

## = Atlantis : The Lost Empire =

Atlantis : The Lost Empire is a 2001 American animated action @-@ adventure film created by Walt Disney Feature Animation ? the first science fiction film in Disney 's animated features canon and the 41st overall . Written by Tab Murphy , directed by Gary Trousdale and Kirk Wise , and produced by Don Hahn , the film features an ensemble cast with the voices of Michael J. Fox , Cree Summer , James Garner , Leonard Nimoy , Don Novello , Phil Morris , Claudia Christian , Jacqueline Obradors , and Jim Varney in his final role before his death . Set in 1914 , the film tells the story of a young man who gains possession of a sacred book , which he believes will guide him and a crew of mercenaries to the lost city of Atlantis .

Development of the film began after production had finished on The Hunchback of Notre Dame ( 1996 ) . Instead of another musical , the production team decided to do an action @-@ adventure film inspired by the works of Jules Verne . Atlantis was notable for adopting the distinctive visual style of comic book creator Mike Mignola . At the time of its release , the film had made greater use of computer @-@ generated imagery ( CGI ) than any of Disney 's previous animated features ; it remains one of the few to have been shot in anamorphic format . Linguist Marc Okrand created a language specifically for use in Atlantis , while James Newton Howard provided the score . The film was released at a time when audience interest in animated films was shifting away from hand @-@ drawn animation toward films with full CGI .

Atlantis : The Lost Empire premiered at the El Capitan Theatre in Hollywood , California on June 3 , 2001 , and went into general release on June 15 . Released by Walt Disney Pictures , Atlantis performed modestly at the box office . Budgeted at \$ 100 million , the film grossed over \$ 186 million worldwide , \$ 84 million of which was earned in North America . Due to the film 's lackluster box office performance , Disney quietly canceled both a spin @-@ off television series and an underwater attraction at its Disneyland theme park . Some critics praised it as a unique departure from typical Disney animated features , while others disliked it due to the unclear target audience and absence of songs . Atlantis was nominated for a number of awards , including seven Annie Awards , and won Best Sound Editing at the 2002 Golden Reel Awards . The film was released on VHS and DVD on January 29 , 2002 ; the Blu @-@ ray released on June 11 , 2013 . Atlantis is considered to be a cult favorite , due in part to Mignola 's unique artistic influence . A direct @-@ to @-@ video sequel , Atlantis : Milo 's Return , was released in 2003 .

## = = Plot = =

A large tidal wave triggered by a distant explosion threatens to drown the island of Atlantis . In the midst of an evacuation from the capital city , the Queen of Atlantis is caught by a strange , hypnotic blue light and lifted up into the " Heart of Atlantis " , a powerful crystal protecting the city . The crystal consumes her and creates a dome barrier that protects the city 's innermost district . She leaves behind a young daughter , Princess Kida , as the island sinks beneath the ocean .

Thousands of years later in 1914 , Milo Thatch , a cartographer and linguist at the Smithsonian Institution who is marginalized for his research on Atlantis , believes that he has found The Shepherd 's Journal , an ancient manuscript that contains directions to the lost island . After the museum board declines his proposal to search for the journal , a mysterious woman , Helga Sinclair , introduces Milo to Preston B. Whitmore , an eccentric millionaire . Whitmore has already funded a successful effort to retrieve the journal as repayment of a debt to Milo 's grandfather , and recruits Milo to lead an expedition to Atlantis as soon as he receives it .

The expedition departs with a team of specialists led by Commander Lyle Rourke , who also led the journal recovery expedition . The crew includes Vinny Santorini , a demolitions expert ; Mole Molière , a geologist ; Dr. Joshua Sweet , a medical officer ; Audrey Ramirez , a mechanic ; Mrs. Wilhelmina Packard , a radio operator ; and Cookie Farnsworth , a mess cook . They set out in the " Ulysses " , a massive submarine . During the journey , they are attacked by the monstrous Leviathan , a robotic lobster @-@ like creature that guards Atlantis ' entrance . The " Ulysses " is subsequently destroyed , but Milo , Rourke , and part of the crew escape by making their way to an underground cavern ,

described in the journal as the entrance to Atlantis .

