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The woman who dressed the Devil

From 'Sex and the City' to 'Prada,' Patricia Field knows glamorous

By Tracy E. Hopkins
Special to amNewYork

Rarely has being bad looked so good.

When "The Devil Wears Prada" hits theaters on Friday, all eyes will be on the clothes.

"It's not about whether or not I think real fashion editors or assistants dress like

Sechs.

"Annie Hathaway's character got dressed from 'The Closet,'" Field explains, referring to the fictional Runway magazine's fashion closet stocked with the latest from Chanel, Dolce & Gabbana and Calvin Klein. "But for Meryl's character, it was different. She was an accomplished fashion edi-

(who has a cameo), Oscar de la Renta and, yes, MiuMiu Prada — who supplied about half of Streep's shoes.

"There were a few who felt uncomfortable, but I never pressured anyone," Field said.

Field, who worked with "Prada" director David Frankel on "Sex and the City," wanted to give Streep a regal look.

"I imagined her character as the queen of fashion, and proceeded to dress her like a queen," Field said.

Although Streep admits she used to walk by Field's former Eighth Street boutique and "got scared when I looked in the window," she appreciated the Emmy-winning stylist's vision.

"I'm a notorious pain in the butt for a costume designer," Streep said. "[Patricia] was very agreeable. ... She just lay down and let me run over her."

For Hathaway, working with Field was more collaborative.

"I was ready to sit back and let her do absolutely whatever she wanted, because she's brilliant," Hathaway said. "She really wanted to bring me along and teach me."

(With reporting by Jenny Holzer)



Patricia Field, right, on the set with Meryl Streep.

that. It's my spin," said stylist Patricia Field, who was responsible for the costumes. "In the end, [the wardrobe] is heightened and I think it's beautiful and glamorous."

Meryl Streep portrays the shriveled editor-in-chief Miranda Priestly, with Anne Hathaway as her fashion-clueless assistant, Andy

tre-in-chief. She had to have a signature style."

To get the clothes she needed, Field — who has been around the downtown fashion scene for a long time — relied on a modest \$100,000 budget and her connections to borrow clothes from top designers.

Most of them were cooperative, including Valentino



The "Prada" cast wore Valentino, Oscar de la Renta and, of course, Prada.



Anne Hathaway wears a Calvin Klein dress, vintage belt and Alexis Bittar bangles.

True stories from boss hell

Here are some real-life stories from the annals of awful bosses.

■ My boss punched a hole in his office wall. But I don't really think he's a boss from hell. Just a bit stubborn and needs to control his anger. — Anonymous

■ I was Mrs. S's personal assistant. ... While talking on the phone she would often refer to me as "the idiot" sitting across from her. I would ask her nicely not to do that but she would shake her head at me and call me "a wimp." ... When I decided to become a school teacher and leave the art world, Mrs. S scoffed. "Teachers are losers," she said. — M

■ I did some freelance work for a now-defunct magazine. There were two big problems with the editor. One, he didn't take any interest in the issue until days before it closed, and then he would do major revisions. Two, it took six months to get paid. — Anonymous

■ I was out of college, working in an art gallery in Englewood, N.J., that the owner thought was in the heart of SoHo. She was an old lady, such a pain in the ass, and basically had the "gallery side" doing all manner of dumb stuff — parking her car, returning clothes to Macy's and, on occasion when her arthritis was acting up, remove her shoes. — MS

■ I had to share a tiny office with my boss, who is a very religious woman. This wouldn't have been a problem except for the fact that she loved to play her religious music in the office while we worked. ... One day she was blasting her music so loudly, I couldn't hear mine at all. So I turned mine up a little while she was out of the room. When she came back, she heard my music and turned her music up more, so I turned mine up a little more. ... The next day, my computer was gone. — BT

■ The head of our company anonymously gave one of his female employees a tube of lube for as a gag gift. ... She was mortified. — SK