

FRONT MISSION SERIES: GUN HAZARD
THE MAKING OF COMMERCIAL FILM
By Front Mission: Series Translation Project

CREDITS:

Interviewees

Shinji Hashimoto (Square Co., Ltd.)

Yoshihiko Dai (PMC Pictures)

Misha Suslov (PMC Pictures)

Clarence Major (PMC Pictures)

Front Mission: Series Translation Team

Translation – Kyle A. Thompson

Editing – Angelo D. Pineda

Introduction

With the debut of the Gun Hazard game comes the appearance on television fully realized 6 meter tall wanzers! The game world suddenly becomes reality before one's very own eyes. Albert fires his shoulder-mounted bazooka at this giant wanzers. Once the flash of light and screech of rending metal clears, a mysterious girl becomes visible. Albert crosses the screen as the giant wanzers is consumed in crimson flames. This is the true distilled essence of the dramatic action shooter, with its intense human drama here for all to see.

The following sections cover the shooting of the film used to promote the game, including information on the 60 second commercial which only aired once on television and the normal 15 and 30 second clips. Furthermore, it gives a backstage look at the making of the Gun Hazard film, offering behind-the-scenes insights.

Filming Information

Filming date: October 21-November 6, 1995

Filming locations: Santa Monica, California and Tonopah, Nevada (a town dotted with aircraft hangars from the 1950s)

Director: Yoshihiko Dai (Japanese director)

Filming: Misha Suslov (Hollywood resident)

Art: Clarence Major (Terminator 2, Robocop)

Air date:

February 11, 1996 (film)

February 16, 1996 (60 second commercial)

February 17-25, 1996 (15, 30 second commercials)

Behind the Scenes – Tonopah, Nevada, USA

A wanzer burned before a young girl's eyes...

Roughly an hour and a half by plane from the Santa Monica Airport, and dwarfed by the vast desert area often used for military tests and maneuvers surrounding it, is the town of Tonopah.

The owner of a general store greeted us, saying “Just what are you doing here? If you're going to shoot a film, there are plenty of better places around here, you know?” with a look of surprise and a smile. In this sleepy town, the news that someone would be blowing up an over 20 foot tall robot caused quite a stir. Even though we shot on a Monday, there was no lack of spectators...with the fire department showing up in a brightly polished fire truck, and the police in their patrol cars.

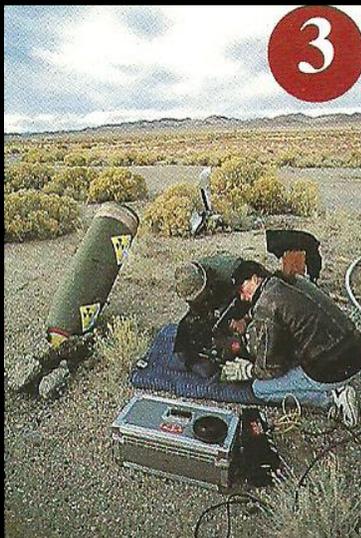
Filming Production Flow



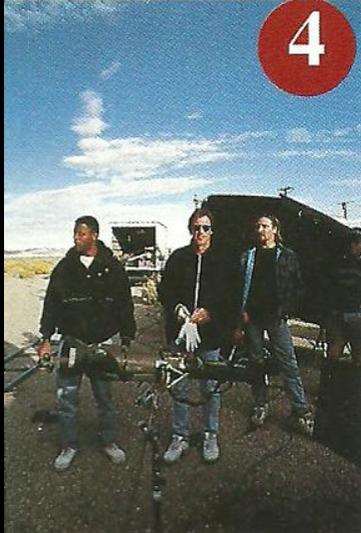
Wanzer Assembly: The wanzer is unloaded from the trailer, and assembly begins from the torso section upwards. The components are mainly constructed out of fiber-reinforced plastic (FRP). The main frame of the wanzer is constructed out of steel.



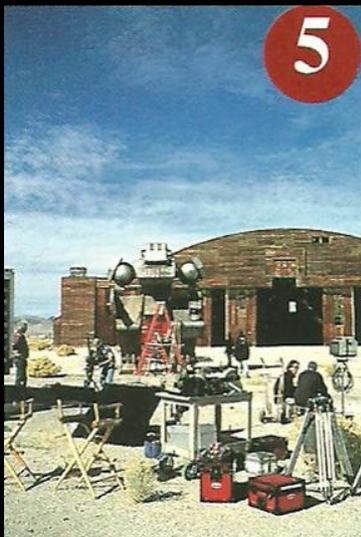
Props: Props we used in filming...but the M-72 LAW anti-tank bazooka in the middle and the RPG-7 anti-tank rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) launcher are the real thing. Only in America!



