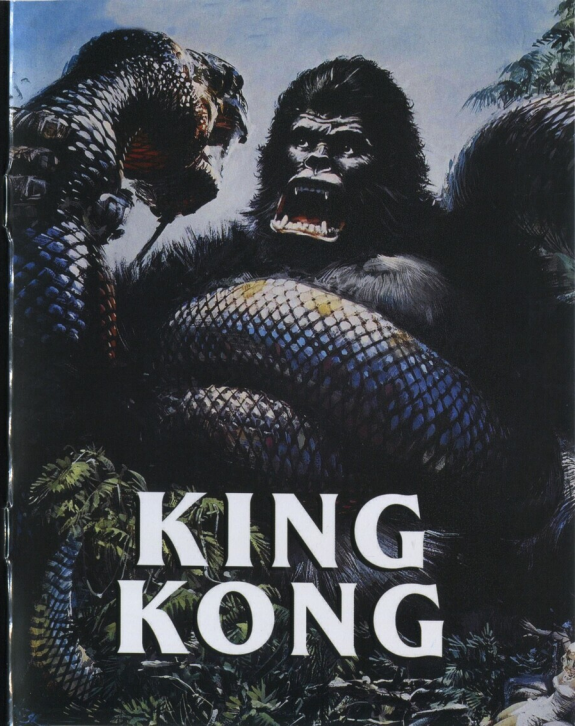




Obras  
Primas



# KING KONG



# KING KONG

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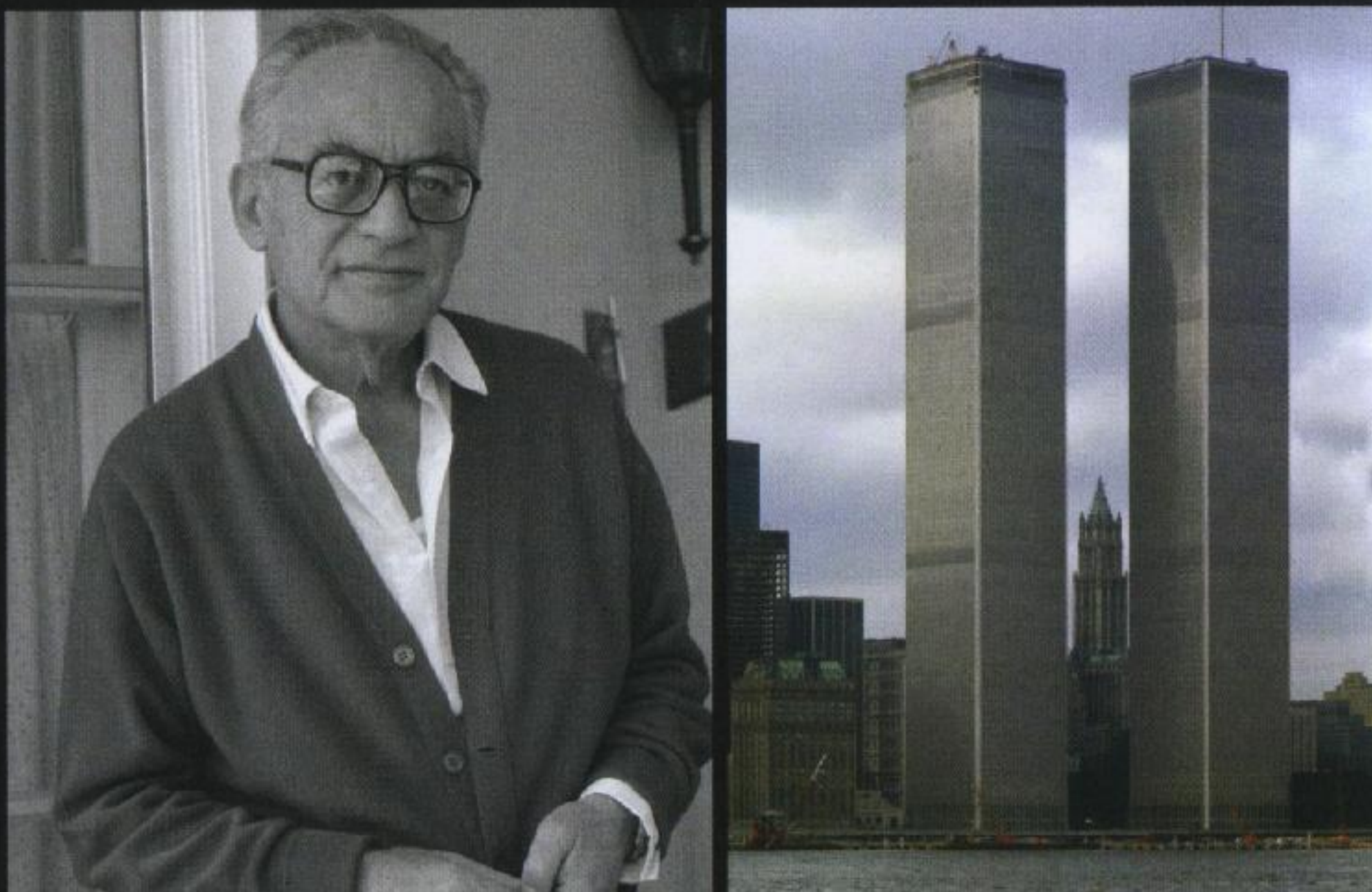
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## KONG PRE-PRODUCTION

Producer Dino De Laurentiis had two stipulations for remaking the film:

- First, that it would take place in the present day;
- Second, that it would feature the then newly built World Trade Center.



Dino De Laurentiis and next to a photo of the Twin Towers in the 1970s.

Federico De Laurentiis, son of Dino De Laurentiis, and executive producer of the film, extensively photographed a gorilla named Bum at a local zoo. These photos were used as the basis for Kong.

