



DEAD OR ALIVE  
YOU ARE COMING  
WITH ME.

RoboCop



OMNI CONSUMER PRODUCTS



## CONTENTS

**CAST AND CREW ... 6**

***TALES OF BLOOD AND STEEL* (2019)**  
by Omar Ahmed ... 9

**ORIGINAL PRODUCTION NOTES (1987) ... 15**

**ABOUT THE CAST ... 22**

**ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS ... 35**

***ROBOCOP ROB* (1987)**  
by Eric Niderost ... 41

***ROBOCOP AND THE GENERATION  
THAT GREW UP WITH IT* (2019)**  
by Christopher Griffiths ... 51

***ROBOCOP: DISMANTLED & REASSEMBLED* (2019)**  
by Henry Blyth ... 61

**ABOUT THE TRANSFER ... 76**

**PRODUCTION CREDITS / SPECIAL THANKS ... 77**

## CAST

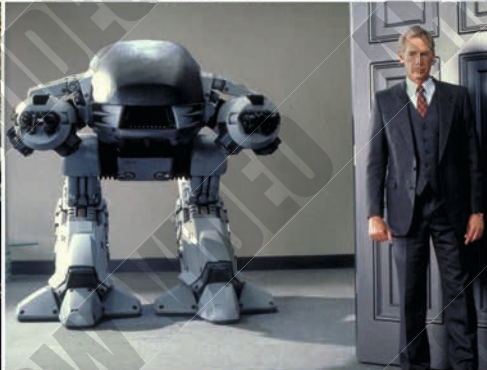
**Peter Weller** Murphy/RoboCop  
**Nancy Allen** Lewis  
**Daniel O'Herlihy** The Old Man  
**Ronny Cox** Jones  
**Kurtwood Smith** Clarence  
**Miguel Ferrer** Morton  
**Robert DoQui** Sgt. Reed  
**Ray Wise** Leon  
**Felton Perry** Johnson  
**Paul McCrane** Emil  
**Jesse Goins** Joe  
**Calvin Jung** Minh  
**Del Zamora** Kaplan  
**Rick Lieberman** Walker  
**Lee DeBroux** Sal  
**Mark Carlton** Miller  
**Edward Edwards** Manson  
**Michael Gregory** Lt. Hedgecock

## CREW

Directed by **Paul Verhoeven**  
Written by **Edward Neumeier & Michael Miner**  
Executive Producer **Jon Davison**  
Produced by **Arne Schmidt**  
Editor **Frank J. Urioste**  
Director of Photography **Jost Vacano**  
Production Designer **William Sandell**  
Music by **Basil Poledouris**  
RoboCop designed and created by **Rob Bottin**  
ED-209 Sequences by **Phil Tippett**









# TALES OF BLOOD & STEEL

By Omar Ahmed

Detroit, some time in the future. Airlifted from the abandoned steelworks where Officer Alex Murphy (Peter Weller) has been shot to pieces, his body is transferred to a stretcher and carted into a hospital where a flock of medics try to save his life. In the operating theater, a series of POV shots from Murphy's perspective creates a dissonance. His lifeless eyes seem to say he is dead. But the constant use of the POV shot looking up at the medics trying frantically to save his life is unsettling. This is because we are given access to something sacred, unconscious, and conjectural. The first memory is of Murphy's son watching a TV show titled 'T. J. Lazer' about a fictional sci-fi Westerner. This is followed by a second memory of Murphy's wife telling him how much she loves him. The third and final memory is of his wife and son standing outside their suburban home waving. Murphy might be dead, but his memories connected to his soul live on. As the medics use the defibrillators to revive Murphy, the electric shocks that resound through his body trigger the faces of Clarence Boddicker (Kurtwood Smith) and his unsavory gang, the men who perpetrated the violence against him. The reliving of this traumatic event is the first of many flashes in the film that gradually come back to haunt Murphy in his incarnation as RoboCop. Irrupting through memories that OCP (OmniConsumer Products) cannot repress with a fleeting refrain and unremitting intensity, the trauma eventually awakens RoboCop from his technological corporate slumber.

*RoboCop* (1987) is often interpreted as a political satire, a treatise on corporate power, the melding of man and machine and a critique of 1980s Reaganomics. It is of course all of these things and embodies a visceral power that has rarely been matched by Hollywood science fiction films in the contemporary era. However, two major themes often go amiss when *RoboCop* is talked about; trauma and memory, both of which are intertwined and connect with Verhoeven's subsequent sci-fi film *Total Recall* (1990). The impact of a traumatic event is an occurrence that brings with it conditions of repetition, lucidness and pain. Trauma is often only really ever felt or realized until after the event in question. In *RoboCop*, the trauma takes on an

added resonance since Officer Lewis (Nancy Allen), Murphy's partner, witnesses the event. The central goal for Murphy is not just to reclaim an identity that has been stolen from him but to also come to terms with a personal trauma. In this respect, could we argue that *RoboCop* is a trauma film? If so, this is no ordinary trauma film, but one about a homicidal trauma inflicted upon society by a pathological corporation. Images of trauma proliferate in *RoboCop*. In the notorious opening sequence, the demonstration of ED-209, the latest in hi-tech law enforcement, goes violently awry, resulting in the grisly murder of Kinney (Kevin Page), an overenthusiastic corporate newbie. But the trauma of such images is rendered into something far more satirical. The endless squibs, the near evisceration of Kinney's body, the two-faced corporate executives scurrying to take shelter in the boardroom segues into Dick Jones' (Ronny Cox) glib retort about the murder of Kinney as a 'glitch', a hilarious retort that cuts through the violence to remind us of the wit that resides amongst the dread in the films of Paul Verhoeven.

When RoboCop awakens from his technological slumber and abruptly leaves the police precinct, we are told he had a dream, something that is inexplicable to Bob Morton (Miguel Ferrer), Head of the Security Concepts division of OCP. It is memories of a past life that come back to haunt RoboCop, reasserting the traumatic event as something he has to overcome. Dreaming and memories are two existential and temporal concepts that recall the wider cultural influences of Cyberpunk. Expressly, the works of William Gibson and Philip K. Dick imagine the cyborg as more than a machine but as a sentient being imbued with spectral, haunting characteristics. In the latter's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968), later adapted into *Blade Runner* (1982), memories are implanted in replicants (mechanized slave labor) to simulate human qualities such as intelligence. In the case of *RoboCop*, the corporation attempts to erase the memory of Murphy but OCP cannot account for the ways in which trauma leaves a trace, often enough to forge a path to recovery for the victim, as is the case with Murphy. Lewis first recognizes RoboCop is in fact Murphy when the micro gesture of the gunplay at shooting practice, a memory linked to his son, reconnects with the opening when Murphy performed his gun skills for Lewis. Indeed, memories of a past life seep into many of RoboCop's gestures, taking on a ghost-like quality.

Having fled the police precinct after his initial awakening, RoboCop runs into one of the criminals, Emil Antonowsky (Paul McCrane), who perpetrated the violence against him. This stand-off between RoboCop and Emil unfolds late night at a petrol station. "Dead or alive, you're coming with me" is the ultimatum given by RoboCop. The déjà vu of this ultimatum is enough for Emil to recall the man under the mask is Murphy, the police officer they brutally gunned down. Emil has to do a double take, perplexed how someone who is dead can return to haunt them. And when Emil tells RoboCop they have killed him, this leads to a momentary paralysis. RoboCop's physical state is seized by an uncanny memory recall that is fragmented and indistinct. This is the first of many decisive moments in the film where RoboCop is confronted about his true identity, forced to relive the trauma of his death as Murphy, but one that he does not fully realize has taken place until he accesses the restricted OCP records and begins to uncover the truth. The encounter with Emil also opens a wound that was never healed, left exposed by the hijacking of Murphy's body by OCP.

It is often said the emotional core is the 'going home' sequence in which RoboCop comes face to face with his deceased self. When RoboCop returns to his now empty house, this constitutes the first stage of an attempt to heal a wound first opened when he was massacred. And as RoboCop walks through the ghostly spaces of his house, it is the same fragmented memories of a lost past that maps a disjunction in which RoboCop is out of synch with reality. The sterile and empty spaces amplify the deep sense of loss he feels. Along with a repetition of the same memories, a new memory also surfaces; this one shows Murphy with his wife and son taking a timed Polaroid selfie at Halloween. This new memory hints that a recovery is underway in which RoboCop is retrieving a past that has been repressed by the corporation, memories of a human life re-emerging. But how is this at all possible? Murphy is dead after all. We saw that happen and the medics declared the time of his death. There is something inexplicable at work here, a strange duality about the human mind. The suggestion that the brain, a repository of data, a memory store, can be revived after death through a technological resurrection is a metaphysical subtext that lingers through many of the sequences in which RoboCop is overcome with the trauma of the past. Memory is an aspect of

human existence the corporation attempts to regulate. And erasing the memory of Murphy after he undergoes full body prosthesis is a gesture of the totalizing ways in which corporate ownership extends to our very bodies, the next lurid step in the evolution of capitalist colonization.

When RoboCop removes his battered helmet, the fusion of old flesh and new steel melded together is the man-machine aesthetic that imagines the cyborg as a technological hybrid over which the corporation wields a startling power, ownership and control. But what exactly does RoboCop mean when he says: "I can feel them...but I can't remember them"? It is a pitiful line delivered after his unmasking in the steelworks when he questions Lewis about the whereabouts of his family. Looking into a makeshift mirror held up by Lewis, RoboCop finally 'sees' Murphy. Running his cumbersome fingers over his baby like face, reclaiming a human identity disrupts the fabricated narrative weaved by OCP. While the removal of the helmet is connected to the recovery of a body stolen by OCP, the recovery of a past life is only partial. RoboCop comes to realize that remembering remains an impossible act in the face of pathological corporate machinations. In this respect, Murphy is only resurrected emotionally, although the biblical allusions to Christ point to another kind of resurrection altogether. More suggestively, the removal of the helmet uncovers the unseemly sight of the bullet hole in RoboCop's forehead, a literal scar and visual reminder of the trauma perpetrated against Murphy.

If the trauma of an event repeats itself, materializing in different ways, the final confrontation between RoboCop and Boddicker becomes an absolution, a belated and cathartic coming to terms with the horrors of the past. Returning to the scene of the crime, the ugly industrial architecture is the ideal Jungian landscape against which to stage RoboCop's recovery, a battle of blood and steel. Now unmasked, Murphy walks again, a traumatic victim and survivor seeking to avenge those who once tried to annihilate him. There is a swagger to Murphy's actions now, gliding and evading with guile the unchecked destructive force of his villainous perpetrators who fire clumsily with their outrageous military hardware. Murphy is made to suffer once again, reliving the pain of the original traumatic event. But this time Murphy fights back, driving a spike through Boddicker's throat, killing him. It is the same titanium spike RoboCop used to unlock his human past, inverted

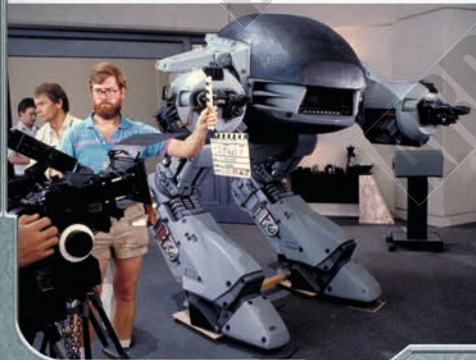
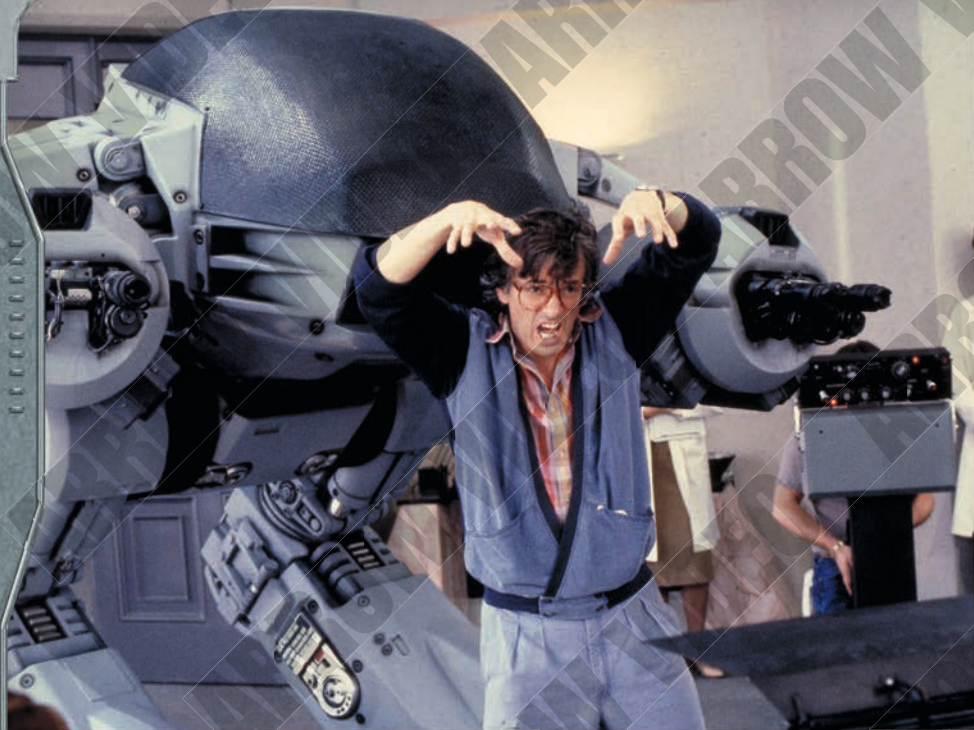


now for an altogether violent source of retribution and spectacle of power. Since Boddicker is an extension of the corporate machine, a proxy for Dick Jones, the violence inflicted on both Murphy and RoboCop reiterates the trauma of capitalism as something uncontrolled, destructive and perpetual.



