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Disney's live action The Little Mermaid: Production facts versus rumors



by Victoria Davis 1 month ago

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From casting to release dates, there's been a lot of speculation about Disney's live-action The Little Mermaid. So, what's really going on with production?

Since 2016, there has been news circulating about the creation of a live action version of Disney's [The Little Mermaid](#), from lead roles to release dates. But over the years, these claims

have almost turned to rumor since **two additional** *Little Mermaid* live action projects have been mistaken for Disney's still in-process film.

The **first project** reported was a partnership between Universal studios and Working Title, with Rebecca Thomas as director and a screenplay by Richard Curtis. Buzz about the movie increased when **Chloe Grace Moretz** was officially given the lead role as Ariel and **CinemaBlend** announced Universal and Working Title had chosen to tell the story from the pages of the **original tale** by Hans Christian Anderson rather than the musical Disney adaptation.



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Moretz expressed a great deal of enthusiasm for the project, telling **Entertainment Tonight**, "...a modern, revisionist tale is kind of what we're going after...and making it progressive for young women in this day and age."

But that was two summers ago, and Universal's *Little Mermaid* has suffered several setbacks since then, from Sofia Coppola **dropping out** of production due to "creative differences," to the team's constant cycling of writers, exiting Kelly Marcel (*Fifty Shades of Grey*) and Caroline Thompson (*Edward Scissorhands*) and bringing on *Love Actually*'s Richard Curtis.



The worst downfall for the project came last fall when Moretz **announced** her desire to take a break from acting, and thus left a mermaid-shaped void in Universal's team. Since then, the project has been in **limbo**.

Redemption for Little Mermaid fans came with the trailer release of Conglomerate Productions and Kingsway Productions' own independent live action ***The Little Mermaid***. Set in Mississippi, this story follows a young girl and her journalist uncle, played by William Moseley, as they search to track down a woman rumored to be the real-life Little Mermaid. *Downton Abbey*'s Poppy Drayton stars as Elizabeth, the "performing" mermaid whose soul was stolen by a circus ringmaster. Shirley MacLaine also has a role in the film as a mysterious lady who seems to know a great deal about the Little Mermaid's story.





The film, whose production was kept quiet until the trailer release, just swam into theaters last month. While some [reviewed](#) the film as a perfect father-daughter date, others showed no restraint in expressing their disappointment in the movie, claiming that it is “Not The Little Mermaid.”

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It's possible the distaste for this second production came from viewers believing this was the long-awaited, and under-budgeted, Disney live-action film. Clarity and excitement once again ensued last week, when rumors surfaced about Zendaya's possible [involvement](#) with Disney's production of the romantic, under sea tale.

The *Greatest Showman* star was allegedly offered the [lead role](#) of by Disney studios, who may be taking a “new route” with their adaptation of Hans Christian Andersen's story by casting a woman of color as Ariel.

Disney and reps for the actress have not commented on the news as of yet but That Hashtag Show claims, should the report be true, the role of King Triton would also go to an actor of color.

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While [Lindsay Lohan](#) did briefly offer up her voice to Ariel's character on Instagram—should Disney decide to recruit *Beauty and the Beast* (2017) director Bill Condon—the moment was shortly lived and news of Lohan's pitch has died down since.

What is certain about Disney's upcoming live action *The Little Mermaid*, third in the project pool, is that it will be a re-imagining of the studio's golden-age animated classic. Though there is no official release date, Alan Menken and Lin-Manuel Miranda (*Hamilton* and *Moana* songwriter) are [officially tapped](#) to compose the film's music, while Rob Marshall is set to [helm the film](#) from a script by Jane Goldman (*X-Men: Days Of Future Past*). Production is expected to take [place](#) in Puerto Rico and Cape Town Africa.

One way or another, Ariel will once again, at some point, be part of our worlds. When that will be has yet to be confirmed. The hope is that Disney will dedicate this time to making its new under-the-sea adventure as beautiful and heartwarming as the songs Jodi Benson sang for us all in 1989.

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The next [live-action remakes](#) coming from Disney are Tim Burton's *Dumbo*, Jon Favreau's *The Lion King*, Guy Ritchie's *Aladdin*, *Mulan* (which just recently began production) and *Maleficent 2*. What adaptation are you most excited for?

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DISNEY

What can superhero movies learn from Incredibles 2?



by Alexander Lunde 1 month ago

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Pixar's latest animated movie, *Incredibles 2*, has three key lessons for other superhero movies.

This article contains spoilers for *Incredibles 2*, and the first one. Proceed at your peril.

So, I saw *Incredibles 2* a little while ago. I liked it a lot. It's solid mid-tier Pixar, and by far my favorite superhero movie so far this year. It's also a pretty successful movie, to the tune of [more than \\$850 million and counting](#).

This got me to thinking: What did I enjoy so much about this movie, and what could other superhero movies learn from it. I came up with three key lessons I'd like other superhero movies to learn.

Lesson 1: Embrace not happening in the real world

By this, I don't mean that character's actions should be without consequences. It's important for stories that what a character does or thinks has meaning. However, filmmakers should use the freedom of not being real to dream up a truly different world.

The *Incredibles* movies happen in an imagined version of early-to-late 60's space age, complete with modern touches. The costumes have hallmarks of Jack Kirby designs. Even the most crime-ridden city in this America is building a monorail to connect it to other cities. A [monorail!](#)

It's not even the first superhero story to embrace making its own aesthetic world. The 1990's Batman's melding of Art deco cars and architecture with 90's tech was instantly iconic.

Not every superhero movie has to do this. More would be welcome.

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Lesson 2: Set-piece Ingenuity

The first *Incredibles* features some of the most dynamite and inventive set pieces I've seen in any movie. I am not alone in feeling that [Incredibles 2 set pieces](#) are some of the best that came to theaters this year. Our own [John Dotson thinks](#) that the best *Mission Impossible* stunt was the one *Incredibles 2* director Brad Bird contributed to *Ghost Protocol*.

So what are the biggest ways other superhero movies can up their game to compete? They could 1) use space in creative ways, 2) mix it up so that it's not just punching things, and 3) try to make each one at least a little different.

Let's look at the first action scene in *Incredibles 2*. *The Incredibles* are trying to stop the Underminer's gigantic drill. Dash is running ahead of the drill to save people and try to prevent damage. Elastigirl is stretch flipping through the air and helps Mr. Incredible get in. Mr. Incredible tries directly attacking the Underminer in his drill, which goes underground when he enters it.

In this scene alone, we can see how *Incredibles 2* has multiple planes of movement going on and makes the action so that it's not just punching things. While there are echoes of this action scene in two of the future set-pieces, none of them feel like a Xerox. They involve different numbers of characters, and the characters have different goals that lead to different results.



Lesson 3: Stand on your own two feet

This is a big one. I understand that Hollywood studios started a concerted effort to build their own shared universes after the success of *The Avengers*. However, current film producers often focus so much on setting up other movies, they forget to make a satisfying movie.

I was watching *Avengers: Infinity War* with a couple of coworkers and friends. One of my coworkers spent a lot of the second half of the movie asking questions. Questions like who this person was, where were they now (Wakanda), why everything in Wakanda was so advanced, etc. The whole second half of the movie, he kept needing help understanding what was going on.

I was happy to answer his questions. But the fact that this kept happening illustrates that *Avengers Infinity War* is not satisfying in a vacuum.

Watching *Incredibles 2*, I was incredibly relieved that every concept that's absolutely necessary to understanding the movie is in the movie. Because of this, I had more fun watching it than I did *Infinity War*.

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Is there anything you'd like to see in future superhero movies. Feel free to sound off in the comments below.

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