

Jürgen Ohlsen

Titles: 2 Sources: 1 Stills: 2

Born: Germany; c1919



"HITLERJUNGE QUEX" – the slightly rakish tilt to the cap the only surviving vestige of humanity in a portrait as cold and hard as a rifle butt. Source: Moving Picture Boy

The Moving Picture Boy entry:

““One of the few amusing things about the Third Reich was the trouble it had in finding the right "image" to project to the German people and the wider world. The fact that Josef Goebbels had a club foot and looked like one of the cruder anti-semitic caricatures in "Der Stürmer" (and that a leading Nazi was called Rosenberg) was awkward. So were the party's problems with heroes: the first famous

Nazi "martyr", Horst Wessel, was known to be a pimping thug.

In a nation teeming with blond, blue-eyed children, it's similarly ironic that the great boy-icon of the Nazi cinema was played by a boy with a Danish surname. (Later, when they wanted a "perfect German boy" for propaganda films in the 1940s, they chose the Swedish-born Gunnar Müller. One would almost have thought they were exercising

positive discrimination in favour of racial minorities - blond ones, of course.)

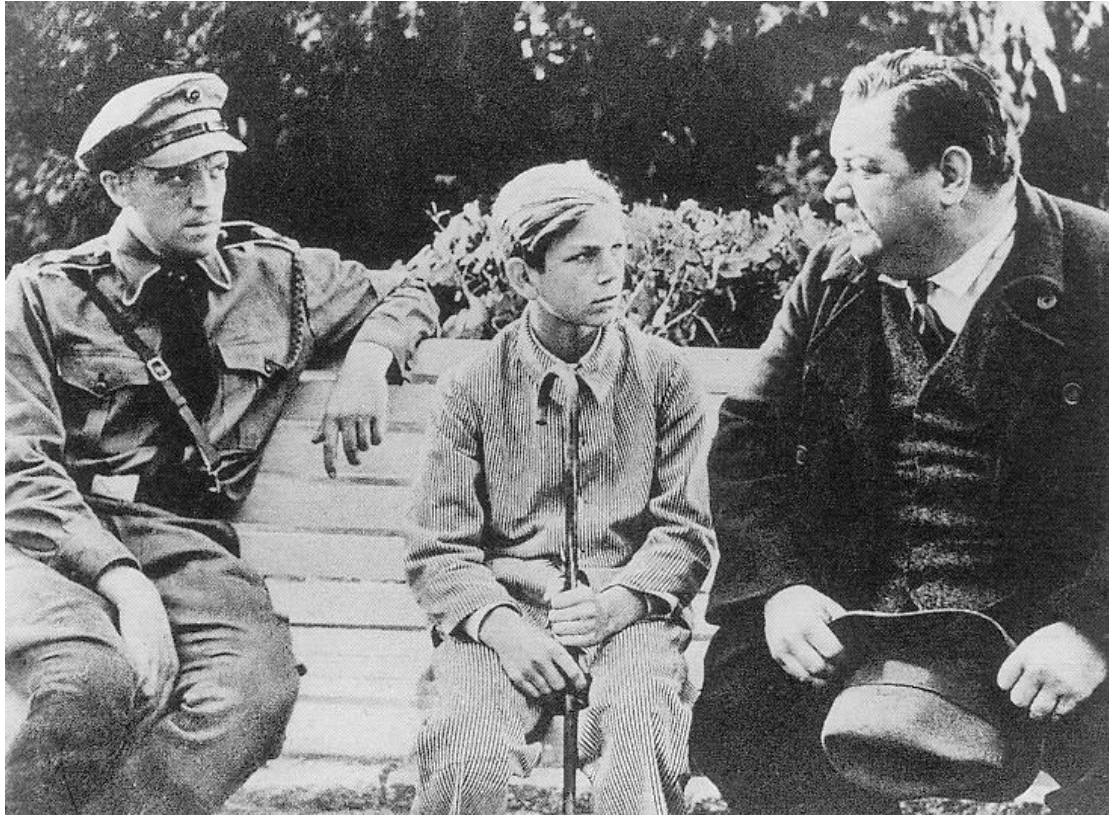
"**HITLERJUNGE QUEX**" (from a book of the same name) was based on a real-life killing which had shocked Berlin a year earlier. A 12-year old schoolboy called Herbert Norkus, out in the streets at dawn sticking up posters for a forthcoming Nazi meeting, was viciously set upon, knifed and left to die by a group of Communist roughs. Goebbels instantly spotted the propaganda potential of a boy martyr; he made a moving oration over Herbert's grave and hailed him as a model for the idealistic youth of Germany.

The Nazi cinema badly needed a success after the flop of its first "emblematic" film, "**S.A. MANN BRAND**", earlier in 1933, from which all but the already converted stayed away in droves, and which was generally considered fatuous. "**HITLERJUNGE QUEX**" was to be another matter: based on a true case which lingered in the national memory, and directed by the expert Hans Steinhoff.

Who was to play "Quex"? (This, short for "Quecksilber" - quicksilver, from his tireless zeal for the Party - was the nickname of the film's young hero, Heini Völker, poor Norkus's reincarnation.) A teenage actor called Hermann Braun was picked for the part, but fell ill just as filming started and was replaced, with glamorous mystery, by a boy billed simply as "ein Hitlerjunge", though referred to by those in the know as "Jürgen".

This was Jürgen Ohlsen, a boy a year or two younger than Braun, who had been spotted sunbathing by the Wannsee. He was suitably blond and handsome, but with a disarmingly gentle, innocent air which was a propagandist's godsend. He had never acted, but played his scenes with expressive simplicity. Even in his H.J. uniform he looked the perfect sacrificial lamb. (Still photographers had a job producing the defiantly heroic image which ended up on the posters.)

Jürgen Ohlsen appeared a couple of years later, under his own name, in one more film: "**WUNDER DES FLIEGENS**", in which he played a teenage glider pilot. He survived World War Two (unlike the hapless Hermann Braun) and was last heard of living in Austria."



Torn – but not for long – between Party and father: the young “Quex”

Source: The Moving Picture Boy

FILMOGRAPHY

<i>Year</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Role</i>
deb 33		HITLERJUNGE QUEx ("Hitler Youth Quex")	in title role, Heini Volker
	35	WUNDER DES FLIEGENS ("The Wonder of Flight")	with <i>Hans Richter, Rolf Wenkhaus</i>