

Marvel's Victoria Alonso Wants a Female Superhero Movie, Calls for More Women in VFX



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Marvel (<http://variety.com/t/marvel/>)'s exec producer (<http://variety411.com/us/los-angeles/producers/>) and exec VP of visual effects (<http://variety.com/t/visual-effects/>) & post-production, [Victoria Alonso](http://variety.com/t/victoria-alonso/) (<http://variety.com/t/victoria-alonso/>), called for vfx pros to hire more women — not just for gender equity, but because it will improve the work.

In her keynote conversation at the [Visual Effects Society](http://variety.com/t/visual-effects-society/) (http://variety.com/t/visual-effects-society/) Production Summit in Hollywood on Saturday, Alonso diverged from talk of Marvel's story process to thank the group for inviting a woman in to speak, but raised her voice to ask, "Where are the girls?!"

"You've got to get the girls in here, boys. It's better when it's 50-50," she continued. "I have been with you beautiful, handsome, talented, creative men in dark rooms for two decades and I can tell you those rooms are better when there are a few of us in them. So as you take this with you, please remember that it's OK to allow the ladies in. They're smart, they're talented. They bring a balance that you need."

Marvel has put Alonso in a position of authority, but has not yet announced a film centered around a female superhero. *Variety* asked Alonso in an offstage conversation when Marvel will do so. "If it were up to me, it would be today," she said. Alonso then took a long pause to consider what to say next, finally smiling and declining to say more.

The Marvel Cinematic Universe already features a female heroine, Scarlett Johansson's Black Widow. Johansson toplined "Lucy," Luc Besson's sci-fi pic that amounted to a superheroine film, grossing over \$400 million worldwide.

Asked whether Warner's announcement of a Wonder Woman film has put more pressure on Marvel to do a female superhero movie, she said, "We have so much pressure internally for everything we do, we don't need outside pressure. We are always so hard on ourselves."

She said Marvel hopes Warner/DC is successful because "the success of superheroes, whether ours or others, is success for all of us. But I will be honored to be part of a woman leading the way."

Among visual effects artists and supervisors, she said there is a constant struggle to build up the number of women.

“This a tough road for women, not because it is a world of men, but because it takes a certain amount of time to be in a supervisory position, and by that time you are having to make a decision about having children or not. Which means you have to take a break. If you take a break, you’re out of the game, and once you’re out of the game, it’s hard to get back in the game.”

She said once women decide to have children, about half don’t come back to the business. “So we’re back to trying to fill in the 50% that left. We’re consistently trying to fill that gap of women who leave.”

She said that global production is hard on families in general, not just on women. “We are like gypsies, right? We go out in the world for months chasing the location. ... When you’re away for so long, a certain degree of loneliness [sets \(http://variety411.com/us/los-angeles/sets-stages/\)](http://variety411.com/us/los-angeles/sets-stages/) in that breaks families apart.” The 16-hour days of vfx production are also hard on families, she said.

For her part, Alonso says when sees talented female artists have children, she tries to bring them back part-time, or for part of the year.

Alonso, who speaks frequently at vfx events around the world, told the gathering she makes a point of accepting invitations so that women can see a role model.

“This morning I came here because I wanted to make sure that when you put this out on a live-stream and there’s some 14-year-old kid in Austria or a 15-year-old in Germany or a 17-year-old in Massachusetts or somewhere else, and you want to go become an engineer or a digital artist, ladies, you can do it. Why, because the boys are going to be by your side, teaching you what they know, and at times, you will be teaching them. So for me what’s important is to have a presence.”

She said that she couldn’t see any role models when she was growing up in Argentina, but “I’d say if I want to be something, I want to be Kathy Kennedy. I just knew she produced ‘E.T.’ and ‘Schindler’s List.’” When she scheduled a

lunch with Kennedy, she said, “I told everyone in my office. I was like a dork,” and when she met Kennedy, she told her story. “I gushed. I was a mess. She had tears in her eyes.”

“I said there are hundreds of thousands of little girls out there who think you’re the bomb,” said Alonso, “and there are hundreds of thousands of little girls who want to be you.”

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