

STAR TREK III:
Interview & Photos

GREMLINS • GHOSTBUSTERS • LAST STARFIGHTER • CONAN II

HARRISON FORD IS INDIANA JONES

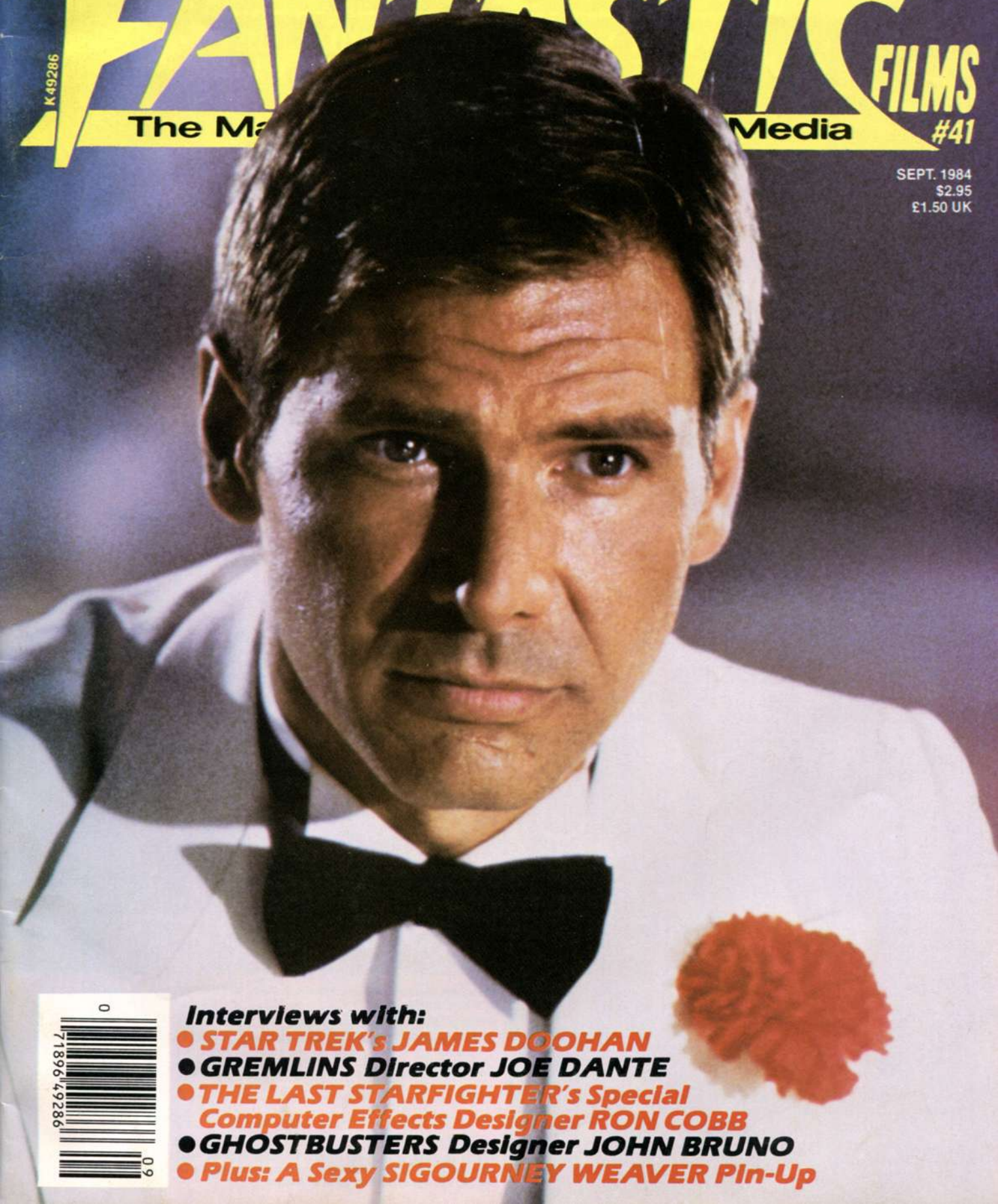
K49286

The Magazine

Media

FILMS
#41

SEPT. 1984
\$2.95
£1.50 UK



Interviews with:

- **STAR TREK's JAMES DOOHAN**
- **GREMLINS Director JOE DANTE**
- **THE LAST STARFIGHTER's Special Computer Effects Designer RON COBB**
- **GHOSTBUSTERS Designer JOHN BRUNO**
- **Plus: A Sexy SIGOURNEY WEAVER Pin-Up**





CONTENTS

- REACTION:** Response **6**
Comments, suggestions, corrections, complaints, footnotes, explanations, threats and promises of glory from our readers.

