

Stephen Schwartz Comments on Disney's Pocahontas

Enchanted is a Disney movie from 2007 with original songs by Alan Menken (music) and Stephen Schwartz (lyrics).

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Enchanted lyricist

Question:

Has Stephen Schwartz replaced Glenn Slater as the lyricist?

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

No. Glenn (who is an extremely talented, smart, and witty lyricist and entirely capable of doing a brilliant job on ENCHANTED) is working with Alan on several other projects, hence the confusion. At one time, perhaps, it was discussed that he and Alan would do a song for ENCHANTED -- before it was to be a more heavily "musicalized" project -- but once Alan was brought on for the present movie, I came with him.

Lure of Enchanted

Question:

What attracted you to this project?

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

I have long wanted to do a live-action movie musical. ENCHANTED is a very clever concept that allows characters to sing within the world of the film, which is often difficult to achieve. Plus I thought the screenplay they sent me to read was, well, enchanting.

Menken/Schwartz

Question:

When did you learn you were going to be reunited with Alan Menken? What was it like after ten years to work with him again? Yes, I've read you both enjoy a good friendship, but has much changed after a decade long hiatus in terms of working together?

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

It was Alan who first told me Disney wanted me to do the project with him, so I knew at the outset. Our working relationship remains a very good one -- the fact that we are such good friends makes it very easy to collaborate, plus of course the fact that we have high regard for one another's work.

Glenn Slater

Question: Was Glenn Slater considered for writing Enchanted, before you signed on? What do you think of Glenn's lyrics? Hope all is going well, All the best, Nathaniel

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

Glenn is one of the most talented lyricists I know, incredibly deft with language and very funny. I assume your question stems from the fact that most of Alan Menken's current collaborations are with

Glenn, including the upcoming stage version of LITTLE MERMAID. But for ENCHANTED, Disney wanted to reunite the old team of Alan and me, which I was delighted about, so they approached us as a team.

Future

Question:

Disney is returning to the musicals. Alan Menken and Glen Slater are doing "Sweating Bullets", and there are some rumors about Chris Curtis in "Rapunzel". Do you think in return to Disney (of course, if they call you) to do some musical in the future? You won an Oscar working in an animated feature. Do you like to work in animation?

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

I very much enjoyed writing all three of the animated musicals I was involved with, but I feel that I have basically had the experience of doing animation, so I don't really have interest at this time in doing more. I have learned in show business that one never says never, and I suppose if an irresistible idea came along that I was asked to do for animation, I would probably do it, but I'm not looking for one at this time. I'm very much enjoying working on my new show, WICKED, for the live stage.

ENCHANTED: That's How You Know lyric question

Question:

I loved Enchanted! I can say 1,000 good things about the film and still not adequately summarize how great an experience I had watching it. My question is about a lyric from "That's How You Know." The lyric goes like this,
Because he'll wear your favorite color
Just so he can match your eyes

I'm just confused about how that works. I mean, what if the person's favorite color is red? Or any color that's not Blue, Brown, or Green? I know this is a trivial nitpick to the otherwise marvelous song, but I've never heard of someone wearing clothes to match the other's eyes. Have you ever done that?

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

It just seemed like a romantic idea to me. I do know people who are very careful about what they wear in order to bring out their eyes, and I thought the notion that someone would wear that color to "help" was the sort of loving gesture talked about in the song. I recognize it might not literally be that person's favorite color. As for "red", that would work if you were dating an albino bunny. Stephen Schwartz

Cut Songs

Question:

I read a rumor online that some cut songs (particularly a title song sung by Idina Menzel and James Marsden) might be available on the DVD when it is released. Any truth to this rumor?

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

There was indeed a title song that closed the film that was replaced by "Ever Ever After". I too have heard a rumor that it may be included in the DVD, but I don't know for sure. I don't have a copy of it to post, and am not sure Disney would want me to if I did, so we'll both just have to wait for the DVD. Thanks for your enthusiasm for the movie, which as I've said, was a blast to work on. Sincerely, Stephen Schwartz

ENCHANTED Q&A

Question:

Were some songs (from ENCHANTED) easier to write than others?

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

First of all, let me say that the entire process of writing songs for ENCHANTED was a total blast for me. Bill Kelly's screenplay was in terrific shape when I came on board the project, so where the songs should come and what they should be was fairly clear, and our director, Kevin Lima, had a great understanding of how songs could work in the movie and was terrific to work with. Plus I always have a lot of fun working with Alan. Of course, as always, some of the songs were easier than others -- "Happy Working Song" and "That's How You Know" in particular came pretty quickly. I guess the most challenging (and of course it is a love song, albeit gently satirical) was "True Love's Kiss", the song in the animated section -- it took a few tries to find the right mix of homage to classic Disney scores like "Snow White" and "Cinderella" and Alan's and my original voice, plus the structure was tricky to work out. But the whole project was a lot of fun.

Question:

Was there any idea of giving Queen Narissa a song?

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

Yes. In fact, Alan and I wrote a song for her entrance into New York called "Nobody Gets in My Way", but Kevin Lima didn't go for it. It's one of the few places I disagree with him -- I still think she should have had a song and I like the one we came up with.

