

DAVID GILER

Producer

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David Giler, who wrote scripts for *MYRA BRECKINRIDGE*, *THE PARALLAX VIEW* and *FUN WITH DICK AND JANE*, always seemed to get his office located down the hall from scriptwriter Walter Hill, and the two became good friends while they toiled over their respective scenarios. Each had a mutual friend in producer Gordon Carroll, and a lot of casual talk about forming their own company eventually evolved into Brandywine Productions, an association of which *ALIEN* is the first result. Carroll brings to the company considerable experience as a line producer, and both Hill and Giler contribute their expertise at screenwriting to find and develop properties for filming. Hill and Giler collaborated on the shooting script for *ALIEN*, based on a script submitted by Dan O'Bannon.

Giler came to filmmaking by way of television, doing scripts for *THE GALLANT*

by Glenn Lovell

David Giler



MEN, KRAFT THEATRE, BURKE'S LAW, THE MAN FROM U.N.C.L.E and THE GIRL FROM U.N.C.L.E, plus many others. He directed his first feature, THE BLACK BIRD, from his own script in 1975.

Who at Brandywine Productions saw to it that the ALIEN script was given serious consideration at Fox?

Walter Hill probably had more to do with getting the O'Bannon script launched than anyone. Mark Haggard at Goldwyn Studios asked him to read it, and Walter championed the project from then on. It was a bone skeleton of a story then. Really terrible. Just awful. You couldn't give it away. It was amateurishly written, although the central idea was sound. Basically, it was a pastiche of Fifties movies. We—Walter Hill and I—took it and rewrote it completely, added Ash and the robot subplot. We added the cat, Jones. We also changed the characters around. We fleshed it out, basically. If we had shot the original O'Bannon script, we would have had a remake of IT! THE TERROR FROM BEYOND SPACE.

You mentioned that your rewrite changed some of the characters around. Could you be more specific?

Yes, of course. We made the crewmembers working class types. We made two of them women, thereby adding the feminist elements everyone is talking about. We gave the characters texture, functions. In O'Bannon's draft, they were totally different, military types. All men. We changed all the dialogue. Every word of it. Nothing is left of O'Bannon's draft. Not a word of his dialogue is left in the film.

In interviews just prior to ALIEN's release, O'Bannon argued just the opposite—that you guys took a nifty, low-budget idea and "inflated" it to the point that it lost all impact.

I would expect him to say that. He's only out for himself.

Why this ongoing feud?

There's no feud. O'Bannon's a guy trying to make a buck. He's capitalizing on the whole thing as much as he can. I can understand that. But we haven't been fighting or arguing over the phone or anything like that. We bought his script a couple of years ago. That was the end of my association with him.

What about reports of O'Bannon being on the set, working with the actors, and changing major sections of dialogue?

He was there for a while, yes. That was in his contract; that he could hang around during production. That's why we could buy the script so cheap. We optioned it from him for \$1000. Later, he wanted every credit in the book. He wanted art director credit, director of special effects. He wanted a lot of stuff. Thankfully, the unions don't permit that kind of thing. Finally, he settled for "Visual Design Consultant," whatever that is. But I can tell you he didn't change a thing when he was on the set. By the time I arrived in England, O'Bannon was gone. He was in disgrace. He was involved in a big foul-up. He was supposed to have done something with the computer read-outs. They finally had to be redone.

Why, if O'Bannon's contributions were so meagre, did the Writer's Guild award him sole screenplay credit? It doesn't make sense.

You're right, it doesn't. I can't go into what transpired with the Writer's Guild right



Sigourney Weaver in Hill and Giler's "Sleeping Beauty" ending.

now. There isn't time. We'd be here all day. All I can say is it's a totally ridiculous and arbitrary process. You just can't tell with the Writer's Guild. In the end, the plot in O'Bannon's ALIEN and the one is ours are the same. Basically the same. And yet, they're as different as night and day. It's something subtler than the Writer's Guild is equipped to handle. Though the storylines are basically the same, what happens to the characters has been changed drastically. That is what has been altered.

Do you feel ALIEN was influenced by STAR WARS?

ALIEN is to STAR WARS what The Rolling Stones are to the Beatles; it's a nasty STAR WARS. We see it as a suspense-horror film. It's a richly textured film, thanks to H. R. Giger's work. We received an extra \$2.5 million from 20th Century-Fox on the basis of his storyboard ideas alone. That's how important he was to this project. His designs for the derelict ship and the alien were based on flesh, bone and machine—as if machinery were organic and could grow. It's what he calls biomechanics. We used a 6' 10" native of the Gold Coast inside the monster suit designed by Giger. We used animal and human sounds mixed for the alien's 'voice.' Composer Jerry Goldsmith added a conch sound. A local fish restaurant supplied the innards and viscera of the crustacean-like specimen examined by Ash (Ian Holm). The "chest birth" was simulated for the actors by surprising them with a shower of animal entrails. That's why their looks of disgust and horror are so real. They had no idea what we were going to shoot that day.

