

**KINO**  
INTERNATIONAL



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# **KINO**

I N T E R N A T I O N A L

## **METROPOLIS**

### CAST

**Gustav Fröhlich.....Freder Fredersen**  
**Brigitte Helm.....Maria/The Robot (AKA Futura)**  
**Alfred Abel.....Johhan (Joh) Fredersen**  
**Rudolf Klein-Rogge.....C.A. Rotwang**  
**Fritz Rasp.....Slim**  
**Theodor Loos.....Josaphat**  
**Heinrich George.....Grot**

### CREW

**Director.....Fritz Lang**  
**Screenplay.....Fritz Lang and Thea von Harbou**  
**Producer.....Erich Pommer**  
**Original Music Score.....Gottfried Huppertz**  
**Cinematography.....Karl Freund and Günther Rittau**  
**Art Direction.....Otto Hunte, Erich Kettelhut and Karl Vollbrecht**  
**Costume Design.....Aenne Willkomm**  
**Set Designer.....Edgar G. Ulmer**  
**Special Effects.....Ernst Kunstmann**  
**Visual Special Effects.....Gunther Rittau, H.O. Schulze (Assistenz)**  
**Painted Special Effects and Technical Advisor.....Erich Kettelhut**  
**Sculptures and Robot Design.....Walter Schultze-Mittendorf**  
**Make up.....Otto Genath**  
**Production.....Universum-Film AG (UFA), Berlin**  
**Still Photography.....Horst von Harbou**

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## METROPOLIS

Kino International is proud to release the definitive version of Fritz Lang's METROPOLIS as part of a worldwide celebration of the film's 75th anniversary. In the next pages, Kino illuminates this film's restoration and production, highlighting some of the relevant moments in the history of one of the most important films ever produced.

## METROPOLIS: from 1927 to 2002

**1927**  
**Fritz Lang's "Metropolis"**  
**Premiere Version**

- Length - 13,701 feet.
- Recut by UFA and Paramount Pictures shortly after its German release.

**1927 - 1968**  
**Various Versions**

**1968-1972**  
**East German Archive**

- Length - 7,750 feet .
- Considered the first "modern" restored version.

**1984**  
**Giorgio Moroder's Reissue**

- Length - 7,468 feet.
- New score by Giorgio Moroder (Flashdance) with songs by contemporary singers.

**1987**  
**The Munich Version**

- Length - 9,608 feet.
- First attempt to assemble all the available footage for Metropolis.

**2002**  
**"Fritz Lang's Metropolis"**

- Length - 10,928 feet.
- Digitally restored negative.
- Newly translated english subtitles.
- Original score re-recorded by a sixty-piece orchestra.
- Recovered shots not seen in Giorgio Moroder's reissue.
- Newly written intertitles with detailed information on still missing scenes.

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## **METROPOLIS**

### **A SHORT HISTORY**

Many have seen a screened version of Fritz Lang's METROPOLIS, but what have they seen? Certainly not the film directed by Fritz Lang in 1925/26, which premiered at the Ufa Palast in Berlin, on January 10, 1927. That film was 13,701 feet long (lasting 153 minutes at a projection speed of 24 frames per second) and it was significantly longer than all versions currently available.

Within weeks of the premiere, the American and German distributor – Paramount Pictures and UFA – decided to cut down this monumental film to a "normal" feature length in order to maximize its commercial potential. Since then, METROPOLIS has been shown in severely truncated versions with important segments from its original story drastically changed or omitted.

For instance, the basic conflict between Joh Fredersen, the industrialist, and Rotwang, the scientist inventor, was completely removed from the film. Both men were in love with the same woman, who eventually married Fredersen and died giving birth to his son Freder. This plot segment is essential to understanding why Rotwang creates the machine woman and orchestrates the destruction of Metropolis. Also cut was the pursuit of Freder by the "Thin Man," the majority of scenes taking place in Metropolis' red-light district "Yoshiwara," and the extended scenes at the end of the film, when Maria is pursued by the masses of uprising workers.

From 1927 until the early 1980's, METROPOLIS was screened in a variety of versions and lengths, but all of them derived from the general release prints cut by Paramount and UFA. In the past 30 years, three new versions of METROPOLIS have surfaced and drawn public attention.



### **EAST GERMAN FILM ARCHIVE VERSION (1968 - 1972)**

Between 1968 and 1972, the East German Staatliches Filmarchiv der DDR compiled a version of the film with the help of other world archives. Even though this was an improvement from previous versions, many riddles of the film's abridged narration could not be solved due to a lack of secondary sources and an original script. This version is 7,750 feet long.

### **THE MORODER REISSUE (1984)**

A new version of METROPOLIS was created in 1984, when the rights to the film were licensed to composer Giorgio Moroder. Working with the film material available at that time, Moroder put together a "pop" version of Fritz Lang's classic film by re-cutting shots and replacing missing scenes with a montage of stills.

Even though this version used few intertitles, included subtitles and added color tints to the film, none of these elements was more controversial than its newly composed score, which also featured songs by Queen's Freddy Mercury ("Love Kills"), Bonnie Tyler ("Here She Comes") and Jon Anderson ("Cage of Freedom"). This version of 7,469 feet (with a running time of 87 minutes at 24 frames per second), proved to be successful both in theatres and on video, making this classic film widely available to a much larger – and younger – audience.

### **THE "MUNICH" VERSION (1987)**

In 1987, Enno Patalas and the Munich Film Archive took advantage of a series of unusual acquisitions to unveil a third version of METROPOLIS, now with the historical commitment of making a definitive assembly of all the known footage.

This new version made extensive use of materials acquired from the estate of METROPOLIS' original score composer Gottfried Huppertz. The Patalas team's discovery of the premier version's censorship cards (required copies of all the original intertitles kept by German censors in the 20's) and acquisition of stills that document some of the as yet still lost scenes also filled in previously unexplainable gaps. This version is 9,608 feet long.



## **THE DIGITAL RESTORATION (1998-2002)**

Since 1998, under the auspices of METROPOLIS copyright holders the Friederich Wilhelm Murnau Foundation, with support from a consortium of German archives headed by the post unification German Bundesarchiv-Filmarchiv, film preservationist Martin Koerber has been meticulously compiling and constructing a definitive restoration based on the 1987 "Munich" version.

Using a nitrate original camera negative found at the Bundesarchiv-Filmarchiv, and original nitrate prints from the British Film Institute, the George Eastman House, and the Fondazione Cineteca Italiana, this new METROPOLIS was reconstructed directly from original elements, retaining the greatest possible amount of detail and image quality.

By carefully selecting the best available print and negative elements and by utilizing new digital technology, the team of archivists working with Martin Koerber have not only restored METROPOLIS' original narrative but also brought back the contrast and detail only seen in the early versions of the film.

For this new restoration, each of the film's 1257 shots were scanned at a 2K resolution in order to digitally clean every frame of the film. "The powerful digital tools have eliminated traces of time such as physical damage, scratches and dust, so a great part of the outstanding photographic quality has been brought back," says Koerber.

In essence, the digital restoration performed by Alpha-Omega of Munich was done in three steps:

1) A general software processing was applied to reduce small dust and scratches. Great care was taken to insure that the automatic cleanup did not take away picture information which often happens in video restoration.

2) The next step was to regain stability of the images for scenes previously unsteady.



### **THE DIGITAL RESTORATION (continued)**

3) The final step was a computer-based manual retouch of all scenes to get rid of major defects like glue around the splices, dirt, scratches, and torn frames.

Once Alpha-Omega finished their work, the film was then recommitted to 35mm negative film stock – by Centrimage Paris – from which release prints have been made. For the North American release, an all-new English translation of the German intertitles was recently completed by Kinograph Montreal and inserted into a new 35mm negative.

In October 2001, the Murnau Foundation successfully completed negotiations with Bernd Heller, the musician who owns the rights to the original Gottfried Huppertz score. The Radio Sinfonieorchester Saarbrücken recorded that score with a 65-piece orchestra in late 2001 so that it could be added to the 35mm negative, allowing METROPOLIS to be screened without the need for live music.

Seventy-five years after its Berlin premiere in 1927, Fritz Lang's visionary science fiction spectacle can now be seen in a way that no filmgoer of today has ever experienced before. This version is 3,460 feet longer than Moroder's and 1,320 feet longer than the "Munich" restoration, making it the most accurate and definitive version of METROPOLIS.

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## **METROPOLIS**

### **Synopsis**

Please note: passages and sections of the film still considered lost are italicized.

