

Simon Barry - Creator & Showrunner of Netflix's Warrior Nun ...

Sun, Jan 22, 2023 4:38PM 59:58

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

season, people, character, netflix, shows, nun, feel, shooting, story, actors, writing, ava, audience, fans, episode, warrior, amazing, scene, day, literally

SPEAKERS

Bryan (host), Simon Barry

- B** Bryan (host) 00:22
So on this week's episode of Be more super the podcast, we welcome back an awesome guests. He's a creator, showrunner, director and writer of Warrior Nun on Netflix. It's Simon Barry Simon, welcome back to the show, sir.
- S** Simon Barry 00:36
Good to be back, Brian. And thanks for that introduction. Of course, it's not just me, it's an entire army of people writing and directing and making that show. So as much as I appreciate the the confidence, I'm just, I'm just the ringleader of the whole circus.
- B** Bryan (host) 00:53
And I've been trying to get as many of them on the show as possible, you know, in front of the camera and behind the camera, because, is rightly so it's a massive team effort. And the team is just marvelous in what they've achieved. It's just outstanding. It's fantastic. But I wanted to say first of all, congratulations on having I've got a little slide here to, to put up congratulations on the height one of the highest rating shows on Netflix, with 100%. From the critics and 99% for the audience. I mean, that must feel amazing as a showrunner to have a show have that much of a response.
- S** Simon Barry 01:30
Yeah, it's very, it validates the work that you put in for sure. And it makes you I'm particularly I mean, the critics, it's lovely to get critical reviews, but I'm more I think, elevated and uplifted by the fan reaction in the audience reaction that we gave them something that they wanted,

and that they enjoyed, and were entertained by and challenged by. And that's very satisfying, of course, because I've made shows where that doesn't happen. And it's not this and it's a very different feeling. So this is this is lovely.

B

Bryan (host) 02:05

But you've had quite a few shows that you know, had a massive fan base like Van Helsing and, and critically acclaimed, you know, Babylon as well, which, which I thought was an awesome set series. So don't cut yourself short. And obviously ghost wars as well, which I think is amazing. And it's just been shown on crackle. I think And that, again, is an awesome show. It really really is. So you obviously have got the Midas touch with with the majority of them. So Season One left us on a cliffhanger. And what a cliffhanger. But while we got a kick ass season two, and you started filming Season Two in the pandemic. So how challenging was that compared to filming Season Season One? And what were the biggest challenges you had to face?

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Simon Barry 02:59

Well season it's funny because season after season one, we loved shooting all around Southern Spain so much in season one that season two, the plan was to really, we were going to take the show on the road, if you will, we were going to do a show that kept the cat and mouse part of the story moving and that we were going to try and shoot in all these different locations over the course of season two and of course with with COVID. Netflix put the hammer down and said Nope, you're not moving, you're staying in one place. And that's it. And you'll only be able to go and shoot a drive away from that hub. No overnights, no travel. And so Madrid became sort of our our de facto studio in a way because we couldn't move from Madrid, we could just find things in the Madrid area that were were suitable. So we had to sort of rethink how the story was going to unfold. And we had to bring it into Madrid as more of a central location as opposed to a traveling show. So that was the one big change. story wise, though. It didn't really affect us from a point of view of story, but it did affect the way we shot because obviously, the mass protocols and the COVID costs that are attached to the cost of making the show makes everybody nervous about the cost of making TV because you're already on this. You know, you're already being told, as a producer, you have to bring in the show at a certain price point with a certain number of audience members for it to be a good formula for us. Right. And so when you already know you're riding that razor's edge of profitability or at least acceptance, to find out that you're gonna have to spend you know 15 or 20% more on COVID costs terrifies you because you think How are we going to how's this going to be mitigated in the formula of our success, and also, you worry about, you know, just people getting sick in the people that you work with and care about. And you don't want to put them in a position where they are at risk. So all of those went into, you know, all and then just the, the, the issues of working with masks and, and working in environments that are inherently, you know, dangerous, there's always just an added layer of stress. And on one, we were, I would say, compared to other shows I heard anecdotally about, we probably fared very, very well, because we had minimal disruptions, compared to other shows. But we did have major disruptions in our little world that really did throw us for a loop and forced us to make, you know, very quick decisions and change things around in ways that were not planned. And that's always on a film shoot, it's

always when you have to drop the plan that you really get nervous and scared, because the plan is really your security blanket. And when you have to throw it out, you realize that chaos is suddenly taking over and not necessarily the best way.

B Bryan (host) 06:17

So was there any Tom Cruise moments on set at all? Or did everyone everyone behave properly?

S Simon Barry 06:26

No, I mean, we didn't have to yell and tell anyone off at all. People were very well behaved. The nice thing about Madrid, of course, and shooting in the summer was that most life was outdoors in terms of your social your nonworking time. So it was that gives you at least the illusion of safety because most of those restaurants, you're sitting in fresh air, and you're not in an enclosed space. So that part, I think, definitely gave us an advantage. Because, you know, we weren't asking people to go into places, or at least we weren't asking them at all, if you went out for dinner, or went out with friends. After work, you would probably more than likely be at a place that was indoors and outdoors. And you can choose to be outdoors, which is good.

