

Make-Up Artist

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DAN STRIEPEKE

The make-up artist's
make-up artist

The Big Translucency Question:
IS Silicone The Answer?



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Dan Striepeke works on the Bull Man character on Island of Dr. Moreau. Photo courtesy of David J. Dillon.





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DAN STRIEPEKE

A MAKE-UP MAN FOR ALL SEASONS

By Michael Key

Make-up being a highly competitive business, there always seems to be somebody who will badmouth you. Not so with this man. I have never heard anything slightly negative about Dan Striepeke. That alone is quite an accomplishment. Who would have known in 1949, at the age of 17 this talented young man would become one of the most respected makeup artists in Hollywood? We were able to talk with Dan at his home in Marina Del Rey, California about his career.

Striepeke took makeup seriously from the beginning. When he was a sophomore in high

makeup for high school and community theater. "I sent to [Max] Factor for what in those days was called the Dramatic Directors Makeup Kit. It came with the crepe wool and powder and all the grease paints. I augmented that with Stein's sticks and all the theatrical stuff."

Striepeke drew his inspiration to be a makeup artist from Bob Stepenoff and Jack Pierce. He was also inspired by the makeup of Jack Dawn on *The Wizard of Oz*. "*The Wizard of Oz* blew my mind, because it had every facet of makeup that's ever been done," said Striepeke. "Munchkins, and the apes, it just goes on and on."

One night, Striepeke and some high school classmates were having dinner after having won the National

"I got word from Mr. Westmore, who said, 'Forget it, kid.'"

Forensic Speech Contest. Patrick Knowles and Lloyd Noland and their business manager, Charlie Crizona, were in the next booth. "I cornered the business manager in the men's room, of all places, and asked him if there was anyone in Hollywood he knew that I could meet who was a makeup artist. So he said, 'Write me a letter 30 days ahead and I'll arrange something.' I wrote the letter, and sure enough, he wrote a letter back. He said, 'I have an interview set with you and Ern Westmore at Eagle Lion Studios.'"

Striepeke set out for Los Angeles with his mother to meet with Mr. Westmore. "Mr. Westmore was wonderful to me. We spent three and a half days in the makeup department." Striepeke developed a great admiration for Westmore's skill and inventiveness. "We made an agreement that I would continue sending pictures of my work to him and he would send them back with corrections."

After faithfully corresponding with Westmore for six months, the letters and pictures stopped coming back. With \$150 in his pocket, Striepeke moved to Los Angeles. When Striepeke arrived he learned that Mr. Westmore had had a heart attack. "I got word from Mr. Westmore, who said, 'Forget it, kid.'" Due to the advent of television, the movie business had fallen on its back. "Television had come in and no one was going to the movies. People were staying home and watching *Lucy*."

BREAKING INTO MAKEUP

Mr. Westmore's advice, for once, would not be followed. Striepeke got a job at Bullock's Pasadena as a stock clerk, and continued the pursuit of his dream, to be a makeup artist.

Of his break into the makeup business, Striepeke recounts, "As God is my judge, this is exactly how it happened. It was a Saturday morning, I was driving down La Cienega Boulevard. There was a marquis that said, 'Soon to open at the Civic Playhouse: *The Fabulous Invalid*.' It had John, Drew, and all the Barrymores; it had Louis Walheim, all the greats of American theater. I was a young guy with



Above and Below: Tom Hanks as Forrest Gump, with beard and hair work.

Facing Page: Tom Hanks is in a test makeup Dan Striepeke did for *Joe vs. the Volcano*.





was earning a living as a makeup artist and having a ball. Then the Korean War hit in 1950. A friend of mine came down from Santa Rosa in September and he said, 'You and I are in the same draft call.' I said, 'What are you talking about?' My head was full of what I was doing and I wasn't even thinking about the war." The idea of going to Korea didn't appeal to Striepeke, so he spent the next four years in the Air Force. When he came back in 1954, his position at KTTV had been filled, and the station had unionized,

'You need a makeup artist for this production.' He said, 'I know. So what?' I said, 'I'm the guy.'

so Striepeke was out of a job. It took the involvement of the Justice Department working for the veteran's reemployment rights to get Striepeke back to work. He asked to work the 30 days needed to get his union TV card, and that was what he got.

But a TV card didn't give a makeup artist

more bravado than brains. I pulled into the parking lot and went into the rehearsal.

About a hour went by and they called a coffee break. I went up to the director and said, 'Sir, I'd like to introduce myself. You need a makeup artist for this production.' He said, 'I know. So what?' I said, 'I'm the guy.' He called an actor out and he said, 'Okay, make him look like Louie Wolheim.' Louie Wolheim, a famous Broadway star, was the predecessor to Victor McLaughlin. He played Katz in *All's Quiet on the Western Front*. He was kind of a big, surly man with a heavy brow, broken nose, undercut jaw. A real wonderful face. So I went backstage and made this actor up. It was a terrible makeup, as I recall. I brought him out in front of the footlights and the director said, 'You're hired.' It was three nights a week, \$15 a night. And that's exactly how I started."

The director of the play was John Clair, one of the founders of KTTV, the designated CBS television station in Los Angeles. The play ran four weeks, and before it ended, John Clair had arranged for Striepeke to work at KTTV. He started by putting makeup on newscasters, and then moved on to the *Buster Keaton Show*.

