

= Care Bears Movie II : A New Generation =

Care Bears Movie II : A New Generation is a 1986 children 's animated film produced by LBS Communications , Inc. and Canadian animation studio Nelvana and released by Columbia Pictures . The third animated feature from Nelvana , it was directed by Dale Schott , written by Peter Sauder and produced by Nelvana 's three founders (Michael Hirsh , Patrick Loubert and Clive A. Smith) . It starred the voices of Alyson Court , Cree Summer , Maxine Miller and Hadley Kay .

In the second film based on the Care Bears franchise , a character called The Great Wishing Star (voiced by Chris Wiggins) tells the origins of the Care Bears , and the story of their first Caring Mission . True Heart Bear and Noble Heart Horse lead the other Care Bears and Care Bear Cousins , as they come to the aid of Christy , a young camper who is tempted by an evil shape @-@ shifting figure named Dark Heart . The film marked the first appearance of the Care Bear Cubs , who also had their own line of toys .

A New Generation was made over a seven @-@ month period at Nelvana 's Toronto facilities , with additional work handled by Taiwan 's Wang Film Productions , and involved several crew members who had worked on the original Care Bears Movie . Patricia Cullen served as composer , and Los Angeles musicians Dean and Carol Parks worked on the film 's six songs . The Samuel Goldwyn Company , a U.S. independent distributor , was originally set to release this follow @-@ up ; demands from the film 's producers caused the company to give up . To the chagrin of Goldwyn 's founder , the worldwide rights were then acquired by Hollywood studio Columbia Pictures .

Upon its release in March 1986 , A New Generation gained mostly negative critical attention ; some of its key elements received comparisons to the German legend Faust and J. M. Barrie 's Peter Pan . The film grossed only US \$ 8 @.@ 5 million in North America , about a third of what the previous instalment earned , and over US \$ 12 million worldwide . It was released on video in August 1986 , and on DVD in April 2003 . This was the last animated feature for Columbia until Final Fantasy : The Spirits Within in 2001 . A third film starring the title characters , The Care Bears Adventure in Wonderland , was released in 1987 .

= = Plot = =

Aboard their boat , a yellow bear and a purple horse look after the baby animals known as the Care Bear Cubs and Care Bear Cousin Cubs . On the way , a red sea serpent threatens them ? one of the many forms of Dark Heart , an evil spirit . They escape by following a rainbow up to the sky , while the boat transforms into the Cloud Clipper . There , the Great Wishing Star gives the group their " tummy symbols " , pictures that indicate each creature 's role or specialty . True Heart Bear and Noble Heart Horse , as the characters are named , become founders of the Kingdom of Caring , a land which comprises Care @-@ a @-@ Lot and the Forest of Feelings .

For the Bears ' first Caring Mission , True Heart and stowaway Swift Heart Rabbit (one of the Cousins) travel to Earth and visit a summer camp . There , they meet three of its participants : a girl named Christy , and her friends , the twins John and Dawn . A boastful boy nicknamed the " Camp Champ " always defeats them in competitions , and assigns them to trash duty . Christy is unsatisfied at this ; she and her friends run away , only to get lost in the woods . True Heart soon finds John and Dawn , and brings them to the Kingdom of Caring . After they arrive , the children hear a bell toll from the Caring Meter , which tells the Bears how much caring is taking place on Earth . Noble Heart and True Heart tell them to babysit the Cubs , before they leave to search for Dark Heart and Christy .

Meanwhile , in the woods , Christy meets Dark Heart (as a human boy) for the first time , and asks him to make her the new Camp Champ . He grants her that wish , telling her she must pay him back with one favor , and heads away while she rejoins her friends . Aware of Dark Heart 's potential , True Heart and Noble Heart move the Bear Cubs to Care @-@ a @-@ Lot , and the Cousin Cubs to the Forest of Feelings . Both sets quickly grow up to become the Care Bear Family .

Later , while the Bears prepare a party for the Kingdom 's founders , Dark Heart enters Care @-@ a @-@ Lot in disguise so that he can capture the whole Family . A cluster of Star Buddies , assistants

to the Bears and Great Wishing Star , drives him off ; he then morphs into a raging red cloud . The Bears shoot light at him from their bellies , forming their " Care Bear Stare " ; the Cousins also help by using their " Care Cousin Call " . Afterward , True Heart and Noble Heart decide to search for him , and leave the Bears to handle missions all by themselves .

