

Utopia

Revisiting a German State in America
A Traveling Exhibition



Ausstellungsreise auf den Spuren
einer deutschen Republik in den USA

Press Kit

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www.utopia-exhibit.net

As of 2015-01-28

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2013 – 2015

Five-hundred people left their homeland together, in order to live together in their Utopia. They came from all over Germany, all led by that one idea. The Giessen Emigration Society crosses the Atlantic Ocean in 1834 to found a model democratic German State in the USA – what later became a State of Germans in Missouri.

The exhibit is in both German and English and tells the amazing story of these early immigrants, what they thought, the challenges they faced, and the nativism they endured. It shares the history of the Society founder Friedrich Muench and his work as a writer and as a statesman, to continue the Society's original effort. It explores the impact that the Germans had on Missouri's involvement in the Civil War and their anti-slavery movement. The visitor not only becomes involved in what these early emigrants faced, but what it means to be an immigrant in the United States today. The utopian ideal is explored, and participants invited to share their ideas of what Utopia means today and to their future. Another unusual concept that is found in the exhibit is its' own archives, where everyone is invited to read the thousands of pages of research collected and used in the exhibit, the accompanying book and documentary.

The traveling exhibition "Utopia – Revisiting a German State in America" traces the route that our utopians in 1834 once did, from Giessen and Bremen in Germany to Washington D.C. and St. Louis, Missouri – and from there onwards. Whoever checks in may join as well – in thoughts, by train, truck or ship.

The "Traveling Summer Republic", a transatlantic collection of artists, creators, and scholars, generates a meeting of the minds with these travelers. After ten years they are bringing together their work and findings to create a world of discovery for people of all ages through video installations, texts, archives, footage, and photographs. Here is an invitation to a journey – through German and American states at turning points – of revolution and upheaval; along private, social, and philosophical adventures, through their motives, and the highs and lows of a bold vision. It is a journey through past and present Utopia.

"Utopia" deals with being on the road and indeed actually travels, as well – in many boxes within a cargo container. The Traveling Summer Republic transforms the emigrants' search into concrete experiences, and the team's every arrival and farewell becomes a public event. The exhibits are unpacked, the travel trunks become the architecture, the doors to the past are opened: Come stay a while and explore! Childhood dreams, rebellions, and lifelong friendship await you in pictures, sounds, and writings. Freedom, equality, and brotherhood, religion and assassinations are all to found. Crossing the Atlantic, winegrowing, and slavery are examined as well. Old documents from the Utopians and recent interviews with the descendents are shared. At the end of every visit the trunks become still, the wallpaper rolled up, the books are closed. Everything is packed up and stowed away. And onwards!

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Following the first stops in Germany – in Giessen and Bremen – the traveling exhibition opens its doors on 6 September in Washington DC at the German-American Heritage Museum and on **22 November 2014** at the **Missouri History Museum** in St. Louis. “Utopia” looks at the myriad stories of our emigrants through art and action and explores its political and social dimensions to provide inspiration for the present day.



Missouri History Museum - St. Louis, Missouri

5700 Lindell Boulevard in Forest Park, St. Louis MO, 63112

www.mohistory.org – phone (314) 746-4599

22 November 2014 – 19 April 2015

Hours of operation:

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday: 10 am to 8 pm

Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday: 10 am to 5 pm

Free entry

Accompanying media

The **book**, *Utopia*, is a comprehensive bilingual catalog that both enlarges and deepens the viewers understanding of the exhibit's content and ensures the experience of the topic. For those unable to visit tour the exhibit or experience the exhibition, the book will provide an excellent understanding of the history, complete with photos and maps found in the exhibit. Published by Edition Falkenberg, Bremen, 356 pages, English/German, full color.

The accompanying **documentary**, *Utopia* provides a visual opportunity to experience the history, with interviews, and visits to the original sites. Filmed in both Germany and the U.S., it is both an audio and visual tour, to enhance the experience of the Exhibition. World premiere: 23 November 2014, St. Louis.

A bilingual **educational syllabus** “Stay or Leave” for “Utopia” has been produced at the Justus-Liebig University of Giessen developed by the Institute for History Didactics. The brochure can be downloaded for free on the exhibit website.

www.utopia-exhibit.net

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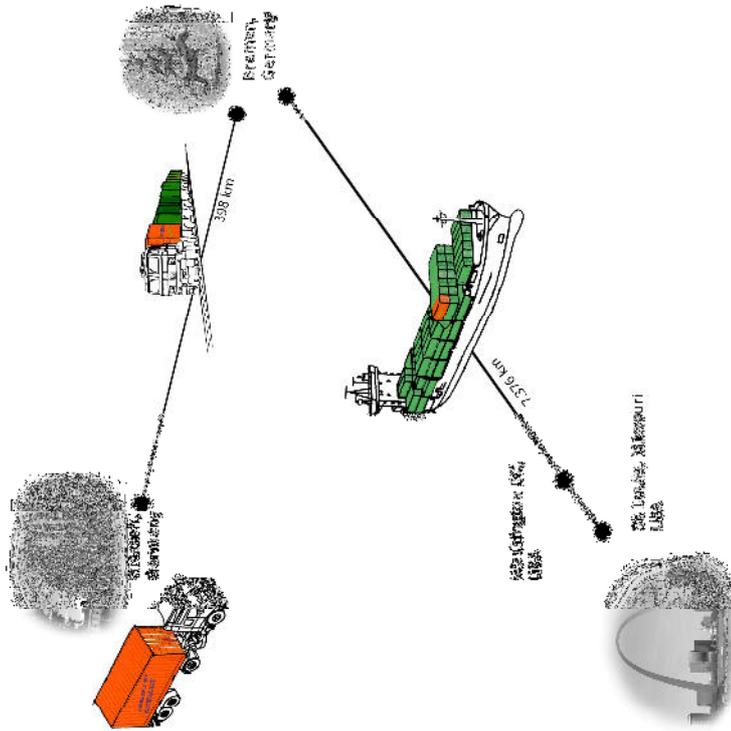
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The Traveling State is an association of cultural workers, artists and researchers from Berlin, Missouri. They are united by the history of the German settlement in Missouri, the strength of this utopian idea and the bridges in the present between the two states. The exhibition is a unique chapter in the development of German demography.



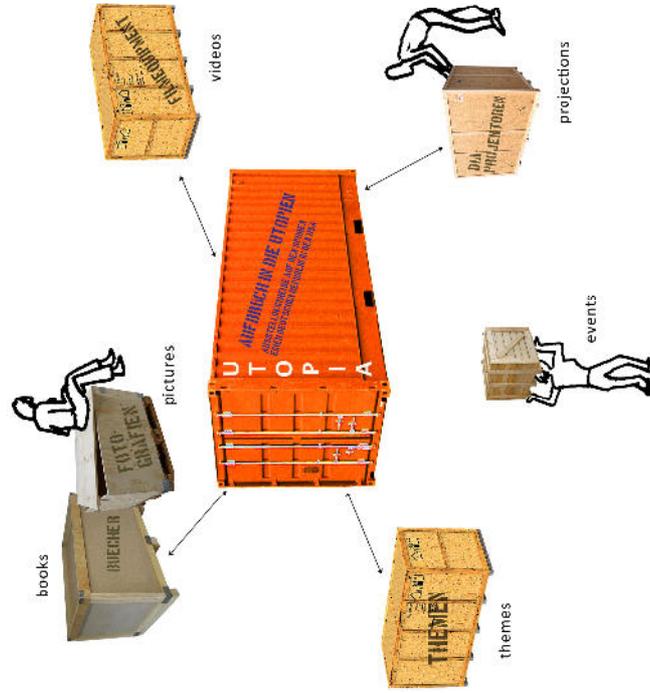
From 1 November 2013, the Traveling German Republic went on an exhibition tour along the route of the German settlement in Missouri. A huge cargo container was packed with paintings, videos, objects, with an archive and a utopia library. The exhibition tour follows the traces of the "German State" - a unique chapter in the development of German demography.

