



**THE CREATION OF SCREEN CHARACTERS BY  
THE GREAT MAKEUP ARTISTS**

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# **Making a Monster**

A behind-the-scenes look at the great film makeup artists, their careers and creations, from *Frankenstein* to *Star Wars*, with revealing information on how to make your own monsters

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**Al Taylor and Sue Roy**

*Introduction by Christopher Lee*

*Over 400 illustrations*

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# Chapter 19

## JOHN CHAMBERS

**W**ith a unanimous vote of the board of governors the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences presented John Chambers with an Oscar in 1969. The Oscar had been presented only once before to a makeup artist in the Academy's forty-year history.

As most of us have discovered, nothing comes from nothing, and Chambers was no exception. His route to the Oscar was long and tedious and began many years before Ben Nye, Sr., contacted him in Europe where he was busy on the "I Spy" television series, to discuss the possibility of Chambers working on the soon-to-be-made *Planet of the Apes*. It was for Chambers's incredible work in transforming Roddy McDowall, Kim Hunter, Maurice Evans, and many others into orangutans, chimpanzees, and gorillas for this film that he received the Oscar.

After high school Chambers designed jewelry and then carpeting, and then he joined the army. He became a dental technician, and, oddly enough, this led to Hollywood.

A gifted sculptor and artist, Chambers found himself able to experiment with various forms of plastics, and he was able to develop new adhesives and rubber compounds. Some of his experience came from working in the army's Fitzsimmons General

Hospital in Denver, Colorado, and then later in Santa Maria, California, where he spent three years creating prosthetic devices such as artificial noses and ears for wounded soldiers.

Chambers eventually found his way to the Hines Veterans Hospital. He was in charge of prosthetic devices. He would follow surgeons into the operating rooms, making anatomical notations.

Using these, he would create in plastic the parts necessary for reconstructive surgery. He created a palate, allowing patients who were unable to form words to speak again. He replaced shoulders which had been blown away in battle and created artificial breasts for WACs and nurses who had been wounded. He was able to improve techniques for painting artificial eyes, perfectly duplicating the coloring and even the texture of the patient's existing eye. He would create full orbital appliances which consist of the eyelid and lashes, as well as the eyeball. He was able to create artificial plastic thyroid glands for use in cadaver research. On one occasion Chambers did a full-face restoration on a young soldier after the jeep in which he was riding hit a land mine and the metal floor of the jeep sliced off his entire face.

At one time during his film career he heard of a woman who had had her nose removed due to a severe facial malignancy.



John had her come to his lab where he created a plastic nose which fitted perfectly. Showing her how to put it on and cover it with makeup which blended into her complexion, he did it so beautifully that no one could suspect the slightest imperfection in her features.

"It just makes me feel good to know I can help people," Chambers replies. Looking down at his hands, he adds, "God put it there, and it comes easy."

In 1953 television was just starting to grow. Chambers began to notice that what he was doing in his realm was a far superior job to what he saw come out of television. Chambers's talent was sorely needed. The golden aura of Hollywood, compared to the morbid work he was involved in, appealed to John. Since he was a creative artist, there was the anticipation that in Hollywood there would be only the world's greatest minds and talents. Of course, Chambers found that

as in many realms, there is genius, but there is also mediocrity.

Chambers wrote NBC offering his services, and when he had heard nothing from them for nine months, he left Chicago for Hollywood anyway. The day he left, a letter from NBC arrived, offering him a job.

He brought to Hollywood scientific techniques that no one was familiar with. The studios had worked only with smatterings from the plaster shop, or they might have a cousin or a friend who was a dentist and could teach them how to make a set of fang teeth. He found that very few technicians ever went deeply into the art and science of the materials.

There were, of course, real artists who, despite crude, old techniques and old types of plaster and hydrocal stones, were doing marvelous creative makeups.

Chambers disguised Charlton Heston as the beast in a Shirley Temple Storybook



production of *Beauty and the Beast*. He also created and handled the makeup for Paul Newman in *The Battler*, Hemingway's story of a boxer. Newman had to appear unscarred in one scene and badly beaten up in the following scene. These scenes were live and only seconds apart, but Chambers and a well-trained makeup crew achieved the required effect. He was also involved on assignments for "Matinee Theatre" and "Lux Video Theater." He enjoyed the experience and excitement generated by "live" television.

After six years, Chambers went to Universal where he worked on *The Ugly American* (1962) and *Bedtime Story* (1964), fashioning a complete upper set of veneer teeth for Brando in order to effect a toothier appearance.

But Chambers's first real love was the vehicle that brought him to film prominence, *The List of Adrian Messenger* (1963). In this film he helped create as many as ten dis-

guises for Kirk Douglas from a young farmer to an elderly cleric. He even turned handsome Burt Lancaster into a horse-faced woman and Frank Sinatra into a gypsy.

