THE COMPLETE *SFX* GUIDE TO

GHOSTBUSTERS™

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THE COMPLETE **SFX** GUIDE TO

GHOSTBUSTERS ™

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GHOSTBUSTERS.

WELCOME

An astonishing 32 years after the original film, the streams are in danger of being crossed once more when the new *Ghostbusters* hits screens this July. It hasn't been an easy process – a third *Ghostbusters* movie has been in development hell for years, hit by a series of false starts and setbacks, not least the sad death of Harold Ramis in 2014. So bravo to director Paul Feig for pulling off what many thought impossible: a brand new *Ghostbusters* movie. And one with a twist, too – these new 'busters are all women. Many voices were raised in anger, but the haters shouldn't have been so quick to complain; three (or four) fellas stepping into the roles would have been too samey, the new actors caught in the long shadows cast by their famous and much-loved predecessors. A fresh start means that these 'busters can be more their own thing, and their efforts will, and should, be judged on their own merits. To get the lowdown on the new film, head to page 6 where we chat to the director about taking on the task of making the world's favourite spook squishers relevant in 2016.

Elsewhere in this magazine, which is a revised reprint of one we published in 2014, we cover pretty much *everything* in the franchise. Films, comics, telly, videogames, cosplay, you name it! So dive in and enjoy. It'll put you in the best possible mood to go and see the new movie!

RUSSELL LEWIN, REPRINT EDITOR

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GHOST PROTOCOL

WHEN IT COMES TO THE NEW *GHOSTBUSTERS*, WHO WERE WE GONNA CALL BUT DIRECTOR PAUL FEIG? HE TELLS **RICHARD EDWARDS** ABOUT REBOOTING A CLASSIC

I f you're going to make a cover version of a classic record, there's no point doing something too similar. You're always going to be compared unfavourably with what's come before. Mess around with the arrangement, the singing style, do anything – just be bold and *don't* treat it like it's simple karaoke. There's a reason why Jimi Hendrix's "All Along The Watchtower", Soft Cell's "Tainted Love" and Madness's "It Must Be Love" are often considered superior to the originals. And why Robson & Jerome's "Unchained Melody" is now regarded as torture for the ears and in contravention of the Geneva convention.

The same rule should apply to movies: the original *Ghostbusters* is such a once-in-a-lifetime collision of comedy, perfect performances and blockbuster spectacle that any identikit remake would be doomed to failure before it had clambered into its boiler suit. But radically play around with the formula – as *Bridesmaids*, *The Heat* and *Spy* director Paul Feig has with his female-focused, Bechdel Test-aceing new take on *Ghostbusters* – and you might just have a chance of making something memorable. For the *right* reasons.

"I thought, 'They're going to get someone to do *Ghostbusters* eventually, so if I had to do it, how could I be the most creatively fertile for it?'" says Feig, talking to us on the phone from LA with just a week and half to go until the movie's finished. "Well, what would be

The Ecto-1: one of the classic touches Feig was determined to include.

"FUNNY PEOPLE FIGHTING THE PARANORMAL WITH TECHNOLOGY IS SUCH A FUN ARENA!"

really fun is to let all the funny women I work with be in this, because then it separates itself so much from the original movies – it's just so fraught with peril if you're going to hire four guys to play these roles, they're so going to get compared to the original guys. But if you get these funny women, it erases that straight comparison thing – or it did in my head at least! I felt that was the most respectful way to do it because it's not stepping on the originals. I thought, 'I can reboot *Ghostbusters* and make it its own thing for a new generation. That allows me to really establish four new characters and see them become this team.' I'm an origins story guy. I really to see where things come from.'"

I LOVE THIS PLAN. I'M DELIGHTED TO BE A PART OF IT

Feig wasn't always enamoured with the idea of firing up the proton packs once more. A follow-up to 1989's *Ghostbusters 2* had been bouncing in and out of development hell for over a quarter of a century when Ivan Reitman, the original movies' director and one of the keepers of the franchise's spectral flame, initially got in touch with Feig. At that point he wanted to discuss giving Feig the reins on a threequel, a movie that would have seen the original 'busters handing the keys of Ecto-1 over to a new team.

"I read the script and I thought it was really fun," Feig recalls, "but New York and the world had been through this ghost attack problem twice in the past and it'd been solved. So now if a new team was going to come together and be given all their weaponry from the old team…

Back at the Hook & Ladder #8 firehouse, Tribeca, New York.

it kind of sounded better on paper than it did in reality. It didn't feel like it would give a new cast the ability to plant a flag in these characters and in the franchise."

Feig had already "turned it down a couple of times" when he got a call from former Sony studio head and *Ghostbusters* producer Amy Pascal. "She said, 'Why don't any of you f**king comedy filmmaker guys want to do this?'" he laughs. "But she also planted in my head the idea that it's this amazing idea that's sitting there. That really stuck with me because I remember when I saw *Ghostbusters* the very first day it opened back in '84, I was still in film school, just sitting there, going, 'Oh my God, this is such a step forward for comedy.' *Ghostbusters*

was one of these seminal moments that move the art form further, a huge step forward. The idea of a special effects-laden comedy hadn't really been done before. Funny people fighting the paranormal with technology is such a fun arena that it almost shouldn't just be contained by only two movies!"

Having signed up to make a movie based around four female Ghostbusters, and teamed up with his *The Heat* screenwriter Katie Dippold, Feig was back in that difficult cover version territory. Just how much can you play around with the pillars of the film and still be making, in essence, *Ghostbusters*?

"My first thought was, 'We're just going to make everything different. Let's just completely

Return of the proton packs...
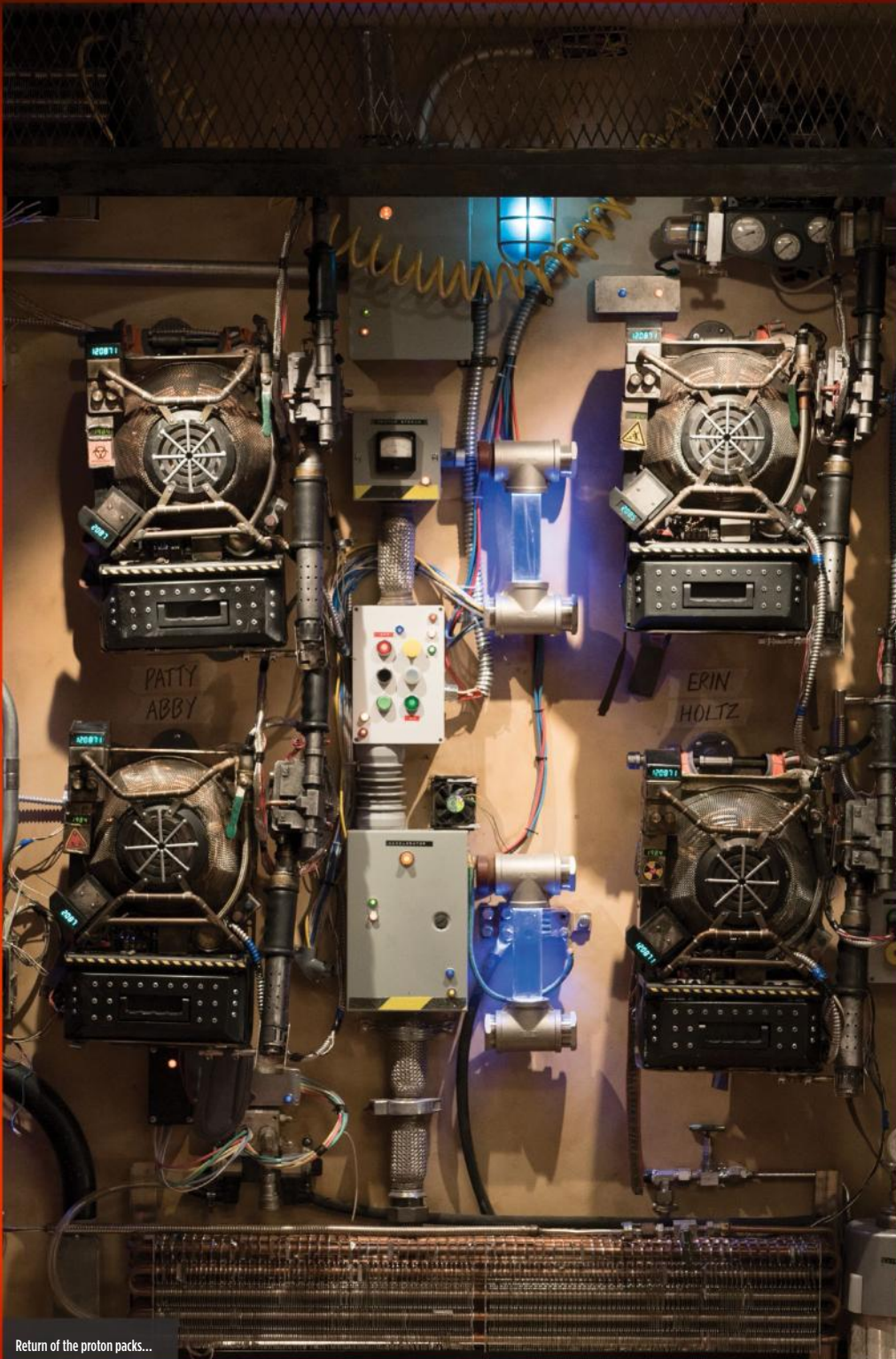
THERE'S SOMETHING YOU DON'T SEE EVERY DAY

PAUL FEIG EXPLAINS WHERE HIS SPOOKS COME FROM – AND HOW HE MADE THEM REAL

"I don't believe in ghosts, but I was like, okay, as a science head, where do I think ghosts would come from? It's not like there's a hard science on ghosts, but for me, it's like, 'What could I see as the most logical reason that ghosts could be pulled back or energised or brought into this world? How would that work?' That's the element we added. It wasn't as interesting to me personally to have it be 'the gods have sent something down'. The original *Ghostbusters* really planted a flag in that. You want to have ghosts in it, but we thought it would be fun to change their origins.

"[When it came to creating the ghosts in the movie] it was really important to me to have as many practical elements as I could, because for me it's all about the interaction of the actors with their environments. I worked as hard as I could to provide those practical elements, knowing we would either augment or replace them with CG.

"A lot of our ghosts are played by people because, you know, ghosts are dead people! And for any of the ghosts that were played by humans, we put this LED light rig on them. Pete Travers, my special effects supervisor, felt very much that the way to make them seem real was light interaction – if you have ghosts that are emitting this kind of light and you don't compensate for that with the environment, then it just looks like a cartoon piece popped into a shot."

clean the house, so we don't step on the original ones,'" Feig explains. "But Katie and I thought, being fans of the original one, what would we be bummed that we didn't see? Pretty quickly, you think yeah, you want to see an Ecto-1 and you want to see the proton packs and maybe you want to see Slimer. I just don't want people who love the original movie to be sitting there going, 'Nah, screw that – they've changed everything.' You want those little bits of nostalgia that allow you to enjoy it, but then we can twist it by going, 'Okay, here's where the Ecto-1 came from, and here's where the logo came from.' Then it just crystallised in my head. It just felt like the best way to let the audience have the most fun experience. And my only goal when

I make a movie is for an audience to have fun. That's all I care about – I want them to laugh."

BACK OFF MAN, THEY'RE SCIENTISTS

Arguably the movie's biggest challenge was creating a new foursome to rival the iconic Venkman, Stantz, Spengler and Zeddemore line-up. First order of business: not trying to ape the people we'd seen before. "I wanted to keep those little touchstones like the Ecto-1, but character-wise, it would have been death to just go like, 'Alright, who's going to be the female Venkman?'" Feig laughs. "To do that is terrible because it just doesn't allow the actors to own it."
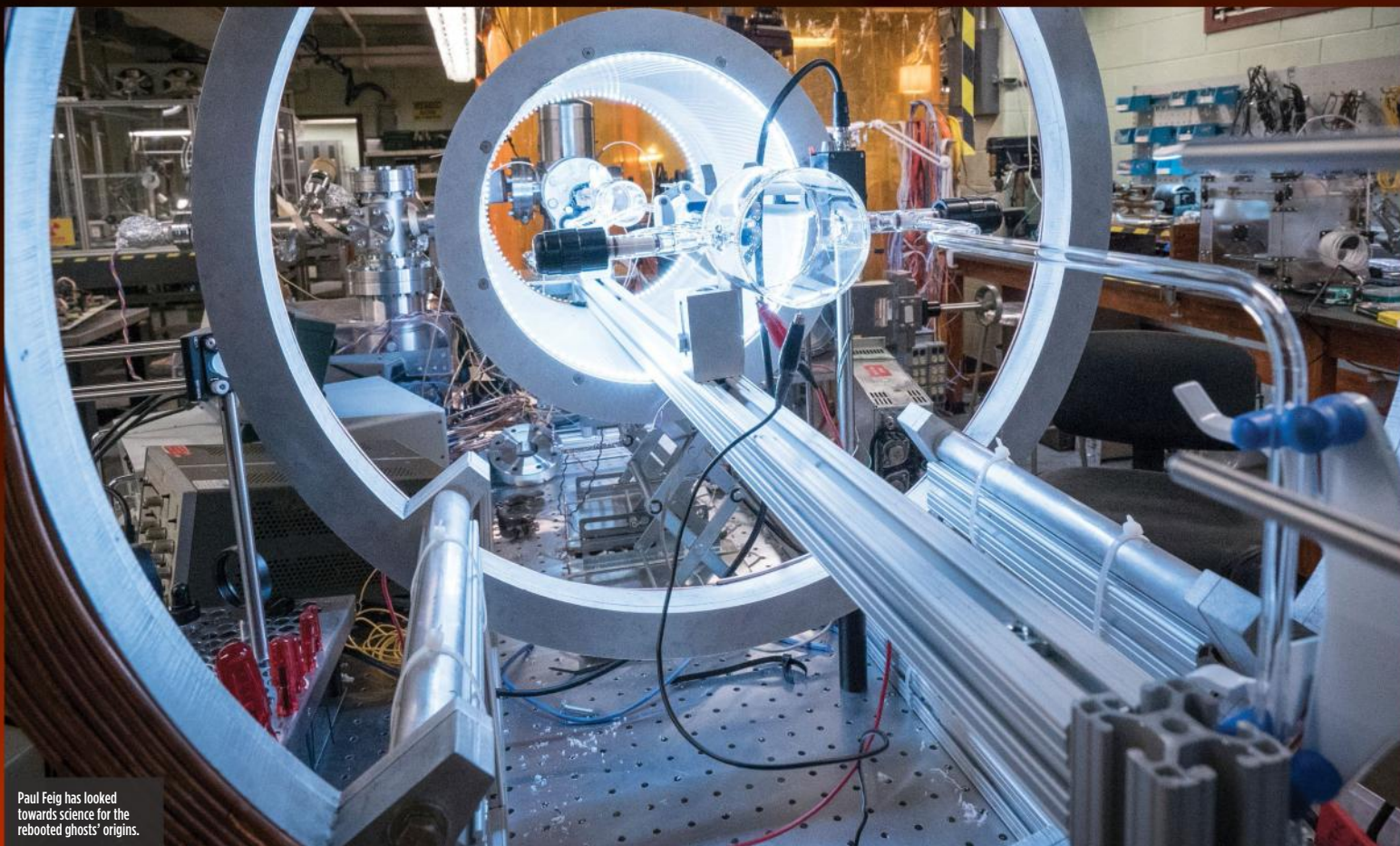
Paul Feig has looked towards science for the rebooted ghosts' origins.

Although Feig would ultimately use some of his regular players in the cast, he and Dippold opted to write the script and the characters first, with the intention of casting later.

"I wanted the story to dominate, to tell us which way to go," he explains. "So Katie and I felt, 'Let's just write it.' We can invent four very different characters, and then once we have it, we can go, 'Who would be good in these characters?' It was helpful to do that because it just allowed us to get the story right and get four different characters that were interesting to us, that all had different takes on the world and different energies. And once we cast those people, we would adjust the script to them.

"All my comedy comes from finding the right people, writing to their strengths, and then letting them go when they're on set, just kind of guiding them, and coming up with new jokes. The role is them, basically. That's why it was important for me to establish who these characters are going to be, what their takes on the world are, and then fit actors that I know into those roles and then take their personalities and then readjust the roles to them. So that when they show up on the set, they just slip right into the roles. They don't even have to rehearse or anything. The role is them, basically."

Unsurprisingly, one of the new 'bustin' quartet is Melissa McCarthy, Feig's comedy muse and a veteran of his previous three movies. The other three members of the team, like Bill Murray and Dan Aykroyd in the original, are veterans of US comedy institution *Saturday Night Live*: Leslie Jones, Kate McKinnon and Feig's *Bridesmaids* star/writer Kristen Wiig. Feig says the new line-up was selected over a two-month period of meetings and much deep thought about who'd work well together, until "I could call them

As with the original, the rebooted *Ghostbusters* stars four talented comedians.

THEY AIN'T AFRAID OF NO GHOSTS
A WHO'S WHO OF THE NEW GHOSTBUSTERS

"The First Cataclysm". Well, that sounds like a fun day out.

ABBY YATES
A scientist whose research interests lie in the paranormal. A few years before the events of the new movie she co-authored a book that suggested ghosts were real.

PLAYED BY: MELISSA McCARTHY
Since Feig helped turn her into the Oscar-nominated breakout star of *Bridesmaids*, she's become one of the most in-demand actresses on the planet.

ERIN GILBERT
Particle physicist and best friend of Abby Yates. Rumour has it she loses a prestigious position when her employers learn about the aforementioned ghost book she co-authored with Yates.

PLAYED BY: KRISTEN WIIG
A long-term *SNL* regular who's graduated to a successful movie career, featuring *Bridesmaids* (which she co-wrote), *The Martian* and *Zoolander 2*.

JILLIAN HOLTZMANN
The nuclear engineer and munitions expert responsible for building the Ghostbusters' kit. Seems to be modelling her style on Egon Spengler in *The Real Ghostbusters*.

PLAYED BY: KATE MCKINNON
While a relative newcomer to movies, McKinnon's one of the hottest properties on *SNL*, and does very impressive impressions of Hillary Clinton and Justin Bieber.

PATTY TOLAN
A New York City Subway worker who has a close encounter of the paranormal kind, and hooks up with Yates, Gilbert and Holtzmann to complete the new line-up.

PLAYED BY: LESLIE JONES
After a long career in stand-up, Jones joined *SNL*'s regular line-up in 2014, where she does very good angry. She's also had numerous supporting roles on big and small screens.

all up and say, 'Okay, you're a Ghostbuster!'

"Their chemistry onscreen is through the roof," Feig boasts. "Comedy is all about lightning from a bottle. That's the biggest thing I hope people realise and take away from this movie – or realise in order to get them to go see it. As great as an idea Ghostbusters is, that movie wouldn't have worked at all if it wasn't for that cast. On top of the story and the world you're in, they're just funny. Their chemistry is funny. The way they portray each one of those characters is funny, and that is what connects you to the movie. That's the only thing I tried to do with this – it's all about the cast. Then the context they're in and all the stuff around them, that's just icing on the cake."

I DON'T HAVE TO TAKE THIS ABUSE FROM YOU. I'VE GOT HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE DYING TO ABUSE ME

All of which sounds great, except not everybody is excited about this *Ghostbusters* reboot. In fact, it's difficult to think of any recent blockbuster that has been subjected to such a barrage of pre-release abuse online. There

have been some liberal-minded criticisms of casting the African-American Leslie Jones as the only non-scientist Ghostbuster – Feig has since said that the role was originally intended for McCarthy, while Jones took to Twitter to argue, "Why can't a regular person be a Ghostbuster? I'm confused. And why can't I be the one who plays them? I am a performer."

But far louder has been the vitriol thrown at the decision to make the Ghostbusters female. The first trailer holds the record for the most dislikes on YouTube, while Feig's had all sorts of accusations thrown at him, including the assertion that he's destroyed *Ghostbusters* fans' childhoods. Feig has been admirably willing to speak out against the trolls, but surely after a while that sort of abuse must start to get to you?

"You've just got to put it out of your mind," he says, taking it all in remarkably good humour. "Look, anybody in comedy is a people-pleaser. You don't go, 'I don't care.' You definitely read it and you take it to heart. Sometimes, it makes you kind of go, 'Oh man, that's a bummer.' At the same time, it's good to know what people are thinking. I like to hear what people's concerns are. That's why for so long I had a policy that I wouldn't block anybody. I've just in the recent month had to

Ghostbusters motorbikes now? We want one!

> "ANYBODY IN COMEDY IS A PEOPLE-PLEASER. YOU DON'T GO 'I DON'T CARE'. YOU DEFINITELY READ IT AND YOU TAKE IT TO HEART"
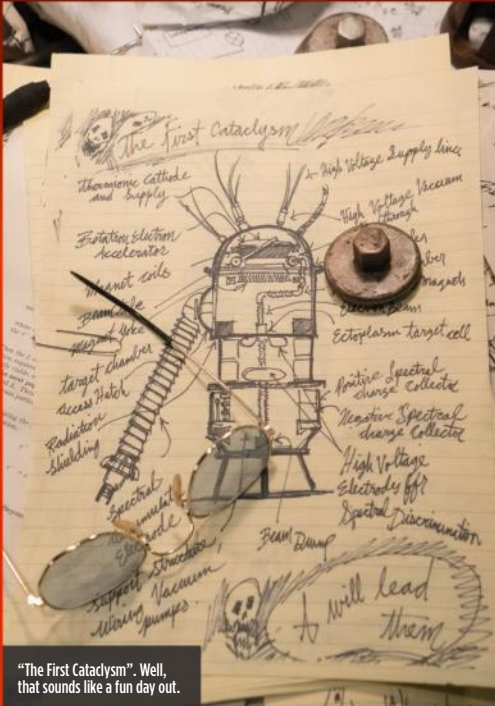
Thor's Chris Hemsworth joins the team as secretary Kevin.

> **"ALL MY COMEDY COMES FROM FINDING THE RIGHT PEOPLE, WRITING TO THEIR STRENGTHS, AND THEN LETTING THEM GO WHEN THEY'RE ON SET, JUST GUIDING THEM, AND COMING UP WITH NEW JOKES."**

start blocking people just because, you know, I get their point – I can only be written to so many times by people telling me the same thing in the most mean, hateful way possible. I just don't need that in my life any more!

"But you also have to make the movie you're going to make because the thing with the internet is, there's so much information that people get so early that everybody assumes they know what you're doing. That's the only thing that's kind of a drag."

Feig also believes that it's unfair to judge the movie solely on the trailers that have been so cruelly slated on the internet.

"Trailers are tricky things," he says. "My movies have always been hard to make trailers for, because my movies are funny in context. Once you get to know the characters and all that, then those jokes become very funny. But a lot of jokes you can't even put in the trailer because on their own, they don't smell like a joke – it's not a big set-up/punchline, it's more in the context of the piece and knowing the characters.

"The way I equate it is, if you're in a restaurant with your friends and you're at a big table and you're just making each other laugh, having the greatest time. That's what a movie, for an audience, is. You're sitting at that table, and you get to know these people so quickly, that you enjoy all their stories and you laugh. When a movie doesn't work is when you're the person eating dinner by yourself, sitting next to that table, and those people are laughing loud, and you're just going, 'Shut the f**k up! You people aren't funny. Why are you laughing? Everything you're saying isn't funny!' Because you have no context of those people. A lot of times, a trailer can be the noisy table of people laughing, and you're sitting next to them going,'They're not funny,' because you're not invested in those people. But all I can say is that, if you're on the fence, I swear you'll be sitting at the table and laughing with these funny people and loving them."

GHOSTBUSTERS. WHADDYA WANT?

If the movie still has some work to do to convince less enlightened regions of the internet, it does at least have the approval of the original filmmakers. Reitman is a producer and has, Feig says, been involved all the way back to the script development process; *Ghostbusters* co-creator Dan Aykroyd has

All female; all funny.

helped out with some of the "paranormal speak", and since we spoke to Feig, said on Facebook that the new movie "has more laughs and more scares than the first two films"; the wife of the late Harold Ramis has given the movie her blessing; and original stars Aykroyd, Ernie Hudson, Sigourney Weaver, Annie Potts and even the notoriously hard-to-pin-down Bill Murray all filmed cameo roles.

So, as Feig points out, it's not like he's making a guerilla, off-the-grid *Ghostbusters* movie to wind people up. "I think there's a feeling on the internet that I've gone wild," he laughs. "I don't know what was in those Sony hacks! When you're coming onto a project, any filmmaker wants to make sure they're not going to be micromanaged by the powers that be, but Dan and Ivan have given me my freedom. Ever since I came on, it's been nothing but a fantastic experience." And nobody ever said that about Robson & Jerome's "Unchained Melody"…

Ghostbusters opens on 15 July. ⓖ

Whatever you do, don't cross the streams.

BUSTIN' OUT A CLASSIC

IT'S THE REASON WE'RE ALL HERE – THE SUPERNATURAL COMEDY THAT WENT ON TO BECOME ONE OF THE BEST-LOVED FILMS OF THE 1980S. **JOSEPH McCABE** LOOKS BACK AT THE MAKING OF THE ORIGINAL *GHOSTBUSTERS*

Sings: "If there's something strange, in your neighbourhood..."

There's an episode of *30 Rock* – Tina Fey's New York showbiz sitcom – in which Fey's character Liz is chatting on the phone with her boyfriend Floyd (Jason Sudeikis). Trying to avoid Liz, Floyd tells her he has to fly to Cleveland for a "meeting with Peter Venkman". The lovelorn Liz later runs into Floyd in Central Park. Realising she's been lied to, she cries, "You used *Ghostbusters* for evil!"

Silly though it might seem, that's the reverence with which countless fans approach *Ghostbusters*, a film starring two wisecracking *Saturday Night Live* comedians that climaxes with a 112ft-tall Marshmallow Man heralding the apocalypse. Decades of fervour for *Star Wars* and *Star Trek* makes sense – their elaborate politics, languages and religions demand solemnity. But ethically dubious parapsychologists turned wisecracking spook exterminators?

HAUNTED HOUSE

Ghostbusters began in the mind of Dan Aykroyd. An A-list star from his work on TV's *SNL* and

its 1980 spin-off movie *The Blues Brothers*, Aykroyd was inspired by his own experiences with the paranormal growing up in his family's Canadian farmhouse.

As Aykroyd recounts in editor Don Shay's 1985 book *Making Ghostbusters*, "That farmhouse has been in the family for five generations, and I've come to believe that any place that has that much history is bound to have some degree of spiritual activity – so many people came through there and lived there and died there. My only personal experience was when a friend and I were sitting in the house one evening watching television and we heard knocking coming from upstairs. We went to the stairs and looked up and saw these ectoplasmic tubes of light – shimmering patterns of iridescent green light that passed in front of us. We were so scared we ran out of the house.

"But there were lots of family stories. My grandparents, apparently, were into holding séances, and my father would tell of being invited to participate as a medium and being put into trances. During one such séance, a

trumpet reportedly flew around the room, talking and singing, until someone outside the circle walked in and it fell to the ground. My mother claims to have witnessed an apparition when she was nursing me. A couple appeared to her at the end of her bed in the old family farmhouse, and it shook her so much she was afraid to talk about it. But a couple of weeks later she finally mentioned it. Some other member of the family dug out an old family album and there, in one of the pictures, was the couple – they turned out to be the ancestors. On another occasion, my grandmother on the other side of the family – who was a real practical, no-nonsense businesswoman – came to visit, and had the covers lifted off of her while she was sleeping. She was then thrown out of bed and bitten on the legs, ankles and arms by some kind of turbulent force – and she even developed a rash."

Aykroyd was seized by an idea that coupled his belief in the supernatural with his knowledge of genre film history. "*Ghostbusters*, I think, has its basic roots in American humour and

Ssssshhhhhhh... you won't like her when she's angry.

Filming the Terror Dog outside Louis Tully's apartment.

Not as house-trained as you'd like...

> "I THOUGHT, WHAT IF YOU ADVERTISED ON TV OR IN THE YELLOW PAGES AND SAID, 'HEY, WE BELIEVE YOU, WE UNDERSTAND YOU.' I THOUGHT IT WOULD HELP. THAT WAS THE BIRTH OF GHOSTBUSTING" **DAN AYKROYD**

American film, Abbott and Costello, the Bowery Boys, Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis, Bob Hope – everyone did a ghost picture. I thought it would be great to write one for this decade, updating the form by using concepts of science and technology and by employing the kinds of special effects available today. In parapsychology, a lot of researchers and thinkers have developed a link between quantum theory and paranormal activity – there are even several books on the subject – but parapsychologists have long been plagued by the fact that one person in ten ever reports a paranormal experience. I thought, 'What if you advertised on TV or in the *Yellow Pages* and said, 'Hey, we believe you, we understand you.' I thought it would help. That was the birth of the commercial enterprise of ghostbusting."

Aykroyd's first draft was more frightening in tone than the final film and rich in "technical words and phrases". It wasn't an origin story but a slice of the life of blue-collar workers tasked with dispatching spirits to the afterlife. It was also written with Aykroyd's close friend and *Blues Brothers* co-star John Belushi in mind.

"I'd been working on it, on and off, for a couple of years – always with the idea of having John involved. I was, in fact, writing one of his lines when I heard that he had died. It was a terrible blow, but eventually I came to realise that the picture really served any three guys."

Bill Murray – Aykroyd's fellow *Saturday Night Live* alum – was the first of the *Ghostbusters* cast to read the script. He was intrigued and recommended it to Ivan Reitman, no stranger to horror comedies, having begun his directing career with *Cannibal Girls* (starring *SCTV*'s Eugene Levy and Andrea Martin). In the years since, he'd produced Belushi's *Animal House* and *Heavy Metal*, and directed Murray in *Meatballs* and *Stripes*.

DEAD END

According to Reitman, "Dan had written only 40 or 50 pages at that point, and frankly, I had no idea how I would go about making it into a film. For one thing, it was set in the future – not far in the future, but far enough – and it took place on a number of different planets or dimensional planes. And it was all action. There was very little character work in it. The Ghostbusters were catching ghosts on the very first page – and doing it on every single page after that, without respite – just one sort of supernatural phenomenon after another. By the 10th page, I was exhausted. By the 40th or 50th I was counting the budget in the hundreds of millions of dollars. And there really weren't very many laughs. Although I could detect a comic attitude, the whole thing was written rather seriously. In the end, I just kind of set it aside and forgot about it."

Undeterred, Aykroyd rewrote his script, and had his friend John Daveikis draw conceptual art of the Ghostbusters' car – the Ectomobile – and equipment. Aykroyd recorded a videotape of himself wearing a makeshift uniform, which he sent Reitman.

"What I focused on, as I read the script again," said the director, "was Dan's really brilliant initial concept – the idea of a group of men who work out of an old firehall and respond to emergencies much the way firemen do. The only difference is that these emergencies are supernatural in nature – and so what the Ghostbusters do is go out, trap ghosts and incarcerate them... So I called Dan and we had lunch at Art's Delicatessen and I told him what I thought ought to be done."

Reitman explained to Aykroyd that rather than start with the Ghostbusters established in their trade, the film should instead explain how they came to be. He also told him that, instead of the future, it should be set in a modern American city and tell "the story of their first really big bust". Most importantly, he recommended that Aykroyd collaborate with Harold Ramis, the *SCTV* vet who'd co-written Reitman's three previous films and co-starred with Murray in *Stripes*.

"Right after our lunch meeting," said Aykroyd, "Ivan and I walked over to Harold's office – which, like Ivan's, was on the The Burbank Studios lot. At the time, Harold happened to be reading another script I'd written about Canadian Mounted Police. I told him to put that script aside, and I replaced it with the *Ghostbusters* one. After looking through the

Director Ivan Reitman discusses shots with the team.

"Okay, you can come down now. I promise to keep my hands right here."

script and listening to what we had to say for about 20 minutes, he said, 'Okay, I'm in'."

Columbia Pictures chairman Frank Price agreed to finance the film provided it didn't cost more than $25m dollars and was delivered for the summer of 1984, when Columbia needed a major release. This gave them a year to revise the script, shoot the film and do the post-production visual effects. Reitman recruited associate producers Joe Medjuck and Michael C Gross, with whom he'd worked before.

Ramis and Aykroyd spent the next three months rewriting in Reitman's offices. Although Ramis loved much of the script he'd read, he was concerned that Aykroyd's Ghostbusters were hired guns, working for a little-seen employer. "For me, comedy always seems more dynamic when characters choose to do what they are doing," said Ramis, "rather than being victims of circumstance. So we decided that the overall motivation would be much stronger if the Ghostbusters initiated the business themselves and were therefore captains of their own destiny."

Working together, Ramis and Aykroyd gave the Ghostbusters their distinct personalities

and motivations. "In essence," said Ramis, "that translated into one character being hipper and more verbal than the others – more of a huckster, the salesman of the team – someone who is weak on the technical side and probably didn't do all that well in school, but is smart enough to have hooked up with guys more intelligent than he is. That, of course, was Bill's character [Peter Venkman]. Then it's always useful to have a mechanic – a nuts and bolts person – honest, straight-ahead, enthusiastic. And that really worked for Dan [Ray Stantz]. For my character [Egon Spengler], we went for a human computer – someone who has no emotional life whatsoever, who only deals in facts and information – a 'New Wave' Mr Spock. For actors, especially in a group comedy, those kinds of archetypes always seem to work."

The original script's ending – in which the Ghostbusters are split up and scattered into different dimensions – was abandoned, though Aykroyd's Onionhead ghost and Stay-Puft Marshmallow Man were kept. Reitman contributed numerous edits and suggestions throughout the scriptwriting process, most significantly the idea that the Ghostbusters

were university parapsychologists. "There are no auteurs in comedy," said Ramis.

THE OTHERS

Meanwhile, Medjuck was kept busy with casting – scoring comedian Rick Moranis as the frazzled Louis Tully (a role originally written for John Candy), Annie Potts as the Ghostbusters' beleaguered receptionist Janine Melnitz, Ernie Hudson as the fourth and final member of the team, everyman Winston Zeddemore (originally the fire station's security man), and William Atherton as the group's antagonist – no-nonsense EPA agent Walter Peck.

Gross oversaw the hiring of conceptual artists, such as Italian comic-book maestro Tanino Liberatore (whose designs went unused), and horror illustrator Bernie Wrightson, who produced approximately 50 pieces of conceptual art, including the Terror Dogs and the Library Ghost. Hardware consultant Steven Dane was assigned the Ectomobile's final design, and storyboard artist Thom Enriquez's designs were used in creating Onionhead.

Gross also oversaw the creation of the Boss Film Studio after hiring effects supervisor

Richard Edlund, a veteran of George Lucas's ILM. Reitman and Medjuck recruited Academy Award-winning production designer John DeCuir, who would be responsible for the enormous Gozer Temple featured in the film's finale, as well as acclaimed cinematographer László Kovács, costume designer Theoni V Aldredge and editor Sheldon Kahn.

The film's budget grew to almost $30m by the time preliminary second unit photography began in New York in late October of 1983. "The hardest thing, though," said Ramis, "was deciding what was going on in that damn apartment building on Central Park West. The whole Keymaster/Gatekeeper idea came very late, and we struggled with it all the way."

A much easier time was had in getting Bill Murray on board as Venkman, the team's leader. As Ramis explained, "*Ghostbusters* was the first film he'd ever committed to without fighting like crazy, and he'd just decided we couldn't fail – which is certainly not to underestimate his part in the film."

Compared to the Ghostbusters themselves, Sigourney Weaver wasn't an obvious choice

The Library Ghost's human form was portrayed by Ruth Oliver...

...at a crucial moment the "live" ghost was replaced with a mechanical replica.

"I AUDITIONED WITH THE POSSESSION SCENE AND I REALLY DID GET POSSESSED. I JUMPED AROUND ON THE COUCH, AND STARTED TO EAT THE PILLOWS AND TURN INTO A DOG" SIGOURNEY WEAVER

for Dana Barrett, who hires the team to rid her apartment of spirits. The director and cast had grown used to seeing the actress in dramatic roles such as Ripley in *Alien*.

"My agent in New York suggested me for it," Weaver told *Starlog* (issue #112), "and Ivan Reitman thought, 'Well, I don't know, she's awfully serious...' But I auditioned for him with the possession scene and I really did get possessed. I jumped around the couch, and started to eat the pillows and turn into a dog. I was disappointed when I didn't get to actually turn into a dog in the movie."

It was Weaver who suggested her character should be a musician rather than a model, and, after developing a warm chemistry with his co-star, Murray toned down some of the script's lechery.

HIGH SPIRITS

"I think you do your best work when you're really loose," said Weaver, "and you have to be loose with Bill Murray. I also saw that it's not just magic and brilliance – those guys really did have to work. Not every take is funny, and not every improvised line is the right one. Their humour wasn't just mad blinding talent – although I think they have that. They really did search to find what would make the scene funny."

Venkman's first visit to Dana's apartment was largely improvised. "We rewrote every scene the night before, and when we got to the set, we improvised again. And Harold and Danny, who wrote the script, wanted us to do that. Bill and I would tell them, 'And we said this instead,' and they would say, 'Ah-ha! Great, that's great – and we'll get the credit!' They couldn't have been less uptight about the whole business. Working on *Ghostbusters* was glorious."

The three and a half weeks of principal photography in New York City utilised locations that many a movie pilgrim has since come to cherish: Columbia University (where Venkman, Stantz and Spengler conduct their research), Lincoln Center (where Dana finally agrees to a date with Venkman), Tavern on the Green (where Tully is attacked by the Terror Dog), New York City Hall (where the team meets with the Mayor), 55 Central Park West (Dana's apartment building), the New York Public Library (the setting for the film's opening scene), and of course, the Ghostbusters' fire station headquarters – aka Hook & Ladder 8 in the city's Tribeca neighbourhood. The exterior and lobby of the Sedgewick Hotel, however, where the boys make their first bust, were actually those of the Biltmore Hotel in downtown LA.

Nine additional weeks of photography followed at The Burbank Studios in Los Angeles, on which was built one of the largest sets ever constructed for a Hollywood film – the Gozer Temple atop "Spook Central". A giant cyclorama surrounded 75 per cent of the temple set, and could be lit for day or evening shots. Other productions at the studio had to halt shooting when the set was fully lit.

Gozer underwent the most changes on the journey from script to screen. For much of the project, he was just a gentleman in a suit, before a David Bowie-like androgynous rock star look was finally decided on. Grace Jones was considered for the part, but time limitations ruled out the hiring of an A-lister, and Yugoslavian actress Slavitza Jovan was cast. As for the Destructor, Ramis wrestled with the idea of the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man. A more demonic form was conceptualised by Wrightson, but discarded.

Puppeteer Bill Bryan was
the man in the foam Stay Puft
suit – he built it too.

That's $20,000 of Stay Puft suit being toasted there.

Red eyes? Glitter? Pearlescent bubbles? Gozer's the Gaga of her time.

"As bizarre as it was," said Harold Ramis in *Making Ghostbusters*, "I wanted the film to say something about life – even if it was subliminal... Finally I found some symbolism in the fact that the whole world of the paranormal seems to represent people's abstract fears – people need a place to put all that nameless dread and so they put it into ghosts and things unseen. But the real source of that dread is in very real things like violence and death and economic uncertainty. So it seemed to me very appropriate that when our monster finally appeared it turned out to be marshmallow – that, literally and figuratively, our biggest fear of the unknown was as insubstantial as marshmallow."

THE HAUNTING

Said Reitman in *Starlog* #85: "We have as many special effects as *Star Wars* and must get them all done in half the time."

With photography wrapped, Richard Edlund, still fresh from his work on *Poltergeist*, had less than four months to complete the remaining 200 optical effects. "I think the ghosts in *Poltergeist* are now accepted as sort of 'generic' for what ghosts look like," said the effects supervisor in *Starlog* #84. "Many ideas that came up as we were working on *Poltergeist*, but didn't have time to implement, are now being used on this picture. Of course, we didn't want *Ghostbusters* to look like *Poltergeist*, and while there are similarities, the look is quite different. *Poltergeist* was a relatively serious film – a drama – this film is a comedy. So, for *Ghostbusters*, we have been able to take some liberties and get away with some pretty outrageous concepts."

From a design standpoint, none of those concepts would become so beloved as Onionhead, whose mid-end-credits reappearance was requested by Reitman. As the team's mascot, he would be rechristened "Slimer" for *The Real Ghostbusters* spin-off cartoon, spearheading a tidal wave of merchandise from action figures to videogames to an Ecto-Cooler soft drink. Dan Aykroyd called him "the ghost of John Belushi" on the *Ghostbusters* DVD's audio commentary.

Ghostbusters' budget wound up at almost $30m, so, once marketing and other costs were factored in, it needed to gross $80m in order to break even, placing it among the Top 20 highest grossing films of all time. Released on 8 June, it grossed $13.6m in its opening weekend. By the end of the year it had earned more than that summer's two other megahits – *Indiana Jones And The Temple Of Doom* and *Gremlins* – combined. The following year a re-release brought its total gross to $238.6m, making it the most successful comedy in screen history and the sixth highest grossing ever.

A sequel was inevitable. Though as Bill Murray stated in *Starlog* #140, "It's not going to be called *Ghostbusters II*. We'll burn in hell if we call it *Ghostbusters II*." G

> "*GHOSTBUSTERS* NEEDED TO GROSS $80M TO BREAK EVEN. IN THE END, ITS TOTAL GROSS WAS $238.6M, MAKING IT THE MOST SUCCESSFUL COMEDY IN SCREEN HISTORY AND THE SIXTH HIGHEST GROSSING EVER"

Ivan Reitman and the team discuss the storyboards.

Steve Johnson – the man who designed Slimer – also helped with the Terror Dogs.

GHOSTBUSTERS
BY THE NUMBERS
BY BRIDIE ROMAN

32 YEARS SINCE *GHOSTBUSTERS* WAS RELEASED

SLIMER HAUNTS THE **12TH FLOOR** OF THE SEDGEWICK HOTEL

SLIMER IS A **CLASS 5** FREE ROAMING VAPOUR

$5K CHARGE TO REMOVE SLIMER FROM THE SEDGEWICK HOTEL ($4,000 FOR CAPTURE, $1,000 FOR STORAGE)

$5 THE AMOUNT VENKMAN PAYS HIS PSYCHIC GUINEA PIGS

6 GHOSTS SEEN

7 SWEARS

8 GHOSTS CAUGHT

JUNE 8, 1984 *GHOSTBUSTERS* WAS RELEASED IN US CINEMAS

1,339 THE NUMBER OF US THEATRES *GHOSTBUSTERS* WAS SHOWN IN DURING ITS OPENING WEEKEND

$32M ESTIMATED BUDGET OF *GHOSTBUSTERS*

$13,578,151 DOMESTIC TAKINGS ON THE OPENING WEEKEND FOR *GHOSTBUSTERS*

$295,212,467 *GHOSTBUSTERS* WORLDWIDE LIFETIME GROSS

AGES OF THE GHOSTBUSTERS

39	**31**	**33**	**38**
HAROLD RAMIS	DAN AYKROYD	BILL MURRAY	ERNIE HUDSON

08/10/84 — 25 CENTS

USA TODAY

GHOSTBUSTERS FEATURED ON FRONT PAGE!

100FT ROUGHLY THE HEIGHT OF THE STAY PUFT MONSTER

555-2368 THE GHOSTBUSTERS HOTLINE IN THE FIRST FILM

40 YEARS
OF DARKNESS AFTER GOZER RISES

2206
DANA'S APARTMENT NUMBER

1920
THE YEAR IVO SHANDOR SET UP HIS CULT OF GOZER WORSHIPPERS

3 FLOORS
ARE BLOWN OFF DANA'S BUILDING AT THE END OF THE FILM. HOW ON EARTH DID THEY SURVIVE?

FLOOR 22
WHERE DANA LIVES IN SPOOK CENTRAL

2202
LOUIS' APARTMENT NUMBER

FLOOR 20
WHERE VENKMAN PLANS TO THROW UP AT DANA'S APARTMENT BUILDING

19%
INTEREST RATE ON THE LOAN THAT RAY TAKES OUT

$95K
THE AMOUNT RAY WILL HAVE TO PAY IN INTEREST ALONE FOR THE FIRST FIVE YEARS

300 CC
HOW MUCH THORAZINE VENKMAN GIVES TO ZUUL/DANA

6000BC
WHEN ZUUL AND GOZER WERE WORSHIPPED BY THE SUMERIANS AND HITTITES

55 CENTRAL PARK WEST, NEW YORK, NY 10023
DANA'S APARTMENT BUILDING (AKA SPOOK CENTRAL)

$4,800
HOW MUCH RAY PAYS FOR ECTO-1

5
EGGS POP OUT OF THEIR SHELLS ONTO DANA'S COUNTER

GHOSTLY VISIONS

FEW MOVIE LOGOS HAVE MADE SUCH AN IMPACT. IN 2014 **JOSEPH McCABE** TALKED TO ITS CREATOR, MICHAEL C GROSS, ABOUT LEGAL WRANGLES, DESIGNING AN ICON AND BRINGING THE TERROR DOGS TO LIFE

Michael C Gross was an art director on *National Lampoon* magazine before deciding to jack it all in for the bright lights of Hollywood. He got lucky straight away, forging a friendship with a certain Ivan Reitman and becoming a key player in the *Ghostbusters* story, not least for being the man behind that iconic logo.

After playing a major role in helping to create the first movie's ground-breaking effects, and producing both *Ghostbusters* films, he added several more hit movies to his resumé, including *Twins* and *Kindergarten Cop*. Gross quit Hollywood in 1995.

One year after this interview was conducted, Gross died of cancer. We republish it now as a tribute to him.

SO HOW DID YOU MAKE THE MOVE FROM WORKING IN MAGAZINES TO THE MOVIE BUSINESS?

I was in New York on *Heavy Metal* magazine. Len Mogel, the publisher, wanted his own movie so he tried to get an animated feature off the ground. I was gonna come on as an associate producer. Someone at Fox *almost* picked it up, but in the end they didn't. I decided I'd had enough of graphic design and went to California to make movies. There were friendly voices saying, "Come on, there's ways you can do this." No promises or anything, but what the hell? Mogel was running out of options for *Heavy Metal*. Ivan Reitman had done *Animal House* so he called him up and said, "Are you interested?" Reitman said, "You know, this sounds great. Animation is

big in Canada, it has a lot of approval with Canadian investors. I can get this made with a phone call."

Mogel said to Reitman, "Do you remember Michael Gross?" Our paths had crossed at *National Lampoon* so he said, "Yeah, I remember him." Mogel said, "I said he'd be one of the producers and he's on his way to California."

I'd landed about a week before and I was gonna take an advertising job. I got a call saying I should meet Ivan Reitman and talk to him about *Heavy Metal*. I go over, and he says, "So, what is it you're going to do for me?" I say, "Well, I know about animation."

I didn't really know anything about animation, but I had friends who did. As an art director I understood artists – who to hire and what worked. I said to Reitman, "You're gonna have trouble bringing animation to the screen and, unfortunately, because they're all different stories [*Heavy Metal* was a portmanteau movie], you're gonna have to divide it up between studios in London, Canada and the US."