Trauma and memory make up the subtext of a work that has grown in critical stature over the years. This to some degree has to do with the increasing ways in which Hollywood sanitizes the action film or panders to an unending nostalgia industry. What sets *RoboCop* apart from 1980s hard body action films like *Predator* (1987) and *Die Hard* (1988) is essentially the darkly comedic vein. Let's not forget *RoboCop* is a very funny film, a comedy in fact, expressly about American culture in an age of reactionary Reaganite politics. And the mischief that writers Edward Neumeier & Michael Miner along with director Paul Verhoeven orchestrate is vividly brought to life in the now famous 'Mediabreaks' that punctuate the narrative with an eviscerating satirical vibe. While so many of the film's best lines have found their way into popular culture, the epoch defining "I'd buy that for a dollar!" is a lasting punchline that seems to have cultivated its own subculture of memes. *RoboCop's* cinematic riches also include Rob Bottin's inspired RoboCop design, the intricate model work of Phil Tippett and that rapturous anvil clanking score by composer Basil Poledouris. Ultimately, the creative intelligence of Verhoeven's *RoboCop* and its enduring appeal resides in the Euro-American mechanics of a film that imagines a critical dystopia in which science fiction, the Western, the action film and horror intersect with a resounding vitality.

*Omar Ahmed is a UK based film scholar and has written the first full-length monograph on RoboCop (Auteur) as part of the Constellations series on sci-fi films.*



# ORIGINAL PRODUCTION NOTES

## PRIME DIRECTIVES OF "ROBOCOP"

- 1) *Serve the public trust.* 2) *Uphold the law.*
- 3) *Protect the innocent.* 4) *CLASSIFIED.*

The near future.

South Africa has the bomb. Rebel forces still hold the Acapulco airport. But the big story on the nightly news ("give us three minutes, we'll give you the world") is the surging crime rate across America.

Among the hardest hit cities is Old Detroit, where thirty-one cops have been killed since Security Concepts, Inc., a subsidiary of OmniConsumer Products, assumed control of the police department.

The company's designers thought they had the answer in ED-209, a clanging, cannon-fisted "enforcement droid." But when ED got rattled – and blew away a junior marketing executive – it was clean up the board room and back to the drawing board.

Something new is needed. Something like Murphy, who was one hell of a cop until the night he was murdered.

Orion Pictures presents *RoboCop*, starring Peter Weller as the title-role cyborg (part-human, part-machine), programmed to patrol an urban combat zone. Nancy Allen, Dan O'Herlihy, Kurtwood Smith, Miguel Ferrer, Ronny Cox, Ray Wise and Jesse Goins also star for producer Arne Schmidt, co-producer Ed Neumeier and executive producer Jon Davison.

Written by Neumeier and Michael Miner, the futuristic fantasy is the first American movie from acclaimed Dutch filmmaker Paul Verhoeven and his first venture into science fiction.



The concept of a law-enforcement Lazarus – risen from the dead to dismantle crime – began when Ed Neumeier was working at a major studio, reading “literary properties,” including comic books. “I was fascinated by them,” says the writer/producer who found a kindred spirit in Michael Miner, who’d developed *Repo Man* (1984) with director Alex Cox. Together, the writers walked a narrow plotline between a tough, sophisticated adult thriller and the grotesque graphic of the comic book form.

That the tale was laced with dark humor was among its attractions for Jon Davison, producer of *Airplane!* (1980) So, too, was its cybernetic super-hero. A knowledgeable film buff, Davison had displayed his affinity for robots, androids “and the wonders of mad science” as the producer of the seven-hour *All Night Once-in-a-Lifetime Atomic Movie Orgy* (1968) (directed by filmmaker Joe Dante).

(He would later form Tobor Productions – to film *RoboCop* – in tribute to the “late, great director Lee ‘Roll ‘Em’ Sholem,” whose *Tobor the Great* [1954] was, he insists, “the best robot movie ever shot in five days. The one-sheet hangs in a shrine in our office.”)

First, however, he had to fund *RoboCop* and find a director “with the talent and guts to pull it off.”

He was joined in the effort by Orion Pictures, where production executive Barbara Boyle suggested Paul Verhoeven. “I’d seen most of his work and enjoyed it,” notes Davison. “In fact, we’d held several meetings on a film which never happened, a screen version of Charles Bukowski’s *Women*. But I never dreamt for a moment he’d say yes.”

Best known for the hard-edged reality of *Spetters* (1980), the epic war story *Soldier of Orange* (*Soldat Van Oranje*, 1977) and the controversial shocker *The Fourth Man* (*De Vierde Man*, 1983), Verhoeven is, he admits, a voracious reader of science-fiction. But that interest never surfaced in his work, because “we don’t have the technology in Europe. I wasn’t about to make a stupid, amateurish version of something Americans do so much better.”



Verhoeven, whose *Flesh + Blood* (1985) dealt with medieval mercenaries roaming plague-ridden Europe, notes that “there are two kinds of myths which are part of movie lore... the heroic past... and the visionary future. In the past, you are guided by history, which serves as a framework on which to mount the story.

“But the future has no rules. You have to imagine not only an incredible adventure but a credible reality in which to place it. That’s what I liked about *RoboCop*. The writers gave me a world with rules.”

The first rule, in that realm, would appear to be: don’t venture alone into Old Detroit, even in uniform. The heart of Motown is slated to be razed in six months – by the omnipresent OmniConsumer Products – to make way for Delta City, America’s most ambitious urban development. But in the interim, it’s an enclave of vice, crime, corruption and decay that makes Jack the Ripper’s Soho look like Disney’s Main Street, USA.

Murphy (Peter Weller) welcomes the challenge. Transferred to the Old Detroit precinct and assigned a new partner, Officer Lewis (Nancy Allen), he pursues a vanload of hoods to the lower depths. He enters in a turbocruiser and comes out in a body bag, the victim of target practice by the bespectacled, oddly soft-spoken Clarence (Kurtwood Smith) and his gang of homicidal flakes and nuts.

It is the golden opportunity Security Concepts’ young development director Morton (Miguel Ferrer) has been waiting for. Using what’s left of Murphy as a prototype, he can put the “RoboCop” program into action, humiliate Jones (Ronny Cox), the executive behind the ED fiasco, and impress ‘The Old Man’ (Dan O’Herlihy).

Out of a hidden hospital lab emerges what Morton describes as “the best of both worlds: the fastest reflexes modern technology has to offer, onboard computer-assisted memory and a lifetime of on-the-street law enforcement.”

RoboCop lives up to his billing. He daringly executes his first three directives, along with several members of the underworld. But while personal memories have presumably been programmed out of his circuits, that’s the only glitch in Morton’s plan. Somewhere, from the deep recesses of the dedicated dead policeman’s

mind come stirrings, longings, shafts of humanity, which have nothing to do with the war on crime.

The creation of *RoboCop* involved a phalanx of technical artists, starting with special make-up effects supervisor Rob Bottin. A disciple of the renowned Rick Baker (*Star Wars* [1977], *The Exorcist* [1973], *An American Werewolf in London* [1981]), Bottin lived with Baker and his wife, working on films like *King Kong* (1976) and *The Fury* (1978).

“Then, one day, Rick said it was time to go out on my own... and fired me,” recalls Bottin.

It was, as Baker hoped, a gesture of friendship. Bottin soon rose to the top of his craft, creating make-up effects for films like Joe Dante’s *The Howling* (1981) and John Carpenter’s *The Thing* (1982).

“But nothing could prepare me for the challenge of *RoboCop*,” he admits. For six months, Bottin and director Verhoeven worked closely together as scores of character designs were conceived, revised, rejected and replaced.

“From an artistic point of view,” says Verhoeven, “*RoboCop* had to be a contradiction... elegant, powerful, futuristic... yet electronic, human and real. If you had the sense of an actor, hidden in a robot suit, everything else we did would be wasted.”

Technically, the costume would have to hold up through chases, explosions, gun battles and stunts. Metal trappings were “too cumbersome for the action scenes,” says Bottin, who experimented instead with chemically treated latex to achieve a gunmetal sheen. He found himself working with “chemicals I’d never heard of before, some deadly,” in fashioning accessories, impregnated with blood squibs and explosive charges for different kinds of action.

“RoboCop’s first helmet – sheathing the hero’s exposed neural circuits – was strikingly bizarre, but,” says Bottin, “it smelled like baby vomit. I added lemon oil and it smelled like lemon baby vomit.” The eventual solution was fiberglass,

molded to the features of star Peter Weller.

For his part, Weller was preparing – physically and mentally – to occupy Bottin’s fantasy. After “reading everything I could lay my hands on about robotics,” the actor spent four months studying with a professional mime, developing “a kind of motion which would be both graceful and painfully mechanical.”

Meditation, he adds, helped him withstand the pressure of being thrust every morning, before dawn, into a twenty-five-pound casing in which the temperature rose as high as 115 degrees. On average, he recalls, he lost “about two and a half pounds of water a day.”

At first, the effect was claustrophobic. “I had to work through that,” he says, “to breathe out of the robot... to convey that this contraption had a soul.”

The same cannot be said of ED-209, RoboCop’s rival in advanced law enforcement. The fictional development of the devious Dick Jones, boardroom survivor nonpareil, ED was invented by Phil Tippett, whom Davison terms “the best stop motion effects man in the business.”

An Oscar winner for the colossal “walkers” and other marvels of *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) – among his contributions to the *Star Wars* saga – Tippett saw ED as “crab-like and clumsy.” (After all,” adds the designer, “he does turn out to be a homicidal screw-up.”) In actuality, there were two EDs, one seven feet tall and nearly as wide, the other an “articulated” miniature model.

It was the latter version which would run amok, through a complex process involving Vista-Vision cameras and rear-projection blue-screen plates.

Tippett’s wizardry, says Davison, has its origins in the “pioneering work of Ray Harryhausen whose Dynamation process revolutionized special effects. Harryhausen, in turn, was inspired by Willis O’Brien, whose *King Kong* (1933) lived up to its billing... at the time... as the ‘eighth wonder of the world.’”

Paul Verhoeven welcomed the technology (“It’s why I came to America”) but also found that it took some getting used to. “In setting up a scene, you have to

imagine that things are happening which won't actually occur until months later... in miniature. The actors must 'see' beings and forces which don't exist and react to them. Or at least not bump into them. It's schizophrenic filmmaking."

While *RoboCop* is set in tomorrow's 'Old Detroit,' the tale was shot largely in today's Dallas. The choice was narrowed down from three cities – including Chicago and Houston – which Verhoeven says "have the most futuristic skyscrapers in the world."