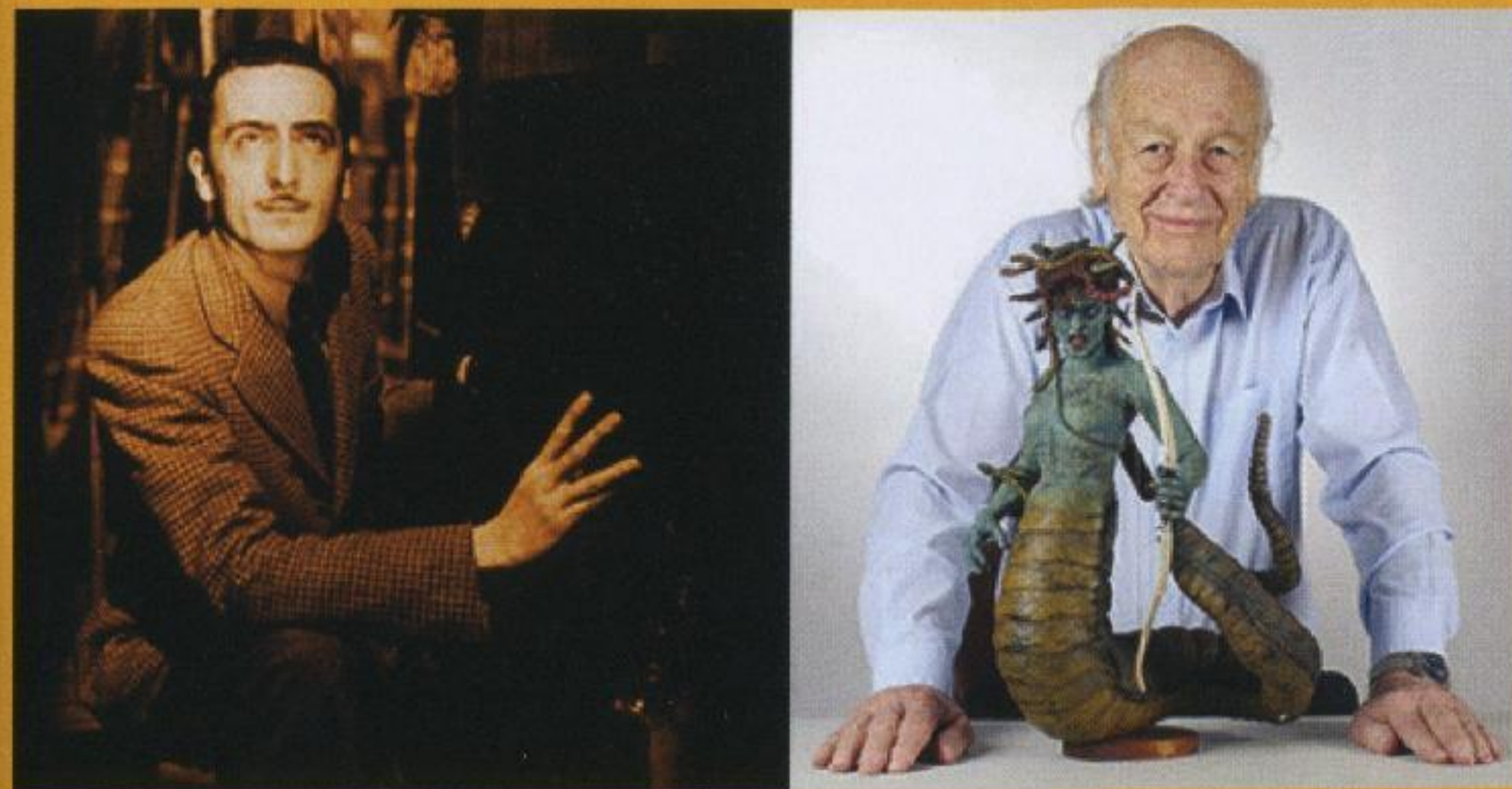
Steven Spielberg was considered to direct the film, as were Roman Polanski, Michael Winner and Sam Peckinpah, but everyone refused.



From left to right, Spielberg, Polanski, Winner and Peckinpah.

Dino De Laurentiis originally approached his Italian friend, Mario Bava, to handle the effects specials. Bava did not want to leave Italy, so he declined the offer. He recommended Carlo Rambaldi, who ended up being hired.

Dino De Laurentiis approached Ray Harryhausen about producing the stop-motion effects for Kong. However, Harryhausen refused because he felt that 12 months was not enough time to make such detailed footage.



In the photo above, on the left side Mario Bava and on the side Ray Harryhausen.



## PRE-PRODUCTION AND ART CONCEPTS

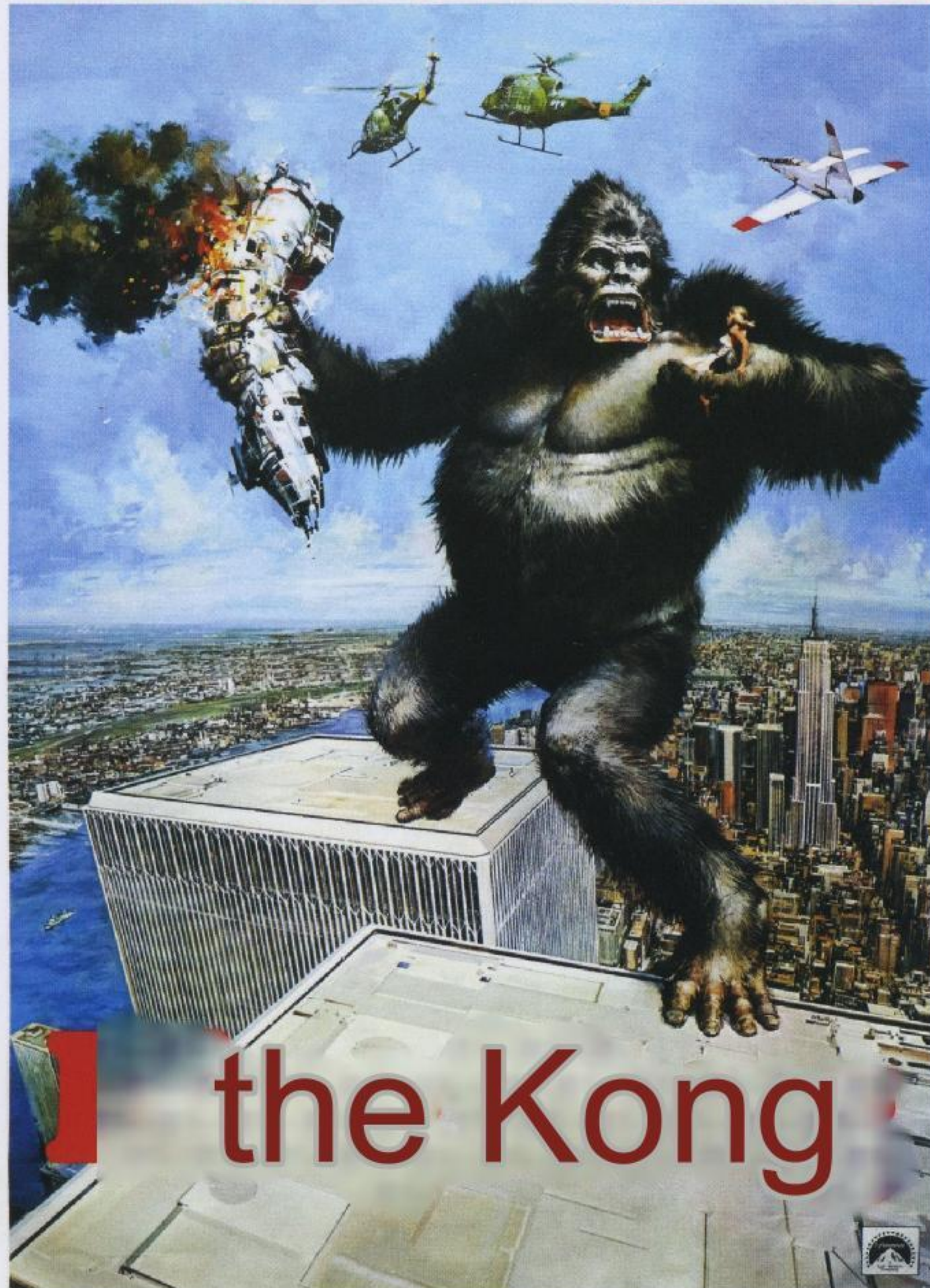
Pre-production began in early 1974, with Dino De Laurentiis proposing his ideas and hiring Lorenzo Semple Jr. to write the film's script. Artist John Berkey was commissioned to create concept art for King Kong in the following situations:

- Kong destroying a snake.
- Kong destroying a wall on Skull Island.
- Kong destroying a train.
- Kong destroying boats (a rarely seen variation).
- Kong destroying Shea Stadium.
- Aerial view of Kong climbing the World Trade Center (the only painting with a different Kong face, although partially obscured by the angle).
- Kong crossing the World Trade Center.





**The most exciting original  
motion picture event of all time.**



On the opposite page, One of the original posters for King Kong (1976).

De Laurentiis liked Kong in the World Trade Center, and used the early draft of the work as the film's poster to advertise it in the New York Times, just days after completion in 1975, promising that the film would be released in time for Christmas, from 1976. The teaser poster was nicknamed "Travolta Kong", due to the style of his hair. This initial poster also depicted Kong crushing a jet in his right hand, an alarmed Dwan on his left, and his shadow over the World Trade Center. Once the script was completed, the cast was complete, the director was in charge, and filming was ready to begin, the poster artwork was changed to what we see now...





## THE TESTS FOR THE CHARACTER "DWAN"

According to his autobiography, Dino De Laurentiis approached Britt Ekland for the role of Dwan. She refused. Fay Wray was invited to be in the film, she turned it down because she didn't like the script, Bo Derek was also offered the role, but she turned it down.

Barbra Streisand and Farrah Fawcett were considered and Melanie Griffith was tested for the role of Dwan. In a 2008 interview with David Letterman, Meryl Streep revealed that she auditioned for the role of Dwan, but Dino De Laurentiis turned it down because she was "ugly". He said this in Italian, not knowing that Streep understood the language.

This film was Jessica Lange's film debut and her audition consisted of three scenes:

- The discovery of Dwan in the life raft by the Petrox crew.
- Dwan convincing Fred Wilson to let her join the crew on the island.
- Dwan making a fuss and hitting Kong's nose, which was a pillow positioned above the camera at the time.



Images from the film: final result of Jessica Lange's test scenes.



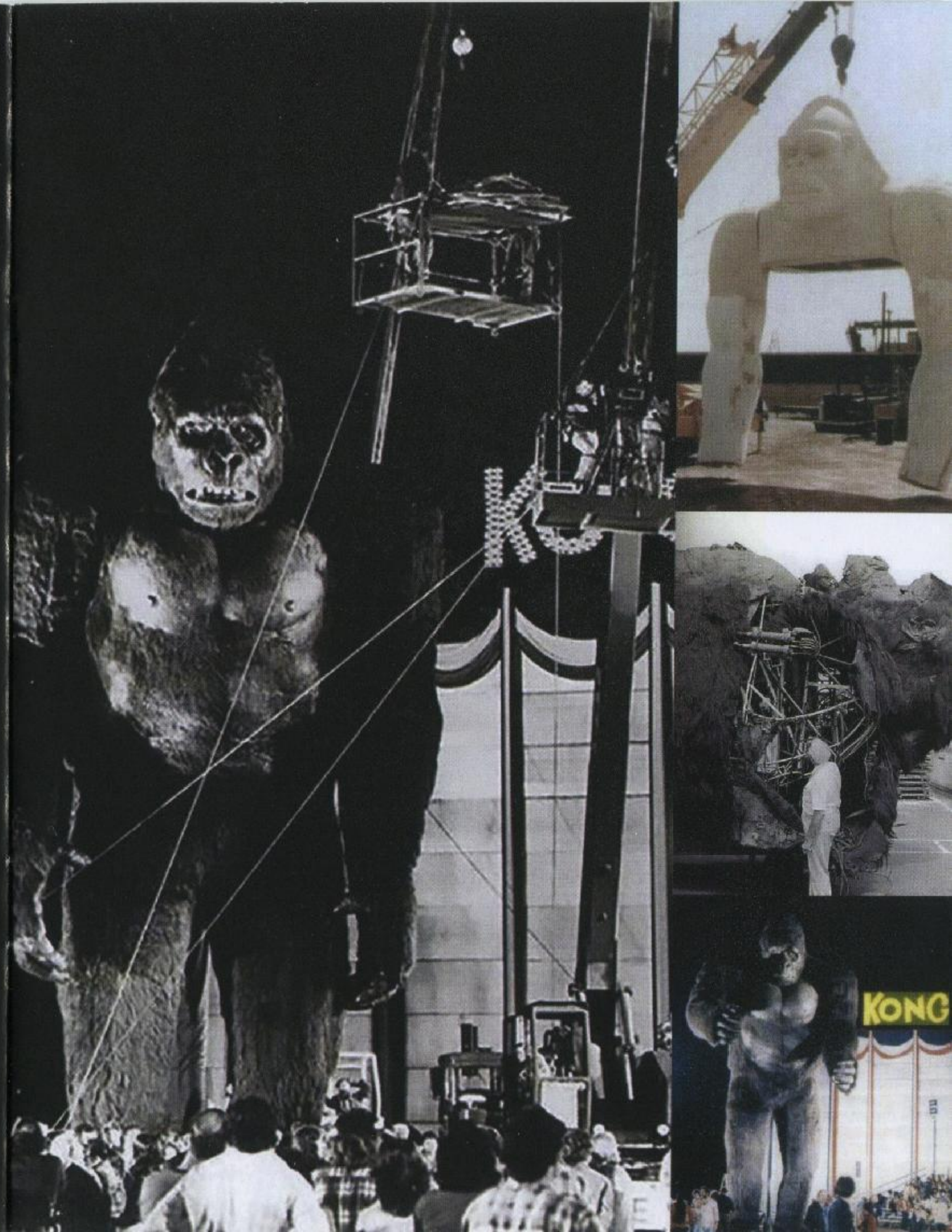
## THE PRODUCTION OF OVERALLS

King Kong was played by an uncredited costumed actor, Rick Baker. Initial designs for the mechanical Kong were conceived by special effects artists Glen Robinson and Carlo Rambaldi, although Rambaldi is not credited on screen. They intended for Kong to be built by an aircraft company, but due to the hasty start of principal photography, experts opted to build Kong in a "Hollywood backyard" starting in January 1976.

