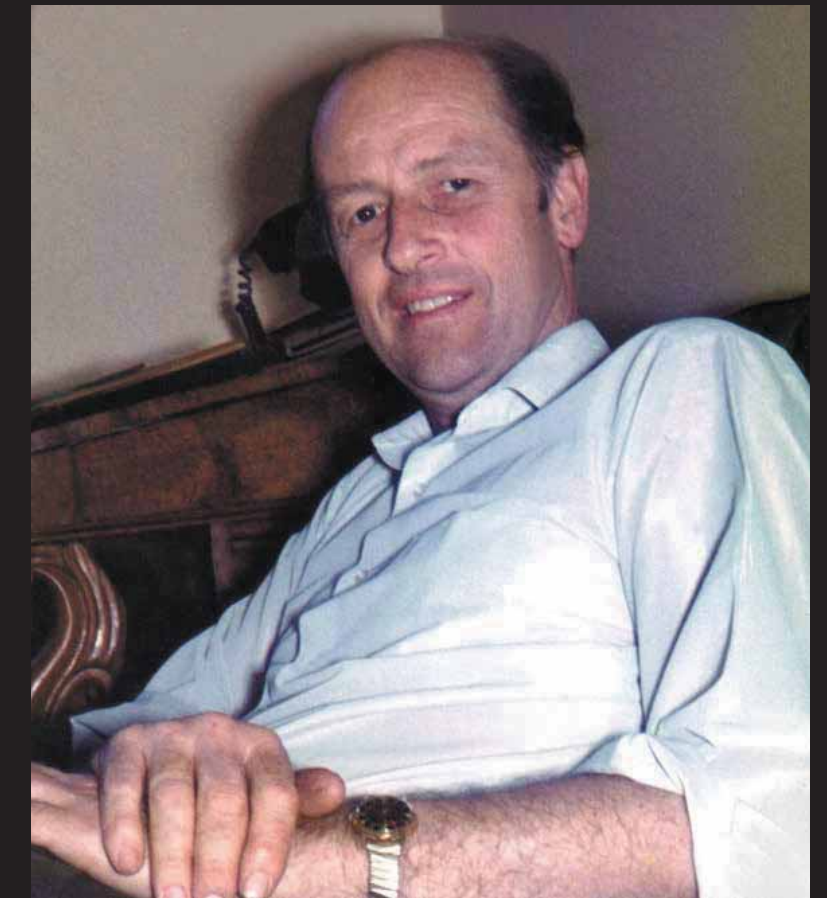


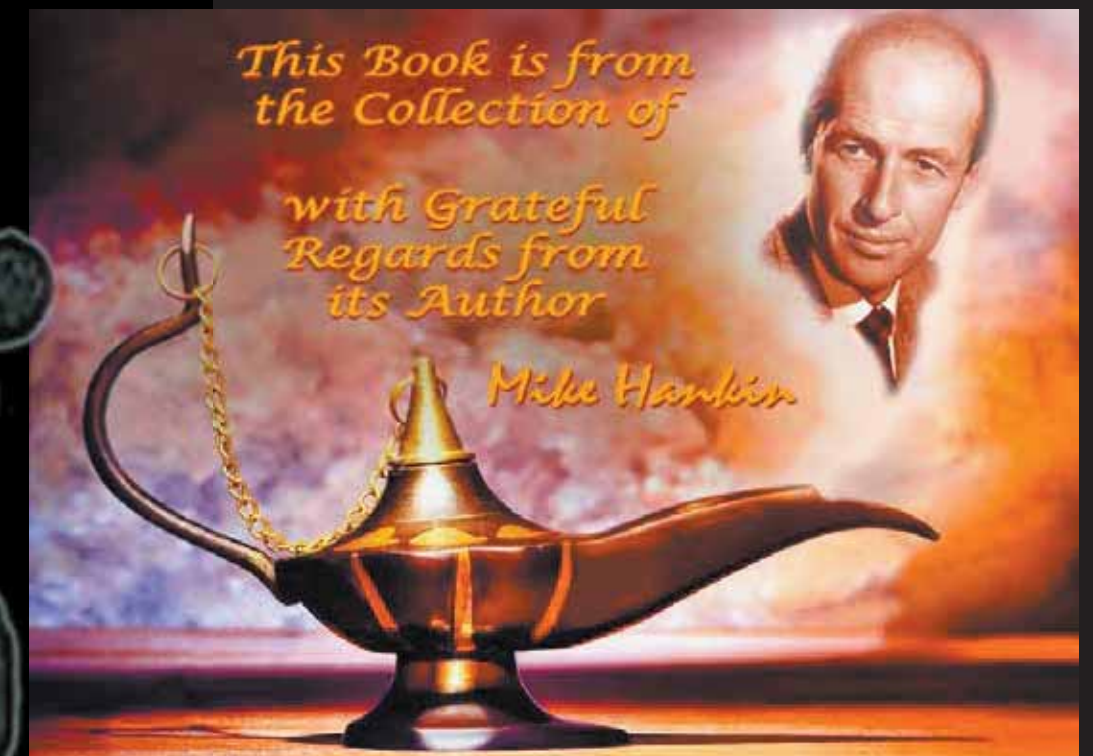


RAY HARRYHAUSEN Master of the Majicks

by Mike Hankin



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**126 Page
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Spring, 2021



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Ray Harryhausen
Master of the Majicks



Volume 1: Beginnings and Endings

Early Experiments, The Influence of Willis O'Brien and King Kong, George Pal's Puppetoons®, The War Years, The Fairy Tales, The Retirement Years, The Oscar,® The Star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame

Mike Hankin

Foreword by
Tom Hanks
Preface by
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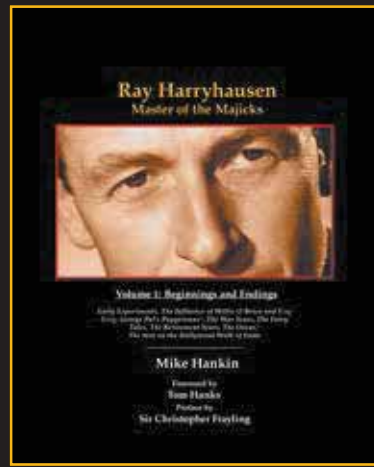
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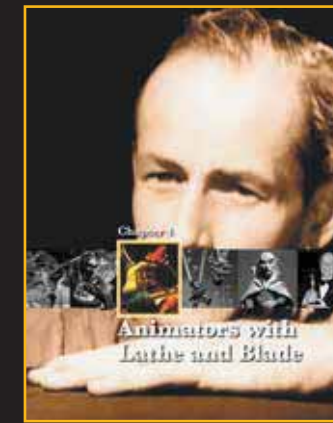
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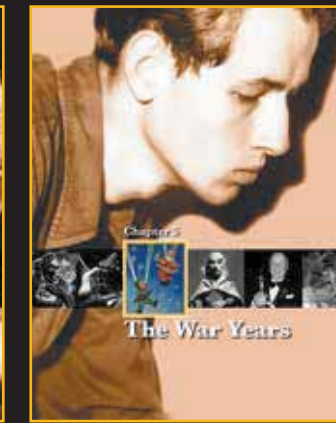
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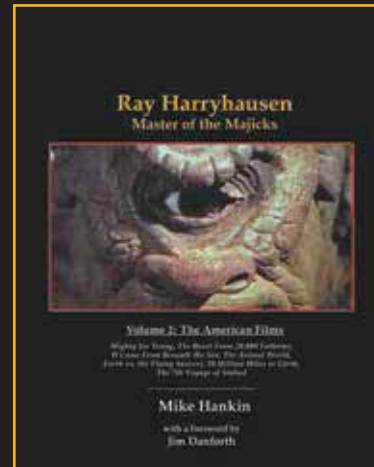


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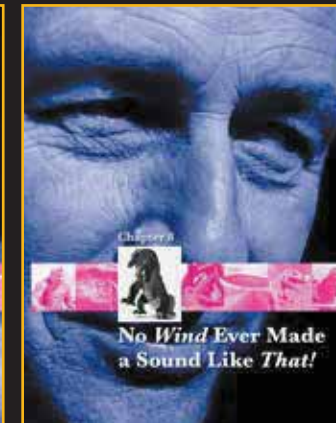
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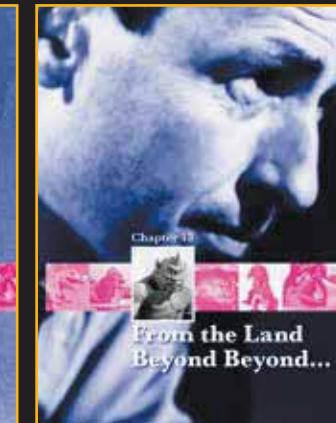
Earth vs. the Flying Saucers (1956)



The Animal World (1956)

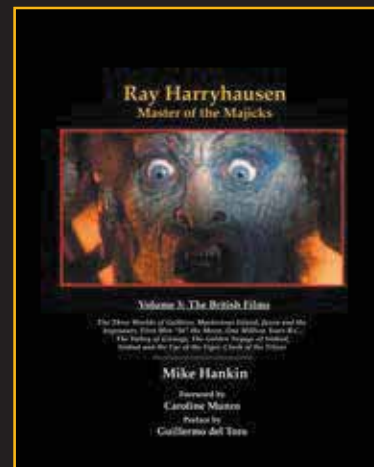


20 Million Miles to Earth (1957)

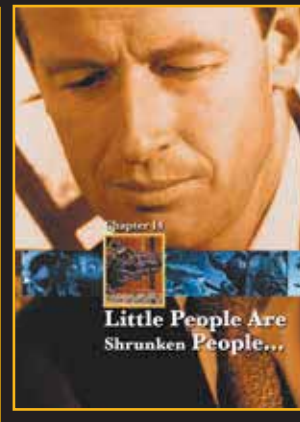


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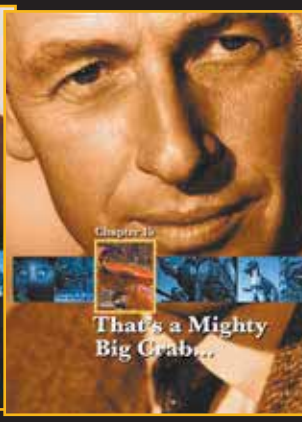
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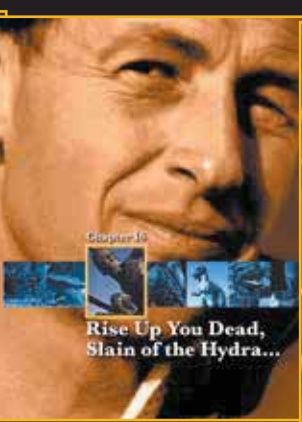
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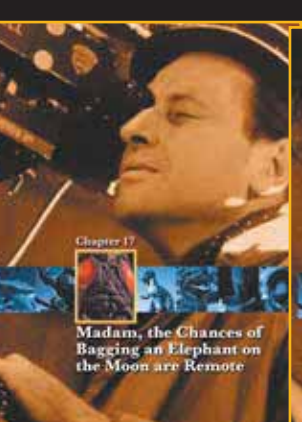
The 3 Worlds of Gulliver (1960)



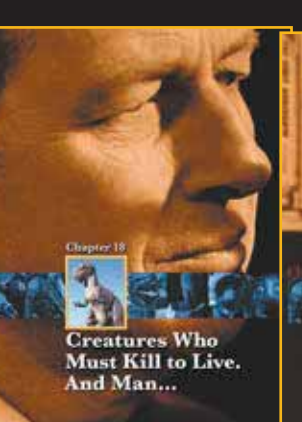
Mysterious Island (1961)



Jason and the Argonauts (1963)



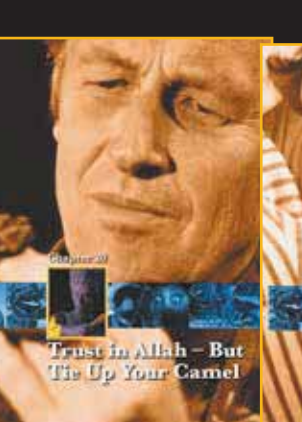
First Men "In" the Moon (1964)



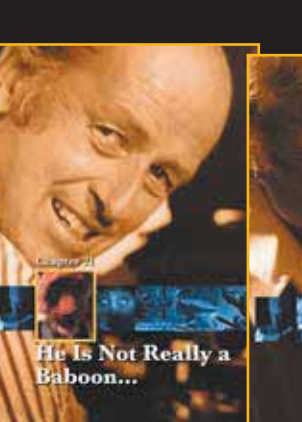
One Million Years B.C. (1966)



The Valley of Gwangi (1969)



The Golden Voyage of Sinbad (1974)



Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger (1977)



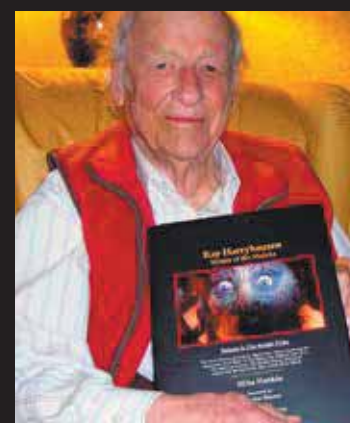
Clash of the Titans (1981)

For the films covered, each volume contains:

- Cast & Credits;
- Filmographies;
- Appendices on Collectibles, Poster Artists, Ray's Unfilmed Projects, The Visual Effects Oscars®, Double-Bills, and much more;
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Designing the Valley of Gwangi chapter in Majicks Vol. 3

Ray Harryhausen Master of the Majicks

Volume 1
2nd Edition
New Material and Corrections

The following section includes new and corrected text and photographic material for Volume 1.

- **Text:** Only new or corrected information is included, referencing whenever possible the interior page number. Minor corrections of typos and formatting of text within the main body of the book are not included here.
- **Photographic material:** New photos have been added throughout the interior pages of the book. Those images are not repeated here. Rather, the photos included here are additional photos that could not be fit within the layouts of the main body of the book.



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Ray Harryhausen Master of the Majicks

Volume 1
Beginnings and Endings

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Chapter 2



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I Used My Mother's Fur Coat...

The Allosaurus and Man Figure

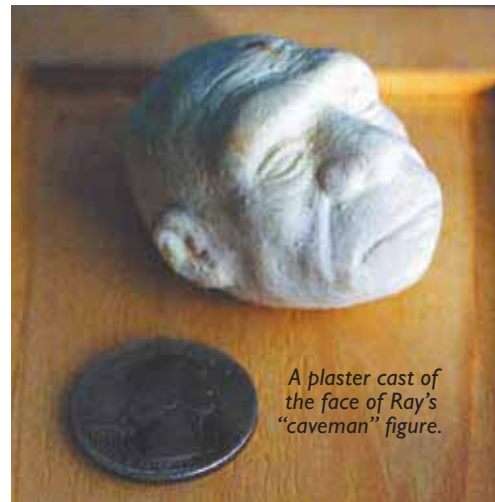
For his first color test, Ray experimented with the elements of what later became the basis of his Dynamation process. First, Ray filmed live action of a friend scrambling up a rocky hill, then combined it with a miniature jungle via split screen. This image was then rear projected one frame at a time onto a translucent screen while Ray animated an Allosaurus figure in front of it (a foreground miniature fern unfortunately emphasizes the unsteadiness of the rear projected image).

The Allosaurus enters from the right with only the top half of its body visible. On the left, a man on a rocky incline is struggling to get away as the rock beneath him crumbles. The man slides down the rock and moves out of frame as the Allosaurus lunges at him. The Allosaurus reaches down and picks up a substituted animated man by the waist, holding him in its claws as it bites his head. The creature devours him with two quick gulps, swallowing deeply, and then casually wipes the side of its mouth.



The Allosaurus Feeding

Using a full miniature jungle set, Ray animated the Allosaurus feeding on a fallen (but still alive) Eryops, a creature that resembles a fat crocodile. A red, gaping hole can be seen in the defeated animal's side. The Allosaurus leans down and takes a few bites, swallowing and chewing. As though aware that it is being watched, the Allosaurus glances towards camera, still chewing. It starts to bend down to continue feeding but bolts upright and stares at the camera, roars, and then returns to eating its victim. Ray would return to this rather gruesome action of the beaten opponent literally being eaten alive in many later films.



A plaster cast of the face of Ray's "caveman" figure.

Right, top: Ray's Allosaurus from the 1940s.

Right, middle and bottom: About 20 years later, a newer Allosaurus invades the camp of the Shell people in Hammer's **One Million Years B.C.**

Author Mark F. Berry put it best when he wrote in his book **The Dinosaur Filmography**: "The Allosaurus raid is not just the high point of the film, it is one of the high points in the history of stop-motion. The set-up, pacing, editing, and choreography of the scene, and of course the masterfully integrated animation, are all essentially flawless. It reveals Harryhausen at the very pinnacle of his powers."

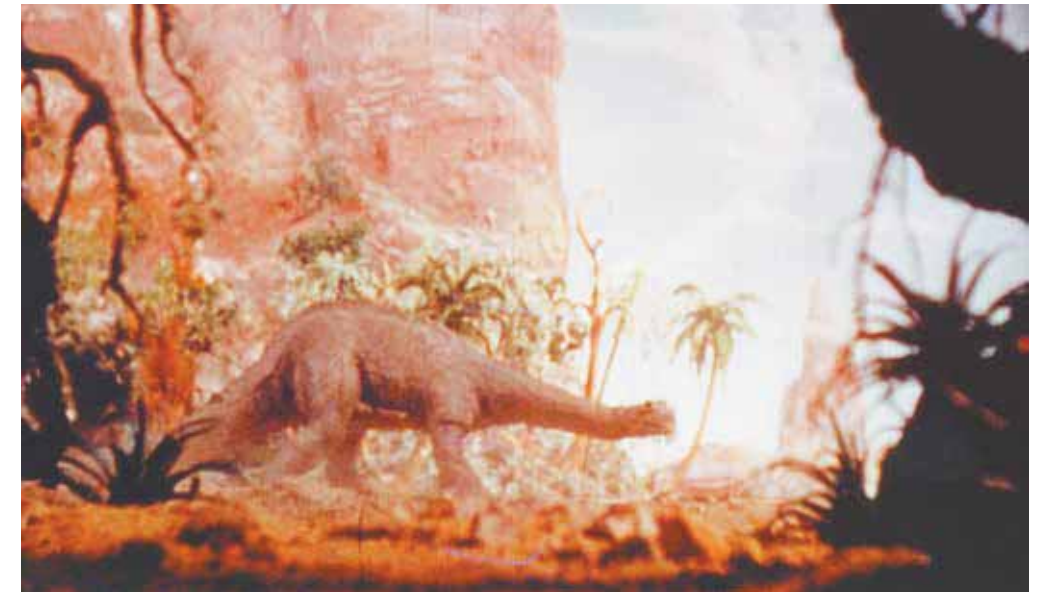
The middle photo shows the setup with a sturdy cantilevered set piece extending into the scene in front of the rear-projected live action. The bottom photo is a rare color version of a famous publicity still most commonly seen in black and white.



The Second Brontosaurus Model Test

Although not strictly part of the *Evolution* project, this color footage does use the second, smaller Brontosaurus model Ray built for the latter film. The armature of the Brontosaurus remains in Ray's collection.

The footage begins with a panoramic view of a lake and mountains with beams of sunlight illuminating part of the rock face. The land to the right is a miniature and the mountains are a painted backdrop. The Brontosaurus slowly wades out of the water to the shore on the right. The foreground area of real water was added by a matte, although the water slightly "burns through" the image of the Brontosaurus. There is an added water ripple effect (strands of cotton wool animated alongside the model). Animated wire-supported birds flit across the sky. This sequence can be seen in a more complete version in the documentary *Aliens, Dragons, Monsters and Me*, but it was printed in reverse and in black and white. Although slightly shorter, the version in *The Harryhausen Chronicles* is correctly printed and in color.



Evolution of the World

This was by far Ray's most ambitious undertaking in his experimental period and was an attempt to show the beginnings of life on Earth through animation. The filming of *Evolution* was spread over a period of one-and-a-half years (from 1939 into 1940) and proved invaluable because it added to Ray's experience and later served as a more fully-realized showcase of his animation for prospective employers. The surviving color footage is at times spectacular, subtle, imaginative, exciting and, above all, highly enjoyable. The fully realized sequences contain a number of tracking shots and are also quite violent when compared with later work, with the use of blood much in evidence.

Apart from a few conceptual drawings, *Evolution* was never set down on paper in any form. Rather, Ray visualized the film entirely in his mind. He began by animating the prehistoric animal sections because for him they were not only more enjoyable but also the most intriguing. He then planned to backtrack and show the undersea amoebas at the very beginning of life on earth.

The footage begins with a brief cut of a highly-detailed, but unoccupied, jungle set. In the following shot, a bird flits by, and then the Brontosaurus walks into the shot along a raised area of shoreline that has a single palm on its far edge. The land to the right is a miniature with a painted backdrop (a wire supported bird flies behind the mountain at one point). Real water is matted into the right-hand corner of the frame. The mountain appears to be reflected in the water, but Ray has admitted that this was just a lucky accident of the live action filming at Lake Sherwood. The dinosaur's tail swishes and knocks a rock into the water as another bird flies past. The Brontosaurus looks out across the lake and then looks down at the water.

The next sequence begins with a tracking shot of the Brontosaurus walking from right to left across a jungle setting before cutting to the creature walking up a slight incline, a mixture of detailed miniature set, foreground glass painting and painted background. A wire-supported animated bird flies away to the left just in front of the model. The Brontosaurus comes to a stop as another bird flies past its head, then looks back before resuming its journey.

In a wide-angle view, the Brontosaurus walks slowly into another detailed set. Miniature trees and vegetation are complemented by a background painting of high, cloud-covered peaks and a foreground glass painting of a tree in silhouette. The Brontosaurus begins to feed from the ground and



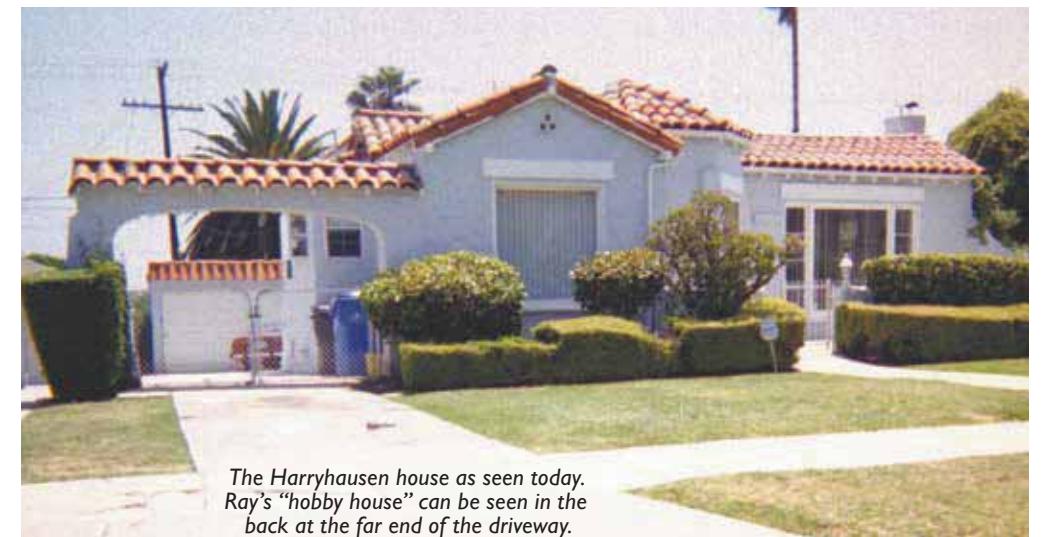
the tree tops. As it rears up on its hind legs to reach higher vegetation, an Allosaurus leaps into the shot from the left and over the top of the camera, its tail swishing back and forth. The inspiration for this shot, Ray says, came from a certain musical phrase in *The Firebird Suite* by Igor Stravinsky. The Brontosaurus in the distance turns its head and drops back onto all fours, backing away slightly.

The Allosaurus advances threateningly towards its prey, stooping low and roaring, its tail moving from side to side. The Brontosaurus, facing front, roars and turns to face the Allosaurus (still out of shot) while its neck stretches up and down as it roars and backs away.

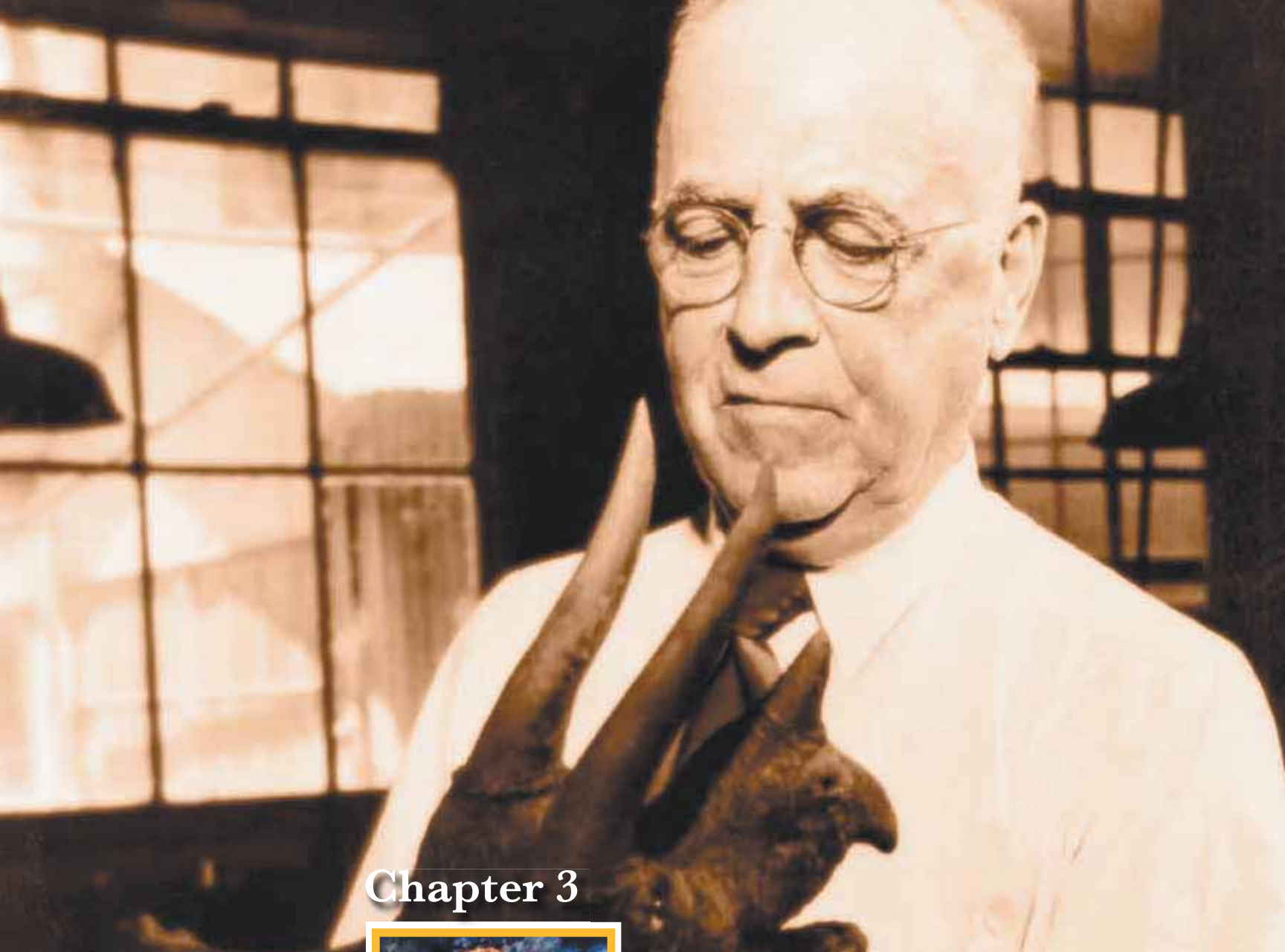
In an entirely new sequence, there is a full-length shot of a Triceratops as the Allosaurus leaps on its back. The Triceratops walks along in a tracking shot as its attacker first bites deep into its neck, drawing blood, and then chomps into its bony, ar-

mored frill. Behind is a highly-detailed jungle with miniature palms in the foreground. The Allosaurus, still on the walking Triceratops' back, turns its attention to one of the vegetarian's horns. The Triceratops turns away from the camera and then twists to one side, throwing off the Allosaurus. In the next cut, the Allosaurus falls from the right of the frame onto its side, its tail swishing violently (the Allosaurus' actions are obviously inspired by the felled *Kong* Tyrannosaurus). The creature regains its footing and looks back at its prey, its lip curling as it roars, then leaps forward.

The Triceratops stands to the right, head held low, pointing its horns toward the Allosaurus. The attacker comes into the shot from the left while the Triceratops backs away. As the animals face each other once again, the Triceratops moves forward and the Allosaurus retreats. The Triceratops then runs forward and the Allosaurus takes evasive



The Harryhausen house as seen today. Ray's "hobby house" can be seen in the back at the far end of the driveway.



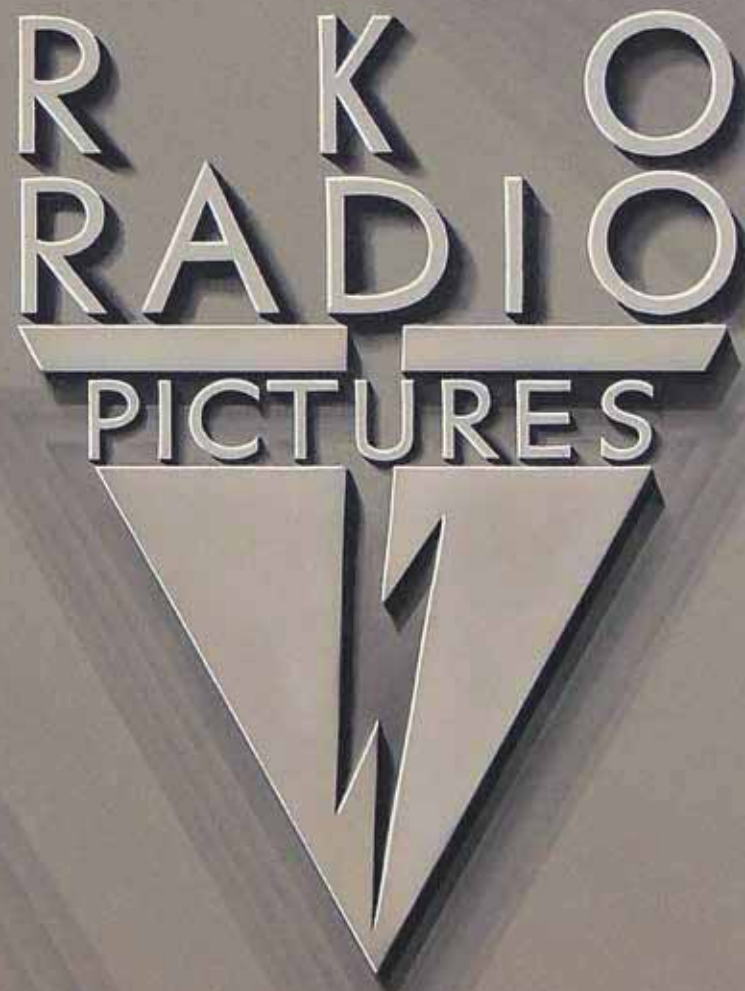
Chapter 3



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He Was a *King* in
His World



Above: The original hand-painted logo art for RKO Pictures rendered in watercolor, airbrush, and gouache in black, white, and graytones on a 19" x 24" 4-ply illustration board. This camera logo art was shot for every black and white RKO film from the 1930s through the 1950s to register its trademark.

Below: The effects crew prepares to film the famous RKO Globe-and-Tower logo. Second from left is Linwood Dunn who, during his early career, created optical effects for *Citizen Kane* and many other RKO films.

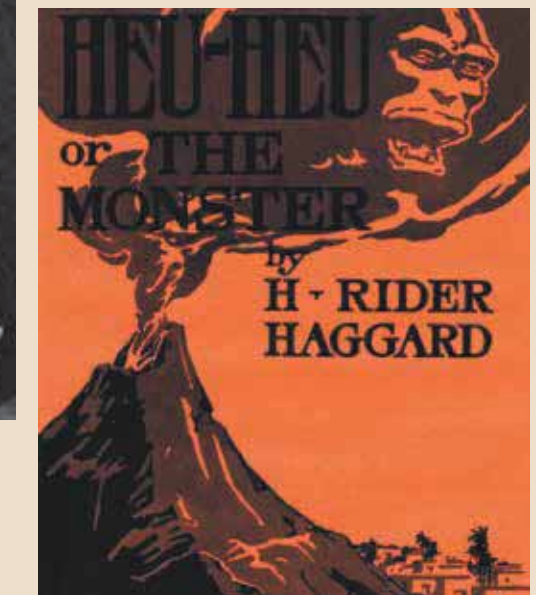
Bottom: Two views of RKO Studios in 1933.



