



**Columbia Pictures**

BILL MURRAY

Biography/Feature

"Dr. Peter Venkman is overtly greasy and will lie and cajole and do whatever is necessary to get something done," says Bill Murray of his latest role in the Columbia Pictures comedy "Ghostbusters." Along with long-time colleagues Dan Aykroyd and Harold Ramis, Murray plays one of three para-psychologists who lose their research grant and go into business for themselves. The name of their business? Ghostbusters.

The comedy reunites Murray with Ramis and director Ivan Reitman, having done three features with each, and with "Saturday Night Live" collaborator Dan Aykroyd. "I'm very comfortable working with the same group of people. I'm comfortable because they all owe me money, so if they are working, I know I've got a good shot at getting some of it back," jokes Murray. "It really is great though, because you can anticipate each other's moves. You can set people up. These guys are goofy--they always have been--so we enjoy working together. Half the fun is when the camera isn't rolling."

Now recognized as one of America's finest comedy talents, Murray looks back on his ascendance and credits much of its momentum

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to his fellow comedians. "I met the best people in the business-- Dan, Harold, Belushi, Gilda and my brother Brian, who was my greatest influence," recalls Murray. "Just hanging around these people was like a crash course in comedy. I became part of that group and when they started to move up...well, it was like picking the right lane of traffic. I just got in line behind these guys, and it was like being behind an icebreaker."

The fifth of nine children, Murray was born in Evanston, Illinois, and raised in nearby Wilmette. After graduating from parochial school, he entered Regis College in Denver as a pre-med student. "At one time I wanted to be a doctor, but that was kind of disillusioning in a way. It turns out you have to study a lot and read a lot of books," he laughs.

Before completing college, Murray returned to suburban Chicago. Inspired by his brother Brian and "an overwhelming urge to get out of the house," Murray auditioned with the Second City, the Chicago improvisational troupe. He won a scholarship to the Second City Workshop, where he first worked with his "Ghostbusters" co-star Dan Aykroyd. After completing the workshop, Murray traveled with the group's road company and later continued on to New York, where he joined "The National Lampoon Radio Show." In 1975 Murray joined the off-Broadway satirical revue "The National Lampoon Show." This show was produced by Ivan Reitman and also featured other newcomers John Belushi, Gilda Radner and Harold Ramis.

The revue played 10 weeks and was seen by Howard Cosell, who tagged Murray for his short-lived variety show, "Saturday Night Live With Howard Cosell" on ABC. One year later, in 1976,

Murray joined NBC's "Saturday Night Live." "It was a big change for me," recalls Murray. "Instead of 200 people ordering Singapore Slings and cheese baskets, it became 20 million people watching at home on Saturday night."

After four years as one of the "Not Ready for Prime Time Players" with Dan Aykroyd, John Belushi, Gilda Radner, Jane Curtin, Garrett Morris and Laraine Newman, Murray took his first feature film role as Tripper in "Meatballs," directed by Ivan Reitman and co-written by Harold Ramis. He was then featured as John Storm, the Human Torch, in a TVTV production of "Marvel Comics' Fantastic Attractions." Murray next starred as journalist Hunter Thompson in "Where the Buffalo Roam," followed by "Caddyshack," which was directed by Harold Ramis. He then collaborated with Reitman and Ramis again, this time on the 1981 smash comedy "Stripes." Most recently, he starred as Larry Darrell in the soon-to-be-released Columbia Pictures feature "The Razor's Edge."

Now Murray re-teams with co-writers and co-stars Dan Aykroyd and Harold Ramis and with director Ivan Reitman. "Danny, Harold and Ivan turned in a great script," says Murray. "It's a very well-written script. On some films I've done the script had no meaning at all. It was an offense to us that it was there every morning," he smiles. "But the dialogue in this script is great, so we actually got to use it. However, it was also important to be able to improvise because it's impossible to completely script physical comedy. A gesture or an action may come up during a rehearsal, and that, in turn, may trigger something you want to say."

"Ivan is great at allowing us to improvise and at knowing just how far to let it go. This is the third film I've done with him, so I try to walk the line between being his friend by helping him maintain order on the set and really stirring things up by getting goofy. It's a great feeling--it reminds me of a Spanish class I had when I was a junior in high school," he laughs.

