



MAKING MAGIC: 100 YEARS OF DISNEY

Ratatouille

Your Friend, the Rat

Director: Jim Capobianco
USA 2007
11 mins

Ratatouille

Director: Brad Bird
Co-directed by: Jan Pinkava
©: Disney Enterprises Inc., Pixar Talking Pictures
Production Company: Pixar Animation Studios
Presented by: Walt Disney Pictures
Executive Producers: John Lasseter, Andrew Stanton
Produced by: Brad Lewis
Associate Producer: Galyn Susman
Production Accountant: Marc S. Greenberg
Post-production Supervisor: Paul Cichocki
Assistant to the Director: Amy Ellenwood
Script Supervisor: Shannon Wood
Casting: Kevin Reher, Natalie Lyon
Screenwriter: Brad Bird
Original Story by: Jan Pinkava, Jim Capobianco, Brad Bird
Story Supervisor: Mark Andrews
Additional Story Material: Emily Cook, Kathy Greenberg, Bob Peterson
Director of Photography/Lighting: Sharon Calahan
Director of Photography/Camera: Robert Anderson
Senior Camera Operator (Sets/Layout): Shawn Brennan
Supervising Animators: Dylan Brown, Mark Walsh
Directing Animators: David Devan, Michael Venturini
Film Editor: Darren Holmes
2nd Film Editors: Stan Webb, Robert Grahamjones, Katherine Ringgold
Additional Editing: Nicholas C. Smith, Greg Snyder
Production Designer: Harley Jessup
Environment Designer: Daniel Arriaga
Character Design: Jason Deamer, Greg Dykstra, Carter Goodrich, Dan Lee
Title Design: Susan Bradley
Music: Michael Giacchino
Music Conducted by: Tim Simonec
Music Supervisor: Tom Macdougall
Sound Designer: Randy Thom
Re-recording Mixers: Randy Thom, Michael Semanick
Supervising Sound Editor: Michael Silvers
Sound Effects Editors: Teresa Eckton, Kyrsten Mate
In loving memory of (1969-2005): Dan Lee
Voice Cast:
Patton Oswalt (Remy)
Ian Holm (Skinner)
Lou Romano (Alfredo Linguini)
Brian Dennehy (Django, Remy's father)
Peter Sohn (Emile)
Peter O'Toole (Anton Ego)
Brad Garrett (Auguste Gusteau)
Janeane Garofalo (Colette Tatou)
Will Arnett (Horst)
Julius Callahan (Lalo/François Dupuis)
James Remar (Larousse)
John Ratzenberger (Mustafa)
Teddy Newton (Talon Labarthe, lawyer)
Tony Fucile (Pompidou/health inspector)
Jake Steinfeld (Git, lab rat)
Brad Bird (Arbrister Minion)
Jack Bird, Andrea Boerries, Marco Boerries, Lindsey Collins, Thomas Keller, Brad Lewis, Lori Richardson (additional voices)
USA 2007©
111 mins

Pixar has repeatedly taken audiences on totally original adventures with a host of cinema's most surprising and unforgettable characters. From toys coming to life (*Toy Story* and *Toy Story 2*), to a group of monsters terrified by a little girl roaming their world (*Monsters Inc.*), to a tiny fish lost in a vast ocean (*Finding Nemo*), to superheroes trying to lead suburban lives (*The Incredibles*), to a hot-shot race car waylaid on Route 66 (*Cars*), the cutting-edge animation studio has consistently presented unique stories full of emotional and visual excitement.

With *Ratatouille*, that storytelling tradition takes yet another wild leap, this time into an uproarious, and unprecedented, animated riff on classic physical comedy. As the film follows a young rat named Remy's quest to leave his garbage-eating roots behind and really cook, it takes him into a world where he's at once creatively inspired and in constant danger – a circumstance ripe for all kinds of comically chaotic situations and side-splitting stunts. Just as it looks like Remy's one big chance at finding his way into a five-star kitchen is in trouble, he strikes up an unlikely friendship with the restaurant's down-and-out garbage boy, coming up with a clever, if literally hair-raising, plan that will allow these two outcasts to achieve great things together.

Amidst the perils and pratfalls, the film also traverses through universal themes: the bonds of friendship and loyalty; the battle against family expectations and finding your own independence in spite of them; and most of all, the importance of being true to who you are, even if you're not quite what anyone expects.

Says the film's director, Brad Bird: 'I think we all have impossible dreams and we do what we can to pursue them – and Remy's dream might be the ultimate impossible dream of them all.'

Comments John Lasseter, chief creative officer Walt Disney and Pixar Animation Studios and a two-time Academy Award-winning director: 'The idea of following one's creative passion against all odds is one that Brad Bird cares deeply about. And it shows because he's created an amazing film that's deeply funny in an original way and has a real emotional core to it, which is so important to us. There's a level of depth, complexity and humour to this film that I don't think any Pixar film has had before.'

For Bird, *Ratatouille* was a chance to choreograph a kind of Buster Keaton or Max Sennett-style physical comedy full of dashing, leaping, chasing and catapulting – yet also imbued with the spirit of die-hard characters tackling the implausible and triumphing over all the adversity that comes their way.

The story's original mix of witty repartee, acrobatic hijinx, tightly choreographed comic timing and resonant emotional themes was an exciting next step for Bird, who made his Pixar debut with the Academy Award-winning hit *The Incredibles*, an animated feature so humanly complex and moving that it was included on numerous year-end Top Ten Lists right along with its live-action cousins, breaking down the barriers between the two.

