



Issue #70



**Featuring: TURN I'll KILL YOU, THE FAR
SIDE OF JERICHO, Spaghetti Western
Poster Art, Spaghetti Western Film
Locations in the U.S.A., Tim Lucas
interview, DVD reviews**

The Swingin' Doors

Welcome to another on-line edition of *Westerns...All'Italiana!* kicking off 2008.

Several things are happening for the fanzine. We have found a host or I should say two hosts for the zine. Jamie Edwards and his Drive-In Connection are hosting the zine for most of our U.S. readers (www.thedriveinconnection.com) and Sebastian Haselbeck is hosting it at his Spaghetti Westerns Database for the European readers (www.spaghetti-western.net). Our own Kim August is working on a new website (here's her current blog site <http://gunsmudblood.blogspot.com/>) that will archive all editions of the zine starting with issue #1. This of course will take quite a while to complete with Kim still in college. Thankfully she's very young as she'll be working on this project until her retirement 60 years from now. Anyway you can visit these sites and read or download your copy of the fanzine whenever you feel the urge.

Several new DVD and CD releases have been issued since the last edition of *WAI!* and co-editor Lee Broughton has covered the DVDs as always. The CDs will be featured on the last page of each issue so you will be made aware of what is available.

We have completed several interviews of interest in recent months. One with author Tim Lucas, who has just recently released his huge volume on Mario Bava, appears in this issue. An interview with Mike Perkins, the author of the upcoming Dynamite Comics *Man with No Name* series will appear in an upcoming issue. Kim August has also authored a new feature profiling characters from the Spaghetti western genre. This will begin in issue #71

I want to again thank Tim Young for his biography of Ferdinando Baldi that featured in the memorial issue that can now be found at The Drive-In Connection. Too bad we had to lose such a great director of the genre in early November. Baldi's films covered the gambit of adventure drama to comedy to even a musical western. None of them were boring and he had a great ability for timing just the right amount of action at just the right time.

I'm dedicating this issue to my good friend Don Bruce who we lost in December. Don, a great Leone fan, made it possible for me to go to Spain twice, in 2003 and 2005 and visit numerous Leone and Spaghetti western locations. This was beyond my wildest dreams and remains a highlight in my life. Don was a giver and never asked for anything in return. He sponsored a yearly get together in August at the time of the Golden Boot Awards and a number of us spent those weekends getting together for food, drink and fun. I'll miss those times but most of all I'll miss Don and his laugh, and friendship. Adios amigo, and thanks for the unforgettable times.

Adios amigo,

Tom Betts

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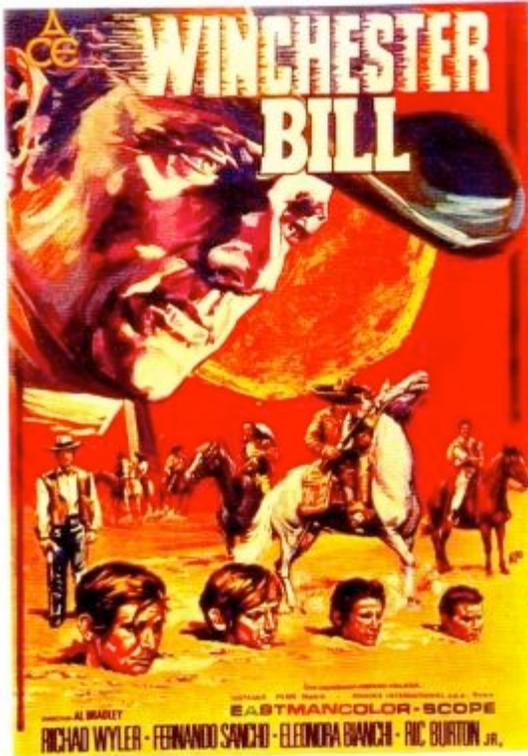
Whatever Became of? Richard Harrison



Richard Harrison starred in 17 Spaghetti westerns during his career in Italy. He also wrote and directed **JESSE AND LESTER, TWO BROTHERS IN A PLACE CALLED TRINITY** (1972) under the pseudonym James London. Director Renzo Genta was originally hired as director but after three days he was replaced by Harrison. Richard was also offered the role of ‘The Man with No Name’ but turned it down because he had just finished making a western and didn’t want to make another. He was offered the part by the producers Pappi and Colombo, and also Sergio Leone, but he turned it down after being told by the producers that it was not a good script. Today Richard and his son Sebastian run a multisystem electronics company called *Gladiator Electronics* in Palm Springs, California.

Turn... I'll Kill You!

By James Turner



This is a middle period Spaghetti Western from cult director Alfonso Brescia, sometimes known as Al Brady, the mad visionary behind such Italian sci fi epics as "COSMOS: WAR OF THE PLANETS", "WAR OF THE ROBOTS" and "STAR ODYSSEY". Richard Wyler (THE UGLY ONES), stars as the first Spaghetti hero I have encountered whose specialty weapon is a Winchester rifle. Referred to in the film as Billy Walsh, he will forever be Winchester Bill to me.

Billy is a stranger with an obviously dark past. He rides into a tumbleweed hellhole and for reasons all of his own helps a downtrodden prospector and his pretty blond daughter fend off both the local land baron and El Bicho ("The Bug", played by the great Fernando Sancho) and his band of Pistoleros. In defending the old man's gold mine he enlists the help of a SEVEN

PISTOLS FOR THE MACGREGORS-like band of blond brothers. There's intrigue and derring-do to spare as the motley group of comrades withstands beatings, home invasions, bouts of witty menace by the local heavies and, in the movie's standardized torture section, being buried up to their necks while Sancho's gang charges at them on horseback – an idea probably lifted from DEATH RIDES A HORSE albeit with an upped ante of violence and suffering prompted by the scene having more than one burying.



Meanwhile, Winchester Bill puts a complex series of sucker plays into effect to pit the

two groups of bad guys against each other and waits for the lead to start flying before picking off the stragglers. The ending is a hoot and I won't dare give away the movie's big twist, but it certainly ends with a bang. It's a shame that Wyler didn't ride off into the sunset for a sequel or three: his character was good enough to warrant it, and I really liked the idea of him working with the brothers rather than just being a trick shot artist waiting for the big shootout to wow everyone with his shooting skills. You can vary the formula and still come up with a very classic package, and as it turns out Brescia and his cinematographers find some interesting moments to pepper the action with: a scene where the brothers are delivered into battle hidden in barrels which burst open on cue for a well choreographed shootout. And I loved the bit where Brescia had his cameraman sort of lean the focus to the left to simulate one of the heroes taking bead while on the ground.

The music is credited to General Music of Rome so it has been lifted from various library tracks, but it is very good and is used interestingly. The audio in the English language version I found curiously muted during passages that would usually have musical flourishes (perhaps this was a working print that wasn't finished during dubbing?) and the movie boasts the most shamelessly awful day for night photography ever used. After a few minutes of blue/green haze I began to wonder if my PAL converter was on the fritz -- it goes on for a couple three scenes that made me wonder if perhaps the exposed film was not inspected until it was too late to re-shoot. Too bad as I could see casual viewers not understanding why it wasn't fixed or done better though for my money it sort of provides the movie with it's Brescian touch of unfathomability. See the plot of "STAR ODYSSEY" for an illustration of what I mean, and I will grant that there are viewers who will find this movie to be just as oblique, stupid and ineptly made. But that probably wouldn't include anyone reading this far. I say it's a masterpiece.



Fans of Spaghetti fare will be very pleased: the film is fast-paced and genuinely entertaining in its own sweet way. And the movie has an odd juxtapositioning of obviously phony interior sound stage shots with blazing color schemes that are contrasted with some nice early Cowboy Grunge aesthetic. Everyone (except the girl and the power broker) are glazed with perspiration, somewhat tired looking and covered with dust, including Winchester Bill. My favorite shot was right at the end with a close pan around a group of staring faces looking accusingly at the camera that was as good as anything

from Mr. Leone or Mr. Corbucci that I have seen. This is a movie that had a vision and deserves proper restoration beyond the Greek subtitled pan-and-scan version I found. But it still does the trick and emerges as one of those instant sleeper classics of the genre that fans will watch repeatedly. Alfonse Brescia may have made a series of Spaghetti STAR WARS movies that are an in-joke amongst the Euro cult sect, but here is proof that he was capable of directing very good movies when he was allowed to. Now all I have to do is track down “AMAZON WOMEN VS THE THREE STOOGES” and my Al Brady collection will be complete!!

