

## INTERVIEW WITH MARTIN GRACE (ROGER MOORE STUNT DOUBLE) - 2009/2010

*Interview by Anders Frejdh, Founder of From Sweden with Love, and Marie-France Vienne, webmaster for Roger Moore's official website.*

### **First of all, could you tell us a little bit about yourself?**

I was born in Kilkenny, Ireland on September 12, 1942. I attended National School at a little place called Lisdowney. The village master in the town thought his little school were the best. He was a sincere man and stern to view. That was from the age of 6 to 14. Then, I attended the college in Kilkenny City. It was during this time that I experienced the excitement of watching my first action movies by a travelling film show in a tent. It was sheer magic. I went to London in the early 1960's and attended Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts. I took a job with Butlins Holiday Camp in 1963, organising sport and playing in their theatre to gain experience. I won a Charlton Heston talent contest in 1974 that took me to Hollywood for the first time. I was already preparing my skills with boxing, wrestling, fencing, swimming, trampoline and gym work out, special motorcar and motorcycling driving skills, parachuting and various other sports in view of becoming an action stunt man in films. I attended stunt classes to learn the basics and joined a stunt agency for films and commercials. It was for commercials that I got my first stunt jobs. The white knight in Supersoft hairspray and the action man on Cadburys milk tray chocolates stunts. One was jumping on to a speeding train from a bridge. One transferring from a car to a helicopter and one were jumping on to a truck from a cliff edge. These were very daring, action packed, prestigious and Bondish. The first film I worked on was "DR WHO". The first big action film I did as a stuntman was "YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE" in 1966, doing lot of various actions. During the 60's I also performed stunts on "ALFRED THE GREAT". On "WHEN EIGHT BELLS TOLL" I did a fight with a young Anthony Hopkins. In the 1970's I did a stunt show tour in Scandinavia performing big stunts on a nightly basis on various places in Sweden, Finland, and Denmark.

In 1975 I was selected to be Sir Roger Moore's number one stunt double which gave me work on six of his James Bond films – "THE SPY WHO LOVED ME", "MOONRAKER", "FOR YOUR EYES ONLY", "OCTOPUSSY" and "A VIEW TO A KILL".. My films with Sir Roger Moore include "THE WILD GEESE" (1978), "SEA WOLVES" (1980), "NORTH SEA HIJACK" (1979) and "THE NAKED FACE" (1984). Other memorable films that I worked on during the 1970's, 1980's to 2000's include "SUPERMAN" (1978), "RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK" (1981), "ENEMY MINE" (1985), "HIGH SPIRITS" (1988), "ERIK THE VIKING" (1989), "NUNS ON THE RUN" (1990), "A KISS BEFORE DYING" (1991), "ROBIN HOOD" (1991), "ROBINSON CRUSOE" (1997), "THE TRUMAN SHOW" (1998), "ANNA AND THE KING" (1999) and "THE NUMBER 23" (2007).

I have done stunt work on four continents – Europe, Africa, Asia and America – on land, at sea, in jungles, in deserts, in the Arctic and in the air. I still enjoy being part of film making and appreciate seeing great action in movies. I enjoy passing on my knowledge to help achieve good action and stunts. I enjoy telling interested people

of my experience during my career in stunts. I still enjoy keeping in shape and training for good life. I still cherish seeing the Bluebells in the woodland, shimmering and dancing in the breeze. Oh, how I loved their magic spell, it's amongst them I wish to dwell!

**How did you become involved in films in the first place? "YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE" was your first Bond, wasn't it?**

I remember as a young boy being taken to see my first films at the movies, mainly Westerns that had a very shaky projector but I was fascinated by them. It all began in the early 60's, I came over from Ireland to London to try and find what I was looking for. I was very motivated by sports, joined boxing, weight lifting, wrestling and fencing clubs to learn those skills. I wished to work in some form of entertainment, I was so enthused I applied for, and got a job at a holiday resort (Butlins by the sea) as an entertainer and sports organizer for one summer season. On returning to London, I joined an acting school at Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts, for night classes. I learned a lot of basics which stood by me in my later career in stunts. Then, I discovered an action agency that sent me along for action commercials; one of those was for a Cadbury milk tray chocolate jumping from a bridge on to a fast moving train to deliver the chocolates. The second was being lifted from an open sports car and dropped on to a hotel roof. The third was jumping from a rock face on to a moving truck, and then jumping from the truck down into a lake to deliver the goods to the lady on a pleasure boat. These commercial stunts were very James Bond style prestigious and caught the attention of Bob Simmons, who then was the big stunt coordinator on the James Bond films.

In 1966, the opportunity arose; I had my first interview with George Leech who was Bob's trusted right-hand man. George seemed impressed but not as much as I was by his agility and graceful movements. In fact, George had been an excellent and gifted boxer and it showed!