B Bryan (host) 07:13

It must be so nice. So filming now, compared to the pandemic times, things must flow a lot easier. Now, compared to

S Simon Barry 07:23

because I only shot. I haven't been on a set since season two. So I don't know. I mean, I did go I have visited other sets. And it's still I think there's still an awareness that the pandemic the virus needs to be taken seriously on a worksite. Because, especially in film if an actor is, is is down with COVID, it shuts you down as a production. And there's no, there's very little. So I think people still are taking it pretty seriously. I think because the insurance companies have told them they have to take it seriously too.

B Bryan (host) 07:59

Well, I suppose you can see it in the way of stunts. You know, that's the reason why we have stunt teams, because if one of the actors get injured during a stunt, you know, they're out of action. And that costs money and then you extend shoot time. So in season two, we get introduced to some new faces. Jack Amina to name a few. You were heavily involved in the casting are, you know, in season one, what was casting like casting those characters for season see season two? I mean, how did it go?

S Simon Barry 08:31

S Simon Barry 08:31

It was very smooth, I must say, I think, you know, when you have a great casting team, which we have in Suzanne Smith, and Lucy Linux, Suzanne was based in London, Lucy is based in Barcelona, we really they worked very well together, combining their resources and finding the best undiscovered, you know, talent in Europe. So if you can start there, everything kind of is affected by that decision. And those those two, casting directors are so good at what they do and bring you such a great bounty of talent, that it's actually what I like, when I'm making choices, I have a very hard choice to make I get, you know, I get I feel very good when it's either a very, very obvious choice or a very hard choice, because everyone's so good. Now, you're always hoping for the obvious choice. And with certainly with with Jack. He was the perfect blend of someone who we wanted as a performer who had the chops to deliver this kind of performance. But he also had the look that when the audience found out who he was that he was actually, you know, Julian son, Michael, that they would go Oh, yeah, I totally believe that. That is the grownup version of that little boy. And that's a very that's when you're casting obviously, to things that are criteria for the audience. One being that they're an amazing actor and two, that they feel like they're legitimate, based on the story, that's really great. So we were lucky and very grateful for that mean, it was immediately shone out as an amazing option for Yasmin, right out of the gate, she just brought this light. In her, she's like that in person, she has this beautiful buoyance approach to life, that is that translates perfectly to Yasmine. So that was, that was a no brainer as well. And, and, and then we got very lucky also with Siddiqa, who plays Sr. Dora, who came comes in late, but was an incredible stunt talent that we had asked her to, you know, we had to sort of say, hey, we need someone who can do what you do as a stunt performer, but you know, also become this, this character that needs to kind of show up at the end near the end and, and really make a mark. And so that was a lovely discovery, too. So all of those, that whole process is always rewarding when you know, you've got you found somebody, and they found you, and it's gonna be a great relationship.

B

Bryan (host) 11:15

I mean, he's great cast. And I've got to say the character is just awesome. I mean, if you ever get stuck on an idea for your next project, I was chatting to Mina. And she was saying that when they flew in, for filming, they had to isolate for a certain amount of time. And she would spend all day, every day on the balcony. And she would be talking to Jack from the distance. And then I just had this thought of a movie based on two people, you know, during pandemic that fall in love, you know, the balconies, but they never meet in person. So have you ever have you ever get stuck, you know, who to cast their Mina and Jack? So do you feel it helps cast in sort of unknowns? And I say that in the most affectionate way? Because, you know, when you get these big named actors, do you think it helps for the believability of the characters to cast? Maybe people that are not as well known, as, you know, some actors out there?

S

Simon Barry 12:16

Well, I guess, aesthetically, and sort of, from a point of view of keeping the magical realism of the show alive, yes. But it's also I mean, a lot of times, it's an economic reality, you know, it's not something that you are necessarily always saying, Oh, this is this is a function of like a strategy. It's usually driven by, you know, a pot of money that you have, and how much is left in it. And also, whether you can, I personally, like it, I, I'm the kind of filmmaker that loves to find new talent and embrace it, and elevate it and bring it to the world. I think that's so much fun. And but at the same time, I also love working with, you know, actors who are known

because they're so good at what they do. And when I worked with Vincent denorfia, it was a dope everyday, it was a pleasure, because he's so committed, and, and talented, and, and just has this amazing approach to the process that it's great. But I think that on a show like Warrior Nun, in particular, a show that is, in this fantasy universe, if you will, as a mythology that is its own, it is, I think, easier to keep this sense of, of, sort of a realism, if you will, when you're not distracted by an actor who has been in a zillion other things and your view, you can, I think, create a more lifted world, you know, in a way that feels a bit like its own thing. You know, it's its own. It's, it's not a derivative of something else. And I want to mention also, Richard Clothier who played Cardinal Foster was, when we went he auditioned, he did a self tape. And when he auditioned, he did the most amazing thing in his audition that I had to leave my office and go and bring people in to show them what he had done an audition, which was just this phenomenal transition in in one of the scenes that and he's amazing to work with as well. So yeah, I think that and also for me, I just feel like these actors also come with this head of steam. They want to they want to prove to you and to the audience, that they are, you know, worthy of this opportunity and worthy of the show and, and that's exciting too, and I think you just get a really committed passionate performance in those situations. And I have worked with some actors of note, you know, who aren't always, you know, not as a director or as a showrunner. But when I was a cameraman, I worked with some actors who kind of because of their fame or their notoriety, I felt didn't push as hard, maybe as the director wanted them to and didn't give, you know, the kind of effort or focus that might have been might have made the show better. You know, you have I've seen that and you don't want that on your set ever?