WAI! Rating: 



Voltati... ti uccido – Italian title
Winchester Bill – Spanish title
Un fusil pour deux Colts – French title
100,000 ver dammte Dollar – German title
Blutiges Gold – German title
If One is Born a Swine – English title
Turn... I'll Kill You! – English title

A 1967 Spanish, Italian co-production [Hispamer Film (Madrid), Rhodes Internacional Film (Rome)]
Producer: Maria Angel Coma Borrás
Director: Al Bradley (Alfonso Brescia)

Story: Maria del Carmen Martinez Roman, Preston Leonide (Renato Polselli)
Screenplay: Maria del Carmen Martinez Roman, Preston Leonide (Renato Polselli)
Cinematography: Alfonso Nieva (Eastmancolor, Overscope 70)
Music: General Music of Rome
Running time: 82 minutes

Cast:

Bob/Billy Walsh/Winchester Bill

	Richard Wyler (Richard Stapley)
El Bicho 'The Bug'	Fernando Sancho (Fernando Arambillet)
Ted Shore	Conrado San Martin (Conrado Prieto)
Sam Wilton	Spean Convery (Spartaco Conversi)
Susan Wilton	Eleonora Bianchi
Sugar Kane	Luc Rosat (Lucio Rosato)
Sheriff	Luis Induni (Luigi Radici)
shopkeeper	Franco Pesce
oldest Davis brother	Max Dean (Massimo Righi)

With; Ric Burton Jr., Rufino Ingles (Rufino Garcia), Rafael Hernandez (Esteban Herrero), Max Dean, Richard Burton

Boot Hill

Raymond Pellegrin



French actor Raymond Pellegrin died at age 82 on October 14, 2007. Born Raymond Louis Pilade Pellegrini in Nice, France on January 1, 1925 he appeared in nearly 150 films and TV shows during his lengthy career. He played the title role in the 1955 version of "Napoleon". He also was the French voice in the three "Fantomas" films made in the 1960s.

Raymond Pellegrin's Euro-Westerns:

1968 - Quando costa morire (A Taste of Death)

1983 - Louisiana

Patrick Mynhardt



Legendary actor Patrick Mynhardt, who died on Thursday October 25th, 2007 was "one of the best in the entertainment world", the National Democratic Convention (Nadeco) said.

Mynhardt died in London in the morning, at the age of 75, during a two-week season of his one-man autobiographical show "Boy From Bethulie" at the Jermyn Street Theatre.

"He has only brought joy and laughter to many South African homes," Nadeco spokesperson Margaret Arnolds said in a message to Mynhardt's family.

"Some of us will remember him back to when there was still Springbok Radio," she said, adding that the country had lost a "dynamic person".

Mynhardt was found dead by an old friend he was staying with during his London run. His publicist, Bridget van Oerle said he died of "natural causes".

"This is a very sad end to a 30-year working relationship, it was a great privilege to work with Patrick, he died doing what he loved most - performing," said Colin Law, the producer of "Boy from Bethulie".

The Free State town was the birthplace of Mynhardt, the son of an Afrikaans father and an Irish mother, according to his website.

However, he was also known far and wide for his one-man shows, including "A Sip of

Jerepigo”, “More Jerepigo”, “Just Jerepigo”, “Another Sip of Jerepigo”, “The Boy From Bethulie” and “The Best of Bosman and Bethulie”.

Mynhardt spent the early years of his long career on stage abroad, where he not only met, but worked with acting luminaries such as Tyrone Power, Sir Donald Wolfitt, Peter Sellers, Terry Thomas, Burt Lancaster, Anthony Quinn, Richard Harris, Peter O'Toole, Sir Michael Caine and Dame Judy Dench.

He settled in South Africa in 1960.

Mynhardt is survived by his son, Johann, grandchildren Liam Patrick and Euan Frederick and a brother and sister, said Van Oerle.

Patrick Mynhardt's Euro-Westerns:

1961 – The Hellions

1967 – The Jackals

1970 – 3 Bullets for a Long Gun

1979 – Scotts & Co.

Don Fellows



Don Fellows, the American-born stage and screen actor who has died aged 84, made his name in the theatre on both sides of the Atlantic before deciding in mid-career, in the 1970s, to settle in London.

A stalwart of West End imports from Broadway such as “Promises, Promises”, “Chicago” and “Crazy For You”, Fellows brought a jaunty authenticity, warm personality and dry humor to numerous roles in both the straight and musical theatre as well as in films and television and radio programs - he is fondly remembered as Conn Kortchmar in *The Archers*.

Donald Fellows was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, on December 2 1922. After graduating from the University of Wisconsin and the United States Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, New York, he began his stage career with Sanford Meisner at New York's Neighbour Playhouse on Grand Street. Invited in 1952 to join the Actors' Studio, he studied with Lee Strasberg before moving to London.

His film credits included “Raiders of the Lost Ark”, “Superman II” and “IV”, “Spy Story”, “Klute”, “Haunted Honeymoon”, “Electric Dreams”, “Enigma”, “Pretty Poison”, and “Twilight's Last Gleaming”. On television he appeared in “Inspector Morse”, “Jeeves

and Wooster”, “The Beiderbecke Tapes”, “The Citadel”, “Lily Langtry”, “Inside the Third Reich”, “Oppenheimer”, “Tales of the Unexpected”, and “Monsignor Quixote”.

Don Fellows was married to the actress and choreographer Miranda Fellows. They had four daughters.

Don Fellow’s Euro-western:

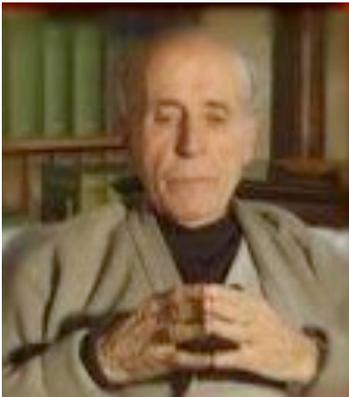
1974 – Tres forajidos y un pistolero (The Spikes Gang)

Serafina di Leo



Opera singer and actress Serafina di Leo died on October 23, 2007 in West Sussex, England. Born on May 7, 1912 in New York City she was a very successful opera singer during the 1930s and 1940s, both in her native America and in Europe. In addition, she was an excellent actress, and after she stopped singing in the 1950s, she appeared in several films, including “**The Singer Not the Song**” (1961), starring John Mills and Dirk Bogarde.

Ferdinando Baldi



Producer, director, screenwriter Ferdinando Baldi died in Rome on November 12, 2007 at the age of 80. Born in Cava dei Tirreni, Salerno, Italy on May 9, 1927, Ferdinando Baldi made his cinema debut in the 1950s, with a series of low budget films and musical comedies such as “Assi all Ribalta” (1954). His break came in 1960 as the co-director of “David and Goliath” which was part biblical epic and part sword and sandal film, and starred Orson Welles. The success of this film saw Baldi as strongly associated with the sword and sandal film genre for the next few years, and he would go on to direct a variety of genre films such as “I, Tartari” in 1961 again with Welles as the star. He also directed “Son of Cleopatra” (1964) with another American actor Mark Damon. 1966 found him busy filming “Massacre in the Black Forest” and “The Shadow of Eagles”, both with Cameron Mitchell, and the low budget spy film “Suicide Mission to Singapore”. He also directed young Franco Nero in “Texas, Addio”. With the explosion of the Spaghetti western films Baldi became known as one of the leading directors of the genre.

“Little Rita of the West” (1967) was one of his most unique projects which was a western musical starring Rita Pavone and one of the early films of actor Terence Hill. In 1968 he

filmed “Preparati la bara!” (Viva Django) which was a follow up to Sergio Corbucci’s “Django”. It starred Terence Hill, who dramatically resembled Nero, in a straight forward role. 1969 saw “Gunman of the Ave Maria” (“The Forgotten Pistolero”) with a plot taken from a Greek tragedy. He also filmed a pirate adventure film “The Corsairs” that year.

By the beginning of the 1970s, the Spaghetti westerns had started to go into a decline. But Baldi still managed to make one of the best films of the genre, “Blindman” starring Tony Anthony and Ringo Starr. It was the first of four films with Anthony. Baldi filmed a Euro-crime flick in 1972, “The Sicilian Connection”, before returning to the western genre with “Carambola” (1974) and “Carambola, filotto... tutti in buca” (1974). These were both comedy rip-offs of the popular “Trinity” films and starred Michael Coby and Paul Smith. He followed these films with Tony Anthony’s bizarre Western, “Get Mean”. In the late 70s Baldi produced exploitation fare with films such as “Nove ospiti per un delitto” (1977). He was reunited with Anthony in 1981 for the 3-D film “Comin’ at Ya!” and the Indiana Jones style film adventure “Treasure of Four Crowns” (1983). His final three productions were a trio of war films, the most memorable being “Mission Finale” (1988), which was produced and filmed in North Korea.

Although dabbling in most genres he is best remembered for his various Spaghetti western titles, which actively rank as some of the best of the genre. Very little has ever been known about his life outside of the film world.

Ferdinando Baldi’s Euro-westerns:

- 1966 – Texas, Addio (The Avenger) [director, screenwriter]
- 1967 – Little Rita nel Far West (Little Rita of the West) [director, screenwriter]
- Viva Django (Django Prepare a Coffin) [director]
- 1968 – Oddio il prossimo tuo (Hate Thy Neighbor) [director, screenwriter]
- 1969 – Pistolero di Ave Maria (The Forgotten Pistolero) [director, screenwriter]
- 1971 – Blindman [director, screenwriter]
- 1973 – Carambola [director, screenwriter]
- 1974 – Carambola filosofo... tutti in buca (The Crazy Adventures of Len and Coby)
[director, screenwriter]
- 1975 – Get Mean [director, screenwriter]
- 1980 – Comin’ at Ya! [director]

Floyd Red Crow Westerman



Floyd Red Crow Westerman, Sisseton-Wahpeton Dakota musician, actor, and activist, passed away at 5:00 a.m. PST, at Cedars Sinai Hospital in Los Angeles after an extended illness. He was 71.