Exhibition venues are

- Kassel: KIZ (Culture in the Center)
- 1 November - 29 December 2013
- Bremen: Culture Church St. Stephen
- April - 13 July 2014
- Washington DC: German-American Heritage Museum
- September - 25 October 2014
- St. Louis: Missouri History Museum
- November 2014 - 19 April 2015



Artists and public travel with the exhibition container from station to station - by bus, by train, by ship, by car. Packing, bidding farewell, departing, traveling, arriving, unpacking and assembling the exhibition are performing parts of the project UTOPIA



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EXHIBIT VENUES

1 November to
29 December 2013

Giessen: Venue KiZ (Culture in the Center)
Lonystraße 2 (Congress Hall), 35390 Giessen
Organizer: City Magistrate Giessen /
Municipal Archives and Cultural Office – www.giessen.de
A contribution to Georg Büchner Commemoration years 2012/13

The KiZ (Culture in the Center) has been recently converted from the city library to a showroom on two floors. It's located close to the Municipal Theatre and the new City Hall. Utopia opened in conjunction with the University of Giessen's exhibit "In the Sight of State Power. The University of Giessen as a center of revolution and repression, 1813-1848".

2,500 visitors saw the Utopia exhibit and took part at its 28 accompanying events.

5 April to 13 July 2014

Bremen: St. Stephen's Cultural Church
(Kulturkirche St. Stephani)
Stephanikirchhof 8, 28195 Bremen
www.kulturkirche-bremen.de

Close to this heavily WWII-damaged medieval church the Giessen Emigration Society embarked on the Weser River.

4,500 visitors saw the exhibit and attended at the 48 accompanying events in the 3-month exhibition period.

6 September to 25 October 2014

Washington, D.C.
German-American Heritage Museum
719 6th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001
www.gahmusa.org

The German-American Heritage Foundation of the USA in Washington DC will be the Exhibition's next host. Its museum is housed in the former home of a German businessman and opened in 2010. The museum is aimed at the political world of Washington DC, German-American interest groups and schools.

22 November 2014 to
19 April 2015

St. Louis, Missouri
Missouri History Museum
5700 Lindell Boulevard in Forest Park, St. Louis MO, 63112
www.mohistory.org

The Missouri History Museum will be the last venue. It is located on the grounds of the 1904 World's Fair with around 300,000 visitors a year. The museum's mission is "to deepen the understanding of past choices, present circumstances, and future possibilities; strengthen the bonds of the community; and facilitate solutions to common problems".

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OLD STORY

The **Giessen Emigration Society** was founded in 1833 stemming from the ideas of the Giessen lawyer Paul Follenius; and the Upper Hessian Protestant minister Friedrich Muench from the village of Nieder-Gemünden.

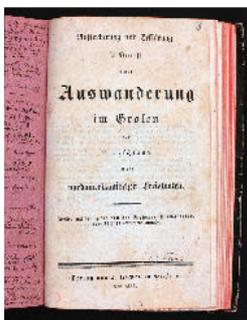
Follenius and Muench were both born in 1799. Paul Follenius, 14 years old, fought in the liberation wars against Napoleon, he was honored for his bravery. Follenius and Muench met at the University of Giessen and established a lifelong and close friendship.

Around 1818 Follenius and Muench became members of the Black Student Alliance of Giessen led by Karl/Charles Follen. He was quickly banned because he campaigned vociferously against the continuation of arbitrary rule and exploitation, and struggled for a united Germany. The very contradictory process of the political and religious; the German nationalist and Christian-rationalist views of Giessen Blacks, made quite a stir in the German universities. They were the avant-garde of their time.

The restoration after the Congress of Vienna (1814/15) had the population of the German states in firm grip, the critics of princely rule were silenced, rebellions and uprisings having been nipped in the bud. After the Carlsbad Decrees of 1819 the rest of the German states were included in these crackdowns. In 1825, Friedrich Muench finds it difficult to gain appointment as a pastor, after his loyalty to the Grand Duke of the Hessian State is questioned. This humiliating experience will shape his actions, all the way to the church in America. In the same year Paul Follenius married Friedrich's sister Marie, the love of his life.



Friedrich Muench (1799-1881)



The Call, 1833

Naively innocent, Friedrich Muench and Paul Follenius worked as pastor and lawyer. In 1830, the July Revolution in Paris and the European political revolutionary mood gave way again to new hope. But alas, the uproar and the people were broken, the old powers were maintained.

Follenius and Muench decided to emigrate. In 1833, a pamphlet circulated through Germany: *"Call and Declaration on the Subject of Mass Emigration from Germany to the North American Free States."* Its 25-page declaration states: "The intent awakened in us, gained in our understanding, that belief that the conditions in Germany won't permit, not now or in the future, the satisfactions that we as men and citizens demand for ourselves and our children's life. We have recognized, that the only possible way for us and our children to satisfy these needs, is in the free

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states of North America's ". They continue to write:" ... we declare that emigration from a country, which doesn't correspond to our individual needs, is a holy human right." "A rejuvenated Germany in North America" should arise. The demand was huge, and soon had Follenius and Muench had to close the membership list.

The men and women of the Giessen Emigration Society were leaders with their decision, and whether change may be made by peaceful or violent means, due to the oppressive political situation of tyranny, provincialism and political persecution. They found their answer to this dilemma in the peaceful ideal of a German model republic in America. In contrast to this was Georg Büchner's and Friedrich Ludwig Weidig's concept of a revolution, even if necessary by violent means, as promoted by them in the "Hessian Courier" ("Peace on the huts – war on the palaces"). A new Germany should be modeled in Missouri, with hope for a transformation of those in power in Germany.

In the spring of 1834 five-hundred people – farmers, artisans, academics - "blameless and hardworking families," as stated in the "Call" began their journey. They were mostly from upper Hesse, Altenburg (Thuringia today) and Coburg (Bavaria today), Prussia and several others. After a quiet well-done crossing, the first group of emigrants led by Follenius' reached New Orleans. On the boat trip from there up the Mississippi, however, some 40 people died from cholera and malaria, the strain bore down the group.



Paul Follenius (1799-1844)

Meanwhile, the second division being led by Muench, had a five-week bivouac in a "miserable cowshed" on the "unhealthy Weser River island" Harriersand, because the Bremen ship agent Delius couldn't locate a ship. During their stay on the island, Muench performed a Jewish-Christian wedding, and worked to keep up the morale of the group. But boredom, floods and money quarrels led to the gradual decay of the community.

Several weeks later the ship the "Medora" finally reached the U.S. with the other 250 immigrants during a historic summer thunderstorm at the Port of Baltimore. Then they traveled for two weeks by horse and cart, through the Allegheny Mountains; and another two weeks by steamboat down the Ohio to St. Louis, and then on to St. Charles. Here, came a joyful reunion, when both immigrant groups met, and then formally dissolved as a company.

The leaders Muench and Follenius and many other members of the society settled on farms along the Missouri River valley in the immediate vicinity of Gottfried Duden's farm at Lake Creek. Duden, had investigated Missouri some years earlier, and then in 1829 published a propaganda pamphlet "*Journey to the Western States of North America*" in Germany with great success. He never returned to his farm to America.

The immigrants found themselves exposed to several waves of xenophobia. The so-called "nativism" as Americans wanted America only for Americans, created cultural alienation and local

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unemployment. They stated that the boat was full. In 1840, Muench criticized this attitude in a fiery speech on the American Independence Day, stating that this is quite contrary to the "Pursuit of Happiness", which the U.S. Constitution stands for, enshrined with the right to happiness.

Sadly, in 1844, Paul Follenius died, due to the debilitating effects of emigration and probably for reasons of economic loss. Frederick Muench went on alone, and successfully established his new home of Missouri. He wrote for the German masses, extolling the agricultural and viticultural virtues, promoting Missouri both here and in Germany.



Paul Follenius' farm

Friedrich Muench

Muench studied Protestant theology from 1816 to 1819 in Giessen, and after his father's death, took over the pastorate of his birthplace in Nieder-Gemünden in Upper Hesse. At the University of Giessen, he met with Karl/Charles Follen the leader of the "Giessen Blacks" and got to know of his dream of a German University in America, the intellectual forerunner for a German Republic in America. Charles Follen was also an inspiration for a change in his religious beliefs, leading in 1823, to anonymously publish his book "Jesus, the Son of God or Messiah to the world – views of the favorite disciple John." Inclining toward the rationalist worldview Muench interpreted the Bible as man-made and guided by human interest.

