An Exploration of the Profession Based Structure of the Japanese Anime Industry via Patterns in Career Trajectories as Seen through Credits Information

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Bryan Hartzheim, Zoltan Kacsuk, Stevie Suan, and Martin Roth

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Kyoto, 7-9 June 2025

Outline of the presentation

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1. Utilizing anime **credits information** for research
2. Analyzing **career progressions** with credits information
3. An **exploded view** of the profession based structure of the Japanese anime industry
4. Next steps

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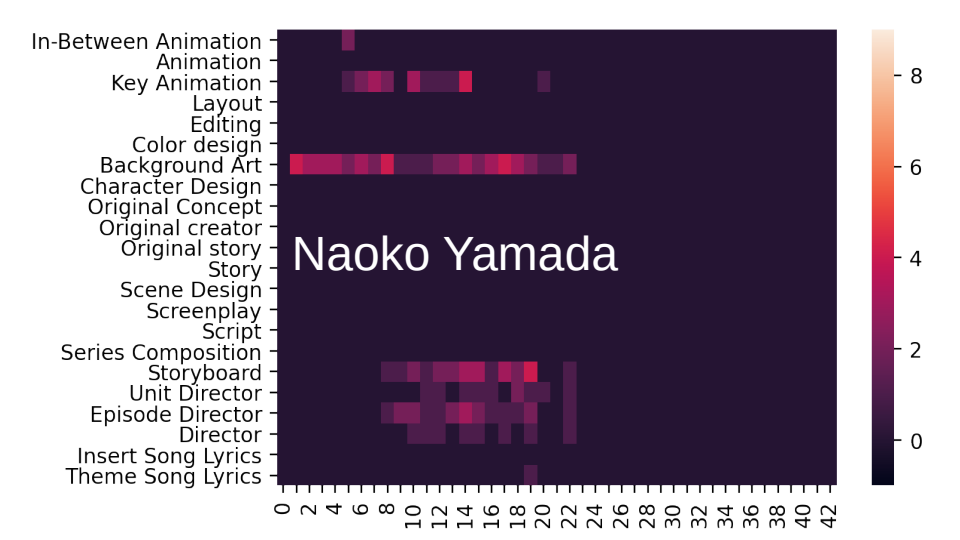
Utilizing anime credits information for research

Anime credits information as resource and challenge

- *The impossible quest for the complete list of all anime*

  (Mechademia 2023, Pfeffer Magnus, Hideyuki Ōtsubo, Zoltan Kacsuk and Martin Roth)
  - **Haraguchi Perfect Data** & List Production Committee
  - **Media Arts Database** -> **Japanese Visual Media Graph**
- Credits information as a resource for anime research
  - **Not everything is captured** in credits information (see for example the work at JAniCA, the Archive Center for Anime Studies at Niigata University, the WIJA project)
- Using **Anime News Network** data as a pilot to explore the efficacy of this type of research

Analyzing career progressions with credits information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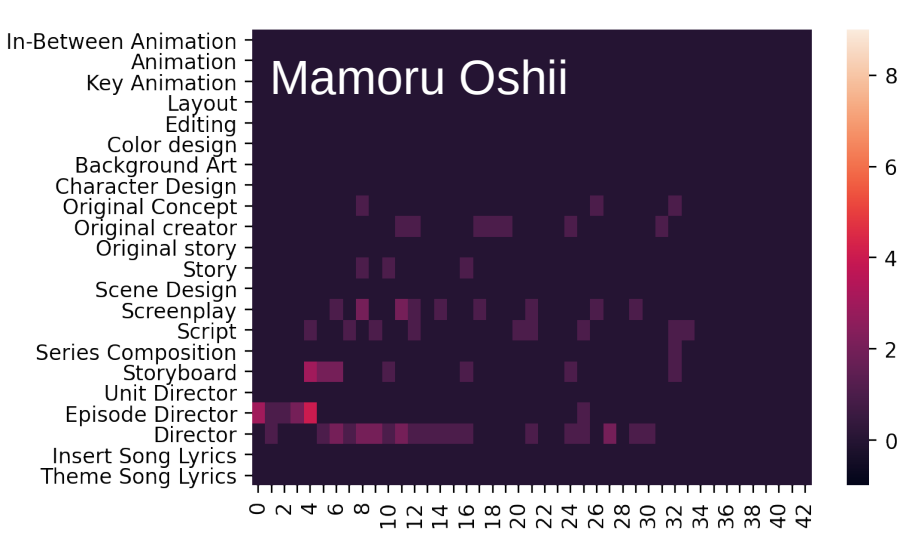
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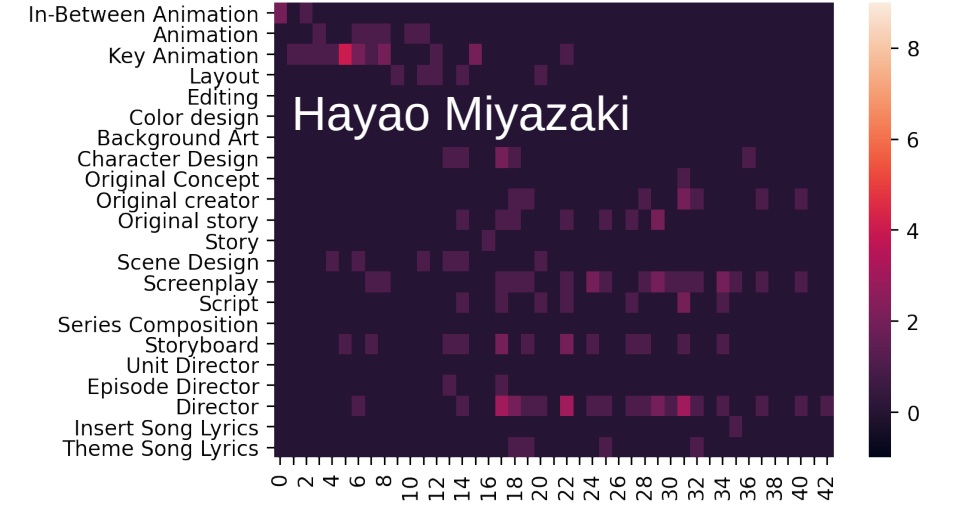
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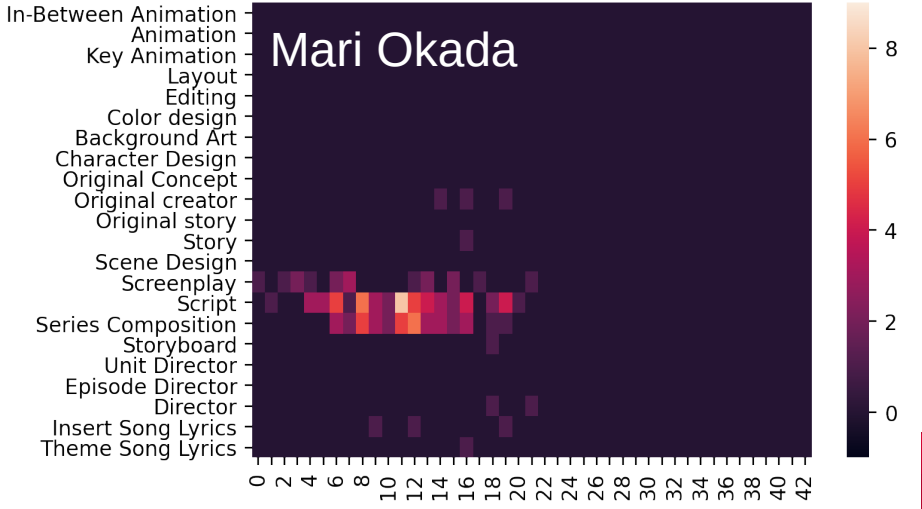
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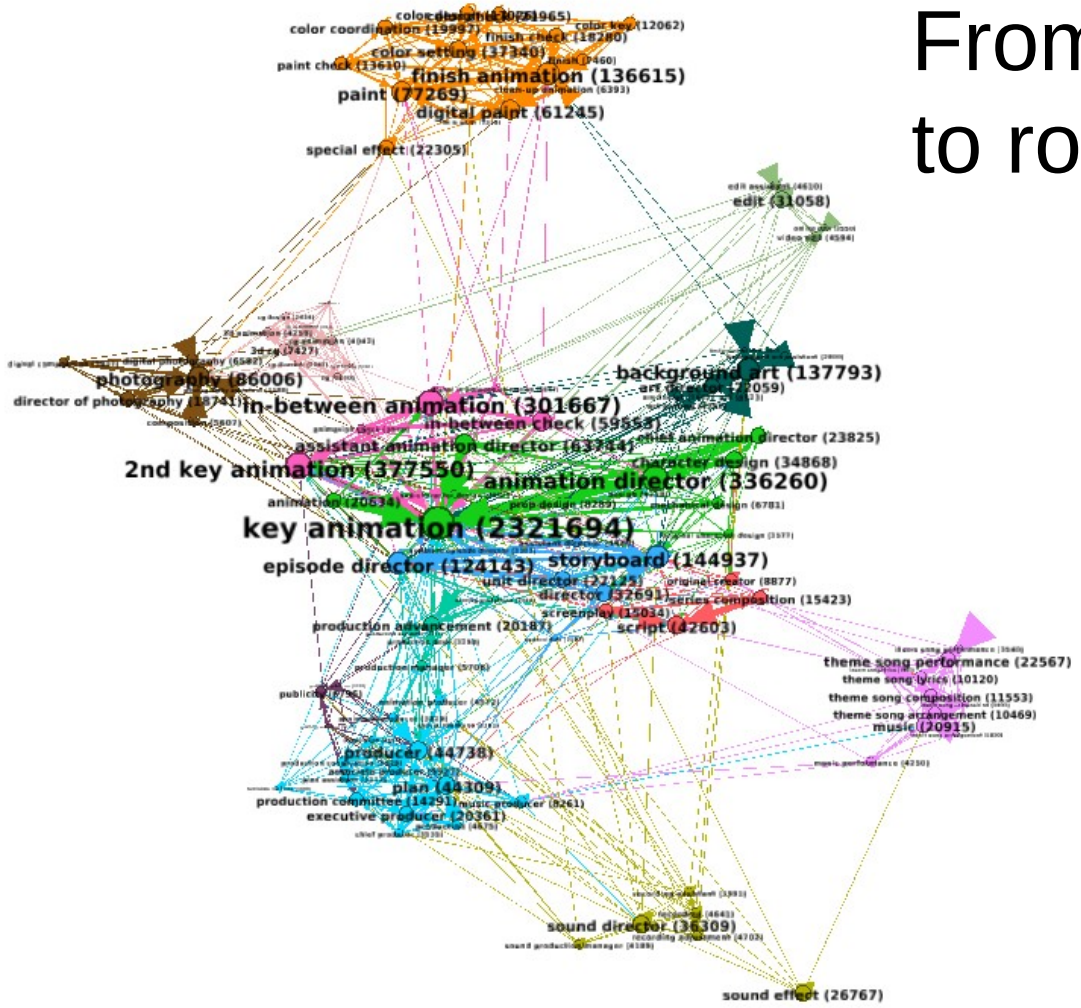

