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Macario

MACARIO

(1959) Directed by: Roberto Gavaldón

This film was so effective in its cinematic rendering of magical realism that the story, written by Bruno Traven, was often mistaken for an ancient Mexican folk tale. Set in 18th Century colonial Mexico, the story follows a poor woodsman, Macario, who vows that he will eat nothing until he can have an entire turkey to himself. He finds a fowl and runs off to the forest to eat it. Refusing to share it with either God or the Devil, he finally agrees to make a pact with Death. Like Faust, Macario gains wealth and power, but all the while slowly loses control of his own destiny. The film ends with Macario's wife discovering him next to the untouched cadaver of the turkey.

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The world of the dead, so prevalent in the imagery of Mexico, is hauntingly visualized through Gabriel Figueroa's dramatic photography.

Produced by: Azteca Films, Armando Orive Alva, José Luis Celis

Based on a story by: Bruno Traven

Screenplay: Emilio Carballido, Roberto Gavaldón

Cinematographer: Gabriel Figueroa

Music: Raúl Lavista

Sound: Teodulo Bustos

Art Director: Manuel Fontanals

Editor: Gloria Schoemann

Cast: Ignacio López Tarso, Pina Pellicer, Enrique Lucero, Mario Alberto Rodríguez, José Galvez, José Luis Jimenez, Pepe & His Marionettes

In Spanish with English subtitles, black and white, 91 min. Reference copy held by UCLA Film and Television Archive