CINÉMAGIC

PREMIERE ISSUE! The world of amateur fantasy films and filmmakers

Number 1 $1.00   Winter 1972

THE FACE ON THE WALL -- from
the amateur horror film,
THE LATE SHOW (see page 11)

CINÉMAGIC

FEATURES

FILM PROFILES

FILMMAKER PROFILE

GENESIS...

Way back in 1964 I wrote a book-length letter to Forrest J. Ackerman (editor of *Famous Monsters* magazine) and detailed my plans about a magazine idea I had, devoted to "the world of amateur fantasy/science fiction/horror films..." Mr. Ackerman approved. Unfortunately, my own inexperience, lack of money, and inability to interest other filmmakers in the magazine caused me to scrap the whole idea.

In 1970, I resurrected the magazine idea. *This* time it could work, I figured, because of new advancements in amateur film gauges which had brought about a whole new era of serious filmmakers who, not surprisingly, demanded a lot more than jerky, homemade movies. These people were into things; they were doing films on an often professional level, with special visual effects plausible enough to convince even the most critical film fan that effects can be more than fun: they *can* be and *are* an entire medium unto themselves. And so, as filmmakers built animation models, miniature sets and spacecraft models, and experimented with matte shots, rear-screen projection, realistic make-up, backdrops, and so on, the seeds to my plot were being sown again: the magazine would be *more* than worthwhile now; it'd almost be a necessity.

Of course, that was in 1970. An idea, a concept, if you will, is a good basis, but it would take a lot more than mind impulses to transform such an idea into printed reality.

In fact, it took nearly two years of planning: mulling over layout concepts and techniques; deciding on a format; contacting scores upon scores of people interested in effects filming -- horror fans, animation enthusiasts, science fiction buffs -- people with a desire to advocate and/or produce their own effects-oriented films. Add to this the technicalities of magazine production that had to be worked out: meetings with printers and photographers; innumerable trips to art and supply stores; hundreds of letters to artists, magazine editors and others associated with the field, to say nothing of the endless phone calls to vital people who live in distant cities....

By the time I had digested all of this, it was mid-summer, 1972. The magazine, it was decided, would be in print by early December. So after five months of consuming articles, features and photographs, writing and editing manuscripts, and definitely deciding on what exactly would be presented in the first issue, we've finally made it. CINEMAGIC is here; hopefully to stay.

In this premiere issue we've selected a mixture of features and articles which will ultimately set a precedent for future issues; certain types of features will continue, but with different slants and contributors. For example, Britt McDonough's wire and latex model building technique: this time we show you how to create a spider -- subsequent issues will present different models, all using the same basic process. Other regular features will include miniature sets, miniature props, optical techniques, make-up, and of course, an important ingredient: filmmaker profiles. These are vital to CINEMAGIC, for they explore the films, techniques, knowledge and theories of people who *have made* and *do make* films in the fantasy genre -- films which require some sort of special visual effects.

And by "people" I mean, quite literally, people like *you*, the amateur or semi-pro filmmakers and enthusiasts of the world who make films that run the gamut from straight-out horror shockers to involved science-fantasy epics. *You* are the people we'd like to feature in the pages of CINEMAGIC, for participation of our readers is something we're counting on. If the idea intrigues you, get in touch with us! There are no special requirements or rules -- just that you do effects-oriented films. Examples of such films (and the profiles on the filmmakers who made them) can be found throughout this issue and should give you an idea of the types of people we're interested in.

Finally, I'd like to tell you about some of our aims with CINEMAGIC. Quite obviously, we want to entertain you, through visual layouts, unusual photographs, and enlightening text, coupled with the fact that we're presenting material that's never been published before. Accordingly, then, our main concerns are to give a bit of deserving fame to filmmakers and at the same time endeavor to be of some help to those of you who want to learn as many tricks and techniques about the effects realm as possible. True, some of you will have tried and conquered the techniques we'll present -- but there are always those among us who *haven't* built a miniature set, or constructed an animation model, or realized the myriad effects possible with film-- and we aren't catering to any specific age or experience group. We're here because we want to expand the genre and bring together *every* person who has ever had a yen to pursue or enjoy "magic in the cinema," or as we prefer, CINEMAGIC.

Your comments, thoughts, ideas, suggestions and criticisms are welcomed. Remember, CINEMAGIC is by nature *your* magazine as well as ours.

HOMEMADE ANIMATION MODELS

by BRITT McDONOUGH

Creating a Giant Spider

King Kong fighting prehistoric monsters and stalking through misty jungles; a giant scorpion wrecking an unsuspecting train; the Venusian "Ymir" terrorizing Rome and making his last stand on top of the Coliseum (the climax of Columbia's *Twenty Million Miles to Earth*) -- these and scores of other movie creatures were actually animated miniatures: small models averaging fifteen or so inches high (although the models for *King Kong* were much bigger). These models, elaborate stop-motion puppets, are completely bendable or flexible, a characteristic imperative for frame-by-frame animation (by individual posing or manipulations of the models).

As a hobby over the past few years, I have built dinosaurs, insects, mythological beasts, and other weird creatures, which are reasonably adaptable for animating. The chief material used in their construction is liquid latex rubber, which can be bought at art supply stores (as a sculptor's tool in casting figures: the latex is used to make rubber molds). The latex acts as a detailed and flexible "skin" for the animation models, which are based on a simple wire skeleton. In painting these creatures, acrylic or polymer paints work best; the paint is mixed directly with the liquid latex (and can be thinned with household ammonia if necessary). The following is the step-by-step procedure I used to build a spider for a horror genre film.

MATERIALS

The more unusual ones are listed first; the ones likely to be found in most homes, last.

LIQUID LATEX RUBBER - This material is absolutely essential for the flexible skin of the model. I buy it in quart cans ($3.50) from:

> *American Handicrafts, Inc.*
> *737 - 7th Street, N.W.*
> *Washington, D.C.*

Latex can also be purchased from:

> *Sculpture House*
> *38 East 30th Street*
> *New York, New York*

or from:

> *General Latex & Chemical Corp.*
> *666 Main Street*
> *Cambridge, Massachusetts*

BLACK CREPE HAIR (Theatrical crepe) - Check your phone book (yellow pages) for the nearest costume rental company or theatrical supply store, or contact one of the following:

> *Junior Mode*
> *3146 Wilson Boulevard*
> *Arlington, Virginia 22201*

> *Paramount Theatrical Supplies*
> *32 West 20th Street*
> *New York, New York*

Crepe hair is usually sold by the yard or foot, at 50¢ per foot.

NUMBER SIXTEEN GALVANIZED WIRE - This is used to form the model's "skeleton" and is available at most hardware stores.

The following items, also necessary to build the spider, are common household ones:

> *FACIAL TISSUE*
> *ALUMINUM FOIL*
> *SCOTCH TAPE*
> *PAPER TOWELING*
> *SCISSORS*

And don't forget to buy some polymer or acrylic paint (black). Most art stores or art departments in department stores carry this new medium. I use Hyplar brand "Mars Black" paint, which is made by Grumbacher, Inc.

SHAPING THE WIRE FRAME

The #16 galvanized wire might seem too stiff to use at first; nevertheless, this is necessary for the skeleton as a whole to hold up against repeated bending and the pressure of the latex rubber on it.
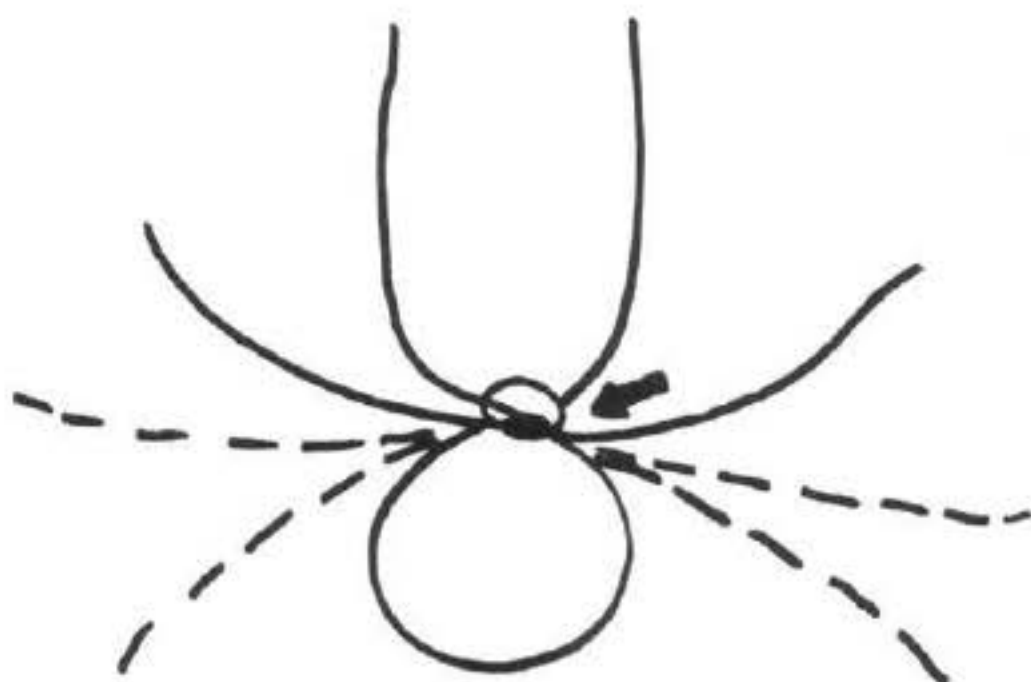
1: Overlap the wire
   to form a loop.

2: Twist the loop tightly
   a few times to secure
   it. The loop now func-
   tions as the body or
   "abdomen" of the spider,
   and the two long ends of
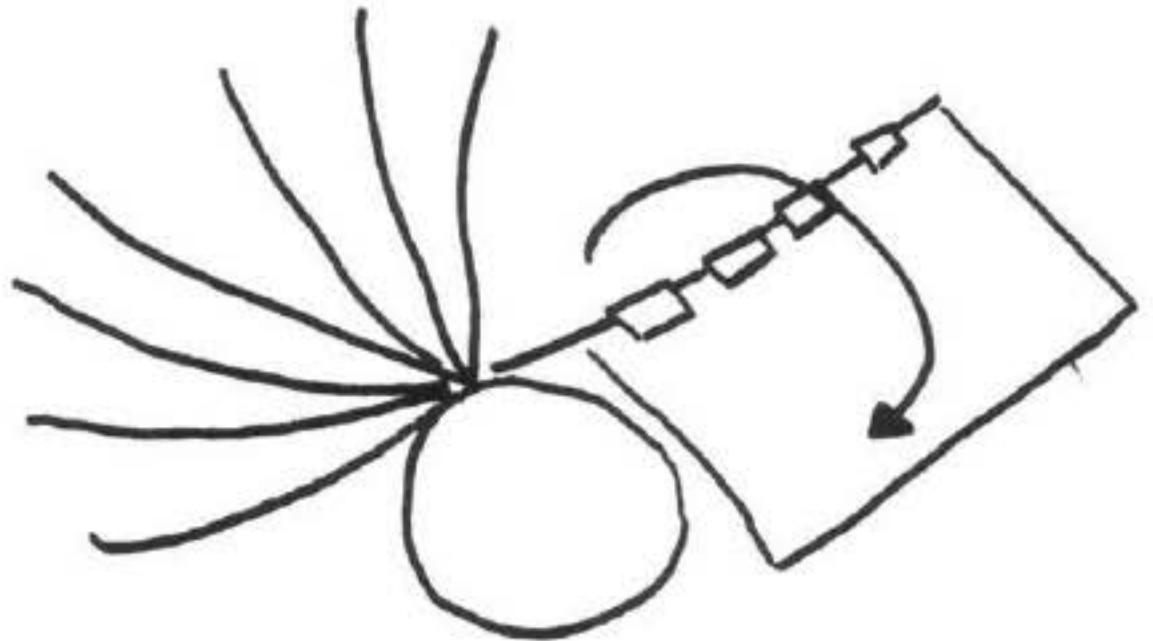   the wire serve as the
   front legs.

3: Twist three long
   additional strands
   of wire around the
   loop/leg joint to
   complete the frame.
   (Photo 1.)

FORMING THE LEGS

1: Tape paper toweling
   to each leg, then
   wrap it around the
   leg.

2: When paper toweling
   is completely wrapped,
   tape it to make the
   finished leg.
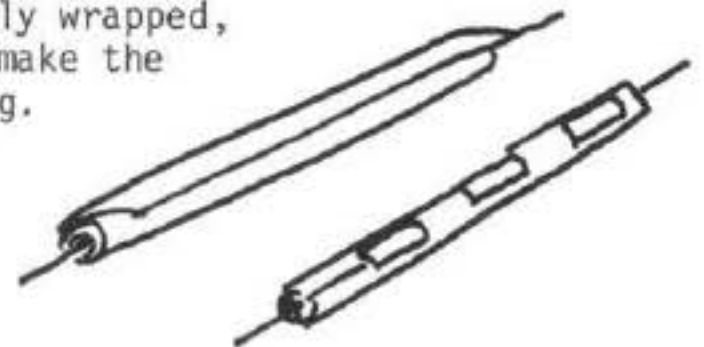
Photo 2 shows the paper towel legs complete. In
the left-hand corner of the photo (ten o'clock)
is a ball of newspaper which was taped to the
body loop to form the spider's abdomen. Facial
tissue wrapped around the newspaper abdomen com-
pletes its "roundish" shape.

FINAL MODELING

   Photo 3 shows the addition of the head and
neck, and the addition of a single liquid latex
coat, which is brushed over the model with a
stiff-bristled brush. The head is a small tis-
sue ball (which is taped together to hold its
shape); the neck is also tissue, taped to the
spider's abdomen or main body. Once the head
and neck are taped on, the latex coat is added.