From individual creators to role types

- Credits information for **1980-2020**
- Roles with **at least 1000 occurrences**
- Exploring **role-transitions**
- **Top 10 target roles** for role-transitions for each role

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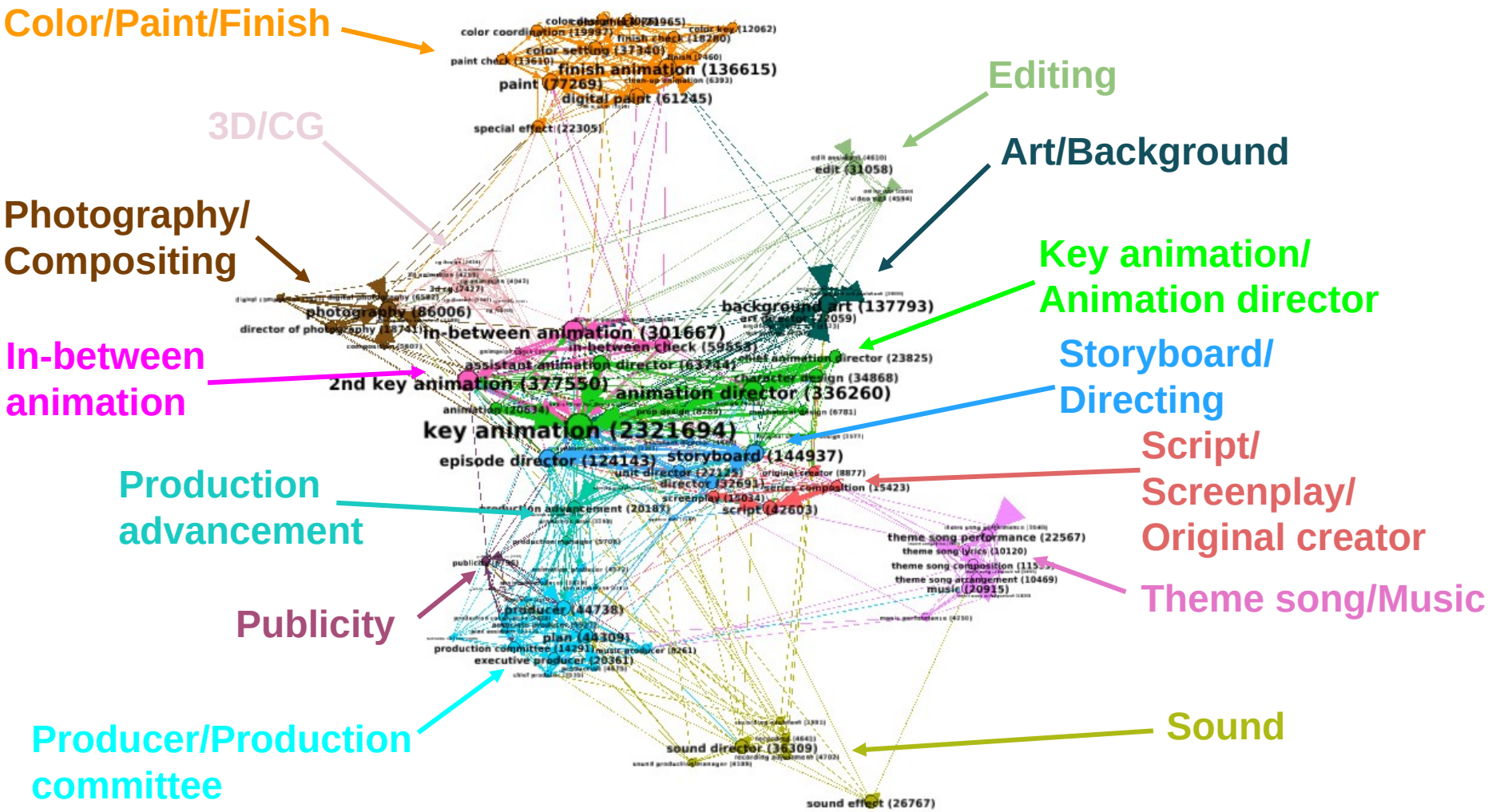
An exploded view of the profession based structure of the Japanese anime industry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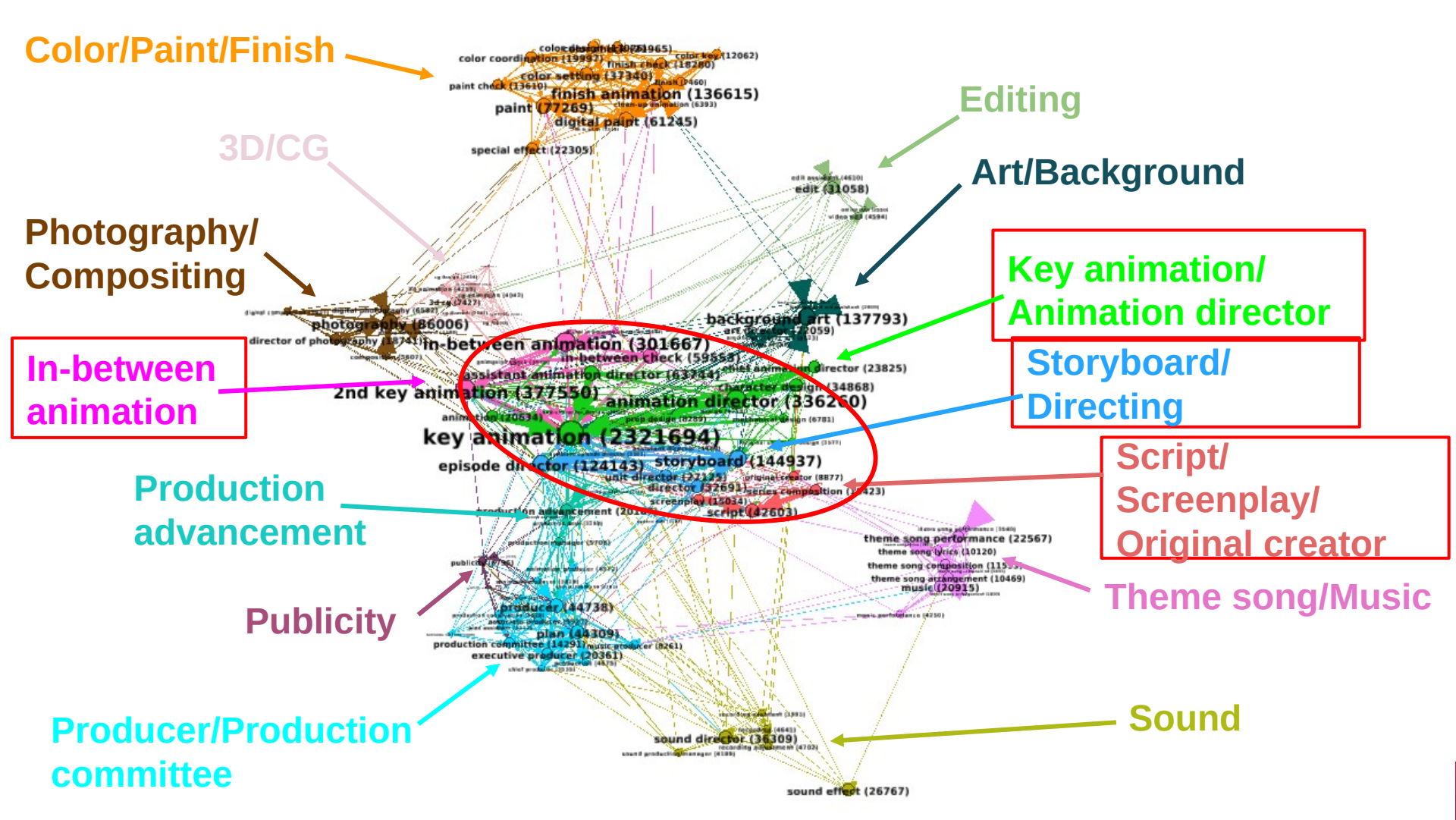
