning that since the studios are located outside of the city centers, transportation was difficult, and it would have been better if accommodation had been provided. These demands reflect the workers' desire for a space that contains everything that allows workers to continue the production process without wasting time or relying on external factors, while also allowing them to maintain their social lives.

The large and versatile spaces that studios offer have made them flexible spaces not only for film production but also for responding to the diverse needs of society. The fact that studios were designed and operated like industrial sites, and were self-sufficient complexes with their wide range of facilities, made them ideal spaces to be used for other purposes during crisis times. These repurposing practices completely

altered the impermeable nature of the film studios and made them open to the needs of the public. Visitors, who had previously been admitted under certain conditions, now began to use these spaces as a shelter. The usage of studio spaces during wartime to store ammunition, supplies, and food, and as an accommodation for refugees, collided the heterotopic, imaginary environment of the studio space with real-life struggles, which makes a studio an intermediary space that blurs the boundaries between the real and the artificial. By tracing these micro-histories, this research highlights the architectural and functional flexibility of film studio space and reveals underlying spatial, political, and cultural dynamics.

Despite being built in the early 20th century, these studios are still preferred complexes today, hosting major productions. All three studio examples have adapted their facilities to meet the changing and evolving demands of filmmakers over time, keeping pace with the developing technology and maintaining their positions as international film production centers. One of the fundamental factors behind this continuity is arguably the fact that these studios were designed from the beginning as self-sufficient production environments. These complexes, which house every stage of production and eliminate dependence on external resources, have been preferred from the past to the present because they offer a one-stop shop for filmmakers. With new technological advancements, these studios have developed their soundstages and post-production facilities and started to offer new mediums for filming, such as LED Volume Stage or volumetric capture studios, which enable filmmakers to transport their characters to any part of the real or imaginary world without constructing new sets. As a result, the spatial and functional demands traditionally placed on studios are evolving. This shift may lead to the shrinkage of film studio complexes, and city-like film studios that existed from the past to the present may not be needed as much in the future. This change could also be explored in the future.

Future research might build on this work by expanding the geographic scope to the studios in Eastern Europe, which are still developing but are beginning to compete with other major European film studios. In the last century, filmmakers began to prefer Eastern European countries like the Czech Republic and Hungary for film production because they offer many economic, architectural, and logistical advantages. For instance, Hungary offers tax incentives to filmmakers. Also, filmmakers choose to film in Hungary because the city of Budapest can be utilized to

represent many other cities like Moscow, Berlin, and so on.[244] There are both newly built and historical film studio complexes in those countries that can be explored for future research. Barrandov Studios in the Czech Republic, established in 1931, housed both successful local and Hollywood films. Also, during the Second World War, under German occupation, it was used to produce propaganda films for the Nazi regime.[245] Similarly, in Hungary, studios like the Corvin Film Factory, later known as Hunnia, formed the basis of the Hungarian film studios and were active during the twentieth century.[246] Therefore, by studying these studios, researchers can further explore the history of film studios in Europe and how different political, economic, and architectural conditions shaped the film production spaces. Moreover, comparative studies between Western and Eastern European studios may reveal new perspectives on regional differences in architectural design or in political involvement in the film industry. In future studies, the downsides of the design of studio complexes can be examined as well. The architectural layout of the studios might reveal underlying social hierarchies within the production process. Thus, by continuing to study film studios, scholars cannot only highlight their roles as physical spaces of production but also uncover broader political, cultural, and social contexts within the layered history of film studios.

[244] Nick Holdsworth, "Cannes: Inside Eastern Europe's Busiest Filmmaking Countries," *The Hollywood Reporter,* May 8, 2018, https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/lists/cannes-inside-eastern-europes-busiest-filmmaking-countries-1110006/

[245] "History," Barrandov Studios, accessed July 30, 2025, https://www.barrandov.cz/en/o-nas/nase-historie/

[246] *NFI Studio Sales Catalogue* (Budapest: National film Institute Hungary), accessed August 8, 2025, https://nfi.hu/file/documents/3/3083/nfi_studio_sales_catalogue.pdf

