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US

LOVING JOHN

How Yoko's trick broke up
rock's weirdest triangle—
May Pang's untold story

AUGUST 1, 1983/\$1.00

*Jedi's jelly belly, flyer Pryor
& Superman's brainy bimbo*

star as movies O.D. on . . .

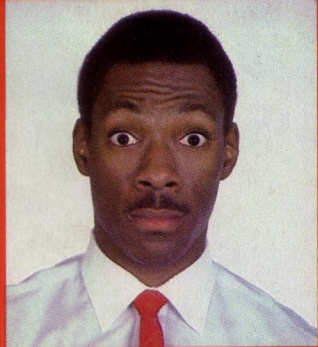
Inside *Jedi's*
cuddly Ewoks

HEROES & HEAVIES

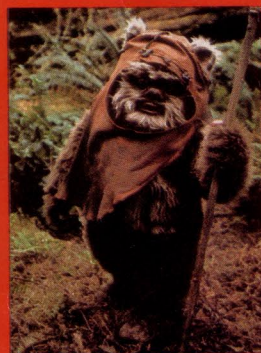
Man of Steel, Man of Laughs



Jabba the Hutt:
Lucas' cosmic Capone



Eddie Murphy: going *Places*



Flashdance's raw Rocky



Superman's Lorelei



MAESTROS OF JEDI

The mega-movie's creators needed more than The Force

By Stephen Schaefer

Jabba the Hutt is easily *Return of the Jedi*'s most memorable monster. An intergalactic gangster who exhibits the carbon-encased Han Solo (Harrison Ford) as a wall hanging, fiendishly feeds a slave girl to his pet carnivore and dangles the captive Princess Leia (Carrie Fisher) as his unwilling playmate, Jabba dominates *Jedi*'s early sequences with globular glee.

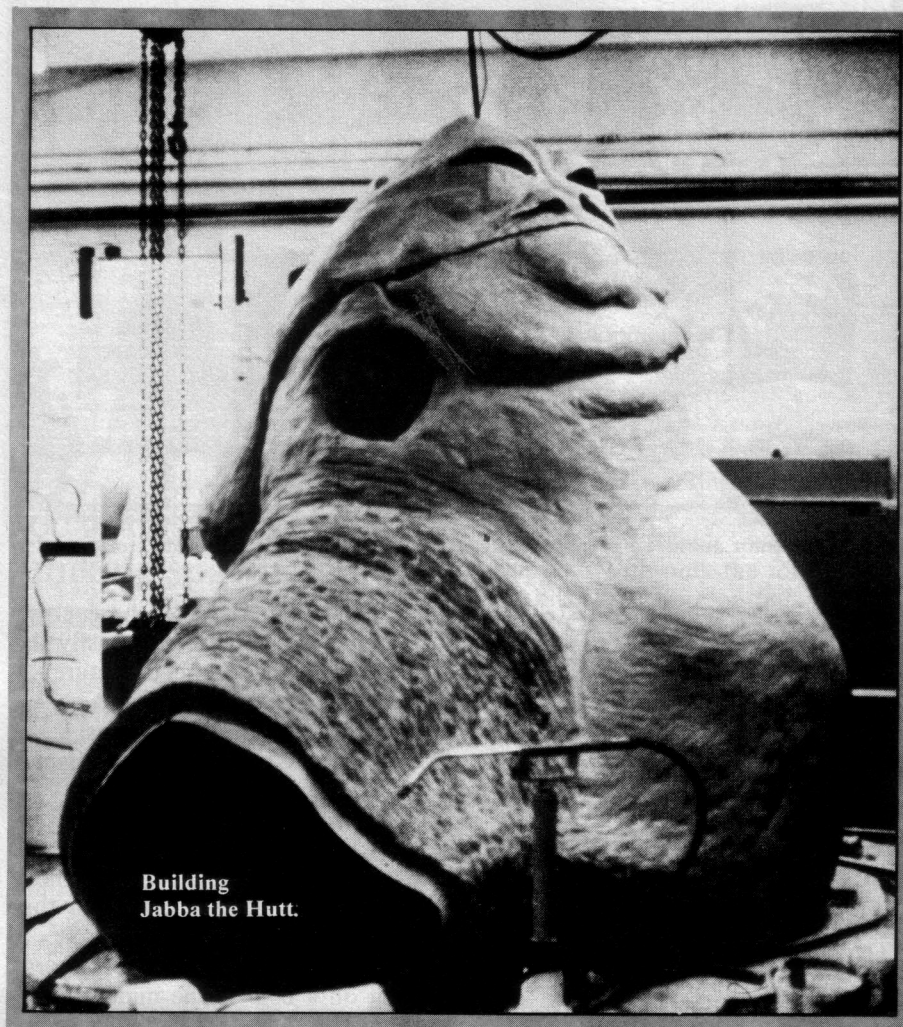
Concocting so vivid a villain wasn't easy. George Lucas had introduced the character in the original *Star Wars*, recalls creature design supervisor Phil Tippet. "Jabba was then a guy with a handlebar mustache and a Scots brogue." That footage was cut, however, and the *Jedi* team was allowed full imaginative rein to work up a viler Hutt.

