

TVB EUROPE



MARVEL VISION

TRANSLATING THE MARVEL UNIVERSE FROM
THE BIG SCREEN TO THE SMALL





wonder VISION



During 2021, Disney Plus has brought the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) to the small screen, with three series featuring characters that had previously been seen on the big screen. But how easy was it to translate Marvel's visual language from the cinema to long-form storytelling? *TVBEurope* talks to the editors on all three shows to find out more



NONA KHODAI, WANDAVISION

Tell us about your background in the industry

Out of film school, I started assistant editing out of the gate. My first job as an assistant editor was for a company that produced Movie of the Week for networks such as Hallmark Channel. It was the

best place to train because we shot on film, but also worked in a fast-paced environment so it was a wonderful mix of features and television. From there, I started out in features working on such films as *Rambo 4* and *The Expendables*, but also wanted to explore television and worked on such shows as *Pushing Daisies*, *Ugly Betty*, and *Alcatraz*. I got my big break to finally move up on this show called *Revolution*. The producers seemed to like me and when an editor needed to leave early, I was able to step in and get my break to cut on an episode.

How did you get involved with *WandaVision*?

Funny enough it was a multi-step process. I think I was at the right place at the right time knowing the right people. I was working on the Disney lot on another series and I ran into a friend of mine who worked at Marvel. She was telling me as we were standing in line for Starbucks that Marvel was developing some streaming shows and they were looking for editors to work on them. She asked if I was interested in coming in for a general chat and I said 'of course, and thank you.' I went in for the chat and I'm guessing it went well. I ended up getting a call a few months later asking if I'd like to come in and speak to Matt Shakman and Mary Livanos about a new show. I was thrilled because weirdly enough I had just worked with Matt Shakman on *The Boys* the year prior and I knew from his past work that this project must be good because he has a good eye. So, I met with them and I remember Matt pitching the most bizarre show. I was super into it since I was obsessed with sitcoms growing up, so it felt like a good fit. And the rest is history. I got the job and here I am today.

Have you worked on Marvel projects before?

No. This was the first Marvel project I had ever worked on. I had worked on *The Boys* which is a satirical superhero show, so I had a bit of experience with this world.

What attracted you to working on the show?

Working with Matt Shakman again, and also the opportunity to work at Marvel. I thought if Marvel could create in the same way they produce their movies, then it would be amazing to work on one of the first series they develop. I had no idea we'd be the first series to air. We were always the weird show that was supposed to launch after *The Falcon* and *The Winter Soldier* but the pandemic changed all of that.



You were one of a number of editors working on the series, how much collaboration was there during the editing process?

We had our own episodes from the very beginning, but we would constantly share our cuts and ideas and work alongside each other. It was very collaborative and in the beginning I was front-loaded with footage and I had the other editors help me assemble. Towards the end, another editor was back-loaded so I and the other editor helped him out. It was a wonderful crew and I couldn't have asked for better colleagues.

Why did you choose to work with Avid's editing software on the project?

I wouldn't work with any other editing software. It's the most intuitive and reliable editing software out there today.

How many passes on each episode did you have? And how long did you have to bring each episode together?

We worked on the show for 15 months. Because of the pandemic it took about a year to get all the cuts right because we didn't have all the footage when the world shut down.

Were you working in an edit suite or remotely?

Before the pandemic, we were in edit suites. And then we went remote when the world shut down. We used a system called Teradici using a device called Amulet.

How did you find working in the cloud?

It was pretty much the same as working in the edit suite. The technology had a learning curve at first but by the time we delivered, it had improved to the point that being at home or being in an edit suite really made no difference.

Were you involved in discussions on the show's colour grading?

Yes, I was involved but I wasn't calling the shots. The director with the DoP, Jess Hall, guided the look



FEATURE

with the help of the colourist. *WandaVision* was very complicated due to the multiple decades look. It was a challenge but so satisfying when it was perfected.

How immersed were you in the MCU before you joined the show? Had you seen all the films?

I was slightly immersed into the MCU. I would go see movies with my friends because they were really fun movies to go see in a group but I wasn't the biggest fan. And no, I hadn't seen all the films. But I did after I got the job.

Was there a visual language already in place that you were asked to replicate, or were you given free rein?

