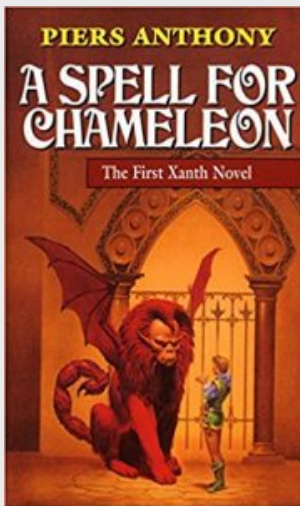


New XANTH Film and TV Franchise in Development



[featured image: cover art by Michael Whelan]

Variety reports that Steven Paul's Sp Entertainment Group is developing a series of film and television projects adapting Piers Anthony's *Xanth* fantasy series.



Beginning with *A Spell for Chameleon* (1977), the series originally was planned as a trilogy — the next two being *The Source of Magic* and *Castle Roogna* — but Anthony continued in the wake of strong positive reception from fans. It's now one of the world's largest fantasy book series, with number 41, *Ghost Writer in the Sky*, set to be published this month. Anthony noted in the Author's Notes for book 27, *Cube Route*, that the first trilogy was now complete. (27 = 3 cubed)

The *Xanth* series is set in a universe where humans are born with unique magical abilities, and the stories generally center around people with “Magician” level abilities. There are also centaurs, demons, dragons, gargoyles, golems, naga, nymphs, ogres, zombies, and a host of other magical and fictional beasts. Some half-humans also have been found to possess magical abilities as the series progressed.

A Spell for Chameleon tells the story of Bink of North Village. Bink, it seems, possessed no magic and was afraid he would be exiled. Except the charts say Bink has power at the level of the King or the Evil Magician Trent. But no one can figure out just how Bink's power manifests itself, Bink gets exiled to Mundania, where he has to figure himself out. Along the way he meets a strange woman named Chameleon (so named because her beauty and intelligence shift in inverse proportions depending on the time of month). They also encounter evil magician Trent, who wants to invade Xanth.

Paul will produce along with Hans Futterman and Spike Seldin, who heads development and production for SPE. Paul's genre credits include *Ghost in the Shell* and the two *Ghost Rider*

movies.

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