You also mentioned the title IT! THE TERROR FROM BEYOND SPACE.

We only began to hear about IT! THE TERROR towards the end of production. I haven't seen it, but I know of it. We were convinced we were doing something new stylistically, even if the basic outlines were the same. I gather the alien-hiding-on-a-space-ship idea is pretty much a classic premise with science fiction writers, like the gunfight in the western. So the similarities you refer to

didn't bother us.

Rumor has it the copyright owners of IT! THE TERROR FROM BEYOND SPACE are talking about suing Fox over similarities between the two films.

I haven't heard anything about it. Nothing at all. The first I heard about the similarities of the two films was from you. I know some of the more esoteric science fiction magazines have commented on tie-ins between IT! THE TERROR and ALIEN. But I'm not a regular reader of these magazines. Personally, I think it's a question you ought to address to O'Bannon and Ronald Shusett. If somebody is responsible for stealing the idea, it's them. They signed a paper saying it was an original idea. If it isn't, they lied to us. It wouldn't surprise me at all to learn that O'Bannon stole the idea, I must tell you.

Was the cocoon scene cut from the film because it received a negative response from the Dallas, Texas preview audience?

No, not at all. That sequence was taken out before the film was shown anywhere. So no one except us has seen the cocoon footage. It was removed because it simply didn't work. It interfered with the pacing of the film. It looked terrible, awful. So instead of re-doing it, we decided to write it off as a bad idea.

Would you consider pulling a 'Steven Spielberg' and re-release ALIEN with the missing eleven minutes?

No. It runs the way we like it. Sure, the extra footage would fill in some blanks for those who read the novel. But it would, we believe, interfere with the pacing of the thing. Look, I wrote the cocoon scene, and I'd love to see it replaced. Basically, it shows Ripley discovering Dallas and Brett in the alien's lair. Harry Dean Stanton has almost been reduced to egg-shape. Skeritt is still alive but beginning to change. He begs her to kill him. She blasts him with a flame thrower. We didn't show him burning, just a closeup of Ripley pulling the trigger. The horror comes from the idea of her torturing her closest friend.

Doesn't the removal of the cocoon sequence with

the egg make the thrust of the film's ad campaign a bit obscure?

No, I don't think so. First of all, the ad people never saw the film with that sequence in it. In fact, they worked up the present ads before they saw any of the film. As far as we're concerned, it's just an esoteric image. It's not supposed to be specific at all; the egg is a metaphor for the alien. A very general symbol for it. Originally, we had a Giger egg that we liked very much for the ad prototype. But the ad people finally couldn't reproduce it well enough. We showed them Giger's egg, but they ignored it and came up with their own version of it.

Hasn't anyone expressed confusion over not finding the ad egg in the film?

No one has mentioned it—except, of course, you.

Do you feel the success of ALIEN, with its R rating, validates the concept of "adult" science fiction?

I couldn't say. I really have no idea. Of course, I would like to think we have aimed for a more intelligent science fiction audience than many of the Fifties' grade-B science fiction films. So in that respect I would hope any breakthrough made by ALIEN will be reflected in future science fiction films. I do know, though, that if we'd have gone for a PG rating, we'd have had to soften this movie. The same with THE EXORCIST, I suppose. That had some really strong stuff, too. I mean JAWS certainly should have been an R. It was really violent. I mean that opening shark attack and all. There's a lot more blood in JAWS—especially in Quint's attack—than in our picture.

Wasn't Fox leery of an R rating, and wasn't there pressure to tone down the violence, gruesomeness, blood and gore, and sex?

No, just the opposite. They weren't leery of the R rating. Everybody knew from the start we'd get an R. It was always assumed. The rating aspect of our film has been inflated all out of proportion. I'm asked more about that than anything else. I can't figure out why.

Wasn't Walter Hill originally scheduled to direct? Does he have any regrets now?

No, he doesn't regret not directing. He

doesn't regret it at all. The reports have been that he stepped down because of a schedule conflict with THE WARRIORS, which he finally directed. Again, this is a media misconception. Conflict or no conflict, science fiction really isn't Walter's bag. He has no particular interest in science fiction. Never has. Nor is he particularly interested in terror. Of course, I may be absolutely wrong. He may call me tomorrow and say, "What are you talking about?" But I get that impression.

What exactly was Hill's contribution to the actual shooting of ALIEN?

A certain amount of Hill's contribution was flat engineer work—editing, casting, etc. But he wasn't at the studio at all during the shooting. His responsibilities were mostly in the preliminary stages. He had an awful lot to do with selecting the actors. We talked about it all the time. Though he wasn't involved in the actual shooting of ALIEN, his contributions, in my opinion, are not to be underestimated.

To what extent were you involved in the physical production of ALIEN?

