

1. The director of *Metropolis* is Fritz Lang.
2.
 - A. Filming began in 1925, and it was released in 1927.
 - B. The film is set sometime in the future.
3.
 - A. The city the film is set in is Metropolis, which is fictional. Metropolis is divided into the underground workers' city and the wealthy industrialists who reside in giant skyscrapers above the ground.
 - B. The film was shot in the Weimar Republic, but any outdoor footage appeared to be shot using models or elaborate sound stages. The above-ground city of Metropolis reminded me of Manhattan.
4. Five adjectives or phrases that describe the sense of the city portrayed in the film: dense, uniform, monochrome, foreboding, no sign of people or life apart from the main characters of the film. The city appeared soulless, which was not helped by the hectic, agitated background music whenever the skyscrapers filled the frame.
5. For me, the most memorable and remarkable scene was when the workers rise up to destroy the Heart Machine. I thought the editing was remarkable because the tension was maintained throughout the lengthy scene: we witness the workers' insurrection, the dangerous situation Freder, Maria and the workers' children find themselves in as the water levels rise, and also the consequences on the city itself as the riots bring Metropolis to a standstill. I think this scene really embodies the "mind-hand-heart" message that Maria preaches in the film. Without everyone doing their part and fulfilling their duties, the city is unable to function.
6. Questions I would like to discuss in class are
 - A. How different architectural styles were employed to imply whether the characters were in places that were deemed "safe" or "happy."
 - B. Does the "silliness" H. G. Wells complained about in his review detract from the overall message the director and screenwriter attempt to convey?
7. The look of the film reminded me of Christopher Nolan's Gotham in his Batman trilogy, since those three movies also treat the city as a malignant character.

MIT OpenCourseWare
<http://ocw.mit.edu>

11.139 / 11.239 The City in Film
Spring 2015

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: <http://ocw.mit.edu/terms>.