WESTERNS...
ALL'ITALIANA!

EIRD PERSON

March-April

No. 6

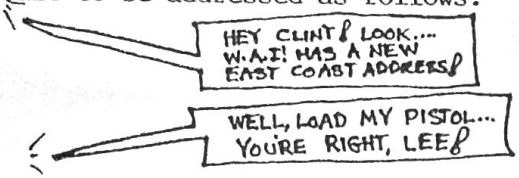
THE SWINGIN' DOORS...

What a year WESTERNS...ALL'ITALIANA! has had. You hold in your hands the 3rd Anniversary Issue and the kickoff of our 4th year of publishing! Not that there has been previous anniversary editions...but with the current strength of the fanzine, it's about time we start tootin' our horn and making all aware of our staying power! As you can see, this edition is considerably thicker than those in the twelve months prior. You can thank yourselves for an additional seven pages that includes readership letters and responses! Evidently my editorial last time out touched a nerve in some of you and believe me when I say the letters were nothing short of BOFFO-NEAT-GREAT and ATTABOY! My deepest thanks to those who wrote because it <u>really does</u> make a difference in the way things are run around here. Please keep this flood of gripes and praises coming! You're on a roll!

While on the subject of writing, I must make everyone aware of this important information, therefore I will now type the words "read this" in bold letters across the width of this page in order to attract the attention of those who pass by this section!

<u>READ THIS!!</u> <u>READ THIS!!</u> <u>READ THIS!!</u> <u>READ THIS!!</u> <u>READ THIS!!</u> <u>READ THIS!!</u>

The address has changed for mail sent to me, Tim Ferrante. Please make a note in your files as it is effective <u>IMMEDIATELY</u>! <u>All</u> letters or otherwise sent to me are to be addressed as follows:



WESTERNS...ALL'ITALIANA!
Tim Ferrante
P.O. Box 41
Keyport, New Jersey 07735 [USA]

As you can see, the only difference is the Post Office Box number changing from the old (#186) to the <u>new</u> (#41). Due to the larger amount of mail coming in, it was necessary to switch to a bigger box after having the old address for over ten years.

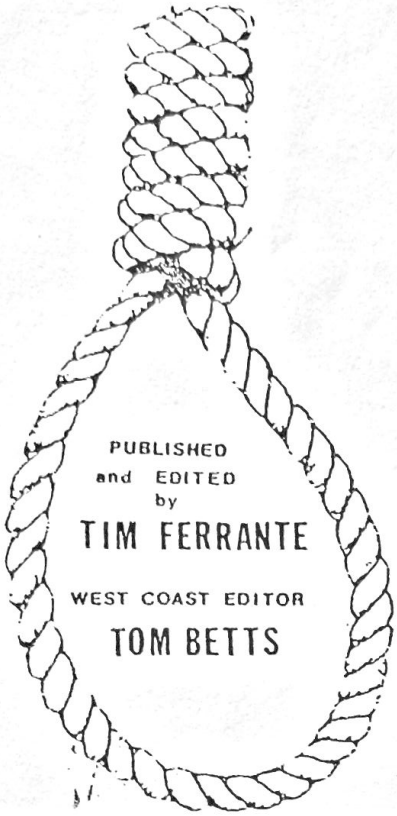
If you missed it, on our cover is a tiny notice near the logo pointing out a very important aspect of it. Thought you'd like to know....

In looking back over the past year, I can't help but take a moment and wonder what the hell is going on here! Imagine, if you will, the fact that over 100 copies are printed of each issue with very few left for back issue distribution. And that these 100 copies are eagerly awaited by 100 fans of a sub-genre that could never be totally unraveled! Sometimes I think we're all a bit looney...but damn it sure is exciting when you discover some lost or barely known fact that suddenly ties together what were seemingly loose ends of information. So little has been dug up on these films and as each item is resurrected, we'll bring it to you here! And I know that I keep harping on this, but do write for information from Bill Connolly about his SPAGHETTI CINEMA fanzine. It, too, is a great source of obscure foreign cinema info. As usual, you'll find an ad in our classified section!

If any of you are subscribers to the Movie/Entertainment Book Club, you may have noticed a mention of WESTERNS...ALL'ITALIANA! in their latest mailing. Tom and I are hoping this brings in fresh subscribers as the Book Club has an enourmous mailing list. And everyone can expect a subscription renewal notice next issue! Only those whose subscriptions began with JULY (#2-1985) will be due for renewal. Your sub will end with our next edition [MAY/JUNE - #7 1986] as the first issue you received this time last year was free.

Okay amigos! Please...enjoy this time of celebration and join me and Tom in the wonderful expectation of continued success as we ride on to the fourth year of WESTERNS...ALL'ITALIANA!. We have a thing or two planned this coming twelve months, more giveaways and of course our forever money-losing merchandising schemes! As a matter of fact, see the enclosed flyer for the latest! Adios!

Tim



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WESTERNS ALL' ITALIANA
Issue #6
March/April 1986

As sometimes happens we run across something pertaining to an article after it has gone to press. In this instance a rare ad mat for SPAGHETTI WESTERN was turned up by Bill Connolly after Tim Ferrante's review appeared. Please refer to issue #4, November - December 1985.

TEX

By TOM BETTS

(We've reported several times on a new Italian Western, TEX AND THE LORD OF THE DEEP, hopefully to be released here soon in the U.S. Not knowing anything about the character, Tex Willer, other than he is an Italian comic strip character, I decided to do some research. Here is what I was able to find. TB)

"Per tutti i diavoli, che mi siamo ancore alle costole?" (By all the demons in Hell, are they still on my tail"); thus did the protagonist of Tex Willer introduce himself to the readers in the second panel of the first weekly comic book (September 30, 1948).

"Tex Willer," Aurelio Galleppini and Giovanni Bonelli. © Edizioni Araldo.

It proved to be the start of a phenomenal climb which, to this day, has suffered no setbacks. Thirty seven years have gone by since that time, but our hero, the only survivor among the multitudes of adventurous characters born in the post-war period, still rides into the sunset in 15 different editions published in Italy and abroad.