"We clown around a lot on the set, but it's important when you're making a comedy," Murray explains. "Because you don't have a real audience, it's important to know that the crew is enjoying it. In fact, one of the terrific things about working with Ivan is that he's a great laughter. It's essential for people who direct comedy to be able to laugh if they are going to pass the humor on to the audience. And Ivan is a master at it."

Columbia Pictures presents an Ivan Reitman Film, "Ghostbusters," starring Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, Sigourney Weaver, Harold Ramis and Rick Moranis, produced and directed by Ivan Reitman from a screenplay by Dan Aykroyd and Harold Ramis.

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**Columbia Pictures**

DAN AYKROYD

Biography/Feature

"Bill Murray, Harold Ramis and myself are the Ghostbusters-- we find and trap ghosts. The three of us are a team: Harold plays the brain, Bill plays the mouth and I play the heart," says Dan Aykroyd, creator, co-writer and co-star of the Columbia Pictures comedy "Ghostbusters."

"'Ghostbusters,'" he continues, "is about three para-psychologists who study ghosts and other supernatural entities and what happens to them when they are thrown out of the university where they have been doing research."

"As Dr. Ray Stantz, I play the optimist of the group," explains Aykroyd. "My part is more spiritual in nature and less hard in characterization than the other roles I've done. The look is also closer to my actual physical persona--no weird glasses or hats in this one."

Born in Ottawa and raised in Quebec, Aykroyd was given a toy microphone at the age of 3 by his parents, who hoped to direct some of their son's seemingly endless energy. He rebelled as a youth and was expelled from some of Canada's finest schools, including a seminary.

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His original ambition was criminology, which he studied at Carlton University in Ottawa for four years. However, Aykroyd joined the Toronto company of the Second City improvisational troupe, developing his comedic talents from the experience. In addition, Dan and some friends ran Club 505--"the best bootleg booze joint that there ever was in Canada"--from 1:00 a.m. on every night.

Aykroyd eventually joined the Chicago company of Second City, where he performed with "Ghostbusters" co-stars Bill Murray and Harold Ramis. "When I first came to Chicago with Valerie Bromfield," he recalls, "we had an act that was kind of a Nichols and May routine. We came down from Toronto, and the man who picked us up at the airport was Bill Murray. From then on, he took care of me at Second City and made sure I knew all the rules, who was who. He took me under his wing."

While performing with Second City, Dan was spotted by "Saturday Night Live" executive producer Lorne Michaels. At the time, the TV program was still in its formative stages.

Aykroyd remained a staple of the "Saturday Night Live" cast for five seasons as both an actor and a writer. Some of the characters for which he is best remembered include his Tom Snyder, Richard Nixon and Jimmy Carter, as well as scores of original creations such as the Coneheads and, most memorably, the Blues Brothers in collaboration with John Belushi.

Aykroyd won an Emmy Award in 1977 for his work on "Saturday Night Live." He made his Canadian film debut in 1975 with "Love at First Sight," but his American film debut came in 1979 with



Steven Spielberg's "1941." His next film was John Landis' "The Blues Brothers" with John Belushi, an international box-office success released in 1980. He followed this with John Avildsen's "Neighbors," also with Belushi, in 1982. More recently, Aykroyd starred in "Dr. Detroit," appeared in "Twilight Zone--The Movie," and, in 1983, starred with Eddie Murphy in "Trading Places."

A card-carrying member of the American Society for Psychical Research, Aykroyd believes that ghosts and American humor are linked forever in film history by comedians like Laurel and Hardy, Abbott and Costello, the Bowery Boys, Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis, and Bob Hope. "All comedy performers have dealt with ghosts in some of their work," says Aykroyd. "We're just doing the modern version of the old-time ghost movies. The only difference is that we have a little more theory, perhaps a little more science and a lot more new technology than our predecessors."

