WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE!
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**SIMIAN SCROLLS ISSUE 20**

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Join us on a Journey through the Evolution of the Planet of the Apes!
Ken Chase’s interest in special make-up began back in high school when he learned how to do black eyes, scrapes and swollen noses. “I would make up friends to look beaten up and spread tales of them being in fights. I enjoyed doing make-up right away and eventually I was given opportunities.”

One such opportunity arose when Ken was allowed a permit to undergo training on two TV shows, (The Time Tunnel’ and The Long Hot Summer’). Usually one would have had to have been a Union member (the Local 706 – Make-up & Hair Stylists Guild) but at that time they could not meet the constant demand for new talent. During his training, he found himself being watched very closely by none other than John Chambers.

Chambers was on the lookout for likely candidates to help assist in a new project being developed at 20th Century Fox and he recognized that the then twenty-four-year-old Chase possessed a natural talent for the kind of abilities the project would require. Ken fondly recalls, “John was very special to me. He taught me how to make prosthetics”.

That project was, of course, ‘Planet of the Apes’ and Ken found himself personally selected by Chambers and ultimately assigned the responsibility of making-up Maurice Evans as Dr. Zaius. “There were some concerns over budget but the only concerns I had back then were to learn my craft and gain membership in the union. John was a great teacher and it was a wonderful time. John designed those make-ups, invented the technology, and taught the application skills to all of us. There were a few jealousies and dirty tricks played on me by one or two of the older journeymen… Being woken up on my day off and told to report to the set when I wasn’t needed, etc. but I guess you get that kind of thing in every trade.

It was an honour to work with Maurice Evans. He was a lovely man. The only problem was that he salivated a lot and therefore there was a frequent need to re-glue his mouth piece. When it came off at the end of day it was completely soaked with saliva!”

Thanks Ken, the value of our Maurice Evans collectables just plummeted!

Now seventy-four years young, Ken’s memories of his days on the Planet of the Apes are understandably hazy. “I’m lucky if I remember what I did an hour ago!” He says, “But I remember he (Evans) coped well with the make-up process. There was nothing we could do to make it faster or more bearable for him, it was what it was and he put up with it very well.”
Fortunately, Evans wasn’t a method actor and Ken remembers that when the cameras weren’t rolling, “He was just Maurice. He had much in common with Roddy (McDowall). Both were true gentlemen. They demonstrated even temperaments, a sweet nature and a genuine interest in those with whom they associated.”

When asked if his responsibilities were limited purely to the character of Zaius, Ken told us “On the odd day when he (Evans) wasn’t on-set I did work on others but I don’t remember details. I just went wherever I was needed. A typical day went like this... I’d get up very early after having little sleep. Then there were long hours carrying heavy cases up and down sand dunes in heat so extreme it surprised many of us! I’d clean hairpieces at the day’s end with chemicals that would render me slightly high! Then I’d stay up far too late doing things young men do... including spending time at the hotel bar!”

So it wasn’t all fun and games then?

“It was extremely hard work. Much learning and making a lot of money in overtime! At that point in my career it was a golden opportunity and I saw it as such. Did events on the set ever get me angry? Of course! There were a few people on our crew I despised.”

Ken’s experience with Evans’ Orangutan make-up was utilised again for the sequel, ‘Beneath’ and later for Paul Williams for ‘Battle’. One day, after having made-up Williams as Virgil, the two thought it might be fun to go visit a local restaurant with the actor in full costume. Fellow diners were astonished as Williams, fully in character ordered himself a banana daiquiri!

After Apes, Chase moved back to TV. “When I later solicited work at CBS Studio Center from George Lane, the head of the department, I brought along a jar of foam latex noses I had made. I ended up getting the coveted job of makeup artist on “Wild Wild West”. One of the main characters wore disguises of all kinds in every episode. This was a real career builder.” The character was Artemus Gordon (played by Ross Martin) and with Ken responsible for each ‘disguise of the week’ the production offered invaluable experience.

After ‘Wild, Wild West’ and now a fully-fledged union member, Chase worked on the Dustin Hoffman movie, “Little Big Man” not only supervising Faye Dunaway’s make-up but also – under the supervision of Dick Smith - applying the make-up (designed by Smith) to Martin Balsam, playing a medicine salesman who would - during the story - lose a leg, an arm, an ear and would finally be scalped!

Chase’s first opportunity to make his own appliances came with the TV movie ‘Brenda Starr’ in which he had to disguise actor Jed Allan. This assignment led directly to his decision to open the Ken Chase Studio, where he employed other craftsmen to assist him in his laboratory. His ambition upon starting the studio was to work only on assignments that would require his skills in ‘special’ make-up.

It wasn’t long before the studios came knocking and he found himself the designer and supervisor for the TV mini-series, ‘Roots: The Next Generations’. At that time this was the biggest special make up project ever seen on television. Because of the unprecedented success of the original ‘Roots’ the sequel was given a lavish budget and Chase was afforded the luxury of having enough time to experiment and develop the make-ups required for each character.

Ken has enjoyed a wonderful long and varied career and he’s seen his highs and lows. “Being nominated for an Oscar on “Color Purple” was the high... That felt fantastic! I had a blast working on the UFO movie ‘Fire in the sky’. On that I got to do the kind of stuff I love. Lay beards, subtle effects that no one really knows were done. Being fired from “Back to the Future 2” was the low!”

We asked, what, if anything, did Ken consider his biggest contribution to the art of special make-up effects. “As far as I know, I was one of the first to use prosthetics to simulate early middle age. Many old age make ups had been done before and during my time but I don’t recall middle age with prosthetics. If I contributed anything to this trade, that was probably it.”

In a career as long as Ken’s he has seen a great many changes. At the time of ‘Planet of the Apes’ what went on in the make up room was a mystery to the general public. In the eighties, there was a boom of interest in make-up FX and artists like Tom Savini, Rick Baker and Rob Bottin suddenly found themselves the true stars of a movie! Publications like ‘Fangoria’ and ‘Cinefex’ brought the behind the scenes secrets into the spotlight. Today’s Blu Rays have special features that examine everything the make-up man does in minute detail so much of the mystique of what they do is now gone... Ken sums this up as follows... “In those days,” when you went to work at the studios, there were makeup labs, and those doors were closed. It was very secretive. John changed that. There was never a question of him not sharing information and opening up the business to new people. Sun-shine is the best disinfectant. Don’t keep secrets!
So how does he view the state of the art today?

“I recognize the great work being done now. The new materials are amazing. I also think the new digital and CGI FX are fantastic although I feel sorry for the artists who are being undercut in other countries. These are really talented people and don’t deserve being treated like they’re... well, I’ll let you choose your own epithet!”

We asked Ken to choose his favourite make-ups of all time.

“Dustin Hoffman in ‘Little Big Man’ by Dick Smith... and Joel Gray by Carl Fullerton in ‘Remo Williams”. Carl was one of my competitors for the Oscar when I was up for ‘The Colour Purple’.”

Ken’s penultimate credit was for the movie ‘Evolution’ for which many scenes – just like ‘Planet of the apes’ - were shot in and around Page and Lake Powell in Arizona. So, using the Forbidden Zone as a convenient bookend to Ken’s career how does it feel to look back?

“I would have done many things differently. I would have kept my temper more in check. I’d have been less confrontational and more political! But I’ve worked with some great names... The impressive Steven Spielberg, the genuine Billy Crystal, a very young Michael J Fox and the very cool Danny DeVito.

I’ve been retired now for 14 years but I still keep busy. I love to make stuff... I’ve built furniture for many years! I’ve learned wood turning, photography, digital painting using Photoshop and a digital tablet, along with oil painting! I’m currently doing some pottery. I use a potter’s wheel daily. I have my own kiln equipment. Between work sessions I love to read fiction”.

Ken, thank you very much indeed! We wish you a long and very happy retirement!
Hi Gary, many thanks for very kindly accepting our invitation to take part in Simian Scrolls.

It’s a pleasure... it’ll be great to talk about a four/five decade career that goes way, way back! Thanks also to “Simian Scrolls” for inviting me and keeping the great ape legend alive!

So how did a young boy, all the way from Scotland, discover acting?

Actually, I was born on Sunset Blvd in Hollywood - nowhere near Scotland [laughs] That was a typo on IMDb! I’ve never even been there in fact, I was a Hollywood baby.

My Mum and Dad were not in the show business industry so it was interesting how I started. I actually began taking ‘tumbling’ lessons [as a 5 yr old boy] doing circus moves and so forth. It happened that the teacher knew a few children agents and mentioned to my Mum that she should take me to a specific agent - the famous Mary Grady Talent Agency - Mary was quite a powerful child agent. So, there I was, all by myself, (my parents were in the waiting room). Mary and I got along real great! Even then I felt very comfortable performing amongst adults. Mary signed me right away and immediately started to get me auditions. I had no training whatsoever – it just felt very natural going into auditions, saying lines and getting directions from casting directors. I started working straight away in commercials and then into small roles on TV.

Then along came the “Planet of the Apes” audition call.

How did you react when you found out that the part was an actual ape?

Well... It was just like any other call! The agent called my Mum and told her to bring me over to 20th Century Fox for 1 o’clock. I remember showing-up at Fox Studios the next day. There in the hall way were six or seven little guys. You had to be four foot tall for this particular role. I’ve always been on the small side... I’m average size now but was always shorter as a child, which, played to my advantage.

I remember going into the room in front of the casting director. They said "OK Gary, there’s no script for you, but, there is one line for you to say and that line is ‘Look, it’s a man!’

They made me say the line in different ways. In a ‘surprised’ way, a ‘shocked’ way, a ‘scared’ way etc. They thanked me and just said “Great... good-bye”.

The next day, Mum got the call saying that they would like me to play a part in “Planet of the Apes”, as a boy chimp!

I thought great, although, I had no idea that it would involve hours of prosthetics and monkey suits. I certainly didn’t know what was coming!

How was the overall make-up experience for you? Did it cause you any problems?

It did. I’ve been claustrophobic all my life. I don’t like things on my face, even the dentist bothers me! I remember the suit being fine from the neck down, then, they put me in the chair!

I have a very strong memory... the glue, the mouth piece... then I had a panic attack. I really didn’t like it so, they stopped and took it off. They explained that...
they were going to put it back on and should there be any time that I felt scared [don’t forget, I was 6 years old at the time] they’d stop.

They calmed me down and eventually I felt okay with it. I remember it being a hard rubber, not smooth and not very comfortable at all. It took a good full three hours to do just that process! They took their time with me, being that I was a child and had some problems with being covered!

Did you ever sneeze inside your prosthetic?

(Laughs) No... but there were some breathing issues though. I remember it being a heavy thing on my nose and mouth, certainly not a light piece! They should have made it wider! I had to stop a few times and talk to Mum, she always re-assured me.

Did the make-up department have to adapt the prosthetics especially for children?

Every face was different. They had to measure them and do a lot of cutting to make sure they fit right. They were all custom made pieces.

What was your favourite thing to eat when you were in makeup?

I remember drinking out of a straw and lots of soup! You could speak easily enough - but, not eat! I don’t think they even thought about that initially! I was mostly thirsty though... so I drank a lot of water.

How many days were you on set for?

I was on set for a full week.

Did they voice over your "Look, It's a man!" , line, or is that your actual voice ?

That’s my real voice... absolutely!

Immediately after your line there’s a mass panic where Charlton Heston runs around that particular set... were you still there during the filming of that part or had they already whisked you away?

No, I just did my part and was then released so I didn’t get to see the rest of the scene being filmed.

Was this the only scene you were in ?

Yep... that was my only scene!

How long did the makeup removal take? I am assuming that they practically tore the makeup off each day and always put on fresh foam latex the following day?

