



March 8 Sunday at 2pm Sunrise (1927) Directed by **F.W. Murnau** with original **Movietone score soundtrack.**

Metcalfe Auditorium, State Library NSW. 94 minutes

Tickets \$25/ \$20 at the website home page right hand side or call 0419 267 318.

Winner of three Academy awards for Best Unique and Artistic Picture; Best Actress; and Best Cinematography.

The plot of Sunrise can be told in a couple of sentences: A man from the country is tempted by a loose woman from the city to murder his wife, sell his farm, and move to the city. The man loses the nerve to go through with it all and, by way of a trip to the city and the accidental near drowning of his wife, remembers why he loved her in the first place. What appears simple on the page, however, is turned into an eloquent work of visual poetry by director F.W. Murnau, who successfully marries the unmatched technical proficiency and deep pockets of the Hollywood studio system with the distillation of particularly German strains of artistic and poetic Romanticism and Expressionism. The status of Sunrise as the finest silent film ever made is threatened perhaps only by Murnau's own The Last Laugh.

The cinematography of Sunrise is some of the most sophisticated and technically skilled work of the silent era. The two cinematographers, Charles Rosher (who was Mary Pickford's cameraman of choice) and Karl Struss (a fine art and portrait photographer), evoke a visual world that appears frozen in time and yet timeless. There are dozens upon dozens of spectacular superimpositions, matte shots, and montages in the film and what's more amazing is that every single one of them was done in-camera. The set design is equally impressive, including elements of pastoral countryside straight out of a Caspar David Friedrich etching, severe Bauhaus-inspired architectural design, and fantastical Expressionistic interior spaces.



The culmination of one of the greatest careers in film history, F. W. Murnau's *Sunrise* blends a story of fable-like simplicity with unparalleled visual imagination and technical ingenuity. Invited to Hollywood by William Fox and given total artistic freedom on any project he wished, Murnau's tale of the idyllic marriage of a peasant couple (George O'Brien and Janet Gaynor) threatened by a Machiavellian seductress from the city (Margaret Livingston) created a milestone of film expressionism.

Made in the twilight of the silent era, it became both a swan song for a vanishing medium and one of the few films to instantly achieve legendary status. Winner of three Oscars for Best Actress (Gaynor), Cinematography, and a never-repeated award for "Unique and Artistic Picture", its influence and stature has only grown with each passing year.



See another review at <https://mubi.com/notebook/posts/tuesday-morning-foreign-dvd-report-sunrise-fw-murnau-1927>

See original theatrical trailer at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jGZF1_pfErs



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