In America, Muench farmed successfully, with his brother Georg (arrived in the US in 1837) as an agriculturist and viticulturist until his death. He also published, often under the pseudonym "Far West", acclaimed writings on philosophy, religion, immigration, education, wine, agriculture.

In the Dutzow Missouri settlement Muench acquired a plot of land and held speeches and gave talks, in a small building, not sermons specifically, since he preached that each individual must develop his own truth. He gave school, made baptisms and marriages. Munch saw education as the key against intolerance and oppression. In his new home Muench never again belonged to an official church, but was a guest lecturer in many parishes. Muench and many Germans felt the symbiosis of church and state was distressing. A cultural war was waged on the western frontier, by Muench and the freethinkers, also known as the "Friends of Light" – against all doctrinaires.

However, all parties agreed upon the horror of slavery. The German immigrants, who had themselves painfully experienced the lack of freedom in their homeland, saw the freedom of people as an inalienable human right. Munch was one of the most prolific spokesmen against slavery. He led campaigns in support of the Republican



Friedrich Muench in the Missouri Senate chair

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Party all the way to New York where he spoke together with Friedrich Hecker in front of 10,000 listeners. In Missouri, he doggedly pursued the abolishment of slavery and his goal of mass immigration by Germans in order to receive a parliamentary majority. In 1859, he made an promotional trip to Europe for his book "*Missouri*" in order to promote immigration – it was the last time he visited Germany.

During the Civil War from 1861 to 1865 he served as the State Senator for Missouri's 1st District, from St. Charles, Warren and Montgomery counties, where he was often exposed to personal threats as a fighter for the Union. Many German immigrants took up arms as volunteers against the Confederate States. Muench's son Berthold died in a battle, a loss that he would never completely overcome. Friedrich Muench died in 1881 – as the legend says – with a pruning shears in hand in the vineyard of his farm.



Student workshop in the exhibit in Bremen



Visitors in the exhibit in Washington DC



Artistic director Oliver Behnecke gives a tour, Bremen



The voyage

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NEW STORY

In the GDR. Writer Henry Schneider lived in the socialist German Democratic Republic. In the 1970s he discovered in Ferdinand Kürnberger's novel "America-weary" (Der Amerika-Müde, 1855) a reference to the Giessen Emigration Society. He researched this "bizarre escapism," and made plans for a feature film. The state owned film studio DEFA funded a treatment version. However, the full-length film was never realized.

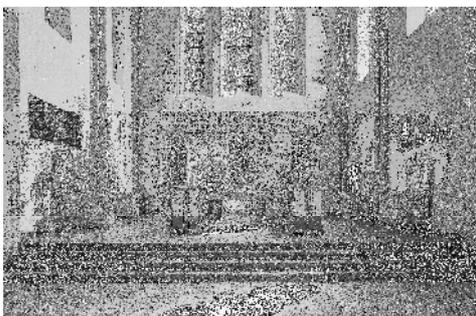
Founding of the Traveling Summer Republic. Inspired by Henry Schneider's research, artists and academics went further into research for this history that was nearly lost and forgotten. Since 2005, they documented their findings and derived issues they felt to be important, creating events with fictional and documentary techniques. In 2009, a delegation first traveled to Missouri, USA, and was amazed by the lasting impression left by the Giessen Emigration Society today for many residents in the region. The research received a fresh impulse, along with new partners in Missouri.



The Utopia container in Giessen

Utopia In autumn 2013, the Traveling Summer Republic, with her historical research and artistic productions packed in their exhibition's "luggage" (in a huge cargo container) started their tour following the route of the Giessen Society – a transatlantic campaign for Utopia. The exhibition opened on November 1st 2013 in Giessen, traveled to Bremen in 2014, and then on to the United States, opening in Washington, D.C. on 6 September, 2014 and concluding in St. Louis, Missouri (November 22, 2014 to 19 April 2015).

The "trip" – rich with audience participation – is created by platforms that connect to the exhibition rooms. The exhibit **Utopia** is conceived as a narrative space that initiates dialogue with the story which releases new impetus. For the development of democratic ideals, societies need the potential of utopian projects and public discussion of proposal and counter-draft. The exhibition offers this rich material for questions that reflect both the historical story and our present. The ideal answers will be found in our "Utopia for the present".



Utopia exhibit in the Cultural Church in Bremen



Exhibit crate

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TRAVEL AGENCY „MUSS I DENN TOURS & CARGO TRIPS“

Esther Steinbrecher

A travel agency of a most peculiar kind began its work on 1 November 2013 in Giessen: Muss i denn Tours and Cargo Trips accompanies the exhibition along the way and offers its travelers the possibility for a temporary trial-emigration. Tour guide Esther Steinbrecher came to the opening of the exhibition in Bremen with a group of Giessen emigrants. The travel package contained a diverse program as part of a three-day journey along winding paths: Introduction to various farewell and welcoming ceremonies, fun and interesting facts about the route and destination, homesickness-management, *Muss i denn* hymn-singing, and much more. The option of a continued journey or an actual emigration was not given, *Muss i denn* tours is expressly a travel agency for trial-emigrations.



Esther Steinbrecher (left) with participants in Giessen

What are the activities of the Travel Agency in the US? *Cargo Trips*, our affiliate for permanent object relocation, is suited to people who do not have the time and/or pluckiness to take part in

the trial-emigration. Instead they can contribute carefully chosen objects to accompany the exhibition on its way and send these satellites out into the distance – thereby making delicate contact between worlds.

Things of all kinds can be checked into the mobile travel agency together with their stories. The objects will be wished farewell, thoroughly packed and labeled in a grand ceremony of departure. Subsequently they will travel together with the whole exhibition and find a new home with adoptive parents.

The travel agency accepted numerous objects for permanent relocation from the exhibition's visitors in Giessen and Bremen, which Esther Steinbrecher is bringing to the exhibitions in Washington and St. Louis in order to find long-term godparents for these emigrated objects and their stories. In turn, the visitors to the exhibitions in Washington and St. Louis have the possibility to send their objects to Germany for permanent emigration, where Esther Steinbrecher will then again look for suitable godparents. The circle closes.



Esther Steinbrecher in Bremerhaven

In a special ceremony, Esther Steinbrecher has been welcomed by the Baltimoreans at the **Baltimore harbor on 1 September 2014**. Steinbrecher presented emigration-objects from Germany, told their stories, and then these objects and Esther spent their first night on American soil in the historical Baltimore Immigrant House.

Concept & Performance & Travel Blog: Esther Steinbrecher | Travel Music: Klaus Seifert | A production of CRISENMANAGEMENT on behalf of the Traveling Summer Republic | www.mussidenn.com

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TANDEM GUIDES – Christiane Gartner (Kultur Vor Ort)

Since August of 2013, ten Bremen teen students have been accompanying the exhibition UTOPIA from Giessen via Bremen under the artistic direction of Katrin Bretschneider and accompanied by historian Kathrin Klug at the invitation of the ART BASIC CENTER of Kultur Vor Ort e.V in Bremen-Gröpelingen.

In the form of an audio collage, the students document their own relationships to emigration and immigration, migration and Utopia, according to historical and current research on the European emigration to the Americas.

The audio collage “Far away so close – How much Missouri is there in Gröpelingen?” was presented for the first time in November 2013 in Giessen, the exhibition’s first stop. It strikingly documents how close the questions of the Giessen Emigration Society approach the youths’ reality of life and family history.

For the exhibition’s second stop in Bremen, the youths developed a scenic guided tour which interweaves two threads: The contemporary experience of emigration and migration, foreignness and homesickness, together with the historical documents in the “Utopia” exhibition. The students impressed the audience with expertise and presence as well as authenticity and persuasive artistic execution in a performative tour through the exhibition in May 2014 under the guidance of Katrin Bretschneider.