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APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Sinema ve mimarlık kesişimi üzerine yapılan araştırmalar çoğunlukla filmlerin mimari mekanları tasvirine, mimarinin sinemayı kavramsal bir tasarım aracı olarak kullanmasına veya film gösterim mekanlarına odaklanırken, filmlerin üretim merkezi olan film stüdyoları çoğunlukla göz ardı edilmiş ve ancak son dönemlerde ele alınmaya başlanmıştır. Bu sebeple, bu boşluktan yola çıkarak "Avrupa Sinema Şehirlerinin İzini Sürmek: 1930-1950 yılları arasında Babelsberg, Pinewood ve Cinecittà" başlıklı bu çalışma 1930 ile 1950 yılları arasında Avrupa'daki film stüdyo komplekslerinin tarihine ve mimarisine odaklanmaktadır. Seçilen zaman aralığı film stüdyoları'nın tarihi için önemli ve çalkantılı bir dönemdir. 1920'li yılların sonunda sesli film üretiminin sinema endüstrisine girmesiyle birlikte sessiz film için inşa edilmiş olan stüdyolar tesislerini genişleterek ve sesli film prodüksiyonuna uygun alanlar sunacak şekilde dönüştürerek yeni teknolojik gelişmelere uyum sağlamaya çalışmıştır. 1930'ların sonunda ise İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nın patlak vermesiyle stüdyolarda film prodüksiyonu durmuş ve bir çok stüdyo yapısı ya bombalardan hasar görmüş ya da film üretimi dışındaki farklı işlevler için kullanılmıştır. Savaş sonrası dönemde, stüdyolar üretime geri dönmek ve hasar gören binaları yenilemek için bir kez daha dönüşüm ve yenileme sürecinden geçmiştir. Seçilen zaman diliminde Avrupa'daki film stüdyolarını incelemek için İkinci Dünya Savaşı öncesinde inşa edilmiş üç büyük stüdyo kompleksi olan Almanya'daki Babelsberg Stüdyoları, Birleşik Krallık'taki Pinewood Stüdyoları ve İtalya'daki Cinecittà vaka çalışmaları olarak seçilmiştir. Bu tez, seçilen stüdyo mekanlarını Foucault'nun heterotopya kavramı üzerinden analiz ederek, mimari düzenleri ve geniş tesis yelpazeleriyle bu komplekslerin kentler içinde izole ve neredeyse kendi kendine yeten sinema şehirleri gibi işlediğini ve bu özelliklerinin film stüdyolarının İkinci Dünya Savaşı gibi kriz dönemlerinde yeniden işlevlendirilmeye elverişli mekânlar haline getirdiğini savunmaktadır.

Tezin ikinci bölümü film stüdyosu mekânlarına genel bir bakış sunarak başlamakta ve Edison'un "Black Maria" stüdyosu ile Georges Méliès'nin "glass house" stüdyosu gibi ilk örneklerinden başlayarak bunların mimari dönüşümünü incelemektedir. İlk sinema denemeleri, bilim adamları, mucitler ve teknisyenler tarafından gerçekleştirilmişti. Bu sebeple, laboratuvarlar ve atölyeler gibi bilimsel ve teknik deneylerin yapıldığı mekanlar hem film üretiminin hem de gösteriminin en eski alanları haline geldi. Bu mekanların örneklerinden biri olan "Black Maria" William Kennedy Dickson tarafından Edison'ın West Orange Laboratuvarı'nda inşa edilmiştir. Black Maria'nın temel tasarım ilkesi ışığı kontrol etmekti. Yapı düzensiz ve belirli bir mimari stili temsil etmeyen bir şekle sahipti. Dickson, doğal ışığın kontrolünü sağlayabilmek adına hareketli bir çatı tasarlamış aynı zamanda stüdyo yapısını da güneşin yönüne göre dönebilecek şekilde tasarlamıştı. Çevresel etkenlerin kontrolü ilkesiyle şekillenen bir başka erken dönem stüdyo mekânı ise geniş cam panellerle kaplı demir veya ahşap taşıyıcı sistemlere sahip tasarımlardır. Sanayi Devrimi ile birlikte cam ve demirin mimaride yaygınlaşması şeffaflık, esneklik ve akışkanlık gibi yeni mekânsal anlayışlar yaratmıştır. Bu mimari stili model alarak cam ve demir teknolojileriyle inşa edilen film stüdyo örneklerinden biri olan Méliès'nin "glass house" stüdyosu film prodüksiyonu için gerekli olan kontrollü çevre koşullarına sahip aydınlık alanlar sunan, cam ve demirden yapılmış fotoğraf stüdyoları ve seraların tasarımını örnek almıştır.

