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The Daily Dragon

Dragon Con 2023

Serkis and Wood Charm the Room by Debbie Yutko

Elijah Wood began as the sole guest at the beginning of the panel “A Spot with Dot: A Conversation with Andy Serkis and Elijah Wood” on Sunday at 1PM in the packed Marriott Atrium Ballroom. Taking his co-panelist’s temporary absence in stride, Wood said, “This is my first Dragon Con,” and added, “I love it... You can really feel the community here... it’s so awesome!”

Fielding his first question, which was when he decided he wanted to be an actor, he spoke about how his mother thought acting in commercials might be “a good outlet” for all his energy.

When Stevenson asked how Wood kept his creative energy, he replied that it was “different every time,” and that there were always new challenges. He admitted to being nervous at the beginning of every project, worrying that he’d get fired and likening it to the beginning of the school year, but he added that he always tries to step out of his comfort zone.

At this point, Andy Serkis arrived. Wood jumped up, and the two gave each other an enthusiastic bear hug. After a quick apology for being late, Serkis answered the decide-to-be-an-actor question. While studying art in college, he designed sets for the theater students, ended up with a few bit parts, then got a bigger part as a kid with no idea what to do after graduating and who held his teachers at ransom. That was when he declared his desire to become an actor to his parents, who were



unsurprisingly worried. But look how it turned out. Serkis said he keeps his creativity by working with amazing people. He hopes to touch people on an emotional basis. Wood was surprised that Serkis also had the same fear when beginning a new project, and the two actors shared a you-too? moment.

What do they look for when offered a role? “Gut response,” Wood said. Sometimes it’s the filmmaker, sometimes the script. “You know in your heart of hearts” that this is something he shouldn’t pass up.

Stevenson asked what they’d choose as their theme song to be played when they entered a room. Wood said a piece of jazz music. Serkis promptly sang out, “What is love...” He thought Wood should use Bill Evans. “And then,” Serkis said, “you walk in...” He proceeded to mimic the part of a bass instrument, a slow dum-dum-dum-da-dum. To the crowd’s delight, Wood hurried offstage then swaggered back to the table with Serkis’s accompaniment.

As for hobbies or what they do for fun, Serkis thinks he might return to his art someday, although he joked that his wife would never hang anything of his on the wall. Wood likes to collect records, but couldn’t name a favorite. “Bill Evans?” Serkis wondered with a laugh.

If they could give their younger selves advice, they agreed that they should have been better about answering emails and getting back to people. Wood said he tends to live in the present and has thousands of unread emails. He’d also tell himself to keep learning to play the piano and to learn a foreign language (his wife speaks seven). He wishes now that he could play a musical instrument well.

Serkis mentioned several British film directors who inspired him, but his “single, most life-changing mentor has been Peter Jackson.” Jackson showed how to “make something personal and exciting on a huge canvas.” Woods noted that many actors have been like helpful to him. “They elevate you.”

Cyborg Guests at Dragon Con by Debbie Yutko

The audience waited eagerly for the panel “Colby in Dolby: with Lee Majors and Lindsay Wagner” on Sunday at 10AM in the Marriott Imperial Ballroom. Since Wagner arrived first, Colby asked her what it’s like to know she’s been a role model for many years. Surprisingly, Wagner considered the role carefully before accepting it because she wanted to be sure she could influence the role and make sure it had a female perspective and wasn’t just a woman plopped into a male role. For this reason, she only accepted the role when they agreed to give her collaboration rights. She wanted women to have permission to do more and be more than they might have imagined, but she didn’t expect it to become as influential as it did.

Wagner had just finished her reply when Majors arrived. As he approached the stage steps, the spry 84-year-old abruptly shifted into the slow-motion run easily recognizable from his role as the bionically enhanced Steve Austin—arms pumping and face set in concentration. The audience cheered and broke into laughter at his antics.

Colby asked Majors what he thought about the influence of his famous metal-man role. Majors said he really hadn’t seen it that way. Back when it started in 1963, he said, they made 39–40 shows per season. He contrasted then to now,



when complete seasons can be a few as eight episodes. The script was originally called “Cyborg,” and Majors recalled working eight to ten hours a day. He considers himself lucky to have gotten the role and said he was “just an ordinary guy from Kentucky.”

