

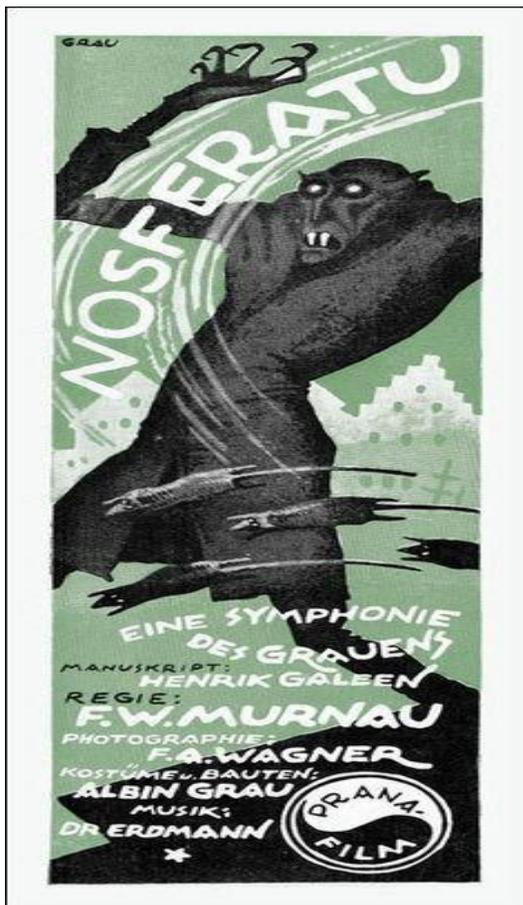
CONCEPTS AND CONSTELLATIONS

WAR, DEATH, AND THE UNCANNY



Nosferatu's first title: "An Account about the Mass Dying in Wisborg"

WAR AS A “COSMIC VAMPIRE”



“The horror of war has receded from the eyes of mankind; but something has remained: the longing to understand, even if often only unconsciously, what lies behind this monstrous event, what roared along like a cosmic vampire.”

Albin Grau

(from Loy Arnold, et al., *Nosferatu*, 2000, p. 62)

SIGMUND FREUD and WW I



Sigmund Freud between his sons Ernst (l) and Martin (r) in 1916

Sigmund Freud, [Reflections on War and Death](#) (1915)

Sigmund Freud, [Mourning and Melancholia](#) (1917)

Sigmund Freud, [The Uncanny](#) (1919)

HYSTERIA (Charcot)



Attitudes Passionnelles
Extase (1878)

Regnard, photograph of Augustine (Iconographie, vol.II)

From: Georges Did-Huberman, *Invention of Hysteria: Charcot and the Photographic Iconography of the Salpêtrière* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, 2003), p. 147. See also: Elizabeth Bronfen, Jean Martin Charcot's Vampires, in *The Knotted Subject: Hysteria and its Discontents* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998), pp. 174- 239.



Ellen in *Nosferatu*

SPIRITISM AND OCCULTISM

No. 647
Der Kinematograph — Düsseldorf.
28. Mai 1919

Der interessanteste Kultur-
und Aufklärungsfilm aller Zeiten!!

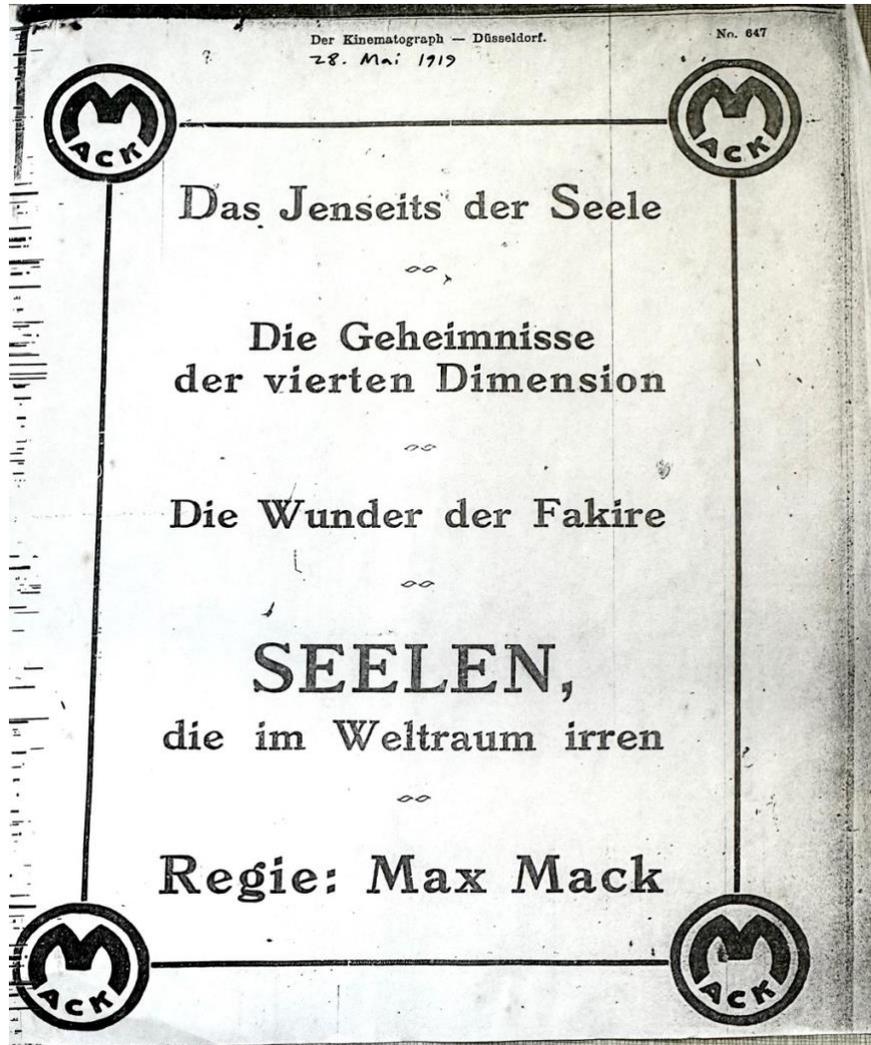


Leben die Toten

Spiritistisch - okkultistisches Monumentalwerk.

