Brooks, Louise (1906-1985) Encyclopedia Article

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Louise Brooks, American silent film actress and author, achieved only moderate fame in her film career, but emerged as the focus of a still-growing cult of admirers in the 1970s, sparked by the renewed critical interest in her performance as the doomed hedonist Lulu in G. W. Pabst's *Pandora's Box* (1929). The publication of critic Kenneth Tynan's *New Yorker* article "The Girl in the Black Helmet" captured the imagination of readers who appreciated her caustic wit and her tales of Hollywood, and also romanticized her hermit-like retreat in Rochester, New York, after a life of alcoholism and excess. Her sleek dancer's body and trademark black bob remain an icon of high style and eroticism. She inspired two comic strips as well as numerous film and literary tributes. Brooks became a bestselling author in the 1980s with her memoir *Lulu in Hollywood.*

Further Reading:

Brooks, Louise. *Lulu in Hollywood.* New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1982.

Paris, Barry. *Louise Brooks.* New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1989.

Tynan, Kenneth. "The Girl in the Black Helmet." *New Yorker.* June 11, 1979.