

## [Transcript] SmartLess / "The Russo Brothers"

All right, so who's up for a little chat and giggle? Are you guys doing like another singing one where we like sing like our names in harmony or something you mean for an opening of the show for you right now ready I'll go out well you hold a note and I'll build it and Jason

I don't even know what I know just do it with your name

Welcome to smart list. What's wrong with that?

That was perfect we were a little late today, but I got a luncheon so that was great

Oh buttons you got it fed so um so okay so I'm walking on the street around like Broadway in 70th and I'm not making this up this girl is 20 something I'm guessing she has a jacket that's open and she has like a like a lace tube top and her boobs completely out just the one just the one boob and I'm like is everybody seeing this and and everybody like was looking at her and she was just walking around real confident with just one boob hanging out that was it took my eyes a minute to believe it you know everybody I once saw a guy confidently hanging a shit on 6th Avenue at noon on a Wednesday you know it wasn't I was with you it was a fucking it was 8th Avenue and I'll tell you this how it went down I was walking with Jason and he goes look at that and then we see a dude and you see it actually coming out and I said thanks for making me look because now I'll never not be able to see that it was a high-pressure garden hose style one again and he didn't even bend his knees it's just I mean this is noon on a weekday on the sidewalk he was he didn't try to go to the to the corner or down an alley or anything just so Jay you'll like the other day the other day oh my god the other day I'm here in Atlanta and and I still want to New York and I'm at the Publix here in Atlanta just buying a few few items at the grocery store hey stars are just like us you know and so I'm rolling and I'm pushing the cart and I've got here with my but I know and I'm here with my buddy Eli as you know oh yeah Eli got recognized at the gym the other day a guy says to him he's because he's wearing a smartless sweatshirt and the guy goes we love smart list and where'd you get that he's like yeah he's like yeah you know my name is Eli and the guy goes are you Eli from this and he was no way yeah really are you kidding no I swear to God that's crazy yeah so he's friends with this guy at the gym anyway that's a different story wait they swap number they're in Publix they swap numbers because Eli's got a whole like he goes to the gym I work out here

at home on my own thing and he goes to the gym and he comes back and he's like yeah I ran into Gordo again my buddy there he was wearing the hockey uh I go how'd you start talking to him he said well he was wearing their shirt that said such and such hockey and he goes so then it was just on and I go yeah Canadians are just fantastic he's so sweet and he's so nice anyway Eli's very engaging and people love him you go everywhere you go I love him yeah so anyway we're going on we're going on the aisle and we stop and he stops and he and he picks up some um the men's

wipes and it's a three pack and he goes oh it's a three pack they're not on their own I go what are you doing you know them getting the wipes and I go what and he goes yeah I go so he puts them in the

cart at which point I push the cart away from me hands off yeah yeah you don't have anything to do with that no I can't be associated with the wipes um I did get a text from our friend JT

Justin Throw last night oh and uh I have to share what he said and I'm sure I'll be so happy I'm sharing this he said we're chatting we're chatting let's get together we're gonna have dinner blah and he goes by the way I saw a picture of Bateman and our net yesterday are they skipping body day like every day that's son of a bitch wow you know listen when you're walking around with two

percent

body fat and freezing in the middle of summer as a result um you I don't want to hear it from him you know he's talk about somebody who's malnourished will yeah it's true why don't you take a run at

him you know I'd like to don't worry I do as you know from his insane text that he when he's tries to be poetic you know he gets like real in in our in our other thread that we have god we're in too many threads now are we yeah we are Jason just got pumped back Jason just got pumped back into the octortal cordal whirl I know I just saw that afleck is now not happy about it well no that got put out there that I guess that Ben as we know we had him on here but he's not part of it and he claimed that he was just in a wordal thread with you and anyway remember Sam was all aghast

yeah I'm not happy about it I didn't ask Matt to do that uh he just thought it would be a fun goof if he just put me back on there and then sure enough first thing the next morning it's not even 7 30 in the morning and I'm in Austin so that's 5 30 in the morning for me and these freaks who are on east time are already done with their an hour of crossword type word play and they say Bateman you're up I'm like I haven't even evacuated myself yet which I brought up which I did bring which you did yeah and I like to do my thing with this wordal stuff when I was on deep in the afternoon

right I do it I do it before I go to bed but these guys like to know who won and who lost before breakfast and talk and talk about it right and I were up Bradley and I were up early already going like well that was a tough fuck totally I know the fourth guess yeah and I wake up I look at my text thing and I've got I've got 19 texts all right I'm like oh something exciting is happening in my life and no it's just a long wordal thread yeah yeah all right listen let's uh let's let's let's let's get to it these these these uh oh there's two we do we have two guests all right now we have we've had two guests before um these two uh they have worked together

their entire career and somehow have managed a very happy and healthy family life as well it's very very inspiring uh they produce together they write together okay direct together they've created some of the most successful film and tv projects together as well as an enormous production company and in fact I don't think there is a more successful Hollywood couple behind the camera wow they have directed 10 films together grossing in excess probably of about five billion dollars what what and they better continue to get along not only for the health of the industry but also for the fact they are stuck together for life will Sean they're not a couple couple they're a couple of brothers guys it's our friends the Russo brothers

