

Short Subjects

Interview with *Maleficent* Costume Designer

Oliver Garcia talks about the collaborative process for an iconic Disney costume.



In an online Harpers Bazaar interview done in conjunction with the release of the movie, designer Oliver Garcia discusses his involvement in the process and behind-the-scenes information about how the costuming team reimagined the iconic costume first worn in the classic 1959 animated feature.

According to Garcia, the main goal was to inject a more contemporary design into the classical look. Much of the effort focused on using techniques to manipulate a wide range of fabrics. “We had to work those elements in a more fashion way, rather than the traditional costume way,” he said.

Oliver credited the fashion research he did to look at contemporary fashion designers who work with the same kinds of materials, including ones who are not big names. For example, according to Oliver, “We looked at a Japanese designer who does a lot of accessories and footwear where she

uses hair and horns, natural elements that she incorporates in her designs.”

When asked what was the most challenging piece to work on, he responded that it was the final one that they called the “battle costume.” “The silhouette stays the same throughout the film except when it comes to the end, which is where the real *Maleficent* comes out. It reveals her body. “The silhouette was quite fitted so it was a big challenge in order to design that costume,” he said. He also revealed that other than the wings, everything else about the costumes is real rather than enhanced with CGI.

Read the full interview with Oliver Garcia in Harpers Bazaar [online](#).

Live Animation Reference Model Videos

YouTube video provides rare footage of reference models for animated characters.

Disney animators relied on live actors in costumes as reference models when drawing their characters. Much of this footage has rarely been seen outside the studios because they considered the to be ephemera. Some of it has been lost or destroyed before it could be archived.

Now a movie buff who goes by “disneydreams89” has posted a ten minute video that makes this reference footage available to costumers and historians.

Starting with *Snow White*, the video shows reference footage of actors going through the same motions for the classic animated movies as their animated counter-parts. The comparison of the actor and character animation makes for a fascinating study.

Some of the actors were already well known and some were just getting started but became famous later on. For example, Marge Champion, the well-known dancer, served as an live action model for “*Snow White*.”

The footage may be of particular interest to those who compete in costume masquerades, because the same kind of broad action required for animation also reads well from a masquerade stage.

View this historical footage of these live animation models and their animated counterparts on [YouTube](#).



Disney Paris Costuming Department Head Speaks

Costume designer Sue LeCash describes her European “Creative Costume Department.”



According to Sue LeCash her job at Disneyland Paris is to design all the costumes for shows, parades, and everything that is entertainment. She also manages a team of costumers.

LeCash, who was born in England, studied at Saint Martin's School of Art in London as well as fashion, but felt drawn to theatrical and musical costumes. “I was lucky to immediately find a job in one of the biggest television studios,” she said. After doing costumes for a lot of American television, she was recruited to Euro Disney in 1992, prior to the park opening.

How she designs costumes depends on their purpose. Ones from films draw their inspiration from their source, while ones for particular themes like Christmas or Halloween draw on imagination and history.

A highlight of Disneyland Paris is the “animatronic” costumes that are designed just for the Park “They are in fact much more elaborate than the ones in the other Disney Parks,” according to LeCash.

Read the full interview with Sue LeCache on the Designing Disney [website](#).

Sketch to Still: Costumes for Saving Mr. Banks

Website includes costume sketches and production stills for Disney/Travers film.



Costume designer Daniel Orlandi's costumes from 1960s Los Angeles for the movie, *Saving Mr. Banks* drew on fashion magazines for inspiration, according to a *Vanity Fair* article online.

Orlandi faced several challenges. Author Pamela Travers' figure was slightly matronly, and Orlandi took pains to design clothing that hid actress Emma Thompson's legendary hourglass figure. And despite its extensive archives, the studio does not have any of Disney's suits. His family donated them to Goodwill after his death.

The most difficult costuming was for Disney's and Travers' visit to Disneyland, which required creating over 1000 costumes including 400 for kids. They also had to recreate all costumed characters in their period correct form, since the studio had no vintage costumes from the period.

The article also lets readers browse through Orlandi's design sketches from the movie for both the 1960s and the 1900s, and view short commentaries. Read the full *Vanity Fair* article about the costume design process, and see Orlandi's sketches [here](#).

Cartoon Princesses and Real Life Counterparts

Fashion photographer's series of images show his take on real life Disney princesses.



Los Angeles fashion photographer Ryan Astamendi has created a series of images where real women depict Disney princesses. His surprisingly accurate photos puts models into perfect costume, makeup and hair to create what looks like the movie screen come to life, even though the models vary in their real-life likeness to the characters.

According to Astamendi in describing his “Sleeping Beauty” shoot, “I put between 30 and 40 hours of work into this, which seems to be the norm for these Disney character projects.” Coincidentally, the model's name was Princess.

Astamendi's fans include Disney director John Musker (*Little Mermaid*, *Aladin*), who emailed him to say he loved the princess photos and to ask when he would be photographing Ariel.

View some of Astamendi's images in a pictorial article about his work published on *the Chive* [website](#). His work is also included in the book *The Art of the Disney Princess* (ISBN 978-1423123712).