



JOURNEY PLANET



# Journey Planet 36

I first suggested this issue to Chris and James in 2016, I believe. Unfortunately, I had a severe case of Real Life™ and didn't get to it - until now. I'm excited to be able to finally present it to you!

To say that all things Disney have an immense fannish base would be something of an understatement. From films to music to TV to theme parks to beloved franchise acquisition, there are opinions and feelings galore. We narrowed our focus to be on connections between Disney fandom and SF/F fandom, specifically on "core" Disney. Let's face it - the franchises can be an issue all to themselves!

I remember going to Disneyland when I was around 5 years old with my parents and younger brother. Probably the most vivid memory of that trip was when Chip (or Dale?) took off with the stroller and my brother. Oddly enough, I decided I had to go after him... The overwhelming sense of that trip was being happy - which makes sense, considering that Disneyland is billed as the Happiest Place on Earth. I've been back many, many times as an adult, and still love it.

Even waiting in line, it's hard to be cranky when there. One of my favorite things there is spotting the Hidden Mickeys - it's brilliant branding (and helps keep you occupied in line!), and I enjoyed doing some research into them for this issue.

A few years later we went to Disney World. It was shortly after EPCOT opened, and it's the only time I've been down there. I keep meaning to remedy that and keep having other things get in the way, but someday I really will get back there! My memories there are more of EPCOT - I still have a plush Figment - and reading Steven Silver's article reminded me that when it first opened, GM was the sponsor and I had the same backstage access he did.

Disney is some of the only cosplay I've done - I have the Evil Queen costume from *Snow White* and wore it one Halloween. Generally costuming isn't my thing, but as you'll see in Whitney Randolph's article, there is so much potential there, and fans have done some phenomenal costuming / cosplay based on Disney characters.



Everyone seems to have their favorite Disney film, favorite Disney song, favorite Disney hero(ine) and villain. The theme park fans have their favorite rides. We did some Instant Fanzines on Facebook asking people to share their favorites and why, collating all of them into this issue.

I wrote a longer article about my love of Maleficent – I have so many things honoring her. Clothing, artwork, mouse ears, pins... Here's a quick story - in 2006, I was in the World of Disney store at Disneyland's Downtown Disney. While in the artwork section, there was a portrait of Maleficent. I walked up to it and just stared, jaw dropped, stunned. The salesperson, being observant, came up to me and commented on how great the piece was. My only question was, "does it come in a larger size?" When I moved to Seattle earlier this summer, my partner was made aware that finding a place to hang that portrait was non-negotiable. A few weeks ago, we sat down to watch *Sleeping Beauty* with my step-son, who had never seen it, and was fascinated with my fascination with Maleficent. He agrees she is a badass, and takes it one step further. His comment? "Actually, she's more like a demigod."

As a convention runner, I've always been impressed by how smoothly things run in the parks. I've always thought there are a great many takeaways there for SF/F conventions, and you'll see in articles from John Donat, Tracy Lunquist, Adam Beaton, and Deb Geisler that I'm not the only one to see those connections. There has been more than one Worldcon bid involving properties at Disney World!

There are so many connections between SF/F and Disney. Traditional fairy tales, an early form of fantasy writing, is the influence of many Disney films, as are more traditional fantasy works such as *Alice in Wonderland*, and SF novels such as *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. Chris Garcia walks us through much of the Disney film history, looking at classic short films and their complete SF/F film catalog, with an additional in-depth piece about *20,000 Leagues*.

I wish we could have touched on more connections between the two fandoms in this issue. Connections between Disney animation and Japanese anime. The influence of SF/F on the theme parks, everything from Tomorrowland and EPCOT center to rides like 20,000 Leagues and Space Mountain. The music! So much could be said about the music of Disney. Disney anthropomorphism and Furry Fandom. The evolution of the Disney Princess and the evolution of the Strong Female Protagonist in SF/F literature.

SF/F collecting vs Disney collecting. (I sense a follow-up issue at some point...)

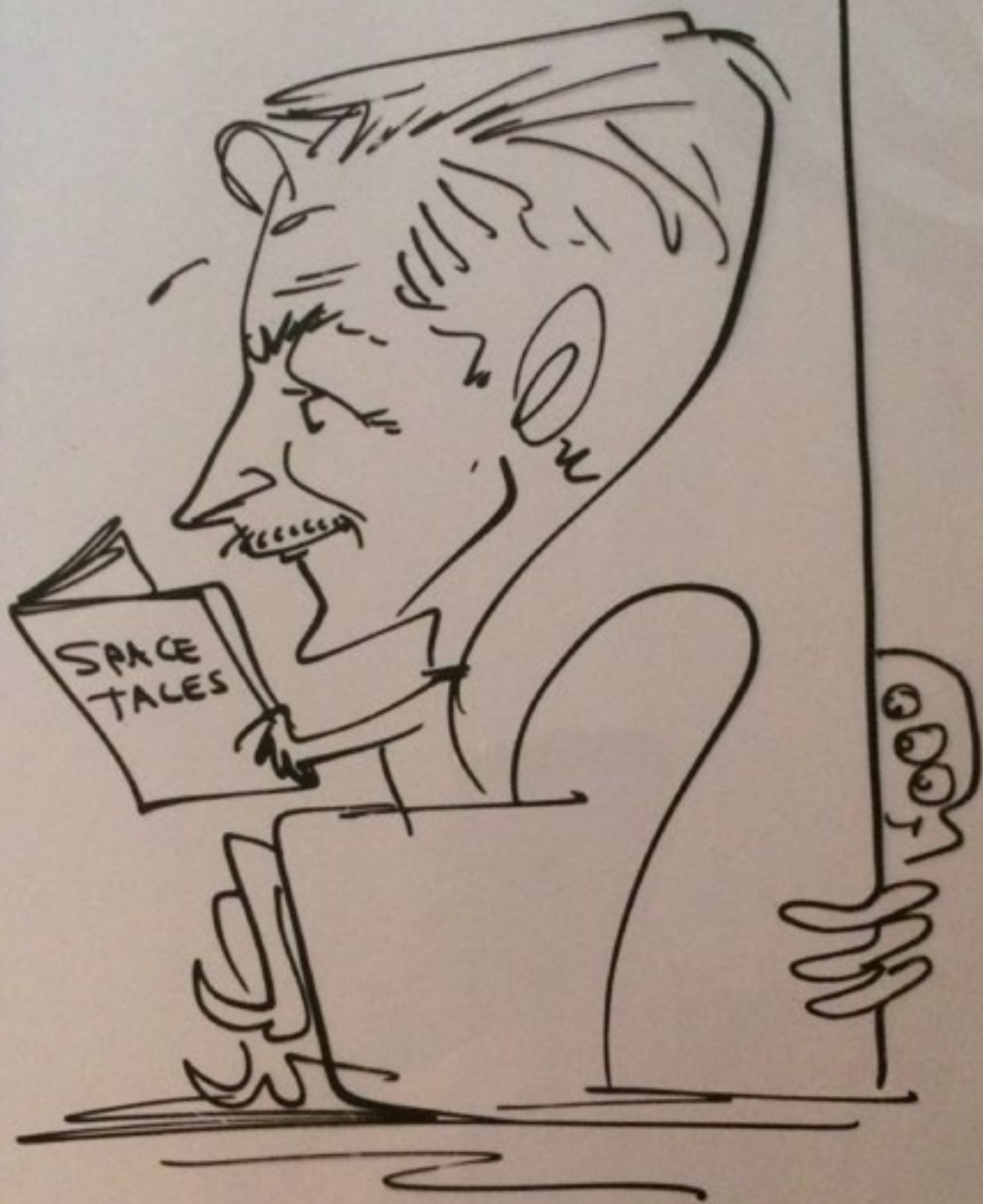
If you haven't already seen it, please check out an issue we did in October ([Journey Planet #34](#)), "Disney on Rails". Believe it or not, there's enough content on Disney and Railroads for an entire issue, and there's some fascinating history there! ([journeyplanet.weebly.com](http://journeyplanet.weebly.com))

