

SPECTACULAR SUMMER SPECIAL!

SCIENCE FICTION PEOPLE

SF MOVIE LAND™

48430
September 1985
\$2.95
\$3.50 Canada
UK L2.95 DGS



WIN A FREE TRIP
TO HOLLYWOOD
AND MEET
EXPLORERS
DIRECTOR
JOE DANTE

NMP



MAX & TINA
BEYOND THUNDERDOME

THE MAKING OF FANTASTIC MOVIES

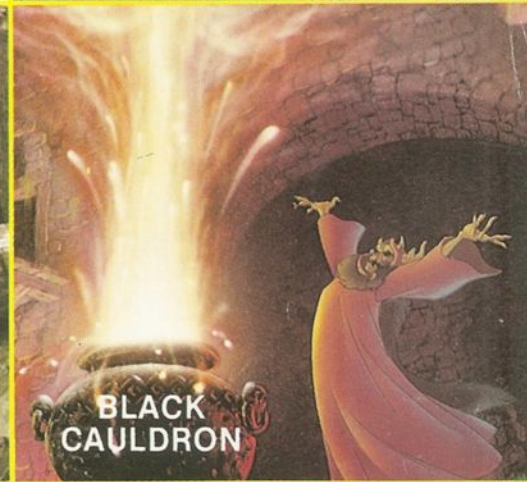
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS
WITH THE STARS
SPECIAL EFFECTS SECRETS
BEHIND THE SCENES
WITH THE CREATORS



EXPLORERS



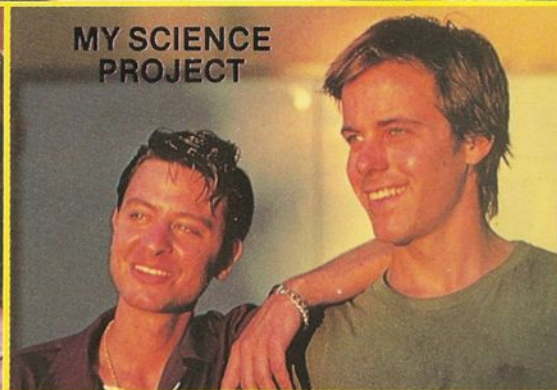
THE
GOONIES



BLACK
CAULDRON



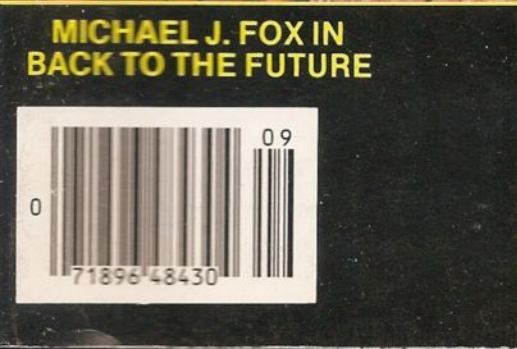
MICHAEL J. FOX IN
BACK TO THE FUTURE



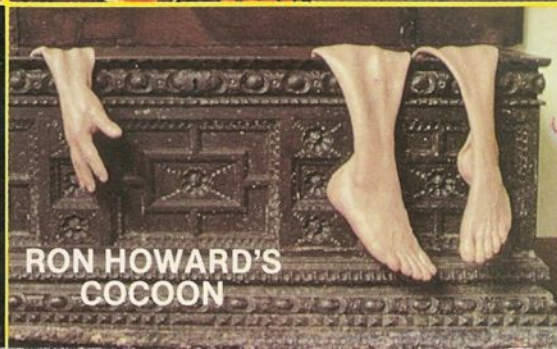
MY SCIENCE
PROJECT



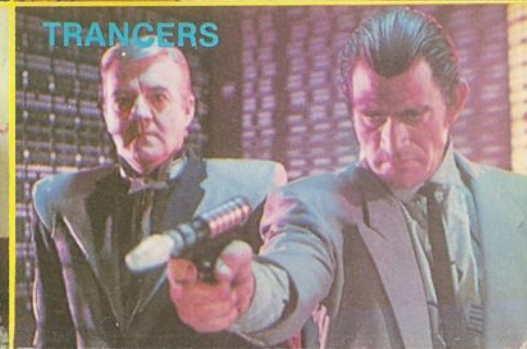
RETURN
TO OZ



0 71896 48430 09



RON HOWARD'S
COCOON



TRANCERS

MICHAEL J. FOX

JOURNEYS BACK

BY NANCY MILLS

"Michael J. Fox is charming, handsome, funny, sensitive and youthful," *Back to the Future* director Robert Zemeckis says. "He's everything his character needs wrapped in one." Unfortunately, when Zemeckis was casting his film last fall, Fox was too busy to take on the role of Marty McFly, the Eighties high school student who is suddenly transported back to the Fifties.

Fox was in the middle of making his NBC series *Family Ties*. But eventually this paragon of castability was persuaded to work double-time.

Picking at a green pasta salad in the Universal Studios commissary, Fox well remembers the day his life became complicated: "The *Family Ties* producer called me into his office and gave me a copy of the *Back to the Future* script. He said, 'Steven Spielberg and Bob Zemeckis want you to do this movie—next Tuesday. You can't tell anyone.' I read the script and said yes."

Luckily for the 23-year-old Canadian actor, Paramount TV, the company that makes *Family Ties*, gave him its blessing. "The major concessions were made by Universal," Fox acknowledges. "Paramount was cooperative and nice. They didn't have to let me do it at all."

