



## FEATURE



Mary Louise Brooks was born in Kansas on November 14th, 1906. The daughter of a Lawyer and an artistic minded mother, Louise developed a lifelong love of reading and the arts. At age 15, with her parent's blessing but without finishing high school, Brooks moved to New York City to join Denishawn, then the leading modern dance troupe in America. Brooks performed with Denishawn for two seasons, dancing across the United States.

Brooks then found work as a Broadway chorus girl in the George White's Scandals, followed by an appearance as a featured dancer in the 1925 edition of Ziegfeld Follies. Around this time Louise caught the attention of producer Walter Wagner, who signed her to a five-year contract with Paramount.

Brooks made her screen debut in 1925, playing a gangster's moll in an uncredited role in *The Street of Forgotten Men*. She was soon promoted to first or second female lead in a string of films with the most notable roles being the Howard Hawks directed film *A Girl in Every Port* (1928) and William Wellman directed *Beggars of Life* (1928).

Today, Brooks is best known for her films made in Europe. *Pandora's Box* (1929), *Diary of a Lost Girl* (1929) both directed by G.W. Pabst are considered masterpieces of the silent film era.

After her return from Europe, and with disputes with movies studios, Brooks' career went into decline. Considered difficult and not having a voice for sound by the studio executives, Brooks appeared sporadically over the next decade with her final credit being *Overland Stage Rangers* (1938), a B-Western starring a young John Wayne.

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