"Ghostbusters" can also boast a new generation of comedians. "We all came out of the same vein, Second City Improvisational Theatre in Chicago," explains Aykroyd. "Therefore, we all have these skills. It's like graduating from a dental college--some guy might know how to knock in gold fillings a little better and another guy might know how to do porcelain work better. We all have these common skills, and our most successful ventures seem to be when we pool our resources.

"That sort of collaboration and improvisation," says Aykroyd, "is important to an actor. When you have a crew of 50 people waiting on you to get a line right, you feel the pressure of

professionalism, but there should be a loose feeling on the set, especially with a comedy. When I wrote this, co-wrote it with Harold and Ivan, I knew that I would be changing even some of my own stuff that I had written. I think a script should be in a process of change, even right up until we roll camera. Scripts are basically a blueprint. I don't expect the other performers, nor do I expect myself, to adhere totally to what's written on the page. It has to be adapted and changed and improved as the day goes on, as the feeling for the film progresses."

Aykroyd has built a career on spontaneity and generosity on stage and screen. "Improvisation," he says, "improves everything. Improv brightens it up and makes it sparkle."

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**Columbia Pictures**

SIGOURNEY WEAVER

Biography/Feature

"I've always thought of myself as an actor, not an actress. The word 'actor' seems to mean craft; 'actress' tends to translate into feather boas." So says Sigourney Weaver, who, as Dana Barrett in Columbia Pictures new comedy, "Ghostbusters," wears not a single feather boa but does have ghosts in her fridge.

"I play a character who has a problem with a major appliance in my home--it's possessed," she laughs. "The film's premise is that this is a common household problem. This is not something on a television special. Everyone in the city has a ghost problem and it's getting out of hand. There is only one group who can take care of it--the Ghostbusters."

Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd and Harold Ramis play these new-age exterminators. "The opportunity to do a comedy with Bill, Dan, Harold and Rick Moranis, who plays my neighbor, was part of the great appeal the film had for me," explains Sigourney. "I knew the work would be loose, crazy and spontaneous. I've worked on the stage so I've done a lot of improvisation, but this was a different atmosphere for film. Having come out of Second City, the guys were all very generous. There was no ego on this show. It was all very giving, which was wonderful."

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Born in New York City to former NBC president Sylvester "Pat" Weaver and English actress Elizabeth Inglis, Miss Weaver changed her first name from Susan to Sigourney, after a minor character in F. Scott Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby." She attended the Brearley, Chapin and Ethel Walker schools before going to Stanford University, where she studied English literature. Upon graduation, she enrolled in Yale University School of Drama, from which she received an M.F.A. "When I left Yale," Sigourney recalls, "it was my intention never to be part of show business. I wanted to get a nice ordinary job." But playwright Christopher Durang offered her a role in his new play, "The Nature and Purpose of the Universe," which was being produced off-Broadway. She accepted, and for the next few years did a number of plays with off-Broadway and road-company groups until she had a chance, in 1977, to play a small role in John Guare's "Marco Polo Sings a Solo," which Joseph Papp was producing at the Public Theatre in New York. Miss Weaver played a Swedish maid who cleans the glacier on which the action takes place and whose midsection lights up when she is artificially impregnated by an astronaut.

In 1978 she was asked to test for the part of officer Ripley, the lone survivor of the spaceship Nostromo in "Alien." She got the part, and "Alien," of course, became a huge success, landing Miss Weaver on the cover of Newsweek.

Sigourney devoted much time to finding the next two roles she would play--both women with interesting careers and personal lives who, inevitably, face tension between the two. In "Eyewitness," directed by Peter Yates, she played a television newscaster who falls

in love with a janitor (William Hurt), and in "The Year of Living Dangerously," she portrayed a British attaché who becomes romantically involved with a journalist (Mel Gibson) during the fall of Djakarta.

Beginning to feel typecast as "stalwart, honest, strong and brave," Miss Weaver next chose "Deal of the Century," a black comedy about arms sales.

Now, in "Ghostbusters," Miss Weaver portrays Dana Barrett, "a sensible girl."

"The script has the basic elements in it--great heart and great humor, and our director, Ivan Reitman, is a real craftsman."

