

# CALTIKI

## THE NAME WRITTEN IN TRIPE!

ARTICLE BY TIM LUCAS

Some of us feared the day might never come, but *Caltiki the Immortal Monster* (*Caltiki il mostro immortale*, 1959) is finally slouching toward Blu-ray and DVD, courtesy of Arrow Video. Though nominally credited to "Robert Hamton" (a pseudonym for director Riccardo Freda), *Caltiki* is now properly recognized as an early showcase for Mario Bava, the film's credited director of photography and special effects, who took over the film's direction when Freda walked off the picture at some point during its principal photography. It also marks the moment in time when the Italian fantastic cinema discovered the increased profit margin of pretending to be something it wasn't—namely, a British or American production. It was the first Italian sci-fi/horror picture to import a known British actor (well, John Merivale anyway) and to employ a roster of cagey English pseudonyms.

Even in its Italian prints, *Caltiki* boasts a cast of notable never-heard-of's, including Didi Sullivan (actually Didi Perego), G.R. Stuart (Giacomo Rossi Stuart), Arthur Dominick (Arturo Dominici) and Black Bernard (Nero Bernardi), as well as screenwriter Philip Just, whose script boasts an equally false basis in "un'antica leggenda popolare Messicana" ("an ancient legend well-known in Mexico"). Philip Just was in fact Filippo Sanjust, a friend of Freda's from the world of Opera, in which he was at the outset of a very successful career as a librettist and art director. He was also very likely the film's uncredited art director, but the idea for the script was actually dreamed up by Bava and Freda in the wake of the Italian release of Hammer's *The Quatermass Xperiment* under the captivating title *L'Atomica Astronave di Dott. Quatermass* ("The Atomic Spaceship of Prof. Quatermass," 1955). Contrary to a long-standing rumor that Mario Bava bore two pseudonyms on this picture—"John Foam" for his cinematography and "Marie Foam" for his special effects, data first reported in a *Monthly Film Bulletin* review—no form of Bava's name appears in the main credits at all, where the only Italian name belongs to co-star Daniela Rocca, whose name is presented like that of an honored guest star. Rocca was the mistress of the film's covert producer, Lionello Santi of Galatea Film S.p.A.—as became front page news during Santi's divorce in 1965. In a curious birthmark, the credits for Bava, composer Roberto Nicolosi and Galatea appear only in a silent end titles attachment—where all the names appear in Italian.

*Caltiki the Immortal Monster* opens in the ancient Mayan ruins of Tikal, a once-great city that was reportedly fled by its entire population under mysterious circumstances, never to return, in the year 607 A.D. There, the noted archaeologist John Fielding (John Merivale) is hoping to make a significant find, in the company of his fellow crew and wife Ellen (Didi Perego). When the sole surviving member of an expedition to a subterranean cave returns looking dazed and screaming "Caltiki!", Fielding and the remaining men mount another expedition to the cave, where a diver discovers that the floor of a subterranean lake is strewn with the remains of Mayan dead and priceless Mayan jewels. As a second dive is undertaken to retrieve the fortune, a mountainous, radioactive blob rises from the lake and engulfs the arm of Max Gunther (Gerard Haerter), which Fielding manages to hack free. The blob—which the ancient Mayans apparently worshipped as Caltiki—is destroyed by fire, but a surviving portion remains glommed onto Max's arm, infecting him with the ancient god's messianic madness. The alien host is successfully removed from Max's arm, but not before eroding most of its skin and muscle, and then taken to Fielding's lab. In a fit of insanity, the disfigured Max shuns his adoring "half-breed" wife Linda (Rocca), murders a nurse at the hospital caring for him, and hides out from the police in the Fielding home—where he intends to make his unwelcome feelings known to Ellen, and where John has recently brought the still-vital tissues of Caltiki for further study in his private lab. All this activity coincides with the moment foretold in ancient Mayan writings, when "a mate in the sky" shall return to herald Caltiki's dominance over the land—namely, the comet Arsinoë, which passes Earth every 1352 years!



I first saw *Caltiki* sometime in 1964, when it made frequent appearances on local television stations as part of Allied Artists' syndicated horror package, along with other titles like *The Cyclops*, *Attack of the 50-Foot Woman*, *The Disembodied* and *The Giant Behemoth*. I knew nothing of Mario Bava at the time, and it wouldn't have mattered if I did because his name appeared nowhere on the picture. But whenever it played on Channel 12's *Early Home Theater*, it was invariably a big topic of discussion on my school's playground the next day. It contained so many sights that you simply didn't see on television back in those days . . .