Based on the decade we were cutting, as a collective we made it our mission to try to replicate those decades' editorial patterns, music and laugh track. There was never a discussion about replicating anything, but we kind of all did the work ourselves on our own. I watched a tonne of old sitcoms, especially the decades I was cutting. I cut the 1970s episode and the 1980s episode and I watched a tonne of *Brady Bunch*, *Mary Tyler Moore Show*, *Family Ties*, and *Laverne and Shirley*. It was fun research because I grew up watching a lot of those shows so it was super nostalgic.

Are there parts of the episodes that you worked on that you're particularly proud of?

I'm proud of all of it. The sitcom editing was the most challenging part of the whole process for me and so I'm most proud of getting through all of that. One of the hardest parts of the show was working on the sitcom main title sequences. Episode five's main title was particularly difficult because at first nothing had been shot for it, so before our show was able to go back into production to shoot it, we ended up mocking up a version in editorial. A lot of the ideas that we presented in that mock-up ended up influencing how they shot the sequence. A cool fact is that when we roll the end credits over pictures at the end of episode five, all the names are people who worked on the show.

The fans have really embraced the series. How has that made you feel?

The best part of working on these Marvel projects is the eyes you get on your work. It is the greatest feeling knowing that fans have really enjoyed this series. Can't ask for anything more. ■



ROSANNE TAN, THE FALCON AND THE WINTER SOLDIER

Can you give us some background on your career?

My love for editing started as far back as middle school when I'd do VHS tape-to-tape editing for my classes.

Then in college, I interned and got hired almost immediately working on reality/non-union projects. I ended up working on the finishing side of post for six years. But, I always knew I wanted to be in scripted, so I kept working/networking/



Sam and Bucky team up with Zemo and Sharon



dreaming I'd be there some day. Then when I finally got into scripted, I worked my way up as an assistant editor, moving from project to project. And I'd cut everything I could get my hands on until I fully transitioned into a full time editor.

How did you get involved with this project?

Jami O'Brien, a great showrunner I've worked with in the past, recommended me to the director, Kari



The Falcon takes up
Captain America's shield



Skogland, who was looking for editors on *The Falcon* and *The Winter Soldier*.

What attracted you to working on the show?

I love Marvel movies because they have heart, great action, great visuals, and a good combination of drama and comedy. Growing up with movies like *Die Hard*, *Back to the Future*, *Batman*, *Superman*, *The Rock*, and *Speed*, I was naturally attracted.

How much collaboration was there among the numerous editors working on the project?

Collaboration is key to making sure the story tracks and characters stay true to the show and, of course, to the MCU. We're always meeting and getting feedback from each other. And not to mention, with such crazy deadlines, we're always helping each other out.

Why did you choose to work with Avid's editing software on the project?

I mainly use Avid on all my projects.

How easy was it to find the shots you wanted?

Depends on the scene, but if I couldn't find something, I would talk with the other editors to see if I could use footage from another scene, and try to make it work using VFX or other tricks.

How many passes on each episode did you have? And, how long did you have to bring each episode together?

We kept working until we couldn't. It's really about telling the story and telling it well. I appreciated how much Marvel cared. And every episode had different deadlines to meet. Because of the Covid shutdown, we didn't know what was going to happen, so we kept on fine tuning.

Were you working in an edit suite or remotely?

The project started in November 2019, so I was in a cutting room at the studio. When the Covid shutdown happened, we were immediately set up to work remotely. Towards the end of the project, when it was safe to return to the studio, I was in a hybrid WFH and cutting room situation.

How did you find working in the cloud?

Working remotely was great. I'm happy to have been able to stay working while also be home with my family.

Was there a visual language already in place that you were asked to replicate, or were you given free rein?

Every movie and project is different. Creatively, it all depends on the tone, the story and the characters. We're always welcome to try things, but ultimately, the characters existed before this project. We did our best to honour them, while also bringing a different 'life' to the story.

Are there parts of the episodes that you worked on that you're particularly proud of?

I'm very proud of both episodes, but particularly episode three. The guys arriving in Madripoor and the whole shipyard and lab sequences were very hard but ultimately so much fun to craft.

Did you feel a sense of responsibility to make sure the TV series matched the fans' expectations?

Yes! A huge sense of responsibility because there's so much love for these characters in the MCU. I definitely wanted the fans to be happy!