**Prelude.** In Metropolis, a towering city of the future, mighty pistons drive the vast network of relentlessly turning wheels and cogs that form the mechanized heart of the city. Deep beneath the city streets, vast armies of anonymous, stoop-shouldered workers expressionlessly exchange shifts in grim lock-step, slaves to the shift whistle and Metropolis' ten hour clock.

A world away amongst the building tops, Freder Frederesen, the only child of Metropolis' ruler Joh Frederesen, wins a footrace against other young men born into Metropolis' privileged upper caste. Freder and the other sons and daughters of privilege's game of hide and go seek in the lush, private Eternal Gardens is interrupted by the arrival of Maria, a young girl from the Lower City. Maria points to Freder and his friends and tells the group of worker's children she has brought with her, "Look, these are your brothers". Maria's words and her beauty deeply touch Freder. After Maria is ejected, Freder clutches his heart and for the first time sees the frivolous waste of the garden and life in the Upper City through her eyes.

Freder's search for Maria takes him to the grim Lower City machine rooms. As Freder watches, a worker collapses at his station on one of the vast machines then the expendable bodies of dozens of workers are consumed as the machine explodes. Freder has a vision of the machine itself transformed into Moloch, the god of fire, gobbling up chained slaves offered in sacrifice.

In his penthouse office atop Metropolis' tallest building, Joh Frederesen - Metropolis' master and Freder's father - monitors the cities functions and dictates to Josaphat and several other mid-level technocrats. They are interrupted by Freder who fervently describes the deplorable conditions he has witnessed in the machine room. Though Josaphat empathizes with Freder's horror, Frederesen offers his son only the cold rationality with which he governs Metropolis. Grot - supervisor of the heart machine, which produces the needed energy for Metropolis - appears. He shows Frederesen a map he has discovered amongst the workers injured in the explosion Freder witnessed detailing secret passageways in the Lower City. Furious, Frederesen dismisses Josaphat for not being aware of this. Outside the office Freder stops Josaphat's suicide attempt and they commiserate while inside Frederesen tells his brooding henchman, Der Schmale, to follow his son.



## **Synopsis (continued)**

Returning to the Lower City, Freder takes over for Worker No. 11811, known as Georgy, who has collapsed at his station connecting circuits with the hands of a huge clock-like machine. They exchange clothes. *Freder tells Georgy to go to Josaphat's apartment and to wait for him there. On the way, Georgy discovers money in the pockets of Freder's clothing and succumbs to the temptations of the Upper City. He goes to the Yoshiwara, where the members of Metropolis's upper crust abandon themselves to their unbridled pleasures. Der Schmale, records Georgy's movements, mistaking Georgy for Freder.*

At the fortress/cottage home of the inventor Rotwang, Joh Fredersen is announced. *In Rotwang's inner sanctum, Fredersen discovers a monument dedicated to Hel, the woman who is the fateful link between Rotwang and Fredersen. Though Rotwang loved Hel, she married Fredersen and died giving birth to her and Fredersen's son Freder. Rotwang is unable to get over the loss of Hel, and rails against Fredersen in front of the monument. Triumphantly, Rotwang presents his latest invention, a machine woman who is to replace his lost Hel. He still needs 24 hours of work until the machine woman will be indistinguishable from his dead beloved: "The woman is mine, Joh Fredersen! You have Hel's son!"*

At the same time, Freder suffers the torments of the worker's life. He discovers papers like the one's Grot showed Fredersen in the pocket of Georgy's uniform. Another worker gives him a mysterious reminder.

Fredersen asks Rotwang to help him decipher the plans Grot found. At his machine, Freder has another vision; the clock in his father's office, dictating the pace of the workers' ten-hour-long workday, appears on his machine's surface. At Rotwang's lab, Rotwang identifies the plans brought to him by Fredersen as being a guide to a meeting in the catacombs beneath the Lower City.

Nearly crucified on Georgy's machine, Freder cries out in torment. Mercifully, the whistle blows, the shifts change and workers take Freder down into the catacombs beneath the Lower City for their secret meeting. Fredersen and Rotwang follow their map to the catacombs at the same time. In the catacombs a gathering of workers listens reverently to Maria.

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## METROPOLIS

### Synopsis (continued)

Freder is transfixed. As Fredersen and Rotwang secretly look on from a hidden cave, Maria tells the workers a parable about the Tower of Babel, destroyed by the slaves who erected it because no common language could be found between them and their rulers. Maria foretells of a mediator that will ease the unspeakable hardships that the workers of Metropolis endure. *Rotwang notices Freder among the workers, and hides this fact from Fredersen.* Freder is overcome with his passion for Maria and for her cause. As the crowd of workers adjourns, Maria recognizes Freder as the awaited mediator.

Fredersen instructs Rotwang to give the machine woman the appearance of Maria, thus enabling Fredersen to mislead the workers. *Rotwang at first refuses, but agrees when he realises that this way he can harm Fredersen even more than by recreating Hel.* Now, with the help of the machine woman, he can drive a wedge between Fredersen and his son. Freder and Maria kiss, their love growing. They agree to meet the next day at the cathedral in the Upper City. After Freder and Fredersen have left, Rotwang pursues Maria through the catacombs, terrorising her with the beam from his flashlight. Rotwang abducts Maria in order to affect the machine woman's transformation.

Interlude. The next day, Freder enters the cathedral of Metropolis. *He listens to the sermon of a monk who declares that the apocalypse is drawing near and will announce itself in the form of a sinful woman. At the same time, Rotwang programs the machine woman in his laboratory: "You shall destroy Joh Fredersen – him and his city and his son."* As Freder wanders through the cathedral, he finds a group of figures representing Death and the Seven Deadly Sins.

*A bleary eyed Georgy emerges from the Yoshiwara, where he has spent all of Freder's money. As Georgy gets into Freder's car, Der Schmale arrests Georgy, realises his mistake and finds out that Freder and Georgy have arranged to meet at Josaphat's apartment. Missing Maria at the cathedral, Freder finally goes to Josaphat's place. He intends to meet Georgy there so that Georgy can take him to the Lower City and put him in touch with the workers. While Freder waits for him, Georgy is allowed to go free by Der Schmale on condition that he returns to his machine and erases the events of the past day from his memory. Der Schmale goes to Josaphat's apartment to find Freder.*

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## METROPOLIS

### **Synopsis (continued)**

*By the time he arrives there, however, Freder has already left. But Freder has dropped Georgy's cap, which Der Schmale finds and rightly regards as evidence of the conspiracy between Freder and Josaphat. He offers Josaphat money to leave Metropolis and thus quickly put an end to the whole affair before it comes out that he lost track of Freder for a whole day. When Josaphat refuses, Der Schmale locks the defenceless Josaphat into his apartment.*

Freder walks through the streets while Maria is overpowered by Rotwang. Freder hears Maria's cries and follows them to the door of Rotwang's house. A series of doors open for Freder, trapping him inside Rotwang's home. Rotwang brings Maria into his laboratory and transfers her appearance to the machine woman. The real Maria is held prisoner by Rotwang who, when Freder demands to know where Maria is, tells Freder that she is with Fredersen. *In a letter, Rotwang invites Fredersen to the presentation of the false Maria; a dance performance before the male elite of Metropolis that will prove no one can tell that she is a machine.*

In his office, Fredersen ogles the false Maria and instructs her on what to do to sabotage the workers. Freder discovers the two together. Thinking that his beloved has betrayed him with his father is more than Freder can bear and Freder collapses. As Freder languishes in bed, the false Maria beguiles the male elite of Metropolis with a dance in the nude. Jan and Marinus, sons of Metropolis ruling-class citizens, are entranced by the false Maria's dance; willing to commit "all seven deadly sins" for her sake.

Der Schmale keeps watch over the fever-ridden Freder, in his sickroom. *In a vision Freder sees Der Schmale transformed into the monk who preached about the apocalypse in the cathedral and warned that the appearance of the whore of Babylon would precede the city's downfall.* Freder finds the invitation to the false Maria's unveiling on his nightstand where a doctor has carelessly left it.

As a nurse tends to him, Freder has a vision of the cathedral statues of Death and the Seven Deadly Sins coming toward him. Death's scythe sweeps through the sickroom.

