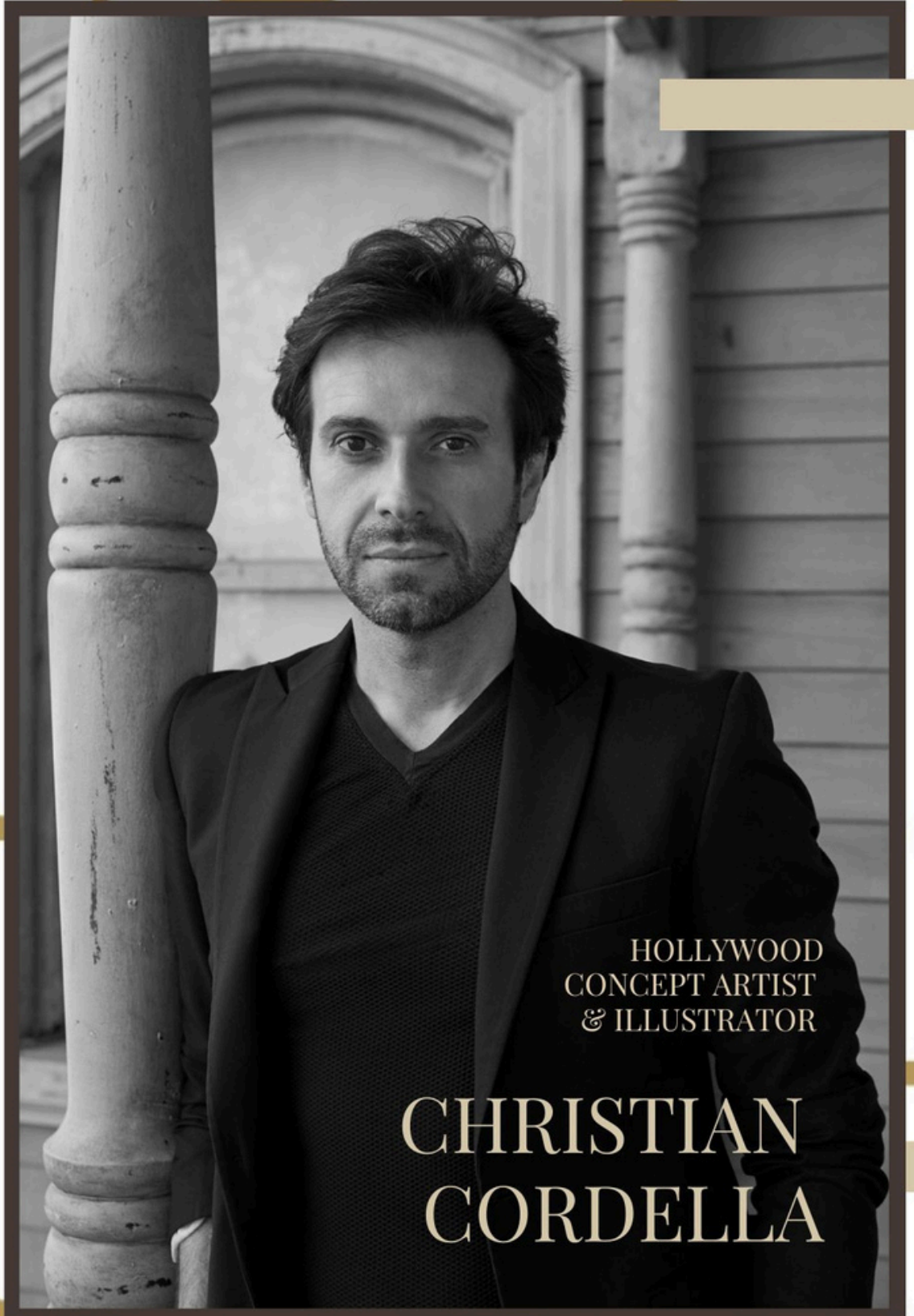


# NIROSHINI

Interview

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HOLLYWOOD  
CONCEPT ARTIST  
& ILLUSTRATOR

CHRISTIAN  
CORDELLA

MINI MAGAZINE

# CHRISTIAN CORDELLA: A JOURNEY FUELLED BY CURIOSITY AND VISION

Christian Cordella's journey as a concept artist and illustrator is one defined by boundless curiosity and an unrelenting passion for creativity. From an early age, he viewed the world as an intricate tapestry of beauty, wonder and untold stories waiting to be discovered. This innate curiosity has remained at the heart of his artistic vision, driving his ability to explore the deeper layers of human experience and bring them to life through his work.

Born into a family renowned for eight generations of fashion excellence, Christian was immersed in artistry from the very beginning. Growing up surrounded by textiles, colours and design, he inherited a profound appreciation for the creative process. His earliest memories include tracing the lines of a painting as a child – a quiet moment that ignited a lifelong fascination with how art could connect imagination with reality.

Christian's formal training began at the Academy of Fine Arts of Brera in Milan, where he graduated with highest honours in scenic and costume design. He was awarded a government scholarship for top students to pursue further studies at Kingston University in London. There, he mastered the visual language of shapes, fabrics and textures, further refining the skills that have become the hallmark of his career.

As a concept artist and costume illustrator, Christian has worked on some of Hollywood's most iconic films, including Iron Man, Thor, The Hunger Games and Avengers: Endgame. His ability to blend imagination with meticulous attention to detail has earned him a reputation as one of the industry's most sought-after talents. His work extends far beyond cinema, with contributions to Disney World, Universal Studios and numerous international events, creating immersive experiences that captivate audiences worldwide.

For Christian, the creative process is deeply rooted in exploration. He finds inspiration in folklore, mythology and the intricate interplay between human behaviour and the natural world. Yet, he remains grounded in reality, believing that the true challenge – and beauty – of art lies in transforming fleeting moments of wonder into something meaningful and lasting.

Despite his extraordinary accomplishments, Christian approaches each project with the same curiosity and humility that have guided him from the beginning. Whether illustrating a costume or conceptualising an entire character, he sees each creation as an opportunity to connect with life's deeper narratives and share them with the world. For Christian Cordella, art is not just a career – it is a lifelong journey of discovery and storytelling, where curiosity leads the way.

# *As a child, I saw the world as an endless playground*

As a child, I saw the world as an endless playground – a place to explore and share with the people I loved. Everything seemed infused with wonder, blending imagination with reality as if layering a fantasy world onto the real one. That sense of curiosity and exploration has stayed with me, shaping how I approach life and my work as a concept artist and illustrator. Creating meaningful work begins with seeing beyond the surface and appreciating the beauty in life's moments and the stories they hold.