- CINEMASNEAK: CONAN II** Preview by JUDITH PYNE **8**
Advance production information and first photos from forthcoming attractions

- DATABANK:** News **10**
A look at what's happening in the world of films, theater, literature, conventions and fandom.

- READOUT:** Reviews **11**
Reviews of some of the newer SF literary releases.

- FILMFAX: RON COBB'S
COMPUTERIZED ANIMATION** Interview by MICHAEL STEIN **16**
Interviews and information focusing on the latest developments in state-of-the-art cinema.

- STARSCAN:
SIGOURNEY WEAVER** Profile by BEVERLY WOOD **20**
A closer look at some of your favorite film personalities.

- GHOSTBUSTERS** Interview by MICHAEL STEIN **22**
Behind-the-scenes with
Special Effects Art Director John Bruno.

- STARTREK III: THE
SEARCH FOR SPOCK** Interview by MICHAEL STEIN **26**
James M. "Scotty" Doohan
talks to *Fantastic Films* about his years
aboard the *Enterprise*.

- INDIANA JONES: THE
TEMPLE OF DOOM** Interview by JESSIE HORSTING **32**
Associate Producer Kathleen Kennedy
reveals the perils of production.

- GREMLINS** Article by JESSIE HORSTING **40**
Director Joe Dante talks about
Gremlins, and how he got there.

GENERAL OFFICES: 2020 Lincoln Park West, Chicago, IL 60614. Return postage must accompany all manuscripts, drawings and photographs submitted if they are to be returned and no responsibility can be assumed for unsolicited materials. All rights in letters sent to *Fantastic Films* will be treated as unconditionally assigned for publication. Copyright©, 1984 by *Fantastic Films* and *Fantastic Films Magazine Inc.* All rights reserved. Nothing may be reprinted in whole or in part without written permission from the publisher.

FANTASTIC FILMS: (USPS: 561-650) (ISSN: 0273-7043) September, 1984, VOL. 7, NO. 5. Published bi-monthly by FANTASTIC FILMS MAGAZINE, INC. 2020 Lincoln Park West, Chicago IL 60614. Second class postage. Rates paid at Chicago, IL and additional mailing office. Postmaster send form 3579 to FANTASTIC FILMS Magazine, P.O. Box 245 Mt. Morris, IL 61054. Subscriptions: in the U.S., \$15.00 per year; Canadian, \$17.25 per year; Foreign, \$23.00 per year. Printed in the USA.

FANTASTIC FILMS

EDITOR/PUBLISHER

Michael Stein

WEST COAST EDITOR

Jessie Horsting
(213) 216-0440

ART DIRECTOR

Michael Stein

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Mike Andris
Douglas Bakshian
Joseph Bensoua
Ken Bussanmas
Vernon Clark
Mike Gold
Ivy Graham
Aimee Horsting
Roy Kinnard
Terry Winslow Parker
Dave Pettus
Presley Reese
Douglas Rice
Jim Salski
Tom Weaver
Sharon Williams
Beverly Wood

ADVERTISING AND ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR

I. Karchmar
(312) 871-5376

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR

Gerald Levine

PRODUCTION

Kable News Typeset

From Alien Hunting To Ghost Busting SIGOURNEY WEAVER Makes Her Living Living Dangerously

Sigourney Weaver as a "Terror Dog?" Or, at least, a possessed woman?

The last time we saw her she was being tall, cool, and passionate in *The Year Of Living Dangerously* alongside last month's profile, Mel Gibson.

Weaver has always played intelligent career-women: a warrant officer aboard an ill-fated starship (*Alien*), a TV reporter (*Eyewitness*), a foreign military attaché, (*TYOLD*), and a seller of atomic weapons (*Deal Of The Century*). Where does a Terror Dog fit in?

Sigourney (originally Susan before she adopted a more unusual name from F. Scott Fitzgerald's *"The Great Gatsby"* when she was fourteen) is the daughter of Sylvester "Pat" Weaver, formerly president of NBC, and Elizabeth Inglis, an English actress. She was educated at the uppercrust Chapin School, Ethel Walker School, Stanford and Yale, where she received an M.F.A. (How many Terror Dogs do you think Yale turns out?)