Westerman, who began his career as a country singer, appeared in over 50 films and television productions, including “Dances with Wolves”, “Hidalgo”, “The Doors”, “Poltergeist” and “Northern Exposure”. He

appeared in 12 episodes of the 1990s TV series, “Walker, Texas Ranger”, as Uncle Ray Firewalker.

As a young man, he was educated at the Wapheton and Flandreau Boarding Schools, where he became a close companion and life-long friend of Dennis Banks. He left his home on the Lake Traverse reservation in South Dakota, with a suitcase and an old guitar in hand. He rambled across the country playing country music and original tunes in bars and clubs, living for some time in Denver. In 1969, his first album “Custer Died for Your Sins” became the background theme of the emerging Red Power Movement. Before that, as a member of the American Indian Movement, and a spokesman for the International Indian Treaty Council, Westerman traveled the world extensively working for the betterment of native people. His vision of improved social conditions for indigenous people around the globe is reflected in the music of his second album, “The Land is Your Mother”, 1982. In 2006, he won a NAMMY Award for his third album, “A Tribute to Johnny Cash”. During his career, he played and collaborated with a number of notable musicians including Willie Nelson, Kris Kristopherson, Buffy St. Marie, Jackson Browne, Harry Belafonte, and Sting.

Before his musical accomplishments, Westerman had earned a degree in secondary education from Northern State University in South Dakota.

Westerman also worked throughout his life to empower Indian youth. "They are our future," he said in a November interview. "Today we are fighting a great battle against the popular culture that surrounds them. It's a battle for their hearts and minds. We need to work to inspire them to embrace their own history and culture. Without them, we Indians have no future."

Floyd Red Crow Westerman's Eurowesterns:

1993 – Jonathan degli orsi (Jonathan of the Bears)

1999 - Grey Owl

2003 - DreamKeeper (TV)



Jean-Francois Remi

Veteran actor and director Jean-François Remi died Friday December 21 at the age of 80. Remi was born Jacques Pierre Poli on November 16, 1924 in Olmeto, Corsica, France

and he appeared in many television series, one of which was the series “Brigades du Tigre” in which he played the role of Alexandre Santucci. In the cinema, he acted in particular under the direction of Claude Lelouch (“Si c’était a refaire” in 1976 and “A nous deux” in 1979, where he played the role of the father of Catherine Deneuve). He was also directed by Alain Resnais, with co-star Yves Montand, in “La guerre est finie” (1966). Jean-François Remi appeared in many film scenes, and appeared in the play “Phèdre”, at the Festival of Ramatuelle in 2006 where he directed his former partners of the Comédie-Française, Beatrice Agenin and Jean-Claude Drouot. Jean-François Remi was of Corsican origin, and had taken part in the freeing of Provence on August 15, 1944 and fought in the countryside of Italy. He was, until his death, chair of the Association of Actors.

Jean-Francois Remi’s Eurowestern:

1977 Un autre home, une autre chance (Another Man, Another Chance)

Don Bruce



Donald S. Bruce was born on October 12, 1953 and was one of the second wave of Leone film location searchers and a very good friend of mine and many who read ***Westerns...All’Italiana!*** Thanks to Don I was able to fulfill a lifetime dream and visit many of the Leone locations during a two week visit in 2003 and again in 2005. These were locations in Northern and Southern Spain that had took Don over 6 years to locate. Some of his “Now-and-Then” photos can be seen on the Leone DVD collection released a few years ago, and also on Wild East’s “Day of Anger” DVD. Don was hoping to issue a book on the locations with proceeds being donated to the actors’ home in Woodland Hills, CA. A sudden illness and complications from surgery resulted in Don’s passing on December 14, 2007. Per Don’s request no funeral service will be held but a memorial service will be held at a later time. All of us Leone fans owe a debt to Don for his dedicated research, his warmth and friendship to his many friends and to his undying love for Sergio Leone. I’m sure you’ll all join with me in expressing our sincere condolences and sympathy to Marla at this very sad time. He will be greatly missed.

Alain Payet



French X film director Alain Payet, also known under his pseudonym "John Love", died Thursday December 13 at 60 years of age from the continuations of a long disease, we learned Friday from Marc Dorcel, producer of X. An assistant director in the Seventies on the films of Philippe Labro and Claude Vidal, Alain Payet graduated to director of X films under various pseudonyms, one of which was that of John Love. He launched in 1965 the fashion of the "Hard-Core", with films "Trash", and carried out more "suitable" films. He also made a few B series films such as "L'Emir prefere les blondes", with Paul Préboist. He directed many French actresses, one of which was Tabatha Cash, who played in his film "Les visiteuses" in 1994. "Alain Payet was one of the early French X film directors and the most appreciated," according to Marc Dorcel.

Alain Payet's Eurowestern:

1975 – La marquee de Zorro (The Sign of Zorro) (co-director) [as James Gardner]



Clody Bertola

Theatre and film actress Clody Bertola died during the night of December 27-28, at the age of 94, the Romanian Theatre Union (UNITER) announced. Born on August 12, 1913 in Bucharest, Clody Bertola had a successful career at the Bulandra Theatre and successful appearances at the Comedy Theatre, at the National Theatre of Bucharest and at the Little Theatre. Her famous performances in plays such as "The Last One", "Saint Joan", "As You Like It", "Elisabeth I", "The Three-Penny Opera", "The Sea-Gull" and her unforgettable appearance in "A Streetcar named Desire" by Tennessee Williams have established her position as one of the legends of the Romanian theatre.

Clody Bertoli's Eurowestern:

1977 – Profetul, aurul si ardelanii (The Prophet, the Gold and the Transylvanians)

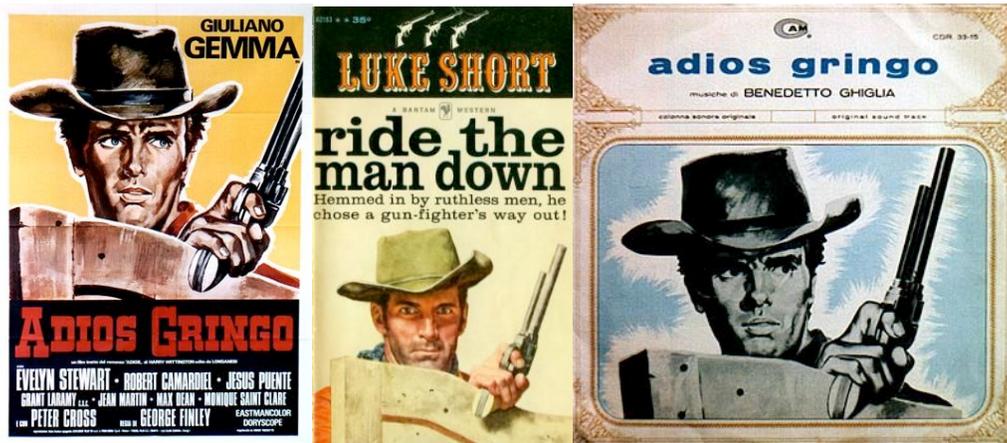
Spaghetti Western Poster/LP Art

By Michael McQuarrie

In the early days of the Spaghetti Western boom, many of the writers and directors still heavily followed the style of the American western. The genre, even after the success of “A Fistful of Dollars”, had yet to fully find its own form. This also extended to the genre’s advertising materials.

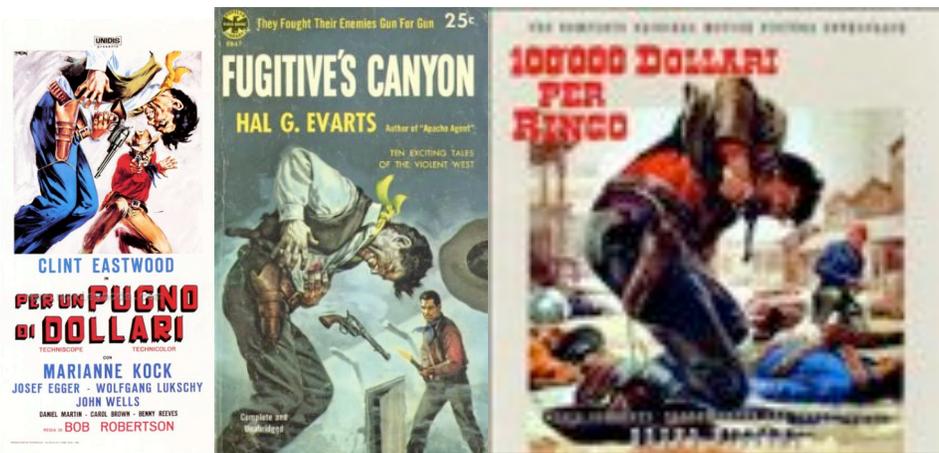
Probably faced with little to work with from the films, and driven by the pace with which they were being produced, the graphic artists took many of their ideas for poster images from the covers of American western paperbacks.

The result was bold, powerful art which, while not wholly original, set a unique tone that matched the movies themselves. Here are some examples of the original book cover art and the art that the Italians’ subsequently used on their posters and LPs.



Luke Short was an extremely popular American western writer in the 1950s and ‘60s. His books would have been readily available in Italy.

