

## INTERVIEW WITH NATHAN FILLION AND SUMMER GLAU

**Description:** After the talk with the master himself (Joss Whedon) we talked with two of the leading cast of *Serenity*, Nathan Fillion (the German audience could know him as the fanatic priest „Caleb“ from *Buffy*) and the lovely Summer Glau. After that interesting and amusing conversation one thing is clear: Unfriendly comic-salesmen should be careful with the Captain.

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**Nathan:** (pointing to a camera of the group) oh, that's an interesting camera.

**Group:** your producer said something else.

**Nathan:** surely something dirty, doesn't he?

**Group:** well, it looks dirty, but it doesn't vibrate.

**Peter:** (after a couple of seconds of silence) okay, let's try to break this awkward silence with a question. Nathan, is it true that you have a problem with comic-shops?

**Nathan:** Okay, that's the story. I was at my home city Edmonton, and my mother wanted to buy 4 copies of the serenity-comic for friends and the family. I called the comic-shop and asked if they had some copies left. They answered „yes we have“, and told me that the price would be 20 dollars for a comic that would usually cost 4 dollars. So I asked „20 bucks? “ and the salesman said „they are worth it“. And I said: „yesterday I bought 4 booklets for 4 dollars each“. „Yes“, he said, „but today they are worth 20 dollars“. I said: „ok, if you want to raise the price, it's ok, but you can't tell somebody that they are worth it, only because you decided to ask for that much, that's wrong.“. Then he was so nasty and impolite. I am really a patient man, but at this moment I only wanted to jump over the desk and rip of his patch. I was so angry. Even my brother was angry, and he is a really patient person. He took a comic, pointed at it and asked „do you know this person? “. The salesman knew Joss Whedon! He isn't any guy from the streets! “, and the salesman said „well, why don't you call Joss Whedon and ask him for a comic“. Gosh I was so angry.

**Group:** what did you do?

**Nathan:** then I went into the internet and told the fans, that they should boycott that shop. Than they crashed his webpage by sending him an email with the subject "you're scum" and a 1MB attachment over and over again until his server crashed. Yes, that was great!

**Group:** you killed him!

**Nathan:** we didn't kill him. But it was really nice how the firefly-fans came to rescue their captain... and his mom.

**Peter:** sound like a great sub-plot for the sequel.

**Nathan:** exactly!

**Group:** Summer, are you the new Sarah Michelle Gellar?

**Summer:** No, I only want to be River. Joss writes such great and strong female characters, and I am happy to be one of them. Sarah is a fantastic actress.

**Nathan:** I like River more than Buffy.

**Summer:** thanks!

**Nathan:** but only because Buffy killed me. River only tried to do.

**Group:** but in "the 4400" series you played another kind of character, that was much more insane.

**Nathan:** well, that doesn't sound like River in any way!

**Summer:** it was much harder for me, as I found out that I had to play a role, that is so similar to River and I needed to play it that different. But Joss said that I played the characters different enough so it worked out well. I enjoyed playing that role.

**Group:** Summer, did you enter the cast for Firefly, because you knew Joss Whedon from your guest-appearance in "Angel"?

**Summer:** I had to come back to the set of Angel shortly before Christmas to do some more dancing scenes. We talked after that, it was a wonderful day, and it was like being in heaven for me to dance at the set. I asked Joss, what he will do at Christmas and he answered, that he was writing at a series called "Firefly". I really wanted to join the casting and Joss suddenly said, that there's a character in the series that would fit into me. He suggested me to drop in, and that's how it started.

**Peter:** are you scared for your job, regarding to the fact, that Joss Whedon is notorious killing his leading acts?

**Nathan:** well, I have done a pact with the devil, so: "no"

**Summer:** sadly I didn't.

**Nathan:** but you're Joss' favourite, so you should be pretty save.

**Summer:** but if he decides to kill a character, it's always glorious, so I don't think I would care.

**Nathan:** right.

**Summer:** he really knows how to put on a death.

**Nathan:** so if you will be killed by somebody, it really should be Joss Whedon!

**Group:** he also knows well how to tantalize people. At Buffy, he let Spike hang from the ceiling and bleed him to death.