   Next is the fine modeling. The spider's
abdomen is given an additional coat of latex,
and while the coat is still wet, cornmeal is
sprinkled over it. The cornmeal gives the model
texture -- a rough, realistic skin. The tips of
the legs have been "pointed" by modeling wet la-
tex mixed with tissue and cotton over them. The
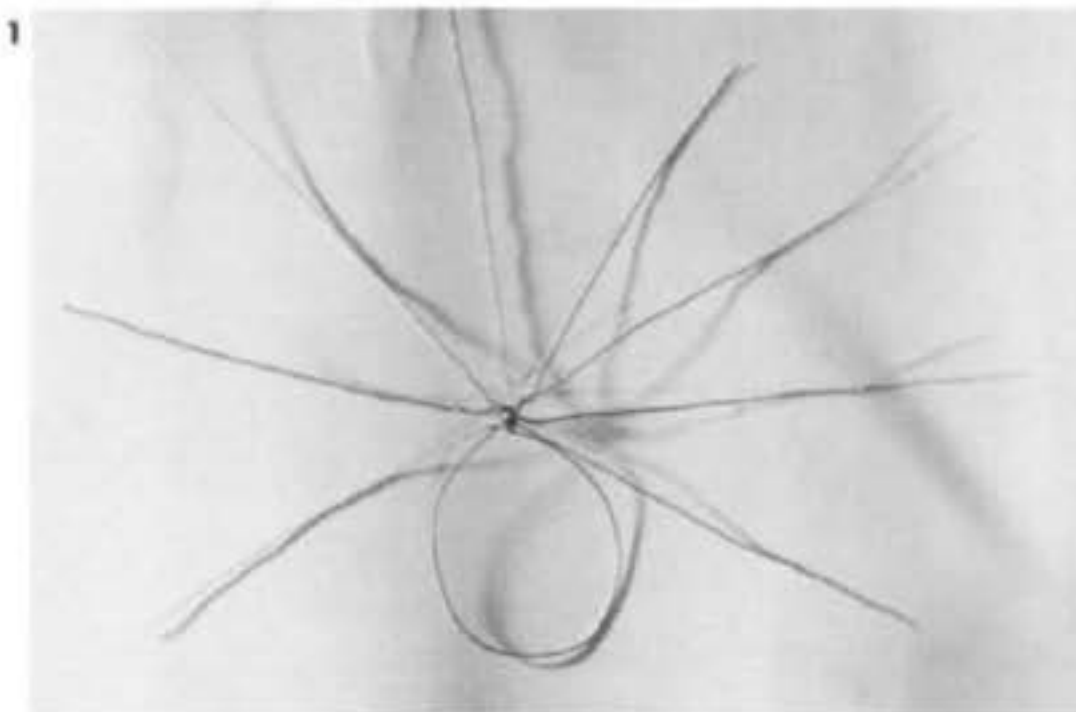
spider's eyes are small imitation pearls painted with red plastic model paint (drug or hobby stores). Cotton and tissue are also used to model the eye sockets, the eyes stuck in them while the latex is still wet. (By the way, this spider only has two eyes for simplicity's sake. Feel free to add as many sets as you want; real spiders have eight eyes.)

The spider's two "fangs" (the "mandibles" or jaws of the creature) are shaped of aluminum foil, taped onto the spider's head, and given a few coats of latex. Once this modeling is completed (photo 4), the spider is ready for a color coat.

The polymer or acrylic paint must be mixed with liquid latex before it is painted on. In photo 5 the spider is shown hanging on a wooden shelf, two of its legs stuck under some heavy books. This is done, of course, to make it possible to paint a large portion of the model at one time.

Once the black color coat is completely applied and dry (photo 6), the spider is ready for the addition of hair (which isn't absolutely necessary, but tends to make the spider look "fuller" and more "grisly real"). The hair used for this spider is theatrical crepe hair, in black, which is purchased braided and by the
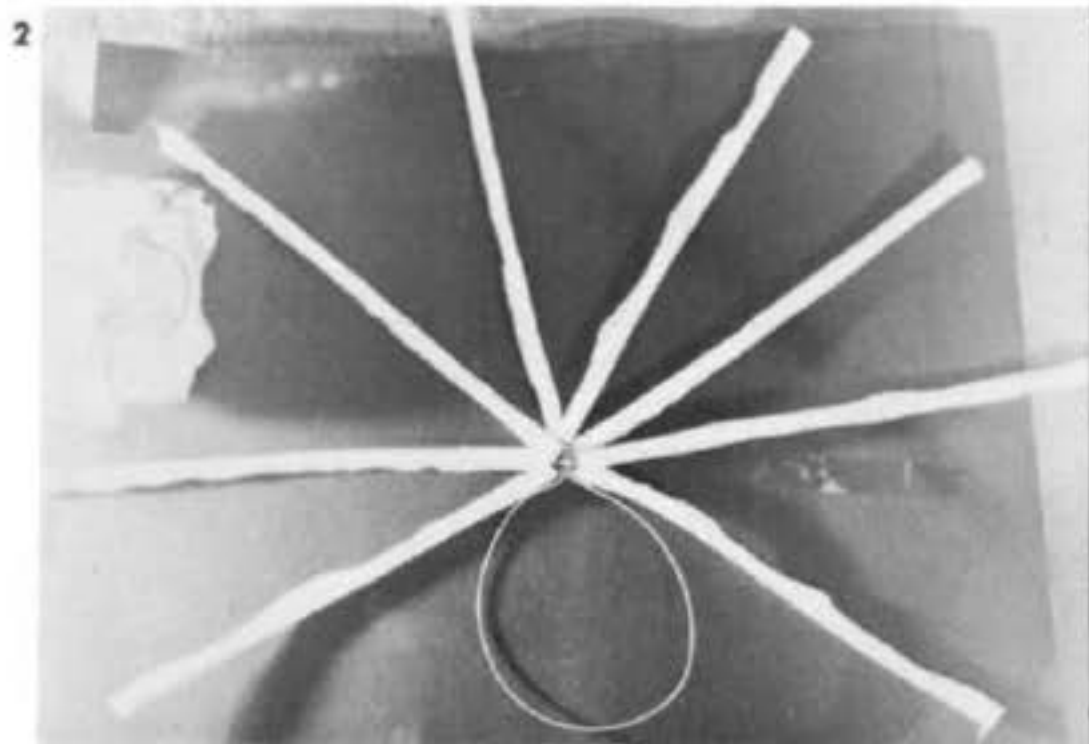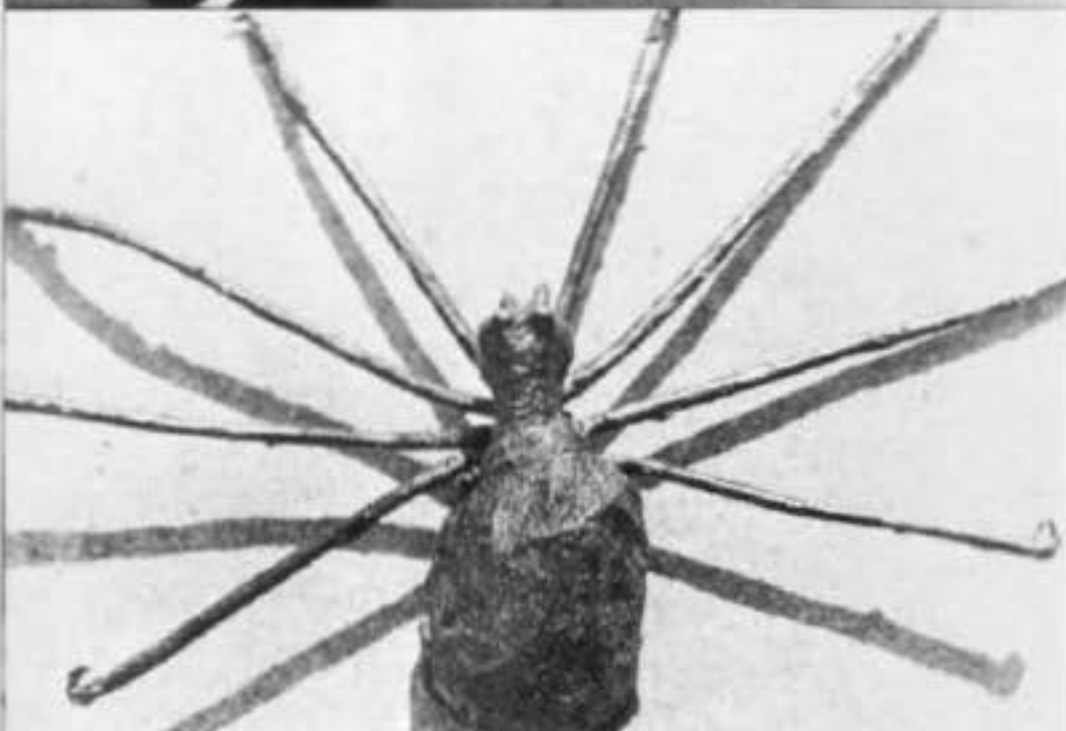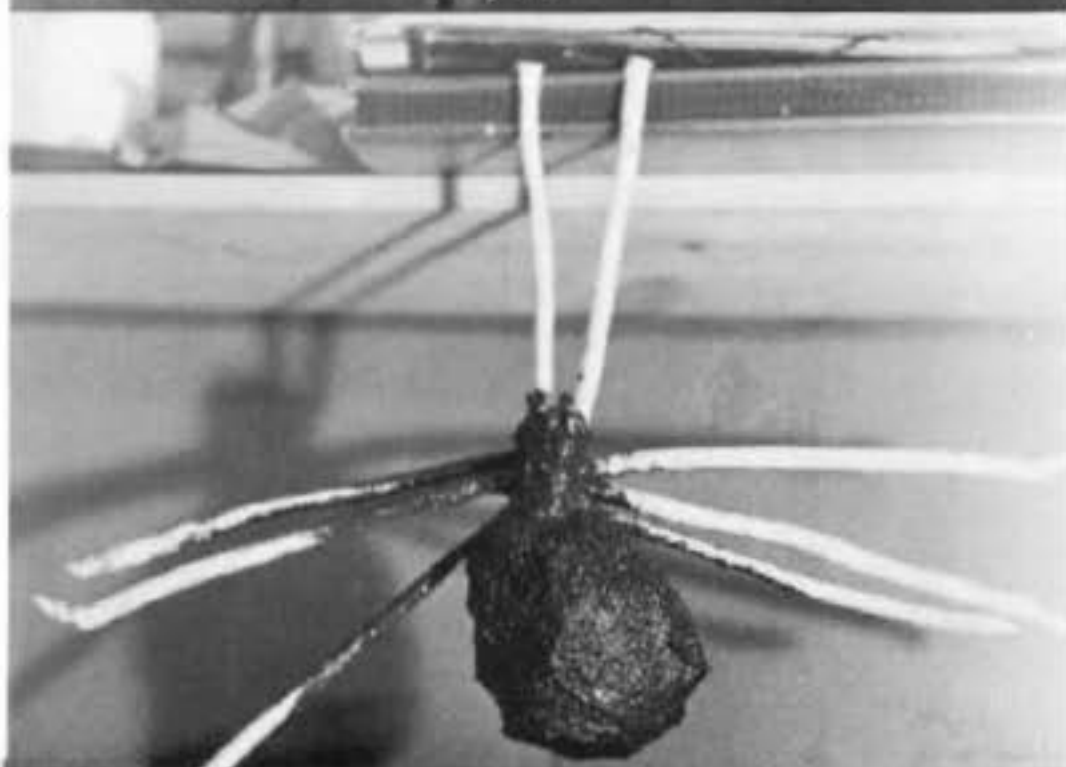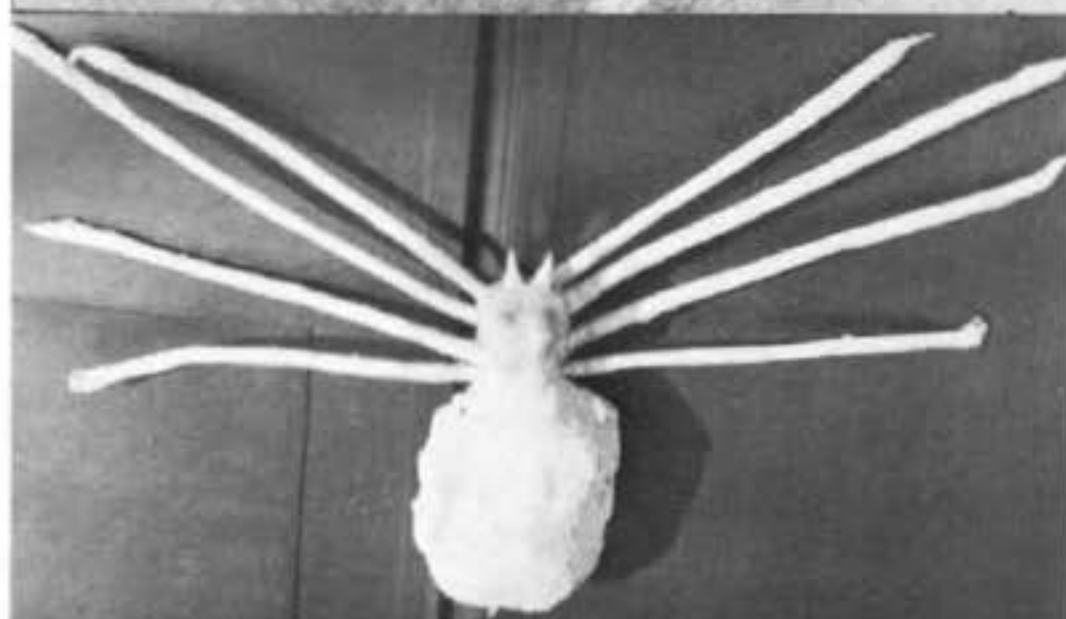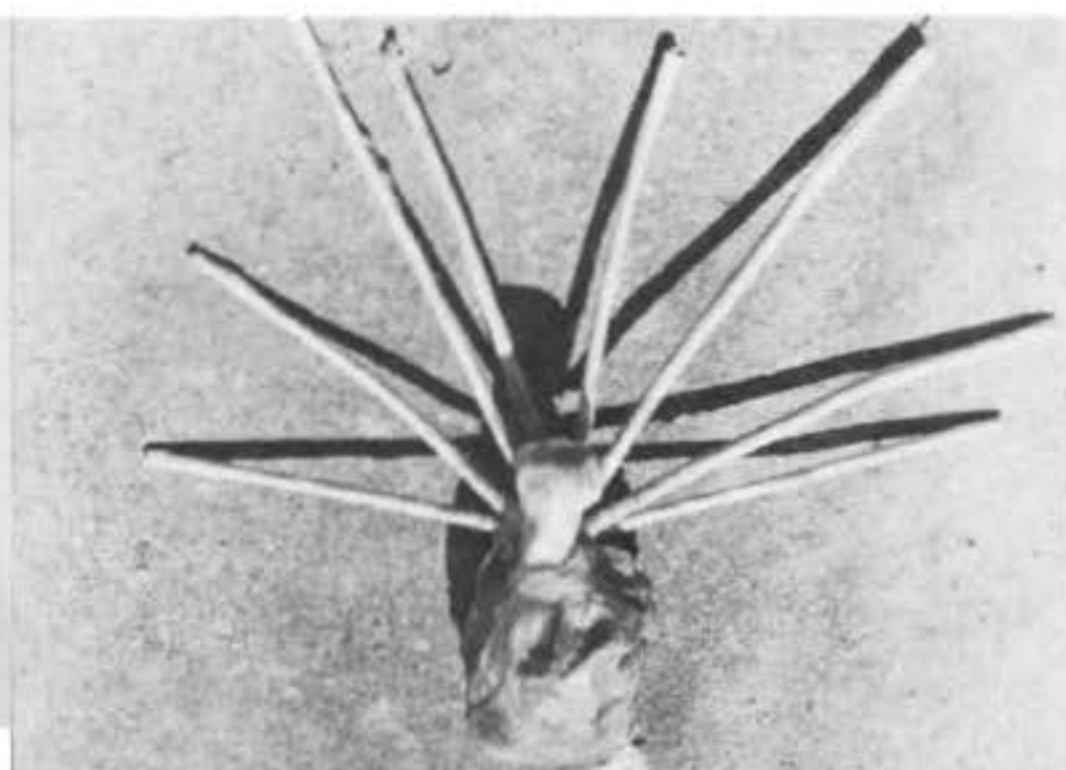
yard. Before use, the hair must be unbraided, soaked in hot water, and fastened to two objects in such a way that it's stretched while drying out. (I usually tie one end of the wet crepe hair to the shower curtain rod in my bathroom and weight the other lower, hanging end.) Stretching the crepe makes it much longer (four to five times) and easier to comb. Liquid latex again is used to glue the hair to the spider. It must be glued from the end of the spider's legs. Take a length of crepe, comb the end of it, and cut off about two and one-half inches of it. Spread it out in your hand and dip a small stick into plain, uncolored latex and apply a small band of the latex to the spider's leg. Now stick the crepe hair into the band of wet latex, pushing the ends of the hair into it, as one would with a wig.