After traveling through a network of caves and a dormant volcano , the team reaches the outskirts of Atlantis . They are greeted by Kida who resembles a young woman and discover that the Atlantean language is the basis of many existing languages . Kida enlists Milo 's aid in deciphering the Atlantean written language , long forgotten by the natives . By swimming deep within the city 's submerged ruins and translating underwater murals , Milo helps Kida uncover the nature of the Heart of Atlantis : it supplies the Atlanteans with power and longevity through the crystals worn around their necks . He is surprised this is not mentioned in the journal , but upon examination realizes a page is missing .

Returning to the surface with Kida , Milo discovers Rourke has the missing page . Rourke and the crew betray Milo , intending to bring the crystal to the surface and sell it . Rourke mortally wounds the King of Atlantis while trying to extract information about the crystal 's location , but finds its location for himself hidden beneath the King 's throne room . The crystal detects a threat before merging with Kida . Rourke and the mercenaries lock Kida in a crate and prepare to leave the city . Knowing that when the crystal is gone the Atlanteans will die , Milo berates his friends for betraying their consciences and ultimately convinces them to leave Rourke and remain in Atlantis . The King explains to Milo that the crystal has developed a consciousness ? it thrives on the collective emotions of the Atlanteans and provides power , protection and longevity in return . It will find a royal host when Atlantis is in danger . He then reveals that the sinking of Atlantis was caused when he attempted to use it as a weapon of war . As he dies he gives his crystal to Milo , telling him to save Atlantis and Kida . Encouraged by Sweet , Milo rallies the crew and the Atlanteans to stop Rourke .

In the ensuing battle inside the volcano , Helga and the other mercenaries including Rourke are all killed . Milo and the others successfully fly the crystal back to the city , as the volcano erupts . With lava flowing towards the city , Kida ( in her crystal form ) rises into the air and creates a protective shield . The lava breaks away harmlessly , showing a restored Atlantis , and the crystal returns Kida to Milo . The surviving crew members return to the surface and promise to keep the discovery of Atlantis a secret . Having fallen in love with Kida , Milo stays behind to help her rebuild the lost empire .

= = Cast = =

Michael J. Fox as Milo James Thatch , a linguist and cartographer at the Smithsonian who was recruited to decipher The Shepherd 's Journal while directing an expedition to Atlantis . Kirk Wise , one of the directors , said that they chose Fox for the role because they felt he gave his character his own personality and made them more believable on screen . Fox said that voice acting was much easier than his past experience with live action because he did not have to worry about what he looked like in front of a camera while delivering his lines . The directors mentioned that Fox was also offered a role for Titan A.E. ; he allowed his son to choose which film he would work on , and he chose Atlantis . Viewers have noted similarities between Milo and the film 's language consultant , Marc Okrand , who developed the Atlantean language used in the film . Okrand stated that Milo 's supervising animator , John Pomeroy , sketched him , claiming not to know how a linguist looked or acted .

James Garner as Commander Lyle Tiberius Rourke , the leader of the band of mercenaries , for the Atlantean expedition . Wise chose Garner because of his previous experience with action films , especially war and Western films , and said the role " fits him like a glove " . When asked if he would be interested in the role , Garner replied " I 'd do it in a heartbeat . "

Cree Summer as Kidagakash " Kida " Nedakh , the Princess of Atlantis . Kida 's supervising animator , Randy Haycock , stated that Summer was very " intimidating " when he first met her ; this influenced how he wanted Kida to look and act on screen when she meets Milo . Natalie Strom provided dialogue for Kida as a young child .

Don Novello as Vincenzo " Vinny " Santorini , an Italian demolitions expert . Kirk Wise and Russ Edmonds , Vinny 's supervising animator , noted Novello 's unique ability to improvise dialogue .

Edmonds recalled , " [ Novello ] would look at the sheet , and he would read the line that was written once , and he would never read it again ! And we never used a written line , it was improv , the whole movie . "

Phil Morris as Doctor Joshua Strongbear Sweet , a medic of African American and Native American descent . Sweet 's supervising animator , Ron Husband , indicated that one of the challenges was animating Sweet in sync with Morris ' rapid line delivery while keeping him believable . Morris stated that this character was extreme , with " no middle ground " ; he mentioned , " When he was happy , he was really happy , and when he 's solemn , he 's real solemn . "

Claudia Christian as Lieutenant Helga Katrina Sinclair , Rourke 's German second @-@ in @-@ command . Christian described her character as " sensual " and " striking " . She was relieved when she finally saw what her character looked like , joking , " I 'd hate to , you know , go through all this and find out my character is a toad . "

Jacqueline Obradors as Audrey Rocio Ramirez , a teenage Puerto Rican mechanic and the youngest member of the expedition . Obradors said her character made her " feel like a little kid again " and she always hoped her sessions would last longer .

