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## SUMMARY

Despair is the first in a series of planned high quality, low-budget, ground-breaking horror features, put together by a talented and highly experienced crew of individuals who have all worked in genre films for well over a decade, and whose diverse credits include films such as Spawn, Gods and Monsters, Toxic Avenger, The Abyss, Skinner, etc.

Our policy has been to start with a strong story, in this instance a classic European horror novel adapted into a powerful script, which Horror Writers of America charter member Stephen R. Bissette (Swamp Thing) compared to "Misery on speed."

The strength and quality of our package was enough to attract two rising international stars: James Armstrong, an award-winning Australian actor with numerous film and television credits, to play the lead, and Manuel Stagers, a famed European composer, to write the music.

The contemplated budget has been kept to a minimum thanks to the creative contribution of the talent involved: \$760,000, a figure which ensures quality, while at the same time virtually guarantees the investor(s) a return on their investment.

Significantly, the commercial value of the elements assembled in this package has enabled the producers to secure a distribution agreement with a well-known, established international distributor, Fries Entertainment, a company with a long history of feature production and distribution, thus ensuring that the film will be sold and will make money for its backers.

Finally, a unique marketing and ancillary rights program, including sales of music CDs, a novelization and a comic book adaptation, has been put together, and is ready to go to market upon release of the picture.

At a time when stocks are tumbling, investing in tangible assets such as real estate and films is increasingly attractive. The value of horror films only appreciates over time, and in fact, has been shown to thrive during recessions, as people find refuge in pure escapist entertainment.

We strongly believe that Despair and its sequels are unique investment opportunities, delivering quality entertainment at low-budget prices.

## STORY SYNOPSIS

A man named Jackson meets a friend who tells him that a fortune-teller has (seemingly accurately) predicted a wonderful future for him. The unbelieving Jackson dismisses the predictions, stating that his friend could just as readily be hit by a truck. Which is exactly what happens after the friend walks out in the street.

A furious Jackson goes to see the fortune-teller to berate her, but she already knew of his friend's fate and confesses that she lied to him to make his last hours happy ones. She then offers to read Jackson's future. What she sees stupefies them both: none of this is real. It's all a dream Jackson is having. His subconscious is trying to warn him, because he's fallen asleep at the wheel of a car while driving to meet his lover!

The car crashes. Jackson survives, but finds himself on a dark, lonely country road.

Stumbling along, he finds a private clinic where he thinks he can get help. He blacks out and, when he awakens, finds himself strapped on an operating table, at the mercy of the clinic's lunatic owner, the terrifying Doctor Despair.

A climate of surreal terror sets in as Despair claims to hate Jackson because his lover is also Despair's head nurse and girl friend. With sadistic pleasure, Despair mutilates the helpless Jackson by blinding him, cutting out his tongue, then performing brain surgery to alter his memories. But when Jackson wakes up again, he learns that his mutilations are the result of the deadly car crash, his partial amnesia is post-traumatic shock, and that the kindly Doctor Despair actually saved his life. Or did he?...

As Jackson is introduced to the other, deformed and disturbed residents of the clinic, he starts to suspect that the earlier scenes of horror were very real, that Dr. Despair is truly mad and that he is using him as a pawn in a demented scheme of revenge against his wife, Helen, who once betrayed him. No one knows what Dr. Despair's plan is, other than that it is truly abominable and will do worse to Helen than merely kill her.

As per Dr. Despair's plan, Jackson slowly falls in love with Helen -- something that will make her agony even more unendurable. He desperately tries to divine what monstrous scheme the Doctor has hatched that will result in Helen's doom, but in Dr. Despair's asylum, no one is ever sure of what is a lie and what is the awful truth.

Ultimately, Dr. Despair succeeds in carrying out his ghastly scheme. Jackson gets his revenge and kills Dr. Despair. But the story is far from over as Jackson still has to discover who he really is, and understand the true meaning behind the abominable events that have taken place in Dr. Despair's clinic...

## THE PROPERTY

Despair is based on a classic 1959 French horror novel, "La Bête Immonde" by Marc Agapit. The title translates as "The Awful Beast" and refers to jealousy, that green-eyed monster, that gnawing cancer of the heart that can destroy a man's soul.

The publisher of "The Awful Beast" is Editions Fleuve Noir, a fifty-year-old division of the Presses De La Cité group, the second largest publishing company in France. Fleuve Noir was established in September, 1951, by publisher Marc de Caro, and specialized in popular "pulp" paperback imprints, such as police thrillers, espionage novels, war stories, science fiction, and horror. Its horror imprint, dubbed "Angoisse" (*Anguish*) was begun in 1954, and continued monthly until 1974, publishing a total of 261 volumes, a feat probably unique in the annals of horror literature.

Among its top authors were Kurt Steiner, B.R. Bruss, Marc Agapit, and renowned film writer Jean-Claude Carrière (The Discreet Charm Of the Bougeoisie, The Tin Drum, The Unbearable Lightness Of Being). It also published French translations of major international authors such as Isaac Asimov and Arthur C. Clarke.

Fleuve Noir was taken over by the giant publishing group, Presses de la Cité, in 1966, and increased its output, as well as diversified into comics and other fields.

The works of Marc Agapit are considered classics of French horror literature. Twelve of his most successful novels -- including "La Bête Immonde" -- were adapted into a series of graphic novels entitled "Hallucinations" published by Presses de la Cité in the early 1970s. His books were reprinted in new editions in the late 1970s. An "omnibus" edition of several of his best novels -- again including "La Bête Immonde" -- was released in 1997.

# DESPAIR

## THE NOVEL



ORIGINAL BOOK COVERS

FIRST EDITION (1959) (left) - OMNIBUS REPRINT (1997) (right)

## "DR. DESPAIR": JAMES ARMSTRONG

James Armstrong was born in Melbourne, Australia, and raised on the West Coast in Perth. From an early age, James had a passion for drama and film, spending many weekends making short films while still at high school. James was accepted into the exclusive Directing Course at the Curtin University Film School, and was also invited to study Acting with renowned actress and teacher, Barbara Dennis, at the acclaimed Curtin University School of Dramatic Arts. Unable to choose, he decided to do both, graduating from Curtin with a Bachelor of Arts, double majoring in Theatre and Film.

After University, James hitchhiked around the world, traveling through 26 countries on five continents. A year and a half later, he returned to Perth and pursued his acting career. He starred in many local productions for the Blue Room and The Subiaco Theatre, before moving to Sydney. James soon landed the lead role of 'Squealer' for the Iron Cove Theatre production of "Animal Farm". After rave reviews, he was invited to join the company, and became a regular cast member for several years, starring in productions of "Much Ado About Nothing", and "Les Liaisons Dangereuses". He also commenced his Master of Arts degree at the University of New South Wales.

