



**Lang, Fritz** , 1890–1976, German-American film director, b. Vienna. His silent and early sound films, such as *Metropolis* (1926), are marked by brilliant expressionist technique. He gained worldwide acclaim with *M* (1933), a study of a child molester and murderer. After directing 15 films, Lang fled Nazi Germany (1933) to avoid collaborating with the government and settled in the United States. His 20 Hollywood films continued his exploration of criminality and the cruel fate that can overtake the unwary. His notable American works include *Fury* (1936), *You Only Live Once* (1937), *Hangmen Also Die* (1943), *The Big Heat* (1953), and *Beyond a Reasonable Doubt* (1956).

Born in Vienna, Austria, Fritz Lang's father managed a construction company. His mother, Pauline Schlesinger, was Jewish but converted to Catholicism when Lang was ten

. After high school he enrolled briefly at the Technische Hochschule Wien, then started to train as a painter. From 1910 to 1914 he traveled in Europe and, he would later claim, also in Asia and North Africa. He studied painting in Paris in 1913-14. At the start of the First World War he returned to Vienna, enlisting in the army in January 1915. Severely injured in June 1916, he wrote some scenarios for films while convalescing. In early 1918 he was sent home shell-shocked and acted briefly in Viennese theater before accepting a job as a writer at Erich Pommer's production company in Berlin, Decla. In Berlin, Lang worked briefly as a writer and then as a director, at UFA and then for Nero-Film, owned by the American Seymour Nebenzahl.

In 1920 he began a relationship with actress and writer Thea von Harbou (1889?-1954), who wrote with him the scripts for his most celebrated films, *Dr. Mabuse der Spieler*, *Die Nibelungen*, *Metropolis*, and *M* (credited to von Harbou alone). They married in 1922 and divorced in 1933. Fritz Lang began his career as a scriptwriter, but soon moved on to directing. Many of his scripts were co-written with novelist Thea von Harbou, who he married in 1924. Lang, fled Germany in 1933. Thea von Harbou stayed in Germany, where she later wrote and directed films for the Third Reich. Lang and Harbou were divorced in 1934.

In 1934 the newly-installed Nazi régime refused to allow the exhibition of Lang's *Testament des Dr. Mabuse*. Lang left Berlin for Paris, smuggling out large amounts of money. After about a year in Paris, Lang moved to the United States in mid-1934. He was initially under contract to MGM. Over the next twenty years he directed numerous American films. In the 1950's, because the film industry was in economic decline and because he had acquired a reputation for being difficult, Lang found it increasingly hard to get work. At the end of the 1950's Lang made his last three films, in German, which were not well received. In 1964, nearly blind, he was president of the jury at the Cannes Film Festival. As a director Lang had a reputation for being abusive to actors. He collected primitive art and habitually wore a monocle. From about 1931 to his death in 1976, while dating other women, he was close to Lily Latté, who helped him in many ways. Many, if not most, of Lang's silent films are dominated by powerful visual design, and are either pure fantasy films, or include strong fantastic elements in their plotlines.

*The Spiders*, a two part serial produced in 1918-1919, dealt with a mysterious multinational criminal society seemingly bent on plundering the world's treasures. Inspired by the thrilling serial of *Feuillade*, the first episode of *The Spiders* offers exotic locales, a hidden treasure trove, poison gas, a heroic princess, a message in a bottle, and a secret meeting of the Spiders in their secret underground headquarters. Part Two, unfortunately, offers repetition of scenes and themes from the first story rather than develop and expand the tale's mythos. The two parts for *The Spiders* were released several months apart.

One of Lang's most influential silent films was *Destiny* (1920). Inspired by Griffith's multi-story film *Intolerance* (1916) and Richard Oswald's *Uncanny Tales* (1919), *Destiny* established the omnibus form as a method for presenting short horror tales. The film itself is a fantasy, concerning a young woman who visits Death in his great castle to plead for the life of her husband. Death presents her three tales of love through the ages to show her the uselessness of her request. Paul Leni would later build on Lang's film for *Waxworks* (1924), and Richard Oswald used the template for his own omnibus films. This type of film reached it's greatest popularity in the 1970's with a sub-genre of British horror films inspired by the success of *Tales from the Crypt* (1972).

