

## KEN CLARKE - MY PROFESSIONAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

When I left junior school at the age of twelve my plastering career started at the well known building Arts & Craft Secondary School, 'Christopher Wren', and from this early age I was particularly interested in fibrous plastering. It was a known fact that, of a class of 16, two of the pupils, after four years of schooling, would start their training at a major film studio. I passed my GCE in Building Craft, Paintwork and Plasterwork (copy 1 attached) and was one of the lucky two to be chosen to start training at *Shepperton Studios*. This was my first achievement (copy 2 – letter of engagement, 9 June 1964, attached).

I started *Shepperton Studios* in the plastering Dept on 22 June 1964 under conditions of a six-month probationary period and a further 4 and half years. During this five-year apprenticeship, I was to do through the block release system, eight weeks at work and two weeks at Art & Craft College 'Lime Grove'. At the end of five years I was awarded my basic and final City and Guilds in plastering (basic June 1966 and final June 1968 – copies 3 and 4 attached). This was a big achievement for any youngman – for me; it was the beginning of a big career.

After my five years I was presented with one of the very last certificates of apprenticeship offered by the 'Film Industry Training Apprenticeship Council'. Thus, my apprenticeship came to an end. (Letter of thanks and delivery of my deeds and certificate 1 June 1969. – copies 5A and 5B attached).

It was common theory that one learned among craftsmen that, in doing your apprenticeship at a studio and staying on to work there, you would always be thought of as the boy and not a man, but in spite of everything, I decided to stay on at *Shepperton Studios*. The industry had plenty to offer if you worked hard enough for it and I was very determined to learn. I set myself high standards – for me it is not enough to be good but to be the best in my field. This was the target I had set for myself.

During my apprenticeship at *Shepperton Studios*, I worked on major productions such as 'Lord Jim', 'Moll Flanders', 'Anne of a thousand Days', 'Cromwell', etc. and I began to take a big interest in the industry. One job that particularly appealed to me was one nearer the camera – that of a stand-by plasterer. My first stand-by was a film called 'Wuthering Heights', made by a well-known American company. The American International (letter of thanks – copy 6 attached). From there I moved on to other stand-bys in films such as 'Lord Jim', 'Luther' etc.

It was at this time that I began taking an interest in design, so at home after work I took to sketching, drafting and small amounts of designing. With a small portfolio under my arm, I tackled different Designers and Art Directors, whose advice to me was to go back to college to perfect my new techniques.

I took their advice and went back to college at 'Lime Grove' and took a course of TV Design at night school. I stayed on for 18 months, but this course was interrupted by a slight upset. The studio administration would not transfer, assist or encourage me into the department of Art and Design, known as the 'Art Department'. Their view was that, after great expense in training me as a plasterer, they would not assist me in changing crafts. I felt let down by the administration at *Shepperton Studios* and after nine years, knew that there was a far bigger industry outside, called Freelancing.

At this time I was about to get married and the BBC offered me a position as a design assistant over a short period for holiday reliefs. The difference in salary at the BBC and the studio was quite substantial and at the time I needed the money most, with a mortgage to pay, I decided to stay with plastering.

So, with the title and the knowledge that I had, I drove in full force into the freelance world of filmmaking. By now, I had realised that the strongest survives and you are only as good as your last film. In January 1974 I started on a freelance film called 'Juggernaut', made by 'Richard Alan Simmonds Production Limited', and from here I moved on and worked on films, as listed as a freelance plasterer.

Since my first freelance film ‘Juggernaut’ to the present day I have learned to love my craft and the Film Industry profession. On previous productions, i.e. all the ‘Star Wars’ films, ‘Raiders of the Lost Ark’, ‘Dark Crystal’ and ‘Greystoke’, etc, I have had to produce new moulding and casting techniques to provide the film industry with better quality goods for construction, props, special effects, make-up and wardrobe departments.

In my opinion, the new technology, high standard directing and camera equipment, computers, video etc have forced us to provide the best. I continue to keep myself up to date with new techniques and the latest materials on the market. e.g. new and modern resins, silicones, rubbers, latex’s, waxes, plastics etc.