I now found myself working on one of the most popular action movies of all time, "YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE". Four weeks of extensive training scaling nets, sliding down ropes and practicing trampoline explosions for the major action scenes. There I was, a young raw novice amongst the seasoned professional stunt people learning the ropes for the future Bonds with Sir Roger Moore.

I did lot of stunt work under the supervision of Bob Simmons in the gigantic volcano that was specially built for the attack by the Japanese ninjas. After our training period, I was ready for any of the everyday action required. Climbing, sliding down ropes and big explosions was the order of the day.

I learned a lot more from Bob as he proved he is a master at organizing massive action scenes with ease. I also had the privilege to work alongside another legendary and brave stuntman, Joe Powell, and, for the first time I met a young Vic Armstrong. Vic has since then progressed to the top of the stunt profession which has included doubling for five of the official James Bond actors (Sean Connery, George Lazenby, Roger Moore, Timothy Dalton and Pierce Brosnan).

From 1966 to 1976, I really learned and honed my trade on many films and TV shows. One of those films was "ALFRED THE GREAT". I had the privilege to work with Paul Stader, now departed. Paul was a top professional American stunt coordinator who thought me the finer points of accuracy and precision in fights, sword play and more. Then, I had the privilege of doing a fight scene with a young Anthony Hopkins in a Scottish graveyard on "WHEN EIGHT BELLS TOLL" with George Leech and me as thugs.

In 1974, I was offered a contract on a stunt show that toured the Scandinavia countries Sweden, Denmark and Finland. The show was a great experience for me and included high falls, car crashes, motorcycle jumps, fights, musketeers and tunnels of fire. The show was on six nights a week on long summer days. After finishing the international stunt show in Scandinavia, the movie business was a bit down in Europe. I then got a telephone call from Bob Simmons. He informed me he was doing another Bond film and would I be interested to work on it... I was in Ireland at that time and did not take it that seriously, as I had been told some years before that I was wanted to work on George Lazenby's James Bond film – "ON HER MAJESTY'S SECRET SERVICE" – in Switzerland. Apparently, I had been on a second-wave list of stunt people for that film, but my call never came that time, very disappointing.

But Bob did not give up on me and called back a week later and said: "I want you on a movie as the main stunt double for Roger Moore".

I answered: "How soon do you want me."  
He said: "Right now". I said: "OK, I am on my way." The film was "THE SPY WHO LOVED ME" ...

I arrived at Pinewood Studios and Bob said: "You are the man I needed, a stunt man who is willing to perform any physical stunt I throw at him from day to day, with vigour and without complaint or excuses, and be prepared for hard knocks." Well, I thought this sounded like my language. I was fully confident from my years of stunt training and preparation, which was no problem. I was vetted by Mr Cubby Broccoli for his approval. I still remember him looking me up and down so I guess I met with his approval.

I am not one to be forceful and up front. I approached the job as a professional and kept a low profile in the background, observed what was going on and emerged to carry out the stunts as required. I was now on the most prestigious of action movies, in the most coveted position as the stunt double for the leading action actor, Roger Moore. It was to be a stunt roller coaster for the next 12 years with locations incl. Sardinia, Egypt, France, Brazil, Argentina, Guatemala, Greece, Italy, UK, Iceland and the USA. (More about those later)

Like I said before, my first 007 experience was with Sean Connery in "YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE" that was directed by Lewis Gilbert in 1966. I did not know then, that 10 years later I would join him again as he was the director for "THE SPY WHO LOVED ME". The work I did for "THE SPY WHO LOVED ME", initially on location in Sardinia, was driving the super Lotus in a chase scene pursued by villains and Jaws (played by the lovely man, Richard Kiel). I remember thinking this would be great fun, doing some hairy driving and sliding on narrow Sardinian country roads.

When you think about stunt car chases, you probably think of much banging, barging dents and scratching your car, given that freedom. But, on the morning of the beginning of the chase, the production assistant (Chris Kenny) came to me and said: "Martin, whatever the action do not scratch the car as it has to go back to Lotus in the condition it was delivered in!" I thought that was pressuring for me! We were accommodated at a most beautiful hotel, the Cala di Volpe in the Northeast corner of Sardinia, and it was a wonderful location.

Then, the big change on to Egypt i.e. "flies, flies and more flies"... We filmed at Cairo, the Pyramids, Luxor and the Valley of the Kings. I got the opportunity to learn how to ride and handle a camel as Sir Roger had to, and did a scene riding in from the desert to the Bedouin tent of his Arab contact.