L-R: Merian C. Cooper, John Hay "Jock" Whitney, and David O. Selznick. Whitney was U.S. Ambassador to the United Kingdom, publisher of *The New York Herald Tribune*, philanthropist, and through his venture capital firm J.H. Whitney & Company, an investor in several Broadway shows and the Technicolor corporation. In 1933 Cooper and Whitney co-founded Pioneer Pictures, which included a distribution deal with RKO. Whitney also invested \$870,000 in David O. Selznick's production company and served as Chairman of the Board. He put up half the money to option the film rights to Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind*. He then invested in the production of that film, as well as in *Rebecca* (1940).



Armed with a rough story outline and a commissioned illustration of a huge ape attacking a modern-day explorer, painted in oil by Willis O'Brien and artist Byron Crabbe, Cooper approached David O. Selznick, executive vice-president in charge of production (and future producer of *Gone With the Wind*). Selznick showed little interest in the idea but trusted Cooper's instinct completely. Cooper said, "I can tell you, David played one vital part. He was the only human being who backed me 100%. He didn't look at the rushes; he didn't know what the hell I was doing. All he knew was that Monty (director Ernest Schoedsack) and I had only done three pictures and all of them had been big hits — *Grass* (1925), *Chang* (1927) and *The Four Feathers* (1929). He skimmed off the budgets of other pictures to keep us going."¹⁶ Selznick instructed Cooper to approach the RKO executives in New York for approval. Before they committed themselves, they asked that he produce a test reel. The reel was completed; although it was not accepted unanimously, full production on *King Kong* was given the go-ahead.



Above: *Heu-Heu, or The Monster* (1924) by H. Rider Haggard, a precedent and perhaps inspiration for some of the story elements in *King Kong*. In Haggard's short novel, Allan Quatermain finds a lost island city whose inhabitants regularly sacrifice nubile young women to the giant ape-god, Heu-Heu. In addition, at the end it is revealed that the "ape" is the tribe's High Priest in a costume. In a climactic cataclysm, the island is sinking. The High Priest, in his ape suit, climbs to the summit to try and save himself, finally disappearing beneath the waves— action and imagery very similar to the finale of *Son of Kong*.

Left: Merian C. Cooper shows pre-production art to David O. Selznick. In a 1965 letter, Cooper wrote, "It [the Empire State Building concept] was, in fact, the first complete scene I visualized during the creative birth of *Kong* back in 1929. It was the 'Empire State' sketch that finally sold the RKO 'hold-outs' on the idea of making the picture."

Ironically, in 1932, due to concerns of possible copyright infringement of the film version of Poe's *Murders in the Rue Morgue* (which included an ape carrying a girl across the rooftops of Paris), Cooper suggested "we give up the New York sequence, and end the the story on the island. This will apparently obviate all legal difficulties. We will not have as good a picture, but we will have a good picture, I believe." Ultimately it was decided that there was no risk of copyright infringement.



L-R: Merian Cooper, Willis O'Brien, Fay Wray, and Ernest Schoedsack.



Three cameras shot different angles of the natives lined up atop the roof of an office building on the studio lot (above). These filmed elements were later matted onto the miniature of the Great Wall.



Located on the back lot of the RKO-Pathé Studio in Culver City, the "Temple of Jerusalem" set from Cecil B. DeMille's *King of Kings* (1927), originally built at a cost of \$100,000, was redressed as the Great Wall for a mere \$14,000.



The Great Wall was later burned to the ground as a stand-in for Atlanta's train station and ammunition dumps in *Gone With the Wind* (1939).

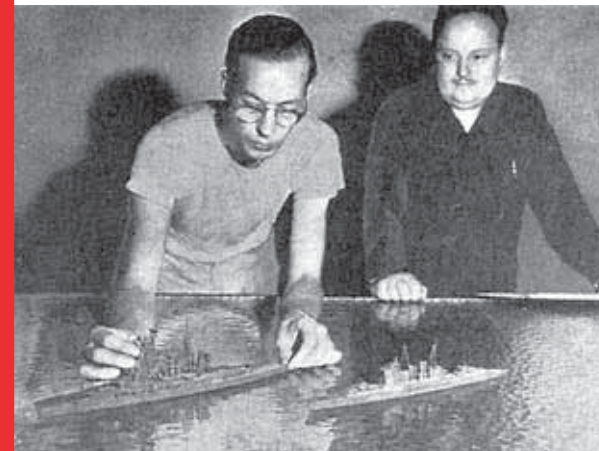


Erwin Bronner with a Jasper figure for **Hotlips Jasper** (1945). Bronner was at the Pal studio the same time as Ray.

Army/Navy Films

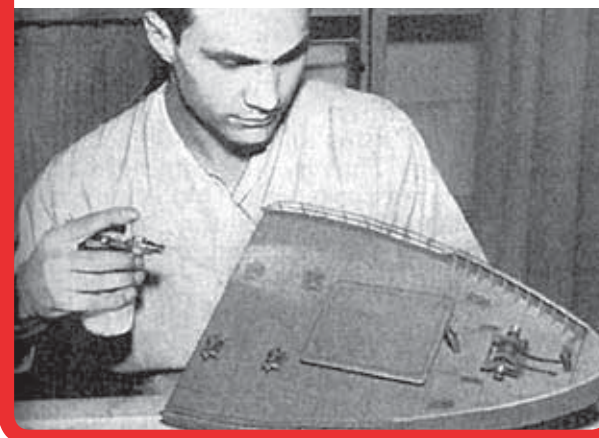


Pal's studio produced several films for the Army/Navy film program. George and Zsoka Pal's citizenship, with Walter Lantz as a sponsor, was rushed through in 1943 because some of the Army/Navy films were of a top secret nature.



Above: John Abbot (left) and Paul Sprunk working on Army/Navy films in 1943.

Below: Nick Eckhardt with a miniature ship model for one of the Army/Navy films.



Each **Puppetoon**® required roughly 12,000 separate animation moves using from 3,000 to 9,000 individually carved puppets at a cost of approximately \$25,000 for each seven-minute film (about \$300,000 today). With the animators forever facing a deadline, speed and total commitment were the order of the day. They tried to complete at least one scene every two days which often meant working long hours. Typically, Ray threw himself totally into his work and remembers those non-union times only too well: after animating one particularly complex set-up for an extended period, he became faint, tripped over a camera tripod (ruining a setup), and collapsed from exhaustion. On the other hand, he found a soul-mate in the paint department, Lillian Seaquist, who was also completely dedicated to her profession. They became good friends and even dated for a short time, but their individual ambitions meant that while she was studying photography Ray was continuing his experiments at home, so the relationship didn't prosper.

One incident had a marked influence on Ray's mindset in the years to come, as he recalls: "One day Jimmy Stone was loading the camera when the telephone rang. Without thinking he placed the magazine [in its normal place] on top of the camera while he went to answer the phone and then forgot that the camera hadn't been loaded. Because Jimmy would often set the camera in position and then go off and do something else, I would trip the shutter with a foot pedal myself, once for each of the filters. I carried on animating all day without any film in the camera. The mistake wasn't realized until the end of the day, so a whole day's effort was wasted."^{18]}



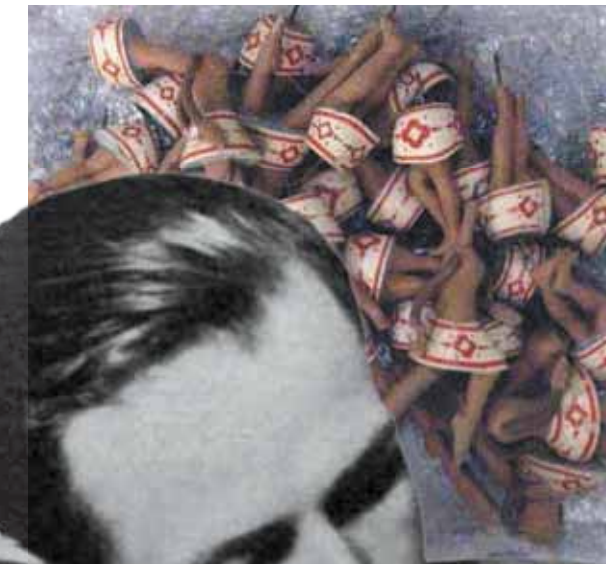
Dorothy Lamour wore a sarong in 14 films, including the Bob Hope/Bing Crosby "road" movies. She was an appropriate inspiration for the character "Sarong-Sarong" in **Hoola Hoola**.

HOOOLA BOOLA

GAYE KNIGHTIES



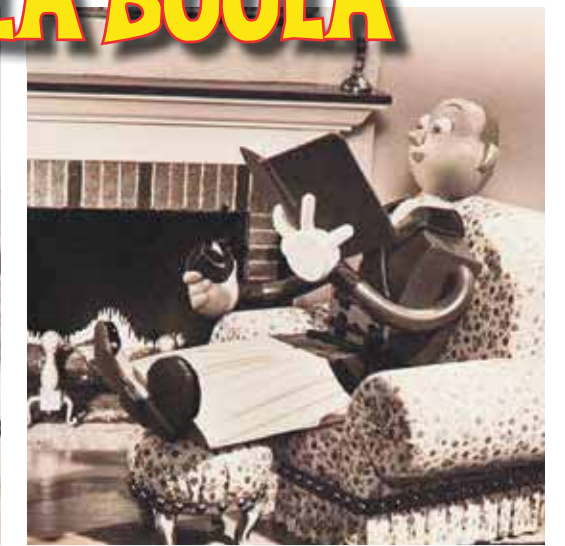
Studio Manager George Jordan (left) and animator Bob Larson with **Gaye Knighties** miniatures in 1941.



Middle left: A container of "leg" units as seen in the 2011 Profiles in History auction.

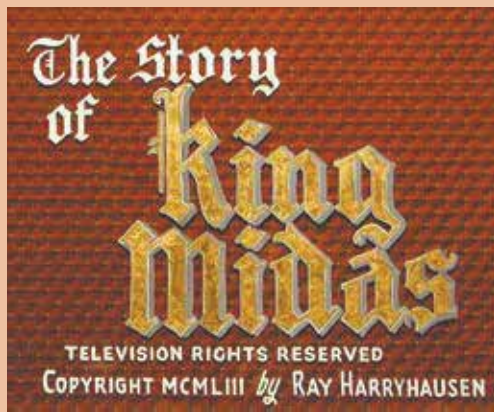


Left: Ray poses with a series of hands from **Hoola Hoola**.



Below: In the Paramount commissary, George Pal shows a Sarong-Sarong puppet to actress Martha O'Driscoll. The caption for this photo reads: "More than 7,000 miniature, stringless manikins were used for the eight minute film." O'Driscoll is probably best known in fan circles for having been menaced by **Dracula**, **Frankenstein** and the **Wolf Man** in Universal's **House of Dracula** (1945).





The Story of King Midas

This last original completed tale, which began life as *The Golden Touch*, has a sumptuous look but is somehow less satisfying artistically than either *Red Riding Hood* or *Hansel and Gretel*. Strangely, given Ray's enormous interest in Greek mythology, he changed the setting from ancient Greece to a purely-imaginary medieval European kingdom, and the close confines of a palace and garden offered little opportunity to add the extra touches (flying birds, running water and so on) that visually expanded the earlier tales. Even so, the elaborate camera moves and smooth change of items touched by Midas to gold are all done with great finesse, and the smoothness of the puppet movement is exceptional (even Midas' long robes do not obscure the walking motion underneath).

The film fades in to a high shot of King Midas' throne room. The throne is on a raised platform with steps all around, backed with red curtains and flanked by two marble columns. The camera cranes down to reveal Midas resting his head on his right hand while restlessly drumming the fingers of his other hand on the arm of the throne. It was important for Ray to capture the miserly character of Midas. The camera moving in slowly not only makes for an interesting opening, but it also gives the viewer time to assess the Midas persona. Ray's father built a geared camera crane to allow smooth movement from wide shot to closeup, long before the advent of zoom lenses. This shot alone took two days to film.

Following a beautifully flowing scene in which Midas descends a spiral staircase, he enters a dungeon vault containing a wooden table with gold coins piled high and bags of gold lying all around the floor. Ray keeps the camera constantly on the move, and his characterization of Midas counting his money leaves little doubt about his obsession. One of the coins falls from the top of the pile, rolls along the tabletop, then falls to the floor, turning a few times before stopping, and the camera follows its progress all the way. Focusing on the coin in the middle of the floor, smoke rises and forms the shape of a man— a splendid entrance for the demonic-looking "Stranger." Similar to the materialization of the *Hansel and Gretel* gingerbread house, this was achieved by filming smoke through a cutout mask in the shape of the Stranger puppet. The puppet itself then dissolves into the set.^[17]

The character of "The Stranger" with his green skin and pointed ears was based partly on Conrad Veidt's marvelously evil Jaffa in Alexander Korda's 1940 version of *The Thief of Bagdad* (see inset photo at right). However, the figure's appearance disguises his true benevolent nature. He was first envisioned as a sorcerer, or at least mystical or genie-like, which he certainly is, but for dramatic purposes he had to be quite distinct from the other two characters who have a lighter "cartoon" look.



Photo by Jim Manning



"The Stranger" bestows the "gift" of turning any object Midas touches to gold and then backs toward the door, his cloak pulled across his body, and disappears (the same effect as when he arrived, except the smoke goes back into the coin). Over and above the pivotal plot point, this moment is also the best episode in the film. Ray conveys greed, distrust, astonishment and other emotions while keeping the action constantly moving.

As the next scene begins, Midas awakes at his dining table and a slight glitter effect (superimposed) appears to enter his body. To make sure that the gift of the golden touch wasn't a dream, he reaches out and touches the top of his chair. There is a slight puff of smoke and the chair gradually turns to gold, spreading quickly from the place where Midas touched it.

It would have been easy to simply substitute each object for a gold version when necessary, but the illusion was all important. Spreading the "gold" across each object (applying gold paint a frame at a time) suggests that a strange power from Midas' fingers changes the very structure of the object. If the chairs, vases and everything else had turned to gold in an instant, the effect would have been lessened; it would be too easy for the viewer to guess the trick.

Once his power is established, Midas touches various objects in a series of quick closeups: a vase, a torch holder, a large vase and another chair at the dining table. Midas finally touches his robes which also turn to gold. He looks at the robes, rocking from side to side with joy. The sequence is exciting and fast-paced, allowing Midas little time to reflect on the downside of his gift.

The story of Midas is of course a morality tale; the gift inevitably becomes a curse when the king first discovers that he is unable to eat and then finds that his touch turns his beloved daughter, Marigold, into a gold statue (this puppet had first seen service as Red Riding Hood and then Gretel). For this one shot, Ray had to make another casting of the Marigold puppet painted gold.

Midas is saved from his fate when "The Stranger" returns and offers the king an opportunity to mend his ways and restore his daughter to life. Every object "The Stranger" picks up, while delivering his warning speech to Midas, reverts to its original state. Completely opposite to the theatrical display of Midas, the changes are made very simply. "The Stranger" tells Midas how to break the spell by drawing a pitcher of water from the river and sprinkling it over every object he had changed to gold; he then disappears.

Restored to life, Marigold opens her eyes, looks at her father, smiles and hugs him. He lifts her off the ground and kisses her. Even though it is a very brief shot, when Midas lifts Marigold off the floor, his actions convey that she has weight. Touches like this one are easy to overlook but remain vital for total believability. *Fade out...*

The Story of King Midas is probably the most photographically accomplished of the whole series, but there was every indication that Ray's next planned tale would have gone farther than any of the others.



Ray Harryhausen Master of the Majicks

Volume 2
2nd Edition
New Material and Corrections

The following section includes new and corrected text and photographic material for Volume 2.

- **Text:** Only new or corrected information is included, referencing whenever possible the interior page number. Minor corrections of typos and formatting of text within the main body of the book are not included here.
- **Photographic material:** New photos have been added throughout the interior pages of the book. Those images are not repeated here. Rather, the photos included here are additional photos that could not be fit within the layouts of the main body of the book.



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Ray Harryhausen Master of the Majicks

Volume 2 – The American Films

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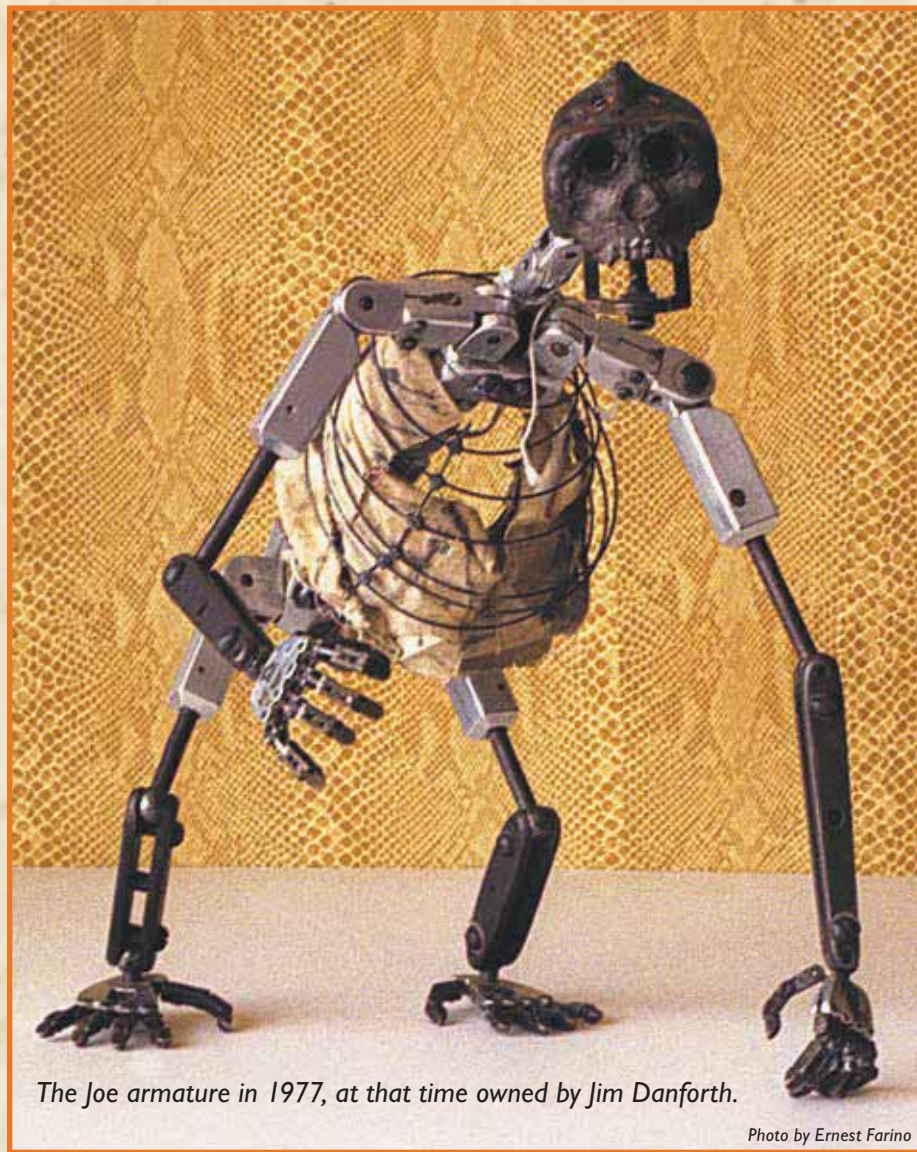
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The Joe armature in 1977, at that time owned by Jim Danforth.

Photo by Ernest Farino

The Mighty Joe Young Model

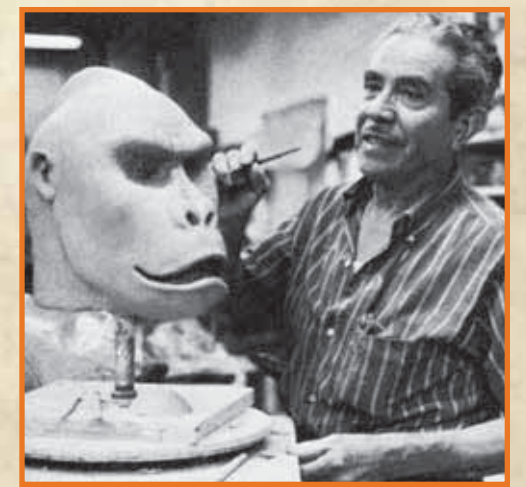
Ray and Willis O'Brien's design of the armature was based on the skeleton of a real gorilla and required over 150 aluminum parts. Contrary to popular belief, machinist Harry Cunningham did not build the gorilla armatures. "Cunningham examined two small human armatures from *Mighty Joe Young*," related Jim Danforth, "and said that he had definitely made them, but when I showed him one of the two Joe Young armatures [no longer covered with rubber] Cunningham refuted the oft-repeated claim that he had machined the gorilla armatures. 'That's not my work,' Cunningham said firmly. I asked Ray Harryhausen about this and he replied, 'We gave the plans [for the gorillas] to Cunningham and later he delivered the completed armatures.' My conclusion," Danforth continued, "is that Cunningham delegated the work of building the gorilla armatures to an associate."¹⁶¹

Ray explained that "the first armature had hinge joints in the shoulders, as opposed to ball and socket joints. The later armatures were completely ball and socket. Obie preferred hinge joints because ball and socket joints would double-up sometimes and require many repair sessions. The pull of the rubber would occasionally make the model 'shorter,' particularly because of the pressure on the spine. The hinge joint was not as versatile as the ball and socket version, but my favorite Joe model [of the four that were built] was the one with the hinge joints in the shoulders."¹⁷¹ These armatures were far more intricate than earlier O'Brien and Delgado models and the movement was very smooth, an enormous help to the animator in achieving the required action with a minimum of struggle.

Marcel Delgado was responsible for the design and sculpting of the wonderful animation models. Delgado, born January 16, 1901, in La Parrita, Coahuila State, Mexico, emigrated to the United States with his family in 1916 during the Mexican Revolution (he did not speak English until 1917) and secured a job as a monitor at the Otis Art Institute in 1924. "It was while doing this that Mr. O'Brien came to Otis, presumably to study but probably to find a helper, and when he asked me why I did not criticize his work, I told him that he should be criticizing my work instead. He was then starting work on *The Lost World* and offered me the job with him several times, but I turned him down. Then he invited me to visit the studio, and when I did he asked me how I liked my studio. It was all set up perfectly, so I couldn't very well refuse, and that was the start of my career in special effects."¹⁸¹ Although he encountered considerable race discrimination, Delgado managed to work steadily in the film business for 43 years, including *King Kong* (1933), *Son of Kong* (1933), *Mighty Joe Young* (1949), *War of the Worlds* (1953), *Dinosaurus!* (1960) and his final film, *Fantastic Voyage* (1966). He died on November 26, 1976.



Below: The four principal *Mighty Joe Young* models, posed with various human figures used in the film. Note the tiny model of Joe cradled in the arms of the Jill Young figure sitting at the left.



Marcel Delgado sculpts a clay reference model of Kong for a full-size replica made by Don Post Studios in 1965.



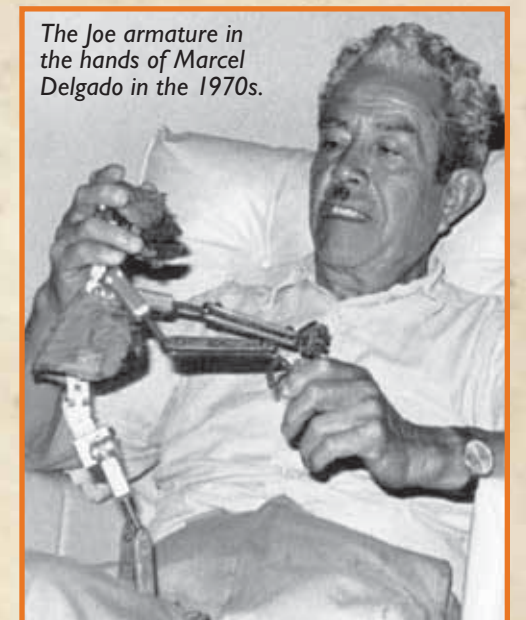
Ray sculpted a bust of Joe based on Bushman, the resident gorilla at Chicago's Lincoln Park Zoo, but Delgado's design was the one that was ultimately used. Delgado built up the exterior of the model with dental dam and kapok (a fine, fibrous cotton-like substance). Shaping these pieces directly on the armature gave the impression of muscles moving under the skin. However, this time-consuming approach was vetoed by Cooper in place of a simpler method of applying pieces of cut foam rubber. In place of the rabbit fur covering the earlier *Kong* models, Delgado used the hide of unborn calf (relatively easy to come by in slaughterhouses) which had the distinct advantage of much finer hair for a scaled-down creature. A huge problem with fur-covered models is that they all too easily show the "fingerprints" of the animator and result in a rippling effect on screen, very much in evidence in *King Kong* (particularly in the closeups atop the Empire State Building). Most people regard it as part of Kong's charm and RKO execu-

tives reportedly thought it was the result of Kong "bristling" in rage.

To overcome this problem taxidermist George Lofgren invented a process called "pelt transfer." Using freshly slaughtered animals, the untanned pelt was stretched on a frame. The fur was combed and immersed in wheat paste and allowed to cool and harden. The exposed hide was then devoured by Dermestes beetle larvae, exposing the ends of the paste-embedded hairs. Rubber was poured onto the exposed hair and, when cured, the outer layer of paste was dissolved away in a water bath. The treated hide was then applied to the model. The "rubberized" hair, when touched, would spring back into place.

Six gorilla models were constructed for *Mighty Joe Young* in scales of 1/2"=1', 1"=1', 1 1/2"=1', and 2 1/2"=1' yielding one 5" model, one 10" model, and four 15" inch models (actually about 16" if standing totally erect). Finally, a partial hips-up model about 15" tall was built, but in the end this model was never used. The multiple

models were all used in both wide and close shots, and made it possible for several setups to shoot at once (as well as reducing production delays when repairs were required).



The Joe armature in the hands of Marcel Delgado in the 1970s.



“But the most astonishing thing about it is —”



The bathysphere’s dramatic underwater encounter with the Rhedosaurus in the Hudson canyons was animated “dry-for-wet” against a background painting, miniatures, and a foreground water tank to distort the image. In early tests, one of the weird undersea rock formations in the background had a shipwreck wedged between two pinnacles, but it was removed because it made the scene too fanciful. Although these shots do have a certain eerie quality to them, Ray was never pleased with the movement of the creature (outside of the Centaur reaching for Margiana in *The Golden Voyage of Sinbad* and most of *The Animal World*, these shots are among the few instances

in Ray’s body of work in which he animated on “twos” — 2 frames per movement of the model). The only scene that doesn’t come off too well is the grainy stock footage fight between an octopus and a shark, which ends thankfully when the two combatants are swallowed by the Beast. The Beast turns its attention to the bathysphere and there are some striking closeups of the creature’s face as it bears down on its quarry. In the script, the diving bell chain became hung up on the ledge of a cliff, thus stopping its descent and making it vulnerable to attack by the beast. The live action is beautifully directed by Lourié and these scenes are high-

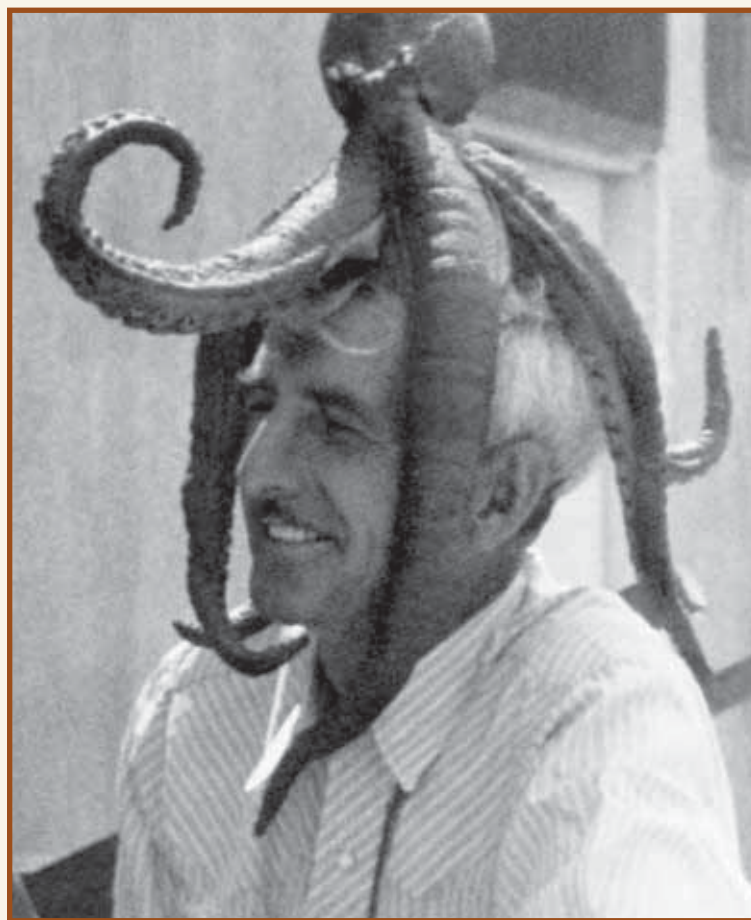
lighted by some wonderful dialogue. Dialogue director Michael Fox recalls, “They had not written anything to cover that long descent into the ocean and there were just a few lines. Cecil Kellaway talked to me about it one night, that there was no provision for cutaway, and he was right. So I started that night, after the talk with Kellaway, to write some ‘fill’ dialogue — just gibberish, a series of bromides between the two men in the bell. I wrote about three pages of dialogue.”^[27] Fox’s added “gibberish” included what became one of the film’s most famous lines: “...the clavicle suspension appears to be cantileveric. But the most astonishing thing about it is —” which is not in the original script.



As the tentacles squirm their way down the streets and behind buildings most of the composites were achieved by split screen rather than traveling matte or extensive full-scale rear projection. A notable exception is the famous shot of the tentacles wrapped around the miniature clock tower in which two fleeing citizens "cross" in front of the animation for 10 frames (although the person who first crosses the split at the beginning of the shot was overlooked and has his hand "cut off"). Ray made still photo enlargements of these frames, cut out the images, and animated them in sequence on a glass pane in front of the camera during the stop motion, a trick he learned from the scene in which Joe Young swings Max O'Hara up in front of the painted cliffs at the climax of the roping sequence in *Mighty Joe Young*.

Right: Photo magazine in January, 1956 included a surprising (for its time) before-and-after comparison of the famous Clock Tower effects shot.

Below: The two of the ten frames of photo cutouts used to place live action people in front of the miniature.



Above: Author and actress Charlotte Knight (Ray's writing partner on his *Fairy Tales*) takes a tentacle inventory on the sextopus while model maker George Lofgren (right) tries on the latest fashion in men's hats.

With only the occasional shot of the full octopus, most of the destruction scenes involve single tentacles toppling sections of buildings animated and suspended on a series of wires (the Ferry Building model measured 14"x23"). Perhaps the most disappointing scene comes when the creature is threatening the clock tower, as described on page 124 of the script:

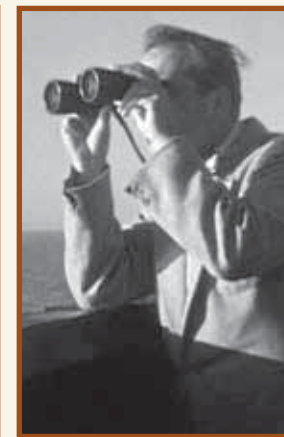
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282 LONG SHOT PETE'S POV HIGH ANGLE BINOCULAR MATTE

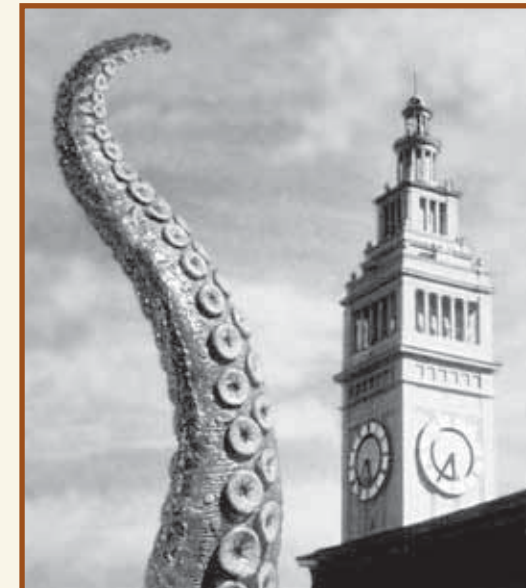
P.P. #57 (SPECIAL EFFECT STILL PHOTO S.F. LOCATION)

The shape of the octopus can be seen against the rear of the Ferry Building with two tentacles raised in the air, threatening the tower.

Unfortunately, instead of a still photo as indicated, this POV [point-of-view] shot turned out to be a rather poorly-painted version of the action, somewhat jarring in the context of the animation. "We didn't have a shot," Ray laments, "and we needed to do that quickly. I was up to my neck with the animation so we had someone do a matte painting very quickly. It was such a quick flash that we thought we could get away with it. On such a cheap picture, one has to let these things go through."¹⁷



It's hard to tell, Commander, but it appears to be a giant... *drawing!*



The Clock Tower miniature in the Ackermansion. Photo by Mark Wolf



Photo © Mark Mawston / The Ray and Diana Harryhausen Foundation

“We’ll let those flamethrowers have a whack at it first...”

