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OBS EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW: FRANK BEDDOR

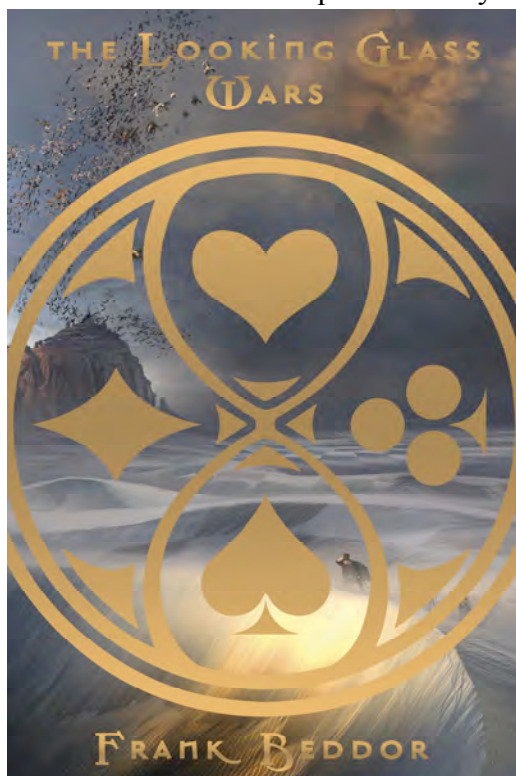
Author: krystal109 | Filed under: Exclusive Interviews, News Blog

What if every fairy tale we knew was true, but someone had written it down wrong? After all the Brother's Grimm simply went around writing folklore and fairy tales they heard through word of mouth. Frank Beddor knows what would happen, for he tells the true tale of Alyss and her Wonderland; a world where Imagination rules and no one is safe under Redd's rule.

Frank Beddor had scaled the heights of professional skiing and filmmaking before deciding to become an author. This transformation was born of "an odd, empty feeling" and a serendipitous whisper of inspiration.

After the global success of "There's Something About Mary," he formed Automatic Pictures, over which he still presides, to develop creative properties. "After 'Mary' I put a bunch of projects into development," he says. "At the same time, though, I was coming to realize that, as a producer, you're a facilitator for the creative team, but what I really wanted to be was a creator. Once that seed had been planted in my mind, it was impossible to shake it loose. Of course it's

great to have a hit; it's great to make money, but the work I was doing was not satisfying me."



Read the rest of Frank's bio [here](#).

OBS: A quick question from one of our followers, Hannah: What gave you the inspiration to reimagine a timeless classic like Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass? Could you quickly recap the story for anyone who hasn't heard it already?

Frank: Dear Hannah...

A number of years ago I was in London for the European premiere of THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MARY. I went to the British Museum and saw an exhibit of ancient cards. For instance, Napoleon hired artists to hand paint depictions of his many victories in battle. But what caught my attention, at the very end of the exhibit, was an incomplete deck of cards illuminated by an unusual

glow, almost as though they 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' 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' 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!



OBS: The art of LGW is extremely stylized and unique to this tale. What can you tell us about the artist, concepts and your influence on the final overall style of the LGW?

Frank: There have been a number of great artists working on the various elements of the LGW and Hatter series. As I often mention, art has been a big part of the process of writing the

Looking Glass Wars trilogy. From the very beginning I have engaged artists to visualize what I am writing. This has resulted in the project generating a continuous stream of amazing art that is used in everything from book covers to a scrapbook containing the lost art of Princess Alyss. My influence begins when I call an artist and ask if they would like to work on a particular piece. I try to explain the concept I have in mind and inspire the artist as much as I can – and then I let go – fully expecting to love what they do. My choice of artist, the inspiration and art direction I pass on and the expectation of the ‘marvelous’ occurring has worked quite a few wonders over the years.

OBS: As someone who has a background in film, you understand the visual side of media. Did this influence the way you wrote the LGW? For example, did you think of them in terms of storyboards before you started writing or did you just see it as you wrote them?

Frank: Oh absolutely. I have mentioned in a lot of interviews that my visual language is based in film and that’s my starting point for creating. Over the years this ‘language’ has been enriched and broadened by working with my editors and publishers for the prose and of course, in creating the comic books and graphic novels.

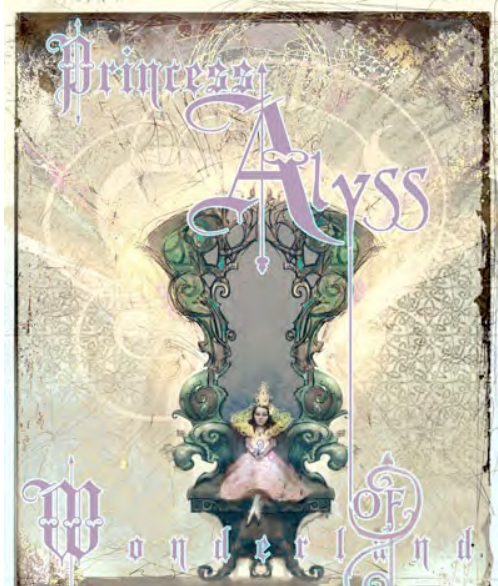


OBS: There have been a lot of Lewis Carroll’s Alice in Wonderland adaptations recently (SyFy’s Alice and Tim Burton’s Alice in Wonderland) and they seem to be met with positive reviews, but yours is not an adaptation, it’s a whole other world and personal tale of struggle and imagination. Do you think this is why you have received some negative reaction from Carroll fan’s?