He experienced many disappointments on the film. Bud Westmore was the "main man," the department head. Chambers ran the laboratory and solved the problems. Westmore demanded that the picture be black and white, while Chambers felt that it should have been in color. Then it would have been a classic. Westmore feared that the appliances wouldn't look right in color. "So we went to black and white and modified a fine picture," John lamented.

Chambers created teeth appliances for Marlon Brando in *The Chase* (1966). Chambers has a certain notoriety for being able to keep five or six makeup artists busy at the same time, fitting the appliances he creates for them. He has a laboratory in his garage where he creates thousands of appliances for good money, but without screen credit.



Chambers in his studio with many of the molds and impressions used for the film that brought him to prominence, *The List of Adrian Messenger*. Bud Westmore was makeup director on this film. (© Universal)

He created the head of the man seen in the water in *Jaws* (1975). For a scene in *True Grit* (1969) he prepared fingers so that John Wayne could chop them off a fellow cowpoke.

When an Egyptian peasant's ear was cut off in *Justine* (1969), it was one of Chambers's creations. He made all of the appliances for Ross Martin in "The Wild, Wild West" television series. And "trekkies" will be glad to know that Mr. Spock's ears were made by John Chambers.

Chambers also worked on the first "Mission: Impossible" pilot and did some episodes for "The Outer Limits," "Lost in Space," and "Night Gallery."

Many of these television programs had to exist on low budgets despite high ratings and the need for creative staff. Chambers would turn out two and three monsters a

week. He made scores of vampire-type teeth. For "The Outer Limits," he created a domed head for David McCallum in "The Sixth Finger."

One of Chambers's favorite creations is the Pickman's Model from the television series "Night Gallery." The story concerns a young artist in whose studio there was a trapdoor that led to the sewers of Boston. Legend had it that every so often a creature who lived in the sewers would emerge, take a woman captive, and return below. The young artist painted the creature (which he actually saw) and won acclaim for such "creative" work.

Pickman's Model was another low-budget creature. Comprehensive sketches were made of the concept. Chambers worked in collaboration with sketch artist Tom Wright. Wright did all the "Night Gallery" portraits.

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It was necessary to come up with sketches in only a day or two on such programs, instead of the two or three weeks they would normally have on a better-budgeted feature. The creature itself would have to be completed in a week and a half at most.

Robert Prohaska wore the Model's suit. It was made from bits and pieces. They made the head, then cut and hand-carved the lump. Chambers took a mold of a tremendous snake and made a tail out of it. Sheepskins were bought and stripped so that they would be flexible. There was no time to make molds. They hand-cut the skins and fit them on leotards. Chambers made red full-scleral contact lenses for Prohaska for the tight shots.

Chambers's most well-known work, of course, was for *Planet of the Apes*. Eventually, Chambers and Dan Striekpeke would be together on *Apes*, but in the beginning, it was Chambers alone under Ben Nye, Sr. No one seemed to have any real concept of what they wanted, only of what they didn't want. Chambers would try this and that and the other thing, only to receive negative comments from everyone.

Bill Creber, the art director, was his biggest help. Creber had the propmen bring into the lab all the old, stuffed, falling-apart monkeys, chimps, and orangutans they



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could find. Chambers had them hanging all over, as they gave him sketch ideas. He was alone. The budget at that time wouldn't allow for him to hire any help. Sometimes Ben Nye would pull Tom Burman or Werner Kempler off some other project and allow them to help, but basically, in the beginning, Chambers was alone.

The first sculptures Chambers did were of a gorilla and a chimp. The chimp had a very natural appearance, and when they tested it, they found that the slits of the nose were just too ugly. After much discussion, they came up with a modified "button" nose for the chimpanzees.

Although they toyed with the concept of a Neanderthal type, this wouldn't work. They needed the strength of the animal face, but without the grotesqueness. They also had to find a way for the actors to project their voices for sound recording without it seeming as though it were coming from a cavern deep within the ape's body. The actor's lips

also had to be synchronized with the ape lips so that when they spoke, the ape lips would form the words visually. It was known from experience that heavy foam-rubber appliances would absorb the sound. It became necessary to invent makeup that would allow the dialogue to sound natural.

After the first film test it was necessary to eliminate some wrinkles around the eyes to permit greater expression. Sometimes the actors' own teeth could be seen behind the ape teeth. They had the help of the camera people and lighting experts in this area, who selected angles to minimize the problem. They would also black out the actors' teeth so they would not reflect the light.

The actors had trouble with the noses and couldn't breathe through them. A passage was designed through the ape's upper lip, and this made it easier for the actors to breathe.