Publisher’s Disclaimer

Flamethrowers drive the octopus back into the sea, the flames surrounding the writhing tentacle. Unfortunately, Ray couldn’t remember how these effects were accomplished, so the exact technical configuration is unknown. A brain trust comprised of the visual

effects professionals has considered this nagging problem at length and, without excluding other options, one theory that seems reasonable to me has emerged. It should be noted, however, that while we have applied considerable effort to verify the factual information in *Ray*

Harryhausen—Master of the Majicks, the theory described here is speculation. It is completely viable, even for 1955, but in lieu of hard evidence, should not be considered the definitive explanation.
— Ernest Farino
Publisher

Given that—

- Unlike separate elements superimposed over the live action in *20 Million Miles to Earth*, these flames were filmed as part of the live action background plates (reflections of the flames are visible on the streets and windows). So the task here was *separating* the flame element from the background image in order to “insert” the tentacle behind the smoke and flame.

- While Ray never shied away from hard work when it came to the animation (such as delicate sword substitutions), his approach to compositing was always very straightforward, and he rarely veered from his tried-and-true Dynamation setup.

- The roto mattes that isolate the flames, including the “leading edge” that moves over the tentacle, are too precise and controlled to have been done in the Dynamation setup. Mattes animated frame-by-frame in Ray’s split-screen-on-glass setup would have betrayed themselves against the feathery, smoothly-flowing shape of the spewing flames.

- Ray was not experienced with hand-animated roto work. Such work in his shots almost always reveal themselves, even in the simplest of setups (such as adding/removing a split matte in the middle of a shot).

- To complete the flamethrower effects using Ray’s Dynamation setup would have been not only cumbersome and expensive

but extremely time-consuming. The nine flamethrower shots involved 202 frames of “overlap” effect. Thus, Ray’s matte/counter-matte setup would have required 404 large, hand-painted sheets of glass. On such low budget film (in which the entire live action was filmed in 9 days), it is inconceivable that Charles Schneer and/or Sam Katzman would have approved an approach that would have taken weeks just to superimpose flame effects.

So, what’s the alternative?

- Because Ray was never able to remember how the flamethrowers were done, and given the limitations of the Dynamation approach as described above, one can conclude that he did not handle the work personally and farmed out the compositing. By comparison, Ray *did* remember and was able to tell Ernest Farino directly that he handled the few fairly obvious and somewhat crude frames of the people running in front of the Clock Tower by using photo cutouts on glass. But in this case, “out of sight, out of mind.”

- Close examination reveals that the leading edge of some of the bursts of flame are distinctly hard-edged, further suggesting that the rotoscoped mattes were made with flat cel animation. The edge characteristics of Ray’s traditional Dynamation type splits, while often precise and detailed, were never razor-sharp due to depth-of-field factors.

- Subtle microscopic mis-matching of matte lines are evident occasionally in the flame-

thrower shots, but only when the shots are examined frame-by-frame. When the shots are running, none of these “flaws” are apparent. Unlike the Clock Tower shot, the flamethrower shots are, for all intents and purposes, nearly perfect. (In other words, if the extraordinarily more complex and difficult flamethrower shots were so good, and had they been done in the Dynamation configuration, why was the much simpler—and shorter—Clock Tower shot so crude...?)

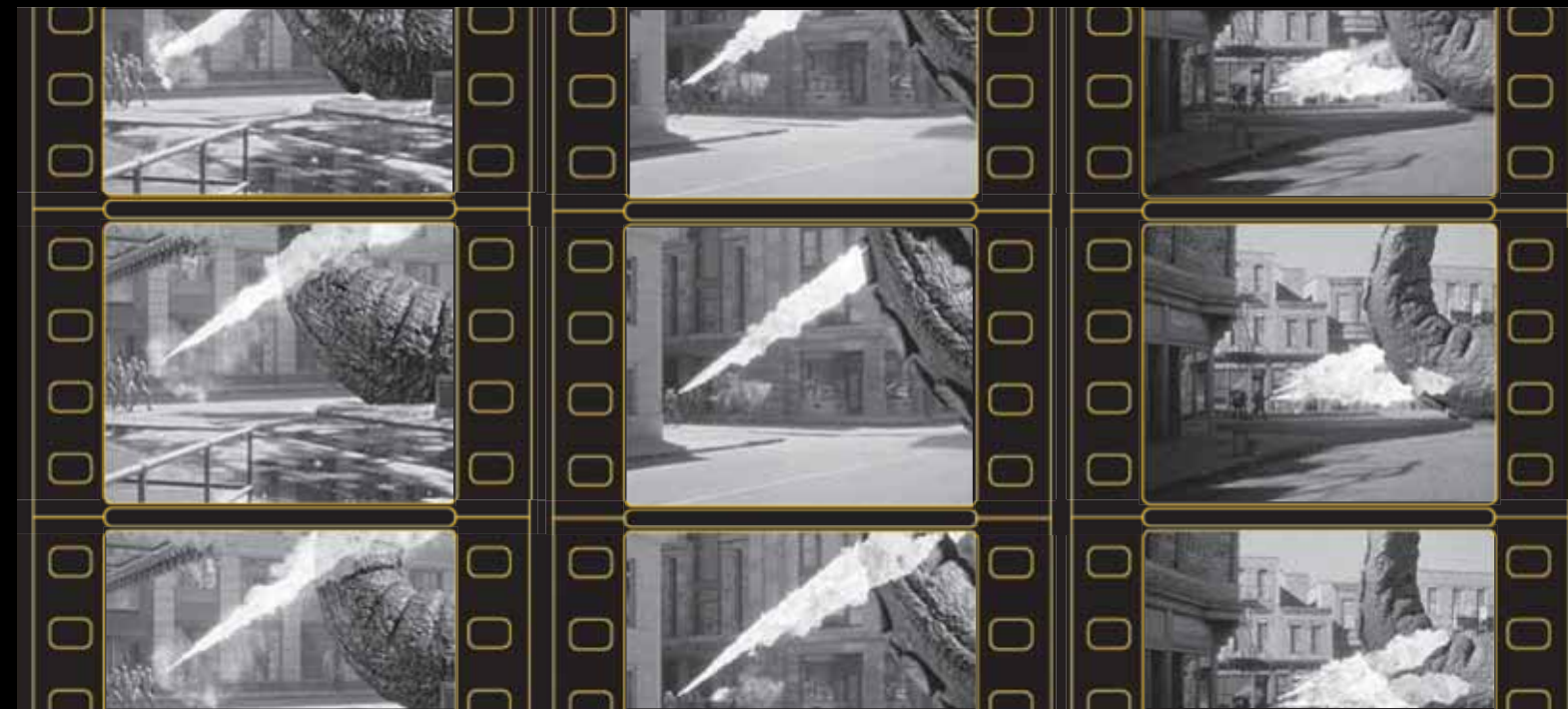
- Optical compositing is often dismissed because it’s assumed that the increased grain and contrast of a “dupe” would be evident. However, high quality opticals were attainable in the 1950s, especially in black-and-white. Other opticals (and Ray’s own rear projection work) demonstrate that optical composites *did* yield high quality results.

- Examples of high quality opticals in Ray’s films include the ray-gun beams in *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers* as well as the two shots of a saucer moving dramatically to or away from the camera (which were hand-rotoscoped). In *20 Million Miles to Earth*, a print of the raw animation discovered in Ray’s garage of the Ymir hanging from the Colosseum includes no explosion. Thus, the explosion was added optically, not as a double-pass exposure during animation photography (as has been assumed previously).

- Optical work on Columbia films in those days was likely handled by Lawrence Butler, who later established the Butler/Glouner company, and whose work goes back to *The Thief of Bagdad* (1940). Butler later directed the live action on location in Rome for *20 Million Miles to Earth*, partly because of his visual effects expertise.

Thus, all things considered—

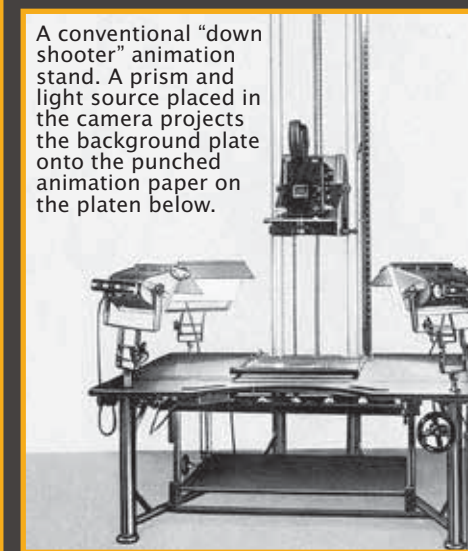
We conclude here that Ray animated the tentacle over the background plate as normal, then handed that footage – plus the original plate—to Lawrence Butler (or the Columbia optical department) to rotoscope and blend the flames on top of the tentacle.



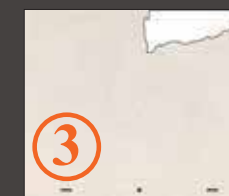
Background plate is filmed on location with real flamethrowers in the shot.



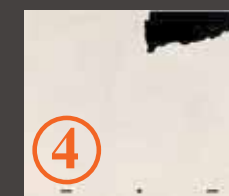
Ray animates the tentacle in front of the rear-projected plate, as usual.



A conventional “down shooter” animation stand. A prism and light source placed in the camera projects the background plate onto the punched animation paper on the platen below.



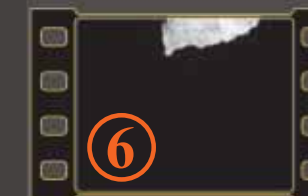
The flame image is rotoscoped frame-by-frame, isolating only that area that overlaps the tentacle.



The drawings are inked and painted onto clear cels and photographed on the animation stand, matching the original rotoscope projection.



High-contrast film creates a black holdout matte. A print from that yields the clear-center “window” matte (left).



The “window” matte double-exposes the original flames on top of the tentacle.

For the final optical composite, below, the exposure of the flames atop the tentacle would have been tested and adjusted for brightness. In addition, the black-center holdout matte would have been made at a reduced density for some measure of transparency, thus allowing the image of the tentacle to show through the flames.



Ironically, the modern “colorized” version of *It Came From Beneath the Sea* helps define the rotoscoped overlay section of flames as described on these pages. Note the separate, more saturated color in the area of the flame that overlaps the tentacle.



Chapter 11

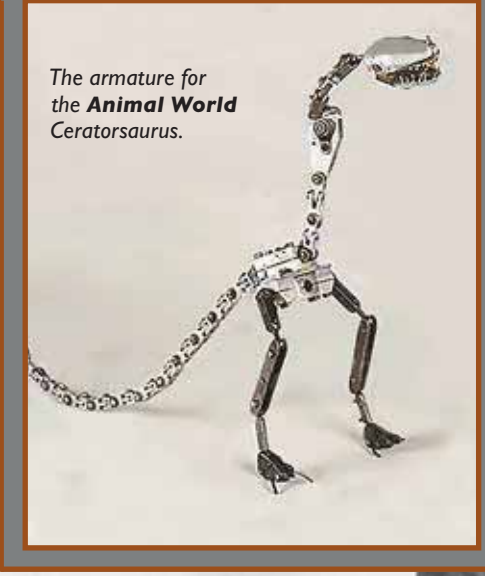


**Two Billion Years
in the Making!**

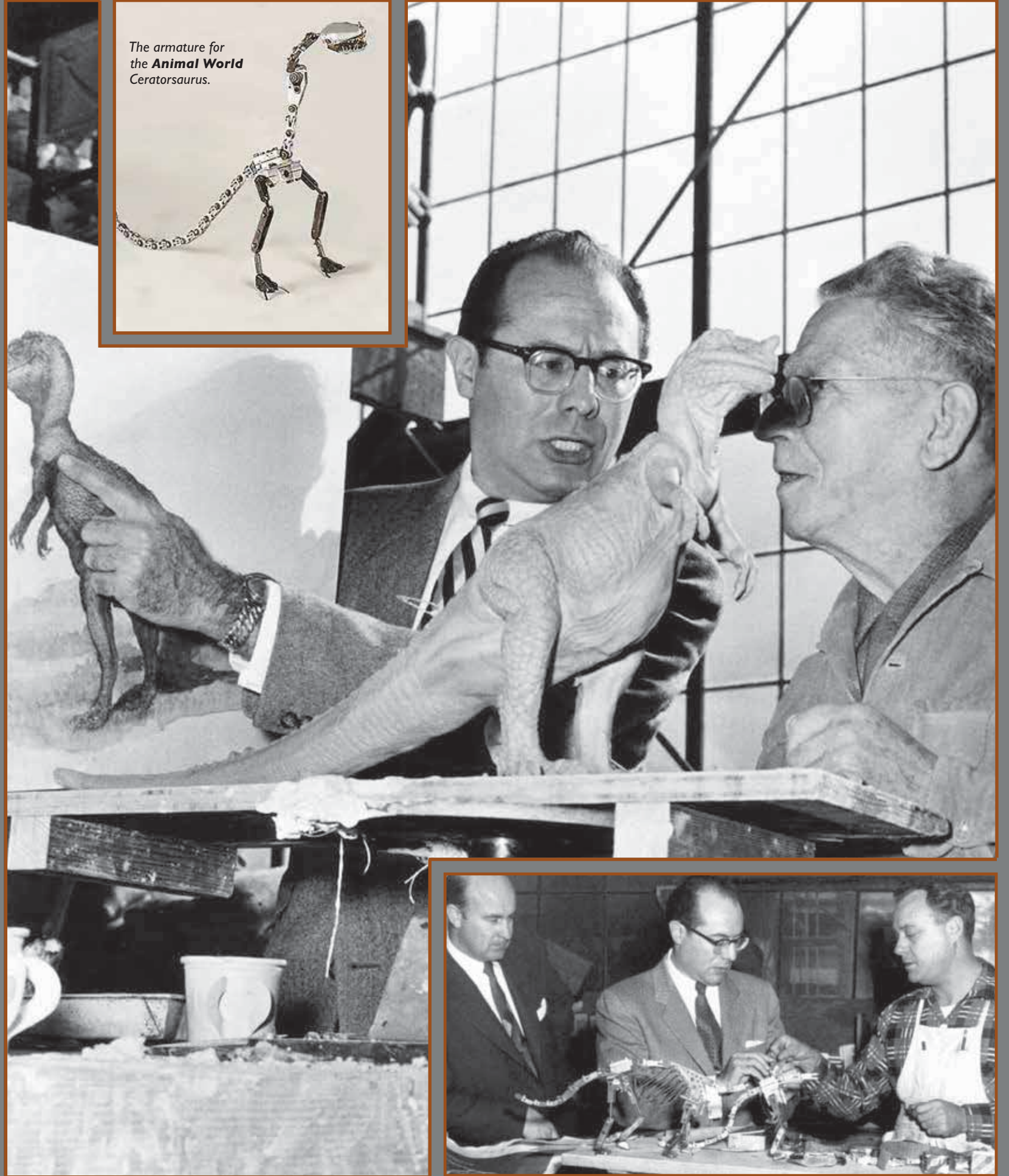
Right: Irwin Allen (in striped tie) reviews the progress of the construction of the animation models. Willis O'Brien at far left (in gray suit, glasses), Warner Bros. executive John Swink (in dark suit), while studio sculptor Pasquale Manuelli points out details of the sculpture.

Opposite page: Irwin Allen and sculptor Pasquale Manuelli discuss the anatomy of the Ceratosaurus.

Below: Irwin Allen holds an armature while Willis O'Brien (center) looks on. The other men in these photos have never been identified. The clay sculpture of the Ceratosaurus appears larger in this photo, but that's a trick of perspective — the sculpture simply happens to be closer to the camera. But it is, in fact, the same sculpture seen in the other photos.



The armature for the *Animal World* Ceratosaurus.

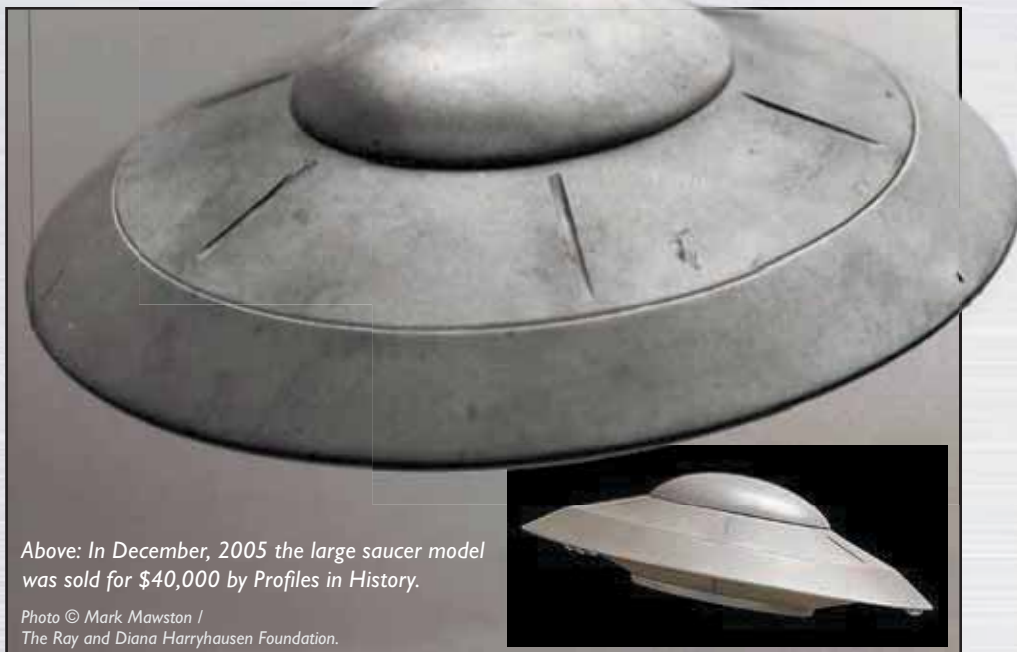


Designing the Saucers and Aliens

Ray faced entirely new challenges with *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers*. While other invasion films concentrated on the aliens, here they would be secondary to the destructive power of the saucers themselves. Ray researched the physical appearance of the saucers by gathering many photographs and eyewitness sketches of numerous "sightings." He embellished these descriptions with topside and underside inner rings scored with vertical notches that revolved independently of the main body and in opposite directions to one another. When animated, the movement resulted in a strange strobing effect that not only created a feeling of alien propulsion but also gave the saucers a "presence" much stronger than if they had simply hovered.

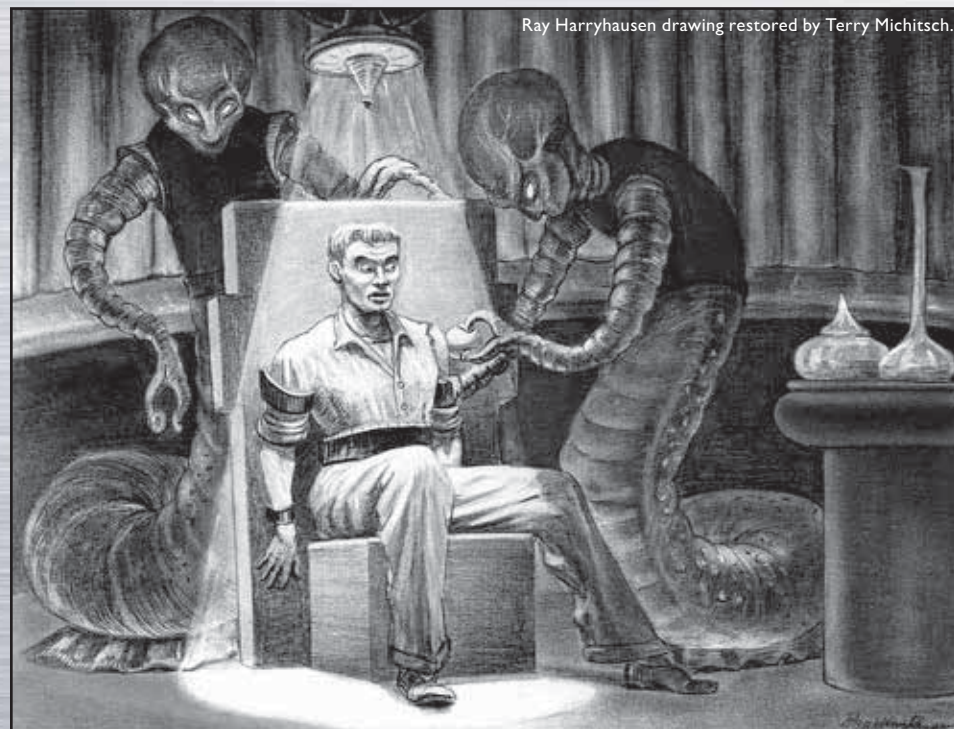
Three anodized aluminum saucers 3" in diameter were built by Ray's father (one of which featured a replaceable base that could hold a death ray) as well as a medium size saucer around 6" across weighing approximately 1 pound, 4 ounces. One 12"-diameter saucer was made out of wood and this model could extend the central access tube, whirl on its axis, and lower a cup-shaped death ray. Detailed miniatures were made of the Washington Monument, the Treasury Building and the Capitol Dome, all built to be "destroyed" one piece at a time. Many of these large structure models still exist, although when storage became a problem Ray donated them and the large wooden saucer to the private museum of his friend Forrest Ackerman. Several have since been acquired by *Lord of the Rings* director Peter Jackson. The three smaller aluminum saucers remain in Ray's own collection.

The aliens take the form of eyeless, silver space suits made of "solidified electricity" (jargon, incidentally, coined by Ray and included in the actual script) and are nearly as featureless as their craft. Three suits were made of heavy rubber and fiberglass by the Columbia staff from Ray's design. The beings carry no discernible weapons, but a disintegrating ray emanates from the end of round, handleless arms. All the aliens are played by men in suits, but a pre-production illustration by Ray pictured them with long, snakelike bodies. Was there any intention of animating the aliens? "There was in the early stages," Ray recalled, "but then there were too many scenes and I didn't want to spend more and more days animating, because I was under a contract to do so-much-footage for so-much-money and I didn't want to end up overspending myself, so to speak. So we decided on men in suits. I'd rather have animated them, frankly, but when you're working on a tight budget time is of the essence."¹³¹ Today, one of those aliens suits is owned by film and video entrepreneur Wade Williams.



Above: In December, 2005 the large saucer model was sold for \$40,000 by Profiles in History.

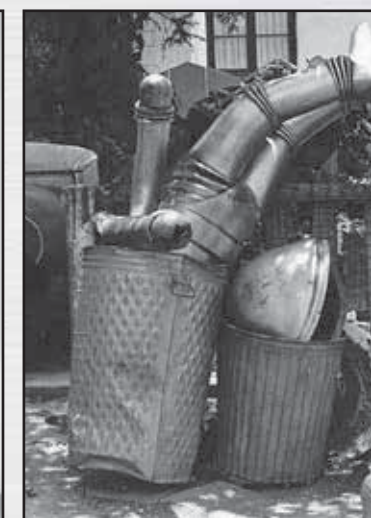
Photo © Mark Mawston / The Ray and Diana Harryhausen Foundation.



Ray Harryhausen drawing restored by Terry Michitsch.



Color photo, middle: Sam Calvin (co-editor of the Harryhausen fanzine FXRH) in 2003 with the *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers* robot suit owned by Wade Williams.



Joan Taylor: "Those robots look sort of corny when you see them in the film, but in person they were quite ugly. At least we got to see the robots. We never saw any prop flying saucers, as they were only small, miniature models that Ray Harryhausen animated and added in after all our scenes were done."

—**Screen Sirens Scream!**
by Paul Parla and Charles P. Mitchell, McFarland, 2000.

Clay Campbell and the Face Inside the Suit



Page 106 of the script suggests only a brief glimpse of the alien's face when one is killed:

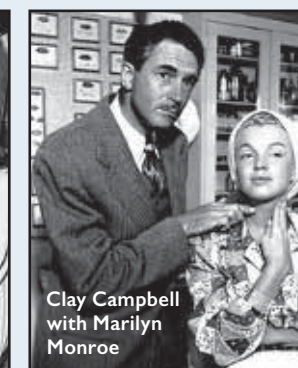
393 CLOSE SHOT S/M (PROP)
(OPTICAL PRINTING)

An incredibly ancient humanoid face with distorted proportions - exposed to the atmosphere the "flesh" of the face disintegrates under our eyes, turning to dust and blowing away in the wind like an Egyptian mummy exposed to the air.

In the film the alien is given a less dramatic demise by simply fading to nothingness. Ray's design of the face is interesting without being outlandish and was sculpted by Clay Campbell.



Clay Campbell with Veronica Lake (on Sullivan's Travels)



Clay Campbell with Marilyn Monroe



Clay Campbell (1901-1989) the head of makeup for Columbia Pictures, was a collector of lip imprints of famous female movie stars. He amassed over 1,000 lip prints (seen on the wall in the above photo), including Marlene Dietrich, Donna Reed and Rita Hayworth.

Left: Oct. 29, 1952 - Campbell makes a life-cast of Linda Christian, mother of future Harryhausen star Taryn Power.

Having been born in semi-darkness, the creature is suddenly blinded by the glare of electric lights and Ray successfully conveys the Ymir's fear and disorientation. The smoothness of movement as the creature strides up and down the table is completely natural and convincing and the composition (the actors looking down on the foreground animated figure) would become a signature composition in many of Ray's later pictures.

After such a breathtaking sequence, the only disappointment is the use of the rubber stand-in *maquette* of the Ymir that Dr. Leonardo grabs from the table and places in a cage outside. The actor does his best to cover the model with his body but the creature would, at the very least, be kicking wildly. Stop motion resumes once the Ymir is inside the cage and the miniature perfectly blends with the live action, an excellent example of the effectiveness of the new black and white film stock.

Dr. Leonardo decides to take the animal to Rome where it can be studied properly. The creature's escape during the journey begins with a splendid shock moment of a scaly arm thrusting out from behind the canvas covering its cage and grabbing the wrist of Marisa (Joan Taylor). This full-size glove-style hand and arm gives a good indication of how much the creature has grown and increases expectations of seeing the enlarged Ymir. Ray said that, while George Lofgren helped with "building props and other things," Lofgren had no part in the live action (unlike Lofgren's manning the "Foo Lights" in *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers*) and Ray said he had no idea who was in the rubber hand.^[13]

In a very intricate piece of animation, the Ymir pulls the canvas (actually a piece of dyed towel) inside the cage and bends the bars sufficiently apart to squeeze through and leap to the ground. For once, the alien being doesn't abscond with the heroine, this time merely growling at the doctor and his niece before making its escape. Ray confirmed that only one model cage was built, and the small and large Ymir models in that same cage helped convey the growth pattern.

Using the close confines of a small building to heighten tension, the barn sequence is arguably the best episode in the whole film. Moreover, with its dark, moody setting it was an ideal opportunity for recreating the chiaroscuro ambiance of the Gustav Doré etchings that had not only influenced the artists

on *King Kong* but had also guided Ray's own visual style.

The Ymir enters the open barn door and finds a pile of sacks filled with sulfur — its natural food (in reality Johnson & Johnson baby powder) — and comes around to an area that is a totally miniature setup (an exact live action counterpart is seen later). In this instance, one of the sacks was also animated as it falls to the floor.

The farmer (Sid Cassel) discovers his wounded dog and begins to back out of the barn when he is stopped by Calder, who has spotted the Ymir in the shadows of the hayloft. The Ymir is goaded into leaping down from its hiding place — this time the smaller model with discernible differences in the size and shape of its head — and was supported on wires as



it jumps onto a miniature floor. A return to this wide shot is given added depth by the clever removal of a part of the miniature foreground area during the animation. On the rear plate, Calder works his way to the left around the back of the creature and the Ymir edges its way in the opposite direction. The ground that the creature had landed on is removed, allowing the rear projected Calder to move seemingly into the "same" space.

In a carefully crafted piece of live action choreography, Calder jabs a pole in an attempt to maneuver the creature into a wooden cage (rather pointless, considering it had already escaped from a cage with iron bars). "The door of the cage was part of the projected background," Ray said, "so I had to cast the 'shadow' of the door on the Ymir [a cutout shape off-camera animated with the model]. When the door moved forward you would see the shadow of the cage bars move across the creature, so it put the Ymir right in conjunction with the cage, instead of looking like a totally separate entity."^[14]

When the attempt to capture the creature fails, the farmer grabs a pitchfork and plunges it into the creature's back. In a minor continuity snafu, the farmer plunges the pitchfork into the back of the Ymir but then appears in the reaction shots behind Calder, still holding the lamp and shotgun he had in the opening action.

The creature twists and turns and the pitchfork eventually falls out. In a beautifully timed action, it jumps at the farmer, forcing him to the floor. After cutaways to the watching soldiers, the besieged live action farmer becomes an animated figure, allowing the Ymir to bite several times into his struggling body.

Calder attempts to dislodge the beast by hitting it across the back with a shovel and, as a result, gets struck heavily by the creature for his efforts. Note that in the first cut of this action, the strikes of Calder's shovel on the far side of the Ymir make very positive "hits," the result of the actor striking a solid post (obscured in the animation setup by a miniature replacement matching one of the boards of the back wall of the barn). After a cutaway, the final two strikes of the shovel appear to be more like "glancing blows," although the miniature panel is still in place and the on-set post actually wobbles into view slightly.

Inevitably, the soldiers resort to gunfire, which distracts the Ymir but eventually turns the creature on them, and they have to retreat outside the barn. In a film that is filled with unusual and startling images, the shot of the dramatically lit Ymir advancing toward the camera captures all the intrinsically pleasing attributes of model animation.

The pursuit of the Ymir begins with several beautifully constructed split-screen composite shots of the Ymir roaming across the Italian countryside. It ends with Calder and the army capturing the Ymir by enticing it with bags of sulfur onto open ground and then dropping an electrified metal net over it from an Army Sikorsky S-55 "Windmill" (aka H-19 "Chickasaw") helicopter. While the soldiers attach the net to the ground and connect the electrical cables, the Ymir thrashes about trying to break loose. The flailing arms and tail disguise the fact that its feet remain rooted to the same spot, no doubt aiding the difficult task of animating the figure under the net. Ray used ordinary fishnet stiffened by metallic paint to cover the Ymir. As the beast is subdued, the image is enhanced with sparks of electricity added as a separate exposure.

The Illusion of "Contact"

Ray sometimes went to considerable trouble in some cases to reinforce the illusion of physical contact between the live actors and the animated model.

At right, shadows of the wooden cage appear on the Ymir, reinforcing that sense of "contact" between the animation model and the live action cage.



When William Hopper hits the Ymir with a shovel, he's actually hitting a post for "positive" contact. The post is obscured by either a photo cutout or a miniature of a plank that matches the back wall of the barn (it jiggles slightly). Note, too, that Hopper's shadow is not on the plank.

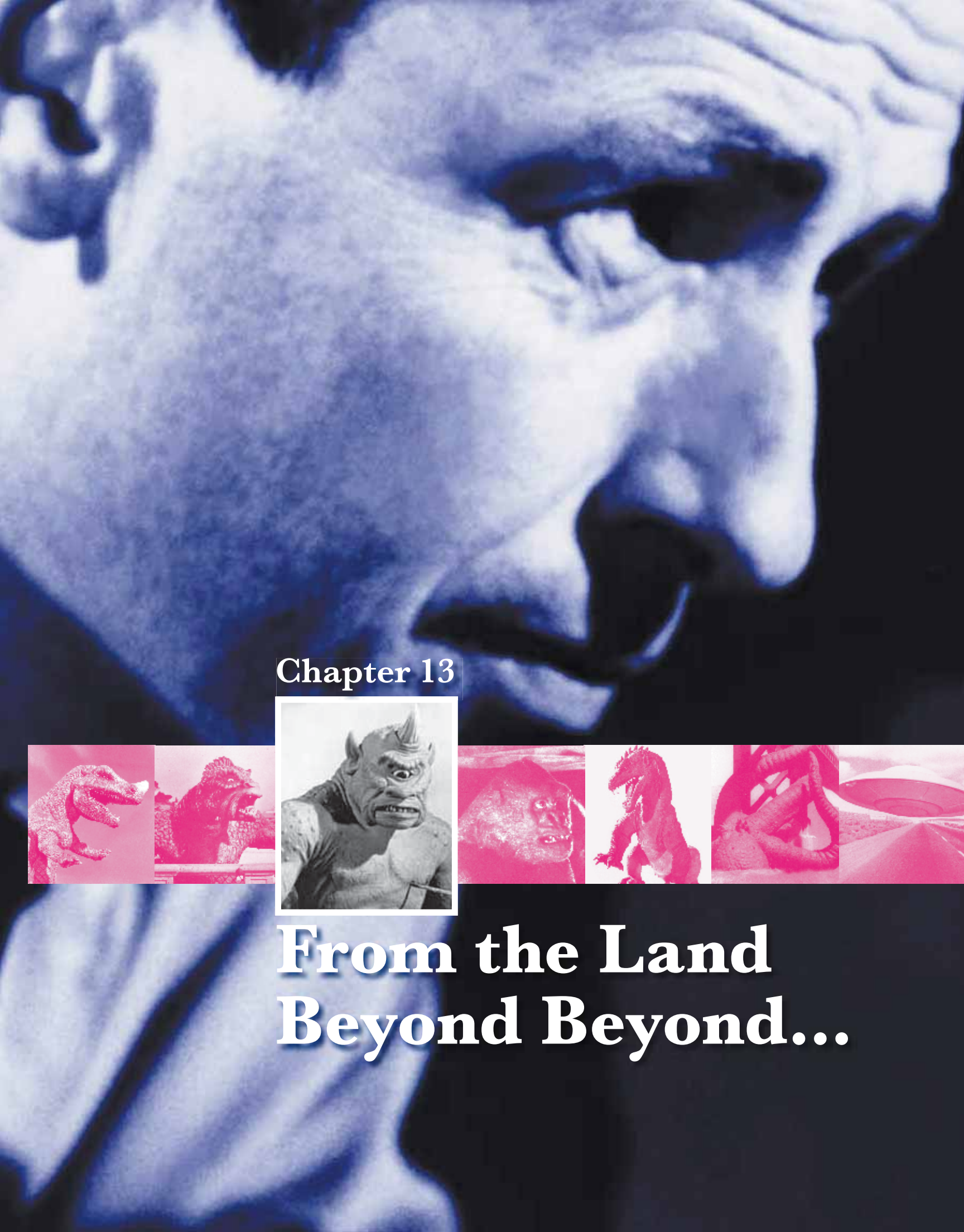


A photo cutout of the farmer's hand and sleeve reinforces the sense of contact between the live action man and the Ymir.