Over the next few years his film and television acting career took off, landing plumb roles in "Undying", "Mercury", "Halifax FP", "Denton", "Good Guys Bad Guys", "Exile", "Big Sky". While Film and TV commitments occupied most of his time, he continued to accept lead roles in theatre, starring in "Bouncers", "King Lear", "Away", "Convict Streak", and "Seeing Things" among others.

While working consistently as an actor, James also pursued his career as a director. In 1992, he founded Armstrong Productions, which focused primarily on live events. In 1997, James built Studio Net Australia, and diversified into all facets of media production. From websites to music clips, from fashion parades to documentaries, from live events to film, James applied his creative expertise as a Director, Producer, Writer and Editor to many productions for media, corporate, and broadcast clients. He developed many of his own projects, including the feature documentary, "The Fringe", and the comedy film "Loserhead's Date", for which James won Best Comedy Actor at both the Buzz Film Festival and the Independent Filmmaker Awards. "Loserhead" then became a series on The Comedy Channel under James' direction.



**James Armstrong**

<http://www.cybamedia.com/>

Best Comedy Actor, Buzz Film Festival, 1999  
Best Comedy Actor, Independent Filmmaker Awards, 1999  
Best Actor, Western Australian Film Festival, 1988

Of James Armstrong's popularity, Tom Horton, the director of Television at Saatchi & Saatchi, one of England's largest entertainment production facilities, says: "*He is in constant demand in Australia, and it is no wonder the international industry is sitting up and taking notice.*"

Of his character, award-winning film and television Australian actor, Steve Adams, writes: "*Everyone who has worked with this actor has carried that experience with them into other productions and as a result, the bar has been raised and our industry is all the richer for it.*"

Of his career, John Eastway, the executive producer of Denton and a multiple Australian Film Institute Award winner, notes: "*James went on to enjoy a very successful career. . . and is now considered one of the best actors in Australia.*"

Of his talent, Simon Baldock veteran director/producer of network television in Australia (Channel 10) writes: "*In all my years of entertainment I have never seen such an outstanding talent as James Armstrong.*"

## THE DIRECTOR

### ROY KNYRIM

Born and raised in Rochester, NY, Roy Knyrim was always interested in film making and special effects. From an early age he utilized his parents Super 8 movie camera to make his own movies, which coincidentally enough, contained a lot of special effects. After graduating from Hilton Central High School in 1985, Roy worked with Rochester effects artist Pat Tantalo on some key make up effects scenes for the DeLaurentiis production, Slugs, which had come to film on location in upstate New York.

After this first professional experience, he went to New York City where he created all the gory effects for the second and third Toxic Avenger films. Having felt he had accomplished all he could on the east coast, he relocated to Southern California where he founded SOTA F/X along with partner Jerry Macaluso. For the last 12 years he has worked on hundreds of productions, some of which are: The Abyss, Ed Wood, Weird Science, Gods And Monsters, and The Profiler television series.

Having achieved success in the special effects industry Roy was eager to try creating his own shows. In 1999 he created Matthew Blackheart: Monster Smasher, which was sold to the Sci Fi Channel. In fall of 2001, Roy directed Demons At The Door, his first full length theatrical feature. Since then, Roy has also directed three music videos for Psychopathic Records featuring Insane Clown Posse, and a 30-second national spot.

Currently Roy still runs SOTA F/X out of their facility in Van Nuys and continues to develop film and television projects.



## THE PRODUCER

### ERIC MILLER

Eric Miller earned a Bachelor of Science degree in telecommunications from Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, in 1989.

Eric first worked in the industry as Director of Development for two years for Max Pix Inc., before becoming a screenwriter and a producer. As a writer, Eric co-wrote the 1997 sci-fi cult classic The Shadow Men, starring Eric Roberts and Sherilynn Fenn, and the pilot for Jack Armstrong, All-American Boy, a made-for-television comedy.

In the field of film production, Eric first assisted producers and directors on the Puppet Master and Trancers horror film franchises, before becoming a full-blown Producer, Line Producer and Production Supervisor. His producing credits now include over two dozen films in the low-budget genre arena, including Deep Freeze, Beanstalk, Demons at the Door, Beach Babes From Beyond, etc., and numerous television programs and commercials.

Eric is also a professional video camera operator, has grip, lighting, art department and editing experience on both film and video, has supervised transportation and location for numerous low-budget productions (including many shot in Mexico and Eastern Europe), and he is in good standing with entertainment industry bond companies. All of these skills are essential in the smooth running and management of a low-budget production such as Despair.

## THE WRITERS

### RANDY & JEAN-MARC LOFFICIER

Randy & Jean-Marc Lofficier have been a professional writing team since 1980, first covering the Hollywood scene for a variety of American and foreign cinema magazines, including American Cinematographer, Cinefex, and Starlog. Randy and Jean-Marc have written animation scripts for The Real Ghostbusters and Duck Tales. They have also written and sold three live-action screenplays and one animated feature, one published fantasy novel, and numerous comic-books, including Tongue\*Lash, Robur, Superman's Metropolis, Batman-Nosferatu, Clive Barker's Hellraiser, etc. They won an Inkpot Award for their translations of the Moebius graphic novels. Randy worked with Pioneer and Kurosawa to produce an animated feature, and had a Saturday Morning series in development at ABC. Jean-Marc is the author of a dozen media books such as The Doctor Who Programme Guide and Into The Twilight Zone, two genre anthologies and an 800-page encyclopedia of French science fiction, fantasy and horror.

### SHANE BITTERLING & PAUL HART-WILDEN

Shane Bitterling has worked in the film industry for seven years. He worked as a development executive for Jon Voight Entertainment, and as Director of Acquisitions for international film distributor Brimstone Entertainment, where he was involved with the production and marketing of Russell Mulcahy's Tales of the Mummy (Dimension) and My Brother the Pig (NickelOdeon). His feature screenplay, Beneath Loch Ness, is to be distributed by Dimension in 2002. Paul Hart-Wilden has worked in the UK film industry for over sixteen years, as a noted Assistant Director and Unit Production Manager. His directorial effort, Horrorshow, premiered at the Scala Film Festival in London in 1987. His writing credits include the British Independent Film Award nominated Alone (2001, CF1), the Dick Randall produced Living Doll, and the cult favorite, Skinner, starring Ted Raimi, Ricki Lake and Traci Lords.