*[Editors note: "Sheikh Hosein" played by Edward de Souza].*

While Sir Roger was doing his acting in the stifling heat of Cairo, Bob Simmons was preparing a fight scene on the flat roof of block about 60 feet up, above the dirt strewn streets of Cairo with Milton Reed (who played the big heavy side kick of "Jaws"), George Leach, myself and Jackie Cooper (who doubled for Milton as he falls off the roof after Bond cuts his tie loose whilst tethering on the edge).

During the shooting in the desert, some crew members were getting upset because the caterer was unable to get his supply of good quality food in from England... Rule one on difficult locations is to make sure the food is extra good, Cubby Broccoli obviously recognized the problem. The very next day, we arrived over a sand dune to the catering wagon and there was Cubby, our producer, in the kitchen! He had made Italian spaghetti for all the crew and served every one himself! If your producer does that kind of thing, there is no cause to complain. Cubby showed he was doing his best.

During a shoot at an old temple in Luxor, director Lewis Gilbert saw some scaffold boards on top of the temple, about 50 feet up. They were there to carry lighting cables for the luminary night shows at the temple on the Egyptian archaeological site Abu Simbel.

*[Editors note: The temple was built by Ramses II more than 3000 years ago.]*

Lewis decided he would like to see "Jaws" appear, walk across and disappear again. Although I was there as Sir Rogers's stunt double, Bob looked at me as he had no one else available and said: "Martin, you are going to double "Jaws" up there". I had

in fact been studying Richard Kiel. His stance, the way he walked and the distinctive way he held his head so I found him an easy subject to copy. When I did the first rehearsal, all of the crew members were in amazement that I had carried it off. Richard even claimed that his mother would not believe that it was not him up there. Despite being so tall, he suffered from vertigo; Richard was a very witty man. To add to the filming of "SPY" by the temples in Egypt I can tell you we had some shots of falling scaffolding and boulders. Sir Roger bravely stood in dangerous proximity of them but I stepped in for the final falling boulders. Even though they were polystyrene fake rocks, they could still do some damage to the head, one had to move out of the way extra promptly.

We then returned to Pinewood to complete the submarine base sequence, which was another elaborate trademark set designed by Sir Ken Adam in the way that only he could do.

**Did you mainly do your stunt work at Pinewood for the Bond films or did you go on the locations as well?**

I actually did both. I worked on some interesting and wonderful locations. My answer is usually "from Becton to Rio". Becton, being a gas works facility in London with a lingering smell of old gas and Rio de Janeiro being a place where all women are beautiful and the atmosphere vibrant with people dancing in the streets. It was at Becton that I performed my favourite James Bond action sequence, the helicopter scene for the pre-title sequence of "FOR YOUR EYES ONLY". Three weeks of exciting action including climbing out of the helicopter, hanging underneath while the machine does all kinds of daring manoeuvres to shake Bond off.

Every day was an adrenaline rush, roaring engines first thing each morning being lifted swiftly above chimney tops to 400 feet above ground. The chopper would drop like a stone, only to recover and make dangerous flights down, through rows of pipe works. We had an excellent pilot in Mark Wolf. An American, the best in movie making and I had complete trust in his ability. This was exciting stuff for me! Except the shooting of the helicopter scene on location at Becton, I did some work on it back at Pinewood.

In Rio, it was a scene for "MOONRAKER", the fight on top of the cable car between Bond and Jaws. The fight area on top was like a large billiard table but becomes even smaller when you are 1 300 feet from the ground, at the highest point. I usually say that, despite if it is 50 or 1 300 feet, the height difference does not matter much, and one must not fall off anyway! Bob Simmons prepared the fight with Richard Graydon and myself at ground level, and used the supporting structure on top to hold on to as much as possible. During the fight, Dorothy Ford came on board to double Lois Chiles (who played Dr. Holly Goodhead, Bond's main love interest in the film) and to make her situation easier, she lay most of the time on the roof. It is when you are standing up, it always seems scarier. At the end of the scene, Bond throws a chain over a cable and slides down fast, with Dr. Goodhead hanging on and they jump to the ground as Jaws crashes into the control Room.

For the film, I also found myself crashing out the back door of an ambulance on its way up towards the giant Christ statue, after Roger had used some cunning moves inside to subdue his captor. Sir Roger did some shots riding across the pampas in "A Fist Full of Dollars" style which gave me the chance to do the continuation ride into an Old Portuguese town called Marianna. I was also lucky to be able to have some time at Iguaçu Falls before leaving. Brazil is probably my most favourite location of all the James Bond.

