

Fritz Lang's 1927 Masterpiece
Now With 25 Minutes of Lost Footage

**THE COMPLETE
METROPOLIS**

a Kino International release
Kino Lorber

CAST

Joh Fredersen.....	Alfred Abel
Freder Fredersen.....	Gustav Fröhlich
Maria / The Robot.....	Brigitte Helm
Rotwang.....	Rudolf Klein-Rogge
Josephat.....	Theodor Loos
Grot (Foreman).....	Heinrich George
Slim.....	Fritz Rasp
Master of Ceremonies.....	Heinrich Gotho
Georgi, 11811.....	Erwin Biswanger
Mafinus.....	Hans Leo Reich
Jan.....	Olaf Storm

CREW

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

SYNOPSIS

(Passages and sections still considered lost are *italicized*; new additions to this restoration are in **bold**.)

In Metropolis, a towering city of the future, society is divided into two classes: one of planners and management, who live high above the Earth in skyscrapers; and one of workers, who live and toil underground, slaves to the whistle of Metropolis's ten-hour clock.

Like the other children born into the privileged upper caste, Freder Fredersen, the only son of Metropolis' ruler, lives a life of luxury. One day, as he and his friends play games in the lush, private Eternal Gardens, they are interrupted by a beautiful girl, accompanied by a group of workers' children. They are quickly ejected, but Freder is transfixed by the girl — and decides to follow her down to the grim Lower City machine rooms. As he watches, a worker collapses at his station and an enormous machine (known as the M-Machine) violently explodes and kills dozens of workers. In the smoke, Freder has a vision of the M-Machine as Moloch, the god of fire, gobbling up chained slaves offered in sacrifice.

Horrified by what he has seen, Freder returns to the New Tower of Babel, a massive skyscraper owned by his father Joh Fredersen (hereafter referred to as 'Fredersen'). He confronts his father and describes the deplorable conditions and horrific accident in the machine room, but Fredersen is more focused on hearing about the accident from Freder and not from his clerk Josephat — **a cold rationality that shocks Freder**. Grot, foreman of the Heart Machine (which produces the needed energy for Metropolis) informs Fredersen of papers resembling maps or plans that have been discovered in the dead workers' pockets. Furious, Fredersen fires Josephat and tells his brooding henchman Der Schmale (aka the Thin Man) to start following his son.

Outside the office, Freder keeps Josephat from committing suicide and they commiserate together, **finally agreeing to meet later at Josephat's place**. Returning to the Lower City, Freder takes over for Worker No. 11811 (known as Georgy), who works a machine that directs electrical power to the enormous series of elevators in the New Tower of Babel, and has collapsed at his station. They exchange clothes, and **Freder tells Georgy to go to Josephat's apartment and to wait for him there. When he reaches Freder's car, however, Georgy finds large blocks of money in the pocket of Freder's pants and decides to go to Yoshiwara, the city's red-light district. The Thin Man, meanwhile, records Georgy's movements, mistaking him for Freder.**

Fredersen, curious about the papers found, decides to consult the scientist Rotwang, an old collaborator who lives in a house contained in the lower levels of the city. **In Rotwang's inner sanctum, Fredersen discovers a monument dedicated to Hel, his late wife; though Rotwang loved Hel, she abandoned him for the wealthy, powerful Fredersen, and died giving birth to their son Freder. Rotwang has never been able to get over the loss, and is furious when he sees that Fredersen has discovered the hidden sculpture.** After railing against his past rival, Rotwang presents his latest invention: a machine woman who is to replace his lost Hel. In 24 hours, he tells Fredersen, the machine woman will be indistinguishable from his dead beloved. Meanwhile, Freder works at Georgy's machine until he becomes delirious, having visions of being crucified to the factory clock.

When Fredersen asks Rotwang to help him decipher the papers, Rotwang identifies them as maps to the 2,000-year-old catacombs that are deep under the Lower City. Back in the factory, the shifts change, and workers take Freder down into the catacombs for their secret meeting. Fredersen and Rotwang follow their map to the catacombs at the same time. There, the beautiful Maria appears and begins preaching to the workers (including the disguised Freder) about the Tower of Babel, which was destroyed by the slaves

that erected it because no common language could be found between them and their rulers. She predicts the arrival of a mediator who will ease the unspeakable hardships that the workers of Metropolis endure. **Listening to the sermon, Fredersen realizes that Maria is a threat to his authority over the workers.** Rotwang notices Freder in the crowd, but 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 his machine woman the appearance of Maria, thus enabling him to mislead the workers. Rotwang agrees, but has ulterior motives, intending to use the machine-man to ruin Fredersen's life. Freder and Maria kiss, and agree to meet the next day at the cathedral in the Upper City. When Fredersen returns to his offices, Rotwang pursues Maria through the catacombs, terrorizing her with the beam of his flashlight before abducting her.

