



## TOGETHER: THE LONDON FILMS OF LORENZA MAZZETTI

# K + Together

### K

Director: Lorenza Mazzetti  
Presented by: British Film Institute,  
Slade School of Fine Art  
Suggested by the work of: Franz Kafka  
Cameraman: Ahmed Al Hadary  
Music: Danièle Paris  
Sound: Jacopo Treves  
Cast:  
Michael Andrews (*Gregory Samsa*)  
Claude Rogers (*the father*)  
Mary Rava (*the mother*)  
Hilary Morris (*the sister*)  
Jacob Lowensberg (*the boss*)  
Walter Bloor (*a guest*)  
UK 1953  
29 mins  
Digital 4K (restoration)

### Together

Directed by: Lorenza Mazzetti  
In collaboration with: Denis Horne  
Production Company: Harlequin Productions  
Made with the support of:  
British Film Institute Experimental Film Fund  
[Executive Producer]: Denis Horne \*  
Story and Scenario by: Denis Horne  
Photography: Hamed Hadari  
Additional Photography: Geoffrey Simpson, Walter Lassally, John Fletcher  
Supervising Editor: Lindsay Anderson  
Editor: John Fletcher  
Music by: Danièle Paris  
Played by: Sinfonia of London  
Recordist: John Fletcher  
Cast:  
Michael Andrews  
Eduardo Paolozzi  
Valy  
Denis Richardson  
Cecilia May  
UK 1956  
48 mins  
Digital 4K (restoration)

\* Uncredited

## TOGETHER: THE LONDON FILMS OF LORENZA MAZZETTI

**K + intro** by Brigid Lowe and Henry K. Miller,  
hosted by William Fowler + Together

Wed 13 Sep 20:45

**Vali, the Witch of Positano**

Sun 24 Sep 13:20

**Twilight City + intro** by BFI National Archive

Curator, William Fowler

Tue 3 Oct 18:30

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+ intro discussing the Mazzetti film restorations by William Fowler, Curator, and Elena Nepoti, Film Conservation Manager, BFI National Archive

The Slade School of Fine Art, where Lorenza Mazzetti enrolled as a painter in 1951, is a department of University College London (UCL), albeit one that maintains a certain distance from its peers. The way Mazzetti tells it in *Together with Lorenza Mazzetti* is that one day while exploring the campus she chanced upon the clubroom of UCL Film Society, and it was through this encounter that she made her first film – *K* – adapted from Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis*.

Kafka's story begins with Gregor Samsa waking from uneasy dreams one morning to find himself transformed into a giant bug. Mazzetti's adaptation is a model of intelligent compression, but also of expansion, and the film begins with scenes that are not in Kafka's original, establishing Gregor as a travelling salesman grovelling to his boss. Whereas Kafka's story is set wholly inside the Samsa family home, Mazzetti inserts outdoor sequences that can be interpreted as Gregor's fantasy.

The film was most likely shot in the spring of 1952. For the role of Gregor Samsa, Mazzetti cast Michael Andrews, a fellow painter at the Slade and, at some point, her boyfriend. Claude Rogers, one of their teachers, took the role of Gregor's father. Mazzetti's cameraman, shooting on 16mm, mostly handheld, was Ahmed al-Hadary, an engineering student at UCL. Given the technical limitations of student filmmaking, *K* was an ambitious production, shot on more than a dozen locations across London.

One location that Mazzetti mentions is a Portobello Road market trader's storeroom near her digs in Bayswater. Another was a fabric wholesaler whose boss, Jacob Lowensberg, she charmed into playing Gregor's boss. Another location in the Portobello Road area was the home of a total stranger, Mary Rava, who lent her living room – a situation that attests to Mazzetti's extraordinary powers of persuasion. Exterior locations include the rooftops and alleys of Soho, a trolleybus in Clerkenwell and the UCL campus itself.

All of these spaces Mazzetti cut together with the most primitive technical means, on her bed, to create a highly subjective imaginary city, a projection of her protagonist's mental state – witness how Gregor's bedroom changes from scene to scene.

Most of the soundtrack is occupied by Daniele Paris's music but there is a credit for Jacopo Treves, who wrote Gregor's monologues. In her first account of the film's making, published in 1955, Mazzetti also credits Ennio Melis for his work on the soundtrack, which was by that account completed in Rome. It is difficult to be precise about dates but she was in Rome in the autumn of 1952.

It is equally difficult to give a date for the make-or-break screening of *K* at the Slade that Mazzetti describes in *Together with Lorenza Mazzetti*. The best evidence is an entry in the desk diary of William Coldstream, the Slade's director and the screening's organiser, for Tuesday, 1 December 1953, at 5.30pm: 'Miss Mazzetti's film'. There was at least one attested private screening before this date, however.

