

Tekst 5

And for my acting Oscar ...

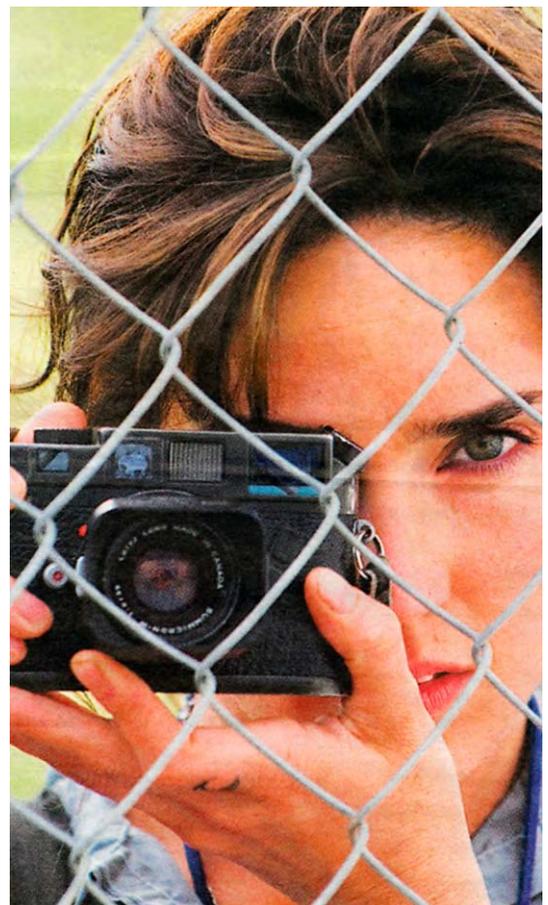
Ben Hoyle, Arts Reporter

1 From a welling tear to a wounded stare, the ability to project convincing emotions in close-up is the test of a cinema actor. But now it appears that there is more to some star turns than meets the audience's eye. Directors have started to manipulate actors' performances in postproduction. Modern visual effects technology allows them to go beyond traditional cosmetic changes, such as removing wrinkles and unsightly hairs, and adjust actors' facial expressions and subtly alter the mood of a scene.

2 At the Visual Effects Society's recent conference, Jeff Okun, the organisation's chairman, showed before and after versions of one of the climactic shots in the Oscar-nominated film *Blood Diamond*. In the "before" shot Jennifer Connolly, the leading lady, was shown talking on her mobile phone. The digitally manipulated "after" shot showed her talking on her mobile phone with a tear rolling down her cheek. Such alterations are becoming increasingly common, but practitioners are discouraged from discussing this work. "Acting is all about honesty, but something like this makes what you see on screen a dishonest moment," said a leading technician privately. "Everyone feels a bit dirty about it."

3 Visual effects experts admit to changing actors' expressions: opening or closing eyes; making a limp more convincing; removing breathing signs; or splicing together different takes of an unsuccessful love scene to produce

one in which both parties look like they are enjoying themselves. Mr Okun told *The Times*: "What used to cost £40,000 is now only going to cost you £6,000. No re-shoot necessary. We are put in a difficult moral position when directors ask us to change an actor's performance. The performance is sacrosanct and to alter it is creepy. But we don't get hired by actors. We get hired by directors."



4 24 are understandably concerned. According to *Variety*, the leading industry publication, a proposal to give performers approval of digital alterations was first put forward in negotiations with the

Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers in 1998. Tom Le Grua, of the Screen Actors Guild, told the magazine: "The proposal said no part of a performance may be altered digitally or otherwise without the actor's consent." It was rejected and has languished since in committee discussions. Some actors such as Tom Cruise have begun to write clauses into their contracts granting them full control of their own digital assets, Mr Okun said. "They are saying: If you make me look better, then it's fine. But if you are dealing with the subtleties of

a dramatic performance it's not fine."

- 5 However, Matt Johnson, a visual effects supervisor at Cinesite in Soho, London, said: "Actors have always known that directors would manipulate their performances by clever editing in postproduction. Now they are realising that visual effects can give directors even more choice. But I think it would be quite challenging to take a performance that wasn't working at all and completely revolutionise it digitally. Audiences would be able to spot that."

The Times

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- 1p **22** What is the function of paragraphs 1 and 2 of the text?
- A To give examples of the public's ever-growing demand for breath-taking stunts achieved by visual effects technology.
 - B To illustrate that the increased use of visual effects technology adds to an actor's popularity.
 - C To introduce the subject of how visual effects technology can change the authenticity of an actor's performance.
 - D To warn audiences that they are being fooled on a large scale by directors who use visual effects technology.
- 2p **23** Geef voor elk van de onderstaande beweringen aan of deze wel of niet overeenkomt met de inhoud van de alinea's 2 en 3.
- 1 Als je bij de film werkt in de afdeling visuele effecten wordt je aangeraden niet vrijuit met buitenstaanders over je werkzaamheden te spreken.
 - 2 Mensen die voor de visuele effecten in een film zorgen, vinden een perfect resultaat van hun werk belangrijker dan acteerprestaties.
 - 3 Om kosten te besparen worden in films steeds vaker en meer visuele effecten gebruikt.
 - 4 Uiteindelijk bepalen de acteurs welke visuele effecten er voor hun filmrol ingezet worden.
- Noteer het nummer van elke bewering, gevolgd door "wel" of "niet".
- 1p **24** Which of the following fits the gap in paragraph 4?
- A Actors
 - B Audiences
 - C Directors
 - D Producers
 - E Visual effects experts
- 1p **25** What does Matt Johnson (paragraph 5) think of the use of visual effects? He considers it
- A a development that has to be stopped.
 - B a hype that should not cause too much concern.
 - C an insult towards the acting profession.
 - D a useful instrument that has its limitations.