



LUCHA MEXICO

A film by Alex Hammond & Ian Markiewicz

Official Selection, 2015 DOC NYC Film Festival

2015 / USA / 105 min. / Color / In Spanish and English

Press materials: www.kinolorber.com

www.luchamexicofilm.com

Distributor Contact:

Kino Lorber

333 W. 39th Street

New York, NY 10018

(212) 629-6880

Rodrigo Brandao, Rodrigo@kinolorber.com

Publicist:

Emma Griffiths/ Emma Griffiths PR

(917) 806-0599

emma@eg-pr.com

Synopsis:

The ultimate look behind the mask, *Lucha Mexico* documents the joyous spectacle of Lucha Libre, which has thrilled fans in Mexico for generations. The film gives the audience the ultimate access to these legendary masked wrestlers, in the ring and beyond the lights of the stadium.

Born into the entertainment business, 'El 1000% Guapo' SHOCKER is one of the most successful Luchadores of the modern era. His life is consumed by a need to be in the ring. As tag team partner with extreme American strength competitor JON 'STRONGMAN' ANDERSEN, Shocker also becomes a guide to working in Mexico City. After long days of body building at Fabian's Gym, owned and operated by their masked wrestler colleague FABIAN "EL GITANO," these unique entertainers headline events around the country. Injuries and death eventually threaten to end these thriving careers, forcing each performer to search for what truly matters in their lives

A supporting cast of fan-favorites further reveal Lucha Libre from the inside, with BLUE DEMON JR discussing life behind a legendary mask, the tragic HIJO DEL PERRO AGUAYO pursuing violent creative change, and veterans like TONY SALAZAR and ARKANGEL teaching the new generation. These stars and more illuminate the physical and emotional challenges they face in the constant fight to stand between the ropes and thrill every last fan. With an unprecedented level of access to the top Lucha promotions and performers in the world, *Lucha Mexico* steps into the ring, pulls back the mask, and reveals a powerful look into the beating heart of Mexico.

Lucha Libre- A Brief History:

Lucha Libre is known to millions around the world as Mexico's colorfully acrobatic version of professional wrestling. For nearly a century, the iconic masks and epic battles have remained synonymous with fun and excitement. Luchadores are the Superheroes of Mexican pop culture: El Santo and Blue Demon, the original stars who helped build the business, are the country's own Superman and Batman. This long-standing tradition, one that filled arenas long before Vince McMahon even dreamed of WWE, is an enduring entertainment for the whole family that gains new fans every day.

Though loved by Latinos internationally, it is the enormous home audience that has most fully embraced Lucha Libre. Arenas have been built in both big cities and small towns, running wrestling events all year round, and in addition to countless independent promotions, two major independent organizations flourish with star power and imaginative showmanship. Several times a year, major gatherings and conventions bring thousands of fans face-to-face with their heroes, although it's a daily part of a wrestler's life to interact personally with the fans. Such is the popularity of Lucha Libre that masks

are seen in one form or another everywhere in Mexico, and a match can be found almost any night of the week.

Basic Terminology: Lucha Libre:

Lucha Libre: “Free Fighting.” A style of professional wrestling unique to Mexico, with many performers in masks, and a greater focus on acrobatics than in the US or Japan.

Technico : The good guys. Fan favorites who play by the rules and love their audience.

Rudo : The bad guys. Dirty fighters who sneer at the crowd.

Suplex: An offensive wrestling move used around the world, in which the opponent is lifted and slammed onto their back and a greater focus on acrobatics than in the US or Japan.

Tope: A move that involves flying over the ropes.

Arena Mexico: The biggest venue in the world built specifically for professional wrestling. It has operated several weekly shows without fail for 60 years, and is the main hub of all Lucha Libre.

CMLL: Consejo Mundial De Lucha Libre, or “World Wrestling Council.” Founded by Salvador Lutteroth in 1933 and based in the Arena Mexico, it is the oldest still-running wrestling promotion in the entire world. The CMLL Anniversary show is the biggest Lucha event of the year.

AAA: Founded in the early 90s by Antonio Peña, a former head of public relations for CMLL, AAA is the other major Lucha Libre promotion in Mexico. It is home to some of Mexico’s most popular wrestlers.

Perros Del Mal: An independent promotion created by El Hijo Del Perro Aguayo, they became infamous for bloody, violent hardcore matches in their quick rise to the top.

Mask vs. Mask Match: Two masked wrestlers put their masks on the line, typically the biggest matches of the year. And as a crossroads virtually every masked wrestler comes to, it’s a make or break moment for many careers.

Key Cast:

SHOCKER: Billed as “1000% Guapo,” Shocker is one of the most recognizable faces in Lucha Libre. Raised in a wrestling family, he has been a consistently popular, top-drawing luchador his entire professional life. After sustaining a severe knee injury, he works overtime to make his way back to the ring, with grueling rehabilitation sessions matched by an equally grueling wrestling schedule.

