

Film Close-Up: Tobey Maguire

by Joey_Berlin

Tobey Maguire slips back into his skintight Spidey suit for a third and possibly final time with the release of "Spider-Man 3." The skyscraper-high budget - north of a quarter billion dollars - makes it one of the most expensive films ever made. And the roster of villains is beefed up as well.

TOBEY MAGUIRE - Tobey Maguire is back in his Spidey suit for a third time in 'Spider-Man 3.' CNS Photo courtesy of Merrick Morton. In the latest installment of the Peter Parker saga, Spidey tangles with the trio of Venom, Sandman and a new incarnation of the Green Goblin. But the heart of "Spider-Man 3" is the way Maguire as the web-slinging wonder grapples with his seductively enhanced powers, while navigating a love triangle with Kirsten Dunst and James Franco.

"Spider-Man 3" will take its place in pop culture history, and if your Spider-sense is tingling, it might be because Maguire and the rest of the major players have been talking up tentative plans for a fourth installment in the franchise.

Off-screen, Maguire recently welcomed a baby girl with his fiancée, Jennifer Meyer, daughter of Universal Studios president Ron Meyer. He grew up poor and struggled to fit in, but at 31 the unassuming Maguire has found fortune and fame, living his life in the calm center of a hoopla hurricane.

Q: Was it like a dysfunctional family reunion on the set of "Spider-Man 3" when everyone got back together?

A: No, it was mostly great. There are not many bad experiences and if there is any conflict, it's in the form of debating about a scene. And it's pretty clear, for me anyway, that it's Sam Raimi's movie at the end of the day, so I defer to Sam. I'm happy to plead my case or make an argument about something if I feel strongly about it. But I'll do that and then respect Sam's choices.

Q: Was making this film more physically rigorous for you than the previous two?

A: I had to do a lot more of the action in this movie just because you see me a lot more. It's not more difficult. Any one stunt or thing that I'm doing isn't necessarily more difficult, I mean, maybe a slight degree higher. But it just takes longer, it's just more work, that's all.

Q: Topher Grace, who plays the villain Venom, said he whooped you in a fight.

A: Hah, well I think if you just took a look at Topher and, you know, kind of sized him up and sized me up, I think you'd know the truth on that one.

Q: Kirsten Dunst as M.J. calls Peter Parker a nerd in the film. Do you have a nerdy side?

A: Yeah, although I can't claim to be the ubernerd that Peter Parker is, but I definitely have a nerdy side.

Q: Like what?

A: Well, I don't know what exactly classifies as nerdy. I guess if you can be obsessive by nature, that can be considered nerdy. If you do things with conviction that are laughable or humiliating, that's kind of nerdy also. You know, I can be just kind of goofy and nerdy.

Q: Did you find it easy to cry on cue, when you needed to for this film?

A: You know, I was really at ease throughout this whole process of making this movie. And the emotions for me were just available.

Q: Spider-Man's superpowers taint him at one point in the film. As an international celebrity you are sort of in a similar situation as Spider-Man, in that you can almost do whatever you want.

A: Well, I think that's a personal individual thing and it depends on what you want out of life and who you want to be as a person. I like feeling good about myself as a human being so I make choices like that. It's really a self-correcting thing. If I make choices that make me feel bad about who I am, then I try not to repeat those things. If I make choices that make me feel good about who I am, then that's a positive response. So, you know, it's kind of a simple process in that way.

Q: What would it take for you to come back and do a "Spider-Man 4"?

A: A great script with a story that was fresh and unique and worth telling. There'd have to be something new for Peter Parker, some new territory to cover, something great for Peter. And then Sam would have to be involved, the right cast would have to be there. And at that point I'd be willing to consider it.

Q: What are your younger fans like?

A: Well, I love little kids so it's fun and it's sweet and it's innocent and they're honest. I think they're just excited. I don't feel like they have some strange agenda or something. I like my interaction with kids.

Q: Your daughter is almost 6 months old. How do you like being a dad?

A: Well, it's changed my life in so many ways and it's a great transition, too, for me. Friendships change, what I have time for changes, my whole life's different. I'm looking to find a different place to live, just pretty much everything. But it's great. I love it. I love being a dad.

Q: Do you mind not having time for the things you used to? And losing the sleep?

A: No, the sleep was fine. She's really starting to sleep through the night now. At first that was a little tough. I don't really see it as a bad thing, it's just about giving up things that I used to have time for, and I don't have time for anymore. But it's replaced by something better.

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