



[CG GARAGE PODCAST #258 | TIM MILLER](#)

[DIRECTOR, "TERMINATOR: DARK FATE"](#)

"Terminator: Dark Fate," "Love, Death & Robots" and "Deadpool" director, Tim Miller, returns to CG Garage to offer a human perspective on the Hollywood machine.

Much has changed in the three years since director Tim Miller recorded the 100th episode of the CG Garage podcast. After the runaway success of Deadpool, he returned to the big screen with Terminator: Dark Fate. At the same time, his Heavy Metal-inspired anthology series Love, Death & Robots busted boundaries via Netflix.

Contents

[Linda, Arnie and the cast](#)

[Deadpool, Logan & Joker](#)

[The Love, Death & Robots effect](#)

[Working with David Fincher](#)

Useful links

[Tim Miller on IMDb >](#)

[Blur Studio >](#)

[Love, Death & Robots on Netflix >](#)

[Love, Death & Robots at Chaos Group >](#)

Chris Nichols: All right Tim. Like I said, I just got a Facebook reminder today that it's been three years since we last recorded a conversation, probably seeing you.

Tim Miller: It seems like only yesterday.

Chris Nichols: It was fun though, right?

Tim Miller: Yeah, it was at the Gnomon School, so we had a little bit of an audience in, and Joe. It's always great doing it with other people because you're not ... Not that this is not awesome at this moment, but you people to bounce off of and it's a little bit more of a tennis match at times, which is interesting.

Chris Nichols: Right. Right. Right. There's a lot of things that have happened in those three years. Two big things that have happened since then. Obviously, one of the big things you revealed during that time is that you decided to step away from Deadpool 2, but obviously we have the new Terminator film that came out that you worked on and Love, Death & Robots. Plus Love, Death & Robots the sequel has been green lit, so-

Tim Miller: Yes, season two.

Chris Nichols: ... these are a lot of things that I wanted to figure out that's gone through you. That's been an amazing three years, because that's a lot of stuff going on, right?

Tim Miller: It's been busy. Terminator was easily the hardest thing I'd ever done.

Chris Nichols: I can bet.

Tim Miller: I was just talking to the line producer, John Kelly, stopped by today. We were reminiscing, even though the wounds are still very fresh, but for everybody else or for many people at least that were part of the original shoot, it's that period of time and it's very intense and then they're gone. For the director, it's that intense period that rolls right into an often even more intense period of post, which this was for me. I feel like since for the last two years, it's been pretty much 14 or 16 hours a day, seven days a week.

Chris Nichols: That must've been a very, very intensive ... I don't know if this has actually been discussed. How did that come to you? How did this project present itself to you and you got involved in it?

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- Tim Miller: I met David Ellison and who runs Skydance and who controls at least part of the Terminator. I met David at the end of Deadpool. He came by to meet me because of another project. We started talking about sci-fi and all things nerd related, and one of them was Terminator, which he said he wanted to try again. Having done Genisys, didn't feel that it was the Terminator movie he wanted to make, and so would I be interested in helping to try again? I said, "I'd love to. I love the movie, but I got this Deadpool thing and I got to do first."
- Chris Nichols: Finish.
- Tim Miller: Then, I didn't. So then it was game on for Terminator.
- Chris Nichols: What was the motivation behind it? Obviously, you said they want to try to revamp it. That was the premise there.
- Tim Miller: You mean the motivation for them and the motivation for me?
- Chris Nichols: Both actually.
- Tim Miller: For me at the ... Like everybody, it's like any nerd out there in the universe if you said, "Hey, would you like to make Star Wars movie or would you like to make an Avengers movie," or would you like to make all these things that I love that every other person who loves this shit loves, you get a chance to do that, you go, "Yeah." If somebody came to me and said, "You can do Aliens or you can do Terminator or you can do the next Gladiator film," all these things that I love, you would have to think seriously about would you do it or would you fuck it up? I thought I could make a good followup to Terminator. Only history will be the judge. Maybe they've judged it already because the movie didn't do well, but I still I'm proud of the movie and I don't think that that is actually the final judgment on whether the movie is successful as a Terminator sequel or not.
- Tim Miller: I hope for better than the box office gave us in that regard. Anyway, you would like the chance to continue that story. When David Ellison first began talking to me about it was a blank slate, so it could be anything, and the world is ripe for virtually any kind of sci-fi or post-apocalyptic or even a positive tale of the future. If you wanted to bend it that way you could because it was literally, what do you do?
- Chris Nichols: I think it's an interesting idea because obviously Terminator ... There's a lot of great sci-fi out there and most of the really great sci-fi that we all romanticize actually did not do well in the box office. You look even at Blade Runner, considered one of the greatest sci-fi films ever made, did poorly in the box office.

- Tim Miller: I very vividly remember Tim Miller in high school, 1982, I think is the year it came out, which is the year I graduated. High school, standing up in the theater at the end of Blade Runner and going, "That was fucking weird. I'm not sure if I like that," and then it became my favorite movie of all time. I had it on VHS and I watched it. I could literally quote Blade Runner to you, verbatim, and you don't know how those things are going to turn out. For whatever reason, I'm not sure I would have taken the Blade Runner sequel assignment had it ever been offered to me, which it wasn't, but the Terminator 1 seemed doable. Because of all those things, because Blade Runner was not Terminator. Everybody loved Terminator, and it's easy to see why, it's accessible. Whereas Blade Runner, I don't know. It's more of an acquired taste perhaps or maybe more of a thing that is indefinable as to just why it resonates so much.
- Tim Miller: There's a lot of things about that movie that you don't immediately go, "This'll be a blockbuster." Harrison Ford gets his ass kicked every single time. That's not what usually happens to a hero that people want to watch over and over again.
- Chris Nichols: There is definitely complexity to Terminator, because Terminator involved the complexity of time travel. Time travel is always-
- Tim Miller: A tricky beast.
- Chris Nichols: A tricky beast, right?
- Tim Miller: Yeah. The best left with as little explanation or exposition as possible.
- Chris Nichols: I think it's very interesting to bring that up. There was obviously some challenges in this movie to make it obvious. This is-
- Tim Miller: Every movie is.
- Chris Nichols: Every movie.
- Tim Miller: Every movie is a challenge.
- Chris Nichols: Much bigger budget production wise compared to Deadpool, right?
- Tim Miller: More than three times the budget. Imagine little Tim Miller, this is your second movie ... The only thing that saves me and my advice to any filmmaker going into a similar situation is just you cannot be afraid to say, "I don't have an answer for that, or I don't know, or please fucking help me," or any of those things that you can say to the fabulous group of really competent, creative people around you to get them to feel some ownership of the project alongside you. They will help you carry the ball.

