

"I was Frank The Bunny!"

They starred in some of cinema's most memorable moments, yet they could walk into Sainsbury's without raising an eyebrow. After months of detective work, we track down those shadowy figures everyone remembers but few know...

INTERVIEWS NICK DE SEMLYEN
SPECIAL THANKS TO MEREDITH ROBINSON

The Cockpit Kid Ross Harris



Movie: Airplane! (1980)
Who can forget... the inquisitive poppet who gets a tour of the cockpit and a barrage of dodgy questions from the captain?
Screen time: 3 mins.

"The acting was supposed to be a parody of the bad acting in disaster movies, and I caught onto that quickly. I'd done lots of commercials – 'Gee, look at this!' – and had the all-American look, so I got the job.

"I understood a little bit of the sexual innuendo but didn't get the whole idea behind it until I saw the film a year later. Peter Graves, the captain who asks me all those dirty questions, was very much a straightforward kind of guy. I think he was a little afraid of the humour, so maybe was a little bit afraid of fraternising with me. Like, 'Do what we've got to do, then get the kid out of here...'

"The set was surreal. I used to wander around and end up in the prop room with all its fantastic things. I snuck in there once and, coming to the end of a row, saw



this prosthetic penis with a pump. I remember thinking, 'Oh, man,' and grabbing it. The lights went on, I turned around and the prop man was there looking at me. We never said anything to each other, but there was kind of an agreement: 'We won't speak of this.'

"Since then, I've worked a lot with Beck (see above), doing design work and photography. But for the rest of my life I'll have people coming up to me and asking if I've seen a grown man naked. I love to play up to it. For the record, my favourite gladiator movie is Spartacus, and I'm actually a little afraid of going to Turkey because it seems like a given I'll end up in prison..."

Frank The Bunny James Duval



Movie: Donnie Darko (2001)
Who can forget... the twisted, time-travelling guy in a rabbit-suit who visits Donnie to warn him of Earth's imminent demise?
Screen time: 2 mins.

"I'm friends with the guys from Ain't It Cool News and they had been talking about this project they had high hopes for. Then my agent randomly sent me the script. I thought, 'This is really out there,' but I did get it in a weird way.

"Apparently a lot of people were coming in to audition and reading

Frank really creepily. The costume, dialogue and setting, it all lends itself to being creepy, so what I thought would be even creepier is, what if there's a guy who's like Donnie but not from Earth? It's the unexpected that is frightening.

"The costume was very hot. It was a regular jumpsuit with rabbit

fur on the outside, then they put these gloves and plastic nails on, and the mask, which really made it.

"I had seen (*the James Stewart invisible-giant-rabbit movie*) Harvey, but my preparation was lots of Twilight Zone, as well as books on time travel. I wanted to work out a linear, logical reason for Frank to be doing what he's doing. I spent a lot of time on the set, watching them shoot and bouncing around. I'm not going to

lie, my job was the easiest in the world – no hair, no make-up, I put on the suit, I go to work, I cook up a bit of mystery, I go home.

"I love the idea of being this sort of iconic horror character. I've done a few films, but never had the response I've had from Frank The Bunny. I've met people who dress up as him and people have left me messages in his voice. I mean, how did they get my number? I need to cut my drinking down..."

KOBAL (3); REX (1); RONALD GRANT (1)



The Girl In Red Oliwia Dabrowska

Movie: *Schindler's List* (1993)
Who can forget... the cherubic Polish child in a red coat who runs through a hellish Holocaust ghetto, providing the film's only touch of colour?
Screen time: 1 min.

"I'm Polish girl and live in Krakow with my family. Now I'm 17, and I go to the college and to the music school – I play the violin. My mother is a teacher, my father is regional manager, and my brother is a swimmer. I'm normal girl in normal home. I love music and animals – I have got a dog.

"When I was three years old, my mother saw an advertisement in the newspaper. Some people making a film were looking for a small girl with blonde hair... like me! So my mother thought, 'Why not?' And I went to the casting with my grandfather. I remember there were a lot of small girls, and they were all sitting on the floor.

Because these people weren't interesting, I sat alone and played. But I was very interesting to the men who were making the film, because I was strange. So I became The Girl In Red.



"I talked to Steven Spielberg about... small things. I don't remember well, but we talked about my home, about dogs and about E. T. (I said that I was too young for this film).

"Unfortunately I don't remember more. No-one recognise me now, because I changed: I am older and my hair is dark. After Schindler's List I played in a few Polish films and in a music video. I finished my career when I was ten because it was very tiring.

"I went to the music school, and one year ago I played in the Krakow tribute to Pope John Paul. I want to be a journalist or an advocate, but haven't decided yet. Of course, I want to play in films too, but now I'm not a small, sweet girl and no-one wants me in their films."

Marvin The Cop Kirk Baltz

Movie: *Reservoir Dogs* (1992)
Who can forget... the unlucky police officer who has his ear sliced off to the sound of Stealers Wheel?
Screen time: 6 mins.