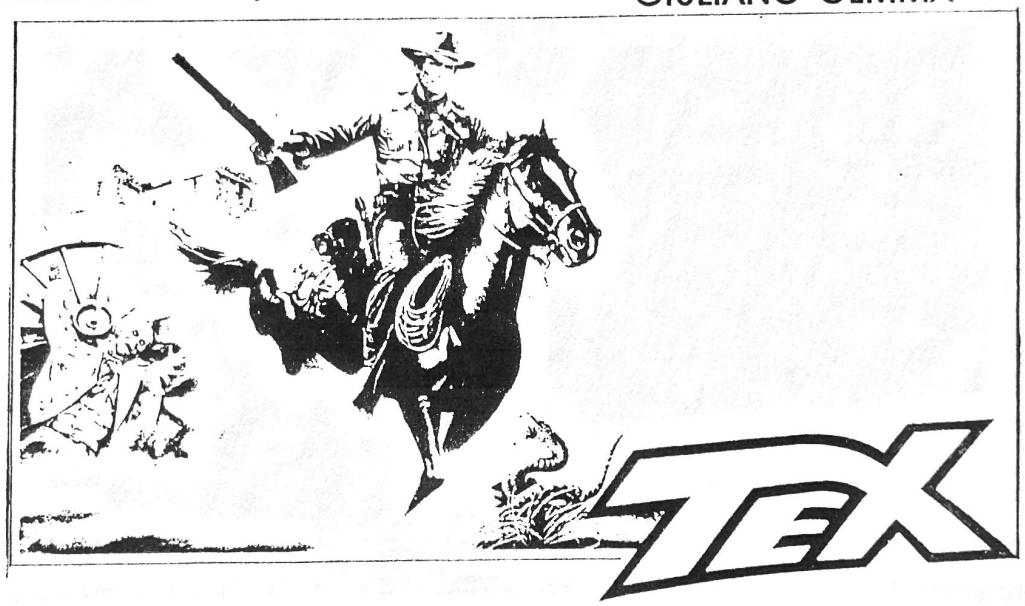
Credit for Tex Willer's success should go to scriptwriter Giovani Bonelli who has authored some genuinely original stories built upon a meticulous historical and geographical documentation, and the artist Aurelio Galleppini, a master of the chiaroscuro and the photographic style. Bonelli and Galep (as the authors sign their pages) have become as well known as their character.

Tex, a Texas Ranger, friend of the Navajo Indians who call him "Night Eagle", is a champion of justice and a righter of wrongs with very unorthodox methods; he resorts to fists quite often, uses his

Colts almost ceaselessly (our kind of guy), and speaks in racy language (alright!). This series is much blo dier than any American western comic character, and its violence prefigures that of the later western movies of Leone. In his missions he is accompanied by Kit Carson (a very personal interpretation of the famous frontier scout), and by his own son Kit named in homage to the Indian scout, who has learned much from his dynamic and eternally youthful-looking father. (Tex, was left a widower while still young and has stubbornly refused to remarry.)

Tex Willer is a highly entertaining comic strip which sometimes oversteps the boundaries of the genre. Bonelli's imagination never stops, and he does not hesitate to veer away on occassions from purely Western themes to delve into science fiction, fantasy and even horror.

If the film lives up to its comic strip legend this should be a very enjoyable and entertaining movie, one which should fit right into the mold of the Italian western we all love. I just hope it is released nationally for all of us to view. **GIULIANO GEMMA**



AND THE LORD OF THE DEEP

by **DUCCIO TESSARI**

A RAI CHANNEL 3/CINECITTA PRODUCTION - GIULIANO GEMMA «TEX AND THE LORD OF THE DEEP»
WITH WILLIAM BERGER / CARLO MUCARI / ISABEL RUSSINOVA AND WITH FLAVIO BUCCI
BASED ON AN IDEA BY GIOVANNI L. BONELLI PRODUCED BY RAI CHANNEL 3
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER ENZO PORCELLI DIRECTOR DUCCIO TESSARI

REVIEWS & PREVIEWS

Tex And The Lord Of The Deep
(ITALIAN-COLOR)

Venice, Sept. 4.

A Titanus release, produced by RAI-TV Channel 3 and Cinecitta. Directed by Duccio Tessari. Stars Giuliano Gemma. Screenplay, Gianfranco Clerici, Marcello Coscia, Tessari, Giorgio Bonelli; camera (color), Pietro Morbidelli; art director, Antonello Geleng, Walter Patriarca; editor, Mirella Mencio; music, Gianni Ferrio. Reviewed at the Venice Film Festival, Sept. 4, 1985. Running time: 103 MINS.

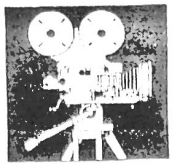
Tex Willer .....Giuliano Gemma
Tiger Jack .....Carlo Mucari
Kit Carson.....William Berger
Tulac.....Isabel Russinova
Kanas .....Flavio Bucci
Witch doctor .....Giovanni Luigi Bonelli
El Morisco .....Peter Berling

The rage for transposing the two-dimensional pen-and-ink heroes of young readers to big and little screens has reached the heart of Italo production, RAI-TV, where "Tex And The Lord Of The Deep" was conceived.

Based on three issues of the popular Italo comic book that recounts the adventures of a Texas ranger and his partners, Kit Carson and Tiger Jack the Indian, "Tex" marks what Italian tv clearly hopes will become the first in a series of formula Westerns capable of cashing in on the comic's 500,000 readers scattered from Yugoslavia to Brazil, Greece, Finland, Turkey and most Spanish-speaking lands.

Tex Willer was created in 1948 (only 10 years after "Superman" first appeared), and his loyal fans will recognize the finicky fidelity with which helmer Duccio Tessari and associates have handled him. Recognize, but not appreciate, because somewhere in the process the excitement has slipped away, and Tex the movie proves a rousing disappointment, unable to make even the simplest suspense mechanisms function.

Pic has something of a corporate look to it, as though once the perfect Old West sets designed by Antonello Geleng and Walter Patriarca were in place and the three main characters physically replicated in Giuliano Gemma (Tex), William Berger (Carson) and Carlo Mucari (Tiger), there was nothing left to do but sit back and let the complicated tale perform its magic on the screen. Unfortunately, it does nothing of the sort.



Story is a melange of adventure plots any kid will recognize. Tex and his pals are investigating a robbery of guns from an army convoy. The trail leads them to a tribe of Yaqui Indians who dream of avenging the slaughter of their ancestors, the Aztecs, by joining forces with other tribes and launching an Indian War. Their secret weapon, manufactured by a hooded alchemist in the belly of a volcano, is a glowing green rock capable of turning their enemies into instant mummies.

The violence is fast and furious, but as make-believe and bloodless as a comic strip. On the screen, the effect is curiously uninvolving, as in dynamite explosions that toss the wrong extras into the air a few seconds too late, making for anything but a realistic impression. Each mini-adventure ends in the miraculous escape of the heroes, who pull each other out of swamps and up from ravines before the least sense of danger can be communicated.

Predictable on the level of action, "Tex" makes another mistake in taking it for granted that everyone has a clear idea of who the characters are and why we should root for them. Gemma makes an archetypal Ranger in a white hat, but is too restrained and anonymous to arouse gut-level sympathy.

Berger gives Carson the right dose of aging awareness, but the role is too slender to develop, while Carlo Mucari's Indian of few words seems barely on the screen at all. Everybody looks dated circa the 1960s, particularly Isabel Russinova in the one female role of Tulac, Yaqui queen, who gives new meaning to the words impassive acting.

