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| **Your article** |
| Fantômas |
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| [Enter an **abstract** for your article] |
| The silent crime serial *Fantômas* (1913) is considered to be one of the best and most influential works of French film director Louis Feuillade, and is the first and most famous of many films based on the eponymous villain created by writers Marcel Allain and Pierre Souvestre in their long series of hugely popular books. In *Fantômas,* Feuillade first experimented on a large scale with techniques that would become staples of the thriller and other genres. In a foreshadowing of modern studio wars, Pathe and Gaumont fought for the rights to develop *Fantômas* into a movie (Abel 373). The character of Fantômas was an inspiration for writer Norbert Jacques’ master criminal Dr. Mabuse, while modernist director Fritz Lang’s films, including his adaptations of Jacques’ work, seem to bear the mark of Feuillade’s realist fantasies (for example the striking similarity between the opening sequence of Lang’s 1922 *Dr. Mabuse, der Spieler* [Dr. Mabuse the Gambler] and that of *Fantômas*), although there is no definitive evidence that Lang himself acknowledged such a debt. Surrealists too were fascinated by the character, in particular René Magritte, who made direct studies of Feuillade’s film (Walz 71).  Magritte, René. *L'Assassin menace* (The Menaced Assassin) 1927  Oil on canvas, 59 1/4″ x 6′ 4 7/8″ (150.4 x 195.2 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Kay Sage Tanguy Fund. Charly Herscovici—ADAGP—ARS, 2013  Fantômas, dir. Louis Feuillade, France, Gaumont  René Magritte posing with his (no longer extant) 1927 painting *Le barbare* (The Savage), a clear likeness of Fantômas. (1938) ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London |
| Further reading:  (Abel)  (Thomson)  (Walz) |