An authentic cult heroine due to her appearances in such genre fare as The Golden Voyage of Sinbad, At the Earth's Core and The Spy Who Loved Me, Caroline Munro is acclaimed as the undisputed 'First Lady of Fantasy Films' by her worldwide fan following (see previous interviews in FANGORIA #4, 6 & 46, and STARLOG #57). Now, after two decades in show business, she finally seems poised on the verge of her widest success—her progress accelerated by six diverse new projects: three films, two television series and a play.

"At the beginning of 1987, I decided I wanted to do as much work as I could," Munro says. "I want to be kept on my toes. I feel I must expand in all sorts of ways.

Just when you thought it was safe to watch TV, here comes Roxscape, taking up where Max Headroom left off.

These projects have been very good for me, because I've learned something from each experience. I've learned that I'm more capable, perhaps, than I thought I was. I don't mean to say that I'm brilliant. But I'm open to suggestions."

**Challenge of the Who**

Relaxing in Malibu, California, during a respite from her whirlwind of activities, the beautiful British actress is recharging her energy before embarking on her most exciting professional opportunity yet—starring as the female lead in the long-awaited tentatively titled Doctor Who: The Movie, based on the BBC science-fiction TV series. The film will be produced and directed by Peter Litten (FANGORIA #53) and George Dugdale—the original creators of Max Headroom, through their London-based special effects company Coast to Coast Productions—from a screenplay by Mark Ezra. The $14 million movie casts Munro as Cora, a Gallifreyan TARDIS engineer, who reluctantly accompanies the Doctor on his adventures through space and time.

"It's the best thing that has ever happened to me," Munro declares. "It's the pinnacle for me as an actress. I know how much Doctor Who is loved throughout the world. To be associated with it, even in a small way, is wonderful. I grew up watching the TV show. To be in the film version is like a dream come true. I hope I do it proud."

Accustomed to portraying superficial, helpless "women in jeopardy" roles, Munro relishes the chance to play Cora as a forceful, self-reliant character. "Cora won't be running about in tiny bikinis," she notes, referring to her stereotypical image as the scantily clad space pirate Stella Star in Starcrash. "She will be a strong, opinionated lady, who won't stand for any nonsense.
Regenerating her career, Munro will portray Cora, the Gallifreyan TARDIS engineer in Doctor Who: The Movie.

But she'll also have a vulnerable side, so the audience can feel sympathy for her."

While patiently developing Doctor Who: The Movie, Litten and Dugdale have also created another property with which to showcase Munro, Roxscene. Initially perceived as a female version of Max Headroom, the character provides a much larger scope for creative experimentation. According to their story concept, Roxscene is an android manufactured by profiteering tycoons to operate a pirate TV station in outer space. Liberated from their control via a technical mishap, she unleashes her outrageous personality on an unsuspecting world.

Originally envisioned as a presenter of music videos, Roxscene has been further refined to incorporate the potential for more lucrative exposure. Though they have yet to decide on a definite venue, Litten and Dugdale expect to officially unveil their bizarre brainchild once Doctor Who has been stabilized.

"Roxscene is a rebel without a cause, and her cause is rock and roll," Munro announces cryptically. "She is very much a lady of the past, present and future. She's a chameleon. She changes her look depending on her mood, as do most women. She can be very coy and playful, but she can also be a real bitch. She's all the extremes, embodied in one personality."

Indeed, the character will be photographed in full-length form wearing a variety of...
Munro, believing it to be a bit part, turned down playing the Kryptonian dominatrix, Ursa, in Superman.

colorful costumes and wigs, dramatizing at least six distinctly different personas, including an ingenuous Valley girl, a coquetish Southern tomboy and a gritty punk rocker. Following a week of rigorous rehearsals with Peter Litten, Munro endured a grueling four-and-a-half-hour special effects makeup session before shooting a brief presentation video.