"I was new to L.A. Like everybody else in town, I read the Reservoir Dogs script and fell in love with it. I auditioned a few times – I think for Orange and for Pink. They said, 'We really want you in the movie. What do you like?' I said, 'I love the cop.' And they went, 'You're kidding!' This guy goes through all this shit and doesn't squeal. I just thought it was a great role.

"There was a lotta trust and camaraderie between us all. The car I'm in when you first see me is actually Michael Madsen's yellow Cadillac. I wanted to see what it was like inside a trunk, so Michael took me for a little ride. It can get a bit warm in the trunk of an old Caddy in LA in the summertime.

"My torture scene was all right there in the script. We even shot the ear being pulled off, but it's great Quentin edited it the way he did it. It's more disturbing to watch Michael dance as I writhe in pain. You're watching it and want to enjoy yourself like Michael but know you're not supposed to! I love the mind-fuck in that.

"I'm amazed that there are film students in their late teens that go, 'You're the cop.' It's flattering. These days I teach an acting class in LA and do weekend workshops in San Francisco, but the main thing I'm up to is I've got a three year-old and a six year-old. It's all about tee-ball and tiaras..."



The Tree-Rape Chick Ellen Sandweiss

Movie: *The Evil Dead* (1981)
Who can forget... the poor girl who is immortalised in a really icky way – by being raped by a demonic tree?
Screen time: 7 mins. (in human form)

"I went to high school with Sam Raimi and Bruce Campbell – we were in plays together and had fun, although they were deathly afraid of girls at the time! I was also in several of their early Super-8 movies. When we made *The Evil Dead*, I was 21.

"I can never escape answering questions about that pesky woods scene. The experience was gruelling: cold, long, painful, humiliating – not funny until about 20 years later. The vines were made to look like they were wrapping around me by starting out with them wrapped, having them slowly pulled off, then playing the film in reverse.

"The sexual nature of the scene bothered me a lot – it was not written that way, but evolved as we shot. There were also lots of sound effects I was not aware of. Basically I didn't realise what it would look like until I saw it on the big screen

at the premiere and was totally mortified.

"I've seen it since around 20 times, a lot less than most fans. I had no clue of what it would become, and yes, when I see my face on T-shirts I can't help but marvel. I see the other *Evil Dead* 'ladies' a lot – we do horror conventions and have a website: www.ladiesoftheevildead.com.

"If I have any advice, it's this: don't let your kids watch horror movies until they're teenagers, and for God's sake stay away from trees with long limbs!"



The Banjo Boy Billy Redden

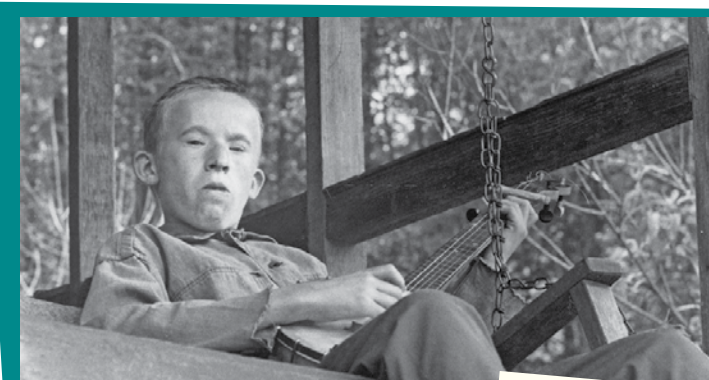
Movie: *Deliverance* (1972)
Who can forget... the sinister hillbilly child who challenges out-of-towner Ronny Cox to a banjo duel?
Screen time: 2 mins.

"When I was 16, I got picked out from my school and went down to help them make this movie called *Deliverance*. I was there for a week and had a real good time. There were a lot of people milling around but I wasn't scared.

"There's a lot of people in

Rabun County that don't like Burt Reynolds. He was on a talk show saying we all sit watching cars go by. He was always trying to put me down, just a lot of unkind things that he said. I guess he had a lot on his mind.

"I went to the premiere in



The "Kick My Ass!" Guy Paul Shaffer

Movie: *This Is Spinal Tap* (1984)
Who can forget... dweeby record promoter Artie Fufkin, who hilariously beseeches Tap to apply their boots to his behind?
Screen time: 2 mins.

"I was good friends with Harry Shearer, who played Derek Smalls – we'd done Saturday Night Live together. And he knew that I kind of specialised in studying these guys in the rock 'n' roll business. So I started to research the role with an actual promo man, who knew all these party terms.

"It was straight into a shoot that had been going on for weeks. The guys were very comfortable with all the back-stories, but I had to learn them: what were the names of the band? Who was the label president? Before walking into a scene I would just be going over the details in my head.