this wow I was gonna leave that on and make you guess uh uh are you really cool it's a family reunion with all of us are you fucking kidding me what's up good morning nice to meet you guys it's been about 20 years good to meet you too it's been 20 years since uh since the pilot of arrested development but you've worked with will a few times since then that's right and we've bumped into each other a bunch since then uh-huh a Bateman you have an age today I know it's amazing isn't it well I sleep in olive oil um and I go down to Tijuana a couple times a month for experimental uh medical work infuse some Paul Rudd blood to your body Paul Rudd blood yeah well I didn't want to say anything you don't look as I know I know I get it listen it makes a lot of sense you know I look I say the same thing about JB he looks incredible he has not aged I look like I look like my own father now are you

are you living in a tent in your in your home he's got tough lighting there in the whisper booth it is tough I'm here in Atlanta and I'm in the basement and I've got this like portable booth that I bring with me uh so I can do all my records and uh and you guys have not met Sean before is that right we we have not no no get a little remember during uh casting a recipe development anth right there was a conversation point about no could we get Sean off of come on well in grace is that true work in between his schedule what and and I'm still waiting I mean I could probably still get out probably good well guess what guess what that son of a bitch has still never seen one goddamn episode I saw two I saw two he saw two episodes name them what happened in those one and

two uh will was on the couch saying something funny you were being snarky uh standing up great guess the blocking was will was sitting and you were standing I think I remember the one you're talking about no no that was a good one that was a good one um but I didn't know I you guys directed up all night and I did up all night with will and Maya that's right true and uh what about Todd Margaret there was that too right Todd Margaret that's sweet sweet Davey Cross and Running Wild that's right and Running Wild all right jeez it yeah we did a bunch of stuff will on Running Wild those conversations we had early on where we were trying to be really respectful

of arrested development and so you and me and Mitch and anth we all decided to make it not as good

as arrested that was really important that was the bar that'll show well well well the truth is this the truth is is it was a good concept and we had some good pieces and we kept getting the note we kept getting the note on the script from people at the network saying look man you can't just have this be another arrested development like as if that was a big failure that they kept saying that to us like okay and you can't just think that you guys are gonna come in here and we're just gonna have another arrest development we're like well we're really proud of arrested development I don't know what you why you guys are mad at it they didn't want us to move the cameras

I remember there's a lot of but it was with Lionsgate if you remember and I think we made that show for like two cornpea sandwiches you know and then was there any discuss once you got into the marvel

world any discussion to go ahead and bring Will Arnett into that as well it's sort of like some sort of a horrific flash forward is what was we don't want another arrested development right there are these characters called the Great Lakes Avengers and there's a cheese man really important to that group that's just come up with that is that something you got a half a pitch on and we do we have a good we do we do that's our go to whenever anybody asks what's our fantasy marvel project the Great Lakes Avengers now you guys are done with the marvels with the marvel stuff the group the whole thing or do you still flirt with them a little bit you guys are off on doing your own thing well you did end game it's kind of like that's your end game that was the end game that's right right I mean I think we you know they're very good friends of ours

I mean we've talked to those guys all the time but um yeah we're focused they can't hurt you anymore they just kind of I remember Joe Joe and it I remember when you guys first I forget which was the first it was a Captain America was the first one right that was yeah Captain America Winter Soldier I love that one and I would I would he would do huge I'm Joe I

remember texting you and saying fucking congrats man huge and then it just like and then every time that I just stopped saying congrats because the numbers just it kept getting even bigger I was like well fucking he doesn't need to hear congrats anymore it's the number one movie of all time but then but then the next one made even more and then the Avengers stuff made even more I mean was there did you feel like a pressure like how were we going to top or try to manage the expectations of of Kevin of the whole the whole infrastructure over there was was there that was there a worry that oh my god how can we keep making more and more and more as with quality but also with with commerce yeah you put you have to isolate yourself a little bit from all of the hype around those movies you have to they're also physically draining I mean you know look at us yeah I mean Jesus Christ um but uh listener they look beautiful one's in a basement and one's in a beautiful office that's right that's what happens we don't split the money guess who can yeah that must be complicated well okay so hang on a second I want to get more into the into the Marvel stuff and how you guys got there but I kind of want to go even further back to how how we came into your world Jason and I did but even before that but even before that like what about like were you you guys never struck me as like comic book like guys were you no but you guys made that film your first film out of you guys came out of Cleveland we did we made a movie called pieces that went to the slam dance film festival in 97 and this was like this was a credit card movie so you know late 80s Soderbergh made a film called sex lives and videotape that ignited this you know hey you can make a movie for 10 grand on credit cards and get discovered out of anywhere and become a major filmmaker and you've got to start you've got to pay that one off you got to stop accruing all that expensive interest that we were that's what a recipe it was about right it took it took it took 10 years to pay that off is that true it's true yeah did it really wow yeah it was a while all right so then Soderbergh sees pieces that's right and then he picks up the phone he gives us a call a week later I mean again two guys from Cleveland no connection to the film business whatsoever very strange movie only a guy like Steven Soderbergh we love this film and he calls us and says look I'd love to help you get your next movie made and then he started a production company with George Clooney that's the fast version of it yeah and he and Clooney produced another movie for us called welcome to common wood that absolutely crushed it at the box Sam Rockwell the Sam Rockwell that's right Sam Rockwell is incredible cast but great movie I love that movie spent about eight million on that film and made about three hundred thousand dollars but it would but the quality was good enough to then go on to well we were very lucky yeah we were so we were so lucky because we actually got hired before that movie came out and bombed to direct that's the key yeah exactly to direct a pilot at FX called lucky so this was right the year after the shield premiered and FX wanted to do the same thing with comedy that they had done with the shield like make something very dark and risable and Kevin Riley that's right Kevin Riley was running yeah FX yeah so we made this kind of really weird dark comedy called lucky that didn't actually work as a series but the pilot was like an industry favorite like everybody watched that pilot it made its rounds everywhere we got more meetings off of that pilot than I think anything we've done and that ended up getting us into imagine

