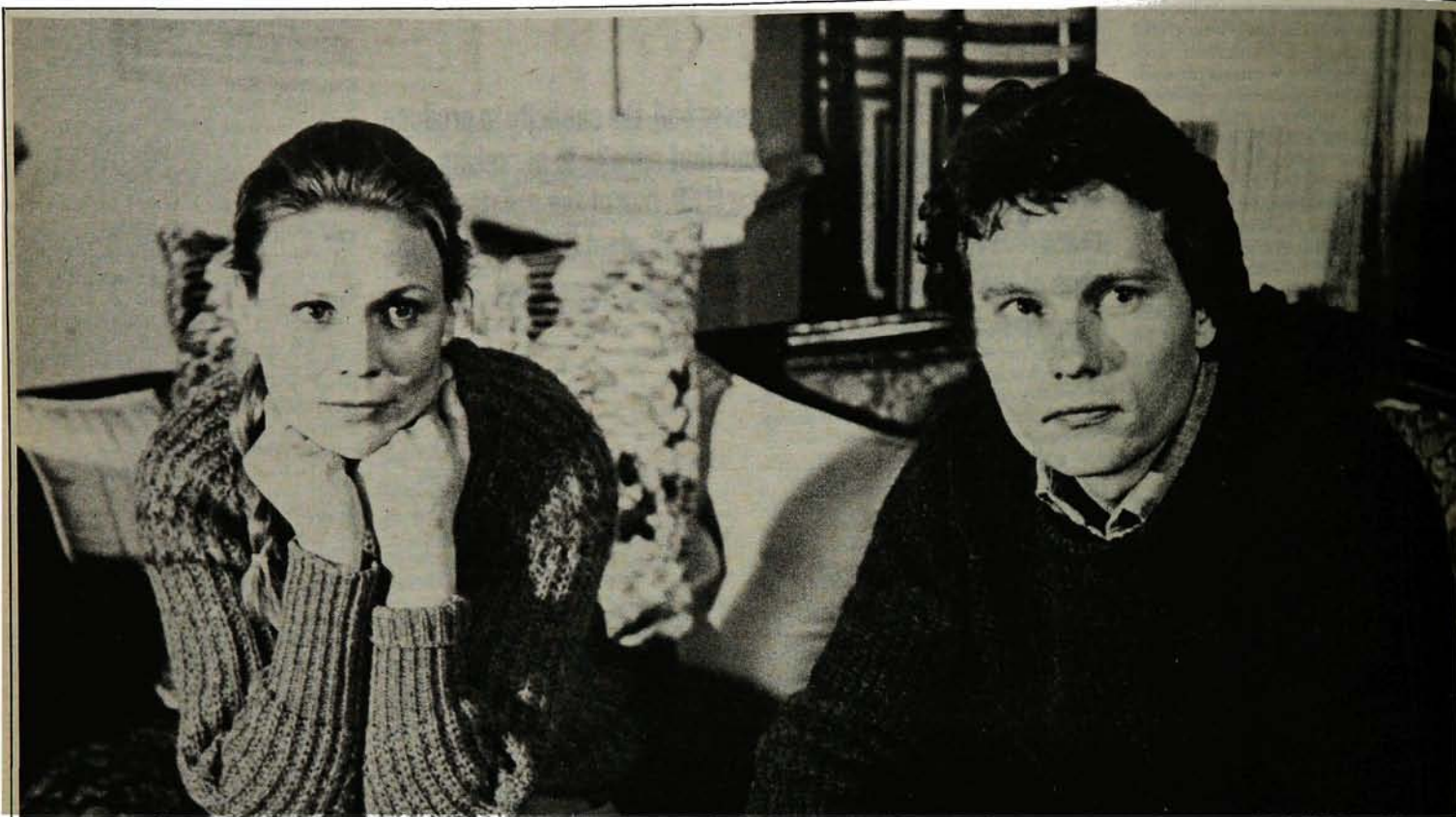


# IN PROGRESS



Caught in a web of international intrigue: *The Amateur's* Marthe Keller and John Savage.