That’s correct. It was fairly quick but they still had to be careful as there was strong glue involved! They didn’t want any skin rashes or cuts. It probably took about an hour to remove comfortably. You had to be patient!

Did you get to see any of the other main actors having their make-up applied?

No, sadly, I wasn’t privy to any of that. I would have loved too!

What was it like working with Chuck Heston?

Well... I have to say that he wasn’t very friendly! There was no interaction from him. I don’t remember even being introduced to him! He was very quiet so I really didn’t say anything to him, except for that line. In those days, the stars would do their piece and then go back to the dressing-room.

Did you manage to meet any of the other main cast members?

I don’t recall seeing any around at all. It was a hot set so most of the actors did their bit and disappeared!

Were you offered the opportunity to appear in any of the other 'Ape' films ?

No, although, my agent did suggest I try for the Tim Burton movie - as the return of the boy chimp!

Do you have any anecdotes or amusing stories relative to the film?

I do remember all the ape extras staying and eating together!

Did you keep any souvenirs from your appearance in Apes?

I wish I could say that I kept my prosthetic but they were really protective with the pieces after they had been removed. It was all very secretive at the time! I haven’t experienced that since.

What is your overall memory of 'Planet of the Apes'?

It was a lot of fun! It was like a big playground especially fo me being six years old! It was like a fantasy!

Your thoughts on the new movie "Rise"?

I just saw ‘Rise’ the other day and thought with the CGI the apes didn’t look that real! They’ve lost that quality of being the real thing! It’s wonderful that they’ve continued with the Apes series though!

Do you look back on your visit to the ‘Planet of the Apes’ with fondness?

Absolutely, yes! It’s something very special!

Gary... thank you very much indeed!

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[Additional thanks to Alistair Herz @ Omega Celebrity Management International]

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FLASHBACK!

Playboy Club Bunnies Play Malcolm Allison’s Planet of the Apes Football Team


The result remains unknown but the charity match was in aid of the World Wildlife Fund and there was expert advice from Crystal Palace FC manager Malcolm Allison.
Hi Pat, how’s the weather there?

It’s raining here in Southern California and that’s always good!

So tell us about your acting career.

Well, I saw kids acting on TV and in movies and felt I could do it as well. Instead of going to school in the third grade I went to the Pasadena Playhouse and got to know the actors there. They were involved in making a very low budget WWII film and suggested the director hire me. I had a hard time explaining to my parents that I got a part in a movie! The director of that film liked what I did and helped to get me a SAG card and an agent. I was featured in over one hundred TV show episodes, a series, several movies, educational films and as a voice over actor for cartoons and commercials.

How did you get the part in ‘Battle for the POTA’?

I had been on several interviews at Fox studios, but don’t think I ever got a part. I believe Ross Brown was the head of casting there and had put me up for “Lost In Space” which I couldn’t do because of contractual obligations to Universal Studios. Down the road parts came far and few between. I had a meeting with Ross to see what was cooking at Fox but he said he had nothing at the moment. But then he changed his mind and asked how I might feel about playing a Chimp in the next POTA film, “Battle For…” I was up for it, and spent the better part of a month playing Young Chimp up at the Fox Ranch.

Were you familiar with the APES franchise?

Yes and yes!

I had read Boulle’s novel before it was made as a film. I was a fan of science fiction in books, magazines and films and TV. I looked forward to each film as any fan would. When I met with Ross Brown I had no idea FOX was prepping Battle, so I was looking for a paycheck, and hopefully a restart to my acting career. It was a very small bit part, but I was thankful for it, and the fact that I was on the production for so long helped me get back up to speed financially. Finding out it was a POTA film was the cherry on the icing!

Were the producers looking for a specific “look” for your character?
No one from production ever spoke to me about the part. My first day in makeup I met Claud Akins, an actor whom I respected very much. I asked him "how do you act in this stuff". He took me to a mirror and made faces showing me what he thought was possible. He told me to practice, and I started making faces and making up lines to go with the looks I could create in the chimp makeup. It was fun and challenging at the same time. After a few hours I was confident I could do anything they needed. I did an impromptu performance for the director who was watching my every move. I was used as a bystander in several scenes because of my ability to react appropriately given the makeup limitations.

**And those limitations were?**

As you must already know, eating meals was a challenge. Invariably food would end up inside the chin piece of the appliance behind the teeth - which was gross! Mostly I drank shakes from a straw. I was a smoker back then and we were given cigarette holders to smoke from. The cigarette holders would hide deep in the appliance mouth making it appear that the cigarette was hanging off my lips naturally.

**How did you feel seeing yourself fully made up and in costume for the first time?**

I looked like everyone else. If we were in a group looking at the mirror it took a moment to figure out which one was me in the reflection. But there was something about being anonymous that was comfortable. I didn’t have to be self-conscious about what I looked like, what I was wearing, how long my hair was. I wasn’t a slave to anyones expectations about me in particular - we were just a bunch of faceless actors disguised as apes.

**Were you given any guidance on how to be an ape?**

None, other than the experience with Claud Akins I mentioned earlier.

**How long were you given to get used to the make up before you went in front of the camera?**

There were several days that I did not have to act other than being in the background, so I had plenty of time to practice my "line" and my walk.

**You are credited as a ‘Young Chimpanzee’ and that you were "only in a few scenes". Can you describe for us which ones?**

It was so long ago, I don’t really remember much about what I did on camera. I have not seen the film since it’s initial release. I actually remember that I had a lot of down time, just meeting folks and enjoying being an ape. There was a scene where Aldo is having an argument with the teacher and I played an onlooker. I also played one of the students in the school scene. I remember being in battle scenes but with no clear memory of what I did. I met John Landis on the set. We talked a bit about filmmaking, and careers and he invited me to the premier screening of his first film, “Schlock”, and it played at the Hollywood Theater on Hollywood Blvd. That first film was a breakthrough for his career. Looking back it’s fun to know we were in a POTA film together.

**Did you interact with the guys playing gorillas or orangutans at all? There has always been a tradition in Apes that different species kept to themselves!**

When we started production, the early morning call time was quiet amongst the many secondary actors and atmosphere players. As the makeup made us look more like each other warm conversations took the edge off of the cold morning. By the time we were on the set we were all like old friends. As production progressed the groups started forming, each living up to the expectations of the animals they portrayed - Chimps acting silly at times, Orangutans becoming stoic, and Gorillas became authoritarian and alpha male in temperment. Although clans formed they did not necessarily keep to themselves. In a gaming sort of way the Gorilla’s would invade the Chimpzenees space in mock threatening ways. The Chimps would take pleasure in being able to get the upper hand over the gorillas.
I think it is a great undiscovered social experiment, the facts of which might reveal useful data regarding tribal trends and interactions.

The film was directed by J Lee Thompson… do you have any memories of him or the rest of the crew?

J Lee Thompson seemed to be a very quiet man. I do not remember him actually giving directions. He did seem to enjoy the moments I took to pantomime my character in front of him. Make up was pleasant. At first I was in the same make-up trailer with Paul Williams. John Chambers seemed to be in charge. (I remembered him from working with him on a previous television show) Later I was moved to another makeup trailer with several other secondary characters. Other than actors and makeup people I didn’t interact with any of the crew. There were so many Apes to hang out with, and the crew was always busy making the film.

What was the mood on set?

There was a good mood on the set. It was close to Christmas and we were all glad to be working. I did not experience anything negative on the set. I just remember that once we had our makeup and wardrobe on, we were all the same, and smiles and good conversation was the order of the day. I loved filmmaking, and I stayed as close to the camera as possible to soak up all I could learn. My dream back then was to become a film director. There was always something to learn on the set.

Between shooting did you get any opportunity to interact with the main cast?

Roddy seemed like a good fellow. I didn’t work directly with him, but I stood by the camera as he was working and he was easy and professional to work with. I was impressed. He was also famous for being a former child actor, and I was hoping to have a conversation with him about that. I needed advice to help resurrect my ever sinking acting career. But it was not to happen.

Sadly, I was not on the set when John Huston did his scene. I did work with him on “Cannery Row” at MGM and he regaled the cast and crew with glorious and humorous anecdotes and war stories. I cherish the memory.

Claude Akins was very personable and professional. He helped me find my Ape character and I will be forever grateful that he did. Because of him I was prepared. Off camera he was a good conversationalist, generous with information about his real life, and genuinely interested the person he was speaking with. I loved his performance. Very much a General!

I became friends with Paul Williams for about a minute and a half. I actively tried to have conversation with him. I was aware of his lyric writing prowess, and I had been writing and recording demos for years. I think he tired of my “fan-ish” behavior. For the record, I was the one who suggest he go on the Carson show unannounced in the Orangutan makeup - which he did - playing a piano and singing "I've Grown Accustomed to Your Face". I also suggested we promote a feature film musical based on POTA titled “Song of the Planet of the Apes” - a concept which eventually made it way to “The Simpsons” as a skit.

"Battle" is well over 40 years old! Can you recall the last time you watched it?

I saw the film only once, in a theater when the film opened. As much as I loved the POTA series, I was not all that happy with the episode we filmed. I can’t remember why, but I didn’t think it represented the franchise well.

Were you ever approached to appear in the TV Series?

I gave up acting after Battle so they couldn’t have found me if they wanted to. I went back to school, and got a job cleaning sound stages (no joke) wrote screenplays, tried to get my turn in the directing saddle. I just moved on.

Do you look back on your experience with fondness?

I enjoyed the experience and the process. It is the one film project I worked on that I actually got to take home a paycheck. Everything before that was used to support my family, Mom, Pop and siblings. It’s also the one project that continues to pay me residual payments year after year. Of all my credits it is the least acting I ever did in a film, but gets the most attention. Go Figger!

You’ve had a varied career, which, of your many roles, do you consider as your most ‘memorable’ and why choose this particular one?

As a child actor I condemn everything to “stereotype”. I don’t believe I had any standout roles. I starred in two films for Universal (And Now Miguel and Let’s Kill Uncle) which I am often asked about. Horror High (Twisted Brain on TV) I played both the tortured soul and the monster killer. It was “I was a Teenage Dr. Jeckyl and Mr. Hyde” but on an extremely low budget.

Dean Preston
How highly do you rank Jerry Goldsmith in the list of great film score composers?

Jerry Goldsmith is among the greatest - not only for his inventiveness and sheer productivity, but for his instinct for getting directly to the heart of a film through music. And for doing that successfully in such a wide variety of genres.

In exploring the music, have you encountered any new surprises or insights?

It's been a big walk down memory lane for me - this is the music which made me get serious about music. It's very modern - a 12 tone score that was embraced by Hollywood. It drew me into the Second Viennese School and music of Schoenberg, Berg and Webern before I knew what that was and who they were. It also takes me back to the days I worked as stage crew at the wonderful Monday Evening Concerts contemporary music series at the LA County Art Museum. Jerry Goldsmith along with David Raksin, Leonard Rosenman and many other Hollywood luminaries would come in for their dose of new music.

How did you come to choose ‘Planet of the Apes’ why not ‘Psycho’ or ‘Star wars’ or Lawrence of Arabia etc – or any one of dozens of other classic movie scores?

The choice was an excellent one but it wasn’t mine. The show is being produced by Tommy Pearson for the South Bank Centre - and they kindly asked me to conduct.

The score is famous for its implementation of unusual instruments (mixing bowls, cuika, Ram’s horn etc) will the orchestra be using these too?

Absolutely. The BBC Concert Orchestra percussionist, Alasdair Malloy, has been in touch with musicians in LA who were on the original sessions and is striving to re-create all the original gear.

How will the live performance work? - Will the movie soundtrack be muted for the entire performance?

