

## **Pretty Curious with Jonathan Van Ness & Frances Hannon**

JVN: Hey, curious people. Welcome to Pretty Curious, our podcast on All things Beauty. I'm Jonathan Van Ness. You guys, this is such an exciting episode. I can't *\*sings\** stand it. And you know, when I start to sing on the beginning of the episode, it's really exciting. This week, we're going to Oz Baby. It's Wicked season. This, our whole queer lives have been leading up to the movie Wicked. This is the moment that everyone's been waiting for and not to go out there and just be like we're literally giving you Barbara Walters of gets of interview, gets a this week. Team Getting Curious has done it again today. We are talking to the hair, makeup and prosthetics designer from Wicked, the one, the only the Oscar winning artist Frances Hannon to learn all about how she brought the stage musical and this new interpretation of the magical land of Oz to Life. This recording was literally over two hours. Francis is a wealth of information with that said, we're going to go right into the conversation today because we really couldn't edit much out of this conversation because it was too riveting and too good and like my jaw is still on the ground because just Francis is an absolute legend. Uh, so we're, we're foregoing our normal intro because this is just a really good episode. And I'll tell you about my beauty pics of the week next week. Although just stand by for the beginning of this episode because you may have an idea of what our beauty review is gonna be next week because mama just got something in the mail, but you'll see what that is in a minute. Ok. So let's get to our guest bio. Famous in the entertainment industry for her ability to transform any face, makeup and hair designer, Frances Hannon first entered the realm of film and TV with a job working on the British sketch comedy series, the Kenny Everett Television Show on the BBC from 1981 to 88 cut to her ongoing collaboration with Wes Anderson, she began with 1998 Rushmore Hannon quickly became one of the most sought after makeup and hair designers in Hollywood, loved and appreciated by directors and actors alike for her rigorous research. She won an Oscar for her work on Wes Anderson's The Grand Budapest Hotel and has worked on major Blockbusters like World War Z, Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny, and most recently Wicked. But you guys that literally scratches the surface of her resume. It's really storied and very like Francis is major and we kind of can't believe that we got her. So now without any further ado, let's get to our conversation with Frances Hannon.

Francis, we are so excited that you're here. We can't stand it and I could not have even planned this better if I had tried, but you'll never guess what came in the mail this morning. My wicked makeup pr box. I'm on the list I got on the fucking list. I'm so happy. Look at it. You guys. It's gorgeous. It's my very old fucking our Ari, makeup beauty box Caboodle. I'm never gonna be the same. Even though the internet tried to betray us this morning, Francis, this internet tried to come between us, honey. But the universe said no, Francis and Jonathan will bond. We are going to have this

wicked makeup box and, and that's what happened to me this morning and I'm just so happy you're here. How are you?

FRANCES HANNON: I'm very well. How are you, Jonathan? Good.

JVN: Now, where are you joining us from? Where your accent proceeds or is it? Are you like Stateside? Where are you joining us from today?

FRANCES HANNON: I'm joining you from London.

JVN: My husband's British too. Frances.

FRANCES HANNON: Awe, congrats!

JVN: I know. I'm so lucky. He's from Essex.

FRANCES HANNON: I hope that maybe I'll see you over here one day, Jonathan then.

JVN: I would love to get to see you in real life. I can't even handle your prowess. I mean, we had just told everyone right before you joined about your bio and your work is just I mean, you, your resume is incredible. Your career is storied and I, I just, I look up to your work. I, I actually would say I would go so far as to say that I revere your work and I'm just, it's such an honor that you're here. Um but, and this, this was originally a question that came later, but this pr box just has me totally beside myself. Um where were you Francis when you found out that you booked Wicked?

FRANCES HANNON: I was sitting in my home having spoken with John Chu and Mark Platt the night before at my friend, the producer's house, Joan Schneider. And uh we, I was so excited when I heard I'd got it, but I, I kind of, I, I don't know what I'd have done if I hadn't, Jonathan, I would have been devastated.

JVN: What was the process like? Did you have to like go do like auditions for it or like paint like an Elphaba or what did you know?

FRANCES HANNON: God no, I would have probably failed Jonathan if I had to have done it in advance. But no, I I am I was very lucky. I worked with John Chu in the past and I had a Zoom with John, Mark Platt, and other members of the producer side on, on Wicked and John Chu remembered me straight away and I was blown away. He said something very lovely that set my heart at ease. He said, um he said, Oh, as soon as we spoke, he said, I recognize your soothing, calming voice. He said, and that makes me feel very good and it really made me feel very good too. And I kind of felt, I was, um, I was just very lucky to be talking with him again and, and the questions I think maybe my CV is, it says it all. But I, I was just so glad to be chosen because, you know, there's great people in this world and it could have been anybody in the world and it was me and I don't know for why, but I it was my lucky day.

JVN: So how did you land on the perfect shade of green for Cynthia Erivo's take on the role? Like just so many practice days?