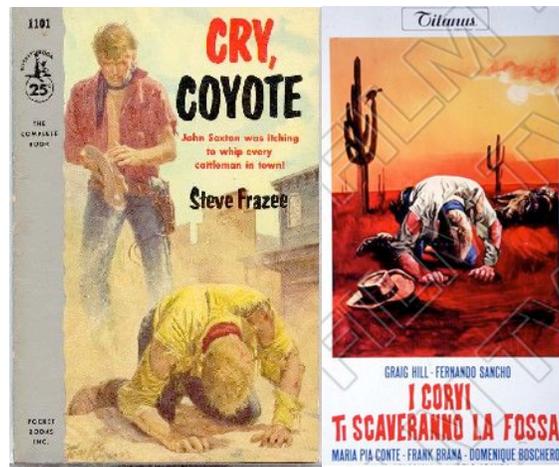




Hal G. Everts was another very popular pulp writer in the 1950s and '60s.



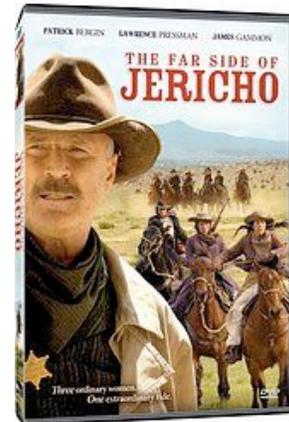
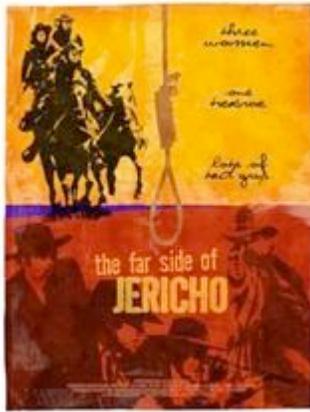
After the boom of **A FISTFUL OF DOLLARS** the Italians began to develop their own style of poster art that was more suitable to their own film genre but they still kept their ties to the American art form.



Many of these Italian posters were copied for the later Turkish western releases, so it was like a domino effect: the pulp book cover art was copied by the Italian poster artists and the Italian poster art was then copied by the Turkish poster artists and so on and so on. Still the origins of these posters and how they were derived makes for fun when looking through used book stores and coming across familiar looking art work.

The Far Side of Jericho

By John Hoffsis.



I really wanted to like *THE FAR SIDE OF JERICHO*, and for about the first half hour or so, I liked it a lot. Then the damned ghosts showed up (more on that in a paragraph or two).

THE FAR SIDE OF JERICHO is a new low budget western, shot in my home state of New Mexico. It played briefly in Los Angeles in the spring of 2007, and is now on DVD. With Tim Hunter (*THE RIVER'S EDGE*) directing and hard-boiled novelist James Crumley as co-writer, it was clear this had the potential to be a pretty off-beat flick. It does succeed at being unusual, but not at being a good film.

The film centers around three middle-aged ranch women; an ex-whore (Lissa Negrin), a bitter alcoholic (Judith Burnett), and a crack-shot (Suzanne Andrews). It starts with the women watching their outlaw husbands, the notorious Thornton Brothers, hang for robbing the local bank. The brothers hid the loot somewhere, and everyone wants it, including the banker (Lawrence Pressman), the corrupt sheriff (Patrick Bergin), and an amoral hangman (James Gammon), who all chase the women off their land. While on the run, each woman discovers that the Thortons left her a portion of a map to the hidden treasure. Piecing the map together, they try to get to the money before the bad guys, a teenage boy, and a band of Apaches catch up with them. Along the way, the ghosts of their dead husbands guide them on their quest.



Yep, you read that last line correctly. But the ghosts are just the tip of the problematic iceberg here. The movie can't seem to decide just what exactly it wants to be: it waivers wildly from gritty realism to humorous fantasy and old-fashioned adventure. Add in some weirdly surreal bits, like a whorehouse in the middle of nowhere and ninja-like Apaches, and you get a pretty schizophrenic viewing experience.



The overall effect is like channel surfing between different movies on three or four TV channels. As the credits rolled, accompanied by an end theme sung by a slightly inebriated-sounding Patrick Bergin, I asked the television “What the hell was that?”

I just don’t think the filmmakers had a clue what they were doing. While some scenes are entertaining on their own, they just don’t blend together well enough to make a cohesive or consistently enjoyable whole. There is a nice sense of humor running through most of the running time, which keeps it from being a total loss, but the movie is certainly nowhere near as funny, or as clever, as it seems to think it is.

The actors don’t seem to know what kind of movie they’re appearing in, either. The three female leads give generally low-key, naturalistic performances, befitting a serious drama. Pressman’s f-word spouting banker would be perfectly at home in DEADWOOD. Gammon, as the evil hangman, seems to be channeling John Carradine from a bad Al Adamson movie, hamming it up whole-hog. Bergin just seems kind of confused, tongue somewhat in cheek, just kind of reacting to the weirdness around him. C. Thomas Howell, John Diehl, and Jason Connery, as the ghosts of the dead husbands all come off, opt to go straight for goofy and corn-pone.

Is there anything here of interest to Spaghetti Western fans? Outside of the old “put the maps together to find the treasure” ploy and the general grimy look of things, I’d say no. It sticks mostly with American western conventions. The photography goes for big, sweeping vistas, and the musical score is strictly old-fashioned Hollywood for the most part.

Something odd I noticed was that while the movie is heavily peppered with very colorful and downright filthy language, it is also a remarkably bloodless affair, considering how many people are killed in the course of the action. While I’m not much for brutality and gore, this didn’t make much sense to me. If you’ve already guaranteed yourself an R-rating with about a hundred f-words, why hold back on the blood? And about the language, I’m not sure the phrase “dip-shit” was a common phrase in the American West of the 1800s.

What’s sadly lacking in this movie is a sense of “Oomph.” It is competently shot and acted, but it never succeeds at being more than mildly interesting or entertaining. It tries to do too many things at once, does none of them particularly well, and ends up shooting itself in the foot. It might be worth a rental for die-hards, but I can’t give this one more than two pistols.

Oh, one interesting bit of trivia; Lissa Negrin, who plays the ex-whore Bridget, apparently makes her living primarily as a Cher impersonator. Check her out at:

www.cherandcheralike.com

Spaghetti Western Filming Locations in the U.S.A.

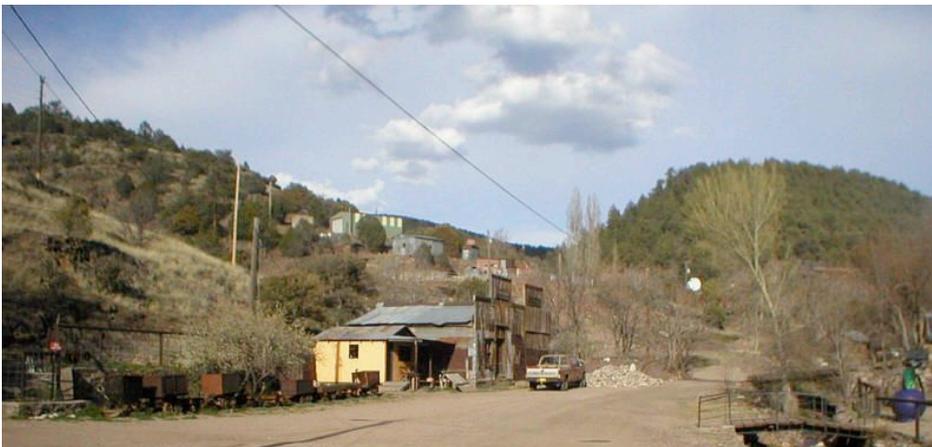
By Tom Betts

MOGOLLON, NEW MEXICO

Tucked away in a narrow defile of Silver Creek Canyon, which winds its way through the precipitous Mogollon Mountains, rests the quiet town of Mogollon (mo-go-yone). The road to Mogollon, hacked out of mountainsides by convict labor in 1897, rises to Whitewater Mesa and winds up the western slopes of the Mogollon Mountains. It climbs past Windy Point, near Slaughterhouse Spring, and over Blue Bird Gulch. You round a corner and across Silver Creek Canyon is New Mexico's most dramatic ghost town view: the remains of the Little Fannie Mine.

Your telephoto lens or binoculars can pick out the giant mill; with its chalk-white tailings spreading from its base like some colossal, dried-up laundry soap overflow. The head frame, which covers a shaft sixteen hundred feet deep; the long covered conveyer, the link between head frame and mill; and the blacksmith shop, assay office, machine shop, and miners' residences that extend to the right and left of the major buildings. Yet out of your view, over a rise of Fannie Hill, is much more.

You are at seven thousand feet, and so is the mine, but you will have to descend over six hundred feet into remarkable Mogollon. Its two dozen or so stone and wooden buildings



and several nearly collapsed shacks line a once-bustling thoroughfare. A narrow dirt road winds north up Jack Canyon past the site of the Spanish red-light district.

There it bends west around a mountain slope and past rusty machinery and abandoned mine buildings, a few of which are private residences, to the Little Fanny Mine buildings that are perched on top of an extensive fan shaped tailings dump.

Early in the eighteenth century, Don Juan Ignacio Flores Mogollon served as the Spanish governor of lands from present New Mexico to the Pacific coast. Later the extensive mountain range of western New Mexico was given his name, and amid the mountains of this locality grew the gold and silver mining camp of Mogollon.

WAI! #70

Preceding page pic: up the main street of the town of Mogollon is a parked pickup truck, which sits in front of a building marked General Store which was built by Tonino Valerii's crew for the 1972 film "My Name is Nobody".



