



# FX Makeup

**Brings Dracula to Life.**

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PHOTOGRAPHY: ROB DAWSON

IF YOU WONDER HOW DRACULA CAME TO GRACE OUR COVER, it's all about the makeup artist. Andrea O'Donnell, professional makeup artist and body painter, began her career in makeup about 28 years ago. Ten years ago she veered into the world of special effects makeup, known in the industry as FX. She worked in her mom's salon after graduating from beauty school and loved makeup application, but didn't want to continue with prom and wedding makeup for the rest of her life. O'Donnell says, "Now I create a different character every time I go to work and that's exciting."

When asked about working on movie sets she said, "I usually turn that down. I like creating the great characters we see in the movies, but don't want to do the same one over and over for months on a set."

She focuses on creating authentic looks and one-of-a-kind characters for commercials, photo shoots and events such as the 2016 Fash Bash at the Detroit Institute of Arts. Many clients invite her to add some intrigue to their private parties and events. "I have one client who flies me to L.A. to do effects whenever he has a large party."

Full face and body painting is another skill that puts her in demand around the world. O'Donnell says her most memorable



body painting project was "painting the actor James Franco for a *W* magazine photo shoot – once green and once grey to blend into the environment. I told them I could make him *disappear* into the backdrop, but they just wanted green and grey. Still a good time."

O'Donnell travels extensively with her work. Her favorite conference is the Austria World Body Painting Festival where FX artists attend from around the world. She won the International Face and Body Painting award four times in competition against the world's professionals.

According to husband Tim, she's also a music trivia expert. "It's no contest playing music trivia against her; our friends have learned not to try." Her favorite genre is old school punk but she's familiar

**Top left:** Angela starts the transformation on ad director Matt Fasang. She applies a bald cap, nose and ear prosthetics and a layer of clay. **Top right:** The tanned Matt meets Angela, FX makeup artist. **Bottom:** Phase 1 complete.

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**Top left:** Matt exercising prosthetic fingers with nails polished in deep purple. **Top right:** A little eyebrow action. **Middle Left:** During the 4-hour preparation Matt gives the "OK" sign. **Bottom right:** Adjustments for final shot.



with a broad array of music from jazz to movie themes. For this shoot she played background strains of "Nosferatu" from a 1922 German Expressionist horror film directed by F. W. Murnau. It set the tone.

If you want to become an FX makeup artist, you'll need to start with a fantastic imagination and an appreciation of horror and sci-fi movies. The makeup, materials and tools to create effects include ample supplies of prosthetics, Woochie bald caps, airbrushes, clay, fillers and putty, finger extensions and fangs, vials of blood and mouth capsules. The collection of camouflage equipment is almost as intricate as the makeup required for attending a 25<sup>th</sup> high school reunion.

For the October photo shoot, O'Donnell's model was the SEEN ad director Matt Fasang. She quipped, "It's not hard to make this guy look like a monster." Starting with a bald cap and prosthetics, followed by trade secret applications and O'Donnell's commercial product "bad ass stencils," the look was created slowly. It took four hours before Fasang was ready to don Dracula's cape. We have no idea when he hopped on a motorcycle to cruise the Detroit skyline. **NS**

**For more info:**

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