Sesli film teknolojileri ve yapay ışıklandırmanın ortaya çıkmasıyla birlikte, bu ilk film stüdyo mekanları, çeşitli tesisleri barındıran büyük endüstriyel komplekslere dönüşmeye başladı. Şehir merkezlerinden uzak ve izole konumları ve film ekibinin ihtiyaçlarını karşılamak için sunduğu geniş tesisleri, onları neredeyse kendi kendine yeten ve şehirlerin mikrokozmosları gibi işleyen kompleksler haline getirdi. Bu tasarımlar, Ebenezer Howard'ın Bahçe Şehir'i (Garden City) gibi ütopik kentsel planlama idealleriyle bazı benzerlikler taşıyordu. Bu tür ütopik idealler, şehir sakinlerin sağlıklı, kendi kendine yetebilen, ekolojik olarak sürdürülebilir vb. topluluklar içinde bireysel potansiyellerine ulaşmalarını teşvik etmek amacıyla ortaya çıkmıştı. Mimar Hans Poelzig'in hayata geçmemiş olan bir film şehri projesi için hazırladığı ilk planlarda da benzer bir yaklaşım görülmektedir. Poelzig'in önerisi, film yapımı için gerekli tüm tesislerin dairesel bir düzen içinde yer aldığı bir plan içermektedir. Bir başka örnek ise Helmut Junge'nin *Plan for Film Studios* (1945) adlı,

Britanya'daki stüdyoların en iyi performansa nasıl ulaşabileceğini hayal etmeye çalışan ütopik bir düşünce çalışmasıdır. Junge bu çalışmada "Bahçe Şehir" modelinden esinlenerek 50.000 işçi için konut, okul ve dinlenme alanları içeren film çalışanları için yeni bir kasaba inşa edilmesini önermiştir. Bu stüdyo modelleri incelendiğinde kesintisiz bir film prodüksiyonu sağlamak için tüm tesislerin kolayca ulaşılabilir olduğu, özenle organize edilmiş ve kontrol edilen bir ortam yaratmayı amaçladıkları ortaya çıkmaktadır.

Film stüdyoları için çekilen bazı tanıtım filmleri de stüdyo komplekslerinin mikro-şehirler olarak işlediği argümanını destekleyen bulgular ortaya koymaktadır. *MGM Studio Tour* (1925) ve *Behind The Screen: A Tour of Universal Studios* (1915) gibi filmler stüdyolara içeriden bir bakış sunuyor ve bu komplekslerin, film yapımından sosyal ve eğlence alanlarına kadar uzanan birçok tesis ve altyapı ile nasıl kendi kendine yeten kompleksler olduğunu gösteriyordu.

Bu bakış açısından yola çıkılarak, çalışmanın üçüncü bölümü de bu tezin temelini oluşturan kavramsal çerçeveye odaklanmaktadır. Bu bölümde, Michel Foucault'nun "heterotopya" ve Jean Baudrillard'ın "simülakr" kavramları, bu çalışmanın iki belirleyici yaklaşımı olarak ele alınmaktadır. Heterotopya kavramı ilk olarak tıpta, bir dokunun normal yerinden farklı bir yerde gelişmesi durumu için kullanılmış, Foucault ise bunu mekânsal deneyimlerle ilişkilendirerek "öteki mekân" anlamında geliştirmiştir. Foucault, bazı mekânların diğer tüm mekânlarla ilişkili olduğunu ama aynı zamanda onlarla çeliştiğini açıklar ve bu mekanları iki türe ayırır. İlk tür, gerçek mekânlar olmayan ütopyalardır. Bunlar, toplumun kusursuz biçimde tasarlanmış hâlini temsil eder. Buna karşılık, ikinci tür ise Foucault'nun karşı-mekânlar olarak adlandırdığı heterotopyalardır. Foucault heterotopya kavramını altı ilke üzerinden açıklar.

