

# Kora Terry

**Kora Terry** is a 1940 German film directed by Georg Jacoby and adapted from the novel of the same name by Hans-Caspar von Zobeltitz that was released the previous year.

## Table of contents

[Plot](#)

[production](#)

[Songs](#)

[propaganda tendencies](#)

[reviews](#)

[See also](#)

[literature](#)

[web links](#)

[itemizations](#)

## Storyline

When Bartos, the director of the Odeon vaudeville stage , cancels an artist at short notice, he hires the Terrys out of necessity, whose parents were successful vaudeville artists but who had not yet been engaged. Both are supported by Tobs, a friend of the parents. While the blonde Mara Terry shows up on time for the first rehearsal, her dark-haired sister Kora is diva-like late and behaves aloof and snippy. When they first perform together the next day, Kora is exhausted from having been to parties the night before. She becomes careless during a dangerous act in which she has to balance her upside-down sister on her head. Mara falls and pulls a severe tendon strainso that it can no longer occur. From now on, Kora performs alone and starts a relationship with the bandmaster Michael Varany, because he should write songs for her.

Movie	
original title	Kora Terry
	
production country	<u>Germany</u>
original language	<u>German</u>
Publishing year	<u>1940</u>
length	109 minutes
age rating	<u>FSK 16</u>
	<u>Rod</u>
directing	<u>George Jacoby</u>
script	<u>Walter Wassermann</u> , <u>CH Diller</u> based on the novel <i>Kora Terry - The novel of an artist</i> by <u>Hans-Caspar von Zobeltitz</u>
production	<u>Max Pfeiffer</u> for Ufa
Music	<u>Frank Fox</u> , <u>Peter Kreuder</u>
camera	<u>Konstantin Irmen Chet</u>
cut	<u>Eric Kobler</u>
occupation	
<div><div>▪ <u>Marika Rokk</u> : Kora / Mara Terry</div><div>▪ <u>Will Quadflieg</u> : Michael Varany</div><div>▪ <u>Josef Sieber</u> : Karel Tobias, called Tobs</div></div>	



Varany used to be a gifted violin virtuoso before he had many affairs and thus relegated to the piano-playing Kapellmeister. Kora Terry also starts an affair with the industrialist Borodin. When he explains to her one evening that he did not buy a valuable ring she wanted, she steals a technical drawing in revenge. Although Borodin only joked and gives her the ring, Kora forgets to return the drawing. As Kora Terry an engagement in the Ambassador in Africareceives, she persuades Michael to come along, who is quitting his engagement at the Odeon. Kora then drops him and causes him not to get a contract with the Ambassador. Shortly before departure, Mara, who is traveling with her, promises to keep in touch with Michael Varany. From Africa, she also wants to take care of Kora's little daughter Ilonka, who is housed in a Luisenstift because Kora has no time for the child.

- Will Dohm : Agent Moller
- Herbert Hübner : Stefan Borodyn
- Flockina von Platen : Olly Laurenz, his sister
- Hans Leibelt : Bartos, director of the Odeon
- Ursula Herking : Miss Haase
- Franz Schafheitlin : Vopescu
- Gisela Scholtz : Ilonka, Kora's daughter
- Paul Mederow : member of the commission of inquiry
- Hermann Mayer-Falkow : Casino guest

In Africa, both sisters work alone. Kora Terry stars in The Ambassador, where she performs half-naked "veil dances" with snakes. Mara is employed in a small bar as a solo dancer and singer, where she has to defend herself against intrusive guests. In the casino in Africa, Kora Terry meets the shady Vopescu and encourages her to gamble. When she becomes addicted to gambling, Vopescu reveals to her that he uses her as a spywants to recruit. She rejects Vopescu's proposal, but he tells her that an arrest warrant is already out for her because of the stolen drawing. Since she is heavily in debt and her sister doesn't want to lend her money either, she is willing to hand over the drawing to Vopescu. As she is about to leave her room with the drawing, Mara Terry shoots Kora. When she falls down the stairs, Kora breaks her neck and dies. Mara takes on the identity of her successful sister in order to provide for Ilonka financially and henceforth appears as "Kora Terry". Tobs takes the blame for the death of the real Kora. He is sentenced to five years hard labor for assaulting and killing "Mara Terry".

In the following years Mara celebrates success in the USA under the name "Kora Terry" and finally comes to Rome for a guest performance. Michael Varany also performs here. After his dismissal from the Odeon, he found his way back to playing the violin and was immediately taken to the master classadmitted to a university. He declined an engagement at the Odeon and now plays as a solo violinist at the final concert of the master class. After his performance, he learns from the newspaper about Mara's guest performance, which he mistakes for Kora Terry. Surprised, he sees a seemingly changed Kora on stage and makes an appointment with her. Meanwhile, Mara is being blackmailed by Vopescu. When she doesn't respond to his demands, he reports her to the police for espionage. When Mara receives a message that Ilonka is seriously ill, she leaves in a hurry and is arrested in the children's home by the waiting police. Meanwhile, Tobs, released early from prison after three years, appears in Rome and reveals the true identity of "Kora" to Michael Varany. At the subsequent court hearing against Mara Terry, no one believes her at first that Mara and her sister Kora are dead. Tobs' testimony does not convince the court either. Only a doctor can confirm Mara's identity: Mara had injured her ankle so badly when she fell on the stage that years later there were traces of the injury on herX-rays are visible, the traces also match the X-ray that was taken shortly after the injury. Mara has been rehabilitated and can finally confess her love to Michael Varany.

