

Behind the Fairy Tale: The Creative Team of *Ever After*

By Elizabeth Montgomery



It's no small thing to take a beloved story and make it new. Currently on stage at The Phoenix Theater Company is *Ever After*, a musical inspired by the 1998 film starring Drew Barrymore. The show introduces a brand-new score audiences are hearing for the very first time ([and falling in love with](#)) and a heroine who was never waiting to be rescued.

Behind the production is a creative team of extraordinary women whose combined careers span Broadway, film, television, and beyond.



Marlo Hunter: Director

Marlo Hunter came to *Ever After* five years ago through a conversation with lyricist Marcy Heisler and she never looked back. A film and television director as well as a theatre director and choreographer, Hunter was named a "2022 Woman to Watch on Broadway" and brings a career of world premieres and new work to this production. Her feature film directorial debut, *American*

Reject, starring Annaleigh Ashford and Keala Settle, earned Best Narrative Feature at the BendFilm Festival.

Her Off-Broadway production of *Cat Kid Comic Club: The Musical* was hailed a New York Times Critic's Pick and is now in its third year of national touring. Hunter has developed new work at Second Stage, Roundabout, Playwrights Horizons, Williamstown, and beyond.

What drew her to *Ever After* is personal. Hunter has spoken about a mantra she lives by, that you are not destined to become what you're born into, and she sees that conviction at

the very center of this story. This is, she has said, the fairy tale she wants to leave her children. It shows.



Kate Wetherhead: Book

If the name Kate Wetherhead rings a bell, it might be because her most recent work is currently running on one of the world's most prestigious stages. Wetherhead wrote the book for *The Devil Wears Prada* musical, now playing in London's West End, and *Ever After* marks another major chapter in a career that spans writing, performing, and directing.

As a performer, she has appeared on Broadway in *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* and *Legally Blonde*, as well as numerous Off-Broadway and regional productions. She is also the co-creator and star of the popular web comedy *Submissions Only* and co-author of the YA trilogy *Jack & Louisa*. Next up: a new musical adaptation of *The Babysitters Club* series, set to premiere next year.

Wetherhead brings both the performer's instinct and the writer's precision to *Ever After* — a combination that gives Danielle de Barbarac's story the grounded, human texture it deserves.



Zina Goldrich: Music

There is nothing quite like the score of *Ever After*. Composer Zina Goldrich has spent a career writing music that Broadway's finest have championed, including Audra McDonald, Kristin Chenoweth, Megan Hilty, and Alan Cumming. Together with longtime collaborator Marcy Heisler, she won the 2009 Fred Ebb Award for excellence in songwriting – the first women to do so. Their collaborations have earned Drama Desk and Lucille

Lortel nominations, and their songs, including "Taylor the Latte Boy" and "Alto's Lament," have become beloved staples of the musical theatre repertoire.

Goldrich's credits extend far beyond the stage. She was a staff songwriter for Walt Disney Feature Animation and has composed for television including ABC's *The Middle*, *Wonder Pets!*, and PBS's *Peg + Cat*. As a performer, she has appeared at Carnegie Hall, the

Kennedy Center, and most recently with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. She has also played keyboards on Broadway for *Avenue Q*, *Oklahoma!*, and *Titanic* – where she also conducted. She studied with legendary Oscar winner Jerry Goldsmith at USC, where she graduated from the Scoring for Motion Picture and Television program.



Marcy Heisler: Lyrics

Marcy Heisler is the kind of lyricist whose words make your heart skip a beat. A recipient of the Kleban Prize for Outstanding Lyrics, one of the most prestigious honors in musical theatre writing, she also shares the Fred Ebb Award with composing partner Zina Goldrich. Together they have built one of the most distinctive bodies of work

in contemporary musical theatre, from *Dear Edwina* to *Junie B. Jones* to the beloved concert songs that have been performed around the world.

Heisler's writing extends well beyond the stage. She has written for Disney, Netflix, and Apple Podcasts, and recently contributed lyrics to *The Pianist*, based on the acclaimed film, premiering at the Park Theatre in London. She is also an active concert performer, educator, and lecturer. A graduate of NYU's Tisch School of the Arts Dramatic Writing Program, Heisler dedicates *Ever After* to her family, and in loving memory of her father Jerry.

Together, these four women have built a rare story about courage, love, and the power to change your own narrative, told by artists who know exactly what that means.

Ever After runs May 6 – June 14, 2026. Tickets are on sale now.

Details

Dates: May 6 – June 14, 2026

Location: The Phoenix Theatre Company, Dr. Stacie J. and Richard J Stephenson Theatre

Tickets: phoenixtheatre.com | (602) 254-2151

Audio Description and American Sign Language interpretation are available for this production. Performance dates and details can be found at phoenixtheatre.com.