

NOSFERATU, a Symphony of Horrors



Nosferatu, eine Symphonie des Grauens (dir. F.W.Murnau 1922 Germany) 88 mins F.W. Murnau – Director/Heinrich Galeen - Screenwriter /Fritz Arno Wagner - Cinematographer /Albin Grau - Set Designer/Hans Erdmann -
Cast -Max Schreck - Graf Orlok /Alexander Granach – Knock/Gustav von Wangenheim - Jonathan Hutter Greta Schroeder - Ellen Hutter/John Gottowt - Prof. Bulwer

REFLEKTOR - JAN KOPINSKI saxophones STEVE IILIFFE keyboards
Murnau's absolute classic and unequalled vision of the now mythical Dracula of Bram Stoker's novel. 'Nosferatu' is derived from the Greek meaning 'plague-carrier' or 'disease-ridden' and links the evil count to the horrors of the plague. The often copied story of a bourgeois husband travelling to better himself by selling property to the exotic wilds of Transylvania, only to meet the horrors of the eerie count and the torments of his own mind. Murnau's film was also a collaboration with the enigmatic Albin Grau, who was a driving force behind the film, designing the sets and costumes, a man interested in the occult and generally credited with giving the expressionist feel to the film, whilst Director of Photography, Fritz Arno Wagner, was a top cameraman from UFA; and screenwriter Galeen also led the film owners (the short-lived Prana Films) to be sued by Bram Stoker's widow. This mysterious film with great expressionist stylisms is a true masterpiece of not only motion art but in the allegories and metaphors of the time. The Germany of 1922 suffered a volatile and extreme social climate with the aftermaths of the first world war and scars felt throughout Europe; and the count's visage is a peculiarly prophetic image which resonates through the ghastly records of the second world war.

Jan and Steve have worked on this version of a live soundtrack carefully and with great thought to sound. It is perhaps one of the most popular silent films on the circuit and their scoring seeks to find resonances not only with the overt expressionism of the disturbing imagery, but to reflect the space and bleakness of the Carpathian locations. The sense of place and mood is a direct link for REFLEKTOR, from Kopinski's GHOST MUSIC work, through to his Live Soundtrack to EARTH (dir. Dovzhenko 1930) and BERLIN: Symphony of a great City (dir. Rutmann 1927) and suits their improvising style.

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