

LET ME IN



**HAMMER
HORROR!**

**The edgy Swedish thriller gets
a makeover, courtesy of the new
Hammer and Overture Films**

by Joe Nazzaro

VAMPIRE EFFECTS

While *Let Me In* is more psychological thriller than monster movie, there is certainly no shortage of visceral moments to be found. In order to create the aftermath of Abby's savage attacks, Michael Reeves enlisted the services of Andrew Clement, whose company Creative Character Engineering had previously collaborated with the director on *Cloverfield*.

"We had to do a number of bodies," Clement relates, "as well as all sorts of bite wounds, both static and bleeding. We did Chloë's vampire makeup; there was a birthmark for one of the actors; we had people getting injured and wounded in various ways and all kinds of little things; there was a tremendous amount of stuff. We had to make lots of bodies including bodies that breathed, we did a burn makeup, a character getting singed by the sun; things like that."

One of Clement's biggest challenges was to help devise a series of looks for Chloë Moretz's Abby, who had to look different when hungry, well-fed or overwhelmed by her vampire nature. As Clement recalls, "We put her through the life-casting process



and she was pretty beat by the end of the day from everything we had done. We had one picture of her where she looked really worn and weathered from everything she had just gone through and Matt saw it and said, 'That's perfect, what did you do to her?'

"I said, 'Well, we didn't really do that much.' I think it was just a trick of the light and maybe a little junk in her hair; the light was catching her just right in that photo, so she got a little shadowing under her eyes, but Matt said, 'That's the look when she's hungry!' That was what we handed off to



Examples of some of the incredibly lifelike dummies built by the crew at Creative Character Engineering. The problem with showing you still pictures is that it's almost impossible to tell the dummies from the living actors! In the pic above, it's a bit easier to tell...



...but in this one, not so much. But it's a dummy. We swear!



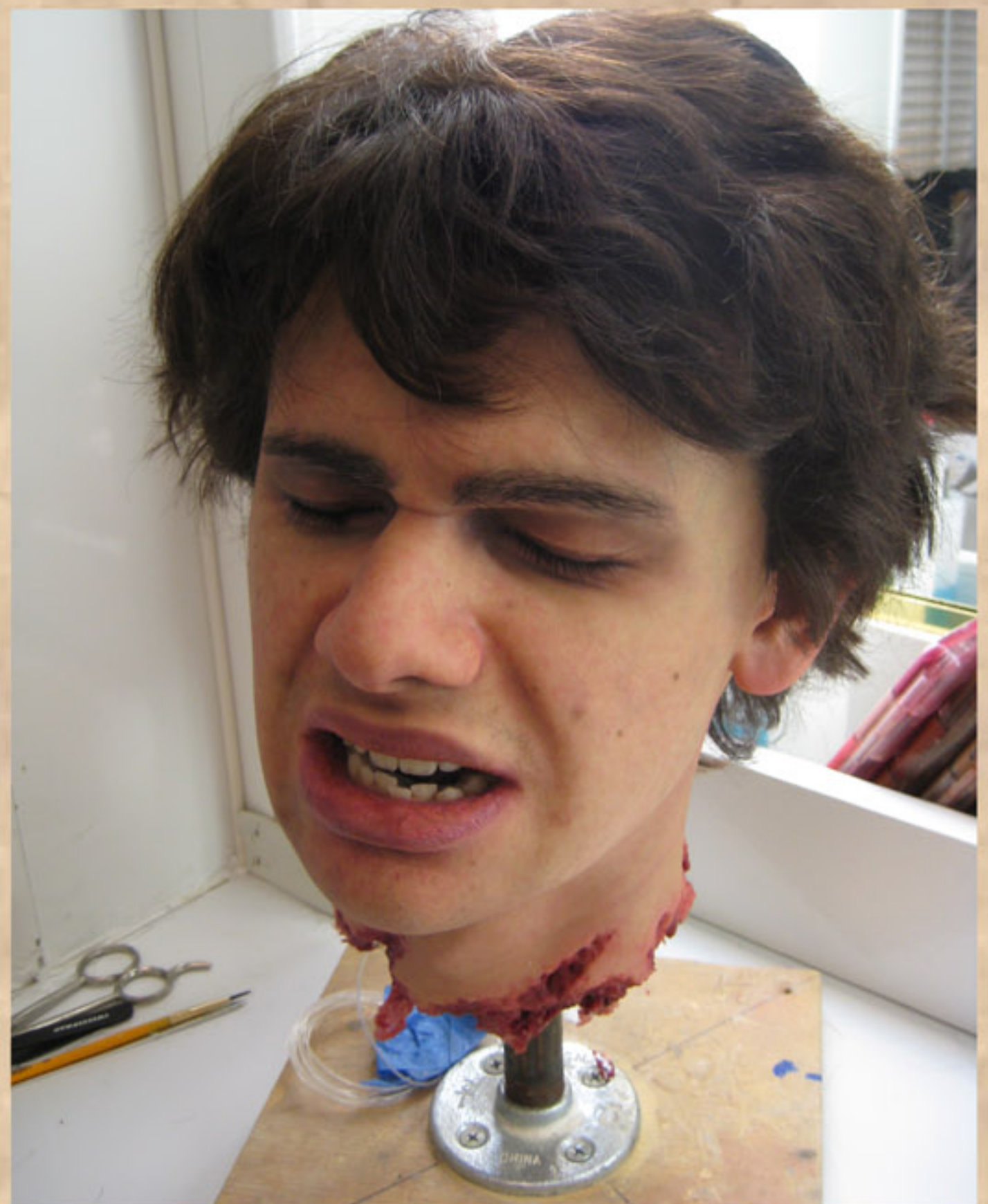
This is a dummy too. Honest! No living actors harmed in this scene!

the straight makeup department and that's what they sort of went for, making sure that she looked a little worse for wear all the time, except after she's fed. When Abby transforms, she's got teeth, contacts and some facial appliances but really subtle stuff.

"One of the other deciding factors in the makeup was that she's so young, so they really wanted something that was like half an hour, tops. That drove our hand as far as what we were going to be able to do, so it was really just highlight and shadow, paint and a couple of transfer appliances, and that was really it. I love going for realism, so this was a great opportunity to do something understated."

That devotion to realism filtered down to the dummy bodies that had to be built for some of the film's more gruesome moments. "We had one character that was supposed to be hanging upside down," remembers Clement, "so we actually took the actor's life cast upside down. I don't think anybody has ever done that before, but I'm the only person crazy enough to do it."

"What we did was get an inversion table and put the actor on the table, put silicone on his face and just before the silicone was about to gel, we tipped him back at a 45 degree angle and let it set before putting him back up. He was never fully upside down and wasn't upside down for very long, but the difference in the life cast was striking. I wouldn't have done it if he wasn't a young kid into extreme sports and all that kind of stuff, so he was totally fine with it and it was a lot of fun."



See? See?! NOT REAL! (Well...we HOPE not. We weren't actually there at the time...)