Film stüdyo mekânı da heterotopyanın altı ilkesi çerçevesinde incelenerek daha iyi anlaşılabilir. Heterotopya'nın ilk ilkesinde Foucault, her kültürün heterotopya ürettiğini ancak bunların biçimlerinin ve işlevlerinin farklılık gösterdiğini söylemektedir. Foucault bu ilkeyi "kriz heterotopyaları" ve "sapma heterotopyaları" olmak üzere iki tür altında açıklamıştır. Kriz heterotopyaları kriz durumunda olan insanlar için ayrılmış alanlardır ve değişim veya dönüşüm durumunu sembolize ederler. Günümüzde kaybolmaya başlayan kriz heterotopyalarının yerini ise sapma heterotopyaları almaktadır ve huzurevleri, akıl hastaneleri ve hapishaneler gibi

toplumsal normların dışında davranan bireyler içindir. Film stüdyoları bu ilke bağlamında incelendiğinde kriz durumunda olan insanlar için ayrılmış bir mekân olmasa da dönüşüm ve değişimi simgeleyen bir mekân olarak değerlendirilebilir, çünkü film çekimleri sırasında, aktörler veya aktrisler günlük yaşamlarından ve kişiliklerinden koparak 'öteki' bir kişiliğe bürünürler. Bu dönüşüm sürecinde, film stüdyosu fiziksel bedenin yeniden kurgulandığı ve kimliğin geçici olarak değiştirildiği bir heterotopya haline gelir. İkinci ilkede ise heterotopyanın işlevinin zamanla değişebileceği ve bir mekâna tarihsel ve kültürel bağlama bağlı olarak farklı dönemlerde farklı anlamlar yüklenebileceği açıklanmaktadır. Bu bağlamda da film stüdyo mekânı İkinci Dünya Savaşı sırasında film üretimi dışında depolama, savaş ekipmanı üretimi, mülteci kampı gibi amaçlar için kullanılmış ve film stüdyosunun kurgusal mekânı, geçici olarak siyaset, propaganda ve trajedi gibi gerçek olgular ile iç içe geçen bir yer haline gelmiştir. Heterotopyanın üçüncü ilkesi birbiriyle bağdaşmayan farklı mekanların tek bir fiziksel mekânda bir arada bulunabilmesidir ve sinema ve tiyatro örnek olarak verilmiştir. Bu iki mekanla benzerlik gösteren ve birbirinden farklı setleri bir arada bulunduran film stüdyo mekânı da bu çerçevede incelenebilir. Bu ilkede Foucault aynı zamanda İran Bahçeleri'ni dünyanın mikrokozmosu olarak örnek vermektedir. Film stüdyosu kompleksleri de mimari düzenleri, geniş tesisleri ve yarattıkları sosyal topluluklarla şehirlerin fiziksel ve sosyal mikrokozmosları olarak değerlendirilebilir. Bu ilke aynı zamanda Baudrillard'ın "simulakr" kavramı ile desteklenebilir. Baudrillard simülakrı, gerçeğin yerini alan ve "hipergerçeklik" üreten bir model olarak tanımlar ve Disneyland'i örnek olarak gösterir. Shiel, Disneyland'ın yarattığı yapay dünyanın aslında 1910'lardan itibaren Hollywood stüdyolarında ortaya çıktığını ve stüdyoların kentin dokusuna yayılıp Los Angeles'ı da bir simülakr manzarasına dönüştürdüğünü savunur. Heterotopyalar, 'öteki'nin simülasyonları olan alternatif gerçeklikler yaratmamızı sağlar. Buna benzer şekilde, film stüdyoları da gerçek şehirden daha 'gerçek' hale gelen simüle edilmiş gerçeklikler yaratır. Dördüncü ilke, heterotopyanın zaman dilimleriyle ilişkisini vurgular ve Foucault, zamanın ya heterotopyalarda biriktiğini ya da zaman algısının geçici ve akıcı olduğunu belirtir. Film stüdyoları da farklı zaman dilimlerini simgeleyen setleri bir arada bulundurarak zamanın biriktiği bir heterotopya haline gelir. Aynı zamanda film stüdyo turları sayesinde ziyaretçilerin farklı dönemleri temsil eden setler arasında ilerleyerek akışkan bir zaman algısı da kazanmış olduğu