The dialogue and sound effects are left intact. The music soundtrack is stripped out of the film and we play it live.

Are film scores ‘real’ music and is there any sense from the musicians that they are ‘dumbing down’ their abilities?

Very “real” - but the film composer has to magnify and augment a story being told by the director. In concert music, the story telling belongs to the composer alone. As the famous arranger/composer Russ Garcia said, you can’t tell an audience two stories at once - unless they have two heads!

Will the event be performed again at other venues?

No firm plans at the moment - but I have had enquiries.
Hi Klair... Were you relieved you played a human and not an Ape?

I didn’t care one way or another. I was just ecstatic that I had lines! I’d only had my SAG card for four years and I hadn’t worked much. Later I finally realized how lucky I was to avoid all that make up and play a human.

What are your memories of Ralph Senensky [Director] and, was there much time for direction and rehearsal?

Everything was done so fast... I didn’t even have time to learn my character’s name let alone the Director’s!

There wasn’t much time for preparation for the role... I wanted to look like a servant by hunching over and trying to be more like my master but at the same time being fearful I might anger him.

Senensky has made it quite clear that it was asking ‘far too much’ for each episode to be filmed in just seven days. Do you recall any panic?

Every work I’ve ever done there has always seemed to be a ‘panic’... Always racing against time and costs, etc. I just thought that was normal!

You shared quite a bit of screen time with both Mark Lenard [Urko] and Percy Rodriguez [Aboro]. What was it like working with these fine actors?

To be honest, back then I had no idea who Mark Lenard or Percy Rodriguez were. I remember Percy being very kind and inviting me to lunch with him in the studio cafeteria to show me how he was able to eat with his make-up on. I never actually saw him out of make-up and didn’t realize he was of African descent until months later [laughs]!

What are your recollections of Roddy McDowall. Did you get to interact with him at all?

I’d already met Roddy many times, when he worked on a game show called “Hollywood Squares.” I was doing cue cards for the host and we would do five shows a day. It gave us time to mingle with the cast and crew.

He mentioned he had a movie theatre in his home and copies of all his films. He would have movie parties for his friends so I thought I’d try that for myself. I had my scenes from ‘The Tyrant’ in 16mm but I had to go out and buy a 16mm movie projector to show them off to anyone I could get to watch them. To get film, projector, screen and audience together wasn’t easy and it didn’t happen very often!

I began to amass a collection of films that have now been gathering dust for years since the advent of video tape, DVD and streaming etc... I’d be happy to give the collection away to anyone with use for it.

Did you, as a Human, tend to hang out with other humans on set?

I don’t have clear memories of hanging out with anyone. They were all strangers to me who were
either in their dressing rooms, getting their make-up touched up, or learning lines and script revisions. They were all pleasant toward me on-set and helped me find catering or the rest room!

Your character, Sam, has only a small role. What do you think the future held for poor Sam after his boss was sent to jail?

I thought maybe Sam should have started his own spin-off show in which he busts his boss and others out of jail!

What was with Aboro’s black ‘human like’ shiny shoes? Did Percy forget to change them for filming?

I never noticed the shoes... He probably wore them hoping Sam would shine them for him!

Do you have any anecdotes relative to the Episode?

Only being allowed to leave before the rest of the cast in order to go to other work (I was changing eight separate movie marquees that night). I missed being in the final shot of the episode because of that! If I’d been told I should have been in it I would have stayed!

Did you keep any souvenirs from your appearance in Apes?

Sadly no, although I did try to take some photographs with my camera of my black and white TV – when they showed my episode!

What is your overall memory of ‘Planet of the Apes’ and your thoughts on the TV Episode that you were involved with?

I was concerned that people would be able to follow the story because to me the apes all looked so very much alike. I’m impressed you still remember all those character names! Something I didn’t try hard enough to do!

Do you look back on your visit to the ‘Planet of the Apes’ with fondness?

More so now I know people still care about the show!

You were also on the set for the amazing Westworld TV Series - What are the biggest changes on a TV Show in the four decades between Apes and Westworld?

The Westworld set was so quiet. The script was top secret and had to be handed in each day! We were all sworn to secrecy. Anthony Hopkins was never told where his character was going except when it was time to rehearse a scene... Then, he’s nominated for Best Emmy Actor!

We had to redo or add scenes for many of the episodes - I could hardly follow the series after the first few! [Laughs]
It was ape insensibility that raised this monument to Caesar – the first and mightiest ape of all.

Built nearly two thousand years before our own era, during the reign of Cornelius the First – Caesar's only son – it depicts Caesar more... unusually... primal, bare...

It is symbolic – an artistic flourish of the age – and not to be taken literally, as no ape, even in Caesar's day, ever walked the earth naked as a lony beast.

Here, Caesar is shown in his purity, as a newly born, newly created by the Almighty.

He emerges into the world with our most sacred law, and with a rod of authority, giving ape-kind dominion over the planet!

Our simian ancestors alone were possessed of the divine spark to conceive and realise an architectural marvel as this.

It stands as a testament to the unencumbered spirit of the ape!

And so, they named it... "The Statue of Liberty!"
I LIE TO THE PUPILS.

AS I WAS LIED TO AT SCHOOL... AS WE'VE ALL BEEN LIED TO FOR GENERATIONS.

I DO THIS TO KEEP MY JOB - TWELVE YEARS AS A TEACHER ON THE VERGE OF A PROMOTION TO VICE PRINCIPAL AT A PRESTIGIOUS ACADEMY.

IF I WERE TO EVER SPEAK THE TRUTH, EVERYTHING I'VE EVER WORKED FOR WOULD BE LOST.

MY CAREER, MY HOME, MY LIFE - MY WONDERFUL LIFE WITH MY FAMILY...

I AM CERTAIN ZELDA WOULD LEAVE ME, AND IT WOULD DESTROY HER CAREER TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH AN INTELLECTUAL HERETIC SUCH AS ME.

CAMILLA, THE APPLE-OF-HER-EYE... HER UNIVERSITY PROSPECTS WOULD BE RUINED, AND SHE WOULD BE SHUNNED BY HER PEERS AND FRIENDS, ANY HOPE OF SEEDING HER MARRIAGE INTO A FAMILY OF GOOD STANDING WOULD BE GONE!

SO I LIE.

I LIE ABOUT THE DIVINE NATURE OF OUR BEGINNINGS.

POOR CAESAR AND THOSE FIRST SPEAKING APES WERE LITTLE MORE THAN - DARE I SAY IT - ANIMALS.

IT PAINS ME TO EVEN MENTION SUCH A THOUGHT, BUT IT'S TRUE.

CONCEALING THE FACT THAT THIS MONUMENT WAS BUILT ON THE BACKS OF HUMAN SLAVERIES.

IT WAS ANCIENT HUMAN INTELLIGENCE THAT CRAFTED THIS TRIUMPH TO CAESAR - EVEN THOUGH IT WAS DONE WITH THE LASH OF A WHIP, AND THE BLOOD OF AN APES BOOY!

LABORATORY EXPERIMENTS GONE WRONG - WRONG FOR THE HUMANS, I MEAN.

FOLLOW DROMERID, MRS ABBEY, SLOWLY AND CAREFULLY - NO RUNNING ON THE STAIRS!

NOW COULD WE DARE POTHAM THAT WE OWE OUR VERY EXISTENCE TO THEM?
I realise how reckless I've been. The secret meetings I've been organizing with other like-minded "conspiracy theorists" have had to stop.

I sometimes wish I'd never learned the truth about our past. No good has come of it really.

Poor old Uncle Bilas went mad with all that knowledge about "superior" and "ignorant." He's been swirling about in his head all day! I don't want to end up like him.

There were murmurs that someone in our group might be beginning to draw outside attention to our gatherings...

It was thrilling, certainly — having my eyes opened to a world most apes couldn't possibly ever comprehend... Perhaps some part of me felt special amongst my "ignorant," everyday peers. Superior, even.

I wonder if it's that same, supercilious attitude that keeps the Ape Council looking down on us — the common ape — from 'on high?'

I suspect the elites know full well of our planet's hidden history, perhaps they're always known, and kept that knowledge for themselves.

And Caesar called upon God, and the heavens answered, sending a raging torrent of ice down onto the Earth to smite the enemies of the apes, too.

Why should they be the only ones to have a monopoly over the truth? Sigh — forget it, just forget it! I need to put all of this rubbish behind me.

Look up there!

Good grief —
A HUMAN RIGHTS PROTESTOR!

THE FOOL! ONE SLIP, AND HE'S DONE FOR! HE'LL BE LOOKING AT TEN YEARS AT LEAST, FOR DISHONORING CAESAR'S STATUE - IF HE MAKES IT DOWN IN ONE PIECE!

STOP CARNALITY TO MAN

HUMANS HAVE SOULS TOO

END HUMAN TARGET PRACTICE AND EXPERIMENTATION!

END THE TORTURE AND EXPLOITATION OF MAN!

THEY ARE PART OF THE APE FAMILY TOO!

END THE INJUSTICE OF THEIR SUFFERINGS TODAY!

END HUMAN TARGET PRACTICE AND EXPERIMENTATION...

OH NO...I KNOW HIM!

I KNOW THAT APE! THAT'S BILAB, FROM OUR SECRET MEETINGS!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING, YOU BLASTED BABOON?! GET DOWN FROM THERE!

SHUT UP!

SHUT UP!

AHHH-EEEE!!!

WHEN THEY CATCH YOU, THEY'LL INTERROGATE YOU!

YOU'LL LEAD THEM BACK TO OUR SECRET GROUP -- TO ME!

AND I'LL BE RUINED!

NO!!
CURSE ME FOR WHAT I'M THINKING...

HE MIGHT HAVE EXPOSED US ALL...

HE... HE CAN'T NOW!

I NEVER KNEW HIM WELL AT ALL, BUT HE HAD THAT SAME DUMBFOUNDED AWE IN HIS EYES WHEN HE FIRST CAME TO OUR MEETINGS. THE SAME AWE I HAD WHEN I FIRST LEARNED ABOUT EVERYTHING.

I NEVER THOUGHT HE'D DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS! NEVER EVEN IMAGINED HE HAD A PARTICULAR APPETENY FOR THE HUMANS!

SIR, WE NEED EVERYONE TO MOVE BACK AWAY FROM THE STAIRS! NOW!

LET'S GET THE YOUNG ONES INSIDE!

WHAT A MOMENT... WAIT...!

H-UH... YOU KNOW HIM?

THIS WAY, SIR... LET'S MOVE IT!

I'M SORRY, SLAS...

A-APE... H-HAS APE... KILLED APE...?
THE CHILDREN — THEY'RE SHOCKED, CONFUSED. IT WON'T SINK IN TILL LATER WHAT JUST HAPPENED.

IT'S MY DUTY TO PROTECT THEM FROM THESE ... THESE DISSENTING IDEAS ... INSTEAD I'VE BEEN REVELLING IN THEM, BEHIND CLOSED DOORS!

I MIGHT INSPIRE A WIDE-EYED NEOPHYTE LIKE HIM INTO COMMITTING SUCH A FOOL-HARDY ACT!

I WILL MAKE IT RIGHT, CAESAR. I MUST!

BY GOD, I'LL LEAD NO MORE APES BACKWARD, INTO THE ASHES OF THEIR DEAD AND RAVAGED WORLD!

I'LL ONLY LOOK TOWARDS OUR FUTURE...
Dan Lemmon grew up in a time when personal computers were becoming common in the household and he quickly learned to write his own graphics programs. In the early 90s he studied Industrial Design at university, which utilized similar skills and software as the Hollywood special visual FX industry. Interning at Digital Domain during his summer breaks he worked on TERMINATOR 2 3-D, THE FIFTH ELEMENT, and TITANIC before graduating and going into FX work full time.