"I had quit my job at Bullock's. And I





out the people who didn't do the job. It was brutal but it was very honest. So, thank God, I never got weeded."

Many old-time character actors, like Ray Lopez, Dick Narr and Johnny Wallace, who used to do their own makeup, were now working as makeup artists on the same films with Striepeke. It was here that Striepeke learned character makeup and wigmaking. "I learned great tricks with blending hair and wool, and wool by itself, and colodion. You name it, as far as character makeup was concerned, these old boys could slap it on quickly, and deftly. I give great credence to all of them. They didn't teach me, but I learned by observation."

In 1955 Striepeke worked continuously. He ended up working on Warner Brothers' *Giant*, a film that called for many age make-ups. They used George Bau's foam latex and gelatin. "I remember fondly those 4:00 a.m. calls. We would put Alexander Scoreby's hair

any status in the film industry at that time, or any benefits such as makeup artists enjoy presently. By this time Striepeke had a wife and child, so he went to work for Douglas Aircraft in Santa Monica, California doing radio and radar telemetry. "That's a long way from makeup artistry," said Striepeke. "But that's what I learned in the

He said, 'You and I are in the same draft call.' I said, 'What are you talking about?'

Air Force."

A break came for Striepeke in the spring of 1955 when "the town started to really perking." *Ten Commandments*, *Kismet* and *The Story of Diane*, all huge films, were in production. There were only 152 union makeup artists at that time, and there were not enough hands to go around. So Striepeke was called to work.

He recalled being at MGM, "I was about halfway through the makeup session in the morning, Bill Tuttle would walk through, or Keister Sweeney, his assistant. The people who had lines of extras waiting to be done would get a call-back the next day. The extras knew who was doing good work. It was a very good way of weeding





Robin Wright as Jenny Gump, during her illness.

down with [George Bau's 225], kind of like what people do with gafquat now, but it did a better job of it. It required an acetone shampoo. Then the stipple rubber was carried right on back. Then the wig, which was receding on his head, worked very well. In later years I used the same technique on Sally Fields in *Forrest Gump*."

Striepeke worked at NBC for a couple of years, where he met John Chambers for the first time on the *Pinky Lee Show*. "They had brought John out from Chicago. He had become quite well known for dental prostheses."

Meanwhile, Striepeke was getting a lot of film work, and worked enough days to take and pass the union's journeyman examination. "I was off and running, and never looked back."

THE EARLY FEATURE FILMS

It was around 1958 that George Bau recommended Striepeke to Bud Westmore, head of the Universal makeup department. Bau had seen Striepeke's work at Warner Brothers on the TV shows *Sunset Strip*, *Sugar Foot* and *Maverick*, and a film called *A Miracle*. After meeting with Striepeke, Bud Westmore hired him to run the laboratory at Universal.

The first project delegated to Striepeke's lab was *Spartacus*. A full body cast had to be done on Woody

Stroud in order to create a stunt body that would be hanging upside down. "I just plunged in. There were all sorts of things that had to be done, like cut-off legs with blood spurting. I was sculpting, along with Chris Mueller and Bud. I'd have a couple of staff shop guys make the molds, which for instance, on Woody Stroud, were enormous. In those days, we were using plaster to take the impressions." A clay line would be laid and the plaster would be reinforced with fiber and two-by-twos.

Striepeke remembered *Spartacus* as "enlightening." He said, "Every morning I would go in and I'd make maybe 30, 40 gallons of body makeup. Bill Turner and Hank Edds were doing the spray jobs. I usually made 10 to 15 gallons of blood every day. Every morning I would go into the lab and make the body makeup and blood fresh every morning. The powder was from Overton Cosmetics. I came across an idea to make up this 2% methocyl solution. I added a little alcohol (to accelerate the drying) and water. Once the methocyl, water, alcohol and color were mixed – I would use five pounds of this tone, and two pounds of this tone, half a pound of this – I put it in a great big beater. The blood was methocyl based also, with food coloring. An interesting thing about Karo syrup blood that a lot of people don't know — it's no good in water, it disappears — but the clue to it is just add

There was a makeup artist who said, 'You know when you've finally made it in this business because you can say, 'No Universal, no MGM and no Emile LaVigne.'

some milk to it, and it will stay opaque all day long."

Striepeke finished at Universal in late 1959 and went on to work on *The Outsider* with Tony

Curtis. Curtis played a Pima Indian and wore a nose appliance. The film had "documentary" sections in black and white. Max Factor 665N makeup for black and white film was used for those sections, along with black Indian wigs and the nose appliance on Curtis. "It was a difficult makeup, but it

worked quite well on the screen.”

Around 1959 Striepeke met Emile LaVigne. “He was a wonderful makeup artist. A task master. In fact, there was a makeup artist who said, ‘You know when you’ve finally made it in this business because you can say, “No Universal, no MGM and no Emile LaVigne,” when you go on the list.’” But Striepeke got along with him and respected his creativity and imagination. “He asked me to come with him to Mexico on *The Magnificent Seven*. I was doing Steve McQueen, Charlie Bronson and Brad Dexter. There were the times when the two of us would do 10 to 15 beards a day on stunt men.” He counted it a good opportunity, and he got his first screen credit.

Back from Mexico on *The Magnificent*



Striepeke artfully tells the story with makeup of Jenny's (Robin Wright) social development.



