



Shakefire sat down with Tim Heidecker and Eric Wareheim to discuss their upcoming film, Tim and Eric's Billion Dollar Movie in which they both wrote, directed, and starred in.

**Shakefire:** Tell us about the writing process for the movie as opposed to the work you guys have done in the past?

**Tim Heidecker:** Well, we tried to take our time. We knew we didn't wanna make a sketch movie. We didn't want to make a long episode of The Awesome Show. So we focused on trying to come up with a story that would fit our sensibility and not clog it up with too much plot. Just sort of make a movie that we could do everything we wanted to do, all of our little tricks and stuff. It was back and forth, working on it for quite a while, getting to a good position where we had something that we could use to shoot the movie with knowing that we'd probably spend a lot of time editing it and changing it.

**SF:** Did you have any trouble adapting from the short to a full length feature film?

**TH:** No trouble, just that it was a challenge. We didn't consider it adapting, just doing something different. It was work, but so is anything you care about.

**SF:** The film is already available on Video on Demand. What was the decision process for going that route?

**TH:** That's a decision from Magnolia/Magnet. That's how they release all their films. It wasn't our decision. It was a decision that at first confused us but since it happened it's been great. For multiple reasons, it's allowing the film to be seen by way more people than if it just had a limited indie theater release. There're a lot of people out there that are very savvy about this kind of stuff and know how to do, and then there's people that aren't going to be aware of it and will go and see it in the movie theater in traditional ways.

**SF:** With the VoD release, have you guys experienced people who have already seen the film and are already enthusiastic about it or has that shifted the dynamic at all?

**Eric Wareheim:** No, it's interesting. The screenings we've gone to most people have not seen it yet. They want to see it in the theater. Word on the street is a lot of people are waiting, which is awesome. The way this is rolling out is, I think, good for both people. You know, people who don't go the movie theaters. It's only in 20 cities so it's not as easy for someone in say Miami to see it.

**TH:** Our thing about this movie is it's going to be around for years and years and years and years so people are going to discover it in all kinds of ways. There's no cost in putting it out right now. It's not like you're renting physical space or anything, it's just available on these sites. It is a weird thing, cause it's so new. Even from a practical PR/Press standpoint, the shelf life of this release has doubled



because there was all kinds of press happening leading up to the VoD release and now there's press happening leading up to the theatrical release. People are still being reverent or respectful about the idea of the theatrical release and a lot of bigger papers and more traditional news outlets are only talking about the theatrical release. So it's capturing a bigger audience.

**SF:** A lot of sacrifices were made in making the film. Was there anything you would have done differently in making the movie?

**TH:** No, no regrets.

**SF:** When you were writing the movie, what was your thought process on what kind of techniques from The Awesome Show you've done, to what degree you'd implement your editing techniques; how did you judge how far you'd go with some things and how much you'd pull back with others.

**EW:** We definitely knew it wasn't going to be cut as fast as Awesome Show or have that look. We wanted it to look like a movie. We wanted to have somewhat of a cinematic experience. Some parts, like the Johnny Depp movie, have a little more heightened Hollywood look and then for the rest of the movie we wanted to have a higher production value. At the same time, we wrote a bunch of those "Understanding Your Movies" which feel very Awesome Show.

**TH:** The basic rule is like what makes sense. If you're making a shitty commercial then it makes sense to be a shitty commercial but if you're just in the narrative, it doesn't make sense for it to be all shitty and weird. We want you to forget about the form when you're watching the movie until it makes sense for the scene.

**SF:** You guys have a very niche audience. How do you want to attract other people? The Awesome Show can be very extreme.

**TH:** Generally, we're just doing a lot of press. We're talking to as mainstream press as you can get. We're talking to the Atlanta Journal Constitution; they're going to run a piece about it. It's different than your normal film, I guess, but it should be treated like anything else. It's just a little different. It's not a remake of something; it's not an animated CGI thing.

**EW:** At the same time, though, our objective is for it to reach...to do well in the mainstream light. Of course we want lots of people to see it but our objective was to make OUR movie, which I think we succeeded in.

**SF:** When you started the process of making the movie was there ever any temptation to go full on crazy, bizarro, very tiny movie that would be much less accessible than this is?



**TH:** That's a funny thing. One perspective is that it's so crazy, how are you going to get an audience? The other is the opposite. From a superfan's perspective, they may be like, "Hey, you made this traditional movie." So in that sense, we kinda found a middle ground there. We knew that we couldn't get a movie made if it was just gonna be completely out-the-window bonkers. It's probably not a movie we'd really want to make anyways. To spend 90 minutes and all that time and all that money and all that opportunity to wank off feels like a missed opportunity.

**SF:** A lot of people that are in the movie have also been a part of the show, but then there are people who have been a part of the show that weren't in the movie. How did you go about choosing which of your regulars would be a part of the movie?

**EW:** We sort of wrote the movie with characters and then assigned people to those characters. It was just whoever fit. There was a lot of people who didn't get in there and a lot of people who wanted to get in there.

**TH:** Yeah, there were just too many people that we wanted to have in the movie. There just weren't enough places for them cause we didn't want it just to be a parade of cameos necessarily. So it is just striking a balance and hoping that if we get to make another movie we can include other people. This isn't meant to be the time capsule of all things we care about in our careers.

**SF:** If you get the opportunity to do more things would you like to continue this narrative Tim & Eric timeline as it is now or would you like to collaborate on some other effort in a different direction?

**EW:** Yeah, we'd love to make another Tim & Eric movie.

**TH:** It's confusing because the way that this movie ends, I'm not sure how you would continue it. There's the ending of the movie within the movie and then there's this other ending. I don't know if it would continue from the screening room or from the mall. We can kind of do whatever we want, probably.

**SF:** If you guys actually had \$1 billion to make a movie, what would you do?

**TH:** We would probably give 99% of it away. No, the problem with having lots and lots of money for a movie is that's somebody else's money so they're going to want it back. They're going to try and fuck with it to make sure that they make it as accessible to the most people as possible.

**SF:** You have the Tim & Eric brand but then you both also have your own singular bodies of work. How do you maintain a balance between all your projects?



**EW:** It's sorta like weekend projects, the other stuff right now. We're pretty focused on the Tim & Eric thing. As anyone, you have a lot of other outside interests and you want to be creative and do others things outside of that.

**SF:** What has the reaction been to the movie so far from what you've seen?

**TH:** I think it's been overwhelmingly and surprisingly positive. The tweets that I've been getting, I'd say, are like 10 to 1 or 15 or 20 to 1, all positive.

**EW:** Yeah, if you look on iTunes, there are 600 five-star reviews right now. A couple one-star reviews but our fans took to the net and downloaded this thing and really have shown a lot of love to it. I think we're still in the stage of like, we're going to these screenings and it's all fans so it's a really nice thing but I think once it comes out in theaters it'll even out.

**TH:** Here's the thing. There's going to be a certain group of fans who have been waiting for this movie for two years since we started making it, have all kinds of expectations for it, want it to be certain way, want it to be a show, that are going to be disappointed in a way. Then, there's other people that have seen it and are going to have first reactions and then they see it again and are going to have different reactions. So, like I said earlier, this is a movie that is going to have a long lifespan to it. People that haven't experienced our show, this is going to be what they associate with us. But in general, the most reasonable people that I've heard from have all been, "I've laughed, I've had a good time." That's all it's meant to be. It's not meant to change cinema history.

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