He was the Visual Effects Supervisor on War for the Planet of the Apes and he recently won an Oscar and a BAFTA for his work on The Jungle Book. When Simian Scrolls asks for an interview, we aim high!

Dan, RISE, DAWN and WAR for the POTA didn’t just raise the bar for performance capture—they strapped the bar to a rocket and shot it into space! Does it feel that each new Apes movie is the standard bearer for the technology?

It goes back further than that! The original 1968 Planet of the Apes was so innovative in its time that the Academy recognized it with a Special Achievement Award. John Chambers won an Honorary Oscar for his ground-breaking makeup twelve years before the Oscars even had a makeup category! So when we set out to reboot the franchise on Rise, we already knew we had big shoes to fill.

We have made some pretty significant advances in both the art and the tech from what we developed for Rise. That is one of the best things about being involved in a franchise like this - with each new instalment you have the opportunity to revisit characters you love and make them even better.

When you’re making a character for a movie, you usually have to design and build the character before you start the work on the movie itself. You do tests and little proofs-of-concept, and there is a process of discovery and refinement you go through before you get underway on the movie, but try as you might, you can never anticipate everything that is going to come up as you start working on actual shots. That’s true of the technology, and it’s also true of the character design and the animation.

As you start working on shots and you see your character coming to life in the movie, you learn a whole lot more and sometimes you want to make adjustments, but at that point the ship has set sail, and you’re limited in the scope of the corrections you can make.

When you get started on the next instalment though, you get to take a step back and - pulling from everything you learned on the earlier movies - make everything a little better. We’ve changed little details in Caesar’s face to help him better hit some of the intensity and subtlety that we see in Andy Serkis’ performance. We’ve rebuilt our fur system so that we can carry literally millions more hair strands on our characters and style them in ways that are much more realistic than what we were able to do before. We took our ray-tracing engine, Manuka, and added a new physically-based camera and lighting system to it, which allows us to light and ‘photograph’ our digital apes in a way that more closely matches the on-set cinematography and is more realistic than ever before.
So yes, we are always pushing the envelope and striving to create more engaging and believable characters, and there is a lot of pressure to keep the bar high, but we love the challenge and we love the franchise.

One of the treats of the John Chambers’ make-up was the opportunity it gave for off screen fun and skits. Are you guys ever tempted/allowed to try doing a Weta version of this? (It would be mega cool to see Caesar eating lunch in his Winnebago!)

I love those old behind-the-scenes Easter eggs! I think my favorite is John Chambers in the makeup chair with Roddy McDowall, in full ape costume, prepping him for the camera. Those old photos capture some really great moments that play games with our suspension of disbelief while at the same time humanizing the ape characters even beyond the “four walls” of the movie. There is something really fantastic about acknowledging that the movie is an invention, but continuing to insist that the characters are real. Somehow that actually enhances the suspension of disbelief rather than breaking it down.

Unfortunately the process of creating digital characters doesn’t really lend itself to those kinds of unplanned visual discoveries. Even at Weta, we only get to see Caesar in a shot after we’ve put a lot of painstaking time and money into creating him, so those whimsical, candid snapshots don’t materialize. Which is unfortunate, because they’re so great!

We had some great reference photos from The Lord of the Rings of the Warg Riders. It was a hot day on set and they were under layers and layers of prosthetics and they were really uncomfortable. So in these photos that we were referring to for some of the stuff we were making, there were PAs holding white parasols over these nasty-looking Orcs to give them shade, and the vile Orcs were sipping iced-tea through straws. It was really kind of surreal and beautiful, and you got the impression that these ugly Warg Riders weren’t such bad guys after all - they were just playing bad guys for the movie.

How God-like is Andy Serkis? We Apes fans hail him as the new Roddy McDowall.

Andy Serkis is an amazing actor, full stop. He puts so much energy and passion into every role that he takes on, and each role is unique and touching and memorable. I think the thing that is great about our on-set performance capture process is that it allows great actors like Andy to play these kinds of characters on a set, working with other actors and a director to find the scene and react to each other and discover all the little details and happy accidents that happen when you put great actors and filmmakers in a room together.

Toby Kebble and Steve Zahn are examples of other fantastic actors whose faces we all know from other roles, and who put in riveting performances as Koba and Bad Ape. Through the performance capture process we are able to take each actors’ unique creative decisions and apply them to the digital character they are playing.

Can you describe Andy’s role in the process of creating Caesar’s performance?

We work really hard to translate all of the emotion and detail that Andy, Toby and Steve bring to the set, and make sure that the digital apes they are playing read in the same way. There are a whole lot of other people you probably haven’t heard of - Dan Barrett and Dejan Momcilovic, Jack Tema and Goran Milic, Florian Fernandez and Alessandro Bonaro - who I actually think are god-like, in many ways. They have almost supernatural skills and abilities, and through their mysterious processes they are able to breathe life into fantastic creatures that otherwise would not exist.

It’s not often easy or straightforward. You might have noticed that Andy Serkis doesn’t actually look anything like a chimpanzee. Some of the tight, emotional mouth shapes that Andy makes during his performances are actually really hard to get to read correctly on Caesar’s much larger ape
muzzle. All the gear and the computers don’t solve those kinds of problems for you. You have to make many thousands of specific, individual, creative decisions in order to make Caesar communicate the same emotions that Andy does on set.

If you had to select one shot that summed up Weta’s Apes, what would it be?

There are so many great moments, but if I had to choose I think my favorite scene is the bit in Dawn where Koba shares a bottle of whiskey with a couple of soldiers and then kills them. It’s a chilling scene where many of the elements that make these movies great came together. Toby Kebble gives a really dynamic performance, playing Koba as silly at first, then chummy and then suddenly sociopathic. The interaction between Koba and the soldiers is fantastic, both in terms of the performance and also from a technical VFX point of view.

From a technical POV WAR was the best yet! What new techniques were used to achieve the impossible again?

War quickly shaped up to be the most epic *Planet of the Apes* yet. It was a sprawling adventure full of rich, new characters and sweeping environments. I don’t think I’m giving too much away when I tell you that snow has been a big part of our development. Apes in snow and snow in apes!

Performance capture in snowy environments tested the limits of our gear, and breaking cables out of the icepack when we wrapped set was a first for me. Some of the new characters were just fantastic, with a broad range of emotional performances that gave us both technical and creative challenges. We’ve had to rebuild parts of Caesar’s facial animation rig yet again in order to match some of the extremes of Andy Serkis’ performance.

If Weta don’t get the Oscar THIS time, can we expect Caesar to gently intervene?!!!

Haha! I think it would be out of character for Caesar to interfere with the workings of Man unless the survival of Apekind absolutely depended on it!
Let’s start by asking you to describe what led you down the path to becoming an actor.

I trained as a dancer until I was 16 when I went to university and got a degree in English and Theatre History. While there I took part in some theatre productions and decided to become an actor. After I graduated I attended a theatre school for two years and then began working professionally.

And how did you initially get a part in ‘Rise’?

The first audition call-out for the film was "Untitled Feature Film Casting For Mimes." I thought: I’m not a mime so I’m not going. Then I was told it was for actors to play chimpanzees and I thought, now I’m REALLY not going! But then I decided I’d be a good sport and go to it. After the first audition I was called back to a lengthy ape movement session under Terry Notary’s expert guidance, and after that I was called back to audition for an orangutan. I knew nothing about orangutans and did a lot of research fast. It was at the third audition that Rupert Wyatt, the director of "Rise of the Planet of the Apes", told me that the character he wished me to play was Maurice.

Was the APES franchise something you were already familiar with?

No I wasn’t, though I had seen the ’68 film on tv when I was young.

Did your background and discipline as a dancer help you to play Maurice?

The physicality of a mature male orangutan is, in all ways, a very specific and often strenuous thing to accomplish. Yes, I think my background as a dancer, and all the roles I’ve played through my career that have required physical agility of all kinds, has helped. I stay in constant training of one form or another. With Maurice, my training/practice has involved extensive and daily workouts in the gym, some yoga practice, distance cycling for cardiovascular strength, and a great deal of practice with quadrupedal movement using the arm stilts.

You also had a human role as the Court Clerk in RISE... Whose idea was that?

That was Rupert Wyatt’s idea. The scene was filmed a few months after we wrapped principal photography, so my work as Maurice was finished by that point. A fun thought too, as the court clerk is most unhelpful and uncaring, and Maurice such a good friend to Caesar. We only worked for one afternoon to film that scene, but I enjoyed working with James Franco.

There’s a scene [in WAR] where Maurice christens Nova. The dialogue ["Nova... No...va"] sounds remarkably like Charlton Heston saying the exact same thing in ‘Beneath the POTA’. Was this a deliberate homage or was that, by any chance, Heston’s voice?
I had no idea Heston said those same lines, so no that wasn't something I was aiming for! If you meant, was I trying to mimic Heston's voice? No, I wasn't. That is my voice as Maurice throughout, whether vocalizing or speaking words. It's been a huge undertaking over the years to create orangutan vocal integrity and long calls in my voice, and to find the resonance and pitch I wished for in Maurice's voice.

You share many scenes with 'Bad Ape', what do you think about Steve Zahn's delightful creation?

I had a wonderful time working with Steve, and really, really enjoyed our interactions together as Maurice and Bad Ape. The couple of brief one-on-one interactions our characters had together were such fun I wish there'd been more of them! Steve is great.

The end of WAR is both uplifting and heart-wrenching. How emotional was filming those final scenes?

It was indeed a very emotional experience to move through, and to find the specificity of moments within it. Matt Reeves guided us with such care and clarity throughout.

How great is Andy Serkis?

Andy Serkis is one of the finest artists and human beings I've ever had the privilege to work with. It's been an honour and a joy to do these three films with him.

Why do you think Maurice so rarely speaks?

Maurice speaks rarely simply because he chooses his moments when he must speak, which is only at times when the emotional import of the moment calls for it. He is very specific in all that he does and communicates, which is also very much an orangutan "thing", something I've worked hard to honour in my portrayal of him throughout all three films - Maurice's orangutan integrity.

Given the opportunity, would you have liked to have experienced the classic, several hours in the chair, make-up process for 'Maurice'?

Nope! I've done several "hard suit" prosthetic roles, and it is brutally difficult endurance-wise. Not just the many hours in the chair for the get-in (and get-out as well), but being sealed in latex all day long is incredibly difficult on any number of levels. With performance capture technology, while it requires much more of me as an actor in portraying Maurice, it certainly is much more comfortable to wear a grey suit, wires and battery packs, helmet and camera etc, than being sealed in latex!

Out of 'Rise', 'Dawn' & 'War', do you have a favourite?

No, I have truly loved being part of them all. I treasure the whole journey of the films, all three of them as one grand journey, that has been one of the most challenging and also most rewarding experiences of my career.

Can you 'see' anything of yourself in Maurice?

Because I am the actor playing Maurice I can only say that the key to his character for me came when I travelled to observe orangutan Towan at Woodland Park Zoo in Seattle in August 2010, and he in turn chose to observe me. I had been watching him from a distance for some time when he came to the window to see me, and as he closely studied up and down my face he gave me the quintessential understanding of Maurice's character, which became the grounding for all of my work since then.

After "Rise" opened, I was invited for a personal introduction to Towan and his family, and since then I have visited regularly with them all, and they have all given me inspiration for various aspects of Maurice's character, and influenced how I approached different moments in "Dawn" and "War." But first and foremost, it is Towan and what I learned from him that gave me the heart and soul of Maurice.

