

Elisabeth Gottowt, né Adler

Elisabeth Adler was born on 11 November 1883 in Gothenburg, Sweden. Her pet name was Lisa. She had two brothers and two sisters. All three girls were educated artists. Her mother Johanna Adler in 1877 founded and ran a flourishing milk enterprise (ARLA) in Gothenburg (which she sold to the farmers in 1936 and used the money to establish a student support foundation which exists up to now) and so Lisa grew up in a wealthy family. Her oldest brother Axel took care of the family company so the sisters could study art abroad.

Lisa moved to Munich, Germany where she met her later husband Isidor Gesang. Isidor studied architecture in Munich. Yet he dearly wanted to become an actor, so the young couple moved to Vienna where Lisa continued her art studies. Here their first child Nils was born in 1904.

Lisa's sister Elvira and her brother Axel came down to Vienna to convince Lisa to come home to Sweden but it was too late, Nils was already born. Elvira Adler fell in love with Isidor's best friend, Henrik Galeen, who was also Jewish. Henrik Galeen was an author and wrote the script to F.W. Murnau's film *Nosferatu* (1922).

Axel Adler loved Vienna, he stayed for a year and founded one of the first cinemas in Austria, the "Welt-Biograph-Theater" at Stubenring in Vienna.

Lisa and Isidor – under his stage name John Gottowt meanwhile a famous character actor in films and at theaters in Berlin, Vienna and Munich - moved to Berlin where they had three more children, Eva and Johanna in 1906 and Olaf in 1907. Around 1911 the family returned to Munich. Lisa went to an art school and one of her classmates was Adolf Hitler. As Max Reinhardt offered John a permanent position as actor and director at "Deutsches Theater" in Berlin they moved back to Berlin and the family lived at Dernburgstrasse 50 (after the war the street number was changed to no. 7) and that's the place their children remember as their childhood home in Charlottenburg, Berlin.

During the First World War Lisa lived in Berlin where she was taking care of her four children while her husband served in the German army at the front for four years. Having family money from Sweden she was financially safe. In 1926 Lisa and John's daughter Hanna, with 20 years, won the first prize and a medal from the North German Skiing Association as the best cross-country athlete in 1926. The Gottowt family, just like the Einstein and Brecht families who lived in the neighborhood, had a rowing boat at the Lietzensee, a great fun for all of them.

In 1933 Lisa Adler got a warning from an insider who came to her house and urged her to leave Berlin the same day. He said he had seen her name on a list for her to be arrested the next morning. She left Berlin immediately (all her children lived in Sweden by then) and spent the rest of her life in Sweden where she passed away in 1981 at the age of 98.

Stolperstein donor and text: Harriet Williams, Sweden, granddaughter of Elisabeth Adler and John Gottowt

Sources: <https://www.geni.com/people/Lisa-Adler/6000000006337629146>
<https://gw.geneanet.org/karosenius?lang=de&n=adler&oc=0&p=anna+maria+elisabeth+lisa>

Photos: Family property