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**Columbia Pictures**

HAROLD RAMIS

Biography/Feature

"The Clark Kent of comedy" is how the Los Angeles Times recently described Harold Ramis. Indeed, he has quietly changed his generation's notion of what is funny. His credentials are impeccable, and according to "Ghostbusters" co-star Bill Murray, he is "the standard."

"If Harold thinks it's funny, it's funny," says Murray. Ramis and Murray star with Dan Aykroyd, Sigourney Weaver and Rick Moranis in Columbia Pictures' new comedy "Ghostbusters."

Born and raised in Chicago, Ramis graduated from St. Louis' Washington University with a degree in English literature. After a stint as a psychiatric orderly, he and his wife returned to Chicago, where he became a substitute teacher, freelanced for the Chicago Daily News, was hired as "jokes editor" at Playboy and was soon promoted to interview both celebrities and Playmates.

Then, he was invited to audition for Second City. He spent a year in the touring company, and in 1969 he became a regular cast member with the Chicago troupe. Remembered for his lightning-fast improvisations, Ramis has been called one of the fastest-thinking humans ever to grace the Second City stages. He was

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eventually asked to write and perform in a New York stage revue called "The National Lampoon Show." Ivan Reitman produced the show, which also starred John Belushi, Gilda Radner, Bill Murray and Brian Doyle-Murray. After several months, Ramis left to write a serialized-fictionalized history of television for the "Visions" series on PBS. It was then that Ivan Reitman called about writing the script that would eventually become "Animal House."

Meanwhile, Ramis left for Canada, where he became one of the founding fathers and the first head-writer (also a cast member) of SCTV. He continued his work as co-writer on "Animal House," and when the movie opened, it became one of the biggest youth-oriented hits of all time.

Ramis went on to co-write and direct "Caddyshack" starring Bill Murray, Chevy Chase and Rodney Dangerfield. He co-wrote "Meatballs" for director Ivan Reitman and star Bill Murray, and then co-wrote and co-starred with Bill Murray in "Stripes," again for Reitman. Next, he directed one of the biggest box-office hits of the summer of 1983, "National Lampoon's Vacation," starring Chevy Chase. And, of course, he most recently co-wrote (with Dan Aykroyd) and co-stars in "Ghostbusters."

Ramis relishes working with essentially the same group of people from project to project. "It's important to like, trust and depend on the actors you're working with," he says. "I like to feel that there's a lot of energy, a lot of give and take. We approached 'Ghostbusters' from the point of view that my character, Spengler, was the brains because I tend to be rationalistic.

Danny was the heart because he tends to be enthusiastic and sincere, and Bill was the mouth because he really can talk. Together, we add up to a whole person.

"I see all of us as part of a long mainstream of comedy that goes back to silent films," he adds. "I mean, as subtle or as bright as some of these people can be, we still reach back into the established repertory of comedy moves. For instance, when you want to take a fall, there's not a new way to fall. You go to the handbook. The same with a doubletake; it's something you can practice. What we are doing is drawing on what we like from the past and just adding our own contemporary values to it."

As co-writer/co-star of "Ghostbusters," Ramis says he liked playing against people's expectations of what a ghost film should be like. "Most ghost films depend on creating terror in the audience and then sustaining that terror throughout the film. Even in ghost comedies, it's usually people acting scared in the broadest way, but always with great reverence for the ghosts. What we are doing, which I love, is we are taking a completely mundane attitude toward the supernatural. We're simply janitors cleaning up someone else's mess with a little bit of high technology."

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**Columbia Pictures**

RICK MORANIS

Biography/Feature

"Ghostbusters" brings together some of the best comic talents of contemporary film and television, including Emmy Award-winner Rick Moranis, who joins Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd and Harold Ramis in the Columbia Pictures comedy. "My character, Louis, spent most of his post-graduate life as a practicing accountant in New York City," says Moranis, "and a great part of his social life longing after the character played by Sigourney Weaver-- a relationship that winds up being consummated after they become almost possessed by this demonic spirit. A lot of strange things happen in New York, and this is just another one of them."

For Moranis, "Ghostbusters" was a one-in-a-million opportunity to be part of a real team. "The combination of working with comic actors like Bill, Dan and Harold and spending most of the movie chasing after a beauty like Sigourney was hard to beat."