During their patrol , Wish Bear spots Christy stranded in a canoe within a lake ; the other Bears and Cousins set out to rescue her . Dark Heart fires lightning bolts before the team , and captures many of them with his magic bag ? the favor he wanted Christy to do all along . The few Family members at hand determine that she has teamed up with him . This prompts Tenderheart Bear to hold a conference at the Hall of Hearts ; Friend Bear , Secret Bear and Christy 's friends later join them .

That night , Dark Heart 's influence causes the other children to wreck the camp . The Bears and Cousins search for the Family members , before Dark Heart imprisons them ? first in cages , then inside big rubies hanging from a chandelier . Meanwhile , John and Dawn tell Christy of their conviction to rescue the Family from the villain . Feeling guilty , she finally pays him back by admitting what she has done . Despite this , her bargain with Dark Heart is over .

True Heart , Noble Heart , John and Dawn enter Dark Heart 's lair amid his impending deed ; Christy asks him to free the others . While True Heart and Noble Heart enact their Stare , lightning from his cloud strikes Christy , who screams in fear and gets struck and wounded . With little energy left in her , she crashes down the chandelier with a marble . The Family members , finally free from the rubies , help True Heart and Noble Heart out .

At the sight of a dead Christy , Dark Heart becomes remorseful for his actions . He asks the Care Bears to bring her back to life , but is disappointed that their kindness is not even enough . So he , the Family , John and Dawn chant " We care ! " enough times to bring her back to life . Soon after , the group quickly leaves the cave as it transforms into an outhouse .

Dark Heart becomes a real boy , and everyone is overjoyed . After a swim in the lake , the campers say goodbye to the Bears and Cousins ; the former Dark Heart promises to be a better person at camp . The film ends with a message from its narrator , the Great Wishing Star , and flashbacks of the Care Bear Family 's childhood .

= = Cast = =

= = Production = =

= = = Development = = =

The Care Bears franchise was created in 1981 by Those Characters from Cleveland , a division of the greeting card company American Greetings . Early in their tenure , the characters appeared as toys from the Kenner company , and also in greeting cards by Elena Kucharik . They starred in two syndicated television specials from a Canadian animation studio , Atkinson Film @-@ Arts of Ottawa : The Care Bears in the Land Without Feelings (1983) and The Care Bears Battle the Freeze Machine (1984) . After the specials , Toronto 's Nelvana studio produced the first Care Bears Movie in less than eight months . It was distributed in the United States by The Samuel Goldwyn Company , an independent outfit , and grossed US \$ 22 @.@ 9 million at the North American box @-@ office , the largest amount for a non @-@ Disney animated film at the time . This success guaranteed production of a second film , which was in consideration by May 1985 . As with the original , production took place at Nelvana 's facilities and Taiwan 's Wang Film Productions ; the Canadian studio also hired South Korean personnel to handle inking and painting . This time , over one hundred Nelvana animators worked on the film over a seven @-@ month period that lasted until February 1986 ; the company itself received credit for the story development . American Greetings and Kenner commissioned Nelvana to make the sequel on contract ; television syndicator LBS Communications , a co @-@ financier of the first one , became the producer and presenter .

Care Bears Movie II was Nelvana 's third animated feature film , after 1983 's Rock & Rule and The

Care Bears Movie . It marked the directorial debut of Dale Schott , a Nelvana staff member who served as assistant director on the first Care Bears Movie , as well as the Nelvana / Lucasfilm TV series Ewoks . Several other crewmembers from the first film returned to the fold ; Nelvana 's founders (Michael Hirsh , Patrick Loubert and Clive A. Smith) served as producers , while Peter Sauder wrote the screenplay and Charles Bonifacio handled animation duties . Jack Chojnacki , the co @-@ president of American Greetings ' licensing division Those Characters from Cleveland , served once again as an executive producer . A roster of Toronto voice actors ? among them Cree Summer , Sunny Besen Thrasher , Dan Hennessey and Hadley Kay ? appeared in this follow @-@ up . Mickey Rooney and Georgia Engel , who appeared in the first film , did not return .

