

A Mark of Excellence

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25 December 2002

Birds of Prey

Susan Young

Airdate: WB, Wed 9 Oct 2002

Featuring the voice of Mark Hamill as The Joker.

The WB's fall series premiere of "Birds of Prey" was a pleasant surprise for two reasons. One, it was a very good show. And two, it featured a very familiar voice!

Focusing on the more feminine side of New Gotham City, the show stars Ashley Scott as "Helena Kyle", daughter of "Bruce Wayne/Batman" and "Selena Kyle/Catwoman", Dina Meyer as "Barbara Gordon/Oracle", formerly known as "Batgirl", and Rachel Skarsten as "Dinah Lance", a teenager with budding psychic abilities.

The series' foundation is a complex and interesting one. In the last battle fought between Batman and The Joker in New Gotham City, The Joker escaped only to seek vengeance on Batman by destroying those

whom the Caped Crusader held dear. After murdering Selena Kyle as she walked down the street with her daughter Helena, The Joker guns down Barbara Gordon in the doorway of her own apartment. Barbara survives but her legs are paralyzed, and she must now fight crime from a wheelchair. After Bruce Wayne, not knowing he has a daughter, leaves the city, Barbara takes in Selena and trains her as Gotham's new hero, Huntress.

This history is told in flashback sequences, with narration by Ian Abercrombie, who plays Alfred Pennyworth. It is in these scenes that we are shown smoky glimpses of Roger Stoneburner, an actor/stuntman who appears as The Joker. However when The Joker speaks, the voice is unmistakably that of The Joker we already know and love!

Although he has only a few lines in the show, it was a great treat to hear Mark Hamill's voice once again as Gotham's arch villain. After Barbara

Gordon is shot, The Joker cackles "Knock, knock. Who's there? Batgirl! *Past tense!*" and his insane laughter rings out, as chilling as ever...

It appears to me, even with the brief time he is heard on this pilot, that Mark's portrayal of The Joker is still considered by many to be the best ever and strongly ties together all the formats by which the WB has brought the DC comic book legends to life on the small screen.

Considering that Dr. Harleen Quinzel (Mia Sara) is the villain behind the scenes in "Birds of Prey", there had seemed hope for further cameos by The Joker in future episodes. After all, according to the pilot, The Joker **is** alive and well, if imprisoned in another city. And we all know that Miss Quinzel, aka Harley Quinn, would do anything for her

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Notes From the Editor

Happy Holidays!

'Fast away the old year passes...'. I, for one, will be quite glad when 2002 is over. It has been my 'annus horribilis', and almost as difficult for the staff. As some of you know, among other things, I've been seriously ill a good portion of this year, which has limited a good deal what I've been able to do. The job I have is physically demanding, as well, which had left me with little energy for much else. But life is getting back on track.

Among the things that need catching up on are posting the newsletter issues on the website. I've just purchased the software needed to convert files to .pdf format, so once again, issues current and past will be accessible online. By the time you receive this newsletter, the new message board should

be up and running in the general area of mark-hamill.com. Again, it's taken longer than anticipated. As we were about to implement it, bugs were found in the program.

We're working on the updates to the credits section on the website. Real life has caused serious disruptions in staff members' lives as well. The updates are slowly being worked on, and we hope to have some additions posted within the next three months. Other changes are in the planning stages.

The fan club received a thank you note from CHPHP for our donation in honour of Mark's birthday.



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Receipt for Donation

Fed. Id. #95-4002431
June 6, 2002

Sue Depping
International Mark Hamill Fan Club
P.O. Box 287
Grand Blanc, MI 48439

Dear Sue and the International Mark Hamill Fan Club,

Thank you for your wonderful donation of Fifty (\$50.00) Dollars, which you have donated in honor of Mark Hamill's Birthday! We appreciate your generosity and thoughtfulness, which truly reflect the generous and caring spirit of Mark himself. What a beautiful way to celebrate Mark's Birthday by helping people in need - people Mark cares so much about.

With Mark's continuing support and with your help, we are assisting many children, women and men in need. We thank you for your continuing support and we look forward to continuing our work together.

