Richard Garrett

Alumnus Drama and Theatre Arts

Year of study 1988

Current position Stuntman

Why the change of direction?

I actually wanted to become an actor, but my career was not going as well as I would have liked. I had always enjoyed rock-climbing, scuba diving and I was in the British Schools fencing team as well as having fenced for the University team. One day I realised that I could do all the things I enjoyed doing for fun and do some kind of performance work rolled into one.

How did you become a stuntman?

You have to have a full equity card, as well as becoming highly qualified in a minimum of six sports related to the profession, such as martial arts. Then you can be added to the Stunt Register, at which point you become a probationer and start a three year apprenticeship during which you can simply learn on the job.

What do you most like about your job?

I love the variety - no two days are ever the same. One day I can be fighting a big Hollywood film star and the next I can be thrown off a cliff.

What are the most memorable experiences of your career so far?

Doubling as James Bond I doubled for Pierce Brosnan in a sunken ship fight scene in Tomorrow Never Dies. I have also doubled for Hugh Jackamn in Van Helsing and I also went out to Mexico to work on the film Titanic, in which I had to pretend to die horribly night after night in lots of different ways.

What advice would you give to anyone starting out in a career as a stuntman/woman?

The most important thing to remember is that it is not just about physical ability; it is actually all about attitude. It is about calculating risks and a combination of enjoying high risk activities whilst keeping them controlled for film work. The best idea is to find out where filming is taking place and talk to people there and get to know them. It is a personal business and contacts are important.

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