B

Bryan (host) 15:36

No, no, of course. Of course not. But I mean, looking at season two, we only got eight episodes. And David Hayter I had on the show recently, David hook, you can't David. Certainly, we snake. I felt really bad. I met him in Manchester just before Chris Christmas, and literally is lying at this convention was a mile long. So I thought I'd wait in line, because I wanted to invite him on the show. And I went up, and I wanted to get him to sign something. And literally, there was nothing. I wanted him to get getting signed, soon Warrior Nun. And all I could see on this table was Solid Snake. And I've never played the game. And I felt so guilty. So luckily, I found a watchman picture. So I had to get that signed, of course, because that is an epic, epic movie, indeed. And he mentioned the Netflix only budgeted eight episodes. So bearing in mind that you've mentioned previously, that you wrote Season Two back in May 2020. If I'm right in saying, how did that affect, you know, telling you the story, knowing that it went from 10 episodes to eight?

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Simon Barry 16:53

Well, we knew it was gonna go to eight in the writing room. Because mandate, the Netflix mandate was not it wasn't a budgetary thing it was Netflix was shifting all of their shows to eight episode seasons, their studio shows I should say, not the shows they acquire, and reboot and broadcast, but the shows they make in house as a studio. So we knew that Netflix had decided to make this shift across the board. It wasn't, wasn't something that Warrior Nun was being punished for anything we were just trying, we were long existed long enough to see go from 10 to eight for everyone. So it really just at the end of the day becomes a function of how you break the story. Typically, in the writing room, you know how the show's going that the season is going to begin, you know how it's going to end and you fill in the middle as it relates

to plot and character so that each of those chapters is propulsive and entertaining, and delivers enough information to get you to the next one. So, breaking it down into eight versus 10 really just was a function of what was required, it didn't really change the story we had in mind, it just meant we compressed it into eight hours instead of 10. So as far as that went, it really didn't have a big impact, I think, on us from a storytelling point of view, the good thing was, we got the same budget from season one to season two. So we could spread the money over eight episodes instead of 10, which meant that every episode got a little bit more in the budget. So because we were amortizing that amount, and, you know, it was important also, because we needed that extra money because Madrid was more expensive to film in than southern Spain. And also because we were dealing with a pandemic, which added, you know, hidden costs as well. So it helped us but from a storytelling point of view, I mean, it's always nice to have more episodes, because, you know, you want to have more story to tell. But it was very, it was part of the process from the beginning of season two's writing. So it was very, it was never something we had to grapple with.

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Bryan (host) 19:05

I mean, you often see shows that that you often think actually could cook could be slightly, you know, shorter, it feels like they're sort of stretching that elastic band. So I've got to say season two is definitely you hit the ground running. And it didn't stop for for any of the episodes. It really didn't. And for this season, I've got to say Lilius story arc, I just thought was incredible. And her character is just amazing. I mean, you know, what did you think of that story arc in the from the writers room to how it came on screen? And which character for you in season two, was the most fun to do to develop, you know, on screen?

S

Simon Barry 19:46

Well, we knew I think early on that little arc based on what happened to her in season one was something that would we could really go somewhere interesting with it and do something that was a bit unpredictable. and surprising for the audience. Plus the kind of supernatural nature of what happened to her meant that we could have some fun with, you know, things like the wings and her ability to teleport, we knew we wanted to, like invest in that and push it into the show in a way that gave Lilith, her own story, her own journey that was as interesting as we could make it, which I think we accomplished. And I think it was nice for Lorena also to be Eve because she unfortunately gets kind of separated from the main group, which is sucks when you're part of an ensemble, but at the same time, the spotlight was on her in a way that might not have been otherwise. So it gave her an opportunity to to put to stretch and to do things that I think she might not have been able to do, she'd stay part of the ensemble. So I think that was a satisfying thing. I mean, the question was, which character? Did I enjoy the most? Like? It's tricky question, because there's so many. It's very hard to pick one. Because they all have their moments, you know, and the will and you, we really wanted to find ways to bring everyone's character into a bit of sharper focus with mother Superior. And her flashback story and how she lost the halo. And then with her near death experience, and with Camilla, you know, taking on the role of being much more front and center in the group, obviously with Ava because she was the whole season was built around Ava being more of a action hero and I'm more more deliberately invested in the plot direction she she controls the way the story is told much more than in season one. I mean, everyone kind of had, I think, an interesting arc, and I love the way that Kristina through Beatrice, that relationship developed in a slow way. It's

really hard for me to pick one. And I think the reason it's hard to pick is because we've spent so much time trying to make sure no one is let down. No, no single character is left to you know, wander aimlessly at the show, we're always trying to make sure that everyone is serviced. So I can't really pick one. I mean, I think in terms of at the end of the day, when I watched season two, I do love the Lillith sequences in a way because the each there's they're all very different in the context of the show. So it takes you out of the the main story in ways that I think are really fun and entertaining. And you know, because of the difficulty of shooting some of her scenes because of the VFX component of teleportation in the wings. It was the most challenging stuff to shoot in some respects. And that is fun for me personally as a as a nerd and a technician. On top of being a storyteller, I like the technical challenge of being able to do sequences like the end of episode one where she's teleporting through those guys and killing them all. And then the fight with the wings with Ava. It's like it's it's a it's a puzzle you have to crack and on many levels with a group of people that you love to collaborate with all trying to solve the same problem with you which is also a lot of fun.