I'm captivated by the reasons behind human behaviour and the evolution of nature – how we, alongside animals, plants and the cosmos, have arrived at this moment in time. Folklore, mythology, human nature and personal experiences offer glimpses of what lies beyond the visible but staying grounded in reality is essential. The real challenge – and beauty – lies in transforming those ideas and moments of wonder into something tangible and meaningful. That's what inspires me the most.

# Maleficent: Mistress of Evil

## Production companies:

Walt Disney Pictures,  
Roth/Kirschenbaum Films

Walt Disney Studios  
Motion Pictures 2019



## Directed by:

**Joachim Rønning**

Costume Designer

Ellen Mirojnick

Costume Concept Artist

Christian Cordella

## MY EARLIEST DRAWING EXPERIENCE



THAT EARLY FASCINATION  
IGNITED SOMETHING INSIDE ME

As a kid, my earliest drawing experience began before I was even a year old. My father noticed that I would often cry at night but whenever he put me in the living room, I became calm. Curious, one night he stayed up to see why I was so quiet. That's when he saw me staring intently at a painting on the wall, completely focused.

He brought me closer to the painting and as he did, I started tracing its lines with my finger. From that moment on, I always seemed to have some kind of tool in my hand to express myself. It was as if that early fascination ignited something inside me, shaping the way I interacted with the world.

REPRESENTING ITALY IN THIS ARTS FESTIVAL DEDICATED TO  
LOVE AND PEACE WAS AN EXTRAORDINARY PRIVILEGE

Hiroshima



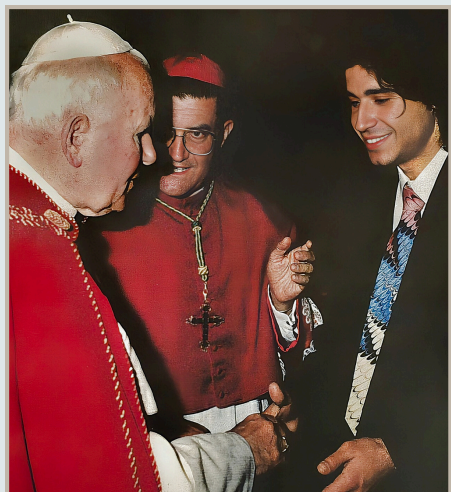
PAINTING IN SUCH A HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT SETTING  
WAS A HUMBLING AND INSPIRING OPPORTUNITY

In 1995, I was deeply honoured to be invited by the city of Hiroshima, Japan, to represent Italy through my art at an international event commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Hiroshima tragedy. The theme, "love and peace in the world", brought together artists from 12 countries, including the United States, China, South Africa, Denmark and others, each contributing a painting to this global message of hope.

Representing Italy in this arts festival dedicated to love and peace was an extraordinary privilege. I created my painting in the main square of Hiroshima alongside other participants, all of us conveying our visions of unity and hope through our work. Among the many impactful contributions, my painting was selected as the winning piece. Today, it is part of the Hiroshima Museum's collection.

Traveling to Japan, immersing myself in its culture and connecting with its people made the event profoundly meaningful. Painting in such a historically significant setting was a humbling and inspiring opportunity. This experience remains one I hold closest to my heart.

IT WAS EXTREMELY SPECIAL TO CONTRIBUTE  
TO SUCH A MEANINGFUL MOMENT IN HISTORY



I HAD THE GREAT HONOUR OF WORKING  
AS A PORTRAIT ARTIST FOR THE VATICAN

My journey as an artist began humbly, with my first paintings created for the church in my hometown. The bishop was so impressed with my work that it caught the attention of officials in Rome, leading to my first major opportunity. It has been a long road to get to where I am today...

I had the great honour of working as a portrait artist for the Vatican, an experience that remains one of the most special moments of my life. I was commissioned to paint the image of Saint Filippo Smaldone who protected the deaf.

This painting was displayed in Saint Peter's Square in Rome as part of Pope John Paul II's canonization ceremony. It was later presented by the Pope as the official image to be shared throughout the Catholic world

During this extraordinary time, I had the privilege of a private meeting with Pope John Paul II himself. As he studied my work, he remarked with admiration that he had never seen a blue sky as vivid as the one in my painting. Touched by his words, I replied, "Your Holiness, your blue eyes are even bluer than the sky".

It was extremely special to contribute to such a meaningful moment in history.

*St. John Paul II*

# *Family history*

The Cordella name has been connected to the fashion industry since before 1783. That year, Leonardo Cordella's tailor shop was established in the heart of Salento, beginning a long-standing family tradition. Over the years, it achieved success, earning my grandfather a Gold Medal from the Chamber of Commerce of Lecce. In 1988, he was also awarded the title of Official Knight of the Republic and was entrusted with designing uniforms for the Chilean Navy, among other honours.

Our family has always taken pride in our tailoring heritage. Over generations, we've preserved a collection of our most significant creations, showcasing designs that span from the 1600s to the present day. Some pieces even reflect collaborations or exchanges with notable designers like Chanel and Dior.