FRANCES HANNON: Yeah, you're absolutely right. Jonathan. So many practice days before I ever even met Cynthia, I started with getting in models um, of the same skin tone and trying to work on what products existed on the market and what mixes would make the right green and just never left off until we found the green. But then I started looking at how that green is affected in all the different lights. And that was the hardest thing to achieve because, um, a darker skin tone absorbs light and where as on paler skin to reflex light. So I had to work on how because so on my models on one light, the green would look perfect. But in the next light she'd look gray or she looked like she had nothing on her. So I, I started researching the market again and just trawling the streets and I found in a tiny little shop, a little Canadian product that had a neon base in it and, and it was a green color, but just a, just a tiny little tube like that. And it wasn't, it was a discontinued product, but I brought it back. I mixed it with my ready done green and it gave the right, it caused a reflection that was needed to stop the light absorption. So it gave me the continuous color in all different aspects of light. Um, and then in over here, we have this wonderful alchemist called David Stoneman and he designs makeups for you and his company is called Makeup Online and he took my greens and he took the neon base out of the little color I'd found and he just put three drops of yellow neon into my greens and hey, Bingo, it hit the spot. And um we worked with that. I got Cynthia in, in the very early days just for one day when it was only myself and um one of my crew members was called Branca and she was working with me and um we did the spray and we had no cameras at that stage. Alice Brooks our um DP. She just photographed it and it was just a great learning curve one day just in the early. Like, I'm going back to August, August, September 2020.

JVN: I'm just dying to know Francis. What, what are we setting with? How, what, what is this a trade secret you are willing to spill Francis? What do the girls need to be setting with to keep to? Because what, what was it? Because the skin was skinning? Like, I mean, I've never seen such a beautiful green complexion. It looks like beautiful skin.

FRANCES HANNON: Oh, I'm really glad you thought that Jonathan it was, we didn't seal it Jonathan at all. I mean, sometimes we'd use a light, just a normal seal that we might use over a tattoo or something, something like that just to, to um protect it for the day. But we couldn't seal her in because of what she had to achieve every day. So it really was just, you know, your basic everything, you know, and we all do, you know, it was, it was what the product was made of that made it hold, it wasn't what we did on top of it –

JVN: Ohhh.

FRANCES HANNON: And, you know, in life and I think you must feel the same less is more so the more layers you add to somebody, the more and more you're removing them from the reality of what you want to achieve. So I'm not a great believer in primers, sealers, anti shiners all that you, you know, the less you use the longer longevity and also you have to repair. So if you seal something and then the

witch's hat rubs the surface off, you have a full on very serious repair. If the witches hats rubbing off on your foundation or, or a normal makeup, you can, you can fill in that gap and that's, that's how we have to work.

JVN: So now one other sidebar that's just coming up for me with Cynthia's um makeup did this stylist or like costume design ever, were they ever just like, girl, you've got to figure out how to set this green because if it gets green on this costume, I just can't get as many of these like shirts or did you figure out how to make it, like, totally transfer proof from the clothes?

FRANCES HANNON: You're so perceptive Jonathan, you got, you certainly know your stuff when it comes to what all the practicalities of the industry, don't you?

JVN: Well, I've been doing a little bit of it. I have to, I don't have to do green makeup, but I do have to do like my makeup on like my own, like my makeup and then if I'm in like a cute like outfit, then I, I just, I get it and I'm like, oh my God, there's all this, like, smears all over it now, shit.

FRANCES HANNON: Yeah. No, but I mean, part of the design, one can never just take into achieving the look of the character. You have to take into how long you're going to take because that will take it out of John Chu's day. You know, how, how many hours can you have an artist in the makeup chair? How many hours to clean them off at the end of the day has to be into consideration it not transferring was very high because it wasn't just the costumes, which of course, Paul there is a limit because they cost thousands but also transferring to the other artists, you know, so often in the film, Ari and Cynthia are hugging each other, kissing their faces together hands on their face. And um so that was a big part of, of the design of the product as well. It can't just be the right green, it can't just be the right light. It has all those other stipulations and if you don't achieve them, you haven't succeeded, you have to achieve all those things.

JVN: So how did Cynthia get that off every day? Did she have like a gorgeous little like shower in her trailer? Did she just go through so much like cold cream? Like I'm thinking like colds pond, like just like ponds, like like a liquid, more lotion remover or was it?

FRANCES HANNON: No, you're absolutely right. It's hot towels. It's cold cream. It's a product made especially to remove it straight to color and everything. And she has like, she had her team of people who were getting her ready every day and they'd all be there. I had to, like, Cynthia has deep, deep pools of, of dark brown, black eyes and we changed her eye color to green as well. So she had a, and they were just off the shelf. It wasn't anything bespoke that was made. We tried the bespoke, but they, somehow they removed you from Cynthia just a fraction. But the off the shelf ones didn't have that effect. They're much finer. So she had her lenses on every day. She had her, you know, she has like 3040 odd piercings. They were covered with a little prosthetic every day because you can't have piercings would, we did, we want it to be timeless and piercings are. So now as our tattoos, every piercing, every tattoo on

the whole film, nobody had anything like that so that we kept it as, as undateable and hopefully we achieved the same with the hair look. Um as we possibly could. You know, you never once say that film was made in 2020. You know, I can tell from the hair or I can tell because she's got so many piercings or -

JVN: So I, I feel, I feel complete with Elphaba. I don't know how we got there. It only took me 45 minutes. I freaked out Francis. I'm so sorry. Don't wanna, we cannot cheat Galinda – Oh, tell me.

FRANCES HANNON: We never mentioned something that I thought that was really lovely with alphabet. Was her? How much was the storyline, her nails told, you know, and it's, it's quite a –

JVN: How can I be like, yes, the story of his nails tell us.

