

A MONSTROUS TRANSFORMATION AT IMAGE ANIMATIONS

A not-so-gory story

BY ADRIANA CAPADOSE

British special effects company, Image Animations, can be given the credit for turning Michael Caine into Mr. Hyde (1) for the recent London Weekend Television Special, *Jekyll and Hyde*. The makeup artists were challenged with the task of creating a Mr. Hyde that was more psychologically terrifying than classically frightening. The image they came up with was a huge baby-like creature, ravished by drugs.

Image Animations, l'entreprise anglaise d'effets spéciaux, est à l'origine de la transformation de Michael Caine en Mr. Hyde (1) pour la production récente de Jekyll and Hyde, diffusée sur London Weekend Television. Le défi aux créateurs des maquillages fut la réalisation d'un Mr. Hyde qui était plus horrible psychologiquement que terrifiant de manière classique. L'image qu'ils ont trouvée était celle d'une créature semblable à un immense bébé, ravagé par les drogues.

Der britischen Firma für Theatereffekte, Image Animations, kann zugeschrieben werden, Michael Caine in Mr. Hyde (1) verwandelt zu haben für *Jekyll and Hyde*, die neue Wochenend-Spezialsendung in London. Die Herausforderung für die Maskenbildner bestand darin, einen eher psychologisch erschreckenden als klassisch angsteinjagenden Mr. Hyde zu schaffen. Die von ihnen kreierte Figur war ein riesiges, babyartiges, durch Drogen geschändetes Geschöpf.

“Gore’s not in vogue at the moment,” claims Little John, makeup artist with Image Animations who did the prosthetics for *Jekyll and Hyde*, a London Weekend Television Special featuring actor Michael Caine which ran this past January.

Little John explains that there is currently less demand for imaginatively gory makeup effects. Creating the Mr. Hyde look was, indeed, more of an exercise in psychological terror than blood and guts. Little John admits a fascination for the intimate workings of the human body, and says that the tools of his trade include extraordinary morbid forensic pathology books.

Image Animations has been creating prosthetics for four years and has worked on films like *Highblander* and *Hellraiser I and II*. They were approached by director/screenwriter David Wickes and production designer William Alexander who invited them to pitch for the job.

Wickes had a clear idea of how he wanted Hyde to look. He was determined that it should not be the classic black and white movie monster with hairy jowls, razor-sharp fangs and gnarled fingers. He has a fascinated horror of the human foetus, and he wanted to generate the same sort of reaction in his audience with Hyde’s appearance — “a huge baby-like creature, primitive and primordial. I

find the foetal image terrifying. Babies are endearing because they are very small. But, my goodness, if they were big.”

The finished look also had to emphasise the effects that drugs can have on the body. The skin is distended and discoloured, the nose reddened, the eyes baggy. The creature has crooked jowls, gnarled ears and a puffy face and scalp.

Geoff Portass, designer and co-founder of Image Animations, and Little John presented their ideas to Wickes, and the team was galvanised into action. The company has only four full-time members, but a resource of 15 - 20 freelance artists. The team worked six or seven days a week designing and creating prosthetics for



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