

= Ariel (Disney character) =

Princess Ariel is a fictional character and the title character of Walt Disney Pictures ' 28th animated film The Little Mermaid (1989) . She subsequently appears in the film 's prequel television series , direct @-@ to @-@ video sequel The Little Mermaid II : Return to the Sea (where her daughter , Melody , takes over as the lead character , while Ariel is a secondary character instead) and direct @-@ to @-@ video prequel The Little Mermaid : Ariel 's Beginning . Ariel is voiced by Jodi Benson in all official animated appearances and merchandise . She is fourth in the Disney Princess lineup , and the only princess to become a mother to her own child .

Ariel has a distinctive appearance , with her long , flowing , bright red hair , blue eyes , green mermaid tail and purple seashell bikini top . In the films and television series , she is the seventh @-@ born daughter of King Triton and Queen Athena of an underwater kingdom of Merfolk . She is often rebellious , and in the first film longs to be a part of the human world . She marries Prince Eric , whom she rescued from a shipwreck , and together they have a daughter , Melody .

The character is based on the title character of Hans Christian Andersen 's " The Little Mermaid " story , but was developed into a different personality for the 1989 animated film adaptation . Ariel has received a mixed reception from critics ; some publications such as Time criticize her for being too devoted to her man whereas others , such as Empire , praise the character for her rebellious personality , a departure from previous Disney Princesses .

= = Development = =

Ariel was based on the title character of Hans Christian Andersen 's " The Little Mermaid " , but co @-@ director and writer Ron Clements felt that the mermaid in the original story was too tragic and rewrote the character , resulting in Ariel .

Jodi Benson , who was predominantly a stage actress , was chosen to voice Ariel because the directors felt " it was really important to have the same person doing the singing and speaking voice " . Clements stated that Benson 's voice had a unique " sweetness " and " youthfulness " . When recording the vocals for " Part of Your World " , Benson asked that the lights in the studio be dimmed , to create the feeling of being deep under the sea . " Part of Your World " , which was referred to by songwriter Howard Ashman as the " I Want " song , was originally going to be cut from the final film , owing to Jeffrey Katzenberg 's belief that it slowed the story down , but Ashman and Keane fought to keep it in .

Ariel 's original design was developed by animator Glen Keane . Her appearance was based on a number of inspirational sources , including Glen Keane 's wife , actress Alyssa Milano (who was 16 at the time in addition to hosting the making of the special on Disney Channel ,) and model @-@ comedian Sherri Stoner , who provided live @-@ action references for the animators during the development of the film . The movement of Ariel 's hair underwater was based on footage of astronaut Sally Ride while she was in space . Extra reference was given by filming Stoner swimming in a pool , which also helped guide Ariel 's aquatic movement .

A challenge in animating Ariel for the 1989 film was the color required to show Ariel in the changing environments , both under the sea and on land , for which the animators required thirty @-@ two color models , not including costume changes . The bluish @-@ green color of Ariel 's fin was a hue specially mixed by the Disney paint lab ; the color was named " Ariel " after the character . The choice of red as Ariel 's hair color was the subject of dispute between the filmmakers and studio executives who wanted the character to have blonde hair . It was noted that red hair contrasted better with Ariel 's green tail , red was easier to darken than yellow , and Disney 's live @-@ action branch Touchstone Pictures had recently released Splash that had a blonde mermaid ; Ariel 's red hair was ultimately kept .

In an interview , Jodi Benson stated that for Ariel 's Beginning , the writers revised the script multiple times to make sure Ariel retained her relevance in a more modern context . Benson complained to them that they wrote Ariel out of character and suggested they bring her back to her roots .

= = Characteristics = =

Ariel is the youngest of King Triton and Queen Athena 's seven daughters . She is often seen in the company of Flounder , her best friend , and Sebastian , her father 's advisor who is often assigned to keep an eye on her . In the television series and first film , Ariel has a fascination with the human world and often goes off to find human artifacts that she displays in a secret grotto . Ariel is often rebellious , wandering off on her own to explore her surroundings , and frequently disobeys the orders of her father or Sebastian , causing conflict between the characters . In The Little Mermaid she is depicted as being willing to do anything to be with Prince Eric , even giving up her voice to become human . Clements described her as a typical teenager , prone to errors of judgment . She also is incredibly curious , and her curiosity often leads her into dangerous situations .