I was involved in all the preproduction work. All the casting and that stuff. When they started getting behind in production, I joined them in London. I was there from late August [1978] to the finish—straight through the editing. I worked side-by-side with Scott in the editing room. Ridley and I got along very well.

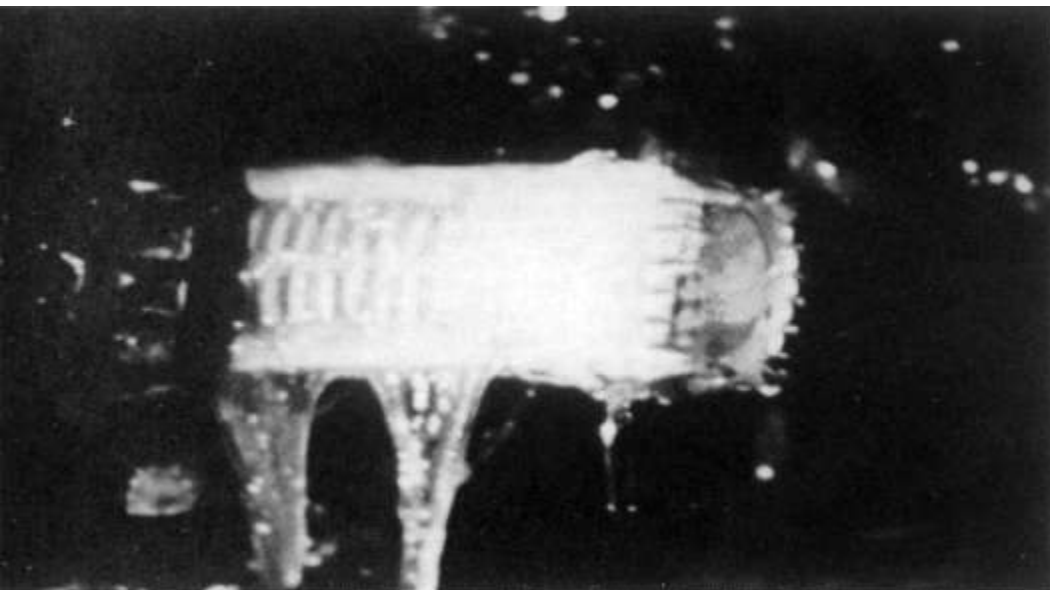
The viewer is led in the end to think the cat has been taken over by the alien. Ripley's foolhardy return to save Jones, then the emphasis on the pet being safely stowed in the shuttle supports this suspicion. Did you ever consider going with this trick ending?

Not really. We wanted a SLEEPING BEAUTY ending. We thought it would be better to have a more lyrical ending, instead of going with the stock Hitchcockian twist.

And you've left yourselves open for a sequel. . .

Absolutely. We're involved in preliminary discussion right now. But it's still too early to say how it will unfold. Hill and I are working on it. I know a lot of people who think we intended the closeups of the cat in the shuttle as a hook for the sequel. Not so. It probably won't have anything to do with the cat. •

The protruding tongue of Carlo Rambaldi's mechanical Alien head in operation.



H. R. GIGER

Alien Design

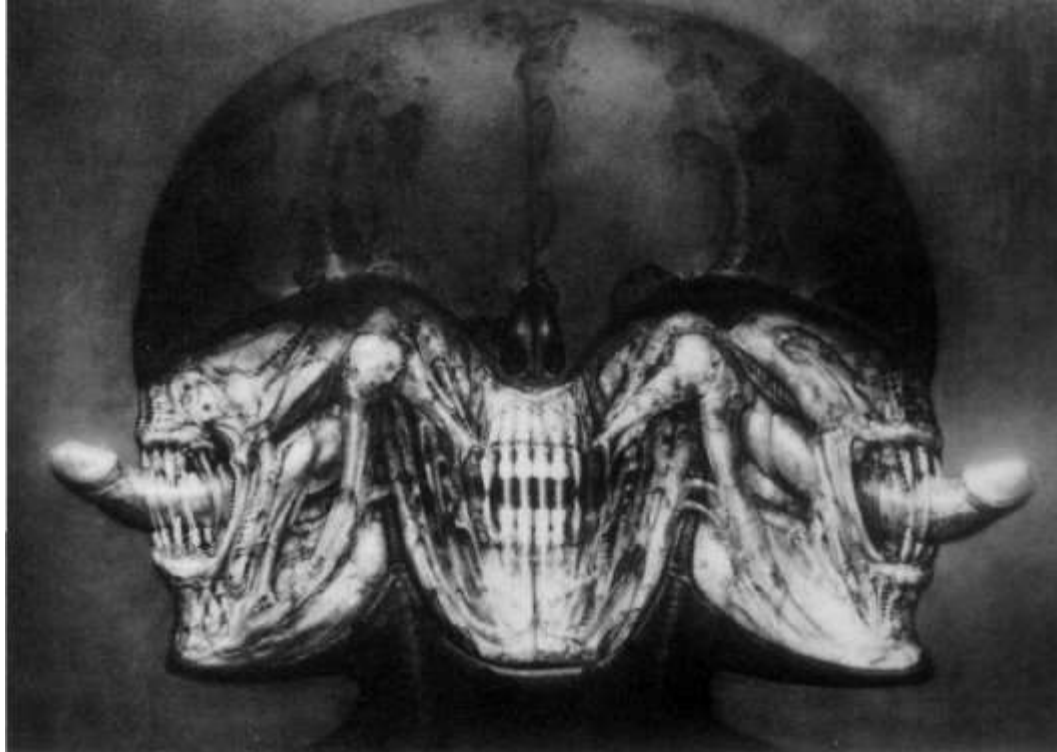
"I think that, for an artist, film is the most terrific medium. I like seeing my work in three dimensions."