The complete 6.5 ton model was structured by an aluminum skeleton that contained 944 meters of hydraulic hose and 1371 meters of electrical wiring. Its chest measured twenty meters wide, with an arm's length the same distance. The machine could walk, rotate its waist and move its arms into sixteen unique positions through a system of hydraulic valves controlled by six men. The hands were only 1.80 m in diameter, and the arms weighed 748 kg each.

The arms were built separately, then suspended by a crane, so that Jessica Lange could be lifted 10 to 12 meters. Publicity materials touted at the time that safety features had been installed in Kong's fingers, so that they would not be able to close entirely around Lange. Michael Dino, a famous wig maker and hair designer from Kong, created the gorilla's skin from two tons of horse tails, imported from Argentina.

One hundred assistants wove the fur into four types of net, and the work took several months. The fur panels they were then attached to pieces of latex, which, in turn, were glued to the metal structure of the model.







On the opposite page, impressive size comparison.

Carlo Rambaldi created seven different masks, which were shaped by Rick Baker to convey varying emotions. Separate masks were essential, as many cables and mechanisms would be needed for all the expressions to fit into a single mask.

The masks were composed of a plastic skull over which were placed artificial muscle groups activated by cables that entered the suit through Kong's feet, with the outer latex skins molded by Baker placed on top.

The masks used a hydraulic system to move, just like Kong's mechanism and hands, facial expressions were controlled by the team of operators who worked off-set with the control boards. To complete the gorilla look, Baker wore contact lenses, so his eyes resembled a gorilla's.

#### ABOUT THE ROBOT

In addition to the 40-foot mechanical Kong and the life-size mechanical hands, Carlo Rambaldi built a separate pair of life-size legs (used in Dwan's scenes on the oil tanker, the death of Fred Wilson, and the climax on top of the World Trade Center), and a life-size, non-mechanical Styrofoam statue of Kong, seen at the end of the film, lying on the broken pavement.





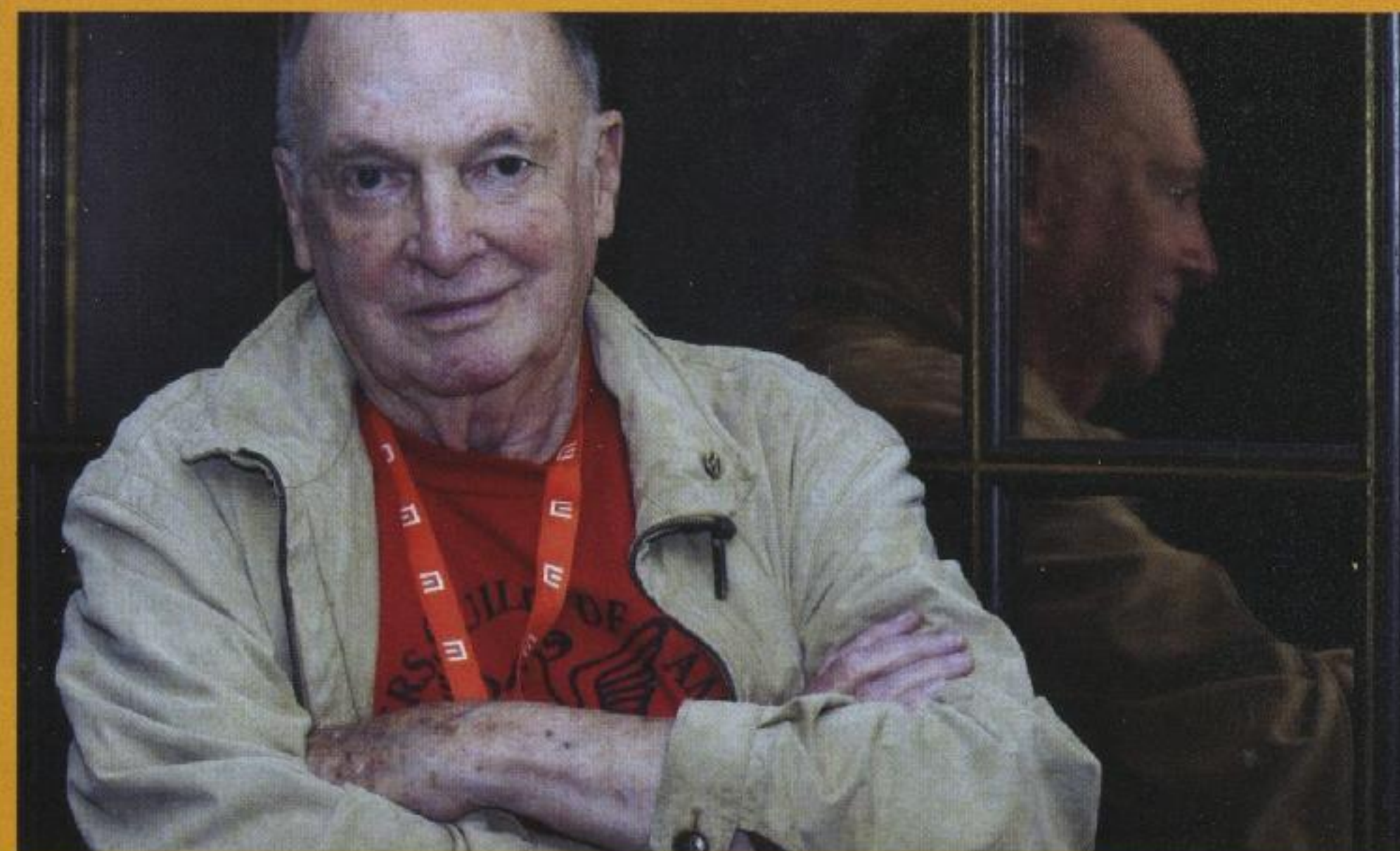
Jessica Lange climbing down from the gorilla's hand and sliding onto one of his feet. And the final scene of the film, with the gorilla lying on the ground.