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- Chris Nichols: Yes. That's the thing. There's a lot of people on that team, and they're going to back you up, right?
- Tim Miller: Yeah. At one point I was told 600 people on the crew in Spain on those highway sequences between stunt drivers and craft services and everything else, but-
- Chris Nichols: 600 people.
- Tim Miller: Imagine. Fucking 600 people. It's crazy. I would interact with only a small fraction of those, but it's a big machine to spend that much money in a very short amount of time. It takes a lot of people.
- Chris Nichols: That's got to feel like a big burden of responsibility. Every minute of the day is just the meter ticking in some ways, right?
- Tim Miller: It should, but I think there's something wrong with me that allows me to not really feel the pressure of that. I feel completely focused and invested, but I don't feel like the world is going to collapse if I ... It's not life or death usually.
- Chris Nichols: No.
- Tim Miller: It's not brain cancer or I'm not a neurosurgeon, and if the scalpel slips I'm going to paralyze somebody. What's the worst that usually happens, which is you don't make your day, which is not good because it costs a lot of fucking money, but it's not like anybody's going to die or lose their ... Actually they may lose their job. Who knows? I thought many times I may lose my job. It's one of those things where I just feel a responsibility to do a good job, not necessarily the pressure of failure.
- Chris Nichols: Sure.
- Tim Miller: If that makes any sense. I'm not sure I can explain it.
- Chris Nichols: It's got to feel like a lot of pressure obviously, and you're sitting there, you're just making decisions. I can imagine just myself in that situation, which I'm not even close to being there, and don't have the confidence that you do, but just like, "Did I make the right choice? Did I make the right choice?" Right?
- Tim Miller: Yeah. Jeff Fowler, who you know, the director of Sonic. Jeff Fowler always jokes that Tim Miller: frequently wrong, but never in doubt. I think that you do ... I think it's too easy in part to say this, but sometimes it is better to make a decision, even if it's the wrong one than-

- Chris Nichols: Than to not make a decision.
- Tim Miller: You can't be paralyzed by ... Honestly, there are very few moments. In fact, I thought it would happen all the time, but I only remember one day on Deadpool where I had, I would just call it a white out moment where there was so much shit going on and so many questions coming at me and things were going so badly that I said, "Could you guys excuse me for a second?" I went to the next room and said, "Fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck," and then I came back out and said, "Here's what we're going to do. Ryan, you sit over there. Morena this scene is not about you. The lady extra behind the counter there, I'll talk to you when I'm ready, so just please wait quietly." Every scene was about Morena.
- Tim Miller: Let me change that statement, because she is the love interest and fantastic. Anyway, you have those moments, but you just have to work through it because otherwise who is?
- Chris Nichols: That's a real challenge. You have to be a decision maker on that process, and that's got to be really, really tough.
- Tim Miller: It's not hard because I'm into the-
- Chris Nichols: Material.
- Tim Miller: I wouldn't say I was prepared every day perfectly because honestly it was such a big operation that you can never be completely prepared, but there's no day where I didn't know what I wanted to do. Again, you have all these people there that can help you achieve that vision. Whatever. I hate that fucking word, vision. They can help you achieve whatever goal you happen to have. As long as you can use language to communicate it to them, they'll be able to do it.
- Chris Nichols: Sure. You are a very passionate person about genres and mythology of comic books and science fiction.
- Tim Miller: I love this shit.
- Chris Nichols: You do. It was very, very interesting. I'll be honest with you. There's another podcast I do that's called Martini Giant, which is just me and my buddies Erick Schiele, who actually worked at Blur and Dan Thron who also worked at Blur. Those two guys-
- Tim Miller: We've had a lot of talented people come through our doors.
- Chris Nichols: The three of us love movies, and we talk about movies. We talked about a movie that I loved called The Château, which is a movie that no one has

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seen. It played in seven theaters worldwide. It made \$200,000 total, but it's amazing, and it was shot on DV camera and is the most indie film ever. It actually stars a very young ... What's his name? Paul Rudd.

Tim Miller: Oh really?

Chris Nichols: Yeah.

Tim Miller: He's still young, or at least looks that way.

Chris Nichols: He perpetually looks like he's 30.

Tim Miller: Forever young.

Chris Nichols: Anyway, we were looking at it and Erick was like, "Why would Tim take on the giant franchise of Terminator? Why would he take this on when he's the guy who gets to the root ..." He sat there and he's like ... "He's not a comic book guy," but he said, "You go to Blur and you see this wall of literature that Tim admires he is to the point of this, going into the franchise machine seems something really challenging to take on considering ..." To the core, I feel that you are an independent thinker in a lot of ways.

Tim Miller: Yes, but I honestly, perhaps in hindsight ... Actually not in hindsight, because I still don't feel that way, but it may seem like it was that way, but I actually don't think of it in terms of the franchise machine. I didn't think of it either as a career move or a business decision or anything other than I liked Terminator. Somebody wanted me to direct a Terminator movie and I thought I could do some cool shit, and there it was. Deadpool, when that happened, that threw away about seven months of my life that I had been ... We were pretty close to shooting. We were going to go in about a month and start prepping Deadpool 2.

Tim Miller: It was it was Terminator and then it was some Joe Abercrombie books, first of all, which are my favorite books of all time. It was, which of these is going to happen, but it really wasn't like some analytical process. I really do for better or worse shoot from the hip, and I just thought, "Oh, this'll be cool. I'll make a great Terminator movie and Jim may come back and I can do any story we want to develop." I don't know. It just seemed like a cool opportunity.

Chris Nichols: I saw it, I thought it was great. I thought the shooting was amazing.

Tim Miller: Would you tell me if you didn't think it was?

Chris Nichols: Would I tell you? Yeah. I would-

Tim Miller: Would you go, "It was challenging visually and ..."

Linda, Arnie and the cast

Chris Nichols: No. I honestly think it was really good. I did really enjoy it. I'll tell you very honestly. I did not necessarily feel it to be groundbreaking in a lot of ways, but I really loved the way the story developed. I thought Linda Hamilton was fantastic.

Tim Miller: Amazing.

Chris Nichols: She had an attitude of grisliness to her-

Tim Miller: She does not fuck around.

Chris Nichols: No, no. Which she landed solidly. The fact is that we haven't seen her in a while. She hasn't really been-

Tim Miller: She's not overexposed.

Chris Nichols: She's not overexposed. Just the fact that you haven't seen her in a while, when you see her again and it almost like you've seen her as a character and as an actress way later, so that feeling of grisliness really solidifies itself, which is great.

Tim Miller: I think even if you could have made this movie or a followup with Linda involved, this amount of time would be a great choice from a story only perspective, because she has so much time to change. She's not just playing the same character she was before. Getting Linda to come back was key. I can't tell you the love affair I had with the whole cast. Arnold, fantastic to work with. Natalia Reyes, she is one of the most amazing actors I've ever seen. Mackenzie Davis-

Chris Nichols: Did great.

Tim Miller: Oh my God. So emotional and so bad ass. Gabriel Luna is just fantastic.