Lang returned to the serial thrills of *The Spiders* for *Dr. Mabuse, the Gambler* (1922). Dr. Mabuse, a criminal mastermind, employed hypnosis to expand his power in the instable environment of post-WWI Europe. Like *The Spiders*, *Dr. Mabuse* was a two-part tale. Unlike the earlier films, the two episode of Mabuse were intended to be presented on consecutive nights. Most of Lang's silent films were epics. The two-part adaptation of Wagener's *Die Nibelungen*, *Metropolis*, and *Woman in the Moon* were all big-budget voyages into fantastic worlds beyond where any previous filmmaker had ventured. The results were mixed. *Metropolis* cost over 5 million marks to produce, and bankrupted its studio. Some of the scenes from *Metropolis*, however, are among the most memorable visions in cinema history.

Lang fled Germany in 1933. By 1936 he was in Hollywood, where he would direct films for the next 20 years.

## Director - filmography

*Tausend Augen des Dr. Mabuse, Die* (1960)  
... aka *1000 Augen des Dr. Mabuse, Die* (1960)  
... aka *Diabolical Dr. Mabuse* (1960)  
... aka *Diabolico Dr. Mabuse, Il* (1960) (Italy)  
... aka *Diabolique docteur Mabuse, Le* (1960) (France)  
... aka *Eyes of Evil* (1960)  
... aka *Shadow vs. the Thousand Eyes of Dr. Mabuse, The* (1966) (USA)  
... aka *Thousand Eyes of Dr. Mabuse, The* (1966) (USA)  
*Journey to the Lost City* (1959)  
... aka *Tiger of Bengal (1959/I)* (UK)  
*Indische Grabmal, Das* (1959)  
... aka *Indian Tomb, The* (1959)  
... aka *Sepolcro indiano, Il* (1959) (Italy)  
... aka *Tombeau hindou, Le* (1959) (France)  
*Tiger von Eschnapur, Der* (1959)  
... aka *Tiger of Bengal (1959/II)* (UK)  
... aka *Tiger of Eschnapur, The* (1959) (International: English title: informal literal title)  
... aka *Tigre di Eschnapur, La* (1959) (Italy)

*... aka Tigre du Bengale, Le (1959)*  
*Beyond a Reasonable Doubt (1956)*  
*While the City Sleeps (1956)*  
*Moonfleet (1955)*  
*Human Desire (1954)*  
*Big Heat, The (1953)*  
*Blue Gardenia, The (1953)*  
*Clash by Night (1952)*  
*Rancho Notorious (1952)*  
*American Guerrilla in the Philippines (1950)*  
*... aka I Shall Return (1950) (UK)*  
*House by the River (1950)*  
*Secret Beyond the Door (1948)*  
*Cloak and Dagger (1946)*  
*Scarlet Street (1945)*  
*Woman in the Window, The (1945)*  
*Ministry of Fear (1944)*  
*Hangmen Also Die (1943)*  
*... aka Lest We Forget (1943)*  
*Moontide (1942) (uncredited)*  
*Confirm or Deny (1941) (uncredited)*  
*Man Hunt (1941)*  
*Western Union (1941)*  
*Return of Frank James, The (1940)*  
*You and Me (1938)*  
*You Only Live Once (1937)*  
*Fury (1936)*  
*Liliom (1934)*  
*... aka Liliom (1934) (USA)*  
*Testament du Dr. Mabuse, Le (1933)*  
*Testament des Dr. Mabuse, Das (1933)*  
*... aka Crimes of Dr. Mabuse, The (1952) (USA: dubbed version)*  
*... aka Dr. Mabuses Testament (1933)*  
*... aka Last Will of Dr. Mabuse, The (1933)*  
*... aka Tagebuch des Dr. Mabuse, Das (1933)*  
*... aka Testament of Dr. Mabuse, The (1933)*  
*M (1931)*  
*... aka Fritz Lang's M (1931) (Australia)*  
*... aka M - Eine Stadt sucht einen Mörder (1931) (Germany)*  
*... aka Murderers Are Among Us, The (1931)*  
*Frau im Mond (1929)*  
*... aka By Rocket to the Moon (1931) (USA)*  
*... aka Girl in the Moon (1930) (UK)*  
*... aka Woman in the Moon (1931) (USA)*  
*Spione (1928)*  
*... aka Spies (1928)*  
*... aka Spy, The (1929/II) (USA)*  
*Metropolis (1927)*  
*Nibelungen: Kriemhilds Rache, Die (1924)*  
*... aka Kriemhild's Revenge (1924)*  
*... aka Kriemhilds Rache (1924)*  
*... aka Nibelungen: Kriemhild's Revenge, Die (1924)*  
*Nibelungen: Siegfried, Die (1924)*  
*... aka Nibelungen: Siegfrieds Tod, Die (1924) (Germany)*  
*... aka Siegfried (1924)*  
*... aka Siegfried's Death (1924)*