Seven, Striepeke was contacted by a B movie maker, Burt I. Gordon, who hired Striepeke to do *The Magic Sword*. He was called upon to make up a witch with an eye on her cheek, coneheads, Siamese twins connected at the head, and bird people. “I’d be sitting up in my apartment at night pasting feathers. Burt Gordon told me about a year or so later that he had been in Japan talking up the picture, and said, ‘Nobody talked about my picture except what you guys [the makeup artists] had done.’ And it did turn out pretty good for those days. It encompassed just about everything you





Left and Right: Lieutenant Dan (Gary Sinise) leads his company, including Forrest Gump, through the hot, muddy jungles of Vietnam.

Below: It looks painful, but Lieutenant Dan's cuts and bruises are only skin deep. The stubble beard is also the makeup artist's handiwork.

Below Right: Sinise talked the director into shooting out of sequence so he could grow his own facial hair for this look. He is wearing a wig.



could think of out of a makeup artist, from appliances on."

Striepeke went on to work with LaVigne on *West Side Story*, *Taras Bulba* (Frank McCoy, makeup department head) and *Kings of the Sun*.

Kings of the Sun, which starred Yul Brynner, was an experience Striepeke would never forget. The battle scenes called for 750 extras, all of whom had to have makeup. The night before they were to begin shooting, he had mixed more makeup than he thought he would need, enough for 800. But they soon ran out of makeup and wigs, and the people were still lined up. Production had asked for 1,500 expecting to get



half, but got closer to 1,200. "I'm out there in the middle of the jungle with a 55 gallon drum trying to mix more makeup and keep the spray guns going."

Taras Bulba starred Yul Brynner and Tony Curtis. Most of it was shot in Argentina. Striepeke did Curtis's makeup. He recalls, "We had a huge call for bald caps. And there was quite a large bull pen [a term for a group of artists that are doing bit players & extras] – probably 50, 60 bald caps." The actors weren't wearing wardrobe that would cover the edges at the neck. So the makeup artists were in competition to see who could do the best baldcap.

"All of a sudden, everybody is looking at what this guy has done. His baldcap was absolutely magnificent. And the back was even better than the front. He had taken [the baldcap] all the way down to the outer vertebrae. He had piled cotton in there and made the neck look like a neck instead of a low baldcap. Everybody was just gawking at how wonderful this thing was. At any angle, you could get away with it. The first day the caps came out so-so, except for this guy. But each day was better. You could just see the progress each day."

"Trying to keep a Hawaiian out of the water is unbelievable," said Striepeke of working on *Hawaii* in 1965. John Chambers was also on the picture, and LaVigne was the makeup department head. "There was aging, tattoos, body makeup, and wigs. The first day on the beach filming in Hawaii there were all these extras, and they all had tans from the elbow down. So body makeup was needed. They are all down at the beach, and all of a sudden I

Burt Gordon said, 'Nobody talked about my picture except what you guys [the makeup artists] had done.' get on the set and they are all swimming. The wigs are floating away and the body makeup is coming off. What a horror story. They had this big dolly set up for the shot. 'Get them out of the ocean,' I told them, 'and tell them not to do it again,'

"When we came back John [Chambers] asked me to do the pilot on *Mission Impossible*. John did the lab work and we did the pilot together." Striepeke and Chambers created the removable masks that got so much attention. "That was a thing of necessity, really, rather than anything else. There just wasn't enough time to do it another way. We had





Above: From *Forrest Gump*.

Right: Striepeke mixed body makeup in 55 gallon drums for *Kings of the Sun*.



to do it as a gimmick to make it work.” Striepeke did the series by himself for the first year. He was also running his lab at the same time, which made for long hours and lots of “walking dinners.”

THE FOX YEARS

In the spring of 1967 Striepeke, exhausted, had just finished *Mission Impossible* when he got a call from Ben Nye. “He said, ‘How would you like to do 10 shows? I’m going to retire and I’d like to have you take this job.’ I was dumbfounded and said, ‘I can’t give you an answer right now, Ben. I need to talk to my wife about this.’ I really didn’t know whether I wanted to be tied up 52 weeks a year, and whether or not I wanted to do the studio game and all the rest of it. So Carol and I talked at great length that night, and I decided to go for it. John [Chambers] had already moved onto the Fox lot because he was brought in to solve the problem with the apes [*Planet of the Apes*]. So he was well into the creative process by time I got the call from Ben Nye. I think John was also part of the catalyst for my name being in

the hopper.”

“Boy, did I step into something,” remembered Striepeke. “*Planet of the Apes* was rapidly coming to the start of production. *Valley of the Dolls* was shooting, and *Star* with Robert Weiss and Julie Andrews. Fox Western Television, doing *Batman* and all the other things that were being done over there. They also had the Irwin Allen pictures like *Lost in Space* and *Voyage Beneath the Sea*.

Because the features were coming fast and furious, Dick

**“Trying to keep a
Hawaiian out of the
water is unbelievable.....
the wigs are floating
away and the body
makeup is coming off.”**

Hamilton, who had also been Ben Nye’s assistant department head, ran the television end of the Fox makeup department.

Tom Burman, Bill Miller, Jim Phillips and Wes Dawn were apprentices. “Wonderful lads. These guys had just fabulous training. Tommy [Burman] was there long before I was. He was coming close to finishing his apprenticeship in about a year. Tom was working in the lab mostly. And we know where Tom is today. A wonderful artist and a fabulous guy.”