Introducing the story, and concluding it with hopeful hints of a sequel, is an old witch doctor played by Giovanni Luigi Bonelli, creator of the comic book. —*Yung.*

Submitted by BOB BAHN

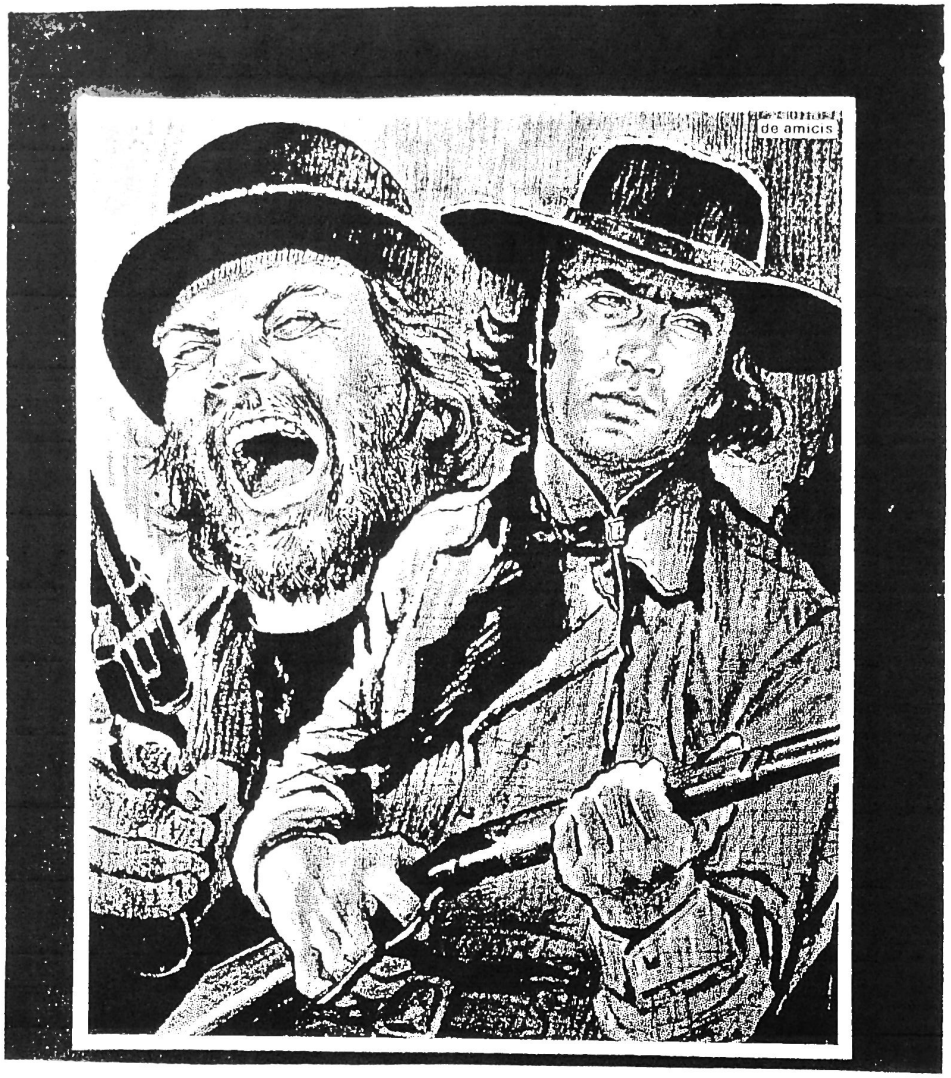
NOW FILMING

WHITE APACHE

Director: Bruno Mattei
Starring: Sebastian Harrison, Lola Forner

SCALPS

Director: Werner Knox
Starring: Vassili Garis



MANY THANKS TO READER ERIC MACHE FOR THIS EXTREMELY RARE AD ART FOR "Amico mio...frega tu...che frego io!" (EVERYTHING FOR A FRIEND). Directed by Miles Deem (Demofilio Fidani), and starring Red Carter, Bud Randall, Simone Blondell, Sleepy Warren and with Gordon Mitchell, a 1973 release.

Keith Hall, Jr.

Behind the Scenes!

Jack Elam had just finished shooting a film in Spain and was taking a brief vacation with his wife in Switzerland when he received a call from his good friend Henry Fonda in Italy. Fonda was making a Western called ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE WEST and wanted Elam to appear in a cameo to be filmed in Spain. It would take only one week's shooting, and the money was very generous. Also it would give the two actors a chance to get together with their families.

The Spanish location was very hot. The rails were about 150°, so scalding that Elam couldn't walk on them without burning his boots.

The first shot of the cameo was the fly scene. The rest of the sequence would be done later. The prop people were prepared to dangle a phony fly from a string to bother Elam's head, but Leone wouldn't hear of it; the fly had to be the genuine article.

Well and good, but the plentiful flies in the area wouldn't cooperate. Elam, Leone, and the entire crew sat in the hot Spanish sun waiting for the fly, any fly, to appear.

No fly. As the day burned on, Leone got impatient and put orange jam on Elam's face. The heat made this jam most discomforting, yet no fly was attracted. The first day ended with nothing to show but a sunburn for Elam.

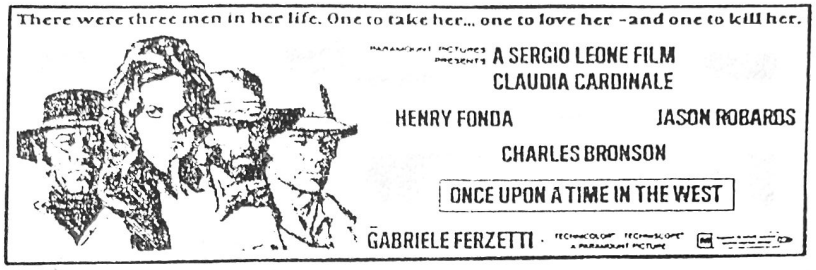
The second day didn't start much better. Elam continued to sit there, waiting for one of the little pests, but none appeared. More frustrating was the fact that, just off camera, there were hundreds of the little beasts, but they all seemed camera shy.

The second day was coming to an end, and the light was fading with still no results. Leone decided to give Elam and the crew a little break, so they all retired to a tent which contained several watermelons soaked in ice to bring some refreshment to the filmmakers.

As they entered the tent, everybody noticed something amazing--flies were all over the place, totally enamored of the watermelon. Leone suddenly had his answer.

They dashed back to the set, and Leone rubbed watermelon on Elam's face. Immediately there was a horde of flies. Elam had to fight them off.

After selecting the most photogenic of the lot, Leone finally got around to shooting the scene.



