

Everett Burrell

Biography, 1983-2020

Special Visual Effects Supervisor

Co-Producer/2nd Unit Director

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“An Eye for the Fantastic”

There was nothing unusual about a boy growing up in the community of 1970s Orange County, California to look to the night stars and wonder: What if? Fueled by genre television like “The Twilight Zone”, and “The Outer Limits”, Everett Burrell did just that. But unlike so many that allow the machinery of their imaginations to disintegrate, Everett never let go of his child-like daydreams or his sense of wonder.

Armed with a Super 8mm film camera, a crew of friends, and his creativity, Everett began making short films that for all of their technical crudeness, became his early cinematic training ground that taught him early in life that it all begins with a frame that a director fills with images designed to affect audiences visually.

Fortunately, Everett had just turned 12 years old, when “Star Wars” debuted in theaters and this set the boy's ambitions in stone. He would pursue a career in motion pictures. By the time Everett finished High School, a parade of films featuring ambitious special makeup effects burst onto screens such as “The Howling”, “An American Werewolf in London”, and “John Carpenter's “The Thing”. Everett began to sculpt and make his own monsters in his garage and eventually earned a job working on low budget horror films.

It was while working on low budget films in the 1980's that Everett learned a very important lesson: how to be resourceful. Without the advantage of a big budget, he began figuring out ways to assist directors and producers to tell their visual stories relying on imaginative rather than expensive solutions. He soon found himself working on bigger pictures such as “Aliens” and “Harry and the Henderson's” with some of the biggest names in motion picture practical effects. He was only 22 years old.

In 1989, Everett opened his own makeup effects company, Optic Nerve Studios, where he designed and supervised the makeup effects for films such as the remake of Night of the Living Dead, and George Romero's “The Dark Half” as well as television including

the Emmy-award winning “Babylon 5”. During this time, Everett began doing what was then, the unimaginable – he began to design using a computer rather than traditional illustration techniques.

This lured Everett from the practical creature side of effects into the digital side of visual effects and the result was impressive. Unlike so many visual effects artists who learn their craft in a “virtual world,” Everett brought with him his knowledge and experience of working on real film sets alongside department heads, directors, and production. This made him the perfect candidate for a visual effects supervisor.

And it was this rare combination of skills that soon brought Everett into collaboration with Hollywood's premiere filmmakers. Everett brought the dark, exotic world of “Sin City” to life for Robert Rodriguez. For Guillermo del Toro's “Pan's Labyrinth”, Everett enhanced traditional practical creature effects with digital augmentation that elevated them to a new level of believability. For the television hit, “American Horror Story: Freak Show”, he transformed actress Sarah Paulson into a set of conjoined twins.

As his experience and skills evolved to higher levels of responsibility, Everett found himself the go-to effects supervisor for directors like Frank Darabont, who needed to create an invasion of monsters for “The Mist” within the constraints of his budget, while for director, Ridley Scott, Everett helped reveal the mysteries and horrors of the “Prometheus” expedition.

Most recently Everett has been connected with Netflix as the production visual effects supervisor for “Altered Carbon” season one. This was a science fiction epic for Netflix that took almost 2 years to complete and was nominated for an Emmy, Outstanding Special Visual Effects. After the success of “Altered Carbon” Everett was moved up to associate producer and visual effects supervisor on season one of “The Umbrella Academy”. For season two of “The Umbrella Academy” Everett was once again promoted to 2nd Unit Director, Co-Producer and Senior Visual Effects Supervisor. As well as gaining another Emmy nomination for Outstanding Special Visual Effects for “The Umbrella Academy” season one.

Whether transporting actor, Ben Stiller, to the Himalayan mountains in “The Secret Life of Walter Mitty” to coordinating a full-scale, alien attack of Los Angeles (shot in Shreveport, Louisiana!) for “Battle: L.A”., to delivering ultra-realistic WWII battle scenes for “Fury”. Everett Burrell continues to bring his love for film, his years of experience, and his eye for the fantastic.