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to talk to David Nevins about arrested so it was never so it was Nevins who was the first guy that you met on arrested that's right I'm part of the arrested world and then he says what hey why don't you guys have lunch with Mitch Hurwitz type thing exactly yeah I think we sat dance we sat with Nevins right and he said look we have this show it's kind of crazy but it's going to take some hustling because there's about 35 location changes we got to shoot it in a compressed time frame you

know we're trying to get budgets down because we're worried that you know single camera comedy may

be short live because the budgets are getting too high on these things and we got to compete a little bit and it was pitched to you as as a pretty pure mockumentary correct weren't there even testimonials

ala it was it got pushed more mockumentary amp I mean right like it was more at the time I think it was it was my memory it wasn't a mockumentary at all yeah no it was just a straight family drama that we ended up here here here's the framing that's why they cast Sean right Sean's too funny it's kind of a complex framing so also what Nevins said to us at the time and this he said look at Ron Howard thinks that the half hour comedy on television is in trouble he thinks the sort of the sitcom the stage sitcom is getting stale he thinks the half hour single camera comedy has become come unaffordable because you get half the ad revenues for a half hour comedy that you do for an hour long drama but it doesn't cost half the price to produce a half hour of single camera filmed entertainment then it does to take an hour so they're like we're trying to figure this out so what we want to do is we want to take a we're reaching out to indie filmmakers like you because they knew we were kind of guerrilla style filmmakers and cheap to try to react cheap we're cheap but

also we know how to shoot cheaply yeah so they're like we're trying to come up with a new model for a single camera that will be cheap to produce and that's when Joe and I after seeing the script and seeing the level of absurdism that is inherent in Nick's voice we thought well wouldn't this be funny if he tried to like shoot this in in the most real way possible it's sort of like news gathering right handheld no marks no lights just just gathering it exactly and now a word from our sponsor hey listeners you need to know that Wondery shocking true crime podcast over my dead body is

back for a fourth season gone hunting this newest season covers the story of Mike Williams it was Mike's sixth wedding anniversary when he set off on a hunting trip into the gator infested swamps of north florida he figured he'd be back in time to take his wife Denise out to celebrate but he never came back friends and loved ones feared he met his fate through bad luck and a group of hungry

alligators leaving his young family behind except that's not what happened at all and after 17 years a kidnapping and the uncovering of a secret love triangle the truth would finally be revealed enjoy over my dead body gone hunting on the Wondery app or wherever you get your podcasts you can listen to over my dead body early and add free on Wondery plus get started with your free trial at Wondery dot com slash plus he's a suave billionaire owner of the delis mavericks and the sharkiest shark on shark tank yes i'm talking about mr business himself mark cuban and our smart list interview with him is available now four weeks early on Wondery plus mark unravels the secrets behind the phenomenal success and recounts the magical moment when he became a member of the



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billionaire club our interview with mark cuban was recorded live in chicago in front of thousands of our biggest fans from our smart list tour this is the seventh of ten interviews with new episodes releasing every thursday we're talking with celebrities and icons like the great will ferrell conan o' brian kevin heart jimmy kimmel and so many more and it wouldn't be smart less if scottie and i didn't take the opportunity to pitch mark cuban our new idea will we land a deal of a lifetime you'll have to listen to find out we call that a tease in the biz you can listen to these episodes four weeks early and add free with Wondery plus find Wondery plus in the Wondery app or on apple podcasts

all right back to the show two things so one is also the guy you brought with you from lucky was your dp was jim right that's right jim hawkinson and jim hawkinson uh who's just an absolute cowboy

who we worked with a bunch on our other stuff too and running wild and etc uh and jim came in and you guys the three of you guys had worked together and already had that you already had that shorthand when it came to shooting really quickly lighting really quickly and just getting you know right using a lot of existing light if you yeah lucky was the same thing right it was a very aggressive handheld show shot yeah a shot on the streets of vegas so we couldn't light things i mean you know not a big budget it was fx early phase of fx and so we had this we had developed this run and gun style and uh and i remember you know the uh the dogma was big at the time they were making the dogma films if you remember that we're you know actors were getting letters that said don't expect a trailer do your own makeup you know this is a no frills production and we may have even sent that out with the script at one time that's how i got the script to arrest development yeah in fact it was read it was reading that cover sheet that convinced me that there's no way they're gonna let me be a part of this cool thing because it was it was declaring like we don't want your makeup budget well there's that um but yeah we don't want any of the traditional sort of known basically hacky safe tv stuff and that's that was my middle name no hey hey yeah no will it's okay jason how dare you multi cam don't you say that let me say that we get into the casting of it we could talk about that because it was true there was a stigma against bateman at the time yeah and i remember we kept bringing you in and bringing you in with other actors to keep putting you in front of the studio and there was this conversation constantly because anthony are like the guy's fx perfect why can't we cast them and they go i you know he's you know he's a spring come guy he's been in a lot of pilots that haven't gone to air he's cursed a little bit i don't know that this is the we would hear this and just have these blank stares on our faces like this is the stupidest thing we've ever heard that and you had no idea who i was it's like what have you been oh no we watched you we watched you well cloney well you had just and cloney had somewhat of a uh a long career let's say in the pilot world yeah 11 pilots or something yeah and things were working out for him george had the same stigma though right where he had like a bunch of failed pilots before we are yeah right right right now i remember feeling

