



50 DESIGNERS

50 COSTUMES

*C*ONCEPT TO CHARACTER

Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences

# COLLEEN ATWOOD

The overall design for BIG FISH was tricky because the director, Tim Burton, wanted to weave fantasy and reality, but not have a huge separation between the two. We skipped through time from modern day back to the '30s, weaving them together in the way somebody's memory might construct it. The costume for Mister Soggybottom is actually based on an old circus photograph that Tim and I have loved for years and finally found the right movie in which to use it. The character of Soggybottom is a lawyer slash circus clown, and watching the movie the audience thinks that the hero has made him up, but at the end of the film he is revealed to be a real person. Soggy appears in the 1950s, 1970s and then at the funeral; however the time periods in the film weren't designed as consecutive chronological units, but changed scene by scene. We had so much to reveal in very small cinematic moments so that the audience didn't get dizzy every time there was a new outfit and a new period.



The clown costume was built on shoulder straps with a wide hoop for the waist, and worn by a little person named Deep Roy. It had a cage built inside it, a little box that could take the weight of a dog. Actually the dog was really great and Deep Roy was really great with him, and the costume worked like a charm. The dog would stay in there and come out on cue. I took an old thin cotton chintz Halloween fabric, silkscreened it to get the over-scale circus pattern that I needed, then hand sewed sequins on the edges of the diamonds to make it even more magical. The other costumes in the scene were recreations of '50s circus troupe costumes, using actual contemporary circus performers. I met amazing people who were third and fourth generation circus people and I really learned how a circus worked. For their costumes it wasn't different than designing a dance costume or any other functional costume. In the beginning they were a little hesitant, because they really wanted to wear their own trademark ensembles; but at the end of the day they were all really happy.

## · FILMOGRAPHY ·

BRING ON THE NIGHT (1985) · MANHUNTER (1986) · SOMEONE TO WATCH OVER ME (1987)  
 MARRIED TO THE MOB (1988) · TORCH SONG TRILOGY (1988) · THE HANDMAID'S TALE (1990)  
 JOE VERSUS THE VOLCANO (1990) · EDWARD SCISSORHANDS (1990) · THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS (1991)  
 RUSH (1991) · LORENZO'S OIL (1992) · PHILADELPHIA (1993) · WYATT EARP (1994)  
 ED WOOD (1994) · LITTLE WOMEN (1994) [A.A. NOMINATION] · THE JUROR (1996)  
 THAT THING YOU DO (1996) · MARS ATTACKS (1996) · BUDDY (1997) · GATTACA (1997)  
 FALLEN (1998) · BELOVED (1998) [A.A. NOMINATION] · SLEEPY HOLLOW (1999) [A.A. NOMINATION]  
 THE MEXICAN (2001) · PLANET OF THE APES (2001) · CHICAGO (2002) [A.A. WINNER]  
 BIG FISH (2003) · LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS (2004)



Black and off-white cotton "vintage" silk-screened diamond print clown suit with silver sequins. Green and black three-tiered ruff, red Turkish-style shiny shoes and pointed hat. Designed for Deep Roy as Mr. Soggybottom in BIG FISH (2003).



# BETSY HEIMANN

The research for ALMOST FAMOUS was compiled from photographs from a 1973 Neil Young tour as well as other tours that Cameron Crowe had been on. We looked at these photos together and decided to make a love letter to that period of music when the romance was still in rock, and rock as a business was beginning to rise.



I wanted to combine Kate Hudson's personality with Penny Lane, a legendary 'band aide.' Her character reminded me of the Jimi Hendrix song "Little Wing." Some of the lyrics are: "When I'm sad she comes to me with a thousand smiles, she gives to me for free. It's all right, she says, it's all right. Take anything you want from me, anything." It suggests a person who never stops giving even if doesn't always feel good. To me, that was Penny Lane.