FRANCES HANNON: Well, I mean, first of all, it started with Cynthia and what she liked in life and, you know, she has these wonderful nails that when we first met two years ago weren't quite to the level they are now, they're really spectacular. But, um, it was a, it was a point of story where Cynthia wanted, she didn't want to lose that. Um and of course, she has her own life to lead as well. So she, we decided to try and simplify it with Mark Platt's input because it's very important. We started cheers with just matching her green skin for looking real like long but super long. And then as Cynthia, we kept it like we thought maybe three or four looks. But as Cynthia developed her Elphaba, she developed her thoughts in her nails and we added a couple of more looks to it, but it's very much a part of her story and it's very much something Cynthia uses in her performance. And I thought that was a lovely touch and that truly came right with that.

JVN: I love that there was an environment to see the artist in the role and, and develop it. It, it didn't have to be this like stagnant thing. You can take the inspiration from what people bring to a role and, and make it better. And and, and um enhance it. And that's so nice because I think a lot of times in creative spaces, like sometimes that's not allowed to happen and it's so nice that, and it seems like everywhere you go that does get to happen and, and I love that you bring that and allow your artist to develop and shine with you. And that's just such a beautiful ability to have as an artist that you facilitate that.

FRANCES HANNON: That's very kind of you to say. I, I hope I'd always do. I think that's your starting point really is what the artist brings to the table and you, you hopefully enhance it.

JVN: I just can't even believe that I'm having this conversation with someone who's just like on a first name basis with like Ari and Cynthia. It's like too much for my gay bones. I think I might shatter. Um but how, so how did your makeup tests go with her? Because obviously, I mean, Ariana founded Rem, which we're huge fans of. So was that most of what you were working with when it came to Ariana's look? And how did like, how did her makeup testing and like lighting testing and hair testing go?

Is it kind of like similar but different because Elphaba's hair is a little bit more predictable whereas like doesn't Gina's hair get like big, small, tight down bun, big, like doesn't it go all over the place more?

FRANCES HANNON: We have? Uh, well, the first wonderful thing about Ari was when she, she did come to the UK. Um she said straight away, in fact, she said it when we were um you know, speaking with each other prior to her arrival that she didn't want to bring any part of Ari's life into the film with her. She wanted to be Glinda from the first day with people who um without bringing any influences, she already had about her visuals. And of course, she's been on camera since she was a child. So she uh she was very, she knows everything about her own face and everything that she likes to look like and enhances and everything. So it was absolutely wonderful for somebody like me to have someone come and say that to you like it's I'm I'm your do what you like. So um it was, I think the main thing with her was for me was finding a look that kept her um timeless. Very important uh particularly with hair because that is so easy to date if you're not careful. Um Princess like which ari brings that quality to everything in my opinion. Um the fact that she's nearly got brown black hair herself um and a very strong texture was made us know that we couldn't really, as much as we'd like to have used her own hair. It wasn't going to be possible for this length of time. So, so we did bleach her hair constantly. It was really to keep it looking pale under her wigs because they were so light. But we did pretty much the same with Ari and the design we used, we used slightly warmer and shorter style for the shoes for the younger to enhance it. And then as she learned more and more about herself as a person, we went to a pair of blondes and let her hair appear longer. Um and, but we never, ever, as you'll see, we never did a bun and we never did an updo. We didn't want to go for the um ever, she's always, always a down stuff cut back like that, tiaras, crowns.

JVN: How did you manage that many hairdressers and makeup artists? Like what would could you just take us like through an example of like maybe pre-production like a day of pre-production and a day of like production like with pre-production with you taking like hair leads and makeup leads and then like, would you show them how you wanted the finishing to be on like a principal extra or like or one of the principal artists and be like, I want it like this and then would they have to like recreate your look and then you'd be like, ok, that's checked off. You're good to go. I just need to see this before this goes out or would you just show them a picture or something and then approve it? Like, how did that process work?

FRANCES HANNON: It all starts with sitting down once you, once you know that you're on the right page for what John Chu wants to achieve and, and, and where you are with regards to the sets and the costumes for that be it Emerald City say for example, that was a really extreme look. You know, we knew we wanted them to be very tall and statuesque. We knew the sets were the tallest going. We knew it was all pillars and, and everything was very elongated and quite an art deco film. And it feel not that we want to do art deco hairstyles, but we just in the, all the research is done

and then you sit down with your whole team, you have crowd supervisors and supervisors and coordinators and my keys, you know, for um I had two major keys throughout the whole film. He knew everything there was that I knew and uh you sit down and you all discuss what would work and all the references and then everybody puts in what they think would make it work, you know, a mesh, a metal frame, um outsourcing, getting more stuff made the colors we did the munchkins in that was very, you know, that had a huge amount of input on the design side from us and um what Mark Platt wanted to see and taking the original Wizard of Oz into account what we didn't want to make it look like a fancy. We wanted everything to look like real people and real life, not somebody with green hair or blue hair or whatever, you know, even though Elphaba is green that in itself. But that was always meant to be real and live in a real life. It was never meant to be, you know, as you, as you saw in the original film, the Rainbow Horse and all that stuff, but it was so you'd sit down all together, uh come to the end look of, of what it is and what variations you could put in it and how to achieve it. And then my crowd supervisor, Laura and her team would all go off and start making. We did a lot of stuff um where they used a lot of um acrylic hair and nylon hair to make the shapes and designs beforehand because you can, they would iron them and mold them and, and then that would often be added to the weeks to give. I wish I wish we'd met before. I wish you'd had a chance to come in and see some of the crowd rooms with all the –

JVN: Oh my God, I would probably combust. I honestly probably, I probably would have had security called. I think I would have literally spontaneously gay combusted on the set. Like I'm gonna have to work on my maturity before I can do that. But give me like one or two more years and, and please invite me again and I will still take you up on it because like that would just be the best day of my life. Ok. So not to like, ok, so how much did you inspiration did you take from like the Wizard of Oz in constructing the hair look for Wicked?