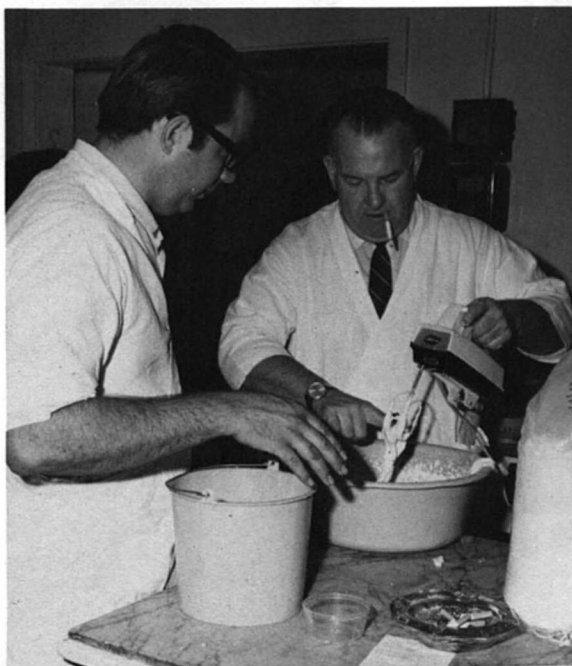
Chambers also wanted color conformity. Because eventually there were so many



An early ape concept by Ben Nye, Sr., for *Planet of the Apes*. Edward G. Robinson appears as Dr. Zaius, the role Maurice Evans would eventually make famous. Owing to a heart condition, Robinson declined the role because shooting was to be done at a high altitude.  
(© Apjac Productions, Inc. and Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation)



Chambers and Tom Burman mixing impression material.



Burman and Chambers inject foam latex into the ape appliance molds. These will be baked at high temperatures in ovens.  
(© Apjac Productions, Inc. and Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation)



Rubber masks were worn by many of the extras in *Planet of the Apes*. Chambers closely examines an unfinished mask. (© Apjac Productions, Inc. and Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation )

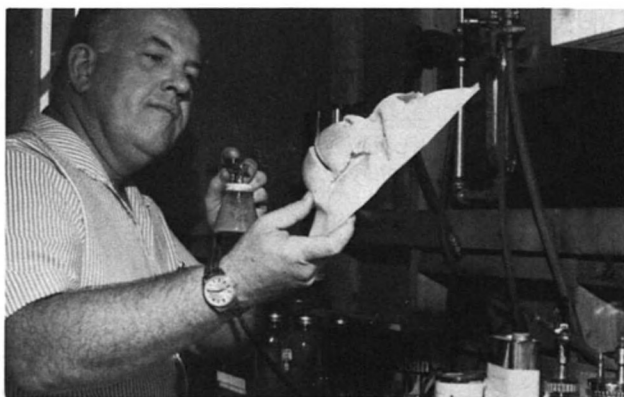
JOHN CHAMBERS



Each foam-latex appliance had to be carefully identified as to which actor would wear it. Some of the appliances could be reused. (© Apjac Productions, Inc. and Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation)



Apprentice Burman willingly allows Chambers to test a gorilla appliance on his face. Note Burman's own mouth below the gorilla muzzle. (© Apjac Productions, Inc. and Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation)



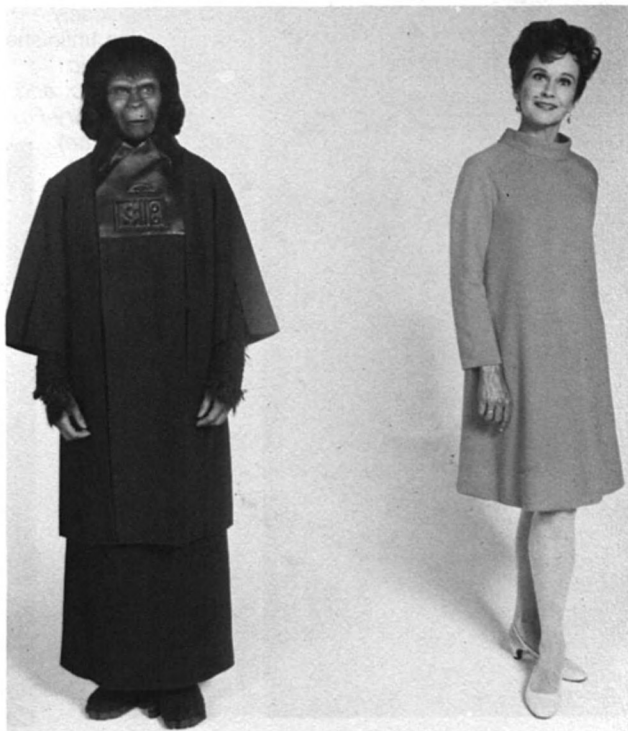
Chambers sprays makeup onto an orangutan appliance which will be used by Maurice Evans. (© Apjac Productions, Inc. and Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation)



