

Film Feature: Which X-Men We Want to See in Next X-Sequel

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on June 2, 2011 - 12:31pm

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CHICAGO – Comic book fans, particularly X-Men fans, have been pretty spoiled lately. Anyone over the age of fifteen might not remember this, but there was a time back when it was essentially impossible to imagine seeing an honest-to-god movie version of your favorite comic book character on the big screen. Sure, we'd sit around and fan cast all day and night, debating why Charles Bronson and Dolph Lundgren would make the best Wolverine and Colossus ever (imagine that fastball special), but, back then, we didn't think that Hollywood would actually ever make an X-Men movie. Then Bryan Singer's "X-Men" dropped like a bomb in 2000 and, suddenly, movie X-Men were everywhere.

And we mean, EVERYWHERE. Since 2000, there have been five X-Men movies total, rounding out with this week's release of Matthew Vaughn's "X-Men: First Class", and each one is literally packed with movie versions of our favorite X-Men. It's actually gotten a bit ridiculous. While it seemed inevitable that any X-movie franchise would include old favorites like Wolverine, Storm, and Professor X, thanks to the X-movies' penchant for packing their stories with familiar characters, X-fans have also been treated to seeing less popular characters like Jubilee, Toad, Pyro, Lady Deathstrike, Callisto, and the Blob hit their local multiplex.

And "X-Men: First Class" definitely continues this trend. While Charles Xavier and Magneto are, unquestionably, X-Men royalty, the rest of the "First Class" cast is seemingly a hodge-podge of whatever mutants weren't used in the previous four films — Beast, Banshee, Mystique, Sebastian Shaw, Havok, Emma Frost, Riptide, Azazel, Darwin — yes, Darwin (ten points if you actually know who he is). This is not exactly an A-List team of the most popular X-Men ever, but we'll admit, the early buzz on "X-Men: First Class" makes us excited to see what Vaughn can do with his league of extraordinary second-stringers.

But it begs the question — if we're scrapping the bottom of the mutant barrel for "X-Men: First Class", who's going to be left for the next inevitable sequel? Will the mutants in "X-Men: Second Class" actually be second class? With this in mind, we took a look at the surprisingly short list of X-Men who haven't been in an X-Men film yet and made our picks for the mutants we think are finally ready for their big-time movie adaptations.



Cannonball

Photo credit: Marvel

X-Man: Cannonball

Real Name: Sam Guthrie

Powers: He's a human missile – he can fly at top speeds while surrounded by an almost impenetrable force field, making him a living projectile weapon. Or, to quote him, “Ah’m a darn-near invulnerable when ah’m a-blastin’!”

Why He Should Be in an X-Men Movie: Cannonball is one of the few major X-characters who haven't found their way into a movie yet. He's definitely X-royalty, the first member of one of the junior mutant teams to graduate to the big-time Uncanny X-Men, and he's a helluva fun character. This good ol' Southern boy is like a big hayseed version of Cyclops – all wound-up with duty and responsibility, but way more grounded than Scott Summers. But the big draw should be that his power is really, really cool. Flying scenes in superhero movies have been pretty staid so far. But Cannonball has so much potential to be something violent, visually arresting, and bombastic. Forget about graceful dancing on air. Cannonball IS a human cannonball and watching him launch himself at his foes and tear through them with impunity sounds like WAY more fun than claws or eye lasers.

Who Should Play Him: There's been some odd fan casting for Cannonball on the 'net (Van Der Beek? Really?), but we're basically looking for someone who would pull off a strong Southerner, a natural leader, with a hint of wild behind the eyes. We could see Nick Stahl, Chris Pratt, a young Owen Wilson or Josh Lucas would've been great. But, if we have to choose, we'd love to see “Friday Night Lights” Zach Gilford blasting through the next X-sequel as Sam Guthrie. His role as Matt Saracen, the Texas football star/former outcast who rose up the ranks to become quarterback, seems like a perfect analog for Cannonball's path into the X-Men. (If we can't get Zach, “Animal Kingdom”'s Joel Edgerton or “Scott Pilgrim”'s Mark Webber could work too.)



