

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Analesa Fisher's Hail Mary in a Hot Car

From Portland kid to Netflix and Angel Studios, the actor who almost rejected Metal Lords is grounding Omi and bringing authentic disability representation to Rise and Shine.

Interview by Paul Salfen · AMFM Magazine



Analesa Fisher. Photo via IMDb.

This is the week Analesa Fisher's calendar refused to behave. Cyberpunk: Edgerunners Season 2 dropped on Netflix, the voice of Omi already drawing love for the nomad survivor who tries to pull a main character back from delusions of grandeur. Tomorrow, Rise and Shine opens in theaters nationwide, with Fisher as Amanda opposite newcomer Ana Sharp, Tony Award winners Rachel Bay Jones and Danny Burstein, and more than a dozen speaking roles cast with disabled actors. The Angel Studios film streams on the Angel app in November. "I didn't expect it all to be happening in the same week," Fisher told Paul Salfen, "but here we are."

THE WEEK THAT STACKED

Salfen, who has been tracking Angel's family-friendly output, asked about the movie first. Rise and Shine is based on Janice Steele's memoir Remembering Terry. Terri has been homeschooled her whole life; senior year she decides she wants public school. Best friend, popularity, prom—the ordinary wants of an ordinary girl—while her mother navigates her own love story in the background. "It is an endlessly feel-good movie," Fisher said. "It really boils down not to this character has a disability, but how a character with this disability's unfiltered optimism changes the lives of everyone around her."

Fisher is a disability advocate. The casting of more than a dozen disabled actors in speaking roles is, in their words, a dream come true. “You don’t get that. That representation is so few and far between as it is. To have over a dozen in a single movie is... it’s a dream come true.”

"To have over a dozen speaking roles that have actually been cast with real disabled actors... it's a dream come true."

— Analesa Fisher

THE GIFT THAT ALMOST WASN'T

The gift showed up early. Fisher has been acting since they were little in Portland, Oregon. They didn’t believe a full career was possible until *Metal Lords*, the Netflix film in which they played Kendall. “I pretty much did everything in my power to not get that role, because I was like, I’m not right for this, I’m not a popular girl, I’m not pretty, like, there’s no way that they’re gonna hire me for this. I almost was, like, rejecting it the whole time.” Sitting in the trailer, it hit: this is happening. “If I really put my nose to the grindstone, I could do even more things like this.”

Advice for the ones looking up and saying the same thing? Relentlessness paired with release. “In this industry, you have to have a two-fold. You have to have a relentlessness, while also somehow letting go of everything that happens all the time, because if you hold on to something like this in this business, it doesn’t happen. You have to do an audition... to the best of your ability... and then you have to let it go. And never think about it ever again.” Enjoy the craft, put the work in, then release it. “I think that’s where success ends up growing.”

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— Analesa Fisher

GROUNDING ON THE BAD DAYS

On the bad days, Fisher Googles their own name. “There is a kid out there right now that would die just to have this, what I’m looking at right now on this Google search. And so, if that is all that happens, that has to be enough... if this is my legacy, it’s a pretty good legacy.” On the good days they know they are good at the job. The middle is the work of staying there.

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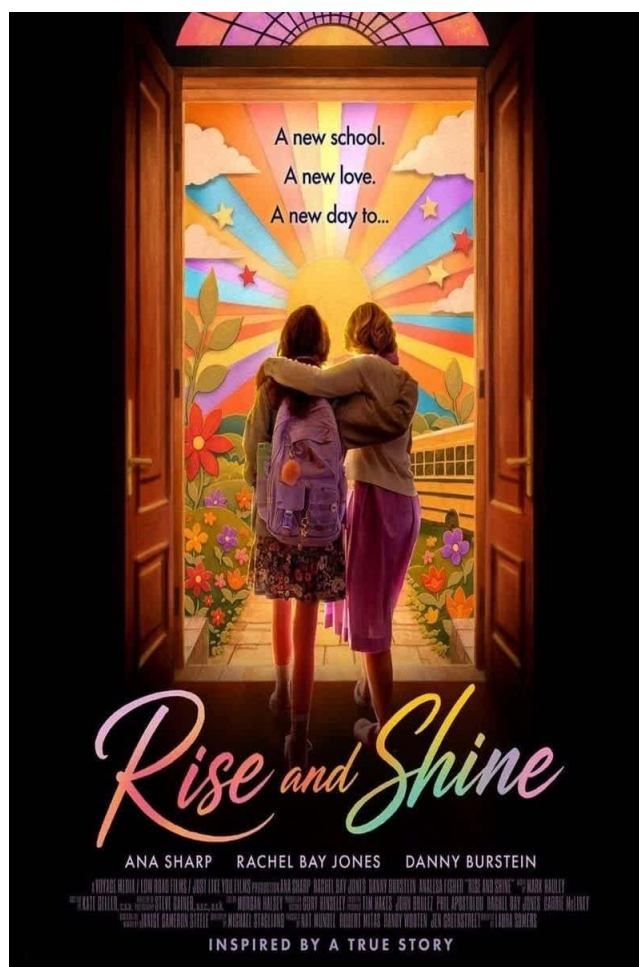
INSTINCTS IN THE BOOTH

Voice-over is different. On-camera, for *Saving Buddy Charles* on Tubi, they worked the whole script, brought a binder. In the booth, “we don’t know anything until we’re in the booth. And then they put our lines up on the screen, and they go, go ahead.” Instincts, the director, humility. “I’m such a planner.” It is also silly. “If you really were to take, like, a fisheye lens and look at yourself in this, like, hamster cage of a booth... it’s so silly, it’s not that serious.”

Salfen's signature Hail Mary question landed on the Omi audition. It was the last character they were casting. Fisher had already auditioned for the others and not booked them. "I don't voice deep voice characters, I don't voice cool characters, that's not my bread and butter." They were in Portland without their booth, in their mom's car, travel mic, parking garage, dead of summer. "That car insulates so much of heat... I was sitting in this car, like, shaking, sweating... I was like, I don't know if this is gonna turn out to be anything, but I have to try. I can't just sit here and go, oh, rats! Because it's a character I don't normally voice, I guess I just won't audition. I have to try. And I think that we as humans are rewarded a lot if we do that, if we just try, and you never know what's gonna happen."

"I have to try. I can't just sit here and go, oh, rats! Because it's a character I don't normally voice."

— **Analesa Fisher**



Rise and Shine official poster. Courtesy Angel Studios / AMC.

THE SHOCK OF RECOGNITION

People still get shocked at conventions when the banner says Analesa Fisher next to Firefly from Honkai: Star Rail. "No, you're Firefly's voice actor?" "I am! Hello!" Cartoon Network work gets the same reaction—we all grew up with it.

Contracts and NDAs mean the next things stay quiet for now. Salfen noted that usually means the good stuff. Fisher is under them, smiling. For now there is Cyberpunk: Edgerunners 2, number one in the United States and globally after two days, and Rise and Shine in theaters tomorrow. “There’s lots of good stuff to see, of me right now, at least.”

Salfen closed proud of the success and ready for the next conversation. Fisher thanked him and signed off.

FIND ANALESA FISHER

Cyberpunk: Edgerunners 2 now streaming on Netflix.

Rise and Shine in theaters nationwide October 23; streaming on the Angel app in November.

Instagram: @analesafisher

Interview conducted by Paul Salfen for AMFM Magazine, October 2026.

Paul Salfen is Managing Editor of AMFM Magazine and a veteran interviewer of film, television, music, and sports figures. He is the author of Going For It!, a collection of Hail Mary moments from the artists and athletes he has spent two decades putting on the record.