Chris Nichols: I also love the fact that this was about female heroines, because the original Terminator, which was a long time ago gave birth to the female heroine. Terminator 2 embraced it hardcore. Still early, for female badass characters and now this one was all about the female character and a female hero.

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- Tim Miller: I thought that was fantastic. I know there was a quite a bit of hate on the web about some of those choices, but I don't for a second regret.
- Chris Nichols: I don't read that stuff, so.
- Tim Miller: I wouldn't say I don't go wallow in it, but fuck, it's hard to avoid sometimes.
- Chris Nichols: I'm sure. I'm sure. You're very much central to it. It was-
- Tim Miller: No. I don't let it get to me. Sometimes it's interesting just to see the narrative that people make up to fill the void of what they think you were thinking. It's pretty amazing.
- Chris Nichols: I thought it was really, really cool to see that. I do have some questions about the first flashback sequence on the beach.
- Tim Miller: Fire away.
- Chris Nichols: How? Explain to the audience how the young character, young Linda Hamilton, young-
- Tim Miller: You mean technically or the story choice of it all?
- Chris Nichols: Both of those things.
- Tim Miller: The story choice was actually ... I know it-
- Chris Nichols: We can spoil it by the way.
- Tim Miller: I'll tell the story stuff quickly and then I'll get to the tech. The story choices were I know controversial and it pissed a lot of people off, but for me Terminator was always a story about Sarah Connor. It was always a story about a mother's love for her son and what she would do for him. When you really look at her, she is a character that is best fueled by rage. She's not someone you want to see contented or happy. If we're going to have that character in our movie driven by the same things that make her interesting, she needed that rocket fuel. You can't have John hanging around as a 34-year-old accountant or a high school teacher or whatever when he would be a man who had missed his destiny to be the leader of humanity. There's no satisfying way to tell that story, and to also have that rocket fuel for Linda.
- Tim Miller: Then, there's only so much room on the stage. We're already introducing new characters and then Danny is coming on as this new savior, so you have to make some air in the room, you have to make some room on the stage. That is the way to do it while satisfying all these other things. I

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really feel it's weird because in the writer's room, everybody, Jim, me, David Goyer, Billy Ray, David Ellison, we all agreed that ... There wasn't even a point of question like this was the way to solve this, and it was a dramatic choice that really, really ignited the story in a way that said, "Hold onto your fucking seats." Anyway, I still think that that was the right choice to do even though I certainly understand people's issues.

- Tim Miller: Then, technically we of course explored a lot of different ways to do this, but to me it never felt like there was a better way than what we chose, which was full head replacement on body doubles. We couldn't get the idea of doing ... It's on the beach in Guatemala and Sarah is uncovered and everything has to look young and youthful and the 1984 ... Not '84. Fuck. When was Terminator 2? Anyway, Terminator 2 version of Linda, and you would end up doing a CG replacement to make that happen. Then, of course Eddie Furlong is in his 40s now so he can't do it. They're really short of an all CG solution, which I don't think was a good idea. It seemed like head replacement was the way to go, and in fact it was.
- Chris Nichols: It was stupendous.
- Tim Miller: Thank you.
- Chris Nichols: Stupendous.
- Tim Miller: Thank you. It's a different animal when they have to talk, but I was surprised because probably that few moments in the movie for us in individual effects, a portion of our show was post was probably under the microscope.
- Chris Nichols: That's Eric, right?
- Tim Miller: Yeah, Eric Barba.
- Chris Nichols: He was my boss. I know a lot about digital humans and everything I learned and scrutinize about digital humans was with Eric and he can ... Big time.
- Tim Miller: David Ellison had just come out of Gemini Man and had gone through that whole process with Will Smith and all that was done at Weta. It really was and then John Knoll came in to help out at the end and Jeff White. I think virtually every artist that ILM got involved in those shots on some level.
- Chris Nichols: They were good though. They were good.
- Tim Miller: Thank you on their behalf.

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- Chris Nichols: You know what? The thing is, it still has to meet with your approval, so you still have the final say on it in a lot of ways.
- Tim Miller: I don't know if it's a good thing. Maybe you could ask ILM this question, and off air to get an honest answer, but I think I'm more involved in the VFX process than most directors. I was in reviews for two to four hours every day, all day.
- Chris Nichols: I got to tell you this because I worked in VFX role for a long time where most directors had no idea what they were looking at when they saw it on screen. The first time I experienced it was with Joseph Kosinski when he was looking at some of the shots we were doing and he would suddenly say like, "Oh wow, that looks really good. What was the noise threshold on that shot?" It was the first time that I-
- Tim Miller: You probably still do that.
- Chris Nichols: Yeah, but it was the first time that I met a director who got a perspective about what he was looking at and he could understand the challenges, or more importantly he could see what wasn't finished and knew that he was going to get there. I think having a knowledge of visual effects is actually a really good thing for directors, and I think that's really refreshing. I see directors like you or Joseph Kosinski or even Wes Ball, right?
- Tim Miller: Wes is super smart.
- Chris Nichols: He understands CG, right?
- Tim Miller: Very well.
- Chris Nichols: That's the point, I think that it's really cool to see these top level directors that can understand CG completely.
- Tim Miller: It's been a long time since I was on the box, so I would say that-
- Chris Nichols: There's perspective though.
- Tim Miller: There's a theoretical understanding of what's happening, but I actually feel ... Again, you'd have to ask the vendors because they may say something completely different, but I felt like the most value to having been in VFX was I could figure out how to point them in a direction to fix a problem or overcome an issue that wouldn't unravel everything else. I wouldn't come in and go, "This is not working. Fuck it."
- Chris Nichols: Right. You don't want to micromanage?

Tim Miller: I would micromanage to the point of being able to suggest solutions of, "You know what, the problem we're having is the lip shape here, so what if we just turn the head away a little bit so it's not ..." We can do that because the CG or whatever the case may be. On Deadpool it was such a benefit to own a visual effects house. I could literally have our animators do something and say, "Here's the animation, just send it to the vendor." Those kinds of things are great because I've got the might of Blur behind me. Anyway, just knowing that if a note is going to fuck somebody's entire week or just a day of it, or just a few hours because it's a quick fix, I think it's pretty valuable in the process.

Chris Nichols: That's really cool. All right. I do want to jump back. It's probably been about four or five years since I did my first podcast with you at Blur. During that time, you talked about your passion for doing a series of animations that were-

Tim Miller: You can say Heavy Metal.

Chris Nichols: You can say Heavy Metal. You had a passion for this, and I was like, "Oh my God, that would be amazing." You said this like, "I had Fincher with me, I had all these people, we really wanted to do this thing ..."

Tim Miller: It was Jim Cameron-

Chris Nichols: Jim Cameron.