incredibly lucky that i got that i mean i wasn't sure how many people were gonna watch the show but i knew that it represented a complete opposite for the stuff that i had been doing in the hopes of kind of creating a reset i mean like it the show doesn't work because everyone is so insane on the show it didn't work without a conduit for the audience somebody that the audience could come in

through and what you don't want typically with a comedy is when you have a straight man and

everyone

else is insane it's very hard for the straight man to get laughs it's the opposite was true with you and that's what we kept saying is you know this character is going to be flat and there were there were other actors that were trying to push on us that were you know very straight and it was just had a generic feel to it wait i've never heard these names are you drunk enough to start sharing some of these names should we wait just go get a beer it's a sunday morning right now if you're if you're just joining us you're thanks for listening to the arrest development rewatch podcast listen i have a question for uh you me and you and me left out i want to talk about captain america the winter soldier hold on comic dork we're gonna get there we have spent the last eight episodes talking about dorkville and star wars and the mask goes theater and shit fuck up for one minute let us have one moment to talk to the rooster brother by the way i will say jason so go ahead and go ahead no i just want to say i you're listening to your other shows that you've done with the arrest of development people i always feel horrible for shawn and i like coming into this i was like oh my god are we are we really going to do this to shawn again it is kind of like a cult i love it i love it fighting digestion on his uh on his lunch he's probably chicken sandwich yeah uh did you so jason comes in you guys are stoked he's the perfect i've always said the perfect blank canvas right like every orange like i've just blank give line readings he doesn't ever you tell me just a blank canvas just the whitest canvas for the for the other colors to really pop so

but but he comes in and then and then he comes in and he reads and then you guys are like yeah you feel vindicated he's he's he's great and then you start building the pieces around and you start trying to find all those other actors and it just uh it must have been like a my question is did it go the way you thought it would or did it all happen like in this kind of surprising way like oh fuck this person and this person is super surprising i mean you're probably the biggest surprise but if we go through yeah because that was a hard hardest part to cast wasn't it joe it was by far the hardest part and well we had it we had an uh incorrect take on joe by thank you remember

that amps for a while we were playing him like the pull my finger uncle this weirdo that was you know living up in the attic and so he we were bringing in a lot older actors and it just kept going um creepy you know and yeah you could have just called him fart net oh my god then we got then we got our net and it got even creepier we're like clean into it exactly but i think it was i think michael sarah was first if i remember correctly but i mean that it was as you guys know the the the whole casting process on that show was difficult the network never really loved the show no even you know as we all know when it hit the air but even back then it was like even after winning an emmy they were like oh fuck we can't cancel it now no they sent us an ice cream truck remember not truck an ice cream cone and a banner over the guard gate 20th banner that was blocked

by the main 20th signed so you couldn't see it unless when you drove you could see it through your sunroof yeah if you were right underneath it and then i go and then you're like hey guys we won the emmy yesterday for best coming here's an ice cream cart yeah with a belt not even not even powered somebody had to push it it was on man that's right you had to get your own ice cream out and you had to put your own wrinkles on it not an exaggeration it's so funny god and there were 10 bars in it god bless him having never met you guys uh you know there's not a lot of directing duos writing duos producing duos let alone as successful as you guys are i'm not knowing you

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guys i i want to ask the the obvious questions like how did you guys did you both when you were kids have this have this secret about loving the business and you didn't let each other know like at what point were you like hey i want to do that too hey we should do it together two kids from cleveland that's right yeah a couple of indians fans yeah we grew up on the east side of cleveland and um anth was getting a law degree uh and uh was this 94 and i was and i was getting an mfa and acting or both at the same school case western in cleveland we both came back for uh to our hometown

to go to school and he was really frustrated with law school and uh i felt like i didn't ultimately want to be an actor and we started thinking about directing we did some black box stuff and started working on some comedy sketch stuff together and then we decided to write a movie and robert redriguez had written a book uh about making al mariochi for seven thousand dollars

and again this contributed to that craze that was going on at the time and so we decided to make a film and we wrote a script called pieces it was a very dark comedy right are you telling your family this are you telling your mom and dad like are you like hey we're writing a movie they're like yeah good for you guys like what's going on answer tell that story that's okay but you but you never i would love that but you never did it as kids it wasn't it wasn't until you were older in college that you had no we weren't spielberg in the backyard with a camera right okay we were more cinephiles we were just guys who went to watch a lot of movies we love going to movies a lot of friends that would go we'd all quote films i mean just sort of the traditional high school experience of you know yeah um you know watching movies talking about um yeah doing lines all day

long making each other laugh you know acting out doing a lot of co-condition is okay that's right wait it's how did that go down oh so eventually as we started to like get more and more serious about it i eventually did tell uh my parents that i was living in their house at the time that i was going to leave uh film school to like go all in on the filmmaking efforts and i think uh yeah my dad didn't speak to me for like six months even though i was living in the same house with him no way he would kind of grunt as we would pass each other at the refrigerator or something but um but anyway eventually he became a very big supporter he was convinced we're gonna