Ariel is kind to others no matter what their circumstances , as depicted in the television series . In an early episode , Ariel helps an orphaned merboy who had fallen in with a bad crowd . In another episode , Ariel befriends a supposed bad @-@ luck creature and protects it from Ursula and other merfolk who wish it harm . Ariel appears as an adult in Return to the Sea , and gives birth to a daughter named Melody , becoming the first , and currently only , Disney princess to become a mother . Ariel is protective of her daughter , as Triton was of Ariel in the first film . After Morgana threatens Ariel and King Triton , Prince Eric and Ariel build a wall around the palace to protect Melody from Morgana and other terrors of the ocean . Although it protected her , it could not protect her curiosity . Ariel 's Beginning depicts her personality as it was in the original film , after Jodi Benson had advocated returning the character to her roots . Ariel is once again rebellious , and after her father decrees music to be banned in Atlantica she runs away with Sebastian and his band .

= = Appearances = =

= = = The Little Mermaid = = =

Ariel first appears in The Little Mermaid (1989) , in which she is shown as being adventurous and curious about the world of humans , a fascination which angers both her father King Triton and his court composer Sebastian , as merfolk are not allowed to make contact with the human world . She and Flounder go in search of human objects , which they take to a seagull named Scuttle for appraisal . Ariel falls in love with a human prince named Prince Eric after saving him from drowning , and visits the sea witch , Ursula , who agrees to turn her into a human in exchange for her voice . Ariel must make Prince Eric fall in love with her and romantically kiss her within three days , lest she belong to Ursula forever .

Unknown to Ariel , this agreement is part of Ursula 's bigger plan to trap Ariel 's father , King Triton and steal his magical trident . After being transformed , she is soon found by Eric and is taken back to his castle . Ariel almost manages to obtain the " kiss of true love " , but is stopped by Ursula 's underhanded tactics . On the third day , Ursula transforms herself into a human , calling herself " Vanessa " and using Ariel 's voice , and bewitches Eric to make him marry her . After learning from Scuttle that the woman is Ursula in disguise , Ariel disrupts the wedding and regains her voice but the sun sets as Ariel and Prince Eric are about to kiss , transforming Ariel back into a mermaid . After transforming herself back into her true witch form , Ursula takes Ariel back into the ocean , where she is met by King Triton and Sebastian .

Triton trades himself for Ariel , enabling Ursula to steal his crown and enabling her to claim his trident , a fascination which angers Ariel , who will not allow Ursula to destroy merfolk and humans . In the battle that follows , Ariel is trapped at the bottom of a whirlpool . Before Ursula can destroy her , Eric kills Ursula by ramming a derelict ship 's splintered prow through her . After Ursula dies , her spell is broken , and King Triton and the merfolk are transformed back to normal merpeople . At the end of the film , after King Triton uses his magical trident to transform her into a human , Ariel leaves the sea to live in the human world , and she and Eric marry and live happily ever after .

= = = Television series = = =

A prequel television series that originally aired from 1992 to 1994 , depicts Ariel 's life as a mermaid under the sea with Sebastian , Flounder , and her father . Ariel appears in all 31 episodes of the series , which is set an unspecified time before the first film . The series follows Ariel 's adventures with her friends and family , and sometimes has Ariel foiling the attempts of enemies that are intent on harming her or the kingdom of Atlantica .

Ariel 's relationships with various characters from the film are highlighted and expanded , such as the love and occasional conflict between Ariel and her father , how Ariel met Flounder and Scuttle , the relationships between Ariel and her sisters , and Ariel 's early fear and avoidance of Ursula the sea witch . Other recurring new characters are also introduced , such as merboy Urchin and mermaid Gabriella that become Ariel 's friends , as well as the Evil Manta , Lobster Mobster and Da Shrimp , who are Ariel 's enemies . Ariel 's mother is absent from the series , having already died prior to the events of the series , though she is occasionally mentioned in vague terms . In one episode Ariel comes across Hans Christian Andersen , author of " The Little Mermaid " . In the fictionalized encounter she saves Andersen 's life , inspiring him to write the story .