The attack by the farmer's dog, "Carlo," could have been just another confrontation between two animated creatures, but it evolved into something much more interesting. Ray built a fully articulated dog using the armature of the wolf from his fairy tale *Little Red Riding Hood* but he wasn't happy with its appearance. Consequently, "necessity being the Mother of Invention," he decided to stage the action to see only fleeting glimpses of the dog as it lands on the Ymir and play out the rest of the fight in the shadows. He also thought that the action, if seen in detail, might have become too violent and lessen audience sympathy for the Ymir.





Chapter 13



**From the Land
Beyond Beyond...**



There's an old saying in the movie business: "Happy set, bad movie." On that basis, the relentless technical, physical, budgetary, logistical, and health problems may have contributed to *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad* turning out to be one of the greatest fantasy films ever made.

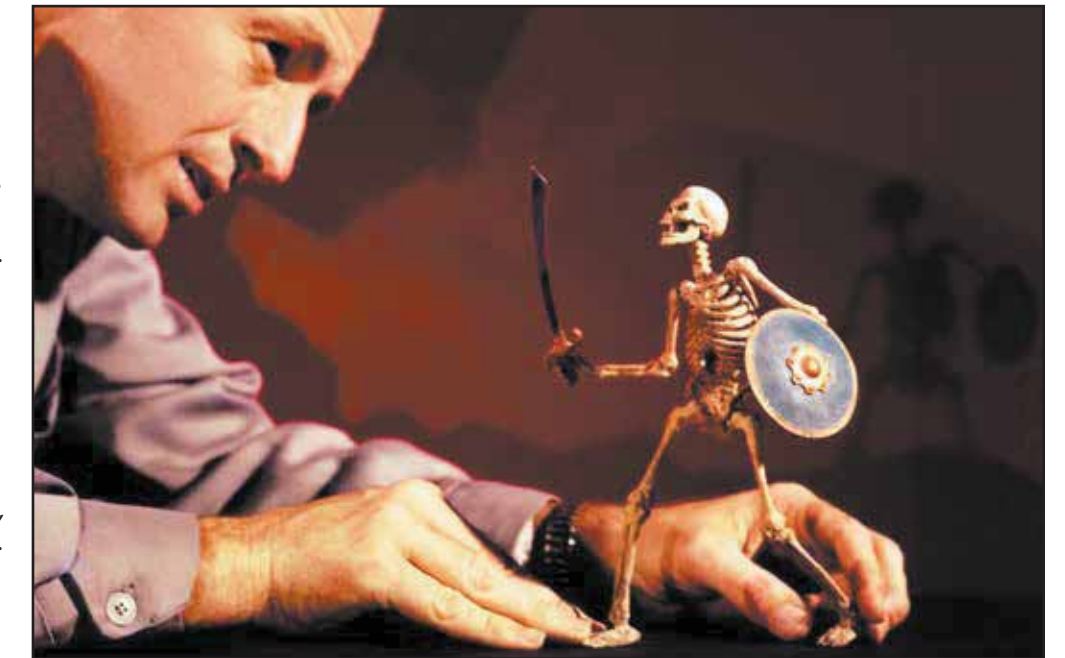
The Skeleton of an Idea

In the early 1950s Ray had become fixated with the image of a living, fighting skeleton and even before *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* had made a drawing based on the Thorne Smith novel *Skin & Bones* (1933) about a man waking up to find himself transformed into a skeleton. But it wasn't until he chanced upon an illustration by French artist Gustave Doré of a knight at the top of a ruined spiral staircase that the idea developed further. Initially, Ray was unsure in what kind of framework to fit the scene, but eventually he came around to the tales of the Arabian Nights and, in particular, the stories of the many voyages of Sinbad. On his drawing board, a strange image took shape: a man and a living skeleton fighting atop a ruined spiral staircase.

The idea expanded into eleven additional drawings depicting a dragon, a Cyclops, and foreboding castles, all tied together by Ray's first outline, *Sinbad the Sailor*.

In one of those odd misconceptions perpetuated by the movies, the name "Sinbad" came to epitomize the "dashing hero." However, even a cursory glance at the original tales reveals a different story. Throughout his seven voyages, Sinbad considers his own survival of paramount importance and although an adventurer, his primary motive is monetary gain rather than any noble cause. Ray wisely stayed with the "dashing hero"-image and did find much to inspire him within the stories. But before reading about the film version of Sinbad's seventh voyage, interested readers may want to turn to **Appendix A: Story Synopses** to review his other literary voyages.

Hollywood was no stranger to the tales of Scheherazade. From the early days of silent films, many a dashing



hero had been swashbuckling his way across the screen. The most famous was Douglas Fairbanks, Sr.'s marvelous *Thief of Bagdad* (1924), filled with fantastic images and incredible sets. Even when Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. followed his father into the same territory in *Sinbad the Sailor* (1947), like Scheherazade herself, they only mentioned fabulous creatures such as the Roc without actually showing them. Later films departed even further from the spirit of the stories and, as Ray has often said, became basically "cops and robbers stories in baggy pants" or glorified girlie shows. By the time Ray was ready to pitch his idea, RKO and Howard Hughes had released the mediocre *Son of Sinbad* (1955) starring Dale Robertson (later famous for the *Tales of Wells Fargo* TV series). Whether this specific film dismayed the producers to whom Ray presented his drawings can only be guessed, but their general reaction was

one of indifference (producer Edward Small ultimately regretted his decision, but more on that later). Even George Pal could not see the concept working at that time. Only Jessie Lasky, Sr. showed any interest but was unable to raise the necessary financing.

After the success of *20 Million Miles to Earth* Charles Schneer was looking for a project that would put Morningside Productions on the map. Ray gathered up his drawings and outline and placed them in front of Schneer. The search was over. However, before making the pitch to Columbia, the concept was reworked to fit a more reasonable budget. Columbia took the bait and green-lit the revised package for further development. Schneer signed *20 Million Miles to Earth* writer Bob Williams to expand Ray's original treatment but his two alternate drafts didn't rise to Ray's or Charles' vision. So another writer, Kenneth Kolb, was hired.

The 7th Voyage of Sinbad (1958)

actors and the camera assistant charged with rocking the camera on its gimbal. The fire department also used the flag as their guide for timing the 'spume' and waves of water breaking over the deck as the ship's bow plunged through the stormy seas. We rehearsed Sinbad and his sailors rolling and staggering across the deck as they followed the movement of Enzo's flag. The prop men learned when to roll 'loose objects' across the deck in sync with the flag as well. When everyone knew his part and the camera had rehearsed its gimbal movements, we turned on the hoses and wind machine and shot what turned out to be a most convincing scene, better than we could have had out on the ocean."¹²⁷¹

However, being moored also caused other problems, such as keeping the surrounding dock out of shot. Nathan Juran said that "the grips kept busy moving sails to hide adjacent vessels and overhead cables, yet to let the camera see every patch of blue sky possible. With the long shots out of the way, we concentrated on Sinbad's torturous movements in his struggle to regain the helm in the wild and open sea, driven back by furious winds and waves, all on an unmoving deck tied to a hemmed-in dock."¹²⁸¹ It's hard to believe that the ship is docked. During the mutiny, Kerwin Mathews plays the swashbuckling role to the fullest, climbing rope ladders and swinging down from the mast, and there's nary a glimpse of anything to suggest that they are not in open sea."¹²⁹¹

Kerwin Mathews had been ill for a few days (he had swallowed some of the dirty sea water during the storm sequence)

but left his sickbed to shoot the scene, and probably wished he hadn't. He later brushed the episode aside: "Ray, Wilkie, Jerry, Charles and all their families were so incredibly kind to me in every way that I would have done anything for them. Truly, my memories are only of the good things that happened. After 35 years that is right, I think."¹³⁰¹

The extras were recruited from surrounding dock workers, eager to appear in a film and not too worried with how much they were paid. Even the interpreter was dressed in a costume and told to hold the boom microphone high above his head to keep it out of shot.

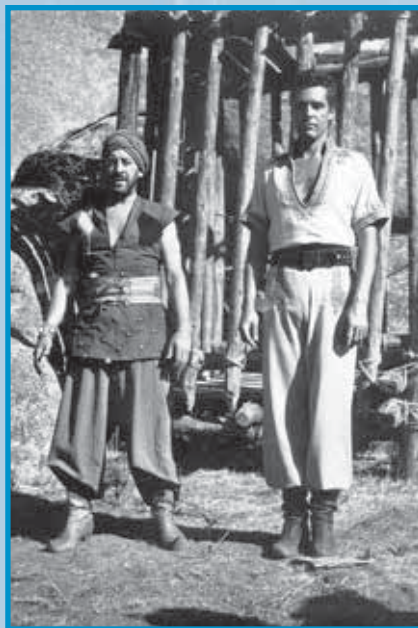
The ship sequences were the last live action to be shot in Spain and Wilkie Cooper "will always remember at the end of production Maurice Gillette said to Charles Schmeer, 'There are two things in my life that I wouldn't have missed,' he said. 'One was Dunkirk [in World War II] — you know what happened to the British there — and the other was working on this film.'"^{131, 321}

Even then the problems were not over. The sound recorded on location was not only unusable, but the notes taken by the script girl were written in *Spanish shorthand* and no one could read them. The quickest solution was to hire lip readers to transcribe the silent footage, then bring the cast into the recording studio and "loop" [re-record to picture] all the dialogue. The resulting dialogue tracks are acceptable for the most part, although a few sequences, such as the group scrambling back aboard ship after the first Cyclops encounter (with Sokurah exclaiming, "My lamp...! My lamp...!") or

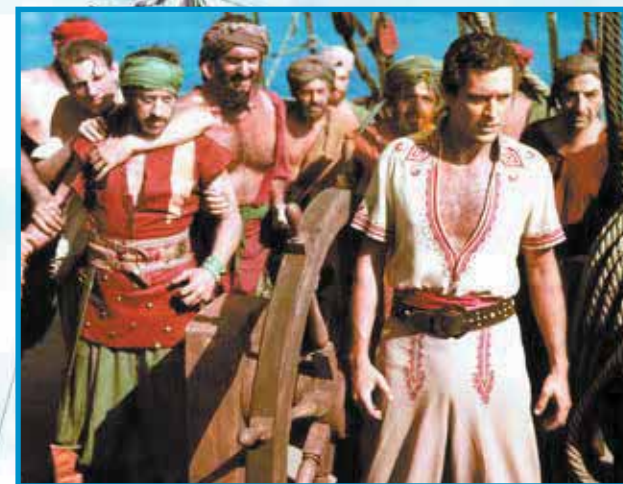
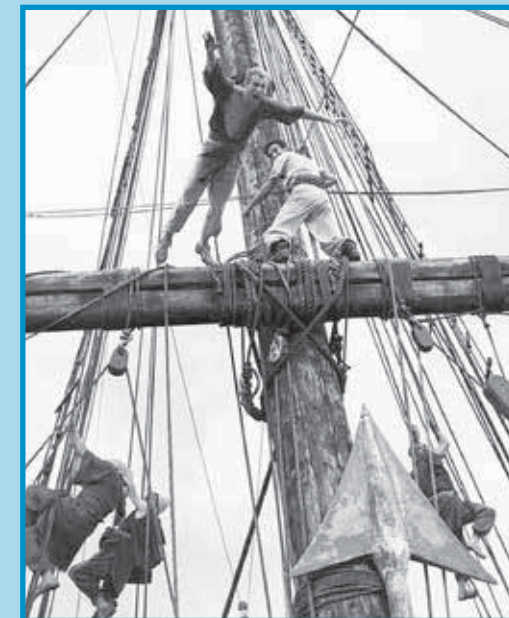
the sailors forcing Golar (Brazilian actor Juan Olaguivel) to test the "poison" river, are a bit dodgy with regard to the post-sync looping. (Golar's single line, "That's right...!" is repeated three times in the film, amusing trivia oft-quoted by animation fans; it's interesting to see that the line is handwritten into Nathan Juran's script in all three places, a running gag apparently created by the director during filming.)

Most of the studio work was shot in the Seville Studios, Madrid. Insert shots of the swing across the chasm in Sokurah's cave and the interior of the lamp were filmed in Hollywood, as well as all footage of Richard Eyer (the genie) in which his face is seen. Before returning to America, three days were spent at MGM at Elstree to shoot the traveling matte elements. This required building a few partial sets, such as the spit on which Harufa (Alfred Brown) is roasted by the Cyclops.¹³³¹ The completed film would return to London for printing by Technicolor®. Thankfully, their lab work was more accurate than their advertising: In a full-page advertisement in the November, 1958, *Kinematograph Weekly* they proclaimed how proud they were to be entrusted with the processing and printing of "Sinbad the Sailor."

While in England, Ray visited George Pal who was also at MGM filming *Tom Thumb* (1958). Ray later said, "George and I had always wanted to make a film together, but our busy working schedules meant that it just never happened."¹³⁴¹ We can only dream about the images these two masters of cinema fantasy might have brought to the screen.



Sinbad, Harufa, and members of Sinbad's crew pose for reference photos used in creating their stop motion counterparts.





The Fire-Breathing Dragon

Sinbad encounters a dragon guarding the entrance to Sokurah's castle.¹⁴⁶¹ The dragon is a wonderful classic fairy-tale creature designed with nightmarish accouterments. Built partially over the armature of *The Beast From 20,000 Fathoms* and measuring over three feet long, it has the wide lizard-like gait of the Rhedosaurus. Its head is adorned with two twisting horns and its eyes are covered with spiky, protruding brows. A long, forked tongue occasionally darts from its mouth accompanied by a mixture of growl and a hiss. A red bony frill stretches the length of its spine and tail ending in an arrow-shaped tip. The rough, warty, green-colored skin is ideally suited to this fabulous creation. A bladder inside the

chest (part of the original Rhedosaurus design, but rarely noticed in that film) provides the model with that extra subtle touch of the animal actually breathing. Ray sculpted the overall clay model of the dragon, but only detailed one side. George Lofgren then completed the opposite side of the sculpture to match.¹⁴⁷¹ While it is not known for sure who sculpted which side, *both* sides are visible for comparison in the same shot as the dragon turns away from the slain Cyclops to follow Sokurah. The fire that spews from the dragon's mouth (a well matched, separately filmed element) is a weapon it abandons when fighting the Cyclops. Although mentioned in the shooting script and illustrated in

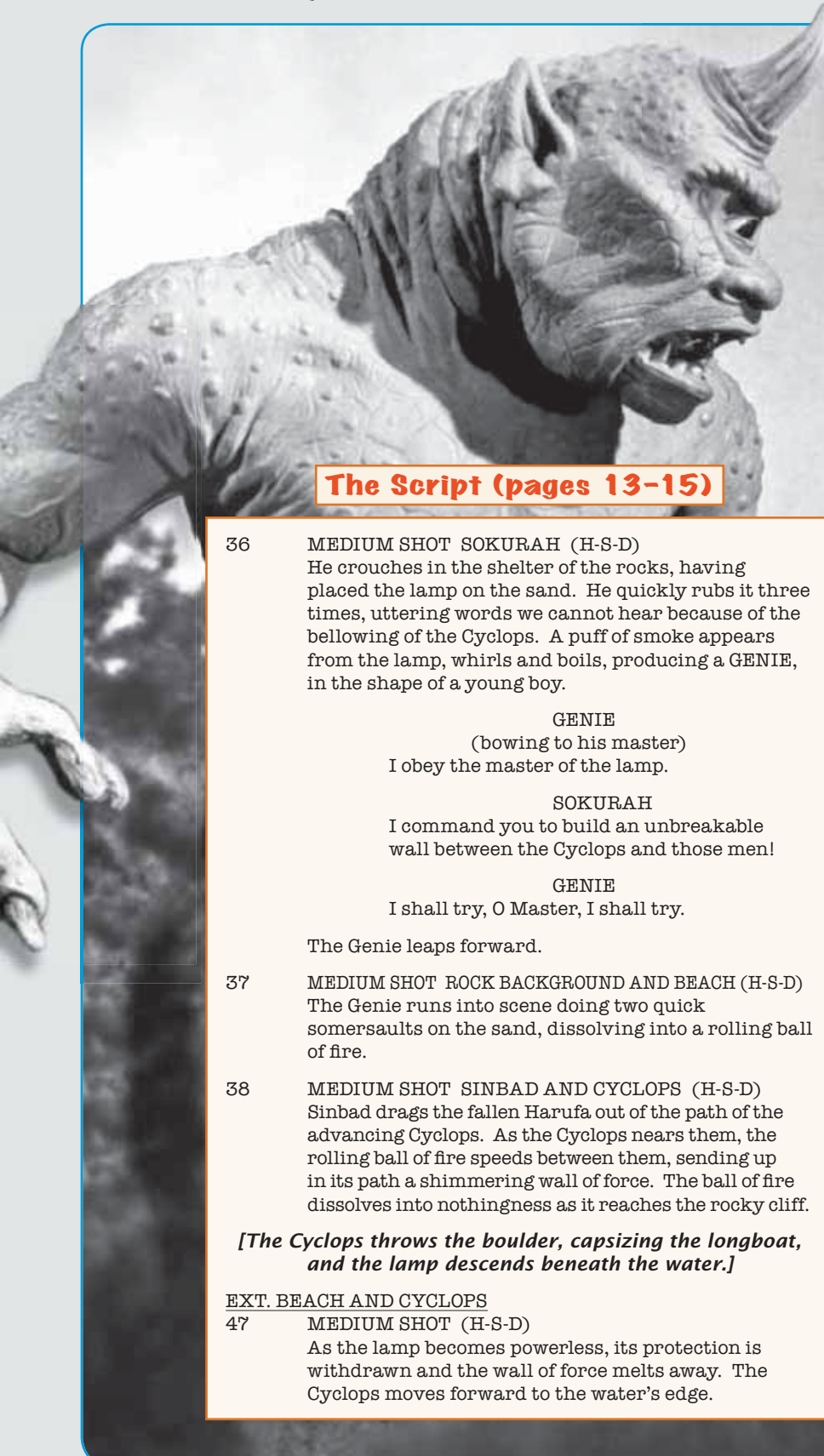
the storyboards, Ray thought that the sight of a badly-blistered Cyclops would not only bring their monumental struggle to a grisly and premature end but also cause a few problems with the censor. And, of course, a snort of flame at the tiny figure of Sinbad would have ended the movie on the spot. The dragon's freedom is restricted by a chain-and-collar around its neck. By the turn of a wheel at the entrance, the chain is shortened even further, allowing the wary Sinbad to pass, while the creature, typically animal-like, claws at the annoying restraint. The sequences where Sinbad, first alone and then later with Parisa, pass in front of the chained dragon are among the few traveling matte shots used in the film.



Ray again displays his mastery of animal movement and behavior as applied to imaginary creatures. However, not all the movements spring purely from Ray's imagination, for he regularly visited wrestling matches to study grips and holds, similar to Willis O'Brien using his knowledge of boxing to great effect in Kong's fight with the Tyrannosaurus. It is so easy to sit back and enjoy the action (which, of course is what is intended) and not consider why it is so good.



"I command you to build me a barrier between those men and the cyclops!"



How to Stop a Cyclops! (or, Don't Forget Your Magic Lamp)

Scene 38 in *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad* presented Ray with a unique challenge: Materialize a shimmering "force field" in front of the angry Cyclops. Up to now Ray's "Dynamation" split screen technique had been restricted to static mattes. This time the mattes would have to "wipe" across the scene to add-and-reveal the "barrier" — *during the animation!*

The Script (pages 13-15)

36 MEDIUM SHOT SOKURAH (H-S-D)
He crouches in the shelter of the rocks, having placed the lamp on the sand. He quickly rubs it three times, uttering words we cannot hear because of the bellowing of the Cyclops. A puff of smoke appears from the lamp, whirls and boils, producing a GENIE, in the shape of a young boy.

GENIE
(bowing to his master)
I obey the master of the lamp.

SOKURAH
I command you to build an unbreakable wall between the Cyclops and those men!

GENIE
I shall try, O Master, I shall try.

The Genie leaps forward.

37 MEDIUM SHOT ROCK BACKGROUND AND BEACH (H-S-D)
The Genie runs into scene doing two quick somersaults on the sand, dissolving into a rolling ball of fire.

38 MEDIUM SHOT SINBAD AND CYCLOPS (H-S-D)
Sinbad drags the fallen Harufa out of the path of the advancing Cyclops. As the Cyclops nears them, the rolling ball of fire speeds between them, sending up in its path a shimmering wall of force. The ball of fire dissolves into nothingness as it reaches the rocky cliff.

[The Cyclops throws the boulder, capsizing the longboat, and the lamp descends beneath the water.]

EXT. BEACH AND CYCLOPS

47 MEDIUM SHOT (H-S-D)
As the lamp becomes powerless, its protection is withdrawn and the wall of force melts away. The Cyclops moves forward to the water's edge.

The Storyboards



The "Elements"

The term "pass" (First Pass, Second Pass, etc.) refers to the separate exposure of a new element onto the same piece of film. The lens is capped, the film is wound back in the camera to the first frame, and the next element is exposed. Any number of exposures onto the same piece of film are possible with this approach.



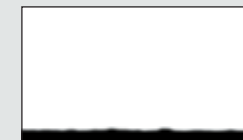
Background Plate
Static shot, locked-off camera.



"Holdout" Matte #1
On glass, positioned in a groove to allow horizontal movement frame-by-frame.



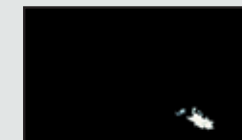
"Reveal" Matte #1
On glass, positioned in a groove to allow horizontal movement frame-by-frame.



"Holdout" Matte #2
On a separate glass, secured in place.

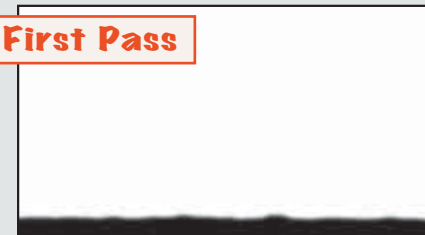


"Reveal" Matte #2
On a separate glass, secured in place.



"Fireball" Element
Filmed against black.

First Pass



"Holdout" Matte #2 obscures the stage on which the Cyclops model is standing.



"Holdout" Matte #1 will slide across the scene frame-by-frame as the Cyclops is animated.

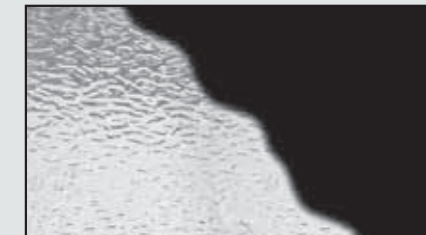


Through the viewfinder: The matte slides across, gradually *obscuring* the entire frame, as the Cyclops is animated reacting to the Genie. The animation stops when the matte fully obscures the Cyclops in its last pose looking to the far right.

Second Pass



"Holdout" Matte #2 (still in place following the first pass) obscures the stage on which the Cyclops model is standing.

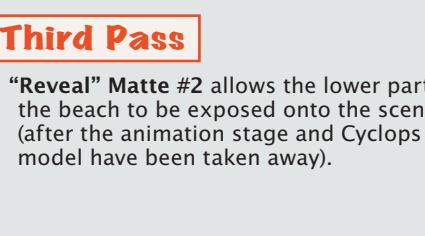


"Reveal" Matte #1 slides across frame-by-frame. Behind it: a "ripple glass," animated independently to create shimmering movement.



Through the viewfinder: The matte slides across, gradually *revealing* the entire frame, the image rippling. The animation resumes when the ripple glass fully reveals the Cyclops in its last pose from the first pass (looking to the far right).

Third Pass



"Reveal" Matte #2 allows the lower part of the beach to be exposed onto the scene (after the animation stage and Cyclops model have been taken away).



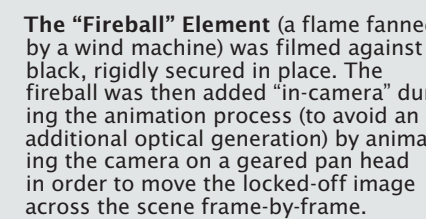
The "Fireball" Element (a flame fanned by a wind machine) was filmed against black, rigidly secured in place. The fireball was then added "in-camera" during the animation process (to avoid an additional optical generation) by animating the camera on a geared pan head in order to move the locked-off image across the scene frame-by-frame.



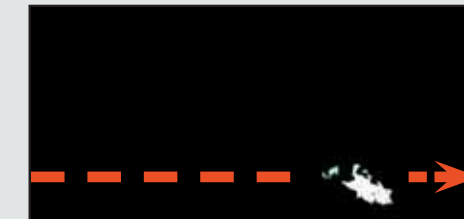
Fourth Pass



"Fireball" Element
Filmed against black.



"Fireball" Element
Filmed against black.



"But the most astonishing thing about it is..."

Which is what Dr. Thurgood Elson most certainly would have said upon analyzing this shot. The final complication was that the Cyclops had to progressively come to a stop, if only for a few frames, as the sliding split screen crossed in front of him. Hand-animating the Cyclops could not be repeated *exactly* in two separate passes. Any differing movements between passes would have "split" the figure visually into two separate pieces. The bottom (rippling) part of the Cyclops therefore had to retain its position relative to the top (non-rippling) part during both exposures. This requirement was met by not animating the Cyclops during the second pass until the ripple glass revealed the entire figure in its last pose from the first pass. Notice that as the barrier moves across the frame, the Cyclops gradually — although very naturally — comes to a "held pose." First the legs, then the arms, then the head. Once the barrier has fully crossed over the figure, the Cyclops resumes his bellowing. Ray handled this requirement in his typically clever way, animating the Cyclops as if it were "puzzled" or "curious" about the barrier, slowly turning its head to follow the fireball as it crosses the frame.



Ray Harryhausen Master of the Majicks

Volume 3
2nd Edition
New Material and Corrections

The following section includes new and corrected text and photographic material for Volume 3.

- **Text:** Only new or corrected information is included, referencing whenever possible the interior page number. Minor corrections of typos and formatting of text within the main body of the book are not included here.
- **Photographic material:** New photos have been added throughout the interior pages of the book. Those images are not repeated here. Rather, the photos included here are additional photos that could not be fit within the layouts of the main body of the book.



Ray loved meeting people and talking about his work. Once the secrecy barrier had been breached with the publication of his books he was more willing to go into detail, although it seemed as though most of his fans just wanted him to name his favorite creature. Ray's stock answer was he couldn't say, because "the others would be jealous."

Even I was not immune from this frequently asked question. When I finally asked, Ray said quietly that Medusa was his favorite creation.

— Mike Hankin

Photo by Terry Michitsch

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Ray Harryhausen

Master of the Majicks

Volume 3
 The British Films

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The Frenetic Squirrel

The giant squirrel is one of the most neglected of all of Ray's animated creations and its appearance provides a wonderful shock effect in a film that generally lacks such moments. Gulliver's quiet conversation with Elizabeth is abruptly interrupted as the squirrel drags Gulliver off by his ankle to its underground burrow a short distance away. Gulliver is eventually rescued from the squirrel's hole when Glumdalclitch uses her pigtail as a makeshift rope (a curious variation on Ray's own *Rapunzel* Fairy Tale).

However brief, the sequence is noteworthy because Ray used a different compositing method than his normal rear screen setup in an effort to get a better quality background image. "This was the only time that I animated a model with a variation of the traveling matte process [often referred to as the frontlight/backlight process]," he explained. "The basic principle involves shooting two frames of everything. First, the [miniature] set is lit to match the background. But the background will not be filmed, so you drop a black card or black velvet behind the model. You shoot that frame of the squirrel all against black. Then, without touching anything, you turn off the foreground lights and shoot the next frame against white which creates a silhouette of the foreground [a "matte"]. The squirrel is the same size and in the same position as the previous frame because you haven't touched anything; you've only switched the background from black to white. This technique can really only be



Frontlight Backlight



Left: The stop motion Pillsbury Doughboy in a frontlight/backlight setup at Coast Productions in 1979 (this commercial animated by Ernest Farino). The card for the frontlight pass is covered in black velvet to absorb all light, as is the platform and pylon supporting the Doughboy (positioned on a wooden spatula per the design of the commercial). The black card is hanging from a rudimentary hinge attached to a horizontal bar supported by two C-stands and is easily lifted up to reveal the front-lit white foamcore. The frontlight/backlight frames are shot in succession on the same strip of camera negative, and this film is later skip-framed in the optical printer to extract a continuous color frontlight ("beauty") pass, as well as a high-contrast matte pass. The silhouettes of the C-stands are removed by garbage mattes. When composited in an optical printer, the matte pass is used with the background image to "hold out" the animation, and a separate pass then lays in the color foreground element.



used in stop motion because the figure must not move while you are shooting against the alternate white and black backgrounds.

"In the laboratory, they skip-print the two [foreground] frames onto one strip for the color foreground and the other strip for the 'silhouette' image, thus creating an automatic traveling matte. It saves having to go through the various steps of blue-backing, where you have to make a positive and negative and have to allow for shrinkage of the image, which is the reason you sometimes get the 'halo' around the figure. With blue backing the image goes through the developer so many times it shrinks, and when they're superimposed over one another you're left with a blue line around the figure, which is actually the original blue screen on the set showing through the gap between the mattes. The [frontlight/backlight] process is very time-consuming, but as this was only a very brief scene, I thought I could spend the time on it. A lot can go wrong. You can forget that you just shot the black frame and shoot it a second time. Unless you have an automatic setup, it can get rather tedious to do a whole picture that way."^[24]

The squirrel sequence is over so quickly that it's difficult to assess an improvement in quality and any advantage over Ray's normal rear screen setup would appear to be minimal. Ray would use the time-consuming frontlight/backlight method again only as a last resort.^[25]

The exquisite squirrel model was built by Ray himself. He acquired a squirrel skin from a taxidermist and this was fitted onto an armature machined by his father. The model still survives today.

In 1959 Jim Danforth inquired to *American Cinematographer* magazine about compositing. Linwood Dunn's reply described the Frontlight/Backlight process.

Technical Questions & Answers, Conducted by Walter Streng, A.S.C.

