AN INSIDE LOOK AT THE MAKING-OF "GHOSTBUSTERS"

GHOSTBUSTERS began as "Ghost Smashers," Dan Aykroyd’s original screenplay in which he and John Belushi traveled through space and time in pursuit of ghosts. When Aykroyd brought the project to Ivan Reitman, successful comedy producer of "Animal House" and director of "Stripes," Reitman agreed to helm the film, but wanted to revise the script’s locale entirely to modern-day New York City. Coming up with the basic premise of scientists who turn to ghostbusting after losing their college grants, Reitman recruited "Animal House" co-writer Harold Ramis to rework the script with Aykroyd.

In May 1983, armed with a concept and the star team of Murray and Aykroyd, Reitman pitched GHOSTBUSTERS to Columbia Pictures. Even without a finished script, the studio saw the project’s potential and greenlit the film with the understanding it would be ready for release in one year, the summer of 1984.
Among the sites utilized by the filmmakers were the New York Public Library, City Hall, Columbia University, Tavern on the Green, Central Park West and Columbus Circle. After one month in Manhattan, cast and crew returned to the Burbank Studios, where production designer John De Cuir had completed the rooftop temple set. Sixty-feet high and covering an entire soundstage, the set was surrounded by a backlit, 360-degree panorama of NYC.

It was so large, in fact, that Columbia had to shut down other stages to provide cinematographer Laszlo Kovacs enough power (50,000 amperes) to properly light it. A second soundstage contained Dana’s apartment and a partial hotel set. Additional Los Angeles locations included a downtown firehouse, MacArthur Park, the Biltmore Hotel and the Burbank Studio’s ranch, where a two-story facade of Dana’s apartment building was recreated.
CREATING AN ICON

Michael Gross – the former art director of the ‘National Lampoon’ – explains the origin of the logo:

GROSS: The second most famous thing I’ve ever done – after the ‘We’ll Kill This Dog’ cover – is the ‘No Ghosts’ logo used for GHOSTBUSTERS. Now I did not create the concept – Danny Aykroyd did – so I take care to say I designed it. In fact it was described in the script.

Q: This was the ghost behind the European ‘No’ sign?

GROSS: Yes. I turned the signal the other way, because we didn’t use that sign in America yet so it didn’t look wrong. The initial concept has the word ‘Ghostbusters’ in the crossbar, but it tilted the way it actually is used – tilted down – it didn’t read right, so I reversed it. Then we took the word out. In Europe, the logo’s the other way around... it was vertically flopped, because they didn’t think we should mess with their symbol.

– COMIC BOOK ARTIST, April 2003

GHOSTBUSTERS
Initial logo exploration

Ghostbusters

Initial logo exploration
DEVELOPING THE CHARACTERS

Production of GHOSTBUSTERS began in October 1983. Joining Murray and Aykroyd on location in New York were co-stars Sigourney Weaver, Rick Moranis, Ernie Hudson and Ramis himself as fellow buster, Egon Spengler.

Dan Aykroyd: Dr. Raymond Stantz/Writer
Born July 1, 1952
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
Partial Filmography:
- 50 First Dates
- 1941
- The Blues Brothers
- Christmas with the Kranks
- The Coneheads
- Dragnet
- Evolution
- Ghostbusters
- Ghostbusters 2
- Loose Cannons
- My Girl
- TV’s “Saturday Night Live”
- Trading Places

Harold Ramis: Dr. Egon Spengler/Writer
Born: November 21, 1944
Chicago, Illinois
Partial Filmography:
- Analyze That
- Analyze This
- Animal House
- Armed and Dangerous
- Back to School
- Bedazzled
- Caddyshack
- Club Paradise
- Groundhog Day
- Ghostbusters
- Ghostbusters 2
- Meatballs
- Stripes
Bill Murray: Dr. Peter Venkman  
Born: September 21, 1950  
Wilmette, Illinois  

Partial Filmography:  
- Caddyshack  
- Ghostbusters  
- Ghostbusters 2  
- Groundhog Day  
- Kingpin  
- The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou  
- Lost in Translation  
- Mad Dog and Glory  
- The Royal Tenenbaums  
- Rushmore  
- TV’s “Saturday Night Live”  
- Stripes  
- What About Bob