Some episodes of the series are musical , and feature original songs performed by the characters . A soundtrack containing some of these songs was released in 1992 under the title " Splash Hits " .

= = = The Little Mermaid II : Return to the Sea = = =

In The Little Mermaid II : Return to the Sea (2000) , Ariel , now the new queen of Prince Eric 's kingdom , has given birth to a daughter named Melody . When Melody 's safety is threatened by Ursula 's sister Morgana after using her as a hostage to get King Triton 's Trident , Ariel and her husband Eric decide they must keep Melody away from the sea . So they build a large wall to separate it from the castle .

But Melody 's love of the sea proves too strong and she visits Morgana , who turns her into a mermaid temporarily . King Triton uses his trident to transform Ariel back into her own mermaid form to find and rescue Melody . Morgana tricks Melody into taking part in a plot to steal her grandfather King Triton 's trident . Together with Tip the Penguin and Dash the Walrus she goes to Atlantica and succeeds in acquiring the trident . Ariel arrives as they return with it to Morgana , and tries to persuade Melody to give back the trident . Morgana captures Ariel , tightly wrapping her tentacle around Ariel 's mouth and body . She then seals Melody behind a block wall . Tip and Dash rescue Melody and Ariel manages to free themselves . Morgana then uses the trident 's magic to force everyone to bow before her .

Melody manages to grab the trident and returns it to King Triton , who then punishes Morgana by sending her to the bottom of the ocean frozen in a block of ice . Triton returns Ariel to human form , the wall separating Eric 's castle from the sea is torn down , and contact between humans and merfolk is restored .

= = = The Little Mermaid : Ariel 's Beginning = = =

The prologue of The Little Mermaid : Ariel 's Beginning (2008) shows Ariel as a young mermaid , living happily with her father , King Triton , her mother , Queen Athena , and her six older sisters . As Ariel and her family relax in a lagoon , a pirate ship approaches and everyone flees except Athena , who returns to recover a music box Triton had given her and is killed when the ship crushes her . Afterwards , a devastated King Triton bans all music from Atlantica and throws the music box deep into the ocean . Ariel and her sisters grow up forgetting music and living under their father 's strict rules , enforced by Marina del Rey , their governess .

Ariel meets Flounder and follows him to a secret underground club where Sebastian and his band play music . There she sings the song " I Remember " , which reminds her of her distant past surrounded by love and music , and of her mother . Ariel introduces her sisters to the club , but

eventually they are caught thanks to Marina , who had followed them . Sebastian and his band are imprisoned and the club is closed under Triton 's orders . After arguing with Triton , Ariel breaks the band out of prison and escapes with them .

With Sebastian 's assistance Ariel finds her mother 's music box , and they decide to return it to Triton . On their way back to Atlantica , they encounter Marina , and a struggle ensues in which Ariel is knocked unconscious , witnessed by Triton . Ariel makes a full recovery , and a remorseful Triton allows music back into Atlantica .

= = In other media = =

= = = Tie @-@ in music albums = = =

In addition to the film 's official soundtrack , two original music albums were released by Walt Disney Records for the franchise : Sebastian from The Little Mermaid (1990) and The Little Mermaid : Songs from the Sea (1992) . The former is a cover album mainly focusing on Samuel E. Wright as Sebastian , with Ariel providing supporting vocals , while the latter is a concept album of original songs that depict a day in Ariel 's life under the sea . Ariel also appears in Songs and Story : Ariel 's Christmas Under the Sea , a Christmas @-@ themed mini @-@ album with a read @-@ along story and two original songs . Jodi Benson performs in @-@ character as Ariel in all these albums .

= = = Printed media = = =

Ariel appears in a number of printed media that have been released as part of the franchise .