Early on, her parents and friends tried to dissuade her from becoming a professional actress because they thought she wasn't tough enough. (And at Yale they thought she was too tall and odd-looking, according to Sigourney.) Fortunately, she persevered, and from the beginning believed she had an advantage over her colleagues: "I'd grown up in the business. I knew it was fun, but I also knew you couldn't expect too much from it."

"By the time I came to New York, I was so used to rejection that I was perfectly willing to get a job as a bank teller. I had already lost whatever joy I'd found in the theater at Yale, and it took me a long time to get that back. I had no expectations whatsoever. And then I started to get work."

Her first professional job was as an understudy in Sir John Gielgud's production of *The Constant Wife* starring Ingrid Bergman. She subsequently appeared in several productions for Joseph Papp in New York, as well as in the off-Broadway productions *Gemini*, *Marco Polo Sings a Solo* and *New Jerusalem*.

But she's never appeared before as a Terror Dog.

So what is a Terror Dog? O.K.—"T.D.s" are a phenomenon of *Ghostbusters*, an outrageous new special-effects-laden comedy starring those off-beat kings of comedy, Dan Aykroyd, Bill Murray and Harold Ramis. But Sigourney is no stranger to comedy either (and bizarre comedy at that). She co-

authored (with Christopher Durang) and starred in a cabaret piece called *Das Lusitania Songspiel*, a Brecht-Weill parody that was a 1980 hit in New York. Sigourney, by all accounts, was rowdy

outer space thriller to romantic thriller in the 1981 movie *Eyewitness* where she played a TV reporter who becomes the object of John Hurt's boyish adoration. In this Steven Seid/Peter Yates col-

spectacular about Sigourney Weaver: her brainy, female-hunk physicality—her wide-awake dark eyes, the protruding lower lip, the strong, rounded, outthrust jaw, and her hands, so large that when she embraces Gibson her five fingers encompass his back."

She uses her face and body to "pour on the passion and laughter," said Kael, comparing her to the young Sophia Loren, who had the same "capacity for enjoyment."

(Sigourney also recently appeared in *Deal of a Century* with Chevy Chase, but according to most critics who reviewed it, her presence in the film was wasted.)

Sigourney has openly rejected any new attempt to stereotype her by taking the role of Dana in *Ghostbusters*, where she is possessed by the demon Terror Dogs and spends a lot of time hanging around with ghosts in New York City (never fear though, we will get to see her in human form.)

The movie, a comedy with some giant special effects, (see article on page 22), brings together a great combination of talent. This is the first feature film Aykroyd and Murray have acted in together. It also reunites director Ivan Reitman and writer-actor Harold Ramis who created *Animal House*, *Meatballs*, and *Stripes* (in which Ramis played Murray's sidekick). The *Ghostbusters* cast also includes Ernie Hudson, Rick Moranis (one of the famous McKenzie Brothers from SCTV) and Annie Potts.

The movie centers around a group of parapsychology professors who believe it to be more lucrative to suck ghosts out of the buildings and alleys of NYC—so they develop the machine to do it.

Needless to say, the spirits that be (and they don't be friendly) can't take this sort of abuse lying down, which leads to some pretty awesome battle scenes and bizarre opponents (including, of course, the Terror Dogs).

Director of special photographic effects for the movie was Richard Edlund, who started out in television with *The Outer Limits*, *Twilight Zone* and *Star Trek*, and went on to such hit films as *The China Syndrome*, *Poltergeist*, *Star Wars*, *The Empire Strikes Back*, *Raiders Of The Lost Ark* and *Jedi*.

So, in the near future, we'll all get to see Sigourney Weaver, the tall and beautiful, play the role of a Terror Dog. What we want to know is, who are the critics going to compare her to then? *Cujo*?

—Beverly Wood



Above, Sigourney Weaver and Bill Murray star in *Ghostbusters*. Opposite page, Sigourney poses in a possessed state of mind.

and funny as a girl with a multiple personality. She also starred in the Phoenix Theater's production of Durang's *Beyond Therapy*. ("It's glorious to be in a comedy that sold out," said Sigourney.) Durang, another Yale grad, went on to write the popular and controversial *Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All For You*, about a nun who believes toilet seats can father children.