Dazzler

Photo credit: Marvel

X-Man: Dazzler

Real Name: Alison Blaire

Powers: She can transmute sound into light, which is a nerdy way of saying that she can take noise – including her own singing – and turn it into lasers, light shows, blinding flashes, holograms, you name it.

Why She Should Be in an X-Men Movie: Because she’s so freaking ridiculous it just might work. Dazzler was originally introduced to the X-world in 1980, essentially billed as the first ever Disco X-Man. As disco thankfully died away as the ‘80s progressed, the camp-tastic Dazzler was quick to reinvent herself as a laser-shooting rock singer, but her essential core of cheese has never left the character, even after she spent years as an essential part of the main Uncanny team. We’re just going to say it – Alison Blaire has paid her X-dues and she deserves some respect. Dazzler is just pure fun, a punchline character who strangely works, and, in the right hands, she could be PERFECT for an X-movie. She’s over-the-top, she has a wonderfully visual power, the filmmakers could have so fun with music industry commentary, and having a popular pop goddess come out as a mutant could be a great story beat.

Who Should Play Her: The problem with Dazzler is that studio execs would probably use the character as an excuse to drop the pop-star du jour into the X-franchise for some multimedia synergy. So if Dazzler ever shows up in an X-flick, expect to hear rampant rumors of everyone from Britney to Taylor Swift being cast in the role. There’s actually a fan campaign to get Kristen Bell to play Dazzler in an X-movie, and she’s not a bad choice. Bell is a great actress with the comedic chops to handle the character’s campiness, and she’s got a great voice (she was fantastic in “Reefer Madness”). If not Bell, let’s forget about a pop princess and get a real singer like Rilo Kiley’s Jenny Lewis to put on the disco boots and shine.



Armor

Photo credit: Marvel

X-Man: Armor

Real Name: Hisako Ichiki

Powers: She can create super-strong psychic body armor around herself, giving her super-strength and durability, and it basically looks like she’s beating people up while standing inside a see-through Japanese robot, which is awesome.

Why She Should Be in an X-Men Movie: She’s an ass-kicking, teenaged Asian X-Man created by Joss Whedon. Is that enough reason? (It should be.) Armor might be a relatively new X-Man – she debuted in the Whedon-scripted “Astonishing X-Men” back in 2004 – but she might be the coolest new mutant of the 21st century. Why? Because she’s the full package. She’s got a wonderful human core as one of the youngest X-Men, hoping to prove herself to her elders (just like a young Kitty Pryde back in the ‘80s), and her relationship with her gruff mentor Wolverine is equal parts drama and comedy. Her powers are fantastic, a compelling mixture of defense and offense, and they look extremely, extremely cool. Forget about Green Lantern’s ring constructs. Being able to imagine that you’re surrounded by a robotic super-suit and then running into battle to beat down your opponents with your imaginary phantom limbs? That’s seriously kick-ass – pure, unfiltered wish fulfillment - and it would look amazing on the big screen. Plus the idea of having a skinny teenaged girl as one of the big-time bruisers on a super team is just too much fun to ignore.

Who Should Play Her: The very first name that jumps to mind is Ellen Wong, who did such a tremendous job bringing Knives Chau to life in “Scott Pilgrim vs. The World”. Wong made Knives into a vulnerable, three-dimensional teenage girl who could kick butt in a boss battle when she needed to, which sounds just like Armor. But, if Wong is otherwise occupied, we actually think Brenda Song might be a fun choice for the role. Granted, Song is mostly known as a Disney Channel princess, thanks to the “Suite Life on Deck” and “Wendy Wu”, but she’s got comedic chops, she got a good head on her shoulders, and she was great in her small role as Andrew Garfield’s unstable girlfriends in David Fincher’s “The Social Network”.