EMMA MCCLEAVE, *LOKI*

Please can you give us some background on your career?

I'm from Australia and moved to the UK in 2008. For about eight years I worked here as an assistant editor on some really amazing shows. I liked it, and I was constantly working. Then in 2017, I was given a piece of advice that had this profound effect on me and I decided I would never assist again. I wanted to be an editor and I was going to try and edit! It was so scary as assisting was such a safe job for me at that point. Fortunately, I've trained under some of the most generous editors. I worked as a 'first' under Dody Dorn several times and she actively engaged in teaching me to edit, helping me get better on every show we worked on. Elliot Graham hired me to be an associate editor for him; that was a huge deal. But it ebbed and flowed. Despite real periods of not working, I would consistently get these great opportunities – not all of them would last very long – but they helped me all the same. I cut a surreal little art film during that time. The director is a visual artist and it was exciting, challenging work. It ended up screening in museums which was different and cool. I feel proud of that one!

How did you get involved with *Loki*?

I have history with the studio as I started working for Marvel as a first assistant editor in the earlier years of the MCU. I got to meet Victoria Alonso back when we were working on *Captain America: The First Avenger*. The studio then called me back each time a feature came to the UK. When I wasn't working for Marvel, I stayed in touch and kept them informed as I progressed in my career towards editing. As *Loki* came up, Victoria emailed me; it was very exciting! I eventually met with the director Kate Herron and producer Kevin Wright. Gosh, just recalling it is kind of thrilling.

What attracted you to working on the show?

Well. *Loki* is *Loki* is *Loki*! That's a wonderful prospect. But apart from that, it felt good and exciting and safe to come back in the Marvel fold, especially as *Loki* marks my first solo broadcast credit as an editor. I worked so much for Marvel as an assistant that it felt wonderful to be cutting for them. There was also the huge lure of Kate Herron. When she got the job to direct *Loki*, it was like a small sonic boom went through the British female film industry. She was one of us! Incredible. I think it made so many of us British, female filmmakers feel like we could do anything.

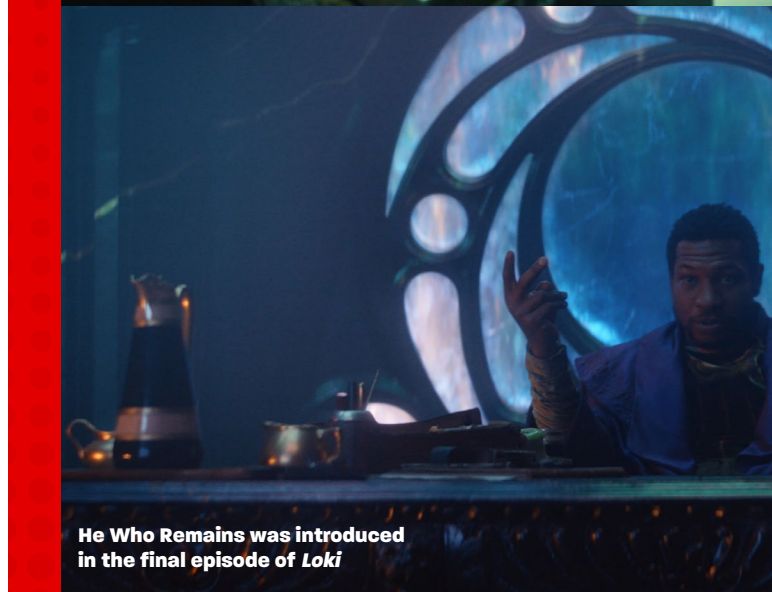
You were one of a number of editors working on the series, how much collaboration was there among you?

I feel so lucky with my fellow editors on the show. I worked with Calum Ross and Paul Zucker and we enjoyed a great working relationship. We all had separate episodes, but we would watch each other's scenes, give feedback, collaborate. It was a generous editing environment. And apart from the work, we had a lot of fun every day too.

Why did you choose to work with Avid's editing software on the project?



Loki comes face to face with numerous variants



He Who Remains was introduced in the final episode of *Loki*

I've been working on Avid for 20 years. Honestly, I think for all of us editors on *Loki*, it was just the natural choice.

