



Entwurf für ein Großfilmlustspiel
Design for film setting

HERLTH

Robert Herlth, the best known architect of the Ufa displays his opinion of a film problem much discussed in the present time

FILM ARCHITECTURE AND PICTORIAL FORM

I've heard it used these 15 years—that strange term "the film as a work of art"—and I came from art to the film.

It was a good joke at the time and brought a smile of satisfaction to business men's faces. Now that honest endeavour is coupled with understanding the cry passes for an ethical postulate. The slogan is general—advice plentiful and multifarious. With this catchword on their lips they troop to every fresh venture in the studio—but the film remains what it was: a vague something—partly almanac, partly documentary, picture book and captions.

How is this possible?

At one time—that of the silent film—all its devotees held the postulate to have been fulfilled for once in the form of "Caligari", or at any rate in some measure. But whatever form the film assumed later: it was just when it was most desirous of being artistic, when it was a brilliant epitome of all the styles of period or fashion that it fell far short of its aim.

It was then that an attempt was made to create an externally decorative film style with "Die Nibelungen", and possibly with "Faust", dynamic pictorial expression inspired by the film content. Others (the Russians) solved the problem by using pictures as symbols. Thus the film seemed to be taking definite form: the pictorial. For what essentially distinguishes the honest masterpiece