Florence Stanley as Wilhelmina Bertha Packard : an elderly , sarcastic , chain @-@ smoking radio operator . Stanley felt that Packard was very " cynical " and " secure " : " She does her job and when she is not busy she does anything she wants . "

David Ogden Stiers as Fenton Q. Harcourt , a board member of the Smithsonian Institution who dismisses Milo 's belief in the existence of Atlantis . Stiers previously worked with Michael J. Fox in Doc Hollywood . He earlier voice @-@ acted for Disney in Beauty and the Beast , Pocahontas , and The Hunchback of Notre Dame and would do so again in Lilo & Stitch .

John Mahoney as Preston B. Whitmore , an eccentric millionaire who funds the expedition to Atlantis . Lloyd Bridges was originally cast and recorded as Whitmore , but he died before completing the film . Mahoney 's zest and vigor led to Whitmore 's personality being reworked for the film . Mahoney stated that doing voice work was " freeing " and allowed him to be " big " and " outrageous " with his character .

Jim Varney as Jebidiah Allardye " Cookie " Farnsworth , a Western @-@ style chuckwagon chef . Varney died of lung cancer in February 2000 , before the production ended , and the film was dedicated to his memory . Producer Don Hahn was saddened that Varney never saw the finished film , but mentioned that he was shown clips of his character 's performance during his site sessions and said , " He loved it . " Shawn Keller , supervising animator for Cookie , stated , " It was kind of a sad fact that [ Varney ] knew that he was not going to be able to see this film before he passed away . He did a bang @-@ up job doing the voice work , knowing the fact that he was never gonna see his last performance . "

Corey Burton as Gaëtan " Mole " Molière , a French geologist who acts like a mole . Burton mentioned that finding his performance as Mole was by allowing the character to " leap out " of him while making funny voices . To get into character during his recording sessions , he stated that he would " throw myself into the scene and feel like I 'm in this make @-@ believe world " .

Leonard Nimoy as Kashekim Nedakh , the King of Atlantis and Kida 's father . Michael Cedeno , supervising animator for King Nedakh , was astounded at Nimoy 's voice talent , stating that he had " so much rich character " in his performance . As he spoke his lines , Cadeno said the crew would sit there and watch Nimoy in astonishment .

= = Production = =

= = = Development = = =

The idea for Atlantis : The Lost Empire was conceived in October 1996 when Don Hahn , Gary Trousdale , Kirk Wise , and Tab Murphy lunched at a Mexican restaurant in Burbank , California . Having recently completed The Hunchback of Notre Dame the producer and directors wanted to keep the Hunchback crew together for another film with an Adventureland setting . Drawing

inspiration from Jules Verne 's A Journey to the Center of the Earth ( 1864 ) , they set out to make a film which would fully explore Atlantis ( compared to the brief visit depicted in Verne 's novel ) . While primarily utilizing the Internet to research the mythology of Atlantis , the filmmakers became interested in the clairvoyant readings of Edgar Cayce and decided to incorporate some of his ideas ? notably that of a mother @-@ crystal which provides power , healing , and longevity to the Atlanteans ? into the story . They also visited museums and old army installations to study the technology of the early 20th century ( the film 's time period ) , and traveled 800 feet underground in New Mexico 's Carlsbad Caverns to view the subterranean trails which would serve as a model for the approach to Atlantis in the film .

The filmmakers wanted to avoid the common depiction of Atlantis as " crumbled Greek columns underwater " , said Wise . " From the get @-@ go , we were committed to designing it top to bottom . Let 's get the architectural style , clothing , heritage , customs , how they would sleep , and how they would speak . So we brought people on board who would help us develop those ideas . " Art director David Goetz stated , " We looked at Mayan architecture , styles of ancient , unusual architecture from around the world , and the directors really liked the look of Southeast Asian architecture . " The team later took ideas from other architectural forms , including Cambodian , Indian , and Tibetan works . Hahn added , " If you take and deconstruct architecture from around the world into one architectural vocabulary , that 's what our Atlantis looks like . " The overall design and circular layout of Atlantis were also based on the writings of Plato , and his quote " in a single day and night of misfortune , the island of Atlantis disappeared into the depths of the sea " was influential from the beginning of production . The crew wore T @-@ shirts which read " ATLANTIS ? Fewer songs , more explosions " due the film 's plan as an action @-@ adventure ( unlike previous Disney animated features , which were musicals ) .