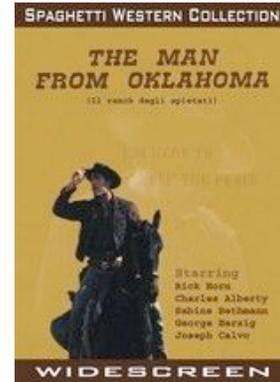
Right pic: a closer look at the General Store which was used as a backdrop for several shots which were seen in "My Name is Nobody", where 'Nobody' played by Terence Hill is hired by several outlaws to deliver a bomb to Jack Beauregard played by Henry Fonda (see below).



Mogollon is located 9 miles east of US 180 on New Mexico State Route 159.

DVD Reviews by Lee Broughton

The Man From Oklahoma Directed by Jesus Balcazar. 84 min. Widescreen (2.35:1 anamorphic). Dorado Films, USA. Format: NTSC Region 1. When the local sheriff is brutally murdered by Jim Edwards (George Herzig) and Hondo (Karl-Otto Alberty), 'Oklahoma' Dan (Rick Horn) is sent to replace him. He finds a town that is still in shock following the murder of Georgina White's (Sabine Bethmann) land-owning father. A local businessman, Watson (Tom Fellegly), is spreading rumours that Jim's volatile father, Roy (Pepe Calvo), must be the killer because he had expressed an interest in White's land. Then again, Watson seems to be taking an unhealthy interest in Georgina's inheritance too. Dan must solve the murder before Georgina sells the land to the wrong man but when Jim Edwards goes rogue, the sheriff faces the prospect of taking on Roy Edwards' gang of tough guys alone. One of the Balcazar family's early Spanish Westerns, this is a quite enjoyable little film. Low budget but finely assembled, this is a good-looking and reasonably involving show. These 'intrigue provoked by land-grabbing'-themed genre entries aren't to everybody's liking but there's plenty of well-staged action on display here (some of it quite brutal in its execution) and the film's characters are pretty well defined. The film also sports a really neat twist ending. Rick Horn's sheriff is a slightly goofy and lunky character who adds a sense of fun to the show while genre stalwart Pepe Calvo turns in a welcome performance as Roy Edwards. Given this film's rarity, the picture quality here is pretty good while the disc's sound quality is very good. *Extras:* four Spaghetti Western trailers. *Contact:*



www.doradofilms.com **Once Upon a Time in the West ... There Was a Man Called Invincible** Directed by Giuliano Carnimeo. 82 min. Widescreen (2.35:1 flat). Southern DVD, South Africa. Format: NTSC Region 0. Bambi (Chris Huerta) is working as the sheriff in Apple Pie City when his old friend Tricky Dicky (George Hilton) shows up. The pair are employed by the town's banker to transport a shipment of gold to Dallas and, despite being attacked by a number of bandits and crooks, they manage to succeed.



Unfortunately, they soon discover that the shipment of gold is actually made of lead. Gate crashing the banker's masked ball incognito and snooping around in Miss Marlene's (Evelyn Stewart) cake factory just might help the duo discover what happened to the real gold. This has to be one of the craziest Spaghetti Westerns ever made but director Giuliano Carnimeo and cinematographer Stelvio Massi ensure that it remains an eminently stylish affair. George Hilton is right at home as a resourceful Sartana/Hallelujah-like man-in-black who employs a variety of strange automated carriage-clock-like devices as weapons and Chris Huerta is equally good as his lumbering partner. Fan-favourite Rosalba Neri pops up in a barmy cameo sequence and Bruno Nicolai supplies the film's fun music. Presumably representative of some bizarre crisis of masculinity being experienced in Italy at the time, the film features a number of crude and un-PC gags that involve the show's characters questioning each other's sexual orientations and preferences. The whole thing comes to an end with an over the top and

thoroughly slapstick cake fight in Miss Marlene's factory. Crazy and coarse or bizarre and compelling? Only you can decide with this one. Picture quality here is pretty good, as is the sound. *Extras:* trailer and an Italian language track. **Shoot Previews Shoot Southern DVD, South Africa. NTSC Region 0.** This is a hefty but fun and thoroughly entertaining collection of Spaghetti Western (plus a few US Western) trailers of varying quality. The titles featured are: *God Forgives ... His Life is Mine, Kill Johnny Ringo!, The Three From Colorado, Massacre at Grand Canyon, Here's Django ... Pay or Die, Tension at Table Rock, Shadow of Sartana ... Shadow of Your Death!, They Called Him Trinity, El Desperado, Buffalo Bill, Sartana's Here ... Trade Your Pistol For a Coffin, One Gun - A Hundred Graves, The Great Chihuahua Treasure Hunt, White Commanche, Twenty Steps to Death, I'll Forgive You Before I Kill You, Django Against Sartana, 30 Winchesters For El Diablo, El Chunchu, The Sheriff Won't Shoot, And For a Roof a Sky Full of Stars, The Hangman's Tree, Man Called Invincible, The Ride Back, One Dollar of Fire, Nevada Joe, Cjamango, For a Few Dollars Less, And Sartana Killed Them All!, The Glory Guys, Run of the Arrow, Go For Broke and The Son of Zorro.* *Contact:* The two Southern DVD releases reviewed here are available from www.xploitedcinema.com



Revenge of Sartana Directed by George Sherman. 108 min. Widescreen (1.66:1 flat). Global Video, South Africa. Format: PAL Region 0. A Mexican couple, Joaquin and Rosita Murrieta (Jeffrey Hunter and Sara Lezana), arrive in California to prospect for gold but are instead met by a series of racially motivated insults and con tricks. An aging but tolerant lawman, Captain Love (Arthur Kennedy), helps the couple out of a tight spot and becomes a firm friend. However, when gringos attack Murrieta's camp and kill Rosita, the Mexican hits the vengeance trail before teaming up with and commandeering Jack Three Fingers's (Roberto Camardiel) gang of Mexican bandits. With Murrieta now causing havoc all over California, his old friend Captain Love sets out to hunt him down. This Spanish Western features good performances from its lead players and boasts appearances by a number of familiar genre faces. Much of the



time the show looks like a US Western but the unflinching and progressive way that the film tackles issues related to racism reminds us that we're watching a Euro Western. There's some decently staged action to be found here and the scenes where Murrieta dispatches Rosita's killers and a big-mouthed racist bully are particularly well handled. The sound quality here is generally good and the disc's picture quality in itself isn't too bad but it seems that the master source used here suffered from some kind of standards conversion problem, which means that some scenes possess a slight but noticeable 'stutter'. **Ringo Kill (Night of Vipers)** Directed by Giulio Petroni. 102 min. Widescreen

(2.35:1 flat). Global Video, South Africa. Format: PAL Region 0. A Mexican Federale officer, Hernandez (Luigi Pistilli), discovers that four miscreant cousins are plotting a crime that will see them inherit \$10,000. He cuts himself in on the deal and requests that a Mexican bandit (William Bogart) sends him a dispensable man who can be blamed for said crime. The intended patsy is Luke (Luke Askew), a drunken gringo that the

Mexican bandit and his men keep as a pet. However, when Luke finds out who Hernandez is planning to kill, he sobers up and casts himself as the victim's protector. A series of flashbacks help Luke to remember who he is but they also reveal the inner demons that drove him to drink: his tragic past just might hinder his hopes of effecting good deeds in the present. This title's ultra-rare status has baffled fans for years: how could a film directed by Giulio 'Death Rides a Horse' Petroni, starring Luigi Pistilli,



Benito Stefanelli, Chelo Alonso, et al, and featuring a really interesting soundtrack score by Riz Ortolani, just disappear? Who knows but worry no more because this DVD represents what amounts to the discovery of a lost classic. This is a great looking film that boasts a highly original storyline and a host of top genre actors in very unusual roles. The film takes a while to fully get going as it is really a kind of thriller/mystery set within the Spaghetti West, but once it is properly underway we are presented with a really intriguing and compelling storyline. This DVD, which boasts excellent picture and sound quality, raises the hope that further undiscovered classics might still be waiting to be

found amongst those genre titles that have yet to receive a home video release. *Extras:* trailer. *Contact:* Global Video, <http://myworld.ebay.com/video786/> **Wild East's Violent Action! Double Bill** *Wild East, USA. Widescreen (1.85:1 anamorphic). Format: NTSC Region 0. The Forgotten Pistolero* Directed by Ferdinando Baldi. 80 min. A Mexican on the run, Rafael (Peter Martell), comes across Sebastian (Leonard Mann) and realizes that the pair share a tragic past. Rafael informs Sebastian that his real mother (Luciana Paluzzi) is still alive, as is Tomas (Alberto de Mendoza), the man who killed his father. The pair hit the vengeance trail but with Tomas's men, who are led by the cruel Francisco (Pierro Lulli), already searching for Rafael on account of his continued but prohibited love for Sebastian's sister Isabella (Pilar Velazquez), the duo's revenge mission won't be easy. This is a hugely enjoyable genre entry that punches well above its weight: it's a low-ish budget affair but director Ferdinando Baldi brings a touch of panache to the show's proceedings by employing some striking camera angles and impressive editing techniques. Coming on like a cross between a Greek tragedy out West and a Mexican soap opera, this involving tale possesses a strong emotional pull that is reinforced by flashbacks which reveal the callous actions that shattered Sebastian, Rafael and Isabella's childhoods and greatly affected their adult lives. There are plenty of familiar faces here (fan favourite Luciano Rossi pops up in an unusual extended cameo role) and some nicely executed action scenes too. Special mention must be made of Roberto Pregadio's brilliant soundtrack score which, having been featured on countless TV ads and in countless Spaghetti Western spoofs, probably possesses the biggest public profile of any piece of genre music bar Ennio Morricone's *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* score. Picture and sound quality here are both excellent. *Extras:* image gallery and trailer. **The Unholy Four** Directed by E. B. Clucher. 89 min. When a gang of vicious outlaws steal a gold shipment from the bank at Dodge City, the town is thrown into chaos. Amidst the chaos, Chuck Mool (Leonard Mann), Silver (Peter Martell), Hondo (George Eastman) and Woody (Woody Strode) seize an opportunity to escape from the local asylum. Chuck Mool is an amnesiac and when a wounded and dying villain fleetingly recognizes him, Chuck convinces his fellow escapees to tag along with him in his search for his old