A series of twelve prequel novels were published in 1994 by Disney Press , following young Ariel 's adventures living under the sea with her sisters and father . The titles are : Green @-@ Eyed Pearl and Nefazia Visits the Palace by Suzanne Weyn ; Reflections of Arsulu and The Same Old Song by Marilyn Kaye ; Arista 's New Boyfriend and Ariel the Spy by M. J. Carr ; King Triton , Beware ! , The Haunted Palace and The Boyfriend Mix @-@ Up by Katherine Applegate ; The Practical @-@ Joke War by Stephanie St. Pierre ; The Dolphins of Coral Cove by K. S. Rodriguez ; and Alana 's Secret Friend by Jess Christopher . The novels mostly focus on the domestic setting of Ariel and her sisters living together .

In 1992 Disney Comics released a four @-@ issue The Little Mermaid Limited Series comicbook series . In 1994 Marvel Comics released its own title , Disney 's The Little Mermaid , which ran for twelve issues . All these comics are prequels to the film , and feature Ariel a mermaid living under the sea having adventures with Flounder and Sebastian , and thwarting villains that wish to take over or destroy Atlantica .

= = = Disney Princess = = =

In 2000 , Ariel became an official member of the newly launched Disney Princess line , an umbrella franchise that includes various Disney princesses under its banner . Ariel is one of the original 8 characters that were included at the franchise 's launch . The franchise is directed at young girls , and covers a wide variety of merchandise , including but not limited to magazines , music albums , toys , video games , clothes and stationery .

This franchise includes illustrated novels starring the various princesses , two of which are about Ariel : The Birthday Surprise and The Shimmering Star Necklace . Both novels are written by Gail Herman , and contain original stories about Ariel 's life as a human and Eric 's wife , but still maintaining close relationships with her father and sisters under the sea . The franchise also includes illustrated short stories about Ariel 's life as a human , such as Ariel and the Aquamarine Jewel , Ariel 's Dolphin Adventure , and Ariel 's Royal Wedding . Ariel also appears as a supporting character in one volume of the Japanese manga Kilala Princess , where she is seen in her pre @-@

movie mermaid form .

Jodi Benson provides Ariel 's voice for her appearances in the Disney Princess music albums , DVDs and video games . The first original song released for this franchise is " If You Can Dream " , which featured Cinderella , Aurora , Ariel , Belle , Pocahontas , Jasmine and Mulan singing together . Other original songs that feature Ariel are " I Just Love Getting Dressed for Tea " , " Manners and Etiquette " , " The Princess Dance " and " Happy Birthday , Princess " from Disney Princess Tea Party (2005) ; " Christmas Is Coming ! " , " Christmas in the Ocean " , " Ariel 's Christmas Island " and " The Twelve Days of Christmas " from Disney Princess Christmas Album (2009) ; and " Ariel 's Sing @-@ Along Sea Song : the Crab Song " from Disney Princess Party (2010) . Ariel also appears in the franchise video games Disney Princess : Enchanted Journey (2007) , Disney Princess : Magical Jewels (2007) and Disney Princess : My Fairytale Adventure (2012) .

= = = Broadway musical = = =

Ariel appears in the Broadway adaptation of the 1989 film , which ran at the Lunt @-@ Fontanne Theatre with previews from November 3 , 2007 leading to opening night on January 10 , 2008 . This original production closed on August 30 , 2009 , but other US and international productions have followed since . The character of Ariel for the stage adaptation was originated by Sierra Boggess , with the role also portrayed later by actresses Chelsea Morgan Stock and Michelle Lookadoo . Jodi Benson , the original voice actress for Ariel , attended the musical 's opening night .

In order to portray the characters underwater , the actors wore Heelys wheeled footwear , which simulate the gliding action of swimming creatures . The actors playing Ariel and the other merfolk had wire @-@ frame tails attached to their hips . Subsequent productions feature different designs for Ariel and the merfolk ; the Dutch and Japanese productions use wirework and aerial stunts to create the illusion of underwater swimming .