## THE FILM SCRIPT

Lorenzo Semple Jr.'s initial idea was to have the romantic lead named Joe Perko, a comical Italian oil drilling worker; Dwan would be a "classy semi-intellectual" camera operator for a film crew who went along on the expedition to film commercials for Petrox. Semple changed his mind, however, as he thought there was something "predictable" and "TV-movie-like" about portraying a camera operator. Therefore, the character of Joe Perko was discarded and Jack Prescott was created, characterizing him as the liberal, young anthropologist from Princeton, and the camera operator became the actress adrift at sea.

His justification for this was "having established a kind of 'reality' with the oil exploration ship sailing, we needed a bridge to the fantasy that will follow, and what more pleasant fantasy than finding the most beautiful girl in the world floating unconscious in the South Pacific?"



In the image, Lorenzo Semple Jr., screenwriter of the film King Kong (1976).



## INSIDE THE FILMING

Filming for this film began on January 15, 1976, at the docks in San Pedro, California. The first shot filmed was a stabilized view of the Petrox ship as it prepared to leave Surabaya. The scene where Jack Prescott (Jeff Bridges) is sneaking aboard the ship was filmed the following night, and the movie was officially underway.

## THE FIRST FILMING IN NEW YORK

In June 1976, production moved to New York. The first shots taken in New York were high-angle shots of the military moving into position at the World Trade Center, which would later be used as the background for the shot of Kong climbing up the side of the south tower.

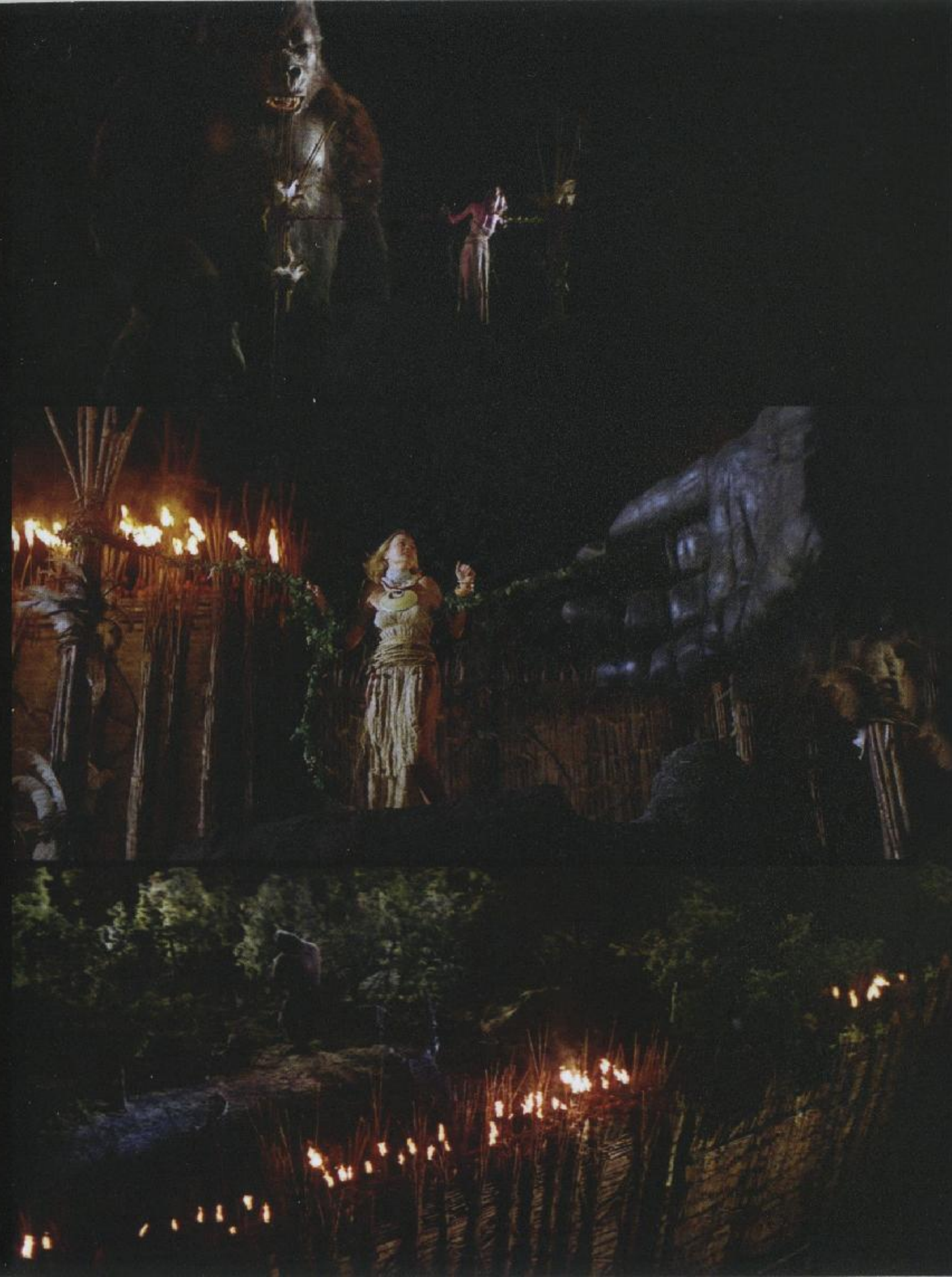
Filming took seven months, with twelve hours of work per day, from January to August 1976. The climax in New York City was filmed in June 1976, with a casting call for 5,000 extras. Well over 30,000 people showed up and were used.

An August 1976 issue of *Cinemaphile* noted that the crowd of approximately 40,000 people in the same shot is one of the largest crowd scenes in cinema history to date.

Location filming in New York took about three weeks during the summer of 1976.

## THE SCENES WITH MINIATURES

The miniature scenes began filming on April 26, 1976. The first scene filmed was the sacrifice scene, in which Kong appears from the trees, approaches the wall, takes Dwan from the altar and takes her to the jungle.





To build the miniature World Trade Center, production designer Dale Hennesy obtained blueprints and architectural drawings of the real buildings, which allowed him to reproduce every aspect of the buildings in exact detail. In fact, several scenarios were created. The first was a recreation of the main plaza, built on a studio lot, and included a three-sided reproduction of the South Tower and a two-sided reproduction of the North Tower.