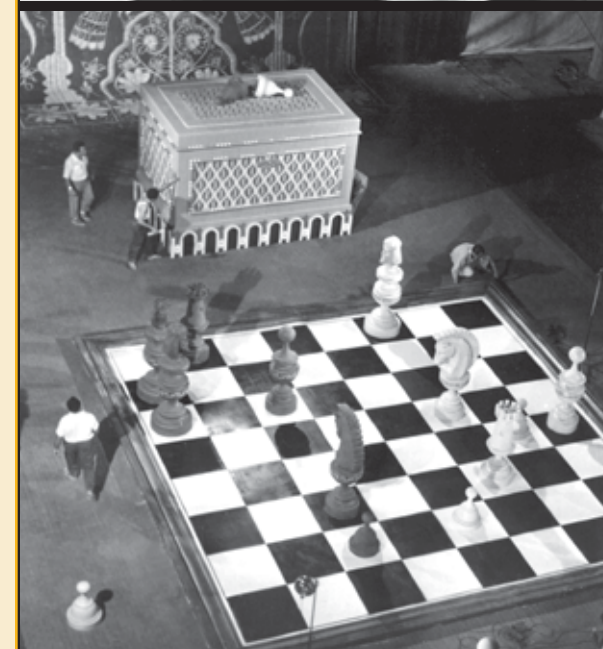
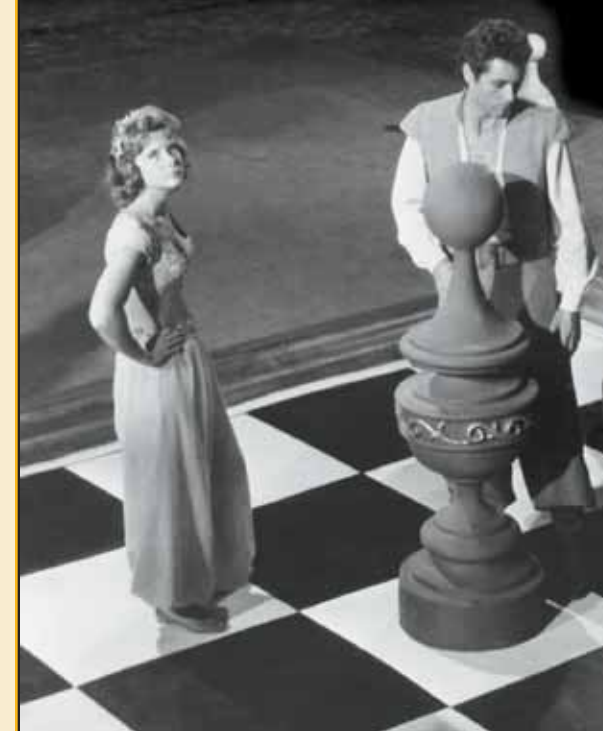
Q. Does Ray Harryhausen use a standard travelling matte process to obtain rock-steady, fringeless combination prints or some other process? — J. D., Los Angeles, Calif.

A: Composites of foreground and background action are generally accom-

plished by the background projection process. Also, this type of miniature animation is quite adaptable to the making of fringeless travelling matte composites. An extra frame can be photographed each time silhouetting the foreground figure against a white light projected through a translucent background screen alternately with normal photography against a black background. From the negative thus obtained, a perfect travelling matte print can be made by skip-frame optical printing.

— Linwood Dunn, A.S.C.
American Cinematographer, July, 1959, p. 403.

A Game of Chess



“I am Captain Nemo”

356. MED. LONG SHOT - HERBERT & ELENA'S POV

A strange figure can be seen in the light, emerging from the water and the mist that lies on the sea. The figure is apparently that of a man, and he grows taller as he reaches the shoreline. He wears a heavy helmet made from a Nautilus shell, with a face-plate; on his back is another large shell acting as an air tank. His upper body is encased in some gleaming rubberized material. Water drips from him. He emerges completely now and walks with slow measured steps toward CAMERA. He carries a long slim spear.

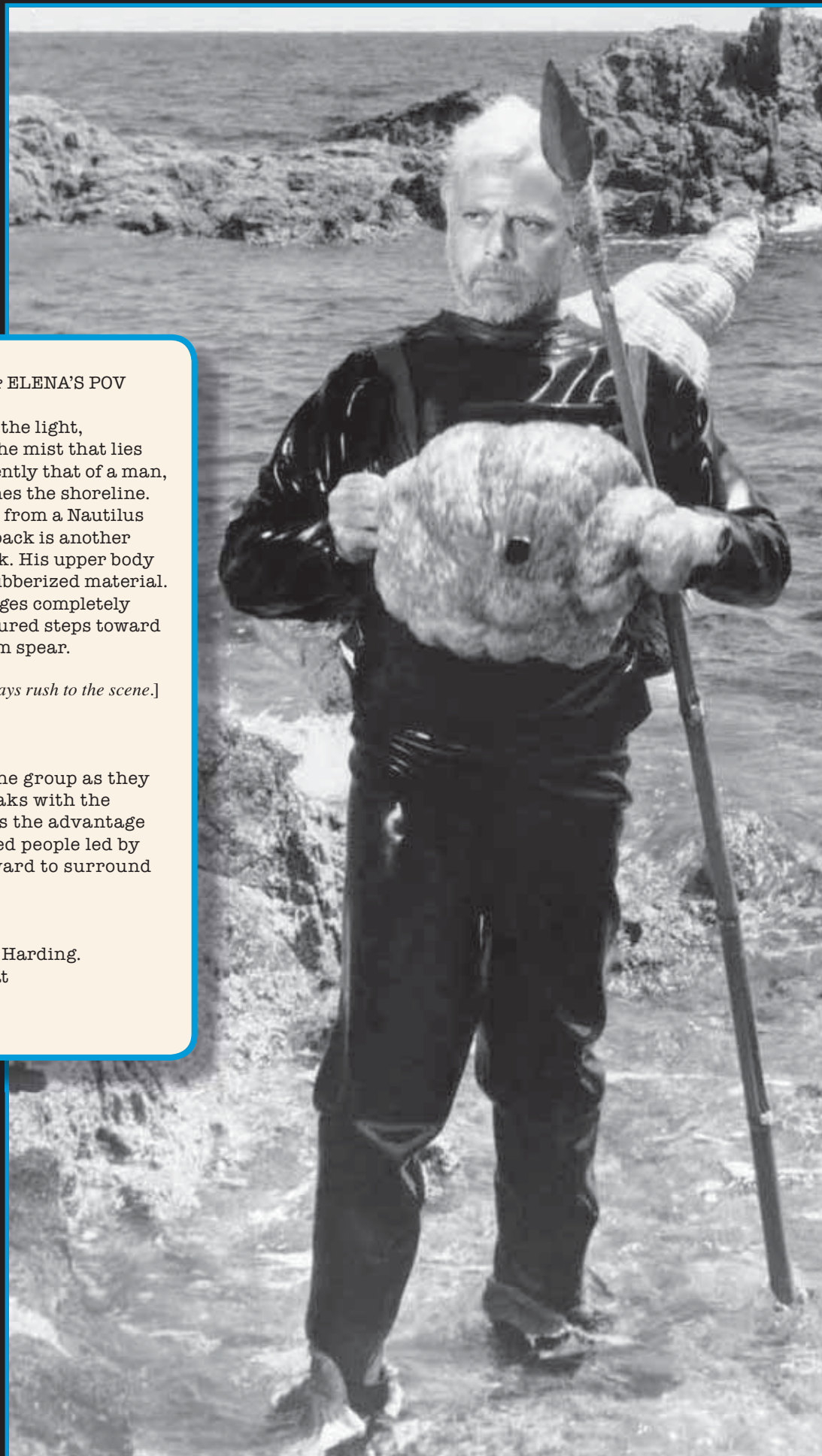
[Moments later, the rest of the castaways rush to the scene.]

364. MEDIUM SHOT - GROUP

NEMO is turning, surveying the group as they come towards him. NEMO speaks with the quiet assurance of one who has the advantage of knowledge over the mystified people led by HARDING, who now come forward to surround him.

NEMO
How do you do, Captain Harding.
(as if he knows what
the effect will be)
I am Captain Nemo...

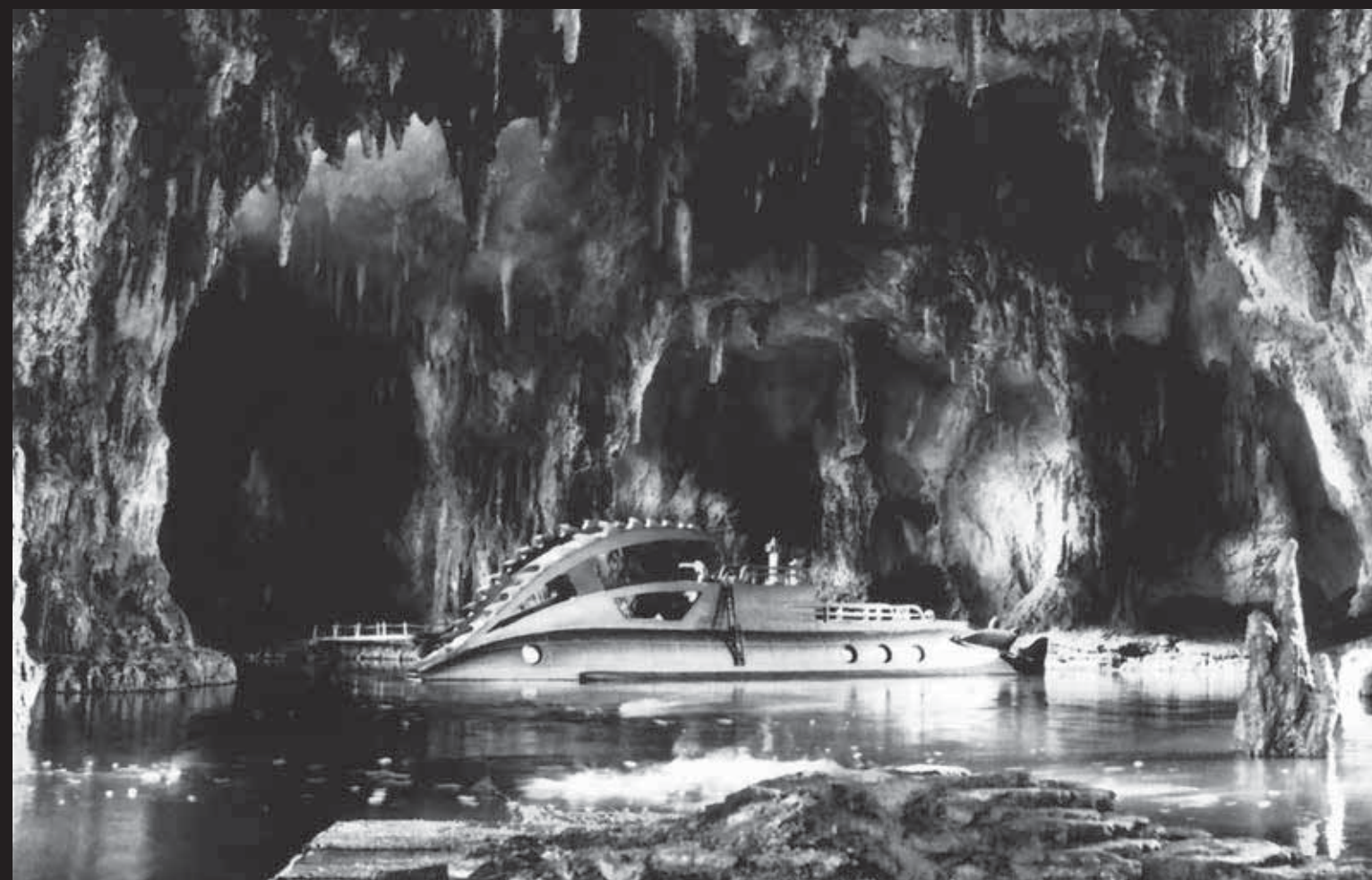
The unique underwater diving suit featured a helmet and air cylinder made to look like large converted seashells, and it certainly made for an arresting image as Nemo dramatically emerged from the sea for the first time. Michael Callan recalled that “Herbert Lom was a vision as he came out of the ocean with his giant seashell air tank. Unfortunately, [the seashell tank] was made of Plaster of Paris and kept melting. It had to be replaced four or five times.” [16]



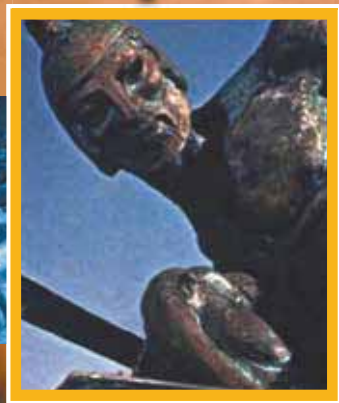
Above: A foreground traveling matte of Michael Callan and Beth Rogan on a rocky peninsula.

The Nautilus

Below: The elaborate miniature of “The Grotto” where the Nautilus is moored.

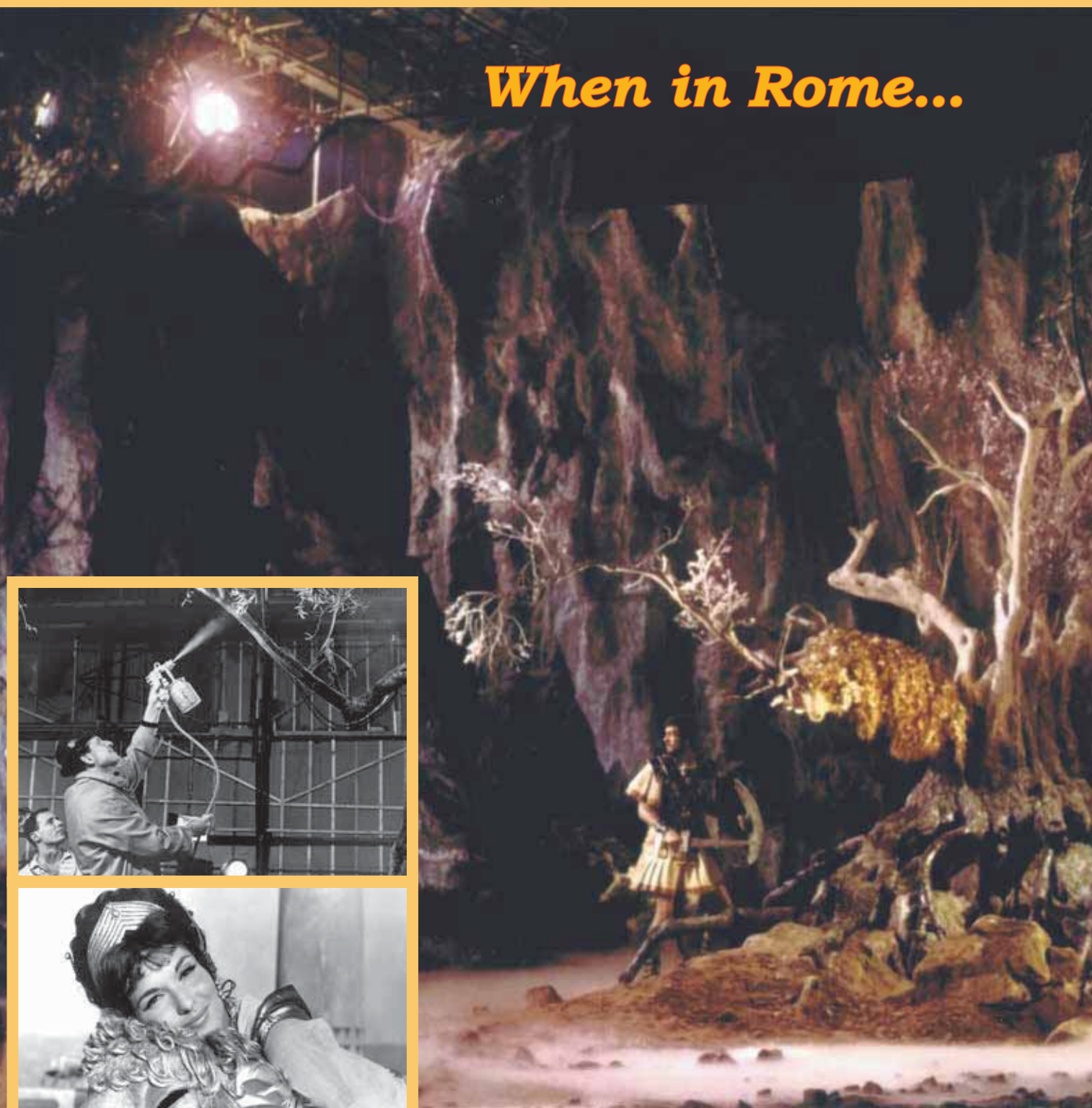


Chapter 16



**Rise Up You Dead,
Slain of the Hydra...**

When in Rome...



Top: Ray dulls a shiny spot spotted when looking through the lens. An overcoat and hat were in order as the Golden Fleece set had been built outdoors, covered by a canvas "tent"-like structure, and it was quite cold in November and December.

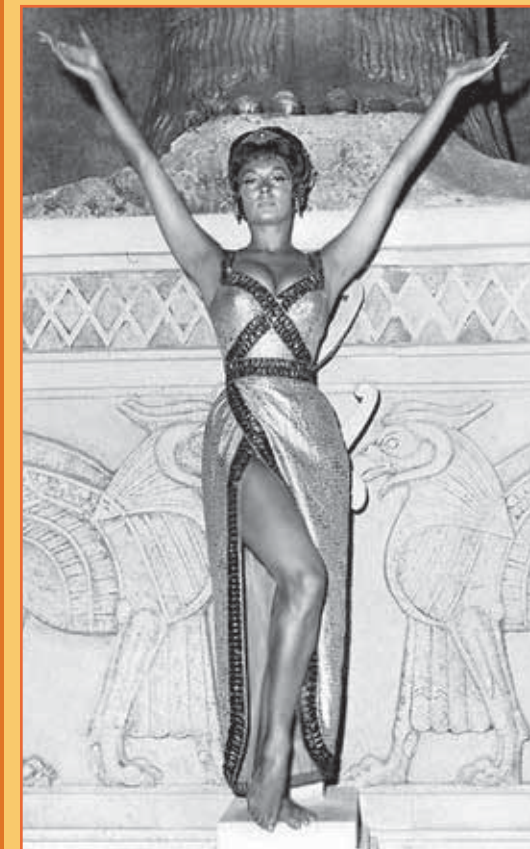
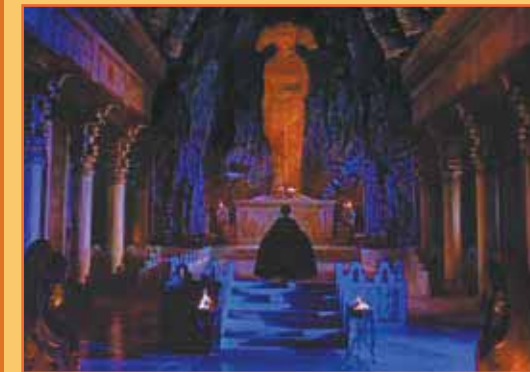
Above: Nancy Kovack snuggles with The Golden Fleece. After two months of searching for a "golden fleece," the art department found a Scottish textile firm that agreed to weave a fleece of gold if production would provide the ram's head. Total cost: \$258.45 (considering the trouble that Jason goes to, it hardly seems worth the trip).

In addition to the real locations, indoor sets depicting Mount Olympus, the Temple of Hera, the treasure chamber of Talos, the palace of Aeetes, and the lair of the Hydra were built at the Saba Palatino and Vasca Navale Studios in Rome, where the production filmed from November 14 to December 12, 1961. Production designer Geoffrey Drake was able to call upon his experience with Greek locations and sets two years before as the designer of Carl Foreman's production of *The Guns of Navarone* (1961), and under his supervision, art directors Herbert Smith, Jack Maxsted and Tony Sarzi Braga were each assigned separate locations and sets to design and supervise.

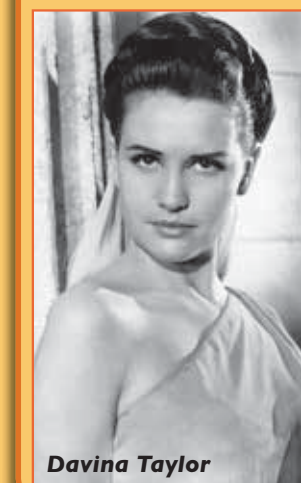
It looks as though time and care were taken with the Hydra's grotto setting, but Wilkie Cooper remembered that "we really didn't

have enough studio space on *Jason*. We had Carl Foreman's art director [Geoffrey Drake] because there were quite a lot of sets. I gave him all the scales we were working with, to put all these figures in, but the things he was designing were so large that most of the set would never be seen. He was building for weeks and got rather behind. I went to Rome with Charles and the art director and we still had a set to build—the one for the fleece—and no stages. So we put up some canvas and built the set overnight because we had to get down to Naples to shoot the following day. I tell you, if it wasn't for Charles Schneer it would have taken another month. Bertie [Herbert] Smith was doing all the good stuff down there. He had done all the sets on *Mysterious Island* and was working like a slave."^[32]

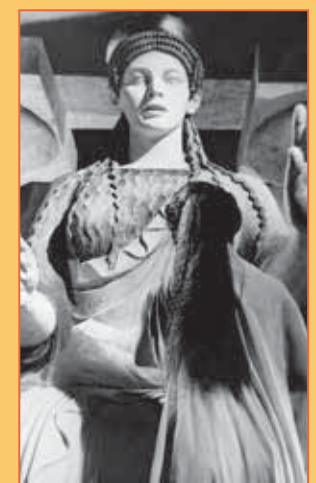
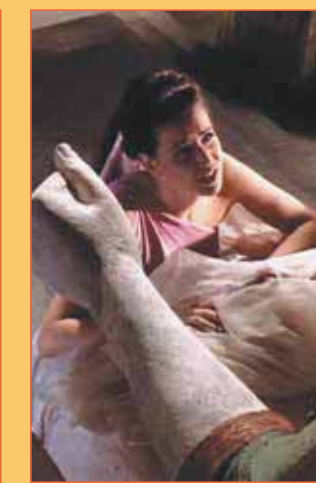
The Temple of Hecate

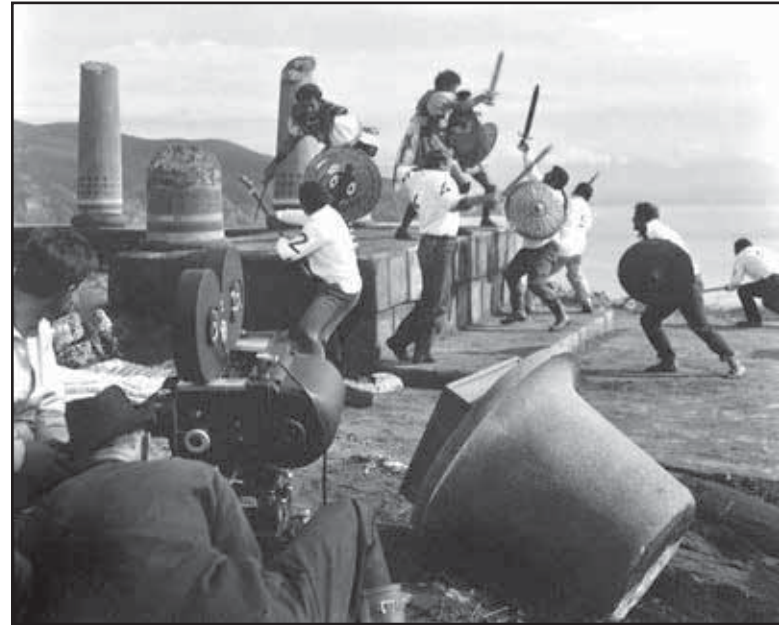


Briseis appeals to the goddess Hera



Davina Taylor





Above, middle: Wilkie Cooper (in dark hat) wonders if this will ever work as he peers through the viewfinder of the massive Mitchell BNC ("Blimped Newsreel Camera"), a camera model first introduced in 1932.

Above: A frame taken from the preview trailer (and not appearing in the film itself) includes a surface gauge. Its vertical shaft about 15" tall, the gauge also provides a sense of scale to the skeleton models.

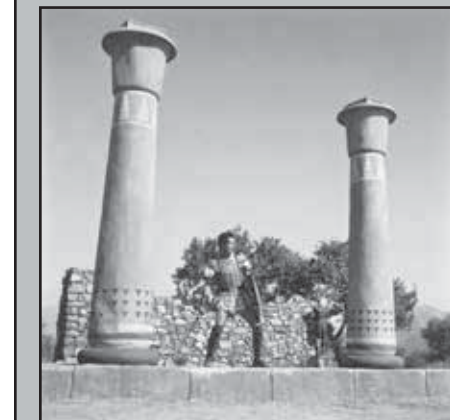
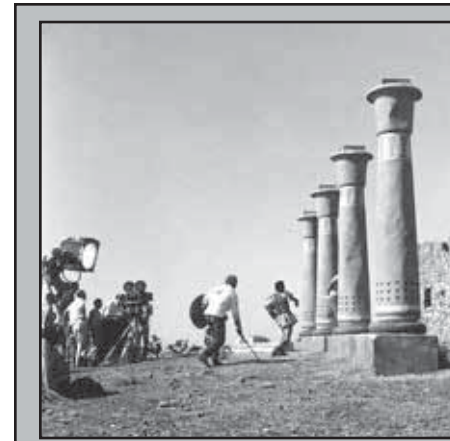
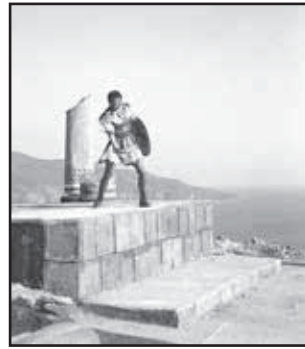


Ray used the black and white footage of the stunt men with numbers on their backs as a guide for the animation. After ten or twelve rehearsals, the stunt men stepped aside and the actors would go through the action for the cameras alone. Much of the action was rehearsed to a specific beat to make it easier for the actors to remember (One, Two— sword comes down; Three, Four— shield is pushed aside; ...and so on).

Only six stop motion skeletons were made, joined by the existing star of *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad*, and Ray's father once again engineered the precision ball and socket armatures. The skeleton faces were given heavy brows and pronounced cheekbones to make them look more evil. Amazingly, all these figures still exist, although one has lost its legs, cannibalized for one of the ghouls in *Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger*. Ray confirmed that, contrary to information published elsewhere, Diana Harryhausen did not paint the ornate markings on the skeletons' shields. He hadn't known Diana that long at the time of *Jason*, and her interest in art and painting came along later.^[61]

The shot of the skeletons emerging from the ground was achieved by installing a small lift platform for each figure below the animation stage. A controlling screw raised each skeleton a frame at a time through the pre-broken topsoil (a close shot of one of the emerging skeletons was used twice).

The stone pedestal used in a series of long and medium shots is a mixture of live action and miniature, later allowing the skeletons to climb onto it to pursue the three swordsmen. A large stone head, part of a broken statue, adds foreground depth to the setup.



Stunt choreographer Ferdinando Poggi also played Castor, and here wages battle with one of the skeleton warriors. The black and white photos show the setup, rehearsal, and the empty plate, and the color image is the final shot. Note that Ray has placed a miniature replica of the platform stones in the foreground, eliminating the need for the normal split screen.



Because the action is so fast-moving, it is easy to miss some of Ray's ingenious tricks that make this sequence believable. Often, an actor's live action sword passes in front of the animated figure. This is, of course, impossible with the live action projected on a rear screen. The illusion required painstakingly suspending a miniature section of sword in front of the model and matching its position to the real sword on the background plate, or painting the partial sword on a foreground glass. Either way, this work was very time-consuming, but so important to the overall effect.

Jason strikes at a fallen skeleton, leaving his sword imbedded in its ribs. This "impossible" shot is emphasized by the fact that the skeleton leans

toward the camera to show that the sword is firmly imbedded in its ribs. Armstrong actually dropped his sword onto the ground and Ray covered it with a portion of "empty" background plate via split screen. The real sword that left Jason's hand "became" a miniature prop to enable it to remain inside the model skeleton.

Then another skeleton just misses Jason with a downward stroke of its sword. The skeleton's sword passes behind Jason, and in this instance, since the skeleton's hand also passes behind the image of Jason, small portions of Jason's arm, tunic and leg were painted on glass to match the projected live action for those 3 or 4 frames to obscure the skeleton's hand and sword.





Photo by Jim Manning



Top: Photographer Richard Green attempts to soothe the savage beast.

Above and Right: The Hydra model in retirement.

Below Right: In a few shots such as this, two or three of the heads actually come to a stop. This lessened the amount of animation work in a way that was not overtly noticeable.

Far Right: The Jason figure was one of the most detailed and accurate "human" figures in all of Ray's films, and the effect was further enhanced by especially delicate animation.



Only one head-and-neck section was sculpted and molded, and all seven heads were then cast from the same mold. Even still, the Hydra remains one of the most complex and fascinating of all of Ray's animated creatures.

Large photo by Jim Manning



Above: Ray Harryhausen drawing restored by Terry Michitsch.



The Hydra model in Ray's living room in London, photographed in the 1970s.



Many viewers regard *Jason and the Argonauts* as Ray's best film, including Ray himself, but for story construction and an ideal integration of the animation, *First Men 'In' the Moon* takes the honors.

First Men 'In' the Moon was not the first H. G. Wells story that Ray wanted to film. In the early 1950s, Ray had tried to interest a number of studios in a version of Wells' *War of the Worlds*. Gaumont British tried unsuccessfully to bring the Martian invasion to the screen in the early 1930s, and then Alexander Korda filmed two of the Wells novels in 1936, *Things To Come* and *The Man Who Could Work Miracles* (Wells himself supplying both screenplays).

In 1938, a controversial and now-legendary radio adaptation of *War of the Worlds* was produced in America by Orson Welles for the Mercury Theater of the Air. The story was updated and presented as a series of "emergency news bulletins" interrupting a seemingly genuine broadcast of dance band music. Although the program was properly identified as a dramatic presentation, complete with a score by Bernard Herrmann, many listeners believed that what they were hearing was true, and widespread panic ensued.

George Pal followed Orson Welles' lead in his classic version of *War of the Worlds* (1953) by transferring the story to America and setting the main conflict around modern-day Los Angeles. In 1960, Pal again dipped into the treasury of Wells literature to produce *The Time Machine*, but this time retained its original Victorian London setting.

In the early 1950s, Merian Cooper and Ernest Schoedsack considered filming Wells' *The Food of the Gods*, a story about a substance that caused living things to grow to many times their normal size. Apart from accidentally being eaten by various creatures, the formula is consumed by the inventor's own child and others, and creates a race of giants. Ray considered this story in 1962 and even produced a large drawing of giant chickens attacking a group of men. But again this treatment failed to generate any enthusiasm. It was left to producer Bert I. Gordon to film two versions, *Village of the Giants* (1966) and *Food of the Gods* (1976). An even later version, *Food of the Gods 2*, appeared in 1987.

First Men "In" the Moon (1964)



"We're Off!" Charles Schnee hosted a "kickoff" party on Saturday, October 5, 1963 at the May Fair Hotel. In attendance but not shown below was composer Laurie Johnson. The film started shooting at Shepperton



Above, L-R: Alan Kean of BLC, Kenneth Maidment and Don Romney of Columbia, Martha Hyer, E. J. Bryson, Charles Schnee and Victor Hoare.

Studios two days later on Monday, October 7, 1963. Martha Hyer had arrived from Hollywood the previous week, having completed work on *The Carpetbaggers*. Both Edward Judd and Lionel Jeffries had recently wrapped on Columbia's *The Long Ships*.



Above, L-R: Charles Schnee, Diana Harryhausen, Technical Advisor Arthur Garrett, Ray Harryhausen, Shirley Schnee.



Above: Martha Hyer (in foreground, left), chats with George Wills of *Time* magazine and Tony Wells of *Today* magazine. Ray Harryhausen at right.

Below, L-R: Eileen and Lionel Jeffries, Mr. Littlejohn and Mr. Bush of Technicolor.



Below, L-R: Charles Schnee, Lionel Jeffries, Martha Hyer, Edward Judd, director Nathan Juran.



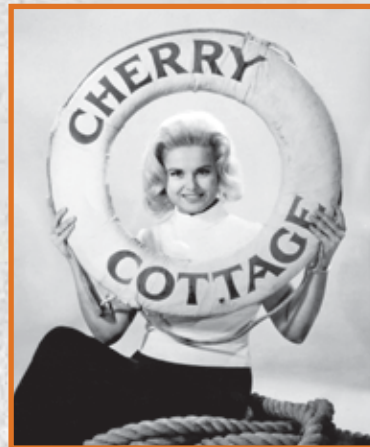


Capturing the Feel of Victorian England

Principal photography lasted a full 12 weeks. According to *Variety*, Charles Schneer scouted locations in Spain in April, 1962, before returning to England to supervise the final post production of *Jason and the Argonauts*, though it's not clear what scenes he had in mind for production in Spain. In the end, the limited amount of location shooting involving Bedford's "Cherry Cottage" and the registrar's office at Dymchurch took the crew only a few miles from Shepperton. The use of existing period-looking buildings kept costs down while capturing the feel of Victorian England.

The exterior of Cavor's house was about 20 miles from Shepperton near Reading, Berkshire. Effects technician Kit West remembered "an incident that happened when we were filming at

the location of Cavor's house. We had to photograph the exterior of the house because we were going to build an exact replica for the model work. I was standing at the front entrance with the elderly couple who had granted us permission to film there, watching all the activity. All of a sudden, there was this awful noise behind us and an electrical generator came crashing through a beautifully-trimmed privet hedge that must have been there for a hundred years, plowed across a flower bed and came to a stop, stuck fast in this immaculate lawn. The old couple just stood there, wide-eyed and open-mouthed as this thing utterly destroyed part of their wonderful home. Someone should have warned them: Never rent your place to a film company!" [17]



Cherry Tree Cottage today, now New Haw Locks, Chertsey in Surrey, close to Shepperton.



Above: Clearly ahead of her time, Kate Callender arrives at Cherry Cottage driving a ca. 1903 DeDion Bouton automobile (the story takes place in 1899).



