

MAKE-UP ARTISTS & HAIR STYLISTS GUILD

THE

# ARTISAN

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EVIL

# MORPHING INTO *EVIL* CHARACTERS

BY **JOEL HARLOW**  
SPECIAL CHARACTER  
MAKE-UP DESIGNER

**A few thoughts on *Evil*, from the perspective of a creature designer and make-up artist.**

It all started when I went in for an interview with Robert King, Michelle King, and Liz Glotzer for their supernatural drama, *Evil*. I had been given a description of a character called “George,” prior to that meeting.

“It feels like a demon halfway between the sci-fi specificity of *Alien* and the archetypal scariness of fairy tales,” Robert had told me.

With that, I took a shot and designed a character that I had hoped would speak to what Robert and Michelle were looking for. It was a great meeting, the designs for George were met with enthusiasm and appreciation, and with that, I was off on this path. A path that would become one of the highlights of my professional life.

This journey continued for the following 5½ years. Five and a half years of the most collaborative and inspiring chapter of my career to date. Through this journey, I was afforded the opportunity to create virtually anything I could think of (often going back to childhood ideas I had come up with before I had the skills to realize them).

The process of designing and then translating those designs to screen was magical. Robert and Michelle showed complete faith in what we were creating. Characters were incorporated into scripts based on the designs I had presented, as opposed to the other way around. Regularly, demon descriptions within the scripts called me out by name: “...the DEVIL, a hoofed man, ghastly looking, yellow demon eyes, massive antlers, hair everywhere. Taking notes on a legal pad. But not in a suit (Joel is building it, and it’s fantastic).”

It became a fluid process of creation that encouraged bolder and bolder designs, artistically following a path long desired, yet less traveled.

*Red Devil played by Marti Matulis*





*George played by Marti Matulis*

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*Massive Stick Demon played by Fedor Steer*

I had the very fortunate luck to be able to employ some of the top artists and technicians in the make-up effects business. For the characters we built and brought to Brooklyn to shoot, I was repeatedly reminded how this work epitomized the very reason I got into the business, and this is a sentiment shared by many of the artists who collaborated on these characters.

Jeremy Selenfriend was introduced to me on the pilot episode and became my right hand in Brooklyn, handling a multitude of effects of his own, as well as helping us when we came to town with our creatures. He proved extremely talented and very reliable through the years.

When it comes to the multitudes of characters created at Morphology, certainly there are my favorites among them.

George, of course, was the character who kicked it all off. I was able to sculpt this character's head myself. As the show continued, that would not always be the case, and I would lean on many other artists to

accomplish the wild and varied designs I was pitching to the Kings.

The Devil Therapist was a character that I pitched for the finale of Season 1. I wanted to create a traditional “Baphomet”-style demon after a slew of more abstract creatures we’d been delivering throughout the season. It has long been a challenge for make-up effects designers to effectively push or disguise the anatomy of the human face. Of course, that could easily be accomplished with digital effects, but I wanted to get as much “in camera” as possible. Thus, ALL our demons were designed with the idea that we would use a digital assist only when necessary. The Therapist, we felt, could be accomplished with a combination of prosthetics and animatronics, effectively spreading the eyes of the character, while gluing down to the mouth. This allowed the performer to deliver dialogue without mechanical assistance. It proved quite tricky since the mechanical head piece had to blend down to a thinner foam thickness without obviously compromising the aesthetic of the character. This performer, Marti Matulis, was going to be compromised enough when it came to vision, as he was only able to look through the nose. Add to that that he was on stilted legs, and never once complained, and it is clear why Marti is my go-to for almost all the characters we create here in the studio.

Working with John Criswell, who handled all our animatronics for the entire series, sculptor Joey Orosco sculpted the Therapist’s head. As Joey translated the design into clay, he paid close attention to the thicknesses of the sculpture, allowing enough space for movement of the mechanical elements, while tapering down the sculpture to meet Marti’s mouth. Creating a character that incorporates both mechanical and prosthetic elements had proven to be much harder than a character that required only a prosthetic element. This would still be considered a prosthetic make-up, but it pushes those boundaries and allows for the restructuring of the human head anatomy, without digital effects, and that was the idea. Push the limits.

Gil Liberto (our shop foreman), Joey, and I traveled to Brooklyn to meet up with Jeremy. I did some final hair painting touches before we would bring it to life for a definite high point in the series.

The Therapist was a reoccurring character, counseling and manipulating the character Leland Townsend ... until Leland chops his head off (for which we built a severed head and neck stump).

Abbey the demon succubus started during the lockdown. Because of this, we were only able to employ a skeleton crew. The upside of this was that I was able to sculpt the entire character by myself. It was also quite fortunate that my daughter-in-law, Ashley Edner-Tancharoen, played the character, so I could test fit elements on her without jumping over any quarantine hurdles. She did a brilliant job bringing this character to life, having hooved leg extensions and a mechanical tale to contend with. Once we had the suit back from Bill Fesh, Mark Killingsworth delivered a brilliant paint scheme, and Brooke built us a couple of wigs (as we weren’t decided on hair color yet).

The “Red Devil” character brought back Marti as nude,



*The Jinn played by Marti Matulis*



Back row, L-R Jeremy Selenfriend, Joe Orosco,  
Joel Harlow, and Gil Liberto.  
Front row: Devil Therapist played by Marti Matulis



L-R: Abbey played by  
Ashley Edner-Iancharoen  
and Marti Matulis



Devil Therapist



David Grasso



Joel Harlow with Marti Matulis



Scott Ian



Joel Harlow with Nivek Ogre

red, elegant demon this time. I sculpted the head of this one and Kerrin Jackson built the hairpieces, as well as helping Jeremy and myself apply it. I liked this one because of its simplicity. It wasn't a "monster" ... well, it was, but it felt more grounded than the extreme demons we had been creating, and I enjoyed that it was basically red paint and hair.

The "Stick" demon was the last character we built for *Evil*, and it marked the end of Season 4. I wanted to sculpt the head of this one myself, since I had sculpted the first demon (George). "Stick" was a major undertaking. Worn this time by Fedor Steer, who I had met on *The Haunted Mansion*. The concept for me was to throw as much into this demon as possible and go out with a bang. To that end, Bryan Blair helped design a rig to allow him to pull three demon bodies behind him, while also wearing four severed heads from a belt harness. These bodies were copies of a creature that was made for the pilot episode but never made it in the final cut. Bryan also handled building and aging all the costume elements in our

studio. One of the more difficult elements were the arm extensions, which added a foot to his arm length. The fingers were motivated by Fedor using rings in the palm of the demon's hand. It was a challenge for him to manipulate props on set, but he ultimately adjusted, and it looked great. Jamie Grove painted the Stick demon and David Grasso painted the dragging demon elements, as well as sculpting elements of the body. Josh Saks created the multiple eyes. It was a fun one to go out on. I remember Robert saying that it was his favorite demon out of all that we had made, so it felt like we had ended on a high note.

I could go on and on, as this is just scratching the surface. Wrapping up this series, I am at once left with an enormous feeling of pride in the work Morphology Studio has created and for the series which it was created for. Projects like this one are very rare and I don't take any of it for granted. Making monsters with my friends and seeing ideas I had as a kid come to life... It's a pretty great way to spend five years! •