Many articles published in the press said that Giger had horrible nightmares while working on ALIEN, because he was haunted by the monster. "That's pure rubbish," says Michele, dubbed Mia, Giger's secretary-girlfriend-model-muse. "But one thing is true," she says, "He used to have nightmares and would even talk in his sleep because of the terrible pressure imposed on him by the production." Joining the ALIEN team must have brought, indeed, quite a new pace to Giger's life. For not only is his home situated in a particularly quiet district of Zurich, it is also conceived, 'designed,' as an isolated place. Very few windows, if any, especially in the atelier, and one dominant color: black. Giger and Mia are dressed in black. The ceiling is painted black, and so is the furniture. The walls of the living room offer lighter hues, however, as they are the support of Giger's most famous paintings, like **The Spell**.

Despite this Necronomicon's decor, and though he confesses with a smile he wouldn't want to belong in his paintings as a character, Giger's declared aim is not to disturb people, but to give them peace. He is rather a nice person who often laughs and smiles. At the time of our interview in July, Giger was busy preparing the publication of **Giger's ALIEN**, largely based on Mia's photographs taken on the set. This report and analysis of Giger's part in the making of ALIEN will be published in November by Big O Publishing, London, in association with Sphinx Verlag, Basel.

Giger was brought into ALIEN by Dan O'Bannon, probably O'Bannon's greatest contribution to the project. Giger had met O'Bannon once, briefly, in Paris, while both worked for Alexander Jodorowsky on his aborted film of Frank Herbert's DUNE. Says Giger, "I haven't been contacted by Jodorowsky since. He just sent back my slides and sketches, but never paid me for them!" O'Bannon called Giger from Los Angeles in August 1977 and asked him to design the monsters for ALIEN. "He promised to pay me in advance," laughs Giger, "so I agreed. I made three paintings and some sketches, based on the story he told me over the phone. I liked it particularly because I found it was in the vein of Lovecraft, one of my greatest

by Frederic Albert Levy



About The Cover

Our cover reproduces only a portion of Necronomicon II (shown above), a 70x100 cm painting made by Giger in 1976 and published in H. R. Giger's Necronomicon, the book which served as director Ridley Scott's inspiration for ALIEN. The artwork suggests the gaping jaws of horror, and seemingly eye-less, dome-headed visage which developed into the film's Alien. The side views suggest the action of the protruding tongue and the appearance of the jaw musculature developed by Carlo Rambaldi. Says Giger, "Ridley Scott often referred to my Necronomicon book to show people how they should work."

sources of inspiration. In the beginning, for example, the eggs were in an old pyramid. But the producers didn't believe in me yet. Someone reportedly said, 'There are fifty Gigers around town.' Only when Ridley Scott was chosen to direct did I become really involved—he had been fascinated by my book **Necronomicon**." On February 8, 1978, Scott met Giger at his home in Zurich, and the artist began his design work for the picture in earnest, later traveling to Shepperton Studios in London to work intensively on the film's sets, miniatures and special effects.

"As for DUNE," says Giger, "I haven't given up on the project. Dino DeLaurentiis contacted me to design some creatures for his FLASH GORDON. I turned the offer down, because I do not know the world of FLASH GORDON very well, and because I just couldn't start working on a new film right away, after the exhausting experience of ALIEN. But I let him know that I would be interested in participating in his production of DUNE, now that he has acquired the rights, and is said to be looking for a director to start filming next year."

What elements in the film did you design?

