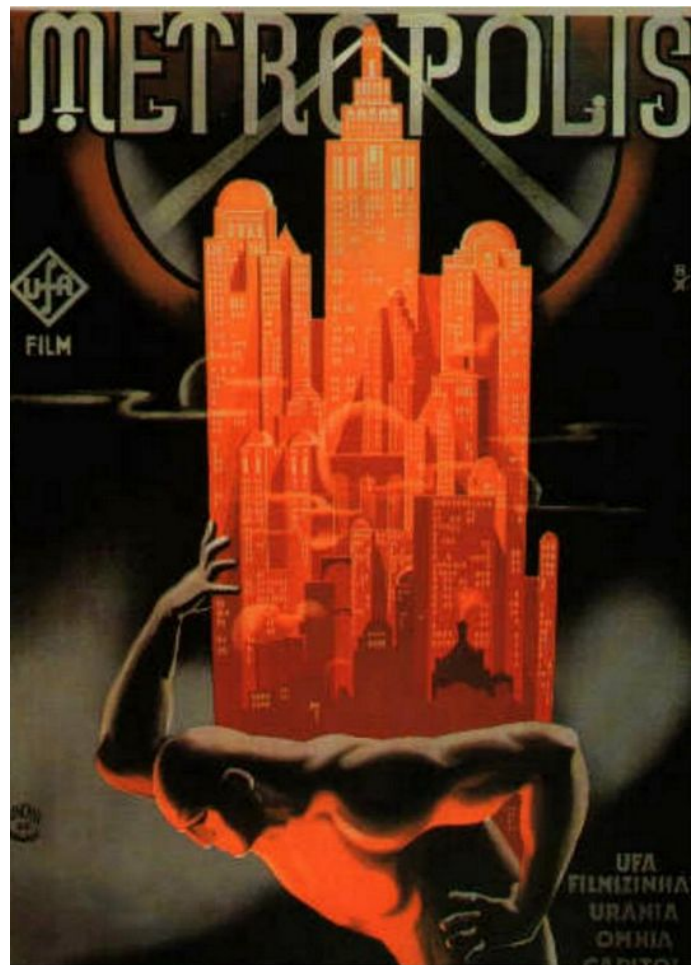


**DIRECTED BY** Fritz Lang  
**WRITTEN BY** Thea von Harbou & Fritz Lang  
**PRODUCED BY** Erich Pommer  
**CINEMATOGRAPHY BY** Karl Freund, Walter Ruttmann, Gunther Rittau  
**ART DIRECTION BY** Otto Hunte, Erich Kettelhut, Karl Vollbrecht  
**COSTUME DESIGN BY** Aenne Willkomm  
**SPECIAL EFFECTS SUPERVISED BY** Ernst Kunstmann  
**MUSIC COMPOSED BY** Gottfried Huppertz (1927) and Benjamin Speed (2005/2011)

**Alfred Abel...** Joh Fredersen  
**Gustav Fröhlich...** Freder, Joh Fredersen's son  
**Rudolf Klein-Rogge...** C. A. Rotwang, the inventor  
**Fritz Rasp...** The Thin Man  
**Theodor Loos...** Josaphat  
**Erwin Biswanger...** 11811 - Georgy  
**Heinrich George...** Grot, the guardian of the Heart Machine  
**Brigitte Helm...** The Creative Man/The Machine Man/Death/The Seven Deadly Sins/Maria

**FRITZ LANG** (December 5, 1890, Vienna, Austria-Hungary [now Austria] – August 2, 1976, Los Angeles, CA) directed 46 films, some of which are *The 1,000 Eyes of Dr. Mabuse* (1960), *The Tomb of Love* (1959), *Beyond a Reasonable Doubt* (1956), *While the City Sleeps* (1956), *Moonfleet* (1955), *Human Desire* (1954), *The Big Heat* (1953), *The Blue Gardenia* (1953), *Clash by Night* (1952), *Rancho Notorious* (1952), *American Guerrilla in the Philippines* (1950), *House by the River* (1950), *Secret Beyond the Door...* (1947), *Cloak and Dagger* (1946), *Scarlet Street* (1945), *The Woman in the Window* (1944), *Ministry of Fear* (1944), *Hangmen Also Die!* (1943), *Man Hunt* (1941), *Western Union* (1941), *The Return of Frank James* (1940), *You and Me* (1938), *You Only Live Once* (1937), *Fury* (1936), *Liliom* (1934), *The Testament of Dr. Mabuse* (1933), *The Last Will of Dr. Mabuse* (1933), *M* (1931), *By Rocket to the Moon* (1929), *Spies* (1928), *Metropolis* (1927), *Kriemhild's Revenge* (1924), *Siegfried* (1924), *Dr. Mabuse: The Gambler* (1922), *Destiny* (1921), *Vier um die Frau* (1921), *Das wandernde Bild* (1920), *Die Spinnen, 2. Teil - Das Brillantenschiff* (1920), *Harakiri* (1919), *Die Spinnen, 1. Teil - Der Goldene See* (1919), *Der Herr der Liebe* (1919), and *Halbblut* (1919). He wrote or cowrote 36 of them.



**THEA VON HARBOU** (December 27, 1888, Taupelitz, Germany – July 1, 1954, West Berlin, Germany) wrote the scripts of or novels or stories that were the basis of 77 films, among them *The Terror of Doctor Mabuse* (story) (1960), *Dein Herz ist meine Heimat* (1953), *Affairs of Dr. Holl* (1951), *Annelie* (1941), *Jugend* (1938), *Prinzessin Turandot* (1934), *The Testament of Dr. Mabuse* (1933), *M* (1931), *By Rocket to the Moon* (novel "Frau im Mond") (1929), *Metropolis* (novel / screenplay) (1927), *Siegfried* (1924), *Dr. Mabuse: The Gambler* (1922), and *Frauen vom Gnadenstein* (1920).

**KARL FREUND** (Cinematographer. January 16, 1890, Koniginhof, Austria-Hungary [now Dvur Kralove, Czech Republic] – May 3, 1969, Santa Monica, CA) won a best cinematography Oscar for *The Good Earth* (1938). He did 143 other films and tv series, among them "I Love Lucy" (1951-1956), "Our Miss Brooks" (1952-1956), "December Bride" (1955), "Willy" (1954-1955), *I Love Lucy* (1953), *Montana* (1950), *Key Largo* (1948), *The Thin Man Goes Home* (1945), *The Seventh Cross* (1944), *A Guy Named Joe* (1943), *Cry 'Havoc'* (1943), *Du Barry Was a Lady* (1943), *Tortilla Flat* (1942), *Pride and Prejudice* (1940), *Parnell* (1937), *The Good Earth* (1937), *Camille* (1936), *Air Mail* (1932), *Murders in the Rue Morgue* (1932), *Dracula* (1931), *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1930), *Berlin: Symphony of a Great City* (1927), *Metropolis* (1927), *Manon Lescaut* (1926), *Tartuffe* (1925), *Jealousy* (1925), *The Last Laugh* (1924), *Tiefland* (1922), *The Golem* (1920),

*Catherine the Great* (1920), *Frau Eva* (1916), *Zapata's Gang* (1914), and *Gipsy Blood* (1911).

**WALTER RUTTMANN** (Cinematographer. October 22, 1877, Hanau, Germany – September 15, 1954, Berlin, Germany) is known primarily as a director. Some of his 32 films are *Deutsche Panzer* (1940), *Deutsche Waffenschmieden* (1940), *Aberglaube* (1940), *Düsseldorf* (1936), *Stuttgart* (1935), *Melody of the World* (1929), *Berlin: Symphony of a Great City* (1927), *Spiel der Wellen* (1926), and *The Victor* (1921).