= = = Language = = =

Marc Okrand , who developed the Klingon language for the Star Trek films , was hired to devise the Atlantean language for Atlantis : The Lost Empire . Guided by the directors ' initial concept for it to be a " mother @-@ language " , Okrand employed an Indo @-@ European word stock with its own grammatical structure . He would change the words if they began to sound too much like an actual , spoken language . John Emerson designed the written component , making hundreds of random sketches of individual letters from among which the directors chose the best to represent the Atlantean alphabet . The written language was boustrophedon : designed to be read left @-@ to @-@ right on the first line , then right @-@ to @-@ left on the second , continuing in a zigzag pattern to simulate the flow of water .

The Atlantean [ A ] is a shape developed by John Emerson . It is a miniature map of the city of Atlantis ( i.e. , the outside of the swirl is the cave , the inside shape is the silhouette of the city , and the dot is the location of the crystal ) . It 's a treasure map .

= = = Writing = = =

Joss Whedon was the first writer to be involved with the film , but soon left to work on other Disney projects . According to him , he " had not a shred " in a movie . Tab Murphy completed the screenplay , stating that the time from initially discussing the story to producing a script that satisfied the film crew was " about three to four months " . The initial draft was 155 pages , much longer than a typical Disney film script ( which usually runs 90 pages ) . When the first two acts were timed at 120 minutes , the directors cut characters and sequences and focused more on Milo . Murphy said that he created the centuries @-@ old Shepherd 's Journal because he needed a map for the characters to follow throughout their journey . A revised version of the script eliminated the trials encountered by the explorers as they navigated the underground caves to Atlantis . This gave the film a faster pace , because Atlantis is discovered earlier in the story .

The character of Milo J. Thatch was originally supposed to be a descendant of Edward Teach , otherwise known as Blackbeard the pirate . The directors later related him to an explorer so he

would discover his inner talent for exploration . The character of Molière was originally intended to be " professorial " but Chris Ure , a story artist , changed the concept to that of a " horrible little burrowing creature with a wacky coat and strange headgear with extending eyeballs " , said Wise . Don Hahn pointed out that the absence of songs presented a challenge for a team accustomed to animating musicals , as solely action scenes would have to carry the film . Kirk Wise said it gave the team an opportunity for more on @-@ screen character development : " We had more screen time available to do a scene like where Milo and the explorers are camping out and learning about one another 's histories . An entire sequence is devoted to having dinner and going to bed . That is not typically something we would have the luxury of doing . "

Hahn stated that the first animated sequence completed during production was the film 's prologue . The original version featured a Viking war party using The Shepherd 's Journal to find Atlantis and being swiftly dispatched by the Leviathan . Near the end of production , story supervisor Jon Sanford told the directors that he felt this prologue did not give viewers enough emotional involvement with the Atlanteans . Despite knowing that the Viking prologue was finished and it would cost additional time and money to alter the scene , the directors agreed with Sanford . Trousdale went home and completed the storyboards later that evening . The opening was replaced by a sequence depicting the destruction of Atlantis , which introduced the film from the perspective of the Atlanteans and Princess Kida . The Viking prologue is included as an extra feature on the DVD release .

= = = Animation = = =

At the peak of its production , 350 animators , artists and technicians were working on Atlantis at all three Disney animation studios : Walt Disney Feature Animation ( Burbank , California ) , Disney Feature Animation Florida ( Orlando ) , and Disney Animation France ( Paris ) . The film was one of the few Disney animated features produced and shot in 70mm anamorphic format . The directors felt that a widescreen image was crucial , as a nostalgic reference to old action @-@ adventure films presented in the CinemaScope format ( 2 @.@ 35 : 1 ) , noting Raiders of the Lost Ark as an inspiration . Because switching to the format would require animation desks and equipment designed for widescreen to be purchased , Disney executives were at first reluctant about the idea . The production team found a simple solution by drawing within a smaller frame on the same paper and equipment used for standard aspect ratio ( 1 @.@ 66 : 1 ) Disney @-@ animated films . Layout supervisor Ed Ghertner wrote a guide to the widescreen format for use by the layout artists and mentioned that one advantage of widescreen was that he could keep characters in scenes longer because of additional space to walk within the frame . Wise drew further inspiration for the format from filmmakers David Lean and Akira Kurosawa .

