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MOVIES FEATURES

Oscar ® 2008 Watch: Hair spotlight - 'Pirates' Martin Samuel

By April MacIntyre

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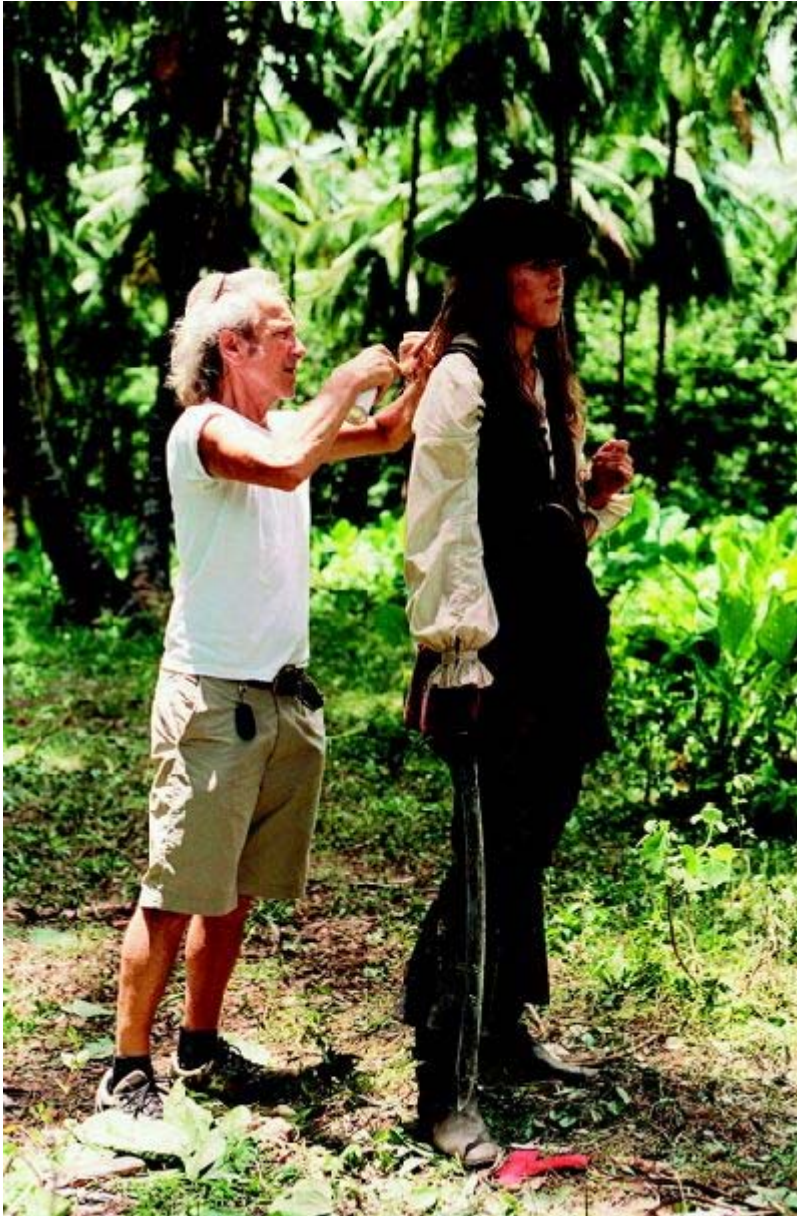
The success of the epic action adventure trilogy, "Pirates of the Caribbean" is due to an artfully meshed collaboration of skilled crafts under the orchestration of director Gore Verbinski. The film's department heads all took great pains to finding accurate historical research and allowed Verbinski to add the right amount of historical fantasy to it.

The look of all the characters is exemplary in this regard. The details in hairstyle, makeup, props and costuming were dutifully and uniquely created for this period fantasy/action film.

Hair design is crucial for any actor to embody their character wholly, and to give an overall authenticity to the production. The design of the hair for the entire cast of Pirates (each film) was envisioned by a creative genius in the field, Martin Samuel, a son of England, who has worked with some of the best directors and talents in motion picture history.



For Johnny Depp's Captain Jack character, Samuel created a blend look of a rogue, ruffian and rock star with beads, braids, extension hair and bandanas.



