

# MADAME FALBEAUX'S



## CINÉMA MYSTIQUE

### The Many Masks of Mexico

This month at the Salon, we'll be paying a lot of attention to the men (and women) behind the masks of Mexico (and California when the rancheros ruled). This is a country that likes their rice covered with beans and their wrestlers covered with a mask. So enjoy this month of NAFTA-styled entertainment as we legally import some south of the border fun.

First though, it's time to wrap up the ongoing conflict between **Federal Operator 99** and his nemesis, Jim

#### HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

*This day in the history of masked avengers*

**BATMAN** (5/1/1939) - The first appearance of the caped crusader was in the May 1939 issue of Detective Comics.

Belmont in the final chapter of our serial. This month, G-man Jerry Blake tracks the elusive Belmont to his lair, an abandoned movie theater, for a climactic exchange of fisticuffs, Republic stuntman style.

Next month starts a new adventure, *Manhunt of Mystery Island*. This chapter play features a mysterious villain who, by the use of an electronic contraption, is able to transform himself into the evil "Captain Mephisto."

Speedy Gonzales is back to the Salon to vex "el pussy gato," Sylvester, in the Friz Freleng directed *Here Today, Gone Tamale*. A community of mice have been in the midst of a famine when a shipment of

cheese pulls into the local dock. Only Speedy is capable of giving the run-around to the ships cat. Ya-reba, andale, eh-hah!

Next we visit the West that wasn't, but wish it were. Jim West and Artemus Gordon help a Mexican official and some unscrupulous adventurers disguised as archaeologists

*continued on back*



Archaeology was never like this! Leave it to Jim West and Artemus Gordon to uncover an ancient Aztec site with hot babes in attendance. Come by this Saturday to check out the face behind the mask in the *Wild Wild West* episode, "The Night of Montezuma's Hordes."

## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“...According to the apocalypse, we’re living at a time when things are perfect for the resurrection of monsters here on earth. Since men are bent on wreaking destruction upon the world today, they’ll heed their selfish desires and use the tremendous (nuclear) power that nature has given us.”

— Prof. Orloff explains all the strange goings on to Santo (called Samson in this English dubbed version) in *Santo vs. the Vampire Women*.

## ZORRO CONFIDENTIAL



☞ Zorro debuts in 1919 as part of a five-part series in the above pulp magazine. “The Curse of Capistrano” borrows from Robin Hood legends, Scarlet Pimpernel adventures and Dumas’ “The Count of Monte Cristo.” Another inspiration was a 19th century series of “Spring Heeled Jack” stories. They featured a costumed protagonist who had a secret underground lair and left a signature letter on the bodies of enemies.

☞ The Zorro character in turn influenced many comic characters to come. The Lone Ranger, The Phantom, Green Arrow, and Batman (see Birthdays).

☞ A year after the magazine serial was published, Douglas Fairbanks chose the story to launch his career as a swash-buckler in *The Mark of Zorro*.

find the lost treasure of the Aztecs. *The Night of Montezuma's Hordes* (horde of treasure that is) is a good example of how this series always found a way to get eye candy into the show (see front page). When Indiana Jones found Aztec treasure, he almost gets flattened by a boulder. When Jim West finds it, he gets to make out with the curvaceous guardians.

This episode’s cast features *My Favorite Martian’s* Ray Walston and the bad guy with the dead eye, Jack Elam in the gang of cut-throats. Archaeology wasn’t meant to be this much fun.

Santo returns to the Salon in perhaps what can be considered the best (and wackiest) of all the silver masked man’s films, *Santo vs. the Vampire Women*. We’ll be viewing the K. Gordon Murray dubbed version in which Santo is referred to as “Samson,” but we know who the man behind the mask really is. The fact that *Mystery Science Theater 3000* exposed some video tape to spoof this film attests to its cult-level quality. In addition to Santo, the lovely Lorena Velazquez appears as the queen of the vampires. However, most of the evil doer heavy lifting is done by the equally alluring Ofelia Montesco as “Tandra,” vampire high priestess. Talk about your “hot tamales.” Several of Santo’s wrestling pals are there to provide action for the fight scenes and, of course, for the obligatory wrestling matches that stop the plot cold.

Years ago, one of our serials was the fondly recalled *Zorro’s Fighting Legion*. This month, we’ll get a taste of a feature-length masked caballero when we view Tyrone (no relation) Power’s *Mark of Zorro*. If this wasn’t Ty’s best acting role, it was certainly the most fun. Scion of a famous stage acting family, Ty took up fencing at an early age, so he was more than ready with the rapier when he had to battle Basil Rathbone, one of Hollywood’s best fencers. In the climactic sword fight near the film’s end, that’s Ty and Basil, not stuntmen, doing all of the work.

Though the Zorro character was an American invention (see box), he was heartily embraced by South American fans. When Disney’s *Zorro* TV series star, Guy Williams, visited Argentina in 1973, he was so overcome by the adulation (14 years after the series ended), he decided to extend his stay and move to Argentina where he spent the rest of his days until he rode off into the sunset in 1989.

Adios Muchachos!

Col. Tom

## SERIAL

1. **Federal Operator 99** (1945) - *Chapter 12* - “The Case of The Musical Clue” Jim Belmont plants a listening device in Jerry Blake’s office. With his electronic ear to the wall, Belmont is a step ahead of Operator 99’s plans and is able to capture the plucky Miss Kingston. Blake gets hip to the intrusion and traces the electronics back to Belmont’s hideout for the final showdown. (Next Month: *Manhunt of Mystery Island* begins)

## CARTOON

2. **Here Today, Gone Tamale** (1959) - A ship full of cheese pulls into a Mexican port and only Speedy Gonzales can unload the cargo for the starving locals.

## FEATURETTE

3. **The Night of Montezuma’s Hordes** (1967) - Jim West and Artemus Gordon go on an archeological expedition to find the lost treasure of the Aztecs in a classic episode from TV’s *Wild Wild West*.

## FEATURES

4. **Santo contra las mujeres vampiros** (1962) - Aka, “Samson vs. the Vampire Women.” Santo is back and Lorena Velázquez has got him. The silver masked man goes after a bevy of vampirettes who are after a professor’s beautiful daughter. It seems that the lovely Diana is the spitting image of a former vampire queen. Lorena and her crew are determined to capture Diana and make her the bride of Satan. All the creepy “dark castle” motifs appear in this adventure.
5. **The Mark of Zorro** (1940) - This is probably pretty-boy Tyrone Power’s best role. Ty runs around in his black outfit carving the letter “Z” in anyone and everything. There’s lots of action, especially swordplay as Ty (no slouch with the rapier) tangles with Hollywood’s best swordsman, Basil Rathbone.