Spider's leg with band of wet latex.
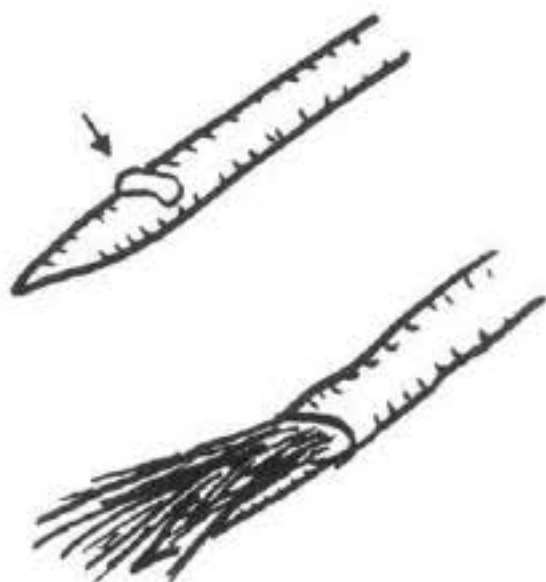
Ends of crepe hair pushed into latex.

Glue hair starting at the ends or tips of the legs, working toward the spider's body. It just doesn't work the other way!
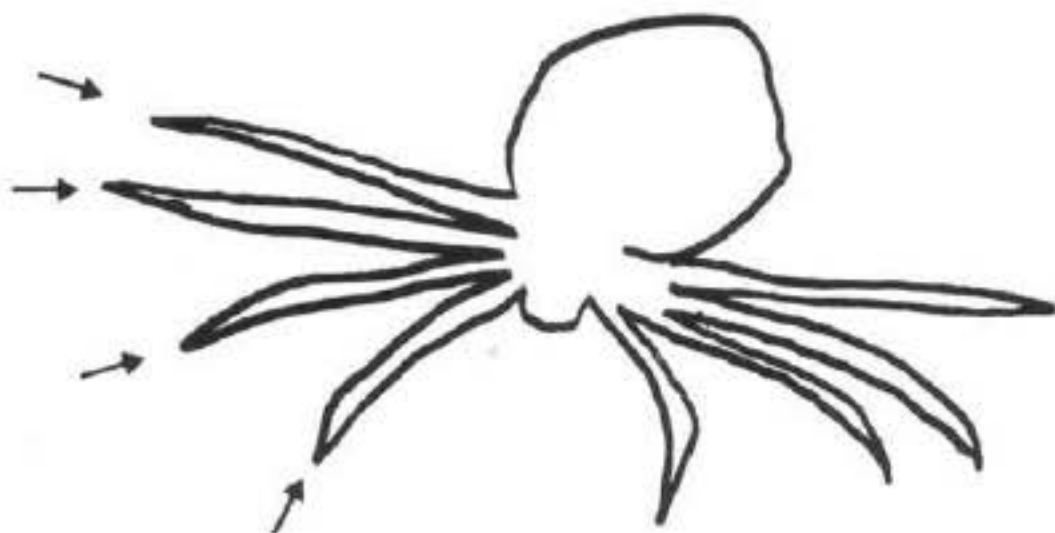
Side view of hair on leg, showing individual lengths. When hair is dry, a comb merges the separate "rows." (For this model, I glued hair only to the top of the spider's leg.)

Photo 7 shows the two legs completed and the hair gluing started on another. Photo 8 shows the completed model, ready to pose, and in photo 9, ready to animate.

7
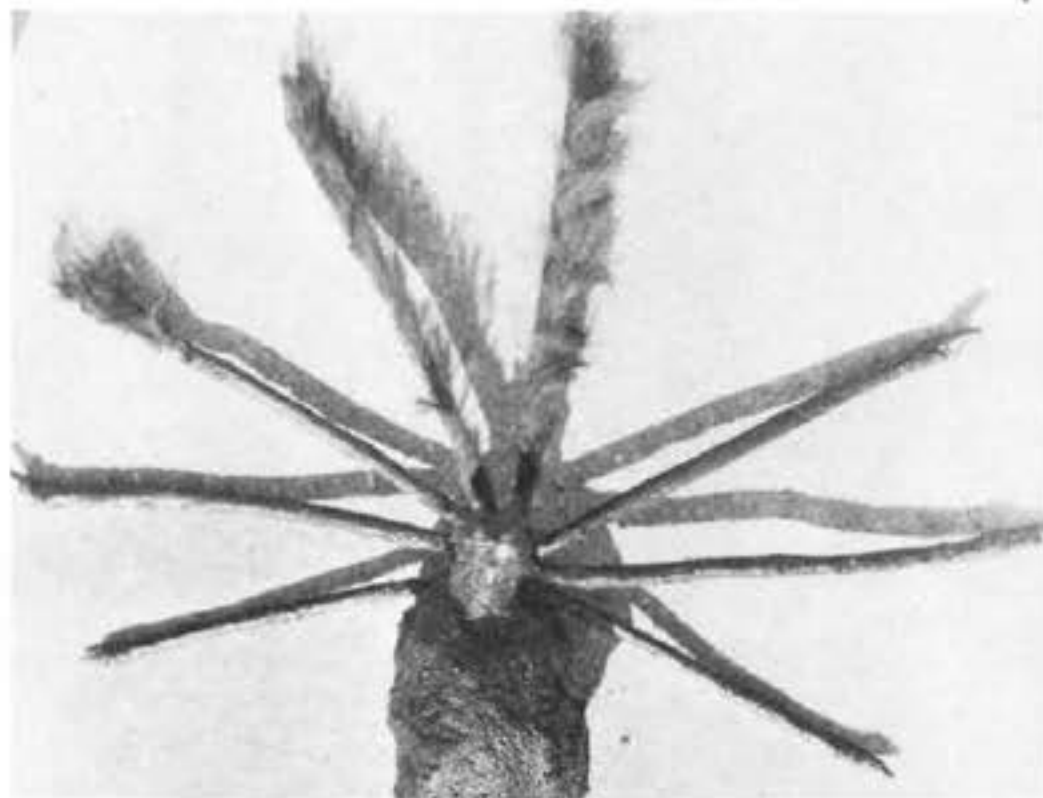
8
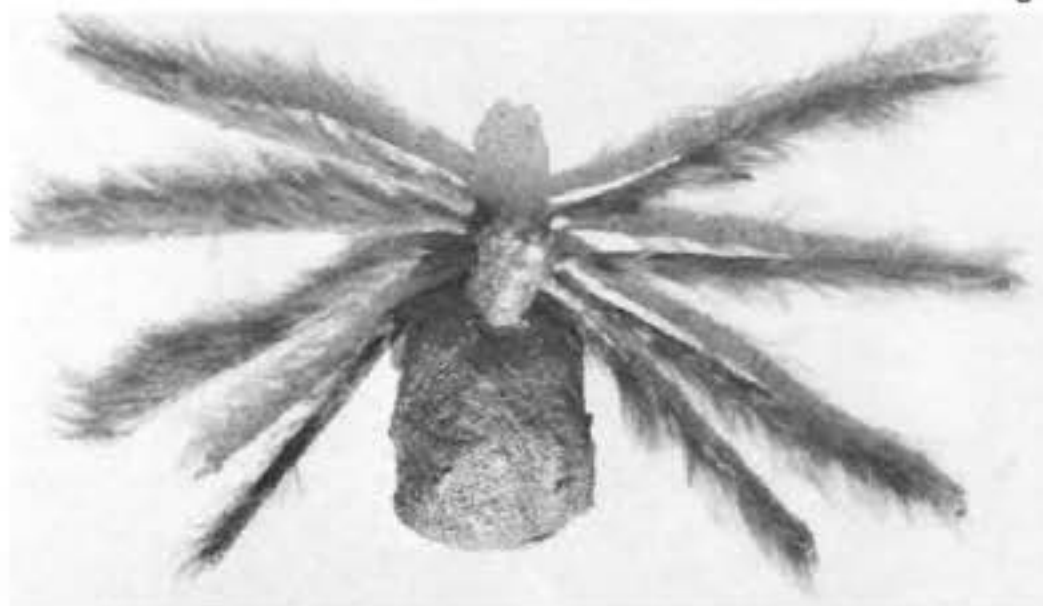
9

IN THE NEXT ISSUE: A new animation model, using this same process but on a more elaborate scale. Slated: a medieval-type dragon.

BILL GEORGE

AND "THE LATE SHOW"

Bill George is a Baltimore filmmaker currently attending the University of Maryland, Baltimore Campus, where he is seeking a film degree. Twenty-one-year-old George has been a fantasy film enthusiast since age ten, when he first obtained some home version prints of various horror/fantasy movies. His interest in the fantasy film genre has grown considerably since then: he founded a horror-film-oriented fanzine, BLACK ORACLE, in 1969 (now published by a friend, George Stover), and remains as the fanzine's chief film critic.

Subsequently, Bill began involved correspondence with such film pros as Robert Bloch, Alan Ormsby (producer of CHILDREN SHOULDN'T PLAY WITH DEAD THINGS), Jack H. Harris (DINOSAURUS; BEWARE OF THE BLOB), and Debbie Reynolds, among a long list of others.

Bill's film company is comprised of several local fantasy buffs: Ed Litzinger, a masterful make-up artist; Phil Guntner, a memorabilia collector and key assistant in production; and George Stover who, aside from cranking out BLACK ORACLE, is a professional actor appearing regularly in many Baltimore stage plays.

"The Late Show," according to Bill George, "is to be a trilogy of horror epics, part one of which is completed, part two of which found its way to the trash basket, and part three of which is being shot on video tape, with a later conversion to 16mm film intended."

Obviously, I'll concern myself here with part one, which I've viewed, and enjoyed, a couple of times. Actually, if Bill and friends never complete the epilogue, part one can easily stand alone, with some minor editing. It presents a complete story in itself, and could conceivably suffer if tied in with subsequent footage.

Anyway, The Late Show - Part I opens with a contrasty scene of a derelict hippie preparing a fix over his bathroom sink. He is clumsy, though, and drops his stuff in the sink bowl. Much to the hippie's chagrin, his attempts to scrape the dope from the sink are fruitless, and he makes a quick telephone call to his local, neighborhood pusher. In this scene Bill uses an odd prop -- a simulated dialing disc from the phone -- through which the camera looks up at the hippie. Alfred Hitchcock wouldn't approve of such methods, but it works in this particular instance, lending an air of surrealism to the all-too-dreadfully-real subject of a desperate drug addict pleading to his merciless supplier.

On the phone, the pusher informs the hippie that he'll supply him with a quick fix for five bucks. After hanging up, the hippie realizes that he doesn't have a cent. At this point there's a bit of contrivance, but after all, what good horror flick isn't helped along by "as fate would have it" coincidence? In this case the coincidence is an overgorged vacuum cleaner salesman, who bursts into the hippie's house with an undeniable "HI-I THERE..." It takes little time for the bumptious solicitor to throw the proverbial dirt on the floor, sweep it up in a flash with his amazing "fat little monster" vacuum cleaner, and chortle something about how, for a few minutes of his time, the hippie can earn an easy five dollars. But before the salesman can open his bag of accessories, the hippie is suddenly gone.

Apparently not one to give up, the salesman pursues the hippie through the house, ultimately ending up in the basement. It's here that we see our first glimpses of special effects. The salesman gets to the bottom of the basement steps and stops to look around, when we see a long-handled ax chopping down. The blade lands in the middle of the salesman's hand, which is holding the stair rail. Make-up artist Ed Litzinger has done a remarkably fine job of substituting a putty hand for the actor's. The ax blade nestled firmly into the hand is a convincing (though gruesome) effect. The effect is enhanced as the salesman lifts his fingerless

(please turn page)

11

hand in dismay. Again, Litzinger makes us believe that this guy's fingers *have* been severed!

Subsequently, a combination of intriguing camera angles (coupled with fine low-level lighting) by George and expertly applied make-up by Litzinger provide for a graphic murder, which is anything but a euthanasia for the vacuum cleaner salesman. His head is repeatedly slashed and hacked, until he falls back against a cinder block wall and drops to the floor. As the hippie drags the mutilated body to a closet he notices that the salesman's head left a dripping blood stain on the wall. This sequence is perfectly executed, as the blood stain grows, continues to drip, giving the illusion of a "bleeding" wall. Bill explained that it was a matter of continually pouring chocolate syrup on the wall, getting out of the way, and filming the dripping.

Meanwhile, the hippie has encumbered himself with a supply of Ajax, Comet, Spic & Span and similar gritty cleansers in an attempt to remove the blood stain. The attempt is futile, though, so the hippie solves the problem by placing a mirror over the persistent drip. Satisfied that all is well, he gloats at the five dollar bill he's swiped from the salesman's corpse, and gets to the phone; however, a resounding crash in the basement startles him. Could it be the bleeding wall and the mirror? Not at all convinced of such humbuggery, the hippie returns to the scene of the crime.

Litzinger's talents shine out here, too, as the hippie arrives in the basement and watches in disbelief as the blood stain on the wall transforms into the *face on the wall!* Bill and Ed lend to each other admirably in animating the face's appearance: they literally built a face and took time lapse shots of their progress. And even more convincing is the fact that the putty face is a good caricature of the human salesman's.

The dead have been awakened in the form of this Ed Litzinger ghoul make-up.

Following true to the murder that happened minutes earlier, the face is at first unscathed, then sequential ax marks and rips appear on it, until it is a gruesomely exact counterpart of the *real* salesman's mangled face.

