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EVIL DEAD III

**SAM RAIMI'S
ARMY OF DARKNESS**

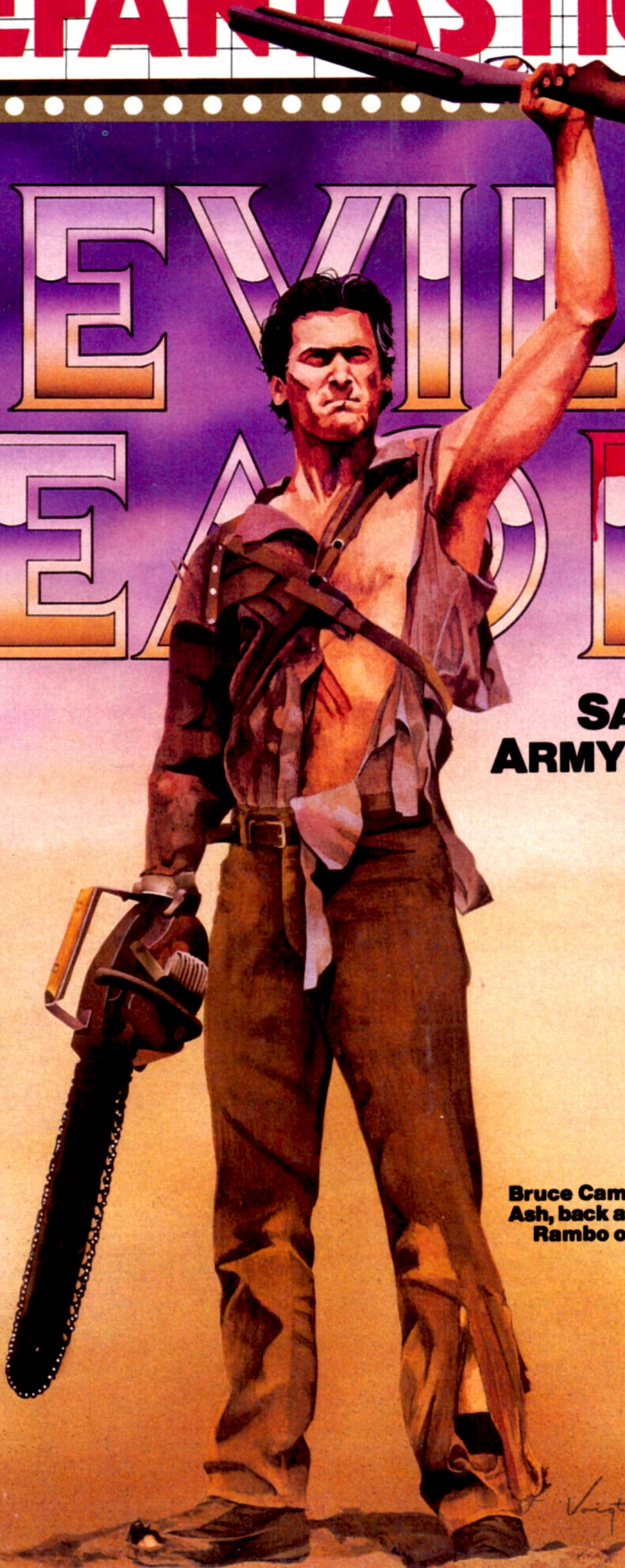
BATMAN RETURNS
Dark Knight Done Right

**HONEY, I BLEW
UP THE KID**
Amazing Colossal Efx

PET SEMATARY II
Stephen King Exhumed

**Bruce Campbell as
Ash, back as Raimi's
Rambo of gore.**

Volume 23 Number 1



The Root Of All Evil...

SEEDPEOPLE



Coming on Videocassette May 1992

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The magazine with a "Sense of Wonder."

AUGUST, 1992

When we began working on this paean to director Sam Raimi's *EVIL DEAD* series, the third film in his trilogy—*ARMY OF DARKNESS*—was scheduled for delivery to distributor Universal Pictures in May, with a summer release in either July or August a foregone conclusion. That was before producer Dino DeLaurentiis and Universal took each other to court. Now it's anyone's guess as to exactly when we'll all get to see the conclusion of Raimi's horror epic.

As we went to press, *ARMY OF DARKNESS* star and co-producer Bruce Campbell outlined the legal maneuvering behind-the-scenes for writer Sue Uram. According to Campbell, the release of *ARMY OF DARKNESS* hinges on whether DeLaurentiis has, or has not, given Universal the right to release his sequel to—get this—*SILENCE OF THE LAMBS*! What's the connection, you ask? Apparently DeLaurentiis managed to tie up the film rights to the character of Hannibal Lecter when he bought Thomas H. Harris' bestselling novel *Red Dragon* and filmed it as *MANHUNTER* in 1986. Universal claims that when *ARMY OF DARKNESS* ran over budget, and Universal put up an additional \$3 million to complete the film, that DeLaurentiis verbally promised them the right to release Lecter's next screen adventure.

"DeLaurentiis said that there was no connection between *ARMY OF DARKNESS* and the *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS* sequel," noted Campbell in May. "Universal does not see it that way, and it doesn't appear that they will come to any agreement soon." Campbell said that Raimi is taking any delay in stride. "Sam continues to work on the film and we're all just doing the best that we can." Campbell held open the hope that if the case gets settled, *ARMY OF DARKNESS* could still be released by late August. "That's a potential," he said.

We can all hope. As you'll see from Los Angeles correspondent Steve Biodrowski's cover story on the making of *ARMY OF DARKNESS*, Raimi's film is a big entertainment that would be a natural for summer audiences.

Frederick S. Clarke



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AFRAID OF THE DARK

**Oscar-winning screenwriter
Mark Peplow turns director.**

By Alan Jones

"Entertaining, intriguing and very demanding," is how Mark Peplow described *AFRAID OF THE DARK*, his debut feature as director after winning the 1988 Best Screenplay Oscar for Bernardo Bertolucci's *THE LAST EMPEROR*. Peplow also wrote Bertolucci's *THE SHELTERING SKY* and used the high industry profile the Academy Award gave him to finally dust off an eight-year old script he'd always wanted to put on screen. Said Peplow, "Although I've wanted to direct, it hasn't been a burning ambition. I'm happy writing screenplays and will continue to do so. It's the project at hand which interests me in whatever capacity I can be of most use." Fine Line Features, the "adult film division" of New Line Cinema, plan to open the film in August.

AFRAID OF THE DARK, a British and French co-production for Sovereign Pictures, is a psychological study in childhood terror echoing Bernard Rose's *PAPERHOUSE*. Newcomer Ben Keyworth, grandson of the film's makeup supervisor, Tommie



Peplow, an Oscar winner for *THE LAST EMPEROR*, directed his own horror script.

Manerson, plays an 11-year-old West London schoolboy, who is so traumatized by the prospect of the retinal surgery that could save his failing eyesight, that he descends into a nightmare world where all truth is reversed and his stark reality gets dangerously blurred with dark fantasy.

"I wrote the initial concept in 1983," explained Peplow. "The industry was still in a post-HALLOWEEN wave at that time and a friend said, 'Why don't you do something practi-

cal for a change like a small, cheap horror film set in London.' Even though I thought the genre would soon be finished off by all the trashy stuff being released, I decided to write a psychological thriller about fear with an unusual narrative structure—my way of upgrading it far above the endless production line. Then interest waned. I had bills to pay. I started writing commissioned screenplays and I put it on the back burner." Had *AFRAID OF THE DARK* been produced when he first wrote it, Peplow said the dream landscape idea would have prefigured Wes Craven's *A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET*.

Peplow termed the film's unconventional narrative structure, "A new cinematic proposition with thought-provoking resonances." You'll have to take his word on that because the film's clever approach is impossible to describe without ruining its surprises for prospective viewers. Suffice it to say that Peplow causes major audience disorientation by virtually starting a whole new story at a key midway point and has most of the cast—James (*GREYSTOKE*) Fox,



Ben Keyworth, as 11-year-old Lucas.

Fanny Ardant, Paul (*ALIEN 3*) McGann and Claire (*LET HIM HAVE IT*) Holman—playing dual roles.

Noted Peplow, "The switch is a bit like *PSYCHO*, I suppose. Hitchcock shocked audiences by killing off his leading lady early on. I don't kill anyone. I just firmly pull the rug out from beneath the audience's feet. While I don't mind being accused of totally throwing audiences unexpectedly, I will argue with certain British critics who have admonished me for bandying around red herrings which don't add up. Each was purposely placed and is a clue to the real story, one dealing thematically with how we are all blind in certain respects."

AFRAID OF THE DARK has received a very mixed reception in Great Britain. Because it deals with the blind, it has been called exploitative. "Not true," rebuked Peplow. "It's just the opposite. There's a tremendous amount of sympathy shown on behalf of the blind. Blindness is a frightening, taboo subject. But unlike *WAIT UNTIL DARK* or *SEE*



Peploe's film is the story of a young boy going blind, with terrifying consequences.

NO EVIL, which deals with the matter in a very conventional manner, my film is about the emotional effects of going blind. The cast wore special contact lenses which gave them tunnel-vision for extra reality and Claire Holman spent a lot of time researching sight problems at clinics for the blind."

The movie has also been called highly offensive for one particular sequence, a graphic throat-cutting razor attack on a blind victim, coerced into posing for pornographic photos by a voyeuristic maniac who then has a knitting needle plunged through his eyeball. "That's a critical scene and a necessary, savage punctuation mark," countered Peploe. "It's the climax to one whole story section. A second later everything you've witnessed is suddenly redefined. Yes, it's unpleasant and traumatic but there is a justified explanation for it in the classic tradition of Oedipus plucking out his eye and King Lear being blinded by a red-hot poker. The level of

violence is no different from every other American hi-tech action-thriller," said Peploe, discounting the controversy.

Accompanying the many Hitchcock references in AFRAID OF THE DARK are numerous nods to Michael Powell's PEEPING TOM and Michaelangelo Antonioni's BLOW-UP. Explained Peploe, who scripted Antonioni's THE PASSENGER, "Those movies dealt with how we see things,

various ways of looking at images, and new visual metaphors. Did you see what you thought you saw or was it all in your imagination? AFRAID OF THE DARK is told from the point of view of looking through a child's terrified eyes so you can't be sure what's true and what's false."

But BLOW-UP was the picture's greatest influence according to Peploe. "Because it's one of the few movies showing London as it really is," he said. "I wanted that atmosphere. London is a discreet city, yet you can look through everyone's rear and front windows. There's no privacy at all. You can't do that in any other city in the world."

In fact, Peploe wrote AFRAID OF THE DARK from his chance impressions of various London areas. "I used to have an office overlooking Brompton Cemetery, [in the Earl's Court district] and I never knew it existed until then," said Peploe of the actual location used for shooting. "It seemed dreamlike, as if it shouldn't be there, like something from a child's fantasy." The climax takes place at Brompton as the spectres of Keyworth's nightmare world close in for the last time prior to

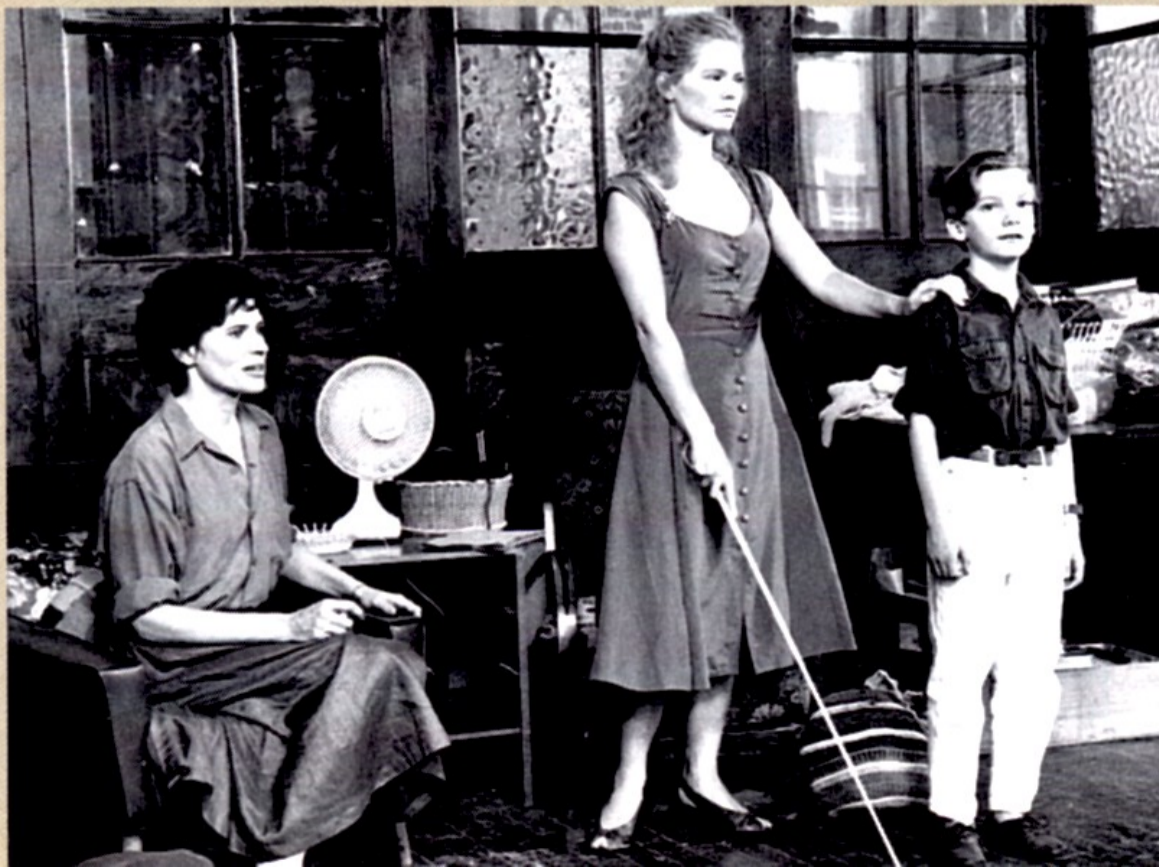
his operation. "London's deserted streets over a holiday weekend gave me the mood of emptiness I wanted to put across," said Peploe. "My regular sightings of a minibus taking blind people to a day care center called Reach Out House provided the whole blind milieu."

The film's fantasy elements required many of the locations used for filming to be set-dressed twice. That was the hardest challenge of all," Peploe sighed. "I didn't film in sequence which would have made things easier. Therefore I had to decide well in advance the overall look for each complex section which I hadn't properly worked out, naively thinking I could film it in two separate halves. But that was the fun of making this picture, why it echoes a genre, doesn't copy one, takes an entirely new direction and makes it an asset."

Peploe is currently putting the finishing touches to the latest draft of his long-stalled Antonioni project, THE CREW. After that he'll direct his own adaptation of the Joseph Conrad novel *Victory* set in Indonesia. Then he'll turn his attention to another screenplay which has been gathering dust on his shelf for longer than AFRAID OF THE DARK, an eco-thriller titled OUT OF THE BLUE.

But is Peploe AFRAID OF THE DARK himself? "As a child, of course," he said. "I don't know one person who's never had the experience of lying in bed and being scared of what's under it. The mystery of the dark is a powerful and universal fear. However, just as the narrative plays against all preconceived conventions, the title AFRAID OF THE DARK carries a double meaning too." □

The blind leading the blind: Keyworth with Claire Holman and mom Fanny Ardant.



PET SEMATARY II

Paramount digs up their sequel rights to test the horror franchise waters.

By Patricia Ross

"Clancy Brown is a brave man," commented special makeup effects artist Trey Stokes. As Sheriff Gus Gilbert, actor Brown (*HIGHLANDER*, *BLUE STEEL*, *THE BRIDE*) is lying on the nearly frozen ground with only a space blanket insulating him from its seeping chill. Raw meat has been placed on the actor's throat to attract the attention of Newman, one of two Alaskan Huskies that play Zowie, the Gilbert's family dog.

There's a palpable tension on the set of *PET SEMATARY II*, but not for any danger faced by Brown. The "suits" are here from the studio to find out why the film is more than four days behind schedule on its Georgia location. Rain, snow and unseasonably cold weather have slowed progress on the sequel to Paramount's 1990 \$60 million hit, due to open nationally in August.

Producer Ralph Singleton, associate producer of the original and director of *GRAVEYARD SHIFT*, another Paramount foray into Stephen King territory, shepherded the studio reps away from the action. Returning to direct the sequel is a harried but determined Mary Lambert (*SIESTA*, *GRAND ISLE*), who made the original such an

"It's not about a body count," said director Mary Lambert. "I'm trying to make a movie that will disturb people, scare, make them laugh and make them think."



King (l) on the set of the 1989 original with director Mary Lambert, rehired to film a continuation of the saga with all new characters—minus King's involvement.

effective shocker.

"This horrible weather!" Lambert fumed in the sub-zero chill, on a newly constructed pet cemetery set at Dunaway Gardens. "We've shot in rain, snow and sleet. I've stood for 12 hours in 12-degree weather. It is the worst time of year you could possibly consider being outside." Ironically, the temperate Georgia location was chosen primarily

for its track record of moderate weather.

Unlike the original *PET SEMATARY*, which was based on Stephen King's novel, the sequel is an original screenplay by Richard Outten, the tale of another family relocating in Ludlow, Maine. (Ellie Creed, the sole surviving member of the family depicted in the first film, does not return.) Paramount owns sequel rights as

part of the deal that was struck to make the original film. Richard Rubinstein, who produced the original for Paramount under his Laurel Productions banner, said that both he and King were approached to work on the sequel but were not interested.

Anthony Edwards (*TOP GUN*, *HAWKS*) plays Chase Matthews in *PET SEMATARY II*, a newly widowed veterinarian who moves with his teenage son, Geoff, to a summer home in Ludlow in the hope of building a new life away from tragic memories. Matthews takes the place of the town's previous veterinarian, Quentin Yolander, who was mentioned but not seen in the original film. *TERMINATOR 2* star, Eddie Furlong, plays Geoff Matthews. "The original *PET SEMATARY* was for adults," noted Furlong. "There wasn't a lot for kids to identify with. This is for everyone. It covers a lot more than the last one."

PET SEMATARY II is pegged by both Singleton and Lambert as a rite of passage rather than a blood feast. "I'm trying to make a movie that is not about a body count, but a movie that will disturb people . . . scare them, make them laugh and make them think," said Lambert. "We're touching on some very disturbing subjects. This one's much more about teenagers and beginning to take moral responsibility for



TERMINATOR 2 star Edward Furlong as Geoff and Jason McGuire as Drew (r), burying their dog in **PET SEMATARY II**, filmed on location at Dunaway Gardens in Atlanta, Georgia, doubling for King's Ludlow, Maine. Inset: The Micmac Indian Burial Ground of the original.

your actions.”

Singleton concurred, “This is a different movie. I think the kids will see a lot of themselves in it. There’s a large identification factor here. The basic premise, of course, is Stephen King’s pet cemetery, the Ancient Indian Burial Ground, and the *evil* forces that are there, all of the classic elements of horror. And then it’s the whole thing about don’t wish for something too much because you might get it and have to live with it.”

But **PET SEMATARY II** promises to be anything but staid and moralistic. An abundance of special makeup effects are provided by Steve Johnson’s XFX crew, supervised by Bart Mixon and David Barton. “When we initially started,” said Johnson, “there were probably half as many effects as there are now. Now we have puppet heads, animatronic dogs, fire and electrical effects and multiple prosthetics.” XFX crewmembers Scott Coulter and Trey Stokes also have cameos in the opening scene.

Additional makeup effects are by Bill “Splat” Johnson (**ROBOCOP 3**), who supplied numerous dead creature carcasses, including dead kittens and rabbits. Live animals in the form of two Alaskan Huskies, named Frankie, (after Frank Sinatra) and Newman, (“after Paul Newman because he’s got really great eyes”) are trained and handled by Animal Actors

wranglers Boone Narr and William Grisco.

Mechanical special effects are supervised by Second Unit director Peter Chesney (**HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID**), who invented the glowing eye beam splitter used on the original **PET SEMATARY**. Stunt coordinator John Robotham (**SOMETHING WILD, SILENCE OF THE LAMBS**) oversees a catastrophic fire scene and a motorcycle accident, as well as a few harrowing electrical calamities. Russell Carpenter (**LADY IN WHITE, LAWNMOWER MAN**) is director of photography. Singleton cited Carpenter’s “mysterious quality of photography” as “exactly what’s good in this film.”

Production designer Michelle Minch (**TWO MOON JUNCTION, GRAND ISLE**) has redesigned the Micmac Burial Ground to look more authentic. “I did a lot of research and was trying to bring in Indian or indigenous culture to the design of it,” she said. “It was difficult from an engineering standpoint. We were working on top of the largest granite dome in Georgia. Just a flat stone. So we did very specific blueprints. It was a circle a hundred feet in diameter with a figure in it. My greens crew made it look perfect.”

Minch also made reference to the minor Micmac controversy afforded by the Stephen

King novel and later, the **PET SEMATARY** film. “We shouldn’t say Micmac Burial Ground, we should say Ancient Indian Burial Ground because the Micmacs aren’t happy with us making the association with bringing people back from the dead,” said Minch. “It’s *not* called Micmac anywhere in this script. In the description it’s called Micmac, but it’s not in any of the dialogue lines.”

“I think we may have one reference to it in this one,” countered Singleton. “But the main thing is that we have an ancient burial ground somewhere out in the woods, where these things take place. I don’t think King meant any harm to the Micmac Indians. I know we certainly didn’t. The Micmac Indians have absolutely no reference to what goes on in this movie that I can recall.”

The Ramones, who scored the original, aren’t slated to bring their musical talents to **PET SEMATARY II**. Director Lambert noted she wanted the soundtrack to reflect the differences between the two films. “[I want] much more of a contemporary sound on this one,” said Lambert. “The previous show was a Gothic. I had this very simplistic picture in my mind from the first moment: the mother, the father, the son, the cat, the hill in the background and the road. That was the whole world. This one is much bigger.

“Mary [Lambert] is definitely leaning toward a more metal sound,” said Singleton. “Not a hard metal sound, but more of a rock metal sound to tie in with the kids.”

Singleton summed up **PET SEMATARY II** this way: “What we’re trying to make here is a horror film for the ‘90s,” he said. “We’re not making **FATHER KNOWS BEST**, that’s for sure. I thank Stephen King for giving us the concept in the first place. Without it, there wouldn’t be a movie.” □

Furlong, haunted by the spectre of Sheriff Gus Gilbert (Clancy Brown).



BATMAN RETURNS

Director Tim Burton wins the creative control to do the Dark Knight justice.

By Taylor L. White

Beneath the T-shirts, bed-sheets and cereal boxes—all emblazoned with the everpresent Batshield logo—BATMAN somehow missed its mark, despite its phenomenal commercial success. One taste of BEETLEJUICE or even Tim Burton's earliest short films readily explains why the director himself has gone on record that BATMAN is the least favorite of his pictures. Now with greater creative control, Burton has opted to return to Gotham City on his own terms. Warner Bros opens BATMAN RETURNS nationwide June 19.

The sequel is a conscious effort on the part of Burton and his EDWARD SCISSOR-HANDS co-producer Denise Di Novi (HEATHERS, MEET THE APPLLEGATES) to add a new slant to an old hero. "One of our main goals to correct in BATMAN RETURNS was to make it more of a Tim Burton movie," said Di Novi. "If you look at the first film and compare it to his other movies, you'll see that only about 50% of BATMAN was Tim. We've had much more creative control this time, so I'm sure it'll be a lot closer to 100%."



Michael Keaton returns as Batman, on Gotham City streets in the dead of winter.

Although Di Novi, now head of Tim Burton Productions, is quick to point out the new film's innovations, she doesn't disregard the roots planted by the first film. "We've tried hard to maintain the important aspects of the first film by keeping it dark and by giving Batman the same kind of tortured duality he had before, but this time we've tried to infuse it with a real freshness. It'll be a weirder movie, but also more hip and fun."

Though the prospect of a guaranteed hit sequel might have seemed enticing to any director, Di Novi reported that Burton was initially reticent about returning to the streets of Gotham City. "Tim didn't want to do the sequel until we came up with an approach that felt fresh and original to him," said Di Novi. With ample time for story development and pre-production, Di Novi recruited HEATHERS sriptor Dan Waters, late of HUDSON HAWK and THE ADVENTURES OF FORD FAIRLANE, to concoct a plot that would be original, yet true to the subject's comic book origins.

"We specifically wanted to start fresh by using a writer who didn't have any emotional ties to the first movie," said Di



Michelle Pfeiffer as Catwoman and her alter ego Selina Kyle (r). The chance to work with comic book creator Bob Kane's supervillains attracted Burton to do the sequel.

Novi. "Dan is an original thinker who I was certain would come up with something out of left field." Co-credited screenwriter Wesley Strick (*CAPE FEAR*) contributed needed revisions and added material to the film's final shooting script.

The result is a hard-edged, biting satirical yarn that pits Bruce Wayne/Batman against the triple threat of the Penguin

(Danny DeVito), a misunderstood mutant with high political aspirations, Selina Kyle a.k.a. Catwoman (Michelle Pfeiffer), whose victimization at the hands of her boss turns her into a sleek feline purveyor of vengeance, and corporate shark Max Schreck (Christopher Walken), all vying for power or vengeance using the citizens of Gotham City as pawns. In keeping with the

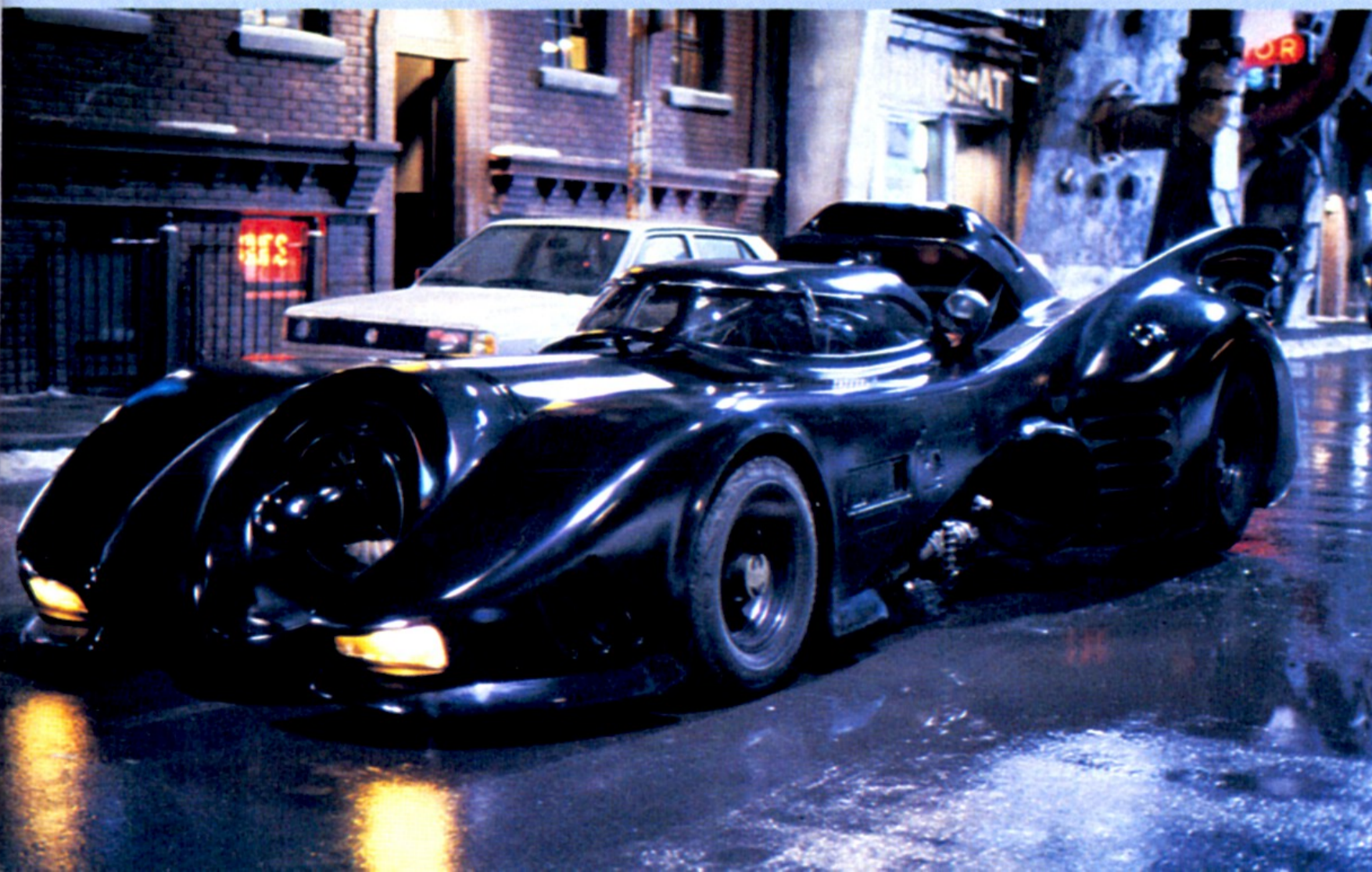
film's visual style, which echoes the German Expressionism of the silents, Walken's character name is that of the actor who played the vampire in F.W. Murnau's *NOSFERATU* (1922).

It was the inevitable coupling of the Penguin and Catwoman that eventually drew Burton in, noted Di Novi "Dan came up with two really wild characters who have a

real edge to them which I think excited Tim as much as the prospect of doing the Batman character excited him in the first one," said Di Novi. While the casting of DeVito as The Penguin was a natural, finding an actress to fill Catwoman's tights became a much publicized tale of woe with initial choice Annette Bening leaving due to pregnancy, followed by an ill-fated campaign by actress Sean Young to replace her.

Pleased with the casting of the sequel's villains is *BATMAN* creator Bob Kane, the character's self-proclaimed "Pied Piper of Public Relations" and creative consultant, who came up with the original Penguin character for his comic adventures in the '30s. "My God, he looks so gruesome," laughed Kane in approval of DeVito, looking like Lon Chaney in *LONDON AFTER MIDNIGHT*. "His makeup was beyond anything I expected. When I saw the early sketches, I figured they'd do a simplistic makeup job, like Burgess Meredith in the TV show, but I was completely stunned when I saw DeVito in full costume. Plus, he acts the same way as he looks, angry and horrific, certainly nothing campy like Burgess Meredith

Batman tools around on the Gotham City streets in a redesigned Batmobile, newly outfitted by production designer Bo Welch.





Danny DeVito as the Penguin, equipped with a series of lethal umbrellas. DeVito, a madcap image of horror echoing German Expressionism, faces Batman at the climax.

[of the BATMAN TV show]. Danny's Penguin is truly the epitome of evil."

The plethora of villains left little room for the anticipated introduction of Robin, Batman's sidekick. In earlier drafts of Waters' script the character was portrayed as a streetsmart Gotham garage mechanic who assists Batman when the Batmobile crashes into his shop after the vehicle is rigged by the Penguin to decimate the city streets. Though sets were reportedly built, costumes were designed and actor Marlon Wayans, the youngest brother of Keenan Ivory and Damon Wayans of *IN LIVING COLOR*, was considered, the sequence was scrapped with Michael Gough's Alfred filling in as Batman's mechanical savior, keeping Robin to perhaps be highlighted in yet another installment.

With a solid story and a green light from Warner Bros, Burton and Di Novi continued to break the first BATMAN mold by reuniting a host of non-BATMAN alumni from Burton's past triumphs, *BEE-TLEJUICE* and *EDWARD SCISSORHANDS*, including production designer Bo Welch, camera stylist Stefan Czapsky, creature effects supervisor

Stan Winston, key makeup artist Ve Neill and longtime associate Rick Henrichs, now acting as art director with Tom Duffield. Noted Di Novi, "These people have garnered a sixth sense of how Tim sees the world, which makes things a lot easier since you don't have to explain everything that's in his head."

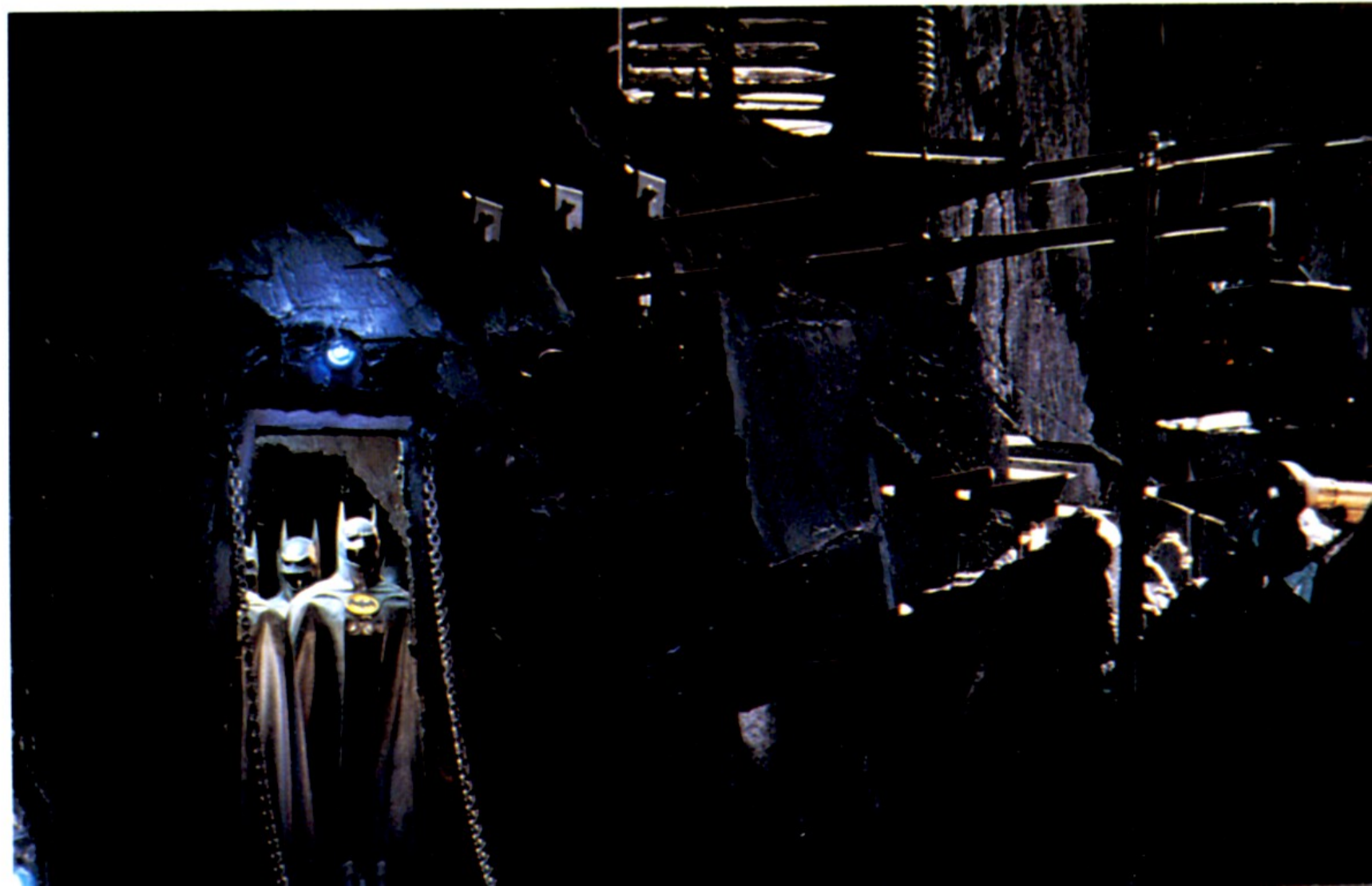
The sequel also marks Burton's reunion with PEE-WEE'S

BIG ADVENTURE star Pee-Wee Herman who, with co-star Diane Salenger, the starry-eyed waitress Simone from the same film, step into the shoes of the Penguin's parents. Comic actress Jan Hooks, Pee-Wee's tour guide at the Alamo, also returns as a fashion consultant.

The souring overseas economy forced Warner Bros to abandon London's Pinewood Studios and mount Gotham

City on the company's Hollywood lot. "The economy in England isn't as financially favorable as it was three years ago, so at this point it would've been more expensive to shoot over there," said Di Novi. "Plus, it would've been hard to give the movie the fresh feeling we were looking for by using the same sets over again, so we shipped over the few sets we needed and then built the rest

Batman in the bowels of the Batcave beneath Wayne Manor, a dark, noir look that makes the original film seem sunny.



on the soundstages."

The gargantuan sets, including stylistically refurbished interiors of the Batcave and Wayne Manor, and the spacious town center known as Gotham Plaza, were spread out over seven soundstages on Warner's Burbank lot, with numerous sets constructed on existing exteriors for some of Gotham's city streets. An additional soundstage at Universal—the largest in Hollywood—was utilized to build the Penguin's Lair, a fortress of ice and water complete with towering stalagmites.

Production designer Welch described his designs for Burton's alternate Gotham City as having an even darker feel than that of the first film. "It's a very oppressive, decaying look with a lot of neo-fascist world's fair architecture overlaid on an old U.S. city," said Welch. "You can find traces of German Expressionism, which we found was the sort of root material that was appropriate for the kind of story that's being told." Welch was quick to point out that his work is a totally new interpretation of the late Anton Furst's original designs. "For me as a designer, there is no marriage to the first and second BATMAN except for the character himself. The sequel has merely given us the license to explode all of the ideas from the first film and take them further and stronger and harder."

Art director Heinrichs, who goes back with Burton to 1983's VINCENT, described the "Caligari"-like German Expressionism which has been an ongoing style since their first efforts. "There's something very timeless about using sets and lighting expressionistically, as in films like CITIZEN KANE and THE THIRD MAN where the stark black and white images are used as a very stark, yet beautiful and clear way of visually telling the story. This is part of the reason why BATMAN RETURNS takes place in the wintertime

BURTON GOES WILD

"We've had much more creative control this time. We're keeping it dark and giving Batman the same kind of tortured duality, but we've tried to infuse it with a real freshness. It'll be weirder, more hip and fun."



Burton (r) with Batman comic book creator Bob Kane and producing partner Denise Di Novi.

because we could visually get stronger graphic images, like having the stark, black Batman silhouetted against the white snow."

Part of Welch's task was to design an entirely new set of toys for Batman, including a slick hydroplaned "Bat-ski boat and a programmable Batarang, while also giving the Penguin his own private arsenal in the form of a series of umbrellas, each with its own lethal purpose—from a flame-throwing or bullet-shooting parasol to an umbrella that clamps on to the hand of its victim, sending him or her flying into the Gotham night sky.

BATMAN RETURNS also allowed Welch to redesign the Batmobile, giving it a unique personality of its own. At one point, the vehicle sheds its metallic skin and rotates its wheel to form what has been christened the "Batmissile," which Batman uses to elude his pursuers in a high speed chase.

Warners began marketing BATMAN RETURNS last September, unveiling a 12-minute promo reel at the

World Science Fiction Convention, followed by a stark black and white advance poster picturing a silhouetted bat head, a campaign which did little to inspire the fans.