Tim Miller: ... and Zack Snyder was going to do one. We had talked to Guillermo and Gore Verbinski. It was really the who's who of genre directors. I was a drag on the ticket. We had Jhonen Vasquez who did Invader Zim. Just the possibilities for different styles, different types of stories to be told, I just thought it was the perfect project.

Chris Nichols: It happened.

Tim Miller: It did.

Chris Nichols: I am so excited that it did. I am just blown away by the fact that it did. I love the fact that we live in a world where that's possible.

Tim Miller: Me too. This is a weird little thing, but maybe you remember this, but I got a call and I owe him a call back and if he listens to this podcast, consider this my apology. Gary Yost, the original creator of 3D Studio of which I bought the DOS release one of 3D Studio. That's where I learned 3D on. Anyway, I got a voicemail the other day from Gary Yost who said, I just wanted to call and say, "You've always talked about doing ..." I get choked up in this thing. "You've always talked about doing exactly what you've

done with Love, Death & Robots. You always talked about telling these kinds of stories and doing this kind of art and you've done it."

Deadpool, Logan & Joker

Chris Nichols: I think that what you've done both with Deadpool and with Love, Death & Robots is you basically told the system that said that that can never be done. You've done it and it's done in space. If it wasn't for ... I'm sorry, I'm going to be gushing a little bit. If it wasn't-

Tim Miller: Please, gush.

Chris Nichols: If it wasn't for Deadpool-

Tim Miller: After the Terminator box office, I could use a little stroking.

Chris Nichols: No. If it wasn't for Deadpool, the Joker would never have been what it is. No one would have dared do Joker if it wasn't for Deadpool. Joker is now one of the highest R rated movie ever.

Tim Miller: They beat us. I got a text from Ryan, "Fuck, they're about to pass us."

Chris Nichols: That's because that happened, because you and Ryan basically said or somehow Deadpool proved that it's possible, and so that made it. The taxi driver of superhero films, right?

Tim Miller: Yeah, Logan followed up and again said, "Yeah, people want to see this sort of thing." We actually thought that was a big point in favor of the R rated Terminator where you look at Logan and Deadpool as an example of the fans rewarding the R rating for material that feels like its DNA is R rated. Perhaps the PG-13 of the other Terminator movies, it has been posited to me. Perhaps the PG-13 of the other Terminator movies hid the fact that maybe the franchise wasn't as beloved as we all thought because it brought in a wider audience, but I don't know. I really applauded the decision that we go R, because it was in doubt for a long time or in discussion for a long time, because I do think it's the right rating for the material. It's the right way to tell the story.

Chris Nichols: I think that there's something to be said about finding a corner of the four quadrants and not necessarily trying to satisfy all four parts of the quadrant, right?

- Tim Miller: Yeah, but the usual thinking is that you can't have the success that either Deadpool or Joker or Logan had in that if you choose your quadrant, but you can. The biggest thing in this moment in time, which is not very far removed from the box office of Terminator, the biggest lesson I feel I should learn is I thought I had my finger on the pulse a little bit more of what people would want to see and I was wrong, or at least the box office says so. Like every filmmaker, you make a good movie, you build it and they will come, and they did not.
- Chris Nichols: I'm going to say this. I saw the movie, I thought it was treated unfairly. The reason I think it was treated unfairly, if you really think about it, the Friday that it came out, there were already articles talking about how it bombed at the box office. It never even had a day in the theater before it got those articles, so who's going to see it if it came out on Friday and there's already article talking about how it didn't do well, you haven't even given the weekend a chance for people to see it. It's not fair for the movie. I thought it was a good movie. I thought it was unfairly treated, but also honestly speaking, it's a big risk for you. It's a big risk for you to be able to take on those types of movies. I don't know if I could do it.
- Tim Miller: Again, I guess I don't feel like it's a risk, but before you go to the next point, I just go, "Oh yeah, it sounds cool, I'll do it." I don't think too much as you may be able to-
- Chris Nichols: You go with passion, right?
- Tim Miller: Yeah, I go with the ... To be honest, I do have confidence in that I feel like I'll make it work even though sometimes that's not the case, but anyway, I wanted to see the movie in theater before it left, so weekend before last. Gina Carano had texted me and said, "Hey, I haven't seen the movie yet. I really want to go." I said, "I would like to go and see. Do you want to come?" Gina and Drew Crevello, who is the executive at Fox who first I would say "discovered" me in air quotes because he saw the DC Universe piece and first contacted me about Deadpool. Anyway, so Drew and Gina and I went to see it, we're sitting around talking after the movie comes up, it finishes and the credits go and we're the last people out at the theater.
- Tim Miller: As we're walking out, this couple behind me, the woman says to her husband, "I don't know why that movie got such a bad rap online. I really enjoyed it." He's like, "Yeah, man. The action scenes were ..." I turned around and I said, "Could you people give me a hug because ..." They said, "Who are you you strange man?" I said, "I directed the movie and I could use a hug this week."
- Chris Nichols: That's so sweet.

- Tim Miller: She's like, "You're the director?" Literally behind me in the lobby on a giant screen, a making of Terminator thing came and she's like, "That's you right there." It was up on the screen. It was a really nice moment because they had said the same thing, but again, I am not here trying to ... I don't mean in this place, but I mean in this moment. I'm not trying to say that I blame it on anything or anyone or I was wronged or whatever because I don't feel that way at all, but it was a moment that felt good because you felt like, "Hey, somebody liked the movie you made."
- Chris Nichols: You know what, the thing is you can't blame yourself because it's a good movie. At worst it's a decent movie. You know what I mean? At worst it's a decent movie. I think it's unfair the way it was treated and I think the way that everything's coming out, but at the same time there is something special about you, Tim, that puts out these things that are like break the mold a little bit. When you did Deadpool, you broke the mold. You proved to people that you can make a movie like that no one thought was possible. If it wasn't for that, we wouldn't have gotten the Logans and the Jokers and all the other movies that came after that you had nothing to do with, but you just proved to everyone else that that was possible.
- Tim Miller: I would say I'm a fortunate opportunist.
- Chris Nichols: I think the same thing is happening with Love, Death & Robots. Now we're starting to get into some dramatic adult animation stuff that's born out of graphic novels. That is beautiful. Did you see Undone that's happening on Amazon Prime?
- Tim Miller: Yeah, it looks amazing.
- Chris Nichols: Right. Those types of narratives that are happening like that that's clearly not ... It's an animation, clearly not for kids.
- Tim Miller: No. To be fair, I think we all thought Final Fantasy was going to be the one that broke the mold way back in the beginning.
- Chris Nichols: Not the right timing though, right?
- Tim Miller: Yeah, or not the right movie. I don't know. For 10 years, it scared everybody away from the forest because it was a lot of money and it didn't do well. Then, Beowulf was another where Robert Zemeckis tried to break through with an adult story and didn't quite-
- Chris Nichols: That was mostly about ... The uncanny valley was the big problem there, right? It was not necessarily the story. It was-

Tim Miller: I just mean that somebody made the attempt to say, "I'm going to tell a story in animation. It's not talking animals."