FINANCIAL DONATION

\$50.00

Ron & Christine

Ron Taylor
Christine Schanes

Cc: M. Hamill

Sue, Once again we thank you for donating. Thank you for helping others? How awesome & great deed to Mark & what people in need. Love, Christine

Birds of Prey

(Continued from page 1)

"sweet Mr. J"!

Unfortunately, with cancellation looming on the horizon for "Birds of Prey," it is

unlikely that the threads of this series will be followed up.

Ed note: Sadly, this series was cancelled.

Future Watch

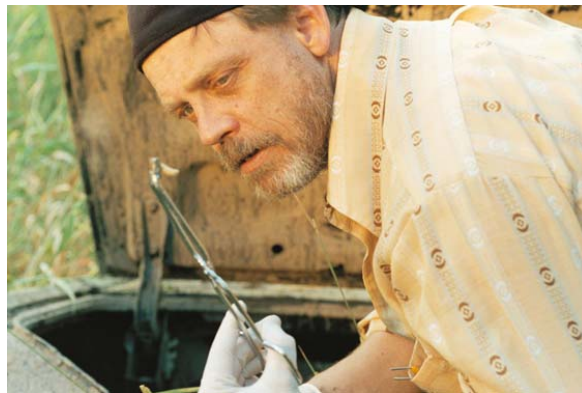
Planning on being in Florida sometime in March? You might want to make plans to see Mark in a new play, *'Six Dances Lessons in Six Weeks'* at the Coconut Grove Playhouse in Miami. Written by Richard Alfieri, who also wrote *'Harvest of Fire'* (starring Lolita Davidovich and Patty Duke) and *'Friendship in Vienna'*, (Jane Alexander and Edward Asner), the play is directed by Arthur Allan Seidleman. Mark worked with him in *'Walking Across Egypt'*.

Starring with Rue McClanahan, the play will be in preview 18-20 March, and will open 21 March 2003 for a limited run through 13 April. There is talk of a move to Broadway as well.

While *'Birds of Prey'* has been cancelled, the good news is that Mark has done work on a double Joker episode, *'Justice League Wild Card, Part Two'*. Should be interesting... the Joker neither laughs nor chuckles in it!

What if the *'Sopranos'* was done like a 60's sitcom with a

laugh track? What if *'Braveheart'* had been choreographed by Britney Spears? This is the premise behind Mark's latest project, *'The Wrong Coast'*, debuting on AMC Wednesday, 2 April 2003, 8.00 pm ET. Mark teams up with stop motion animator Carl Paolin (*'Celebrity Deathmatch'*) and writer Bob Underwood (*'Night Court'*) for AMC's first-ever original animated series, and is targeted toward adults. 'Edgy, but not mean-spirited' is how Mark describes it. He is also executive producer!



'Reeseville' (working title *'Constricted'*) is being screened the 31st of January for distributors and the press. The premiere screening will be at the Cinequest Film Festival, San Jose CA, 27 February– 9 March. While Mark's character, Zeek, has been previously described as the funeral director, he is actually the coroner. When David Meyer returns to his

hometown, he discovers his father has apparently committed suicide. Zeek begins to believe the suicide is actually murder after finding bruises on Meyer's neck, and suspects the son.



For more information and to see some trailers, check out www.welcometoreeseville.com/Index.html

Work is still continuing on *'Comic Book: The Movie'*. It is a fictional documentary, partially filmed at the San Diego Comic Con in August 2002. While many reports and articles refer to it as a 'mockumentary', that is a misnomer.

'Comic Book: The Movie' is a great adventure where we have the passion, a compass, a certain framework of what we want to achieve, but we can't totally guarantee what's going to happen at every twist and turn.'

Mark Hamill



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The Last Word...

A Mark of Excellence is the quarterly newsletter of the **International Mark Hamill Fan Club**. Yearly dues are \$15 US, and include 4 consecutive issues of the newsletter, a membership card, access to the fan club area on the website, and special mailings as appropriate.

Submissions, including photos or original artwork, are welcomed; final editing is the discretion of the editor. If you wish your photo or artwork returned please enclose a sase, and attach your name/address on the back of your submission.

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