

Sarah Taylor:

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Omar Majeed:

Some of these words we use in television are so outdated in a weird way you know. It's like a comedy-drama, but it's like we think of comedy, our association is mainly the high comedy. We think of drama, you think of high stakes drama, right? Life is so often lived in the middle zones of those extremes. And then, you know, you add something high concept like WandaVision in there, and it feels like, oh, we got to have huge, big action, not scale things down to emotions of grief, right? So similarly for a character like Sabi, they're queer, they're marginalized, they're racialized. These are labels that we tend to think of as having high stakes drama or outrageous comedy. And I think we were trying to kind of find what was more just the authentic truth.

Sarah Taylor:

Hello and welcome to the Editor's Cut. I'm your host, Sarah Taylor. We would like to point out that the lands on which we have created this podcast, and that many of you may be listening to us from, are part of ancestral territory. It is important for all of us to deeply acknowledge that we are on ancestral territory that has long served as a place where Indigenous Peoples have lived, met, and interacted. We honor, respect and recognize these Nations that have never relinquished their rights or sovereign authority over the lands and waters on which we stand today. We encourage you to reflect on the history of the land, the rich culture, the many contributions and the concerns that impact Indigenous individuals and communities. Land acknowledgements are the start to a deeper action.

Today's episode is part two of our four part series covering EditCon 2022 Brave New World. Today's panel is flipping the script. The age of streaming has fully arrived. We've experienced a boom of top-notch shows. But how do you set yourself apart in such a crowd? Whether it's bucking the trend of antagonistic conflict to create an arc of Ted Lasso, using comedy to punctuate the lives of non-binary characters in Sort Of, exploring familiar characters in new ways with WandaVision, or reinvigorating period drama with the diverse world of Bridgerton. These shows prove that discarding past norms leads to success. Sit with the editors behind these phenomenal series as they discuss the ins and outs of their groundbreaking approaches to storytelling.

Speaker 1:

And action. Action today, this is the editor's cut, CCE podcast, exploring, exploring, exploring the art of picture editing.

Gillian Truster:

Hello everyone, I'm Gillian Truster. I'm your moderator for this panel Flipping the Script, and I am very excited to have the opportunity to chat with editors of some of the most critically acclaimed and popular shows on the planet. I would love to introduce our panelists today in the order in which you appear on my screen. We have Melissa McCoy who's here to talk about Ted Lasso. We have Omar Majeed and Sam Thompson who are here to talk about Sort Of. We have Jim Flynn who's going to be discussing Bridgerton. And we have Nona Khodai who's here to talk about WandaVision. Welcome everyone.

Nona Khodai, ACE:

Thanks for having us.

Gillian Truster:

Yay, I'm very excited. So all of you have shows that there's something very unique about them and we could fill a panel on each of your individual shows. So with our limited time, I'm going to focus my questions on what makes your shows unique and innovative, creative challenges and what you feel resonated with audiences. And then I'm going to leave time for a less structured section where all of you can ask each other questions and share your experiences. So with that, let's get started. So Nona, let's start with you on Wanda Vision. So you were nominated for two Emmys for this show. That is very exciting, congratulations.

Nona Khodai, ACE:

Thanks, in the same category, but yes.

Gillian Truster:

That is amazing. That is amazing. So before we dive into it, can you tell us what the premise of the show is for those watching who may not have had a chance to see it yet?

Nona Khodai, ACE:

It's basically, well it's an exploration on grief, actually. The show in the short term, basically. The reason the show is kind of unique is that it's structured in a way that you think it's about happy sitcoms, and then you reveal, as we reveal episode by episode, little things are a little odd. The character goes from decade to decade in sitcoms, and it's her way of dealing with her grief over the years. And so instead of showing it in this traditional way of how we see grief, we see it in her love of sitcoms and how those sitcoms have helped her get through the grief as each person in her life has passed, basically.

So we start in the fifties with an episode that's similar to Dick Van Dyke, and we go decade by decade until we get into the present day. And then we reveal in a way, in the clip I'll be showing, how she changes the world from present to the past into the sitcom world that she's created to protect herself from grief. And then it's based on the characters, Wanda Maximoff, who has powers being able to mind control people and move things with her mind and Vision, who is, who's the lover of her life and is a Synthozoid, a robot essentially, but has human emotions. And she's lost him in the last Avengers movie. He has passed away and this is her dealing with his death basically is the show. That's the exploration of her grief over his death and all the deaths that she's had to deal with. So that's basically what the show is about.

Gillian Truster:

So exactly, your show, it's the way that it's told. That's super, super innovative. So with that, let's show your clip because I think, well why don't you set up, the clip?

Nona Khodai, ACE:

Basically goes through her life and it flashes back through what's happened to her and where she has ended up today in the present, in her present day in the show. This witch, Agatha Harkness, basically is trying to open her up because she has this power within her that she doesn't know why she has all this power. And so she's basically Wanda's walking her through her memories. It's kind of like a Christmas Carol episode basically. So she's walking her through all her memories and the clip is she's found this

letter, that vision has gone to this one location and we reveal why in a clip, basically why she's gone because she basically... Well, I don't want to give it away, but basically there's a deed to a house that he's bought in her name and their name and because it would've been this life that they would've lived together and yet they don't get to live it. And so it's the catalyst to what happens next, which is she creates this world to protect herself.

Gillian Truster:

So let's roll that clip.

[clip plays]

Gillian Truster:

Thank you very much. That's a great clip.

Nona Khodai, ACE:

Thank you.

Gillian Truster:

And I love how there's so much information that's conveyed nonverbally and I think that clip also is great that it gives people who haven't seen the show a really good sense of actually what the show is. If somebody asked you what genre do you consider WandaVision? I legitimately think you could say all of them. I mean, it has drama, it has comedy, it has mystery, it has action, adventure, superhero. It has sci-fi, it has fantasy. But what do you consider it?

Nona Khodai, ACE:

I mean, it's whatever, whoever's watching it considers it. I think it's such a show for everyone, hopefully. And you can't put it in a... I mean it's a limited series, so it's its own thing. So there is no genre, I guess you would say in it. I think essentially it is like a drama and comedy, a dramedy. We have both elements. It could also be a multi-cam sitcom at times because we have laugh track and whatnot. I don't know. I can't... I don't know what it is.

Gillian Truster:

Right, it's it. It's a bit of everything. It's a bit of everything. So actually speaking of sitcoms, so the first few episodes starts in this sitcom world. Did you watch old sitcoms in order to emulate the style?

Nona Khodai, ACE:

Yeah, I mean we knew from the start of signing on that we would have to emulate older sitcoms. So I was a big fan of I Love Lucy, so I know all of those episodes. So I just went and rewatched a lot of that. I was a big fan of Dick Van Dyke, so I went and started watching some of those. And it's amazing how crisp that timing is and the pacing and how much they rehearsed, it looked like they rehearsed, to get that because it was all so fast-paced. And they would just stay in those wide shots and they would just banter back and forth. It's pretty incredible. Bewitched, I watched a lot of Bewitched and Brady Bunch and Family Ties for the '80s episode, Full House, and then Modern Family and The Office were our '90s, 2000s episodes. So all of those decades, and I grew up with all those.

Gillian Truster:

So you're familiar?