In the third leg of the journey, the Bremen teen students will travel to Missouri in February 2015 and will work in a transatlantic project together with students of the Teens Make History program of the Missouri History Museum for this exciting chapter of German-American history. Starting in September 2014, the Bremen students took part in a work group to improve their English capabilities. They will contact the partner project at the Missouri History Museum via Skype to plan their collective projects in St. Louis.

Partner schools in Germany: Neue Oberschule Gröpelingen, Bremen; Gesamtschule West, Bremen; Liebigschule Giessen

www.kultur-vor-ort.com



Tandem Guides performance in Bremen



Tandem Guides in Giessen



St. Stephen Cultural Church

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PHOTOGRAPHY – Folker Winkelmann

The Bremen-based photographer Folker Winkelmann has been with the Traveling Summer Republic since its inception. His large-scale photographs frame the exhibition itself. He captures unique moments in time, incredible still portraits of people and places. Such moments frozen in time become especially lucid when the very same protagonists and places appear in the videos, but a completely different impression unfolds in the context of our search for historical clues and restless movement.

In various locations within the exhibition, photo series – in the form of leaflets or albums, for example – provide little visual stories through details of Muench's farm in the present, or tell of the many activities of the Traveling Summer Republic on the island of Harriersand.

Winkelmann's photographic composition continually provides new levels of interpretation. Documentary material gives rise to large-scale panoramas, whose lighting is reminiscent of the Romantic painters. Reality and fiction flow into one another.

www.folker-winkelmann.de



Library, Missouri History Museum, St. Louis



Old Lorry, Hermann, Missouri



School's Out. Paul Follenius' former farm. Lake Creek. Missouri

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DISCUSSION BOARD „Utopia Today“ – Christian Weber



Utopia Today in the exhibit in Giessen

Before leaving the exhibition, Christian Weber invites the visitors to a discussion board where the current societal circumstances may be reflected upon, critically considered, and culminating in the design of a better form of social coexistence. “Utopia Today” asks the question “To what extent can utopian thinking provide drive for political change?” Five themes (Freedom, Work, Economy, Democracy, and Love) are on the boards and one criticism and one re-evaluation for each is drawn up. This is to provide food for thought, and encourage the visitor to scrutinize what is old and familiar.

The visitors have the possibility to leave behind their own contributions and commentary, something also quite extensively done in Giessen and Bremen already. Weber understands Utopia to be a project of emancipation where it is never defined according to a few people, but rather all members of society must shape its development. For this

to happen, large and inclusive debates must take place, and they can begin here in a smaller form. Aside from abstract and strategic considerations, individual wants and needs have to be incorporated. This portion of the exhibition stands apart by using spray-painted graphics in “stencil” style – made famous by the street artist Banksy.

VIDEO INSTALLATIONS – Manfred Hielscher

Research/Camera: Peter Roloff

Montage/Installation VideoBook Dialog: Manfred Hielscher

In drawing upon the Traveling Summer Republic's archive and Peter Roloff's research documentation with the video camera, several video installations have come into being, which the visitor encounters at several points through the exhibition.

Between the entrance and exit you can find the centrally located archive: Diaries, letters, biographies, newspaper articles, books, maps, lithographs, family documents, widely scattered source material from document collections and libraries are brought together here. For “Utopia”, the archive has been set up as a walk-in sculpture where the visitors can research and read more in-depth themselves. A video

UTOPIA –Revisiting a German State in America – A Traveling Exhibition

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Utopia

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Ausstellungsreise auf den Spuren
einer deutschen Republik in den USA



VideoBook Dialog „Books and Stones“

station on the outer side of the archive shows extracts from the research done in the archives in Germany and Missouri.

Next to his investigations in the archive, Peter Roloff captured the research done on-site with his video camera. The search for clues, as seen through the lens, comprises landscapes, city spaces, farms and log cabins, churches, printing presses, wine cellars, long-vanished places and tombs; it is watching, questioning, and in many situations, improvising. Roloff spoke with the people living there to find out what they knew about the immigrants who came to Missouri in 1834. He discovered lively and spontaneous stories. Historical artifacts – photographic documents, writings, even a rare wax cylinder for making music – give the depictions and portrayals of the archivists Dorris Keeven-Franke and Dr. Ludwig Brake, authors Ralph Gregory and Rolf Schmidt, as well as the descendents of the Giessen Emigration Society, renewed impetus and direction.

The video installations form an interface between the documentary archive and the research trips. Its most important aspect is how it allows the visitor to jump into the stories, from which a kaleidoscope of perspectives on the era of the Giessen Emigration Society and the life of its people unfolds.

Under the title *VideoBook Dialog*, you can find three installations in the exhibition: “Ralph Gregory – World of Ideas”, “Wine Land”, and “Books and Stones”. The construction of these works occurred by drawing upon everyday situations: Two pages of an open book, two people sitting across from one another, a conversation at a table. A dialog develops from two narrative sequences on two monitors. Two seats for the visitors face the monitors. The video installations are small rest stops in the exhibition room. Here the visitors can watch, listen, and enter a conversation with another person.

The video installation “Folks Abroad” jumps to the 20th and 21st century. People from various generations and countries recount their stories of immigration and emigration upon the ferry “Ostertor” on the river Weser. “Folks Abroad” was realized as part of the series UNTERWEGS from the Bremen Chamber of Labour.



Dorris Keeven-Franke in the Rare Book Room



„Folks Abroad“

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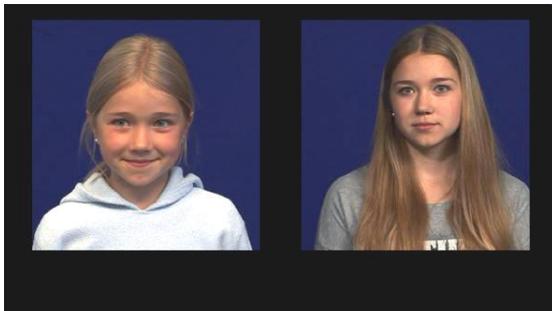
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“8 and 16” – Maja Maria Liebau

The video “8 and 16” explores personal utopias. Four eight-year-old schoolchildren speak of their great dreams and answer questions about their utopias as 16-year-olds. Film portraits from 2005 and 2013 set side-by-side show both their childlike fantasies and their youthful visions. They look back at themselves and forwards. How are their current projects, plans, and fictions connected with their dreams from back then? Verena, Philine, Julius, and Emily offer glimpses into their reflections and inner worlds. Into that which is, and that which is missing. What does that even mean, “Utopia”? Do I have one? Is it important to me? Why? Do we need them?

In the context of the exhibition “Utopia”, the film creates a bridge between the adolescent world of ideas and plans of the historical Giessen revolutionaries of 1816, and those of the four Bremen-based film protagonists of the same age from 2013.

“8 and 16” is a continuation of the project “Private Utopias” and the film “What I like the most is ... everything”, which Maja Maria Liebau created in 2005 with 21 children from a Bremen primary school class for the Island Congress of the Traveling Summer Republic.



A film by Maja Maria Liebau

With: Verena Dickhut, Philine Pfannenstiel, Julius Kloss, Emily Schoen (2005 & 2013)

Educational guidance: Christine Boyer

Camera: Peter Roloff

Subtitles: BABELFISCH TRANSLATIONS

Special thanks to the school on Freiligrathstrasse, Bremen

Sponsor: Chamber of Labor in Bremen, among others.

Production: maxim film for “Utopia”

Bremen/Berlin 2013



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LAND OF OPPORTUNITIES – German Historical Institute

The German Historical Institute Washington DC contributes within its program **Immigrant Entrepreneurship** an exhibition create “Land of Opportunities.”

The Giessen Emigration Society was a pioneer of German mass immigration into the U.S. Most newcomers became farmers, craftsmen, retailers, or skilled workers; but German-Americans shaped the U.S. with entrepreneurial spirit and capital as well.

Eberhard Anheuser (1806-1880) grew up in a family of winemakers in Rhenish Prussia. Wine prices, however, declined rapidly, swaying him and his young family to move to Cincinnati in 1843 and then to St. Louis in 1845. He started a career as a soap maker, predominately in the factory of Silesian emigrant William D’Oench. From the 1850s, he became a partner in several larger soap, oil, and candle firms. In 1860 Anheuser used his capital to invest in the Bavarian Brewery in St. Louis, founded by Bavarian immigrant Georg Schneider. Anheuser benefitted from the Civil War, selling large amounts of beer to Union soldiers. From the 1870s, Anheuser and his son-in-law, Hessian immigrant Adolphus Busch, invested heavily in advanced European technology and used modern advertisement to become, a decade later, the world’s largest brewery.



