

I know you're used to fighting two opponents at once in martial arts contests, but do you think your lightsaber duel with Qui-Gon and Obi-Wan at the end of Episode I is entirely believable? I mean, could anyone – even a Sith Lord – really fight two highly-skilled swordsmen at once?

I'm sure there are loopholes, you know, but we tried to cover everything and make it believable. Nick Gillard and I talked about everything. Obviously, there's only so much you can do with a lightsaber – you can't bend it round your back to block. That's where I think Darth Maul uses his legs sometimes. That's the key.

I would have loved to have done more of that actually, but George didn't want to go down the kung-fu way too much. He didn't want to do stunts for stunts [sake]. He wanted to concentrate on the sword-work.

What was the atmosphere like on set during the making of Episode I?

It was cool. I've got to admit I worked really hard on the film. I remember getting up at five or six most morning and getting back at 10 most nights. It didn't bother me at all. I never once thought, 'Oh no, I've got to go to work.' I loved it.

If I wasn't on set working as Darth Maul, I was rehearsing. So I didn't get much time to mingle on-set with everyone else. I find sitting on a set boring. I'm one of these people who likes to be working.

At what point did you start to realise how much of an impact Darth Maul was making on the audience?

It was before the movie came out. When they put the first trailer on the Internet and did a big spread in *The Sun*, that's when everything went ballistic. People who knew me were going mad because I didn't tell them I was doing the film. They were going, 'I know it's Ray from the way he's doing his stance.' Then everyone wanted to find out who Darth Maul was, and suddenly all these Websites came out wondering who Darth Maul was.

The reaction I got early on from Rick McCallum, the producer,

was also very encouraging. He said, "This is going to be massive.

Everyone's going to love you."

I didn't listen to that, because I don't like getting my hopes up. So I just sort of went, "Yeah, yeah, thanks." Deep down I was hoping it would do well.

What did you think of the finished movie?

I thought it was really good.

Even when we were rehearsing the fight, I thought if Darth Maul was going to die the way he did, it should have been a better death. But I enjoyed the film.

Obviously, a lot of people hoped that you might be a part of Episode II, but you're not. Is it possible you'll be involved with Episode III?

I don't know. I haven't spoken to anyone at Lucasfilm about it. I'm not contracted to it. But you never know. I'd love to do it. I'd love to play another part in it. It would be fun.