The best and worst aspects of playing an orangutan?

I don't really think of it as best or worst - but all of it has been both strenuous and fascinating!

My extensive research and observation of orangutans over the past seven years has been an unending joy, and one that continues for me. The physical training to portray a mature male orangutan has been intensive and necessary both in advance of and throughout all three films. Not just to gain skill and ease with quadrupedal movement on arm stilts, but flexibility, strength, etc. My personal practice has included gym and weight training, cycling, yoga, many things on a daily basis.

Also a great deal of vocal research and practise to achieve as much resonance as I could for the sounds I make as Maurice, to achieve the depth of voice, to get as much of an orangutan "long call" into my voice as possible. Terry Notary originally trained me in quadrupedal movement and has been a great support to me throughout all three films. During the filming of "Rise" and through the first part of filming of "Dawn" we attached extra weights to each of my arm stilts to help me land Maurice's heaviness with authenticity, that made the job even more physically strenuous! Fortunately, and I don't know how this happened, part way through the filming of "Dawn" I found I was able to dispense with the extra weights and land Maurice's weight fully on my own.
Can the sign language used by the apes be used in the real world or was it just something made up for the movies?

The sign language we use in the films is indeed based on ASL, though reduced to less words, i.e. not as fluid sentences. "Why cookie Rocket?" (from "Rise") is a good example: as Maurice, I literally ask in sign language "Why cookie Rocket?" I don't ask "Why did you give the cookie to Rocket?"

Moving away from the 'Apes'... You've had a long and varied career. Which, of your many roles, do you consider as your most memorable?

I've been fortunate to play a wide range of roles on stage and onscreen over the years - I've got lots of favourites! But Maurice is certainly right up there as one of the most memorable.

TV, Film or Stage - any preference?

I love working in all three. What interests me most is being part of a fine story telling, working with a great director and great acting ensemble, and exploring a really interesting character, finding my character's unique journey within the larger story-telling.

Tell us something about your Orangutan preservation work.

I don't feel that I do any "work" in regards to orangutan conservation. I consider myself an enthusiastic student of orangutans. Through the Orangutan SSP (www.orangutanssp.org) I've been introduced to the conservation community and the critical challenges orangutans face. I follow and support as I can the invaluable work of the people and organizations I've come to know. Currently, I'm one of the "foster people" to orangutans Linus and Mari and chimpanzee Knuckles at the Center For Great Apes (www.centerforgreatapes.org).

Through Orangutan Outreach (redapes.org) I am able to foster orangutans Krismon, Nadya and Megaloman at the Sumatran Orangutan Conservation Programme (sumatranorangutan.org) and Jumbo at the Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation (orangutan.or.id).

Your book, 'Jeffrey Takes A Walk in December'... a one off or the start of a new career?

I love to tell stories, whether as an actor, a painter or a writer. As a painter I've been exhibiting for ten years, and all of my solo gallery exhibits are full stories or series in paintings... the story unfolds from canvas to canvas around the room. While I had short stories published before I began painting, I've really enjoyed the journey of painting and writing coming together. Whether the words or the artwork comes first changes constantly, but always towards a singular storytelling. With "Jeffrey Takes a Walk in December" the artwork came first, the words later. It's my first published book and I'm sure there will be more. If you want to know more about "Jeffrey" and my other artwork, please visit the artist/writer page on my website karinkonoval.com.

How does Karin Konoval relax?

I love to cook, visit with family and friends, and go for day trips on my bicycle when I can!

Karin, thank you very much indeed!
Hi Michael, many thanks for taking part in our Q&A session... So how are things with you?

Keeping very busy, thanks.

How did your acting career get started?

Well, I’ve always believed that we all start from somewhere. It just so happens I have stuck with a very cool ‘job’. I’d say, in a way, that as an art I was introduced to acting, but as far as sticking with it that has definitely been a mutually beneficial a relationship between me, and my craft. I love telling stories and stories love being told.

How did you initially get the part in ‘War’?

I auditioned like most of my film and television and voiceover projects, I had a very short time to make decisions, how to best represent what I thought the character would be, while working with a lot of fake information and only two minutes of the director (Matt Reeves)’s time. It was a normal Tuesday... Or might have been a Thursday :0)

Was the original APES franchise something you were familiar with before your audition?

Yes I was very aware of the encyclopedic amount of information about our world and how our franchise predecessors tackled their generation's version. The whole experience has been pretty incredible considering how long this franchise will be watched throughout time. It’s exciting to think about.

Were the producers looking for a specific look for the actor who would play Luca’?

I would say that the design team had already created a fabulous foundation, and framework for Luca. But very much of his final look is based on my physical structure and facial musculature. Blended with the anatomy of a giant silver back gorilla, it’s all part of the motion capture process. The levels at which these design teams are working at is astonishing and breathtaking.

Did you study gorillas to get into the role?

Sadly, my schedule at the time didn’t afford any trips to the zoo. But I did spend a great deal of time studying internal videos, various other footage sources, and materials provided by the production. I also took part in a rigorous Ape training camp put on by Terry Notary, renowned motion teacher, and also the actor behind the character of Rocket.

The forest scenes are very Vietnam-esque. How difficult were those location shoots?

We were in the rain forests here in British Columbia. As a native Canadian, I’m very used to the weather. But even the most rugged outdoor person will get cold at some of the temperatures we worked at while working in the high mountains along BC’s coast particularly Squamish and Whistler and its surrounding ranges. Thankfully, we had a phenomenal crew who took first class care of us, and tended to our every need when we were not standing directly in the snow working.

These kinds of films would be impossible without amazing crews, we have the best crews in the world right here in beautiful BC.
Did you ‘feel’ larger when performing as Luca compared to the other actors portraying smaller species?

It wasn’t so much a feeling of being larger than any other particular ape, so much as it was a sense and the feeling of great responsibility. A feeling of a large weight on his shoulders. I very much felt that Luca, for years has shared the great burden of responsibility. As leader and King, Caesar has the weight of the world on his shoulders. Luca and Rocket and Maurice, they served as his shoulders in a way, strengthening him, protecting him, and giving him counsel. Every Ape has a job, no exceptions.

Although Luca had the ability of speech in ‘War’ he did not have any verbal lines of dialogue. Why do you think that is?

In the world that Matt Reeves has created in this film there are apes with intelligence and skill enough to speak. There are also apes who have good understanding, and who sign well and will communicate perfectly within the community. And then there’s Luca. I never questioned Matt directly on this, but Luca always struck me as a true believer, I imagined at times that he wouldn’t like hearing himself use their words.

What do you think Luca’s philosophy for life would be?

I think in the world like the one our characters find themselves in, Luca’s philosophy couldn’t be more clear. “Look Ahead, Be aware, and Learn from the trail.” Caesar is the head of their family, Luca and his comrades are there because of his efforts. In a world torn apart. Caesar has put them together.

Can you ‘see’ anything of yourself in Luca?

I like to think we have a lot in common. I’m very proud to have been part of this film and to have a chance to portray this character. He has a good heart, strong convictions, and good friends. What more can any creature ask for?

How weird/difficult was it acting with green screens and lots of guys in mo-cap suits?

I didn’t find it difficult at all, I find it very engaging, and refreshing. It’s the kind of challenge that you don’t really get anywhere else anymore. Actors hide behind hair, make up, and wardrobe. Mocap is raw and unapologetic. Naked and exposed. Not for the weak.

Motion capture is acting. It’s no different. There is only a short list of things that make it challenging. It’s really more about learning a new procedure, and being aware of a few new technical details. The work is very much the same. You are portraying the character in a scene with motivations, feelings, and goals of their own. It shouldn’t matter whether or not the character you are portraying is human.

Sometimes the restrictions of the technical world will impact the requirements for humans in a scene with Ape characters, but for the most part you’re still just in a scene with a scene partner or partners. At times Amiah, who played, Nova, was required to wear a motion capture suit, or if she was in wardrobe, at times Karin would have to wear a blue top to allow for the two of their characters to touch.

Gorillas are normally bad guys. How cool is it that gorillas are now getting back to their natural good nature in the movies?
I know right!? I feel like big guys get a bad rap. As a big guy myself, I know what it's like to be seen as dangerous, or a potential threat. When inside most of us big guys are just people with size not necessarily monsters with menace. But of course as an actor telling stories, it has worked out very well for me. I've been able to use what I got to play some pretty nasty people. We need villains to remind us how well we should live and why.

**How important was Terry Notary’s contribution to these movies?**

Terry Notary is indispensable in every sense of the word. Terry and his tireless efforts and dedication have served every second of footage for these films, and even more so for these filmmakers and performers.

**Do you think Luca would have made a better leader than Caesar?**

In the military mind, you may think that strength, power and size are everything. There seems to be a lot of that kind of thinking going around. In actual fact Cesar is the perfectly imperfect leader. He knows his enemy, he knows his friends, he knows both sides and the spaces in between. What becomes his undoing is his anger.

**What were the best and worst aspects of playing a gorilla?**

Eating bugs. Both answers.

**We’ve established playing Luca presented many challenges... which was the most difficult?**

I’d say the most difficult part about this character, was doing away with myself and allowing myself to just be an animal. Doing less is usually a very challenging thing. It has been for me at times as an actor.

**Given the opportunity would you have liked to have experienced the old fashioned, prosthetic make-up process for ‘Luca’?**

I would have loved that! that would have been amazing. I’ve done quite a few roles in my career where prosthetics and transformation were required. I have a huge amount of love and respect for the artists and the artistry of this discipline. I would definitely sit in a chair for as long as it took just to get that one shot for sure.

**You shared a lot of scenes with ‘Bad Ape’. What did you think about Steve Zahn’s utterly delightful creation?**

Working with Steve was absolutely magical. He is an incredible performer and diehard professional. There were times when I wasn’t really sure which one of them I was looking at.

Steve and bad ape definitely have a few things in common. It's not often you see a character like bad ape, it's even less often to see a character like this and love them so completely, he definitely hit home, straight to the heart.

**Do you have any anecdotes or amusing stories relative to the making of ‘War’?**

I have so many wonderful stories about this film making experience but if I had to choose, I would say one of my favourite moments was actually during rehearsal.

We as Ape family, had been running around the studio for at least an hour. We rounded a corner and found a Tech, standing in the back of his van working or organizing some of his stuff. In an instant he was completely surrounded by ape actors. Instead of saying anything or doing anything he just froze, calmly and awkwardly smiled at Andy, who returned the nod in kind, very subtly. He grunted and waved us all forward, poor guy had to watch some 30 or so Apes run past his truck in formation. I guarantee that guy went home glad we were only Actors.

**Do you recall being rather hungry one day during your time at Ape School?**

I remember this day very well. Lol

**Was that a strange question? Not really because when I recently interviewed Ty Olsson he confessed to stealing all his fellow ape actors’ food (see page 34)**

That's totally classic, totally Ty, and it really translated in the film that Luca and Red were opposite ends of the spectrum for sure. Apes with very different histories. The diehard loyal companion who serves with dignity and honor, and the survivor with no loyalty who will do whatever is necessary to stay alive. Both in the end surprised us all. We had some great times on set. But it all began THAT day, with him stealing from us.

**Did you keep any souvenirs from your time on WAR?**

I still have the same little beat up car I had when I was filming WAR. And I stole the tape label from my trailer and slapped it in my car. I ride with it every day. Luca is my co-captain on every drive, to every audition.

I also have some small items, like my studio security pass, and most prized of all... I have a slightly exploded right thumb knuckle... during filming I popped up on my right hand in an effort to save Caesar in a rather memorable scene. I felt my thumb go white hot. My hand hasn't really been the same since. But then again neither have I. Best souvenir ever.
Andy Serkis... God or Uber God?