## THE AUTHOR

### MARC AGAPIT

Adrien Sobra (1897-1985), a French English teacher, was a mainstream novelist who had published a few novels and thrillers before turning to writing popular horror fiction under the pseudonym of "Marc Agapit" in the 1950s and 1960s. As Agapit, Sobra wrote forty-three novels for the popular horror imprint of Editions Fleuve Noir, one of the largest French publishers, and quickly became one of their best-selling and most acclaimed authors.

Agapit used the supernatural sparsely, his catalog of horrors being somewhat more akin to a Ruth Rendell story rewritten by the Grand-Guignol. He delighted in throwing a light on the perversity of the human soul, showing sordid, lonely, ordinary people ravaged by time, slowly sinking into madness. His heroes often came from cursed families. They exhibited an unhealthy sexuality, and may even have been afflicted with physical handicaps, such as the doomed protagonist of "La Bête Immonde" (1959), now the basis for the motion picture Despair, whose tragic hero is blind.

Agapit's protagonists were sometimes young boys who became natural prey for evil females, or innocently trafficked with the most monstrous, unnatural creatures, as in his classic "Grefte Mortelle" (1958), which was praised by Jean Cocteau, the renowned author of the immortal Beauty and the Beast.

## THE MUSIC

### MANUEL STAGARS

Manuel Stagars was educated and trained in Switzerland. He began his musical career at the age of 8. He received a classical musical education in composition and interpretation with noted pianist Stephen Bader and was awarded the Musikpreis 1st Prize for piano performance in 1989. Soon his musical career skyrocketed and he has been solely engaged in the business and art of music composition since 1996. In addition to concert composition, scoring and songwriting for the most established and famous figures in Europe, Manuel has a successful commercial music business in Zurich, Audiobox, through which he composes and records music for music labels, film production houses and advertising agencies.

Through Audiobox, Manuel has composed commercial music for many companies such as Deutsche Bank, Compaq Computer, Swatch, and Swisscom. Manuel has authored over one hundred original compositions for concert, television, commercials, and films, from chamber music to pop songs. His work has been performed live and broadcast on radio. He has composed and exhibited his music at such well-known music venues as the Rohstofflager in Zurich and La Biennale in Venice. Manuel was the selected composer to provide underscore to the science fiction-themed exhibition, "Space-A Dream" for Zurich Winter 2001. He has been nominated for art and music prizes and was the winner of such national awards as the Swiss Federal Art Prize in 1999 and 2000, and the Buro Art Prize in 2000.

Manuel's credits include film scores and theatre music, television series and live musical productions. Recent projects include composing for primetime Swiss television programming, composing the music for several European motion pictures, C -Files: Tell Saga, Sky High and Enchanted Evening. Manuel has now been retained to do a variety of music composition work in the United States, including, concert commission work, composing for television projects, website music composition, videos, and film.

<http://www.audiobox.ch>

## THE SPECIAL MAKE-UP EFFECTS

### SOTA F/X

SOTA F/X is a special effects company based in Van Nuys, California, specializing in Special Make-up Effects, Animatronics, Prosthetics, and Creature Effects for film, television, commercials, and music videos.

Founded in 1990, SOTA F/X has consistently created high quality creatures and effects for projects ranging from Spawn to the Emmy award winning Earth-2, from Ed Wood to Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers. SOTA's credits include such films as the Wishmaster series, Jack Frost, Prophecy 2 and 3, the Children of the Corn series, Indian in the Cupboard, The Howling, Darkman, The Abyss, Toxic Avenger, etc.

SOTA F/X was nominated for an Academy Award ("Oscar") for its work in duplicating Jack Pierce's famous Frankenstein Monster make-up for the 1998 film Gods and Monsters.

In 1995, SOTA built and animated 28 motion-control aliens for the CD-ROM game Star Control 3 -- a revolutionary approach to character creation for the game industry.

SOTA engineered a new silicone formula for prosthetics which they used to miraculously age David Schwimmer 30 years in HBO Pictures The Breast Men. SOTA's television credits also include make-up effects for NBC's Profiler and Pretender series, Universal's Earth-2, Babylon-5 and Son of the Beach.

Additionally, SOTA has contributed to a variety of commercials, music videos, even theme parks.

## THE DISTRIBUTION

### FRIES ENTERTAINMENT

One of the leading producers of theatrical films, television movies and miniseries, Fries Entertainment is also involved in the distribution of television, home video and theatrical motion pictures.

Producer or supervisor of more than 100 movies of the week and miniseries, more than 30 feature films and over 4,000 TV episodes for all the major broadcast networks, Charles W.(Chuck) Fries counts among his many producing credits such acclaimed hits as Small Sacrifices, The Neon Empire, Leona Helmsley: The Queen of Mean and Mission of the Shark. Theatrical features produced under the Fries Entertainment banner include The Cat People, Flowers in the Attic, Out of Bounds and Troop Beverly Hills. Fries Films have garnered Peabody and Christopher awards and nominations for the Humanitas award, plus innumerable Emmy nominations.

Fries Entertainment has generated over \$350 million in revenue during the past 10 years. In 1995, Fries founded Fries Film Company, where he serves as Executive Producer and Chairman. Fries is a graduate from Ohio State University, where he received an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree. After serving in various production and administrative capacities in the entertainment industry, he became Vice President in charge of production/administration for Screen Gems, the Columbia Pictures Television arm, and subsequently became Vice President in charge of feature film production/administration for the parent company, where he worked with the top producers and directors in the industry.

## THE BUDGET

The budget for Despair is based on a 15 days shoot, 3-5 days week, SAG low budget rates, 16mm film stock, and a non-union crew. It can be summarized as follows:

(US\$)		
Above the Line		
• Producers	30,000	
• Director	10,000	
• Rights/Script	50,000	
• Casting Director	10,000	
• Lead Actors	114,030	
• Other Actors, Misc.	51,965	
Total Above the Line	265,995	
Production	65,274	
Camera, Sound, Grip & Lighting	68,717	
Makeup & Wardrobe	23,918	
Art & Props	35,619	
Special Effects, Post Sound, Editing	70,000	
Location, Transportation, Catering	142,542	
Film, Lab & Post	18,924	
Total		690,989
10% contingency		69,098
Total Budget		760,087

## THE MARKETING

The success of horror films no longer needs to be proven. A good deal of that success can be attributed to the fact that the genre is well received by a core audience of dedicated horror fans, who will repeatedly support those films which they respect. These pictures were able to break through that audience, and reach a lucrative cult status, because of good word-of-mouth spread by the same loyal fans.