'I was really intrigued by the possibilities of *Ratatouille*'s premise,' says Bird. 'The story has such a great and relatable hero because in order for Remy to do the one thing he loves, he has to go into a world that's completely hostile to him. He wants to express himself in a way the world doesn't expect him to, and I think a lot of people know that feeling,' says Bird. 'The question is: just how bold and clever can this little guy be in pursuing the thing that matters most to him, and what will he discover along the way? The story is in the tradition of that kind of timeless physical comedy that spans all languages and cultures, but it's been given a fresh twist.'

Bird was especially excited about injecting the film with wild twists and turns from nail-biting suspense to no-holds-barred comedy, from navigating the whitewater rapids of Paris's famously intricate sewers to the high-pressure hustle of a restaurant serving dinner with a critic in the house. 'Part of the joy of *Ratatouille* is simply that it is so unpredictable,' Bird notes. 'If we've done our job right, when you

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Ratatouille

Sat 19 Aug 12:00; Tue 29 Aug 20:30

Soul

Sat 19 Aug 13:00; Thu 24 Aug 14:20

101 Dalmatians

Sat 19 Aug 15:30; Tue 29 Aug 14:20

The Rescuers

Sat 19 Aug 15:50

Beaches

Sat 19 Aug 17:30

The Love Bug

Sun 20 Aug 13:30

The Parent Trap

Sun 20 Aug 15:10

Pinocchio

Sun 20 Aug 19:00

Mary Poppins

Mon 21 Aug 14:20; Mon 28 Aug 13:00

20,000 Leagues Under the Sea

Tue 22 Aug 14:20; Wed 23 Aug 20:20

Freaky Friday

Thu 24 Aug 20:50

Zootropolis (aka Zootopia)

Fri 25 Aug 18:00

Dick Tracy

Fri 25 Aug 20:40; Tue 29 Aug 18:10 (+ intro by

Ben Roberts, BFI CEO)

Tarzan

Sat 26 Aug 12:00

Bambi

Sat 26 Aug 12:20; Mon 28 Aug 16:20

Turning Red

Sat 26 Aug 15:30

The Lion King

Sat 26 Aug 20:30; Thu 31 Aug 14:20

Finding Nemo

Sun 27 Aug 13:30

Luca

Sun 27 Aug 13:15

The Little Mermaid

Sun 27 Aug 16:00; Mon 28 Aug 16:40

Bedknobs and Broomsticks

Sun 27 Aug 18:20

Up

Mon 28 Aug 12:30

The Jungle Book

Wed 30 Aug 14:20

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SIGHT AND SOUND

think it's going left it goes right, and vice versa, hopefully all in a way that's not only humorous but from the heart.'

The enchantment of *Ratatouille* begins with the charm of the characters, developed by Bird and Jan Pinkava, who first invented the film's premise, and whose characters join the Pixar pantheon with real and relatable inner lives. At the centre of the tale's emotional appeal are Remy's many different relationships – including those with the affectionate but flummoxed father who doesn't understand the road he has chosen; with the ghost of the legendary French chef he has idolised all his life, despite their different species; and especially with Linguini, with whom he forms an unusual symbiotic friendship based at first on their mutual desperation but which turns into something truly life-altering for both of them.

Though rodents have a long and storied history in animation, right down to Mickey Mouse himself, rats are often cast as villains and rarely as screen heroes. But Remy manages to bust through that taboo as he finds wily ways to evade detection inside the kitchen, often by a mere whisker, while whipping up recipes that become rousing successes. His courage comes to the fore as he uses one of his species' most inspiring and human-like qualities – a spirited affinity for taking on a perilous world far larger than themselves – in remarkably inventive ways, including pairing up with Linguini to make an invincible team in the kitchen.

For Brad Bird, the many barriers that appear to stand between Remy and success – from his family's lowly expectations to the health inspector's impending visit – made the storytelling process that much more humour-filled and exciting. 'When you have a lead character with such big obstacles to overcome, that's really juicy stuff for animators. There's so much inherent conflict and drama to grab onto,' the director notes. 'I've always liked stories that take advantage of how far character animation can go, but this goes to a new extreme.'

Indeed, with its fast-and-furious comic pacing, its madcap antics and its painterly beauty, *Ratatouille* features some of the most sophisticated visuals yet seen in a CG animated film, once again nudging the technical bar for animated filmmaking skyward. Among the film's many unique qualities is its locale – an ornately magical imagining of Paris.

Then there is the food. Not just any food, but the most delicious, scrumptious, artistically presented gourmet meals imaginable. All of which takes audiences into a realm of sublime visual delights previously unexplored in CG animation and helping to create an utterly authentic world in which audiences might even believe that a rat could be a chef in the kitchen.

Yet the technological achievements of the film are always in service to spinning an even more enveloping and laughter-filled tale that celebrates the challenges of being true to friends, family and the search to find real happiness in life. Notes John Lasseter: 'These characters are so charming and so emotionally believable that the audience isn't likely to even realise they are seeing new technology. You're just too caught up in their story.'

Producer Brad Lewis believes that Brad Bird was the perfect man to take on this mission of pushing the boundaries of animated comedy in the name of innovative storytelling – in part because of his Remy-like refusal to believe anything is impossible. 'Brad Bird is as intense and passionate as Remy is in the film,' Lewis muses. 'I've never seen someone so locked into what's going to make a story work creatively and emotionally. He's got these skills of perception where he always hones right in on what's going to make things a little more natural, or a little more funny or a little more true. And he's a genius with physical comedy.'

Bird ultimately hopes the film will take audiences on a journey that keeps them constantly off guard, yet rooting for Remy to achieve the seemingly impossible and save not only himself but his new friends at Gusteau's Restaurant. Sums up Bird: 'When you can get audiences to believe in something that might seem inherently unbelievable, that's the real magic of movies.'

Production notes