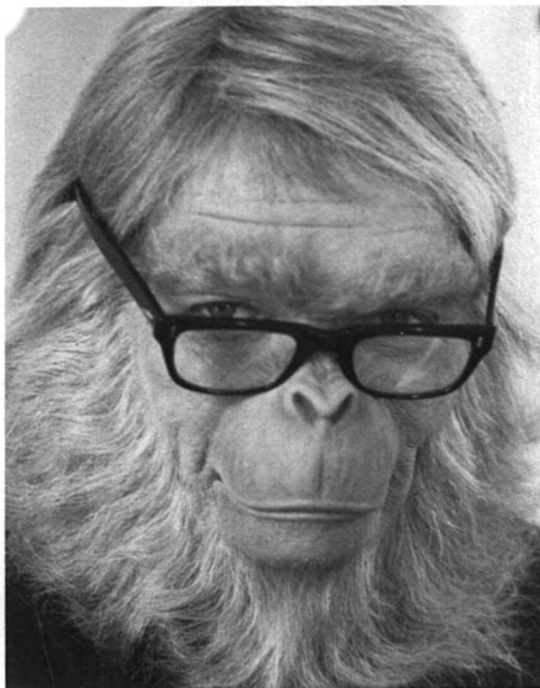
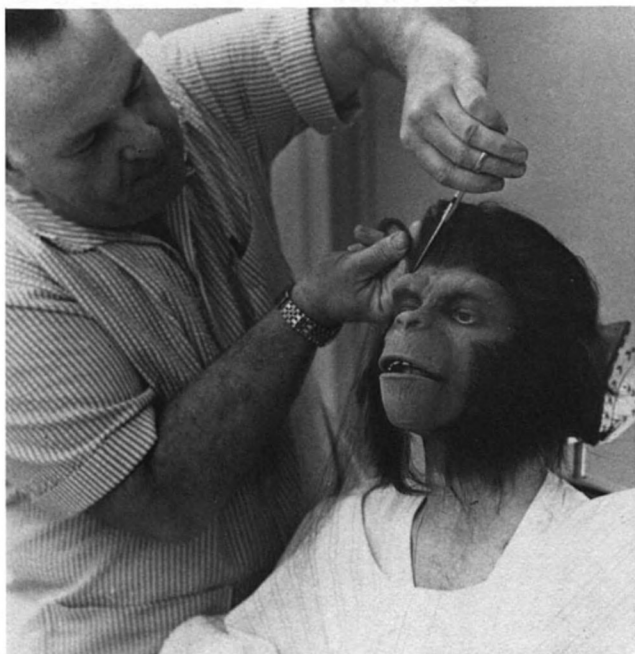
Chambers and Ben Nye examine two of the many masks. (© Apjac Productions, Inc. and Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation)



Kim Hunter, who won the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress for her performance in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, poses with and without makeup and costume for her role in *Planet of the Apes*. (© Apjac Productions, Inc. and Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation)



Lou Wagner finds himself transformed under Chambers's skillful hands. (© Apjac Productions, Inc. and Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation)



If Maurice Evans wanted to catch up on his reading during a break in shooting, he didn't let his Dr. Zaius makeup stop him. (© Apjac Productions, Inc. and Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation)



Chambers poses with (left to right) an orangutan, a chimp, and a gorilla. (Photo courtesy of John Chambers)

makeup artists working—at one time there were as many as eighty—it was a real problem. He achieved uniform coloration by premaking up the appliances. He had the appliances presprayed with new rubbers. They used rubber adhesives, glues, and paints that no one had ever used before. No one had ever premade up before, either. It took nearly five hours for each actor to be made up, and this had to be cut down. Extras were hired simply for makeup tests.

There was no commercial product designed for premakeup, so it became necessary to create a special paint. Prepainting saved about forty-five minutes of labor in the chair for each actor. It also allowed the makeup men to paint large numbers of appliances at the same time with the same batch of paint, thus maintaining color consistency. The edges were blended in after attachment to the face, but the basic color was already there for the makeup artist.

It was also necessary to develop a paint that would allow the actor's skin to breathe. In the beginning, sweat would make the appliance come loose, and the new paint also prevented this. It had a plastic base that allowed it to be sprayed at low air pressure.

Small particles of paint stuck to the rubber but never completely joined each other, leaving small breathing areas not visible to the human eye. This, in conjunction with the open-cell foam rubber that was developed, allowed the body sweat to be transmitted through the substance, so that when the ape's face was bathed in sweat, it was the actor's own.

Another product developed was a spirit gum that, unlike the existing product, would not have a sheen to it. A special sealer was devised to protect the rubber from the effect of a mineral-based oil. This also had a sheen to it, but they were able to flatten it. Using a research grant from a rubber company, a foam rubber was developed that had a high degree of softness, cutting down the heavy bulk of the muzzle and chin.

It was necessary for the actors to learn to eat correctly too. In the beginning, although they could open their mouths, they had to use a mirror to see where to place the food. Often they would resort to feeding each other, and that was an amusing sight to see. They found it easiest to chew solids that had been cut small. Of course, there were always those who didn't respect the makeup.

