

Disney THE JUNGLE BOOK

FUN FACTS

GOOD CHARACTER

SLAM DUNK – At full stretch, Baloo can reach nearly 15 feet high.

- The free-spirited bear is so heavy and sports so much fur, he took nearly five hours per frame to render.

WHAT'S IN A NAME – Mother wolf Raksha is aptly named. In Hindi, Raksha means protector.

SO BIG – Artists at WETA took some creative license when it came to King Louie, borrowing a legendary character—Gigantopithecus—and exaggerating his size. King Louie stands 12 feet tall.

LOINCLOTH LOGIC – Mowgli sports a red loincloth in the film, but costume designer Laura Jean Shannon had her work cut out for her. “Mowgli’s immersed in water and mud, he gets rained on, he runs,” says Shannon. “We even rigged a hidden safety harness into the costume because Mowgli hangs on tree limbs and cliffs. Each of the loincloths—we ended up with 16 or 17—had a very specific purpose.”

- Shannon built a “suit of armor” from the leaves of an alocasia tree (known as elephant ear plant). The garment showcased how the intelligent man-cub would protect himself from angry bees before collecting honey for Baloo.

MOVIE MAGIC

DETAILS, DETAILS – The team at Moving Picture Company (MPC) were responsible for animating more than 70 species, crafting 100 million leaves and simulating earth, fire and water. A team of more than 800 computer graphics artists spent more than a year on the project.

BUILDING A JUNGLE – Artists digitally built most of the jungle environment that appears in the film, creating moss, bark, rock, water, grass, trees, leaves that were all inspired by their real-life counterparts in India. The virtual environment makes up 80 percent of the film frame 100 percent of the time.

PLACES, PLEASE – Filmmakers utilized motion capture technology to help them visualize the entire film prior to live-action production kicking off. The process involves special body suits adorned with dots that translate into the computer. Even director Jon Favreau suited up for select scenes.

ME AND MY SHADOW – One of the challenges filmmakers faced by pairing a live-action Mowgli with computer-generated animal counterparts was that the CG creatures were unable to cast shadows on real-life Mowgli. Visual effects supervisor Rob Legato developed a system that allowed filmmakers to project light and shadows onto Mowgli that represent the creatures that are moving near him.

HONEY, HONEY – Mowgli deals with a lot of honey in “The Jungle Book.” The sweet stuff proved challenging for filmmakers, who wanted it to look authentic—yet still appealing. Color and viscosity had to be considered, as well as how to make the honeycomb it comes in.

BACK IN TIME

INSPIRED BY WALT – Disney’s 1967 animated film, “The Jungle Book,” was the last film that Walt Disney oversaw. He passed away in 1966, the year before the film’s release.

- Director Jon Favreau was inspired by more than the 1967 movie. “When I think about Disney’s legacy, I relate to Walt’s original dream,” he says. “Walt Disney’s work has influenced my work. He was considered high tech for the time. He was the first person who locked soundtrack with picture, so the characters were perfectly choreographed to the musical score—something that absolutely blew people’s minds. Disney was on the cutting edge of technology.”

OSCAR NOM – The iconic song “The Bare Necessities,” written by Terry Gilkyson, was nominated for an Academy Award® in 1968.

STUDIO BRATS -- Composer John Debney, who wrote the score for the new, live-action film “The Jungle Book,” is the son of Louis Debney, who worked for Walt Disney. “When I was a youngster, they were making this incredible magical film called ‘The Jungle Book,’ and I was sort of a studio brat,” says Debney. “I got to know the young man Bruce Reiterman who played Mowgli. We would go on adventures around the world with his family.”

SCOUTS’ HONOR -- According to actor Ben Kingsley, author Rudyard Kipling’s characters are part of being young in the U.K. “Before a boy in the U.K. joins the Boy Scouts, he joins the Cubs,” says Kingsley. “And our Cub Chief was always called Akela. In fact, all the Scouts’ names come from Kipling’s writings.”