

# Our Bond with 007...



Bond (Pierce Brosnan) admires the new Aston Martin whilst Q (John Cleese) runs through its technical abilities



Pictures by Keith Hamshere and Jay Maidment

Bond's Aston Martin is flipped over with the force of the explosion from Zao's missile as they race across the icy landscape

The action is packed, the spy suave and the girl stunning.

*Die Another Day*, produced by Michael G. Wilson and Barbara Broccoli and directed by Lee Tamahori, promises to deliver everything its fans would want in this latest epic which deals with betrayal, hi-tech weaponry and military domination on a huge scale.

Imperial College's involvement came about in January when Professor Ara Darzi, professor of surgery at the faculty of medicine's academic surgical unit at the St Mary's campus, collaborated with EON Productions over featuring the Da Vinci machine, the first minimal access system to eliminate tremor in a surgeon's hand, in an early scene.

The robot's three arms can be seen early in the film scanning Bond's body and taking a blood sample. Production designer Peter Lamont and art director Mark Harris spent time at St Mary's learning about the machine's ingenuity as they practised sewing stitches,

picking up balls and putting them in boxes – standard practice for those learning how to operate with the machine.

"I'd seen the Da Vinci on *Tomorrow's World* and in *Time* magazine. It's an amazing machine for non-

**Vic Armstrong, second unit director: 'We had one incident up in Iceland where the Aston Martin hit an iceberg and the result was the same as when the Titanic hit it – the iceberg won'**

invasive surgery and I thought we'd have to make a mock-up. I was delighted when we found it at St Mary's," said Peter, who originally wanted to be a surgeon before he won a scholarship to art school and went on to work on 17 Bonds. In 1997, he won an Oscar for *Titanic*.

Commenting about the film in general, he added: "All spy stories have a similar theme, there is a set formula. But this time we are doing things that have never been done before...the hovercraft chase, the car chase on ice. And it will never be repeated, because that look was unique, absolutely unique. I'm very happy with the way the whole look of it turned out. It was a huge team effort... there are a lot of people to be congratulated."

Sarah Robinson, product placement coordinator, said of Da Vinci's role in medicine: "Both the producers and director thought this machine was fantastic; it's a very important part of the film. "It's very difficult to keep up with technology — we have to be one step ahead and try and come up with great new products which is where the Da Vinci came in."

"It was also incredible to see St Mary's hospital — we had a great day. We were definitely in 'awe of the work carried out there —

by TANYA REED

our world is fantasy whereas St Mary's is real — we don't save lives."

Professor Darzi has been fascinated with Bond films since very young. "Surgeons and spies are alike as both aspire to serve their subjects with minimal fuss while using the best technologies around. Bond films have always been an inspiration to those with a technology interest," he said.

"I never thought that one day, the department I headed would be making a contribution. It's great that Imperial College's knowhow has made it to the movie screen."

*Die Another Day* is released on 20 November in the UK.

● Stay to the end for the Imperial College credit.

**Actress Rosamund Pike: 'The sets don't feel like film sets. They're like big theme parks. You walk into a world that doesn't stop behind the next bit of board or the next door'**



Bond and Jinx in Cuba



Jinx (Halle Berry) strapped to a diamond cutting bench with villain Zao (Rick Yune) looming over her

## Die Another Day — the verdict

A bedraggled, bearded James Bond comes face to face with the Da Vinci machine after being held captive, writes TANYA REED.