**GUNTHER RITTAU** (Cinematographer. August 7, 1893, Königshütte, Germany [now Chorzów, Poland] – August 6, 1971, Munich, Germany) is credited as cinematographer on 68 films, some of which are *Die fidelen Detektive* (1957), *Children, Mother, and the General* (1955), *S.O.S. Sahara* (1938), *Lady Killer* (1937), *Winter in the Woods* (1936), *F.P.I. Doesn't Answer* (1932), *A Blonde's Dream* (1932), *Bombs Over Monte Carlo* (1931), *The Blue Angel* (1930), *Melody of the Heart* (1929), *Asphalt* (1929), *Metropolis* (1927), and *Siegfried* (1924).

**GOTTFRIED HUPPERTZ** (Original 1927 Score. March 11, 1887, Colonia, Germany – February 7, 1937, Berlin, Germany) has 11 film composer credits: “Die Reise nach Metropolis” (TV documentary) (1927 score), *Durch die Wüste* (1936), *The Green Domino* (1935), *Der grüne Domino* (1935), *Hanneles Himmelfahrt* (1934), *Elisabeth und der Narr* (1934), *The Judas of Tyrol* (1933), *Metropolis* (1927), *The Chronicles of the Gray House* (1925), *Kriemhild's Revenge* (1924), and *Siegfried* (1924).

**ALFRED ABEL** (Joh Fredersen. March 12, 1879, Leipzig, Germany – December 12, 1937, Berlin, Germany) appeared in 137 films, some of which are *Mrs. Sylvelin* (1938), *Millionäre* (1937), *Und du mein Schatz fährst mit* (1937), *Das Hofkonzert* (1936), *Maria, die Magd* (1936), *Skandal um die Fledermaus* (1936), *The Burning Secret* (1933), *Dope* (1932), *The Gala Performance* (1932), *Montparnasse Girl* (1932), *Narkose* (1929), *Cagliostro - Liebe und Leben eines großen Abenteurers* (1929), *Mein Herz ist eine Jazzband* (1929), *L'argent* (1928), *Strauss, the Waltz King* (1928), *Rasputins Liebesabenteuer* (1928), *Art of Love* (1928), *Eine Nacht in Yoshiwara* (1928), *Dancing Vienna* (1927), *Ein Tag der Rosen im August* (1927), *Tragödie einer Ehe* (1927), *A Modern Dubarry* (1927), *Metropolis* (1927), *Die lachende Grille* (1926), *Der Herr Generaldirektor* (1925), *Die Frau im Feuer* (1924), *Mensch gegen Mensch* (1924), *Die Buddenbrooks* (1923), *The Princess Suvarin* (1923), *The False Dimitri* (1922), *Bigamie* (1922), *The Phantom* (1922), *Dr. Mabuse: The Gambler* (1922), *Lotte Lore* (1921), *Der schwarze Graf* (1920), *Tagebuch meiner Frau* (1920), *Eine junge Dame aus guter Familie* (1919), *Lucas, Kapitel 15* (1919), *Die Dame, der Teufel und die Probiermamsell* (1919), *Nur ein*

*Schmetterling* (1918), *Die nach Glück und Liebe suchen* (1918), *Lola Montez* (1918), *Das Spiel ist aus* (1916), and *Sodoms Ende* (1913).

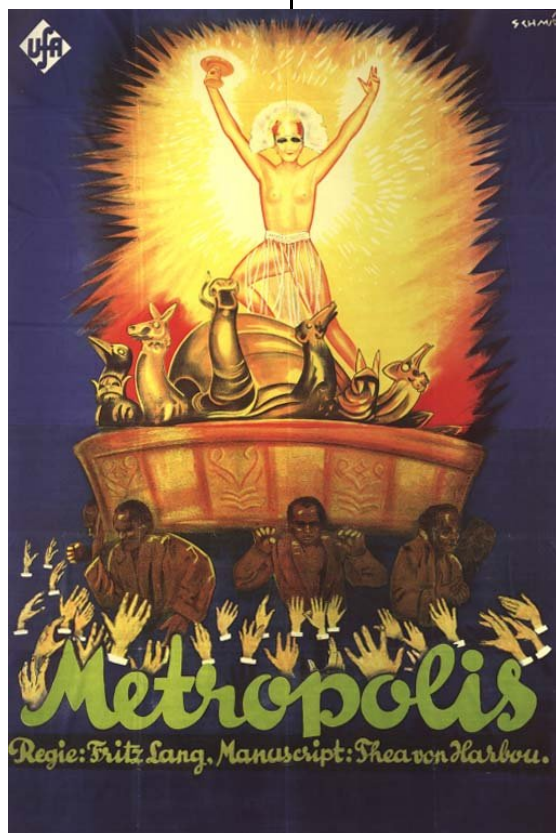
**GUSTAV FRÖHLICH** (Freder, Joh Fredersen's son. March 21, 1902, Hannover, Germany – December 22, 1987, Lugano, Switzerland) appeared in 111 theatrical and television films, some of which are “Schicht in Weiß” (1980), “Laubenkolonie” (1968), “Die Dubarry” (1963), “Das Kriminalmuseum” (1963), “Der neue Talar” (1961), ...und keiner schämte sich (1960), *Adventures in Vienna* (1952),

*Torreani* (1951), *This Man Belongs to Me* (1950), *Der große Fall* (1949), *Secrets of a Soul* (1948), *Der große Preis* (1944), *Familie Buchholz* (1944), *Tolle Nacht* (1943), *Mit den Augen einer Frau* (1942), *Der große König* (1942), *Sechs Tage Heimaturlaub* (1941), *Alarm auf Station III* (1939), *Adieu Vienne* (1939), *Alarm in Peking* (1937), *Abduction* (1936), *Stradivari* (1935), *Gardez le sourire* (1933), *Liebeskommando* (1931), *Die heilige Flamme* (1931), *Kismet* (1931), *The Master of Nuremberg* (1927), *Metropolis* (1927), *Schiff in Not* (1925), *Paganini* (1923), and *De bruut* (1922).

**RUDOLF KLEIN-ROGGE** (C. A. Rotwang, the inventor. November 24, 1888, Cologne, Germany – April 30, 1955, Graz, Austria) appeared in 87 films, the last of which was *Hochzeit auf dem Bärenhof* (1942). Some of the others were *Kora Terry* (1940), *The Heart of a Queen* (1940), *Kennwort Machin* (1939), *Zwei Frauen* (1938), *Cat Walk* (1938), *The Yellow Flag* (1937), *Madame Bovary* (1937), *Der Kaiser von Kalifornien* (1936), *Between Heaven and Earth*

(1934), *The Testament of Dr. Mabuse* (1933), *The Last Will of Dr. Mabuse* (1933), *Eine Nacht in Yoshiwara* (1928), *Das Mädchen aus Frisco* (1927), *The Loves of Casanova* (1927), *The Gypsy Baron* (1927), *Metropolis* (1927), *Der Mann seiner Frau* (1926), *Siegfried* (1924), *Dr. Mabuse: The Gambler* (1922), *Der schwarze Graf* (1920), *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920), *Morphium* (1919), *Der Film von der Königin Luise - 2. Abteilung: Aus Preußens schwerer Zeit* (1913), and *Der Film von der Königin Luise - 1. Abteilung: Die Märtyrerin auf dem* (1913).

**FRITZ RASP** (The Thin Man. May 13, 1891, Bayreuth, Germany – November 30, 1976, Grafelfing, Germany) appeared in 115 films and TV programs, among them *Lina Braake* (1975), “Tatort” (1971), “Gestern gelesen” (1969), “Herodes und Marianne” (1965), “Eine Dummheit macht auch der Gescheiteste” (1959), “Die Heiratskomödie” (1955), *Paracelsus* (1943), *Einmal werd' ich Dir gefallen* (1938), *Togger* (1937), *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1937), *Decoy* (1934), *Little Dorrit* (1934), *Charley's Aunt* (1934), *Border Patrol* (1934), *The Judas of Tyrol* (1933), *Emil und die Detektive* (1931), *Die 3 Groschen-Oper* (1931), *Les frères Karamazoff* (1931), *The Dreyfus Case* (1930), *By Rocket to the Moon* (1929), *Diary of a Lost Girl* (1929), *Der Hund von Baskerville* (1929), *Docks of Hamburg* (1928), *The Prince of*



*Rogues* (1928), *Der letzte Walzer* (1927), *Metropolis* (1927), *Torments of the Night* (1926), *Comedians* (1925), *Menschen am Meer* (1925), *Youth... Amandus* (1922), and *Schuhpalast Pinkus* (1916).

