

HISTORY

CAPITAL B – WHO OWNS BERLIN?

5 × 52' (ENG)

The exciting and entertaining story of how Berlin became the city it is today.

Let yourself be amazed by this gem of a documentary series! A chronicle of housing and life in the metropolis, East-West tensions, urban dreams and nightmares. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, Berlin has taken many detours to transform itself from a rather provincial city into a global metropolis that today resembles both a boomtown and an ungovernable zone. It is a story of idealism and megalomania, of activism and the power of capital, of social advancement and exclusion. CAPITAL B takes us into the slipstream of a unique city and into the battles that have been waged passionately and relentlessly in Berlin for thirty years over one question: Who owns this city?

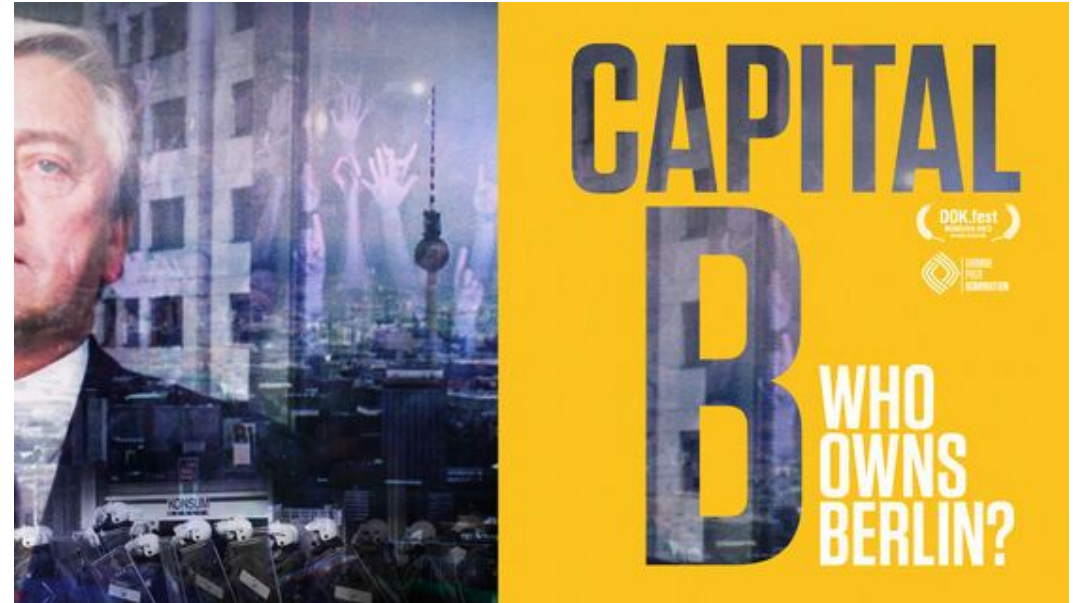
"Astonishment. Amazement that something like this is still being produced and broadcast on television. Capital B. asks the questions that matter." Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung

"It is impressive how this series manages to elegantly create connections between the top and the bottom despite all the complexity of the events" Zeit.de

"fabulous research" Media magazine DWDL.de

"Capital B also makes you very much aware of the difference between documentary film art and your average journalistic TV documentaries." TAZ- die tageszeitung

"Great art ... multi-skeletal urban sociology ... artfully assembled ... the new symphony of a big city" SZ - Süddeutsche Zeitung



"A Must-Watch!" TAZ - die tageszeitung

"Elaborately researched....Showing us all the big picture for the first time"
Spiegel Online

"So dense, so rich in images and so rich in contrasts ... A must-see for anyone
who wants to understand the Berlin of today" Berliner Zeitung

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Partners:	arte, rbb, WDR

1. Summer of Anarchy

November 1989: The Berlin Wall has barely fallen when the battles over the future of the newly divided city and the distribution of the newly created spaces and opportunities begin: Vain provincial politicians, enterprising real estate developers, and battle-hardened squatters from the West, but also freedom-seeking young techno pioneers from East and West. They all try to seize the opportunity and stake their claims among the derelict Wall sites, dilapidated old buildings, and abandoned industrial plants of a vanished country. For the subculture, it is a brief summer of anarchy in which anything seems possible, in which utopia and chaos lie close together. But the old power elites of West Berlin put an abrupt end to this in a major police operation. The dream is over.