Mathilde Franziska Anneke (1817-1884) became a social entrepreneur after her arrival in the U.S. in 1849. Having grown up in a wealthy Westphalian family of nobility, she became notorious for her divorce from her first husband. Already active as a writer and a journalist, Anneke engaged herself in womens’ rights topics. She married Fritz Anneke, a former Prussian officer and socialist, and together they were active in the revolution in Baden 1848/49. The family had to flee to America, to Milwaukee. In 1852, she founded the first feminist newspaper in the U.S., *Die Deutsche Frauen-Zeitung*. She was active as a writer and as the head of the *Milwaukee Töchter Institut*, established in 1865. Anneke, who published in German, worked closely with Anglo-American women and was an important voice for women’s suffrage and abolition.

Immigrant Entrepreneurship
German-American Business Biographies
1720 TO THE PRESENT

www.imigrantentrepreneurship.org

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UTOPIA COMPANION PUBLICATION– Ludwig Brake

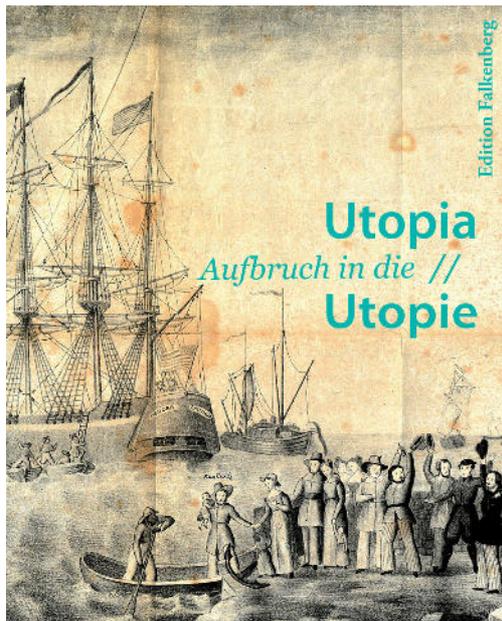
The companion publication for the exhibition “Utopia” is the very first extensive presentation of the history and setting of the Giessen Emigration Society of 1834. At its core, the bilingual book (German/English throughout) chronologically follows the story of the Giessen Emigration Society, from its farewell to Germany right up to the settlement in Missouri. Texts from the exhibition's creators and guest authors further deepen and enrich the theme of the politically motivated emigration in the 19th century. The book also functions on its own, without prior knowledge of the exhibition, as an independent product.

The volume is printed in color all throughout the book, and contains – also in large-format – photos by Folker Winkelmann and offers numerous, often unpublished images from archives and private collections within its 352 pages.

Dr. Ludwig Brake is head of the City Archives of Giessen and academic director of the Utopia project.

Contributors:

- Kilian Spiethoff: America, Land of Refuge. Emigration, Emigration Societies and the Idea to Establish a German State in the New World (1816-1834)
- Rolf Schmidt: Departure and Journey of the Giessen Emigration Society
- Dorris Keeven-Franke: Missouri – “Where the sun of freedom shine”
- Peter Roloff: Decision for Illinois
- Walter D. Kamphoefner & Adolf E. Schroeder: Gert Goebel and the Giessen Emigration Society
- Walter D. Kamphoefner: Growing Up in the Footsteps of the Giesseners
- Henry Schneider: “The America-Weary”
- Steffen Wiegmann: Political Emigration from Germany in the 18th Century
- Ludwig Brake: Hesse in Pre-March, 1819-1835
- Kilian Spiethoff: The Giessen Emigration Society – Success or Failure?



Edited by Traveling Summer Republic and City Archives of Giessen:

„Utopia – Revisiting a German State in America“

Bilingual (German & English), 157 color plates, 54 halftones, 8 maps

Format 8 ¼ x 10 ¼ inch - 21 x 26 cm | Publisher: Edition Falkenberg, Bremen

Distributor in the USA: University of Chicago Press | ISBN 978-3-95494-595-5 | US\$ 27.50

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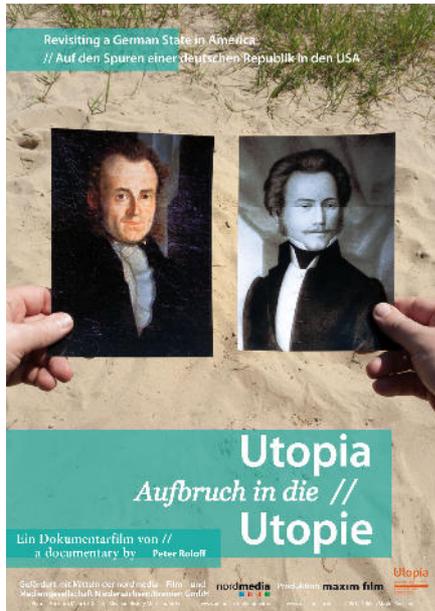
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DOCUMENTARY – Peter Roloff



The feature-length documentary “Utopia” searches for traces of a unique and bold democratic project: a German state in America.

In the spring of 1834, nearly five-hundred Germans board two ships heading for America, led by one idea: freedom and democracy! The Giessen Emigration Society crossed the Atlantic Ocean in hopes of founding a model democratic German State in the USA. Friedrich Muench and Paul Follenius were the founders of this bold project. Filmmaker Peter Roloff and a team of artists and historians are going on research journeys through Germany and Missouri, USA. They are united by the strength of this utopian idea. What will they find?

Traces of history and how these affect us in the present were already themes of Roloff’s artistic film work but in the Traveling Summer Republic, and after a decade of analysis, these themes have now become a part of his own life story.

The film was created independent of the exhibition project and is sponsored by nordmedia – Film- und Mediengesellschaft Lower Saxony/Bremen mbH.

US première: 23 November 2014 – St. Louis International Film Festival – **Trailer** vimeo.com/103133177

90 min. | directed by Peter Roloff | editor Manfred Hielscher | music André Feldhaus | produced by maxim film

STUDENT’S WORKBOOK – Rita Rohrbach

“Stay or Leave? The Giessen Emigration Society” is the title of an educational publication for the exhibition directed at teachers and teen students. It is published by Rita Rohrbach and was developed under her guidance in a project seminar by students at the Historical Institute of the Justus Liebig University in Giessen (Didactics of History and Cultural Sciences).

Migration is as old as human history and influences every aspect of our lives. A teaching unit devoted to this topic reveals what is common to us all in life and helps



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students to comprehend that anyone can be the “new” person. The students of today can understand the example of the Giessen Emigration Society and the causes, course, and difficulties of migration and integration processes, as well as prepare noteworthy examples throughout global history. Amongst others, their consciousness of history, other-awareness, judgement skills, and other related competencies will be fostered.

This student’s workbook is bilingual (German/English) and accompanies the traveling exhibition “Utopia!” through Germany and the USA. However it also functions independently from the exhibition and may be used in the classroom as is. The workbook may be downloaded both in English and German for free from the exhibition website: www.aufbruch-in-die-utopie.net/shop.html.

The student’s workbook was sponsored by the Hessian Ministry for Science and Culture and supported by the City Archive of Giessen.

UTOPIAN FLICKER – Sala Deinema

Sala Deinema’s curated film series “Utopian Flicker” began in August 2005 with an open-air short film program on the quai of Brake on the river Weser, as part of the founding meeting of the Summer Republic, at the “Island Congress 2005 – Trip to Utopias”.

Sala Deinema: “Our conception of history is deeply influenced by film and television, resulting in a growing inability to distinguish reality from fiction. There is therefore more reason than ever to look theoretically and critically at the methods of appropriating history using the medium of film. The film program which accompanies the exhibition “Utopia” presents various forms of this communication from phases of history and the contexts in which they occur.”