## The Amateur Action on all fronts

From the last week of December until mid-February, Toronto was transformed into Washington, Prague, and Vienna, during the shooting of Balkan Film Productions' *The Amateur*, produced by Garth Drabinsky and Joel Michaels. Kleinberg Studio sets included everything from Prague apartment interiors to an immense Czech bar complete with underwater pool designed by production designer Trevor Williams.

According to Oxford's Dictionary, an "amateur" is one who is fond of; one who cultivates a thing as a pastime... hence "amateurish." A more popular definition suggests one who is inept or ill-prepared to perform a given function. This better describes the character of Charles Heller as performed by John Savage in the film.

When we meet Charles Heller, he is a harmless nine-to-fiver in the code section of the CIA whose world is that of computers, logs, and paper. Heller's girl friend is murdered in Vienna by a group of ruthless terrorists at the American embassy. Heller demands that the forces of the CIA be used to ensure their destruction. For reasons of its own the "Company" refuses. Via blackmail Heller forces the CIA to train and send him on a

personal mission of revenge. His indoctrination by fire takes him behind the Iron Curtain and into unforeseen dangers. What Heller doesn't realize is that his own side, his own "Company," also plans his demise.

The world of the CIA and the KGB is a mysterious one, populated by true professionals. There are no novices tolerated in this environment. Yet, to the dismay of both sides, Heller is introduced - an outsider, who is inept and ill-prepared to perform his personal function; an amateur, whose sloppy ways could prove an embarrassment to all. In classic form, suggesting *Three Days of the Condor*, Heller winds his way ever closer to the centre of the mystery that surrounds the death of his girl friend.

During the shooting, few local business people who make their living on University Avenue were aware that there was a full-fledged terrorist attack taking place in the old Hydro building. Somehow, the twelfth floor had been transformed to resemble, to the smallest detail, the American embassy in Vienna.

John Marley, Ed Lauter, Marthe Keller, George Coe, Graham Jarvis, and John Savage made up the international side of the cast, but they were nicely matched line for line by the Canadian contingent. Christopher Plummer and Arthur Hill represented the veteran acting school, but it was a regiment of young Canadian talent that seemed to leave the strongest impression. Collectively, their performance and demeanour on set was impeccable.

Under Charles Jarrott's direction the

terrorists - made up of leader Nicholas Campbell, Chappelle Jaffe, George Buzza, and Miguel Fernandes - became so engrossed in their roles that they were overheard to sign out after a fifteen-hour day still using their "coached" German accents. Jan Rubes and Lynn Griffin filled out the principal cast brilliantly.

One week, the Metro Toronto Zoo became a CIA winter training farm. With helicopters taking off in one direction, new recruits (who looked a great deal like part of Metro's finest), were sent through an obstacle course in the other. First assistant director Jon Anderson, doubled more as a drill sergeant than a production leader. The hills of Kleinberg doubled for the Czech frontier, with jeeps, dogs, machine guns, and a panic stricken Charles Heller. When wrap was finally called people were more frightened of being frost bitten than mauled by a guard dog.

Finally, a full-scale invasion was called for, with two dozen armed troops, trucks, jeeps, dogs, and police. Unfortunately, the weather turned, and instead of freezing temperatures, snow and ice, the crew had to adjust to autumn temperatures, fog, rain, mud, and the flu.

The crew was asked to re-enact the Battle of the Somme with buses sliding off into oblivion and stage-built houses melting under a constant deluge of rain. The carpenters had constructed a makeshift bridge over a little stream. The stream turned into a raging river and swept away their work. Somehow, the day's work was filmed, and Chris Plum-

mer didn't catch pneumonia like everyone else.