Ernie Hudson: Winston Zeddemore  
Born: December 17, 1946  
Benton Harbor, Michigan  

Partial Filmography:  
- Airheads  
- The Basketball Diaries  
- The Crow  
- Ghostbusters  
- Ghostbusters 2  
- The Hand That Rocks the Cradle  
- Miss Congeniality  
- Miss Congeniality 2: Armed and Fabulous  
- The Substitute

When Belushi died in March 1982, trade papers reported Richard Pryor was under consideration as his replacement, but by the year’s end, Bill Murray had agreed to take over the role.
Sigourney Weaver: Dana Barrett
Born: October 8, 1949
New York, New York

Partial Filmography:
- Alien
- Aliens
- Alien²
- Alien: Resurrection
- Company Man
- Death and the Maiden
- Ghostbusters
- Ghostbusters 2
- Gorillas in the Mist
- The Ice Storm
- Imaginary Heroes
- Tadpole
- The Village
- The Year of Living Dangerously

Rick Moranis: Louis Tully
Born: April 18, 1954
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Partial Filmography:
- The Adventures of Bob & Doug McKenzie: Strange Brew
- The Flintstones
- Ghostbusters
- Ghostbusters 2
- Honey I Blew Up the Kid
- Honey, I Shrank the Audience
- Honey, I Shrank the Kids
- Honey, We Shrunk Ourselves
- L.A. Story
- Little Giants
- Little Shop of Horrors
- Parenthood
- Spaceballs

Ivan Reitman: Director
Born: October 27, 1946
Komárom, Czechoslovakia

Partial Filmography:
- Dave
- Evolution
- Father's Day
- Ghostbusters
- Ghostbusters 2
- Junior
- Kindergarten Cop
- Legal Eagles
- Meatballs
- Six Days
- Seven Nights
- Stripes
- Twins
Slimer: Digitally Rendered Actor
Born: 1500 A.D.
Manhattan, New York, U.S.
Partial Filmography:
- Ghostbusters
- Ghostbusters 2

Stay Puft: Actor
Born: 1984
Manhattan, New York, U.S.
Partial Filmography:
- Ghostbusters

Terror Dog: Assistant to Gogar. Guards the gates of hell.
WINSTON: EVAH! THEY WOOP IN TRIUMPH... AND CONSIDERABLE RELIEF.

VENKMAN (PULLING UP HIS VISOR)

WELL! THAT WASN'T SO BAD, WAS IT?

WINSTON LOOKS ASKANCE AT HIM.

WINSTON

ARE YOU KIDDING? THAT WAS LIKE TRYING TO PUSH SMOKE INTO A BOTTLE WITH A BASEBALL BAT. NOW WHAT DO WE DO WITH IT?

WINSTON LOOKS AT VENKMAN AS HE TURNS TO CHEERS SPENGLER (CONFIRMS IT)
HE'S IN THERE!

WINSTON LOOKS AT VENKMAN - VENKMAN LOOKS AT SPENGLER SPENGLER SHRUGS. VENKMAN
WE'LL HAVE TO WORK ON THAT.

VENKMAN (TO STANTZ)

GRAB THAT, WOULD YOU, RAY?

THEY ALL EXIT, LEAVING STANTZ TO DEAL WITH THE TRAP.

INT. LOBBY-

THE ELEVATOR OPENS AND THE GHOSTBUSTERS EMERGE. STANTZ AND VENKMAN COME OUT FIRST. STANTZ HOLDS THE TRAP BY ITS FOOT PEDAL, HE RANGLIES IT AWAY FROM HIS BODY AS IF IT IS SOMETHING PUTRID. SPENGLER AND WINSTON FOLLOW.
SPECIAL EFFECTS

To meet GHOSTBUSTER'S tight production deadlines, visual effects supervisor Richard Edlund and his staff were already at work on creating the film's 300 special effects shots before shooting was even complete. Working at his shop in Marina del Rey and on the soundstages at the Burbank Studios, Edlund created creatures utilizing stop-motion, rotoscoping and cell animation. Using miniatures, he recreated the Central Park West apartment building and its accompanying unnatural disasters. These effect shots were added to the film after principal photography was complete in February 1984.
CONVERSATION CONTINUES - BEHIND SHELVES THROUGHOUT SCENE

HIS P.O.V. - SHE'S SITTING ON NOTHING - FLOATING

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