**THEODOR LOOS** (Josaphat. May 18, 1883, Zwingenberg, Germany – June 27, 1954, Stuttgart, Germany) appeared in 198 films, some of which are *The Maharajah's Blonde*, *Rosen aus dem Süden* (1954), *Der Fall Molander* (1945), *Shiva und die Galgenblume* (1945), *Philharmonic* (1944), *The Dismissal* (1942), *Rembrandt* (1942), *Jud Süß* (1940), *White Slaves* (1937), *Stradivari* (1935), *The Legend of William Tell* (1934), *The Judas of Tyrol* (1933), *The Testament of Dr. Mabuse* (1933), *Death Over Shanghai* (1932), *Rasputin*, *Demon with Women* (1932), *Die andere Seite* (1931), *In the Employ of the Secret Service* (1931), *M* (1931), *Zwei Menschen* (1930), *Luther* (1928), *Anastasia*, *the False Czar's Daughter* (1928), *Prinz Louis Ferdinand* (1927), *Metropolis* (1927), *Manon Lescaut* (1926), *Our Heavenly Bodies* (1925), *Kriemhild's Revenge* (1924), *Siegfried* (1924), *Friedrich Schiller - Eine Dichterjugend* (1923), *Youth* (1922), *Othello* (1922), *Das Haus in der Dragonerstrasse* (1921), *Das Buch des Lasters* (1917), *Das Haus der Leidenschaften* (1916), *Im Schützengraben* (1914), *Die Eisbraut* (1913), and *Das goldene Bett* (1913).

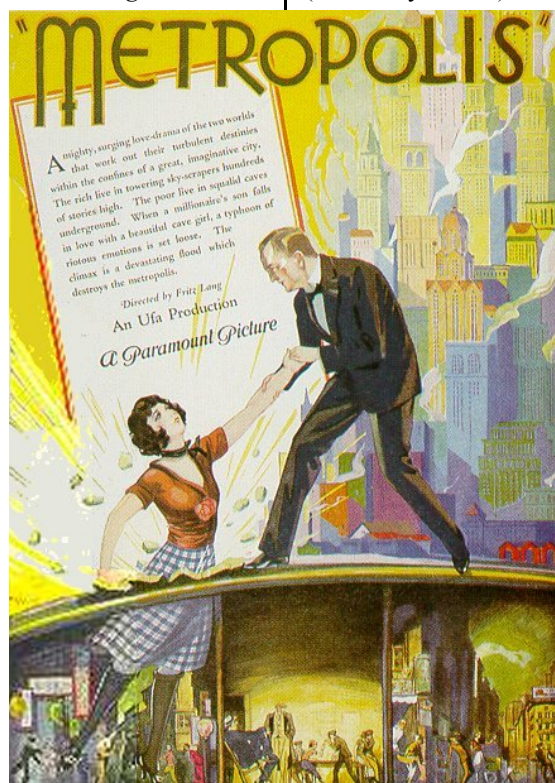
**ERWIN BISWANGER** (11811 – Georgy. November 26, 1896) has 9 acting credits: *Metropolis* (1927), *In Treue stark* (1926), *Op hoop van zegen* (1924), *Kriemhild's, Revenge* (1924), *Siegfried* (1924), *Erdegeist* (1923), *Unter Räubern und Bestien* (1921), *Uriel Acosta* (1920), and *Morphium* (1919).

**HEINRICH GEORGE** (Grot, the guardian of the Heart Machine. October 9, 1893, Stettin, Germany – September 26, 1946, Sachsenhausen, Germany) appeared in 81 films, some of which were *Kolberg* (1945), *Das Mädchen Juanita* (1945), *Der Verteidiger hat das Wort* (1944), *Wien 1910* (1943), *Schicksal* (1942), *Pedro soll hängen* (1941), *Friedrich Schiller – Der Triumph eines Genies* (1940), *Jud Süß* (1940), *The Brigands* (1940), *Sensationsprozess Casilla* (1939), *Magda* (1938), *Das Mädchen Johanna* (1935), *The Growing Youth* (1933), *Our Flags Lead Us Forward* (1933), *Berlin-Alexanderplatz - Die Geschichte*, *Franz Biberkopfs* (1931), *The Dreyfus Case* (1930), *Der Andere* (1930), *Kinder der Straße* (1929), *Bigamie* (1927), *Metropolis* (1927), *Orient Express* (1927), *Superfluous People* (1926), *She* (1925), *Lola Montez, die Tänzerin des Königs* (1922), *Lucrezia Borgia* (1922), *Kean* (1921), *Lady Hamilton* (1921), and *Der Roman der Christine von Herre* (1921).

**BRIGITTE HELM** (The Creative Man/The Machine Man/Death/The Seven Deadly Sins/Maria. March 17, 1906, Berlin, Germany – June 11, 1996, Ascona, Switzerland) appeared in 39 films, the last of which was *Wie im Traum* (1978). Some of the others were *Ein idealer Gatte* (1935), *Fürst Woronzoff* (1934), *Gold* (1934), *Adieu*

*les beaux jours* (1933), *Die schönen Tage von Aranjuez* (1933), *L'étoile de Valencia* (1933), *Spies at Work* (1933), *Three on a Honeymoon* (1932), *Queen of Atlantis* (1932), *The Blue Danube* (1932), *Manolescu - Der König der Hochstapler* (1929), *L'argent* (1928), *Secrets of the Orient* (1928), *Yacht of the Seven Sins* (1928), *Am Rande der Welt* (1927), and *Metropolis* (1927).

**FRITZ LANG** from *World Film Directors Vol.1*. Ed. John Wakeman. The H.W. Wilson Co., New York, 1987. Entry by Philip Kemp Austrian-American director and screenwriter, was born in Vienna, the only child of middle-class parents. His father, Anton Lang, was a municipal architect. His mother, Paula Schlesinger Lang, had been born Jewish but had converted to Catholicism early in life. Lang was educated at the local *Volksschule* (primary school), and moved on to the *Realschule* (secondary school) in 1901, where he specialized in architecture,



since Anton Lang intended his son to follow the paternal calling. “Yet I had heard too many of his complaints about the disadvantages of his profession to feel much enthusiasm at the prospect,” Lang said. His own ambition at the time was to become a painter. He was also, like his parents, a regular and enthusiastic theatre-goer.

Early in adolescence Lang suffered a serious illness, during which he had a vision of Death. As he later described it: “I saw myself face to face, not terrifying, but unmistakable, with Death. Made of black and white, light and shade, the rib cage, the naked bones...I don’t know whether I should call the fear I experienced at that moment one of fear. It was horror, but without panic...I recovered quickly. But the love of death, compounded of horror and affection...stayed with me and became part of my films.”

Still following his father’s wishes, Lang enrolled in 1908 at the *Technische Hochschule* to study

architecture. He was very soon bored and instead began studying art at the Vienna Academy of Graphic Arts, where he was strongly influenced by Klimt and Egon Schiele. He also made the most of other opportunities that Vienna offered. “I was precocious and started having affairs very early. Viennese women were the most beautiful and the most generous women in the world.” To help pay for his studies, Lang occasionally worked as master of ceremonies at two of the city’s cabarets, *Femina* and *Hölle* (Hell). This activity finally exhausted his father’s patience, so around 1909 Lang ran away from home—“something every decent young man should do”—and made his way to Brussels, where he lived by selling sketches in the cafés.