At one point , The Samuel Goldwyn Company was about to release A New Generation , but lost the distribution rights after turning down demands from the producers . Eventually , Nelvana went into negotiations with the Hollywood studio Columbia Pictures , which acquired worldwide theatrical rights in early 1986 . This led founder Samuel Goldwyn , Jr. to remark : " The fact that Columbia is distributing the Care Bears sequel is typical of the greed of the big studios . Someone else has to go in and prove something works , then a studio will charge in . " By contrast , Goldwyn acquired the rights to the original film after major U.S. studios passed on it ; they did not see the financial potential in a movie aimed strictly for children .

= = = Allusions = = =

According to Richard Freedman of the Newhouse News Service , " This must be the first version of the Faust myth in which not only does Faust (or Faustina [Christy] , here) manage to weasel out of the pact with the Devil , but succeeds in regenerating him , as well . " Elliot Krieger of Rhode Island 's Providence Journal also took note of such a theme , headlining his review " Faust goes to summer camp " . In regards to continuity issues , a reviewer in The Scarecrow Movie Guide observed a " montage showing the Care Bears and their Cousins growing up together from infancy to full Care Bear maturation ? nullifying everything that happened in the first movie " . Mike McLane of Florida 's Gainesville Sun gave a few suggestions of the storyline 's possible religious subtext . He compared the Great Wishing Star to God , the Bears ' " beautiful cloud kingdom " of Care @-@ a @-@ Lot to Heaven , and Dark Heart to Satan ; he also hinted that the Bears protected humankind like angels did .

Charles Solomon pointed out that the film 's climax , in which the Bears help revive Christy , " borrows ... flagrantly from Peter Pan " . The Scarecrow contributor took note of this aspect , writing , " There 's an excruciating scene where the Care Bears turn to the audience and plead for help in the form of excessive and focused caring . " In his critique , Hal Lipper called it the " Tinker Bell Principle " , whereupon the audience must come together to save a dying character . In Vincent Canby 's opinion , the Great Wishing Star " looks like Tinker Bell if she were a star @-@ shaped beanbag " .

= = = Music = = =

As with the original film , Patricia Cullen composed the score for Care Bears Movie II . The soundtrack album was released in LP format by Kid Stuff Records . Los Angeles musicians Dean and Carol Parks were credited as producers , writers and performers of the film 's six songs , which were included on the album . Stephen Bishop , performer of the Oscar @-@ nominated " It Might Be You " from Tootsie , and Debbie Allen from the TV series Fame , were on hand as vocalists . John Braden arranged and edited the album .

The Parks recorded their contributions to the project at their home . At the time of production , they shared their experiences of working on the soundtrack :

Our children helped us tremendously with their feedback as real Care Bear fans . When we took on this project , we made up our mind not to write down to children . There 's a huge library of over @-@ simplistic music available to children , but kids love music and they have very sophisticated tastes . When Debbie came over to the house to record ' Care Bears Cheer Song , ' she brought her baby and nanny and manager and everyone had a great time .

The songs are particularly important because they forward the movement and reflect the action and feelings of the story . We try to make it so that everyone can relate to the music .

Paul Attanasio of The Washington Post gave a mixed response to the film 's music . " The songs are dopey , " he said , " but the score [...] , which is mostly seven kinds of sprightly , has its occasional moments . " Vincent Canby wrote in his review , " [There are] unseen loudspeakers [that] pour out a nonstop Hit Parade of songs to be interred by , including ' I Care for You , ' ' Our Beginning ' and ' Forever Young . ' " But Joe Fox of The Windsor Star recommended it , adding , " [W] henever things start to drag a snappy tune comes along to get everyone interested . "

= = Release = =

= = = North America = = =

Initially intended for a mid @-@ year release , Care Bears Movie II opened on March 7 , 1986 , in the U.S. and Canada , grossing US \$ 243 @,@ 161 from 55 theatres , and US \$ 449 @,@ 649 by its first few days . At this stage , it managed to rank above a reissue of Disney 's 1959 production Sleeping Beauty , which also premiered that same weekend . However , when the final weekend box office results were announced Sleeping Beauty outgrossed Care Bears II by \$ 59 @,@ 000 . Its wide @-@ release opening on March 21 brought in \$ 2 @.@ 5 million from 1 @,@ 446 theatres , placing seventh on the box office chart . Over the next two weekends it earned little more than \$ 1 million in 12th place . During release , it faced competition from another toy @-@ based film , Atlantic Releasing 's GoBots : Battle of the Rock Lords . At the time A New Generation opened , Richard Martin of the Ottawa Citizen commented : " ... The first Care Bears movie has become the most successful non @-@ Disney animated feature ever . This second movie from Nelvana could very well surpass that record , since it held the attention of all but the youngest members of the first @-@ night audience and even has something to offer adults . " Ultimately , this installment earned US \$ 8 @,@ 540 @,@ 346 in North America ? about a third of what the previous one earned ; over US \$ 1 million of this total came from Canada . By 1988 , it made over US \$ 12 million worldwide .