Cameron had said once that he wanted Penny to evoke the spirit of Shirley Maclaine's character in THE APARTMENT. That was the direction for the Penny Lane coat, and that's what he always called it before I even designed it. We wanted her to appear in the beginning, standing on the top of the ramp as a goddess of the 'band aides,' a radiant young girl in a coat that wrapped all her emotions in a beautiful exterior that she could hide within.

Even though all of Penny Lane's clothes were custom made, it was important to me that they looked authentic. All the fabrics were overdyed to look older and we controlled the palette using colors of the period like the avocado green color of Penny's coat. I decided to give the coat a big, furry cream collar because it was very glamorous, and the cream color bounced light off Kate's face. Cinematographer John Toll and I tested different shades of cream, figuring out which would be the best for Kate's complexion. I wanted the coat to be iconic – like Marlene Dietrich, but in a '70s rock way. Her pants were made of velvet so the light reflected the curves of her body when she danced by the side of the stage. The camisole was reminiscent of a Victorian camisole as vintage shopping was coming into fashion at that time.

I knew we were successful when people saw ALMOST FAMOUS and thought that they were looking at a movie that was shopped in thrift stores.

## · FILMOGRAPHY ·

SKATETOWN, U.S.A. (1979) · HIGH ROAD TO CHINA (1983) · SKY BANDITS (1986) ·  
SURRENDER (1987) · ELVIRA, MISTRESS OF THE DARK (1988) · TUNE IN TOMORROW (1990)  
WELCOME HOME, ROXY CARMICHAEL (1990) · ONE GOOD COP (1991) · RESERVOIR DOGS (1992)  
THE ADVENTURES OF HUCK FINN (1993) · GUNMEN (1994) · RENAISSANCE MAN (1994)  
PULP FICTION (1994) · THE TIE THAT BINDS (1995) · GET SHORTY (1995) · 2 DAYS IN THE VALLEY (1996)  
JERRY MAGUIRE (1996) · SWITCHBACK (1997) · MERCURY RISING (1998) · OUT OF SIGHT (1998)  
SIMON BIRCH (1998) · ANYWHERE BUT HERE (1999) · ALMOST FAMOUS (2000) · THE FAMILY MAN (2000)  
VANILLA SKY (2001) · STEALING HARVARD (2002) · RED DRAGON (2002) · CHEER UP (2004)



1970s avocado and cream wool coat with ivory fur collar.  
Cream silk camisole and brown velvet trousers.  
Designed for Kate Hudson as Penny Lane  
in ALMOST FAMOUS (2000).



# MONA MAY

My costume designs for Rob Minkoff's HAUNTED MANSION needed to overcome some very unusual and challenging problems. After researching the many past films in which ghosts had been photographed, we decided that the ghosts should have a very organic look and be in themselves an effect, not just a computer-generated image. The costumes needed to glow and at the same time give the appearance that the fabric was still real, with aging, rips and flowing movement. During camera tests to find the right effect, Remi Adefarasin, our Director of Photography, suggested using Scotchlite™, a reflective product that all of us have seen on road signs, running shoes and sports wear. This material comes as microscopic glass beads in powder form. I believed that this would be the right product, but how to apply it, on what color fabric, and how it would affect the fabric? All had to be tested. More important, how would it look on film?



For our first test, we mixed the powder with paint in various strengths and brushed it on black fabric. When we viewed it, the glowing effect worked but the costumes disappeared, so we had to try a different approach. We then used the Scotchlite on new costumes made with brighter fabric to make the outline stronger. For each costume, varying degrees of saturation of the powder and paint had to be adjusted to get the right brightness. We also decided to outline the clothes' natural folds and silhouette with the paint mixture. This technique, along with a special lighting rig created by Remi, gave HAUNTED MANSION costumes that glowed more organically, and an effect that could be customized for each costume and character's personality.

Once it was seen how well this effect would work, I went to work creating a complete sub-department of seamstresses, painters and agers. Each of the 60 costumes for the ghosts in the graveyard scene were hand-painted and designed with this effect, using a variety of techniques (i.e. lace, plaid, patterns, silhouettes). In the end, each ghost had a unique, sparkly diamond-like glow, that produced a very eerie mood and enhanced the film.