In mid-February, promotion kicked into high gear with the unveiling of a revealing two-minute trailer in over 5,000 theatres across the country, and a new poster featuring the familiar bat symbol with a

wisp of wind and snow blowing across the shield. All hype aside, Batman's creator believes the myths will thrive no matter what format it appears in, whether it be comics, film or TV. "I believe every man and every child's dream is to be a superhero, to get away from themselves and be somebody who is very heroic," said Kane. "Batman personifies this escapism for most people who live mundane nine-to-five lives. They see themselves as Batman, living a glamorous, adventurous life, meeting very interesting people and fighting villains."

Though fans expressed initial distrust in the casting of Michael Keaton for the first film, Kane believes it is Keaton who provides the connection between audiences and Batman. "Keaton gives Batman a real vulnerability that an atypical hunk actor probably couldn't bring to the character," he said.

Though, as Kane noted, BATMAN is certain to turn up in various formats well past the turn of the century, producer Di Novi is too fresh from the latest installment to consider the prospect of any further cinematic BATMAN adventures. "That's like asking someone who's nine months pregnant when they're going to have their next baby!" she laughed. □

Christopher Walken as Batman's foe, evil millionaire industrialist Max Schreck.



FUTURISTIC

Jean Claude Van Damme, Dolph Lundgren

By Steve Biodrowski

UNIVERSAL SOLDIER is the first of a multi-picture deal between Belgian kickboxer Jean Claude Van Damme and Sony Pictures Entertainment, which will either produce the films through Columbia or, as in this case, distribute them through TriStar after they have been produced by Carolco. At \$23 million, the film represents Van Damme's graduation to big-budget action-adventure after a successful series of low- to mid-budget martial arts pictures, including the science-fiction effort CYBORG.

Along for extra name value is Dolph Lundgren, another mid-level action star, with two previous genre credits: MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE and I COME IN PEACE. The casting is symptomatic of the currently profitable fusion of science fiction and action-adventure; no doubt Carolco and TriStar are hoping the project will launch its two co-stars into the boxoffice orbit reached by Arnold Schwarzenegger in TOTAL RECALL and TERMINATOR 2. TriStar opens the film nationwide July 17.

Produced by Craig Baumgarten, UNIVERSAL SOLDIER was originally to be directed and co-written by action-thriller specialist Andrew Davis, who put Steven Seagal on the map with ABOVE THE LAW. However, after months of development, pre-production, and location scouting in Mexico, Mario Kassar replaced Davis in February 1991. Apparently, the Carolco executive was concerned about the budget, which at that time included extensive computer-generated opticals. Only the presence of the two leads kept the project alive, and German director Roland Emmerich (MOON 44), whose experience overseas had taught him to do science fiction on a shoestring, was allowed to develop a new script with the old title.

"The hook for me was it was a kind of double-monster situation, where one is good and one is bad," said Emmerich.

“Carolco hopes the project will launch its two co-stars into the boxoffice orbit reached by Arnold Schwarzenegger in both TOTAL RECALL and TERMINATOR 2.”



Former heavyweight karate champion Dolph Lundgren as one of the Universal Soldiers, fighting supermen spawned from the revived corpses of Vietnam vets.

"Also, I felt it was an action film with a message. I think too many action movies don't have any kind of message or theme you can relate to. It was not really clearly there in the original script, but I immediately saw that it could be a terrific story about someone who wants to become human again. These guys never got out of war. They died in war and were revived as these robot-things. What Luc [Van Damme] wants to do from the very beginning is go home—like every soldier. Scott [Lundgren] was exactly the opposite. He was going nuts in war, and when he wakes up again, he wants to stay at war—it's the only thing he knows."

After coming on board in March, Emmerich spent the next five months developing his version of the story with screenwriter Dean Devlin. In the new screenplay, Luc and Scott, after killing each other in Vietnam, are revived two decades later as part of a top-secret anti-terrorist program. Although the Universal Soldiers were originally conceived as

glowing biomechanical cyborgs (hence, the computer opticals to provide interactive lighting), the explanation for their strengths and recuperative powers has been simplified to a "hyper-accelerating" metabolism, which results in prohibitively high body temperature. The Uni-Sols' memories are supposedly wiped after each mission, but things go awry when a pesky female reporter and eventual love interest stumbles upon the program.

When satisfied with the new script, Emmerich took the production to Arizona for ten weeks of location shooting, which started last August. "I didn't want a town or city area, because I had seen it so often," said Emmerich. "We were looking for a gigantic building for terrorists to take over. As a German, the most impressive place I know of in America is Hoover Dam. Everybody said, 'You're nuts—they'll never allow it.' But they allowed it—we got permission."

Emmerich found no particular problems working on location in the middle of the desert, though he claimed the producers were at a loss without working cellular phones in their automobiles. Emmerich noted that he got on "surprisingly well" with Van Damme and Lundgren. "I was a little nervous," he said. "You always read and hear about all kinds of problems working with stars, but they accepted me from the first day of shooting and did what I told them. I think people will be very surprised to see both of them in this movie. It's not a typical movie for them."

Although the emphasis on action might not seem like much of a change of pace for either actor, Emmerich noted that UNIVERSAL SOLDIER abandons the standard martial arts formula. "It's not a typical karate-revenge picture," he said. "There's not much fighting, because these guys are the ultimate soldiers—an ordinary human being couldn't fight them." Only at the very end is there a hand-to-hand confrontation between Van Damme

MUSCLEMEN

flex it in Carolco's **UNIVERSAL SOLDIER**.

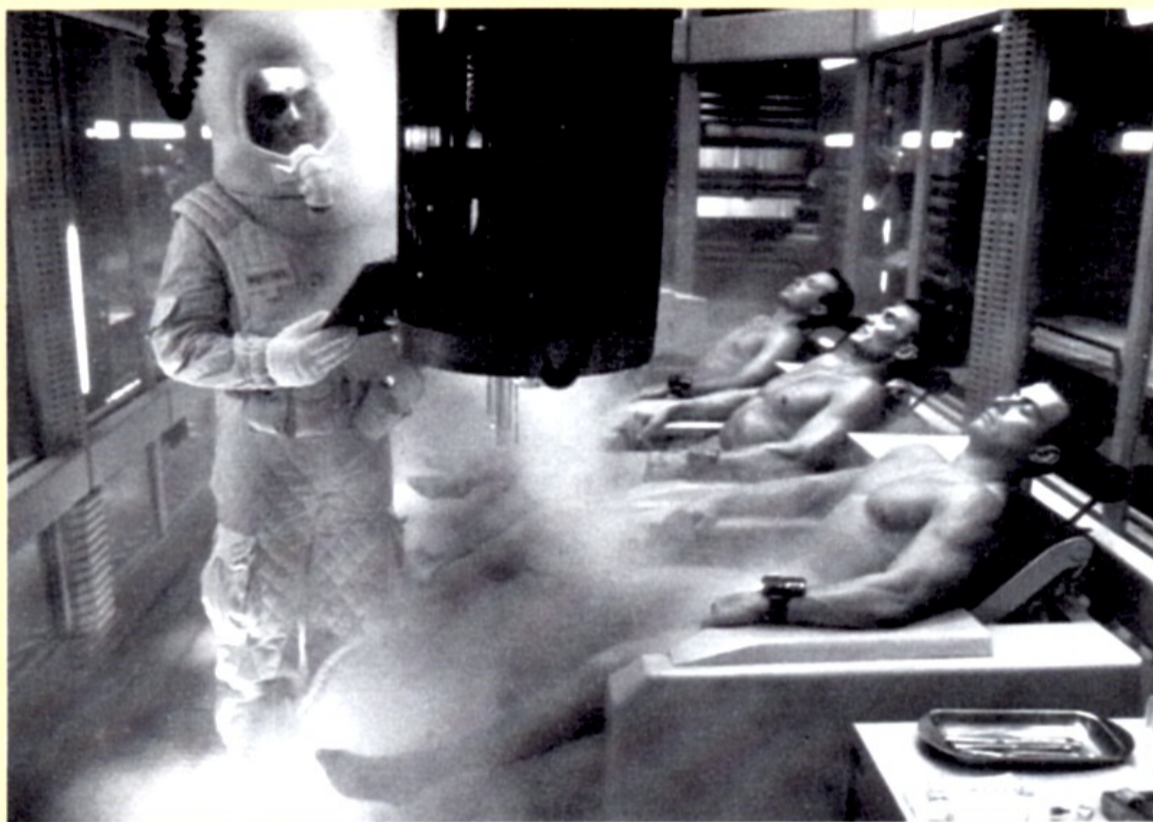
and Lundgren, during which both actors get to show off their physical prowess, including Van Damme's patented 360-degree spinning head kick. "We went for a different approach there. We didn't say, 'We need a ten-minute fight.' It has some twists and turns; it's very uneven, because only Dolph's character stays strong, while Jean Claude is a declining, dying man."

After finishing in Arizona, the production moved back to Los Angeles to shoot interior scenes of the Uni-Sol command truck, where the Universal Soldiers are cooled off and placed in suspended animation after each mission. These scenes include many of the film's gruesome makeup effects, courtesy of Michael Burnett Productions (DOLLY DEAREST). "Basically, the idea here was to make very realistic stuff—not fancy, not science fiction," explained Emmerich. "In the beginning, the film was on the fantasy side. I tried to tone it down. It has a science fiction element, but it's realistic."

Burnett and his new partner Larry Hamlin were among the few survivors from the earlier version of the project. "It became a makeup effect movie as opposed to puppet or mechanical effects," noted Burnett of the changeover. "Originally, the characters were like bionic men. We built an articulated dummy of Dolph for close-ups when you'd see biomechanics working under the skin. We would have been developing a lot of new things. Puppets are one of the hardest things to do convincingly."

"In the old version," added Hamlin, "Andy Davi wanted full-body nude dummies just so the actors wouldn't have to be suspended in water tanks. Once they got the bill, they decided the actors were making enough money to get wet."

The molds of Lundgren were salvaged to make a dummy for the character's demise. Other effects include a torso for an open-chest operation on one of the Uni-Sols, a leg for a scene wherein the reporter



Champion kickboxer Jean Claude Van Damme (l.g.) and Lundgren get revived from cryogenic sleep to serve as Uni-Sols, the government's top-secret anti-terrorist program.

(Ally Walker) cuts a tracking device out of Luc, and numerous gunshot wounds, especially in the Vietnam prologue. "There are some really gruesome appliance wounds," said Burnett. "We tried to go for a gritty, realistic look, like you'd see in PLATOON. Even the operation sequence isn't over the top—it's disturbing, but you don't see a lot of blood."

"We did a bunch of head hits," Burnett continued. "Roland tried to tie things into the Vietnam sequence, with similar incidents triggering the character's memory. We worked with Kit West's people—he's a special effects guy from England—because you have to be licensed for pyro and we're not. We made an appliance for the front and an appliance for the back that could go under a wig, and a blood bag. It's very subtle but very disturbing. We didn't want DAWN OF THE DEAD heads exploding. The character looked totally normal—you wouldn't know he had an appliance on. They'd pop this thing off, and the back of his head would open."

After finishing the makeup effects, the film moved into the editing phase for the remaining months of 1991, then wrapped post-production early this year, including a score by Chris Frank (formerly of Tangerine Dream). Director Emmerich is pleased with what he managed to accomplish on his first big-budget American production. "We have a huge, very different

kind of car chase," he said. "I think you couldn't do something like that in Germany. Also, the coordination of special effects is a slower process there. It's amazing how they do it here. In Germany, you have the director totally involved in that; here, you tell them what you want, and like a miracle, it happens."

Despite Emmerich's previous genre credits—THE NOAH'S ARK PRINCIPLE (1984), MAKING CONTACT (1985) and GHOST CHASE (1980)—the director doesn't want to make science fiction exclusively. "My very first film was science fiction," he explained. "They put me in

a drawer, and it was easier for me to get this kind of movie made than another. Right now, I'm looking for other stuff, because it's getting repetitive. On the other hand, I have a big science-fiction project I would like to do. It's not easy now to get films of that size made, because everybody is scared. On the other hand, I don't think money alone solves the problems of a big movie. It's more how inventive you are. I still think it's possible to do big movies for \$20-30 million, if you do them a different way. When you have a lot of time, it costs less—you can plan it with fewer people, and everything's more in control." □

Makeup artist-turned-dead soldier: Sun Valley-based effects specialist Michael Burnett as the Vietnam vet who gets his ear sliced off by mad dog Lundgren.



STAY TUNED

Peter Hyams created "Hellvision" with Morgan Creek's \$25 million flourish.

By Robin Brunet

Morgan Creek executives are fond of saying they only buy scripts they fall in love with, like *STAY TUNED* by long-time advertising copywriters Tom S. Parker and Jim Jennewein. After purchasing the script in the spring of 1990, Morgan Creek proceeded to tinker with a list of directors best suited to realize the tribulations of a couch potato and his wife unwittingly sucked into a satanic television netherworld called "Hellvision." The script might not have seemed so unique had the Morgan Creek execs checked out *TERROR VISION*, a 1986 low-budgeter produced by Charles Band's Empire.

"We rounded up the usual suspects," said Morgan Creek's senior vice president of production, Larry Katz, "Dante, Zemeckis, Joe Johnston. *STAY TUNED* struck us as sort of a reverse *HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS* because it's the parents who disappear [through the family's satellite dish] and the children who try to find them."

Peter Hyams, one director not on Morgan Creek's short list, lobbied to get the assignment. "He really badgered us, saying how much he loved the material and how he always wanted to make a Spielberg-type picture," laughed Katz. "He won us over by sheer willpower, but it took a series meetings and a lot of consider-



A victim of "Hellvision," 666 channels of infernal programming on the devil's own cabal-ready satellite system, with gems like "Autopsies of the Rich and Famous."

ation before we signed him."

Not that Katz or producers James G. Robinson and Arne Schmidt doubted Hyams' storytelling abilities—it's just that his forays into the realm of *cinefantastique* (2010, *OUTLAND*, *CAPRICORN ONE*) seemed to exude equal parts thrills, menace, political intrigue and cynicism. Spielberg, Hyams wasn't. It's a point Hyams fully appreciated. "When I read *STAY TUNED*, I quite frankly begged to do it," he said. "There's no denying I pursued those guys for the assignment." Warner Bros opens the Morgan Creek fantasy/comedy nationwide in June.

The media labeled *STAY TUNED* as a slam against tele-

vision and assumed Hyams, who left the medium several decades ago, relished the thought of getting his own licks in. Hyams, immersed in choreographing the film's climactic Errol Flynn-like swordfight during filming last January, was eager to set the record straight. "I have no axes to grind concerning my television background," he said. "The script struck me as a solid comedy and a good, solid film, and you don't often see these two elements together."

"Second, although the story structure has the husband and wife leads surviving one Hellvision television program after the other, this is *not* a movie about TV. It's a movie

about excess, about someone who watches TV too much and escapes life. I see nothing much different between that behavior and someone who slavishly pursues rock and roll groups. It's endemic to our whole culture." Hyams' realization of the script's sober implications promises to augment the satire and punch up what seems on the printed page like rather flat TV comedy.

STAY TUNED required thousands of costumes, elaborate period sets, a dazzling Chuck Jones animated segment and dozens of diverse action vignettes—all on a \$25 million budget. Morgan Creek decided to put the money on the screen rather than into big star names. "The script's couch potato hero may have initially conjured images of Dan Aykroyd, but we eventually chose John Ritter and then Pam Dawber as his wife," said Katz, "more affordable, less of a box-office draw." Katz defended Ritter's ability to convincingly change from couch potato to romantic hero during the course of surviving the various Hellvision shows. "He was terrific in *THEY ALL LAUGHED*," noted Katz. "Bogdanovich loves him. You can't ask for a better endorsement." And the crew pointed to Ritter's dramatic turn in Stephen King's *IT*, also shot in Vancouver, for validation.

Morgan Creek hired Hyams in the spring of 1991 to prep for filming which began in October.



Filming guillotine action for one of the devil's trying shows on a French Revolution set designed by Phillip Harrison, built inside Vancouver's mammoth Bridge Studios.

By that time Chuck Jones Productions had been working on the seven-minute Hellvision animation segment featuring Ritter and Dawber as cartoon mice for close to half a year.

Filming in Vancouver, British Columbia, helped stretch the film's budget. "With the Canadian exchange rate you get a lot of bang for your buck," said Katz. "We secured a fabulous soundstage and construction benefits for a tidy price." The production was based at the Bridge Studios, headquarters of fantasy projects like *IT* and *FLY II*. Despite Hyams' nightmarish difficulties filming *NARROW MARGIN* in the province, to disastrous boxoffice results, the director was high on filming again in Canada. "Vancouver crews have an eagerness towards filmmaking backed by high-quality experience that is

“This is not a movie about TV,” said director Peter Hyams. “It’s about excess, about someone who watches TV to escape life. It’s endemic to our culture.”

tough to find elsewhere,” said Hyams, who singled out stunt coordinator Gary Combs and effects supervisor John Thomas for praise.

And Morgan Creek made sure that the multi-talented Hyams didn't spread himself too thin. "He's mastered directing, photographing, producing, writing and editing," said Katz. "And he's proud of it. He wore all five hats for *NARROW MARGIN*, but it was too many, and it didn't serve him well. He's director and

photographer of *STAY TUNED* and I think he's doing his best work as a result."

Because the bulk of *STAY TUNED* was contained in soundstages, Hyams not only avoided the seemingly endless BC rain, but was able to plot out his lighting schemes during pre-production. And the gigantic Bridge soundstages allowed for the huge period sets to be erected side by side and filmed at will. The 430-foot effects stage boasted a two-block, four-story 1790s French village and the vaulting interior of a castle where Ritter and Hellvision nemesis Jeffrey Jones worked their way through the climactic swordfight.

"The name of the game on this show is the sets," said Katz. "An Art Deco nightclub set is used in a black and white *CASABLANCA* sequence in which Dawber is kidnapped by gangsters and private eye Ritter has to risk himself to save her." Eight major set-pieces comprise the film's storyline, and a dozen 45-second vignettes (World War II pilot, race car driver, hockey

player) are interwoven into the climax.

The Old Tucson Studios in Arizona were used as a location to film footage for the swordfight climax—Dawber tied to the train tracks by Jones as Lee Van Cleef, with Ritter as "the man with no name" hurrying to save her. "We laid two sections of track at the edge of town, imported a beautiful train from LA and blew it up for the grand finale," said effects supervisor John Thomas.

Katz acknowledged the fact *STAY TUNED* will have to compete head-to-head with sure-fire mega-hits like *BATMAN RETURNS*, *ALIEN 3* and *LETHAL WEAPON 3* and said Morgan Creek expects their labor of love to do "a solid double," meaning a \$50 million gross. "It'll find a broad audience," said Katz. "It's definitely a concept idea you can describe in a sentence or two, but there's also a lot of movie behind it. We're satisfied the way it came out. We wrapped production at the end of January. Our last task is to come up with an effective marketing strategy—just how *STAY TUNED* can best be categorized we're not sure yet."

Concluded John Thomas, "I, like everybody else, thought the script was hilarious. But it's one of those films that will either explode onto the screen or leave audiences saying, 'Oh God, what were they trying to do with this?'" □

Peter Hyams directs Jeffrey Jones as Mr. Spike, the devil's programmer, and John Ritter as the couch potato sucked into a Faustian world of bizarre video.



HONEY! I BLEW UP THE KID

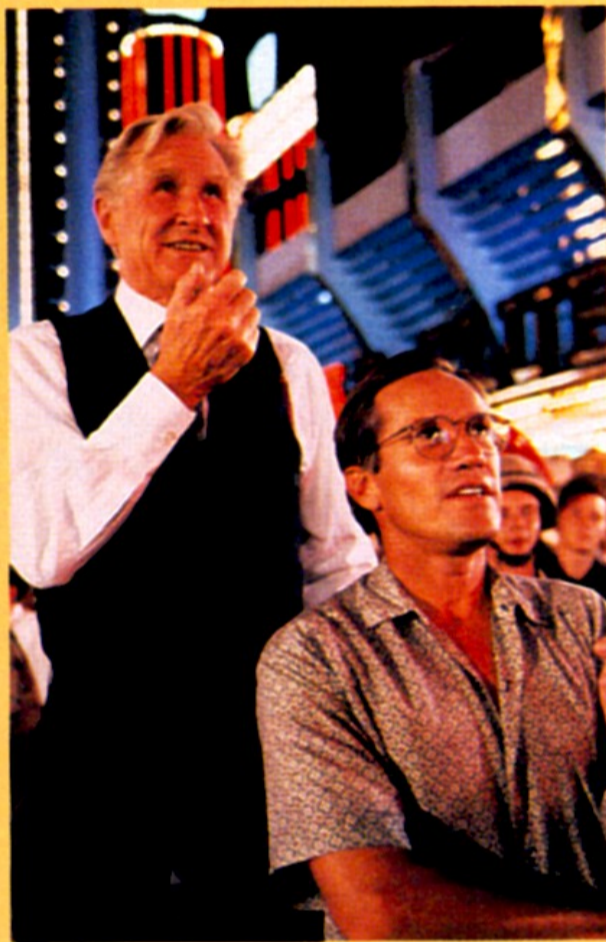
Disney's effects comedy series gets bigger than ever.

By Daniel Schweiger

Ever since Fred MacMurray created Flubber in 1961's *THE ABSENT-MINDED PROFESSOR*, unhinged inventors and weird science have been the staples of Disney's live action comedies. But no Disney gizmo could materialize money like Wayne Szalinski's raygun, the product of a backyard Einstein who miniaturized four teens and brought Disney \$131 million with 1989's *HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS*.

Now Disney is warming up Szalinski's energy beam for another shot at boxoffice success, this time reversing the cannon's effects to target another '50s genre. If *HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS* was *THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN* (1957) for the shopping mall generation, then *HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID* is *THE AMAZING COLOSSAL MAN* (1957) for distraught baby boomers, Szalinski's offspring turning into a Godzilla-sized tyke with a devastating case of the terrible twos. Adam grows in bursts from seven to 112 feet tall.

At first the Szalinskis attempt



Randal Kleiser, with Lloyd Bridges, directs the action on Las Vegas' Glitter Gulch.

to hide him as "Uncle Yanosh" from Yugoslavia, but even they can't stop the kid from ripping plaster Fudgesicles off ice cream trucks. Soon the police and others are on the baby's pampered tail, their chase leading to a time-honored monster-on-the-loose climax. Enlarged beyond dinosaur proportions, Adam romps down Las Vegas' Glitter Gulch playing airplane with a real Lotus, his brother

Nick and babysitter Mandy hanging on as they swoop over the screaming gamblers.

The movie's retro-concept was originally hit upon by director Stuart Gordon while conceiving his own miniaturization comedy *THE TEENIE-WEENIES*, the project that became *HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS*. "A wonderful actor named Gary Goodrow and his friend Peter Ebling wrote this script called *BIG BABY*, which was a parody of '50s sci-fi thrillers," said Gordon. "This child gets hit with an enlargement ray at a research facility in Nevada, then heads for Las Vegas. But the National Guard can't do anything to him without looking like the worst villains in the world!"

Unfortunately, Gordon also couldn't stop his mental and physical burnout from making him drop *HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS*, a directing assignment that would have finally taken him from *RE-ANIMATOR*'s cult success into Hollywood's big leagues. Retaining a story credit while director Joe Johnston stepped into the Disney reins, Gordon and producing partner Albert Band optioned



The giant two-year-old wreaking havoc.

BIG BABY as an independent production, always hoping that the success of the original film would allow them to pitch it as a sequel.

When *HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS* became an unexpected hit in the face of the all-devouring *BATMAN*, Disney purchased *BIG BABY* and hired Thom Ederhardt (*NIGHT OF THE COMET*) to transfer Goodrow's script to the Szalinski household. After working a year and a half on the script's development, Gordon bowed out again as director, taking an executive producer credit with Band.

As director, Disney signed Jeremiah Chechik instead, believing that the comic mania and huge physical gags of Chechik's *NATIONAL LAMPOON'S CHRISTMAS VACATION* were perfectly suited for their overgrown tyke. Dawn Steel was hired to produce the then-titled *HONEY, I BLEW UP THE BABY*, an executive tenure at Columbia Pictures hopefully insuring that she could handle the film's tremendous scope. Cast mem-

50'S RETRO CONCEPT

“If HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS was THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN to the shopping mall generation, then this is THE AMAZING COLOSSAL MAN for uptight baby boomers.”



Effects supervisor Tom Smith composited the kid using high-definition video.

bers Rick Moranis, Marcia Strassman, and Robert Oliveri were brought back as Wayne, Diane and Nick Szalinski, with Lloyd Bridges as Szalinski's awed boss, John Shea as his nefarious competitor and Josh and Daniel Shalikar playing little Adam.

Given the choice between directing HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID or making FORTRESS in Australia, Gordon happily allied himself with the medium-scaled adventure instead of the \$40 million studio film that already had Disney chomping at the budget bit. “There was talk of me directing,” said Gordon. “But I also enjoy having a certain amount of personal input. A big company like Disney makes decisions by committee and that's contrary to the way I want to work. All I had to do as an executive producer was kibbitz. You have all of the perks and none of the day-to-day worries. Albert and I would be able to come on the set, make suggestions, and have people respond to them.” Gordon's FORTRESS, a post-holocaust

science fiction saga, is now in the can for release by 20th Century Fox.

After HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS' Tom Smith and Peter Chesney returned as the visual and mechanical supervisors for the new KID, Chechik immediately jumped into the effects possibilities. However, he had a bit too much enthusiasm for Disney, who began to fear that his ideas would run the film well over its budget. Even though test composites with Kevin Yagher's baby were

promising, Chechik's expensive brainstorm would ultimately get him removed from the show a few months into pre-production. “There was a sense of the movie floundering under Jeremiah, which was also due to Dawn producing a special effects picture for the first time,” said Gordon. “A director's always wrestling with a budget, while everyone else is trying to rein him in.”

Before their BABY could run amuck, Disney relegated most of Steel's on-set responsibilities to Edward Feldman, who'd just produced THE DOCTOR for their Touchstone division. The studio then asked Randal Kleiser to direct, owing to his profitable success with the Disney effects fantasy FLIGHT OF THE NAVIGATOR and his proven ability to jump in and save the company's troubled productions. “Since I replaced Chris Menges on WHITE FANG, Disney asked me to take over BABY so it would come in on time and budget,” said Kleiser. “But then it's always nice to get involved with a project that's already been started. Getting the picture shot faster allows me to spend more time readying pictures that I'd like to direct.”

Having mastered a pleasantly homogenized pop formula

with GREASE and THE BLUE LAGOON, Kleiser was a natural to tap into Disney's bright-eyed approach to mass entertainment. “The scripts dictate my approach, and I don't try to impose a personal style on their movies,” said Kleiser. “I'm not a filmmaker who wants to make a stand, just to entertain. Though I'd really love to do a dark adult thriller like SEA OF LOVE, I've yet to go beyond these commercial movies. Though this is my third film for Disney, I've worked with Michael Eisner and Jeffrey Katzenberg for most of my career. But now I've seen a huge change in them and Disney over the last few years, especially after Katzenberg's memo was leaked. He met with the agents and convinced them that Disney was going to make films differently and the company suddenly went from their direct approach on WHITE FANG to being practically interference-free with HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID.”

Disney's new hands-off policy was the impetus for Kleiser to take on KID, a movie that would fulfill his ambition for tackling effects far beyond NAVIGATOR's computer-animated spaceship. Now his easygoing talents would get their first real challenge with high-definition video, motion control and in-camera trickery, a visual palate that also influenced his script revisions. Adam's meeting with his tiny parents changed from a highway overpass to a roadblock with Las Vegas' twinkling lights on the horizon, with the movie's finale taking place in the neon city instead of at an anti-climactic power plant.

Kleiser's scouting trips to Las Vegas also gave him the idea for Adam to rip off the Hard Rock's 50-foot electric guitar so he could play rock star with it. But while Joe Johnston had the effects know-how

Rick Moranis returns as wacky inventor Wayne Szalinski, dodging a prop shoe.



THE AMAZING COLOSSAL KID

TYKE STAR TEMPER TANTRUMS

Cameras coaxed performances from the Shalikar twins till the diapers were full.

By Daniel Schweiger

Filming *HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID*, the little Shalikar twins were the kind of stars who would always have their own way. Doubling to play blonde-haired Adam, the film's giant "baby," the tots threw more temper tantrums than Kim Basinger on the set of Disney's *THE MARRYING MAN*.

"While movies are usually shot until the film magazines run out, *HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID* was made until the diapers were full!" said Tom Smith, the film's effects supervisor. "One time we gave a baby one of the remote-controlled dolls of Nick and Mandy, who were then put into his pocket and operated by a puppeteer. We had to explain to the Shalikars not to bite the \$10,000 dolls' heads off, and they ended up believing that 'Nick and Mandy' were little people.

"I was ready to do a shot where Adam comes around a mountain road, but the baby wouldn't come out when we called, 'Action!' remembered Smith. "I didn't know what the hell was going on, and our Vista-Vision film was rolling pretty quickly. Then it turned out the kid wouldn't do the scene because 'Mandy was sick.' He'd broken one of the doll's hands, and was afraid to go in front of the camera!"

Laughed Randal Kleiser, the film's director, "The biggest problem was that the twins were two and a half, and you can't direct kids who are that young. You have to create an environment that tricks them into certain behaviors. It's a lot



The Shalikars on set, dad Sia with twins Joshua (l) and Daniel.

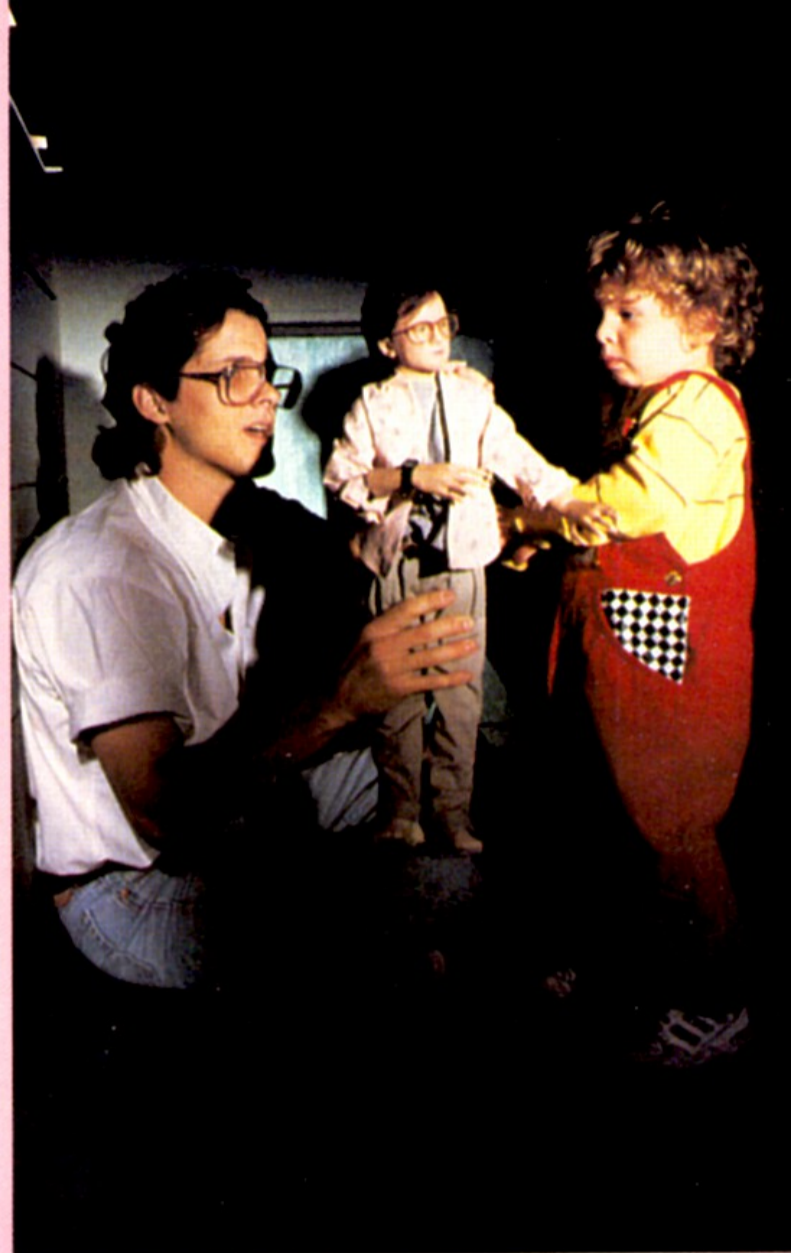
like working with animals. You have the trainer off camera and his pet reacts. That made us always shoot the babies first, then build the other performances around them. And it was very expensive when the babies misbehaved."

Filling in for the troublesome twins as a giant double is Alex Daniels, a handsome and sometimes reluctant "creature" actor who's made a career out of lustful werewolves and Lasamorphs on such projects as *STAR TREK: THE NEXT*

GENERATION and *MERIDIAN*. Wearing Kevin Yagher's rarely glimpsed animatronic head, Daniels prances toward the miniature Vegas, then reacts to Mom's cries to come back.

"This isn't as serious as most of my suit work, and I love it because I'm a big kid at heart," said Daniels from inside his oversized underalls. "Adam might not understand what's happening to him, but he's having a log of fun. I studied the Shalikar twins on videotape, then imitated their movements in front of mirrors at a dance

Yagher works on the giant puppet head worn by stunt double Alex Daniels.



Makeup effects supervisor Kevin Yagher teaches one of the Shalikar twins how to play with a \$100,000 animatronic doll of Adam's brother Nick—carefully!

studio. Though it doesn't help my ambitions as a serious actor, people always recommend me on my stamina and mime abilities. Right now, Randal's finding spots where my costume works, and when it doesn't." Daniel's youthful glee caused him to momentarily collapse when Adam's air cooling system broke down. "It's probably the hottest suit I've ever worn," he said, visibly perspiring.

Kleiser's most frustrating experience with the Shalikars occurred when they refused to go on the soundstage. After becoming desperate enough to order the crew off the set, Kleiser brought in a guitar player to lure the babies back on. As the crew snuck in, the director prepared to roll his camera without an "Action!" But the twins quickly discovered the plot and walked off again. "Those kinds of instances made us use a lot of dolls, dummies and doubles," Kleiser sighed.

The Shalikars' antics would often result in some hilarious improv performances with Rick Moranis, who'd quickly go along with the kid's demands. "Rick saved the day, and two instances that made it into the film are when he argues with the baby about a nursery rhyme," said Kleiser. "Then one wanted to go to a restaurant instead of eating something that Rick had just microwaved. So he pretended to be a waiter, and the baby finished its meal. I just let the camera roll." □

E F F E C T S T Y P E C A S T I N G

“The little Shalika twins were the kind of stars who had to have their own way, throwing more temper tantrums than Kim Basinger on the set of Disney’s *THE MARRYING MAN*”

to back his vision on *HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS*, Kleiser’s relative inexperience made him rely heavily on effects ace Tom Smith. Having worked together on *NAVIGATOR* and *WHITE FANG*, Kleiser’s constant need for a technical advisor also fulfilled Smith’s ambitions to oversee live action shooting. “Some effects-oriented directors can fall flat on their face, but Tom Smith has a filmmaker’s mind and attitude,” said Kleiser. “He’s come up with great ideas that have nothing to do with the visuals, and I respect his opinion on the editing and acting. But the real technical proficiency has always been in his area.”

Having worked as a shop supervisor for Industrial Light and Magic since its *STAR WARS* days, Smith left ILM to write a glorious coffee table book about his experiences, as well as produce two *STAR WARS*-themed Ewok TV-movies for George Lucas and ABC. But it was *HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS* that really convinced Hollywood of Smith’s abilities outside of Lucas’ orbit, his dazzling visuals for a danger-fraught backyard earning critical acclaim. Though Smith’s task on *HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID* was made easier by the sequel’s live action move from Mexico to Burbank, the sudden switch of directors in the midst of pre-production gave him a sense of *deja vu*.

“The situation’s an interesting parallel, because Stuart Gordon had worked with me for three months on *HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS*, and Joe Johnston could only go with our effects groundwork,” said Smith. “Yet Stuart was very pleased when he got to see Joe’s footage, and I think Jeremiah will feel the same way about Randal’s work. He was quick-witted and inventive, and thank goodness Disney’s given us a director with the same qualities. Randal’s ended up doubling the effects shots in *KID* to 250, and has still kept it on budget. But while you could play scenes with teenagers in front of giant blades of grass, you can’t put a baby in a realistic miniature city. That’s made us go back to the oldest and most basic effects technique,



Adam’s size 686 Adidas, planted on Main Street, Las Vegas. Inset: Peter Chesney’s prop team with the giant shoes under construction at Image Engineering. “It was almost like building real shoes,” said Chesney about the 17-foot sneakers.



which is forced perspective. And in order to sell those shots, you need regular-sized actors in front of the child.”

Live action filming began on June 17th, 1991, with cameraman John Hora giving *HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID* the same color-saturated look he applied to *GREMLINS* and the “It’s a Good Life” segment of the *TWILIGHT ZONE* movie. However, two-time Oscar-winning production designer Leslie Dilley was on the picture from the start, also functioning as a second unit director for Szalinski’s wacked-out world. The baby’s destructive antics were a welcome escape from his draining experience on *THE ABYSS*, a job he jokingly referred to as *THE ABUSE*.

“I’ve learned my approach from years of working on science fiction movies like *STAR WARS* and *ALIEN*,”

said Dilley. “I took *KID* because it was a major technical challenge, more than a design one. It’s deceptive to have a miniature set with a small person pretending to be big, and you’ll get a hokey look if you don’t spend the money for the right opticals. But films like *GUILTY BY SUSPICION* have taught me to cut my ‘outfits’ to the studio’s cloth. I had about \$1.5 million to work with and the laboratory design alone came out at \$750,000, which I then cut back to \$200,000. My job is to make the film appear as good as possible, and that generally means spending a lot of money. However, I’ve always realized that *KID* isn’t a film about art direction. This doesn’t take place in outer space.”

On location in Valencia, Dilley displayed one of the Szalinski’s vans, an improbable vehicle that Lloyd Bridges is huddling in for warmth. Glass is plastered over every metal

inch, a radar spinning about on top. Inside is a collection of unfathomable gadgets, a souped-up cry from Fred MacMurray’s flying jalopy. “Since Wayne is a nutty inventor, he’s come up with a solar-powered van whose mirrors revolve around,” said Dilley, as he patted the vehicle. “Though none of these devices really do anything, they still look impressive.”

An even more inspiringly useless gadget lies in Disney’s Burbank studio, where Dilley has designed Bridges’ Sterling Labs around Wayne’s laser cannon. It’s an ultra-modern building of concrete and steel, and has a big dais in the middle where objects are placed for testing,” said Dilley. “Sterling has given Szalinski a much larger toy to play with, and Peter Chesney’s built the laser gun with a functioning laser, just as he did for *HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS*. We’ve also run liquid nitrogen around it to create a frozen look. The set itself is three levels high, which almost took up the entire soundstage.”

