1994

the year the world changed under the four men's feet

● Pixar / Hidden City ● Animation industry ● The wider world

EIGHT MONTHS BEFORE

Nov 19, 1993 — BLACK FRIDAY

Disney shuts down Toy Story production after a disastrous storyboard reel. Lasseter asks for two weeks to fix it. Whedon comes in to help with the rewrite. The crew survives.

JAN 1994 · FEB 1994 · MAR 1994 · APR 1994 · MAY 1994 · JUN 1994 · JUL 1994 · AUG 1994 · SEP 1994 · OCT 1994 · NOV 1994 · DEC 1994

THE LUNCH WINDOW

JAN 24
Pocahontas in production at Disney
Next Disney animated feature underway in Burbank.

FEB 12
Norway Winter Olympics
Lillehammer.

MAR 5
Toy Story voice cast re-records
Hanks and Allen come back after the Black Friday rewrite. Buzz is no longer self-aware.

APR 6
Rwandan genocide begins
Plane carrying President Habyarimana shot down. 100 days follow.

APR 5
Kurt Cobain dies
Found at his Seattle home. He is 27.

MAY 1
Senna dies at Imola
Ayrton Senna killed at the San Marino Grand Prix.

MAY 10
Mandela inaugurated
South Africa's first multiracial election.

MAY 21
Pulp Fiction at Cannes
Tarantino's second film. Wins the Palme d'Or.

JUN 17
1994 World Cup begins
First FIFA World Cup hosted in the United States.

JUN 17
OJ Bronco chase
Slow-speed pursuit. 95 million Americans watching live.

JUN 12
Nicole Brown Simpson murdered
Brentwood, Los Angeles.

JUN 15
THE LION KING OPENS
Disney's hand-drawn peak. Highest-grossing animated film ever, at the time. Ranft has story credits.

JUL 5
Amazon.com founded
Jeff Bezos incorporates Cadabra Inc. in Bellevue. Later renamed Amazon.

JUL 14
THE HIDDEN CITY LUNCH
Lasseter, Stanton, Docter, Ranft. Sketches on napkins. Four films born.

JUL 6
FORREST GUMP opens
Zemeckis. Dominates the summer. Hanks's second consecutive Best Actor.

AUG 1
A Goofy Movie in active production
Kevin Lima directing. Paris animation. Targeted Nov 18, 1994 (slips to Apr '95).

AUG 24
Katzenberg resigns from Disney
Eisner passes him over for the presidency after Frank Wells's death in April.

SEP 23
Friends premieres on NBC
Becomes a cultural anchor of the decade.

OCT 12
DREAMWORKS SKG announced
Spielberg, Katzenberg, Geffen. Each invests $33M. First new major studio in 60 years.

OCT 14
Pulp Fiction U.S. release
After Cannes. Reshapes American cinema.

OCT 13
Netscape Navigator beta
First public release of what becomes the dominant web browser.

NOV 8
Republican Revolution
GOP takes Congress. Gingrich becomes Speaker.

DEC 14
Toy Story crew at 110
From 24 a year earlier. Pixar burning $2.4M on $5.6M revenue. Jobs funding shortfalls.

SIXTEEN MONTHS AFTER THE LUNCH

Nov 22, 1995 — TOY STORY OPENS

First fully computer-animated feature. $373M worldwide. Three Oscar nominations including screenplay.

Nov 29, 1995 — PIXAR IPO

Trades at $39 on opening. Jobs's stake instantly worth $1.1B — larger than his Apple-era peak.

The exact date of the lunch is not on the record. Stanton has said only "the summer of 1994." July is the most dramaturgically rich window: World Cup in the US, Forrest Gump in theaters, Katzenberg weeks from leaving Disney.