be broke artists i remember it actually was the me for arrested development that when he finally went okay fine you guys can do this i think he's the one that sent the ice cream so so you guys so we you do arrested you guys direct the pilot and you direct most i would say the bulk of the episodes of the first two seasons uh nobody directed more episodes than you guys some of the great some of our favorite episodes obviously with you guys and um and and jason i talk about this too all of us and you guys are part of you guys and me and jason and the cast and Mitch and everybody we made those not john not john those first like eight episodes completely in a vacuum we had no idea

if people were gonna like him or think that they were shit and so we were kind of like this real tight group of us just doing it with no feedback and it's like and we're taking big swings and thought like fuck we could i remember driving home some days after shooting we're like this might be

the worst thing ever or right that segue around cop and attitude and i might get ridiculed for this i had no further to fall i was like i was fine i'm completely on the bottom we have we have a



lot of fun doing and then you guys and then the show ends and you guys end up sort of moving on and doing a bunch of other stuff what was the first when you kind of started to break out of the arrested world what were you guys thinking okay now we want to do x or y what was the plan well i think really what was going on then we had struggled so long to sort of make a life as like any filmmakers and then kind of segue into television that once arrested had that success once we won the me it was all of a sudden we had work coming at us for the first time in our lives like everything prior to that point was just like us pushing the boulder up the hill right like trying not to listen the people tell us no now it's chasing you yeah all of a sudden it was coming at us so we welcomed that and we had uh we had a run in television there um that ended up uh turning into shows like community and happy endings and right right a few other shows what our what our process would be was basically what we did on arrested where we would come in we would direct a pilot because again we we had sort of patterned ourselves as sort of indie feature makers so we would approach a pilot like it was a feature sort of execute it like that and then we would stay on with the show for just like with arrested for a season or two and do some episodes and then kind of like pass it on normally the show would be canceled by that point but but that but that became our process right and then what was what was the first big film after your television run there captain america for yeah what yeah in between we did you mean to pre oh you don't need to be right right right right right right yeah which i by the way which i also did the table read of remember that that's right i played i think was michael douglas the in that yeah yeah i did i read his part of the table right you know that's hysterical that is very so long and storied history mr arnett it's crazy right yeah i remember downy calling me about you guys saying so so what do you think about the i remember getting that call going holy shit the russians are going to do a fucking marvel movie yeah i remember thinking that quietly to myself because i didn't want to say it outwardly to to to june yeah i didn't want him to hear the surprise in my voice or envy but i just immediately went into like i got so excited thinking about you guys combining with his humor and his sensibility and his comfort on set and you guys just the way you just move around through the set i just thought i could i couldn't say enough about what a great match that would be i mean i'm not taking any claim for uh him signing off you know you should completely surprise that he was calling about that this is a great clickable story for the internet wow i'm happy to repeat that but here i'll tell you something the other side of that coin i mean there's a lot of truth in that because you know the first captain america movie we did winter soldier downy wasn't in it amazing then we went back with our partners marcus and mcfely who who wrote all the marvel work that we did and we can conceive the the next captain america movie civil war yeah amazing you know downy was never supposed to be in that movie who wasn't contracted to be in that movie but we had designed a story where it was built as a two-hander between captain america and downy's character iron man so uh we finally got the approval from marvel coven feige said okay let's do this he got the approval from uh marvel publishing in new york we're gonna do it and he said okay now you guys gotta go get downy he's like just tossed it tossed it to us that's an easy fish to boat yeah exactly yeah listen robert we want you i know you've uh you know you've revitalized your career uh playing a superhero we want you to be the villain in this next one oh no that was literally the the pitch to him as we had to go sit there and explain to him you know how his you

know how his character wasn't going to be um oh boy exclusively a villain in it so it's a big swing for him because yeah you know here the guy's coming off of captain america doing you know this is gonna be our second movie with evans he's coming into evans's franchise i mean it was a big it was a big swing and i'm stunned i'm still stunned he said yes well but he loves taking chances as you know and he's such a uh i would have loved to be in that meeting of you guys convincing him and i can imagine the questions that down he asked you guys because he's so thoughtful

and he's thinking from so many different steps ahead always inside way like in every direction right i just want to see his outfit i want to see i want to know what what he was wearing he had us out to the house he might have been in shorts of a t-shirt anthony remember he's kind of laying on a shea's lounge and anthony are sitting across from him leaning forward you know excitedly pitching and then this happens and then sweating sweat right and then he almost kills you and then he's down he'll be wearing like a see-through fendi raincoat right he literally he literally came to a barbecue with a cookout on the beach once uh and he was wearing a see-through fendi raincoat and i go what the fuck are you wearing man a see-through raincoat but nobody can pull it off like down he by the way he made it look cool and like if i were i'd look like the worst he's a walking piece of art he's a fucking piece of art guys i have two questions i have two questions about endgame really quick one is i'm sure you've seen the reactions on tiktok and everything i'd like the crowd reaction videos on about endgame it must have been like so satisfying and thrilling and like that was just huge that's the first question and then the second thing is how in the world one of the most now iconic shots in all of cinema history is all of those superheroes in one shot when iron man dies and they're all lined up in the camera goes through every single one of them and what'd you say what'd you say nothing what did he say i guess i don't need to see that no i'm 18 years old no i said uh but no show it have you still managed to to scrape the jizz off your tv from that no it makes everybody look beautiful for you yep and so anyway so it goes through and the camera goes through and every single superhero ever like in every single movie how i had somebody in the business watching i'm like how did you organize everybody's schedule to shoot all that's so many schedules to figure out we start with number two first yeah that took a year we that took a year planning just that shot yeah and we referred to it as the wedding i mean it took us a year to plan how to get all those people together and then we had we had a couple months to plan out that shot but i remember the day that we yeah we took a we sent a drone up just to get a footage of base camp that day i've never seen anything like it everybody said it was the largest base camp they'd ever seen in really 40 or 50 it went on for miles i mean it was in excess of 50 trucks oh it was it was it was it was the deal points olympics i bet portal to portal meeting trailer requirements food and right just workout trailer everything oh my god but we rehearsed that shot chad we did we like we scouted that location multiple times we got uh we brought stand-ins we would do we rehearsed the entire shot over and over yeah so that it was we refined it we refined it because it was amazing i mean name an actor and they were in that shot it was crazy it was a lot of pressure it was and i remember yeah that day we were able to shoot that on a on a ranch down and outside of atlanta so we had control of the property there was no paparazzi around right it was a several hundred acres so it was you know very clandestine

