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Mr. Speice

Independent Study Mentorship

6 November, 2017

#### **Interview Assessment 4**

**Name of Professional:** Marta Marks

**Profession/Title:** Head of Artist Management and Recruiting

**Studio Name:** Reel FX

**Date of Interview:** November 2, 2017

My fourth interview was with Marta Marks, the Head of Artist Management and Recruiting at Reel FX. Reel FX is a well known studio in Dallas as they make feature films though they also have a commercial division and a virtual reality department. During this interview I was able to learn a lot about the management of studios, and how large projects are made within a studio's budget. This was a very interesting discussion as I was able to learn more about how studios and animation pipelines function to create large projects.

From this interview I was able to gather a lot of information regarding how studio's create feature films. Ms.Marks said that a key factor to how a movie is created is the budget they have to produce a movie. Reel FX has a fifty million dollar budget to produce their feature films whereas studios like Pixar have crossed 1 billion dollars to produce their films. There are three main factors that contribute to the higher budget: time, number of critiques and the number of “glory” shots. Ms. Marks said that the time taken to produce a film is the largest portion of the

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budget so working at a slightly faster pace can save money. For example, Reel FX animators create four seconds of work in a week while Pixar animators create one or two seconds of work in a week. Another factor that contributes to the money spent on a movie is the number of critiques given by the director on the animation. These critiques can cause slower production since shots will be reworked multiple times by animators at larger studios while Reel FX has a limit of three critiques from directors before the approval of a shot. The last factor is the number of “glory” shots or very complex and beautiful shots. These shots will use heavy amounts of visual effects which are very expensive. With fewer shots that make a heavy use of visual effect the money spent on a movie will lower. This information on how studios produce movies within a budget directly affects how people work in a studio and their work flow can be majorly affected.

I also learned about how the animation pipeline works at larger studios and how people are hired at a studio. The animation pipeline is the system and order in which a feature film is made at a studio. This pipeline will have many departments and these groups of people will work on something before passing it on to be continued by another department. This system allows studios to stay on a strict timeline and makes it much easier for them to release a film on an exact day. This system is pivotal to every studio and a problem in the pipeline can cost a studio millions of dollars. Furthermore, the pipeline is designed with deadlines in mind and if an animator misses a deadline by one day the studio could lose large amounts of money depending

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on the budget.. This makes the role of producers very important since they have to budget time and money well so that production of a feature films stays on track. This information on how studio pipelines work will be very important for me to know and understand for the future.

Overall this was a very interesting interview with lots of interesting information. This information regarding studios will be very helpful in the future to understand different types of studios and how they create their products. I will also be able to implement this information in the future when I am trying to create my own product. In general this interview was very helpful and I was able to gain a lot of new knowledge.