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body on somebody. The finished item is much like a sculpted wet suit, a diving wet suit with a sculpture on the outside, rather than just flat.

"In fact, the deepest place is only about an inch and a half. He's not wearing a vast body suit at all — it was just streamlining *his* body to make it the right outlines."

Cast in foam rubber from molds, the costume is made in pieces — the body, the cloak, the head, the shoes and the gloves. "The body is all one thing with the zip right up the back," Ringwood says. "It's based on a leotard and then the rubber bits are glued on."

"It's extremely flexible because it's made of very soft foam rubber which is then glazed with some silicone. And of course we sculpted it so that where the bends in the body come is where the thinnest parts of the rubber are, so they crease easily, folding in the muscles' shapes — we didn't want it to buckle across the muscle."

"The cloak is made of rubberised wool. The great problem was getting a cloak material that would look animal-like but still drape nicely. Rubber doesn't drape at all well — it's rather flimsy and a bit like jelly, so we had to bond it onto very heavy weight wool which sculpted beautifully."

"The head was the very difficult part. We started with a cast of Michael's head and then built on it and sculpted it as a sort of prosthetic. The major problem was to make sure that we didn't cover him up so much that he could have no expression. Getting the face shape to be sexy was difficult, because if you don't get the angles of the nose and the cheek bones just right it just doesn't look good."

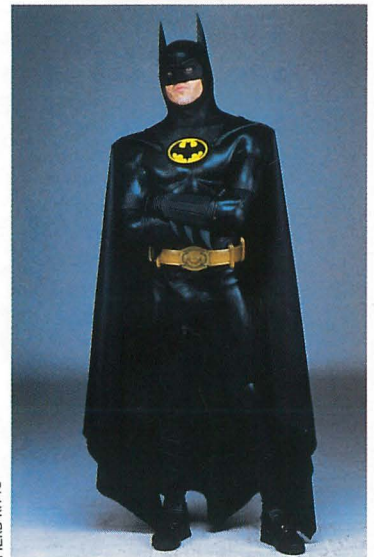
The demands of large-scale filmmaking — stunts, doubles, second units — meant that there were multiple versions of the Batman costume. Another consideration — "The problem with casting a costume is that it has to have seams on it," Ringwood notes. "So you've got casts of the head with seams down the ears, and then casts of the head with seams down the back, and casts of the head with seams at the front."

Wearing the finished costume, Ringwood says, "it gets quite hot — but it's not as hot as you'd think. I noticed that Michael didn't take it off to go to lunch, so it can't be that uncomfortable. I think he quite liked wearing it. He said he hated wearing it, but in my experience anyone who goes to the canteen wearing their costume doesn't dislike it that much!"



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