

Karl Valentin (1882 - 1948) fascinated intellectuals as well as simple people beginning with his first performances in the Munich pub cabaret Simpl in 1906. Valentin explored the borders between cabaret, popular theater and clowning; he was a thought-twister and "Linkskomiker" (Kurt Tucholsky), an anarchic and philosophical clown. After studying carpentry, he toured with his partner Liesl Karlstadt from 1911 to 1935. In the twenties he had a national breakthrough with his guest appearances in Berlin's Cabaret of the Comedians (Kabarett der Komiker). After 1933, he was viewed with suspicion by the Nazis, and his Chamber of Horrors (Panoptikum) and his own cabaret The Knight's Dive (Ritterspelunke, 1939/40) failed ultimately, he withdrew from the stage for seven years: "I won't say a word, at least they'll allow me to say that much."

Karl Valentin

"His asthmatic 'non-singing voice' is the most exciting voice. With profound consternation, it leads from nonsensical texts like 'Dawn, Dawn' straight up to the yawning chasm of the deepest human sadness." (Hermann Hesse)