The film 's visual style was strongly based upon that of Mike Mignola , the comic book artist behind Hellboy . Mignola was one of four production designers ( along with Matt Codd , Jim Martin , and Ricardo Delgado ) hired by the Disney studio for the film . Accordingly , he provided style guides , preliminary character and background designs , and story ideas . " Mignola 's graphic , angular style was a key influence on the ' look ' of the characters , " stated Wise . Mignola was surprised when first contacted by the studio to work on Atlantis . His artistic influence on the film would later contribute to a cult following .

I remember watching a rough cut of the film and these characters have these big , square , weird hands . I said to the guy next to me , " Those are cool hands . " And he says to me , " Yeah , they 're your hands . We had a whole meeting about how to do your hands . " It was so weird I couldn 't wrap my brain around it .

The final pull @-@ out scene of the movie , immediately before the end @-@ title card , was described by the directors as the most difficult scene in the history of Disney animation . They said that the pullout attempt on their prior film , The Hunchback of Notre Dame , " struggled " and " lacked depth " ; however , after making advances in the process of multiplaning , they tried the technique again in Atlantis . The scene begins with one 16 @-@ inch piece of paper showing a close @-@ up of Milo and Kida . As the camera pulls away from them to reveal the newly restored

Atlantis , it reaches the equivalent of an 18 @,@ 000 @-@ inch piece of paper composed of many individual pieces of paper ( 24 inches or smaller ) . Each piece was carefully drawn and combined with animated vehicles simultaneously flying across the scene to make the viewer see a complete , integrated image .

At the time of its release , Atlantis : The Lost Empire was notable for using more computer @-@ generated imagery ( CGI ) than any other Disney @-@ animated feature . To increase productivity , the directors had the digital artists work with the traditional animators throughout the production . Several important scenes required heavy use of digital animation : the Leviathan , the Ulysses submarine and sub @-@ pods , the Heart of Atlantis , and the Stone Giants . During production , after Matt Codd and Jim Martin designed the Ulysses on paper , Greg Aronowitz was hired to build a scale model of the submarine , to be used as a reference for drawing the 3D Ulysses . The final film included 362 digital @-@ effects shots , and computer programs were used to seamlessly join the 2D and 3D artwork . One scene that took advantage of this was the " sub @-@ drop " scene , where the 3D Ulysses was dropped from its docking bay into the water . As the camera floated toward it , a 2D Milo was drawn to appear inside , tracking the camera . The crew noted that it was challenging to keep the audience from noticing the difference between the 2D and 3D drawings when they were merged . The digital production also gave the directors a unique " virtual camera " for complicated shots within the film . With the ability to operate in the z @-@ plane , this camera moved through a digital wire @-@ frame set ; the background and details were later hand @-@ drawn over the wire frames . This was used in the opening flight scene through Atlantis and the submarine chase through the undersea cavern with the Leviathan in pursuit .

= = = Music and sound = = =

Since the film would not feature any songs , the directors hired James Newton Howard to compose the score . Approaching it as a live @-@ action film , Howard decided to have different musical themes for the cultures of the surface world and Atlantis . In the case of Atlantis , Howard chose an Indonesian orchestral sound incorporating chimes , bells , and gongs . The directors told Howard that the film would have a number of key scenes without dialogue ; the score would need to convey emotionally what the viewer was seeing on screen .

Gary Rydstrom and his team at Skywalker Sound were hired for the film 's sound production . Like Howard , Rydstrom employed different sounds for the two cultures . Focusing on the machine and mechanical sounds of the early industrial era for the explorers , he felt that the Atlanteans should have a " more organic " sound utilizing ceramics and pottery . The sound made by the Atlantean flying @-@ fish vehicles posed a particular challenge . Rydstrom revealed that he was sitting at the side of a highway recording one day when a semi @-@ truck drove by at high speed . When the recording was sped up on his computer he felt it sounded very organic , and that is what is heard within the film . Rydstrom created the harmonic chiming of the Heart of Atlantis by rubbing his finger along the edge of a champagne flute , and the sound of sub @-@ pods moving through water with a water pick .

