



The CinemaxX at Potsdamer Platz

Photos: Nigel Luhman

CINEMAXX

MOVIES & MORE

CinemaxX's general manager
Andreas Crüsemann
Photo: Nigel Luhman

Regular visitors to this column will know all about my unreserved dedication to the job in attempting to cover the Berlin film festival in its entirety. Those visitors will also know that this is more of a passion than a pain. However, in the interests of providing a balanced picture, your roving reporter roved over to the site of the Berlinale, Potsdamer Platz, to speak to one man who has no choice in the matter.

As General Manager of the CinemaxX complex at Potsdamer Platz, Andreas R. Crüsemann is in charge of the whole of operations in the building. As reported a

while back, all 19 theaters are used for the Festival for its entire duration. For this reason, among others, Herr Crüsemann worked each day for three weeks in the run-up to and during the Berlinale. This was not without its compensations, however, as he got to meet all the members of the Festival jury, including Jacqueline Bisset, Volker Schlöndorff, Hildegard Knef, veteran director Luciano Emmer,



Emir Kusturica, and the subject of this year's homage, Kirk Douglas.

Mr. Douglas came to the CinemaxX for a special screening of his latest (but probably not last) movie, *Diamonds*, and defied the security staff by insisting on entering the building through the main entrance, rather than being smuggled in the back way as planned. He was rewarded for this with everyone in the CinemaxX foyer applauding him as he stepped out of the limousine, a greeting only surpassed by the audience waiting for the screening of *Diamonds*.

Now that the Berlin film fest is over, Herr Crüsemann can look back on it with a contented sigh and congratulate himself and his 90 staff that all went well. Only one mishap occurred and that was when the third reel of an international premiere (no names revealed here!) was shown before the second one. "Of course the director was sitting in the theater," Herr Crüsemann notes, "The poor guy nearly had a heart attack. We were that close to calling an ambulance".

Not that the CinemaxX staff need worry about the unexpected. The day I met Herr Crüsemann was a particularly wet and cold Good Friday. The spell of bad weather meant that more people than usual had

stayed in Berlin and then went looking for something to do in the evening. This resulted in an anticipated 6,000 moviegoers flocking to the site at Potsdamer Platz - half as many again as is normal for that time of the year. When I spoke to him that afternoon, the General Manager had no qualms about dealing with the situation "even if it meant not getting away from the building until 2 or 3 in

the morning." The 19 theaters show as many different movies from early afternoon to the small hours, and in any given week, five or six of these films will be shown in the original English version. As an added bonus, the CinemaxX shows a sneak preview every Wednesday night at 23:00 in English.

Furthermore, in what is surely a unique

cooperation, your favorite Berlin English-language magazine is teaming up with CinemaxX at Potsdamer Platz to have its own theater. Moviegoers in the near future will be treated to commercials for International Community while they sit in Kino 11, and soon this is to be renamed the "International Community Studio". You can be sure that Media Watch will keep you up-to-date on further developments. Studio 11 is one of the smaller theaters with 52 seats, while the largest (CinemaxX 7) can seat an audience of more than 600. Whatever their size, all the studios are easily accessible for people in a wheelchair and boast the very latest in projection and sound equipment. Added to this is the comfortable seating you would expect from a modern purpose-built multiplex and an equally good view of the screen wherever you are seated.

While his duties include planning the regular 19 movies each week, Andreas Crüsemann is also responsible for advertising. He explains that this is strictly limited to 20 minutes of commercials (go on, time them), but trailers can easily bump up the "pre-movie entertainment" to a total of 33 minutes. Backed by seven assistants, he is also in charge of concessions at the various kiosks throughout the CinemaxX, as well as the technical equipment in the building, be it projectors or air-conditioning.

As mentioned above, Herr Crüsemann is also responsible for festival screenings and until the next Berlinale comes round, the CinemaxX can be proud of being the sole cinema to house the Fantasy Filmfest in Berlin from 8 - 15 August. Before then, namely from 14 - 17 June, the multiplex will play host to the Schwedisches Kinderfilmfest, organized by Berlinale children's section head, Renate Zylla, in cooperation with her own Lemon Film distribution company. A whole series of children's movies will be shown for the special admission price of DM 6 per ticket and the Fest is being held under the motto "Auf den Spuren von Astrid Lindgren" [On the trail of Astrid Lindgren]. To this end, moviegoers young and old can take in (again) such kinder classics as *Ronja Räubertochter*, *Pippi Langstrumpf*, and *Carlsson auf dem Dach*, as well as the brand-new *Ikingut*, featured at this year's Berlinale.

The spacious foyers and wide range of theaters of varying capacities - coupled with its prestigious address - mean that the CinemaxX is also frequently used for marketing presentations of all shapes and sizes. Such renowned companies as Rolls Royce, Disney Channel, Postbank, Sony



Above: 19 films to choose from

and IBM will all be staging events here, while scientific meetings attract the likes of Professor Ernst Ulrich von Weizsäcker.

What may not be immediately obvious to anyone sitting in the dark, munching popcorn and staring at the large screen ahead of them, is that the CinemaxX theaters can easily accommodate stages for speakers and podium discussions. This means they are equally sought after for staff training sessions, lectures and company meetings.

In short, there's more to CinemaxX than meets the eye. 🌐

Information and online - inc.
WAP - ticket reservations (free of charge): www.cinemaxx.de
Telephone reservations:
(030) 44 316 316
(booking fee of DM 1 per ticket)
Recorded program
announcement: (030) 259 22 111
Program by fax callback:
(04307) 830 475

Below: The bustling, multilevel foyer
Photos: Nigel Luhman