Among the chosen locations was the ultra-modern Dallas City Hall, designed by famed architect I.M. Pei, to which a seventy story "extension" was added by matte artist Rocco Gioffre. Here, an OmniConsumer executive would plunge through a plate-glass window in the longest, messiest fall from high office in history.

Other sites, recognizable to Dallas residents – despite their *RoboCop* camouflage – include the Plaza of the Americas, the Renaissance Tower, the Stark Club and a downtown intersection where a gas station was built and blown sky-high, along with a street of mock storefronts.

For the film's climax, production moved to southwest Pennsylvania, outside Pittsburgh. An abandoned steel mill was leased to serve as the fossilized factory where RoboCop – his memory banks re-fired – at last confronts his own executioners.

The mill, with its twisted, rusted girders and stagnant, oily pools, seemed "hauntingly appropriate" to filmmaker Verhoeven. "When the mill closed down five or ten years ago, workers who spent their whole lives there wrote their farewells as graffiti on the walls. It was like walking through a mechanical graveyard.

"Within the fun and fantasy," Verhoeven adds, "I like to think that the film makes a comment... satirically and visually... on those who believe that the functions of life are better organized by things than people."

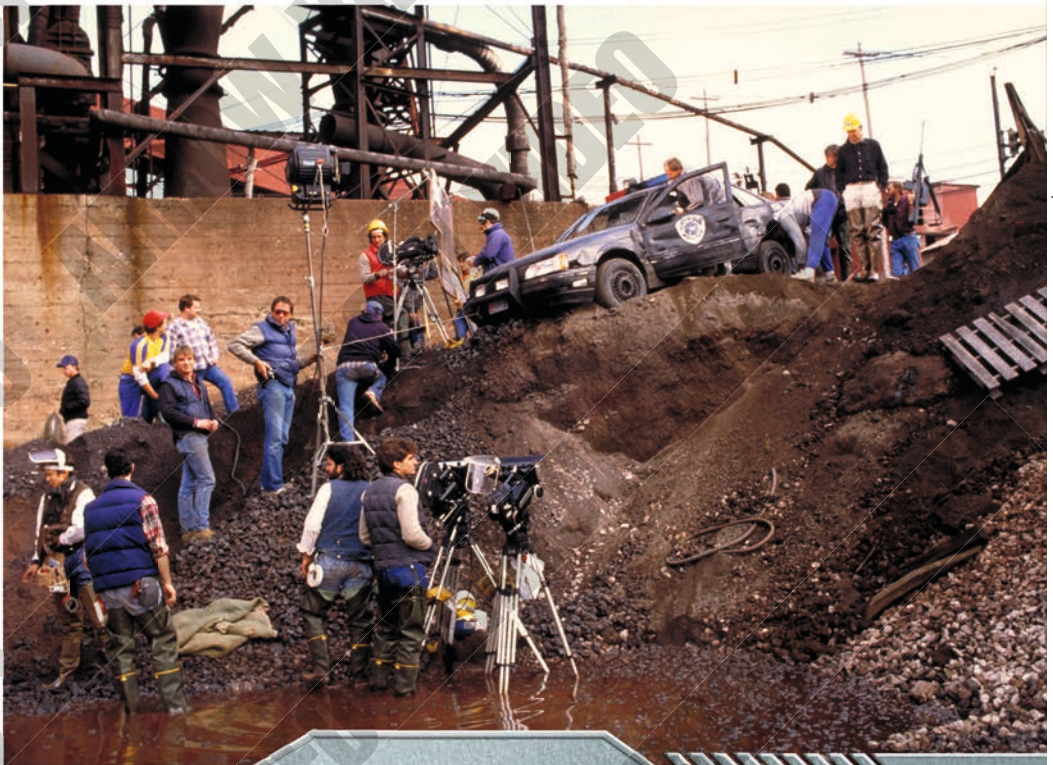
On that note, Jon Davison was surprised to read a recent account in the *Los Angeles Times* of a newly invented robot, designed to replace security and prison



guards. The four-foot high, 485-pound droid “bears an uncanny resemblance to our own ED-209,” says Davison. “But fortunately, they haven’t yet given it a gun permit.”

“Science fiction,” concludes Verhoeven, “enables you to express a point of view you can’t put in the present but is yet related to it. It’s a dream world, furnished by a toy shop.

“We imagine walking on Mars. Some day we will and Mars will become boring. We’ll have to dream of another unknown world.”



## ABOUT THE CAST

With only a characteristic gun-flip and a recurring nightmare to recall his past, PETER WELLER as RoboCop takes dead aim at the urban underworld... and tracks down his own killers. As the trail leads from crime-infested streets to corridors of corporate corruption, the relentless cyborg “gradually regains his humanity,” says the actor.

Conveying a split personality is nothing new to Weller. As the title-role hero of *The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai* (1984), he was a brain surgeon, rock star, physicist and race-car driver, who dabbled in global intrigue.

Most of Weller’s life, in fact, has been spent pursuing two interests – acting and music. (Six generations on his mother’s side have been professional musicians.) The youngest son of a career Army helicopter pilot, he was born in Wisconsin but grew up literally “all over the globe.” Settling finally in Texas, he enrolled at North Texas State University primarily to play in one of its celebrated jazz bands, but soon found himself more interested in acting.

Weller left Texas to accept a scholarship at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York, and, two weeks before graduation, made his Broadway debut as David in the New York Shakespeare Festival production of David Rabe’s *Sticks and Bones*.

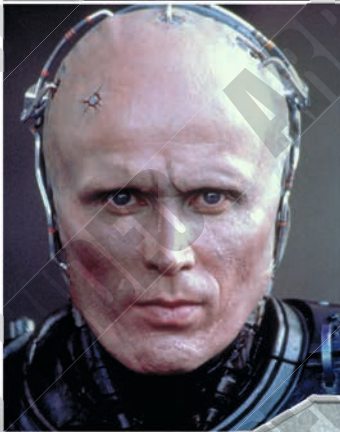
After repeating the role in the London production, Weller returned to New York for the Lincoln Center presentation of Rabe’s *Streamers*, then originated the role of Nick in the American premiere of David Mamet’s *The Woods*. While studying with noted drama coach Uta Hagen, Weller also joined the Actor’s Studio and appeared in such off-Broadway productions as *Summer Brave* and *Full Circle*.

Since making his film bow in *Butch and Sundance: The Early Years* (1979), Weller has played Diane Keaton’s tennis court-building boyfriend in Alan Parker’s *Shoot the Moon* (1982) and Ali MacGraw’s off-beat off-Broadway playwright/lover in Sidney Lumet’s *Just Tell Me What You Want* (1980). More recently, he was Teri Garr’s sinister lout of a boyfriend in *Firstborn* (1984), and a bachelor with a huge



rat problem in George Pan Cosmatos' *Of Unknown Origin* (1983) – for which Weller won the Best Actor Award from the Paris International Festival of Fantasy.

In addition to appearing in such television dramas as *Kentucky Woman* (1983), *Two Kinds of Love* (1983) and *Apology* (1986), Weller still frequents small clubs in Manhattan – to play jazz trumpet.



Tough and athletic yet surprisingly tender, NANCY ALLEN as Anne Lewis is the only police officer to see through RoboCop's steely hide to the mutated Murphy beneath. Once his partner, she becomes the cyborg's one true friend.

*RoboCop* marks the first time Allen has played a cop on screen – an ironic twist of fate for the daughter of a New York City police lieutenant.

Raised in suburban Yonkers, Allen studied dance at the High School for the Performing Arts in Manhattan, where she began her career as a model and actress in television commercials.

Moving into films with Hal Ashby's *The Last Detail* (1973), she won recognition as the vicious teen queen of Brian De Palma's *Carrie* (1976). After a comedic outing in Steven Spielberg's *1941* (1979), she reached stardom with her third De Palma film – *Dressed to Kill* (1980), in which she played a high-class hooker who joins Angie Dickinson's son to pin his mother's vicious murder on mad Michael Caine.

Allen has since starred opposite John Travolta in *Blow Out* (1981), as a determined Beatles fan in *I Wanna Hold Your Hand* (1978), one-third of a romantic triangle in *The Buddy System* (1984), a target of 1950's-style "aliens" in the sci-fi spoof *Strange Invaders* (1983), a friend-in-need to time-warped sailor Michael Pare in *The Philadelphia Experiment* (1984), and a star reporter-turned-political aide in the screwball comedy *Not For Publication* (1984).

In none of those, she points out, was she required to make the sacrifice demanded of her in *RoboCop* – cutting off her trademark long, full head of hair.

While all his underlings maneuver to make their marks in the elegant boardroom of Omni Consumer Products, it is the unmistakable authority of the Old Man they must impress – and obey. He is played to the last harrumph by DAN O'HERLIHY.

A veteran of films and television as well as stage and radio, O'Herlihy was born in Wexford, Ireland, and attended the National University originally bent on a career in architecture. Turning to acting, he joined the prestigious Abbey Players in Dublin, where he honed his craft and moonlighted on radio.





After making his film debut in Britain's *Hungry Hill* in 1946, O'Herlihy appeared in Carol Reed's glowingly received *Odd Man Out* (1947) before moving to the U.S. to co-star in *Kidnapped* (1948).

Three years later, with increasingly solid notices for his work in *Macbeth* (1948), *The Desert Fox* (1951), *Soldiers Three* (1951) and *The Blue Veil* (1951), he won an Academy Award Best Actor nomination for his portrayal of the title role in 1951's *The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*.

O'Herlihy has since starred in such diverse films as *Bengal Brigade* (1954), *The Virgin Queen* (1955), *Imitation of Life* (1959), *King of the Roaring 20's* (1961), *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1962, title role), *Fail Safe* (1964), *The Tamarind Seed* (1974), *MacArthur* (1977, as FDR), *The Last Starfighter* (1984) and *Halloween III* (1982).

Television viewers have seen him most recently in such top-rated series as *Remington Steele* (1982-1987) and *Murder She Wrote* (1984-1996).

As cool Clarence Botticker, KURTWOOD SMITH flashes a certain charm along with a drop-dead smile and the bespectacled diffidence of a CPA... but he soon blows his cover to reveal a shockingly sadistic killer.

For Smith, the role marks an exaggerated return to villainy after bugging Kris Kristofferson and Treat Williams as a smarmy CIA agent running a government coverup in *Flashpoint* (1984).

Born in Wisconsin and raised in L.A.'s suburban San Fernando Valley, Smith earned his MFA in drama from Stanford University and taught theater, acting and directing at Canada College for five years before zeroing in on a serious acting career.

He played such classic heroes as Othello and *The Taming of the Shrew's* Petruchio with the California Shakespeare Festival, then spent five years as the leading actor with the California Actors Theatre at Los Gatos, where he won three Dramalogue Awards in 1981 – as the heavies in *Billy Budd*, *Green Grow the Lilacs* and *Idiot's Delight*.

Moving to Los Angeles, Smith gave himself a year to make it, and immediately broke into television as a regular on the series *The Renegades* (1983). Among



his 17 TV credits since are *Newhart* (1982-1990), *Stingray* (1985-1987), and the miniseries *North and South, Book II* (1986).

Still active in theatre, Smith's most recent stage credits include *Enemy of the People* at the Los Angeles Actors' Theatre, and Beth Henley's *The Lucky Spot*, in which he starred opposite Christine Lahti at the Williamstown Theatre Festival.

As Morton, the conniving young comer behind the RoboCop project, MIGUEL FERRER makes a fool – and a mortal enemy – of rival executive Dick Jones. It's a power play that puts him on both the 6 O'Clock News – and Jones' hit list.

The manipulative Morton is the latest in a series of sharply etched character portraits for Ferrer, whose credits include *Valentino Returns* (1989), *Flashpoint* (1984), *Star Trek III* (1984), *Lovelines* (1984), and *Heartbreaker* (1983).