“The lab at that time was just inundated because of *Planet of the Apes*. We were working shifts, 24 hours a day. I dove in on the hair goods side of it. Johnny [Chambers] was running the show. I got John to have the lab guys make duplicates of faces. I found a place down in Compton that had a pentagraph. They would carve it out in alder wood, then we could make the hair pieces that would fit exactly to the configuration of the appliances. It worked wonderfully. I don’t have one of those today, and I know there are 10 of them around Hollywood somewhere. Josephine Turner was the wig maker who worked for us at that time on the



lot. She had a couple of helpers. They could just nail the lace right on the wood block. So wherever it needed darts or anything, it would fit perfectly when you would put it on.”

Planet of the Apes started shooting in May of 1967, starting at Lake Powell where the astronauts first come out of the space ship. John Inzerella did Charlton Heston’s makeup. Once again, there were not enough union makeup artists to go around. Striepeke got permission to train 10 people, among them Tommy Cole, Larry Abbott, Maurice Stein, and Ken Chase. “In the corn field sequence there were 35 gorillas. That’s 35 makeup artists right there.”

One of the cast members of *Planet of the Apes* was a [real] chimpanzee. “I had to put a nose on the chimp. The chimp was wonderful. He sat there all the time in the makeup chair. Odessa in the makeup department brought a cup of coffee for the trainer, and the chimp wanted it, and so they gave him coffee. When the chimp wanted a second cup of coffee, and the trainer said no, and the chimp went crazy, absolutely beserk.”

John Chambers received an Oscar for his work on *Planet of the Apes*. “John is a tremendously creative man. He certainly deserved that Oscar. It was a herculean effort on John Chambers’ part to break that problem of



Above and Below: Battle wounds on *Forrest Gump*.



the projection of the jaw [*Planet of the Apes*] and all of his artistic and dentistry background came into play. John is brilliant. It was a well-deserved Oscar."

The key makeup artists on films at Fox had Dan Striepeke to thank for getting them screen credit. "It was kind of unheard of in those days, at

"....and the chimp went crazy, absolutely berserk. He crapped all over my office."

least in the major studios. The department heads got credit whether they ever set foot on the set or not. I had always had a thing in my craw about that, so I said if I ever did get in a position, one of the first things I would insist on was that the key makeup artist on any show would get receive equal credit with me. That was part of my deal when I made my deal with Fox. I thought it was fair, and the right way to go."

The makeup department garnered a lot of respect on the Fox lot, because the makeup was so integral to *Planet of the Apes*, especially after that film became a smash hit at the box office. It led to a subsequent series of films that also put a lot of money in 20th Century Fox coffers.

"Dick Zanuck and David Brown were very dynamic studio heads at a very exciting time. You could be in the makeup department, and if you wanted to go to the stage, you picked up a phone and called a rover, and a radio dispatched car would come pick you up. It was that kind of operation."

Striepeke recalls the crew at Fox fondly. "What a wonderful group of people. These fellows were just a great support. You could put them on any feature and they could handle it."

Hello Dolly came through Fox during that very busy time. It was one of Striepeke's favorites because of the satisfaction he got from having a lot of creative control. "I wanted the makeups to look particularly good on the women, and on the men, I wanted a John Singer Sargent look, a very pale boy's complexion. The producer, Ernest Lehman, and Gene Kelly, the director, whom I have great admiration for, agreed wholeheartedly. We tested extensively, and developed makeup colors for that look that would not 'burn out' where lighting was concerned. When we got down to doing the final printing for *Dolly*, I was in the[*color*] lab every night. I was involved in the final color corrections, and that kind of control is something you rarely get, but it's a wonderful experience. It was very satisfying.

"Those touches are vitally important. It's not out of the realm of present day makeup artists to do the same thing, particularly if you're really striving for a particular look. Once the people realize that's where you're coming from, your stature changes immensely within production companies, as opposed to being a nuisance, a necessary evil, to really being a creative force. We certainly had that on *Forrest Gump*."

Striepeke was self taught, but wished he had had the opportunity to be an apprentice. "The apprenticeship served the art of makeup very well. It's too bad that it went by the wayside. It's a real shame. A huge loss. I wish it would come back, but I doubt it will."

"In the major studio days, all the makeups were done in the makeup department. So everybody came to a central place. And that lends itself to emphasis, as opposed to being scattered around in cubbyholes or makeup trailers. And all the actors and everybody came to the makeup and hairdressing department. Then they would go to work on the stage. You had that central area where everything was available to you. You had a wigmaker, a hairstylist, laboratory, and all that backing for every individual who was working in the makeup department, as opposed to now with everybody out there on a limb, so to speak."