Despair is invested with the same imagery and concepts that have propelled all successful horror pictures. It has the gut-wrenching quality of Texas Chainsaw Massacre and the surreal imagery of Nightmare on Elm Street.

Because the horror community is familiar with certain names, the production will generate enormous publicity before the film is even released, by obtaining endorsements from:

-- Stephen R. Bisette, co-creator of Swamp Thing, publisher of From Hell, member of the Horror writers Of America, has already labelled Despair, "*Misery on speed*."

-- Clive Barker, writer and film-maker, author of Hellraiser, Nightbreed -- the writers of Despair wrote for the Hellraiser comics and can obtain a positive quote from Mr. Barker.

Intelligent marketing aimed at the cult audience will enhance this perception of Despair as a ground-breaking feature, including:

-- articles in Fangoria, America's #1 horror magazine, read by all serious fans and professionals alike -- the writers of Despair write book reviews for Fangoria's sister publication, Starlog, and should be able to secure excellent coverage in this vital publication.

-- access to a rare French interview with the late Marc Agapit.

Horror fans will not only pay to see the film in theaters, but will also rent, and since it is a collectors' market, buy the film on video and DVD. To capitalize on this behavior pattern, a "special edition" of the film, containing promotional storyboard art drawn by Sylvain Despretz, Ridley Scott's assistant and storyboard artist on the Oscar-winning Gladiator and Blackhawk Down, will be released.

In addition, Despair will also appeal to the rock music market, which parallels the intended horror audience. An appropriate sound track will help broaden the marketing base of the film, and generate additional publicity through cross-promotion of the music and music videos, which will use the film's terrifying visuals.



## ANCILLARY RIGHTS

Any analysis of a film project like Despair should not fail to take into account the upside potential for revenues in the exploitation of ancillary rights, more specifically:

- (i) the novel by Marc Agapit;
- (ii) the comic book adaptation;
- (iii) the possibility of sequels, using other Marc Agapit books as springboards.

Horror novels and horror comics are at the forefront of the expanding American popular entertainment market. Horror novels regularly break through on the bestseller lists, and comic book "graphic novels", priced anywhere between \$6 and \$15, have become a staple in the marketplace. The recent box office hit The Road to Perdition was based on a graphic novel, and the success of the film, in turn, boosted the sales of the graphic novel. Other recent successful pictures based on serious graphic novels include Ghost World and From Hell.

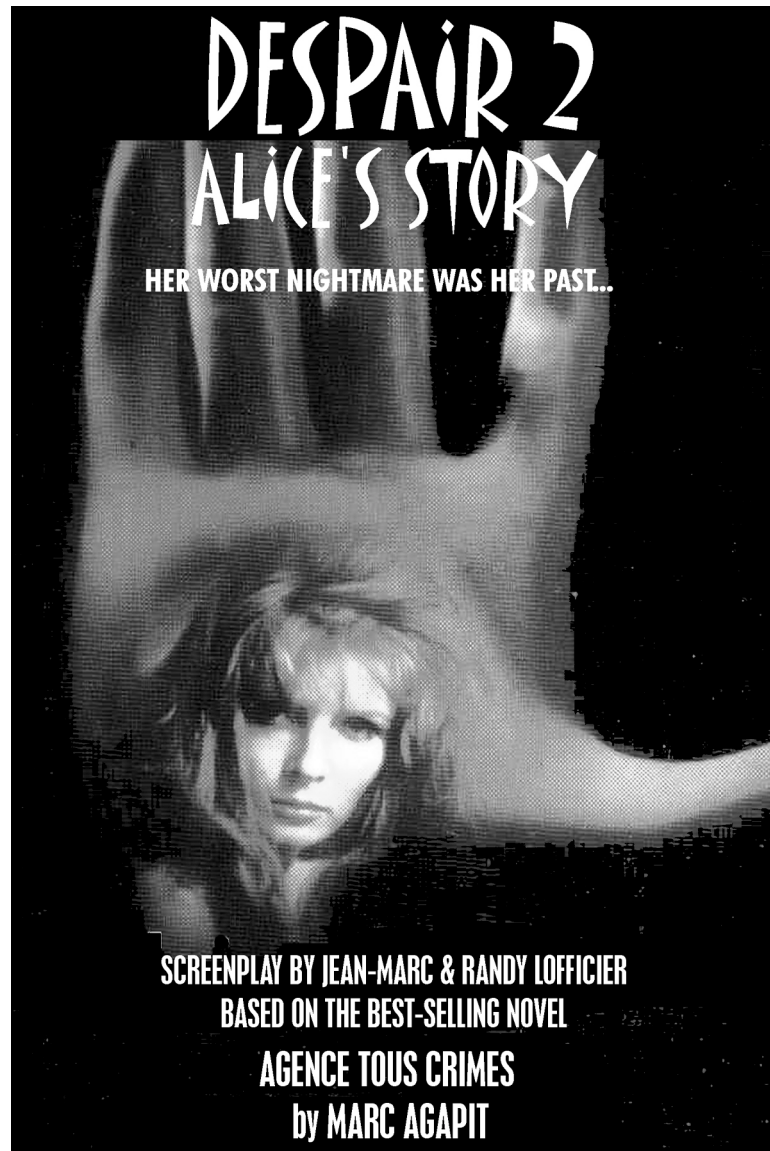
The producers of Despair have the option of licensing the publication of both the original Marc Agapit novel, and of a French graphic novel adaptation published in 1970, thereby increasing both the awareness of the product, as well as generating additional income from products with a long shelf-life.

With respect to a sequel, the producers have already started work on a story treatment entitled Despair 2: Alice's Story, based on another Marc Agapit novel, which tells the story of what happens to the character of Alice after the end of the first film. Alice's Story is another chilling Agapit story, with numerous horrific twists and that nightmarish sense of the surreal that is characteristic of his novels. Production on Despair 2: Alice's Story could begin immediately upon completion of Despair.

## THE SEQUEL

### DESPAIR 2: ALICE'S STORY

This is the initial promotional poster for Despair 2: Alice's Story, which follows the life of Alice, the film's protagonist's girlfriend, after the horrible events of Despair. Alice's Story is based on "Agence Tous Crimes" (*The All-Crime Agency*), another stunning novel of surreal horror and the macabre by Marc Agapit.



## INTERVIEW WITH MARC AGAPIT

by George NAHON

(Originally published in French in *Horizons du Fantastique* No. 13, 1970; translated by Randy Lofficier.)