The next day, Freder enters the cathedral of Metropolis *and 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.* **Back in his laboratory, Rotwang instructs his new machine woman (the "false Maria") to destroy Fredersen's city and murder 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 Yoshiwara after a long night of pleasure. As he gets into Freder's car, he is apprehended by the Thin Man and forced to reveal details of a planned meeting at Josaphat's house. After missing Maria at the cathedral, Freder goes to Josaphat's place so that Georgy can take him to the Lower City — but he is surprised to learn from Josaphat that Georgy never showed up.

Freder leaves to continue his search for Maria, but moments later the Thin Man arrives and discovers Georgy's cap, further evidence of the link between Freder, Josaphat and Georgy. He tries to get Josaphat to betray Freder, first through bribery, then through threats and intimidation, and finally by force. The two men struggle, but the Thin Man is too strong for Josaphat; after defeating him, he tells Josaphat that he will return for him in three hours.

Freder walks through the streets and hears Maria's cries as she is overpowered by Rotwang. He follows the sound to the door of Rotwang's house — where a further series of doors open for him, trapping him inside. When Freder demands to know where Maria is, Rotwang tells him that she is with Fredersen. **In a letter, Rotwang invites Fredersen to a demonstration 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, and he collapses at the thought that his beloved has betrayed him with his father. As Freder languishes in bed, the false Maria beguiles the male elite with an erotic dance; Jan and Marinus, sons of ruling-class citizens, are entranced — and willing to commit "all seven deadly sins" for her sake.

The Thin Man keeps watch over the fever-ridden Freder. **In a vision, Freder sees him 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.** When he awakes, he 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 another vision of the cathedral statues of Death and the Seven Deadly Sins coming toward him, with Death's scythe sweeping through the sickroom.

As the elite sons' response to the false Maria's licentious dance reaches fever pitch, Josaphat escapes his confinement and is reunited with Freder. **The Thin Man reports to Fredersen about the increasing unrest in the Lower City, warning that "the only thing keeping the workers in check is their expectation of getting the mediator promised to them."** Jan is killed in a duel with Marinus over the false Maria, and the Eternal Gardens become deserted as the privileged sons of Metropolis all gather in Yoshiwara to vie for the false Maria's favors, **and even more of them die in confrontations with each other. Josaphat tells Freder that "this woman, at whose feet all sins are heaped, is also named Maria," and that it is the same Maria who gives sermons to the workers in the catacombs. The shift whistle sounds, signaling for the workers to go the catacombs, and Freder tells Josaphat that it is time for the mediator to appear at last.** Freder and Josaphat descend into the Lower City.

Fredersen instructs the Thin Man that the workers should not be stopped, no matter what they decide to do. He sets off to meet Rotwang, who is still holding the real Maria prisoner. Rotwang explains to her that the false Maria only seems to follow Fredersen's orders – when in fact she obeys Rotwang's will alone.

At the secret meeting in the catacombs, the false Maria urges the workers to rebel and destroy the Lower City's machines. When 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 identifies Freder as Joh Fredersen's son, and 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.

Meanwhile, Fredersen has secretly heard what Rotwang has revealed to the real Maria, and he attacks Rotwang. While the two fight, Maria escapes into the city. Wave after wave of enraged workers mass at the gates and elevators leading to the machine rooms, and the real Maria follows. The false Maria and the rioters attack the M-Machine, convincing the workers there to join them — but when they attempt to move on to the Heart Machine, Grot closes the giant gates. Fredersen, having defeated Rotwang in their fight, returns to his office and receives a desperate report from Grot over a videophone. He 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 close, the false Maria damages the Heart Machine and escapes to the Upper City.

As the Lower City begins to flood from the damage to the Heart Machine, the real Maria sounds the alarm and gathers the workers' children, but their escape is cut short by an avalanche of wrecked machine room elevators. **As the water rushes in from all sides and quickly rises around them, they become trapped and increasingly desperate.** Josaphat and Freder finally discover them, **but their attempt to reach safety through the stairwell of the towering airshaft is blocked by a locked steel grille. As countless children continue to climb into the stairwell, Freder and Josaphat are able to break through the grille and on to safety** 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 that their children must have all 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 am going to take you home, my Hel!," he sets out to recapture his machine woman.**

Freder, Josaphat and Maria find refuge for the children at the Upper City's Club of the Sons, but an exhausted Maria briefly pauses to rest outside the club and is separated from the group. At the same time, Grot leads the riotous workers through the streets — and when they come upon Maria

outside the club, Grot calls her a witch and declares that she must be burned at the stake. Terrified, she runs from the menacing workers into the city streets.