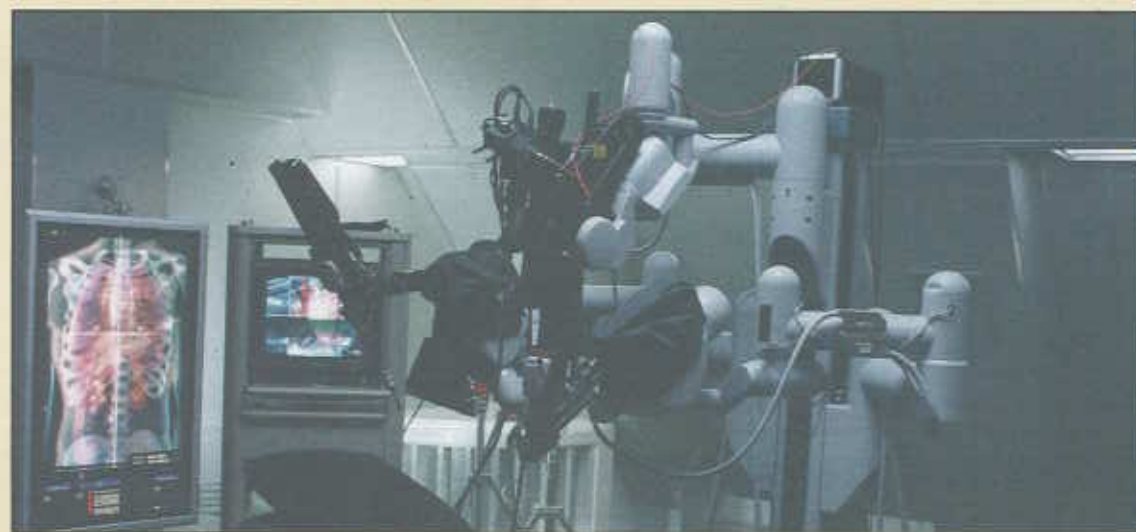
The spy's half naked body is thoroughly checked and tested by the robot against a backdrop of bleeping medical equipment, before a voice finally announces: "The liver's not too good. It's definitely him though." The latest blockbuster delivers all it promises. You know ice is going to feature

strongly when the maidens start melting in the opening credits, but nothing prepares you for the coolness of M, played by Judi Dench, or the car chases, featuring Bond's invisible Aston Martin, through freezing backdrops and inside an ice palace made at Pinewood studios.

From hovercrafts that ride over landmines, to the hero left clinging to the side of a crumbling glacier, it's all in there, suspense and gadgets galore, under the bemused eye of

John Cleese as Q who discovers Moneypenny, played by Samantha Bond, in a somewhat compromising position after a virtual reality machine gives her the chance to experience Pierce Brosnan at very close quarters indeed.

Bond himself gets very close to Halle Berry, who plays Jinx, one of the few women to genuinely resemble his equal. Her rescue from the ice palace is so tender it makes you want to cry. Didn't know 007 had it in him.



The Da Vinci machine on the set at Pinewood Studios during filming



Miranda Frost (Rosamund Pike) and Graves (Toby Stephens) in his Ice Palace office

## MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

### Media interest in merger

Merger talks between Imperial and University College London have entered their fifth week. The *Guardian* (15/10/02), describes the possible union as creating a 'super-university' while the *Daily Telegraph* (15/10/02) describes negotiations between 'two of Britain's most prestigious academic institutions' as opening up the possibility of creating 'the world's number-one university'. The *Times* (17/10/02) adds: "With their proposed £800 million merger, Imperial College and University College London are set to transform themselves into the Manchester United of the British academic league."

Imperial is consistently in the education headlines after highlighting the funding deficit faced by UK higher education institutions. "Top-up fees for top universities are the hottest undecided item on the domestic political agenda", reports the

### With Judith H Moore

*Guardian* (02/11/02). Speaking to the *Business* (20/10/02) rector, Sir Richard Sykes, said: "Through years of inadequate funding... our competitive edge is fading rapidly. If we are to compete successfully as a nation in the knowledge-based economy, it is essential that our top universities are enabled to compete effectively on a global stage."

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**Measuring long-term health effects of vehicle emissions** Imperial scientists are developing a new system that helps measure the long-term health effects of vehicle pollution. Working with partners in industry and government, Dr Washington Ochieng, civil and environmental engineering, is

helping design a novel system capable of distinguishing between vehicle emissions and those generated by other sources. "The new system will allow officials to ensure the UK is complying with environmental regulations, while health professionals hope to gain valuable information on the affects of pollution on the development of cancers, as well as breathing and lung disorders," Dr Ochieng told the *Engineer* (28/10/02).

### Chart topping alumnus

A multi-talented alumnus who first rose to fame with eighties pop sensation, Haysi Fantayzee, is reaping the rewards of a very different venture. Caplin Systems, the company created by former Imperial maths student Paul Caplin, has been voted number three in the *Sunday Times* chart of the top 100 hi-tech businesses in the UK. The awards, which rank the fastest-growing unquoted technology companies, credits the company's success with developing computer technology that provides effective data feeds to banks and brokers across the globe. "We can now enable financial institutions to use the web to get real-time information rather than go through Reuters or Bloomberg," Paul told the *Sunday Times* (29/09/02).