FRANCES HANNON: Well we did do some odd nods to it and both to the stage production as well. Uh, nods to the stage production were always safe because Mark, that's marks. Our nods to the Wizard of Oz were, were always had to be checked if we were allowed to use them because through Mark, of course, because he knew everything um because of copyrights and stuff like that, that I'm not that, you know, I don't know about those sorts of things. But um you know, so something like the, the braid from the arrival at she taken from Wicked, the production that was a given, you know, that, that was an iconic moment that we were definitely going to bring through. There aren't that many other moments where we've taken stuff from the stage play, I don't think as exact thought processes, but from the Wizard of Oz, going back to the early days of, of in the planning and, and very early in the planning was what should the munchkins be? Because we needed to find the munchkins to find Bok. And of course, Bok being a principal, normally you'd find Bok and then you'd find the munchkins. But Munchkin was a big village it had to all sit together. And um again, along with John and Nathan and um Paul, the, the textures that everybody was using like Paul in his costumes and layering and in the house, the

designs, you know, and Nathan starts much earlier than John Paul or I in the film were always textured and layered. And the color palette was, was very beautiful and really like easy to work with. And it was immediately inspiring to me that the munchkins would look fantastic if they were because they work in the field. They're natural. They're the workers of life is that they had um uh red textured hair but very textured. Not just, you know, not just uh and the reds, I mean, there are 100 or more shades of red in life. I didn't mean just like uh somebody who you call ginger or strawberry blonde. We went from aubergines and maroons right up to pale blondes and older ladies, gray reds and um everybody had a curl, everybody had a tan from working outside, everybody had freckles pretty much from working on the land. We tried to keep the foreheads quite high in the early days. We did some experiments. We actually ball capping the artists and starting the wigs quite high. But um it was, it was quite easy to see that, that, that really wasn't that necessary because you could keep the foreheads high without going as far as adding an extra hour to the call by ball capping two or 300 people every day. But once, um, I mean, there was a stage in that process where Mark Platt came back, he was actually an American and he, he added that maybe he'd like to look at our munchkins having blue hair. Um, and that was a nod back to the Wizard of Oz. Not in the blue as in it being a color. That's a fantastical, not a real color. And um I, I disagreed completely, but this is an occasion where you say, well, yeah, I'll show you that. Of course, I'll show you that anything you want. But I said, I do feel like we're moving into another area of storytelling that I don't think they were, had thought about before by going into such a removed color. So we did lots of blues for Mark and luckily we did it and then we photographed it on our on stand ins. Um, but Mark saw straight away whenever we went to camera with it, he saw straight away that it wasn't right for what we were building on. Um, and uh and so he agreed to the red hair and then that gave us me the foundation for Bok because Ethan by nature happens to have red hair, which was a bit, he doesn't look that red, but in his youth, he was, he was the red that I've used on him in Bok. So it wasn't until I met him that I learned that he showed me a photo and we gave him the texture and we gave him the hair extensions and he was colored red and he had hair extensions put in. And he had a wonderful artist called Zoe Stones who works with me all the time who does fantastic extensions and she put them in, cared for them and we had to move them. Sometimes he had to go off to America or whatever on occasions. And the process of putting in is with coloring is eight hours, you know, so we always had to have him a day or two early. I mean, I don't know if you've ever done extensions on yourself, but it's a process and getting them out is boring.

JVN: It's hard, it's long.

FRANCES HANNON: Yeah long, long time consuming. But they were beautifully, they work beautifully and then Ethan brought to the plate as well. So he's casual and funny at the beginning of in film one and then as his life as he's been dominated by um uh the Marissa, isn't it by Marissa? He, he gets more controlled, he's in his uniform, he's a servant and his hair becomes much tighter and he becomes much



tight as a person. And then it was easy to take that small thought process through into what ended up as tin man with him.

JVN: But because your bread, I mean, when you think about like Indiana Jones to like Grand Budapest to Wicked, I mean, such different visual cues, different, like amounts of people, like, I mean, I think, um, oh my God, my brain when I think like Indiana Jones, it's like this is much more rugged. It's like a little bit more men's grooming than Wicked just couldn't be any more opposite. And then, um, and then the Grand or then the Grand Budapest Hotel is like all like interesting angles and interesting, just different. It's just so different. How is it really different? Working on a huge production versus like a smaller one or is it pretty similar? Um, what would people be surprised to know about the similarities or differences between smaller production or gigantic one?

