

# Harry J. Alpert



## A Visual Effects Genius

**H**arry J Alpert has been in the film business for over twenty years as a Director of Photography, Camera Operator, Assistant Cameraman and Animator. In the Visual Effects business he specialized in Motion Control, Blue Screen, Green Screen and High Speed cinematography as an operator and D.P.

### Film career and Achievements

As a Director of Photography, in live action, I worked on several low budget "B" and "C" films, some commercials and rock videos. I used every sort of film camera made, from Super 8 to Arri 16SR, from Mitchell Standard to 65mm BFC, and from Panivision, Arriflex, to IMAX, several video cameras as well. Most of my large film

credits are in VFX motion control and animation. They include: "Starship Troopers", "Air Force One", "Fifth Element", "Independence Day", "True Lies", "Junior", "Judge Dredd", "The Hunt for Red October", "Back to the Future: The Ride", "Return of the Jedi" and "Heavy Metal".

I have been fortunate enough to work with some of the top folks in the movie business such as: Roland Emmerich, Doug Smith, Dave Stewart, Doug Trumbull, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Richard Edlund and John Mactearnan.

Currently, I live in Great Barrington, Massachusetts and Stamford Connecticut with my two daughters, Mary Jasmine and Caitlyn Paige.

## The inspirations that made him choose the world of Visual effects

I was actually a VFX DP and cameraman for 22 years. I specialized in Motion Control Cameraman, high speed, animation, blue screen and green screen. I never really did much CGI 3D stuff.

My inspirations were all the great Sci-fi movies of the 50's and 60's, "Robinson Crusoe on Mars". "War of the Worlds", "Star Trek", "Batman", "Lost in Space" and "Green Hornet" "Jason and the Argonauts" . . . to name a few. George Pal, Ray Harryhausen, Tex Avery, Chuck Jones, Gene Roddenberry, Irwin Allen, as well as many others!

has to be that way although it can be very stressful. With some of the big shows you are on, some of the actors can be squirrels.

I started off in the animation world hoping for a break... got trained in animation as a down-shooter...this business is very tedious and a very concentrated discipline...but when you're done, you feel a great sense of achievement...especially if you have a love for visual effects.

## The changes in technologies through years

There are several ... the biggest one now is the 3D Format



Mary Jasmine and Caitlyn Paige

## The hurdles

On the job training there was always something new to learn or always the feeling that I should know more. Or . . . oopps . . ."I sure hope I can do that and not look like ea knuckhead in front of everybody!"

Or a great quote from Alan Sheppard (played by Scott Glenn) in "The Right Stuff" - "Oh Lord . . .Please don't let me effff up!"

Competition from other Visual Effects and animation enthusiasts was overwhelming. Although I had studied Visual Effects and animation on my own since I was little, the college education folks had a huge leg up on me. I started when I was 19. But I was infinitely more tenacious than most. Mostly visual effects, I love low budget live-action shows. They are run so efficiently it

it is far beyond what it once was it is amazing I see this being the wave of the future because of quality the 3D is beautiful! It's diversified and competitive, and the digital film explosion is bringing the price down. They did Terminator 2 on 3D and it went great! High definition came on the set 8 years ago but now it is coming back again. In terms of cost and return on investment the evolving technology of 3D is a revolution whose time has come. Virtual Sets are becoming big as well!

The 3D thing has many new filmmakers considering doing movies with effects that can definitely draw an audience in but most importantly the cost of 3D production is coming down. There is film produced by Marvel called "1602" by Neil Gaiman, (Creator of the Sandman Series). This book came out 3 years ago. This book is phenomenal. All the Marvel Heroes