In mid-February department heads and principal actors flew off to Vienna to complete European exteriors. They left on time, and returned with a bevy of new stories, two days ahead of schedule. **Humphrey Grey** •

**THE AMATEUR.** p.c. Balkan Film Productions Limited (1981) p. Garth Drabinsky, Joel Michaels d. Charles Jarrott asst. to d. Margot Webb p. man. Marilyn Stonehouse loc. man. Michael Brownstone a.d. Jon Andersen (1st), Otta Hanus (2nd), Bob Wertheimer (3rd) sc. superv. Sandra Marley asst. to p. Margaret Livingston p. co-ord. Suzanne Lore sec. Angela Heald p. asst. Tom Pinteric, Rick Watts, Alan Zweig p. compt. Heather McIntosh p. acct. Lynn Lucibello asst. acct. Joanne Jackson d.o.p. John Coquillon cam. op. James Turrell, Thom Ryan (1st asst.), David A. Makin (2nd asst.) stills Shin Sugino sd. mix. Peter Shewchuk boom Herbert Heritage p. design. Trevor Williams art. d. Richard Wilcox set dec. Steve Shewchuk, Rondi Johnson set dress. Dennis Kirkham set labourer Dave Fleisher draughtsman Richard Harrison superv. ed. Richard Halsey ed. Steve Fanfara, Bruce Lange (asst.), Marta Nielson (2nd asst.) make-up Ken Brooke, Patricia Green (asst.) hair James Keeler, Albert Paradis (asst.) ward. design. Suzanne Grace ward. mistress Aleida Macdonald asst. ward. Nadia Ongaro prop. master John Berger asst. props. John C. (Butch) Rose gaf. Chris Holmes best boy Tony Eldridge elec. John Spurrell, Sam Hughes gen. op. Herbert Reischl key grip Ron Gilham best boy Glen Goodchild grip Wayne Goodchild, John Davidson sp. efx. Michael A. Clifford, R. Taylor, Leland (Bud) Fisher Lp. John Savage, Christopher Plummer, Marthe Keller, Arthur Hill, Nicholas Campbell, George Coe, John Marley, Jan Rubes, Miguel Fernandes, Jan Triska, Graham Jarvis, Jacques Godin, Neil Dainard, Chappelle Jaffe, Ed Lauter, Vladimir Valenta, Lynne Griffin, Deborah Kipp, Glenna Jones, Bobby Hannah, Tedde Moore, Lisa Schrage, Susan Young, Guy Sanvido, Fred F. Culik, Paul Hubbard, Fred Williamson, John Corbett, Maruska Stanikova