= = = Overseas = = =

Care Bears Movie II made its debut in the United Kingdom , via Columbia @-@ EMI @-@ Warner Distributors , on July 25 , 1986 ; it later appeared on home video in that country under the RCA / Columbia Pictures and Video Collection International labels . Warner @-@ Columbia Film of France released it on April 8 , 1987 as Les Bisounours II ? Une nouvelle génération ; publishing rights were held by Hachette Livre . It was released in the Netherlands on April 9 , 1987 , as De Troetelbeertjes Deel 2 : Nieuwe Avonturen Van De Troetelbeertjes . The film is also known as Gli orsetti del cuore II in Italy , and Krambjörnarna : på nya äventyr in Sweden .

The Warner @-@ Columbia branch in West Germany released it under the title Glücks @-@ Bärchis , Teil 2 ? Jetzt im Abenteuerland (Care Bears lucky , Part 2 Now in Adventureland) on December 11 , 1986 . It sold 174 @,@ 550 tickets and ranked 84th place among the year 's releases in that market (excluding re @-@ issues) , grossing approximately ? 665 @,@ 000 (the equivalent of DM1,300,000 , or US \$ 824 @,@ 000) . By comparison , Filmwelt 's release of the first film that same year placed 47th with 538 @,@ 487 tickets . On October 13 , 1987 , RCA / Columbia Pictures released the local version of Care Bears Movie II on video .

The film was released in Mexico on December 25 , 1986 , as Los Ositos Cariñositos II , and in April 1987 in the Philippines . By the early 1990s , it was marketed as Ursinhos Carinhosos II in Brazil . In China , it is known under the title of Baby Love Bears (Chinese : ????? ; pinyin : Àix?n xióng b?ob?o) . In the Russia movie was distributed under several names , such as Wonder Bears : The New Generation (Russian : ????? @-@ ????? . ????? ?????????) , in a more corresponding translation to the original (Russian : ????????????? ?????? 2 : ?????? ?????????) and other .

= = Reception = =

= = = Critical response = = =

The film received mostly negative reviews , in part because of their theory that Care Bears Movie II : A New Generation was part of the franchise 's marketing scheme at the time of release . This led The New York Times ' Vincent Canby to begin his review by proclaiming , " Product merchandising marches on . " Another reviewer claimed to have seen almost every collectible within the film 's first twenty minutes . The film was produced to serve as the franchise introduction of the Care Bear Cubs and the Care Bear Cousin Cubs , who also had their own line of toys from Kenner . The plushes , measuring 11 " in height , consisted of Bedtime Cub , Cheer Cub , Funshine Cub and Share Cub ; the line of Care Bear Cousin Cubs included Li 'l Bright Heart Raccoon , Li 'l Proud Heart Cat and Li 'l Swift Heart Rabbit . Kenner announced the introduction of the Cubs in 1985 , shortly before the film opened , and showcased them at the American International Toy Fair in February 1986 .

In The Motion Picture Guide 1987 Annual , Jay Robert Nash wrote that its title " refers to the new featured characters who , more than coincidentally , have ended up on the toy shelves of stores everywhere . " A critic from the Omaha World @-@ Herald , however , found it misleading and complained that the Cubs " are not ' a new generation ' at all " . Several critics considered the film a prequel to the original : the Omaha World Herald reviewer ; Edward Jones of Virginia 's The Free Lance @-@ Star ; Charles Solomon of the Los Angeles Times ; and Bill Cosford of The Miami Herald . According to Michael H. Price of the Fort Worth Star @-@ Telegram , " Care Bears Movie II is what the film industry calls a ' requel , ' tracing the origin of the Care Bear family and relatives of other species . "

In his Animated Movie Guide , animation expert Jerry Beck gave Care Bears Movie II a half @-@ star (½) out of four , and offered this consensus :

Unfortunately not many critics cared for the television standard limited animation , bland songs , and blatant [sic] product placement in this film . Strictly for toddlers over age six , [it] tries too hard to cram new characters into the plotline . The characters are obviously introduced to create toy lines

This is the weakest of the Care Bear movies . Avoid at all costs .

