

THE JUNGLE BOOK (2016) - RT: 1 hr 45 min

- Released April 15th 2016
- Jon Favreau directed
- 175 million budget
- TOTAL BUDGET INCLUDING P&A: 215 MILLION
- Buena Vista, Disney
- Produced by Molly Allen, Karen Gilchrist, Bringham Taylor, Peter M. Tobyanson
- Promoted in August 2015 at D23 Expo
- Rated PG

QUICK OVERALL THOUGHTS

- MARISA:
- PHIL:
- BECCA:
 - Going into watch the movie I wasn't sure what songs were going to be included in the movie, if any, and was also worried I wouldn't be able to take whichever songs were in the movie seriously coming out of the animals mouths (since the animals truly look real)
 - Both "Bare Necessities" and "I Wanna Be Like You" were kept in the movie; when I heard both songs that nostalgic feeling automatically took over and I was in my seat in the theater snapping and dancing).
 - I was confused during "I Wanna Be Like You" as the second verse was different then what's heard in the animated movie/the movie I saw as child.
 - Beyond impressed with Neel Sethi's acting as Mowgli in the movie especially because he was the only human actor in the film at the age of only 10 and essentially had to play pretend throughout the whole film/talk to animals that weren't really there. Of course from watching behind the scenes videos puppets were brought in for Neel to interact with during some scenes and Jon Favreau even stepped in to help Neel out (ex. when Shere Khan was chasing Mowgli, Jon came up behind Neel and roared to get a reaction).
- SARA:
- DEMETRI:
 - A FULLY REALIZED REMAKE OF AN ANIMATED DISNEY CLASSIC WHICH I FEEL OUT SHINES THE ORIGINAL IN CERTAIN WAYS—THE ENDING TO BE SPECIFIC. VOICE TALENT EXCELS HOWEVER AS MUCH AS I LIKE CHRISTOPHER WALKEN HE AIN'T LOUIS PRIMA! SHOULD NOT BE FORGOTTEN COME OSCAR TIME

DEVELOPMENT

- Walt Disney Pictures announced that a live-action remake of *The Jungle Book* was in development on July 9, 2013, with Justin Marks set to write the script
- The film would be Disney's second live-action adaptation of Rudyard Kipling's works, following the 1994 film, and the studio's third overall after the 1967 animated musical
 - Original story/book by Rudyard Kipling
 - 1967 cartoon version directed by Wolfgang Reitherman; written by Larry Clemmons, Ralph Wright, Ken Anderson, and Vance Gerry.

- 1994 live action version directed by Stephen Sommers based on Rudyard Kipling's writing/novel. Story by Ron Yanover and Mark Geldman. Screenplay by Stephen Sommers, Ronald Yanover, and Mark Geldman.
- Jon Favreau was later confirmed as director on November 5, 2013
- Favreau, Marks, and producer Brigham Taylor developed the film's story as a balance between Disney's animated adaptation and Kipling's original works, adapting elements from both into the film
- Favreau was encouraged by Walt Disney Studios chairman Alan Horn to take advantage of the film's setting and story as an opportunity to use the latest advancements in photorealistic rendering, computer-generated imagery and motion capture technologies

WRITING (Justin Marks - Screenplay, Rudyard Kipling - Book)

- The story of the film is not independently taken from Kipling's works but also borrows cinematic inspirations from other films, including the child-mentor relationship in *Shane* (1953), the establishment of rules in a dangerous world from *Goodfellas* (1990) and the use of a shadowy jungle figure in *Apocalypse Now* (1979)
- Pixar Animation Studios assisted in the development of the story, as well as providing suggestions for the film's end credits sequence

STORY/CAST

- POINT OF DISCUSSION: The realism
- POINT OF DISCUSSION: Story
- POINT OF DISCUSSION: Ending
- POINT OF DISCUSSION: Favorite character
- The cast was announced between March and August 2014, with Idris Elba being announced to voice Shere Khan during early stages, and Bill Murray eventually confirmed as the voice of Baloo in August 2014
- Between then, Scarlett Johansson, Ben Kingsley, and Christopher Walken were confirmed to play Kaa, Bagheera, and King Louie, respectively
- The voice cast never recorded all together. Many of the principals, like Elba, Johansson, Nyong'o, and Esposito, were alone with Favreau, who would read all the other parts. But whenever possible, the director would try to pair key actors opposite each other. The director figured Sethi needed to bond with Mowgli's surrogate fathers, so the young actor spent time in a booth with Kingsley and Murray. Favreau also made sure to get the combustible pairing of Murray and Walken in a studio. "Try to get them in the room together as much as possible so they're reacting to eye contact and taking pauses in harmony with one another," explains Favreau.