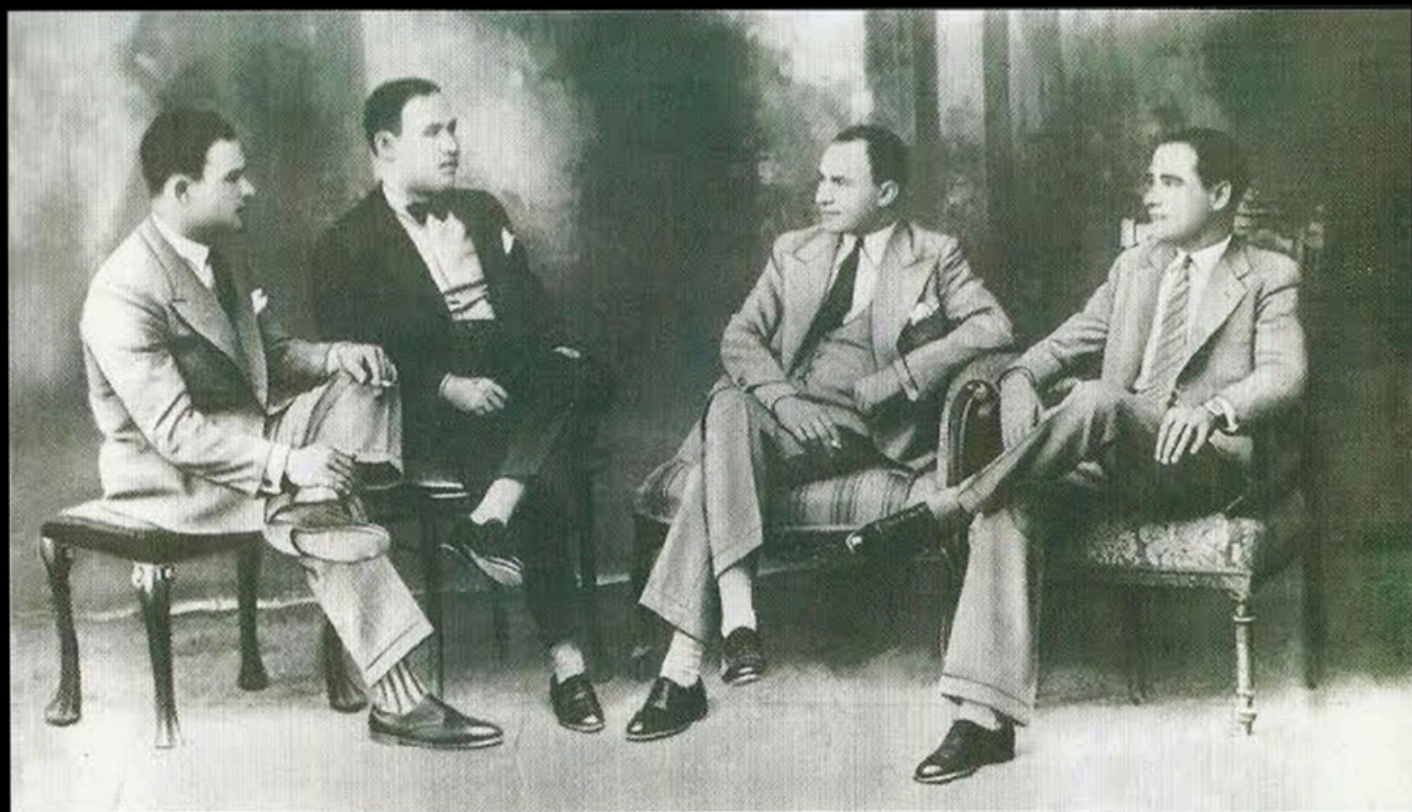
This history has always felt personal to me, shaped by the choices of my great-grandfather. My grandfather, the youngest of five brothers, was the only one to stay in Italy while his siblings moved to Argentina, where they established the fashion line El Condor. My great-grandfather was determined to keep at least one son close to home which kept our family's connection to its roots alive.

My father also pursued a career in fashion, gaining recognition in 1972 when he won the Oscar Fashion award in Sanremo. This brought him offers from leading textile companies, including Marzotto. However, he chose to stay in southern Italy to focus on his family, a decision he never regretted. Interestingly, Giorgio Armani began his career under the Marzotto name, a detail that highlights the different paths life can take.

In the 1980s and 1990s, my father remained active as a designer. Among his notable accomplishments, he was commissioned to create a chasuble and stole for Pope John Paul II during the pontiff's visit to Lecce. Although both my father and I had encounters with Pope John Paul II at different times, these moments were not part of a larger connection but rather rare and special opportunities.







F.lli Cordella: Armando, Italo, Arturo, Antonio - Santiago del Cile, 1926



Sartoria Cordella, Santiago - Cile, 1933



Famiglia Cordella - Copertino, 1923



*Abito nero da sera due pezzi*

*1895 c.a.*

*It's like the air we breathe,  
shaping us in ways we don't  
always notice*

I believe every country is shaped by its unique blend of ideology, beliefs and the shared experiences of its people. These influences define not only how societies function but also how individuals perceive the world. I've travelled extensively and while I don't strictly identify with one faith, I am Catholic by heritage because I'm Italian. My upbringing and even my sense of moral values are deeply rooted in the cultural environment I grew up in – it's like the air we breathe, shaping us in ways we don't always notice.

For example, studies have shown cultural differences in how rules are enforced. In Germany, if you're caught speeding and explain you were rushing to see your mamma in the hospital, the likelihood of receiving a ticket is still high. In Italy, however, the chances of getting a ticket would be lower because there's often more compassion for personal circumstances – an attitude connected to a Catholic-influenced sense of empathy and forgiveness. This isn't necessarily tied to attending church but reflects a broader cultural outlook. Each nation carries its identity through these values which shape the way its people see and respond to the world.

# *The blood of Cordella will awaken in you...*

Growing up in a family like mine, with a legacy spanning eight generations of prominent fashion designers, was truly extraordinary. My life was steeped in textiles, colours and beauty – it was all around me. Fashion was more than just an industry; it was a part of our daily lives.

When my father became involved in fashion shows, that world naturally became a part of mine as well.

I remember my father telling me, “The blood of Cordella will awaken in you and you’ll find a love for what you do”. At the time, his words didn’t resonate much with me – but when I landed my first job in America, I realised how naturally the work came to me – it felt like second nature – it was “my cup of tea”. That’s when it dawned on me: growing up in such an artistic household, I had unknowingly absorbed a wealth of knowledge. I felt a deep connection with assignments that involved working with the human figure, striving to create something meaningful and beautiful from it. It was challenging yet profoundly fulfilling – a creative process that felt like it had always been part of my life’s path.

The experience of watching my father design and select costumes had ingrained in me an understanding of the creative process. It gave me an edge in my career as a concept artist and illustrator. Knowing how to construct costumes and appreciating the details behind the designs wasn’t just a skill – it was a part of me.



# *I wanted a glimpse into the world of TV set design*

I've always been incredibly curious and as a child, that curiosity drove me to participate in countless art competitions.

By the time I was 17 and studying in Milan, I was juggling an intense workload: a fashion illustration course, a comic book course, an architectural decoration course and an English course – all at once! It was during this time that I discovered architecture wasn't truly my passion. I pivoted to studying Fine Arts at Brera, focusing on set design and costumes which felt like the perfect medium to express my creativity.

Participating in all those competitions early on likely set the stage for my career as a set designer for one of Italy's largest TV networks, Mediaset /Fininvest, under Berlusconi – the biggest of its three channels.

Interestingly, my first steps into television set design came from an unconventional path. I began auditioning as a host for game shows – not because I wanted to be on camera but because I wanted a glimpse into the world of TV set design. I didn't know anyone in the industry so I thought this was a way to get my foot in the door. After consistently being selected, I took every opportunity during filming to network with the set design teams. I'd approach them, gather contact information and hope for an apprenticeship opportunity while still being a student.

That relentless curiosity and determination became my gateway into the field. To achieve the career you want, you must be proactive, creative and immerse yourself in the environment you aim to succeed in. By putting myself out there, I opened doors to more and more opportunities, building the foundation for my future.