Dilley has also built a full-sized replica of Wayne’s Simi Valley house, alongside a similar home that’s been scaled down 43%, allowing Adam to appear as seven feet tall when he crouches inside it. But some of the most astonishing props have been constructed by theatre designer Peter Chesney’s Image Engineering. With unaccountable prop and pyro credits that include *MILLER’S CROSSING* and *PACIFIC HEIGHTS*, Chesney’s past contributions to *HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS* included giant ants, towering Lego blocks and a flood of raindrops.

The sequel’s oversized menagerie includes a 28-foot-high replica of Adam’s chest, with a pocket that’s more than big enough to contain his older brother and a babysitter. In addition to giant Indians, ice cream bars, raisins and stuffed rabbits, Chesney constructed an exact replica of the Vegas strip’s Sassy Sally. Her steel and neon leg will be the resting place for the Lotus, Nick and Mandy doing a precarious balancing act as they hang over the street. “I’ve dedicated myself to becoming a Jack-of-

all-trades with this hybrid technology," Chesney said from his prop-filled trailer. "I want people to be entertained by these large things without noticing them, and the more you believe in the illusion, the happier I am."

One prop that barely survived the original KIDS was Wayne's matter gun, which had become a tourist attraction for Disney's Orlando park. Sixteen feet long and weighing six hundred pounds, the shrinking device was fitted with a real argon laser, which would be used as an optical line-up for the animation effects. Shipping the gun back to Disney damaged it so badly that the laser practically had to be rebuilt, then mounted on a gantry so it could move about the Sterling labs.

But Image Engineering's most impressive overblown creation is Adam's size 686 Adidas, which march down Glitter Gulch as thousands of extras run for their lives. As Kleiser and Smith figured out how to matte the baby on its hightops, the film's impending start date made Chesney so desperate that he built an outline that would fit any design. "It was almost like building real shoes, with foam insides and a synthetic vinyl covering," he said. "At this point Adam's 112 feet high, so the shoes are 17 feet long. They were so big that a tractor

Director Randal Kleiser, who stepped in to take over the troubled big-budget project from Jeremiah Chechik.

THE BABY BEHEMOTH

“It was fun directing the shoe sequence,” said Randal Kleiser. “We closed off all ten blocks of Glitter Gulch and had 1,000 people running across the streets. It was surreal.”



Making Adam look large, setting up a shot on one of Chesney's miniature sets.

trailer had to bring them to Vegas in three sections!" Cranes would move the king-sized sneakers around, while a mechanical linkage wiggled the toes on cue. One Image engineer was stationed inside a shoe, while a technician would stay on top to move the fake leather around.

"It's important to put the people and the oversized props together as many times as possible," said Kleiser, "and it was particularly fun to direct the shoe sequence. We closed off all ten blocks of Glitter Gulch, then had 1000 people running across the streets. It was a surreal spectacle, and I like making things appear costlier than they are. That whole attitude comes from my film school days."

Though he enjoyed wreaking biblical havoc with rabbit heads and gigantic mints, Kleiser's favorite shots would be done in split scale, a dated in-camera approach that he and Dilley fought the studio on. "HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID was shot in practically the same way as DARBY O'GILL AND THE LITTLE PEOPLE, which was insane because it's so difficult to get the actors' eyelines to match

the BABY's," Kleiser said. "One of my favorite shots is when Wayne and Nick are sneaking the seven-foot Adam around Sterling Labs. The baby walked with Rick and Oliver in forced perspective, then was immediately replaced with Kevin Yagher's puppet. But when we didn't light that baby head properly, it came across as a giant Chucky doll! Most of those shots worked by fluke."

Tom Smith chalked up the film's trials and errors to KID's enormous visual scope, one that he and Kleiser were trying to pull off on an effects budget that paled before TERMINATOR 2's. "As with HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS, I was never setting out to win an Academy Award or break new ground," said Smith. "Randal and I just wanted to tell the story, especially since Disney wanted the spending under control. That made us use traditional techniques, and the only major difficulty we've had is with the huge rubber head which just never looked like an honest-to-God baby. That was an early idea of Jere-

miah's, but I never fault people for trying new things. Most of the split-scales worked out spectacularly, but the process was never as flexible as we'd hoped. But I'd say the film's biggest accomplishment was having the baby in all the effects shots. Depth of field is very critical, and we imposed all of those technical specifications on two little kids who could barely talk. That's been one of the biggest challenges of my career."

After shooting baby effects in front of a Vista Vision blue screen, Smith transferred the footage to HDTV for compositing. Getting that quality back to the movie screen was a futuristic variation of techniques that Disney animators first used on their three-strip Technicolor cartoons. With the celluloid held in a vacuum, Sony, the system's manufacturer, had an electron beam recorder spray the film with particles, in much the same way that phosphors are placed on a TV screen to get a picture. With the smallest dot "painted" on film, a separate strip is shot for each primary red, green and blue color. An optical printer then merges the images without distortion or image degradation. "It's a revolutionary leap for making film look equally good on the television and theatre screens," said Smith. "Though I wouldn't go and invest my life savings in the HDTV system just yet, it's finally allowed people to open up their imaginations without spending ten million dollars."

This technique would allow Smith to view his favorite visual in days, as Adam reveals his height at the roadblock to Las Vegas. "The camera starts very low with the parents and police, then rises into the air as the baby steps into frame," outlined Smith. "You see his shoes, trousers, belt buckle and then the camera's finally at the top of his head. People would think we used a motion control crane, but no rig can travel 100 feet from bottom to top. So we put the crane on the bottom of a hill, then brought it to the highest position over a street light. The baby was then put on a platform, which simulated that six-foot move. The shots snapped together as if they'd



THE AMAZING COLOSSAL MOVIES

INSPIRATION AND LEGAL HASSLES

Disney cut back on similarities to '50s B films, but still wound up in court.

By Robert T. Garcia

When Gary Goodrow and Peter Ebling wrote their treatment for **BIG BABY** back in the mid-'80s, they used as inspiration the imagery of Bert I. Gordon's awful '50s B-film **THE AMAZING COLOSSAL MAN**, including its Las Vegas setting and climax set at Hoover Dam. **HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID** executive producer Gordon brought the script to the attention of Walt Disney while he was pitching the studio on backing **THE TEENIE WEENIES**, the Gordon project Disney ultimately chose to make as **HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS**.

Disney passed on **BIG BABY**, but saw Gordon's project about shrunken kids as a way to revive the studio's penchant for comedy in the vein of **THE ABSENT-MINDED PROFESSOR** (1961). A fan of Disney's old series, Gordon happily agreed to revise the realistic horror slant of **THE TEENIE WEENIES** into **HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS**. When that film became a huge success, Gordon pitched **BIG BABY** as the sequel. Disney hired Thom Eberhardt to rewrite the script, and Eberhardt retained many of Goodrow and Ebling's homages to Bert I. Gordon until Disney lawyers asked for revisions. "It was kind of funny," recalled Gordon Stuart. "A bunch of Disney attorneys came running up to me saying, 'Do you realize there's another movie where they do the same thing?'" That was the end of the **HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID**'s Hoover Dam



Author Kit Reed took Disney to court over similarities to her short story, published as a book in 1981.

sequence. Noted Gordon, "I think those people familiar with **COLOSSAL MAN** will still recognize a lot of similarities."

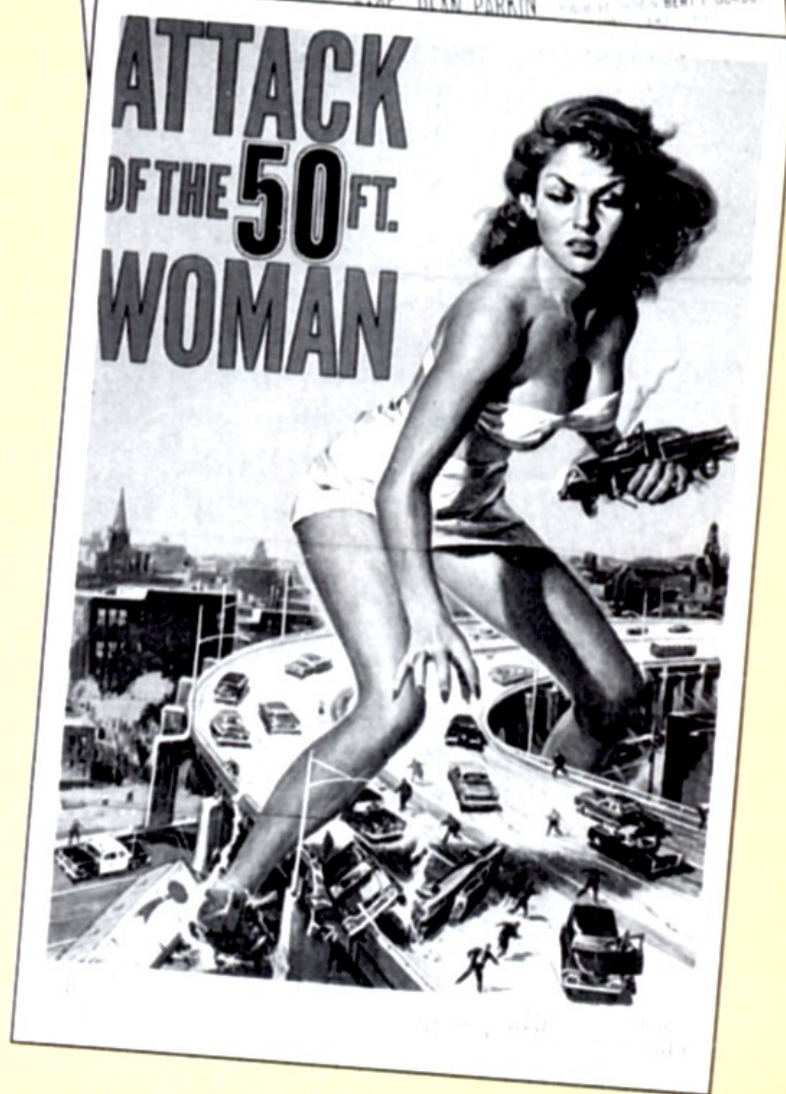
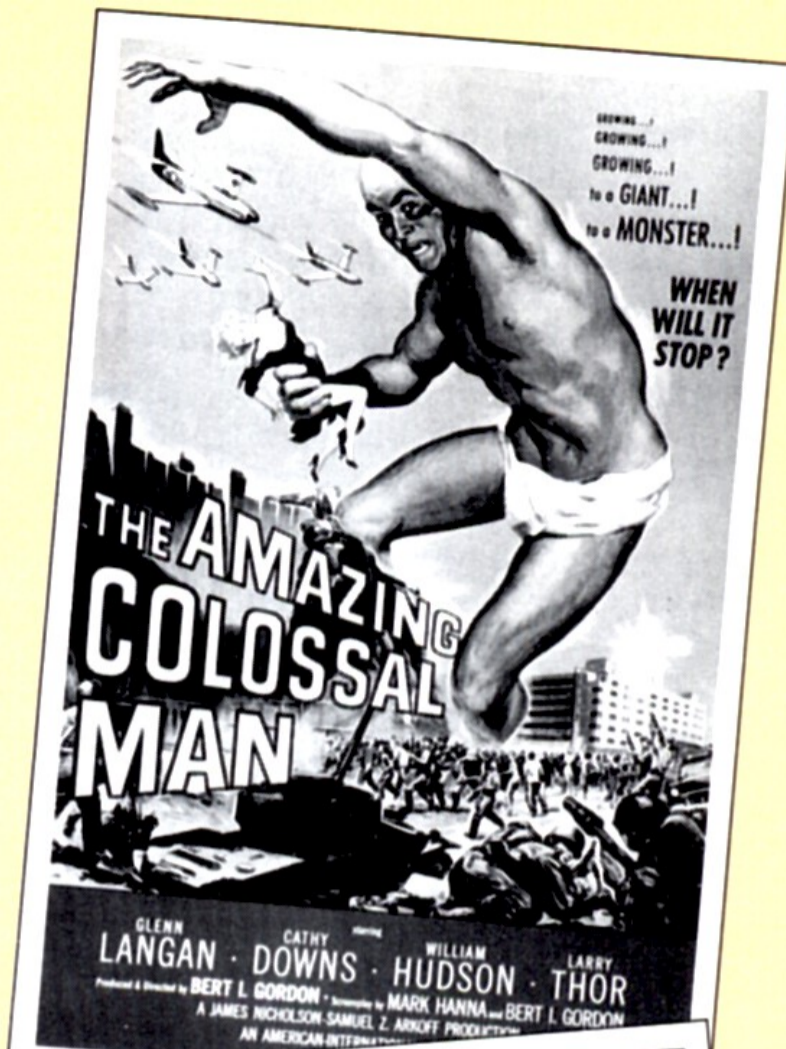
Someone who thought they saw similarities was science fiction writer Kit Reed. After viewing a promo for **HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID** on **ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT**, Reed took Disney to court in New York, seeing similarities to her celebrated short story "The Attack of the Giant Baby." Reed's story, set in New York, actually bears little resemblance to the Disney film. In the story, the diapered baby tears down buildings, tosses ships, eats

people and craps continuously and profusely, leading to pollution problems. Nowhere near as nice as Disney's Adam, Reed's tot never gets cured, but floats blissfully out to sea.

Reed said she wouldn't comment on her legal action against Disney, filed before the New York State Supreme Court in October 1991. Stuart Gordon said he was unaware of Reed's suit. Disney's attorney, Edward Nowak, declined to return repeated calls.

Bert I. Gordon himself was originally inspired to make **THE AMAZING COLOSSAL MAN** by the success of Universal's **THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN** (1957). Gordon completed the film in just ten days in order to get it released the same year. His film triggered Allied Artists' **ATTACK OF THE 50-FOOT WOMAN** (1957) and Gordon's own sequel **WAR OF THE COLOSSAL BEAST** (1958). That's about the extent of this small but colossal Hollywood sub-genre. □

Disney's effects comedy actually more closely resembles **THE AMAZING COLOSSAL MAN** (1957) and its sequel, **WAR OF THE COLOSSAL BEAST** (1958), produced, written and directed by Bert I. Gordon, set in Las Vegas and Los Angeles. Allison Hayes loomed large in 1958 as the small but colossal sub-genre's other notable entry.



been done by some humongous motion control camera, and the shot's beauty is that it was extremely simple, but had enormous visual impact. You'd never bet it would work so well."

The most troubling incident on the film's 12-week shoot was a stunt in Vegas. Chesney tried to devise a shot to simulate Nick and Mandy's view as their Lotus is swung over the crowd. Rigging a camera to two cranes, the lense was able to jet down at 50 mph, then fly one foot above the street. Forty stuntmen were positioned around the rig, while 150 extras ran a safe distance away from the hurtling device. All were warned about the lethal impact from Chesney's steel case, yet everyone thought that danger was past after the second take. But as it was being cranked back up, the casing suddenly slipped loose, then flew towards the crowd at maximum velocity. "My heart leapt into my throat, because I could see that accident coming, and I couldn't stop it," Smith recalled. "The crowd's hubbub was too loud for anyone to hear me, and it's a miracle that no people were hurt. I'm extremely safety conscious, and would sacrifice a great shot if I thought it couldn't be done with the right precautions."

People were thrilled in a far more pleasant manner when KID moved to Disney's new Orlando studio tour, where Kleiser shot Wayne's van crashing through the Sterling warehouse, his "stolen" shrinking ray soon to be turned on the pursuing cops. Though many of the studio's films have been sidetracked from their LA shoots to give tourists their promised glimpse of Hollywood magic, Kleiser got a pleasant charge from the studio's marketing. "The day after we shot the scene, it was part of the tour," he said. "But I thought that was very clever of Disney, because all of the people who go on it will now want to see the movie. Besides, I could never have found such a gigantic warehouse in Los Angeles."

HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID wrapped its live action

E F F E C T S M I L E S T O N E

“Just as TERMINATOR 2 redefined computer imagery, HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID will be remembered for changing the cinematic picture of high-definition video technology.”



Adam accidentally gets zapped by Dad's enlarging ray—taken over for development by Sterling Labs—when Pop tries to prove his crackpot theories by sneaking in and blowing up his son's plush bunny toy. Inset: Les Dilley's futuristic lab design.

filming on October 10th, 1991, with its digital compositing set to be finished in March of 1992. Yet that month was Disney's original release date for the movie, the kind of studio-locked rush job that's caused such effects films as EXPLORERS and TOTAL RECALL to suffer at the hands of bleary-eyed technicians forced to undergo 18-hour days. But this schedule that would have certainly killed the baby was avoided by moving the almost-completed NEWSIES into its release slot, leaving KID to once again face off against the BATMAN RETURNS juggernaut.

"We can now preview the film a month and a half after the director's cut, with 90% of the effects shots in color," Smith beamed. "At that point in HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS, we didn't even have half of the visuals completed. We're not stumbling to the finish line anymore, because Disney's

given our sequel the time to perfect its new technologies. Now I'll be able to apply KID's lessons to my next picture."

By getting an effortless entertainer like Randal Kleiser to make HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID, Smith feels that Disney is confirming its message of placing an "actor's director" over an effects showboater, even if his best visuals are swallowed by the two-ton baby. "You can spend \$20 million on effects and get ILM to pull out all the stops," noted Smith. "KID isn't in that same category. It's the best we can do on the budget, and the visuals should be appropriate for our story instead of being a demonstration in and of themselves. There are scenes in T2 that go on and on, showing you 15 different ways to crash trucks and transform cyborgs. In HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID, I want people to get lost in the humor and the child's wonder. But it would stop their suspension of

disbelief if the audience noticed a flawed effect, which makes it vital that everything's done perfectly."

Kleiser hoped that the probable success of his biggest film will finally give him creative control, something he briefly tasted with the English comedy GETTING IT RIGHT. The director's own tastes in the genre run to the darker fluids of ALIENS, the kind of killer beast film that he'd love to apply his new-found technical knowledge to. Yet, Kleiser remains proudly optimistic about his latest slice of film lite. "HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID fits into the studio's theme of being sunny, and having a lot of family values," noted Kleiser. "Baby boomers will like the new KID because it's about raising children, while teens will enjoy Nick's arc from being nerdy to getting the girl in his brother's pocket. This is the kind of movie where I didn't have a tremendous artistic vision that was being compromised. Any art in HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID is going to come in through osmosis."

After seeing young test audiences react enthusiastically to Kleiser's efforts, Stuart Gordon agreed with Disney's decision to give him the project. "Randal's done a good job and has really allowed Rick Moranis to cut loose," said Gordon. "It takes a brave director to let his actor improvise, which gives KID a lot of warmth. This is also a very complicated film, because Randal is locked into a certain approach by the visuals. He can't make the audience realize that they're watching effects, which is intellectually impossible, since you can't have a 112-foot kid walking around!"

"I think anyone that's recently had a baby can relate to this in a big way, especially a father who has three children like me," Gordon continued. "HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID was inspired by our newest addition, whom we jokingly called 'Godzilla.' You quickly become aware of the incredible, good-natured destructive force of a child. And when that baby's in the terrible twos and taller than his parents, there's a potential for enormous damage!" □

THE AMAZING COLOSSAL KID

LOW RENT MOVIE MAGIC

Effects supervisor Tom Smith blazed new trails of high definition video compositing to stretch the budget.

By Daniel Schweiger

Just as TERMINATOR 2 redefined computer imagery, HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID will be remembered for changing the cinematic picture of high-definition video. Effects supervisor Tom Smith demonstrated the revolutionary system in front of a television monitor, the amazingly sharp picture showing Adam throwing a billboard on Mark Stetson's miniature set, the actors digitally composited in front of the towering tyke. Moving the



Adam at the roadblock, heading to Vegas, a mammoth forced-perspective miniature.

figures about with the ease of a weatherman placing his maps, Smith then has the footage transferred to film with the same crystalline clarity. But like most of KID's visuals, this digital matting took a long time to perfect.

"Sony has been trying for years to push the high-definition standard in this country,

Robert Olivieri as brother Nick and Keri Russell as babysitter Mandy, snatched by Adam. Inset: Trying to direct the tyke's actions by megaphone.

and in the history of visual effects, every trick has been borrowed from somebody else," said Smith. "Because Disney uses their products in the theme parks, Sony lent us the equipment at a very low price. But on our first attempts at digital compositing, the lenses degraded the picture so much that it didn't transfer with the same quality." Smith and Sony ultimately licked the image degradation problem.

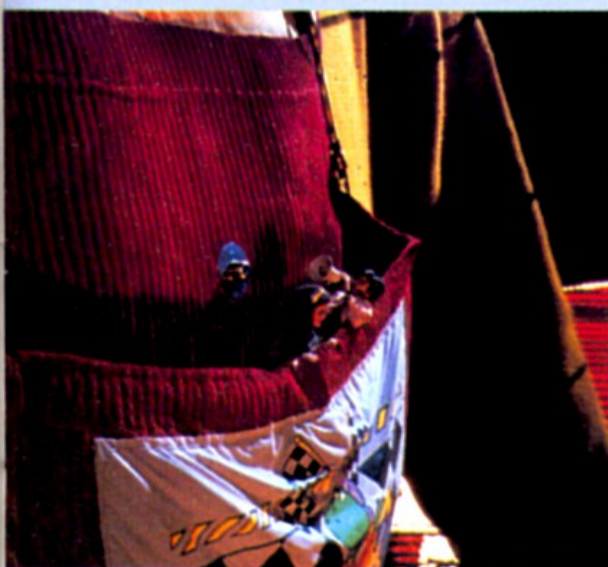
HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID's biggest effect was actually a forced-perspective trick shot. Built on an unused housing tract in Valencia was a three-mile approach to Las Vegas, condensed into 100 yards with 25-foot-high telephone poles and billboards shrinking to 18 inches at the "highway's" destination. Police cars were parked in front of the camera, with a balloon telling the actors where the 56-foot-tall Adam would appear before making his way to Las Vegas.

"We couldn't find a location like this in real life, and even if

we did, it would still be impossible to light," said production designer Les Dilley, as he checked his city out. "[Director] Randal [Kleiser] thought of an illusion that would give us more control, and our clean horizon lines create a sense of scale. The master shot will be done from 40 feet in the air, using a VistaVision plate of the baby walking in for its reverse angle."

Smith's direction of the film's effects got him a Director's Guild card, the Hollywood passport so vital to his plans for making feature films. As Smith worked with the bewildered Shalakar twins for 20 weeks, Kleiser was always sure to point out his talents to the Disney executives. "That shows how much self-confidence Randal has," said Smith. "He just wants to make a damn good movie, and that's left him open to everyone's input." □

Smith, setting up a blue screen shot with his two-and-a-half year-old actor.



ARMY OF DARKNESS

Director Sam Raimi aims his cult film sensation squarely at the mainstream.

By Steve Biodrowski

"It's a little bit like 'ZULU meets NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD,'" joked Sam Raimi. "This is the largest-scale picture I've ever been involved with. We tried to make it as big as humanly possible. I think [co-producer] Rob Tapert pulled off quite a feat, achieving that scale." The director is describing the third entry in his EVIL DEAD *magnum opus*, scheduled for release by Universal Pictures this summer, and clearly "scale" is the operative word, especially when making comparisons to Raimi and Tapert's previous low-budget productions.

Indeed, the scale has increased so much that the film has outgrown its EVIL DEAD III moniker, inspiring Universal to change its title to ARMY OF DARKNESS. Obviously, the new title reflects the distributor's desire to reach a wider audience than the cult fans of the earlier films. More than that, however, the title reflects the increased scope which separates the multi-million-dollar Dino DeLaurentiis Communications production from its predecessors.

Whereas THE EVIL DEAD and EVIL DEAD II centered on an isolated cabin besieged by a handful of possessed zom-



Raimi flashes the "can do" sign on the set of EVIL DEAD II: DEAD BY DAWN (1986), the first sequel made for Dino DeLaurentiis, which got slapped with an X rating.

bies and a hand-held camera representing an unseen evil presence, ARMY OF DARKNESS is a time-travel story featuring a medieval castle under attack by a literal army of skeletal "Deadites," brought to screen life through a combination of animation, mechanics and prosthetics. The film features the most extensive use to date of the Introvision front-projection process, which not only combines the go-motion skeletons with their live-action counterparts, but also provides most of the castle, which would have been too expensive to build in its entirety.

Co-producer Bruce Campbell, reprises his starring role as the chainsaw-wielding monster-fighter Ash. The cast also includes English actor Marcus Gilbert, who appeared in John Hough's science fiction adventure BIGGLES, as Arthur and newcomer Embeth Davidtz, an emigrant of South Africa, returning to make her American film debut as Sheila, Ash's damsel in distress.

Raimi's actual budget (\$12 million, according to DDLC) is still modest when compared to today's major studio productions. Raimi's EVIL DEAD II (1987) was, in fact, originally intended to be ARMY OF DARKNESS, until budgetary restrictions dictated that the



Bruce Campbell, Raimi's producing partner in Renaissance Pictures, stars in *ARMY OF DARKNESS* as Ash, the chainsaw-wielding monster-fighter, stranded in the 13th century in *EVIL DEAD II*, trapped by closing spiked walls and fending off an attack from the rear by the Deadite Pit Monster, makeup designed by the KNB Efx Group.

script be cut back. "After *THE EVIL DEAD*, we were going on to make *CRIMEWAVE* [for now-defunct Embassy Pictures]," recalled co-producer Rob Tapert. "Our sales agent at the time, the late Irvin Shapiro, suggested we make a sequel to *THE EVIL DEAD*. Sam came up with the idea of going back to the middle ages. Shapiro really liked the idea and took out ads in the trades, announcing *EVIL DEAD II: ARMY OF DARKNESS*, in '82 or '83. We had a story fairly

similar to this, but it was too expensive to make at the time, so after *CRIMEWAVE*, Sam wrote a new version of *EVIL DEAD II* that didn't take place in the middle ages."

Though unable at the time to make his "Medieval Dead" movie, Raimi retained one hint of his original concept: transporting Ash to the 13th century for the twist ending of *EVIL DEAD II*. Perhaps this was his way of insuring that any future sequel would have to adhere to his *ARMY OF DARKNESS*

storyline. *EVIL DEAD II* was produced by the DeLaurentiis Entertainment Group, which went bankrupt shortly after releasing the film. Dino DeLaurentiis, who retained sequel rights, approached the Renaissance Pictures team of Raimi, Tapert and Campbell during the development of *DARKMAN* (1990) and struck the deal to make *EVIL DEAD III*.

After *DARKMAN*'s successful release, Raimi sat down for eight months with his brother Ivan and worked out the first draft of the screenplay. Unlike the previous *EVIL DEAD* scripts, which merely had Ash fighting off one monstrous attack after another in a desperate bid to survive, the Raimi brothers opted for a more traditional plot structure, in which the protagonist has a clearly stated goal: to find a way back home. "This one is a lot more story-driven," said Ivan Raimi, a physician who practices in Youngstown, Ohio. "We wanted the story to stand on its own; we didn't want to write it just for the fanatics."

The story has Ash searching for the "Book of the Dead" (entitled *Necronomicon*, in a nod to H.P. Lovecraft), a passage of which will reopen a dimensional vortex that swept him into the past; unfortunately, reading an incorrect

passage inadvertently resurrects an army of Deadites. Ash's dilemma: does he selfishly continue his quest for home, or does he aid the 13th-century people who see him as a hero sent from the skies to deliver them?

"*ARMY OF DARKNESS* is really the story of one man's character," said director Sam Raimi, on the set. "If he is weak, the Evil will know it is time to rule; if he is strong, then it will know it must sleep for a number of centuries and awaken at some later date. There's a black humor element running through the picture, which comes from the contrast of a 20th-century man being brought to this time. Ash is a modern man who never had to stand up and fight for anything. These people have a completely different code of honor."

Considering Raimi's reputation for improvisation on the set, one might imagine the director considers a script merely a rough draft which need not be honed to perfection. His brother painted a different picture, however: "We try very hard to perfect the script—we fight over commas, and when we get in a fight, we don't mind resorting to fisticuffs," joked Ivan Raimi. "Sam does improvise a lot,

Medieval maidens get sacrificed to the Deadites, filming *ARMY OF DARKNESS* on the front projection stage at Introvision, making \$12 million seem like \$40 million.



EVIL DEAD

8MM AMATEUR ORIGINS

Raimi, Campbell, and their college friends pooled money to film a horror demo reel.

By Sue Uram

Writer/director Sam Raimi was inspired to make *EVIL DEAD* as the result of a history assignment while a student of literature at Michigan State University at Ypsilanti. Raimi's assignment was to read the *Book of the Dead*. Intrigued by the title, Raimi wrote a script he called *WITHIN THE WOODS*. Short on dialogue and plot, Raimi more than made up for the script's deficiencies with action.

Raimi, childhood friend Bruce Campbell and fellow MSU student Robert Tapert pooled their money—\$1,600—to film 30 minutes of Raimi's script. The resulting footage

Campbell with high school friend Ellen Sandweiss, a drama student who also went on to star in *THE EVIL DEAD*.



was a non-stop gorefest. Fellow MSU student Tom Sullivan was drafted to provide makeup effects for the short which took place over "one long weekend," according to Sullivan. It was filmed on a farm owned by Tapert's family, near Marshall, in the dead cold of Michigan's climate. "No one got any sleep, either," Sullivan added.

In this early *EVIL DEAD* prototype, Campbell played the monster. Also featured in the footage was Ellen Sandweiss, who went on to take the lead female role opposite Campbell in *EVIL DEAD*. Sullivan noted that Campbell insisted that Raimi give him a screen test even though he was already "hired." In the footage, Campbell tampered with something he shouldn't have and became a possessed creature wreaking havoc. Sullivan described Campbell as the "ultimate trooper." After spending days in latex makeup, submerged in filth and incredibly tired, Campbell eventually reached what is known as the "latex point." Recalled Sullivan, "That is when you are so uncomfortable you just start to rip the stuff off."

Sullivan recalled one inspired bit of improvisation by Campbell during the shoot. In one scene Campbell was called on to cut off a prop arm, slush cast in foam with a coating of heavy-duty latex. During the take, Campbell was unable to cut all the way through, but knew it was the only prop arm they had. Recalled Sullivan, "As he was tugging on the arm, he decided to just gnaw through it



Bruce Campbell played the monster in 30 minutes of footage titled *WITHIN THE WOODS*, with 20-year-old director Sam Raimi, shot in one weekend for \$1,600.

and bite it off. It was one of those magical moments that worked out so well that Raimi used it again in *EVIL DEAD*. But, intentionally that time."

The result was a dynamic marketing tool in the form of an 8mm pilot for what eventually evolved into Raimi's script for *BOOK OF THE DEAD*, the shooting title for *EVIL DEAD*. Sullivan recalled how the footage was projected for neighbors and friends in the Tapert family backyard. Now 20 years old and an MSU dropout, Raimi, with Tapert and

Campbell, used the demo reel to hook local attorneys and businessmen into investing money in the film. Like the Marines, they were "looking for a few good investors for a high-risk venture," said *The Detroit Free Press*. "They literally passed the plate" to friends and neighbors, as well as the local market owners and even to real estate dealers. Raimi, Tapert and Campbell managed to raise \$90,000 in three months, the first leg of their four-year effort to film *EVIL DEAD*. □

Campbell threatens Sandweiss in the out-and-out gore footage, which Raimi and co-producer Rob Tapert used to raise \$90,000 to make their first horror feature.



CAMPBELL ON RAIMI

“Sam’s always wanted to do cool shots. He’s never had a low-budget mentality. On the first EVIL DEAD we had shots that took us 18 hours to get and probably shot 13 to 14 weeks.”

because when you get on set you realize there are certain things that need to be said or don’t need to be said. Sam claims that I have the easy job; ‘When you’re finished,’ he says, ‘I’m cleaning up your mess!’”

Of the tempestuous collaboration, the director noted, “When Ivan and I write, there’s never a shortage of ideas. It’s just a question of selecting the ideas which best suit the story or character and then paring them down.”

Fortunately, sibling rivalry was the only kind that took place over the screenplay. Dino DeLaurentiis preferred not to wield a heavy hand over Renaissance Pictures, and Universal, involved only in a distribution capacity, had no influence over the production or development of the film. “Occasionally, Dino gave

some very general suggestions,” noted Ivan Raimi. “When we wrote DARKMAN for Universal, we’d get several pages of notes from professional readers—at some point, it becomes counter-productive, and you start fighting studio input. From Dino, we’d get two comments: ‘Do this,’ and ‘I’d like to see more of that.’ Sam feels that, hit or miss, we won’t be able to blame anybody but ourselves.”

With a first draft complete, Renaissance Pictures began tackling the problem of how to get the 13th century on film—quite a challenge for a production with about one-fourth the budget of ROBIN HOOD: PRINCE OF THIEVES. “Sam is the creative head; he defers to the budget if necessary, and we defer to his creativity whenever possible,” explained Campbell. “I think the whole point of



Raimi jokes with Campbell on the set of ARMY OF DARKNESS, wearing a makeup rig by Tony Gardner’s Alterian Studios for the metamorphosis of “Evil Ash.”

being a producer is to support the director—he’s the captain of the ship. You say, ‘What’s your vision?’ and try to achieve that. We stretched ourselves out on this one—we know we were inheriting a major nightmare when we did the first pass on the budget.”

The original plan was to shoot on location at a castle in Spain or England. Not only did this prove prohibitively expensive, it also failed to meet the needs of the production. “Rob and Sam were at a festival in Spain for DARKMAN and snuck in a little location scouting,” Campbell recounted.

“But even if they found a great castle, it would not be designed to fit our needs. Also, with privately owned castles, you can’t mess them up, so it’s tough to stage an EXCALIBUR-type battle.”

The decision was made to build a portion of a castle, which could be augmented with miniatures and/or matte paintings during post-production. In late 1990, Campbell began scouting for a suitable location in the United States. “In the past, I’ve gone into town ahead of time and set things up, as with EVIL DEAD II, while Sam was busy writing

BASHING ASH: CAMPBELL ON RAIMI

“I’ve had the perspective of watching Sam evolve for 14 years,” said Bruce Campbell on the set of Raimi’s ARMY OF DARKNESS. “Sam had struggled the least of any director I’ve seen with the technical side. He’s always wanted to do cool shots; he’s had a pretty good sense of how stuff cuts together. Sam’s never had a low-budget mentality. On the first EVIL DEAD, we had shots that took us 18 hours to get; we probably shot 13 or 14 weeks, which is a long schedule for a film that originally cost only \$350,000.

“There are different types of directors. There are CHILDREN OF A LESSER GOD directors, who are actor-oriented. Technically, their work’s competent, but

there’s not a lot of flair—you don’t have the camera turning upside down or blowing out of people’s eyeballs. Sam has a lot of flair, a lot of style. In the first couple of films, the emphasis was on that. But I’ve seen him mature to the level where what he wants to do with the camera has become second nature, so he can go to the actors now and say, ‘Let’s talk about what you’re doing.’ Which is a good sign. His attitude isn’t, ‘You’re a chess piece—I’ll get to you in a minute.’

“In some cases, it’s so technically oriented that you are a chess piece—you can’t get all bent out of shape about him not spending an hour explaining your motivation. With Sam’s movies, you’ve got to be a technical actor and then

try to go for the next step. Having worked with him, I can concentrate more on acting, because I know how to hit a mark and cheat for the camera. I don’t think I would have learned that as fast with another director.

“Actually, I don’t mind being tormented now on Sam’s movies, because it makes other movies seem much easier. I don’t feel, other than from an acting standpoint, that I could ever get in over my head technically—because I’ve done blue screen and rigs and dialogue with an ‘X’ on the wall. So if a director asks, ‘Do you think you can do this scene with just a C-stand?’ I say, ‘Fine, get the other actor out of here—I don’t need him.’”

Steve Biodrowski



Put through the mill by Raimi, Campbell as a mini-Ash gremlin, speared bedeviling his bigger self.

and Rob was doing pre-production," said Campbell, explaining part of his function as co-producer. "I checked out Utah, because the film called for a very strange look, and I had worked in the town of Moab for *SUNDOWN*. I fell in love with the area and its great landscapes. A lot of the story is Ash traveling to strange lands, so location work was one way of doing that. I documented tons of sights, but budgetwise we decided to opt for a longer schedule by shooting everything locally, so we wouldn't have to pay travel *per diem*. We had wanted to get out of the state initially because it's easier to hide—the farther away you go, the less you get hassled. Our cast was SAG, but the crew was non-union, and when you get into the LA basin, the unions start to chase you around and set up picket lines."

Ultimately, Renaissance Pictures decided to risk confrontations with local unions, though a showdown never materialized. Besides eliminating travel expenses, this had the additional benefit of keeping the production in close contact with Introvision, which was handling the film's visual effects. "Once we committed to them, they didn't want us to leave town, because of the need

Bruce Campbell as Ash in *ARMY OF DARKNESS*, reaching for the Book of the Dead, which flaps away like a bird.



DEAD AUTEUR

SAM RAIMI, TYRO DIRECTOR

How a 20-year-old ex-college student carved out his horror niche in Hollywood.

By Sue Uram

Samuel M. Raimi was the second youngest of five children, raised in a large house in Franklin, Michigan, outside Detroit. Raimi had an uneventful childhood. He played baseball with the other kids on the block, became fascinated with the antics of what later became his heroes—The Three Stooges, read *Spiderman* comic books, thought Jerry Lewis was hilarious and the *Little Rascals* even more so. What influenced Raimi to become the "horrormeister" of slash and gore films is not found in his past.

Though Raimi now lives in California, his parents, Leonard and Celia Raimi, still reside in Michigan. Leonard owns a Detroit furniture and appliance store and Celia runs two lingerie outlets in nearby Oakland County. Young Sam put in his time working in Dad's store. If he worked with Mom in lingerie, he won't admit it.

Raimi credited his father as the greatest influence on his film career. Leonard staged and shot elaborate home movies with only the directions from an Eastman Kodak book. Everyday family occasions became "birthday parties with audience appeal," noted Raimi, who said he was fascinated by the fact that you could capture reality, however staged, with an 8mm camera, replay it, edit it, and make things happen in a different order than they did in real life. At age 11, Raimi shot his first movie; bought his first camera at age 13, with money he earned from raking leaves;



Michigan drama student Hal Delrich as Scott, sporting painful scleral contact lenses for Raimi's low-budget horror look in the original.

graduated to slapstick comedy in the image of the Three Stooges; and shot a Civil War extravaganza using props and costumes with 50 extras.