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## METROPOLIS

### Synopsis (continued)

**Furioso.** The sons of privilege's response to the false Maria's licentious dance reaches fever pitch. Josaphat escapes his confinement and is reunited with Freder. *Der Schmale reports to Fredersen about the increasing unrest in the Lower City: "The only thing that still keeps the workers in check is that they are still waiting for the mediator they were promised..."* Josaphat updates Freder, who has recovered from his illness, about what has happened since he took ill. Jan is killed in a duel with Marinus over the false Maria. The Eternal Gardens have become deserted as the privileged sons of Metropolis all gather in Yoshiwara to vie for the false Maria's favors. *More and more of them are killed in duels and confrontations with each other. Josaphat tells Freder that "this woman, at whose feet all sins accrue" is also called Maria. The shift whistle interrupts Josaphat. It's the secret signal for the workers to gather in the catacombs.* Freder and Josaphat descend into the Lower City.

Fredersen instructs Der Schmale that the workers should on no account be stopped no matter what they decide to do. He again sets off to meet Rotwang. The real Maria is still Rotwang's prisoner. Rotwang explains to her that the false Maria only seems to follow Fredersen's orders. "I tricked Joh Fredersen! His creature does not obey his will – but mine alone!"

At the secret meeting in the catacombs, the false Maria urges the workers to destroy the Lower City's machines. Freder and Josaphat arrive. Freder realizes that the agitator cannot be the real Maria and cries out. A worker under the false Maria's rabble-rousing spell accuses Freder, identifying him as Joh Fredersen's son. The mob of workers attacks Freder and Josaphat. Georgy is stabbed as he shields Freder with his own body. The workers, led by the false Maria, rush off to destroy the machines, leaving Georgy to die in Freder and Josaphat's arms.

*Fredersen has listened unobserved to what Rotwang has revealed to Maria. He attacks Rotwang. While the two fight, Maria escapes into the city. The crowd of enraged workers masses at the gates and elevators leading to the machine rooms. The real Maria follows. Grot, who guards the heart machine, desperately reports to Fredersen over a video phone. Fredersen orders Grot to open the gate and to let things take their course. Grot reluctantly obeys, but holds the surge of workers at bay with a wrench. As the real Maria draws nearer the false Maria damages the heart machine and escapes to the Upper City. The real Maria sounds the alarm as the Lower City, deserted except for the workers' children, begins to flood from the damage to the heart machine.*

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### Synopsis (continued)

She gathers the workers' children but their escape is cut off by an avalanche of wrecked machine room elevators. The spectacular lights of Metropolis' Upper City go out from the failing power. Josaphat and Freder discover Maria and the children. There is no doubt in Freder's mind that this is the real Maria. *Their climb to safety through towering air shafts is blocked by a locked grille.* In the nick of time Josaphat and Freder deliver Maria and the children to a safe refuge as the lower city is engulfed by flood.

While Fredersen fears for Freder's safety, Grot crawls from the heart machine wreckage and stops the workers' victory-dance, telling them their children must all have been drowned. The workers blame Maria, declaring her a witch. Meanwhile, in Yoshiwara, the false Maria urges the dancing crowd out onto the street crying, "Let's watch the world go to hell!" Rotwang, who has survived Fredersen's attack, regains consciousness *and drags himself to Hel's monument.* *With the words, "Now I'll come and bring you back home, my Hel!" he sets out to recapture his machine woman.*

*The real Maria is confronted by the angry crowd. She flees from the menacing workers back into the city.* As the angry mob of workers and the procession of Yoshiwara revelers collides, Grot seizes the false Maria. The workers tie her to a stake in front of the cathedral and prepare to burn her. Freder's frantic search for "his" Maria brings him to the cathedral where he thinks it is the real Maria that is about to be burned at the stake. Rotwang discovers the real Maria in the cathedral's portal and takes her for the false Maria, his machine woman, Hel. Maria flees from Rotwang into the bell tower, desperately hanging from the cathedral bell's massive rope. As the cathedral bell rings, the maniacally laughing false Maria is unmasked by the rising flames. Now Freder and the workers realize that they have been tricked. They look up and see Rotwang chasing the real Maria across the cathedral roof. Freder races into the cathedral and pursues Rotwang and the real Maria. Josaphat brings Fredersen to the cathedral square. As the assembled workers close in on Fredersen, Josaphat reassures them that their children were rescued. Rotwang carries the real Maria farther up the cathedral roof but Freder frees her and as the crowd watches, Rotwang falls to his death.

Later, the workers gather before the cathedral's portal. Maria and Freder – the prophet of reconciliation and the mediator – declare an alliance between the rulers and the ruled. Freder places Fredersen's hand in Grot's: "The mediator between brain and hands must be the heart."



## **The Making of Metropolis**

In 1924 the German UFA Studios sent producer Erich Pommer and director Fritz Lang to shepherd their spectacular new two part mythic German spectacle DIE NIEBELUNGEN to it's gala New York premier. For the rest of his life Fritz Lang would maintain as he told Peter Bogdonavich, that upon Lang and Pommer's arrival in New York, "we were still enemy aliens, so we couldn't leave the ship. I looked into the streets - the glaring lights and the tall buildings - and there I conceived METROPOLIS." Lang's description of the New York he and Pommer would wander by day as "a crater of blind, confused human forces - pushing together and grinding upon each other, motivated by greed," and by night as "a vertical veil, shimmering, almost weightless, a luxurious cloth hung from the dark sky to dazzle, distract and hypnotize...lit as if in full daylight by neon lights and topping them oversized luminous advertisements, moving, turning, flashing on and off, spiraling..." certainly evokes the tensions and textures that would define METROPOLIS. In truth, though, Lang and his co-scenarist and wife Thea Von Harbou had been at work on the concept and scenario of METROPOLIS for more than a year prior to the New York trip. Lang and Pommer's whirlwind VIP tour of several Hollywood film studios on a subsequent leg of their American junket may ultimately have influenced METROPOLIS more. Humbled by the technical superiority and perfect vertical integration of the Hollywood studios, Lang and Pommer realized that their next picture would have to be of a size and scope that could rival the craftsmanship and spectacle that had become synonymous with American picture making.

By 1924 UFA's expansion had stalled due to rampant inflation and a fitful cash flow. The high esteem UFA was held in worldwide as the home studio of Murnau, Lang and the influential German style in film (often described with the catch-all term "Expressionist") did little to offset the studio's growing debt. But Lang declared his intention from the start to be a creation of, "the costliest and most ambitious picture ever." Total investment in Lang's "super production" was justified by the assumption that METROPOLIS, conceived as it was to be a blockbuster of Hollywood proportions, would prove irresistible to US distributors (most notably Paramount and MGM, with whom UFA would hammer out a deal over the course of METROPOLIS' year-plus shooting schedule). In the hands of such expert, proven filmmakers as Lang and Von Harbou, any expense would be worthwhile. The presumed bonus of denying the director nothing would be that any reported excess would only serve as advance advertising.



## **The Making of Metropolis (continued)**

One of UFA's additional areas of pioneering expertise was public relations. But nurturing the expectations of an increasingly hard to impress German and international film audience was becoming a challenge in the face the star-driven American films being dumped into international release after successful runs in the US.

"Mrs. Von Harbou and I," Lang recalled decades later to Bogdonovich, "put in the script to METROPOLIS a battle between modern science and occultism, the science of the middle ages." This controlling dichotomy (though eventually torn from the narrative by Paramount's scissors) would define the lingering fascination of the film far more than the script's muddy social commentary that would so divide reviewers once METROPOLIS was released. Fresh from the triumph of the NIEBELUNGEN films, Lang and production designers Otto Hunte and Erich Kettlehut set about designing a modernist cityscape that encompassed the full range of 20's architectural and industrial futurism. They also created a series of settings that were steeped in brooding medieval religiosity like the Tower of Babel, the shadowy catacombs, Rotwang's pentangle-decorated lab and the cathedral whose roof Rotwang climbs like Victor Hugo's Hunchback with Maria over his shoulder. In every aspect of design, from Walter Schulze-Mittendorf's set sculptures to long suffering Aenne Willkomm's costumes, Lang strove to create a unity of the disparate visual motifs and traditions in art, theater and architecture that were establishing Weimar Germany's underdog supremacy in the contemporary art world of the 20's.

Karl Freund, UFA's star cameraman, was tapped to photograph METROPOLIS with the same versatility and precision he had lent to the grim romanticism of Paul Wegener's THE GOLEM, the relentless experimentation of Murnau's THE LAST LAUGH, and the breathless pulp of Lang's own DER SPIEGEL Pt. II. The METROPOLIS script, calling as it did for both meticulous miniature photography and full scale floods, explosions and riots, demanded a new level of collaborative ingenuity from every department.