A year and a half before there was a *Jedi* script, Tippet and colleagues Nilo Rodis-Jamero and Joe Johnston discussed Jabba with Lucas. "We always wanted something immense, obese," Tippet recalls, "so I designed a big slug-like creature." Johnston and Rodis-Jamero had an idea behind the character: the image of Sydney Greenstreet (the corpulent 1940s movie villain) with a fez in *Casablanca*. "Jabba was always meant to be more ridiculous than horrible, more an Alice in Wonderland creature than an *Alien* slime monster," adds Tippet, 31.

According to Tippet, it was Lucas who conceived the little creature sitting atop Jabba, the parasite called Salacious Crumb. "George called him 'Jabba's pet.'"

For Tippet, *Jedi* represented a professional leap forward. Previously, he had always worked on what filmmakers call post-production stop-motion animation—the technique by which inanimate dolls or creatures are made to move. Experience with gore producer Roger Corman (*Piranha*) helped him land a job with Lucasfilm two and a half years ago to work on *Dragonslayer*, and *Jedi* followed.

For Tippet, *Jedi* was a trial



Building Jabba the Hutt.

by fire. With a laugh, he says, "There was terror all the way through—we had an incredible amount of work and a very short time to do it."

The hateful Hutt was finally built by a United Kingdom crew under Stuart Freeborn and was operated by three puppeteers inside the blob-like brute. Sound designer Ben Burtt did the vocalizing.

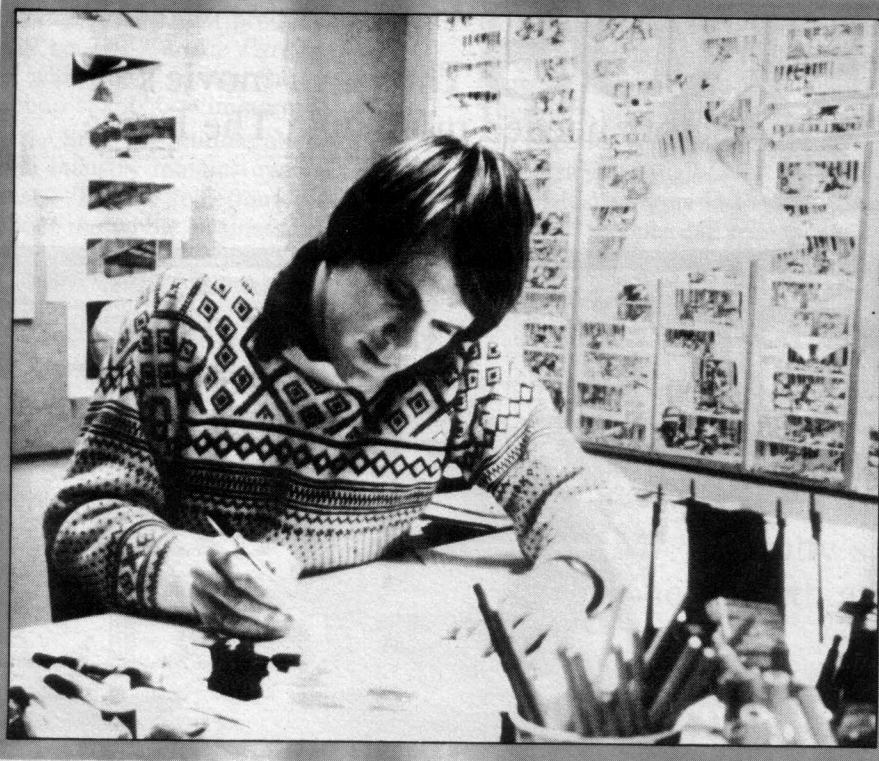
"Any monster's effectiveness," says Tippet, "ultimately depends on how it's used. E.T. is a good example. He's only a funny rubber doll, but emotionally, he carried the whole picture."