FRANCES HANNON: Uh I, what, what, what I would say two different things is one is um always try to strive for perfection then no matter what size you're working on, you know, whether it's the high action or the piece of art, um you hopefully will have achieved something in between that works for the camera. But I think one of the big differences, if you're talking about say something like World War Z, the Grand Budapest those two, for example, is no know your director's work because you know that Wes holds a frame, you know, and it's a piece of, it's nearly like looking at individual paintings. So, you know, that level of work for that frame has got to be exactly as you'd want it. The delicacy. Um, you know, you never put on anything too heavy, you never go over the top with blush because of the lighting. You know, that, that what you see with your eyes, what is going to achieve. Whereas World War Z, with all your zombies running around like lunatics, you know that if you go too fine on the art, it's going to be lost. You won't even see it as they run past. So you're going a bit more, uh, with a bit more, ump, I might call it with, with making everything a bit bigger than you might do when it's still. And when you've got the still frames then work with the still frame. But that's, that's in general. The only if you, if to answer that question is what I would consider is how, whether it's action packed and then you, I work with Paul Greengrass who I absolutely adore and, you know, he does the action with a realness to it, but he holds frame and he holds frame really tight and like, you know, um Tom's face for Captain Phillips, something like that. You know, for those really deep emotional moments, you wouldn't want him too made up or looking like he's even wearing anything. But of course he has to wear something for perfection. So for not perfection as in perfect for a camera of the character, the sweatiness of whatever it is that, you know, but keeping Tom's hair looking good, you don't want it to look too thin. Jonathan Bailey. Jonathan was very happy to wear two P because he knows when he does a huge amount of action, he gets really hot and that makes his hair go flat and that's no good when you're Fiyero, that's not your image. You want it big and flamboyant the whole time for different reasons for doing different things. Really. If that makes sense.

JVN: It did make so much sense. But because you brought up World War Z and that is like my favorite zombie movie. So the plane scene when the zombie like sneaks into the plane and then like kills everyone did no spoilers. But it's 2013. You guys, if you slept on World War Z, that's your own problem. Um, did you do that scene? Were you there for the filming of that scene?

FRANCES HANNON: The plane scene always be on the set because it's what happens in front of the camera that so we will always come haunt you.

JVN: Were you scared Francis? Was that scene scary to watch or only to or only for us viewers? Like, was it creepy filming it?

FRANCES HANNON: I thought it was so brilliant. I have to say, I mean, I've worked with Brad a few times and I just think he was marvelous. Fantastic.

JVN: He was incredible.

FRANCES HANNON: Yeah.

JVN: Here's my only note for that movie. I know you didn't have anything to do with it. And I actually read that it was budget things after the plane crash. I was like ok, honey, this, you got the, that's a sepsis waiting to happen. Honey, we got the metal rod through the abdomen. We're gonna pull ourselves off the metal rod and we're gonna fall out of an airplane like 70 ft. But then we're gonna walk all the way to safety on the boat? I needed a little bit more there. I needed like the, I, I kind of got lost at the pancreas, but I still stuck with it because I was just like, damn, honey the rod to the pancreas and the suspended airplane is just a lot for Brad and I, that his core strength is like, you know, it's storied but it's just dang. But I need a World War Z, really a World War Z Two –

FRANCES HANNON: Yeah.

JVN: I want a two because like they, you know, at the end they were like blah, blah, blah. We got the vaccine. Well, what about when the vaccine resistance comes? And the, and the zombie resistant strain comes for the World War Z? I want a two. I want a sequel and I think everyone can agree that we want a sequel on World War Z.

FRANCES HANNON: I do agree. It was so lacking but for me and, and my gut is he to have just to have been through that your pancreas pulled out, everything fallen out of a plane, everything that happened and all you get is a few scratches on your face. That's very sad. But that's the you know, there are reasons when you can't control what they want to show because they want to make him look beautiful in the next scene. So if he has to look beautiful, you can't have ripped out half his face because that would have to carry through for a much longer period of time than a few bits of glass that have cut down the side of his face. I mean, I've never forgotten it. It's funny you should bring that one up.

JVN: Well, I, but it's funny that you say that I did not remember his face. I only remembered the, the only and his face didn't lose me because you could never lose

me with Brad Pitt's face. Ok. Are you ready for our final segment? It's our rapid fire segment. And then you get to be released into the London day and, and you just have been our most fun guest ever and I can't stand it.

FRANCES HANNON: Oh, Jonathan, what about all the other things I want to tell you about all the other secrets?

JVN: Oh, my, tell me all the secrets!

FRANCES HANNON: We haven't talked about Fiyero's blue horse that matches Fiyero and he's all done with makeup.

JVN: Oh we have to talk about it, we have to talk about it.

FRANCES HANNON: In Post. They did like, um, Dulcie Bear and they did the goat and they did the monkeys. But in reality, we did the scarecrow and the tin man and Fiyero's horse. He wasn't prosthetics, but it was a huge job. Um, and then we did some 3D masks and that, which kind of aren't so obvious, but the, the horse was, um, Jonathan has a favorite horse in Bridgeton. And so he came in and then our director said, I really want the horse to be fantastical. I think it's sort of like have something special about him. And the director said, I really like him in this iridescent blue. And so and but also within horses, different horses give different performances. So like one horse is better at standing still. Another one's better at running. Another one is much better at performing, turning twisted safer for Jonathan to ride all these different things. So they the horse people, we we got the horses, we showed them what we wanted to do. And so they, we shaved the horses, they were dyed black from a Japanese hair dye, which was safe for the horse's skin which the horse company knew about so that every horse matched each other. So one horse was called, was gray, it was called white gray. One was brown and one was dark brown. And um they, they all had their, they were all stripped and dyed black to for the base. Then they all had their manes had hair extensions and their tails so that they all matched. And John Chu wanted them super long anyway. And then we had our horses painted blue with this wonderful iridescence blue that we had made again, we used like, um, it's a shine that's used for the horse's shoes and everything. So we knew it was safe. And um uh David Stoneman again, took that product and added the blues that we found and we did the trials like we do with the actors until we found the blue that the director thought worked wonderfully. And that's what was used. And then I had my horse makeup artist who was Jo Hannon and Becky Sheridan, who did the horses, all the different horses to always look alike every day. They were used. It was a real little thing behind the scene that nobody –

JVN: What other cool, Wicked things?