Colby asked Wagner who had inspired or influenced her to develop the character of Sommers. She replied that actors dig into themselves. In her teen years, she had some health problems that she was able to resolve after a boyfriend’s mother introduced her to holistic thinking, meditation, and medicine. She would visualize seeing her body healed and use the power of her mind to separate herself from the illness. Wagner said she has a fifth-gear personality and tends to get through problems by locking away her emotions. She’s learned to deal with her emotions in the moment, and she got involved in teaching these techniques to others. “Treat yourself well,” she recommended.

Majors said the actors he worked with had a big impact on him. He mentioned Barbara Stanwick, whose advice included to always be on time, to know his lines, and to keep his mouth shut. He reminisced about his first movie, where he worked with Joan Crawford and was asked to ad lib. He had no idea what that was at the time, but he tried. The line never made it into the show—Crawford’s character killed him before the initial credits, in which his name wasn’t even mentioned.

If they were to teach a workshop at Dragon Con, Colby asked, what would it be? “I’m way past workshops,” Major joked. “I’m just looking for the next job.” Unfortunately, he’s suffering from macular degeneration, but he still managed to show his comedic side by pointing out that the audience probably wouldn’t know if he was sleeping or not. A fan shouted out, “We can rebuild him!” Majors joined in with the laughter, then added, “I’m just happy to be here.”

Schedule Changes

Hy = Hyatt Hil = Hilton
M = Marriott W = Westin
CG = Courtland Grand
AM2/3 = AmericasMart Bldg 2/3

The following previously confirmed guests are unfortunately not able to attend Dragon Con 2023: **Carlo Barberi, Bruce Boxleitner, Nathan Fillion, Scott Grimes, Rebecca Moesta, Larry Niven, Jodie Whittaker.**

CANCELLATIONS

Chesya Burke will not be on "Babel 17: the Works of Samuel Delany" Monday 11:30AM, Embassy AB (Hy).

Hi Barbie!

2023 Dragon Award Winners

Best Science Fiction Novel: *The Icarus Plot* by Timothy Zahn
Best Fantasy Novel (Including Paranormal): *The Witch King* by Martha Wells
Best Young Adult / Middle Grade Novel: *The Golden Enclaves* by Naomi Novik
Best Alternate History Novel: *Lost In Time* by A.G. Riddle
Best Horror Novel: *A House With Good Bones* by T. Kingfisher
Best Illustrative Cover: *Tower of Silence* by Kurt Miller
Best Comic Book or Graphic Novel: *Dune: House Harkonnen* by Brian Her-

bert, Kevin J Anderson, Michael Shelfer
Best Science Fiction or Fantasy TV Series, TV or Internet: *The Sandman*, Netflix
Best Science Fiction or Fantasy Movie: Dungeons & Dragons: *Honor Among Thieves* by Jonathan Goldstein, John Francis Daley
Best Digital Game: *The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom*, Nintendo EPD
Best Tabletop Game: *Magic the Gathering: The Lord of the Rings: Tales of Middle-earth*, Wizards of the Coast
The Julie Award: Marty Krofft. The Julie

was established in 1998 in honor of legendary comics editor Julius Schwartz, and is given for universal achievement across multiple genres.

Eugie Foster Memorial Award for Short Fiction: "Quandary Aminu vs The Butterfly Man" by Rich Larson. The Eugie Award, celebrating the best of short innovative fiction, is named for Nebula winner Eugie Foster.

Mike Resnick Memorial Award: "For the Great and Immortal" by Daniel Burnbridge (South Africa). For the best unpublished science fiction short story by a new author.

Almost Famous: Building A Brand by Jared Austin

"The Writer vs Author: Building a YA Brand" panel in Marriott A707, Sunday at 1 PM, featured authors Sean Fletcher, A.J. Hartley, Sherrilyn Kenyon, and Mari Mancusi. Moderator Natalie Simpson started off asking about the differences between writing when you're learning to write versus writing new books post-publication.