# IT: Chapter Two

## Production companies:

New Line Cinema, Vertigo Entertainment,  
Double Dream, Rideback

Warner Bros.  
Pictures 2019



## Directed by:

**Andy Muschietti**

Costume Designers

Janie Bryant (Chapter One)

Luis Sequeria (Chapter Two)

Concept Artist & Illustrator

Christian Cordella

# *Sam Raimi*

I have had the privilege of working as one of the art directors for a variety of incredible projects, including theme parks, the Super Bowl, cruise lines, Disney Studio, Busch Gardens and Mardi Gras. Each experience was nothing short of amazing and enriched my creative journey.

When I was working in Orlando, I found myself involved in designing costumes for events and festivals. While the work was exciting, my ultimate dream had always been to work in movies. At the time, I didn't know anyone in Los Angeles so I juggled both worlds – working in Orlando to save money and spending one month at a time in LA. I knocked on countless doors, determined to understand how the movie industry operated and how I could be part of it.

A turning point came when I connected with American fashion designer Bob Mackie, known for his iconic designs for the Supremes, Barbie and legendary performers like Cher, Madonna, Elton John and Pink. He provided invaluable insights into the world of costume design for films and helped me navigate the industry.

Sanja Hays, Costume Designer, eventually helped me land my first film project, *The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor* (2008). That job was a breakthrough – soon, my name began circulating within the industry. To date, I've had the honour of contributing to nearly 200 films.

I also had a unique opportunity to work as a storyboard artist on Sam Raimi's *Drag Me to Hell* (2009) which was an unexpected but rewarding experience. Producer Grant Curtis approached me to assist with creating storyboards and I immediately said yes. It was an immersive process – meeting with the director daily, learning camera angles, planning shots and bringing the vision to life. That's where I met Ellen Freund, the Property Master, who asked me to create books of mythical beasts and an illuminated Manuscript, an important part of the film's storytelling and which led to being part of designing and drawing the main title sequence of the film.

Working with Sam Raimi was one of the most cherished experiences of my career. For me, he was a mythical figure, having directed *The Evil Dead* (1981) and *Army of Darkness* (1992), films I adored. In many ways, my fascination with Sam Raimi surpassed even that of Spielberg. Collaborating with him was a dream come true and a highlight of my creative journey.





# Drag Me to Hell

**Production company:**  
Ghost House Pictures

Universal Pictures (North and  
Latin America, Germany and Spain),  
Mandate International (International)



**Directed by:**  
**Sam Raimi**

Storyboard Artist  
Christian Cordella



# *Spaghetti on the wall*

In the world of movies, an artist with a capital "A" might create purely based on their own vision, doing whatever they feel inspired to do. However, in the environment I work in, it's a different story – it's all about collaboration. Finding the right team and the right people is essential, as the process is deeply collective.

Sometimes, the vision of the director, producer or designer is crystal clear and you're working to bring that specific idea to life. Other times, there's no defined direction and you have to create the concept entirely from scratch.

There are moments when people might give the impression that the creative process is a free-for-all – like "throwing spaghetti at the wall to see what sticks" but that's rarely the case. Often, you discover they already have a recipe in mind – whether the spaghetti needs to be al dente or could use a bit more salt. In other words, while it may seem like an open-ended creative task, they often have a clear idea in their head of what they want. It's not truly a free-form assignment but rather a matter of shaping their vision into reality.

# *I view my creations as my little creatures*

As a concept artist and illustrator, I view my creations as my little creatures. However, I've learned not to get too attached to them. The creative process involves countless revisions, transformations and adjustments and by the end, the work often looks very different from how it began.

You have to embrace this evolution and let go of personal attachments. Ultimately, it's about what works best for the team and the project as a whole – not necessarily the design you prefer, choose or feel most connected to. The best idea is the one that serves everyone's vision, not just your own.

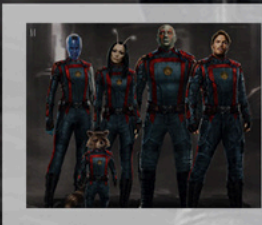




# Guardians of the Galaxy: Vol. 3

Production company:  
Marvel Studios

Walt Disney Studios  
Motion Pictures 2023



Directed by:  
**James Gunn**  
Costume Designer  
Judianna Makovsky  
Concept Artist & Illustrator  
Christian Cordella

# *Having a rich life experience is crucial in this process*

The way creations come to me is a blend of different processes. Sometimes, as I mentioned, the director, producer or designer has a clear vision and my role is to bring that to life. Other times, it's about generating images in my mind based on their ideas or suggestions. When they're trying to express a concept, I often find that their words immediately take shape in my imagination.

Having a rich life experience is crucial in this process. Religion, human experiences, mythology, science, folklore and practical problem-solving – all these elements feed into your ability to envision shapes and forms in your mind. Once the concept is there, it goes through a dynamic process of destruction and reconstruction, evolving until it becomes something that aligns with the collective vision.

## AVATAR: THE WAY OF WATER



I FELT INCREDIBLY PROUD AND HONOURED  
TO BE PART OF SUCH AN ICONIC PROJECT

For Avatar: The Way of Water, that photo was taken for the casting crew of the movie. I felt incredibly proud and honoured to be part of such an iconic project.

The challenge was creating designs for fictional characters while ensuring the costumes we built were real. It was a unique process of translating something from a purely imaginative world into reality.

Bringing a virtual character to life in a way that made sense in the real world was truly inspiring – and the people I worked with made the experience even more rewarding.

# Avatar: The Way of Water

**Production companies:**  
TSG Entertainment,  
Lightstorm Entertainment

20th Century  
Studios 2022



**Directed by:**

**James Cameron**

Costume Designer

Deborah L. Scott

Concept Artist & Illustrator

Christian Cordella

# *Walking a tightrope in a circus act*

My presence in a movie isn't pivotal to whether the film gets made or not. The movie would simply take a slightly different direction – another artist might create illustrations that lead to costumes being better or worse. In that sense, I'm expendable. However, the role of a concept artist and illustrator is undeniably a crucial part of the process.

I often feel like my work is precarious, as if I'm walking a tightrope in a circus act – important but not indispensable.

At the level I work, the industry is filled with extraordinary artists at the top of their craft. Being surrounded by such talent makes it clear that none of us are the sole, irreplaceable "snowflake" that determines a movie's success. Instead, we're all part of a larger mechanism. While we each contribute something vital, the movie doesn't hinge entirely on any one individual. We're part of the process, not the central focus.



# *Sometimes I joke that I could become a holy saint*

From my experience working with major studios, I've learned the importance of patience – sometimes I joke that I could become a holy saint because of it. In this industry, you simply can't afford to have a big ego. Everything moves so quickly and you're constantly collaborating with a wide variety of people. These interactions have helped me develop an awareness of my own limits and a skill for navigating different personalities. It's a crucial part of the job.