Back to 2006. L.A.Con IV occurred in August 2006 at the Anaheim Convention Center. That weekend, Pluto was downgraded to dwarf planet status. Chicago had been bidding for the 2008 Worldcon, and lost by 12 votes. At the gathering of bid members and friends that evening, we cried and drank champagne. Later that evening as I wandered the other parties and people asked how I was feeling, my answer was "I just lost a Worldcon bid. I'm going to Disneyland!" And so, I did. We determined that the best seats for Space Mountain are the first row of the second car. I bought my Maleficent painting. Perhaps most fun was meeting Pluto that weekend, and as I said to him, "Don't worry Pluto. You'll always be a planet to me," I could hear the cast member laughing inside the suit. It was a great time.

I have a lot of love for Disney, and a lot of love for the Science Fiction and Fantasy genre. I'm clearly not the only one, and I suspect that if you're reading this, you do too. Enjoy, and please share your stories with us as well!

Helen Montgomery  
Editor





In Memory of Dave Kyle  
1919 - 2016

Disneyland



# Table of Contents

Front and Back Covers by Hillary Bliss-Pearlman

Page 2 - Editorial - Helen Montgomery  
Collage by Chris Garcia  
Photo from Helen Montgomery

Page 4 - Dave Kyle image by Unknown caricature  
artist at Disneyland in the 1960s

Page 6 - The Disney Bubble by John Donat

Page 8 - Disney Cosplay by Whitney Randolph  
Photo collage by Chris Garcia

Page 10 - My Favorite Theatre - Main Street Cinema  
by Chris Garcia

Page 13 - The EPCOT You WON'T See by Steven H  
Silver  
Photo of Original EPCOT concept from Walt  
Disney Family Museum

Page 16 - Hidden Mickeys by Helen Montgomery  
Hidden Mickeys by Hillary Bliss

Page 19 - Instant Fanzine Part I - What's Your Favorite  
Disney Ride  
Photos purchased from eBay (grand total  
spent: \$17.45)

Page 26 - The Best Disney Worldcon That Never Hap-  
pened by Deb Geisler

Page 28 - Keys from the Kingdom:What Cons Can  
Learn from Disney Parks by Tracy Lunquist

Page 30 - Instant Fanzine Part 2 - What Is Your Favor-  
ite Disney Song and Why?  
Photo by Chris Garcia

Page 34 - Disney Does SciFi... LIVE! 1954 to 1999 by  
Chris Garcia  
Photo collage by Chris Garcia

Page 40 - *On Mars and Beyond* (Adapted from an ep-  
isode of *52 Episodes to Science Fiction Film Literacy*) by  
Chris Garcia

Page 43 - My Favorite Disney Character by Helen  
Montgomery  
Photo from Helen Montgomery

Page 46 - *Jules Verne's 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*  
(Adapted from an episode of *52 Episodes to Science  
Fiction Film Literacy*) by Chris Garcia

Page 49 - Instant Fanzine Part 3 - If You Liked Disney  
Movie X, Then You Should Read Science Fiction/Fanta-  
sy Story Z. Solve for X and Z.

Page 51 - Worldcon Bidding with Walt by Adam Bea-  
ton Chairperson, Orlando in 2015 Worldcon Bid

Page 52 - Instant Fanzine Part 4 - Favorite Disney  
Hero/Heroine AND Favorite Disney Villain and Why?

Page 45 - Enditorial by James Bacon





THE DISNEY BUBBLE  
BY JOHN DONAT







Fans and Disney... Fans and Disney?! Yes, fans and Disney. I didn't realize the overlap between SF/F fans and Disney - everything from the movies, to the music, to my favorite Disney obsession...the theme parks.

I've been going to the parks since 1972, and have loved them since then. Why? Many of us call it the Disney Bubble. Once you get to Walt Disney World, you are in a bubble. A bubble of imagination, happiness, not being in the "real world". Part of that bubble is what many of us in SF/F fandom call "sensawonder" (how DID they do that!!)" There are many instances in the rides that do that (the banquet room in the Haunted Mansion, for one).

Walt, and the current group of cast members, love delighting the guests with little things. Unexpected things that don't take much time or finances to do, but will stay with that guest for the rest of the trip, and possibly the rest of their lives. We've had some of those recently. Magical Moments, they're called.

If you can stay at one of the many resorts at WDW in Florida, the magic begins there. Most hotels, heck, most resorts are pretty basic all around. They're hotels, for goodness sake! Not at Disney. One looks like a lodge in the middle of a national park. One looks like a resort in the fancier parts of West Palm Beach, FL. One has a MONORAIL running through it! One has animals in a savannah in front of your patios. They're all themed! Some of them pay homage to a certain area of the US, and some of them are themed with larger

than life animated characters! A word was invented - don't know if Disney Imagineers invented it, but the resorts, and the theme parks all use this philosophy - Placemaking. The Imagineers use simple, and often not so simple, tricks to have the guest immersed in where they are, from Main Street USA, to the world of the Nav'i in the new Avatar part of the Animal Kingdom. It's amazing, and adds to the magic.

Disney's attention to detail also fascinates me, as I'm sure it does many fans. The folks who have had theatre training see all the tricks Walt Disney World uses to make their placemaking more believable; among them, as one example, is the forced perspective on upper floors of buildings to make them look bigger. There are so many little things that the Imagineers have put into the staging of the buildings that most guests won't notice, but many Disney fans obsessed with the parks find out about them, and again it adds to the magic. Lighting and music play a part, too. The shifts from one country to another at EPCOT, for example, are almost seamless. You can walk from one country pavilion towards another, and within 20 feet, the lighting and music have changed to the new country. Disney tries to make the costumes both believable and usable for day to day use. They use more advanced fasteners than what would be used for period costumes to make them easier for the Cast members, and may make creating costumes easier for fans to make and wear.

Yes indeed. Fans and Disney.