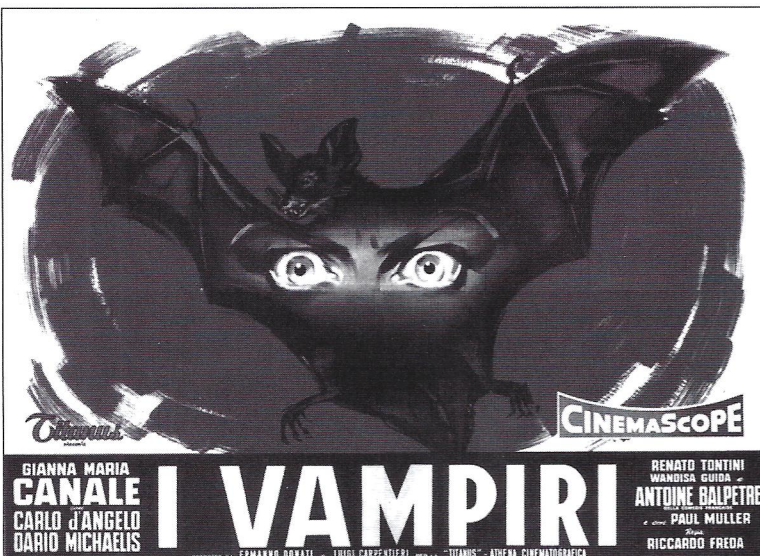
A scuba diver surfaces terrified from an underwater encounter, only to have the skin and muscle peeled from his face along with his scuba mask! Zoom into bleary, oyster-like eyeballs lolling in the sockets of a slimy skull! A gigantic blob emerges from the pool in his wake, attacking a group of archaeologists! The hungry tissues of this shapeless horror being surgically removed from a man's arm, taking all but the bare nerves and bones with it! This same man, devoured whole by the blob, sucking him blood-dry and eroding the skin from his skull before he disappears completely into its shuddering folds!

*Caltiki* wasn't a very long movie—it could play uncut with commercials in a 90-minute slot—but it was eventful to say the least.

The part that most got under my own skin, even on first viewing, took place well before the monster's first appearance. The movie opens with the arrival at a jungle campsite of the only surviving member of an expedition into the caves of an extinct Mayan civilization. This character, Nieto, is played by Arturo Dominici of *Black Sunday*, no less, and he makes his first appearance exactly as he would in Bava's official directorial debut, as his character Javutich exhumes himself from his own grave, a pair of bare hands scurrying over a pile of rocks. Here, he's still alive but almost catatonic with horror, and he has brought back to John Fielding a reel of undeveloped camera footage documenting the doomed expedition. When the Fieldings screen this footage in their tent, the moody, shadowy, artfully contrived look of the film is replaced by home movie footage. Like all home movie footage, it looks too bright, unsteady, awkwardly framed, as the photographer jerks the camera this way and that. There's no cutting within individual shots. The actors onscreen behave differently, too—they smile, they ham about, they look directly into the camera, they behave self-consciously rather than as actors. They even go in and out of focus. Then, after they descend into the subterranean caves, something happens that the camera fails to capture. There is chaos, the camera wobbles, and we see frightened faces, flailing arms blur past as it finally tips over and hits the ground.

Even in 1964, at the age of 7 or 8, I fancied myself a budding expert on horror movies, but I had never seen anything like this before. I was just a kid but I must have understood, though not in so many words, that horror movies were made with care; they were made with steady cameras that were always in focus, and the people on the screen were pretending when they behaved as though the camera wasn't there. But *Caltiki* depicted a sudden, complete loss of technical control—much as I had seen happen on television not long before, when Lee Harvey Oswald was shot to death on live television while being transported from Dallas Police Headquarters to a local county jail. Perhaps because of that moment in American history, in the weeks following the assassination of our President, this moment in *Caltiki* frightened me more than just about anything else I had ever seen. It made the monster feel more real than any other monster had ever felt. Seen from today's perspective, this sequence is the horror genre's first instance of "found footage," a sub-genre in its own right that includes such highlights as *Cannibal Holocaust*, *The Blair Witch Project* and *Ringu*.