Sometimes you naturally click with certain individuals and other times you don't. The movie industry is an incredibly emotional environment – far more so than any other type of project or job I've been part of. The expectations are high: you're expected to perform, work hard and communicate effectively with others. This dynamic can either become a strength or a challenge in your life.

It's a delicate balance and you learn very quickly where you fit within it all.



# *It's like crafting a new language each time*

I believe that when you create a shape or image, the core question is: what are we trying to express? What is the communication I'm establishing with this element or creation? It's not a process you can replicate repeatedly – it's like crafting a new language each time.

Every creation requires an understanding of its purpose and the context in which it exists. From the shape and colour to the fabric and texture, each element contributes to building this visual language, shaping the expression of the emerging idea.

To truly create, there must be context – a foundation that guides the form and gives it meaning. The communication between the creation and the audience is unique, requiring alignment and a shared understanding to bring the idea to life effectively.

# *The experience I have while working on a project matters more than anything else*

Sometimes my work experience is incredible and other times it's not – it all depends on how the project unfolds. The job is deeply emotional. For instance, if I had a great time working on a project, watching the movie for the first time fills me with excitement and happiness. However, on the flip side, even if I worked on a big movie, if the experience wasn't enjoyable, I often find myself indifferent to seeing the final product.

For me, the experience I have while working on a project matters more than anything else. You can have the best time on set and when the movie succeeds – perhaps even earning nominations or Oscars – it feels rewarding. However, what truly makes it valuable isn't the awards or recognition; it's the experience of creating it.

At the end of the day, I want to pursue projects not for the accolades but because they contribute to a fulfilling life and meaningful moments.



# Oblivion

**Production companies:**  
Relativity Media,  
Chernin Entertainment

Universal Pictures 2013



**Directed by:**  
**Joseph Kosinski**  
Costume Designer  
Marlene Stewart  
Concept Artist & Illustrator  
Christian Cordella



[TOP LEFT]  
TOM CRUISE  
OBLIVION PREMIERE IN BUENOS  
AIRES, 2013



[TOP RIGHT]  
SAM RAIMI'S DRAG ME TO HELL,  
2009  
ON LOCATION



[MIDDLE RIGHT]  
WILL SMITH, PRODUCER ON  
THE KARATE KID, 2010

[BOTTOM RIGHT]  
DWAYNE JOHNSON  
FAST & FURIOUS 5, 2011



# *Deborah Nadoolman*

One of the people I deeply admire is Deborah Nadoolman. She's an incredible advocate for costume designers and an inspiring individual. Deborah has this remarkable ability to elevate the profile of costume design, fostering greater knowledge and awareness of the craft. She's married to John Landis, the renowned filmmaker behind classics like *The Blues Brothers* (1980).

Deborah has worked on notable films like *An American Werewolf in London* (1981) and *Coming to America* (1988). She also designed Michael Jackson's iconic red jacket for his groundbreaking *Thriller* (1983) music video and won MTV's first music video award.

When she created a book celebrating 150 years of costume illustration, she invited me to contribute and have a section in it. Being part of such an extraordinary project was truly an honour.



# *Bella Fortuna*

One of my most cherished moments was working with Hardrive Productions on a truly magical project. They invited me to create costume illustrations for Bella Fortuna, inspired by the Carnival of Venice, for the Italian Pavilion at Disney World's Epcot Center.

I developed the concept of ladies embodying the four elements which became a central feature of a stunning Venetian festival. Seeing that vision come to life and contributing to an immersive experience for the guests was an absolute joy. It remains one of the happiest highlights of my time in Orlando – a deeply rewarding and unforgettable project.



# *Ruth Carter*

Ruth Carter is a truly remarkable talent. She's an extraordinary costume designer who has worked with iconic filmmakers like Ryan Coogler, Spike Lee and John Singleton. Over the course of her career, she has been nominated for the Academy Award for Best Costume Design four times, winning twice for *Black Panther* (2018) and *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* (2022).

Beyond her creative achievements, Ruth is someone I admire deeply – a truly wonderful person and an unwavering supporter of the arts and the people within it. People like her are rare. When she published a book about her life and career, I was deeply humbled that she chose to include some of my drawings as part of her career story. I have nothing but the highest praise for Ruth; she is extraordinary in every way.



# *Istituto Cordella*

My family has always been deeply rooted in the fashion industry. The idea for Istituto Cordella was inspired by my sister who believed that with our family's centuries of knowledge and experience in fashion, we needed to find a way to share it with others. That's when my sister Carol, along with my father, mother and brother Manuel, came together and decided to establish a school. Our goal was to help the younger generation navigate the complexities of the fashion world.

While many schools focus on teaching students how to become fashion designers, we envisioned something different – a place where students could learn not only the creative side of fashion but also the skills needed to lead and succeed in its business aspects. The reality is that the fashion world doesn't revolve solely around designers; it's about understanding the ecosystem and knowing how to climb the professional ladder.

We recognised the importance of teaching practical skills like tailoring and pattern-making – roles that are in high demand. Most companies aren't looking for an influx of new designers; they need skilled professionals who can contribute to essential departments. That's why we emphasise the foundations of the craft.

Just as a painter must learn to work with watercolours, acrylics and oils before becoming an artist, we believe fashion students need to master the technical and practical aspects of their trade. Too many schools focus on the idea of being an artist without equipping students with the tools to get there which often leads to disappointment and disillusionment.

At Istituto Cordella, we combine artistry with business acumen, preparing students to chart their own career paths and grow into the positions they aspire to. We also teach them to communicate effectively, both creatively and professionally. Through business simulations, our students learn how to present their work, articulate their decisions and back up their ideas with a clear rationale. For example, in tailoring, it's not enough to say, "I don't know, I just did it". That mindset suggests luck rather than skill. Instead, we encourage students to explain their vision, outline their process and justify their choices, ensuring their work is both intentional and impactful.

Ultimately, everyone wants to live a fulfilling life and build a sustainable career but success in the fashion industry doesn't happen overnight. No one is going to hand you a million-dollar project or a CEO position. That's why we focus on teaching strategic ways to prove yourself, develop your skills and build a lasting career in fashion.