B Bryan (host) 23:20

I mean I've got to give a massive shout out to Michael black black born and the embassy because the work that they did you know each episode is like literally movie aids it's literally the the effects. The visuals I just thought was stunning. In every way the wings and and my favorite favorite scene was that fight scene with Lilith with with teleport in the way that that was shot was just off the scales. It's just another level of epic. It really really is. I mean, I do idea say that season two, there was more action sequences than Season Season One, because it felt like that one I was watching. Because,

S Simon Barry 24:03

yeah, I think we had the ability in season two to have more action per episode per hour than we did in season one. And season one, I think we had to spread it out a bit more in terms of the we had some bigger action in season one for sure. The the the Crusades sequence with the with the the castle at the end of in Episode 10 was certainly a much bigger action sequence than we did in anything in season two, but the complexity of action and season two in the end the amount of action we had in season two definitely was it was more in terms of volume.

B Bryan (host) 24:38

Yeah. And which and which one was the most satisfying to see From Page to Screen, you know,

S Simon Barry 24:45

to deliver church with all the church fight was less defined on the page. It wasn't so the church fight as written was not written as a continuous kind of exercise in shooting like trying to maintain this kind of flow, it was written as really much more of kind of a story fight that got you from A to B, before the task showed up. In the prep of that, we all as a team recognize that there was the story, the story of the fight, as written had not given it anything particularly special, as on the page. So we all sat around the table with Cassia, the director, and Lee and

kuko and Chi in the stunt department, myself, and, and we talked about how we could make this fight interesting visually, in a way that wasn't going to require a ton of, you know, changes, you know, and the one thing that we that we came up with was this idea of like trying to keep the seamless connection of, because you have three different people fighting, it allowed for these opportunities to keep the action flowing from character to character, and thus not breaking it up. And having too many cuts. So that I can't remember where that idea came from might have been Cassia, the director might have been, Lee are the stunt guys, it might have even been me, I really don't remember that it's such a blur that whole process. But we all definitely knew that something needed to be added to make it special, make it memorable. And that was the that was a nice way of solving the problem. And that's what happens in prep a lot. I mean, people obviously talk about the production as being what happens on set. But the reality is, is a lot of the best stuff happens in prep, when you're planning and figuring out how to not just squeeze all of those pages into seven or eight days of shooting, but also how to make each scene stand on its own and part and feel special. Because you always want to seem to feel like it's it's the most special scene every scene is. So when you come up with a solution like that on the fly with, you know, only a few days to prep it and to plan it. That feels really good. And you feel great at the end of the day when you go Oh, my God, it worked. You know, it actually it actually worked. Definitely. Yeah. So I was very happy that that turned out the way it did. But I'm always happy that anything turns out because I'm the I'm like, I'm the worried parent every day going, oh my god, what have I gotten these poor people into? Have? I asked much have I not gotten enough money for them? I mean, anytime a scene plays out, and you're like, Oh, my God, it actually turned out, okay, I'm thrilled. And it's like, you just don't want to fail, you know, you don't want the audience to fail, you don't have to cut something out because it didn't work, which is what normally happens is if a sequence doesn't turn out the way you want it or isn't as good as you hope, you oftentimes just remove it. And it's never seen. And that's always painful. And we didn't have to do that in season two,

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Bryan (host) 27:56

at all. Good. I mean, I, you know, I've interviewed quite a few stars, from the front of the camera, as well as the awesome people behind the camera. And when I've asked every single one, what was it like to work with Simon, they've literally all said, it's been amazing. I've got here that they can't praise you enough as a leader and your openness to the creativity. So what is the secret of running a successful team? And how did it How did it feel to wear so many hats along the way? Are that

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Simon Barry 28:33

the honest answer is laziness. I can't do I literally cannot do it all by myself. And I'm not good enough to do it all. So I need a super strong group of people around me who are as talented as they can possibly find. I mean, I think I'm, I'm good at letting people do their jobs and getting out of their way. I think that's probably the translation of what you've heard is that by and that's why I call it laziness. But it's not laziness, really. It's just me picking Well, I choose people well, and I know that they can deliver to the degree that my expectations and my standards will, you know, will be satisfied. So I think that when you have people like that it's easy to be a trusting, it's easy to be supportive. It's easy to be a leader, not a boss, you know, and by leading I just mean by giving, solving, helping them out wherever I can solving their problems, answering the questions and lending support where however I can. But when you have great