As the angry mob of workers and the procession of Yoshiwara revelers collide, Grot mistakenly seizes the false Maria, and 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 fears the real Maria is about to be burned at the stake. Meanwhile, the real Maria is chased into the cathedral portal by Rotwang, who takes her for his machine woman and now wants to give her the likeness of Hel after all. Maria flees from him into the bell tower, where she hangs desperately from the cathedral bell's massive rope.

As the bell rings, the false Maria is unmasked by the rising flames. When 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 Maria, **and he and Rotwang engage in a fierce fight.** Josaphat brings Fredersen to the cathedral square, where he reassures the assembled workers that their children were rescued. Rotwang carries the real Maria farther up the cathedral roof, but Freder frees her and 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 and declares that "the mediator between brain and hands must be the heart."

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

In 1924, Germany's UFA Studios sent their star producer Erich Pommer and star director Fritz Lang to the gala New York premiere of their two-part mythic spectacle *Die Nibelungen*. For years, Lang claimed that he conceived *Metropolis* ("the glaring lights and the tall buildings") on this trip, although he and his co-scenarist (and wife) Thea Von Harbou had already been at work on the concept and scenario for more than a year at this point. Ultimately, though, it was Lang and Pommer's whirlwind VIP tour of several Hollywood film studios on a subsequent leg of their American junket that may have influenced *Metropolis* more than anything else. Humbled by the technical superiority and perfect vertical integration of the studios, it was here that the men 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.

Although UFA's expansion had stalled due to rampant inflation and a fitful cash flow, Lang immediately declared his intention to create "the costliest and most ambitious picture ever" — and the studio justified their investment with the assumption that the film would prove irresistible to US distributors. Fresh from the triumph of the *Nibelungen* films, Lang and production designers Otto Hunte and Erich Kettlehut set about designing a modernist cityscape that encompassed the full range of 1920s architectural and industrial futurism — as well as a series of settings that were steeped in brooding medieval religiosity. In every aspect of the design, from Walter Schulze-Mittendorf's sculptures to Aenne Willkomm's costumes, Lang strove to unite the disparate visual motifs and traditions that were contributing to Germany's underdog supremacy in the contemporary art world. Karl Freund, UFA's star cameraman, was tapped to photograph the film with the same versatility and precision he had shown with the grim romanticism of *The Golem*, the relentless experimentation of *The Last Laugh*, and the breathless pulp of Lang's own *Der Spione Pt. II*.

As detailed in the script, the meticulous miniature photography and full-scale floods, explosions and riots, necessitated a new level of collaborative ingenuity from every department. 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. Over 36,000 extras were used for the live action flood, the workers' riots and the Tower of Babel scenes, which were created on UFA's Neubabelsberg 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 [all] suffer[ed]." Frolich's co-star Brigitte Helm, another of Lang's discoveries, fared worst of all, as Lang badgered the 17-year-old (nicknamed "the virgin of Neubabelsberg" by the *Metropolis* crew) through repeated takes, under the most bewildering assortment of physical deprivations ever devised for a motion picture. "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.

Managed more like a European builders' guild than its factory-esque Hollywood counterparts, UFA hired many key craftsmen by the job rather than as permanent staff — which only added to the studio's crippling overhead. As *Metropolis*'s cameras rolled over 310 shooting days and 60 nights and UFA's

coffers emptied, Pommer was summoned before the desperate studio board. They had finally made a deal with Paramount and Metro (heavily slanted in Paramount's favor) for US distribution of select UFA films, but Lang's excesses were threatening to bankrupt them before they could deliver *Metropolis* to their new American partners. The footage Lang was generating was so astounded that the board was willing to let him off the hook — but Pommer was relieved of his duties on *Metropolis* and would shortly depart for America. After 17 months of shooting, Lang completed the film at a cost of 5.3 million marks — almost four times as much as the film's original budget of 1.5 million.

RELEASE AND REACTION

Once edited to Lang's standards, a nearly two-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 approved it for release — but 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 audience-friendly entertainment.

The film officially premiered in Berlin (at Lang's original, un-cut length) on January 19, 1927, and received decided mixed reviews — the studio's hysterical publicity had backfired by creating unrealistic expectations in the press. As the most ambitious and expensive film ever made in Europe, *Metropolis* needed to be everything to everyone — and the social, political and artistic tensions of the time meant that it was evaluated as a barometer of Weimar Germany's past, present and future, 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 (along with UFA and Paramount) was equally disturbed by the destructive revolt of *Metropolis*' Lower City denizens, and found the film borderline Communist. Technocrats saw the film's industrial nightmare world as being anti-science, and clergy found its vision of a sex-crazed upper-class killing themselves over a libertine robot both prurient and reprehensible.

