

The Craft Behind *Ever After*: A Closer Look at the Design Team

By Elizabeth Montgomery



The world of *Ever After* may begin with a beloved film, but what audiences see on stage is the result of hundreds of creative choices.

The Phoenix Theatre Company's production has assembled artists whose work stretches from Broadway and the West End to film, television, and some of the country's most respected regional theatres. Together, they're helping shape a production that feels both familiar and entirely its own.

Here are a few of the creative minds helping bring *Ever After* to The Phoenix Theatre Company.



Billy Griffin: Choreographer

Billy Griffin has built a career creating movement for stages across New York's most prestigious stages, and an educator's instinct for what movement can do for a story. His choreography credits include Shakespeare in the Park at The Public Theater's *As You Like It*, the Off-Broadway production and national tour of *Friends! The Musical Parody*, the Hudson Valley Dance Festival, multiple Broadway Bares and Red Bucket Follies for BC/EFA, and The Drama League Gala at The Plaza

Hotel. He has served as associate and assistant choreographer alongside some of Broadway's most respected names including Sonya Tayeh, Andy Blankenbuhler, Al Blackstone, and *Ever After* director Marlo Hunter herself. Griffin is on faculty at Steps on Broadway and is an adjunct professor at his alma mater, NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. That combination of professional rigor and teaching experience makes him exactly the kind of collaborator a world premiere production needs.



Jeff Croiter: Lighting Designer

Jeff Croiter is one of Broadway's most decorated lighting designers, and his work on *Ever After* brings that caliber of craft to the Stephenson Theatre stage. His Broadway credits include *Newsies*, *Falsettos*, *Something Rotten!*, *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *Bandstand*, *Freestyle Love Supreme*, and *Guttenberg! The Musical!*, among many others. Off-Broadway, he has lit over 150 productions. His awards include Tony, Hewes, and Bass honors, with additional nominations from the Drama Desk, Outer

Critics Circle, Lucille Lortel, NAACP, and Ovation. Most recently, he designed *Hercules* on the West End and *Limitless* in Las Vegas. When the world of *Ever After* glows with the feeling of something real and something magical at once, Croiter is the reason why.



Reid Thompson: Scenic Designer

The lush, real, and quietly extraordinary world of *Ever After* comes from the imagination of scenic designer Reid Thompson, whose résumé reads like a tour of the most exciting rooms in American theatre. His recent New York credits include productions at Roundabout Theatre Company and Playwrights Horizons, and his regional work spans Arena Stage, the Denver Center, Baltimore Center Stage, and Actors Theater of Louisville, among others. He has also designed for opera, with credits at Heartbeat Opera, and for television, with

screen credits that include *Severance* (Season 3), *Fallout* (Season 1), *Kaleidoscope*, and *Bridge and Tunnel*. As well as film, including Spike Lee's *Highest 2 Lowest* and *A Complete Unknown*. Thompson holds an MFA from Yale School of Drama, and his upcoming projects include *The Secret Garden* at Signature Theatre D.C. and the Warner Bros. production *FA.S.T.* He is an artist who moves fluidly between worlds, which makes him the ideal designer for a story that does the same.



Kish Finnegan: Costume Designer

Kish Finnegan returns to The Phoenix Theatre Company after designing last season's *Seussical*, and *Ever After* gives her a canvas worthy of her range. Based in Tucson, she spent many years as resident costume designer for Arizona Theatre Company, where her credits include *The Glass Menagerie*, *American Mariachi*, *Hair*, and *The Mountaintop*. Her work extends to world premieres, most recently *Joan*, the story of trailblazing comedian Joan Rivers, at South Coast Repertory, as

well as productions at San Jose Repertory, The Village Theatre, and Childsplay. Finnegan is a graduate of California Institute for the Arts, and her career began in perhaps the most unexpected place: designing costumes for Team USA Synchronized Swimming and for aquatic shows in Las Vegas, Japan, Hong Kong, and Australia. Excellent preparation for a fairy tale.



Doug Besterman: Orchestrations

If you've fallen in love with the sound of a Broadway musical over the last two decades, there's a good chance Doug Besterman had a hand in it. A three-time Tony Award-winning orchestrator, with six nominations total, Besterman's Broadway credits include *The Producers*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *Fosse*, *Falsettos*, *Anastasia*, *Death Becomes Her*, and *A Bronx Tale*, among many others. His film and television work is equally remarkable: *Mary Poppins Returns*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Aladdin*, *Frozen*, *Schmigadoon!*, *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend*, and the live

broadcasts of *The Sound of Music* and *Peter Pan*. He has arranged for Barbra Streisand, Beyoncé, Mandy Patinkin, and Sutton Foster, and for the Boston Pops Orchestra. Besterman's work can be heard in every layer of the score, helping shape the sound of *Ever After* from the first note to the last.

Together, this team has built a musical audiences in Phoenix are experiencing for the very first time. *Ever After* runs until June 14. Tickets are on sale now at phoenixtheatre.com or by calling (602) 254-2151.

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.