



The music from Mickey and the Magician: LET THE MAGIC SHINE!

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After "it's a small world" and Phantom Manor, our music series continues with this must-see show from Walt Disney Studios Park, where the soundtrack is an essential ingredient for magic.

"There are reactions that don't deceive. As soon as I heard the first notes of Mickey and the Magician, I felt shivers running through my body," recalls InsidEar Virginie (Ninie) Revelle. "After only 30 seconds, the emotion was already there".

"This music is so emotional", adds Liz Read (Fairy Godmother on You Tube and Instagram), "that it makes me cry every time".

But what makes the music of *Mickey and the Magician* so... magical?



A Little Magic and Fairy Dust

Mickey and the Magician, an original story created in July 2016 especially for Disneyland Paris, takes us back to the sources for Disney magic. Here we go back in time to the early 19th century in Paris, to the mysterious workshop of a great Magician, whose Assistant Apprentice is none other than Mickey. While he is tidying up the place, our young Apprentice is going to let himself be carried away by his thirst to learn magic.



However, nothing will go as planned and in spite of himself, he will be transported into the most magical worlds of Disney films, from *Cinderella* to *Frozen*, and too, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Aladdin* and *The Lion King*. Strengthened by the teachings delivered to him during his encounters, he will find the secret of true magic, the one that resides in each and every one of us...



Music plays a crucial role in Mickey's initial journey. As Niels of Capturing Disney Parks site explains, Mickey and the Magician's original soundtrack "presents songs that are revisited in the spirit of Broadway musicals and that are familiar to all of us from our favorite Disney films..."

The creator of this sumptuous score is none other than Joel McNeely, known particularly for the music in *Peter Pan 2: Return to Neverland* (2002), the *Tinkerbell* series, and the night show *Disney Dreams* (2012).

For the composer, the project began during work sessions where all the show's creators including choreographer Tatiana Seguin (who couldn't help but dance as soon as she heard his first music propositions), were brought together.

Eternal Songs

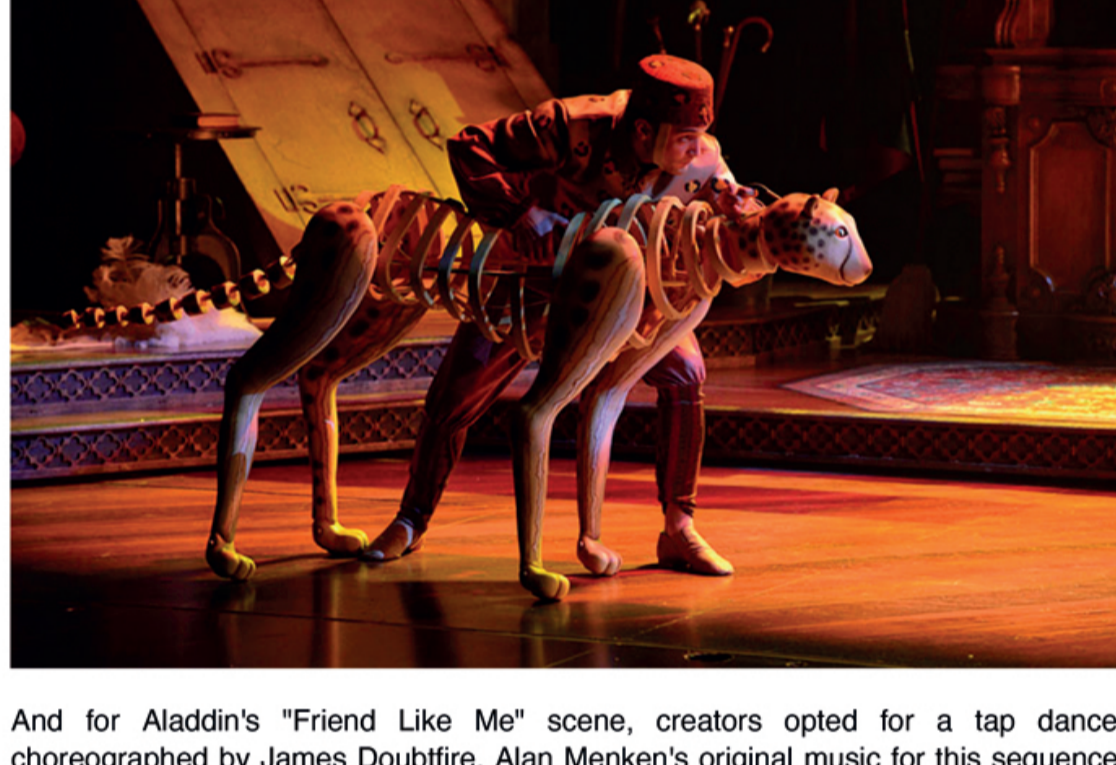
The fact is that dance is at the heart of the show and each scene, the composer has come up with new and particularly catchy arrangements for classic Disney tunes.