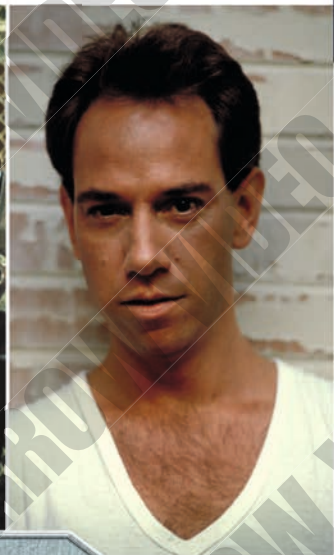


The son of José Ferrer and Rosemary Clooney, he was born in Santa Monica and grew up wanting to be a professional musician. He was well on his way as a skilled drummer, but switched to acting after appearing in an episode of *Magnum P.I.* (1980-1988), playing his father as a young man.

He has since guest-starred in such top-rated series as *Cagney & Lacey* (1981-1988), *Hill Street Blues* (1981-1987), *Trapper John, M.D.* (1979-1986), *Hotel* (1983-1988) and *Houston Knights* (1987-1988), and will soon be seen in the pilot of *The Way of the Dragon*, a new *Kung Fu* series starring Bruce Lee's son, Brandon.

A devotee of theater as well, Ferrer has performed onstage in *Adventures in Paradise* and *When You Comin' Back, Red Ryder*. The latter, which he also directed, enjoyed a successful run in Los Angeles and was re-staged at Florida's celebrated Coconut Grove Playhouse.

Ferrer's most recent achievement is *Comet Man*, a just-published comic book he and Bill Mumy wrote for Marvel Comics.





As the smooth, savvy Dick Jones, RONNY COX didn't rise to the top by being a pushover. Unfazed by the fact that his pet droid turns the Omni boardroom into an abattoir, he stops at nothing – including murder – to keep his place in the corporate hierarchy.



Recently seen on screen as the outfoxed Lieutenant Bogomil of *Beverly Hills Cop* (1984) and the likable loser who gives his son outdated advice in *Vision Quest* (1985), Cox vaulted into prominence with his memorable film bow as the doomed, banjo-duelling businessman of the 1971 hit, *Deliverance*. He has, however, a 24-year history of major acting credits.

Born in Cloudcroft, New Mexico, he earned his degree from Eastern New Mexico University, then made his professional debut with Washington D.C.'s Arena Stage Company, where he performed such classic American plays as *The Andersonville Trial*, *The Crucible* and *The Glass Menagerie*.

Cox made his Broadway bow in *Indians*, then joined Joseph Papp's Public Theatre, where his performance in *The Happiness Cage* led to his motion picture debut.

He has since appeared in such films as *Some Kind of Hero* (1982), *Bound For Glory* (1976) and *Courage* (1984) (which he also wrote and co-produced), and co-starred in television's *Who Is The Black Dahlia* (1975), *The Chicago Conspiracy Trial* (1970, for the BBC), *The Jesse Owens Story* (1984), *A Case of Rape* (1974) and *Reckless Disregard* (1986).

PAUL McCRAANE's Emil is the youngest of the thugs, but, as Clarence's wheelman, he recklessly drives the gang's van from shootout to hideout – until he melts into the scenery. Literally.

Way beyond any hope of workman's comp, Emil nonetheless proves a dramatic breakthrough for McCrane, who began his film career as the red-headed kid who played the guitar in *Fame* (1980). He has since been featured in *Purple Hearts* (1984) and *The Hotel New Hampshire* (1984).



Born and raised in Pennsylvania, McCrane studied theater in New York under the tutelage of Uta Hagen and Hal Holden. His extensive stage credits include *As You Like It*, *The Curse of an Aching Heart*, *Runaways*, and the recent revival of *The Iceman Cometh*, in which he co-starred with Jason Robards.

Alternating theater with films and television, McCrane has appeared on *Hill Street Blues*, and in the TV dramas *Baby Comes Home* (1980), *Death Penalty* (1980), *Nurse* (1981-1982), *We're Fighting Back* (1981) and *Moving Right Along* (1983).

To those touched by RAY WISE's deeply moving performance as the Depression-era lumberjack searching for his lost daughter in *The Journey of Natty Gann* (1985), his *RoboCop* role may come as a surprise. As the trigger-happy Leon, all he hopes to find are unsuspecting victims... and careless cops.

But then nobody's perfect... and Wise sees a link of sorts between his current role and the one which marked his screen debut – the scientist/monster of the cult movie, *Swamp Thing* (1982).





Born and raised in Akron, Ohio, Wise started appearing in community theater productions while he was still in high school. When he won the Best Actor Award for his work in *The Subject Was Roses* with the city's noted Weathervane Playhouse, he turned to acting as a serious career.

After graduating from Kent State University he won an Obie for his portrayal of Hoss in the Off-Broadway production of Sam Shepard's *The Tooth of Crime*, then appeared on Broadway in *Romeo and Juliet* and *Tartuffe*, among others.

Television viewers have seen Wise in *Dallas* (1978-1991) and *Hart to Hart* (1979-1984), and will soon see him in two recently-filmed pilots – *Beauty and the Beast* (1987) and *Condor* (1985).

Rounding out the roster of Motor City hoods is happy-go-lucky gunsel  
JESSE D. GOINS.

A veteran of theater, films and television, Goins has appeared on screen in *Ordinary Heroes* (1986), *WarGames* (1983), *Second Thoughts* (1983) and *Jekyll and Hyde... Together Again* (1982).

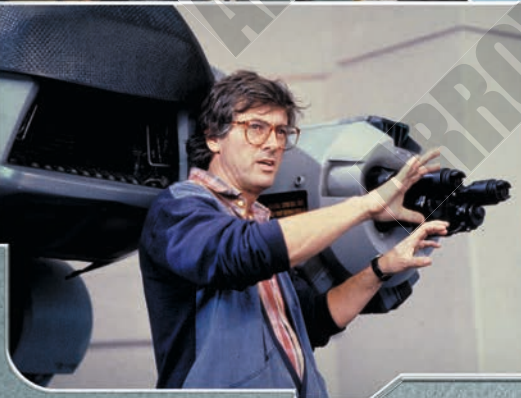
Born and raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, he earned his Master of Arts in drama from the University of Michigan, then went on to New York, where he honed his craft with the Hudson Guild Theater before joining the acclaimed Negro Ensemble Theater.

After two seasons under director Douglas Turner Ward (who originally staged *A Soldier's Play*, later filmed as *A Soldier's Story*), Goins headed west to work in television and motion pictures.

Among his 20 TV credits are the miniseries *King* (1978) and the top-rated *Hill Street Blues*, *Knots Landing* (1979-1993), *Taxi* (1978-1983), *Diff'rent Strokes* (1978-1986), *Benson* (1979-1986) and *The Greatest American Hero* (1981-1983).









## ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

For director PAUL VERHOEVEN, *RoboCop* marks not only his first American film, but also his initial plunge into the special demands of science fiction. He became fascinated with its possibilities when he realized that “even though *RoboCop* is an action film, it has deep emotions beneath its stylized surface.”

It is typical of Verhoeven to search for the humanity in any given genre. His *Flesh + Blood* depicted life in the Middle Ages as far from the myths of Merlin and Camelot as possible... while his controversial *Spetters*, a telling look at Holland’s teenagers, dispelled any storybook presumptions about coming of age in the land of Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates.

Born in Amsterdam, Verhoeven became interested in cinema during his six-year stay at Holland’s University of Leiden, where he earned a doctor’s degree in mathematics and physics.

After directing three short films – *A Lizard Too Much* (*Één Hagedis Teveel*, 1960), *Let’s Have a Party* (*Feest!*, 1963) and *The Wrestler* (*De Vorstelaar*, 1971) – he served with the Royal Dutch Navy as a documentary-maker, a skill he put to excellent use on his return to civilian life.

Entering Dutch television, Verhoeven first scored with his insightful documentaries – *Portrait of Anton Adriaan Mussert* (*Portret van Anton Adriaan Mussert*, 1968), for example, profiled notorious Dutch quisling who collaborated with the Nazis – then broke through to dramatic shows with *Floris*, a hit 1969 adventure series about a medieval family.

Segueing into motion pictures with *Business is Business* (1971), Verhoeven proved his mettle a year later, when his *Turkish Delight* won an Oscar nomination as Best Foreign Language Film. Then came *Katie Tippel* (*Keetje Tippel*, 1975) and – his fourth and most famous effort – *Soldier of Orange*, a taut WW2 drama about the Dutch underground which won the 1979 Golden Globe and became an international favorite.

Verhoeven polished his growing flair for realism with *Spetters*, and has since directed a television film (*All Things Pass* [*Voorbij, Voorbij*, 1979]) and *The Fourth Man*, a thriller which brought him the Toronto Film Festival's International Press Award, the 1984 Prize of the Jury at Avoriaz, and the Los Angeles Film Critics Award as Best Foreign Film.

Executive producer JON DAVISON has been a film buff for as long as he can remember. Born and raised in Haddonfield, New Jersey, he crystallized his interest into a career while attending New York University's Film School, where he studied under Martin Scorsese.

Supplementing his academic training, Davison spent his extracurricular hours operating the St. Marks Cinematheque – a repertory movie house which showed cult favorites and rarely seen vintage films, with a new double bill every day. He also ran the film retrospectives at Greenwich Village's famed rock club, the Fillmore, and co-staged the memorable *All-Night, Once-in-a-Lifetime Atomic Movie Orgy* (1968).

When NYU classmate Jonathan Kaplan directed *Night Call Nurses* (1972) for exploitation master Roger Corman, Davison was lured west to rewrite the script. That led to a post as director of national advertising and publicity at Corman's New World Pictures, where he ran a department consisting solely of himself.

Between marketing chores, Davison also produced such Corman classics as *Big Bad Mama* (1974), *Piranha* (1978), *Grand Theft Auto* (1977, Ron Howard's first directing effort) and *Hollywood Boulevard* (1976), which he recalls as "the cheapest movie ever made at New World" – no mean feat.

(While Davison brought *Hollywood Boulevard* in for \$58,000, he insists "it would have cost even less if Corman hadn't insisted on an answer print.")

After leaving the rarefied atmosphere of New World, Davison spent the next two years developing the screwball satire, *Airplane!* When the comedy took off, so did his career.



Signing on at Paramount, he produced *White Dog* (1982) and *Top Secret* (1984), as well as the Joe Dante episode of *Twilight Zone: The Movie* (1983, for Warner Bros). Returning to independent production, he made *RoboCop* his initial project.

As producer of *RoboCop*, ARNE SCHMIDT renews a working relationship with Jon Davison which began with *Night Call Nurses* and continued through *Airplane!*

Born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio, Schmidt moved to Los Angeles and attended UCLA where – as a film school student – he remembers “the thrill of polishing director John Frankenheimer’s car.”

Encouraged by Frankenheimer, Schmidt enrolled in the assistant director program at Paramount, and worked as a trainee on *Day of the Locust* (1975) and *Thunderbolt and Lightfoot* (1974). Moving up through the ranks, he was second and/or first assistant director on 35 features, including *Who'll Stop the Rain* (1978) and *Magic* (1978).



Before serving as associate producer on *Heart Like a Wheel* (1983), Schmidt joined Francis Ford Coppola at Zoetrope Productions, where he worked on *Hammett* (1982) and *One From the Heart* (1981).

He most recently served as production manager on John Hughes' *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* (1986) and *Pretty in Pink* (1986).

Next up for Schmidt: executive producer of *Throw Momma from the Train* (1987), which stars Billy Crystal and Danny De Vito.

Although writer/co-producer EDWARD NEUMEIER has been an executive with several major studios, *RoboCop* marks his first filmed screenplay.

Born in northern California's Marin County, Neumeier traveled around the world with his schoolteacher parents before he settled in Los Angeles and enrolled at the UCLA Film School.

After working as a reader at Paramount, ABC Motion Pictures and Columbia, where his interest in fantasy was honed, he was promoted by Columbia to a production capacity. There, he contributed to such hits as *Ghostbusters* (1984) and *The Karate Kid* (1984), before joining Marty Ransohoff Productions for the development of *Jagged Edge* (1985).

After a stint at Universal for the production on *Fletch* (1985), he left to pursue his first goal – writing – and teamed with Michael Miner on *RoboCop*.

Screenwriter MICHAEL MINER decided on a motion picture career only after making several short experimental films during his undergraduate days at UC Riverside, where he majored in English Lit and Theater.