## Disney Cosplay by Whitney Randolph

Fairy tales are some of the earliest fantasy stories, and no one does fairy tales like Disney. While Fan Conventions are getting increasingly popular and accepted, it's still very much considered to be a fringe activity. On the other hand, Disney is incredibly mainstream. Disney's role in most of our childhoods, as well as their current trend of impressive performance in movie releases, is a part of why conventions are slowly breaking into the mainstream. For so many of us, our first fantasy movies were by Disney. I know for myself and a good majority of my friends and family, it was the love of the fantastical elements in the Disney movies that inspired us to broaden our scope to seek out other forms of Fantasy entertainment. From there it was only a small step over to science fiction and then a headlong run into the entire fan convention scene.

While there is D23, the official Disney convention, Disney has a strong presence in the more broad-strokes fan conventions as well. Many of the guests have Disney movies in their portfolios. There is no end to panels that revolve around analyzing Disney characters and their movies. Then you have the Artists and

Exhibitors. Disney's strong presence in inspiring artists and encouraging purchases of souvenirs is easily the largest of any single brand. However, for myself, and those I love, the most fun comes from the cosplay.

Disney characters are extremely popular to cosplay and it's easy to see why. The breadth of the character choices in Disney is second to none. They do an amazing job of incorporating characters of all types and personalities. It doesn't matter what your hair color is or your attitude you can find a character you identify with and want to be for a day. The use of archetypes also makes Disney characters a prime base for mashup cosplays: Princess Jedi, pin-up female characters, and steampunk being some of the more popular. Steampunk Disney is one that has gotten particularly popular, which is interesting as the 1954 Walt Disney Film, *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, is considered to be one of the early originators of the steampunk aesthetic.

In general, Steampunk has been getting more and more popular on the con/cosplay front. Several years ago, my family and I had not yet discovered our love of conventions. Our affair with the steampunk aes-



thetic actually started with my husband. He had gotten into the design elements of steampunk and had started building lamps and other decorative elements for our house. This is part of what turned myself and some of my family on to the genre. Once we started going to cons and developing cosplays it seemed natural to combine our love of Disney with this interesting and unique (at least we thought) element. Last year we finally got it all together and my Steampunk version of Belle from *Beauty and the Beast* was joined by my cousin and her boyfriend as Ariel and Eric. My aunt and her boyfriend went as Merida and Jiminy Cricket. Another cousin dressed as Tinkerbell. We even got some friends to join us as Snow White and Mary Poppins. It was an amazing time and a creative process to determine how our favorite Disney characters would exist and inhabit a steampunk inspired world.

While elaborate and highly themed cosplays are the norm in the fan convention world, it is certainly not so ubiquitous for most. Most of the general population only dress up for Halloween and therefore do not put nearly as much time, energy, and money into the process. Fortunately, Disney has their own mainstream approach for this as well; though of course, this was not developed by Disney themselves, but avid fans seeking a way to combine their love for attending Disney parks and cosplaying as some of their favorite characters.

For adults, attending Disney parks in costume is not allowed, except at certain events; this is due to Disney not wanting the impression that these people work for the company. So, creative folks who wanted to show their Disney spirit with something more than a t-shirt came up with the concept of Disneybounding. Disneybounding is the art of invoking a character by wearing normal clothing that approximates that character's color palate and/or style without actually wearing a full costume of that character. To use myself, and Belle, as an example, it would be wearing a yellow cold shoulder dress with a rose purse and hair done up the way Belle's was in the classic ballroom scene. It's a fun way to get in the cosplay and Disney spirit without breaking the rules or putting too many resources into a costume. Disneybounding is slowly getting more popular and well known and, once again, I hope this can be used as a stepping stone to cosplay becoming a more accepted activity.

To say that Disney has a lot of influence over popular culture is an understatement. For many of us, it hasn't just shaped the way we consume entertainment, it has shaped who we are. To see its vast influence,

one needs go no farther than the nearest fan convention to look at the panels, wares, and cosplays. To the mainstream public, too nervous to venture into this unknown quantity, I hope that Disney, through their own D23 convention and more common activities like Disneybounding at the parks, will be a guiding light to those who would have fun taking the plunge.







# My FAVORITE THEATRE - MAIN STREET CINEMA

## By CHRIS GARCIA

I love Disneyland more than any other single entity on Earth. OK, it's tied with the Winchester Mystery House, but still. I have nothing but absolute love for the time I've been allowed to spend there over the years. I love the rides, the characters, the food, the Tiki Room, the faux reality that intersects with real reality directly in a visitor's wallet. I love the flow of the place, the way that kids lose their minds, that adults float between despair and elation, the constant movement that is only interrupted by the presence of something as amazing as a parade. Maybe it's that relentless flow, that ever-present need to move and circulate, that makes a place that is so utterly rooted in standing and stillness my favorite place to hang out. Right on Main Street, less than a 3-minute walk from the entrance, sits a room, a single room, that warms my heart.

Main Street Cinema.

About 2/3 of the way down Main Street, as you head towards the Castle and Fantasyland beyond, towards Tomorrowland, is a brick building with a marquee. It doesn't look like much to most folks who walk on by, moving with purpose towards the realms of imagination, but to those of us film theatre geeks,

we know this design. It is the Uptown Theatre from Walt's hometown of Marceline, MO. It is the Alameda in Sacramento, or probably even closer in spirit, the Alvarado in Union City. This is not a movie palace, not a centerpiece theatre like the Fox in Oakland, Radio City Music Hall in New York, or the Egyptian in LA; this is a theatre that is designed to be a part of a Main Street, not the definition of it. It is simple, and clean, and there's a ticket window as you walk inside, and there's a figure sitting in there, as if she's waiting to take your ticket. You go through the turnstile, and then through a couple of curtains, to arrive at the six-sided room, with a screen on each wall, a raised dais in the center with a rail.

On each screen is a Golden Age Disney Cartoon.

Now, supposedly they change them from time to time, and special events might be showing related footage, but whenever I've been in there, it's been the same six films. The same six wonderful films. Six films that helped define what I loved about cartoons, about movies, that showed me the way to appreciating things that weren't of the now, but were so thoroughly of the



then. The experience of Main Street Cinema is so foreign, if you think about it. Six films showing at once, and only one with the sound, and they're viewed by people who are standing. None of those ideas is standard, and yet, it also feels so right and natural.

Each of the six films has a connection with who I am, and why I love film the way I do.

### **Steamboat Willie**

It's likely the most famous of all the Mickey Mouse cartoons. Here, it is shown in an edited form. Disney, long ago, began to realize that much of their back catalog was racist, and so they shelved many films, and others, like the first Mickey Mouse short here, they cut up. Honestly, it's for the best, and in *Steamboat Will*, it really makes no difference to the film. What charm it has in full, it has in the edit.

I'm not a huge fan of *Steamboat Willie*; honestly, it's never been my fave. There are flashes of brilliance in it, and hints that this Mickey character could go places, but it's kind of a flat experience. I've seen it dozens, if not hundreds of times, and while I love Ub Iwerks, the director, it's also an early sound cartoon, which is something I never really enjoyed. It took about five years to get how to make a naturalistic soundscape, so it wasn't quite there yet.

Yes, there are some great moments: Mickey pulls a cow's tail and gets doused with milk, the actual travel of the steamboat, the way the hook transforms to pick up Minnie. It's cute, at best, and when it breaks into being a music video, it's kinda joyous. Of course, I wasn't around then. I'm a part of the generation after the first generation who was brought up on constantly available cartoons on Saturday mornings and after school. Still, it feels like history being made.