"It's so intricate and must be perfectly done," she explains. "First, my face was covered with a layer of thick, surgical glue. Then, all the different pieces were stuck on. It didn't hurt, but it was very uncomfortable. My head was really quite huge looking, with an exaggerated forehead, cheeks and chin. It was difficult for me to keep a straight face because I kept getting the giggles. The makeup wasn't heavy, but I perspired underneath it, and I became itchy. I wanted to scratch my face, but there was no area I could touch. Everything was covered with makeup. It was like a second skin."

Submerging her shy and unassuming nature beneath the protective protheses, Munro felt sufficiently removed from reality to liberate Roxscen's caustic character traits. "I was Roxscen," she insists, "I was no longer Caroline Munro. I could lose myself in her. I had to, because there was no way I could be myself while looking like her.

"At first, I felt very inhibited, because I'm used to underplaying in films, rather than overplaying. But once I realized that I had to fight through the makeup, I knew what I had to do. Since I was covered up, I could pretend to be whomever I wanted. I didn't have to have any inhibitions, because she wasn't me. When I understood that, all the barriers came down."

Limited for her entire acting career to playing two-dimensional sex objects, Munro is delighted to at last capture a role which taxes her performing talents instead of merely exploiting her physical attractiveness. "Roxscen is my greatest challenge, because she is nothing like me," Munro points out. "I hope I can show another side of myself."
I want to prove that I really can be somebody else, other than the little girl who floats about, screaming and crying and carrying on. I would like to be more than just the token female in a film. It would be nice if people could see something deeper in me, and realize that I can play other parts.”

**Shy of the Limelight**

Caroline Munro quietly tolerated the personal and professional restrictions imposed upon her for most of her life. One of England’s most successful models, she graduated to motion pictures through a succession of fortuitous accidents. Lacking any formal dramatic training, she learned her craft on camera, accepting undemanding roles in minor movies, while earning a modest living in the British film industry.

Too timid to try to conquer the more competitive American marketplace, Munro repeatedly rejected opportunities which she feared would further exacerbate her insecurities—declining an offer of personal management from Hollywood star maker Jay Bernstein, who later spectacularly launched the careers of glamour queens Farrah Fawcett and Suzanne Somers; two offers of professional representation by Eileen Ford, head of the prestigious Ford Model Agency, which would have required her to relocate to New York from her London home; and two lucrative offers for nude pictorials in *Playboy*.

“I was frightened of every opportunity I had,” she muses. “Part of me wanted the success and notoriety, and part of me didn’t. Part of me is a private person, but part of me must be a show-off, to be able to be in the limelight. It would be lovely—in an ideal world—if I could do the work, and then go home and have my private life, and be totally anonymous. Unfortunately, it can’t be that way.”

Simultaneously offered supporting parts in two big-budget major studio releases, Munro naively opted to play the villainous helicopter pilot Naomi in the James Bond extravaganza *The Spy Who Loved Me*, rather than the showier, sinister Kryptonian refugee Ursa in *Superman* (subsequently portrayed by Sarah Douglas, *STARLOG* #47), because she was unaware that additional footage would be shot back-to-back to enlarge the role in *Superman II*. Munro also turned down a sympathetic starring role opposite Faye Dunaway, Alan Bates and Sir John Gielgud in Michael Winner’s costume adventure *The Wicked Lady*, refusing to perform a nude love scene. Ironically, she was replaced by the equally unwilling Glynnis (Blake’s 7) Barber, who requested—and received—a nude body double.

“I didn’t fancy the nudity,” Munro asserts. “Had it not been for that, I would have done *The Wicked Lady*. I didn’t ask for a body double, because I thought that would have defeated the purpose. People would still have thought they were seeing me nude. It’s not that I’m ashamed of my body. It’s OK. I just don’t want to show it all.”

She separated from her husband, American musician/actor/producer Judd (The Last Horror Film) Hamilton in 1983, after a 13-year marriage. “I wasn’t happy,” she reveals. “I took stock of myself, and decided I needed to change my life. It was a matter of my finally growing up. I met Judd when I was a teenager, and he was my first boy friend. My ideas changed completely from that time. I couldn’t be held down. Obviously, I had to grow. Sadly, I think we simply grew apart.”