identity. When it becomes apparent that his quest might also lead them to the stolen gold, Silver, Hondo and Woody are happy to oblige. The gang eventually arrives at a town where two rival families are at war. It seems that Chuck Mool belongs to one of these families but his amnesiac state results in him being 're-united' with the wrong family, who deviously plan to make good use of his shooting skills. This is another previously



rare genre entry and it turns out to be another highly enjoyable show. It's a low-ish budget affair but *Trinity* director E. B. Clucher plays things straight and turns in a stylish and quite original little film that sports a well-balanced mix of action and drama. Mann, Martell, Eastman and Strode represent something of a genre dream team and it's great to have four stalwarts of the genre headlining the show. Their onscreen interactions sometimes bring to mind the team of gunfighters assembled in *Today It's Me... Tomorrow You*. The show's big finale features a really tense shootout that doesn't always go our heroes' way and a pretty neat, flashback-fuelled, twist ending. Picture quality here is very good and the sound quality is good too.

Extras: Image gallery and trailer. Spaghetti cinema fans should also check out two other new double bill DVDs from Wild East: their 'Goliath peplums' double bill DVD features *Goliath and the Barbarians* teamed with *Goliath and the Vampires* while their 'Italo World War Two' double bill DVD features *Churchill's Leopards* and *Salt in the Wound* (both of which star Klaus Kinski). *Contact:* www.wildeast.net **No Mercy For the Hunted** Directed by Zacharias and Vassilis Drosos. 44 min. Widescreen (1.66:1 flat). Drosos Bros, Greece. Format: DVD-R PAL Region 0.

John Payne and Rojo escape from a Texan prison and meet up with Rojo's old bandit gang. Led by the vicious Durango, the gang are under the impression that Payne knows where old man Jackson's gold is buried and they proceed to try and beat its location out of him. Payne is only interested in getting back to his wife Maria and he duly escapes and heads for home with Durango and company in hot pursuit. This film was shot in Greece



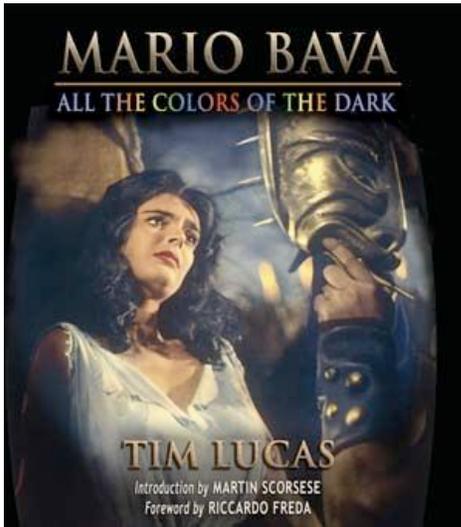
in 2005 by a group of local Spaghetti Western enthusiasts. It's an amateur/independent effort shot on digital video cameras but the film is helped greatly by the presence of some good countryside locations and a decent amount of equestrian action. Shooting the film sepia-toned instead of in colour probably helped when it came to assembling costumes for the film but while the costumes here are generally good, there are a couple that don't quite work. Heavy-handed audio effects employed to emphasize punches connecting, etc, bring to mind similar Spaghetti Western audio effects and Wulf-Henning Steffen's soundtrack score is a good approximation of the Spaghetti Western sound. This is a tightly scripted, enthusiastically acted and well-paced show that manages to fit all that it needs to genre-wise into its quite short running time. The film's twist ending is particularly well done and is worth waiting for. A reasonably well assembled show, the directors seemingly chose to wait until the film's final ten minutes before really letting rip with displays of the kind of noticeably stylish camera work that the best Spaghetti Westerns were renowned for. *Contact:* www.myspace.com/nomercyforthehunted

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Mario Bava: All the Colors of the Dark

By Lee Broughton

Mario Bava: All the Colors of the Dark. By Tim Lucas. Video Watchdog. 2007. 1128 pages. \$260 USA / \$290 outside of USA (price includes Priority Mail shipping). ISBN 0-9633756-1-X. Available from www.videowatchdog.com/home/home.html



When coming to review this book I was confronted with the same question that arose when I first came to read it: where to start? Well, as a Spaghetti Western fan, I naturally turned straight to the pages that are concerned with the Italian Westerns that Mario Bava worked on. In this respect, the book features chapters that are dedicated to *The Road to Fort Alamo*, *Minnesota Clay*, *Savage Gringo*, *A Gunfighter Sent by God* and *Roy Colt & Winchester Jack*. Each chapter generally features a synopsis, production credits, a historical run down of the film's production, details of its distribution, details of the careers of those involved in its making, details of contemporaneous developments within the genre, quotes from a

variety of interview sources and biographical details concerning Bava's life at the time the film was made. All of this is woven around a general but in-depth comment-cum-critique of the film in question. Since Bava's Western entries stretch from the very start of the genre to the end of the 1960s, the five chapters dedicated to his work on Westerns effectively form a mini but highly interesting history of the genre itself.

It certainly makes a change to have the critical spotlight shone on such obscure genre entries, and to have them covered in such depth, and it's a real treat to have a writer of Tim Lucas's standing and calibre writing about these films. But the words on the page are only half of the story with this book. The book's graphic designer, Donna Lucas, has fully restored a whole host of rare stills and posters related to the films and these are all faithfully reproduced on the book's high-quality glossy pages. Donna has a talent for getting the most out of each page, consistently finding the right mix of graphics and text per page and laying it all out in a coherent and stylish way. The result is a lavishly

Operation: Pop



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Roy Colt & Winchester Jack



835

illustrated and really great looking book. Check out the reproductions of page layouts and supporting graphics that we have been allowed to include here for an indication of the book's graphic quality. As an addendum to Bava's work on Westerns, Lucas has included an intriguing appendix article that argues the case (as yet unconfirmed) that Bava also worked on *Matalo!*.

New Frontiers



And so, for him, the first take was always the best." Lambert's quote does not really contradict Luciani's account, so much as it explains how there became involved in the production. It also reveals something not that Rossini's role in *Ringo del Nebraska*

would not have required him to be present on-set for every day of the production. It is possible that Rossini shot Rossini's role in its entirety and that there remained a few profiles on the set, especially when the Italian actors were concerned, out of respect for Rossini's

territory. Rossini's "easy to please" methods were perhaps one of the reasons why Luciani was open to replace him, or possibly he wanted to move the production back to Rome for financial considerations since he had satisfied the terms for this Spanish-Italian co-production and wanted the location shooting out of the way. Lamberto Bava is credited as co-director of the film, but assistant directors, which would not have happened had the film been entirely shot under Rossini's direction in Spain.

The problems that prevented Rossini from directing *Ringo del Nebraska* also evidently played him on his subsequent picture, *Trappole per un agguato* ("Trap for a Secret Spy", 1967), which was ultimately taken over by director Mario Amadei. Public Luciano faithfully kept the secret of Rossini's replacement until after the director's death, which occurred in Madrid on June 16, 1988.



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Synopsis
Belton, New Mexico, the 1870s. Danica, a woman working for ranch boss Mary Hillman, is announcing her father's death. Hearing news so terrible, she is shot dead by three masked gunmen. The assassin in charge is the disreputable Bill Carter, an outlaw who covets Hillman's property. Carter is not interested in the money, but in the woman behind the scene of the murder. Hillman returns home to find his wife, Rita, packing a trunk to leave him. He signs her into submission. Their argument reveals that they are not actually married, but pretending to be, to protect her. When Bill Carter, Hillman's reluctant partner, hears that she

Ringo del Nebraska—Savage Gringo



Bill Hillman Carter and his gang at his with a loaded rifle.

is about to get a man of strong up cuts, and proves himself a competent marksman. As he prepares to get a closer look at the man, the entire gang is shot down by a sniper who identifies himself as Nebraska. "That is a remarkable name," says Nebraska. "I have never seen it before." Nebraska is a handsome and enigmatic stranger.

After dinner, Hillman worries that Danica has not returned from his cattle drive. He and Nebraska ride into town to investigate. Hiding there, they discover Danica's bullet-riddled body. After studying the markings on the ground, Nebraska deduces that there were three gunmen who took the woman's trail, shot Danica, scattered the herd, and rode off in another direction—the direction

of where with himself and with one well-considered move, puts him in check. The doctor is impressed: "You have covered here off my light and I've never met a horse player before!" He dings up to the bar. Nebraska is a good at five drink and he orders with Carter picks a fight with him, and the

action is soon overpowered by their violence. Carter slashes Nebraska's chest with a broken bottle, but Nebraska wins the fight. Carter quickly strangles Carter and Hillman in his departure. As the bartender prepares to pour Nebraska another glass of milk, he orders Nebraska instead.