söylenebilir. Beşinci ilkede Foucault, heterotopyaların açılma ve kapanma sistemi ile işlediğini, bu sistemin onları izole mekanlar haline getirdiğini ancak ziyaretçilerin belirli ritüeller ile bu mekanlara girerek heterotopyaları geçirgen hale getirdiğini belirtir. Film stüdyoları da genellikle halka kapalıdır ancak zaman zaman yarışmalar veya resmi izinler yoluyla bazı ziyaretçileri kabul ederler ve geçirgen mekanlara dönüşürler. Foucault heterotopyanın son ilkesini ise "yanılsama mekanları" ve "telafi mekanları" olarak iki tür altında açıklar. Bu iki uçtan biri gerçekliği illüzyon yoluyla ortaya çıkarırken diğer uç dış dünyanın düzensizliği ve kaosuyla çelişen özenle düzenlenmiş mekanlardır. Film stüdyoları da telafi mekanları gibi sorunsuz bir üretim süreci sağlamak için özenle organize edilmiş ve kontrol edilen ortamlar olarak tasarlanmış olup, set tasarımları ve kurgusal anlatılarıyla gerçekliği illüzyon yoluyla izleyiciye sunmaktadır.

Bu teorik çerçeveyi takip eden dördüncü bölümde ise seçilen üç stüdyo kompleksinin ortaya çıkışı, mimarileri, şehirle ilişkileri detaylı bir şekilde ele alınmıştır. Babelsberg Stüdyoları sessiz film döneminde inşa edilmesi sebebiyle aralarından en eski olanıdır. Stüdyo ilk olarak Deutsche Bioskop şirketi tarafından kurulmuştur. Berlin'in gelişimi ve yoğunluğu film yapımını olumsuz etkilediği ve stüdyolar için yeterli genişleme alanı olmadığı için Berlin'in güneybatısında bulunan Potsdam'ı seçmişlerdir. Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nın sona ermesinin ardından, Deutsche Bioskop şirketi Decla ile birleşmiştir. Decla'nın ana ilkesi, mümkün olduğunca her şeyi stüdyo içinde üretmekti. Bu dönemde stüdyonun planı incelendiğinde giyinme odaları, marangozluk ve metal atölyeleri, sahne malzemesi depoları, film mahzenleri, kantin ve kafe binası gibi çeşitli tesisleriyle Babelsberg Stüdyoları'nın daha ilk aşamalardan itibaren kendi kendine yeten bir kompleks olarak planlandığı görülmektedir. 1922'de Decla-Bioscop şirketi resmi olarak Universum Film AG (UFA) ile birleşti. UFA yönetim kurulu, stüdyoyu yeniden düzenlemeye karar verdi ve sinemada gelişmekte olan aydınlatma ve ses teknolojilerine ayak uydurmak için iki yeni stüdyo inşa etti. Bu stüdyoların ilki *Große Halle* adı verilen yeni büyük yapay ışık stüdyosuydu. Stüdyo mekânı, aynı anda birden fazla çekimin gerçekleştirilebilmesi için hareketli duvarlarla bölünmüştü. Üst katta soyunma odaları, saç ve makyaj, projeksiyon odaları ve diğer tesisler bulunuyordu. Ayrıca, stüdyo ve ona bitişik diğer mekanlar ısıtılıyordu; bu da stüdyoya diğerlerine kıyasla önemli bir avantaj sağlıyordu. Diğer yeni stüdyo yapısı ise 'ses haçı' anlamına gelen

Tonkreuz'du. Otto Kohtz tarafından özel olarak sesli film yapımı için tasarlanan bu stüdyo yenilikçi tasarımı ve güncel ses yalıtım malzemeleri kullanımıyla dikkat çekiyordu. Stüdyo yapısı haç şekline benzer olacak şekilde dört ses stüdyosuna bölünmüştü ve stüdyoların kesiştiği noktada kare şeklinde bir avlu bulunmaktaydı.