Question:

Just wanted to ask Stephen - you are obviously credited as the lyricist, and Alan Menken the music but the process is obviously extremely collaborative. Just wondering how much input you have in the melody, and vice-versa Alan with the words? Would music & lyrics by Alan Menken & Stephen Schwartz be a more accurate description, or is there a degree of role separation?

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

When Alan and I work together, he is definitely responsible for the music and I for the lyrics. This is not to say that he does not make suggestions about lyrics (for instance, in the intro to "True Love's Kiss", where I had originally written "Before you can become one..." he suggested the superior "Before two can become one...", which of course I used). And I will make suggestions about music, which tend to be vaguer, such as "Couldn't the melody go up here?" or "Couldn't there be a whole note somewhere in there?" But the lines of demarcation are pretty clear. Once the song is done, we collaborate on its production for the movie and recording. Unlike some famously thorny collaborations (Gilbert and Sullivan being a famous example), my collaborative experience with Alan has been an unmitigated pleasure; we just clicked as a team from our very first writing experience together ("Colors of the Wind"), and I look forward to the fun of future projects with him.

Question:

I found it fascinating that you said you had written a song for Queen Narissa's character for her entrance into NYC; is there any chance we could hear or at least see some of the lyrics for it?? I'll totally understand if you're not allowed or don't want to for whatever reason, but I was quite curious, especially since you felt so strongly that it should have been left in. It did seem like Narissa's character was a little underdeveloped (as compared to the others at least). As an aspiring musical theater composer myself, I have an insatiable curiosity for the songwriting process, so I hope you'll forgive me if

I pry!

Answer from Stephen Schwartz:

Here is the lyric (I thought Alan's music for it was pretty cool, too). I don't know how far it goes towards further developing her character, but I thought it would be a fun moment. I can see how its coming (pardon the play on words) so close to "So Close" might be too much like a full-out "musical". But though I do like the solution director Kevin Lima came up with and I like the background chorus singing magic chanting with all the made-up words as she arrives, I still sort of miss having a "villain's song". Anyway, for what it's worth, here's what we were thinking of. Sincerely, Stephen Schwartz

NOBODY GETS IN MY WAY

Note: This song is for Narissa, but the intention is that it will be sung by a pop singer (with back-up vocals) on the soundtrack, and Narissa will sing along with or mouth some of the lines.

There are built in moments in the music for places her destructive magic can be used for punctuation “ things crashing, shattering, people flying,etc., but I haven't indicated them here in the lyrics.

NARISSA

NEON ON BLACK LEATHER
STRIDING DOWN THE STREET
YOU SEE 'EM YOU BETTER DUCK (DUCK!)
DUCK AND RUN FOR COVER
BLOOD POUNDING, I NEVER
FELT SO STRONG A BEAT
MAY I SUGGEST, BOY, YOU RUN (RUN!)
RUN ON HOME TO MOTHER
I'D THINK YOU'D RECOGNIZE A WITCH
WHEN YOU'VE SEEN HER
AND KNOW THESE MEAN STREETS JUST
GOT A LITTLE MEANER
NOBODY, NOBODY GETS IN MY WAY
IF YOU WANT TO SEE TOMORROW
I'M HERE TO TELL YOU, IT'S HELL YOU WILL PAY
BETTER HEED WHAT I SAY
OR DON'T TO YOUR SORROW
I'VE HAD A BAD DAY
AND NOBODY GETS IN MY WAY!
TONIGHT IS MY HOUR
WATCH ME STRUT MY STUFF
WHO IS THIS BEAUTY IN BLACK? (WHO?)
A WOMAN ON A MISSION
I'M FEELING MY POWER
GOT MORE THAN ENOUGH
THERE'S ONLY ONE THING I LACK (WHAT?)
ANY INHIBITION
SO MAY I RECOMMEND SELF-PRESERVATION?
I'VE ALWAYS BEEN SO BAD (BAD!)

AT HANDLING FRUSTRATION
NOBODY, NOBODY GETS IN MY WAY
IF YOU WANT TO SEE TOMORROW
I'M HERE TO TELL YOU, IT'S HELL YOU WILL PAY
BETTER HEED WHAT I SAY
OR DON'T TO YOUR SORROW
HOW ROUGH CAN YOU PLAY?
'CAUSE I'LL PUSH IT TOO FAR, OH,
I'VE HAD A BAD DAY
AND NOBODY (NOBODY!)
NOBODY (NOBODY!)
NOBODY GETS IN MY WAY!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

DVD, sheet music, etc.

<http://www.musicalschwartz.com/disney-movies-enchanted.htm>

“Defying Gravity: The Creative Career of Stephen Schwartz, from Godspell to Wicked” includes the story of Stephen Schwartz’s work for Disney on *Pocahontas*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, and *Enchanted* – the three movies for which he wrote lyrics for Alan Menken’s songs. It includes quotes from interviews with Schwartz and Menken about their collaboration, as well as photographs.

www.DefyingGravityTheBook.com.

Enchanted cast and other movie details

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0461770/>