Regie: Max Mack





„Leben die Toten?“ (Do the Dead Live?) was the title of a new film by the prolific filmmaker [Max Mack](#), advertised in *Der Kinematograph* on May 28, 1919. There is no record that this „spiritualistic-occultistic monumental work“ and „the most interesting cultural and educational film of all time“ was ever shown. The massive loss of life in World War I and the Spanish flu pandemic of 1918-19 motivated filmmakers to explore the boundaries between life and death. Fritz Lang's *Der müde Tod* (Destiny, 1920) can be placed in this tradition, as can *Nosferatu*.

MASS DEATH AND MOURNING

Pest.
In Transylvanien und in den Häfen
des Schwarzen Meeres Varna und
Galaz ist eine Pestepidemie ausgebro-
chen. Junge Leute werden in Massen
eingegraben. Bei allen Opfern zeigen

The Plague

A plague epidemic has broken out in Transylvania and in the ports of Varna and Galaz on the Black Sea. Young people are dying in masses. All victims appear to have the same strange scars on the neck. The doctors are unable to tell their origin.

The Dardanelles were closed to all ships suspected of being plague-infested.



Burying the dead in *Nosferatu*

The deadly virus pandemic of 1918-19 killed close to 300,000 Germans and between 20 and 50 million worldwide. See Anne Rasmussen, “The Spanish Flu,” in *The Cambridge History of the First World War*, vol. 3, Civil Society, ed. by Jay Winter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 334-57.

For more information on the history of the “Spanish Flu,” see [here](#).

For K.V Turley’s Blog on “Nosferatu, the Spanish Flu and Fatima,” April 20, 2020, see [here](#).

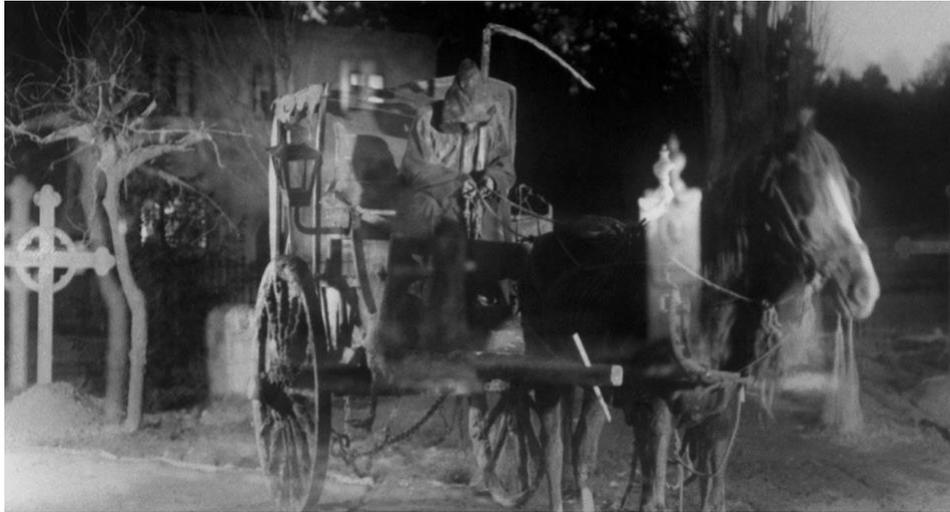
See also J. Hoberman’s essay, “The Twinned Evils of Nosferatu: The great film and social document illuminates a primal fear —that of foreign contagion,” in [Tablet](#) (May 18, 1920).



PHANTOMS



Nosferatu's phantom carriage (using negative film and stop animation to suggest Nosferatu's otherworldly reality)



Victor Sjöström, *Körkalen* (The Phantom Carriage, 1921)

The film was released in Berlin on December 16, 1921 as „Der Fuhrmann des Todes“ and in the US on June 4, 1922 under the title „The Phantom Carriage.”



Fritz Lang, The procession of the dead, in *Der müde Tod* (Destiny, 1921)

VAMPIRES and PHANTOMS IN NATURE

Murnau's *Nosferatu* uses found footage sequences from the 1921 educational documentary, *Die Seele der Pflanze* (The Soul of the Plant), which was screened at Pordenone in 2019 from a print at the Filmmuseum in Frankfurt. See Michael Cowan and Anton Kaes, [Weimar Shorts..](#)



“A carnivorous plant . . . Is it not a like vampire?”



“A polyp with tentacles . . . transparent . . .
almost incorporeal . . . almost a phantom.”
Professor Bulwer in *Nosferatu*

LOCATION SHOOTING



Orava Castle (Oravský Hrad) in the Carpathian Mountains in present-day northern Slovakia, was used as the setting for Count Orlok's castle in *Nosferatu*, and may also have served as the model for Kafka's *The Castle* according to Peter-André Alt, *Kafka und der Film* (Munich: Beck, 2009), pp. 160-188,

DISAPPEARANCE



It is not enough to die —
you also have to disappear.

Jean Baudrillard