A former member of the Second City Television Company, he first met Bill Murray when Murray did a guest shot on the Toronto-based show. "Bill's great," Moranis says. "Bill walks onto the set, and you have a terrific time. He's got a wonderful gift for comedy. With Bill, there's always the possibility that something

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very strange will happen--and certainly very funny. That unpredictable sense of danger is what makes his particular brand of comedy so special.

"Dan Aykroyd, the creator of 'Ghostbusters,' has an amazing mind," continues Moranis. "After Louis becomes this character, Vince Clortho, I rattle off a couple of paragraphs that sound like complete nonsense, yet I'm convinced it makes total sense to Dan Aykroyd. It's like the cosmology that George Lucas had in 'Star Wars.' I think Dan, somewhere in his mind, knows everything there is to know about this other dimension where this 'Ghostbusters' thing takes place.

"Before 'Ghostbusters,' I had never worked with Harold Ramis, but I was fortunate to replace Harold on SCTV," Moranis says. "Harold has one of those subtle deliveries in his comedy which spans a very dynamic range. I think he is really one of the funniest people around."

Within less than two years, Moranis, who joined "SCTV" in 1980, created, with fellow SCTV-er Dave Thomas, the now-famous Canadian "hosers," the McKenzie Brothers, cut an album which went gold, and wrote, directed and starred in the film "Strange Brew."

While still in high school in his native Toronto, Moranis began working part time at a radio station, which led to a job with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) in which he engineered and produced radio shows, as well as wrote material for the disc jockeys. He began writing and acting for CBC on radio and television, wrote and performed in two pilots for CBC, and appeared nationally on CBC on "The Alan Hamel Show" and "90 Minutes Live."

After joining "SCTV" in 1980, Moranis co-created the McKenzie Brothers and earned acclaim for his portrayals of such personalities as Woody Allen, Dick Cavett and Merv Griffin. "SCTV" went network on NBC in 1981, and Moranis earned Emmys for comedy writing in 1982 and 1983 for his contributions to the show.

Moranis' more recent work includes "Streets of Fire" for director Walter Hill, which he followed with "Ghostbusters" for Ivan Reitman. He also appears in the upcoming features "The Breakfast Club" and "The Wild Life."

Recalling his time on the set with Murray, Aykroyd and Ramis, Moranis says, "When you're working with these guys, the script is really a blueprint. We're all writers, so the script frequently got thrown out and the best idea won. There was no competition as far as whose line was going to be used. Everyone just sort of agreed on what was going to make for the best scene. It's what Harold calls the unwritten rule of Second City. If you make the other guy look as good as he can, you're going to look better. It's about support and helping people and it really works. That's really the feeling you got on the set."

"I had never worked with Rick Moranis until this film," says "Ghostbusters" director Ivan Reitman. "I had been a great admirer of his and had loved SCTV. I thought he was a great contributor to the show. Rick's strength is that he's a good actor, and he's naturally funny."

"Ivan, along with taking on a very difficult job of supervising an enormous technical task, created a very open environment

for his actors," adds Moranis. "He's a great director for a comedian because you can try all your ideas. He'll use the one that works the best for the scene, for the project, for you, for every condition--it's really good. Ivan encourages ideas and is very open. He has a great style of working. It's a shame that more productions aren't done like this one. It would, no doubt, inspire better-quality films."

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**Columbia Pictures**

ERNIE HUDSON

Biography/Feature

"I'll tell you, if I heard a lot of strange noises and had weird stuff going on at my house, I'd like to know there is someone to call and say, 'Hey, something's going on here; come and check it out.'" And in Columbia Pictures new comedy, "Ghostbusters," Ernie Hudson is one of those guys you call when things go bump in the night.

Starring with Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, Sigourney Weaver Harold Ramis and Rick Moranis, and under Ivan Reitman's direction, Hudson had the opportunity to be part of a unique group of talents. "Working with Bill, Dan, Harold and Ivan was great," he says. "They have a basic trust for each other's work and abilities. That kind of trust is so important and so rare. Learning from them was a great experience."

