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Feuillade, Louis

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Feuillade, *Louis*
French Filmmaker
Born 19 February 1873 in Lunel, France
Died 25 February 1925 in Nice, France

Louis Feuillade was a popular filmmaker in France in the years leading up to and during the First World War. He is known for his serial productions, which, with their cliffhangers, were effective at pulling in large crowds, week-after-week, especially during the war.

Table of Contents

[1 Early Life](#)

[2 Feuillade as a Filmmaker](#)

[Selected Bibliography](#)

[Citation](#)

Early Life

Louis Feuillade (1873-1925) was born in Lunel (Hérault, France) into a modest family. Before becoming the famous filmmaker of the *Fantomas* series (1913), he wrote plays and poetry, some of which was published in the local press. In 1898 he moved to Paris to pursue a career in [literature](#) but was forced to work as a journalist to support his family.

Feuillade as a Filmmaker

Feuillade began his career in [cinema](#) in 1905, selling screenplays to the famous French film producer [Leon Ernest Gaumont \(1864-1946\)](#). Three years later he reached the top of Gaumont's production house, becoming its Artistic Director after [Alice Guy \(1873-1968\)](#) departed for the United States.

Feuillade worked for Gaumont until 1918, simultaneously continuing to make his own films. During the war he produced several serials, including *Les Vampires* (1915) and *Judex* (1917), which were very popular, in part because each episode ended with a cliffhanger, forcing the public, which was looking for a diversion from the war, to return to see the rest of the series the next week. He also produced patriotic dramas such as *Le Noël du poilu* (1917), in which he portrays the action of "war godmothers" and the suffering and loneliness of the soldiers; and *Vendémiaire* (1918), which was shot in a realistic style in natural settings and was at the frontier of the documentary genre. The film is representative of the germanophobia prevalent during the period; its Manichean composition, depicting the ugly German intent on conquering France and destroying its culture, marked an evolution towards a radicalization in the representation of the enemy.

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