

## Getting Curious with Jonathan Van Ness & Arlo The Alligator Boy: Ryan Crego, Mary Lambert, Blake Lemons, Michael J. Woodard

**JVN** [00:00:00] Welcome to Getting Curious. I'm Jonathan Van Ness and every week I sit down for a 40 minute conversation with a brilliant expert--or in this case, experts!--to learn all about something that makes me curious. On today's episode, I'm joined by the team behind the new Netflix film Arlo the Alligator Boy, where I ask them: How much do we <3 Arlo? Ah! Welcome to Getting Curious, this is Jonathan Van Ness. I am so excited. This is a literal Getting Curious historical first. We have before had two guests at once, I think only one time. But never ever have we had four at once. Welcome to the show the writer and director of 'Arlo the Alligator Boy,' Ryan Crego. We have Blake Lemons, who is the co-executive producer. We have Michael J. Woodard, who plays literal Arlo Beauregard himself and Mary Lambert who plays Bertie. And there is me who plays Furlecia.

**ALL** [00:00:59] Woo! Yeah! [CLAPPING AND LAUGHING]

**JVN** [00:01:04] Y'all! This has just been like my first ever, like, animated thing where I, like, played anything outside of, like, three lines. Like, I've, I've done, like, a line here, I've done a line there, but I've never, like, done a *whole* project. Michael, is this your first project? And Mary, is this your first, like, full, like, feature animated project?

**MICHAEL J. WOODARD** [00:01:24] Yes, this is, this is my first, ever. This is even like, I've done some acting in the past but I don't think I've ever made it to the point where I've actually gotten to be on a platform, acting. So this is, like, my first overall movie ever and let alone animation project. But, I think I'm nailing it and you are too, Mary!

**MARY LAMBERT** [00:01:50] Yes! This is my first acting thing I've done since I was Cinderella in my high school musical.

**RYAN CREGO** [00:01:58] I want to see that. [ALL LAUGH] Please.

**JVN** [00:02:02] So, Blake and Ryan, same question. Is this your guys' first spearheading of, like, your first own animated, like, feature?

**RYAN CREGO** [00:02:13] Yeah, kind of. So I've worked on movies before and I've worked on series and I've run shows before. And Blake and I have worked together for off and on over the last, like, six or seven years on different shows. But this is the first movie that I've directed and taken on, and the first movie I think Blake's been the supervising producer on.

**BLAKE LEMONS** [00:02:34] Yeah, yeah, this is, I've been in television animation since 2005, and this is the first feature and I'm pumped about it; it's great.

**JVN** [00:02:42] Ok, so, you know what I just realized, for our listeners queens, because I've been so on the inside of this, I have been so excited about this and I was just assuming that everyone even knows what we're talking about. But let me just fill everyone in. We are talking about 'Arlo The Alligator Boy.' This is a movie that is coming out on Netflix, April 16th. And the stunning logline for 'Arlo The Alligator Boy' is--and you can correct me if I'm wrong someone but I think this is correct--a wide-eyed boy who is half-human and half-alligator leaves his sheltered life in the swamp to search for his long lost father in New York City. What a premise! What a premise. Who even knows what could happen. So for, for Blake and Ryan, what was this development process like? Like, how did Arlo come to life? What were you doing? Where were you? You just, like, "Uh, there's this alligator boy." How did it happen?

**RYAN CREGO** [00:03:34] It's been over a decade for me. So I was, I was just a young artist and I, myself, like, Blake, kind of came up as what's called a story artist in animation, which means we, we do the storyboards but on a lot of projects they're what's considered, like, board-driven. So, like, my early work, I worked on 'Shrek' movies. And with that, like, we oftentimes weren't even given a script. We were just told like, hey, Shrek and Donkey walk to the forest and, you know, they're going here. And then you just start writing jokes and drawing funny things. So I always write through drawing. And then one day, I don't know when the day was, but this little alligator boy started popping up and I was like, "Oh, he's so cute and so fun and lovable," and just had, I started digging into, just you start building a personality and all that stuff.

So, then the whole thing came together and that's like the early characters, Bertie and, and the hairball character and all these, you know, I kind of, but I wasn't old enough or experienced enough at the time to like put a cohesive pitch for a movie together. I tried, it was a great experience, but you know it's kind of, like, you know, being persistent is great because I didn't nail it then. And then, however many years later, it was, like, my wife was like, like 'cause that was around the time I met my wife and she was like, "You never did that project and I loved it so much." And I was like, "Someone else believes in it again, maybe I should look at it again." And so I did. And I started working on it and redeveloping it and then got Blake involved. And Blake was there when I pitched to Netflix. And, you know, it was the whole thing. It just, they were, like, "Yeah, let's do it." Movie and series at the same time. It's crazy.

**JVN** [00:05:12] I love that you said that and not me because I didn't know if people knew about the series yet and I didn't want to be the one to like, again, say the thing, like,

before it was released because like I do that like it's my job. So I'm really glad that we cleared that up. So it's out in the world. How exciting! Did you think, ok so was that like on, like, did you do it in LA, like, on that, not to name drop but, like Van Ness Avenue, like, where Netflix is?

**BLAKE LEMONS** [00:05:34] Absolutely.

**RYAN CREGO** [00:05:34] Yeah, yeah, yeah. In that big old intimidating building, yeah.

**JVN** [00:05:37] So, so did you expect to leave that pitch meeting with not only a feature film but a series as well? I mean that's a pretty huge thing to, like, get greenlit for both of these things simultaneously.

**RYAN CREGO** [00:05:49] No, I, I no, I expected to go back to my regular life and not to hear that, I don't know. I was like, I thought it was a crazy thing to pitch a movie and then say, "And then a series and it's a musical. And, and not only that, the music is going to be, like, super modern and like, you know, like, think Beyonce, don't think Disney." And, and they were, Netflix was just, like, right in the, like, from the beat, before the character even came on the screen, they were like, "Mhmm, yeah." And I was like, "Ok, well, here's the alligator," yeah.

**JVN** [00:06:22] And Blake, you were there for this?

**BLAKE LEMONS** [00:06:24] Yeah, I absolutely was, yeah. I'll mention that I remember in 2012 when Ryan and I first started working together at a different studio, him saying to me, "I have this character, I really want to pitch it, I really want to make it, I think it's groundbreaking, I think people will love it," you know. And that was 2012. And fast forward to, when was that pitch Crego? What year was it?

**RYAN CREGO** [00:06:46] Oh, it was right before my daughter was born, so it must have been 2017. Yeah.

**BLAKE LEMONS** [00:06:52] 2017. And so fast forward to that and, and it got going and, and, yeah, I was lucky enough to have been making some shows with Ryan before that and he brought me in and, and then when I met Michael J. Woodard here I was like, "Yes, that is absolutely the, the, the voice, the character," the everything that Crego had been talking about in 2012.