They'd fill up on greasy foods, and after lunch their chins would be hanging off. Food would be caught in the foam-rubber lips, and the actors would go to Makeup for repair.

Drinking was done through straws, and smoking through long cigarette holders. James Whitmore had to find a long stem for his pipe.

Some of the appliances could be reused. It was necessary to remove them without using any solvents or mineral oils. The appliances were rewashed in a mixture of acetone and alcohol, the edges were cleaned and sterilized, and then put through a refinishing process so that they could be used as often as three or four times. It all depended on the makeup man and the actor who wore it. Because there were so many appliances used, some were interchangeable. All were named and numbered.

For example, Woody Parfrey played one of the wise orangutan judges, along with James Whitmore and Maurice Evans in the "see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil" parody for Heston's trial sequence. Parfrey had a fairly large nose and bone structure. His appliances were large enough to be reused on other actors and would look as though they were custom-made. When an actor was being fitted, they would refer to the appliances that might work on him as being a "Woody Parfrey" or a "Roddy McDowall."

For one day's shooting, the entire makeup ran about \$700 to \$800, but reuse would bring that figure down. The makeup artists themselves were earning from \$1,200 to \$1,400 a week.

Josephine Turner did all the hairwork for the film. Chambers describes her as a genius of a lady. Her work was all hand-ventilated onto the finest lace. She is the grande dame of wigmaking in Hollywood.

The mutants in *Beneath the Planet of the Apes* (1969) wore full-head appliances of foam rubber. Over this, a thin skin of clear silicone was painted to give the effect of depth, as though looking through transparent skin. The wardrobe designer designed a hood that could be pulled off. Chambers had several exceptional makeup artists and sculptors working on the likenesses of the overmasks, creating them to look human. These were worn over the mutant full-head appliance. The mutants flipped off these



Josephine Turner did all the hairwork for *Planet of the Apes*. Hair was ventilated onto the finest of lace. Turner is regarded as the grande dame of wigmaking in Hollywood. © Apjac Productions, Inc. and Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation)

covers when they worshiped the atomic bomb that adorned their altar.

This was a difficult effect because it had to be done rapidly. The mutants had to look as though they had a natural human face, which was actually the hood, and when this was removed, the mutant head remained. It cost thousands of dollars to create this effect, which lasted for about three seconds on the screen. However, it worked.

Working with the actors in ape costume could be quite amusing. Chambers recalls Maurice Evans in full ape regalia, wearing his own eyeglasses and reading his newspaper, as he sat in a car on the Ventura Freeway returning from shooting out at the Fox ranch. Other drivers on the Freeway would nearly put their cars in a ditch viewing such a sight. The first time they were out filming on location and had to drive one of the actors in full makeup into town for something, the local people were stunned to see this "animal creature" ordering things from a luncheonette counter.

Chambers himself, though he knew the actors beneath all the makeup and had worked with them many times before, began to think of them as being ape creatures. He found that he would forget that it was Kim Hunter, Roddy McDowall, or Maurice Evans, and he would actually begin to think of them as the characters they were playing.





It seemed only fitting to those behind the Academy Awards that John Chambers be presented with an Oscar by a simian for his outstanding achievements in makeup for *Planet of the Apes*. Walter Matthau was given the dubious honor of controlling the chimp. (© Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences)

It was a strange feeling.

Chambers and Dan Striekpeke have recently finished *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1977), which was filmed in the Virgin Islands. Chambers's involvement in this film began nearly two years earlier. Striekpeke was first approached to do the film and agreed if Chambers would, too.

The two men recognized that the makeup would lie somewhere between the *Primal Man* concept and the *Planet of the Apes* concept. The mechanics had already been licked in these previous films, but the concept would take some doing. They worked with Sandy Howard in developing the creatures. Although they studied the original film version of *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, which was titled *Island of Lost Souls* (1933), they felt that they could offer much more than could have been done in 1933.

Originally they had wanted less hair on the faces, giving a more human aspect, but this was changed, and more hairwork was added to the face. Haircloth was used because of the tropical climate. Normal hair just would not stand up to the humidity.

Striekpeke went to the Islands first, doing makeup on Burt Lancaster and Michael York and others. Chambers remained back

at the lab with his crew preparing enough appliances. The requirements changed continually up until the last moment.

The first makeup on Michael York was created by Dan Striekpeke. He created a sunburnt, blistered, dehydrated look brought about from the shipwreck Michael survives. York becomes the first specimen that Dr. Moreau attempts to transform from human to animal, the norm being from animal to human.

Chambers had created appliances so that he could subtly transform York into a wolf without the audience realizing it. However, York, taking "dramatic license," wanted to do the part dramatically and physically rather than with appliances. Striekpeke did a beautiful job in creating an effective makeup using highlights and shadows and a little hair. The makeup, combined with York's performance, achieved the effect very successfully.