Transferring to the UCLA Film School, the Pasadena-born Miner became a cinematographer and won the 1979 Focus competition for his student film, *Labyrinths*. While still in college, he collaborated with fellow student Alex Cox on the director's first film, *Edge City* (AKA *Sleep Is for Sissies*, 1980).

After graduating with an MFA, Miner directed and served as cinematographer

on rock videos and commercials before teaming as a screenwriter with Edward Neumeier.

Miner is currently directing and shooting his own script, *Kid with a Ray Gun* for Empire Pictures.

Cinematographer JOST VACANO, who won an Academy Award nomination for his stunning camera work on *Das Boot* (1981), has previously teamed with director Verhoeven on *Spetters* and *Soldier of Orange*.

Most recently the cinematographer for *52 Pick-Up* (1986), Vacano also lensed *The NeverEnding Story* (1984), *21 Hours at Munich* (1976) and *The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum* (*Die Verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum*, 1975).

*RoboCop* is a Jon Davison production of a Paul Verhoeven film starring Peter Weller and Nancy Allen. Daniel O'Herlihy, Ronny Cox, Kurtwood Smith and Miguel Ferrer co-star.

The Orion Pictures release was directed by Paul Verhoeven, produced by Arne Schmidt and co-produced by Edward Neumeier from a screenplay by Neumeier & Michael Miner. Jon Davison served as executive producer.







# ROBOCOP ROB

By Eric Niderost

*This interview with RoboCop designer and creator Rob Bottin was originally published in Fangoria #66 (August 1987). Reproduced through the kind courtesy of Phil Nobile Jr., Cinestate and Fangoria magazine.*

In Hollywood, robots are played for terror or for laughs. Portrayals can run the gamut from Arnold Schwarzenegger's killing machine in *The Terminator* to the android "Hymie" in the classic TV spy spoof *Get Smart*. In fact, robots are such a sci-fi staple that it's hard to come up with an original idea for one, a problem FX virtuoso Rob Bottin recently faced in Orion's new action-adventure *RoboCop*.

Bottin is best known for his elaborate FX in such pictures as *Piranha*, *The Howling* and *The Thing*. Lately, though, he has felt a desire to break out of the horror field and prove himself in other genres. His recent involvement with *Legend* – which nabbed him an Oscar nomination – was part of the process, and *RoboCop* seemed a heaven-sent opportunity to continue the trend.

*RoboCop* spins a murky tale of Murphy (*Buckaroo Banzai*'s Peter Weller), a Detroit policeman who is killed and made into a cyborg to help stem a growing crime rate. Though ostensibly an unfeeling machine, Murphy/RoboCop begins to recall his former identity. The spark of remembered humanity kindles a blaze of revenge, as Robo tracks down the people who murdered him and stole his "soul."

The \$10 million-plus adventure also stars Nancy (*Strange Invaders*) Allen and Dan (*Halloween III*) O'Herlihy. *RoboCop* is directed by Paul (*The Fourth Man*) Verhoeven, a Dutch filmmaker with a worldwide reputation but little experience in FX; this picture should abundantly fill *that* gap in his resume!

Bottin went with the *RoboCop* company on location in Dallas, Texas. The FX wizard is a tall, bearded man with a congenial air and an offbeat sense of humor. He dresses casually in a shirt and slacks and sports a shoulder-length head of hair. Essentially a private person, he seemed reluctant at first to grant an interview, but the self-styled "hermit" soon loosened up, and after the first few questions, he

emerged as a genuinely likable guy.

Bottin heard of *RoboCop* in an almost offhanded way. “The producer, Jon (*Piranha*) Davison, called me up one day,” the FX master relates, “and asked me if I would like to do a thing called *RoboCop*. He gave me the script to read, but I was reluctant at first because I wasn’t in love with the name. Then I opened the script up, and once I started reading, I couldn’t put it down.”

Once Bottin was “hooked,” it was simply a matter of Davison reeling him in. “In the beginning, Jon told me that he thought the entire project wasn’t going to be that monumental in terms of what I had to do for it. I thought, ‘Well, what the heck – it’s only one robot costume.’ But when I really examined the script, I saw that Jon had basically bamboozled me into an entire man-in-the-suit movie!”


Still, Bottin had never designed a robot suit before, so he plunged ahead without regrets. As a first step, he decided to pause a moment to reflect how robots were shown in the past. Bottin readily concedes, “I wondered what movie I had seen in the past where a robot is in every scene and *really participating* in all the destruction. None, right?”

A bit chastened at the thought, his enthusiasm momentarily cooled, Bottin decided to do some research to confirm his mental findings. Since he’s a fan of the *Star Wars* trilogy, he decided that was a proper place to start. “I went back and bought all three *Star Wars* pictures and studied them. C-3PO is one of my favorite robots. He’s got this continuous gold body, except for his midsection, which is black cloth with a bunch of little wires glued to it. He’s great – but C-3PO isn’t running around kicking the crap out of everybody and cracking heads together. There must be a reason!”

Bottin laughs, then continues, “Robots like C-3PO have really hard surfaces and move rather stiffly. I started to remember stories about what happened during the filming of the *Star Wars* movies. It seems that when C-3PO would fall down, he couldn’t get up again without help. I thought, ‘Oh, my God, I’ve already told Davison that there’s no problem and I can do the robot!’”

So with something of a devil-may-care attitude, Bottin began work in earnest. The





first task was to determine what RoboCop would look like. Robo first saw life when Bottin created a series of sketches for director Verhoeven's approval. Once a drawing was completed, Bottin and Verhoeven would get together and try to arrive at some kind of design consensus. After consultation with the director, Bottin would literally go back to the drawing board, incorporate the changes agreed upon, and return to Verhoeven with his amended design.

The FX expert soon discovered, like the old saying, that "man is the measure of all things," at least where robots are concerned. As Bottin recalls, "The first design looked heroic, because it had a physique like a Marvel comic-book hero. Then, through other drawings, we'd change him. For example, we'd put different shoulders on him – things that looked like big, giant globes – and maybe a different torso. We went through 50 different variations of the character, but we always seemed to return to the original man-like idea."

And after all that consultation, inspiration, and preparation, just what did the filmmakers achieve? Before taking Fango readers on an "anatomical tour" of the Robosuit, Bottin says a few things about the underlying design. "There are really *two* Robosuits in one," he says with a trace of pride in his voice. "One suit, the innersuit, is the one that's exposed where it needs to be flexible. The second suit is non-flexible, or semi-flexible, and is placed over the first suit.

"The chest portions, as well as the upper and lower limbs that are hinged mechanically with bearing joints, are all made of urethane. There's a ring that bridges the foam latex gloves with the upper arm, made out of acrylic tubing that's been turned on a lathe. The midsection, the back, the butt, and the pelvic area – all parts of the innersuit – are made out of foam latex. Finally, the legs and feet are made out of hard urethane and mechanically joined with bearings and aluminum hinges and things. Everything is supported by an internal harness of hooks and snaps that hold the outer extremities to the body." In sum, Bottin fashioned a unique suit that could stand up to the Rambo-like action the script demands.

Bottin reveals that the Robohelmet gave him the most trouble. "To begin with," he confesses, "a major difference between this picture and the others I've done is that on the others, I was working with materials I really knew how to handle.



In *RoboCop*, we're using a lot of urethane, which is a bitch to paint! First, you have to prime it with deadly chemicals, then you go through a multi-layered paint job that takes *forever*."

The Robohelmet is a medieval-looking affair that covers the wearer's head almost completely. "The helmet is made of fiberglass," Bottin elaborates, "because every time I got a urethane robot piece next to me, I almost threw up! It really smelt like baby vomit. We called up the company that supplied the stuff to us, and they told us there's one way to get rid of the smell-put some lemon oil on it. Well, we did as they said, and what did we get? *Lemon* baby vomit!"

Expanding on this theme, Bottin continues, "I knew I couldn't have a helmet that smelt like that, and I certainly knew Peter Weller wasn't going to put up with it, so I opted for fiberglass instead."

In spite of his work on *Legend* and *RoboCop*, Bottin says he isn't planning to abandon horror films entirely. On the contrary, one sanguinary saga, *The Thing*, stands out in his memory as the vehicle that put him on the FX map. "To begin with," he observes, "because of cable TV and video sales, most people have now seen it. I used to go up to people and ask, 'Have you seen *Humanoids of the Deep*?' and they'd say 'No.' Then I'd say, 'Well, how about *Piranha*?' and they'd still say 'No.' But now, thanks to video, when I say I did *The Thing*, they reply, 'Wow! That movie was great.'"

But it's more than just a surge of popularity that makes *The Thing* memorable. "I feel the movie inspired a whole new wave of sci-fi makeup," Bottin says truthfully, not without pride, "and this makeup in turn has changed the outlook of the whole industry."

*The Thing* was recently mutilated by CBS TV censors during a network airing, but Bottin takes it all philosophically. "I thought it was terrible," he recounts, "yet how could you show it uncut on commercial TV? They cut out all the effects, then added this narration that was supposed to explain who all the characters were, so that these characters would be endeared to us.

"The narration would say things like, 'This is Nauls. A product of Watts,'" chuckles



Bottin, perfectly imitating the booming voice of an off-camera narrator. "I figure, 'Yeah, I'm *really* endeared to this man now, and I'm gonna be so sorry when he gets killed!'"

Turning back to *RoboCop*, it seems the project almost came to grief due to lack of time. Since Bottin and his assistants were creating something new, something with little or no precedent, design was a matter of trial and error. Trouble was, time became a luxury the filmmakers simply did not have. A Robosuit was fashioned and rushed to the set with "seconds" to spare, and Weller has said he had to don the suit and shoot a scene the same day it arrived. Both Weller and Verhoeven have admitted to being depressed during the first few days of shooting

Weller became very upset because he could not move in the suit, and his despondency cast a pall over the entire production. Bottin plays down the gloom, though he admits there *were* problems in the beginning. "When Peter first tried on the suit," he recalls, "he felt it was very confining. Even so, that robot costume is the most flexible of all time, there's no doubt about it. It's just that Peter wasn't used to playing a creature." Bottin adds that some last-minute adjustments set the matter right.

Since the Robosuit was the linchpin of the entire production, it naturally occupied a good deal of the FX master's time. Nevertheless, Bottin hasn't reached the bottom of his FX "bag of tricks." One gory tour de force will be the scene where Murphy meets his untimely end. "We had to do a full cast of Weller's head," Bottin details, "because Paul wanted to have a shot where a guy comes up to him with a 'desert eagle' gun and blows Murphy's brains out against a wall. To make the shot, we ended up with a kind of mechanical Peter Weller, and this head is one of the neatest things I've done. It's funny: I'm not a real blood 'n' guts fan. and tried to talk Paul out of it, but as he explained to me, 'It is the fashion.'"

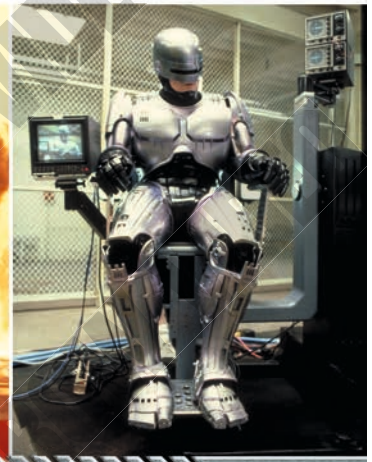
Despite subsequent edits to avoid an MPAA X rating, it is hoped that the assassination segment remains a real cinematic shocker. "First, we'll start on the real Peter Weller to convince the audience that this *really* is the actor. Then, the camera will move around and behind him. The actor with the 'desert eagle' will step in and say his lines, we'll cut to the mechanical head, and then Weller will be

shot and his brains will be splattered against the wall. Hopefully, the audience will wonder how we did that.”

After a beat, Bottin quickly adds, “I’m exaggerating as I usually do – not *all* of his brains are blown out; some are left!”

Besides *RoboCop*, Bottin has quite a few other irons in the celluloid fire. He completed some unusual transformation FX for Joe Dante’s *Innerspace*, a giant Dr. Seuss-like creature for Dante’s second season *Amazing Stories* episode, as well as “a little bit” of *The Witches of Eastwick*. Regarding *Innerspace* and *Witches*, at the time of this talk, he’s been “sworn to secrecy” and can’t divulge the slightest detail about those FX.