For a finale, Bill takes *The Late Show* into the mysticism school of thought. Once the face has materialized, it proceeds to tell the hippie about a sound that *literally* wakes the dead -- the "unfinished symphony" apparently synonymous with the many unfinished symphonies of the great composers; and allegedly the very reason that the symphonies were never completed.

The hippie inevitably seeks and discovers the "sound that wakes the dead," in the person of a ghoul who is conjured up and slashes the hippie to death with a sickle. The ghoul here is yet another Ed Litzinger make-up job, in the form of a full mask resembling the Peter Cushing ghoul in *Tales from the Crypt*.

The last scene of the film proves once again that crime doesn't pay, and that the unfinished symphony shall remain *unfinished* -- or at least undiscovered -- as a dissolve takes us back to a face on the basement wall. This time it is *not* the vacuum cleaner salesman's; it is the hippie's....

--Don Dohler

13

MAKING A LIFE MASK

by BILL SCHWARZ

I've always been interested in films -- especially fantasy ones. At the age of ten I really began to notice the technical processes that were involved in certain films. So when my father bought a movie camera, I was the first to use it. Soon I began to attempt various special effects and make-up techniques, though some didn't work, so I set out to improve them. During the next several years, through trial and error, I obtained only a minimum of success. Then in 1968 I saw PLANET OF THE APES, and wrote to John Chambers, who did the APES make-up. During a series of communications with him (and by reading), I developed a foam latex process for make-up based on Chambers' techniques. This eventually led to a series of television appearances (both acting and doing make-up) on local stations in Philadelphia, and a couple of trips to the West Coast to view some of the actual Chambers techniques first hand (during the filming of CONQUEST OF THE PLANET OF THE APES).

The following article (and subsequent ones) is based on what I have learned of this fascinating medium.

Many film buffs who have viewed the early Universal horror films such as the Frankenstein series, the Wolfman, the Mummy, etc. will probably realize that the fabulous make-up creations in these films were spear-headed by a great artist named Jack Pierce. With putty, pancake, and fuller's earth he created and brought to life creatures and man-things of horror and fantasy. But time was against him, and in 1939, a new breed of make-up materials came into play in a now classic film. That film was WIZARD OF OZ, and the material was a type of sponge rubber. The face of the Cowardly Lion, the jaw and nose of the Tin Man, the neck area of the Straw Man and the muzzles of those sinister little flying monkies, along with the nose of their leader, the Wicked Witch of the West, were all created from this material. This, of course, outmoded a lot of Pierce's more primitive, non-flexible

materials. And this brings up an interesting point. Let's suppose that Pierce had mastered the use of sponge rubber, or as we call it today, foam latex. Imagine the impact of the Frankenstein monster, for instance, if he were able to wrinkle his brow and convey a greater number of expressions. Now I'm not saying that there was anything wrong with Pierce's work, but this example serves to show how such early creations could have been further enhanced by the use of foam latex.

Speaking in terms of films today, foam latex is now an established make-up material in all major studios. There are many experts in this field working for the various studio make-up departments, and some who are independent specialists called upon to solve difficult problems.

But what of amateur filmmakers? Where do they get the materials needed to create such make-up for their films? How do they learn the techniques involved? Well, it's not as difficult as it seems. The trick is the proper choice and use of specific materials, many of which can be bought at hardware and drug stores.

Before I get into that, though, let me supply a few make-up materials definitions. During the course of my articles there will be some specific terms you should be familiar with:

SPONGE RUBBER: a soft, pliable latex material that is produced from a liquid latex which has been chemically treated, whipped to a certain volume in a beater or electric mixer, then processed at accelerated temperatures in a curing oven.

FOAM LATEX: modern name for sponge rubber, and the one I'll be using in my writing.

PROSTHETIC: an artificial part or feature; can be facial or any limb or area of the body. (In surgical terms, this can apply to a false replacement for a missing anatomical feature.)

IMPRESSION MATERIAL: any cream-like substance used to make a mold of the face or body (Moulage, Alginate, etc.)

LIFE MASK: the plaster copy of a human face or feature (or of an animal, for that matter) that is made using the impression materials.

CASTING STONE: any of a group of hard, plaster-like materials used in various steps of the mold-making process.

PLASTILINE CLAY: soft, oil-base clay used to create a feature that will be molded in plaster or casting stone.

APPLIANCE: the finished foam rubber piece that has been cured and is ready to apply to the subject.

That should take care of major definitions for now. If I use new words from time to time, an explanation of them will be included. But now, let's get to the work at hand.

IMPRESSION MATERIALS

First of all you'll have to get some impression materials. These are various powders that are mixed with water to form a creamy molding material that can be used on the face or body. You may have already had an experience or two with this substance whether you know it or not, because this is essentially what your dentist used the last time you had dental impressions made. The kind he uses is called "alginate" and goes by many brand names (Dental Perfection, Jeltrate, etc.), and is available at most dental supply houses.

Now, you must find yourself a willing subject. Let's say you're making an entire facial prosthetic for this person. You'll need a mold of his (or her) whole face. To accomplish this, have the person sit in the position in which he will finally be performing with the appliance, place a cap on his head (the bald caps sold in joke stores or five and ten-cent stores work well), then mix the alginate with water. Once you've done this you'll have to work fast, but thoroughly. (One thing that keeps the alginate from setting too fast is the addition of cold water.) Now scoop some alginate up in your left hand and begin to apply it to the face with the right hand (PHOTO 1). Work steadily and make sure every crevice of the face is covered, but avoid blockage of the nostrils. Once you've accomplished this, you'll need some plaster of Paris to put over the alginate (PHOTO 2). Since the alginate is so soft and rubbery, it will never stand up by itself, so the plaster shell (or Mother Mold, as it is sometimes called) is cast around it to form a protective outer coating to keep the inner alginate one from changing shape after removal from the face. The plaster should be mixed relatively thick to afford fast, hard setting. (This also helps in getting the person out from under his temporary prison much faster.)

When you've finished the Mother Mold, you must carefully remove the plaster and the alginate casts together from the subject's face. Now turn the whole arrangement over and you'll have a negative mold of the person's face (PHOTO 3). This will be the basis of the positive cast or mold.

POSITIVE MOLD

For this step you'll need some casting stone. This is a very hard plaster available from various dental supply companies. Mix the stone and pour it into the negative mold you made earlier with alginate and plaster. (Make sure you do this step as soon as possible after making the alginate cast, because alginate tends to shrink after a time and if you wait too long, your impression will be false.) Smooth the casting stone with your hand (PHOTO 4), and gently push it against the negative mold with your fist (PHOTO 5) to insure a good impression.

After it has set, carefully remove your cast from the alginate-Mother Mold combination. You will find that the alginate usually tears, but you can use it again, anyway. At any rate, you should now have a well-formed stone likeness of the person who posed for the mold (PHOTO 6).

Now you have a bit of insight into the creation of your first life mask. This will eventually become the working surface for an appliance and later will serve as half of the mold from which you'll be able to make numerous copies of the appliance. Practice is important with the like mask because it is probably the most difficult part of the entire process.
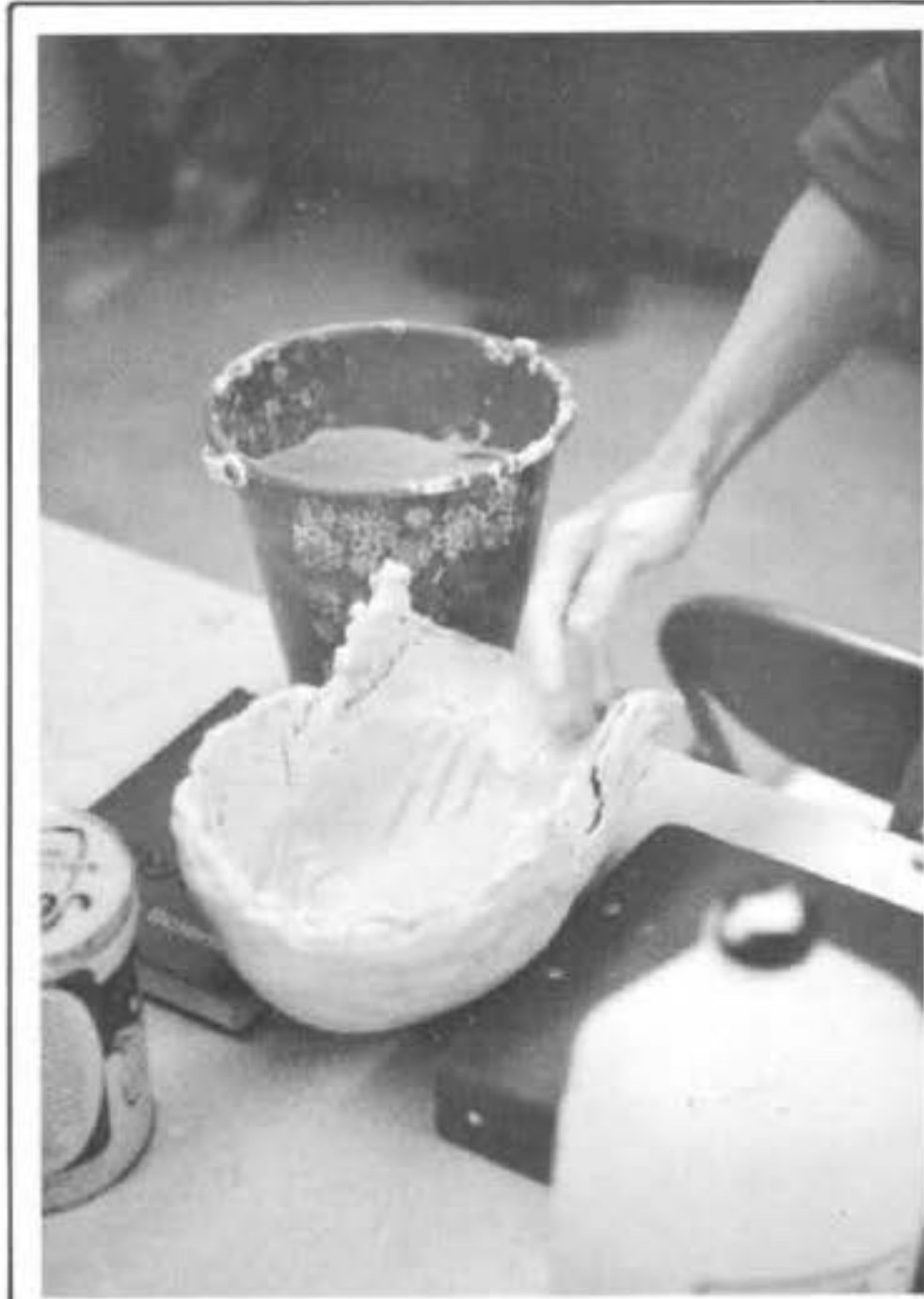
In CINEMAGIC #2 I'll show you how to take these life masks and use them as the base for a clay sculpture that will be the original model for a foam appliance. I'll also explain how the foam is produced and poured into the mold. Until then, keep at it, and good luck with your first life mask.

--BILL SCHWARZ

QUITE AN EFFECT, BUT...

Notes on Some Effects, Historical and Hysterical

by MARK ESTREN

We take so many technical advances in film for granted today that we easily forget there was a time, not too long ago, when the production of effects was impossible, incomprehensible, or -- worse still -- unintentional.

Just about a hundred years ago, when the views of the positivist philosopher Comte on The Real were in vogue, it was starkly realistic effects for which the theatre was striving. The search for realism reached heights of absurdity in the productions of David Belasco, who brought an entire boardinghouse room intact to the theatre for *The Easiest Way* and set it up on stage, and who created an exact replica of Child's restaurant for *The Governor's Lady*, and who -- shades of Smellovision! -- pumped the smell of coffee through the theatre's ventilation system to reinforce a coffee-drinking scene.

Yet theatre is not film -- though the pre-history of film shows plenty of effects that didn't quite come off. For instance, film projection goes back to the *camera obscura immobilis* (literally and accurately, a dark room that doesn't go anywhere), which was probably known to Euclid and Ptolemy and was certainly known to Roger Bacon and Leonardo da Vinci. This thing involved cutting a hole in one wall of a room, through which light would fall on the opposite surface. If the outside scene were brightly enough illuminated, an image of the scene would appear on the far wall. Problem: the image would be upside down and reversed, like a mirror-image you see when standing on your head. Quite an effect, but not exactly what anyone was looking for at the time.

Possibly the earliest ancestors of modern-day effects were the Phantasmagoria shows of the Belgian E.G. Robertson (real name: Etienne Gaspard Robert). Robertson used a magic lantern with a mobile disk in front of the lens; the whole thing was mounted on a sort of tea cart, which could be rolled forward or backward to make the images on the screen larger or smaller. Contemporary drawings show men and women alike recoiling in fear from these effects -- though the reactions were probably aided by the locale Robertson chose for his shows: an abandoned, partially ruined monastery. And mind you, this was going on in the late *eighteenth* century!

Many commonly accepted film effects originated during the nineteenth century, in crude home workshops. There was the first effect of superimposition, for instance. It came from a toy created by Dr. John Paris in 1823 and called the Thaumatrope. Different images appeared on the two sides of a cardboard disk, which could be spun by loops of string attached to it. With a bird on one side and a cage on the other, the bird would seem to be *in* the cage.

A more sophisticated version of this sort of thing was Emil Reynaud's Praxinoscope. This was a double projection system -- one for rear-projecting the backgrounds, and one for rear-projecting the images moving over the backgrounds.

Incidentally, don't be surprised at names like "Praxinoscope" if you look into the fore-runners of modern-day cinematography. That name is rather simple, actually, and was complicated further into Zoopraxiscope by a man with the suitably complicated name of Eadweard Muybridge. The Zoopraxiscope, in fact, earned Muybridge credit for the first projection of photographs that achieved the illusion of motion. It was a huge success at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, where it was installed in its own Zoopraxographical Hall.

A few other nineteenth-century contributions to the budding art of the cinema included the Zoëscope, the Zoëtrope, the Phantascope, the Phantasmascope, the Phenakistiscope, the Choreutoscope, the Stereothaumatrope, the Eidotrope, and the Phosmatrope. Then again, does any of those names sound so much stranger than the Cinematographe of the brothers Lumiere -- the first true motion picture camera and projector?

The idea behind all this hectic development was to create the illusion of motion -- the most important effect of all. The first Lumiere show, in 1895, had films of soldiers, a wall being knocked down, a baby eating (sloppily), a train pulling into a station, and workers leaving the Lumiere factory (the earliest known instance of mugging for the camera). There was also the rolling sea, which was said to make ladies squeal and snatch up their skirts as they saw the ocean's waves lap towards them. And the Lumiere brothers didn't need a decaying monastery to involve their audiences!