One scene called for the Bullman to be attacked by a real Bengal tiger, and Striekpeke created a fiberglass helmet from a mold of Bob Ozman's head. It was outfitted with straps and a protective covering. The production staff had been advised that when an animal attacks—provided he does

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become "wild" enough to do so—he could snap at a head or neck in an attempt to crush the skull. Because they were going to train the tiger to bite one of the Bullman's horns off anyway, they felt every possible precaution should be exercised.

The tiger did try to bite Bob Ozman, who was playing the Bullman, on the back of the neck, and another time a fang just grazed his eyes. Both times the helmet was the life-saving factor. Striekpeke had to repair it after the first encounter, which is some indication of how severe the attack was. At other times, the tiger would slash at a hand, tearing off a foam-rubber glove.

Makeup calls varied from three A.M. to four A.M. It took four hours per person to make them into a Humanimal, mainly because there were so many appliances involved. The Wardrobe Department helped a great deal with other parts of the costumes such as fur jackets. Although the makeup could probably have been completed in three and a half hours, Chambers and Striekpeke insisted on an allowance of at least four, and the cameras were never held up.

Chambers did anticipate problems with the appliances and the moisture, particularly because some of the action required fighting scenes in the water. Special adhesives were used, and the problem never arose.

Chambers was quite proud of the teeth he designed and created. They were veneer and tamped right in. Despite the fighting

with the actual animals, there were no broken real teeth, and the actors could talk with them, too.

Chambers has found that a surprising number of young people are interested in makeup as a hobby. They are very creative, and both the talented and untalented have the same enthusiasm. It is out of this group that our future makeup artists will come. Chambers tries very hard to answer letters he receives from these fans. One of the first things he tells them is to be honest with themselves as to whether they are artists. The mechanics of the profession can be taught, but without the creativity, they will remain mechanics, never to become anything greater.

If they are good artists, Chambers recommends that they go to school and get a college degree in one of the sciences or go to art school. There is no easy way to make it today.

Although Chambers has realized his element in television and movies, he is still connected to the medical field. He is prosthetic consultant to Los Angeles County General Hospital and makes many of the appliances required by the veterans there and at San Diego Naval Hospital.

Chambers was the only makeup artist for years to operate a commercial makeup lab. He worked mainly as a lab man, doing makeup creations and appliances for other makeup artists for good fees but no film credit. His studio is the John Chambers Stu-

## *MAKING A MONSTER*

dio at 330 South Myers Street, Burbank, California.

Chambers is the first and only makeup artist to possess both the Oscar and the Emmy for outstanding creative achievement in both the motion picture and television industries. He has trained many of today's successful makeup lab men and remains extremely proud of them. In 1978 he was

elected president of the Society of Makeup Artists and was also selected by the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce to become the first motion picture makeup artist to be honored by them with a star in Hollywood's well-known Walk of Fame. Chambers has contributed an enormous amount to the progression of the makeup industry.

# Chapter 20

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## FRED BLAU

**F**red Blau was born in 1939 in Los Angeles. He became interested in makeup during a theatre arts course at Los Angeles Valley College. He had been a professional actor in movies since 1956, and when taking a makeup class in his theatre arts course, he found that as a result of his acting experience he was soon showing his instructor techniques never heard of before. That seemed to be the crucial factor in deciding his future.

Blau served an apprenticeship of three years with Warner Brothers. After his graduation, his first assignment was on the film *Cool Hand Luke* (1967), and since then his career has continued to develop. Some of his movie credits are *Finian's Rainbow* (1968), *Winning* (1969), *Bite the Bullet* (1975), and *Sparkle* (1976).

In 1967 another milestone in makeup history occurred when John Chambers of Twentieth Century-Fox began the laborious task of creating the now-familiar simian creatures for *Planet of the Apes*. John Chambers won an Oscar, and the incredibly successful movie spawned four sequels and a television series.

It was Fred Blau's daily assignment at Twentieth Century-Fox to make up the series' star, Roddy McDowall. McDowall was the only actor to have played three different ape roles: Cornelius in *Planet of the Apes*,

and *Escape from the Planet of the Apes* (1971), and Caesar in *Conquest of the Planet of the Apes* (1972), and *Battle for the Planet of the Apes* (1974), and Galen in the television series. With all these feature films under McDowall's belt, Blau readily admits that McDowall could tell him more about makeup than he could tell McDowall.

The heat on the Twentieth Century-Fox ranch in Malibu Canyon, where most of the exterior shots were filmed, didn't offer the most pleasant working conditions. Skin divers use neoprene suits for insulation against cold water—depending on body heat trapped by the rubber to keep them warm. Latex has the same effect and is used for appliances because it moves with the skin. One can well imagine the strain of wearing a rubber appliance for fourteen hours under the 110-degree temperatures at the Malibu ranch.