The story of how *Caltiki the Immortal Monster* came about has become an inextricable part of its legend; because the film has been so difficult to see in recent years, its behind-the-scenes story is more often discussed than the story of the film itself. As is now commonly known, Mario Bava and Riccardo Freda made their first attempt to launch a horror genre in Italy in 1957 with a picture called *I vampiri* ("The Vampires"), starring Freda's wife Gianna Maria Canale. The film had been made as a bet with two producers, who didn't believe Freda's boast that he and Bava could make an entire picture in twelve days—that is, two five-day work weeks. The normal period of production for an Italian picture was eight weeks. Filming began and, on the Wednesday of the second week, Freda found himself only halfway through production. When his producers refused to grant him an extension, he abandoned the picture, leaving Bava holding the bag. There was an interruption of the filming, during which Bava and screenwriter Piero Regnoli worked together to rewrite the story so that a movie (if not *the* movie) could be completed in the remaining two days budgeted. Against all odds, the plan worked—under Bava's direction, the film was somehow wrapped in the remaining two days. Freda was an established director of important costume pictures, so *I vampiri* was released with his name on it. It subsequently performed very poorly at the box office and Freda could not understand why; it was a very good picture of its kind. To find the answer, he went to the movies.

"I happened to be in Sanremo, a film not unlike Cannes," Freda recalled in an interview with the French magazine *Midi-Minuit Fantastique*, "and I decided to visit a theater that was showing *I vampiri*. I sometimes do this, stand around the lobby to eavesdrop on the reactions of the public. As time went on, I noticed there were very few paying customers. I couldn't understand why, but the theater was almost vacant for every performance, though many passersby had been attracted by the posters, which were indeed very beautiful. They would stop and look: '*I vampire . . . I vampire . . .*' This seemed to intrigue them, but then at the last moment, they saw Freda. Their reaction was automatic: 'Freda?' Seeing an Italian name, they all made faces, because they found the idea preposterous. They assumed that Italians didn't know how to make a film of this kind."

Bava concurred in an interview with the French publication *Positif*: "In our country, the sun drives away all the dark shadows . . . This is how I explain to myself why my films are successful in America and the northern countries, but never in Italy. The Calabrese workman only goes to the movies to laugh or to cry. He doesn't want to see blood."

Consequently, when the time came to make *Caltiki*, Freda had the brainstorm to present it under the guise of being an English picture, something imported from Britain or America. This idea alone would change the way most Italian horror films would be made well into the early 1980s. It was only through the intervention of fan magazines that anyone later found out that Robert Hamton, John M. Old and Anthony Dawson were in fact Riccardo Freda, Mario Bava and Antonio Margheriti.

*Caltiki* should be regarded as half of a science fiction double-feature that Bava conceived and secretly directed in the years immediately prior to his official directorial debut. The first of these films was *The Day the Sky Exploded* (*La morte viene dallo spazio*, 1958), which finds Earth under threat of destruction as an enormous meteor is discovered to be on course for an imminent collision (more or less the same story later retold by 1998's *Armageddon*). In Italy, it was the accepted procedure for all workers in the cinema to apprentice under an established worker's guidance, but it was rare for anyone other than a screenwriter to ascend to the position of director. Because Bava was not only a cameraman, but a unionized cameraman in the Associazione Italiana Autori della Fotografia Cinematografica (A.I.C.), he would have endangered his professional standing if caught trying to become a director. So he asked an established director of his acquaintance, Paolo

Heusch (the future director of *Werewolf in a Girl's Dormitory*, 1961), to serve as a "beard," to be present on the set and accept formal credit as director. His participation allowed the film to land its funding and distribution deal, though Bava himself was the true driving force behind this, Italy's very first science-fiction film. As on *Caltiki*, Bava was the film's prime mover, cameraman, special effects designer, stock footage acquirer, and covert director.

The truth about the film did not come out for almost half a century. Actor Ivo Garrani finally confirmed the above in an interview with Italian journalist Luca Rea, conducted for my book *Mario Bava—All the Colors of the Dark*: "That movie, *The Day the Sky Exploded*, was completely directed by Bava," Garrani revealed. "Really, Paolo Heusch didn't do very much on that set. I can say that I am in the three movies that launched all three of the genres of Italian fantastic cinema: *The Day the Sky Exploded*, *Hercules* and *Black Sunday*—and they all owed their success to Mario Bava!"

