

Exclusive: Jess Franco planning two new films

Written by Chris Alexander
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Not only is Spanish-born, internationally marked horror, cult and exploitation filmmaker Jess Franco one of the most prolific directors in cinema history (over 200 films made over the span of 50+ years, and under a plethora of pseudonyms), he's also one of the most passionate and enigmatic. A natural voyeur and obsessive lover of movies – both as architect and spectator – Franco's films are intriguing, brilliant, frustrating, visionary, reckless and dividing; sometimes within a single scene. Take his 1974 sex vampire classic BARE BREASTED COUNTESS – aka EROTIKILL, LES AVALEUSE, LOVES OF IRINA etc - on for size...it's as personal and confounding a picture as you'll ever encounter and yet it's also unforgettable.

The star of BARE BREASTED COUNTESS was Lina Romay, the Spanish model, actress, long time muse and common law wife/professional partner to Franco, the absolute love of his life. When she passed earlier this year after a battle with cancer, universal concern for Franco's welfare was felt from his friends and fans.

One of those admirers and pals, PLAGUE TOWN and THEATRE BIZARRE director and Severin Films mastermind David Gregory, ventured to Franco's home in Spain to sit with him, discuss some of his classics and get a sense of where his emotional wellbeing was at.

As it turns out, Franco is thriving and planning to direct two new horror films.

[They] will start shooting next month in Malaga," Gregory tells FANGORIA, "and I've no idea on budget, but I understand longtime Franco actor/collaborator Antonio Mayans is involved in the productions. They will be titled SISTER VAMPIRE and THE CASE OF THE FRIGHTENED LADY, the latter based on an Edgar Wallace story [*Ed. note—Adapted as a film in 1940, THE CASE OF THE FRIGHTENED LADY concerns an aristocratic family and their propensity for murderous deeds*]."

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Gregory also shared an audio clip with us, wherein he asks Franco if he ever had planned to stop making movies.

“Never,” said Franco. “The one day I have to stop, life will stop for me. This is the thing I prefer. The death of Lina gave me—instead of letting me die in a corner—it gave me the power to go again.”

This is great news for Franco fans and fantastic evidence that his love and undying need to express himself will never, ever go gently into that good night. Keep your eyes focused on the pages of a future issue of FANGORIA for some exclusive, extensive and equally passionate Jess Franco coverage.