

MOVIE HAPPENINGS

Stunts, Stars and Legends:

Tom Selleck

by John Hagner

Selleck has appeared in more than 50 films and television roles since "Magnum P.I.," including "Three Men and a Baby", "Quigley Down Under", "Mr. Baseball", and "Lassiter". He also appeared as Dr. Richard Burke on "Friends" and as A.J. Cooper on the TV series "Las Vegas".

Selleck was born in Detroit, Michigan. While working as a model, he attended the University of Southern California on a basketball scholarship where he played for the USC Trojans men's Basketball team.

He began his career with bit parts in smaller movies, like "Myra Breckinridge", "Coma", and "The Seven Minutes".

Selleck is an avid outdoorsman, marksman and firearms collector. He played the frontier marshal Orrin Sackett in the 1979 film "The Sacketts", opposite Sam Elliott and Western legends Glenn Ford and Ben Johnson. He played the role of Thomas Magnum in 1980 after filming six other TV-pilots that were never sold.



Martin Grace

Born in Kilkenny, Ireland, in 1942, Grace attended Kilkenny College. He then moved to England, joined boxing, weight-lifting, wrestling and fencing clubs, and worked at Butlin's.

He then trained as an actor at the Mountview Theatre School, in London, and joined a stunt agency. His first jobs were in commercials, such as the Cadbury's Milk Tray campaign, in which he jumped from a bridge on to a train, was lifted from a sports car and dropped on a hotel roof and, finally, jumped from a cliff on to a moving truck, before diving into a lake to deliver the chocolates to a woman on a boat.

His first film was the television spin-off "Dr Who and the Daleks" (1965). Like many stunt performers, he was cast in a role that demanded his special skills, as he was in pictures such as "Who Dares Wins" (1982) and "Curse of the Pink Panther" (1983), and television programs that included "The Onedin Line" (1972) and "The Protectors" (1973).

In "You Only Live Twice" (1967), starring the screen's original Bond, Sean Connery, Grace was one of a host of stunt performers taking part in the climactic volcano eruption scene where Bond gives an elite ninja force access to the villain Blofeld's secret base. Grace underwent four weeks of intensive training, scaling nets, sliding down ropes and practising trampoline "explosions," before the sequence was shot.

In 1969, he was Oliver Reed's fencing double in "The Assassination Bureau". He fought with Anthony Hopkins in "When Eight Bells Toll" (1971), and did stunts with Kirk Douglas in "To Catch a Spy" (1971), after seven months out of action as a result of breaking his neck in "Scrooge" (1970).

Performing as Roger Moore's stunt double in the James Bond films brought Martin Grace respect throughout the industry, but, because of the nature of his job, he was never a "Star". He also did stunts for some of the early Cadbury's Milk Tray commercials.

Grace first stood in for Moore in the 1977 picture "The Spy Who Loved Me", driving a Lotus Esprit through the winding streets of Sardinia in a furious chase, with the express instruction that the car had to be returned to its manufacturer intact. He followed this with Bond's fight with the steel-jawed henchman Jaws on top of a cable car 1,300 feet above ground in Rio de Janeiro in "Moonraker" (1979). The action continued in the air in "For Your Eyes Only" (1981), with Grace hanging on to the outside of a remote-controlled helicopter for the pre-title sequence. Later, in Moore's final Bond film, A View to a Kill (1985), the stunt



performer did more aerial acrobatics, on the Eiffel Tower and San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge.

But during Octopussy (1983) a complicated stunt involving a train and a car went horribly wrong while shooting on the Nene Valley railway. A helicopter was to

shoot the action from the air, but communication was lost between Grace, the pilot, the train driver and the rest of the stunt team, and Grace smashed into a wall, fracturing his pelvis and damaging his thigh. "The impact was so lightning fast that I only realised that I had hit something when I found I was hanging prone for dear life on the side of the train!" he recalled. "Adrenalin was pumping through my arms like never before. I looked down and saw my trouser leg had been ripped off and saw my thigh bone through the gash in my thigh muscle."

Grace appeared in a show that toured Scandinavia in 1974 and starred the Norwegian stunt performer Arne Berg. The experience of doing six performances a week that required high falls, car crashes, motorcycle jumps,

fights and tunnels of fire stood him in good stead when he was asked to double for Roger Moore in five Bond films. He also doubled for Richard Kiel, as the villain Jaws, in both "The Spy Who Loved Me" (1977) and "Moonraker" (1979).

This also led Grace to become Moore's stunt double in some of the star's other films, "The Wild Geese" (1978), "Escape to Athena" (1979), "North Sea Hijack" (1979), "The Sea Wolves" (1980) and "The Naked Face" (1984). Also among the 70-plus films in which he did stunt work were "Superman" (1978), "Raiders of the Lost Ark" (1981), "Brazil" (1985), "King Arthur" (2004), "Ella Enchanted" (2004) and "The Number 23" (2007). He had extra responsibility, as stunt coordinator, on pictures such as "High Spirits" (1988), "Erik the Viking" (1989), "Nuns on the Run" (1990), "Patriot Games" (1992) and "Angela's Ashes" (1999).

A partial list of stars that have made movies in Moab

John Wayne, Maureen O'Hara, Henry Fonda, Rock Hudson, Jimmy Stewart, Richard Boone, Anthony Quinn, Shirley Temple, Kris Kristofferson, Billy Crystal, Robert Duvall, Gene Hackman, Bill Murray, Susan Sarandon, Geena Davis and Tom Cruise.

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