## A VERY HOT DAY

Second unit director William Kronick remembers spending an entire afternoon in the oppressive summer heat putting together the scene in which Kong's shadow passes over a priest on the steps of St. Patrick's Cathedral that required the Fifth to be locked down. Avenue for several blocks, on both sides of the cathedral. To do this, it was necessary to turn on the lights only in the cathedral, turn off the lights in all surrounding buildings (to simulate a blackout), and test a horse and carriage without riders. When Kronick got everything ready, it started to rain, forcing him to cancel the shoot, return the next night, and do it all over again.

## CURIOSITIES ABOUT THE TRAIN SCENE

The last large-scale sequence filmed for this film was the one in which Kong destroys the elevated subway train, in this case, the Astoria El in Queens, New York.

For this scene, special effects supervisor Glen Robinson and his team constructed a large of the tracks, as well as several miniature subway cars, complete with graffiti from the 70s.

One of the cars was equipped with a cable, responsible for most of the actual lifting in the shot where Kong picks it up and throws it into a building. Robinson's team also set up a series of large explosions designed to occur when the car crashed into the building.

Rick Baker remembers that the explosions were so intense that, on several occasions, he was convinced that his clothing had caught fire, although, fortunately, this did not happen.





## MORE ABOUT SCENES

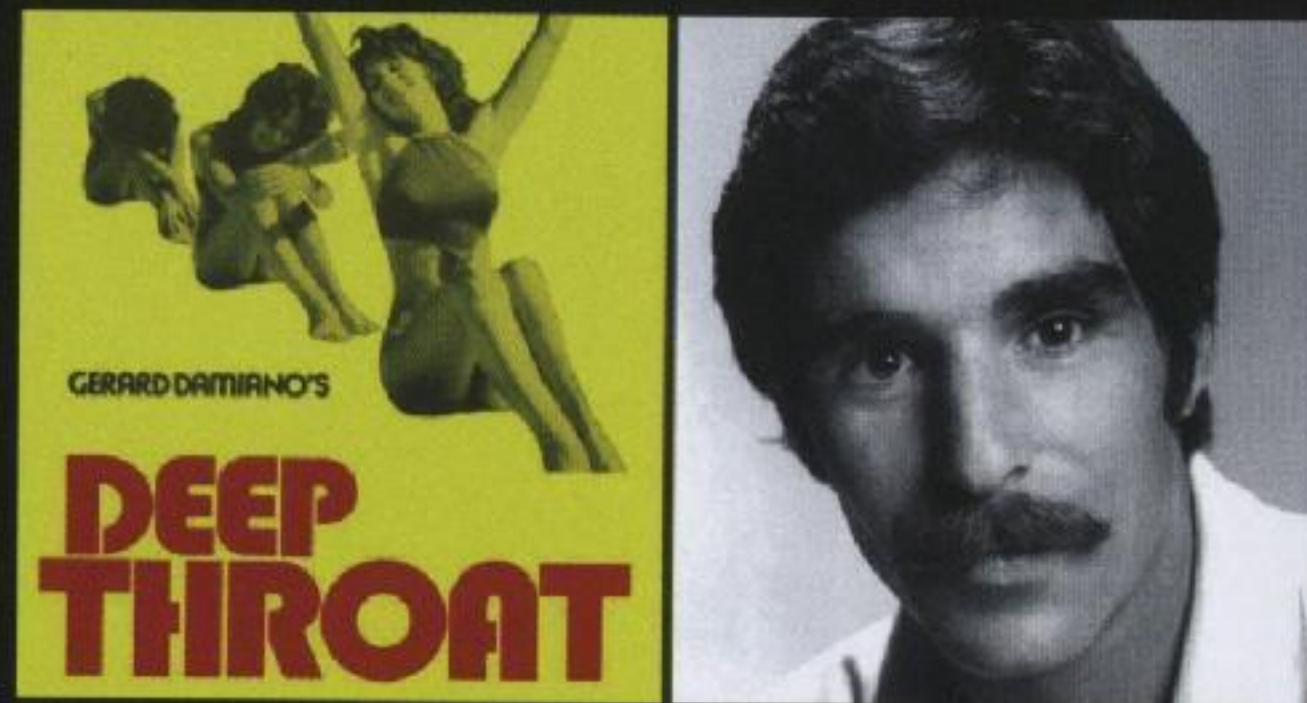
From August 11, 1976 to August 20, 1976, the main crew filmed the last major sequence of the production, the introduction scene, where Kong makes his debut in New York.

## PROBLEMS WITH UNIVERSAL

The film was filmed over seven months in Los Angeles, New York and Hawaii. Principal photography was scheduled to begin on April 15, 1976. Due to competition from Universal, De Laurentiis moved up the start date by three months to January 15, 1976, although the sets had not yet been built and the mechanical monkey of 12 meters had not been completed. When Universal settled with R.K.O. on March 5, 1976, production was already filming, and moved to Hawaii. De Laurentiis estimated that the dispute with Universal cost the production up to US\$4 million.

## OTHER CURIOSITIES, GOSSIP AND TESTIMONIALS

When Dwan explains how she got on the yacht that sank, she mentions that her friend Harry was going to take her to Singapore and cast her in a movie. She also mentions that when the yacht sank, everyone but her was below deck, watching the adult film "Deep Throat". This is mentioned more than once, with the implication being that Dwan was going to star in a pornographic film, and that "Harry" was Harry Reems, the star of Deep Throat.



Harry Reems, star of the film Deep Throat (1972) and the film's poster.

## JESSICA E JEFF

During filming, tabloids speculated that Jeff Bridges and Jessica Lange were having an affair on set. The rumors were false. Lange was in a relationship with Russian ballet dancer Mikhail Baryshnikov, and Bridges was engaged. Lange and Bridges have remained friends since making this film.



Jeff Bridges and Jessica Lange in a promotional scene for the film.



## ABOUT GRODIN



From left to right: Rene Auberjonois, Jessica Lange, Jeff Bridges, Charles Grodin, Ed Lauter.

