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Janus Films Catalog
1973



G. W. PABST'S
**Pandora's
BOX**

Adaptation of Wedekind's
"LULU"

Two of Pabst's finest films, PANDORA'S BOX and DIARY OF A LOST GIRL have been unavailable since their original release when they were both mutilated by the censors and hostilely received by critics. Pabst brilliantly conceptualizes Wedekind's words to bring out the erotic power of this singular 'earthly being' who, though endowed with animal beauty, lacks all moral sense and, though devoid of guile and malevolence, does evil unconsciously.

"One of Pabst's maturest and sharpest works"
CINEMAGES

"One of Pabst's finest achievements"
LOTTE EISNER, THE HAUNTED SCREEN

"Handled with a masterly touch"
LIAM O'LEARY, THE SILENT CINEMA

STORY

Dr. Peter Schoen, the editor of a large newspaper, discovered his watch being pilfered by a pretty little flower seller, Lulu, but instead of turning her over to the police, he befriends her and sponsors her upbringing and education, including extensive training as a dancer. Later he tried to marry her off to some worthy man of substance, but Lulu insisted that he was the only man she ever really loved. Schoen attempts to break off with Lulu and becomes engaged to another girl, but Lulu forces him to write the girl and break the engagement and marry her instead.

A few months after the wedding Lulu is surrounded by amorous admirers, including the Lesbian Countess Geschwitz and the acrobat Rodrigo. Schoen is driven to distraction by this humiliation and puts a revolver into Lulu's hands and orders her to shoot herself. Instead, she fires five bullets into his body, and then bewails the death of the only man she has ever loved.

She is put on trial but manages to escape with the help of Dr. Schoen's son, Alva. They flee together to Paris. In a gambling saloon Rodrigo is murdered and her latest lover offers Lulu the choice of being turned over to the police or sold to a high class brothel in Cairo.

Towards the end we find Lulu, Alva, Countess Geschwitz and their old friend Schigolch living in an attic in London.

They are destitute and living on what Lulu can earn as a streetwalker. One of Lulu's customers turns out to be Jack the Ripper who murders both her and the faithful Countess.

CAST

Lulu	Louise Brooks
Dr. Peter Schoen	Fritz Kortner
His son, Alva Schoen	Franz (Francis) Lederer
Papa Brommer (Schigolch)	Carl Goetz
Countess Anna Geschwitz	Alice Roberts
Marie de Zarniko	Daisy d'Oro
Rodrigo Quast	Krafft Raschig
The stage producer	Siegfried Arno
Marquis de Casti-Piani	Michael von Newlinsky
Jack the Ripper	Gustav Diessl

CREDITS

Director	G. W. Pabst
Producer	Seymour Nebenzal
Assistant Directors	Paul Falkenberg Marc Sorkin
Screenplay	Ladislaus Vajda
Adapted from the plays	"Erdegeist and Die Buechse der Pandora" by Frank Wedekind
Photography	Guenther Krampf
Design	Andrei Andreiev Gottlieb Hesch
Editor	Joseph R. Fliesler

A Janus Films Release

COMMENT

"Every woman of Pabst's synthetic creation had had a curious, unnameable and hopelessly indefinable quality about her. He seems, in the building up of their filmic personalities, to be able to bring to the surface the vital forces of their being. . . . He contrives by some unknown force to invest his characters with a quality of intense feeling, with strangely complex sexual or mental significance. Asta Nielsen, Brigitte Helm, Louise Brooks are almost ordinary when appearing in other films under other directors. But Pabst has an understanding, an appreciation of the intelligence, that builds the actual personality into a magnetic, filmic being."

Paul Rotha, *The Film Till Now*

"Pabst's more important work was done during the years that marked the decline of the German film . . . He had a passion for realism; and no one excelled him in concretizing that reality. Whether filming an actual flower market in Paris or a misty London street built in a studio, he sifted each scene for the details that would be at once more revealing and most evocative, using his camera like a surgical probing instrument to lay bare in fragmentary glimpses a sensuous intellectuality, suggesting the emotional and psychological drives of his characters through vivid, affecting and often grotesque screen images."

Arthur Knight, *The Liveliest Art*

"To sum up the elements of Pabst's technique: he seeks the 'psychological or dramatic angles' which reveal at a single glance character, psychical relationships, situations, tension or the tragic moment. . . . So, for Pabst, the action is ultimately built up by the montage."

Lotte Eisner, *The Haunted Screen*

**Pandora's
BOX**

110 Minutes. Black and white. Germany, 1928.