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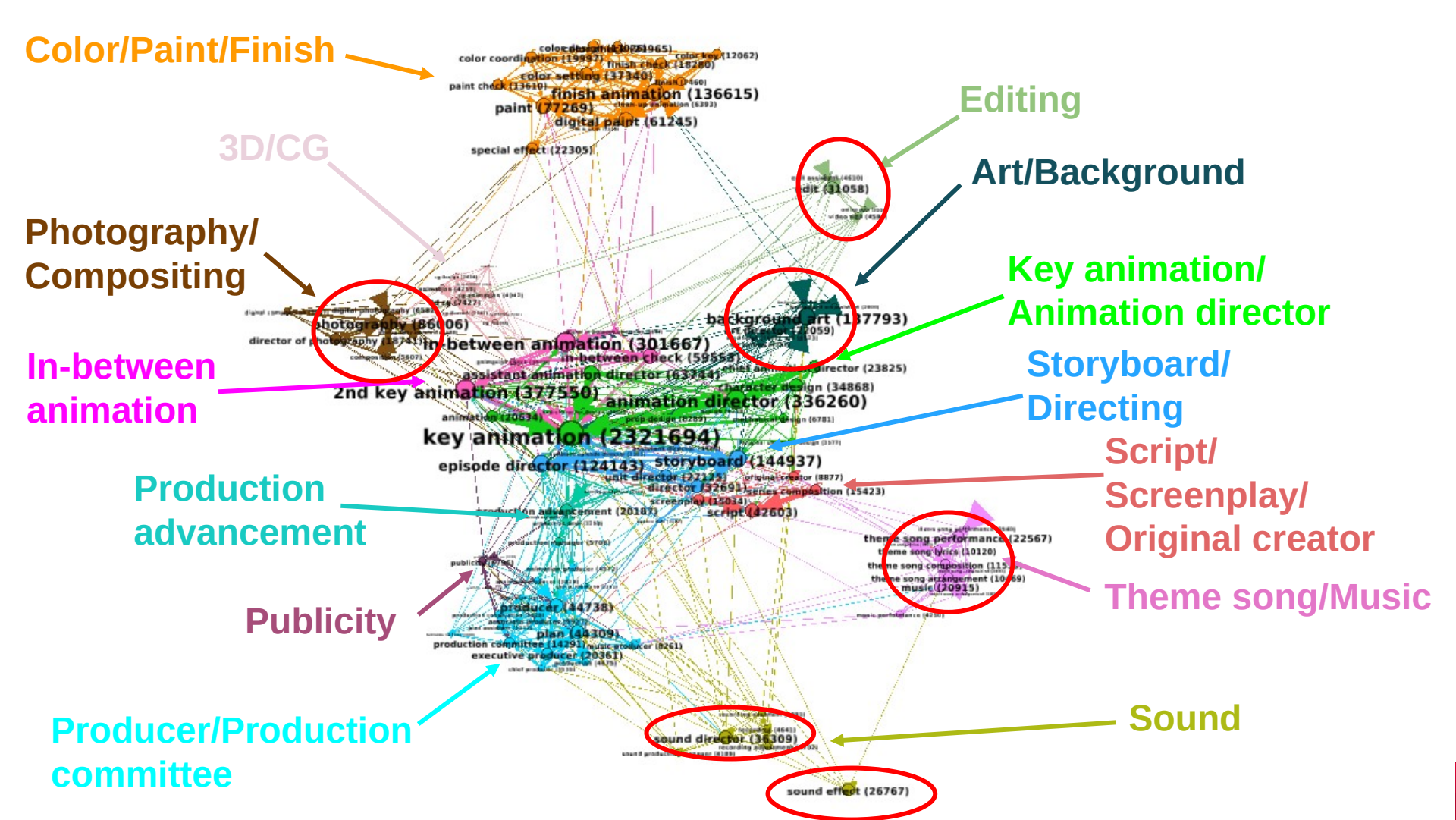
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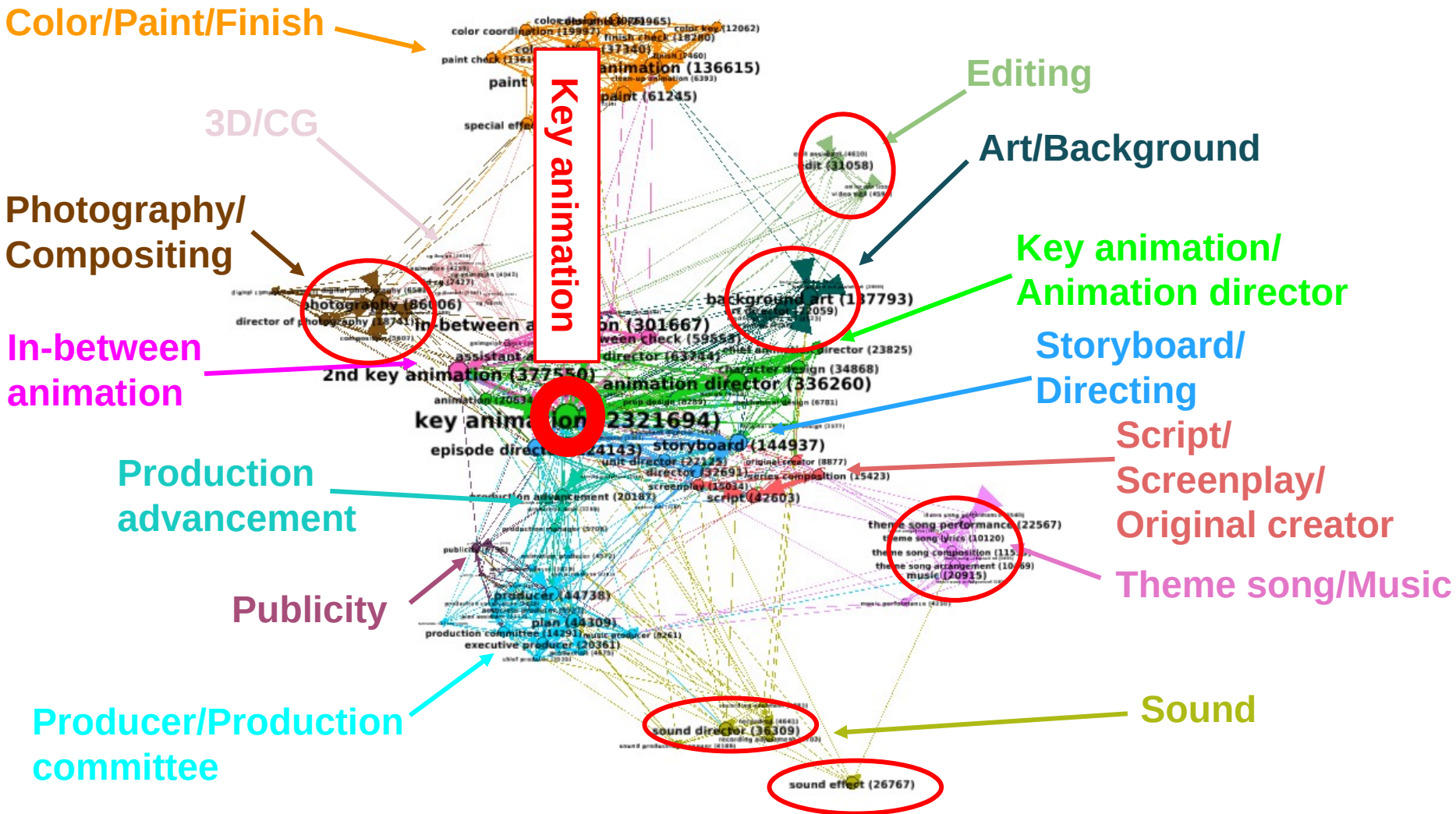
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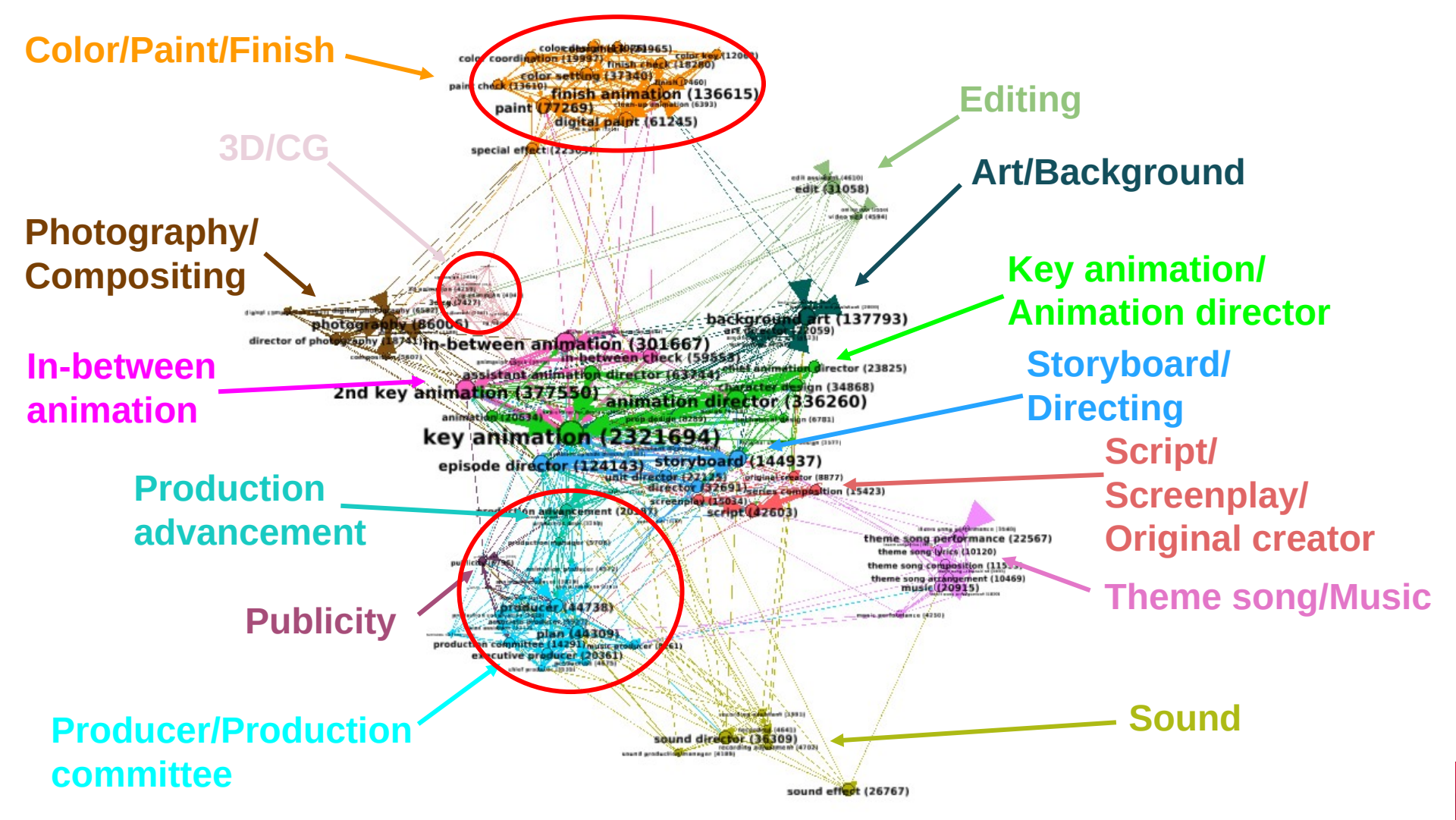
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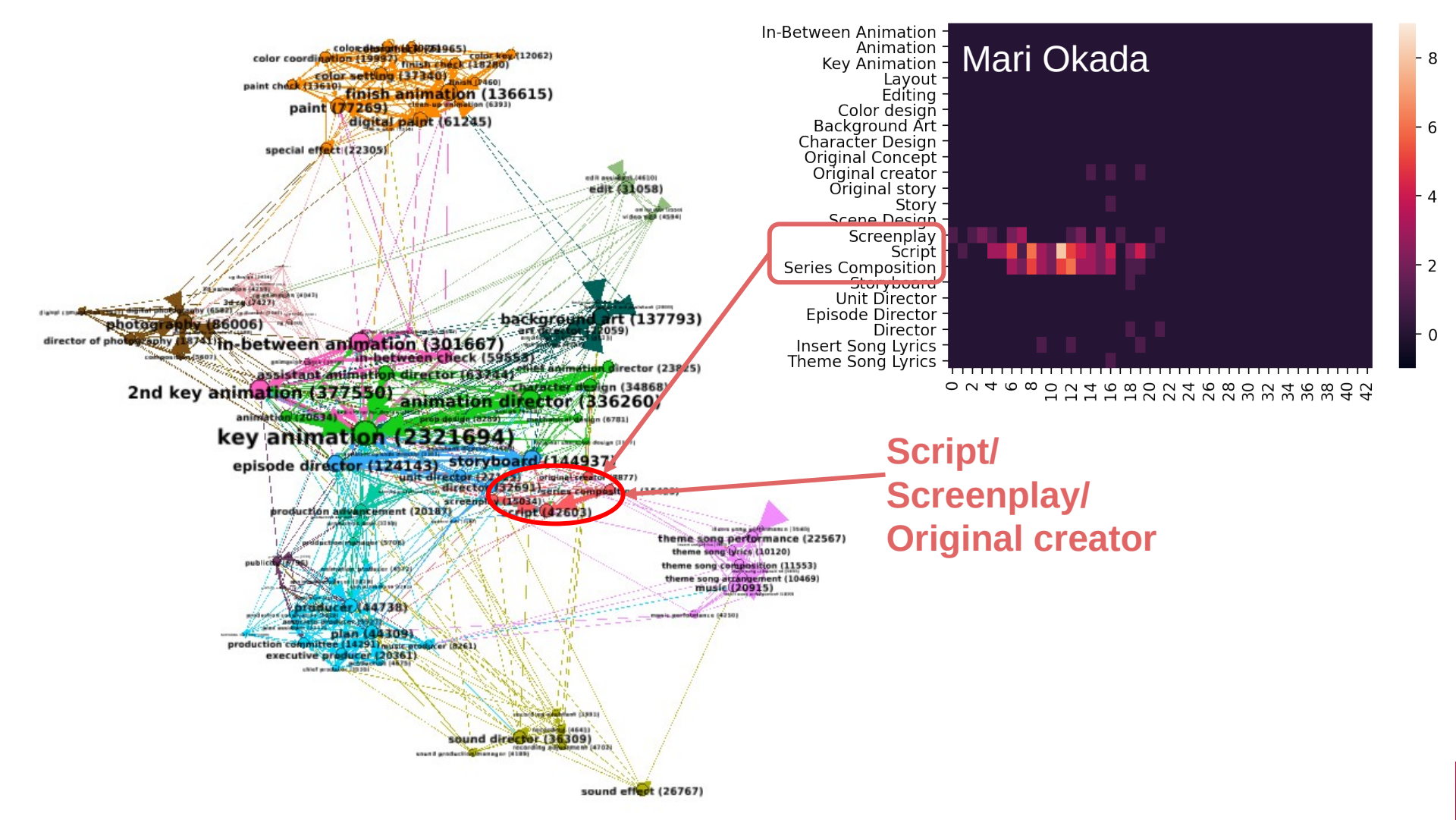