The first step in Roddy McDowall's transformation was his hair. Sheral Ross, hair stylist on the series, began by taking small bunches of McDowall's hair and securing them tightly with rubber bands. When Ms. Ross had completed that task, she covered the entire area with a black stocking cap. The bunches of hair would give appropriate anchor points needed later when the wig had to be secured.

After this had been done, Blau would begin. He first took a small pallet knife and

painted McDowall's eyebrows and sideburns with Dumold—a wax that prevented the adhesives used later from adhering to McDowall's real hair. If this step was missed, McDowall's appliances, when removed after the day's shooting, would undoubtedly pull sideburns and eyebrows off with it.

Using a small makeup brush, Blau would then paint the inside of the appliance that covered McDowall's nose with a rubber ad-

hesive; then the same adhesive was used on McDowall's nose. With an adequate amount of adhesive on the appliance and face, Blau then would press the muzzle firmly over McDowall's nose and upper lip, securing it. Now that the appliance had an anchor point, Blau would go on to glue down the eyebrows and cheek sections in the same manner. Using a tweezer, he got under the very thin edges of the appliance, smoothing them down at the same time. If



this wasn't done, the edges might have bunched up and become lumpy, hampering the total illusion.

The drying of the adhesive was speeded up by using a hand-held dryer. Then Blau used more adhesive to thicken and build up the edges of the appliance so that it would fit snugly to the contours of McDowall's face.

After the upper half of the appliance is secured, Blau used a small stipple sponge and darkened McDowall's neck and the still-exposed portions of his forehead and cheeks with castor grease. Castor grease has been around as long as rubber appliances. It is used exclusively on rubber because it will not affect the rubber as normal makeup greases and oils will.

The ears were applied next. They were constructed of hard rubber rather than foam latex like the other appliances. The only problem with these ears, which were used on the chimpanzees, was that they created difficulty in hearing.

After the appliances were secure, a wig was applied to McDowall's head. Next Blau painted McDowall's teeth with black enamel, so that they would not show through the teeth attached to the appliance for the simian makeup. Blau then used rubber adhesive again, first on McDowall's chin, and then on the inside of the chin appliance, which was secured and again carefully smoothed out and dried.

The hairpieces were then attached. Four facial hairpieces and a wig were used on the apes. The hairpieces were made of human hair. The actual hairpieces used on the apes were ventilated onto lace, the same way a hairlace wig or beard is made. Every strand of hair was hand-tied onto this lace and shaped according to the needs of the actors.

In the case of the ape hair the wigs were made to look like the hair on a chimpanzee, gorilla, or orangutan. Those pieces were used over and over. They did take a lot of rough use. Blau added the side pieces, which looked like muttonchops, and the frontal piece to the forehead to blend into the wig. Then the chinpiece was added. This was like a small goatee.

The forehead hairpieces were then applied. First McDowall's skin area and then the inside of the hairpiece were painted with spirit gum and pressed onto McDowall's

forehead, then dried. Rubber adhesive was used on McDowall's face because it is less irritating to the skin than spirit gum and holds appliances better. The sides and beard were then glued on in the same manner.

After the facial pieces were in place, Blau used human hair and a crepe wool mixture to overlay the lace and create the look that hair was actually growing out of the skin. Ideally, human hair was preferred, but the cost was prohibitive. Wool was used with the hair to serve as a filler, and it also made the hair easier to handle. Besides the intricate work on the appliance, the hair overlay was probably the most important job. The overlay could actually have made or destroyed the authenticity of the makeup because after it was laid by hand and glued onto the face, it then had to be picked up by a hot curling iron to give it the appearance of growing out of the skin. It was this procedure that put the finishing touches on the simian makeup, overlaying the individual hairs, giving the impression of a natural-looking unevenness.

Once the facial appliances and hairpieces were attached, Blau would then apply castor grease to McDowall's eyelids and the uncovered facial sections, blending the coloring until it was impossible to tell where flesh ended and appliance began. The grease was then dusted with powder to seal it and prevent running. McDowall's hands were then prepared simply by slipping on a pair of nylon gloves with hair and fingernails attached.

When John Chambers created the makeup for the original films, he used foam latex because, though firm, it is soft and flexible, permitting the actors a good range of expression with minor discomfort. However, for some, the discomfort wasn't minor enough. Three stars selected for the roles, Edward G. Robinson as Dr. Zaius, Julie Harris as Zira, and Rock Hudson as Cornelius, gave them up because they could not tolerate the makeup for various reasons. McDowall's perseverance is admirable.