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### **The Making of Metropolis (continued)**

Miniature sets were built on a grand scale in eye-popping forced perspectives through which stop-frame animated vehicles drove or flew from building to building. Photographer Eugene Shufftan used a unique new process for combining live action and miniatures via carefully placed, mirrored glass with sections of the mirror's silver scraped clear to marry full-sized sets to miniatures. Studio literature bragged that over 36,000 extras were used for the live action flood, the workers' riots and the Tower of Babel scenes created on UFA's Neubabelsberg lot. As the production swallowed Neubabelsberg whole, it became an irresistible magnet to the curious from on and off the lot. Future directors Alfred Hitchcock and Billy Wilder were both set visitors and Sergei Eisenstein made a much-publicized visit to lend his handshake of approval to Lang's massive struggle.

Though the 35 year old Lang's unyielding perfectionism and drive were already the substance of legend in the German film community, the despotic tenacity he brought to METROPOLIS surprised even veterans of his previous films. Newcomers like Gustav Frolich, promoted out of the extras ranks when the actor originally cast as young Freder was fired, were shocked. "In scenes of physical suffering," Frolich remembered years later, "he tormented the actors until they did suffer." Frolich's co-star, another METROPOLIS discovery, Brigitte Helm, fared worst of all. Lang badgered 17 year old Helm (nicknamed by the METROPOLIS crew, "the virgin of Neubabelsberg") through take after take under the most bewildering assortment of physical deprivations ever devised for a motion picture. Helm's dual role called for her to be nearly drowned, burned at the stake, imprisoned, pursued, duplicated and manhandled almost throughout the entire film. "I have to feel you are inside the robot," Lang insisted to Helm at one point as she slowly asphyxiated in the wood and plaster armor that transformed her into the robotrix Maria, "I was able to see you even when I didn't."

But Helm wasn't the only one having difficulty breathing. Managed more along the lines of a European builder's guild rather than a factory like it's Hollywood counterparts, UFA hired many key craftsmen by the job rather than as permanent staff. As METROPOLIS' cameras rolled over 310 shooting days and 60 nights, this only added to the financially shaky studio's crippling overhead. Mid way through shooting, as UFA's coffers emptied, Pommer was summoned before the desperate UFA board.

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### **The Making of Metropolis (continued)**

Over the course of METROPOLIS' production, the studio had finally made a deal, receiving a partial bailout, with Paramount and Metro (heavily slanted in Paramount's favor) for US distribution of select UFA films. Lang's excesses were threatening to bankrupt the studio before they could deliver METROPOLIS to their new American partners. But in the UFA brass' eyes, the mountains of amazing footage Lang and company were generating let Lang off the hook. That left Pommer as the only person available to be held responsible. Relieved of his duties on METROPOLIS and disgusted at the UFA board's bad faith, scapegoat Pommer shortly departed for America and a staff producer job at Famous-Players Lasky, leaving Lang and UFA in each other's hands. After a total 17 months of shooting, Lang completed the film to his and UFA's anxious satisfaction at a cost, according to UFA, of 5.3 million marks - a geometric increase from the film's original budget of 1.5 million.

Once edited to Lang's still uncompromising standards, a nearly 2 and a half hour long cut of METROPOLIS was submitted in November of 1926 to the German censors, who declared the film "educational" and "artistic" and passed it for release. UFA's new partners at Paramount were less appreciative when shown the same version a month later. Accustomed to star-driven films with simple plots and an absolute minimum of symbolic underpinnings, Paramount demanded extensive cuts to bring METROPOLIS in line with their idea of an audience and cashbox friendly entertainment. Thus before METROPOLIS had even premiered, the seeds of its destruction were sown.

The film officially premiered, at Lang's original un-cut length of 153 minutes (at 24 frames per second), on January 19th of 1927 at UFA's flagship theater, the UFA-Palast am Zoo in Berlin. UFA's hysterical publicity and the unexceedable expectations created in the press backfired and the film received decidedly mixed reviews. As the most ambitious and expensive film ever made in Europe, METROPOLIS needed to be everything to everyone. The social, political and artistic tensions that characterized Germany between the wars doomed METROPOLIS to be measured as a barometer of Weimar Germany's future, present and past rather than as a movie.

The Left Wing, appalled at the portrayal of an anger-blinded working class abandoning their children and destroying their own homes, found the film fascist. The Right Wing (and the UFA brass and Paramount, apparently), equally disturbed by the destructive revolt of METROPOLIS' Lower City denizens, found the film borderline Communist.



## **The Making of Metropolis (continued)**

Technocrats found the film's industrial nightmare world and scientific alchemy shrilly anti-science and clergy found its vision of a sex-crazed upperclass exterminating itself over a libertine robot prurient and reprehensible.

Typically damning was a contemporary review by H.G. Wells who declared the film "silly." Wells' criticism would prove ironic when his own **THINGS TO COME** was made by the Korda brothers in England a few years later. **THINGS TO COME**'s moribund vision of a utopian future where pompous pieties are delivered by posing men in starched togas only served, as so many science fiction films have over the decades since, to point up **METROPOLIS**' unyielding power by comparison. Though twenty five years later the Times of London would laud **METROPOLIS** in hindsight by saying, "there's no denying the strength of Lang's imagination expressing itself in the terms of the cinema and the cinema alone", in 1927 film was still being condescended to critically as the crass bastard child of bad theater and low brow literature. Lang's extraordinary achievement in fusing obsessive, visionary filmmaking with expertly realized, mind-boggling spectacle was lost on those charged with identifying such things. It probably didn't help that as the first feature length science fiction film, there was no other film yet conceived to compare with **METROPOLIS**.

## **The Un-making of Metropolis**

Though UFA briefly ran **METROPOLIS** in Berlin and Nuremberg in it's original length, the film was pulled from theaters and re-cut, re-titled and pared down from 12 reels to 7 for US release. Paramount hired American playwright Channing Pollock to rewrite the film's title cards per a scene-excising and condensing continuity of his own creation. Declaring the film in its original form, "symbolism run such riot that people who saw it couldn't tell what the picture was all about," Pollock told reporters, "I have given it my meaning." In doing so, Pollock removed the key conflict between Rotwang and Joh Fredesen over Freder's mother Hel. Pollock reasoned (despite the fact that he had no qualms about Americanized renaming of other characters and that the character of Hel doesn't even appear in the film) that the name "Hel" was too close to "Hell" to be accepted by American filmgoers and eliminated any reference to her whatsoever.



## **The Un-making of Metropolis (continued)**

Pollock also cut out much of the detective story subplot involving Der Schlame ("Slim" in the US version). The unintended effect was to eliminate Lang's two narrative strengths - obsessive romantic fatalism and breathless pulp intrigue - while foregrounding the story's formerly fairly vague, supposedly Socialist content. Lang would confess in retirement that, "I was not so politically minded in those days as I am now."

This new abrupt, less coherent METROPOLIS, shorn of nearly an hour of running time, premiered in the US in March of 1927 and shortly thereafter in England in a slightly altered version. Lang (who would go on to do perhaps better but never bigger things in the US in a few short years) bitterly remarked to British journalists at the time, "I love films so I shall never go to America. Their experts have slashed my best film, METROPOLIS, so cruelly that I dare not see it while I am in England." Though the film was relatively well reviewed in the US ("it is a weird and fascinating picture" opined the New York Herald Tribune), it wasn't given much of a chance to perform and was quickly forgotten in the sensation created by the arrival of talking pictures in the form of THE JAZZ SINGER that same year.

While shooting METROPOLIS, Fritz Lang had followed the common practice at the time of securing 3 printable takes of each shot so that 3 separate negatives could be created for making prints. Of the three negatives, the bowdlerized Paramount US negative accounts for one and the similar British abridgement another. Tragically, UFA cut their original long-edit negative late in 1927 along the lines of Pollock's version and resubmitted it to the German censor board who now demanded and received small changes. Mostly due to acquisition of a copy in the thirties by The Museum of Modern Art's film archive (copied, and repatriated back to Germany in 1986) it is this version that has proliferated in the 75 years since METROPOLIS' premier. Variant copies and versions have changed hands, been preserved or discovered through the efforts of the Bundesarchiv-Filmarchiv, the former East German Staatliches Filmarchiv, the Munich Filmmuseum, The British Film Institute, The National Film and Sound Archive in Canberra, Australia, The Fondazione Cineteca Italiana in Milan, The George Eastman House in Rochester and UCLA. Though all are slightly different, inadvertently highlighting missing fragments of deleted scenes, none represent Lang's vision as seen on METROPOLIS' opening night and for a few short weeks thereafter.