"Bibbidi-Bobbidi-Boo" became a festive march worthy of an operetta by Jacques Offenbach and "A Dream is a Wish your Heart Makes" took on waltz accents a la Johann Strauss.

"Be our Guest" begins with a nod to France via the accordion, before transforming into the type of music that fills us with joy during circus shows, and whose orchestration is sometimes reminiscent of Julius Fuck's *Entry of the Gladiators* or sometimes of the music Nino Rota wrote for films such as *La Strada* or Federico Fellini's *8 1/2*, classics of the genre.



The arrangements for "The Circle of Life" and "Baba" are rooted in both the 1994 animated classic and the musical, with extensive use of percussions and flutes from around the world.



And for Aladdin's "Friend Like Me" scene, creators opted for a tap dance choreographed by James Doubtfire. Alan Menken's original music for this sequence happens to be a tribute to Cab Calloway and Fats Waller, two jazz legends where the music naturally itself to this type of dance, as seen in *Stormy Weather* (1943) or *Living in a Big Way* (1935). There on, Joel McNeely came up with this upbeat arrangement, adding a "jungle-type" touch, decipherable by his typical playing on the bass toms of the drums.



"Let it Go" is the only piece not to contain a dance number. The composer has thus remained close to the legendary orchestration written by Dave Metzger for the film.

To intensify all these orchestral tones, exceptional musicians were needed. That's why the soundtrack of the show was recorded by the finest English musicians in the famous Abbey Road Studios in London.

Like the flicker of a spark...

Mickey and the Magician's music is not just about revisiting classics. As Niels further explains, "The show has its own musical theme that perfectly unites the different scenes".

The theme song "Let the Magic Shine", was written by Brendan Milburn and Valerie Vigoda, who had already written several songs for the *Tinkerbell* franchise, and had participated in the writing of "Vive la Vie", the song from Mickey's Halloweem Celebration. As for arrangements, it is the work of Scott Erickson, who wrote many songs for Disneyland Paris, and who also participated in the writing of "Vive la Vie". For "Let the Magic Shine", he imagined a grand crescendo, starting from soft, sparkling sounds to gradually reach a rich and festive ensemble, with brass and pop percussions, to end the show in beauty.



This version was then entrusted to Joel McNeely, who used this theme as a common thread throughout the show, transforming the piece as the story unfolds. It is heard for the first time at the very beginning, in the form of a ballad being sung while Tinker Bell explores the Magician's workshop. Then it appears instrumentally in various dialogue sequences, either with refrains played in staccato form, or in "underscoring" form, unobtrusively accompanying the dialogue and staging, a bit like in a film, before the grand finale.

As you can grasp, from the numbers sung to the main theme song, the music from "Mickey and the Magician" are true artworks ...And it is all these pieces that make this show "Magical from beginning to end", as the blogger Lady Thumper says, "Like a spark that has "the power to fill our hearts with hope".

