

## FACE OFF: Top Three Finalist, Ian Cromer

Written by Sean Abley  
Monday, 06 August 2012 11:00

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Top three finalist Ian Cromer was one of the two youngest competitors on FACE OFF Season Two, and possibly the quietest.

**FANGORIA:** Just to clear up your background, had you just gotten out of school before you landed on FACE OFF?

**IAN CROMER:** I was basically just doing freelance work, a lot of construction stuff. I didn't get to do too much FX stuff or makeup stuff. I had to build seven concrete elephants for this guy in New York. That was the biggest job I had.

**FANG:** Pretty early on in the show the youngest contestant, Miranda Jory, got the boot. Since you were the second youngest contestant were you worried they were going to start picking off the young people first?

**CROMER:** No, I never really felt that way. I was more nervous about the work I put out, not so much my age. I never felt that young compared to everyone. I felt more inexperienced, but not necessarily young.

**FANG:** There was a point in one of the episodes where someone said, "Ian is always doubting his work, and he always thinks he's going home." And then they showed a montage of you doubting your work and thinking you were going home. Was it really that nerve wracking? Or did they create that in editing?

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**CROMER:** It was a little bit mixed. I usually had doubts about what was coming up, but not really more than anyone else. I think they focused on that about me.

**FANG:** What was the most difficult challenge?

**CROMER:** Definitely the old age, hands down. Because that was the most realism oriented. I'd never done an old age makeup before. And that [challenge] we had to do three, and that was just insane.

**FANG:** I know we saw some people have this problem; you never know how someone is going to react to makeup until you apply it. Did you have any problems with models reacting poorly to the makeup?

**CROMER:** I never had an issue with a model until after they were wearing the makeup for the amount time it took to film. The problem is they baked foam so quick there's not enough time for the ammonia to evaporate, so it burns the model. It can give them a chemical burn. At application, every time I had a model they'd fall asleep in the chair. So I guess that's a testament to my technique.



**FANG:** What was the most surprising thing about being on a reality show?

**CROMER:** The fact that I was on it was pretty surprising. I don't watch too much television, or

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any, so I wasn't even going to try out for FACE OFF. I was helping my girlfriend try out, and she was, like, "Oh, yeah, my boyfriend taught me most of what I know..." And they said I should try out, and I got on the show and she didn't. So that was a big surprise.

**FANG:** And how did that go over?

**CROMER:** [*Laughs*] It was a little rocky. If it had happened to me, the other way around, I would have been pretty hurt and felt like I wasn't good enough. I'm positive she's going to be on one of these seasons coming up.

**FANG:** The more I talk to contestants from this season, the more I find that either they weren't actually FX artists, or hadn't planned on doing it. What advice would you give to people that will find themselves cast on FACE OFF to survive the process?

**CROMER:** Budgeting time is the biggest issue. You have unlimited resources, but time is your killer. You have to have your sculpt done your first day, and your molds, and you have to have your pulls by the next day. Get your sculpture done first, and budget your time as wisely as you can.

**FANG:** Has the show benefitted you as far as your career? Are you working with people you met on the show?

**CROMER:** I think I was really lucky with how I was portrayed on the show. I don't think I could have been portrayed any better. Frank [Ippolito, from season one] and Jerry [Macaluso] are nice guys, and they got portrayed like jerks. [Judge] Ve [Neill] calls me all the time, we text once a week. She has me demo at a lot of spaces. I've met almost every great makeup artist out right now because of her.

**FANG:** Is that actually translating into work?

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**CROMER:** Oh, yeah. You get paid to do demos at conventions. So you're padding your portfolio. And the second day I moved to LA I got a call from Frank to work on a Danny Devito film.

**FANG:** Is there a FACE OFF fraternity? When you see each other from seasons one and two is there that unspoken understanding that you're now part of something special?

**CROMER:** Definitely. We're all pretty much family. We keep in really close contact. We're always throwing each other work. It was a huge bonding experience. I was on the show for two months filming. You're totally sequestered. It's really difficult. So everyone went through the same thing. It's a killer. It's mentally straining.

**FANG:** Who or what are your biggest influences, FX-wise?

**CROMER:** I grew up on films like BATMAN and SUPERMAN. GHOSTBUSTERS was a huge one. So Steve Johnson, Rick Baker was a huge one for HARRY AND THE HENDERSONS. I always loved those movies as a kid. They were always real to me, every character in them.