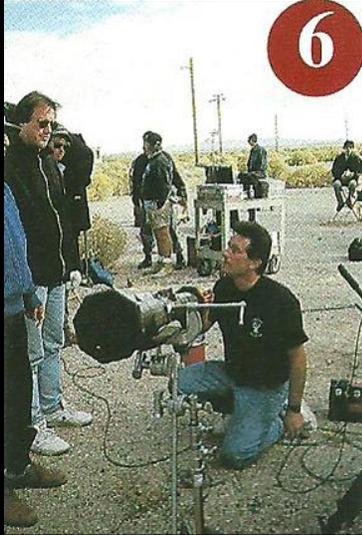
The Pathos of the Battlefield: A shot taken during rehearsal. In our actual take, we littered the scene with the wreckage of weapons in order to capture the feel of a devastated battlefield, and used an ultra-low shot to capture it.



Clarence Major: On the left is Clarence, art director for films such as Terminator 2 and Robocop. On the right is Ben, who designed our over 6 meter tall wanzel. Both of them are active working in Hollywood.



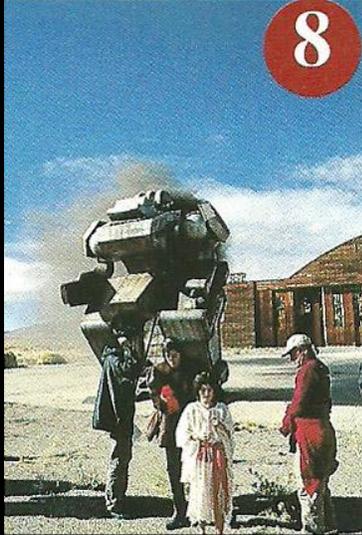
Shooting Begins: The day that we shoot our film has finally come. But on this one day, weather conditions take a turn for the worse, filling the almost always blue skies with clouds. Our only options are to wait for the weather to clear or postpone the shoot. The staff's frowns express their frustration.



Rocket Firing Preparations: The bazooka is aimed to hit the target wanzler. Of course, we could not use a real bazooka shell, so a solid fuel toy rocket was used instead.



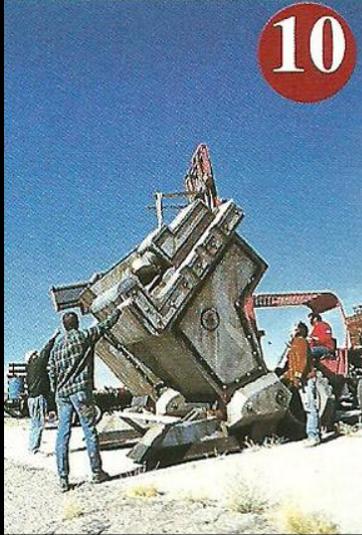
Albert Grabner: The actor we hired to play Albert prepares for the shot. In this shot, he has to pick up the just-fired bazooka and assume a gloomy expression, making use of his refined acting skills.



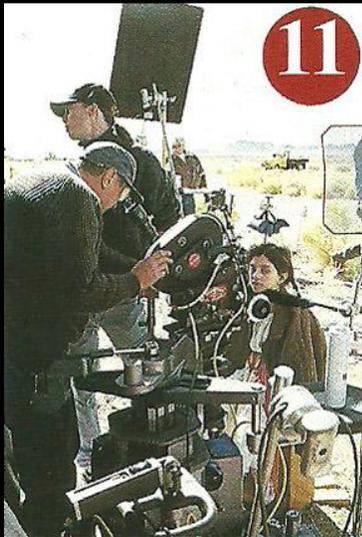
Test: Final checks before the real shot. The smoke and flame devices attached to the wanzer are being inspected. Since we only had one chance to light up the wanzer, we had to be extra careful that everything was ready.



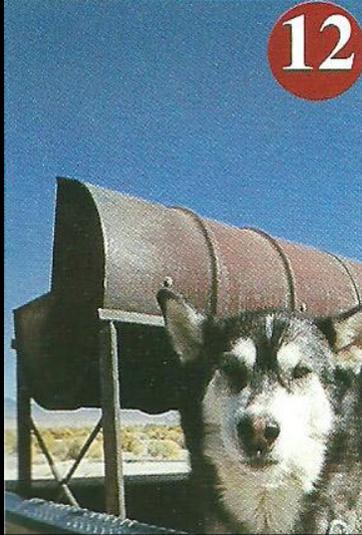
Nuclear Shells Too: N-nukes!? Just how American are things going to get!? No worries, this is just an imitation. It's just our little joke. The shells on the right are the real thing without the gunpowder though.



The Wanzers' Size: These were the base parts for the wanzers' bottom half. When the wanzers was all assembled, it was 6 meters tall. You can see just how big even the bottom half is compared to the people around it.



The Battlefield Seen through a Girl's Eyes: A girl standing before a burning wanzers. Capturing the intended drama made the girl's part difficult. Therefore, in casting, we focused on finding someone with the right intensity in her eyes.



A Canine Spectator: In the small town of Tonopah, our film shoot was a big event. Many of the locals came to watch. This Malamute was one of the spectators.