He said, "Fine, I'll make you associate producer." So after landing in LA I made

An even more ferocious form for the ghost, which was never actually used.
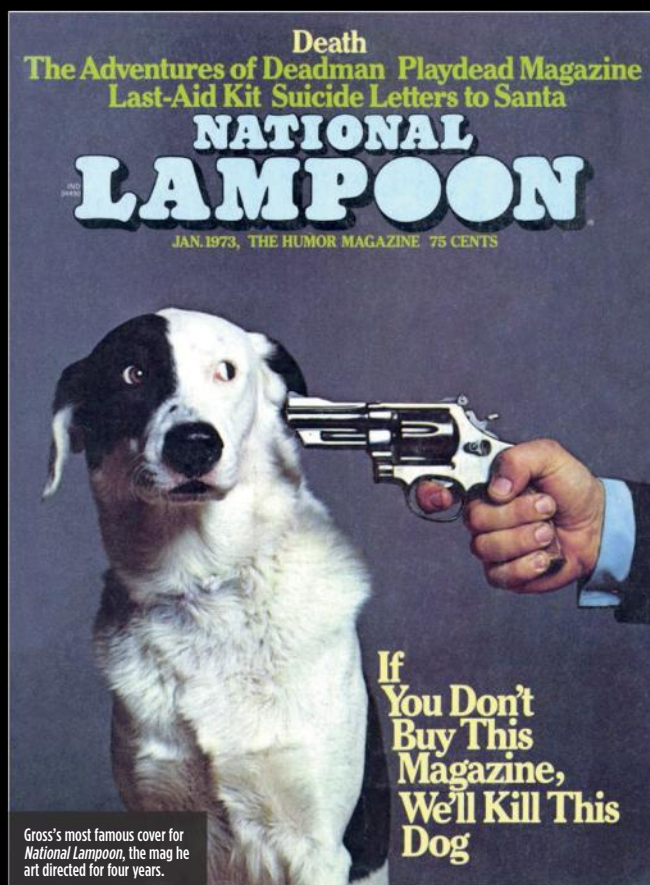
Gross's most famous cover for *National Lampoon*, the mag he art directed for four years.

> "I DIDN'T REALLY KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT ANIMATION... AS AN ART DIRECTOR I UNDERSTOOD ARTISTS – WHO TO HIRE AND WHAT WORKED"

my first movie within three weeks. The film ran into a lot of difficulty. It became almost unmanageable and he was doing it at the same time as he was directing *Stripes*. He needed somebody to take care of *Heavy Metal*. So there I was and I delivered the movie.

AND THAT LED TO MAKING GHOSTBUSTERS?

Mogel was about to do a special effects movie – and he knew as little about special effects as he once knew about animation. I said, "Maybe I can pick up this end of it and solve those problems." He agreed, and that's the beginning of the whole story. I understood what Ivan wanted so my job was to look at movies with a lot of ghosts and creatures. We had to start thinking about those before we even had a special effects house.

So I was able to work on the creation of the creatures at the same time as

building an effects studio. That's what I concentrated on, along with some script work. Joe Medjuck, another producer and an old friend of Ivan's, went on to take care of things like casting.

It was like the old gang was back. I knew Ivan and Harold from New York. John Belushi's wife was my assistant in the art department. I'd known Bill Murray since his days at *National Lampoon* – before *Saturday Night Live*, way back in the '70s – so he was an old friend. It was a bunch of guys having a lot of fun. That's how it started.

CAN YOU TALK ABOUT THE VISUALS THAT YOU DEVELOPED FOR THE FILM?

Ridley Scott had used Giger, Cobb and Moebius, artists outside the industry, to give him visualisation for *Alien*. We were gonna do a comedy, but we didn't want Casper running around, and we
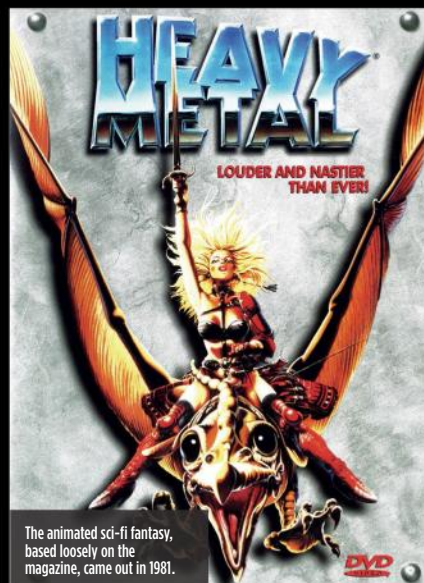
The animated sci-fi fantasy, based loosely on the magazine, came out in 1981.

The Library Ghost's transformation from kindly old lady to hideous demon.

Cable mechanisms transformed the elderly librarian into a screaming demon.

THE NAME GAME

WERE DIFFERENT TITLES EVER CONSIDERED FOR THE MOVIE?

The name "Ghostbusters" was not owned by us. It was part of Filmation, an animation company that had done a live-action show with Larry Storch called *The Ghost Busters*, years ago. We tried to look at other titles – "Ghostbreakers, Ghosthunters, etc." We looked at the title and said, "No, Ghostbusters really works." So Columbia said, "Well, we'll have to work on getting it from Filmation."

Okay, fine. We started to film, and every once in a while we checked with them and said, "Do you have the rights to Ghostbusters?" They said, "Not yet, not yet." Then one day Joe Medjuck is outside the building in New York and there's thousands of people out there carrying signs, waiting for the Ghostbusters to arrive. They're all shouting, "Ghostbusters! Ghostbusters! Ghostbusters!" He took the phone and said to Columbia, "Do you have the rights to the name yet?" They said, "No." He held the phone outside the window so they'd hear the thousands of people yelling, "Ghostbusters!" and he said, "Well, you better get it." And they did. They made a deal that allowed Filmation to do a cartoon series later if they wanted to.

That's the reason that the first teaser poster just has the logo and says, "Coming this summer to save the world." They couldn't say the name Ghostbusters because they didn't have the rights yet. A friend of mine coming into Los Angeles from New York saw the first billboard going up and he said, "Oh god. Somebody's making *Casper* into a movie..." It was not easy to walk that fine line between looking graphically right for the film and avoiding *Casper*.

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didn't necessarily want silly ghosts. Ivan is not the kind of filmmaker who'd make *Beetlejuice*. He wanted something a little more grounded in terms of what the creatures looked like. *Poltergeist* was out – as a recent movie about ghosts it was our only reference point. The first task was deciding what to do with our ghosts, whether it was going to be scary or funny. Onionhead was the original name for Slimer. The Library Ghost had to be frightening or it wouldn't work. The laughs didn't come from her, they came from the reaction and what the boys did afterwards. By the time Slimer came we didn't want to make it goofy, but we made it a little sillier. If you look at him carefully, Slimer got sillier with the cartoon and even sillier with *Ghostbusters II*. He may have been kind of goofy, and fooled around, but he's not entirely like a cartoon – though he's probably the most cartoon-like of all the ghosts. So we had to develop that.

The Stay Puft Marshmallow Man was actually in Danny's script, and he had him drawn by a friend. It was pretty much what you see on the screen. We

"THE LIBRARY GHOST HAD TO BE FRIGHTENING OR IT WOULDN'T WORK. THE LAUGHS CAME FROM THE BOYS' REACTIONS"

had to fine-tune it and make him less scary, and then it had to be something you could give the special effects people to actually implement. So there were certain guidelines, but that was pretty much what was in Danny's script. We often questioned whether it was the silliest, stupidest thing we ever did before we realised what a great payoff it was. We'd thought it would be, but you start to doubt yourself after a while...

The Terror Dogs were not referred to as Terror Dogs in the movie, except at one point Bill says, "Okay, so, she's a dog." We said, "Are they dogs from hell?" So we had Bernie Wrightson and some other people do some different concept drawings. "Is it a dog from hell? Is it a zombie dog? Should it look like more of an alien creature? Should it be a lizard?" There was a lot of development to get the look down. A lot of artists were involved.

At the same time we were racing towards building an effects studio. We had less than a year and there were no special effects studios that could do it in the timeframe. We found out that Richard Edlund wanted to leave ILM and start his own effects house. He didn't have the financing so we told Columbia and they said, "Well, do you think he can build a studio that can do this movie?" I said, "Yeah, I think he can."

I don't know who worked out the deal but it turned out that Twentieth Century Fox was also making *2010* [a US sci-fi film written and directed by Peter Hyams]. Columbia and Fox agreed to split the costs of building a studio. It meant building cameras from scratch,

Filming on the massive Gozer Temple set at The Burbank Studios.

buying optical printers and building a matte department. You can imagine the number of cameras that were needed. That whole thing had to be happening at lightning speed. At the same time we were trying to conceive what they were gonna have to do. The more time it took for us to make up our minds over when to get ready to do production, the more difficult it was to do something like construct the Terror Dogs. So these deadlines coming at us were the single biggest problem with the movie. They were not creative problems. It was the damn deadlines.

SO YOU WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR BRINGING RICHARD EDLUND ON BOARD?

Yeah, pretty much. I think it's public knowledge now. Don Shay – who

> "TO WATCH THE TERROR DOGS COME TO LIFE AS FULL-SIZE RUBBER CREATURES WITH RANDY COOK'S STOP-MOTION ANIMATION WAS WONDERFUL"
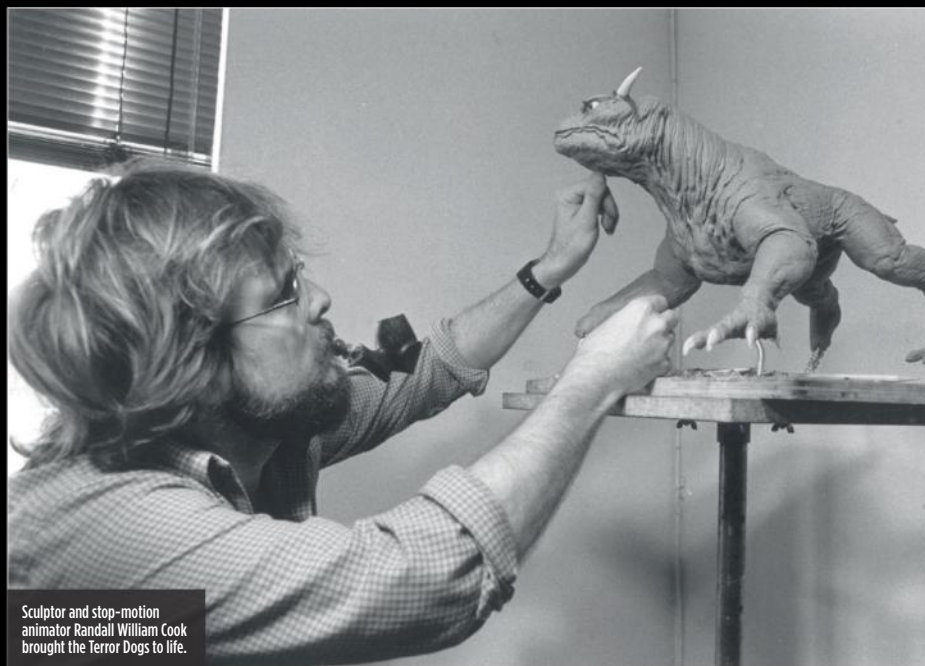
Sculptor and stop-motion animator Randall William Cook brought the Terror Dogs to life.

published *Cinefex* magazine – and I went to high school together. We knew each other very well and were still good friends. So I went to Don and said, "Don, you're a guy who knows what's going on in the industry. Can you help me out here?" We even paid him a consulting fee. He's the one who came back and said, "Okay, here's the word. I think we should talk to…" He put it in motion, but it started with me going to him.

YOU'VE MENTIONED BERNIE WRIGHTSON – DID HE DO ANY OTHER STUFF FOR YOU?
Bernie worked on everything. *Making Ghostbusters* (see overleaf) has all

of his drawings… We didn't have a visualisation for what the tower might look like, or what the top of the building might look like. We even had a couple of other things in there that you don't see, that we didn't put on film. At some point, they opened up and looked inside the grid, and you saw this kind of Dante's Inferno with all the ghosts they'd captured. We thought it wasn't worth the effort it would take to do that shot in the time we had, so we cut it out. But Bernie was visualising some of those things. So he did a lot. He worked on the Library Ghost and a lot of the visualisations. We had no idea what would happen when Dana

opened her refrigerator. We had no idea what happened when they reached the top of the building and what they would see up there. Art director John DeCuir Jr designed his version and that's what we went with. But see, John wasn't even on the picture when we started designing all the creatures, and he was glad to let that go. He had enough work, he didn't have to worry about every ghost. So it was a nice relationship.

THE FILM'S MOST MEMORABLE IMAGE IS ONE YOU DESIGNED YOURSELF, THE LOGO. IT'S SUCH A PERFECTLY REALISED GRAPHIC…
Yeah, it was in the script. Danny just had a throwaway line saying that the boys show up in the Ectomobile, which is something he's pretty much designed already, a Cadillac. We made it more realistic and more applicable to film but that was pretty much it. He designed it, and he said that on the side of it was a logo of a ghost being trapped by a "No" symbol – "No ghosts". That's it. That's how it was described. We just needed something for the boys to put on their uniforms and on the car.

John Bruno, who directed the "Taarna" sequence for *Heavy Metal*, came to Boss to be the art director on the effects unit. And he had a very talented artist, Brent Boates, come down with him. Brent was a great storyboard artist and I sat down with him and said, "Give me all the variations you can so we can do this thing." Being a magazine art director at *National Lampoon*, I really understood what the symbol had to be. I knew it had to be simple, it needed to be clean, it had to make the point. From a distance it should be maybe a little silly but not push too far. Then we realised that once you reduce a ghost

Michael C Gross and one of the Terror Dog models that he remains proud of.
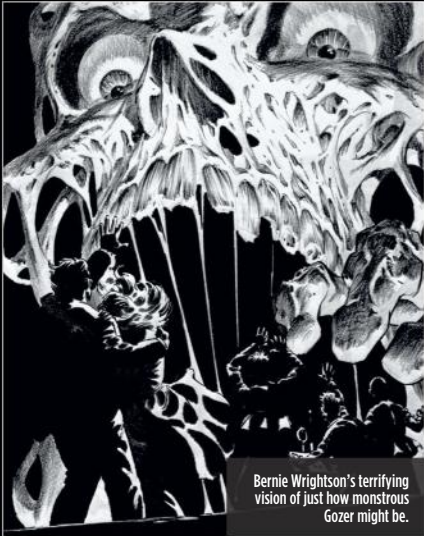
Bernie Wrightson's terrifying vision of just how monstrous Gozer might be.

One of several illustrations by Wrightson depicting the terror inside Dana's refrigerator.

in that context to a two-dimensional image there's not a lot of ways you can do a ghost. We tried, and they did tend to come out looking like something out of Casper. We were careful to avoid that. Harvey Comics sued us later saying it was designed after a *Casper* character called Fatso. Somehow Columbia settled that. But the point is, I had maybe 20 variations. I narrowed it down to five I really liked. I took them to Ivan and we both agreed on the same one.

It's an icon, but you have to understand something – you can't set out to create an icon. You can't say, "I'm gonna do something iconic." That's

The cable-operated underskull that gives the full-size dog its range of facial articulations.

impossible. If the film hadn't been a hit, nobody would be looking at this logo. And if the film had been a hit with a different logo, would we be looking at that? Maybe. I don't know. The combination made it something else.

The other reason it became iconic was that Columbia really responded to the logo. We made it to go on the uniforms, the side of the car and outside the building. It wasn't intended for use outside of the film but the advertising and design people at Columbia sat down with us and said, "We like this logo!" They worked out how to put it into the word "Ghostbusters".

THE ORIGINAL SCRIPT WAS WRITTEN WITH JOHN BELUSHI IN MIND. HOW DIFFERENT DO YOU THINK IT'D HAVE BEEN IF HE'D STARRED IN IT?
We also had John Candy in Rick Moranis's role, but he turned it down… In Danny's original script they were working-class guys, kind of like Roto-Rooter plumbers, but Ivan turned them into college professors. That changed the characters anyway. That would have been a tough role to have John in. Of course John and Danny were best friends, they'd done *The Blues Brothers* etc. I'm sure there was a very early draft… but John died in 1982, so he

wasn't there at all. Danny had the script around for a while. So Danny probably had him in there. I have to say probably, because I can't speak for him. I never saw the earliest drafts.

At the time we were working on a picture called *Big Trouble*, written by Harold Ramis. It had a bunch of guys – John Candy and Bill Murray – and they all get scooped up to another planet. It was a very complicated thing. They also found themselves embodied in what would pretty much be the Terror Dogs, when they went in their bodies and out. At a certain point when Danny had his script, Ivan said "Let's incorporate some of these things."

The biggest challenge was that I was also responsible for them delivering. It wasn't easy. I was going back and forth with Ivan, who didn't like doing effects because they limit a comedy director. He couldn't improvise. He'd have no outtakes. And he'd have to storyboard it in the beginning. If he wanted to make a change, I'd say, "No, you can't change. We shot a plate. They're building the creatures to go here. That's the shot. It's too late to start over." He'd pull his hair out over that kind of stuff. So I had to be very careful, while working with Boss Film's effects, that what Ivan wanted got on film. At the same time I had to be able to go back to Ivan and say, "Ivan, we had

"THE LOGO'S AN ICON BUT YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND SOMETHING – YOU CAN'T SET OUT TO CREATE AN ICON. YOU CAN'T SAY, 'I'M GONNA DO SOMETHING ICONIC'"

The spinning chair in Dana's apartment was mounted on a rotating platform.
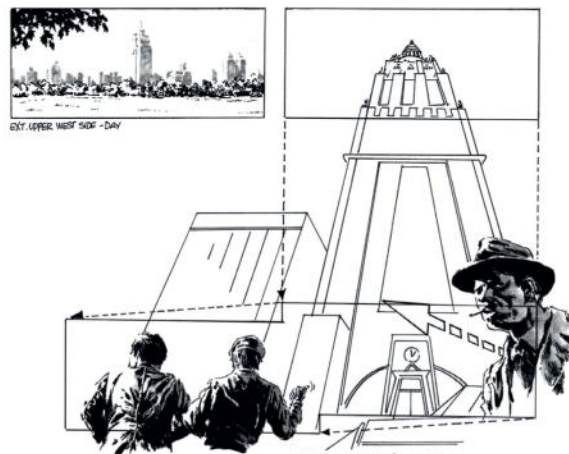
The gothic-style apartment house which was to become the hub of psychic activity is first viewed across the broad expanse of Central Park. Since the actual structure had a roofline decidedly unlike the one called for in the script, the upper section of the building — even though ill-defined from such a distance — was matted out of the live-action photography and rerendered in the form of a painting by Matthew Yuricich. / The next shot had to establish the building as being Dana Barrett's residence and, at the same time, introduce its singular temple-like rooftop. As storyboarded by Thom Enriquez, the original concept was to start at the roof and then pan down the building to Dana as she enters from the street. Since the temple rooftop was not actually on the building, however, the pan would have entailed a very complex matte composite. In the end, the shot was achieved from a reverse angle, with the camera looking down past one of the stone Terror Dogs — in this case, just a painting — to Dana entering the apartment building below.

some problems today. Come take a look at this. Maybe we can cut a few scenes? Because we're running out of time and you keep adding scenes. We can't do that." All these things are not conducive to directing humour. He was having to edit in advance and it wasn't his style of filmmaking. So my biggest job was doing that dance, managing and getting it all delivered.

YOU'VE ALREADY MENTIONED BERNIE WRIGHTSON – DID YOU RECRUIT ANY OTHER *NATIONAL LAMPOON* ARTISTS FOR *GHOSTBUSTERS*?

There were about five or six *Heavy Metal* artists, but I don't remember who they were. I said to Tanino Liberatore, "Here's $3,000, send me a bunch of drawings of what ghosts might look like." He was so far out on the fringes of imagery that he'd come back with things I didn't want – weird one-eyed blobby things.

But that's part of the process – if you have the money and you're able to do it. Even though it's rejected, it's part of finding the answer. It makes it easier to say, "Oh no, I don't want to go there." But until I see it, I don't know we don't want to go there.

DID YOU HAVE THE SAME ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES ON *GHOSTBUSTERS II*?

Yeah, I worked as associate producer and executive producer on 11 films, and my job was always the same. There were films we did later that didn't have effects but at that point I'd been producing. I was part of a team, so I was involved with script development. Sometimes we had three pictures going at the same time, and I'd take one and Joe Medjuck would take another. It became a more standard film producing role that also expanded to second unit directing. I was a second unit director as well. So, later on, I was shooting second unit for Ivan on *Kindergarten Cop* and *Dave*.

YOU MENTIONED THAT SLIMER LOOKED A LITTLE LESS FRIGHTENING IN *GHOSTBUSTERS II*. BY THAT TIME *THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS* CARTOON HAD ALREADY DEBUTED. WAS THERE A DESIRE TO MAKE THE SECOND FILM MORE FAMILY-FRIENDLY?

No, not at all. I think we were hurt by the fact that the cartoon ran for so many years. So if you were hip and 16

CARTOON CAPERS HOW THE ANIMATED SERIES NEARLY NEVER HAPPENED...

YOU WERE ALSO A PRODUCER ON *THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS* DURING ITS SIX SEASON RUN...

Yeah, I was very involved – Ivan oversaw it. We had a very talented bunch of people working on it. Joe Straczynski was a story editor, which was amazing. We just had to watch the scripts mostly, and see what some of the designs would look like. We changed the look of the characters to a certain degree, so we didn't have to deal with getting the rights. We'd have had to negotiate with each of their agents over likenesses and we just didn't need that. And of course it prompted the toy line. We gave enough advance notice so we could produce the toys. Kenner knew it was gonna be a five-year contract and they were happy to jump in.

The reason *The Real Ghostbusters* happened was that Filmation decided, since they did own the animation rights to the title *Ghostbusters* – not our story, not our characters, just the name – that they'd rush out a *Ghost Busters* animated show. Columbia came to us and said, "Look, we can't let this happen. We can't let them do this. We have to put out a show." We said, "Fine. It might be fun."

We did 118 shows... The only way to do it was to call it *The Real Ghostbusters*. Of course we wiped them off the map. Nobody even saw the other show. The rest is history. It was a business decision that we had no problem going along with. I was more on board as a story creator, and it was fun. There was so little pressure. We were having a great time

and we laughed a lot. We were just pumping these things out on a weekly basis. There was almost no pressure to it frankly, not compared with the pressure of feature films.

THE CHARACTER WHOSE APPEARANCE DIFFERED THE MOST WAS EGON. WAS THERE A PARTICULAR REASON FOR THAT DRAMATIC DIFFERENCE?

Not really. The thing about animation, especially when there are characters running around and they're not that well animated, is that you try to put a more distinctive physical look to each of them so you can see who the hell is in the scene. If you look, they had different colour costumes. That's the reason for the different colours – so you could tell which

character was running across the screen. The funny thing is we started with Lorenzo Music as Peter Venkman. I just loved Lorenzo's voice. I thought he did a wonderful job of keeping it dry. But we had one small problem – he was the voice of Garfield and he was also in a lot of advertising, so he was a little bit too familiar. But it didn't matter, we were fine with it.

Then Bill Murray came one day after seeing a couple of shows, and he said, "You know, why don't you use someone who does my voice?" We said, "Well, we don't want to get into negotiating that. Your agent's gonna want separate rights. We thought it was easier to just circumvent it." He said, "I don't care. Use me." So then we switched to Dave Coulier who kind of did Bill Murray.

A portion of Central Park West and the adjacent park was constructed in miniature.

it wasn't a big deal to see this movie because your little brother had been playing with *Ghostbusters* toys for five years. Because of the cartoon show, some people thought it might just be for kids. But we didn't worry, we just went ahead anyway.

Other things hurt us as well. Almost everything you saw at number one at the box office was a surprise – and it wasn't a surprise to see the Ghostbusters anymore! – so we had to concentrate on a more complex storyline and a little more characterisation.

I think what we did with Harold Ramis and the cast was really wonderful, and Peter MacNicol's character was wonderful. We did a lot of wonderful things, but it did kind of feel like we'd seen it before. When we got to the end we were almost without an ending. Instead of walking a giant Marshmallow Man up the street, we walked the Statue of Liberty up the street.

We'd all have liked to have done something different but we literally just couldn't figure out what! We struggled with it and struggled with it and we got moving, and in the end I think we just said, "Oh well, I guess it works."

THERE WAS A WRITERS' GUILD STRIKE AT THAT TIME. HOW DID THAT AFFECT THE FILM'S SCRIPT?
We made *Twins* and *Ghostbusters II* back-to-back. We were in post-production on *Twins* when we went into pre-production on *Ghostbusters*. With the writers' strike, miraculously, Ivan's was one of only two companies in Hollywood producing major films at that time. We made them independent productions. To this day, I still don't know how we got away with it, because there's no way you can pretend that *Ghostbusters II* is an independent film, but we got away with it. They were never happy with us at the Writers' Guild over

"IF YOU LOOK AT HIM CAREFULLY, SLIMER GOT SILLIER WITH THE CARTOON AND EVEN SILLIER WITH *GHOSTBUSTERS II*"

this, and they were sort of enemies of Ivan's for a little while. We had a lot of difficulty with them over that decision.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE LINE FROM THE FILMS?
I know all the lines that are popular and quoted. But what makes me laugh every time is when Bill Murray is in Dana's apartment and he lifts up the piano, hits the keys and goes, "They hate that." It still makes me laugh *every single time*. Her line in that scene where she says, "You're more like a game show host," that actually made me laugh more than a lot of other lines.

We cut some lines. We decided we didn't want a real heavy rating, because we'd started to see what worked. Somewhere along the line we decided we didn't need to get a worse rating and limit our audience. So we took foul language out, basically. There was improvisation in certain scenes. Harold Ramis is standing on the edge of the top of the building the first time the Stay-Puft Man is revealed, and when he sees him it cuts first to Harold, who says, "F**k me." We had that in the cut at one point. It was funny, but we decided we didn't need it.

AND YOUR FAVOURITE CREATURE?
It's the Stay Puft Man, because I love those scenes. They're perfectly executed. But the Terror Dogs made me the happiest, because I was so involved with the development of them, from beginning to end. To watch them come to life as full-size rubber
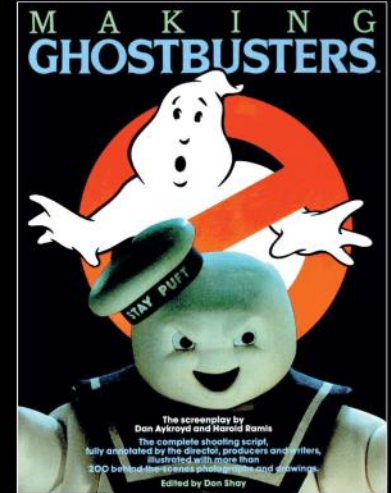
INSIDE STORY
BOOK REVEALS HOW MOVIE MAGIC WAS MADE

Published in 1985, this 224-page gem by *Cinefex* magazine's Don Shay includes the movie's shooting script accompanied by production notes, stories, anecdotes and behind-the-scenes photographs and drawings.

It's a fascinating read and for movie buffs it's especially interesting to see how the script tallies up with what actually appeared on screen.

Highlights include the fabulously detailed illustrations by legendary horror artist Bernie Wrightson of monsters that didn't make it into the film – possibly because they were way too scary – and the touching poem Sigourney Weaver wrote and read out at the wrap party. There's also a full-colour photo section at the back.

Sadly the book's now out of print and getting your hands on a second-hand copy will set you back about £160.

creatures with Randy Cook's stop-motion animation was wonderful. It was a very complicated and difficult creature because it needed to do so much. You have this race, because you have to shoot the optical early so you'll have a background plate, but it's a practical creature – a rubber creature – so you gotta shoot it last because it won't be ready early. You're constantly balancing those scenes that were shot – often out of sequence – in which the problem was, "This is an optical. We gotta shoot it now." But, practically, we couldn't shoot it at the same time. If the creatures had to be on set, then we had to do them all at the end. So it was a scheduling nightmare to some degree. But it was all necessary... I lived with those creatures, with every detail of those creatures. That's why I have a particular fondness for them. ◉

HAUNTING THE CHARTS

WILL SALMON CELEBRATES ONE OF THE MOST MEMORABLE POP SONGS OF THE '80S...

Ray Parker Jr and the boys busting their best moves for that memorable video.

A side from the film, there are two things that immediately leap to mind when you hear the name *Ghostbusters*. The first is that logo – ubiquitous in the '80s and still unmistakable all these years later. The second is the song. You know the one. Ray Parker Jr's classic theme was released in May 1984, before the film itself, and became an enormous hit, haunting the US charts for months and spending three weeks at number one.

But Parker Jr very nearly didn't write the song at all. Clive Davis, founder of Arista Records, was not keen on letting one of his prized R&B singers do some novelty song about ghosts. Luckily, producer Joe Medjuck met with Davis and was able to convince him that the film would be a hit, and that Parker Jr – mostly famous at this point for songs about wooing the ladies – wouldn't look daft singing about spooks.

By this point, Ivan Reitman had heard numerous ideas for the film's theme but wasn't happy with any of them. He was insistent that the song should feature "ghostbusters" as its key lyric. After a brief meeting with Reitman, Parker Jr knocked out a demo and handed it over. Reitman was so impressed he promoted the song from a brief snatch of music at the start of the film to a full-on single. He even elected to direct the music video, which is memorable for its own reasons...

The "Ghostbusters" video takes the time-honoured film tie-in video format

"THE SUCCESS OF THE SONG WAS UNSURPRISING. IT'S AN UNDENIABLY BRILLIANT PIECE OF POP MUSIC"

(the star singing, interspersed with clips from the movie) and bolts on a seemingly endless – and slightly surreal – parade of big-name celeb cameos. Chevy Chase, John Candy, Carly Simon, Al Franken, Melissa Gilbert and Danny DeVito are just some of the people who pop up to yell "Ghostbusters!"

This was Parker Jr's idea as he was nervous about the video. "I was worried what Clive Davis was going to think," he told *Screencrush*. "Ivan took the ball and ran with it and got tons of cameos. To me, if he can get Bill Murray and those guys in it, it will be funny and it won't be taken like me trying to sing to a ghost romantically, or whatever." The video concludes with Parker Jr dancing down the street with the gang and Bill Murray doing an awkward breakdance.

The success of "Ghostbusters" the song was unsurprising. It's an undeniably brilliant piece of pop music and so catchy it teeters on the edge of being annoying. It bagged Parker Jr an Academy Award nomination and undoubtedly contributed towards making the film the monster hit it was. It also, in "I ain't afraid of no ghost", spawned a catchphrase that would echo around playgrounds and offices for the next three decades... 🅖

WHO YA GONNA CALL? "MY LAWYER!"
THE THEME TUNE'S LITIGIOUS HISTORY

Back in 1984, when Huey Lewis heard something strange, he didn't call the Ghostbusters, he called his lawyers. He reckoned that Ray Parker Jr's famous theme was a rip-off of his own track, "I Need A New Drug" released earlier in the year.

The basic riff in both songs is very similar. Lewis instructed his legal representatives to sue, but the dispute was eventually settled out of court. The two musicians issued a joint press release in 1985 claiming the matter had been "amicably resolved".

Neither of them mentioned the case again until 2001, when in an interview for VH1's *Behind The Music* series, Huey Lewis broke his silence. He didn't seem to think the issue had been amicably resolved at all: "The offensive part was not so much that Ray Parker Jr had ripped this song off, it was kind of symbolic of an industry that wants something — they wanted our wave, and they wanted to buy it... In the end, I suppose they were right. I suppose it was for sale, because, basically, they bought it."

At which point, the story took a bizarre turn, with Ray Parker Jr suing Huey Lewis. Apparently there was a "gagging" clause in the original settlement which meant that neither of them were supposed to talk about the details. Parker Jr told the press that the confidentiality agreement was "directly related to his comfort, happiness and welfare" and that Lewis's "inflammatory, disparaging and false" comments had caused him emotional distress. The outcome of that case has never been made public.

It would be an injustice to paint Parker Jr as the villain of this story, however. The genesis of the theme suggests there was a lot more going on than plagiarism. For starters, the film was edited together with "I Want A New Drug" as a temporary track in places. That was the version that Ray Parker was shown when he agreed to write the theme.

There's nothing to suggest that the filmmakers ever asked Parker to rip-off "I Want A New Drug" but there was clearly something about the song that appealed to them. Parker has also admitted that he had difficulty writing the song in such a short time. This combination of factors probably resulted in the final song being closer to "I Want A New Drug" than was intended.

On the other hand, the most iconic, enduring elements of the *Ghostbusters* theme tune – "Who ya gonna call?" and "I ain't afraid of no ghost" – are both Parker Jr's creations. And Huey Lewis has since said that the whole debacle helped him get the *Back To The Future* gig. So who cares about riff rifts? **DAVE GOLDER**

PLAYING IT STRAIGHT

WALTER PECK WAS THE GHOSTBUSTERS' NEMESIS. BUT WILLIAM ATHERTON IS A LOVELY CHAP WITH A LOT OF TIME FOR HIS SPOOK-CHASING PALS, AS **JOSEPH McCABE** FOUND OUT IN 2014

If one movie villain sums up the mood of the '80s, then it's surely Walter Peck. This tight-ass busybody represented The Man and existed purely to make the Ghostbusters' lives hell. He was the power our boys had to fight, and the part was played with an admirably straight face by William Atherton.

Formerly best known as a stage actor, and for his appearance in *The Sugarland Express* (the feature debut of a certain Steven Spielberg) *Ghostbusters* brought him a new level of success. *SFX* met him to reminisce about his days playing the EPA's slimiest suit.

WHY DO YOU THINK *GHOSTBUSTERS* HAS REMAINED SUCH A TIMELESS MOVIE?

I have a couple of ideas about that. First of all, visually, *Ghostbusters* is fantastic. The effects were amazing, and on the big screen, still are. Nothing looks dated, nothing looks anachronistic. It really does move in this wonderful animated way. I think it's unique in that respect. Even in *Titanic* the boat looks a little like something sitting in the Caribbean. The impact of *Ghostbusters* visually is still as fresh as it always was.

The other thing is that the characters are really big and warm, and they're wonderfully well-drawn – even the slightest character is inhabited. All the actors played it with that depth of comedy they all had. They played it for real – there was no "wink-wink, say-no-more". The film was mostly shot in New York, and it was filled with wonderful New York actors. I mean we shot some of it here in Los Angeles, but it has that energy, that kind of grounded feeling.

IT'S ONE OF THE FEW CLASSIC FILMS THAT, WHEN IT'S SCREENED IN CINEMAS, GENERATES A ROUND OF APPLAUSE FOR EVERY CHARACTER...

Yeah, everybody. Quite frankly, I don't know of a comedy like that. The other thing was that Harold and Bill and Dan, they all used their fame wonderfully. They used all that celebrity from *Saturday Night Live*. That doesn't happen very often. There was a straight line that created energy in all of them.

HOW DID IVAN REITMAN APPROACH DIRECTING THE FILM?

Ivan was great. The thing about Ivan was that he let everybody go. He'd encourage them, he'd heat 'em up. He was terrific as a director because he was a wonderful wrangler! He just wrangled those guys. And so did Harold Ramis, really. Harold was very much the heartbeat of it all.

WALTER PECK'S INITIAL CONFRONTATION WITH VENKMAN IS WONDERFUL, AS YOU'RE SIZING EACH OTHER UP. WAS ANY OF THAT IMPROVISED?

We didn't do a lot of improv, no. We did it when we did it. I knew the guys, because *Saturday Night Live*'s Gilda Radner and I had done Broadway together. So when I was first talking with Ivan, I said, "These are the greatest comedians in the country right now. What am I gonna do – try and be funny? That's absurd!"

So my choice was to play it like a male Margaret Dumont [from the Marx Brothers' movies]. My character didn't know why it was funny, and didn't know why the Ghostbusters were doing something so terrible, and I wasn't going to stand for that. As far as I was concerned, I was Creon in *Antigone*.

Peck's character was so hated that Atherton would often be harangued by strangers.

And he said, "Yeah, that's great." That was what I did so that I could always be the straight man.

So once you had that architecture, that gave everything a kind of grounding. I'd worked with people from Second City – and all those guys were from Second City – but my Second City was, like, 1969 and there are certain rules when you do that stuff. It's not just "Everybody get out there and say what comes to mind and then you're improvising and everybody's funny." There's an architecture. There's a real structure to things that happen instantly. They were all aware of that, so that's what we did.

DID YOU HAVE ANY INPUT INTO WALTER'S LOOK?

Theoni Aldredge was the costume designer. She designed those uniforms. She'd won an Academy Award and I'd first worked with her at The Public Theater in New York. So when we were thinking and coming up with what I'd look like, I said, "I have to represent something, so I never want to change my suit. I'll change the tie, but the minute you see me you have to know what I represent and who I am." So we designed the whole thing – the little Phi Beta Kappa pin and the tie bar and the three-piece suit and all of that. I decided to grow a beard, because I just felt, "Well, why not?"

> "THE EFFECTS WERE AMAZING, AND ON THE BIG SCREEN STILL ARE. NOTHING LOOKS DATED, NOTHING LOOKS ANACHRONISTIC"

"May I *please* see the storage facility, Mr Venkman?"

IT'S SURPRISING HOW POLITICALLY INCORRECT IT WAS. ALL THE HEROES SMOKE AND THE ANTAGONIST REPRESENTS THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY...

Right, right. A lot of this was pre-politically correct. It wasn't done so much in defiance, it was just the reality of the moment. This was the way it was! So over time it became perhaps politically incorrect, but at the time it was just what people did.

IT GIVES THE FILM AN ADDED LAYER OF TEXTURE...

Yeah, it does. That's a very good point, because cultures do change. When I was a kid, if somebody smoked on screen it gave them a certain depth. If a woman smoked on screen, it signified adulthood, it signified freedom, sometimes defiance. All kinds of things could be identified with smoking a cigarette dramatically. When you see people smoking now, it's "Oh, they just got out of rehab" or something. That seems to be what it usually means culturally these days!

WOULD YOU EVER LIKE THE CHANCE TO REVISIT PECK IN A SEQUEL?

Well, sure. Listen, I've been doing this for so long I'd be stupid to say no. Of course I would be interested. But it would be very different now. Of course I'd like to play it again, but generationally it's moved on. There's been a lot of talk about that one way or the other, but... Of course I would! We'll leave it at that and see what the world brings.

IN THE MEANTIME YOU'RE PLAYING VICEROY BERTO MERCADO ON *DEFIANCE*. HOW DID THAT COME ABOUT?

I was approached because Andy Fickman and Kevin Murphy, *Defiance*'s executive producer, were doing *Heathers: The Musical* in New York. Kevin was looking for someone to play this part and I'd done *Who's Your Daddy?* with Andy and had a great time. I thought he was a terrific director.

When we went to Toronto, Kevin laid out what he really wanted to do with this character going forward, and I thought it was just fascinating.

> "WHEN I WAS A KID, IF SOMEONE SMOKED ON SCREEN IT GAVE THEM A CERTAIN DEPTH. NOW IT'S, 'OH, THEY JUST GOT OUT OF REHAB'"

The thing that I thought was so interesting was that here are two different species. He has a yearning for a woman – or for a woman who dresses as the other species – and at the same time he has no shame about it. He knows he has to be politically astute and he has to be discrete, but the thing that was fun about it is that he's exploring something in himself he never knew was there.

He's not 20 years old, and all of a sudden there's this new dimension in him and it has a life of its own. He's trying to relate that to the power he has and the world that he runs. The relation of those two things is wonderful to play.

PLUS YOU GET TO SING…
I said, "Do you know I sing?" They said, "No. Do you sing?" I said, "Did you ever see Robert Redford's *Great Gatsby*? I sang on the score." They listened to my "What'll I Do" over the credits and then they wrote the song and we went and recorded it. It was so cool. The whole thing was just great, immediate fun – "Let's take this idea and that." Learning this wonderfully bizarre song in this wonderfully bizarre language… it was something that one rarely gets

Atherton as Viceroy Mercado's cross-dressing alter ego in *Defiance*.

to ponder, let alone do. You'll see my character again in the finale, which has some surprises in it.

SYFY HAS PUT TOGETHER AN ESPECIALLY ECLECTIC CAST FOR *DEFIANCE*…
What's really great about the cast is that they're from everywhere and everyone is really terrific. These are very

accomplished people. We can go from comedy to farce to drama to tragedy and they all do it seamlessly. Julie Benz is wonderful; Jim Murray, my arch-enemy, is terrific. He's younger than me and good looking and all the girls like him, so it's very easy to play scenes where I'm just out of my mind with irritation!

IF YOUR CHARACTER SHOULD SURVIVE THIS SEASON, WOULD YOU LIKE TO RETURN?
Oh sure. I think everybody's waiting to find out what's going on. I had a terrific time doing it. I'm still getting an enormous response from people, and I wrote to Kevin last week and said I was very grateful for it. He wrote such a terrific character and I wanted to let him know how much it had resonated. The metaphor I made was that as an actor you often dive into the pool and just pray that the pool is full. And it was.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR YOU?
I have a very nice sci-fi picture coming out called *Jinn* which is almost a theocratic sci-fi. It's about Middle Eastern devils – kind of a Middle Eastern version of *The Exorcist* – about the jinn, supernatural creatures in Islamic mythology. It's a great little story. I'm kind of dabbling with this genre, but I have a very good time with it. They ask me to do things because of my theatre background or the movies I've done. So I get kind of neat things to do.

FINALLY, WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE LINE IN *GHOSTBUSTERS*?
"What is the magic word, Mr Venkman?" ☺

SLIMER DESIGNER

EFFECTS ARTIST STEVE JOHNSON IS THE MAN TO THANK FOR ONE OF THE MOST ICONIC CREATIONS OF THE *GHOSTBUSTERS* MYTHOLOGY, AS **CALUM WADDELL** FINDS OUT…

A team of puppeteers – wearing helmets to avoid food spray – control Onionhead.

Often forgotten about in discussions of *Ghostbusters* – perhaps because the pitch-perfect performances of Aykroyd, Murray, Ramis et al quickly take centre stage – is that its effects work was, back in 1984, genuinely groundbreaking.

Opening on the same day as Joe Dante's *Gremlins*, the boundless imagination of the Ivan Reitman-directed blockbuster made traditional movie magic – of the "spaceships filmed against green screen" type – suddenly seem somewhat old hat. Case in point: a month later the would-be box office smash *The Last Starfighter* made its cinematic debut to disappointing audience attendance – and there is no question who, or what, was to blame.

Indeed, post-*Ghostbusters* (and indeed *Gremlins*) it would be larger-than-life creature creations, extravagant planet-pulverising entities and intricately showcased movie monsters that made the grade in the multiplex. Want proof? Just take a customary glance at the big-name summer sci-fi contenders that followed in the wake of Dr Peter Venkman and his spectre-slaying unit: *Cocoon* (1985), *Aliens* (1986), *Big Trouble In Little China* (1986), *Beetlejuice* (1988).

Ultimately, it's hard to imagine that the effects excellence in any of these classics would have emerged without the work that was laid down in 1984. And this is a statement that Steve Johnson, then a young and hungry monster-maker

"I NEVER KNEW WE HAD SOMETHING SPECIAL. TO ME, SLIMER WAS JUST A BIG SMILE WITH ARMS. I THOUGHT, 'WHO CARES? HE'S HARDLY EVEN IN THE MOVIE"

who had plied his trade on the likes of *The Fog* (1980) and *Videodrome* (1983), is happy to agree with…

"In every genre film there has to be one standout special effects scene," he explains. "I worked on *An American Werewolf In London*, for example, and in that case it was the sequence where the guy changed from a man to a beast. However, I think *Ghostbusters* raised the bar because there were several amazing moments that people left the cinema and talked about. In a way, it changed everything."

In Johnson's case, *Ghostbusters* gave him the opportunity to craft a new cinematic phantom that would – ultimately – become one of the flagship figures of the filmic franchise.

"Slimer is one of the characters that I'm most famous for," he says. "By that I don't mean people go, 'Oh, Steve Johnson, he created Slimer'. Rather I mean that if I'm asked what I've done, and I mention him, people immediately know who he is.

"Slimer has become really iconic but I never knew that would happen. It's impossible to predict what an audience will connect with. In fact, I was embarrassed by the Slimer sculpture. Ivan Reitman and the *Ghostbusters*

producers were not too impressed either. Even the writer, the writer's girlfriend and the janitors were giving me notes on it! I did a number of different versions – small, medium, large – I must have done 12 sculptures in total. It was a really long process to get Slimer green-lit."

LITTLE SPUD

As Johnson maintains, part of the problem was in trying to work out if the colourful creeper should be comical or carry at least some sort of sinister distinction.

"Yeah, that was the whole thing," continues the artist. "I was hearing, 'The eyes are too big, make them smaller, he looks too friendly' then it would be 'But now they're too small – he looks really odd and he can't be that terrifying!' Then it was 'take his ears off' only to be followed a week later with 'actually, we liked him better with the ears on'.

"I also got, 'What is it with the big teeth? He looks too happy'. So I took that all away and they came back with 'But now he looks too sad' – so I couldn't please anyone. During this time I never knew we had something special. To me, Slimer was just a big smile with arms. I thought, 'Who cares? He's hardly even in this movie'. That was all it was – a

Sigourney Weaver watches Steve Johnson working on one of the Slimer models.

> ## "THE FIRST DESIGN I DID ENDED UP BEING ALMOST IDENTICAL TO THE CHARACTER THAT ENDED UP ON FILM. THEY BASICALLY BURNED $300,000 TO GET BACK TO WHERE WE STARTED. THAT'S HOLLYWOOD, RIGHT?"

smile with arms that you see for a short sequence – but we were obsessing over the ears and what colour he was going to be. And all the time I was thinking, 'You know, we should probably be worrying more about how the hell we're going to make this thing!'"

Nevertheless, Slimer did arrive onto the screen as a strangely convincing foam rubber/animatronic puppet that, in the final feature, looks suitably translucent. When he covers Bill Murray in green goo we really, genuinely, believe in this plasma-splashing little poltergeist.

"Well, somehow, in the end, we got there," agrees Johnson. "And we even managed to make him convincing. When you see him in the movie you really do believe that he can fly – but the truth is that he was controlled by 12 puppeteers and filmed against a black background. He was almost immobile – and yet that's one of the most iconic creations I've ever made. And if you asked me back then 'Hey Steve – do you think Slimer's going to take off?' I'd have said 'no'. I didn't realise this was going to be the face of a new fizzy fruit drink, a Saturday morning cartoon series, a comic book, refrigerator ornaments and even Christmas decorations. To me, it was a huge six-

month design process that caused me to miss out on a lot of sleep!"

GHOST WARRIOR
Amazingly, Johnson also mentions that the final version of Slimer, as seen in *Ghostbusters*, is actually more or less the same as his original sculpture.

"That's the funny thing," he says. "Ultimately, the first design I did ended up being almost identical to the character that ended up on film. Almost exactly – I'm not kidding! In the end, they basically burned about $300,000 to get back to where we started. That's Hollywood, right?

"On the other hand, though, it was that same process that allowed us to talk about the movements so, who knows, maybe it worked in the end. I mean, something about that little creation obviously reached out to fans and made them think 'Yeah, this is what we think of when it comes to *Ghostbusters* and we can't get enough of him.'"

Asked what he thought about *Ghostbusters* when he was first hired, Johnson is remarkably forthright...

"When I read the script I thought it was awful," he chuckles. "I'm serious – I just didn't get it. I was going through the

screenplay and thinking 'What? Are you kidding me? This is stupid!' But, listen, you can imagine how that film might read on paper, right? If you didn't know the performances of Dan and Bill and everyone – and you were just seeing black words on white paper – it read as if there was no way it was ever going to work. I was amazed that it worked as well as it did."