FRANCES HANNON: Yeah. Well, Michelle Yo, you know, she was one of those wonderful experiences. Of course, she was very busy as you can imagine with the Oscars and everything. So she came in rather late, but I had her head shaped from another production because she was too busy to do a fitting. And um I met her once

and showed her the thoughts of designs, but I based her on um, you know, her magic powers to controlling the weather if you know, Wicked. And, and so I based her on a cloud because I thought her she's very petite in person and you know that thick black hair, but I thought it'd be so lovely like when she's controlling the weather, waving her hands that she's got this big hairdo that all up in the air and bits floating off to the side and it just, you know, she came in only the day prior and we did her, we didn't ball cap or anything because her own dark hair gave a nice density under the whiteness of the wig. I mean, so and her makeup artist for Sarah News and she did her hair artist and makeup was Branca. She did a wonderful job of getting that all that black hair away, but it really did make a difference just having that little bit of depth underneath the cloud, so to speak. But Michelle loved it and we were sorted really and we did a trial date for again, never, never just on the day, you know, John Chu and up that all approved it prior with the costume and everything. So, but I I loved her look and she's truly a wonderful human being.

JVN: Bowen Yang. Did, did he just make everyone laugh like all the time like on set just like such a light and loved to be around?

FRANCES HANNON: He is such a light to be around, isn't he? Uh, Bowen he came in as you know, he wears his extraordinarily short. So there was no chance of using just that. So we too paid him and, and of course, as you know, Baron is so busy and locked into his production that we had no time he was very late in and, and we just had to make it work and it did work and it gave him some height and something to work with. I, I it just complimented his costume. I thought it was amazing with it, but he was just so lovely. He was so um I don't know what the word from. Uh he was just so giving. He's so unaware of how brilliant he is in himself.

JVN: I love that. Was there ever a time on Wicked where, like it's like you guys are doing a shoot and there's like a piece of hair that is just like holding on for dear life and you're like, oh fuck, I don't want that to fall right now. Like I wanna get this shot and, or like, or like did you ever like, like what's like a time where it was just like a like a tense time where you're like, oh God, I need like, please stay up or like, oh God, please stop sweating or like, oh my God, I can see the, the thing. Does that ever happen? Or is it usually pretty? You've done so much prep work that like those sorts of things don't really happen?

FRANCES HANNON: Oh no, no, you can't predict those things. They do happen. I mean, first of all, I go straight to the John or Wes Anton, whoever it was that was happening with and say look, I mean he's, that mustache is falling off or that wig is going to come off I can tell. Um and they go no no, no, I'm too busy, whatever. And then I go to the head of visual effects and saying if that does happen, can, is there anything you can do? And then if it does happen after you've warned everybody, you just ask them to make a note that you, you said it and, and it went wrong and it means doing the take again, but not much once Cynthia flying through the air, I mean, and she was doing it for the ten zillionth time and it was, um, you know, on second unit and post on the broom and she was singing her heart out and she was

strapped to the pole and she was forever 40 ft 60 ft in the air and um, throwing her head around and everything and her hat was attached to her wig and the weight of the throw in the whole lot came. But, you know –

JVN: Oh shit.

FRANCES HANNON: That's just like pop it back on again and go for it again.

JVN: So when that happened with Cynthia did they just kind of lower her and then you were like, all right, we got the second one standing by, let's just get that on there. No problem. Back up. You go?

FRANCES HANNON: No, they lowered her, we picked it off the floor and the hat and stuck it back on and then up, she goes again, it's just a, just part of the process. But it, you know, it happens. I mean, I, I think I've had it happen in every, there would be something on every film that you could refer this to. Not just the hat or the wig Wes Anderson in, I don't you remember Grand Budapest? But the story is being told by that lovely actor who's since passed away. I can't remember his name and it's the opening has got the little girl sitting on his knee or son and um Wes doesn't like you to go in at all. No checks during takes or anything. Once it starts, it might go for 10 hours and you can't go in unless Wes says, and the actor's mustache just went, started coming off. So, and then it was rolling down and then it was hanging down half over his mouth. It's not until we says you can go in or Wes is willing to cut that you go in and do your repairs. But you know, it's, um, it's not, you, you always inform them then it's their call.

JVN: But what was your, but you won? You won an Oscar. Can you just take me into like sitting in the, you're sitting in the theater and did, was it like a long standing dream for you to win an Oscar? Did it change your life? Did it, was it everything you thought it would be? Was it kind of, what was that like?