Otto Kohtz ayrıca Alman sinemasının dünya genelinde yaygınlık kazanmasına yardımcı olmak amacıyla Nazi Almanyası tarafından başlatılan *Filmstadt* projesi kapsamında stüdyo kompleksinin yeniden tasarlanması için bazı çizimler de yapmıştır. Kohtz'un çizdiği stüdyo planına bakıldığında, komplekste hem film üretimi tesisleri hem de filmle ilgili olmayan farklı olanakların yer almasını planladığı ve mimarın vizyonunun, çalışanların ihtiyaçlarını karşılayacak tüm olanaklara sahip ve dış kaynaklara bağımlı olmayan küçük bir sinema şehri yaratmak olduğu ortaya çıkmaktadır. Ancak, bu projeden sadece yeni yetenek stüdyosu binası fiziksel olarak inşa edilmiştir. Bu yapıya ve *Filmstadt* projesinin fiziksel modeline bakıldığında, büyük kolonadlara sahip yarı açık alanların kullanımı dikkat çekmektedir. Bu dönemde Hitler'in Nazi inşa programı için klasik antik çağ mimarisinden ve anıtsallıktan etkilendiği bilinmektedir. *Filmstadt* projesi için tasarlanan yeni yapıların da Hitler'in mimari vizyonundan etkilenmiş olduğu gözlemlenmektedir.

Tezde incelenen ikinci film stüdyosu olan Pinewood Stüdyoları İngiltere'de Londra'nın batısında kalan Iver Heath şehrinde yer almaktadır. Pinewood Charles Boot ve Arthur Rank iş birliğinde kurulmuştur. Amaçları, Hollywood'daki stüdyolarla rekabet edebilecek bir İngiliz film stüdyosu kurmaktı. Eski bir Viktorya dönemi malikanesi olan Heatherdan Hall ve arazisi, onların isteklerini karşılıyordu. Londra'ya yakın bir konumda bulunan malikane, sis olmayan açık havaya ve yüz dönümlük bir araziye sahipti. Ayrıca, arazide bulunan geniş bahçeler, köprü ve göl film çekimlerinde arka plan olarak kullanılabilirdi. Stüdyo kompleksinin mimarı A.F.B. Anderson'dı ve kompleksin mimari düzenine bakıldığında sesli stüdyoların, ofisler, giyinme odaları ve diğer tesislerden oluşan kompakt birimler olarak planlandığı ve beş ana sahne olduğu görülmektedir. Stüdyoların aralarında avlular ve üstü kapalı yürüyüş yolları oluşturulmuştu. Bu tasarım, mekanlar arasında hızlı ve kolay erişim sağlarken aynı zamanda Londra'nın yağmurlu hava koşullarından da koruma sağlıyordu. Ek olarak, Pinewood'da çalışma saatleri dışında çalışanlar spor ve sosyal gruplar, müzik ve film grupları, sergiler vb. aracılığıyla birbirleriyle olan sosyal bağlarını güçlendirmişler ve canlı bir ortam yaratmışlardır. Heatherden Hall'un bir odası, çalışanların boş

zamanlarında vakit geçirebilecekleri bir kokteyl bar ve restorana dönüştürülmüş, üst katında ise sanat galerisi, yazı odası, çizim odası, bilardo salonu gibi diğer eğlence odaları bulunmaktaydı. Bu nedenle, Pinewood'un bir işyerinden daha fazlası olduğu ve bu kapalı kompleks içinde çalışanlara şehirlerde bulabileceğimiz sosyal olanakların çoğunu sunarak şehirlerin sosyal bir mikrokozmosu olarak davrandığı söylenebilir.

