



SEGUNDO DE CHOMÓN

TERUEL, SPAIN, 1871 - PARIS, FRANCE, 1929

The son of a doctor with a penchant for photography, Segundo de Chomón moved to Paris in 1895, months before the official presentation of the Lumière cinematographer. His wife was an actress that worked at the Georges Méliès film hand-colouring workshop, where Chomón acquired the know-how to establish in Barcelona his own lighting and sign-painting workshop, working both for Méliès and for the major French production company Pathé Frères. His innovative spirit and his skill as a technician stood out soon, and Chomón started working as a feature producer and operator. In 1905, Pathé hired him to make *films à trucs*, fantasy films that could compete with those of Georges Méliès. Like his counterpart, he made some films inspired in Jules Verne's works, like *Excursion dans la Lune* (1908) or *Voyage au centre de la Terre* (1909). In 1912, he joined Itala Film, a production company from Turin, and worked in silent masterpieces like Giovanni Pastrone's *Cabiria* (1914) or Abel Gance's *Napoleon* (1927).



ENRIQUE RAMBAL

UTIEL, VALENCIA, SPAIN, C. 1890 - VALENCIA, SPAIN, 1956

Actor, director, author and impresario, Enrique Rambal is one of the most prominent figures of Spanish theatre in the first half of the 20th century. A fan of serials, he became specialized in spectacular melodrama and had a repertoire comprising over five hundred works inspired both in great classics and in popular novels or films. His company's *mise en scène* soon stood out thanks to its complexity, using dozens of performers, constant mutations and plenty of scenographic tricks borrowed from cinema. He made incredible adaptations of the most famous novels of Verne, like *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea* and *Michael Strogoff: The Courier of the Czar* in 1928 or *Around the World in Eighty Days* in 1934. He had massive audiences, both in Spain and in Latin America; but Rambal was a victim of an unbridled passion for theatre that led him to ruin and obscurity. His life was full of women, debts, voyages and mysteries, but there's almost no documentary proof about it: what's left just tells us how much he made his audiences enjoy his shows.



NELLIE BLY

COCHRAN'S MILLS, UNITED STATES, 1864 - NEW YORK, UNITED STATES, 1922

Elizabeth Jane Cochrane became Nellie Bly because of an offensive sexist article published in the *Pittsburgh Dispatch*: she sent a complaint letter so well written that the editor hired her immediately, and as a journalist she used that alias inspired in a popular song. She kept her *nom de plume* when she started working at Joseph Pulitzer's *The New York World*, where she wrote an article on the horrid conditions of Blackwell Island's psychiatric institution for women, where she was admitted as a patient. That was the first of her undercover journalism stories, a genre she pioneered. She was already famous when, in 1889, *The World* sent her around the globe in an attempt to beat Phileas Fogg's time: not only she completed the trip in seventy-two days, she also made a visit to the Vernes in Amiens. She had a glorious return, but the feat was soon forgotten. In 1895 she married the millionaire Robert Seaman; and, when her husband died, she managed his companies, but led them to bankruptcy in no time. In need of money, she returned to journalism and lived a second golden age, during which she worked as a correspondent in World War I and fought for women's rights.



ORSON WELLES

KENOSHA, UNITED STATES, 1915 - HOLLYWOOD, UNITED STATES, 1985

In 1938, a young Orson Welles caused a commotion with his radio adaptation of H. G. Wells' classic *The War of the Worlds*: quite a few listeners believed that it was a real broadcast and that New Jersey was being attacked by aliens. This early success allowed him to start his outstanding career as a cinematographic director with the film *Citizen Kane*. In 1946, after completing a commissioned film, Welles wanted to produce a musical inspired in his favourite childhood novel, *Around the World in Eighty Days*. It was an extravagant production with a cast of seventy actors and music by Cole Porter. The most spectacular scenes included a giant eagle, circus acts, a mechanical elephant, a train, original shootings and thirty-eight sets inspired in George Méliès films. Welles spent all his savings and turned to several investors, amongst them Harry Cohn, CEO of Columbia Pictures, who got in return Welles' promise to make a film for him at no cost. Broadway only offered seventy-five shows of this ruinous musical, and Orson Welles filmed *The Lady from Shanghai* for Columbia as compensation.