Retreating to the relative safety of British TV, Munro accepted a steady assignment as hostess of the inexplicably popular weekly game/variety series *3-2-1*, produced by Yorkshire Television. Initially pleased by the chance to sing and act in comedy sketches with many of England’s veteran entertainers, she grew increasingly bored as her participation was reduced.

Severely stilled on the small screen, Munro turned to the theater in 1985, making her stage debut playing Fairy Twinklestar in the traditional Christmas pantomime *Jack and the Beanstalk*, at Britain’s Theatre Royal Lincoln. “I wanted to test myself,” she remarks. “It turned out to be the most physically and emotionally terrifying work I’ve ever done. I had to go out on stage night after night—sometimes three shows a day—and lay bare my soul.”

Munro divorced Judd Hamilton in 1986. She also left *3-2-1*, after completing the 1986 season. “I floundered for about three years,” she laments. “I was on my own, and

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reading historical fiction," he explains.

He reveals that he was less than thrilled at
shooting Joe Dante’s Gremlins. His favorite
sequence was edited from the film.

“I had a pretty nifty scene where I end up
in the bank vault. I shut myself up in the
vault to keep away from the gremlins, and
when Phoebe Cates opens the door, I’m
singing, ‘We’re in the Money!’ and throwing
money all over the place. I’m carrying on
a psychotic conversation with an Arab oil
sheik who isn’t there, about how much
money the bank is going to lend him—it was
pretty interesting,” he smiles at the memory.

“Unfortunately, Steven Spielberg said that
it took the tension away. I was working with
the gremlins, and I wasn’t really crazy
about it. It was like being a guest on The
Muppet Show every morning!”

Reinhold has played a variety of roles
thus far in his career, including dinner
tea and television work. His initial
interest in acting was spurred by the “girls
in the drama department” at his Virginia high
school. He was featured in Stripes, and
earned his big breakthrough in 1982 as the
older brother Brad in Fast Times at Ridge-
mont High. Reinhold then went on to both
Beverly Hills Cops, and starred in Ruthless
People, Head Office and Off Beat. Vice
Versa would seem to cement his status as a
lead actor, with his favorite scenes not end-
ing up on the cutting room floor.

“My favorite scene in this film is very
definitely a charming sequence where my
father walks into the department store,” he
says, explaining that he is playing the child
inside his father’s (Reinhold’s) body.

“When I turn into the kid inside my
father’s body, I walk in and see all the ladies
behind the cosmetics counter say hello to me
because I’m this department store executive.
I never—as an 11-year-old—received that
kind of attention from these beautiful,
fascinating women!”

As he speaks, he undergoes a transforma-
tion, perhaps without realizing. His eyes go
blank, as he stares up into the distance, pic-
turing himself in that role. Instead of an
adult actor, he is an 11-year-old boy, slowly
describing his feelings and sensations.

“I remember being that age, being really
scared of women, because they look so
beautiful, and their hair is so pretty, and
they smell so nice. I think I blushed! I hope
they got it on camera, but I just
remembered, and it was so vivid to me. It all
came back to me when they said, ‘Good
morning, Mr. Seymour,’ ‘Good morning,
Mr. Seymour.’ I got the first rush of almost
prepubescent embarrassment—a huge
mystery that I didn’t understand. I don’t
understand it yet, but the feelings inside me
are there. I felt what he was going through!” the actor exclaims, and blinks as
he returns to reality, with director Gilbert
calling for him.

It is time again for Judge Reinhold to
become 11 years old.

went through a bad state in my mind. I
didn’t know if there would be any other
work for me, but chose not to do another
season.”

Distancing herself from her 3-2-1 duties,
 Munro played a game show hostess in the
Christmas Day 1986 British TV pantomime
Cinderella or: The Shoe Must Go On!, for
Central Television, and then appeared as a
celebrity contestant on several popular
British quiz shows. Intrigued by a more ap-
pealing invitation for regular TV exposure,
she also shot a pilot episode for a new
British astrology series, Zodiac. Directed by
Mike Mansfield, who previously helmed her
award-winning music video for Adam Ant’s
single Goody Two Shoes, the program has
been sold to London Weekend Television.

