

= Aquaman (TV pilot) =

Aquaman is a television pilot developed by Smallville creators Al Gough and Miles Millar for The WB Television Network , based on the DC Comics character of the same name . Gough and Millar wrote the pilot , which was directed by Greg Beeman . Justin Hartley starred as Arthur " A.C. " Curry , a young man living in a beachside community in the Florida Keys who learns about his powers and destiny as the Prince of Atlantis .

The Aquaman pilot was expected to debut in the fall schedule of 2006 , but following the merger of the WB and UPN , the resulting CW Network opted not to buy the series . After they passed on the pilot , it was made available online through iTunes in the United States and became the number @-@ one most downloaded television show on iTunes . It received generally favorable reviews , was later released on other online markets , and aired on Canadian television network YTV .

= = Production = =

= = = Development = = =

The concept of Aquaman stemmed from a fifth season episode of Smallville , " Aqua " . The episode featured Arthur Curry (Alan Ritchson) coming to Smallville to stop an underwater weapons project being developed by LuthorCorp . " Aqua " became the highest rated episode for Smallville that season , but it was never meant to be a backdoor pilot for an Aquaman series . However , as work progressed on " Aqua " , the character was recognized to have potential for his own series . Miles Millar and Alfred Gough , the creators of Smallville , also considered a series featuring Lois Lane , but felt more confident about Aquaman . Millar said , " [Aquaman] was the first idea where we really thought we had a franchise where we could see 100 episodes . "

Alan Ritchson was not considered for the role in the new series , because Gough and Millar did not consider it a spin @-@ off from Smallville . Gough said in November 2005 , " [The series] is going to be a different version of the ' Aquaman ' legend . " Gough did express the idea of a crossover with Smallville at some point . There was initial speculation that the show 's title would not be Aquaman . Tempest Keys and Mercy Reef were rumored to be the working titles for the series . The show would eventually be listed as Aquaman , when it was later released on iTunes . Greg Beeman , who has produced and directed episodes of Smallville , was hired to direct the pilot .

= = = Casting = = =

The role of Arthur Curry was originally given to Will Toale , after Gough and Millar saw over 400 candidates from England , Australia , Canada and the United States . Before filming began , Toale was replaced with Justin Hartley . A CW spokesman said , " We have made the decision to go in a different direction with the Aquaman role and wish [Toale] the best of luck in all of his endeavors . " Graham Bentz was cast as a young Arthur Curry , while Adrienne Palicki was cast as a Siren named Nadia . Ving Rhames , Amber McDonald , Denise Quiñones , Rick Peters , and Lou Diamond Phillips filled in the rest of the regular cast members .

Four of the cast members guest starred on Smallville before the Aquaman pilot . Denise Quiñones played Andrea Rojas in the season five episode " Vengeance " , while Adrienne Palicki appeared in the season three episode " Covenant " . Rick Peters was cast as Bob Rickman in the season one episode " Hug " . Kenny Johnson , who briefly appears as the Sheriff in the pilot 's opening , guest starred in the season five episode " Mortal " .

= = = Filming = = =

Production was based in North Miami , Florida ; filming began in March 2006 with an estimated budget of \$ 7 million . Practical and exterior footage was shot around Coconut Grove , Miami . Some

scenes were filmed on location at the Homestead Joint Air Reserve Base adjacent to Homestead , Florida . The 482nd Fighter Wing Airmen were used as extras while filming at the base , along with several of their fighter aircraft . The production was expected to continue in June of that year , had it been given the greenlight .

Some of the actors received training from Staff Sergeant Leo Castellano on the proper way to present arms . Much of the filming took place underwater ; Hartley filmed his underwater scenes without a tank , breathing from the safety divers ' tanks around him for the scenes out on the ocean . Hartley had never been scuba diving and was not a diver , but did say that he was a good swimmer . Entity FX , the firm which did the special effects for Smallville since its second season , was contracted to work on the Aquaman pilot .

= = Cast and characters = =

Justin Hartley as Arthur " A.C. " Curry / Aquaman : The central character of the show . He runs a dive shop in his day @-@ to @-@ day life . However , Arthur is aware of his special abilities , but uses them for fun before learning in the pilot episode of his destiny as the lost Prince of Atlantis .

Lou Diamond Phillips as Tom Curry : A Coast Guard officer . While in his rookie year , he rescues the infant Arthur (then named Orin) , Atlanna , and McCaffery from shark @-@ infested waters . He later falls in love with Atlanna , marrying her and adopting her son .

Denise Quiñones as Lt. Rachel Torres : A fighter pilot . She meets Arthur when he rescues her after her jet crashes in the ocean . She is then asked by Brigman to aid in his investigation .

Rick Peters as Admiral Brigman : A U.S. Navy officer who has been investigating the apparent resurfacing of people around Mercy Reef who were lost in the Bermuda Triangle , some , as much as 40 years ago .

Ving Rhames as McCaffery : A lighthouse keeper and A.C. ' s mentor . He is also an Atlantean .

Amber McDonald as Eva : A.C. ' s business partner ; together they run a dive shop in Tempest Keys . The two are close friends .

Adrianne Palicki as Nadia : A siren and the villain of the story . She is the one responsible for the murder of Atlanna .

Daniella Wolters as Atlanna : A.C. ' s mother ; she was taken from him when he was young , and her disappearance has mystified A.C. ever since . She was the first to call him " Orin " .

