

RTL GROUP ^{The} Golden Lion

The Golden Lion weighs 2.5 kg (5.5 lbs) with base and is 26 cm high. It was originally designed and cast by the Luxembourg painter/sculptor Auguste Tremon in 1958.

- The Radio Luxemburg Lions were first presented on 17 March 1959.
- RTL presenter and *Schlager* singer Camillo Felgen is regarded as the inventor of the Lion Awards. Felgen, a native of Luxembourg, began his career in 1946 as a news presenter on RTL Radio. He was appointed the first Programming Director of the new German-language radio station 'Radio Luxemburg' in 1958. Here, he presented the RTL Hitparade from 1958-1963.
- The Lion was commissioned by Claude Fischer, who was then Director of the German Programming department. Others documented as contributing to the idea were Camillo Felgen, Helmut Stoldt (CEO of IPA) and the former Head of PR at IPA, Gerd von Hassler.
- Originally, the Lions were presented to the most successful stars of the von Radio Luxemburg Hitparade, based on sales figures and ranking and frequency of appearance in the Hitparade.
- From 1959-1995, they mainly went to German and international artists in the *Schlager* (German pop music) and pop music genres. From 1990, other categories for achievements in TV and politics were added. In the early 1990s, the restructuring and breakdown of *RTL Radio* into the oldies station *RTL – Der Oldiesender* and the more hit-oriented *104.6 RTL Berlin* resulted in the addition of awards for 'Oldies', 'Cover Versions' and 'Latest Hits'.
- Past winners of Golden Lions and Honorary Lions are: Abba, Peter Alexander, Lale Andersen, Bee Gees, Roy Black, Rudi Carrell, Drafli Deutscher, Fats Domino, Fischer Chöre, Connie Francis, Hans Dietrich Genscher, Rex Gildo, David Hasselhoff, Heino, Gitte Henning, Ernst Huberty, Michael Jackson, Curd Jürgens, Udo Jürgens, Peter Kraus, James Last, Vicki Leandros, Peter Maffay, Nana Mouskouri, Eros Ramazotti, Chris Rea, Walter Scheel, Caterina Valente, Otto Waalkes, and others.
- Freddy Quinn: "I keep all my Lions in a bank safe because they mean so much to me." Howard Carpendale: "My Lions are displayed in the glass cabinet in my manager's office. They're safe there – and I'm happy every time I see them." Former German president Walter Scheel won an Honorary Lion in 1974 and has used it as a classy paperweight ever since.
- In the 35 years between 1959 and 1995, the Lion Awards developed into a glamorous media event with grand ceremonies, and simultaneously became the world's most successful radio extravaganza. When RTL turned the Lions loose, 10,000 fans were on hand at the Gruga Hall in Essen (and later at Dortmund's Westfalenhalle).



- In 1998, the Golden Lion merged with the Telestar TV award administered by WDR (1985-1998). This merger resulted in the *Deutscher Fernsehpreis* – German TV Award – which was called into being by the CEOs and Directors of ARD, RTL, Sat.1 and ZDF 1999. The founders were Gerhard Zeiler, Prof. Dr. h. c. Dieter Stolte, Fred Kogel and Fritz Pleitgen. In 2009, the German TV Award celebrates its tenth anniversary.
- International stars weren't always popular at the Lion Awards: in 1969, Dusty Springfield performed to boos and whistles from the audience, which demanded "Valen-te". David Cassidy suffered a similar fate in 1973, with the audience insisting on "Hei-no" instead. By the same token in 1981 the audience refused to let the runner-up, Silver winner Roland Kaiser, off the stage, frenetically celebrating him with chants and sparklers. Minutes later, the Golden Lion winner Visage from England scored unmistakable displeasure and a mere spattering of polite applause.
- The 59th and last RTL Lion Awards presentation was held in 1995. It was moderated by Jochen Bendel and Hans Meiser.
- From 1959-1994 (= 35 years of RTL Lions), 58 Galas were celebrated and 227 Lions presented. Originally, Lions were presented twice a year; from the beginning of the 1980s only once a year. The 'Lion King' is Freddy Quinn, who won 15 Lions.



A statue of the Golden Lion in front of RTL Group's Corporate Centre in Luxembourg

Lions Laureates

- **Freddy Quinn** is the Lion King. He was presented with a total of 15 Lions: 8 x Gold, 3 x Silver, 3 x Bronze, 1x Honorary Lion.
- **Roy Black** won 13 RTL Lions.
- **Golden Lions:** Petula Clark, Udo Jürgens, Bee Gees, Peter Alexander, Heintje, Roy Black, Abba, Queen, Mireille Mathieu, Boney M., Peter Maffay, Nino de Angelo, Bryan Ferry, David Hasselhoff
- **Silver Lions:** Nana Mouskouri, Mireille Mathieu, Cliff Richard, Howard Carpendale, Roland Kaiser
- **Bronze Lions:** Dalida, Adamo, Sacha Distel, Vicky Leandros, Caterina Valente
- **Honorary Lions:** Walter Scheel, James Last, Rudi Carrell, Otto Waalkes, Heino, Chris Rea
- **Political Lions:** Johannes Rau, Hans-Dietrich Genscher