Crew members of other departments at the studio had a great deal of respect for the makeup artists. Cameramen, producers, and directors would come into Striepeke's office to talk about the films. "I remember one time we were doing a picture called *Justine* at Fox. The director came to my office and we had long talks about how some of the characters like Baltazar and the belly dancers, and how



More battle scars from *Forrest Gump*.

some of these people were to look. One actor came in and said, 'I've got this idea and blah, blah, blah,' and the

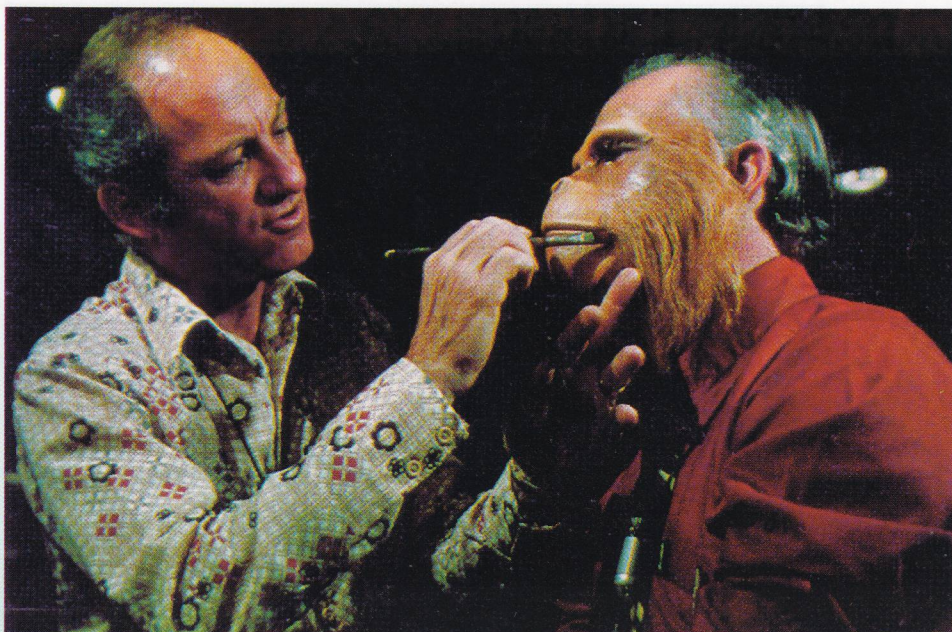
The director said, "Mr. Striepeke and I will decide what you're going to look like. Just sit down and shut up."

director said, 'Just shut up. Mr. Striepeke and I will decide what you're going to look like. Just sit down and shut up.' The director would not take it

from anyone. That was the way it was. That's the way it should be."

POST FOX

In 1971 during an upheaval at Fox, Striepeke left, after five and a half years. There were not many films being made. The last *Planet of the Apes* film had finished a year before. "I was at Universal producing my film, *SSSSSSS*, when the last *Planet of the Apes* was made. Johnny [Chambers] was at Universal at the time. He did all the work on the appliances, and did a beautiful job. He got a very nice award



in France for his work.”

Striepeke collaborated with Tom Burman and John Chambers on the 1970s version of *Island of Dr. Moreau*. They rented the empty makeup lab at Fox for the huge amount of preproduction involved, then they were off to St. Croix to shoot. Because of delays getting started on *Moreau*, Striepeke ended up having to leave the show early on because of another commitment. John Chambers took over the administration of the makeup department, as well as sculpting a large portion of the appliances. Frank McCoy and his son, Jim, McCoy, Thomas Burman, Eddie Butterworth, Joe DiBella, Eddie Henriques, Tom Hoerber, Mike McCracken, and Walter Skank also worked with Striepeke and Chambers.

“I had been out of makeup for about a year. And so I was out looking for a job. Del Acevedo called me and said, ‘Why don’t you go over to Paramount and talk to these people.’ So I did, and got the job. Max Factor had a line called Geminesse. It was beautiful packaging, like Roman rouge pots. I liked the quality of it and the

feel of it. So I decided to use it on the film. We started testing. The guys looked great, and the girls, too. Everybody loved it.

“You kind of search little things and find this or that, and see what works. I can’t emphasize enough that the one thing about the art of makeup is you never stay with the tried and true. Always try to expand.”

“I can cite an example. I did a picture called *Dead Again* with Kenneth

Branagh at Paramount. He played two characters, and Emma Thompson, his wife at that time, did it also and played different people. When I came onto the picture there was no money in the budget for wigs on the film. I said, ‘Well, it can’t be done without them.’ So Charlie McGuire had to scramble around and find \$60,000 to \$70,000 for wigs. Unfortunately, in our modern era, there is so little money for makeup. There wasn’t even money in the budget for a second makeup artist.” Striepeke told them he needed extra help. There were huge scenes that could not have been done with one makeup artist. “I think makeup artists also have to be smart enough to get involved with the budget process before the budget is locked up.”

FORREST GUMP

Of all the myriads of films Dan Striepeke has done, *Forrest Gump* (Universal) is at the top of the list of his favorites. The makeup department received an Oscar nomination for the seamless makeup that was applied under difficult conditions. “It was challenging, to say the least. I’m so proud of that picture,” said Striepeke,



Right: Makeup artists Gary Morris, Edwin Butterworth, John Conte, Walter Schenck and Dan Striepeke.



"because from our point of view, you never see any makeup. That's what pleased me so much about it."

It was hot and humid on location in South Carolina, and there were countless age makeups. "There was no time to do prostheses. We were using 1990s technology with 1940s technique. It was out of the box. All of the testing was done on location, without the

"Nothing went out the door without all of us kind of approving it. That was what made it good. The egos were left at the doorstep."

benefit of a lab. We did tests of probably 70 characters in about two to four days.

"I had an old hair piece I had had for 30 years and I was using it on the doctor. It was just an old piece of crap, falling apart and moth-eaten. We got Judy Cory to put some dye on it and block it real good, what was left of the lace. It was a full single needle ventilation. And it worked. Judy Cory did the hair cutting on Tom [Hanks] and the funnel hair pieces that were changing his hair

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Above: The doctor in *Forrest Gump*, with age makeup.