## **FILMS WORKED ON AT SHEPPERTON STUDIOS 1964 – 1973**

### **1964**

I’ve Gotta Horse	Billy Fury
The Curse of the Fly	Brian Donleavy
The Amorous Adventures of Moll Flanders	Kim Novak
The Bedford Incident	Richard Widmark
Dr Who and Daleks	Peter Cushing
Rotten to the Core	Eric Sykes
Monster of Terror	Boris Karloff
Darling	Julie Christie
The Return of Mr Moto	Henry Silva
The Skull	Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee
A Study in Terror	John Neville
Sands of Kalahari	Stanley Baker, Susannah York
The Spy who came in from the Cold	Richard Burton
Promise her Anything	Warren Beatty

### **1965**

The Great St Trinians Train Robbery	Frankie Howard
Cul-de-Sac	Donald Pleasance
The Psychopath	Patrick Wymark
Modesty Blaise	Monica Vitti, Dirk Bogarde
Georgy Girl	Lynn Redgrave
Daleks – Invasion Earth 2150	Peter Cushing
The Family Way	Hayley Mills
The Spy with a Cold Nose	Laurence Harvey
Drop Dead Darling	Tony Curtis
2001 A Space Odyssey	Keir Dullea
Danger Man TV Series	Patrick McGohann

### **1966**

A Man for All Seasons	Paul Scholfield
Casino Royale	Peter Sellers, David Niven
The Trygon Factor	Stewart Granger
Torture Garden	Jack Palance
Fathom	Raquel Welch
Berserk	Joan Crawford
Danger Route	Richard Johnson, Carol Lynley
The Great Catherine	Peter O’Toole
Half a Sixpence	Tommy Steele

**1967**

The Bofors Gun  
 Oliver  
 Salt and Pepper  
 Duffy  
 Girl on a Motorcycle  
 Don't Raise the Bridge Lower the River  
 Negatives  
 Otley  
 Twisted Nerve  
 Mrs Brown You've got a Lovely Daughter  
 The File of the Golden Goose  
 Play Dirty  
 Hostile Witness

Nicol Williamson  
 Ron Moody  
 Sammy Davis, Peter Lawford  
 James Coburn  
 Marriane Faithful  
 Jerry Lewis  
 Glenda Jackson  
 Tom Courtney  
 Hywell Bennet  
 Hermans Hermits  
 Yul Bryner  
 Michael Caine  
 Ray Milland

**1968**

The Looking Glass War  
 Till Death Us Do Part  
 The Adding Machine  
 The Best Home in London  
 The Mind of Mr Soames  
 The Oblong Box  
 Take a Girl Like You  
 Scream and Scream Again

Christopher Jones, Ralph Richardson  
 Warren Mitchell  
 Milo O'Shea  
 David Hemmings  
 Terrance Stamp  
 Vincent Price, Christopher Lee  
 Hayley Mills, Oliver Reed  
 Vincent Price, Peter Cushing

**1969**

The Birthday Party  
 The Reckoning  
 Every Home Should Have One  
 Anne of the Thousand Days  
 The Last Grenade  
 Cromwell  
 Loot  
 When Dinosaurs Ruled the Earth  
 Three Sisters

Robert Shaw  
 Nicol Williamson  
 Marty Feldman  
 Richard Burton  
 Stanley Baker  
 Richard Harris  
 Richard Attenborough  
 Victoria Vetri  
 Laurence Olivier

**1970**

The House that Dripped Blood  
 Scrooge  
 There's a Girl in my Soup  
 A Severed Head  
 Wuthering Heights  
 Dads Army  
 Macbeth  
 I Monster

Peter Cushing  
 Albert Finney  
 Peter Sellers, Goldie Hawn  
 Richard Attenborough  
 Timothy Dalton  
 Arthur Lowe  
 Jon Finch  
 Christopher Lee, Peter Cushing

**1971**

Fright  
 Crucible of Terror  
 Mary Queen of Scots  
 Mr Forbes and the Penquins  
 Tower of Evil  
 Whoever Slew Auntie Roo?  
 Young Winston  
 Zee and Co