**QUESTION:** What does the term "horror novel" mean to you?

**AGAPIT:** A horror novel is like any other adventure novel -- a mystery, a thriller, even a science fiction novel. The spirit of Fleuve Noir's "Angoisse" [terror] imprint demands that the adventure elements be mixed with a certain amount of mystery, weirdness, or fantasy. It can even be tinged with a little bit of gore, but not too much.

**Q:** How did you start writing horror novels?

**AGAPIT:** I suppose I always liked the genre. I had written some short stories before that were more or less fantasies, but then one day I decided to burn them all. Then, I saw the "Angoisse" books published by Fleuve Noir, and they interested me -- I became especially fond of Kurt Steiner's work. So I began to rework most of the ideas that I'd played with in those old stories. Although the fire had turned them to ash, a good number of these had remained well implanted in my memory. So in the end, I was able to rework them and give them an added, new dimension, that of novels.

I know that you really liked my book Opéra de la Mort (*Opera of Death*). When it came out, a film director thought it was very cinematic in its treatment. One of its most poetic passages was, in fact, a literal excerpt from one of my old stories that I turned into that novel. Originally, the young Japanese girl's name in that book was "Mo-Ma-Mi." A proof reader decided that that word wasn't any good and replaced it twenty times with "Monami," which made it lose its Japanese sound and made it sound like "mon ami" (*my friend*).

That reminds me of an anecdote: an old writer friend of mine bitterly complained to me that four times in his latest novel, a proof reader replaced an uncommon word with a more banal one, thinking that he, the author, had made a mistake! I forget now what they were. But, suppose that a proof reader had replaced "Ciron" (a Greek classic) in my novel Les Santons du Diable (*The Devil's Nativity*) with "Citron" (*lemon*), I would have been furious!

**Q:** How do you approach the writing of a new novel?

**AGAPIT:** The important thing, of course, is finding the subject. Then, if it really captures my interest, you could say that the book writes itself. I don't follow any particular methods or rules. It seems to me that I only have to lock into a credible dramatic plot, and then add some supernatural elements, more or less artificially, because I have a natural bent towards that sort of thing. I also try to respect the spirit of the imprint for which I write; if I add a little humor into my novels -- something which you've probably noticed -- it's usually involuntary, if not subconscious.

**Q:** What are your favorite themes?

**AGAPIT:** I don't think I have any. I find the themes I use according to the needs of a specific novel. All of the classic genre themes, like the Devil, vampires, ghouls, evil creatures, etc. are, and remain, eternal. Some of my themes firmly belong to the tradition of classic horror, like the shambling monsters from Les Santons du Diable, the necrophiliac from L'Appel de l'Abîme (*The Call of the Abyss*), and the serpent woman from La Guivre.

But I've tried to expand on other themes, from completely different sources. For example, I used Oedipus as a source of inspiration for Piège Infernal (*The Hell Trap*). L'Île Magique (*The Magic Island*) is a personal adaptation, or rather a reworking, of Shakespeare's famous play The Tempest. I remained faithful to his characters: the two demons Ariel and Caliban are there, but my epilog, in contrast to his play, is particularly tragic.

In Les Yeux Braqués (*The Staring Eyes*), I was inspired by the Frankenstein theme; in Monsieur Personne (*Mister Nobody*), by that of the Wandering Jew. One of my novels, La Nuit du Minotaure (*The Night of the Minotaur*) is partly inspired by Greek mythology. I should also mention that my other subjects of inspiration are death, reincarnation, love, passion, remorse, resentment, hate, revenge, jealousy, curses, persecution, mental cruelty -- really, all the sins of Mankind one can imagine; certainly the cruelest and most vile! All of these themes serve as the basic canvas that always underlies all of my works. And, as I said, I'm not even really aware of doing it deliberately. I've simply tried, within the framework of the horror novel, to revisit certain themes with a fresh eye and, as much as possible, give them a new, original spin.

**Q:** How do you create your characters?

**AGAPIT:** Sometimes, I create them as the need arises for the story that I want to tell, but most often, I create the story around a character that already exists in my mind. Sometimes, both the story and the characters are created together in my mind, without me being consciously aware of the process. At the end of the day, I suppose it's the same for every writer.

**Q:** Are your characters monsters?

**AGAPIT:** There is always at least one major character in each of my novels who is strongly portrayed as a monster. But one could really say the same thing about a number of characters that we meet in mainstream literature. In my opinion -- if I can be so bold to attempt such a comparison -- Molière's Miser and Balzac's Père Goriot are monsters, that is if one looks at them from a certain angle. Yet, Molière and Balzac are part of our classic literary tradition.

**Q:** Young children are always portrayed as sympathetic characters in your novels. For instance, I'm thinking of Octave, the young ghost with gentle thoughts in Greffe Mortelle (*Deadly Transplant*).

**AGAPIT:** Of course, my horror novels are filled with sympathetic characters! But you're right; it's often young children who fulfill this role. Why not? They contrast with other characters that have more dramatic parts to play. Besides, I've always instinctively tried to introduce a human factor you can empathize with in even the most fantastic of my works.

**Q:** Some of your characters are deeply misogynistic. The heroine of L'École des Monstres (*The School of Monsters*), a work with no fantasy elements, is typical of that vein.

**AGAPIT:** Yes, L'École des Monstres is not really fantasy... The strangeness of its atmosphere comes from the description of this sinister, run-down house, filled with a deep, suffocating

atmosphere of hatred, where the story is narrated in the first-person by that rapacious, old woman...

It's true that that novel paints a rather grim picture of a matriarchy. But I don't think of it as misogynistic in principle. My characters have to be caricaturally grotesque, excessive versions of themselves in order to contrast them with reality; it's what makes the book work as a horror novel, even though it contains no fantasy elements. Besides, the reader has the right to interpret it as he or she wishes. For example, you told me that you found certain passages of L'Île Magique erotic, and yet I can tell you that nothing of the sort was intended!

**Q:** Would you say that psychoanalysis is a source of inspiration for you? In particular, I'm referring to the dual natures of the characters that you used in La Bête Immonde (*The Awful Beast*, a.k.a. *Despair*), Les Yeux Braqués, and L'Île Magique.

**AGAPIT:** Not particularly. The only thing I try to do is offer the reader an extraordinary tale, using basic logic and pushing the characters to the extreme limits of their own insanity. I don't have a particular liking for dual personality stories. It's a theme just like any other.

**Q:** What about black humor?

**AGAPIT:** Yes, that is present in most of my works, especially in Puzzle Macabre. In that case, the subject easily lent itself to its use. It's the story of a man who lost his head!

You can also find some humor in Parade des Morts-Vivants (*Parade of the Living Dead*), which I conceived as a playful variation on the hoary myth of the haunted castle. I quite like black humor, but I don't systematically try to inject it in my books. It has to be almost unconscious and done very subtly to really work well.