As would *Caltiki*. It wasn't the sort of film that Riccardo Freda—a specialist in historical dramas and high-toned costume pictures—would have made on his own. He undertook the project because he saw it as an opportunity to help Bava's overlooked capabilities as a director to gain recognition. "It wasn't really my film," he later told interviewer Luigi Cozzi. "It was about monsters, tentacled creatures from space, and that's Bava's line of work. It's his genre. The film was born almost by accident, to help Bava. You see, during that period, Mario was a director of photography, both for my films and those by Pietro Francisci [such as *Hercules*, 1957, and *Hercules Unchained*, 1958]. It was truly his work that made Francisci a success, because that director would sit on the set and fall asleep! I insisted to Bava, for the sake of our friendship, that he break off with Francisci—and he did . . . but times were hard. His dog was sick, there were taxes due . . . In short, he had to work in order to live. So I met with him at his father's house and proposed that we make *Caltiki* together. He accepted. I later abandoned the film a couple of days before it was finished."

To clarify Freda's remarks, he abandoned the picture *at some point* (it is not known exactly when he departed) prior to the completion of its *dramatic* scenes. This gave Bava an opportunity to gain some experience of working with actors and running a set. After this, there remained two or three weeks of filming devoted entirely to special effects, which was done entirely under Bava's supervision—a workload that amounted, in this case, to more than 100 individual trick shots. The shoot was precisely analogous to the way John Carpenter later made *The Thing* in 1981-82, with an initial schedule devoted to dramatic scenes followed by a separate post-production schedule devoted to filming Rob Bottin's special effects—though on a far more impoverished level.

As mentioned previously, *Caltiki* was inspired by the success of Hammer's *The Quatermass Xperiment* ("a rip-off," Bava bluntly termed it) and the story scripted by Filippo Sanjust mirrors the earlier film in many respects. In the Hammer film, the first manned space rocket returns to Earth with only one of its original three passengers still aboard. By viewing a film log of the trip, Quatermass (Brian Donlevy)—the head of the experimental rocket program—and his team see that the rocket was briefly assailed by mysterious waves in space. They soon learn that these waves were concentrated on passenger Victor Caroon (Richard Wordsworth), who physically absorbed his fellow passengers as well as what seems to be an alien intelligence. Caroon soon flees the hospital where he is under observation, committing a murder in the process, and is hunted like an animal. On the streets, he kills others and comes into physical contact with a cactus, which is absorbed into his arm and triggers his mutation into a shuffling, tendrilous organism that finds its way into Westminster Abbey for the grand climax. Sanjust's script also paid apparent attention to the other big amorphous threat movie of the moment, Irwin S. Yeaworth's *The Blob* (1958), released in Italy under the creepy title *Fluidi mortale* ("Deadly Fluid")—in which a growing, flesh-consuming blob was released from inside a landed meteor, of which the film's teenage hero has difficulty trying to convince the authorities.

In his job as special effects supervisor, Bava wasn't working with foam latex, methocellulose slime, or any of the other costly tools of Rob Bottin's effects crew on *The Thing*. The stuff and substance of the ancient Mayan god *Caltiki* was nothing more or less than common household tripe—animal intestines, that is ("the cheap kind that butchers set aside for cats," Bava wryly noted). Bava claimed that he and his team (which included his father Eugenio and, sometimes, even his teenage son Lamberto) went through as much as 220 pounds of it every single day. His use of tripe is a testament to how closely Bava had studied his point of inspiration. According to an interview with British special effects man Les Bowie (published in *Little Shoppe of Horrors* #4), the shuffling, blob-like creature that astronaut Richard Wordsworth becomes in the final reel of *The Quatermass Xperiment* was created by special effects man John Cline out of tripe—something that Bava could have deduced at the time only by meticulously scrutinizing a print of the Hammer film.

First released in August 1959, *Caltiki* earned about 59,000 *lira* during its Italian playdates—about \$1,200,000 in today's money. This doesn't sound like very much, but considering that the film was likely made for 30-35,000 *lira*, it probably failed to double its original cost in earnings. It was released in America in September of 1960, but not until 1962 in Great Britain, where it was subjected to censorship cuts.