**JVN** [00:07:15] Ah! Ah! Ok so one thing that I wrote down for that is that I really hope the children at home are taking from this is patience, patience, 2012. It's like I think so many

people are like, "You know, it was an overnight thing," but, like, no, like you've literally been visualizing this, working towards this, like in different moments of intensity, like for literally ten years. So, patience, perseverance comes up for me. That's such a massive, congratulations, like, wow, wow, wow. So, one other thing that, not to speak for Michael and Mary, but I'm going to guess that I think this is going to be correct when I say: Shrek! You guys worked on Shrek?! I love Shrek!

**RYAN CREGO** [00:08:00] Yeah. Yeah, it was crazy. It was the best place, I was, I was, and, you know, out of school and I got my, I had worked in a bunch of you know restaurant jobs and things, but, like, my first animation job, they were like, "Yeah so you're going to be a production assistant," and I was, like, "Cool." And then I didn't know exactly what-, it was DreamWorks; crazy. And then all of a sudden I walked in and they were like, "Yeah, so, the movie you're working on, we're not sure about, can you go help out: Shrek?" And I was like, "Yeah, I can do that." So, and then I just totally that, that group of people, the producers on those projects and the artists just really, like, shepherded me and helped me grow. And I became a storyboard artist and, you know, just kept going.

**JVN** [00:08:47] Wow, wow, wow. That is major. Ok, this is kind of a question for everyone but I want to hear from Blake and Ryan first. What was it about Michael and Mary that just, you're like "Ha! That's it, I hear it, I see it, I feel it, this is it"?

**RYAN CREGO** [00:09:05] Um, I'll start with Michael, because I think, I didn't know who, I didn't know who would play Arlo, and I was searching for, for years literally, was just kind of thinking like, "Oh, that's an interesting person or that." And a lot of times it was a younger talent because I didn't want the voice to, you know, he's, like, 15, 16 years old. And, and so, and then all of a sudden by the time, because I worked on it for so long, it's like a grown person. Like, "Oh that's not going to work anymore."

But I was working on the music with Alex Geringas, who, as you know, Jonathan, you've gotten to work with him a little bit, he's our amazing songwriter, my songwriting partner on the movie and series, and we were trying to figure out: who are we writing for. And that's a big thing when you're writing songs without knowing what, you know, like, how you're crafting, who's that, what that voice is. And Alex, one night, I remember it clear as day, sent me, we're always, we're in constant contact, and he sent me a clip of Michael's audition on American Idol. And, it wasn't even him singing. When I got to him singing, I was like, shocked. And I was like, "This is it!" But it was him getting his I would say it's not the golden ticket because that's when you're going to Hollywood, but it's like, it's like that little tag that could be like for a marathon, you know, like, your number.

So it's like you're not even, you didn't even win, you didn't win. You didn't, you're not going to Hollywood, you're just getting in the door. And they gave him the ticket in this, in this clip and he holds it up and he was like, yes! And the way he was so proud and so happy and I was like, that is Arlo. Like, he just sees everything so positively, like, that's a win. It's a, being there is a win, being, the door, I was like, that's my guy. And so, um, so I, I, we, found Michael's manager and, like, we're, like, "Hey, er we want to meet him." We wanna, we wanna, and so we had some songs in hand and we, we, we met up at a studio and and we recorded and I was like, "That's it." Like, it was done, for me it was done.

I had, you know, we had a lot of work with Netflix. Michael hadn't acted before, right. I want him to play the lead, he's never acted before, like, but, but I knew in my heart this was, this was Arlo. So, you know, they followed me, we made it happen. And, and even some of the audition is in the movie, that's how good he was. I mean, that's how authentic Michael, that character is like without even having acted for all these years, just that some of the audition is in that, is in that movie when he's on the train with Bertie and he does the [SINGS] Bertie. Actually Michael, do it. Can you do Bertie?

**MICHAEL J. WOODARD** [00:11:29] Oh, um [LAUGHS] no. [LAUGHTER]

**RYAN CREGO** [00:11:30] Alright, ok, ok.

**MICHAEL J. WOODARD** [00:11:33] Wait, wait, wait. I'll do it. [SINGS] Bertie, B-B-B-Bertie. Bertie. It was like, something like that, I don't know.

**RYAN CREGO** [00:11:39] I mean how do you not, right.

**BLAKE LEMONS** [00:11:40] And that scene, and that scene is, is, was the first thing that we put together with Mary and Michael together, like, animatic where we put the storyboards with the audio and, and we saw the, the two characters playing off of each other for the first time and, and we absolutely loved it. And, and yeah, Mary playing with, with Michael, it was, it was just magic. We knew it was the right duo. Um, but yeah, Crego, if you want to talk about finding Mary.

**RYAN CREGO** [00:12:08] Yeah, yeah. And Mary, Mary auditioned in a more, like, traditional, we, I couldn't find Bertie and I, and you know we did a bigger casting search. Like for Furlecia I knew Jonathan to, not to put you on the spot, but I knew it was you. It was like, [JVN SCREAMS] I was fighting so hard from the beginning, I, it took, it took me *months* to get you, but we did. But with, with Mary, Mary came in through a more, like, traditional auditioning process through the casting directors. And, we had, she came in later. Like, there were, there were a *bunch* of auditions and I was pouring through every

single one and I had some that I liked but I, but I didn't, I didn't feel that passionately. And one of the things we did for, for the audition was we had a song and it was a pretty popular song that, you know, popular artist, that we had the Bertie audition sing and everyone did like the karaoke version you know off of, like, YouTube or whatever.

And then they sang the song and Mary, from the beginning, there was this piano chord and she was singing at her piano and sang the most haunting version of this song, and I was like, I was in tears, I literally like I got tears in my eyes. And I was like, "Ok, this is it," and, like, and I knew there was a little bit like we had some work to do like we had to find the character still a little bit but like, I was like, "That was it, man." It was just so powerful that someone would come in and say, this is, this is who I am, and then take, you know, take it or leave it kind of a thing, but felt like that's Bertie, right. So it was a very like-

**MARY LAMBERT** [00:13:38] I didn't know that!

**RYAN CREGO** [00:13:40] Yeah, yeah. I was like, I listened to that, I still, I still have it on my iPod-

**MARY LAMBERT** [00:13:45] Oh my God.

**JVN** [00:13:48] Ok, well that's fresh. I'm just going to, like, we're going to go to Mary for a second and we're going to roll it back to Michael 'cause there's a lot of things that we need to hit there. This is a quick sidebar. Mary, I was, too, very shook by Amber Glenn's rendition on Instagram. I was gooped, gagged, and gotten my life all together. Reigning national silver medalist, U.S. senior figure skating just giving her life to your music, honey. I had chills! Wow. Ok, anyway.