**Q:** Tell us about the apocalyptic universe that serves as a background for Nuits Rouges (*Red Nights*).

**AGAPIT:** There's nothing particularly remarkable about the world of Nuits Rouges. I'm not the one who invented Satan, Hell and all its familiar demons. I'm also not the one who invented horror; it has existed for thousands of years. When one embarks upon a horror novel, it's important to make use of those archetypal elements that have always been with us.

I did have a problem with Nuits Rouges. One scene dealt with a vaguely homosexual scene -- a kiss exchanged between two boys. The publisher made me change it. They thought it was some kind of sinister attempt to undermine morality or something like that. So I rewrote that part while trying to remain faithful to my original idea.

**Q:** Some critics berate you for what they see as too much gore or graphic horror in your novels. For example, Complexes (*Complexes*) and La Ville Hallucinante (*The City of Hallucinations*). Can you explain your taste for the "grand guignol"?

**AGAPIT:** A horror novel, in my opinion, must contain elements that are truly horrifying. This feeling of horror, the thrill of fear, of terror, has to be visceral, at least within the context of a popular genre novel.

You say that some complained that Complexes had too much horror? Yet, the magazine Fiction (French edition of F & SF) praised me for the believability of its characters. At any rate, the story wasn't any more monstrous than some of the things one reads in the tabloids. As to La Ville Hallucinante, the action takes place in Hell, so you have to expect some scenes of pure horror.

**Q:** In your novels, do you genuinely try to terrify your readers?

**AGAPIT:** Actually, not at all. Fear is like happiness. Someone once said that one must not look for it in order to find it.

**Q:** Tell s about La Goule (*The Ghoul*), your most recent book.

**AGAPIT:** It deals with a sort of vampirism that I would call "cerebral," because everything happens in the hero's mind. It eventually ends in madness, with some erotic moments throughout. The Song of Songs from the Bible plays the role of a catalyst.

**Q:** What are your favorite books?

**AGAPIT:** The first two that I wrote, about twelve years ago, Agence Tous Crimes (*All-Crime Agency*) and Greffe Mortelle. The latter was so powerful that Jean Cocteau himself wrote an elegiac letter to my publisher. My fans generally prefer Agence Tous Crimes, but real horror *connoisseurs* prefer the second one.

# ROY KNYRIM

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## DIRECTING

<u>DEMONS AT THE DOOR</u> —feature 2001	Mangy Dog Pictures
<u>ICP 6<sup>th</sup> JOKER'S CARD</u> —30 second National Spot 2002	SOTA Productions
<u>INSANE CLOWN POSSE CONCERT</u> —Home Video 2002	Psychopathic Records
<u>INSANE CLOWN POSSE VIOLENT J SEMINAR</u> —Home Video 2002	Psychopathic Records
<u>JCW WRESTLING Viol. 3</u> —Home Video 2002	Psychopathic Records

## FILM CREDITS—Make up Effects

<u>HAUNTED LIGHTHOUSE</u>	LookOut Entertainment	Joe Dante, Dir
<u>Scorched</u>	Juniper Productions	Gavin Grazer, Dir
<u>HALLOWEENTOWN 2</u>	Disney Channel	Mary Lambert, Dir
<u>HOUNDED</u>	Disney Channel	Neal Israel, Dir
<u>BlackMask 2</u>	Film Workshop	Tsui Hark, Dir
<u>ELIAN GONZALES STORY</u>	My New Film Inc	Chris Lietch, Dir
<u>WISHMASTER 3</u>	Artisan/Blue Rider	Chris Angel, Dir
<u>WISHMASTER 4</u>	Artiann/Blue Rider	Chris Angel, Dir
<u>JACK FROST 2</u>	Cypress Willow	Michael Cooney, Dir
<u>G-MEN FROM HELL</u>	Sawmill Entertainment	Crist. Coppola, Dir
<u>BLESSED ART THOU</u>	Yucca St	Tim Disney, Director
<u>HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL</u>	Warner Bros/Dark Castle	Bill Malone, Dir
<u>GODS AND MONSTERS</u>	Lions Gate	Bill Condon, Dir
<u>THE PROPHECY 3</u>	NEO/Dimension Films	Joel Soisson, Prod
<u>CHILDREN OF THE CORN 6</u>	BlueRider/Dimension	Jeff Geoffrey, Prod
<u>DREAM HOUSE</u>	UPN/Singer White	Graeme Campbell, Dir

<u>HALLOWEEN TOWN</u>	Disney/Singer White	Duwayne Dunham, Dir
<u>WISHMASTER II</u>	LIVE Entertainment	Jack Sholder, Dir
<u>MODERN VAMPIRES</u>	Storm Entertainment	Richard Elfman, Dir
<u>BREAST MEN</u>	HBO Pictures	Larry O'Neil, Dir
<u>THE PROPHECY 2</u>	NEO/Dimension	Greg Spence, Dir
<u>JINGLE ALL THE WAY</u>	Twentieth Century Fox	Brian Levant, Dir
<u>SPAWN</u>	New Line Cinema	Mark Dippe, Dir
<u>PHANTOMS</u>	NEO/Dimension	Joe Chapelle, Dir
<u>CHILDREN OF THE CORN 5</u>	BlueRider/Dimension	Ethan Wiley, Dir
<u>THE PROGENY</u>	Progeny Films	Brian Yuzna, Dir
<u>INDIAN IN THE CUPBOARD</u>	Paramount	Frank Oz, Dir
<u>HUMANOIDS FROM THE DEEP</u>	Concorde New Horizons	Jeff Yonis, Dir
<u>ED WOOD</u>	Casual Pictures	Tim Burton,
<u>CHILDREN OF THE CORN 4</u>	Dimension Films	Greg Spence, Dir
<u>CAMPFIRE TALES</u>	Campfire LLC	Larry Weinberg, Prod
<u>NIGHT OF THE DEMONS 3</u>	Blue Rider Pictures	Jimmy Kaufman, Dir
<u>UNCLE SAM</u>	Uncle Sam Productions	Bill Lustig, Dir
<u>AMITYVILLE DOLLHOUSE</u>	Zeta Entertainment	Steve White, Dir
<u>FIST OF THE NORTHSTAR</u>	Overseas Film Group	Tony Randel, Dir
<u>OPPOSITE CORNERS</u>	Opposite Corner Productions	Louis D'Esposito, Dir
<u>CLIFFORD</u>	Dinosaur Productions	Paul Flaherty, Dir
<u>THE HOWLING 7</u>	LIVE Entertainment	Roger Nall, Dir
<u>FREDDY'S DEAD: THE FINAL NIGHTMARE</u>	New Line Cinema	Rachael Talalay, Dir
<u>DARKMAN</u>	Universal Pictures	Sam Raimi, Dir
<u>SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION</u>		Tobe Hooper, Dir
<u>THE ABYSS</u>	Twentieth Century Fox	James Cameron, Dir
<u>STEEL AND LACE</u>	Fries Entertainment	Ernest Farino, Dir
<u>EL MARIACHI</u>	Columbia	Robert Rodriguez, Dir
<u>CIRCUITRY MAN 2</u>	IRS Media	Steven Lovy and Robert Lovy, Dir