### **Plane Crazy**

This is one of the more impressive early Disney cartoons, and it also helps to demonstrate Walt's obsession with transportation. Here, Mickey finds himself wanting to be Lucky Lindy, going as far as adopting his hairstyle and fly in his homemade, dog-powered plane. This was the first Mickey cartoon made, but it was originally silent, which I think is why these gags work so much better for me. Re-done with sound added, it's still very good, because it's built on a strong foundation of gags and that shows. Since it's shown in Main Street Cinema without sound, it works perfectly, and really showcases the Iwerks Disney style.



## The Moose Hunt

This is Mickey with Pluto from 1931, and somehow, it feels much older than even Steamboat Willie. From character design to sound, it feels like it could have been the first Mickey cartoon. It does have a wonderful moment of Mickey breaking the fourth wall, calling “Is there a doctor in the house???” when he thinks Pluto is dead.

The evolution of Disney’s cartoons is not nearly a straight line. It is full of culverts, cul-de-sacs, and culled cattle never allowed to breed. Watching this is one of the things that made me dig into Disney, trying to figure out why they went so far backwards in this one to where I clearly believed that it was the original Mickey Mouse cartoon somehow held back three years in favour of Steamboat Willie.

## Traffic Troubles

Again, transportation. So much of Disneyland is transportation, and so many of his cartoons are about the difficulties of transportation. This one is another that feels like a step-back. This feels like Plane Crazy done three years later, right down to the ridiculous driving method for a vehicle, when Mickey’s car ends up running on cow power.

This is not without its charms, of course. That scene with the cow running, wearing the car like an elephant in a Bantha suit, is hilarious, and overall, it’s got very good flow. Maybe that’s the thing that’s missing from *The Moose Hunt*. This flows like a 1930s Mickey Mouse short, and feels far less compacted to fit to the form.

## The Dognapper

I’m of the opinion that this is the second best of the black-and-white Mickey shorts of the early 30s. It’s so much fun, and though the character design is

rougher, the backgrounds are more thorough, the action more fluid, the concept, Mickey and Donald as beat-cops, zanier. The entire short is basically a “catch the tough bad guy!” sort of thing, and it’s so much fun! This sort of cartoon would never fly today, of course, but it’s also a great example of the whole concept of slapstick. This is a Keystone Kops kind of short animation where the logic of the scenario is far more important than the actual reality of character, location, or physics. This is exactly the kind of presentation that parents’ groups rose up against in the 1980s, but it’s also the best example of Disney’s path to success. It plays the violence, and there is a lot of shooting, for comedy, but the good guys win, just like Will Hayes said they should.

## Mickey’s Polo Team

No other short film, with the exception of *The Life & Death of 9413: A Hollywood Extra*, has had more impact on my life. I can remember seeing it as a kid, probably first at Disneyland, and later on the Disney Channel. It’s a silly short, Mickey and his team of the Big Bad Wolf, Donald, and Goofy, take on the Hollywood team of Charlie Chaplin, Laurel & Hardy, and Harpo Marx. When I was a kid, I probably knew Chaplin by sight, but none of the others would have been recognizable until I was in Junior High at least. I watched it, and then retreated to learn about it the old-fashioned way – through weird books at the library. I discovered who these folks were, and why they did some of the things they did. I learned why Chaplin’s horse walked funny, why Harpo rode an Ostrich, why there was a guy with a tiny head but giant ears sitting in the stands cheering the Hollywooders on. It was this film, THIS FILM, that got me interested in Hollywood history more than any other.

Whenever I go back to Disneyland, and specifically back to the Main Street Cinema, this is the film I stand in front of to make sure I see it all the way through at least once. It’s a masterpiece from where I’m sitting, and when I showed it to my kids, two-year olds who hate traditional animation for the most part and certainly would have no idea who any of the characters were supposed to be, they sat with 100% attention the entire time!







THE EPCOT YOU WON'T SEE  
By STEVEN H SILVER



When you think of EPCOT, chances are you picture the massive geodesic sphere that houses the Spaceship Earth attraction and is Disney's symbol for EPCOT Center. What you may not realize is that until earlier this year, that ride was sponsored by Siemens, a large company for which I've worked for the last nine years. Siemens' sponsorship of the ride, which could be seen if you knew where to look, was part of an overarching alliance between the two companies.

Even if you were aware of all that, what you probably did not know is that in addition to the ride portion of Spaceship Earth and the exhibits, there was a secret lounge located in the sphere, available only to Siemens employees and their guests.

In order to gain admission to this respite from the hustle, bustle, and heat of EPCOT, a Siemens employee had to plan ahead and submit a request for an access code prior to their visit, although I also found that the turnaround was so quick that applying to day of the visit would often result in receipt of a code in time. The code came with instructions that my wife, Elaine, describes as if they were out of a James Bond film. Find the unmarked door. Type in the code; when the door slides open, hurry through and go up the

stairs to where Miss Money Penny, or rather a Siemens receptionist, is sitting, waiting to confirm your right to be in the lounge.

The first thing that strikes you about the lounge is that it is nicely air conditioned and offers complimentary beverages...soft drinks, hot chocolate, coffee, and tea. The entry room has several couches and small tables so you can sit around in comfort. One wall has a large video display which can be used to feature information on different Siemens divisions and their products. Visitors are also invited to insert the memory chip from their cameras to download photos of themselves from Disney and tag the pictures with their names, home locations, and Siemens division. You can also search to find other Siemens employees from your area or division.

The wall isn't the only fun little techie gadget in the lounge. There is a pathway of glass bricks with a rheostat set up so you can change the color of the pathway and a magic mirror that allows you to superimpose cowboy hats, mustaches, crowns, and other cartoony stickers over yourself.

Perhaps even better than the air conditioning, the lounge contains extremely nice bathrooms, practi-





cally guaranteed not to have a wait and to offer all the privacy you could possibly want.

There's more to the lounge, notably a large conference room with panoramic windows overlooking the park, although every time I was able to visit the lounge, meetings were taking place, so I wasn't permitted back into the conference room.

Once finished with your respite in the lounge, the receptionist presses a button that opens up another door and there is a long stairway down. This leads to the room in which riders are off-loaded from the Spaceship Earth ride. People coming down from the Siemens Lounge are allowed to get on the ride in this room, so if you are ever waiting to get onto Spaceship Earth and you see cars entering the loading room that already contain people, that's where they are coming from.

Several years ago, a few members of my work team were attending a conference at the Swan and Dolphin. We wondered if it would be possible to book ourselves a meeting in the Siemens Lounge to get the opportunity to visit EPCOT without paying the admission fee, figuring that surely they wouldn't charge the admission fee to attend a work meeting. Our plans merely turned up the fact that we wouldn't be able to book a meeting there.