Nona Khodai, ACE:

I was familiar. I knew the timing, but it was good to refresh and go back, even Laverne and Shirley and Mary Tyler Moore for the main title sequences. I had to go, because we had to create those main title sequences too. And so it was a good way to look at all of those different sitcoms and what they did and how it evolved from the '50s to the '60s to the '70s, especially style and music. Music was really hard to temp because if you go back and watch, they don't really have scores right now. We can't go and buy those scores and put them in. So it was a lot of library music that we found to sprinkle it in for temp until we had the composer come in and write to the show.

Gillian Truster:

So even though you were emulating those sitcoms, did you end up taking any liberties with that in order for them to work for a modern audience?

Nona Khodai, ACE:

Absolutely. I mean I think at some point I had a little bit more pauses and whatnot and I tended to kind of squeeze in places just because we needed it to be paced-up for modern times and even cutting it a little cuttier than say the older sitcoms because they would just stay in those mediums for most of it. And I did do that, but sometimes you do have to just pace it up for time and so people won't get bored, especially those early sitcoms because no one knew what was happening. And I think we were worried that no one would like the show because you're like, what is the show? Why would people stick around and watch it? But I'm glad they did.

Gillian Truster:

Well actually, I mean that does bring up a couple of questions I have. When the show starts, the narrative is not immediately clear. So did you end up doing anything in editing to parcel out the information differently than maybe perhaps as scripted?

Nona Khodai, ACE:

I mean, a lot of it was scripted, I'll say that. But yes, we did the end of 101, that was scripted, but we come out of frame and you see that someone's watching the show and you're like, what's that? And then at the end of 102 and mainly the first two, mostly because we aired those together and they were originally going to air all three, but we needed time on the back end for VFX for the finale. So we needed that extra week to get all those VFX approved. And so instead of having all three air, and the end of two they added a bit of sound and Randall Park has a line at the end that you don't know it's Randall Park, but it's him saying, "Wanda, Wanda, do you hear me?" And we added that at the very end of 102 so that it would entice audiences to come back for the next episode because we just didn't have anything to come back to this mystery of what's really going on.

You did a little bit with the Beekeeper coming up and staring at Wanda at the end of 102. You see all that bit. That was all done intentionally, but you just needed something extra there, I think, just to get the audience to come back for the next episode. And I think it worked. And then after the end of 103 with Monica Rambo getting thrown out of the Hex, definitely people came back for episode four, which is where we really get ya, I feel like. Four is the episode where people want to come back and watch and

they're like, okay, I get it. I get the show. But up until that point, I think it's a bit of a mystery and it was, I think, a lot of audiences probably left because they were like, what is this? What am I watching?

Gillian Truster:

You wanted people to know that, oh not every episode is going to be a sitcom. That just wait, there is something that is going to come. And you just giving them those little tidbits just to let them know, just wait, patience.

Nona Khodai, ACE:

Just wait a second.

Gillian Truster:

Patience people patience and then it will, the mystery will unfold.

Nona Khodai, ACE:

It'll pay off eventually. Exactly, yeah.

Gillian Truster:

Working on this show, how much did you need to know about the Marvel Universe?

Nona Khodai, ACE:

I mean, I went back and watched all the movies. I think most of what I needed to know is Wanda and Vision's backstory. I needed to know that, how they met and what happened to her and her brother in Age of Ultron, Avengers Age of Ultron, that he had died. And just knowing her and his backstory, I think, was probably what I needed to know. But I did, I went and watched all of them and it was fun to go back and watch the whole catalog because I don't think I had actually done that before I started the show. So it was just fun to just learn about the world and all the various different characters. And you just go everywhere. You go to a space, you go... It's a universe of its own. It's pretty fun.

Gillian Truster:

Now I've heard you say that this show was treated as if you were making a movie, not a TV series. So can you elaborate on what you mean by that?

Nona Khodai, ACE:

Well, the way that the shows are structured at Marvel, we have a director who's the showrunner essentially. There is a writer, but we never dealt with the writer really. We would get notes through the director from the writer, but essentially the director was our leader and we took the show from production all the way to delivery. And usually on TV shows, you lock your show, you say goodbye, they do all the VFX, and then they deliver after. Like on The Boys I would lock shows and then they would spend another six to eight months working on VFX and then they would deliver the show. And I would never see them until the final mixed playback, which would be six to eight months later. And then I'd be like, whoa, look at all this, all these VFX that I had never seen before.

That's not the way it works at Marvel. You're there, you're working with the VFX team, you're working with the Sound Department, the Music Department, you're giving your insight in all of it. You're giving notes on all of it. You're changing timing on shots based on VFX to the very end. And a lot of TV shows do

that, but for the most part, being on very high genre shows, I haven't had the privilege of doing that. And I don't know about the other panelists here, but I had never experienced that in TV before. So it was refreshing to just be able to finish the show properly. And that's what I mean by it feels like a feature.

Gillian Truster:

Right, it sounds like you're until the end collaborating with a lot of different departments, right through the-

Nona Khodai, ACE:

Taking it right through to the end. Yeah, I mean we delivered the finale, I think, 15 days before it aired. And that was 15 because we just had no time, so. We were there to the very end. And I know working at Shonda and other places, they've done that or I've heard that too, that they take it to the very end too sometimes with shows, and I'm sure Jim could speak to that.

Gillian Truster:

That's great. No, that sounds like a fantastic process, a fantastic way to work.

Nona Khodai, ACE:

It was a pleasure.

Gillian Truster:

So Melissa, let's get into Ted Lasso.

Melissa McCoy, ACE:

Okay.

Gillian Truster:

So you won an ACE award and earned an Emmy nomination for Ted Lasso. Yes, congratulations, that's incredible.

Melissa McCoy, ACE:

Thank you , yeah.

Gillian Truster:

So before we get into it, could you please give us the premise of the show for those who may not have a chance to see it?

Melissa McCoy, ACE:

Well, it's about an American football coach who goes over to England to coach soccer or football over in the UK. And he's brought over by the team owner who's acquired the team in a nasty divorce. And the reason she brings him over is not to take the team, basically. And so that's kind of the setup. It's very Major League, but from there it basically turns into a workplace comedy that also deals with the human condition and loss. Much like WandaVision, where it's kind of hard to put in a box because I remember going through season one and getting things and thinking, okay, I'm getting a lot of sad episodes. Him

and his wife go through a divorce, and Rebecca's dealing with a lot of pain and shame. And Roy Kent is dealing with the end of his career and who is he going to be?

It's all about the human condition really. And it wrapped in a workplace comedy with a little bit of sports mixed in. Yeah. So it's more of a dramedy in that way. But for me at least, you just fall in love with this cast of characters that revolve around this world. And it's not all, you know you have your team, you have your soccer players, you have the coaching staff who have their own world. You have the behind the scenes with Rebecca, and then she brings in Keeley who starts out as a... She's a kind of model-star dating one of the soccer players. And then, or football players, I'll say football, that's what we kind of try to stay with the right vernacular, even though Americanized.

Anyways, it's complicated. I feel like I'll say soccer and I'm pissing off some people over here and I'll say football and people are like, wait, what are you talking anyways, football. She was dating one of the football players and that turned into a love triangle. And so there's just a lot of world blendings of this ragtag team of characters that are all going through some pretty big life stuff. But you still find the comedy in those moments.