Ele alınan son film stüdyosu ise İtalya'nın başkenti Roma'da bulunan Cinecittà'dır. Cinecitta, faşist rejimin sinema yoluyla toplumu şekillendirmek ve devletin gücünü arttırmak için başlattığı; Nazi Almanyası'ndaki ve Sovyetler Birliği'ndeki devlet denetimindeki sinema endüstürilerinin alternatifi olarak tasarlanan bir projeydi. 1936 yılında Mussolini, bir törenle Cinecittà'nın temelini attı ve seremoni sırasında "Sinema en güçlü silahtır" sloganının yazıldığı büyük geçici bir duvar inşa edilmiş ve ise üzerine Mussolini'nin film kamerası kullanırken bir fotoğrafı yerleştirilmişti. Cinecittà stüdyo kompleksi, İtalyan Rasyonalist tarzında tasarlanmıştır. 20. yüzyılın başlarında Gruppo 7 olarak bilinen, Milano'dan yedi mimar, Rasyonalizm akımını benimseyerek modern mimari stili İtalya'ya tanıtmıştır. Gruppo 7 modern yapıları inceleyerek, yeni bir mimarinin mutlak bileşenlerini oluşturan beş estetik faktör belirlediler. Bu faktörler gereksiz süslemelerden arınmış 'antidekoratif' yaklaşım, kusursuz oran ve ritimle elde edilen yalın estetik, sütrüktürel iskeletin gizlenmeden açıkça gösterilmesi ve betonarme ile elde edilebilen formları gösteren konsollar ve köşe pencerelerin kullanımıydı. Roma'da, bu faktörlerin yanı sıra, rasyonalist mimarlar, şehrin mimari dokusunun temel geometrik formlarından ve içbükey ve dışbükey formlarından da ilham aldılar. Benzer şekilde Cinecittà'nın da mimari diline bakıldığında geometrik formların ve içbükey ve dışbükey kütlelerin kullanımı göze çarpmaktadır. Ayrıca, geometrik uyumla desteklenen süslemesiz tasarım dili, Gruppo 7 tarafından ortaya konulan ilkeleri yansıtmaktadır. Cinecittà, mimar Gino Peressutti tarafından tasarlanmıştır ve Peresutti, kompleksi merkezi bir eksen boyunca simetrik bir düzenle planlamıştır. Peresutti kompleksi, binaların işlevlerine göre altı gruba ayırmıştır. Bu gruplar: giriş meydanında bulunan genel hizmet binaları, ana ses stüdyoları, giyinme ve makyaj odaları vb. gibi film yapımını destekleyen tesisler, post-prodüksiyon hizmetleri, ses ve malzeme üretim tesisleri, ve son grup ise ikincil girişler ile çalışanlar için acil durum ve sosyal hizmetlerden oluşuyordu.

Bu üç stüdyo karşılaştırıldığında, mimari düzenlerinin ve stillerinin farklılık gösterdiği görülmektedir. Babelsberg ve Cinecittà daha yayılmış bir düzene sahip ve ulusal mimari stillerini sergilerken, Pinewood hava koşulları nedeniyle daha kompakt bir mimari düzenle tasarlanmıştır. Ancak üç stüdyonun da ana tasarım ilkesinin ideal bir "stüdyo şehri" yaratmak olduğunu söylenebilir. Heterotopyanın üçüncü ve altıncı ilkesinin paralelinde bu kompleksler, kendi üretim atölyeleri, bağımsız elektrik ve su tesisleri, restoranlar, barlar ve çalışanlar için sosyal olanaklar ve daha fazlasını içeren, iyi düzenlenmiş şehir mikrokozmoslarıdır. Ancak bu stüdyoların tamamen kendi kendine yetebilen kompleksler olmasını engelleyen tek unsur konaklama imkânı sunmamalarıydı. Barınma için işlerden talepler gelse de, ve bu durum için bazı projeler üretilse de, bu planlar hiçbir zaman hayata geçirilmedi. Sonuç olarak, farklılık ve benzerliklerine rağmen, üç stüdyo da yalnızca küresel film endüstrisine önemli katkılarda bulunmakla ve sinema tarihinde önemli bir rol oynamakla kalmamış, aynı zamanda şehirlerin heterotopik ve mikro versiyonları olarak da şekillenmişlerdir.