Unfortunately for Johnson, though, his work on *Ghostbusters* was not the career boost he was hoping for...

"It was annoying because I thought, 'Okay, now I can go out on my own and run my own company'. I mean, why not right? I'd been working on huge projects – not just *Ghostbusters* but *Big Trouble In Little China*, *Fright Night*, *Poltergeist II*... These were all major, major movies – with lots of money behind them.

"So I went out by myself and I remember the first thing I went for was the Jack Nicholson film *The Witches Of Eastwick*. I spoke with the producers and I promoted myself as 'the guy who did *Ghostbusters*' and they said, 'No, Richard Edlund is the guy who did *Ghostbusters*'. And I had to say, 'He was working in a different building from me – I'm the guy who did Slimer. I did the old lady in the library. I did loads of stuff. I worked really hard on *Ghostbusters*!' But as far as they were concerned, I was working for Richard – I was just a hired hand."

No longer part of the bigger package, Johnson would also sit out *Ghostbusters*

STANDING ON THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS

WHY THE KEY TO SUCCESS IS CREATING A TALKING POINT

Asked about the biggest inspirations in his career, Johnson, whose acclaimed creations also include the extraterrestrial evil that highlights the *Species* series and the mystical marauders of Clive Barker's *Lords Of Illusions*, mentions that James Cameron tops the list. "James was amazing to work with on *The Abyss*," he recalls. "He was the one who told me that you have to make something that you can imagine people leaving the cinema and speaking about. He said to me, 'You have to ask yourself if you'd tell your friends about this' – and that's a piece of advice that has always stuck with me. You have to excite yourself – and that's the start of exciting other people. If you're doing something that isn't making you think, 'Holy shit, this is amazing,' then don't expect that reaction from others."

Clay prototypes of the ghosts – versions were made with different facial expressions.

II (1989) – although his decision to go solo finally paid off thanks to some bigger studio projects such as *Leviathan* (1989), *The Abyss* (1989) and *Suburban Commando* (1991).

"Sure, it would have been great to do *Ghostbusters II*," he admits. "But there is that question – and this is the same with *Ghostbusters 3* – of how you can follow such a classic movie? For the audience it's a comfort thing – so they demand more sequels.

"It's like going back to eating your mother's mashed potatoes and gravy. It's recapturing that special time when a movie really amazed you and broke new ground – which is rarer and rarer today. I think that's why everyone wants

"BACK THEN IT WAS LIKE PULLING A RABBIT OUT OF A HAT – PEOPLE DIDN'T KNOW HOW WE'D DONE IT. I THINK SOME OF THAT MAGIC HAS BEEN LOST"

a *Ghostbusters 3*. However, that original film was before digital technology. You can't make a movie like that anymore."

FREE SPIRIT
Nowadays, Johnson is semi-retired from the effects industry. One of the great genre movie enthusiasts (he was once married to the celebrated Scream Queen Linnea Quigley), and a master of practical creature-creations,

the artist stuck it out until the mid-part of the millennium, offering his services to *Blade II* (2002) and *War Of The Worlds* (2005). Yet, having been one of the key talents of the practical effects boom – alongside the likes of Rick Baker (*An American Werewolf In London*), Rob Bottin (*The Thing*) and Tom Savini (*Friday The 13th*) – he openly admits that the time has long passed for the sort of on-camera wizardry he once specialised in...

"Back in the '80s, when I was working on cutting-edge movies like *The Abyss* and the *Nightmare On Elm Street* films, you could call up the director and speak to him," he says. "I'd say stuff like, 'Hey, I have an idea for this. I think I know how we can do that scene even better'. And the director trusted you because you were the guy in a workshop who made the monsters.

"Now, of course, that's all changed. There are too many studio people involved – and that sense of 'Wow, I fooled the audience', that isn't there anymore. No matter how hard I try, people just think 'Yeah, it was a computer that created that'.

"In fact, I find myself speaking to fans today – young fans – and if they ask what I've worked on I say, '*Ghostbusters*, *The Abyss*, *Big Trouble In Little China*...' and so many of them say 'Oh I thought that was just computers'. Back then it was like pulling a rabbit out of a hat – people didn't know how we'd done it. I think some of that magic has been lost."

By the second film, Onionhead was called Slimer and hanging out with the gang.

THE TOP 40 GHOSTS

WHICH SCREEN SPOOKS HAVE SENT YOU BEHIND THE SOFA? OUR POLL OF HAUNTED READERS REVEALS ALL

Brrrrrr! There's a chill in the air. And what's that strange clanking sound, like an agonised groaning? Could it be that our coverage of all things *Ghostbusters* has awakened some ancient evil from its slumber?

Nah, it's not a ghost. The central heating in *SFX* Towers has broken again and the moaning is your erstwhile editor trying to count up the entries to our recent Scariest Screen Ghost poll. You voted in your thousands via the website and this Top 40 review is the result.

There are spirits from both the big and the small screen here, some old and some new. And while you could question the inclusion of the likes of Zero from *The Nightmare Before Christmas* or Obi-Wan Kenobi – hardly likely to trouble many dreams – they're both great characters who received a lot of votes.

Who's at number one? Well, it's probably not a spoiler to say that it's not Timothy Claypole from *Rentaghost*, no matter how nostalgic he might make us. No, our winner can quite confidently lay claim to being one of the most frightening characters ever to be shown on screen in any genre, while at number two we've got the scourge of an entire generation of TV viewers. So settle back, relax and join us on our trip down a rather haunted memory lane…

Your reviewers for this Top 40 were: Bridie Roman (BR), Miles Hamer (MH), Will Salmon (WS), Alasdair Stuart (AS), Dave Golder (DG), Sarah Dobbs (SD) and Jo Wylie (JW).

40 MARLEY
A CHRISTMAS CAROL (VARIOUS)

Poor Jacob Marley has rattled his chain of guilt and regret since 1843. He's become so familiar he's almost not scary anymore. He's even been played by Statler and Waldorf in *The Muppet Christmas Carol*.

But look closer and you see that Marley has endured because he's one of the most horrifying ghosts in fiction. He's not just paying for his crimes but is cursed to be aware of them for all eternity.

Marley's chain is a lovely visual, but it's also a weight that constantly threatens to tear him apart. As a result, the image of the skies of London full of ghosts labouring with similar chains is as powerful as it is disturbing. The message is clear: make sure you can live, and die, with your choices. Even if you're sometimes Statler and Waldorf.

SCARIEST MOMENT Not so much a scariest bit as a scariest performance. There are two standouts: Alec Guinness voiced an inhumanly wounded version in the 1971 animated film, while Frank Finlay's chilling rendition from the 1984 TV movie is often regarded as a definitive version. **AS**

39 NEARLY HEADLESS NICK
HARRY POTTER (2001)

This jovial ghost rarely got too tied up in the drama at Hogwarts, but his kindly disposition and sense of humour have seen him endure. Something of a loveable-but-crazy-uncle figure in the books, casting John Cleese for the role was a stroke of genius.

Sir Nicholas de Mimsy-Porpington was a knight at King Henry VII's royal court before he met his untimely end. He was sentenced to death the day before Halloween, in 1492, for accidentally giving a lady-in-waiting tusks while trying to fix her crooked teeth. He gained his name when he died after 45 hacks of a blunt executioner's blade.

SCARIEST MOMENT There aren't many Nearly Headless Nick moments you could describe as "scary". His most impactful moment didn't make it into the movies. As Harry mourns the loss of his godfather, Headless turns uncharacteristically sombre: "'I was afraid of death,' said Nick softly… He gave a small sad chuckle. 'I know nothing of the secrets of death, Harry, for I chose my feeble imitation of life instead.'" **JW**
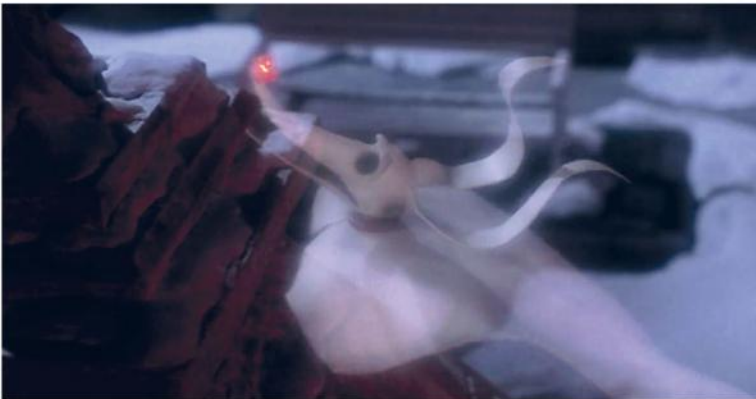
38 ZERO
NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS (1993)

And now, the only ghost in this list you can recreate using nothing more than a hanky and a tomato. The hanky may need washing afterwards.

Zero was the top dog in this Tim Burton-inspired stop-motion musical fantasy – Jack Skellington was just the lead (ho, ho, ho). When it was time for walkies Jack would summon Zero from his doghouse-shaped grave. We can only guess what kind of dog Zero was in real life – as a ghost he's just a head with a red nose and a floating shroud thing for a body – but the poor guy seemed ridiculously happy in the afterlife despite having no privates to lick. The red nose came in handy when Jack nicked Father Christmas's job; on a foggy festive evening, Zero did a Rudolph floating ahead of the skeleton deer pulling the sleigh, lighting their way. At the end of the film he turns into a star. Not sure why. Perhaps it's a visual pun. Dog star? Siriusly?

SCARIEST MOMENT Zero couldn't scare a rabbit back in its hole, but some of his "driving" during the sleigh ride scene is hair-raising. **DG**

37 SANTI
THE DEVIL'S BACKBONE (2001)

"What is a ghost? A tragedy condemned to repeat itself time and again."

Those are the opening words of Guillermo del Toro's early horror masterpiece and they define this mournful story of a murdered child, buried secrets and political unrest.

Set in a haunted orphanage at the tail-end of the Spanish Civil War, *The Devil's Backbone* is a beautiful movie that Del Toro has often said is his most personal film, and a companion piece to *Pan's Labyrinth*. The ghost that wanders the orphanage's corridors is Santi – a young boy who was murdered because he stumbled upon a dangerous secret.

When Carlos, the film's young hero first encounters him, he's a frightening presence with his porcelain-white dead skin and glaring eyes. But it soon becomes apparent that the real evils here are all being carried out by the living.

SCARIEST MOMENT The ghost of Santi chases Carlos through the orphanage and the poor fella is forced to spend the night hiding in a closet. **WS**

36 JOSEPH
THE CHANGELING (1980)

An unfairly overlooked movie, *The Changeling* follows John Russell (George C Scott), a widowed composer who moves to Washington and rents a large mansion in order to piece his life back together. Of course, as we'll see elsewhere on this list, moving to a large spooky house rarely ends well...

This house is haunted by the ghost of a young boy who's been murdered. John investigates, and as he digs deeper he discovers there's far more to the mystery than even he first thought, including connections with a US senator. There are hints of Watergate-era conspiracy thrillers, and a willingness to throw big, visceral scares at the screen with far more enthusiasm than many horrors. Not all of them stick, but the ones that do mark *The Changeling* out as a complex and cheerfully nasty piece of '80s cinema. Rediscover it before you're chased by a possessed wheelchair.

SCARIEST MOMENT The wheelchair chase just takes it, for the genuinely nasty-looking stair fall at the end. **AS**
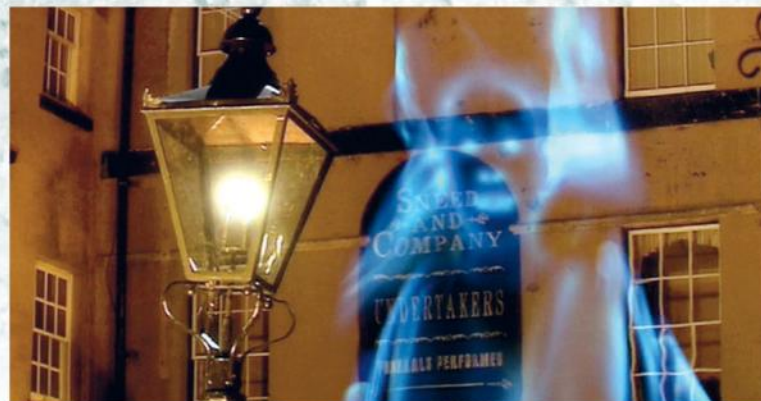
35 THE GELTH
DOCTOR WHO (2005)

It's perhaps no surprise that *Doctor Who* has tackled ghosts in its long history. What *is* surprising is that it took them this long to do it properly...

The Gelth are an alien race, humanoid in form who, thanks to the fallout of the Time War (the cataclysmic conflict between the Daleks and the Doctor's people, the Time Lords) have been reduced to incorporeal "spirits". Quite how this works is never really explained...

In their (to date) only screen appearance, the Mark Gatiss penned Ninth Doctor tale "The Unquiet Dead", the Gelth are attempting to inhabit the corpses of the recently dead. The Doctor, pragmatic as ever, thinks this is a fine idea – recycling on a grand scale! Alas, the Gelth have more sinister plans in mind, with domination of the entire human race their ultimate goal. Bloody typical.

SCARIEST MOMENT As Rose Tyler wakes up in Sneed's undertakers after being drugged (never a great start to the day), a pair of Gelth-controlled bodies come to life. **WS**

34 OBI-WAN KENOBI
STAR WARS

"If you strike me down, I shall become more powerful than you can possibly imagine..." So said Obi-Wan Kenobi, the erudite and benevolent Jedi Master who guided Luke in the ways of the Force, from the battle with Tusken Raiders on Tatooine until well past his death.

Despite Darth Vader's best efforts, though, that lightsaber blow was not the end for Obi-Wan. He continued to mentor Luke, and his Jedi spirit is an enduring image, referenced – and spoofed – many times, even shimmering into view in a number of novels set after *Return Of The Jedi*.

Obi-Wan bids his final farewell in *Heir To The Empire*. Before he shuffles off this, er, spiritual coil, though, he hears Luke tell him he was like a father to him. Obi-Wan replies that he, in turn, loved Luke like a son. Aaah.

SCARIEST MOMENT Well, he's not the scariest of ghosts, but Obi-Wan's spirit plays a key role in some spectacular scenes. The most memorable of these resurrections is, of course, in *A New Hope*, when Obi-Wan appears to help Luke fight the Death Star. "Use the Force, Luke! Let go!" **JW**
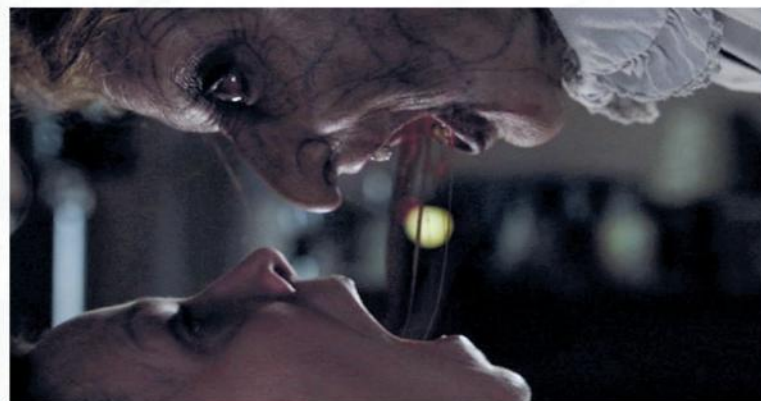
33 BATHSHEBA
THE CONJURING

When will horror movie families learn to stop relocating to rundown old houses in the middle of nowhere?

When the Perron family move into their Harrisville home, they end up lodging with the vindictive spirit of Bathsheba, a witch who killed her own children and is pretty keen to knock off a few more.

For most of the film, Bathsheba is only seen in glimpses – or not at all, though she's definitely there. Like when the youngest Perron sits up in bed at night, crying that there's a monster in the corner of her bedroom. Or when an innocent game of "hide and clap" turns out to have an extra-evil participant. Director James Wan builds an excruciating amount of suspense, so that when Bathsheba finally does show her face, it's pant-wettingly scary.

SCARIEST MOMENT The wardrobe scene. Because it's bad enough when you think Bathsheba might be hiding inside the wardrobe, but then you realise where she's really lurking... **SD**

32 THE CHILDREN
LOST HEARTS (1973)

MR James penned many stories which have made excellent fodder for adaptations. *Lost Hearts* – originally published in 1904 and adapted in 1973 – is just one of them. It's a simple tale of a young orphan, Stephen, coming to live with his older cousin, who has a seemingly unquenchable thirst for knowledge… and a dark secret.

While Stephen wanders the grounds, he catches glimpses of spectral children. They wave, raise their fingers to their lips to keep him quiet and – in one moment that's both crap-your-pants creepy and ever so slightly hilarious – dance around him while he sleeps to some peculiar hurdy-gurdy music. Sure, these creepy kids aren't going to give Sadako any nightmares, but there's something powerful about this pair that lingers, long after you've forgotten how dodgy the make-up is.

SCARIEST MOMENT Stephen seems to take the appearance of his ghostly pals fairly well – until they lower their arms and he sees the holes in their chests, and the meaning of the title becomes clear. **WS**

31 THE FURTHER
INSIDIOUS (2010)

The Further isn't a single ghost – it's an entire ghost dimension. In *Insidious*, beings from The Further are in a sort of limbo, and it's not one they're happy in. Nope, their main goal in, er, not-life is to find a living soul they can latch onto, stalk relentlessly, and eventually possess. Some people can travel into The Further while they're still alive, but you wouldn't want to: it's all Dutch angles, knee-high fog, and eerie grinning murderers in there. Known residents of The Further include the Lipstick-Face Demon, a dead ringer for Darth Maul; the Long-haired Demon, a leering creep fond of hiding behind curtains; and the Dancing Boy, a Tiny Tim fanatic. It's not clear what a person would have to have done in their life to end up trapped in The Further after death, but it probably involves being awful in one way or another.

SCARIEST MOMENT The split-second when the normal-looking family suddenly snaps into a horrifying tableau of grinning dead people. We'll take claw-footed demons over those facial expressions, thanks. **SD**

30 MOIRA
AMERICAN HORROR STORY (2011)

American Horror Story has a reputation for exuberantly over-the-top storytelling. But it's also capable of surprising subtlety at times. Moira, from season one (aka *Murder House*) is a great example.

Moira is a maid working in said house. Initially she's presented as a polite, slightly matronly older woman, but she's actually a ghost and her appearance changes depending on whether she's talking to a man or a woman. Moira's a fascinating character who embodies the central idea of the series: that the house is a "prison" of sorts for the people who died there. As a result, she ends up on the frontline of the war between the family who've moved in and the ghosts who have plans for them…

Frances Conroy and Alexandra Breckenridge's performances mesh perfectly to create a character unlike any other on this list. Polite, angry, driven and running headlong at (un)life she's one of *AHS*'s all-time greats.

SCARIEST MOMENT The moment Ben comes into the room and we see how Moira appears to him is as elegant as it is chilling. **AS**

29 THE GIRL
THE STONE TAPE (1972)

Quatermass creator Nigel Kneale's famous TV movie offers a distinctly different and modern take on the ghost story. Originally planned as the final episode of anthology series *Dead Of Night*, it was eventually broadcast as a standalone film – and instantly entered into the nightmares of a generation.

The central ghost at the heart of the story is a young woman who fell to her death. Her final moments are captured forever in the stone of an old building, constantly replayed to the dismay of anyone who sees her. This is a theory that many parapsychologists hold to. But the really chilling implication is that her ghost isn't just some unfeeling echo. Instead, it's suggested that some aspect of her consciousness still lives and feels her pain and fear, looped again and again. Forever.

SCARIEST MOMENT The implication of the final scene is horrific, but spoilery – go watch it! For eerie shivers, however, the child's letter that simply reads "What I want for Christmas is please go away" is hard to beat. **WS**

28 PHANTOM DENNIS
ANGEL (1999-2002)

To say that Phantom Dennis appeared in 11 episodes of *Angel* is a bit misleading, as he spent all but one of them completely invisible.

Dennis wasn't so much haunting Cordelia's apartment as sharing it with her, like a ghostly flatmate. Maybe even more than that if Cordelia's comment that the only sex she was getting was, "an invisible ghost who's good with the loofah," but she was prone to exaggeration.

The friendliest ghost since Casper, the only time he was in the least bit terrifying was in his first (and only literal) appearance, and it wasn't because Angel and co named him after a crap *Star Wars* film.

When Cordelia first moved in, her apartment was properly haunted by Dennis's mum. Angel and Cordelia find Dennis's remains bricked up behind a wall. This unleashes Dennis's ghost and he sends mum packing. He was, forever after, lovingly loyal to Cordelia.

SCARIEST MOMENT Being unleashed from captivity and taking vengeance on his appalling mother. **DG**

27 THE SCOLERI BROS
GHOSTBUSTERS II (1989)

The sudden appearance of the Scoleri Brothers half an hour into *Ghostbusters II* is handy for our boys, who are in dire need of supernatural intervention, but it raises several awkward questions. Firstly, why do ghosts only ever appear in New York when the gang needs them to? And how does the judge recognise Tony and Nunzio Scoleri? They look barely human in their spectral form!

No matter. While we learn little about these two gangster ghosts' backgrounds (they were tried for murder and electrocuted, that's literally it), they certainly made an impact.

Visually inspired by the Blues Brothers and played, uncredited, by designer Tim Lawrence and actor Jim Fye in latex suits, they tear up the courtroom in the film's first major setpiece, giving the gang the excuse they need to strap on the Proton Packs.

SCARIEST MOMENT The way they spring out of nowhere is a nice jump scare, and they soon make short work of that courtroom. **WS**

26 THE GHOST CHILDREN
CORALINE (2009)

In Henry Selick's 3D stop-motion take on Neil Gaiman's eerie novella, Coraline explores more and more of the "Other World", a fantastical version of her home and family being used to lure her away from reality.

Events come to a head when Coraline is shoved through her Other Mother's mirror and meets the three Ghost Children. Nameless, eyeless and empty, the trio are all previous victims of Beldam, the film's antagonist and the Other Mother so intent upon keeping Coraline forever. They warn Coraline against accepting the lure of the Beldam, as they did in the past. "She said that she loved us, but she locked us here and ate up our lives…"

The disquieting trio ask Coraline to find their eyes – the only way they can be free from the dark world Beldam has sentenced them to.

SCARIEST MOMENT Huddled and moonpale on the rotted old bed behind the mirror, the three children grip the buttons they have for eyes and speak in chilling rhyme. It's terrifying in a quiet, understated way. **JW**

25 THE GHOSTS
THIR13EN GHOSTS (2001)

What have we learned looking through this list? If you're sent to a big spooky house? Be worried. If that house is made of glass, metal and sat on foundations of evil? Be *very* worried. Unfortunately, Arthur Kriticos never got that memo so when he "inherits" the house of his ghost hunter Uncle Cyrus, he moves his family in. It doesn't go well.

Absolutely nothing in *Thir13en Ghosts* is subtle but it doesn't need to be. A remake of the old William Castle movie, it's a full-throttle, trashy drive-in horror that knows exactly what it wants to do and succeeds admirably. That's largely thanks to the special goggles that let the characters see the ghosts. This is a nod to a marketing gimmick for the original but, along with the wonderful design work on the phantoms, gives the movie a unique visual identity. Trashy but huge fun.

SCARIEST MOMENT The spooks are all wonderfully nasty but the scariest bit has to be the encounter that Cyrus's lawyer, Moss, has with one of the ghosts and a set of very, very fast sliding doors… **AS**

24 VIGO
GHOSTBUSTERS II (1989)

Say what you like about *Ghostbusters II*, but one thing most fans agree on is that it got the villain exactly right. Vigo is a brilliantly intimidating antagonist, despite spending most of the film inside a painting.

A damn creepy painting, though, and certainly not one you'd want hanging in your bedroom. From the moment Dana lays eyes on it in the Manhattan Museum of Art, we know that something's amiss. It's not long before all manner of supernatural weirdness is going on.

Wilhelm Von Homburg gives a fearsome performance as the scourge of Carpathia, all scowls, penetrating glares and Darth Vader bulk. The fact that he is later able to possess poor Ray only adds to his "don't mess with me" skillset.

SCARIEST MOMENT While Ray and Egon study some Kirlian photographs of Vigo's painting the door locks on its own and the photos catch fire. The fact that Vigo's face has warped horribly adds to a rare scene in the film that is actually quite spooky. **WS**

23 SPIKE
ANGEL (2003)

Whaddya mean "he's a vampire, not a ghost"? Well, technically you're correct – but don't forget *Angel*'s fifth season… Spike's death was the perfect way to end *Buffy*. After starting out as a villain, the show set about gradually redeeming William the Bloody to the point that his final heroic self-sacrifice felt appropriate and moving. But death was not the end (er, again) and he was soon restored to un-life by a magical amulet in the offices of demonic lawyers Wolfram & Hart.

Okay, so James Marsters was never going to play spectral Spike as a sinister spook – he's the same loveable Quincy Punk of old. But the episodes that feature him in this limbo state do a great job of revitalising the character.

SCARIEST MOMENT Ironically, Spike's scariest moment as a ghost comes not through his own actions. In "Hell Bound" he is tormented by the spirit of Matthias Pavayne, a mass murderer who opens a portal to hell and tries to send Spike there. **WS**

22 THE ORPHANS
THE ORPHANAGE (2007)

"Are you playing? Do you want to play with me?" asks bereaved mother Laura, towards the harrowing climax of this Spanish ghost story. That's the way the ghosts in *The Orphanage* like to communicate: treasure hunts, tag, statues. They can't help it if the games get a little out of hand.

Most of the ghosts are like shadowy-eyed child dolls from a Tim Burton movie, but one, Tomás, is an altogether scarier affair. He's like a nightmarish dwarf scarecrow, who clicks and wheezes like a dolphin with mutant adenoids. But when you learn his backstory, your heart goes out to him. It almost excuses all that slamming-people's-fingers-in-doors business. Most of the rest of the time, the ghosts don't actually do much that's scary; it's Laura's neurotic interpretation of what's going on that makes the film so creepy.

SCARIEST MOMENT The biggest "made you jump" scare doesn't involve the ghosts but an old lady and a bus. But the creepiest moment is Laura playing a Spanish version of statues with the orphans. **DG**

21 CAPTAIN BLAKE
THE FOG (1980)

As the coastal town of Antonio Bay prepares to celebrate its centennial, it's beset by a series of strange happenings. Phones start to ring. Alarms go off. The local priest, Father Malone, discovers an ancient journal. And then a huge bank of fog rolls in from the sea…

With the fog comes a horde of silent spooks – the ghosts of a boat crew murdered 100 years previously by the locals to stop them establishing a leper colony. Led by the spirit of Captain Blake, these sword-wielding spectres have a thirst for vengeance – and who can blame them?

Visual effects artist Rob Bottin played Blake's physical form – though you see little of him, aside from a silhouette and glowing red eyes. But there's no denying the sinister appeal of Blake and his crew as they descend on the town.

SCARIEST MOMENT As the town is subsumed in fog, the smart townsfolk keep quiet. But not babysitter Mrs Kobritz, who can't resist a peek when a heavy fist knocks on the door. Bad move… **WS**

20 QUINT AND JESSEL
THE INNOCENTS (1961)

When is a ghost not a ghost? When it's the figment of a repressed Victorian governess's imagination, perhaps? That's the genius of Jack Clayton's adaptation of *The Turn Of The Screw*. Even after its shocking denouement has played out, you're left wondering just how much of what's happened was supernatural, and what was merely down to the fanatical and increasingly frayed temperament of Miss Giddens.

What we do know is that Peter Quint and Miss Jessel both worked at the Bly estate before their deaths. Giddens believes that their restless spirits are trying to possess the two children in her care. And while she often comes off as a rambling loon, the evidence begins to add up. Barely glimpsed, but always felt, Quint and Jessel's mute presence is subtly terrifying.

SCARIEST MOMENT Many will say it's Quint's face appearing at the window, but there's something truly eerie about Giddens and Flora staring out across the lake and seeing Jessel's mute, funereal figure gazing back. **WS**

19 THE DOORWAY GHOST
POLTERGEIST (1982)

Poltergeist is one of the all-time great ghost movies. When the Freeling family discover that something nasty has invaded their home (which is built on top of an old cemetery, natch) all manner of supernatural beasties visit. The Freelings, along with a team of parapsychologists, must battle the ghosts and rescue their daughter, Carol Anne.

It's a very modern horror movie, with a rich streak of grounded humour that really makes you root for the Freelings, and its "science vs the paranormal" approach still feels fresh. But best of all is the wonderful design of the horrors that the family face. The Doorway Ghost is the most striking of the bunch. One of the final reveals in the movie, it's wonderfully ferocious, all spindly legs and flowing hair. This isn't a floating sheet, chain-clanking phantom or transparent old lady – it's something utterly inhuman and evil.

SCARIEST MOMENT The Doorway Ghost's sudden appearance is the most alarming moment in a film that troubled the dreams of many '80s teens. **AS**

18 THE SICK GIRL
THE SIXTH SENSE (1999)

There are many ghosts in M Night Shyamalan's classic shocker. There's the cyclist, killed in a traffic accident, so brilliantly parodied in *Spaced*; the abused wife who commits suicide and frightens the life out of young Cole Sear; there's even... ah, spoilers. What? There must be someone reading this who *still* doesn't know.

But the best and most frightening of the bunch is the sick girl. She breaches Cole's safe space – a tent set up in his house – goo dripping from her chin, and she seems to have, at least temporarily, a real physical presence. But as Cole bravely makes contact with her, he realises the truth – she's as scared as he is. The reveal that she was murdered by her mother is arguably the scariest thing in the film.

SCARIEST MOMENT As Cole hides in his tent, we see the pegs keeping it closed slowly ping open. We expect her to crawl in with him, but then the camera moves and we see that she's there, already sitting beside him. Shudders guaranteed. **WS**

17 ANNIE
BEING HUMAN UK (2008-2012)

Annie Sawyer never asked to haunt the little corner house that hosted supernatural drama *Being Human*, and she certainly never asked to get thrown down the stairs by her fiancé, Owen. Despite that, though, she's not a vengeful spectre, instead she's gentle and diffident, the emotional centre of a series that revolved around her and her little flat.

It was a joy to watch her hone her skills, but she was rarely scary. She rejected numerous chances to move on so she could stay and help her friends; she became a mother to Eve, and in some ways saved all the supernatural creatures that came to stay under her roof.

Annie's power only increased as the seasons went on and we watched her progress from a wavering, barely visible ghost to a powerful and confident vampire slayer. She may not have scared the audience outright, but you knew that you never wanted to cross Annie Sawyer.

SCARIEST MOMENT As she looked to punish Owen for killing her and turning her into a spook, she drove him mad just by whispering in his ear. **JW**

16 THE PHANTOM
WHISTLE AND I'LL COME TO YOU (1968)

Whistle And I'll Come To You, My Lad is often said to be the scariest of all MR James's great ghost stories. And yet, it's also one of the most subtle.

Its popularity is, without doubt, down to its two screen adaptations. The first, made in 1968 by Jonathan Miller, is a masterpiece of understated chills. The ghost here – if it even *is* a ghost – is a spectral wraith glimpsed in the distance on a beach, and (literally) haunting Professor Parkin's dreams. It could be real, it could all be a delusion – we don't know. But it definitely has something to do with the whistle he found in a graveyard…

The remake, for once, is also worthwhile – though the changes to the plot are largely unnecessary. This time the phantom is less a flapping sheet, and more clearly a figure – perhaps even the spirit of Parkin's hospitalised wife. Good stuff, but we'd choose the floating sheet any day.

SCARIEST MOMENT Walking back along the beach in the 1968 version, Michael Hordern's Professor Parkin sees a ragged cloth floating ominously in the distance. He turns to run and it rears up towards him… **WS**

15 THE WOMAN IN BLACK
THE WOMAN IN BLACK (1989)

The '80s version of *The Woman In Black* was developed for ITV and, as such, it's not as glossy as the more recent adaptation. Somehow, though, that lack of polish only serves to add to the terror.

Arthur Kidd (Adrian Rawlins) is a young solicitor sent out to the remote Eel Marsh House to deal with the affairs of an elderly recluse. In theory, there shouldn't be anything scarier than piles of paperwork and some dusty antiques for him to deal with, but as he digs into the house's history, he discovers a family tragedy – and a whole load of ghosts.

It's a slow burner, and the titular Woman's backstory is a pretty sad one. But you'll forget all of that once the haunting starts in earnest. After all, it's hard to feel too sorry for a ghost whose whole reason for existing is to kill children.

SCARIEST MOMENT The bit where the Woman appears over the bed in the boarding house. It seems to go on forever; even if you look away, she's still there when you look back. Arghhh. **SD**

14 ARMY OF THE DEAD
THE RETURN OF THE KING (2003)

The Army of the Dead were a miserable and probably quite frightening bunch pre-death, and expiring certainly didn't cheer them up. Once worshippers of Sauron, the Men of Dunharrow swore an oath to fight the Dark Lord – and then broke it. Cursed to know no rest until they fulfil their promise, they haunt their ruined subterranean city.

They're not quite the stuff of nightmares, especially since Gimli is present to huff, puff and blow away their wispy hands and look comically terrified about crushing the skulls of their mortal bodies. They do look pretty mean, though, with their glowing green faces, and there's no doubt they kick butt in the fight for Gondor.

Interesting fact: in the books they are so scary they don't even have to fight, they just show up and the bad guys start running away.

SCARIEST MOMENT The rotten corpse-ghosts of the undead surround Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli. Who wouldn't be scared of a hostile ghostly army that outnumbers you? **BR**

13 WOMAN IN ROOM 237
THE SHINING (1980)

The Shining revels in ambiguity. A central tenet of fright lies in the unknown, and boy, is there a lot of that here. Especially in The Overlook's mysterious Room 237. A malevolent force that makes even the avuncular chuckling of Scatman cease in order to break out his newsreader face, the presence that occupies said nightmare suite is foreshadowed several times before the Torrances step unwisely inside. And, when they do, all manner of bad redrum goes down. Of course, the book goes and ruins the mystery by a) explaining it and b) being written first. Thankfully, Kubrick's insistence on leaving out the details creates a far more palpable dread – fear born simply from not knowing where this evil comes from, and where it might lead.

SCARIEST MOMENT A lesion-ridden hag with a funhouse cackle, the deceptive ghoul that manages to temporarily bewitch mad Jack is a horrifying sight, particularly in the juxtaposition with what originally emerged from the bath. **MH**

12 CANDYMAN
CANDYMAN (1992)

The titular bassoon-voiced honey enthusiast is a more traditional spook than you might think. For a start, his origin is steeped in folklore – the urban myth re-told across playgrounds and campfires for many a generation. Secondly, ghost tropes dictate that said spectre should be seeking to avenge a perceived injustice that occurred during their lifetime. Check. (Tony Todd's face, all sad eyes and cruel mouth, is haunting enough all in itself.) Thirdly, film wisdom has taught us that movie ghosts are dog-botherers. Well, Candyman bothers a dog to bloody canine chunks in this. Oh, and there's a psychological threat for sure. He's an apparition with the power to evoke terrifying imagery and even frame you for murder if that takes his fancy.

SCARIEST MOMENT Coming at you with that infamous rusty hook of his to "split you from your groin to your gullet". Then projectile vomiting a swarm of bees in your face for good measure. We'd like to see Casper try that. **MH**

11 THE GHOST
THE HAUNTING (1963)

Less is more. It has to be said. It's almost a law of film journalism that if you're writing about *The Haunting* you have to say that. Or you can expand it to, "Sometimes what you don't see is scarier than what you see."

You only need to compare the 1963 *The Haunting* with its 1999 remake to understand that. You never see a ghost in the '60s version, and the special effects never extend beyond a door buckling a bit. And it's terrifying. The 1999 film is wall-to-wall spooky CG effects, and it's just monumentally dull.

The irony is, there may not even be a ghost. The film may be about a bunch of paranormal experts investigating the haunting of Hill House, but they could just as easily all be suffering mass hysteria. Or maybe the ghost has a real sense of drama, and knows that if it showed its face, it'd ruin all the tension.

SCARIEST MOMENT "God, it knows I'm here!" The team cowers in a bedroom from ghostly footsteps, knocking, and bulging, buckling doors. **DG**

10 CHRISTMAS YET TO COME
A CHRISTMAS CAROL (VARIOUS)

Wanna know why the Ghost Of Christmas Yet To Come is one scary mother? Because he's the spook who *finally makes Scrooge change his ways.* And he does it all without saying a word. Maybe he could come back and convince Piers Morgan never to appear on television again. *A Christmas Carol* is one of the most filmed stories, but the depiction of the Ghost Of Christmas Yet To Come has remained remarkably consistent (and very true to Dickens's description in the book) – he's basically the Grim Reaper sans scythe. And no matter what the tone of the adaptation – from *Mickey's Christmas Carol* to the musical *Scrooge* to the comedy *Scrooged* – Yet To Come's appearance is always the point at which the film suddenly gets scary and serious. Prize for the scariest one of all, though, must go to the towering, boney vision of death in the 1984 made for TV version of *A Christmas Carol*, starring George C Scott.

SCARIEST MOMENT The "Last Of The Spirits" (for that is what the chapter is called) showing Scrooge his own gravestone. **DG**

9 THE HEADLESS HORSEMAN
SLEEPY HOLLOW (1999)

The Headless Horseman once had a head, and oh what a head it was. So special, in fact, that this particular Hessian soldier got a little too attached, and when it was detached well, he lost his head. Now an angry vengeful ghost atop a menacing black steed, the Headless Horseman searches for his noggin and cuts down anyone in his way.

Tim Burton's retelling of classic tale "The Legend Of Sleepy Hollow" might stray from the original, but it retains the fear and mystery that makes this a ghost story that continues to be told. Whether he's striding through a house, weapon in hand, or chasing a victim through the mist-filled woods of Sleepy Hollow, his presence is one of grim, murderous determination. Burton's vision of the Horseman *with* a head is just as terrifying as without, Christopher Walken's ashen face, piercing blue eyes and sharpened, grimacing teeth are a terror to behold.

SCARIEST MOMENT The Horseman's skull is returned to him and, as it's held there, the flesh starts to grow back on the weathered bone. **BR**

8 KAYAKO
THE GRUDGE (2004)

Director Takashi Shimizu has revisited his haunted house story many times over the years. First there was *Ju-on: The Curse* (2000), then *Ju-on: The Curse 2* (2000), then *Ju-on: The Grudge* (2002), *Ju-on: The Grudge 2* (2003), and then finally *The Grudge* (2004) and *The Grudge 2* (2006). Though the story changed from one film to the next, one thing never did: actress Takako Fuji's terrifying portrayal of the ghostly Kayako Saeki. The j-horror trend of the early 2000s saw ghosts who looked like Kayako popping up all over the place, all white dresses, long black hair, and mad staring eyes. But Kayako's trademark rattle, a noise somewhere between a burp and a scream, sets her apart. In the *Grudge* films, you know a character is in trouble when they start to hear that croaking noise, a product of the vengeance-obsessed ghost's broken windpipe. Brrrrrr.

SCARIEST MOMENT There are almost too many to pick from, but the time she climbed under a victim's duvet to take them right out of their own bed wins. Is nowhere sacred? **SD**

7 THE TWINS
THE SHINING (1980)

It's only 10 minutes into *The Shining* where we meet the most terrifying twins in cinema history outside of an Arnold Schwarzenegger action-comedy. Even during this briefest of glimpses, it's instantly iconic and utterly unnerving, carving an imprint of horror deep in the audience's psyche that stays long after the credits have rolled. It's a myth that twins are in and of themselves "creepy". Even Jedward.

It's context that Kubrick nails so early on in his brooding masterpiece which really gives the spectral siblings their fear factor. Thanks to some handy exposition, we already know the gruesome manner of their deaths. So when troubled Danny screams silently over images of their static smirks fleetingly layered between shots of a flowing river of blood, it's hard not to feel a little more than mere discomfort.

SCARIEST MOMENT The wretched spirits beckoning the petrified Danny to "come and play with us for ever and ever" beside recurring visions of their blood-soaked corpses. **MH**

6 BEETLEJUICE
BEETLEJUICE (1988)

Betelgeuse is a class-A jerk. He's a "bio-exorcist", a specialist in scaring the living on behalf of the dead, and while he's not always scary he's certainly not someone you'd want to encounter on a dark and empty street. Obnoxious, crude and downright perverted, Betelgeuse's bad manners will frighten you more than anything else. Everything about him is repulsive, from his unwashed hair and grimy, corpse-like face to his questionable fashion choices (which are shared by Robin Thicke, and that's not the only similarity between the two). Simply put, he's slimier than Slimer. He becomes especially creepy around women, particularly Lydia Deetz, who he plans to marry against her will, which is when he reaches the pinnacle of creepy-jerkdom. Let's be thankful though, apparently this is the toned-down version – in original scripts he was a mass-murdering rapist.

SCARIEST MOMENT Betelgeuse turns into a snake, his terrifying visage twisting around the Deetzes, looking up skirts and throwing people around. **BR**

5 SLIMER
GHOSTBUSTERS (1984)

No one planned for a ghost to be the breakout star of *Ghostbusters*. In fact, during production, Slimer wasn't even the green ectoplasmic glob's name. He was dubbed "Onionhead" by those making the movie.

But something about the creature's early appearance struck a nerve. "He slimed me", was one of the most often quoted lines from the movie around school playgrounds. When *The Real Ghostbusters* cartoon aired a few years later, Slimer was back and seemingly part of the gang. Nicknamed "the ghost of John Belushi" by Dan Aykroyd, the big green meanie was just too much fun to be really frightening. Instead, he came to represent the film's unique qualities: its playful sense of humour, its fondness for covering its stars in goo and its mixture of horror and laughs.

SCARIEST MOMENT Waiting at the end of the corridor, staring down Peter Venkman, the "spud" comes hurtling towards the camera roaring. More comical than frightening, there's still something freaky about the scene that's missing from all of Slimer's future screen appearances. **WS**

4 THE WOMAN IN BLACK
THE WOMAN IN BLACK (2012)

Based on the acclaimed 1983 novella by Susan Hill, this 2012 version of the classic ghost story – about a mysterious spectre that heralds the death of children – gets everything absolutely right.

Lawyer Arthur Kipps (Daniel Radcliffe) arrives in an English village to arrange the sale of the isolated Eel Marsh House. The villagers are less than welcoming, and on his first visit to the property he hears strange noises and sees a spectral entity in funerary garb. The scares keep coming – empty rocking chairs, dead bodies hanging from beams, poisoned children – and a ghoulish game of chess ensues in which Kipps is constantly outmanoeuvred, leading to a chilling final scene that could be read any number of ways.

Everything about this movie works, especially Radcliffe as the well-meaning Kipps, and Liz White as the Woman herself. She's a terrifying figure, a poised and elegant spectre who is calculated and intelligent but oozes malicious rage from every pore.

A very British ghost story: subtle, and absolutely terrifying.

SCARIEST MOMENT Alone in Eel Marsh House, Arthur hears something. He creeps through the house until he reaches a window and watches, horror-struck, as something digs itself out of the ground and stumbles towards the front door… **AS**

3 LIBRARY GHOST
GHOSTBUSTERS (1984)

Let's address the Library Ghost's scariest moment first: she messes up the well-ordered books at the New York Public Library (the horror!). And then, after being yelled at, she shows her scary face to the 'busters, forcing them to flee. Okay, so she's not the most terrifying ghost, but she *is* iconic.

It's a pretty standard name: the Library Ghost could describe any ghost in any library. But when you hear it you know it means *this* ghost – the first adversary of Venkman, Spengler and Stantz.

Her book-piling talents are prodigious, and she displays symmetrical stacking skills only rivalled by the Philadelphia Mass Turbulence of 1947. This means she's either an especially powerful ghost or she's just really dedicated to making a mess.

A full torso apparition, she's pretty ugly when she's angry – but then she's just had three guys shouting "Get her!" But perhaps the most disturbing fact about the Library Ghost is that she swings so wildly between being a normal librarian (shushing Venkman while quietly reading) and a crazy destructive ghost with no regard for order. She's unpredictable and clearly deeply unhinged.

SCARIEST MOMENT Scattering index cards and messing up the shelves of a public library should send a shiver down any book lover's spine. **BR**

2 PIPES
GHOSTWATCH (1992)

The BBC's fake documentary has achieved an almost legendary status in the 22 years since its first (and only UK terrestrial) broadcast.

An investigation into the fictional haunting of an ordinary suburban home, and starring such everyday screen presences as Sarah Greene, Michael Parkinson and Craig Charles, it appeared to be a cheerfully lighthearted bit of fluff until seemingly real supernatural events started to take place in both the house – and the TV studio itself. By the end of the show's 90 minutes, viewers were left bewildered and some terrified by the apparently real ghostly attacks that had just taken place.

It was fake, of course. A brilliant Halloween horror story by ghost writer extraordinaire Stephen Volk (who went on to create the spooktacular *Afterlife*). His genius was in giving the haunting an ambiguous personality. Nicknamed "Pipes" by one of the children interviewed, "he" is described as being the accumulation of all the dark spiritual energy in the house, and resembles the (also fictional) sex offender Raymond Tunstall who committed suicide in the building. There is nothing about that description that is not inherently terrifying. As the ghost that haunted Parkinson, it's no surprise to find Pipes so high in our list.

SCARIEST MOMENT As the crew play back some CCTV footage of a bedroom, keen-eyed viewers spot a shadowy figure by the window. **WS**

1 SADAKO
THE RING (1998)

It's a cliché now. Whenever someone wants to parody the tropes of Asian horror cinema, the first thing they do is hire a young girl with a massive mane of long black hair and have them creep towards the camera. But even though familiarity breeds contempt, nothing can quite prepare you for quite how shit-your-pants terrifying Sadako from *The Ring* still is…

Partly it's the build up to her reveal. Hideo Nakata's film oozes dread right from its first frame, as Japanese teenagers discuss a cursed video tape that kills anyone who watches it. The only way to survive is to copy and pass the tape on. There's a sense of remorseless inevitability to this concept – the supernatural as a virus-like contagion.

While the delivery method of the curse is modern (for 1998), Sadako's history is rooted firmly in the ghost story tradition. Murdered by her father because of her psychic abilities, you can't help but feel sympathy for her.