**Nathan:** I didn't see all the episodes of Buffy, but I'm pretty sure it was a wonderful episode.

**Group:** but you played in that episode!

**Nathan:** did I? No! I threw him into the wine barrel. That was fun.

**Peter:** I'm obsessed with the series and can't remember that scene either.

**Group:** we have to admit, that we all are geeks.

**Group:** a TV-reviewer said that you, Nathan, are the next Harrison Ford. Why are you not yet a superstar?

**Nathan:** my experience with the film-industry is, that people only give you a job, if they know exactly that you can manage it. I have only done supporting acts until now, and was always very happy with it. People said "oh, he's really good, but is he good enough to be the "cart horse" of the series?". And nobody wants to give you the chance to prove it. Joss Whedon was the first one, that was willing to give me a leading act, and now I'm playing leading acts. Joss Whedon was the first that gave me the chance to play the bad guy, and now I'm playing bad guys. After serenity I played in a horror-movie called slither. The people of "Universal" said "yes, we know he can do it, we know him. Give him the role".

**Group:** the trailer is disgusting.

**Nathan:** of Slither? Now imagine how it is, to play it.

**Group:** but without rubber-prosthesis.

**Nathan:** right, no rubber prosthesis. I have rubber underwear, but nobody knows that.

**Group:** how was it for you to come back to the Firefly-universe? Hard?

**Nathan:** not hard. We did all our homework. The series was an extended workshop for our characters. We went through the hell as a group of friends. We fought a tough war and lost it. And then we came back to kick their butts.

**Group:** and how do you feel after doing that?

**Nathan:** rehabilitated. That's the way, Adam Baldwin calls it. I would prefer calling it "sweet sweet revenge. Oh sweeeeeet revenge."

**Summer:** We're so proud. Everything is so overwhelming. Right now we're in Germany and talking about our movie.

**Group:** what other projects are you working at?

**Summer:** I just shot a Sci-Fi comedy in Romania, that will come to the cinemas next year. Later I must go home for some castings.

**Nathan:** end of March Slither comes to the cinemas, and then an independent-movie called "Outing Riley". I shot it before Serenity, but they did not show it until the release of Serenity. They probably hoped, I would be famous then.

**Peter:** Do you know the German sub-title of Serenity?

**Nathan:** the German dub?

**Peter:** No the subtitle. The full German name of the movie is "Serenity: Flucht in neue Welten" [Serenity - escape to new worlds]. I'm still not sure, what this means.

**Nathan:** hmm... I don't think, that we as characters fled into new worlds. It's probably ment to mean, that the audience should flee into new worlds with this movie.

**Peter:** ah...

**Nathan:** I'm happy to be of help!

**Group:** It happens fairly often in Germany - an additional subtitle to the original title. They probably think, we're stupid and need a translation.

**Nathan:** there's also a slogan in America for the movie: "The future is worth to fight for". It also doesn't tell anything about the movie.

**Peter:** We also have a slogan "They have weapons. She's dangerous". It's probably regarding to River.

**Nathan:** Well, it's correct.

**Summer:** (embarrassed) that's ok, they mentioned me. I'm satisfied.

**Group:** somebody told me, that River is like Xena, but without leather. So there's surely an audience.

**Summer:** I take it!

**Group:** Do you both have genres that you like most, like Sci-Fi or Horror?

**Summer:** I like costume-dramas most. It was always that what I wanted to do. I just don't know how to get a role.

**Nathan:** yes, it's always about getting a role. But it's not the genre that is important, it's the character.

**Group:** What's your favourite character?

**Nathan:** I think, my place is somewhere within the anti-heroes or the improbable heroes. Or the not-so-much-hero, the somehow-hero, the pseudo-hero, the false hero. I have a billion of meanings for it.

**Group:** do you choose the roles or do you get chosen for a role?

**Nathan:** when I spot a role, it's sadly not like snap my fingers and say: "I take it!". When I get scripts, I of course sort out, what I'm interested in. But as said before, when the film-industry decides to make something different, they are often not sure if somebody can really bring it through. But if there's an anti-hero, a quasi-hero or a pseudo-hero, then I surely have a chance. People without a vision can at least be sure, when they have seen a role before.

**Group:** if you still were a superstar in 10 years, would you still play independent movies?

**Nathan:** it depends on the role. Surely as long as it's an anti-hero or a pseudo-hero. The character is important.

**Group:** Mal Reynolds changed a lot from the series to the movie. He got much darker.

**Nathan:** He was supposed to be darker in the series. When we take a look at the pilot, he's a very dark person there. But in the first real episode, he's much more twinkletowed. The people at the TV-station wanted Mal to be more "lovely". So he needed to be more funny and friendlier. Ironically the audience like him much more, when he's angry embittered and unfriendly.

**Group:** some people said online, that the movie was in lack of the family-feeling of the

series.

