

Summer Glau Talks Alphas' Big Season 2 Finale
Plus, the actress comments on Joss Whedon's S.H.I.E.L.D. series and ten years of Firefly.

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Already beloved by genre fans for her memorable roles in series like Firefly, The 4400 and Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles, Summer Glau has been appearing on yet another super-cool show of late, Syfy's Alphas.

Glau plays Skylar Adams, whose Alpha ability allows her to create technology years beyond our most advanced modern tech - and improvise some very formidable weapons from the most innocuous of objects.

With Alphas going into its big Season 2 finale this Monday, I spoke to Glau about portraying Skylar, what's in store for the finale and more. And yep, I asked the frequent Joss Whedon collaborator what she thought about Whedon returning to TV with S.H.I.E.L.D. - and if there could potentially be a role there for her.

You appeared in one episode of Alphas in Season 1, but has it been fun to come back and flesh her out more and to see different facets of Skylar in Season 2?

It has been. It's been a great season for Skylar. I love doing TV, and I love being a part of a team. I really enjoy the process of getting to live in a character for an extended period of time and watch them grow, and I think that's really happened for Skylar this year. Throughout this final episode, I think she evolves even more. I like where it's going, and I know I've said this before, but I really, really enjoyed the challenges of playing a mother for the first time. That's been very inspiring for me.

I wanted going to ask you about that. What's it like playing a mom, and can you talk about that amazing little girl playing your daughter?

Oh my gosh, Skyler [Wexler] and I are pen pals online. She is a brilliant, brilliant young lady. When I originally took the role, that was one of the main reasons why, because I thought, "Oh, I wonder what it would be like to play a parent." Once I got on set and I started working with Skyler - and it's funny because I play Skylar -- I realized once we started workshopping scenes that it created a whole other layer of depth and inspiration for me as an actress. It really, really helped drive my scenes. I'm not a mother yet. I have a little dog, and that's closest thing I have to someone that truly belongs to me. So it really helped push me along through these last two seasons of Alphas, being able to focus on the fact that Skylar is an absolute loner. She only has herself to count on, and that's how I play it and that's how I see her storyline before you meet her in the show. But now that she has a daughter, she just can't think that way. So it's a lot of mixed feelings for her, and it just helps me as an actress.

What really impresses me about little Skyler's acting is that she's very natural. There was that funny moment in the last episode where Gary was saying, "This place is gross," and just the way she said, "Yeah, it is..."

[Laughs] I know! Yeah, she's such a natural. She's really smart.

You've been in a lot of genre shows, specifically where you got to play an ass-kicker. Skylar has very impressive powers, but they're more mental. Do you miss getting out there and fighting next to the people with the more physical powers sometimes?

I do. It's funny that you mention that because Michael Karnow, who is one of the creators of Alphas, he's a friend of mine, and we were discussing this, it came up in one of the episodes - I think it was actually the episode that just aired this week. They had written the episode -- and we always tend to workshop it and rehearse and make some changes -- and we were thinking, you know, Skylar doesn't really get physical. Should we involve her more physically in this storyline? I talked to Michael about it, and he said, "You know what, we specifically want to veer away from that for you as an actress, because people are always going to expect that from you. This is going to be a new challenge for you to be part of the team and make an impact and be a power player without using a physical ability." So it was actually done on purpose, and that's good for me because I always want to rumble and throw down; it's just natural for me as an actress. So this is a good exercise for me.

And hey, she can still throw together a flamethrower very quickly!

Oh, yes. I'm very proud of that flamethrower that I made. That thing was cool. It was heavy! I actually really like that her ability isn't a physical ability, it's more mental. She's very tactile and very good at building things, but it's different than having a physical ability like Kat's or Bill's.

Going into the finale, Stanton Parish has used her to make this horrific device that can be used to kill all these people. Suffice to say she has a very personal vested interest in stopping him in the finale?

She does. And I just remember that scene where she wakes up and realizes what she's done. It's very, very hard for Skylar to admit that she's wrong and feel vulnerable and to realize that she's been taken advantage of. I think it's good for her because it's important for her to remember that sometimes she does need help. This is an opportunity for her to possibly integrate into the team in a more sincere and fully realized way. She's humbled by the experience, I think. It's shaken her to see that she could be taken advantage of and been manipulated in the way that Stanton has. So it's a great opportunity for Skylar to start a new chapter with the rest of the Alphas.