The point of all this is that the history of effects and the history of cinema itself are in many ways the same history. As we use our modern equipment and take for granted everything technology has given us, it is worthwhile to remember that our entire medium is based on the production of a false effect. For the motion we create when we make movies is, after all, only the succession of a series of still photographs, too fast for the eye to realize one is gone before the next appears. So no matter what sort of film we do, we are creating a special effect by the mere act of making that film. ∎

Film Profile

Redneck:

man's
search
for Evil

Rory Palmieri is an eighteen-year-old resident of Lanham, Maryland, who is currently attending Harvard University, where he plans to major in English. Rory's film, *Redneck: Man's Search for Evil*, was originally made as a required high school assignment for a Christian Ethics class. It was mandatory that all of the films for the assignment use the three words, "Man's Search for --" in their title, so, as Rory says, "...the course title was too trite, because *Redneck* turned out to be an allegory presenting·my view on the evil and violence in mankind."

He adds, "I tried to maintain an atmosphere of horror in the film, but I found my interest in violence dominated the project."

On his interest in films and filmmaking, Rory offers the following: "English has been my chief interest ever since I began studying it in elementary school. I didn't think of movies as a rival interest to English until sometime during my senior year in high school, probably not until *Redneck* was completed. Movies had been an important pastime to me since second grade, when I started going to see several films a week at the theatre on the Air Force base where I lived. In my junior year at DeMatha High School I was film critic for the school's first literary magazine (which I helped to found). Working on *Redneck* in my senior year was extremely important to me for I learned much about what goes into the making of a film. I was able to approach the movies I saw with a much sharper critical eye; I also found that I enjoyed studying films as much as I did English."

"My favorite filmmakers are Kubrick, Sam Peckinpah, Roman Polanski, and Ken Russell. I have become very interested in studies of violence in film, such as Peckinpah's *The Wild Bunch* and *Straw Dogs*, John Boorman's *Point Blank*, and, of course, Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange*."

The following is a plot synopsis of *Redneck: Man's Search for Evil*, written by Rory Palmieri.

Boredom. Frustration. An overpowering sense of fatigue. He just wanted this last half hour to pass quickly. Then he could walk the short distance from this lab and be alone with his thoughts. He hated this job at the science center. Meaningless, boring, menial labor was all it was, all he was given. He yawned again.

A tap on his shoulder brought him back to his work in the lab. "Wake up! You've still got a lot of work to do before you can leave. Put that down! Have you done... What is this? You did this all wrong. Now look, pay attention! If you don't..."

He couldn't help it if he was bored with the work he was given. After all, the work was dull. Nevertheless, he could always count on his overseer to jump on his back every damn day. Now as his boss moved away, the anger grew. Lousy sonofabitch. He knew the anger was finding a release through a violent fantasy which he knew had just registered in his brain. He felt

The protagonist (Rory Palmieri), left, is bored with the verbal attacks from his boss (Dana Twining).

---

his evil spirit, the Violent One, kicking in his brain, like a baby in a womb, struggling to be set free.

He found himself next to his boss with a knife in his hand. Grabbing the man's shoulder, he spun him around. With a firm grip, he raised the finely honed kitchen knife high in the air. With one swift, smooth motion he brought the weapon across the man's face, engraving a deep slash down the length of his victim's face and popping his eye in the process. Yet his passionate lust for violence against this man had not been satisfied. And enormous exhilaration stormed inside his whole body as he continued to hack away at the bloodied flesh. Now he found his overseer, his boss, his tormentor on his knees begging for mercy. "Begging will do you no good." A powerful lunge of the knife straight from the shoulder drove through the man's cheek and sent him down on his back. He was helpless under the rain of blows coming from his assailant's knife. The frustrated labworker was now joyful as he bent over the mutilated man and drew out the life of the man, his blood, with the brutal weapon. The room began to turn and spin as in a dream. Slash...stroke...cut... blood...blood....a ripper...a modern vampire.... stab...stab...

It was a dream, a shameful dream; something dirty.

"Why do I think such evil thoughts?" he asked himself. "Why?"

He tried to rub out the foul thought from his mind -- all the foul thoughts that had been coming to him for the past several years, but this was impossible. These thoughts were too deeply engrained in his mind; they went back too far to be erased now.

The overseer had been concerned about this man for quite a while now: lately, this lab assistant didn't seem to be able to concentrate on his work; he always seemed to be adrift in

space. Now look at him, he thought. Maybe he should see a psychiatrist.

Thus ends the first scene of the film. If this episode is understood, the rest of *Redneck* is quite easy to follow. The protagonist is introduced as a man who is bored with and frustrated in his job. When he is upset, he releases his emotions through vicarious violence. The audience must understand that the violent sequence is only occurring in the mind of the protagonist; this fact is clearly realized when the boss's reaction is seen at the end of this episode. The protagonist will undergo a rebirth later in the film: he will be born into a life of actual rather than vicarious violence; in this first scene the audience sees the beginnings of labor pains in the man's mind, though they may not realize this particular aspect of the film this early. If the audience understands these concepts, the film is easy to follow from here.

The next scene, in which the protagonist is hassled by a street gang, does not necessarily occur on the same day that the first scene does. The idea is that the first two episodes, the protagonist's reactions to the berating from his boss and the hassling by the street gang, are two events drawn at random from this man's life which are connected only by the fact that they illustrate his inner violence.

Following the vicarious massacre of the street gang, the protagonist is seen in a psychiatrist's office relating to the doctor this particular fantasy and then begging for help to end these shameful thoughts. The doctor tries to reassure him that everything will be all right. As the protagonist leaves the office, the doctor is seen with an evil grin on his face muttering, "Soon..."

The protagonist is next seen at home engrossed in Bram Stoker's Dracula. Around him are seen other books on the supernatural and macabre, as well as books about violence and sadism. His wife is irritated because he's so engrossed in reading about vampires and doesn't pay any attention to her. Excitedly, he tries to explain to her about vampires, showing her how one can defend oneself against vampires and also how a vampire can be destroyed. None of his enthusiasm rubs off on her; she only turns around and walks away from him, claiming that the whole business is rubbish. This enrages him, for vampirism is very real to him. He rushes after her, trying to make her believe in the supernatural world, but she only turns back again. He has been frustrated again, and by his own wife, no less. He cannot contain his anger and once again he gives vent to violence -- only this time it is not vicarious. By grabbing his wife and throwing her to the floor, he commits his first act of real violence. Regretting this action and seeing the implications of it, he rushes back to his psychiatrist. His wife sees how upset he is and rushes after him to console him.

Arriving at the psychiatrist's office, the protagonist is soon put into a trance by his doctor. The doctor, now seen to be a vampire (a messenger of the devil), bares his fangs and bites the man's neck and sucks out some of his blood. The protagonist has now found a release from the boredom and frustration in his life by dying from his civilized state in which violence is only expressed mentally, and by being born into a primitive state in which violence is expressed physically. For the first time in the film, there is a look of joy on his face. At this moment the wife runs into the room and sees blood on the psychiatrist's mouth; she screams and runs back home. The protagonist is sent out with the blessing of the devil to find happiness in violence. He encounters the gang which had hassled him earlier, and this time really massacres them. Only the gang leader survives; he stares around in disbelief at his murdered companions and resolves to revenge the death of his gang. He picks up the nearest weapon, a long stick with jagged ends, and sets out after the protagonist.

Meanwhile, the wife is attacked by the psychiatrist-vampire, who has followed her home. Terrified beyond any ability to think clearly, she grabs the anti-vampire equipment her husband has left on the table and in a brutal act of violence brought on by her unhappiness at her husband's condition, which is at the back of her mind, and the overwhelming fear of her assailant, she destroys the ages-old vampire who disintegrates into nothingness. As she looks in disgust and horror at what she's done, her husband walks in. She goes into his arms. While he's sucking her blood, the gang leader comes down the stairs behind him. The protagonist bares his fangs in challenge. With all his strength the gang leader shoves the wooden spear through the protagonist's heart and out his back. Standing over the dying vampire, the gang leader feels a sharp pain in his neck; he has been bitten by the wife, who had been transformed into a vampire only a few minutes before by her husband.

This expresses my belief that evil and violence will continue to exist because they are like a contagious disease which will spread from one human being to another. For each evil that is destroyed, another is created.

CAST

Protagonist.........................Rory Palmieri
Lab Overseer........................Dana Twining
Gang Leader.........................F.P. Woodbridge
Psychiatrist........................Bruce van Stratum
Wife................................May Finerman

Written by Rory Palmieri; produced by Rory Palmieri and John Oliver; filmed by Rocco Mennella.

THE EVIL SPREADS from the psychiatrist-vampire (top), to the protagonist, who is finally killed (center); but not before he inflicts his wife (bottom).
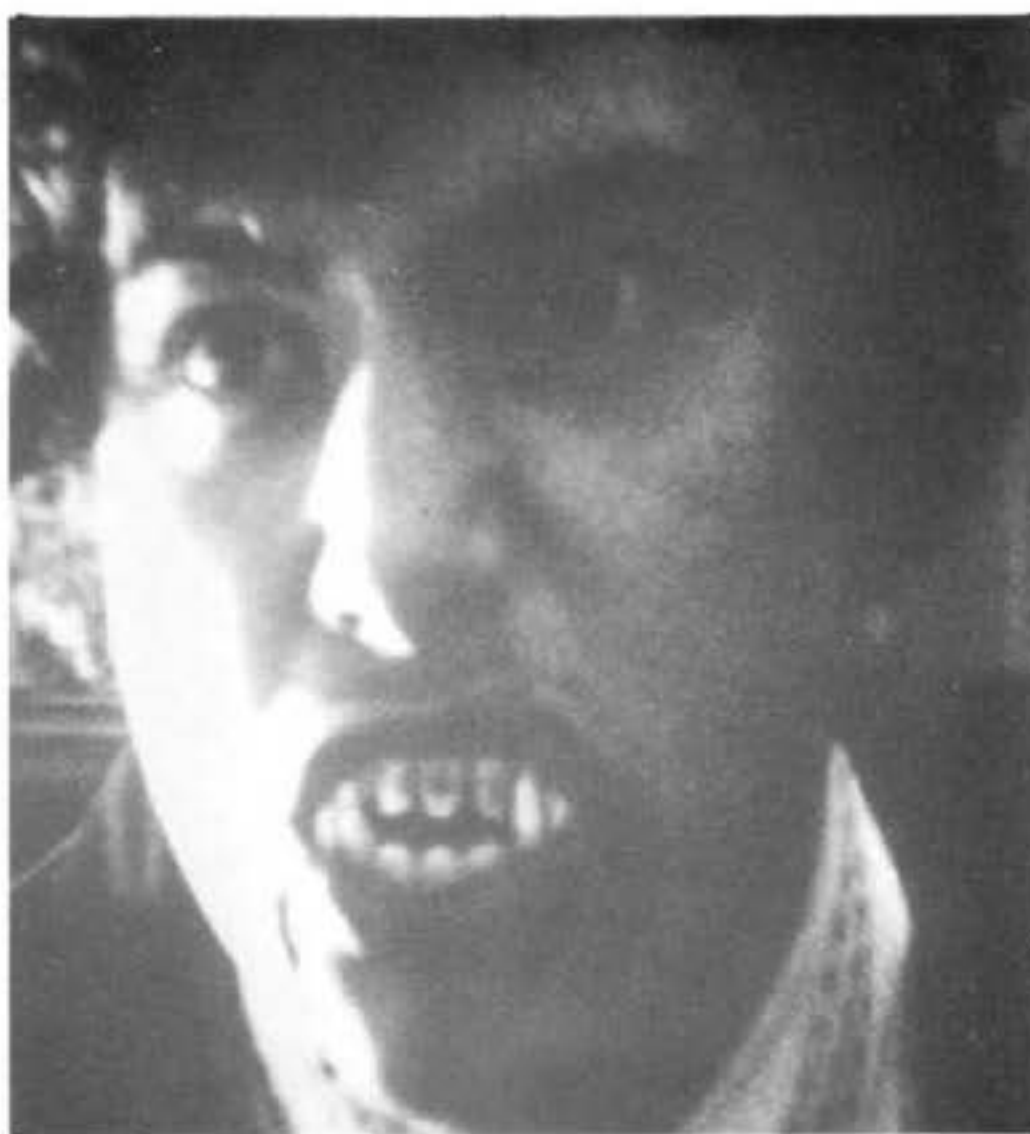
MINIATURE SETS:

CREATING YOUR OWN
MOON SURFACE

By DON DOHLER

The moon: a celestial body of jagged mountain peaks and mile-long craters, and located approximately two hundred and fifty thousand miles from the earth. A pretty desolate proposition, at best, but inspiration enough for many a science fiction film.

Obviously, you can't shoot a movie on the surface of the moon, unless you happen to be an astronaut scheduled for the next Apollo blast-off. But you can do the next best thing -- create your own moon surface.

If it sounds complicated or technically-oriented, it's not; and in fact, is really quite easy. Your moon surface will be a mere miniature model, but it can look as good as the real thing.

The moon-model materials are all simple items, easily obtained. In some cases (use your imagination), you can substitute material. A list of the basic needs:

A sheet of plywood or similar material (can be hardboard, fiberboard, etc.).

[The size of the sheet depends on how large you want your lunar surface to be. I've used a two-by-three-foot piece of plywood, though I'd recommend a larger size (at least four-by-six).]

Plaster of Paris (five pounds).

Some soda bottles *(here's a chance to make good use of throw-aways).*

Flour and water.

Old newspapers, cut up in two-by-eight-inch strips.

A few assorted sizes of rubber balls.

Some cardboard cores from rolls of paper towels or wrapping paper.

Two medium-size plastic bowls.

Spray acrylic paint (flat white).

After you've gathered your materials, find a good place to work. Forewarned: this can get quite messy, so if you have a basement workbench or table, use it. If you're forced to use a kitchen or dining room table, be sure to spread plenty of newspapers on and around it. Take special care in protecting any carpeted areas; you'll be working with plaster of Paris which, if spilled, can be very difficult to remove from carpets or rugs.

For the sake of instruction, I've kept this surface very small and simple, with slightly exaggerated mountains. Once you've gotten into the shaping process, you'll find that you can develop size, shape and proportions of the craters and mountains as you see fit.

THE MOON SURFACE MATERIALS

STEP 1:
After placing your plywood (or similar material) on your work area, use a sharp knife or blade to cut the rubber balls in half. Line your materials up, making sure that you have everything you'll need.

STEP 2:
Make a mental picture of mountain and crater location. In doing this, consider things like camera accessibility, lighting, etc. Here, I've placed my mountain frames (soda bottles & towel cores) toward the back, my ball halves (craters) nearer the front.

(Note that I've put a strip of board behind my surface here. This will be draped with black fabric later, to serve as a backdrop.)