Before breaking into films, Sigourney also acted on television in *"The Best of Families"* and in the daytime soap *"Somerset."* She then escaped from TV in a space-ship, and became the only survivor in Ridley Scott's SF classic, *Alien* (many of you may remember her sneaking around the ship in her undies) which propelled her at light-speed into the public eye.

Weaver was tagged as "up and coming" from the start. *Newsweek* compared her to Jane Fonda, saying she "takes the classic B-movie woman's role—all the heavings and hysterics of noble women like Fay Wray, Faith Domergue and Julie Adams—and raises it to a kind of abstract energy and ambushed grace that's like watching a ballet of pure terror."

Sigourney then moved from

laboration (as in *Breaking Away*) Sigourney played a cross between "a Jewish princess and a Henry James' heiress." *People Magazine* described her as tall and classy looking with an "elongated elegance."

Pauline Kael of the *New Yorker*, who is not always kind to those new to the film world—or those old to the film world—took quite a shine to Sigourney in *Eyewitness*.

"By training, temperament and spectacular good looks, Sigourney Weaver seems a natural for stardom in this era; she's scaled to be a modern heroine," wrote Kael.

Weaver went on to Peter Weir's 1983 romantic thriller, *The Year Of Living Dangerously*, playing the cool and elegant Gillian Bryant in steamy Indonesia, with the equally steamy Mel Gibson. (Hey, it was all over the newspapers what a good time Sigourney had in those love scenes.) Critics who compared her to Mary Astor—refined on the surface, smoldering underneath—were right on target. She was so expressive that a twitch of her eyebrows more than replaced a hundred words. And her fan, Pauline Kael, summed Sigourney's impact up beautifully: "Weir knows what's





GH**OST**BUSTERS

From the Silly to the Scary to the Sublime, Ghostbusters Takes a Special Effects Romp through New York City

Just when you thought the streets of New York were serious again . . . Ghostbusters! But then, nothing stays serious for long when Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd and Harold Ramis are on the job. Their comic talents, combined with a unique display of special effects from Richard Edlund's newly formed Boss Film Corporation, are an unbeatable team when it comes to tickling the fannish funnybone.

Laughs run wild as do the Ghostbusters when they attempt to deplete, for fun and profit, New York's oddball population of paranormal personalities. From phantom librarians to ghostly gluttons, from sexy spookettes to ghastly terror-dogs, from demonic possessions to marshmallow nightmares, the special effects crew

at BFC have stretched their talents beyond the limits of common imagination and state-of-the-art technology.

Visual Effects Art Director John Bruno recently took time out from his hectic production schedule to talk about BFC's extensive effects work for Ghostbusters. John has previously been interviewed in *Fantastic Films* about his animation work on the Heavy Metal movie (FF #26) and his affiliation with Richard Edlund on *Poltergeist* (FF #31). For Ghostbusters John teamed up once again with Richard, who had recently left ILM at Lucasfilm to set up shop at Doug Trumbull's EEG facility in Marina Del Rey. Among those in the Hollywood special effects community, the formation of BFC was a major event. We began by asking John how he had be-



come affiliated with the group.

BRUNO: I was in Paris working as a production designer on Cheech and Chong's upcoming film, *The Corsican Brothers*. Richard Edlund was in the process of both setting up BFC, doing some reorganization of EEG and doing a publicity tour on *Jedi*. We had talked many times about the eventuality of working together again which I was looking forward to, but it wasn't until *Ghostbusters* solidified that it seemed like it would happen.

I do remember the first few calls though. Richard was in Tokyo. I was blowing up a Chateau southwest of Paris. He wanted me to start right away, but we were running a little behind on *Corsican Brothers*.

Then there were calls from Michael Gross and Terry Windell. Terry wanted to know if I was going to do it. Michael was pressing me saying that they were already five weeks late in getting started. I didn't take all of this that seriously. So I finished my work in Paris and stopped in London for a week to visit my friend Mike Ploog who was working on *Return to Oz*. While visiting at EMI, I ran into Frank Marshall and Kathy Kennedy who were there with Stephen Spielberg finishing work on *Indiana Jones*. They asked a lot of questions about the Boss Film Corporation, and at that point I started to take it a little more seriously. I arrived back in Los Angeles on Tuesday and started work Wednesday.

FF: So you began immediately on *Ghostbusters*. What was it like starting up from scratch and who were some of the other effects personnel at the new facility?

