



A Producer's Life

Oakland resident Jonas Rivera says his role as producer of Oscar-winner *Up* was “two parts air traffic controller and one part head coach. My job was to take the director’s concept and help flesh it out, get it into script form, manage the process of getting it storyboarded, and build the team that actually produced the animation.”

Here, Rivera chats with *Inside Out* about how he and his colleagues create their unique brand of movie magic.

Q: What’s changed and what’s remained constant at Pixar since you joined the studio in 1994?

A: It’s obviously grown exponentially since I started. I think there were 120 people when I came in, and there are almost 1,100 or 1,200 now. It was a mom-and-pop grocery store of a building in Point Richmond, and now we have this beautiful building, and we’re building another one to accommodate all the space and the people and the ideas. And it’s more visible. But the thing that has stayed the same, and we’re very proud of this, is we just make movies that we want to see. As big as Pixar has become, we’ve managed somehow to hang on to that.

Q: How have changes in technology impacted Pixar’s work?

A: Technology has gotten so much better; at Pixar, we tend to eat those gains immediately. As soon as there’s a jump in technology, the ideas and the creative desire seem to surpass it instantly. Actually, it’s no faster today to render these films than it was in the ‘90s, even though the machines are a million times faster and everything is better. We just make bigger and better ideas that require all that.

Q: What are other characteristic aspects of Pixar’s creative process?

A: The thing that’s unique at Pixar is we all rely on each other a lot to take an idea and “plus” it. Everyone feels like he or she is relying on the team downstream to take the work and set it up even higher. Nobody is overprotective of his or her work; we want to hand it off and have it get better.

Q: How does it feel for you and your colleagues to know that your work is being shown at OMCA and in museums around the world?

A: The word is “pride.” It felt really, really special to be in these great museums. It just made us feel proud that the stuff held up at that level. I’m just thrilled that the exhibit is in Oakland and that it’s home. This is where I’m taking all my friends and family to see it.