## Production



The shooting of *Kora Terry* began on March 27, 1940 at the Babelsberg film studio and ended in July of the same year.

For Marika Röck, *Kora Terry* was "the breakthrough to the top star of German music film". <sup>[1]</sup> In the dual role of Kora and Mara Terry, who were completely opposite characters, she was able to show her acting versatility, which was still in doubt at the time of shooting. Her husband Georg Jacoby, who directed the film, defended his wife to critics: "I know my wife. She is a naive child and a wonderfully erotic woman, she has these contrary traits." <sup>[2]</sup> Joseph Goebbels also opposed the film, since he generally rejected double roles as "nonsense" <sup>[2]</sup> and instead demanded a double for Marika Röck. The film was shot with the double role and a double was only used for a few scenes. Peter Kreuder, the film's composer, said that a woman was taken from a concentration camp as a double, but was not sent back to the camp after the end of shooting. <sup>[3]</sup>



Marika Röck on the time the film was made in 1940

According to Marika Röck, Goebbels held the film back for six months after the end of shooting, in which case he "revenged" the double that had been requested but was not used. Only when there was "a flop with a propaganda tearjerker" did he finally release the film. <sup>[4]</sup> The film premiered on November 27, 1940 in the Berlin Capitol . On November 29, the censorship awarded him the title "Youth ban/not public holidays".

## Songs

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While Frank Fux wrote the "melodic illustration music" <sup>[5]</sup> of the film, Peter Kreuder created "some sparkling hits" <sup>[5]</sup> for the film , which became known beyond the film. Günther Schwenn wrote the lyrics , all songs were sung by Marika Röck.

- *When spring comes* - Hungarian song
- *For a night of bliss* - foxtrot
- *why should i be faithful*
- *Everything in life is temporary*

## Propagandistic Tendencies

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*Kora Terry* presents the audience with two different types of women: The dark-haired Kora is presented as unreliable, superficial, arrogant, selfish and inconsiderate. She drinks and flirts with men indiscriminately, gambles away her money and doesn't take care of her child. At the same time she is presented as shameless and revealing and - shown symbolically in the snake dance - as a dangerous seductress. She sings her songs with an energetic and emotionless voice. Compared to her, the blonde Mara appears as the ideal woman in the sense of National Socialist propaganda. <sup>[6]</sup> She is reserved and shy, she sings her songs with an "angelic voice" <sup>[3]</sup>, she wears "modest" clothes, longs for a family and takes loving care of her niece. While Kora is dominant towards the men, Mara is the weaker one who needs the men's protection. *Kora Terry* can be described as an entertainment film



with propagandistic tendencies due to the emphasis on the NS image of women , in relation to the positive emphasis, among other things, on motherhood, willingness to make sacrifices and the ability to suffer Mara Terry. <sup>[7]</sup>

## Reviews

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*Kora Terry* was praised by contemporary critics above all for his dance scenes and the sets: "Georg Jacoby unleashes a rich imagination as the director in the lavish revue interludes. The choreographic direction by Sabine Reiß, the participation of the outstanding dancer Jockel Stahl and above all, of course, the solos by Marika Röck give the film an exciting and colorful atmosphere." <sup>[5]</sup> Marika Röck's snake dance was particularly emphasized. <sup>[8]</sup> The "psychologically by no means always convincing[e]" action of the film, in which the "fairy good" and the "terribly superficial..." sisters face each other, was criticized. <sup>[5]</sup>

*Reclam's encyclopedia of German film* called *Kora Terry* a "convincing[n] revue film ... with serious overtones" <sup>[1]</sup> , while the *encyclopedia of international film* described the work as a " colportage novel with revue elements" <sup>[9]</sup> .

## See also

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- List of German feature films premiered in the German Reich during the Nazi era

## Literature

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- First day of shooting at "Kora Terry"* . In: Filmwelt, No. 16, April 19, 1940, p. 12.
- Rhythm and intoxication of the dance. Kora Terry - A Dancer's Movie* . In: Filmwelt, No. 49, December 6, 1940, pp. 12-13.
- H.-E. Fisherman: *Movies We Saw: "Kora Terry"* . In: Filmwelt, No. 50, December 13, 1940, p. 22.
- Marika Röck: *Heart with paprika. memories* . Ullstein, Frankfurt am Main 1991, pp. 140–142.
- Jo Fox: *Filming women in the Third Reich* . Berg, Oxford 2000, pp. 124–132.

## Web Links

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- Kora Terry* (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0032677/>) at the Internet Movie Database
- Kora Terry* (<https://www.filmportal.de/8b941f1e2d944ac692814ad295c7e1be>) at filmportal.de

## Itemizations

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- Reclam's Lexicon of German Film* , p. 182.
- Marika Röck: *Heart with paprika* , p. 140.
- Fox, p. 125.
- Heart with Paprika* , p. 141.
- H.-E. Fisherman: *Movies We Saw: "Kora Terry"* . In: *Filmwelt* , No. 50, Berlin, December 13, 1940, p. 22.
- Fox describes her as "the 'good' Germanic woman" in contrast to Kora as "epitome of the 'bad' woman". Fox, pp. 130f.



7. Fox, p. 130.
  8. HOF: *Rhythm and intoxication of the dance. Kora Terry - A Dancer's Movie* . In: Filmwelt, No. 49, December 6, 1940, p. 13.
  9. *Lexicon of international film* . Volume 4. Rowohlt, Reinbek near Hamburg 1990, p. 2097.
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