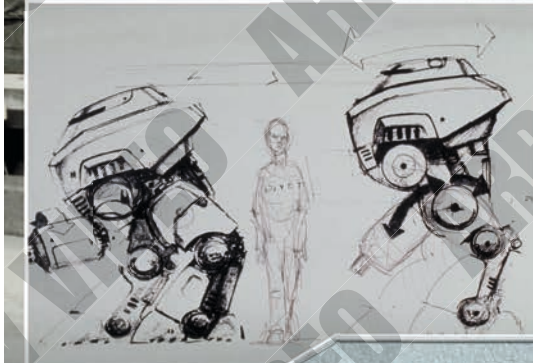
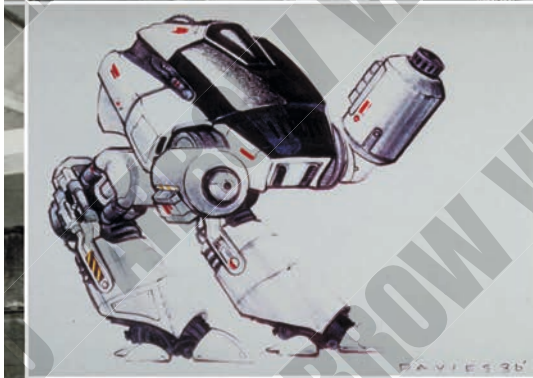
Bottin is more open about future plans and goals. “I know everybody in Hollywood would like to direct,” he cheerfully acknowledges, “but I would be very interested in designing creatures for a movie that I would also direct. You see, there’s been a lot of controversy in the past over whether I’m a makeup artist, a special effects guy, or a special makeup effects artist. It would be a nice chance to show that I can *create* characters, instead of just making people’s heads drop off and change into spiders!”















# ROBOCOP AND THE GENERATION THAT GREW UP WITH IT

by Christopher Griffiths

“The thing that is most interesting to me, and I could have not predicted it and I couldn’t be more pleased, is how *RoboCop* is this cultural thing that young men and some young women really embrace. There’s something really masculine about this movie and it almost becomes a rite of passage. 30 years later, I hear people say, “This is my Dad’s favorite movie” (and it was he) who first showed it to them. “Don’t tell your Mom!” they would say. And kids would sneak off to see it over other people’s houses. This was part of their ritual of becoming young men.” - Ed Neumeier, writer of *RoboCop* (1987)

If ever there was a question I wanted to put to the *RoboCop* cast and crew, it was what their thoughts were on how their ultraviolent satirical masterpiece managed to find an audience like myself and many others at such a young age. Speaking from my own experience, I have come across very few people who had not seen *RoboCop* when they were growing up and heard their many stories of just how they came to see that film. It might have been on television late one night when they snuck downstairs to watch it; at their friends’ house on VHS; or simply their dad knew that it would appeal to them and let them watch it. There’s not one solid answer to why they were drawn to it, more so a series of events that culminated in kids re-enacting the signature *RoboCop* stomp and firing their index finger weapons at each other on the school playground. I was one of those kids.

*RoboCop* arrived at the peak of Eighties excess. Hollywood was already



saturated with explosive action and explicit violence thanks in part to the boom of the 'franchise'. On the one end of this colorful spectrum, shiny, musclebound war heroes were mowing down the bad guys with heavy artillery; whilst at the other end, hockey mask-wearing maniacs were dismembering horny teenagers at summer camp. "The 80s just happened to be a time when Hollywood finally discovered that they could make 'A' movies out of 'B' movies – and they just went wild with it!" explains *RoboCop*'s on-set publicist, Paul M. Sammon.

Like its peers, the film offered up plenty of action and a plethora of blood-spattered spectacle to the point of being challenged by the MPAA who would give its initial cut an X rating. But despite all of this, *RoboCop* would somehow make its way into children's bedrooms in varying forms, from toys, to costumes, and even an animated series. It's hard to imagine what the mindset was when transforming an ultra-violent satirical science fiction film into a Saturday morning kids show, but it happened. Co-produced by a fledgling Marvel Productions (with Stan Lee acting as executive story editor), *RoboCop: The Animated Series* ran for a single season consisting of twelve episodes in 1988.

*RoboCop* was certainly not the first R-rated property to go from the silver screen to toy shelves. Industry giant Kenner produced an 18-inch action figure based on the hideously terrifying Xenomorph from Ridley Scott's not-so-child-friendly *Alien* (1979). In an unsurprising turn of events, Kenner would recall the figure due to lack of sales and above all, an outcry from angered parents as the toy was deemed too terrifying for children to play with, given that the source material derived from was an R-rated movie. However, this would not be the final attempt made by the company.

Throughout the 1980s, other R-rated properties would be converted into toy lines, including *Commando* (1985) and *Rambo: First Blood Part II* (1985), the latter of which, like *RoboCop*, had been adapted into an animated spin-off series (1986's *Rambo: The Force of Freedom*). This model of creating a watered-down animated show would work as the perfect go-between for these adult oriented properties and children's toy lines.

Though never quite equalling the success of *Transformers* and *Masters of the Universe*, or even Kenner's successful *The Real Ghostbusters* range, it would be thanks to heavy marketing on Saturday morning television, and promotional ads in catalogues and comics, that the *RoboCop* toy line (re-branded *RoboCop and the Ultra Police*) would raise children's interest in the new cyborg crusader.

There were action figures of the titular character and his cartoon sidekicks, a pretty neat ED-209 (renamed ED-260A in the animated show), and even accessories, including Robo's helmet that was often two sizes too big for the kids that attempted to wear it. For those kids, however, it would come to their attention that there was more than just action figures and a cartoon chronicling the iron hero's adventures – there was also a feature film!

Upon its theatrical release, *RoboCop* would prove to be a box office success, gaining \$53.4 million during its North American run in the summer of 1987. However, in February 1988, it would go on to find a much larger audience in its home release, earning \$24,036,000 from video rentals in the United States alone. Not only did the film gain new audiences made up of those who may have overlooked such a frivolously-titled film in the theaters, but more importantly, it would find an entirely new demographic.

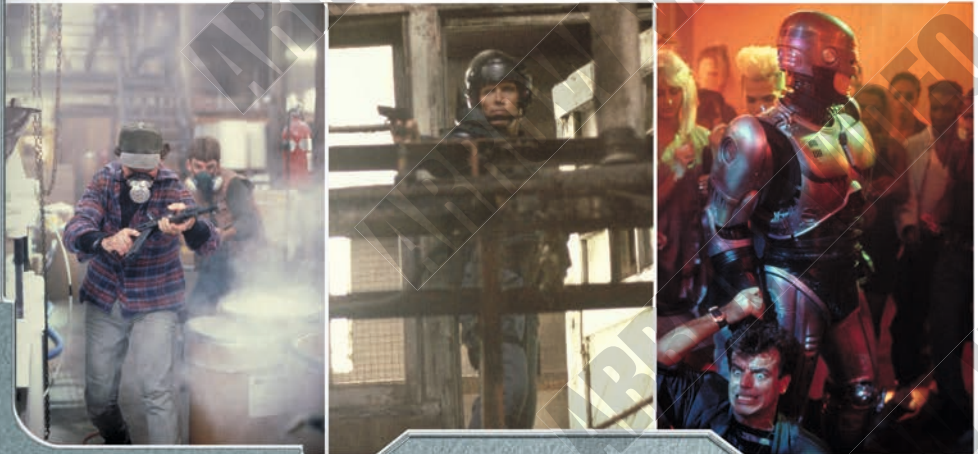
"I was probably about 10 years old and saw it on VHS at some friends' house who probably had neglectful parents," explains pop culture journalist Alex Pappedemas who, like many, would discover *RoboCop* for the first time on home video. "I don't think I recognized that there was this satire of Reaganomics that was taking place, I was not awake to that sort of stuff. It was just a cool movie about a robot with a human inside it."

For me, it was a VHS recording from the film's British terrestrial TV premiere on ITV in 1994, which had been heavily edited, the channel having acquired the US TV version that omitted every ounce of profanity and violence. Furthermore, my diligent mother recorded over anything that even hinted at the excessively violent sequences with Colgate adverts; but I got the general idea of what was happening. It was thanks to a friend in school who had snuck out his dad's VHS double bill

of the first two *RoboCop* films that I would finally see the film in all its uncut glory. Like Alex, I just enjoyed the movie on a surface level: a nonstop action adventure with really cool robots. It would be some time before I began to understand the existential dilemma of the protagonist, the humor and the satirical quirkiness; but nonetheless, I quickly became obsessed with what I had seen, and 25 years later, that obsession has not subsided.

Paul Sammon explains: “Those of us who love film, music or books will have a defining moment as a child where you’ll see a group of pictures or a picture that will shape you the rest of your life.” This was mine. Although shocking and in some ways terrifying, *RoboCop* enthralled me and I have never found anything else quite like it. “There is a phenomenon of *RoboCop* and young people, and how this is a touchstone film in lots of ways,” explains Ronny Cox. “It tapped into your humor, your sense of absurdity. I know that there is something there that speaks to young guys through adolescence.”

Though the idea of such a brutal movie being embraced by a young audience may be something to be frowned upon, the appeal to children is explained by Leeza Gibbons (the actor behind Mediabreak’s Jess Perkins): “RoboCop appealed to kids because he was this very straight, down the middle moral hero. When





Mediabreak ask if he has a message for the kids watching at home, he says, ‘Stay out of trouble.’ That sums it all up. He has his three prime directives: *Serve the public trust. Protect the innocent. Uphold the law.* So this was quintessential hero stuff, and that works for kids!”

That very notion would be the rationale for the film’s hugely successful game adaptation courtesy of UK developer Ocean Software, which had been responsible for the *Rambo* video game adaptation a few years prior. “Although these films were violent, there was a morality to them. The heroes were genuine heroes.” explains former Ocean Software VP Gary Bracey, who had previously worked with Orion Pictures on the video game adaptation of Oliver Stone’s *Platoon* (1986).

Bracey was sent the script of *RoboCop* as the next tie-in video game which he would take on and oversee. “It was the perfect storm of a great IP (intellectual property) which had tapped into the culture. The game was released at the same time as the home video, and it was rare you had all these components at the same time. I don’t think we realized how well it would do. It was the first game to break the million mark and it set a template for the games industry.”

Bracey elaborates: “*RoboCop* was the first time that the movie companies started to see not just more revenues over and above the guarantee, but serious revenues. So they started taking the games business more seriously.” It would come as no surprise that a year later, Ocean Software would acquire the game rights to Tim Burton’s *Batman* (1989), and that very same template would be applied in the creation of another milestone in the history of tie-in video games.

With the massive success of both the home release and the games, it seemed that the financially strapped Orion Pictures had found a winner with *RoboCop*, and executives immediately greenlit a sequel. Ultimately *RoboCop 2* (1990) would not fare as well as the first film critically or commercially, being branded mean-spirited and lacking the satirical punch of Verhoeven’s original. The once successful tie-ins that had boosted the reputation of *RoboCop* would ultimately lead to the franchise’s downfall, as it began to struggle to identify just who the target audience was. Nonetheless, Orion sought to continue capitalizing on the Robo-brand by

greenlighting *RoboCop 3* (1993) almost immediately after *RoboCop 2*'s release. This time round, their intent was to make a PG-13 movie, thus opening the franchise up to a younger demographic.

Although not the sole reason for its success, *RoboCop* was an adult movie with excessive violence and biting satire. It seems the dilution of these elements in *RoboCop 3* was not what original fans wanted, and arguably contributed towards the franchise's demise. Regardless of all that followed the success of the original *RoboCop*, it remains both a critical and fan-favorite that is fondly remembered by many as the first 'adult' movie they ever saw. It was a unique situation where both the adult and kids' markets crossed paths, creating a singular "rite of passage", in writer Ed Neumeier's words.

A lot has changed in the years since *RoboCop*'s release. Gone are toys aimed at young audiences for the likes of *Game of Thrones* (2010-2019) or *Deadpool* (2016), but instead expensive collectibles aimed at the same generation who once owned the classic Kenner toys, and which now reside in glass cabinets as opposed to underneath their beds. For myself and likely many others, the discovery of *RoboCop* at such a young age, and my gradual understanding of its many layers over the years, has been a rewarding experience that has allowed me to appreciate the film more as the years go by.