## · FILMOGRAPHY ·

3 NINJAS (1992) · VALHALLA (1992) · HOUSE IV (1992) · BEST OF THE BEST II (1993) · CLUELESS (1995)  
HIGH SCHOOL HIGH (1996) · ROMY AND MICHELE'S HIGH SCHOOL REUNION (1997)  
THE WEDDING SINGER (1998) · A NIGHT AT THE ROXBURY (1998) · 8MM (1999)  
NEVER BEEN KISSED (1999) · LOSER (2000) · STUART LITTLE 2 (2002)  
THE MASTER OF DISGUISE (2002) · EASY (2003) · THE HAUNTED MANSION (2003)



19th-century fuchsia and black striped bodice, purple-gray and fuchsia distressed hoop-skirt. Ghost costume hand painted with Scotchlite™ reflective paint which is only visible in the dark. Designed for ghost character in THE HAUNTED MANSION (2003).



# JOSEPH PORRO

I knew SHANGHAI NOON would be a challenge due to the huge variety of costumes I had to design and assemble. What was both scary and exciting was designing the Imperial Court of the Forbidden City. Due to budget constraints, it would be impossible to make these richly embroidered court robes within our budget in America, or in Canada where we were shooting. So I contacted James Acheson, designer of THE LAST EMPEROR, and asked if any of his pieces from that film were available as rental stock. They had all been left in Beijing, so I visited Beijing Studios' wardrobe department. The wardrobe people lived and worked in the same building under very Spartan conditions. All my hopes were dashed when I looked at their stock. Most of the clothes were poor polyester reproductions; where were Jim's costumes from THE LAST EMPEROR? Apparently they had been selling them out the back door for years.



Even more frustrating was that they had one standard women's Imperial Court costume, which was used for a three or four hundred year period. They would insist, "This is what a lady of the court would wear," and I would counter, "Well, no... that's not true." They thought I was crazy until I showed them historical photographs. I now had to quickly design and make the 300 Chinese court costumes for the interiors, more than 500 for the exterior shots, and make it work within my budget.

Through Jackie Chan's contacts in Beijing, we began having my designs for him made, but when we were only three days away from shooting we heard they were having lots of problems, and the costs would be a little higher. I ended up paying twenty times their original estimate! But now there was a bigger problem: I couldn't personally go back to Beijing and find a new manufacturer. Finally it came to me: AN OPERA HOUSE. Chinese Opera uses very traditional designs and embroideries. Only who could I trust as my middleman who wouldn't rob me blind?

I enlisted the help of my cousin, who is in medical supplies in Beijing. I said, "How would you like to get into the movie business?" He thought I was absolutely insane. I sent him itemized, detailed sketches, fabric swatches and photographs of the period and said, "Can you make this happen for me?" And he did.

## · FILMOGRAPHY ·

MEET THE APPLAGATES (1991) · THE PERFECT WEAPON (1991) · KICKBOXER 2: THE ROAD BACK (1991)  
DOUBLE IMPACT (1991) · UNIVERSAL SOLIDER (1992) · SHADOW OF THE WOLF (1992)  
SUPER MARIO BROS. (1993) · TOMBSTONE (1993) · STARGATE (1994)  
MIGHTY MORPHIN POWER RANGERS: THE MOVIE (1995) · THE QUEST (1996) · INDEPENDENCE DAY (1996)  
MAXIMUM RISK (1996) · DEEP RISING (1998) · HOMEGROWN (1998) · GODZILLA (1998)  
THE THIRTEENTH FLOOR (1999) · STUART LITTLE (1999) · SHANGHAI NOON (2000)  
EQUILIBRIUM (2002) · BLINDNESS (2003) · ULTRAVIOLET (2004)



19th-century Chinese aristocratic man's court dress.  
Yellow silk garment with embroidered dragons  
and auspicious symbols over a blue ocean.  
Designed for Sherman Chao as Emperor's Cousin  
in SHANGHAI NOON (2000).