A seasoned actor, writer and theatrical producer in his own right, Michigan-born Hudson spent nearly a decade in the academic community studying, acting and producing plays at Wayne State University, Yale University and the University of Minnesota. He won excellent notices for his performance in "The Great White Hope," which, first performed in Minneapolis, was brought to Los Angeles for a successful run.

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In the summer of 1974, director Gordon Parks gave him his film break, a supporting role in "Leadbelly," the biography of famed singer/songwriter Huddie Ledbetter. Featured roles followed shortly thereafter in "The Main Event" with Barbra Streisand, "The Jazz Singer" with Neil Diamond, "Penitentiary II," "Spacehunter: Adventures in the Forbidden Zone," "Two of a Kind" with John Travolta and the upcoming "National Lampoon's Joy of Sex." For television, Hudson has made recent appearances in the series "The A-Team" and "Webster," and has done several telefilms, including the miniseries "Roots II," "White Mama," "King" and "The Women of San Quentin."

When "Ghostbusters" began casting, dozens of actors were vying for the part of Winston. Hudson recalls, "I met with Ivan shortly after I did 'Spacehunter.' He said that there really wasn't a part in it for me, that they wanted a comedian for the role of Winston. I read for it anyway and, even though it went well, I knew they weren't set on me. I waited for about a month, which is an eternity for an actor, before I got the part.

"I was thrilled," he continues. "I knew I could work well with everybody. I felt I really knew the character and that it would be a lot of fun, which it was--running around New York with the funniest guys you'll ever meet looking for ghosts."

But does Ernie Hudson believe in ghosts? "I believe there are spirits, that there's a plane that exists beyond what we know. There are other realities. Unfortunately, they're usually portrayed as evil. Technologically, we've progressed, but spiritually we're still in the Dark Ages. The more we learn about that other plane, the more we'll benefit from it.



"I do believe in ghosts and that there can be, and are, good ones. I believe in spirituality, in life and in love."

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**Columbia Pictures**

IVAN REITMAN

Biography/Feature

Producer/director Ivan Reitman continues to shape America's perception of contemporary comedy. From the groundbreaking off-Broadway "National Lampoon Show" to the influential blockbuster "Animal House," from the hilarious "Meatballs" to the international success of "Stripes," Reitman's films have become a kind of standard by which movie comedy is measured.

Expertly guiding many of his stars through the transition from television to film, Reitman has consistently worked with some of the greatest comedy minds of our generation. He continues the tradition with "Ghostbusters," marking his fourth collaboration with Harold Ramis, his third with Bill Murray and his second with Dan Aykroyd. Reitman's comedies, coincidentally, have all been about friendship, a theme again reflected in "Ghostbusters."

Although the director's participation in "Ghostbusters" began with some of the earliest rewrites, the project itself originated with Dan Aykroyd. "Danny had written a script called 'Ghostbusters,'" recalls Reitman, "and he had written it with Bill Murray in mind, as a starring vehicle for the two of them.

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It was a real extraordinary supernatural adventure, and they came to me with it. That was less than a year ago--last May. I thought it was a wonderful idea, but I wanted it to be a little more realistic. In all my films, I've tried to give the comedy a base in reality. Once we started working on the screenplay together, I thought it would be good to get Harold Ramis involved--Harold has helped me on all our previous hits, "Animal House," "Meatballs" and "Stripes"--because he has the right sensibility to help ground this extraordinary story. He is also one of the finest comedy writers in America. And so Dan, Harold and I went out to Martha's Vineyard last summer and worked on the script. When Bill got back from Europe, where he was shooting 'The Razor's Edge,' we worked on yet another draft. Then, we wrote another draft while we were in production--that's the way I like to work.

"The actor/comedians that I've worked with are their own best writers," explains the director. "They know what will sound best coming out of their mouths. They have a natural sense of what is funny, and they are great contributors in terms of what their lines should be. I try to promote an organized type of improvisation on the set."

A native Czech whose family fled to Canada when he was 4, Reitman accomplished much at an early age. After winning a music prize in a national student competition for the Canadian Bicentennial and producing and directing several shorts in college which were aired on Canadian television, Reitman started the New Cinema of Canada, a non-theatrical film distribution company which is still active.