The stage musical follows the basic structure of the film , but there are some differences between the two . Ariel acknowledges and is acknowledged by Ursula as family , since in this version Ursula is Triton 's sister . In a new subplot , Grimsby holds a contest inviting all the princesses in the land for a singing competition for Eric to choose his bride ; Ariel cannot sing , but she dances for Eric , and he chooses her . Ariel also has a more active role in the final battle , where she is the one who defeats Ursula by destroying her Nautilus shell that contains her power .

In addition to the songs in the film , Ariel has new songs by Alan Menken and lyrics by Glenn Slater . " The World Above " is Ariel 's introductory song , where she expresses her admiration and curiosity with the human world , " Beyond My Wildest Dreams " is performed after Ariel has become human and given up her voice , and is used to express her thoughts about the human world and Eric , and " If Only (quartet) " is a quartet between Ariel , Eric , King Triton and Sebastian where all four express longing and sadness for their current situation : Ariel saddened that she only has one day left to get Eric to kiss her , Eric 's confusion of falling for Ariel despite longing for the mysterious girl who saved his life , King Triton 's regret at driving Ariel away , and Sebastian for his inability to help Ariel achieve her dreams .

= = = Disney Parks = = =

Ariel makes regular appearances in the Walt Disney Parks and Resorts , having a special location called Ariel 's Grotto at most of them . Ariel 's Grotto was torn down at Walt Disney World 's Magic Kingdom owing to the Fantasyland expansion . An " The Little Mermaid " mini @-@ land can be found in the Magic Kingdom 's New Fantasyland . It includes a replica of Prince Eric 's Castle , a dark ride called Ariel 's Undersea Adventure , a market called " Prince Eric 's Village Market " , and Ariel 's meeting grotto . She has a major role in Mickey 's PhilharMagic and stars in her own live stage shows at Disney 's Hollywood Studios and Tokyo DisneySea . A dark ride based on the movie was designed for Disneyland Paris but never built . A re @-@ designed version of the attraction , called Ariel 's Undersea Adventure , was built as part of the major expansion for Disney California Adventure Park . She also has her own hotel at the Disney 's Art of Animation Resort . There is a

land in Tokyo DisneySea titled " Mermaid Lagoon " . It features many rides and attractions themed around the Little Mermaid . A clone of the dark ride found in Disney California Adventure Park and Magic Kingdom was to be a part of Fantasyland in Hong Kong Disneyland , but was never built . A clone of the dark ride was also supposed to be in Tokyo DisneySea , but was canceled due to budget reasons . A Little Mermaid dark ride is or was planned in every Disney resort worldwide .

= = = Video games and television = = =

Not long after the film was released , late Muppet creator Jim Henson proposed a live @-@ action show based on the film , titled Little Mermaid 's Island . Ariel was to be portrayed by Marietta DePrima , and she would interact with various puppet characters created by Jim Henson 's Creature Shop . Two episodes of this series were filmed but not aired due to complications after Henson 's death .

Ariel appears in various video games based on the films , including the video game adaptation of the first film and the popular Kingdom Hearts series . In the first Kingdom Hearts , Ariel 's story has an unrelated plot to that of the movie . Ariel also makes an appearance in the sequel , Kingdom Hearts II , where its storyline loosely follows the plotline of the 1989 film . They 're also was an appearance card in the video game Mickey 's Memory Challenge on 1993 .

In 2001 , Ariel appeared occasionally in the animated television series Disney 's House of Mouse as one of Mickey 's guests at the night club . She is seen in both her mermaid and human forms .

On November 24 , 2013 Ariel made a brief appearance in a TV special Sofia the First : The Floating Palace , which is part of the computer @-@ animated television series Sofia the First . In the special , Sofia is trying to help her mermaid friend , Oona , whose underwater kingdom is under threat . Sofia wishes for help , and the magical amulet of Avalor summons Ariel in her mermaid form , who gives Sofia advice on what to do . Ariel performs the song " The Love We Share " with Sofia .