This past episode was the first time where it really felt like you were working with them all, standing around the table and planning things together. Do you think she's a little more at home in that scenario now?

It's a struggle for her, but it's definitely fun as an actress to get to play the awkwardness of her trying to play nice. It's cool because in the finale you'll see that there's some really great scenes between me and all the other girls. When we were sitting around and talking about the scenes before we started shooting, it was interesting, because each girl is so powerful and important in their own way, but we're all completely different. In the finale, we really have to put our differences aside and put together the team, and you can really see through everything that there's a lot of love and a strong bond between these girls that are so different.

I talked to Azita Ghanizada a couple of months ago, and she told me the same thing - that the finale is very cool as far as all you girls really getting some great scenes together.

Yeah, we had a really good time.

What was it like when you did your first episode, as far as the look they gave her, with the hair and tattoos? Was it fun for you to just get into the skin of that kind of person?

It was so fun, and I was surprised by how natural it felt for me! [Laughs] I really like it. As soon as I put on my Skylar boots -- she's worn the same boots since the first episode -- it's just been like, "Okay, I'm ready. Skylar's back."

She has that pretty nifty thing now where she can still have her tattoos and no one can see them. That'd be very handy for an actress, I'm sure.

I know, believe me. I've sat next to an actor or two who had to spend an extra hour at least in the makeup trailer covering up their tattoos. It's so funny that they never use an actor's real tattoos. They'll paint them on, but they never use their real ones.

Have you seen Lena Headey in Dredd?

No!

She has those flowers tattooed on her arm and shoulder, right?

Yes, and her back.

It was pretty funny in Dredd, because not only did they actually let her have her tattoos for once, but they extended them, and they go up her neck and onto her face.

Oh, that's awesome. I've got to see that. Good for them! They worked with what Lena already had going on.

Speaking of Lena and your Terminator history, what did you think when you first read that line on Alphas last week where Zoe asks if you're a terminator?

[Laughs] I thought that was really fun. Every once in awhile, I feel like the writers just kind of wink at the audience, and that was fun. I thought it was cute. She didn't even know what she was asking me!

Alphas is going into its season finale. It hasn't been renewed yet, though I know I'm not the only one who's very hopeful, certainly. If there is a Season 3, would you like to come back and play more with the Alphas gang?

Absolutely, I would. It's hard to tell at the end... When the finale's done and done, it's going to be interesting to see what happens and who comes back. I don't want to give anything away, but I hope that there's a possibility for me to come back, for sure.

So I've got to ask... Your buddy Joss [Whedon] has a new TV show percolating, and he's been known to make use of your talents in several projects. So is that something you've had any conversations about? And do you think you'd look good in a S.H.I.E.L.D. jumpsuit?

Well, I have my fingers crossed behind my back. I try not to say anything to Joss about anything he's doing because he has so many actors, and I know we all want to work for him. So I don't know, but if I could be a part of it in any way, of course, you know I want to.

What's it been like seeing the year Joss has had?

It couldn't be more deserved. I'm just so proud that I got to work for him, and nobody deserves it more. I think he's finally getting the place in mainstream filmmaking that we all knew could happen, and now everybody's getting to enjoy it. And to get to see him back on TV, I just think that it's going to be so gratifying for everybody who tried to get Firefly back on and supported Joss all these years, and bought the DVDs for friends and kept supporting it and kept promoting it. Now, I just cannot wait to see what he does next on TV. Of course, I'm excited about Avengers 2 as well, but it'll also just be awesome to have Joss back on TV!

I agree completely! You mentioned Firefly, which reminded me of one last question I wanted to ask, because the last time I saw you was at San Diego Comic-Con. What was it like doing that Firefly reunion panel this summer? Just the fact that it is ten years later and that show still means so much to people...

I was so overwhelmed. I was so emotional. I look back on the day that I met Joss and what a miracle it was that I was chosen to be a part of this really special story, this special cast. I look back on how it changed my life, and being there on stage, getting to sit next to him and feel like it was a flashback -- because I remember when I went to Comic-Con for the first time for Firefly. And for it to be ten years later and seeing all of my dear friends that feel like family, I was just overwhelmed with gratitude. You could never, ever picture that kind of love and loyalty lasting for ten years, for a show that was on for such a short period of time. It's really, really special. It was really, really powerful. We were all crying. I have to say thank you, a million thank yous for that experience.

Taken from the IGN's website:

<http://www.ign.com/articles/2012/10/20/summer-glau-talks-alphas-big-season-2-finale>