**MARY LAMBERT** [00:14:22] I died.

**JVN** [00:14:23] If y'all on this have not seen that clip of Amber Glenn skating to Mary's song, you should run; don't walk. [LAUGHTER] That's what we were saying. Mary, so you didn't hear that story? You didn't know that the way that you did the audition of Bertie was what set you apart in the way that you did that song?

**MARY LAMBERT** [00:14:38] No, I didn't know! I'm just so, I can't believe that, that's so beautiful. I-

**JVN** [00:14:44] That was really gorgeous.

**MARY LAMBERT** [00:14:46] I was actually really worried when I did the song. My agent sent me the, the sheet and I was like, "I am not, I'm, this is perfect, I'm in the studio," but I didn't have that much time, I had to hurry and do it. And I was like "I don't really know the song, but I'm gonna just kind of take the chords and make it my own and, and just sing it" [LAUGHS] Crazy. I, I just can't believe that, Ryan, that's so sweet.

**JVN** [00:15:07] One thing that I take from Bertie's character is that she is very, like, herself and she's so lovely and she is not like everyone else. So I think that, that to me as, like, an outsider just makes so much sense, I like have chills up my triceps, it's just amazing and your performance is so, I mean, sometimes it makes me question my emotional intelligence because of like how into Arlo I am, like I'm like because I am I like, am I 11? Like, I'm so in it like I am in it! When we are watching it, like I am taken away, like, I am chomping at the bit to see this movie, like, did you mean to make it for 34-year-olds accidentally as well?

**RYAN CREGO** [00:15:44] Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**JVN** [00:15:47] Ok, so that's so, so it's not that I'm not like, I am mature, I just am like a victim of great storytelling and incredible animation and it's not my fault that we are all really just seeing this amazing work. Ok, so I answered my own question for me. I'm going back to Michael. So Michael, you are just minding your own business and then your team tells you that these guys want you to do, like, voice this character in this new Netflix movie.

**MICHAEL J. WOODARD** [00:16:11] Yes. I got an email from, well, I'll say this. I did the finale of American Idol, and I think it was, like, a week after or a couple days after I got this email, Jonathan, that said that people want to get in touch with you. And they was, like, it said that they wanted to get in touch with your team, actually. But, like, I lowkey didn't have a team because I got signed to management right after American Idol was over but there was no kind of, like, relationship because it was so quickly after the finale. So I didn't, I'm like, "Who do I, you know, who do I forward this email to," but I was like, "Ok, I do have a manager now so let me just, you know, scramble and send it to them."

And then I think a month later we winded up meeting at Paramount Studios in Hollywood. And I get like, the audition process was, it wasn't the most easy thing. Like I did an accent, Jonathan, and you know it didn't fly over too well in my mind. So it was one of those situations where I was like, "Ok, Ryan, can I be myself too, do I have to talk this way?" And he was like, "Yeah, like do it." It was, like, I was trying this whole New Orleans thing and it, it just was not good. But they kind of told me afterwards, like, "Michael, the part has been yours, like, we just wanted to meet you and come in." But I'm, I'm so glad that that moment kind of solidified it for you Ryan and Alex.

**RYAN CREGO** [00:17:49] So can I tell one small story about that first meeting that was so amazing?

**JVN** [00:17:52] Yes. Yes.

**RYAN CREGO** [00:17:53] So, so we're waiting for Michael and he, here comes, I'm like, is he that person? You know, I kind of think that. And I thought that about you, Jonathan, and like, and you are, by the way, for anyone listening, you are, you are that person. You're so sweet and positive. And I think that, you know, you wonder sometimes with people, you see them, you see just a clip on whatever YouTube and you're, like, "Is that really, can that person really be that person?" Here comes Michael. He's got his little backpack on. He's got high waters and row socks and loafers, and he's shuffling, and he's shuffling his feet down the street and he goes, "Hey!" And I was like, "Oh God, it's really him." And, um, and so we got inside, and we start talking. And it was just, like, that, like, totally lovely and amazing.

And he goes, "I need to, um, I need to go use the bathroom. Don't worry, I've been here. I know, I know where the bathroom is." And, and so I'm thinking, like, you know, Alex and I are downstairs talking and then all of a sudden for those of you who get to watch the movie, 'Beyond These Walls' is, like, one of my favorite songs, very, it's very important song to me and to Arlo. And we hear Michael upstairs in the bathroom, he went to the bathroom to warm up, and he's singing 'Beyond These Walls.' And we hear it reverberating through the studio. And Alex and I looked at each other and we were like, we, like, crept up the stairs, it was up, it was up the stairs, and we, like, creep up the stairs and we were like listening to him in the bathroom going, "Oh my God, this is it," like this is, it was so crazy. And, and then he came down and, like, knocked it out of the park. It was, it was insane. But he was warming up and I was like, the fact that he not only took the time and like learnt the song but like cared enough to go do his vocal warm ups and do the prep and like go upstairs and practice the song before he came down and I was like, oh my, you know, that's work ethic. That's why he is where he is.

**JVN** [00:19:46] Yeah, I like to do my vocal warm ups too before we do our songs, because it's like I really need to, like, get into, like, my octaves and everything, because I find when I, when I don't, it's like it, I'm just kidding, I obviously don't sing in this musical! This is a question for Mary and Michael, because this is your first feature. You are, I don't know what it's call-, well, yeah, so in a movie, I guess you're, like, a lead, honey. And then in, like, a series, you're like a series regular honey. So you were just really thriving, nailing these roles. What was the most um--two-part question for both of you--what was--and Michael, you're on my screen, you're first so I'm going to have you go first on this one--what was your most



challenging part of voicing this character for the first time? And what was the most exciting part?

**MICHAEL J. WOODARD** [00:20:36] Ok, first I want to say, Ryan that story is freaking nuts. Like, no, and I'm mad that you didn't tell me this sooner Ryan, like, what the heck, but oh my God this just, that's amazing, that's so inspiring and so amazing. I don't even remember doing that. That's, that's funny. But I still remember what the steps in the bathroom look like. Oh, but yeah, um, I say Jonathan the most challenging thing, so the animation world is, is different from just, like, walking onto a screen or, or in front of a camera and pretty much acting out, there's a lot more that goes into it technically, I think. So I would say the lines weren't the most challenging, and maybe Mary can attest to this, I think the laughs was, was what I struggled with and, like, the um, like, the grunting noises and, like, the physical noises, you know, that had to represent me moving.

**MARY LAMBERT** [00:21:36] Totally!

**MICHAEL J. WOODARD** [00:21:37] And, no, and I think I'm good at it now. Like, I've grown to a place, like, me, Ryan and I recorded the other day, so I don't know if I'm getting better, Ryan. I don't know yet.