= = Release = =

= = = Promotion = = =

Atlantis was among Disney 's first major attempts to utilize internet marketing . The film was promoted through Kellogg 's , which created a website with mini @-@ games and a movie @-@ based video game give @-@ away for UPC labels from specially marked packages of Atlantis breakfast cereal . The film was one of Disney 's first marketing attempts through mobile network operators , and allowed users to download games based on the film . McDonald 's ( which had an exclusive licensing agreement on all Disney releases ) promoted the film with Happy Meal toys , food packaging and in @-@ store decor . The McDonald 's advertising campaign involved television

, radio , and print advertisements beginning on the film 's release date . Frito @-@ Lay offered free admission tickets for the film on specially marked snack packages .

= = = Box office = = =

Before the film 's release , reporters speculated that it would have a difficult run due to competition from DreamWorks ' Shrek ( a wholly CGI feature ) and Lara Croft : Tomb Raider ( an action @-@ adventure film from Paramount Pictures ) . Regarding the market 's shift from traditional animation and competition with CGI films , Kirk Wise said , " Any traditional animator , including myself , can 't help but feel a twinge . I think it always comes down to story and character , and one form won 't replace the other . Just like photography didn 't replace painting . But maybe I 'm blind to it . " Jeff Jensen of Entertainment Weekly noted that CGI films ( such as Shrek ) were more likely to attract the teenage demographic typically not interested in animation , and called Atlantis a " marketing and creative gamble " .

Atlantis : The Lost Empire had its world premiere at Disney 's El Capitan Theatre in Hollywood , California on June 3 , 2001 and a limited release in New York City and Los Angeles on June 8 ; a wider release followed on June 15 . At the premiere , Destination : Atlantis was on display , featuring behind @-@ the @-@ scenes props from the film and information on the legend of Atlantis with video games , displays , laser tag , and other attractions . The Aquarium of the Pacific also loaned a variety of fish for display within the attraction . With a budget of \$ 100 million , the film opened at # 2 on its debut weekend , earning \$ 20 @.@ 3 million in 3 @,@ 011 theaters . The film 's international release began September 20 in Australia and other markets followed suit . During its 25 @-@ week theatrical run , Atlantis : The Lost Empire grossed over \$ 186 million worldwide ( \$ 84 million from the United States and Canada ) . Responding to its disappointing box @-@ office performance , Thomas Schumacher , then @-@ president of Walt Disney Feature Animation , said , " It seemed like a good idea at the time to not do a sweet fairy tale , but we missed . "

= = = Home media = = =

Atlantis : The Lost Empire was released on VHS and DVD January 29 , 2002 . During the first month of its home release , the film led in VHS sales and was third in VHS and DVD sales combined . Sales and rentals of the VHS and DVD combined would eventually accumulate \$ 157 million in revenue by mid @-@ 2003 . Both a single @-@ disc DVD edition and a two @-@ disc collector 's edition ( with bonus features ) were released . The single @-@ disc DVD gave the viewer the option of viewing the film either in its original theatrical 2 @.@ 35 : 1 aspect ratio or a modified 1 @.@ 33 : 1 ratio ( utilizing pan and scan ) . Bonus features available on the DVD version included audio and visual commentary from the film team , a virtual tour of the CGI models , an Atlantean @-@ language tutorial , an encyclopedia on the myth of Atlantis , and the deleted Viking prologue scene . The two @-@ disc collector 's edition DVD contained all the single @-@ disc features and a disc with supplemental material detailing all aspects of the film 's production . The collector 's @-@ edition film could only be viewed in its original theatrical ratio , and also featured an optional DTS 5 @.@ 1 track . Both DVD versions , however , contained a Dolby Digital 5 @.@ 1 track and were THX certified . Disney digitally remastered and released Atlantis on Blu @-@ ray on June 11 , 2013 , bundled with its sequel Atlantis : Milo 's Return .