Film studios used for my work on the Bonds were mainly Pinewood in the UK but I also worked at places like Epernay, Monte Bianco, and Boulogne in France. Of course there were other films with Sir Roger in between the Bonds in which he was instrumental in having me employed with him. These were "THE WILD GEESE" in Africa, "SEA WOLVES" in India, "NORTH SEA HIJACK" in Ireland, "ESCAPE TO ATHENA" in Rhodes, "THE NAKED FACE" in USA and "THE MAN WHO WOULDN'T DIE" in Canada.

I believe we trusted each other and developed a bond of professional respect for each other in our individual roles. I also know that Bob Simmons had belief and faith in my ability that made us a great team working together.

**Could you let us know under which circumstances you were seriously injured on the set of "OCTOPUSSY"?**

The accident occurred during the filming of "OCTOPUSSY". We had location work to achieve on a train sequence shot at Peterborough in the UK. There is a private railway track with an original train station that was mainly used for enthusiastic holiday day trippers. I believe it was not maintained by the official British Rail.

*[Editors note: British Rail (former British Railways) was privatized in 1997 and the name is no longer used.]*

After the opening shootout with Bond and the soldiers, Bond commandeers a car and makes his escape crashing into some barrels. He then takes the car on two wheels to dodge some bullets and drives over lacerating grid shreds and the car tires gets on to the railway tracks.

My action was to climb through the sun roof of the car, while travelling, and make a jump on to the side of the Octopussy train as an Express Train is approaching fast towards me on the same tracks I was on. The transfer is made just in time. Over several days, I did shots climbing on to the top of the train, running on top from carriage to carriage, climbing down the side of the train, emerging from underneath the train, climbing back to the top again and doing a fight on top of the travelling train. It was in fact like second nature to me, easily and comfortably within my capability. Then, for additional angle shots, the company hired a helicopter for; I believe, a few days to do aerial shots of the action I had already achieved. Bearing in mind that the helicopter was hired per hour and days are expensive, the first helicopter shooting day was cloudy and little was achieved. But, on the second day of shooting this scene it was sunny. As I recall, there was an almighty rush to get the



train going and the chopper in the air, with camera and operator in order to get some footage shot. As a stunt performer, it was one of those times that I had to trust in others to control certain elements. Like a chain reaction, if there is a weak link in the chain, it may break. Unfortunately, there were weak links that day and I suffered the penalty of a broken pelvis and lacerated my thigh muscle right through to the thigh bone...

I started on top of the train, and the helicopter was to move into position, as we both travelled parallel to each other. I was briefed for a hand turnover signal, but, for some reason the chopper veered away without giving the signal and I wondered why. Then it veered back in and they gave me the turnover hand signal. Everything happened very quickly and I was concentrating on the action. Others were controlling the time, the distance travelled and the drivers' instructions. I climbed down the siding and moved along the side of the train.

The action required was to look through the train windows, which meant I could not look ahead as I climbed forward, and I got hit on the pelvis. Apparently, it was a solid wall built parallel with the railway track on a fly over bridge. The impact was so lightning fast that I only realized that I had hit something when I found I was hanging prone for dear life on the side of the train! At first, my pelvis area was numb like a gigantic tooth extraction injection. Adrenalin was pumping through my arms like never before, I felt I could have hung on to the side for ever, frightened to let go and drop. I looked down and saw my trousers leg had had been ripped off and saw my thigh bone through the gash in my thigh muscle. The train came to a stop, I still hung on miraculously.

I had held on to the siding on impact, otherwise I would have at least hit the naked ground, possibly in an awkward position with a broken neck and/or back. Still, it could have been much worse as part of my body or limbs could have been even more damaged by the train wheels on the track.

After the train stopped, some person put their arms around my waist and literally prised me off the train. As I lay on the track siding, a great pain started to set in. I had never in my life experienced such pain and I was wreathing in agony. I remember I could hear someone say: "Can we get him in the helicopter?" Then, I recognized Mark Wolf's voice saying: "We cannot fit him in the helicopter." Some wonderful St. John ambulance people were there, they eased me on to a stretcher and got me on to the train and headed back to the station. I remember asking this kind St John's person to give me some tranquilizer but he refused as they did not know what severe injuries I might have sustained infernally. Although I am not a smoker, I asked if I could have a cigarette.

I recalled Richard Burton in a war movie. He is shot and mortally wounded so he asks one of his buddies for a cigarette to deaden the pain. That was where I was at that moment. The ambulance reached the station and got me to Peterborough Hospital. The rest is a story of uncertainty for a long time, lying prone for many months. I was thinking what would lie ahead, would I ever recover, was I able to ever perform

again, how will it be, what might have been, who was waiting and knocking on the door to fill my position. I thought, now would be the best opportunity for them! I literally went instantly from being super active to being completely inactive and it had happened in a fraction of a second.