After unwittingly getting himself involved in an art-faking racket, Lang headed for Munich, where he studied art at the School of Arts and Crafts under Julius Dietz. In 1910 he embarked on a long sea journey, which took him to North Africa, Asia Minor, China, Japan, and Bali. On his return to Europe he settled in Paris, renting a studio in Montmartre and studying at the Académie Julien. He made a living by designing clothes and selling postcards,

watercolors, and cartoons, and also began to take a serious interest in the cinema: “I already subconsciously felt that a new art...was about to be born.” Painting, though, was still his main interest, and he was preparing his first exhibition when war was declared. Lang just managed to get himself on the last train across the French border and safely back to Vienna, when, despite defective eyesight, he as called up for active service in the army.

Promoted to lieutenant, Lang served on the Russian, Balkan and Italian fronts, received several wounds (one of which cost him the sight of his right eye) and various decorations. “For four years I saw life stripped to its rawest, hunger and desperation and death—scenes that neither fiction nor the screen can ever picture.” While in military hospital he began writing film scripts and sold two of them to Joe May, at that time one of Germany’s leading producer-directors....

Early in 1918 Lang was declared unfit for further service. Whiling away his time in Vienna, he was offered a part in a Red Cross play, and after driving the fee up to 1,000 kronen he accepted. Among the audience was Erich Pommer, head of the Decla film company in Berlin. Pommer was unimpressed with Lang’s acting ability but struck during a subsequent meeting by his ideas on the cinema, and offered him a contract with Decla as a scriptwriter.

Lang arrived in Berlin shortly in September 1918, shortly before the end of the war. His first scripts for Decla...were all three directed by Otto Rippert, and received good reviews. By the time they were released, Lang had already persuaded Pommer to let him direct a film. *Halbblut* (*The Half-Caste*, 1919), filmed in five days to Lang’s own script, was a triangular melodrama with its apex the half-caste of the title, first of the many *femmes fatales* in Lang’s films. No prints of *Halbblut* are extant, nor of his next picture, *Der Herr der Liebe* (*The Master of Love*, 1919), of which little is known; but both were successful enough for Pommer to let Lang embark on a major production, the first episode of an adventure serial, *Die Spinnen* (*The Spiders*).

The influence of Feuillade (whose *Fantômas* series Lang would have seen in pre-war Paris) and of Hollywood’s Pearl White-style cliffhangers can be detected in the episodic, comic-book construction of *Die Spinnen*. The first part, *Der Goldene See* (*The Golden Lake*, 1919), contained all the standard ingredients: a sinister, all-powerful secret society, with masked minions to execute its nefarious designs; a (supposedly) irresistible and demonic temptress; and intrepid and resourceful hero; hidden Inca treasures, exotic locations, last-minute rescues, human sacrifices, snakes, all thrown together with a blithe disregard for verisimilitude or narrative structure. The acting was none too subtle, either. But Lang and Pommer evidently knew their public; the film was hugely successful on release, establishing Decla as one of the major German companies.

Before continuing *Die Spinnen*, Lang was assigned to direct *Harakiri* (1919), a version of David Belasco’s oriental weepie, *Madame Butterfly*, on which Puccini had based his opera.

The film survives only in one fragile, rarely shown print, but was praised at the time for its “vivid realistic picture of life as it is.” Lang’s next film was to have been *Das Kabinett des Dr. Caligari* (1919), on the scenario of which he collaborated; but distributors were clamoring for the next part of *Die Spinnen*, and *Caligari*, much to Lang’s disappointment went instead to Robert Wiene. *Das Brillantenschiff* (*The Diamond Ship*, 1920), episode two of *Die Spinnen*, provided the mixture as before, with an even more convoluted plot.

By this stage in his career Lang had already evolved his working method, which entailed meticulous preparation of every aspect of filmmaking. Carl de Vogt, who played the hero of *Die Spinnen*, noted that Lang “was dominated by a fanatical love for the cinema and the demands he made on his actors were enormous....In contrast to other directors he always knew exactly what he wanted.

He was indefatigable in his work and never self-indulgent.” Theo Lingen, another of Lang’s actors, recalled that “one did what one was told to do to the letter of the timetable, by which I mean that no improvisation was tolerated. Everything...was fixed and calculated in advance. This might suggest...pedantry, but that is the exact opposite of the truth: the mastering of all aspects, the intelligent use of this method, and the conviction that technology can only be mastered by technology—these were probably Lang’s main strengths as a film director.”

To supplement his income, Lang had continued to take occasional assignments for Joe May while working at Decla, and had been assistant director on May’s *Die Herrin der Welt* (*The Mistress of the World*, 1919). Now, annoyed over his loss of *Caligari* and the rejection of his *Spinnen* scripts, Lang signed a contract with May to direct *Das Wandernde Bild* (*The Wandering Image*, 1920). No prints are known to exist of this film....It was also his first collaboration with Thea von Harbou, the popular novelist who was to coscript all his films until his

departure from Germany in 1933.

Lang and von Harbou next wrote a two-part exotic adventure, *Das Indische Grabmal* (*The Indian Tomb*) which Lang expected to direct but which May arrogated to himself. Since he never much liked May but had a high personal regard for Pommer, Lang returned to Decla (or Decla-Bioscop, as it had become through a merger), taking von Harbou with him, and directed the last of his “lost” films, *Kämpfende Herzen* (*Struggling Hearts*, 1920). The film’s alternative title was *Die Vier um die Frau* (*Four Around a Woman*), apparently a fair summary of the plot. In Germany Lang was by now recognized as one of the foremost directors, though he was as yet little-known abroad....

“In Europe,” Lang later wrote about the post-war period, “an entire generation of intellectuals embraced despair. . . . Young people engaged in the cultural fields, myself among them, made a fetish of tragedy.”... Lang always deprecated references to his films as “expressionist,” maintaining that he never restricted himself by conforming to a single artistic fashion. Nonetheless, expressionism—the visual distortion and stylization of reality to express



psychological states and heighten emotional response—undeniably influences many of Lang’s films, if never to the extremes of Wiene’s *Caligari*, with its contorted, aggressively two-dimensional sets. In *Der Müde Tod* (*Destiny*, 1921) the vast wall, extending beyond the confines of the screen, that surrounds Death’s realm, the misty vastness of the cathedral in which burn countless candle-souls of humankind, and the storybook toy-town, all draw on expressionist elements in their design. Lotte Eisner even regarded much of the film as deliberate parody of expressionism, especially the Chinese episode.... This episode also featured the film’s most impressive special effects, including a miniaturized army and a journey by flying carpet. These were much admired and emulated. In the United States, Douglas Fairbanks bought the distribution rights but delayed the release until after the premiere of his own *Thief of Bagdad*, which copied several of Lang’s best tricks. Meanwhile Lang, now internationally famous, began work with von Harbou on a two-part crime thriller, *Dr. Mabuse der Spieler* (*Dr. Mabuse the Gambler*, 1922).

In some ways *Dr. Mabuse* returns to the world of *Die Spinnen*. Mabuse is a fiendish mastermind, a man of a thousand disguises, gifted with sinister hypnotic powers, leader of a gang of criminals and cutthroats. During the course of the complicated plot he manipulates the Stock Exchange, steals treaties, murders, runs crooked gambling dens, abducts women; finally brought to bay by a determined public prosecutor, he goes mad, and is taken away babbling incoherently.