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# ROBOCOP: DISMANTLED AND REASSEMBLED

By Henry Blyth

Film fans in the DVD/Blu-ray era have rejoiced over the release of comprehensive video editions highlighting different versions of the same film. Often the result of corporate interference or industrial necessity, and usually dismissed as ephemeral trivia in the past, now these collections of alternate and restored material serve as a testament to the way a film's impact can be quantifiably reshaped through even just a few subtle snips in the cutting room. The most famous example is arguably Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* (1982), which has been released on video in at least five different cuts (from the 1982 "Workprint" to the 2007 "Final Cut") over the years. *RoboCop* (1987) is no exception, and while the differences between the three versions on this Arrow Blu-ray release are relatively small in comparison – no major narrative restructuring or deleted scenes, for example – the various reasons for their existence form an interesting tale of their own.

## ROBOCOP VS. THE MPAA

Ultraviolent action cinema ruled the American box office in the Eighties, one-upping the gory body counts of the slasher horror films that preceded them and giving Reagan-era audiences a vicarious vehicle to quench their bloodlust, thanks to the shoot-first-ask-questions-never exploits of testosterone titans like Arnold Schwarzenegger, Sylvester Stallone and Chuck Norris. Most of these films were rated 'R' – admission restricted to anyone aged under 16 without parental supervision – by the industry ratings board MPAA (Motion Picture Association of America) without much incident. *RoboCop*, however, would not prove so lucky. While it was every bit as bombastic and thrilling as other action films of its era, Paul Verhoeven traded the easy, escapist thrills of his contemporaries for a unique mix of comic-book extravagance and queasy body horror, aided in no small part by the inventive make-up effects overseen by Rob Bottin. Though it was filmed with an R

rating in mind, the MPAA instead gave the film an 'X' rating – a commercial kiss of death that would necessitate further editing.

The X rating had achieved a short-lived legitimacy in the late-60s and early-70s thanks to mainstream taboo-busters such as Best Picture winner *Midnight Cowboy* (1969) and Stanley Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), but as the decade wore on it became inextricably linked with hardcore pornography. As the MPAA had not trademarked the 'X', it quickly became co-opted by distributors of erotic films as a selling tool – the more X's on the marquee, the more taboo the content onscreen. This unfortunately tainted the X rating's reputation in the marketplace, and many media outlets refused to promote or review X-rated (or unrated, also an option) films, inevitably leading to lower box office returns. As a result, risk-averse major studios often made it a contractual mandate that filmmakers had to deliver an R-rated film at most.

Paul Verhoeven was no stranger to the MPAA before *RoboCop* was submitted. *Spetters* (1980) was shorn of eight minutes of "graphic" sexuality to receive an R rating, and *Flesh + Blood* (1985) also got an X before some of the nudity was reduced to achieve an R. (Both films are available in uncensored and unrated versions.)

Speaking to Laurent Bouzereau in 1994, Verhoeven sounded surprisingly even-handed when reflecting on his interactions with the MPAA:

I want to be clear that I don't think the MPAA is crazy or something. I have done four movies in America, and I had to deal with the MPAA on all of them... If you want to use the term censorship, which I'm hesitant to use, I think you would have to call it more of an economic censorship. They don't censor your movie. They don't say you cannot release your movie. After showing the MPAA the first cut of *Basic Instinct* (1991), they said this is great, it's a wonderful movie, please don't change it, it's an NC-17. They wanted to protect children or warn parents, but also they felt that it was a powerful movie, done with artistic integrity. They wanted

to legitimize the NC-17. Then, of course, the studio said we cannot release this film with an NC-17 because in a lot of cases, and that's why I call it an economic censorship, theaters won't show NC-17 movies, especially in malls... It would have done half the business it did.<sup>1</sup>

Asked to sum up the function of the MPAA, Verhoeven described the organisation as "warning-system agents or something... it is supposed to be a system to warn parents about what their kids are going to see – that's the essence of it."

The makers of *RoboCop* scored an early victory in convincing the MPAA to back down over the sequence where bad guy Emil starts melting after exposure to toxic waste and is splattered over a car windshield. Speaking to Paul Sammon for *Cinefex* magazine in 1987, executive producer Jon Davison elaborated on how this scene escaped unscathed: "That was one of the scenes that the MPAA wanted to cut out... but we fought like crazy to keep it in. One of our weapons was the fact that during some early screenings, The National Research Group had asked people what their favorite thing in the movie was – and the answer was the Melting Man. At that point certain people took a stand against the MPAA, because it just seemed ridiculous to cut out the one thing that audiences liked best!"<sup>2</sup>

Despite this, four other scenes were edited before the film received an R rating: the explosive death of unfortunate OCP underling Kinney thanks to ED-209; a close-up of gang member Bobby being shot in the leg; Murphy's protracted, brutal murder at the hands of Clarence's gang; Clarence dying as he gets a spike through the neck courtesy of *RoboCop*. The issue, according to Davison in the same *Cinefex* article, was that the MPAA did not think the over-the-top violence was suitable for children. Davison tried to reason that they had not made the film with children in mind, but was overruled; the very nature of the R rating meant that small children could conceivably see the film if accompanied by an adult. This confusion over *RoboCop*'s intended audience would later arguably lead to the franchise's decline.

When interviewed for *AMC Backstory* in 2002, Davison said: "*RoboCop* got an X eleven times at the MPAA. They finally refused to even watch the film anymore!"



(In earlier interviews, Davison and Verhoeven both say it took eight submissions to get an R.) Interviewed for the same documentary, Verhoeven added: "I fought them, I tried everything to do it my way, but of course they have the power; and in my contract, it said (the film) needed an R rating."

In a *Los Angeles Times* news article (published on the 20<sup>th</sup> of May 1987) on the film finally being passed in a cut version, MPAA ratings chairman Richard Heffner was quoted as saying: "We thought the X rating was fair due to the violent nature of the film... Obviously the filmmakers wanted the footage left in there, but what was submitted was an X as far as we were concerned." Ironically, the filmmakers argued that cutting back the heightened, cartoonish nature of the violence made it ultimately more horrific.

The version that was ultimately passed with an R differed from the initial X-rated cut as follows:



- Five shots (totalling around five seconds) were cut out completely from Kinney's death: an additional shot of Kinney being shot before he falls on the model of Delta City; two shots of Dr McNamara attempting in vain to rip the wires out of the control pad for ED-209; two shots of Kinney's body being further shot to pieces as he lies lifeless on the Delta City model.
- The close-up of Bobby being shot in the leg and the initial close-up of Clarence bleeding to death from his neck wound were replaced with alternate angles where we see the action occur from further away.
- Murphy's "crucifixion" was the most censored sequence in the film by far. Removed entirely: an additional shot of the gang cackling with laughter; two additional shots of Murphy's arm being shot off (the arm suddenly disappears in the R-rated cut); two additional shots of Murphy screaming as he's being shot; an eight-second sequence after the shooting stops, including a close-up of Murphy in pain, Clarence lighting a cigarette, Emil saying "Hey Clarence! He's still alive," and Murphy keeling over; a bravura special effects shot where, thanks to a hydraulic puppet designed by Rob Bottin, in one continuous shot the camera tracks around Murphy who is then shot in the head by Clarence; and finally, a seven-second long shot of Lewis crying over Murphy's body. In addition to these edits, alternate, less gory takes and angles were deployed to lessen the sight of Murphy's bleeding stump after his hand is shot off, and to cover for the cutting of the arm removal and headshot.

(Interestingly, the Murphy head-puppet footage made its first public outing way back in 1987, when a workprint version of the shot was included in the appropriately-named promotional featurette *Shooting RoboCop*, made by Awesome Productions and televised in Europe.)

When the R-rated version of *RoboCop* was distributed internationally, it fell afoul of censorship bodies in countries such as Australia, Sweden, Finland and Germany, and its violent scenes were often cut to such ludicrous effect that they

became barely coherent. (These cuts have largely since been waived in the DVD era.) Surprisingly, despite their reputation for being especially scissor-happy in the 1980s in the wake of the ‘video nasties’ moral panic, the British Board of Film Classification allowed the R-rated version to be released uncut with a compulsory ‘18’ (no persons under 18 may be admitted) certificate in cinemas and on home video in the UK. In the original examiners’ reports, recently published on the Board’s website, they noted that “the overall tone, which (is) always slightly offbeat and tongue-in-cheek, serves to ameliorate the loving care and attention with which Verhoeven treats the violence... this is clearly a ‘PG’ film given an ‘18’ treatment.”

In 1990, Paul M. Sammon and executive producer Jon Davison set about searching for the 35mm elements needed to restore Verhoeven’s original X-rated cut, a quest Sammon detailed in a *Video Watchdog* article published in 1995. According to Sammon’s article, which detailed how the restoration of the X-rated footage was a lengthy five-year process exacerbated by the concurrent Chapter 11 bankruptcy of Orion Pictures, the original camera negatives of the altered sequences were deemed lost after a widespread search by the filmmakers and the studio.<sup>3</sup> Finally, the minute of gorier material was ultimately restored via the discovery of a lower-generation positive film element, and released to the public in the form of a laserdisc distributed by the Criterion Collection in May 1995. This reassembled X-rated cut, rebranded as the Unrated “Director’s Cut”, has since overtaken the R-rated cut as the ‘default’ version available on subsequent home video formats, remastered again for DVD in 2001 and Blu-ray in 2007 and 2014. In October 2018, online outlets excitedly hyped that digital platforms were streaming “the rare, X-rated cut” of the film, though it was the same 4K restoration of the Unrated version released on Blu-ray in 2014.

## ROBOCOP VS. NETWORK TELEVISION

The demise of the Production Code in the 1960s, and the flood of hitherto forbidden content that filled American cinemas as a result, roughly coincided with another trend in the same decade: major theatrical films finding a second life on primetime



television, starting with NBC's *Saturday Night at the Movies* slot in 1961. While the big screen enjoyed a revolution of scandalous sex and shocking violence, the small screen stayed as conservative and buttoned-down as before, meaning such cinematic excesses would have to be tempered for home viewing – and thus, the practice of editing films for television was born.

While the practice of altering films for syndicated television dates back at least to the early 1960s – Roger Corman's *The Wasp Woman* (1959) was enhanced with 20 minutes of new footage shot by Jack Hill in 1962 – it became commonplace in the 1970s, with *King Kong* (1976) and *The Deep* (1977) being two notable examples of theatrical flops that were re-shaped into primetime events, both extended by nearly an hour and broadcast over two nights.<sup>45</sup> As the 1980s rolled around, the “edited-for-television” cut had become an industrial inevitability. Edits for content came in all shapes and sizes: nudity, sex and violence were either removed or replaced by alternate takes shot especially for the TV version; previously deleted material was reinstated to compensate for removed material and to fill up a two-hour time slot (with commercials); and often most memorably, profanity was dubbed over with ‘minced oaths’, the more nonsensical and conspicuous the better. The television edit of Alex Cox's *Repo Man* (1984) openly mocked this practice with “motherfucker” being replaced with “melon farmer”, achieving a cult notoriety all of its own. By the time of *RoboCop*'s release, few Hollywood films were excluded from this treatment; even Sam Raimi's unrated splatter classic *Evil Dead II* (1987) was edited for TV (or, as the opening disclaimer memorably phrased it, “Severely Edited For Television”), though the resulting version still proved too strong for US networks and only ever aired south of the border on Mexican television.<sup>6</sup>

As such, it was not surprising when *RoboCop*, a huge hit that had already spawned a children's cartoon series produced by Marvel the following year, eventually aired in a compromised version. What was surprising was the extent to which the TV version arguably bolstered the film's growing fanbase, and the fondness with which it is still often remembered despite the unrated director's cut being available at the click of a button today.

On February 11<sup>th</sup> 1990, *RoboCop* had its US network television premiere as the

Sunday Night Movie on ABC. (An early teaser for *RoboCop 2* played during a commercial break, four months before the film's world premiere.) A disclaimer played before the film started: "Although edited for television, tonight's film contains scenes of violence that may be too intense for young viewers. Parental discretion is advised." The limits of US network TV violence would be pushed throughout the 1990s by series like *Twin Peaks* (1989-1991) and *The X-Files* (1993-2002), but at the start of the decade, standards meant that *RoboCop* had to be significantly revised for family friendly viewing.