**What was Roger Moore's reaction when he learnt what had happened to you?**

I believe he was devastated and very concerned. Immediately after returning from India, where the main unit was shooting, he came to visit me and lend his support. This perked me up immensely, knowing he really cared. And from this I got much more attention in the hospital as the nurses and staff were always inquiring when he was coming again. Once I recovered, and got back to work again, he always made a point of calling me first thing through his secretary Doris Spriggs, and telling he wanted me on his film projects. Thank you Sir Roger!

Cubby Broccoli also came to see me on a couple of occasions. As I said before, he would go to the highest mountain, cook spaghetti in the desert or visit the hospital for members of his crew.

Bob Simmons was also concerned. I have learnt that, being the stunt coordinator, it breaks you up if a member of your stunt crew gets hurt in any way. One feels a genuine responsibility for people. Richard Graydon was a stalwart of support and always gave sound logic as he had been through difficult times in his career. There were others who came with some concern too. Others, who came out of curiosity or guilt, quickly faded away into oblivion.

**Did Roger Moore make any of the stunts himself in the Bond films?**

Sir Roger did a potentially dangerous piece of action at Pinewood for "THE SPY WHO LOVED ME", in the scene sitting at a big table with Curd Jürgens (who was playing "Stromberg", the main villain in the film) at the other end. The special effects people placed an explosive device on the chair seat where Roger was sitting. At a certain moment, when Jürgens fires a lethal shot under the table through a funnel, Roger dived aside and the chair back instantly explodes. Roger did his action superbly but the problem with explosions is that, when set off, the speed and acceleration is so great that it catches up with you if set off slightly prematurely!

Sir Roger must have felt the heat and the sting on his backside although he continued his action by getting back and firing his own gun back through the funnel hitting Jürgens in the groin. Had the device been set off a fraction of a second earlier, it could have been lethal. Personally, I experienced the impact it can have in a similar explosion on the film "INCHON" while filming in Korea. After landing on the ground, my side stung so much from magnesium penetration through my uniform I was not sure if part of my side had gone although found I was OK. No matter how agile and proficient an actor or stunt person is, we are sometimes at the mercy of others. I am sure Sir Roger remembers this action. It was a brave effort from him but a bit too close to call.

**Did you make any promotional work for the Bond films?**



I did a promotional tour for one Bond film – “A VIEW TO A KILL” – in 1985. I went to the south of England, Plymouth and some places in the north talking about the action and explaining the stunts in the film. How they were prepared and executed, especially the action on the Eiffel Tower in Paris and the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco.

**Please tell us a bit about the different people that you met during your Bond films:**

**Cubby Broccoli** – He was a proper old-time film producer who understood movie making and understood how to treat actors and crews. He was a real human being, very understanding and was prepared to get to the highest mountain if his crew was there and also to play back gammon with Sir Roger. I believe he would have gone to the top of Mount Everest for a game with Roger, and show me a producer who is prepared to make spaghetti in the desert to keep his crew happy.

**Sir Roger Moore** – One of the few most genuine actors I have worked with. He was always a gentleman, courteous and charming to his colleagues, humorous when situations got tense and a true professional in his work. He brought suaveness to the role of James Bond and made his mark as 007.

**Richard Kiel** – He was a pleasure to have met and worked with, a gentle giant. A very normal person who enjoyed telling the stories of his life, how he got into movies and his appreciation of what the role of Jaws did for him. I shall always treasure his time and presence on the James Bonds.

**Bob Simmons** – Bob was the stunt coordinator who chose me to be Sir Roger’s stunt double on the James Bond films along with him. Bob did the action scenes on the Bond films with Cubby Broccoli/Harry Saltzman as producers and Terence Young as director. It was an honour to be chosen by Bob for such a prestigious position as the leading stuntman with Sir Roger as James Bond. He was great to work with and had a knack of making fights at close quarters look really great, like the fight in FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE between Sean Connery and Robert Shaw in the train carriage. Bob was a master at big action scenes.

**Richard Graydon** – The most courageous stunt man I have ever worked with. He treated hanging in the rafters of a volcano 120 feet up, and on top of the cable car in Rio as if he was having a coffee down at Piccadilly Circus in London! He made what other stunt men claimed as too dangerous and impossible look like a walk in the park. Although small in stature, he was head and shoulders above the rest. Richard’s quick wit and intelligence in the stunt field is greatly missed.

These guys were the best!

**Which is your favourite film among the ones you have worked on?**

My personal favourite, among the films that I have worked on, is “A VIEW TO A KILL”. Mainly because the Bonds were my favourite action films and they were with my favourite actor playing James Bond, Sir Roger Moore.

Working on two of the highest and prominent structures in the world; the Eiffel Tower in Paris and on the Golden Gate Bridge in the USA, for the same movie in the same year after cheating death (Thank god I was lucky!) during an action scene for "OCTOPUSSY" two years before is another reason. Of course, at that time, I was unaware that this highlight would be Sir Roger's and my own swansong on the James Bonds.