= = Pilot summary = =

A.C. and his mother Atlanna are flying over the Bermuda Triangle . As they get closer , Atlanna 's necklace begins to glow and a surge of light and energy erupts from the ocean , causing cyclones which bring their plane down . Atlanna is kidnapped by a siren , but not before giving A.C. her necklace and calling him Orin . Ten years later , A.C. is charged for releasing dolphins from a marine park . His father bails him out of trouble , but gives him a stern lecture on responsibility . Later , A.C. tells his friend Eva that he felt like the dolphins were calling to him . While he 's working , he is approached by a lighthouse keeper who identifies himself as McCaffery . The Coast Guard picks up an unidentified man , floating in the Bermuda Triangle and pleading to warn Orin . Lt. Torres is sent to investigate the area . A.C. is also at the Triangle , and his necklace triggers another surge of light , which causes Torres to crash her jet . Brigman transports the John Doe to another facility , and persuades Torres to join his team . Brigman is looking for a connection between the disappearances of thousands of individuals , and their reappearance years later without ever aging a day .

That evening , A.C. meets Nadia and she convinces him to go swimming . In the water , Nadia reveals herself to not only be a Siren , but the one that took his mother . A.C. barely escapes with a little help from McCaffery . McCaffery explains that he , Arthur and Arthur 's mother were all exiled from Atlantis , and that A.C. is the prince of Atlantis . Arthur convinces Eva to leave Tempest Key for a few days , but it comes too late as Nadia injures Eva and captures Arthur . When he wakes up , A.C. finds that Nadia has also captured McCaffery and she is bringing them both back to Atlantis to

be executed . Breaking free using a flask of water to enhance his strength , A.C. destroys Nadia by putting a spear through her head . The next morning , McCaffery explains that there will be more creatures that will come looking for A.C. and that he should have started his training years prior . A.C. agrees to start his training , and McCaffery leaves him with Henry IV Part 1 and Part 2 to read . McCaffery informs Arthur who would rather just skip to the ending that " It isn 't about the ending , it 's about the journey . "

Ideas for future episodes focused on environmental threats , such as " ocean polluters " and " evil oil companies . " The first 13 episodes already planned out , with a possible story arc involving McCaffery being captured and taken back to Atlantis . Stories regarding mythology were set to play a small role in later episodes . Gough and Millar chose to go with a more classic version , from the comics , of Aquaman 's mythology . Gough stated , " Unlike Superman , there really isn 't a set core mythology for Arthur Curry . There are a couple different versions of it . We went with the most classic one . "

= = Abilities and weakness = =

Hartley explained that Arthur would be aware of his powers at the beginning of the series and would have no problem using them for personal gain . Hartley felt this played against the typical superheroes , because his character was not afraid to flaunt his abilities . Gough explained A.C. would be able to swim faster than humans , breathe underwater , as well as have super strength while underwater . He also stated that exposure to water on land would give him powers . The extent of his speed is shown in the pilot , when Arthur is able to keep up with a fighter jet flying above him . The extent of A.C. ' s ability to breathe underwater was not elaborated upon , but he is seen swimming near the bottom of the ocean near the start of the pilot . When A.C. is talking to Eva about releasing captive dolphins , he tells her that he felt as though the dolphins were somehow calling to him . In the comics , one of Aquaman 's powers is the ability to communicate with sea life . Gough likened A.C. ' s not having access to water to Clark 's growing weak around kryptonite in Smallville ? if A.C. does not get water , he will dehydrate and weaken . Water gives him a power boost and enables producers to explore stories on land .

= = Release = =

The pilot was considered to have a good chance of being picked up , but ultimately the CW passed on the show . Discussing the excitement surrounding the project , Lou Diamond Phillips said , " The funny thing about the Aquaman project is that there 's so much buzz about it already . Which is amazing , I mean you don 't usually get that with a pilot , because they 're sort of sight unseen . " There were reports of two WB pilots in contention for the new CW network , one being Aquaman , which was a frontrunner . On May 18 , 2006 , when The CW announced its fall lineup Aquaman was not on the list . Dawn Ostroff , The CW 's president of entertainment , stated that it was still a midseason contender .

Gough and Miller were so passionate about the pilot that they wanted it released in some form so the fans could see it . Gough said in an interview , " The implication when a network doesn 't pick up a show is that the pilot sucks and that 's not the case . It 's not a perfect pilot by any stretch of the imagination . There are other reasons ? which are a mystery to us ? as to why The CW didn 't pick it up . " He mentioned a potential release as an extended episode during the sixth season of Smallville .

On July 24 , 2006 , the pilot became one of the first shows offered by Warner Brothers on the iTunes Store (available only to US customers) for \$ 1 @. @ 99 , under the title Aquaman . Within a week , it reached the number @- @ one spot on the list of most downloaded TV shows on the digital store 's list , and it held that spot for over a week . Gough stated , " At least the pilot is now getting its day in court with the fans , and the reviews have all been very positive . " It became the first show available on iTunes which had not previously aired on a network . The pilot was released the week of March 12 , 2007 on the Xbox Live Video Marketplace . By March 24 , 2007 , the pilot reached # 6

on the Video Marketplace 's top downloads . On June 9 , 2007 , Canadian television network YTV , aired the pilot as part of their " Superhero Saturday . " Warner Home Video in association with Best Buy released the pilot as a promotional DVD on November 11 , 2007 , bundling it together with selected Smallville season sets . On February 23 , 2009 , Warner Bros. attached it as a bonus feature to the Blu @-@ ray release of Justice League : Crisis on Two Earths .

Critical response was generally positive . The pilot was found comparable in quality to Smallville , with suggestions that Aquaman was indeed worthy of a place on The CW 's schedule . The cast was well received ; in addition , Hartley was praised for his portrayal of Arthur Curry . Cinematography and underwater special effects were well received . Reviews that were not as positive did concede the show had potential . The project was commended for keeping the comic book myth fresh and exciting for a modern audience . IGN had a different opinion of the show , calling it " dead in the water " , and comparing it to " cheesy cult classics , such as Shazam ! " .