



MAKING MAGIC: 100 YEARS OF DISNEY

Hocus Pocus

Presto

Director: Doug Sweetland
USA 2008
5 mins

Hocus Pocus

Directed by: Kenny Ortega
©: The Walt Disney Company
A David Kirschner/Steven Haft production
Presented by: Walt Disney Pictures
Distributed by: Buena Vista Pictures Distribution Inc.
Created for purposes of UK copyright by:
Walt Disney Pictures and Television
Executive Producer: Ralph Winter
Co-executive Producer: Mick Garris
Produced by: David Kirschner, Steven Haft
Co-producer: Bonnie Bruckheimer
Associate Producer: Jay Heit
Unit Production Manager: Whitney Green
Production Accountant: Sharon Simon Rellick
Location Managers: Debbie Laub, Lori Balton
1st Assistant Director: Ellen H. Schwartz
Script Supervisor: Pam Alch
Casting: Mary Gail Artz, Barbara Cohen
Screenplay by: Mick Garris, Neil Cuthbert
Story by: David Kirschner, Mick Garris
Director of Photography: Hiro Narita
Animation Camera: Brandy Hill
Camera Operator: Kristin R. Glover
Key Grip: Ben Beard
Stills Photography: Andrew Cooper
Visual Effects Supervisor: Peter Montgomery
Digital Supervisor: Craig Newman
Special Visual Effects Produced by:
Matte World Digital
Special Effects Co-ordinator: Terry Frazee
Cat Animation Supervisor: Chris Bailey
Animation Supervisor: Michael Lessa
Talking Cat Animation by: Rhythm and Hues
Editor: Peter E. Berger
Production Designer: William Sandell
Art Director: Nancy Patton
Set Designer: Martha Johnston, Brad Ricker
Illustrator: Giacomo Ghiazza
Property Master: Russell Bobbitt
Costume Designer: Mary Vogt
Key Make-up Artist: John M. Elliott Jr
Key Hairstylist: Carol Meikle
Title Design: David Oliver Pfeil
Titles/Opticals: Buena Vista Optical
Colour Timer: Dale E. Grahn
Music: John Debney
Choreography: Peggy Holmes, Kenny Ortega
Sound Mixer: C. Darin Knight
Boom Operator: Charles J. Bond
Re-recording Mixers: Terry Porter, Mel Metcalfe,
David J. Hudson
Supervising Sound Editor: George Watters II
Negative Cutter: Theresa Repola Mohammed
Special Sound Effects: John Fasal
Stunt Co-ordinator: Glenn Wilder
Animals Supplied by: Birds and Animals Unlimited
Head Trainer: Gary Gero
Partially Filmed at: Walt Disney Studios
Cast:
Bette Midler (*Winifred*)
Sarah Jessica Parker (*Sarah*)
Kathy Najimy (*Mary*)
Omri Katz (*Max*)
Thora Birch (*Dani*)
Vinessa Shaw (*Allison*)
Amanda Shepherd (*Emily*)
Larry Bagby III (*Ernie 'Ice'*)

Young Max and his family move to Salem. On Halloween night, he inadvertently brings back to life a trio of malevolent sibling witches who, in order to live forever, have to carry out a heinous act. However, they only have 24 hours to do it and soon realise their task isn't going to be quite so easy. Cue a race against time involving all manner of magical mayhem. Although it struggled on first release, *Hocus Pocus* now has a global cult following and continues to delight.

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The beginnings of *Hocus Pocus* lay in a (non-talking) cat. One night producer David Kirschner and his young daughter were sitting outside their home watching the local activity when Sam, a neighbour's black cat, strayed by. Kirschner began at once to make up a story of how Sam was once a boy. His daughter then wanted to know how what had happened. 'I contrived a legend which said that 300 years ago a young boy was trying to protect his little sister from three witches who then cast a hex on him.' From that father-daughter chat, and from that cat (renamed Binx) sprang the entire film.

In keeping with Kirschner's conception of the story as a legend, great attention was paid to the 'look' of everything. Designer William Sandell's team created a cemetery with careful attention to topography, trees and rocks; then spent months researching houses until they came up with a perfect design for the witches' house. 'We looked at a number of restored and preserved houses in Salem; and we examined many books and illustrations. However, the architecture was always too simple and stark for our purposes. None of it was like the 'Hansel and Gretel' witch type of motif we wanted. As a result, our house ended up being an amalgam of everybody's vision of a witch's house – from fairy tales to Mother Goose. Even so, it was a real house. All the beams are real, and fixed in the correct fashion. You could have placed it on a hill somewhere, and really lived in it.'

