



PRODUCTION BRIEF

Pixar Animation Studios' "Dug Days" is a new series of five shorts that follows the humorous misadventures of Dug, the lovable dog whose high-tech collar translates his thoughts into speech. A sweet and loyal pup, Dug won the hearts of audiences around the world when Disney and Pixar's "Up" debuted in 2009—so a series starring the memorable mutt was a perfect addition to the Disney+ lineup.

Bob Peterson, the voice of Dug then and now, wrote and directed the new shorts. It was familiar material for Peterson, who was a screenwriter and co-director on "Up," which won an Oscar® for best animated feature. In fact, Dug was born in part from a compelling moment in Peterson's past. "I was a camp counselor when a little kid ran up to me on the first day and said, 'You're my counselor—I love you,'" he says. "I thought, 'Wow. That's just pure.'" So when writing Dug years later, I realize dogs are like that—running up to you, wagging their tails, offering immediate acceptance."

Peterson has long understood why fans are so drawn to the character. "Dug is pure of heart—he's a good soul. I think people enjoy that part of Dug," he says. "Plus, people love their dogs. We've gone to great lengths to include truth in dog behavior, so they see their own dogs in Dug."

In "Up," Dug attached himself almost immediately to his self-declared master Carl Fredricksen, the unlikely hero in the film whose grouchy persona proved endearing. According to producer Kim Collins, the series kicks off shortly after the conclusion of the feature film. "Carl accepted Dug as his own at the end of that story," she says. "They've just returned from their big adventure and had some ice cream with Russell. They trade in the 1920s airship for a new house—complete with a doggy door and big back yard. But Dug grew up in Paradise Falls, so the suburbs are an exotic and exciting adventure to him."

Each of the five shorts features everyday events that occur in and around Dug's backyard, all through the exciting (and slightly distorted) eyes of the fan-favorite talking dog. According to Peterson, the key



component of the shorts is, quite simply, fun. "We thought it would be fun for Dug to finally encounter a squirrel, or watch the cutest puppies in the world," says Peterson. "We thought, 'What if he loses his collar and has to do charades to tell Carl something?'"

As Peterson wrote the episodes, however, he realized that each was rooted in a theme, adding depth to the fun. Themes are varied, including territoriality, nurturing and fear, for example. "It's true with our features, too," says Peterson. "If you do it right, you start with something that you'd just like to see. Then as you bend it in different ways, other elements come forward. So while I didn't start with facets of dog behavior, it landed there in the end."

Peterson, a "dog-guy" to his core, says finding characteristics of dog behavior that are universally recognizable was pretty instinctual. "I love to be with my dogs—like a caveman and his wolf. I didn't have to do a lot of research, really, I just think about my own puppies."

The shorts welcome back from the "Up" world Carl Fredricksen and the snipe-hunting wilderness explorer Russell. Ed Asner, who lent his voice to the curmudgeonly Carl in 2009, returned to the recording studio a decade later to deliver his dialogue for "Dug Days." According to Collins, Asner and Peterson picked up where they left off. "Bob and Ed go way back," she says. "They have a very funny relationship—there's a lot of teasing and poking, good-natured ribbing. It's a zany dynamic, but it puts Ed in the headspace of Carl, and he delivers a great performance."

While it's been 10 years since we last saw Russell, the character hasn't aged at all since "Dug Days" takes place immediately following the events of "Up." At 21, Jordan Nagai no longer sounds like a junior explorer, so filmmakers had to get creative. "I mined the lines Jordan recorded but we never used in 'Up,'" says Peterson. "At times what I found was better than what I initially wrote. For example, he sings this little song—it's so cute and we'd forgotten all about it. It was like opening up a time capsule."

"Dug Days" features a score by composer Andrea Datzman, who is a long-time collaborator of Michael Giacchino, along with Curtis Green. The music, which is designed to represent Dug's overblown inner emotions, includes nods to Giacchino's Oscar®-winning score from "Up." "The opening credits feature a twist on it that takes us to this new place where the series lives," says Collins. "Some of the character themes from 'Up' are woven in as well but overall, Andrea and Curtis have created really beautiful music. The score for each individual episode really has its own personality."