Martha Hyer, Nathan Juran, and Charles Schneer outside Cherry Cottage



Above: Other than a closeup insert, only one wide shot in the "excursion" sequence includes Martha Hyer visible in the porthole of the sphere. While this could have been easily avoided, the extra effort of bringing in Hyer that day for the one shot nicely ties the group together at the beginning of the sequence.



In 1963 there was no clear understanding of the conditions on the moon, and the Art Department and miniatures crew had little factual reference. The only certainty was that there was no atmosphere, contrary to what Wells had written (thus the "In" for the film's title).



Mooncalf!

While the film is filled with many complicated optical and miniature effects, there are less than four-and-a-half minutes of actual model animation. This can be partly attributed to the difficulty of doing animation in Panavision®, but the concept of the film was radically different from any other film that Ray had done. In many of Ray's films, the animation depicts confrontations between live actor and creature, but with *First Men 'In' the Moon*, with the exception of the mooncalf episode, the animated Selenites are well-integrated into the story and are often of a "non-spectacular" nature — an alien society, characters in the play. The Selenites are the first of Ray's animated creatures to have speaking parts (albeit through a translating device), but these are intelligent beings and not merely animal adversaries.

The attack of the moonbeast is more traditional Harryhausen animated action, but Ray remembered that this huge caterpillar was "one of the most difficult single figures I ever had to animate. The undulating movement of the body, with the tiny legs that had to give the impression of pushing the body forward, made the animation incredibly slow and complicated."^[29] Although two of these enormous creatures are seen together in one shot, only one model was built and the second was added by split screen.

Because most of the animated action had to be accomplished with split screen or bluescreen traveling matte rather than the usual rear screen setup, there is none of the characteristic close contact between the animated moonbeast and the live action. Nevertheless, several closeups of the moonbeast's head, its unusual movement, and the spectacular environment make this sequence a highlight. The skeleton of the moonbeast seen in the film was designed and cast only in miniature by Ian Scoones using hard rubber. Edward Judd was added walking in front of, then behind, the skeleton by a double traveling matte.

From the novel...

First of all was its enormous size: the girth of its body was some fourscore feet, its length perhaps two hundred. Its sides rose and fell with its laboured breathing. I perceived that its gigantic flabby body lay along the ground and that its skin was of corrugated white, dappling into blackness along the backbone. But of its feet we saw nothing. I think also that we saw then the profile at least of the almost brainless head, with its fat-encumbered neck, its slobbering, omnivorous mouth, its little nostrils, and tight shut eyes. (For the mooncalf invariably shuts its eyes in the presence of the sun.) We had a glimpse of a vast red pit as it opened its mouth to bleat and bellow again, we had a breath from the pit, and then the monster heeled over like a ship, dragged forward along the ground, creasing all his leathery skin, rolled again, and so wallowed past us, smashing a path amidst the scrub, and was speedily hidden from our eyes by the dense interlacing beyond. — *H. G. Wells*

From the screenplay...

278 REVERSE SHOT. FUNGUS PASTURE (T.M.-MIN-DYN)

Across the cavern is a huge creature, diminished by the distance, but perhaps a hundred feet long. It is shaped generally like a vast, overgrown grub or caterpillar, its colossal hull segmented and stiffened against collapse by overlapping plates, chitinous and barbed. The great horny jaws are surmounted by protruberant, staring eyes. The sound of its greedy munching carries clearly across.

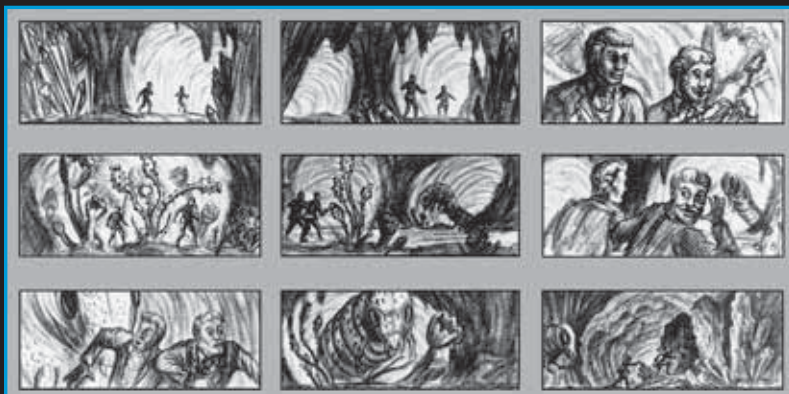
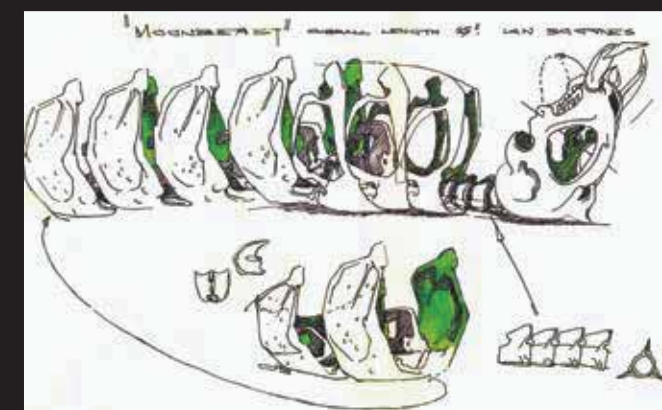


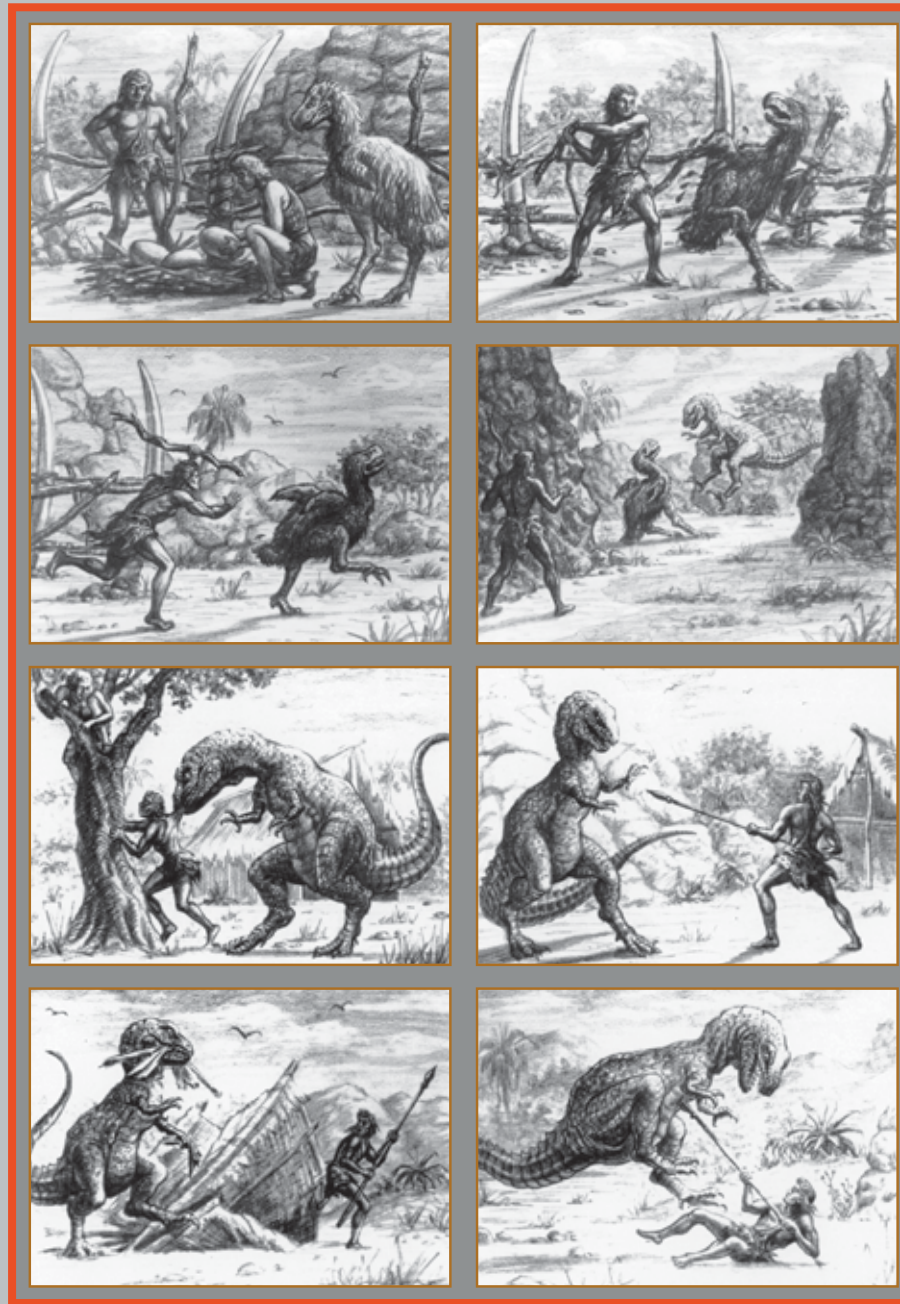
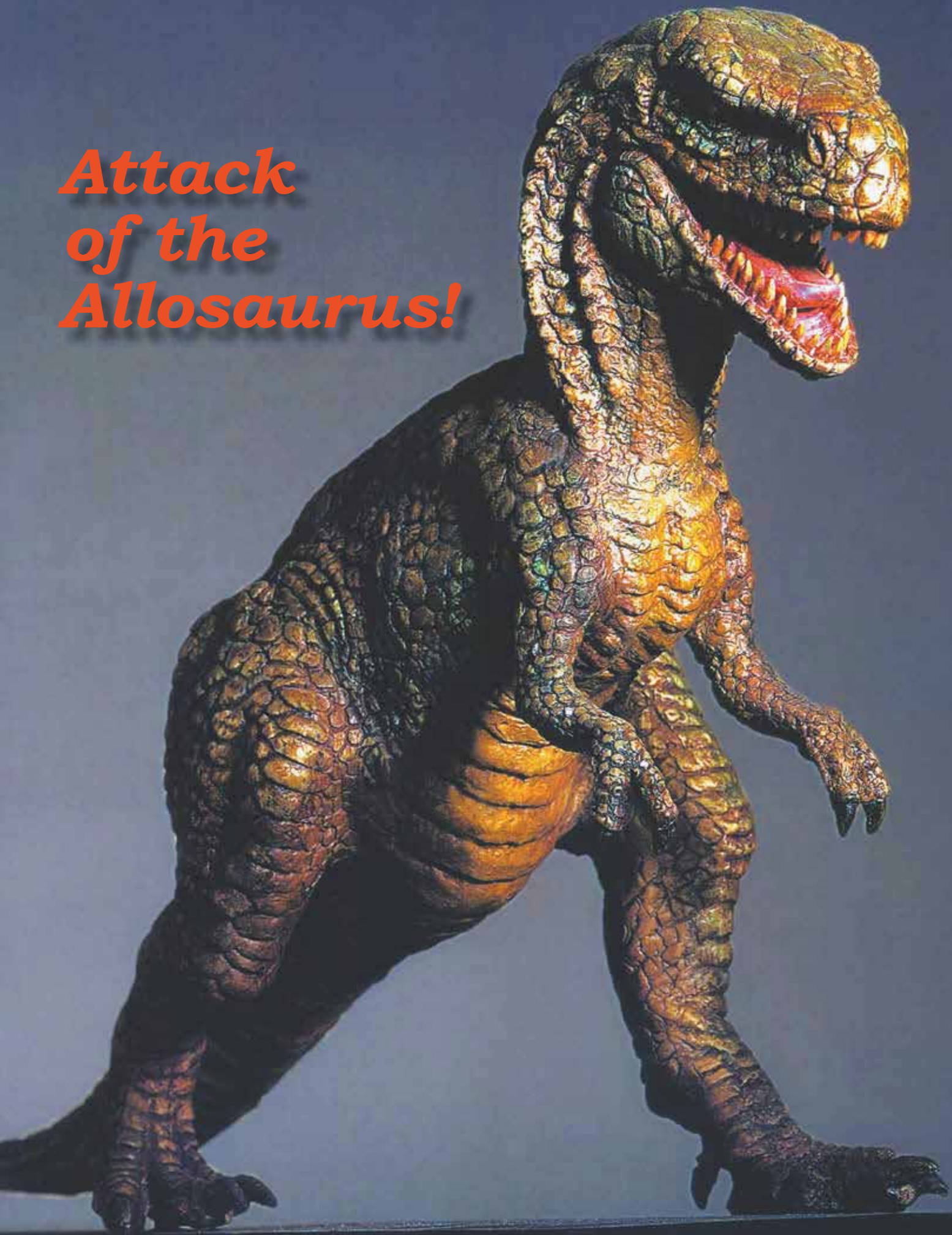
Photo by Jim Manning

Below: Ian Scoones' drawing of the Mooncalf's skeleton, eventually fabricated into a 25-inch-long model (right).

Above: The 5-Piece Mold of the Mooncalf
Photo © Mark Mawston / The Ray and Diana Harryhausen Foundation



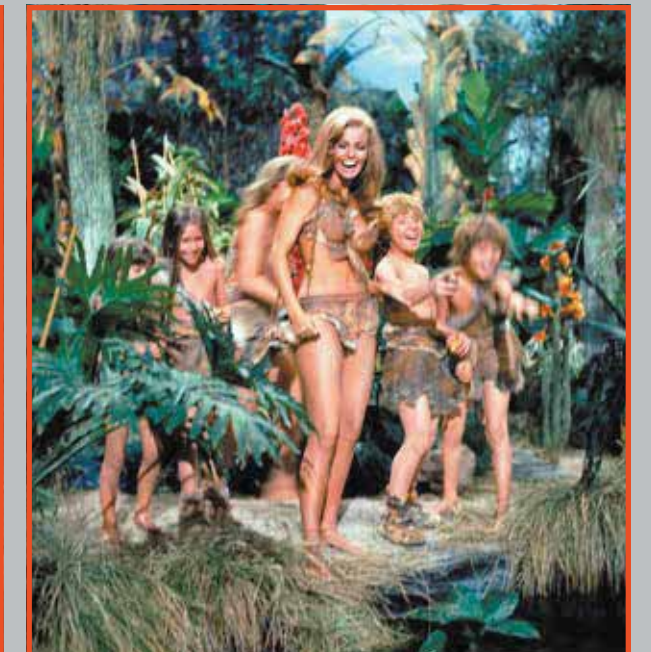
Attack of the Allosaurus!



For sheer dynamic power, the invasion of the Shell people's camp by a young Allosaurus is the kind of scene where Ray's consummate artistry and skill really come to the fore.

The light-hearted episode of Loana unsuccessfully teaching Tumak how to fish is spoiled by the sudden arrival of an Allosaurus. Ray recalled that he "had a different introduction to the sequence originally planned. Instead of just walking into the camp, we were going to have a scene with a Phororhacos being tended by some cave people. It runs off and is grabbed by the Allosaurus at the entrance to the camp. I eventually used the scene in *The Valley of Gwangi*, replacing the bird with an Ornithomimus."^[29]

The parallel sequence in the original 1940 production used a man in a stiff dinosaur costume (*photo below*). It is slow, plodding and all the more unimaginative when compared to this animation *tour de force*, animated over a period of a month from May 2 to June 3. Ray "thought we could do better than the original film, in which the man in a dinosaur suit was so bad that they had to hide it behind some bushes. For most of the action, all you saw was a vague form moving in the background. There was so much you could do with this sequence. We wanted to display the Allosaurus in all its glory, and so that is the way I designed it."^[30]



A Classic Confrontation

Tumak and Loana stumble upon a Triceratops feeding on the sparse vegetation. Escape is blocked by a Ceratosaurus, a bipedal carnivore with a prominent horn on its snout, but the meat-eater is more interested in the larger prey. Tumak and Loana cower in a deep crevasse, captive spectators to the savage confrontation that follows. Ray felt that “a picture of this type required a big battle sequence between monsters and I think it worked quite well, particularly those shots looking through the rock crevasse with the two people in the foreground. In the original film, this scene was the fight between the young alligator with the pasted-on fin and the monitor lizard, ending with the loser lying on its back with blood oozing out of a gaping wound, which I think overstepped the bounds of good taste.”^[35]

While filming the live action in Lanzarote, one question that had puzzled some of the crew was finally answered. “I remember Ray getting the prop department to build this huge piece of dark green foam rubber,” recalls Patrick Curtis. “Ray never said, and no one knew, what the hell this thing was for, and we all tried to guess. Ray would have this thing carted around all over the place, from island to island, up and down mountains, and still we hadn’t a clue what it was for. Then, when we

were filming the scene where the Ceratosaurus and the Triceratops battle while Raquel and John Richardson are stuck in a crevasse, a huge tail comes into shot that we had to drag across.”^[36] All of the dinosaur shots use the actual animation models and Ray Harryhausen couldn’t recall the use of such a prop, so any such prop tail was most likely used as a perfunctory eyeline “stand-in,” as well as for size and placement reference of the animation model later on the animation stage.

When designing the dinosaur battle, Ray tried to vary the usual outcome of such encounters and here the meat-eater suffers defeat. Apart from the live-action background and occasional traveling matte shots of Tumak and Loana trying to escape, the tussle of the two adversaries is straight out of *The Animal World*, but here with only sound effects and a low, tonal music effect. As always, Ray’s animation is excellent, and was filmed in about 5 weeks from June 6 to July 15 (during which Ray celebrated his 46th birthday). But the sequence is less dramatically satisfying than when the prehistoric creatures are in direct opposition to the human characters, a good argument for showing humans and dinosaurs together. This sequence was later used as stock footage in John Badham’s film *War Games* (1983) as well as Joe D’Amato’s Italian-made *Ator, The Fighting Eagle* (1982).

“The dialog consisted of words like ‘Tumak,’ ‘Akita’ and ‘Seron.’ Tumak was my lover’s name; we had a giant bird we called Seron; and ‘Akita!’ was supposed to mean help. ‘Akita!’ was my big word. The producers also dubbed in a number of grunts and groans for me. The rest of the picture I spent running away from monsters.”^[37]

— Raquel Welch

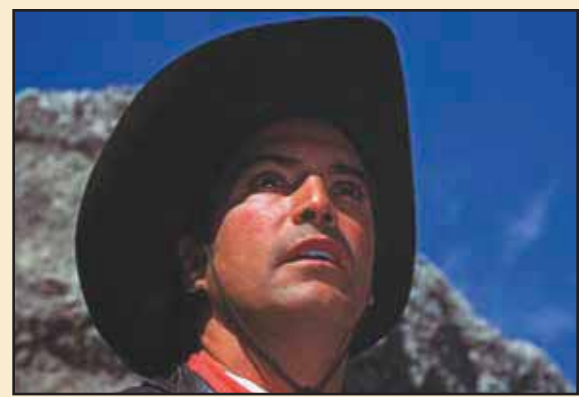
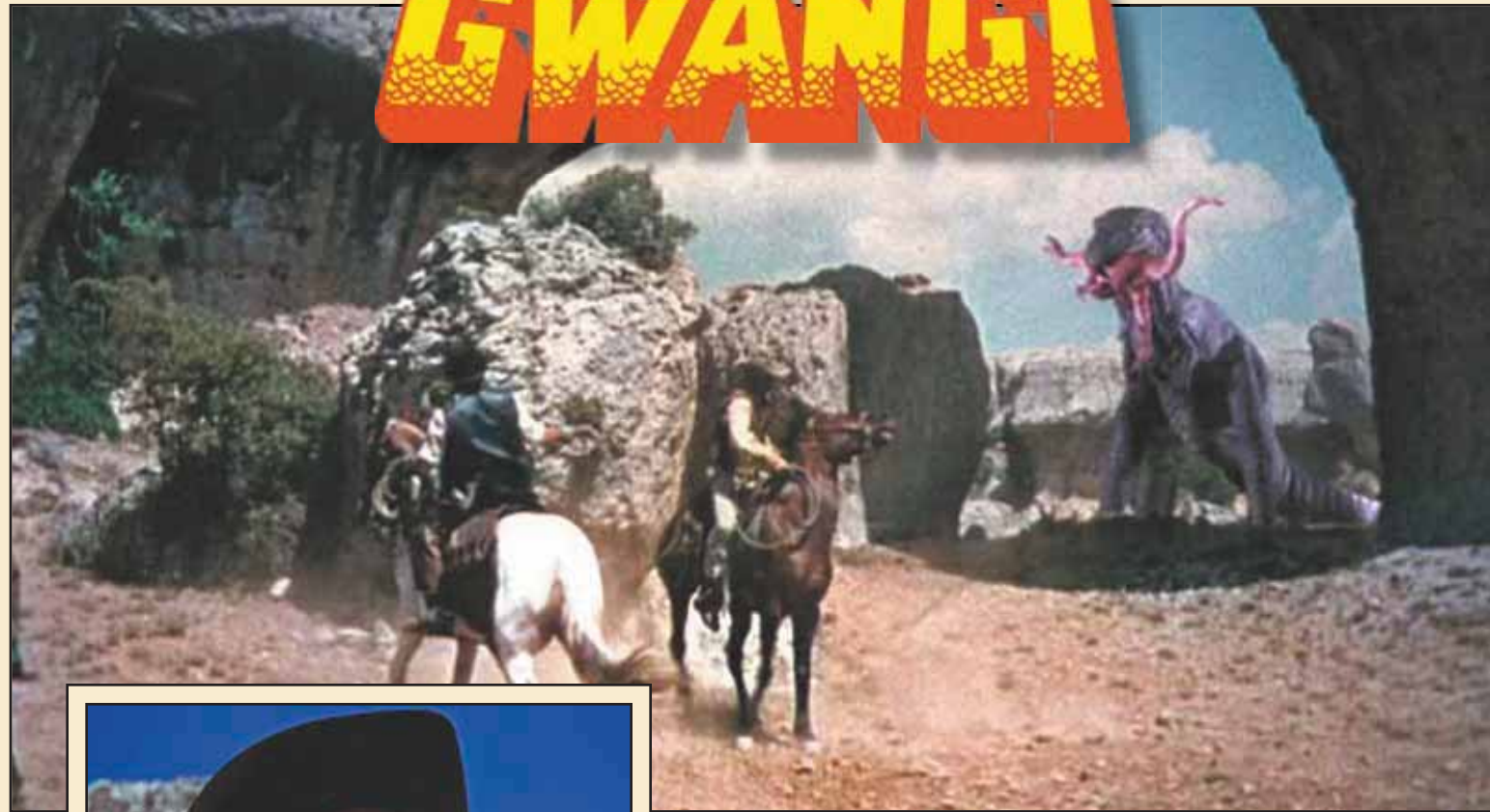
Chapter 19



**There's a Big Lizard
Back There and He's
Headin' This Way!**



GWANGI



The fun of the cowboys chasing the Ornithomimus, "a plucked ostrich," is shattered by the startling appearance of Gwangi, as described in the original script:

286 FULL SHOT CHAMP, ROWDY, TUCK (D) ORNITHOMIMUS, GWANGI (DYN) (SAME AS 284)

Champ's and Rowdy's rearing horses are on the left. They are almost in panic. Gwangi leaps into the scene from behind the right hand rock, pouncing on the stunned ornithomimus. Gwangi is an Allosaurus, possibly the most terrible of all prehistoric reptiles. He towers over the men, perhaps 14 feet. Huge and ferocious, Gwangi snatches up the ornithomimus in his great saw-toothed jaws, snaps the neck and tears at the flesh of the screaming, wriggling creature mercilessly.

Whereas the first part of the film centered around the Eohippus, from this point on it's entirely dominated by Gwangi. "I tried to give Gwangi as much personality as possible within the limitations of the animal," said Ray, "but not so much that he would appear to be a send-up. I tried to convey that it was intelligent, not merely a non-thinking killer, an animal removed from its normal environment and following its natural instinct."^[23]



The Design of Gwangi

O'Brien's original Gwangi was a Tyrannosaurus, but Ray decided to adjust the design to include certain traits of the Allosaurus, particularly its bulk, the length of its arms, and the number of fingers (Gwangi has three fingers, whereas a Tyrannosaurus has two). The shape of the model was also governed slightly by the armature that had already been made, using parts that Ray had cannibalized from other models (he couldn't remember which ones), plus other parts machined by a British company (whose name he couldn't recall). The model was sculpted by Arthur Hayward, working on his fifth and final film with Ray. Hayward modeled the basic shape from existing skeletal remains and then added skin texture by pressing hexagon-shaped tubing onto the clay for individual "scales." As usual, the final model was completed by Ray himself. Hayward had this to say about Gwangi's construction: "Ray actually taught me a lesson concerning the eyebrows. He always wanted a 'demonic' look, which I suppose if you look at some of the modern reptiles face-on, they do have, and this effect was achieved by enlarging the brow and emphasizing the bone structure underneath. When I used to complain, Ray would just shrug and say 'Artistic license you know, Arthur.'"^[24]

As the leading animated character and one which had to be filmed from every conceivable angle, the 12" Gwangi model was full of fine detail and truly gave the impression that this was indeed a living creature. Ray's animation was an extension of his work with the *One Million Years B.C.* Allosaurus, full of nervous energy and purpose, a predator with speed, agility and power, and arguably, the smoothest animation that Ray ever achieved. The realistic movement of the skin when the animal twists and turns, snaps its huge jaws, swishes its tail and strides after its intended victim, belies the fact that the model was cast from a mold. This quality was normally only achieved through the laborious buildup method pioneered by veteran model builder Marcel Delgado.

Ray saved time and expense by reusing two of the animation figures which had been made for *One Million Years B.C.* The Pterodactyl from that film became the main Pterodactyl model that snatches Lope from a horse and the *One Million Years B.C.* Triceratops became the Styraeosaurus that battles Gwangi. The Eohippus, Ornithomimus and elephant were new models. Aside from the strangely shrill sound given to the elephant, the "voices" were of the highest order, as were all the other sound effects used throughout the film.

One-half of the Gwangi mold.

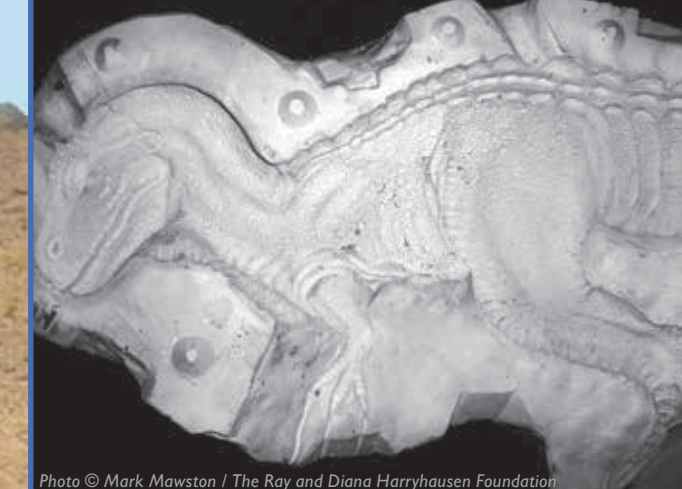
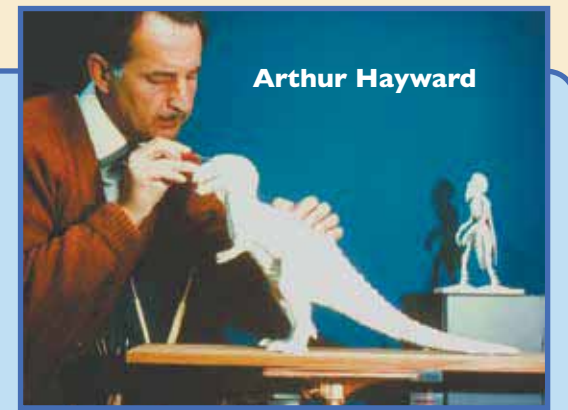


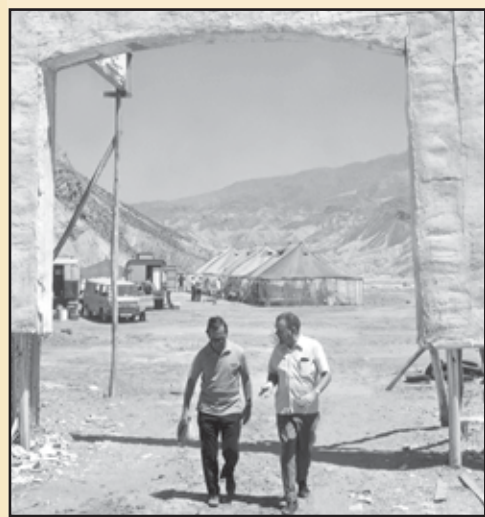
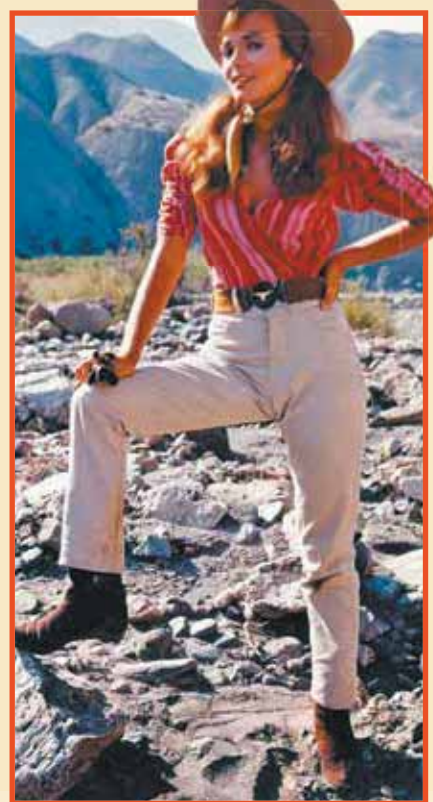
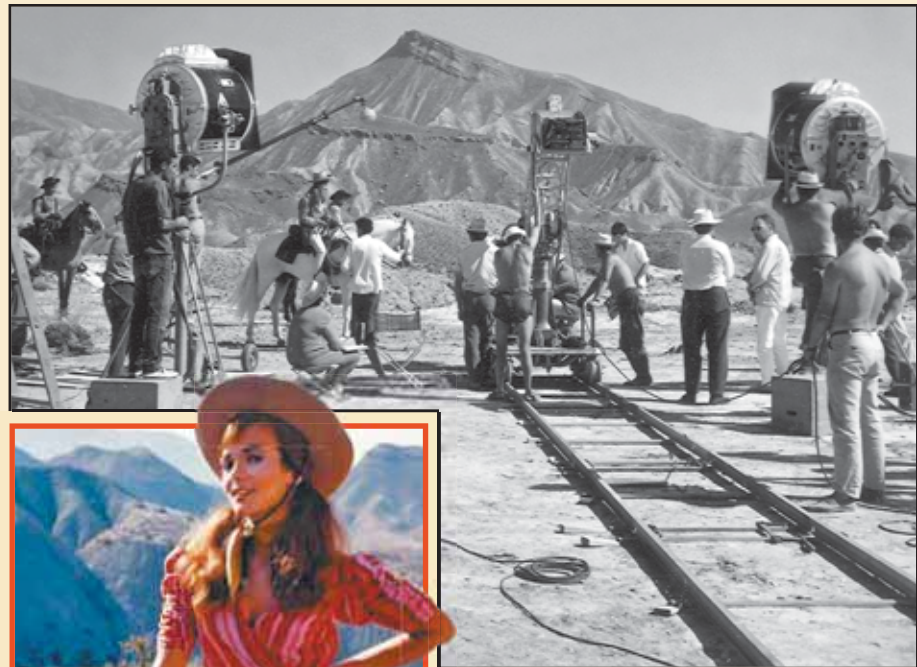
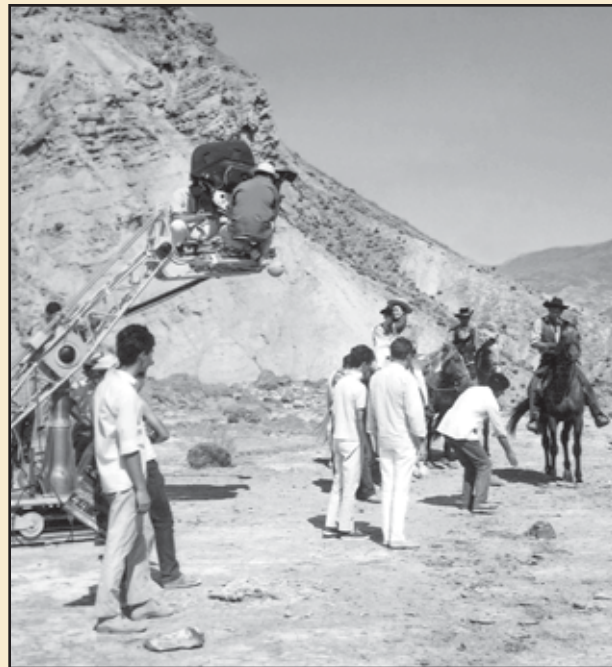
Photo © Mark Mawston / The Ray and Diana Harryhausen Foundation



Arthur Hayward

Sculptor Tony McVey worked with Arthur Hayward in the Modelmaking and Taxidermy Department of the British Natural History Museum for four years. In a Facebook post on July 28, 2018, McVey wrote, "Arthur told me that Ray required copies of the animation models, to use as stand-ins to allow him to check his lightning and adjust the set-ups without subjecting the 'hero' model to any more stress than necessary. Arthur cast these copies in manikin latex, a rubber compound containing China clay that produced light-weight rigid castings with a much longer working life than foam latex (which tended to break down fairly quickly from handling and exposure to the lights). Manikin latex would naturally shrink 8 to 10%, making the removal of Ray's models from their 3- or 4-part molds fairly simple (which would not be the case if they were cast in plaster). We used manikin latex extensively to make display models for the museum exhibits, as well as fiberglass and wax. The white manikin latex cast that Arthur is posing with above was eventually painted to look like bronze."