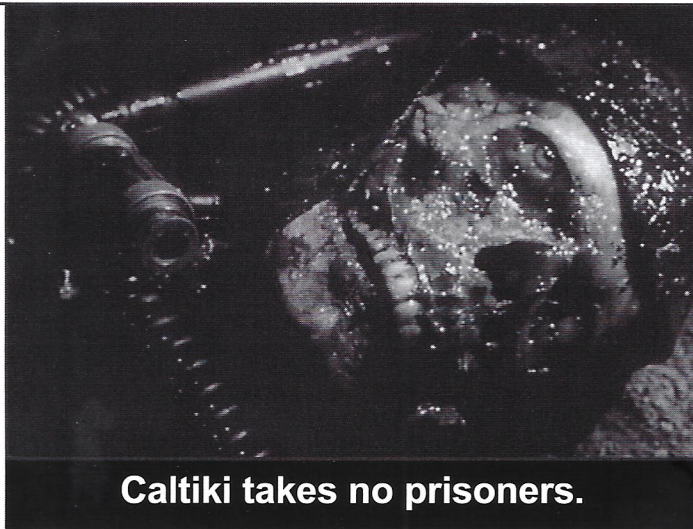
So how did such a fun, scary, accomplished monster movie become much more talked-about than seen by this point in time?

Well, *Caltiki's* US distributor, Allied Artists Pictures Corporation, filed for bankruptcy in 1979 and their various TV syndication titles began to disappear from circulation in the early 1980s. (One of their last TV acquisitions was Bava's sparsely released 1973 feature, *Lisa and the Devil*.) After this, *Caltiki* basically disappeared for many, many years. In my capacity as liner notes and audio commentary contributor to past Mario Bava releases on disc, I've occasionally heard internal rumors that *Caltiki* had been considered by one or more companies as a possible release—but it was always passed over, its brisk running time as much as a commercial discouragement as its black-and-white photography.

Things began to change as recently as five years ago, when the Italian label NoShame Releasing issued *Caltiki il Mostro Immortale* on DVD with supplementary input from the likes of Luigi Cozzi and Stefano Della Casa. While this release was somewhat English-friendly and had unprecedented access to an Italian print of the film (which boasts a far more effective dubbing track than the English one), the film itself looked every bit as dark and murky as the American bootlegs that popped up from time to time. Indeed, at the time I sat down to record my audio commentary for Arrow's release of *Caltiki*, they did not yet have their 2K remaster in hand, and my comments had to be guided by my copy of the NoShame release, which was so dark I wondered if Bava had perhaps deliberately timed the film to look this way to conceal some telltale birthmarks of his special effects shots. Little did I know at that time how truly revelatory the Arrow release was going to be!

Arrow's *Caltiki the Immortal Monster* is a 2K digital restoration of the film's best surviving element, a 35mm duplicate negative preserved at Cineteca di Bologna, that was carried out at L'Immagine Ritrovate, also in Bologna, Italy. When James White (Arrow's Head of Restorations) was sent his initial brief on the dupe neg, prior to traveling to Bologna to supervise the restoration, it notified him that the element had a screen ratio of 1.33:1. He knew this information to be at odds with the data included in my book *Mario Bava—All the Colors of the Dark*, which had specified a 1.66:1 ratio, so he emailed me to confirm my finding. I was naturally concerned that I'd made an error; it is now nearly a decade since my book was published and the research was older still—I couldn't recall if I had obtained the information from the film's pressbook or if it was simply a best guess, based on what was then the standard projection ratio, even for films lensed at full aperture.

James and I discussed this, and in an email dated January 27, he expressed his strong inclination to release the film at 1.33:1 unless something in the element itself strongly indicated a preference for 1.66:1 matting—an exposed stage light, for example, or perhaps onscreen evidence of how a special effect was achieved. He wasn't scheduled to arrive in Bologna to begin work on the project until February 7, but he asked if I could possibly look at a raw transfer of the 35mm element with an eye peeled toward anything that might confirm the intended screen ratio, one way or another. Of course, I was excited by the invitation and, as it happens, I was sent a password that allowed me to view the element before anyone else at Arrow had a chance to look at it. What I found therein was more important than even I recognized on the first pass.



## Caltiki takes no prisoners.

First of all, as I had told the disc's producer, Michael Mackenzie, I had never seen a copy of *Caltiki* that wasn't murky-looking. Even in its untreated state, without the image sharpened or the contrast adjusted, the dupe negative was unexpectedly bright and beautiful. As promised, from the very first shot of the film's masterful special effects prologue, the image filled the entire frame . . . *but then something happened*. As soon as the opening credits ended, with Nieto's perilous climb over the rocks, the image was abruptly matted to 1.66:1! Was only the title sequence to be unmatted? Then, as Nieto arrived at the Fieldings' encampment, the image was unmatted once again! And then, as Nieto awoke from his coma to scream "Caltiki!", the matte bars were back! At least one thing was immediately certain: Once the bars were placed there, they could not be removed, so the intention had obviously been to matte all of the footage and release the picture in 1.66:1. I was relieved by this confirmation that the data in my book was correct, but then another question presented itself. Why was so much material in the raw element unmatted? Was it random, as it initially seemed to be, or was there in fact a logic behind it?