There were over twenty makeup and hair personnel working at one time on the *Apes* television series. The series was shot at one of the most active times in the industry, and Blau says good appliance help was scarce. There were times when he made up three apes in one day, approximately nine hours



It was Fred Blau's daily assignment to turn Roddy McDowall into Galen, the chimpanzee star of the popular television series "Planet of the Apes." (© Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation)



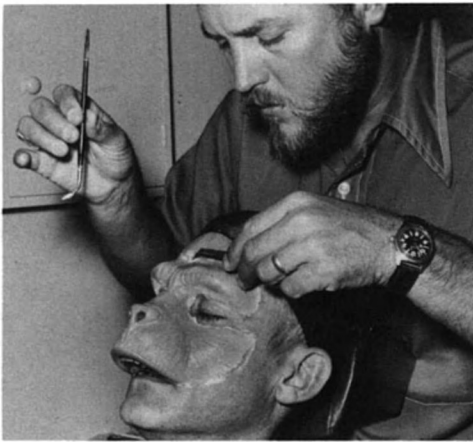
Using a small pallet knife, Blau painted McDowall's eyebrows and sideburns with Dumold to prevent adhesive from adhering to McDowall's facial hair. (© Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation)



Adhesive was painted on McDowall's nose, as well as the inside of the appliance, to secure the appliance to his face. (© Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation)

of straight makeup. Fortunately, Blau's philosophy is that when he is doing such an assignment, it must become a labor of love. He feels he could make up the apes all day long and never stop.

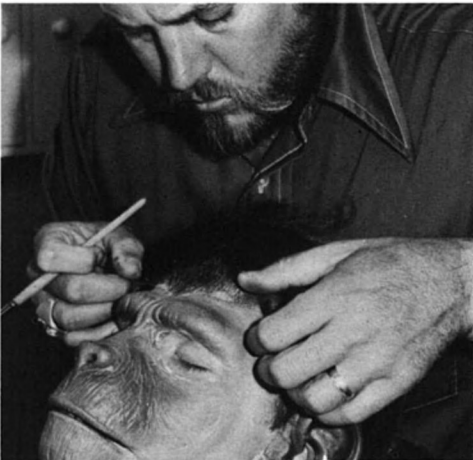
There are always comical occurrences when working on projects of this magnitude. Once Blau accidentally glued another actor's chinpiece onto McDowall's face, and McDowall had to play his scenes with his lower lip tucked under. Fortunately, that didn't happen twice.



Being extremely careful not to tear the thin edges of the appliance, Blau gently glues the edges down while smoothing them out at the same time. (© Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation)



McDowall's teeth were painted with a black enamel so that they would not show through the teeth attached to the appliance for the simian makeup or reflect the camera lighting. (© Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation)



Hairpieces were made of human hair and ventilated onto lace. Four facial hairpieces and a wig were used on the Apes. (© Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation)



A frontal hairpiece was added and blended into the wig, as well as side pieces, which looked like muttonchops, and a chinpiece. (© Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation)

# Chapter 21

## THOMAS BURMAN

**T**om Burman owns a laboratory that is unlike any other in the world. The Burman's Studio, Inc., of Van Nuys, California, sports a vacuum form machine, a large walk-in oven for curing rubber, spray-painting booths, and other tools needed in the art of creating some of the most incredible makeups of today.

Burman was born in 1940 in Santa Monica, California. When he was three, his parents moved to a house next door to Warner Brothers Studios, where they lived until he was eight. Burman's mother wanted him to be a doctor, but it was his father who had the greatest influence upon his son's career. The senior Burman was an inventor, sculptor, and artist. He had his own business making masks and props. During his childhood, Tom got a taste of working with rubber, plastics, and other materials.

Burman was fortunate enough to begin an apprenticeship at Twentieth Century-Fox Studios under Ben Nye, Sr., in 1966. Approximately one year later, Dan Striepeke took over as department head, and Burman worked almost entirely with John Chambers, who came to Fox to do *Planet of the Apes*. Except for Chambers, Burman feels that he worked in more areas and facets of *Planet of the Apes* than anyone else. Burman considers working with John Chambers and having Chambers receive an Os-

car for *Planet of the Apes* as one of the high points of his career.

Chambers chose Burman as his assistant to work as a department head on the set of the film *The Ardry Papers*. This film related modern man to primitive man from his earliest beginning. The film was never released, but it was decided that the creations were much too good to leave on the cutting-room floor, so a documentary-style series was developed for television and titled *Primal Man*. The series depicted man's primitive activities, such as hunting and locating shelter, and dealt with territorial instincts and the discovery of fire.

The television series was reshot, using the same makeup artists and the same creations they had used for *The Ardry Papers*. This time, however, Burman was in full charge. Because John Chambers had prior commitments he was unable to be involved. Burman had fourteen makeup artists working twelve weeks to achieve the look they wanted.

For the third series Burman received a Special Emmy Award for Outstanding Achievement in Any Area of Creative Technical Crafts. As Chambers had done a good share of the original creations with Burman for *The Ardry Papers*, he too received an Emmy. During the filming of the last show there was a tragic plane crash, and Burman and Chambers lost some very dear friends and the industry lost some very talented craftsmen.