

## PRODUCTION PROCESS

### Interview with Marc Jousset

(JE SUIS BIEN CONTENT)

**Why did you decide to produce PERSEPOLIS almost completely in a 'traditional' way, not using computer generated images?**

The question of which technique to use, arose very quickly when we discussed the movie. We started with 2D images on pen tablets, but we were not totally happy with the result. The lines lacked definition. It also seemed logical that Marjane should be able to work with the animators using the tools of her trade; paper and ink. It was clear that a traditional animation technique was perfectly suited to Marjane's and Vincent's idea of the film.

**Did the use of black and white make things particularly difficult for an animated movie?**

Using only black and white in an animation movie requires a great deal of discipline. From a technical point of view, you can't make any mistakes. As soon as an eye isn't in the right place, or a pupil not perfectly drawn, it shows up straight away on the large screen. It's even more obvious in this particular film since it's not a cartoon with codes, conventions and distortions. We were closer to Japanese animation because of the story's realism, but we couldn't apply the techniques used in manga. As a result, we had to develop a specific style, both realistic and mature. No bluffing, no tricks, nothing overcooked. With animation director Christian Desmares, twenty animators worked on the movie. Marjane had quite an unusual way of working. Each sequence (1,200 shots) was given to an animator. Marjane insisted on being filmed playing out all the scenes. Given that she's a genuinely talented actress, it was a great source of information for the animators, giving them an accurate approach to how they should work. It was also very encouraging for them that she was so committed and passionate. Usually, in animated movies, directors are rarely so concerned with the day-to-day work on the film. After animators, the assistant animators put the finishing touches to the drawings and check them against the original. Marjane's drawings look very simple and graphic, but they're very difficult to work on because there are so few identifying marks. Realistic drawings require outstanding accuracy.

**What was the main challenge for you?**

To be on schedule, and to stay within budget, whilst maintaining our requirement for high quality. The budget was 6 million Euros, which is reasonable for a 2D movie made in France. I've rarely seen a team so focused on a project, not only for the technical challenge, but also for the story itself. I think the culmination of the fact that it was a true story, that the main character worked with you, that an animated movie dealt with a current issue and that it was intended for adults was tremendously exciting for the team.

## Interview with Pascal Chev 

(PUMPKIN 3 D)

**You were the one who suggested to work with a team of traditional animators (trace animators), who hardly exist in France anymore. Why?**

It was essential to be true to Marjane's line. An animation studio is a team of over 100 people, all with their own style. An animator will be more focused on trying to make the character move in the right way. Assistant animators will then put the final touches to the drawings, to make sure they're true to the original. Then the 'trace' team comes in, and they work on each drawing with a quill pen, a paintbrush or, (as it was the case here), a felt pen, to ensure that they are consistent with the line that runs throughout the movie. Our philosophy was to work on this movie in a traditional way.