



Photo by Ruth Thomas

“I’d describe myself as psychotic.”

Ted Raimi

Above: The *Xena Magazine* team (Kate Barker, left, and Darryl Curtis, right) are certainly amusing themselves, if not the audience...

Below: The Chariots of War III guests take a final bow.

show *à la Whose Line Is It Anyway?*, which had the audience in fits of laughter. Then it was time for last minute reminiscing, in which Ted recalled his first day on set in New Zealand. “My driver said to me, ‘watch out for the Wetas.’ I didn’t know what they were. I was sitting in my trailer and suddenly I saw this huge thing like a brown grasshopper looking at me. Cue to the exterior of my trailer and me running out in my underwear, shouting, ‘Aaaah!’ I heard the driver say, ‘Now you know.’ Welcome to New Zealand!”

Ted and Karl went on to say how much they were going to miss working on the *Xena* sets, and in particular the people they had been working with for so long. As their time on stage came to an end, they were each asked to sum up their favourite memories of the show. “My favourite words on set were, ‘That’s lunch everybody,’” joked Ted.

“My favourite,” Karl finished, “are... ‘That’s a wrap!’”

The last guest spot of the day went to the incomparable Hudson Leick, and as usual, she didn’t disappoint. Dressed in a short white dress, white stockings, feather boa and black choker, she posed for the obligatory photographs before getting down to business. The first question from the audience was whether there were any other types of roles she’d like to play, to which her initial reaction was, in mock innocence, “...are there any other types of roles?”

“Playing a normal person might be nice, but I wouldn’t have any point of reference for that, would I?” she added. “I only seem to play crazy people or angels...”

Speaking of crazy people, a member of the audience asked Hudson to do Callisto’s banshee-like scream, but she refused to do it unless the audience did it first! After a little coaxing (and, after all, who could say no to Hudson?), two near-deafening screams erupted from the crowd.

“Now do you feel good?” she asked with a mischievous grin. “That was great – now you can understand why I liked playing the character!” As a reward, Hudson launched into the scream herself, and as the cheers died down, she remarked candidly, “We’re all going to get kicked out of the hotel for this...”

Following the guest panels it was auction time again, with the money going to a cancer foundation fund. A bemused Karl Urban modelled Hudson’s white dress, while Hudson ran the auction dressed in Karl’s T-shirt and very little else apart from her white stockings and choker. Hudson convinced Karl to stand on a table and do his own version of Callisto’s scream, and the dress eventually sold for £400.

As a finale to the afternoon’s events, and the entire weekend, Hudson read out a moving poem about accepting and loving yourself, which followed a very wise-sounding comment on enjoying your life to the fullest. “I like wherever I am at the time, because that’s the moment, and at that time, that’s all you’ve got.”

With the promise of a fourth Chariots of War convention in 2002 (see box), organiser Sean Harry officially announced the close of Chariots of War, Part III. What a truly fantastic way to spend a weekend!! ■●



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