# KINO

I N T E R N A T I O N A L

## METROPOLIS

### The Un-making of Metropolis (continued)

In spite of or perhaps because of the relative incoherence of its studio-truncated story, the images of METROPOLIS have hung in the minds of the generations that have seen it in various forms since its abortive release. Pauline Kael eulogized its, "moments of incredible beauty and power," and declared METROPOLIS a "beautiful piece of expressionist design." Even tight-lipped Stanley Kubrick confessed that the wild-haired, one handed Teutonic mad scientist title character of DOCTOR STRANGELOVE was inspired by METROPOLIS' Rotwang. The film's aesthetic reverberations began to be felt most strongly in the eighties as, in the wake of the extraordinary success of wide-release genre mongrels like STAR WARS (featuring Maria robot look-a-like, C3PO), a new kind of story and character de-emphasizing blockbuster filmmaking became the American movie ideal. Ridley Scott's BLADE RUNNER (like METROPOLIS, re-cut by nervous producers at the time of its release) was, after STAR WARS, the first shot in a latter day salvo of METROPOLIS inspired or referencing films that have cropped up with reliable frequency from the eighties to the present.

In 1982, Italian record producer Giorgio Morodor, acting, he said, on the suggestion of, "someone at Paramount that I do something with a silent movie," and impressed by the success of Zoetrope and Kevin Brownlow's restoration of Abel Gance's NAPOLEON, outbid David Bowie for the rights to fashion his own version of METROPOLIS. Morodor, creator of soundtracks for films like MIDNIGHT EXPRESS, FLASHDANCE and the re-make of CAT PEOPLE chose to supervise a re-edit and score the film himself. Utilizing a variety of sources, some newly discovered, Morodor's tinted, sub-titled version somewhat clarifies the film's lost narrative, at least to the degree that it compliments his apparent belief that the film best functioned as a feature length music video. Though made in consultation with the Munich Film Archive (who received a new copy of the un-Morodored MoMA print in exchange for their efforts), and METROPOLIS' tireless would-be savior there, Enno Patalas, Morodor's METROPOLIS was roundly criticized. Morodor's questionable choice of wall to wall pop music (featuring the likes of Pat Benetar and Billy Squire) and re-editing of scenes to reflect a more pop-music friendly, modern tempo were denounced. Morodor shrugged off such criticism, telling the New York Times, "I didn't touch the original because there is no original."

# **KINO**

I N T E R N A T I O N A L

## **METROPOLIS**

### **The Un-Making of Metropolis (continued)**

Morodor's version was a modest success and most importantly, highlighted Enno Patalas and Munich Film Archive ongoing restoration efforts while continuing METROPOLIS' pernicious seeping into the eighties and nineties zeitgeist. Tim Burton's BATMAN films and Terry Gilliam's BRAZIL (another unfortunate recipient of a studio ordered re-cut) referenced METROPOLIS with adoring overtness as did PANIC ROOM director David Fincher's Madonna video, "Respect Yourself". A musical METROPOLIS was even briefly mounted in London's West End in the early nineties. The perilous cyberspace vistas of William Gibson's NEUROMANCER and THE MATRIX's dystopian, technology-ruled future were both built on METROPOLIS' ashes like the cities that grew on the burnt foundations of Troy.

**\*\*SEE PAGES 4 AND 5 FOR VERSIONS AFTER 1984\*\***

# KINO

I N T E R N A T I O N A L

## METROPOLIS

### PRODUCTION TEAM



#### **Fritz Lang - Director**

Born in Vienna in 1890, Fritz Lang was brought up in Viennese middle-class comfort by his Roman Catholic father Anton and his Jewish mother Paula Schleisinger who both hoped that young Fritz would become an architect. But like so many middle-class children of the new century, Lang was fascinated by the pulp and fantasy literature of his day, the art world both in and outside Vienna and a potent new form of entertainment that invited artistic scrutiny and craftsmanship, the motion picture. Though the teenaged Lang attended school as his parents wished, he secretly haunted the café's and cabarets of Vienna and intended to become a painter like his idols Klimt and Schiele. At aged 21 Lang's yearning took him to Paris where he lived in Bohemian splendor until the outbreak of W.W.I. Returning to Vienna, Lang enlisted in the Austrian army where he repeatedly saw combat, was wounded at least three times and decorated twice.

It was while on leave recuperating from one of these wounds that Lang teamed up with a young acquaintance and sold several film scenarios to film director Joe May. Through May, Lang was to meet producer Erich Pommer for whom, after the armistice was signed, Lang worked as a story editor in Berlin. Pommer soon permitted Lang to direct one of his own scenarios, HALBBLUT (THE HALF-BREED) in 1919.

# KINO

I N T E R N A T I O N A L



## PRODUCTION TEAM (CONTINUED)

### Fritz Lang - Director (continued)

Lang's third directorial success for Pommer, **DIE SPINNEN**, set the tone for much of Lang's German films, mixing pulp adventure thrills with a particularly fatalistic outlook on human nature. Around the same time Lang married his first wife, identified in Patrick MacGilligan's exhaustively researched biography of Lang **FRITZ LANG, THE NATURE OF THE BEAST**, as Lisa Rosenthal.

For Lang's sixth film (in less than two years) Pommer introduced Lang to Thea Von Harbou who would become Lang's collaborator on the scripts of the rest of his pre-war German films and, after the mystery-shrouded suicide of Lisa Rosenthal, Lang's second wife. Together, Lang and Von Harbou created, amongst others, the strum and drang of **DER MUDE TOD (DESTINY AKA, BETWEEN TWO WORLDS)** '21, the sensational paranoid thriller **DOKTOR MABUSE, DER SPIELER (DR. MABUSE, THE GAMBLER)** '22, a spectacular two part Wagnerian obsessive revenge fairy tale often mistakenly referred to as proto-Nazi propaganda **DIE NIEBELUNGEN (THE NIBELUNGS)** '24, **METROPOLIS** '27, an expertly polished thriller, **SPIONE (SPIES)** '28, Lang's second and final science fiction film for which Lang invented the countdown, **DIE FRAU IM MOND (WOMAN IN THE MOON)** '29, Lang's first sound film the lurid, serial murderer masterpiece, **M** '31 and a second film featuring Lang's master-criminal creation **DAS TESTAMENT DES DR. MABUSE (THE LAST WILL OF DR. MABUSE)** '33. As the Nazis beckoned, Lang left Germany and his Nazi sympathizer wife Von Harbou who would shortly divorce him. After a year in France where he made **LILLIOM** '34 with Charles Boyer, Lang continued on to Hollywood.

In Hollywood Lang married his personal artistic obsessions, most eloquently described in the singing Greek chorus of his 1952 western **RANCHO NOTORIOUS** as "hate, murder and revenge", with the popular genres of the American studio film. His American debut, **FURY** '36 was an unblinking portrait of a lynching starring Spencer Tracy and Sylvia Sydney made for MGM. Though **FURY** was a hit, its tortured genesis set the tone for the unending disagreements with producers and often despotic treatment of actors and crew that would keep Lang from remaining at any one studio for very long. Lang's 1937 crime drama **YOU ONLY LIVE ONCE** is the template for such better remembered lovers-on-the-lam films as **BONNIE AND CLYDE**. His two Westerns for Twentieth Century-Fox, **THE RETURN OF FRANK JAMES** '40, and **WESTERN UNION** '41 generously reflect Lang's boyhood affection for the mythic American west of Karl May.

# KINO

I N T E R N A T I O N A L



## PRODUCTION TEAM - (CONTINUED)

### **Fritz Lang - Director (continued)**

Lang collaborated with fellow German expatriate Berthold Brecht (though co-collaborator John Wexley ultimately usurped credit to Brecht's frustration) on the stridently anti-Nazi HANGMAN ALSO DIE '43 and also made the taut propaganda thriller MINISTRY OF FEAR '44.

Lang's ceaseless studio tribulations and his uncharacteristically cordial collaboration with star Joan Bennett on 1942's MAN HUNT and on THE WOMAN IN THE WINDOW '44, led him to create Diana Productions with Bennett and her husband, independent producer extraordinaire Walter Wanger. Seeking the same star director status as Alfred Hitchcock, Lang intended for Diana to give him the freedom to indulge his perfectionism without interference. Throughout his American career Lang courted the press as Hitchcock did, writing magazine articles and giving copious interviews but rarely with Hitchcock's ingratiating ease or expertise. Diana barely survived two films, SCARLET STREET '45, not only one of Lang's absolute masterpieces but also one of the finest American crime films of the forties, and SECRET BEYOND THE DOOR '48 a creative and financial disaster. Wanger described working with Lang as, "two and a half years of misery."