= = Reception = =

= = = Critical response = = =

The review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes reports that 49 % of 140 professional critics have given Atlantis : The Lost Empire a positive review , with a rating average of 5 @.@ 5 out of 10 . The site 's consensus is that " Atlantis provides a fast @-@ paced spectacle , but stints on such things

as character development and a coherent plot ". Metacritic assigned the film a weighted average score of 52 out of 100 based on 29 reviews from mainstream critics ; this was considered " mixed or average reviews " . CinemaScore polls conducted during the opening weekend revealed the average grade cinema @-@ goers gave Atlantis : The Lost Empire was an " A " on an A + -to @-@ F scale .

While critics had mixed reactions to the film in general , some praised it for its visuals , action @-@ adventure elements , and its attempt to appeal to an older audience . Roger Ebert gave Atlantis three @-@ and @-@ half stars out of four . He praised the animation 's " clean bright visual look " and the " classic energy of the comic book style " , crediting this to the work of Mike Mignola . Ebert gave particular praise to the story and the final battle scene and wrote , " The story of Atlantis is rousing in an old pulp science fiction sort of way , but the climactic scene transcends the rest , and stands by itself as one of the great animated action sequences . " In The New York Times , Elvis Mitchell gave high praise to the film , calling it " a monumental treat " , and stated , " Atlantis is also one of the most eye @-@ catching Disney cartoons since Uncle Walt institutionalized the four @-@ fingered glove . " James Berardinelli , film critic for ReelViews , wrote a positive review of the film , giving it three out of four stars . He wrote , " On the whole , Atlantis offers 90 minutes of solid entertainment , once again proving that while Disney may be clueless when it comes to producing good live @-@ action movies , they are exactly the opposite when it comes to their animated division . " Wesley Morris of the San Francisco Chronicle wrote positively of the film 's approach for an older audience : " But just beneath the surface , Atlantis brims with adult possibility . "

Other critics felt that the film was mediocre in regards to its story and characters , and that it failed to deliver as a non @-@ musical to Disney 's traditional audience . Owen Gleiberman of Entertainment Weekly gave the film a C + rating , writing that the movie had " gee @-@ whiz formulaic character " and was " the essence of craft without dream " . Kenneth Turan of the Los Angeles Times noted the storyline and characterizations were " old @-@ fashioned " and the film had the retrograde look of a Saturday @-@ morning cartoon , but these deficiencies were offset by its " brisk action " and frantic pace . Todd McCarthy of Variety wrote , " Disney pushes into all @-@ talking , no @-@ singing , no @-@ dancing and , in the end , no @-@ fun animated territory . " Stephanie Zacharek of Salon loathed the film , specifically Disney 's attempt to make the film for an adult audience , of which she wrote , " The big problem with Disney 's latest animated feature , Atlantis : The Lost Empire , is that it doesn 't seem geared to kids at all : It 's so adult that it 's massively boring . " Rita Kempley of The Washington Post panned the film , calling it a " new @-@ fashioned but old @-@ fangled hash " and wrote , " Ironically Disney had hoped to update its image with this mildly diverting adventure , yet the picture hasn 't really broken away from the tried @-@ and @-@ true format spoofed in the far superior Shrek . "

= = = Themes and interpretations = = =

Several critics and scholars have noted that Atlantis plays strongly on themes of anti @-@ capitalism and anti @-@ imperialism . M. Keith Booker , academic and author of studies about the implicit messages conveyed by media , views the character of Rourke as being motivated by " capitalist greed " when he pursues " his own financial gain " in spite of the knowledge that " his theft [ of the crystal ] will lead to the destruction of [ Atlantis ] " . Religion journalist Mark Pinsky , in his exploration of moral and spiritual themes in popular Disney films , asserts that " it is impossible to read the movie ... any other way " than as " a devastating , unrelenting attack on capitalism and American imperialism " . Max Messier of FilmCritic.com observes , " Disney even manages to lambast the capitalist lifestyle of the adventurers intent on uncovering the lost city . Damn the imperialists ! " According to Booker , the film also " delivers a rather segregationist moral " by concluding with the discovery of the Atlanteans kept secret from other surface @-@ dwellers in order to maintain a separation between the two highly divergent cultures . Others saw Atlantis as an interesting look at utopian philosophy of the sort found in classic works of science fiction by H. G. Wells and Jules Verne .