Von Harbou and Lang took pains to stress the contemporary relevance of the *Mabuse* films. The two parts, *Der Grosse Spieler* (*The Great Gambler*) and *Inferno* were respectively subtitled *Ein Bild der Zeit* (*A Portrait of the Age*) and *Ein Spiel von Menschen unserer Zeit* (*A Play About People of Our Time*). Today, to claim any kind of documentary realism for such overblown melodramatics may seem ludicrous, but at the time the suggestion was evidently found credible. “The film is a document of our time,” wrote a reviewer in *Die Welt am Montag*, “an excellent portrait of high society with its gambling passion and dancing madness, its hysteria and decadence, its expressionism and occultisms. An article in *BZ am Mittag* described the films as “a condensation of the spirit of the age, a playful re-enactment.... Not one important symptom of the postwar years is missing.” The protean personality of Mabuse—resourcefully played by von Harbou’s first husband, Rudolf Klein-Rogge—dominates the action, manipulating all the other characters and events. Even the police seem reduced to a mere rival gang—as so often in Lang’s films, villains and heroes, crime and justice tend to become interchangeable. *Mabuse* remains memorable not for its limping and flawed plot but for the darkly brooding atmosphere Lang creates, a disturbing compound of hysteria and fatalistic passivity. In August 1922, a few months after the release of *Dr. Mabuse*, Fritz Lang and Thea von Harbou were married. It was a second marriage for both of them. Von Harbou had separated quite amicably from Klein-Rogge, who readily

continued to appear in Lang’s films. Lang’s first wife, about whom little is known, had been a Russian Jew from Vilna. She had died in 1920—according to some accounts, she killed herself on learning of the passionate affair between her husband and von Harbou. *Dr. Mabuse* was enormously successful, both in Germany and abroad, and on the strength of it Pommer announced an even more ambitious project: a two-part epic superproduction, *Die Nibelungen* (1924). The basis for Lang and von Harbou’s script was not Wagner’s operatic tetralogy but the original medieval epic, *Das Niebelungenlied*, on which Wagner had also drawn. Preparations for the massive production took nearly two years, and shooting

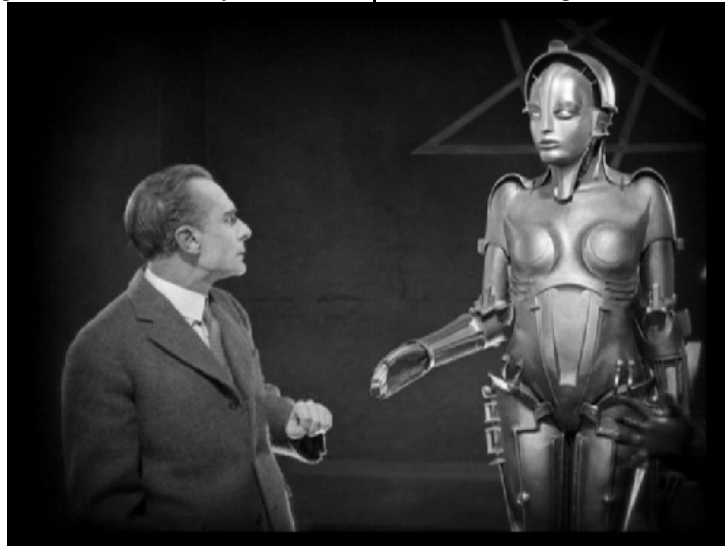
lasted nine months. During filming, Decla-Bioscop merged with UFA. Lang was now the star director of the world’s largest studio outside Hollywood.

*Siegfried*, the first part of *Die Nibelungen* tells how the hero slays a dragon, meets and marries the Burgundian Princess Kriemhild, and is killed through the treachery of Hagen and the jealousy of Brunhild, an Icelandic princess whom he has wooed on behalf of Kriemhild’s brother, Gunther. “For sheer pictorial beauty of structural architecture, *Siegfried* has never been equalled,” wrote Paul Rotha....

Arguments over whether Lang, however unwittingly, was creating fascist cinema have inevitably clustered around *Die Nibelungen*. Hitler and other leading Nazis certainly admired *Siegfried* greatly (*Kriemhild’s Rache* less so), and after Lang’s departure from Germany it was revived in a sound version, complete with chunks of Wagner. The film’s grandiose architecture evidently influenced Speer in his staging of the Nuremberg rallies, as well as Leni Riefenstahl’s notorious propaganda film, *Triumph des Willens*.

*Metropolis* (1926), “an exaggerated dream of the New York skyline, multiplied a thousandfold and divested of all reality” (Lotte Eisner), was by far the most ambitious film ever produced in Germany. Originally budgeted at 1.9 million marks, it eventually cost over 5 million, took nearly a year to shoot, and ruined UFA. The company was refused a state subsidy and passed into the control of Alfred Hugenberg, a millionaire industrialist and press baron with Nazi sympathies.

Lang envisioned a repressive technological future (set in the year 2000), in which the gulf between the classes has become brutally absolute. The ruling aristocracy lead lives of idle luxury in sunlit gardens, while the workers, housed in subterranean caverns, have been reduced to a soulless army of slaves.... Luis Buñuel, reviewing *Metropolis* in 1927, described it as “two films glued together by their bellies.” Most critics, then and since, have agreed with him. The plot of the film is puerile, incoherent, and feebly motivated, culminating in an embarrassingly trite and sentimental ending. Lang himself claimed that he “detested [the film] after it was finished,” and admitted that “you cannot make a social-conscious picture in which you say that the intermediary between the hand and the brain is the heart—I mean that’s a fairytale—definitely.”



Visually, though, *Metropolis* is superb, and remains so even in the face of modern megaproductions....Although a commercial disaster, *Metropolis* was widely shown and hugely influential. Countless sci-fi films owe a debt to it....Disappointed by the financial failure of *Metropolis*, Lang now formed his own production company, Fritz-Lang-Films, to release through UFA. For its first project, Lang and von Harbou reverted to the proven box-office values of *Dr. Mabuse*, applying them with minor modifications to the world of international espionage.... Despite all the parallels *Spione* (*The Spy*, 1928) improves greatly on *Dr. Mabuse* in both pacing and atmosphere....Once again, Lang conceded scant moral superiority to the forces of law; espionage and counterespionage operate in the same ethical jungle.

Lang had originally planned to include a space-ship sequence in *Metropolis* but was forced to abandon it by the film's spiraling costs. He now returned to the idea for his last silent picture, *Die Frau im Mond* (*The Woman in the Moon*, 1929), in which an ill-assorted band of scientists, capitalists, and stowaways travel to the moon in search of gold. Lang took great trouble over the technical details of the rocketship and its launching, calling in Herman Oberth and Will Ley as scientific advisors....Many of Lang's silent films—especially *Metropolis* and *Dr. Mabuse*—suffered mutilation at the hands of foreign distributors. Lang was much angered by this, though he could do nothing about it; but he could and did object when UFA proposed that *Die Frau*, along with other current films, should be converted to sound. Since the film had been planned silent, that—he insisted—was how it should be shown, without even added music or sound effects. As a result of this quarrel, Lang broke completely with UFA and even contemplated giving up filmmaking to become a scientist. Luckily, he reconsidered, and went on to make what is generally recognized as his finest film.

When Lang announced his new project, his first sound film, under the working title of *Mörder unter uns* (*Murderers Among Us*), he encountered unexpected hostility. Anonymous threatening letters arrived, and he was refused use of the studios he wanted. Not until he explained that the film was to be about a sex murderer did opposition cease. The Nazis, apparently, had assumed the title referred to them.... In *M*, for the first time in Lang's work, style and content fuse into a taut, effective whole. The brooding urban menace that he had brought to *Dr. Mabuse* and *Spione*, the dark fatalism of *Der Müde Tod*, the acute spatial instinct of *Siegfried* and *Metropolis*, are at last placed at the service of a plot that needs no apology. Sound is used creatively and dramatically, with no hint of inexperience, to counterpoint and enrich the images, often overlapping across scenes to achieve fast narrative ellipses. Violence, as Lang always preferred, is suggested rather than shown: a child's killing is conveyed by a ball rolling out of a bush, a stray

balloon caught in overhead wires—thus (as Lang wrote) “forcing each individual member of the audience to create the gruesome details of the murder according to his personal imagination.”

As Franz Becker, the murderer, Peter Lorre's performances made him deservedly world-famous. Squat, chubby, and vulnerable, obsessively whistling his snatch of Grieg (performed by Lang since Lorre couldn't whistle), smiling with a shy kindness as he buys his victim a balloon, grimacing before a mirror in an attempt to grasp his own monstrosity, he presented a chillingly plausible incarnation of helpless schizophrenia.... Although it encountered censorship problems in a few countries, *M* enjoyed widespread success. Some critics found the subject-matter “disgusting,” but most were enthusiastic. Graham Greene vividly likened the film to “looking through the eye-piece of a microscope, through which the tangled mind is exposed, laid flat on the slide: love and lust, nobility and perversity, hatred of itself and despair jumping at you from the jelly.” *M* rapidly achieved classic status, confirmed by Joseph Losey's ill-advised remake of 1951, in which the action was transferred to Los Angeles. Lang dryly commented that, when Losey's film was released, “I had the best reviews of my life.”