Gillian Truster:

No, it is actually said that I was going to ask you about, because for awards you have to choose the category, but it's not, and so it's won all these awards in the comedy category, but it's really, really not a straightforward comedy. So when you signed onto the show, did you have an idea of, oh, I'm on a comedy and this is how I'm going to cut it. Did your perception of it change over time when you got the footage?

Melissa McCoy, ACE:

Yes. Yeah, so I signed on because I was working with Bill Lawrence, who's the executive producer. So I just basically saw him developing with Jason, didn't know the script or anything. I didn't really even know the skit. It's based on a skit, like an NBC promotional thing for when they brought football to America. The Olympics were coming up and it was done back in the day and it was just like a snappy, ridiculous comedy. But I knew that he was developing the script and I just basically was like, I want in on that because I love Jason from SNL. I'm a big SNL fan, and I just.

Melissa McCoy, ACE:

I love Jason from SNL. I'm a big SNL fan, and I just thought he was charming and a wonderful performer. I don't know, just something in me, script unseen, I didn't know anything about it. I was like, please, please, please, can I be on that? They let me do it. I got to do the pilot. I had signed on before even reading the pilot. And then when I got sent the pilot, I was reading it and I was like, okay, comedy, comedy, comedy. Then you get to the end and in the script, I remember they were like, this song plays, please play this song as you read this scene. I was like, okay. I remember I was in a coffee shop and I was like, okay, I brought up the song and I'm listening to it and reading the scene and I'm like, this feels really heavy.

It's this conversation with his wife and you don't hear the other side of it where you basically, oh, he's come here for a different reason than Rebecca bringing him over. He's got a reason to want to get away as well, which I really loved. Then when the footage started coming in, I was kind of by myself. Everybody was in London, I was in LA and we never had a tone meeting about it or anything like that. When it was coming in, I was like, "I am not cutting this 30 Rock." It just didn't feel like that. The performances didn't feel like that. It felt like I want to land this moment. I definitely took my time in some places to build the

relationships. Then of course did some snappy stuff. We like some more stylized stuff. There was a press conference which was kind of a nod to the original skit, so that was a little more frenetic and fast paced.

But as we were trying to figure out what the show was when we started cutting it, first Apple was like, "This needs to be 28 minutes." and we were at 36 minutes or something. I think we got it down to 30 minutes in and around there, but everyone was like, it's a comedy, it's got to be fast. it just didn't feel right. Talking to Jason, we had cut a scene that he was like, looking back now, he was like, nobody ever said, I wish these were shorter. He was like, I wish we would've kept that scene in it. So it was just little things. We made some concessions early on that we didn't do in season two. As our times kind of grew, we didn't ever get close to 30. I think our longest episode in season one was 34 minutes, and that was our shortest episode in season two.

It's interesting to see how the world has evolved and Jason really leaning into his beliefs in the show and what he wants to say and what he wants the characters to be feeling and going through and giving them the space to do that has been a really enjoyable process to find it along the way and be like, this is what it is. And I think we all just fell in love with the people and wanted to spend some time with them and gave ourselves, luckily we're on a platform that you don't have to fill to the tee of a running time.

Gillian Truster:

So then in terms of like you said originally it sounds like Apple was like, oh, this is a comedy. It's a sitcom, it's supposed to be this many minutes. You have to get it to be shorter. Then is it with season two that they allowed more leeway because they saw how successful it was? Is it that they really had to wait to see what the audience reaction was before they were like, "Oh, right, it is this, we could let it breathe."

Melissa McCoy, ACE:

Yeah, I think they found that over season one, it was just how much pilot, because we were a straight to series pickup, so it was like they didn't work out anything with the pilot. They just got that and we were already moving along. I was working on episode three because I did every other episode, and so it was just like we were still going and finding it. Luckily season one, everything was open until the very end. We didn't have to lock anything, so we didn't have air dates. It was lovely. We were finding things later and being like, let's go back and plant, oh, I see why the writers did this. We were letting moments land early that had we had to lock and move on and not have found what it was later. I think over the course of season one, Apple was like, "Oh, okay."

It was only in that opening, what is this? It's all that, trying to find the music and the tone. It was really tough. I was burning through all my soundtracks, just trying to find the right musical tone for this, because it's just like, is it a comedy? But we have these kind of interpersonal moments that we're trying to let land, and it feels more real in that moment and less slap sticky, which if you watch the original skits, it was all just like joke, joke, joke, joke and kind of outlandish. Even though there's some of that, Ted Lasso you could send him off and he could be a complete caricature, but Jason grounds it in so much reality that that's one of the things I love is he's being silly, but then he gives a little wink to the audience of there's something deeper of reason why I'm deflecting with the joke or trying to make you comfortable with the joke or open you up with this joke, especially with him and Rebecca and how he just keeps working at her and then they kind of reach a deeper relationship.

Well, everybody in that way, Keeley and Rebecca and Roy and Keeley and Jamie and Roy, they all kind of have this friction that then breaks down into a real relationship, which has been really enjoyable to kind of, I guess create in the editing room.

Gillian Truster:

You also brought a clip with you. Do you want to set that clip up?

Melissa McCoy, ACE:

Sure. This is from season two, episode 205 called Rainbow. It's basically, it's basically the rom communism episode where it's a romantic comedy, but it's not about love interest, it's about the love of football and Roy Kent's return to the pitch. It's basically the romantic comedy of Roy and football and actually between him and Jason really, or Ted. Yes, and he's retired after season one and he's become a sports announcer and he thinks this is where he needs to be. He needs to be away from the pitch but our team captain Isaac is having a bad start of the season and Ted wants a big dog Roy to come in and kind of set him straight and get him on the right path to get out of his head. So Ted has kind of asked Roy to do this, and he has helped him.

One night he comes and he takes Isaac to his hometown football field and plays a scrappy pickup game with some of the guys there that are really, really good pickup game. He gets his love of the game back and Roy has kind of done that for him. Now it's game day. Roy is on the show for the, it's soccer Saturday I think it's called. Yeah, starts there.

Gillian Truster:

Let's roll the clip.

[clip plays]

Gillian Truster:

Thank you very much. That's a great clip. Why did you select this clip?

Melissa McCoy, ACE:

For me, it was, when I think about Ted Lasso, it's like, again, it's not really about the football, it's about what's going on in these people's lives. And that was such a turning point for him. There was a bunch of different ways you could cut that, but I chose to stay on him for longer and not cut around to all the things that were happening because he's going through this decision moment. That's basically what Ted Lasso is about, is these people going through these really real things and we have to cut it in a way that you are on that journey with him. When it starts out, it's ratatat back and forth with the commentators. Then as you're going and he's seeing what's happening, his change that he imparted onto Isaac and the team, when you come back out, you just stay with him and you see it on his face and you hear the announcers having the conversation in the background, but it's not about that for him anymore.

He's making his decision to not do this anymore. I remember I cut the scene basically how it is, and then when the director came in, she was like, "I think maybe we need to see the guys that they're saying it's lovely weather back there and all that stuff." I was like, "Sure, I could cut it that way, but I did it this way because who cares about that at this point? Roy doesn't care about that. Why would we go there?" She was like, "Yeah, I get that, I get that, but let's see it that way." I cut a version of it and then she was like, "Oh no, you're right. Go back to how that was." It was important to go through that process because that's traditionally how you do it. Somebody's talking, go to them. You should see it that way, sort of thing. Ultimately it was about his character and what he is going through.

