

**“Guardians” bright star  
Wyatt Oleff moves from high-profile role to his own film work  
By Andrew Domino**

In the blockbuster comic book movie “Guardians of the Galaxy,” Earthling pilot Peter Quill joins a group of alien warriors in a quest to confront an evil tyrant. The movie ended up earning more than \$700 million worldwide, with actor Chris Pratt earning credit for his work. But Pratt isn't the only Peter Quill in the movie.

Wyatt Oleff played Young Quill (according to IMDB) in the early scenes of the film, where he acted opposite Gregg Henry as his grandfather, and a series of special effects before the movie's credits begin. Oleff said he wasn't a comics fan before winning the role in “Guardians,” and while he checked out the comic book, his part had less to do with superheroes and more with emotion.

“Young Peter Quill's mom is in the hospital, and he's mostly lost right now,” Oleff said. “He's trying not to think about it.”

One scene required him to cry, and Oleff said he thought about his dog that passed away to help make that scene more real.

“Guardians” isn't his only high-profile role. He also played Young Rumpelstiltskin on TV's “Once Upon A Time” and Owen on “Scorpion,” along with commercials and small films. He admires “Guardians” director James Gunn, and said he wants to follow a similar career path. He's currently directing an short online film for his mother Jennifer's preschool class, but it's in the early stages - he wouldn't reveal any details. He's been part of several TV pilots, and television is where he feels most comfortable, Oleff said.

“I want to be on a TV show as a regular,” he said. “I like to meet new people, and be with the same people every day.”

Oleff said he knew he wanted to be an actor at age 5. He grew up in Chicago (while his mother's parents, Pam and Randy Walker, are from Kalamazoo, Mich.). He said he quickly learned how to sound natural with screen dialogue, and then began practicing accents. He had to learn what he called a “Scottish-Canadian” accent to match Robert Carlyle, who played Rumpelstiltskin. Most often, though, he auditions for shows on the Disney and Nickelodeon channels. Shows for pre-teens (he's been on Disney's “Shake It Up”) call for different skills for performers, Oleff said.

“You have to go over the top with the acting,” he said.

Whether it's a TV commercial or a big-budget film like “Guardians,” Oleff said for him the process is the same. His manager emails his mother whenever there's a possible audition, and if he's interested in the role, Oleff gives his contact information. From there he's called in to audition, reading the dialogue from the script and acting out the part.

“I do the scene, then I put that out of my mind,” he said.

It can be weeks or months before he hears back on a part he's auditioned for, though he said Disney and Nickelodeon often cast parts less than a week before shooting an episode. Between acting jobs, he's in a private school with other student performers, and like many kids, spends a lot of time on the computer or using Skype with friends. He said not many people know he's a very creative person.

“I love to draw and I love to play outside,” he said. “I like the urban more than the suburban, but I do miss Chicago.”

Though Marvel Studios has announced a “Guardians Of The Galaxy 2,” Oleff isn't sure if he'll be in that film. He said he had a chance to meet his co-stars Chris Pratt and Zoe Saldana at the “Guardians” premiere in Los Angeles, since he didn't work with them on the film. While he enjoyed that experience, Oleff said he's much more interested in the technique of movie-making than in the celebrity lifestyle. He also likes acting in front of a camera, whether on TV or film.

“I'd love to do voiceover,” he said. “On stage it's a one-time thing. On a movie, you can try again.”