NEEL SETHI (Mowgli)

- The search for casting Mowgli was extensive, with thousands of children auditioning from the United States, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, and Canada
- From Manhattan. Never acted before who went on tape because his dance instructor gave him a flyer. "He was so full of confidence and poise. I kept watching the tape and smiling." - Favreau
- (Before meeting the A-List cast) "The idea that I had for this was to get the Jim Henson Studios to design puppets and the puppeteers to come because they improvise, it's spontaneous. And if you've ever seen a kid interacting with a puppet their eyes light up"

- Sarah Finn describing him as embodying "the heart, humor, and daring of the character. He's warm and accessible, yet also has an intelligence well beyond his years and impressed us all with his ability to hold his own in any situation."
- Sethi underwent parkour training in preparation for the role
 - "He did some training in New York with parkour teachers. He did some training here [in L.A.] with parkour instructors. And then I would meet with them to figure out what his capabilities were, and then we would design sets that measured out to what he was capable of, how large an obstacle he could vault, things like that. And they would start to drill him in it. And whether he knew it or not, he was being trained for the set that we were designing digitally."
 - "Now on the set, you would just see foam objects and things to climb over beams to balance on — all painted blue — but there was a digital environment that lined up exactly to that. And of course it was all much higher off the ground in the digital world. So it just looked like you were running around in a tumbling studio or on a jungle gym. And when you saw it in the Simulcam monitor, he'd be 100 feet off the ground precariously leaping from branch to branch."
- Actor Neel Sethi said that since he never actually worked with real animals onset during filming, director Jon Favreau would on occasion stand in for where the animals would be present, one most notably as Shere Khan lunging out from the tall grass
- "We wanted to find the right kid. And when you're dealing with a 10-year-old there's not a lot of kids with a lot of experience. And sometimes they have a background from theater that might be a different kind of set of skills or from television," said Favreau. "But from kid to kid it varies. But the big thing is that you want to find somebody who's got a charisma, a magnetic quality, somebody that you like to watch. And there were 2,000 submissions all around the world. And we found a kid right here in Manhattan who had never acted before who went on tape because his dance instructor gave him a flyer. He was so full of confidence and poise. I kept watching the tape and smiling."
- Neel Sethi -I recorded with Bill Murray and sang with him. Me and Jon Favreau flew on a plane to Martha's Vineyard, on a private jet, and he smoked a brisket while me and Bill Murray played football.

BILL MURRAY (Baloo)

- During the early years of his career, he frequently played loud, sarcastic, often rude and mean, anti-heroes (Meatballs (1979), Stripes (1981), Caddyshack (1980), the two Ghostbusters movies, Groundhog Day (1993)
- During the later years of his career, he frequently plays depressed characters (Lost in Translation (2003), Broken Flowers (2005), The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou (2004), Rushmore (1998) , The Royal Tenenbaums (2001)
- He has rubbed some collaborators the wrong way because he has a tendency to re-write and improvise his way through scripts until many of his scenes barely resembles the original versions. Most collaborators ultimately find, though, it's to the improvement of the films
- Known for *Ghostbusters*, *Groundhog Day*, *What About Bob*, *Caddyshack*
- Behind the scenes when Neel first met Bill Murray they played football, Favreau cooked dinner and they immediately clicked
- "I read that book when I was about 22 and I've always thought that it was just extraordinary writing."

BEN KINGSLEY (Bagheera)

- Ben Kingsley described Bagheera as a military character: "He's probably a colonel, he is instantly recognizable by the way he talks, how he acts and what his ethical code is."
- Ben Kingsley was born Krishna Bhanji in Scarborough, Yorkshire, England. His father, Rahimtulla Harji Bhanji, was a Kenyan-born medical doctor, of Gujarati Indian descent, and his mother, Anna Lyna Mary (Goodman), was an English actress. Ben began to act in stage plays during the 1960s. He soon became a successful stage actor, and also began to have roles in films and TV. His birth name was Krishna Bhanji, but he changed his name to "Ben Kingsley" soon after gaining fame as a stage actor, fearing that a foreign name could hamper his acting career.
- Known for *The Beast*, *Shutter Island*, *Ghandi*, *Schindler's List*

IDRIS ELBA (Shere Khan)

- An only child, Idris Elba was born and raised in Hackney, London, England. His father, Winston, is from Sierra Leone and worked at a Ford motor factory. His mother, Eve, is from Ghana and had a clerical duty. Idris went to school in Canning Town, where he first became involved in acting. He gained a place in the National Youth Music Theatre - thanks to a £1,500 Prince's Trust grant
- Known for *Thor*, *Pacific Rim*, *Prometheus*, *Zootopia*, *The Wire*
- Phil liked the cucu bird puts its young ones in someone else's home portion
- "Shere Khan reigns with fear. He terrorizes everyone he encounters because he comes from a place of fear."

LUPITA NYONG'O (Raksha)

- Favreau and Marks noticed the lack of female characters in the 1967 film version and wanted to address that by reviving Raksha's character more prominently, as she was very much prominent in Kipling's tales as well
- Lupita Nyong'o was cast as Raksha as Favreau believed her voice imbued the emotion required for the role, "Lupita has tremendous depth of emotion in her performance. There's an emotional underpinning she brings, and a strength, and we wanted that for this surrogate mother. Much of that comes from her voice."
- "It's so vital to have some of the stuff recorded. To hear the timbre of people's voices, the subtext to what's going on in what they're saying, and to respond to that, was really, really cool to have. To have both the experiences of doing the performance on my own...and then go back again and, with those character who were not in the room, play off what they had done.
- "It was a very different thing from playing Maz Kanata," she said, referring to her Star Wars: The Force Awakens motion-capture character.
- "She is the protector, the eternal mother. The word Raksha actually means 'protection' in Hindi. I felt really connected to that - she wants to protect a son that isn't originally hers but one she's taken for her own."