Despite brushes with HUAC (Lang ultimately eluded the black-list on the say-so of the also notoriously despotic Harry Cohn), Lang continued to work in Hollywood from the war years into the fifties. Highlights include 1946's spy drama CLOAK AND DAGGER, a claustrophobic gem of grand guignol titled HOUSE BY THE RIVER '50, the crackling, operatic revenge western RANCHO NOTORIOUS '52, the Clifford Odets scripted CLASH BY NIGHT '52, 1953's unforgettable THE BIG HEAT, the studio bound period drama MOONFLEET '55 and the vigorously seamy WHILE THE CITY SLEEPS '56. Though his budgets declined Lang's mastery of his chosen medium - characterized by astute, nightmarishly ominous framing, emotionally eloquent camera movements and unnervingly precise montage - remained consistent. The jewels of Lang's American output like THE BIG HEAT, SCARLET STREET and RANCHO NOTORIOUS stand as uniquely personal, fatalistic and technically accomplished works of art that rival Hitchcock's films and the films of Lang's fellow Viennese expatriates Otto Preminger and William Wyler.

# **KINO**

I N T E R N A T I O N A L



## **PRODUCTION TEAM (CONTINUED)**

### **Fritz Lang - Director (continued)**

Lang's experience making his final American film **BEYOND A REASONABLE DOUBT '56** proved so unpleasant and his efforts to get any of his own projects off the ground proved so fruitless that he accepted an offer from a German producer to return to the country of his initial success. Sadly the result, an East Indian adventure yarn based on an unrealized script of Von Harbou's and Lang's, proved to be another debacle. The two part **DER TIGER VON ESCHNAPUR** and **DAS INDISCHE GRABMAL** was released as a mutilated single film in the US titled **JOURNEY TO THE LOST CITY**, in 1960. His next directorial effort **THE THOUSAND EYES OF DR. MABUSE '60**, a post-war revisit to the criminal mind of Lang's arch-fiend Dr. Mabuse, wasn't the success it needed to be and it became Lang's final film. Lang appeared (as himself) in young acolyte Jean-Luc Godard's **CONTEMPT** in 1963 while continuing to try to get his own pet projects produced. But as the sixties spiraled on, Lang's failing eyesight and age began to take a substantial toll. Lang returned to Hollywood where he lived modestly in Beverly Hills with his longtime mistress Lilly Latte, granting interviews and making film festival appearances until his death in 1976.

Though out of vogue amongst the current generation of historically apathetic filmmakers, Lang was revered by the film history obsessed movie brat generation of the seventies. George Lucas has often acknowledged the debt his **STAR WARS** films owe Lang's **METROPOLIS** and Martin Scorsese actually cut clips from **THE BIG HEAT** into the climax of his own fatalistic crime masterpiece **MEAN STREETS**. **FRENCH CONNECTION** and **EXORCIST** director William Friedkin shot hours of interview footage of Lang discussing his films and methods for a never completed documentary in the 70's. But director Peter Bogdonavich's epitaph probably states the case for Fritz Lang's body of work most accurately. "His dark vision," Bogdonavich wrote, "was very much representative of what the 20th century was like. Unfortunately that has not helped his reputation."



### **Fritz Lang - Filmography**

1. **Tausend Augen des Dr. Mabuse, Die (1960)**  
... aka **Shadow vs. the Thousand Eyes of Dr. Mabuse, The (1966)**  
... aka **Thousand Eyes of Dr. Mabuse, The (1966) (USA)**
2. **Journey to the Lost City (1959)**  
... aka **Tiger of Bengal (1959/I) (UK)**
3. **Indische Grabmal, Das (1959)**  
... aka **Indian Tomb, The (1959)**
4. **Tiger von Eschnapur, Der (1959)**  
... aka **Tiger of Eschnapur, The (1959)**
5. **Beyond a Reasonable Doubt (1956)**
6. **While the City Sleeps (1956)**
7. **Moonfleet (1955)**
8. **Human Desire (1954)**
9. **Big Heat, The (1953)**
10. **Blue Gardenia, The (1953)**
11. **Clash by Night (1952)**
12. **Rancho Notorious (1952)**
13. **American Guerrilla in the Philippines (1950)**
14. **House by the River (1950)**
15. **Secret Beyond the Door (1948)**
16. **Cloak and Dagger (1946)**
17. **Scarlet Street (1945)**
18. **Woman in the Window, The (1944)**
19. **Ministry of Fear (1944)**
20. **Hangmen Also Die (1943)**  
... aka **Lest We Forget (1943)**
21. **Moontide (1942) (uncredited)**
22. **Confirm or Deny (1941) (uncredited)**
23. **Man Hunt (1941)**
24. **Western Union (1941)**
25. **Return of Frank James, The (1940)**
26. **You and Me (1938)**
27. **You Only Live Once (1937)**
28. **Fury (1936)**
29. **Liliom (1934)**



### **Fritz Lang - Filmography (continued)**

- 30. Testament du Dr. Mabuse, Le (1933)
- 31. Testament des Dr. Mabuse, Das (1933)  
... aka Crimes of Dr. Mabuse, The (1952) (USA: dubbed version)  
... aka Last Will of Dr. Mabuse, The (1933)
- 32. M (1931)
- 33. Frau im Mond (1929)  
... aka By Rocket to the Moon (1931) (USA)  
... aka Woman in the Moon (1931) (USA)
- 34. Spione (1928)  
... aka Spy, The (1929) (USA)
- 35. Metropolis (1927)
- 36. Nibelungen: Kriemhilds Rache, Die (1924)
- 37. Nibelungen: Siegfried, Die (1924)  
... aka Siegfried (1924)
- 38. Dr. Mabuse, der Spieler (1922)  
... aka Dr. Mabuse: The Gambler (1922)
- 39. Vier um die Frau (1921)  
... aka Four Around a Woman (1921)  
... aka Struggling Hearts (1921)
- 40. Müde Tod, Der (1921)  
... aka Between Two Worlds (1921) (USA)
- 41. Wandernde Bild, Das (1920)  
... aka Moving Image, The (1920)  
... aka Wandering Image, The (1920)
- 42. Spinnen, 2. Teil: Das Brillantenschiff, Die (1920)  
... aka Spiders, Part 2: The Diamond Ship, The (1920)
- 43. Herr der Liebe, Der (1919)  
... aka Master of Love (1919)
- 44. Pest in Florenz, Die (1919)  
... aka Plague in Florence, The (1919)
- 45. Harakiri (1919)  
... aka Madame Butterfly (1919)
- 46. Spinnen, 1. Teil: Der Goldene See, Die (1919)  
... aka Spiders, Part 1: The Golden Lake, The (1919)
- 47. Halbblut (1919)  
... aka Half-Caste, The (1919)

# **KINO**

I N T E R N A T I O N A L



## **PRODUCTION TEAM (CONTINUED)**

### **Karl Freund - Cinematographer**

**METROPOLIS'** director of photography Karl Freund's status as an innovator and craftsman with over 500 major screen credits as either cameraman or director is unequaled in film history. Born in Bohemia (now the Czech Republic) in 1890, Freund became a projectionist in Berlin at age 17 and a newsreel cameraman for Pathe's Berlin office at 18. During WW I, Freund's service in the Austrian Army was terminated after three months due to his prodigious, apparently unmilitary, weight. He finished out the war once again photographing newsreels.

After a stint shooting Enrico Caruso films produced in an early experimental synchronous sound process, Freund was recruited to work for Universum Film Aktiengesellschaft - Germany's legendary crucible of cinematic creativity, UFA. While at UFA shooting Richard Oswald's **THE ARC**, Freund met an extra who became his wife, Gertrude Hoffman. Though Freund's post war residency at UFA brought him into collaborations with such European directorial luminaries as Ernst Lubitsch, Carl Theodor Dreyer and of course Fritz Lang, it is his pairing with F.W. Murnau that yielded Freund's most influential work. For Murnau's **THE LAST LAUGH** Freund's entfesselte kamera's ("liberated camera") constant movement, distorted lens and pan focus effects raised the emotional eloquence of film grammar to a level it had never before achieved and has rarely equaled since. Freund's experimentation continued with his extraordinary photography of Walter Ruttmann's visual poem **BERLIN, SYMPHONY OF A GREAT CITY** which stands alongside Dziga Vertov's **MAN WITH A MOVIE CAMERA** as one of the greatest documentary abstractions of the silent era. "If the cameraman," Freund offered, "can portray a scene or a bit of action so realistically that his audience is completely unaware that it is merely a picture, then he has succeeded."