Charles Schmeer and James O'Connolly

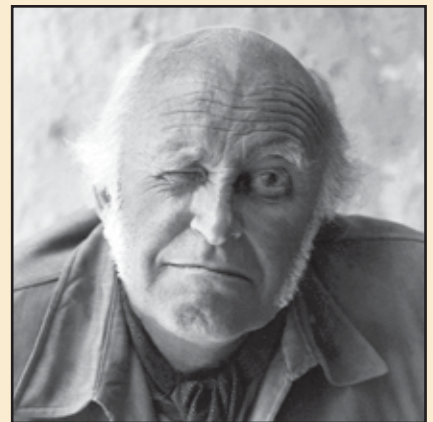


Script Supervisor Gladys Goldsmith

Above: At the end of filming the cast and crew gathered together to say their goodbyes, which was a particularly sad time for Gila Golan: "The Spanish crew gave me a doll that was dressed exactly like I was in the film. Sadly, it went missing, and I never found it again. Laurence Naismith [below] was adorable — when he saw that I was crying, he came up to me and put his arm around me and said, 'Don't worry, we'll get together again.' But, of course, we never did."^[15]

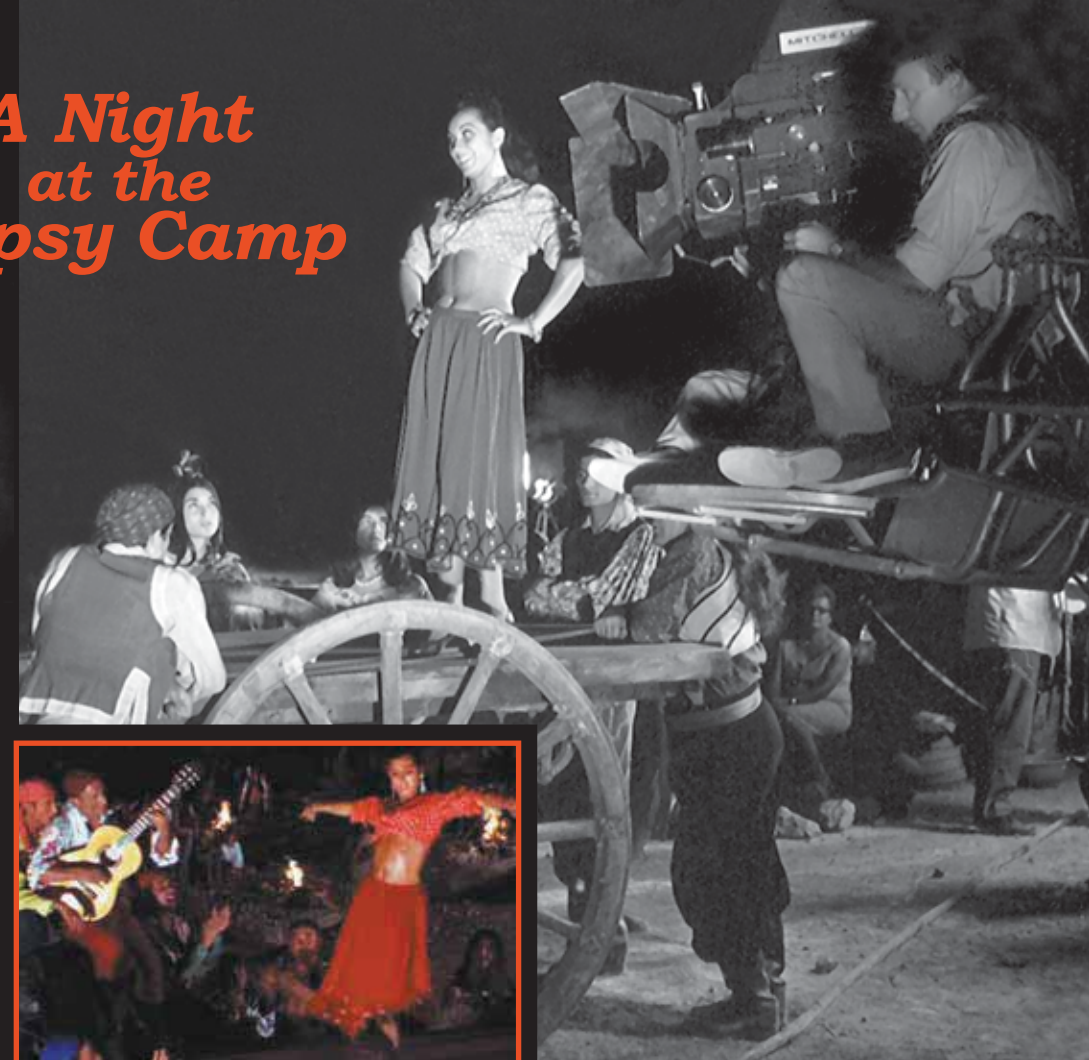


James O'Connolly and Assistant Director Pedro Vidal



Sound Recordist Malcolm Steward

A Night at the Gypsy Camp

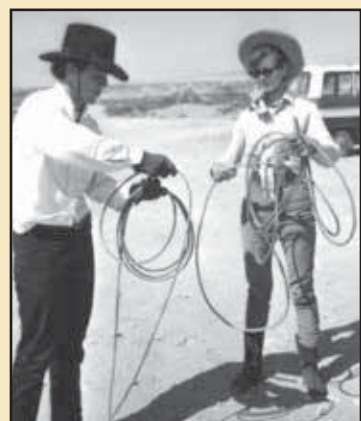
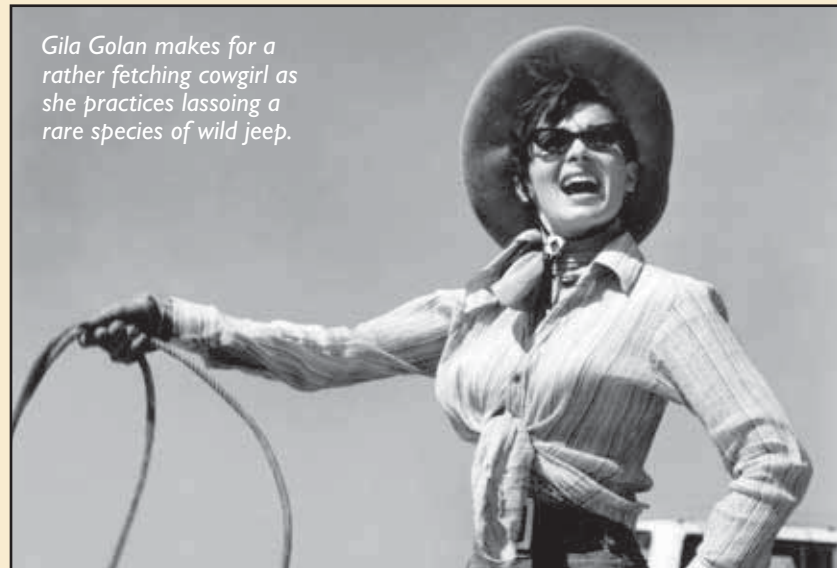


Above: Director James O'Connolly guides Laurence Naismith to the correct position for "negotiating" with Tia Zorina (Freda Jackson). Camera operator Alec Mills remembered that cinematographer Erwin Hillier probably shot the Gypsy Camp sequence at night (rather than "day-for-night") because of the presence of campfires and torches, which would not "read" as well if filmed in daylight. (See the footnotes at the end of the **Jason and Argonauts** chapter for a more details about day-for-night photography.)

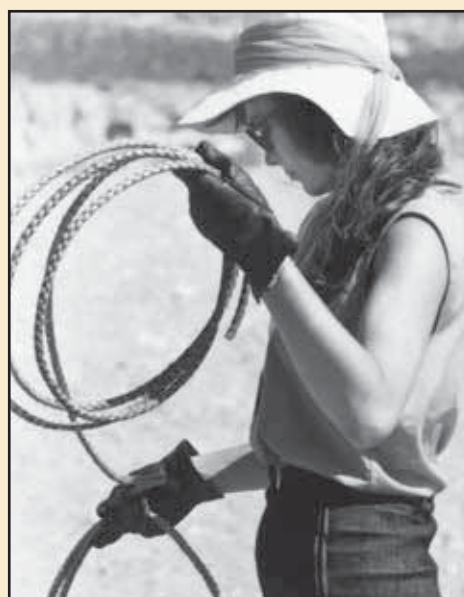




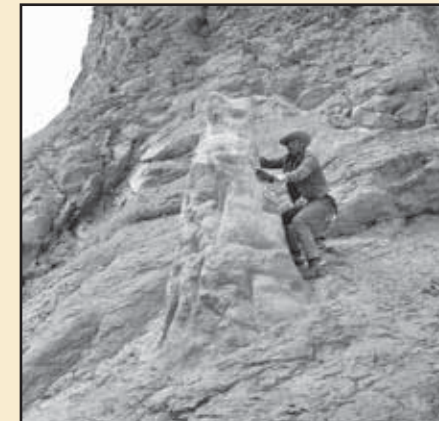
Gila Golan makes for a rather fetching cowgirl as she practices lassoing a rare species of wild jeep.



"When I read the script I knew I would need to ride very well," said Gila Golan, "so I went to a farm [in the U.S.] and took lessons. Of course, I was all black-and-blue and picked up a few injuries from falls, but after a few lessons, it all began to come together. For a lot of the hard riding scenes I had a stunt double, who, believe it or not, was a man. But for many sequences I had to be seen, and I never fell off once. Other riders were falling off all the time. James Franciscus took one really nasty fall, and at one stage he didn't want to get back on his horse. But when he saw me riding around, he (and the others) didn't want to be shown up by a woman." [27]



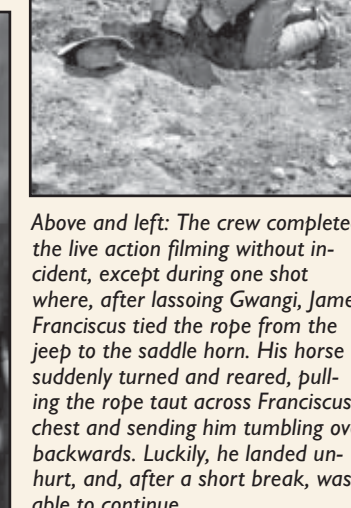
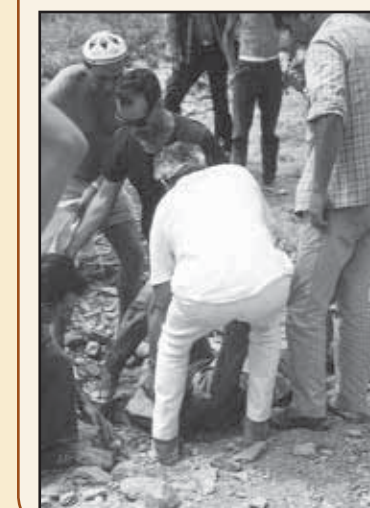
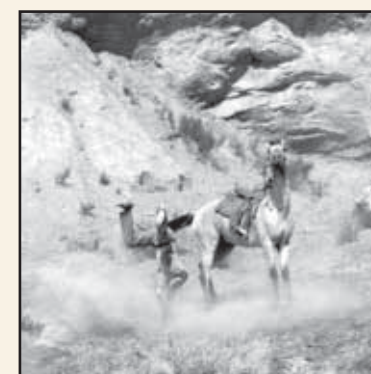
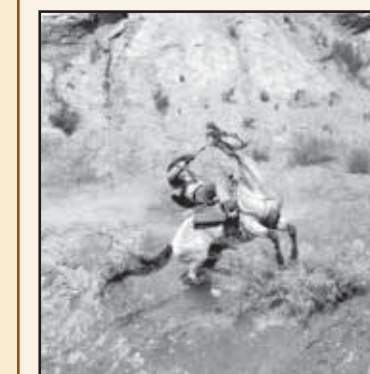
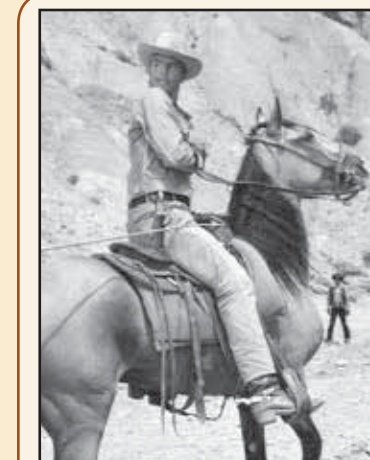
Willis O'Brien's original storyboard drawing ...



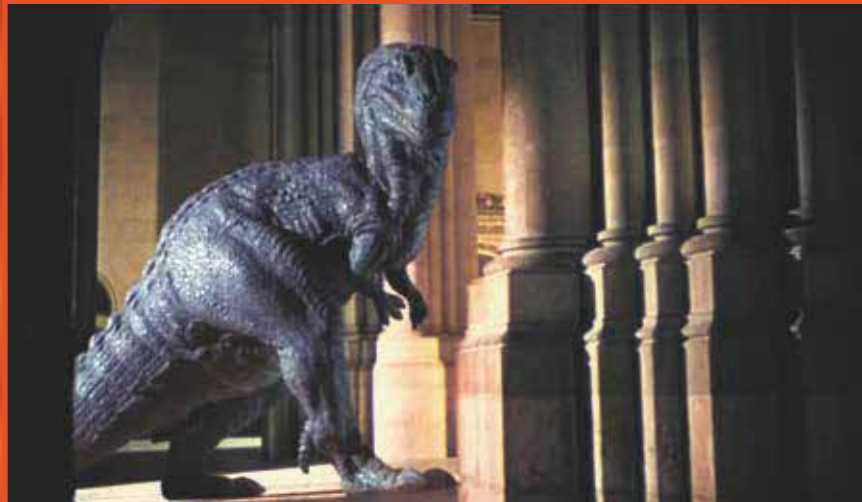
... James Franciscus positioned behind a set piece specially constructed by the art department ...



... and the final shot. The Dynamation "split" can be detected up the left edge of the rock spire, allowing Gwangi to pass behind the rock at different times during the shot..

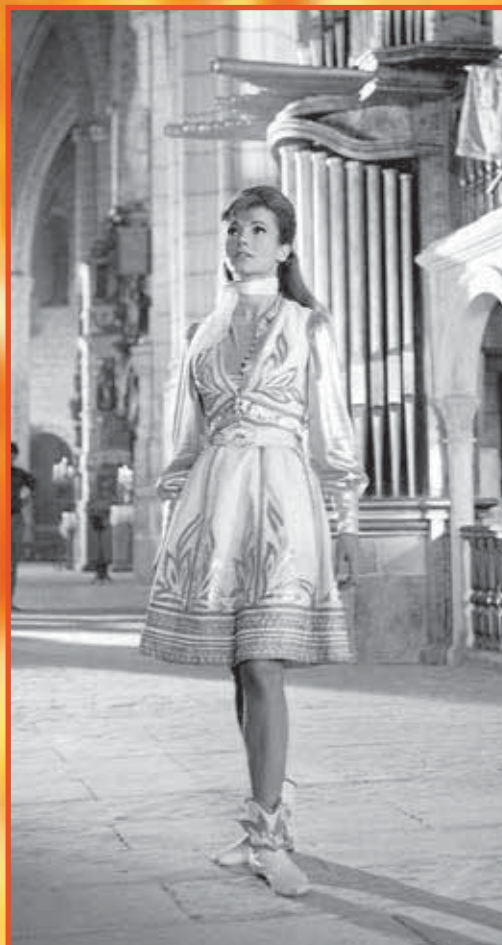


Above and left: The crew completed the live action filming without incident, except during one shot where, after lassoing Gwangi, James Franciscus tied the rope from the jeep to the saddle horn. His horse suddenly turned and reared, pulling the rope taut across Franciscus' chest and sending him tumbling over backwards. Luckily, he landed unhurt, and, after a short break, was able to continue.



Filming inside the cathedral. A stand-in for Lope helps frame the shot.

Right: Gila Golan poses for reference photos to gauge size and position. "I had read the script, so knew the story, but had no idea how it would be filmed," Golan recalled. "I soon found out that Ray was involved with everything. He would continually give us eyelines and talk us through what we were meant to be seeing, or showed us sketches. We were allowed to film in this beautiful cathedral during the daytime, and every footstep echoed eerily throughout the building. We were told to run this way and that, with no idea of the magic Ray would conjure up to put Gwangi right in there with us. When I saw the film, many years later, my admiration for Ray knew no bounds."^[39]

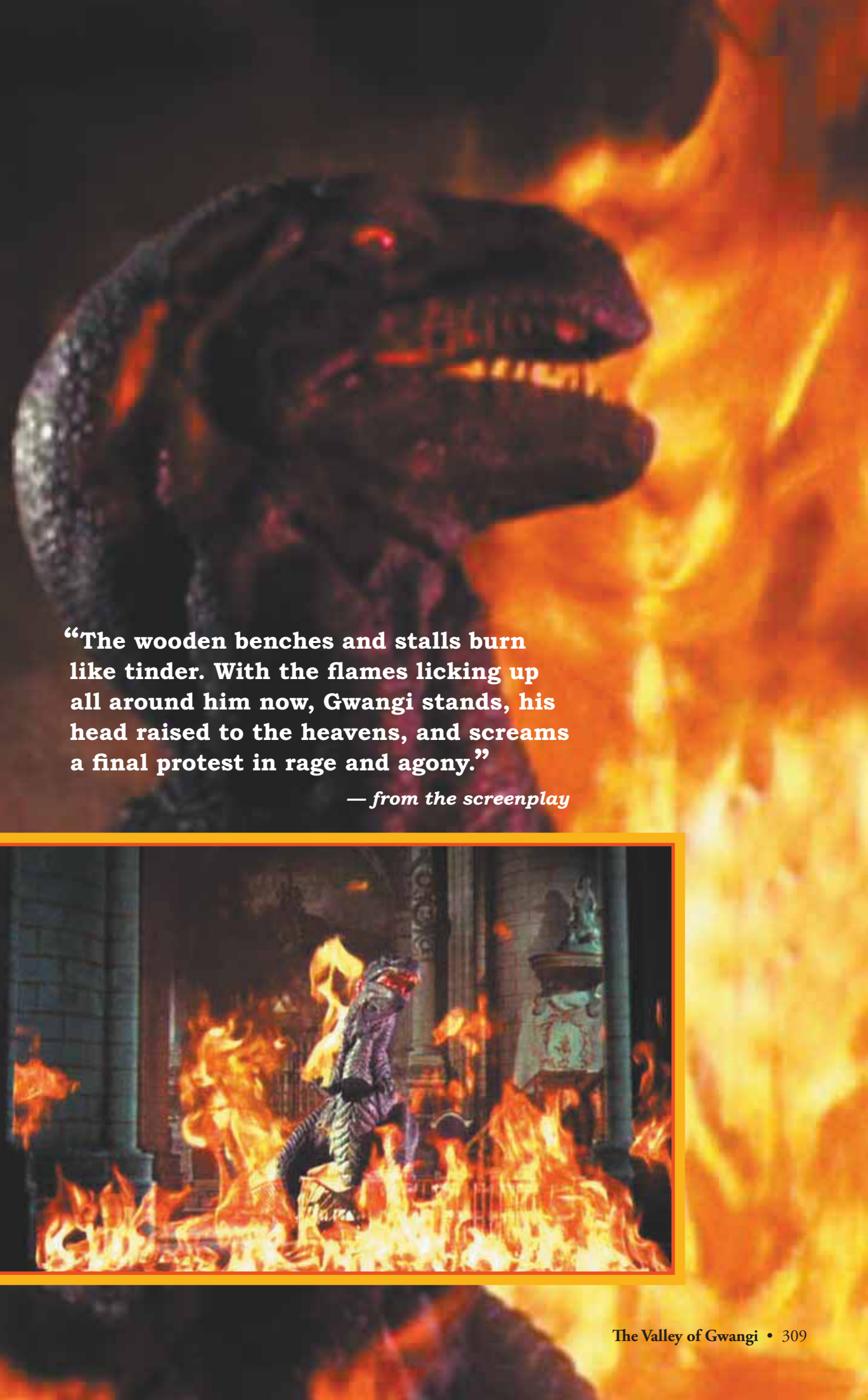


Facing Page: Gwangi is surrounded by flames, elements filmed against black on a smaller-than-full-size scale. Background flames were built-in to the plate, while foreground flames were added by separate exposures as part of the animation setup. These shots benefitted greatly by interactive "flicker" lighting on the animation model during the stop motion photography.



Above: Ray Harryhausen's pre-production drawing and the final animation shot — quite a close match.

Below: The "empty" background plate of Tuck fending off Gwangi with a chair, and the final shot. A portion of the miniature stage can be detected just to the left of the foreground column.



"The wooden benches and stalls burn like tinder. With the flames licking up all around him now, Gwangi stands, his head raised to the heavens, and screams a final protest in rage and agony."

— from the screenplay



The Cult of the Single Eye

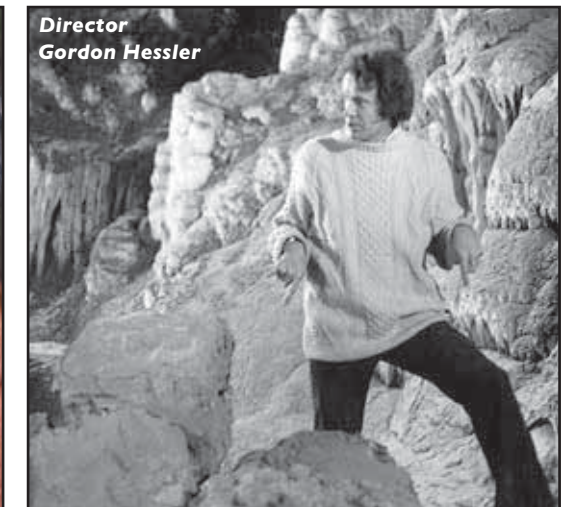
Apart from a few notable exceptions, which include Jason's teacher Chiron, the Centaurs were a race of mountain-dwelling, war-like creatures with a love of wine and a preference for eating raw flesh. This particular inhabitant of the underground Temple of the Green Men was a survivor of a vanished society and possibly the last of its kind. The primitive Green Men consider the creature a god and are protective and obedient to the Centaur's needs. Ray's design of the creature strays somewhat from the classical image of the beast, because here the human half is only superficial. The skin is dark green and coarse, with patches of bristly body hair and a shock of reddish head hair (Ray said he used the fur of an ocelot). Adding to its grotesque appearance is a single cyclopean eye, sharp canine teeth and pointed ears (but without the earrings pictured in Ray's initial drawing).



Although not as startling as the entrance of the Cyclops in *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad*, the subdued approach of the Centaur is more in keeping with the darker tone of this film. Margiana's abduction by the Centaur is achieved with the use of an 8" animated human figure, and there is no attempt at any time to show physical contact between the live actress and the animated creature.



Above: Did an image from Ray's cinematic experience come to mind when he was animating the Centaur carrying Margiana? One particular shot, later used as one of the film's advertising stills, conjures up memories of a painting of a Centaur and its victim on Count Zaroff's castle wall in *The Most Dangerous Game* (1932).



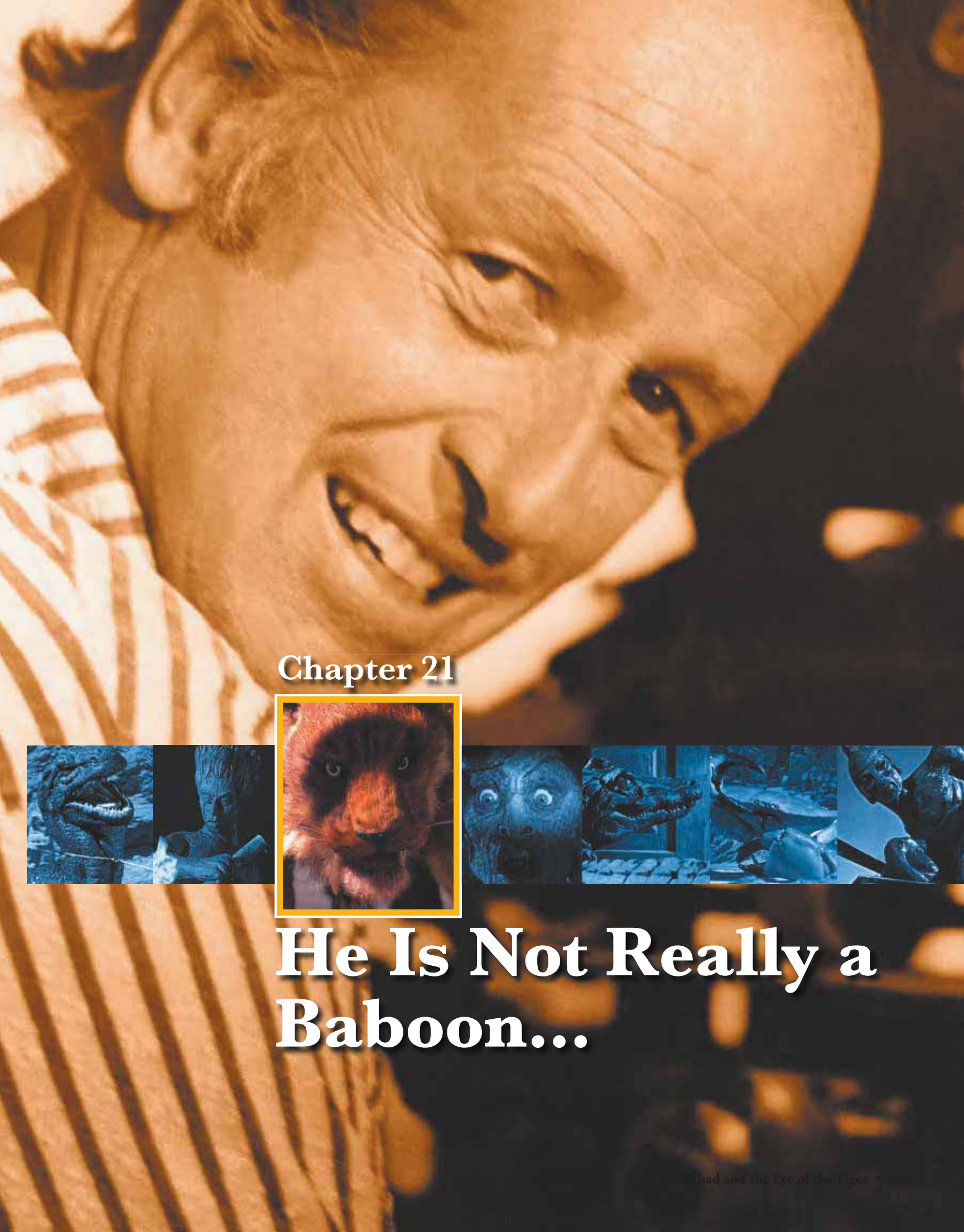
Director
Gordon Hessler

Caroline Munro remembered, "My very first scenes were shot in the Caves de Arta. It's almost a shame that films can't be shot in continuity like a play, because by that time I had been abducted by the centaur and then thrown onto a pile of bones [left, center, a scene which occurs on page 110 of the script]. Which, for my first day's work, was very bizarre. At night the caves were so quiet, with only a colony of bats to keep us company."¹⁴⁵¹



Whenever Caroline walked into a room, all the men went quiet. She was breathtaking, but it was her demeanor that changed everything and made everyone fall in love with her.

— Interview with Kurt Christian October 13, 2018 by Connor Heaney, Tami Hamalian and Vanessa Harryhausen for the Ray and Diana Harryhausen Foundation blog.



Chapter 21



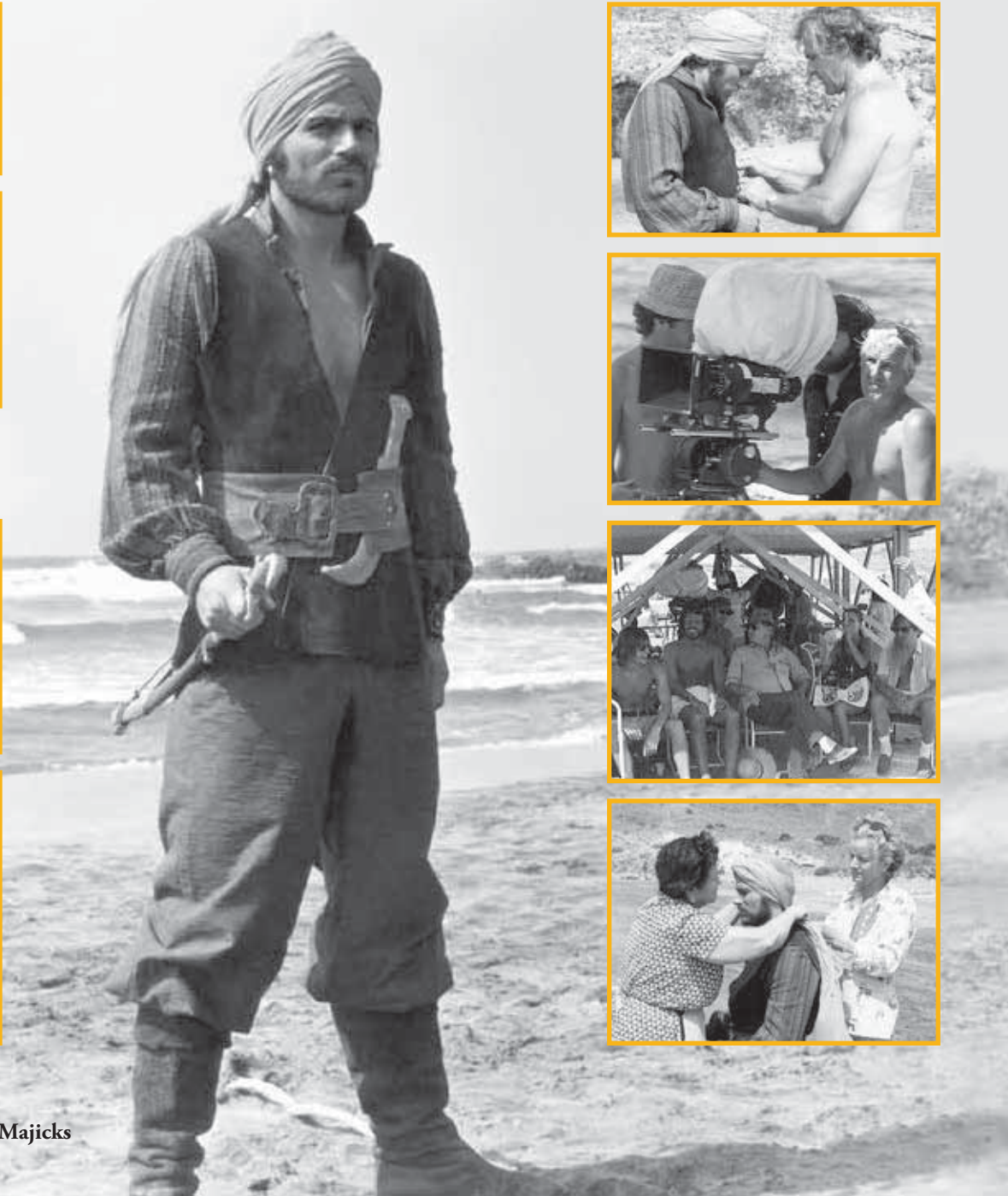
He Is Not Really a Baboon...

Coronation

The coronation scenes were filmed in the Jewish Synagogue in Toledo, Spain.



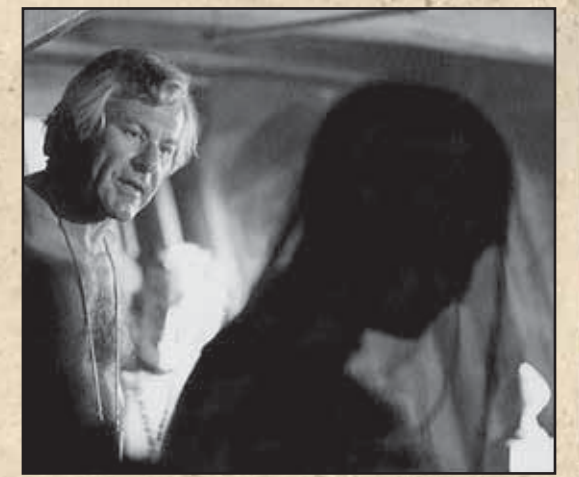
Above: Rowing ashore incorporated a scale model of Sinbad's ship moored in the distance to force perspective and eliminate the need for the full scale ship to be made seaworthy.