Though UFA briefly ran *Metropolis* in Berlin and Nuremberg in its original length, the film was soon pulled from theaters and redone for its US release; Paramount cut the film down from 12 and 7 reels and hired American playwright Channing Pollock to rewrite the film's title cards. Much of the symbolism was removed, as well as the key conflict between Rotwang and Joh Fredersen over Freder's mother Hel (Pollock believed that "Hel" was too close to "Hell" to be accepted by American filmgoers), Der Schlame's pursuit of Freder, the majority of scenes in the red-light district of Yoshiwara, and the uprising workers' extended pursuit of Maria at the end of the film. As a result, Lang's two narrative strengths — obsessive romantic fatalism and breathless pulp intrigue — were nearly eliminated, while the story's fairly vague, supposedly Socialist content was brought to the forefront. Lang would confess in retirement that, "I was not so politically minded in those days as I am now."

This new version of *Metropolis* — nearly an hour shorter and far less coherent — premiered in the US in March of 1927 and shortly thereafter in England (in a slightly altered version). Lang 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...so cruelly that I dare not see it while I am in England." Though the film was relatively well reviewed in the US ("a weird and fascinating picture," opined the New York Herald Tribune), it was quickly forgotten in the sensation created by the arrival of talking pictures that same year.

But in spite of the relative incoherence of the studio-truncated story, the images of *Metropolis* would display a remarkable staying power in the years to come. Pauline Kael eulogized its "moments of incredible beauty and power," and declared *Metropolis* a "beautiful piece of expressionist design." Even

Stanley Kubrick confessed that the mad scientist title character of *Dr. Strangelove* was inspired by *Metropolis*' Rotwang. But the film's aesthetic reverberations began to be felt most strongly in the eighties, in the wake of wide-release genre mongrels like *Star Wars* (featuring the Maria robot look-a-like C3PO) and *Blade Runner* (like *Metropolis*, re-cut by nervous producers at the time of its release).

PREVIOUS RESTORATIONS

From 1927 until the early 1980s, *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. (Between 1968 and 1972, the East German Film Archive compiled a version of the film with the help of other world archives, but most of the riddles of the film's abridged narration could not be solved, due to a lack of secondary sources or original script.)

In 1984, the rights to the film were licensed to composer Giorgio Moroder, who put together a “pop” version by re-cutting shots and replacing missing stills 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 were more controversial than its newly composed score, which featured songs by Queen's Freddy Mercury, Bonnie Tyler and Jon Anderson. Nevertheless, this version proved to be successful both in theatres and on video, making the film available to a much larger — and younger — audience.

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 composer Gottfried Huppertz — including the original censorship cards (required copies of all the original intertitles, kept by German censors in the 20s) — as well as newly acquired stills that documented some of the lost scenes.

Between 1998 and 2002, film preservationist Martin Koeber meticulously compiled a “definitive” restoration based on the 1987 “Munich” version, working under the auspices of the Friedrich-Wilhelm-Murnau-Stiftung (the film's copyright holders, hereafter referred to as the Murnau Foundation) and a consortium of German archives headed by the German Bundesarchiv-Filmarchiv. 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, with new digital technology used to “clean” every frame of the film. A handful of recovered shots were added, along with newly translated English subtitles, newly written intertitles with detailed information on still-missing scenes, and a re-recording of the original score by a sixty-piece orchestra. At 124 minutes, this version was 3,640 feet longer than Moroder's and 1,320 feet longer than the “Munich” restoration — the most accurate and definitive version of *Metropolis* than contemporary audiences could ever expect to see.

THE “COMPLETE” *METROPOLIS*

In July 2008, it was announced that an essentially complete copy of *Metropolis* had been found — a 16mm dupe negative unearthed by the curator of the Buenos Aires Museo del Cine that was considerably longer than any existing print. It included not merely a few additional snippets, but 25 minutes of “lost” footage, about a fifth of the film, that had not been seen since its Berlin debut. The discovery of such a significant amount of material called for yet another restoration, spearheaded again by the Murnau Foundation and coordinated by their Film Restorer Anke Wilkening. Also returning was Martin Koeber, Film Department Curator of the Deutsche Kinemathek, who had supervised the 2001 restoration.

“We discussed the new approach with experts and German archive partners to establish a team for the 2010 restoration,” Wilkening explains. “The project consisted of two main tasks: the reconstruction of the original cut and the digital restoration of the heavily damaged images from the Argentinian source.”

As word spread of the discovery of the Buenos Aires negative, a nervous public worried that archival politics might hinder the integration of the rediscovered footage into *Metropolis*. According to Koerber, this was never the case: “They were always willing to cooperate; in fact, they offered the material once they identified what it was.”

