

Verbundkatalog Kalliope

Mann, Erika

New York, 1942-03-05

Nutzungsbedingungen

Bei zahlreichen Dokumenten auf monacensia-digital.de sind die Urheberrechte bereits abgelaufen. Sie sind gemeinfrei und dürfen ohne weitere Rücksprache mit der Monacensia weiterverwendet werden. Bei den Dokumenten, bei denen noch Urheberrechte bestehen, müssen für eine Weiterverwendung stets die Rechteinhaber*innen angefragt werden sowie eine Publikationsgenehmigung der Monacensia eingeholt werden. Das Zitatrecht bleibt hiervon unberührt.

Zur Erteilung einer Publikationserlaubnis wenden Sie sich bitte an:

Monacensia im Hildebrandhaus
Literaturarchiv
Adresse: Maria-Theresia-Straße 23, 81675 München
E-Mail: monacensia.literaturarchiv@muenchen.de

Terms of use

The copyrights for numerous documents on monacensia-digital.de have already expired. They are in the public domain and may be reused without further consultation with Monacensia. In the case of documents for which copyrights still exist, the copyright holders must always be contacted for further use and publication permission must be obtained from the Monacensia. The right to quote under copyright law remains unaffected by this. To obtain permission for publication, please contact:

Monacensia im Hildebrandhaus:
Literaturarchiv
Address: Maria-Theresia-Straße 23, 81675 München
E-Mail: monacensia.literaturarchiv@muenchen.de

Erika Mann
118 East 40th Street
Caledonia 5-1000
New York City
March 5th, 1942.

Dear Bob Sherwood:

I am afraid I'll have to give up for the moment being. As things stand, I don't have a chance to be of any help or use, and I feel too strongly about all matters at stake as to sit still, drawing a handsome salary from the government, and let it go at that.

The German department is fully staffed. Dr. Hoellering is not only in charge of the daily 15-minutes-show, he's also responsible for all short wave programs in as far as they emanate from the G.I.O. Various assistants are at his disposal. The production part is under the care of Mr. Hausman who, on his part, is aided by a German director. Quite obviously there is no space left for an additional "consultant". Despite all this I've tried my best to contribute whatever knowledge or talent I may possess, and to prove my readiness to work. I've written "reports", "outlines", and "suggestions" on end; I've spent half a night preparing a raw-translation of Archibald MacLeish's play, just because none of the translators seemed to be available and because I was determined not to refuse any kind of work. Yet I could never help feeling that there was no real function for me in the present setup, in which nobody - including myself - was able to detect just what my position was and what I was supposed to do.

I need not tell you that this state of affairs is disappointing to me. For I believed - and still believe - that my experiences - collected in nine years of propaganda work - might have enabled me to be of some help. For instance: if only I ~~would~~ ^{had} been allowed to see the finished script of "Voices from America" before it was recorded, to "consult" with those in charge on possible improvements, and to help with its daily production, I would have felt my presence at the G.I.O. to be worthwhile. But, as it went, I never saw the script before it had already gone to London, and I never participated in its production, as a German director was especially engaged for that purpose. And so I didn't have a chance, either as a writer, or as a producer, actress, or broadcaster.

The only opportunity I was finally given had nothing to do with "Voices from America", but concerned the short-wave-programs for which I was to write a few pieces. However, I am too familiar with the situation in Germany and German-occupied countries, as not to realize the futility of the short wave-enterprise with regard to the general German speaking public. As I've repeatedly pointed out, there exist only five groups of people who possess short wave receivers, namely, Nazi-officials, big industrialists,

air-men, navy-men, and radio-professionals. Our short-wave-programs should, consequently, be addressed to those five groups and not to "the people". To talk, for instance, to Germany's women via short-waves, or to write short-wave-propaganda for the German middle-classes, is, in my opinion, a rather hopeless enterprise. And to devote one's time and strength to the making of "propaganda" which cannot be heard, is sadder than to write poetry exclusively for one's own drawers.

So, that's that. I very earnestly beg you to believe that I was, and still am, more than willing to help wherever I can. Please remember this if you see any possibility for me to do so. As soon as you give me any definite job, I should certainly not fail you. To be a "consultant" with no one to consult with and nothing to consult on, is too honorary a position as to be called a "job".

As ever, yours very sincerely