Still, that's not gonna help when she's schlepping out of your telly to get you. Ah, Sadako. If ever there was an argument for the transition to DVD, it was you…

SCARIEST MOMENT With Sadako's history revealed and the curse apparently dispelled, Ryuji believes that he is safe. And then his TV switches on and Sadako's ghostly form lurches out of the screen towards him. Ryuji freezes in horror and dies of a heart attack. **WS** ⓖ

BUSTIN' OUT A SEQUEL

FIVE YEARS ON AND THE 'BUSTERS WERE BACK BATTLING RIVERS OF PINK GOOP BUBBLING UNDER THE STREETS OF NEW YORK. **JOSEPH McCABE** LOOKS BACK AT THE MAKING OF *GHOSTBUSTERS II*
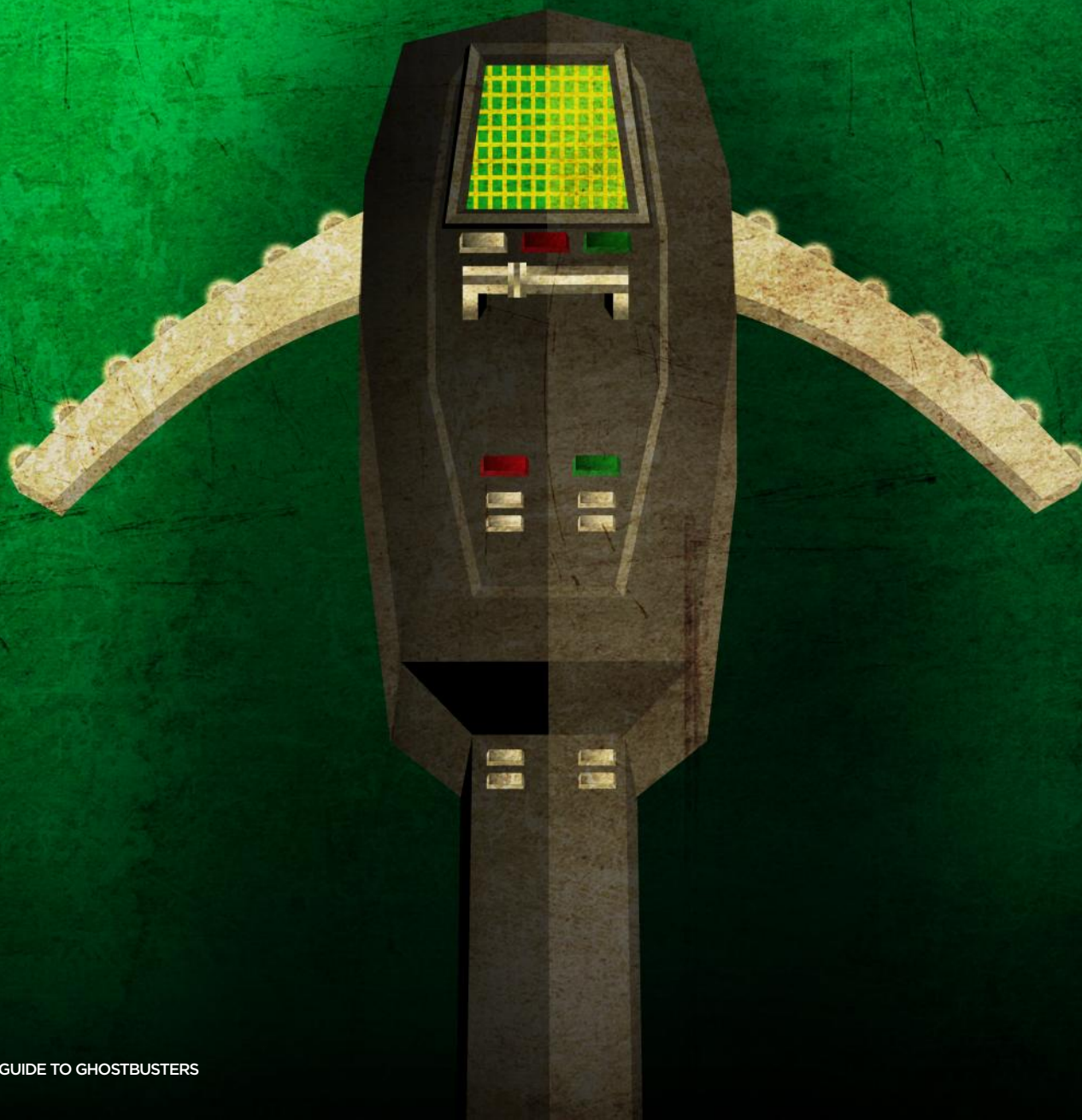
Sings: "If there's something weird, and it don't look good…"

OLD HAUNTS

*G*hostbusters was lightning in a bottle. The quintessential example of smart mainstream '80s filmmaking, it broke new ground in its fusion of improvisational comedy and big-budget special effects. Its creators knew that recreating its alchemy would be a fool's errand, and moved on to other projects. Dan Aykroyd and Bill Murray starred in other films (including other comic fantasies such as *My Stepmother Is An Alien* and *Scrooged*). Sigourney Weaver won fame, and the first of three Oscar nominations, for her role in *Aliens*. And Ivan Reitman found continued success directing the high-concept comedy *Twins*. Meanwhile, *The Real Ghostbusters* cartoon helped kids everywhere conquer their fear of the dark while making a superstar out of Slimer. But fans of the 1984 megahit wanted more, as did Columbia Pictures.

OLD HAUNTS

"I've suggested *The Last Of The Ghostbusters*," said Bill Murray in *Starlog* #140, "to make sure there won't be anything like a *Ghostbusters 3*.

But the script is nowhere near ready, and we start shooting soon. Jeez, more pressure. We'll figure it out… or we won't."

Murray knew that comedy, like horror, relied on subversion, the antithesis of the play-it-safe philosophy inherent in almost all Hollywood sequels. His reticence was shared by Aykroyd and Ramis, though perhaps to a lesser extent.

"I was the last holdout. They finally just waved too much money in my face… I really didn't want to do it for all the obvious reasons, but the reasons to do it were obvious, too. With Dan and Harold and Moranis and Sigourney, we really had a ball making *Ghostbusters*. That's really the most fun I've had on a movie. It's the most fun group to be with… Finally, Dan and Harold said, 'We've got some ideas here. What do you think?' We spent a couple of days talking, and they did have some amazing ideas for this story."

As he did for its predecessor, Aykroyd wrote an early draft of what would become *Ghostbusters II* on his own, this time setting the story's action overseas.

"My first draft was really too far out," Aykroyd recalled in *Cinefex* #40. "It was also probably too inaccessible, though I thought at the time I wrote it that it was the direction we should go in. I wanted to leave New York City behind, because I thought we'd done that. But New York really is the greatest arena for our kind of ghost story, and staying in the city gave continuity too. One idea that did stay in our script was the notion of having things occur underground. We went skyward in the first film – up to the top of a skyscraper – so I thought for the second one it would be nice to see the underbelly of the city. But my original concept for going underground was different. It involved a pneumatic tube 2,000 miles long that they travelled for three days. It was like a primitive mail chute."

Ramis once more partnered with Aykroyd to rewrite his script, and the pair agreed to account for the passage of time by setting the sequel five years after the original film. Initially, Murray's Peter Venkman and Weaver's Dana Barrett were to remain together after the events in *Ghostbusters*, and Ramis envisioned them

"I'm loving what you're doing with that gouache."

Up close he's even more mean and menacing.

"WE WANTED TO SHOW THAT YOU CANNOT BE BAD TO PEOPLE WITHOUT HAVING IT GO SOMEWHERE. NEGATIVE ENERGY HAS TO FIND A PLACE TO SETTLE"

having a child who became possessed. But according to Murray, that decision offset the balance of the story.

"Sigourney and I would be this major thing," said Murray, "and it would be hard to figure out how the Ghostbusters' dynamic would grow. The sort of story they were writing ended up not really needing the other three guys."

Finally, it was decided that Dana and Venkman would part ways and that Dana would wind up a single mom, pursuing a new career as an art restorer in order to support her infant son. The Ghostbusters would be forced out of business for the damage they were said to have wrought in the first film. Venkman would end up hosting a talk show for psychics and Egon would return to his university research, while Ray and Winston would entertain ungrateful whelps at birthday parties. (A young Jason Reitman plays the tyke who berates Ray early in the film.) Rick Moranis's Louis Tully would abandon accounting and obtain a law degree. And beneath the city would grow a glowing river of slime, feeding off the negative emotions of New Yorkers, who would soon find themselves once more in need of the Ghostbusters' special services.

"We started with the moral notion that negative human emotions have consequences," said Ramis in *Cinefex*, "and that in big cities like New York and Los Angeles bad vibes can build up. What we were working toward – and it took a while for it to develop – was that it would get to the point where everybody in New York would have to be nice or else the city would be destroyed. We did not know by what at first, but

Another laugh-a-minute episode of *Celebrity Big Brother?*

Okay, we get the distinct impression they're not liking that idea.

eventually we created a tyrant motivating all of this – Vigo the Carpathian."

"We wanted to show that you cannot be bad to people without having it go somewhere," said Aykroyd, "other than just being absorbed by the person your anger is directed at. Negative energy has to find a place to settle, and it's directly linked to human behaviour. It seemed to us that this idea was more grounded than the last film where we were dealing with mythic gods."

BACK IN BUSINESS

With the script in place, and the principals signed on, an anxious Columbia requested a July 1989 release date, giving *Ghostbusters II* a deadline even more hurried than that of its predecessor.

But while the faces in front of the camera remained the same, many of those behind the scenes changed. Michael C Gross, now credited as a full producer (as was Joe Medjuck), again coordinated the film's special effects team, but

Ever wondered what happened to the twins who played baby Oscar? Martial arts instructors. Fact.

this time Dennis Muren and Industrial Light & Magic (ILM) were recruited to do the honours.

"I guess the first *Ghostbusters* set the trend for short production and post-production schedules," said Muren in *Cinefex*, "and this one was worse. *Ghostbusters II* had by far the shortest schedule of any film I've ever worked on. We had nearly 180 shots to complete – and considering they were still shooting with the actors two months before the film opened, it was definitely tight!"

Other newcomers were director of photography Michael Chapman replacing *Ghostbusters*' László Kovács and production designer Bo Welch replacing John DeCuir. Director of effects photography Mark Vargo, who'd worked as an optical supervisor at Boss Film, and in-camera effects wiz Chuck Gaspar were two of the very few effects team veterans returning from the first film.

Muren explained his reasons for signing on despite its rushed schedule: "What I wanted to do with the film was to try and create ghosts

that nobody had ever seen before. Going in, we knew we had to match the look of nutrona beams and of the Slimer character from the first film; but beyond that, we had the opportunity to create a whole new array of ghostly images."

Reitman was again less interested in the technical side of filmmaking than most genre film directors and so gave Muren and his team carte blanche to let their imaginations run wild.

One of ILM's enhancements was to give the Ghostbusters' nutrona beams a little more personality, allowing them to function as fishing lines or cowboy lassos as they targeted new ghosts – like the vengeful Scoleri Brothers, sentenced to death by electric chair. Their capture by Stantz, Spengler and Venkman win the trio their business back. But the brothers' threat pales in comparison to that of Vigo (actor Wilhelm Von Homburg, dubbed by Max von Sydow). In his desire to return to and conquer our world (from which he was once banished), the crazed Carpathian takes control of Dana's boss, Dr Janosz Poha, played by *Dragonslayer*'s

> ## "WE LOVED THE IDEA OF SETTING INTO MOTION A MASSIVE FIXED IMAGE THAT YOU COULD NEVER NORMALLY IMAGINE MOVING"

Peter MacNicol, and commands him to seize her baby in order to host his rebirth.

MacNicol explained in *Starlog* #148 how he developed Janosz from Aykroyd and Ramis's conception of the character as a straight foil for the film's cast of comedians.

"I had a dawning thought about what I could do with the guy if only I dared, because certainly the script wasn't drawing a connection between the art restorer and Carpathia. I thought such a connection could be made, that's why this guy knows so much about this particular painting. I went in and said, 'Guys,

Wait till their mums see them this mucky.

"What? No, of course I know how to use it…"

> "ULTIMATELY A MOVIE LIKE *GHOSTBUSTERS II* IS NOT ABOUT EFFECTS, IT'S ABOUT MAKING PEOPLE LAUGH… IVAN JUST WORKED AND WORKED TO MAKE IT THE BEST FILM HE COULD" DENNIS MUREN

does anything go here?'… I just let fly with it."

Ironically, it was the new performer, MacNicol, with his bonkers accent and mad line readings who would come closest to capturing the impish spontaneity of the original *Ghostbusters*.

ON THEIR OWN

The first film's slime recipe was again employed for *Ghostbusters II*'s "mood slime", albeit with the addition of red food colouring. And that "ugly little spud" himself – Slimer – was intended to play a larger role this time around, but preview audiences found his scenes with Rick Moranis intrusive, and so he was cut from all but two shots (and a bonus appearance beneath the film's end titles). Unlike the first film's Slimer, controlled by levers, cable mechanisms and puppeteer Mark Wilson, the sequel's utilised electric servo motors, a pneumatic jaw and actress Robin Shelby. Aspects of *The Real Ghostbusters*' Slimer (who by now headlined the animated show) were also incorporated, rendering him a little more kid-friendly than the first film's monstrous eating machine.

But slime played a key role throughout *Ghostbusters II*, particularly in the film's finale, when the Ghostbusters use it (along with the music of Jackie Wilson) to animate the Statue of Liberty in a last-ditch effort to boost the goodwill of their city so they may defeat Vigo and save Dana's baby.

"Really, we were just looking around for a way to get her off that pedestal and into Manhattan," said Aykroyd of the Lady Liberty's part. "We loved the idea of setting into motion a massive fixed image that you could normally never imagine moving. It's like seeing the Eiffel Tower skipping down the Seine or seeing Victoria Falls suddenly reverse themselves. Making the Statue of Liberty move also offered a great opportunity for the ultimate special effect."

But that effect may have been one too many for Muren. While wrestling with a list of shots that had grown from 110 to 180, and with less than three months before release, he learned the film was being moved from July to 16 June in order to open before that summer's most hotly anticipated blockbuster – Tim Burton's *Batman*.

"When we made the first *Ghostbusters*," said Gross, "I thought no schedule could be worse – but this one was."

Yet Muren retained fond memories of the experience. "Ultimately, a movie like *Ghostbusters II* is not about effects, it's about making people laugh. Working in an improvisational environment, you have to be ready for anything and be prepared to take advantage of new ideas as they come along… Ivan just worked and worked to make this film the best he could within the timeframe that we had to make it."

Unfortunately, audiences dazzled by *Batman*, *Indiana Jones And The Last Crusade* and the season's other hits weren't quite as appreciative of Reitman's efforts, and *Ghostbusters II* received mixed reviews. After enjoying the biggest three-day opening weekend in film history, the movie would end up grossing less than its predecessor ($215.3m worldwide vs $293m), despite costing more ($37m vs $30m). Columbia deemed the sequel a financial failure. In hindsight, perhaps audiences and critics reacted too harshly. Certainly those long wanting for a third *Ghostbusters* wished the 1989 sequel had been better received.

In the end, however, *Ghostbusters II* may have had just a little too much "moral notion", a little too much heart, for its laughs and scares to work as effectively as its creators had hoped. ⊙

GHOSTBUSTERS II

BY THE NUMBERS

BY BRIDIE ROMAN

27 YEARS SINCE *GHOSTBUSTERS II* WAS RELEASED

14 THE NUMBER OF KIDS AT THE BIRTHDAY PARTY RAY AND WINSTON ARE PAID TO ENTERTAIN

JUNE 16, 1989

GHOSTBUSTERS II WAS RELEASED IN CINEMAS

2,410

THE NUMBER OF US THEATRES *GHOSTBUSTERS II* WAS SHOWN IN DURING ITS OPENING WEEKEND

$37M

ESTIMATED BUDGET OF *GHOSTBUSTERS II*

$29,472,894

DOMESTIC TAKINGS ON THE OPENING WEEKEND FOR *GHOSTBUSTERS II*

$215,394,738

WORLDWIDE LIFETIME GROSS FOR *GHOSTBUSTERS II*

5 YEARS LATER – WHEN THE SEQUEL IS SET

JL5 2020 THE NEW GHOSTBUSTERS NUMBER

93M THE HEIGHT OF LADY LIBERTY

31/12/89 THE DATE THAT MILTON ANGLAND PREDICTS THE WORLD WILL END ON *WORLD OF THE PSYCHIC*

14/02/16 THE DATE THAT PSYCHIC ELAINE THINKS THE WORLD WILL END. VALENTINE'S DAY.

AGES OF THE GHOSTBUSTERS

44 HAROLD RAMIS

36 DAN AYKROYD

38 BILL MURRAY

43 ERNIE HUDSON

3,000 CALLS
REPORTING PARANORMAL ACTIVITY TO THE POLICE

CLOSED!
7PM WEEKDAYS, **12AM** SATURDAYS
THE CLOSING TIME OF RAY'S OCCULT BOOKS

18 MONTHS
THE TIME THE GHOSTBUSTERS WERE SENTENCED TO DO IN A CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

1505 – 1610
WHEN VIGO WAS BORN AND WHEN HE DIED

5,000 YEARS
THE HALF-LIFE OF THE PROTON PACK POWER CELLS

1
PROMOTIONAL THERMAL MUG AND BALLOON PER FAMILY WHEN YOU HIRE THE GHOSTBUSTERS

1,118 PKE, 2.5 GEB GIGER METER
THE READINGS COMING FROM THE HOLE IN THE FLOOR WHERE THE SLIME IS

2419 SLIMER'S BUS NUMBER
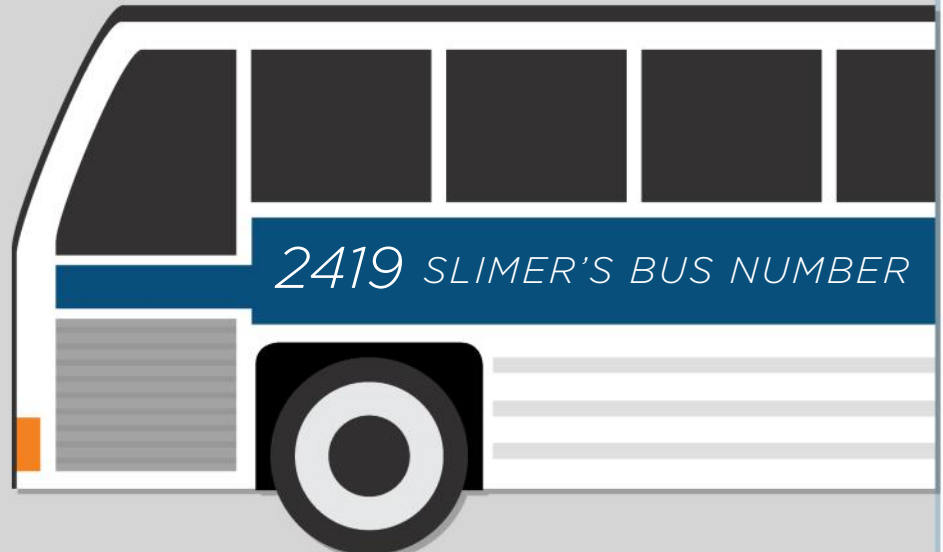
100FT BELOW 1ST AVENUE
WHERE RAY WAS LEFT DANGLING

1920
THE YEAR THE NEW YORK CENTRAL "CITY OF ALBANY" TRAIN DERAILED
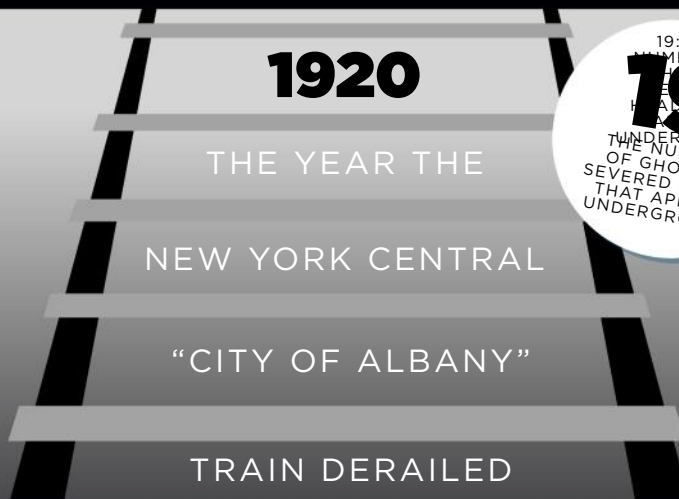
19
19: THE NUMBER OF GHOSTLY SEVERED HEADS THAT APPEAR UNDERGROUND

3 MILLION
COMPLETELY MISERABLE ASSHOLES LIVING IN THE TRI-STATE AREA

AWESOME ANNIE

JANINE, JANINE, WE'D LIKE TO KNOW YOU WELL… THAT'S WHY *SFX* DESPATCHED **JOSEPH McCABE** TO TALK TO ANNIE POTTS, THE ACTRESS WHO BROUGHT MS MELNITZ SO VIVIDLY TO LIFE…

Three decades after she first played the *Ghostbusters*' acerbic secretary, Annie Potts is still happy talking about Janine Melnitz. While she had already been acting on screen for seven years (including an ongoing role in TV show, *The Goodtime Girls*), the first film certainly raised her profile. She went on to appear in '80s comedy classics such as *Pretty In Pink* and *Jumpin' Jack Flash*, voiced Bo Peep in *Toy Story* in 1995 and has appeared in any number of big US TV shows, including *Boston Legal*, *Ugly Betty* and *Gray's Anatomy*.

Born in Nashville and *not* New York, as you may have thought from her convincing accent ("Oh, thank you. Well, it was my job to convince you of that!" she says when *SFX* brings this up), she's still a busy working actor, regularly appearing on stage, TV and the big screen. She spared some time from her schedule to talk about the legacy of the film as it enters its fourth decade.

DID THE CHARACTER OF JANINE DEVELOP THROUGH CONVERSATIONS YOU HAD WITH IVAN AND THE WRITERS?
Well, yes. I just auditioned for it. Just like any other thing. Then I went into New York early to the fire station. They were shooting something else, and I just went down to watch. And all of a sudden Ivan saw me and he went, "Oh, you're here! Great. Let's just put you in this scene!" I was like, "Huh?" So I turned to the wardrobe person and said, "Give me your glasses." That's kind of how that happened. So part of her got invented in the moment. The script was really wonderful, but a lot was improvised. On the set the approach was different because there were things that were already established. But for me it was a little bit on-the-fly when we did that.

WHICH SCENE WAS THAT?
It was something outside of the fire station, in the street. But I'm not sure. I wouldn't want to misspeak.

HOW DID THE REST OF YOUR WARDROBE COME ABOUT?
We had a wonderful costumer, Theoni V Aldredge. She didn't impose anything on anybody. Although the clothes were a little offbeat, it was all beautiful Armani stuff.

WHAT ELSE WAS IMPROVISED ON SET?
I didn't work very closely with Rick on the first one, but the story was that he invented his whole character. And I think Bill always strays a bit from the script, because he just does. But it was very lighthearted and inventive on the spot. I don't come from a tradition of improvisation like everybody else did… I'm much more of a scripted person.

JANINE HAS A WONDERFUL CHEMISTRY WITH EGON…
That was all in the script. I think the chemistry really has a lot to do with casting. They were all really fun delightful people. Harold was a lovely, gentle spirit, bemused and deeply funny. Everything with him was so easy.

HOW DID YOU VIEW JANINE AND EGON'S RELATIONSHIP?
It seemed that there was a budding romance there. I was surprised in the second one that they didn't develop that relationship further, but comedically I think that they thought that Rick Moranis and I… they wanted to mine that. I had a crush on Harold, and I think I'd have liked to continue that relationship. But of course Rick was wonderful and wonderfully funny, so it was a win-win situation for me. I thought Janine and Egon had a nice chemistry, but I'm sure as they were developing the script they were thinking there was just more comedy there to mine.

ONE OF *GHOSTBUSTERS*' TRADEMARKS IS THE WAY IT CAPTURES THE GRITTINESS OF NEW YORK IN THE EARLY '80S…
It was a darker place. It was dangerous in New York then. It was not as it is now. When you carried your purse, you put that on first and then you put your coat on top of it. It was different. The whole kind of saving-New-York-from-bad-

Janine looked quite different in the second film – but kept those trademark glasses.

"DID ANYTHING EVER MAKE ANYONE LAUGH HARDER THAN THOSE HORRIBLE, HORRIBLE TERROR DOGS?"

spirits thing, I mean, it was a metaphor for something that was actually going on then. It's different now.

WERE YOU SURPRISED BY THE FIRST FILM'S EXTRAORDINARY SUCCESS?

Well, I think everybody sets out to make a success. But I don't think it's very often that you achieve that iconic kind of success. How much money did those films make over the years? I just thought it was unbelievably original, but who would have imagined that kind of success? Nobody.

YOU DIDN'T REALLY SUFFER FROM TYPECASTING, DESPITE THE FILM'S SUCCESS...

I had a little fallow period after the first one, because they felt that I was too ethnic, too New York. Which of course wasn't even remotely what I was! So I had to fight against that a little bit. Isn't that funny? It's always been funny to me. But that's the way it goes – whatever the last thing you've done is, that's who they think you are.

HOW DIFFERENT WAS WORKING ON THE SECOND *GHOSTBUSTERS* FROM THE FIRST?

No one was nickel and diming anything on the second one, I can tell you. We knew it was going to be a hit. But for me... I was working on *Designing*

Potts and Bill Murray were friends off-screen and still keep in touch.

Women [the long-running TV sitcom, where Annie played the character Mary Jo Shively] simultaneously, so I was having to do double duty. That was a little tricky. At one point I was on two different sets at Warner Brothers, and flying back and forth between the two. But it was all fun.

HOW DID YOU FIND WORKING ON A FILM THAT MADE SUCH HEAVY USE OF SPECIAL EFFECTS?

Looking back 30 years, they're pretty crude. I remember having a conversation with Ivan on the first one. I'm like, "Okay, what happens next?" He was like, "Well, Rick goes to the Tavern on the Green

As Molly's record store colleague Iona in 1986's *Pretty In Pink*.

and that's when the Terror Dog..." I'm like, "What on earth is a Terror Dog?!" Of course, did anything ever make anybody laugh harder than those horrible, horrible Terror Dogs? But seeing it on the page and seeing it as it developed were two different things.

HAVE YOU RUN INTO ANY OF THE OTHER ACTORS AGAIN OVER THE YEARS?

I haven't seen Dan in a very long time. I have run into Bill a few times over the years. We knew each other before *Ghostbusters*, so we've always had a warm relationship. But when we did the videogame [in 2009] I didn't really meet anybody. It was a solo thing.

HOW DID YOU FEEL ABOUT JANINE BEING PLAYED BY SOMEONE ELSE IN *THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS* ANIMATED SHOW? DID IT BOTHER YOU?

They did that so they wouldn't have to pay any of us. So no one would sue! They hired somebody who had a voice identical to mine. I only know that because my three-year-old came running in to tell me that I was on the cartoon. I said, "No, no. I haven't done any cartoons." He said, "Yes, yes. Come look!" And there was somebody sounding very much like me. But I never watched those.

JANINE PUTS ON THE UNIFORM AND BECOMES A GHOSTBUSTER HERSELF...

My character? Oh wow. That's interesting. I never knew that! I think she'd probably be running the business

by now. She'd probably have some underlings who are making a lot of fun of her. But I've never seen any of the drafts for the supposed third, so I don't know.

WE APPEAR TO BE LIVING IN A KIND OF GOLDEN AGE IN TERMS OF WOMEN IN TV AND FILM COMEDIES. DO YOU THINK THEY HAVE MORE POWER AND RESPECT IN HOLLYWOOD THAN THEY USED TO?

I'm not sure if that's so. But certainly *Bridesmaids* helped prove that people will go to see a comedy with women, and that they can be really funny. But of course they're still going to pay us 70 cents on the dollar that a man makes no matter what. It pisses me off... But that's true across the board. And the Senate voted two to one against equal pay for women in all things. So if women don't get equal pay out there we're never going to get it in this industry. But we digress...

I hope that it's the golden age for women. I mean, movies are more or less made for 14-year-old boys as far as I can see. I have sons, so I see what they see and I see how they view. They'll go to the movies and watch the same thing

Potts is also a voice-actress – she was Bo Peep in *Toy Story* and *Toy Story 2*.

repeatedly. The industry likes those repeat dollars.

DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE LINE FROM *GHOSTBUSTERS*? OR ONE THAT'S QUOTED MOST OFTEN BY YOUR FANS?

Yeah. There's "Ghostbusters, whaddya want?"! I was just doing a Broadway show in New York [*Pippin*], and the *Ghostbusters* fans would be waiting and want me to sign or do a little video. Some guys waited for me outside the theatre one night and they were from someplace in the Midwest, and they had come to New York on what they called their "Ghostbusters Tour". These were grown-up people. These were, like, 30-year-old men. They were gonna go to all the places where it was shot, go to the fire station and everything. And when they found out I was in New York, I became part of that tour. Wow. That's all I have to say. Remarkable.

THERE ARE A LOT OF FAN CLUBS, *GHOSTBUSTERS* COSPLAY GROUPS AND SO ON...

It's amazing. And I say that with a light heart. I'm very proud to have been part of something so iconic. It's been sweet for me all these years. It seems every generation loves that film. There are grown-up people and there are little ones. It's like, "Oh, you're a Ghostbuster?" It's always a good calling card.

WHAT DO YOU THINK IT IS ABOUT *GHOSTBUSTERS* THAT GIVES IT SUCH A TIMELESS APPEAL?

All the guys were just coming off that flush of early success from *Saturday Night Live*. That was just a new kind of thing – actors being elevated to movie stars overnight. Bill had done *Stripes* and *Caddyshack* but still...

It was just original. There was nothing else that had ever been done like it. This town always says that it prides itself on its originality, but mostly what they want to do is a replica of something that was done before. This was one case where it was so original, and they supported it and went with it. I think that's how you get a hit that's still a hit 30 years on. Ⓖ

"We got one!" The 'busters are in business!

"I'M VERY PROUD TO HAVE BEEN PART OF SOMETHING SO ICONIC. IT'S BEEN SWEET FOR ME ALL THESE YEARS. IT SEEMS EVERY GENERATION LOVES THAT FILM"

SET 'EM UP JOE

AS ASSOCIATE PRODUCER ON BOTH FILMS *AND*
THE TWO CARTOON SERIES, HE'S PLAYED A
HUGE PART IN THE *GHOSTBUSTERS* STORY.
JOSEPH McCABE TALKS TO JOE MEDJUCK

Joe Medjuck has been working in the film industry since 1981, when he started out as an associate producer on his friend Ivan Reitman's war-comedy, *Stripes*. That film is a direct ancestor of *Ghostbusters* – starring as it does Bill Murray and Harold Ramis, as well as the man who was almost Louis Tully, John Candy.

Since then, he's had an incredible career, producing many comedies, including *Twins*, *Kindergarten Cop*, *Beethoven* and *Dave*, as well as the new *Ghostbusters* and the upcoming *Baywatch* remake. *SFX* caught up with him to talk about his experiences on the *Ghostbusters* films and his involvement with the cartoon series...

YOU WERE HEAVILY INVOLVED WITH THE CASTING OF *GHOSTBUSTERS*. CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THAT?

Danny had written the script – or *a* script – but parts of it were still unfinished. His Ghostbusters were blue-collar guys and there was a lot of them – a lot of ghostbusting groups – and part of it took place in another dimension.

We'd had a script session at Ivan's house and it hadn't gone that well. Ivan turned to me and said, "What if the Ghostbusters were university professors?" I said, "I get that. I used to be a university professor." He said, "I'm gonna talk to Danny about it."

He took Danny, who he knew from Toronto, for lunch at Art's Deli in Studio City, to talk about the changes, and while he was there, he said, "What if we got Harold Ramis to work on it?" They came back to our office and I remember them saying, "Do you think Harold would do this?" I said, "If you let him be in it, he'll do it." They walked across the street to see Harold in his office. I don't think he said yes immediately, but he was fairly enthusiastic. They came back and said, "We think Harold's in."

We thought John Candy was gonna be in it. We actually wrote a part for John. If you look at the storyboards from the movie, they're drawn as though John were the character.

YEAH, YOU CAN SEE IN THE STORYBOARDS THAT LOUIS IS HEAVYSET LIKE CANDY...

He had all sorts of funny ideas for the character, like he'd have a German accent. Ivan kept saying, "I don't think so." I think the character had been written rather like Johnny LaRue, a character John Candy played on *SCTV*. John had just played another character like that in *Splash*. I don't know, maybe he didn't want to do that again.

So Ivan phoned Rick Moranis and sent him the script. Rick said, "I want to be in it, but this is what I want the character to be..." His idea for Louis was very much a nerd. Louis as written for John Candy was very flamboyant. Rick went completely the other way and really developed his own character.

HOW ABOUT SIGOURNEY WEAVER?

Sigourney famously tells this story... We didn't know her background, of her being a comedian with playwright Chris Durang. We knew her from *Alien* and *The Year Of Living Dangerously*. She came

Rick Moranis as the possessed Tully. A small lightbulb was put in his mouth for this effect.

Each special effects shot was storyboarded on a separate piece of paper.

DESCRIPTION			SPECIAL NOTES
MUGGERS WRETCH AND GAG COVERED WITH A PHOSPHORESCENT SLIME – THEIR BODIES SMOLDER AND THEIR MOHAWKS ARE SINGED.			Same techniques as VM-2
OPTICAL	PHYSICAL –Wind effect –Sulphur?		Heavy lighting to look like heat.'
MATTE	ANIMATION –Rotoscope mattes		SPECIAL EQUIPT. 2-8" Air movers (large)?

"GHOST BUSTERS"   SEP 21 1983 | SCRIPT | SHOT NO. VM 3   FRAMES

> ## "HAVING THE WRITERS ON SET HELPED. IVAN WOULD SAY, 'THIS IS GOOD, BUT IT COULD BE BETTER.' THEY'D JUST HUDDLE AND WE'D WORK THINGS OUT"

in and read. Harold Ramis came to a lot of the auditions, and my memory is that Harold read opposite her. She started barking like a dog. She jumped on the sofa and acted out the dog part. So we said, "Oh, she gets it. She's funny." We were thrilled to have her.

Annie Potts I knew from a couple of movies. I didn't know her personally but I'd seen her in some movies I really liked. She was in *Heartaches* by Canadian director Donald Shebib and she did a couple of other things. She came in and read for the part. Then we tried some more obvious comedians, but Annie was just very good. We did most of the auditioning in LA, but I think we did some in New York too.

GHOSTBUSTERS HAD A VERY SHORT LEAD TIME AND PRE-PRODUCTION PERIOD. HOW DID YOU PULL IT OFF ON TIME?

I think there were two things. One is, we hadn't done anything that big before and didn't know any better! We didn't know it couldn't be done. The second thing is we had a really good script going in. It was a little longer, and we cut some things, but it was very good structurally. Some dialogue was changed on set, but Ivan was really a commander. He just kept working.

We started the special effects while we were still working on the script. We started designing ghosts and machinery – Michael C Gross did all that. So, when we went to shoot, we got all that stuff going right away. As soon as we shipped footage to Richard Edlund, he'd start working on it, and he knew what was coming up. It wasn't digital in those days, so he actually had to shoot things physically. He'd have a Marshmallow Man ready to shoot, so strangely enough, that was one of the first things ready. The first time we screened the movie, there was only one special effects shot in it – the Marshmallow Man.

We just kept working and pushing it through. We had to accept a couple of special effects that none of us were thrilled with. If we'd had more time we'd have worked on them longer, but most of them were great. We also had really good editing. We'd never used Sheldon Kahn before and he kept right up with us. As we were shooting he was cutting scenes together.

WHAT WAS YOUR BIGGEST TASK ON THE FILM?

Every day of shooting! Particularly in New York. We had hundreds of extras and we were causing traffic jams and people were trying to close us down. It was just going to war every day. But in an exciting way! One of the things that really helped was the cast. Bill, Danny, Harold and everybody were incredibly cooperative. They were the team. Having the writers on the set helped too. Ivan would say, "This is good, but it could be better." They'd just huddle and we'd work things out. Somebody would say, "We can do something better," and

A colander and some wires: essential gear in every prop guy's toolkit.

we'd all try to think of things to do. The writers were right there, it was great. Bill, Rick and everybody would all chip in.

I don't know. Apart from Ernie Hudson, these guys had all worked in Second City [the world-famous improvisational comedy club]. They'd change the lines all the time – not trying to get laughs themselves, but to make the scene better. Sometimes they'd come up with a good line and one guy would say, "You say it." "No, you say it!"

Ernie was the one character we didn't need to be funny. We needed him to be deadpan, so when he does say something funny, it's *really* funny.

Stay Puft gets a faceful. Burn Marshmallow Man, burn.

He reacts a lot to what the other guys are saying. He's sort of the voice of the audience.

HOW DID PRODUCTION DIFFER WITH THE SECOND FILM?
We were more confident, for better or worse. A sequel can never be as exciting, the whole concept is not as new.

I really love the opening – it's shown a lot now on cable channels. I love the way the first film ends and the first credit on the second reads "Five Years Later". That was Sheldon Kahn's idea. We went to look at a cut of the movie and Shelly had stuck that on, which I thought was great. Then the opening with Sigourney, and the Ectomobile roaring down the street and you're sure it's because of Sigourney with the baby, and it turns out they're going to a birthday party. I thought that scene with Ernie and Danny was really funny. I think Bill's sequence is a really funny scene. It ends up with Bill pointing at his head and saying, "Remember, until next time…" I think those scenes are very subtle and funny, but it got a little lost in the plot.

HOW DID PETER MACNICOL CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIS CHARACTER?
The character was written rather as he did it, though he came in and did his accent. He later told me that he was stealing Meryl Streep's accent from *Sophie's Choice*.

THERE HAVE BEEN RUMOURS OF AN ALTERNATE CUT OF THE SECOND FILM…
No. We did do some reshoots, but in fact we added things. We didn't leave anything out that I remember. Well, we might have cut something out… I do remember what we shot in the reshoots. We had a good screening of the movie, and the Columbia people were very happy, and we said, "Y'know, it's too easy for them at the end." So we added to the ending. They'd killed the painting and everything was fine, *The Picture Of Dorian Gray* idea. But after we screened it, we said, "This is too easy. He's got to make a comeback." None of this involved very many effects, because we

"Whaddya mean you forgot to bring the batteries?"

wouldn't have had time to do them. I remember we added the scene of Danny in the bookstore, where the fire starts. We put a scene in and took a scene out, but I can't remember what it was. I don't think there were any really great funny scenes missing.

DID COLUMBIA ASK FOR ANY CHANGES?
No, they desperately wanted us to make it! The delay was because of us, the actors and Ivan deciding to do it. Columbia wouldn't have thrown anything out. It would have been the opposite! We'd have said it wasn't ready, but they'd have said it was. All they worried about was the cost of it – getting it done.

YOU'D BEEN PRODUCING *THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS* CARTOON FOR SEVERAL YEARS...
Yeah, Michael C Gross and I did everything together on that one. He'd make more comments about design. I'd probably make more about the script. But we read every goddamn script. When they started, we were finding our feet – the first few weren't great. Then in the middle – there was about 100 of them – we just got in the groove.

THE LOOK OF THE CHARACTERS WAS CHANGED, BUT THEY RETAINED THEIR PERSONALITIES

Maybe Dan Akyroyd shouldn't be wearing trousers of this colour...

FOR THE MOST PART...
Their personalities were basically based on the guys in the movie. So we'd like to think we knew who would say what, their attitudes. We went into it not wanting them to look exactly like the guys, because the guys weren't gonna do the voices. They were gonna pass on it. We didn't use Bill's voice, we used Lorenzo Music at the beginning. Then Bill said, "Why doesn't he sound like me?" "Because we didn't think you'd want us to." Then we got Dave Coulier, who would imitate Bill. It was an amazing cast. We had Lorenzo, then Dave Coulier, Arsenio Hall... It was great.

DID THE CARTOON'S SUCCESS FURTHER MOTIVATE COLUMBIA TO PUSH FOR A SEQUEL?
It kept the name alive – but if the show hadn't been on they'd still have wanted a sequel. Everybody wants a sequel to hit movies. This one made itself open to it. What the cartoon did was sell merchandise as well as being a good show. They didn't sell any merchandise when the first movie came out because none of it was ready. You have to get yourself ready by February for Toy Fair. People didn't think the movie was gonna be that big a hit. People thought it was a silly idea and you couldn't make a big-budget special effects comedy. That was the attitude at the time. So

> ## "THERE WAS ALMOST NO MERCHANDISE. KIDS WERE WEARING HOMEMADE GHOSTBUSTERS COSTUMES FOR HALLOWEEN THAT YEAR"

there was almost no merchandise. Then when the movie hit, they couldn't get it ready fast enough! Kids were wearing homemade *Ghostbusters* costumes for Halloween that year, with homemade backpacks. Except for Jason Reitman – I think Ivan got him one from Columbia! All that merchandising came out after the cartoon. The cartoon kept it alive. The biggest effect it had on the sequel was that we had to do a shot of Slimer, because he was a major character in the cartoon. He wasn't even called Slimer in the movie – we called him Potato Head or Onionhead – but we had to have him show up in the second film in one scene.

ANY OTHER THOUGHTS ON THE ORIGINAL MOVIES?
Almost no one mentions this, but there's an interesting difference between the first movie and the second movie: in the first movie the Ghostbusters are smoking all the time; in the second movie, nobody smokes, because times had changed that much. Also, we didn't think of the first movie as being for kids. We wanted the second movie to be scary but we knew kids were going to come to it. They'd seen the cartoon show as well as the original movie. G

Grupe boxed as the flamboyantly monikered Prinz Wilhelm Von Homburg.

As Vigo. He was furious when he discovered his lines had been re-recorded.

He was a distinctive figure with his trademark fat cigar and flashy jewellery.

BOXER, BEATLE

FANS MAY KNOW HIM BEST AS VIGO THE CARPATHIAN – THE INTIMIDATING VILLAIN IN *GHOSTBUSTERS II*. BUT ACTOR WILHELM VON HOMBURG'S LIFE WAS PERHAPS MORE INTERESTING THAN HIS MOVIES, SAYS **WILL SALMON**

Ghostbusters II may remain controversial amongst fans, but one thing that most agree on is that it sported a truly excellent villain in the form of Vigo the Carpathian, intimidatingly played by boxer-turned-actor, Norbert Grupe. But the German bruiser led a life that was, arguably, more fascinating – and controversial – than that of his screen counterparts.

MEET THE BEATLE BOXER

Grupe was born in Berlin on August 25, 1940, and young Norbert's first five years were spent in the beleaguered capital. Following the division of the city, Grupe and his family moved to the democratic West, and into poverty.

While professionally a baker, his father Richard had some athletic skill – a trait that his son had clearly inherited. The pair enjoyed wrestling and, after moving to the United States in the '50s, father and son entered the ring first under the name "The Vikings", then later the Von Homburg Brothers. Decked out in rough, homemade barbarian costumes – his father in a horned helmet, Norbert wearing an aristocratic monocle – the duo did battle up and down the country, with the younger Grupe usually taking the role of the bad guy – something that no doubt came in handy with his later acting career.

Wrestling wasn't his first sporting passion, however. In 1962 – still just 22 – he moved into boxing and changed his name, tired of people mispronouncing Grupe as "groupie". Prinz Wilhelm Von Homburg, as he was now known, spent several years in America's boxing rings before returning home to Germany – where he rapidly became a sporting sensation.

With long blond hair, an arrogant swagger and flamboyant style, Grupe was quite removed from the no-frills toughness of most boxers. He was young, he was sexy and he was rebellious, sometimes spitting into the audience – unheard of at the time. His enormous cigars and the ring he wore embedded with the initials WVH only added to his rock star image. The "Beatle boxer", as he was soon dubbed, was just plain cool. He had drive, too. "It was my insane desire to be world champion," he told filmmaker Gerd Kroske. "I tortured myself and trained for it."

He was keenly aware, however, that a sporting career doesn't last forever – and boxing is a more dangerous sport than most. He told writer Patricia Nell Warren that he "never wanted to wind up a punch-drunk old guy in a wheelchair". And so he turned to acting, first appearing on TV show *Gunsmoke* and then making an uncredited big-screen appearance in Bernhard Wicki's World War II

The young Grupe had many different jobs and was always a bit of a ladies' man.

WRESTLING HERE NEXT WEEK
THE VIKINGS
DIRECT FROM MADISON SQUARE GARDEN
BRUTAL SAVAGE TAG-TEA WRESTLI
YOU HAVE READ OF THEIR RIOT
SEEN THE ON TV
WORLD
SEE THE

"Prinz" ended his boxing career with a record of 29 wins, 11 losses and six draws.
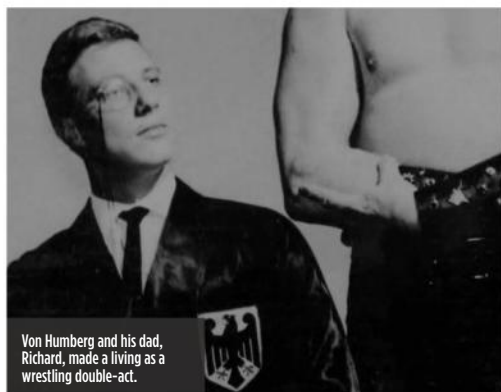
Von Humberg and his dad, Richard, made a living as a wrestling double-act.

Dressed in his wrestling gear, and clearly more than willing to play the fool.

movie, *Morituri*. A small – but enduring – secondary job began to flourish.

While his career was on the up, Grupe's personal life was becoming increasingly intense. Sex, drugs and alcohol were readily available and Grupe was more than happy to indulge. He moved to Hamburg's notorious red light district, Saint Pauli, divorced his wife (who his friend, Wolli Köhler, claims paid for his boxing lessons) and enjoyed the benefits of his fame and wealth.

"If he'd led a respectable life he'd have made loads of money," fellow boxer and one-time opponent, Jürgen Blin told Kroske in his documentary, *Der Boxprinz*. "He electrified people." Alas, Grupe's training began to suffer under the weight of his hedonistic lifestyle – and the dodgy friends he was making.

A celebrity – especially one as obviously hard as Grupe – was bound to draw the attention of disreputable types, and it wasn't long before he was hanging out with pimps, drug dealers and Hells Angels. They saw in him a valuable "friend" and he seemed to enjoy living on the edge. It began to take its toll on his working life.

Things came to a head in 1966 when he was disqualified from a match he had been winning. The referee claimed that he had head-butted his opponent, Piero Del Papa. Grupe was enraged at what he saw as an unjust, perhaps even racist, decision. It marked the beginning of a bad losing streak and contributed to an increasing disillusionment with the sport. In 1969, after losing to Oscar Bonavena, he appeared on a live TV interview with Rainer Günzler. Quizzed about why he had lost, he sat in complete silence, his curled-lip sneer both hilarious and more than a little terrifying. He was banned from the German Pro Boxers

Association for his rude behaviour, but Grupe didn't care. He quit boxing in 1970 and decided to concentrate on acting instead.

A NEW CAREER IN A NEW TOWN

He had variable success. He played a boxer in *Gentlemen In White Vests*, and a hitman (dressed as Santa Claus, no less) in forgotten David Janssen vehicle *The Swiss Conspiracy*. A highlight, however, was appearing in Werner Herzog's early classic *Stroszek*. "The Prince was so clear and intelligent," Herzog told Gerd Kroske, but also described him as radiating "a feeling of danger that absolutely terrified me."

"IF HE'D LED A RESPECTABLE LIFE HE'D HAVE MADE LOADS OF MONEY"

But his career – and indeed his life – was about to take a major turn for the worse…

Grupe's relationship with the law could be best described as "strained". He had never hidden the more controversial aspects of his life – his drink and drug use, for instance – and the police had taken notice. An undercover operation led to his arrest with 10 kilos of cannabis, and he was arrested, charged with numerous crimes including drug dealing, promoting prostitution and extortion. He spent several years in jail, where his reputation for being both talkative and dangerous – a sign on his door reportedly read "Enter only with three guards" – only flourished.