BRUNO: When I arrived Richard seemed happy to see me. We were already six weeks late in getting started, so there was plenty to do. That was in August of '83, and Richard had done quite a lot already. Laura Buff was there as our business manager. Gene Whiteman had already set up a machine shop and was busy building the high-speed 65mm reflex camera that would be used for *Ghostbusters* and *2010*. Mark Stetson was model shop supervisor, and other than that, Neil Krepela our matte super-



visor, Mark Vargo our optical supervisor, Terry Windell and Garry Waller our animation supervisors, Bill Neil our effects cameraman, Stuart Ziff our creature shop supervisor and Conrad Buff our editorial supervisor were all still finishing other projects and were not yet available.

FF: How did you go about catching up on lost time?

BRUNO: I was way behind on storyboards for the film. We didn't know how many effects shots there

would be until that phase was completed. So I started working weekends right away. My friend Brent Boates, who had worked with me on *Heavy Metal* and a special project with "Cheech" Marin, also assisted me in the storyboarding. During the boarding stages, we began to realize the complexity of the effects asked for, which would require not only animated energy beams, animated ghosts and ectoplasm, but also full-sized mechanical ghosts and creatures as well as

stop motion puppets, matte paintings, cloud tank and pyro work—a sum total of effects which were somewhat more complicated than what we did for *Poltergeist*. Plus we were not encouraged by the fact that we were starting late. We would have only four months after the completion of first unit photography to finish the effects work on the film, some 193 shots.

FF: It sounds almost impossible. How did you and your crew pull it all together on time and under





such pressure?

BRUNO: The first set of storyboards were completed in October after a location scouting trip to New York in September. By this time, the "hunting band" had been assembled. The hunting band (as Richard Edlund calls our group) is an interesting work theory that we all adhere to. People of a certain personality and talent attract others of the same talent and personality. This group stays together as friends moving from film to film.

We all understand and respect each other. This is very important especially on a film with such a short deadline. There would be a lot of pressure on all of us to produce a large quantity of shots and maintain a very high standard of quality.

In November matte plate photography started in New York. Richard Edlund, Neil Krepela and Alan Harding were gone for about three weeks. In between a frantic storyboarding schedule, which

Terry Windell had now also started to help out on, I began conceptualizing scenes with Matt Yuricich and Michelle Moen in the Matte Painting Dept. Matthew was hoping that the paintings would be designed in a much more dramatic style than had been seen in recent years. There would be more than 40 paintings in *Ghostbusters*, so a great deal of attention would have to be paid to this area. The script called for a temple on top of a building on Central Park West in New

York. This didn't exist, of course, and was the focal point in the story. **FF:** You mentioned that Matthew Yuricich wanted to render the matte paintings in a "more dramatic style"—can you describe how you worked together to achieve this effect?

BRUNO: Whenever possible, I forced perspective on each of these shots. Michelle Moen, whom I believe is a total master of perspective, spent many, many hours trying to conform angles from our storyboards to her layouts of the paintings. Matt Yuricich spent many more months trying to complete them as paintings, especially the paintings done in and around Stage 16, the temple set.

FF: As Visual Effects Art Director for *Ghostbusters* did you find designing the effects for a comedy even more challenging than the "straight" effects done on *Poltergeist*?

BRUNO: Even though the tone of *Ghostbusters* is humorous, the effects are always treated very straight. During preproduction we talked about how many different kinds of ghosts there could be, assuming that everything that ever lived could be a ghost—from a dinosaur to an amoeba. Actually, the only "funny" ghost in the film is the one we called the Onion Head. He is a little green potato-looking guy who is basically a big mouth with arms. All he does is eat. But he can't keep food in him, so he obviously was not a very successful lifeform. The ghostbusters chase him all over the Biltmore Hotel and eventually catch him. They take everything they do very seriously.

FF: How was the Onion Head effect mixed into the live action?

BRUNO: The body of the Onion Head ghost was basically a suit sculpted by Steve Johnson, one of Rick Baker's proteges. Steve made three different 3-dimensional suits. The one with the big mouth eating face took 8 people to operate. It was shot against a black background, then inserted into the scene optically.

FF: How were the Terror Dogs created?

BRUNO: The terror dogs posed

(Continued on page 48)



Photos this page, above, top down: mystic lightning strikes the ghostbusters atop 55 Park West. Neutrons wands glow with ectoplasmic energy as the ghostbusters go into action. Below, left to right; a flying "glamour ghost" is positioned for a shot. Visual effects art director John Bruno adjusts the drape of an aged "librarian ghost."