... aka *Siegfrieds Tod* (1924) (Germany)  
*Dr. Mabuse, der Spieler* (1922)  
... aka *Dr. Mabuse, King of Crime* (1922)  
... aka *Dr. Mabuse: The Gambler* (1922)  
... aka *Inferno* (1922) (Germany: second part title)  
*Vier um die Frau* (1921)  
... aka *Four Around a Woman* (1921)  
... aka *Kämpfende Herzen* (1921)  
... aka *Struggling Hearts* (1921)  
*Müde Tod, Der* (1921)  
... aka *Between Two Worlds* (1921) (USA)  
... aka *Beyond the Wall* (1921)  
... aka *Destiny* (1921) (UK)  
... aka *Three Lights, The* (1921) (UK)  
... aka *Weary Death, The* (1921) (USA: literal English title)  
*Wandernde Bild, Das* (1920)  
... aka *Moving Image, The* (1920)  
... aka *Wandering Image, The* (1920)  
*Spinnen, 2. Teil: Das Brillantenschiff, Die* (1920)  
... aka *Brillantenschiff, Das* (1920) (Germany: short title)  
... aka *Spiders, Part 2: The Diamond Ship, The* (1920)  
*Pest in Florenz, Die* (1919)  
... aka *Plague in Florence, The* (1919)  
*Harakiri* (1919)  
... aka *Madame Butterfly* (1919)  
*Spinnen, 1. Teil: Der Goldene See, Die* (1919)  
... aka *Spiders, Part 1: The Golden Lake, The* (1919)  
*Herr der Liebe, Der* (1919)  
... aka *Master of Love* (1919)  
*Halbblut* (1919)  
... aka *Half-Caste, The* (1919)

*Filmography as: Director, Writer, Producer, Actor, Himself, Archive Footage*

*Writer - filmography*

*(1960s) (1950s) (1940s) (1930s) (1920s) (1910s)*

*Tausend Augen des Dr. Mabuse, Die (1960)*

*... aka 1000 Augen des Dr. Mabuse, Die (1960)*

*... aka Diabolical Dr. Mabuse (1960)*

*... aka Diabolico Dr. Mabuse, Il (1960) (Italy)*

*... aka Diabolique docteur Mabuse, Le (1960) (France)*

*... aka Eyes of Evil (1960)*

*... aka Shadow vs. the Thousand Eyes of Dr. Mabuse, The (1966) (USA)*

*... aka Thousand Eyes of Dr. Mabuse, The (1966) (USA)*

*Journey to the Lost City (1959)*

*... aka Tiger of Bengal (1959/I) (UK)*

*Indische Grabmal, Das (1959) (uncredited)*

*... aka Indian Tomb, The (1959)*

*... aka Sepolcro indiano, Il (1959) (Italy)*

*... aka Tombeau hindou, Le (1959) (France)*

*Tiger von Eschnapur, Der (1959) (uncredited)*

*... aka Tiger of Bengal (1959/II) (UK)*

*... aka Tiger of Eschnapur, The (1959) (International: English title: informal literal title)*

