

Cultivate Cinema Circle presents:
SHANGHAI EXPRESS [1932]

Directed by Josef von Sternberg
DECEMBER 4TH, 2021 - 1:00PM



Original Theatrical Poster

and romance, exoticism and danger. This, for me at least, is Sternberg's most resonant film, and one that I doubt you'll forget. All aboard, then, for the *Shanghai Express!*"

- Wheeler Winston Dixon, *Senses of Cinema* [2012]

SHORT CUTS

"Von Sternberg, who was forever looking for new kinds of stylisation, said that he intended everything in *Shanghai Express* to have the rhythm of a train. He clearly meant it: the bizarre stop-go cadences of the dialogue delivery are the most blatantly non-naturalistic element, but the overall design and dramatic pacing are equally extraordinary. The plot concerns an evacuation from Peking to Shanghai, but it's in every sense a vehicle for something else: a parade of deceptive appearances and identities, centering on the Boule de Suif notion of a prostitute with more honour than those around her. Dietrich's Shanghai Lily hasn't aged a day, but Clive Brook's stiff-upper-lip British officer (her former lover) now looks like a virtual caricature of the type. None the less, the sincerity and

emotional depth with which Sternberg invests their relationship is quite enough to transcend mere style or fashion."

- Tony Rayns, *Time Out* [2006]

"In the Pre-Code era, before the Hays/Breen Office clamped down on precisely the sort of moral ambiguity that *Shanghai Express* displays, Sternberg's dictatorial approach to the cinema – my way or the highway – resulted in a string of artistic and box-office triumphs. The film was a huge hit with the public, grossing \$3,700,000 US in its initial engagements in the United States alone. That's in 1932 dollars; adjusted for inflation, that's more than \$55 million today. So, here's a film that has it both ways; a completely personal vision that nevertheless struck a reverberating chord with a public desperate to escape the darkest days of the Depression for a world of fantasy

"Dietrich is an extreme case— not just because she simultaneously emphasized the erotic and the ridiculous in sexuality, but because it is unclear how far this was her projection. Although

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:



she seemed self-possessed, tantalizing the feelings she aroused with her very indifference, it is possible that, more than any other great star, she was a cinematic invention—a message understood by viewers but not by herself. Was that knowingness the product of her mind, the vision of an audience, or the light laid on her skin by Josef von Sternberg?”

- David Thomson, *The New Biographical Dictionary of Film* [2014]

CAST & CREW

Director.....Josef von Sternberg
 WritersJules Furthman
 Story Harry Hervey

Shanghai Lily.....Marlene Dietrich
 Captain Donald Harvey..... Clive Brook
 Hui Fei..... Anna May Wong
 Henry Chang..... Warner Oland
 Sam Salt Eugene Pallette
 Mr. Carmichael.....Lawrence Grant
 Mrs. Haggerty Louise Closser Hale
 Eric Baum.....Gustav von Seyffertitz
 Major Lenard..... Emile Chautard

DIRECTOR FILMOGRAPHY

- The Epic That Never Was (I, Claudius) (1965)
- Jet Pilot (1957)
- Macao (1952)
- Anatahan (1952)
- The Shanghai Gesture (1942)
- I Take This Woman (1940)
- Sergeant Madden (1939)
- I, Claudius (1937)
- The King Steps Out (1936)
- Crime and Punishment (1935)
- The Devil Is a Woman (1935)
- The Scarlet Empress (1934)
- Shanghai Express (1932)
- Blonde Venus (1932)
- Dishonored (1931)
- An American Tragedy (1931)
- Morocco (1930)
- The Blue Angel (1930)
- Thunderbolt (1929)
- The Case of Lena Smith (1929)
- The Dragnet (1928)
- The Docks of New York (1928)
- The Last Command (1928)

- Underworld (1927)
- A Woman of the Sea (1926)
- The Exquisite Sinner (1926)
- The Masked Bride (1925)
- Salvation Hunters (1925)



CULTIVATE
CINEMA CIRCLE



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:



UPCOMING SCHEDULE:

THE SCARLETT EMPRESS [1934]

Sat, December 18th, 2021 | 1:00pm

SWING TIME [1936]

Sat, January 8th, 2022 | 1:00pm

YANKEE DOODLE DANDY [1942]

Sat, January 22nd, 2022 | 1:00pm

A STAR IS BORN [1954]

Sat, February 5th, 2022 | 1:00pm

HELLO, DOLLY! [1969]

Sat, February 19th, 2022 | 1:00pm

Please support us on **PATREON** |
 @cultivatecinemacircle