RWBY Volume 4 Director's Commentary

Chapter 1:

- Kerry talks about how each episode had a ‘fuck you’ shot, which is a particular shot that was difficult to create across all departments. The opening shot of the Volume was one of these.
- In a little conversation about how much they’ve planned in the show, Kerry talks about how they’ve actually been hanging on to team WTCH (Watts, Tyrian, Cinder and Hazel) since the beginning.
- Regarding Oscar and his story this volume, Miles and Kerry had more rewrites with him than with anything else in RWBY, trying to figure out the right way to present it. At one point, Oscar’s first major scene was going to be in chapter 7, instead of 4.
- Mentioned in the commentary, but in more detail in the special features, is the fact that CRWBY had a rough start to the volume due to the new production pipeline, which continued for several episodes.
- “Bad. Landing. Strategy!” was Gray’s idea.
- According to Miles, the Petra Gigas was originally supposed to appear in the Emerald Forest during Volume 1. It was supposed to be a part of the giant nevermore/deathstalker fight, as was a giant Bourbatusk.
- On that note, they talk about how incredibly different the original 4 episodes of Volume 1 were compared to what we got, and that Fennec and Corsac were originally Volume 1 villains.
- On the origin of the Geist, Kerry talks about how, at the time Monty was working on the White trailer, he and Miles were thinking of ways for it to make sense, and came up with the idea of a poltergeist Grimm. They say that particular Geist is called an Armor Gigas.
- The crown on Jaune’s shield was first inserted by layout artist Rachel Doda when creating the storyboards. Kerry thought it was a perfect touch and decided to include it in the official design.

Chapter 2:

- In regards to the infamous map, Kerry mentions that in one version of the script, RNJR was going to lose the map in a fight of some sort. A similar was also supposed to happen in Chapter 6 involving Tyrian, but decided against it because of how busy CRWBY already was.
- According to Miles, Jaques is loosely based on Jack Frost, something they try to hint at in the way he keeps his study.
- Kerry says that writing the final scene of chapter 2 was the first time he cried while writing. Likewise, Miles said he lost his shit while performing mocap for the scene. Apparently everyone who worked on it had a pretty strong emotional reaction to this scene.

Chapter 3:

- On the topic of writing RWBY with multiple different story lines at the same time, Miles called it a ‘scary experiment’ but is happy overall with how it turned out.
- Kerry talks about the change from Poser to Maya, and all the new stuff it allows them to do now, but he also talks about how they also changed to something called Pencil (I’m sorry but I really not that knowledgeable with this kind of thing :P), a plugin that they’ve wanted to use for years to help with the look and style of the show. They initially tried to emulate it using Maya, which is what we saw from the Volume 4 Character Short at RTX, but realised it would be much easier for the technical crew if they just used the original tool, so they changed midway through production.
- Apparently all the animators were super excited once they learned that Blake was losing her bow, and I can’t blame them :D
- The disturbing noises made by the Seer were, just like most Grimm, made by William Orendorff, but these sounds were actually from Volume 1, and were an audition for what the Deathstalker would’ve sounded like.
- Miles talks about how they tried to have Salem feel a bit motherly, and not overly cruel, because she’s “better than that” and that she has a certain way of talking to each of her lieutenants.

Chapter 4:

- Apparently Yang’s eye colour was decided because of Taiyang’s and Raven’s eye colours. Red and Blue making purple.
- Burnie is apparently very invested in voicing Taiyang, and takes it very seriously. He would go over the script with Miles and Kerry before recording sessions and they talk about how Burnie will listen to Yang’s lines and efforts, and try and make Taiyang’s similar, as a way of representing how Yang was influenced by her Father. It’s also mentioned that Joel is similar when it comes to portraying Oobleck.
- When it came to naming all the villages in Anima, they wanted to keep the theme of Mistral being heavily inspired by Eastern influences, so they named villages after the Japanese names for certain flowers.
- Going back to the ‘fuck you’ shots, the long shot including RNJR entering the inn and Qrow watching was one of them. Apparently the shot just wouldn’t render a number of times.
- Originally, the inn and the pub were the same building, but were separated when they couldn’t figure out how to fit Raven into the scene.

Chapter 5:

- Miles says he cried while writing Blake’s reunion with her parents, and that the Belladonna’s are some of his favourite characters.
- Fennec and Corsac, as mentioned earlier, were characters originally conceived pre Volume 1, being the 2nd and 3rd Faunus thought about after Blake.