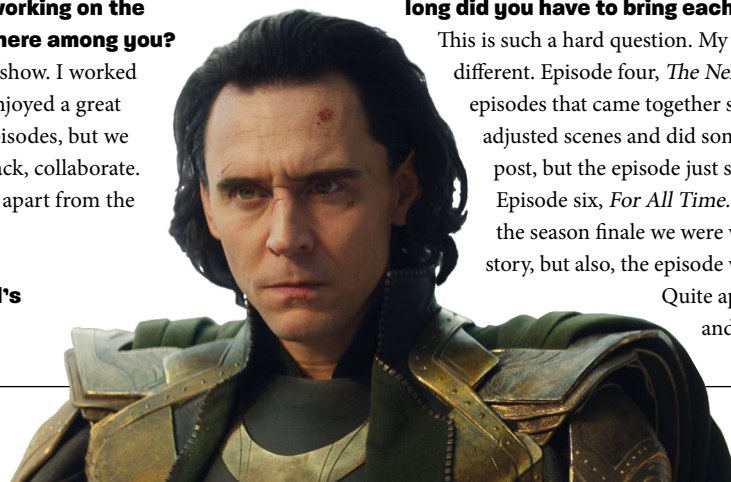
How easy was it to find the shots you wanted?

Like (almost) every other editor, I work in frame mode and it was simple to format my bins the way I needed and find all my shots.

How many passes on each episode did you have? And how long did you have to bring each episode together?

This is such a hard question. My two episodes were quite different. Episode four, *The Nexus Event*, was one of those episodes that came together so quickly. Of course, we adjusted scenes and did some restructuring through post, but the episode just sat easily from the early cuts. Episode six, *For All Time. Always*, was different. As the season finale we were wrapping out much of our story, but also, the episode was introducing so much.

Quite apart from *Loki*, Sylvie, B15, and Mobius, we had a new,





Richard E Grant joined the cast as Classic Loki

important character coming to the MCU and we were also creating the multiverse. The balance of closing out our season while also introducing people and story points that would affect the wider MCU meant the episode required a different consideration.

Were you working in an edit suite or remotely?

If remotely, how did that work?

I was pretty much in studio the whole time. Because of Covid, we had a hiatus like many shows, but as filming resumed I flew to Atlanta to work from the studio. I did the director's cut with Kate in the room, which was fantastic. I then moved to Disney in Los Angeles to finish the post. We had very strict Covid protocols in place and I feel so grateful that I could work and feel safe during such an intense time.

Were you involved in discussions on the show's colour grading at all? If so, what did they involve?

Our DI and colour team on *Loki* really just wanted to help make the shots look as beautiful as they could possibly be. Some of the lighting in the show was moody and dark so across those scenes you always just need to make sure you can see faces and eyes. Almost all the scenes in the He Who Remains office were blue screen with VFX work to fill out the citadel windows, so ensuring all that balanced was important. That scene had firelight, so the room needed to be warm, but the timeline outside the windows was all blue and purple. We just had to ensure the balance between the cool and warm environments, but honestly, our DI/colour team were all over it.

Was there a visual language already in place that you were asked to replicate, or were you given free rein?

Obviously, *Loki* is an existing character, but our location, our story and most of our characters were new (well, new to the non-comic reader), so there was a freedom. When we started crafting the opening of episode six, with the MCU Hero Voices and soundscape across the Marvel logo, that was a real moment where myself and my first assistant editor, Sara Bennett, were really mindful of the MCU as a whole. I think all of us that worked on that sequence wanted to pay huge respect to what had come before.

Are there parts of the episodes that you worked on that you're particularly proud of?

In episode four I have some gorgeous emotional moments. B15 and Sylvie in the rain is a scene that still takes my breath away, and that remains the same from a very early cut. The button at the end of four with Loki waking up in the void surrounded by the other Lokis was originally how we ended the episode. When we moved that to be the 'button' after the main/end credits, that was a move that we knew fans would love. Our reveal at the end of episode six when Loki is back in the TVA is also very, very cool.

The fans have really embraced the series. How has that made you feel?

It's been overwhelming. It is really hard to explain the emotion in it. We worked hard, so people embracing the show is wonderful. I got a number of texts and emails from people I hadn't spoken to in a long while; one person from over ten years ago when I still lived back home in Australia! When messages like that arrive it really emphasises the love people have for these shows and that so many people, all over the world, are watching them. ■