

Fiction

NOSFERATU Jim Shepard (*Knopf*, \$22) This is a mordantly funny and moving fictionalized life of F. W. Murnau, the pioneering German director best known for the landmark vampire film *Nosferatu*. The section about the making of that classic first appeared in Shepard's chameleonlike short-

story collection *Batting Against Castro* and there Murnau seemed a cold, reserved aesthete. But here, Shepard expands on his Murnau character's shy, nervous boyhood, his bonding with soul mate Hans in college, their tragic falling-out, and Hans' death in World War I. Shepard captures the cut-and-paste excitement of early filmmaking, and he keeps Murnau's heart, broken and sad, quietly beating in our imagination. **A-** —*Michael Giltz*