Reitman went on to produce a live television variety show with a young comedian, Dan Aykroyd, as its announcer. "I started with Dan when I directed television back in Toronto. I had a show called 'Greed' where he was the announcer. He would have to kick back half of his salary to me because we didn't have enough to help pay for the show," laughs Reitman. "We would make up the show every Saturday afternoon. It would go on opposite the hockey game, which meant that no one watched. It also meant that we could do whatever we wanted."

Shortly thereafter, he produced "Spellbound" for the Toronto stage, which evolved into "The Magic Show," a five-year hit on Broadway and the 13th longest-running show in Broadway history.

After "The Magic Show," Reitman produced the off-Broadway hit, "The National Lampoon Show," and its subsequent year-long tour. The success of this show led to the development of "National Lampoon's Animal House," which Reitman produced. Released in 1978, this wild comedy became one of the 15 top-grossing films of all time.

Reitman followed this success with another summer release the next year, "Meatballs," starring Bill Murray, which Reitman directed and Harold Ramis co-wrote. "After 'Animal House,' I thought it would be a good idea to try directing," recalls Reitman. "Harold needed new furniture for his house, so that's how I corralled him into doing 'Meatballs.'" I had to keep bugging Bill, but he finally agreed too."

In 1981 Reitman hit paydirt twice, first with the surprise hit of that summer, "Stripes" (again with Bill Murray and co-starring Harold Ramis, who also co-wrote), followed by the critically

acclaimed feature-length animated hit, "Heavy Metal," which he produced.

In early 1983, Reitman returned to the Broadway stage, earning a Tony nomination for directing the hit musical magic show, "Merlin," which he also produced, starring Doug Henning.

It was in May of 1983 that Dan Aykroyd first brought his "Ghostbusters" script to Ivan Reitman. "As we got into the script, I realized I needed a quiet, intelligent, slightly goofy presence," remembers the director, "so it occurred to me that Harold would be a great foil for the two other guys. I have directed Bill twice before, so I had a pretty good idea what I wanted him to do in this film. And in Dan's case, I knew he has a side to his personality that he had never shown on film before. He keeps playing these very eccentric characters, and he's really a very sweet, charming man in real life. I wanted some of that on the screen.

"I think the key to their humor is irony," elaborates Reitman. "Even though there is exaggeration involved, there's a core of reality in their humor that you won't find in the comedy of the late '50s with a Jerry Lewis or Bob Hope. Our generation's comedians view the world through ironic glasses."

Reitman's way with actors won praise from "Ghostbusters" co-star Rick Moranis. "Ivan, along with taking on a very difficult job of supervising an enormous technical task, created a very open environment for his actors," says Moranis. "He's a great director for a comedian because you can try all your ideas. He'll use the one that works the best for the scene, for the project, for you, for every condition--it's really good. Ivan

encourages ideas and is very open. He has a great style of working. It's a shame that more productions aren't done like this one. It would, no doubt, inspire better-quality films."

Bill Murray confirms the director's affinity for comedy. "We clown around a lot on the set, but it's important when you're making a comedy," Murray explains. "Because you don't have a real audience, it's important to know that the crew is enjoying it. In fact, one of the terrific things about working with Ivan is that he's a great laughter. It's essential for people who direct comedy to be able to laugh if they are going to pass the humor on to the audience. And Ivan is a master at it."

"This is the luckiest and happiest filming experience I've ever been involved in," concludes Reitman. "It came together quickly and smoothly, and the shooting was a very happy experience. Looking back on it, I guess you could say I laughed every day. Yes, that would be the best way to characterize the making of 'Ghostbusters'--I found many, many opportunities to laugh."

Columbia Pictures presents an Ivan Reitman Film, "Ghostbusters," starring Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, Sigourney Weaver, Harold Ramis and Rick Moranis, produced and directed by Ivan Reitman from a screenplay by Dan Aykroyd and Harold Ramis.

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**Columbia Pictures**

"GHOSTBUSTERS"

Special Effects Feature

"Ghostbusters" director Ivan Reitman has said that if his film is going to succeed, it must do so with or without special effects--that first and foremost, it must succeed as a comedy. Nevertheless, "Ghostbusters" has earned the distinction of being the first major comedy to employ the large-scale special effects usually reserved for space or horror films.