I designed the alien planet, the landscape, which I made out of a mixture of bones, tubes, technical stuff, in order to achieve what I call my **biomechanics**. I made the derelict spacecraft, interior and exterior, the cockpit, and under this derelict ship, the egg silo. Originally, as I told you before, the story

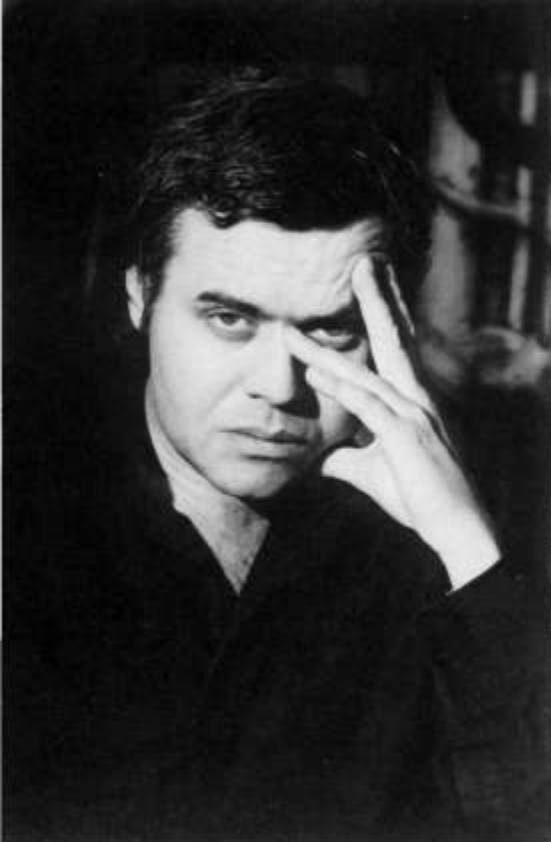
was different and the eggs were in a pyramid. But this was thought too close to the Egyptian myths, and we had to combine the derelict ship and the hatchery silo. I thought we could place the egg silo under the ship, a bit like termites do. I also made the egg, and the cocoon. But the cocoon ended up on the cutting room floor.

I designed the three alien forms: the "face hugger" [which attaches to John Hurt's head], the "chest burster" and the big alien. I gave the first one a tail the shape of a spring, because its function commanded that it could jump out at the face, and also two hands so it could grab a hold of the head. Ridley Scott took some inspiration for the second beast from a painting by Francis Bacon, where the face of a character is limited to a mouth, as this second alien has literally to eat its way out of the chest. The big problem was that of the monster. More often than not, in horror films, they show the monster for much too long, and once you have seen it, you can leave the theatre. There is no point in watching on. And Ridley Scott would often say, "I don't want to have a movie monster." So we decided to show the monster very briefly, detail by detail, reserving a full view for the end. Otherwise, the film may well have been dull.

Was the idea of showing the monster only fleetingly due to any aesthetic conception of yours?

No, that played no part in the decision; I give a "full view" of my monsters in my paintings. It was not conditioned by the story, either, as, when at one point a character is killed by the alien, he can see him completely. But I totally agree with this 'cover-up' policy. I had very long discussions with Ridley Scott, and for us, the monster undoubtedly was the most important aspect of the film. We decided not to show him, in order to keep some tension in the spectator. To create a final surprise. And I have heard that some people went to see ALIEN up to six times with the mere purpose of figuring out, of seeing what the monster is like.

Did you work personally as much on the alien which attaches to John Hurt's face as on the full-



H. R. Giger

grown alien?

No, that was mainly Roger Dicken's work. I had made a plaster-cast for this alien at the same time he made one. But I did not go on with my work on that. I simply did not have the time.

Did you work with Dicken at all?

No, I didn't work with him. Originally, he wanted to build the monster; but when I saw the kind of things he had done, I thought he couldn't do the monster, and I decided that I should build it myself. Roger Dicken is very gifted for models of real, or rather, **known** animals, such as dinosaurs, but not for imaginary creatures. Let's say, at least, that in this domain, he does not work in my direction. I must say, at the beginning, I was not too satisfied with his work, but, with director Ridley Scott, I supervised him, and I was finally entirely happy with what he turned out. He worked from my drawings, and I met with him quite a few times, with director Ridley Scott, but what we may have done together was nothing more than corrections. He also made the "chest burster," and his experience enabled him to achieve very good results for the animation of this third monster, mostly air-controlled.

How did Carlo Rambaldi become involved with the "Alien Head Effects"?

After STAR WARS, everybody was busy and working on different films, and they just could not find a monster-maker for ALIEN. Finally, producer Gordon Carroll came up with Carlo Rambaldi, who worked on KING-KONG, and who brilliantly devised the mechanical apparatus to animate the mouth I had designed for this monster. He did most of his work in Los Angeles, but flew over to Shepperton for a week, during which time we worked together in close collaboration. We devised the muscles for the mouth of the monster. Originally, we wanted to make it transparent but we couldn't get the manufacturing facilities, and had to make do with

the plaster shop. But I insist that I made the monster myself. I used a kind of skull to represent the sexual organ. It all depends on how you look at it.

Did you do any work in collaboration with Carlo DeMarchis and Dr. David Watling credited for "additional alien mechanics"?

Carlo DeMarchis was one of Carlo Rambaldi's assistants. When I modelled the alien's head, he made about six copies in polyester, which he sent to Rambaldi in Los Angeles so that he could work out the inside mechanism. And when Rambaldi came over to Shepperton for a week, DeMarchis helped him put the parts of the mechanism together. David Watling was asked to make another head, for reasons of security, but we didn't have to use it.

