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35MM TINTED PRINT!
NOSFERATU – A SYMPHONY OF HORROR

(NOSFERATU, EINE SYMPHONIE DES GRAUENS)

Director: F. W. Murnau

Germany 1921 84 minutes silent • Cast: Max Schreck, Alexander Granach

“There is one Murnau film that stands out above all others as a great masterpiece. This is neither *SUNRISE* nor *THE LAST LAUGH*, but the earlier *NOSFERATU*. . . . In my judgment, the highest of [Murnau’s] peaks . . . a precarious and astonishing achievement” (Gilberto Perez Guillermo). Once simply seen as cinema’s first “symphony of horror,” this nightmarishly beautiful version of Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* has since been endlessly debated and explicated – for its various versions and their different effects (an argument still unresolved), its sexual and political subtexts, its placement in traditions of Nordic mysticism, Symbolist art, and German Expressionism. Looking like an upright rodent with rack-stretched limbs and tapering talons, Max Schreck is the creepiest Nosferatu ever. (Rumour had it that Schreck did not exist, and that the vampire was actually played by Murnau himself, which only added to the film’s sense of morbidity.) Tonight’s is a rare 35mm print, tinted according to Murnau’s instructions. “One of Murnau’s (or indeed the cinema’s) least contestable masterpieces. . . . The genius of Murnau: *NOSFERATU* marks the advent of a total cinema. . . . With this film the modern cinema was born, and all developments to come, notably those of the Soviet filmmakers, became possible” (Jean-André Fieschi). “The finale in its visual perfection is the apogee of the art of silent film” (Lotte Eisner).

Presented with live piano accompaniment by William O’Meara.

Cinematheque History • Journeys into the Night: The Mystical Poetry of F. W. Murnau, 1997

Saturday, August 5 8:45 p.m.



NOSFERATU - A SYMPHONY OF HORROR

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