Total Mega Uber God without Equal. Andy most definitely deserves an Oscar. I think he’s completely raised the bar for what acting should be. I would be quite shocked if there was anything out there that could hold a candle to him.

Why ARE there so many Apes in Canada?

Simple really... We’ve got the best Grub(s) :0) I’m very happy to be part of a wonderful community of performers here in Vancouver BC, Canada. We have talent like no other city on earth. People with integrity, passion, and amazing heart. There are real live artists here. Our crews are un-freaking believable. Hard-working men and women like I have never seen. And we have locations to match any world one can imagine. Where else would you go?

How cool is it knowing you were an Ape?

I don’t know if it will hit me until much much later. Life has been moving so fast for so many years, I haven’t really had much of a chance to stand around and watch myself do anything. I’m incredibly grateful to be part of this franchise, this filmmaking experience was unlike any other I have ever been fortunate enough to have. It’s only when I’m alone in my car, laughing to myself as I stare at that silly piece of tape with my Ape name on it that it settles in at all.

Is performance capture becoming accepted as ‘legitimate acting’ or do the general public still view you as glorified voice over artists?

Being an actor is incredibly difficult. I challenge anyone to step into a mocap suit, then do what Andy Serkis, Terry Notary and Karin Konoval have done, and tell me that it’s not worthy of being recognized. There is a lot involved in tackling this argument with integrity. So with that in mind I invite anyone who can get involved with performance to do so. In my travels I have met so many people who have told me that "once in my youth" they were so excited about performing and acting etc. Many people have given up because it was simply too difficult for them, or they couldn’t make it work, or they had no real opportunities. The general public would be shocked and amazed to learn what is required for this skill set, at this level, with this caliber of performer. I think it would knock most of them on their asses.

Was there any discussion between takes of another apes movie?

(LUCA signing response) (cough)... And that’s the whole story. You got all that right?

You’ve had quite the career... which, of your many roles, do you consider your best?

My reality is this, everybody wants me to be who they want me to be... except Danika. Husband is hands down the best role. I choose it because it’s the most important recurring role of my life. 24/7 I get to be the best version of myself, right alongside my best friend. Few things can compare with that. A resume is just a piece of paper after all.

Actor, Writer, Filmmaker, Teacher, Voice Over Artist... any preference?

All fine titles. My favorite is being “Michael, Felicity’s Son.” That one is the best. “Dad” being a very close second.

You are currently actively writing & developing multiple scripts, and have also begun the design process for your first book... could you tell us a little more about these projects?

Writing is a long passion of mine. And the one I have taken the most time to develop. I have scripts across all the genre lines, I like to dabble. But life has a way of putting things on the side burner until they really need to get cooking. My wife and I have raised a beautiful family, moved 15 times, suffered great loss and set backs, and had many laughs. But never once have I felt like I needed to rush toward a sale of one of my stories. I’ve discovered that the most important thing about storytelling and being a storyteller, is acknowledging that the voyage is so much more important than the voyager at times. What I’ve needed most to tell my stories best are people that I hadn’t met yet, people who I am meeting now. The future is bright, I’m making my shades from scratch.

What’s up next for Michael Adamthwaite?

Thankfully I find “what’s next” usually takes care of itself when I focus on right now. There’s a lot of irons in the fire, lots of projects in development. But most importantly I like to think that what’s next is just a whole lot more breathing, and tapping into what has worked, while refining what hasn’t.

When you find the time, how do you relax?

When I get a minute I’m going to walk into the backcountry. That should relax me up a bit.

Michael, thank you very much indeed!

© Dean Preston / Michael Adamthwaite [Sept 2017]
Hi Ty! How are things with you?

Things are good! Staying busy. Enjoying some sunshine and loving life.

Did you discover acting or did acting discover you?

Looking back, I think I always had it in my bones but I didn't really know it until I had a grade seven teacher force me to audition for school plays.

I first played Chicken Little. Then I played one of Cinderella’s evil stepsisters. I’ll be forever thankful for my grade seven dream teacher, Judy Cragg for pushing me into the arts.

How did you initially get the part in 'Rise'?

The old-fashioned way. I auditioned... Although at first I wasn't given the part because, the night before, not knowing the audition was coming up, I had happened to shave my head into a mohawk and dyed it blonde! (And they couldn't look past it).

At that time, I didn't know if I would be playing a human or an ape because at that time the franchise had just started to reboot.

Two weeks later I went in for a different role, minus the mohawk, and they immediately had me read for the role of Chief Hammil, again.

Were the producers looking for a specific "look" for your character 'Chief John Hamill'?

Well they were definitely not looking for a blonde mohawk. They wanted a fairly classic cop/trooper type look. Personally, I think the mohawk would have worked! LOL.

Was the original APES franchise something you were already familiar with?

I was familiar with the original series and had seen them when I was younger, but I was perhaps was too young to appreciate them fully.

Your character shot and killed “Buck” the gorilla, one of the nicest characters in the movie! Did you see yourself as a bad guy or just a cop doing his duty?

I don’t really believe in the idea of characters seeing themselves as the “bad” guy. Even people on the wrong side of history think they’re doing what is right, or necessary. But what’s interesting in the new franchise is that the humans are on the wrong side of history. Their arrogance is in believing they can manipulate nature and play god with science and medicine but ultimately there is no “bad guy” in these movies. So, Hamill was protecting and serving the public, as per his job.

How difficult was that shoot on the helicopter and around the Golden Gate set? Were you ever actually flying?

Most of it was shot in a mock up helicopter that was on a gimbal, which was pretty amazing. It was like a ride at an amusement park with advanced hydraulics and remote controlled to bounce and glide in all directions, with a green screen backdrop.
How difficult was it acting with green screens and lots of guys in mo-cap suits?

Doing motion capture and green screen work is always a challenge but you quickly become accustomed to it and it becomes the norm. Probably one of the trickiest and funniest aspects of working with the green screen outfits and the face dots and head cams is to be careful not to knock people with your camera that’s hanging a few inches in front of your face, or not locking cams with another actor.

Your scenes were shared with the evil Steven Jacobs, played by the ‘not-so-evil’ David Oyelowo... what was it like working with David?

He was professional and easy to work with. Our biggest challenge was pretending we were in a super loud, moving helicopter when we in fact were not. Again, I don’t think he thought of himself as “evil”.

Did you see Andy Serkis in action on ‘Rise’ and what were your thoughts?

I don’t think I did meet Andy directly on the first film. If so, it would have been in passing. But having worked with him extensively on the latest film, I can tell you that he is a delight to work with and a wonderful man.

After playing a human in RISE how did you come to play a gorilla in WAR?

Again, the old-fashioned way, I auditioned. It was four separate auditions. Two for acting, and two for gorilla movement.

Can you ‘see’ anything of yourself in ‘Red Donkey’ [we prefer just ‘Red’]?

I think Red is one of the “more human” characters in the movie. He epitomizes what happens to someone during the struggles of war, dealing with fear, anger, threats of genocide and trying to survive. He does a lot of things that he is not proud of or happy to have to do but feels it’s the only way for him to survive. I think any one of us in similar circumstances would struggle with the same decisions that he had to make. It’s easy to say you would never steal until you are starving and there is a loaf of bread in front of you.

The forest scenes are very Vietnam-esque... how difficult were those location shoots?

The battle scenes were set up to be as visceral and jarring as any war movie that we have seen. It’s such an odd contrast to see such beautiful old growth forests and ferns and greenery suddenly turn into a smoky, mortar fire filled place with aching blasts of machine guns thundering through it. The locations are always tricky, in the middle of the woods with such big productions with so many people and moving parts. But it was essential to the feel of the movies and the scenes.

You get to beat up and be a bit of a bastard to Caesar/Andy Serkis. Those are amazingly powerful scenes... what was it like interacting with Andy in mo-cap suits?

I get to play a lead antagonist to Andy Serkis’ Caesar, and as an actor having that strong of intention and purpose in the scene and with such an amazing actor is a dream. I really felt we worked well together. It’s always so fulfilling to work with such a consummate actor.

When Red redeems himself by saving Caesar at the end, do you feel that Red has really seen the light or is he just saving a fellow ape?

It has the feel of a ‘Road to Damascus’ moment for Red. I definitely think Red has seen the light. All the decisions he has made as a turncoat and allying with the humans were simply him acting from a survival mode.

Do you think Red knew that in saving Caesar he was also effectively committing suicide?

Yes. In that moment there is no way he didn’t know that he was signing his own death warrant by saving Caesar. But again, back to that idea of good and evil. Red wasn’t an evil character. He was simply doing everything he could to survive.
Of course, there are layers of complexity when talking about Red, having been one of Koba’s followers. Like Koba he believed the humans had no mercy and intended to commit genocide to apes and saw the humans as an enemy on the wrong side of history. But ultimately his decision to ally with the humans comes from a base need to survive. The amount of self-loathing that came with that decision must have been torturous and that makes him one of the more “human” characters in the movie. I feel Red probably faced that choice every single day, to align with the winning side. It must have been horrible.

Red is a remarkably pivotal character in WAR who has his own emotional journey that, in some ways, mirrors that of Caesar... do you see him as a good guy or a bad guy?

Again, I never see characters a good or bad. They always feel they’re doing what is right for them under the circumstances that they are facing. Ultimately, Red makes the decision to act on behalf of apes, instead of self, which in a way is as heroic and selfless as Caesar’s character. Because the stakes are high - he IS going to die by doing this. It’s easy to be heroic when you have nothing to lose. Red makes the ultimate sacrifice and does the “right” thing by the end of the film. I think we have to remember that from Red’s point of view, he believes that Caesar is a hypocrite. And it’s not until he sees Caesar’s heroic actions himself does he believe in Caesar’s selflessness in trying to save the apes.

Best and worst aspects of playing a gorilla?

Lot of free bananas. Hard to go pee ;)

What was the most challenging part of playing Red?

Red was a character that didn’t fit in with the other apes because of his turncoat status. But clearly was never going to fit in with the humans either. And as early as the weeks in “ape school” it was clear that Red was alone in this world. The challenge is to ignore both human and ape instinct, which is to be part of the pack, to belong. So I had to be ok with not belonging.

How difficult is mo-cap acting? What special challenges does it present?

I couldn’t keep a proper beard because they had to put dots on my face and needed skin for that. The head cams took getting used to. And it was really hard to go pee. I think acting for mo-cap and green screen is equal parts difficult and freeing. Once you’re able to suspend your own disbelief of not having set, or that everyone in a grey suit is a fellow ape then you are able to find freedom within it. It’s much like theatre where your mind fills in all the details that are needed.
Given the opportunity, would you have liked to have experienced the old fashioned, hours in the chair, make-up process for Red?

No, I don’t think so. The amount of time that goes into that level of makeup is exhausting and prosthetics are always uncomfortable and a challenge to move and act in. The mo-cap allows a lot more freedom.

Do you have any anecdotes or amusing stories relative to any of the Ape films?

There seems to be a recurring hair theme for me in these movies. At first being turned down for the role of Chief Hamill because of my bleached blonde mohawk. Then later during shooting for “War” I felt bad for Woody’s character being out in the cold with his bald head that I shaved mine in solidarity. Then out of necessity of a clean shaved face for the mo-cap dots I shaved my beard into gigantic chops allowing the dots to be in place but still having some facial hair.

Was there any evidence of Apes and Humans splitting up into species groups for meals etc?

I think by nature you hang out with people with whom you have the most scenes. Who you work with the most. It didn’t have much to do with species groups. But a funny story... while we were doing ape school my character quickly became isolated from the rest of the group, and I later stole their food and props during the ape school exercise. I hid everything from the rest of the apes. At one point, I was alone for 45 mins, still in character, in the basement of the studio while the rest of the apes ventured outside as a pack. During that time is when I stole all their food/props/supplies. Survival of the fittest, kids!