Keira Knightley's Elizabeth has locks that veer from a youthful, alluring loose and uncontrived long look to an aristocratic upswept hairstyle for her wedding. Even for her disheveled Pirate moments Samuel worked with just the right balance of hair and hats for her face in the moment of the frame.

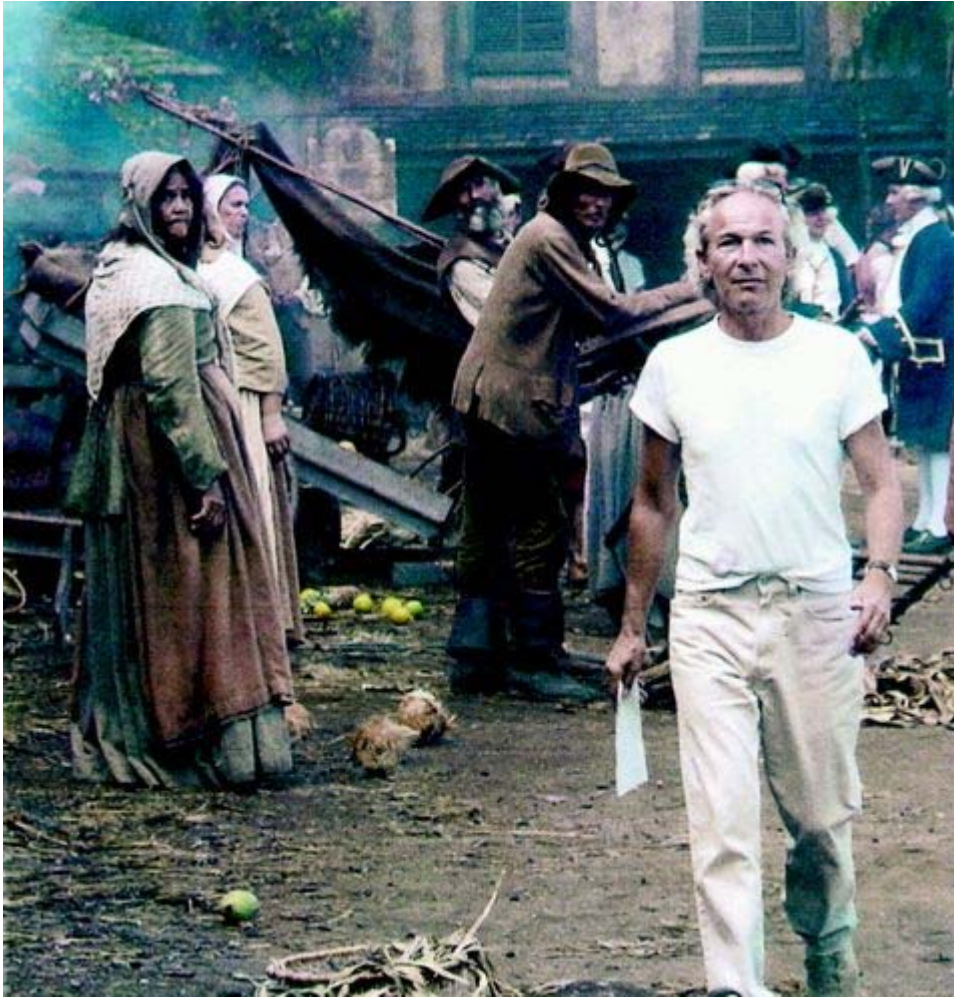
To recreate a look that would have made sense for the Black Pearl Pirates, Samuel found the right wigs and hairpieces and embellished hair with leather, decorated coins and other accessories that a pirate may have picked up in their adventures.

Ve Neill and Martin Samuel are one of three teams nominated this year in the craft of Makeup and Hair in *Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End*, for the 80th Academy Awards.

Mr. Samuel spoke with *Monsters and Critics* from Vancouver on the set of his current movie, "Traveling" starring Jennifer Aniston.

When we spoke at the M.A.C. Academy Awards Bakeoff party in Beverly Hills, you told me you were en route to a film in Vancouver to be a personal hair stylist for Jennifer Aniston on her film "Traveling." How much traveling does your work entail?

Martin Samuel: Yes, I am working as a personal hairstylist for Jennifer Aniston in Vancouver at the moment. It's great, and she has lovely hair and I love working with her. Traveling is a big part of the job, but it is par for the course in the film industry.



