

Feuillade, Louis

By [Manon Billaut](#)

Feuillade, *Louis*

French Filmmaker

Born 19 February 1873 in Lunel, France

Died 25 February 1925 in Nice, France

Summary

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.

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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.

Manon Billaut, University of Paris 3 – Sorbonne Nouvelle and Bibliothèque nationale de France

Selected Bibliography

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- [Gauthier, Patrice / Lacassin, Francis: **Louis Feuillade. Maître du cinéma populaire**, Paris, 2006: Gallimard.](#)
- [Lacassin, Francis / Fescourt, Henri: **Louis Feuillade. Choix de textes et propos de Louis Feuillade, extraits de scénarios et découpages, panorama critique, témoignages, filmographie, bibliographie, documents iconographiques**, Paris, 1964: Seghers.](#)
- [Véray, Laurent: **La Grande guerre au cinéma. De la gloire à la mémoire**, Paris, 2008: Ramsay.](#)

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External Links

- [Champeux, Jacques / Carou, Alain: 1895. Revue d'Histoire du Cinéma Hors-série Louis](#)

[Feuillade, 2000 \(AFRHC\) \(Article\)](#)

- [Films by Louis Feuillade \(Internet Archive\) \(Video\)](#)
- [Le Gendarme est sans culotte, 1914 \(European Film Gateway\) \(Video\)](#)
- [Les Vampires, 1915, directed by Louis Feuillade \(Internet Archive\) \(Video\)](#)
- [The Films of Louis Feuillade \(Internet Archive\) \(Article\)](#)

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