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Zürich, 1964-08-09

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Kantonsspital, Room A 75
Zürich

August 9th 1964

Dear Kay, -

isn't jolly old David Merrick the limit ? Personally, I don't quite believe that his hatred for the German film was his true reason for failing us. There is too big a difference between a German movie and an American Musical for this motivation to make much sense. Nor do I think Merrick and his lawyers ever believed "Felix" to be in the public domain. More probably they were looking for a way out even then. Let's not be discouraged, though. And I do admire your plug in persuing the thing.

As for that complete list of our properties available for pictures and dramatization, I shall try my best. Here goes:

Novels: "Royal Highness" about which I wrote you early this year; "Joseph and his Brethren", a tetralogy and eminently suitable for the films. This particular movie would be entirely different from all "biblicals" ever made or ever likely to be done. The work makes human beings of everyone of the ancient creatures it is concerned with; there is a lot of humour; also there is rather a "shocking" and hopeless love story; there is practically everything. To my mind "Joseph" has never been done in Hollywood because they didn't know how to do it without stealing from "Joseph and his Brethren".

Next question: "The Beloved Returns". This is a novel dealing with Goethe and his old time beloved, Lotte. Possibly, Goethe isn't well enough known in the US as to make the book a promising project. On the other hand, it's a good story and would possibly do even without Goethe's fame.

Finally, "Doctor Faustus", the tale of a composer who is almost a genius but finds it impossible quite to reach the heights his ambitions are longing for. So he sells his soul to the devil by catching - inadvertendly ? - v.d. The pact with the devil is an actual scene, though it takes place in a somewhat unreal atmosphere. And the v.d., the illness heightens the composer's genius to the desired degree. The devil, however, gets him in the end, and he dies an insane man. A lot more could and should of course be said about this novel and its filmish aspects. At first sight one would think the work far too intellectual as to be suitable for the screen. But the story proper would lend itself to an adaptation. It's just that I am afraid nobody connected with the films would be willing to read it.

Long short stories: "The Transposed Heads". This is based on an Indian legend, and at one time some company in India was very interested in an American co-production. The story is rather phantastic but full of blood and drama. Besides, it has its very funny aspects. T

The rest of the short stories are either too short or you are already familiar with them. "Mario and the Magician" would make a good film, "Death in Venice" will make one, or so we hope, and "Tonio Kröger", a German-French co-production has just been chosen for Venice. It was among the twelve movies selected out of a 125. The director and my ill little self wrote the screen play.

I am a trifle disquieted about José Ferrer's payments. Shouldn't he have payed \$ 6000 on August 1st ? And what about the ~~sum~~ 1'000 agreed upon between Joe Besch and myself ? Perhaps we'd better rush them a bit.

As ever yours fondly,

PS. All is still clouded regarding "The Magic Mountain". We are now fighting to get the rights back . Shall we win, I'll let you know.