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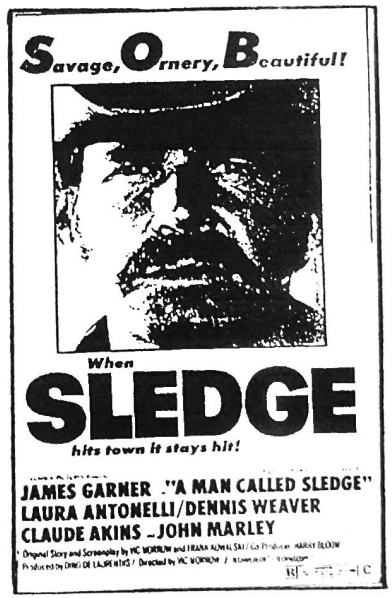
Vic Morrow, who had become a popular actor in his youth by playing a juvenile delincuent in BLACKBOARD JUNGLE, decided that he would like to direct a movie. Dino De Laurentiis gave him his chance in 1970 with A MAN CALLED SLEDGE (reviewed by Robert Bahn in WAI issue 3/4), to be shot in Spain and Italy. In order to make his film directing debut a success, many of Morrow's friends agreed to appear in the movie, friends such as Jim Garner, John Marley, Claude Akins, and Dennis Weaver. Unfortunately, Morrow and De Laurentiis didn't get along and, after the film was well underway, Morrow was quietly replaced with another director, although Morrow gets full credit in the finished version.



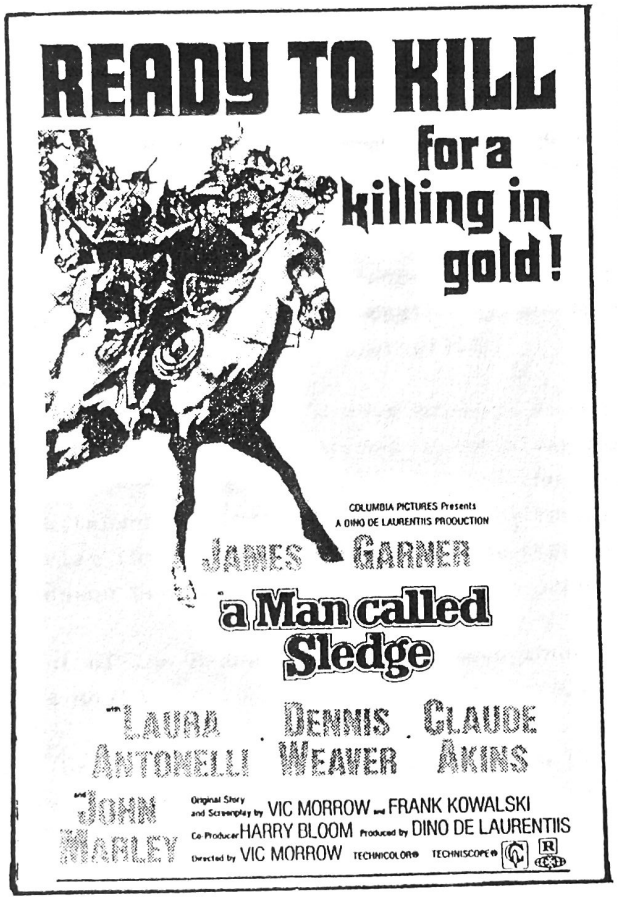
The actors were now stuck in a movie by their friend. Trapped, they finished it.

SLEDGE was released at the tail end of the Italian Western's popularity in America, so was given very little promotion. It was simply dumped onto the market at the last

minute. In Los Angeles no advertising was placed in the newspapers about its being released until only the very night before it opened. Jim Garner didn't help much by badmouthing the film while it was still out, saying that the film should have been called "Sludge" and that he had only done it to help his friend. (I disagree with Garner for several reasons. Not only is it a good film, it also contains Garner's best screen performance. Garner plays an alcoholic rat who learns money isn't everything. Unlike in many other Italian Westerns, the main character grows a little. Most of Garner's other characterizations are glib Rockford/Maverick copies--the very opposite of Sledge.)

The film came and went very quickly. It appears on television now and then, however the homosexual references deleted.

Morrow went on to direct two more films, then died tragically while acting in TWILIGHT ZONE--THE MOVIE.



HIS NAME WAS KING (1971)

A Review by Eric Mache

HIS NAME WAS KING (English Title)
LO CHIAMAVANO KING (Italian Title)
ON L'APPELLE KING (French Title)

Starring:
Richard Harrison, Klaus Kinski, Anne Puskin, John Silver, Lorenzo Fineschi, Lucio Zarini, Luciano Pigozzi, Marco Zuanelli, Vassili Karis.

Story & Screenplay by Renato Savino
Music by Luis Enrique Bacalov

Telestampa (Rome)
Interiors filmed at Elios Film (Rome)
Sound Recording N.C.
Dialogue by Ted Rusoff
Edited by Roberto Colangeli
Director of Photography: Guglielmo Mancori
Produced by Luigi Nannerini
Directed by Don Reynolds (Giancarlo Romitelli)

SYNOPSIS & REVIEW:

The Benson brothers head a gang of ruthless gun smugglers. The film begins as they massacre a garrison of American soldiers who stop their wagons for cargo inspection. As some of the Benson gang sit around a fire afterwards they are ambushed by a bounty hunter named John "King" Marley (Richard Harrison). He, in turn, is ambushed by the youngest Benson brother. When Benson's gun jams, King shoots them all dead.

The rest of the Bensons inform a mysterious unseen figure of their brother's death. This figure is the mastermind behind the gun smuggling.

King's brother and his new wife Carol are surprised by the Bensons as they prepare for bed. Carol offers her body to the Bensons to spare her husband's life. They kill him anyway after they rape her. She runs to tell King, who is playing poker with his friend Brian

Vosser (Klaus Kinski). When King goes to the sheriff to get help, the Bensons surround the office and demand that King be turned over to them. They retreat when King kills another brother.

King's help is enlisted by an army officer named Ericson to prove that the Bensons are gun-smuggling to the Mexicans. Meanwhile, Carol has moved in under the "protection" of Brian and his lecherous bodyguard.

King goes to the Mexican border where he witnesses the Benson gang supplying the Mexicans with guns in return for gold. He signals to the U.S. army and tells them where the Mexican hideout is. King infiltrates the hideout and is captured. Unfortunately the Mexicans saw him signal the army and are now waiting to ambush the troops. Back at army headquarters Major Ericson meets with a government agent who suspects King of masterminding the gun-smuggling operation. Evidently King's name was forged on a bill of sale.

The Bensons have been celebrating with the bandits in the Mexican hideout. One of the Bensons decides to knife King, who has untied himself. King kills Benson and escapes after rigging the hideout with explosives. The Mexicans and Bensons fight a violent battle with the attacking U.S. army as the hideout blows up. The U.S. soldiers kill the bandit chief and the Mexicans surrender. King kills one of the two remaining Bensons while the other escapes. The army arrests King as the smuggler leader.