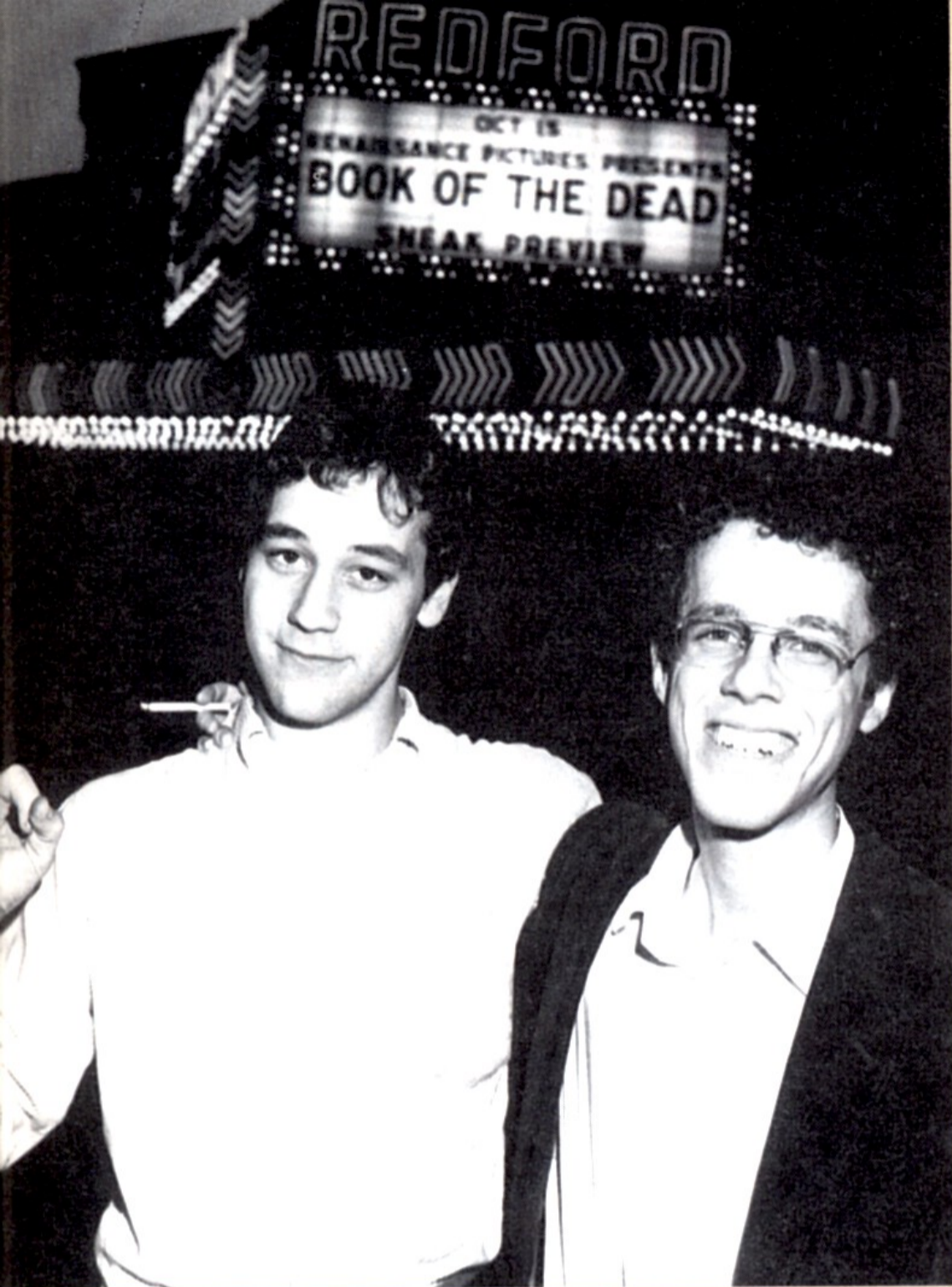
Sam and brother Ivan (now a physician) experimented with new techniques and ideas for camera angles. Raimi strapped the camera to the family station wagon luggage rack and drove it to see how it would look on film. Subsequent zooming and whirling assaults on audiences from lessons learned here are evidenced in Raimi's *EVIL DEAD* series as well as *DARKMAN*. Although older brother Ivan participated in his brother's flights of fancy, Raimi's parents were not sure that his preoccupation with filmmaking was a good thing.

When Raimi was 15, he and 16-year-old friend, *EVIL DEAD* star and co-producer,

Bruce Campbell, were allowed to drive out to St. Claire Shores and take film classes from Vern Nobles, an industrial filmmaker. The experience was Raimi's first encounter with a real movie set. He was hired by Nobles as a production assistant and between lectures on screenwriting and filmmaking technique, Raimi worked, shooting commercials in the local Detroit area. While continuing to write, direct and star in his own amateur efforts, Raimi said his experience with Nobles taught him a lot about discipline—to "keep my mouth shut—and how a professional crew runs from the bottom." While working as a "go-fer" for Nobles, Raimi enrolled in Michigan

State University. It was here that he met brother Ivan's roommate, Rob Tapert, completing the producing triumvirate—with Campbell—who formed Renaissance Pictures to make *EVIL DEAD*.

Tapert was an economics major at MSU as well as an aspiring film producer. Raimi's college films consisted of action footage and slapstick comedy in the vein of his beloved Three Stooges. Other films made by Raimi at MSU included a short on teamster Jimmy Hoffa and *THE HAPPY VALLEY KID*, the story of a student driven mad, actually announced as a project in development by Raimi's Renaissance Pictures after the completion of *EVIL DEAD*. It was Tapert who discovered the key to success that would set Raimi on his rollercoaster ride of horror, following the



Raimi (l) and a pre-BLOOD SIMPLE Ethan Coen at the original's Michigan world premiere, October 15, 1981, shown under shooting title BOOK OF THE DEAD.

advice of an old Michigan theatre owner. Dropping out of school, Raimi—at age 19—and Tapert began to write for the “retch.”

The result was *BOOK OF THE DEAD*, filmed in Tennessee over three months in 1978, by Raimi and his friends. Raimi and Tapert appear briefly on camera at the beginning of the film, playing two local yokels standing by the side of the road waving as the hapless group of college kids, led by Bruce Campbell as Ash, drive by, heading for the cabin. Also starring in the film was Ellen Sandweiss, a high school friend of Campbell and Raimi's, who was a regular in their amateur productions. Hal Delrich had done dinner theatre in Detroit and was cast by Raimi when he accompanied a friend—who wasn't hired—to the audition. Rounding out the college group were other local Detroit actors, Betsy Baker and Sarah York.

With first-time cinematographer Tim Philo, Raimi began experimenting with the tech-

niques that would become his trademark. “Shakey-cam” was invented out of gross necessity dictated by a lack of funds. To provide a semblance of fluidity without the use of a Steadicam, the production's 16mm camera was mounted onto a 12-foot length of a 2x4, equipped with an 8mm lens and strapped to Raimi or Philo, who “ran like hell through the woods,” according to makeup artist Tom Sullivan, providing vertiginous point-of-view shots for the unseen *EVIL DEAD*.

Shakey-cam figured heavily in the film's climax as the spirits invade the cabin to attack Ash as the sole survivor. “When they hit the doors, there was someone on the other side pulling a rope that would yank them open,” said Sullivan. “They would yell out as they were approaching.” For the penultimate zooming shot into Bruce Campbell's face, Sullivan remembered Campbell being knocked down, sustaining a few broken teeth which he had to have capped at the dentist.

8MM TRAINING GROUND

“Raimi credited father Leonard, who staged and shot elaborate home movies with only the directions from an Eastman Kodak book, as the greatest influence on his film career.”

Raimi and Philo also came up with “Vasil-cam” out of necessity, to film a smooth gliding *EVIL DEAD* point-of-view shot into Campbell's face after Ash has stabbed his possessed girlfriend and she begins to retch a multi-colored vomit. For the shot, a 2x4 was mounted to the floor and covered in duct tape, fashioned with a bracket for the camera mount to act as a rail. The camera mount was also covered with duct tape and placed inside, and the rail was smeared with Vaseline petroleum jelly. The cameraman followed the action by gliding the camera smoothly along the rail while on his knees.

“Sam was very inventive with this sort of thing,” noted Sullivan, who said he was impressed that Raimi was so open to ideas during filming. Raimi did storyboards Sullivan described as on a “third grade level using stick figures.”

Counting bank loans, special effects post-production, interest and other costs, *BOOK OF THE DEAD* had a final budget cost of \$550,000. On October 15, 1981, almost three years after filming began in

Tennessee, Raimi held the film's world premiere at Michigan's Redford Theatre, announcing the formation of his Renaissance Pictures company. Ethan Coen, whose brother Joel was finishing the final edition for Raimi in New York, and who went on to make *BLOOD SIMPLE*, flew in for the screening clutching the just-completed final reel, barely making it to the theatre on time.

Raimi took the film to the Cannes Film Festival in 1982 where it received a rave review from writer Stephen King—Raimi had been “discovered” at last. Irvin Shapiro, of Films Around The World, saw the film's commercial potential and bought it, changing the title to *EVIL DEAD* and selling US distribution rights to New Line Cinema, which opened the film—boosted by King's quotes—in 1983. Worldwide release netted \$3 million, enough to satisfy Raimi's investors. Not bad for a grainy, color-desaturated 16mm film blown up to 35mm. Raimi proved he had what it takes. The rest is history. □

A bearded Raimi lines up a 16mm shot for the original in 1978 (l to r), producer Rob Tapert, actress Ellen Sandweiss, effectsmen Bart Pierce and Tom Sullivan.



to coordinate and get approval," explained Tapert.

"We decided to stay in the 'Studio Zone,' as they call it," said Campbell. "Fortunately, Los Angeles is fairly diverse, which is probably why you have so many T.J. HOOKER episodes shot here—it has mountains, beaches, deserts. We checked out a bunch of studio ranches, like Disney and MGM, but they usually go for a premium. We ended up at a privately-owned ranch in Acton, near Palmdale, where I basically lived for a month—what a thrilling place that is! But that's okay—it keeps you focused on your work. It's pretty much desert, but it has enough hilly landscape that a castle could conceivably be there."

Proximity to Introvision's facilities in West Hollywood was important, because of the company's increasing involvement with the production. Originally, Raimi had wanted animated shots of fighting skeletons, along the lines of Ray Harryhausen's work in JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS. With budget restrictions dictating that most of the castle be optically composited, Introvision offered to take on a larger role, becoming not only an effects house, but an overall in-house production facility.

"After DARKMAN, Sam was very happy with what we did on it, which was more than we had contracted for, and he planned for us to do major amounts of work on ARMY OF DARKNESS," noted Bill Mesa, Introvision's chief visual effects supervisor. "He hadn't originally planned for us to create the castle itself. When he started adding up what it was going to cost, what kind of castle he was going to get based on the kind of action he would be filming, it just became too expensive. He decided to take another look at the film and figure what else we could bring to it, what areas we could enhance and make even more bizarre than he had written. We had a few talks about making the skeletal sequences longer and having more interaction between Evil Ash and the animated skeletons, and he wrote those things into the

CAMPBELL ON "DEAD III"

"We decided to stay in the 'Studio Zone' and ended up at a privately-owned ranch in the desert at Acton, for a month. What a thrilling place! It kept you focused on your work."



Raimi directs Campbell, filming the battle scenes of ARMY OF DARKNESS in the desert at Acton, California, near Palmdale. Raimi hated working with horses.

film. He decided to make the whole film here with us and basically work out of our building."

Campbell found himself confronting rotted skeletal warriors provided by the KNB EFX Group, filmed with Introvision's front-projected backgrounds. One such shot, when Ash punches a foe, led to a few headaches. "I was doing the head and body movement, and I was always late with the reaction to Bruce's punch," said KNB's Howard Berger. "Sam started to get upset. He said, 'Just hit the bag of bones!' Bruce asked me if it was okay. I said, 'Go ahead—he won't be happy until you do.' The spine shattered. Sam loved it. Afterwards, he said, 'I'm sorry. I hope you boys aren't mad at me.' We said, 'That's okay. Just remember, you shattered another one of your puppets, so now we're down to seven.'"

Introvision began preparing to shoot not only the effects, but the majority of the interiors as well. Tony Tremblay, who had been asked by Mesa to design the castle, was

brought on to design the rest of the production, and Doug Lefler, who ended up directing second unit, was hired to storyboard the entire film—a necessary process in order to determine exactly which shots could be achieved with Introvision. "We had an absolutely incredible array of shots—it was well over 2,000, probably closer to 3,000," said Mesa. "We knew we had to cut down, so we went back and looked at what was going to be the most interesting stuff. We ended up with 400 to 500 shots."

For Raimi, who conceives his films without regard for technical limitations and whose style utilizes extensive on-set improvisation and coverage from a variety of camera angles, the pre-planning process probably wasn't a pleasant one, but it achieved results he could not have otherwise afforded. "At first, I don't think about the technical aspects; I just think about what would be an interesting thing to see or the best visual way to tell that part of the story," said Raimi. "After the rough draft

is written and we begin to break it down, I have to think very specifically about how to create these images. We determined with Bill Mesa what would be miniatures and what would be full-size, what would be built and what would be faked. The biggest technical challenge was making a picture that takes place 75% in a castle that doesn't exist in reality. The pre-production was the biggest challenge, making it work on paper without the ability to improvise on the set, pre-conceiving the picture in as complete a state as possible."

Raimi didn't see the restraints of the process as necessarily compromising. "A lot of changes take place," said Raimi. "I wouldn't say 'compromise.' It's an evolutionary process. It's growing as you draw the storyboards—and changing, not always in a compromising way, just in a way that will work best for the technique you employ to deliver that piece of information."

With the question of where to shoot the film settled, Renaissance had to find someone to handle the extensive mechanical and makeup effects. Raimi, who has a reputation for re-using people who have served him well, first went to Greg Nicotero, Robert Kurtzman and Howard Berger, who had contributed to EVIL DEAD II, and showed them the script and storyboards. The ambitious nature of the project fooled KNB into thinking Raimi had the money to shoot a major epic. "The script was huge," said Kurtzman. "We didn't know how much money the guys had, and we made a bid that was four times the amount we ended up getting."

"We ended up cutting our bid substantially," added Berger. "We like Sam Raimi and those guys so much that we did a lot of favors for them and also for ourselves. We said, 'This show's going to be fantastic,' so we went the extra five steps. We made a huge investment, as well as they did."

Tony Gardner's Alterian

continued on page 35

EVIL DEAD

THE ORIGINAL 16MM HORROR

Raimi, a 20-year-old college dropout, took four years to complete his low-budget epic.

By Sue Uram

Sam Raimi, age 20, traveled by car from Detroit to rural Tennessee in November 1979 to undertake the shooting of *EVIL DEAD*, then called *BOOK OF THE DEAD*. Accompanied by a cast and crew consisting of his high school and college friends, Raimi filmed for 11 weeks straight, 12 hours a day, six days a week under grueling and primitive conditions.

"Raimi just needs a lot of time to shoot," said Bruce Campbell, Raimi's star and the film's co-producer. "He wants the camera to fly everywhere." As an example of Raimi's arduous filmmaking technique, Campbell cited the sequence in the cabin as the characters listen to the weird noises surrounding them on the outside. "Raimi was doing animation on the set," said Campbell. "For 60 seconds at a time we had to stand with our eyes open and not blink. The camera was clicking at six frames per

second to obtain that effect of the strange, jerky motion. Since the camera usually runs at 24 frames per second, this is really slow."

Shooting *EVIL DEAD* in the Tennessee swamps proved exceedingly uncomfortable for Campbell. "They had trouble keeping all the flies off of me in the swamp because there is Karo syrup in the stuff they used for fake blood," recalled Campbell, who said he looked at the film as just a story about a guy trying to survive overwhelming odds. "I never really kill anyone," said Campbell of Ash, the character he created for Raimi and continues to play in *ARMY OF DARKNESS*. "I killed Linda, my girlfriend, but only after she tried to kill me. I was a generic character that could have died like the others. By the end of the movie, my character was finally getting with the program—he learned to survive."

Once filming wrapped in Tennessee in early January 1980, Raimi continued to



Campbell as Ash, the Rambo of the gore world, shot for the film's ad campaign.

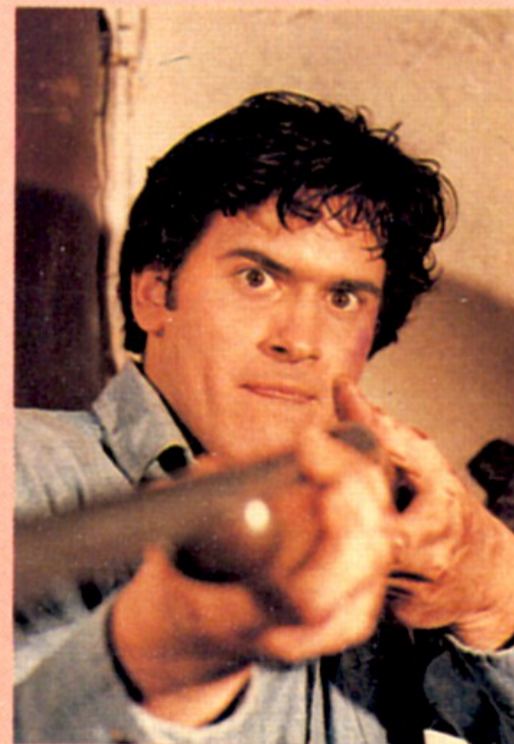
shoot pick-ups and effects in the basement of his parents' house in Franklin, Michigan, almost up to the time of the film's first public screening in October 1981. To score the film, Raimi hired young Michigan musician Joe LoDuca, also in his twenties, with no film experience. "We would sit around for hours at his mother's home watching movies and then discussing the music," said LoDuca. "Sam would tell me to listen to a score by Bernard Herrmann. I would comment that it resembled a Stravinsky piece to me."

For the score, LoDuca supplemented the sound of a small string ensemble with synthesizer chords for fuller orchestral effect. LoDuca also devised unique synthesizer effects for the frenetic rushing through the woods. Synthesizers manufactured after the film's success now come equipped with a knob labeled "EVIL DEAD sound," based on LoDuca's combinations. LoDuca, who went on to score *EVIL DEAD II* for Raimi, said he was impressed with the group Raimi had assembled. "They were very determined that this project was going to be completed, and that it was going to do well," said LoDuca. "They were going to make sure of that. I was impressed by their enterprising spirit. Sam's crea-

tive ability and comic sense made it enjoyable to work on."

Campbell said that their real goal in making *EVIL DEAD* was just to get the money they raised back into the hands of their investors. "I never grew up on creepy stories," said Campbell. "However, I still feel that whatever subject you choose, it should be done in the best way possible. We felt if we were going to make a horror movie, we were going to make *the* horror movie. I learned from the first *EVIL DEAD* that whatever you do, you are stuck with it forever. If you are too tired or you just do not care, it is going to show." □

Campbell, playing college student Ash at age 20. Now 33, Campbell's Ash has graduated in *ARMY OF DARKNESS*.



Raimi and Campbell, shooting post-production 16mm pick-up shots on a facade of the cabin set built at the home of the director's parents, in Franklin, Michigan.



EVIL DEAD III

THE MAKEUP WORLD OF ASH

Tony Gardner's Alterian Studios mangled, multiplied and metamorphosed monster fighter Bruce Campbell.

By Steve Biodrowski

For ARMY OF DARKNESS, Tony Gardner's Alterian Studios (DARKMAN) provided makeup concepts for Bruce Campbell as Ash and Embeth Davidtz as his lady in distress, Sheila. The work ranged from designing Campbell's scars to creating more elaborate prosthetic makeups for evil versions of Ash and Sheila. But perhaps Gardner's most unusual task was creating a small band of miniature Ashes that emerge from a broken mirror.

Eight stunt doubles were made up to resemble the actor, supplemented by a variety of small, mechanical puppets. "They sent me audition tapes of actors standing next to Bruce, so I was able to pick the faces that would work best," said Gardner, who faced a similar challenge on DARKMAN, fashioning makeup doubles for Larry Drake. "Bruce's face is—I don't want to say 'cartoony' but he has some very



Campbell as Ash, sucked into the Book of the Dead when he utters the wrong incantation, latex and polyfoam arms over an aluminum armature with a fiberglass body harness.

strong lines: prominent cheekbones, pointy nose and a very pointy, Dudley Do-Right kind of chin. So I picked people with similar cheek and brow structures."

The puppets were too small to contain complicated mechanical armatures, because they were only a few inches tall. Instead, the torsos were supported with rods, while wires were used to create movement.

"Kind of like a little Chucky—a lot smaller, a lot simpler," said Gardner. "Imagine how a G.I. Joe doll fits together. We ran cables up through the body parts, so when Sam wanted one skewered to a chair, we threaded fine cables through the fork and out the handle to make the little guy kick." Storyboards made it possible to design puppets for specific needs. "Because everything was predetermined, we knew which direction to lead the cables out of the bodies," said Gardner. "Sam would stick to what he said, which is a very rare thing with a director on any film these days."

Some shots required Campbell to interact with the puppet versions of himself, as when his nose is being held closed. "We got him to choose a facial expression and agree to a certain body stance," said Gardner. "We took a dummy cast of Bruce, put it on a table, and worked out with some posable figures, for example, how these little people would be standing

next to his head when they're holding his nose closed and forcing him to open his mouth. We were able to sculpt a body of a specific size whose hands would be at nose level for the shot. We actually pinched Bruce's nose shut, glued the hands to it, and glued the puppets' feet to the floor. When Bruce moves around, it looks like they're holding his nose, but he's actually puppeteering them. They ended up being different sizes. I said, 'If they're so small, there's no way they could hold his nose.' Sam replied, 'Okay, make them bigger, but I still want the little guy to dive down his throat.'"

The swallowed character eventually grows, emerging as a second head, which then splits off to become Evil Ash. Originally, Raimi first wanted to show a bulge beneath Ash's skin as the tiny character moves toward his neck. Due to time limitations, the effect was designed but never filmed. First an eye appears on Ash's neck, then a baby-sized head, which grows to full size. Three mechanical heads were built, with varying degrees of expression, supported by a shoulder harness. With one arm behind the harness and his body tilted to one side, Campbell's shoulders could be made to appear to be even. A second harness, for the opposite shoulder, allowed Campbell to play both the good and the bad heads. Each harness had a positionable arm, which was always in contact with Campbell's visible arm, therefore, the actor could supply the movement himself, as if the character's two sides were fighting for

Will the real Ash please stand up? Campbell, in foreground, with prosthetic makeup look-alikes, devilish mini-Ashes who try to skewer their giant alter ego.





Sam Raimi Excedrin Headache #666. Campbell after freeing himself from the *Book of the Dead*, a one-piece foam appliance. Above: An extreme version, a one-piece foam makeup with acrylic teeth sculpted by Jim McPherson.

dominance. Animation takes over when Ash falls to the ground, sprouts extra arms and legs, and begins crawling like a spider. On set, Raimi hung stunt men side by side for close-ups of hands and feet scampering on the ground.

Ash blasts his newborn twin with a shotgun, chops him apart, and buries the pieces. The dismemberment and burial is mostly implied off-screen, no doubt to avoid potential ratings problems. "Sam wanted everything dry—no blood," recalled Gardner. "I used the gunshot as an excuse to blow away his skin, to sell the idea beforehand of his jawbone sticking out, so that when he comes up later, even more rotted away, it wouldn't be a huge leap."

Continuing his search for the *Necronomicon*, Ash nearly finds himself sucked into another dimension when he opens the wrong volume (a two-stage facial makeup and stretching arms). Then he reads an incorrect passage, reviving the Army of Darkness and Evil Ash, who emerges from his grave reassembled.

"The idea was that his body didn't fit back together quite right," Gardner explained. "We tried to make it look a little surreal." Alterian sculp-

ted elbow-length foam gloves, dismemberment scars, fingertip extensions and translucent nails and sent them to the wardrobe department along with the design. Wardrobe put it all together in a spandex suit with slashes on the costume to match the scars, so that Campbell could get into the makeup/costume combination as fast as possible."

Rather than the traditional Evil Dead look, Gardner opted for a *Bride of Frankenstein* approach for Evil Sheila, once she becomes possessed. "We tried to make her look sexy and dead—quite a combination,"

When two heads aren't better than one. Campbell in Alterian's body harness, supporting an "Evil Ash" puppet head. Below: Evil Ash begins splitting away.



quipped Gardner. "We teased her hair out as far as we could, because you first see her on horseback, and I wanted all this hair flying behind her, with an Elsa Lancaster look—very pale face, prominent bones."

Unfortunately, pressing personal business prevented Gardner from being on the set to see his studio's work brought back to life before the cameras. "I wasn't able to apply Bruce's makeup, which is what I had wanted to do," said Gardner, with regret. "Bruce Fuller handled Evil Ash; Garret Immel applied Evil Sheila, which was sculpted by Roger Barelli; and

Bill Sturgeon coordinated the whole thing and handled the puppets.

"It was tough, especially with the circumstances they were in, which weren't ideal," summed up Gardner. "You never know what's going to happen or what's going to be called for, so you make everything interchangeable; you bring extra people; you take everything you could possibly need, including sleeping bags, boxes of spare parts and any bad foam, in case Sam wants to blow something up. Basically, we needed to have the whole shop there." □



EVIL DEAD III

PRODUCTION DESIGN

Introvision hired conceptual artist Tony Tremblay to devise the look of the film.

By Steve Biodrowski

More than just an effects supplier, it was Introvision's responsibility to design the look of ARMY OF DARKNESS. Effects supervisor Bill Mesa turned to Anthony Tremblay, a designer who had worked on A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET 3. Tremblay read the script and discussed other films with director Sam Raimi that suggested a

the graveyard, among others. Using period reference books like *Church of England*, Tremblay did sketches for Raimi's approval, and then made miniature mockups for further refinements, before blueprinting for final construction. "Sam would go through the mockup and play out his whole scene, and then make changes," said Tremblay.

Some sets never made it past the mockup stage, such as the volcanic chamber which was originally supposed to house the three books from which Ash must choose the *Necronomicom*. "We built the study model, but it became too costly, so Sam decided to set the scene in the graveyard where Evil Ash is buried," said Tremblay, who was impressed with Raimi's ability to adapt to budgetary limitations. "When he's put in that position, he seems to come out of it with something better. It might be a script change or a construction change or an idea for shooting an effect." Most limitations consisted of how much of each



Dressing the miniature set for the mill exterior, for the sequence where Ash has to fight off a cadre of attacking mini-duplicates. Sam Raimi enlarged the scope of his film and stretched the budget with the use of Introvision's front-projected models. Inset: The mill design art by Tremblay.



set could be built full scale. "Storyboards helped us see what we could get away with," said Tremblay, who designed table-top miniatures to blend with the full-size construction.

The film's most important set was the castle, where most of its first and third acts are set, with just 20% built full size. Tremblay patterned his design after Warwick Castle in England, made to look 30% larger. "Only the lower courtyard, which had to accommodate the Deathcoaster, and certain architectural bits—like the gatehouse, the pit and the blacksmith shop—were full size," said Tremblay. Budget

limitations ruled out the use of an actual location. "I'm sure you could have done it in Europe, but it would have cost a lot of money," said Tremblay. "We didn't spend very much on the castle set. It was the biggest set, but for what it was, we didn't spend much—we didn't have much to spend."

Tremblay said he had a good time working on ARMY OF DARKNESS. "It was a fun movie. The funniest thing was working with Sam. He has quite a sense of humor—he could really throw you for a loop. I think the only time I had more fun was working on PEEWEE'S PLAYHOUSE." □



Tremblay on location in Palmdale, matching a full-scale live action to Introvision's miniature constructions.

possible approach. "Two of my favorites, just for authenticity, were MONTY PYTHON AND THE HOLY GRAIL and THE NAME OF THE ROSE," said Tremblay, who considered the chance to design a full-blown fantasy epic a dream come true. "Sam really liked the FRANKENSTEIN look. We tried to do something with our own twist."

In January 1991, Tremblay began eight months of work, designing 20 major sets on a relatively low budget. Tremblay's work included the castle exterior, the Deadite pit, the windmill, the temple ruins and

Introvision effects cameraman Les Paul Robley takes a light meter reading on the castle model for plate photography. Inset: Tremblay's castle design art.



Studios, who worked with Raimi on DARKMAN, was given the makeup assignment on principal characters Ash and Sheila. "Splitting it up added a friendly competition, which was good for us and prevented them from burning out on the workload," said Campbell. "Both groups were really excited about ARMY OF DARKNESS, because it's a monster movie—it's like a possessed version of THE VIKINGS."

Fans of the EVIL DEAD films recall that Ash has persistent problems with mirrors; in particular, his reflection briefly attacked him in Part II. ARMY OF DARKNESS multiplies this predicament into a Lilliputian nightmare when a shattered mirror yields an evil squadron of tiny Ashes.

"When they called and told me the script had tons of little Bruces running around, I was terrified—I thought it would be 'Army of Puppets,' with a bunch of operators below the set," recalled Gardner. "When Sam described the action, I thought, 'Wow, this must be a bigger film than DARKMAN,' but when I went through the budget for the Ash stuff, it was about one-fourth of DARKMAN. It was one of those 'forced to be as creative as possible' situations; 'Sam, what do you think about using fishing line to do this shot?' It's good that he's from that background, because it was the only way to do this film for the money. That's where the 'simplest is best' approach comes into perfect utilization."

Scheduling ARMY OF DARKNESS presented some rather unique difficulties. Most special effects movies shoot their live action first, then add miniatures, matte paintings and animation later. Because Introvision is a modified version of front projection, it requires that the background plates be photographed first, so that they can be projected behind the actors. Furthermore, what's an effect versus what's live action is sometimes a matter of definition rather than of scale: if it has to be projected as a background plate, then it's an effect.

"DEAD III" ECONOMY

"It was one of those 'forced to be as creative as possible' situations," said Tony Gardner. "It's good Raimi has that background, because it was the only way to do this for the money."



Setting up the miniature for the Temple Ruins scene at Introvision. Inset: KNB's prosthetic makeup for Pat Tallman as the old crone who teaches Ash about duty. The scene was dropped when Raimi ran out of money.

For example, Ash's battle with his miniature reflections required a combination of shots: sometimes the full size was used as a background plate, with Campbell performing as a miniature Ash in the foreground; at other times, a small image of Campbell was projected onto the set, while Campbell appeared as the full-sized character.

The schedule was laid out so that the miniatures—a graveyard, a windmill and the castle—were shot one month prior to principal photography. Meanwhile, at the Introvision facility a full-scale water tank set for the Deadite pit was constructed, as were partial sets for the graveyard, windmill and castle. While the miniature shots were being processed, the production moved to a stage leased in North Hollywood and began shooting on the mill set, where Ash has his encounter with the mirror.

The sequence is very much a medieval version of the typical EVIL DEAD situation: Ash trapped in an isolated structure

besieged by an evil force. The tiny evil versions of himself torment him in a variety of outrageous ways—Campbell's re-introduction to the kind of torture Raimi loves to inflict on his character. "It's grueling, because Ash never has much fun—he rarely sits down and has a regular conversation," said Campbell. "At one point, we had to skip forward in the schedule and shoot something out of sequence. We put on my makeup in the true continuity of what I had to be, and Sam was horrified. He said, 'You're the leading man—you can look horrible but not that horrible!' We decided that, since Ash goes on several journeys, that would be the best opportunity to make things go away. Ash is a little bit like a cartoon character: the anvil flattens him, but then he gets up. If you keep dumping everything on him, he'd be charcoal gray by the end of the movie."

Raimi laughed at Campbell's "cartoon character" simile, adding, "That's how I look at Bruce, but Bruce sometimes doesn't feel that way

when he's under the wheel of the steam roller."

After finishing initial photography on the mill sequence, the production moved to the Palmdale area and began shooting in Angeles National Forest and the nearby desert while waiting for the full-scale portion of the castle to be completed—a wait lengthened by some local political maneuvering. Construction had originally begun at a reservoir in Chatsworth, conveniently near the KNB studio. Unfortunately, according to Tapert. "After a week, the local people were able to put enough pressure on a councilman, who went around the film permit office's back and got the Office of Zoning and Building Safety to declare what we were doing improper. He got us shut down. It was really a ruse for an upcoming election: he was a big pro-growth advocate, and he was trying to make a last-minute grandstand to say that he was protecting the environment of this dry reservoir. We scurried for another place and wound up in Acton, near Palmdale, the 'Lilac Capital of California.'"

"The shooting schedule was always in flux," said Gardner. "They were shooting nights, so their time was limited. Sam is spontaneously creative—he'd come up with new ideas, which is fine if there's flexibility, but we were doing stuff that's a process, and there's no flexibility to it. Trying to juggle enough people here at the shop to keep everything going on the days they needed eight makeup men on set was interesting. Then when the Evil Ash skeleton went on location, we didn't know which part of the action was needed. In case Sam had an idea, we needed to have everything there and ready the first day he shot anything with it, so he could pick from this grab bag whatever he wanted. Also, we had to have enough operators to handle the most complex actions it could perform."

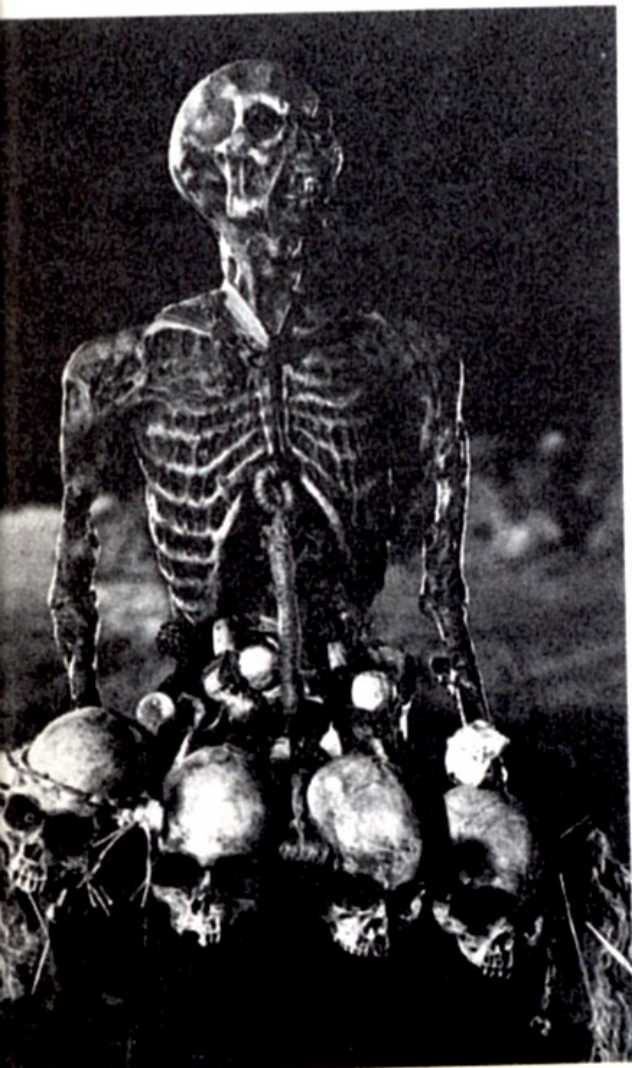
Of Alterian Studios' chief assignment, applying the Evil Ash makeup, Gardner had this to say of Bruce Campbell: "He's really patient. He had some days when he had to be in the makeup chair all night and

they'd shoot his first shot at five a.m. It's night, it's cold—and you have a sponge glued to your head. I don't think people give him the credit he deserves. I think a lot of producers should get their heads encased in a full appliance, just for a day. I think they would appreciate how patient Bruce is."

With makeup sometimes keeping him in the chair four hours a day (three to apply, one to remove), not to mention the demanding physical nature of his role, Campbell obviously had to remove himself from his capacity as co-producer during the actual shooting. "It's good to be just an actor," said Campbell. "When you go home at night, there's no homework—if the film is over budget, who cares?—but you have no control, so if you don't like something, you have to bite your tongue and look the other way. On the other hand, being involved as a producer, I'm pulled off the market longer. My agent asks when I'm available and I say, 'After we deliver the film in May.'

"I'm fairly involved in pre-production, planning and hiring," continued Campbell. "Then, while we're shooting, I pretty much back off and just act. There were sword-fighting and horse-riding lessons, because Sam is pretty demand-

A skeletal warrior with the skulls of its victims from *ARMY OF DARKNESS*, a puppet built by The KNB Efx Group.



DEAD HERO

BRUCE CAMPBELL ACTOR/PRODUCER

Ash's alter ego typifies the hard-working Midwest values of Renaissance Pictures.

By Sue Uram

With his success in the *EVIL DEAD* series, actor and co-producer Bruce Campbell—alias Ash—uprooted his wife and two kids from their Birmingham, Michigan hometown and moved to Hollywood to "follow his dream." On the set of *MOONTRAP* in 1988, Campbell noted that he hasn't let success in Hollywood go to his head.

"Just because you make a movie does not mean you are important," said Campbell. "Hollywood is only a microcosm of the world. It is just in the public eye so much that it *seems* important. Actually, it is a very weird spotlight because you do get a great deal of attention, prestige and money from it. But it is *not* a vital need. It is very cliquish and insidious, self-centered, selfish and self-oriented. It is a very confused business of confused people for the most part." Campbell had this advice for would-be actors: "Keep a level head about it, work like a dog and you'll be fine."

Campbell was born and raised in Birmingham, a suburb northwest of Detroit. Campbell's father, Bruce, was a successful advertising executive, who didn't exactly encourage his son's dream of "making movies." Campbell recalled that his father opposed his acting aspirations. "I always knew I wanted to be an actor," said Campbell. "My dad is in the ad business, but he hates it. He wanted to be an artist, but his father said no to that and instructed him to get a 'real



Campbell as Ash in the original *EVIL DEAD* (1981), college student-turned-monster fighter.

job.' So he got involved with the Community Theater at Cranbrook. I used to watch him act. I saw my dad singing in a wacky outfit and thought it was the coolest thing I had ever seen! When they did *The King and I*, I played the Prince. Then the next year, they did *South Pacific* and I played one of the kids. As I got older, I got more and more parts."

Campbell teamed up with writer/director Sam Raimi in grade school. "As kids, we did Super 8mm movies—almost 30 of them," said Campbell. "That is where my training really is—eighth grade to Senior High. As a result of this, I learned a great many movie tricks."

Campbell admitted that the first two films in the *EVIL DEAD* series only reached a cult audience. He noted that their greatest notoriety resulted

from network exposure on 20/20 in the late '80s when scenes from the films were used as examples of graphic violence in movies. "I do not feel that the movies were given a chance on that program," said Campbell, who didn't relish the publicity. "They were scenes taken out of context and portrayed in a negative light. We were not asked our opinion, which I feel was unfair."

Campbell cited the stylized universe of the *EVIL DEAD* series as something that separates them from an unwholesome portrayal of more realistic horror. "Our goal was to make the sort of movie that one would not see on the six o'clock news," said Campbell. "It would never happen. We were hop-

ing *not* to disturb people. We felt that it was all right for them to be frightened out of their wits while viewing the movie as long as they would be all right when they went home." Campbell said he regarded the *EVIL DEAD* movies as entertaining and non-offensive.

"Our intent at Renaissance Pictures is not to insult the audience," said Campbell. "Everything we do is *for* the audience. When Raimi shoots a scene, he does it with the intent of *not* boring the audience. As one of the producers of the film, I have to stay with it for two and a half years. My paycheck essentially [is flat] for two and a half years. I am *less* than a yuppie at this point!" Campbell noted that his share of the profits from either of the first two *EVIL DEAD* films failed to equal his age.

“It’s a very weird spotlight, a confused business of confused people, cliquish, selfish and self-centered. Keep a level head about it, work like a dog, and you’ll be fine.”



Campbell as Ash in *ARMY OF DARKNESS*, a continuation of the *EVIL DEAD* saga by Renaissance Pictures, Campbell's partnership with fellow Detroiters Sam Raimi.