# ISTITUTO CORDELLA FASHION SCHOOL



Lecce  
Via 47° Reggimento Fanteria,  
19 - 73100 Lecce  
Tel. 0832 302869

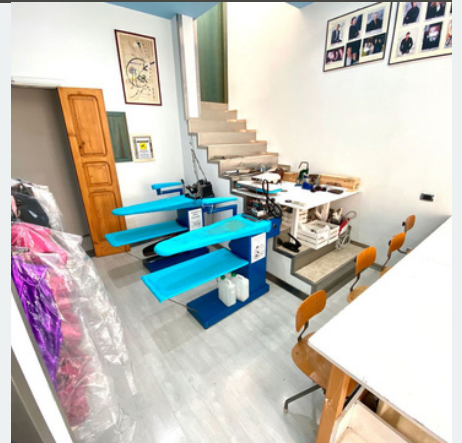
Roma  
Via Boncompagni, 93 - 00187  
Roma  
Tel. +39 338 272 4259

~ Cordella ~  
Manuel, Christian, Anna Rita, Pino, Carol



# ISTITUTO CORDELLA

FASHION SCHOOL



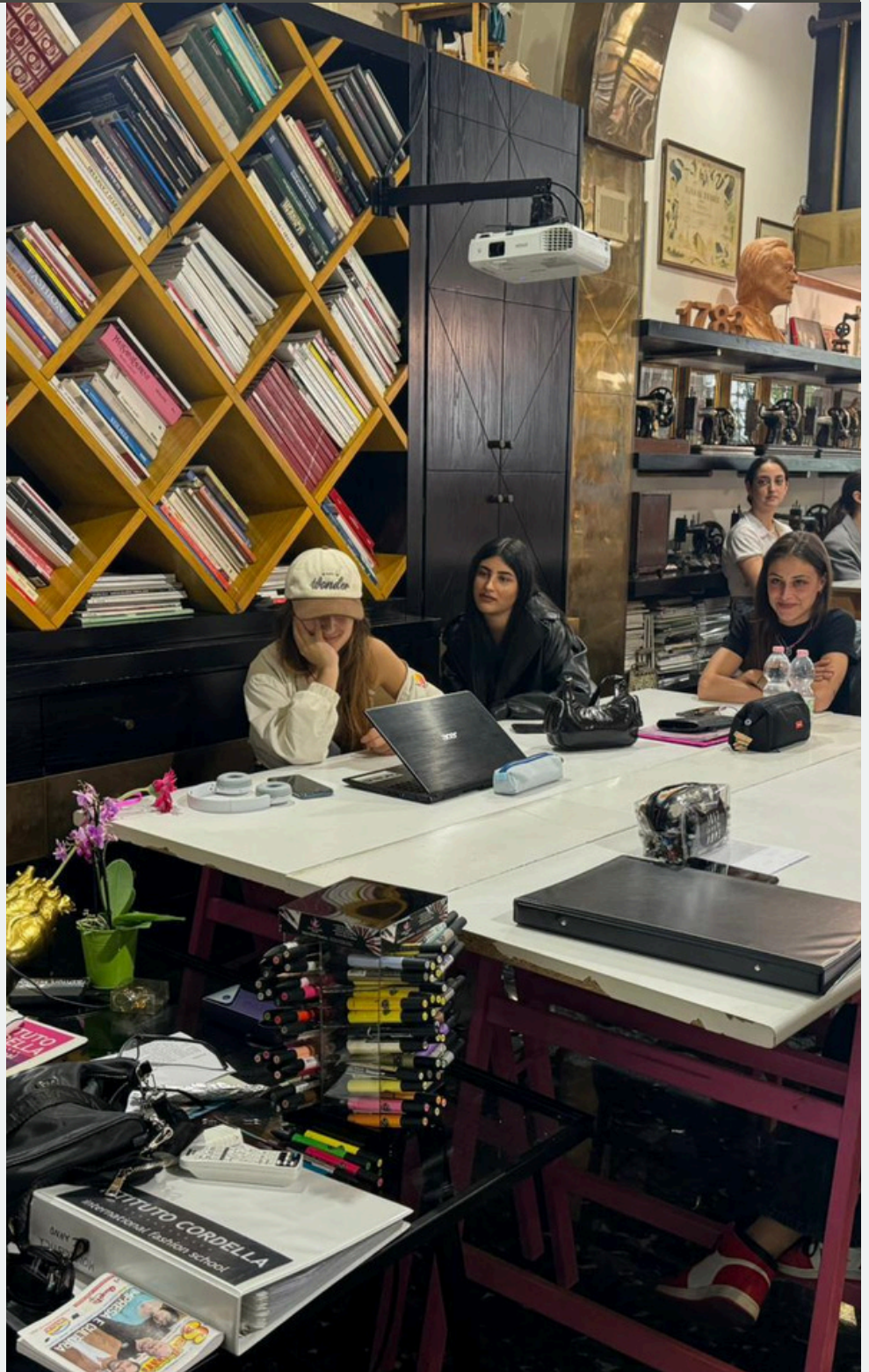
# ISTITUTO CORDELLA

FASHION SCHOOL



# ISTITUTO CORDELLA

FASHION SCHOOL



# *Building my own story and intellectual property*

I'm genuinely excited about the process of creating as a concept artist and illustrator, rather than simply executing tasks. What I'd like to expand upon within my career is building my own story and intellectual property – that truly inspires me. I want to step into that space where I'm not just contributing to someone else's vision but bringing more of myself into the creative process.

The question of "When can I tell my own story?" is always on my mind. It's not just about telling a story but making sure it's one worth sharing – something meaningful and enjoyable in its own right. It's about pulling more of myself into my work, striving to create something truly personal and authentic.

# *A dream come true!*

When I think about the future, I believe space travel will be an incredible experience. It offers an exciting opportunity to explore new frontiers and create pathways for humanity beyond our planet. This challenge deeply inspires me, as I feel driven by the potential it holds.

I envision a future where life isn't confined to Earth but extends beyond it, opening up fascinating possibilities. However, as we face the reality of environmental destruction on our planet, I can't help but wonder if we can prevent further harm. Space exploration could provide valuable insights, almost like a survival strategy for humanity, ensuring our existence even in the face of adversity.

I actually had the incredible honour of visiting NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston, where I experienced something truly extraordinary: wearing the EVA suit that has been to space and worn by only 46 people. It was really a dream come true!

The suit was pressurised, making movement and maintaining balance a real challenge. Even so it was absolutely awe-inspiring to get a glimpse – if only for a moment – of what astronauts experience while working in space.

A heartfelt thank you to Paragon for making this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity possible!



# *A curious mind is the key to living a meaningful, enriched life*

I live my life one day at a time, embracing the present moment but I also believe it's essential to set goals. While I recognise that there's only so much we can do to control what happens, I think it's wise to prepare for the worst while striving for the best. Life is fragile – it can change or end in an instant – yet having something to aspire to gives it meaning. It's a delicate balance between living in the now and keeping an eye on the future.