STEP 3:
Mix the flour and water to what seems like a runny consistency -- this, of course, will be used to make papier-mache, which will form the basic structure and shape of your mountains and craters. Now, take one of the cut-up newspaper strips, run it through the flour/water mix until soaked, and apply it to a bottle or towel core, starting at the bottom. Continue this process, working in a circular fashion, until you've worked your way up each bottle/core. There's no set rule for this -- just keep adding the paper strips until the mountains start getting some bulk.

STEP 4:
Papier-mache mountains basically complete, you can start on the craters. Place one end of a paper strip in the center of a ball half and overlap the other half out to your plywood. This forms the slope of the crater. Do this until all the ball halves are pretty well covered.

STEP 5:
After the craters are done keep working with the papier-mache strips until you've achieved a desired overall look to the whole surface. Be sure to make the mountains and craters look "solid." Cover them well and avoid any ragged paper edges that may show by overlapping each strip.

STEP 6:
With the papier-mache completed (starting to shape up already, isn't it?), your surface is probably pretty soggy, so allow it to dry a bit before preparing the plaster of Paris. I've mixed my plaster in a relatively small plastic container. It's best not to mix large amounts of plaster at one time, since it usually dries (hardens) quickly. Mix it to a medium thick consistency (like a milkshake) -- be sure it's smooth and free of air bubbles.

STEP 7:

Work fast! Pour the plaster all over the sur-
face: between the mountains, and in and around
the sides of the craters. Continue this until
the bulk of your surface is covered with plast-
er. Since you're working with a small contain-
er, you'll have to mix several batches in order
to cover everything properly.

STEP 8:

You'll notice that the surface looks too smooth
after the initial plaster coat. You remedy this
by mixing a fairly thick batch of plaster to a
point where it's almost (but not quite) dry.
Grab a handful of plaster and flop it onto the
surface, then pull your fingers up quickly.
This will give the rough textured look of the
moon. Again, there's no set way of doing this,
but once you start, you'll be able to judge
when everything looks jagged enough. (By the
way, don't forget to smear some plaster up and
down the sides of the mountains. You don't have
to cover them completely; just add enough plast-
er to "rough 'em up.")

STEP 9:

Blend the papier-mache exposed areas of the sur-
face by spraying with flat white paint. It's
best to do this a day later, though, since
everything will be extremely wet and damp after
you've completed the first eight steps. At this
point you can leave your surface as is, or you
may prefer to experiment with other colors
(light greys or blues). But remember: too
many cooks spoil the broth, or in this case, too
many colors spoil the moon.

*Now that your moon surface is complete, your
next ambition will be to photograph it. When
making films of the moon, keep in mind that the
real moon gets lighting from one side only.
Though this is not practical for movies, you can
achieve the same effect. Place a key light at
one side of your surface, so that it casts dark
shadows from the mountains and jagged rock
peaks. Then use a fill light from the point of
camera position. This light should not over-
whelm the shadows cast by the other light, but
should serve to decrease extreme contrast. Of
course, you might try several lighting set-ups
to get the best effect and exposure values.*

MOON SURFACE GALLERY: Take a photograph of your
moon surface and send it to CINEMAGIC. We'll
publish a gallery of the best of these in a fut-
ure issue. Photos will become the property of
CINEMAGIC, and cannot be returned. And be
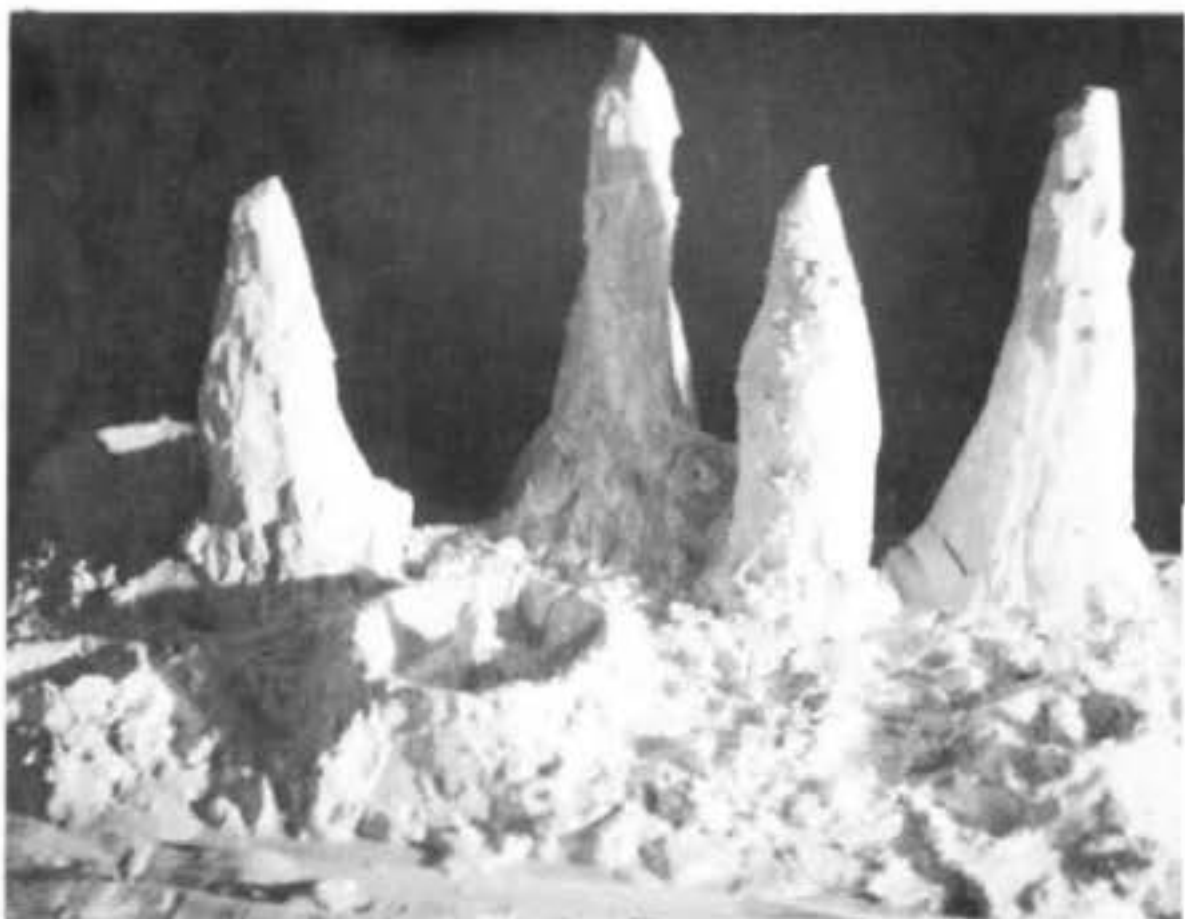sure to include your name for use in the gallery
feature.

*A final suggestion: as I've done here, get
a sheet of black matte material to use as a
backdrop when filming your moon surface. In a
pinch, a sheet of leftover paneling sprayed flat
black might do the trick.*

THE LOGOS MACHINE

NOTE: The Logos Machine *is a fanciful science-fantasy yarn which won the first-place award this past year at the annual Film Competition of the Washington (D.C.) Society of Cinematographers. Herewith the inside story on the making of the film.*

By BRITT McDONOUGH

During the summer of 1971 I made a science fiction film entitled *The Logos Machine.* The film's plot was typical of feature films of the Fifties in the genre, such as *The Day the Earth Stood Still* and *Forbidden Planet,* though not as ambitious as either of these. The real fun of the film was in the making and planning of it; that is, of solving challenging problems in terms of special visual effects techniques. The film script, which turned out to be a catalog of effects, took two months to write and revise into a final form. During this time, miniature sets and props were under construction as needed. The actual shooting of the film took two and one-half weeks. *Logos* was shot in Single-8 black and white, Fujipan R50 stock. The Single-8 system was absolutely necessary for the film, since a third of *Logos* is composed of shots which required double and triple exposures. Controlled double exposures for more than ninety frames *is* possible in Single-8 (*not* in conventional Super 8).

Before discussing the film's visual effects in detail, here's a brief synopsis of its plot:

A saucership glides through space and soars past the camera, followed by the film's title *The Logos Machine.* The camera slowly zooms in on the saucer's cabin and dissolves to an interior shot of the spaceship to reveal it under the control of a robot navigator. The ship's human occupant is seen lying in a glass chamber; he is in suspended animation until the ship lands.

Under the guidance of its robot pilot, the saucer approaches a desolate planet and lands. Out of the ship emerges a lone scientist-astro-naut who begins exploring the alien world. As he presses onward he sees distant towering cities in ruins, and gracefully designed airships wrecked and rotting. Moving on, he finds a laser pistol, and tests it by blasting a nearby wooded area to cinders. Satisfied that the weapon works, he keeps it for scientific study.

Back at the ship that night, the scientist speculates that all life forms on the planet were annihilated in a great biological war. As he ponders the events of the day, his thoughts are telepathically recorded on a data screen known as The Logos Machine. The planet's existing civilization having long since been destroyed, its self-operating, autonomous war machines have continued the struggle.

The next day the space explorer is aroused by a warning siren. An alien airship flies over his saucer and fires on it. Automatically the saucer's force field protects it from the blast. Suddenly and without warning, the alien craft falters in flight and crashes. Trailing the disabled craft, the astronaut enters the grounded ship and discovers the remains of a huge biology laboratory. He relays this information to his robot comrade back at the ship, then proceeds to explore the alien lab further. His first discovery is a microscope, which he peers into.

Unseen by the scientist, who is engrossed in looking at a slide, an alien creature appears behind him. It is horrifying: three-legged, bug-eyed, with bulbous brain, and carrying a disintegration rod. The creature slowly creeps up on the innocuous scientist and grabs his shoulder! Startled, the scientist knocks over

a vial containing some strange, organic fluid, which breaks open on the laboratory floor. The scientist flees from the spaceship, but the alien follows, firing its disintegration rod at the terrified astronaut. After several near-misses, the scientist runs for cover, pulls out the laser he found earlier, and fires at the alien -- disintegrating the creature!

Pausing after this to catch his breath, the scientist signals his ship. While signaling (via a wrist-worn transceiver), he notices a splotch of growth on his palm. His hand is becoming light and lifeless, his energy fading. Recalling the broken test tube in the alien lab, he realizes that he has become infected with the same germ that made life on the planet extinct. Soon he is totally paralyzed and falls to the ground. A shot of his inanimate body dissolves into a final scene of his robot co-pilot carrying the scientist's corpse back into the saucership.

FADE-OUT

I'll now discuss the production of the film, considering it from three basic standpoints: prop/miniature set construction, optical effects, and animation techniques.

PROPS/MINIATURE SETS

One fascinating thing about the making of *Logos* was that it necessitated the creation of a variety of unusual props: ray guns, miniature spaceships, and so on. Most of these props were constructed out of assembled odds and ends, which I keep a large collection of just for this purpose. With every film I make, my collection of props grows; and I'm always on the lookout for interesting pieces of junk, plastic bits and such, that look as if they might have potential as props for a film. One of the best examples of the use of miscellaneous debris was the construction of the miniature set representing the interior of the scientist's saucership. In this miniature set a sharp-eyed viewer can spot rug insulation material (the floor of the ship), hair curlers painted silver, defunct projection lamps, 8mm fifty-foot reels neatly stacked and generating a piece of equipment, inverted plastic cups, and so on. There's even an old Kodak Brownie flash attachment, which has become the shining silver base of a navigation device.

One scene in the film called for a long shot of a wrecked, futuristic city. Specifically:

LONG SHOT: Camera pans across a barren, desolate landscape. PAN STOPS on a wrecked, domed city in ruins.