STRONGMAN: A successful retired strength-competitor from northern California, Jon “Strongman” Andersen maintains a massively extreme bodybuilding physique. Though he entered wrestling as a second career, Jon’s unique look and performance have made him an instant fan favorite. After working through an arm injury that would stop many wrestler’s careers, he eventually has to leave Mexico behind and let his battered body mend.

FABIAN “EL GITANO”: A respected and popular mid-card star, former dancer Fabian El Gitano was determined to find a place with his friends at the top. In his effort to support the dream, he owned and operated a gym used by colleagues like Shocker and Jon “Strongman.” But when Fabian has to put his treasured mask on the line - and his anonymity - his life takes a turn towards tragedy.

BLUE DEMON JR: Proudly carrying on the tradition of classic Lucha Libre, Demon’s charisma and showmanship keeps his iconic father’s legacy alive in the modern era. Perhaps more secretive than any other wrestler, the famous mask is his only public face.

EL HIJO DEL PERRO AGUAYO: The proud son of a Lucha legend, El Hijo Del Perro Aguayo attempts to violently shake up the creative status quo. Always willing to push the boundaries of what a wrestling show can be, he actively seeks fresh ways to expand the business and captivate new audiences. In a freak accident, his impressive career is brutally ended in the middle of the ring.

Cast:

ARKANGEL: A still-active wrestling veteran of over 25 years. Arkangel trains young Luchadores starting out at the Arena Mexico.

ULTIMO GUERRERO: One of the most popular and exciting Rudos. Ultimo Guerrero is always there to torment the heroes, often straying far from the script.

FABY APACHE: Born into a wrestling family, Faby is an impressive natural talent. She ably demonstrates why the women champions should be taken just as seriously as the men.

SEXY STAR: In her own words, Lucha Libre saved Sexy Star's life. Her love of wrestling, and her faith in its power to save, has pushed her all the way to the top.

GIGANTE BERNARD: A former WWF Superstar enjoying the second phase of a long career. To reconnect with his passion for wrestling, Bernard travels the world as an independent performer.

DAMIAN 666: Old colleague and close friend of Perro Aguayo. Damian has a reputation around the world for extreme and bloody matches, but Perro's death makes him question how he can even get back in the ring.

HALLOWEEN: Among the most loyal members of Perros Del Mal. Halloween is an unpredictable hardcore fighter who reached some of his greatest heights while teamed with Perro Aguayo.

TONY SALAZAR: A retired Luchador who returned as both teacher and head of security for the Arena Mexico. Tony demonstrates why so few will ever make it in Lucha Libre.

KEMONITO: The company mascot. This tiny performer dresses like a fuzzy blue monkey, takes endless abuse in the ring, and survives it all with humor and dignity.

JULIO CESAR RIVERA: Host of every World Council of Lucha Libre broadcast. Julio is both scholar and fan of Mexican wrestling, and our guide to the history of the business.

The Filmmakers:

Ian Markiewicz - Director & Editor:

An independent filmmaker based in NYC. His previous film, the feature documentary *Better Than Something: Jay Reatard*, was released to theaters and VOD in 2012. Ian has also collaborated with direct cinema pioneer Albert Maysles on various projects, including *The Love We Make* (with Paul McCartney), *Rolling Stones: Get Yer Ya Yas Out*, and *ESPN's Muhammad and Larry*.

Alex Hammond - Producer & Director

Alex has worked in Film and TV in NYC for over ten years. Her feature debut, *Strange Things* premiered at MoMA's Documentary Fortnight Film Festival and featured on PBS's Independent Lens series. In 2012, she produced and co-directed *Better Than Something: Jay Reatard*, hailed as the "Best Rock-Doc of the Year" by AV Club and IFC.

Crew:

Directed by, Cinematography by, Edited by.... Alex Hammond & Ian Markiewicz

Produced By....Alex Hammond

Written By....Ian Markiewicz

Co-Producers....Ian Markiewicz, Sandra Granados, Margarita Altamirano

Music Supervisor....Abe Bradshaw

Original Music....Jonathan Snipes, Sergio Mendoza, Odilon Chavez, Heartour

With Songs By.... Rodrigo Y Gabriela, The Sword, The Tubes, Orkesta Mendoza, Los Elásticos, Sanjuana, Conjunto Africa, Miguel Aceves Mejia

Assistant Editors....Max Cavanaugh, Chris McCue, Victoria Linares Villegas

Consulting Editor....Sam Pollard

Additional Camera....Sean Price Williams

Supervising Conform Editor....Eugene Lehnert

Colorist....Alex Berman

Supervising Sound Mixer & Re-recording Mixer....Tom Paul

Dialogue Editor....Michael Feuser

Sound Designer....Andrea Bella

Title Artwork....Adam Markiewicz