*... aka Tigre di Eschnapur, La (1959) (Italy)*

*... aka Tigre du Bengale, Le (1959)*

*M (1951) (scenario) (uncredited)*

*Hangmen Also Die (1943) (story)*

*... aka Lest We Forget (1943)*

*Fury (1936)*

*Liliom (1934)*

*... aka Liliom (1934) (USA)*

*Testament des Dr. Mabuse, Das (1933)*

*... aka Crimes of Dr. Mabuse, The (1952) (USA: dubbed version)*

*... aka Dr. Mabuses Testament (1933)*

*... aka Last Will of Dr. Mabuse, The (1933)*

*... aka Tagebuch des Dr. Mabuse, Das (1933)*

*... aka Testament of Dr. Mabuse, The (1933)*

*M (1931)*

... aka *Fritz Lang's M* (1931) (Australia)  
... aka *M - Eine Stadt sucht einen Mörder* (1931) (Germany)  
... aka *Murderers Are Among Us, The* (1931)  
*Frau im Mond* (1929)  
... aka *By Rocket to the Moon* (1931) (USA)  
... aka *Girl in the Moon* (1930) (UK)  
... aka *Woman in the Moon* (1931) (USA)  
*Spione* (1928)  
... aka *Spies* (1928)  
... aka *Spy, The* (1929/II) (USA)  
*Metropolis* (1927)  
*Nibelungen: Siegfried, Die* (1924)  
... aka *Nibelungen: Siegfrieds Tod, Die* (1924) (Germany)  
... aka *Siegfried* (1924)  
... aka *Siegfried's Death* (1924)  
... aka *Siegfrieds Tod* (1924) (Germany)  
*Dr. Mabuse, der Spieler* (1922)  
... aka *Dr. Mabuse, King of Crime* (1922)  
... aka *Dr. Mabuse: The Gambler* (1922)  
... aka *Inferno* (1922) (Germany: second part title)  
*Indische Grabmal: Der Tiger von Eschnapur, Das* (1921) (scenario)  
... aka *Indian Tomb, Part 1 of 2* (2000) (Germany: DVD title)  
... aka *Indian Tomb: Part II, the Tiger of Bengal, The* (2000) (USA: video title)  
... aka *Mysteries of India, Part II: Above All Law* (2000) (USA)  
*Vier um die Frau* (1921) (written by)  
... aka *Four Around a Woman* (1921)  
... aka *Kämpfende Herzen* (1921)  
... aka *Struggling Hearts* (1921)  
*Indische Grabmal: Die Sendung des Yoghi, Das* (1921) (scenario)  
... aka *Indian Tomb: Part I, the Mission of the Yogi, The* (2000) (USA: video title)  
... aka *Mysteries of India, Part I: Truth* (1922) (USA)  
*Müde Tod, Der* (1921)  
... aka *Between Two Worlds* (1921) (USA)  
... aka *Beyond the Wall* (1921)  
... aka *Destiny* (1921) (UK)  
... aka *Three Lights, The* (1921) (UK)  
... aka *Weary Death, The* (1921) (USA: literal English title)  
*Wandernde Bild, Das* (1920)  
... aka *Moving Image, The* (1920)  
... aka *Wandering Image, The* (1920)  
*Spinnen, 2. Teil: Das Brillantenschiff, Die* (1920)  
... aka *Brillantenschiff, Das* (1920) (Germany: short title)  
... aka *Spiders, Part 2: The Diamond Ship, The* (1920)  
*Herrin der Welt 8. Teil - Die Rache der Maud Fergusson, Die* (1920)  
... aka *Herrin der Welt - Die Tragödie der Rache, Die* (1920)  
*Bettler GmbH* (1919)