While researching my book, I had learned that Mario Bava began hard-matting his movies in the mid-1960s, when he began working in the "SuperPanoramico" ratio of 1.85:1, around the time of *Planet of the Vampires (Terrore nello spazio)*, 1965. This allowed him to exert total control over how his images would be framed in theatrical projection—especially his special effects shots, which often made use of extreme periphery and thus could easily be ruined with the wrong matte box applied to the projector. However, as this privileged look at *Caltiki* showed me, nearly all of its special effects shots were unmatted—the only matted effects shots were those effects (like the volcanic background to Nieto's arrival at the encampment) that had to be staged on-set in concert with the actors. The more closely I studied the footage, I noticed that the unmatting wasn't exclusive to the special effects shots at all; it also extended to some dramatic scenes, or isolated moments within matted dramatic scenes (as in the case of Nieto's aforementioned cry).

Then something clicked. The one thing I knew for certain was that Bava had been solely responsible for the film's special effects, and the great majority of that material was unmatted in its original state. Could it be that Bava had deliberately left the mattes off all the footage he had supervised, as a visual marker to help the film's editor (Mario Serandrei—*Ossessione*, *Fabiola*, and numerous earlier projects for both Bava and Freda) distinguish Freda's footage from his own?

Close study of the dupe neg encouraged this line of thinking. The matted content seemed to consist entirely of master shots and cutaways that were shot with actors on the sets at Titanus-Appia Studios (formerly Scalera Film)—precisely the sort of things that would have been addressed in the early stages of production, when Freda was in place as director. Likewise, there were a number of unmatted shots in the dramatic scenes, most of which were in the nature of inserts or could be explained as "pick-up" shots. For example, in the scene where Professor Rodriguez (Vittorio André) explains the relationship between *Caltiki* and her so-called "bridegroom," the returning comet Arsinöë, the scene's master shot is matted while the close-ups of André are not. This suggests that the scene was either initially filmed without the proper coverage, or that some fault inherent in the coverage (dialogue, performance) required that it be refilmed. In either case, the unmatted footage would have had to be filmed later in the schedule, which again supports the theory that the unmatted footage falls into Bava's purview, which covered the end of production, the two weeks of special effects photography, and the editing of the picture. Editing is not only a period when the editor works with the director to assemble the film from the available footage; it is also a period when the editor must also point out to his director that additional shots are needed to make a scene cut together properly. This also supports the conjecture that Bava was responsible for the unmatted insert shots where they occur, because it was he who worked with Serandrei in the editing room.

Speaking of Professor Rodriguez, all of the footage pertaining to his visits to the Fielding home are also unmatted. Even the brooding night exterior shot of his automobile driving away from the Fieldings' walled gate outside the premises is unmatted—and gives fascinating evidence of a scene rewritten in the editing. The fully exposed frame shows this shot commencing as matted (= directed by Freda), with the matte bars dissolving to an open gauge after the car drives away, with the menacing Max stepping out of the shadows in a perfectly matched continuation of the shot—the matte bars disappearing just before he appears! Likewise, Rodriguez' strangely gratuitous death in an incendiary car crash (stock footage lifted from the first chapter of the 1946 Republic serial *The Crimson Ghost!*) is unmatted, which helps us to make sense of why such a spectacular death goes unmentioned by anyone elsewhere in the picture. The absent matte bars tell us it must have been added late in the game, either to bring up the running time or to add some excitement to an overly talkative reel.

