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Gelatin

How-to and notes from a seminar given by Academy Award winning make-up artist Matthew Mungle

About These Notes...

Who is Matthew Mungle?

Matthew Mungle has earned 3 Academy Award nominations and 1 Oscar (for *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, 1992) for his work in special effects make-up. His credits include such hits as *Edward Scissorhands*, *Natural Born Killers*, *Congo*, *Outbreak* and *Schindler's List*. His most recent Oscar nomination was for his work with gelatin appliances aging James Woods in the recent hit *Ghosts of Mississippi*.

What are these notes from?

These notes were taken during a seminar given by Mr. Mungle at this year's Make-up Artist Magazine's 'Make-up and Effects Trade Show' which took place Aug. 3rd in North Hollywood, CA. A thank you goes out to Rebecca Burt who contributed this to S.C.R.E.A.M.

Notes:

Why choose Gelatin?

Gelatin is more translucent and moves better than other materials. It also has a very realistic texture and takes a minimal amount of make-up to cover. Gelatin's drawbacks are that it breaks down from heat (melts) and sweat (dissolves). There are solutions for the sweat problem, but not much can be done if you are working in a hot area.

Molding

- Use a mold of Ultracal or Epoxycal.
- Epoxycal is better but also more expensive.
- Use Epoxy Parfilm release.

Directions for Use

1. Gelatin Formula:
 - 100 grams Sorbitol
 - 100 grams Glycerine
 - 30 - 20 grams Gelatin 300 bloom
 - + any coloring, flocking, etc.
2. Mix and let set, preferably overnight.
3. Heat in a microwave for approx. 2 minutes, mixing several times.
4. Don't allow mixture to bubble or foam, because it will burn, change color and leave bubbles in your finished piece.
5. Carefully swirl and bump mixing bowl to get rid of any bubbles that may have formed.
6. Pour carefully into mold, as close as possible to the surface. The farther up you pour from the better chance there will be of trapped air bubbles.
7. Rock the mold from side to side, coating the full surface and allowing air bubbles to escape.
NOTE: Only put escape holes in unused areas and flashing.
8. Press positive into place if you have one and band or weight mold.
9. Let cure.
10. Remove your positive, trying to keep the gelatin in the negative. Leaving your piece in the negative allows you to repair any bubbles easier.
11. Cut around flashing, leaving a small edge, and powder the inside of your piece.
12. Carefully find an edge and start removing your piece, powdering as you remove.

Piece Preparation

1. If applying the piece to skin you must build a barrier between the gelatin and skin (or sweat will dissolve piece). For this you can use a light plastic over the areas of the piece that will be touching skin. - Eye pieces should be totally sealed.
2. After plastic sealing, cover back of piece (except edges) with Pros-Aide.
3. Dry and powder.

Application

1. If being applied to skin, clean area of application with alcohol.
2. Coat area with Pros-Aide and dry.
3. Press piece into place, starting in the middle and pressing outwards. Be careful not to trap any air bubbles.
4. Work on edges of piece. Qutips work well to give edges a coat of Pros-Aide.
5. After all edges are glued down, rub over edges with a little Witch Hazel. This breaks down the edges and blends it into the skin. - Don't use too much Witch Hazel or the appliance will break down too far!
6. Pull off any extra flashing bits and blend these edges as well.
7. Go over the edges with a little Pros-Aide to blend further and lightly powder.- For long durations, use a little of the same plastic sealer you used on the back of your piece around the edges as well.
8. Use paints like Stay-color (basically a light plastic with color) to match skin colors closer. - Alcohol can be used to blend these paints.
9. Use make-up as needed and add anything else (beard, stubble, etc.).

Removal & Tips

- Use Detachol, Ultrasol, Isopropyl Myristate, or other remover.
- Gelatin can be colored using tattoo colors, make-up, or flexible paints.
- If you mess up during molding, gelatin can be re-melted and used again.
- Putting a few BB's in your pigment bottles will help stir them when shaken.
- If you must move or store a gelatin piece: Leave it on the positive, and wrap it in plastic or seal it inside a Ziploc bag. It's also a good idea to put some silica gel in with the piece (often comes in small paper packets in pill bottles or leather goods).