FRANCES HANNON: I think, I think, uh, the, the moment you've won that, that's, that's the most special moment. But no, I didn't expect to get it because um because the other projects it was up against, there was some great work in there and often it's in my mind, it's the majority of the work that wins. And there was Guardians of the Galaxy and I had wonderful work in it and everything and was very popular. I, and I, I didn't expect it to win by any means, but when we did get called, I was beyond delighted. Um and other than how proud I am to have won it, it certainly not changed my working life. If that makes sense, I think maybe it changes people's perceptions of me. It hasn't changed me.

JVN: But you were booked and busy before and you stay booked and busy afterwards.

FRANCES HANNON: I have to say, you know, you have to thank Wes Anderson as well. There's a, you know, he's artistic guy is quite phenomenal and his attention to detail surpasses anybody I've ever worked with. So, you know, within that in it's his art really.

JVN: So scarecrow and Tin Man prosthetics. What, what, what prosthetics are we going to be seeing in Wicked?

FRANCES HANNON: Well, they're marvelous. So it was a collaboration with Mark Cooly again, which we've had several times and he, his work is just, I just, I find that I feel like he just compliments everything that I can imagine or do or ask for. And he and John Chu had the most fantastic image of a Tin man that he found and that was our basis for the Tin man look. Um, and it, and then Mark worked along with that and of course, there's a lot of work in post though, the prosthetics are all on. Um and keeping something of um Ethan showing through that, that uh Ethan managed to be Ethan through a full face of prosthetics. He brought through a, a sadness and a sympathy for him that I have a vulnerability that I can't even imagine how hard it was. I mean, we keep the prosthetic super thin, but nevertheless, you have to add the different shapes. And the idea when you do get to see it is that in the room when um Marissa does the spell and it goes wrong is everything metal in the room in the post attaches to, to, to um Bok, that's how he becomes tin. That's she does spelling it all goes wrong and then oh and she in by doing the wrong spell makes him metal. And um you'll see all this lovely detail where um uh you know where John had, where you'll see a piece of the fireplace on him and you'll see the salt and pepper pot or you see the handles of the jug or you'll see the rivets from the fireplace, all these little details that um were brought to the plate. It was a real collaboration between what Nathan had on said what Paul could do what um Paulo did who's our supervisor imposed to make the body all hang together. But the detail, the little fingers, he's got pepper pots and he's got it just beautifully done. That was all Paul the, that final bit there. It was, it's really, but the main thing I think was Ethan's performance never got lost behind it. And um that, that I think is a real um light to shine on how good the work was. And Fiyero, of course, he had a love sequence to do with Elphaba whilst he was a scarecrow. So we did a pass at it where um and the wig worked perfectly well because it was the transition and we, you know, sewed in half the field into a basic wig that was of the color of his original blondes and that just worked really well on Jonathan, but the um our, our burlap face, our sacking, you know, that was his head. We again with that, we put it on and Mark felt like it lost a bit too much to Jonathan. So Mark Platt that is so Mark Cooler shaved down all the inside so that it kept Jonathan's face shape. But we just changed all the texture. And Jonathan in the film, we gave him, Jonathan has naturally brown eyes. We made him blue for Fiyero because that's the color of his village and where he comes from his color tones palette. And then we made him dark brown for the fields for when he becomes scarecrows. So his eyes became more of a pool, um which worked really well in the love scenes, I think. But that was the, the prosthetic sort of, and they, they worked beautifully and of course, then the actors brought it all to life, but it was beautifully done. But with great thought, I thought um, Mark Platt and John Chu's part in how much they wanted to keep Fiyero and bulk more alive than going straight to that prosthetic. Look for a Tinman and scarecrow as in the original film.

JVN: What do you think that people will be like, maybe the most surprised about when they see *Wicked*?

FRANCES HANNON: How spectacular is really because everything is exaggerated and um and hopefully how timeless it is because everything has a twist on it. No matter where it's been taken from in history or present day, it's all got something new about it. And I hope that brings enhances the audience's um what they see what they will see regardless of the story. And that's wonderful.

JVN: Ok. So basically this is our final segment and it's our rapid fire segment.

FRANCES HANNON: Ok.

JVN: What is your budget? Beauty recommendation under 10 quid?

FRANCES HANNON: Under 10 quid, throw me. But I'm um uh a mascara.

JVN: I love, like, I love the ma, I love Maybelline and it's definitely under 10 bucks. I always use that one. Yeah, it's gorgeous lash blast. It's classic and it works really well and it's affordable. What's your favorite splurge recommendation?

FRANCES HANNON: Oh, Crème de la mer.

JVN: You guys, you know how I feel about that. What's a product you never leave home without?

FRANCES HANNON: My lip tint.

JVN: Which one, who do you love?

FRANCES HANNON: I'm using the Victoria Beckham at the moment, but it's new to me –

JVN: Vicky B!

FRANCES HANNON: So I just let you know.

JVN: What's your favorite vintage beauty look?

FRANCES HANNON: I'm punk, very different.

JVN: Ooo! I feel like I need to see you like, do a period piece, collab a punkin forties. It's giving like Vivian Westwood on like dry brush out finger waves. I'm obsessed. Ok. Ok. What is your favorite coat?

FRANCES HANNON: A Crombie particularly the one that Bill Murray wore in *Groundhog Day*.

JVN: What about your favorite handbag?

FRANCES HANNON: A tote.

JVN: What designer?

FRANCES HANNON: Hermes, Hermes.