people, it's you you do less, which is better for me, because I don't want to be working 20 hours a day I want to have like a normal life. So I really try to empower everyone I'm working with because I trust that they are going to be better at their job with my support than with my you know than with me trying to micromanage them, which, you know, I tried to give them the the I tried to give everyone my hopes and expectations and dreams of what I what it could be and what I want it to be. And it's up to them to sort of find a way to deliver that. Without me trying to tell them how to do it or, or what to do, I mean, but I do like being a source of support, or, and a source of inspiration if I can, you know, because it is hard. I do think I'm good at visualizing what the end result needs to be. And I can communicate that to people who, when they read the script don't necessarily know what I have in mind. And I need to be able to communicate that. So clear communication, open communication, transparency, all of these things go into essentially encouraging your team to do their best work, not just for me, but for them. You know, I want them to be proud. I want them to go home feeling like when they hit a home run, you know, and that's I know how that feels. Having been on that side of of the crew of being a grunt a worker bee how good it feels when someone trusts you to do your job and you do a good job and you go home feeling like you've accomplished something. It's a very good feeling. Even if it's a small thing on a movie, or a big thing. It's it's a good feeling to know your work is appreciated. And and you've done well.

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Bryan (host) 31:25

I mean, obviously shows on camera. You know the work that gets done behind this back behind the camera camera. It really does. I wanted to touch just like slightly on. Let me see if I pronounce his right, Eva trace. Eva Treece. Literally, I do apologize. The fans are gonna kill me right now. But obviously, this has impacted the internet, the internet literally blew up. Because you gave the fans exactly what they want. Did you ever think that it would have made this much of an impact when you was filming that scene? With Beatrice and Ava?

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Simon Barry 32:00

Um, I knew that was I think I think I hoped it would. I hoped it would play out in a way that was mean, we wrote we wrote all of season two before season one came out. So we didn't know the impact Aviatrice would have with the fans. But we weren't trying to we were still trying to be honor, we were still trying to honor where the characters were going in this journey of their relationship. And we knew we didn't want to do it too quickly. We knew we wanted it to be a organic earned moment, as opposed to a forced one or something that was just, you know, to get clicks. And I think that this, the satisfaction of it, being of blood of it, seeing it blow up was because it felt, I think, because people felt it was authentic. And I think in that authenticity, that's the satisfying thing. It's not the volume of clicks, or the reaction, it's the fact that people were genuinely moved, you know, they felt like it was a moving moment. And it had emotional power, which is all we think about on the day, when we're writing it or planning it or shooting it. All I want is for the audience to believe that this is is a truthful moment. And that it's done well, you know, it's done with with respect, and with a sense of importance that is not over, you know, overbearing or, or pedantic or, you know, just false. You know, you want it to feel like a moment where and we were all fans of storytelling, we all know the moments that make us choke up and make us feel emotionally connected to characters and the stories and you just as a filmmaker, you're always trying to hopefully, achieve that when you're doing it yourself. So as a writer and a director, it's terrifying, because you're thinking, Oh, my god is this? I know the

actors can do it. It's like, Can I do it? Can I pull it off? Is this going to work with the music with the shot with the blocking? And is it going to work in the context of the whole journey that got us here? Is this going to mean what I hope it means and it was nice that it did for the audience? Because I can't tell them that this is I'm putting everything into this basket. I hope it doesn't blow up or fail, because it can and it has, you know that there's the potential for that. So yeah, it's very less. I'm less interested in the I mean, I love that the audience use the Aviatrix hashtag is kind of a way to to broadcast their affection for the show. I think it's great, but it's more important for me that that individual person in their moment of watching the show that it had an impact on them. That's more that's what I'm out to do. In my job more than trying to create an internet sensation or a Twitter storm.

B Bryan (host) 34:53

Yeah, exactly. Yeah, I mean, I mean, it was great for the representation to have that on screen. But it was done in such a normal, real honest way. And it doesn't take away from the show itself. And it was just done beautifully. And, you know, it wouldn't matter if it was a, you know, a straight couple, a queer couple, you know, that that would have worked for, for anyone. And, you know, it's just fantastic. I mean, I've got two small girls. So for me, I want them to grow up watching things that just seem natural and honest. So, you know, not, you know, not to be sort of influenced in a way that is unnatural. If you know what I mean. You know, I wonder,

S Simon Barry 35:41

yeah, that's the one that's the way it should be. And it's, it's also actually a great lesson as a writer, that you can't replace the truthfulness of characters, journeys, and evolutions, with something that is a slapped on, statement about, you know, sexuality or, or orientation, because that's not good writing, good writing is that you serve the character, you don't serve an agenda. Good writing is that that moment is earned and feels real, not that it needed to be in there to make a point. The day I put a scene in, that involves anything that is, you know, pandering to an agenda is the day I fail as a writer to my character, my characters, I've failed them, you know, so it's got to be a character choice. It's got to be a character journey that is earned and real. And then it feels natural, because the characters are living that experience. It's not me making a political statement, which I wasn't, I was making a character statement. This is love. And it's real. And it had to be expressed at this moment. Because it couldn't, it might never be expressed, again. And that's just that, for me is like that puts you in the place where you're going, I'm working for these characters, I'm working for the audience so that they know that these characters are being treated with respect. And if the byproduct of that is an honest, loving moment, that's, that's not standard. Great. I take it, I love him, because that's the way the world could be.