Absent from motion pictures since 1984,
when she starred in the British horror thriller
“Face of the Future" Testing her fortitude even further, Munro
returned to the stage in October 1987, ap-
pearing in the unusual industrial show The
New Travels of Marco Polo. Sponsored by
the Japanese conglomerate NEC Elec-
tronics, the 30-minute play was presented
eight times a day for eight days, to
demonstrate their new product line at a
computer convention in Geneva, Switzerland.

Maintaining her vow to make 1987 her
most prolific year of work, Munro departed
for Paris, to film the horror thriller Faceless
(a.k.a. Les Prédators de la Nuit), directed
by genre veteran Jess (The Castle of Fu
Manchu) Franco. Co-starring with Helmut
(The Damned) Berger and Chris (Rio Lobo)
Mitchum, she plays American model Bar-
bara Hallen, kidnapped by a crazed plastic
surgeon who plans to graft her face onto his
disfigured daughter.

“I quite like the script,” she reports. “It’s
a well-written, clever little story. My
character looks terrified most of the time,
but she doesn’t have much dialogue. That
doesn’t bother me, though, because it’s a
different sort of part, a variation of what
I’ve done before. The role has depth and
scope. I expect it will be very demanding.”

Her professional confidence restored,
Munro eagerly anticipates Doctor Who: The
Movie and Roxyxene as her most compelling
career chances to date. She intends to take
proper advantage of the many benefits both
projects will likely bring.

“As I get older, I’m becoming more ex-
perienced, and more secure about myself
and my work,” Caroline Munro reflects.

“Having not taken the correct route of
theatrical school and the stage, it has been extra
hard for me. I felt I didn’t have the
experience, and therefore I was very insecure.
Now, however, I feel I have—in a
way—paid my dues, by going back to the
beginning and starting again. That’s why
I’ve been jumping at so many different
projects. I feel I’ve earned the chance. I feel I
can be up there with the other actors. I’m
still not completely secure, but I’m much
more secure than I used to be.

“I feel I’m ready for the challenge, and
equal to the task. I suppose I must have
some ambition after all, or else I wouldn’t
have kept working for so long. But my am-
bition has always been half-hearted. Life has
always been my career. Work has only been
my hobby. But as my time for working gets
shorter, I realize it’s now or never. So, I’ll
give it my best shot.”

“Clothes I wore were very plain. I
wouldn’t be seen dead in them, walking
about as myself. But when I put them on,
with flat shoes, a little apron and my hair
pinned back, it seemed absolutely right.
I was comfortable, because I felt like the
character. In fact, the Spanish women on
the set said I looked authentic. Perhaps,
when people see me in The Howl of the
Devil, they’ll think: ‘My goodness, what an
old bag.’”

April Fool’s Day (released as Slaughter High
in 1987), which was written and directed by
her Coast to Coast collaborators George
Dugdale, Mark Ezra and Peter Litten,
Munro was understandably anxious to
resume her big screen career. Journeying
to Madrid and a picturesque mountain village
in July 1987, she played the female lead in
the forthcoming English-language Spanish
shocker The Howl of the Devil—written,
directed by and starring Spain’s prolific
“King of Horror,” Paul Naschy.

Munro portrays a poor Spanish maid
named Carmen, who is menaced by a
cavalade of classic genre creatures, in-
cluding the Frankenstein Monster,
the Phantom of the Opera, Quasimodo, Mr.
Hyde, and—invariably—Paul Naschy’s best
known character, the melancholy werewolf
Waldemar Dánisky. “It was a chance to do
something different,” Munro recounts. “It
was a challenge for me, as an English
woman, to blend in with the Spanish look,
but I adapted quite easily.

Looking to the stars as host of Zodiac,
Munro is taking control of her own future.

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