**RYAN CREGO** [00:21:48] Absolutely.

**BLAKE LEMONS** [00:21:49] Oh you're absolutely are.

**MICHAEL J. WOODARD** [00:21:50] Ok good. And Blake was there so you guys would know if I'm getting better. I think I'm getting better but the first time around, oh my God, I thought I would lose the role just off of my, my laughs and my grunting sounds; it was so bad. Like, the running noises, like, the panting, you know. Yeah, it was, that's the most challenging.

**JVN** [00:22:09] I'm going to tell you how good you are at it though, because I'm going to jump in now, not as, like, a producer, but I didn't, like, they, they were so good. Like, I didn't even, I was like, "What?" Like, they're so good I didn't even realize because, like, yeah, you're running, but it's, like, you sounded such your character that I didn't even realize there was a person voicing it! That's, like, how good you are! Like, wow. Wow.

**MICHAEL J. WOODARD** [00:22:31] Thank you. Thank you. I, I don't know, I think I just grew at it, like, now the panting is like, [MAKES PANTING NOISE] like, you know so-. Now I can't help doing it, I'm just, I just go to my bathroom and I'm, like, "Eugh, ah," you know [LAUGHTER].

**BLAKE LEMONS** [00:22:50] An animated life!

**JVN** [00:22:53] They're like, "Is he ok in there?" [LAUGHTER]

**MICHAEL J. WOODARD** [00:22:57] Um I would say though, Jonathan, the most exciting part is I would say just the whole acting experience all around like when I have like recording days, I get so like excited to go ahead and like read all these pages, because when you figure out that you're actually like telling a story here that will affect, you know, I'm going to say millions of people you know, to come, I'll say, one day, it makes you, it makes you even more exhilarated and happy to go ahead and and put your all. It, like, motivates you to really put your all into the lines. And, you know, when you realize that these, these are not just lines on the paper, like these are lines that are telling a story, like, it just pushes you even harder to go ahead and like give your all and be expressive.

And I think as an artist, like, it gives me another creative outlet to really, you know, be creative and to be expressive. And I think just the fact that I get to do it, like, all the time and I get to tell a story by using my creative expression is like one of the most exciting things to me as well. And also to have a movie that is so inclusive when it comes to music, including the music, like, that is so exciting, like, just these songs that I get to sing all the time and also a lot, having Ryan and Blake and Alex just allowing me to be myself in it, you know, and just, like, do all my little nuances if I want to and, you know, use my tone that I have, my natural tone to, in order to express the songs and lyrics my own way, that's pretty exciting as well. So that's what I would say.

**JVN** [00:24:42] Ah I love that answer, first of all. Second of all, I did have, like, an impending sense of, like, "Oh no," when you were like yeah, you're not just reading lines on a paper, you're telling a story. I was like, oh, I wish someone would have told me that like eight months ago before I finished my, I was like, I was? No I'm just kidding!

**RYAN CREGO** [00:25:04] You do a really good job though. You do a really good job.

**JVN** [00:25:07] I was like, I was, like, are you, no! Mary, same question: most exciting part of voicing Bertie; most challenging part?

**MARY LAMBERT** [00:25:15] The first thing that came to my mind, so I had like a second, I had a callback with, with Ryan and Blake, and I live in western Massachusetts in, like, the woods and I, so I drove, I drove to New York, and I was, like, really, really excited, and Bertie's character originally had-, it said she had a, like, a Southern accent. And so I, I didn't memorize anything, I just spent the entire time trying to finesse this accent. And I

got, and we got to the audition, and I, you know, I read, like, one line and then I think it was Ryan, Ryan was, like, "Hey, just don't worry about the accent," and I was like, "Oh no, I'm failing, I, I did bad, I did it bad." And I, I left the audition and I cried the entire way home.

I was sobbing. I was like, "I didn't get it, I really wanted it," you know, I was like, I was like, "You know what, but I learned a lot," that, so that, like, those first couple of days and then I remember I got a call from my agent like a couple, a couple of days later, she's like, "You got it." And I was like, "What?!" I just did not believe that. So that was like, that was a little bit of an emotional rollercoaster. But in terms of the process, I totally echo Michael's sentiments of like doing these efforts of, like, when you're running, it's really like, people are around you, so you really sound like you're, like to me, it sounded sexual [LAUGHS] like it was really [MAKES NOISE]. And I kept doing these things that, like, and I'm, like, is this, this is funny.

**JVN** [00:26:46] Um, I do just really quickly, I have to jump and I have to ask a follow-up question. And I would be remiss, and I know everyone would be too, if I didn't ask it. We're going to need to hear, like, just a sentence of a Southern accent, like, just [LAUGHTER] like, I just, I'm really just, I'm so sorry, Mary, but please just give us, like, any one of, any one of those sentences that you could remember from character, like, if Bertie had been from the South, what would she have sounded like?

**MARY LAMBERT** [00:27:17] [IN A SOUTHERN ACCENT] Buddy, you two better stay down now, dontcha hear. Y'all, y'all are too cute.

**JVN** [00:27:24] Oooh, I feel like you started to get into something there. The first one made me really laugh and then by the second one, I started to already believe! Wow! Actressing. That was, like, meant to be more funny but you ended up being really good at it, which I'm not surprised because you're a literal actress. Ah. Ok, so keep going about, keep going with your answer before I rudely interrupted; I'm sorry. Told you it would happen; it's happened.

**MARY LAMBERT** [00:27:48] No, no, no. The first time I flew to LA to do some of the records with Michael, and it was our first time meeting, and as soon as, like, Michael came down the hallway and I was meeting him, it was literally like, it was like meeting my best friend. It was like meeting, like, my mirror. Like, I'm just, I'm real extra all the time like I can't really help it. I'm just always smiling all the time. And here is Michael, just, like, always smiling. So we were just, like, immediately just, like, hugged and, like, couldn't stop, like, being near each other and laughing and making each other laugh. And then I also do, like, weight lifting and so Bertie is, like, super strong, you know, and at one point I, like, picked

Michael up and I was doing squats with Michael. That was, like, I think one of my favorite, favorite parts we've had. Just meeting Michael.

**JVN** [00:28:42] Aww, that's cute.

**RYAN CREGO** [00:28:45] We got, we got like nothing done that first day. We got nothing done that first day. These two, every time, we were, like, "Ok, hang on a second, we're going to talk about something." We just shut off the mic in the room and then it's, like, "bla bla bla bla bla," and they're up lifting each other and I'm like, "Oh God, ok, yeah we're back in our seats now."

**JVN** [00:29:05] You're like, "We're going to need an extra studio day because there was this, uh, thing happened at the-, we just need one extra day."