The version aired on ABC made significant use of alternate takes either ingeniously lifted from cutting room outtakes or shot specifically for television audiences. Changes included (but were not limited to):

- The police station locker room scene was optically reframed to crop out all nudity, both male and female.
- Kinney's death utilised an alternate take where, instead of bloody squibs exploding on his body, actor Kevin Page just mimes being shot, without any squibs.
- The scene where Lewis happens upon Joe urinating in the warehouse was re-edited to remove all sight of the urine stream, with the accompanying sound effect also reduced in the mix.
- Murphy's death was inevitably re-edited the most. In addition to removing numerous shots of him being fired upon, the ABC version uses alternate angles keeping the removal of his hand (and subsequent stump) out of frame, and cropping and darkened re-grading were also liberally deployed to tone down the amount of blood shown. The biggest change was that Basil Poledouris' music cue "The Dream" was laid over the scene to mitigate the stark, haunting impact of the unscored original.
- Alternate angles and cropping were used to hide the gorier shots as hospital staff attempt to revive Murphy.

- Alternate angles of a gun muzzle firing were used to hide the convenience store robber visibly mouthing “Fuck me!” as he fires (which is overdubbed as “Why me?!”).
- All sight of the attempted rapist’s bloody crotch was edited out.
- Bob Morton and his friend Walker discussing and ultimately being confronted by Dick Jones in the executive washroom was re-edited to remove all shots of Jones’ feet as he sits in the stall listening (he is first shown standing outside the stall), using alternate angles to hide this as well as one where Walker’s stain on his trousers is not visible.
- An alternate introductory shot of the nightclub scene which omits any topless female nudity. Leon subsequently kicking RoboCop in the crotch is cropped out.
- All shots of cocaine use in Bob’s living room were removed (the scene starts with an alternate angle of one of the women to hide this), and alternate angles were used in place of the gunshots to Bob’s leg.
- In addition to an alternate take of Clarence putting the money on Sal’s desk where he snorts drugs off-screen instead of on, the subsequent drug factory shootout uses several alternate shots to lessen the impact of the violence.
- The two scenes of Clarence spitting blood – onto RoboCop’s visor and later on Sergeant Reed’s desk – use alternate takes where Kurtwood Smith spits saliva instead of blood.
- Several shots of RoboCop being fired upon by the SWAT team were removed.
- When Emil emerges from the van covered in toxic waste, the scene was re-edited so that his melting form is never seen from the front. When he subsequently accosts Leon, it was again re-edited so that you never see melting Emil from the front, followed by a different angle of Leon running away in horror.



- The most notorious alternate footage – instead of Emil turning into a gooey mess on Clarence’s windshield, Clarence instead drives around Emil, avoiding him completely!
- Clarence’s death uses alternate takes with no blood shooting out of his neck. RoboCop pulling the iron spike out of his shoulder is also shown from a different angle.
- Dick’s death uses alternate takes with bloodless squibs.

Much of the profanity-laden dialogue was dubbed over. A representative sample of the dialogue includes:

### THEATRICAL CUT

### TV VERSION

Your client's a scumbag, you're a scumbag, and scumbags see the judge on Monday morning!	Your client's a sleazebag, you're a sleazebag, and sleazebags see the judge on Monday morning!
Lewis! Come here when you've finished fucking around with your suspect!	Lewis! Come here when you've finished playing around with your suspect!
You burnt the fucking money! ...It's as good as marked you asshole, you stupid, stupid asshole!	You burnt the freaking money! ...It's as good as marked you dunce, you stupid, stupid moron!
Shut the fuck up and do it, just do it!	Shut your face up and do it, just do it!
I used to call the old man funny names. "Iron butt". "Boner". Once I even called him... "asshole".	I used to call the old man funny names. "Iron butt". "Bumbler". Once I even called him... a lot worse.
- You just fucked with the wrong guy! - You're out of your fucking mind!	- You just finked on the wrong guy! - You're out of your freaking mind!

- Sorry, Sarge. I fucked up. - Forget it kid; this guy's a serious asshole.	- Sorry, Sarge. I messed up. - Forget it, kid; this guy's a serious airhead.
- I've got the muscle to shove this factory so far up your stupid wop ass that you'll shit snow for a year. - Frankie, blow this cocksucker's head off!	- I've got the muscle to shove this factory so far up your stupid fat nose that you'll blow snow for a year. - Frankie, blow this bloodsucker's head off!
Goddamn it! Listen to me! Listen to me, you fuck!	Leave me alone! Listen to me! Listen to me, you fool!
Your company built the fucking thing - now I've gotta deal with it? I don't have time for this bullshit!	Your company built the freaky thing - now I've gotta deal with it? I don't have time for you big shots!
Nobody popped my cherry!	Nobody pushed me around!
- Give it up faggot! - Hey butthead, get your own!	- Give it up maggot! - Hey bozo, get your own!
Die, you bastard!	Die, you monster!



This version of the film instantly gained notoriety among existing fans, and no doubt helped the film gain younger fans too. Things, however, took a bizarre turn – after a handful of other airings in the early-90s, the ABC version was replaced by a *second* TV edit of the film. While this new version retained about half of the swearing dubs from the ABC airings, many others were replaced with even more inexplicable alternatives:

### THEATRICAL CUT

### TV VERSION

Your client's a scumbag, you're a scumbag, and scumbags see the judge on Monday morning!	Your client's a crumb-bag, you're a crumb-bag, and crumb-bags see the judge on Monday morning!
Lewis! Come here when you've finished fucking around with your suspect!	Lewis! Come here when you've finished fooling around with your suspect!
You burnt the fucking money! ...It's as good as marked you asshole, you stupid, stupid asshole!	You burnt the money! ...It's as good as marked you dipstick, you stupid, stupid doofus!
I used to call the old man funny names. "Iron butt". "Boner". Once I even called him... "asshole".	I used to call the old man funny names. "Iron butt". "Bonehead". Once I even called him... "airhead".
Your company built the fucking thing - now I've gotta deal with it?! I don't have time for this bullshit!	Your company built the freaky thing - now I've gotta deal with it?! I don't have time for this baloney!
Die, you bastard!	Die, you blaggard!

Similarly, while some alternate footage is retained, much is not (including, most lamentably, Clarence swerving to avoid Emil), with some of the original violence from the Theatrical Cut being reinstated in its place. Among some notable alternate material not seen in the ABC version:

- An alternate take of the police station locker room scene has the topless



actress instead facing sideways with her bulletproof jacket covering her breasts. (More recent airings use the theatrical take, but with a black bra digitally imposed over the nudity.)

- While some of Murphy's death uses the alternate footage from the ABC version (most notably the different takes of his reaction to his hand being blown off), much of it otherwise plays out as per the Theatrical Cut.
- A different re-edit of the Bob/Walker conversation in the executive washroom, where Jones' feet in the stall *are* shown and Walker exits off-screen.
- When Clarence rings the doorbell at Bob's house, there is a cutaway to the door to hide shots of cocaine use.
- Clarence hits Emil with his car, but most of Emil's disintegration is cut, with an alternate shot of Clarence's reaction utilised instead.
- Other alternate takes for Clarence's death throes and RoboCop pulling the iron spike out of his shoulder.

The earliest known airing of the second version occurred in the UK, when the film received its 'terrestrial' TV premiere on ITV on March 19<sup>th</sup> 1994. Fans were shocked to see a censored version airing at 10pm (past the 9pm 'watershed' for explicit content), but when this version was later shown again in an 8pm slot, a write-in campaign eventually convinced ITV to use the theatrical version (albeit with minor cuts) for subsequent broadcasts. Years later, many fans would swear that ITV once broadcast the censored version in the middle of a Saturday afternoon, but it appears the 8pm showing was being conflated with a broadcast of *RoboCop: The Series*, which did air on Saturday afternoons.

It is this second version that has roughly served as the basis of every TV edit distributed since, including those licensed for syndication by MGM from the early-2000s to the present day. Other than further bespoke cuts to content by the TV stations airing it, some broadcast masters are missing much of the Mediabreaks

(including the fake commercials) and the scene of Leon being arrested in the nightclub, while others omit the convenience store robbery scene. Regardless, airings of the edited for television version have become more and more scarce as more TV channels have upgraded to widescreen HD (a high def master of the TV cut does not exist), the few stations still airing 'old' films usually electing to air either the Director's or Theatrical cuts.

One could argue that *RoboCop* the film has undergone a similar arc to its eponymous protagonist: mutilated in its early stages, its surviving parts reorganised into other forms, and finally restored to something approaching its original glory. Regardless of which version you choose, the film remains as stirring and cathartic as ever – just with differing degrees of viscera to suit your own individual level of squeamishness.

*Special thanks to Kevin C. Hart for his invaluable assistance in researching this essay.*

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- 3 Paul M. Sammon, "I'd Buy That For A Hundred Dollars! The Making of the Criterion Collection's *RoboCop*", *Video Watchdog* #29 (1995), edited and published by Tim & Donna Lucas.
- 4 <http://www.pulpanddagger.com/canuck/kkextras.html> (Accessed Sep 6 2019)
- 5 <https://catalog.afi.com/Catalog/MovieDetails/55885> (Accessed Sep 6 2019)
- 6 [http://bookofthedead.ws/website/evil\\_dead\\_2\\_versions.html](http://bookofthedead.ws/website/evil_dead_2_versions.html) (Accessed Sep 6 2019)



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## ABOUT THE TRANSFER

*RoboCop* was restored by MGM in 2013 and is presented in its original aspect ratio of 1.85:1 with 5.1, 4.0 and stereo 2.0 audio.

The original camera negative was scanned in 4K and all grading and restoration was completed in 4K. The grade and final restoration was approved by director Paul Verhoeven, as well as executive producer Jon Davison and co-writer/co-producer Edward Neumeier. All audio tracks were remastered from the original mag sound elements.

As the original camera negative only corresponds to the original R-rated theatrical version of the film, at the time of MGM's restoration, additional print elements were sourced to make up the additional or alternate shots in the Unrated Director's Cut version. Since these inserts were scanned from lower-generation positive elements due to the negatives for these sequences being lost, there is an unavoidable subtle shift in picture quality throughout these scenes. We sincerely hope these shifts do not affect your enjoyment of the overall film.

The original 4.0 and stereo theatrical mixes were remastered for this Blu-ray from the original audio stems at Deluxe Audio, in addition to the "Final Theatrical Mix" Isolated Score audio option.

Lastly, additional film elements of the TV Cut version supplied by MGM were scanned at EFILM and graded in 2K at R3Store Studios and are included on the *RoboCop: Edited For Television* featurette on this release. The full TV Cut presented on Disc 2 was transferred from an original DigiBeta broadcast master tape.

The restored 4K master and all additional elements provided by  
MGM/Scott Grossman.

Additional restoration and audio remastering work supervised by  
James White and James Flower, Arrow Films

R3Store Studios: Gerry Gedge, Jo Griffin, Nathan Leaman-Hill, Rich Watson

EFilm: David Morales

Deluxe Audio: Jordan Perry

# PRODUCTION CREDITS

Disc and Booklet Produced by **James Flower**  
Executive Producers **Kevin Lambert, Francesco Simeoni**  
Technical Producer **James White**  
QC **Nora Mehenni, Alan Simmons**  
Production Assistant **Samuel Thiery**  
Blu-ray Mastering **Fidelity In Motion**  
Subtitling **The Engine House Media Services**  
Illustration by **Paul Shipper**  
Design **Oink Creative**

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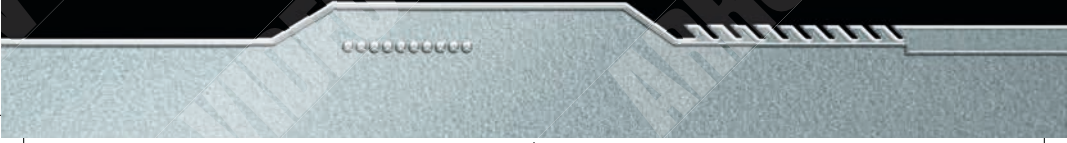
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