Susan George  
 James Bolam, Mike Raven  
 Glenda Jackson, Venessa Redgrave  
 John Hurt, Hayley Mills  
 Bryant Haliday, Jill Haworth  
 Shelley Winters  
 Simon Ward, Anne Bancroft, Robert Shaw  
 Elizabeth Taylor, Michael Caine

## 1972

Asylum	Robert Powell
Tales from the Crypt	Ralph Richardson, Peter Cushing
The Asphyx	Robert Powell
Bequest to the Nation	Glenda Jackson, Peter Finch
The Creeping Flesh	Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee Hitler:
Last Ten Days	Alec Guinness
It's a Two	George Sanders
The Lovers	Richard Beckinsale, Paula Wilcox
Alice in Wonderland	Fiona Fullerton, Peter Sellers

## 1973

The Beast must Die	Peter Cushing
From Beyond the Grave	Peter Cushing
The Internecine Project	James Coburn
Soft Beds and Hard Battles	Peter Sellers

## FILMS WORKED ON FREELANCE TO PRESENT DAY

### “JUGGERNAULT”

‘Richard Alan Simmonds Production Limited’, 17 February 1974, as Construction Plasterer at *Twickenham Studios*.

### “TOMMY”

April 7<sup>th</sup> 1974 - on location South Sea FTV as Construction / stand-by.

### “GREAT EXPECTATIONS”

Trans Continental Film Productions, 6 June 1974 - *Shepperton Studios* on Construction.

### “ROYAL FLASH”

2 Roads Production UK Limited, Construction, 16 September 1974 - *Twickenham Studios*.

### “MOHAMMED THE MESSENGER OF GOD”

‘Filmco International Productions Ltd’, 1 November 1974 - filmed on location in Libya. On construction.

### “HENNESY”

Subcontracted to ‘D & K Ltd’, at *Shepperton Studios*, 15 February 1975, – Construction.

### “SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER”

‘Andor Films Ltd’, June 11 1975,. Location in Malta. Construction / stand-by.

### “PINK PANTHER STRIKES AGAIN”

‘Amjo Productions Ltd’, 1 December 1975, at *Shepperton Studios* on Construction.

### “JOSEPH ANDREWS”

Woodfall Ltd, 13 April 1976, on location in Bristol and Bath Construction / Operational.

### “JABBERWOCKY”

‘Umbrella Entertainments Productions Ltd’, 13 August 1976 - *Shepperton Studios* as HOD. Received credit.

**“A BRIDGE TOO FAR”**

Offered “A Bridge Too Far”, but turned it down to honour ‘Jabberwocky’, Located Holland.

**“SUPERMAN – Parts 1 and 11”**

‘Dovemead Ltd’, 8 November 1976, at *Shepperton Studios* on construction / operational/stand-by.

**“MUD”**

Subcontracted to Ancient and Modern Design, *Bray Studios* and location in Plymouth, 1 May 1977. Construction stand-by credit received.

**“MIDNIGHT EXPRESS”**

‘Columbia Pictures Corporation Ltd’, 5 August 1977. Location in Malta on construction/stand-by. Credit given.

**“THE SHINING”**

‘Hawk Films Ltd’. 28 November 1977, *EMI Studios*. Construction. Period of time out due to birth of second child.

**“LEGACY”**

Subcontracted to ancient and Modern Design at *Bray Studios*, 3 March 1978. Construction/stand-by.

**“ALIEN”**

‘Twentieth Century Fox’ at *Shepperton Studios*, 3 April 1978 - as Construction Supervisor.

**“THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK”**

Chapter 11 Productions Limited, *EMI Studios*, 9 October 1978 - as Supervisor Construction.

Worked outside the industry. Major project on pre-fab at *Bray Studios*, contracted to me by Ancient & Modern Designs for the famous “Chamber of Horrors” at the world famous ‘Madame Tussauds’ on 7 September 1979. HOD Technical Advisor to ‘Tussauds’ in Baker Street.

**“RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK”**

‘Lost Ark Productions UK Limited’. On location in Tunisia and at *EMI Studios*, 24 March 1980 - Supervisor Construction. Credit Given.