Tippet also designed the *Jedi*'s Rancor Pit monster ("pretty simple, —he just needed to be dumb and ugly"), the Great Pit of Carkoon into which the heroes are almost fed

("the most painful experience, because the desert was so hot, around 110°") and Rebel military leader Admiral Ackbar ("the design wouldn't fit over a person's head, so for close-ups, hand puppets with full-size heads were used").

And what becomes of these *Jedi* creatures? "They go to a giant *Citizen Kane* warehouse, along with the *Lost Ark*," Tippet quips. *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, of course, concluded with the priceless religious relic being stuffed away, all but forgotten, in a gigantic warehouse.

With *Jedi* completed, Tippet feels that "a great part of my life is over." Yet he can't escape the film. "I had a horrible dream the other night," he says. "I went back to work—and they had closed it down to build a junior college."



Ewoks co-creator Johnston prepares *Jedi* effects sequence with elaborate storyboards.

Dennis Muren: He's behind *Jedi*'s amazing speeder bike chase

You, too, can make your own version of *Jedi*'s fabled speeder bike chase. So says the movie's visual effects supervisor, Dennis Muren. "Kids already have all the video equipment they need," he says. "They can make it at home."

A Lucasfilm veteran since '76, Muren, 36, used videomatics to plan what most viewers concede is the movies' greatest motorcycle chase ever: Princess Leia and Luke Skywalker pursue fleeing imperial troopers on rocker bikes that do what real motorcycles can't—they fly.

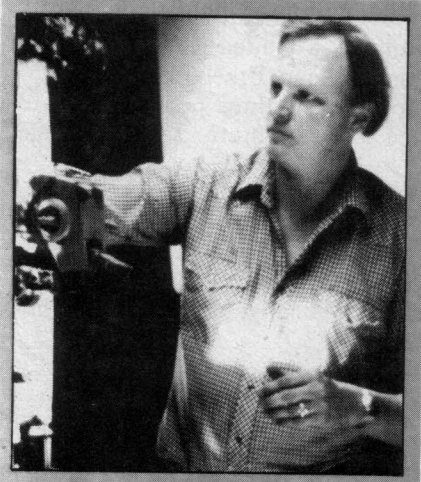
Videomatics is "the use of video equipment to create a cartoon version of a special effect." For *Jedi*, Muren began with a storyboard sequence. Storyboards, like comic strips, illustrate each camera angle the viewer will see.

The next step was to construct a miniature set with props. This was used for a run-through. Shot over a three-day period by video cameras, this rough version of the chase allowed Lucasfilm to save time. "By knowing exactly what shots we were going for, we saved a lot of money, too," says Muren. All decisions were made before filming began.

Muren needed all the energy he could muster for *Jedi*, easily the most complicated effects picture ever. For example, the air-bike scene takes place in a redwood forest. While all the trees seen in the background are real, the final chase mixes miniatures and live action. "To give the sequence a faster motion," Muren reveals, "we shot at 20 frames per second rather than the usual 24."

Because it's "hard for actors to sit on a bike in the middle of a soundstage and look like your brain's going five times faster than it is," Muren believes this shooting process also helped the scene emotionally.

Muren angles lights for a miniature set.



Terry Chostner/Lucasfilm

Muren likens his work on *Jedi* "to doing what I've been doing most of my life." Fascinated by sci-fi effects at age 10, he owned an 8-millimeter camera at 12 and learned to do "spectacle effects." By the time he was 15, he'd moved up to 16mm. After professional experience in TV commercials (the Pillsbury Dough Boy) he moved into movies.

Jedi not only has more effects than *Star Wars* and *The Empire Strikes Back*, but they're better, he says. Muren's main enemy remains time. "I'm always fighting deadlines," he says. "I keep asking myself, 'Do we try to do it better now, or do we move on to the next shot?'"

The effects expert says he'll never stop searching for "something more." His next chance comes with *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*, the Lucas-produced sequel to *Raiders*, again directed by Steven Spielberg. Promises *Jedi* master Muren: "It's going to be good, old-fashioned, cliffhanging special effects."