Written and directed by Academy Award® nominee and Emmy® Award winner Bob Peterson and produced by Kim Collins, all five episodes of "Dug Days" debut exclusively on Disney+ on Sept. 1, 2021.



FROM A LITTER OF PUPPIES TO... SQUIRREL! **Dug's Backyard Adventures Span Five Episodes**

Coming up with new adventures for Dug was not a problem for writer/director Bob Peterson, who kept top of mind the idea that this is Dug's first time out of Paradise Falls. "Everything is new and he's excited about all of it," says Peterson. "But the smallest things can distract Dug, never mind an actual squirrel."

The episode lineup includes:

SQUIRREL! (9:21) – What starts as an afternoon in the backyard with Carl working on a project and Dug "helping," evolves into another genre altogether when Dug comes face to face with his sworn enemy. "It's a challenge for Dug to behave but also protect the yard," says Peterson.

PUPPIES (9:14) – According to Peterson, the episode was inspired in part by old commercials that featured toddlers being joyfully inundated by puppies. "I'd always wanted to see Dug bowled over by a bunch of puppies," Peterson says. "But babysitting puppies is more work than Dug expects."

FLOWERS (6:36) – Featuring a summertime tradition that a lot of dogs would rather skip, the short is all about Dug's first-ever fireworks show. Carl, who tells Dug that fireworks are like "flowers in the sky," fails to mention the accompanying noise. "It's about a dog's fears," says Peterson, "and how you get a dog through something that terrifies them."

SMELL (7:12) – Featuring a smell that Dug has never experienced before, the episode explores the true potential of a pet. "We look at the superhero quality of a dog's sense of smell," says Peterson. "We had a blast imagining what it's like for a dog to smell something new."

SCIENCE (8:16) – Highlighting the technology that makes it possible for Dug to talk, "Science" welcomes Carl Fredrickson's fellow adventurer Russell to the backyard where he conducts some wild experiments. Says Peterson, "Dug faces an existential crisis about whether he's still a wild animal or if he's become just a pampered pet."

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

BOB PETERSON (Director/Written by) is an Academy Award®-nominated screenwriter, director and voice



talent at Pixar Animation Studios. Peterson has been a key player at Pixar since 1994. His first assignment was as a layout artist and animator on "Toy Story." He went on to work as a story artist on "A Bug's Life," "Toy Story 2" and as story supervisor for "Monsters, Inc." On Pixar's "Finding Nemo," Peterson and fellow writers Andrew Stanton and David Reynolds were recognized with an Oscar® nomination for best original screenplay. On the Academy Award-winning 2009 feature "Up," Peterson made his directorial debut as co-director, and was nominated with director Pete Docter and writer Thomas McCarthy for best original screenplay. Peterson also contributed to the original story for "The Good Dinosaur," which was released in November 2015; he was a screenwriter on "Cars 3," which opened in June 2017.

Peterson has voiced several of Pixar's most memorable characters, including paperwork-obsessed Roz in "Monsters, Inc.," Mr. Ray the tuneful Manta Ray teacher in Finding Nemo, and Dug the dog in "Up."

Recently, Peterson was the writer and director of the Emmy® Award-winning "Forky Asks a Question," which is now streaming on Disney+.

Peterson grew up in Ohio and New York City. He earned his undergraduate degree from Ohio Northern University, and master's degree from Purdue University, both in mechanical engineering. Peterson created cartoon strips for newspapers at both schools - "The Northern Review" and "The Exponent." He lives in the San Francisco Bay Area.

KIM COLLINS (Producer) joined Pixar Animation Studios in June 2000. She has worked in production management on several projects, including the Academy Award®-winning features "The Incredibles," "Ratatouille," "Up," "Brave" and "Toy Story 4."

Prior to Pixar, Collins worked at Disney Animation on "The Lion King" in an administrative role. She also worked as a production office coordinator in television and feature films that shot in San Francisco.

Collins grew up in New Hampshire, and attended Boston University in the Film and Television program. She currently resides in Oakland, Calif.