Filming Inside Sinbad's Cabin Set

"I decided to braid my hair as 'Farah,' which meant endless hours every day to redo the braids, and causing the hair department – and me – to wish I'd never established it."

— Jane Seymour



A flash photo of the set taken by the art department as continuity reference.





the same material, which Ray attached himself. I recall seeing roughed-in clay models of the Trog and the Minoton in the same room, so I imagine Ray would often start the character sculptures, but due to time restraints would get a studio sculptor or freelancer to finish them.” [20] Ray completed the baboon model himself and covered it with raccoon fur. A model about 6” high was used for long shots and scenes when the baboon appeared together with Trog, although Ray found it difficult to get suitably fine hair for such a small figure.

The transformation of Prince Kassim (Damien Thomas) is only suggested in the opening scenes of the film, and then there is only a brief glimpse of the animated baboon when it is brought aboard ship in a cage. The baboon playing chess is the first clear view the audience has of the creature. Hassan discovers the baboon in this gently-effective scene. The baboon is perched on a stool in front of Princess Farah and the chess table, and Ray gives full reign to everything he learned years earlier on *Mighty Joe Young*. Ray recalls, “Back then, we sent a man to the Chicago Zoo to photograph a gorilla so that we could learn something of their mannerisms. But all the gorilla did was to walk across the screen, sit down and pick its nose, which wasn’t really helpful to the film. But at least it gave us an idea of how a gorilla moved and would sit in repose. With the baboon in *Eye of the Tiger*, I was able to transfer all these little peculiarities I had somehow managed to store in the back of my mind to the model, which I think gave it an air of realism.” [21]



Above: Jane Seymour had to interact closely with the baboon in these early scenes, and remembered, “Working with Ray was wonderful. He showed us pictures of the creatures and explained that we would be acting and reacting to a piece of 2x4 wood with a cross at the top, which would represent the creature. This was ‘real acting,’ because until I saw the final movie I had no idea what I was communicating with.” [19]

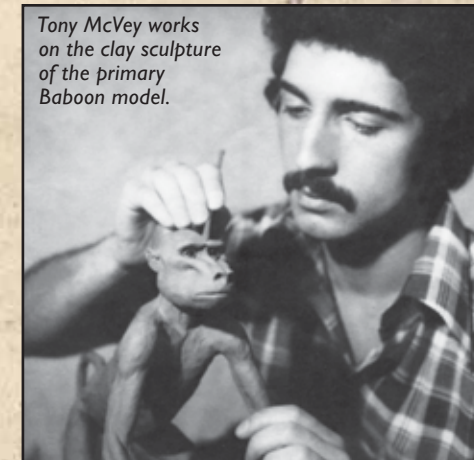
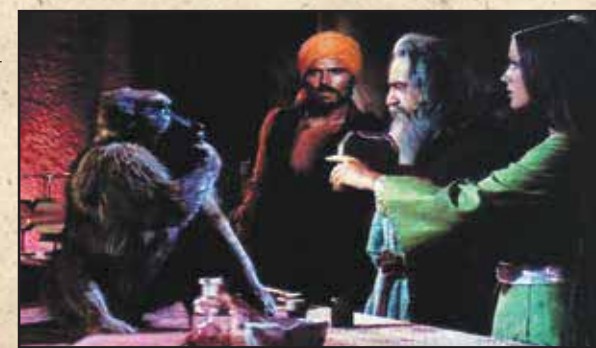


Above: Sinbad’s cabin was built as a separate, free-standing set on land to facilitate access from both inside and outside the windows as Hassan stumbles across the remarkable scene of Princess Farah playing chess with a baboon.



Photo by Jim Manning

Because the baboon is featured throughout the film, Ray is able to explore a variety of characterizations. An audacious moment of interaction comes when Melanthius examines the baboon to verify that the creature has been transformed from the prince. The baboon looks at himself in a mirror but does not attack its reflection (as a real one would do), which required Ray to produce a wonderful moment of character acting through his animation, as a tear falls from the creature’s eye. Melanthius is convinced and shakes the creature’s hand. Matching the live action and foreground model required precise alignment and timing. (In the earlier December, 1974, version of the script, Melanthius — then called Marzavan — determines the truth about the transformed Prince by a long series of intelligence tests).



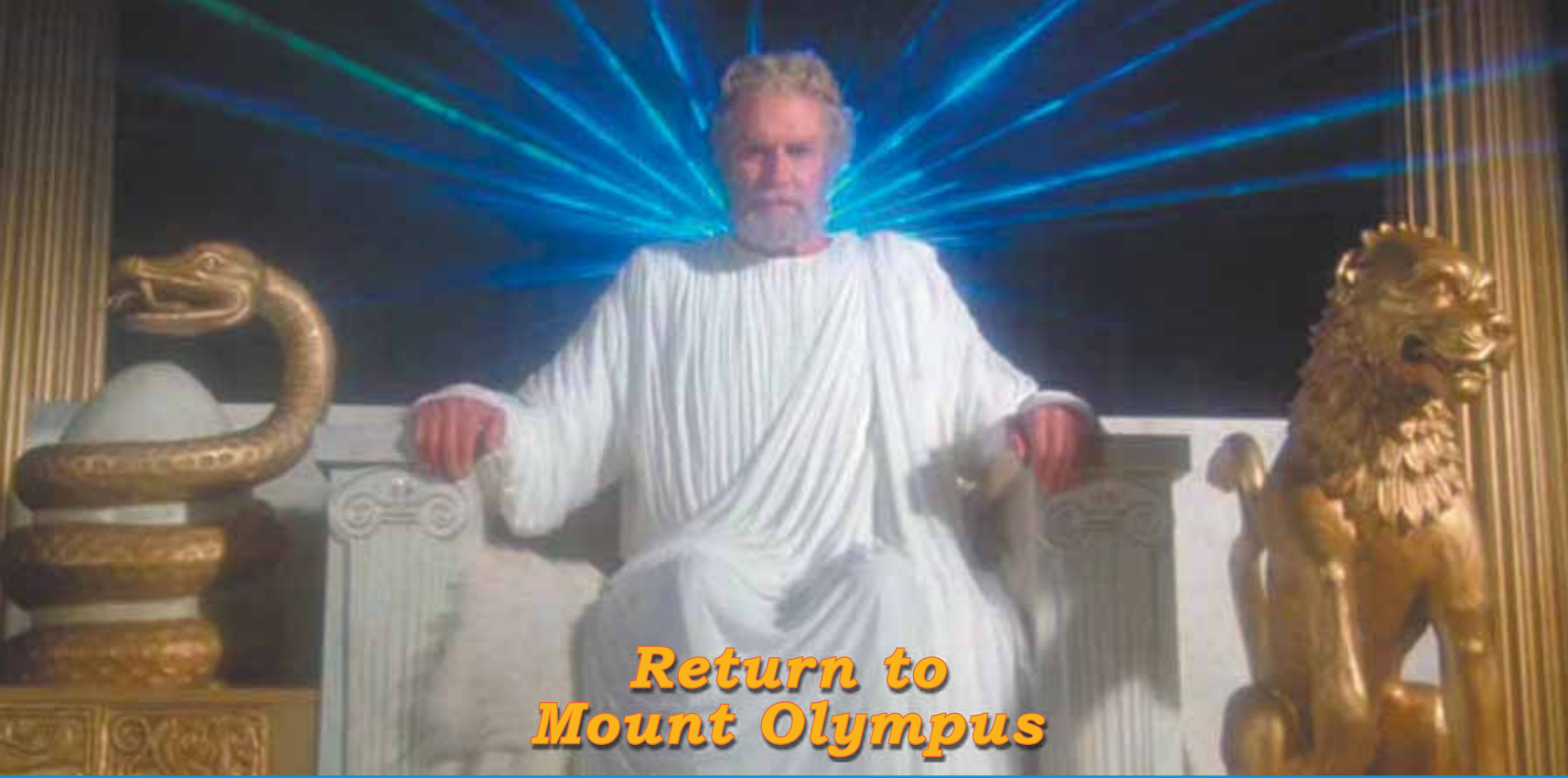
Tony McVey works on the clay sculpture of the primary Baboon model.



Left: Patrick Troughton and Jane Seymour show the baboon his reflection, using a stuffed baboon figure on set for eyelines and positioning. The stuffed animal also served as a size reference for the animation, though the actual plate was filmed without this furry stand-in.

Below: Ray and Sam Wanamaker guide the actors in the intricate scene of listening to the baboon’s heartbeat.





Return to Mount Olympus

Three weeks were spent at Pinewood filming the Mount Olympus scenes before the crew left for location, eventually returning to Pinewood to complete the filming.

Although not entirely necessary, for the one scene where Zeus talks directly with Perseus as a reflection in the shield, Laurence Olivier insisted that Harry Hamlin be on the set. Hamlin had to stand

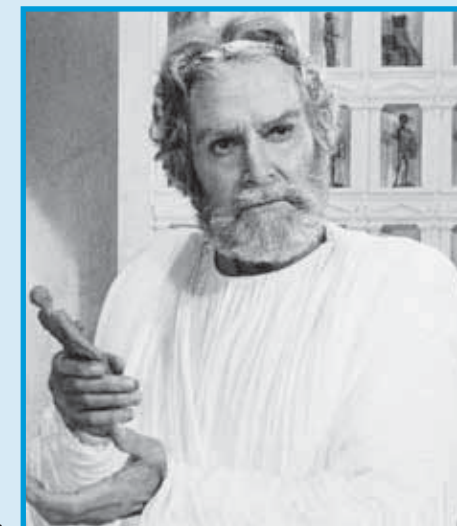
on a ladder to give Olivier an eyeline from where he was sitting on his throne. It was the only time they worked together. Some time later, after Olivier and Hamlin had met again during a dinner party at director Franco Zeffirelli's house, Olivier sent Hamlin a letter that took the form of an apology, stating, "[Clash] was such a frivolous piece, but I had so many mouths to feed." [23] Desmond Davis recalled,

"Olivier brought authority to it, didn't he? And you know the opening sequence where Zeus is on his throne? We used a laser behind him to have those 'lines of power' coming out of his head. That was a laser projector. We had a company that was developing them, and we got them down to Pinewood and they fired up this machine that sent out these marvelous rays. It looked very good, very good indeed." [24]



"Olivier was sort of near the end of his career, really, and he was quite a tetchy person. You had to treat him with, um, care... [laughs] and not be very worried if he growled at you, you know. He was getting rocky on his lines, too, but we were patient and it was fine. And British directors have this particular problem. When faced with one of the 'theatrical knights,' the protocol is that you must use the prefix 'Sir' until released from the obligation. So, I always addressed him as 'Sir Laurence,' expecting him on the first day to grandly say, 'Don't worry about that, old boy, call me Larry.' But the moment never came, so I was obliged to always use the mouthful 'Sir Laurence' throughout, even when delivering notes!" [25]

— Desmond Davis



Top: Maggie Smith and director Desmond Davis. Smith spent a day on her own with Ray and Roy Field for the talking statue and several other shots. Roy Field tells the story: "It was a very tricky effect, and in fact, I never got it quite to my satisfaction. Maggie Smith was fitted with a skullcap and we placed her in a head brace so that she wouldn't — and couldn't — move. I had to shoot just her face and match all the different angles used in the live action. Some, I must say, didn't work. We tried all different methods to make it work, which often made it worse. Despite her discomfort, Maggie didn't complain once, which is what you often find with the better artist." [26]

Right: When the Mount Olympus shoot was about to wrap, and after Olivier had gone, it was thought that an insert of Zeus' hand placing the figure of Calibos in the arena was needed to precede the transformation. So Ray "lent a hand" and made a brief cameo.



Below: Camera operator Mike Roberts assists Laurence Olivier in the placement of the figure of Perseus in the arena.



Medusa!

Desmond Davis telephoned Ray Harryhausen with congratulations after seeing the Medusa sequence for the first time.

The Lady with the Stone Cold Stare

While the Dioskilos sequence had been left in the capable hands of his two assistants, the encounter with Medusa was to be pure, classic Harryhausen animation.

Previously, Medusa had appeared prominently in two films, George Pal's *7 Faces of Dr. Lao* and Hammer Films' *The Gorgon*, ironically both released in 1964. For *Dr. Lao*, Tony Randall wore the Medusa makeup. Project Unlimited partner Wah Chang fitted rubber snakes with tiny solenoids so that their tongues could dart in and out. Similarly, Hammer's effects man Syd Pearson rigged up mechanical snakes affixed to a wig worn by actress Prudence Hyman, and the snakes could squirm about as well as withdraw into the wig and extend out again. Both were only marginally effective, and actor Peter Cushing remarked that, "the thing that bothered [director] Terence Fisher a little was that they just could not afford someone like Ray Harryhausen to do all those snakes in her hair, and that bothered him because that was the whole climax of the picture, to see that terrible head with all those writhing snakes. He had to sort of shoot around that quite a bit to get the effect he was after."^{167]}

The Medusa sequence was always going to be the highlight of *Clash of the Titans*, so Ray spent considerable time on the figure's design, which had to be both aesthetically pleasing and practical. "While I was researching classic paintings and sculptures, I found that most artists had portrayed her as just a beautiful woman with snakes in her hair. They do say that many beauties have a heart of stone, but we thought that the image just wouldn't be strong enough. So we made her as ugly as possible, although her underlying features suggested that she was once beautiful. I actually based her face on Joan Crawford because her high cheek bones, I thought, gave her a particularly cold stare. We then gave her a snake's body, partly because people have a fear of snakes but also so that we wouldn't have to give her flowing robes, which would have caused quite a few problems during animation. The rattlesnake tail served two purposes: a 'terror' factor with regard to its warning, as well as a good opportunity for the sound man to make her presence known when she wasn't on the screen."^{168]}

Imaginative lighting from flickering torches and braziers (with a reactive firelight effect reproduced on the animation stage), and effective use of shadows and reflections, make the sequence one to cherish. This is also in no small measure due to Harry Hamlin's performance, which cannot be faulted.

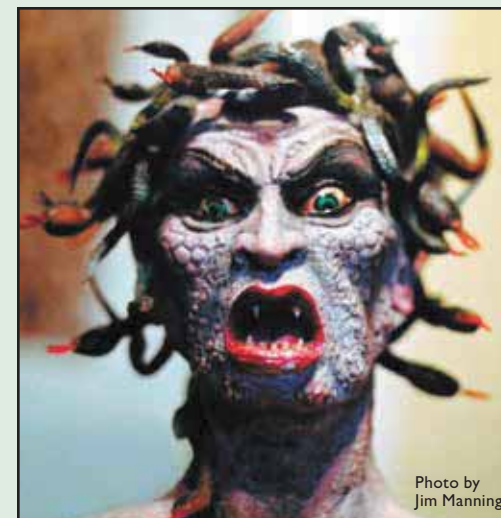


Photo by Jim Manning

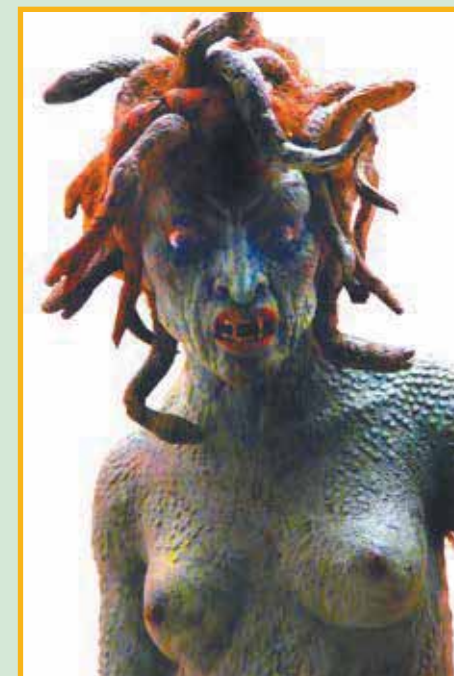
Precedents and Inspirations



Tony Randall donned the snakes in George Pal's *7 Faces of Dr. Lao* (above), and Prudence Hymen cast a deadly spell in Hammer Films' *The Gorgon*, both released in 1964.

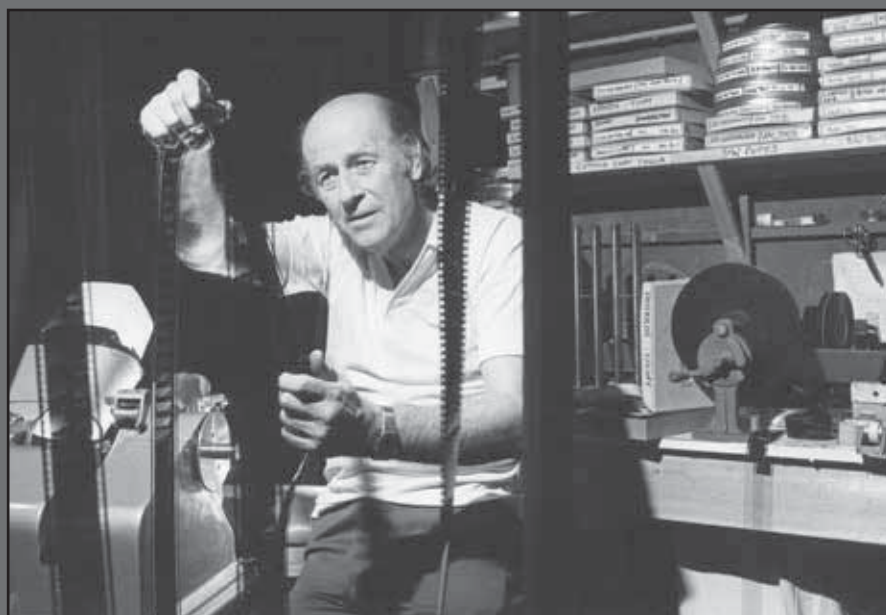
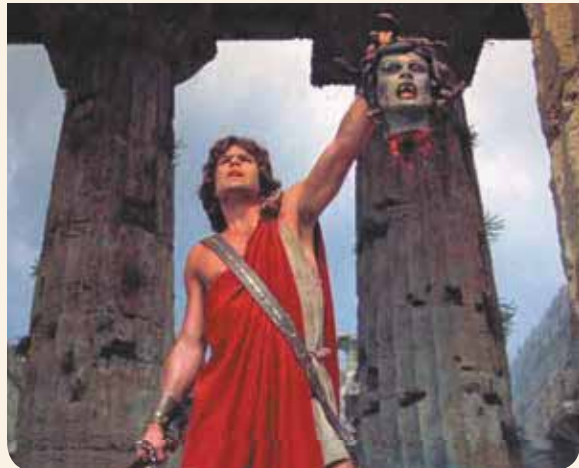


Below: Joan's Crawford's chilling stare inspired Ray's concept of Medusa.



A bare-breasted Medusa caused problems, and at one stage she wore an unnatural-looking brassiere. Eventually, it was decided to reduce the prominence of her nipples and her scaly skin texture helped disguise this compromise.

At the end of the live action filming at Paestum, Harry Hamlin put forward another idea: "There is this great image that everyone is familiar with from the Cellini statue of Perseus with the head of Medusa. I brought it up with Charles several times that it should be included in the picture. Then, on the final day of shooting at Paestum, I said to Desmond that this is the place to do it. Desmond said, 'Okay, but you only have five minutes to do it, as everyone is packing up.' So they set the camera up, got the head and my cape, just as it began to rain. They just shot it, turned the camera with no sound or anything. I just lifted the head up. I only did it one time — it was quite an amazing moment that I shall never forget. I got chills all through my body when I did it. The setting was perfect, the timing was perfect, and the image was recreated. It all worked out." [72]



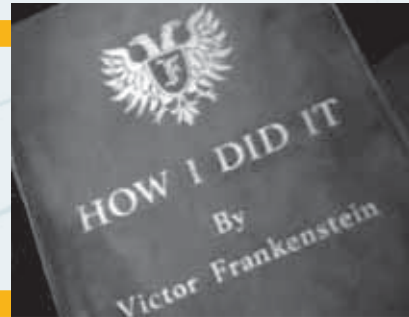
A Visit to Ray's Office



HOW TO MAKE A MONSTER!

In keeping with the theme of this volume — Ray Harryhausen’s early years of experimentation — we thought it would be interesting to present examples of the step-by-step process of the design and construction of stop motion models. This display is not intended to be a textbook or tutorial, but just a collection of images that illustrate the various stages of model construction.

We don’t have any step-by-step photos of the



construction of any of Ray’s models, so the material that follows is a collection of images from an assortment of other projects, most of which are familiar to stop motion fans or are creations that can be easily seen in the movies themselves.

The broad categories include the original design sketches or blueprints, armatures, mold-making, foam rubber fabrication and painting, and the finished models in scenes or setups.



A War Eagle armature once owned by Jim Danforth (photos taken in 1977). The complete story behind this legendary (unfinished) Willis O’Brien project can be found in **War Eagles – The Unmaking of an Epic – An Alternate History for Classic Film Monsters** by David Conover and Philip J. Riley.

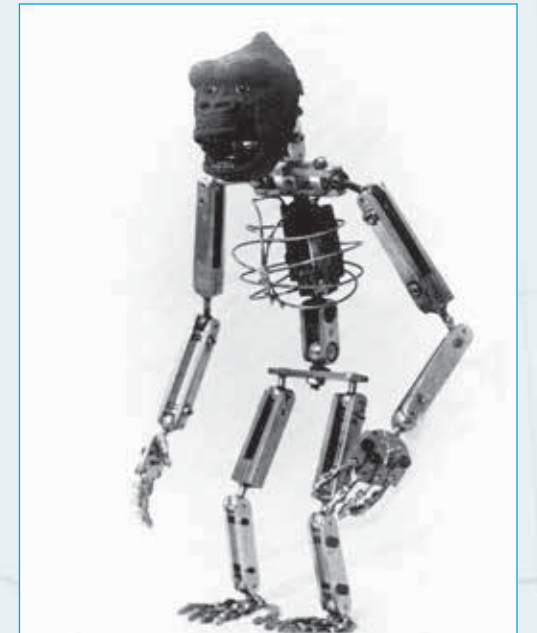
WAR EAGLES

One of a series of early conceptual drawings prepared after the first test reel was shot (artist unknown). It’s unclear exactly where this scene would have appeared in the story.



An O’Brien armature made most likely for **Gwangi** (the Allosaurus intended for **War Eagles** was much smaller).

Photo by Mark Wolf



ASSORTED ARMATURES

Above, left: David Allen with a Tyrannosaurus armature that he put together from spare parts (i.e., not intended for any specific project). The “hinge joints” are the type of joint preferred by Willis O’Brien.

Above, right: Dave Allen’s King Kong armature for the 1972 Volkswagen TV commercial. After this photo was taken, Dave felt that the legs were too long and that the lower legs were not “beefy” enough. So he replaced the upper legs with the lower legs, and then used joints that Pete Peterson had made for his model of **The Las Vegas Monster** for the lower legs.



Left: This human figure armature, about 6” tall, had been discarded at Film Effects of Hollywood and retrieved in the 1970s. As a result, it was first thought to be a Marcel Delgado armature for one of the comedians in the final stop motion “ladder sequence” in **It’s a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World**. However, Jim Danforth, the principal animator on the sequence at Film Effects, weighed in on this armature in an e-mail to Ernie Farino, as follows: “After studying the **Mad World** armature, I’m not entirely sure it’s the one Marcel made, and I don’t think it’s the one Marcel showed me. It certainly looks similar, but seems to have more ‘machining’ than I recall (the clevis clamps at the hinge joints). These could have been hand filed, but it doesn’t look like that. Also, I recall that Marcel had some swivel joints that were made from telescoping tubing, the outer one of which had been slit and tension applied by simply binding it tightly with heavy thread. It may have been made for **Mad World**, but I can’t definitely identify this armature.” So, like the final conclusion about the monolith in **2001: A Space Odyssey**, “Its origin and purpose still a total mystery...”

Bottom row:

Left: Marcel Delgado in front of his Hollywood home. Marcel holds the stop motion figures from **It’s a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World** — latex castings with polyfoam interiors (no armatures).

Middle: Marcel Delgado, Forry Ackerman and Jim Danforth in the Ackermansion in the 1960s.

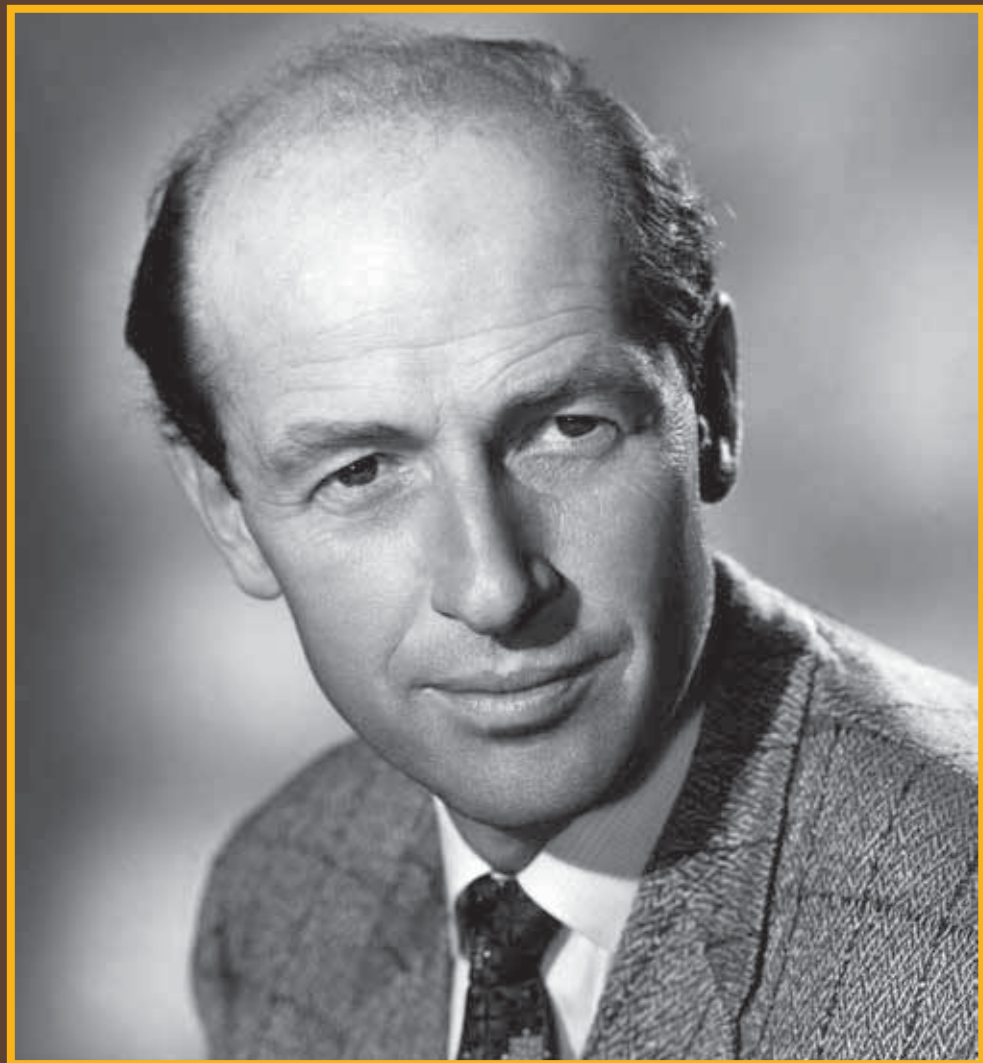
Right: Two armatures and a figure from the **Davey and Goliath** TV series. Dave Allen hired Ernest Farino to re-work these armatures into the stop motion werewolf models for **The Howling** (1981) by lengthening the torso and limbs. Ultimately, there was only one stop motion cut in the final film.



Photo by Mark Wolf



Photo by Ernest Farino



I have lost a very dear friend who always had the ability to surprise me, and I will miss our regular chats. We shared the Cancer birth sign, plus a love of film music, Laurel and Hardy and, of course, *King Kong* (although his addiction to the TV series *Murder, She Wrote* or his constant yearning for a Big Mac was lost on me). Despite living in England for over fifty years, Ray never became Anglicized — he was a Californian to the end. You never had tea and biscuits with Ray, it was always cookies (how I loved the sound of his deep voice asking, “Do you want a cookie...?”). He did love some of our quaint English sayings, though, and often ended our telephone conversations with an exaggerated, “Cheerio, pip-pip!”

A real-life George Bailey, he touched so many lives throughout his own Wonderful Life. Ray had an impact on seemingly everyone, and I made so many good friends from my friendship with Ray. When I started writing these books I wanted to share my passion for his genius with others — how gratifying to realize that I was preaching to the initiated, and how lucky to have shared over thirty years with such a wonderful and creative person. I was so excited about taking Volume One of *Majicks* to Ray — he would have loved the *Kong* chapter and probably the rest of the book, too.

The world was a richer place when Ray was alive, and much less fun now that he’s gone. Cheerio and pip-pip, Ray, and thanks for the memories.

— Mike Hankin



Ray Harryhausen
June 29, 1920 — May 7, 2013

Ray Harryhausen

Author Mike Hankin personally delivered Ray's copy of Vol. 2 (the first one published) to Ray at his home in England on Wednesday, Sept. 24, 2008. Mike wrote the following account of the visit:

"Ray looked at every page of the book, and so did [Ray's wife] Diana. Ray's first reaction: 'My God!' He was full of praise for the layouts, and it seemed like every page was greeted by 'Where did you get that photo?!' He loved the cover [a close-up of the Cyclops], immediately showing it to Diana and saying, 'Whoa, my old friend!' His tiredness from his recent travels seemed to go away and he looked through the book virtually all the time I was there. He grasped my hand with both of his when I said goodnight and said, 'You can see on every page the love and care you have put into this book. It really is superb.'"

Vanessa Harryhausen (Ray's daughter)

"I couldn't believe the beauty of [Vol. 2] when I first opened it. The layout is just stunning. Dad had already told me that there was photographs he had never seen before, but there was so much more. I love all the different movie posters. I can't believe all the people you talked to. If Vol. 2 is the first, I can't wait to see the rest."

Guillermo del Toro, Director of *The Shape of Water*, *Hellboy*, *Pan's Labyrinth*, and *Pacific Rim*

"An absolute marvel!! A dream of a book series that inspires and awes as much as the filmmaker it enshrines. Flawlessly designed, chock-full of astounding graphic material and impeccably written, these are the books you dreamed of as a Monster Kid!! An absolute must."

From Guillermo del Toro's Preface to Volume 3:

"There is no way to overstate the importance of these books. These books are, simply, the most perfect books about Harryhausen ever made. This is the book that you dreamt of having as a child and the only gateway, I guarantee you, to regain that long-gone thrill you had when you were eight years old and you cracked open the pages of the latest issue of *Famous Monsters of Filmland* magazine. Perhaps more importantly, this book performs one truly magic trick, one that we don't experience often enough: it makes you want to go out, immediately, and re-watch every single one of the chronicled films and, if at all possible, go and shoot a film yourself. In summation: It makes you fall in love with cinema all over again."

Leonard Maltin

"In my recent roundup of film books I neglected to

mention one of the most elaborate publishing ventures of 2008, *Ray Harryhausen: Master of the Majicks* Vol. 2 by Mike Hankin. I often receive review copies of books from their publishers but I was happy to shell out my own hard-earned dollars for this labor of love, a meticulous survey of Ray's life and career.

Ron Borst, author of *Graven Images* and owner of the Hollywood Movie Posters shop

The three volumes all together represent the greatest books on fantasy films—*ever*.

Scoop eNewsletter from Diamond Comics

Archive Editions' definitive biography of special effects pioneer Ray Harryhausen is a joy to behold. The beautiful, limited edition, hardcover books are a treasure and Volume 1 [alone] makes for compelling reading for almost any film buff. The series covers Harryhausen's career from early 16mm experiments and the influence of *King Kong's* Willis O'Brien to his unfinished projects and his Lifetime Achievement Oscar®.

Sam Calvin

At a point when "Done To Death" might be considered Ray Harryhausen's middle name, I'm delighted to say that these breathtaking volumes stand on their own as major contributions to fantasy film history by recounting the perspectives of the many artists who have worked with the effects master over the years. Everything about these books screams meticulous research. Mike Hankin has interviewed pretty much everybody you can think of to bring us the ultimate Harryhausen reference works. Virtually every line of text reveals some new fact about Ray and his films. As I read these books, I was blown away by the incredible amount of detail. Believe me, you will not be disappointed even if you've read everything else out there.

Richard Green

Each volume justly deserves to be hailed as "A Supreme Achievement in Writing, Meticulous Research and Prolific Illustration." The total conviction and diligence that you have committed to each volume of this encyclopedic work is abundantly obvious as it leaps out to the reader from every page. And these volumes rekindle our fond memories of Ray himself, as well as all those others with whom he worked in such skillful collaboration, especially Charles H. Schneer. Yours is in indeed a fitting "Tribute to The Master" and they deserve to be included in every public library around the world because of their unique and valuable contents. They are certainly volumes to be relished and treasured.



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