What materials did you use to make the alien? And, did you have any assistants?

I used quite a lot of materials: polyester, rubber, animal meat, real bones, and oysters. I was helped by Peter Boysey, who was very good. I'd say he was the best of all the modelers who worked on the film.

What about the metal jaws? What inspired those?

I did that myself, too. Those teeth are also in polyester. They were chrome-plated, so as to give them a metallic shine. I imagined them that way because for me the monster is both human and mechanical—more human than mechanical, though. So giving him **steel** teeth was a way to convey this two-fold nature.

How did you deal with the fact that a real actor was playing the alien? Was it easy for him to get into and out of the 'suit' you designed?

The making of this 'suit' was certainly one of the most complicated things to achieve. We took a plaster-cast of the whole body of actor Bolaji Badejo. Then, from this cast, we made a kind of statue, upon which I put tubes, bones, etc. to obtain the shape of the monster. Then a rubber mold was made out of this statue-with-accessories. And only then, finally, from this rubber mold, was the suit properly realized. Badejo, in fact, was not the only one to don this unusual type of clothes; it's him you see when the monster walks, but when the monster comes down from the ceiling, the man in the suit is a stuntman. Anyway, for both of them, getting 'dressed' was a terrible ordeal. It took them at least an hour to get ready. The stuntman, especially, didn't have a good time in the scene where he is hanging, or you'd better say, 'is hung' from the ceiling. He couldn't see a thing, and he had to move by following instructions shouted up to him! These sufferings the stuntman and an actor standing in for Harry Dean Stanton had to endure for the two weeks it took to film the scene.

Who controlled the movements of the tail?

That is a special effect. The original idea was to have a mechanized tail. But that would not work. So a 'normal' tail was used instead, and animated with a system of wires which, hopefully, the spectator cannot see!

What was your inspiration for the design of the egg?

The egg is related to my work insofar as it is an element essential to art nouveau, of which, in a way, I am a representative. In O'Bannon's script, the top of the egg wasn't organic, but completely mechanical. I didn't like it that way. So I built up this egg with a top

like a vagina. But when the producers turned up in my studio, they exclaimed, 'Oh, that's too specific! We can't show such things in Catholic countries. Can't you change the egg just a little bit?' So to satisfy Catholic audiences, I modified the egg, and made the opening a cross on the top. I like the opening of the egg in the film. They used real meat from a slaughterhouse, mmmm.

How come the producers never objected to the Alien's head being the shape of a penis? Or is this perhaps why the creature is shown so briefly?

Any long thing is phallic, in a way, and what you say for the head is not so obvious as the vagina was for the egg! There was no censorship whatever about it, and I repeat that the Alien is shown very briefly because it was Ridley Scott and Hans Giger's idea, not anybody else's.

Did you work with supervising model makers Martin Bower or Bill Pearson on the derelict spacecraft miniature?

No, they belonged to Ron Cobb's team, in charge of the making of the Nostromo. And that's just one thing I should like to point out: I went my own way to make the derelict (and it's no coincidence if it looks like my paintings), and Ron Cobb went his own way for the Nostromo. These two tasks were entrusted to two different artists so the two ships should look totally different, giving the impression they came from two different civilizations. The derelict had to appear as a **non-human** construction—so I did it!

Are you ever disappointed that, because of the cuts, this feeling of another civilization does not really come through in the scenes of the planet?

I **am** a bit disappointed, but I think the film comes off alright as it is now. We had made a lot of little models, but very few were actually executed full-size. And, due to lack of time, the one made for the landscape is not really **biomechanic**. But, at least, it is full-size. Only in one scene is a model used for the landscape: when you see the three men with the derelict in the background.

Can you tell us about SWISS MADE, the science fiction film you worked on before ALIEN?

SWISS MADE was filmed in 1969 by F. Murer, with a very small crew. The picture is distributed here by a firm called Nemo. But the story is so complicated I can only give you the main lines. An extraterrestrial comes to Earth with his extraterrestrial dog. The dog is wearing some clothes, which indicate how polluted our atmosphere is. I used a real dog, and I made the clothes in polyester. With a camera the alien has instead of eyes and a tape recorder he has in his chest, he records everything he comes across. But he is arrested by security people, who take him to a hospital. All these events are seen through his camera, in a subjective way. I think he dies at the end, but I'm not sure. He is examined by the people in the hospital, but when they turn his limbs, they discover there is nothing there! It was filmed in 35mm. The story, somewhat in the vein of Orwell's 1984, is very complex. It is in fact the combination of seven different stories, none of which are told entirely!

You were an industrial designer, originally. Could you tell us what led you to the cinema, and was that industrial training useful for ALIEN?

