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## Interview with Andrew Clement

February 28, 2011 by [Mike Gencarelli](#)

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Andrew Clement is the owner of Creative Character Engineering, an SFX company that has been around since 1993. Just in 2010, Andrew has worked on the following films, 2010's "A Nightmare on Elm Street", "Repo Men", "Let Me In" and HBO's "Boardwalk Empire". Movie Mikes had a chance to chat with Andrew about his latest work and what he has planned upcoming.

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**Mike Gencarelli:** Where you nervous re-designing one of horrors biggest icons Freddy Kruger in 2010's "A Nightmare on Elm Street"?  
**Andrew Clement:** I have to honestly say that the main thing that I was nervous about was getting the work done on time. We didn't get Jackie Earle Haley until the eleventh hour, and we had a deadline for a makeup test a few weeks after that. I didn't want to compromise the look, or how the makeup went together, so it meant a lot of crazy hours. I always have a certain amount of stress when I prep a makeup, because I want it to be the best it can be, and I'm a pretty tough critic. When I was awarded the film, I knew that no matter what I

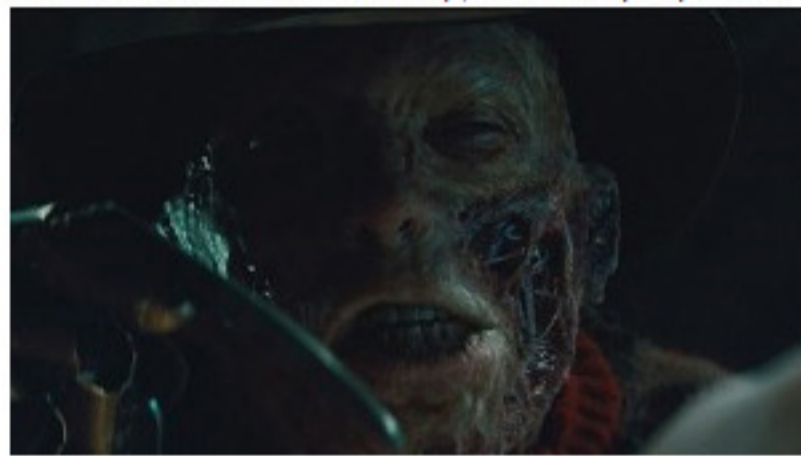
did, there would always be a segment of the fan population who would hate it on principle, just because we changed it. I was really happy that there was an almost universal acceptance of the make-up, especially with the people who were invited to see it in person.

**MG:** When working on make-up effects for "Let Me In", did you refer back to the original film?

**AC:** I actually didn't know that the film was a remake until after I began working on it. I asked Matt Reeves if he wanted me to see the film, and he requested that I not watch it, so my take would be fresh. I still have not seen the original, even though I bought a copy. I got too busy with projects right after we wrapped "Let Me In". Again, like "Nightmare on Elm Street", I got a lot of positive feedback on the make-up, even with people who were familiar with the original.

**MG:** How did you start working with Dick Smith?

**AC:** I had been sending photos of my work to Dick ever since I was a kid, and he would send nice responses to me. Eventually, I would call him for advice and help when I began to get professional jobs. Around 1984, I heard that he was thinking of writing a book or something on make-up. I called him to say hi, and let him know I would be interested in buying a copy if he ever got around to it. A few months later he sent out a flier advertising his professional make-up course. I sent out a check to him for a copy that day, and my promptness resulted in me being his first student. Then around 2004, Dick called me to say he wanted to find someone to carry on the work of the course, and to update the material. I was his first choice, and would I be interested? Of course I said yes, and we have been business partners since. It's allowed me to spend a lot of time and travel with him teaching, and it's been a remarkable experience.



**MG:** You have worked on a few projects with Steve Oedekerk, can you tell us about how that became?

**AC:** Steve is one of my favorite people to work with. He's terrifically funny and a nice guy. I was brought in on "Kung Pow" by a prop master friend of mine, and we hit it off. I wound up doing some small things for his "Thumb" series of projects after that. I look forward to him doing something big again, because he always has fun, silly things to do.

**MG:** What has been the most difficult project that you have worked on?

**AC:** I can honestly say that "Let Me In" was far and away the most difficult project I have ever been on. Working with a limited budget, in the mountains of New Mexico in the dead of winter, with effects in water, and on kids who have a limited schedule for filming. The production that did not have a lot of experience working with practical effects and that made it extremely stressful. But we got through it, and delivered work that I am extremely proud of.



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**MG:** What has been your favorite project that you have worked on?

**AC:** My favorite project to date, in terms of work I have created has to be "Repo Men". On that film, we got to do everything from tiny brand/tattoo appliances to full effect replicas of Jude Law and Alice Braga. We also broke new ground for ourselves in creating the futuristic artificial organs in the computer. We then printed via a 3D printer and plated with actual metal to create these hyper real working props.

**MG:** Do you have a favorite genre to work in?

**AC:** I love to create characters, and some of my best memories came from when I worked at Jim

Henson's company. I love when an audience can have an emotional response, be it awe, or fear, or affection, to something that I have created. I would have loved to stay at Henson's, but they have an edict that keeps them from pursuing films that are not family friendly. I needed more latitude in my work than that, so I decided to form my own company where I could explore those kinds of projects. If I had the opportunity to create more fantasy or alien characters, I would be very happy.

**MG:** Tell us about your two upcoming projects "The Apparition" & "Wanderlust"?

**AC:** Unfortunately, I'm not permitted to talk about either of those projects yet. I do have a lot of things in the works, including some exciting CG projects, that should really show the full range of the work that we can do.

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