Stüdyoların sunduğu geniş ve çok amaçlı kullanım alanları, onları sadece film yapımına değil, İkinci Dünya Savaşı gibi olağanüstü dönemlerde toplumun çeşitli ihtiyaçlarına hizmet edebilecek esnek mekanlar haline getirmiştir. Bu sebeple, tezin beşinci bölümü savaş döneminde film stüdyolarının stratejik konumunu ve hangi amaçlar için kullanıldığını ele almaktadır. Savaş esnasında Babelsberg Stüdyoları'nda çalışanların savaşa çağrılması sebebiyle çalışan eksiği ortaya çıkmıştı. Bundan dolayı savaş esirleri stüdyo bitişiğindeki alana inşa edilen kampta kalıyor ve stüdyoda zorunlu işçi olarak çalıştırılıyordu. Benzer şekilde Cinecittà'da da Alman işgalinden önce savaş esirleri stüdyoda çalıştırılıyordu. Hatta bu esirler Cinecittà'da çekilmiş olan Alman propaganda filmi *Germanin* (1943)'de figüran olarak görülmektedir. Ancak savaş devam ettikçe bazı film stüdyoları bombardımanlardan ağır şekilde etkilendi. Örnek olarak, Sovyetlerin Potsdam'a düzenlediği hava saldırıları, Babelsberg'i o dönemde kullanan UFA Stüdyoları'nın bir kısmına zarar vermiş ve bombardımanların ardından, birbirleriyle ilgisiz olan set dekorları ve savaş malzemelerinin aynı mekânda yan yana bulunması heterotopyanın üçüncü ilkesini çağrıştırmıştır. Aynı şekilde, Cinecittà'da savaştan sonra, stüdyo ekipmanlarının ve sahne dekorlarından geriye kalanlar sesli film stüdyolarında kurulan mülteci kamplarını döşemek için kullanılmış ve gerçeklik ile illüzyonun iç içe geçtiği bir heterotopya yaratmıştır. Ancak savaşın diğer cephesinde, Pinewood'da ortam görece sakindi ve savaş çoğu zaman uzakta

hissedilmekteydi. Savaşın son evrelerinde Pinewood Stüdyoları'nda film gösterimleri, resitaller ve partiler bile düzenlenmişti. Dolayısıyla, savaşın karşıt taraflarında yer alan stüdyoları incelemek, Müttefikler ile Mihver devletlerinin bu mekânların kullanımına nasıl yaklaştıklarına dair özgün bir bakış açısı sunmaktadır. Ancak, her iki tarafta da heterotopyanın ikinci ilkesini yansıtacak şekilde, film stüdyolarının işlevi değişmiştir. Artık sadece sinema yapımları için kullanılan mekanlar değil, siyaset, propaganda ve yerinden edilmeyle de iç içe geçmiş mekanlar haline gelmişlerdir. Bu yeniden işlevlendirme uygulamaları, film stüdyolarının geçirimsiz ve kapalı yapısını tamamen değiştirmiş ve onları halkın ihtiyaçlarına açık hâle getirmiştir. Daha önce ancak belirli koşullar altında kabul edilen ziyaretçiler, artık bu mekânları bir sığınak olarak kullanmaya başlamıştır. Bunun dışında, üç stüdyo da savaş sırasında propaganda filmleri üretmek için de kullanılmıştır ve bu filmlerle, heterotopyanın altıncı ilkesine paralel olarak gerçekliği kontrol edip çarpıtarak savaşı halka bir illüzyon olarak sunmaktalardı.

Özetle, bu tezde yirminci yüzyılın ilk yarısında Avrupa'daki film stüdyo komplekslerinin tarihine ve mimarisine odaklanılmış ve Avrupa genelinde stüdyo sistemlerinin gelişimi ile dönüşümüne dair daha geniş bir bakış açısı sunulmaya çalışılmıştır. Babelsberg Stüdyoları, Pinewood Stüdyoları ve Cinecittà'nın karşılaştırmalı analiziyle, film stüdyolarının kendi kendine yeten kompleksler olarak işlev gördüğü ve çalışanların tüm ihtiyaçlarının karşılanabildiği mekânlar sunduğu vurgulanmıştır. 20. yüzyılın başlarında inşa edilmiş olmalarına rağmen, bu stüdyolar günümüzde hala büyük yapımlara ev sahipliği yapan ve dünya çapında tercih edilen komplekslerdir. Bu stüdyoların sürekli başarısı, başlangıçtan itibaren kendi kendine yeten üretim ortamları olarak tasarlanmış olmalarına bağlanabilir. Film üretiminin her aşamasını bünyesinde barındıran ve dış kaynaklara bağımlılığı ortadan kaldıran bu kompleksler, yapımcılara tek bir merkezde tüm ihtiyaçlarını karşılayabilme imkânı sundukları için geçmişten günümüze tercih edilmeye devam etmektedirler.

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