B Bryan (host) 37:16

And then I wanted to move on to marketing of the show, which has been talked about quite a lot. So I'll be honest, I don't know how it works with Netflix. But I'm part of the Netflix Media Center. So when Netflix season one came out, I saw it before everyone else that there's a show coming out called Warrior Nun, got all the backstory, the photos and everything like that. With

season two, it never appeared on the media center. It never appeared anywhere. I mean, were you aware that this was going to happen? Or was this a choice that Netflix made? Or was it just a bundle? for them? Well,

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Simon Barry 38:05

it's ultimately I do not get involved directly with Netflix in terms of setting an agenda about marketing, because they, especially on a show, that is one of their studio shows which we are a show that they that we developed internally that they are the they are the they have the sole financial responsibility for I trust that they will come to me with whatever they need from me or share with me as a showrunner and as the someone who gets to represent the show, and our answer questions or whatever it is. So typically, I'm not read into their strategy in advance, other than the basic things like, you know, they're going to put up a trailer at this time where they're going to release some key art at this time, or here's the release date that we're going to have in advance. I'm not asked to I mean, they do ask me for my comments on things like the trailer before they release it and some other things. But I'm not part of those conversations of general marketing strategy. That is their internal process. It's a courtesy that they even include me in any of these discussions, I think. And so if I was part of that conversation, I of course, would have raised flags and said, Hey, I didn't know any of this. I didn't know you weren't being or you or any journalist wasn't getting access to the way we assumed it was. I'm not aware of the of I only am aware of what I see, like any fan, so I saw billboards and season one. I didn't see billboards in season two, and I said, Hey, are we gonna get a billboard in season two? And somebody said, I don't think so. And that's it. That's the end of the conversation. But you know, it The reality the world is different in 2020 to November than it was in July of 2020. When Northern Ireland season one came out, we were in a wasteland of content that because of COVID, and because a lot of shows couldn't get out in time, because they were interrupted, or whatnot, there was very little competition for Warrior Nun in and it was, I think it's July 4 weekend, in 2020. I mean, you couldn't have asked for a better release for an unknown show a show that was, you know, different genre show on a hot weekend in the middle of a summer where most shows that should have been out warrant out. So we had kind of this lovely moment of luck. And in a bad luck in a global bad luck situation, that allowed Warrior Nun, I think, to grab a lot of eyeballs everywhere. And then in season two, we did not have that luck, we had the bad luck of being delayed because of COVID in terms of season two's production of the release being pushed into the fall instead of the summer. And other shows many, many, many other shows big shows like Wednesday, the crown, and at 99, all coming out at the same time that we had to share. Now that space. Well, that's Netflix's prerogative, I can't tell them when two shows on. It's absolutely their business model. And they know what they're gaining and losing as a result of these decisions. And that's way beyond my, my paygrade. And I'm not interested in being an expert in that I'm much better at making shows, and I haven't programming them. However, I do feel like if you were saying to me, if you're comparing season one and season two, in terms of how the show performed, there was no way we could perform as well as season one. I don't think just because of the nature of the universe, we were being released into I mean, we had such a lovely, shining moment in season one. And I think because there was very little content coming out that we got an additional press push, you know, and you know, perhaps also, because a lot of the people that Netflix aren't the same people they were then we just didn't have someone who loved the show as much. I don't know, I don't know any of these. I can't answer your questions about this. They give the data and the data is Season Two did not perform at the same level that season one did. And that ultimately was the reason I was given for its cancellation. I have to accept that. And I have to believe that now. Does that mean that the fans can get Netflix to reverse their decision? I would never say

that. I would never say that. It's not possible. Because I don't know. I'm not this person who knows how things work. I'm just an outsider like everyone else. And and they did it with *Sensate*. That's proof that it can't happen. So who am I to say that it can't happen with *Warrior Nun*? I'm going to I'm going to be just like everyone else. Watching these guys launch this amazing campaign and and hope for the best for myself for the show. And for the fans more than anyone. Because I definitely want the shows on I want the show to have the opportunity to continue and tell the story now, that said if it doesn't work out with Netflix or another streaming service, are there other ways to continue the story? I believe there are certainly and of course, there's the possibility of a feature film there's a possibility of other media, of animation maybe of of graphic novel where we saw where all this started. I don't know. I mean, that's the great thing about this kind of process is it's no one can say definitively this can't happen. Because nobody knows definitively it's it's it's it's wonderful that way so keep hope alive.

B Bryan (host) 43:51

Yeah, keep it alive. I mean, I've got to say when it was canceled, I was gutted. It was funny, actually, I was interviewing David Hayter again, and halfway through. Well, he messaged me after the interview, to say that halfway through the interview, you got a text message from you.

S Simon Barry 44:08

Yeah, I texted him not knowing he was being interviewed poor guy. I feel terrible about that. But you know, you also have to tell people right away because with Netflix, they give you kind of a to our heads heads up that it's gonna go to the to the media. And so I needed to get the tech contact a cast to contact some of the key creatives, the other producers, I wanted them to hear it from me not from Twitter, or, you know, some other vehicle. So that's why, you know, that's my sort of reset, because I think I was it was two or three hours Headstart they gave us to let everyone know.