"Promoters would always wear a tour jacket with a T-shirt, jeans and a leather shoulder-bag with records in it, ready to give out. And then the comb-over... we just thought that was funny. A lot of Fufkin-isms are based on things

that actually happened. Harry and Mike McKean, Tap's lead singer, had gone to a record signing where no-one showed up and the promo guy said, 'It's all my fault, kick my ass.' My favourite line is my one to the record store guy: 'I thought we had a relationship!' These guys were doing business but always talking about having a relationship – their mouths moved faster than their minds.

"I've been David Letterman's musical director for over 20 years. On the show we have musicians every day, and many of them call me Artie Fufkin – a lot of British ones too. I still do a little 'kick my ass' – a band says 'kick my ass' and I say, 'Thank you, one of my hits.' I have that and *It's Raining Men*, which I did actually write. I'm a two-hit wonder."

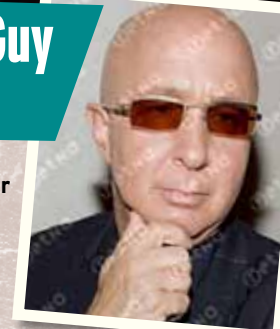
Gainswood, Georgia, with some of the others who were in it. I don't think Burt Reynolds was there, I didn't see him. The movie was okay – there was a lot of party sceneries and that one part I didn't really care for.

"Now I part-own a café in Georgia, the Cookie Jar. We serve vegetables and stuff, the good ol' Southern cooking. We play banjo music and bluegrass, but I've never played Duelling Banjos. Heard it a lot of times, though.

"People come from all over to

meet me. This big bus came, full of boys from Atlanta. They took all kinds of pictures of me, you know. It really shocks me. I mean, I didn't ask for this. I sign stuff for 'em, that's my gas. One guy gave me a hundred-dollar bill.

"Tim Burton sent two big men to the Cookie Jar to ask me to be a part of *Big Fish*. He said I was an icon and got me a banjo. The banjo I had in *Deliverance*, it got gone and that really upset me. We done moved so much it probably broke, you know?"



The Bone Monkey Dan Richter

Movie: 2001: A Space Odyssey (1968)

Who can forget... the man-ape who flings a bone into the air, setting up the most celebrated match-cut in history?

Screen time: 10 mins.

"I was 28, a starving mime teacher, when I got word that Stanley Kubrick wanted to meet me. He was making a new film in London and wanted to discuss the opening sequence. I'd heard stories to the effect of 'the guy's a fucking nut'. So, driving to MGM Studios that day, I was scared to death.

"As it happened, we hit it off straight away. Stanley described 2001 as a sci-fi project which begins three million years ago, and explained that he wanted the man-apes to be completely credible. I instantly understood his problem – actors can't move, stuntmen can't act, but mimes can do both.

Right there, I showed him how to do the sequence, wearing a black leotard with towels stuffed in it.

"I didn't want to specifically play Moonwatcher at first, but Stanley convinced me. I spent months studying in zoos before going into the scenes, which were brutal. The set was dusty and our body temperatures rose so fast in

the costumes that we could only play for a minute or so without taking the masks off and the medical staff ventilating us. We often did over 40 takes.

"We went outside for the final throwing of the bone. We both sensed how important the shot was and ate up a lot of film trying to get the right effect. In the end,

with a special camera motor sent over from Hollywood and me miming the slowness, we got it.

"Recognition has developed over the years. The fans still write, Tom Hanks told me he had seen 2001 37 times, and I stay in touch with Arthur C. Clarke, who calls me, 'the most famous unknown actor in the world!'"



"I'll Have What She's Having" Estelle Reiner

Movie: When Harry Met Sally (1989)

Who can forget... the lady who steals the show from a fake-orgasming Meg Ryan with the killer line, "I'll have what she's having...?"

Screen time: 15 seconds

"Rob, my son, came in one evening and very casually said, 'Oh Mom, there's a line in this movie I would love you to do, but you'll have to come to New York.' I said, 'But there's so many good actresses – why do you need me?' He said, 'I know you can do it, that's all.'

"It was actually Billy Crystal that came up with the line. The scene took a very short amount of time to film but there was a little trauma to it. My son was directing the actress having an orgasm and he felt funny doing that with his mother in the room! It caused a lot of anxiety for him.

"They always talk about these lines that are so well-known, but

I think this is the funniest ever written. It was perfect for the situation, and it was hearing an elderly woman wanting to have... It had the double-meaning, you know, of giving an order and also wanting the action!

"After the movie, I got recognised a lot. Not only in delis, but in airports too – I suddenly became a celebrity. It's amazing

how many people say, 'Oh, you did that line...' And they never say it right! They always say, 'I want to have what you're having.'

"Acting gave me an opportunity to be a singer. I'm very musical but was never ready to get up in front of an audience. My first gig took place when I was 65. It's the greatest thing for me – everybody says I'm sexy and I say, 'How can

I be sexy at 92?' But that's what they say and I get that a lot.

"I perform at the Gardenia in LA, a lot of early jazz. I sing this really black music, even if I am a 92 year-old Jewish lady. Rob comes down to see my shows often and my husband Carl is there every time – at this point in my life I don't think I could do it without him."