Pete Wisdom
Photo credit: Marvel

X-Man: Pete Wisdom

Real Name: Pete Wisdom (not big on codenames)

Powers: He can absorb heat and radiation and shoot it out of his fingers in the form of white-hot throwing knives. So he's like Wolverine, but with burning hot, projectile hand knives, which, be honest, is an upgrade.

Why He Should Be in an X-Men Movie: Because he's a proper English bastard and we don't have enough of those in comic book movies. (Want proof? Probably the most iconic English comic book bastard of all time, John Constantine, was turned into Keanu Reeves in the movie version. 'Nuff said.) Pete Wisdom was the creation of comics legend Warren Ellis, and he's been a fantastic addition to the usual crop of angsty X-Men we normally get. Wisdom is a wickedly funny, caustic, and often anti-social former British secret agent, who's highly trained, isn't afraid to use his powers, and who's had his flexible moral center tested by years of espionage work. Plus he was the guy who deflowered Kitty Pryde. He's a big-time British bad-ass. The X-Men movies need less mutants fretting over identity issues and more mutants who are out there, thigh-deep in the ugly world, using their powers to carve out victories amongst the murky shades of grey. We actually can't believe that Wisdom didn't make the cast for Matthew Vaughn's "First Class". He's tougher than Fleming's Bond, perfect for the sixties, and sounds like he just dropped out of the cast of "Layer Cake". Maybe he'll make the sequel.

Who Should Play Him: Clive Owen would make an amazing Pete Wisdom – he's got the perfect mix of verbal and physical intimidation – but let's assume that he's not going to want to play a C-List X-Man in a sequel. Jack Davenport from the "Pirates" trilogy and ABC's "FlashForward" would do a nice job—he's played the straight man so often lately that he's probably relish the chance to be a proper bastard for a while. But we'd love to see Benedict Cumberbatch from BBC's "Sherlock" tear into the role, slicing down his foes with equal parts heat blades and wit.



Multiple Man

Photo credit: Marvel

X-Man: Multiple Man

Real Name: Jamie Madrox

Powers: He can create multiple copies of himself, duplicating himself over and over again, and, when finished, he can absorb his duplicates back into his own body, absorbing all of their memories and experiences in the process.

Why He Should Be in an X-Men Movie: OK, OK, you got us. Jamie Madrox, the Multiple Man, was already in an X-Men movie. But he was only in it for a few seconds and it was the WORST X-Men movie ever made (“X-Men: Last Stand”), so we’re just going to ignore that it ever happened, all right? We mean no offense to Eric Dane (i.e. “Grey’s Anatomy”’s McSteamy), who played Madrox in “X3”, but you just don’t take a character as cool as the Multiple Man and waste him in a cameo. His power may sound vaguely ridiculous, but Madrox became one of the most compelling characters in recent Marvel history ever since he found his muse, comics writer Peter David. Once David brought Multiple Man into the X-Men spin-off, “X-Factor”, he turned Madrox from a D-list back-up character to an A-list protagonist with one of the best character voices in the entire Marvel Universe. Madrox is funny, conflicted, sarcastic, lonely, plagued with doubt, loyal, principled... he's got more dimensions than the multiverse and he's one of the few X-Men with a strong enough personality to carry his own comic. His duplicating powers are visually arresting AND they have amazing ties to his character traits – his dupes typically embody different aspects of his persona. Basically, he is rich, grade-A material and he deserves better than a five-second drop-in in a Brett Ratner film. (Don’t we all?)

Who Should Play Him: There’s an online contingent that desperately wants “Psych”’s James Roday in the role of Madrox, and, after some consideration, we’ll agree, he’s a strong choice. We’re not 100% convinced that he could nail the sarcastic pathos of our favorite multiplying man, but he could pull off the humor without breaking a sweat. But we’d also love to see multiple versions of Adam Scott from “Parks & Recreation” or “Fringe”’s Joshua Jackson running around the next X-Men sequel.

By TOM BURNS

Staff Writer

HollywoodChicago.com

tom@hollywoodchicago.com [17]

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