

ULTIMATE SPECIAL EFFECTS

SYNOPSIS

International Version

Episode 101

SHEER ADRENALINE

Thrilling action sequences fuel the biggest box office hits year after year. This hour of *Ultimate Special Effects* throws us right in the middle of the action as we witness death-defying stunts, cutting-edge special effects, high-speed camera rigs and pedal-to-the-metal editing. It's all to bring the audience to the edge of their seats and pump their adrenaline to the max!

Pierce Brosnan is James Bond in *The World Is Not Enough*. Audiences expect a dynamic pre-title sequence in a Bond movie, and this film features a stunner as 007 pursues the mysterious Cigar Girl (Maria Grazia Cucinotta) down London's River Thames. We see how 2nd unit director Vic Armstrong and stunt coordinator Simon Crane stage the wildest speedboat chase ever.

After a 16-year wait, director George Lucas rewarded *Star Wars* audiences by taking them on the wildest thrill ride in the galaxy in *The Phantom Menace*. In the film's centerpiece sequence, young Anakin Skywalker displays his ability to channel the Force in a show-stopping pod race. We reveal the secrets of the breath-taking sequence, created by the wizards at Lucas's pioneering visual effects company, Industrial Light and Magic. Then we'll see how Jedi knights Liam Neeson and Ewan McGregor learned to handle their light sabers and fight the evil Darth Maul.

The car chase is an essential ingredient of most action movies. Director John Frankenheimer reveals how he staged the greatest car chase of the 1990s in the espionage thriller *Ronin*. Robert De Niro is at the wheel in this nail-biting sequence that crashed 75 cars!

Long the martial arts superstar of Hong Kong cinema, Jackie Chan is now captivating audiences worldwide. We'll observe how Jackie choreographs his unique blend of comedy and bold daredevil stunts on the set of his smash hit *Rush Hour*.

Then we'll see how martial arts filmmaking and the cutting edge of computer technology combine to produce the visual sensation *The Matrix*. Visual effects supervisor John Gaeta reveals how his digital team was able to give Keanu Reeves the superhuman ability to dodge speeding bullets in a breakthrough photographic process.

Episode 102

MAXIMUM FEAR

This hour of *Ultimate Special Effects* crosses over into Hollywood's dark side, where a movie is only successful if it scares the audience to death. The makers of horror films and psychological thrillers reveal the secrets of exploiting a powerful emotion every member of the audience holds inside – fear.

A foreboding old mansion with a ghostly reputation is the setting for a mysterious psychological experiment. In *The Haunting*, director Jan De Bont updates the haunted house genre with the help of Hollywood's visual effects A-list including physical effects supervisor John Frazier and visual effects supervisor Phil Tippett. Stars Liam Neeson, Catherine Zeta-Jones and Lili Taylor reveal how frightening making the film was for them.

No one is more associated with thrillers than legendary director Alfred Hitchcock, who once remarked, "I enjoy playing the audience like a piano." Never-before-televised footage of Hitch working on the set of his most graphic and disturbing movie, *Frenzy*, reveals how the Master of Suspense put his distinctive touch on this still powerful tale of a serial killer.

For the ultimate in terror, we see how Hollywood successfully danced with the Devil in the classic shocker *The Exorcist* with the help of inventive make-up effects. Now, Winona Ryder believes she's discovered the identity of the Anti-Christ in *Lost Souls*. This edgy thriller marks the directorial debut of Academy Award-winning cinematographer Janusz Kaminski.

In the thriller *The Faculty*, high school students learn their teachers *really* are from another planet. To create the monstrous alien villain, a team of puppeteers from KNB EFX Group manipulates a 15-foot animatronic creature for the final showdown in the school's gymnasium. Then, the filmmakers of *Komodo* show how to scare audiences with a combination of animatronic and computer-generated Komodo Dragons.

Three student filmmakers enter the woods to find the truth about a legendary witch - they were never seen again, and only their raw film was found. That was the disturbing premise behind *The Blair Witch Project*. The film's directors and cast members reveal the true story behind this sensational hit.

Episode 103

MEGA-BLASTS

Nothing rivets an audience more than a giant explosion! To capture these dynamic images on film, Hollywood pyro-technicians use a variety of techniques: from full-scale demolitions to exploding miniatures to digital blasts. This hour reveals the secrets Hollywood uses to craft films with explosive impact!

It was a call only Bruce Willis could answer – to lead a team of oil drillers into outer space to blow up an asteroid that threatens to end all life on Earth. The action-packed *Armageddon* rockets audiences aboard the space shuttle and sends them colliding into fields of inter-stellar debris. Exclusive behind-the-scenes footage on the film's giant asteroid set reveals how director Michael Bay and his visual effects team created the impossible, including a stunning sequence that destroys Paris.

A secretive government building suddenly explodes in a giant curtain of fire! No, it's not the work of terrorists - we're on the set of the sci-fi thriller *Universal Soldier: The Return*, starring Jean-Claude Van Damme. For the film's explosive finale, pyro-technician Joey DiGaetano reveals how he created a 200-foot tall curtain of flames, a fireball inspired by one of movie history's most spectacular blasts created for *Apocalypse Now*.

A bomb squad unit becomes the target of a terrorist – that's the premise of *Blown Away*, when Tommy Lee Jones hunts down a Boston cop, played by Jeff Bridges. This thriller features Hollywood's biggest mega-blast of the 1990s. A full-size ship explodes when physical effects supervisor Clay Pinney ignites 580 gallons of gasoline, 9000 feet of primacord and 200 pounds of black powder to set off the devastating blast!

In *Enemy of the State*, Will Smith and Gene Hackman find the only way to escape National Security Agents is to blow up Hackman's six-story warehouse hideout. To pull off this shot, the filmmakers turned to the masters of implosion technology, the famed Loizeaux Family of Controlled Demolition, Inc. Careful planning and just the right amount of TNT brings this structure to its knees in a picture-perfect Mega-Blast.