SCARLETT JOHANSSON (Kaa)

- Favreau decided to cast Johansson to play Kaa, originally a male character, as he felt the original film was "a little too male-oriented"
- The Jungle Book (2016) marks the reunion of Scarlett Johansson and Bill Murray following Lost in Translation (2003)

- “The snake from the animated film is a boy. He’s a friendlier, goofier version of the character. In this film Kaa seduces and entraps Mowgli with her storytelling - her voice.”

CHRISTOPHER WALKENS (King Louie)

- Favreau also decided to change King Louie from an orangutan to a *Gigantopithecus* due to the fact that orangutans are not native to India, where the story takes place, and he appears as more sinister and villainous than in the original 1967 version, replacing Kaa (who only appears in one scene in the film) as the secondary antagonist
- His character was given a slight alteration from the 1967 film and was partly inspired by Marlon Brando's character Colonel Walter E. Kurtz in *Apocalypse Now*, as well as incorporating Walken's own physical mannerisms
- In regards to Louie's changes, Favreau stated, "We created this looming figure that was trying to extract the secret of fire from Mowgli. And also this gave Mowgli the idea that if he had fire, he could have power over Shere Khan, whether it was good or bad. So there was a *Lord of the Rings* aspect to that; the fire was almost like the ring in that was going to give someone ultimate power, but corrupt them as well as create destruction."
- The first time King Louie appears on the screen, he is sitting in a chair, his face obscured by shadows and talking in a sinister, slightly muffled voice about offering Mowgli protection before finally revealing his face. This is an obvious homage to the classic film *Apocalypse Now* (1979) in which Marlon Brando's character, Colonel Walter E. Kurtz, first appears on screen similarly composed
- Another scene that required a rethink was Mowgli’s encounter with King Louie, voiced by Christopher Walken. “That was an addition that Disney stuck in the 1967 version,” says Favreau. “There really weren’t orangutans in the Indian jungle, and we wanted to stay a little more accurate because we were putting so much effort into the photorealism.” His art department found a solution in a creature called a *Gigantopithecus*, an extinct ape “believed to have lived tens of thousands of years ago in the Indian jungle. So we treated him like the last of his species. And then with [VFX house] Weta [Digital] and Christopher Walken, it was our way to reinvent the sequence. We created this looming figure that was trying to extract the secret of fire from Mowgli. And also this gave Mowgli the idea that if he had fire, he could have power over Shere Khan, whether it was good or bad. So there was a *Lord of the Rings* aspect to that; the fire was almost like the ring in that was going to give someone ultimate power, but corrupt them as well as create destruction.”
- “It was fun to have Chris Walken play the heavy. He’s charming and endearing, but there’s this unpredictability to him.”

EASTER EGGS/TRIVIA

- Amid the treasures in King Louie's temple, one of them happens to be the Genie's lamp from *Aladdin* (1992)
- Bill Murray voices Baloo in this film; his older brother Brian Doyle-Murray had voiced Baloo in *The Jungle Book: Mowgli's Story* (1998)
- This is Garry Shandling's final film, released less than a month after he died of a sudden heart attack. He provided the voice of Ikki the Porcupine, a character from Rudyard Kipling's original novel, who was not present in the 1967 film. Similarly, *The Jungle Book* (1967) also had a posthumous performance: Verna Felton, the voice of Winifred, Colonel Haithi's wife, in that incarnation, who starred in many other previous prominent Disney animated film productions, such as *Dumbo* (1941), *Cinderella* (1950), *Alice in*

Wonderland (1951), Lady and the Tramp (1955), and Sleeping Beauty (1959), up until her death on December 14, 1966, the day prior to the death of the producer of The Jungle Book(1967): Walt Disney