As for his duties at Renaissance Pictures, his partnership with Raimi and producer Robert Tapert, Campbell said that, “Half the time we are sitting around doing paperwork—it is really boring.” Things liven up on the sets of the *EVIL DEAD* series though, like wielding an actual chainsaw in *EVIL DEAD II*. “When you are holding a running chainsaw in your hand, somehow it is easier to get into the part,” said Campbell, who has no formal acting training.

Campbell noted that he’s a “method” actor. “I’m on the ‘learn as you go method,’” he quipped. Typifying his approach Campbell observed, “If you are cast as a coalminer, I don’t think it is necessary to live with one. You get on the set, you are in your costume, you are hunched over and dirty. After several hours of this, you know what being a coalminer is like.”

Campbell noted that *EVIL DEAD II* introduced comedy into the horror formula, prompted by the fact that some audiences laughed at the original. “I think when you play something to such an extreme, you are either horrified or you laugh,” said Campbell, who feels that the audience should be treated as a peer. “Sam does not mind punishing the audience, but he

does not like to insult them. I like scaring people, but in a friendly way.

“In *EVIL DEAD II*, we tried to play it straight. If you read the script, breaking plates over your head and a possessed hand is not really funny. I played the role as if it was horror—losing control of your hand is horrible. If you play it straight, though, the warped idea will make the audience laugh. We never try to insult the audience. For comedy effect, after I cut off my hand and place it under a bucket, I put a book on top of it titled *Farewell to Arms*.”

Despite the fact that the first two films in the series were X-rated, Campbell said he preferred a more subtle, suggestive approach to horror, scaling down the gore in the second film. “Conceptually, it was still strong,” said Campbell. “But when Ash cuts off his own hand, you do not actually see him do it. You hear the sound of the chainsaw and see the blood spattering in his face. I think it is pretty effective that way.”

Campbell noted he likes to do his own stunts in the films. “I do as many stunts as they let me do,” he said. “When I was dropped into the muddy water in *EVIL DEAD II*, I just stood on some boxes and did a face-flop. It stings a little but the

footage was good!” The nightmare for Campbell occurred when they were rushing him through the woods attached to Raimi’s Samma-cam device, driven on a crane truck, with tree branches thrown in his face for effect.

“I was placed in the Samma-cam device for 12 hours a day,” said Campbell. “It was a big rig which had me splayed at my arms and legs, spinning around about 15 feet off the ground. Sam telescoped the camera back and forth to make it look like warp-speed traveling. I was on this ‘torture rig’ throughout the whole movie. That is why it is hard *not* to scream. I feel that as long as you are not truly abusing yourself and the footage looks good, it is worth the effort.”

Campbell said he refuses to conform to the Hollywood stereotype and feels that capped teeth and dirty fingernails do not detract from his acting ability. In fact, just being himself enables the audience to identify with him as a normal guy caught up in an extraordinary situation.

“I have a problem with normal dialogue, as in not screaming,” said Campbell. “Trying to sound normal, unscripted, ad lib is really difficult. Yelling is easy. When you want to scream, you just crank up the volume. So, unless the scripted work is very good, normal dialogue is the most difficult thing in the world for me to do.” In selecting his movie roles, Campbell said he reads scripts from an audience viewpoint. As a producer, if projects can’t be found, he writes them himself. “I’m the most inexpensive writer I know,” he said.

Campbell has encouragement for other filmmaking entrepreneurs about to make their first movie. “There is absolutely no reason not to do it,” said Campbell. “I never grew up on creepy stories. We never thought *EVIL DEAD* would become a cult classic when we made it. Our goal was just to make the scariest movie that we could. All it takes is hard work. The first *EVIL DEAD* movie took us four years to make. We knew what we wanted to do—to achieve—and we did it.” □

Raimi (l) and Campbell in makeup filming *EVIL DEAD II* (1987) with co-producer Rob Tapert, the third member of Renaissance Picture’s filmmaking partnership.



ing and just writes whatever he thinks he can make me do. A lot of the movie is these 'hero shots' of Ash riding across the tundra. We shot a lot of those early; in November we did two weeks of re-shoots, when I knew how to ride better. Fortunately, I wore a cape, which disguises the space between my rear-end and the saddle. Every actor wants to look smooth and fluid."

Filming the castle exterior, where the majority of the action and the climactic battle take place, began early in summer and lasted through the end of July 1991—not the most advantageous time to shoot night exteriors. "No matter what happens when you're shooting a movie, you always seem to be on the wrong time schedule," lamented Tapert. "In the middle of June, the longest days of the year, we were shooting nights."

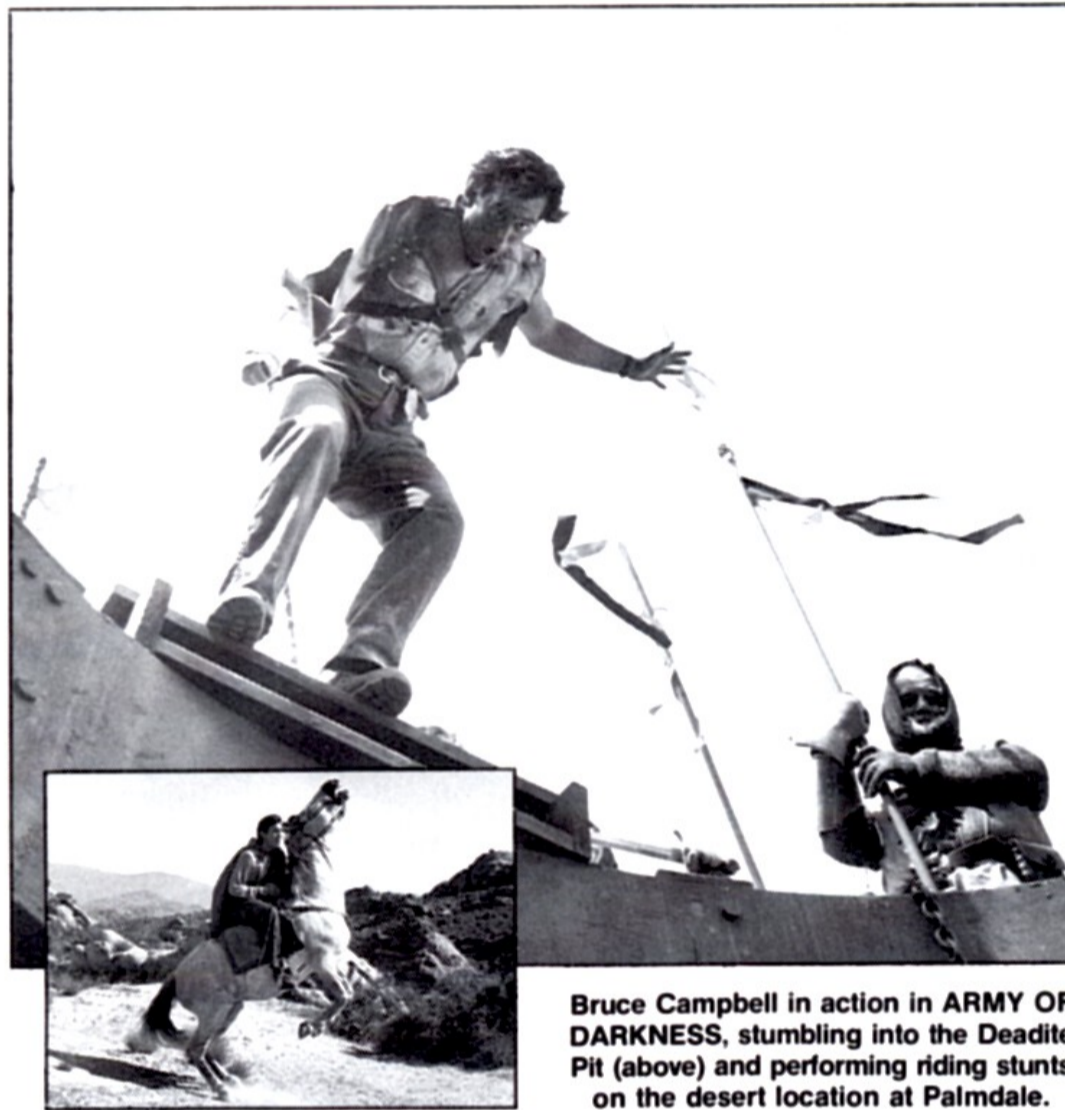
"The desert has its own logic," added Raimi. "It's a very strict boss and determines when you start shooting and when you stop. When the sun goes down, you start, and when the blue gels come up in the morning, you finish. It was tough, because the cloak of darkness was so short, but Bill Pope, our cinematographer, was very quick, and we used the daylight hours to rehearse and prepare."

Typically, the crew would arrive at five p.m. and begin setting up; shooting would commence at nearly nine p.m. Then, after a one-hour lunch break at 11:00, the production would wrap at 4:30 a.m., as dawn was breaking. Inevitably, shooting fell behind schedule, but DeLaurentiis was amenable to adding an extra week on location. However, even after extending the schedule and cutting money elsewhere in order to spend it on the climactic battle, Raimi still found himself coming up short. "Certain ideas had to be compromised for the lack of budget," said Raimi. "Instead of 200 extras on horseback, how about 100 extras and 50 horses?"

"When they started shooting the battle, I think Sam realized he wasn't going to get a lot of the shots that he wanted," said Mesa, who suggested a cost-

SHOOTING "DEAD III"

"Shooting a movie you always seem to be on the wrong time schedule," lamented producer Rob Tapert. "In the middle of June, the longest days of the year, we were shooting nights."



Bruce Campbell in action in *ARMY OF DARKNESS*, stumbling into the Deadite Pit (above) and performing riding stunts on the desert location at Palmdale.

saving alternative that allowed the principal action to be completed back on the Introvision stages. "We proposed that we go out there and shoot a series of plates, with all the extras fighting, from various angles. That way, when it came to the battle between the Good and the Evil Ash, in the upper area of the castle, then behind them could be all of this major battle going on, because you couldn't afford to set up battles just to have close-ups on actors."

On location to transform those hundreds of extras into the Army of Darkness were Robert Kurtzman and Howard Berger—partner Greg Nicotero was busy attending to Wes Craven's *PEOPLE UNDER THE STAIRS*. Noted Berger, "We had four groups. There was the A-group, which were sculpted foam-latex bodysuits and heads for close-ups; there were the B-suits—black spandex

unitards with skeleton bones constructed onto the suits, and skull masks; the C-group were black spandex bodysuits with skeleton bones painted on, with skull masks, and we ended up dressing them up with a lot of wardrobe; and the D-group, which ended up being a lot of the riders on horses, were just a lot of cloaks and wardrobes."

In addition, there were ten mechanical puppets, sometimes operated on dolly tracks and other times worn as backpacks by crew members walking in trenches. "Before the sun went down," said Kurtzman, "we would go over the location with Sam, who would say, 'This is where I want the puppets to be. What do you need from me?' We'd say, 'If we're going to use the backpack rigs, we'll need a trench.' He'd mark the spot and yell at the production assistants to start digging, and they would look at us as if to say, 'You assholes with the puppets!'"

"The thing that Sam tried to

do, because we obviously could only make a limited number of puppets and suits, was mix them in every shot," said Nicotero. "Every time you cut to a different angle, you see more and more soldiers. It gives the impression that there is indeed an army when there were only ten puppets and 30 close-up suits."

However, getting the correct mixture at first proved tricky according to Berger. "For the first week, we didn't see any dailies, because we were out on location. That Sunday, we went to the screening room, and it was obvious that the first row was puppets, the second row A-suits and so on. From that point on, we intermixed everything, and it worked out well."

Unfortunately, moving closer to the camera proved too tempting for some extras, who tried to sneak in for close-ups, forcing Kurtzman and Berger to remind them that they were in the background suits. Said Nicotero, "Then in dailies, you'd see something four feet from the camera that was supposed to be 40 feet from the camera. Obviously, if we had spent the same amount of time making the background suits look like the featured suits, we would have been working till Doomsday."

Despite the tough conditions, KNB made the extra effort to accommodate Raimi because his openness to suggestions provided a good showcase for their work. "Sam is open to creativity from everybody. He's not a director who just puts his foot down while everybody just walks through a job," said Kurtzman. "There was a list of shots we needed and a list of 'bonus shots' that we could get with a second camera setup on the same background action. Sam would ask for something, or we would come up with a suggestion. I'd say about 50% of our work is bonus shots that weren't boarded. The fun part was coming up with those."

"KNB gave me a lot of great ideas," Raimi gratefully acknowledged. "What I like to do is storyboard, so I have a definite plan, and then I go over the storyboards the night before shooting, to improve them one

EVIL DEAD II

MAKING THE FIRST SEQUEL

Dino DeLaurentiis backed Raimi with \$3.75 million but ended up with an X-rating.

By Sue Uram

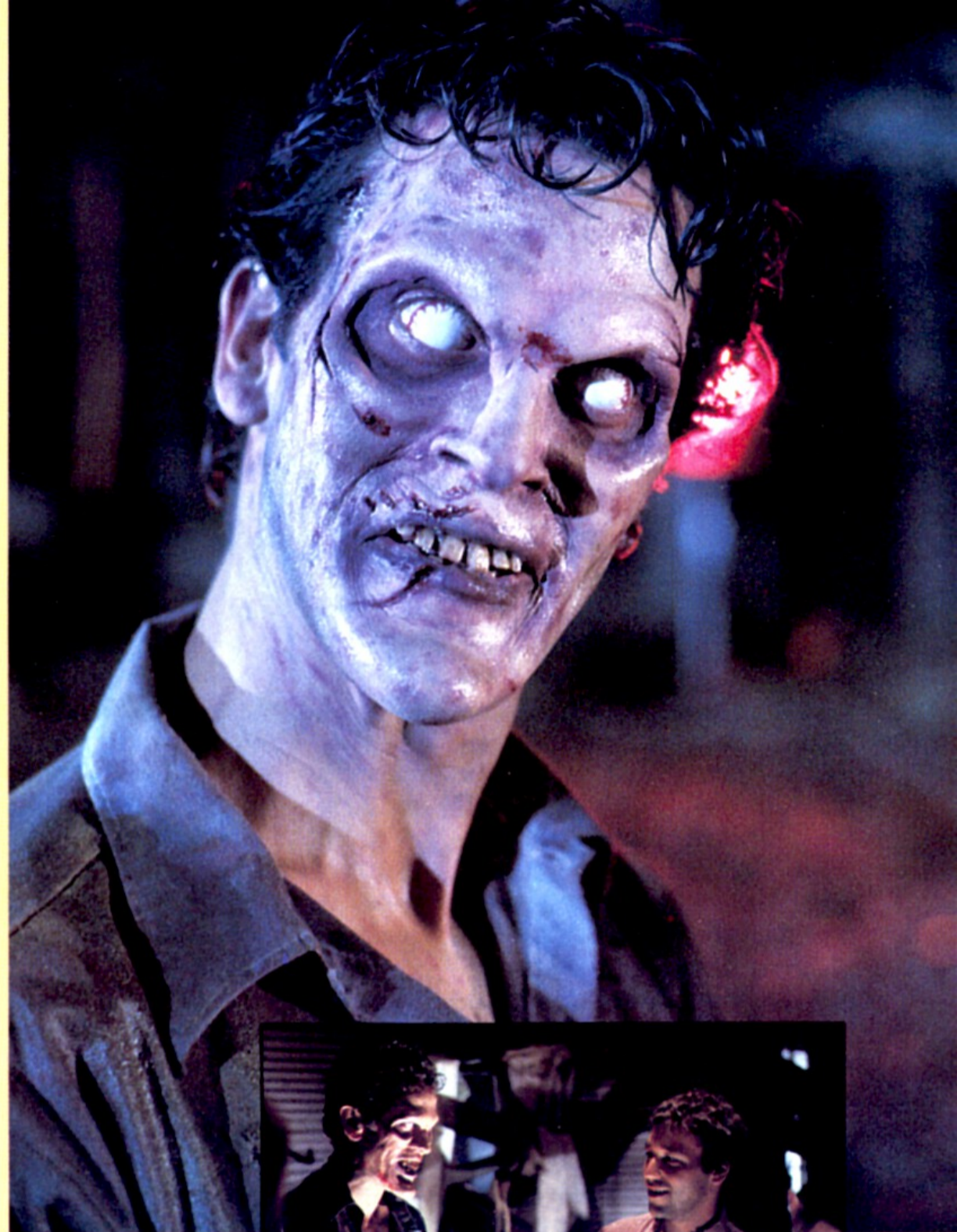
Director Sam Raimi began writing a follow-up to EVIL DEAD while the first film was still in production. As co-screenwriter, Raimi later enlisted the aid of Scott Spiegel, a member of his filmmaking group from his student days at Michigan State University, who had a flair for comedy. Spiegel, now a Hollywood screenwriter, made his own directorial debut in 1989 with INTRUDER, based on his own script about a maniacal slasher invading a supermarket.

Raimi and Spiegel's original script for the sequel was titled EVIL DEAD II—ARMY OF DARKNESS, subtitled "A Scream Play," dated 1985. Anticipating another small budget to work with, Raimi planned to use stock footage from EVIL DEAD to recount

much of the original film's plot in flashbacks. According to Raimi associate Tom Sullivan, both Universal and 20th Century Fox passed on making the follow-up. Renaissance Pictures eventually struck a deal with Dino DeLaurentiis to film the sequel on a budget of \$3.75 million. Renaissance was unable, however, to negotiate a favorable rights deal with Films Around the World to use the stock footage from their own movie, opting instead to refilm the action of the original. Scaling down his vision for the sequel, Raimi dropped most of the penultimate 13th-century "armies of the dead" sequences—saving them for EVIL DEAD III—and retitled the film DEAD BY DAWN.

Filming began May 10, 1986 in Wadesborough, North Carolina, and at the DeLaurentiis Studios in Wilmington. Raimi, now a 26-year-old movie mogul, again solicited the help of fellow MSU filmmaker Tom Sul-

A dummy head of the possessed Linda retaliates as Ash attempts to crush it in a vice. Inset: For talking scenes, Rob Kurtzman made up Denise Bixler and hid her body beneath the workbench set.



Bruce Campbell in possessed makeup, designed and applied by Howard Berger. Inset: Campbell with Raimi during filming in North Carolina.



livan, who supervised makeup effects on the original. Sullivan chose to do stop-motion work on the sequel, a technique he had urged Raimi to use more extensively on the first film. Sullivan joined the crew during preproduction in North Carolina in April, and remembered staying in the house used by Steven Spielberg to film THE COLOR PURPLE, used as lodging by the crew.

Sullivan said his tenure on the project was fraught with troubles, beginning with the car Raimi had purchased from his sister as Sullivan's mode of transportation while on the shoot. "On the way to North Carolina, the car died," said Sullivan. "After wasting a day and a half trying to get it fixed, it caught on fire." Sullivan said he barely made it out of the smoking vehicle with his possessions intact. When he told Raimi and co-producer Rob

Tapert what had happened, Sullivan said they thought it was funny. "A little sympathy would have been nice," he said. Ultimately, Sullivan left the shoot after only two weeks, due to a "family hardship," which he said resulted in "bad feelings" among the crew. Sullivan completed his assigned animation during three and a half months of post-production work in Detroit.

The sequel's makeup work was supervised by Mark Shostrom [17:5:44], who parceled out much of the work to Rob Kurtzman, Greg Nicotero and Howard Berger of Hollywood's KNB Efx Group. Out of 1,200 shots in the film, Raimi had scripted some 250 makeup effects. "We had to stretch the dollar as much as we could," said Berger, who said KNB had about 12 weeks to complete their work. "I did not think we would ever work that hard

“When Ash appears out of the time vortex, Sam Raimi can be seen as the medieval knight who exclaims, ‘Hail! He who comes from the skies to deliver us from the Deadites.’”



Campbell plays his scenes opposite a puppet head manipulated by Greg Nicotero.

again on a movie, until we started *EVIL DEAD III!* Berger noted that Raimi continued to rewrite the script, making changes during filming.

To handle *EVIL DEAD II*'s elaborate physical effects during principal photography, coproducer Bruce Campbell hired Atlanta effects man Verne Hyde. A budget of \$75,000 was drawn up by Hyde in December, including equipment, after phone conferences with Raimi. In January 1986, Campbell informed Hyde that *EVIL DEAD* had sold on video and that a “few extra dollars” were available for effects, at which time Hyde said his budget “went up considerably.” Hyde joined the unit in North Carolina later that year with filming already in progress.

Besides fashioning Raimi a new, improved version of “Shakey-cam” for vertiginous point-of-view shots for the unseen Evil Dead, Hyde designed and built special camera rigs dubbed “Samma-cam,” to film shots of Ash plummeting through the forest, “sky-high-cam,” a flagpole-like device for one whirling shot high in the trees, and a “Rammo-cam,” used to film Ash’s headlong plunge through the windshield of his Olds 88.

Hyde told a story he said typified the playful mood on the set. One scene required a stunt double to be dragged through the forest, substituted with a dummy which flies up over a log and lands in a pond of water. “Sam really wanted a big splash when it landed,” said Hyde. “We dug a big hole about five to six feet deep and 12-feet across and filled it by

pumping water from a nearby stream. We created a waterproof charge which we set at the bottom and filled with mud. When I tested the charge it almost emptied the pond.

“Sam had been playing games with me for about three days,” continued Hyde. “That night he asked me if he could stand with the camera to film the shot without getting hurt. I said, ‘No, Sam, you won’t get hurt.’ When I set off the charge, a wall of water came up and landed right on him. He was totally saturated. He just stood there, looking at me and said, ‘I thought you promised I wouldn’t get hurt!’ I replied, ‘Sam, you’re not hurt, you’re wet!’” Hyde said the entire crew burst out laughing—Raimi included.

Hyde used a tobacco smoker for Ash’s smoking chainsaw, running a small plastic tube up Campbell’s leg. The gasoline engine had been replaced with a small 12-volt electric motor, leaving space for Campbell to insert and hide his hand, which had been cut off in the action.

Cameraman Peter Kline, filming the miniature cabin set crafted by Tom Hitchcock of Illuminations and Gary Jones of Acme Effects. Inset: Campbell observes the post-production set-up.



The teeth were filed off for safety.

Hyde said his favorite effect in the film, dead Henrietta’s flying eyeball, was an impromptu shot devised right on the set at Raimi’s request. KNB provided the “eye,” a Ping-Pong ball they painted on the spot. Hyde experimented with various rigs until he hit upon a technique to do the shot. Hyde mounted the eyeball onto a small motor that would spin it, attached to a wand that was bolted directly onto the camera. As the camera dollied and panned, the fixed spinning eye moved with it in the shot. Said KNB’s Howard Berger, “With Sam, things would always grow into becoming *huge* shots!”

Once principal photography was completed in North Carolina, Raimi moved back to Detroit for three months of pick-up shots and post-production miniature work filmed at Gary Jones’ Acme Effects and Tom Hitchcock’s Illuminations Effects. Jones and Hitchcock built the cabin in miniature with a small forest of attacking trees, devised the time-warp vortex and came up with a model bridge that becomes possessed to threaten Ash in a scaled-down Olds 88. It came as a surprise to the effects makers, once they saw the finished film, that Raimi

had intended to go for humor instead of horror.

“We put 2000% into making some serious effects,” said Jones. “When we saw what Sam was doing, we realized he was after a campy comedy and not the horror of the first movie.” Jones noted that the miniature trees pounding on the cabin were meant to be glimpsed only fleetingly. Instead, Raimi held on the shot for eight seconds. “After three seconds the trees begin to look fake,” said Jones, who noted that Campbell took over the second unit direction from Raimi on day two of the week-and-a-half shoot. Dino DeLaurentiis actually requested more scenes of the cabin miniature once Raimi showed him the footage.

“You could almost hear the audience groan when the backdrop painting with the car going over the bridge appeared on screen,” said Jones. Raimi did a head-on shot of the miniature set-up which stressed its fakeness, according to Jones, who felt Raimi wanted an intentionally “cheesy” look. “Although we put as much detail into it as we could,” said Jones, who did the shots for just \$35,000, “we realized that the effect is meant to be just a bridge to the next live shot.”

The interior set of the full-size cabin was brought back to





A full shot of the flying Deadite glimpsed in a three-second shot that ends *EVIL DEAD II* and sets up *ARMY OF DARKNESS*. Inset: Tom Sullivan animates the stop-motion model he designed and built for blue-screen shots.

Michigan to film additional shots of Ash subjected to the "blood flood" that erupts from the cabin walls, supplementing the effects devised by Verne Hyde during principal photography. Jones, with a lower budget, filmed Campbell on a slant board, with a mixture of water, wallpaper paste and paint dropped on him through the set wall mounted above, with the camera positioned on its side to make it look as if Ash were standing. Jones' shot is the one that opens the sequence. "We just added the wallpaper paste to make sure everything would stick to Bruce, making him really uncomfortable," laughed Hitchcock.

During post-production, Sullivan designed, sculpted, built and animated the flying Deadite seen attacking Ash in

the 13th century at the conclusion. When Ash appears out of the time vortex, Raimi is seen in a cameo role as a medieval knight who exclaims, "Hail! He who comes from the skies to deliver us from the Deadites." Raimi asked Sullivan to make the flying Deadite resemble the Harpies seen in Ray Harryhausen's *JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS*. The creature appears in the film just long enough for Ash to blast it with his shotgun—an insert shot of a full-size gelatin head crafted by Gary Jones.

Sullivan noted that the flying Deadite was slated for more extensive use, wrecking havoc, as Deadites on horseback attacked. Sullivan was not on location with Raimi to film the live-action background plates that were needed. "The

background plates were virtually useless," said Sullivan, "due to all the dust in the air." Though Sullivan had equipped the model with detail, with a hinged jaw and the capability of facial movement, he had time to get only a brief smile into the scene's telescoped action.

When Raimi failed to obtain a desired R-rating for the film from the MPAA, DeLaurentiis, bound not to release X or unrated product through his own DEG operation, opened the film in selected markets early in 1987 through Rosebud Releasing, a wholly owned subsidiary. The film failed to make much of an impact in limited release, though DeLaurentiis was said to have eventually recouped its modest production budget through video, foreign sales and other ancillary rights.

For *ARMY OF DARKNESS*, Raimi's third installment of the series to appear this summer, DeLaurentiis has mandated that the director deliver an R film to reach a wide audience. Besides devising a means for Ash to drive his Olds 88 and run his chainsaw without gas, and load his shotgun without a supply of ammo, Raimi's biggest challenge was how to make it punchy enough to satisfy his core audience without the blood and gore. □

extra step. But when I get to the set, I always keep open ears, because that's what makes everything special: the extra ideas. KNB had plenty of them and I used maybe 90%—shots, good angles on their skeletons, lighting on their makeup. I've come to count on that—ideas from the cast and crew. I was surrounded by great professionals, and that finally determines the quality of the picture. The director just directs these people, who have to do all the real work."

High praise for KNB also came from Tony Gardner, who said, "I think KNB did an amazing job with the money they had. I realize it was pretty much mass production—mold a skeleton, pump them out—but the variety they were able to get, the quality of different characters, was great. They fabricated all their own armor out of foam, created a whole look for their characters—very cartoony, which was great."

One area in which KNB could not accommodate Raimi, due to budget limitations, was the planned use of mechanically operated skeleton horses, which had to be abandoned in favor of ordinary real horses—which turned out to be Raimi's single biggest headache throughout the course of the entire production. Originally,

The Deadite Pit Monster in *ARMY OF DARKNESS* by The KNB Efx Group. Brent Armstrong dresses Bryan Brown.



EVIL DEAD III

KNB'S ARMY OF DARKNESS

KNB Efx Group provided rotted skeletal warriors for Raimi to stage Armageddon.

By Steve Biodrowski

In addition to turning hundreds of extras into a skeletal ARMY OF DARKNESS, the KNB EFX Group provided a raft of other effects for the third installment of Sam Raimi's EVIL DEAD series, many only briefly seen and some not at all: ten mechanical skeletons, two cable-operated, the remainder rod-puppeted; breakable Deadite figures (termed "Crushites"); the creatures for Ash to fight in the Deadite pit; a full-size version of the Winged Deadite that kidnaps Sheila; a witch, including transformation effects, for the deleted temple ruins scene;

One of KNB's mechanical dolly track puppet warriors, used for closeups, augmented by legions of actors in suits.

and Deadite horses that were abandoned.

"Sam was always saying, 'This is just a little movie,'" said Rob Kurtzman of the daunting task taken on with partners Greg Nicotero and Howard Berger. "But when we saw the storyboards, it looked like an epic."

When budget limitations dictated cuts, the Deadites' skeletal mares were the first to go, much to everyone's disappointment. "They really wanted to build the mechanical horses," recalled Nicotero. "When we were working on EVIL DEAD II, Sam was telling us the story for this: 'It's great—a whole army of Deadites on rotted horses!'" KNB experimented with a cost-saving alternative, which could have proven effective had the battle scenes been filmed in the controlled environment of a studio setting. "We foam-fabricated an entire skeleton suit on a horse," explained Kurtzman. "It looked really neat, but you needed to shoot it like an optical, against a black background."

For the two creatures in the pit, Raimi had requested actresses in Deadite makeup, but KNB decided to differentiate between the two by making one a full-body suit worn by Bill Bryant (the Stay-Puft Marshmallow Man in GHOST-BUSTERS). On one of Raimi's weekly trips to check on progress, KNB came up with an interesting way of presenting their version of the creature. "Sam hadn't seen the pit monster," said Kurtzman. "We had Bill Bryant get inside the costume and stand, so it looked



Nadine Grycan in KNB's winged Deadite suit, filming front-projection shots at Introvision. Below: KNB's winged Deadite prop, designed for live-action scenes of its flight over the castle on location, shots Raimi never found the time to film.

like the suit propped upon a body form. Then we brought Sam in and said, 'Here it is.' When Bill started moving, Sam jumped back."

One problem KNB had to deal with on location was adapting their Deadite suit designs to the less-than-ideal proportions of robust stunt men. "The stunt guys didn't really fit the proportions that we sculpted the suits for," said Nicotero. "It takes a certain body type, very thin and tall, to get a skeletal look. When you get these big, burly stuntmen, they don't fit."

Two full-sized versions of the Winged Deadite were built: a mechanical puppet and a bodysuit. "Sam wanted something that could fly in on a crane and interact with the actors," said Nicotero. "We designed it so the actress could put her arms in the wings and flap them, and we attached fake arms up front." With the film falling behind schedule, Raimi opted to shoot the kidnapping scene at Introvision, using plates shot on location. The puppet was abandoned, and the suit was limited to medium shots requiring interaction with Embeth Davidtz. Long shots were completed in post, utilizing animated figures for Sheila and the Deadite.

Despite the tight schedule that prevented KNB from

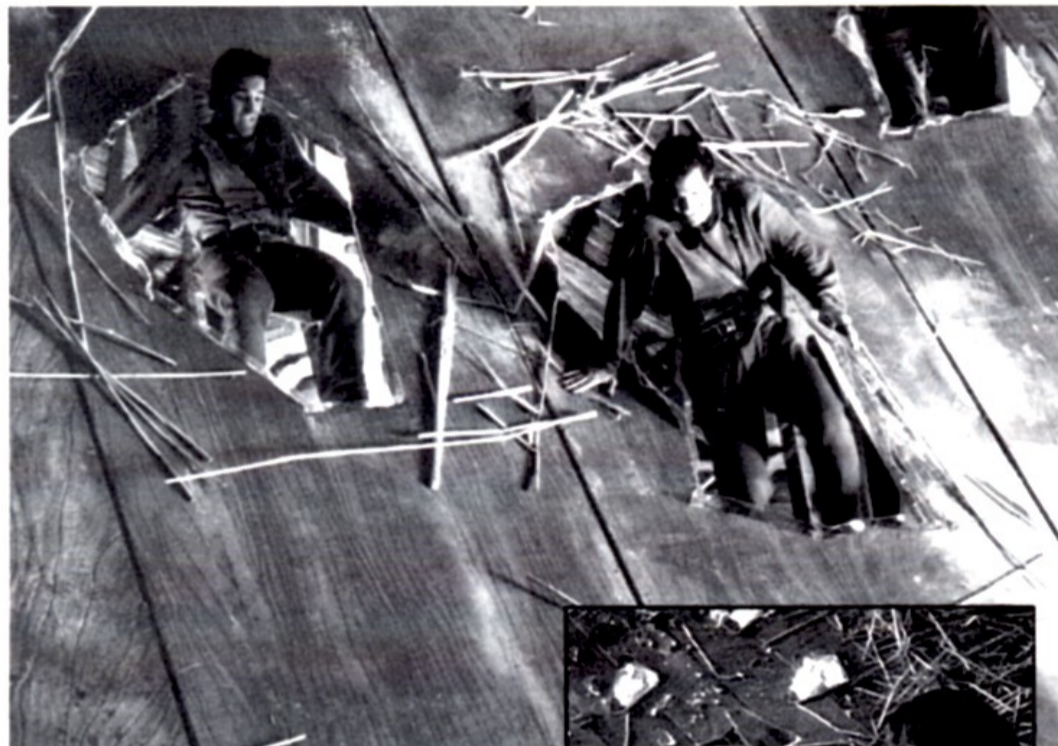


doing Ash's makeup, the KNB partners were more than happy to work on another Raimi film. "In the long run, I'm glad we didn't have to deal with Evil Ash—once we got on location, we had our hands full," admitted Kurtzman. "We worked seven days a week for three weeks straight, staying at the hotel up there. The only reason we did this is these guys are cool to work with."

"Sam made us work," Berger added. "There was never any day that we had down time, because if first unit wasn't using us, second unit was. Sam would have five puppets going, and each camera had its own puppet. The scope of the film was so huge that they would sometimes only get two shots a night." □

A S H O N I N T R O V I S I O N

“We had eight guys dressed like me running around, hitting very specific marks, timed off a large projected version of me, which nobody could see, acting to numbers being called.”



Filming Bruce Campbell and extras made up by Tony Gardner's Alterian Studios to look like Ash, on an enlarged section of the floor of the old mill, at Introvision. Inset: The cadre of mini-Ashes appear to emerge magically from the shards of a broken mirror.



Raimi had planned to use horses mostly in long shots of the advancing army. However, he soon discovered that tight shots of actors, filmed against an open desert with little interesting background detail, looked particularly empty. In effect, almost every shot, including dialogue close-ups, became a “money shot,” featuring extras and horses.

“The toughest thing was dealing with those damn horses!” exclaimed the director. “It’s a good thing the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals person was there—that’s all I can say, because I had explosives in the truck! Horses and I don’t get along very well. They’re big scene stealers. Whenever you’ve got the hero kissing the girl, there’s always a horse in the background shaking its head. They learn a word like ‘action;’ they anticipate it. So if you’ve just shot some big ‘charge’ scene, and now you’re shooting dialogue, when you call ‘action,’ they start charging. They’re not the most gracious of God’s beasts. You just can’t talk to them; you can’t threaten them, either. Nothing I tried worked. Especially when you’ve got a hundred of them, the problems multiply. Fortunately, we had some great wranglers, who made things work as best they could. Someday, I’d like to direct a Western. Now I know why they used all those bogus mechanical horses we always make fun of.”

Raimi managed to finish location work by late July—without detonating any horses—and then moved back to the Introvision facility for seven weeks to complete the bulk of shooting. In many cases effects shooting is a tedious post-production process during which the director surrenders much of his control. The Introvision process, on the other hand, was really a part of principal photography, with Raimi directing the actors as if they were on set, the difference being that most of the sets were projected background plates. “Because they have a great technician and artist, Bill Mesa, in residence, I didn’t even have to worry about the technical aspects of Introvision,” said Raimi. “They took care of it and allowed me

to just direct, either the background plates or the foreground action, which was very refreshing.”

Also, the pace of shooting was not slowed down by the systems’ dual-screen-front-projection process which requires careful precision to align both the screens and their mattes and countermattes. Since MEGAFORCE (13:1:36), Introvision has moved into a larger building equipped with four stages, including a small one for insert close-up work. While one Introvision setup was being photographed on one stage, another could be prepared on the second stage, and the third stage could house a practical set. “We could keep rotating,” Raimi enthused. “Sometimes, we could knock off four Introvision shots a day, plus a full day of normal set shooting, so there was really no waiting around. And you get it back the next day with your dailies, already composited. It’s such a relief, not having to take your shots to a blue-screen and wait six weeks.”

Added Campbell, “Obvious-

ly, with the Introvision system, the next day at dailies you see whether it works or not. Otherwise, we’d be mixing sound effects to numbers. A month after shooting, you’re still not sure if a blue-screen shot is going to work—you have to send it back and have them recomposite, and nothing’s free. With Introvision, basically you look through the camera on stage and say, ‘Yeah, that’s right.’”

With the perspective of Ash’s tiny tormentors at the mill established by Introvision’s projected plates, giant props were mostly unnecessary. “Probably the only oversized setpiece we made was a fork,” recalled Mesa, for a scene wherein Ash impales one of his adversaries. “We had to shoot that backward. We had Bruce dying backward, and a mechanical rig pulled the fork out of him.”

Campbell also ended up face-to-face with his own full-sized image for a confrontation between Ash and Evil Ash. “We had shot Bruce with one of our live-action motion-control

rigs, tracking around him while he walked in a circle,” Mesa explained. “We then played that back on the Introvision stage, using our system that fits on the same track, so that we could follow the same path and put him onto the shot again.” Using the projection process allowed Campbell to walk in front of himself—impossible to achieve with MAN IN THE IRON MASK-type split-screen effects.

“A culmination of all the technical stuff I’ve learned from Sam,” is how Campbell described his experience with what he called “the wacky world of Introvision,” which required precision timing with a projected image visible only to the camera. “You have to tune everything else out, and you have to hit exact marks,” said Campbell. “You might hit your mark and say your line, but the camera and the projector didn’t phase interlock, so you do it again. Then technically everything works, but you screw up. So we might do 15 takes to get both elements right. Sometimes we had eight guys dressed as me running around hitting very specific marks and timing off a large projected version of me, which nobody could see. We were acting to numbers being called out.”

Scheduling was a challenge because of Campbell’s wardrobe and makeup changes. In fact, an entire wall of the wardrobe trailer was devoted to 25-30 of Ash’s “hero shirts” in various stages of being torn and bloodied. “That was fairly interminable,” recalled Campbell. “There were special rigs for my hand, two-headed rigs, stretched-arm rigs, and extreme makeup for my face stretching. For a while, every day was some new form of torment, where you can’t go to the bathroom or can’t eat, and have to drink through a straw.

“A lot of that translates into a schedule nightmare,” continued Campbell. “Fortunately or unfortunately, I’m in almost every frame, so you can’t say, ‘Shoot Joe Blow’s monologue,’ because there is no Joe Blow. Usually in a schedule, you want

to get rid of all the actors and just keep the main guy, because I'm stuck in this thing—they can always get me—but it's tough if you've got some English actors who disappear across the big ditch to do some BBC work.

"It was a little easier on me in the beginning, when they could split up the work between me and the other characters. But as in every good EVIL DEAD sequel, everybody dies but Ash. By the end of the shoot, we'd scheduled all the stuff with just me—a shot of me dressed in this, a shot of me dressed in that. Several times, we'd strip the Evil Ash makeup off; then I'd get remade up as regular Ash, and we'd shoot some tight close-ups, which actors love. It was like a revolving door, where you really have to rely on the director. You're asking, 'What shot is this?' Fortunately, my character is grimy and scarred, so we can get away with it. We figure it will gain the audience's sympathy. He may be an idiot, but he does go through a lot."