Mancusi asserted that people don't appreciate the pre-published writing experience. Everyone who isn't published is focused on the goal of being a published author and what that would be like, but "writing before all that is pure and you can just enjoy the process." It will never be the same after publication, because with future novels you're writing under deadline, or with the worry of how people will respond to what you've written. Kenyon added that she's reliving the pre-publication

life with her son, who is seeking publication, and has to encourage him to not listen to the negative voices in his head. Simpson then asked the authors what it was like to juggle writing and having a full-time job before they were successful enough to be a full-time author. Kenyon was first published at twenty years old but didn't become a full-time author until she was forty. And she didn't quit working, her company had layoffs and her boss chose her as one of the people to be laid off because she had a job as an author. Hartley wrote for twenty years before he was first published, but he was a Shakespeare professor, which gave him a lot of flexibility to write around teaching. When his son was first born, he'd already written eight books without successful publication. He was considering giving up writing altogether

because he knew he didn't have the same free time anymore. After speaking with his wife, he decided to give writing one more year. During that year he wrote three books, the first two of which didn't sell, but the third sold in 28 languages.

Simpson then shifted the focus to marketing and asked the panelists to dispel some myths about author marketing. All the authors agreed that publishers do not know how to market or make much effort to market. They expect the author to market. Kenyon had a sister who taught marketing who taught her. At one point she was building microsites for movies and had an epiphany to do the same for her book series. She told her fans about her site and they went out and told their friends. They caused the site to crash as she became one of first authors to go viral.

2023 Masquerade Winners

Most Inspirational: Carol Williams, Phoenix Rising from the Ashes
Best Horror: Charlie Blood, Jibaro, *Love, Death + Robots*
Best Inside Joke: DragonConTV Dragon and Yip Yips
Best in Anime: Patrick Wallace, Howl, *Howl's Moving Castle*
Best Mashup: Brian K. Johnson, Mando Maar Vin
Novice: Shawn Logan Cunningham, Rocket Racoon, *Guardians of the Galaxy*
Journeyman: Claire Fletcher, Mister Mistoffelees, *Cats*



Master: Sarah Lemay, Notre Dame Cathedral, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*
Best In Show: Michelle Dempsey, La'an Noonien-Singh as Princess Thalia, *Star Trek*

Fifty Ways, More or Less, to Leave Your Living by Amy Herring

Cat Rambo, author, writing teacher, and past president of Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America (SFWA) left her job at Microsoft twenty-some years ago. She worked at anything writing-related to follow her dream to be a full-time writer.

By her example, Rambo inspired writers attending the Two-Day Intensive Writers Workshop, directed by Jody

Lynn Nye. Rambo also attended a workshop taught at Dragon Con by the late A.C. (Ann) Crispin. Crispin recommended that Rambo join SFWA as soon as she was eligible and volunteer (Crispin set an example as a founder of SFWA's *Writer Beware*.)

Nye asked her what had helped her most in establishing her fiction-writing career. Rambo said that her prior work

as a tech writer proved to be very valuable. From that job, she became used to working with editors. They knew what made writing better.

Rambo said you can't rely on a muse who may not arrive. She treats writing as her job and keeps several different projects in progress. Successful people tend to be hard working. Paraphrasing Ralph Waldo Emerson, she added, the

Daily Dragon Tweets

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Art Show Charity Auction

Come score an awesome piece of art while supporting our 2023 charity! Choose from original pieces as well as prints from so many of our wonderful artists. Monday 11AM, Grand Hall C (Hyatt).

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Robot Battles™

Where homemade robots battle for mechanical supremacy. You'll come for the metal-on-metal mayhem & stay for the crunching carnage! Setup for builders at 10AM. Monday 11AM-3:30PM, Regency VI-VII (Hyatt).

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Jim Henson Trivia with Center for Puppetry Arts

Are you the ultimate Henson geek? Prove it! Experts from the Center for Puppetry Arts will test your knowledge of America's most famous puppeteer, and the winners will walk away with some sweet Henson and Center for Puppetry Arts swag. Monday 11:30AM, A704 (Marriott).

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Comicbook Quick-Sketch Contest

Our quick-sketch competition! Prizes for best individual character and best comic page. Monday 11:30AM, The Learning Center (Hyatt).

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Win, Lose, or Draw: Dragon Con Style

The traditional game where players try to draw things and get their teammates to guess them. The winning team will receive prizes! Monday 4PM, Embassy AB (Hyatt).

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