When the film was released , some viewers noticed that Atlantis : The Lost Empire bore a number



of similarities to the 1990 ? 1991 Japanese anime television program *Nadia : The Secret of Blue Water* and the 1986 film *Castle in the Sky* from Studio Ghibli , particularly in its character design , setting , and story . Although Disney never responded formally to claims of plagiarism , co @-@ director Kirk Wise posted on a Disney animation news group in May 2001 , " Never heard of *Nadia* till it was mentioned in this [ news group ] . Long after we 'd finished production , I might add . " Both *Atlantis* and *Nadia* were inspired , in part , by the 1870 Jules Verne novel *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* , of which Lee Zion ( reporting for Anime News Network ) wrote , " There are too many similarities not connected with 20 @,@ 000 Leagues for the whole thing to be coincidence . " Critics also saw parallels with the 1994 film *Stargate* . Milo 's characteristics were said to resemble those of Daniel Jackson , the protagonist of *Stargate* and its spinoff television series *Stargate SG @-@ 1* ? which coincidentally launched its own spinoff , titled *Stargate Atlantis* .

= = = Accolades = = =

= = Related works = =

*Atlantis : the Lost Empire* was meant to provide a springboard for an animated television series entitled *Team Atlantis* , which would have presented the further adventures of its characters . However , because of the film 's under @-@ performance at the box office the series was not produced . On May 20 , 2003 , Disney released a direct @-@ to @-@ video sequel called *Atlantis : Milo 's Return* , consisting of three episodes planned for the aborted series . In addition , Disneyland planned to revive its *Submarine Voyage* ride with an *Atlantis* theme with elements from the movie and the ride was promoted with a meet @-@ and @-@ greet by the movie 's characters . These plans were canceled and the attraction was re @-@ opened in 2007 as the *Finding Nemo Submarine Voyage* , its theme based on the 2003 Disney · Pixar animated film *Finding Nemo* .

= = = Soundtrack = = =

The soundtrack to *Atlantis : The Lost Empire* was released on May 22 , 2001 . It consists primarily of James Newton Howard 's score and includes " Where the Dream Takes You " , written by Howard and Diane Warren and performed by Mýa . It was also available in a limited edition of 20 @,@ 000 numbered copies with a unique 3D album cover insert depicting the Leviathan from the film . A rare promotional edition ( featuring 73 minutes of material , compared to the 53 minutes on standard commercial editions ) was intended only for Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences voters , but was bootlegged and distributed with fan @-@ created artwork . Concerning the promotional edition , Filmtracks said , " Outside of about five minutes of superior additional material ( including the massive opening , " *Atlantis Destroyed* " ) , the complete presentation is mostly redundant . Still , *Atlantis* is an accomplished work for its genre . "

= = = Video games = = =

There are several video games based on the film . *Atlantis The Lost Empire : Search for the Journal* ( commonly known as *Atlantis : Search for the Journal* ) was developed by Zombie Studios and published by Buena Vista Games , a subsidiary of Disney Interactive . It was released on May 1 , 2001 , for the Microsoft Windows platform and was a first @-@ person shooter game , the first of two games based on the film developed by Zombie Studios and released for UPC labels from Kellogg 's products for promotion . *Atlantis : The Lost Empire ? Trial by Fire* ( commonly known as *Atlantis : Trial by Fire* ) was the second game developed by Zombie Studios and published by Disney Interactive , and was released May 18 , 2001 , for the Microsoft Windows platform .

*Atlantis : The Lost Empire* is an action game developed by Eurocom for the PlayStation console which was released June 14 , 2001 . The player controls Milo , Audrey , Molière , and Vinny as they traverse *Atlantis* , unlocking its secrets . Some features in the game unlock others ( such as a movie

) by finding items hidden throughout the game . THQ released Disney 's Atlantis : The Lost Empire for the Game Boy Advance and Game Boy Color . It is a platform game in which the player controls Milo and three other characters from the film across 14 levels on a quest to discover Atlantis . The game was met with average to mixed reviews upon release . GameRankings and Metacritic gave it a score of 73 @. @ 83 % and 73 out of 100 for the PlayStation version ; 64 @. @ 50 % for the Game Boy Color version ; and 55 @. @ 86 % and 51 out of 100 for the Game Boy Advance version .

= = = Books = = =

= = = DVD media = = =

= = = Periodicals = = =