Under the circumstances, one of Campbell's main concerns was that his performance not be reduced to a mere technical matter of hitting his marks in time with the Vista-Vision plates. Fortunately, the increased budget allowed Raimi to confer more with his actor, rather than devoting himself solely to the mechanics

ARMY OF DARKNESS, the Love Story: Campbell as Ash and Embeth Davidtz as Sheila, his medieval damsel in distress.



EVIL DEAD III

INTROVISION COMES OF AGE

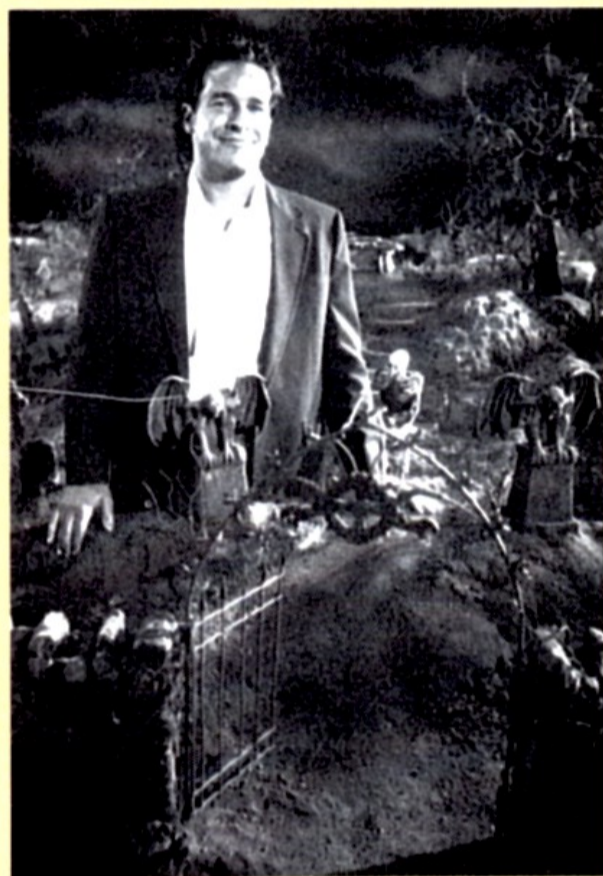
Filmmaking's "better mousetrap" found a visionary to explore its vast potential.

By Steve Biodrowski

For Introvision, ARMY OF DARKNESS was the ideal assignment. Since its 1980 debut in OUTLAND, the company, under chairman Tom Naud, had been trying to promote itself not only as a special effects house, but a complete production facility. But its assignments continued to consist of special effects for films shot at other facilities. And that is how Sam Raimi originally intended to use them, until budget limitations dictated another approach.

When planned location shooting proved too expensive, Renaissance Pictures turned to Introvision to provide the film's major settings with their dual-screen front projection system. "They were very hot on not being just a service company," said coproducer Bruce Campbell. "We worked out an overall deal where we lived there and they could say they were deeply involved in the production and provided the whole look of the movie."

Being a complete production facility meant having to lease a second soundstage and construct several full-size sets, but Introvision's chief method remained the use of front-projected backdrops of locations or miniature sets, using its patented dual screen system. Introvision background plates are shot with either a 4x5 still camera or a VistaVision motion-picture camera. With its extensive use of animation, ARMY OF DARKNESS, for



Company vice president Andrew Naud on the miniature graveyard set where Ash raises an Army of the Dead, Introvision's acid test.

the most part, required the latter.

Introvision effects supervisor Bill Mesa noted that the company's go-motion animation footage was shot first as plate footage, then combined with the live action on the front-projection Introvision stage, the reverse of traditional stop-motion methods. "A lot of animators claim that when you have the live action first then you can animate more precisely and make sure all the sword hits connect," said Mesa. "We've found with some testing that that isn't true. It's actually better if you pre-animate a plate and then have the live-action character react to the animated character. Then the actor can really perform. The other way around, having the actor not know what he's reacting to, really lacks in performance."

Mesa also noted that shooting the live actors in front of large front-projection screens results in a more convincing composite. "The grain structure on the live-action subject and the grain structure on the stop-motion puppet are exactly the same," said Mesa. "It ties those characters together extremely well and makes them blend in perfectly."

For the massive graveyard shot, Introvision built a forced-perspective miniature set, blending four different scales to the horizon, with the largest 14-inch-high skeleton in the foreground. "These were the main animated puppets," said Mesa. "Then we went to 1/12th scale, 1/20th scale and 1/24th scale, which were all go motion, mechanically operated, not stop motion."

Also filmed in pre-production was plate footage for the mill sequence, shots of the interior full-scale set, used to make Bruce Campbell and his doubles appear to be doll-sized miniatures. The windmill exterior is entirely a projected plate of an Introvision miniature, requiring no full-size set construction. "We gave it a gloomy sunset, as Ash approaches," said Mesa.

Introvision built a portion of the graveyard set full scale, used for tracking shots. When Ash reads the wrong passage from the Book of the Dead, Campbell was filmed on the full-scale set with the miniature front projected as a background. The tombstones which begin blowing into the air like mortar shells were actually

RAIMI'S SECRET WEAPON

“It was the perfect marriage,” said company VP Andrew Naud. “Introvision is an answer to the process of making movies, whereas ILM is an effects company and always will be.”

skeletons running in with swords,” said Mesa. “We photographed a plate on location with [KNB’s] Deadites running in. Then on stage, using our tiny Introvision system, because we were just photographing puppets and a piece of castle, we could put the stop-motion characters on the same bridge.”

Overall, Renaissance Pictures is pleased with its decision to join forces with Introvision. “It worked out very well,” said producer Rob Tapert. “It’s a tool like any other tool in the filmmaking process. It’s got very good applications, and at times it looks very good; sometimes, they think it can do something, and it really doesn’t do that quite right. All in all, for our production, it was fine, but every producer would have to consider what they’re using it for and whether its going to give them the right look and right effect.”

“They provided a one-stop effects shop,” Campbell added enthusiastically. It’s risky to put all your eggs in one basket, but in this case it worked out well, because there was no confusion. You never heard, ‘Oh, I thought so-and-so was supposed to do this.’ They helped provide a weird world. If we’d

had to pay on a shot-for-shot basis, it would have been murder. I think it worked out to our mutual advantage.”

The last sentiment is echoed by Andy Naud, who claimed the phone at Introvision is ringing off the hook thanks to Sam Raimi. “It was a perfect marriage,” said Naud. “He gave us what we needed, and we gave him what he needed. He’s very approachable, and he has all these people around him that he hasn’t forgotten, who worked with him on his lower-budget movies. That’s a characteristic we couldn’t help noticing.”

After a 12-year struggle, Naud is hopeful that his company’s involvement with ARMY OF DARKNESS will finally prove to Hollywood that Introvision is more than just another special effects house. “Introvision is an answer to the process of making movies,” claimed Naud, “whereas ILM is a special effects company and always will be. In computer areas, blue-screen areas, optical areas, 20 companies in LA can do all those things they do at ILM. There’s nothing unique up there. If George Lucas died, ILM would be out of business in five months.” □

Introvision effects supervisor Bill Mesa with the miniature stop-motion figures and battering ram used to storm the castle during the film’s action-filled climax.



Raimi rehearses Campbell's fight with a Deadite warrior in one of KNB's body-suits on the front-projection stage at Introvision. Inset: In another scene, Campbell is combined with an image of consuming flames, the front-projection composite visible only on the video tap.

miniatures mounted on air-mortar rigs. Introvision’s dual screen projection process, with some precise mattes and counter mattes, put Campbell into the middle of the scene.

The graveyard sequence contains one of the many “Sam Raimi flying shots” that Introvision provided, as the Book of the Dead itself takes flight. ARMY OF DARKNESS also features a number of flying chainsaws, all filmed akin to the flying eyeball in EVIL DEAD II. “Usually, these shots are done with either blue-screen or frontlight-backlight and then optically composited,” said Mesa. “When we do these shots with live action, the projected plate has a matched move to the Introvision motion-controlled camera. So you get no matte bleeds or any sense of matting something together. It looks like something naturally flying around in the picture image.”

By its very nature, Introvision is less post-production-oriented than most special effects processes; nevertheless, the specifics of some shots required that they be completed in post. Usually, these were principal photography shots that needed some element added. For example, on location Raimi had staged a crane shot of Campbell, just before the final battle, running through the castle courtyard

and up into a turret. Raimi wanted the camera to continue craning up and over the turret to reveal the battlefield enveloped by the approaching Army of Darkness.

To achieve the effect, a motion-control plate of the model battlefield was shot, simulating the perspective of a camera rising over the turret. Then the actual turret was brought from location to the stage and placed in front of the Introvision screen, where it was matched and locked into position by using clips from the live footage. Next, a motion-control move was shot, picking up where the original shot left off and completing the move over the turret to reveal the projected miniature background plate. The switch between the location half of the shot and the Introvision half was obscured by cross-dissolving layers of wispy smoke, actually a matte painting with some real smoke elements for movement.

Completed in post-production were any shots that required a stop-motion puppet to be *in front* of the actors. In many cases, this involved adding animated skeletons in front of KNB’s mechanical skeletons and made-up extras, such as when the Deadites storm across the drawbridge and into the castle. “Intermixed with those, we wanted to add four or five

of getting the shot. "There was more time, although it was so ambitious that sometimes I felt just as rushed as on a low-budget movie," said Campbell. "Sam exercised quality control. If I happened to be out of it that day, he let me know, whereas on a low-budget movie, the director might be out of it, too, because he's so overwhelmed with guys hassling him about getting more setups. We did fewer setups per day, but they were more complex, so we'd still run out of time. And if we fell behind, we had to make it up the next day, because there was no deep pocket on this film."

One sequence pushed so far back that it didn't get made up, at least not during principal photography, was the temple ruins scene, wherein Ash was supposed to learn a crucial piece of information from a sorceress, who then mutated into an Evil Dead witch. The scene was to climax with the temple pillars toppling like dominoes, which had been filmed in miniature during pre-production. "It was a crucial scene," said Tony Tremblay, the production designer. "It was a transition from when Ash wasn't interested in helping these people to when he knows he's got to help them, whether he's interested or not." With little hope of filming live-action pillars toppling on guards, Tremblay designed a new set, to be rebuilt and redressed from a standing set, in which the expository portion of the scene could hopefully be shot during post-production.

Despite losing a sequence which would have featured some spectacular effects work, Introvision vice-president Andy Naud is justifiably proud of the work which did make it to the screen. "Half of the running time is Introvision," calculated Naud. "The movie looks like it cost a fortune, when it didn't, and we gave them many more shots than storyboarded, because you can change the camera lens and get a closer perspective on the same plate. You can move in about 60% from a wide shot, which is a tremendous luxury for someone like

ASH'S "DEAD III" ORIGINS

"We show Ash as a mild-mannered S-Mart employee," said Campbell. "He goes from being a guy working in housewares to a gun-slinging, chainsaw-wielding Deadite slayer."



A stand-in for Raimi's beloved Olds 88, outfitted as the "Deathcoaster," starring in *ARMY OF DARKNESS*. Below: Ash's mean machine, mowing down Deadites.



Sam. He could design a long shot, but then he could change a lens to be in tighter on his actor, and it wasn't a whole different optical cost."

Raimi himself is happy with the results, despite the limitations. "Every technique has its limitations," observed Raimi. "I look at these techniques—be they miniatures or Introvision or blue screen—as different tools to build the piece that you need to present. Introvision is the most multi-faceted tool that I've had a chance to deal with. It's the best 'Pocket Fisherman' available. You can create some incredibly powerful shots using Introvision, but you can't come up with anything on the set. You have to be happy with what you have in storyboard form, because you're pretty much locked into it when you get to the stage. I'm

the kind of guy who likes to do his homework but also likes to improvise on the set. So it limits a little bit the amount of improvisation you can do. But blue screen or rear screen would have even greater limitations. So I'm always going to complain—that's my job."

Renaissance Pictures' original plan had been to finish at Introvision and then wrap principal photography with two more weeks on location, shooting prologue and epilogue scenes unrelated to the rest of filming. Instead, the filmmakers opted for a short breather in mid-September, so that they could put together a rough cut and then regroup in November. "We were going to shoot those final two weeks at the end of our original schedule, but people were a little fried," recalled Campbell. "We were running on about 70% efficiency by that point. It's funny—you don't even know it until you stop. Then you say, 'Ouch, I can't even think!'"

According to Raimi, the delay had the additional benefit of allowing him to pick up any missing inserts and transitional shots revealed by the

rough cut. "The scenes needed a smaller crew, and they were completely unrelated to the rest of filming," said Raimi. "So it made sense to take a break, cut a little bit, and then shoot those scenes. That way, we could make sure we didn't need to pick up any other sequence as well."

The final two weeks included the film's conclusion, in which Ash, having abandoned the spell from the *Necronomicon* in favor of a Rip Van Winkle approach, awakens after sealing himself in a cave for several centuries. Also, as with *EVIL DEAD II*, a new version of Ash's trip to the fateful cabin was shot, this time with Bridget Fonda appearing briefly as his girlfriend, Linda. "She's only in the film very briefly," said Raimi of her cameo. "She said it didn't matter—she just wanted to be a part of it for the fun of it."

Added Campbell, "Now, including this, we've shot three different versions of Ash going to the cabin. In *EVIL DEAD II*, a lot of people thought Ash was stupid enough to go back to the cabin, because he had so much fun the first time, with his new girlfriend, who happened to be named Linda, again. Now, we've done it again, with Bridget Fonda. That was a thrill. Apparently, she had liked the other movies and wanted to be the third and best Linda. We went even further back to show Ash as a mild-mannered S-Mart employee, our version of K-Mart. Story-wise, we're trying to make that leap from being a guy working in the housewares department to being a gun-slinging, chainsaw-wielding Deadite slayer. I'm not sure how that's going to work, but we'll see."

"Now that we're getting involved with studios, that's the kind of request we get—to make Ash a real guy," continued Campbell. "Ash is still on the cartoon side. I'm not sure he'll ever be a real character. I like the fact that he makes horrible mistakes that cost hundreds of lives—which sets him apart from the guys who can do no wrong. Ash's problem is: if he thinks about it, he makes a bad decision; if he doesn't have time to think and just goes for the ax, he comes

EVIL DEAD II

WORKING WITH SAM RAIMI

According to effects expert Vern Hyde, "Ash-bashing" with Raimi can be lots of fun.

By Sue Uram

"You have to remember," began Verne Hyde, "Sam Raimi is just a big kid trapped in a man's body." Hyde, now sixtysomething, recently moved back to Georgia after working on Raimi's ARMY OF DARKNESS, and recalled his days with Renaissance Pictures on EVIL DEAD II as a "heck of a lot of fun!" Given \$3.75 million



One of Raimi's vertiginous "Shakey-cam" shots, rushing headlong at the cabin, filmed with a custom Hyde rig.

by Dino DeLaurentiis to film EVIL DEAD II at the DeLaurentiis studios in North Carolina, Raimi at last could afford to hire a professional effects supervisor. Hyde was it. With a Southern drawl and a dash of humor, Hyde recounted his experience at "Ash-bashing" or "Bruce-bashing," as he said the crew referred to it.

While Bruce Campbell pumped iron to get in shape for the rigorous role of Ash, Hyde designed and built a camera rig for Raimi he dubbed "Samma-cam," to film the scripted action of Ash hurtling through the forest in a time-warp vortex. Dale Johnson assisted Hyde in constructing the rig

out of steel and mounting it on the back of a Chapman crane. Campbell was strapped, spread eagle on the rotating rig, which ran from 1-20 rpm. Hyde, who tested the rig, described the sensation as being torn apart. "I can tell you it was rough," he said.

Campbell had his arms and legs strapped to the rig, with the straps hidden by wardrobe, and his feet laced into shoes that were bolted to the rig. As the truck-mounted crane backed up, a phalanx of production assistants held up tree branches for Campbell to vortex through. "They would go through it over and over again," recalled Hyde, who said Campbell's only remark after his first ride was, "That was damned uncomfortable."

Adding to Campbell's general misery, for the "blood in the walls" shot, Hyde's crew pumped out 880 gallons of various colored fluids onto Campbell in just 44 seconds. "Sam

Ash-bashing: Campbell, hair turned white, in the penultimate grip of the Evil Dead itself. Inset: Hyde's "blood flood," 880 gallons of Technicolor glop.



Raimi, continuity Polaroids in hand, explains to Bruce Campbell in the mudhole why he'll have to take another dive, filming EVIL DEAD II in North Carolina.

wanted it to start out red and quickly change colors until it was black," said Hyde, who employed eight 110-gallon holding tanks outside the cabins, forcing the fluids through one-and-a-half-inch tubing with two huge gasoline-powered pumps. Hyde said Campbell was hit with the force of a fire hose.

Hyde also custom-built a new model of "Shakey-cam" for Raimi's use on the film, to shoot point-of-view shots of the Evil Dead force, hurtling through the woods. "I took a 2

x 4 and carved each end to resemble the hand grips on a motorcycle," said Hyde. "I mounted the camera in the middle and placed a strap from one side of the camera around Sam's neck to the other side of the camera."

When Raimi used the Shakey-cam to film the Evil force chasing Campbell through the cabin, Hyde rigged the doors with a push-button air ram to open on cue. The first two doors worked fine, but the last one failed to open and Raimi went crashing through with the camera. Fortunately the door was constructed of break-away type balsa wood. "Sam was laying on the ground," said Hyde. "Everyone was running around yelling, 'Check the camera!' I said, 'The hell with the camera, check the director!'" Raimi was okay. "And it was a beautiful shot," said Hyde.

As for Raimi's beloved Olds 88, Ash's wheels, Hyde said the director's car was used only for beauty shots—two stunt doubles took the heavy beating. "We didn't damage Sam's car in any way," said Hyde. "It's in California in mint condition, starring in EVIL DEAD III!" □

through with flying colors.

"In this one, there are a couple of straight scenes, in which I'm acting rather than reacting," said Campbell. "It's great, because it helps keep it a mixed bag, so that I'm not just a 'Rambo of the gore world,' as one magazine said. It's good, because when you're in sequel mode, you run a danger of the director saying, 'Routine 2-B.' Sam and I will do that to get through sequences that are similar, but the material's changing. This is a much bigger step than Part II, because that was still rehashing the situation of Part I. I hope we never get into a situation where you could splice any of the films together and not know the difference."

During the two-week pick-up shoot, Raimi did manage to add some transitional shots of Ash riding through the forest from one scene to the next, but the temple ruin and other missing sequences remained un-filmed. Raimi went back into the editing room throughout the end of 1991, with the hope of shooting an additional two or three weeks in January.

Explained Campbell last December, "Here's the theory: While shooting, we dropped several sequences for budget that we would re-evaluate later, but in those sequences was a lot of story information. In that last two weeks, we shot the beginning and ending, but there were still several chunks missing in the middle that had to be reworked into more manageable scenes. Fortunately, it's not because we cut it together and couldn't make sense of it—the script was always very linear—but when you look at the storyboards

EVIL DEAD III

STOP-MOTION SPECIAL EFFECTS

Raimi's skeleton fighters invoke the legacy of effects genius Ray Harryhausen.

By Les Paul Robley

To create the Go-Animation effects for Universal's *ARMY OF DARKNESS*, Introvision International opted to eschew standard stop-motion techniques and perform the process in reverse. Introvision shot miniatures first, projecting the footage onto a large 60-foot Scotchlite front-projection screen, combining live action with the miniature using Introvision's unique patented process. Peter Kleinow, a veteran animator whose credits include *ROBOCOP 2*, *TERMINATOR 1 & 2* and the "Pillsbury Doughboy," supervised the Go-Animation filming.

Front-projection background plates were shot in VistaVision, offering twice the negative size of standard 35mm, with a finer grain, resulting in a more convincing composite.

The miniature set-up at Introvision, showing Technirama camera and Lynx motion-control system. Left: Detail in the miniature, gravediggers at work.



Animation supervisor Peter Kleinow (c), with motion-control camera operators Nic Nicholson (l) and Les Paul Robley, in the miniature trenches.

Animation was filmed with at least two camera set-ups, enabling director Sam Raimi to cut to closer or alternate views.

The first and most difficult animation sequence undertaken (no pun intended) was the wide-angle graveyard set where the camera booms up over the hill, revealing the characters Ash and Sheila overlooking the vast Armies of the Dead as they make ready for

battle. As many as 50 skeletons are visible moving in the shot with 15 channels of movement programmed into the Lynx Motion-Control Spectrum System on an IBM AT computer.

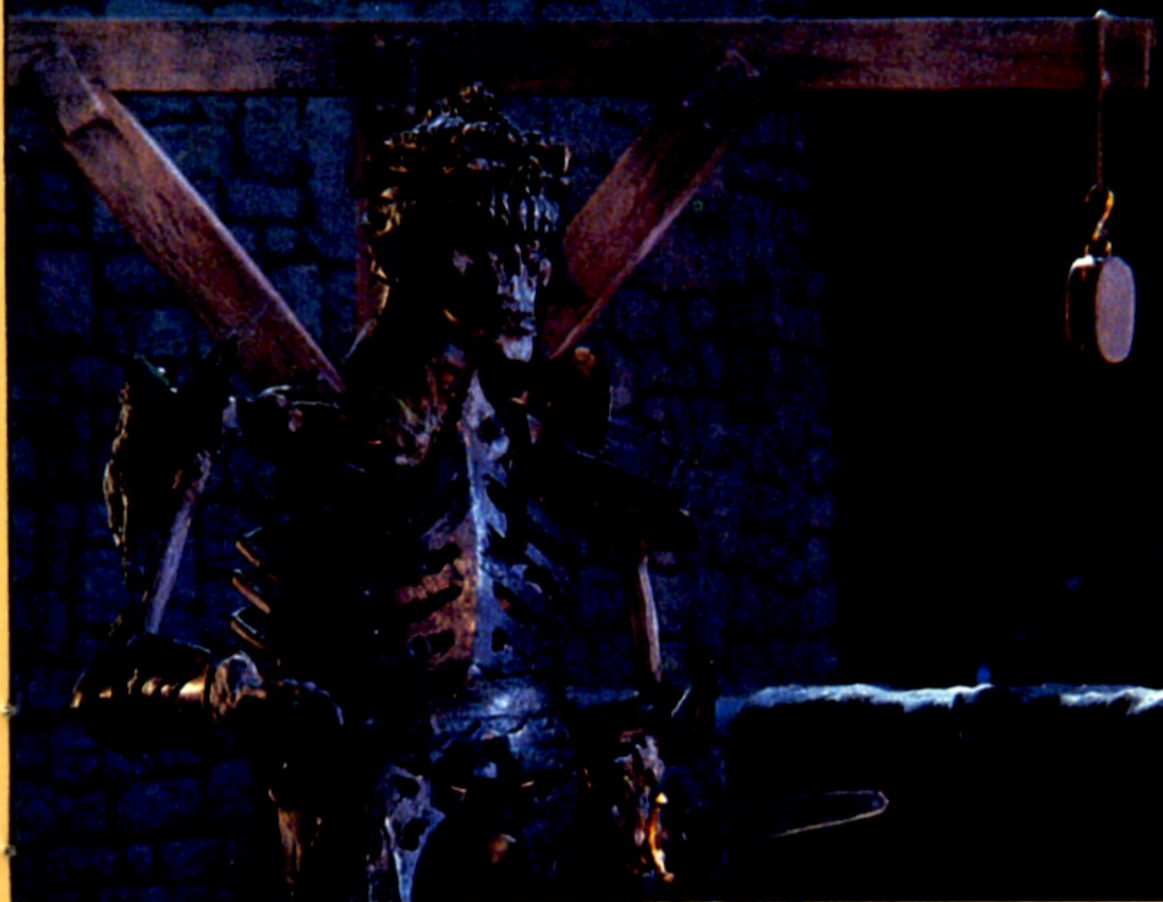
Only six of the skeletons were actually animated by hand in the shot. The four main 12-inch foreground skeletons consisted of ball-and-socket metal armatures with parts culled from human anatomy models kits. These were animated frame-by-frame by Kleinow. A six-inch

grave digger, swordsman and two sets of marching skeletons in the background were animated by Les Paul Robley. The rest of the skeletons were controlled by the computer using wire cables connected to stepper motors. The camera boom and tilt were each operated on two separate motion-control channels, programmed to coincide with the live-action boom filmed later. The entire



H A R R Y H A U S E N H O M A G E

“Introvision updates the skeleton warriors of Ray Harryhausen’s 1963 *JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS* with VistaVision, front-projection and motion-control computer refinements.”



A stop-motion background plate of Evil Ash on the castle parapet, about to battle with Bruce Campbell's live-action counterpart, composited later in front projection. Below: Kleinow during animation on Introvision's miniature set-up.



set was approximately 30 feet by 40 feet and constructed in four forced-perspective sections which were made to appear to stretch to the distant hills occupying the farthest table.

This ten-second shot in the film took about three days to set up, rig and light, and about two and a half days to animate. Troughs were cut in the huge miniature set to enable the ani-

The off-camera flexible motion-control cable connected to the Lynx system, with 15 channels of movement. Six of 50 skeletons were animated by hand.



maters to reach the models. The four foreground skeletons were made to appear to talk with one another and give a battle cry *a la* *JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS* by syncing their jaw movements to a pre-orchestrated exposure sheet developed by Kleinow. One can even catch a brief glimpse of a sword passing between the two on the right.

All animated skeleton footage in *ARMY OF DARKNESS* contained some form of motion blur—either a motion-controlled camera move or an actual stepper motor attached off-camera to the model—to give them that extra look of natural realism without the stroboscopic effect so often associated with stop-motion animation in the past.

Next to be animated were scenes of the skeletons pulling their dead comrades out of the grave as Ash (Bruce Campbell) creeps by. One of them saunters forward with a jaunty air, swinging a shovel over his bony shoulder like a carbine rifle, as he joins his mates.

For the scene where Ash

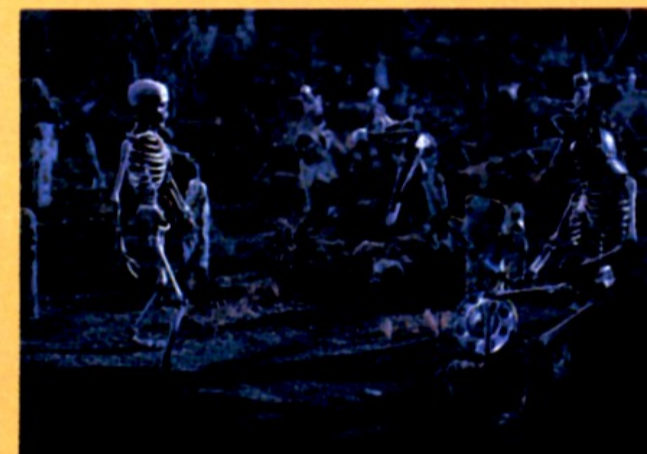
reads the incantation from the *Book of the Dead*, miniature tombstones were rigged with air hoses and filled with Fuller's Earth in order to shoot out of the ground like missiles. Timing was critical since the air jets, lightning, flying debris and dust were all controlled manually without the aid of motion control.

While this was being photographed, Kleinow prepared the first of the castle battle sequences in which the humans engage in swordplay with the skeleton legions. One of the skeletons vaults over the wall, loses its sword and its head, and then proceeds to beat Ash with its amputated arm.

Some scenes of Ash sword-fighting with skeletons were accomplished using traditional methods, with Bruce Campbell filmed first in VistaVision fighting nothing, with the miniature skeleton added later using a front projection set-up. Scenes where swords collided, producing a barrage of sparks, involved adding an interactive lighting flash on the puppet.

Other stop-motion scenes in *ARMY OF DARKNESS* included one head of the two-headed Ash slapping the other in a comical send-up of Raimi's beloved *Three Stooges*,

animated by Kleinow, and a feisty, flying *Book of the Dead* that attacks Ash. Before Ash can say the magic words—"Klaatu, Barada, Nikto"—the *Book* opens its mouth, crunching his fingers. He hurls it away from him and the *Book* magically flaps its bindings like a butterfly, diving upside down to fly back at our hero, an effect achieved by using two small, identical, quarter-scale book puppets, dubbed the "paperback editions" by the crew. □



Kleinow animating two skeleton warriors who have just risen from the grave. The sword passed between them (above) is blurred by its thin moving wire support.



EVIL EFFECTS

TOM SULLIVAN, GORE AUTEUR

Raimi's one-time effects right-hand man had only a minimal involvement on III.

By Sue Uram

Tom Sullivan, draftsman, self-taught makeup artist and special effects expert, has worked in various capacities on all three films in the EVIL DEAD series. Currently working on a *Field Guide to Cthulhu*, a book of monster designs based on the lore of H.P. Lovecraft, Sullivan said he is also "testing the waters" to form a Michigan-based film production company with miniatures expert Cary Howe (DARKMAN.)

Sullivan, who became part of Raimi's filmmaking team while a student at Michigan State University, recalled that Raimi's goal in the first EVIL DEAD was to accomplish as much "gore" as possible. Sullivan said it was his idea to stay away from the look of red blood, suggesting that the film's Kandarian demons had an alien or supernatural physiology that would bleed, ooze or vomit other colors. Sullivan used green, squashed marshmallows for demon vomit, milk for blood, and black coloring for spewing bile.

Sullivan recalled that the makeups in the original involved the use of scleral contact lenses. "They felt like you took a bent quarter and stuck it in your eye," said Sullivan. Though sterile procedures should have been followed in the application and removal, Sullivan remembered that by the end of the three-month shoot, the actors were cleaning the lenses with coffee instead. "But everyone survived," said Sullivan. "It just shows you the



Sullivan brings his Book of the Dead to life with stop motion for EVIL DEAD II.

kind of ambition we had on that film."

Sullivan said that making the original film was a learning experience for everyone. "I was putting plaster right on people's faces," he said about making molds of the actors. Without the use of alginate, a facial cast of actress Betsy Baker caught on her hair and forehead. "I had to cut it off with an X-Acto blade!" exclaimed Sullivan.

Sullivan remembered that fellow effects man Bart Pierce came up with an ingenious system to manufacture homemade blood bags. Pierce used Saran Wrap to cover a styrofoam cup, with fishing line attached to a construction staple, using a rubber band and string. With one of the bags taped to his own arm, Sullivan said Pierce inadvertently pulled the line and promptly stapled himself, producing the real thing.

Sullivan laughed about

shooting post-production at Raimi's parents' house. Montgomery, the family bulldog, once carried off a prop dismembered hand, filled with meat from the butcher shop prompting a passerby to threaten to call the police.

Sullivan also created the Book of the Dead seen in the first two EVIL DEAD films, patterned after Lovecraft's *Necronomicon*, suggesting the idea that writing "appear" on its pages. Sullivan was hired by producer Rob Tapert to create a "new-looking" volume for ARMY OF DARKNESS, since the film is set in the 13th century when the book was made, but Sullivan's new book won't be seen in the film. "I sent it out, but they decided they needed a larger book as something was going to emerge from it," said Sullivan. "But the check cleared. That was all that mattered." □

The self-taught makeup and effects artist, transforming Ted Raimi, Sam's younger brother, acting as an effects stand-in on the original EVIL DEAD.



Sullivan animates a ghost seen at the opening of EVIL DEAD II. Below: Painting the vortex on glass, and an unused effect for the time travel finale.



skipped over, that's quite a chunk of work.

"This is like *GONE WITH THE WIND* in a weird, low-budget way," continued Campbell. "We couldn't have certain sequences because it was more important to put money in other areas. Now we have to go back and get the same information out another way. Now we have to redo the temple ruins scene and set it in someone's chambers, where Ash is sitting on some furs and being fed grapes. We can get away with that because it's not the climax of the movie, which is where we put all the dough."

"That was our intention, but we didn't actually do that," said Sam Raimi when the additional shooting in January failed to materialize. "We had to cut a lot of things out, and the amount of reshooting we can do is basically nothing, so we have to eliminate certain scenes from the picture. The big pillar scene may have to be cut. Tony [Tremblay] designed a new set, Arthur's Court, where we would have shot it, but I may not even be able to afford that."

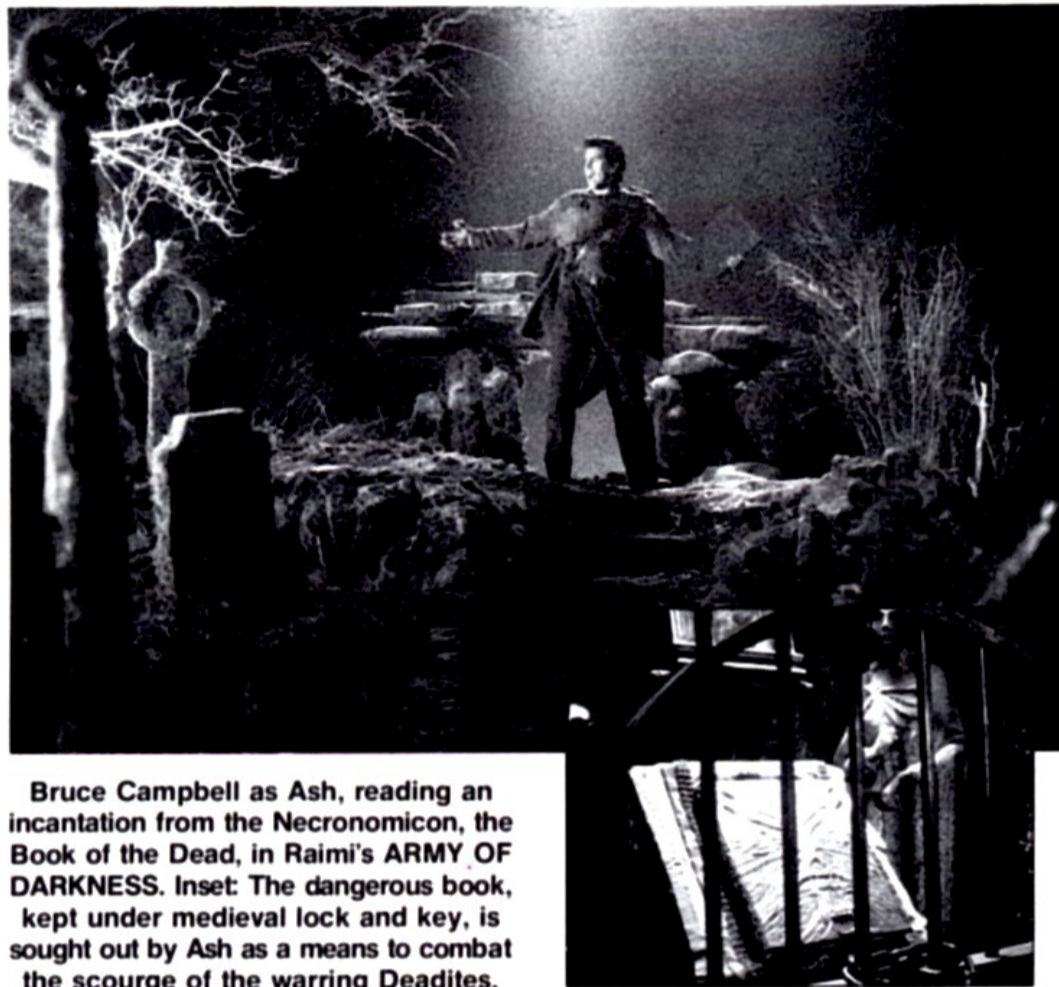
"Unfortunately, going back and filming becomes more and more difficult during the editing process," lamented Tapert. "When you're in production, the producer and the director wield a lot of power, because everybody's got to trust them. When you get into post, everyone can see the film and say, 'Oh no, you don't need that—the audience will understand anyway.' It's much harder to get things approved that might on the surface seem extravagant—but the audience loves the big extravagances."

Instead, Raimi planned to spend January getting his two-hour rough cut down to 95 minutes. "Then we'll probably shoot our inserts: 'hand grabs sword,' effects that need to be reshot—usually just dumb mistakes I made that I have to cover over. We'll have a final locked print for the picture in February. I always tinker with it till the last minute, to the chagrin of the sound people."

The last minute tinkering should get the running time down to Raimi's preferred

SAM RAIMI ON PACE

"The type of picture I make would work best at 60 minutes—no brain, no story, no nothing. That way the audience, after leaving, won't think they wasted an entire afternoon."



Bruce Campbell as Ash, reading an incantation from the *Necronomicon*, the *Book of the Dead*, in Raimi's *ARMY OF DARKNESS*. Inset: The dangerous book, kept under medieval lock and key, is sought out by Ash as a means to combat the scourge of the warring Deadites.

maximum length of 90 minutes. "I liked when they used to make really short films," he said. "I think that's a great length for a picture. Certainly, the type of picture that I make would work best at 60 minutes—no brain, no story, no nothing. That way, the audience, after leaving my films, won't think they wasted an entire afternoon, just an hour and ten minutes. This picture is about pace—kick, spit and hellfire—so you don't want the audience to sit for more than an hour and a half."

As of February, the plan was to deliver the finished film, with a score by *EVIL DEAD II*'s Joe LoDuca, by May. Though Robert Tapert was hoping for July 4, the exact release date depends on Universal and the MPAA rating board. "We've been told that, if we can get a PG-13 and not mess with the integrity of the movie, they're interested in getting it out early," said Campbell. "With an R, if they love it, they'll get it out early, but they might do the *DARKMAN* thing, which was mid-August."

With Universal gearing up to give *ARMY OF DARKNESS* the big push this summer, one might believe Raimi to be concerned about topping his work on *THE EVIL DEAD* and *EVIL DEAD II*, but such is not the case. "I'm not so much trying to top myself as to make this film original and interesting," he claimed. "I'm keeping in mind, certainly, the elements of *THE EVIL DEAD* that the audience liked. I'm trying to incorporate those elements into this film, but it's always hard for me to know exactly what they liked. 'I'm always wrong'—that's my motto. I'm trying to go William Goldman's, 'Nobody knows nothing' one better."

If Raimi has any concern, it is with audience reaction to his leading character, on whom he has chosen to heap so much abuse. "It's going to be interesting for me to see how the audience reacts to him," admitted Raimi. "I'm hoping that they will not abandon him—because he is such an imbecile in this film that it's hard to believe. I personally find it

funny, but I understand why it might be hard to take."

Surprisingly, Campbell agreed with Raimi's downbeat assessment of the character he portrays. "Actually, I think he represents the average guy, in that he will clearly panic in a given situation—which I think is cool, because you can get into the trap of having a lead character who says, 'Stand back—I'll take care of it!' To the audience that's fine, because they can feel protected, but Sam, I don't think, has ever wanted his audience to feel that comfortable."

"Ash is a for-the-moment sort of guy—whatever needs to be done at the time, he'll do," continued Campbell. "Whenever he has to fight somebody, he knows what's going on—for some reason he knows how to ride a horse and swordfight—but he screws up in every other department of life. He's basically a dork on the human side. He goes back in time and, even though he's an idiot, he assumes that these people are primitive, and he thinks he knows more than everybody. Sam gave a lot of other characters lines implicating me in such manner."