John Stanley expressed his views likewise in his 1988 film guide , *Revenge of the Creature Features* :

[This] inferior sequel [is] rather charmless . This is strictly Saturday Morning at the Cartoons , a blatant commercial for Care Bear toys and related products ... [T] he bulbs are out as far as ideas are concerned .

" Care Bears Movie II is a sort of pre @-@ sequel that , I suspect , requires its audiences to have some prior knowledge of Care Bears , " Vincent Canby said in his New York Times review . " Very young kids may love this , but anybody over the age of 4 might find it too spooky . " Hal Lipper of the St. Petersburg Times remarked that it " is an enormously engaging cartoon ? quite a feat when you consider the saccharine psychobabble passing for dialogue " . The Miami Herald 's Bill Cosford gave it two and a half stars out of four , the same rating he had applied to its predecessor . Edward Jones commented that " The animation can 't compare with the best of Disney . Take a look at *Sleeping Beauty* [...] and you 'll see the difference . " Likewise , Italian critic Paolo Mereghetti complained , " [This is an] ugly sequel with awkward animation , and not even the small fry will find it fun . "

Charles Solomon said , " The new Care Bears film ... is even more sloppily made and hawks its goods even more shamelessly . [...] The film makers seem more concerned with showcasing the toys than providing entertainment ; shared profits obviously count for more than shared feelings . If someone started selling ' Hate Bears , ' there undoubtedly would be a film about them . " Gene Siskel awarded the film zero stars out of four (along with " *Thumbs Down* " on *At the Movies* ? the Siskel & Ebert TV show having not been introduced yet) , while Leonard Maltin gave it a " BOMB " rating in his *Movie Guide* , and added : " Your kids deserve better entertainment than this treacly stuff about the Kingdom of Caring . Prefab animation from the era of toy merchandising tie @-@ ins

. " The Gale Group publication , VideoHound 's Golden Movie Retriever , gave it one bone out of four in its 1992 edition , but revised it to two later on . In 2001 , the Los Angeles @-@ based Hastings Bad Cinema Society picked A New Generation as one of The 100 Worst Movies of the 20th Century . " Even suffering through a Barney video would be preferable to sitting through this , " said compiler Michael Lancaster .

The film received some positive reviews , however . Writing for The Advocate of Baton Rouge , Louisiana , Norma Dyess Michaud deemed it " a must @-@ see for preschoolers , especially those who are in the throes of the current Care Bear mania " . Richard Martin praised the script and climax , along with the performances of the orphan Cubs . " Their pastel , birthday @-@ cake @-@ and @-@ whipped @-@ cream world has never looked sweeter , " he stated . The Philadelphia Daily News commented that it was " even better than the first one , which was good " .

= = = Home media = = =

Care Bears Movie II was released on VHS and Betamax by RCA / Columbia Pictures Home Video on August 21 , 1986 , and debuted in 12th place on Billboard 's Top Kid Video Sales chart on September 27 that same year . The film aired during 1987 on the Disney Channel , a premium television station , and was broadcast in later years on CBS , HBO , Showtime and The Movie Channel . It returned on VHS as part of the Columbia TriStar Family Collection on August 13 , 1996 . Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment premiered it on DVD on April 8 , 2003 ; the only special features in this edition were trailers for several of the company 's family @-@ oriented titles . This was the last animated feature to be released by Columbia Pictures until Final Fantasy : The Spirits Within in 2001 .

= = Sequel = =

In 1987 , Nelvana followed A New Generation with The Care Bears Adventure in Wonderland or The Care Bears Movie . In this third film , the Bears and Cousins travel to Wonderland and save its Princess from a wizard ; Alice , a girl from the real world , takes her place . Self @-@ financed by Nelvana and released by Cineplex Odeon Films , it was the last Care Bears movie of the 1980s to go into theatres . It grossed US \$ 2 @. @ 6 million in the North American market , and US \$ 6 million worldwide by February 1988 . The Bears would not appear in another feature production until 2004 's direct @-@ to @-@ video effort , Care Bears : Journey to Joke @-@ a @-@ lot .