

Josephine Baker Caricature from the Magazine *Ulk* (November 16, 1928)

Abstract

Except for the small number of Germans who had settled or visited the colonies before 1918, most Germans had only encountered Africans in the *Völkerschauen*, the traveling carnival exhibits that took a paternalistic view of black Africans and their “primitive” customs and culture. But when African-American and French colonial soldiers arrived on World War I battlefields, all of that changed, and after the war, the German fascination with blacks was generally accompanied by patronizing and racist attitudes. Josephine Baker, a black American performer whose *Revue nègre* created a sensation in Berlin and all over Europe, was seen as the embodiment of both an unspoiled, primitive naturalism and urban modernity. This caricature of a white German woman aspiring to look like Baker appeared in *Ulk*, a satirical magazine published by Rudolf Mosse from 1872-1933. The drawing is by artist Dörte Wolff (who signed her artworks DoDo). The caption reads: “I already have Josephine’s figure. Now it just takes one of Emil’s hysterical fits, until I’m black and blue, and I’ll be there.”

Source



Source: Drawing by DoDo (Dörte Wolff), *Ulk*, no. 46, November 16, 1928.

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