

Frank Beddor has done many things, and has marked all the thing he has done with a mark of excellence and uniqueness. His work runs the span from Athlete, to Stunt man to Actor, to Producer, to Writer. His take on the ALICE IN WONDERLAND and THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS by Lewis Carroll called The LOOKING GLASS WARS and HATTER M have begun to garner a following, and to inspire critics for and against retelling old well loved tales. But his work does not just retell a story, it completely rejects certain aspects of the original and tells a new story.



Alex Ness: Tell me, Mr Beddor what inspired you to write the LOOKING GLASS WARS

Frank Beddor: A trippy, mind expanding experience at the British museum 7 years ago

Alex Ness: Where they venerate Lewis Carroll?

Frank Beddor: He is their god

Alex Ness: Ok but why is he, and why did it inspire you?

Frank Beddor: I discovered an incomplete deck of illuminated cards that led me to an antiquities dealer who told me a mindblowing story of Wonderland that I felt compelled to share...

Alex Ness: Actual cards at the gift shop?

Frank Beddor: Actual, handpainted playing cards -- part of a larger exhibit of cards - -for instance there were decks depicting Napoleon's great victories

Alex Ness: Ok, so how did that lead you to Wonderland?

Frank Beddor: The antiquities dealer possessed the missing cards from the incomplete museum deck

Alex Ness: Ok so a mystery ensues

Frank Beddor: Yes...,a mystery that led me to uncover what I believe is to be the ultimate literary lie that has existed untouched for 150 years

Alex Ness: And that is??



Frank Beddor: That Lewis Carroll did not tell the story of Wonderland to a little girl named Alice... Alyss told him.

Alex Ness: Hmmmm are you sure that he was not just hepped up on Cannabis or something stronger?

Frank Beddor: From radical research I believe it was a tea of psilocybin which is why he got it so wrong.

Alex Ness: Lewis Carroll, aka Charles Lutwidge Dodgson drank tea of psilocybin...

Frank Beddor: It was quite popular in victorian drawing rooms

Alex Ness: Shrooms in other words.

Frank Beddor: Yes. but not pinky pinks...

Alex Ness: So while in hallucinogenic state, he became a medium or he was visited by a muse?

Frank Beddor: He was definitely visited by a muse in the 7-year-old form of princess alyss heart who told him her harrowing tale in the hopes that he would turn it into a book so those seeking her would find her -- unfortunately -- he chose to turn it into a nonsensical children's book -- perhaps the shrooms -- and got it all wrong -- enraging Alyss and causing the infamous rift between them that has been has been torn from his diaries and replaced with the 20th century conjecture that it was all about pedophilia -- totally wrong.

Alex Ness: And you believe this you aren't just yanking me

Frank Beddor: The evidence supports it.

Alex Ness: And so your work is a historical account?

Frank Beddor: I prefer to call it a meta-historical account.

Alex Ness: Of the wars of that world, and the passing of Alyss from one world to another?

Frank Beddor: Correct.

Alex Ness: I see Alyss in your conception is a more tragic figure also filled with great courage and heart...

Frank Beddor: Absolutely....don't forget Imagination. which the world can always use more of..

Alex Ness: Hatter M is a honorable warrior trying to help Alyss, as opposed to a fellow stuck in a moment, a tuesday for getting trapped in time.

Frank Beddor: Hatter Madigan -- royal bodyguard of the Wonderland millinery is an incredibly complex, tortured, stubborn and determined grown-up hero who's got a job to do.

Alex Ness: Who is Chesshire cat's according to you versus that of Lewis Carroll?

Frank Beddor: The Cat is Queen Redd's feline assassin -- part feline and part man it morphs from kitten to killer.

Alex Ness: Now, if I might, I am someone who came quite late to the Alice in Wonderland and The Looking Glass and I found Lewis Carroll's work to be about two or three very disturbing things one, there is a lack of logic, that each character believes in what they say but that they make no sense whatsoever outside of that. And second, as a story for children, this seems to be a threatening sort of world, "wonder" land or not if Alice trips along, however good she is, there is a sense of dread I feel, throughout almost the opposite of a child's story to me, because if there is nothing that makes sense, there is a capricious whim and world out there in Wonderland

How is your work different in tone, and different in outlook beyond his "misreading" of what Alyss told him?

Frank Beddor: Hmmmm... interesting... what Lewis Carroll could not escape was the tragic nature of Alyss's story -- despite his attempt to make it for children with his whimsy and nonsense -- the sense of dread and the sense of the capriciousness of the world (and how Alyss lost everything) persisted -- what Looking Glass Wars tries to do is convey the emotion and strength of alyss -- and the hope of the power we all hold within us -- Imagination.

Alex Ness: Her persistence in the face of the loss of her crown and Wonderland is both noble, and sad.