This sounds little like a character who inspires what the studios like to call "rooting interest," but studio input was practically a non-consideration during the making of *ARMY OF DARKNESS*. "That's hopefully to everyone's mutual satisfaction," said Campbell, about Universal's non-interference. "We just want to give them the best product we can, because we're very familiar with this type of bird. Now's not the time to start pleasing every hierarchy."

According to Campbell, even financier Dino DeLaurentiis seldom intruded into the filmmaking process. "Dino, fortunately for us, is very pro-filmmaker, and he loves Sam dearly. That's been helpful, because Sam can give the whole director's spiel—'this is rough; this is crude'—and get more time. That's all we've really asked for. We've put a lot on the line, salaries and everything, in order to make it happen. I think that has not gone unnoticed. They realize this is not something we were just going to walk through.

We've invested an incredible amount of time. Versions of this project were written back in '88, and Dino waited for Sam to finish *DARKMAN*, much to his credit. I'm sure there are all kinds of stories about Dino, but we've had good fortune working with him."

Campbell was optimistic about the film's boxoffice chances against many far more expensive efforts. "It's not going to be as big as some of the other summer movies, on a budget scale, but I think it can compete. We may not have had 10,000 extras, but fog has a wonderful way of hiding how many people there are, and sound effects will tell you that there *are* 10,000."

Summed up Campbell, "We tried to make a cool summer movie primarily for boys 16 to 24 years old. It's not 'docu-horror' like the first one. It's more like an adventure story, which is why we have the new title. If you do any sequel, there's a ceiling, and Universal doesn't want a ceiling—they want to set out for a whole new ball game. I think they did a great job marketing *DARKMAN*. If they can do anywhere near as well with this, I'll be really happy. From the footage I've seen, if they can't cut a great trailer, something's wrong." □

Inside the castle set for *ARMY OF DARKNESS* at Palmdale, with one of Vern Hyde's working catapult rigs.



EVIL DEAD

COLLEGE FILMMAKERS TURN PROFESSIONAL

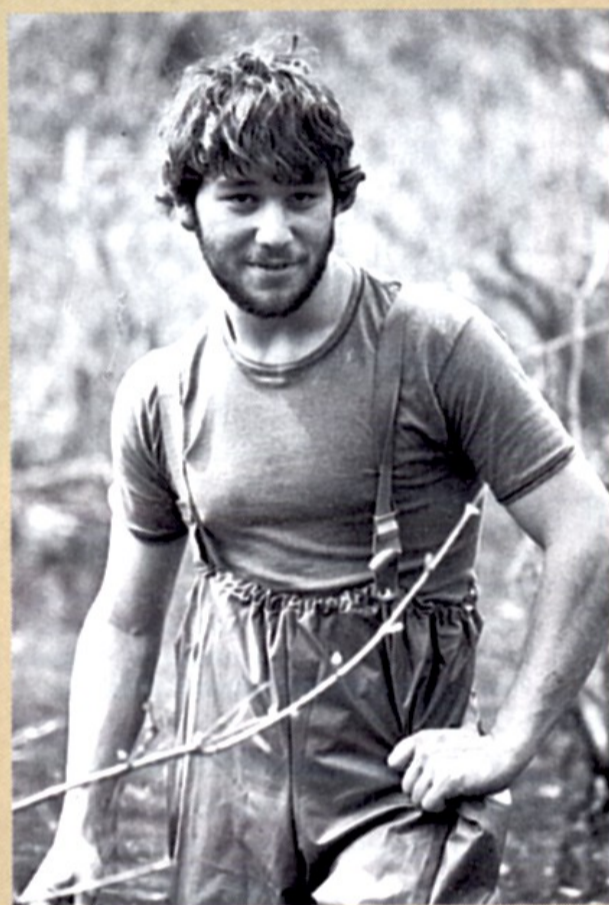
Raimi's days at Michigan State University led to the filming of THE EVIL DEAD.

By Sue Uram

While a literature student at Michigan State University, Sam Raimi—age 19—formed a filmmaking group with fellow students, including brother Ivan Raimi—the screenwriter of *ARMY OF DARKNESS*—and Rob Tapert, Raimi's Renaissance Pictures producing partner, then a 22-year-old graduate student in economics. The group ran ads in the school newspaper to audition talent for their productions.

Tom Sullivan, creator of the makeup in *EVIL DEAD*, became part of the group when he answered an audition ad for *IT'S MURDER*, a slapstick murder mystery which Raimi wrote, co-produced, directed and starred in. Raimi played the role of an evil character who dropped poison in co-star Scott Spiegel's drink. Spiegel went on to co-write the screenplay for *EVIL DEAD II* with Raimi. Sullivan, then 24 and living on campus with his wife, recalled his audition. "I could do a sound effect of something dropping in water, so I got the job," he said.

Sullivan was also an illustrator and showed Raimi sketches of his work. He was promptly drafted to make a flier-sized poster to promote *IT'S MURDER* on campus. Through the auspices of MSU's filmmaking society, Raimi's group would rent rooms in nearby apartment buildings to use as a production base and cover the cost with a commission from the society, which would show the Super 8mm productions and charge admission. "Peo-



Raimi, age 20 in 1978, filming *EVIL DEAD* in the swamps near Morristown, Tennessee.

ple would show up expecting to see a feature film," said Sullivan. "Instead, they would see a comedy in the vein of *The Three Stooges*."

Raimi used audience reaction to gauge the success of each production. Despite Raimi's fondness for the Stooges—recalled Sullivan "No one could do a better Curly 'Nyuck, nyuck, nyuck' impression than Sam,"—Raimi could see that his penchant for slapstick comedy was getting him nowhere.

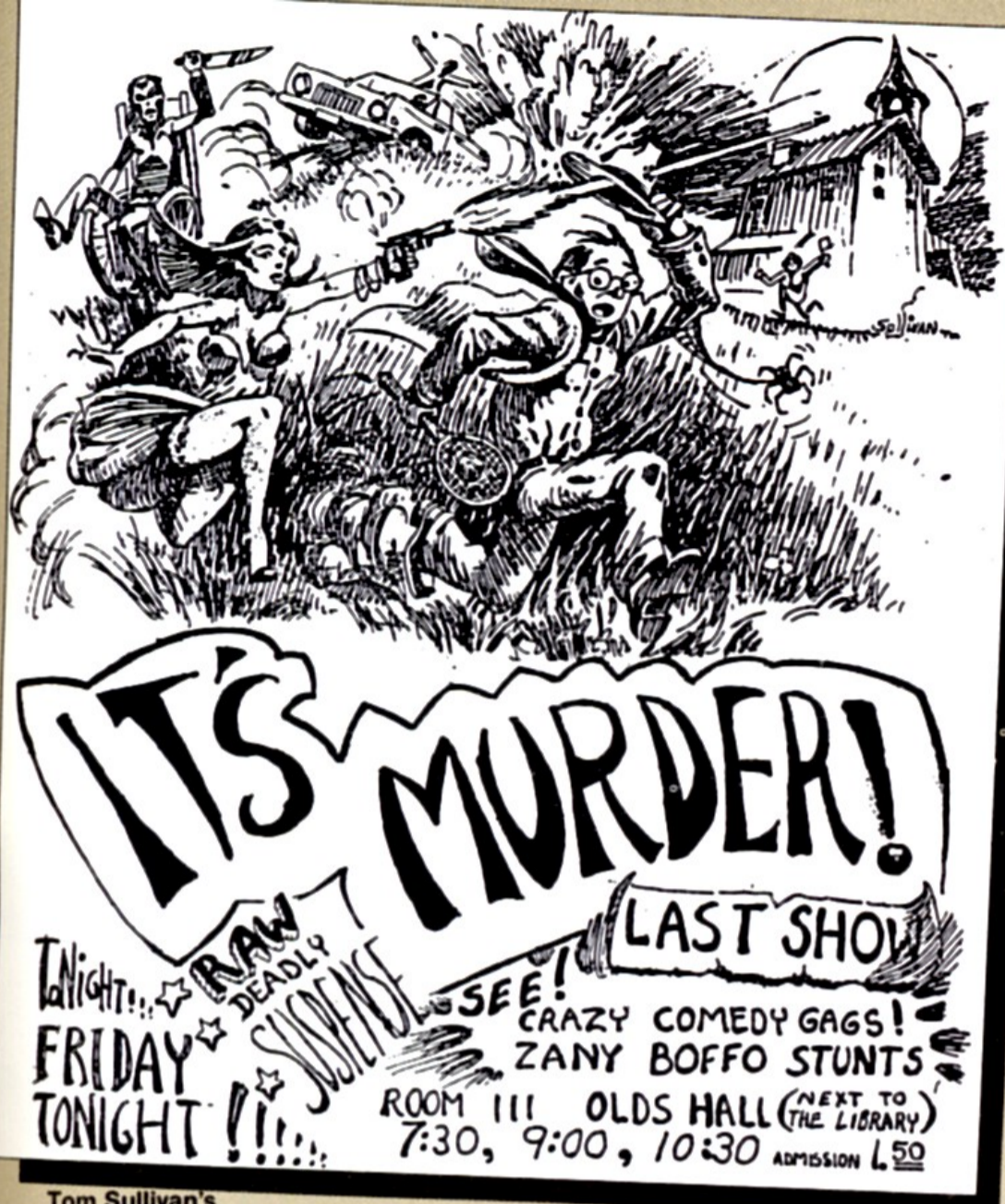
Sullivan suggested it was the commercial success of John Carpenter's *HALLOWEEN* (1978) that prompted Raimi to switch gears and try the horror genre. Raimi's first horror effort was *CLOCKWORK*, an MSU effort starring Spiegel as a homeless serial killer who torments a rich woman he finds conveniently living alone.

Sullivan recalled that Spiegel was "always on." He wore a "joke jacket" decorated with all sorts of punchlines. Sullivan said that when the group would take a break to go out and get a pizza, without encouragement Spiegel would begin to entertain people in the store. Spiegel, now a Hollywood screenwriter, wrote *THE ROOKIE*, Clint Eastwood's 1990 action-adventure team-up with Charlie Sheen.

To film *CLOCKWORK*, Raimi's group rented rooms on the MSU campus. Mattresses were attached to the walls with duct tape to muffle the sounds of screaming. "In spite of all that," Sullivan recalled, "they were evicted at four a.m." Evicted

but undaunted, Raimi dropped out of MSU to follow a recipe for success that Tapert had gleaned from an old Michigan theatre owner. "Just make the screen run red with blood," Sullivan said Tapert told the group. In *EVIL DEAD* there is a scene of Ash pinned to the wall of the cellar in the flickering glare of a movie projector that has run out of film. As Ash searches for shotgun shells, Raimi dripped blood down the lens—and the screen.

As part of Raimi's MSU core group, Sullivan was drafted to do the makeup for *EVIL DEAD*. Raimi drove to the Tennessee location in his old 1973 Olds 88, which doubled as Ash's car in the film, caravanning with the vehicles of his cast and crew. Sullivan made the 14-hour drive to the location near Morristown, an area he called "DELIVERANCE country,"



Tom Sullivan's poster for one of Raimi's MSU student films before the director discovered horror as the key to his commercial success.

accompanied by cinematographer Tim Philo, a graduate of Detroit's Wayne State University who had shot his own films. Sullivan recalled that the cabin originally selected for the shooting site proved unavailable when they arrived. Raimi, undeterred, found another decrepit shack.

"Cows had used it as a bathroom," recalled Sullivan. "There was no heat or electricity, and no windows." The set department went into action, hosing down the floor, building a new front porch, and installing windows which were scratched up to look old. The cabin doubled as living quarters for the cast and crew. Sullivan said Raimi suggested that subliminal writing be placed on the walls. Raimi felt words like "fear" painted in a slightly lighter color or with a different texture, though not visible to the eye, would induce the desired viewer response.

Since the new cabin location did not include a cellar, a cellar door was installed in the floor, and stairs were built leading into a six-foot hole dug underneath. To film the cast as seen from the cellar, cameraman Tim Philo laid down in the hole on a blanket, shooting an up-angle on the steps. A set for

the cellar was built in the shack alongside the cabin, decorated by Raimi with gourds he had brought along for use as props, leading the crew to affectionately dub the set "the gourd zone."

Sullivan said he used "a lot of paint and liquid makeup" during shooting. "My first makeup shot was with Betsy Baker," recalled Sullivan. "I was supposed to have her ready at midnight and they were shooting something else. So, they weren't ready for her until sunrise." Originally, Baker was supposed to appear with veins sticking out of the contact lenses she wore for the shot. "Baker was so tired by the time of the shot that she actually slept while I was painting on her makeup," said Sullivan. This is the first time in the film that the monster makeup is seen. Sullivan said Baker really got into the part and was actually screaming and writhing on the ground as Campbell dragged her out of the cabin. From then on, everyone was pretty much "into" the filming.

Once production wrapped in Tennessee, after nearly three months toil, Raimi's exhausted group returned to Michigan for more pick-up

BLOODY HALLS OF IVY

"To film *CLOCKWORK*, Raimi's first horror effort, rooms were rented on the MSU campus. Mattresses were plastered on the walls with duct tape to muffle the sounds of screaming."

and effects filming in the Raimi garage and basement, more than two years of refinements that continued right up to the time of the film's first public showing in October 1981. Cheap effects were the order of the day. For the shot where Campbell runs through the cabin and struggles at the window with Sandweiss turned monstrous, Sullivan used a mannequin with a wig to double for the actress. MSU friends who had stayed in Detroit and missed the adventure in Tennessee, now pitched in to help out. Spiegel, who worked in a butcher shop, provided Sullivan with a side of ribs to tape to the mannequin with blood bags.

Sullivan recalled how the interior of the Raimi garage was white when they began the shot. The blood balloons were filled with the "Raimi recipe for blood" (Karo syrup, red food coloring and water, with instant coffee mixed in for opaqueness and texture). A real shotgun was used to blast the shoulder of the mannequin. Sullivan said the impact of shot was so tremendous it turned

the inside of the garage pink, but the one-shot take was a success. Sullivan remembered that toward the end of filming there were "vats of blood and bile, cockroaches and snakes" intended to gush out of decomposing skulls at the finale. Sullivan said that Raimi considered the effect "too extreme" and cut it.

As for Raimi's favored 1973 Olds 88, look for it to make an appearance in *ARMY OF DARKNESS*. After putting his car through absolute hell filming *EVIL DEAD*, driving it to the edge of a cliff and almost falling off, the vehicle managed to get Raimi back home from Tennessee. Well, almost. He was a block away when the engine blew. That Olds 88 remained parked in front of the Raimi home until it was resurrected for a starring role in *EVIL DEAD II* (1987), not to mention its cameo appearance in *DARKMAN*. Raimi's Olds—Ash's car—gets refitted as the "Deathcoaster" in *ARMY OF DARKNESS*. It seems that Raimi believes in the luck of charms. And hard work. □

The cabin, a decrepit shack that served as living quarters for the cast and crew as well as the principal set during a grueling three months of Tennessee shooting.



Split SECOND

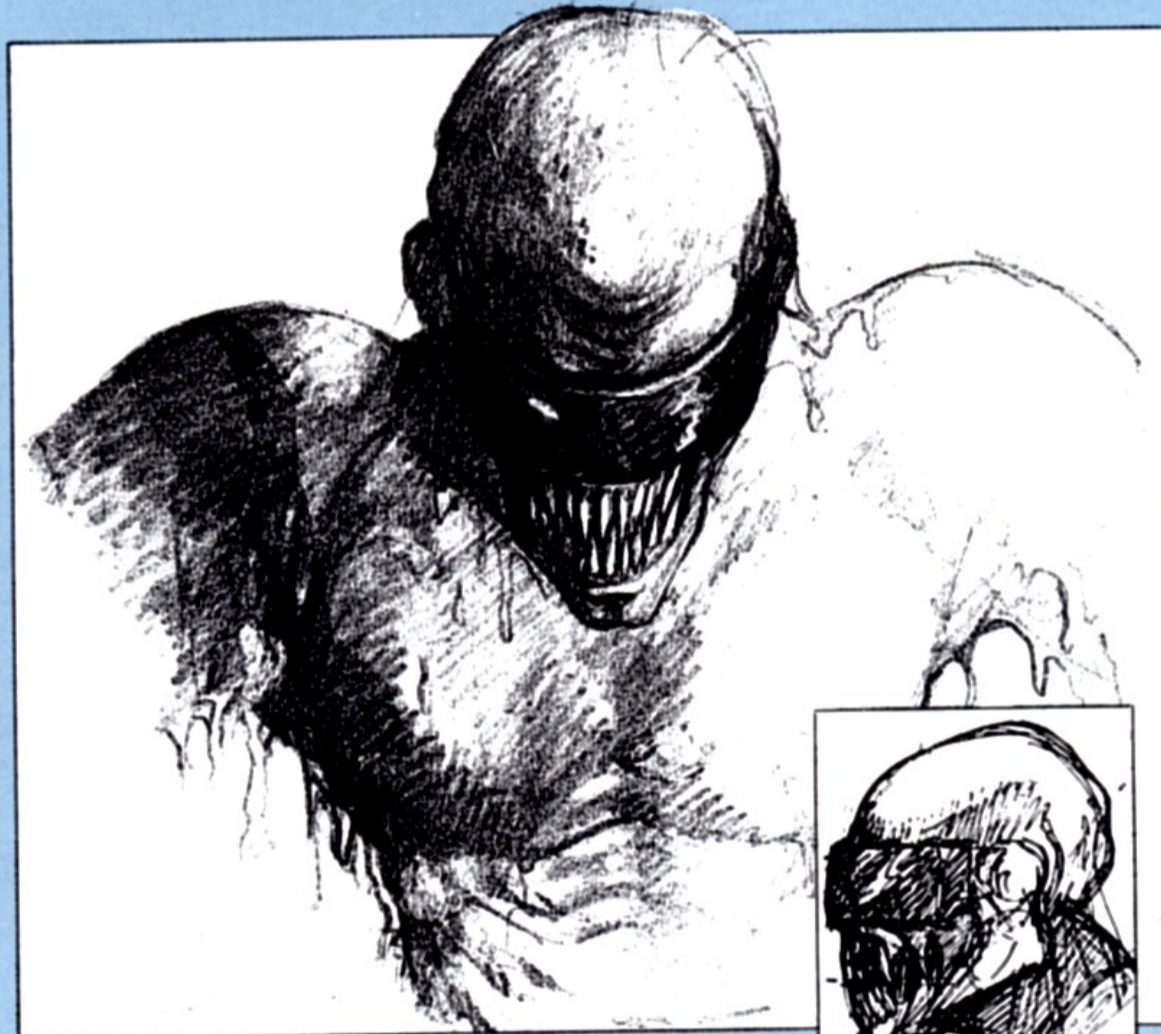
By Alan Jones

An inhuman serial killer stalks the flooded streets of future London in the \$7 million supernatural action thriller *SPLIT SECOND*. Dutch actor Rutger Hauer plays the Special Branch cop, "Harley" Stone, assigned to hunt down a demonic Jack the Ripper who strikes during phases of the full moon. Stone shares a psychic link with the monster that murdered his partner in director Tony (THE BURNING) Maylam's water logged *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS*, representing the first movie project from Challenge Films, one of the top four commercial production companies in the United Kingdom. Interstar planned to open the film nationally in May. (The Turner Network, which owns Dick Powell's 1953 suspense *SPLIT SECOND*, gave Challenge their blessing to adopt the same title).

SPLIT SECOND began as a spec script titled *PENTANGLE*, by American, Gary Scott Thompson, who also served as the film's associate producer. Written in 1988 and set in present-day Los Angeles, the story originally involved a ritualistic serial killer, who struck over a 25-year period, committing five murders every fifth year, leaving behind a pentangle symbol. But similarities to Robert Resnikoff's *THE FIRST POWER* (1990) seemed to sink the chance of its ever being made.

Enter Challenge Films, who saw the script's commercial potential for their *entree* into feature film production. Susan Nicoletti, ex-MPAA ratings

A serial killer crossed between *SILENCE OF THE LAMBS* and *ALIEN*.



Shades of H.R. Giger: creature effects supervisor Steven Norrington's design for the serial killer stalking the streets of London in the year 2008. The British, Challenge Films Production is currently seeking an American distributor.

board member and associate producer of the zombie thriller *NIGHT LIFE*, executive in charge of production at Challenge, recommended the script for filming. Laura Gregory, partnered in Challenge with Roger Lunn, brought in Maylam as director and hired Thompson for rewrites. Gregory and Maylam wanted Thompson dialogue left intact, but the script's buddy cop concept got reworked and the

setting changed to London in the year 2008.

Thompson came up with the premise of global warming for the rewrite when someone mentioned casually that the level of the river Thames rises each year. Maylam retitled the script *BLACK TIDE*. Co-financing was secured by executive producer Keith Cavele, (producer of *QUEEN KONG*, *SYMPTOMS*, *THE BURNING* and Chuck Russell's

upcoming *NEUROMANCER*), from Muse Productions B.V. Inc., a new subsidiary of an unnamed private Swiss bank.

All that was needed was a star name. "And it screamed Rutger Hauer," remarked Gregory. "We sent the script to his agent, who loved it, who then passed it to Rutger, who was just boarding a flight from Amsterdam to Los Angeles. Above Alaska he excitedly radioed down a message saying he wanted to meet Maylam two days later in LA."

Hauer only had a limited gap in his schedule. After 21 days of hectic preproduction, *SPLIT SECOND* started shooting on June 17, 1991, for 12 weeks utilizing unusual London locations. First time production designer Chris Edwards took two East End landmarks, the abandoned Hartley's jam/jelly factory and Watney's Raven Row Depot, and turned each disused building into sound stages for every set, including an impressive recreation of London's subway system spectacularly flooded for the submerged metropolis set-pieces. "We used the jam factory for a bank commercial a few years ago," remembered Gregory.

"Shooting in a proper studio would have been too cost prohibitive."

Thompson wrote the script with Harrison Ford in mind, but was happy with Hauer's casting, with one reservation, "Rutger doesn't sell tickets in America," said Thompson. "People either love him—*BLADERUNNER* and *THE HITCHER*—or they don't know who he is!" For this reason Gregory beefed up the cast



The creature and cast: Rutger Hauer (l) as the cop on its trail, Kim Cattrall as the love-interest lady-in-peril and Neil Duncan as Hauer's buddy-cop sidekick.

with other well-known American actors, including Kim (STAR TREK VI) Cattrall and Michael J. Pollard. Joining the American contingent are Alun Armstrong, Neil Duncan and former rock star Ian Dury.

SPLIT SECOND is Hauer's third science fiction film—counting the post-holocaust BLOOD OF HEROES (1989)—but he's not really a fan of the genre. "What I liked about SPLIT SECOND were the twists it brought to the routine buddy-cop formula," said the imposing blond actor. "I've always wanted to play a cartoon character with the accent on humor. That element is very light here, though the underlying theme—how to destroy a monster—is classy and classic."

Hauer had Thompson rewrite the script's climax to make it more physical and better define the psychic link his cop character has with the

monster. "They hadn't quite worked it out and the climax suffered from that," said Hauer. "For the last five years I've been looking at filmmaking more from the director's point of view and I know I'll helm my own soon. SPLIT SECOND was a totally different experience from THE HITCHER where we changed three words and, during shooting, changed two back."

Hauer's showdown with the monster, set in the subway tunnels beneath the city.



“I’ve always wanted to play a cartoon character with the accent on humor,” said Rutger Hauer. “The underlying theme—how to destroy a monster—is classic.”

SPLIT SECOND was more occult-oriented originally until Thompson decided to leave the description of the killer intentionally vague and more open to the imagination. "We had heated discussions about whether to show it or not," smiled Thompson. "If we did, what was it going to look like? A man, a man possessed, the Devil, an alien, or the CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON? We see only flashes of it until the end. There's an argument over whether it will look good or not because it is ultimately a man in a suit."

Steven Norrington, the animatronic and prosthetic designer for ALIENS, HARDWARE, THE WITCHES and ALIEN 3, came up with the Gigeresque design of SPLIT SECOND's killer. Norrington's "huge black killer with big sharp claws and pointed teeth" had to be designed and built quickly in three weeks. "We made five casts from a mold of performance artist Stewart Harvey-Wilson of which two were 'hero' suits for close-ups, two were rough-and-tumble versions for stunt work, and one was a dummy to be tossed around and abused," said Norrington. "The one-piece foam Latex suit had a separate head, which just slipped over the actor's glove hands with different lengths of fingernails and feet. The whole thing was then

covered in surgical jelly to make it slick. There tended to be a lot of wear, particularly under the arms, but because it was black and only glimpsed at, that wasn't a problem."

For six-foot, six-inch mime artist Harvey-Wilson, being enclosed in foam rubber was nothing new. He played Jack Pumpkinhead in RETURN TO OZ and also worked with Peter Elliott, animal behavioral consultant on GORILLAS IN THE MIST, who provided the actor with valuable tips on how to become the creature in SPLIT SECOND. "I didn't want to come across as robotic or stiff, but fluid, swift and graceful," said Harvey-Wilson. "I wasn't sure whether Maylam knew about movement so I prepared it and hoped he'd see my approach was the right one."

Some of Harvey-Wilson's scenes were filmed in slow-motion to be speeded up for the final print. "The foam and Lycra body stocking costume wasn't uncomfortable and only took 30 minutes to put on," he said. "I had limited visibility wearing the head and wore a ballaclava so my face couldn't be seen. It had no moving parts, just lit eyes. They built a close-up head for jaw movement and one where my visor gets blasted away."

Challenge hasn't ruled out the possibility of a SPLIT SECOND 2 based on healthy world market pre-sales by Vic Bateman's newly formed Victor Films, bolstered by its nationwide US break. "There is talk and I already have a story for a sequel," said Thompson. "It's in a new setting, it's different and, whereas the first one is more a straightforward action-thriller, the sequel is much more psychological. The killer would come back in many, many different ways—not necessarily what we've seen before." □

LAWNMOWER MAN

Effects by Angel Studios and Xaos, Inc.

By Gary Wood

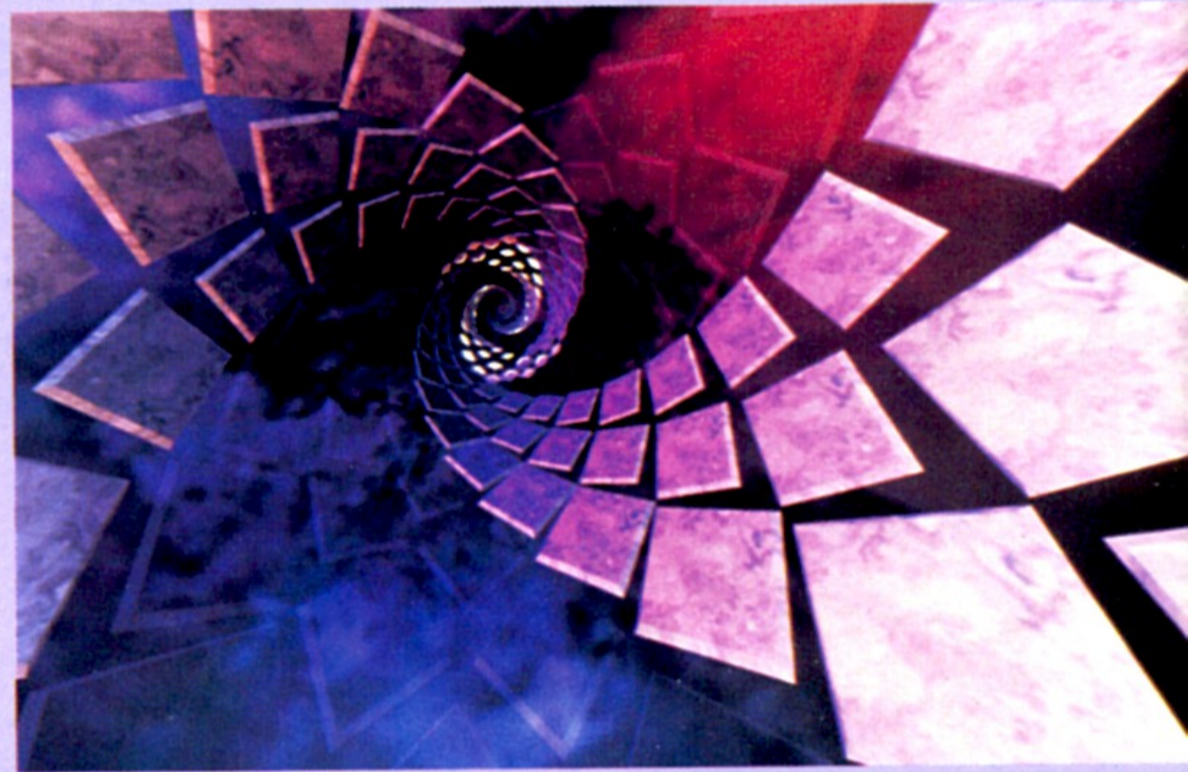
Made for just \$10 million, THE LAWMOWER MAN isn't quite the computer effects showstopper that was TERMINATOR 2, but made for about one-tenth as much, the quality of its computer graphics has amazed the movie industry as much as audiences. Now that the film has become an unqualified boxoffice hit for New Line Cinema, other producers will be jumping on the low-budget computer effects bandwagon.

"The key is that hardware graphics has matured and the price of the computer has come way down and the software technology has gone way up," said Brad Hunt, director of visualization and software development for San Diego-based Angel Studios, one of the Bay Area graphics producers which contributed to THE LAWMOWER MAN's VR visual feast.

Angel Studios created eight minutes of effects for the film using the company's custom Scenix software, developed by Hunt, including CyberJobe and the movie's celebrated "Cybersex" sequence. To create CyberJobe, Angel digitized the likeness of actor Jeff Fahey, lip-syncing the computer graphic to the actor's voice. A grid pattern drawn on Fahey's face for reference photos provided reference points for Angel computer animator Jeff Hayes.

Among the other computer animation suppliers who contributed to the film's effects razzle-dazzle is San Francisco's Xaos, Inc., which devised a "particulation" effect, turning characters into random particles which vibrate away from each other, swirl into a violent vortex and then disperse into the air.

Keeping costs down for THE LAWMOWER MAN meant doing graphics with less realism and detail than computers are now capable of. "There's a lot of different variables that add to the price," said Jill Hunt, Angel's director of marketing. "We're not recreating every pore on the actor's face. It's a



A virtual reality point-of-view shot by Xaos computer animator Hayden Landis.

graphic representation. The technology has been towards realism and that's when you start getting into dollars, when you have to recreate every single, minute detail."

Added Brad Hunt, "Computer graphic effects are now more competitive because you don't have so many man-hours involved. It's more machine-hours. We've automated and have developed techniques that can be re-used. You're looking at the possibility of getting

the price way down."

Key members of the Angel graphics team, Hunt and Michael Limber, the company's director of computer animation, both worked on the computer effects of THE LAST STARFIGHTER and 2010 before the formation of Angel Studios in 1984. "Back then filmmakers didn't really trust the computer to do anything," noted Hunt. "Now we're doing eight minutes of actual story-telling, creating human-like databases that *act*." □

Cybersex, computer animation by Angel Studio's Jill Hunt, a virtual reality representation of Jobe's video coupling with his girlfriend in computer space.



Death by particulation, dispersing randomly vibrating spheres, devised by Ken Pearce of San Francisco's Xaos, Inc.

REVIEWS

An eye-catching virtual reality field of dreams, with heart

THE LAWNMOWER MAN

A New Line Cinema release of an Allied Vision/Lane Pringle production in association with Fuji Eight Co. 2/92. 105 mins. In color. Director, Brett Leonard. Executive producers, Edward Simons, Steve Lane, Robert Pringle & Clive Turner. Producers, Gimel Everett & Milton Subotski. Associate producers, Peter McRae & Masao Takiyama. Director of photography, Russell Carpenter. Editor, Alan Baumgarten. Art director, Chris Farmer. Production designer, Alex McDowell. Costume designer, Mary Jane Fort. Music, Dan Wyman. Sound, Russell Fager. Screenplay by Brett Leonard & Gimel Everett based on Stephen King's story.

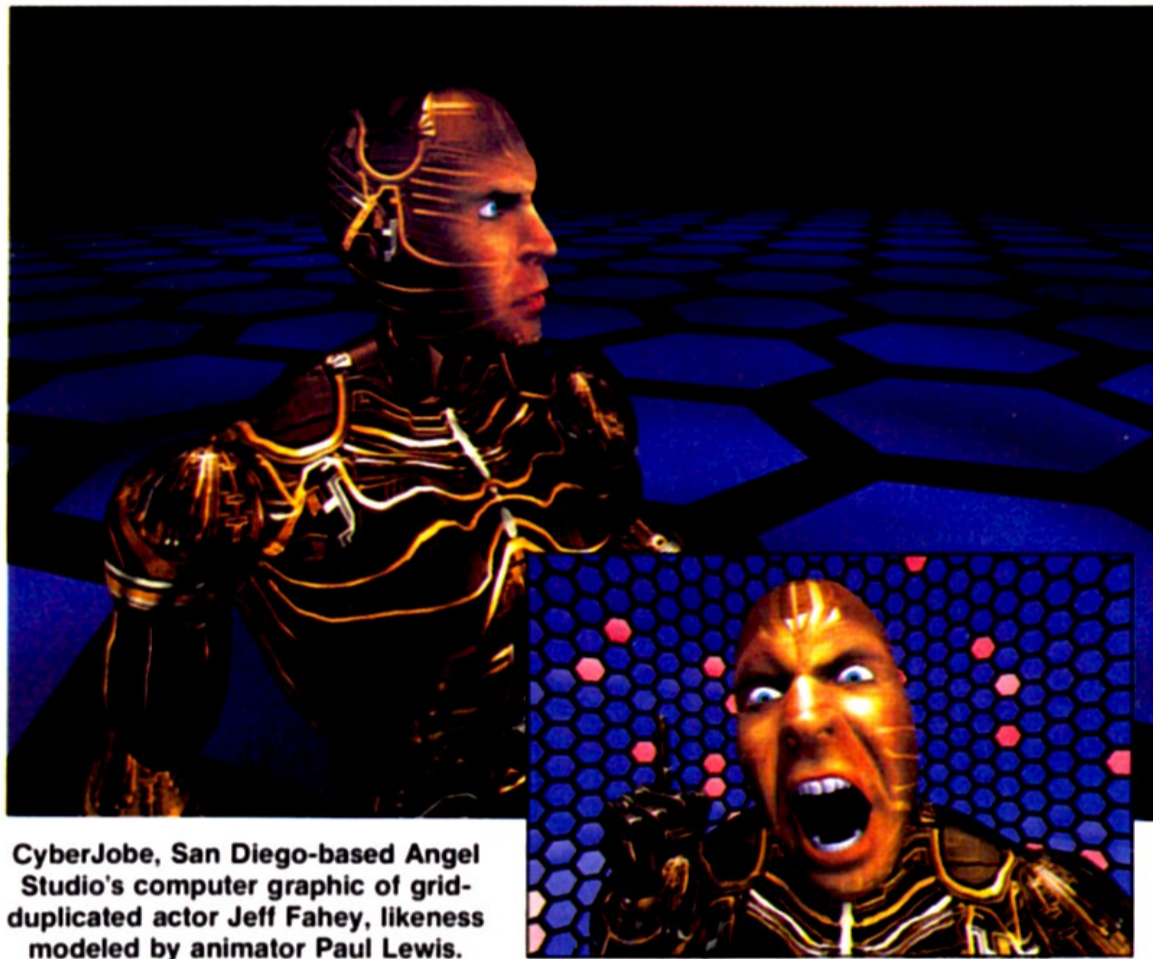
Jobe Smith Jeff Fahey
Dr. Lawrence Angelo Pierce Brosnan
Marnie Burke Jenny Wright
Sebastian Timms Mark Bringleston
Terry McKeen Geoffrey Lewis
Father McKeen Jeremy Slate
Director Dean Norris

by Thomas Doherty

When the name "Stephen King" is linked to the word "lawnmower," suburban landscaping is not the first image that springs to mind. Thus, as the camera caresses a gleaming, souped-up power mower nicknamed "Big Red," and the soundtrack mixes up the pulsating purr of a ravenous engine, somehow you just know that eventually those power blades are going to be running over more than crabgrass. Watch the shrubbery, fella—but don't miss that torso.

Directed by Brett Leonard from a King short story, this latest knockoff from the human word processor plays like an unholy coupling between Sissy Spacek in *CARRIE* and Cliff Robertson in *CHARLY*. It has all the paperback kid's stock elements—dumb smalltown proles, Christian sadists, sinister bureaucrats, a visionary misfit and a telekinetic text. Against expectations and marketing enticements, however, the computer graphic visuals are less diverting than the lawn-level vicissitudes. For a film whose hook is eye-catching mind games, its human protagonist is the heart of the matter.

Pierce Brosnan, whose jet black hairdo and square, wire-rim glasses make him look like a handsomer, thinner version of author King, plays Dr. Angelo, a scientist up to his eyeballs in virtual reality. Since delving into mind alteration and IQ enhancement is an expensive hobby, Doc Angelo works for one of those secret think tanks financed by a nefarious government agency. Federal regulations



CyberJobe, San Diego-based Angel Studio's computer graphic of grid-duplicated actor Jeff Fahey, likeness modeled by animator Paul Lewis.

apparently require licensed laboratories to adopt the tech *noir* look—metallic interior designed bathed in shards of purple metallic lighting. The feds want to use the doctor's pure scientific research for "bad things." Meanwhile, at home, the doc's wife—herself into "reality reality" walks out on him. You really can't blame her, what with hubby locked into his virtual reality visor and piloting a barber's chair in the basement.

The death of the doc's experimental chimp gives him the opportunity to move up the evolutionary scale guinea pig-wise. With agonizing slowness, the obsessed Dr. Angelo reaches a conclusion the audience came to 20 minutes ago. Since no American high school students live in the neighborhood, wouldn't that nice, blonde, low-IQ lawnmower man make a suitable victim—rather, subject—for cerebral expansion and virtual reality headgear? Needless to say, the lawnmower man's semivacant brain soaks up the new input like a Handy Wipe. Brandishing verbal facility, cheek-hugging bluejeans and a messiah complex, he is soon seeking out fresh fields to mow.

As anyone who's ever had his mind fried on Super Mario Brothers knows, the computer matrix is a realm unto itself, a deeply involving alternative reality for the

socially maladroit. Hollywood cinema is already asserting a symbiotic identity with the new entertainment format. Cross *TRON* with William Gibson's cyberspace, toss in one of Freddy Krueger's audiovisual nightmares and you get the picture. Once upon the '50s, science fiction projected itself *forwards* into an imagined future-world. Today the genre tends to project itself *sideways* into an alternate reality. Yet to an audience lately fed the magical morphing and the seamless matching of *TERMINATOR 2*, *THE LAWNMOWER MAN* is bound to seem behind the effects curve. Because the folks at New Line can't squander bread with the S&L abandon of Carolco, the virtual reality screenspace looks like a low-budget rock video.