Quest for fire

# 'Pretty department', dirty work

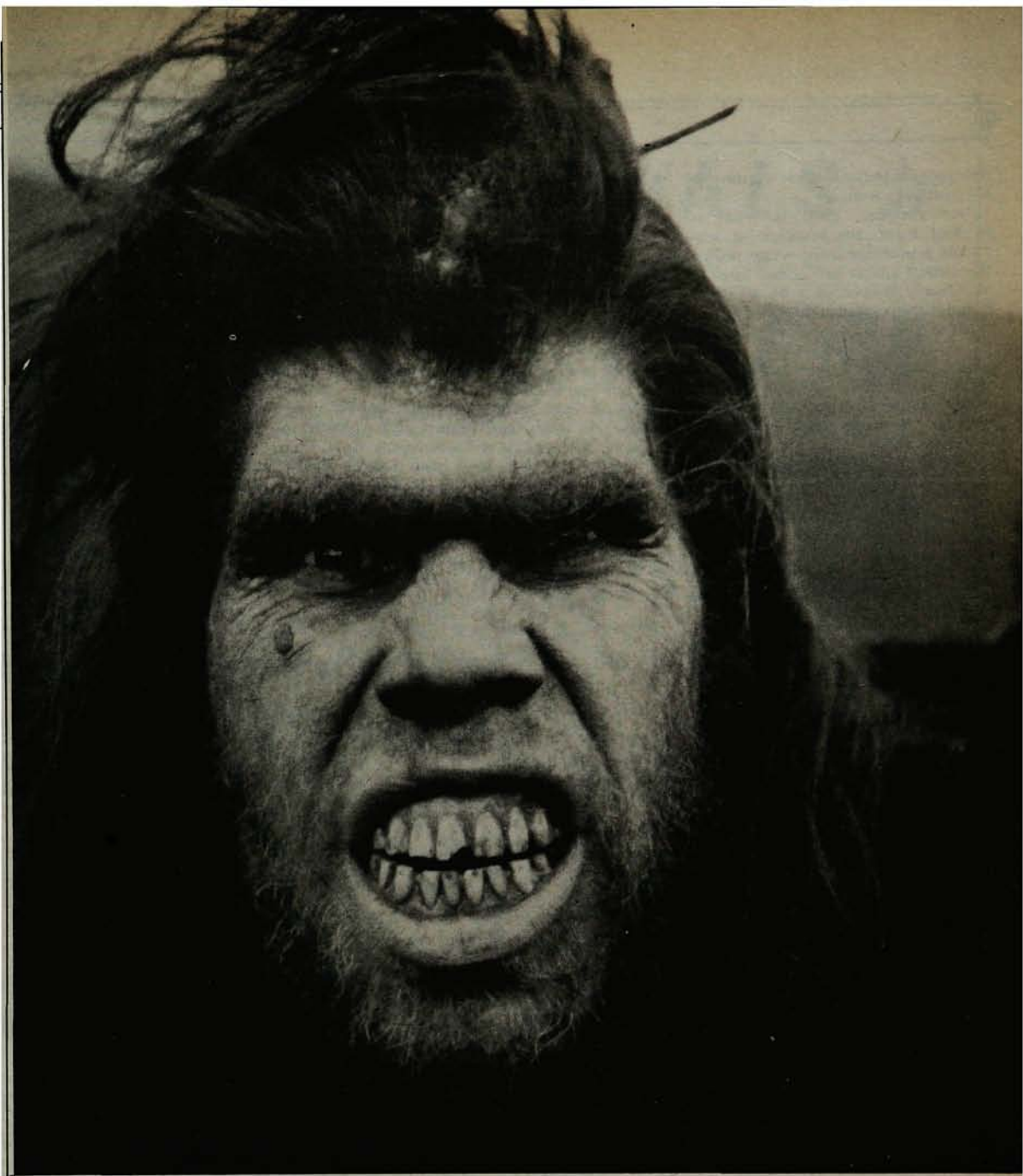
Budgeted at \$12 million, *Quest for Fire* follows everyone's favorite relative, Neanderthal Man, through an odyssey to insure his only way out of the Stone Age — possessing fire.

Attacked by the savage Wagaboo tribe, the Ulam tribe is robbed of its precious fire. Three prime Ulam warriors, Naoh (Everett McGill), Amoukar (Ron Perelman), and Gaw (Nameer El Kadi) are sent out to reclaim the flame. On the way, they rescue the beautiful Ika (Rae Dawn Chong) from the vicious cannibal Kzammms. Ika's grateful tribe, the Ivaka, teach the Ulam trio fire-making from scratch. Ika and Naoh fall in love, proving once and for all that primitive man was capable of more than just a one-night-stand.

The publicists on *Quest* produced an impressive release. We have everyone's credits: director Jean-Jacques Annaud (*Black and White in Colour*), executive producer Michael Cruskoff (*Young Frankenstein*, *Nosferatu*), screenwriter Gerard Brach (*Cul de sac*, *Knife in the Water*, *Tess*). ICC producers John Kemeny and Denis Héroux score a long paragraph. It's also full of the rich texture of human interest that journalists crave: the on-set marriage of one of the lead actors to the unit nurse; exactly where actor Ron Perelman has lived each of his 31 years; the rather confusing ethnic heritage of Rae Dawn Chong (Chinese-Irish-French-Indian-Black, and all-Canadian).