Top Right, Facing Page: The younger looking doctor in *Forrest Gump*.

Right: Kenneth Branagh plays two characters in *Dead Again* -- Roman Strauss (right) and Mike Church (far right).

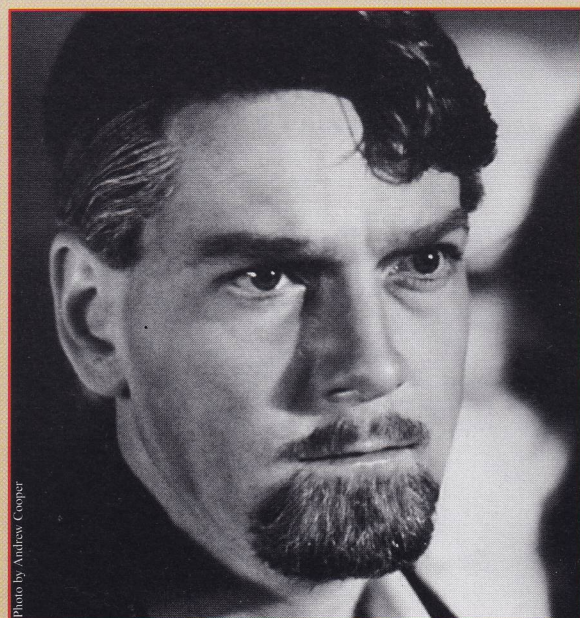


Photo by Andrew Cooper

line throughout the film. She did a magnificent job.”

The entire makeup and hair department developed a camaraderie and accountability to one another. Suggestions for improvement were taken in stride. “Nothing went out the door without all of us kind of approving it. That was what made it good. The egos were left at the doorstep.”

“Halley D’Amore was a co-partner with me. With anything good you say about this picture, you should include her.

“I think the work itself shows what the input was. The level of exercise and diligence has to be really elevated. I think as you go on in your life and career, you should push yourself to another level every time you do a film. For instance, I like to find minor characters in just a so-called straight [makeup] film just do special touches. I learned that doing extras in the huge calls they would have with the old-timers. You could make them really special. The director would see it put them up in front. That’s the fine touch of painting and that’s what makes our craft wonderful and exciting. The makeup artist has to initiate that, because it always feels like a sore is being scraped from production.” The tools that the makeup artist has are creative people on the film. And that goes from the producer, director to the writer and anyone you can get to on that level.

“I think Stan Winston, Rick Baker, Tom Burman, Greg Cannom, Matthew Mungle have all gone the extra mile. And I have great admiration for these gentlemen. They have pushed the boundaries of our craft. And even if you’re not a laboratory person or a prosthesis person, you can still stretch – whether you’re taking an actor who has a weak jaw and creating a beard on him to give strength to the chin, whether there is a certain treatment around the eye of an actress or an actor, how you approach what that person should look like in that particular role.

“I did a picture called *Footloose* with Kevin Bacon and a bunch of kids up in Provo, Utah. I said, ‘What do these kids wear?’ So I went to a local Walgreen Drug Store and I started buying some Cover (Continued on pg. 38)

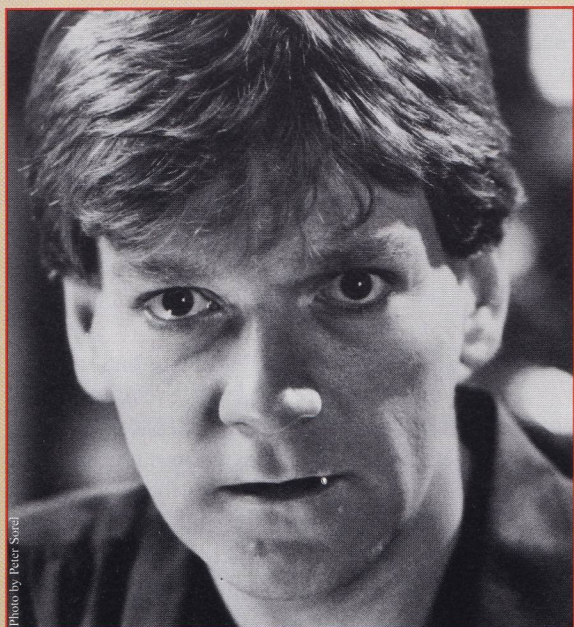


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(Continued from pg. 33) Girl, some of this 'blisterpack' stuff and started playing with it. We used it on the film and the young kids loved it, because that's what they used. They felt good, I felt good, and it looked good on the screen.

"That's just one small idea of how one should approach filmmaking. And it becomes very gratifying. If people are content with just an everyday job, then they shouldn't be makeup artists. They're not makeup artists. They're mechanics. The thing is, you've got to sometimes dare to be bad. Just push yourself to where you get to that point, then regroup and go ahead again.

"I like to collaborate. If I'm

doing a film with you, I would never lock you out. You would know every move that I make and be welcome to join in. I'm not standing on a pedestal. If you find makeup artists who you are at ease with, those people who you've surrounded yourself with when you're keying a show, then the input is only upward movement. And it helps all of them to be creative and let their juices flow, rather than say, 'No, do it like the numbers, 1-2-3, and shut up and go to your chair.' I don't believe in that. One of the primal forces for me getting credit for people on a major lot at that time was the fact that they should be there. Because the person is going to

do so much better for the film and for you."