The selection of films for “Utopian Flicker” is often connected to the place of exhibition. This adds an additional aspect, a surprising enhancement or social reference.

In collaboration with the Goethe-Institut in Washington DC, “Utopian Flicker” will show Edgar Reitz’s current feature film “Home from Home: Chronicle of a Vision” at the Goethe-Institut on 10 September 2014. While famine, poverty, and tyranny oppresses the population in the middle of the 19th century, hundreds of thousands emigrate to distant South America. “You can find something better than death anywhere” was at once their bitter knowledge and their hope. The film recounts the exodus of the German farmers and laborers to the New World in historical pictures.



Scenes in „Home from Home“



The fictitious village Schabbach in Germany

RESEARCH / HISTORIC NOVELS – Rolf Schmidt

Rolf Schmidt has been participating in the research and presentation of the Giessen Emigration Society ever since the founding of the Traveling Summer Republic. Amongst others, he has worked with and produced stage performances and essays. Together with a school theater group, the pieces “Waiting for the Medora” (2005) and “Last Exit Harriersand” (2006) were produced and concern the destiny of the Giessen Emigration Society. Together with Ulla Schmidt, he published a reprint of the “Call and declaration of the subject of mass emigration from Germany to the North American free states”.

Schmidt's two historical novels, “Waiting for the Tide” and “The Move – From the Weser to Missouri” are available in German. They elaborately and stirringly portray the tragic destiny of the Giessen Emigration Society.

While “Waiting for the Tide” describes Muench and his group's forced stay “in a squalid cowshed on an unsanitary island” in May of 1834 as well as their disputes and doubts about the general plan, “The Move” portrays the distressing Atlantic crossing on the “Medora”, the ultimate failure of the planned founding of a German state, and the emigrant families' arduous attempt to make a life for themselves, each fending for their own, in the American West.

Rolf Schmidt is currently researching and working on a third part of the story, which will concern itself with the pre-history.



Warten auf die Flut – Ein historischer Harriersand-Roman

(Waiting for the Tide)

Publisher: Isensee, Oldenburg 2008

ISBN: 3899955692



Der Auszug – Von der Weser zum Missouri

(The Move)

Publisher: Isensee, Oldenburg 2013

ISBN: 3899959825

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THE PRINCIPLE OF HOPE– Bremen Council for Integration

On the occasion of the World Refugee Day on June 20 the non-governmental Bremen Council for Integration opened within our Utopia exhibit an extra photo exhibition depicting 10 refugees living in Bremen and telling their stories: “**The Principle of Hope – Bremen Refugees and their Stories**”. This exhibit by photographer Manja Hermann with its 10 pictures and related text panels fits very well in the Utopia container and will be placed in front of the Missouri History Museum.

The stories told in the photo exhibit are specific individual stories but at the same time these stories are universal: “same but different”. It happens everywhere, in Bremen, London and St. Louis.

www.bremer-rat-fuer-integration.de

Name: Femi Abazi

Birth date: 1985

Arriving from Montenegro at six years old, Femi Abazi has spent almost his entire life in Bremen. Abazi arrived with his family and have all grown to think of Bremen as home. His moving to and growing up in Bremen have been a combination of both negative and positive experiences. Working with the immigration office, not being able to study, and having to wait 20 years to acquire permission to work wasn't easy, but he will be able to start his Ausbildung (apprenticeship) this summer.

Abazi currently works at the Bremen Flüchtlingsrat, where he works with young refugees or young people with immigrant backgrounds. Drawing on his own experience, he is able to relate to their hardships and frustrations about the obstacles they face in trying to move forward. Speaking from both his work and personal insight, Abazi explains how important it is for refugee integration to be a two way street, a process that needs effort and compromise from both ends. This outlook influences Abazi's hopeful idea of what his version of an Utopia is: “The day that immigrants and refugees can come here, and are granted permission to work and study, and actually have a fair chance of integration.”

Abazi was photographed in front of Bremen's Roland statue because he recalls so clearly looking up at the Roland as a child, and thinking how magnificent and 'King-like' this founding figure was, and is to this day, still impressed by the statue's presence.



Femi Abazi, refugee from Montenegro

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BORDERLINES/GRENZLINIEN – Raul Gschrey

As a special guest, the project “borderlines” (“grenzlinien”), with three artistic positions, was represented at the Bremen exhibition. The works in the project broach the issues of demarcation and border crossing, in which the focus is upon the irregular border crossing and migration movements into Europe. The artistic positions are not to be understood as romantic visualizations, but rather refer to taking a position on the social and political problems along the european borders.



„maritime incidents“ by Heiko Schaefer

In front of the Kulturkirche, there were works from Heiko Schaefer (Berlin, Düsseldorf) and Michael Wagener (Frankfurt am Main), as well as documentation of the project. In the photo series “maritime incidents” Schaefer has indeed already begun to address the topic of irregular migration across the Mediterranean Sea. He now looks at Calais and the places and traces of migration at the heart of Europe in additional photos. Similar to his photographs of the upset refugee boats, sobering views are revealed upon closer inspection of the stories.

The 2-channel video installation “l'autre côté” by Katrin Ströbel (Stuttgart, Nice) was displayed at the Kulturkirche and presents a view over the sea – from France and from Senegal – while two brothers recount their personal stories of migration. In a third contribution to the project “borderlines”, Michael Wagener's “cartographies” create the world anew.

A publication has been released by curator Raul Gschrey:

grenzlinien. Edited by R. Gschrey and C. Taxer. Frankfurt am Main: gutleut verlag, 2013.

www.grenzlinien.com



CONTACTS & PARTNERS

Organizers: Municipality of Giessen
in co-operation with Traveling Summer Republic

Co-organizer: Cultural Church St. Stephen, Bremen
German-American Heritage Foundation, Washington D.C.
Missouri History Museum, St. Louis, MO

Project Manager and Academic Director
Dr. Ludwig Brake – City Archives of Giessen

Project Managers & Artistic Directors
Oliver Behnecke, Bremen
Peter Roloff, Berlin

Implementation Edition Maxim Bremen in collaboration with
City Archives Giessen with support from the
Cultural Office of the University Town Giessen

Scientific and artistic realization: Team of Traveling Summer Republic

Andrew Cook | translations | Berlin
Sala Deinema | curator film screenings | Berlin
Manuela Demmler | PR | Bremen
Annette Eidmann | organization, event programs | Gießen
Julia Erb | production assistant | Gießen
Christiane Gartner | youth projects | Bremen
Christoph Geiger | graphic design exhibition | Frankfurt
Timea Gremesperger | translations | Berlin
Manfred Hielscher | video installations VideoBook Dialog, video montage | Berlin
Dorris Keeven-Franke | Missouri liaison, research, text | St. Charles, MO
KULTURMASSNAHMEN | performance „The Message“ | Berlin
Andrea Kuserau | Utopia Library | Schweinfurt
Maja Maria Liebau | exhibition texts, video “8 and 16” | Bremen
Gale McKiddy | translations | St. Charles, Missouri
Gary McKiddy | educational programs | St. Charles, Missouri
Stephan Moskophidis | website | Berlin
Rita Rohrbach | educational syllabus | Gießen
Rolf Schmidt | research, text | Bremen
Ulla Schmidt | graphic design book | Berlin
Henry Schneider | research, dramaturgical advisor | Berlin

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Kilian Spiethoff | research, text | Bad Reichenhall
Esther Steinbrecher | staging & performance Travel Agency „Muss i denn
Tours & Cargo Trips“
Christian Weber | Utopia today | Berlin
Manuela Weichenrieder | production manager | Bremen
Hendrik Weiner | exhibition design | Bremen
Folker Winkelmann | photography | Bremen

Project partners:

CARGOTRANS (Bremen) GmbH – Internationale Spedition;
BLG Logistics Group, Bremen;
German Historical Institute, Washington D.C.;
Goethe-Institut Washington D.C.;
Embassy of Germany, Washington D.C.
Heinrich Böll Foundation Bremen;
Lindenwood University, St. Charles, MO;
Justus-Liebig-University of Giessen;
Chamber of Labor Bremen;
Bremer Rat für Integration
Landeszentrale für politische Bildung Bremen
grenzlinien.com
Filmbüro Bremen e.V.
Kultur Vor Ort e.V., Bremen;
Gesamtschule West Bremen
Neue Oberschule Gröpelingen, Bremen;
Liebigsschule Gießen;
Baltimore Immigration Memorial Inc.;
Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland;
Begegnungsstätte Schwanewede e.V.;
Museum Schloss Schönebeck;
German Heritage Club of Saint Charles County, Missouri;
St. Charles County Historical Society;
The Missouri Council for History Education
"Die Brücke" Deutsch-Amerikanischer Klub Gießen-Wetzlar e.V.;
German Emigration Center Bremerhaven

Exhibition funded by:

Transatlantic Program of the Federal Republic of Germany;
The Prime Minister of Hesse

Sub-Projects funded by:

Hessian Cultural Foundation (Hessische Kulturstiftung);
The Senator for Culture of the City of Bremen;
Chamber of Labor Bremen;
Hessian Ministry for Science and Arts;
Hessen Cultural Foundation (Gießener Kulturstiftung)

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TRAVELING SUMMER REPUBLIC

The Traveling Summer Republic (Reisende Sommer-Republik) is a free association of cultural workers, artists and researchers from Bremen, Giessen, Berlin, Missouri. They are united by the history of the Giessen Emigration Society, the strength of this utopian idea and the bridges in the presence. Since 2004, researches the Summer Republic of historic and artistic means of the Giessen Emigration Society.

Public launch in 2005 was the "Island Conference" on the Weser River Island Harriersand, a project application to the Bremen initiative as European Capital of Culture under the direction of Martin Heller. Since then the Summer Republic produced more than 100 events as well as books and films. Important events: "Island Congress" (2005), "Great Giessen Escape" (2006), "Ship Congress" (2009), "A Trip to a Forgotten Utopia" (2010), "Utopia Revisited" (2011).

The Traveling Summer Republics and his partners bring with the traveling exhibition Utopia the fascinating story of the Giessen Emigration Society to a wider audience – both stimulating and entertaining.

www.sommer-republik.de

TEAM

Dr. Ludwig Brake | Project Manager and Academic Director, historian, text | study of History, Political Science and English language and literature at the JLU University Giessen, dissertation on the early days of railway construction in Hesse, trained as a scientific archivist at the Archives School Marburg. Since 1991 Head of the Municipal Archives of Giessen. Since 2006 connected with Traveling Summer Republic | www.stadtarchiv.giessen.de

Publications (selection):

"50 Years of War: City and University of Giessen in the Reconstruction of 1945-1960", with Eva-Maria Felschow, Giessen 1997

"800 Years of Giessen History", ed. by L. Brake, Giessen 1997

Book and exhibit *"From the Castle to the Modern City: 800 Years of Giessen Urban Development – 1197 to 1997"*, William Bingsohn, Ludwig Brake, Heinrich Brinkmann. Edited by L. Brake. Giessen: Bruehl, 1998

Since 1995, editor of the historical series "Writings of Giessen City's History," in so far 10 volumes have appeared.

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Exhibitions – As a curator or substantive posts for various exhibitions, including:

The 50th anniversary exhibition of the WWII end in 1995: *“50 Years of War: City and University of Giessen in the Reconstruction of 1945-1960”*

Exhibition of the regional archives of the Giessen district (county): *“Leaving Is Always Arriving. Migration History of the Giessen district”*, 2001

Justus Liebig anniversary in 2003: *“Liebig in Giessen – From Outsider to Honor Citizen”*

100th anniversary of the City Theatre in 2007: *“On the History of Theater in Giessen before 1907”*

University Jubilee 2007: *“Antoniterkreuz and Winged Lion. City and University of Giessen on the Way to Dialogue from 1850 to 1920.”*

Work in progress: *“Catching a glimpse for forever. Giessen in the summer of 1890”*. Photographs from the Special Collections of Dickinson College, Pennsylvania, by Charles Francis Himes (1838-1918).

Oliver Behnecke | Project Manager & Artistic Director | festival producer, director, arts manager; graduate of applied drama at the Justus-Liebig-University Giessen. He led several science festivals and theater projects, co-founded the Traveling Summer Republic. | www.wissen-schafft-stadt.de | www.wir-entern.com, www.gaertnerpflichten.org | www.klub-dialog.de

Theater productions with performance groups *“showcase beat le mot”* and other in Hamburg, Berlin, Bochum, Hannover (1998/1999);

“New Era” (Giessen 2000): Imagine a city twisted the time... in Giessen night and day were reversed on the first weekend in July 2000, to celebrate the millennium in the middle of the year. 200,000 people participated in the event;

Science festival dedicated to the 200th birthday of the chemist Justus Liebig (Giessen 2003);

“Salon Education Bremen” (Bremen 2005) and *“City of Science Bremen_Bremerhaven”* (2005), education festivals as part of the Bremen European Capital of Culture bid for 2010;

“400 Years of University of Giessen” (2007), 400 events for the 400th Birthday of the University of Giessen with exhibitions, conferences, theater performances, concerts, scientific Sunday excursions and a large city-wide Festival of Science;

“Gardener Obligations” (Giessen 2010-2014): artistic and cultural planning process guidance on the way to the 5th Hessian State Garden Show;

Bremer Writers and Producers Award 2009 for the multimedia performance project *“We are boarding”*;

Since 2010, co-organizer *Klub Dialog Bremen* (platform of cultural and creative industries);

Since 2009, cultural management for the Justus-Liebig University of Giessen.

www.wir-entern.com | www.klub-dialog.de | www.gaertnerpflichten.org | www.wissen-schafft-stadt.de

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Peter Roloff | Project Manager & Artistic Director | graduate Media Studies at the University of the Arts Berlin, Film producer, writer and director, directs in Berlin and Bremen maxim film. National and international co-productions of documentary films and experimental hybrids. Board member of the Film Office Bremen. Developed with Oliver Behnecke the Traveling Summer Republic, www.maxim-film.de

Director, writer & producer (selected works):

Lost Water Parts 1-4 (Verlorenwasser 1-4) | 1990-2009| long-term documentary | 100 min. | 16mm | funding: Goethe Institute, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Cultural Film Fund Bremen. *Awards* Part 3 – Beautiful America (Krasna Amerika): Best Documentary – Palm Springs, USA; Best Short Film – Belo Horizonte, Brazil; Honorable Mention – Ann Arbor, USA; 3. Prize Audience Award for Documentaries – Selb, Germany

Peterchen's Moon Ride (Peterchens Mondfahrt) | 2007 | travelogue | 25 min. | HD | funding: Cultural Film Fund Bremen | FBW rating "precious"

The Villa (Die Villa) | 1977 | film poem | 6 min. | 35 mm | *Premiere*: Locarno International Film Festival, Switzerland | *Awards*: Eastman Kodak Award, New York EXPO; FBW rating "precious"

Producer for maxim film (selected works):

Kümmel Goes East (Kümmel baut) | 2011 | documentary | 92 min. | HD | Co-producer rbb TV and MDR TV; funded by: BKM German Federal Film Fund, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, Filmstiftung Northrhine-Westphalia, Cultural Film Fund Bremen. Festivals in 2011: Max-Ophüls-Award, Saarbrücken ,Germany | achtung berlin – new berlin film award | Babel Festiwal, Lodz, Poland | Leipzig International 2011, Germany | Kassel Film und Video Fest, Germany; Theatrical release: August 2011; DVD release June 2012; TV premiere September 2012

Farewell Quay (Kai des Aufbruchs) | 2010 | documentary | 80 min. | HD | funded by nordmedia Fonds in Lower Saxony and Bremen, Filmförderung Hamburg | US premiere: German-Texan Heritage Society, Austin | festivals: Istanbul Intern. Architecture and Urban Films Festival, Turkey; Göttingen International Ethnographic Film Festival, Germany

All About Tesla – The Research | 2009 | documentary | 81 min. | HD | funded by MEDIA Program of the EU, nordmedia Fonds in Lower Saxony and Bremen | festivals: Swansea, Wales; New Jersey, USA; Long Island, USA; Plymouth, USA; Great Lakes, USA | Belgrade Documentary Festival, Serbia

Alphonse Mucha – Art Nouveau Visionary | 2004 | 52 min. | DigiBeta | German-Czech co-production with NDR TV and Czech TV | festivals: International Festival of Films on Art, Québec, Canada; Pärnu Film Festival, Estonia | broadcasts: ARTE, NDR, Czech TV , Norway, Netherlands, Spain, Finland, Poland, Hungary

www.maxim-film.de

UTOPIA –Revisiting a German State in America – A Traveling Exhibition

PR contact: Manuela Demmler, pr@utopia-exhibit.net

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Utopia

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Ausstellungsreise auf den Spuren
einer deutschen Republik in den USA

Andrew Cook | translations | grew up in Canada. In 2004 he graduated from Carleton University's College of the Humanities, a 4 year interdisciplinary intensive study program focusing on history, philosophy, and language. Since then he has worked as an English teacher and translator in a variety of fields and projects. He currently resides in Berlin. Since originally hearing of the story he has been intrigued by the Giessen Emigration Society endeavor and feels a kind of kinship with these people who left for the other side of the world in search of their own Utopia.