Chris Nichols: Sure.

Tim Miller: It didn't work, but my buddy Jerome Chen was the CG sup on that. I know how hard he and everybody else tried to make it the coolest thing ever. Honestly, as you know, if you look back at your own work, I can't look at anything that I did five years ago and just go, "Oh fuck ..."

The Love, Death & Robots effect

Chris Nichols: You see pixels that no one else sees, right?

Tim Miller: Yeah, I thought that was good. What the fuck was I thinking? Anyway, I do feel I'm super proud of Love, Death & Robots, but not only because I feel like it's ... I wouldn't exactly say it's breaking new ground, but I think it's contributing to a groundswell of support for animation as an art style that can tell stories beyond what it's traditionally been relegated to.

Chris Nichols: What do you think-

Tim Miller: ... CG animation, because for years, there's been adult animation around the world in other styles. It just hasn't really made it into the mass media in the same way.

Chris Nichols: You would think that ... You're saying that Love, Death & Robots made into the mass media, so something enabled that to happen because it would never have happened in theaters. It would never have happened in real. The streaming world suddenly opened up the door somehow, right?

Tim Miller: Yeah. Fincher is funny. David never gives up on anything. We literally had hundreds of meetings to try to get Heavy Metal done, and the weekend Deadpool comes out, I'm sitting out in the backyard, still stunned and I get a call from David who says, "Congratulations on Deadpool. Now, we're going to use this clout to get Heavy Metal made," which then eventually morphed into Love, Death & Robots because Netflix really offers us this platform to do it in a way that traditional movies can't. It could be episodic. Netflix has been so fucking supportive of the whole effort. They really give us unbelievable creative freedom. It's such a weird thing for me, I can tell you right now.

CHAOSGROUP

Tim Miller: I come back from Terminator, which I love to collaborate and I love the group process of everything, but I start working on the season two of Love, Death & Robots and there is literally no one telling me, you can't do this or you shouldn't do this, or we have to talk to somebody else to see if this is okay. Again, I'm not complaining about anything about the process of spending \$200 million on a movie and the fact that you can't just do whatever the fuck you want, but it is a real wonderful feeling to be able to say, "I'm doing this story, the one that I'm going to direct and it's fucking weird." It's so strange. I don't think I've ever seen anything like it. I'm not sure if people, what they will think about it, but that's okay. That's what makes an interesting for the show.

Chris Nichols: Love, Death & Robots is not for everyone, right?

Tim Miller: No.

Chris Nichols: It's not a full quadrant situation.

Tim Miller: No. We got our fair amount of shit from people that didn't like it or that thought it was sexist or-

Chris Nichols: But it did well, right?

Tim Miller: Yeah.

Chris Nichols: That's the thing. You're offering something to people that they can't get any other way. That there is a satisfaction that they get, and maybe it's sexist or maybe it's this or maybe it's too feminist or maybe it's this or whatever it is. There is going to be something that's going to dissatisfy some part of the quadrant, right?

Tim Miller: Which is the truth of all media today. Really, there is nothing for everyone.

Chris Nichols: Right. Maybe it's too violent or this and that, but the fact is that it's something that is engrossing and it's going to start a conversation. I think the same happened with Deadpool. I was like ... There was a lot of mothers that walked into Deadpool with their young kids thinking they're going to watch a superhero film that were a little bit freaked out-

Tim Miller: Ran out screaming-

Chris Nichols: Ran out screaming, right?

Tim Miller: ... shortly thereafter.

Chris Nichols: They should, and they were misinformed when they walked into those theaters. That's fine, but to everyone else, they're like, "Thank God we got the Deadpool that we always wanted."

Tim Miller: I think that there is no world in which you shouldn't have those kinds of choices about everything shouldn't be homogenous and made for everybody. I love the fact that ... What's really interesting about Love, Death & Robots is you can have shots that are really niche inside a show that tries to be a broader experience and have a little something for everyone. It's definitely not something for everyone, but it certainly the show is broader than any one shot. I think I did the broadest of all of the shots in last season. It's the least offensive on any level. It was the live action one with Topher Grace and Mary Elizabeth Winstead. There's nothing really edgy about it except the occasional fuck in the dialogue, but it actually served as a gateway to the series for some people depending on the order that the show ... It was it was a fifth column, if you will, into people's living rooms because it was not as quite in your face as the some of the other ones were.

Chris Nichols: I think it's also really cool is when the whole series is so varied, not just stylistically, but also thematically. Some of them were extreme comedy. Some of them are extremely dramatic. Some of them are very bizarre. There's all kinds of different parts of the different stories that are happening, which is very refreshing because if you don't like this particular story, you're going to skip and get to the next one, right?

Tim Miller: Yeah. I like the ... It's really hard for me because I pick all the stories, but I wouldn't say that I find or create ... The Witness, which was one of my favorite if not the favorite story last year from Alberto. That was his story that he came and pitched us. 16 of the 18 stories were ones that I had found in various sci-fi and fantasy short story ones. There's several people involved in the process on the team, and I might find a story that it may not be my favorite one, but it'll go up on the board as I think this is interesting, and then you get into the dynamics of what does everybody else think and what is the mix? What is the right mix for the series because you want to have something for everybody. I read mostly sci-fi, so it can't all be sci-fi.

Tim Miller: I really have to make an effort to be inclusive of other styles. Because there's other directors and other animation types, you really get a pretty broad mix that ends up being not like, I sat down and did it myself, which is the whole fucking point. I don't want it to feel like I'm directing by proxy.

Chris Nichols: You enabled a lot of ... You enabled Alberto and The Witness. That's something that no one's ever seen.

CHAOSGROUP

- Tim Miller: It is amazing. I wish people ... A lot of the directors do a pitch book, or this is how I'm going to approach the story and the artwork. Alberto did his as a video where he's talking about his process.
- Chris Nichols: I've met him.
- Tim Miller: Have you seen ... You've got to come by Blur and see this-
- Chris Nichols: Where he does the story where he tells you ... Is it him and his kitchen?
- Tim Miller: It goes everywhere from the influence of Disney animation to his clubbing experience that is fucking bizarre, but more, it talks about the way he views the world and how he approaches art and composition and color. I honestly got to say I liked it almost as much as the shot, just as someone who does this for a living and works with artists every day. It was one of the clearest, most humbling exposition of how someone approaches their art that I'd ever heard. It was amazing.
- Chris Nichols: The first time I met Alberto was at THU actually, and he gave a lecture there and I was like, "Oh my God, this guy ..."
- Tim Miller: The guy's fucking amazing.
- Chris Nichols: He's off his rocker a little bit, but he clearly has a visual clarity that is amazing. He understands both painting and animation and composition, and he's got an idea of what everything needs to look like. The Witness, every frame of it is beautiful.
- Tim Miller: Every frame. The cool thing is when we hand out stories, we cast the director and the studio to some degree, and we may make a decision like this story feels like it could be 2D versus 3D or stop motion versus whatever. There's some influence there, but they're actually given ... The directors are given quite a lot of freedom to take the best shot at it. I got to tell you that there's nothing that makes me happier than when I see something where I go, "This is fucking great. I never would have made this decision. I never would've thought of this," but I still love it. It's just so fresh when you get into the second act of a movie and then something happens that you completely didn't expect. There's nothing better.
- Chris Nichols: I think we're very ripe for creativity right now. Even what's going on in the franchise world, I think the things that are happening are very fresh. I think there's some really great fresh ideas that are emerging through that process. I think that you are ... Honestly speaking, I'm looking to people like you to make that happen. I think Love, Death & Robots is an example of that, and things like The Witness would never be out there publicly for everyone to see without that process. I'm very excited about it, which