and you to get on the set that day was the most you know intense security you had to be at the highest level sort of the i'm sure and how long did it take to actually film the scene i think it took us about two hours i probably did that shot like eight or nine times you know you're only getting

people stand around for so long because you know they're not really doing anything they got to get back to the cable machine and so impressive last backs and buys yeah well it interrupts a lot of workouts but those fan reaction videos too shan that you brought up we've watched those things so much i mean they're some of the most satisfying things we've ever seen

yeah amazing yeah i mean to be to see a movie theater you know to a crowd to react like that in a movie theater there's not a live show yeah um it's just was extremely rare and it's for people who just like love that experience in the theater it's just was priceless yeah and my my got you know growing up for for me it was like you know star wars because i'm not star wars was the thing but my one of my godson sammy he was like crying his eyes out when iron man died and i was you know

and he called me he's like i'm like what's the matter he's like iron man is dead i'm like it was such a huge deal for this massive generation of these fans in a way that star it was just so cool to see like sammy needs to get a life to be honest yeah sam might want to take a step outside in perspective you know what i mean sammy i mean it sounds like there's a bad parent thing or something but but let me ask you guys uh no jk we love sammy um what about your own kids and their reactions to you guys being part of something that is so such a huge part of i'm sure they're friends and everybody loves the movies and and and they do too and can they appreciate it in the way knowing that you know what you got that you guys made these movies it's a really complex question yeah i think it's like you know the same movies that took us away for two years that's right you know but they're my kids are not big comic book fans so it was interesting it's grounding because you come home and they could give a shit you know right uh which

is great i think um and um you know but i do think that um uh you know for anthony look we we you said this earlier bateman we were huge comic book fans and we nobody knew this but i have a you know i have like five boxes in an attic still filled with you know 50 year old comic books um this was a dream come true for us and what you're talking about shon is watching these reactions in the theaters that's who we were as kids right i watched empire strikes back yeah like five times in a row in one day yeah sitting in the front row by myself exactly you you know crying at the end every time that was me masturbating behind you check out this lightsaber and put it this way joe he wasn't watching the movie all right but to be able to give that to like that you want to recreate that experience that's what we wanted that's what we love about films so if there's a line you could draw from who we were as kids to these movies right and that's like falling out of his booth right now he cracks himself up all the time we'll just turn him down in the mix and you just keep talking and we will be right back

and now back to the show did you guys get any advice when you were first starting out as directors you know doing films at a tiny scale that's that you're still using today on stuff that you're doing at a massive scale are you or or if you change so much as directors had to adapt so much as directors that everything you learned at the beginning is not really applicable now or or is there some evergreen don't work with jason bateman was not yeah aside from that one

aside from that lesson learned i mean look at the short answer i think for us is like because we've done so many different things like we've made movies for as little money as you could possibly make a movie for and we've made movies for as much money as you can make a movie for you know we've done tv comedy drama you know network cable streaming we do shoot commercials so it's like for us you know because we like working in all these different forms it's kind of all the same for like we have the same process no matter what we're doing we just sort of dream up something that's exciting to us and then figure out how to execute it so it's kind of just that process repeated over and over again so i think and we love technology we we've always loved the the way that technology allows you to create certain feelings or effects or or or uh just how do you stay up on that because i'm sure that you know if you can imagine it you can do it nowadays but how do you know that for sure how do you stay up on on where technology is so that you know whether what you're thinking of is actually manageable it's hard because you have to use it so it is really tricky you have to just figure out ways you have to learn it too you have to constantly learn the only way to learn it is to use it yeah i mean filmmaking was a giant collaboration between hundreds of people so you're relying on you know technical experts technologists that come in and can show you new things that are going on tell you about you know farrows are a really good friend of ours and he's you know he's done all this incredible work yeah with uh with star wars shows um using led screens and really trying to advance the craft to make it more efficient and i think the important thing is where technology helps you is you know the the higher the budget goes the higher the risk right and then a studio becomes more risk averse uh when you're spending more money on a project if you can get that number down then they'll take more risks they'll they'll take risks on um you know filmmakers with interesting voices younger filmmakers i think it's critically important because it has gotten absurdly expensive um to make to tell stories and uh there has to be a future where that number comes down dramatically yeah but but while you say that it your new project citadel on on amazon uh seems to be the trailer is incredible by the way um the you're you're doing a show tell tell the aunts a little bit about the show but what's exciting to me is that you're doing it in you're doing multiple versions of the show that kind of cross pollinate each other like in different territories around the world um yeah explain that i mean basically it came from gen salki came to us who runs amazon and said look i have this idea it's basically a business model yeah which is i wanted to do a us mothership show that somehow connects to various local language shows around the globe in some in some manner there's interplay between the mothership english language show and the local language shows and she's like can you guys come up with anything we love the idea because we love the global audience that was one thing that the marvel experience really turned us on to i mean we were globally minded all of our lives since we were like early film fans but you know the idea that we live in a world now where you can reach people in every corner of the globe with a story that they can enjoy together at the same time and communicate together i mean it's just a really it's a very powerful thing so we thought okay this is a new frontier this is new technology amazon now exists and and their business model says oh we can make shows in different languages in different places around the world and they can