**When did you meet Roger Moore for the first time?**

I met Sir Roger Moore for the first time when being vetted for the position as his number one stunt double. This was just before the start of the James Bond film "THE SPY WHO LOVED ME". I believe that was in 1975. Bob Simmons had presented me to Cubby Broccoli for his approval and, as I recall, then being introduced to Sir Roger.

**How did you become Roger Moore's "official" stunt double?**

I became Sir Roger's stunt double because I had previously worked on some action films with Bob Simmons. He had the belief in my ability and capability to execute the various stunts that were thrown at Bond on a daily basis.

Sir Roger was capable to carry out much of the stunt work himself but it can be very fatiguing trying to concentrate on the acting plus throw you about and possibly attain injuries. Sir Roger could perform a fight scene better than most stunt men. I had watched the Saint for years and noticed he had a trademark punch to his opponents jaw, always perfect and convincing.

**What was the funniest time on a film set with Roger Moore knowing he is such a practical joker?**

We were working at night on "THE SPY WHO LOVED ME" at the Karnac temple in Luxor, Egypt. This particular scene was with Jaws (Richard Kiel) pursuing Fekkesh (the Arabic spy contact played by Nadim Sawalha). The scene was with a frightened Fekkesh being followed by Jaws, and with Bond shadowing both in pursuit they were not much separated. This took place during the night show at the Ramses temple, which meant there was a weird soundtrack and lighting effects that came on as spotlights, and then off into total darkness.

This shot was when Fekkesh was inside this burial tomb, after locking the tomb metal gate behind him to prevent Jaws from entering. The lights come on and we see Jaws approach the gates and take the chain in his mouth, bite through breaking the chain and enters the tomb as the lights go off. Director Lewis Gilbert then does a shot, looking toward the tomb gate where Jaws has entered. He says: "Roger, what I want is you to come past camera, go forward and approach the tomb gate in pursuit of Jaws, as Bond had not seen Jaws enter, he must be cautious." Bearing in mind, Bond will be approaching the tomb with his back to camera, not the ideal situation for the leading man having his back to camera and not being seen clearly.

So, upon action, Sir Roger moves gracefully past camera in a cautious crouched posture with the gun in his hand. As he gets into full frame, he spins into, and faces the camera and say: "Lead actors know they must get face exposure on camera as

much as possible!” He then continues to approach the tomb, turning and twisting in a most beautiful ballroom dance in a bally style series of movements, turns and twists! It just looked so graceful performed on the desert sand.

I was standing behind Lewis; he had his fingers caressing his cheeks as the cut was called. He then said to Roger: “Who is directing this movie? Victor Sylvester?” What was funny is that Victor Sylvester was a great popular dance band leader at that time. Sir Roger made it look so smooth and the vapour between actor and director was like light comedy for the crew, and kept us all happy during those Arabian nights.

**Were you Roger Moore’s stunt double in “THE WILD GEESE” and which scenes were you involved in?**

I was there to be Sir Roger’s stunt double if needed, but because of the nature of the film, there were a lot of soldiers and simbas running and shooting in the bush. All actors had to go through an assault training course out in the baking African sun prior to the movie shoot. But I did carry the deposed president on my back, running through the bush, in one scene. I also ended up doubling Hardy Kruger and Richard Burton in that same scene as their usual stunt doubles suddenly developed bad back complaints. To carry a person on your back, running in the bush and fighting off the enemy at the same time is not easy. And I did in fact get shot by Sir Roger at the air strip. I was an East German adviser who appears in the control tower; Sir Roger was lurking underneath with a cigar in his mouth. He steps out, shoots up, nails me and I tumbles off the tower.

I loved the location on this very good action movie with a great cast such as Sir Roger Moore, Richard Burton, Richard Harris, Hardy Kruger, Frank Finlay and the great Walsh character actor Kenneth Griffith. The film was directed by Andrew McLaglen and produced by Euan Lloyd who also produced “SEA WOLVES”, another film I did with Sir Roger.

**Were you Roger Moore’s stunt double in ESCAPE TO ATHENA and which scenes were you involved in?**

Again, I was there to step in if Sir Roger got injured although he had to do most of the general action himself. My claim to fame on this film was a German sniper who is on the highest minaret in Rhodes, Greece. At the end of the battle, Telly Savalas casually fires his weapon from the hip and I fall screaming from about 90 feet. Another enjoyable movie and thanks again for having me, Sir Roger.