**RYAN CREGO** [00:29:09] It was the best. It was the best.

**MICHAEL J. WOODARD** [00:29:11] It was awesome.

**JVN** [00:29:12] Not that anyone asked, but I'm going to ask myself a question now because I just have to say, because it's just too funny. The efforting, I, there is, I can't remember when it happens, but there is a major fight I think it's in the movie. And, those effortings was, I never knew, like, "hah!" Like, there is so much like "hah!" like, for me that I was, that I, that I, like when I first saw it I was, like, "I got that in my sleep, honey," I know. But it's hard, it's hard. You don't realize.

And then, you know, the other thing that I'm going to also say, even though no one asked, but I'm going to ask myself the same question; most challenging. So y'all are singers, obviously, you sing very, very well. And a big thing for me was that I was like, "Ok, I'll do a musical, but, like, y'all aren't going to have me sing. I'm not coming on here with all these people who are, like, really genius singers and, like, trying to sing." And so I had recorded a lot of this like in a like in a stairwell closet in my house like, like a two foot wide by like three foot deep, like, closet, like, scrunched into it, like, trying to keep four cats at bay, which is not easy, which is why we re-recorded it in a studio, honey, because it just kept sounding worse and worse and worse when I would, like, record it from my house. And, but it was like COVID so we were trying to do the best we could.

And then finally when things started to get a little better, I was able to get into a recording studio. So after not being in a recording studio for, like, a good like, I don't know, from like April of 2020 to like, what was that you guys, like a month or two ago? One of the things that I had to do first into this recording studio is, like, I come, and I say hi to everyone and

it's like, so you're going to like match singing like just one note. And because Furlecia has this note where she's like [MAKES NOISE]. And I was like, it's like, and so for the first, like, 12 seconds after hearing that, I was like, [MAKES NOISE]. And then I was like, "Wait, no you're like a paid actor now. Like, you're, like, literally, like they believe in you, like they think you can do this, like, you can't keep saying like [MAKES NOISE] like [MUMBLES] I can't."

So then I was, like, "Focus! Commit!" like, and there was that nice music person who you were talking about Ryan and I was just like, "Oh my God he's, like, a literal musician," who like, you know, he didn't say like "Boom, cat," but like he was doing like the what choreographers are to "Boom, cat," he was doing that with music, he was like, yeah, you could just go like up here or like and you're like [MAKES NOISE] like you know, he's like doing like musical things and I don't really know about any of that and I was just like [MAKES CRYING NOISE] but I did it. I really just, like, committed and I, like, did my, like, throaty stomach growl and wow.

**RYAN CREGO** [00:31:42] And it worked.

**BLAKE LEMONS** [00:31:43] So it was everything we wanted, yeah, it was great, yeah.

**JVN** [00:31:45] So did you guys ever have to do a thing where you had to, like, sing to animation? Like, did you ever have to, like, match a song to, like, animation? Like, for Mary and Michael, or did that ever happen? Or, like, or would you sing first and then do the animation around how they sing it?

**MARY LAMBERT** [00:32:01] We sang, we sang first. We recorded it first and then they made the lip flaps match us I think.

**MICHAEL J. WOODARD** [00:32:06] Yeah.

**RYAN CREGO** [00:32:06] Yeah particularly with the songs because you never know, like, we want to give these artists the most freedom they can when they're singing to interpret the song and own it and, and embellish and do all that stuff. And so if we, if we record, or if we animate it to, like, a demo track or whatever, then we're kind of locking them into, this is the performance and you never want to lock these two in because they, they, you know, that would be a big mistake.

**JVN** [00:32:30] They are, honey, Mariah Carey butterfly honey, set them free, honey. Ok here, question. So, one thing, I had never really, you know, recorded like this, like, not so many lines, and I'm curious for, er this is a question for everyone, so how many times in that

booth, when you're recording, how it's like, "Ok, we'll listen to it," and then it's like [MAKES BEEPING NOISE] and then you, like, do the line. And remember how when we would do that, like, I could never remember if that was the first time hearing it or the second. So basically like every single line for, like, six hours at a time it'd be like, "This is the one we're going to listen to." And then after we'd listen to it, I'd say it when we weren't recording and it's like not the time to say it. And then every other time when it's like, it's like the go, it's like you're, it's like this is the one to listen and then say like I would just be, like, in this dark booth, like, "Huh it's warm in here, that's nice," like, and then and then they'd be, like, "Say it!" like, so, did that happen to you guys too or was that just me?

**MARY LAMBERT & MICHAEL J. WOODARD** [00:33:23] [CROSSTALK] No that happened / Oh, Jonathan!

**JVN** [00:33:26] It did?

**MARY LAMBERT** [00:33:26] Absolutely, like, because I, I get so sucked into the show, I am I, I want, the only thing I want my eyes to see is 'Arlo The Alligator Boy,' it's all I want to watch. I am the biggest fan too. So like when I'm supposed to be like, like putting in lines, I'm watching and I forget that I'm supposed to say something. I completely agree.

**JVN** [00:33:49] Did that happen to you Michael?

**MICHAEL J. WOODARD** [00:33:50] Y'all, the, the, it's called ADR, right?

**MARY LAMBERT** [00:33:53] Yeah, ADR.

**BLAKE LEMONS** [00:33:54] Yep, yep-

**JVN** [00:33:55] But so Michael, that happened to you as well?

**MICHAEL J. WOODARD** [00:33:57] It was, it was pretty, I think it was pretty rough at the beginning, but y'all, I love you guys, but I think I did pretty good with the ADR, ADR. But the thing about it is, Jonathan, I think it comes from me being good with rhythm, like I'm really good with rhythm. So when, when it did the one, two, three, like immediately I went into musician, so it's, like, it's the ear thing, it's the ear thing.

**MARY LAMBERT** [00:34:26] I couldn't do it. I was really, I had, I couldn't do it that, I mean I, I, a couple lines, but not many.

**JVN** [00:34:34] I think from therapy it was like, I've done like hypnosis in the past and I feel like once I heard those beep, beep, beep, I was like "ahhh," I almost had to go, like, harder to be, like, "Girl when you hear those beeps, like, it's your time to shine!" Like I really had to be like-. Ok, so here's a question for Ryan and Blake, not to put you on the spot, but I'm doing it. Of the phenomenon that I just described, who on the cast, even if they're not here, who did that the most? Like how, like, who, like, would just be standing there when it was, like, time to say their lines that you had to be like "Knock, knock, knock is anyone home," like, was it me?

**BLAKE LEMONS** [00:35:11] Um, er, here's, here's how I'll start to answer that. You all embodied it, your characters so much that we were always rolling. We just love you all so much and the improving and, yeah. So the ADR, yes, Johnathan I believe it was you.

**JVN** [00:35:30] Yeah, I would say in reality it was like, I would say that that happened, like I don't think I'm over it, I bet it happened, like, 30 percent of the time, like, a third of the time I think I missed my, like, I got distracted.