In Switzerland, the word 'artist' is not taken seriously. If you're an artist, you do not have a real profession over here; you must be

one of those guys who just drink too much and play around. But mind you, even in Los Angeles or at Shepperton they were surprised that a Swiss could be something other than a cheese-eater or watchmaker. Anyway, my father insisted that I have a true profession. So I looked for something where I could do some drawings. I learned architectural design first, and then attended courses in a Zurich school where you are taught photography, and all forms of design. I more or less specialized in interior architecture. This training gave me the capacity of translating my designs into three dimensions; I got used to working with plastics, for instance. And all this turned out to be very useful for ALIEN.

Your designs, as a painter, are immobile. How did you deal with the fact that your pictures, here, would be part of a moving picture?

As an industrial designer, I always consider what kind of function an object has. If you look at an object, its form should be enough to tell you about its function. That's the way I work. Admittedly, the difficulties you come across when you realize a normal, an 'ordinary' painting (shadows, lines, etc.), multiply in an incredible way as soon as you know you have to move it. That's why the director had to concentrate on the monster first, as it was to be the most difficult thing to show.

Did you have any influence on the script?

Not really, but on many occasions I insisted that the **visual** aspect of the film should come first because, for me, a film like this needs a succession of very strong impressions. Ridley Scott is, like me, a very 'visual' man, and we had to fight together against screenwriter Dan O'Bannon quite a few times. O'Bannon kept saying it wouldn't work if some points of the script were dropped. He once said, for example, that because of the script, the hatchery could not contain more than six eggs. And I had to convince him that a hatchery with six eggs was preposterous. Also, I had to change the spacecraft once without being given any specific reason. Very often you are confronted with a lot of people totally impervious to artistic viewpoints.

Do you establish a hierarchy in your different types of work, and what place is occupied by your film work?

I don't draw any lines, actually. The cinema forces me to create in new domains.

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For instance, I had never designed a spacecraft before ALIEN.

You very often mix elements of different epochs in your painting—machine guns unscrupulously gang up with antique cathedrals, etc. How did you approach the question of Time in ALIEN? Would you call it a science fiction film?

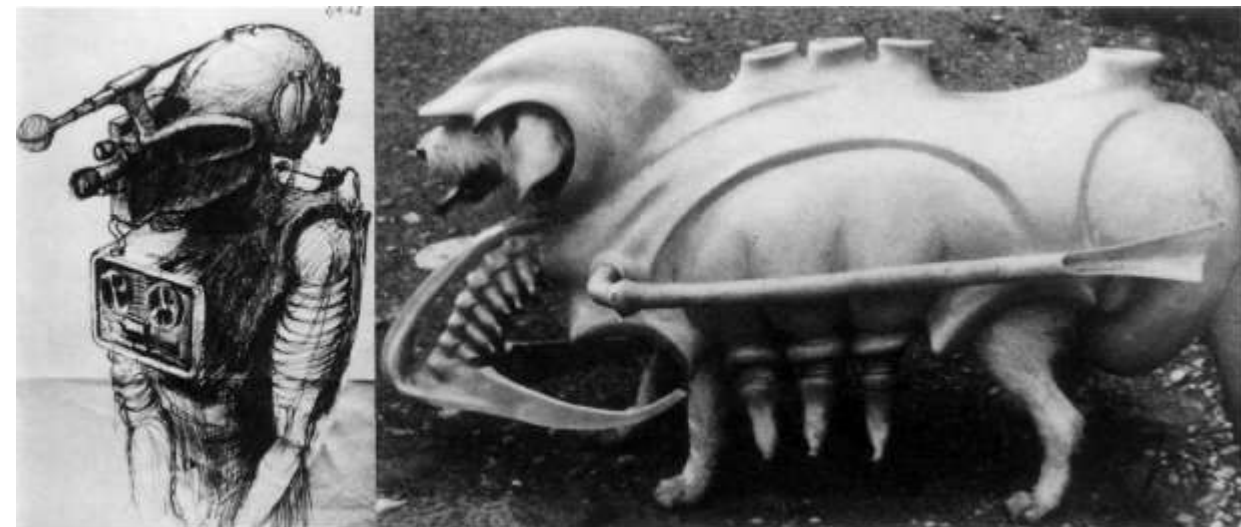
It is a kind of science fiction film, but for me, it's more a horror film. Ridley Scott called it a gothic novel, and he often referred to my **Necronomicon** book to show people how they should work. "Moebius" [Jean Giraud, another member of the DUNE nucleus] did the designs for the astronauts. They wear a kind of Japanese armor and helmets which could belong to just about any period of time. Space, here, is just a means to express a feeling of claustrophobia.

Outer space and claustrophobia seem to be a very odd couple.

The events of the film take place inside the spacecraft, mostly. Little time is devoted to the planet, not more than twenty minutes. ALIEN is about the situation of people locked together inside a very limited space. They would like to escape, but they can't. Claustrophobia was already there, in the script, but it just falls in with my own personal fantasies. As a boy, I would dream every night that I was in a white room, from which I could escape only through a small hole in the ceiling. But even when I had managed to reach this hole, I was stuck inside the wall and couldn't

Swiss Made 2069

Giger made this dog creature and alien for the Swiss moviemaker F. M. Murer in 1969, for a 45-minute color short, filmed in 35mm, with an optical soundtrack.





breathe. I freed myself from these obsessions when I began painting my **Passages**.