**Please tell us about your work on “THE NAKED FACE”?**

It was not long after recovering from my accident on “OCTOPUSSY” and wishing to get back into stunt action on big movies again. I got a call from Doris Spriggs (still Sir Roger’s secretary) with the good news that Sir Roger requested me to be his stunt double to be shot in Chicago, and to arrange a major fight scene where Roger is brutalised by a mafia boss.

I was very excited at the prospect of getting back at the top again and to prepare a fight for Sir Roger in a much different style than in his James Bond fight scenes. Here,

he was to be punched around, brutalised and thrown into stacks of oil drums by a jealous mafia Boss with his henchmen in attendance. It was going to show him in a very different mood and character. Brian Forbes (the director) discussed with me how he envisaged the scene. Slow calculated brutality from calmness to fury and back again. (I put this fight scene as one of my best creations because of its style, pace and impact).

Sir Roger was involved in that entire fight scene and played the part so well. I was there dressed and ready, did the big impact stunt being hurled into a stack of oil drums but mostly watching and advising Sir Roger and the mafia boss on technique. Encouragement is a vital element with actors on any action scene. The mafia boss did wonderfully well, as he had been cast only a couple of days before the shoot, but did a great scene with Sir Roger. In addition, I doubled for a local actor falling down stairs in the city centre and doing a little car driving. It was a real pleasure to work on this film and I loved Chicago (as Frank Sinatra once sung "Chicago Chicago, my home town"). On arrival there, I knew no one except Sir Roger, Elliot Gould and Brian Forbes. When leaving, I had hundreds of friends among the local people on the crew and others. Sir Roger kindly treated us to dinners at the famous Drake Restaurant. Long live the memories of Chicago with Sir Roger on "THE NAKED FACE", a great period!

**How many films have you been involved in except the Bond films? According to IMDb it comes to 62 films and 7 TV series in total, is that correct?**

The IMDb list has most of the films I have worked on but they have given me credit for two films that is not correct. These are the two James Bond films – "LIVE AND LET DIE" and "THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN GUN" made in the early 70's. I suspect Sir Roger's previous stunt double Les Crawford, who has now passed on, may have done them. The following is a list of additional films that I have worked on that IMDb have not credited to me, but they are significant and interesting:

- ALFRED THE GREAT (1969) with David Hemmings, shot in Ireland
- THE ASSASSINATION BUREAU (1969) – Stunt and fencing double for Oliver Reed in a sword fight with Curd Jürgens that I later worked with on THE SPY WHO LOVED ME
- OLIVER TWIST (60's) – various stunts
- WHEN EIGHT BELLS TOLL (1971) – stunt fight with Anthony Hopkins in a Scottish graveyard
- SCROOGE (1970) – Stunt double for Kenneth More and Albert Finney on which I broke my neck. Had two vertebrae fused, was on traction for three months and a further four months in full body cast. What we really go through for the love of movie making!
- TO CATCH A SPY (1971) – incl. stunts with Kirk Douglas and Patrick Mower.
- CROMWELL (1970) – various stunts
- GREAT CATHERINE (1968) – various stunts
- YELLOW DOG (1973) – various stunts
- BRAZIL (1985) – various stunts

- IZZAT (2005) – Stunt coordinator, shot in Norway. The film is about Pakistani gangs living in Oslo
- INCHON (1981) – various stunts, shot in Korea and directed by Terence Young who directed three of the first four James Bonds with style and flair (DR. NO, FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE and THUNDERBALL). The lead part of General Douglas MacArthur was played by Sir Laurence Olivier, the great Shakespearean actor.
- THE MIRACLE (1991) – Stunt coordinator, shot in Ireland and directed by Neil Jordan.

If you include the films above, and that IMDb has not listed, it brings the number of films that I have worked on to a total of 73.

There were many small films and TV-series with days or perhaps the odd week that I worked on but have not kept track of. My contracts have been lost or mislaid due to home moving etc. There were also many stunt orientated safety films for the industry. The National Coal Board in the UK and building companies mainly back in the 60s which formed part of my stunt preparation.

There were two popular BBC TV-series that I worked on and did many stunts for – THE BORDERERS (1968-1970) and THE ONEDIN LINE (1971-1980). The latter one had a certain Jane Seymour as a shipping line owner. As all Bond fans know, Miss Seymour played the leading lady (Solitaire) in LIVE AND LET DIE 1973. Another Bond alumni in that series was Michael “Mike” Billington, he played the sea captain on the ship.

*[Editors note: Michael played the part of Sergei in THE SPY WHO LOVED ME and he could even have been the new James Bond after Roger Moore as he was one of the actors that Cubby Broccoli screen tested for the role in the early 80's.]*

Unfortunately Mike passed away in June, 2005 due to illness. We miss you Mike!

