

Titanic 1912: Soundings in Global and Media History

An interdisciplinary symposium 100 years after the sinking of the luxury liner as a transnational media event

30 March-01 April 2012, Munich

organization: Dr. Nic Leonhardt
Global Theatre Histories Project
Ludwig Maximilians-Universität München

CALL FOR PAPERS

In the night of the 14 to 15 April 1912, the *R.M.S. Titanic* sank, the second luxury liner, after the *Olympic*, of the White Star Line, which, from the late 19th century, operated shipping lines between America and Europe. The maiden voyage had been eagerly awaited, and marketed worldwide. Newspaper articles, illustrations, technical reports, and product advertising had all contributed to generating global public attention even before the ship was launched. Well-heeled and famous passengers, among them many international figures from media, business, and the arts, who travelled the transatlantic trade routes, functioned as additional magnets of attention. However great the expectations surrounding the launching were, they were surpassed by the global reception after the sinking. Already on the morning following the disaster, a multifaceted medial, artistic, literary, and ideological reaction began, which has determined the controversial debate on the sinking of the luxury ship to this day. The event crystallised the practical aspects of the infrastructure of the transatlantic trade routes for theatre and media, for the ensembles, managers, producers, actors, designers, and film crews had been using ships as the only usual means of transport for their companies since the late 19th century. Already in June 1912, only two months after the catastrophe, Mime Misu directed the first Titanic film, *In Nacht und Eis* ('In the Night and Ice'; working title: *Titanic*; atelier of the Continental Kunstfilm GmbH, Berlin). But other media and arts – among them "old" media such as Magic Lantern projections, theatre, painting, as well as newspapers, products of popular culture, advertising – took up the event immediately.

The focus of the two-day symposium *Titanic 1912 - Soundings in Global and Media History* is the examination of the *Titanic* catastrophe from an interdisciplinary, global and media historical perspective. Although the disaster has been recalled in recent years by James Cameron's hit film *Titanic* (1997, with Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet), the conference is concerned explicitly with the immediate medial and artistic resonance prior to the event (i.e. 1911-1912, which helped determine the impact of the catastrophe) and the global reception and treatment directly afterward in the media, arts, and literature (1912-1914).

Contributions from the history, global economic history, theatre studies, film studies, media studies and history, the literature, and art history are welcome. A public film showing, or a magic lantern show, or both, are planned for the opening evening.

Suggestions for lectures are requested in the form of abstracts (German or English, approx. 300 words; please mention the medium and material to be used); a short biography is also requested.

The deadline for submission is 15 December 2012.

Coordination and Contact:

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