Did you keep any souvenirs that you are able to share with our readers?

My non-disclosure agreement is pretty tight. Although I snuck a few personal pictures I wouldn’t feel right releasing them under that agreement.

Do you think Andy should get an Oscar?

He should have already gotten one for Gollum in LOTR! I haven’t seen all of this years performances so it would be hard to say.

Why ARE there so many Apes in Canada?

Because of our free medical, Tim Horton’s Coffee, and our welcoming immigration laws. ;)

How cool is it knowing you were in this franchise?

Ridiculously cool. Being part of cinematic history is something all actors dream of. The Apes franchise is a cinematic masterpiece of many levels.

Please throw us a bone... was there any discussion of another Apes movie?

I haven’t heard anything official but I can’t imagine that a franchise that has been so financially and creatively successful that they wouldn’t continue the storyline. I’m definitely interested to see where it goes from here. And its ripe to go into the same timeline as the original planet of the apes.

Moving completely away from the ‘Apes’, which, of your many other roles, do you consider as your most memorable and why?

I’ve been very fortunate to play a lot of roles over the years, some of the memorable ones that come to mind are Benny in “Supernatural”, Old from “Dragon Tales”, Vic from “Survival Code” and of course Red from “War”, but I’m hopeful that the best is yet to come.

TV or Film... any preference?

They both have pros and cons. TV has really become a dominant story telling force in the last decade. I think the characters and writing in TV has surpassed film in a lot of ways. And they don't cost $250 million to make. But I’ve been fortunate to have had opportunities in both and ultimately it comes down to script and character, regardless of the format.

What’s next for Ty Olsson?

I don’t know, what have you got for me? LOL. If there is another Apes film I’d love to be part of it. Then I could be the first person to play three characters in the re-booted franchise! Presently I’m working on “The Man in the High Castle” and I have a role in the Netflix series “Slasher: Guilty Party” (Season Two of the Slasher series) which should be coming out soon.

When you find the time how do you relax?

Next week I’ll be visiting is islands of Haifa Gaia in B.C. for 11 days with my girlfriend. We’ll spend the rest of the summer with our families, and friends just enjoying the summer weather as long as we can.

Ty, thank you very much indeed!
After Tarzan on the POTA, was it a big shift to writing the new War for the Planet of the Apes comic?

Every new project is a shift, so there’s always a certain amount of mental and creative preparation to be done. Thankfully, for me there’s this incredible fondness for POTA, which has really served me well. Even with this particular branch of the franchise, there’s a love of the material, and a richness to the work that’s been done, which made this a fairly easy world to transition into.

The creators behind the Movie have discussed how they see Caesar as a Messiah-like figure—is that your feeling, too? If he IS a Messiah, is it just for Apes or do us humans have a place?

I see him as being more of a cross between Martin Sheen in Apocalypse Now and John Wayne in The Searchers. I love the complexity of Caesar. He’s been incredibly fun to write, especially since he’s in a very conflicted and complex time of his life.

Your book links in really well with the tone and plot of DAWN, WAR and also the prequel novel, Revelations, by Greg Keyes—were you given a detailed idea of this framework and how to fit in with it?

It’s kind of funny. I read the shooting script for WPOTA, and put together a pitch, and then an outline that was approved. Then we got a memo saying that there was a book tie-in, Revelations, and my outline had too many similarities. It turns out that books and comics are different licensing divisions. Since the book was written, I had to change more than half of my story. I was devastated, but then what I came up with was so much better. All the stuff in Florida and Atlanta is part of the new stuff.

There are nice nods to the classic canon, is Dr. Burke a TV Series tribute?

Yes, Dr. Burke is a nod to the TV series. In fact, at one point there was a character named Virdon in this story as well. That entire subplot with Burke was the result of me having to come up with a new storyline, as was the reason for cutting Virdon. I’d really like to do a series based in the timeline of the television series. I’d love to see the final fate of Burke, Virdon, and Galen -- I’d do something really tragic.

Jonas Scharf has done an amazing job—gritty and graphic. How was it working with Jonas (we’re interviewing him, too!) and were you full script on this?

Jonas has been incredible. His artwork has blown me away every step of the process. We’ve never had direct communication, but he has been a dream to work with in that his work is totally on point. By the time we got to the third issue, I was trying to leave the script open enough for him to really create some magic, and he did it. His visual storytelling is so precise, I wanted to remove all the text from the comic. You don’t need words to understand this story, because Jonas can tell a helluva story with pictures.

Is Maurice really what this entire Saga is about—he seems to be a bridge between extremes of attitude, regardless of species.

Maurice is an amazing character, really complex and deep. I love the growth we’ve seen with him in the films. I also think Rocket is really interesting, though not as obviously so. I just love that there are these two apes that have been down with Caesar since the beginning. Maurice represents intellect and consciousness. Rocket is the pragmatic let’s-get-it-done ape. Both are ride-or-die, and to me it really comes through.

The covers for the book are jaw dropping. How happy are you with the way the project turned out?

To quote Stevie Wonder, “I’m happier than the morning sun.” I’ve been luck to work with an incredible creative and editorial team, on a project that occupies a special place in my heart.
"What did you think of WAR?

I really enjoyed the movie. I don’t want to sound like one of those people who kisses up to the franchise, but I took this gig based on the quality of Rise and Dawn, and the belief that War would deliver. And it delivered.

Why do you think Apes, as a concept, has endured through the decades.

It may sound weird, but it is the humanity of the apes. The best of the characters in the overall franchise, be they heroes or villains, have emotional depth and complexity. Zaius is a really deep character. And how can we not love Zira and Cornelius?

It’s the same thing in these new films. Koba was one of the most complex villains in decades. Caesar is equally complex, and this why the films endure. I just rewatched Conquest, and that film still holds up.

Can we hope for a Cage/Apes crossover?!

Luke Cage on the Planet of the Apes would be bananas—pun intended. But it would have to be 1970s Luke Cage going up against Zaius and Ursus. Maybe throw Dr. Doom in for an extra dose of fun.
Being a comics artist isn't easy---how did you break into the industry?

It wasn't necessarily that magical huge break-in moment you always imagine. I started working as a freelance illustrator after I got my bachelor's degree in design in 2015. Being a comic artist has been my dream since I was a teenager, so I was always drawing comics on the side, but after the graduation I knew I had to give it a serious shot. I was hired by a couple of writers to help them pitch their ideas to publishers, so I did that for a while with not much success.

One day I was contacted online by Eric Harburn, an editor at Boom!, who had seen my work and asked if I was interested in drawing a book for them. At first I couldn't believe it, but a few months later I worked on Phillip K. Johnson's, Warlords of Appalachia, my first book.

I think it used to be about getting a foot in the door, but now with the internet and social media I think the real challenge is to stay in the industry that you slowly crept your way into. How to do that is something I'll have to figure out over the next couple of years.

David Walker, who loves your art! is a wonderful writer and has drawn plaudits for his Luke Cage and Tarzan on the POTA books. How has it been working with David?

To be honest, I haven't had much interaction with David. Most of it is coordinated by the editors, Dafna Pleban and Alex Galer, who are doing a great job.

That being said, I'm always very excited when I get a new script to see what David has come up with for the next issue. When you are working with such well known and talented people all you can do is to give your best and hope you "can hang" so to speak.

Was there discussion as to the 'look' of the book or is that simply your vision?

I think the look of the book is an amalgam of influences. Just reading the scripts you can tell David has a strong vision of the post-apocalyptic world he wanted to portray in this book. He'll include reference photos and detailed explanations for specific locations, so that really makes my job a lot easier. Sometimes you can almost see the scene in front of you just by reading David's descriptions.

On my end, I took a lot of inspiration from "Dawn" and just tried to elaborate on that. I try to imagine the people who would actually live in these environments and what they would or wouldn't do in order to survive.

For me, a big theme in the new Planet of the Apes trilogy is nature reclaiming the ruins of human civilization, so it was important to me to really show the contrast between the two.

Jason Wordie has done a lovely job on colours. Was there a post-apocalyptic 'style' that was decided upon for the colour palette with nothing too bright?

I don't know if he and the editors had a discussion about the look of the book, but when I heard Jason would be coloring I looked up some of his work and I just knew my lines would be in good hands. I usually have a hard time giving up control over my art, so I get the occasional impulse to leave him a little note somewhere, but the voice of reason in my head always tells me to just let him do his thing and it always pays off. I'm really not surprised his work on the book gets so much praise and attention.

Is the WAR book a different sort of challenge---how easy is it showing Ape emotions?

Jonas and the WOW!
Every project I work on is a huge challenge for me. I always try to improve and learn and there’s always that little voice of doubt in my head. It being a tie-in to a huge summer blockbuster didn’t exactly help with the anxiety that comes with any project that will eat up four months of your time. The new films have all been excellent, so I felt a lot of pressure and responsibility to get it right.

To me, there is no difference between ape emotions and human emotions. They are just emotions, so my approach is the same. The apes might look different, but they struggle with the same emotions, and isn’t that what the Apes movies have always been about?

Is it cool getting to draw Woody Harrelson?!

It’s both super cool and a bit terrifying, since I’m a fan of his work. Going in I knew I had to find a compromise between the actual likeness of the actors and my own, more cartoony style. Time is also a huge factor on a monthly book, so I couldn’t spend ages drawing a photorealistic likeness.

I think in some panels I did a better job than in others, but I really hope I managed to pull off a respectful compromise.
Who are your artistic heroes and inspirations? Are you familiar with the huge back-catalogue of Apes comics over the decades—you are following in the footsteps of Ploog, Tuska, Alcala, Sutton and Trimpe!!

No, unfortunately I’m not familiar with any of the POTA comics. I’m still getting used to the idea that people are actually reading a book I illustrated, let alone following in the footsteps of well known and beloved artists like the ones you mentioned.

I’ve been inspired by a bunch of artists over the years. If I had to pick my current top three it would be Sean Murphy, James Harren and Zach Howard, but there are so many other great artists out there, it’s impossible to start naming them all.

What are your thoughts on the movie itself?

The movie is not even out yet here in Germany, which is a bummer. I loved Rise and Dawn, though, so I can’t wait to finally go see the movie in August.

Covers by Borulko, Rivera....pretty cool?

I know, right? And don’t forget Jay Shaw’s cover! As I said, I still can’t quite wrap my head around it. I’ve been reading comics since I was 5 or 6 years old and now I’m drawing comics myself, working with super talented people. It’s crazy. Have you seen the SDCC exclusive cover by Robert Sammelin, yet?

What is next for Jonas Scharf—would you re-visit the Planet of the Apes?

I have a couple of covers and other smaller projects lined up after POTA, but no new series, yet. I’m currently working on it, though, making plans for the rest of the year.

If I get the chance, I’d be more than happy to return to the Planet of the Apes, assuming of course the Apes fans approve!
What was your first experience of Apes?

It’s pretty tough to say. I was always aware of the original movie, knew what the ending was, but didn’t actually see it for myself until about 2013 (for shame!). I saw the Tim Burton version in the theater with my Dad, and all 3 of the new movies not long after they came out. What I can say for sure, is that the Simpsons song plays in my head most of the time.

Do you prefer old style or new, CGI-style Apes?

What they’ve done with the new trilogy is pretty impressive, especially since you can see such improvement from the first to the last. I’ve got nothing against CGI — it’s just another tool that is dependent upon the people who use it. I’ll always love the apes from the original, though.

How cool is it to be illustrating Zaius and Ursus, guys who have been iconic characters for decades?