Gillian Truster:

Thank you Melissa. Omar and Sam let's get into it, because I think that your show does share some of the same challenges that Melissa experienced in terms of tone and finding the right tone and music for your show. You brought a trailer with you. Why don't we roll that clip to set that up for the audience.

[clip plays]

Gillian Truster:

Thank you for showing that. That's a great trailer. Sort Of has been on a lot of top 10 lists for 2021. It premiered at Tiff. It's gotten a lot of acclaim. It's a show that similarly to your main character or a lot of the characters actually don't fit into any typical boxes. It doesn't fit into boxes. Was it difficult for you to find the tone of this show? How did you find the tone of this show? What do you think the tone of this show is?

Omar Majeed:

We had to really discover the tone of the show and it was a process. I think it's very fitting that actually Sam and I are both here on the panel. Because even though we had our individual episodes, especially in the beginning, there was a lot of back and forth on episodes that I was working on and that Sam was working on. We would share a lot and just sort of trade off ideas with Fab and Bilal who were the creators of the show to really define what wasn't even, I think clear to all of us at first in terms of we kind of knew what the show wasn't more than maybe what the show was, and we had to figure out a lot of things along the way. The character of Sabi is not a very usual character and that's obviously something to be celebrated.

I think that presented unique challenges tonally. Melissa, like what you were saying, and I'm sure for you as well similar feelings about in this genre is supposed to be funny. I tend to feel like some of these words we use in television are so outdated in a weird way. It's like it's a comedy drama, but it's like we think of comedy, our association is mainly the high comedy, the broad comedy. We think of drama, you think of high stakes drama and life is so often lived in the middle zones of those extremes. Then you play something high concept like WandaVision in there and it feels like, oh, we got to have huge big action, not scale things down to emotions of grief. Similarly for a character like Sabi, they're queer, they're marginalized, they're racialized. These are labels that we tend to think of as having high stakes drama or outrageous comedy. I think we were trying to find what was more just the authentic truth of the character and that situation and also the characters around Sabi because they mattered just as much as Sabi did. What are your thoughts there, Sam?

Sam Thomson:

No, absolutely. I mean I totally agree with that. I think from the get go, it was really important from for Bilal and Fab to have this be a show that was about a non-binary or trans character that wasn't about their body or about some of the other frequent sort of storylines that end up popping up about these types of characters on television and have it just be just more universal and about their humanity. There's a line in the show that I think we come back through often, which is we're all in transition and we're all sort of constantly experience transition in our life and not every transition is the same or is it seen the same way in society. I think that was the core of the show is that we're all in transition. I think for Sabi, that character, the show is about identity and just defining who you are and feeling comfortable in who you are.

It's a journey that I think everybody can relate to. Then in terms of the process around that, I'll echo, what Omar is saying about, repeating what Melissa was saying, I think it was hard to define how funny

the show is going to be or how broad it's going to be. I mean a lot of it was already on the page, but I think that was a huge part of the editing process was testing different directions and then seeing where we could come back to. Sometimes it feels like sometimes it feels like a little bit of a circle and sometimes you're discovering new things along the way. I think just the fact that we could be experimental and that we had kind of the support to do that and the time to do that, but also be really collaborative like Omar was saying, just to lean on each other for new ideas. I think that was the biggest, I don't know, the biggest takeaway I guess from the process in general.

Gillian Truster:

Yeah, I really want to get into the collaborative process on your show because I feel like, so you could say this show is about a queer, trans-feminine, non-binary, Pakistani Canadian Muslim, but it's really not reducible to those descriptors. I think your show has really gone out of its way, just as you said, to do that. I had seen an interview between Bilal Baig and who plays Sabi and Amanda Cordner, who plays their best friend 7ven. Bilal said something like, they're straddling all these identities, but it's not the identity stuff that keeps them up at night. It's like, are the kids okay? Am I letting my best friend down? Am I letting my mother down? Is the bar going to close? It's just all this human stuff. It's just about how people navigate the world. The show really is, it's really trying, I mean there's so many different people in the show and it's really trying to find the authenticity. Everybody has depth down to the most minor characters. What was the collaboration process on your show to achieve that?

Sam Thomson:

Wow. I mean I think initially, Omar and I both knew Fab through different sort of origins. I think for us to get to know each other, a lot of it was maybe about sharing musical ideas or film ideas and things like that early on just to talk about tone because it's like Omar brings his lived experience to the editing process and I have my own experience. And it's like, I think again, to go back to the collaborative nature was just us having the freedom to be open-minded, to ask questions of each other and not assume that we know the answers and be comfortable with that. It was such a strange experience I think in so many ways.

I mean know, we don't really want to get into the technical stuff too much, but we're all sort of remote on this. It was sort of during the height of Covid and we're just sort of trying to feel out what the show is and that's a process and feel out each other. We were cutting while they were shooting and it was just a lot happening sort of all at once. We can speak to other sort of specifics like music and a few other things were very important in terms of that part of the process. I don't know Omar if you wanted to say anything else just about the initial collaboration.

Omar Majeed:

I think that's sort of the thing I would say the show's, I really feel the show's success owes a lot to the spirit of collaboration because I think this is a bit of a double-edged sword for me being somebody who kind of occasionally benefits from these diversity kind of initiatives. But the show did have real diversity in its, it worked weaved into its actual collaboration. The writer's room was diverse. They were well represented in the edit suite in the sense that both Fab and Bilal were very actively involved in the edit. Then at the same time.

Omar Majeed:

Actively involved in the edit, and then at the same time, Sam and I are collaborating back and forth. And then there was other editors on the show. There's Craig, who I didn't get a chance to work with directly,

but he as well, and we're all sharing ideas and bringing our own experiences into things and discussing stuff. Even just to be able to raise a point, if I thought maybe there was something let's say from a Pakistani angle that maybe let's say rubbed me the wrong way, well, I wasn't the only person speaking to that point. Bilal, they would put their opinion in. The writers had obviously, they had enough sort of lived experience there to speak to those points as well. The cast... It was all reflected in such a way that no one had to be the one person speaking to one specific experience, whether it was racialized, gender-fluid perspectives or even just the specifics of how you put a show together.

I mean, all of us had varying levels of experience coming into it, but I think there was a sense of like, okay, we're trying to go for something tonally... I mean, I've heard the show described in some reviews as having a certain sort of gentleness, and we didn't think of it that way, but it sort of hits as like, yeah, that sort of makes sense. We were I think consciously not trying to go for... Even though one of the characters in the show is in a coma in the hospital, it's not like, "Oh my god," or it's not like laugh out loud pratfalls kind of comedy. I mean, we did have those experimentations here and there, mostly towards trying to make it more comedic, but I think it was always clear that, no, it sort of occupied a sort of middle zone here where the comedy isn't like I-got-you-in-stitches, MacGruber kind of style comedy.

I'm speaking to my own sense of humor here. It's more of the comedy grounded in the characters and the absurdity of certain situations. And I think we had to figure that out through a lot of real discussion where no one, I think, had to feel the burden of having to speak for one specific thing. It was real, genuine discussion on an artistic level, not just on the level of identity. So inside the show and outside the show, we touched on those issues, but it wasn't those kinds of discussions, if that makes sense.

