



### New World Summary

- The 1989-1994 Zorro television series consists of 88 half hour episodes of live action produced by an international co-production group which included New World Television and the Family Channel from the U. S., Ellipse Programme of Canal Plus from France, Germany's Beta TV, and Italy's RAI.
- ZORRO was filmed entirely on location at studio facilities near Madrid.
- The New World Zorro aired in approximately 35 countries around the world.



### SERIES SYNOPSIS: ZORRO: THE LEGEND

In the early 1800's, Los Angeles was a dusty pueblo, the farthest colonial outpost of the Spanish empire. The pueblo was plagued with the problems of the frontier, including drought, earthquakes, lawlessness, and municipal corruption. This wild and untamed land was governed by the pueblo's mayor, the ALCALDE, a corrupt dictator whose word is law and whose law is absolute.

Only one man is courageous enough to take a stand against the injustices of the cruel Alcalde: a masked rider named ZORRO. With his trademark whip and sword, he is everywhere and nowhere, quick to defend the innocent and attack the guilty. And always he leaves his trademark symbol, a 'Z,' the mark of Zorro.

No one knows Zorro's true identity: not the ALCALDE, despite his unending efforts; not the lovely tavern keeper VICTORIA who is in love with him; not even the wealthy landowner DON ALEJANDRO who is his father. Only FELIPE, a deaf-mute servant, knows that his master DON DIEGO is Zorro - the hero no one can unmask.

Zorro is the original caped crusader, a man of mystery and intrigue who fights injustice with cunning. He is the master swordsman, a handsome and romantic hero.

#### CAST:

**Duncan Regehr** plays **Don Diego de la Vega** and his alter ego – the Spanish fox who fights injustice – ZORRO. Diego is an educated man, well versed in the arts and sciences who conceals his identity as Zorro. He uses his knowledge and athleticism to defend the poor and helpless.

In this guise, he is soft-spoken with impeccable manners who avoids risk-taking behavior. He pretends to be clumsy with a sword, abhors violence and shows no interest in women. He spends his time in intellectual pursuits, reading, writing poetry, playing the piano, and conducting scientific experiments. He is in love with Victoria but fears that she will not want him because she sees none of Zorro's brave traits in him. They have always related more as a brother and sister than showing any romantic interest in one another.

**Patrice Martinez**, as **Victoria Escalante** owns the tavern. She is Zorro's love interest but considers Don Diego merely a good friend. Diego is secretly in love with Victoria. He is envious of Zorro's relationship with Victoria which creates interesting dramatic tension since he is in fact Zorro. Since Victoria doesn't know that Diego is Zorro, it's as if she is in love with another man.

**James Victor** plays the lovable **Sergeant Jaime Mendoza**. He is first under the command of the Alcalde in the Pueblo de Los Angeles. He provides comic relief in the series with his lovable incompetence, general tomfoolery, and overindulgence in food and wine.

**Michael Tylo**, the **Alcalde Luis Ramón**, tries to advance his political career by resorting to radical tactics of oppression in hopes of winning a transfer to a better garrison.

**John Hertzler** is the **Alcalde, Ignacio De Soto**, succeeds Luis Ramon as Mayor of the Pueblo in Season 3. A fastidious man, obsessed with money, prestige and power, expects that capturing Zorro will facilitate his return to Spain as a hero.

**Juan Diego Botto** is **Felipe**, Zorro's trusted aid. As a mute orphan living with the de la Vegas, Felipe appears timid in his role as a house servant. Felipe is the only one who knows Zorro's true identity, and Diego is the only one who knows that Felipe can hear.

**Efrem Zimbalist, Jr.** played **Don Alejandro de la Vega**, Diego's father, in Season 1. He is a wealthy landowner and well respected in the Los Angeles Pueblo. Father and son may have moved beyond a typical relationship to become close friends, however, even Alejandro does

not know his son Diego's secret identity. Diego's behavior often upsets his father. Unaware of the truth, Alejandro wishes his son were more like Zorro.

**Henry Darrow** took over the role of **Don Alejandro** in the subsequent Seasons 2, 3 & 4. He portrays an outspoken man with a spirited personality who is easily angered, especially when an injustice has been committed. He is impulsive and an adventure-seeker who has difficulty understanding his son, Diego, who is so different from him.

**Tornado**, Zorro's gallant black stallion, who rides like the wind, is not an ordinary horse. He was captured as a wild horse and trained by Zorro. He seems to know exactly what Zorro is thinking and knows when Zorro is in danger. He follows commands conveyed to him through eye signals and slight gestures. He has saved Zorro's life many times.