2. Delusion of grandeur

In 1991, Governing Mayor Eberhard Diepgen is re-elected. He and the head of the CDU parliamentary group, Klaus Landowsky, a secret string puller of Berlin politics, dream of making Berlin a world metropolis again. While East Berlin's GDR industry and hundreds of thousands of East Berliners were being put out of work from one day to the next, money-hungry investors from the West were hoping for big business and taking unprecedented risks. In their slipstream, techno pioneers and squatters in the center of Berlin conquer empty factory halls, churches and cinemas to live their utopias. The Love Parade turns from a ridiculed event of a few dance enthusiasts into a success story. Berlin becomes the German capital and, on top of that, applies to host the 2000 Olympics. This is too much for the citizens of the poor city and drives the left-wing scene to the barricades. The fact that Nazis are increasingly hunting down foreigners and leftists in the eastern part of the new German capital does not fit in at all with the image of the international metropolis. Politicians continue to adhere undeterred to their plans and are having the symbol of their metropolitan dreams cast in concrete built in the heart of the city, at Potsdamer Platz. But Europe's largest construction site on the former death strip can only hide the fact: Dark clouds are gathering in the new German capital.

3. Crash

The West Berlin elite around Mayor Diepgen and the powerful Klaus-Rüdiger Landowsky cemented their power in the mid-1990s and celebrated themselves at big parties in the concrete cathedrals of the city's many large construction sites. But the boom they hoped for failed to materialize in the capital. The truth is bitter: Berlin is not a world metropolis in the mid-nineties, but the capital of kebab stalls. Districts like Kreuzberg, Wedding and Neukölln have been left behind and threaten to degenerate into ghettos with their majority migrant and unemployed populations. Crime and gang fights are the order of the day. In the middle of it all: Savas Yurderi aka Kool Savas, who soon becomes Germany's most influential rapper. The only thing that works commercially in Berlin is techno, the first German-German youth culture, which has long since arrived in the mainstream. The Love Parade and clubs like the Tresor conquer the hearts of European youth from Berlin's Mitte. The number of visitors to the Love Parade doubles from year to year.

4. Poor, but Sexy!

"I'm gay and that's a good thing!" After the Berlin banking scandal swept away the somewhat fusty power duo of Eberhard Diepgen and Klaus Rüdiger Landowski in 2001, a new style is entering politics with the charming and also power-conscious Klaus Wowereit: Loose on the outside, but tough on the inside. The lost bets of the 1990s and the dubious dealings of his predecessors and the Berliner Bankgesellschaft have plunged the city into a deep financial crisis. To save money, the smart mayor looks for and finds an ice-cold en-forcer whom hardly anyone knows at the time: his name is Tilo Sarrazin. Another duo at the helm of the city: the friendly party mayor and the iron-fisted savings commissioner. The rough and poor image of the tough city of Berlin has long been exploited by young Berlin hip-hop artists around Kool Savas and his buddy Sido. They turn it into hard-hitting and often explicit Berlin battle rap and make it their trademark. And Berlin's techno and party scene also experiences a renaissance, moving from Berlin's cramped Mitte to a new location full of industrial wasteland: Bar 25 opens and kisses the fallow banks of the Spree awake. In a short time, it becomes famous worldwide and contributes in no small way to Berlin's new image: "Berlin is poor, but sexy". And lo and behold, the slogan works. Berlin's new image attracts tourists and creative people, but also triggers unprecedented conflicts.

5. The City as Loot

In the last decade, capital is conquering the city. While a financial crisis is keeping the world in suspense from New York, the opposite is happening in Berlin, to the surprise of many. The city is booming. Finally. To the delight of Klaus Wowereit, the mayor of Berlin, who had just advertised Berlin as "poor but sexy," Berlin is attracting not only tourists but also investors from all over the world and is becoming a real estate dorado worth billions. After years of stagnation and decline, it is suddenly growing at breakneck speed. Berlin's citizens and the club scene are feeling the downside of the boom: first clubs are being displaced by financially strong investors, then the residents. The citizens' fight against displacement, gentrification and for a city that continues to be worth living in becomes the overriding issue of the decade. Meanwhile, Klaus Wowereit, the mayor of Berlin, who seems increasingly distracted, no longer understands his citizens and makes himself the laughing stock of the entire world with a ruined building that was to become a major airport and the district of Neukölln becomes a symbol of failed migration policy and criminal clan criminality. And as if that were not enough, at the beginning of the new decade a worldwide pandemic puts the city, now truly a world metropolis, into a state of shock that changes everything.