<u>RAVEN DANCE</u>	Orphan Eyes	Jimmy Lifton, Dir
<u>MIDNIGHT KISS</u>	Rosen/Bender Productions	Joel Bender, Dir
<u>ASSAULT WITH A DEADLY WEAPON</u>	Force Majeure Productions	Brad Southwick, Prod
<u>AUNTIE LEES MEAT PIES</u>	Steiner Films	Joe Robertson, Dir
<u>TOXIC AVENGER 2</u>	Troma	Lloyd Kaufman, Dir
<u>TOXIC AVENGER 3</u>	Troma	Lloyd Kaufman, Dir

TELEVISION

<u>POST MORTEM</u>	FOX/	TV Pilot
<u>PROFILER</u>	NBC	Season 2 and 3
<u>SON OF THE BEACH</u>	Loch Lomond Ent	Series
<u>THE PRETENDER</u>	Pretender Prods	Several Episodes
<u>WEIRD SCIENCE</u>	Universal	Entire run
<u>EARTH 2</u>	Amblin	Several episodes
<u>VITAL SIGNS</u>	Bonnie View Productions/ABC	Series
<u>MIGHTY MORPHIN' POWER RANGERS</u>	SABAN Entertainment	Series

COMMERCIALS

<u>COCA COLA/GRANDE BLUE</u>	TRAKTOR	
<u>YAHOO</u>	TOOL TLC	
<u>TOYOTA</u>	BFCs Inc.	
<u>AIRWALK</u>	Tate and Partners	Dir - Baker Smith
<u>GLENDALE FEDERAL</u>	BFCs Inc.	Dir - Barry Sonnenfeld
<u>DURACELL</u>	Eye Patch	
<u>3DO ARMY MEN</u>		Dir-Pat Sherman
<u>UNICARE</u>		Dir-Gerald V. Casale
<u>SEAWORLD</u>	Palomar Pictures	Dir-Pat Sherman

MUSIC VIDEOS & STAGE SHOWSPOWERMAN 5000

"When Worlds Collide"

HEPBURN-BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER

STANDARD

Dir - Mark Gerard

SILVERCHAIR

"Freak" ,

"Cemetery"

Commotion Pictures

Dir- Gerald V. Casale

WYCLEF JEAN

PROPOGANDA

ICE CUBE

FM ROCKS

CRYSTAL METHOD

"Name of the Game"

Palomar Pictures

INSANE CLOWN POSSE

"Dark Lotus"

Tour

PsychoPathic Records

GEORGE MICHAEL

"Freek"

Mega Palomar

**ERIC MILLER**  
(323) 855-7607

**MOTION PICTURE PRODUCTION & DEVELOPMENT**

**Production Experience**

(Feature Films unless otherwise noted)

"BROKE SKY"	Producer/Line Producer	Buzzard Films LLC
"DEMONS AT THE DOOR"	Producer/Production Manager	SOTA F/X Productions
"COLLEGE"	Producer/Production Manager	Mortarboard Prods LLC
"ALL AMERICAN BOY" (Spec pilot)	Producer/Shared Writer/UPM.	Max Pix Inc.
"DEEP FREEZE"	Line Producer	Regent Entertainment
"BEANSTALK"	Line Producer	Moonbeam Ent.
"TESLA" (Documentary)	Line Producer	Mid-City Pictures
"VICTORIA WOODHULL" (Doc.)	Line Producer	Mid-City Pictures
"JUST CAN'T GET ENOUGH"	Production Manager	Regent Entertainment
"ATT/ROADRUNNER" (commercials)	Production Manager	Mental Pictures
"ROMEO MUST DIE" (Title Sequence)	Production Manager	Picture Mill
"TOON DISNEY" (Idents/Bumpers)	Production Manager	Picture Mill
"THE STRIP" (TV Series Title Seq.)	Production Manager	Picture Mill
"WINGS: THRILL OF FLIGHT"	Production Manager	Iwerks/Discovery Ch.
"NEW ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD" (7 one-hour episodes shot in Lithuania)	Production Manager	Warner Bros. Int.
"2 DIE 4" (Feature-pre-prod. only)	Production Manager	Adventuress Prods.
"BEACH BABES FROM BEYOND"	Production Manager	Torchlight Ent.
"CIRCUITRY MAN II"	Production Manager	I.R.S. Media
"SKETCHERS" (2 commercial spots)	Production Manager	Wolfcrest Ent.

**SUPERVISING PRODUCER/PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR:** Staff position for Full Moon Entertainment. Domestic & International feature productions. 1994-1995.

"MAGIC ISLAND"	Shot in MEXICO.
"SPIRIT OF THE NIGHT"	Shot in ROMANIA.
"LEAPING LEPRECUANS I & II"	Shot in ROMANIA.
"JOSH KIRBY, TIME WARRIOR"	Shot in ROMANIA.
"PRIMEVALS"	Shot in ITALY, ROMANIA.
"DENIM AND LACE 2000"	Shot in ROMANIA.
"CASTLE QUEEN"	Shot in ROMANIA.

**TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR:** For over 30 Features & reshoots. List on request.

**PRODUCTION COORDINATOR:** For numerous Features & Commercials. List on request.

**LOCATION MANAGMENT:** For various Features & Television. List on request.

**ERIC MILLER**  
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**MOTION PICTURE PRODUCTION & DEVELOPMENT**

**Development/Screenwriting Experience**

**DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT: 1990-1992**

**MAX PIX INC.** In charge of: Script acquisitions; story editing, pitching projects to investors. Interfaced with agencies, writers, actors, financiers. Supervised writers during re-writes.

**SCREENWRITER (Produced):**

"THE SHADOW MEN" (written with Justin Stanley). Feature Film, Sci-Fi/Action.

Promark/Spectacor Entertainment. Starring Eric Roberts, Sherilyn Fenn. 1997.