As Mazzetti recalled, the Slade screening prompted Denis Forman, director of the BFI, to ask her to pitch a new film but it seems also to have led to the BFI taking *K* on to its books as a distributor, hence the opening credit. During 1954, the BFI made *K* available on 16mm, seemingly under the title *Metamorphosis*, primarily for film societies. Its first known public screening was at the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels in April 1954, as part of a programme of experimental films presented by the BFI's Ernest Lindgren.

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+ Alix's Pictures (Les Photos d'Alix)**

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**Robinson's Place (Du côté de Robinson) + Santa  
Claus Has Blue Eyes (Le Père Noël a les yeux  
bleus)**

Tue 5 Sep 20:40; Thu 14 Sep 18:00

**Numéro zéro**

Fri 8 Sep 17:55; Sat 23 Sep 11:30

**The Mother and the Whore (La Maman et la  
putain)**

Sun 10 Sep 14:15; Sat 23 Sep 14:10

**My Little Loves (Mes petites amoureuses)**

Mon 11 Sep 18:05; Mon 25 Sep 20:30

**A Dirty Story (Une Sale histoire) + Hieronymous**

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The next 50 years of *K*'s history are opaque but at some point it was  
deaccessioned by the BFI. The extant version is based on materials that were  
in Mazzetti's possession until about 2011, when they were accessioned by the  
Cinit archive in Venice and put on to DVD by Cinit's magazine *Cabiria*.

## Together

In late 1956 a letter signed by Lorenza Mazzetti appeared in the BFI's *Sight  
and Sound* magazine saying that 'For some time I have been conscious of an  
injustice in the credit titles of *Together*, which attribute the creative  
responsibility for the film entirely to myself.' The letter went on to say that 'the  
first title has now been amended to read 'a film by Lorenza Mazzetti and Denis  
Horne'. The direction credit is similarly shared. It seems the film's original  
credits already attributed the story to Horne. The letter was written from 105  
Oakley Street, which happened to be Denis Horne's address.

The genesis of *Together* is slightly mysterious. As Mazzetti recalls in *Together  
with Lorenza Mazzetti*, she proposed what was then titled 'The Glass Marble'  
to Denis Forman, director of the BFI, after he saw *K*, and the project was  
approved by the BFI's Experimental Production Committee at a meeting in  
March 1954. The minutes for this meeting refer to a synopsis 'proposed by a  
group of Slade students' rather than Mazzetti alone, and Mazzetti herself,  
writing close to the time, refers to her working with unnamed 'writers' on her  
basic idea of 'a story about two deaf-mute labourers in the London Docks'.  
But these writers did not include Horne; at that point he and Mazzetti had not  
met. By her account their first meeting occurred after the film had gone into  
production, some time in mid-1954, and while he contributed to the film as a  
writer, much of what he contributed was not filmed.

The BFI's archive contains a synopsis titled 'The Glass Marble', and though it is  
undated and unattributed, it could well be Horne's version. But although there  
are numerous points of contact with the finished film, there are many  
dissimilarities, above all its large cast of characters and range of subplots. As  
Mazzetti says in *London Diary*, Horne left the project – and for a time Mazzetti's  
life, since they were lovers – when he tried to take over direction and was  
swiftly rebuffed by Mazzetti's lead actors. Mazzetti wrote in 1956 that 'I did not  
want anything happening in the story', and that is largely what she achieved.  
However, Horne remained on the scene for some years afterwards, and  
evidently they were reconciled as of late 1956, at the time of the letter.

Other than Michael Andrews and Eduardo Paolozzi, only three performers are  
credited. Denis Richardson appears in no other film. Cecilia May has a small  
handful of television credits. Valy is Vali Myers, later a cult icon. Mazzetti may  
not have wanted anything happening in the film, but Vali provides the  
exception, shattering the bond between the two main characters – characters  
who represent Lorenza and her twin Paola, making Vali's entry into the film, in  
view of the sisters' shared trauma, all the more significant.

Production was completed a year after principal photography, in mid-1955,  
after the BFI put Mazzetti together with Lindsay Anderson, credited as  
supervising editor. Essentially he served as producer by helping Mazzetti edit it,  
arranging additional photography, organising the recording of the soundtrack,  
and giving the film its title. He also very effectively stage-managed the film's  
launch as part of the first Free Cinema programme in February 1956. But the  
body of the film had been shot in 1954, largely at Mazzetti's initiative, with  
Ahmed al-Hadary as cameraman, working with 35mm for the first time. It was  
they who went out in search of the film's astonishing range of East End  
locations, from Wapping to Canning Town, persuading pub landlords, dock  
workers, and fairground operators to let them film in their places of work – two  
outsiders discovering a new city.

Henry K Miller, from BFI booklet for *Lorenza Mazzetti Collection* Blu-ray boxset