After pioneering the use of sprocketed magnetic tape in film sound, a practice that continued until the advent of digital sound editing, Freund worked for a year in the UK on color film experiments before being summoned to Universal Studios in Hollywood in 1930. His first Hollywood assignment involved rewriting and re-shooting the end of Lewis Milestone's **ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT** just weeks before it's scheduled premier. At Universal Freund photographed features for John Ford, James Whale, John Stahl and many others.

# KINO

I N T E R N A T I O N A L



## PRODUCTION TEAM (CONTINUED)

### **Karl Freund - Cinematographer (continued)**

In addition Freund took several directorial assignments of his own; most notably **THE MUMMY**, with Boris Karloff and **MAD LOVE**, a gothic horror film often cited as a stylistic progenitor to **CITIZEN KANE**, shot by **KANE'S** cameraman, Greg Toland. At Universal, Fox, MGM, Columbia and finally Warner Bros., Karl Freund's versatility is evinced by the pseudo-documentary clarity of **OUR DAILY BREAD** (for which Freund won an Oscar), the gauzy romantic veil of light Freund placed on Garbo in **CAMILLE**, the autumnal hues of Michael Curtiz' **BRIGHT LEAF** and the foggy menace of John Huston's **KEY LARGO**.

Freund's technical experimentation continued throughout his studio years in the forties and early fifties. Freund was constantly seeking to streamline the actual soundstage shooting process and through his Photo Research Corporation Freund developed the Norwich incident light meter. In the fifties Freund joined Desilu studios where he shot **I LOVE LUCY** and **OUR MISS BROOKS** with a three film camera system of his own devising that became the nascent TV industry's standard. After finally retiring in the sixties Freund taught and traveled extensively before he passed way in 1969, still married to Gertrude Hoffman.

### **Thea Von Harbou - Screenwriter**

Thea Von Harbou was already a successful screenwriter, novelist and journalist by the time she was introduced to Fritz Lang in 1920. Born into an aristocratic Prussian family, Von Harbou spoke several languages and played both violin and piano. Against her family's wishes, Von Harbou became an actress and it was in the theater in Aachen that she met actor Wolfgang Kleiner-Rogge who became her first husband. During WW I, Von Harbou concentrated her creative energies on writing and was successfully published. Her novels focused on epic national myths and legends and were, therefore, popular source material for the nascent German film industry. Von Harbou was hired to write for producer-director Joe May and it was through May that she met Lang.



## **PRODUCTION TEAM (CONTINUED)**

### **Thea Von Harbou - Screenwriter**

Lang and Von Harbou collaborated on the script to Lang's **DAS WANDERnde BILD (THE WANDERING IMAGE)** and from then on received or shared script credit on every one of Lang's pre-war German films. Soon after Lang's wife committed suicide in late 1920, Lang and Von Harbou were married. In the thirties Von Harbou was drawn to Nazism as Lang was repelled by it and when Lang left Germany in 1933 for France and finally Hollywood, Thea Von Harbou remained, divorcing Lang soon after. She spent WWII working in the Nazi controlled German film industry and was arrested, interrogated and briefly interred by the allies after the war. She remained in Berlin until, after a screening of her and Lang's **DER MUDE TOD** at the 1954 Berlinale, Von Harbou fell and died of complications a few days later on July the 1st, 1954.

### **Gottfried Huppertz - Composer**

After studying music in Cologne Huppertz worked as a singer and theater actor during the First World War. Through his stage experience that Huppertz became friends with actor and theater director Rudolf Klein-Rogge to whom Huppertz dedicated his first musical composition, a song entitled "Rankende Rosen". Klein-Rogge and his soon to be ex-wife Thea Von Harbou in turn introduced Huppertz to Fritz Lang. Huppertz composed his first original film music score for Lang's spectacular two part UFA prestige production, **DIE NIBELUNGEN**. Buoyed by **Nibelungen's** success, Huppertz composed the score for **ZUR CHRONIK VON GRIESHUUS** while working on the music for Lang's next epic, **METROPOLIS**. Though he continued scoring films until his death in 1937, Huppertz primarily composed songs. Sadly, virtually none of them have survived or are available on record.



## **PRODUCTION TEAM (CONTINUED)**

### **Erich Kettelhut - Art Director**

Erich Kettelhut (1893-1979) was apprenticed as a stage-set painter, studied drawing and painting at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Berlin, and held various appointments at provincial theatres. In April 1919, Joe May appointed him assistant set designer for *Herrin der Welt* (*Empress of the World*). Kettelhut assisted Otto Hunte, who was responsible for the artistic and technical direction as well as the overall plan of the structures. Around Berlin, at Weissensee, Potsdam, and Woltersdorf, fantastic monumental building began to appear that were intended to transport the audience all over the world, to China, Africa, America, and the legendary Ophir. With this production Kettelhut acquired the tools of the set designer's craft. Together with the cameraman Karl Puth, he experimented with different heights and angles for perspective vistas and developed an understanding for the way film can represent architecture.

In his next project, it was Kettelhut's job to convert designs by Hunte into ground plans and elevations for the construction sets. Joe May's *Das Indische Grabmal* (*The Indian Tomb*, 1921), Fritz Lang's *Dr. Mabuse der Spieler* (*Dr. Mabuse the Gambler*, 1921-2), and *Die Nibelungen* (1924) were construction assignments this team completed in spectacular fashion. But Kettelhut's specialty was above all architectural models, as well as the special effects necessary to make his trick building appear as actual architecture on the screen. As on *Metropolis*, Kettelhut worked mainly with Gunther Rittau, a cameraman with a great interest in special effects.

From then on, Kettelhut was in charge as the art director. For Walter Ruttmann's *Berlin, die Sinfonie der Grossstadt* (*Berlin, Symphony of a Great City*, 1927), he organized the sheltered and disguised sites for the camera in order to capture street scenes directly, authentically, and without interruption. One camera, for example, was installed in an advertising kiosk in front of the Anhalter railroad station in order to record the morning and evening traffic at this busy Berlin intersection. The experience of Berlin also contributed to the success of *Asphalt*. In *Neue Sachlichkeit* style, documentary takes of daily life in Berlin were incorporated into the opening scenes of the film by means of multiple exposures. For the action in the film itself, Kettelhut built a 230 metre street in the studio, made completely according to the demands of camera operation, and constructed a movable crane to provide interesting details for the panning lens. Thanks to his diversity, Kettelhut remained in demand as a set designer after the end of World War II. Shooting of *Die 1000 Augen des Dr. Mabuse* (*The Thousand Eyes of Dr. Mabuse*, 1960) brought him and Lang together once again. With Lang's last film, Kettelhut also left the cinema. A few projects for television concluded the more than four decades of work in film.



## **PRODUCTION TEAM (CONTINUED)**

### **Edgar G. Ulmer - Set Designer**

Edgar G. Ulmer was born in what is now the Czech Republic, in 1904. He attended the Academy of Arts and Sciences in Vienna. Ulmer got his start working on the set design of Paul Wegener's 1920 *The Golem*. He assisted F.W. Murnau on *The Last Laugh*, devising the very first ever tracking shot. Ulmer designed sets for *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920), and G.W. Pabst's *The Joyless Street* (1925). He worked as a set designer for Fritz Lang on *Metropolis*, *The Nibelungen*, and *Spies*, before inventing the new post of Production Designer on *M*: this job entailed designing sets in perspective from each camera angle. If there were to be five shots in one room, then five different sets would be built of that room.

Ulmer also co-directed the film *People on Sunday*, a project whose other creators included Billy Wilder, Fred Zinneman, Robert Siodmak, and Eugen Schufftan. Before long, these great filmmakers fled the burgeoning Nazi regime to invigorate Hollywood with their gifts. Ulmer came to Hollywood to work at Universal as an art director for Erich von Stroheim. After six months, he was studying under William Wyler to become a director in his own right. The high point of his directorial career at Universal was 1934's *The Black Cat*, starring Boris Karloff and Bela Lugosi.