CHAOSGROUP

makes me very excited about season two. What can you tell me about season two, and when's it coming out, when can I see it, how many episodes? There's got to be something you can tell me a little bit about it.

Tim Miller: I don't know.

Chris Nichols: It is happening though.

Tim Miller: Did you hear that knock on the door. I think that's the Netflix SWAT team.

Chris Nichols: It is happening?

Tim Miller: Yeah. There's a couple of things I can tell you. We brought in Jennifer Yuh Nelson to be supervising director.

Chris Nichols: Oh, nice.

Tim Miller: Jennifer's great. You're probably familiar with her work because she's been in animation and she's done a lot of action. Despite the fact that some of her career has been light and fluffy, she's actually pretty fucking dark. I've met her a few years ago and she was one of the first people I called on season one to help out, but she couldn't because she was doing her Fox film Darkest Minds. She's on full time. She's directing a really interesting ... I can't tell you the plot, but if I did, you would go, "That's fucking an edgy choice to do a story about that." It's all her baby, and she's helping to mentor the rest of the process as well.

Tim Miller: I'm going to direct one, which I don't think is a surprise to anybody. There'll be some other people that I shouldn't tell you because there'll be part of whatever press we end up doing. I can tell you that of the stories we've found almost all of them and then all of them are in some stage of development. I got a big board at Blur that every time I read a short story that I think could be a good fit for something. It goes up on the board and then we're constantly having that discussion of-

Chris Nichols: Interesting.

Tim Miller: It is the same thing that happened in the last season, and you think the mix is stabilized and then you go, "Oh fuck, we can't get the rights to that," or "Oh, fuck these people that we thought we were going to do one aren't," or things like that. We're holding a spot for Alberto, but he's finishing another project and we don't know if his schedule will work out, but we certainly hope he does another one. It really is. There's a lot of factors from the studio to the director to the story, to the mix, to the schedule that it's really unique in how the mix shakes out, but it's stabilizing, and I'm pretty fucking excited about it. What I do think I could say is that you won't watch season two and go, "Oh, well they're just repeating the formula

from season one." We are in that, it is a diverse mix of sci-fi, fantasy, fantastic horror. That's true, but the stories are very different-

Chris Nichols: Nice.

Tim Miller: ... and unique. I'm just as excited about this as I was about season one.

Chris Nichols: What I also really loved about season one was the ... This is coming purely from some guy who somehow works in marketing a little bit more these days, but the packaging of it. The way that it was presented, the Love, Death & Robots symbolism that happens, and all of that sound, the trailers, everything. Even though every story is completely different, somehow there was a-

Tim Miller: A wrapper.

Chris Nichols: A wrapper around it that felt very concise and exciting. How did that come about?

Tim Miller: It was really a team effort. I was not the captain of that particular team. Netflix did a great job marketing it, but it was really the charge was led by Jennifer, my wife who runs Blur and is a brilliant designer. She really drove the whole process of coming up with the logo, the type treatments and everything, evolving the brand of what Love, Death & Robots is. Then, we really worked with ... Netflix really understands the show, and their whole marketing team got really excited because it's different. It could be fucking anything. They really did ... All of them really extended themselves to come up with a lot of options. In that initial phase, there was tons of different ways it could have gone, but they were so excited about exploring all of them.

Working with David Fincher

Tim Miller: Then, if you've ever done a project with David Fincher, the marketing of it is as important to him as any other part of the process. He is a motherfucker when it comes to being specific and he's got a vision for how he'd like it marketed. For me, David is very collaborative, but he has done this so many times over the years that he's got this wealth of experience about what works best that it's really great to have that part of your team. Everybody did such a fantastic job. I loved it. The first trailer that they showed us is the one that is on the surface right now where it's that really pounding techno music and we all went, fuck yeah.

- Chris Nichols: The first film that I worked on with David, which you actually worked on as well, was *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*. You see the trailer to that and it's like, "Oh my God."
- Tim Miller: Nobody does it better.
- Chris Nichols: *Led Zeppelin* and it's *Immigrant Song* and it's like, "Oh," and it's bam, bam, bam, bam, bam. You're like, "I want to see that." He's very good at that. He's very good at that. He knows his audience. That's the thing is that David knows his audience and he understands that he's going to appeal to a certain people that are visually intelligent in a lot of ways.
- Tim Miller: Although I don't know if it's as strategic as that, but rather just that's the way he's wired.
- Chris Nichols: Right.
- Tim Miller: David wants to please David as much as he wants everybody else to like it, which to be fair is the way all of us are. I don't think I've ever done anything in my career that I said, "Well, I think this is shit, but people will probably like it, so let's put it out there."
- Chris Nichols: Wouldn't that be bad?
- Tim Miller: No. I talk to the other directors at Blur all the time. I occasionally hear, "I don't really like this, but the client wants it." I'm like, "Fellas, our job is to present the client with good options and not just do what we're told." The whole purpose of Blur is to create great work, and sometimes you got to get your fucking hands dirty, and be unpleasant and get in people's face and earn a reputation of being a dick, but I always thought that all would be forgiven because your intentions are really just to create great work. It's not ego. It's just how do we create the best work? Sometimes you have to fight people to do that.
- Chris Nichols: It's true.
- Tim Miller: I went to the Reset Holiday Party the other night, which is Fincher's commercial directing company. David was there, and Dave Morrison, who runs Reset, and there was a new director there who was very nice. He was listening to David and I talk about *Love, Death & Robots* and having done a hundred meetings on *Heavy Metal*. He said, "I really thought that it was easy for guys like David Fincher to get a project done or after *Deadpool*, it would be easy for you." I couldn't tell if he was happy that he knew we had to beat our heads against the wall just like other people or sad that it never gets easy to get this shit done, but it really doesn't. It feels like

CHAOSGROUP

you're constantly in combat one way or another to push something forward.