Once obtained by the Murnau Foundation, the 16mm negative was digitally scanned in 2K by The Arri Group in Munich. The condition of the negative — a “back-up” copy made from the original 35mm nitrate print, which was probably destroyed due to the flammability and chemical instability of the film stock — posed a major technical challenge to the team, as the image was streaked with scratches and plagued by flickering brightness. “If we could have had access to the 35mm nitrate print that was destroyed after being reprinted for safety onto the 16mm dupe negative some 30 years ago, we would have been able to make a much better copy today,” emphasizes Koerber.

Fortunately, advances in digital technology allowed the team to at least diminish some of the printed-in wear. “If we...had the Argentinian material for the 2001 restoration, it would have hardly been possible to work on the severe damage,” Wilkening says. In 2010, however, “it was possible to reduce the scratches prominent all over the image and almost eliminate the flicker that was caused by oil on the surface of the original print — [all] without aggressively manipulating the image.”

Under Wilkening and Koerber’s supervision, the visual cleanup was performed by Alpha-Omega Digital GmbH, utilizing digital restoration software of their own development. “[Digital technology] has made things possible we could only dream of a decade or two ago,” Koerber says, “Digital techniques allow more precise interventions than ever before. And it is still evolving — we are only at the beginning.”

Viewing *Metropolis* today, the Argentine footage is clearly identifiable because so much of the damage remains. The unintended benefit is that it provides convenient earmarks to the recently reintegrated scenes. “The work on the restoration teaches us once more that no restoration is ever definitive,” says Wilkening. “Even if we are allowed for the first time to come as close to the first release as ever before, the new version will still remain an approach. The rediscovered sections, which change the film’s composition, will at the same time always be recognizable...as those parts that had been lost for 80 years.”

Other changes are not so noticeable. Because the Buenos Aires negative provided a definite blueprint to the cutting of *Metropolis* — which in the past had been a matter of conjecture — the order of some of the existing shots has been altered in the 2010 edition, bringing *Metropolis* several steps closer to its original form.

It is important to note that the “new” shots are not merely extensions of previously existing scenes; in some cases, they comprise whole subplots that were lopped off in their entirety. (“It restores the original editing,” Koerber says, “restoring the balance between the characters and subplots that remained and those that were excised.”) Furthermore, the film’s structure has changed significantly, especially in regards to Josaphat, Georgy and Der Schmale (the Thin One) — major supporting characters whose roles had been significantly diminished with the elimination of two extended scenes. “Parallel editing now becomes a major player in *Metropolis*,” Wilkening says. “The new version represents a Fritz Lang film where we can observe the tension between his preferred subject, the male melodrama, and the bombastic dimensions of the UFA production.”

From conception to completion, the restoration took about one year, and was performed at a cost of 600,000€ (approx. \$840,000). But Wilkening is quick to point out that it is just the latest chapter in an ongoing saga — as well as a tribute to the other preservationists who have so vigorously championed the film: “*Metropolis* is the prototype of an archive film. Decades of research for the lost scenes and various attempts to reconstruct the first release version have produced a large pool of knowledge of this film.”

Asked how the *Metropolis* restoration compared to other projects in which the Deutsche Kinemathek participated, Koerber replies, “No comparison, *Metropolis* is more complex in many ways. On the other hand, it is also more rewarding, as the [availability of source material] — film material as well as secondary sources — is exceptionally good.”

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CAST AND CREW BIOS

FRITZ LANG (DIRECTOR)

While the exact origins of film noir are impossible to pinpoint, no director worked within the genre more consistently or more brilliantly than Fritz Lang. Bringing to the screen an obsessive and fatalistic world populated by a rogues' gallery of strange and twisted characters, Lang staked out a uniquely hostile corner of the cinematic universe; despair, isolation, helplessness -- all found refuge in the shadows of his work. A product of German Expressionist thought, he explored humanity at its lowest ebb, with a distinctively rich and bold visual sensibility that virtually defined film noir long before the term was even coined.

Born Friedrich Christian Anton Lang in Vienna, Austria, on December 5, 1890, he initially studied to become an artist and architect, later serving in the Austrian army during World War I and earning an honorable discharge after being wounded four times. He first entered the German film industry as a writer, penning a series of horror movies and thrillers beginning with 1917's *Hilde Warren Und Der Tod*. In 1919, he and director Robert Wiene teamed up on the script of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, and although Lang exited in the pre-production stages to begin work on another project, his major contribution to the story -- a framing device ultimately revealing the story line to have been a dream -- went on to rank among the most imitated structural techniques in history.