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Lucas generally employs the same approach adopted for coverage of Bava's Westerns when covering the other films that Bava worked on. Some films are covered in more detail than others - cult favourite *Danger Diabolik* for example receives 36 pages of coverage while the more obscure *Four Times That Night* receives 14 pages - but Lucas's engagement with the films is always interesting and warm: indications of the author's love for Bava's work are never far away but the book remains an objective piece of work none-the-less. Since Bava's other work stretched from thrillers to sci-fi, horror films to historical epics, etc, etc, Lucas's desire to place Bava's films within their proper historical and national contexts essentially turns the book into a history of Italian popular cinema itself. Indeed, an early chapter on Bava's cinematographer father allows Lucas's detailed historical gaze to reach as far back as the early days of silent cinema in Italy. It's all really fascinating stuff and Lucas's enthusiastic and authoritative but fluid and coherent writing style makes this book a real pleasure to read. The decades of research and writing (32 years all told) that Lucas has put into the making of this book have really paid off and it's an essential purchase for anybody who has an interest in Italian genre filmmaking. Alas, the book doesn't come cheap but this really is no ordinary book. For a start, it's physically huge: the book's dimensions in inches are 10.85" wide x 11.87" high x 2.63" deep and it weighs all of 12 pounds. All of its 1128 pages are glossy and full colour pictures and graphics are featured throughout. Running close to 800,000 words, it's been estimated that this book is in fact equal to ten average-length books. Lucas has effectively set a new benchmark in terms of how large and detailed studies of film directors should be and for that alone he deserves to be applauded. As such, I look forward to the day when a book of this size and scope is dedicated to the work of Sergio Leone, Sergio Corbucci, et al.

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An Interview With Tim Lucas

By Lee Broughton

LB: *Congratulations on putting together such a fabulous book on the work of Mario Bava. You must be very proud to finally have the book finished and in print?*

TL: Letting go of this project has led to more a sense of relief than a feeling of pride, and the relief has been more short-lived than a post-partum depression which, as you might imagine, is pretty considerable as I spent all of my adult life researching and writing this



book. I'm proud of the fact that it turned out to be longer than *WAR AND PEACE*, which is something I never expected to achieve as a writer (few do), but pride generally doesn't enter into it. Both Donna (who spent four years on the book's design) and I feel humbled by the whole experience: proud of what each other did, but otherwise just a deep satisfaction that we fulfilled our calling as best we could.

LB: *Are you a fan of the Spaghetti Western genre per se?*

TL: I've often said that *ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE WEST* was the movie that "marked" me. I hadn't seen any of the earlier films that Sergio Leone had made with Clint Eastwood because I wasn't a Western fan at that age -- I was 12 -- but I was an Elvis fan, and it happened to be booked on a double bill with *CHARRO!*. So I went to my local theater, the Plaza, to see *CHARRO!* on a Saturday, but the other movie was on first... so I went home, deciding to go back the next day. I went back on Sunday, when the Plaza typically reversed the order of what

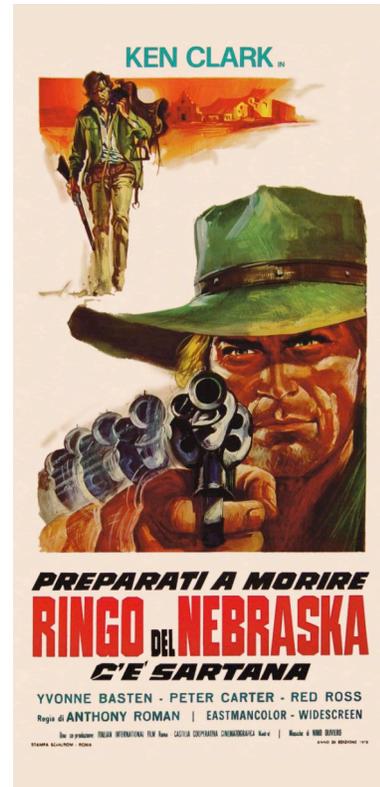
they were showing, but they ran *OUATITW* first again, and this time I had to sit through it. Mind you, I had deliberately avoided going to see any Western at the movies; I was a horror and science fiction purist, for the most part. But I had been steeped in a love for Italian horror, and I gradually became fascinated by the baroque qualities of what I was seeing... and once they got to the shot of little Timmy running down the corridor toward the sight of his massacred family, and the first stings of electric guitar, I was hooked. I'm sure it involved me even more that I was a little Timmy too, who had already lost his father and knew his mother only on weekends till I was 8 years old, spending most of my childhood in the homes of foster families... but seeing that movie was like discovering a family that was waiting there to receive me, more reliable than my own -- those kindred, faraway spirits who knew how to speak my language, and who were using it to speak to

me as an adult viewer. I felt almost raped by the experience, like it had ripped my shirt open and ravaged me. I had never been so moved or so spellbound by any movie and, when it was over, I made what I consider to be the first adult decision of my life: I decided to leave without seeing CHARRO!, which I instinctively knew would only dilute the experience I'd just had. So I went home... and, to this day, I've never seen CHARRO!. In fact, though I had many opportunities in the meantime, I deliberately avoided Leone's other movies and other Westerns, even Italian ones, until the early 1980s; so I must have savored that experience for roughly a decade before moving on. I also caught OUATITW every chance I got when it came to television.

Nowadays, I'm much more grounded in Westerns than I used to be -- American Westerns more than Italian Westerns, though I believe I've seen all the acknowledged classics. Now I limit the times I watch OUATITW to maybe once every four or five years, and the crane shot at the railway station as the full orchestra kicks in still makes my eyes suddenly smart with tears every time I see it.

LB: *Which are your favourite titles and why?*

TL: There are a few titles I admire, like THE BIG SILENCE and THE BIG GUNDOWN, and others that I enjoy like DJANGO and TODAY WE KILL TOMORROW WE DIE, but comparatively few that really get under my skin the way I hoped they all would. The only others that touched me on any kind of similarly deep emotional level were FOR A FEW DOLLARS MORE, KEOMA, and MATALO!, and I feel KEOMA is by far the best of those three. On the other hand, I discovered a year or two ago, that I absolutely love the Karl May Westerns that came out of Germany -- not Italian Westerns of course, but the way they use lush symphonic music and landscape to produce deep emotional frissons are very much related. When Winnetou unexpectedly died in WINNETOU 3, I wept. I wish more of May's books were available in English; where Leone's best work made me feel more insular about it, wanting to hoard and cherish it, my discovery of the May films led to more expansive feelings. I want to know more about that world. I'm also one of the few people in the world who seem to like Dennis Hopper's THE LAST MOVIE, which seems to me like an Italian Western in many ways, though it's more of an American peyote Western. What OUATITW says about the coming of the railroad bringing an end to the Old West, THE LAST MOVIE similarly achieves by bringing a film crew into a primitive South American village.



LB: *Do you think that it's fair to say that Spaghetti Western fans are the poor cousins of genre-dom when it comes to DVD releases?*

TL: It seems to me that Italian Western fandom is substantially more underground than, say, Italian horror fandom these days; maybe 10-20 years behind popular acceptance. On the one hand this is good because it helps to build a good, strong, swapping community that's held together by publications like this one, and I think it's pretty amazing to see

some of the gray market reconstruction discs that are being generated from the fanbase. You might think it'll get better once the major video labels commandeer the genre and start releasing more of what you want to see and own, but believe me, that's the level where loss of quality control and loss of passion set in, so what's happening now is a



time you'll always treasure in retrospect. Basically it won't get better until someone within this fandom, like the folks at Wild East, engage with wider distribution and put some real money on the line to secure one or two significant titles... and even then, you might find that the licensor screws you over with an incomplete print, or that the movies chosen simply don't connect to a larger public interest at this time. I think Wild East is filling an important function, as are a number of foreign labels, like Anolis in Germany.

LB: *Do you think that the cultural status of Spaghetti Westerns in the US/UK has improved over the years? Do you think that critical reception of the genre is couched in much more positive terms now?*

TL: Frankly, I think the phrase Spaghetti Westerns does the genre no favors. I've spoken to some people in the Italian industry about this, and they've helped me to see that calling them Italian Westerns is more respectful. I know that no disrespect is intended, and I know it's not felt by the fans who use it or even the creators who made these films, but it does attract condescension from the vast middleground between the two. I once heard something similar about the title of Craig Ledbetter's fine fanzine EUROPEAN TRASH CINEMA: a friend who knows some of the filmmakers covered in its pages once complained to him because they loved the magazine, they loved what it said about their work, and they wanted to show it around and say to money people, "See? The Americans get what I am doing! Help me to finance a new picture!" -- but the name of the magazine took away all their ammunition. Speaking for myself, I love the anarchic vigor expressed by Craig's title; it attracts attention, it's very punk -- but most people aren't like the rest of us, who have experience of digging for gold in heaps of what is commonly considered trash. As for Italian Westerns, I think it helps a lot that people like Sir Christopher

Frayling are rallying to their cause, because the genre needs more than eloquent spokesmen, it needs respected spokesmen if it's going to get across to people that normally wouldn't take that step.