For me personally, maintaining my health, physical and mental is a cornerstone of how I choose to live. Taking care of your mind and body is fundamental, as the Latin phrase goes: “Mens sana in corpore sano” – a healthy mind in a healthy body. I've always prioritised fitness and wellness. Martial arts are a passion of mine; I won the Italian championship in 1993 and even trained in Beijing for six months, focusing on Kung Fu and physical education. Keeping my body and mind in sync is vital to my overall well-being.

I believe a fulfilling life requires intellectual curiosity. An inquisitive mind keeps you engaged and interested in everything life has to offer. I have a deep love for music – playing the piano and dancing salsa bring me immense joy. Salsa, in particular, is beautiful because it creates patterns and rhythms that foster a connection with others. To me, life is about experiencing as much as possible.

For instance, I've never smoked, not even once because I know the outcome is inherently negative. While I value experiences, I see no reason to engage in something when the consequences are certain to be harmful. On the other hand, I've embraced opportunities to explore the unknown – those experiences where the outcome is uncertain and the potential for growth is high.

Independence is also incredibly important to me. I don't feel the need to conform to societal expectations or prove myself to fit into a specific clique or community. If I don't feel accepted in one space, I'm fine seeking connection elsewhere. Building a network of trustworthy people and cultivating a strong sense of self-reliance is a priority for me.

At my core, I'm a curious person. If someone invited me to try paragliding, I'd say, “Why not?”. This curiosity even led me to explore a one-time experience with a shaman in Los Angeles, where I tried mushrooms. It wasn't about escapism but rather about embarking on a journey of self-discovery and learning more about my behaviour and mind. The experience was insightful but I moved on – it wasn't something that became a part of my life.

Ultimately, I believe a curious mind is the key to living a meaningful, enriched life. It drives you to explore, learn and grow in ways you might never expect.





## FAVOURITE QUOTE

il fon brûler pour elle mais soupir tous bas

he burns for her but sighs softly

~ memoir and autobiography of Giacomo Casanova

I believe this is very true in terms of how to live a good  
life.





## *Note from founder of Niroshini Mini Magazine, Melissa Day...*

Christian Cordella often humbles himself by saying he's "not a snowflake" emphasizing that his contributions, while valuable, are ultimately replaceable in the grand scheme of the creative process. It's a sentiment that reflects his grounded nature and belief in the collaborative essence of his work. Yet, to those who know him and admire his craft, this perspective feels understated.

While Christian may view himself as just one part of a larger mechanism, his unique ability to blend imagination, technical mastery and a deep understanding of human stories makes his work far from ordinary. His talent brings a distinct voice to every project – a voice that cannot simply be substituted or replicated.

Christian's journey is as much about personal growth as it is about creative success. From the child tracing lines on a painting to the artist illustrating costumes for some of the world's most iconic films, his life has been guided by a deep curiosity and a relentless drive to transform fleeting moments of inspiration into something tangible. Whether drawing upon mythology, folklore or his personal experiences, Christian's work reflects his profound connection to the beauty and complexity of the human experience.

It was truly wonderful to learn of one of Christian's most profound moments that came in 1995, when he was invited by the city of Hiroshima to represent Italy, at an international art event commemorating the 50th anniversary of the atomic bombing. Centred on the theme of "love and peace in the world", this gathering brought together artists from across the globe. Painting in Hiroshima's main square, Christian created a powerful work that was ultimately selected as the event's winning piece and is now part of the Hiroshima Museum's collection. This experience, filled with cultural exchange and the universal message of hope, remains one of the most meaningful highlights of his life.

His belief that art must balance imagination with reality – is a philosophy shaped by a lifetime of exploration. Whether working with the Vatican, representing Italy at international events or contributing to blockbuster films, Christian's ability to capture life's essence in his work leaves a lasting impression.

For Christian, life itself is an intricate tapestry – a fusion of wonder, beauty and stories waiting to be told. It is a playground where imagination merges with reality and every moment holds the potential to inspire something extraordinary. This perspective, more than anything, defines him – not only as an artist but as a storyteller who invites us all to see the world through his lens of curiosity and creativity.



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# Understanding the Rhythm

: EXPLORING THE SCIENCE BEHIND MALE  
HORMONAL CYCLES



The differences that we see between men and women occur because of the amount, the pattern or the way the hormone interacts with male and female bodies. Albeit not as obvious as the female cycle, there is much evidence from endocrinologists that hormones play a pivotal role in men's day-to-day and monthly cycles, affecting everything from sleep to sex to stress.

The endocrine system controls hormones and commands body activity through the hypothalamus and pituitary glands. These glands control by sending out messages to organs like adrenal glands, thyroid, pancreas and for men, testes. The hormones controlled by the endocrine system, in turn, control or affect key areas:

## **Testosterone, LH, FSH: Sex**

Both men and women have testosterone (and oestrogen), just in different amounts. One key factor of male hormonal cycles is frequency. Where women are in a monthly cycle, men's are often erratic; some fluctuate hourly, daily, monthly or even over a period of years.

However, there is some regularity with men's testosterone levels, tending to rise throughout the night, peak first thing in the morning and level off by lunchtime. Studies reveal seasonal variations in men's testosterone cycles.

Research also indicates that environmental factors in childhood can influence testosterone levels: in challenging environments with vulnerability to infectious disease or insufficient nutrition, developing males' direct energy towards "survival" at the sacrifice of testosterone. They will likely have lower testosterone levels later than those who spent their childhood in healthier environments.

Men with higher testosterone levels have an increased possibility of negative implications from the hormone. Research shows that unusually high levels raise the risk of prostate disease.

Abnormally low testosterone levels in men can cause fatigue, erectile dysfunction and reduced sex drive. The release of daily testosterone in men mainly occurs during sleep. Interrupted sleep patterns and obstructive sleep apnea correlate to reduced testosterone levels.

## **Infertility**

Research shows that women's "combined oral contraceptive pill" which provides artificial versions of female hormones produced naturally in the ovaries – progesterone and oestrogen – influences male fertility. How?

When women ingest the contraceptive pill and urinate, this goes into the water systems and both women and men are then exposed to the hormones. This results in men drinking artificial female hormones specifically intended to "trick the female body" into thinking it's pregnant. Currently, infertility rates are increasing.

## **Cortisol and epinephrine: Stress**

Although a little stress is fine, too much stress can raise the cortisol level and put your body on high alert. This consistent elevation affects the metabolic system and tells your body to store fat as an emergency response. The term "adrenal fatigue" is where the adrenals have become overburdened by an increased cortisol release and cannot produce cortisol levels for optimal bodily function.

Adrenal depletion may cause some symptoms: lack of clarity of mind, feelings of lethargy, low mood and cravings for sweets or salt. To try and balance this out, do relaxing activities such as meditation, exercise a little more and drink plenty of alkaline or spring water. This may not get rid of the stress-inducing factor but it will go some way to encourage your body to lower cortisol levels.

