

The

BIG Kiss

In *Star Trek: Insurrection*, The Latest Film In The Franchise Series, Veteran Trekkie **Patrick Stewart** And Newcomer **Donna Murphy** Learn That Even Galactic Goodguys Sometimes Have To Kiss Scenes Good-bye...

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Interview by David Salcido

When is a kiss not a kiss? Ask **Patrick Stewart** and **Donna Murphy**, co-stars in the latest franchise epic *Star Trek: Insurrection*, and the answer will most likely be: when not one, but two steamy clinches are shot, but neither make it onto the screen.

"We had a couple of wonderful kissing scenes," says Murphy, a classically-trained, two-time Tony Award-winning actress and first-time visitor to the *Star Trek* universe. "There was a whole sequence that was very

sensual and involved a lot of contact between us. It led to a wonderful kiss that we spent a week shooting. When I first saw that it had been cut, I thought, well, they're looking for a greater payoff at the end. But apparently the studio made the choice. That's what we were told. Patrick seemed equally surprised when we talked about it afterwards."

"I was very disappointed," Stewart agrees, exasperation evident in his smooth

British tones. "Structurally, if anything, there just doesn't appear to be a payoff to the relationship. The attraction between these two people is intense. She introduces him to a different way of looking at the world and he saves her life. It seemed that they should have been closer, but wherever I ask, I'm told the studio insisted on removing it."

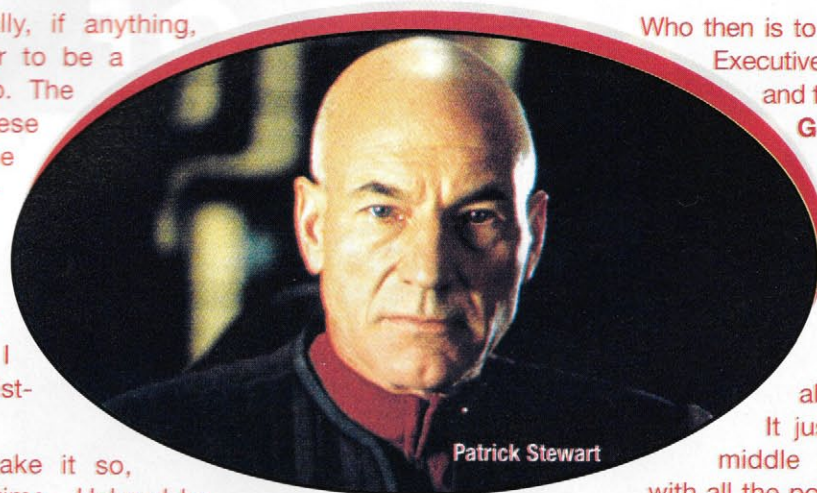
What's this? No "make it so, Number One"? Not this time. Helmed by Number One himself, **Jonathan Frakes**, *Star Trek: Insurrection* is the third time out for the seasoned crew of *The Next Generation*, and the second time under his direction. The last outing, *Star Trek: First Contact*, enjoyed the biggest opening-weekend gross of any *Star Trek* film. It also racked up a satisfying \$92 million and, in a sense,

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jump-started the flagging movie franchise. So it would only be logical that whatever Mr. Frakes wants, Mr. Frakes gets, right?

"Yeah, but not this time," says Frakes. "Ordinarily they say, 'You guys know what you're doing, we'll leave you alone. Make your movie.' We did that. We delivered that movie and they cut scenes out. But to their credit, they also added the ending, which is different from what was originally shot."

Even so, he would have liked to see at least one of the kisses escape the knife. "The second one," he admits. "You go all the way through the movie, you pay the hero and the love interest off. You give 'em a kiss. It just makes sense, it's good storytelling."



Patrick Stewart

Who then is to blame? **Rick Berman**, Executive Producer of the movie and the successor to creator **Gene Roddenberry**, has this to say on the subject: "Without naming any names, there were those who felt that the kisses weren't working. The first was part of an altered reality sequence. It just seemed that, in the middle of this huge exodus, with all the potential jeopardy, that to

have these two start making out seemed inappropriate at the time. It seemed to slow down what was a very long scene in the middle of a lot of action. Then there was another kiss at the very end, which was a very good kiss, but it made absolutely no sense once we took out the first one. It was like a house of cards. Once that one went, the last one seemed kind of inappropriate as well. And I must say, there

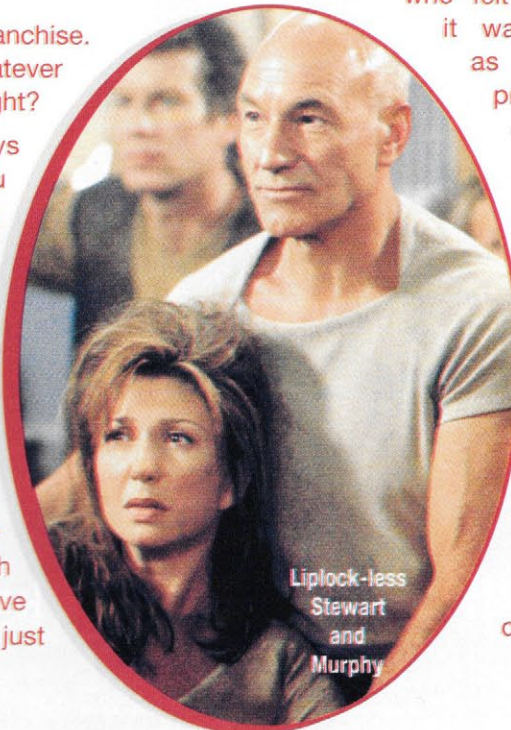
were those of us who felt that it was not as big a problem as others did."



Donna Murphy

So there. Oh, but don't you believe for a minute that this is the end of the matter. There's always the possibility of a Director's Cut. And should that come about, what exactly are the chances of Captain Picard getting his second chance at an unrestrained liplock?

"Very good," says Frakes, a twinkle in his blue eyes and a mischievous smile creasing his handsome face. "Matter of fact, you can count on it!" ■



Liplock-less Stewart and Murphy