Seymour Nebenzal, for whose Nero Films Land had made



Fritz Lang & Thea von Harbou at home

*M*, urged him to make a new *Dr. Mabuse* film. Initially reluctant, Lang gradually began to see possibilities in the idea of his master-criminal directing operations from within the lunatic asylum in which, at the end of the earlier film, he had been incarcerated. In later years Lang consistently maintained that *Das Testament des Dr. Mabuse* (*The Last Will of Dr. Mabuse*, 1933) was intended as “a veiled comment on

Nazism,” and that he put Nazi slogans into the mouth of the deranged criminal. This seems slightly improbable, since von Harbou, who coscripted as usual, was by this time a keen member of the Nazi party. On the other hand, the film was certainly found subversive enough to be banned by Goebbels.

Mabuse himself dies midway through *Das Testament*; but by then he has gained control over the mind of the director of the asylum, Dr. Baum, through whom his orders are transmitted to his gang. After Mabuse's death his spirit continues to possess Baum who goes steadily out of his mind and by the end of the film has been completely taken over, like Norman Bates in *Psycho*, by his alter ego. As Mabuse/Baum's chief opponent, Lang reintroduced the stolidly humorous Inspector Lohmann (played by Otto Wernicke), who had headed the police investigation in *M*.

As with *Spione* and the earlier Mabuse films, the plot of *Das Testament* is less interesting than the atmosphere of tangible menace that Lang creates. The opening sequence is especially effective....Menace is inexplicable, impersonal, and ubiquitous.

Soon after *Das Testament* had been banned by the newly elected Nazi government, Lang was summoned to an interview with

Goebbels. Apprehensively, he presented himself in the customary formal dress. Goebbels—“he was a charming man when he wanted to be”—explained that he and Hitler had much admired *Metropolis* and *Die Niebelungen*, and invited Lang to head the Third Reich’s film industry. Lang expressed his gratitude and delight. “I could only think ‘How do you get out of here?’ I wanted to get some money out of the bank. Outside the window there was a big clock, and the hands went slowly round.” Goebbels talked on. At last Lang could make a polite departure, but the banks had closed. He rushed home, grabbed all his loose cash and portable valuables, and caught a train for Paris, leaving behind his wife, his money, his extensive art collection, and his position as Germany’s foremost director. “I must begin again. It is not easy. But, yes, it was good. I was *arrivé*—fat in my soul, fat around the heart. Darling, too much success...oh, it is not good for the man.” Thea von Harbou remained behind in Germany where she continued to make films for the Nazis. She and Lang were divorced about a year later....

Like most prominent European filmmakers, Lang had received frequent offers from Hollywood, but he had always turned them down. Now, however, when David O. Selznick arrived in Paris on a talent hunt, Lang accepted a contract with MGM, and sailed for America in June 1934....For eighteen months he stayed on MGM’s payroll without directing a single foot of film. ...

Though frustrated at not working, Lang had no intention of wasting his time and set out to learn the language and the customs of his adopted country, becoming an American citizen in 1935. ...

If a single consistent theme can be isolated from Lang’s oeuvre, it would be the struggle of the individual against fate. But fate, for Lang, is not a metaphysical concept or a supernatural power. Even when—as in *Der Müde Tod* or *Die Niebelungen*—supernatural elements are introduced, they never decide the outcome; Siegfried’s Tarnhelm is merely an enabling device, an instrument, like a gun or a fast car. Lang’s fate is always some human force or factor—a criminal organization, social pressure, a psychological impulse within the individual. The socially critical aspect of this theme, implicit in his German films, became increasingly overt in his Hollywood output.

*Fury* (1936), as Gavin Lambert has pointed out, “is not...*about* a lynching, but an almost abstract study of mob hysteria; this hysteria has a number of results, of which the attempted lynching is one and the ferocious destructive bitterness it arouses in the victim...is another.”... “Every serious picture that depicts people today,” Lang once remarked, “should be a kind of documentary of its time.”

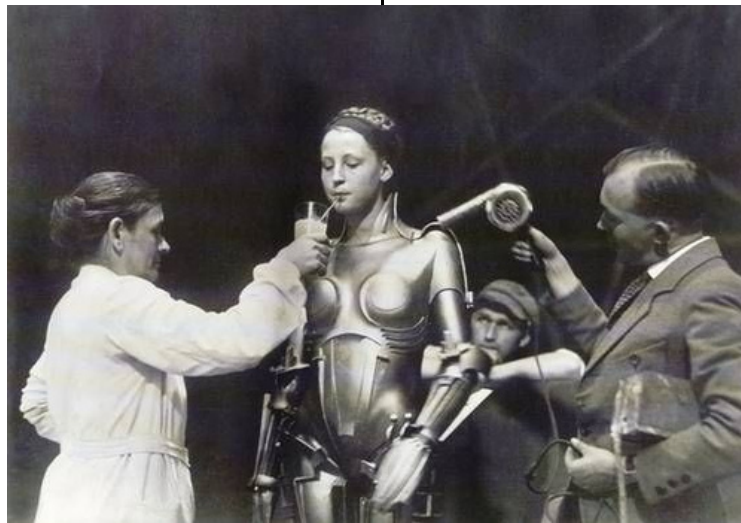
Lang’s “social trilogy” [*Fury*, *You Only Live Once* (1937), *You and Me* (1938)] as his first three Hollywood films are sometimes called, ended with a flop....The outbreak of war allowed Lang to return to a far more congenial genre. The sinister, pervasive criminal organizations of his German movies, dedicated to terror, destruction, and world domination, had become awful reality and

taken over most of Europe; who better than Fritz Lang to depict the struggle against them? Lang’s anti-Nazi films, wrote Peter Bogdanovich, are “characterized by an intense personal involvement, a vivid awareness of the fascist mind, missing from other similar movies of the period.”...

François Truffaut identified Lang’s “favorite theme” as “moral solitude, a man alone, conducting a struggle against a semi-hostile, semi-indifferent universe”—an apt summary of *Ministry of Fear* (1944).

...Lang moved on to RKO to direct the last, and most individual of his three Westerns, *Rancho Notorious* (1952)....Lang’s career was now at a low ebb....One reason for this, he discovered, was that he was considered politically suspect, having associated with such “premature anti-fascists” as Brecht, Eisler, and Ring Lardner Jr.; he had, therefore, as a “potential Communist,” been blacklisted. He was only rescued from limbo after eighteen months by Harry Cohn, with whom Lang, unlike most people, got on well....

Lang’s stature within the industry—and to a lesser degree among critics—was diminished during his years in Hollywood. From the mid-1920s until 1933, Lang was recognized as the greatest director in Germany, and perhaps in Europe. By the time he arrived in the States, he was no more than one of the many distinguished European refugees; by 1950, he had become just another directorial hack and politically dubious at that. (Lang’s own independent temperament, and refusal to stay tied to any one studio, most likely



contributed to Hollywood’s dismissive stance towards him.) The hope that he might repeat earlier glories by returning to Germany was disappointed. It was mainly during his retirement, when the overall shape of his career could be assessed, that Lang regained his status as one of cinema’s greatest artists. Pauline Kael rated him with Eisenstein, Gance, Griffith, and Welles as one “whose prodigious failures make other people’s successes look puny.”

...Throughout his films, both American and European, Lang created a distinct world, consistent and unmistakable, marked by the intensity of his vision. “Fritz Lang’s America is not essentially different from Fritz Lang’s Germany,” maintained Gavin Lambert: “it is less openly macabre, its crime and terror exist on a comparatively realistic level, but both countries are really another country, a haunted place in which the same drama constantly occur.