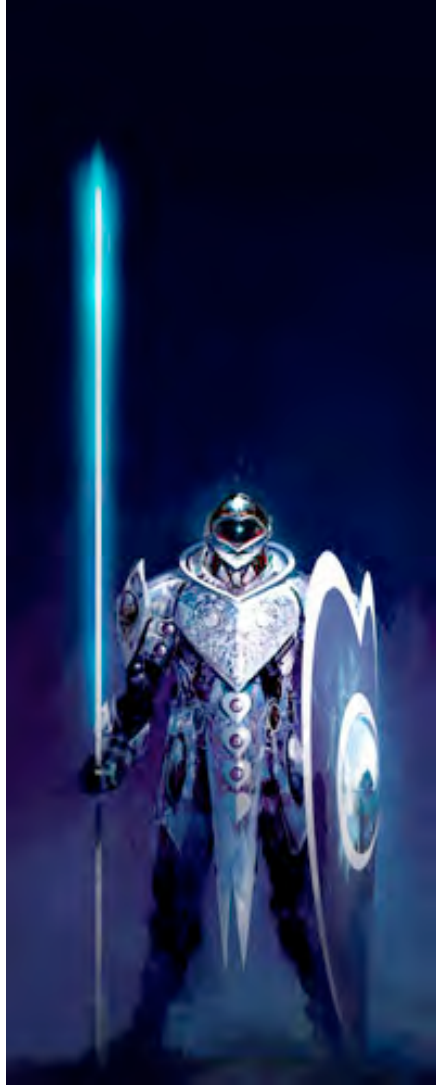
Frank: Maybe to a small degree. But, at the same time, many of my most supportive and ardent fans are also fans of Lewis Carroll’s books. With the exception of a small lunatic fringe of the Lewis Carroll Society, I have been encouraged by most to go further and deeper in revealing Alyss’s Wonderland. If readers are a true fan of Wonderland and my books have any resonance for them, I think they are happy to finally have more to explore and enjoy than Lewis Carroll initially provided.

OBS: Despite those negative comments from Carroll fans, you have also pulled in a lot of fans of the classic tale. Did you read Lewis Carroll’s Alice in Wonderland in your childhood and did you like it? Did you read it again when you were writing the LGW or did you want to stay away from the classic as much as possible?

Frank: My grandmother (whose name is actually Alice) insisted on reading it to me when I was about 10. It was a hot summer day and all the other kids were at the pool. Needless to probably say, it wasn’t a treasured memory. Since then, I have read the book as an adult to attempt to further explore



and decode the mystery of what Alyss told Carroll and how he chose to interpret it for his vision of Wonderland. This is a fascinating manner of reading the book since it is sort of a reading between the lines, searching for clues and literary slips that further validate the Looking Glass Wars thesis that Lewis Carroll didn't tell Alyss the story of Wonderland...she told him!



OBS: Since you're currently working on making LGW into a movie, who do you see starting in the major roles? Would you prefer to cast newcomers, seasoned actors or have you not thought about it at all?

Frank: 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

Andy Serkis (aka Golum!) as The Cat

Joe Anderson as Dodge

Clive Owen, Robert Downey Jr. as Hatter Madigan

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.

OBS: Visual effects and the use of 3D is so common in films today, do you think you will utilize CGI and/or 3D?

Frank: I'm certain CGI, 3D and no doubt amazing technical marvels not even invented will all be used to bring Alyss'

Wonderland to vivid life.



OBS: What question are you tired of having people ask when it comes to LGW?

Frank: "When is the movie coming out?" While I really appreciate their enthusiasm I dislike disappointing people because I cannot say "Next Summer!" I don't think anyone wants to see the film more than me but a film of this scope is a complex assemblage of people and business and it

takes time. Rest assured, I work everyday to push it closer to reality.

OBS: What's the one question you wish people would ask about LGW and what is your answer to it?

Frank: Thank you for pushing me to think about this. I didn't have an easy answer but knew there was something at the edge of my consciousness that I wanted to put out there for others to share. Basically, after all these years, I wish someone would ask me why Wonderland is so Anglo-Centric. Because if we think about this... Wonderland should be beyond one culture here on earth. Why did Alyss exit the Pool of Tears in England? Why not in Japan? Perhaps another Alyss did. What if I had found the deck of cards in Japan? Would that have revealed an entirely different version of Wonderland? We all read a lot of Sci-Fi and fantasy about parallel worlds... but what about parallel psyches and parallel cultures? I think that maybe there are Wonderlands stacked upon Wonderlands each serving and reflecting the parallel psyche/culture they send Imagination to. Because after all, at the same time we all share so much we are all so different. I wish everyone would ponder this question and come to your own conclusions because I think the answer is... many answers.

OBS: What is the one thing you want to say to your fans?

Frank: If you don't know this yet please commit it to memory now. You and your enthusiasm, energy and Imagination are as vital to the Looking Glass Wars as any word ever written or book ever published. Without you, Alyss and her story would have remained hidden in the dust of history. Thank you!

Thanks Frank for the awesome interview. I have read through the first book and I'm addicted. Now I have to buy all the graphic novels for Hatter Mattigan and find a new copy of the Princess Alyss in Wonderland book. If you like Carrol's Alice in Wonderland you will love this action-packed tale of the true Alyss and her adventures of pain and hardship as she tries to regain her Queendom.

You can check out more about LGW's here:
www.lookingglasswars.com/

By the way we will be doing Alice in Wonderland as our April Young Adult Book Club, so come back and compare the classic with Frank's truthful tale.

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Tags: alice in wonderland, alyss, Frank Beddor, Looking Glass Wars