



"I am Groot."

~ Baby Groot, Season 2, "I Am Groot"

PRODUCTION BRIEF

He's charming and brave—a tree of few words—but what is it about Groot that has captivated audiences for nearly a decade? "We are Groot!" says Kirsten Lepore, who wrote and directed all episodes of the first season of shorts and returned in the same capacity for season two of "I Am Groot." "I find him to be such a relatable character—mischievous, fun-loving—but at the end of the day, he's always trying to do the right thing. Also, you don't have to worry about him getting mistranslated: He only has one line, but he conveys so much through the universal language of action and emotion."

The OG (Original Groot) was introduced to the Marvel Cinematic Universe in 2014's "Guardians of the Galaxy"—a wise old humanoid tree who uttered just three words: "I am Groot." After his ultimate sacrifice—a selfless and game-changing decision—Baby Groot, a 10-inch-tall seedling born from a single stick, debuted in an end-credit scene. He's returned to the galaxy a few times since, including the subsequent Guardians movies, a pair of Avengers titles, "Thor: Love and Thunder" and, of course, Marvel Studios' inaugural collection of five original shorts, "I Am Groot," last year. "I think Groot resonates with audiences because of how he approaches the universe around him," says executive producer Brad Winderbaum, head of streaming, television and animation for Marvel Studios. "He's a crazy kid with wild ideas, who approaches every new world, creature or situation with an excitement to push its boundaries."

Season two includes five all-new shorts starring the troublemaking twig. This time, he finds himself exploring the universe and beyond aboard the Guardians' spaceships, coming face-to-face—or nose-to-nose—with new and colorful creatures and environments. According to Winderbaum, the second season is "filled with new adventures and amazing new beings that challenge Groot and help him grow—whether it's a baby bird or The Watcher himself."

The new season of "I Am Groot" features the voices of Vin Diesel as Baby Groot and Jeffrey Wright as The Watcher. Written and directed by Kirsten Lepore, the shorts are executive produced by Brad Winderbaum, Kevin Feige, Louis D'Esposito, Victoria

Alonso and Lepore. Dana Vasquez-Eberhardt is the co-executive producer and Danielle Costa is the supervising producer. Episodes are produced by Craig Rittenbaum and Alex Scharf; Ryan Meinerding is head of visual development. With music by Daniele Luppi, all five shorts stream on Disney+ beginning Sept. 6, 2023.

BABY GROOT EXPLORES THE UNIVERSE **Five All-New Episodes Find the Sapling Growing Up**

Led by writer/director Kirsten Lepore, artists and technicians behind “I Am Groot” sought to infuse the shorts with the same spirit as the feature films. The photoreal CG look, says Lepore, is “plucked straight out of the world of ‘Guardians of the Galaxy.’ It’s gorgeous, fun and colorful—even when Groot is trapped inside the muted walls of the Quadrant.”

Groot’s escapades aren’t limited to just the spaceship. In fact, the possibilities were unlimited. According to Lepore, perhaps the biggest challenge for the team was deciding which episodes to actually make. “We had so much fun writing loglines for about 30 different adventures,” she says. “With the help of our execs, we narrowed the list down to the five we focused on in season two. Groot gets into even bigger adventures and more trouble. In a way, he’s beginning to grow up: He learns the hardships and joys of parenthood, the tough lessons of cleanliness and hygiene, how not to pilot a ship, and starts on his path to becoming a hero.” But, adds the writer/director, “I was particularly excited about the fact that they let us give Groot a nose.”

Yes, he gets a nose in episode two, confirms executive producer Brad Winderbaum, adding that it was the episode that shocked him the most. “Kirsten is an incredible filmmaker whose vision for this show surprises us at every turn,” he says. “I don’t know how she did it, but her work in season two even surpasses her incredible work in season one.”

EPISODE LINEUP

Episode 1: “Are You My Groot?”

Groot stumbles across a strange egg in a nest while exploring the alien planet of Terma. He instantly falls for the little creature that emerges when the egg cracks, adopting it as his own. “This episode is very near and dear to me as the parent of a young kid,” says Lepore. “We had a blast designing our bird characters, especially perfecting their goofy movements. Additionally, we had the pleasure of recording the legendary voice talent Dee Bradley Baker who single-handedly created all of our bird sounds.”

Episode 2: “Groot Noses Around”

When Groot discovers a bionic nose-shaped device that grants him a sense of smell, he quickly learns not to stick his new nose where it doesn’t belong. Says Lepore, “When we pitched this episode idea, I thought for sure it would be too ‘out there’ for Kevin Feige and our EPs. I was thrilled when they picked it, mostly just to see what Groot would look like with a weird, cute nose on his face? The scene with the fragrant delights displayed across the banquet table is my favorite shot of this season.”

Episode 3: “Groot’s Snow Day”

After landing on the icy planet of Falligar, Groot fashions a snowman with scraps of junk, inadvertently creating an unstoppable snowman-robot that wreaks havoc. “We had too much fun making this episode—and creating our snowman!” says Lepore. “This was one of the last episodes to have the scoring completed, and I wasn’t sure what the two songs for this episode would be. I was cheering and clapping the first time I got to hear them. Our music composer, Daniele Luppi, knocked it out of the park!”

