

Fritz Lang Dossier

Part 1

After the publication of *The Movie Book of Film Noir* (1993) and *The Movie Book of the Western* (1996), two further *Movie* anthologies were planned, one tentatively entitled *Unexplored Hitchcock* and the other on Fritz Lang. In the event, neither was published. Some of the articles commissioned for the Lang book have appeared in journals but those that remain form a substantial body of work which we are dividing between this issue and the next.

In France, significant studies of Lang appeared through the 1980s and 1990s but when the *Movie* collection was originally planned no book on Lang had appeared in English since Reynold Humphries' *Fritz Lang: Genre and Representation in his American Films* (1989), itself originally published in French. Patrick McGilligan's biography, *Fritz Lang, the Nature of the Beast*, then appeared in 1997, followed in 2000 by Tom Gunning's major study, *The Films of Fritz Lang: Allegories of Vision and Modernity*. There were Lang retrospectives at London's National Film Theatre in 2000 and in Berlin early in 2001. Two BFI Classics, Anton Kaes on *M* and Thomas Elsaesser on *Metropolis*, appeared in 1999 and 2000 respectively. A significant revival of interest in Lang seemed underway.

Ten years further on, the amazing discovery of an almost complete print of Lang's most famous film, *Metropolis* (1926) – known previously only in various cut versions – caused a flurry of international excitement. It also provided an occasion to think more broadly once again about Lang's remarkable career. Michael Walker's reflections on the newly released *Metropolis* have therefore been added to essays written for the *Movie* book between 1997 and 2000. Each of these has been reconsidered to acknowledge, where necessary, work that has appeared since they were first written, but in each case the shape of argument remains that of the original. Part 2 of the Dossier will be largely devoted to essays on Lang's American films.