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Mari Okada
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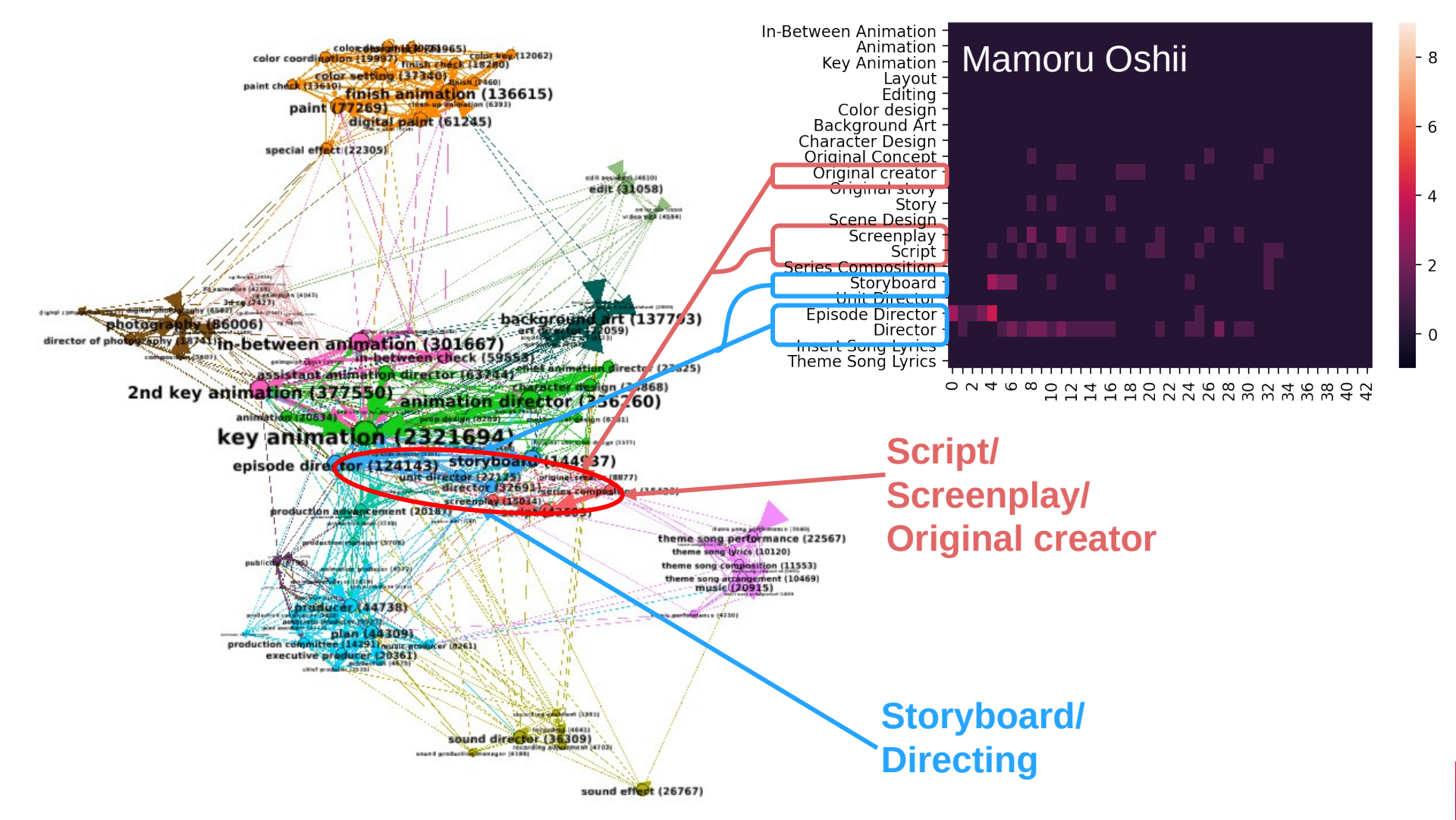
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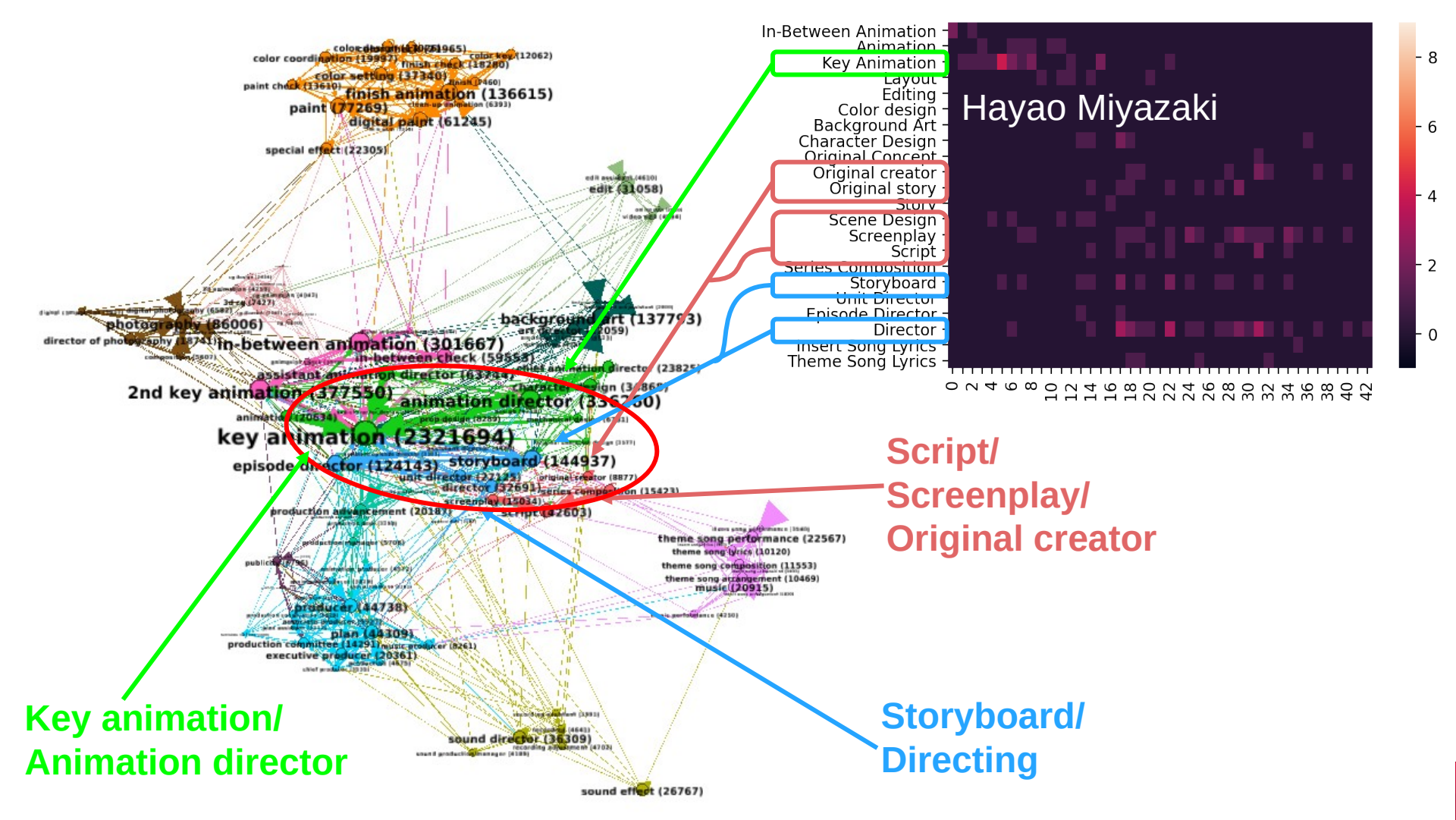
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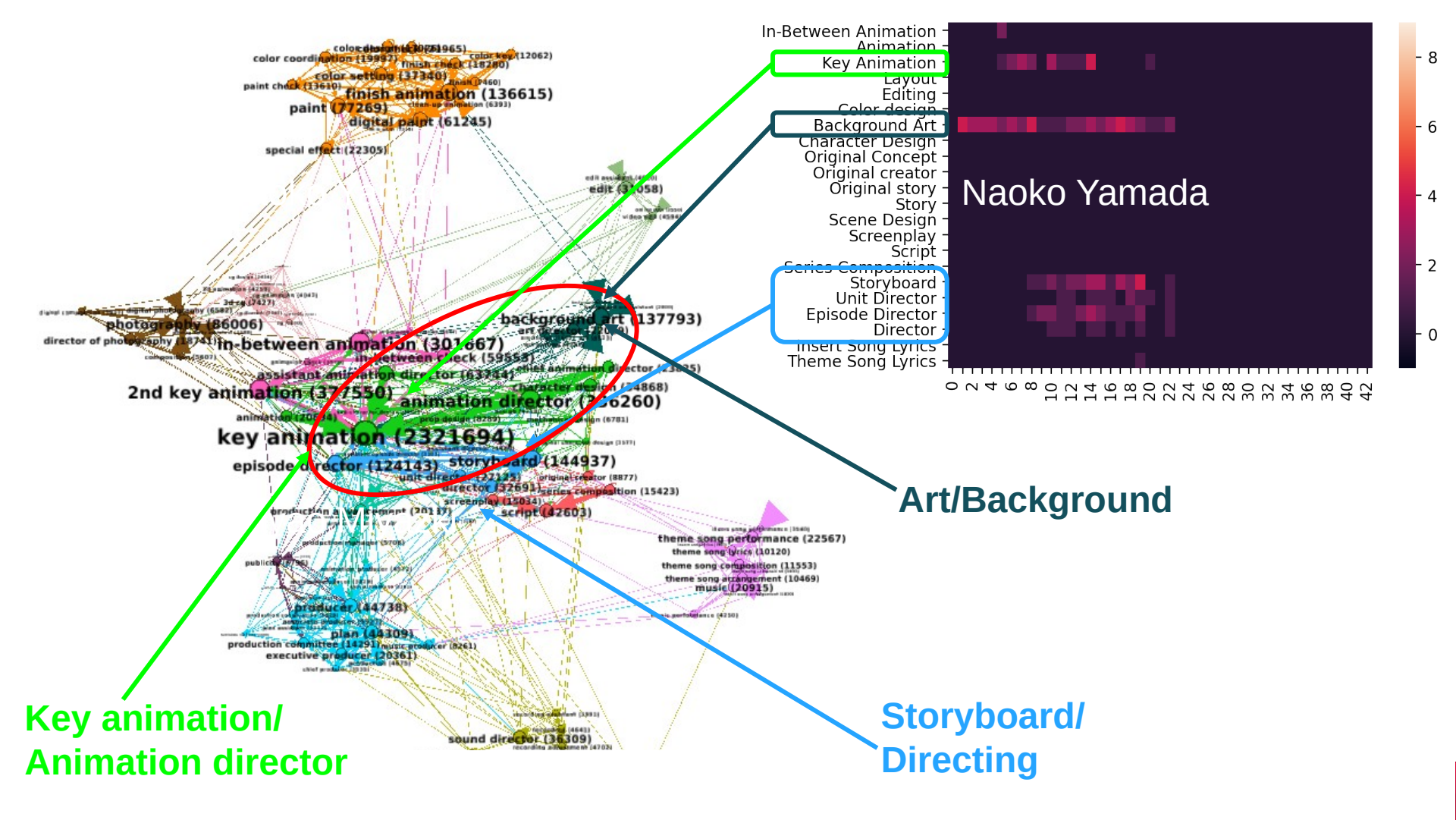
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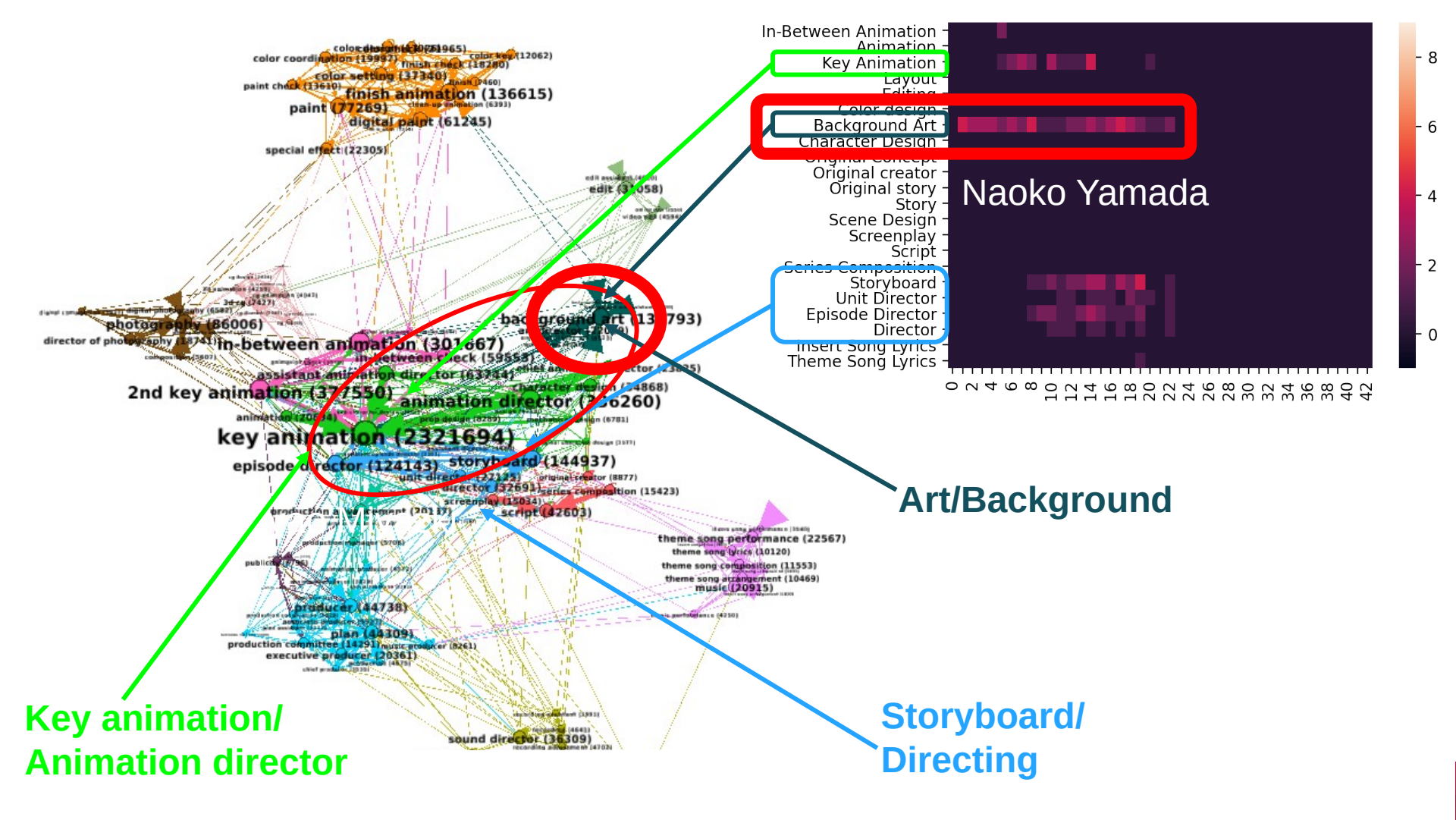
