

Disney Branded Television

Nov. 17, 2022

EMMY® AWARD-WINNING WRITER/PRODUCER CRAIG GERBER EXTENDS OVERALL DEVELOPMENT DEAL WITH DISNEY BRANDED TELEVISION

-- 'Sofia the First' Spinoff Series in Development --



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Emmy Award winner Craig Gerber, the creative force behind Disney's acclaimed series "Sofia the First," "Elena of Avalor" and its newest hit "Firebuds," has extended his overall development deal with Disney Branded Television. Gerber also wrote the television movie that launched Disney's first little girl princess, "Sofia the First: Once Upon a Princess," which debuted 10 years ago (Nov. 18, 2012) and remains TV's #1 cable telecast of all time among Girls 2-5.

Under the extended agreement, Gerber is developing a "Sofia the First" spinoff series set in Royal Prep Academy, a school for princes and princesses in the fictional kingdom of Enchancia. This is his second series in development for Disney Branded Television through his production banner, Electric Emu. Gerber also has a previously announced series in development at Disney with Kris Wimberly ("Elena of Avalor," "Firebuds") about a time-traveling treasure hunter who recovers lost family treasures. The series is created by Wimberly and will be executive-produced by both Wimberly and Gerber.

Alyssa Sapire, senior vice president of Development, Series and Strategy, Disney Junior, said, "Craig's commitment to representing diverse characters and stories with messages of compassion, leadership and resilience is a throughline in his career. His ability to tell entertaining, heartfelt and meaningful stories that resonate with both children and adults alike is unmatched, and I look forward to continuing our partnership for many, many years to come."

Gerber said, "I am excited to be continuing my creative partnership with both Alyssa and Disney Branded Television. Together, we have produced three meaningful, diverse shows, and I am looking forward to broadening the scope of our collaboration while also championing new voices. It's particularly thrilling to return to the enchanted world of 'Sofia the First,' where it all began 10 years ago, and create a follow-up series that is just as magical."

"Sofia the First: Once Upon a Princess" tells the story of a little girl who becomes a princess when her mom marries the king, and it ushered in four seasons of the Emmy Award-winning "Sofia the First" series, currently streaming on Disney+. It starred Ariel Winter ("Modern Family") as Sofia; Sara Ramirez ("Grey's Anatomy") as Queen Miranda; Travis Willingham ("Legend of Vox Machina") as King Roland; Wayne Brady ("Whose Line Is It Anyway") as Clover, a wise-talking Rabbit; and Tim Gunn ("Making The Cut") as Baileywick, the family's Royal Steward.

Among "Sofia the First"'s accolades are multiple Emmy Awards, including for the theme song, which Gerber shares with the series' songwriter/music director, John Kavanaugh, and for Outstanding Music Direction and Composition for composer Kevin Kliesch. "Sofia the First" staff writers Laurie Israel and Rachel Ruderman were also awarded a Humanitas Prize for the episode "Dads and Daughters Day," which highlighted Sofia's blended family and her relationship with her step-father and step-sister.

The series created multiple extensions across the Disney businesses, including Disney Parks & Resorts, where the Sofia character still makes special appearances. "Sofia the First" dolls, costumes and apparel are available at [Amazon.com/disneyjunior](https://www.amazon.com/disneyjunior), as well as children's books inspired by the series from Disney Publishing Group available at [DisneyBooks.com](https://www.DisneyBooks.com), including the New York Times best-seller "Sofia the First."

Gerber is represented by APA talent agency and the law firm Goodman, Genow, Schenkman, Smelkinson & Christopher.

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