

worth working on even if I don't get a role. I just figure that I'll always get to play the role once and that's in the audition. So I may as well prepare for it and get as close as I can. After I got the part, I viewed the original *Phantasm* and was very impressed with what Don was able to do with a shoestring budget. I mean, he wrote it, he directed it, and he produced it. To come up with something as unique and as stylish as it was, I was impressed."

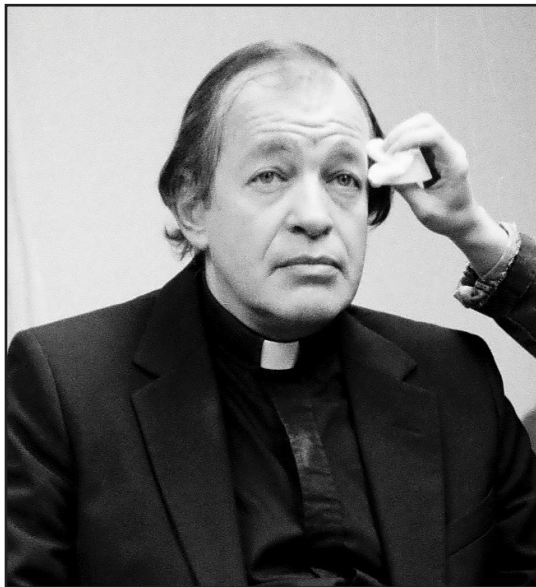
Among the Tall Man's undead army in *Phantasm II* would be two featured henchmen, silent and dressed in matching black suits. The more action-heavy of these two roles was assigned to Stunt Coordinator John Michael Stewart with the other going to actor Mark Anthony Major whom Coscarelli chose from a group audition.

"Don told us that we were going to be chased and pinned to a wall by something very frightening," Major says. "He wanted to see fear, terror and our vulnerability to break away from whatever was holding us back. I saw a few people do it and it looked okay, and when it was my turn I did basically the same thing. Don liked how I played it, so he had me do it a second time with more specific instructions. He told me that the

thing chasing me was this silver ball. I immediately thought of *Phantasm* and, of course, it was! I had no idea because the title was *Morningside*. I didn't make a connection with that being the name of the cemetery. I told Don that I was a *Phantasm* fan and a big horror buff and he goes, 'Oh, you know about horror movies?' and I told him, 'More than you'll ever want to know.' Later that day I got a call saying I had the job."

Although a handful of actors would appear as dwarves in *Phantasm II* such as Felix Silla (best known as Cousin Itt from *The Addams Family*) and Phil Fondacaro (a well-known Ewok performer on *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi*), it was Ed Gale whom Coscarelli cast as the film's featured dwarf player. Gale was best known for his work in the title role from *Howard the Duck* and would soon appear as Chucky in the original *Child's Play*.

"I think they were mainly looking for someone who could work inside of a restrictive costume," Gale says. "Don Coscarelli, who was surprisingly young, hired me on the spot when I met him. He sent me home with a script and told me to pay attention to the ending because that's where my big scene



Kenneth Tigar (*left*) and Mark Anthony Major (*right*) getting into character.

(Photos courtesy Kristen Deem)

was, where I met Reggie in the spacegate world. So I'm reading through it later on, enjoying it, and I get to the ending and the last ten pages are missing. It says 'Confidential Ending Withheld.' I'm just like, 'What!?' so I call Don right away. It turned out that he gave me the wrong script and immediately sent me over a full copy to read through. I loved it! I thought the whole thing was awesome. I was happy to be a part of it."

A PROPER PHANTASM

In stark contrast to the unencumbered creation of its predecessor, *Phantasm II* would be produced using, more or less, industry standard procedure. Dedicated departments would handle specialized tasks rather than the "everyone does everything" approach of the original. There would also be little time for Don Coscarelli to re-write or re-shoot ineffectual scenes due to the pace made necessary by Universal's release date. Frequent departmental meetings would be in order to ensure his vision was being realized properly and on time. Just as they'd done on *Phantasm*, the production secured another Chatsworth warehouse for filming, this one larger.

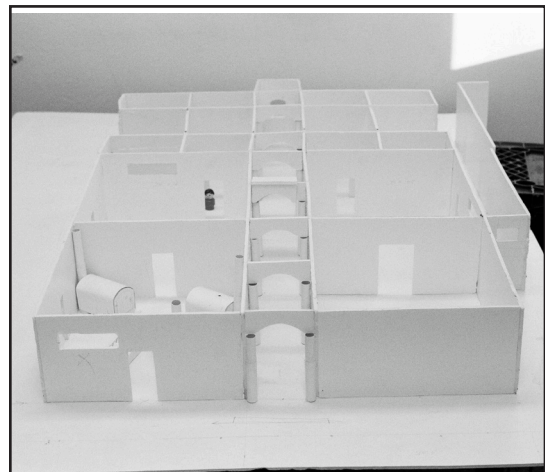
"*Phantasm II* was a really wild ten months of work," Robert Del Valle says. "Unlike the first film, we had a budget and we had a schedule, and we had to stick to both. The budget allowed us to have a larger mausoleum set this time around and we had a terrific production designer, Philip Duffin, to construct the new sets. He was really great in finding creative ways to stretch his budget. Having a budget also meant that we were able to have some new visual effects and considerably more elaborate makeup effects. These were all things that were going to make the film successful in the end but they also required a kind of preparation and management that we weren't worried about on the first film. It was a much more serious production."

"The biggest difference between *Phantasm* and *Phantasm II* for me was the expectation level," Daryn Okada says. "We didn't have that on the first one. We had to somehow be bigger and better than *Phantasm* but still retain some of the simple values from that film. We really did not want to let the

audience down, either the old audience coming back or the new audience coming in for the first time. There was so much more at stake on *Phantasm II*."

Duffin pitched his upgraded mausoleum layout to Coscarelli using a scale model. His design depicted a T-shaped hallway with several rooms jutting off from the main corridor. Although the script called for Perigord Mausoleum to be another white marble structure à la Morningside, Duffin instead went in a gothic direction with dark hallways, large columns and bright red stained glass windows. The set was built in pieces throughout October, erected at the Chatsworth warehouse in November, painted in December and camera-ready by early January 1988. The shooting schedule was front-loaded with location work starting in December to accommodate set construction. Warehouse filming was slated to begin in January with most of the film's makeup effects staggered several months beyond that to allow Mark Shostrom and company time to complete Coscarelli's tall order of gags.

"The effects in *Phantasm II* required a lot of overlap between the departments," Shostrom says. "You had multiple effects departments working on scenes like when the sphere chops the priest's ear off or when Angus gets drilled. You can't have one department not cooperating with another



Philip Duffin's Perigord Mausoleum model.

(Photo courtesy Kristen Deem)