Gillian Truster:

Mm-hmm, fantastic, thank you. No, because I read an interview or an article about Bilal, and they were talking about the same thing that you're mentioning, which is that it would have been very stressful for them to be the only non-binary person on the show, but what you had is real diversity, where you're not relying on a single person to speak for an entire group of people, where there's a spectrum within every group. There's diversity within groups. And so I think part of the reason why you achieve such authenticity in the depth of your characters is, it sounds like, because of this collaborative process. That collaborative process is really the heart of your show.

Omar Majeed:

Yeah, absolutely, absolutely. I mean, even just one example comes to mind where I think one time, and I don't know, I think in the end this didn't even happen in the show, but just as an example of the kinds of things we would have, I was just talking with Fab about how to structure a scene, and then I was thinking about the music that'd be playing in the background in the scene between Sabi and their mother, and they're playing music that their mother would enjoy. So I was trying to think, okay, what's a Pakistani kind of piece that would work? And so I put a couple things in there, and Fabri liked it, but then I went and had a discussion with Bilal about it too, and then we got into this whole thread about what would Raffo have liked? How would she have grown up? And you know what I mean?

So it was an interesting... It's one of those type of sidebar conversations you have that are very deep, that you go, okay, maybe it doesn't even come into the final edit, but it was informative because we were sharing our own references. But it was like Bilal and I were sort of frequently trying to figure out what would be a good... And this was just for temp purposes, but we were trying to figure out what is the right tone. So tone was everything, I think, for us and trying to figure that out. And in terms of pacing, in terms of how to work with music, how to work with each other, and even how to fight back

against certain boxes that maybe we were feeling pressured to conform to kind of echo some of what Melissa was talking about.

Gillian Truster:

Thank you. Thank you. So speaking of smaller moments and a warm, gentle show, so Bridgerton is not. So Jim, let's get into Bridgerton a bit. So this series reached number one in 76 countries on Netflix, and it became the most watched series on Netflix ever at the time of its premier. So it is a monster hit, just a monster hit.

Jim Flynn, ACE:

A lot of people saw it, and it's great.

Gillian Truster:

That must feel quite good, to have worked on something that just blows up like that. So a question I have before we get into sort of creative challenges is this. So Bridgerton is a Shondaland production. Shonda Rhimes is known for being a hitmaker. I mean, she really knows how to read the tea leaves. When you're working on a Shondaland production, is working with Shonda Rhimes different than working with other producers? When you go into the show, does she say to everybody, "Okay, everyone, we are making a hit show, and this is what we need to do?" Or is she just like any other producer just trying to make the best show they can?

Jim Flynn, ACE:

Well, I mean I think all producers are different, but Shonda is different still. I'd never worked with Shonda before, but if she said at any point, "We're going to go and make a hit, and here we go," it wasn't in my presence. But she does know how to do that, and her instincts are so attuned to how to construct a series for television better than anyone I've ever worked with by a lot. And she doesn't even seem to spend any time sort of contemplating any ideas. She's so direct, she's so frank. She seems to know exactly what she wants all the time, and she makes sure that she gets it.

It's a treat working with her. She's a force of nature. She's a little intimidating, and she's very, very brief when she speaks to you or when she sends you notes, which at first blush you're kind of like, whoa, she didn't really like what I sent. But then over time you realize actually this is a great way to deal with her notes. She just tells you "This sucks. Take it out. Don't use that. I don't know why you used this take. We should do this." And it's really refreshing. It's not couched in any sort of pleasantries. She doesn't have the time.

Gillian Truster:

Right, she just gets right to the point, right to the heart of the matter.

Jim Flynn, ACE:

For sure.

Gillian Truster:

I actually forgot to ask, for those who haven't had a chance to see the show, what is Bridgerton about?

Jim Flynn, ACE:

Bridgerton is a Regency-era period piece, but it's kind of put through a bit of a Shondaland prism, I guess. It's very modern. The cast is much more diverse than a Merchant Ivory type film. The moments and the beats feel very modern, and it's really trying to appeal and presumably has appealed to a much younger audience than normally you would get with a period piece romance.

Gillian Truster:

So you also brought a clip with you. I think that clip does give a good idea of what the show is about. Do you want to set that clip up for us?

Jim Flynn, ACE:

No, go ahead and watch it. I think it speaks for itself, and then I can talk to about it when we wrap.

Gillian Truster:

Perfect. Let's roll the clip.

[clip plays]

Gillian Truster:

Tell us about it.

Jim Flynn, ACE:

Well, I know I was originally going to bring something from the pilot, a much bigger event, but when I sort of went through the show again, thinking about this panel, I thought, well, this would also be a nice one to do, because I think what that moment does in the series, it happens in the third episode, and the premise of the show is basically the... The show is about this Bridgerton family, and Daphne Bridgerton, who is the oldest daughter, is being sort of shopped out to find her husband and seek her fortune and the sort of complexity that goes with that. And so her and this Duke Simon, who sort of become these friends, they come up with the dumbest ruse of all time, which is they'll pretend that they're going together so that they can get other people to be more interested in them.

So to that point in the series, they had sort of put on a show that, yes, we're together, we're walking through the park, we're dancing at this ball, we're doing all these things, and then suddenly in this episode, the two find themselves by themselves, and they realize that there is a real energy between the two of them. There's a real chemistry. And I think the scene itself is just very well crafted and not just from my perspective. Tom Verica, who directed it, did a fantastic job with his episodes. I'm sure some of you know Tom.

But just the costuming, she's in white, he's in black, the way they staged it, where they were facing away from each other, then she turns around, you can see the whole scene, the distance between them getting smaller and smaller in the frames. And then I went to these closeups one after the other as she's describing this painting and he is realizing that this person is special to him, and then the hands start to come together, and I think it's sexy, and I think it's really cool, and I think it represented a big change in their relationship, and that became what their relationship was from that point going forward, this sort of just barely reaching out, I'm doing this very slowly, I'm doing this very gently, and I just thought it was very, very well executed.

Gillian Truster:

It's definitely a very memorable moment in the series. It's like one of the iconic moments in the series, absolutely.

Jim Flynn, ACE:

I'm glad, because it's such a small little moment. There's so many big moments in the show, and that moment, that the fans reacted the way that they did to that moment, and that I'm so proud of it I brought it to a panel, I'm really happy that it had that big an impact, because I remember working on that scene and just being over the moon about how cool it was.

Gillian Truster:

Mm-hmm, amazing. So Bridgerton is a very modern take on a period piece. There's been discussion... I've read about the multiracial casting, and also, like you said, typically you would think of a period piece as very conservative. This is not. I would not feel comfortable watching this series with my parents, I can tell you that.

Jim Flynn, ACE:

It's funny. Actually, I'm working on it in my house, and this was at the beginning of the pandemic. This was when? This was April, maybe, and I'm working on Episode Six, which... Episode Six has a little sex in it, and I'm working in my living room. My children are all at home. I have a 16-year-old daughter and a 13-year-old son, and they're working in their rooms on their schoolwork. And my wife's a school teacher. She's in the kitchen, and she's working on her work, and I'm just working on the sex scene like I would normally work on a sex scene, and my wife came in the room, and she's like, "What are you doing?" And I'm like, "I'm doing my job." But I realized I had to put headphones on to work on Episode Six at home with my family.