- The wolf pups in the film are named after motion capture actors and other crew members
- Right before he meets King Louie, Mowgli finds a cowbell in the monkey palace and proceeds to pick it up and shake it, causing Louie to appear. King Louie is played by Christopher Walken, who once famously stated on a sketch on Saturday Night Live(1975), "I have a fever, and the only prescription is more cowbell!"
- Man's 'Red Flower' has a bigger role in this film. In The Jungle Book (1967), it is mentioned briefly by King Louie but in this version several animals mention it and it is implied all animals apart from Louie fear it. This possibly explains why Louie wanted to know how to make fire so he can use it to his own advantage so that all animals including Shere Khan fear him
- Giancarlo Esposito who voices the wolf Akela, was featured in a commercial for the video game Destiny (2014) where he narrated a part of the poem "The Law of the Jungle". This poem appears in Rudyard Kipling's "The Second Jungle Book"
- Mowgli has a scar on the right side of his chest which appears to be the letter "r" and also has a scar on his left shoulder which is a "k". This is a nod to the original author Rudyard Kipling, where the "R" and "K" are the author's initials
- Most character names are actually derived from words in the Hindi language.
- Akela - means alone. Pronounced "a-kay-laa" (not "a-kee-la"). Raksha - according to Kipling, "the demon". A nickname based on her temperament when she "ran with the pack." (In the book she is generally known as simply as Mother Wolf). Baloo - a different spelling of "Bhalu", meaning bear. Bandar-Log - pronounced "bunder-logue". Bandar means monkey. Log means people. So, "monkey people." Shere Khan - shere means tiger in some dialects, whilst khan means chief or king. Another word for tiger is "bagh", of which "bagheera" (leopard) is a diminutive.
- The film will be released in 2016, to coincide with the 49th anniversary of the original Disney animated classic masterpiece The Jungle Book (1967)
- Director Jon Favreau received the Innovation in Film award from P.E.T.A for using all CGI animals, and not harming any real animals during the production of the Jungle Book
- The Jungle Book (2016) is the very first Walt Disney Pictures release since Treasure Planet (2002) to feature the original 1990s cel-animated Walt Disney Pictures logo in its true fashion
- Although this is a remake of the original film, the ending is significantly changed from The Jungle Book (1967). In the original, Shere Khan does not die, he is just frightened away, and Mowgli leaves the jungle to go live in the man-village
- When all of the animals gather for the climactic confrontation with Shere Khan, there is a shot of a warthog and a meerkat next to each other, undoubtedly a nod to Timon and Pumbaa, from The Lion King (1994)
- It takes Mowgli many days to journey to the man village with Bagheera and then with Baloo. However when he learns of Akela's death, at the jaws of Shere Khan, he is able to run back to the River in a few minutes.
- After Mowgli arrives at King Louie's lair, Mowgli has new bloodied wounds on his back and chest, not to mention the bee stings. When Mowgli escapes, he runs down the stone steps, and not one wound is seen on the front of him. Later, as King Louie looks for him, Mowgli's wounds reappear.

DIRECTING (Jon Favreau)

- Favreau as a child used to watch Disney's 1967 animated musical version
- He felt the need to strike a balance between the two films by retaining the buoyant spirit of the 1967 film, including some of its memorable songs, while crafting a movie with more realism and peril
- He also stressed the importance of nature and realized how things have shifted during Kipling's time and now, "In Kipling's time, nature was something to be overcome. Now nature is something to be protected."
- Favreau researched earlier films featuring anthropomorphic animals—including Walt Disney's animated features, such as *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* and *Bambi*, as well as modern films such as *Babe*—and adopted certain techniques from those films into *The Jungle Book*
- Favreau expressed desire in wanting the film's 3-D shots to imbue the abilities of the multiplane camera system utilized in Disney's earlier animated films
 - At Favreau's behest, the idea was extended into the film's version of the Walt Disney Pictures opening production logo, which was recreated as "a hand-painted, cel-animated multi-plane logo" in homage to the animated films of that era
 - The film's ending also features the original physical book that opened the 1967 film
 - At the end of *The Jungle Book* (2016), the physical *Jungle Book* book closes, which is a bookend (literally) to the original film in a really cool way. "At the end of the movie we found the book from the original *Jungle Book* in the archives, and so that book that opens at the beginning of [the 1967] *Jungle Book*, I noticed never closes at the end of *The Jungle Book* (1967)," Favreau explained. "Here we take the same book, the same blue velvet background and we close the book as though to, I think, pay homage to and maybe feel like we're completing that chapter."
- *The Jungle Book* (2016)'s inspiration from the Disney animated classics didn't begin and end with the 1967 original. As director Jon Favreau explained: "We went back to films like *Bambi* (1942) to see how they best used elements, because I wanted to use different elements in in this." He went on: "I wanted air, fire, water, and earth, and *Bambi* uses seasons and weather, and using different types of day-opportunities that this filmmaking style allows you. So we looked at films like *Bambi*, we looked at films like *The Lion King* (1994)." It's true—throughout *The Jungle Book*, you can sense the legacy of these earlier films and, thanks to the nature of the story (roughly broken up into vignettes), the changing seasons effect is vital and dazzlingly realized.
- Director Jon Favreau is an enthusiastic fan of Disney animation and is well versed in the history of the Walt Disney Company. When it comes to the original *The Jungle Book* (1967), he knew exactly what he was trying to retain for his big screen reboot. "That was the high water mark in many ways for character animation. You had the Nine Old Men, and they were hitting the high water mark for emotional character animation that is drawn upon and you can see it even in *The Lion King* (1994), you see reference to that animation style. You can see it in *Zootopia* (2016) too," Favreau said. "So it was a very important film from an animation standpoint, but it wasn't as lush as a texture, of a cinematic texture, as was the big five." When watching this new version of *The Jungle*

Book (2016), with its amazing character animation, you can see that they were really energized by that original classic

