

***Ostalgie* on TV: *Ein Kessel DDR* [A GDR Potpourri] (August 20, 2003)**

Abstract

The success of the movie *Good Bye, Lenin!* prompted a whole wave of *Ostalgie* (nostalgia for the former East Germany) television shows during the summer of 2003. On August 17, the station ZDF kicked things off with its *Ostalgie-Show*; on August 22, *Mitteldeutsche Rundfunk* [Central German Broadcasting] premiered *Ein Kessel DDR* [A GDR Potpourri]. Private broadcasters also got in on the action: starting on August 23, Sat.1 aired two episodes of *Meyer and Schulz – the Ultimate East Show*; and starting on September 3, RTL aired four episodes of *The GDR Show*. In October 2003, two “special GDR episodes” of the program *Kalkofes Mattscheibe* [Kalkofe’s Idiot Box] brought the *Ostalgie*-wave to a satirical conclusion. While *Ostalgie* shows portrayed some aspects of the SED-dictatorship, they focused on everyday life and consumer and popular culture to ensure sufficient entertainment value.

The show *A GDR Potpourri* (its title being a reference to the popular East German variety show *A Colorful Potpourri*) was hosted by former East German speed skater Franziska Schenk (left) and Dresden singer Gunther Emmerlich (right). The show was produced by the firm of former *Bild* editor-in-chief Hans-Herrman Tiedje. *A GDR Potpourri* was heavily criticized by GDR civil rights activists, who feared that presenting the GDR in an entertaining light would lead to a downplaying and “trivialization” of the SED-dictatorship.

Source



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