Editor's note: To uncover the FX secrets of TRUE BLOOD, Fangoria.com engaged legendary FX artist Steve Johnson (GHOSTBUSTERS, SPECIES, THE ABYSS, etc.), who spoke with his friends at MastersFX, the studio he also serves as a consultant for.

It's an early evening in the studio where HBO's popular supernatural series TRUE BLOOD is being shot, when an ear-piercing scream interrupts the quiet summer tranquility. Contrary to the usual reaction one would expect to such a sound, no one blinks an eye. It's pretty much business as usual on a series in which staking, decapitation, full-body immolation and numerous other forms of graphic violence are all in a day's work.

Most of the aforementioned mayhem (as noted in the exclusive pics here) is engineered by the team at MastersFX, whose ground-breaking makeup work have been seen in such series as TALES FROM THE CRYPT, SIX FEET UNDER and FRINGE. On this particular evening, we've managed to corral four key members of that team—including MastersFX owner Todd Masters; TRUE BLOOD FX producer Dan Rebert; MastersFX visual FX supervisor Andre Bustanoby; and coordinator Mark Vinniello—for a rare interview about their contributions to TRUE BLOOD, which enters its fourth season this summer. Punctuated by the occasional unexplained scream of course…

STEVE JOHNSON: Is there such a thing as too gory?

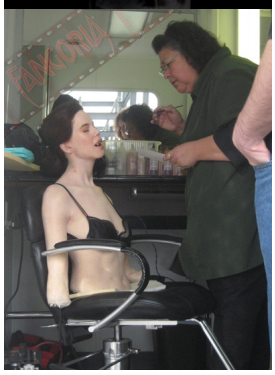
DAN REBERT: A lot of times, in production meetings we toss ideas around. The writers and creators of the show lean on us for input, asking what we can do with a certain amount of money in a certain amount of time. And I'm often told that what I'm pitching is too gory. The producers laugh it off and joke around, tell me I'm sick. But one of our biggest effects on the show was when Bill [Stephen Moyer] is having sex with Lorena [Maria Klaveno]. In the middle of it all, he reaches forward, grabs her head, twists her neck and snaps it. He twists her head all the way around backward and continues having sex with her. That's probably one of the most graphic, horrific things that I've ever been asked to create—and they wrote it! And these writers and producers tell me I'm sick?

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

FANGORIA


FANGORIA