

## Document Citation

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## Street Angel

Directed by [Frank Borzage](#)

We are proud to present the work of underappreciated master director Frank Borzage with this restored print of **Street Angel**. Like Borzage's **Seventh Heaven** (1927), **Street Angel** pairs silent film superstars Janet Gaynor and Charles Farrell as star-crossed lovers and bears Borzage's twin directorial trademarks of romanticism and expressionistic menace. Gaynor plays Angela, a young woman battered by circumstance, pushed into the hard choice of selling her virtue or letting her ill mother go without care. On the lam from her prostitution charge, Angela is nabbed by the police on the eve of her wedding, producing an aching sequence of melodramatic heartbreak. Gaynor won an Academy Award for her performance (she won the very first best actress Oscar, given for all her work that year, which included **Seventh Heaven** and Murnau's masterpiece, **Sunrise**) and Farrell gives an equally gut-wrenching turn as Gino, a young artist scraping by and hoping for a break. Set mainly in a shadowy rendition of Naples (the opening title card reads: "Naples... under the smoking menace of Vesuvius... laughter-loving, careless, sordid Naples") the film is realized through expressionistic sets depicting seedy streets, traveling circuses and gulag-like prisons. As Judy Bloch from the Pacific Film Archive has noted about **Street Angel**, "realism was never a priority for Borzage, who dealt in the visual transference of emotion, and this film is a triumph of Borzagian style and themes." **Street Angel** rarely delves into day-to-day realities, instead concerning itself with more pressing issues like human frailty, kismet and true love.

—Sean Uyehara

### Additional Notes

Total running time 102 min. at 24 frames per second. Silent with live musical accompaniment by American Music Club. Presented in association with the San Francisco Silent Film Festival.

### Show Times

Sat, Apr 23 • 9:00 pm • Palace • STRE23F



### Country

USA

### Year

1928

### Run Time

### Cast

Charles Farrel, Janet Gaynor, Natalie Kingston, Henry Armetta, Guido Trento

### Producer

William Fox

### Editor

Barney Wolf

### Music

### Cinematographer

Ernest Palmer, Paulo Ivano

### Screenwriter

Philip Klein, Henry Roberts Symonds

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