BEING A GOOD DEPARTMENT HEAD

"It starts with, number one, knowing your craft. Number two, it really starts and ends with integrity. If you hire makeup artists and hairstylists, as a department head you had better back those people up. I'll cite an example. On the first *Planet of the Apes*, there was an incident at Fox where the associate producer was accusing the makeup artists on the set of negligent behavior. I heard about it, and I came over to the stage and I pulled this associate producer aside and I stuck my finger in his face and I let him have it with 14 barrels. Most people are really busting their butts to do the best job they possibly can. Whether it's two people or 60 people, it takes a department head with the strength to go in and fight tooth and nail for those people. Because you're only as good as they are, and if you hired them, you've got to back them up. Over the years when I was not a department head I saw people were sacrificed so that the department head would look

good. I vowed that that would never happen, and I can honestly say in all the years that I have worked in this business, I think I have fired only two people and they really deserved it.

"Makeup artists are vulnerable.
Continued on pg. 44

Above Left: Body makeup on *Kings of the Sun* was sprayed on, then burnished with sheepskin gloves.

Right: A coffee-drinking chimpanzee was one of Striepeke's subjects on *Planet of the Apes*. Kim Hunter and Roddy McDowell, in makeup, look on.



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Continued from pg. 38 Everything is up on the screen for minute scrutiny. We're not setting a prop or setting a bush over there or painting a wall. When the closeup comes, everybody backs off because nobody knows what to do except us. And that's why we have to maintain the sense of importance.

"As a department head, you've got to be the buffer so those people who are doing the work every day don't get involved in that production crap. I feel very strongly about this. They have sacrificed a lot of very good, talented people who have been wounded. And when you get wounded, you get hesitant. And when you

"When the closeup comes,
everybody backs off
because nobody knows
what to do except us."

get hesitant, you can't be expressive. And our art is expressive. You have to be free. You have to feel safe to do that. So that's what a department head's job is.

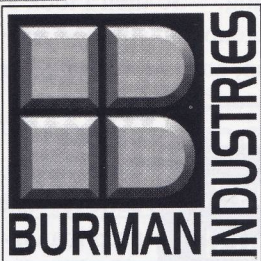
"We must realize we are very important, and that we are necessary. We are not a necessary evil, we are necessary to making a motion picture. And in so doing, we don't have to walk around pushing our chests out. You go about it in a very professional, quiet, dignified way. But if somebody comes along, particularly production, and they start stepping on your toes, then you kick them the heck out of the trailer. I had a trainee come into my makeup trailer one day and she said on the radio, 'He's putting the eyebrow pencil to her brow now....' I threw the pencil down, I grabbed her by the seat of the pants, and threw her out in the snow. I said, 'Don't ever come in this trailer again.' She's yelping into the radio, 'He threw me in the snow, he threw me in the snow!' They all come running down, the production manager, and everybody else. I said, 'She has no business in here whatsoever. And when you start talking on the radio about this stroke or that stroke of a pencil



Above: In *The Outsider*, Tony Curtis plays a Pima Indian who becomes a Marine hero at Iwo Jima.

Below: Walter Matthau and Barbra Streisand starred in *Hello, Dolly!*





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while I'm trying to create this actor's makeup — all of you are out of here.' Production is only one department on a departmentalized film. The makeup department, as far as I'm concerned, is

"I grabbed her by the seat of the pants, and threw her out in the snow. I said, 'Don't ever come in this trailer again.'"

on equal basis with the production department. They're not running my department. They don't know anything about my department. They don't know anything about how to run a makeup department or what it takes to do it. So who are they to tell me what to do?"

Production comes to each department, including makeup, to see what they need to get the actor on camera. "And if they don't, they're going to hear a lot from me. No one knows better than you or I how long it will take up to make up Suzy Q or Joe Schmoe. Certainly production doesn't know. They think they do, but they don't know. All they know is how to make out the call sheet. The information to make a call sheet out right is from you or me or the wardrobe people,

or the prop people, whatever. That's what it's all about. And people have got their priorities all mixed up. They've been buffaloed. And it should not happen. And if someone is going to run a makeup or hairdressing department correctly, it won't happen."

THE OLD AND THE NEW

Striepeke addressed the animosity that sometimes exists between the "old" and the "new" makeup artists. "We who are so-called oldtimers should take it upon ourselves to help these

**Dan Striepeke and his long-time friend John Chambers
discuss a character for Island of Dr. Moreau.**



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[newer] people. They are being put in terribly untenable positions. First, they have not been exposed to the fact that a makeup department is a very important department. I

see many younger people today trying to run it as kind of a subservient thing. It should not

and must not be that way. Because it is not subservient. I was on a picture, *Can't Stop the Music* with Valerie Perrine. She came in on a Monday

sealed the weeping. So then I took a castor based makeup and stippled and got it all fixed up, and we were able to shoot the day's work. Who else in the

company could have done it? The prop manager? The first assistant, the second, the third, the

"The makeup department, as far as I'm concerned, is on equal basis with the production department."

trainee? None of them. Only one person could solve the problem. That is the makeup artist. And that's just how important we are."



morning, and she and her girlfriend had done a zip thing on her upper lip, and they tore off skin. And it was weeping like hell.

There was a big day's work ahead. Did production solve the problem?