His life had to change. When Grupe was finally released he returned to the US, broke. And so, more than a decade after his last movie

appearance, the Beatle boxer returned to the big screen. It was a memorable comeback, playing one of Hans Gruber's heavies in the original *Die Hard*. He quickly followed this up with the role he is famous for – Vigo the Carpathian. His commanding physical presence and sinister gaze made him the ideal foil for the Ghostbusters on their second outing. Alas his voice was not considered up to snuff, and Vigo was revoiced by Max von Sydow (see below). While he was angry at the time, Grupe would later concede that his slurred voice – caused by a split lip – was a hindrance in getting acting gigs.

The next 11 years were filled with auditions, acting lessons and the occasional small part in a variety of lesser pictures – the best probably being John Carpenter's underrated *In The Mouth Of Madness*. When asked by Kroske "Of 10 [acting] offers, how many work out?" he ruefully responded "Half an offer."

Still, his personal life improved. He cleaned up his drink and drug use and moved to LA. He began working out in a gym in Venice regularly and toured the country in a VW camper van with his dog, Kiss. He also opened up to Patricia Nell Warren about his bisexuality and hoped to star in the film of her love story about gay sportsmen, *The Front Runner*. The film was never made. However, he came back into the limelight in 2002 when Kroske's excellent documentary, *Der Boxprinz*, was released.

Norbert Grupe died on March 10, 2004, at the age of 63. He was undoubtedly a complicated and controversial figure. A hero to some and very much a villain to others. But he was an interesting character and, in portraying Vigo's hulking form, easily the best thing about *Ghostbusters II*. ⊚

SOUND OUT HE MIGHT HAVE LOOKED THE PART, BUT HIS VOICE DIDN'T QUITE CUT IT

For 20 years fans assumed that they were listening to Von Homburg delivering lines such as "I, Vigo, the Scourge of Carpathia, the Sorrow of Moldavia, command you!" But in 2009, with the release of *Ghostbusters: The Video Game* it became clear that they had been duped.

Swedish actor Max von Sydow has played a number of villains in his career. He's been Ming the Merciless in *Flash*

Gordon, Blofeld in *Never Say Never Again*, and the Three-Eyed Raven in HBO's *Game Of Thrones*. With Von Homburg having died five years previously, he was a smart choice for the voice of Vigo for the game. Except… well, he sounded just a bit *too* good.

In 2009, website Crispy Gamer interviewed John Melchior, the game's former executive producer. He confirmed

that von Sydow had played an uncredited part in the film. "That was our understanding and what we were told… This was a promise I made to the talent and to Sony: where we could we would go to the actors that played those roles, the ones that fans grew up with and knew."

One of the film's special effects artists, William Forsche, also provided confirmation and revealed something

rather surprising. "Poor Wilhelm Von Homburg, it seems no one told him his voice was replaced with Max von Sydow's. He found out first hand at the screening and stormed out of the theatre."

Oh dear… Clips of Grupe reading his lines can be found online and, while it was undoubtedly a disappointment to him, it's clear the film's producers made the right choice…

From left to right:
TOP ROW Bob Hoffman, Jarek Alfer, Don Pennington, George Pryor, Tom Silveroli, Leslie Ekker
SECOND ROW FROM TOP Dennis Schultz, Bob Wilson, Milius Romyn, Gary Bierend, Pat McClung, Kent Gebo
THIRD ROW FROM TOP Dave Beasley, Robin Reilly, Bobby Johnston, Nick Seldon, Pete Gerard, David Shwartz, Ron Gress
BOTTOM ROW Mark Stetson, Adam Gelbart

Photo by Virgil Mirano, print courtesy of Don Pennington

MAKING MAGIC

THE SPECIAL EFFECTS IN *GHOSTBUSTERS* SET NEW STANDARDS FOR THE INDUSTRY. **JOSEPH McCABE** TALKS TO THE DESIGNERS AND CREATORS WHO BLAZED A TRAIL FOR MOVIE MONSTER MAKERS

Ghostbusters broke new ground for its genre. Its special effects were no less groundbreaking. A new effects company was formed to produce its assortment of creatures, as well as the New York City in which they roamed. Industrial Light and Magic's Richard Edlund – an Oscar winner for his pioneering motion-control photography on *Star Wars* – led a team of creators who fused traditional Hollywood craftsmanship with outside-the-box innovation in LA's Marina del Rey, where Boss Film Studios was born.

"Richard wanted to do something pretty unique," says make-up effects artist Steve Johnson, "which was to create an umbrella effects facility, that would not only do optical effects – there were no digital effects then, it was all optical printing – but also the models and the miniatures. And, hey, as long as we're doing that, let's do the animatronics and the prosthetics as well! So it was all one company."

In order to run Boss Films' "Ghost Shop", Edlund turned to his former ILM colleague Stuart Ziff.

"I'd never done anything like that," Ziff tells *SFX* from his home in Santa Monica. "I'm not a sculptor, I'm good with mechanisms. But I went out to a Thai restaurant with my friend Phil Tippett, who said, 'Stuart, look, I read the script and it looks like you're gonna have a crew of just 14 people.' So I ended up taking the job, and what was supposed to be 14 people ended up being a crew of 55. It was chaos. So I'd hire all these people and put them on various creatures. Steve Johnson did Slimer and Randy Cook worked on the Terror Dogs. Bill Bryan worked on the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man. He eventually

Matte artist Matthew Yuricich working on the paintings for Gozer's rooftop Temple.

"UP TO EIGHT PUPPETEERS CONTROLLED SLIMER'S MORE SUBTLE FACIAL MOVEMENTS USING RODS AND CABLES"

● had 14 or 15 people just building the costumes he puppeteered."

THE ZOMBIE FARM

Johnson had already worked on *An American Werewolf In London* and *Greystoke: The Legend Of Tarzan* with Baker. But his youth – he was a mere 22 years of age – prompted Ziff to give Johnson a test before hiring him. He was asked to build the only creature to be shot live on location in New York City – the "Zombie Cab Driver". Johnson based his puppet on one he'd constructed for Jack Goodman's reanimated corpse in *American Werewolf*.

"The one thing that was different was that the Jack puppet was a little more

Although uncredited, Mark Bryan Wilson is the actor inside the green ghost.

like a muppet," says Johnson. "Because the puppeteer's hand went directly through the neck and inside the head to operate the head movement. I thought, 'Let me take the Jack puppet a step further and I'll do a mechanised neck so you don't have to have a human arm in there, so we can make it thinner and therefore more skeletal.'"

Johnson got his job, and began working on Slimer (then known as "Onionhead"), along with puppeteer Mark Bryan Wilson, who operated the green ghost's body and arms from within a rubber puppet. Up to eight other puppeteers controlled Slimer's more subtle facial movements through a system of rods and cables.

"Steve had done some maquettes based on character sketches," says Wilson of Slimer's genesis. "A lot of those sketches were done before we started working. We used those as a guideline, but also embellished it with our own artistic take. Steve sculpted the full skins, and Mark Siegel also helped sculpt. There'd be moulds made, latex skins would be cast, and those would be given to me to assemble. I'd reinforce the inside."

Johnson drew inspiration from Tex Avery's manic cartoon shorts. "Slimer," says Wilson, "was in essence the Bluto character from *Animal House* – throwing food around and very much into being overzealous in the moment. We talked about John Belushi, and we did pull from his character, but we also wanted to make a totally new and unusual character. A lot of it was, 'He's flying from here to there and he has to look as if he's being propelled.' It evolved as we started putting things on film. Almost all of the Slimer shots were done with me stood on a turntable, sometimes with people moving the camera at me. Because there were cables that came out for eye blinks and the brow's movement up and down, it was much easier to move the camera than it was to move me."

Three full-size versions of the green ghost were constructed – an open-mouth version, a partially open mouth version, and a drinking face with pursed lips.

"Steve made it so a face could be taken off and a new face put on instead of rebuilding an entire suit," explains Wilson. "And there were little tiny ones we called the speeding bullets, about the

size of eggs. You see these flying around the ceiling. Then there was another miniature which had arms."

FRIGHT NIGHT

In addition to Slimer, Johnson and Wilson were also responsible for the Library Ghost, whose transformation from elderly woman to fearsome ghoul sends the nascent Ghostbusters running in fright from New York Public Library.

"My main project was the Library Ghost," says Wilson. "I started working on her by building a mock-up out of PVC pipe and dowels and dry-wall screws. I made a mock-up which was given to mechanics in North Hollywood. Then I was in charge of gluing the rubber skins on in such a way that they would pull very specifically. Then she was painted by somebody else. She was a cable-controlled puppet – descending through her core and down to the floor were 10 to 20 bicycle cables that pulled lines which operated different parts – extended the arms or raised the shoulders or pulled the head and neck down. I pulled the controls which caused her to stretch her head, and then Steve also had a set of controls. We did the cable operation which caused her to transform, as somebody else was blowing her fabric with an air hose and a fan."

Despite the lengthy preparation required for the Library Ghost, its puppet form appears on screen for perhaps only 24 frames of film. Those 24 frames, however, gave *Ghostbusters* its first great scare.

Wilson also helped operate the film's full-size Terror Dog puppets. When seen running or leaping, however, the demonic hounds were stop-motion puppets created and animated by Randall William Cook. Now an Academy Award-winning effects artist (for *The Lord Of The Rings*), Cook, from his home in Los Angeles, recalls the complicated process of bringing the Terror Dogs to life:

"They had a lot of drawings done before I began and they settled on one design, more of an inspirational drawing

Wilson looks suitably proud of his rubber-skinned Library Ghost puppet.

Stay Puft doesn't look quite as frightening here.

than an actual diagnostic. I incorporated the horns and the big round eyes."

"One challenge was making these characters in two forms – in the stop-motion incarnation and also in the life-size incarnation. The creatures were of a size that was appropriate to building them full-scale, and we had to get my stop-motion puppet made concurrently with the construction of the full-size Terror Dog. We often had Mike Hosch and Linda Frobos working in my sculpting area, sculpting the big one while I was sculpting the small one. For a while they were on nights and I'd sculpt the small guy during the day."

Cook was instructed to create a quarter-scale model, despite his preference for a more easily manipulated fifth or sixth-scale model: "The Terror Dogs were so big and so heavy that you had to exert a lot of force to even make them move. I actually did some nerve damage to my hands just pushing those silly things around."

Cook's most complex task was to make a Terror Dog run across a New York street in pursuit of Louis Tully (Rick Moranis), which required him to move his two-foot-long stop-motion puppet across a 30-foot set.

"We did the first take on Easter Sunday of 1984, and we worked all night. It was a 28 or 30-hour shoot. Motion control computer operator Mike Hoover and camera operator Jim Aupperle and I were the team. We never did a rehearsal, we just did the shot. When the model touched down he had to be affixed to a solid surface so his feet wouldn't slide – this presented a problem with the first touchdown, because the model mover threatened to actually tear the puppet's

"I BOUGHT EVERY POLICE CAR MODEL IN 1:18 SCALE I COULD FIND FROM TOYS-R-US IN THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REGION"

Wilson working on the fabrication for the Library Ghost transformation figure.

Steve Johnson, right, and Wilson discuss the mock up of the Library Ghost.

Wilson's legs extended below the suit and were draped in black velvet.

"THE LIBRARY GHOST WAS A CABLE-CONTROLLED PUPPET. COMING DOWN THROUGH HER CORE WERE 10 TO 20 BICYCLE CABLES THAT OPERATED DIFFERENT PARTS"

legs off because it was moving so fast. So for those frames we'd turned off the model mover and shot it still. The camera was still panning of course, and as a result every time he touches down he blurs like crazy. But only when he's touching down. We went home at 4am, came back around noon to see if the film was back and how it looked, and when we went to our stage everything was torn down, because the blue screen had to go to MGM, which was shooting *2010* concurrently. If the set-up had still been there and we'd seen that blur every time he touched down, I'd have rolled up my sleeves and we'd have done it again a different way. But it wasn't to be."

Despite such regrets, Cook reunited with the Terror Dog for *Ghostbusters*' 30th Anniversary, using his original moulds to create a limited edition stop-motion puppet replica rotocast in resin available from Chronicle Collectibles.

The Terror Dogs presented a very different kind of challenge when they burst out of Dana Barrett's armchair and attacked the cellist. According to Ziff, the crew was initially too careful of star Sigourney Weaver.

"Steve Neil made the hands that reached up and grabbed Sigourney. But the puppeteers were like, 'This is Sigourney Weaver!' and the shot didn't look good. Finally, after doing take after take, she looked through the hole and said to the puppeteer, 'Molest me'. So he just went for it – one hand on her thigh, one on her breast. That's the take. She was a wonderful trooper."

"She came on a tour of the Ghost Shop and she actually kissed me on one cheek," laughs Ziff. "I haven't washed it since."

ALL MONSTERS ATTACK
While not as frightening as the Terror Dogs, the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man is every bit as iconic. Sculptor and puppeteer Bill Bryan was the man responsible for the Destructor, having won the job after making the stillsuits for David Lynch's *Dune* out of foam with his colleague Mark Siegel.

"My first day I did two or three maquettes of the character," says Bryan, as he prepares to teach a class in constructing giant monsters at LA's Stan Winston School. "We had some drawings and decided on a particular look. The maquettes were a little sharper along the corners and edges of the marshmallow than the final suit. Then I carved solid foam marshmallows. The first suit we made was all soft foam. When we shot that, the foam buckled between my knees across the crotch. So I figured out another type of foam that would serve as the inner shell. We made 18 suits, and 17 of them we burnt. The burnt suits were worn by Tommy Cesar, a professional burn stuntman, who's in *The Thing* and *Friday The 13th*. The remaining suit was the hero suit, for the very first shot where he's walking down the street."

In the grand tradition of such non-confectionary kaiju as Godzilla, an elevated small-scale replica of New York's Central Park and Columbus Circle

Sigourney Weaver admires Steve Johnson's handiwork on a tour of the Ghost Shop.

was constructed for the Marshmallow Man to travel.

"When we were on the model set," recalls Bryan, "the cables from the controllers went up through a slit in the neoprene street and up into the zipper of my butt and up my back to the head. Underneath, with the monitor, they were moving their controllers to get the facial movement. The shot where he's looking up and frowning was one of the least comfortable shots. It was the only one where you could see down underneath the head and into the suit. So they had to put a piece of light foam in there to limit the amount of opening that can be seen. Because of that I wasn't able to get air flow."

The forced-perspective Central Park set was created by a team of approximately 25 people led by model shop supervisor Mark Stetson, formerly of Douglas Trumbull's Entertainment Effects Group, which was acquired by Richard Edlund when he founded Boss Film.

Stetson tells us the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man presented almost as

"THE THING ABOUT *GHOSTBUSTERS* IS THAT ONE GUIDING FIGURE DIDN'T DICTATE THE LOOK OF THE CREATURES. THERE WERE DIFFERENT LOOKS TO EACH"

many problems for his modellers as he did for the Ghostbusters.

"The Central Park model was built to a scale to match the Stay Puft costume, which turned out to be 1:18 or so. That meant we couldn't use any off-the-shelf miniature supplies, because it was a non-standard scale (the current market of 1:18 collectible car models was not in existence then). We had to fabricate more cars from scratch. I bought every police car model in 1:18 scale I could find from Toys-R-Us in the Southern California region, about 50 of them. We turned them into a fire chief's car, sedans and taxi cabs. For the ones that remained police cars, we rewired the light racks on the top to run at high speed with bright halogen bulbs, so they would flash appropriately during high-speed photography."

The main project, says Stetson, "was the Gozer Temple building. Milius Romyn was the lead model builder, and the temple on top was a joint effort of design and sculpture to satisfy the requirements of pyrotechnics. The model's blast chamber was made

out of steel with an inverted pyramid beneath the roof to help direct the blast through the doors. Bobby Johnston welded up the frame. Tom Silveroli sculpted the temple door panels. Casts of those panels have become prized collectibles. When Thaine Morris set off the charge, bits and pieces flew for hundreds of feet!"

When *Ghostbusters* enjoyed a theatrical release for its 30th Anniversary, the models and monsters of Boss Film Studios were introduced to a new generation of filmgoers.

"The thing about *Ghostbusters*," explains Ziff, is that "one guiding figure didn't dictate the look of the creatures. Because I wasn't Rick Baker. I had all these groups of people. There were different looks to different creatures. I think that really added to the film."

"We had what later became a who's who of effects superstars," says Johnson, still amazed by the film's success, "and we tried to give them something they could be really proud of and feel good about… and now, 30 years later, say, 'Hey, I made that!'" Ⓖ

SPOOK CENTRAL

WANT TO EXPERIENCE THE BIG APPLE OF
VENKMAN, STANTZ, SPENGLER AND ZEDDEMORE?
TARA BENNETT IS YOUR GUIDE…

Thirty years is a long time, but while the world may be a very different place, the Big Apple of today still looks pretty similar to the '80s version we see in *Ghostbusters* – maybe with better hair, sleeker cars and more LCD signage.

The familiar architecture and iconic landmarks, traversed and messily protected by Venkman, Stantz, Spengler and Zeddemore, are instantly recognisable – which is why a walking tour of the locations used in the film is a far better way to spend your time than say, acting out scenes in your living room… not that *any* of us have done that. Oh no. Never.

If you want the fastest and shortest tours, go talk to Egon. What? Do we look like a calculator to you? Oh, and welcome to New York!

1 COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
116TH ST & BROADWAY
IN THE MOVIE The Department of Psychology and Parapsychology where Peter, Ray and Egon work.
TODAY The campus is still a vital part of the city and it's easy to find Weaver Hall (the building the movie says our boys were housed in for their research projects) in what is actually the Schermerhorn Hall. We don't recommend offering to take part in any Behavioural Research Lab experiments, though.

2 THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
FIFTH AVENUE AT 42ND STREET, MANHATTAN
IN THE MOVIE The place where Ray, Peter and Egon witness the librarian ghost.
TODAY The majestic lions that flank the wide steps are actually outside the Stephen A Schwarzman Building, which houses the beautiful reading room that the soon-to-be 'busters sprinted out of in a blind panic. Be warned: unless you're a researcher, just like Venkman and co you won't be welcome in the basement. Shhhhhh!

3 55 CENTRAL PARK WEST
55 CENTRAL PARK WEST
IN THE MOVIE The apartment residence of Dana Barrett, Louis Tully and Gozer the Destroyer.
TODAY Still a 19-floor co-op housing complex, this Art Deco building, which dates back to 1929 and was once home to Ginger Rogers, is now a celebrity in itself – it's been dubbed "The *Ghostbusters* Building" since the film debuted. Just in case you didn't know, the temple at the top doesn't actually exist – it was built on a set and created via matte paintings.

4 GHOSTBUSTERS HEADQUARTERS
HOOK & LADDER #8, 14 NORTH MOORE ST, TRIBECA
IN THE MOVIE Where Ray decides to spend the bulk of his parent's third mortgage to house the Ghostbusters.
TODAY A working firehouse in the arty Tribeca section of NYC, it attracts a lot of tourists looking for the iconic Ghostbusters sign but the only clue to its showbiz history is a painting on the pavement outside. If the door is up you might get a glimpse of the *Ghostbusters II* sign hanging on the wall inside.

5 LINCOLN CENTER
BROADWAY AT 66ND ST, NEW YORK
IN THE MOVIE The place where Peter meets Dana to discuss her case.
TODAY The simple fountain at the famous Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (which was also the place where Nicolas Cage met Cher for a date in *Moonstruck*) has been replaced by a computer-controlled LCD water show, with timed performances throughout the day. We're sure that Venkman could charm the pants off any woman in that spot – no matter how high-tech the water display.

6 ROCKEFELLER CENTER
47TH TO 51ST STREETS BET. 5TH AND 6TH AVES, NEW YORK
IN THE MOVIE Where Ray, Peter and Egon bring out a full trap amongst frightened New Yorkers.
TODAY Home to NBC and GE, the Rockefeller Center is also one of the city's biggest tourist destinations. People from all over the world flock to the ice skating rink in the winter, or to see the taping of *Saturday Night Live*… which, coincidentally, launched Bill Murray and Dan Aykroyd's careers.

7 TAVERN ON THE GREEN
CENTRAL PARK, NEW YORK
IN THE MOVIE The restaurant where Louis tries to escape a snarling hellhound.
TODAY The landmark Central Park eatery has featured in a host of movies, including *Crimes And Misdemeanours* and 2004's *Alfie*, but it was blighted by lawsuits and bad management and closed in 2009. For a while NYC's Department of Parks and Recreation turned it into a gift shop and tourist attraction but it reopened as a restaurant in 2013. On a clear day, some say you can still smell the faint whiff of charred demon dog…

8 CITY HALL
BROADWAY AND MURRAY ST, NEW YORK
IN THE MOVIE The place where the Ghostbusters and Walter Peck make their cases to the Mayor.
TODAY Open since 1812, City Hall is still in use today. Interiors for the film were shot on soundstages, but the exterior featured in the press huddle outside, before the tense powwow between Peck and a very persuasive Venkman.

SPOOK CENTRAL
CONTINUED...

15 WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK
5TH AVE & WASHINGTON SQ N, NEW YORK

IN THE MOVIE When the angry ghosts manifest, the arch gets its own spook.
TODAY This iconic bit of architecture in Greenwich Village is still a big draw. Interestingly, the arch was also used as a backdrop in the *Ghostbusters* cartoons, *Real* and *Extreme*.

16 ALEXANDER HAMILTON US CUSTOM HOUSE
1 BOWLING GREEN, NEW YORK

IN THE MOVIE Dana's workplace, the Manhattan Museum of Art.
TODAY Movie magic made an art museum out of The National Museum of the American Indian. It houses a collection of Native American cultures spanning 12,000 years.

17 STATUE OF LIBERTY
LIBERTY ISLAND, NEW YORK

IN THE MOVIE The foursome hit her with some positively charged slime.
TODAY Lady Liberty still stands tall in New York Harbour. And visitors still sing "(Your Love Keeps Liftin' Me) Higher And Higher" in the hope of inspiring her to take a ramble. Alas, only the Ghostbusters seem to know how to woo her into her boogey shoes. Ⓖ

11 RAY'S OCCULT BOOKS
33 ST MARK'S PLACE, NEW YORK

IN THE MOVIE The book store Ray opens after lawsuits put an end to the ghostbusting business.
TODAY Ray's book store is now a burger joint called Markburger. At the very least, you can chow down on a beef slider while reading *Tobin's Spirit Guide* in Stantz's honour.

12 DANA'S NEW APARTMENT
325 E 77TH STREET, NEW YORK

IN THE MOVIE The apartment Dana and baby Oscar live in.
TODAY The apartment complex is still tempting New Yorkers with its charming brick façade and its proximity to the East River. As far as we know, though, none of its residents have complained about pink slime water...

13 PETER'S NEW APARTMENT
644 BROADWAY, NEW YORK

IN THE MOVIE Venkman's Yankees and Lady Liberty-festooned home is a bachelor pad until a freaked out Dana arrives.
TODAY Who knew Venkman was so fancy? His apartment is just a few blocks from trendy SoHo and another filming location, Washington Square Park. It's definitely the kind of neighbourhood Dana would want to raise her kids in...

14 THE BIRTHDAY PARTY HOUSE
420 EAST 78TH STREET, NEW YORK

IN THE MOVIE The Upper West Side home where Ray and Winston perform at a kids' party.
TODAY The actual residence was located on 78th instead of the West Side but it's still a nice piece of real estate.

9 COLUMBUS CIRCLE
2 COLUMBUS CIRCLE, NEW YORK

IN THE MOVIE The place where the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man stomps his merry way uptown.
TODAY This busy section of the city features two monuments and the big white building next to Stay Puft that now houses the Museum of Arts and Design. Redesigned in 2008, the white marble was replaced with a glass and terracotta exterior that's supposed to change colour depending on your view. As far as we know, the renovation was not carried out by a large white sailor.

10 HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
3 W 65TH ST, NEW YORK

IN THE MOVIE The church Stay Puft uses as a ladder to crawl up 55 Central Park West.
TODAY Calm down and breathe easy. The walking marshmallow didn't really step on a church. Holy Trinity is actually celebrating 112 years of existence. And while the congregation claims it's best known for its Bach Vespers program, we're pretty sure playing footstool to the apocalypse will forever be this church's calling card.

LA CONFIDENTIAL
GHOSTBUSTERS WASN'T JUST SHOT IN NEW YORK...

While *Ghostbusters* is often rightly thought of as a quintessentially New York movie, many of its interiors were actually shot over 2,000 miles away on the other side of the country, in Los Angeles.

The interior of the Ghostbusters headquarters, for instance, was shot in a real firehouse – just not the same one used for the exteriors. Instead, interiors were filmed at Fire Station No 23 on 225 E 5th Street in Los Angeles. The same building was used in a number of other high profile films including *The Mask*, *Big Trouble In Little China*, *National Security* and *Flatliners*.

Likewise, while the interior of New York's Central Library made a prominent appearance in the first film, the scenes with the haunting in the stacks were actually shot in Los Angeles Central Library.

Cast your minds back and you'll recall the boys arresting their first apparition in the ballroom of the (fictitious) Sedgewick Hotel. As it happens, this was filmed in the Millennium Biltmore Hotel in downtown LA. Like the No 23 fire station, the Biltmore has something of a cinematic history, having appeared in many films including *The Bodyguard*, *Speed*, *Daredevil* and a whole host more.

Finally, not in either New York *or* the first film, the scenes shot in the Mayor of New York's home – the famous Gracie Mansion – for *Ghostbusters II* were actually filmed at Greystone Park & Mansion in Beverly Hills. You may recognise this hugely popular site from *Star Trek Into Darkness*, the Sam Raimi *Spider-Man* trilogy, *There Will Be Blood* and literally hundreds more... **WILL SALMON**

HAROLD RAMIS

JEM ROBERTS REMEMBERS THE QUIET GENIUS WHO WAS THE ARCHITECT OF *GHOSTBUSTERS'* SUCCESS AND, SADLY, THE FIRST OF THE GANG TO PASS INTO THE OTHER REALM…

Ramis didn't intend to put on a Proton Pack – but he felt he was the best man for the job.

that they wouldn't ordinarily find funny, or getting them to laugh at their own opinions or prejudices."

When the draft to Vietnam came along, he managed to avoid it by taking meth before his physical. He won a scholarship to Washington University planning to study medicine – although he soon switched to English – and immersed himself in the esoteric fraternal campus life that he would go on to define (and mock) in *Animal House*.

After graduating in 1967, Ramis spent a year working in a mental institution, during which time he not only married his first wife, artist Anne Plotkin, but also began building a reputation as a freelance entertainment writer. By the time he returned to Chicago to work as a supply teacher, he was already a regular contributor to *The Chicago Daily News*, but his focus lay on one particular discipline: making people laugh.

BACK OFF MAN...
By the turn of the 1970s, Ramis had enjoyed a stint as joke editor at *Playboy* magazine, part of a new generation updating the Hefner philosophy for a counter-cultural readership. However, since putting on theatrical spoofs at college, performing had always been just as important, and it didn't take Ramis long to become a core player in the Second City comedy troupe.

With its central philosophy that you should always try to get laughs by working "from the top of your intelligence", Second City marked in many ways the genesis of comedy as we know it today, created more than 20 years before The Comedy Store, which launched UK alternative comedy, even opened its doors. As with *Playboy*,

t's a well-established part of *Ghostbusters* lore that Egon Spengler was the "brain" of the Ghostbusters, compared to Ray's "heart" and Peter's "mouth". In pretty much all respects, these comparisons worked just as well with the actors who played the Ghostbusters – certainly it's unlikely that the concept would ever have made it to screen without the shrewd intellect of the jocular philosopher Harold Allen Ramis.

It's slightly shocking to realise that Ramis was already 40 years old when Egon Spengler turned him into a screen icon, but being several years older than his fellow paranormal investigators gave the experienced gagsmith an added layer of deadpan gravitas – and he had certainly not been idle in the

years leading up to him strapping on his Proton Pack.

INTO THE ANIMAL HOUSE
The native Chicagoan was born in 1944, and raised with only half an eye on the Jewish faith; he and his brother all-but brought themselves up as "latch-key kids", while his parents ran the local grocery store. He admitted to an obsession with television and comedy from a very young age.

Many decades later, he told *Sheridan Road* magazine, "I want people to laugh because deeply embedded in that relationship is making them feel good. When they feel good, I feel good. It diffuses tension. It's a way of commenting on the world, getting people to laugh at something

Ramis and executive producer Michael C Gross on the set of the first *Ghostbusters* film.

HAROLD RAMIS FILMOGRAPHY

RAMIS'S DIRECTORIAL CAREER, FILM BY FILM...

BY WILL SALMON

CADDYSHACK (1980)
It was slated by critics at the time, but this golf comedy quickly found favour with audiences. Chevy Chase stars alongside Bill Murray, Rodney Dangerfield and a pesky gopher. It spawned a lacklustre sequel eight years later, directed by Allan Arkush.

NATIONAL LAMPOON'S VACATION (1983)
Chevy Chase takes the lead again with the first instalment in the patchy-but-much-loved *National Lampoon's Vacation* franchise. A strong script by (the then up-and-coming) John Hughes and Ramis's assured direction helped make this a sizeable hit, pulling in $61m at the box office.

CLUB PARADISE (1986)
Despite a script co-written by Ramis and Brian Doyle-Murray (Bill's brother!) and a starry cast that included the likes of Robin Williams, Peter O'Toole and Rick Moranis, this comedy about an injured firefighter retiring to a Caribbean island did not fare well with the public. Critics were equally unimpressed and it's now barely remembered.

GROUNDHOG DAY (1993)
Ramis and Murray reunite – albeit with one of them behind the camera – for this superb, touching fantasy comedy. Murray's weatherman, Phil Connors, finds himself reliving the same day over and over again, running the gamut of emotions in the process. *Ghostbusters* may have been the bigger hit, but *Groundhog Day* is generally regarded as Ramis's best film.

STUART SAVES HIS FAMILY (1995)
This peculiar vehicle for comedian Al Franken bombed at the box office. Based on Franken's *Saturday Night Live* character, Stuart Smalley, it was such a flop it marked the end of the character (save for one post-failure sketch). Franken was later to quit *SNL* and is now better known as a bestselling writer and for his political work.

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by 1969 the urbane jazz stylings that originally defined the outfit needed to reflect new philosophies, and the young groovily afroed Ramis was soon at home – albeit not for long.

Reportedly, it was a bad acid trip shared with his wife that forced him to absent himself from the troupe's cerebral comedy shows. He went travelling and, when he returned, his place at the cast's lunatic core had been taken by a fearless Albanian called John Belushi.

Realising that he could not compete with Belushi's outlandish improv, Ramis found a new niche for himself as the star's deadpan foil. "When I saw how far he was willing to go to get a laugh or to make a point on stage, the language he would use, how physical he was," he told the *Tribune* in 1999, "I thought, 'I'm never going to be this big. How could I ever get enough attention on a stage with guys like this?' I stopped being zany. I learned that my thing was lobbing in great lines here and there, which would score big and keep me on the stage."

Second City's founding of a Toronto branch opened the doors even wider to

> ## "I WANT PEOPLE TO LAUGH... WHEN THEY FEEL GOOD, I FEEL GOOD. IT'S A WAY OF COMMENTING ON THE WORLD"

a new generation of comic performers, including Dan Aykroyd and John Candy, plus fellow Chicagoans Brian Doyle-Murray and his kid brother, Bill. With Belushi as the least containable comedian of the bunch, his performing soon spread to The Big Apple, and work on a radio show that had grown out of the *Private Eye*-inspired satirical magazine *National Lampoon*. As soon as he could, John sent for Harold and Bill to join him in New York.

IN THE HOLE!
The late '70s saw Ramis inserting so many fingers into so many pies. When *Saturday Night Live* boss Lorne Michaels approached him to join the show, he had to turn him down. "*SNL* was completely fuelled by cocaine," he explained to *GQ*. "The show was being written literally overnight. I didn't want to stay up all night writing."

Work with his old friend, producer Michael Shamberg, on "Guerrilla TV" projects such as *TVTV* led to Canadian Second City spin-off *SCTV*, a kind of transatlantic *Rutland Weekend Television* packed with celebrity impersonations from the likes of Candy, Eugene Levy, Rick Moranis and Catherine O'Hara. It introduced TV audiences to Ramis's steel-rimmed geekiness and he remained a core writer even after leaving the cast in the second season.

Having directed the *National Lampoon* cast in a live show, budding

Ramis made a lot of funny movies but *Groundhog Day* is arguably his best.

> ## "I FEEL A BIG OBLIGATION TO THE AUDIENCE, ALMOST IN A MORAL SENSE, TO SAY SOMETHING USEFUL"

producer Ivan Reitman became the man who introduced Ramis to his primary playground: the movies. Ramis was already hawking his own serious screenplay based on the life of Chicago activist Emma Goldman, but in 1978 Doug Kenney's idea of immortalising his time at college was embellished by Ramis and Chris Miller's own anecdotes to create *Animal House*, one of the biggest box office comedy hits of all time – particularly given the tiny budget.

With such a hit first time out, Ramis and Kenney repeated the formula with summer camp movie *Meatballs* in 1979, co-writing with Brian Doyle-Murray to create the first starring vehicle for Bill. Murray Minor and Ramis were already developing a symbiotic creative relationship, with the writer honing an on-screen persona – part slacker, part wiseguy, all antihero – for the charismatic improviser to raise to new heights when the cameras started rolling.

Although Ramis himself had earned pocket money as a caddy, it was the Murray family's passion for golfing that suggested the next entry in this early run of smashes, providing the first opportunity for the writer/performer to add the ultimate string to his bow, and step behind the camera. When *Caddyshack* proved as popular as their

ON SCREEN THE WRITER/DIRECTOR HAD ANOTHER TALENT – WE PICK RAMIS'S FIVE BEST ACTING JOBS…
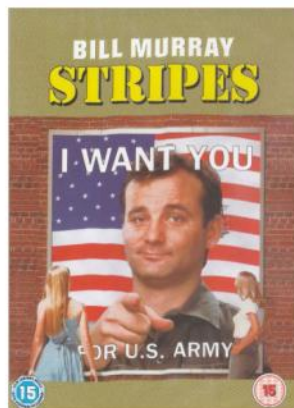
STRIPES (1981)
RUSSELL
Well-versed in making extroverted performers look good, Ramis's first major role alongside Bill Murray was characteristically far from showy, but the more cerebral Russell made a perfect foil for Bill's hopeless drifter John.
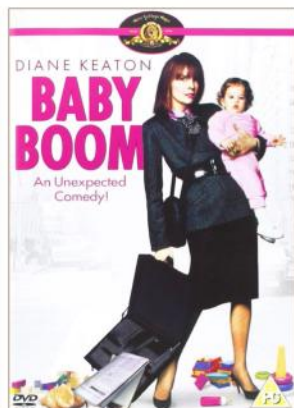
BABY BOOM (1987)
STEVEN
In this almost painfully '80s Diane Keaton vehicle, the heroine grows from a heartless yuppie into a full-rounded human being when a baby is dumped on her – Ramis was the equally shallow capitalist boyfriend who refused to put up with it.
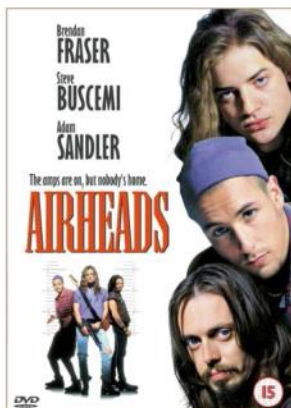
AIRHEADS (1994)
CHRIS
This gnarly (ie embarrassingly dated) rawk comedy does have the singular consolation of featuring two Ghostbusters – Ernie Hudson as a cop, and Ramis's poindexter A&R man who can't tell the difference between Lemmy and God.
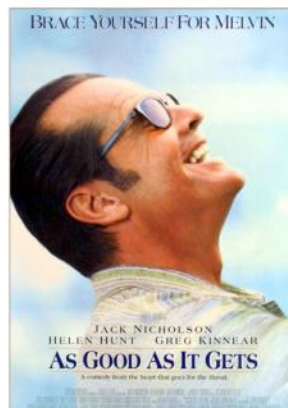
AS GOOD AS IT GETS (1997)
DR BETTES
Playing doctors was second nature to Ramis, which may be why his role in the award-festooned romcom – as the kind-hearted medic who steps in to take charge of Helen Hunt's sickly son – fitted so seamlessly.

KNOCKED UP (2007)
MR STONE
He may not have had a name as male lead Ben's dad, but it still beats his paternal role in *High Fidelity*, which was totally cut. If anything, *Knocked Up* could have been improved with more of him as Seth Rogen's pragmatic, pot-loving pops.

HAROLD RAMIS FILMOGRAPHY

MULTIPLICITY (1996)
Ramis's fortunes did not improve with this sci-fi comedy which was another commercial flop. Michael Keaton is an overworked everyman who volunteers to be part of a new cloning programme. Whaddya know, the scheme gets out of control and soon there are multiple Michaels causing all sorts of comic chaos.

ANALYZE THIS (1999)
The combination of Robert de Niro and the *Sopranos*-led zeitgeist for anguished gangsters helped deliver Ramis his biggest comedy hit. De Niro is superb, riffing on the tough guy roles that made him famous, but with added neuroses. The whopping $176,885,658 it took at the box office meant that no one was laughing harder than Ramis himself.

BEDAZZLED (2000)
This big-screen remake of the TV comedy looked like a potential dud, but is reasonably effective. *The Mummy* star Brendan Fraser plays Elliot – an IT support worker who meets the Devil herself, in the slinky, red-dressed form of Elizabeth Hurley.

ANALYZE THAT (2002)
Robert De Niro and Billy Crystal reprise their roles in a sequel that failed to recapture either the charm or the success of the original film. Gangster Paul Vitti is released from prison and must try and start a new life. Disappointing.

THE ICE HARVEST (2005)
Ramis returns to the mafia with this noir comedy. It's a shade darker than Ramis's usual output, but all the better for it. John Cusack does his usual deadpan thing and it's blessed with a witty script. While it's not up there with *Groundhog Day* or *Analyze This*, the unusual tone helps it stand out.

YEAR ONE (2009)
Despite the presence of cinematic hot property Judd Apatow as a producer and Jack Black and Michael Cera in starring roles, this Stone Age comedy was a dud. Alas, it proved to be Ramis's last movie. A real shame. But let's remember the good times.

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previous films, it was an incredible kickstart to a 30-year career as a director.

SOMETHING STRANGE...
Reitman's next plan, to produce *Cheech & Chong Join The Army*, hit a snag when the stoner duo dropped out, but the producer knew he was onto a winner when he approached Ramis to re-tailor the existing screenplay for Murray and himself, as two hopeless New Yorkers dumped into the US military. Ramis was as unsure about taking on the starring role as the Paramount bosses, but Reitman insisted that it was either him, or nobody, and in 1981 *Stripes* would continue this unbroken run of fratboy-pleasing comedy hits.

By now, the tried-and-tested formula of a gang of misfits learning the ropes of a new way of life (often while trying to get laid), coming up against small-minded authority figures and ultimately triumphing against the system (concluding with a huge homecoming celebration) was a recognised template that would eventually be Xeroxed into oblivion by the *Police Academy* movies, but Ramis was feeling ready to move on from adolescent excesses. Co-scripting with John Hughes, his second directorial

Starring alongside Bill Murray again in the Reitman-directed war comedy *Stripes*.

triumph would be the cherished Chevy Chase vehicle *Vacation*, again for *National Lampoon*, but the detour he was about to make crept up on him, seemingly out of nowhere.

With Reitman having abandoned attempts to flog *Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy* to the Mid-West, his new conundrum was the complex paranormal epic cooked up by Dan Aykroyd, and he knew that Harold was the best man to take all the apocalyptic ideas in Danny's head and turn them into a superior popcorn accompaniment. By imposing the *Stripes* template on Aykroyd's creation, Ramis easily earned his co-creator credit on *Ghostbusters* even if he hadn't been talked into playing the role of the 'busters' resident genius Dr Spengler – though this would also typecast him somewhat as a brainbox for the rest of his performing career (he was often keen to point out that, far from being a nerd in *Stripes*, his character got off with Sean Young).

Away from the *Ghostbusters* set, Ramis's homelife was also undergoing a dramatic alteration. He and Anne were growing increasingly apart and although they had one daughter, Violet (whose godfather was Bill Murray), they officially separated before the film came out. Ramis and his assistant Erica Mann were soon an item.

BEEN HERE BEFORE
Mann had been brought up in a Buddhist community, and soon Ramis too embraced the religion's teachings, and carried around a small "Five-Minute Buddhist" primer for the rest of his life. He eventually went so far as to befriend the Dalai Lama (who doesn't play golf), but was careful to stress right up to the end that he wholly espoused the philosophy without ever losing grip on his non-supernatural rational humanism. "Buddish was the word that I came up with," he told *Chicago* magazine. "I lean that way. I was raised Jewish, and fully embrace the core beliefs of Judaism... But the supernatural aspects of religion were never important to me. I'll put

The Ghostbusters geek: "I collect spores, moulds, and fungus."

Raised Jewish, Ramis was also known fondly as the "Buddha of Comedy".

it that way... I read a basic Buddhist text called *What the Buddha Taught*, and said, 'Oh, yeah, this makes sense'. Memorable, simple, didn't require articles of faith, but completely humanistic in every way that I valued. So I proselytize it without practising it. Much easier."

There was ephemeral work on movies featuring Rodney Dangerfield and a *Caddyshack* sequel in the late '80s, but Ramis's main directorial offering of the time, Caribbean caper *Club Paradise*, was his first real flop, which he largely blamed on it being designed as a vehicle for Murray and John Cleese, in roles ultimately filled by Robin Williams and Peter O'Toole.

The end of the decade brought two consolations: marriage to Erica (they would have two sons, Julian and Daniel), and another chance to slip into Egon's overalls. Despite the commercial pull that instigated *Ghostbusters II*, he took the challenge of penning a worthwhile sequel seriously, aiming to return to a successful formula without rehashing

it – his idea, to focus on the negative emotional energy generated by New York's population, may well have had its roots in Buddhist beliefs.

If there was a sizeable gap between the Ghostbusters' second saving of the world and Ramis's next movie, at least it justified the wait. *Groundhog Day* would become Ramis's most critically acclaimed film, once again not far removed from the themes of Buddhism. As the Ramis family moved from LA back to Chicago, a number of his projects throughout the rest of the decade would also be heavily preoccupied with philosophical and theological musings, not least the solipsistic theorising of *Multiplicity* and the remake of Cook & Moore's 1967 cult comedy *Bedazzled* (Ramis was a sincere fan of the double act, but recasting Peter Cook's Devil George Spiggot as Elizabeth Hurley may have been a career low).

"I feel a big obligation to the audience, almost in a moral sense, to say something useful," Ramis once

told *DVD Movie Guide*. "If I'm going to spend a year of my life on these things, I want something that I feel that strongly about." Although reliant on Ramis's trademark depth of psychology, however, his greatest commercial hit as a director was a world apart – teaming Billy Crystal with Robert De Niro for the mobster comedy *Analyze This* in 1999. The hit more than doubled its $80m budget, but an attempt to repeat the success three years later with *Analyze That* fared less well, actually failing to

CALL IT KARMA
HOW HAROLD & BILL'S GREATEST SUCCESS ENDED A FRIENDSHIP

When young writer Danny Rubin's once-in-a-lifetime screenplay *Groundhog Day* landed in Harold Ramis's lap, it could not have been more perfectly attuned to the writer/director's Humanist-Buddhist leanings, and although he was quick to make a number of dramatic changes (such as showing the dawning realisation for news anchor Phil Connors that he was doomed to repeat the same day for eternity, rather than jumping right into his cursed loop), Ramis was convinced that it would represent something special in his career.

Tom Hanks was the first actor he approached to star, but the good ol' American boy knew he was too loveable for the role, which meant that three years after the last parting of Venkman & Spengler, Harold & Bill were to spend the winter of 1992 in their

freezing home state of Illinois, repeating the same day over and over again.

The details have never been revealed, but despite the lauded gold that ended up on cinema screens, during filming something happened between the director Ramis and his particularly obstreperous old friend, which ultimately led to the collaborators not speaking from that point on. Over the years interviewers would prod Ramis for the reasons behind the bad blood, but he continually expressed exasperated ignorance of whatever Bill's beef was.

When the extent of Harold's final illness became clear, however, Murray visited his old friend, and the two made their peace. The day after Ramis died, Murray announced, "He earned his keep on this planet. God bless him."

Spengler was named after German historian and philosopher Oswald Spengler.

recoup its budget altogether – as Ramis had warned everyone it would.

BIBLICAL PROPORTIONS

At this point well into his sixties, Ramis was growing gracefully grey, portly and benevolent. He resembled some kind of lovably secular rabbi – the softly spoken fountain of comedic wisdom he was always destined to be. He did actually cameo as a rabbi in 2007's superior mock biopic *Walk Hard*, one of a plethora of small roles in a new wave of youth comedies that included *Orange County*, Zach Braff's effort *The Last Kiss* and playing Seth Rogen's dad in *Knocked Up*. If he was particularly in demand for a new generation of comedy filmmakers, Judd Apatow was not reticent in announcing that it was
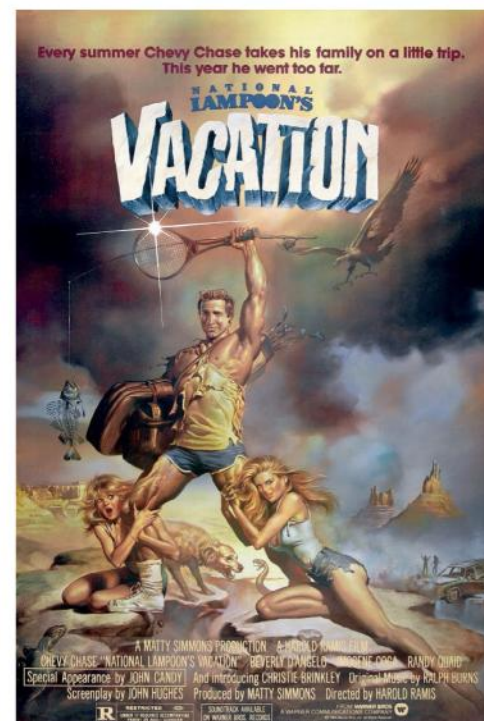

Ramis's directorial debut, *Caddyshack*, made nearly $40m in the US.

> ## "YOUNG PEOPLE AREN'T WANDERING AROUND WONDERING IF GOD EXISTS – THEY'RE TRYING TO GET LAID"

because the new breed of frat-movie stars were well aware that they were all "the spawn of Harold Ramis".

It was understandable that he would use the cream of this new generation for his return to balls-out comedy in 2009, having survived another misfire in 2005 with *The Ice Harvest*, an at best "blackly humorous" crime thriller. Ramis decried the fact that no American comedy had ever got near the beautifully blasphemous theological satire of *Life Of Brian*, and he wanted to create a kind of *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead* for the first few books of the Torah, starring Jack Black and Michael Cera as Stone Age hunter-gatherers. That *Year One* emerged as such a confused mess of disconnected setpieces packed with lame dick jokes, pleasing neither critics nor punters, is all the evidence you need that no amount of talent, wisdom and bravery can guarantee a movie's success. "To actually make people laugh, they have to be surprised – you have to violate some expectation, so part of it is reading the audience correctly," he laughed to *Sheridan Road*. "That's probably why older filmmakers find it

harder, since the audience is very young for comedy in general. That's possibly why *Year One* failed. It had, I thought, pretty juvenile and scatological stuff, but the themes would not appeal to young people because they're not wandering around wondering if God exists or not, they're trying to get laid."

