The Utopian (Josh Duhamel) and Lady Liberty (Leslie Bibb) live to fight another day.

Jupiter's Legacy | The Power of Inspiration

The Netflix series *Jupiter's Legacy*, adapted from the comic by Mark Millar and Frank Quitely, recounts the saga of a gifted family — superpowered and slow to age — as the younger generation challenges the code of the Union of Justice, the crime-fighting group the older generation founded in the 1930s.

"Every department — including costumes, production design, VFX and stunts — was trying to be true to the comic, and they did such a beautiful job," says cinematographer Nicole Hirsch Whitaker, who cites the comics as inspiration, "not only in terms of design, but also composition."

Whitaker provides an example from Episode 7, directed by Marc Jobst, which flashes back to 1932 for the Union's origin story and takes place on an uncharted island. The episode combined practical-location photography in Ontario and greenscreen work onstage at Pinewood Toronto Studios. "In the comic, the island feels very intimate, even though it has a lot of scope," Whitaker says — noting that she and Jobst worked for months pre-visualizing these scenes with the VFX artists. "You can make things more complicated than they need to be, but I love how simple it is in the comic, so we tried to stay true to those references.

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At the same time, we were given license to come up with different scenarios. After scouting the Hawaiian Islands and islands in the Caribbean, we were able to incorporate those references into the photography. It all came together beautifully in the final episodes."

The comic was also valuable in terms of character treatment. "I took inspiration from how [Quitely] draws and frames [the heroes' daughter] Chloe. We photographed her differently from the other characters in terms of lighting and angles, which set up the evolution of her character," says Whitaker, who alternated shooting duties with Danny Ruhlmann, ACS.

The series was shot primarily with the Sony Venice in 4K, paired with Arriflex/Zeiss Super Speed primes (coated and uncoated) and Hawk MiniHawk Hybrid Anamorphic primes. Whitaker notes that the Hawk Hybrid anamorphics helped lend the island scenes a surrealistic feel. "They offer super-close focus, almost like macro lenses, while preserving classic anamorphic characteristics such as elliptical bokeh and shallow depth of field," she says.

For modern-day sequences, references included features by director Andrea Arnold and cinematographer Robbie Ryan, BSC, ISC, such as *American Honey*, for their visually spontaneous feel — as well as the films *Blade Runner* and *The Grandmaster*. "We tried to stay handheld when appropriate for most of the modern-day scenes, while still utilizing cranes, Steadicam, dollies and other tools," Whitaker notes.

"For the period 1930s [sequences], we were always in studio mode in one form or another," she continues. The team looked to work by Roger Deakins, ASC, BSC, such as *The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford* and *The Hudsucker Proxy*, in addition to Barry Sonnenfeld's camerawork in *Miller's Crossing*. These references came into play in Episode 4, directed by Christopher J. Byrne, which takes place in the Depression-era Midwest. Whitaker used a tried-and-true golden period glow, which she calls "an important tool to help differentiate timeframes."

Says Whitaker, "We created a LUT for these scenes that was more desaturated and less contrasty to give it the quality of the images we referenced from the 1930s Dust Bowl era. Photographers such as Dorothea Lange, Walker Evans and Man Ray were inspirations for the look as well. Working with Chris on these episodes was amazing. His vision and love of camera brought so much to these episodes. We then fine-tuned the look in the final DI at Sim with Joe Finley."

— *Mark Dillon*