Gillian Truster:

Oh yeah, the joys of working from home. That is hilarious. So what do you have to consider when you're modernizing a period piece in terms of the picture edit?

Jim Flynn, ACE:

It's interesting. There were moments that we played and it was edited to be much more sort of period piece-y when the scenes would kind of call for that, but when we were kind of bumping up against the edges of a more modern sensibility, more the Daphne stuff, Daphne's older sister, the smoker, stuff like that, we would play that, and it was cut much more in a modern fashion. And I think the contrast of the two cutting styles we benefited from because you could be watching it in one perspective and then suddenly it feels like you're watching a bit of a different show, which I embraced and did as often as I could.

Gillian Truster:

So I understand you cut the pilot, and I understand that that was the last episode delivered to Netflix. So what was the reason for that decision to deliver the-?

Jim Flynn, ACE:

Well, Julie Anne Robinson directed the pilot. She's fantastic. The pilot, it's almost like a theme of this panel. We had to figure out exactly what is the tone of the show. And I think everyone pretty much

across the board here has basically kind of come around to the same thing, which is we'll understand the tone when we understand who these people are. And when we figured out who Daphne and Simon really were, this being the first season... The second season, which I'm not involved in, I guess is subsequent Bridgerton members. But when we figured out who these people were, and not just Daphne and Simon, also Daphne's mom and Lady Danbury and Anthony and all of the other characters, then we were kind of like, okay, that's what this show needs to be. And the pilot is setting the table for all of that. And it's a huge cast, huge locations, huge events, big balls, that a tone shift of a few degrees has ripple effects from the start to the tail pop. So we spent a lot of time refining that, and we went in a few different directions. An early pass of mine, it was very broad. We had Lady Danbury could be very broad, over the top. It was funny, but we couldn't fit that in with the rest of the events. So it just took a long time to figure out who are all these people, what are their relationships with all of the other people, and how do they fit in this space?

Gillian Truster:

So you wanted to see the entire series first so that you could figure out exactly how to set it up properly at the outset?

Jim Flynn, ACE:

Yeah, because each of the episodes is really kind of a different story with a lot of other threads from a lot of other different characters and a lot of other different people, so there was a lot of going back and fitting things back into where they need to be because, "Well, we need to set this up for Episode Six, and Episode Four we're going to need to know who this Penelope character is because when this happens we need to..." You know what I mean? So we spend a lot of time refining Episode One to it. And it was fun. I don't mind. I was the first guy off and the last guy to walk off at the end. I was there the whole time, which was great, got to see all the other episodes develop and go through and make One what we wanted One to be.

Gillian Truster:

Fantastic. So I'd like to know from all of you, what is it you think resonated with audiences? So, Nona, let's start with you. What is it about WandaVision that you really think moved people?

Nona Khodai, ACE:

I think timing was essential for WandaVision. It came out at the height of the pandemic, January, 2021. Everyone was home. There was nothing new on television, I think, at that point, and we were airing on Fridays. So every Friday people would come around, and it felt like those old sitcoms that we would watch when I was growing up, like TGIF with Family Matters and Full House. I mean, I grew up with that. I don't know if you have that. I didn't know if you had that in Canada or not, but in America we had the Friday every night we would watch with my family. And so I think it had that same kind of quality, the feeling, and so everyone would watch it on Friday nights with their families.

And I think because we were all going through this grief of the pandemic, it also resonated in that way. She was going through grief. We were all also grieving or what we had just gone through and still are still going through, and I think it just... Timing. It's because of the timing. It's a great show, but I think the timing really helped too.

Jim Flynn, ACE:

Yeah, the show felt like comfort food in the beginning.

Nona Khodai, ACE:

Yeah.

Jim Flynn, ACE:

It was like, "This feels really comfortable, and I'm really, really happy here." And then it just gets off the rails. But it's great. I love the show.

Nona Khodai, ACE:

Aw, thanks. Love yours too.

Gillian Truster:

Well, Jim, what do you think it is about your show?

Jim Flynn, ACE:

I mean, I have to agree with Nona a little bit because we released on Christmas Day on the first Christmas of the pandemic, and people were looking for escapism, I think. And I think we delivered that in spades, and I think it's beautiful, and I think that the acting is fantastic, and the editing is top notch.

Nona Khodai, ACE:

It's beautiful.

Jim Flynn, ACE:

It's beautiful to watch, yeah.

Nona Khodai, ACE:

Personally, I'll say, I loved it. I love that series so much, and it was a huge escape. And I love period pieces, so to have even modern day music play classically, I thought that was so cool and so different, and it was just a delight to watch.

Jim Flynn, ACE:

Thank you.

Gillian Truster:

Melissa, what do you think it is about Ted Lasso?

Melissa McCoy, ACE:

Same, really. We released in the pandemic, and I think all of us are touching on, and Jason kind of mentioned this too. Jason, we didn't know we were going to go into a pandemic, but he was just like, "I feel like people don't want cynicism anymore." That was something he really was into. If we had a joke in there, he was like, "I feel that's like a little bit too mean for Ted." And he would mention, "I want the locker room, that's our Cheers set." You know what I mean? He's really into Cheers because his uncle is Norm from Cheers, little fact, but so he has a lot of Cheers references.

Jim Flynn, ACE:

No kidding? I didn't know that.

Melissa McCoy, ACE:

Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

Omar Majeed:

When I head that, I was like, "Oh my god."

Nona Khodai, ACE:

Yeah.

Omar Majeed:

I was dazzled when I heard that. I was like, oh my God.

Melissa McCoy, ACE:

Yeah, There's a lot of cheers reference...

Jim Flynn, ACE:

[inaudible 01:09:05] years old when I heard that.

Melissa McCoy, ACE:

Yeah. A lot of cheers references in Ted.

Nona Khodai, ACE:

Wait.

Melissa McCoy, ACE:

But yeah, and then we... He was saying that as we were working on it, so it was just looking back, I'm like, God, he was so... He had such a vision. He was like, I just don't, people don't want cynicism anymore. He's like, I get that kind of comedy, but I don't want to do that. And so when we dropped, We weren't some big... I think people came to it and were like, this show is Major League. This show is going to just be goofy American. And then word spread of people that stuck with it and was like, oh no, they go deeper. And all of us have kind of touched on the human condition of our shows. And I think at that time, people, it was a scary time and a traumatic time.

But there's still comedy, there's still life happening. And like Omar said, it's, there's a lot of, even though you are going through something that's not traditionally funny, there's a lot of comedy in that, sometimes unintentional comedy. You still find time to laugh even in the hardest times I think sometimes. And so our show touched on that. These people are divorced and hurt and shame and not feeling good enough or father issues. We touched on a lot of that in season two. It's just all these things that are universal to a lot of people. And when people were seeking connection, I think we're all home and by ourselves. You want to be with some friends and people that make you feel good. And I think that's what Ted Lasso did for people and then...

Jim Flynn, ACE:

It's also, it's so full of optimism and gratitude. It's just a really, it's a great show.

Melissa McCoy, ACE:

Yeah.