As a swansong, *Year One* will never be a satisfactory part of the Ramis story, but then nobody ever dreamed it would have to fill that gap on his resumé. His next project may have been the movie he mentioned to Ken Plume at asitecalledfred.com when he hinted "there's a personal story that I will write at some point, and it's a film that I will happily make. It could very well be the next thing I do, unless someone shows me something great. It's a personal story of a time in my life, in 1967, and it'll be funny and poignant, and really good."

So the filmmaker's ambition was not sagging as his sixth decade in showbusiness hoved into view and, of course, work continued with Aykroyd on the ever-changing plans for *Ghostbusters 3*, but in 2010 Ramis was struck down with a rare form of vasculitis, an inflammation of the blood vessels that quickly robbed him of the ability to walk. Although he fought the disorder with his usual philosophical bonhomie, and was making progress regaining his mobility, less than three years later complications in his condition made it clear that he would never recover, and with a short time to say goodbye to family and friends, he died in February 2014.

Whether or not his final days moved him to embrace his Buddhist outlook more wholly, Harold Ramis certainly brought enough happiness into the world, touched enough people's hearts and made enough of us think about our place in the universe, to be pretty damn sure of VIP access to nirvana. Ⓖ

THE REAL THING

TWO YEARS AFTER THE FILM CAME THE CARTOON VERSION. **MICHAEL MOLCHER** REMEMBERS AN '80S CLASSIC, STUFFED FULL OF GHOULS, GAGS AND GADGETS

They didn't look or sound like the actors and they actually lived with a ghost – yet *The Real Ghostbusters* is one of the greatest children's cartoons of the 1980s.

Based on the 1984 movie, the animated Saturday morning TV show that ran over seven seasons from 1986 to 1991 not only kept the franchise alive but was popular enough to help spark a sequel movie in 1989.

Yet it was two full years between the success of the first film and the first episode of *The Real Ghostbusters*. In a decade in which toy, movie and TV companies worked feverishly to find the next big hit, why did it take so long for the studio behind the film, Columbia Pictures, to cash in on a critically-acclaimed, number one movie that was a defining part of '80s pop culture? And why did it look so different to the movie that spawned it?

GHOSTS R US

Developed by Columbia Pictures Television and Burbank-based studio DiC Entertainment, which was also responsible for much-loved children's shows such as *Inspector Gadget* and, later, *Sonic The Hedgehog*, *The Real Ghostbusters* hit TV screens on the ABC network in 1986.

While Peter Venkman, Ray Stantz, Egon Spengler and Winston Zeddemore were still busy busting ghosts, the series took significant liberties with the source material – all of the characters appeared radically different, aspects of their world were expanded or exaggerated and stories varied from the silly to the fantastical. Notably, they were also joined in the old firehouse by Slimer, the greedy green ectoplasmic blob they'd "busted" in the first movie, who came to dominate the later, more obviously kid-friendly series.

The addition of "The Real" to the title was borne out of a dispute with production company Filmation, which had produced a 1975 live-action series,

Stay Puft made numerous appearances – usually as a friend rather than a foe.

"THEY CAN'T ALL BE MEN IN GREY SUITS WITH DARK HAIR, SO WE TOOK EACH OF THEM AND GAVE THEM A LITTLE BIT OF INSTANT IDENTIFICATION"

The Ghost Busters. Columbia paid Filmation $500,000 and a promise of one per cent of the profits to use the name for the movie, but despite grossing an enormous $165m at the box office, it "failed" to turn a profit. When the firm was then passed over for the animated spin-off, they produced a cartoon based on their own series but it never achieved the level of popularity of *The Real Ghostbusters* which, after its original 13-episode run, was syndicated for a further 65 episodes.

It's a landmark series that managed to be inventive, scary, *and* fun thanks in no small part to character designs by artists such as Everett Peck and Gabi Payn. It also had a storytelling flexibility that

allowed the show to go places a live-action movie could not – from the depths of hell to a baseball match between good and evil to an attic crammed with ghouls, *The Real Ghostbusters* is packed with memorable moments that fans can still recall from their childhoods.

And whereas there had been virtually no merchandise based on the movie, the show spawned a toy line from Kenner – including some bizarre variant figures such as pre-slimed characters – beach towels, pyjamas, and endless other memorabilia, plus a comic book series, with content published by NOW in North America and Marvel Comics in the UK, that lasted from 1988 until 1992.

An original pilot episode that bore a greater resemblance to the movie was produced but never aired and ended up providing fodder for the show's intro, but while essences of the main characters remained the same their likenesses did not – Egon had a blond quiff, Ray developed ginger hair and a weight problem, Venkman became younger, and Winston lost his moustache. It was pure necessity – when boiled down to their essence, Ramis, Murray and Aykroyd were three white guys with dark hair wearing identical boiler suits, which was not exactly visually striking.

"The consensus was that we should make them different enough to be their own characters but still recognisable from the film, which is a very hard thing
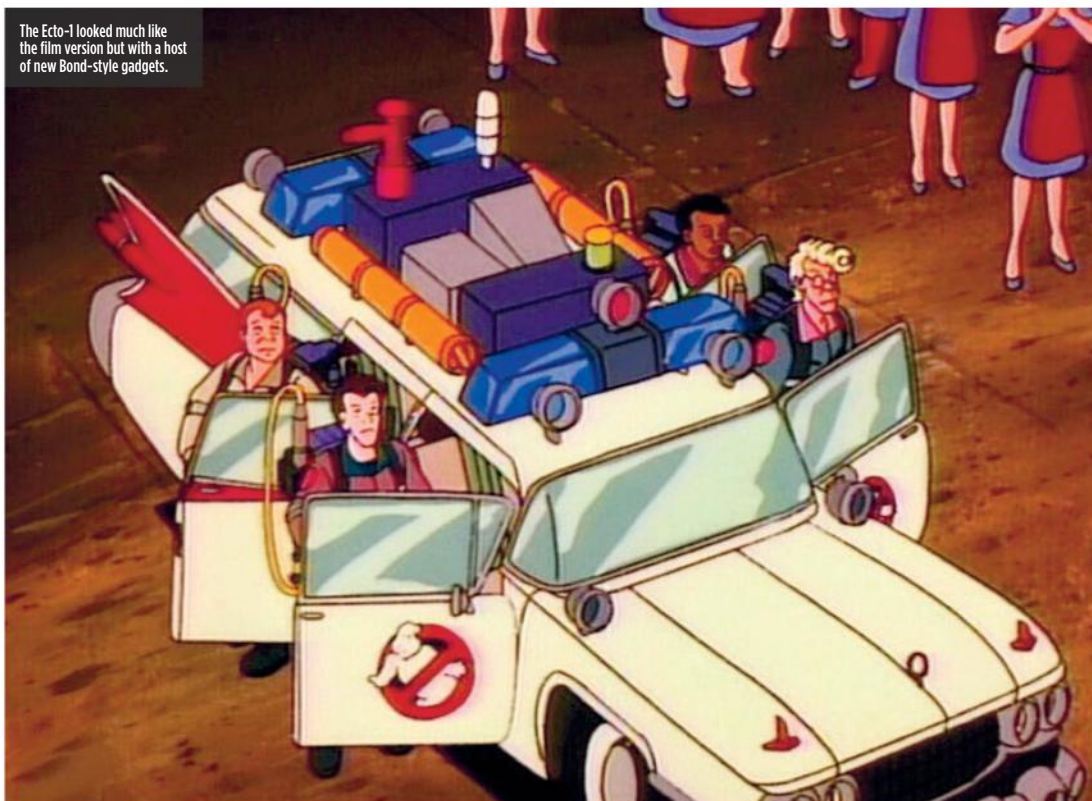

Colour-coded jumpsuits and new barnets helped to differentiate the characters.

Funny, yes, but there were also plenty of running-for-the-back-of-the-sofa moments.

The Ecto-1 looked much like the film version but with a host of new Bond-style gadgets.

Winston looks sad – maybe he's wondering where his moustache has gone...

Janine and the rest of gang communicated via the Ecto-1's two-way radio.

to work out," said season one and two story editor J Michael Straczynski on the documentary *Who You Gonna Call? The Heroes Of The Real Ghostbusters*.

"The characters are not meant to look exactly like the actors," said producer Joe Medjuck, "they're meant to look like the characters, which means they have some resemblance in terms of very, very basic things of the actors."

"They can't all be men in grey suits with dark hair," said executive producer Michael C Gross, "so we took each of them and gave a little bit of instant identification. It helps in animation – when they're running across the screen and small – it helps to tell them apart. The different colour suits were so that in a group scene you could figure out who was who."

The actors who gave voice to these new incarnations also departed from the big screen versions – only Frank Welker, who voiced both Ray and Slimer, and Maurice LaMarche, who impersonated Harold Ramis at his audition despite being told not to, worked on all seven seasons.

"I zeroed in on that glottal pull-back Harold had and everything being very flat," said LaMarche. "It was just a question of working off what I imagined it would be like to have all this intelligence contained in this dead-pan, outside-the-

stream-of-life sort of fellow, who I always thought was longing to belong."

Lorenzo Music's Venkman was the most radical departure; Bill Murray's Chicago accent became a laconic glottal drawl which sounded a lot like the animated version of Garfield, which voice director Marsha Goodman described as "kind of dry, acerbic, the comic relief... He had that attitude." It's since been claimed that Music's replacement with Dave Coulier after 78 episodes came about because Murray questioned this similarity – ironic considering Murray's voicing of the cartoon cat in 2004.

Ernie Hudson auditioned to reprise his role of Winston Zeddemore from the film, but he lost to comedian Arsenio Hall, who was himself replaced by Buster Jones from season four.

BOO-DUNIT
"They were great characters to write for and you knew the actors would just give

In later episodes, Slimer would gain a tail – here, though, he's simply round-bottomed.

you a great line reading on everything, even if you didn't expect it to be that way," said writer Kathryn M Drennan.

The show had a plethora of writers over its entire run but writing duo Chuck Menville and Len Janson, Michael Reaves, Richard Mueller and J Michael Straczynski are credited with the lion's share. Each script would be broken down by DiC's artists into catalogues of characters, props, background designs and storyboards over two weeks, before the voices were recorded and the storyboards sent to Tokyo-based animation firm KK C&D.

What sets it apart from other kids' shows of the time was the way it was written and produced. Script editor on the first two seasons was J Michael Straczynski, now best known for his small screen science fiction epic *Babylon 5*, but then primarily known for working on *He-Man*, who managed to infuse the series with a remarkably mature voice and – thanks to writing 16 episodes, story editing 78, and writing the show's production bible – provided a remarkable amount of consistency in tone and character.

He told *IGN* in 2000: "I met with the producers – who also worked on the film – and they said, 'We want to do the movie. We don't want to cheapen

> "IT WAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO BRING SCI-FI, FANTASY AND HORROR TO A GENRE FOR KIDS"

The pointy-green-glasses Janine – later she'd go all soft and get round frames.

it. We don't want to bring it down in quality. We want this to be as good as the movie and as sophisticated in its storytelling.' Which was music to my ears, and I signed on to do that… It was the first time I'd had the producers saying, 'Just do what you do. We've got no problem with it. Go as far as you want.' I took that and went as far as I humanly could, because it was a great opportunity.

"I loved it enormously, because it was really an opportunity to cut loose and be very obscure, to bring all the classics of science fiction, fantasy and horror to a genre for kids. I mean, when you can call a show "The Collect Call Of Cathulhu"… When you can drag out all the horror clichés and turn them on their heads and just be totally obscure… There was one episode where we have our characters in Alaska and they

need to find Eskimos to take part in a ceremony – we referred to it as an "Inuit Minyan". And never explained it. Five people in the world got that, but that's okay, because we were free to be obscure. I did stories about child abuse, and more serious stories about older characters – it was great. It was a great opportunity."

"The Ghostbusters is a perfect example of a really well constructed ensemble," said *Star Trek* alumnus David Garrold. "You have Venkman who is this dry wit and also a cynical iconoclastic sceptic; you have Ray who's so enthusiastic about everything that he doesn't really think about unintended consequences and his enthusiasm is infectious; and then you have Egon, who's your heroic mad scientist who's just so involved in building the next thing that sometimes he's lost touch

There was no holding back when it came to the ghosts: the odder the better, it seems.

ANIMATED MAGIC
THE BEST EPISODES OF
THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS

JANINE MELNITZ, GHOSTBUSTER
SEASON 2, EPISODE 12
WRITER MICHAEL REAVES
AIRED 29 SEPT 1987
One of four episodes in which Janine dons a Proton Pack and arguably the best as her transformation is at the core of the episode, rather than a mere plot point. Reaves's dialogue for Janine is sharp and funny, rescuing her from being a bit part.

THE BOOGIEMAN COMETH
SEASON 1, EPISODE 6
WRITER MICHAEL REAVES
AIRED 18 OCT 1986
The series was at its best when it riffed on traditional fears and ghost stories and the huge-headed Boogieman was one of designer Everett Peck's best. Unsettlingly inventive and with an ethically dubious ending, this was highly mature storytelling for a kids' show.

MR SANDMAN, DREAM ME A DREAM
SEASON 1, EPISODE 7
WRITER J MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI
AIRED 25 OCT 1986
One of the most disturbing episodes in the show's history, a Sandman decides to put the world to sleep for 500 years. Frank Welker's unsettling voice takes this from snoozefest to nightmare.

CITIZEN GHOST
SEASON 1, EPISODE 11
WRITER J MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI
AIRED 22 NOV 1986
Neatly connecting the events of the first movie with the world of the show with a trick Straczynski later deployed on *Babylon 5*, Venkman is interviewed about the history of the Ghostbusters. It explains the cartoon's different coloured suits as well as the existence of Slimer.

KNOCK KNOCK
SEASON 2, EPISODE 40
WRITER J MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI
AIRED 6 NOV 1987
Subway workmen accidentally uncover a door that unleashes hell and it begins to spread across New York via the tunnels. Clearly created by people who've experienced Manhattan at rush hour.

NIGHT GAME
SEASON 2, EPISODE 7
WRITER KATHRYN M DRENNAN
AIRED 22 SEPT 1987
Winston gets caught up in a battle between good and evil that takes place every 500 years on the same spot – now a baseball stadium.

THE COLLECT CALL OF CATHULHU
SEASON 2, EPISODE 32
WRITER MICHAEL REAVES
AIRED 27 OCT 1987
Using grandaddy of horror HP Lovecraft as inspiration for a syndicated kids show was a bold move – but it pays off. A cult uses the Necronomicon to release "Cathulhu" and the Ghostbusters have to play smart to defeat the Elder Gods.

THE THING IN MRS FAVERSHAM'S ATTIC
SEASON 2, EPISODE 38
WRITER J MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI
AIRED 4 NOV 1987
Another episode, like "The Boogieman Cometh", that references childhood fears and is terrifying because of it. An old lady hires the Ghostbusters to cleanse her haunted mansion but they find the attic has become a hellish realm full of nightmare visions.

Nose-grabbing bespectacled pink frogs: nothing strange about that. Nothing at all.

It was Slimer's popularity in *Real* that led to him appearing in *Ghostbusters II*.

"WHEN YOU WRITE FROM LOVE, TO ENTERTAIN YOURSELF, THAT'S THE WORK THAT'S GOING TO STAND"

with the rest of the world. Winston is a very difficult character to write because he's your everyman point of view, the only normal one of these guys, so he represents the handle by which the audience identifies."

PARTNERS IN SLIME

So why did it take two years for *The Real Ghostbusters* to follow up on the popularity of the movie?

It probably has something to do with the movie having an unexpectedly broad appeal. Put simply, no one expected it to be as popular as it was. Its stars featured *Saturday Night Live* regulars whose back catalogue included such non-family-friendly movies as *Caddyshack* and *Animal House*, while its PG certificate hid some pretty mature and gritty scenes.

What the studio didn't count on was what we now know of as "the Pixar effect" – adults enjoyed the in-jokes, the banter and the characters, while youngsters were enthralled by the supernatural which, along with the less partisan nature of a "team" movie, made it prime playground imagination fodder.

Yet barring some books, t-shirts, and a Commodore 64 game there was a notable lack of any movie merchandise and in an age when you had phenomenally successful tie-ins such as *Transformers* and *He-Man* it's clear that Columbia was caught on the hop.

But what came out of DiC was a show with very few limits – without a pre-existing show bible or manufacturer guidelines to adhere to, the writers were free to build a cartoon series with its own internal logic and mythology, which preserved the anarchic and irreverent ethos of the movie while exploring issues of friendship, loyalty, superstition, science, dedication and sacrifice. The 78-episode syndication season contains some of the most genuinely inventive children's cartoons ever and you could already see Straczynski beginning to form his own views on how to build an immersive, interconnected science fiction world, lessons he would bring to the epic *Babylon 5* series a decade later.

Even the differences with the movie were addressed with "Citizen Ghost", a flashback to the aftermath of the battle of Gozer which explains the new suits and Slimer's presence in the firehouse, while "Take Two" explained that the film was made based on events in the cartoon!

It couldn't last. With the third series in 1988, major changes in direction were enforced by the network (see right). Changed to an hour-long format thanks to the addition of revoiced season one shows, the show was retitled *Slimer!*

At some point after the film, Ray clearly decided to dye his hair. And his eyebrows.

The Sandman sprinkling dream dust: the writers were inspired by myths and folklore.

And *The Real Ghostbusters* with a greater emphasis on the firehouse's resident ghost and much more of a focus on entertainment for younger children. This created a much lighter tone but made the ghosts much less frightening, removing one of the key reasons why the first two seasons had been so well received.

Despite this, such was the show's success that Aykroyd, Ramis and producer Ivan Reitman eventually agreed to a movie sequel, *Ghostbusters II*, which was released in 1989.

Sadly, the reformatted show didn't last long after the sequel. Despite the brief return of Straczynski to writing duties in season seven, the Ghostbusters rode Ecto-1 off into the sunset in 1991. The franchise was revived in 1997 with *Extreme Ghostbusters* (see page 118), in which Egon trains four of his students in the ghostbusting business. It lasted just one 40-episode season and it never seemed to recapture the exuberance of the original show.

Slimer's transformed from bad ghost to resident and friend.

Despite being so different to the source material, *The Real Ghostbusters* managed to capture both the imagination of its crew and that of its fans, for whom the supernatural opened up a world of possibilities. Combined with a regular flow of toys and merchandise, the cartoon came to define the experience of a childhood in the 1980s.

Today, IDW keeps the legacy of *The Real Ghostbusters* with its licensed comics but the series remains as fondly remembered as ever.

"I'm not surprised at the longevity of *The Real Ghostbusters*," said writer Marc Scott Zicree, "because my experience has been that when you write from love, from delight, to entertain yourself, to entertain your friends,

that's the work that's going to stand because you're not writing down to anyone, you're not writing to what the market wants, you're not trying to second guess yourself creatively, you're just coming from where you live. I'm pleased that *Ghostbusters* has lasted. I think it will continue to. I think people will be delighted by this show for years."

"I still get fan mail," said LaMarche. "What's happened is that the little kids who sat with their bowl of Cheerios watching *Ghostbusters* on a Saturday morning are now grown-ups and want to relive their childhood. I'm amazed, though. There's been few shows I've been on that have had tremendous staying power, very few. This is the first of those and it's held on the longest." G
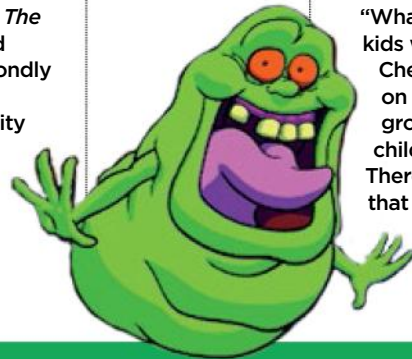
SLIMER! AND THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS — HOW TO PUT THE SKIDS ON A SUCCESSFUL SHOW...

Despite a highly successful run in syndication, when the third season of *The Real Ghostbusters* began in 1988 it had undergone major changes to make it more "kid friendly" as the studio shifted the show's focus to younger viewers.

As the new title suggested, *Slimer! And The Real Ghostbusters* placed a much bigger spotlight on Slimer, by now a fully-fledged comedy sidekick "pet" of the Ghostbusters. Along with a new title sequence, each show became an hour long, with half given over to Slimer's escapades while the rest featured revoiced season one and two episodes. The show's darker tone was wiped away and the ghosts lost their scariness, replaced with sillier plots and "wackier" adventures.

This was the point that J Michael Straczynski, who had been a guiding hand as script editor, walked away from the show. He claims "network consultants" demanded that the show become more "politically safe".

"They proposed, to my mind, some really offensive things. They wanted to make Janine a mommy character, instead of the strong female character she'd been in the movie and the series; they wanted to make Winston, the only black character in the show, just a driver, which I thought was profoundly racist. They wanted to meddle even though, in the beginning, it was ABC's number one rated show. So I said, 'If you do this, I'm walking. If you force these changes on me, I'm leaving, because they're ethically wrong.' And they did, and I left."

The biggest change was to the character of Janine. Not only did her short and spiky hair became long and straight, but the writers fundamentally changed her personality. No longer the sharp, sarcastic and cynical character from the movies, she became more one-dimensional and lost much of her hard-won status within the team. When Straczynski eventually returned to write two episodes for season six, the episode "Janine, You've Changed" was a tongue-in-cheek explanation of the character's changing appearance.

Older fans who had stuck with the show were unimpressed and in 1991, after the new direction and the 1989 movie sequel had failed to capture the younger demographic, the show was cancelled.
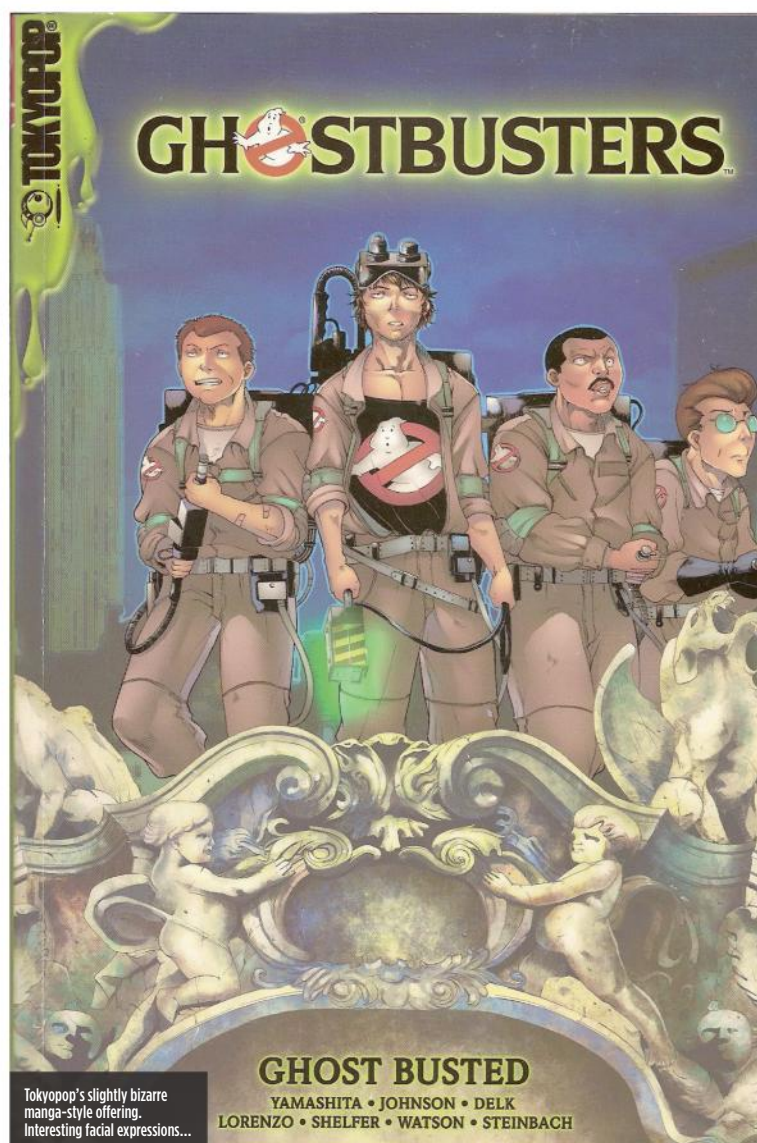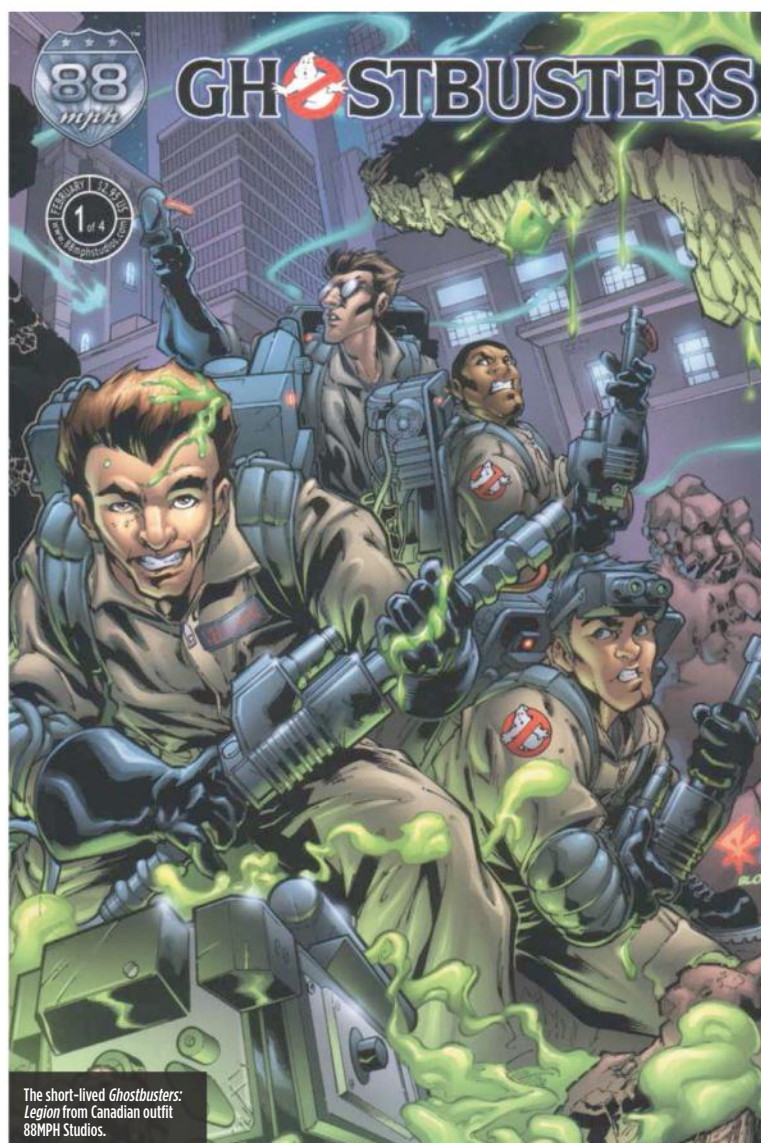
STRANGELY DRAWN

DAVE GOLDER LOOKS AT THE LONG, EVENTFUL HISTORY OF THE GHOSTBUSTERS IN COMICS

The short-lived *Ghostbusters: Legion* from Canadian outfit 88MPH Studios.

GHOST BUSTED

YAMASHITA • JOHNSON • DELK
LORENZO • SHELFER • WATSON • STEINBACH

Tokyopop's slightly bizarre manga-style offering. Interesting facial expressions…

Amazingly, there has never been a comic adaptation of the original *Ghostbusters*. There *was* one of *Ghostbusters II* but even that came with a twist: it starred the characters from *The Real Ghostbusters* cartoon, not the movie. And the first *Ghostbusters* comic to hit the shelves did so in Europe, not the US.

The story of *Ghostbusters* in comic book form is far from conventional. As the franchise has leapt from one publisher to another – there was even an unlikely dalliance with manga specialist Tokyopop – there have been moments of zany, anarchic brilliance, but also missteps, car crash moments, controversy and ever-changing hairstyles.

The first comics came out four years after the original movie,

when Columbia saw the licensing possibilities in the spin-off cartoon series *The Real Ghostbusters*. While comic adaptations of movies such as *2001: A Space Odyssey*, *Dune* and *Alien* were common, at the time of the film's release, Columbia hadn't felt the need for a tie-in comic to boost its publicity drive.

So Egon, Peter, Ray and Winston made their comic book debut in 1988 in the more square-jawed, elegantly coiffured guises of their animated alter egos off the telly. The first *Real Ghostbusters* comic appeared in the UK, five months before a US version hit the shelves. Columbia had given the US licence to NOW Comics, while the European rights went to Marvel UK, and for a while the two titles existed simultaneously on opposite sides of the Atlantic. Rather bizarrely, it meant that Marvel's UK division was

creating strips its own US parent company couldn't reprint.

"We were a very separate company at the time," recalls former Marvel UK editor and *Elephantmen* creator Richard Starkings. "We'd had a very successful launch with *Transformers*, so toy companies gravitated to Marvel UK."

KINDRED SPIRITS

The Real Ghostbusters comics were two very different balls of ectoplasm. The US version was produced in the American way: monthly, with one multi-page story, occasionally spread over a number of issues. The UK comic was more like *Buster* or *The Beano*: weekly, with short *Ghostbusters* strips, a Slimer strip, prose stories and such fun and frolics as Spengler's Spirit Guide (often written by future comic book superstar Dan Abnett). Stylistically, though, they weren't that far apart – although nothing in the US version was as surreal as the 'busters visiting Margate while on a trip to Blighty.

Behind the scenes, though, the respective creative teams

were experiencing very different levels of stress. "It was an exciting, openly creative environment to work in," recalls former Marvel UK and *The Sleeze Brothers* writer John Carnell. "I got paid for messing about. I'd be told how many stories they needed each week, I'd sober up on Wednesday and deliver them on Friday – and we'd all go down the pub."

"John and artist Andy Lanning did keep us laughing the whole time," agrees Starkings, "and John introduced me to Buddhism, which I still practise to this day!"

Over at NOW, on the other side of the Atlantic, James Van Hise, who wrote all but two issues of *The Real Ghostbusters*, was tearing his hair out. "It was a monthly comic and the editor, Fred Schiller, didn't give it the attention it needed," he recalls. "For instance, in issue two, pages were printed out of order and although the text clearly said that the Moon was drawing close to the Earth, the penciller gave it no details, and so the colourist thought it was the Sun and coloured it yellow. There was also a letterer

> **"I GOT PAID FOR MESSING ABOUT. I'D SOBER UP ON WEDNESDAY, DELIVER THE STORIES ON FRIDAY AND THEN WE'D ALL GO DOWN THE PUB"** JOHN CARNELL

Legion propelled the 'busters into the noughties – which proved confusing for readers.

A CHRISTMAS SCARE-ALL

ROB WILLIAMS ON CREATING A FESTIVE GHOSTBUSTERS FOR IDW

Rob Williams (*Cla$$war*, *Ordinary*, *The Royals*) scripted *Past, Present And Future* for IDW in 2009.

"It was genuinely a major thrill to write a *Ghostbusters* Christmas Special. It's one of my favourite movies and I figured a Christmas *Ghostbusters* story lent itself to the Scrooge tale, and the pitch was accepted by IDW. It was only when I was working on it that it was pointed out that a *Real Ghostbusters* cartoon had previously used the Scrooge tale as a template too. Our story was very different, though. I just recall it being a lot of fun to do. Who wouldn't enjoy writing dialogue for Peter Venkman, Ray and Egon?

"I received a kind note from Brian Lynch, the screenwriter of *Hop* and *Puss In Boots*, after it came out saying I 'had the voices DOWN'. But that's because the voices are so strong in the original movie. The characters do the job for you."

who made frequent mistakes. When I complained, Fred said that if I didn't like it I should move to Chicago so I could proofread it myself. Eventually NOW sent me proofs of the finished issues so I could get them to correct mistakes."

Van Hise also had to deal with a revolving door of artists whose style seemed inspired by '70s Hanna-Barbera – threadbare, scratchy and rough. While Van Hise's scripts could be quite complex and witty, the artists seemed to be doing their darnedest to disguise the fact.

FACE ACHE
Production delays and financial problems meant the NOW *Real Ghostbusters* comic went on hiatus for a while. One issue was even filled with Marvel UK reprints (sadly, not the story set in Margate).

Van Hise remained professional throughout. "I had to watch episodes of the show to get the character dynamics which were slightly different from the movie. For instance, Egon was the leader of the group, very much like Mr Fantastic of the Fantastic

Four. When I visited the set of *Ghostbusters II* I got to meet Harold Ramis and I mentioned that to him."

When, in 1989, NOW decided to adapt *Ghostbusters II*, it did so using characters from *The Real Ghostbusters* again. "It was licensing," says Van Hise. "At the time, using an actor's likeness required a whole different contract. When Marvel adapted the 1978 movie *Battlestar Galactica* it was drawn with actors' likenesses, but then the studio said that they didn't have permission to do that and all the faces had to be redrawn. It was only later that all movie contracts included a provision in which the actor allowed their likeness to be used in merchandising."

Back in the UK, Carnell's main bugbear was that "Slimer was a bitch" to write. He was happier doing Venkman: "You just had to think Bill Murray. Although, looking back, it was a bit of a pun-fest. I think we'd all try and out-pun each other. It became a bit of a trademark. I think 'Hell Razor', written by me and my little brother Ali, won gold in that discipline."

Although Starkings recalls his time on *The Real Ghostbusters* with fondness, he does recall one fly in the ointment. "Columbia was a nightmare to deal with. Licensing were always criticising us in regard to likenesses. Artist Phil Elliott had to trace faces from the bible on one job and I wrote him a story called 'Which Witch Is Which?' as a sly dig, about a witch who distorted the 'busters faces."

The NOW comic closed in 1990 after 28 issues, but was briefly resurrected in 1991/2. The UK version closed in 1992 with issue #193. It would be more than 10 years before the Ghostbusters returned to comics – minus the "Real" but feeling more genuine for it.

THE LAST LEGION
When Canadian-based 88MPH Studios acquired the *Ghostbusters* licence it had big ambitions for relaunching the franchise in comic-book form – sadly that wasn't backed by much in the way of business acumen. Company founder Sebastien Clavet gathered together a great team to produce *Ghostbusters: Legion*, a four-issue miniseries intended to pave the way for an ongoing series, but the firm

swiftly collapsed. It left a sour taste in the mouths of fans who'd paid up front for a "collected edition" full of bonus material (including a foreword by Dan Aykroyd), that never materialised.

The controversy clouds the fact that *Legion*, which debuted in 2004, is a good looking, entertaining read, a real attempt, writer Andrew Dabb confirms, to create a comic book sequel to *Ghostbusters*. "That was the idea, yeah. We wanted to tell the story of what happened between the two movies, so we picked up shortly after the first *Ghostbusters*, and would have – if the series had run long enough – built to the events of the second. The goal we had was to match the tone of the first movie, which did appeal to kids, but wasn't a 'kids' movie'."

Set six months on from the first film, *Legion* sees the Ghostbusters having to prove themselves once more as their initial fame following the "Gozer incident" gives way to scepticism, derision and the grind of having to deal with the supernatural on a daily basis. Then a vengeful ex-colleague starts plotting the fall of New York using psychically-controlled spooks. Yikes!

Writer Erik Burnham has descibed *Mass Hysteria* as "a love letter" to *Ghostbusters*.

"THERE ARE MILLIONS OF FANS OUT THERE, SO WE JUST HAD TO MAKE OUR COMIC BOOKS FEEL LIKE THE MOVIE ON PAPER"

their work. I didn't make a cent off it. Which sucks, because we had some very cool ideas for the return of Gozer, and the Ghostbusters opening franchises around the world."

The next comic appearance for Winston, Ray, Peter and Egon was even more unexpected. In 2008 Tokyopop produced the one-shot, black and white manga-style *Ghost Busted*. This comprised six stories by various American writers and artists mimicking Japanese big-eyed weirdness. The result pops with frenetic energy and inventive ideas, but you can't help thinking the inauthentic manga conceit hampers the experience rather than enhances it.

GHOULS RULE

IDW, the company that loves franchises, was the next firm to snap up the ongoing rights to *Ghostbusters*. It released a series of one-shots and a miniseries in 2008 (with writers such as Rob Williams, Scott Lobdell and Peter David contributing) before launching an ongoing series in 2011.

Tom Waltz, who has edited the *Ghostbusters* titles since IDW took the reins, reckons that the company's aim is simple: comics written by *Ghostbusters* fans for *Ghostbusters* fans. "Really what it boils down to is the fact that we at IDW are huge fans of the property and its characters and when the opportunity arose to go after the licence, we leapt at it.

"We had the passion and desire to make *Ghostbusters* work as a comic book. There are millions of fans out there, so if we make our comic books feel like the movie on

paper, we'll appeal to the comic book readers amongst them."

Ghostbusters comics have never been so full of in-jokes and Easter eggs, with obscure references to not just the movies but *The Real Ghostbusters* and even *Extreme Ghostbusters*.
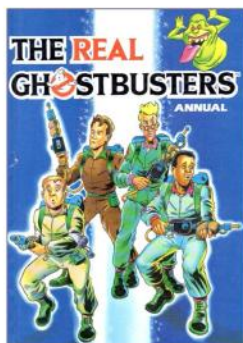
Once again, these 'busters didn't look like the movie characters, but Waltz feels that's an opportunity not an obstacle. "We don't have actor likeness rights, so we told the artists to draw the characters they loved, meaning don't draw Bill Murray – draw Peter Venkman. It worked great, too, because each rendition felt like we were watching and reading new and exciting *Ghostbusters* adventures and not a comic filled with static actor likenesses. The absence of likenesses really cuts down on approval times, too, but more importantly it allows the artists to relax and bring their true style to each page."

Waltz says that the one-shots and miniseries were kind of a trial run. "We were dipping our toes into new waters (or subterranean mood slime). We were looking for the right formula and the right creative team to launch an ongoing series and the shorter stories allowed us the opportunity to test different art styles and voices."

Waltz found his ongoing writer in Erik Burnham, who worked on the miniseries *Infestation*. Burnham, though, had tried to get a *Ghostbusters* gig earlier. "I'm a huge fan of the movies! When I found out IDW had the licence, I bugged Tom Waltz for a chance to pitch."

That pitch failed but none of the ideas went to waste. "It all made

"The other big decision we made was to modernise the story," says Dabb, "setting it in the noughties rather than the '80s. That made a lot of sense for creative reasons; it avoided a retro look and feel – fewer leg warmers – but proved more distracting to readers/reviewers than I think any of us imagined."

While the project failed, Dabb is still "incredibly proud" of what the

creative team achieved. "The team was stellar. I still collaborate with penciller Steve Kurth whenever I can. As far as the work-for-hire I've done, *Legion* is the best comic I've ever written. Hands down.

"Commercially… it's no secret there were problems. I never really understood why; the book sold well, but I know that no one involved was fully paid for

A SPIRIT GUIDE *THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS* EDITOR RICHARD STARKINGS ON THE TITLE'S GOOD FORTUNE

When Richard Starkings took on responsibility for *The Real Ghostbusters* the first thing he had to prepare was the annual, which, because of the nature of deadlines, had to be ready long before the first issue of the fortnightly comic.

"I wanted a cover with the four 'busters standing in a group, much like the classic shot from the movie. The characters would be painted on a rich blue and white background. I asked Anthony Williams – then fresh out of college and the only artist on my books who had painted work in his folio – if he could do it. I was very specific about the background."

Then things got a little weird. Following a recommendation from a Marvel colleague, Starkings visited a clairvoyant in London. "I was, of course, thinking about a girl I was involved with at the time… The little old lass, whose name escapes me, warned me not to get involved with the girl in question but then went on to ask me about a painting with a blue background… This totally threw me.

"She told me that the painting was for a book, and that it was the cover for a project that was going to be very successful. After

that, *The Real Ghostbusters* seemed to live a charmed life."

"Within a few days of my 'reading', the TV show *Surprise, Surprise* approached us to make a young comic book reader's dream of drawing a comic strip come true. We gave him a short strip based on the Ghostbusters commercial in the movie and published it in the comic a few weeks later. In the course of the televised show, the cover of *The Real Ghostbusters* annual was flashed up on screen and Marvel UK had its most successful boys' comic launch since *Transformers*."

its way into the ongoing series," reveals Burnham.

Waltz describes Burnham as "all the Ghostbusters rolled into one," but Burnham's not sure. "He means that I talk as fast as Ray, am as sarcastic as Peter, have the social skills of Egon, and … actually I'm nowhere near as cool as Ernie Hudson's Winston. SO TOM LIED."

THE GRIN REAPER

For Burnham, the most important thing about writing the book is fun. "Just some fun. A smile. We've had people who've disliked the book – it wasn't gritty or serious enough, or it didn't play to their sense of humour – but they've been the minority. A lot of folks have told me this got them into (or back into) comics. Or that it cheered them up after a hard day. Or that they just had fun with it. Like I said, that's the goal."

Burnham has also been praised for capturing the essence of the characters so well. "The most consistent comment (in roughly 80% of reviews, positive and negative) is that the voices sound right. That's been my top goal, and I'm pleased that that's what people are hearing in their heads when they read."

The other major innovation IDW has brought to the table has been crossovers. It has a whole bunch of other franchise titles and loves introducing them to each other. In the past five years, the Ghostbusters have met Mulder and Scully, the Lone Gunmen, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and Mars Attacks. Things become very weird and very meta in 2015 with a *Ghostbusters/ Real Ghostbusters* crossover.

Waltz reckons Sony (which now owns Columbia) has been supportive of their efforts from the get-go. "They've been pleased with the direction we've taken the comic book series and always open-minded to even our craziest ideas. The crossovers are fun and definitely challenging, especially when you have two or more licensors involved. But with the proper mix of franchises and the right creative team, they can be very exciting experiences and I've been very pleased with the bizarre combinations we've been able to make work. We probably wouldn't attempt a *Ghostbusters/My Little Pony* crossover, but then again…"

Aside from the crossovers, there have actually been three ongoing *Ghostbusters* series at IDW since 2011. The first, simply called *Ghostbusters*, ran for 16 issues from September 2011 to December 2012, all written by Erik Burnham with art by Dan Schoening and Luis Antonio Delgado.

"He is Vigo! You are like the buzzing of flies to him!"

> "WE'VE MADE BIZARRE COMBINATIONS WORK. WE PROBABLY WOULDN'T ATTEMPT A *MY LITTLE PONY* CROSSOVER, BUT THEN AGAIN…" TOM WALTZ

After a pause for the *Mars Attacks Real Ghostbusters* one-shot, IDW then published a new ongoing series which it called *The New Ghostbusters*. The angle this time was that Venkman and co had been spirited away to a demon universe leaving receptionist Janine to form a new group of Ghostbusters in part inspired by the 1997 *Extreme Ghostbusters* animated series. As well as fighting spooks they also had to find a way to rescue the old team. The series, again by Burnham, Schoening and Delgado, ran for 20 issues from February 2013 to September 2014.

The current incarnation of the comic started publishing in February 2016. Called *Ghostbusters: International* it takes the team on a globetrotting tour of international spooky locations. The team this time – while with Egon, Ray, Peter and Ray still at the core

– draws upon many characters from Burnham's ever expanding Ghostbusters cast.

"We've always intended to use as much of Aykroyd's concepts as we could and the more we used, the more we expanded on the core, the more it allowed us to expand further," Burnham told *Comic Book Resources*. "We've added team members, investigated other places, brought in new equipment, seen different dimensions, had the team face competition and industrial espionage and opened a new franchise. And for the guys – and the NYC they live in – it's all been routine, just as Aykroyd intended. I don't know if we'll ever expand out to his full vision, but there's so much there that just works so well in comics."

The big question now, then, is when the new female Ghostbusters are introduced into the comics… Ⓖ

THE IDW COMIC BOOK COLLECTION

ALL THE MINISERIES AND ONE-SHOTS IN ONE HANDY LIST

THE OTHER SIDE (2008)
Four issues
WRITER Keith C Champagne
ARTIST Tom Nguyen

DISPLACED AGGRESSION (2009)
Four issues
WRITER Scott Lobdell
ARTIST Ilias Kyriazis

PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE (2009)
One-shot
WRITER Rob Williams
ARTIST Diego Jourdan Pereira

TAINTED LOVE (2010)
One-shot
WRITER Dara Naraghi
ARTIST Salgood Sam

CON-VOLUTION (2010)
One-shot
WRITERS Jim Beard, Keith Dallas
ARTIST Josh Howard

WHAT IN SAMHAIN JUST HAPPENED?! (2010)
One-shot
WRITER: Peter Allen David
ARTIST: Dan Schoening

INFESTATION (2011)
Two issues
WRITER Erik Burnham
ARTIST Kyle Hotz

TIMES SCARE! (2012)
One-shot
WRITER Brian Lynch
ARTIST Marcelo Mueller

MARS ATTACKS: THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS (2013)
One-shot
WRITER Erik Burnham
ARTIST Jose Holder

THE X-FILES: CONSPIRACY: GHOSTBUSTERS (2014)
One-shot
WRITER Erik Burnham
ARTIST Salvador Navarro

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES/ GHOSTBUSTERS (2014)
Four issues
WRITERS Erik Burnham, Tom Waltz
ARTIST Dan Schoening

GHOSTBUSTERS GET REAL (2015)
Four issues
WRITER Erik Burnham
ARTIST Dan Schoening

GHOSTBUSTERS ANNUAL 2015 (2015)
One-shot
WRITERS Erik Burnham, Tom Bancroft
ARTISTS Dan Schoening, Tom Bancroft, Otis Frampton, Sara Richard, Sean Galloway, Drew Rausch, Matthew Dow Smith, Anthony Marques, Alex Deligiannis, Erik Evensen

GHOSTBUSTERS: DEVIATIONS (2016)
(One-shot – set in alternate universe where the Ghostbusters did not defeat Gozer)
WRITER Kelly Thompson
ARTIST Nelson Daniel

THE HISTORY OF GHOSTBUSTERS GAMES

FROM THE ATARI TO THE PS3, VIDEOGAMES HAVE CONTINUED THE *GHOSTBUSTERS* STORY. **ANDY KELLY** LOOKS BACK AT SOME OF THE BEST AND WORST EXAMPLES

Since the first film took cinemas by storm in 1984, there's been an almost constant proton stream of *Ghostbusters* spin-offs. As is often the case with games based on films, not many do the series justice, but there are a few gems nestled among the stinkers. Across these pages we'll be looking at the very best, and the very worst – from arcade shooters to weird puzzlers.

GHOSTBUSTERS

YEAR 1984 **FORMAT** ATARI 2600, SEGA MASTER SYSTEM, NES

The first ever *Ghostbusters* game was released by Activision in the same year as the original film. It was designed by David Crane, best known as the man behind Atari classic *Pitfall*. He coded the game in just six weeks, finishing it before he'd even seen the film.

An entire week of the game's short production cycle was spent on the title screen alone, which plays a digitised version of the

Ghostbusters theme song. The game saw you driving around a top-down New York City in the Ecto-1, and was actually based on a game called *Car Wars* that Crane had started, but never finished.

The Nintendo Entertainment System port of the game, released in 1988 by Japanese studio Micronics, was famous for its badly translated victory screen. "Gonglaturation!" it read. "You

have completed a great game and prooved the justice of our culture." If you look closely at a computer monitor in the Ghostbusters firehouse in the 2009 game, you'll see this message displayed on it.