"From the very beginning, we felt it was important to make this film in a first-class manner," says Reitman. "We didn't want this to be 'Abbott and Costello Meet Some Ghosts,' where you know ghosts are present because you see picture frames move. I felt that 'Ghostbusters' should have the kind of large-scale effects that one would associate with a 'Star Wars' type of film, so the logical step was to try to get the people who indeed had created those effects.

Columbia Pictures presents "Ghostbusters," starring Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, Sigourney Weaver, Harold Ramis and Rick Moranis. Ivan Reitman produced and directed from an original screenplay by Dan Aykroyd and Harold Ramis.

"Ghostbusters" is the first film taken on by Entertainment Effects Group (in conjunction with Boss Film Corporation), the

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new special effects house set up by Academy Award-winner Richard Edlund. Established to handle the effects on "Ghostbusters" and "2010," E.E.G's Marina del Rey headquarters are staffed by many of the best effects people in the business. "It's really a who's who," says Edlund. "We've got people here that have worked on every important special effects picture in the last 10 years or more. Some of the guys go back 40 years."

Edlund, along with his visual effects art director, John Bruno, and staff, had their work cut out for them due to the short production schedule and the nearly 200 effects required for "Ghostbusters." "Our approach was 'give us ghosts like we've never seen before,'" recalls associate producer Michael Gross. And so the people at E.E.G. set up their shop, including a rubber department, a shooting department, a shooting stage, an optical department, an animation department and an editorial department. The actual work, however, began in the machine shop, where Gene Whiteman designed and built the cameras.

"Our field is so rarified that almost everything has to be hot-rodged to some degree," comments Edlund. "That is, a lot of the equipment we need is not available off the shelf. We have to find something close and then modify it to fit our needs. One example is our 65mm camera which we built ourselves."

The visual effects themselves (or "gags") were created by various means. Edlund and his crew animated creatures and ghosts with stop-motion, rotoscoping and cell animation. Using miniatures, they re-created the Central Park West apartment where so many of the paranormal disturbances take place. By injecting dyes and

pigment into the water of a cloud tank, they were able to generate rolling skies and assorted atmospheric conditions. Forty artists and technicians, under the direction of Stuart Ziff, created the various fantasy creatures, including the "terror dogs," which are stone manifestations of ancient apparitions at the Central Park West apartment building. Randall William Cook designed, constructed and animated the stop-motion and miniature "terror dog" puppets, each with different capabilities.

"Technically, it takes as many as 10 people to operate a single 'terror dog,'" explains Michael Gross. "There's a tremendous amount of mechanics involved--hydraulics, electronics, wires, as well as very skilled puppeteers sitting inside and operating. This whole animal has to be literally made from scratch, has to be designed, sculpted out of clay and cast in various types of foam, plastic and other materials that are flexible and workable, so the people can actually get inside."

Because "Ghostbusters" was shot both in New York and Burbank, a number of matte shots were needed to re-create New York in the studio and to enhance the buildings and skyline with the elements of fantasy necessary to create the temple set, which really comes to life during the film's climax. There are about 50 mattes in the film, the majority being architectural mattes. In order to match the temple-top created by production designer John De Cuir on Stage 16, matte painter Matthew Yuricich added nearly 30 stories onto the building that was actually used in New York. Conversely, there were some buildings in New York that were made shorter through matte painting so that the temple building will be the one the audience sees on the skyline.

Mark Stetson, supervisor at E.E.G.'s model shop, was responsible for making the model of Sigourney Weaver's apartment building with the temple on top. The miniature he built was 20 feet tall and was destroyed by a pyrotechnical "gag" during the film's climax.

"We had nearly as many people working on the special effects for 'Ghostbusters' as we had on our crew during the height of production," recalls associate producer Joe Medjuck. "Richard Edlund and his team were on an incredibly tight schedule. They had nearly 200 special shots to put into the film, and the majority of that work could only be done after we finished shooting in February. That's when the hard work really began."

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