**BLAKE LEMONS** [00:35:42] But it was all so much fun and and I think like, like Michael was saying, it really is about that rhythm with the ADR. It really is about that rhythm. Like, you hear either yourself or if it was a scratch line that we had to throw in later on, you hear that rhythm. And I think you all, you all three are good with that rhythm. And, and it was, it was successful for us, so yeah.

**RYAN CREGO** [00:36:02] And to be fair, in a world, in a world outside of COVID we're not doing that much ADR, like, we're doing a *lot* of ADR because, you know, we have a lot to make up for. So in a, in the normal production pipeline, we're getting your original records; you don't have to think about matching the character, and then we get a couple of lines in at the end, but, like, we're doing an extreme amount because we're trying to make up for, you know, a period where we couldn't be in the studio and and that's you know, you're doing a great job.

**JVN** [00:36:31] I really, I really enjoyed the, like, I don't know the difference between, like, if you just get to, like, say the line or if you're having to match your line to, like, when the animation's already done, but I thought that was really fun. I mean, for me, I think that was probably the hardest stuff, like, being like, "Okay, you can't play anything different on this because, like, we already did it, you just need to, like, match it." And I found myself, like, over the sentences, like I would like draw like, like accents and stuff to, like, make myself remember like what emphasis to put, like, on the sentence or I put like little lines to, like, wait 'cause like, like if I needed to, like, wait a beat which that made me feel like such a f-, darn Oscar-winning actress. It did! I was like, "I, I'm, like, literally Helen Mirren. I'm literally,

like, just drama honey, I'm giving the drama." So, ok I think that, so what can, what does, I'm going to start here with Ryan and then move to Blake, what do you want people to take from this film? What do you want people to experience?

**RYAN CREGO** [00:37:36] That's a good question. I mean, you mentioned earlier, like, should a 34-year-old be that into this? And I think, you know, my, my goal from the beginning was always to make something that would resonate with everyone, you know, not just be like looked at as a, this is a kid's movie because it's a cartoon, but to really dig deep into, into the theme, themes of the movie and to really like tell you know an emotionally impactful story. And so the first thing I would say to that is like positivity, you know, I want to put something positive in the world. And I think this is a very positive movie. I think that it's, it's you know, themes are, so, and there's and there's many themes but like, I really like owning who you are, accepting yourself, supporting each other, having you know positive relationships, building each other up, you know, picking each other up when we're down.

All of these things that, like, we really need and we need it now, like, you know, for so many reasons. And so that's, like, the one thing that I really hope that people you know can take away from it, because I think, you know, you just want to do something good in, in the world. You don't want to leave it, leave it better than, than it was when you came into it, hopefully. And I think that's what you know I've committed my life to this art form and my career to it, and like so I'm, I'm very passionate about it. And I, and that's what I hope to do with this project and everything after. The trek for me now is like Arlo's so like, I don't wanna, I'm not tooting my own horn, but it's so good.

I mean, it's such a great job, you guys are all so powerful and so you know entertaining and so lovable and it's going to be so hard to match what we've, what we've just created over the last few years, 'cause I don't, I don't know what that is right now. It's like, I can't see anything other than this. It's just, you know, it was, it's a really, really special project with really special people who really, like, everyone showed up so positive and really put everything into it. And you don't get that with you know, we're so lucky in this time to, like, be able to not only work, but to work with people who really, like, believe in what we're working on and knowing that at the end we're going to have something really positive put into the world, like, that's that was so special to me. So, yeah.

**JVN** [00:39:46] I have to add to that really quickly. I'm sorry, Blake, you know that you're used to me talking over you before you can talk, you've been working with me for months. To add to that, one thing that I, like, obviously people think of me as a positive person and so often people bring this idea up of, like, you know, "How do you stay so positive?" And I think that a lot of times we misconstrue, like, positivity with being saccharine or, like, not



acknowledging difficulties or grief, feelings of abandonment, feelings of whatever is, you know, because we all have things that we've been hurt by and that to experience that doesn't mean that you're not being positive. And I really like the way in the movie and in the series you are not, you're tackling issues, I mean, you are tackling burnout, working fatigue, like all sorts of things that are, like, complex issues that I mean that's part of like what my character kind of went into, but I love how it is, it is complex, it is loving, it is everything that you just said. It's positive, but it's also not *not* acknowledging some of the things that people go through. And I just, I love how you've chosen to tell these stories and craft these stories together, so very much hats off to you for that. And it really is positive. It's everything you've just that, that's amazing. Blake, yes, please answer the same question.

**BLAKE LEMONS** [00:40:56] Absolutely. First off, thank you so much er for everything you just said there. When I read the script that, that Ryan and Clay Senechal wrote, all the positivity that was in there, was so inspiring and I think we needed it at *that* time. And as we were starting to produce this movie and COVID hit and, and everything else from 2020 hit and and we just really felt like we, we were doing something special. And I, what I want to, to come out from this is, the message of, you know, embrace others for everything that they are and do good. And I think that that's in the movie and I think we keep pushing it in the series. And yeah, that's, that's, that's where I feel Arlo is strongest.

**JVN** [00:41:37] Michael and Mary, same question, what do you hope people take from this movie?

**MICHAEL J. WOODARD** [00:41:42] Oh um, May you wanna go first? You want me to go first?

**MARY LAMBERT** [00:41:45] You go first.

**MICHAEL J. WOODARD** [00:46:46] Oh Mary, ok um, I think I want people to take away just I'm grateful that I get to be a part of something so positive, because, like, Ryan said, I think in the times today, we need positive content more than, you know, things that make you look at life in a negative way. I think we get that enough. So I think just having, being a part of something that can be so uplifting and will be so uplifting is just the positivity I want people to take it away from, and also like the life lessons in it. Like Johnathan, going back to when you said like, at 34, like, at 34 watching this movie when they're, like 11, I think that's one of the special parts of this movie. And I've said that for the longest time because I just feel like it's not just four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, 10, 11. Maybe we are soon getting to the cutoff date. I think that is, that's, like, so irrelevant now, I feel like this, this movie is geared toward every age because there is such social, I guess, topics that a young

person wouldn't be able to even relate to a lot of the time. I feel like more adults would be able to relate to some of the topics, like, just self-discovery. And, you know, what did you touch on, Jonathan, the fatigue or-

**JVN** [00:43:09] Yeah, yeah, burnout.

**MICHAEL J. WOODARD** [00:43:10] Burnout and things like that, like those are such universal topics that are not just, not *just* geared toward children, but geared toward every age range, you know. So I think just, like, just the life lessons of patience and self-discovery is something that I want people to take away from this and also the joy as well that the music will bring. And in all of that, I want people to take that away from it too, yeah. And love and happiness and peace and positive; all of that.