**“QUEST FOR FIRE”**

Subcontracted to ‘BBRK Limited’, at *Shepperton Studios*, 25 September 1980, Construction.

**“GHANDI”**

Turned down because of trip to America. Located India.

Visited California in the United States on holiday and visited all major studios in Hollywood. I took with me an introductory letter to all studios from and on behalf of ‘Lost Ark Production UK Ltd’, dictated by Robert Watts and signed by Pat Carr.

**“THE DARK CRYSTAL”**

‘Henson Organisation Ltd’, 1 December 1981, Supervisor Construction, assisting HOD at *EMI Studios*.

**“RETURN OF THE JEDI”**

‘Chapter 111 Productions Ltd’, 27 July 1981 at *EMI Studios*. HOD Master Plasterer. Reference attached presented by Robert Watts on 2 April 1982. Credit received.

**“GREYSTOKE”**

‘Warner Brothers Productions Ltd’, 26 April 1982, HOD to specialised Model and Mould making techniques and requirements for the use of a large make-up complex on Stage 5 at *EMI Studios*, under the direction of Rick Baker.

**“NEVER SAY NEVER AGAIN”**

Turned down to honour commitment on “Greystoke”. *EMI Studios*.

**“THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF INDIANA JONES”**

‘Lucas Films Ltd’, 24 January 1983, as HOD Master Plasterer at *EMI Studios*. Credit given.

**“RETURN TO OZ”**

‘Oz Productions Ltd’. 26 September 1983 at ‘EMI Studios’, HOD Master Plasterer. Finish Date 31 August 1984. Credit given.

**“LADY JANE”**

‘Paramount British Pictures Ltd’, 18 September 1984. Construction. *Lee International Studios*, Wembley.

**“YOUNG SHERLOCK HOLMES”**

‘Paramount British Pictures Ltd’, 29 October 1984, HOD Master Plasterer, Construction, Make-up and Special Effects. *EMI Studios*.

**“THE JEWEL OF THE NILE”**

‘The Stone Group Ltd’, Bermuda 25 February 1985. HOD - Master Plasterer. Locations to France, Nice, Morocco.

**“KING KONG LIVES”**

Location – North Carolina, America, Dino De Laurentis (D.E.G Studios) 2 January 1986 to 13 June 1986.

**“WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT”**

‘Toontown Ltd’, 6 October 1986 - 1 May 1987. HOD Plasterer, *Cannon Studios EMI*. Credit given.

**“PAPERHOUSE”**

*Pinewood Studios*, Iver, 6 October 1987 – 22 November 1987. HOD Plasterer. Credit given.

**“INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE”**

‘Lucas Film UK Ltd’, *Cannon EMI*, HOD Plasterer 14 December 1987 – 12 August 1988. Credit given.

**“CAMDEN TOWN BOY” – “THE TALL GUY”**

Location – Camden Town . London HOD Plasterer, 28 August – 23 September 1988.

**“DANESFIELD HOUSE”**

A major conversion and refurbishment of a 90 bedroom manor house to be converted into a 5 star hotel. Started 23 September 1988 - 29 September 1989. Supervising Plasterer. Location – Marlow, Berkshire, England.

**“HAVANA”**

Cinema Havana S.A. Charge hand Plasterer. 16 October 1989 - 4 February 1990. Location Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

**“SCULPTURE AND CONSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN”**  
**COLNEY PARK HOUSE, SHENLEY, RADLETT, HERTS**  
18 FEBRUARY 1990 – 29<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 1995

Working as Freelance Supervisor/ H.O.D to the well-known Sculptor Derek Howarth.

I worked very closely to Derek on many small and large Freelance Films. We also worked on numerous amounts of TV and Film Commercials all over the UK and Europe. As well as this we worked on Pop Promo's, Film Promotions, London Museums also London Zoo, Windsor 'Legoland' and more.

Over this period of five years I supervised and ran large projects for Derek working with new materials new finishes and techniques for polystyrene and other mediums. I was also involved in designing and constructing many moulds and castings in plaster, fibreglass, latex etc.