Chapter 6:

- In the charity scene, Koen says that there are around 100 different, unique people in the room, each with differing clothing.
- When describing Henry Marigold to concept artist Erin Winn, Kerry told her to draw a ‘posery, imposter Neptune’.
- When Weiss is yelling and grabbing everyone’s attention, there’s a version where one waiter doesn’t pay any attention to her and keeps walking normally. Dude’s gotta get those drinks around.
- Tyrian’s jacket, despite being one of Kerry’s favourite design aspects, was a real hassle for the animators and the rigging team, so much so that he was animated without his jacket on, and then would add it afterwards.

Chapter 7:

- The original plan with Ozpin was to not reveal him as having anything to do with Oscar until the very end of the Volume.
- This episode was the first time proper reflections were used in a mirror in any Rooster Teeth production. Before they would simply fake it.
- Originally the start of Qrow fighting Tyrian was reversed, with Qrow being the one to interrupt Tyrian mid sentence to start the fight.
- When it came to Tyrian swearing, some thought went into whether they could get around it, originally having him say witch instead. Ultimately, Miles and Kerry decided it was the right time for things to get a bit more mature.

Chapter 8:

- Miles says the whole campfire scene was probably the most difficult thing in the Volume to write, simply due to how much they needed to cover. Also, Kerry says more people worked on this scene than any other in the Volume.
- The two brothers was Miles’ idea, and his first major contribution to the series, obviously one of the first parts of the show that was conceived.
- Miles was the one who wrote the majority of Blake scenes in Volume 4. When she’s slapping Sun, Miles only intended it to be softer slaps on the shoulder, so he was quite surprised by the end result.

Chapter 9:

- When remodelling all the characters in Maya, they were mostly kept the same in terms of their faces and hair. Yang was the only one who had a significant change done to her hair, and originally Ruby’s hair was changed in a way so the lighting would look better and it could move better, but it didn’t feel right, so the change was reverted.
- Apparently there were several colour combinations the were tried with Ilia that “did not work”.
- All the patches of mud on the ground were originally water puddles, but Kerry forgot that while the scene was being animated.

Chapter 10:

- One of Gray's headcanons is that the little bit of pink in Ren's hair was done by Nora and that he decided to keep it. Even if it's not true this is totally one of my new headcanons.
- In the scene with Nora being bullied, Miles jokes about that if you feel bad about it, those other kids likely died the next day. To follow that up, Kerry then mentions that they actually considered to have one of those kids lying face down on the ground in the background during the attack. Damn.
- According to Miles, they actually described Ren's father in the script as "A handsome Hanzo looking motherfucker".
- One of the ideas they had that didn't make it into the episode involved Ren's father going to see the mayor. Since he's a hunter, and he had just returned from a hunt, Li was going to talk to the mayor about how they didn't find any animals and it was almost as if they had been spooked away, and that they should get a Huntsman to come and investigate.
- According to Kerry, Jaune and Ruby's moment was originally going to end with them hugging, but was cut due to time and Kerry not wanting people to "worry".
- Miles says that his favourite Grimm was supposed to show up in Volume 4, but unfortunately had to be cut. One day. However, after seeing what Kerry did with the Nuckelavee, he says that it might be his new favourite.
- Kerry says that the fight from chapter 12 was fully animated before any of the shots from chapter 10 were done.
- Kerry made a Rensexual joke. We did it! :D
- The Shione banners were added late in post production of chapter 2 because at that time Miles and Kerry were still writing the last few episodes, and came up with the idea of the banner hitting Ren before they realised that at the time they didn't exist.

Chapter 11:

- Recording Tyrian's efforts in this episode was a ton of fun according to Miles.
- Kerry's "proudest accomplishment of this Volume" was having the photo of Whitely on Jacques' desk be face down after Ironwood slams down on it.
- Kerry talks about Sun's abs (as you do) and actually reveals that, contrary to popular belief, they didn't remove them, but instead Sun's model was made to be more muscular and they would be picked up by lighting and shadows instead.

Chapter 12:

- When talking about the fight, it's mentioned there were several different versions of it. They don't go into detail, but Kerry does mention that Qrow was originally supposed to do something, but Miles reminds him it's something they can't talk about .
- According to Miles, When William Orendorff was making the screams for the Nuckelavee, he's actually screaming the word 'die'.To add to that, most of the noises made were William pretty much screaming while inhaling, and also running his fingers along his throat to produce some of the sounds. There's some video of it in the special features, it's the coolest/scariest thing I've ever seen.