- Tim Miller: I don't mean that like you have to be shitty about it or you're constantly screaming at people. I'd never scream. I never lose my temper. Never really. I've never done it. I may say quietly, "I'd like to punch you right now, but I won't." You know what I mean? It's always a struggle or an uncomfortable conversation or a truth that you'd rather not say, or some version of that on the way to hopefully creating something better, because if everybody agrees on something and it's easy, chances are it's mediocre.
- Chris Nichols: I think creativity comes out of struggle, obviously.
- Tim Miller: I literally used it when I was a compositor. I did commercials in Hollywood. That was my job when I moved down here.
- Chris Nichols: I remember.
- Tim Miller: We would do these commercials and the ad agency guys would sit behind us and sometimes you would get four or five guys in a room and you would do something, and the first guy would go, "Oh my God, it's fucking amazing. I've never seen anything like it." The second guy would go, "Yeah, it is. It is edgy," and then the third guy would go, "I think maybe we're pushing the boundaries," and then the fourth guy go, "We can't do this. Let's start over." You watched the shit snowball roll down hill and you can't stop it, and you know what you're going to end up with if there are enough people in that part of the creative process making decisions that you're going to end up with something that nobody is afraid of, but nor are they excited about it.
- Chris Nichols: What's the old saying? The camel is a horse designed by committee?
- Tim Miller: It's true. There's some truth to that. I think the beauty about being a director a lot of times is that you get to listen to everyone's suggestions, but you are the arbiter of what actually gets done. You get the benefit of everyone and their experience and their ideas, and if you create the right atmosphere, you can create a place where people feel like they can contribute and be heard, and be shot down without being humiliated. I think that's the key thing that some directors don't. That's a lesson. I've heard that some directors don't learn. I try and do that the best I can.
- Chris Nichols: I think it's hard to ... Obviously it's hard for some people to take that role. Some directors may not necessarily feel secure about making the decisions they're making, so they look to other people to help out. Therefore, it becomes this whole big, big thing. It's a very challenging thing directing something.

- Tim Miller: I understand what you mean where you may not want to do it because you look as if you're insecure or don't know, but there's not a moment where I felt like I wasn't ultimately in control because I allowed other people into the process. I think you have as a director, at least in the two movies I've done. Anyway, you get this fear of impenetrable credit around you when you start that, because of the way the industry works that you get a lot of belief that you can either erode over the course of production or maintain if you're wise with the crew. I always felt like I'm going to take this fucking credit that I get right out of the gate and try and maintain my balance for the course of the production. I feel lucky because on both films ... Of course, some of it could be ass kissing, but many crew members said it was one of the best experiences they had working on a film. We have a great atmosphere. We had a lot of fun on both sets, even though they were both hard.
- Chris Nichols: I'm sure. That's the other thing. I've heard this from other big directors, it's like getting feedback is absolutely the right thing to do from anyone, but as a responsibility, as director, you're the person who makes the decision, "Am I going to take that feedback or not?" Ultimately it does come down to your decision-
- Tim Miller: Which is great.
- Chris Nichols: You know this from working with directors like Fincher, right?
- Tim Miller: Yeah, but there's nothing wrong with that. When I work with David, I understand the chain of command and it's my job to offer options, like *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*. We did the open. It's my job to say, "I had a few ideas. What do you think?" He could say, "I think they're all stupid," or "I like A and B. Let's go further on those." David also, at the end of it he goes, "Tell me I'm the best client you've ever had," because he really didn't ... He was a great client. He had a clear and insightful notes that made the project better and he didn't waste anybody's time with bullshit.
- Chris Nichols: That's the dream director, honestly speaking. I would rather take a director that's giving you extremely hard notes, but they're extremely clear as to where they need to be as opposed to, "don't know, make it look better." Those directors are much harder to deal with.
- Tim Miller: You don't understand the notes.
- Chris Nichols: The notes. Right. Make it feel blue but not be blue.
- Tim Miller: Or it just doesn't really make sense, so why do you want him to punch harder? He's not that strong, and a guy wouldn't fly five feet if you punched him in the face. The physics of that. I understand that note, but I

CHAOSGROUP

don't think it's what you want. I hate that. When I was at Sony, when I started out, they would bring the director by and the producer would stand behind your chair with him and the VFX supervisor and the producer would talk about the work on your monitor and you weren't supposed to say anything. I of course would not follow that rule and constantly got in trouble, but it seemed like such a fucking waste when the director suggest something that I tried already and know won't work and to not say, "You know what, I tried that and it didn't do what you think it may do, and I can show it to you."

Tim Miller: I would say this, and the directors always appreciated it, but again you have this phalanx of people around them-

Chris Nichols: You skip five rankings ahead of you, and that's just going to piss people off.

Tim Miller: You can see why you can't have the chaos of ... Even on set, people would say to me, "You can't just have anybody come up to you and pitch ideas." I'm like, "Listen, if somebody did it and abused the privilege, I'll just say, you know what, I appreciate your ideas, but I need to focus right now. Thanks." It never was a problem. I never feel like my authority is being challenged, and so it's easy to just say, "Hey, we're all doing this together. You're choosing to spend your time on earth working to make this project better than I deserve to ... You deserve to be heard."

Chris Nichols: Dan and Eric and I have looked at the work that you've done and a lot of us would say, you are our hero because you proved that even ... We're approaching our 50s, and we looked at you as like-

Tim Miller: I'm an umbrella.

Chris Nichols: You proved that it's still possible to be a great director, but you took everything you've learned from your life and applied it to being a director and still made it happen. We were like, "Wow, Tim is a hero to us," because we were really like, "I can still be a creative person. It's not the twilight. If you didn't make it by your 20, you're not a great director. We're really, really excited about the fact that, not only you're proving it to everyone that you can make things that people said could never be done, but you're also doing it at a time when people said chances are you'll never be able to make it.

Tim Miller: I'm uncomfortable with that label because I don't feel I deserve it for just doing things that I enjoy.

Chris Nichols: Do that.

CHAOSGROUP

- Tim Miller: It's funny. Again, on set as a director, people would ... It is amazing in some positions where you show up on set, semi prepared, not drunk, and you haven't molested any children, and the crew is like, "Bravo, thank you. You're a terrific guy." I'm like, "I'm a terrific guy. Why? Because I'm not a gigantic fucking asshole?" You shouldn't get credit for that and nor should I get credit for getting the opportunity. Seriously, how lucky have I been to have a company like Blur for 25 years? It's our 25 year anniversary coming up.
- Chris Nichols: Congratulations.
- Tim Miller: All the time, it's not been easy, but it's certainly easier than 99.9% of the people in the world have done it. I feel so unbelievably lucky even with ... I certainly wished Terminator had had done better, but Oh my God, the chance to do it is the real reward, and likewise Love, Death & Robots. Please don't idolize me, but you can use it as an opportunity to say-
- Chris Nichols: It's possible.
- Tim Miller: even old guys can-
- Chris Nichols: even old guys can do it.
- Tim Miller: ... achieve their dreams.
- Chris Nichols: More specifically, I think people like Dan and I and Eric really is like old nerds. Old nerds, they're passionate about something. There's still room for us, and somehow this vision that we've been keeping in our back of our minds for a long time has an opportunity.
- Tim Miller: My wife this morning called. She said, "You have a feeling of nostalgia about the things you like," and I'm like, "How could I be nostalgic when I love science fiction, and everything I do is about the future?" But maybe she's right.
- Chris Nichols: I have actually problems with the term nostalgia because I think we're over nostalgic a little bit these days. I think that we tend to try to recreate the past a little bit too much or look to old movies and try to recreate them a little bit too much. That's something I think that you're not doing.
- Tim Miller: Terminator.
- Chris Nichols: Terminator definitely has-
- Tim Miller: Some elements of that.