Other ports of the game were later released for the Commodore 64 (which Ernie Hudson said his kids hated), Sega Master System, MSX, Amstrad CPC and Spectrum.

THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS

YEAR 1987 **FORMAT** ARCADE, AMIGA, ATARI ST

This was based on *The Real Ghostbusters* animated series, rather than the films, which ran for 147 episodes from 1986 to 1991. The game was developed by Japanese studio Data East – whose vast library of games includes *BurgerTime* and *Caveman Ninja* – and was a top-down arcade-like shooter. Playing as one of the four

Ghostbusters, who actually all look the same except for the colour of their costumes, you have to fend off hordes of monsters by turning them into ghosts, then trapping them.

Slimer made an appearance in the form of a power-up that would protect you from damage. Riding on the success of the cartoon,

the game was, briefly, the second bestselling title in the UK. Interestingly, a version was released in Japan called *Meikyuu Hunter G* that stripped away all of the *Ghostbusters* licensing. The main version was designed for arcades, but was later ported to a number of home systems, including the Amiga.

You are hereby and forthwith sentenced to 6 months in prison and a $10,000 fine!

GHOSTBUSTERS II

YEAR 1990 **FORMAT** PC, DOS

After the release of *Ghostbusters II*, a slew of related games were released across all formats. One of the best iterations was on PC, developed by US studio Dynamix and helmed by *X-Wing Alliance* and *Return To Zork* developer Doug Barnett. It recreated several famous scenes from the film, including Ray being lowered into the slime-flooded Van Horne subway tunnel, the Statue of Liberty coming to life and the final battle with Vigo the Carpathian. It took some artistic licence to make it more enjoyable as a game, but was still largely faithful to the film.

Another completely different version was released in the same year for DOS systems. It saw you fighting and capturing ghosts until you raised a certain amount of money, at which point you'd take control of the Statue of Liberty and stomp through the streets of New York. The game ended, again, in a battle with Vigo, which saw you armed with a slime blower so you could coat him in pink gunk. Both versions were significantly more advanced than their console counterparts.

GHOSTBUSTERS II

YEAR 1990 **FORMAT** NES

The Nintendo version of *Ghostbusters II* was notably different from the PC titles. Developed by Imagineering, who made *Bart Vs The Space Mutants* and *Double Dragon*, it was a side-scrolling shooter that featured levels loosely based on the events of the film. The game is perhaps best known for being incredibly difficult. It had a harsh time limit, no health bar to speak of, and forced you to finish the tough-as-nails last level four times before it would let you tackle the final boss.

NEW GHOSTBUSTERS II

YEAR 1990 **FORMAT** NES, GAME BOY

In 1990, Japanese studio HAL Laboratory (*Earthbound*, *Super Smash Bros*) released *New Ghostbusters II*. But because of a dispute over licensing, the game was only released in PAL regions and Japan, not in North America. Featuring a quirky, distinctly Japanese art style, it's a top-down shooter that supports up to two players. Your goal is to clear the area of ghosts before facing a boss. The levels are based on scenes from the film, including Dana's apartment, the New York City sewers and, of course, a final showdown with Vigo. A Game Boy version was also released in the same year, but it was less impressive, with only three levels and no support for multiplayer.

MAKING THE GAME

RAMIS AND AYKROYD ON HELPING TO CREATE *GHOSTBUSTERS: THE VIDEO GAME* (SEE OVERLEAF)

Developers Terminal Reality worked closely with the original 'busters crew as they developed the game, which explains its incredible authenticity. "They grew up on *Ghostbusters*," said the late Harold "Egon" Ramis in a *GamesRadar* interview. "The opportunity for them to give their input and consult for us was fun for them and obviously fun for us. The overall goals and the specific environments were approved by all of us."

"We let them run with it too," said Aykroyd in an interview with *Time*. "And they came up with great stuff. If you look at the movies, they are definitive New York movies, and in the game they gave the city the same personality." Aykroyd admitted that it was a challenge to get back into character after so many years: "I had to watch both movies and get that enthusiasm and passion back. But I think we all managed to do that."

As for Bill Murray – who never usually does work for videogames – one of his demands for being part of the project was giving Winston, who was underwritten in the films, a more important, fleshed-out role.
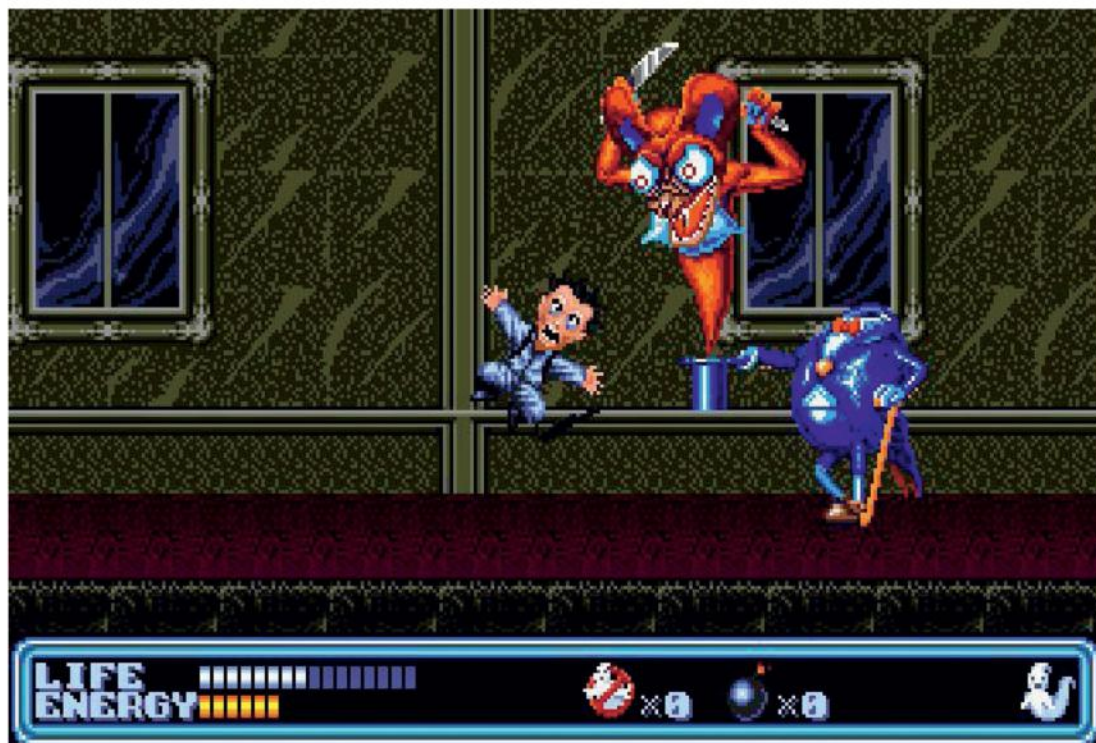
GHOSTBUSTERS

YEAR 1990 FORMAT SEGA MEGA DRIVE

Unlike previous efforts, this title, called simply *Ghostbusters* (but not related to the Activision title), actually had a storyline. Down on their luck, the 'busters suddenly receive an influx of calls from scared citizens. Completing a case unlocks a stone tablet and collecting them all opens a portal to the "evil world" where the gang has to defeat Janna, the God of Darkness. Okay, it isn't

the most complex plot, and it riffs heavily on the films, but it was an early attempt to tell a new story in the *Ghostbusters* universe.

Developed by Japanese studio Compile – who also made *Aleste, Shadowrun* and *Puyo Puyo* – it was a side-scrolling platformer and shooter with detailed graphics and an array of ghosts to battle and capture. The characters had a

Japanese-style "super deformed" look, although for some reason there's no Winston: only Ray, Egon and Peter.

Although it's obviously set after the first film, it doesn't acknowledge the events of the sequel at all – probably due to licensing issues – and, as a result, many *Ghostbusters* fans don't consider it canon.

THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS

YEAR 1993 FORMAT GAME BOY

The Real Ghostbusters was cancelled in 1991, but that didn't stop this appearing two years later. Developed by Kemco, it's notable for being the only *Ghostbusters* game that isn't an action-focused shooter. Instead, it's a puzzle game with platforming elements. You play as Venkman and your goal is to collect the stars in one level in order to unlock the next. Doesn't sound much like a *Ghostbusters* game? It wasn't. In Europe the game starred Garfield and in Japan it was Mickey Mouse.

EXTREME GHOSTBUSTERS

YEAR 2001 FORMAT GAME BOY COLOUR

In 1997, another attempt to revive the *Ghostbusters* franchise was made with the release of *Extreme Ghostbusters*. The animated series featured a new cast of younger 'busters, mentored by Egon. It wasn't as successful as *The Real Ghostbusters* – it was cancelled after only 40 episodes – but it did, a few years later, spawn a number of videogames, including 2001's *Extreme Ghostbusters* for the Game Boy Colour. Developed by French studio Light And Shadow Productions, this was a side-scrolling shooter in which you could play as one of the new Ghostbusters: Kylie, Garett, Roland or Eduardo.

GHOSTBUSTERS: THE VIDEO GAME

YEAR 2009 **FORMAT** PC, XBOX 360, PLAYSTATION 3, Wii

After years waiting for a second *Ghostbusters* sequel, it finally arrived in 2009 – in the form of a videogame. This big budget title managed to reunite the main *Ghostbusters* cast – including the elusive Bill Murray – alongside William Atherton (Walter Peck), Brian Doyle-Murray (Mayor Jock Mulligan), Annie Potts (Janine Melnitz) and Max von Sydow (the voice of Vigo the Carpathian). It features accurate, detailed recreations of famous sets, including the firehouse and the Sedgewick Hotel, Elmer Bernstein's score, and the iconic theme tune. It's the most authentic *Ghostbusters* game ever made. "This is essentially the third movie," said Dan Aykroyd, in an interview with *Game Informer*.

Set two years after *Ghostbusters II*, a large PKE shockwave has hit New York City, causing a spate of ghost sightings and attacks. The game takes you all over the city in the hunt for the source of the shockwave: a powerful ghost called Ivo Shandor who wants to bring back another Great Destructor like Gozer in the first film.

Egon, Ray, Winston and Peter are all in it, but you play as the nameless, mute fifth Ghostbuster, a rookie who finds himself tagging along with the gang on a series of adventures that hark back to the films – Stay Puft Marshmallow Man makes an appearance. The game also features its own ghosts and setpieces, and it's the first *Ghostbusters* videogame with a decent storyline.

The Proton Pack is a particular joy, letting you grab hold of ghosts and wrestle them into your trap – just like in the film. And in another nod to the movies, the environments are incredibly destructible: you earn scores depending on how much damage you cause in each level. The 'busters' firehouse can be explored between missions and is packed with Easter eggs, including the haunted painting of Vigo the Carpathian in the basement.

Ghostbusters: The Video Game cost between $15m and $20m to make, and went on to sell more than a million copies. It was well received by critics, not only for being a faithful *Ghostbusters* experience, but also for being a decent game in its own right.

THE COMPLETE CATALOGUE

EVERY *GHOSTBUSTERS* GAME EVER RELEASED

GHOSTBUSTERS 1984
Amstrad CPC, Apple II, Atari 2600, Atari 8-bit, Commodore 64, MSX, NES, PC Booter, Sega Master System, ZX Spectrum

THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS 1987
Amiga, Amstrad CPC, Arcade, Atari ST, Commodore 64, ZX Spectrum

GHOSTBUSTERS II 1987
Amiga, Amstrad CPC, Atari 2600, Atari ST, Commodore 64, DOS, MSX, ZX Spectrum

NEW GHOSTBUSTERS II 1990
NES

GHOSTBUSTERS 1990
Sega Mega Drive

GHOSTBUSTERS II 1990
NES, Game Boy

THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS 1992
Game Boy

EXTREME GHOSTBUSTERS 2001
Game Boy Colour

EXTREME GHOSTBUSTERS: CODE ECTO-1 2002
Game Boy Advance

EXTREME GHOSTBUSTERS: THE ULTIMATE INVASION 2004
PlayStation

GHOSTBUSTERS: THE VIDEO GAME 2009
PC, PlayStation 2, Wii, Nintendo DS, PlayStation 3, Xbox 360

GHOSTBUSTERS: SANCTUM OF SLIME 2011
PC, PlayStation 3, Xbox 360

GHOSTBUSTERS: PARANORMAL BLAST 2012
Xbox Live Arcade, PlayStation Network, PC

GHOSTBUSTERS: BEELINE MOBILE APP 2013
Download

GHOSTBUSTERS PINBALL 2014
Mobile

GHOSTBUSTERS 2016
PlayStation 4, Xbox One, PC

GHOSTBUSTERS: SANCTUM OF SLIME

YEAR 2011 **FORMAT** PC, XBOX 360, PLAYSTATION 3

Sanctum Of Slime was developed by Behaviour Santiago, a Chilean studio founded in 2004. It features similar visuals to *The Video Game*, but from a top-down perspective. Because of the obvious challenges of reforming the original squad, it features a cast of new Ghostbusters never previously seen before: Alan, Sammy, Bridget and Gabriel. Egon makes a brief appearance, though, bringing the team weapon upgrades. Janosz from *Ghostbusters II* also appears. The game was poorly received. ⊙
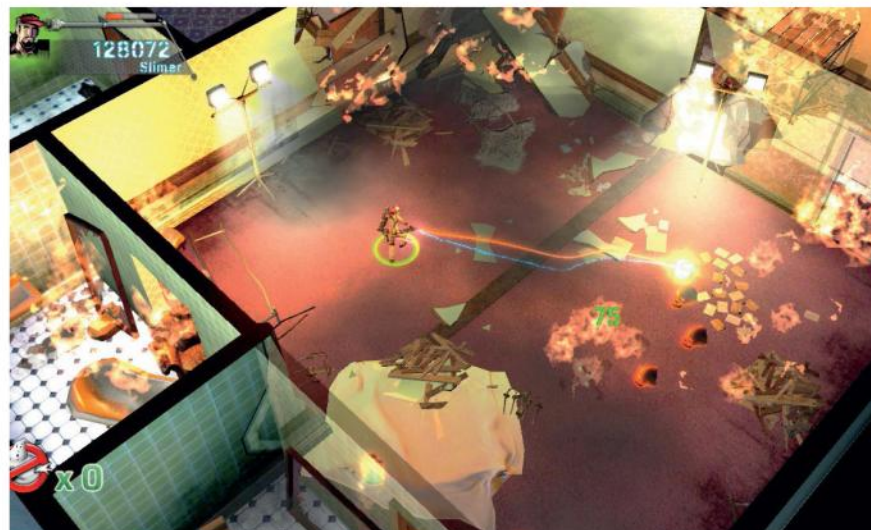
SPIRITUAL SUCCESSOR

NEW STUDIO FIREFORGE AIN'T AFRAID OF NO TIE-IN. AS PART OF A SECRET FIRST PLAY, **BEN TYRER** MEETS THE TEAM BEHIND *GHOSTBUSTERS*' PS4 REBIRTH

Does any genre inspire more undeserved apathy than the licensed tie-in? There's a towering scrapheap of games only out to capitalise on stratospheric opening weekend numbers, sure, but there are also those that soar past that low benchmark. They don't merely capture what makes their universe special, but – like a hug from the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man – engulf you in everything you hold dear about the IP. It's a special skill, one that can elude even the very best of developers. So inheriting one of the most beloved series of all time for your studio's debut? That sounds harder than crossing the streams without ending the world. Step forward, Fireforge.

The cad on the right, holding the PKE meter, is described by Activision as "Bill Murray-ish." Them's big shoes to fill.

CAPTURING THE SPIRIT(S)

Chris Tremmel is project director and, with a CV encompassing names such as Insomniac, EA and Crystal Dynamics, aware of the monumental task his team faces. "Licensed games come with their own set of challenges," explains Tremmel. "The big thing I learned on the *Lord Of The Rings* games was to stay true to the franchise as best as possible, while trying to figure out what fans of the property were going to enjoy."

The first thing that jumps out about Fireforge's debut is the striking art style. Moving away from the films' realism means it's easy to dismiss this as being for kids, but the dev insists this is a game for every 'busters fan. "The industry

> ## "THE TEAM WORKED WITH ORIGINAL *GHOSTBUSTERS* DIRECTOR IVAN REITMAN"

has gone back to this style of game. Just because it looks like that no longer means it's a kiddie game. I mean, that kind of used to be the thing, right? If a game looked a certain way, it was assumed it was made for kids, but as the industry has matured, we're at a place where that art style doesn't dictate the target audience anymore."

In fact, when the studio came to designing *Ghostbusters*, they went to the father of the franchise, Ivan Reitman, as well as the makers of this year's movie reboot. "Just from a validation point, it was important for the team to be able to get our concept in front of Ivan and hear his feedback and hear what he had to say.

"Along with him, we also worked with [the new film's director] Paul Feig a little bit and with Amy Pascal, who's the producer of the film. We didn't get to work with the original cast, but Ivan

seemed to be the spokesperson from that group. The interactions we've had with him have been really good – it's been all the way from the look of the game to the music to the voiceovers, the locations, the ghosts... those sorts of things."

New York is also a huge part of *Ghostbusters*' charm – seeing the more glamorous areas of the city, not just the grimier parts, covered in all sorts of spectral slosh – and Tremmel didn't want to lose any of that appeal, with the levels staying true to the original aesthetic. "We have locations that are pretty standard to the *Ghostbusters* world, like mausoleums and haunted hotels and a sanatorium, but we tried to take different spins to it. Our hotel this time is actually aboard a historic cruise ship, while our cemetery deals with a lot more above-ground crypts and mausoleums. So while we took some standard approaches to locations, we also tried to add a slightly new twist to some of them."

SLIME OF THE CENTURY

The debut developer has been working on this latest "bustin" entry for over a year and Tremmel tells us that, from the start, couchplay multiplayer has been the bedrock for this tie-in. "There are a lot of online games out and a lot of PvP-style games out, but we always thought that the *Ghostbusters* franchise lent itself really well to allowing a group of friends to play together."

Surprisingly, this means there will be no online multiplayer for Fireforge's *Ghostbusters*. Producer Dino Verano, from publisher Activision, explains: "We want people to be able to be playing together and interacting with each other and we want it to be friendlier, [to suit] a wide variety of audiences."

Before we get onto the streets, it's time to meet the new guys and gals. You and up to three mates take on a

Like in any good panto, there comes a time when our heroes should have a look at what lurks behind.

Getting good at playing with your proton-packing buddies is vital – it's the fastest way to level-up.

wet-behind-the-ears crew of NY's finest paranormal protectors, whose names are blank at the start, meaning it's left to you to decide what they answer to. Do you go for the classic Venkman, Stantz, Spengler and Zeddemore lineup? Or take the *Xcom* approach and achieve some goals with your real-life squad?

Fireforge gives them distinct personalities, but the idea is that you're a member of the team. "You can relate to these characters just through their different personalities, but it's not about these new characters and where they come from," says Tremmel. "It's really about you putting yourself into the position of being a Ghostbuster and choosing the character you feel you relate to most."

TOTAL BROTONIC REVERSAL

Taking place after the events of the new film, we jump into The Aldridge Mansion. Using a Diablo-esque top-down view to keep the whole team on-screen, we sneak through the deserted house, scanning the room with our PKE meters until we stumble upon floating skulls.

Proton pistols at the ready, we blast them away using the right stick to aim,

The devs consulted both the original and reboot movie directors when designing the top-down style.

and i to shoot. As we attempt to keep the bookshelves ectoplasm-free, we need to retire this level's boss by firing up the proton pack, frantically wrestling and slamming her into the ground, then finishing her off by dumping her into the ghost trap. This boss battle does a great job of forcing you to experiment with weapons and combinations, as you and your partners probe the ghost's weaknesses with grenades and proton wands. Seeing the co-op award come up for taking down ghosts together always results in a mini high-five.

Like any strong team, each Ghostbuster brings a little something different to the party, such as having a unique grenade and individual weapon that only they can use. But don't worry – all four are equipped with the classic proton wand, PKE meter and ghost trap. Combining the distinct advantages of each class gives the game depth and adds bonus points via the synergy system.

One character, for example, is referred to by Tremmel as "The Heavy", courtesy of the minigun he lugs around. If he chucks his slime grenade, it slows down any ghoul that gets hit by its gunk, giving the rest of the team a chance to earn a little extra XP. The dev explains, "They receive a synergy bonus or co-op bonus for co-operating and you get a score multiplier based on that. It increases the scores for eliminating different ghosts and allows the characters to level-up a little bit quicker."

The top-down view and twin-stick controls imply arcadey thrills, but

Tremmel insists that all upgrades help build the ultimate wraith warrior. "Sixteen different upgrades for each character can be purchased. Each of those has five stages to it. You can make a weapon stronger, make an area effect larger, increase your movement speed, increase a point bonus on the trap mini-game, make the weapon overheat last longer. It's a whole range of things that you can really upgrade."

GHOST OF THE PAST

Despite multiplayer co-op being on the other end of the spectrum to 2009's PS3 *Ghostbusters* effort, Tremmel is open about how much it influenced Fireforge's project. "We're big fans of the third-person Atari game. It nailed the feel of using the proton wand and proton beam to capture and wrangle ghosts, and get them into the traps. We thought that type of mechanic would be really fun if brought into a team-based environment where four people could do that at the same time."

This might not have the huge spectacle and original cast likenesses of PS3's *Ghostbusters*, but instead of lazily adopting the look of the films, Fireforge is mixing distinctive style with admirably old school ambitions. There's nothing you'd call revolutionary, but if the new game achieves its aim of gearing us up with the latest protonic weaponry and making us feel like the new recruits at 110 N Moore Street, we'll be as happy as Ray Stantz sliding down a fireman's pole come 15 July. G

Cynic, goth, square and jock: the new-look 'busters were students in Egon's college class.
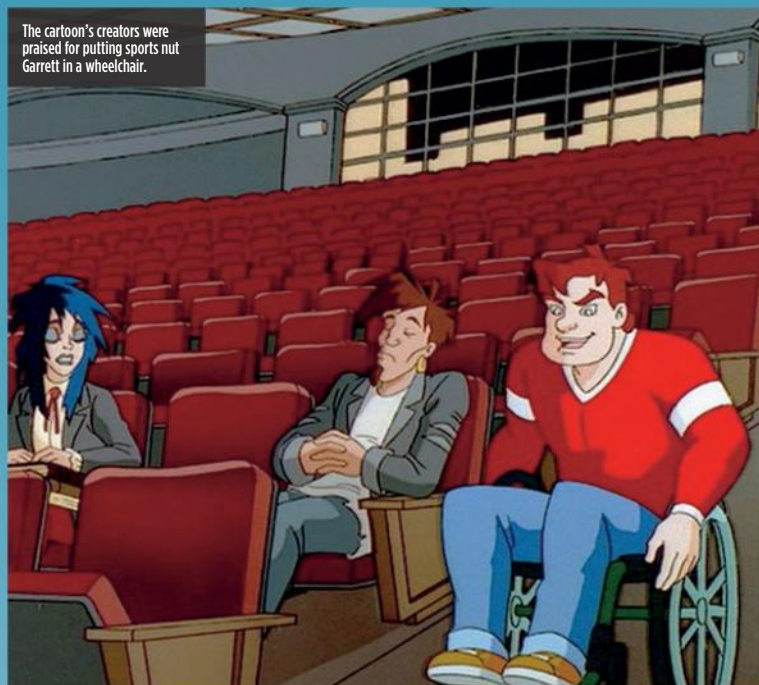
The cartoon's creators were praised for putting sports nut Garrett in a wheelchair.

EXTREME MAKEOVER

JEM ROBERTS LOOKS BACK AT THE 1997 ANIMATED SERIES WHICH RETOOLED GHOSTS AND GHOULIES FOR THE GOTH GENERATION

Although there's nothing inherently wrong with a quartet of sexagenarians battling undead phantasms with deadly nuclear-powered equipment strapped to their backs, it's long been the consensus that any extension of the *Ghostbusters* brand requires a whole new team of newbies to take on the mantle. This has been the model for the last part of a movie trilogy for aeons, but the "next generation" set-up first became handy nearly 20 years ago, when Columbia Tristar and Sony

wanted to give their licence a fresh push on TV and in toy shops a decade after the debut of *The Real Ghostbusters*. In January 1996, the studio announced that "Super Ghostbusters" was in production, with *RGB* veterans Richard Raynis, Jeff Kline and Bob Higgins lined up to mold the reboot, and long-time Ivan Reitman cohorts Joe Medjuck and Dan Goldberg back on hand to keep an eye on the original spirit of the franchise.

SONIC YOUTH

The new approach was set in stone early on, with a press release announcing: "Ten years after clearing out every malcontent ghost and goblin in New York City, the Ghostbusters have disbanded. Ecto-1 is gathering dust, the old firehouse headquarters is quiet, and all the guys have left town – except Egon,

now huddled in front of a computer screen, battling program bugs instead of spooks... But now after a decade of quiet, the supernatural is rearing its ugly ectoplasmic head again, and Manhattan is overrun with ghosts bent on mayhem and malevolent fun. New York needs the Ghostbusters. But the Ghostbusters are gone... or are they? It's up to plucky secretary Janine – now teaching history at a local college – to recruit a new team... The Ghostbusters are back, with the latest technology and a hip new attitude. But the latest crop of phantoms, ghouls, and boogiemen is tougher than ever, so our heroes have to be too!"

This rough sketch faced a few tweaks before production got underway – regrettably Janine was demoted from the academically accomplished instigator of the action

> **"WE WANTED A TEAM OF MISFITS: PEOPLE YOU WOULDN'T NECESSARILY ASSOCIATE WITH BEING SUPERHEROES ON TV"**

Rrrarrrrrggghhhhhh. Or maybe just eek. This demented budgie-alike is not scaring us.

Janine is back – sadly not as the history teacher described in the original press release.

to general skivvy and Egon's apparent stalker – but the gist was clear. This was a new group of supernatural warriors, designed specifically for a new audience. Aykroyd and Ramis had created a quartet fit for an adult comedy action movie. Kline and Raynis and their team now had to come up with the right chemistry for an all-new cartoon hit.

A TEMPORARY INSANITY

An early design for Egon (now Professor Spengler), showed him long-bearded and robed – more wizard than boffin – but that was abandoned for his more familiar appearance, ice-cream quiff slicked back into a ponytail. The design process was packed with such wrong turnings. Australian designer Fil Barlow

The Ghost of Halloween was one of the few villains to face the 'busters more than once.

was given rough character outlines, and was keen on getting as many girls into the team as possible. All the new 'busters – the few students weird enough to be taking Spengler's Paranormal Phenomena 101 class – started out as female designs, with the exception of Eduardo. "What we wanted to do was put together a team of misfits in a way," Higgins told *Ability* magazine. "People that you wouldn't necessarily associate with being superheroes on television."

The fresh quartet could be summed up as "cynic, goth, square and jock", but the competitive, adrenaline junkie last on this list provided a stumbling block. The sneering go-getter seemed impossible to like in any of the rough treatments, until Kline's idea of putting "Lucy" in a wheelchair, totally unhampered by her disability, took root. This provided some animation challenges, but the original idea to make her a girl with proton-spewing callipers and crutches was soon nixed, and a sex change resulted

Egon looks a bit like Karl Lagerfeld – minus the black suit and the dark shades.

in the basketball-crazy dude-on-wheels, Garrett. Ultimately, only one female would gain access to the new gang, while another casualty of the production process was the previous 'bust escapee known as "Gnat", intended to be a mischievous goblin sidekick for Slimer – as if the spud needed any help cordially screwing things up for the Ghostbusters.

There was also the challenge of designing all-new ghost-capturing equipment so long after Dan Aykroyd and the original team had created the

Slimer starts out as a pet, often heard spouting unintelligible gibberish.

optimum hardware designs. With a whole new range of toys to inspire, everything had to be retuned and refreshed. The young gang, showing a cooler disregard for official uniform, were festooned in chunky armour, and wielded all-new Proton Packs and pistols, which fans would hopefully soon be buying in their droves.

The tone of the show was tweaked as well. *RGB* had been undeniably dark for its juvenile viewers but *XGB* consciously aimed for a slightly more adolescent audience with a tougher edge – the show

was even called *Ghostbusters Dark* in some TV listings…

HEART OF DARKNESS
The theme was re-recorded in a rasping grungy metal style, and Maurice LaMarche was back on duty as Egon. He was the only returning regular cast member, as part of a new team of voices that included now legendary cartoon actress Tara Strong, Alfonso Ribeiro (Carlton from *Fresh Prince*), and famed vocal artist Billy West, who took over Slimer slobbering from Frank Welker, just

a couple of years before becoming Philip J Fry of *Futurama* fame. Welker would put in an overdue guest appearance at the end of the season, but the only other notable name in the series was *Star Trek*'s Q, John de Lancie, guesting as Kirilian, a campily villainous former mentor to Professor Spengler.

The "Extreme" of the title didn't just refer to the gnarly new exterminators, but was equally intended to describe the challenges they faced. *RGB* had, of course, boasted plenty of cerebral and potentially disturbing stories and allusions (and having many of the *RGB* creative team back on board resulted in numerous ties to the first cartoon series, with certain villains, such as Halloween master Samhain, coming back for a second stab at dimensional domination, or at least a cameo), but there was a clear intention of ramping up the peril.

As the series opens, every last scrap of paranormal activity in New York has long ceased and the city's population has

MEET THE GANG BLOODY STUDENTS! HOW MANY OF YOU REMEMBER THIS MOTLEY CREW…?

GARRETT MILLER
When the originally mooted "team leader" was widely considered to be too obnoxious to bear, it was decided that putting them in a wheelchair would put their bravery in a whole new light. The ginger jock was born without the use of his legs, but never let it hold him back from anything, least of all being annoyingly arrogant, and always ready for a scrap – perhaps with Eduardo, any time their banter got out of control.

KYLIE GRIFFIN
The only woman in the gang is also in many ways "the new Egon". Kylie has a lifelong morbid obsession with the paranormal (as well as dark cosmetics), and is little short of a fangirl for Spengler's whole career. A 17-year-old prodigy with a tragic past, Kylie's best friend outside the 'busters is a cat, Pagan. As the only other female besides Janine to strap on a Pack, Kylie also resurfaced in a different guise in the IDW Comics.

EDUARDO RIVERA
Perhaps the most obvious rehash of an original 'buster, the Latino lothario was an ersatz Venkman in all but name – cynical, wisecracking, and constantly fending off Slimer's sticky advances (while making his own on Kylie). Eduardo came from a family of cops, and at first shared their total disdain for the very concept of "Ghosts", until joining the team made him an unlikely – and not uncomplaining – hero.

ROLAND JACKSON
Combining Egon's intellect with Ray's engineering prowess and kind heart, the clumsy but otherwise logically minded Roland was turned on to Ghostbusting by the original team when he saw Ecto-1 at a car show as a child. A tower of strength to the new team, despite harbouring many ambitions (majoring in History, joining the FBI), Roland worked hardest on experimenting and improving the Ghostbusters' techniques.

Eduardo fancied Kylie. Kylie tried her best to pretend she didn't fancy Eduardo.

Eduardo enrols in Egon's Paranormal 101 class thinking it will be an "…easy 'A'".

shrugged off years of incessant epochal supernatural destruction as some kind of mass psychosis – hence the Ghostbusters being put out of business. But when strange things start to reappear in the neighbourhood, necessitating the relaunch of the operation, the challenges would be unlike anything faced by the "real" Ghostbusters.

The second story in the whole run showed that certain stakes were raised. It concerned a Golem created by a rabbi's son to fight anti-Semitism – esoteric subject matter for a toy-generating cartoon show. The concepts of many 'busts were clearly intended to test the boundaries of child-friendly horror, featuring spooks who steal victims' eyes or bones, a Pied Piper who abducts New York's child population, insane vampire clowns and a skinless undead bride who haunts her living beau.

A children's series all about the dead and the undead may always have had some elements of a hard sell, but unlike in the previous series, *XGB* made little effort to downplay the morbidity of the concept, particularly with Kylie's emo sensibilities and mourning for her dead grandmother. Eduardo had the closest thing to a catchphrase, shrugging "Maybe they're dead!" whenever one of

"THE HISPANIC HUCKSTER'S LUSTING AFTER THE UNIMPRESSED KYLIE ALSO OCCASIONALLY STRAYED FURTHER FROM PG-13 TERRITORY THAN YOU'D EXPECT"

the team seemed to be missing, while the Hispanic huckster's lusting after the unimpressed Kylie also occasionally strayed further from PG-13 territory than you'd expect from any kids' programme. Even Slimer looked a modicum more menacing 10 years on...

And yet, of course, every caper was ultimately harmless, with the vast majority of plots culminating in a "broken spell" get-out finale, and all damage and suffering caused by the busted entity erased by the Extreme Ghostbusters' heroism. And yes, the regular light-hearted scenes of everyone laughing at Slimer to a jaunty oboe accompaniment also took the edge off any attempts to really present a more mature style.

SEEDS OF DESTRUCTION
Despite the new pseudo-adult approach, toy sales were still a priority, and a new line in Proton Pack and Trap replicas were released onto the market, alongside all-new action figures of
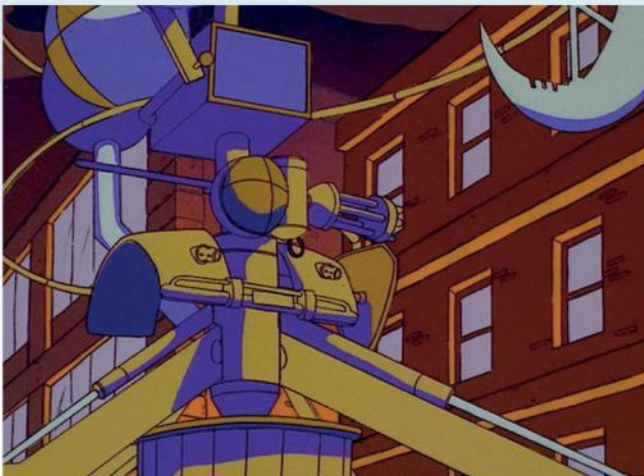
Roland's the Ghostbuster to turn to if you want to get something done.

Everything seems to have been coloured here in shades of mustard, lilac and brown.

> ## "THE DEFINITE HIGHLIGHT OF THE WHOLE SEASON CAME AT THE VERY END, WHEN THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS SHOW UP FOR EGON'S 40TH BIRTHDAY"

everyone except, controversially, Garrett (though a prototype with super-cool gun-festooned wheelchair was made), while a retooled Ecto-1 boasted added flashing lights and siren noises.

And yet the line was largely destined to haunt pound shops for generations to come. The programme halted at one (admittedly lengthy) series, and the public apathy for this rebooted gang of Ghostbusters was undeniable. The definite highlight of the whole season came at the very end, when the Real Ghostbusters showed up for Egon's 40th birthday, all paunchier and more lined than in their heyday, but still arrogant about their abilities, and tempted to get back into the old 'bustin game – but this much-needed callback to the good old days came too late.

Although the show won an award from the LA Commission on Disabilities for Garrett's portrayal, the loudest criticism tended to be due to what was seen as overly PC tokenism. The showrunners also blamed poor US scheduling – it was broadcast mid-morning in a slot only suitable for pre-schoolers – but either way, the *Extreme* experiment was short-lived. 1997-era media had signified something else new for *Ghostbusters* when an official website was launched alongside the original broadcast, featuring case studies based on each episode supposedly written by Egon himself. But, after that single run, the site also stopped dead, and the web 1.0 pages still float adrift on the internet 19 years later, never to be updated.

If the *XGB* chapter proved anything, it was that the appeal of *Ghostbusters* was only partially the concept, and without Peter, Ray and Winston accompanying Egon, the blockbuster franchise became just one more Saturday morning cartoon to throw on the pile. That it's the characters we love above all must be a sobering thought for those charged with rebooting *Ghostbusters* in 2016, but for all its slightly embarrassing late-'90s disposability, *XGB* has a place in the official canon, and has enriched the wider world of *Ghostbusters* lore. It's improbable that any of the characters will be directly depicted in any new movie iteration, but Kylie has become perhaps the most iconic teen 'buster of them all, and even survived into the new comic continuations as part of Janine's "New Ghostbusters" troupe. There may be some form of life in these now-middle-aged box-tickers yet. ⊙

ANIMATED MAGIC THE BEGINNING, THE END AND SOME OF THE LESS GENERIC MIDDLE BITS…

DARKNESS AT NOON
SEASON 1, EPISODE 1
WRITER BILLY BROWN
AIRED 1 SEPT 1997
The reboot episode should be a no-brainer for anyone looking to try out *Extreme Ghostbusters*, explaining as it does the fate of the old firehouse and its occupants, and establishing the new generation of spook-chasers. Sadly the plot that ignites the series is a rather humdrum affair.

GHOST APOCALYPTIC FUTURE
SEASON 1, EPISODE 18
WRITER STEVE PERRY
AIRED 1 OCT 1997
If any *Ghostbusters* cartoon could claim connection to Aykroyd's first vision for the film, this must be it. Kylie switches bodies with a freedom fighter from the future and discovers that all the XGBs are worshipped as long-dead heroes (except Garrett, who nobody remembers).

GRUNDELESQUE
SEASON 1, EPISODE 24
WRITER MARTIN OLSON
AIRED 6 NOV 1997
One of the few callbacks to *Ghostbusters* past, the Grundel showed up in *RGB* – a dirty-old-mac-wearing bogeyman who steals naughty children and turns them into clones of himself. Kylie's only childhood friend was abducted during the Grundel's first attack, and a decade later she gets the chance to free him.

BACK IN THE SADDLE
SEASON 1, EPISODES 37 & 38
WRITER GARY STUART KAPLAN
AIRED 3 DEC 1997
The two-parter that everyone was waiting for – in the space between Egon's 40th birthday and Thanksgiving, the XGBs are brought together tighter than ever by the patronising meddling of the tubby, achey middle-aged RGBs, just in town to bore everyone about the old days.

THE SPHINX
SEASON 1, EPISODE 39
WRITER STEVE ROBERTS
AIRED 5 DEC 1997
In another disturbing spate of attacks, New York's finest minds are being reduced to cabbages by the riddle of the Sphinx, and the gang needs to prove they are smart enough to outwit him… But this episode stands out primarily for centring on Egon's growing midlife crisis.

WITCHY WOMAN
SEASON 1, EPISODE 40
WRITER ROBIN BERNHEIM
AIRED 8 DEC 1997
Kylie's very presence in the series clearly owed something to the Paganistic influence of *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* and *The Craft*, and the latter in particular was channelled in this *Macbeth* mash-up. A trio of student witches decide that Kylie is the perfect woman to complete their coven.

THE REAL GHOSTBUSTER?

GHOSTBUSTERS IS JUST FOR FUN. BUT WHAT ABOUT THE THINGS THAT *REALLY* GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT? **WILL SALMON** FINDS OUT MORE ABOUT THE WORLD OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY...

If you take the *Ghostbusters* movies as your guide, then the lives of parapsychologists are full of excitement, monster fighting and butting heads with city hall.

In reality, things are much different. Real parapsychologists are as likely to work *with* councils to rid buildings of unwanted spooks and the things they face are rather more subtle – though still very strange.

We spoke to Stephen Mera, the editor of *Phenomena* magazine and a working parapsychologist, to find out more about the field – and his most exciting experiences with the supernatural.

HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN PARAPSYCHOLOGY?

I started 31 years ago in 1983. Most of my interest came from books. My father had something of a collection that I read at a young age. Since then I've been investigating for private individuals, corporate organisations, tenants' associations... We've even done some work for the police and the Ministry of Defence.

Phenomena are more likely to take place in homes than the mansions and stately houses that are typically thought to be haunted. Of course, most phenomena can be easily rationalised and explained, but I've witnessed some fascinating events.

IT'S SURPRISING TO HEAR THAT TENANTS' ASSOCIATIONS ARE EMPLOYING THE SERVICES OF A PARAPSYCHOLOGIST! DOES THAT HAPPEN A LOT?

More so now. I used to do work for councils across the country. Sometimes there would be incidents with tenants reporting strange, possibly paranormal, events. The tenants' associations needed some sort of protocol and they would have to send somebody out to investigate. Nowadays people are more forthcoming and report incidents, but they still don't know who to report these things to. Generally they'll tell their families and after that perhaps a medium and then maybe a priest – although the church is usually reluctant to get involved these days.

WHY IS THAT?

Because of the public interest. Priests and vicars know that the general public are interested in this stuff, often because of TV shows. People like to dabble in the subject and their minds can run away with them. Priests need hard evidence before they can get involved and even then they're worried because of the media and tabloid publicity.

LET'S SAY YOU'VE FOUND A HAUNTED BUILDING – WHAT'S THE NEXT STEP?

We go in and establish if there is or isn't a disturbance. We ask a series of questions to help determine if there is a phenomena there or not. As you'd imagine, we know the difference between the real thing and people who have just watched too much television. In some cases we've had to relocate families. If that happens then we leave the house to lie fallow for 12 months.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "LIE FALLOW"?

We move the family out and the house is stripped of electrical input. We've found

that there's a definite connection between phenomena and electricity. In some cases phenomena has been seen to feed on electricity. There have been unusually large electrical build-ups, and flickering lights and disturbances. In these situations, people are relocated to make sure that they're safe and then we suggest leaving the property empty for 12 months.

A lot of phenomena are what we call "fear feeders". They create phenomena to generate fear in the residents of a property. The more upset they get, the more phenomena take place and it becomes a vicious circle. We try to educate people how to react and to think rationally so that the phenomena lessens. It does seem to work.

ARE THESE "FEAR FEEDERS" SENTIENT?

There are different types of phenomena. There are locations that people would traditionally say are "haunted". When the new residents move in and encounter the haunting, their first instinct is to want to get rid of it right away, but they don't understand that it's not that simple. It can be like trying to catch a fly in a glass – and occasionally it can be next to impossible, especially when it comes to stately homes and buildings that have a lot of history.

When it's highly interactive, then in some cases yes there is intelligence. They're aware of their own timeline and occasionally move things around that weren't in the property when the new residents moved in.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT ANY OF THESE COULD BE THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD?

Yes! I believe some incidents may be associated to residual phenomena, a type of recording of an event played back at a later time, witnessed by people and termed "a haunting" – what's sometimes called "stone recording phenomena". These are events where an event that's been recorded in the fabric of the building is played back over and over again, like a figure walking through a wall. These can be anything, like an apparition of a cat or even phantom bombers in the Peak District. There have been several sightings of World War 2 bombers crashing. Again, we're dealing with electricity and geomagnetic energy that peaks and discharges to power a sighting.

MUCH LIKE IN *THE STONE TAPE* THEN? IS THAT AN ACCURATE TAKE ON THESE SORTS OF THINGS?

Yes, it's a solid representation of the phenomena. We know that limestone and granite are exceptional for holding electrical signals. We have to assume this energy is feeding the phenomena because all phenomena is fed, somehow, whether it's through the rocks, or leys, or the way the land lies. Remove the energy and you tend to remove the phenomena.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR MOST EXCITING ENCOUNTER?

In 1996 I was called out by Rochdale City Council. It had some tenants living in prefabricated bungalows. They'd lived there for 14 years in this quite small building, but they were perfectly happy. They reported water appearing and disappearing in the house across the ceilings, on doors… sometimes it was as if it was raining indoors. The water would just appear from nowhere and it would disappear just as quickly. One of the residents would actually sit in his kitchen with his brolly up!

At that time Britain was in the middle of a heatwave. It hadn't rained for a long time and a hosepipe ban had been put in place. So the council had looked at the property. It had checked the plumbing and the pipes and it couldn't find a rational explanation, so we investigated.

I witnessed the phenomena myself. The way I'd describe it is that if you took a glass of water and threw it across the floor, you would see the water arc out of the glass. In this case the water was moving and arcing across the ceiling. At one point we actually saw it move around a light fitting as if it was intelligently controlled.

We took some samples of the water. We took a control sample of ordinary tap water and a sample of the unusual water for analysis at North West Labs. The control sample was just normal water from a tap. The unusual water had particles of plaster and paint in it from the ceiling. There's a certain amount of electrical current in water anyway, because of copper pipes. We call the readings UCSMs. Normal water registers 90 to 93 UCSMs and that's not harmful at all. What was really interesting was that the sample of the unusual water that we tested registered 1,193 UCSMs.

Now, I went into this case as a sceptic, but we – there was myself and two others – were in the bedroom and we heard a rasping breath behind us. As I turned around I felt a hard thump and I was lifted off the bed and thrown four feet into a cabinet. I had a big bruise to show for it! But what I noticed, aside from it being very painful, was that it felt like both a punch and an electric shock at the same time. It was very worrying.

I actually considered leaving the field after that, out of worries for my own safety. We had the family relocated and the house was left fallow for a considerable amount of time.

> "AS I TURNED AROUND I FELT A HARD THUMP. I WAS LIFTED OFF THE BED AND THROWN FOUR FEET INTO A CABINET. I HAD A BIG BRUISE TO SHOW FOR IT!"

WHAT EQUIPMENT DO YOU TAKE WITH YOU ON A TYPICAL INVESTIGATION?

We take a huge range of items on a typical investigation. Some of these include galvanic skin residence meters and probes, vibration detectors, passive infrared detectors, an electronic compass, thermal guns, iron air counters, static air readers, hot wire detectors, camcorders, infrared beam detectors and heat motion cameras, torches and many other small devices.

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST PUBLIC MISCONCEPTION ABOUT THE WORK THAT YOU DO?

That parapsychologists are sceptics. We are not. Parapsychologists believe that there may be some incidents that are real thus we conduct our experimental research in the hope of finding tangible, replicable conclusions.

Read more tales of the unexplained at *www.phenomenamagazine.co.uk*.

STROKES OF GENIUS

WILL SALMON TALKS TO ILLUSTRATOR BRIAN ROOD – BEST KNOWN FOR HIS PHOTO-REALISTIC *STAR WARS* PAINTINGS – ABOUT TACKLING THE GHOSTBUSTERS

As jobs go, painting your favourite pop culture characters for a living must surely be up there with the best of them. That's what illustrator Brian Rood has been doing for the past 20 years or so. After starting out in the world of independent comics, he made the transition to becoming one of *Star Wars* fandom's best-loved artists, thanks to some beautifully detailed portraits of iconic characters such as Boba Fett and Darth Maul.

Tasked with creating the first ever officially sanctioned line of *Ghostbusters* Fine Art prints, we caught up with the Toledo-born artist to find out more about his methods and what to expect from the new portraits…

FIRST UP, HOW DID YOU GET STARTED AS AN ARTIST?

I started to pursue art as a career during college when I was 20. I quit both of my jobs and said that's it, I'm an artist now. I suppose the fact that I was still living at home with my parents made that bold decision a little less dramatic at the time!

I was attending a small business college in Toledo and I met a group of young guys doing some independent comic books. I took a trip out to this little studio, in an old 1900s school house, and just fell in love with the idea of becoming an artist.

I'd always been good at drawing and creating stuff but the odds of a kid from Toledo becoming an artist in the entertainment industry were pretty slim. I persuaded both my professors and the guy running the studio to let me intern there. After a year of being an unpaid grunt I started going to comic conventions and setting up in artists' alley. Some of my first work was for independent comics that no one would recognise the titles of. After a few years in the trenches doing indy work, I was hired as a cover artist for Chaos! Comics. That was the first time that I was doing work that could be found in stores throughout the country.

