

alex zahara

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**RP** You've appeared on Stargate in seven episodes, playing one human and six aliens. Which of the characters to date provided the greatest challenge and which was most fun to play?

**AZ** You are correct, one human Michael and six aliens, more if you count the extra characters in episodes where they had us playing 5-7 different aliens (Beast of Burden.) This was done to take advantage of the extensive makeup and by changing costumes the viewers would feel like there were hundreds if not thousands of these aliens. Challenges for each character have been present, from wearing glued in hair extensions for the hippie Michael in 1969 for 2-3 weeks (not being able to wash them much, yeeuch,) to over heating problems in many of the alien costumes. When you shoot outdoors as well as indoors in the summer months your temperature rises quickly. The most fun I have had has got to be the most recent episode (Enemy Mine) where I play Iron Shirt the Unas leader. I had to learn the Unas language, use the makeup to its full advantage and I had a great group of people to work with. Peter Deluise provided a dictionary of sorts to the Unas language and we learned it all.

As we learned our lines in the Unas language we had to use the dictionary to translate them into English, then with the added clarity, translate them back into Unas. So we really had twice as much work on our hands. It was so much fun though, to totally immerse yourself in the world like that just made the whole experience that much more fulfilling. I found myself living as the character so I was coming up with a lot of physical bits of behavior, like the run, a lot of leaping etc, behaving like an animal of sorts. The crew and makeup people are amazing to work with, David Dupuis, who did my makeup, he is an amazing artist as well as Todd Masters who owns Masters FX.

**RP** What other projects are you involved with at the moment?

**AZ** Right now I am auditioning for quite a few things and may be doing a Canadian feature in the fall. Don't want to talk too much about it and jinx it, I'm a bit superstitious. Oh yes! Open Range with Kevin Costner, Robert Duvall, Annette Bening and Sir Michael Gambon comes out Aug 15th; I have a fun role in that. I play a nasty gunfighter and I am the only person in

the movie that actually gets to shoot Costner!

**RP** When not acting, what is your favorite pastime/s?

**AZ** Well there is always, watching Sci fi on TV something is usually on, going to movies and the like. There have been apartment renovations recently; which can be fun. I do like to get out to the gym and workout but I need to find something more fulfilling and leisure based. The gym can be boring. Hiking has come up lately; climbing the Grouse grind (local ski mountain) the trail is very challenging. I used to mountain bike a lot until my bike got stolen, working on replacing it ... taking my time to get the right bike.

**RP** Is there a character either in film or on stage whom you would dearly love to portray? If so, why?

**AZ** Funnily enough this came up recently. I would love to play Iago from Shakespeare's Othello, as well as Macbeth. I just feel those two roles have got so much depth to them and I would love to dive into either one of them. There are some modern plays of course, but nothing I can think of right now. I am trying to write a Sci Fi

feature, but I would not play the lead, maybe a smaller role somewhere. So I guess I would like to experiment at being a writer and then see if I like it enough to become one

**RP** Have you been to a convention before? What are you most looking forward to at Gatecon?

**AZ** I have only ever been to a small gathering of Babylon 5 fans at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, when I was doing Legend of the Rangers. I helped host some friends of a friend from Germany who attended Gatecon in Vancouver a couple of summers ago. I think I am looking forward to interacting with the people that really enjoy the show. Unlike theatre when you get immediate reaction to your work, you don't get that privilege in film and TV. I mean you do get the reactions of your colleagues (actors, crew, director, etc.) you just don't get the extra feedback from the viewers, (whether they enjoyed your choices or not). The circle is not complete without them. The experience can be really fulfilling as it is but that extra bit, to feel how you've affected the fans, that is what I am looking forward to.