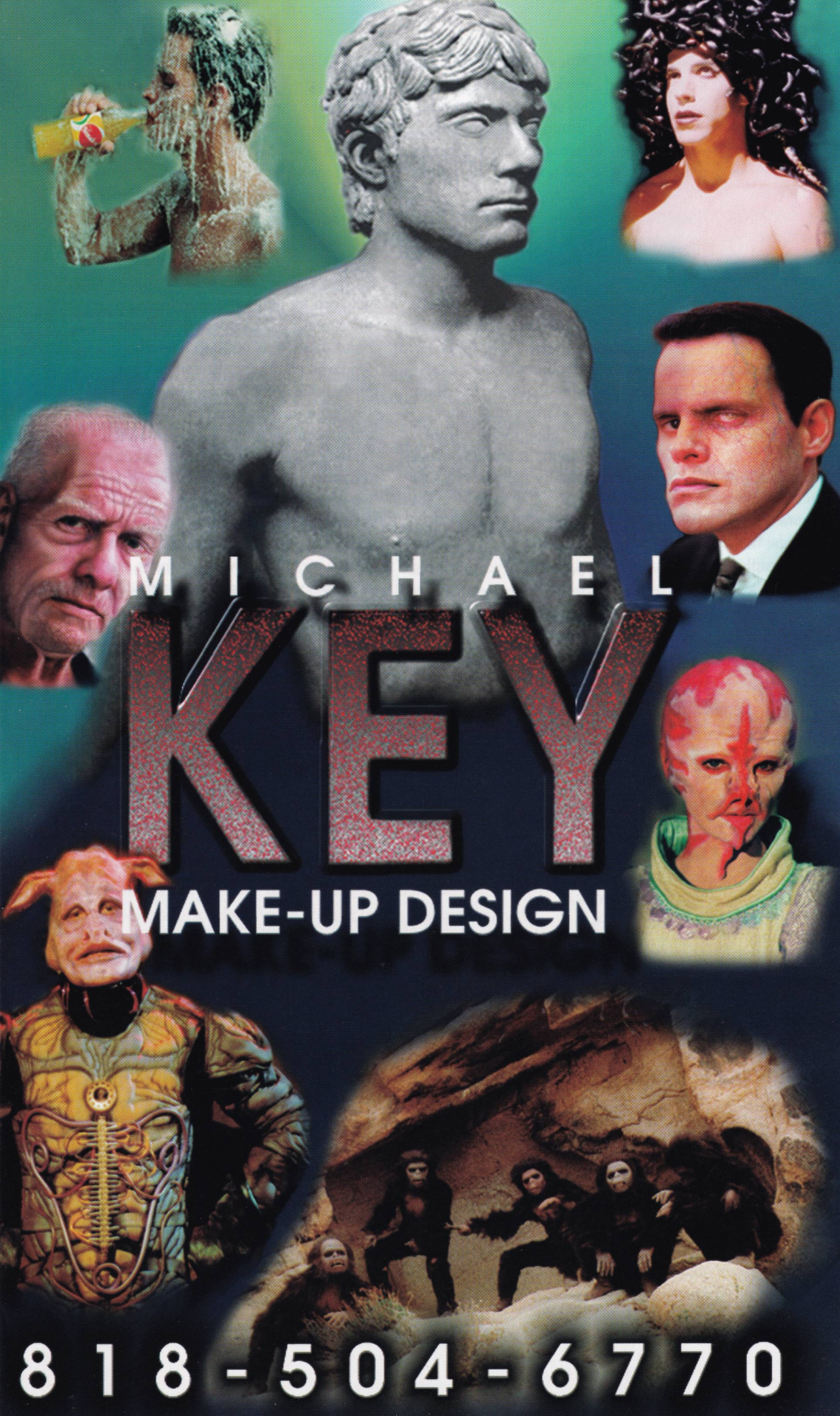
Did the producer, did the director? No, nobody. They all were running crying because this horrible thing had happened. What happens? Dan the Makeup Man, I called a dermatologist friend of mine who got there within an hour, and he

"Nobody starts off in this business knowing it all. Nobody finishes knowing it all. You're always learning.

"I see many younger people today trying to run it as kind of a subservient thing. It should not and must not be that way."

"It's unfortunate we lost the apprenticeship program. But still, these people who are in the union right

now, they should be helped, they should be trained in any way we could possibly do it within our own internal organization to make this union and everybody in it better. And we shouldn't look down our (Continued on pg. 50)



M I C H A E L

KEY

MAKE-UP DESIGN

(Continued from pg. 46)
noses at someone who's come in rather easily because they are still representing all of us. If they fail, we all fail. If they are weak, we're all weak. And let's face it, we are in constant war with the production. And the only way we win is because we know better than anybody else what to do. Ultimately, that's what it all amounts to.

"I don't care whether it's a director or producer, or production manager, whatever. It's very easy to turn them off. If you're frightened and unsure of yourself, then you're meat for the grist mill. So the more training we can give everybody, the better off we are. Then expertise and artistic ability predominate. The only time you can be challenged is when you are weak in a subject. If you are to put on a beard and you don't know how, they're going to kill you. You have to be confident and knowledgeable.

"Ultimately, this is the soul and substance of ourselves and our craft. That's what makes us strong or weak. And it's also knowledge. Knowledge and integrity. With those two, nobody can defeat you." **MA**

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