Brian Vosser has become marshall and King is put in jail. He is visited by Major Ericson who helps him escape. Meanwhile, Brian's bodyguard rapes a gagged Carol. When Brian finds out, he throws a knife into his bodyguard, killing him. King confronts the government agent and convinces him that he is innocent. The remaining Benson visits his now-revealed boss Brian and demands that he get rid of King. King jumps Benson in the stable as he is about to leave and, after a brutal fight, hangs him. King goes outside and calls Brian out into the street for a showdown. Brian comes out and declares him under arrest. One of Brian's men is shot by the government agent as he tries to shoot King in the back. Seeing that King has been wounded in the arm in the fight with Benson, Brian feels that he has a chance in a gundown. King shoots him dead and rides off, cleared of charges.

Obviously, this plot is not the most original ever put to film.

It is a fast-paced, action-packed revenge tale with a very predictable ending. If you have Klaus Kinski cast in a "whodunit" it is a pretty safe bet that he will end up being the culprit.

The film does have a few points that set it apart from most of the genre. There is more violent sex here than usual. First Carol is gang-raped and later she is raped while gagged. No one saves her in the nick of time. There is, curiously, no hint of nudity. It seems to be an unwritten law with Italian Westerns that you can show violent sex, but no nudity, even though several, like "The Dirty Outlaws" have received R ratings. I find this strange, since Italian spy and mafia films always relied on nudity as a prime selling point.

The theme music by Bacalov is terrific, especially the title song which is sung by an Italian Dusty Springfield soundalike. If you listen to the words, though, you will know the entire plot of the film from the outset. The photography by Mancori is very good, giving a nice "border" flavor to the locales. The fight scenes are especially well-staged with lots of action and violence. The end showdown is particularly good with all the trademark elements- the great music, close-up photography, and the temporary interruption of the gundown by the government agent to draw out the tension.

One scene in the middle of the film bothered me in that I could not figure out what was going on. When King is watching the Bensons rendezvous with the Mexicans, we randomly see long-shots of Mexican bandits fighting with Mexican army troops, groups of Mexicans marching for long periods of time, the Bensons marching, and a different group of Mexicans marching. While this is going on, the music alternates between a very strange jazzy tune that sounds lifted straight out of "West Side Story", and one of the best Mexican trumpet themes I've heard. I suppose this scene is supposed to show a slice of corrupt life on the Mexican border, but I wouldn't bet on it. It is a case of very bad editing.

Richard Harrison's character is a major problem. "King" Marley is strictly a one-dimensional throwback to the token hero from every 1950s U.S. western ever made. The only attempt to add depth to the character comes from Major Ericson. He half-heartedly tosses off the fact that King is only a bounty hunter because his mother and father were killed by bandits and therefore he hates all bandits.

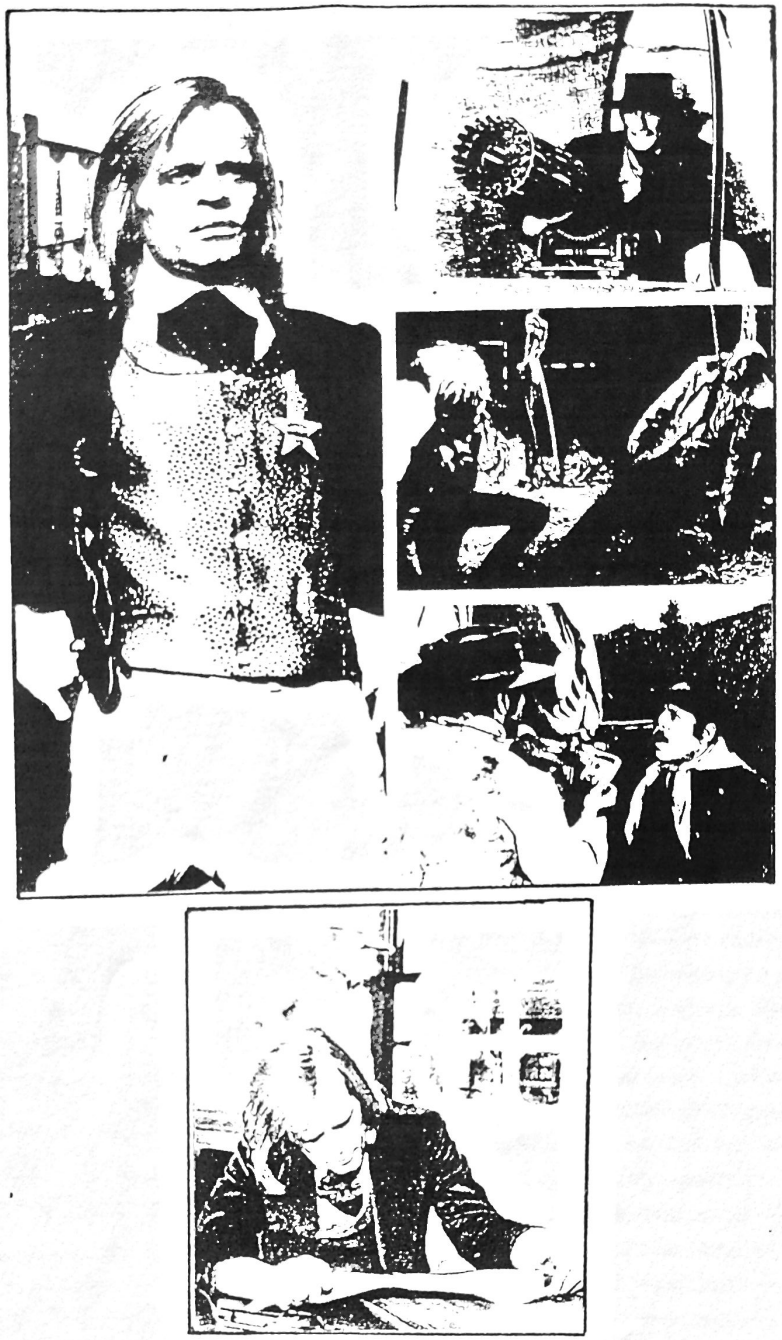
Klaus Kinski's character, however, is more complex, and I believe it is a ploy by the filmmakers to make it appear that Kinski is in the film more than he actually is. The total time he is in the film does not exceed 5 minutes. Kinski, in fact, built a career in the 1970s with his "special participation" in as many films possible, for as short a

time possible, for the most money possible. These films include "A Fistful of Death", "Return of Clint the Stranger", "If You Meet Sartana Pray for Your Death", "Shanghai Joe", "Venus in Furs", "Churchill's Leopards", "Heroes in Hell", and "Five for Hell".

Kinski's portrayal of Brian Vosser is two-faced, but the character never comes across as unlikable. He is King's friend, attending his brother's wedding and playing poker exclusively with him. He is, on the other hand, the head of the smuggling operation. He takes in Carol after her husband is killed, and takes immediate revenge on his own bodyguard after she is raped. He is intelligent and realistic enough to know that he cannot beat King to the draw, so he arranges for one of his men to shoot King in the back. When this man is killed he only continues the showdown after he realizes that King has been wounded.