- “The idea that I had for this was to get the Jim Henson Studios to design puppets and the puppeteers to come because they improvise, it’s spontaneous. And if you’ve ever seen a kid interacting with a puppet their eyes light up,” said Favreau. “So whatever it took to get the sparkle in the eye of the performer that comes from them being engaged, you need to hold their interest, otherwise they get bored.”
- The problem, the director feared, was that when all those fantastic beasts Mowgli encounters open their traps and start chattering away, it would be a make-or-break moment. “We were pretty confident about the animals and rendering and lighting. But the talking — if that broke, the whole movie would fall apart,” admits Favreau
- As he pondered the problem, Favreau realized that Walt Disney himself had wrestled with similar questions in his day. “I looked back to not just The Jungle Book, but the big five Disney animated movies,” Favreau explains. “In the transition from Snow White to Bambi, Walt Disney was concerned with the performance of the animals — not making them too cartoony — and making Bambi feel more photo-real. But he also spoke of the challenges of having the animals talk. They choose to frame it in a way where in the adult animals, they don’t show the mouths that much. So we also were very careful with how we framed certain animals. For instance, if you were dealing with one of the wolves, it was better to have the camera a little bit higher so that the snout blocked the mouth.”
- “We had a cut of the film before we ever photographed it,” he says. “We did it first through our story team, like an animated film.” That means the actors recorded their lines which digital artists used to create a rough animation. “Then we motion-captured the whole thing like Avatar before we ever shot a frame of film. Then we went in and surgically picked out each piece of set we had to build to fit into that motion-capture film. Each set was built for a specific shot.”

PRODUCTION/CINEMATOGRAPHY (Bill Pope)

- Bill Pope was born on June 19, 1952 in Bowling Green, Kentucky, USA as William Homer Pope. He is a cinematographer and director, known for The Matrix (1999), Spider-Man 2(2004) and The Matrix Reloaded (2003). He is married to Sharon Oreck
 - Cinematographer for Barry Sonnenfeld's thesis film at NYU
- Visuals were influenced by James Cameron, George Lucas, & Walt Disney. - Favreau
- The film was all shot in a studio in downtown Los Angeles. The movie was shot on blue-screen stages at L.A. Center Studios
- Principal photography commenced in 2014, with filming taking place entirely in Los Angeles
- The decision to make the movie in a virtual production environment was both a creative and practical one. Says Legato, “Photographing a kid in the jungle and on a limited scheduled is very difficult. A live-action shoot would be difficult, it wouldn’t look as good and It probably would be more expensive. With blue-screen, you are well on your way. Also you get to play a little, and if you miss a shot, you can easily go back. And the production design was definitely a part of the decision.”
- Pope shot the film in 3D, using two Arri Alexa cameras on a Cameron Pace 3D rig. And according to Legato (who also served as the second unit director and DP), the goal was to make it look as if everything in the film, even what was created in the computer, look as if it had actually been photographed on jungle locations. “We didn’t go for crazy-beautiful skies in every shot and pristine everything. We wanted it to feel like we

filmed it. Sometimes you put in shots where the light doesn't match from shot to shot because you are shooting outside and in two hours, the light could be different. All of those things make it look like a real thing."

- Movie was captured native in 3D
- Mowgli floating down the river on Baloo's belly singing was difficult to recreate with real physics
- Jim Henson's Creature Shop was brought in to provide animal puppet figures for Sethi to act against, although none appear in the finished film
- Around 1,000 remote jungle locations in India were photographed and used as reference in post-production
- The 3D of the film and the original 1990s Walt Disney Pictures opening logo were a tribute to the multi-plane camera system. Director Jon Favreau said that one his is "rules" for making *The Jungle Book* (2016) was "let's treat the 3D like multi-plane. Let's be as gimmicky as Walt Disney would have been-but not more." The multi-plane camera is a special camera used to create a sense of dimensional space-of a camera moving through a set, instead of one just taking photos of a series of still images. Disney had a special version of the system developed, which was used first in the *Silly Symphony* animated short film *The Old Mill* (1937) and later in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937). Favreau went on: "There are tremendous shots in *Pinocchio* (1940) and *Bambi* (1942) where the multi-plane was a new technology and they were using it to show off, and that was the 3D of its day. And so we were studying that very closely and became very fascinated with the multi-plane and what went into it and the artistry and ingenuity." This aesthetic philosophy extended to the movie's treatment of the main castle logo. "I got the idea, 'Let's do the opening logo, and instead of doing a super high-tech one, let's have a hand-painted, cel-animated multi-plane logo,'" Favreau said. "And not only that but 'Let's make the kingdom behind the castle have elements from what the live action version would have been,' so it was almost like a little taste of what's back there."
- The production team took many of their cues for the work processes found in the animation world. "We wanted to begin the process as if we were an animated film, doing all of the things that Pixar or Disney animation would do in pre-production [such as working with a story department, designing the characters and environments]," Favreau says. "Then when we got to the point where an animated film would go to layout, we took a left turn and treated it as if it were a motion-capture film," filming the motion-capture shots with actors in mocap suits standing in for the various animals. "We had computer-generated backgrounds, and I was directing as if we were on a set," says Favreau. "We collaborated with a full crew, and figured out the shots in a volume [stage space] as they did on movies like *Avatar*." Those shots were then delivered to editor Mark Livolsi, who started the edit. (Voice performances had already been recorded by the sound department.) With the shots mapped out, they were filmed on the bluescreen set.
- The process was nonlinear from the start, and the level of collaborative required was extensive. "We had VFX counterparts working alongside the production designer and the director of photography, to effectively act in similar roles as you might see in live-action production," Valdez says. "For instance, Audrey Ferrara, our environment supervisor, was working with production designer Chris Glass, building digital sets; and Michael Hipp, our lighting lead, was working with Bill Pope to do pre-lighting in the computer before we shot. It was prepro, production and post all at the same time."