- Chris Nichols: Definitely has some elements of that, for sure, but I definitely didn't feel that in Love, Death & Robots. It's like nothing I'd ever seen.
- Tim Miller: The only thing I would say about Terminator and the nostalgia of it all is that maybe wanting this is passe or not current with the youth of today, but I enjoy reading a book about a character that I've read other books about and you can sync once again into this world that is familiar and comfortable and that you know you're going to be taken care of because the author took care of you before. There's that feeling with the movie too, is that you fall in love with the TV series and there's 10 episodes of that, and because you're familiar with the world and the characters and they feel familiar, and that's a good thing. I think if you use it as an excuse to starve the oxygen of other worthy creative endeavors that would like to get out there in the world, then that's a different problem, but I don't know.
- Tim Miller: You could make fucking Terminator 20 if they were all good and interesting stories. I don't think I'll ever get tired of comic book movies, but I'm sure other people will and we'll have a new thing.
- Chris Nichols: There's comic book movies and then there's a specific character development, because there's comic book movies that ... Comic books are much wider than the Marvel Universe, right?
- Tim Miller: It's true. Yes.
- Chris Nichols: When you say comic-
- Tim Miller: The Goon is our longterm passion project that we will fucking make some day out there. All you Kickstarter developer contributors. We haven't given up. We're still trying.
- Chris Nichols: Right. The Goon is a good example, but I think even there's lot of genres out there. That giant bookcase at Blur is filled with stories, and a lot of them are inspired and wonderful. I think that there's a lot of big audience for all of those parts.
- Tim Miller: Totally.
- Chris Nichols: It's not necessarily a four quadrant audience. Some of them are very female oriented, some of them are very male oriented.
- Tim Miller: I think the difference is you might go like Lone Wolf and Cub. It's a great Manga that actually Fincher and I were developing a while ago, but I think if you went to the movies and saw a Lone Wolf and Cub movie of which there have been many in Japan, you wouldn't go, "Oh, that's a comic book or that's a Manga or that graphic novel." You would just go, "That was a

CHAOSGROUP

cool movie about samurai and a baby." It's like once you get out ... Yes. Comic books are more than superheroes. That's true, but I don't think they'd be recognizable as comic books. Once you get too far outside then they just become a horror story or a science fiction story.

Chris Nichols: It's a story.

Tim Miller: It's a story. I think it falls outside of what most people think of as comic books. What I mean when I say comic books, even though you are 100% correct in your assessment, because there's so much more and ...

Chris Nichols: What the graphic nature of either the graphic novel or the comic book does is it helps contextualize what you're looking at. There is a lot that is described in the picture that doesn't need to be written down.

Tim Miller: Yes.

Chris Nichols: There's something that helps ... It's a nice start. If you're about to make a movie or something, you've already got your storyboards laid out for you in a lot of ways, in some cases, right?

Tim Miller: For sure.

Chris Nichols: I think that that's a really nice genre and it's artistically based.

Tim Miller: Have you ever gone back and tried ... Do you have any kids?

Chris Nichols: I do. I have two.

Tim Miller: Have you taught them to read comic books?

Chris Nichols: My daughter loves Manga, so she's totally into that and anime as well.

Tim Miller: When I taught my-

Chris Nichols: She's going to Japan in the summer so she can't wait.

Tim Miller: Oh really?

Chris Nichols: Yeah.

Tim Miller: We did the last stop on our world tour was the Tokyo premiere for Terminator. Oh fuck. We had such a good time. They loved it. It actually opened up really well there. The cast and I just had such a great time because the fans were so fucking into it.

Chris Nichols: Yes. Nice. Nice.

Tim Miller: Anyway, when I taught my daughter to read comic books, you just take for granted that the whole process of, I'm getting part of the story from the image. I'm getting part of the story from the dialogue bubble, but then there's all these other descriptions, and just how you read the dialogue boxes and the text bubbles. It's intuitive because we've been doing it since we were kids, but it's not intuitive if you've never done it before.

Chris Nichols: No.

Tim Miller: It's just a weird thing.

Chris Nichols: It is a thing. My daughter really gets into the novelty of reading Japanese ones because they have to read them backwards.

Tim Miller: Oh man.

Chris Nichols: Because the book starts from the ... And so you have to read it right to left and the book flips the opposite way.

Tim Miller: That means she's a spawn of Satan. Did you know that? Is she left-handed as well?

Chris Nichols: She's not. She's double jointed, but not left-handed. She loves the novelty of that. To her, that's what makes it special. It's like, I can do a regular comic book, but I can also do a Japanese comic book where I do it backwards.

Tim Miller: I don't think I could do that.

Chris Nichols: That's really cool. Tim, I don't want to take too much more of your time because we've already gone well over an hour, but this has been awesome. I really appreciate it. I cannot be more excited for all the projects you're doing. We know that you're doing Love, Death & Robots season two. There's probably lots of other projects you're got your fingers on, which you can't talk about.

Tim Miller: I feel like I spent a long time climbing the hill, and it would be great to get to do a few more interesting things before I tumble back down the other side, but Love, Death & Robots, that's front and center right now and all my energy is focused on that. I love making movies whether they're animated or live action. It's the bigger canvas and the bigger story. I love both of them. I love short stories, which is ... If you looked at my shelf, you would find, I think I have over 1,200 short story books on my Kindle right now, but there's probably an equal number of novels, of all kinds of crazy shit.

CHAOSGROUP

- Tim Miller: I feel like there's a responsibility to the great stories that are out there to somehow help bring them to a place where everybody can see them, that people that maybe don't have time to sit down and read a book, they could go and digest the material and all the great characters in two hours in a dark room full of nice people.
- Chris Nichols: I think it's great and I'm really, really excited about it, so-
- Tim Miller: Thank you. Thank you.
- Chris Nichols: Thank you so much for doing this. You're one of my rare three pits, so I appreciate-
- Tim Miller: No, always a pleasure. Do I get a jacket or some kind of door price?
- Chris Nichols: You may probably have t-shirts or anything you want at this point, so thanks again.
- Tim Miller: Thank you. It's my pleasure. Thank you.