Below: Some of the many props used in Logos.
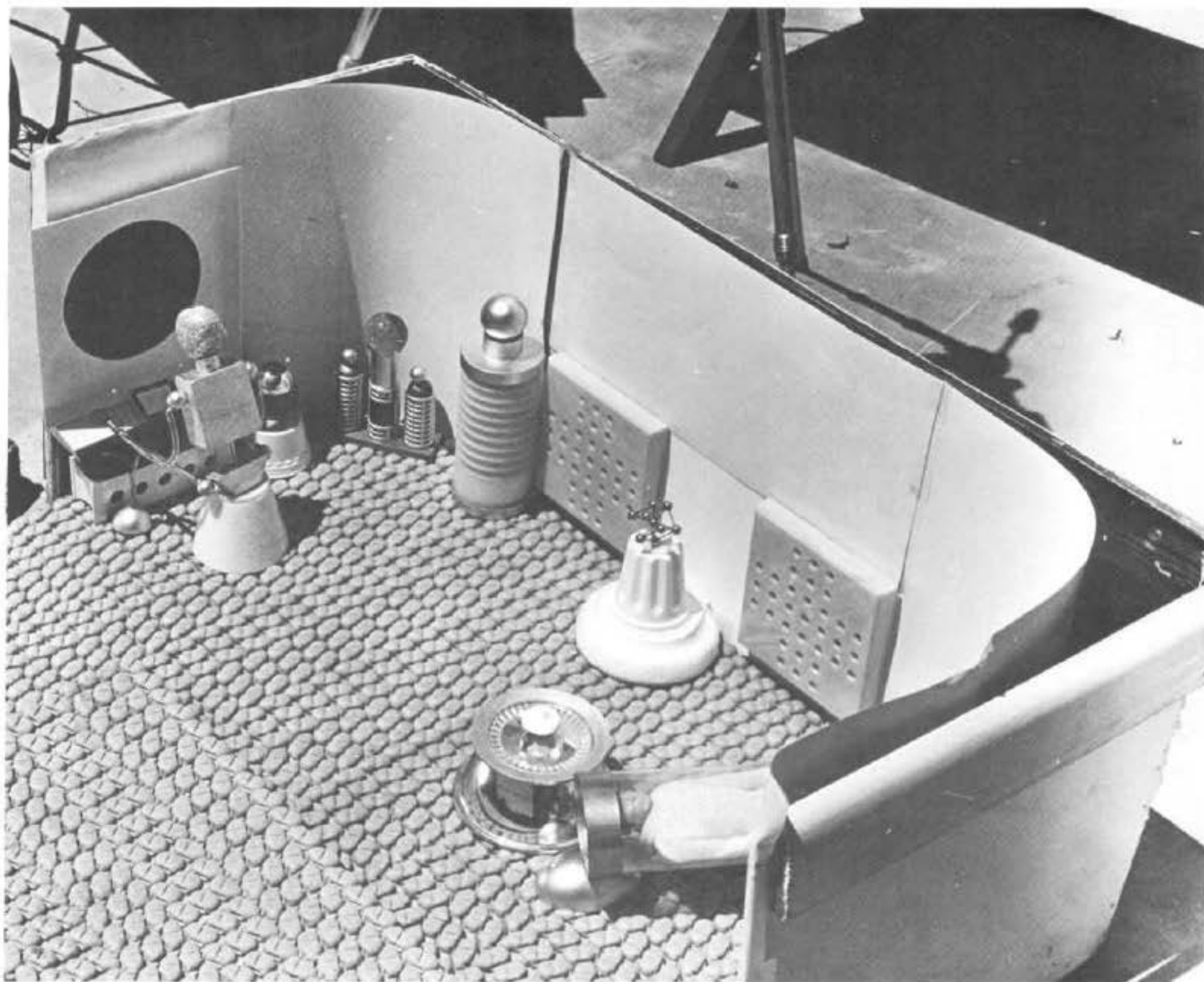
TWO VIEWS: Above, the miniature saucercraft interior set, as seen in reality on my back yard patio. The walls are made of heavy artboard, which has been curved and taped to give a "modular" look. The photo at right shows the same set, different angle, as it appeared in the film. In this shot you can easily detect many of the odds and ends that make up the scientific-looking gadgetry: hair curlers (painted silver), an old projection lamp, a small rubber ball, inverted plastic cups, and, of course, carpet padding for the floor of the craft.
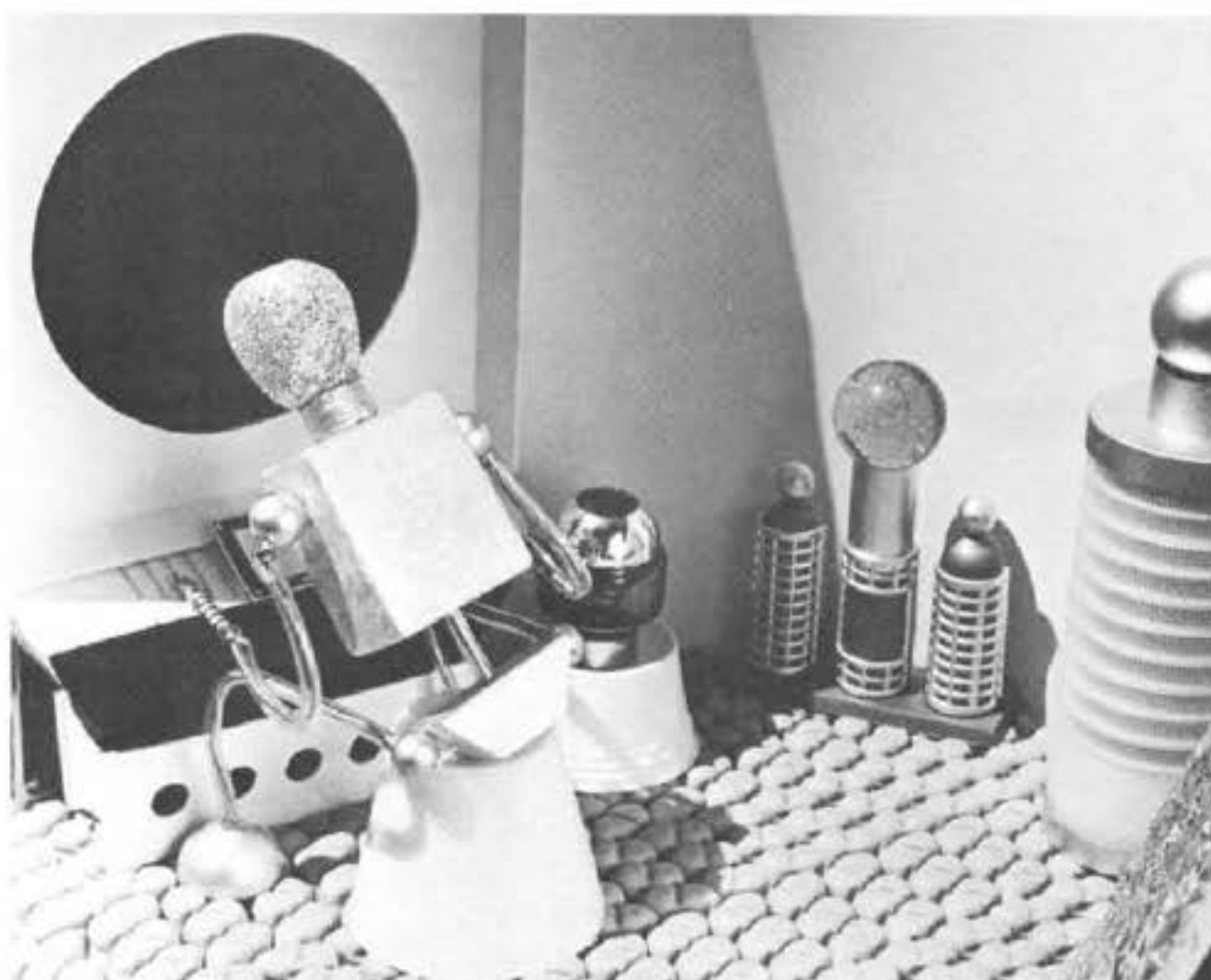
This shot was a combination of photo cutouts (of desolate terrain, mountains, and such) combined with a very small miniature "wrecked city." The buildings were put together out of balsa wood, glass headed pins, plastic film spools, ping pong balls, etc., and the whole shabang was painted white with acrylic paint. Then black paint was put on a piece of cotton and rubbed on the buildings to simulate soot. Next the buildings were bent up a bit, to make the whole thing look "devastated."

The miniature interior set of the alien spaceship laboratory was constructed much the same way as the saucercraft interior was, except that the walls of the saucercraft were white. The interior of the alien ship was made black, for both aesthetic and practical reasons. A black background during the alien ship interior sequences was the universal equalizer between live actor (against a large black backdrop) and animated model (against a small black surround). Using dead black for the inside of the alien ship eliminated the possible task of having to build a full-scale interior. It also made it easy to double-exposure a predominantly white-clad scientist into a miniature set about, at most, ten inches high.

The flying saucer model used for the film was made from a styrofoam top of one of those cheap ice buckets. A rubber ball cut in half and centered on the lid became the ship's cabin, and acrylic putty and white paint blended the two materials pleasingly together.

Every scene in *Logos* was shot using as much light as possible for each set-up, be it miniature set, live action sequences or whatever. The camera was always adjusted to be in as wide-angle a lens setting as possible (using a zoom lens). As a result the entire film is in "deep focus," which is to say that everything, be it a few inches from the camera or far off in the background, appears very sharp. This was necessary for many of the miniature shots, to insure that the intricate details of, say, the saucer-ship's control panel, did not look fuzzy a few inches in front of the animated robot working at them.

(To Be Continued)

RIGHT (top to bottom): 1. The earthman's saucership glides into a landing on the alien planet. 2. Inside the saucership the scientist rests in suspended animation (a toy doll in a hollow plastic tube). 3. The ruins of an alien domed city (a cracked plastic dome with bits of shaped styrofoam inside). 4. A view of the miniature alien laboratory set.
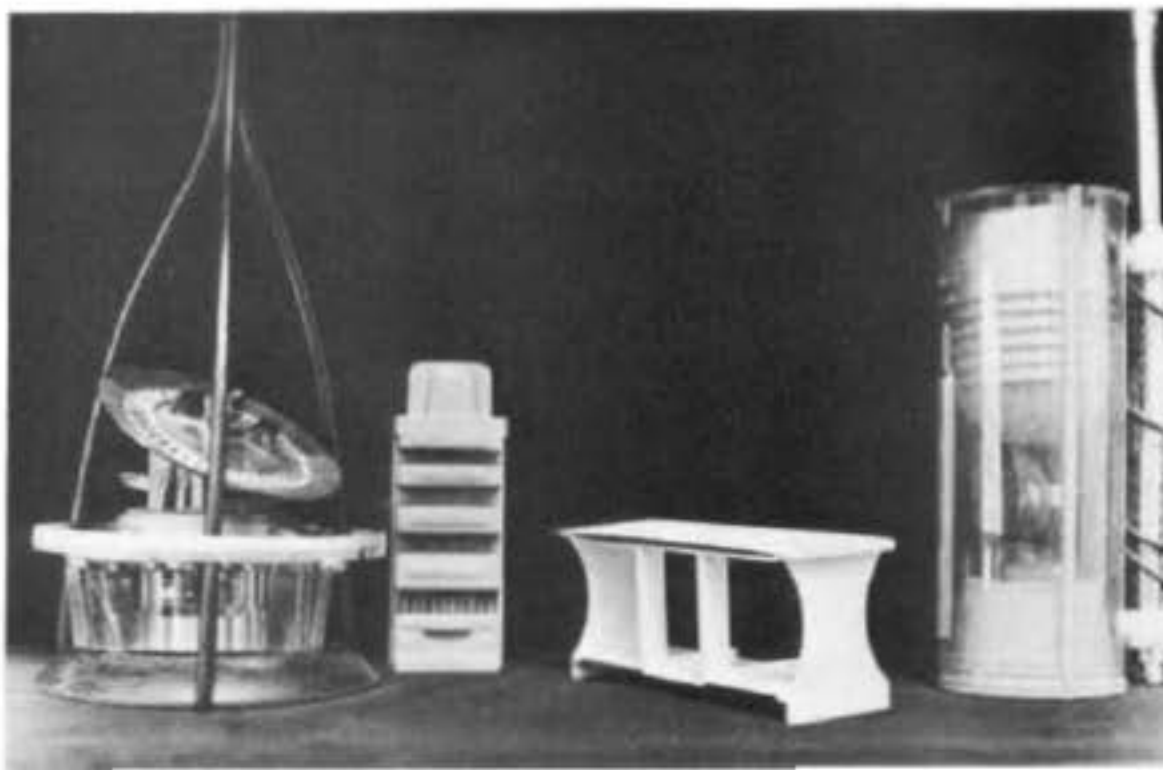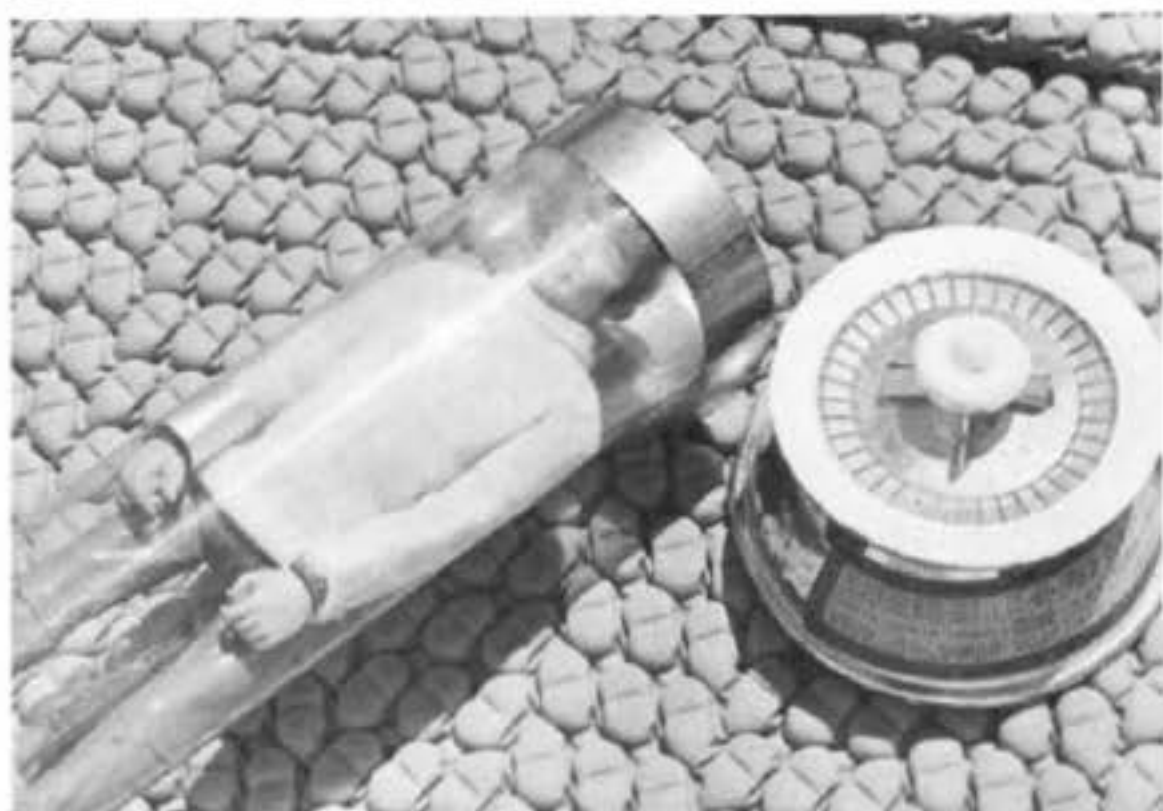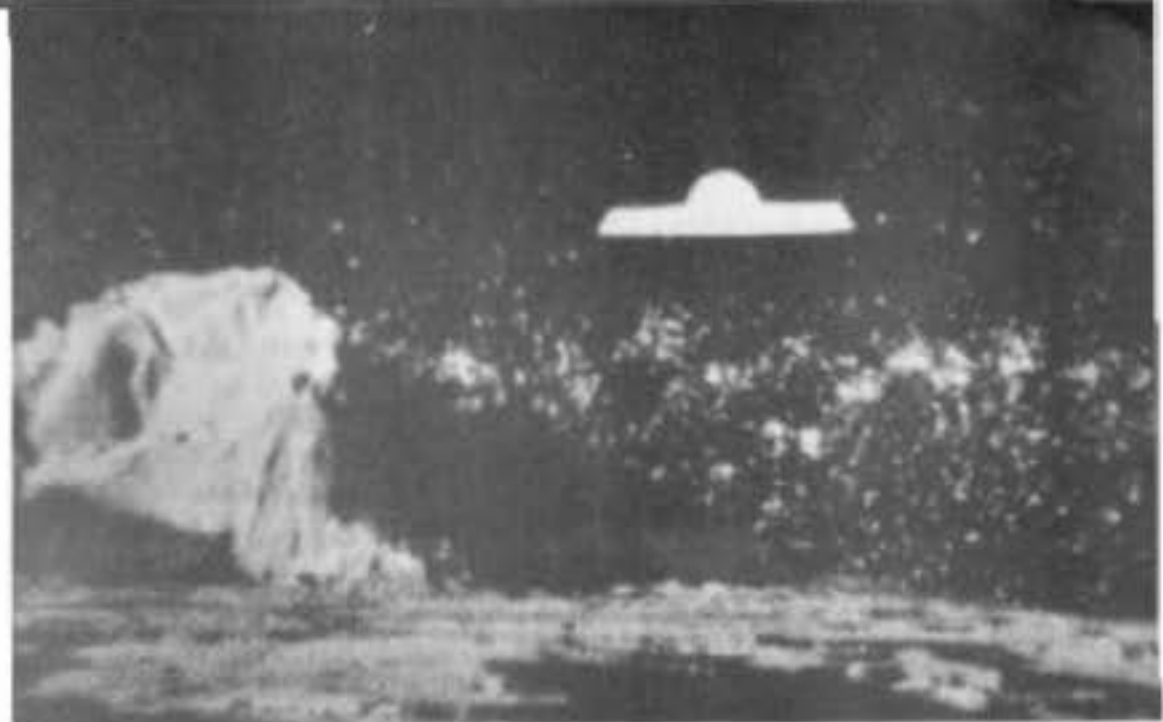
Filmmaker Profile

ernest d. farino, jr.