A few years later, a co-worker actually did have the chance to attend a multi-day meeting in the Siemens Lounge. When she was back in the office, I had the chance to ask her about the logistics. She explained that each morning, they were taken by bus from their hotel to the EPCOT Cast Parking lot. When they alit from the bus, they were escorted into EPCOT through a staff entrance and taken directly to the Siemens Lounge. Lunch was brought in and at the end of the day they were escorted back to the buses. They were there for meetings only and if they wanted to see anything more of the park, they would have to pay the admission like everyone else.

The Siemens-Disney Alliance concluded in 2017. The lounge is still there, and most likely sponsored by some other corporation, as are the similar lounges that exist in most of the other pavilions located throughout Future World.





# HIDDEN MICKEYS

By HELEN MONTGOMERY



*Hidden Mickey: A Hidden Mickey is a representation of Mickey Mouse that has been inserted subtly into the design of a ride, attraction, or other location in a Disney theme park, Disney properties, animated film, feature-length movie, TV series, or other Disney product. The most common Hidden Mickey is a formation of three circles that may be perceived as the silhouette of the head and ears of Mickey Mouse, often referred to by Disney aficionados as a “Classic Mickey”. Miceys may be painted, made up of objects (such as rocks, or three plates on a table), or be references such as someone wearing Mickey Mouse Club ears in a painting. Hidden Miceys can take on many sizes and forms. Hidden Miceys are slipped into many Disney animated films. They are also hidden in architecture and attractions in Disney parks and resorts, and in studio buildings and many other Disney-related features. (Wikipedia)*

I wish I could remember when I first learned about Hidden Miceys. There’s no distinct memory of the phenomenon being explained. Maybe one of my parents noticed them during a trip to EPCOT shortly after it opened, and I’ve been noticing them ever since? Or I just read about them at some point, since the first published mention of them wasn’t until 1989. They are fascinating, and add an additional layer to any Disney experience. Perhaps you’re watching a newer Disney film, and suddenly there’s a Hidden Mickey. It can be a game while in the parks to keep people occupied while standing in line – who can find the most Hidden Miceys? One wonders if they might be clues in a bigger puzzle...

*Interlude: Sneaking into the park after hours was no easy task. One, two, three...press the upper left circle. Down two, press the upper right. Then up 4 and press the center. With a creak of disuse, the wall swung open. The true treasure of Sleeping Beauty’s castle was almost in their grasp!*



*The history of Hidden Miceys can be traced back to when the Imagineers were designing Epcot in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The Disney Company had decided that EPCOT Center would be a more adult park, including selling alcohol. As alcohol and Disney characters were deemed to be an improper combination, it was decided that none of the Disney characters, including Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse, would ever be seen at EPCOT Center. To some of the Imagineers working on EPCOT Center, this was taken as a challenge. (Wikipedia)*

I have only been to EPCOT and Disney World one time, when I was about 10 years old. I have been to Disneyland much more often. The silhouette was not really incorporated into the initial building of Disneyland, at least based on photos I’ve seen, but as repairs, upgrades, and other changes have been made, the silhouette appeared. The building of California Adventure also brought new opportunities for Hidden Miceys. I have seen them in landscaping, on bridges, in wrought iron fencing, in the gift shops – all over both parks, and in Downtown Disney.

*Interlude: The newest cast member, Snow White the 34th, rushed through the tunnels, hoping desperately not to be late to the Princess Tea, but realizing she had become terribly lost. “Follow the Hidden Miceys, she said.” “It will be obvious, she said.” Apparently, even backstage, the Evil Queen really stays in character...*



*Common locations for deliberate Hidden Miceys include the Walt Disney Parks and Resorts, where they are most commonly found in attractions, stores, and decor around the environment. Although approximately 1,000 Hidden Miceys have been recorded, The Walt Disney Company has never compiled a complete list of all the “known” or “deliberate” Miceys (whether created by an Imagineer or a Disney Cast Member), so there is no way to confirm or disprove any reported Mickey sightings. (Wikipedia)*



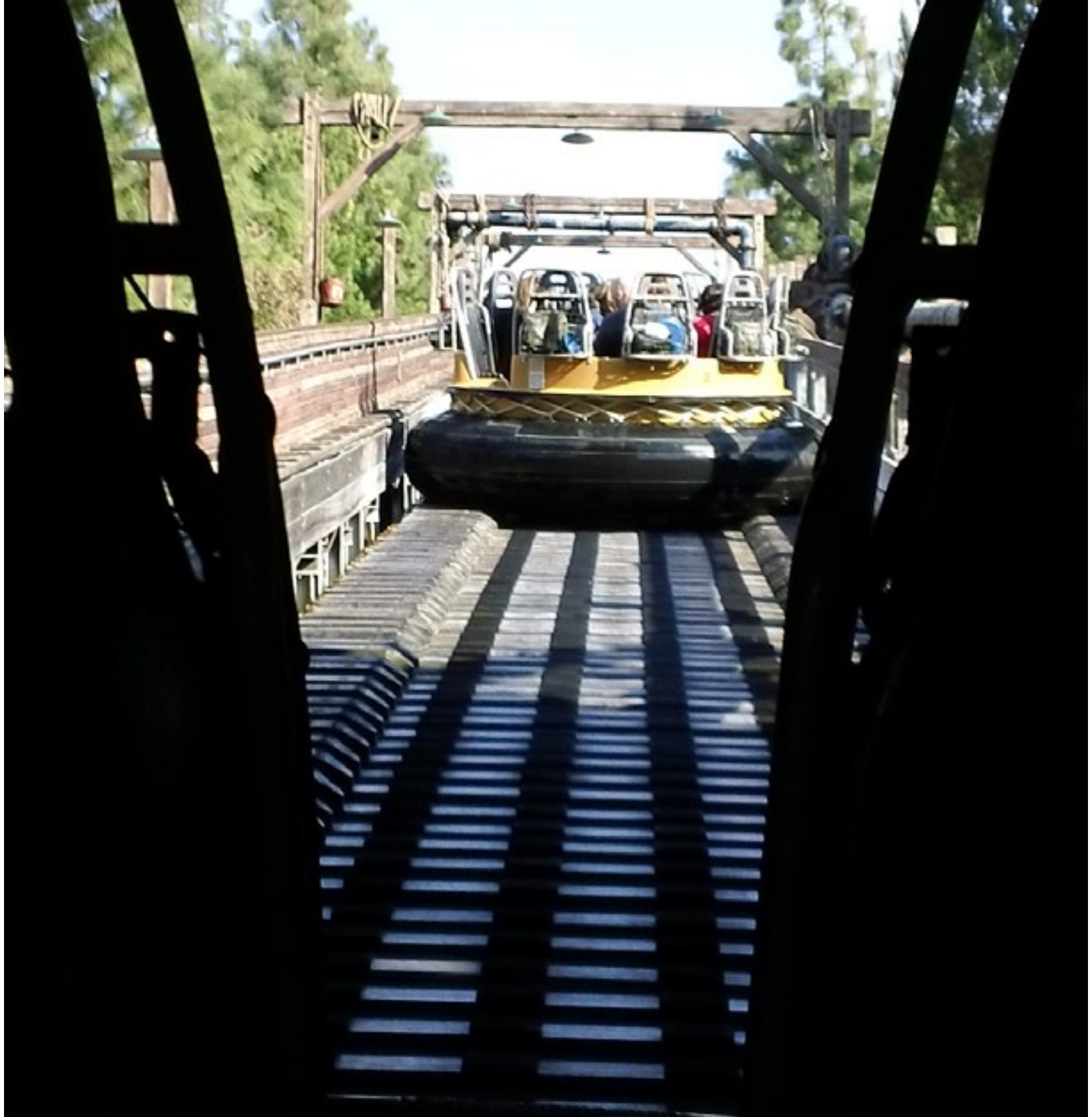
There are many images on the internet showing Hidden Mickeys, and there are websites and books devoted to them. Disney itself has never officially acknowledged the Hidden Mickey phenomenon, other than one contest during the 50-year anniversary, and selling a book about Hidden Mickeys in a gift shop. During the 50-year anniversary (the “Happiest Homecoming on Earth”), the park hid 50 of the silhouettes, with the number 50 in them. They were all removed by the end of the celebration in September 2006, leaving only the unofficial Hidden Mickeys.