Nona Khodai, ACE:

Yeah. Believe, it's so silly, but I heard a lot of sports teams use that motto now. And it's so great to see. It's so positive, which we all need.

Gillian Truster:

It's a celebration of kindness, really. It is. And so Omar and Sam, what are your thoughts on?

Sam Thomson:

Well, I think for me, well first of all, our release was actually a little bit different in the sense that it was almost like a show that I think people were discovering. We had a more of a media push maybe here locally, but we initially released on streaming, on CBC Gem, and then it went to CBC broadcast, and then about a month later was when it premiered on HBO Max. So it's been this slow rollout. But I think Melissa really brings up a point that I hadn't really thought about in a while, but it really connects with our show, which is, I think The Fab, I think had said this at our TIFF screening about the comedy and being, comedy that isn't really mean towards anyone else. It's not cynical. It's not tearing down other people, to have that humor shine.

And I think that was something that was refreshing and fun about working on this show is that it lacked that cynicism that I think you all have said we needed, especially during the pandemic. We needed that positivity or escapism or whatever. But yeah, I think in general the comedy was something maybe I was a little surprised that connected with the audiences because as an editor you watch it so much and the jokes start to... You're fine-tuning things within frames and trying to figure out, is this funny or not? I can't tell anymore. But even being at that first TIFF screening and hearing an audience laughing and howling with laughter and all these little moments that you'd forgotten about, it was really refreshing. And I think just the comedy and also having these characters that I feel like traditionally you feel like people traditionally, maybe a lot of people would feel like they can't relate to them in a direct way because of who they are or whatever.

I think that's been a really fun, surprising things as I talk to people, is how people can really relate to these characters, even if they have a completely different lived experience. They can relate to just the human condition, I guess, or this idea of transition or whatever. It's a relatable show I guess, which was a bit surprising for me but... What about you Omar?

Omar Majeed:

Yeah, I echo all of that. But I would say as well, it really strikes me being on this panel having... I had binge-watched all of these shows during the pandemic. Big panel of all of every them. But what's remarkable to me thinking about them as a group as well, is that they hit a comfort zone like Ted Lasso and the sitcom's dynamics. And Bridgerton with its period peace elements and Wanda Vision and the Marvel universe thing. But they're also really smart evolutions on that they're variations, and I think is

similar in the sense that we've had shows that have tackled representation head on in terms of Queer As Folk or Master Of None or shows like this that really kind of what are trying to set a certain record straight or adjust the bar. And I think Sort Of is coming into a new space in that way where it's not simply about representation. It's about, okay, now let's just put this... That's the situation the character finds themselves into, but we're going to rely on certain dynamics.

So there's a comforting aspect that all of the shows that we've worked on and it's enough that kind of is, that brings it in. But it's not just a kind of throwback or nostalgic exercise. I think that's really amazing. It's an evolution, a turn of the dial. So I think that was also what audiences tended to gravitate towards.

Gillian Truster:

So I could ask a million questions, but I want to leave all of you time to ask each other questions. So let's open it up, let's open it up and let's see what happens. I'm excited to see what this discussion is.

Nona Khodai, ACE:

I actually have a couple questions for Omar and Sam. So I love the fact, I love the show. I watched all episodes. I wish that it was a little longer, to be quite honest because I really wanted to watch them all. I was wondering, I like that the whole Pakistani, non-binary, Muslim element to it. I grew up Muslim, so having that as a show is really great. And to see that and did you guys have a lot of conversations about how to incorporate it? And I love how it's not forced down your throat. There's no talk about it really. And was there more of that that you took out or was it just the way it was written and that's just the way it was? But I was wondering how you approached that in the show.

Omar Majeed:

Yeah, I think from my perspective, it seemed like, obviously being someone who's... I'm also Pakistani background, grew up Muslim. I tended to ask a lot of questions and bring up those kinds of discussion points. And like I said, because everyone was in sort of involved with everyone else's edits, we comment and watch and discuss and figure things out. It wasn't so segmented. There was a lot of discussion that would go into, does this make sense? But I think that was, like I said, it was there all the way from the beginning through the end. So I know those discussions had been ongoing. So a lot of it was as it wasn't in the script and there wasn't a lot of room to play around with, I felt for the most part. It was mostly, again, these tonal sort of things.

But I know, I think early on, one of the things I came to understand about it was, Sabi as a character has these elements in them, but not, any of those things defines them. So you only bring up these things as it applies to the story. So we're going to get into being Muslim or being Pakistani or how their gender fluidity or queerness unless it made sense to the specific scene. And in some senses it's similar to Wanda vision in a way where it's like you've just dropped into a reality. You have to figure some stuff out for yourself. And personally I like not having to explain because then you feel like you're...

Nona Khodai, ACE:

Preaching.

Omar Majeed:

Yeah. You're kind of like, yeah, you're putting it through a, quote unquote, like a white lens so to speak, where you're like, okay, this is what we are. But here it's just like, no, this is the circumstances. So you never really know. You still don't know by the end of the season certain things about Sabi, like what are their views on being Muslim or how do dynamics work in the family exactly? You understand certain things, but other things are left mysterious. And somebody who's grown up in a Pakistani family and is nearing 50, I still find certain things mysterious. So it seems accurate. I don't understand [inaudible 01:18:21] out for you, but I think... It was a lot about, really about what, you only bring these things up as they need to come into play. You find that, did you find that for you as well, Sam?

Sam Thomson:

Yeah, absolutely. And I think we wanted to have it be representative of what Toronto feels like to live in too. It's a very sort of Toronto show where it's just part of the texture of the city, and is a very diverse sort of culture. And one specific thing I just remember from Post that kind of relates to this was for a while we were actually debating whether we would subtitle any of the sort of non-English languages that were used throughout the show. And I feel like that was kind of an indicator, even just the fact that that was a debate, that this is the world, this is how it exists, and people can... We don't need to explain everything in a really sort of prescriptive way. This is just sort of the texture of the world of who all these people are. And we did end up subtitling in the end. We had to, but still.

Nona Khodai, ACE:

Oh, great.

Omar Majeed:

I think my proudest moment of influence on the show was getting them to change a reference to, they were talking about some dish that was being made, and I think initially it might have been Buttered Chicken, and I was like, change it to korai. That was my one thing. Yay for me.

Nona Khodai, ACE:

That's awesome.

Sam Thomson:

I actually had a question, kind of a general question for Nona. we sort of hit this in our little pre-talk, but I legitimately was very curious to know what was it like just working? How do you even do it? How do you make a show like Wanda Vision with all of the VFX heavy? And I mean obviously I'm sure this applies to Melissa and Jim too, but I just don't have that experience. I've worked in animation a little bit, so I'm used to doing animatics and things like that. But just, what is that process like? Are you dealing with green screen footage? Are you dealing with building things? I'm very curious.

Nona Khodai, ACE:

Yeah. So we're really lucky at Marvel to be able to have a lot of tools at our disposal, especially companies to help us pre-vis and post-vis, VFX heavy moments in the show, to tell the story for timing purposes. So say we'll have like, so that clip that I showed, the moment she goes, she explodes back into whatever into her world. That was all done on green screen, outside. The backgrounds actually were all, it was on a back lot in Los Angeles, but we had to make it look like New Jersey. So all of that was filmed, part of it was filmed in Atlanta, and part of it was filmed in LA so we had to merge the background and the foreground together even as she was walking out. So just a normal shot you would think. But those

were all the effect shots too. And we have this post-vis previous company called the Third Floor that helps us basically put in all the backgrounds and all the elements so we can time the shots properly.