But some of us wanted more. We were getting postcards from the *Quest* crew on location. They covered three continents. We knew that elephants were getting stuck in Scottish peat bogs. We knew that Desmond (*Naked Ape*) Morris wanted to choreograph an Apache dance on the Samburu Game Preserve in the Kenyan wilderness. And we knew that a Lion's Head (Ontario) farmer was transporting the cast to location in a manure spreader. Above all, we knew that the Pretty Department wasn't making anyone pretty. Toronto-based makeup artist Suzanne Benoit told us why.

Benoit joined the production in Scotland, the first leg of the shoot. British makeup artist Sara Monzani (*Alien*, *Midnight Express*, *Bugsy Malone*, and *Edward and Mrs. Simpson*) had been overseeing the manufacture of Neanderthal prosthetics for eight months before the first shoot. Brow ridges, noses, wigs, and teeth were produced for months, crafted from positive and negative molds rivaling the lost-wax sculpting process in complexity. "When I arrived in Scotland, everything was not finished. In a little hut, 40 minutes' drive from Fort William, north of Edinburgh, five of us set to painting the latex masks of the Kzammms. We painted the veins, shaded the eyes, and plugged them with hair — in the ears and nose too — with a punching implement, like an open-ended needle. Very different than ventilating wigs. It was very interesting work." Plugging and painting and plugging continued



Man or beast? A masterful makeup job transforms Ron Perelman into Amoukar

photo: Takashi Seida.

further more when the crew moved to Avemoor.

"That was our first sight of the elephants. The art director from Montreal, Guy Comtois, did the elephant hairpieces — it was a hell of a job to get those elephants dressed." Made up as mastadons, the elephants were also treated to enormous tusks, applied by a very well known European animal handler, Mr. Chipperfield. "They were circus elephants, and it was like a scene from Hannibal — we had to get them over a huge mountain to location." The fateful day that one of these gentle creatures became stuck in the bog, cranes were transported over the mountainous terrain to pull the elephant out. "He was a bit hysterical, poor thing," recalls Benoit.

In the shots where the three Ulam warriors and Rae Dawn are involved with these "mammoths," "mini-people" were used to make the animals look more foreboding. "They used children made up and dressed exactly like the lead characters — that was a wonderful job done by Sara."

The cold damp of a Scottish fall threatened to cause problems with the application and maintenance of the prosthetic pieces. "All three Ulams had their prosthetic foreheads on all the time." (Rae Dawn was allowed to be pretty with her very own Irish-Chinese-

French-Indian-Black-Canadian forehead). "The foam latex from which the pieces were made, would, in the rain, act like a sponge. But the pieces were very well made, well applied and well maintained. The make-up artists who were doing them were extremely conscientious and they always looked just right. The actors were kept under umbrellas always between takes."

After three weeks in Scotland, a chartered plane carried crew and equipment from Glasgow to Nairobi. "But the

plane was about a ton overweight and we had to offload all our fullers' earth, which we needed for the body make-up of the Ivaka tribe." Fullers' earth is a clay substance, taken from the earth and refined to the consistency of talcum powder. "They had the earth in Kenya alright, but it was red. Ika (Rae Dawn) has been shot in our European fullers' earth, which was a grey-green. It was the design — and we had to stick to it for continuity." The make-up team tried everything to make the Kenyan earth do. "We mixed all manner of substances — but there's no way you can turn red into grey-green." So more was ordered from England to the tune of about eight-hundred pounds Sterling. Unidentifiable yet reliable sources report that producer John Kemeny was not pleased.

"While we were in Africa, we did a lot of research. We watched the people and rushed into the bookstores. Leni Riefenstahl's photographic study of mask people shows a similarity to what we did with the Ivaka — we fell in love with her book.

"When I was hired, I went to every library and looked in every book to find illustrations of Neanderthal Man. But anything you find, after all, is really only some artist's impression. You have a skull, and work artistically to create what is covering it. And of course, this



The Stone Age's version of Bo Derek? Damsel in-distress, Ika (Rae Dawn Chong).

photo: Takashi Seida.

concept was in the head of the director, Jean-Jacques Annaud.