*Frau mit den Orchideen, Die* (1919)  
*Lilith und Ly* (1919)  
... aka *Lilith and Ly* (1919) (USA)  
*Pest in Florenz, Die* (1919)  
... aka *Plague in Florence, The* (1919)  
*Rache ist mein, Die* (1919)  
*Totentanz* (1919)  
... aka *Dance of Death* (1919)  
*Wolkenblau und Flimmerstern* (1919)  
*Spinnen, 1. Teil: Der Goldene See, Die* (1919)  
... aka *Spiders, Part 1: The Golden Lake, The* (1919)  
*Halbblut* (1919)  
... aka *Half-Caste, The* (1919)  
*Hilde Warren und der Tod* (1917)  
... aka *Hilde Warren and Death* (1917)  
*Hochzeit im Excentricclub, Die* (1917)  
... aka *Wedding in the Eccentric Club* (1917)  
*Peitsche, Die* (1916)  
*Filmography as: Director, Writer, Producer, Actor, Himself, Archive Footage*  
*Producer - filmography*  
(1960s) (1940s) (1930s) (1920s)  
*Tausend Augen des Dr. Mabuse, Die* (1960) (producer)  
... aka *1000 Augen des Dr. Mabuse, Die* (1960)  
... aka *Diabolical Dr. Mabuse* (1960)  
... aka *Diabolico Dr. Mabuse, Il* (1960) (Italy)  
... aka *Diabolique docteur Mabuse, Le* (1960) (France)  
... aka *Eyes of Evil* (1960)  
... aka *Shadow vs. the Thousand Eyes of Dr. Mabuse, The* (1966) (USA)  
... aka *Thousand Eyes of Dr. Mabuse, The* (1966) (USA)  
*Secret Beyond the Door* (1948) (producer)  
*Scarlet Street* (1945) (producer)  
*Hangmen Also Die* (1943) (producer)  
... aka *Lest We Forget* (1943)  
*You and Me* (1938) (producer)  
*Testament des Dr. Mabuse, Das* (1933) (producer)  
... aka *Crimes of Dr. Mabuse, The* (1952) (USA: dubbed version)  
... aka *Dr. Mabuses Testament* (1933)  
... aka *Last Will of Dr. Mabuse, The* (1933)  
... aka *Tagebuch des Dr. Mabuse, Das* (1933)  
... aka *Testament of Dr. Mabuse, The* (1933)  
*Frau im Mond* (1929) (producer)  
... aka *By Rocket to the Moon* (1931) (USA)  
... aka *Girl in the Moon* (1930) (UK)  
... aka *Woman in the Moon* (1931) (USA)  
*Actor - filmography*  
*Zum Beispiel Fritz Lang* (1968)

*... aka For Example Fritz Lang (2004) (USA: DVD title)*  
*Mépris, Le (1963) .... Fritz Lang*  
*... aka Contempt (1964) (USA)*  
*... aka Disprezzo, Il (1963) (Italy)*  
*Herr der Liebe, Der (1919)*  
*... aka Master of Love (1919)*  
*Hilde Warren und der Tod (1917) .... Death*  
*... aka Hilde Warren and Death (1917)*

#### Himself - filmography

*Fritz Lang Interviewed by William Friedkin (1974) .... Himself*  
*Schweren Träume des Fritz Lang, Die (1974) (TV)*  
*75 Years of Cinema Museum (1972) .... Himself*  
*Cinéma de notre temps: Le dinosaure et le bébé, dialogue en huit parties entre Fritz Lang et Jean-Luc Godard (1967) (TV) .... Himself*  
*... aka Dinosaur and the Baby, The (1967) (TV) (USA)*  
*... aka Dinosaure et le bébé, Le (1967) (TV) (France)*  
*Bardot et Godard (1964) .... Himself*  
*... aka Parti des choses, Le (1964)*  
*Paparazzi (1964) .... Himself*  
*Begegnung mit Fritz Lang (1963) .... Himself*  
*... aka Encounter with Fritz Lang (1963) (USA)*

#### Archive Footage

*Fight, The (2004) .... Himself*  
*Fritz Lang, le cercle du destin - Les films allemands (2000) (TV) .... Himself*  
*Universal Horror (1998) (TV) .... Himself*  
*Personal Journey with Martin Scorsese Through American Movies, A (1995) (TV) .... Himself*  
*Exiles, The (1989) .... Himself*