*Interlude: She finished closing the circle around herself. Carefully, she added two additional circles, making sure they were properly places and in correct proportion to the main circle. A summoning of this sort is tricky, and won't work if the symbol is incorrect. All three circles completed, she took a deep breath and uttered the magic words – “Bibbidi, Bobbidi, Boo!”*

I was lucky enough to go to Disneyland during the 50-year celebration, since L.A.Con IV occurred in August 2006. Chicago had been bidding for the 2008 Worldcon, and lost by 12 votes. At the gathering of bid members and friends that evening, we cried and drank champagne. Later that evening as I wandered the other parties and people asked how I was feeling, my answer was “I just lost a Worldcon bid. I'm going to Disneyland!” And so, I did. I have the mouse ears to prove it – gold in color, featuring the silhouette with the 50 in it, and my name embroidered on the back. On that day, despite the loss, Disneyland truly lived up to its reputation of being The Happiest Place on Earth.







INSTANT FANZINE PART 1

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE DISNEY RIDE?

**Tiffany Cart Frye:** I never miss Pirates.

**Julia Long:** Never been to Disneyland, but fav at DisneyWorld was Splash Mountain because it's just so whimsical and has a great story line that really pulls you in. Plus, the drop at the end is fun, but not over-the-top.

**Andrew Trembley:** I always thought Rockin' Rollercoaster was an excellent simulation of the LA Free-ways...at least in my dreams. But that's WDW, not Disneyland.

**Lillian Csernica:** The Toy Story ride where it's one big shooting gallery.

**Adam Beaton:** I work at the Florida version, it's a hoot.

**Liz Zitzow:** I reeeeeeally loved the Peter Pan one and Small World. Also Haunted House and Thunder Mountain. And you cannot top the walkthrough submarine one, I LOVE that one and it isn't even a ride.

**Adam Beaton:** For Disneyland, I'd have to say Indiana Jones. Disney World, it's a toss up between Haunted Mansion and Tower of Terror.

**Jen Heck:** Soarin. Epcot. Just because it's great

**Mariah Waite:** I HAVEN'T BEEN TO DISNEYLAND SINCE 1987, BUT I LOVE LOVE LOVE BIG THUNDER MOUNTAIN. whoops, caps lock.

**Susan Rojo:** Small World! Got me interested in traveling and curious about cultures. Plus who doesn't love the ear worm!

**Cynthia Geno:** Haunted House!

**Ashley Cox:** Haunted Mansion! But Jungle Cruise and Pirates are close behind.

**Douglas E. Berry:** Adventure Thru Inner Space. Long gone, but still my favorite.

**Jim Sullivan:** Me too!

**Kelly Buehler:** Loved that one!

**Daniel Spector:** Yup.

**Kelly McCoy-Prael:** I remember that. That was People mover before it became touring unit.

**Christopher J Garcia:** There is an amazing

animation that recreated it on [youtube](#)

**Kelly Buehler:** I remember being on the ride with my uncle in about '72 and he reached out to a giant snowflake and broke it. I was so embarrassed.

**Kelly McCubbin:** The "Mighty Microscope" appeared in the original Star Tours film, though I don't know if it's there anymore. And I think the miniature one used to be in one of those baskets that moved around in the Star Tours queue.

**Mary C. Knapp:** The ORIGINAL Pirates of the Caribbean in Anaheim, CA, before the movies!

**Karen Schnaubelt:** ^^ THIS.

**Nancy Alegria:** Ditto.

**Elizabeth Siemanski:** Ditto

**Kelly McCoy-Prael:** Me too.

**Karen Tully:** Jungle Boat!

**David Clark:** I liked the Jungle Cruise when it was slower, and the guides had more time to do their spiel.

**Nancy Alegria:** I think in general, we could say the best rides at Disneyland are the ones you can only get to via time travel.

**David Clark:** I never said that... but while I do remember Adventure Thru Inner Space fondly, I think it would need a MAJOR upgrade today. (And I recently made the Day's Top Ten scoreboard on Buzz Lightyear's Astro Blasters.)





**Mike Gendimenico:** The Anaheim Marriott pool ride - sit by the pool and drink tasty cocktails while the mobs down the street drag their kids all over creation...

**Matthew B. Tepper:** I'm old. "Flying Saucers was an amusement ride at Disneyland in Anaheim, California from 1961 to 1966. Guests rode on personal flying saucers on a cushion of air, similar to an air hockey game, which played in a way similar to bumper cars with guests ramming each other with their saucers." More info at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flying\\_Saucers\\_\(attraction\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flying_Saucers_(attraction))

**Mark Bessey:** They're back, in Cars Land. Still don't really work worth a damn.

**Mark Bessey:** No, wait. Closed again, apparently. Someday, the saucers will return, I'm sure.

**Matthew B. Tepper:** The day after I die.

**Durelle Kurlinski:** Nope they turned it into a fun Dancing car ride. Love that ride, the music is from my childhood.

**Nora Kelly:** Peter Pan. Love "flying" over London.

**Kory D. Doyle:** The haunted mansion.

**Kathryn Duval:** I When I was a kid we would spin the teacups until we were crazy dizzy. It was so much fun.

**Mary C. Knapp:** Not if you'd just guzzled a glass of white grape juice on a hot day, JUST before you got on it!

**Guy Lillian:** Jungle Boat ride. First time I went on it there was no foliage, no 'gators or hippos, nothing but

bare sand and a river. The guy kept telling us what Mr. Disney was going to put there when he was finished. 1956.

**Kathryn Duval:** Once as I was maybe 6 years old I rode on the old Monsanto ride where the big eye looks down at you from the microscope. I asked my dad if we were really shrinking and he said yes. He said we'd never be big again. I started to cry. He didn't understand why I didn't know he was joking.

**William Howard:** Pirates of the Caribbean, always and forever.

**Mark Bessey:** The Haunted Mansion. I love the variety of 19th, 20th, and 21st century magic tricks that makes the whole thing work. It's got Pepper's Ghost, it's got audio-animatronics, it's got LCD projectors...