Your book is a different sort of story Lewis Carroll's, do you get frustrated when critics try to compare the two side by side? Because it sounds to me, that your goal is completely and utterly different

Frank Beddor: I get frustrated when people accuse me of re-writing his work -- his books can be read in perpetuity as they are -- and he clearly made a great literary choice in altering Alyss's story. for those who want their 'Alice' it will always exist. My books stand on their own -- it's a world that I want to share

Alex Ness: Why do you think that children and adults both usually see no darkness in Wonderland and Looking Glass tales of Lewis Carroll?



Frank Beddor: People see what they want to see -- the attraction for adults always seemed to me to be the more subliminal, sinister aspects and riff on Victorian England

Alex Ness: Ok that I see

Yours is much more straight forward, and I think, however much more dark, in some ways, much less... naughty for want of a better world it worked much better for me.

Frank Beddor: Glad to hear that... I never agreed with critics who called my work dark necessarily... because I see so much hope in it.

Alex Ness: I see hope but also the fear and situation is much more acknowledgely good and evil the threats seem more face front in Carroll, there seems to be little out there evil, but a buttload of evil in the currents, in the air, in the events waiting to happen

Frank Beddor: He was a cloistered man...

Alex Ness: Do you dislike his books?

Frank Beddor: As a child I did...but in getting to know them so well I have come to deeply appreciate and admire carroll's great works.

Alex Ness: How about the man himself, there are many questions regarding what kind of person he was some argue that his photography of semi nude girls is indication of pedophilia?

Frank Beddor: Totally wrong.

Alex Ness: Others suggest that the family removed all other photos because since children are innocent there is no worries there in photoing them but other sorts of...

Frank Beddor: There is evidence the family did destroy pages from his diaries -- so what were they hiding?

Alex Ness: It seems to be that they tried to remove any untowards evidence that he liked adult women as well so all that seems to be left were the then considered innocent images of children.

Frank Beddor: or...any evidence of Alyss Heart...muse.

Alex Ness: Absolutely, can we discuss you a bit?

Frank Beddor: A bit.

Alex Ness: You skied.

Frank Beddor: Yes.

Alex Ness: Won world championships in freestyle.

Frank Beddor: Yes.

Alex Ness: Was freestyle new then?



Frank Beddor: Pretty much.

Alex Ness: So you were a great athlete?

Frank Beddor: For a time.

Alex Ness: Is that a bit of an allegory for yourself, a great mind, but who sees things a bit different? Just like in skiing you did things a bit different?

Frank Beddor: I'll take that.

Alex Ness: So within the profession of a writer, you are more of an artist, than a story teller?

Frank Beddor: I'd have to disagree and say more of an inventor.

Alex Ness: And to that extent, is that why you wanted impressionistic Ben Templesmith to illustrate your story Hatter M? You wanted an artistic free spirit to capture that inventive energy?

Frank Beddor: Yes -- very much so.

Alex Ness: I love Ben's work.

Frank Beddor: Nice transition.

Alex Ness: No question about it for me, Ben Templesmith's work is great, but many are confused by it they see it as being too moody and less sequential a to b.

Frank Beddor: I've heard from both sides on this -- I personally love how he captures the mood -- issue 2 might win the others over.

Alex Ness: Mood cuts both ways I think those who enjoy the full gauntlet of emotion tend to be moved by his work those who do not see smudgey dark colors with scribbles.

Frank Beddor: Some seem to prefer the simplicity of detail and concrete lines -- maybe it helps them envision the world better -- while others like the atmosphere.

Alex Ness: I read that a university researcher studying fractals found that Jackson Pollacks work is a perfect example of fractal logic so even when something seems chaotic, a mess, in the hands of a master the moodiness of a work is a logic of its own.

Frank Beddor: Picasso.

Alex Ness: or Dali it all works on its own internal logic.

Frank Beddor: Dali is one of my biggest inspirations for LGW.

Alex Ness: I can see that. Which harkens back to me seeing you as an artistic writer, than a story teller and you seeing it as inventive

Frank Beddor: tomatoes -- tomAtoes

Alex Ness: potatoes - hash brown

Frank Beddor: ha ha ha

Alex Ness: Mmmmm I am hungry now.

Frank Beddor: I was hungry when I started

Alex Ness: Dali as an influence is instructive for readers because his surreal work was a hyper view of reality if you submit Alice in Wonderland to Hyper reality you get LGW.

Frank Beddor: I like that.

Alex Ness: Quote it on your next cover.

Frank Beddor: Thank you -- I will.

Alex Ness: Woo hoo.

Should we go forth or are you happy with this

Frank Beddor: Lead on ... very happy.

