

Claire Waldoff (1884 - 1957) was Berlin's favorite singer and popular actress for some thirty years on all of the city's stages. Besides her theatrical roles, this "original talent" (Alfred Kerr) was a guest artist in many cabarets and music halls before she withdrew into private life, thanks to repeated disruptions of her concerts by Nazi thugs. Until 1918, she was the star of Roland of Berlin and the Linden Cabaret, with songs like "His Name's Herman" ("Hermann heesst er"). In the twenties she sparkled in the Cabaret of the Comedians (Kabarett der Komiker) or Erik Charell's revues, seemingly the personification of Berolina and a "singing Heinrich Zille" in numbers by Kurt Tucholsky or Friedrich Hollaender. She gave her last performances after 1933 in the Scala and the Winter Garden (Wintergarten). The bourgeoisie, the working class, and the intellectuals alike loved this quintessential Berlin woman hailing from the coalmines of the Ruhr, whose singing could switch from impudent growling to soft tenderness.

Claire Waldoff

"Berlin's West side and its East side, the sophisticate and the masseuse, never side by side but always synthesized into one character: That's Waldoff!" (Harry Kahn, 1910)