**Nathan:** tell them: "NO". (Self-ironic) They get what they get, and they should be happy about it. Damn onliners.

**Peter:** may we quote that?

**Group:** a perfect headline.

**Peter:** "the captain hates you"

**Nathan:** okay, that's the story: fans are great! But the storyline is not there to make the fans happy. The storyline mainly serves its own purpose. Come and watch it, and don't say "We want to have something else". I also want to be a multimillionaire. That's live. You get what you get. Malcolm Reynolds gets what he gets. River gets what she gets and the fans get what they get. What they got was a displaced series. Then they got a resurrection in the cinemas. And then they say "We don't like it?" (Whispers) That's not a very good browncoat (Note of the author: firefly-fans call themselves browncoats). Maybe they are no browncoats but only brightcoats, or even green berets (Note of the author: a special unit of the US-army).

**Group:** what's with the actors? Do you still have contact to each other?

**Nathan:** we're big friends. Alan Tudyk is at Broadway and plays a Monty Pythons "Monty Python and the Holy Grail". Gina is shooting a new movie and because of this, she cannot be with us here. Where is Sean? I never know if he's in NY or LA.

**Summer:** I think he's in LA. I saw him and Jewel recently there.

**Nathan:** I still meet with Morena, but I don't see Ron Glass often enough. I still owe him a dinner. People always ask, if it was an emotional reunion at the set of serenity but actually we were hiking just a few days before. It was strange to see my friends back in their roles, that was an awkward effect, because I really missed my character.

**Peter:** if you play such an intensive character like Mal, does this have influences to your private life? Does cruelty and bitterness also appear outside the set?

**Nathan:** no, I'm only playing. You go to the set and fake it. My spaceship is a cardboard box... Summer, did you ever build a cardboard-spaceship?

**Summer:** no, not a spaceship.

**Nathan:** when we were kids, we took cardboard-boxes and glued the plastic of chocolate-boxes onto it. Then we could turn them around and push them like buttons. But they always remained pushed, so we always had to push them back outward. Our cardboard-box-serenity was of course a little better, but nevertheless the memories never blurred with those of the real life. Do you beat up people in real life Summer?

**Summer:** no. But I also don't read thoughts or solve complicated formulas.

**Nathan:** what am I thinking right now?

**Summer:** I would rather not tell the audience.

**Nathan:** You are reading my mind.

**Peter:** How do you like the box-office rankings?

**Nathan:** I don't care about box-office rankings.

**Peter:** I ment: What do you think about the reactions towards the box-office rankings?

**Nathan :** when I started acting, it was because of the applause. Then I came to the movies and TV, and suddenly there wasn't any applause. The competition for me as an actor always was to outplay myself. But I don't get any fun out of the financial aspect. I'm getting delighted by the critic and reaction of the fans (points towards one group-member), except for those, you just told about. I don't care about financial success. What I care about is that I was allowed to play Malcolm Reynolds once more. Regarding this, I'm quite selfish. I did it just for me.

**Peter:** do you think, that there's a chance to play that character once more?

**Nathan:** I now believe that nothing is impossible. Does that make sense? I think, that was a threefolded denial.

**Summer:** that experience taught him to expect the unexpected.

**Nathan:** thanks Summer! You're reading my mind!

**Group:** Do you like conventions?

**Nathan:** definitely. I'm always satisfied when I can tell lame jokes in front of 2000 people. I love conventions! "Oh my god, he's so funny! He told the same joke last year, but I'm still laughing."

**Peter:** Summer, will River develop herself in the future? At the end of the movie she's a little less crazy, and she has a new job on the ship.

**Summer:** I hope, that she will go on developing into that direction, because I think, that's what she always wanted. From the day, she made her first step into that ship, she was in search for a new home. She was alone in that government laboratory for years, she thought nobody would care about her, and that she wouldn't belong anywhere. On board it was her mission to show the people that she's one of them. I like how River developed and hope that it will go on until she feels irreplaceable.

**Peter:** I think, we saw that in the flashbacks with her family. Her brother is of course a great person, but her parents aren't that nice. And I think, in Joss Whedons' series it's always about building a family from friends.

**Summer:** right, I love that.

**Nathan:** you find your family by your own. Thanks for your time.

**Summer:** thanks!

*That's it, we wish Joss, Nathan and Summer all the best for their future. And we hope, that Serenity will become the success it deserves to be. Those who want to make their own mind about the futuristic western, should visit the cinema, or should watch its history line by watching the Firefly DVDs, that where just released in Germany. Keep flying.*

Original interview:

<http://www.mangaszene.com/content/modules/arms/view.php?w=art&idx=42>

Kindly translated from German by Christian for **Summer-Glau.net**