- Because Sethi was the only actor present on the soundstages for shooting, Favreau would act out various parts opposite the boy. “I was Christopher Walken on the set, in a motion-capture suit doing the physical movement, and sometimes we would project up on the blue screen so [Neel’s] eyeline was a live feed of me looking down at him like Big Brother,” says Favreau.

ANIMATION/VFX (VFX Director - Rob Legato)

- While Legato, a two-time VFX Oscar winner whose credits include Avatar and Hugo, calls The Jungle Book “the most technically challenging film I have ever worked on, from every aspect,” he adds, “It’s not terribly different than it was in terms of the mechanics from Avatar, but the computers are faster and better. We did some extra things on how you could touch the animals; Neel could ride on [an on-set device] and it would move the way an animal’s muscles would move. The idea was to make this more live action-oriented than any other predecessor — be totally photo-real so it feels like you take the journey in a traditional way.”
- In the end, the big-budget production, which is expected to be the top film at the box office this weekend, required the creation of 1200 VFX shots from lead VFX house MPC, while Weta — drawing on its expertise with apes developed on King Kong and Planet of the Apes—was tasked with challenges such as King Louie and the wild monkeys. Given all the computer-generated imagery, does that make The Jungle Book, Mowgli’s appearances aside, a de facto animated movie? Not according to Legato. “I don’t consider this an animated movie,” he says. “I consider this just a movie, and this happened to be the best way to make it. We [made] it comfortable for Jon Favreau to come in and be able to direct as if it was a live-action film.”
- The animal characters were created entirely in key frame computer animation, with the assistance of footage of real animal movement, the actors recording their lines, and performance capture for reference
- The production team underwent a thorough process to realistically convey the animals’ speaking, while still making them perceptually believable to the audience
- We used behavior & mouth movements of real animals, not humans. Anim reference was drawn from performances and mocap of actors
- MPC (VFX Supervisor : Adam Valdez)
- Weta Digital (VFX Supervisor : Dan Lemmon)
- The Production VFX Supervisor is Robert Legato
- Created 70 different species of animals
- Decided to make some of the jungle denizens 150 percent larger than in real life
 - “Jon wanted this feeling of what it’s like to be a child in a big world,” says VFX supervisor Adam Valdez of the movie’s lead visual effects house MPC. In the case of the tiger Shere Khan, voiced by Idris Elba, he says, “We also wanted him to be a bit of a character, not just a tiger but something more primal and mystical. He’s also a bit leaner, so that when he walks in front of the camera, you see his power, his muscles.”
- VFX team studied polar bear behavior for inspiration.
- King Louie- Art department found a solution in a creature called a Gigantopithecus, an extinct ape “believed to have lived tens of thousands of years ago in the Indian jungle. So we treated him like the last of his species.
- Creation of 1200 VFX shots from lead VFX house MPC

- “We motion captured Neel, and we had humans kind of mimicking the animals he talked to so we could see a live digital composite of Neel with the dialogue with the bear or other animals, so we created eyelines for him to look at,” Legato explained. “That was essentially the shot, and then we took that apart on a blueprint basis and replicated it on stage, because we liked that shot, liked the composition.”
- Some of the animals in the film were up to 50 percent larger than their real-life counterparts, a nod to the child protagonist
- They used Maya animation software to create the complicated animal rigs and the RenderMan software, which was developed by Pixar, for the shading and lighting, which was immensely complicated for immersive jungle scenes
- Rendering the Fur: “It would take 30-40 hours per frame, and since it’s stereo [or 3D], it requires two frames to produce one frame of the movie — at 2K, not even 4K,” Legato said. “So you can tell how much the computer has to figure out, exactly what it’s doing, how it’s bouncing, how much of the light is absorbed, because when it hits an object, some gets absorbed and some gets reflected.”
- Favreau expressed a desire to avoid overusing motion capture in order to prevent an uncanny valley effect
 - The **uncanny valley** is a hypothesis in the field of aesthetics which holds that when features look and move almost, but not exactly, like natural beings, it causes a response of revulsion among some observers. The "valley" refers to the dip in a graph of the comfort level of beings as subjects move toward a healthy, natural likeness described in a function of a subject's aesthetic acceptability. Examples can be found in the fields of robotics and 3D computer animation, among others
- Moving Picture Company (MPC) and Weta Digital created the film's visual effects
- MPC developed a new software for animating muscular structure in the animals
 - MPC developed a new muscle system. “We’ve always done some simulation of muscle and skin,” Valdez says. “But the physics that are used to simulate how muscle moves have traditionally been quite jelly-like. This system looks at how muscle behaves when it’s tense, compared with when it’s loose, as well as how muscles interact with one another.” MPC used an existing in-house tool for creating fur, but the work was painstakingly detailed. “A lot of our characters transition from sleek hair along the body to fluffy hair. We also did new work on how to simulate the movement of hair in wind, water or just how it’s affected by gravity,” Valdez says.
- The CG character Baloo is so large and furry, he took almost five hours of rendering time per frame
- “Some of it is the animators. Some of it’s the technology associated with Ray tracing, which is a new way of rendering the way light interacts with the subject,” Favreau said. “But honestly, a lot of it comes from the director not asking these artists to make those animals do more than they should. In this case we tasked our artists with not allowing the animals to do things they couldn’t normally do. By creating parameters and limitations, it actually adds to the beauty and believability of the film.”
- “The hardest shot was one that flies by,” says Favreau. “It’s when Mowgli says goodbye to Raksha the wolf. It’s raining, he’s running his fingers through her fur and they touch foreheads.” because it was a raw/emotional goodbye scene Favreau didn’t want the audience to focus on the effects and they had to make the shot look as simple as possible like they didn’t do anything.