JVN: Amaze. Uh, purr kitty purr. What's your favorite foundation?

FRANCES HANNON: REM Sweetener.

JVN: Ahhh, Ariana! Oh, wait, actually I skipped through that. Do you guys use? So, but even though Ariana said that she didn't want to bring like Ariana into Glinda, she did bring Ar em into Glinda, right? Because the makeup is looking gorgeous.

FRANCES HANNON: Yeah. No, we definitely used her products a lot and we particularly liked her little cheek. She's got a very special thing where she had a highlighter called Mercury onto the tip of her nose and it was kind of the thing she'd do just before a take or just when she'd leave the room and it was a lovely final touch. I felt once she found Glinda, it would be like the finishing moment.

JVN: Oh my god, favorite shoe?

FRANCES HANNON: Oh, the Ferragamo, the Audrey Hepburn little lace up.

JVN: I love a love it so much. Can't stand it. Favorite hairspray?

FRANCES HANNON: Oh, Got To Be because it holds all those stars in Wicked

JVN: Perfume.

FRANCES HANNON: Oh, bloody Chanel. Reminds me my mom.

JVN: Moisturizer.

FRANCES HANNON: Creme de la Mer.

JVN: Makeup remover.

FRANCES HANNON: Creme de la Mer. Sorry am I being boring? Sorry.

JVN: Oh, so, oh, wait, so when you come home when you're going to take your makeup off, you just like use the same Creme de la Mer and you just like warm it up in your fingertips and use it as a cold cream just like wash it off?

FRANCES HANNON: No, no, it's a cleanser. The moisturizer. The daytime moisture is my favorite but no, thier cleanser is what I like to use and then –

JVN: Oh, the green one that like kind of green, the green one in the shower –

FRANCES HANNON: That's right.

JVN: The foaming one. Ok. Randomly Francis and I don't want to like, I don't want to come for Estee Lauder anymore because like, I already, I already had to eat my words on Creme de la Mer because I already said on this podcast that I thought I didn't like it. Then my girlfriend was like, you're insane. You didn't rub it up in your hands enough to like make it warm and like more liquidy before you like roll and press. Then when she taught me how to use it, right? I literally had to come on this



podcast and do like my only ever retraction where I was like I was wrong, I was talking shit. I take it back. I was wrong but they're, but that foaming cleanser, it burns the shit out of my eyes and I don't know why because I bought it but it, it really does burn my eyes when I wash. I don't know why because I, I wear a lot of eye makeup so I'm like –

FRANCES HANNON: They have a much gentle one. They have a gentle one as well. So maybe you're using the wrong one for you. But, um, if I could only buy one of their products and I think they are so dear people can't go buying them would be the daytime moisturizer. Not the matte finish. The ordinary one. If I could ever say to you just buy one moisturizer the daytime, not Matte finish the night time one is lovely, but it's very heavy and it's, and it quite good for somebody with psoriasis, but it does need warming. You're not wrong.

JVN: What's your favorite candle company?

FRANCES HANNON: Oh I like the, I think it's pronounced. Ortigia. The Zagara one. Ortega or Tija. It's an Italian brand from Sicily. It's just beautiful.

JVN: No we got it. Powder blush?

FRANCES HANNON: Powder blush is the Terry Terry Rose.

JVN: Cream blush?

FRANCES HANNON: REM.

JVN: What about favorite shampoo and conditioner?

FRANCES HANNON: Oh, I like I have to say, I'm, I'm a great fan of the, how would you spell it? Shu Umora range?

JVN: Um, Francis I love you so much. Thanks for taking your time. This was like such a beyond honor and I just love you so much and your work is just so insanely incredible. And also when I said that I didn't have the maturity to go on set. That was my ADHD. So if you ever need an assistant, I will be so quiet and so well behaved and just, just a quiet little mouse that will just, I will get your coffees or I can set up your station or I can blow dry the back of somebody or I can even say I'll do whatever you want me to do. So if you ever need a little good helping girl, I will be quiet. I will be nothing like today. I will be so studious and professional and you won't regret it. So if you ever need to hire me for an onset assistant, I'm your girl.

FRANCES HANNON: Yeah well, I look forward to the day when we do meet maybe New York, LA, London?

JVN: Yeah, we're coming to London in February for some JV and hair stuff and my husband's family is all there. So we usually go like three or four times a year. So if you want, I'd love to take you to dinner and I'll have, I'll have Chris send you my cell number. If you wanna be friends, I would be, I'd love to be friends.

FRANCES HANNON: I would love, I would love that, Jonathan. Thank you so much for today. It's been so nice talking with you.

JVN: You too! You've been listening to Pretty Curious with me, Jonathan Van Ness. You can learn more about this week's guest in the episode description and follow us on Instagram and TikTok @CuriouswithJVN. Pretty Curious drops every Monday wherever you get your podcasts and make sure to tune in every Wednesday for Getting Curious. Still can't get enough? Honey, you're insatiable! Subscribe to Extra Curious on Apple Podcasts for commercial free listening and our subscription only show, Ask JVN, where we're talking all about sex, relationships, or really just whatever's on my mind that week. Our theme music is composed by Nathanael McClure. Come on Nathanael! Our editor and engineer is also Nathanael McClure, yes! Getting Curious is produced by me, Chris McClure with production support from Julie Carrillo, Anne Currie and Chad Hall.