To be honest, I didn’t know who Ursus was until I was handed this project. I took it as an opportunity to watch Beneath the Planet of the Apes, which I have mixed feelings about. I loved Ursus as a character, but the overall movie was pretty nuts. And that’s as a sequel to an original that was pretty crazy to begin with. I find Zaius to be the most interesting — he’s an undeniable villain, but sadly relatable.

Did drawing what is, essentially, a nude Caesar for WAR present any special challenges?

Nothing out of the ordinary.

For Thomas on the Rod Serling Visionaries book, where did your vision of him come from?

I had actually wanted to paint him in his tattered spacesuit, but my editors were looking for something later in the narrative. I had also wanted to paint an ape flying a helicopter, but we could find a composition that covered everything we needed. In the end, I just took a pic of myself in the pose and used that as the basis (giving myself blonde hair, of course).

How did you come up with the 'Ursus Helmet is a cage' idea for #1?
I just kept hitting my head against the cage until something fell out:) I usually create big boards in Photoshop with any and all reference that I find useful or inspiring. That usually leads to juxtapositions that I wouldn't have otherwise thought of. This was one of those rare times when the idea popped into my head and I knew I had something worth recording.
Where can one go to hear commentaries and reviews of both the unsung *Planet of the Apes* TV series (CBS, 1974) as well as the underrated animated *Return to the Planet of the Apes* (NBC, 1975)? **Talking Apes TV**, your Planet of the Apes podcast!

There were podcasts that talked about the films, but none that covered the Apes on TV. That was until in 2014, when creators Richard Woloski (Co-Host, *Skywalking Through Neverland*) and Mark Oguschewitz (Film Reviewer, *Adventures By Daddy*) thought to fill that void by talking about the series that meant so much to them as kids.

**Talking Apes TV** provides commentaries on each and every episode of both series. With both humor and fun-facts, the two co-hosts discuss the story (humanoids' survival on this planet of apes), cast (why does the animated Urko sound like Fred Flintstone?), characters (why is Pete the only one with no real back story?) crew (how many crossed over from the films?), notes on shooting locations (are Pete and Alan confronting shark gods in the same place that the Statue of Liberty was once half-buried?) and much more...

Just like any TV season, there are also mid-season breaks. **Talking Apes TV** uses this opportunity to bring listeners special guests like author/editors Jim Beard and Rich Handley, who made **Talking Apes TV** their first promotional stop to discuss the short story compilation, *Planet of the Apes: Tales From the Forbidden Zone*.

Now, what happens when all 14 episodes of the CBS series and 13 episodes of the animated series have been covered, argued over, debated and discussed? Then it’s time to spin-off into just simply - **Talking Apes**! Here, the show focuses on discussions with actors such as Bobby Porter (Cornelius in *Battle for the Planet of the Apes*, Arno and Remus in the TV series), authors like E.C. Gaska (*The Unknown Ape, Conspiracy of the Planet of the Apes*) and those active in the Apes fan community such as Dean Preston (Simian Scrolls).

Recently, **Talking Apes** attended USC's Visions and Voices 50th Anniversary screening of the original movie and the Legacy panel that followed. The panel featured William Creber, Dan Striepeke, Matt Reeves, Rupert Wyatt, Rick Jaffa and Joe Letteri. Don’t miss the next episode of **Talking Apes** to hear all about this Urko-tastic event! This is a must for Ape fans of all generations!

**Talking Apes** crew also consists of FaceBook admin. Angela May Rushmere, show theme composer Rob Dehlinger and technical director Sarah Woloski.

You can find us at: [SkywalkingThroughNeverland.com](http://SkywalkingThroughNeverland.com) [Retrozap.com](http://Retrozap.com)

Visit and Like us at [facebook.com/talkingapes](http://facebook.com/talkingapes)  -  Email: Tweet: [@talkingapesTV](https://twitter.com/talkingapesTV)

**Now Go Ape!**
“It’s you and me, Tommy!”

With those fateful words, makeup artist John Chambers set into motion an incredible series of events that changed Hollywood forever. The young 20th Century Fox makeup apprentice Chambers was talking to was Tom Burman and they were about to embark on the journey of a lifetime, conceiving and creating the special makeup effects for the motion picture *Planet of The Apes*.

Now, 50 years later, Tom Burman is finally telling his story. *Making Apes: The Artists Who Changed Film* is an upcoming feature length documentary Executive Produced and Written By Thomas R. Burman, Executive Produced by Bari-Dreiband Burman and Directed by William G. Conlin.

Featuring interviews by the artists who worked on the original five *Apes* films, actors who wore the iconic makeup and filmmakers who were deeply influenced by the franchise, *Making Apes* is the first documentary to specifically focus on the makeup aspect of this beloved franchise.

Highlights include:

- Tom Burman telling the story of how he actually got John Chambers the job on the original *Planet of The Apes*.
- Original makeup artists including Dan Striepeke, Maurice Stein, Ken Chase, Frank Griffin, Werner Keppler and Ed Butterworth sharing their stories from on set.
- Actors including Lou Wagner and Bobby Porter discussing wearing the makeup during production.
- Modern makeup masters including Rick Baker, Greg Cannom, Greg Nicotero, Howard Berger, Ve Neill, Steve Johnson and Bill Corso speaking to how the original *Apes* films inspired them to pursue their careers in Hollywood.
- Film historians such as Leonard Maltin and Scott Essman discussing the cultural impact *Planet of The Apes* had on the world.

**AND...**

To celebrate the milestone 50th anniversary of the original film’s release, Lou Wagner is stepping back into the role of Lucius, over a half a century later. Supervised by Tom Burman himself and through the stunning work of Vincent Van Dyke Effects, Lou will be transformed into Lucius, now an old ape, to share his wisdom with audiences.

*All this and more!*
But... the filmmakers need your help to make this dream a reality. *Making Apes* is being independently produced outside of any major studio and is relying on the incredible fanbase to help bring it to the screen.

In March, 2018, an IndieGoGo campaign will be launched to help cover the costs of telling this epic story. With several levels of support to choose from, this also presents an opportunity for you to forever attach yourself to this story, while receiving exciting items made available by Tom Burman himself.

Support tiers will include everything from *Making Apes: The Artists Who Changed Film* on DVD/Blu-Ray Combo Pack, to original *Planet of The Apes* artwork created by Tom Burman, along with autographs, posters and other exclusive memorabilia.

Cosplay fans who support the campaign will have a special opportunity to showcase their names and a picture of themselves in their favorite *Apes* makeup featured in the documentary.

Premium packages will include private lunches with people involved in the *Planet of The Apes* franchise, posters signed by the incredible list of names interviewed for the documentary and even a gorilla head taken from an original 1968 mold and crafted by Tom Burman himself.

The absolute top tier, reserved for just one ultimate fan, will include an Associate Producers credit on the film, a poster signed by everyone involved in the film (more icons than you can imagine) and an original screen used facial prosthetic from *Planet of The Apes* used in the courtroom scene and featured on the cover of the 1968 movie tie-in paperback.

For more information about the IndieGoGo campaign and to follow the documentary’s progress, please visit [www.makingapes.com](http://www.makingapes.com), like on Facebook @MakingApes-Documentary or follow on Instagram @MakingApes.
FLASHBACK!

Summer 1967: A close encounter of the simian kind for young Suzie Dotan

Being a West Coast gal, I used to spend my summers at the beach. I was too young to drive, so I would either walk to Pico Boulevard or take the number 12 to the Pico bus (I think it was the number 7) to go down to the beach. The entire ride down was 25¢.

So, I’d leave my house barefoot, wearing a way too long tee shirt over my bathing suit and have 50¢ in my hand for the round trip along with a rat-tail hair brush and a towel. I think it was the summer of 1967, when I decided to walk to the Pico Bus to catch it on the corner of Pico and Motor. The bus stop was quite literally in front of 20th Century Fox.

As I waited, a guy dressed in an “ape” suit, (although now I know he was a chimp), sat down on the bus bench next to me. He was dressed like the guy in the shot with the lady and the table [below]. I’m pretty sure he was just an actor clowning around. Being that this is L.A, and being that we were right in front of 20th Century Fox, nothing was surprising.

He said “Hi” and I said “Hi” back. Nothing out of the normal! Cars were whizzing by and I glanced at some motorists looking completely stunned as they drove by. A signal was there, so when it turned red and cars had to stop, I could see some drivers laughing and pointing. Some waved. Some didn’t. We chatted about nothing. Banal kinds of things. I remember telling him I was going to the beach. I remember him complaining that all that hair all over his body made him really hot. When the bus pulled up, I got on. I waved to him as I left and he waved back. Some of the people on the bus laughed as they saw that. But, as was usual, I walked barefoot all the way to the back of the bus, flopped down and waited to get to the beach.

I was literally sitting in front of 20th Century Fox at the corner of Motor and Pico. (google maps it). I didn’t see any photographers. It’s quite possible that after he sat on the bench with me, he went back and told them of the experience, and so was born photo-ops.

I recognize ‘The Big Donut’ on Sepulveda near LAX (above), and it looks like the old Schwinn dealer on Pico Blvd. (below).
BOOKSHELF

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Simian Scrolls Issue 20

THE SACRED SCROLLS OF THE COMICS PLANET OF THE APES
Foreword by Corinna Bechko and Gabriel Hardman
Afterword by Dan O'Conner
Edited by Rich Handley and Joseph Creac

BRIGHT EYES, APE CITY: EXAMINING THE PLANET OF THE APES MYTHOS
Foreword by David Gerrold
Edited by Rich Handley and Joseph Creac

PLANET OF THE APES: TALES FROM THE FORBIDDEN ZONE
Edited by Rich Handley and Jim Beard

PLANET OF THE APES: OMNIBUS
VOLUME 1
Beneath the Planet of the Apes
Escape from the Planet of the Apes

VOLUME 2
Conquest of the Planet of the Apes
Battle for the Planet of the Apes

VOLUME 3
Man the Planet

VOLUME 4
Visions from Nowhere

PLANET OF THE APES ARCHIVE:
VOLUME THREE

TIMELINE OF THE PLANET OF THE APES

FRONT ROY OF ZUR FEXICON OF THE
PLANET OF THE APES

THE DEFINITIVEガイド THE
PLANET OF THE APES
APES FANS STILL HAVE QUESTIONS!

Ever wonder what became of those giant Scarecrows?  
What about those oak trees Taylor saw at the top of that mesa?  
Do you want to know what was shot and not used?  
What about shots planned and not filmed?

Find all the answers to these questions and much, much more in the upcoming (mid-2018) book:

**Location! Location! Location!**

Author John O’Callaghan (*Simians & Serialism*) explores his life-long journey to find the exact filming locations for *Planet of the Apes*—including the major discovery that several key locations in Utah haven’t been touched by Man (or Ape) since May 1967! The reader will be treated to incredible discoveries, a wealth of photos and previously unknown research about the work filmmaker Franklin J. Schaffner did to find and exploit these locales. *Location! Location! Location!* provides both clarity and humor to the history of the three-month shoot of *Planet of the Apes*.

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**Winter/Spring 2018 SALE at www.PithikosEntertainment.com:**

You will find Valuable Discounts on:

*Simians & Serialism: A History and Analysis of Jerry Goldsmith’s Score to Planet of the Apes* (Book)

*Music Written For The Film Planet of the Apes* (Audio CD)

*Purgatory—Original Motion Picture Soundtrack* (LP/CDr/HiRes Download)

(All discounts are subject to in-stock product availability)
When Bobby met Andy

24th July, 2017
SAG - AFTRA screening of
‘War for the POTA’

Image courtesy of
Bobby Porter