### **Otto Hunte - Art Director**

Otto Hunte was a highly respected German art director (the German's call them film architects - Architektur). Very few details are known about Otto Hunte's life and they hardly suggest the breadth of his work or the position he held within the complex and intertwined process of German film production. He became a star by virtue of his designs for pictures such as *Die Nibelungen*, *Metropolis*, *Die Frau in Mond* and *The Blue Angel*. He reflected the classic nuance of German expressionism. During the Nazi's regime, his films include *Gold and Jud Suss* or *Die Entlassung* and he continued to work for 40 years. Many of his designs are now in the collection of the Deutsches Filmmuseum.



## **PRODUCTION TEAM (CONTINUED)**

### **Erich Pommer - Producer**

As the tirelessly resourceful and supportive producer of **THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI**, **THE LAST LAUGH**, **THE BLUE ANGEL**, **DIE NEBELUGEN** and **METROPOLIS** Erich Pommer truly deserves Paul Rotha's epitaph, "the real genius behind the great years of the German cinema." Pommer's unique combination of artistic commitment, in-the-trenches production savvy and commercial instinct yielded memorable collaborations with a virtual who's-who of German and German influenced filmmaking. Fritz Lang, F.W. Murnau, E.A. Dupont, Max Ophuls, Josef Von Sternberg, Robert Weine, Robert Siodmak and Alfred Hitchcock all enjoyed the benefits of Pommer's loyal professionalism.

Pommer began his film career in 1907 as a travelling projection equipment salesman for French Gaumont's Berlin office and shortly graduated to overseeing productions for Wiener-Autoren-Film which he co-founded. Twice wounded in WWI, Pommer was transferred to the Austrian army's Bild-und-Film-Amt (Bufa) to oversee production and distribution of propaganda and training films created for the army and occupied territories. Pommer subsequently founded his own production entity, Decla which became Decla-Bioscop after the war which was in turn absorbed by UFA.

While at UFA Pommer supervised production on nearly all of the acknowledged classics of UFA's golden era. "It is immaterial what subject one chooses for making an artistic film," Pommer wrote at the peak of his powers at UFA in 1922, "the only essential condition is that it be made by artists who know what the public wants but also know what they themselves want." For Murnau's **THE LAST LAUGH**, Pommer exhorted Murnau's crew with instructions to, "please invent something new, even if it's crazy!" But by the mid-twenties UFA's financial turmoil and Fritz Lang's profligate ways during the making of **METROPOLIS** brought Pommer before UFA's panicked board who sacked Pommer before **METROPOLIS** was completed. Though Pommer promptly left for America like so many of the influential German filmmakers whose careers he had helped create, UFA lured him back in 1927, giving him his own independent production deal.



## **PRODUCTION TEAM - (CONTINUED)**

### **Erich Pommer - Producer (continued)**

In 1933, however, after overseeing UFA's transition to sound and producing diverse artistic and financial successes ranging from Von Sternberg's **THE BLUE ANGEL** to the science fiction adventure **F.P. 1 DOESN'T ANSWER**, the shadow of National Socialism spurred Pommer's exit from Germany once again. Despite Dr. Goebbels' solicitous assurances that he would remain a key part of the now Nazi controlled German film industry, Pommer, a Jew, sensibly chose to relocate. He set up shop in France where he produced Lang's excellent **LILLIOM**, then the UK where he formed Mayflower Films with actor Charles Laughton, and finally in Hollywood.

In 1946 Pommer was appointed to oversee the recovery of the German film industry he helped put on the map as Film Control Officer for the Allies. Pommer produced his last film in 1955 but stayed an active and respected advocate of German filmmaking until his death in 1966.

### **Aenne Wilkomm - Costume designer**

Aenne Wilkommen had earlier worked with Lang on costumes for **Die Nibelungen** (1923-4). Some of her designs are archived in the collection of the Deutsche Kinemathek, in Berlin.

# KINO

I N T E R N A T I O N A L

## METROPOLIS

### CAST

#### **Brigitte Helm - Maria (A.K.A. The Robot)**

Brigitte Helm was born Eva Gisels Schnittenhelm in Berlin in 1906 to a Prussian army officer father and his soon to widowed wife. When Helm's mother sent Germany's most popular writer-director team Fritz Lang and Thea Von Harbou pictures of her striking daughter, Helm was invited to visit the NIEBELUNGEN set and was screen tested by Lang. After another test she won the dual role of Maria and Rotwang's robotrix in Lang's new film, METROPOLIS.

The varieties of physical discomfort Helm experienced making METROPOLIS taxed even her 17-year-old pluck. Thea Von Harbou noted on more than one occasion in her METROPOLIS production notebook, "poor little Brigitte Helm! The next day her whole body will be covered in bruises," as Helm was immersed in flood waters, scorched in a stake burning, hung from a cathedral bell-rope and encased in the simulated metal skin of Maria's robot double. Helm continued to act in lead roles at UFA for the rest of the 20's in melodramas like LOVE OF JEANNE NEY. She turned down the lead in THE BLUE ANGEL forcing director Josef Von Sternberg to make due with his second choice, Marlene Dietrich.

Helm was never entirely comfortable with her acting career and after marrying German industrialist Hugo Von Kunheim, she was relieved to be let out of her UFA contract in the mid 30's. Helm and Von Kunheim left Germany during the war after Helm served a two month jail sentence for causing a traffic accident. Staunchly anti-Nazi, Helm and her husband remained in Switzerland until after the war. They returned to Germany in the fifties and lived there and in Switzerland until Helm passed away in 1996.



## **CAST (CONTINUED)**

### **Gustav Fröhlich - Freder Fredersen**

Fröhlich's theater career began in 1921 when he moved to Berlin. He had already been a journalist, an author of dime novels and a variety show host. Despite working with German theatrical legends Erwin Piscator and Max Reinhardt and appearing as Franz Liszt in the 1922 silent film, *PAGANINI* Frölich's career only really took off after he was chosen to replace André Mattoni in Fritz Lang's *METROPOLIS*. Though essentially typecast in films from *METROPOLIS* on as, in Frölich's words, the "nice, naïve boy from next door," Frölich contributed memorable performances to Joe May's *HEIMKEHR* (1928) and *ASPHALT* (1928/29) Robert Siodmak's *VORUNTERSUCHUNG* (1931) and Max Ophüls' *DIE VERLIEBTE FIRMA* (1931/32). Frölich was married from 1931 until 1935 to actress and singer, Gitta Alpar whom he left for actress and future lover of Joseph Goebbels, Lida Baarova. After the Second World War, Fröhlich worked as a film director and continued to act in film, television and theater until the 80's. In 1956 Frölich moved to Brissago on Lago Maggiore, Switzerland where he passed away in 1987.

### **Alfred Abel - Johhan (Joh) Fredersen**

Before becoming a distinguished German actor, Alfred Abel worked a wide variety of jobs ranging from forester to bank clerk to designer. In 1913, he caught the eye of Asta Nielsen who helped him break into show business. Abel went on to be one of the best actors in early German films such as *DR. MABUSE DE SPIELER* (1922) and *METROPOLIS*. Abel became a director in the early '30s and had made three films before he died in 1937.



## **CAST (CONTINUED)**

### **Rudolf Klein-Rogge - Rotwang**

Rudolf Klein-Rogge (1888-1955) was born in Cologne, Germany, and after a career as an operatic stage star, he began appearing in films in 1919. His greatest roles were in the silent films of Fritz Lang, performing memorably as the lead in *Dr. Mabuse, der Spieler* (UFA, 1922), the despotic King Etzel in *Die Niebelungen, Part 1* (Decla-Bioskop/UFA, 1922) the megalomaniac Rotwang in *Metropolis* and the criminal mastermind Haghi in *Spione (Spies)* (UFA/M-G-M, 1927).

### **Heinrich Georg - Grot**

Heinrich Georg was born on the 9 October 1893 in Stettin. In the 1920's, under the guidance of Max Reinhardt, he rose to stardom as a complex character actor in the Berlin Theatre. The constant interruptions during the shooting of *Metropolis* did not suit his stage acting style, although he continued to make movies, including many propaganda films. Georg married actress Berta Drews. Their son Götz also became a an actor. A nazi sympathizer, George was arrested by the Soviets after the war and died on 26 September 1946 in an internment camp.

### **Theodor Loos - Josaphat**

His career spanned 50 years, from the 1910s to the 50s.

**Born:** 18 May 1883, Zwingenberg, Hessen, Germany

**Died:** 27 June 1954, Stuttgart, Germany

### **Select Filmography:**

**M (1931)**

**Ariane (1931)**

**Metropolis (1927)**

**Siegfried (1924)**

**Kriemhild's Revenge (1924)**