And so we'll time it out and then we'll send those shots to the vendors with the post-vis on them to show basically what we're doing. That whole sequence, I had to get post-vis, they pre-vised it and then they shot it, but they always shoot differently than the pre-vis always. So I had to recut it to make it work. And then we added post-vis to it. So all the wipes of from day present to past all those wipes, we had to add in post-vis. And then they shot that way later too. So I really had to cut those quickly in. I had timed it all out. We had pre-vis in places where I knew what the transitions were, but they also did shoot them differently too. So we did all those and then we sent it out to the vendors and then they gave us the shots back and then we would rework them in the cut until we finished. But yeah, it's a lot of other people helping us kind of build and build until we get it right.

It feels daunting at first, but I always feel like it's just normal editing, if you're just getting the emotion out of the actors and the rest is easy because you have other people helping you. And Melissa, you have a lot in Ted Lasso too. You could talk about all those soccer games, all of that. That's all visual effects. So, how about you?

Melissa McCoy, ACE:

Yeah, we do the pre-vis with to map out the games, the game play. And our season one, even before that, we just, because they shot all of the football scenes over a couple of nights for all the episodes, and so they had a specific amount of time. So we got the scripts and AJ the other editor and I, we each for episode, I was pulling YouTube clips and stock footage and just to get the beats and putting it together with title cards, like roy kicks and get the beats down. And then our VFX house was sending us the animatics and then we would replace that, and then we sent those packages over to London and the directors were like, this is wonderful because now I know what I need to check off. And then they were able to send us back even more. I feel like we gave them the building blocks for if you can get this, we can tell the story and then open them up with more time to get us some really cool things that I was like, oh, I didn't have this in there and this is wonderful.

They had some really beautiful tracking shots and things like that. So yeah, we did a lot of that. But even in the scene I showed, just thinking we had to go going from the studio to the field. I was like, this isn't, just cutting there, didn't feel right. And I went and, because soccer Saturday is an actual show, so I was like, they have to have cut to a clip and have some sort of transition piece. And so I was scrubbing through YouTube to try to find an example, and then luckily, there's so many wonderful people that work on the show that can help. So we had a VFX editor and I was like, can you match something like this that can get us there? That's what opens up into the field is what their transition would be for the show. And he did it and it was so beautiful.

I was like, oh my God, thank you so much. And then they would shoot those with the actual cameras that they used for the show. So we got that footage and then they would do the actual Ted lasso camera, which is more handheld. And so they had run the show and Roy had done all the speech and all that stuff, and then they got in there with the handheld and they kept the cameras running, but the handheld camera. So the camera was in the scene sometimes, and then our director, Erica, who was phenomenal and did such a wonderful job in this show, and she was in there and I think maybe one of the writers was in there and you saw their shoulders in the studio cameras, but that was his best performance that met, I could go between Roy on the camera and Roy in real life, and I was just like, I don't want to go to the earlier takes where it was clean because he's... It's just not, even though the performances are like, I'm so blessed with the performances, they're so wonderful, but that was the performance that I needed.

And so I said, I tempted in, and I was like, look, his shoulder from this, we could. So it luckily never went in front of his face so that his actual shoulders are vfx. So there's things like that that you don't even see because we're trying to get the character moments just right. And I was like, luckily you're in a space where people are like, I see what you're trying to do and not being like, just use an earlier take where they're not in the camera. And I'm like, but you see there's just a subtle, it's wonderful. That's beautiful, but this is the performance.

But I was thinking of what Jim said where he was saying, I could have gone with one of the bigger scenes, but this moment I feel like these little moments set up the bigger... If you don't get those right, it doesn't set up those big amazing scenes. And so there's almost, you have that pride of I got this interpersonal moment right and that allows us to luxuriate. And I felt that in your clip too, where you really have that patience and finding that timing where you're like, let's sit in this moment and build this moment, and then we can bust into the big... When her heart explodes.

All the effects, but setting it up. And I really love that in both of those scenes, the patience and the build to them. And I'm just wondering, how often do you go back and watch and say, oh, I could give this more frames, or maybe I rush this moment and I could really luxuriate here and take some time there. Is it a process where you go back? Or are you like... Yeah, what's your process of refining those moments to get them just right, so then you can go big?

Nona Khodai, ACE:

For me or for Jim? Jim, why don't you answer that one?

Jim Flynn, ACE:

I work with a director who, his expression is, you don't ever finish a scene, you abandon it. And so when I, because I was watching those scenes from Bridgerton, and I was like, God damn, why don't I have eight more frame in the tail of that shot? Or I could have done this or I'm never done editing, so it's never perfect to me, but it's good enough. I guess

Melissa McCoy, ACE:

That feels comforting because I feel that too. I'm always watching it and being like, oh, and my husband hates watching my stuff with me, and he's just like, nut it's fine. And I'm like... I'm just so hard on myself. So that's good to hear. I'm not alone.

Nona Khodai, ACE:

I feel the same way. I feel I can't watch my cuts. It's really hard. That's why it took me so long to figure out what scene to show. I didn't know, I was going to do the bedroom scene with Vision and Wanda on the bed. I was thinking about that and I asked my assistant, should I show this? And they're like, no, it's a edit panel. You got to show editing. And I was like, but it's editing. It was good. He was like, No, you got to show like a big moment. I was like, okay. But I was going to pick a very quiet moment too, like Jim. It's so funny, but because it's so hard to know.

Omar Majeed:

Because yeah, I honestly was very touched by the ending of WandaVision. Who am I kidding? I was just weeping. Anyways, so...

Nona Khodai, ACE:

Oh, Thank you.

Omar Majeed:

So I wasn't expecting that, but what was great about that, that scene is everything that came before it too. And I think as editors, we appreciate those kinds of things too, where it's the slow build up. Those little moments that really earn you those bigger ones. Just like this, that's a deeply satisfying feeling you get when their hands start moving towards each other. You're just like, oh, I'm so glad it took its time and went there, did this, and now it's happening and I feel warm inside.

Jim Flynn, ACE:

It's character. If you buy the characters and you like the characters, if their chest explodes and their house builds around and you're like, Go house! If you didn't care about them then it wouldn't really matter that much. So if you can make your absolutely audience care about your characters, you can do all sorts of great stuff.

Gillian Truster:

I think that is the perfect way to end this panel because unfortunately we are out of time and I'm just enjoying so much listening to all of you. You're also articulate and talented and charming, and this time has flown by, flown by. But thank you so much for taking the time for this chat. It's been so much fun. Thank you.

Sam Thomson:

Thank you.

Jim Flynn, ACE:

Thank you all.

Melissa McCoy, ACE:

Thank you for having me. Nice to meet you all.

Omar Majeed:

Nice to meet you all too.

Jim Flynn, ACE:

Bye-bye.

Gillian Truster:

Pleasure, you guys.

Sarah Taylor:

Thanks so much for joining us today. And a big thanks goes out to our panelists and moderator. A special thanks goes to the 2022 Editcon Planning committee, Alison Dowler and Kim McTaggart, CCE. The main

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Speaker 20:

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