The disappearing, reappearing mattes can also tell us some fascinating things about Bava's technical cleverness at concealing where and how certain scenes were shot. During the important scene of Dr. Fielding's expedition to *Caltiki's* cave, take note of how the mattes are absent during the underwater shots (which would have been left for post-production), then present during those cave interiors showing *Caltiki's* pool, and absent again during those shots showing the actors arriving and departing the impressive cavern structure. It came as quite a revelation to me that, while the cave itself was a real place—in fact, Bava had recently shot there before, as it's the home of the exiled King Oedipus in *Hercules Unchained*, made the year before *Caltiki*—the pool was not part of it, but filmed on a soundstage at Titanus-Appia and cleverly photographed to appear continuous. (A tip-off is the statue of the Mayan god *Caltiki*



overseeing the pool, which Freda himself sculpted, and which was then apparently photographed amid surrounding rocks and projected onto a blank backdrop behind the pool.) Here the mattes may be telling us that Freda had intended to film the entire cave sequence in the studio, for the sake of expedience, while Bava knew from his own recent filmmaking adventures that the illusion could be sold even better with some location footage filmed in caves where he had worked recently.

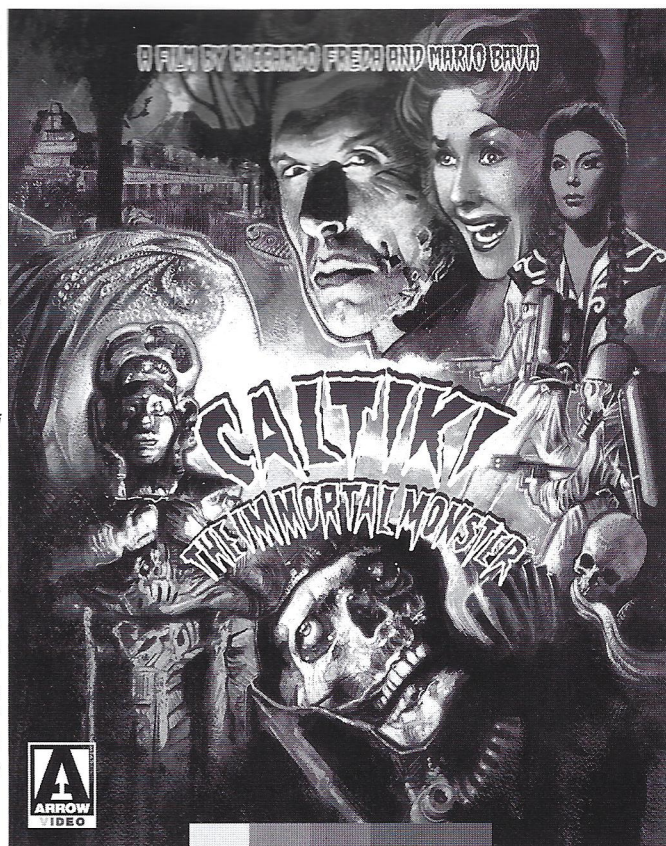
After subjecting the birthmarks of the dupe negative to every rational argument I could think of, I became convinced that there was simply too much logic behind their placement for them to be random or accidental—and I'm pleased to say that James White and Michael Mackenzie at Arrow agreed with me, because their concurrence means that you will have a chance to examine this raw footage for yourself.

Fortunately, *Caltiki* isn't a very long film, so it did not pose too serious a data-storage problem (even with a healthy assortment of extras already aboard) to include both the matted and unmatted versions of the film on disc. This isn't the first time a film has been offered on disc in a choice of cropped and uncropped versions, but it's the first time this has been done for what might be termed forensic reasons.

Of course, most people want only to be entertained, and the 1.66:1 version of *Caltiki the Immortal Monster* provides exactly what the makers of this film wanted its audiences to see. The mattes imposed on the principal scenes in the unmatted version prove this. Having now seen the finished work that James White put into his restoration, I feel certain that the film's fans are about to become its admirers. Bava's B&W cinematography has been lifted out of its former murk to a state of high gloss, shiny whites and deep blacks, that makes Gerard Haerter's performance even more chilling and Didi Perego's shapely physicality almost distractingly sexy. The unmatted version, on the other hand, is a gift for the armchair historians, the true connoisseurs. At the very least, with one-third of the full image newly exposed, this version will treat them to a more generous view of Bava's remarkable special effects than has ever been granted in the film's nearly 60-year history.

*Caltiki* is that rare movie which is almost never discussed without its mixed parentage also being mentioned, and this unprecedented opportunity to "peer behind the curtain" exposes all the hammered nails of the film's carpentry. Thanks to the foresight and indulgence of Arrow Video, we can now all see—with our own eyes—how much Mario Bava did to make this orphaned project the cult favorite that it is.

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***Caltiki the Immortal Monster* is now available as a Blu-ray/DVD combo from Arrow Films.**

