

Voice Actors Panel from Paramount Press Day

Contributed by NightViper
Wednesday, 21 October 2009

You've no doubt watched and re-watched that asf DVD or Blu-Ray you picked yesterday, so you're probably looking for more Revenge news to satiate that new-found knowledge-hunger! Well, we linked to a teaser of the Voice Actor's panel from the Paramount Press day a few days ago, but now have our write-up/summary of that part of the event finished!

Click [here](#) to read all about what Mark Ryan, Charlie Adler, Jess Harnell, Fred Tatasciore, André Sogliuzzo, and Kevin Michael Richardson had to say!

Mark Ryan was originally involved right at the beginning of the first film, as the staff was looking for a British actor with stage experience, and he became the voice of the robots on set so as to give the actors something to interact with vocally. In the process, he eventually came to voicing Bumblebee in both film and the video game. For "Revenge of the Fallen", he laid down the scratch track — an unedited/incomplete sound track that'll give a rough idea for the final recording — so the animation team could create the necessary scenes involving the Transformers talking, in which the other voice actors would later record their appropriate lines. In the case of Jetfire, Michael Bay wanted Mark to make the voice older and angrier, as well a bit more cantankerous, trying different dialog with screenwriter Alex Kurtzman helping on writing up new lines around four weeks before "Revenge" was released.

Next, Fred Tatasciore talked how he was the Kitchenbots in the movie and on the video game as Demolishor, Grindor, and Stunticon. For the Kitchenbots, he made a series of gibberish sounds that would eventually be edited on computers to create the noises the Kitchenbots would later make in "Revenge".

Charlie Adler is a familiar name for those that watched original Generation 1 cartoon, being the voice of the Aerialbot leader Silverbolt, and answered that like the voice actors, he auditioned for the role. The Cybertronian language was basically reading the lines backwards.

Also known as the voice of Wakko from "Animaniacs", voice of Decepticon Barricade from the first film and Autobot Weapons Specialist Ironhide in both, Jess Harnell talked about his audition. He said that they, voice actors, would sometimes run into strange auditions, and on being called in, he knew he couldn't use voices that would be more suited to cartoons, demonstrating with a high-pitched one that was opposite of a much deeper voice he used for promoting movies. For Jess, he did it in front of a camcorder and performed his lines in a deep voice as well trying to sound like "quasi-British" at one suggestion (even though he pointed out that they already had Mark, who IS British). In André Sogliuzzo's case of voicing Sideswipe, he didn't quite had much of an idea about the Autobot at first, other than early artwork (presumably) of the Transformer and a brief description along the lines of "kind of cool, sort of James Bond, but not British". While he's never met Michael directly face to face, they were able to communicate while André was at a studio in New York and the director elsewhere; André points out on hearing the keyboard going over the line, indicating Michael syncing the lines directly with the reel (at that time, it was about two weeks before release). Another point André brings up was that contrast to Jess, Charlie, and Mark, he didn't get to see any actual film sequences until he saw it at IMAX.

Prime #2 and Rampage were voiced by Kevin Michael Richardson, who also did some of the hatchlings, which Michael (director) was quite pleased with. Kevin added that he remembered playing with the toys himself, as well that his family were pleased with his performance when they saw "Revenge".

In regards to adding new dialog after much of filming was done for the real life scenes, Charlie points out the hatchling scene, how Michael would mention they could reanimate if changes were required, Jess following how they tried a variety of lines throughout the process. What the Autobots - and Decepticons - said had to count in order to make up for the lack of lines, and the appreciation from the actors was Michael giving them free reign.

The actors acknowledge on meeting fans who took the series seriously, and the actors took their roles seriously, which gave more inner life to the characters they portrayed. From the photos or animation, the actors had to know where they — the characters — were coming from. Fred sums it up that doing voice overs was "always much more about creating characters than just doing funny voices", Kevin tossing in that audiences were looking for real people.

For his role of Starscream, Charlie didn't know about the character's legacy until much later, only knowing

to honor the writing and Starscream's portrayal in the film when called in. He admits that he might not have given the homage it was expected, but he felt that imitating the late Chris Latta would've done more harm than good.

On their feelings regarding the cartoon series, research on the history and the characters' background was the main thing when they came into the project. At the end of the day, they hope to make people happy, especially children. There was a bit of comparison from the original cartoon to the movie-verse, on the progression of technology and dimension of characters. Mark notes Bumblebee's popularity where he's approached by children at public events and asked if he's actually Bumblebee, joking about buying a yellow shirt with black stripes to wear underneath. For them, it's a humbling experience on how widespread Transformers had become, as well their influence on the younger generation.

On the question of the issue over Skids and Mudflap, voiced by Tom Kenny and Reno Wilson respectively, a Paramount representative who was modding the panel quickly ended it. Jess had said that sometimes things are exaggerated for comedic purposes, but the general consensus from the actors was that neither Tom or Wilson meant any offense by their portrayal of the twins.