**Kathryn Duval:** My dad was a big fan of Disneyland so he made sure we went to the haunted mansion right after it opened. He always made us ride the train as the first ride - we'd go all the way around and then on to New Orleans Square so we could get to the haunted mansion before the "tourists" got that far. We probably went to Disneyland 4 times or more a year. We went on everyone's birthdays.

**Rik Ault:** Matterhorn just fun

**Derek McCaw:** The Haunted Mansion will always be my favorite. It is super cool. I had a model of the organist.



**Vernon Putman:** Used to be Pirates of the Caribbean, before they, if you will pardon the pun, jacked it up. Now it is Haunted Mansion.

**Carol Kennedy:** It's a Small World. Yes, really!

**Durelle Kurlinski:** Matterhorn has always been my favorite, but not thrilled with the new bobsleds.

**David Stein** Always the Haunted Mansion. Peter Pan, Pirates, Big Thunder. I have a soft spot for any of the '64 World's Fair attractions, so do enjoy

Mister Lincoln, It's a Small World. And really love Indiana Jones

**Julie Shepard:** Haunted Mansion (regular and holiday versions)

**John Barrows:** I'd tell you but dead men tell no tales.

**Paula Helm Murray:** Haunted Mansion - got to ride it brand new, is scary enough and still is fun.

**Linda Bushyager:** Haunted Mansion. I will never forget seeing that little hologram of the woman at the end. Also love Pirates of Caribbean, fun song, nice ride in the dark on a hot day. I have a warm spot for Peter Pan ride, Jungle ride, and Tom Sawyers Island. I just love all the Disney properties, love the flowers and trees and topiary, just walking around on a nice day is so nice. I want to go back! (Saw Epcot and Disney studio and Universal on last trip. I want to go to Africa and Magic Kingdom again on next trip).

**Cathy Mullican:** Buzz Lightyear

**Earl Cooley III:** I thought that Space Mountain was going to be a science exhibit...

**Sharan Volin:** Space Mountain! I love it! For me, it's the ultimate anti-depressant. I feel great from the moment it makes the first turn into the ride. I'm a big fan of roller coasters (I love the acceleration) and although I always liked flumes even more I think the fact that it's in the dark with a space theme makes me love it more.

**Beth Vallacqua:** I have two: Peter Pan and Heimlich's Chew Chew train. Ohh..and the new Guardians of the Galaxy: Mission Breakout

**Christopher J Garcia:** I love that train!!!

**Haragano OgMari:** Tea cups

**Leslie Johnston:** Haunted Mansion!

**Sharee Carton:** They wouldn't let me into Disneyland because I had a mohawk..... LACon 1984? 85?

**Jennifer Brown:** Haunted Mansion both normal and when it's Nightmare before Christmas. I really need the purple wallpaper in my house.

**George Wells:** It's not there any more but was de-

scribed in a song by Homer and Jethro: I know a dark and gloomy spot, it's ninety miles from Possum Trot, it's upstairs over a vacant lot, it's called Hernando's Hideaway. They used to have six candles tall, a burning brightly in the hall, till Liberace stole them all....away....



**Steve Mix:** Pirates of the Caribbean. It's just fun.

**Kelly McCubbin:** Nuff said?

**Ryan T. Jones:** Nemo. They let me drive it. 777 times.

**Dennis Harvey:** Tower of Terror

**Mitzi Jones:** Haunted Mansion



**Craig Smith:** Haven't been there in decades, but I'd say Pirates of the Caribbean followed closely by the Haunted Mansion. I can't comment on newer attractions. I first went to Disney land in December of 1961 yikes!

**Bradley Cozzens:** Mr. Toads Wild Ride will always be my favorite. Met Sean Astin in line 8 years ago. Cheesy ride but still fun in my book.

**Joshua Keene:** The space one, with the mountain, but the Winnie the pooh one was very stimulating.

**Heather Shaw:** Space Mountain before they made it all Star Wars... I used to get such a visceral thrill when they did the countdown and we blasted off! Then the whole ride was dark and starry and my sense of wonder was on full blast. The new one lacks that feeling, and the bits of film shown in the dark aren't convincing and make it feel too bright and distant. Bleah.

**Karl Lembke:** Monsanto ride into a drop of water. If Disney ever does a remake of Fantastic Voyage, maybe they'll bring it back...

**Kirsten M. Berry:** Monsanto Microscope SEVER.

**Josh McElravy:** Tough question... so many good ones. I really enjoyed Star Tours. The back row is the best.

**Erica Mulkey:** Space mountain, pirates, and haunted mansion we're always my favorite

**Susie Rodriguez:** Small World.

"Still?"

"Always."

**Chuck Serface:** Mr. Toad's Wild Ride. How can you not like a ride that ends with a trip to Hell?

**Pat Turner:** (Bracing for the onslaught of criticism ...) I adore Small World. I sing along the entire ride.

**Christopher J Garcia:** Me too! One of my faves!

**Sue Ann Barber:** It's my favourite ride too! I love the variations of it around the world.

**Mark Bessey:** It's beautiful. Anybody who doesn't like it has no soul.

**Jackson Garland:** I love it too. In fact the first time I ever rode it was with you Christopher J Garcia!

**Debbie Bretschneider:** Anybody who had to had to do band practice for a parade to that song had the soul sucked out of them.

**Edward Hooper:** I miss Adventure Through Inner-space.

**Christopher J Garcia:** I miss PeopleMover

**James Langdell:** Disneyland's Skyway (long missed).

**Lou Anders:** 20,000 Leagues

**Don Glover:** I can't say I have a favorite, but I always make a point of doing Small World and Pirates.



**Patrick White:** Mansion, classic style (non-NBC)

**Paul DeYonghe:** Space Mountain.

**Ken Meshke:** Pirates most entertaining and the beginning of the ride felt absolutely real

**Brian King:** Yep, I concur.

**Melissa Pentecost:** Haunted Mansion

**Kevin Andrew:** Murphy Mr. Toad's Wild Ride. I read the Wind in the Willows when I was young, and I approve of the ride because it's something that would never be made for kids in this day and age but is allowed to stay around grandfathered. Because there's nothing like a joyriding toad driving a stolen motorcar to Hell.

**Kelly McCoy-Prael:** They used the crazy weasels from that in "Who Framed Rodger Rabbit?".

**Kevin Andrew Murphy:** Yes.

**Jane Dennis:** Pirates\*. Because it was 112° F in Anaheim that day, and it was inside. August 1984. We'd just wrapped it up at LACon 2. 2nd fave, (actually My fave) same day: Space Mountain, because it was 112° - and there was no line for it either. And that was actually fun. Tilt-a-whirl, basically. My poor baby husband - we'd only actually gotten married a few weeks earlier - was miserable... well, I like sideways stuff, giant drops not so much. I don't judge. So the next day we fled to Phoenix because it was cooler. Oh fuck, maybe it was September by then. My brain was melting by then anyway. \*Well, we went on Pirates 3 times

**Christina M. O'Halloran:** Haunted Mansion - because I rode it the first time on Halloween when it first opened and was truly terrified

**Karen Tully:** Oh, and no ride? Tiki Room.

**Bradley Cozzens:** Tiki room isn't a ride it's a private slice of heaven for all worn out parents needing a quiet and cool break.