EDITING (Mark Livolsi)

- Known for *Vanilla Sky*, *Girl Next Door*, *Devil Wear Prada*, *Fred Claus*, *Saving Mr. Banks*, *The Judge*
- “It was so non-linear, you go back and forth. We remade the movie over and over again. Sometimes the editor was asking for a shot, or the cinematographer was suggesting a sequence of cuts for the way the shot is laid out.” - Favreau
- Months after they recorded their initial takes, Favreau would go back in the studio with his actors and the rough animation for a second pass. “Where they do interact in the film, they’d see footage that was either finished or close to it — and seeing Neel’s performance and getting to perform again, although you’re not occupying the same space as a film actor, you can connect with the performance they’re giving and modulate yours to match it,” Favreau says.

SOUND/MUSIC (John Debney)

- The sounds you hear when Mowgli goes underwater when on Baloo's tummy are generated through high powered underwater speakers made by Oceanears
- In the case of the animated version’s music, “We either incorporated it in the score or in some cases, we have singing,” Favreau says. “I had to decide how many songs you can have in a movie before it becomes a musical and changes the tone completely. We went from G-rated musical to a PG-rated adventure movie that was skewed to all ages.” So, in the new version, Baloo the bear,voiced by Bill Murray, still sings “The Bare Necessities.” But instead of being a song-and-dance routine, the tune is sung as Baloo, with Mowgli sitting on his chest, floats down a lazy river. “We had a difficult time presenting that because bears don’t float that much. We wanted to create an emotional connection and sense of nostalgia, but one that doesn’t break the photorealism,” Favreau comments.
 - His VFX team studied polar bear behavior for inspiration. Then, the scene was filmed with Sethi’s Mowgli in a water tank, singing along to a recorded track Murray provided. “I was in the pool a lot of hours on that day,” Favreau laughs. “I was in there singing with him, and providing an eye-line and splashing him and squirting him with a water hose. We had a lot of fun, and you can see it in Neel’s performance.” And since the bear’s fur was going in and out of the water, when it came time to animate Baloo, Valdez explains, “We simulated the water, and then the hair afterward, so when it’s underwater it’s moving in a seaweed-like way, and when it’s above water, it clings to itself and lays flat.” Rob Legato, the film’s overall VFX supervisor, considered Baloo the toughest character to get right, because “a friendly bear, you just don’t see that. He very quickly doesn’t become photo-real, unless he’s ferocious like in *The Revenant*.”
- Oscar-nominated composer
- Frequent Favreau collaborator
- Has worked on approximately 100 films
- *The Passion of the Christ*, *Elf*, *The Princess Diaries*, *The Emperor’s New Groove*, *Chicken Little*
- Favreau brought Debney on nearly two years ago to begin work on the film. Fourth film for director Jon Favreau. *Elf*, *Iron Man 2* and *Zathura*
- Though Favreau decided not to make the film a musical, nevertheless, he and Debney incorporated several songs from the 1967 animated film

- His father, Louis Debney, worked there for more than 40 years, starting as a clapperboy on “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs”
- Practically grew up on the Disney lot, was best friends with the boy who voiced Mowgli in the '67 animated version, and even knew the legendary Sherman Brothers (who wrote most of the songs). “I met the Sherman brothers when I was 7 or 8 and got to spend a day with them in their office creating music for something -- I don't remember what,” Debney said. “It made such an impression on me, I started to play the guitar and then piano. The whole experience started me on the road to loving music and film.”
- First job out of college was in the Disney music department
- 104-piece Los Angeles orchestra and 50-voice choir, Debney added soloists playing Indian tabla percussion, bamboo flutes and other exotic instruments.
- 84-minute symphonic score
- The orchestra applauded the first run-through of Debney's powerful finale. “On the last few notes of the last cue we played, we were all crying. Now, I've done this for almost 30 years, and that doesn't happen.”
- Music for Baloo the bear (voiced by Bill Murray) included marimbas and tubas.
- For King Louie (voiced by Christopher Walken), low drums were the key to capturing his menace.
- The most challenging section to score was the last 20 minutes, which is non-stop cat-and-mouse action. “There are three or four cues in a row, it's continuous,” Debney said. “There's probably a good stretch of 15 minutes or so of straight music. Jon really made me work at it, where to bring the music down, where to bring it back up, where to have a scare or two. It's pretty relentless.”
- "The Bare Necessities", written by Terry Gilkyson, is performed by Murray and Sethi, and a cover version by Dr. John is featured in the end credits.
- "I Wan'na Be Like You" and "Trust in Me"—written by the Sherman Brothers—are performed by Walken and Johansson, respectively; Richard M. Sherman wrote revised lyrics for Walken's version of "I Wan'na Be Like You"
- Johansson's rendition of "Trust in Me" was produced by Mark Ronson and appears in the end credits only