As a director, Lang debuted in 1919 with the now-lost *Halbblut*. Upon completing 1920's two-part *The Spiders*, his early rise to fame culminated with 1922's *Doktor Mabuse der Spieler*, which marked the full emergence of his striking Expressionist aesthetic and introduced his popular Mabuse character. Another two-part epic, *Die Niebelungen*, followed two years later, and in 1927 he filmed the science fiction landmark *Metropolis*. Lang's transition from the silents to sound began with his masterpiece *M* (1931). Written by wife Thea von Harbou, as were most of his principal films of the era, *M* documented the crimes of a deranged serial killer (Peter Lorre) preying on the children of Berlin. The film went on to become a tremendous influence on the work of filmmakers including Alfred Hitchcock, Michael Powell, and Jacques Tourneur.

The success of *M* positioned Lang as a leading figure of the German film industry, but its power may have been too great -- Nazi propagandist Josef Goebbels offered Lang the opportunity to direct films for Adolf Hitler, unaware of the director's own Jewish heritage. According to legend, Lang -- already stinging from a government ban on his recent *Die Testament des Dr. Mabuse* -- fled the country that same evening, leaving without the pro-Nazi von Harbou. After briefly stopping in France to shoot *Liliom*, he landed in Hollywood, earning immediate acclaim with 1936's *Fury*, a stinging indictment of mob mentality.

Lang spent the next several decades in America working in a variety of styles and genres, including the Western (among his more notable efforts being 1940's *The Return of Frank James* and 1952's *Rancho Notorious*). However, his greatest achievement during the period was a series of grim thrillers which went far in defining the look and texture of film noir; pictures like 1944's *Ministry of Fear* and *The Woman in the Window*, 1945's *Scarlet Street*, 1953's *The Big Heat*, and 1956's *While the City Sleeps* offered bleak, gripping depictions of life on the cliff's edge of desperation, exploring recurring themes of obsession, vengeance, and persecution in haunting detail.

However, by the mid-'50s, Lang had become disenchanted with the Hollywood system, and after completing 1956's superb *Beyond a Reasonable Doubt*, he briefly stopped in India to film 1958's *Die Tiger von Eschnapur* before returning to Germany after an absence of decades. Upon completing 1959's *Indische Grabmal*, he directed one last Mabuse picture, *Tausend Augen des Dr. Mabuse*, before announcing his retirement from filmmaking. After appearing in Jean-Luc Godard's 1963 feature *Contempt* as himself, Lang returned to America to live out his remaining years. He died in Los Angeles on August 2, 1976. (written by Jason Ankeny for the All Movie Guide)

KARL FREUND (CINEMATOGRAPHER)

Karl Freund was a photographer who made notable -- and notably enduring -- contributions to cinematography across a career lasting over 50 years, from the peak of the silent era into the days of widescreen theaters, and in television as well as motion pictures. Additionally, he directed several movies during the 1930s that were notable for their visual style, including two recognized horror classics: *The Mummy* (1932) and *Mad Love* (1935).

Freund was born in Koniginhof, Bohemia, in what later became Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic), in 1890. He entered the film industry as a projectionist in 1907, but his interests lay in the other end of the business and the lens, and a year later he joined the Berlin branch of Pathé Films as a newsreel cameraman. Six years later, he joined Germany's Universum Film Aktiengesellschaft (UFA), and was involved with such notable productions as Richard Oswald's *The Arc* (1919), during which he met the actress Gertrude Hoffman, who would become his wife. That same year, Freund worked for the first time with directors Fritz Lang (*Spiders, Part 1*), Ernst Lubitsch (*Rausch*), and F.W. Murnau (*The Blue Boy*, aka *Emerald of Death*). All of these films were well photographed, but there were a handful on which he distinguished himself sufficiently to begin attracting an international reputation -- among them were *Der Golem* (1920), co-directed by Carl Boese and Paul Wegener, and Murnau's *The Last Laugh* (1924). The latter, with its highly mobile camera, and the distinctive uses of distorted lenses and pan-focus effects, demonstrated a visual language more sophisticated than any yet seen in cinema, and brought Freund himself nearly as much attention in the industry as it did the director.

Freund also made a unique contribution to the visual style of *Walter Ruttmann's Berlin: Symphony of a Great City* (1927); but it was somewhat overshadowed by his work during that same period on a movie that would overwhelm much of the cinematic world with its impact, visual and thematic: Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*. Freund's contribution to the movie's success was immense, many of its visuals and its overall look so striking that its impact across the decades that followed only seemed to increase with time, this despite the fact that it was not that big a success at the box office in 1927-1928. *Metropolis* marked the culmination of Freund's work in silent films, but it was only the end of the beginning of his career, and prelude to a period of much greater influence on cinema and his profession.