JOHN BRUNO TALKS ABOUT *GHOSTBUSTERS* SPECIAL EFFECTS

(Continued from page 25)



quite a different problem. The script called for the creatures to do a number of things. In quite a few shots they would have to appear with actors. They would have to run, leap and appear very threatening at all times. These were very serious creatures compared to the Onion Head. It was obvious that more than one technique would have to be introduced.

After the storyboards were finally approved, we held one of our group discussions. (These conferences usually included Richard Edlund, Terry Windell, Garry Waller, Conrad Buff, Bill Neil and Neil Krepela.) During these discussions it was decided how each scene should be handled—which scene would be a man in a rubber suit, which would be stop motion, etc. Stuart Ziff brought in Rand Cook to design and animate the stop motion puppets of the dog. Randy followed through on the construction of the larger 6-foot beasts. In the end, three full-sized dogs were built along with three stop motion puppets. The full-sized dogs were quite complicated and sometimes took up to 12 people to operate.

FF: What about the Marshmallow Man? How was he created?

BRUNO: The Stay-Puft Marshmallow man had an entirely different set of problems. He had to appear to be over a hundred feet tall, walk through the streets of New York and climb up a building on Central Park West (the latter while completely engulfed in flame). His face also had to show a great deal of expression, fear, happiness, anger. Not an easy task.

FF: Were multiple suits constructed with mechanical detailing to achieve these effects?

BRUNO: After the storyboards were finalized, we were able to see how many suits would have to be constructed. Quite a number of suits were constructed in order to hide seams and mechanical control cables from different angles. The burning suits were altogether different. Those needed to be fire-proofed. That was supervised by Joe Viskocil. Stuart Ziff enlisted the aid of Bill Bryant to design the Marshmallow Man costume. Bill sculpted a number of clay models from sketches done by Tom Enriquez. When they were approved, he started work building the full-size suits that he would wear in all but the pyro shots. Those would have to be stuntmen. Linda Frobos transferred over to the Marshmallow Man crew after completing her work on the large Terror Dogs. She sculpted the large Stay-Puft head and worked very closely with Bill on that project. We all here at BFC are very proud of the work they both did.

FF: What kind of miniature work was required for the street scenes?



Photos at left, top down: a series of John Bruno's storyboards for the Terror Dog "Party sequence." (Originally John Candy was to star in the part now held by Rick Moranis.) Center, top down: model shop supervisor Mark Stetson places a miniature figure atop the model of 55 Park West. John Bruno and mechanical Terror Dog. Steve Johnson (left), Onionhead (with Mark Wilson inside) and tongue operator Mark Siegal. Bruno discusses storyboards with Richard Edlund, Stuart Ziff and Randy Cook.

BRUNO: Also used in the sequence with the Marshmallow Man was a 15' tall model building of 55 Central Park West. This was originally constructed by Mark Stetson's model shop crew for one scene where the Stay-Puft Man stood beneath it in flames. We ended up using that building quite a bit. We blew it up, had a flaming Stay-Puft Man crawl up the side of it and struck it with lighting. It too became a star in this film.

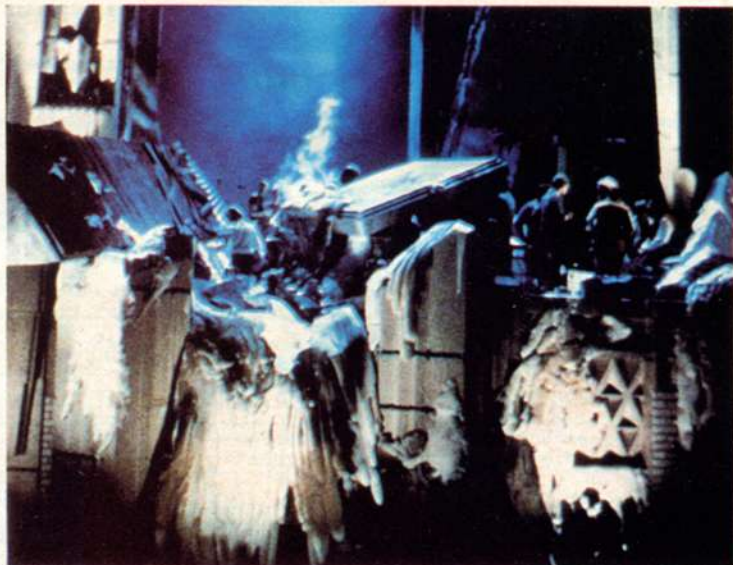
FF: Where did you get the idea for the ghostbusters' neutrona wands?

