

## **Bio**

### **Michael F. Blake**



Michael F. Blake, a two-time Emmy-winning makeup artist, has worked in the film industry for sixty years, and is a well-known Author of many books.

His father, Larry J. Blake, was a well-known character actor who appeared in numerous films and TV shows including *High Noon*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *Seven Brides For Seven Brothers*, *Man of a Thousand Faces*, *Time After Time*, *Gunsmoke*, *Here's Lucy*, *Have Gun-Will Travel*, *Adam-12*, *Kojak*, and *Kung Fu*.

At the age of two, Michael began working as a child actor, appearing in commercials and numerous TV shows including *Adam-12*, *The Lucy Show*, *The Munsters*, *Kung Fu*, *Marcus Welby, M.D.*, *The Red Skelton Show* and *Bonanza*.

In 1978, at the age of 21, a chance meeting with the head of the makeup department at Universal Studios led Michael to switching careers, becoming one of the youngest makeup artists working in the industry at the time. His credits include *Westworld*, *X-Men: First Class*, *Spider-Man 3*, *Drag Me To Hell*, *Domino*, *Independence Day*, *Tough Guys*, *Strange Days*, *Soapdish*, *Magnum, P.I.*, and *Happy Days*.

He has won two Best Makeup Emmy Awards as part of the makeup team for *Buffy, the Vampire Slayer* (1999) and *Key & Peele* (2016).

Widely recognized as the leading biographer of silent film star Lon Chaney, his three books — *Lon Chaney: Man Behind the Thousand Faces*, *A Thousand Faces: Lon Chaney's Unique Artistry in Motion Pictures* and *The Films of Lon Chaney* — are considered the definitive volumes on the actor's life and career.

He served as special consultant and on-camera interviewee for the Turner Classic Movies channel documentary, *Lon Chaney: A Thousand Faces* (2000), and has provided DVD audio commentaries for several Lon Chaney films. Michael has also been a guest speaker at Chaney retrospectives held in New York, Los Angeles, and Italy.

His books *Code of Honor: The Making of High Noon, Shane, and The Searchers* and *Hollywood and the O.K. Corral*, are recognized as informative works relating to the Western genre. Michael is featured in the “TCM Fanatics: Westerns” featurette that airs on Turner Classic Movies cable channel, and has appeared in special featurettes for the John Ford DVD box set from Warner Home Video, and for *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* and *El Dorado* for Paramount Home Video.

For his latest book, *The Cowboy President*, Michael F. Blake spent three years researching Theodore Roosevelt’s time in the Dakota Territory, which included hiking and horseback riding over the same land where Theodore rode 132 years ago. Unlike other authors who have written about Roosevelt’s time in the saddle, Michael has real-world experience in herding cattle and crossing rivers on horseback.

In 2017, Michael received the Stirrup Award from Western Writers of America for his article on the making of John Ford’s *The Searchers*. He has also written for *True West*, *Round-Up*, *American Cinematographer*, *Performing Arts*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and *Chicago Tribune*.

He holds a Bachelor’s Degree from California State University, Northridge and a Masters Degree in Critical Film Studies from UCLA.

Recently retired, after a 60 year career in the film and television industry beginning as a child actor and at age 21 becoming the youngest makeup artist, Michael lives in Arizona with his wife, Linda, and their dogs, Charlie and Dobie, while his two adopted mustangs, Theodore and Dillon, run free at the Black Hills Wild Horse Sanctuary.