

Summer Glau joins galaxy of stars at RI Comic Con Fri.-Sat.

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Whether she's playing a mentally unstable psychic weapon on "Firefly," a Terminator infiltration unit sent back in the past on "Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles," a chief computer programmer for an underground conglomerate on "Dollhouse" or a masked supervillain on "Arrow," Summer Glau doesn't merely tiptoe into a role. She dives in head first.

A classically trained ballet dancer, Glau - who is making her first Northeast convention appearance this weekend at the Rhode Island Comic Con - suffered a broken toe that made her hang up her pointe shoes and ended her pirouette career.

"In all honesty, I think I would have ended up being an actor even if I haven't been injured. As much as I love dancing and it was my identity for my entire childhood, I had some kind of feeling, some kind of instinct that I was going to be an actor."

"When I first came to LA, and I started going to different casting offices and different classes here and there, they would always say, 'You have an Old World quality about you.' And, I'd say, 'Oh, yes. It's my dream to be in period films.' And a year down the road, I meet Joss Whedon (the creator of "Buffy the Vampire Slayer") and I find myself in the world of science-fiction, which ended up treating me very well."

In her first, guest-starring TV role, Glau played a prima ballerina forced to perform the same ballet for all eternity on "Waiting in the Wings," a 2002 episode of the television series "Angel."

As a dancer, Glau said the "Angel" experience was really special because it gave her an opportunity to dance excerpts from the classic French ballet "Giselle" (which she would never have had an opportunity to do in her native Texas) and it started her relationship with Whedon.

"When I first started, my representatives suggested that I not mention that I was a dancer because they really wanted me to be judged on my acting ability, and in this case, Joss held a dance audition that I missed. So, my agent snuck me in the callback. I read for Joss first and something about my reading he connected with and he told the casting director, I'm just going to take a chance and cast her, whether she can dance or not. And, it turned out, I was a real dancer. I was much more trained as a dancer than an actress."

A few months after being cast in "Angel," Glau auditioned in front of Whedon again for the role of River Tam on "Firefly." Despite being canceled after only three months, the show built a massive cult following and forever changed Glau's life.

"When I got the call that I was going to be cast as River, I was laying on the floor of my first little apartment, thinking, 'Oh, my goodness, I'm gonna have a real paycheck, I'm going to be able to go to the grocery store and not have to eat just powdered potatoes. Joss absolutely changed my life and he has been a wonderful friend and mentor. He's the first person to take a chance on me. And he gave me a chance to develop my ability and make it possible for me to change my career."

On "Firefly," Glau played a beautiful, brilliant, emotionally damaged and very dangerous killing machine. Obviously, Glau was already beautiful when she was

cast as River but, when asked if she was already brilliant, emotionally damaged and a very dangerous killing machine, Glau unleashed a hearty laugh and said, "Maybe, a little bit of all of that sprinkled in."

"There are definitely parts of me in River. When I was cast as River, I only had two pages of dialogue and that was it. There was a character definition but there wasn't a script. Yet, when I read those two pages, I felt I knew who she was. I felt I knew how I wanted to play this character. It came very natural."

As for the unmistakable chemistry and comradery of her fellow "Firefly" castmates, Glau said it was all natural and spontaneous from the get-go.

"It was magical from the very start. The dynamics of the characters felt like a family, a dysfunctional one but a real family. The stories were fun but they also had a lot of heart. You really went on for a ride with these characters."

So what would it take for Glau to return to the "Firefly" universe? Glau said all it would take is a phone call.

"I think there's always a chance," **she said of a possible "Firefly" reunion.** "We never thought we get a movie ("Serenity") made on a series that only lasted for 12 episodes and that came true. So I believe this story can do anything. I really do."

While she was away from the spotlight to raise her daughter, Milena (who is now 20 months), Glau's mentor Whedon has become the toast of Hollywood as the creative force behind "Marvel's The Avengers" and its sequel, "Avengers: Rise of Ultron." So why hasn't Glau been cast as a superheroine or supervillain in the Marvel cinematic universe?

"I guess there's a long, long, long line of amazingly talented women who have been waiting to work with Joss. I'm just waiting for when they call in sick because then I would be available."

Taken from Telegram's website:

<http://www.telegram.com/news/20161111/summer-glau-joins-galaxy-of-stars-at-ri-comic-con-fri-sat>