MARKETING

- Promoted in August 2015 at D23 Expo. Showed the very first featured-length trailer. Neel Sethi saw it for the first time with the audience. Release of teaser poster to the audience
- On January 13, 2015, the film's release date was postponed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures from October 9, 2015 to April 15, 2016
- Disney India commissioned a contemporary recording of "Jungle Jungle Baat Chali Hai", overseen by the song's composers Vishal Bhardwaj and Gulzar, and released it as part of the film's promotional campaign in India

BOX OFFICE/RECEPTION

- Total Lifetime Grosses
- Domestic: \$125,094,414 35.0%
- + Foreign: \$232,700,000 65.0%
- = Worldwide: \$357,794,414
- Domestic Summary
- Opening Weekend: \$103,261,464

- (#1 rank, 4,028 theaters, \$25,636 average)
- % of Total Gross: 82.5%
- Due to strong opening numbers, various box office analysts believe the film will earn over \$1 billion in ticket sales
- Projections for its opening weekend in the United States and Canada were continuously revised upwards, starting from \$60 million to as high as \$88 million, with female and older male quadrants being the prime draw
- In total, it earned \$103.6 million in its opening weekend, exceeding expectations by 40% and recorded the biggest PG-rated April opening (breaking *Hop's* record), the second-biggest Disney live-action adaptation opening (behind *Alice in Wonderland*), and the second-biggest April opening (behind *Furious 7*)
- Widest Release: 4,028 theaters
- In Release: 6 days / 0.9 weeks
- The film was released in the Dolby Vision format in Dolby Cinema in the United States, and is the first film to be released in Dolby Vision 3D (in a few select theaters in New York and Chicago)
- It was released in 15 countries, a week ahead of its U.S. debut on April 15 in countries like Argentina, Australia, Russia, Malaysia and most notably in India on April 8
 - The release date in India was strategic for the film as it coincided with the Indian New Year and was a holiday in most parts of the country
- Worldwide, the film was released across 28,000 RealD 3D screens and had an IMAX worldwide opening of \$20.4 million from 901 IMAX screens, a new record for a PG film
- IMDB: 8.1
- On review aggregator Rotten Tomatoes, the film has an approval rating of 94%, based on 198 reviews, with an average rating of 7.8/10
 - The site's critical consensus reads, "As lovely to behold as it is engrossing to watch, *The Jungle Book* is the remake that actually improves upon its predecessors – all while setting a new standard for CGI."
- On Metacritic, the film has a score of 77 out of 100, based on 47 critics, indicating "generally favorable reviews"
- Cinemascore: A
- *The Jungle Book* received critical acclaim, with praise aimed at its visual effects, the performances of the voice cast, Favreau's direction, and its faithfulness to both the animated film and original Kipling works
- Todd McCarthy of *The Hollywood Reporter* wrote, "Exceptionally beautiful to behold and bolstered by a stellar vocal cast, this umpteenth film rendition of Rudyard Kipling's tales of young Mowgli's adventures amongst the creatures of the Indian jungle proves entirely engaging, even if it's ultimately lacking in subtext and thematic heft."
- Andrew Barker of *Variety* felt that this version "can't rival the woolly looseness of Disney's 1967 animated classic, of course, but it succeeds on its own so well that such comparisons are barely necessary."
- Alonso Duralde of *The Wrap* says "This 'Book' might lack the post-vaudeville razzamatazz of its predecessor, but director Jon Favreau and a team of effects wizards plunge us into one of the big screen's most engrossing artificial worlds since *Avatar*."
- Chris Nashawaty of *Entertainment Weekly* graded the film an "A-", calling it one of the biggest surprises of 2016. However, he felt the two songs that were sung rather unnecessarily, and distracting, and believed the film to be a bit too scary for children

- The film's visual effects and 3D photography received acclaim, with comparisons being made to the likes of *Avatar*, *Gravity*, and *Life of Pi*

SEQUEL

- Following the film's early financial and critical success, the studio has begun work on a sequel film. Favreau is reported to return as director and Neel Sethi is reported to reprise his role of Mowgli, while screenwriter Justin Marks is also in negotiations to return
- According to reports Disney is already planning "The Jungle Book 2" with Jon Favreau and Justin Marks

FINAL THOUGHTS