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## Elizabeth Olsen: Five thoughts on the rise of Wanda

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Elizabeth Olsen stars as Wanda Maximoff in “Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness.” (Jay Maidment/Marvel Studios)



**By David Betancourt**  
Washington Post

Elizabeth Olsen was a supporting player as Wanda Maximoff in the “Avengers” movies, the largest superhero gathering ever seen onscreen. But when “WandaVision”

arrived at the beginning of 2021, on its way to Twitter domination and meme glory, Olsen became a headliner.

Heading into her starring role in “Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness,” the pecking order at Marvel has changed. Thanos? Who’s that? It’s all about the Scarlet Witch now. Even in a sequel designated for titular star Benedict Cumberbatch.

Olsen has barely had time to adjust to her transition of being the next big thing in the MCU. She went directly into filming on the “Doctor Strange” sequel after finishing her stint on “WandaVision,” working in a bubble that didn’t allow her to fully grasp how her Marvel experience had changed.

Olsen talked to the Washington Post about her character’s rise. (Responses have been condensed.)

### **On the popularity of “WandaVision”:**

“I’m still surprised by the ‘WandaVision’ response. It was a shocker. We didn’t have expectations. We were kind of the first of our (type of) show, going from these film characters that we know into television. The first of the Marvel Disney+ series. We didn’t feel like there was an expectation that we had to surpass because we were doing something new.

“Now, I have a totally different fear of expectations for this film because I actually understand the expectations a little bit better with my experiences at Marvel. The pressure feels different on this job. I didn’t know whether people would care, when I was filming “Doctor Strange,” about Wanda’s journey. The response from “WandaVision,” I think, is an incredible fuel for this film.”

### **On the show’s experimentation:**

“I felt like we were in a place where we could fail. It felt very freeing being on that job. I also love so many different types of acting ... and to be able to do multiple genres in one show is such a gift.

“All I wanted with ‘Doctor Strange’ was to make sure that we continued to see different parts of her and to continue to advance her. To not be repetitive. Hopefully, people now have this built-in empathy for (Wanda), which is a really amazing way to get into this film.”

## **On the MCU multiverse plots, in “Spider-Man: No Way Home,” “Multiverse of Madness” and others:**

“As long as these films continue to mean something beyond it being about superheroes saving the world and also have an added element of myth or folklore or cautionary tales, then if the stories are worth telling, then they make an impact. I appreciate that that continues to be the goal for (Marvel Studios President) Kevin Feige.

## **On sharing the spotlight with Benedict Cumberbatch:**

“He’s a really fabulous actor, and I was excited to collaborate with him and to have him challenge me and for me to try to challenge him and to have a healthy work relationship in that way. I think these characters are meant to be in the same world together. It’s exciting that we actually get to put them in the same world because they have an understanding of each other. They’re both kind of independents in a way.”

## **On where the Scarlet Witch can go from here:**

“I never really had the expectations of even what I’ve already been able to do. I feel really grateful for all the opportunities that I’ve been given in the past few years with Marvel. As long as there’s a good story to tell, I’m interested in telling it.”

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