

Paul Graetz (1890-1937), the captivating performer of cabaret monologues and songs by Kurt Tucholsky and Walter Mehring, was one of the great stars of the cabaret during the Weimar era. He was a central figure in the first democratic, political cabaret *Sound and Smoke* (*Schall und Rauch*) in 1919-1921, after which he appeared in Trude Hesterberg's *Wild Stage* (*Wilde Bühne*), the *Charlott Casino*, and the *Cabaret of the Comedians* (*Kabarett der Komiker*)—alongside countless film and theater roles. The “quintessential Berliner of all Berlin comics” (Kurt Tucholsky) became a popular institution, a model for everyone who earned the moniker “a sharp tongue with a heart.” His trademark was his unique staccato style, with which he mastered even the complex linguistic syncopations of Walter Mehring. The creator of the modern spoken song emigrated in 1933 and died in Hollywood in 1937, of “a broken heart over the loss of his Berlin homeland” (Ernst Toller).

Janis Greck

“Paul Graetz—and the evening is worthwhile and rapturous. Vigorous, brazen, exhaustive, bursting with spirit. A proletarian trumpet, clowning with genuine wit, bubbling improvisations with the tempo of automobiles, versatile, vibrating, caustic.” (*Vossische Zeitung*, 1920)