LB: *Like a number of other genre titles, the first Spaghetti Western that Bava directed, 'Road to Fort Alamo', featured elements and themes from a mythological story that were reformatted to fit within a Western narrative. Do you see this as an example of the Italians trying to project a national or cultural identity via the Western genre?*

TL: It more likely started out as a form of convenience. I'm sure, as the sword and sandal films petered out and were replaced by Westerns, that a lot of unproduced mythological scripts were floating around -- scripts that could be tweaked into Westerns because they shared many of the same archetypes as the pepla. But it also worked the other way around: Ernesto Gastaldi told me that one of the sword and sandal pictures he wrote, GIANTS OF ROME I think, was based loosely on THE GUNS OF NAVARONE.

LB: *Do you think that such mythological elements would have been easily spotted by the Italian audience but overlooked by US/UK audiences?*



TL: Not necessarily. Honestly, I saw THE ROAD TO FORT ALAMO several times before realizing that it was a reworking of the Phillipides story that Bava had filmed previously, with Jacques Tourneur, as THE GIANT OF MARATHON with Steve Reeves. It wasn't until I happened to watch the two films somewhat close together that I noticed the similarities of the storyline. None of the other

books about Bava caught this, not even the ones written and published abroad.

LB: *It's been suggested that Bava was disinterested or uncomfortable with the Spaghetti Western genre at the time of 'Fort Alamo'. Can you think of any particular reason why that might be?*

TL: Bava wasn't an outdoorsman. He liked to stay inside and read. He liked to create his own imaginary worlds on film sets, and lost control when he had to work on location. So Westerns were not a genre for which he felt a personal affinity; he was more attracted to fantasy, whereas Westerns connote a certain grounding in realism. Mind you, at this time, there were not yet any baroque Italian Westerns. In 1964, the whole idea of an Italian Western must have seemed alien -- even laughable to someone like Bava. They were motivated by the commercial success of the Karl May Westerns, which were a kind of

fantasy of America, so the whole idea of an Italian strain must have seemed ludicrous to anyone without the necessary vision for it. Bava's first Western seems to me to have only one real antecedent in the Western genre, and that's APACHE DRUMS, which oddly enough was produced by Val Lewton, a past master of horror cinema and a colleague of Bava's own past colleague Jacques Tourneur. If you watch ROAD TO FORT ALAMO, you can see Bava instinctively gravitating toward the horrific elements of the Old West -- cattle skulls in the road, Indian raids, scalplings, and so forth -- and quite a lot of its exteriors were actually shot indoors, giving it an interesting veneer of artifice. All this is also true of APACHE DRUMS.

LB: *Any particular reason why a decent copy of 'Fort Alamo' hasn't shown up on DVD yet?*

TL: Not that I know of.

LB: *It's interesting to discover that Bava did some uncredited camera work on 'Minnesota Clay'. Do you think that he might have worked as an uncredited cameraman on other Spaghetti Westerns that have not yet come to your attention? Any titles that you have mild or slight suspicions about in this respect?*

TL: Bava was a compulsive worker, a workaholic, so it's inconceivable to me that he wasn't involved in some minor functions on more Westerns when he wasn't otherwise engaged. He made comparatively few films in 1966-69, and the ones he did make would not have occupied more than half of any one of those years. Of course, he may have spent part of that time looking for work, but he was the kind of fellow who looked for work where work was going on; he didn't sit by the mailbox. And Westerns were what were mostly being produced in Italy during this time.



LB: *I know from the book that you strongly suspect that he may have worked on 'Matalo!' - have your suspicions been confirmed as yet?*

TL: No, but also, no one has come forward to disqualify them yet either. I came very close to taking the dare and including MATALO! in the main text, that's how strongly I felt his stylistic involvement, but I decided to scrap that chapter just before we went to press and reassigned it to the Appendix. If Bava wasn't involved as an uncredited or second unit cameraman, or even a substitute director on some sick days for Canevari, I'd be very surprised -- because that would show me that Bava's level of mastery had been studied by others to the point where his way of looking at things could be forged. But I didn't have any inside

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confirmation, and it seemed to me a dangerous and unnecessary risk to take.

LB: *'Savage Gringo' was the second Spaghetti Western to be directed by Bava, albeit uncredited as he took over the director's chores from, or at least greatly assisted, the credited director, Antonio Roman. Again, any particular reason why a decent copy of 'Savage Gringo' hasn't shown up on DVD as yet?*

TL: Again, not that I know of. It's probably a fundamentally commercial reason: perhaps the US rights holders lost them over time, or they may still have them but aren't willing to spend the necessary thousands to digitally restore a film that would probably have a limited market.

LB: *'A Gunfighter Sent By God' was partially photographed by an uncredited Bava. It's suggested that Bava's creative talents were at odds with the outdoor environments that he encountered on this and other Western shoots. Any particular reason why that should be?*

TL: See 9.

LB: *The third and final Spaghetti Western directed by Bava was the largely improvised 'Roy Colt & Winchester Jack'. Do you think that a copy of the English dub will ever turn up?*

TL: I've never even seen an American one-sheet for ROY COLT, so the existence of English-language prints is doubtful, at least in this country. Fortunately, English prints were often used as the basic soundtrack in foreign countries where prints were subtitled, and such a print may survive somewhere overseas. A few years ago, there was talk that an English print of ROY COLT was going to be screened at an Italian Western festival held somewhere in the Netherlands, but I never heard anything more about it.

LB: *Is there a Spaghetti Western out there that you would have liked to have been directed by Bava or that you feel might have more fully engaged his interest and talents?*



TL: I think Bava might have been more at home in Mexican Westerns, actually. There's a Mexican Western called THE LIVING COFFIN that reminds me very much of KILL, BABY... KILL! in atmosphere, but it uses the spectre of Mexican folklore called "la llorona," or the crying woman. It all turns out to be a fake at the end, but it was much closer to Bava's work than anything he was able to achieve in his own Westerns. Of course, he signed most of his Westerns with other names because he didn't feel particularly close to them.

LB: *Which of the three Spaghetti Westerns directed by Bava is your favourite and why?*

TL: If I can be allowed to think of KNIVES OF THE AVENGER as a Western, because it is a sort of remake of SHANE, I would choose that. Of the Westerns he worked on, MINNESOTA CLAY is by far the best, but it's really a Sergio Corbucci film, of course. Though I say otherwise in my book, where I come down in favor of SAVAGE GRINGO, I probably would point to ROAD TO FORT ALAMO as my favorite because it was the last film he made with his classic crew -- the same camera team that worked on BLACK SUNDAY and BLACK SABBATH and the other early classics. I would really like to see it someday in a proper 35mm widescreen presentation, where I suspect some qualities not-so-obvious on dupey videos would suddenly come into full bloom.



LB: *Which of the three Spaghetti Westerns directed by Bava would you most like to find a larger audience and why?*

TL: I don't have a specific answer to this, but I would like the two that aren't presently available on disc to become more available on disc, simply so that we could have some record of them that could be preserved and judged with greater accuracy. It's a shame to have to write about films for posterity using such wretched reference materials as I had to use for ROAD TO FORT ALAMO and SAVAGE GRINGO. If I could see these as they were meant to be seen, I might even have to revise my chapters -- because I couldn't see something key to a scene because it was cropped, or because the color had faded, or because my source was incomplete. Fortunately I did have foreign language references for these, which looked a bit better, but they all could stand for some improvement in how they're represented on DVD.

LB: *Thank you and good luck with the book.*
Thanks go to Donna Lucas for supplying the graphics used here.

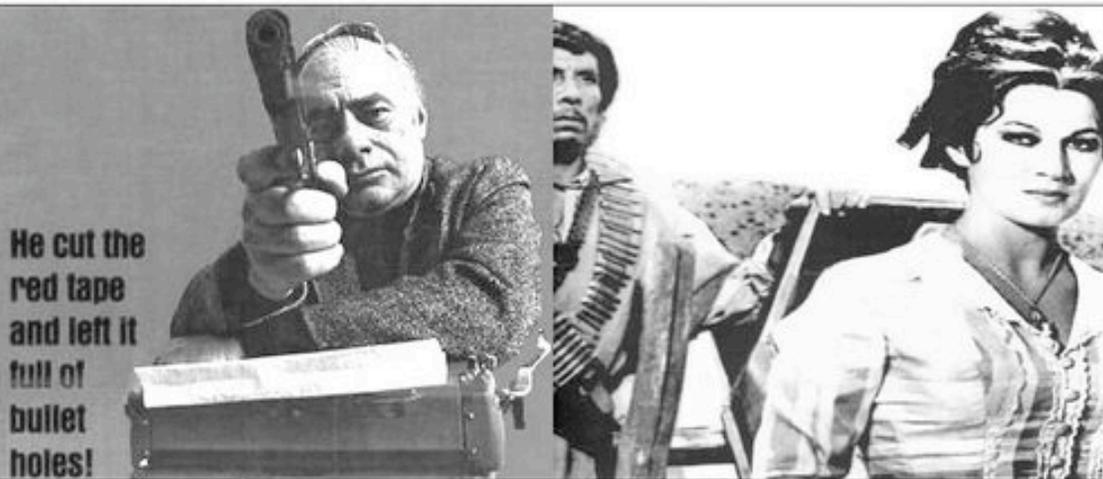
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