As well as this kind of reality, there is also plenty of Halloween magic – so much that the filmmakers had to employ every possible type of visual effect available at the time. There are traditional effects, such as matte paintings; and there are more recent effects, such as the use of Blue Screen to capture the Sandersons' flying skills.

'We also had to create Binx somehow', commented executive producer Ralph Winter, 'since he is at the heart of the story. To do that we found a computer graphic technology which had not been used significantly before. A real cat's image was put into the computer, and there we removed the head and replaced it by a completely synthetic, anatomically correct, three-dimensional articulated head. So in each Binx scene there's a real body under a computer-generated head. When we were finished, Binx definitely looked as if he was talking.'

Tobias Jelinek (*Jay*)
Stephanie Faracy (*Jenny*)
Charlie Rocket (*Dave*)
Doug Jones (*Billy Butcherson*)
Karyn Malchus (*headless Billy Butcherson*)
Sean Murray (*Thackery*)
Steve Voboril (*Elijah*)
Norbert Weisser (*Thackery's father*)
Kathleen Freeman (*Miss Olin*)
D.A. Pawley (*fireman 1*)
Ezra Sutton (*fireman 2*)
Don Yesso (*bus driver2*)
Michael Mcgrady (*cop*)
Leigh Hamilton (*cop's girlfriend*)
Devon Reeves (*little girl 'Neat Broom'*)
Joseph Malone (*singer*)
Jordan Redmond (*little angel*)
Frank Del Boccio (*lobster man*)
Jeff Neubauer (*boy in class*)
Teda Bracci (*Calamity Jane*)
Peggy Holmes (*dancer*)
Jason Marsden (*voice of Thackery Binx*)
USA 1993
96 mins

With thanks to The Walt Disney Company

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And to make friends with Binx, the story called for three children. Director Ortega described the casting process: 'Thora Birch was one of the top five children in her age group. She is a very dynamic little girl, and we knew at once she was our Dani. Then we had to find her a brother. We needed someone strong enough to hold the screen with her. We saw over 600 boys. We actually rejected Omri Katz at an early stage – he was sick during his first audition and had no sparkle. But he recovered and came back and this time we were sure he was right for the role of Max. Vinessa likewise was a choice made after many hours of auditions.'

For adult star Bette Midler all the work was worth it, because 'There's usually nothing for my six-year-old to see, but this is broad and silly, the violence is minimal, and I don't have to worry about what I look like.'

By Terry Staples, based on production notes

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Hocus Pocus

Sun 16 Jul 18:10; Wed 26 Jul 20:40

Moana + Inner Workings

Mon 17 Jul 18:00; Sat 29 Jul 13:00; Mon 31 Jul 14:20

The Princess and the Frog + Babes in the Woods

Thu 18 Jul 18:00

Dead Poet Society + Geri's Game

Thu 20 Jul 17:50

TRON + Smash and Grab

Fri 21 Jul 18:00

Beauty and the Beast + Tick Tock Tale

Sat 22 Jul 11:50; Mon 24 Jul 18:05; Thu 27 Jul 14:20

Once Upon a Time: A Disney Day

Sat 22 Jul 12:00-17:00

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs + Thru the Mirror

Sat 22 Jul 17:45; Mon 24 Jul 14:20

Who Framed Roger Rabbit + Tummy Trouble + Rollercoaster Rabbit

Sat 22 Jul 20:30

Toy Story + The Adventures of Andre & Wally B. + Luxo Jr. + Red's Dream

Sun 23 Jul 12:50; Sat 29 Jul 16:00

Tangled + Tangled ever After

Sun 23 Jul 13:10

Toy Story 2 + Tin Toy + Knick Knack

Sun 23 Jul 15:30

Pocahontas + Lava

Sun 23 Jul 15:40; Fri 28 Jul 14:20; Sat 29 Jul 20:40

Dinosaur + Get a Horse!

Sun 23 Jul 18:15

UK premiere of 4K Restoration: Cinderella + Trailer Horn

Tue 25 Jul 14:20

Sleeping Beauty + Magician Mickey

Wed 26 Jul 14:20

Fantasia + Toot, Whistle, Plunk and Boom

Thu 27 Jul 17:50

TRON: Legacy + Sanjay's Super Team

Fri 28 Jul 20:20

WALL-E + BURN-E

Sat 29 Jul 12:30

Fantasia 2000

Sun 30 Jul 10:30

Frozen + Frozen Fever

Sun 30 Jul 12:40