Sala Deinema | curator film screenings | study of Film Studies, History and Japanese Studies at the Free University of Berlin, editor of film, video art, restoration/reconstruction of films, since 2005 curator of film screening series "Utopian Flickering", realized by the Summer Republic.

Manuela Demmler | PR | studies in Applied Theatre Studies at JLU Giessen. PR assistant at a Berlin communications agency, then press and PR work for "steptext" dance project in Bremen. Since 2011, self-employed in the fields of public relations and cultural management. www.manuelademmler.de

Annette Eidmann | organization, event programs | 15 years of training and working in Berlin and St. Petersburg (Russia). Studied political science at the Free University of Berlin with a focus Theory of Politics and Cultural Philosophy. Head of Department of Art and project support of the Cultural Office of Giessen. Participant in the journey "Great Giessen Escape" by Traveling Summer Republic in 2006. www.giessen.de

Christiane Gartner | Tandem Guides | studied social work and pedagogy in Brunswick. Realized as Managing Director and Project Manager for Kultur Vor Ort e.V., Bremen, projects like PINK House Bremen, studio house Red Rooster. Projects for cultural education for children, for example "Moving Mountains" in the St. Stephen's Church in Bremen. Since 2006, projects with the Traveling Summer Republic as "Lights of Shanghai", "Castle of Bremen", "The Great Giessen Escape". www.kultur-vor-ort.com

Manfred Hielscher | video installations, VideoBook Dialog, video montage | study at the University of the Arts Berlin with a focus on audio-visual communication / art and cultural history. Research and creative work on exhibition projects with a focus on body-image-history. Video works at the intersection of dance-theater performances. Education in media design. Since 2002 editor of short films and documentaries.

Dorris Keeven-Franke | Missouri liaison, research, text | lives in Saint Charles, Missouri, previously the archivist for the Saint Charles County Historical Society, a historian, journalist, book author, and professional genealogist. She writes for magazines and television, as well as a blog on the historical German emigration from Germany to Missouri. Currently concluding work on a biography of Gottfried Duden. Keeven-Franke directs the activities of the Traveling Summer Republic in Missouri since 2009. www.mo-germans.com

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Kulturmassnahmen | performance show "The Message" | Kulturmassnahmen is a Berlin-based group (Boris Jöns, Sebastian Orlac, Thorsten Schwarz) founded in 1997 that performs interdisciplinary events and actions, such as "The Show of Failure" (Die Show des Scheiterns) and "Giessen – the city of doctors". Their work focuses on the observation and staging of interpersonal communication. Kulturmassnahmen works with cultural and social institutions, in particular with theaters (including Munich Kammerspiele, Kampnagel Hamburg, Gorki Theater Berlin). Cooperation with Traveling Summer Republic since 2005. www.kulturmassnahmen.de

Andrea Kuserau | Utopia Library | lector for non-fiction and documentary films, studied European ethnology, gender studies, and communication in Berlin and Pécs/Hungary. Kuserau lives in Schweinfurt, Bavaria. Since 2005, management of the Utopian Library of Summer-Republic.

Maja Maria Liebau | exhibition texts, video "8 and 16" | studied at the Art Academy Düsseldorf, video / performance class Nam June Paik / Nan Hoover, and at the Free University Berlin philosophy and journalism. Then a fellow for dance and choreography with Merce Cunningham in New York, multidisciplinary art works at home and abroad, 1995 Diploma at the Institute for Applied Theatre Studies at JLU Giessen. Lives in Bremen, freelancer for text and cultural work. Film "Private Utopias" for the Island Congress 2005, since then more projects with the Summer Republic. www.denkenschreibenmachen.de

Rita Rohrbach | educational syllabus "Stay or Leave" | studied German and History in Göttingen, teacher since 1976 in the age groups 6 to 16 years. Educational Assistant at the Institute for the Teaching of History at the Justus Liebig University of Giessen. Scientific Advisor to institutions with pedagogical and didactic objectives. Author of textbooks and reference books on history teaching.

Rolf Schmidt | research, text | writer and since 1969 school theater director. He lives in Bremen. Schmidt realized for the Traveling Summer Republic dramatic work for youth theater, including "Waiting for Medora" (Island's Congress 2005). Author of "Der Auszug" (The Move – from the Weser River to the Missouri River, 2013) and "Warten auf die Flut" (Waiting for the Tide – a historical Harriersand novel, 2008); with Peter Roloff editor of the nonfiction book "Harriersand – Insel im Strom" (Harriersand – Island in the Stream, 2006).

Ulla Schmidt | graphic design book | industrial design degree at the Muthesius Hochschule in Kiel. Trade fair and exhibition design, book designs. Lives in Berlin. Developed and maintained since 2004, the visual appearance of Traveling Summer Republic.

Kilian Spiethoff | research, text | studied Modern and Contemporary History, the Historical Basic Sciences and Historical Media Studies, and Communication Studies at the Ludwig-Maximilians University in Munich. 2013 Master of Arts (MA). MA thesis on the early political development of the brothers Karl and August Follen. Lives in Bad Reichenhall, Bavaria.

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Esther Steinbrecher | Travel agency „Muss i denn Tours & Cargo Trips | born 1972 in Erbach / Odenwald, Germany, lives in Berlin. Studied Applied Theater Studies at the Justus-Liebig-University Gießen, diploma in 1998, since then freelance director. Steinbrecher writes and directs stage plays, shows and performances, which always move in the bizarre tension between comedy and tragedy, between the province and metropolis, To Be or Not Be. www.steinbrecher.com

Christian Weber | **Utopia Today** | studies Political Science, Maths and Education at the Free University Berlin. 2012 B.A. of Arts in Political Science and lives in Berlin. His main topics relate to Political Philosophy and Economy. He has experiences with Political Education.

Hendrik Weiner | **exhibition design** | studied Architecture at Leibniz University Hanover. 2004-2005 worked at Institute for Integrated Design Bremen (Design Planning und Management). Taught at Keimyung University of Daegu, South Korea (environmental design), Leibniz University Hanover (theory of architecture) und University of Fine Arts Bremen (temporary architecture). Since 2003 freelance artistic projects. In 2008 founder of company „raumdialog – gebaute kommunikation“ in Bremen. Since 2011 doctorate in city development (urban metamorphosis). www.raumdialog.com

Folker Winkelmann | **photography** | photographer and member of the North Photographers Group. Exhibition participation "local north" 2009/10 (Landesmuseum Emden, State Museum Oldenburg, Nordwolle Museum Delmenhorst). Single exhibitions "A Trip to a Forgotten Utopia" in Hamburg, Bremen, Washington MO. Project photographer of the Traveling Summer Republic since the very beginning. www.folker-winkelmann.de



Grand opening in Bremen on 5 April 2014. From left: Maja Maria Liebau, Esther Steinbrecher, Manuela Demmler, Rolf Schmidt, Hendrik Weiner, Oliver Behnecke, Ludwig Brake, Folker Winkelmann, Anaïs Marie Perier, Klaus Seifert, Helen Klinge, Peter Roloff

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