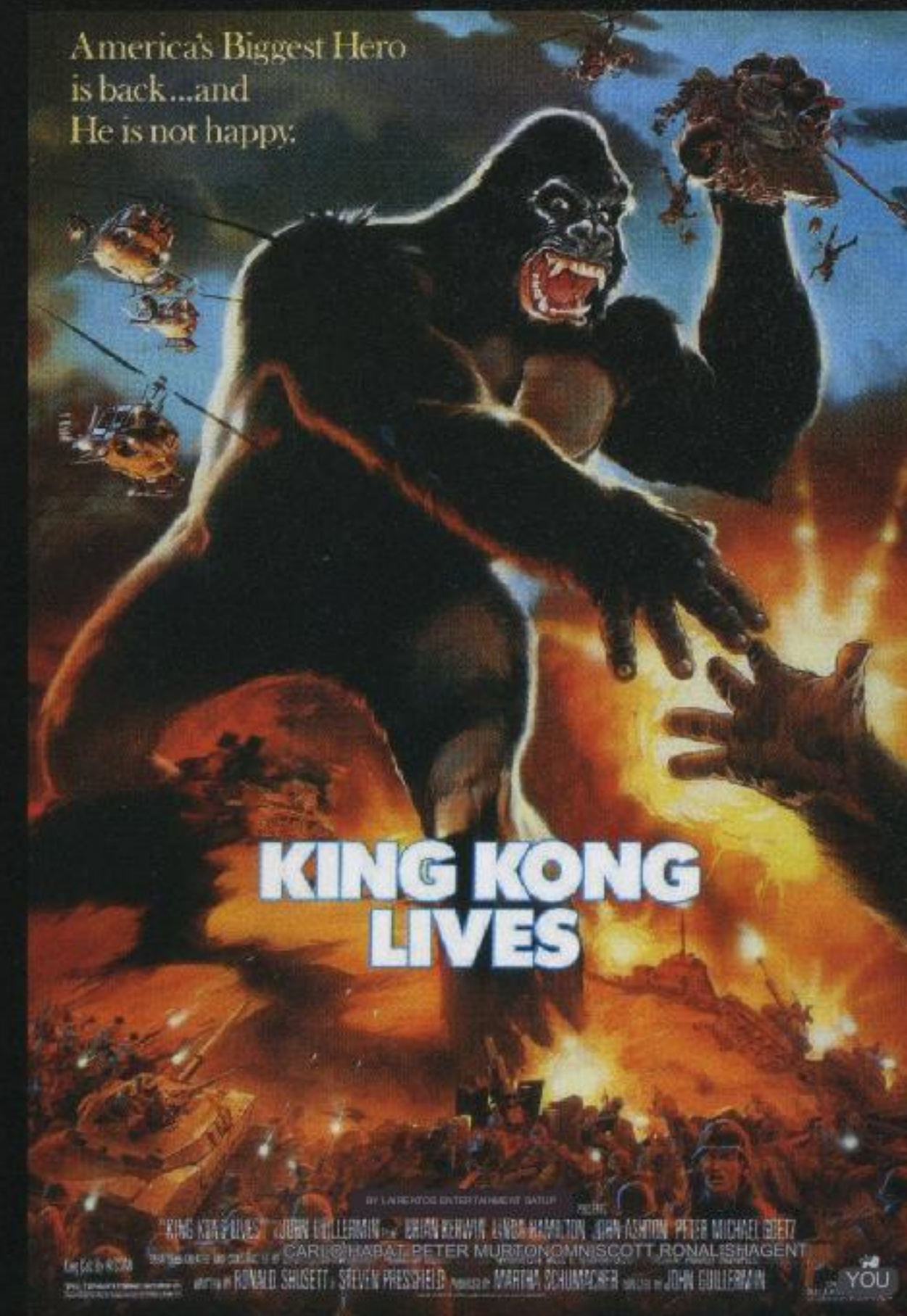
In his 1989 autobiography "It Would be So Nice If You Weren't Here: My Journey Through Show Business", Charles Grodin says that his character was originally going to survive the film, and that Dino De Laurentiis was already planning a sequel and asked if he would be interested in reprising the role. But when a test audience didn't like the scene where Kong tried to stomp on Fred Wilson (Grodin) and missed, the scene was reshot to make it look like Wilson was crushed.

In his 1992 book "How I Get Through Life", in the chapter titled "Sometimes We're Just Hungry", Charles Grodin says that his teenage daughter, Marion, had a crush on Jeff Bridges at the time. She came to visit the set and was very disappointed when she got the feeling that Bridges didn't even know she existed. Grodin then reveals that eating some cheeseburgers and watching a good TV show was the best way to brighten his mood.

The scene where Kong steps on Fred Wilson was Charles Grodin's last day working on the film.

## SEQUELS TO KONG

The proposed sequels that never existed, besides King Kong in Africa, were: The Bionic Kong (to cash in on the success of "The Six Million Dollar Man" and "The Bionic Woman") and King Kong vs. Orca (a crossover sequence with Di Laurentiis' other film, Orca, The Killer Whale). Another was King Kong in Moscow. None were made, and the only sequel was King Kong 2 (King Kong Lives), in 1986, also directed by John Guillermin.



Movie poster King Kong 2 (King Kong Lives - 1986).



## OTHER CURIOSITIES

- As a personal thank you to the team, as well as a promotional tool, Dino De Laurentiis had 500 Kong miniatures built, which cost \$200 each. In the January 31, 1977 issue of People magazine featuring Jessica Lange, the article shows a photo of Lange giving one of the dolls to Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis.