What happens first on a film set for the actor - hair or makeup?

Martin Samuel: It depends on what is needed and also what the needs are of the particular actor or actress, or if there are a lot of hair and wigs. We work in unison so that we can both build up the look and get feedback from each other.

Your career started in mod Sixties London in its swinging Austin Powers heyday. Did you forge friendships with many of the British directors you now work with consistently back then?

Martin Samuel: Yes, I started working on TV commercials for directors like Alan Parker, Tony Scott and Ridley Scott, Michael Apter, Nik Roeg, and Hugh Hudson when they all had small production companies, and when they did their movies and have remained involved with their projects over the years.

What made you change direction from salons and become involved in pursuing hairstyling in film work?

Martin Samuel: I was creative director of "Crimpers" of Baker Street – the first Unisex hair salon in London. It was situated next door to the Beatles store Apple. It was a very exciting and innovative time in London. I was involved with all the photographic print work of the salon – working with top photographers in their studios and TV directors on promo stuff for the salon.

I had always been fascinated with film glamour and Hollywood hair and English period hair in movies, and so I branched out starting on friend's first movies and decided that was where I wanted to be, and so started a career in the film business. It has been a wonderful road to travel and fortunately brought me to this exciting place in my life as a 2nd time Oscar nominee.

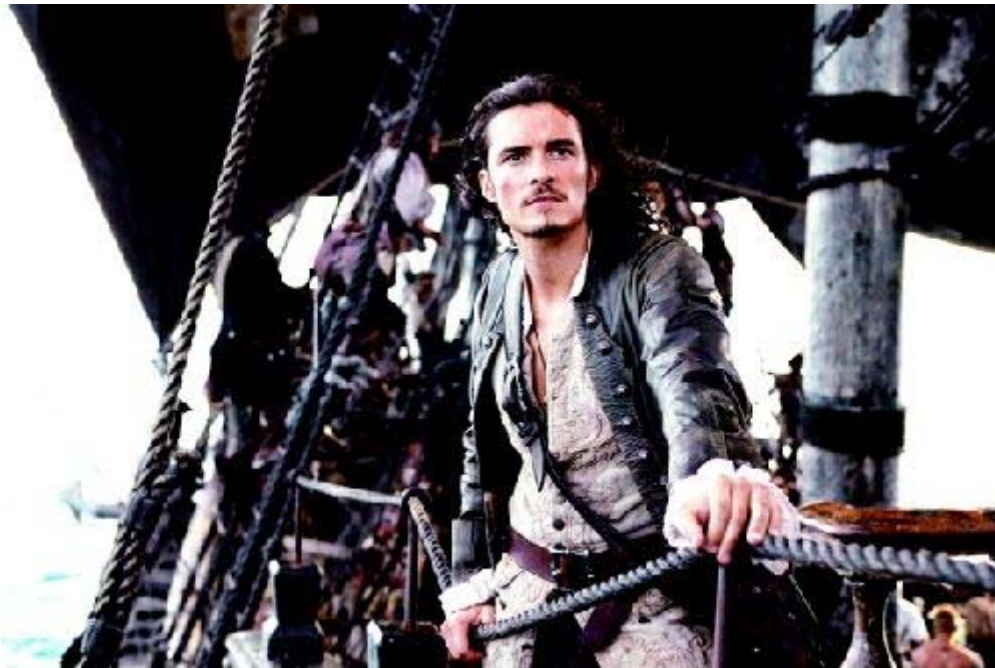
Can you talk about the film you did with David Bowie in the seventies, what was adapting to America like for you?

Martin Samuel: "The Man Who Fell To Earth" with David Bowie was a fantastic experience and I had a chance to prove my creative design for his look of blonde and red slicked back hair for the alien character he portrayed. We shot in New Mexico and Los Angeles. And we of course fell in love with the U.S.A. and made up my mind that one day I would bring back my family and we would live, and I would work and be a success in Hollywood –the magic land of film making.

But that was not to be, just then as David asked me to work with him on his new European and World tour for "Station to Station," his new album and stage show that took a year and was a fantastic and unforgettable experience.

Your celebrity personal request client list is amazing. Who can you name as clients you regularly take care of for their cinematic hair?