#### THE PRODUCTION TEAM:

**Executive Producers:** **Gary Goodman** and **Barry Rosen** formed Goodman Rosen Productions in 1980 after individual careers in production and development.

**Supervising Producer:** **Robert L. McCullough** brought a wealth of television production experience to Zorro centered around writing-producing-directing.

**Story Editor:** **Phillip John Taylor**, an experienced writer for television and graduate of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London who spent two years as Associate Director at the American Shakespeare Theater in Stratford, Connecticut.

**Directors:** Many of the finest directors in television worked on the series including: **Ron Satloff**, **Ray Austin**, **Michael Vejar**, and **Michael A. Levine**

***Fight Director/Stunt Coordinator:* Peter Diamond** is an acknowledged master of screen action. He staged the futuristic laser-light sword fights for all three films in *The Star Wars Trilogy*. He choreographed the more traditional swashbuckling sword play of Rob Reiner's *The Princess Bride* among many other acclaimed television credits. The accomplished fencing master and stunt double also choreographed stage duels for the Royal London Opera House, The Old Vic, The National Theatre, and many London productions on the West End. For *Zorro*, he trained the actors in screen fencing.

#### PRODUCTION NOTES:

Recreating the 18th century world of the Spanish Dons and Señoritas of the rancho society of early California in Spain was a formidable task and challenge for the producers, cast and crew alike. Researchers from the Spanish National Archives and the California Historical Society provided the production with volumes of material which included wardrobe sketches, photographs, manuscripts on manners and customs, military uniforms, and weapons of the period. Costume designers went about creating original wardrobe for the principal actors as well as for guest players. Clothing was assembled to dress extras as citizens of the pueblo and uniforms for a full military garrison. Textile merchants and warehouses in Madrid were combed for fabrics that would approximate the look of the period wardrobe. Silversmiths and leather craftsmen were sought to recreate items of dress worn by Spanish noblemen and vaqueros.

Art directors constructed a detailed recreation of the pueblo of Los Angeles circa 1820 based on the original plans on a 34-acre studio lot just outside of Madrid. Construction of the main set took seven weeks utilizing 50 carpenters, 15 craftsmen, 35 laborers and 25 painters. The exterior set, complete with church plaza, military garrison, rancho haciendas, adobe structures, cantina, and main street, was designed with practical interiors to accommodate interior filming when needed.

Before undertaking the role of Zorro, Regehr, familiar with fencing from his days training as a classical Shakespearean actor, underwent hours of a vigorous regimen with stunt co-ordinator and fencing master Peter Diamond in order to learn intricate swashbuckling moves for the cameras.

For Patrice Martinez, Señorita Victoria Escalante, the corsets and layers of embroidered lace undergarments along with the full dresses, added 25 lbs of weight, which she had to learn to carry gracefully.

Stunt horses and stunt men capable of riding and executing various stunts had become increasingly rare as cinema had moved away from Westerns over the years. Specially trained movie horses were brought to Madrid so they could be readied for their work on *Zorro*. Mules, burros, and vehicles of the period including wagons and buggies had to be located. The actors went through a training period of learning to ride with a Spanish saddle and in the use of various weaponry including swords and flintlock pistols.

Many of the props and decorative items were faithful recreations of the original items created by the many talented Spanish and French craftsmen working on Zorro. Certain irreplaceable one of a kind items were given on loan to the production by various historical societies and museums. These articles were placed under lock and key until they were needed on the set and an armed guard looked after them 24 hours a day. These items included: a diamond bracelet and necklace of the period, gold jewelry made in Mexico City in the 1700's, and church related ornaments belonging to the Franciscans, the religious order of priests who founded the California Missions.



#### NOMINATIONS AND OTHER NOTES:

- Actor John Christian Graas was one of the nominees for the Best Young Actor Guest-Starring or Recurring Role in a TV Series at the 13th Annual Youth in Film Awards, 1990-1991. He was nominated for his role as Pepe in the episodes "The Buccaneers" and "A New Beginning."
- The New Zorro was one of the nominees for the Best Off-Prime Time or Cable Series at the 13th Annual Youth in Film Awards, 1990-1991.
- Henry Darrow is the only actor to ever star in three different versions of Zorro: The New Adventures of Zorro, Zorro and Son, and the New World Zorro.
- Henry Darrow's favorite episode is "Like Father, Like Son" because he was able to be Zorro in that episode.
- The New World Zorro series was designated as one of First Lady Barbara Bush's Thousand Points of Light for the role it played as a motivational tool for At-Risk learners. This award was the result of the laudatory work of Alma Burnette, Resource Teacher in the Covington School District of Kentucky, who developed a Teachers Guide to the Zorro episodes which was supported and promoted by the Family Channel on Cable in the Classroom.