To compound the lack of originality in this film, a couple of elements have been lifted directly from the first two Leone/Eastwood westerns. Brian Vosser is shown constantly toying with a chiming pocket watch, and,in the beginning, a troop of soldiers is wiped out with a machine gun hidden in a covered wagon.

Though flawed, "His Name Was King" does have enough going for it to recommend it as an above-average, fast-paced example of the genre



ABOVE: Scenes from HIS NAME WAS KING

Soundtrackers

Gary W. Radovich

Soundtrack Review - JOE, CERCATI UN POSTO PER MORIRE (Joe, Find A Place To Die) Music composed and conducted by Gianni Ferrio.

LP- CAM MAG 10.018 (Italy)
45- CAM AMP 45 (Italy)

This 1968 Italian western was directed by Anthony Ascott (Giuliano Carmineo) and starred Jeffrey Hunter, Pascale Petit and Giovanni Pallavicino, among others. What firsr attracted me to this particular score, besides the fact that Gianni Ferrio was among the genre's best loved composers, having done many Italian western scores, including UN DOLLARO BUCATO, PER POCHI DOLLARI ANCORA, SENTENZA DI MORTE, WANTED, EL DESPERADO, VIVO O PREFERIBILIMENTE MORTE, etc., is the haunting vocal entitled "Era Un Cowboy." For my money, this particular vocal (sung in Italian) is among the very best executed tracks ever done for an Italian western soundtrack (the track is on both the LP and the 45 single).

This Ferrio score, as presented on disc, is comprised of 14 seperate cuts, many of them derivations of each other but arranged with sufficient variety to keep things interesting. Many of the tracks are very brief and CAM was forced to fill out the album with 5 tracks from a Carlo Savina western score, JOKO, INVOCA DIO E MUORI (aka Vengeance). On the whole, Ferrio's compositions are quite good and

(Director and Producer are reversed)

are suggestive of the Italian western filmusic genre of the 1960's... heavy use of melody, electric guitars, chorus, lively percussion and the requisite soundtrack vocal (2 vocals, in this instance).

CAM MAG 10.018 LP sleeve

The opening track, "Find a Place to Die," sets the overall tone of the score with its sad melancholy theme; it begins with a latin-flavored acoustic guitar passage and Ferrio's woodwinds and strings add the pathos. The aural texture is completed with the insertion of a choral backing. The only thing lacking, in fact, is a more distinct and memorable melody which would have made the track a standout. A dynamic track entitled "El Chato" appears no less than 4 times in varying arrangements (plus a later vocal arrangement). This is the real heart and soul of Ferrio's score and the superb melody is not readily forgotten. The initial 2 appearances of this theme, both in cuts simply entitled "El Chato," are memorable and well performed...but they're too damn brief and are never fully realized. The 3rd instrumental version (in the track "El Chato (prateria)") is the best, using an impressive harmonica accompaniment which embellishes the composition with an evocative and lovely air. Also featured in this instrumental cut is the typical trumpet solo, making its homage to Morricone.

Besides the variations on these 2 main themes ("Find a Place to Die" appears in at least 3 adaptions, while "El Chato" appears 5 times), Ferrio's score contains a number of lesser, though well executed and colorfully arranged, themes. "Rio Verde" materializes twice and evidently is meant to suggest a vast, unending river. In fact, this theme does suggest a flowing body of water but it is primarily a nonmelodic composition which never quite seems to end in a fixed conclusion. The orchestral arrangement is interesting however, with fine use of guitars, keyboards and woodwinds. The superior incarnation of this theme is "Rio Verde (notturno)" which uses a snippet of the "El Chato" piece before evolving into the "Rio Verde" composition.

There are 3 suspense/action motifs heard in the score; "Joe Non Perdona" (Joe Doesn't Forgive), "Oro Amaro" (Bitter Gold) and "Il

Ragno" (The Spider). All 3 tracks are brief and are not as jarring as one might expect. "Oro Amaro" is perhaps the best of the suspense cuts, although muted brass used in "Il Ragno" is an interesting touch. Another melody appears in "Galoppa Cavallo" (Galloping Horse), which really starts to musically simulate the intended effect in the second half. The electric guitars go full tilt here!

The best instrumental version of the "Find a Place to Die" theme is the track which begins the album's B side of this score. It features a pretty arrangement, using the chorus extensively and an acoustic guitar in the introduction and the conclusion. The remaining cuts are the 2 soundtrack vocals, both performed by Jula De Palma and both are well done. "Find a Place to Die" is given a vocal interpretation by De Palma, in English (and in a vocal style reminiscent of Shirley Bassey). Ferrio's orchestral backing is very simple, basically an acoustic guitar and strings. De Palma pulls it off quite well, with a sense of melancholy running throughout. But the best track (in my opinion) is the final vocal, entitled "Era Un Cowboy," which uses the dynamic melody of the "El Chato" theme to create a very impressive, and expressive, soundtrack song. De Palma sings this vocal in Italian and there is a nice instrumantal passage as well. The haunting performanc is backed by harmonica, electric keyboards and chorus. The scores overall melancholy approach is echoed by the lyrics, for instance...

"Era Joe...un vero cowboy (He was Joe, a real cowboy,
un triste cowboy a sad cowboy,
un vecchio cowboy an old cowboy,
galoppa cowboy galopping cowboy...)

And the song ends with the sound of a horse galloping off in the background, a nice orchestral flourish by Ferrio!

CAM AMP 45

front and rear of Italian 45

video!

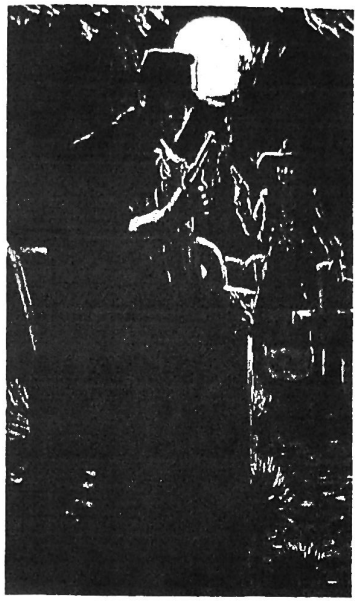
Django ★★★

"There's something about a man like that," Jason Robards observes about Charles Bronson's Harmonica character at the close of Sergio Leone's classic Italian western, *Once Upon a Time in the West,* "something to do with death." The quote comes instantly to mind at the beginning of Sergio Corbucci's earlier *Django* as we see the titular antihero (Franco Nero) ambling into a mud-drenched town, swathed in worn, black clothing, dragging a coffin by a heavy chain through the filth. In a touch worthy of Leone, director Corbucci presents Django as a faceless scarecrow, head always down or face averted, until the camera can best exploit the pure blue of Nero's eyes in bold close-up. He's looking for Colonel Jackson, the sadistic racist responsible for the murder of his wife. All eyes in the local tavern turn from him to the clay-spattered casket....