B Bryan (host) 44:49

So I mean, I mean, from a cancellation point of view. I mean, there's there is a load of shows that have been canceled. I mean, I think 160 last year, and then obviously we get the news *Have Snowpiercer* now, not show in season four on TNT now they're now looking for another streaming platform as well. I mean, do you think going forward, this is going to change the way that shows are written with the risk of them being canceled? In the way? Close to the beach each season?

S Simon Barry 45:19

I don't know. I mean, I think it'll be on the, in the back of people's mind, people like myself who create shows, you know, I think it'll be in the back of our mind for sure that this is the new, the new order. I think it'll change the way deals are structured, too, in the sense that, you know, I mean, I personally think that, you know, the amount of time and effort you put into making a season of television, it's unbelievable. I mean, you have no life, you have no ability to live a

normal life when you're making a TV show. So to do all that work, and think that it's never going to be seen by anyone, for me would just be, you know, the worst possible scenario for not just for myself, but for the people I hire. And so I don't want to be in that position. You know, if there's a way to avoid it, I'll find a way to avoid it contractually, or financially. I don't know. I mean, maybe there isn't a way to avoid it. I think maybe we're in a new era where these are the new realities, but certainly, it'll be probably something that gets brought up a lot more in the writing room, in terms of how stories unfold and how we approach the long game, you know, but that said, you never know, maybe it'll be maybe it'll be on a show like, this is us, or The Last of Us. Which will, which will go on probably for, you know, a dozen years if we're lucky. And that's, you know, so you know, there's always the potential of either end of that spectrum, right. But, yeah, yeah, it's, it's, what can I say? This is my job we're talking about. So it's, it's messed up. When you talk about relations and things. I have to now find a new way to to earn money. Well, it's not just the show. It's my livelihood.

B Bryan (host) 47:16

I mean, we, I threw out to the world wide web questions for you. And I've got a few fan questions. And there was one fan that straightaway answered, within seconds of me putting the post post up. His name is Tristan, I don't know if you know him. But he's put Okay, here's mine. If you had to do a spin off of a Warrior Nun character, who would it be? And why Vincent?

S Simon Barry 47:42

Well, because Tristan is the best. He's just so lovely. Such a good actor. I get to practice my French with him because he speaks French perfectly, and I don't, so I get to practice with them. I love Tristan, and I would love to do anything with him. I mean, I'll trust me. I'll be working with Tristan again. Guaranteed, whether it's the next version of Warrior Nun, or season of Warrior Nun, or if it's something else. Yeah, he's one of those actors. I can't, I can't avoid anymore.

B Bryan (host) 48:14

And then we've got another question. Question here. I'll read this out, because it's quite small on the screen. But it says Uncle Simon, can you please explain the line below? When when Beatrice says Be free? You know, you know, can you elaborate on what she she means by that line? Indeed.

S Simon Barry 48:36

Yeah, I have so many nieces. Now, Brian, did you? Did you know how

B Bryan (host) 48:40

many years you've got? 1000s. You've got 1000s 10s of

S

Simon Barry 48:44

1000s of nieces and nephews to Al? I would say that Beatrice is be freeline. Well, let's just say when I wrote that line, I was trying to make the line mean more than just one thing. I think it was designed to be kind of encapsulate the whole journey of Eva's life, which had been a series of cells, you know, series of traps a series of obligations, a series of expectations. And so on the one hand, Beatrice who knew that wanted, Ava to be free of all those cages and obligations and expectations, because that was ultimately something that Ava had never asked for in her life. She'd never asked to be injured. She'd never asked to be kept in that orphanage. She'd never asked to be get Halo. She never asked to be part of the OCS she never asked me the Warrior Nun. And so she was an essence, a servant of a greater plan that she was not a part of. I think Beatrice wanted her to be free of that, as well. And that what love is, you know, love is is, is knowing that someone is need something and you can give it to them. And, and Beatrice probably also knew that the one thing holding Ava back from being free, it would be Beatrice. So she was giving her permission to say goodbye in a way, I think. But there's other layers to that I think there's layers that the audience will read in that are just as valid as my, my explanation that are probably more meaningful to that are just as valid. And sometimes when you write these things, you're not trying to be literal, you're trying to tap into an esoteric feeling of something larger. So in a weird way, a lot of times I put in lines like that, that are deliberately vague or general, because I want the audience to write their own version of the reason not because my version is the last word, because there's more to it than what I'm writing. There's more to these characters than I can express. So I like that these lines, in particular, generate other versions that are probably better than my version and just as meaningful, just as valid.

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Bryan (host) 51:13

And then our next question is, why didn't we have as many Ava inside thoughts like we didn't see season one, opposed to Season Two

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Simon Barry 51:25

Donita. I mean, the more we got to know Ava, the less we needed her internal dialogue, that was sort of the lesson of season one, less than season one, season one, we had double the amount of internal dialogue written and we used, we ended up cutting most of it out, because it was redundant. I mean, Alba doesn't need an internal dialogue to tell you what she's thinking, or how she feels. And half the time we would watch this, the cuts with her performing the scene. And you know, you didn't need the dial words, on the audio track, it was obvious how she felt it was obvious what she was doing. So we just started removing it, removing it, removing it, removing it, removing it, removing it. And by the time Season Two came around, it was seen as something more as a artifact of season one than the necessity for season two. So we used a little bit at the top just to kind of get us into the mode of the show and short, short cut some of the stuff that we had gaps between season one and season two, and also bring people who might have forgotten what had happened in season one into the show faster. And then if we did use it in season two in little ways, it was really for either a comedic effect or an an editorializing that we felt would just add another layer that was interesting, but it was never meant to be part of the storytelling. And frankly, with Alba you don't need it. I mean, she's just so good. Let her do her thing.