**Leptin, CCK, insulin and grehlin: Weight**

The hormone ghrelin tells neurons in your hypothalamus to make you feel hungry and prompt you to eat. Ingestion of food releases CCK and leptin, the hormones for suppressing appetite, making you feel full.

Leptin resistance, however, can develop over time and there are three primary factors: eating the wrong foods, excess stress and not enough sleep. Although in the correct amount, leptin is a suppressant, when disrupted, leptin resistance tells the body to send out hunger signals – meaning more is eaten and you put on weight. To reverse this, proactively apply substantial lifestyle and diet changes.

For example, find sugar alternatives such as raw organic honey. For a more balanced diet, try upping the number of vegetables and low-GI fruits, such as blueberries and raspberries and reduce carbohydrates. Vary forms of exercise in your daily routine and try different forms of breathwork to help combat stress. This will encourage weight loss and benefit your whole body, including your skin.

**Thyroid: Energy**

The thyroid gland controls your metabolism and your metabolism controls how your body converts calories into energy.

We all know how important “having energy” is. A huge array of products, lifestyle choices and exercises out there are said to increase energy levels. While it’s entirely possible that what you eat, what you do or don’t do and environmental factors can affect energy, there is also the possibility that disruption of your thyroid could be the culprit for low energy levels.

An underactive thyroid, called hypothyroidism, where there is low production of thyroid hormones, causes fatigue, weight gain and feelings of depression.

You can also have an overreactive thyroid gland, called hyperthyroidism, with a high production of thyroid hormones. This abnormally expedites the body’s metabolism. Symptoms may include unusual weight loss, irregular or rapid heartbeat and tremoring of the hands.

If you do suffer from low energy which isn’t medical, one way to address this is by looking after the next hormone, melatonin – which regulates sleep.



**Melatonin: Sleep**

Controlled by your pineal gland, melatonin is secreted once the sun goes down and you are in darkness. Melatonin regulates the circadian rhythm, your body's personal 24-hour rhythm which tells you when to sleep and wake.

Melatonin production is at its highest in the middle of the night and can be disrupted by low levels of artificial light. For healthy sleep, it is best to have the room in complete darkness and at a relatively low temperature. Many people find that going to sleep at a similar time and sleeping for seven to nine hours per night, allows for the most restful sleep. Good quality sleep will help with energy levels the following day.

**Melissa's tips**

**Swap**

Although too much salt is not recommended, our bodies require it. Therefore, why not swap table salt for Himalayan Pink Salt? It's nourishing and contains 84 other minerals and trace elements – but it also helps regulate hormones.

**Check Vitamin D**

Vitamin D is probably the most important nutrient to ensure an abundance of in your body, if you want to make effective hormones. It is central to DNA activation for protein manufacture in all cell types. You can have a "blood-spot test" by post from an NHS laboratory to check your Vitamin D. (They do not interpret the test or give action steps – you'd require additional advice to respond to the test result).

**Conclusion**

The complicated endocrine system is designed to support our body's everyday needs, whether male or female. Just like the rest of your body, your hormones can be looked after by looking after the areas that can be affected. Helpful starting points are eating well, practising relaxation techniques, exercising regularly and drinking plenty of water – your hormones will thank you.

For support on your healing journey, email: [info@niroshini.com](mailto:info@niroshini.com)





## SUPPORTING LUNG HEALTH DURING AND AFTER WILDFIRES

The recent Palisades Fires in Los Angeles have once again highlighted the devastating impact of wildfires on communities and the environment. These fires which have spread rapidly across large areas, not only destroy homes and natural landscapes but also release a toxic mix of pollutants into the air. While much of the focus tends to be on the immediate destruction caused by the flames, the smoke generated by these fires poses a significant and often overlooked health risk. Among the most concerning pollutants are dioxins, a group of highly toxic compounds that can cause serious health issues, including cancer and immune system damage.

### The Unknown Dangers in Wildfire Smoke

What makes the smoke from the Palisades Fires particularly dangerous is the unknown composition of pollutants it contains. When various materials burn – such as vegetation, plastics and industrial products – the resulting smoke is a complex mixture of harmful substances. This includes:

- Dioxins which are released when organic materials and synthetic products burn.
  - Particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub>), tiny particles that can penetrate deep into the lungs and enter the bloodstream.
  - Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) which contribute to respiratory and cardiovascular problems.
  - Heavy metals which can be toxic to various bodily systems when inhaled.
- These pollutants can exacerbate respiratory conditions, trigger asthma attacks and increase the risk of long-term health issues for those exposed.

### Supporting Lung Health During and After Wildfires

In light of the recent Palisades Fires, it's crucial to take steps to support lung health and help the body detoxify from harmful substances in the smoke. As an affiliate of Water for Health, I recommend incorporating two specific detoxification products into your daily routine: Liquid Zeolite and Liquid Chlorophyll.

#### 1. Liquid Zeolite: Morning Detox

Liquid Zeolite is a natural detoxifier that can help remove heavy metals and other harmful compounds from the body. Zeolite's unique molecular structure acts like a sponge, trapping toxins and preventing them from causing further harm. Taking Liquid Zeolite in the morning can be an effective way to "mop up" the toxins that have entered your system.

#### 2. Liquid Chlorophyll: Evening Detox

In the evening, Liquid Chlorophyll serves as an excellent complement to Liquid Zeolite. Chlorophyll binds to toxins and supports their removal through the body's natural detox pathways. Additionally, it aids liver function which is essential for processing and eliminating harmful substances.

While both products aim to cleanse the body, they work in different ways:

Liquid Zeolite captures and removes toxins directly.

Liquid Chlorophyll binds to toxins and facilitates their natural elimination.

#### DISCOUNT CODE

Simply use the code MD005 at checkout.

[www.water-for-health.co.uk](http://www.water-for-health.co.uk)

### Liquid Zeolite

Zeolite, a silica-based volcanic ash formed from lava and seawater, has a unique porous, negatively charged structure. This allows it to attract and trap positively charged toxins like heavy metals and pesticides, helping detoxify the body, balance pH and support overall health.

### Liquid Chlorophyll

Derived from alfalfa grass, copper-extracted chlorophyll serves as a natural detoxifier and is often called "plant blood" for its role in enabling plants to harness energy from sunlight.



Protecting your health is more important than ever, especially with the lingering effects of the Palisades Fires. By incorporating Liquid Zeolite and Liquid Chlorophyll into your daily routine, you can support your body's detoxification processes and mitigate the risks associated with exposure to wildfire smoke.

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