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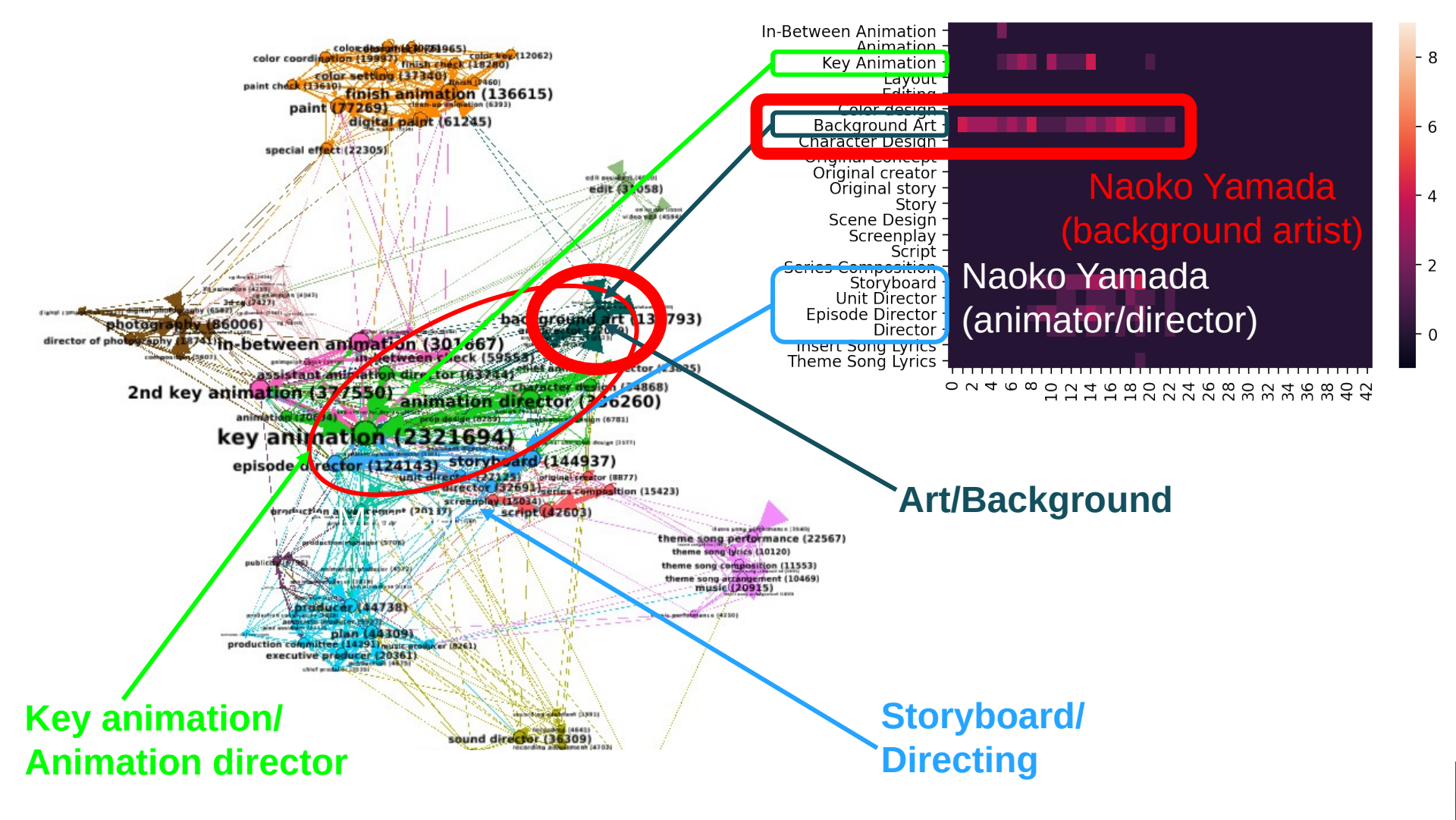
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Naoko Yamada
(background artist)
Naoko Yamada
(animator/director)
Art/Background
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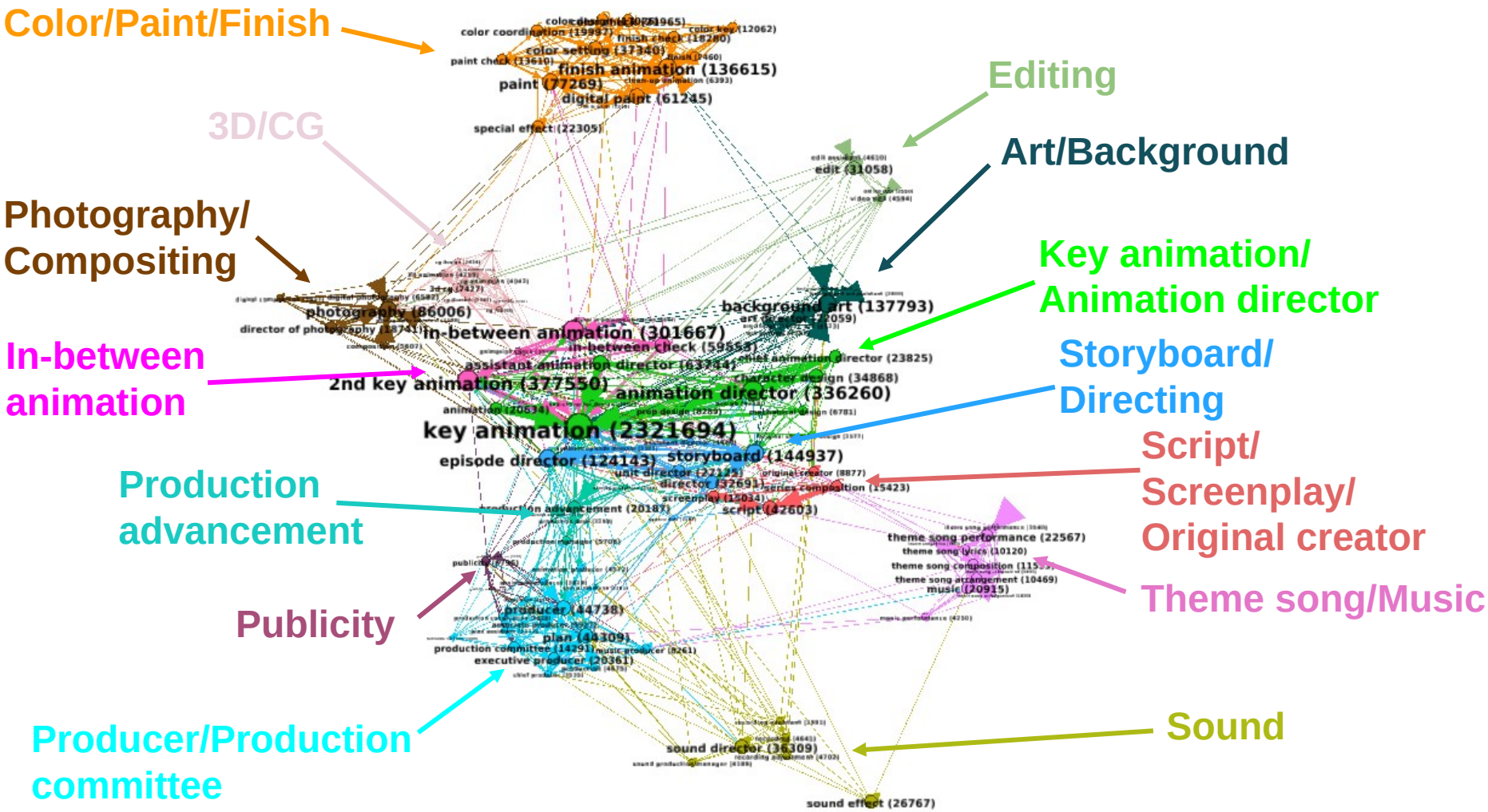
Next steps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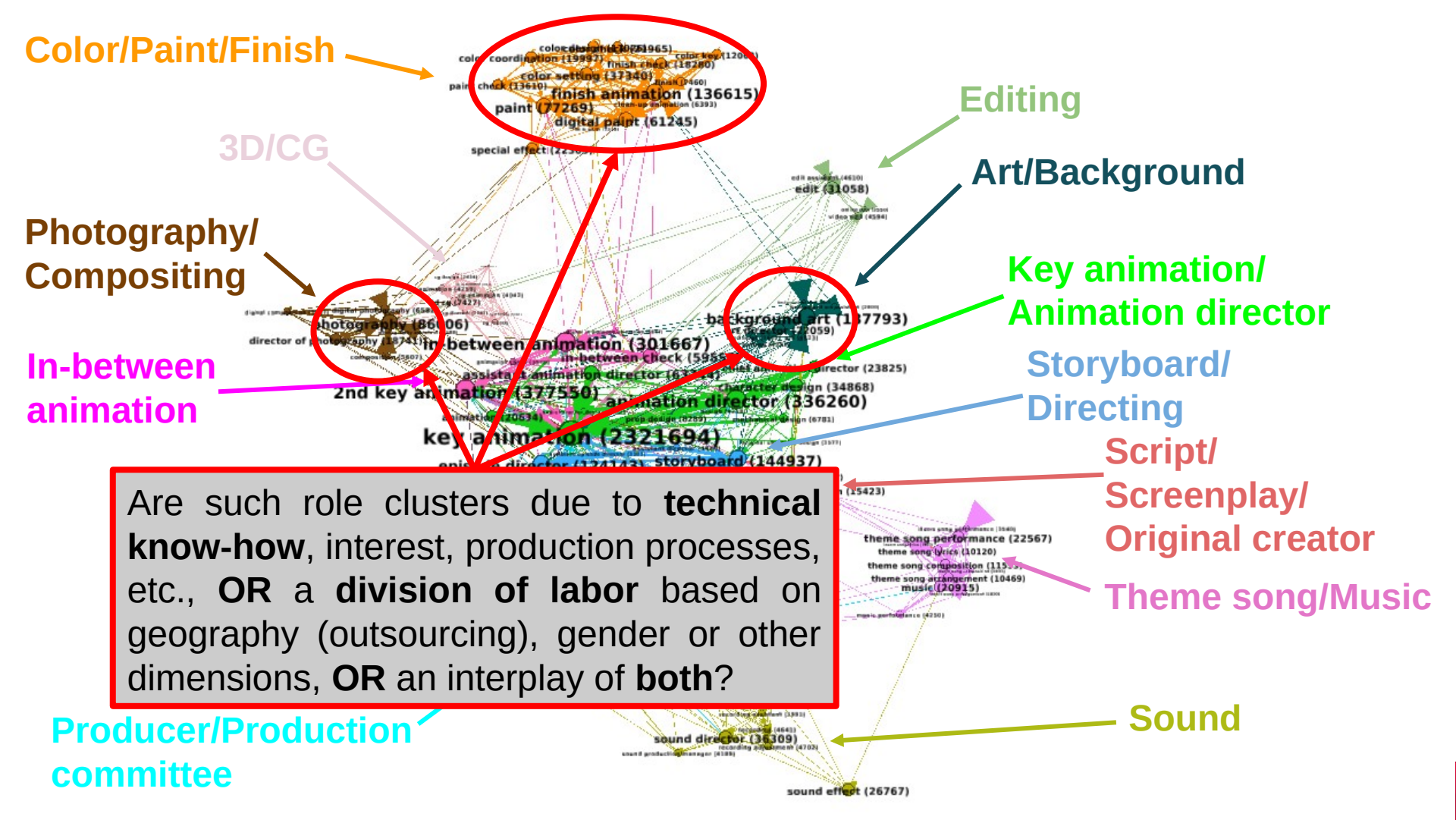
storyboard (144937)
unit director (22125)
director (32691)
series composition (15423)
screenplay (15034)
script (42603)
production advancement (20187)
theme song performance (22567)
theme song lyrics (10120)
theme song composition (11
theme song arrangement (10469)
music (20915)
producer (44738)
plan (44309)
production committee (14291)
executive producer (20361)
sound director (36309)
sound effect (26767)


Color/Paint/Finish
3D/CG
Photography/
Compositing
In-between
animation
Editing
Art/Background
Key animation/
Animation director
Storyboard/
Directing
Script/
Screenplay/
Original creator
Theme song/Music
Sound
Producer/Production
committee
finish animation (136615)
paint (77269)
digital paint (61245)
edit (31058)
photography (86106)
in-between animation (301667)
2nd key animation (377550)
key animation (2321694)
storyboard (144937)
theme song performance (22567)
theme song lyrics (10120)
music (20915)
sound director (36309)
sound effect (26767)
Are such role clusters due to **technical know-how**, interest, production processes, etc., **OR** a **division of labor** based on geography (outsourcing), gender or other dimensions, **OR** an interplay of **both**?

Thank you for your attention!

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