The notorious *Django* (the "D" is silent) is finally available for wide American consumption. Unconditionally banned in Great Britain for its "excessive violence," and released stateside only after an R rating was developed to support it (in 1970), this is the movie that converts Jimmy Cliff in *The Harder They Come* to a life of crime.

Django spawned an unbelievable *19* sequels between 1966 and 1974, many of which featured Django as a ghost or vengeful spectre, an idea that Clint Eastwood later copied for his *High Plains Drifter* and recent *Pale Rider.* After two decades of saucier movie mayhem, *Django* may forfeit some of its original shock value, but it still comes across with style and energy. It's the best non-Leone Italian western I've seen.

The plot bears a rather shameless similarity to Leone's *A Fistful of Dollars* (itself a reworking of Kurosawa's *Yojimbo*), as Django's scheme for revenge against Jackson's brigade of scarlet-hooded mercenaries involves a rival troop of Mexican bandits. The Mexicans join the mysterious avenger in robbing a military outpost of gold, which Django needs to invest in the machine guns necessary to wipe Jackson's army off the face of the earth. When Django senses that he is about to be betrayed by his south-of-the-border compatriots (correctly or not, we are never told), he smuggles his share of the gold out of their campgrounds in his faithful coffin. He is caught and brutally punished.



An artist's rendering of Franco Nero in **Django**

Corbucci and cinematographer Enzo Barboni (who later directed the famous *Trinity* films under the pseudonym E. B. Clucher) give this downbeat scenario a ragged, earthy look in which only the red hoods of Jackson's men and the blood of his slaughters stand out. It's amazing that Nero himself didn't bother to dub what may be remembered as one of his major performances; the voice he's given here makes it a blessing that Django is a man of few words. The music, on the other hand, is stirring, and it features an amusing theme song.

Django marks the first of more than 50 Cinecitta productions that Magnum has obtained for domestic release. It bodes well for their commitment to this undeservedly neglected area of world film production. Their recovery of this little gem deserves the encouragement of our support.

—TIM LUCAS

Django* (1966), C, *Director: Sergio Corbucci. ***With*** Franco Nero, Loredana Nusciak, and Eduardo Fajardo. **90 min.** R. Magnum/Sagebrush, **$59.95**

NEW VIDEO RELEASE AND NEW TITLE FOR "ANY GUN CAN PLAY"

A FISTFUL OF DEATH (Doppia Tagli Per Minnesota Stinky) 1971 with Hunt Powers and Gordon Mitchell; Directed by Miles Deem (Demofili Fidani).

Released on Trans World Entertainment #28003 $59.95

DEAD FOR A DOLLAR. In the Old West, bank robbers, con men, and con women chase each other across Texas, double and triple crossing one another at every opportunity. With John Ireland and George Hilton. Unicorn, $49.95. Not seen.

Not enough information on this film to determine original title but is probably T'ammazzo, Raccomandati a Dio.

Buried Pasta

By TOM BETTS

(In helping to put this fanzine together, one of my main objectives was to bring to the attention of our readers the obscure Italian western titles that are never talked about in books on the genre. Unless you have a copy of Bob Bahn's book THE ITALIAN WESTERN: A CHECKLIST, or have done some thorough research, most of us are only familiar with the major titles released in this country or picked up on TV stations or video releases. The bulk of the Italian productions are unfamiliar to us along with most of their actors, directors and composers. In the coming months I will start a new section of the zine devoted to covering these little known titles in the hopes of broadening our knowledge and enjoyment of our Italian/ Spaghetti Westerns. Since these titles have not been released in the U.S. for our viewing, I can only give you as much information on production crews as I can find and thumbnail sketches of the plot, story and actors involved. tb)

For our first title I found a comedy starring the Italian comedy team Franchi & Ingrassia, in the mold of Abbott and Costello. These two comics were both born in Palermo, Italy and grew up in poverty. They became minstrels and met by chance in a cafe and decided to team up together. In 1960 singer Domenico Modugno of "Volare" fame, saw them and signed them up to play in "Rinaldo in Campo" a Roman comedy. Shortly after they started making movies. In 1965 and 1966 alone they made 23 movies. Often shooting two different movies at the same time with completion in 2-3 weeks. Their films are geared to the common laborer and everyday man on the street. With this capsule review of Franco Franchi and Ciccio Ingrassia we present --

Due mafiosi nel Far West

Fida Film - Epoca Film (Italian - Spanish coproduction)
Director: Giorgio Simonelli
Screenplay: Marcello Ciorciolini, Giorgio Simonelli
Photography: Juan Julio Baena
Music: Giorgio Fabor

cast:

Franco Franchi	Franco Capone
Ciccio Ingrassia	Ciccio Capone
Aroldo Tieri	Ramirez
Helene Chanel	Betty
Anna Casares	Mary
Fernando Sancho	Rio

with; Aldo Giuffre, Adriano Micantoni, Luis Pena, Felix De Fauce, Alfredo Rizzo, Giovanni Vari

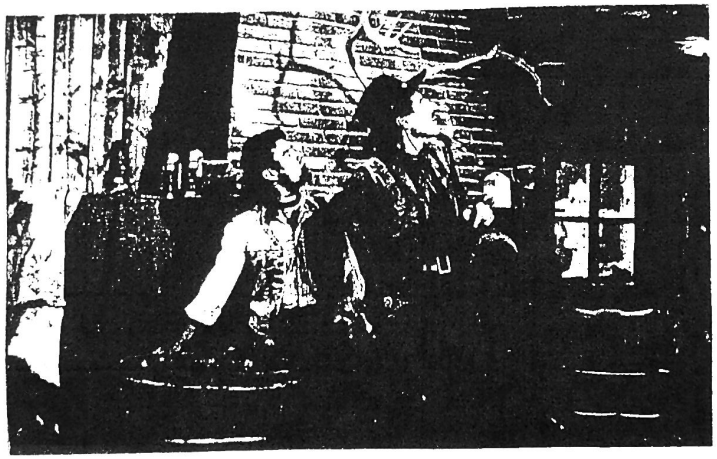
Two Mafiamen
in the Far West

Story Synopsis:

Franco and Ciccio are cousins up in age and joint owners of a ranch in Texas. When the news gets around that they have found a rich vein of gold, their homestead is surrounded by Rio and his gang of outlaws, who want information on the find. In the shooting that follows both Franco and Ciccio are killed.