"Jean-Jacques' ideal is what we worked from. His concept of what makes primitivity is the wider nostrils, the strong jutting jaw, small forehead and heavy brow area, with small and deeply-set eyes. But at the same time, he wanted a semblance of 'evolvment'." So, within the Wagaboo tribe, variations existed. Some had more finely chisled noses and brows, while some were more exaggerated. Some were a compromise between this "evolvment" and primitivity.

Benoit has surprisingly few nasty things to say about the African heat. She was indignant at the suggestion that a make-up department, miles away from civilization and Mac's Milk stores, would so much as run out of Kleenex. "Sara Monzani thought of everything." And she had no comment on the unconfirmed report (postmarked Monbasa) that the circus elephants panicked in a rainstorm, and stampeded the two-man pup tent where the camera gear was stored, mistaking it for the Big-Top.

But she did indicate that lunch breaks were a bit of a problem. "In Scotland and in Kenya, the Kzams (remember, they're the vicious red cannibals) had masks that covered not only the face but the neck, and went down into their fur costumes. For them to be able to eat, the entire mask had to be taken off, and then carefully dried. At first this took half of lunch hour. But by the time we were really cooking, we could get them back on in minutes."

As the production moved back to Montreal, Michelle Burke took over the Canadian make-up unit, and the team moved into a lab in Montreal, which ICC had arranged. "We took over this space, and set up an entire laboratory. With ovens, scales, tables and barber chairs for our life castings, we started from scratch and created the entire laboratory from its smallest detail up. Our 'homme à tout faire' was also the production company's 'homme à tout faire'. So while he was running around for the production coordinator, we were trying to get him to also run to Pascal's and pick up our cement. There was much demand made on this poor man's time.

"From plastic bowls to egg-beaters - every chemical had to be ordered. This was a trial for a make-up artist. One would have to get on the phone and ring up a chemical company and say 'Uh, we're doing this big film, so we'd like to open an account with you.' Then the guy on the other end says, 'Well, send us three letters of reference and your credit

## QUEST FOR FIRE

p.c. Cinetrail Inc. p. John Kemeny, Denis Héroux, Claude Léger co-p. Jacques Dorfmann, Vera Belmont exec. p. Michael Gruskoff assoc. p. Mickey Moore p. man. Stephan Reichel p. coord. Barbara Shrier compt. Leslie Kemeny p. acct. Micheline Bonin asst. to p. Anne Burke unit man. Peter Bray p. selc. Angela Heald sc. Gerard Brach, from the story by Rosny-Aisne d. Jean-Jacques Annaud 1st ass't d. Mathew Vibert d.o.p. Claude Agostini light John Berrie 1st cam. Al Smith 1st cam. grip Carlo Campana 2nd cam. Keith Wood focus puller George Bottos wnd cam. loader Christophe Bonnière 2nd cam. grip André Ouellette gaf. Maris Jansen elect. Frieder Hochheim sd. mix. Claude Hazanavicius boom Denis Dupont art. d. Guy Comtois props Enrico Campana, Gareth Wilson ward. master John Hay ward. mistress Renée April ward. asst. Blanche Boileau make-up Lyne Desmarais, Michele Burke, Joan Isaacson, Suzanne Benoit, Marie-Josée Lafontaine sp. efx. asst. Neil Truffonovitch const. man. Claude Simard carpenter Jos Girard, Jean-Guy Proulx, Normand Richer, Richard Boucher cast. Andrée Champagne unit pub. Quinn Donoghue/David Novek Associates stills Takashi Seida ed. Ian McBride ed. asst. Sidonie Kerr, Glenn Berman stunt coord. Jerome Tiberghien l.p. Evrett McGill, Ron Perlman, Nameer el Kadi, Rae Dawn Chong.

rating.' You want to say, 'Listen, son, I'm not a PM, I'm a make-up artist, and I need these chemicals!'"