talk to one another wow and cast members kind of cross pollinate as well that's right they can cross pollinate that's also you're creating a saying pollinate yeah there's something so gross you really hung up on that i can't wait to see it yeah well and we produce this is a show we produce this is something that our company agbo you know we were joe and i have been able to since we moved on from ag the marvel we formed a production a company with our partners

chris marxist and steve mcfely who are writing partners what's agbo mean real quick a gbl absolutely nothing it's nonsense that's a lot of phone books again go get that beer joe i want the answer yeah that's so dope no here the shortest answer to that is when we were when we were first writing together and we started doing some sketch comedy we tried to drum up publicity for it so we wrote an article for the school newspaper that was a phony review of the show and the the reviewer just lacerates the show and everything he hates about the show is everything we love about the show and we needed a name for this article we looked in the cleveland phone book and found some guy named

gozy agbo and that was that was it that's hysterical wow all right have you guys ever wanted to dive by the way started back up for a second have you guys ever wanted to dive into the star wars world is there plans to do such you're going to say i want to dive into theater i really want to say dive into theater specifically musical theater oh it's coming i know it's coming yes it's a follow well that well yeah we love we love star wars i mean this is you know the same way that you're not going to say anything that you've had meetings on that you're talking about because you can't talk about guaranteed head meetings no there were early conversations there were early conversations

with us and you know kevin feige is a huge star wars fan and there were some early conversations about maybe teaming up with kevin to do star wars speaking to take from jason there's been a lot of cross pollination yeah between oh now he's awake between star wars and marvel a lot of the same because it does have a sort of a similar this are bees yeah similar sensibility right between between those two worlds so it makes sense that there have been people who have done both and i bet you if i'm kathy kennedy i'm like yeah i'm calling the russo brothers because i want them to get in here too um couldn't make their deal guaranteed it's too expensive well not now these guys are running the world but let me ask you this so you're a fan but if something happens it's great they're fans they're on the record is saying they're fans and and by the way and uh and the balls in their court yeah so you guys uh i mean by them i mean star wars um so you guys you you do all this marvelous and you and then you go off you make a bunch of big movies you guys made some

some movies with gray man awesome made gossing in evans yeah gray man yeah all those guys share

you with tom holland yeah when you go and you do those movies after after coming out of that world do they just seem so much easier because like you you do like shon was saying for end game you plan a shot for a year and you fucking and you do all this stuff and there's so much into it now when you make a just a regular old sort of action comedy or whatever you're like yeah that's pretty easy it's something you're starting i mean joe you wrote uh gray man right that's right yeah we started i mean look the the transition for us after marvel was more towards artist ownership you know we wanted to start our own company we wanted to start um you know controlling creating our own content as much as possible we went out and raised money you know the studio is well



## [Transcript] SmartLess / "The Russo Brothers"

financed kind of like what ben and matt are doing yeah exactly i mean it's sort of a uh you know for us i mean i think you know it's a very disruptive time in the business and to have a place where you can be protected right you can protect yourself uh and you can work on what you want to work on and at the pace that you want to work on hire yourself basically exactly and uh you know so that was the focus for us look for your life be a fan of your own work be a fan of your own hire yourself that's what y'all's mumbling behind you joe in the movie theater hire hire hire you're a fan of

yourself just be a fan of yourself um hey let me do you guys how much time do you guys spend i know you keep saying talk about pollinate did you when you when you you guys came out you were young filmmakers and you and you were recognized or you were just sort of discovered if you well by steven soderberg but how much time do you guys spend looking for those new young talents and young voices because there are a lot of people out there who who are trying to make or or are making films and putting them online etc etc like what soderberg did for you guys yeah do you guys spend a lot of time doing that stuff looking for emerging talent yeah absolutely i mean that's a big part of our agenda at agbo we and because we're able to you know the company is built in a way it's a well funded company it makes large projects we have the capacity in the space and joe and i also look at it as like we it's a karmic debt that we owe the universe right to like find people who are interesting artists who have important stories to tell and figure out how how we realize those movies because some of those stories aren't going to get through the system any

other way right you know like we wouldn't have got through the system any other way so that's really important to us and in fact i mean look everything everywhere all at once is a congratulations thank you i wanted to get to that you know it's such a great night for all you guys yeah that's unbelievable yeah i mean it's massive they're i mean they're incredibly talented and that's sort of part of the i mean these are guys that made a movie with the farting corpse you know they're risk takers they're very swiss army men you guys ever see swiss army men three callbacks for that yeah yeah but that's a good i mean there's a good example of swiss because his resume is always said