...

At his best, Lang is the greatest exponent of the Cinema of Paranoia. His films feed upon, and nourish, the irrational fear that nothing is as it seems, that a hidden menace lurks behind all bland appearances, and that even the most amiable of individuals—*especially* the most amiable—is a member of some vast malign conspiracy, from which we alone are excluded.

“No other director,” wrote David Thomson, “convinces us that the melodramatic threat of extinction in the crime movie is the metaphor of a much greater danger. . . .Lang’s films begin in top gear and then advance into higher ratios unknown to other directors.”

**from Fritz Lang His Life and Work. Photographs and Documents. Edited by Rolf Aurich, Wolfgang Jacobsen & Cornelius Schnaubel. Film Museum, Berlin, 2001.**

Old and new worlds. In July 1924 Ufa announced that it would be filming Thea von Harbou's novel *Metropolis*. In October Fritz Lang and the producer Erich Pommer traveled to America. Lang described his experience there and particularly in New York in several essays. The architecture of the New World, the sensuality of the technical illusions and the electricity of the cities fascinated him and possibly also inspired him to create new images, although he had formulated his *Metropolis* utopia in a script long before his arrival in America....

The premiere finally took place January 10, 1927 at the Ufa-Palast am Zoo. It was a glamorous event, however, the critics' reactions to the opening were reserved and it was only much later that the film became a worldwide success....

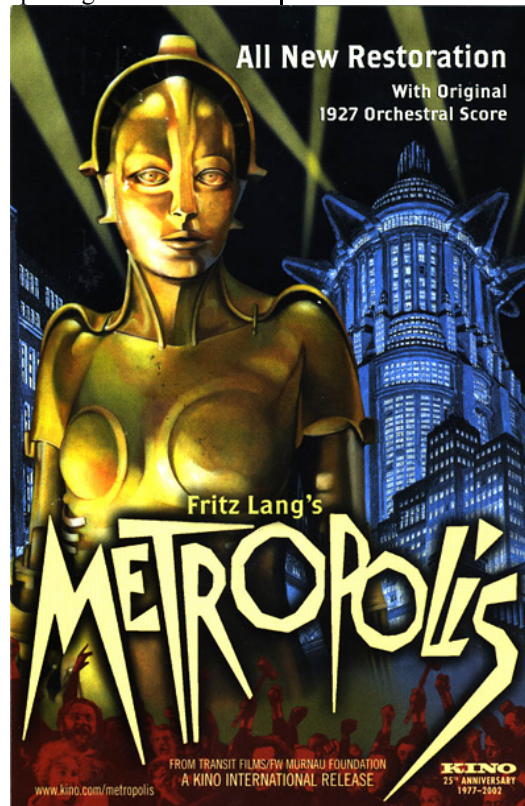
FL: What I want: to create an art—perhaps a new art—with the aid of the moving image and its nearly unlimited technical possibilities, and in general give artistic form through my films to the final great problem facing mankind.

***Metropolis*. Thomas Elsaesser. bfi publishing, London, 2000**

Some of the troubles that were to make *Metropolis* a notorious case (and casualty) are probably attributable to the Parufament Agreement [Paramount, Ufa, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer], under whose terms it was one of the first major productions. It explains, for instance, the supposed profligacy of Lang and the open-ended sums he seems to have had at his disposal. To Pommer, his *carte blanche* for Lang was justified in view of the prize to be bagged, the prospect of a major hit in the US. But just how big a risk UFA's star producer was taking can be seen when the figures are put in perspective. The company's net profits in 1924-5 were 3.1 million Reichmark; at that time the average production cost of a feature film was 175,000 Reichmark.

*Metropolis* was originally budgeted for 800,000 Reichmark, but its final bill—UFA argued, but Lang disputed—was nearer 4.2 million Reichmark, half of the production budget of 1925-6. The gamble cost Pommer his neck, and already in January 1926, long before the film was finished, he had exchanged his place on the UFA board for a producer's office at Famous-Players-Lasky, no doubt a move also facilitated by the visit in 1924. Thea von Harbou Back in Berlin, Thea von Harbou was also working on *Metropolis*. Besides being Lang's wife, a celebrated novelist in her own right and UFA's top screenwriter, Harbou was a contract writer for the Scherl Verlag, one of Berlin's three publishing empires, owned and controlled by press-tzar and ultra-conservative would-be politician Alfred Hugenberg. For Harbou, both *Die Nibelungen* and *Metropolis* were book tie-ins, a practice UFA had pursued with Fritz Lang films since *Dr. Mabuse*. Von Harbou was busy reading herself into the literature of futuristic civilizations: two French novels and one English were consulted, Jules Verne's *The Five Hundred Millions of the Begum*, Claude Farrère's *Les Condamnés à mort* and H. G.

Wells' *When the Sleeper Wakens*. Nearer home, Georg Kaiser's theatre trilogy *Koralle*, *Gas I* and *Gas II*, Ernst Toller's play about a failed worker's revolution, *Maschinenstürmer*, Ernst Ludwig's *Zwischen Himmel und Erde* (for the showdown on the cathedral roof-top), Max Reihardt's and Hugo von Hofmannsthal's *Das Grosse Welt-Theater* (for the macabre Cathedral 'Dance of Death'), and another play by the mid-nineteenth-century playwright C.D. Grabbe were also within reach. She was nothing if not thorough, employing a permanent personal secretary-typist, to whom she dictated scenes or chapters, usually while knitting to maintain concentration.



Von Harbou's novel and the film-script differ in many respects... Preceded by the motto: 'This book is an event braiding itself around the insight that the mediator between brain and hands has to be the heart' and dedicated to 'Freidel' (Fritz Lang), the novel opens with Freder, the son of the master of Metropolis playing the organ in his studio. Floods of tears are streaming down his face as he re-lives the scene of his first meeting with Maria, the simple woman of the people. Over long periods in the novel the perspective is that of Freder, since the story cast him as a reluctant saviour, realizing eventually that his task was not only to 'mediate' between brain and hand in the social conflict of management and labour, but to redeem the soul of his hard-hearted father Joh Fredersen by reconciling him to the loss of his wife Hel during childbirth. Expressionist also by virtue of its theme of redemption, the novel blends two Western archetypes, the seeker-hero Oedipus, and the sacrificial hero Jesus and the Pieta. The matriarchal story-line runs from Maria to Hel to Joh's mother, and crosses the

patriarchal story-line of two rivals in mortal combat over the possession of a woman. Quite logically, therefore, the novel does not end on the couple Maria and Freder, or the handshake between foreman and boss, but with Joh Fredersen visiting his aged mother who hands him a letter written by his wife on her death-bed, confirming that it was Joh she loved, not his rival Rotwang.... Rubbing it in most mercilessly was the young Luis Buñuel, writing in Madrid's *La Gaceta Literaria*: "*Metropolis* is not one film, *Metropolis* is two films joined by the belly, but with divergent, indeed extremely antagonistic, spiritual needs. Those who consider the cinema as a discreet teller of tales will suffer a profound disillusion with *Metropolis*. What it tells us is trivial, pretentious, pedantic, hackneyed romanticism. But if we put before the story the plastic-photogenic basis of the film, then *Metropolis* will come up to any standards, will overwhelm the most marvellous picture book imaginable [...]. Even though we must admit that Fritz Lang is an accomplice, we hereby denounce as the presumed author of these eclectic essays and of this hazardous syncretism his wife, the scenarist Thea von Harbou.... This Manichean division of labour between husband and wife, however, must be considered another of the founding myths of *Metropolis*, its credibility strengthened by the two protagonists' subsequent careers, when von Harbou and Lang became estranged, went their separate ways and von Harbou

joined the Nazi Party. Lang sometimes seemed to agree with Buñuel, though more often apologizing on his own behalf rather than blaming his ex-wife for the sentimental naivety of *Metropolis*' social message. But seeing how they continued working together and even lived in the same apartment until Lang left for France in 1933, the shared secret of their—uniquely successful—collaboration must have been a bond beyond politics or marital infidelities.