The coming of sound only enhanced Freund's career and reputation, thanks to his fascination with technical innovation. He was among the very first cinematographers to work with sprocketed magnetic tape as a sound medium, which became the standard means of shooting sound film for the next 60 years. He was also involved with experimental color film shooting in England at the end of the 1920s. He might

well have made his career in England, but Hollywood beckoned -- in 1930, he was signed to Universal. Over the next two years, he busied himself photographing such movies as Tod Browning's *Dracula* (1931), John M. Stahl's *Strictly Dishonorable* (1931), and Robert Florey's *Murders in the Rue Morgue* (1932). That same year, he made an official return to the director's chair on *The Mummy* (1932), starring Boris Karloff and Zita Johann – followed shortly thereafter by the musical romp *Moonlight and Pretzels* (1933). Freund's remaining directorial credits were confined to the next two years of his career, and showed him ranging freely between drama, light romantic comedy, and horror, closing out his director's career in the latter genre with *Mad Love* (1935), starring Peter Lorre.

By that point, Freund had moved to MGM, where he contributed to numerous films, often in very specialized sequences such as the rooftop production numbers in *The Great Ziegfeld* (1936). He photographed such classics as *The Good Earth* (1937, for which he won an Oscar) and *Golden Boy* (1939), the latter at Columbia Pictures under director Rouben Mamoulian. He remained busy at MGM throughout the war, working on some of the studio's most prestigious productions, including *Tortilla Flat* (1942), *A Guy Named Joe* (1943), and *The Thin Man Goes Home* (1944). In 1942, he managed to get parallel Oscar nominations, for *The Chocolate Soldier* and *Blossoms in the Dust*, in the black-and-white and color categories, respectively. He moved to Warner Bros. in the late '40s, where his work included John Huston's *Key Largo* (1948) and Michael Curtiz's *Bright Leaf* (1950). Freund closed out his movie career by photographing *Montana* (1950), starring Errol Flynn.

Freund's professional work was far from over, however -- he simply saw challenges that transcended anything he could do tied to a single studio, especially with the studios seemingly entering a period of decline after World War II. In 1944, Freund had founded the Photo Research Corporation, which, among other achievements, developed the Norwich incident light meter. He continued working on innovations in his field, and in 1951, he found a new challenge in a new medium of television. He was approached by Desilu, a new television production company founded by the married acting couple of Desi Arnaz and Lucille Ball, who were about to embark on a situation comedy series of their own. It was here that Freund developed what became known as the three-camera method for shooting a television program on film in an affordable way. *I Love Lucy*, when it went on the air, was the best-looking series ever seen on television up to that time, and the process subsequently became the standard method of shooting series.

In 1955, Freund's work at Photo Research Corp. was honored with a special technical award from the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts & Sciences. In 1960, after a decade as the most important and influential photographer in television, Freund retired at the age of 70, though he continued to work at Photo Research well into the 1960s. He passed away in 1969 at the age of 79 in Santa Monica, CA. *(written by Bruce Eder for the All Movie Guide)*

THEA VON HARBOU (SCREENWRITER) was already a successful screenwriter, novelist and journalist by the time she was introduced to Lang in 1920. Born into an aristocratic Prussian family, her first novels focused on epic national myths and legends and were popular source material for the nascent German film industry. Introduced to Lang by producer-director Joe May, the two collaborated on the script to his *The Wandering Image*, and married after Lang's wife committed suicide in late 1920. From then on, they shared writing credit on every one of Lang's pre-war German films.

In the 30s, Von Harbou was drawn to Nazism, and stayed in Germany and divorced Lang as soon as he left in 1933. She spent World War II working in the Nazi-controlled Germany film industry, and was arrested, interrogated and briefly interred by the allies after the war. She died in 1954.

GOTTFRIED HUPPERTZ (COMPOSER) made his living as a singer and stage actor before he was introduced to Lang by Rudolf Klein-Rogge, who played Rotwang in *Metropolis*. His first original film score was for Lang's *Die Nibelungen*; while working on *Metropolis*, he also composed a score for *Zur*

Chronik Von Grieshuus. Though he continued composing songs and scoring films until his death in 1937, virtually none have survived or are available on record.

OTTO HUNTE (ART DIRECTOR) was one of the greatest art directors of the German Expressionist period. As Lang's primary designer, Hunte brought his experience as a painter to the director's architectural background, translating Lang and Von Harbou's ideas into the landscapes and constructions of *Die Nibelungen*, *Metropolis*, *The Girl in the Moon* and the Mabuse films. (In addition to his work with Lang, Hunte is best known for his collaborations with Georg Wilhelm Pabst on *The Love of Jeanne Ney* and with Josef von Sternberg on *The Blue Angel*.) When Lang left for America, Hunte remained in Germany, working with Von Harbou on many of her films and even designing the notoriously anti-semitic *Jud Süß*. After the war, however, he was equally amenable to working with Wolfgang Staudte on the impressive anti-Nazi film *Die Mörder sind unter un*. He continued working until his death in 1960.