can fart on cue special skills try it count me down i'll do it juggles now uh what what can you can you tell us at all what maybe not specifically but in the world of what might be next that we can be all looking forward to seeing coming out of you guys so citadel comes out very shortly extraction two is out in june nice hemsworth franchise action another little cute little indy you guys do that's right and then anthony are working on a project called the electric state that was starring chris pratt and uh millie bobby brown chris pratt that's a mistake that's a mistake yeah you might want to reconsider with pratt very good guys the movie's already shot it's in the canner oh yeah he by the way i ran into chris the other day and he said he had the the best time making that movie we we love pratt i mean obviously you look at it a lot though can i see what i did pratt falls it took me a minute but he's like you guys you guys know him he's the greatest so he's he's he just brought amazing energy every day he's always looking he's always searching he's always sort of surprising you and he's a very smooth good dude happy to be

there but anthony you said something right there which is and i've always loved pratt for this from the day i met him from the day he did that we talked about it we had him on the show and he did the first uh uh season of um i know he was in parks and rec but the i remember the first

## [Transcript] SmartLess / "The Russo Brothers"

season the first time i saw it he was so surprising and he always is surprising yeah the ultimate weapon in comedy is that you never know what the fuck pratt is going to say or do yeah and and he catches you off guard and it's always really fucking funny and that's the mark of somebody who's genuinely funny and a great golfer you know he's decent he's decent he's decent let's not give him too much it works too much to be to be fantastic well i'm realizing as uh you know we do tend to work

with a lot of the same actors we're you know we like family we like hanging out we like having fun it's you spend a lot of time on set together but i think we've worked with you probably double what we've worked with anyone else on so i think we've done like six or seven things together yeah only once with me and nothing was wrong it's coming it's coming yeah so i'll double check my email i can beat that everything everywhere all at once script and i have a three hundred and ten page script i'd like to send you oh right on the money please send it we'll read it we'll read it out loud right here yeah we'll do we'll do a whole podcast around just workshop it um you guys

we love you and thank you for all of this time that's a pleasure to go by fast yeah so fast you guys thank you guys for doing this yeah thank you guys and by the way it's it's remarkable what you guys have done with this show it's like i listen to it all the time it's true we're we're blowing ourselves crazy surprising and and valuable so thank you for even calling it a show because it's such a hazzard piece of shit but but but let me just say this i'm i'm so genuinely happy for you guys it couldn't happen to me too better more talented nicer fucking dudes i love you guys i'm a huge huge fan of you guys thank you very much you give this business a good name you russo brothers

i do you guys um all right we love you love you guys have a great rest of the day and uh we'll see you soon see you guys take care everybody bye boys thank you all ciao thank you uh so um how about

those guys i i didn't know they i didn't know they worked that much on a rest of development oh yeah

the whole first year second year most most of the first two seasons i didn't know that yeah i mean there are other people but yeah yeah that's so cool they're so cool they're so like yeah like imagine that sean like for for all of the the the game that uh arrested development afforded uh me and will and everyone else says to the show to watch what happened with their career yeah yeah after arrested can you imagine what will and i and everyone else is like oh my god yeah there they go

and now they've like up until what last year or something they're responsible for the highest grossing film in the history of movies i know history i know like i think probably like number one and number two and now i think what that's number two and number three or whatever the hell yeah avatar they're just responsible for so much health of this business i know and they're and they're legit and they're legitimately great dudes they are such nice guys they're such regular guys from who really have not changed i imagine since they day since the day they moved from cleveland yeah and and this short amount of time we spent with them i can tell that they're they are very balanced individuals very which is rare this in this business they're very just kind of you know together yeah and a pleasure to be on set with uh man oh my god i would love to and joe would be joe would be when we were doing remember you brought up all up all night when he

## [Transcript] SmartLess / "The Russo Brothers"

was coming he was doing up all night and you go like he'd be like having a little something to eat and he was working on his fantasy football which jason i used to do with him at various times and then he'd be like you come back in and they go cut and i'd walk in he's like talking to the thing he's looking at his thing and go joe what do you think he goes kind of looks up he's like yeah yeah let's just do it again i might maybe just do a little faster at the top there and then look at her in the eye and blah blah blah all right let's go and then he's you i need to go back all right yeah i think maybe i can get a trade for this guy they're so going and effortless and just like no it's just you know what i mean yeah it's rare on top yeah rare and their brothers too i mean our brother's supposed to fight all the time i know that's why i wanted to ask them but i didn't want to be weird about it i was like i've never seen them i've honestly never seen them fight no or or even get a sort of annoyed with one another no not like us three no you know you fucking um what about i didn't ask him about how about splitting the money that's got to be a pain i've always wondered about these directing duos do they get twice the directing budget or do they have to split no it's probably one and they split it but i wonder if that still is the case with them you know they might get like a one plus yeah they're big shots you get a one plus but they're they're they're family so it probably doesn't hurt to split jason price of bread right now go oh uh dollar a slice am i close you're laughing at me like i'm not close i've broken bread it's 35 dollars and it may be 50 cents for the heels i don't know are they selling them all together do you get a break if you buy a bunch of slices together and well only if you buy them together well done shawn bye smartless is 100 organic and artisanly handcrafted by michael grant terry rub arm jarv and benet barbaco smart loss our next episode will be out in a week wherever you listen to podcasts or you can listen to it right now early on amazon music or early and add free by subscribing to wondery plus in apple podcasts or the wondery app