WHAT TOOLS DO YOU USE?

I spent the first half of my career using an Iwata airbrush with Holbein paint and Prismacolor pencils. That slowly evolved to more of an airbrush/paintbrush combo with Holbein acrylics. From there, I started to bring in more coloured pencils and watercolours to do my

"SOMETHING I LOVED FROM MY CHILDHOOD"

Exclusive black-and-white sketches for the *Ghostbusters* Fine Art prints.

Christopher Nolan's *Dark Knight* trilogy inspired this Batman painting.

> ## "I LOVE *GHOSTBUSTERS* FOR THE SAME REASON THAT I LOVE *STAR WARS*: I WAS AWESTRUCK BY THE DESIGNS AND THE SPECIAL EFFECTS"

finishing work. That led to me becoming well known for my watercolour paintings.

After insane deadlines I started doing more work on the computer with Adobe Photoshop and Corel Painter. I'd do digital underpaintings and finish the large canvas printed artwork out with traditional mediums. I'm a traditional painter. I spent long nights learning how to paint on canvas and board, so I can't just hang up the brushes. I love paint under my nails and on my floor. That said, I also love digital techniques. I use a Wacom Cintiq 22hd Touch tablet to create art digitally. I've recently been converted to Mac, and enjoy the workflow the platform provides. Being able to work on the actual digital painting in real time, with paint flowing from my digital brush directly to the screen, is amazing.

HOW DID YOU MAKE THE TRANSITION FROM COMICS TO BECOMING A *STAR WARS* ILLUSTRATOR?
The idea of being an illustrator and working

on *Star Wars* was always the same thing in my mind. I always felt that if you were going to make it in the world of freelance illustration then one of the best homes you could live in was the house that Lucas built. The look, the style, the limitless characters, the timeless story... these are all things an artist like myself dreams of working on. I was always hunting down anyone affiliated with Lucasfilm at the conventions I'd go to. I'd wait in the long Lucasfilm portfolio review lines at San Diego Comic-Con. I'd spend hours waiting for my 10-minute shot to show Troy Alders my latest artistic attempts at the *Star Wars* universe. I'd keep my eyes open in artists' alley, hoping that Steve Sansweet would stop by my booth and possibly pass my name along. I also sent countless pics of my art to Mary Franklin at *Star Wars Insider* hoping she would use my work in the magazine.

Finally, after politely pestering everyone I could for nearly a decade, Steve suggested to Topps Trading Cards that they should use me as an artist on the *Revenge Of The Sith* set. It was

only sketch cards at the time, but that led to me being invited to *Star Wars* Celebration III. From that convention the snowball has been rolling down the hill, gaining more momentum with every passing year.

WHAT RESEARCH DO YOU DO WHEN WORKING ON AN ILLUSTRATION?
I do every kind of research you could imagine. Scouring the net, art books, magazines. In the case of *Star Wars*, freeze-framing the film and material from the Lucas archives. I've spent years stockpiling and organising hundreds of images in my database. Sometimes I'm lucky enough to have reference supplied by the various licensors I work for, but often I'm on my own for many projects. Reference simply doesn't exist for many of the *Star Wars* Expanded Universe characters I've illustrated. In those situations, I research the story the character was in, the author's description and anything else pertaining to that character's outfit, species, weaponry, timeline of existence etc...

MOVING ON TO YOUR NEW *GHOSTBUSTERS* LINE, WERE YOU ALWAYS A FAN?
I love the films for many of the same reasons

"To date, the Star Wars saga has only picked up one Oscar nod for acting. Name the nominated thesp!"

BRIAN ROOD
Artist

Star Wars Bounty Hunter Boba Fett beautifully realised by Rood.

Rood's Egon Spengler was one of the first three Fine Art prints to be released.

that I love *Star Wars*. They are both absolutely timeless, and are as fun to watch with my kids today as they were for me to watch as a kid when they were new. From the creatures in the cantina to the Library Ghost I was awestruck by the designs and the special effects. I remember vividly seeing it for the first time. I saw it in the theatre with my family and I was terrified when the librarian did her thing! I was ready to leave right then and there, but there was no way my folks were leaving a few minutes into a movie that I'd insisted we see. Thankfully it took an immediate turn for the fun joyride that it is. I was in love with it from that night on.

WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE FINE ART LINE?
The Fine Art line has been evolving for the past two years. I currently have the first three portraits done with the fourth coming out this fall. There are over a dozen concepts that have already been approved and I will be working

on these this fall with a big release for the holiday season. Currently you can buy them exclusively through my website store. There are hundreds of great moments that can be created from the *Ghostbusters* films and I look forward to exploring them in the coming months. There are a lot of very exciting things happening behind the scenes here in my studio and I'll be making many announcements in the immediate future.

THE FIRST FINE ART PRINTS ARE OF THE THREE GHOSTBUSTERS. DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE?
I've enjoyed painting all three... They're each an iconic snapshot in time from the film. If I had to choose a favourite, I'd go with Bill Murray. I just loved his character as a kid. He was funny, and witty and not too ornery – qualities a kid could really enjoy! However I really think of these three paintings as a single piece of art. They stand alone great, but with a movie like *Ghostbusters* it really was a team effort. After

the portraits there are roughly a dozen pre-approved images for the *Ghostbusters* line and many more to come after that!

WILL THESE BE LIMITED EDITIONS?
Yes, at the moment the entire *Ghostbusters* line is limited edition. Some of the paper editions will cost as little as $50 and some of the canvas editions will sell for $250 and up. All the prints are going to be Giclee prints that I'm doing personally in my studio. We're using only the finest paper and inks. All the materials I use are museum grade archival. Each painting is created, scanned, and printed by me in-house so the quality control is excellent. They will all come signed and numbered by me and shipped in a heavyweight shipping tube or professionally packaged and wrapped if it's a stretched canvas. ⊙

You can find out more about Brian and his work, including how to buy his Ghostbusters Fine Art prints, at his website www.brianrood.com

Take the smart movie quiz...

www.gamesradar.com/new-totalfilm-quiz

TOTAL FILM

DO YOU REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME?

NEVER SEEN *GHOSTBUSTERS*?!
CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?! SUPERFAN
JORDAN FARLEY INTRODUCES
'*BUSTERS* NEWBIE **BRIDIE ROMAN** TO
THE GHOUL GATHERERS – AND THIS
IS WHAT SHE THOUGHT…

When the editor of this bookazine, first asked me to write this feature he accidently intruded on an ongoing battle. You see, I am good friends with a *Ghostbusters* fan. His name is Jordan (Farley, *Total Film* writer). He's a dressed-up-like-a-Ghostbuster-as-a-child-and-still-wishes-he-was-a-Ghostbuster kind of fan. It's been a point of contention between us that I'd never,

not once, not even slightly, seen *Ghostbusters* or its sequel. Was I keen? Not particularly. It's not really my thing, and besides there's so much I need to catch up on already, so I'd always find a way to put off watching them when Jordan suggested it.

I know what you're thinking – how could I have not watched them already? Did I have a truly deprived childhood, robbed of the joy of ghostbusting? Well maybe. But I'm also a

child of the '90s, so by the time I was choosing what to watch everyone wanted to be Pokémon trainers or X-Men – not Ghostbusters.

So the craze somewhat passed me by. But now, I've given in. I could resist Jordan's occasional, "Oh let's watch *Ghostbusters*", but not my editor's ever-so-polite request. Besides, everyone else seems to have watched it, and if I'd said no there'd have been no one to write this feature...

GHOSTBUSTERS I

J Here we go, your new favourite film is starting...

B Okay, I like this music. If nothing else, I will enjoy the soundtrack.

[Library Ghost starts messing with books.]

B Woah, spooky. Is this just a ghost who messes up your alphabetised book collection? If so that's not particularly threatening, but it *is* exceedingly rude.

[Index cards start flying about.]

B This ghost is a total a-hole! I know you're dead and everything, but do you really need to mess that up? It'll take ages to put them back in order!

J Bet this ghost died with loads of library fines.

[Venkman is testing two students' psychic abilities. He electrocutes the guy.]

B Bill Murray, you asshole. Is he just using this study to hit on this lady? He just let an actual, possibly telepathic person leave!

J I wish I was Bill Murray, he's so smooth.

B And morally questionable...

[Venkman interviews the shaken-up librarian about her mental state, and asks if she's menstruating.]

B I don't like that, that just wouldn't be happening nowadays. He just implied that menstruating is the same as having schizophrenia or a drug habit. No bueno.

J It's heartbreaking seeing Harold Ramis run about knowing that he's dead now.

[Back in the library Venkman starts playing with ectoplasm.]

J I wonder what they used for the goo?

B How rude a joke am I allowed to make here?

J Certainly not THAT rude.

[Venkman goes to speak to the ghost.]

B Don't send him, he has zero people skills.

J Actually they're not people, they're ghosts.

B Well he's not very nice, if I was a ghost I wouldn't want to talk to this guy.

[The ghost freaks out.]

J Did you find that scary?

B Not really. I can see how it would have been scary though, as a kid.

J I was *this* close to hiding behind a cushion.

[Venkman is kicked out of his office and fired, he demands an explanation.]

B Well you've been using your work to hit on women inappropriately and your overall demeanour brings shame to the whole establishment?

J Are you buying Bill Murray as a scientist?

B Nope. He doesn't seem very professional. He seems more like a talk show host just pretending to know about science.

J He's too cool to be a scientist.

B I don't find him cool. We'll have to agree to disagree.

[Enter Sigourney Weaver as Dana Barrett.]

B Is this pre-*Alien*?

J It's five years after *Alien*, so she's not quite badass *Aliens* Sigourney yet.

[The gatekeeper suddenly appears in Dana's fridge.]

B What the f-?!

J How would you react to seeing that in your fridge?

B See my previous statement.

[Bridie was getting pretty hooked at this point so we watched in silence for a while until the boys get their second customer.]

J When I was a kid all I wanted to do was be a Ghostbuster. Slide

The Library Ghost. The scourge of anal-retentives everywhere.

down the pole, drive around in that car, shoot ghosts, trap ghosts – live the dream.

B I'm not sold on that yet. They have nuclear reactors strapped to their backs so they're probably going to die of cancer...

J It'd be worth it.

B Seriously, why have they not tested this stuff before they've set off and why is he only now saying "Oh, don't cross the streams"? These guys are so freaking incompetent. This would not be a healthy career choice.

J Best job ever.

[Back at Spook Central.]

B That building does look evil. It has a sacrificial altar on the

roof! I'm not sure the gargoyles are that scary... Oh, they're real! Poor little guy, someone stuck him in concrete.

J If you saw a ghost in your fridge would you move out?

B At the very least I'd buy a new fridge; she's clearly not short of money.

[Walter Peck shows up to harass the Ghostbusters.]

B I find it interesting that the Environmental Protection Agency are the bad guys. Typical '80s politics. Women be crazy, environment be evil.

J *Ghostbusters* was such a big part of my early childhood that I'm always surprised by how much
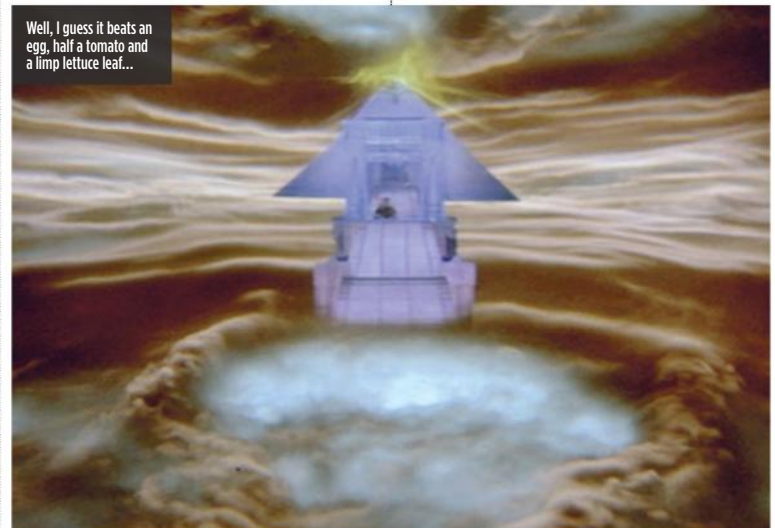
Well, I guess it beats an egg, half a tomato and a limp lettuce leaf...

Peter Venkman: Lecherous arse or The Coolest Dude Ever™? You decide…

swearing there is. I wonder how much. Wouldn't it be great if someone counted?

B Someone has counted. We have! (Find out on page 24.)

[Back at Spook Central the ground falls apart around the Ghostbusters.]

B And then the Ghostbusters died and the world was destroyed – the Cormac McCarthy alternate ending.

J Those effects were pretty cool.

B Yeah I'm quite impressed with that, much better than the ghosts.

[More intent watching. Bridie is obviously into this end scene.]

J I always found the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man more cute than scary. No doubt he'd be terrifying in real life.

**B** [At the same time as the song] I ain't afraid of no ghosts!

J So what did you think?

B You know, I already knew so much about it, and yet had no idea about the plot. It feels good to have watched it because

so much of it was already in my cultural psyche – the song, Stay Puft, Slimer and of course the costumes. It's referenced in pop culture all the time and now I can finally get those jokes. That says so much about *Ghostbusters* as a cultural phenomenon – that I can know so much about it despite never having seen it. It really deserves that legacy. It's infectiously fun, and I feel I did miss out by not watching it as a child.

But I do have my issues with it, mostly concerning Venkman, if I'm honest. I didn't really warm to him as a character. He wasn't a particularly good friend, he wasn't a very nice love-interest and he was a pretty crummy Ghostbuster. Maybe it's because this is a film "for the boys" and the humour just didn't translate. For me the real hero here is obviously Ray, he's a good guy who really believes in what he's doing. Everyone is so overshadowed by Venkman, and I think that's a real shame.

J Sacrilege.
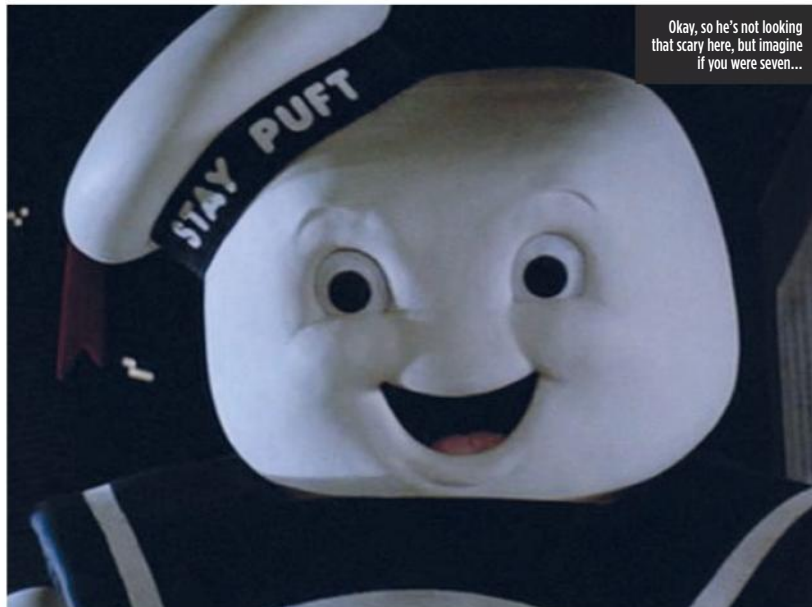
Okay, so he's not looking that scary here, but imagine if you were seven…

STAY PUFT

GHOSTBUSTERS II

B So is this better or worse than the first?

J Worse, but I have a bit of a soft spot for it.

[The film opens with a baby's pram rolling away.]

B So there's a ghost in this pram, right? And as usual the ghost's being an a-hole.

[Ray and Winston pull up to a house in the Ghostbusters car.]

B They're party entertainers now?! How did they go out of business? There was a giant marshmallow man!

J They went out of business because they were sued. Doesn't make a jot of sense, they saved the city!

[A lot has happened in five years. Dana has had a baby called Oscar, for one.]

B Bet she's single-mumming it because Venkman ran away.

J Can't blame him, it's probably Rick Moranis's kid.

B Dana and Louis definitely did it on that roof.

[Peter Venkman is hosting a psychic talk show.]

B He's a cheesy talk show host! That's perfect.

[The talk show guests start proclaiming when the end of days will be.]

B "The world's going to end in 1992." Ah, when I was born and my reign of terror began, an impressive prediction.

J "Or February 14, 2016." It's a pity they didn't release *Ghostbusters 3* on that day and bring this psychic woman back, make her prediction part of the plot.

[Dana is at the museum, painting.]

J She's suddenly a painter now?

Wasn't she a musician in the first film?

B She's allowed to try different things! What accent is that [in reference to Dr Janosz]?

J Insultingracialstereotypic?

B Madeuposlavic?

J Dana's the unluckiest woman in New York. First she lived in Spook Central and got possessed and now she's working in a spooky gallery.

B Plus she dated Venkman. Why is anyone still friends with him?

J Because he's the coolest guy ever.

B Well he doesn't behave very well around this baby.

J He'd be a good dad eventually though.

B I have no faith in Venkman as a decent human being.

[Venkman, Ray and Egon go digging for slime in the middle of a NY City street.]

B You certainly wouldn't be tampering with things in a NY street nowadays.

J You'd probably be shot as soon as you got a shovel out.

[The Ghostbusters get arrested and are put on trial.]

J How can people not believe in ghosts? Giant. Stay. Puft. Marshmallow. Man.

B So the common man believes in ghosts but not anyone in authority? Wake up sheeple, it's a conspiracy. This one goes all the way to the top!

J These ghosts turned up in the nick of time.

B They catch two ghosts at a time in the sequel because it's bigger and better.

[Ray and Egon use the slime to make a toaster dance.]

J I can't believe there was never a toy dancing toaster. I would have bought it in an instant.

B I'm enjoying this music.

Looks a bit like one of the Seven Dwarfs. If you squint. And tilt your head.

Lady Liberty goes for a stroll – what's she got a pout on for, though?

J This film's a little too self-aware, like singing the *Ghostbusters* song at the beginning. It doesn't feel right.
B And that mug has the *Ghostbusters II* logo on it. It's all wrong.

[It's bath time for Oscar.]

B You know I hate it when there's a child involved. Maybe it's my maternal instincts.
J This bathtub scene freaked me out when I was a kid. Always been a shower guy because of it.
B Baby Oscar grew up to remember this moment in the bathroom. *Ghostbusters 3* is about him in therapy, busting the ghosts of his past.

[Shortly after the bathtub attack Ray and Egon get trapped in their blazing dark room.]

J Yeah, Winston saves the day! The one heroic thing he gets to do in these films and he doesn't even get a one-liner.
B You could probably count his lines in this film on one hand. Which is a shame because he seems like a great character; you just never really get to know him.

[While Venkman's on a date with Dana the rest of the Ghostbusters head underground.]

J This is pretty full on for a PG – severed heads floating with dangly spinal cords? No wonder this film scarred me for life.

[A ghost train suddenly appears.]

B I hope Winston's wearing his brown pants...

[With questionable proof the Ghostbusters go to see the mayor.]

B Seriously how has the mayor forgotten about the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man? This is the real plot here – something has made the entire city of New York forget that ghosts exist!
J You can clearly see how this follows the formula of the first film, they even go to see the mayor.

[Back at Dana's.]

B Dear god. How did that baby climb out of the window? And why aren't there locks on that window?

Winston's big moment! He's sadly underused in the second film.

J The answer is always ghosts.
B This movie's really quite frightening. Scarier than the first one anyway.

[Oscar's been abducted and taken to the museum, which Vigo has encased in slime.]

B There are a lot of sacrificial altars in these films.
J It ain't an evil plan without one. Hang on... it's the haunting montage time!
B Everybody needs a montage.

[The Ghostbusters are commandeering Lady Liberty and make their way to the museum for the final showdown.]

B The Statue of Liberty moving is a great effect.
J Yet more priceless architecture and art ruined by the Ghostbusters!
B Vigo's pretty creepy. He's got a very characterful face this guy.
J The ending is so anti-climactic. After blowing up the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man shooting a head in a painting is so lame.
B I think I preferred it to the first one. It was basically the same film, but the characters were a little better. And you know I find it more suspenseful when there's a baby involved.
J It's disappointing because it doesn't try anything new. Ramis and Aykroyd were reluctant to write a sequel and you can tell.
B I did like the fact that Venkman's finally starting to grow up. He seems to genuinely care for Dana and Oscar by the end. There was definitely more of a sense of peril as well. Gozer might have been a god, but I couldn't take her seriously in that shiny see-through onesie. Vigo? Well he'd strike fear into the heart of anyone. Ⓖ

BRIDIE ROMAN
FANTASY FAN

Hi, I'm Bridie Roman. You may remember me from such features as: Top 10 Unanswered Questions in *A Song Of Ice And Fire* (*SFX* 230) and A Recap of Every Episode of *Game Of Thrones* (*SFX Fantasy Special*). You probably don't though, but if you do you may have already figured out where my SFF loyalties lie. I love fantasy. If it has a dragon I'm probably going to be into it, if someone gets beheaded with a ruddy great big sword then even better. Give me an 11-book series with a cast of characters bigger than the Bible and a magic system I still don't fully understand. Give me assassins and their apprentices and grim, dark tales of schizophrenic barbarians. Sure I'll make an exception for the odd bit of sci-fi on screen, and although I'm a bit of a scaredy cat I won't turn my nose up at horror either, but needless to say '80s comedy-horror was nowhere near my favourites list.

"BUSTIN' MAKES US LOOK GOOD!"

MILES HAMER IS FRONT ROW AT THE COSPLAY CATWALK SHOW

Photography Christine McConnell

Photography Paradox Cosplay
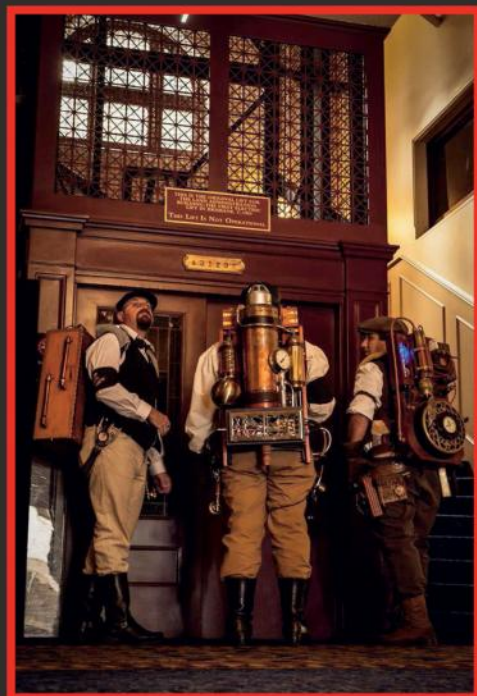
JASMINE HUDSON AS VIGO THE CARPATHIAN

🔺 Following a comment that his mum could double for the paranormal painting (a compliment every parent must dream of), Judson Hudson of Paradox Cosplay decided his next challenge would be to dress her as said villain. Well, why not? Built entirely by hand using two hides of leather, the garb took over 60 hours to complete. "She was a huge hit when we attended DragonCon 2011," enthuses Judson. "She was even able to take home an award for the *Ghostbusters* Annual PKE Surge event!"

CHRISTINE McCONNELL AS THE GATEKEEPER

🔺 LA-based photographer, model and dressmaker Christine McConnell quite literally has her fingers in all sorts of pies (she also bakes gob-smackingly brilliant horror-themed novelty cakes). You can add prop-maker to her list of skills too, as everything in the photograph has been made by her, including the slab! "I even made sure to make the costume out of the exact fabric used in the original movie," says Christine.

Photography Matt Shivers

KEVIN KEMARLY AS VINZ CLORTHO / LOUIS TULLY

🔺 Cult enthusiast and fan of all things proton pack, Kevin does a damn fine impersonation of a possessed Rick Moranis, an impression he rocks regularly at conventions. "It's a costume not often seen at conventions," says Kevin. "And that makes dressing up as Louis even more special. Being in character is indescribably fun," he adds. "The laughs, the 'Oh my god!' comments and the sometimes hysterical tears make me never want to stop. It just makes good convention sense."

Photography The Arizona Ghostbusters

THE ARIZONA GHOSTBUSTERS

🔺 A costuming fan club with hearts bigger than a containment unit about to be shut down by an over-zealous EPA inspector. Started by superfans Jeff Lewis (Lieutenant) and Matt Haynes (Captain), the Arizona Ghostbusters use their PKE meters to seek out worthwhile charities to promote, raising thousands of charity dollars and putting smiles on faces in the process. They even have their own refurbished Ecto-1, cheekily named Ecto-AZ.

THE STEAMPUNK GHOSTBUSTERS AUSTRALIA

Screams meet steam for this group of costumers, the Brisbane-based 'busters drenched in Victoriana. "We're formed around construction genius Matt Spoljarevic and now have 10 core members," explains member Colin. The very first Australian steampunk Ghostbusters, their costumes take inspiration from 19th century scientists rather than the usual jumpsuits, and they use local hardware stores to furnish the equipment. Bustin' doesn't make only them feel good mind. "Recently, we held a charity event that raised nearly $5,000 for the Cancer Council Queensland," Colin adds.

Photography James Niland

Photography Meg Super Photography

GHOSTBUSTERS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Canadian cosplay strained through a distinctively hipster filter, the Ghostbusters of British Columbia mix the attitude and manner of a rock band with the aptitude and devotion of the geek scene: Peter Venkman's cool nonchalance meets Egon Spengler's enthused intelligence. "We're a group of friends that share the passion that is the science, humour, spectacle and fictional technology of the *Ghostbusters* universe," explains leader Todd Whelan. "It's always amazing to see the public's reaction when we share our enjoyment of the franchise with them."

GIALLO GIRL AS GOZER

Bringing some canine bite to the scene is prolific cosplayer Giallo Girl. She not only hand-crafted the costume from fillable Christmas tree ornaments, but also made the snarling Zuul dog – a paper and cloth mache combo with polymer clay for the teeth and claws. But why mean old party-pooping Gozer? "I'm a huge *Ghostbusters* fan and I enjoy cosplaying powerful characters, often villains."

Photography Ron Gejon Photography

THE TWIN CITIES GHOSTBUSTERS IN GHOSTBUSTIN' 911

Taking cosplay to the next level, *Ghostbustin' 911* is a *Cops*-inspired comedy series charting the misadventures of a spectre-smashing franchise. The brainchild of prop builder and filmmaker Jason Skoby, the impressively professional show features not only a great location and FX, but also an appearance from one Ernie Hudson in a cameo role! "It started out a few years ago as a Halloween costume gone out of control," says Jason. "The web series was the perfect platform to showcase the scratch-built movie-quality props – everything from the half dozen proton packs to a couple of *Ghostbusters* cars!"

Photography Lars Michaels Photography

LUNA X MARS

With a love for all things bubblegum pop and retro kitsch, it's fairly remarkable that the self-proclaimed pin-up and *Ghostbusters* fan has only been cosplaying for two years. "I have always loved costuming, but didn't find out about cosplay until NYCC of 2012! Since then, I've been working on building my own screen accurate proton pack. It's complete now and it's a match made in heaven. Wearing my suit and pack makes me feel like a rock star."

Photography Ron Gejon Photography

Photography Chuck Cook

LISA STEVENS & PATRICK CREEL

Dedicated cosplayers Lisa and Patrick met, unusually, in the world of spectral sleuthing. So, was it love at first bust? "I was a paranormal investigator at the time and he a Ghostbuster," reveals Lisa. "Slowly we became involved in each other's worlds. Now we run the REAL Tampa Bay Ghostbusters. We bust for charities, for our communities and for fun in sunny Florida. We believe all things are possible when you work together and do it with smart ass attitude, the true Ghostbuster way!"

ECTO-FUN

MOST FANS HAVE GOT *GHOSTBUSTERS* TOYS AND DVDS LYING AROUND. BUT HOW MANY HAVE GOT THEIR OWN WORKING ECTOMOBILE? **WILL SALMON** TRACKED ONE DOWN…

Some fans like to cosplay. They don homemade *Ghostbusters* jumpsuits, build Proton Packs and head to conventions. But for others, that's not quite enough. Nothing short of a full-scale working replica of Ecto-1 will do.

As Paul Harborne will tell you, finding and turning a Miller-Meteor into a road-worthy Ectomobile is no small task. He's spent three years and a fortune of his own money refitting the car you can see on the opposite page. Here's how he did it…

WHERE DID THE IDEA COME FROM?
I saw a lot of limousines in the UK, stretch Hummers and pink limos and things like that, and I thought, "what would be a great film car that you could use as a limo?" If you bought the Batmobile, you could only have one person plus the driver. The Reliant Robin from *Only Fools And Horses* and the *Back To The Future* car – they're all one-seaters, plus driver.

So, I tentatively said to my wife, "What about the *Ghostbusters* car?" and she said "Well, you're never gonna find that."

HOW *DID* YOU FIND IT?
I started ringing guys in the States. We looked for a time and then gave up. Then, by pure chance, we had a car that we wanted to sell and I thought, "I'll look at a part exchange." I was looking online in a 50-mile radius around my house and there was nothing that took my fancy so I thought, "let's go look at the classics…" And on the last page, there it is, and it's not in Washington or Nebraska – it's in Leicester.

SO YOU MUST BE A PRETTY BIG *GHOSTBUSTERS* FAN?
Not really. I love the film. I've seen it a million times, but I was looking at it more in a "what's the most unique film car you can get?" way.

COULD IT HAVE BEEN ONE OF THE CARS ORIGINALLY USED IN THE FILM?
Who knows. This car came from Washington. It was in the *Ghostbusters* livery, for want of a better word, but did it get used? Who knows.

What happened was Dan Aykroyd saw one of these cars and suggested it for the film. He rented the car, took it to Sony, they looked at it and thought, "yep, that's great, let's have that" and bought it. That's the vehicle you see in the opening scenes. Thing is, it's the *wrong car*.

In those days, a local authority would go to ambulance manufacturers and say "we want five vehicles". They would say, "Well, how do you want them? High top? Low top? End loaders? Side loaders?" They'd build a vehicle based on the customer's requirements. Which meant every one was different – and I mean *every one*.

So Dan Aykroyd selected this vehicle and it's an end loader. It has curtains in the windows. But the one that comes out later on in the film is completely different.

HOW MUCH DID IT COST?
A lot of money. The guy knew what it was. The wife said to me, "Whatever figure he says, just give it to him. Don't argue, don't bid, just give him the money." So, that's what happened, simple as that. They're incredibly difficult to find. There's one for sale in England at the moment, for £175,000, so that gives you some idea how much it would be – and I'd want more.

HOW LONG DID IT TAKE YOU TO RESTORE IT TO WORKING ORDER?
We set a target of 18 months, but it became three years. Not every day, but three years of toil. Me and a number of other friends, you know, people in the States, sending bits, doing research. It's ongoing, because, like any old car, you're always doing improvements.

CAN YOU TELL ME ROUGHLY HOW MUCH YOU'VE SPENT RESTORING IT?
I kept a book and wrote everything down – parts we bought, not our own time, or gas and stuff, just physical parts. When I got to over £50,000, I stopped looking! I thought, "I don't really want to know any more". Some of the parts are as rare as rocking-horse poo. Everything – apart from things like the engine and steering column – has to be made, found, or rebuilt.

SO HOW DID YOU SET ABOUT RESTORING IT?
I trawled through the film. I had a vision of how I wanted it. Some fans will point out, "That's not right, this should be like this…" But what we've done is in the spirit of the film. It's a road car, it's MOTed, it's used for weddings, it's got seats in the back that are obviously wrong. They didn't have seats like that in the film. We're not saying, "Yeah, look, this is *the* car," because obviously the back is different, the lights had to be changed because it's the UK register. If you were really a geek, and studied it properly you'd find a billion things wrong.

WHAT DO YOU DO WITH THE CAR?
Weddings mostly, but anything, really. We started going to car shows, and then people kept asking "can you come pick up my wife and take her to the restaurant?" And then it was a kids' party, then a couple of people asked "what about weddings?" And it just spiralled. Soon we were getting small-filmmakers asking, "can we make a 16-minute film with you, for a documentary?" Then we had schools asking us to make a few appearances…

WHAT'S THE REACTION WHEN PEOPLE SEE THE CAR?
You could be having the worst day, you know, and you'd still be laughing. People want to have pictures with it, they want to get it on Facebook, you know. It's bonkers, honestly. You can't go to the petrol station, because when you do you're gone an hour. It's just full on. I understand how Tom Cruise and the like must feel now, because they can't go to the toilet without somebody following them. We're a bit like that with the car!

DO YOU GUYS WEAR THE *GHOSTBUSTERS* OUTFITS WHEN YOU'RE DOING THESE SHOWS?
Yep, we've got all the equipment. We're there with the suits and proper, authentic Proton Packs. So we turn up in those – a lot of people at weddings want to hold the pack when they come out of the church.

We also own a Stay Puft Marshmallow Man. Sony had eight or nine of these 37ft x 18ft blow-up inflatables built to promote the Xbox 360, and we've got one of those. We use that at some of the car shows.

WHAT OTHER CARS HAVE YOU GOT IN THE GARAGE?
We own a Dodge Daytona, the vehicle that was in *Cars* and *The Fast And The Furious*. We've also got an Eleanor – the *Gone In 60 Seconds* Ford Mustang, and we've got a '57 Cadillac presidential limousine. We're restoring that at the moment. It's a little more formal but just as unusual. That was actually £100,000 more than the *Ghostbusters* car so these are serious cars.

IS THE *GHOSTBUSTERS* CAR THE MOST POPULAR?
Oh, yes. You can't begin to describe. We had a couple come up this weekend interested in seeing it. They'd only seen it on the website, which doesn't really do it justice, and they turned up and honestly, they were there for three hours. They said they couldn't believe it was this big, this good and so lifelike. They were just totally blown away. Ⓖ

WHO YA GONNA CALL?
07801 249677

ZA 332

What a beauty! The Ectomobile
rides again, up and down the
UK's highways...

It may have a few differences to
the car in the movies, but this is
a beautiful piece of work.

Paul is rightly proud of the
time and effort that went
into restoring his car.

WHO YA GONNA CALL?
_01 249677

Paul reckons there's a good
150 miles of wiring inside the
car's lighting system.

Photography Courtesy of Paul Harborne

SUPERNATURAL SWAG

WHILE THERE'S ALWAYS A WEALTH OF COOL NEW TOYS AND MODELS HITTING THE SHELVES, MANY FANS HAVE MADE COLLECTING *GHOSTBUSTERS* GEAR A LIFELONG PURSUIT. MILES HAMER TRACKED DOWN SOME OF THE MOST DEDICATED...

Much like their cinematic heroes, *Ghostbusters* fans are a dedicated bunch. So when we decided to cover vintage merchandise, we sought the biggest 'busters armed with that extra-special level of devotion. These guys don't just stick up a poster and whistle the theme tune on occasion. These are the fans that display their jaw-dropping collections proudly. The fans whose love burns so strongly, it sets their wallets ablaze in a never-ending search for merch. Let's see their stash!

ROBERT BENJAMIN LAWRENCE

Prop builder for stage and screen and keen member of cosplayer group the Alabama Ghostbusters, Robert is a lifelong fan of the franchise. Since receiving a *Ghostbusters II* noisemaker from fast food chain Hardee's as a boy, his passion for all things Proton Pack has resulted in a fearsome collection of merchandise, toys, and all manner of branded goodies.

He started with a gold shell clam VHS of the first film and he's constantly on the lookout for more merch to fill his shelves. So, he must have gone to some lengths to amass such a hoard?

"Nothing too crazy," explains Robert. "I've stayed up late building my pack, and searched eBay and flea markets, but nothing outrageous."

With a collection like this, though, he must have an idea of its monetary value? "Although I own a lot of stuff, I try to be non-materialistic, and understand that they are just things. I could put a price tag on it if needed."

Any rarities in his stash? "I have the role-playing games and a few autographs, and even the same model PH tester Bill Murray uses to shock the guy in the first film, but nothing too rare. I couldn't afford that."

When pushed for his favourite item, he doesn't hesitate. "My *GB* role-playing games. Also, either my Proton Pack or my full-sized Vigo – they are both so fun."

Is that a Stay Puft suit we can see hanging on the shelf behind Mr Lawrence?

That's the Ectomobile there, and a whole heap of badges and paraphernalia.

A plethora of Matty Collector figurines – in all shapes and sizes.

DAN HARSHMAN

That's the giant Ecto-1A standee in the background there... Nice.

Virginian and *Ghostbusters* nut Dan Harshman started young – with a Slimed Heroes Peter Venkman aged just three! Presently, his purchases range from art prints through phones and mugs to, well, anything plastered with that iconic logo really.

Indeed, the current vastness of his ever-expanding bustin' booty is such that parts of it remain inaccessible! "I've been collecting *Ghostbusters* since I was a child," explains Dan, "and sadly I was unable to get it all out to display. So much of it is in so many places, buckets, or even storage spaces I just couldn't get to."

Revealing that on occasion, he's absent-mindedly bought items he already owns, Dan puts a value to his haul of branded goods at more than just a few thousand dollars.

Finding those rare bits and pieces never seems much of a challenge, though. "I've always had a strange luck with *Ghostbusters*

memorabilia. I always seem to get great deals or just happen upon whatever I'm looking for!"

Like a lot of hardcore fans, Dan's a dab hand at building his own Proton Packs: "I've built several packs and I'm working on new ones now." But he holds a particular fondness for a rather two-dimensional bit of promotion. "As far as really cool collectables go, I have to hand it to the giant *Ghostbusters II* Ecto-1A cardboard standee. It's a Coke advertisement and I purchased it about 15 years ago in a small consignment shop for almost nothing. It's the only one I've ever seen, as I'm sure most of them were just thrown out after use."

A Proton Pack takes pride of place in this awesome collection of *GB* goodies.
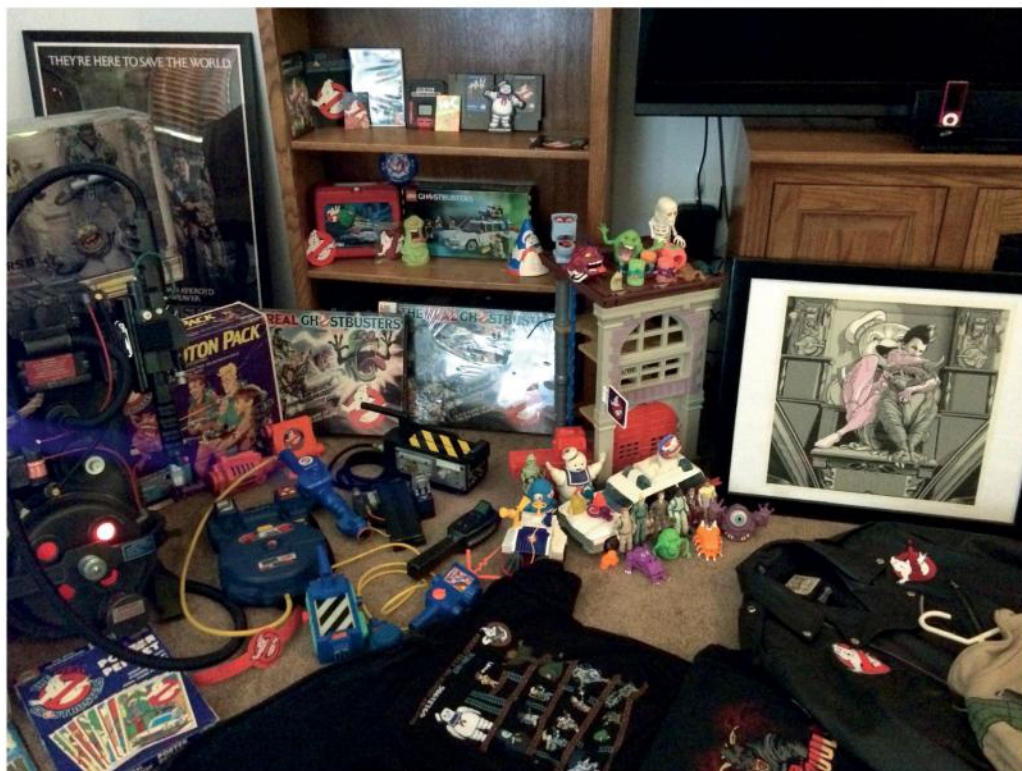
Dustin, in his for-real 'busting togs, and his impressive collection of gear.

DUSTIN KIEHNAU

Like most superfans, Dustin's been bustin' since childhood, an interest started by that classic staple of tie-in toys, the Kenner Proton Pack. "And now I'm one of the lucky ones to suit up with the real deal as the proud founder of the Door County Ghostbusters in Wisconsin!" he reveals.

Dustin's collection started way back in the '80s, when his parents gave him Stay Puft Marshmallow Man from *The Real Ghostbusters*, and has continued to grow ever since. "All the old toys are very near and dear to me," he says. As a married man, surely his wife has a say on such an abode-invading stash? "Other than the occasional eye-roll she's been pretty supportive about everything," he adds.

Dustin's haul includes: functioning Proton Pack with lights and sound, full-size custom sculpted Slimer, Matty Collector Ghost Traps, Matty Collector PKE Meter, toys (old and new, including a rare Ralston *Ghostbusters* cereal premium glow-in-the-dark Slimer), movies, books, games, bedding, prints and posters, and well, even more. Let's just say that if his kitchen sink was emblazoned with Dan Aykroyd's mush, we wouldn't be surprised. His favourite item is chosen with affection, rather than rarity: *The Real Ghostbusters* DVD collection. "That show had a huge impact on my childhood."

Dustin's purchase of Chronicle's Signature Edition *Ghostbusters* Terror Dog 30th Anniversary Blu-ray giftset propelled the value of his spooky stockpile to approximately $7,800! Not that he plans to stop any time soon. "Of course, this is an ever-growing collection…"

Hi-C's Ecto-Cooler drink, right, was being slurped by thirsty kids for more than a decade.

ALEX NEWBORN

Fan Alex knows something about putting effort into collecting. "In January, I drove five hours to get Dan Aykroyd's autograph on my theatrical one-sheet of *Ghostbusters*. Then I flew to New York City six months later and managed to get Annie Potts's autograph!"

That diligence has earned him a couple of rather unique finds: "James Van Hise, the writer of NOW Comics' *RGB* title, sent me photocopies of scripts and black-and-white artwork before the issues came out. He even used one of my awful puns for the title of an issue. The rarest of them all are the missing final four pages of their *Ghostbusters II* adaptation, which the studio made them cut when the scene was trimmed from the picture."

And his favourite? "My copy of *Making Ghostbusters*, a gift from the writer of the NOW comic book *Real Ghostbusters* back in the late '80s."

Alex with the Mattel 1:1-scale PKE Meter that his wife bought him for his birthday.

We can see two versions of *RGB*'s Egon here – and is that Janine in the background?

That's *RGB*'s Ecto-3 – a compact motorised unicycle and sidecar.

MATT McNABB

Editor and webmaster of a dedicated *Ghostbusters* merchandise site, Matt knows a thing or two about the franchise. "I go to great lengths to collect all of the time. My wife Holly and I have made a hobby lifestyle out of junking and searching for old toys."

Matt started modestly, in 1986, with a Kenner Peter Venkman action figure. "I began collecting that day and I never stopped loving *Ghostbusters* toys." Combining his love for the series with a penchant for detail, he launched ghostbusterscollector.com to the world in 2009. "There are some great *Ghostbusters* websites on the net, but I saw a great need for one that specifically archived the merchandise out there and reported pretty strictly on product news."

Collating a mass of both used and permanently packaged product at a value of about $3,000, Matt is hard-pressed to nominate a favourite. "It's nearly impossible to pick one from so many wonderful toys. I have to admit that I got far more use out of the role-play toys than the action figures. I dressed up as a Ghostbuster with my Proton Pack and Ghost Trap longer than I'd care to admit."

He's much quicker to name his rarest find, however. "My absolute gem is a Ralston cereal *Real Ghostbusters* salesman kit. This is the folder that was provided to the supermarkets to sell them on the idea of carrying the *Ghostbusters* cereal back in the '80s. The folder is full of sales sheets, graphics and even includes unassembled hologram cereal boxes. I'm sure a few more are out there somewhere, but I've never come across one."

That's the Stay Puft Marshmallows label in the middle there.

CHRIS STEWART

A cosplaying Canuck, Chris found his way into fandom via the role-playing route, with the West End Games *Ghostbusters* RPG. He cites patience as the secret to collecting. "It took me a decade of watching and waiting to get the Anchor Hocking mug for less than $200 – they can go for as much as $275 in some auctions, because *Ghostbusters* fans as well as Corningware collectors want them."

Speaking of rarities, can he boast of any uncommon treasures? "A test screen print of the Stay Puft label the prop department did before they made Dana's bag of marshmallows. I bought it off *Ghostbusters* producer Michael C Gross who said it was one of three. I love it for its connection to the movie and I generally love packaging, so…"

Perhaps unusually, there's an Australian gold disc of the soundtrack and various Japanese 45s on display. How important does he think the music is to the series? "Critical on lots of levels. The theme just kills audiences. It was played on the radio constantly, helping make the movie a phenomenon. And the music is some of the earliest, widespread merchandise for the movie. You had records, record singles, cassettes, first generation CDs and sheet music."

Regardless of his rarities, though, his favoured item is an endearingly modest selection. "If I had to pick just one, it's Kenner's *Real Ghostbusters* Stay Puft. He's not rare at all, at least out of his card, but that just means any fan can find one without much effort or money. And the figure is a design classic."

THE BEST LINES

THE TWO ORIGINAL *GHOSTBUSTERS* FILMS ARE FULL OF FAMOUS ZINGERS. WE'VE PUT TOGETHER A FEW OF OUR FAVOURITES…

"DON'T CROSS THE STREAMS!"
SPENGLER

"THERE IS NO DANA. THERE IS ONLY ZUUL!"
ZUUL

"He slimed me"
VENKMAN

"Ray, when someone asks you if you're a god you say, 'Yes!'"
WINSTON

"BACK OFF MAN, I'M A SCIENTIST"
VENKMAN

"WE'VE BEEN GOING ABOUT THIS ALL WRONG. THIS MR STAY PUFT'S OKAY! HE'S A SAILOR, HE'S IN NEW YORK; WE GET THIS GUY LAID, WE WON'T HAVE ANY TROUBLE!"
VENKMAN

"I used to have a roommate, but my mom moved to Florida."
LOUIS

"Everything was fine with our system until the power grid was shut off by dickless here." **STANTZ**

"They caused an explosion!" **PECK**

"Is this true?" **THE MAYOR**

"Yes, it's true. This man has no dick." **VENKMAN**

"LET'S SHOW THIS PREHISTORIC BITCH HOW WE DO THINGS DOWNTOWN"
VENKMAN

"Your girlfriend lives in the corner penthouse of Spook Central"
STANTZ

"SINCE I JOINED THESE MEN, I'VE SEEN SHIT THAT'LL TURN YOU WHITE"
WINSTON

"You know, Dana, there are many perks to being the mother of a living god"
JANOSZ

"Take me now, subcreature!"
ZUUL

"WE'RE THE BEST, WE'RE THE BEAUTIFUL, WE'RE THE ONLY… GHOSTBUSTERS!"
VENKMAN

THE COMPLETE **SFX** GUIDE TO

GHOSTBUSTERS™

THE COMPLETE **SFX** GUIDE TO

GH☉STBUSTERS™