How many designs did you do for ALIEN?

About thirty-five. But some of them were just guides for the matte artist [Roy Caple, who painted the matte element of the long shot of Kane (John Hurt) descending into the mammoth hatchery beneath the alien ship]. I had a photograph of my drawing blown-up, and then showed the matte painter how to work. I also did a lot of paintings. As to how much time I spent on all this ALIEN work, I couldn't say. Quite a long time, really, including more than five months at Shepperton Studios.

What matters most to me is that this film enabled me to go beyond what I usually do, to live a new experience. Like Cocteau, I hate being limited to a particular genre. And that's why I am preparing a very precise report on my various activities during the film, which will be published in book form as **Giger's ALIEN**.

What do you think of the current science fiction craze, and, if this book is titled Giger's ALIEN, in what way is the film yours? And what is your relationship with the public, now that you've done ALIEN? Before, you were Hans Giger, the painter.

Obviously, ALIEN has brought me a lot of publicity! Nowadays I think people like science fiction the same way they take, or would like to take drugs or whatever to escape from reality. People need science fiction because it makes them happy. It shows them to areas they would be too afraid to explore otherwise. Many people find my designs horrible at first. But if they look at them a little longer, they eventually accept that world they had not seen before, and admit there is some harmony to it. It's just another kind of peace, but not so well-known. I don't want to instill trouble into people's minds. I don't appreciate that kind of science fiction where every element is invented. That's why I wanted the landscape of the planet in the film to be biomechanic, a mixture of our technology and some kind of magma, so as to create the feeling that maybe something has happened before on that planet, maybe a technical civilization has been destroyed. Unfortunately, as most of the landscape footage has been cut by Ridley Scott, I doubt whether

Derelict Ship

Right: H. R. Giger's painting of the derelict alien starship, which the crew of the Nostromo discover is the source of the distress signal which has diverted them from their course.

Left Inset: The large scale miniature of the ship (approximately 9 feet wide, 13 feet long and 5 feet high) constructed from Giger's design in the model shop at Shepperton Studios.

Giger incorporated his concept of biomechanics, an artistic melding of technology with nature, in his design for the ship and the planet's surface. The film is like a Giger canvas come to life.



all that can be felt anymore.

I will call my book **Giger's ALIEN** because I like to think my biomechanics could be the new style for this century. I'd like to invent a new architecture for this century.

You said that after ALIEN you were not in a hurry to embark on a new film. Why?

I sincerely hope that I can work on De-Laurentiis' DUNE, because I like the book very much, and I understand that Frank Herbert would like to do the screenplay himself. For me, that could be a new incentive to work out new concepts and elaborate new directions. You see, I have accumulated a lot of skeletons in this house recently, and they are just waiting to be transformed into pieces of furniture. I have some designs, for instance, for a bed which would be composed mainly of skulls. Perhaps a film version of DUNE could be an excellent avenue for such ideas. But I doubt whether the contents of the DUNE trilogy could be put into one film, and think that two or three films should be made. The task, anyway, will be a difficult one.

Do you still like the cinema? As a spectator, I mean?

The last film I have seen is one of the greatest films I have ever seen. It's called ERASER-

HEAD; unfortunately, it seems to be presented in New York City only, as a Friday night late show. I also never forget that I got my first fantastic impressions while seeing Jean Cocteau's BEAUTY AND THE BEAST, or, rather, stills taken from the film, published in an issue of **Life** magazine circa 1945. American soldiers had brought us chewing gum and **Life** magazines. I was five years old then. And, as a matter of fact, many of my designs could be called "Beauty and the Beast"

There is, indeed, a female fate in practically all your paintings. But I see no beauty in ALIEN, just a Beast.

Who knows? The Beast might well be the Beauty! For me, it was a hybrid. But Timothy Leary, in the preface he has written for **Giger's ALIEN**, assumes that the creature is a woman.

Do you believe that ALIEN will impress some people the way that Cocteau's images impressed you?

No, I think not, because ALIEN contains too much reality to conceal something in the background. It may pertain to art for some of its details, but on the whole it is essentially an entertainment film—but a very successful entertainment film.

Frederic Albert Levy

Space Jockey

Left: H. R. Giger climbs over the full-size model of the "Space Jockey" he built on the soundstages of Shepperton Studios, making any last-minute final touches prior to filming. Giger built this fossilized spacetraveler, who has become part of his chair, out of fiberglass and plasticene, with a base of plaster.
Right: The concept was derived, like that of the Alien, from a painting (Necronom V, 100x150 centimeters, painted in 1976) that director Ridley Scott was drawn to in Giger's Necronomicon. The detail shown at right is only a small part of a much larger canvas.