Alex Ness: So why do a comic of your work what about that medium is interesting to you

Frank Beddor: Hatter M the comic seemed like a necessary, organic progression from LGW by doing the Hatter M as a comic series I could connect to and expand upon the universe of the Looking Glass Wars

Alex Ness: When you grew up in Minnesota did you read comics?

Frank Beddor: I came to comics later in life..

Alex Ness: What artists , writers and titles particularly moved you?

Frank Beddor: Not really into super heroes -- I like Alan Moore, Grant Morrison... Frank Miller...right now I'm reading Captain Carrot and the amazing Zoo Crew in the Oz-Wonderland war trilogy.

Alex Ness: Nice, I think it was brilliant for what it was.

Frank Beddor: Absolutely.



Alex Ness: So you moved to comics organically from books or is it that comics are hand held paper movies?

You are in hollywood...

Frank Beddor: True

Alex Ness: ...you have produced THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MARY

Frank Beddor: I like visuals

Alex Ness: ... So are comics movies with lower cost outlay?

Frank Beddor: Yes -- I produced MARY

Alex Ness: and smaller staff?

Did Stiller's scrotum ever heal from that terrible injury?

Frank Beddor: Actually I was the stunt double on that -- and yes I'm okay -- just had a baby.

Alex Ness: Yeeeeeeeoouch that was a moment every man experienced but never wanted to see on screen. Well done!

Frank Beddor: Thank you.

Alex Ness: Hatter M sold out.

Frank Beddor: Indeed.

Alex Ness: And #2 approaches

Frank Beddor: Yes March 8.

Alex Ness: Let us suggest that the series sells out and there is a tpb and all is well

Frank Beddor: Let us hope

Alex Ness: Do you foresee more comic work?

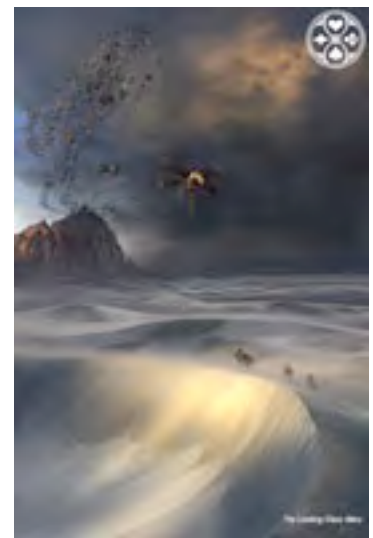
Frank Beddor: Yes --

Alex Ness: More LGW?

Frank Beddor: Series on Redd's reign is in pre- and two more series on...

Alex Ness: Is Templesmith attached?

Frank Beddor: Hatter's Search -- one set in 19th century Asia and one in America during the Civil War
Yes, Templesmith is in, as far as I know --





Alex Ness: I hope those who enjoy Hatter M read LGW because the two together are fabulous and since I am saying that what about a LGW movie?

Frank Beddor: I just completed a script -- I tell the story in a different timeframe -- it begins on the day of the adult Alyss's wedding--

Alex Ness: How would you cast it?

Frank Beddor: And we use flashback for the childhood scenes . We need to go on a worldwide search for the perfect Alyss. Daniel Day Lewis as the Hatter.

Alex Ness: Ooh ooh perfect image ala his appearance in Gangs of NY?

Frank Beddor: Any suggestions?

Alex Ness: ME! I will do any role!

Frank Beddor: assss...?

Alex Ness: So long as it pays, ... Chesshire Cat LGW.

Frank Beddor: Good one -- or maybe wigbeast

Alex Ness: Any thing just remember I am 6'4" bald, ugly and large.

Frank Beddor: Okay...the cat.

Alex Ness: As someone who has been involved in many aspects of film making do you forsee being the producer director screenplay fellow? and talent too?

Frank Beddor: In my dream I'm alyss or do you mean king of the world?

Alex Ness: I mean if you sell the script and it gets made do you want control overthe making of the film

Frank Beddor: I want to follow my vision through all of the mediums

Alex Ness: I think that you have a chance with all of the cgi to make everything work into a wondrous film...

Frank Beddor: Thank you

Alex Ness: So long as you cast me

Frank Beddor: Meooowww

Alex Ness: So when does LGW the book arrive in the US?

Frank Beddor: Sept 2006

Alex Ness: When does volume two hit the stands in UK?

Frank Beddor: Spring 07

Alex Ness: And why do Americans HAVE TO WAIT? GOD BLESS AMERICA!!!

Frank Beddor: US publishers kept saying no...UK said yes first GOD BLESS AMERICA!

Alex Ness: Damn... well. God Save the Queen, then.

Frank Beddor: LONG LIVE ALYSS!



FINAL THOUGHTS:

Thank you Frank Beddor. For a whole lot of things.