Episode 4: “Groot’s Sweet Treat”

As an intergalactic ice cream truck approaches, Groot—desperate to get a treat—frantically scours the ship for coins. “I very much relate to this as a kid growing up in the suburbs, constantly chasing ice cream trucks,” says Lepore. “I’m really happy we got to use the classic ice cream ‘Entertainer’ theme—and then upgrade it into a ridiculous ‘90s club banger. Fun Fact: That’s Mikky Ekko singing the final song that plays over the credits!”

Episode 5: “Groot and the Great Prophecy”

In this adventure narrated by The Watcher, Groot finds himself in the heart of an ancient Drez-Lar temple with a mythic prophecy he must fulfill to save the universe. Says Lepore, “Absolutely loved recording Jeffrey Wright for this one—he was really incredible! The very last thing we did right before wrapping this season was to change up the ball-bouncing sound effects on the final mix stage. Felt good to add a whole new comedic layer in the 11th hour.”

BIOGRAPHIES

VIN DIESEL (voice of Baby Groot) is a prominent actor, producer and filmmaker who has been honored with both a Hands and Footprint Ceremony at the TCL Chinese Theatre, and a Star on the Walk of Fame in Hollywood. He is most widely known as Dominic Toretto in “The Fast and Furious” film series, Richard B. Riddick in the “Chronicles of Riddick” series, Xander Cage in the “xXx” series, as well as the voice of Groot in the “Guardians of the Galaxy” films and “Avengers: Infinity Wars.”

“FAST X,” the latest installment of “The Fast and the Furious,” hit theaters on May 19, 2023. With Diesel both producing and starring, the 10th film in the saga was one of the biggest box office hits of 2023 and secured the second-biggest global opening weekend of the year so far. “F9” was a boost for theaters too, scoring the highest US opening weekend in over 18 months. The eighth installment had the largest international release of all time, grossing over \$1.2 billion worldwide. A native New Yorker, Diesel has also written and directed the original short film “Los Bandoleros,” telling the backstory of the characters and events in the franchise.

Also in 2023, Diesel returned as the voice of Groot in “Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3.” Opening in theaters on May 5, “Vol. 3” has shattered records, grossing \$845 million worldwide and already surpassing the lifetime gross of “Vol. 1.”

Diesel led the star-studded ensemble cast in the highly anticipated “xXx: Return of Xander Cage” and has appeared in “Billy Lynn’s Long Halftime Walk,” directed by Ang

Lee. In 2020, Diesel was seen in Sony's "Bloodshot" starring as Ray Garrison, a soldier recently killed in action and brought back to life as the superhero Bloodshot by the RST corporation. In 2015, he starred in and produced "The Last Witch Hunter" for Lionsgate, opposite Sir Michael Caine.

Diesel previously starred alongside Michelle Yeoh in 20th Century Fox's "Babylon A.D."; he was also seen in the courtroom drama "Find Me Guilty," directed by Sidney Lumet.

In 2005, Diesel starred in his first comedy feature, "The Pacifier," which was a huge box-office success for Disney. In the highly anticipated science-fiction feature "The Chronicles of Riddick," Diesel reprised the title role. Produced by his production company, One Race Films, it was the follow-up to the cult favorite "Pitch Black."

Another endeavor in Diesel's entrepreneurial rise was the launch of his successful video game company, Tigon Studios, which created and produced the multi-platform "Riddick: The Merc Files," as well as 2004's top-selling Xbox game "The Chronicles of Riddick: Escape from Butcher Bay."

In his first foray into filmmaking, Diesel wrote, produced, directed and starred in the 1995 independent short "Multi-Facial," which explored the experience of being multiracial in today's society. The film follows Diesel—whose biological mother is Caucasian and biological father is African American—on several auditions in which he is told that he is either too Black or too white for the part. It was after seeing "Multi-Facial" at the 1995 Cannes Film Festival that Steven Spielberg created the role of Private Adrian Caparzo in "Saving Private Ryan" specifically for Diesel. Diesel would go on to be nominated for a Screen Actors Guild® Award for this role.

Diesel will return as Dominic Toretto when the highly anticipated next chapter of "The Fast and the Furious" franchise hits theaters on April 4, 2025.

KIRSTEN LEPORE (Writer/Director/Executive Producer) is a Los Angeles-based director and animator, and alumna of CalArts. The writer/director behind the 2022 season of Marvel Studios' "I Am Groot" shorts returns to the MCU to write and direct five more shorts for season two, which begins streaming on Disney+ on Sept. 6, 2023.

Lepore's viral hit "Hi Stranger" garnered upwards of 200 million views online, and her stop-motion episode of "Adventure Time" won a 2016 Emmy® Award and Annie Award. She animation directed "Marcel the Shell with Shoes On," which premiered at Telluride and released in 2021 by A24—it is Certified Fresh on Rotten Tomatoes with a 98 percent critics score.

Lepore's other films have taken top prizes at SXSW, Slamdance and many other international festivals. She has worked with clients such as Google, MTV, Mini Cooper, Silk, Skippy, Nestle and many more. Lepore has given talks everywhere from Pixar to Portugal and has also been featured in Juxtapoz and Shots, and was named one of the 50 most creative people by Creativity Magazine.