= = = Once Upon a Time = = =

A live @-@ action version of Ariel appeared in the ABC television series Once Upon a Time , where she was played by Joanna García . Showrunners Edward Kitsis and Adam Horowitz had wanted to introduce the character for a while , but saved her for season three when the show 's setting temporarily moved to the fictional Neverland , a land with mermaids . Ariel 's highly anticipated appearance was announced with a teaser trailer at the show 's panel at the San Diego Comic @-@ con on July 20 , 2013 , during the hiatus between the second and third seasons . The showrunners provided their own " spin " on the character of Ariel for the show , but maintained her spirit as someone " who wants to see the world and who wants to experience things outside of what they know " . In portraying the role , García had to film scenes swimming in the cold ocean water of Vancouver with her legs bound , which was additionally challenging since it was her first role after giving birth . Ariel 's main arc took place over several episodes of the 2013 @-@ 2014 third season , and she appeared briefly in one episode of the fourth season .

Ariel first appears in the sixth episode season three , " Ariel . " In the Enchanted Forest flashbacks of the episode , Ariel meets Snow White (Ginnifer Goodwin) by saving her from drowning . Snow and Ariel become friends , during which Snow advises Ariel to pursue her love interest Prince Eric (Gil McKinney) , whom she 'd rescued from drowning earlier . Ursula , the sea goddess , has given merfolk the ability to gain legs once a year ; Ariel uses this gift to turn human and attend Prince Eric 's ball with Snow . At the ball , Ariel and Eric dance , with Eric commenting that Ariel seems familiar to him . Eric invites Ariel to join him on an expedition around the world that is leaving the following morning . As Ariel contemplates her dilemma she is approached by the Evil Queen Regina , who has disguised herself as Ursula and pretends to want to help her . Regina 's true agenda is to capture Snow , but Ariel thwarts Regina 's plan and manages to escape with Snow . As an act of revenge , Regina takes Ariel 's voice so she cannot call out to Eric before he leaves on his voyage .

Years later Regina calls to Ariel for help . Regina is trapped on Neverland and needs Ariel to use her merfolk ability to travel between realms and collect something from Storybrooke . In return ,

Regina restores Ariel 's voice , gives her a bracelet that can give her legs for 24 hours , and tells her that Prince Eric is in Storybrooke . In the following episode , " Dark Hollow , " Ariel travels to Storybrooke to meet Belle , and they work together to find Pandora 's box . Ariel manages to bring the box back to Regina in Neverland , and in return Regina casts a spell on the bracelet so Ariel can use it to gain legs whenever and for however long she wishes . At the beginning of the tenth episode of the season , " The New Neverland , " Ariel and Eric are reunited in Storybrooke .

In the seventeenth episode , " The Jolly Roger , " Ariel has been separated from Eric again due to the events of " The New Neverland " . In the Enchanted Forest , she learns that Eric has been kidnapped by Blackbeard the pirate , and teams up with Hook to help save him . Faced with an ultimatum , Hook chooses the Jolly Roger over information on Eric 's whereabouts ; Ariel is angered at Hook but leaves to find Eric on her own . In Storybrooke a year later , Zelena disguises herself as Ariel , pretending that she 's still searching for Eric in order to torment Hook with his guilt . It is later revealed that Ariel successfully found Eric on her own and they have been living happily together .

Ariel returns briefly in season four episode " Poor Unfortunate Soul . " She rescues Captain Hook from drowning when he falls off the Jolly Roger after altercation with the sea witch Ursula . Ariel explains to Hook through dialogue that Queen Elsa of Arendelle cast a spell to shrink the Jolly Roger into a bottle in order to punish its previous owner , Blackbeard ; Ariel was unknowingly trapped in the spell as well . Although Ariel is still mildly angry with Hook after their last encounter , she is grateful for his freeing her from the ship 's spell . Ariel then helps bring Ursula 's father , King Poseidon , to Storybrooke so that the father @-@ daughter pair can reconcile .