BRUNO: The idea came from the script. How they worked and how they looked was a collaborative effort on everyone's part. There were a number of problems to solve which had not been dealt with in the story. First, how *did* these things actually catch ghosts. Dan Akroyd's first concept for the wands was that each person would have a "wand" in each hand. These wands would then shoot out beams and "corral" a ghost. A box trap would be rolled beneath it and the ghost would be sucked in. Looks good on paper but it was much too complicated to produce. The first thing I did was simplify that by combining the two wands into just one "thrower"—that left only one beam for Animation to deal with.

Right away we all agreed that we didn't want the neutrona wands to look like laser guns—we've all seen plenty of those. Approaching the problem of motion, the ideal of lighting came to mind, especially the old question "does lightning strike from the ground up or from cloud to ground?" What if, instead of shooting out a beam, the beam came to the "thrower"? You would aim the wand at the wall, pull the trigger, the beam would leap from the wall and strike the tip of the wand. The particle accelerator carried on your back would build up energy, then shoot out an electrical field. This is what would cage a ghost. That was a theory. Terry Windell and Garry Waller did an animation test on it and it worked fantastically, just like magic. As the film stands now, the animation shines out. It rivals the work produced on *Poltergeist*. Gary Waller, Terry Windell and key animators Shawn Newton, Bill Recinds, Bruce Woodside and Rich Colean have a lot to be proud of.

FF: What kind of production and design work went into the set construction for *Ghostbusters*?

BRUNO: John DeCuir was the production designer on the film. He was wonderful to work with. There was no limit to his energy and enthusiasm. From the splitting street scene, the monstrous temple set on Stage 16, and his wonderful design of the hotel hallway and apartment complex at 55 Central Park West. It was great fun. We were all shooting on stages 12, 16, 18 where the hotel hallway, apart-



ments and temple sets were built until around the end of January. Bill Neil and Pete Romano were the 65mm camera crew during all of that. We shot the plates for the On-ion Head and Terror Dogs during December and January.

FF: Once 2010 also began its production schedule, were there any scheduling conflicts with the special effects for that film?

BRUNO: When things started hopping on 2010, the high speed camera built by Gene Whiteman was now needed for both films. So another crew was added to *Ghostbusters* consisting of John Lambert and Clint Palmer. During the day, John and I worked on the On-ion Head and at night I would work with Bill Neil and Thaine Morris. Thaine was our special effects foreman and pyrotechnic expert. About 15 or 20 shots involving explosions, flames and burning suits were produced in complete safety. That helped take the pressure off everyone during those seemingly endless weeks of 18-hour days.

Then in March, Richard, Conrad Buff and I realized that the amount of shots had climbed from 148 in December to around 200 by February. We would not be able to complete the film with that many shots. So I was enlisted to work with the director Ivan Reitman and the film editor Shelly Kahn on reducing the number of scenes during the first week of March. As a result, we dropped about 20 scenes from the film.

Niel Krepela, our Matte Department supervisor, produced quite a few shots, combining live action and matte paintings in camera. This took a bit of pressure off the optical department in the latter stages of production. Niel also rear-projected elements of the On-ion Head ghost on Compsy (Computerized Matte Camera System) re-photographing them to size and position. This saved days of optical time by delivering 65mm negatives that only had to be reduced to 35mm negatives. Scenes done this way were "finalized" 95 percent on the first take.

Our stage work also dropped dramatically by the end of March, and the focus of attention went to Mark Vargo and his crew in Optical. He had 40 days left to produce 160+ shots, and by May 1 had reduced that number by 40. To say that Mark and his crew are the best would be an understatement. The look of the film is every bit as good as we hoped it would be.

FF: Well, it certainly sounds as if *Ghostbusters* was a team effort in the truest sense. And also being a comedy, it promises to be a double pleasure for the fans.

BRUNO: I would also like to add that for all the effort put into this project by so many people, I am not forgetting for an instant that *Ghostbusters* is the brainchild of Dan Akroyd and to him must go a lot of the credit. He was a pleasure to work with.

THIS FILE WAS PROVIDED BY



SPOOKCENTRAL.TK