Ciccio's last words before dying are addressed to a young man called Ramon. He asks him to inform his nephews also called Franco and Ciccio, who live in Sicily, that a large fortune is awaiting them in the United States. Ramon comes to Italy but finds that the heirs are in a prison. He bribes the warden and they escape. The three of them come to Texas but find that Rio is still around trying to locate the mine. When Franco and Ciccio accidently kill a bandit called Il Guercio who is Rio's right-hand man, the townsfolk nominate them sheriffs.

A saloon owner, anxious like everyone else to have information about the mine, sends Mary and Betty, two of his girls, to derive information from our heroes. But the heirs themselves are in the dark about the gold. One day Yellow Hand, an Indian chief who was a friend of their uncle, asks them to visit his camp. He too wants information. Suddenly Rio and his gang arrive. They kill Yellow Hand and make off with a crude map which they think gives directions to the mine. In reality it is no more than waste paper. Rio tries to kill Franco and Ciccio, but they are saved by Yellow Hand's son who puts Rio away. When Franco and Ciccio eventually discover the whereabouts of the mine they generously share their wealth with the whole town.



Franco Franchi & Ciccio Ingrassia in TWO MAFIAMEN IN THE FAR WEST (1964)

Twice A Judas

William Connolly

Due volte guida (Italian title), Dos veces Judas (Spanish title), Deux fois traitre (French title), Two Times A Judas (alternate English)

Two men lay bloody on a desert hill under the sun. Vultures circle for awhile, and then land. Some of the birds begin to feast on one of the men, and the others approach the second man. Suddenly, this second man (Antonio Sabato of BEYOND THE LAW) is startled awake, sees the vultures, and guns them down. The surviving birds take to the air, as the living man swoons from the pain of the bullet graze on the right side of his head. A little later, an old man leading a donkey (Do you suppose he is supposed to be a prospector?) happens upon the fainted man, and patches him up. When the wounded man awakens, he realizes that he can't remember anything, not even who he is. Plus, though his holster is on the left side, he can only shoot with his right hand.

Nando Cicero directs this opening for atmosphere, and gets excellent help from composer Carlo Pes. Unfortunately, the promise of this intriguing beginning is betrayed by an overly obscure script and lethargic pacing.

Riding into the nearest town, the survivor enters the Golden Girl saloon, where he is recognized by a gunman who calls him Luke Barrett. Not letting on that he has lost his memory, Luke goes along with the man, who informs him that they have been hired by Murphy, the town banker, to kill Victor Barrett (Klaus Kinski), Luke's brother. When the time comes for the killing, Luke decides against it, and kills the gunman instead. Then, by mostly keeping his mouth shut and keeping his eyes open, Luke tries to reconstruct his past.

It is the American Southwest, just after the Civil War, and the Yankee banker is trying to buy up the failing farms around the town in order to sell them to new homesteaders. Victor Barrett, on the other hand, is trying to stop the land sales by running illegal migrant workers up from Mexico to help the farms get back on their feet. However, he takes land away from the farms as payment for his help. (How many Westerns can you name that has a scene where the sheriff rounds up illegal immigarants and carts them back to Mexico?) Everytime a farmer goes against Victor's wishes and tries to sellout to the banker, the farmer ends up dead.

Luke meets a bar girl (Cristina Galbo) who gives him a locket with a picture of Luke and a picture of a girl who looks like the bargirl inside. On the back is an inscription about the Appaloosa Ranch, so Luke rides out there, finding his mother and a faithful black servant named Sam. (Now if Luke had let on either to his mother or Sam that he had lost his memory, which he did to Victor and his drunken doctor friend, played by Pepe Calvo of A FISTFUL OF DOLLARS, they could have given him the information which would have solved Luke's confusion. Why did he agree to kill his brother before? But, no, screenwriter Jaime Jesus Balcazar, whose company co-produced the film, had at least another half-hour to fill, so Luke never does so obvious a thing as to ask for help from anyone but the villans.) From them, he learns that his father and his pregnant wife named Susan were killed during the War. When Luke askes Victor about this, his brother tells him that the Yankees did both deeds.

Later on, Luke and the bargirl talk, and she identifies herself as Susan's sister. She talked to Susan as she was dying, and the mortally wounded woman had said that Dingus did the deed. (Dingus is also the name etched into the stock of the Winchester which Luke carries around, and the filmmakers never explain how he happened to get that weapon.) Neither our hero or the woman know who Dingus is, but the sister remarks that the Mexicans use the word to describe "a bastard dog". So Luke goes to Mexico, askes for Dingus, and gets beaten up.

Anyway, after spending over an hour holding off telling us the solution to the mystery, the filmmakers can't come up with a better resolution than to have Luke see a picture of his family (Found in his mother's dead hand. She and Sam were killed.) and suddenly he remembers everything in an extended flashback. (A good mystery should have a trail of clues leading to the important revelation, but the makers of TWICE A JUDAS fail to do this, and then fail to stage a final shootout that is satisfying or believable.)

In the picture, Luke sses the face of his real brother Victor. Kinski is a half-brother, Dingus, born from an Indian woman. After his mother died, Dingus set out to get revenge on the white members of his family, by informing to the Yankees. The real Victor was killed in a Yankee ambush, and Luke thought he had killed Dingus before he went off to enlist in the Confederate Army. Then, after the war, the gunman found him in order to enlist him and another man in a plot to

kill a man calling himself Victor Barrett. Luke finally gets revenge on Dingus using a blunderbuss which their father handmade.

Antonio Sabato is a very uninteresting actor, and he brings little to the caharacter of Luke to make the audience care much for him, and, consequently TWICE A JUDAS is rather dull. Klaus Kinski has said in interviews that he didn't really care about any of the films he made during this period, but his work here is quite good. He invests Dingus with enough complexity so that it isn't until the very end that we know for sure he's completely a bad guy.

The film is available on Unicorn Video, and it is pretty well transfered, except for some video breakup during the last gunfight.

Francisco Marin is responsible for the okay photography. There are two cameramen credited: Claudio Morabito and Aristide Massacesse. The latter, using the name Joe D'Amato, became a director and turned out a series of EMMANUELLE rip-offs with Laura Gemser. Another interesting name in the credits is the music conductor Roberto Pregadio, who would compose the scores to a number of westerns himself.

Director: Nando Cicero
Story & Screenplay: Jaime Jesus Balcazar
Photography: Francisco Marin
Cameramen: Aristide Massacesse, Claudio Morabito
Music: Carlo Pess
Conductor: Roberto Pregadio

Colt Produzioni Cinematorgrafichi (Rome), Medusa Distribuzione (Rome), Producciones Cinematograficas (Barcelona) an Italian-Spanish Coproduction filmed at Cinecitta studios (Rome)

cast:

Antonio Sabato	Luke Barrett
Klaus Kinski	Victor Barrett
with; Pepe Calvo, Franco Leo,	Cristina Galbo

ABOVE: The original Italian 45 rpm release of A PISTOL FOR RINGO

Subscription renewal forms will be included in the next issue for those readers who have been with us since issue # 1. Until then, adios amigos!!