**Of all directors you have worked for, which ones do you like best?**

I loved working for Lewis Gilbert, Steven Spielberg, John Glen, Wolfgang Peterson and Nils Gaup from Norway (“Sami land”).

**In what countries have you been working and which film studios do you consider to be a ‘second home’ because of much work based in them?**

Pinewood was the main studio for me and that I considered a “second home”. I loved working there and visit it in between jobs. Other studios I worked at were; Shepperton Studios in the UK, Ardmore Studios in Ireland, Bavaria Studios in Germany, Oslo Studios in Norway and Universal Studios in USA. But they were all second best after Pinewood.

**We suppose you became friends with many of the stunt people you worked with on the Bond films and other films; we understand Bob Simmons must be one of them?**

Bob Simmons, George Leech, Richard Graydon and Eddy Powell were of the older school that helped and encouraged me in my earlier career. "Their attitude was to encourage Cesar and not to bury him". Normally, I lived a life very separate and simple apart from my work. Between films I trained and kept in shape for the action scenes to come, which was the most important thing.

**Are you doing any film or other stunt work at this moment?**

Well, I try to keep my hand, mind and body busy as much as I can. I am still involved in the stunt business although not at the same pace as at the height of my career in the 70's, 80's and the 90's.

In 2007 I did some work in the USA for the Jim Carrey film – THE NUMBER 23 – with stunts and played the part of a deranged character who strangles the boy's mother in a fantasy scene. I have also been working on two hit TV-series over there, THE MONK and HEROES.

On request, I do action classes for the Norway Film Board and help aspiring directors with action and stunts on their pilots and films.

Last July I completed training and preparation of a sword fight between Hamlet and Laertes in an outdoor production of Hamlet. The play is directed by Alex Scherpf and set up at the Agder Theatre in Grimstad in the southern part of Norway.

Nowadays, the action parts are fights being hit on the head, being dragged away or falling into a dock and finishing up with my head underneath a boat. I guess that's how they envision older stunt men. Possibly, we look better in the dying scenes? [Laughter].

Although I do not pursue the big films and the high pressure any more, I enjoy giving my advice and passing on the knowledge gained during a long career enhanced by experience gained on the James Bond films with Sir Roger Moore.

**Do you have or have you had your own stunt company?**

No, I don't and I never did.

**Would you consider an offer of working on another Bond film if it came to you?**

The simple answer is I would not be asked! The James Bond films that I worked on with Sir Roger Moore, Cubby Broccoli, Bob Simmons, George Leech and Richard Graydon is a great part of film making history, never to be repeated. They were wonderful times in a great cinema era. I have to admit that action and stunts were my life. I loved the buzz and the adrenalin rush of the big stunt numbers on occasions in big action sequences. I really miss the wonderful people from other departments who made my career fulfilling through their cooperation, help and kindness. We may have done some great stunts by putting our lives on the line and have a reservoir of experience, skills and knowledge, but we will have to move on. I want to take this opportunity to thank all those wonderful people whom I worked close with and the fond memories of those who have passed on. In the end, it is like an old blues number I heard many years ago. There's only one way out, I'm going out



that door. I feel that after working and performing on some of the finest and greatest stunt action films, I can be proud to go out that door with my head held high.

**Finally, on a personal note, have you ever been filming and/or privately visiting Belgium/Sweden (Scandinavia)?**

I have never been to Belgium but it is on my list of places to visit in the future. As cycling is one of my pastime sports, I know that a cycling hero hails from there, the great Eddy Merckx who was a sports role model in his time.

Although I am not of his calibre in cycling, I donate to, and take part in cycle rides for various charities and foundations from time to time. I believe in giving something back to those in need, as I have been so lucky in my time. I wish to do more for charities and the under privileged in the future.

As I said before, I toured in Sweden in 1974 for a show – The International Stunt Show – which was all about stunts. High falls, car rollovers, big car crashes, motorcycle jumps, tunnels of fire, fight and sword routines and more. I believe the Swedish promoter was Barry Materson who also was involved in music promotions. The concept of the stunt show was the Stars behind the Stars set up from Norway with the Norwegian stuntman Arne Berg as the main Star. It also included Richard Graydon from James Bond fame. We stayed in first class hotels, just like being on movie locations and were made most welcome by the locals and audience at each show. The venues were usually at trotting tracks or football stadiums. Although we did six shows a week on long summer nights, it was a pleasure to see the fantastic Swedish scenery landscapes, forests, and lakes in their glory when travelling from venue to venue in the mornings. I got the opportunity to do many varied stunts on a day to day basis which stood me well on my future-to-be role as Sir Roger Moore's stunt double. But, I was completely unaware of that back then, of course.

Sweden and the continued tour in Denmark and Finland hold special memories at a crucial time of my life and career.

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME, MARTIN.**

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