

# Carl Hagenbeck's Zoo in Hamburg (1911)

## Abstract

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Carl Hagenbeck, jr. (1844-1913) inherited his father's exotic animal trading business, the largest in Europe at the time. In 1874 he opened his first zoo in Hamburg, where he did not only exhibit animals but also indigenous people from various parts of the world. These widely advertised ethnographic exhibits were called *Völkerschau* [ethnic shows] and drew large crowds. Sometimes they featured performances of dances or customs, or even staged mock-battle scenes, but other exhibits were little more than human zoos. In 1907 Hagenbeck opened a new zoo in Stellingen near Hamburg. It was the first zoo that did not use barred cages to exhibit animals but featured open enclosures surrounded by moats instead, as can be seen in this film. In addition to life-sized dinosaur replicas, the footage also includes an ethnographic exhibit of an "Indian temple," a structure built to look like Hindu temple ruins where Indian men and women can be seen in traditional clothing. Indigenous people in these *Völkerschau* exhibits were usually recruited by Hagenbeck and his local agents and paid to participate in the exhibits. The film was shot by Louis Held (1851-1927), a successful photographer based in Weimar who also began shooting short documentary films in the early twentieth century.

## Source

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Source: *Carl Hagenbecks Tierpark in Stellingen bei Hamburg*, camera: Louis Held, 1911. Bundesarchiv Filmarchiv; <https://digitaler-lesesaal.bundesarchiv.de/video/7330/672018>

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