

BIG CHICO'S MOVIE BLOG

Loving Movies Since 1973

Exclusive Interview with “The Looking Glass Wars” Author Frank Beddor

April 13th, 2010 | Author: Big Chico



How charmed is Big Chico's life I ask you? I have been able to get some great interviews before, but this one takes the cake. Frank Beddor, author of the Looking Glass Wars has granted Big Chico an exclusive interview. You are probably asking yourself, "Who cares, what does this have to do with movies?" I'm glad you asked.

Tim Burton's dark version is more akin to the Looking Glass Wars for Alice in Wonderland than the traditional Carroll version. and had A LOT of influence on the movie. I think that's what made Burton's version of Alice so great.

So without further ado, an interview with author Frank Beddor...

Is there any truth that you saw a set of playing cards at the British Museum and they reminded you of the Wonderland characters so much you sought out a playing card collector and they told you the story of The Looking Glass Wars?

That, my friend, is the founding truth of the entire Looking Glass Wars saga!

A number of years ago I was in London on business and had a free afternoon so I went to the British Museum where I discovered an intriguing exhibit of ancient cards. For instance, Napoleon had hired artists to hand paint cards with depictions of his many victories in battle. But what ultimately caught my attention, at the very end of the exhibit, was an incomplete deck of cards illuminated by an unusual glow, almost as though the images were...alive. I was intrigued by the exhibit and captivated by the images on the cards. This was a very, very different version of Wonderland.

For the remainder of my trip I was preoccupied with the images and told several friends, one of whom suggested I meet with an antiques dealer he knew who specialized in collecting all sorts of ancient playing cards.

The next morning, on the way to the airport, I stopped at the dealer's shop. When I told him about the unusual exhibit, he revealed that he in fact owned the cards missing from the deck. I was stunned. He brought out this old, worn leather box filled with cards and told me the story as he flipped one card over at a time, revealing the saga of THE LOOKING GLASS WARS. It was a darker Alyss from a darker world and I knew I was meant to tell the story. Once I discovered the truth behind the deck of playing cards it soon became clear that Lewis Carroll had changed everything.

I began putting all the pieces together and weaving the revelations of just how different the real Wonderland and its inhabitants were compared to the children's lit version the world had known and accepted for nearly 150 years. Carroll's choices in how he changed Alyss's story were so fascinating (he even changed her name!) – the monsters and heroes of her lost world became these cheery reinventions. It was such a betrayal on Carroll's part and was in fact, the reason for the rift that eventually occurred between the writer and his muse.

For instance – the characters we know as the White Rabbit, the Red Queen, the Cheshire Cat and of course, the Mad Hatter all appear in The Looking Glass Wars as they were intended to by Alyss when she told Carroll her harrowing tale.

The White Rabbit was in fact Bibwit Harte, the six foot tall albino royal tutor for all Wonderland Queens (Carroll had anagrammed his name to create the White Rabbit), while the Red Queen was in truth Alyss's Aunt Redd, the revenge maddened usurper to the throne ably assisted by her top assassin, The Cat, a man size feline who morphs from adorable kitten to giant mutant feline when called upon to kill.

So you see, there was a lot of truth to be uncovered and you might say, I felt the CALLING!.

With your background in skiing, acting and being a stunt man, is the Hatter M sort of an alter ego of yours?

AND I am a connoisseur of fine hats! But, alas no, Hatter M is a far superior being to my simple earthbound endeavors.

What do these books personally mean to you?

A mantra of personal freedom via our inherent IMAGINATIONS! Arise and claim your birthright to imagine. Are we not Imaginers? Why should any of us be content with someone else's REALITY?

Have you had a chance to see the new Alice in Wonderland movie yet and if so what do you think of Burton's darker version of Alice?

I have seen the film – how could I resist? I wouldn't call it Burton's 'darker version'...more like his 'older version' of Alice. It was visually stunning as I suspected it would be and he blew out a whole other dimension for Wonderland but it wasn't anything that shocked or titillated or tweaked my curiosity. Well made and well promoted. Now let's tell the TRUTH OF WHAT REALLY HAPPENED IN WONDERLAND....

What do you want people to get out of reading your books?

I want my readers to get hours and hours of reading pleasure and

inspiration to fire up their own Imaginations but it appears they get much more. Here's a smattering of what some of my readers have told me they get from reading the series. "Up all night reading!" (they get sleep deprivation) "Going crazy waiting for next book – when is it coming out?" (they get impatient waiting for books to be published – good news all three are completed now – no more waiting).

What actresses would you have play your female leads in the LGW movies?

Well I'm going to turn this over to some of LGW's ardent fans who have been writing in with their opinions...

Nicole Kidman, Angelina Jolie or Tilda Swinton as Her Imperial Viciousness Queen Redd.

Emily Mortimer, Cate Blanchett as Queen Genevieve

Mila Kunis as Homburg Molly

And then there is Alyss...though I have had suggestions for actresses I am holding this one back and not putting out any preconceptions because my plan is to do a search for an unknown to star as Alyss.

Who would you have play Hatter M in the movie version?

Clive Owen is my top pick and for the record...I think he would be brilliant.

Look out Johnny...there's going to be a new Hatter in town.

How do you get such an inspired and well received trilogy like Looking Glass Wars off the ground, in terms of getting the movies made?

Even if I started production today it would be 3-4 years before the Looking Glass Wars came to the big screen and time alone would give enough distance between Tim's interpretation and my mythos. However, having said that, I have the option of starting with the Looking Glass Wars or with my Hatter M graphic novel series. Hatter's 13 year quest in our world to find the lost princess is a natural entry point because he is such a cool action hero figure. Right now I have scripts for both the

Looking Glass Wars and the Hatter film and am in discussions with some high profile directors.

Has a studio picked up the option for the trilogy?

No studio yet, however, I have made a deal with Chuck Roven who produced The Dark Knight.

The universe you created is so vast, what are the easiest and hardest characters to write for?

Evil is always much easier to write than Good. Perhaps this explains the state of our world. Good does not have the surface flash of Evil or the snappy one-liners...Good is often more internal...Good has impulse control and intelligence and kindness...Good is deep and clean and something I have to really dig for. It's hard to be Good and it's hard to write a truly Good character but they're the ones we all end up cheering for.

Thanks for all the great questions! Instead of saying goodbye, I would like to invite everyone to visit my free online game cardsoldierwars.com., come be my friend on Facebook and follow myself and the Glow on Twitter.

Long Live Alyss!

Frank