B

Bryan (host) 52:59

And then I just wanted to quickly touch on the fans, because you mentioned about not getting a billboard for season two. I don't think you've seen it on Twitter. Yes, it is not true. Literally, they will be a billboard. They've been sending flowers balloon bouquets to all the streaming, and it's just amazing and breathtaking. Taken. I mean, what are your thoughts, you know, on the efforts that they are actually doing, I

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Simon Barry 53:26

love it, I love it. I mean, this may never happen to me again in my lifetime on a show that I am part of. So do participate in it in a way that I can be like the fans and just enjoy this journey of affection and effort. It's great I am. And I don't feel responsible in a good way I don't I don't feel like I'm the the spokesperson, which is nice. Like I'm used to, I'm used to being the leader of the show. And I don't need to be the leader of this because it's already in great hands. And it's being managed better than I could. And it's a journey that I get to take with the fans on Warrior Nun which normally I don't get to take I don't get to be surprised or participate. Because I'm usually the one behind the scenes, you know, spinning the plates. So this is it's an amazing thing. And it's always for me, I see every every action is an expression of people's love for the show, which means that we did a good job as a team of filmmakers we succeeded. So every day, it's a reminder that that those two years were not only amazing in the exercise of making the show, but they were amazing in what we were able to bring to the fans, and the people who appreciate the show. And that's really great. I mean, that's why I'm kind of enjoying it, because I know that I might do I don't know another five or six shows and this won't happen. And so it's like this is I'm sure it will appreciate the campaign of I'm trying to save the show, you know, obviously, I don't want to be canceled, you know, again and again and again. But the but the idea that the fans rise up like this in a way that is just, it's amazing. I'm just in awe. I mean, and every day, it's like a Christmas present of just new art and new expressions of affection and just all so positive, you know, I mean, I, I really hope that you know that miracles happen and that Netflix decides to reverse themselves do I think that'll happen, I have no idea. I'm not I wish I had more insight into the way people think and operate, but I don't, I am an outsider. From the Netflix organization, I'm not an insider, I don't, you know, I don't have access to that stuff. I'm a contractor, you know, I get hired to do the show. And then I'm done. So I wish I could be, I wish I could participate more in this. But I also have to work with Netflix again, I have a movie with them that's has nothing to do with Warrior Nun, but I'm working with them as a, as a company, as a producer, I have to respect their decision, I do respect their decision. But at the same time, I also believe the fans are entitled to a voice. And, and, and, you know, I'm thrilled that they care enough about the show that they would make this effort and raise money and do billboards, and anything they do, I think it's just like, it's incredible.

B

Bryan (host) 56:31

It is stunning. I was on a Twitter space the other day with, I think it was like 2000 people. And literally, it was like listening to a military operation. And everyone is so you know, intelligent and smart. And, and just they know, their stuff. They really, really do. So keep fighting the fight. You know, keep you know, tweeting Instagram and all that jazz. Because who knows, as you

said, twit, Netflix could reverse it since eight. It could be I mean, is there a chance of maybe if they don't finish in this story off? I mean, you did mention obviously a film or animation. I mean, even like a two episode sort of finish off sort of sort of to iron things things off, or, well,

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Simon Barry 57:21

there's probably a legal component to this, that I'm way too stupid to understand. And that's why I am not responsible for contracts or anything like that, because nobody thinks I'm I should be involved in that sort of thing. But creatively, yes, of course I have, I have ideas about where the story is supposed to want to go. And I know that there is a story to tell, and I know where the characters are going to go, what form that takes is ultimately going to be up to two things, the legality of it and the money, the legality of what is allowed to be done from the contractual point of view of this property that I don't own, I don't control, but I could, I'm a willing servant of, but other people have the legal rights, I don't have the legal rights. So they will make that determination, if there is a legal path to continue the story. That's number one. Number two, be like who's gonna pay for it. making any kind of media is inherently expensive, so someone's gonna have to take the risk, who will happy I again, I don't know. But I'm a willing servant. In that process, if it should happen. So like most people, I'm going to end up waiting in a way to find out what these opportunities may be and how they'll present. And then I can participate as a creative person, which is what I do. But how it will happen, ultimately, will be up to lawyers and money people. And as it always does, and that's really where the the success of this will lie, it'll be in that process and how that is managed, how it is done with, you know, I would say ultimately with transparency and respect, and with the, with the presence of mind to protect, you know, the, the the characters in the story in a way that it deserves. And so you and I will will will hopefully get to revisit this story who knows in another form, or another or another chapter down the road, but I have no idea what that will look like at this point.

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Bryan (host) 59:28

Somogy been a great guest thank you for coming on once again. And who knows we might meet again, you know, in the near future for season three or a new year, get reincarnation of the story, but Simon look after yourself. Keep safe and stay super, my friend. Thank you, Brian. Appreciate it.