**MARY LAMBERT** [00:43:41] That's so beautiful. I think, I think for me, obviously, I, like, sort of my personal stake in it is that Bertie is a fat lady, like she's a fat girl. And, there's one thing that like got me really emotional reading the script is that there wasn't a single fat joke. There wasn't anything having to do with her weight. It was just, like, she's just a strong vegan, like, sweetheart that just, like, has a song in her heart and, and is looking for friendship and like finds that in Arlo. And, so I think I have such a tie to her and a personal, like I have a personal stake here because I wish that I had seen someone like Bertie when I was a kid to know that I didn't have to be on a diet to be happy or find friendship or, like, have a full, vibrant life. And so that to me is like I hope someone personally takes that you know away. But like I think the, the theme of chosen family is also like relevant to me as, like, as a queer person, but so many other people have, you know, fraught relationships with their families. And so to be able to see, you know, these, like, really, like, this whole group of weirdos like this, absolute misfits that find each other and make a home is something that's just so, it's so beautiful. And I, it reminds me of, yeah, it just, it reminds me of, Jack Halberstam is a writer, he has a book called 'The Queer Eye Art of Failure,' and I just feel like that it's kind of embracing your, you being a weirdo and like and and we all get to find each other and be, and find home, you know.

**JVN** [00:45:30] Uuh, full crying, like, didn't see, like, such an emotional answer at the end. Um, mmh, wow. I will say I listened to 'Follow Me Home,' like, 27 times yesterday, ever since I found out that it was on Spotify, like it's, it's kind of been an interesting mix because it's a lot of like Megan Thee Stallion and then 'Follow Me Home'. It's kind of, like, 'Follow Me Home' is, like, my palate cleanser and then I go back to get my, to get my dance on. So this is the part of the podcast where it is your moment, like, you went to, I don't know if anyone's yogis here, if anyone participates in yoga, but sometimes there's this thing at the end of class in my favorite studio where they say, "Ok, it's, like, Yogi Recess," 'cause, like, maybe you wanted to go do headstands or you wanted to do like triangle pose, but they

weren't teaching it that day and you're, like, eugh, I fucking came all the way over here and like I didn't get to say what I was trying to say, so this is your moment if you would be remiss to share anything that you did not get to share. I think we should go in, I, actually, this is how we're going to do this, because we've never done this before. I just wrote a number, I just wrote a number between one and ten. Everyone has to guess. Closest without going over decides who answers the question in what order. This is really 'Drag Race,' it's really RuPaul, it's really, I'm obsessed, ok everyone gets their number between one and 10; closest without going over wins.

**MARY LAMBERT & BLAKE LEMONS** [00:46:54] Two.

**RYAN CREGO** [00:46:55] Ah, I was going to say two, eight.

**MARY LAMBERT** [00:46:57] Seven.

**MICHAEL J. WOODARD** [00:46:58] I said five.

**JVN** [00:46:59] Mary won. Mary won, it was seven. It was seven-

**MARY LAMBERT** [00:47:01] Was it seven? Seven's my lucky number!

**JVN** [00:47:03] I have it written right, right here. Do you see, seven. So, it was seven, it was literally seven. So, Mare-Bear, who would you like to do Yogi Recess? You can select the order.

**MARY LAMBERT** [00:47:19] Ryan is the genesis of Arlo, right. I think Ryan should go first.

**RYAN CREGO** [00:47:25] So I'm just going to do some stretches, right?!

**JVN** [00:52:28] No! What do you want to share, Ryan?

**RYAN CREGO** [00:52:32] No, I, you know, it's been a crazy, it's been a crazy, it's been a crazy few years, but it's been a, it's been a crazy couple of weeks getting to the end here. I'll probably cry, but just so you guys know, we all cry a lot. Mary, Mary and I started crying, like when I met Mary it was, like, tear fest so you just, you know, I'm not afraid of it, but, so if I start, if you're listening to this and he's like why isn't he talking, he's crying. Um, I you know, we put so much into this and we, and now we're at that, we still have some work on the series, but we're at the end of the movie. And you just go like, "Oh my God," like everything, you know, for, I've, I've poured everything I can into this so I don't have anything left to give the movie right now. I think, I, you know, I'm happy that we've done it.

I'm like, I'm so proud of it, I'm so proud of everything but, and I have nothing that I could do different now because I feel like I gave everything to it.

So, I'm very proud of myself for that. But I'm so proud of just, like, the relationships and the people that have stepped up to, to give their lives, their spirit, their energy and their time and, and, you know, to see the value in what we're doing because you just too often kind of go like, you know, "I want to make something, and I want to make something so I feel cool. I want to make something that I like," or whatever. This project really got away from me, like early on. It became everyone else's. And it just and I just was, like Mary said, I was kind of I was just, like, holding on to like everyone's hands going like where are we going? You know, like, let me help keep us on track! But like, it's everyone's at this point, and I'm so freaking proud of, like, you know, this group of people coming together and just and, and putting, you know, I mean, these songs, Jonathan, you know, like I listen to it all the time and I'm like, never have done anything so good.

You know, never have I made anything so good and it's because I believed in these people, in the process and, and, and embraced the cont- you know, the contributions and collaboration of all these people, Michael, Mary and yourself and Blake, just to allow that process to, to flourish and become something special. And I know now that like, I've seen it on a small level, it's affecting people in a way that is beyond my control and in a good way. I think it's touching people's lives already. And there's, like, you know, even if it's, like, 20 or 30 or whatever that have gotten into it so far that are, like, really passionately posting about it online, it's, like, that's ok, that's it, you know what I mean, but, like, but there are people it's, it's affecting their lives and it's affecting them in a good way. And so I just want to say, you know, I couldn't be more proud of, of bringing this group together and just being, you know, getting to do that in my life. Like, that's a, this is, you know, so special. So, that's that's, like, I guess my final piece is just, like, what a, what an amazing journey from, like, 10 years ago to when this movie comes out. And, and to get to, like, work with all of you and do this thing has been so cool, so.

**JVN** [00:50:43] Wow! It's almost there.

**RYAN CREGO** [00:50:45] I know. I know. It's crazy.

**JVN** [00:50:50] Mary, who goes next?

**MARY LAMBERT** [00:50:51] Oh, oh, Blake, I want you to go next.

**BLAKE LEMONS** [00:50:53] Oh goodness, um, I too. I think, I think Ryan definitely hired on a crew and, and cast people that all cry. We all, we all share our emotions. So also, just like

Ryan said, if, if people listening, if you hear a pause it's because I'm trying to catch myself, but um, I think I'm just so happy that I got to help my friend make his original--and there's, there's that little emotion--help my friend make his original from when he first talked about it to now. It's been an, an amazing and magical story and character. And I think it really speaks to the strength of that story. And Arlo and Bertie and Furlecia and Tony and Marcellus and Alia and anyone else I'm forgetting from, from the, from 'Arlo The Alligator Boy.' But I think it speaks to the strength that, that, that all of us, you know, actors, animation people alike, we can all find ourselves in the story and really connect.