Jeff Fahey, who played the evil-armed accident victim in the ill-timed *BODY PARTS*, is very good as Jobe Smith, the dim-witted groundskeeper transformed by the fickle hypodermic of fate into a brainiac computer graphic. Like Cliff Robertson's turn as mentally retarded Charly, his performance consists of smartening up, not dumbing down the character. Jobe's transformation comes in two stages: first, from real world dunce to relatively normal guy, then from relatively normal guy to

computer screen *ubermensch*. Mainly with his eyes and body language, Fahey movingly registers the gradual progression of intelligence and alertness, of climbing up the IQ ladder 20 points at a time. Jobe's vacant pupils gradually turn sentient, flashing with anger and intelligence, and his stature and carriage become straighter, more confident. The emotional dislocation of so sudden a mental promotion—blessed, or cursed, not only with superhuman intelligence but also with powers of telepathy and telekinesis—is the dramatic core of *THE LAWNMOWER MAN*, far more compelling than the climactic antics of the cathode-ray Frankenstein and Doc Angelo's belated "What have I created?" attempts at redress.

Jobe's hot-to-trot girlfriend Marnie (Jenny Wright) is along for some sexual diversion, relatively rare in post-*CARRIE* versions of King's novels. One of the obvious spin offs of virtual reality technology is multisensual porno fantasies, which could render prostitution as we know it obsolete. Unfortunately, when Jobe takes his date for a whirl in the virtual reality matrix, his computer graphic prowess proves too much for the lass even if they are practicing safe sex.

Inevitably, Jobe is transubstantiated into a computer graphic himself—or, as he puts it, a virtual "CyberChrist." The religious cast of the early part of the film—the crucifix imagery, the abusive Catholic priest, the spooky church—has a blasphemously appropriate payoff. In a reverse incarnation, Jobe acts out his own passion play. Just as the Christian God became flesh, Jobe becomes a computer god when his corporeal body is sucked into the screenspace.

Besides metaphysics, the movie skirts some serious and satanic subjects—child abuse, animal testing, heavy metal music—but the over-riding purpose and inevitable movement is to roll over the mundane realities for the leap into virtual reality screen space. The irony—intended?—of *THE LAWNMOWER MAN* is that its "virtual reality" field of dreams is ultimately less fertile. □

A nightmare ET, Donner's dark flight of negative nostalgia



The big buffalo enters the boys' room a remarkable animatronic effect by Rick Lazzarini's Character Shop.

RADIO FLYER

A Columbia Pictures release of a Stonebridge Entertainment production in association with Donner/Schuler-Donner Prods. 2/92, 113 mins. In Dolby & color and b&w. Director, Richard Donner. Producers, Lauren Schuler-Donner, Jennie Lew Tugend, Jim Van Wyck & Dale R. de la Torre. Executive producers, Michael Douglas, Rick Bieber, David Mickey Evans, Richard Solomon & Peter McAlevey. Director of photography, Laszlo Kovacs. Editor, Stuart Baird. Production designer, J. Michael Riva. Art director, David Frederick Klassen. Visual effects supervisor, Peter Donen. Stunt coordinator, Mic Rodgers. Radio Flyer conceptualist, Michael Scheffe. Costume designer, April Ferry. Music, Hans Zimmer. Sound, Ronald Judkins. Screenplay by David Mickey Evans.

Mary Lorraine Bracco
Daugherty John Heard
The King Adam Baldwin
Mike Elijah Wood
Bobby Joseph Mazzello
Geronimo Bill Ben Johnson
Older Mike Tom Hanks

by Thomas Doherty

RADIO FLYER is a flight of negative nostalgia, a nightmare version of E.T. where instead of a cuddly alien, a brutal patriarch lands in a female-headed household. Parental desertion, peer group persecution and child abuse infuse a memory of childhood blackened by welts from an electric cord. Any uplift here is all aerodynamic.

From *Hansel and Gretel* to the WIZARD OF OZ, child abuse is a

recurrent subtext of the great and Grimm fairy tales. Beset children flee unpleasant homes, devote themselves to parent substitutes, and wreck revenge on wicked witches and giant cannibals. In raising what is usually submerged to the explicit surface, RADIO FLYER is nothing if not gutsy. The deadly seriousness of the subject can only smother the effervescent spirit that makes for the warmhearted glow of boxoffice gold. Yet the lurch from bucolic nostalgia to stone dread can pack a powerful punch. In an early scene, when the abusive stepfather, the King (Adam Baldwin), takes his new stepsons fishing, the composition of the shot is serene and nuclear-unit cozy—until, with causal brutality, King cuffs Bobby (Joseph Mazzello) in the face.

Fine acting makes much of the histrionics and hokum palatable. Both child actors are likeably unbratty. As older brother Michael, prematurely burdened as “the man of the house,” Elijah Wood is old before his time. He is well-matched with Mazzello, who is

utterly convincing as the beaten-up but not beaten-down Bobby. Despite everything, Bobby has not been robbed of his childhood—by stretching his arms out like wings and dreamily looking airborne, he soars away from the King. Lorraine Bracco, as Mom, exudes the strength of a mother who would rip the heart out of any man who dared lay hands on her cubs. Adam Baldwin's King is more a hulking presence than a character, but the film wisely gives glimpses of the man inside the monster.

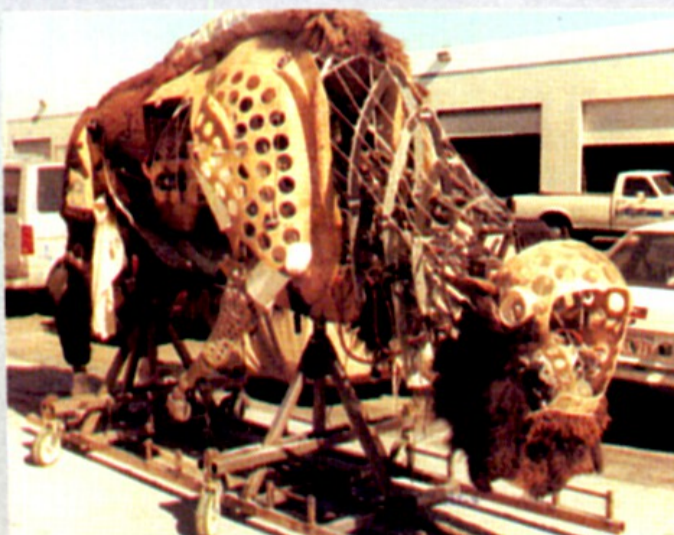
Richard Donner, director of the SUPERMAN movies and the LETHAL WEAPON treadmill, is of the no-nonsense school of Hollywood filmmaking. Lately his main trademark has been a tendentious environmentalism—reminders not to eat tuna harvested by drift nets, that sort of thing. Donner might better keep his homages to Nature behind the camera because visually the film looks terrific. Two sequences stand out: a black and white depiction of the '50s (a reminder of how nice black and white scope

The Giant Buffalo of Rick Lazzarini's Character Shop

By Simon Bacal

Together with his effects company, The Character Shop, creature creator Rick Lazzarini was responsible for breathing life into the eight-foot buffalo in Columbia Pictures RADIO FLYER. Lazzarini, whose previous credits include HOOK, EXORCIST III and BATMAN, had originally been chosen to create all of the film's makeup and creature effects. Zombies and a five-armed worm man were among a variety of creatures built by Lazzarini, but eliminated from the project when writer/director David Mickey Evans was replaced as director by Richard Donner. Instead, monster

The 8-foot-tall buffalo before final fur application.



maker Kevin Yagher, who had worked with Donner on TALES FROM THE CRYPT, was brought in to create a fleetingly glimpsed giant turtle and a bigfoot creature.

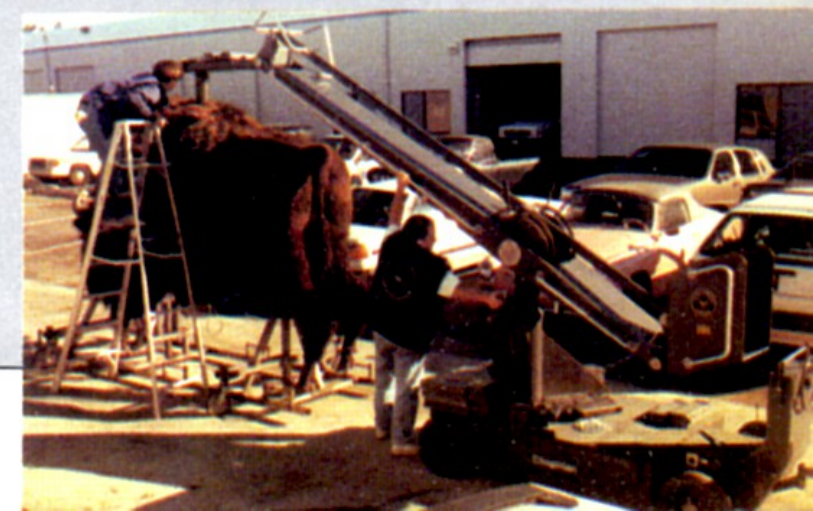
“Originally the buffalo was going to be 12-14 feet high,” recalled Lazzarini. “But I warned [the producers] that this would be bigger than their set. We designed the creature so that it could be mounted onto a camera crane from above or from either side. This way the crane would be hidden by the bulk of the animal. Alternatively, it could be mounted onto a stand so that the poles which supported it would be chest high. If you wanted to shoot above that, you wouldn't see the stand.”

To prepare for the scene, Lazzarini and his crew carried out extensive research on real buffalo, videotaping the animals' habits. “Our buffalo was at least one and one-half times larger than the biggest buffalo that you would encounter,” said Lazzarini, who covered the giant animatronic replica with the hides of real buffalo.

The buffalo's flapping ears were achieved through the use of air cylinders. Powerful linear actuators, air pressured hydraulic cylinders, enabled the creature to move its head up, down and from side to side. Electronically operated servo motors and a special vacuum pick-up system allowed the buffalo's jaw to move up, down and from side to side, to eat marshmallows served by the boys. Servos also controlled eye, brow and



Lazzarini and the crane-mounted animatronic prop. Below: Mounting the creature on a Chapman crane for a test drive at the Van Nuys-based Character Shop.



looks) and a spooky dream sequence in which the boys' clubhouse metamorphoses into a buffalo.

But all those action-adventure antics with Mel and Danny have taken their toll. Though **RADIO FLYER** vividly evokes the insecurity of new kids on the block pursued by "big kids" out for blood, the family interaction comes off as strained and ham-handed. Playing off his regressive role in **BIG**, Tom Hanks as the grown-up Michael who bookends the story, tries hard to pump life into David Mickey Evan's screenplay, but the blissful intimations of kiddie folklore are more over-ripe than lyrical. More than once it crosses the line between the sentimental and the lachrymose—a crying buffalo, alone in his pen, complete with gushing tears, and a wounded pet dog, braver than Rin Tin Tin. Besides, the insistent, controlling adult vantage (a reassurance of Michael and Bobby's growth to safety and sanity) denies the enduring legacy of child abuse.

The final movement of **RADIO FLYER** is either staggeringly audacious or downright weird. Suddenly, the serious social problem film veers into a bubbling



Elijah Wood (l) and Joseph Mazzello, making the histrionics and hokum palatable.

flight of fancy. For all Hanks' wistful remembrances of childhood past, the child abuse and working class verisimilitude anchors it firmly in the realistic mode of familial melodrama. When Michael gets his "Big Idea"—to build a flying machine out of the red wagon, buzz down a mountain runway, and soar up into the sky to escape the King—we're transported into another movie. *E.T.* began with an alien landing so the image of young

boys on dragsters ascending over the moonlit sky is a natural leap into the clouds. **RADIO FLYER** simply shifts genres in the last act. Heretofore normal kids with normal interests and skills, boys who still believe in monster potions and talking animals, construct a flying machine in their backyard out of lawnmower parts. And Bobby jumps into the makeshift cockpit and does just that—flies away. Just as bizarrely, the flash-forwarded coda back to the pres-

ent shows Hanks concluding his parable on the sacredness of a promise by swearing to the total veracity of what can only be a tall tale.

Not to belabor the obvious, but the echoes from *E.T.* are loud, clear and off-putting. The setting (suburban valley, woodland hills) and the family (female-headed household lately abandoned by Dad) is a virtual photocopy. Like "Mr. Keys," the King is hidden from view, his hulking form gazed mainly from the awed, waist level perspective of the boys. One expects Michael and Bobby to trip over Reeses Pieces at any moment. Yet **RADIO FLYER** is one interesting flick in its own right. Part of it is eerily surreal, like when the buffalo talks to Michael. At its best moments, it bears comparison favorably to **THE NIGHT OF THE HUNTER**, the classic James Agee-Charles Laughton film about pursued children on the lam (both films end with the handcuffing of the demon patriarch). The final credit crawl includes a hotline number for abused children, a somber reminder that in too many real childhoods—*E.T.* to the contrary—phoning home is no solution. □

snout movements and activated the creature's two front legs. Leg movement was accomplished with the use of a Lazzarini-devised Waldo system, worn by an off-screen performer. The creature's back legs were operated by puppeteers using rods. Waldos were also used for head and facial movements.

For the scene where the buffalo pushes his head through the kids' bedroom window, we had our creature on a rolling stand," explained Lazzarini. "While some grips pushed the bulk of the buffalo's remaining body towards the window, I was controlling the head with a Waldo. All the time I was making sure that there was an inch clear on either side of the horn, to enable the buffalo's head to easily fit through the opening." Lazzarini designed the lightweight head with a ribbed parallelogram understructure for fluid, realistic neck movement, covered in soft polyfoam.

Though Lazzarini began the film working for Evans, he said he enjoyed working with Donner. "Richard is a very gruff guy," said Lazzarini. "He bellows! He yells! My first thought was, 'We're making a film about child abuse and here's this guy yelling at these people?' But it turned out that his gruffness was a way of getting attention. Richard was never angry and was great fun to work with. He is also the kind of director who wants things done real quick. He doesn't want to worry about the technology of something or wait around for a device to be adjusted. This was a situation of, 'Wham bam, you're on the set. Let's shoot this. Now let's wrap it.'" □



Creature concept sketches by The Character Shop for the initial flight of **RADIO FLYER** under original director and screenwriter David Mickey Evans: the walking undead (top left), the Arsenia zombie (center), the boogie man (right) and the five-armed worm man (below), dropped when Donner took over and cut the budget.



FILM RATINGS

- Must See
- Excellent
- Good
- Mediocre
- Poor

BASIC INSTINCT

Directed by Paul Verhoeven. TriStar, 3/92, 127 mins. With: Michael Douglas, Sharon Stone, George Dzundza, Jeanne Tripplehorn.

Cold-as-ice director Paul Verhoeven (*ROBOCOP*, *TOTAL RECALL*) finds a kindred leading lady in ice-cold blonde Catherine Trammell, played by a sizzling Sharon Stone. She is, as Wayne Campbell might put it, a true Robo-babe—a state of the art body fronting the interior warmth of Hannibal Lector. Deadlier than the male, sexier with her clothes on than off, brandishing the best cigarette moves since Kathleen Turner in *BODY HEAT*, Stone brings to life that hoariest of whorey cliches, the femme fatale.

When she waltzes into a police interrogation room, the boys don't stand a chance against her raw sexual power and immodest lust. Romancing the Stone and thinking with an organ besides his brain is Michael Douglas, as a San Francisco homicide detective (again), who allows his prime murder suspect to tempt him into nicotine, cocaine and bondage. As a coherent thriller, the film makes less sense than *SHAKES THE CLOWN*, but visceral impact is the basic intent of this relentlessly politically incorrect, socially irresponsible and terrifically entertaining exercise in upscale art-porn.

●●● Thomas Doherty

Sharon Stone in *BASIC INSTINCT*, a "Robo-babe" fronting all the interior warmth of a Hannibal Lector.



The freaks of *BASKET CASE 3*, Frank Henenlotter's by-the-numbers sequel.

BASKET CASE 3: THE PROGENY

Directed by Frank Henenlotter. Shapiro Glickenthaus Entertainment, 2/91, 90 mins. With: Annie Ross, Kevin van Hentenryck, Dan Biggers, Gil Roper.

It's sad when low-budget filmmaking, supposedly the last bastion of creativity and independence, becomes just as moribund as its big-budget counterpart, but here we have Frank Henenlotter, once noted for his outrageous originality, churning out another sequel with as much imagination as the most commercially calculated, creatively bankrupt studio product. With no new story to tell, Part III simply repeats the story of Part II: the good mutants (excuse me, "special individuals") slaughter the wicked normal people, *a la* *FREAKS*; the only difference is now there are some baby Belial monsters to join in.

Henenlotter parcels out a bizarre form of reverse discrimination. The writer/director assumes that his audience will get a sick laugh out of seeing all the normal-looking characters knocked off—even a sympathetic sheriff who turns against Belial and company only after his daughter has been killed. Inexplicably, this understandable motivation is portrayed as villainous, while Belial's continual murderous rampages are shrugged off as mere indiscretion. Only redeeming feature: Kevin van Hentenryck's amusing performance as Belial's brother, who's gone completely bonkers this time out.

● Steve Biodrowski

THE CLONING OF JOANNA MAY

Directed by Phillip Saville. Granada Television/The Arts & Entertainment Network, 3/92, 180 mins. With: Patricia Hodge, Brian Cox, Billie Whitelaw, Siri Neal.

The production team previously responsible for the amazing *LIFE AND LOVES OF A SHE DEVIL* (the British mini-series, not the awful Roseanne Barr vehicle) here returns with another Fay Weldon adaptation,

a film every bit as gleefully vicious as its predecessor. In a hyper-real, and possibly near-future Great Britain, the regal Joanna May (Patricia Hodge) and her ruthless, industrialist husband, Carl (Brian Cox), engage in a high-stakes game of sexual one-upsmanship. She takes lovers; he has them murdered. She strikes out on her own; he appropriates a sample of her DNA and whips up a few clones to fill the gap. A comic/tragic examination of the point where love becomes pathology, the film is at once so outrageous that it plays more as fantasy than science fiction, yet so shrewdly observed that one harbors as much sympathy for the desperate, self-deceived Carl as for the victimized Joanna. It's genre filmmaking aimed for the heart instead of the gut—too rare an occurrence these days. With a good score by Rachel Portman, and a strange, J.K. Potter-style Tarot deck that someone should think of manufacturing.

●● Dan Persons

EVIL TOONS

Directed by Fred Olen Ray. Prism Home Video. American Independent Pictures, 1/92, 86 min. With: Monique Gabrielle, Susan Ager, David Carradine, Dick Miller, Arte Johnson.

A low-budget, exploitation-oriented take on *ROGER RABBIT* from the incredibly prolific Fred Olen Ray. Four decidedly overage college girls take a job cleaning an old, supposedly cursed mansion, and unleash the title character (there is only one despite the plural title) from a drawing in a demonic book. Looking a little like the Tasmanian Devil, the creature attacks the nearest coed, rapes and possesses her. Not surprisingly, considering Ray's usually miniscule budget, the creature occupies all too little screen time.

"First they undress you, then they possess you," trumpets the video's box blurb. Dick Miller, Arte Johnson and David Carradine have bit-part cameos, but the film is devoted to the comely coeds (who exhibit only their breasts as opposed to comedic talent, or even interest). Mostly they sit around, just talking. The film is dull, despite its considerable nudity. The creature pops back up again for the film's climax, but it's too little, too late. With

more of the animated beast, better acting, and a good deal more humor, this could have been a minor gem. Instead, it's a barely watchable oddity.

● John Thonen

MEMOIRS OF AN INVISIBLE MAN

Directed by John Carpenter. Warner Bros., 2/92, 99 mins. With: Chevy Chase, Daryl Hannah, Sam Neill, Michael McKeon.

Lacks the sting of the original H.F. Saint novel on which it is loosely based, and goes instead for the comical and the conventional. The ILM special effects are impressive and director John Carpenter provides plenty of sight gags and light touches. Coffee spilled on a keyboard causes an experimental physics lab and Nick Holloway (Chevy Chase), sleeping in an office sauna, to become invisible. Despite all evidence to the contrary, Sam Neill, as a government agent, remains convinced that he can sell Holloway as an invisible superspy/assassin. Daryl Hannah plays Alice, the object of Holloway's lust in an unpretentious bit which recalls her role in *ROXANNE*. The whole thing proves as light and transparent as air and about as substantial. Perhaps it's about time to do something new with this kind of story.

●● Dennis Fischer

SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE INCIDENT AT VICTORIA FALLS

Directed by Bill Corcoran. Vestron Video, 2/92, 120 mins. With: Christopher Lee, Patrick MacNee, Jenny Seagrove.

This video is an episode of a European television series *SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE GOLDEN YEARS*, out on video. Christopher Lee returns to the role of the famous detective, who wants nothing more than to retire and raise bees. Patrick MacNee makes a rather colorless Watson. Holmes is entrusted with transporting a world-famous diamond from Africa to London, but the gem is stolen and Holmes is thwarted in his attempts to unravel the mystery surrounding the disappearance. Several historical figures, such as Teddy Roosevelt, are among the characters and suspects. Although a pleasant outing with an old friend, age seems to have caught up with both Lee and Holmes—the detective's deductive reasonings fail him on several occasions.

●● Dan Scapperotti

SILENT NIGHT, DEADLY NIGHT: THE TOYMAKER

Directed by Martin Kitrosser. Live Home Video, 11/91, 90 mins. With: Mickey Rooney, Jane Higinson, Tracy Frain.

This is a surprisingly good entry from an anthology video series with a generally bad track record. While some may find the makeup effects (by Screaming Mad George, among others) and gore a bit on the thin side, a clever script holds the viewer's interest throughout, with a "mystery" killer whose identity is well-hidden. The plot: someone is sending deadly toys to a young boy (*he* manages to elude them, but various bystanders keep getting killed)—is it the kindly old toymaker, Joe Petto (Mickey Rooney)?

His weird son, Pino? Or the strange young man who buys toys and spies on the boy's house? As noted, the special effects are used rather sparingly, but are well-done when they appear; overall production values are good. Not quite bizarre enough to be top-notch (though the climax is mildly perverse) but very watchable. ●● David Wilt

SLEEPWALKERS

Directed by Mick Garris. Columbia Pictures. 2/92, 91 mins. With: Brian Krause, Alice Krige, Madchen Amick, Ron Perlman.

If not for its Stephen King brand name, this embarrassing effort—better titled *INCESTUOUS CANNIBALS VS. THE KITTY CATS*—would have bypassed theatres entirely and gone straight to video. Even that would have been too good for a production that is agony to sit through, more akin to something found on the USA cable network at 3 a.m., right after *BIKINI BEACH VAMPIRES*. King's relentlessly dumb dialogue and plot are, incredibly, exceeded by director Mick Garris' relentlessly dumb staging and gyrating camera work. At times, the visuals of this ill-conceived effort even contradict the script, to unintentionally humorous effect. In the opening, when police inspect a house devoid of cobwebs or dust, the dialogue informs us, "This place looks like it's been empty for 100 years." ○ Steve Biodrowski

SLUMBER PARTY MASSACRE 3

Directed by Sally Mattison. New Horizons Video. 12/91, 79 mins. With: Keely Christian, Brittain Frye, Hope Marie Carlton.

The third entry in the *SLUMBER PARTY MASSACRE* series continues the dubious tradition of its predecessors: a slasher film produced, directed and written by women. However, like the two previous films, this one only proves that women can make films as morally vapid and narratively inane as their male counterparts. There is no feminist presence here, so don't



Krige, Amick and Krause, walking through Stephen King's *SLEEPWALKERS*.

bother looking for one. Indeed, this installment is even less interesting than its lackluster forerunners, with no attractive protagonist and no charismatic killer, no suspense and no thrills. The female characters are all air-headed sex objects, and the males are all inarticulate, idiotic, emotionally disturbed or immature, and sexually obsessed. The plot? Don't make me laugh—a killer attacks a bunch of teenage girls in pajamas, killing most of them in brutal, degrading fashion, often after abusing and terrorizing them for an extended period of time. Comparing this with John Carpenter's *HALLOWEEN* provides a textbook contrast between an excellent piece of genre craftsmanship and the lowest form of exploitative drivel.

○ David Wilt

SOCIETY

Directed by Brian Yuzna. Republic Pictures. 2/92, 99 mins. With: Billy Warlock, Devin Pevasquez, Evan Richards, Ben Meyerson.

Made before *BRIDE OF RE-ANIMATOR*, but released after, Brian Yuzna's first film literalizes the idea that the rich have always fed off the poor in the film's most witty con-

ceit. Yuzna cannily plays off teenage paranoia as Bill Whitney (Billy Warlock) discovers that his adoptive family and other denizens of Beverly Hills are keeping a terrible secret. The film's best facet is the surrealistic makeups by Screaming Mad George. The script by Keith and Rick Fry however remains stolidly lower class. ● Dennis Fischer

XTRO II

Directed by Harry Bromley Davenport. New Line Home Video. 1/92, 89 mins. With: Jan Michael Vincent, Paul Koslo, Tara Buckman, Jano Frandsen.

XTRO (1982) was a surreal science fiction film with a hard-to-follow plot and some arresting effects sequences which have stayed in my mind for the last decade. The sequel, from the same director, is an unimaginative *ALIEN* rip-off with a rubber monster never completely glimpsed for more than a couple of seconds. This Canadian effort is neither worthy of its title or worth the price of a rental.

A secret government project, *NEXUS*, is sending volunteers into a parallel universe. One returns barely conscious and shortly thereafter a poor version of *ALIEN*'s chest burster introduces the title creature. All of this

takes 30 minutes to get rolling, and after that the unpleasant humans locked in the government installation bicker with each other interminably while they try to track down the monster and kill it. They are trapped because the place is run by a computer. The four scriptwriters responsible for this dullness, John A. Curtis, Steven Lister, Robert Smith and Edward Kovack, have apparently never seen a computer, as they don't seem to realize how easy it is to shut one off or pull its plug. Billed as second after a burned-out-looking Jan Michael Vincent are creature designers Charlie Grant and Wayne Dang, who are obviously not up to the challenge. Close-ups of bullets ricocheting off their creature bear no resemblance to any other shots of it. ○ Judith Harris

YOUNG INDIANA JONES & THE CURSE OF THE JACKAL

Directed by Jim O'Brien & Carl Schultz. ABC TV. 3/92, 120 mins. With: Sean Patrick Flanery, Corey Carrier, Margaret Tyzack, Ronny Coutteure.

Way back in 1963, the BBC came up with the idea of a program to teach history and science to children. They called it *DOCTOR WHO*. After a few disastrous historical stories, the BBC decided to stick with science fiction, and the show lasted until 1989. Now producer George Lucas tries the same idea.

According to publicity releases about the new series' budget, these are among the most expensive history lessons in, well, history. Aimed squarely at children, there isn't much to keep the adults awake. Anytime you can have a good actress like Margaret Tyzack and a setting which combines Howard Carter and T.E. Lawrence at the discovery of a mummy's tomb, and still be so dull, you know you're in trouble. If anything, the second hour of the pilot episode, which dragged in Pancho Villa in Mexico, was even less interesting. The prestige factor will keep this on the air for a while, but let's hope, like the BBC, Lucas switches back to science fiction real soon.

○ Judith Harris

Boxoffice Survey: Genre Film Take Nearly One-Third of First Quarter Revenues

An analysis of the Top Grossing films, as reported in *Variety's* "Weekend Boxoffice Report" reveals that in the first quarter of 1992, revenue from horror, fantasy and science fiction accounted for 32.3% of all money earned at the boxoffice (30.2% last year). Genre films comprised 22.9% of all weekly listings.

Revenue from science fiction films is up 34% over last year in the weekly boxoffice sampling. The jump is due in part to an increase in science fiction releases. Films responsible are Stephen King's virtual reality hit *THE LAWNMOWER MAN* and

last year's *STAR TREK VI*. Fantasy revenues saw an increase, earning 23.6% more than last year. Films responsible include last year's acclaimed animation hit *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST* and Steven Spielberg's updated Peter Pan tale *HOOK*. Horror revenue, although down 31% from last year's record take, is still on solid footing overall, thanks to *THE HAND THAT ROCKS THE CRADLE* and TriStar's controversial erotic thriller *BASIC INSTINCT*.

In the first quarter of 1992, science fiction accounted for 4.4% of all films, 7% of re-

ceipts; fantasy films accounted for 8.8% of all films and 13.8% of receipts; while horror accounted for 9.6% of all films and 13.8% of receipts. The total U.S. and Canadian boxoffice take of top-grossing genre films in the *Variety* totals are listed at right (through 4/24). For purposes of breakdown by genre, titles are indicated as horror (h), fantasy (f), and science fiction (sf), followed by number of weeks each title made the "Weekend Boxoffice Report" since January. Films first released in 1991 are indicated by an ●, but figures do not include prior year's earnings.

TOP GENRE FILMS OF '92

THE HAND THAT ROCKS THE CRADLE (Bv, h, 16)	\$81,620,167
BASIC INSTINCT (Ts, h, 6)	\$77,976,444
● BEAUTY AND THE BEAST (Bv, f, 17)	\$58,173,934
● HOOK (Ts, f, 17)	\$47,729,463
THE LAWNMOWER MAN (Ni, sf, 8)	\$29,751,938
SLEEPWALKERS (Col, h, 3)	\$22,275,419
● THE ADDAMS FAMILY (Par, h, 17)	\$19,516,829
● STAR TREK VI (Par, sf, 17)	\$18,877,909
FREEJACK (Wb, sf, 10)	\$17,033,142
MEMORIES OF AN INVISIBLE MAN (Wb, sf, 9)	\$13,405,114
FERN GULLY (Fox, f, 3)	\$13,324,019
ADVENTURES OF A GREAT MOUSE DETECTIVE (Bv, f, 11)	\$12,938,362
● RADIO FLYER (Col, f, 4)	\$ 4,279,178
AN AMERICAN TAIL: FIEVEL GOES WEST (U, f, 6)	\$ 3,820,439
SHADOWS & FOG (Or, h, 3)	\$ 2,533,621
● NAKED LUNCH (Fox, h, 8)	\$ 2,153,325

LETTERS

GEORGE LUCAS, EXPLAINED

Nolan Wright sailed way off the deep end in his shrill, high-handed attack on George Lucas [Where's STAR WARS 4? 22:6:28]. Having had the pleasure of working closely with Lucas as a writer on THE YOUNG INDIANA JONES CHRONICLES (which may lower me in Wright's eyes to the level of flack or apologist; if so, to hell with him), I can't see George slapping anyone in the face, least of all the fans. It is a ludicrous assertion, almost as ludicrous as suggesting that George is driven by greed. If he were, he wouldn't waste his time on a penny-ante TV series; he'd do exactly what Wright crassly demands—churn out STAR WARS sequels *ad nauseum*, a la New Line and Freddy. It's no secret the first trilogy and related merchandising generated billions of dollars. Contrary to Wright's disingenuous claim, there is *no way* the revenues of a TV show (no matter how successful) can ever hope to approach the profits of a STAR WARS sequel. You don't have to be a rocket scientist or Louis B. Mayer to figure that one out.

Lucas is motivated by the same thing that fuels all creative people:

the desire to do good work and give the world something of value. That means following your passions and instincts, not pandering to the demands of armchair quarterbacks like Nolan Wright (who'd make a typical studio executive in his belief that creativity can be coerced or ordered up like a Domino's pizza). Maybe we could give George some benefit of the doubt that he "ran out of energy to do it." Maybe (just maybe) he has the right to follow where his creative passions lead. Those same passions gave us STAR WARS in the first place (not to mention a few other great movies), and will doubtless dazzle us again in the future. They may even veer back to STAR WARS someday, which George has *not* ruled out.

Does CFQ really prefer a George Lucas cynical enough to make a sequel he feels no passion for (a particularly ironic stance to take in an issue that spends so much time trashing ALIEN 3 for sequelitis)? That would be a slap in the face to the fans.

Frank Darabont
Hollywood, CA 90068

ALIEN 3, SPOILED

Upon receiving my subscription

copy of the June *Cinefantastique* [22:6] with ALIEN 3 on the cover, I began to thumb through, as I always do. As I looked through the ALIEN 3 piece, I decided not to read it until I see the movie, because your publication is infamous for giving away plot lines. Pausing to read a caption to a photo on page 16, you sabotaged me with the following, "ALIEN 3 is reportedly the end of the line for Ripley, finally impregnated with an alien embryo."

I wanted to throw the magazine, rip it, burn it. What's wrong with you people? Have you no shame? How can you claim to promote a "sense of wonder" when you blithely confide a plot element so central and important! I feel betrayed. If you must give away plot lines, leave it in your articles and out of your photo captions.

Jeffrey Pearson
Royal Oak, MI 48073

[We warned sensitive readers not to read the ALIEN 3 coverage in our editorial last issue, until they had a chance to see the film first. Sorry we spoiled it for you.]

THE ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN SULU

After reading your feature on STAR TREK VI [22:5] I feel that, perhaps, it is time to retire *some* of the classic crew. With all the infighting, derision and personality clashes, it would seem better to concentrate on the future (no pun intended) than to try and keep the format alive as is. Personally, I would favor a TV-movie that centered on Captain Sulu and the Excalibur with Chekov and Uhura as his senior officers and a whole cast of new, young faces *supporting them* for a change. I agree with Koenig and Doohan that, even with Takei's "captaincy," the supporting players have been given short shrift for a long time, particularly by Shatner and Bennett.

Ron Murillo
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

MAYBE HE WAS JUST BEING POLITE?

I once asked James Doohan, at a convention, how it was working with Mr. Shatner. He said that it was "a pure delight. Bill is a professional in every sense of the word." In your article [Mutiny on the Enterprise 22:5:26], he says that "Bill has a big, fat head. He's sell-

ing Paramount a bill of goods which is rotten . . ." etc. Does Mr. Doohan always lie to the fans?

Walter Koenig also had some things to say about Mr. Shatner. I can only assume that George Takei and Nichelle Nichols also take issue with the man. I have never met Mr. Shatner, but I cannot believe the things that they say about him. As far back as I can remember, William Shatner has been my hero. After 23 years of looking up to him, I find their derogatory comments about him to be very hard to believe.

Dan Bollinger
N. Augusta, SC 29841

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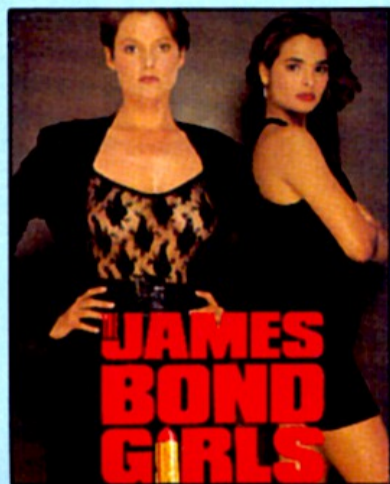
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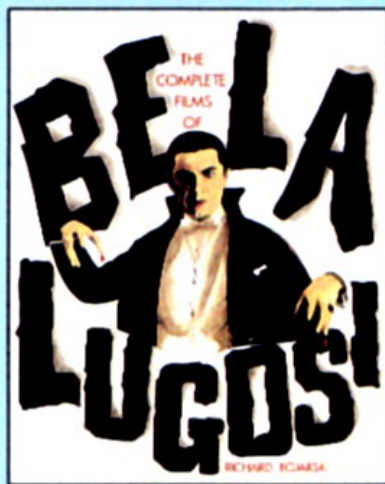
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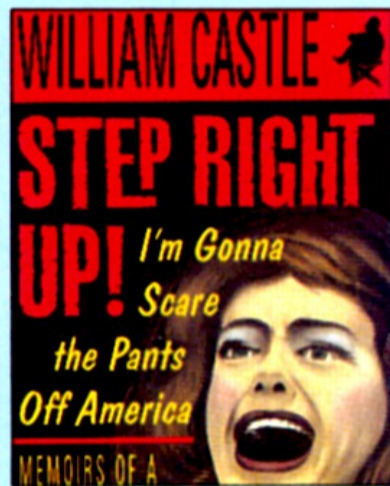
Cronenberg on Cronenberg

Edited by Chris Rodley, the major part of this book comprises interviews recorded over the past seven years. The first in Toronto in 1984, during preparation for TOTAL RECALL, the second in 1986 during filming of THE FLY and the last during work on NAKED LUNCH in 1990 and 1991. Cronenberg's development from maker of "exploitation" cinema to internationally renowned director of million-dollar movies is traced revealing the concerns and obsessions which continue to dominate his rich and complex work. Illustrated.



Femme Fatales - Vol 1 No 1

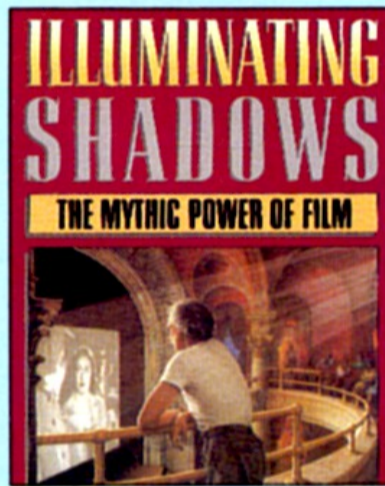
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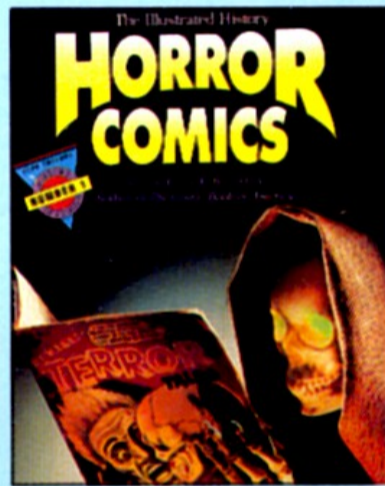
A Pharos Books reprint of the 1976 Putnam autobiography of William Castle, the most outlandish film promoter/producer/director of all time. Best known for THE LADY FROM SHANGHAI and ROSEMARY'S BABY, this book with an introduction by John ("William Castle was God") Waters tells the story of the marketing maniac who planted buzzers on theatre seats and insured his audiences against fright to ensure that going to see his movies would be an unforgettable experience. Paper.



Illuminating Shadows:

The Mythic Power of Film

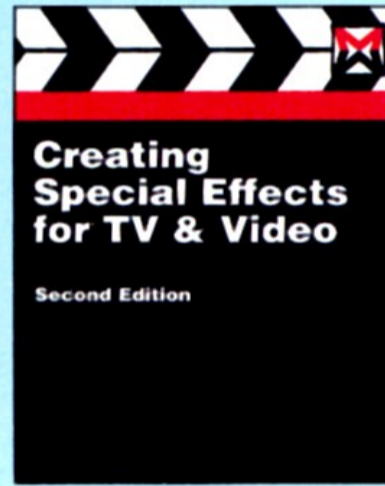
In this, the first book-length study of hidden mythic themes, Geoffrey Hill sees the cinema as a modern version of the tribal campfire where myths and legends inspire and provoke the audience in highly religious ways. In such diverse movies as LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS, SANTA SANGRE, and FIELD OF DREAMS, Hill finds the mythic archetypes revealed through contemporary cultural expressions. Today's art forms can teach us how connected we still are to myth. Paper.



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