

Disney Pictures

The Walt Disney Studios have been responsible for some of the most enduring classics from the world of animation. Disney pictures were the first to release a full-length animated movie with Snow White and the Seven Dwarves. They raised the bar on quality and dominated the genre. With the invention of video and DVD, subsequent generations can watch their favorite Disney movies over and over.

The attention to detail and color made the animation stand out but the studio realized that a good story is important too. We cry at Bambi and laugh at the antics in Jungle Book. Disney pictures ventured into live action films too but it's the animation we fondly remember. So many characters have entertained us, such as Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck and Goofy. We love to hate the villains too, as in Cruella da Ville, the dog-chasing monster from 101 Dalmatians.

Fairy stories have played a large part, lifted from the old storybooks and brought to vivid life. Sleeping Beauty and Cinderella have both been given the Disney treatment. Animals too, have been a constant feature. Jungle Book had a whole jungle full of them and then there was the Lady and the Tramp, Dumbo and The Aristocats. Artists working on Disney pictures would go out to the zoo to sketch animals and study the way they moved.

A typical Disney movie would involve a good versus evil theme, a hero or heroine and some catchy songs. The studio took a courageous step when they produced Fantasia and Uncle Walt was advised against it. It features a sequence of animation matched with classical music. Mickey Mouse got a part as the Sorcerer's Apprentice. Disney proved the doubters wrong, audiences loved it and it was a success. Nothing quite like it has been attempted before or since.

Times move on and the method of producing animation has improved. Today, there is very little hand drawn frames and most animators use a computer. Disney pictures have been shrewd in protecting their business by joining them instead of trying to beat them. They did a distribution deal with Pixar, the studio that produced a string of hits with Toy Story, Finding Nemo and The Incredibles. The graphics and effects produced by Pixar and others are truly impressive but there is nostalgia for the rich tones and storybook feel of the early Disney films. Uncle Walt never talked down to his audience and that's why fans were loyal as they grew into adults.