The only way to learn how to make a film is to go out and do it (much less animation) and although many people attend film schools or are aspiring to do so, I would at least like to warn against being unintentionally acclimated to pre-conceived notions, ideas and theories and techniques which do not necessarily apply in the actual film business. Good schools have a minimum of this problem, but I feel that no school can completely avoid it.

For the most part, my own education has not been associated with film or film courses. I spent the first semester of my college freshman year (September-December, 1970) at New Mexico State University majoring in journalism (mainly because that department included a film course, although I'm also interested in printing, newspaper/magazine work, etc.). Although the course was intended for juniors and seniors, I managed to talk/sneak my way in and produced a six-minute stop-motion film based on an award-winning *Playboy* short story entitled "The Giant Chicken-Eating Frog Will Soon Be Extinct Unless We Take Action Now!" The film was 16mm black and white (sound) and was received very well, garnering an "A" for the course.

That was my one and only semester at NMSU, however, moving to the University of Dallas in order to take advantage of their "exchange" program: they have a campus in Rome, Italy where sophomores can spend an entire semester studying and travelling throughout Europe. During the second semester of my freshman year, at UD, my English class was assigned to do a project concerning Dante's "Inferno." Since the professor, Dr. Robert S. Dupree, was a film buff, he suggested that we organize into groups and make short film adaptations or interpretations of Dante's poem. My group ended up consisting of about four people, which was nice, and unlike the other groups who were doing modern, symbolistic interpretations of "The Inferno," we decided to do it "straight." The resulting half-hour's worth of film, shot throughout the semester, was never afforded the addition of a soundtrack as originally planned, but the edited footage was enough for Dr. Dupree to judge. The film was great fun and featured all sorts of animation: harpies, a sort of Ymir-ish serpent/dragon, the three-headed dog Cerberus, and, of course, a gigantic Satan. With the exception of the harpies, the models were made of clay, which caused a lot of trouble. The harpies were made

by a friend and co-worker of mine, Robert Frye, of latex over a wire framework and have held up very well.

I first became interested in films and filmmaking during the eighth grade when I received a Kodak M-6 Super 8 camera for Christmas. Being a simultaneous horror films/James Bond fan, my first two celluloid ventures became *The Curse of Dracula* and *For Your Eyes Only*, both starring my younger brother. But all during this initial experimentation period, I had been pondering that little chapter in the instruction manual about single-frame animation. Fired with enthusiasm one day, I coerced my mother to buy a cable release at the local camera store and set about filming my first stop-motion opus: a self-propelled chess game. Having no lights at the time, I shot the twenty or so feet outdoors, resulting in a film more interesting as a time-lapse study than anything else. It was pretty poor, in retrospect, and I remember that I was concentrating so much on the animation that I moved "white" twice in a row....

There was a lapse of about two years until January 25, 1968, when I actively started work on *The Mesozoic Menagerie*. It was my sophomore year in high school and the film was fulfilling the requirements of a biology class project. The project was approved, albeit with a bit of skepticism, and I forged ahead. Foam or latex

BELOW: Ernie Farino and John Cacciatore (behind camera) at work filming a television commercial.
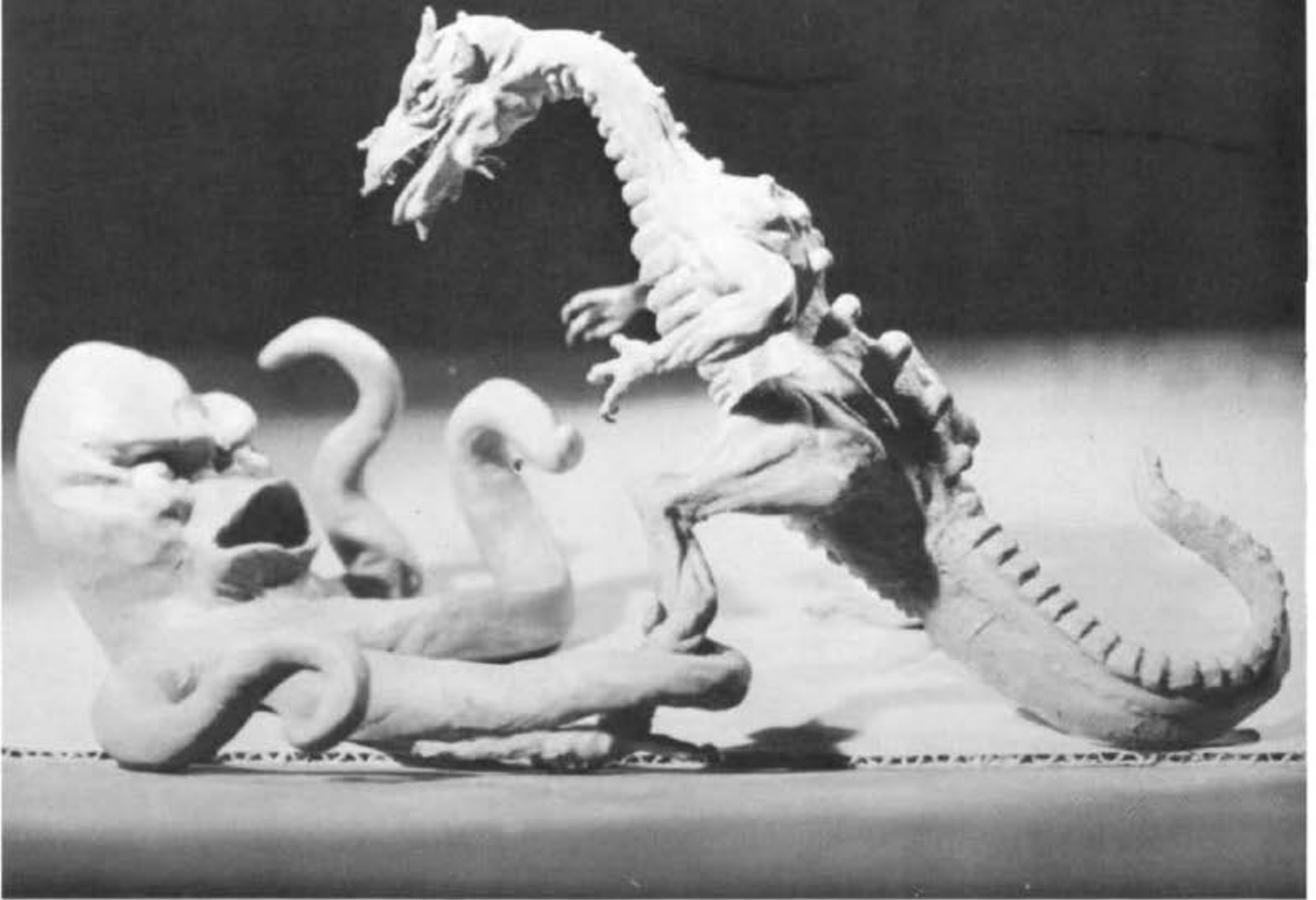
models were automatically eliminated since I had absolutely no conception of the materials, procedures or amount of work that was necessary. But at that time, even working with clay proved to be a new experience as far as developing a suitable armature (soft wire), coloring the clay (powder paint mixed in), and other factors. I experimented, for example, with coating the clay model with latex only to find that it dried up the clay, causing it to crumble into numerous rocky pieces. (There were at least two versions of each monster -- Triceratops, Dimetrodon, Stegosaurus -- during the various experimental stages, with at least four Tyrannosauruses.) The setting evolved into a small box canyon when I decided that I didn't want to hassle with painted backdrops that might reveal themselves to be just what they were. The set was constructed of cardboard and a lot of plaster of Paris, colored with dyes and paint and appropriately decorated with lichens and artificial plants.

The original script for *Menagerie* was much longer than the resulting film, mainly due to the increasing pressure I was under to get the film done on time. Consequently, I didn't have time to develop an internal armature for my long

Brontosaurus neck, so he was booted out, along with an underwater sequence featuring a Plesiosaurus, simply because I wasn't aware of the principles or techniques of making and using an aerial brace.

I also became aware of the hazards of voltage fluctuation during the making of the film, when I saw one sequence marred by increases and decreases in exposure caused by variation in lighting intensity. The sequence was salvaged, however, with the simple addition of a little thunder on the soundtrack. People still ask me how it was done after viewing the film!

The Mesozoic Menagerie ended on a humorous note when, at the end of the film, with the theme from *The Great Escape* playing on the soundtrack, all the animals (appropriately bandaged and limping from the various battles), came out for curtain calls and took their bows....

Menagerie was actually much smoother than I think many had expected and, I dare to say, more so than a lot of first efforts (the ones I've seen, at least). I don't egotistically attribute this to any inborn talent, natural ability or other such intangible influence, but rather to the arduous study of animation that had pre-

ceded the making of the film. The animation can't even be compared in the same sentence (or even book, for that matter) with that of Harryhausen, but study of his work and that of Danforth, O'Brien and others helped in determining such initially overlooked factors as the "graduation of movement" (which is, simply, the starting of a movement with small incremental changes going to larger moves between frames to speed up, and then smaller changes again to slow down. Everything in nature works this way: a car, for example, does not immediately reach 60 mph from a dead stop. There is a period of acceleration), and even such basics as simply making very small moves -- not rushing things -- and exposing only one frame of film per move (which admittedly was rather strenuous on the clay models).

It was during the making of this film that I met and became friends with John Cacciatore, an ex-DJ and current film buff. He agreed to put the sound on my film and created a terrific soundtrack with assorted music cuts, animal roars, and isolated sound effects. My narration was also "echoed" a bit, giving it a hollow, distant sound.

John and I, after making a few more short, non-animated films, decided to form a company, and United Cine Productions was born. Through various contacts, we soon landed a contract with the Dallas-based Frozen Food Express trucking company for a fifteen-minute industrial film. The film provided professional training ground not only with regard to technique, but concerning the business end as well. The entire film cost about $10,000., which, at the time we submitted the bid, also included individual salaries. It was only during the actual making of the film that we discovered all the little trivial costs and unanticipated expenses that must be accounted for in the making of a film. Our salaries diminished quickly.

But we went on to other films, including some Pepsi-Cola television commercials with John Niland of the Dallas Cowboys for BBD&O Advertising, and entertainment/promotional film for the Dallas Chamber of Commerce and Thanksgiving Square Committee (which, in illustrating violence through history as an ultimate plea for peace, involved old film clips, staged live action, and still-photograph montages), and var-

Ernie Farino holds a removable portion of a recently built miniature prehistoric cave set. The cave is made of Hydracol plaster and reinforced, industrial-strength paper toweling.

ABOVE: The Harpy from Ernie's college version of Dante's "Inferno."

ious other projects. I have recently dissolved my interest in United Cine, however, in order to concentrate all my time towards special effects. Since that time, I've been developing molding techniques, armature construction methods, as well as building up my repertoire of equipment and special effects devices. Long-time friend Mark Wolf and I have actually started work on some projects for other filmmakers.

I think that many of the imperfections that crop up in many movies today could be eliminated by a more exacting approach. With regard to live action -- and I suppose the precise nature of special effects has acclimated me this way -- I personally prefer to have every shot, action, camera movement, composition and everything else completely planned out to the finest detail prior to the actual shooting. I have recently found out that Alfred Hitchcock works this way and that during a rough-cut screening of *Frenzy*, he rattled off the one cut missing from the 104-shot sequence where the killer goes after the missing pin in the potato truck. The film editor checked and, sure enough, the shot had been erroneously deleted. This type of complete control and complete knowledge of every aspect of the production I feel is essential from a director's standpoint.

Applied to special effects, specifically stop-motion, it simply means that the special effects man must know every aspect of his part of the production and how his work will fit in, as well as all of the details concerning the actual work he'll be doing. Elaborate drawings and storyboards are useful to me not only for exploring the appearance of a character or establishing rough compositions for the scenes, but also for a start in imagining the movements and gestures of the characters. I can start to visualize how such-and-such a character would react in such-and-such a situation. As is pretty standard practice, I find it useful to re-draw the character in many different positions after the final design has been decided upon, just to become more familiar with every muscle, scar, angle and curve of its figure. But more important, probably, this helps actually visualize the creature in various positions

to see how it looks standing, walking, falling, etc., so that the actual animation will incorporate any changes that are made obvious and necessary in these preliminary stages.

I am constantly working out the various moves and actions in my head and on paper until I have a pretty exact idea of what everybody will be doing in each scene, even if there is no elaborate involvement between the actors and the animation. Then I return to the storyboards and plan my choreography more closely so that, when on the set, I will know exactly what I need from the actors who are in the scene with the animated creatures. The production will then move much quicker and smoother. All scenes should be planned in this very precise way, no matter how simple or elaborate (the prime examples of such precision choreography are, of course, Harryhausen's skeleton battles).

I have just recently completely forsaken 8mm or Super 8 in favor of 16mm, even if it means limiting my work output. I've worked a lot in 16mm, although (for budgetary reasons) most of my animation work has been in Super 8. The limitations and variables of Super 8 have become too restrictive for me, so I've decided to move strictly and unconditionally into 16mm.

Incidentally, I've used equipment ranging from Super 8 cameras (Elmo, Kodak, Belieau, Canon) to 16mm (Arriflex "M," "S," and "BL"; Kodak Cine-Special; Bell & Howell Filmo; Bolex Rex). I've used professional Mole-Richardson studio lights with quartz-halogen lighting, Nagra sound recorders and, in the making of industrial and television commercials, just about every other piece of professional equipment necessary to make a 16mm color, sound film. My "studio" at present consists of my large, two-car garage with an aerial brace hanging from the ceiling. I am developing a front-projection system and have a four-by-four-foot Polacoat professional rear projection screen with a two-by-two-foot front surface mirror arrangement. I have facilities and equipment for making rubber and plastic molds, foam models, plastic eyes and set pieces, masks and appliance make-ups, ball and socket armatures and other necessary equipment and materials. In addition, I own a Cine Printer for making color or black and white dupes or work prints in 8mm, Super 8mm, and 16mm.

--Ernie Farino

This ape is NOT from the PLANET OF APES, but it's a pretty close facsimile -- it was created by CINEMAGIC'S make-up editor, Bill Schwarz who, indeed, gathered much of his knowledge from the man who started the ape make-up craze: John Chambers. To find out how you can create similar masterpieces, see page 14 in this issue.