I also worked alongside young and old artists from all over the UK. I was advised at this stage to go teaching, I took a part time position as a Lecturer at Wimbledon School of Art, London where I have been teaching 'Fine Art Mould Making' to young students (18-30 Years old). I've been at this for 8 weeks a year for 4 years now.

All teaching at Wimbledon College is at Degree Level. The College was set up for Theatre in the early part of this century but now covers a wide range of Departments for TV and Film.

I enjoy this work as I feel that I am putting something back. I'm now finding that 'X' students with degrees are now infiltrating the Film and TV industry in all crafts and trade areas. The above 5 years I found interesting and opened my eyes, it gave me a wider view and vision.

All this came out of the recession years where the Film Industry took a deep dive as many Industries did over this period. I felt that I was building at all levels all of the time.

**“THE FIFTH ELEMENT”**

'Zaltman Films Ltd', (French Company) *Pinewood Studios* from 2 October 1995 – 14 June 1996 working as Supervising Model and Mould Designer for a large Anamorphic and Phosetec Department under Nick Dudman.

**“MONTY SPINNERRATZ”**

Monty Film/Warner Bros. Movie World, Kirchellen, Germany from 17 June 1996 – 21 September 1996. Working as HOD on Construction for the above Company.

**“MORTAL KOMBAT 11 ANNIHILATION “**

'Outworld Productions Ltd', *Leavesden Studios* from 30 September 1996 – 31 January 1997. Supervising Mould Designer for Nick Dudman / Gary Pollard for Anamorphic and Phosetec Department.

**“STARWARS – THE BEGINNING”/ “THE PHANTOM MENACE”**

JAK Productions Ltd, *Leavesden Studios* from 17 March 1997 – 11 July 1997. Working as Supervising Model/Mould Designer for Anamorphic / Creature Effects Nick Dudman Project Leader.

**“SCULPTURE AND CONSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN”**

Working in above Studio from 11 August 1997 – 5 November 1997. Working as Supervisor / HOD on Construction / Small Films / Promos etc.

**“THE MUMMY”**

‘Mummy Productions Ltd’ - *Shepperton Studios*. 30 March 1998 – 19 June 1998. Working as Supervising Model and Mould Designer for a large Anamatronic and Phrosetec Dept under Nick Dudman.

**“SCULPTURE AND CONSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN”**

Working in above studio from 1 July 1998 – 12 February 1999. Working as Supervising Plasterer on large sculpt for Blue Water Shopping Mall, Kent, England.

**“WIMBLEDON SCHOOL OF ART”**

Lecturing at degree level at the above college / academy from 1st February – 12th February for ‘Technical Arts Interpretation Dept’, under the direction Dept. Head David Burrows and leading Sculpturing Lecturer Alan Sly. My brief was to take 3<sup>rd</sup> year degree students through all techniques of mould making and casting. (This is my 5<sup>th</sup> year at the above).

**“BODY SCULPTURE”**

Working in the above studio from 15 Feb 1999. Modelling original clay sculpts from visual and personal interpretation plus also moulding and casting for network of small galleries. This work continues and is solely financed by myself.

**“SCULPTURE AND CONSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN”**

July 1999 – April 2001. Working closely with Derek Howarth, Sculptor as a Freelance Supervisor Plasterer / Sculptor at his studios. Have worked on numerous TV Commercials, small films home and abroad. Undertaken large commissions for famous artists in Great Britain by taking a small marquette and their brief and building to full size in different mediums to final finish ready for the foundry to reproduce in bronze and final siting throughout Europe.

**“THE COUNT OF MONTY CRISTO”**

Location – Malta 3 May 2001 – 22 June 2001. Freelance Mould maker/ Sculptor for the Construction of film set work.

**“PLANET OF THE APES”**

*Pinewood Studios* – 2 July 2001 – 9 July 2001 - Freelance Plasterer / Sculptor for the construction of film set work.

**“BODY SCULPTURE”**

10 July 2001 – To date. Personal interpretation of female form sculptured in clay for final moulding and casting in different mediums for sale throughout the Art Gallery System plus life casting of female’s direct for reproducing for artwork and commission work plus ongoing research and development in the above area ‘Female Sculpture’.