"JACK ARMSTRONG, ALL AMERICAN BOY" (with John Schouweiler & Paul Wilson). Spec Series Pilot, Comedy. 1998.

**SCREENWRITER (Unproduced, paid writing jobs):**

"CARNEVIL": Feature Screenplay. Horror. S.O.T.A. Productions.

"PENNANCE": Feature Screenplay. Sci-Fi/Action. S.O.T.A. Productions.

"CYCLES": Feature Screenplay (with Pat Shiffar). Thriller. Max Pix Inc.

"JUNGLE BOOGIE": Feature Screenplay (w/ Pat Shiffar). Action. Max Pix Inc.

"WHERE'S MURRAY ROSS?": Feature Screenplay Re-Write. Romantic Comedy. (Adaptation of novel by Michael Zatarain) Under option to Westchester Films.

"FREEZETOWN": (Re-Write of John Nathan Goodhertz). Sci-Fi/Drama. Max Pix Inc.

"THE EXTRACTION": Feature Screenplay Re-Write. Action. Cinema Home Video Productions.

Also paid to write screenplay outlines & treatments for various companies.

**SCREENWRITER (Speculative Screenplays):**

"HUNTERS": (Action/Horror) Under Option to Dan Fried Productions.

"THE CLEANERS" (Black Comedy/Action)

"WHATEVER HAPPENED TO UNCLE ED?" (Horror)

"BLACK DRAGON": (Sci-Fi/Action)

"HMO": (Comedy)

**ASSISTANT TO PRODUCERS/DIRECTOR: 1990.**

**CINEMA HOME VIDEO INC/MAX PIX INC.** Assisted producers and director in various development, production, writing, and office capacities on feature films "PUPPET MASTER II & III", "TRANCERS II & III", "UNDER SURVEILLANCE", and projects in development.

## JAMES ARMSTRONG

### Film and Television Credits:

Outriders	Recurring / Sergeant Geoff Ward	Drama / Southern Star / Nine Network Australia
Boot Up	Lead / Anchor Host	TV Magazine / 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Fox / Network 10
Loserhead	Lead / Loserhead *	Comedy Series / The Comedy Channel / Foxtel
Breakers	Guest Star / Mr. Truscott	Drama / Screen Time Prod./Network 10 Australia
Big Sky	Recurring Guest Star / Steve Walsh	Drama / West Street Prod./ Network 10 Australia
Good Guys Bad Guys	Recurring Guest Star / Sebastian Gibb	Drama / Simpson-Le Mesurier / Nine Network
Exile	Lead / The Master Assassin	Emma Freeman / Australian Film Commission
Mercury	Recurring Guest Star / Mitch Blake	Drama / ABC Television / Melbourne, Australia
Denton	Series Regular / Sketch Comedian	Comedy Variety / Eastway Communications
Halifax F.P.	Supporting / Club Announcer	Feature Film / Simpson- Le Mesurier
Undying	Lead / Davis Maxwell	Feature Film / Swinburne Films
Domestic Bliss	Lead / Dave	Short Film / U.T.S / Perth, Australia
No Take Aways	Lead / Danny Cool	Short Film / U.T.S / Perth, Australia
The Shadow	Lead / Rick Slime	Film / WACAE TV / Perth, Australia
Australia's Most Wanted	Co-Star / John Turner	TV Magazine / Grundy Television / Perth
Two Men Running	Lead / Prisoner F *	Feature Film / Elizabeth Jolley
Chances & Choices	Lead / Steve Bolton	Mini Series / West Ed Media / Perth, Australia
Boobalooha Beach	Lead / Tab Avalon	TV Comedy / Curtin TV // Perth, Australia
Challenge	Co-Star / Charles Winston Jr.	Mini Series / Nine Network Australia
News	Supporting / Diplomatic Secretary	Feature Film / Rainer Erler

### Theatre Credits:

Convict Streak	Lead / Marcus	Carlton Courthouse Theatre / Melbourne
Seeing Things	Lead / Randy Tucker	Barry Lowe / Edge Theatre / Sydney
Five Go Mad In Dorset	Lead / Dick	Comic Strip / Harold Park Comedy Theatre
Les Liaisons Dangereuses	Lead / Le Vicomte De Valmont	Christopher Hampton / Iron Cove Theatre
Bouncers	Lead / Judd	John Godber / Harold Park Comedy Theatre
Much Ado About Nothing	Ensemble / Borachio	William Shakespeare / Figtree Theatre, Sydney
Away	Lead / Harry	Michael Gow / Les Solomon / Stables Theatre
Animal Farm	Lead / Squealer	George Orwell / Iron Cove Theatre Co, Sydney
King Lear	Co-Lead / Edmund	William Shakespeare / Ensemble Theatre
Bush Rangers Christmas Eve	Lead / Matt Mullarky	Kylie Tenant / Going for the One Theatre Co.
A Piece Of Cheese	Lead / Albert Mouse	The Blue Room / Perth
Romeo and Juliet	Ensemble / Mercutio	William Shakespeare / Subiaco Theatre / Perth
Sunday Costs Five Pesos	Lead / Fidel Duran	The Blue Room / Perth
The Bewitched	Lead / Almirante De Castille	Peter Barnes / Hayman Theatre / Perth
The Man In The Moon	Lead / Man In The Moon	Pantomime / Tony Nichols / Hayman Theatre
The House Family Play	Lead / Peter House	Luke Devonish / Hayman Theatre / Perth
A Phoenix Too Frequent	Lead / Tegeus-Chromis	Christopher Fry / Hayman Theatre / Perth
Red Poetry	Lead / David La Rouge	Tony Nichols / Hayman Theatre / Perth
Black Comedy	Ensemble / Colonel Melkett	Peter Shaffer / Hayman Theatre / Perth

### Awards:

- 1988 Best Actor - Western Australian Film Festival - Prisoner F in "Two Men Running"
- 1999 Best Comedy Actor - Independent Filmmaker Awards - Loserhead in "Loserheads' Date"
- 1999 Best Comedy Actor - Buzz Film Festival Awards - Loserhead in "Loserheads' Date"

### Education and Training:

- 2001 - 2002 Advanced scene work & technique at The Beverly Hills Playhouse, Los Angeles
- 1995 - 1998 Advanced voice, movement and improvisation at The Actors Centre, Sydney
- 1992 Master of Arts in Theatre Studies at University of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1991 Graduated Multi-Camera Acting Course from Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, Perth
- 1988 Graduated Bachelor of Performing Arts from Curtin University, Perth
- 1985 Graduated Acting Course from McGann Performance Academy, Perth