For the first seven weeks of shooting, Fox arrived at Universal after putting in a full day on the set of *Family Ties*. "I averaged four to four-and-a-half hours sleep a night," he says cheerfully. "It's one of those situations that taxes your sanity, but what was I going to do? This movie had to be done."

"When I get in a tough situation, the last thing I try to do is remind everyone how tough it is. I didn't make any noise until after the rough part was finished." Fox grins and gulps down some Diet Coke.

"I'd got to the point where I'd wake up and couldn't remember going to sleep or even having been asleep. A driver would bring me home at night, open the door and lay me on the bed. Then another driver would come back in the morning, get me up and drive me to work."

"When I'd get to the set, everyone who was lounging in their chairs would suddenly open their eyes. They tried never to take naps in front of me. Because I was so tired I said to the director, 'Bob, I trust you. My brain is cheese. I won't be able to be as sharp as I'd like to.'"

"There are places where I felt like Muhammed Ali—no offense to him—but I couldn't enunciate. 'Please Bob,' I'd say, 'don't ask me to do that take again!' " Fox, of course, is joking. He worked as long and as hard as Zemeckis wanted him to.

"My mother told me, 'Michael, you shouldn't over-extend yourself.' What should I say, Mom? 'Gee Steve, I'm bushed. I'd like to make your blockbuster film, but . . .' You just do it. It's going to be a neat movie."

"We reshot most of the scenes," Fox adds about the work done in the first six weeks before he replaced Eric Stoltz. "Bob called it a great dress rehearsal. I looked at it as a challenge. I didn't care what might have gone on before. I'm just happy for Eric that his movie *Mask* did so well. He's not to be pitied."

BACK TO THE FIFTIES

Coming in at the last minute, Fox had no time to prepare. That didn't bother him too much. "I'm a product of the media generation," he explains. "I probably know more about the Fifties than Fifties kids did. I play Baby Boomer Trivial Pursuit. I know who Nikita Khrushchev was. In my dressing room I listened to the soundtracks of *Diner* and *American Graffiti*, with a little Los Lobos thrown in."

"The great irony to me is that three weeks before I was cast in this film, *Family Ties* did a show where Alex goes back in time in a dream and convinces Thomas Jefferson to write the Declaration of Independence. Now, time travel can be my forte."

When Fox was cast in the NBC sitcom three years ago, his was a virtually unknown face in Hollywood. He had a small role in the CBS series *Palmers-town USA* and guest-starring parts on such shows as *Trapper John M.D.*, *Family* and *Lou Grant*. He had also appeared in the movies *Midnight Madness*, *High School USA* and *Class of 1984*.

But the success of *Family Ties*, which focuses on conservative teenagers growing up with liberated, Sixties-generation parents, has provided Fox with a large teenage following. His character Alex P. Keaton wears pin-striped suits and idolizes Richard Nixon.

"There are tons of conservative youngsters out there," Fox says. "But the main message of Alex is that kids are kids. He's just a bright, ambitious kid. He could even be a Democrat. I was born to play him. I love him so

TO THE FUTURE



When Michael J. Fox journeys into the past he changes the future, preventing his parents from meeting. But by the end of the film all is well—in fact better than ever.





MICHAEL J.
FOX

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 55

much. You'd have to forcibly remove me with guns to make me quit that show. That's my job, and it's home.

SUBURBAN SURREALISM

"Marty McFly is a young, bright, funny, ambitious, wiry guy like Alex, but his sensibilities are different. He's a Tom Sawyer kind of guy. Alex would have been on to him right away.

"When you first meet Marty, he's a very happy, rock & roll kid. He goes home, and his parents are like nimrods. Bob Gale (the producer) calls it 'suburban surrealism.' Marty doesn't want to deal with it.

"Then he gets zapped back to the Fifties and finds out why they are like they are by meeting them. He short-circuits when his mom gets a crush on him.

"This movie isn't really about the Fifties. It isn't *Diner* or *American Graffiti*. It's not a nostalgia trip. The idea is let's

take an Eighties kid and throw him into the Fifties. Everything is seen from an Eighties perspective. Why is that man pumping gas for that lady and cleaning her windshield? The Fifties we present will be like a Fellini movie—all the strange stuff.

"There was a point in the movie important for me to find. Once Marty is back in the Fifties, there's no way out of it. So he tells himself he'd better get his butt moving and figure out how he can motivate things in his favor.

"He does make a half-assed effort to comb his hair in a different way. He takes Fifties things and changes them into the way he likes. And there's a point at which he gets to live out every guitarist's dream.

"Marty's not a yuckster. Hopefully humor will come out of the situation. He's a feisty kid who doesn't take a lot of crap from anyone. He doesn't back down. I think I'm more of a wimp."

Fox likes to make fun of the fact that he is short. He is about 5'4" and could easily pass for sixteen. "Us little guys are gonna take over the world," he jokes. "Instead of thinking, 'Michael J. Fox is too short to play this role,' directors will say, 'We'll have to change this part. It's written too tall for Michael J. Fox!'"

Fox's one regret is that he had to leave Canada in order to work. "My dream come true would be if I could do what I'm doing now in Haney (outside Vancouver). I've got a visa and I pay American taxes, but I'd never become an American citizen.

"I left Canada because I wanted to be an actor in films and television. I'd gone as far as I could go in Canada. Actors are virtually office workers there. They're struggling to make \$180 a week. I said, 'I won't do that. I'm outta here.'

"I didn't want to struggle. I fail to see the romanticism in being 45 and trying to get by on \$200 a week. Now I'm happy. It's nothing against Canada. It's just very tough to get to the point where you can be a financially independent actor and set up and control your projects up there. I'd love to go to the CBC with a great pilot and hire all my friends."