

## MARKING TIME

PRODUCER ELLEN GOLDSMITH-VEIN SHARES HER INSIGHTS ON THE MAKING OF THE UPCOMING *WENDELL & WILD*, WHICH EARNED HER THE PRODUCERS MARK, AND “THE IMMERSIVE AND MAGICAL EXPERIENCE THAT ANIMATION PROVIDES FOR A VIEWER.”

### **Wendell & Wild** Ellen Goldsmith-Vein, p.g.a.

Ellen Goldsmith-Vein, the founder and CEO of The Gotham Group—a management/production company based in Los Angeles—might be best known as the producer of *The Maze Runner* trilogy, a series of sci-fi action/adventure films that collectively have grossed almost a billion dollars worldwide. But her animation roots run deep, dating back to a time “when no one gave animation talent a second thought,” as she puts it. The upcoming *Wendell & Wild* (being released in October via Netflix), which she produced with Jordan Peele and writer-director Henry Selick, continues a fruitful association with animation that began with the TV series *Creature Comforts*, which aired from 2003–06. *Wendell & Wild* has been described as “a dark horror fantasy.” She’s currently in production on *My Best Friend’s Exorcism*, based on the novel of the same name by Grady Hendrix, for Amazon Studios, as well as the animated series *The Search for*

*WondLa* for Apple TV+, based on the sci-fi fantasy series of books by Tony DiTerlizzi.

### **YOUR FIRST PRODUCING CREDIT, AS AN EXECUTIVE PRODUCER ON THE ANIMATED SERIES *CREATURE COMFORTS*, WAS ALSO STOP-MOTION. WOULD YOU CONSIDER *WENDELL & WILD* A FULL-CIRCLE RETURN TO YOUR ORIGINS?**

Stop-motion has always been one of my favorite animation styles because of the handmade quality of the work. It’s incredibly hard to make an animated film or television series, and the artists that work in this unique discipline are in high demand. Alongside Netflix and with Henry Selick as the visionary leader on *Wendell & Wild*, we’ve been able to assemble the best of the best in every department to make this movie. Henry always tries new things on his movies, things that have not been done before, so he is creating while he is creating. To see the artistic and technological advances that have been developed in both instances has been revelatory.



### **HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED WITH *WENDELL & WILD*?**

We’ve worked with Henry Selick for over 20 years. His auteur status was always apparent, and it’s been a highlight of my career to encourage and support his cinematic vision. His idea for *Wendell & Wild* was, like Henry himself, a true original with the potential to attract a wide audience. That’s exactly the type of project that we as a company champion. When Jordan Peele came on board as a producer, co-writer, and star alongside Keegan Michael Key, Lyric Ross and Angela Bassett, among others, it seemed this idea had reached its fullest expression. We brought the concept to Netflix, which saw his film as the perfect debut project for a creative partnership with Henry.

### **HENRY SELICK HAS DIRECTED TWO OF THE MORE NOTABLE**