ERICH KETTELHUT (ART DIRECTOR) collaborated with Lang on *Dr. Mabuse the Gambler* and *Die Nibelungen* before his work on *Metropolis*. His specialty was architectural models, and he worked mainly with Guther Rittau, a cameraman with a great interest in special effects. He remained in demand as a set designer after World War II, but moved from cinema to television after *The Thousand Eyes of Dr. Mabuse*, his final collaboration with Lang.

EDGAR G. ULMER (SET DESIGNER) got his start working on the set design of Paul Wegener's *The Golem* and assisting F.W. Murnau on *The Last Laugh*, for which he devised the first ever tracking shot. After designing sets for *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, G.W. Pabst's *The Joyless Street*, and three films (*Metropolis*, *Die Nibelungen*, and *Spies*) for Lang, he invented the new post of Production Designer on M – a job that entailed designing sets in perspective from each new camera angle. After fleeing from the burgeoning Nazi regime in Germany, Ulmer came to Hollywood to work as an art director for Erich von Stroheim, but was soon 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.

ERICH POMMER (PRODUCER) was one of the most important figures in the German Expressionist film movement, serving as the head of production at UFA from 1924 to 1926, where he was responsible for many of the best-known films of the era, including *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, *The Last Laugh*, *The Blue Angel*, *Die Nibelungen* and *Metropolis*. His unique combination of artistic commitment, in-the-trenches production savvy and commercial instinct yielded memorable collaborations with directors throughout Europe and the United States, including Fritz Lang, F.W. Murnau, E.A. Dupont, Max Ophuls, Josef Von Sternberg, Robert Weine, Robert Siodmak and Alfred Hitchcock.

ALFRED ABEL (JOH FREDERSEN) appeared in over 140 silent and sound films between 1913 and 1938. He was especially renowned for his avoidance of dramatic gesturing, and learned to show the psychology and internal tensions of his characters with reserved expressions. After the advent of talkies, Abel worked with directors such as Detlef Sierk, Anatole Litvak, and Paul Martin; his final film role was as Daffinger in Herbert Maisch's *Frau Sylvelin* (1938), which was not released until after his death in 1937.

GUSTAV FRÖHLICH (FREDER FREDERSON) had played secondary roles in a number of films and plays before being cast in a small role in *Metropolis*; when the original leading man, André Mattoni, walked off the set during shooting, Lang's wife Thea Von Harbou found Frölich working on set and immediately cast him as Freder because of his striking good looks. Although typecast after *Metropolis* as (in his words) the "nice, naïve boy next door," Frölich contributed memorable performances in Joe May's *Heimkehr* and *Asphalt*, Robert Siodmak's *Vorunter-Suchung* and Max Ophuls's *Die Verliebte Firma*.

After the war, he worked as a film director and continued to act in film, television and theater until the 80s.

BRIGETTE HELM (MARIA / THE ROBOT) was 17 when she won her dual role in *Metropolis*, after photographs sent from her mother resulted in an invite to Lang's *Die Nibelungen* set. Although she was never entirely comfortable with her acting career, she continued to appear in films for UFA (including *The Love of Jeanne Ney*) until the mid-30s, when she was finally let out of her contract.

RUDOLF KLEIN-ROGGE (ROTWANG) started appearing in films in 1919, after a career as an operatic stage star. His greatest roles were in Lang's silent films, in which he played the master criminal Dr. Mabuse, the despotic King Etzel in *Die Nibelungen*, the megalomaniac Rotwang in *Metropolis* and the criminal mastermind Haghi in *Spies*. His first marriage was to Thea von Harbou, who eventually left him to marry Lang.

THEODOR LOOS (JOSEPHAT) was a stage actor who also appeared in more than 170 feature films, including Lang's *Die Nibelungen*, *M* and *The Testament of Dr. Mabuse*.

HEINRICH GEORGE (GROT) rose to stardom as a complex character actor in the Berlin Theatre. After *Metropolis*, he appeared in the first film version of Fassbinder's *Berlin Alexanderplatz*; he also acted in a number of propaganda films before and after the war. A Nazi sympathizer, he was arrested by the Soviets after the war and died in an internment camp.

FRITZ RASP (THE THIN ONE) appeared in 104 films between 1916 and 1976; besides *Metropolis*, his most notable role was as J.J. Peachum in *The Threepenny Opera*. Many of his scenes in *Metropolis* are part of this new restoration.