Reception for the role has been received positively , with Amy Ratcliffe of IGN saying " The mermaid was endearing , and Garcia couldn 't have done a better job with her . She had terrific chemistry with everyone , too . "

= = = Concert = = =

In 2016 a stripped @-@ down concert version of The Little Mermaid was staged at the Hollywood Bowl , featuring the songs from the film and four songs from the Broadway musical . Sara Bareilles performed the role of Ariel for the first two nights of the concert (June 4 and 5) , while Jodi Benson , the original voice actress for Ariel , reprised her role for the June 6 performance .

= = Reception and legacy = =

Ariel has received a mixed reception from critics . Roger Ebert of the Chicago Sun @-@ Times praised the character , writing that " Ariel is a fully realized female character who thinks and acts independently , even rebelliously , instead of hanging around passively while the fates decide her destiny " . James Bernardelli of Reelviews wrote that Ariel can be viewed as a template for future Disney heroes and heroines . He also praised Jodi Benson 's vocal performance for the character . In an article for Empire , Levi Buchanan stated that Ariel is " powerful and self @-@ reliant " . Janet Maslin of The New York Times complimented Ariel , stating that " teenagers will appreciate the story 's rebellious heroine " and went on to praise Ariel 's wit . Josh Tyler of Cinema Blend wrote favorably about Ariel although he believed that the character was eroticized , stating , " The scene where Ursula rips out her throat and gives her extremely naked parts below the waist is almost titillating , though I 'm sure to little kids it seems entirely innocent " . Similarly , reviewer John Puccio said that " Ariel is perhaps the sexiest @-@ looking animated character the Disney artists have ever drawn " . In his review of Ariel 's Beginning , James Plath of DVD Town wrote , " For little girls , Ariel is one of the most beloved of Disney princesses , and she holds a warm place in the hearts of parents as well " . Rory Aronsky of Film Threat praised Jodi Benson 's vocal performance in Ariel 's Beginning , writing that " Benson adds more to the appeal of Ariel for older fans , and younger girls just learning about her , as well as generations not born yet who will undoubtedly become attached to her , ensuring the continued existence of the franchise " .

In their review of The Little Mermaid , the staff of TV Guide wrote that Ariel resembled " a big @-@ haired , denatured Barbie doll , despite her hourglass figure and skimpy seashell brassiere " .

Tamara Weston of Time wrote that while Ariel is less passive and more strong @-@ willed than her predecessors , she still " gives up her voice to be with a man " who comes to her rescue at the film 's climax . Hal Hinson of The Washington Post wrote that it would be difficult for children to relate to Ariel 's " feelings of disenchantment and longing for another world " and that she " doesn 't have much personality " . However , Hinson also wrote a positive statement about Ariel , saying it was " refreshing ... to see a heroine who has some sense of what she wants and the resources to go after it " . Nell Minow of Common Sense Media had a mixed view of Ariel , praising her for being " adventuresome , rebellious , and brave " but also criticizing that she " gives up everything ? her family , her home , her voice ? for love , even though her trust in the sea witch puts everyone she loves in danger " . Daphne Lee of The Star called Ariel " annoying " and went on to state that Ariel " is a silly girl who gives up her voice and her family for a man she knows next to nothing about " .

Despite her mixed critical reception , Ariel remains popular with audiences , and is considered one of Disney 's most iconic animated characters , with her specific color combination of red hair , lavender seashells and green tail making her distinctly identifiable . A poll in the Internet Movie Database showed Ariel to be the second most alluring animated character after Jessica Rabbit . In August 2011 , Jodi Benson was honored with a Disney Legend for her work as Ariel and her other projects at Disney .

A bi @-@ annual convention called ArielCon is dedicated to the character . Ariel is an official " ambassador " for the " Keep Our Oceans Clean " campaign by Environmental Defense , The National Maritime Sanctuary , and The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration . " Hipster Ariel " has become a popular internet meme , utilizing a screenshot of Ariel with photoshopped glasses accompanied by a humorous caption . Ariel 's distinct appearance makes her the subject of " look @-@ alike " events and competitions . In the reality TV show and dancing competition Dancing With the Stars , Candace Cameron Bure , Peta Murgatroyd , and Marla Maples dressed up as Ariel in their performances in seasons 18 , 20 , and 22 respectively .