And I definitely, I definitely found my, my connection early on and just so happy to see, like, now it's going to be out and and again, just all the emotions of that. But, I just want to repeat what Crego said about I've never made anything this good. And, and it's amazing; you're all a part of that. It's all because of all four of you and the whole amazing crew. And I want to say that the amazing crew, like I said, Ryan, hired people that fit the show, that they're, they're heartfelt, they're smart, they're, they're emotional. They they just want to tell the best story, just like you all did too. So never made anything so good, 2012 to now and er, and, yeah; I'm just so happy about it.

**JVN** [00:52:47] Woo! Woo! Mare-Bear.

**MARY LAMBERT** [00:52:48] Well I'll share, I'll share and then, Michael, I think you should close us out. That's what I think. Um, well, and then Johnathan, are you going to say, are you going to say too? You'll say.

**JVN** [00:52:59] I mean, I mean if you want me to, you're the one who won the 'Price Is Right' challenge. So this is really, you know, it really is 'Drag Race.' I put the hosting responsibilities on you, like one of the participants, it's 'All Stars,' it's 'All Stars' rules!

**MARY LAMBERT** [00:53:14] Um, I think, I, er, the first time I went to the studio, I was, like, floored by just the sheer magnitude of how many people were involved and it's like, I don't know, I had this idea of how animation worked but there's really, it's so many people come together to make this thing. It's like it's, it's, it's insane! It's this many people have put their whole hearts and souls and selves into making this piece of art, you know, and, and like that, that's magic; that's what magic looks like to me. And I, I just I hope, I hope there's a really strong take away of, of family and, and, and hope and joy and and I hope everybody that worked on it knows how crucial and important they are to the process. You know I feel like, I feel like actors sometimes get to be, like, sort of the surface of like, "It's about me, it's about, you know, it's about us!" But it's really, like, it took, like, how many people, like, how, honestly like how, there's so many people involved in it that it's bonkers. And I think you can feel all of the care from all over in each part of, like, the, the lines, the, the, you

know, the eyebrow movements. Like, it's just amazing, you know, and I just feel really lucky to have been a part of it to help facilitate telling such a, such a precious story.

**MICHAEL J. WOODARD** [00:55:00] I just want to say of being, being as though this is my first like you know, it's my first movie ever, animated, I guess film, whatever, it's my first movie. I'm so blessed to have this opportunity and I want to thank you, Ryan, and I want to thank you, Blake, and Alex, if you're watching this podcast, which I know you will, I want to thank you guys for allowing me to come on in and voice a character that is so special to me and will be so special to people around the world and just allow me to be the, the main character. Like, that's huge, you know, for me.

And I just want to say thank you guys for trusting me and trusting my ability to bring the character to life and give the character, character. So thank you guys so much for that opportunity; I'm so appreciative. I just want to say, I know this movie is going to change lives. I always say that and I say so much where it might become, it might be becoming a cliché at this point because I say it so much, but I just know what it's going to do in the lives of young people and the lives of people young and old, because it's like I, I turned to my mom and she's getting emotional while watching the movie. I turn to, or I FaceTime my grandmother and she's getting emotional, you know, watching the movie.

So I just know the weight, that this, the weight of positivity and joy and, and um I guess message and hope this movie carries. And I just don't take it lightly. And I'm so blessed to be a part of something like this. I just want to say I have the best castmates ever. Mary, I love you and Jonathan I love you too. You guys bring such, I guess, distinctivity to your roles, like when Ryan, when, no for real Jonathan you do, when Ryan said a while ago, like you guys make the characters what they are like, it's, it's true. Like, I couldn't imagine what Furlcia would sound like if it wasn't voiced by Jonathan, I couldn't imagine what Bertie would sound like if it wasn't voiced by Mary.

I couldn't even imagine what Arlo would sound, like, if it wasn't voiced by me, I, I get so, like, in my mind, I get so creeped out because as soon as I walk in the session, I start to talk and I'm like, "Oh, this is the same voice that's in the movie," like, when I watch the movie, I start having dialogue with somebody, I'm like, "Eugh, God, please stop." This is like, what's going on, this is like the voices in the movie and like, you guys are just doing it, um, I'm so blessed once again to be a part of this project and I just can't see, can't wait to see the outcome that it brings to everybody's lives. I'm so excited.

**JVN** [00:57:45] So I will just say that I think, you know, in this, in this recording, Mary when you answered, you know, when I said like, what is, what do you want everyone to take from this, I had not been able to articulate it in that way. And it brought so much tears to my

eyes. But when I think about all of the, all the shows that still stick with me so closely, I think about, like, 'Doug,' I think about 'Rugrats,' I think I mean, because I watched 'Rugrats' from the time I was like six to, like, now, but I don't remember, I mean, there are so many facets to this story that are, it's, it's, it's not only what the story *is* about, but it's also what the story's *not* about. And that is so important. And I think that it does have this, this community and this connectivity that does unite so many people against so, you know, from so many different age ranges and walks of life. And I just think that is so, that getting to folks when they're young is so good and so important, especially with a lot of these messages which are really about love and chosen family and community and helping out and being of service, also setting boundaries, which is like so important for us to be able to talk about. So just hats off.

I'm so honored to be a part of this project as well. And I think, you know, not to sound like Jade from 'America's Next Top Model,' although her character was everything, I think I can speak for you know Mary, Michael and I, thank you for believing in us and thank you for giving us a chance to bring a story so near and dear to your heart, to life. It has, I mean, I'm glad it didn't take another year, but had it taken one more year, it would have been ten years, it's like nine years is a *long* time. So just thank you all so much for including us. And thank you so much for coming on Getting Curious. I love you all so much. You have to follow all these people, they're, where to follow them will be in the link in the episode description below. So thank y'all so much. We love everyone so much. Wow, wow, wow.

**ALL** [00:59:44] Thank you, thank you Jonathan. [APPLAUSE] We love you!

**JVN** [00:59:49] You've been listening to Getting Curious with me, Jonathan Van Ness. My guests this week were Ryan Crego, Blake Lemons, Michael J. Woodard, and Mary Lambert. You'll find links to their work and the new Netflix film Arlo the Alligator Boy in the episode description of whatever you're listening to the show on.

Our theme music is "Freak" by Quiñ - thanks to her for letting us use it. If you enjoyed our show, introduce a friend, *s'il vous plaît*, "if you please" in French, and show them how to subscribe.

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Our editor is Andrew Carson and our transcriptionist is Alida Wuenscher. Getting Curious is produced by me, Erica Getto, and Emily Bossak.