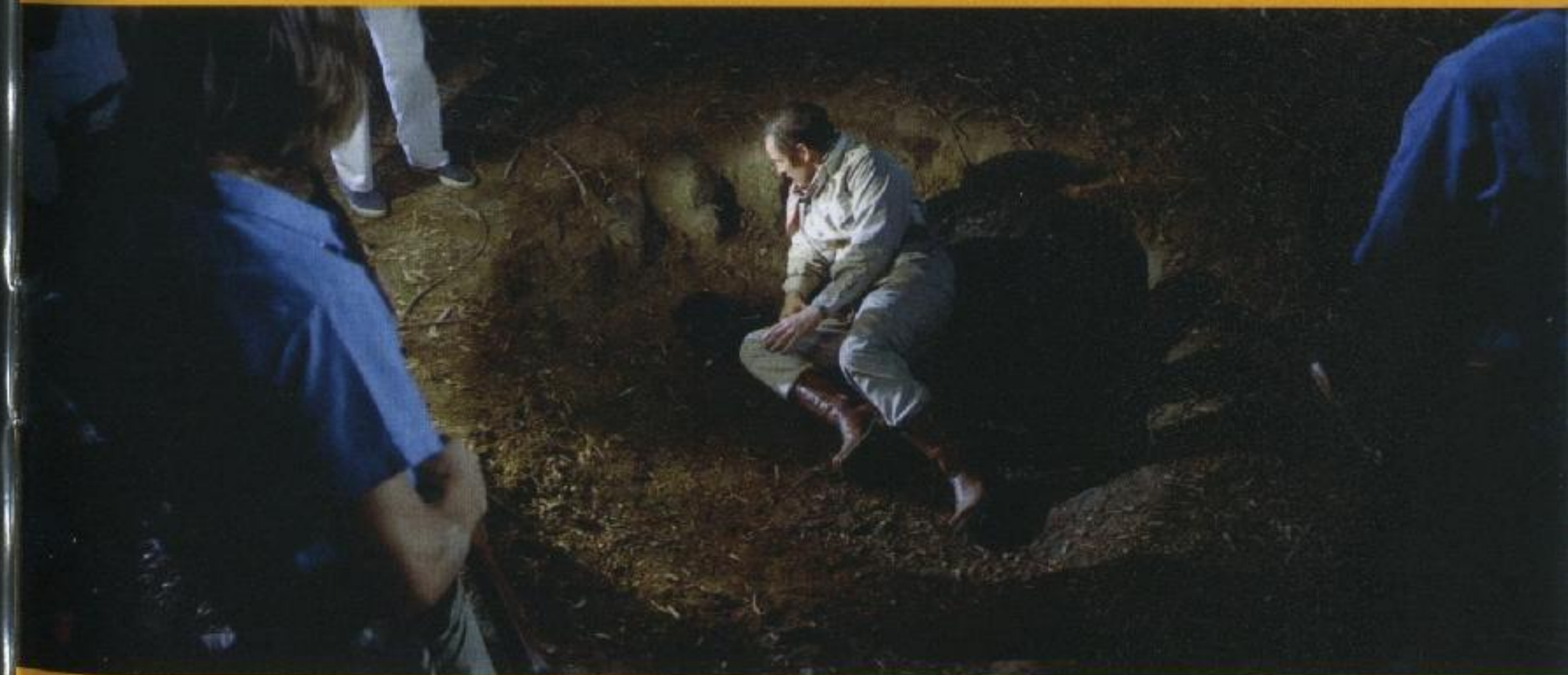
Jessica Lange holding a miniature Kong and next to it, the cover of People magazine, January 1977 issue.

- Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Paramount Home Video voluntarily recalled all retail DVD copies that showed Kong on top of the World Trade Center surrounded by aircraft. The DVD was re-released with a different cover later.



Capa do DVD, King Kong (1976).

- After Kong catches Dwan, Prescott points to the fallen trees and says, "What do you think did that? A guy dressed as a monkey?" Of course, that's exactly what happened. It is possible to assume that this scene was recorded at the beginning of filming, when it was still believed that the 12-meter robot would do most of Kong's scenes.



Film scene: the character Fred Wilson falls into the hole caused by King Kong's foot.



- When Dwan is in Kong's hands, she says he is a Libra, she then guesses that Kong must be an Aries. Ironically, Jessica was born on April 20, 1949. Which makes her an Aries.



Movie scene: Jessica Lange tells Kong that he is Libra.

- The seventh highest-grossing film of 1976.

## THE DUBBING OF THE FILM IN PORTUGUESE

King Kong (1976), as far as we know, is the film with the most dubs in Portuguese in Brazil, 5 in total, these are:

First version (1985):

Studio: Herbert Richers

Media: Television (Globo)

## MAIN DUBBING CAST:

Jeff Bridges (Jack Prescott): Voice of Garcia Júnior

Charles Grodin (Fred Wilson): Voice of Franz Joseph

Jessica Lange (Dwan): Voice of Carmen Sheila

John Randolph (Captain Ross): Voice of Amaury Costa

Announcer: Voice of Ricardo Mariano

Plates: Voice of Garcia Neto

Additional voices: Dário Lourenço, Newton da Matta, Orlando Drummond, Silvio Navas

## SECOND VERSION:

Studio: Cast

Media: VHS/ Television (SBT)

## MAIN DUBBING CAST:

Jeff Bridges (Jack Prescott): Voice of Renato Márcio

Charles Grodin (Fred Wilson): Voice of Luiz Carlos de Moraes

Jessica Lange (Dwan): Voice of Denise Simonetto

John Randolph (Captain Ross): Voice of Borges de Barros

Rene Auberjonois (Roy Bagley): Voice of Jorge Pires

Plates: Voice of Felipe Di Nardo

Additional voices: Eudes Carvalho, Fábio Villalonga, Hélio Vaccari, João Francisco Garcia

## THIRD VERSION:

Studio: Herbert Richers

Media: Television (Globo)



## MAIN DUBBING CAST:

Jeff Bridges (Jack Prescott): Voice of Júlio Chaves

Charles Grodin (Fred Wilson): Voice of Márcio Simões

Jessica Lange (Dwan): Voice of Mônica Rossi

John Randolph (Captain Ross): Voice of Orlando Drummond

Rene Auberjonois (Roy Bagley): Voice of Roberto Macedo

Additional voices: Ednaldo Lucena, Malta Júnior, Ricardo Vooght

## FOURTH VERSION:

Studio: Sincrovideo

Media: Television (Record) / Pay TV (TCM and FX) / Blu-ray (Masterpieces of Cinema)

## DUBBING CAST

Jeff Bridges (Jack Prescott): Voice of Rodney Gomes

Charles Grodin (Fred Wilson): Voice of Dário de Castro

Jessica Lange (Dwan): Voice of Marisa Leal

John Randolph (Captain Ross): Voice of Domício Costa

Rene Auberjonois (Roy Bagley): Voice of Carlos Seidl

Plates: Voice of Leonardo José

Additional voices: Francisco José, José Luiz Barbeito, Leonel Abrantes, Mário Cardoso

## FIFTH VERSION:

Studio: Centauro

Media: DVD/ Television/ Pay TV

## MAIN DUBBING CAST:

Jeff Bridges (Jack Prescott): Voice of César Marchetti

Charles Grodin (Fred Wilson): Voice of Armando Tiraboschi

Jessica Lange (Dwan): Voice of Denise Reis

John Randolph (Captain Ross): Voice of João Angelo

Rene Auberjonois (Roy Bagley): Voice of Cássius Romero

Julius Harris (Boan): Voice of Sidney Lilla

Ed Lauter (Carnahan): Voice of Faduli Costa

Plates: Voice of Raul Schlosser

Additional voices: Faduli Costa, Gilberto Baroli

## CREDITS

Search sources:

[imdb.com](#), [pinterest.com](#), [www.dublanet.com.br](#), [It would be so nice if you weren't here: my journey through show business](#), [twitter.com/TheRickBaker](#), [Marcelo Andreazza \(Quem Dubla Quem - Orkut.com\)](#), [sanojhumber.blogspot.com](#), [www.covercentury.com](#), [wikipedia.org](#).

Research and Translation: Renan Litaldi, Thiago Alves

Review: Thiago Alves, Jasiel Oliveira

Masterpieces of Cinema

CNPJ: 11.396.247/0001-95