Martin Samuel: Keira Knightley, Johnny Depp, Orlando Bloom, Geoffrey Rush, Penelope Cruz, Madonna and Jennifer Aniston to name a few.



The Pirates of the Caribbean three-film franchise was a daunting amount of work. Can you give us an idea of the increased work load for you and your team you managed from the first film to the last one?

Martin Samuel: After the enormous success of Pirates of the Caribbean: Curse of the Black Pearl, The Dead Man's Chest and World's End Pirates was shot as one schedule over a period of 14 months and as Dept. head and Designer we had to submit very large budgets for the enormous background staff I would need as well as the large amount of new wigs to be made for all the actors, background and stunts.

We started shooting in February 2006 in Los Angeles – then the Caribbean Islands of St. Vincent and Dominica and on the Exumas and the Bahamas until July 2006. We then had a hiatus until Labor Day and resumed in Los Angeles and then back to the Bahamas and Exumas and high seas until Christmas of 2006.

During that time we were evacuated because of Hurricane Wilma and flown back to Los Angeles and then back when it subsided, and then around Thanksgiving again because of actor's sickness and bad weather we were flown home lock stock and barrel. We finished at Christmas 2006 and had another hiatus until January 2007.

We then went to Hawaii to complete another sequence. After that we had two sets of reshoots in Los Angeles until May 2007 and that was it until August 2007 when we resumed shooting in Palmdale California to shoot all the ship and storm sequences until Christmas 2007.

The hairstyling involved in Pirates also included a lot of wig work. Can you give us an idea of the amount of wigs, and what researched period styles were needed for the extras, and principals for these films?

Martin Samuel: I carried a stock of 300 wigs which did not include any of the main actors wigs. I researched a lot in London at the Victoria and Albert and Greenwich Maritime Museums and lots of creative meetings with the director Gore Verbinski and Costume Designer Penny Rose and of course, Johnny Depp. A lot of camera "look sees" and camera tests.



Where do these wigs come from?

Martin Samuel: A lot of wigs were made in London as Gore Verbinski had cast a lot of English actors and it was convenient for them in prep. To be made there. I also used two fabulous wig makers in Los Angeles and rental houses both in London and Los Angeles.

What are your favorite films hairstyles to do: fantasy, period, sci fi or contemporary times?

Martin Samuel: I have done every hairstyle and period fantasy and futuristic and contemporary there is, and each had its creative strengths, and I have enjoyed all the challenges each has brought me – especially Pirates which was so diverse and full of everything over the trilogy. But I am especially proud of my work on producing 42 hairstyles of Eva Peron for Madonna.

What is the most laborious female hairstyle to do on either an actress or on a wig?

Martin Samuel: Nothing about do hair for me is laborious.

People think Hair and makeup work on films is a glamorous fun career. Give us the reality check, what is a day like and when does it begin and end on a film as labor-intensive as Pirates?

Martin Samuel: We start at around 5 AM and work 14 to 17 hours in a day's shoot. Night shooting faced with all the elements on location not always a comfortable sound stage. You have to have tremendous stamina and be ready for any change at a moment's notice.

I am working at the moment with Jennifer Aniston in Vancouver on her new film "Traveling" and we are out all night in rain and snow doing various scenes. You must always be up and smiling, keeping morale up.

Which of your film hairstyling achievements over the years has given you the most satisfaction?

Martin Samuel: "Evita" with Madonna – doing 42 different hairstyles recreating the life of Eva Peron was a great showcase of my work.

Martin Samuel's awards:

2007 British Academy Film Awards (BAFTA) Nominee: Makeup and Hair Award for Pirates of the Caribbean II: Dead Man's Chest.

2004 British Academy Film Awards (BAFTA) : Makeup and Hair Award for Pirates of the Caribbean: Curse of the Black Pearl.

2004 Hollywood Makeup Artists & Hair Stylists Guild Awards: Best Character Hairstylist Award for Pirates of the Caribbean: Curse of the Black Pearl.

2004 Oscar Nominee for Pirates of the Caribbean: Curse of the Black Pearl.

1997 British Academy Film Awards (BAFTA) Nominee: Makeup and Hair for Evita.

1997 British Screen Hairstylist Award for Evita.

1997 British Screen Hairstylist Award for Angels and Insects.

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