

Document Citation

Title	Liebelei
Author(s)	Christopher Adcock
Source	<i>Los Angeles International Film Exposition</i>
Date	1978
Type	program note
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Liebelei (Flirtation), Ophüls, Max, 1933

1978 L.A. Int'l Film Expo.

Austria

17F 11:15 pm Monday, April 17



Liebelei

1932. 1.33 format. 88 min.

In German with English subtitles

Director: Max Ophüls / Screenwriters: Hans Wilhelm, Curt Alexander, from the play by Arthur Schnitzler / Cinematographer: Franz Planer / Music: Theo Mackeben / Principal Cast: Wolfgang Liebeneiner, Magda Schneider, Luise Ullrich, Willy Eichberger, Paul Pörebiger / Production Company: Elite Tonfilm / Print Source: Images, Inc. / Special Restoration: Film Technology Company

Liebelei is a story in the grand manner, set in the enchanting atmosphere of Vienna in 1910; and, like all great love stories, it is a tragedy. Based on a play by Arthur Schnitzler and directed by Max Ophüls, the film was released in the Germany of 1933 with neither of those names on the credits, as both men were Jewish. Not suprisingly, this was Ophüls' last German film. Ironically, the film itself was banned after the war by the allied censorship board on the grounds that any treatment of the military should remain on the shelf, and this in spite of the strong anti-militaristic feelings in the film.

The story of young love embodied in a handsome lieutenant and a Viennese girl conflicts with the severity of the military code of honor. The visual charm of old Vienna and the beauty of the romance enacted there are overshadowed by the fatalism in the execution, a conviction that such charm and beauty cannot last. In Ophüls' later work, such a fatalism is evident in his dark and brooding melodramas. In *Liebelei* Ophüls creates a seemingly timeless world that he and the viewer can feel slipping away even as both are drawn into it, if only for a moment.—*Christopher Adcock*