With Benoit, Stephan Dupuis, Michelle Burke and Joan Isaacson succeeded in getting their chemicals. Joined by dental technician and make-up artist John Caglione from New York, they began the intricate molding and sculpting processes to create the prostheses for the last weeks of shooting in Ontario's Bruce Peninsula.

Benoit was thrilled with the opportunity to work with Dupuis and Caglione, who are first and foremost artist-sculptors, bringing their knowledge of anatomy and technique into the casting and molding assembly-line. "John Caglione has worked in this field since he

was about 15 years old." As assistant to the legendary Dick Smith (*Exorcist*, *Altered States*), Caglione worked on *Scanners* in Montreal with Smith, and was also involved in *Altered States*. Caglione also brought with him Smith's detailed instructions for making foam latex, which reads like a laboratory workbook.

Make-up departments are usually outnumbered by the members of any other single department on a feature. But on *Quest*, they were suddenly a committee, a force to be dealt with and a force left to deal with itself.

"The make-up artist is essentially an 'individualist'... one is an artist in one's own right, with one's own techniques. Suddenly all of us, working toward the

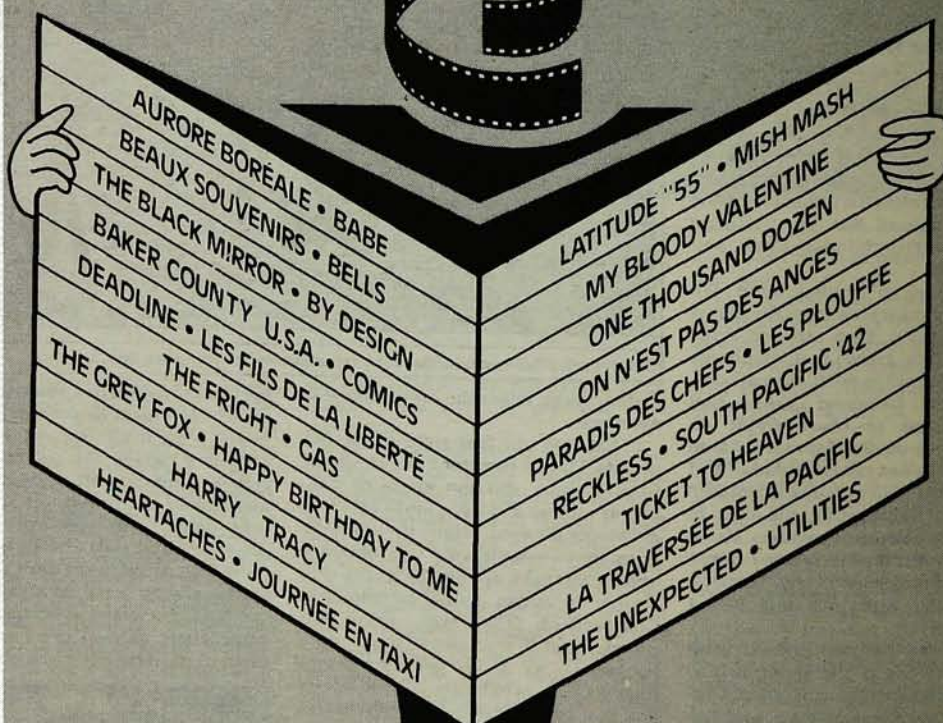
same end result, had to work in the same way, doing the same things. It took a little getting used to. But we were a very compatible group and things ran quite smoothly."

That individuality was further squashed by the laboratory attire-boiler suits (coveralls). No Gucci stripes. No little swans on the ass-pocket, no alligators over the left breast. "Stephane and I formed a club of two, the Twilight Zoners. On my suit he printed "... little did you know..." with an arrow pointing to my backside, where, underneath "the Twilight Zone" was printed the first four notes of the theme song (to that series). That was my protest - my boiler suit shall not be like everyone else's." **Suzanna Plowright** ●

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