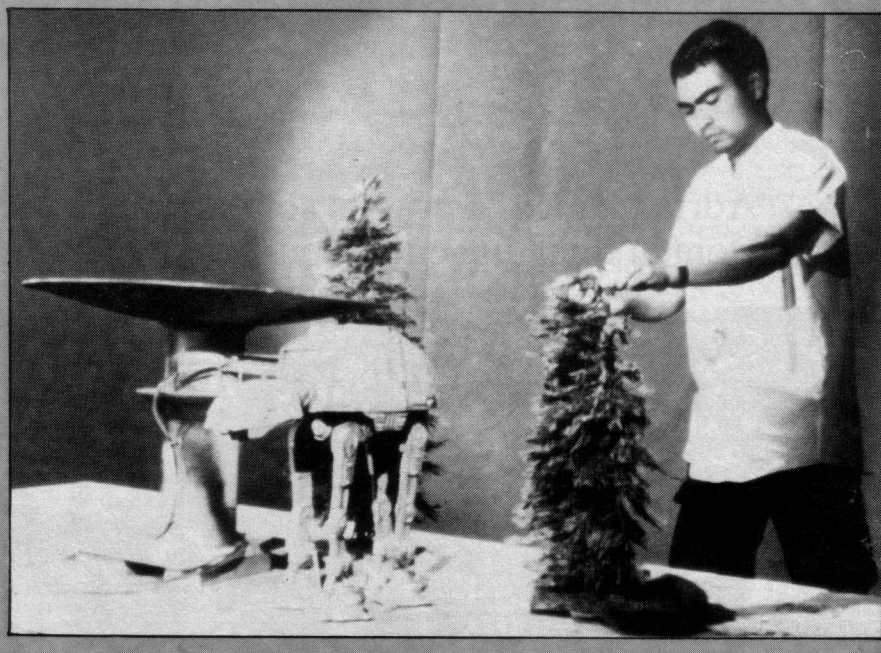
Nilo Rodis-Jamero: Car designing led up to Jabba the Hutt

The costume designer for *Jedi*'s Jabba the Hutt, Nilo Rodis-Jamero, honed his skills not in New York's garment district but in Detroit's auto industry. The Philippine-born Rodis-Jamero, 32, spent 1975 working as an industrial designer at the General Motors Design Center. He spent most of 1982 giving shape to creature clothing, a forest moon's landscape and the desert planet of Tatooine.

For *Jedi*, Rodis-Jamero's role went beyond costume design to include the film's overall look. "Continuity was essential," he says. The artistic team had to work with the color schemes and costume designs that regulars like Han Solo and Chewbacca had worn in the first two *Star Wars* episodes. His challenges were "bringing back a grand scale and doing something even better than it had been done before."

Jabba and the furry little Ewoks were entirely new. "Although Jabba is a revolting creature, we think of him with a bit of a smile—despite himself," says Rodis-Jamero.

Was he ever worried that Jabba might be terrifying to tiny children?



Costumer Rodis-Jamero prepares miniature set for four-legged walker sequence.

"I don't think so," he answers. "Children loathe Jabba more for what he has come to represent in the story than for his physical monstrosity."

Rodis-Jamero's *Jedi Sketchbook* of his designs are among the gigantic merchandising spin-offs from the film. Just as the royalties start rolling in, his thoughts are already on his next project. "I'm having a fabulous time on *Star Trek III*," he says. "Director Leonard Nimoy—Spock himself—and the producers promise the basis of another good production ahead."

Joe Johnston: Fuzzy thinking spawned those lovable little Ewoks

Only God can make a tree but Joe Johnston, 33, said, "Let there be Ewoks." And it came to pass that a breed of fuzzy creatures inhabited the forest planet of Endor.

Were they supposed to resemble teddy bears? "George Lucas didn't know what he wanted them to look like," says Johnston, *Jedi*'s visual effects art director. "Several

of us drew up sketches and he took my design."

The most important design element was the addition of ears. "Without them, the Ewoks looked like, well, squirrels," says the co-creator. A sculptor's rendering of the Ewok head and shoulders was shipped from California to England, where another *Jedi* production crew worked. The English team made 40 Ewok costumes plus six heads with noses that twitched and ears that wiggled on cue.

Johnston, who joined Lucasfilm in July 1975, has seen the company expand from less than two dozen employees to some 400. He worked side by side with Lucas on the development of Ewoks. He also designed the desert skiffs, the rocket bikes, two Rebel fighters and a smaller version of *Empire*'s two-legged walker. His favorite *Jedi* job, though, was working on the speeder bike chase with Phil Tippett.

"George said, 'See what you can do.' With only the forest and six bikes, we were on our own."

The Austin, Texas, native would like to see Lucas return to directing films but has no wish to venture into directing himself. What does he yearn for when the *Jedi* euphoria fades? "I'm a bit tired of these special effects extravaganzas," says Johnston. "*Jedi* is now the standard for special effects films, and I think it will stay that way for a long time. What I'd like to work on now is a small film." **US**

Creature design supervisor Tippett paints the Rancor monster puppet that was ultimately used in *Jedi*. Tippett had originally experimented with a foam rubber costume but it wound up "looking like a man in a suit" and had to be abandoned.

