

Back at OVFF Again!

We're not sure exactly where the last year **went**, but here we are starting our third volume of Wing Words. We've covered a lot of Pegasus-related topics in the last two years – we're looking forward to covering more in the future.

If there's anything that you'd like us to discuss in future issues of Wing Words, just drop us a line at:

wingwords@ovff.org

She Blinded Me With Science

With a new year, we get new floating categories for the Pegasus Awards. If what we've heard is correct, the first of the floating categories for 2010 will be "Best Science Song". This looks pretty straightforward, but let's chat about it anyway.

If we're reading this correctly, the intent of the category is to honor songs that are about real science, as opposed to science-fiction. The last time this category came around was back in 1997 when Steve Savitzky's *World Inside the Crystal* won a Pegasus. That song was about computers, but clearly there are lots of areas of science that filkers have written about, from astrophysics to zoology and pretty much everything in between.

We'd like to think that – aside from being a good song in general! – a song in this category ought to rely on the science involved. It's not enough to include the name Galileo in a tangentially related song, as some popular songwriters have done (Amy Grant comes to mind), and say that it's a song about science.

The good news is that there are a **lot** of songs that will meet the criteria for this category. We can think of a few ourselves. Maybe we should drop them into the Pegasus Brainstorming Poll when it opens.

And maybe you should too.



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wingwords@ovff.org

Do You Believe In Magic?

The other floating category for 2010 is "Best Magic Song", which strikes us as being subtly different from 1997's "Best Sorcery Song". Sorcery implies a deliberate casting of a spell, while magic can "just happen". In the 1997 winner, Susan Cooper and Julia Ecklar's *The Dark Is Rising*, there's clearly a lot of highly ritualized magic going on. So while sorcery **is** magic, it would be a **big** stretch to say that all magic is sorcery.

Of course, these definitions can be a bit loose. It might be hard to count the curse of the werebeast in Talis Kimberley's *Velvet* as sorcery (although it's fairly obviously magic), but it was one of the nominees in 1997, so the Pegasus voters then were clearly good with it.

We, on the other hand, are just annoyingly picky. So while sorcery is covered by several of the definitions of magic that we find on dictionary.com, we like this one: "any extraordinary or mystical influence, charm, power, etc.".

We're betting that you can find plenty of songs that will fit this category. And we're looking forward to seeing what you have to say about them.

Clarke's Third Law

The late (and noteworthy!) science-fiction writer, Arthur C. Clarke, once stated his third law of prediction: "Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic." We tend to agree with this, as well as the corollary stated by our friend, Barry Gehm: "Any technology distinguishable from magic is insufficiently advanced."

We, however, trust that you will be able to distinguish between science and magic.

Completely Ineligible for the Pegasus

There are a **lot** of songs that aren't eligible for Pegasus Awards because they don't originate in the filk community. That's ok, it certainly doesn't make them bad songs.

If you haven't run into the Disney Channel cartoon, *Phineas and Ferb*, you might want to check it out. It's the story of two brothers who spend each day of their summer vacation finding something **interesting** to do. This might be building a roller coaster that takes full advantage of cartoon physics or a time machine or a haunted house. This, of course, makes their older sister insane.

Speaking of insane, there's also an evil mad scientist, Dr. Doofenshmirtz, with a fondness for song and dance numbers. Then there's his nemesis, Perry the Platypus, who is also the boys' pet and who must keep them from discovering his secret agent career. (You can call him Agent P.)

And every episode includes at least one original song, some of which are pretty short, some of which are full-length. All those songs are our excuse for mentioning the show here.

Because we like to encourage that sort of thing. And it turns out to be a show that both adults and kids can enjoy – a Disney Channel show with a Warner Brothers sensibility. Surprise!

Ask Peggy!

It's once again time to dive into our burgeoning mailbag and answer another one of your questions about the Pegasus Award. Today's question comes from B.S. Filker in Danville, Indiana who asks:

"Is there any limit to how many times a song can be nominated for a Pegasus Award? How long do we have to keep hearing the same song in the Pegasus Nominees Concert year after year after year before putting it out of its misery?"

That's a good question, B.S. And the answer is simple: the only way to keep a song from appearing on the Pegasus Ballot again is for it to actually **win** a Pegasus Award. Once a song wins a Pegasus Award, it isn't eligible to be nominated again, which means that we can permanently retire it from the Pegasus Nominees Concert.

Of course, the two-on, one-off rule **does** mean that we get a respite from hearing the same old song again at least one year out of three. And it **does** give the composer of the song the opportunity to think of new and creative ways of staging the concert the next time that the song is nominated. We anxiously await the arrival of the Boston Pops version of some of our most frequently nominated songs. We're not sure that the Pegasus Nominees Concert **organizer** will survive this, let alone our hard-working sound crew, but it will certainly be fun to watch them try.

(Stop whimpering, Erica.)

By our count, there are two songs that have been most frequently nominated for a Pegasus Award. Talis Kimberley's *Velvet* was nominated seven times before winning "Best Filk Song" in 2002.

The only other song that has been nominated as many times is Bill Sutton's *Stray Dog Man*. And now you know.