...Lang's designs resonate with the knowing echoes of so many icons of avant-garde visual culture that the incoherences act more like cognitive jolts or musical dissonances. The musical analogy was intended: the script consists of 406 tableaux, each with its own heading. They are in turn grouped into three 'movements' of uneven length, with part one ('Prelude') comprising 155 tableaux, part 2 ('Intermezzo') taking us from tableau 156 to 224, and part three ('Furioso') making up the final 181 tableaux.

*Metropolis*' incoherence is thus a matter of perspective. One of the objections in 1927 was that the film pretended to be about the future, when in fact it made no plausible predictions, either regarding technological advances or social life in the era of mass civilization....Despite its lack of realism, the film is something of a psychogram or fever-chart of the late 20s which across its tale of technology run riot and industrial regimentation, is obsessed with rising temperatures, pressures coming to a head, bubbling liquids on the boil, imminent explosions and inundating floods: in short it records all manner of forces welling up from the deep. It also opposes to America's perceived optimism of unlimited progress and Fordist pragmatism the self-consciously European clamor for spiritual values, embodied in Weimar Germany's defensively hesitant, sentimentally pessimist, but also stoical or even cynical takes on modernity. Theodor Heuss (later to become the first President of the Federal Republic in 1948) noted that in its *mélange* of Christian symbols, archaic motifs and sub-literary stereotypes *Metropolis* illustrated 'the cramped spiritual atmosphere of our age, when the banal is blown up to heroic dimensions, the heroic is transformed into mysticism, and the mysticism is passed off as tragedy'. Yet although it may take the moral(ising) high-ground, Lang/vonHarbou's film is nonetheless rife with anxiety, which at the depth-psychological or fantasy level makes *Metropolis* all-too-coherent, a fact not always recognized at the time, but one of the key points brought out by structuralist and feminist critics in the 80s, when *Metropolis* once more returned to prominence. The director set out to create a populist idiom for his vision of modernity, rather than following the avant-garde and deploying the film-language of Eisenstein, Pudovkin or Ruttmann, certainly well-known to Lang. That the finished film failed to ignite—or even reach—most of the audience it was intended for, heightens its interest as a film-political document, but does not in itself invalidate the try. For if critics at the time thought the stylistic clashes and the commercial calculations offensive, it was not only because they expected a 'realistic' version of the future. The misunderstanding extended to the belief that a film could be art and thus something of value if it were an original and organic work all of one piece. *Metropolis*, however, positioned itself explicitly as a quite different experience: not a palimpsest, more like a dream-screen or a polished reflector, where the very absence of

psychologically detailed characters, exacerbated by Lang's complex editing, gave a somnambulist ambiguity of motivation to the protagonists' gestures and a hovering indeterminacy to their actions. Perhaps too quickly derided as the director's 'well-known' inability

to handle actors. His tableau-style may have inhibited viewer identification and irritated adherents of montage-kino and the recently imported *Russenfilme*, but it powerfully fed into a peculiar kind of poetry. Attractive to some (such as Buñuel), repellent to many others. Such high tech/low-culture eclecticism, at any rate, became a mainstream movie idiom *par excellence* and one compelling reason for cinema's general impact on the arts of the twentieth century.

*Metropolis*' combination of sophisticated design with the radical naivety of mythic clichés in the mode of a self-referential *mise en abyme* is now a feature of mainstream film-making, almost a condition for entering the international market in the first place. Like Steven Spielberg's 'politically correct' (i.e. timid) fairy-tales or George Lucas's *Star Wars* saga, Lang and von Harbou's film shows the 'imagineer' at work, rather than the artist striving for self-expression. Also comparable to Spielberg and Lucas there was in von Harbou and Lang a didactic streak, a belief in the cinema educating the child in all of us: making the message pristine, but overwhelming the senses in order to touch core (at times, atavistic) emotions.



from *Fritz Lang Interviews*. Edited by Barry Keith Grant.

**University of Mississippi Press, Jackson, 2003.** Lang: I am always questioned about my "Expressionist period." I respond with: "I don't understand what you mean by that. I am always counted among expressionists, but I personally place myself among the realists. In films, it is too easy to associate ideas and images with things that don't necessarily belong in the film in question...."

I can't say what I found in Expressionism; all I can say is that I used it, that I tried to master it. I believe that the more we tend toward simplicity, the more we progress.

Which brings me back to the Western. It is a genre full of simple ideas. Each year, there are new ones for the young, because each year there is a new generation. Critics say that in today's war films there is nothing new. But what can one say about war that is new? The important thing is that we repeat it again and again.

To fight, that is what counts. If we think there is the smallest chance to succeed, we must continue to do what we believe is good. Perhaps this is a sort of martyrdom, even if I don't believe it, but it is the essence of life, fighting for the causes we believe to be right. That is truly the problem that has always interested me—not obsessed or possessed me, because I was possessed only once—that's all, in one way or another it is inevitable. You get caught in the works, and you can't escape. But aside from that, what I always wanted to show and define is the attitude of struggle that must be adopted in the face of destiny. Whether or not the individual wins this fight, what counts is the fight itself, because it is vital.

You know, I have never made a film which made a compromise. That's one of life's important things, and which we have a tendency to forget. A producer—during the war—called me into his office, at a moment when I wasn't working, and gave me a

point of departure for a film. It was extremely favourable towards the war: I refused to make it.

To make a film for one person, whether producer, director, actor or critic, makes no sense. The cinema always has been and should continue to be a mass art.

### **COMING UP IN THE SPRING 2011 BUFFALO FILM SEMINARS XXII:**

Jan 25 Lloyd Bacon **42<sup>ND</sup> STREET** 1933 Feb 1  
 Ernst Lubitsch **NINOTCHKA** 1939 Feb 8  
 Luchino Visconti **OSSESSIONE** 1942 Feb 15  
 Robert Bresson **JOURNAL D'UN CURÉ DE CAMPAGNE/DIARY OF A COUNTRY PRIEST** 1950 Feb 22  
 Martin Ritt **THE SPY WHO CAME IN FROM THE COLD** 1965 Mar 1  
 Nicholas Roeg **WALKABOUT** 1971 Mar 8  
 John Mackenzie **THE LONG GOOD FRIDAY** 1980 Mar 22  
 Bertrand Tavernier **COUP DE TORCHON/CLEAN SLATE** 1981 Mar 29  
 Werner Herzog **FITZCARRALDO** 1982 Apr 5  
 Nagisa Ôshima **MERRY CHRISTMAS MR. LAWRENCE** 1983 Apr 12  
 Stephen Frears **THE GRIFTERS** 1990 Apr 19  
 Jafar Panahi **DAYEREH/THE CIRCLE** 2000 Apr 26  
 Ridley Scott **BLADE RUNNER** 1982

### **“AMERICAN CHARTRES”: BUFFALO’S WATERFRONT ELEVATORS**

An exhibit of Bruce photographs of the grain and cement elevators along Buffalo’s waterfront opens this Saturday, January 22, at the UB Anderson Gallery. The exhibition runs through March 6. The opening reception (6-8 p.m.) is free and open to the public. For further information, visit the Gallery’s website (<http://ubartgalleries.org>), click on “Events & Exhibitions,” then click on the entry for Bruce’s exhibit.

**CONTACTS:** ...email Diane Christian: [engdc@buffalo.edu](mailto:engdc@buffalo.edu) ...email Bruce Jackson [bjackson@buffalo.edu](mailto:bjackson@buffalo.edu) ...for the series schedule, annotations, links and updates: <http://buffalofilmseminars.com> ...to subscribe to the weekly email informational notes, send an email to [addto\\_list@buffalofilmseminars.com](mailto:addto_list@buffalofilmseminars.com) ....for cast and crew info on any film: <http://imdb.com/>

The Buffalo Film Seminars are presented by the Market Arcade Film & Arts Center and State University of New York at Buffalo with support from the Robert and Patricia Colby Foundation and the Buffalo News