A dole whip and 15 minutes of glorious air-conditioned seating listening to the birdies sing.

**Rhawnie Pino-Marshall:** Pirates!!!! It just makes me feel like a kid on an adventure again :)

**Joanne Sterpin:** Peter Pan!

**Melissa Takahashi:** Ooooooh, man, so hard to choose! Probably Pirates, I always wanted to hang out in the treasure room. Tyler made me believe those cannons were real and I had to duck so I wouldn't get hit.

**Bryan Barrett:** Pirates & Haunted House

**June E Vigil-Storm:** Indy Jones

**Leslie Evers:** America Sings, now defunct. And Haunted Mansion, still going strong

**Oscar Arguello:** Indiana Jones.

**James Ersted:** Space Mountain because I like riding rollercoasters in the dark.

**Max Meyer:** Space Mountain! I wish it was one of those neat 3-D inside Star Wars ones but those make me sick to my stomach.

**Kelly McCoy-Prael:** Can't really pinpoint a favorite because they're so many. Peter Pan because of the illusion and perspective drawings and miniatures. Alice in Wonderland and Mr. Toad's Wild Ride are similar to each other, except one is slower. Matterhorn with the glowing eyes of Abominable Snowman and Thunder Mountain because they were the first I ridden with my high school choir group. Space Mountain is always a favorite over and over again. Indy is fun. Space Tours, past and present. Haunted Mansion always great especially if you get stuck. And on the Pirates, on our honeymoon, we sat in the back of the boat, rocking it back and forth, singing at the top our lungs with the pirates and freak-ing out the two mondains with us.

**Daniel M. Kimmel:** Twilight Zone Tower of Terror. Hands down.

**Mike Walton:** Always Pirates. Plus you have to go eat at the Blue Bayou... get a Monte Cristo of course. Get the full experience. (Minus the smell of chlorinated water)

**Brian King:** Not a ride but Great Moments with Abraham Lincoln

**Kelly McCoy-Prael:** The first time I saw that, I was blown away.

**Barbara Chepaitis:** It's a Small World. (but I wouldn't want to have to paint it.)



**Kent Brewster:** Adventure Through Inner Space, because you could actually see the people in front of you in line being miniaturized. SO GREAT!

**John Pierce:** The original Haunted House was damn cool.

**John Pierce:** The original Haunted House was damn cool!

**Ian Moore:** Whichever vehicle takes me to a non-Disney Park with real roller coasters.

**Hillary Pearlman-Bliss:** The haunted mansion, Peter Pan, Pirates. The Land, Star Tours, 20,000 Leagues r.i.p., and Tower of Terror.

**Krys Blackwood:** Haunted mansion!

**Helen Montgomery:** Space Mountain! Extensive testing has shown that the best seats are the front row of the second car from the front.







# THE BEST DISNEY WORLDCON THAT NEVER HAPPENED

## BY DEB GEISLER

I still contend, 19 years after we lost our bid, that it was the greatest Worldcon that...wasn't.

The year was 1997, and Worldcon had just wrapped up in San Antonio, Texas, when the Boston in 2001 bid got the bad news: we had lost any chance to bid for the 2001 Worldcon to come to Boston. We couldn't afford what the hotels in the city wanted, and that was that. Boston was too popular as a destination, and the hotels were not willing to budge on some incredibly high rates.

This all happened in the era of zoned Worldcon bidding: every three years, a fan group could try to bid its home, as the zones were eastern, central, and western North America (with foreign bids being eligible any time). A "carpetbagged" bid was pretty much unheard of. (It wouldn't be until 2011, when the first bid from "out of town" would run a damned fine Worldcon in Reno, Nevada.)

Still, MCFI (the group which ran Boston Worldcons, aka Noreascons) didn't want to give up on hosting the 2001 Worldcon. We had some amazing ideas, and we had been bidding for a very long time (5 years), and so we looked around at the possibilities in our native "eastern zone," which would host the 59th World Science Fiction Convention. It struck us that every one of us knew the city of Orlando. We'd all worked on MagiCon in 1992, which had been at the OCCC in Orlando, Florida, and one of our members (Joe Siclari) had been its Chairman.

But we did not want to upset the local group by coming in and muscling them out. We floated the idea with the local Florida fans: "Would you like another Worldcon?" The answer: "Well, we don't want to run another one." "How about if we ran it?" "Sure! Come on down!"

So, we knew the local fans welcomed us (and at Florida conventions, they pre-supported us in droves). Next, a site. Since MagiCon five years before, two new site combinations had opened up. There were more than 1.5 million square feet of convention spaces in Orlando...but the best one was at Disney World.

The Walt Disney World Swan and Dolphin hotels were in the huge Disney World complex. They were (well, are) situated across a man-made lagoon from each other. There were bridges crossing the water. Walkways with flowers and plants and hot tubs. In the evening, tiki torches and gentle lighting help people find their way. At dusk, guests could stand on the bridges and watch the Disney World fireworks each night over the lake. Underneath the two hotels, there was a large conference center, plus there were ballrooms and function space in both hotels. It was enough space. It was also very beautiful.

We asked our friends and pre-supporters: Given that we can't be a Boston Worldcon, should Boston con-runners try to run a Worldcon in Orlando? We had several options, including the MagiCon site from 1992. We sent a letter to all of our friends and pre-support-



ers, putting the question to them: which site should we choose?

The response from our supporters said, overwhelmingly: give the Mouse a shot.

It has been 19 years since the amazing team of Joe Siclari and Ben Yalow negotiated the contingent contract we settled on with the Swan and Dolphin. People have heard whispers of that contract for years, but the actual piece of work belongs to history. Still, let me tell you a little about what Joe and Ben managed to negotiate (and I signed, as the Chairman of MCFI, several weeks later). The hotel rates were low enough to make most Worldcon attendees cry. Free parking. Free shuttle to all of the theme parks, shopping, dining. Free function space...everything in the two hotels, including the conference center. A corkage waiver throughout the properties. Better: because they really wanted us, the properties were giving us a corkage waiver and throwing in \$5,000 of free food and beverage as an incentive.

Never have I seen a pair negotiate like Joe and Ben did that weekend we three were in Orlando. Fast talkers: be careful of them!

The final contingent contract, signed by all of us, sat in my safety deposit box, with copies elsewhere, waiting until we won the bid, when it would automatically become a contract. In the meantime, I chortled gleefully about the possibilities: champagne and strawberries in an outdoor Hugo reception. Not renting any space meant we could keep the membership cost to \$100 max. Tours of Epcot's back stage...the magical mystery pneumatics of the Magic Kingdom. Everywhere we looked, we thought, "That will be so \*cool\*." Ah, well. When the votes were all counted, our friends in Philadelphia (who, after all, weren't trying to carpet-bag to a different city, and who hadn't had a Worldcon in a very long time) won the right to host the 2001 Worldcon, the Millennium Philcon.

Really, everything worked out, I suppose, for the best. By 2004, when we did run Noreascon Four, the 62nd Worldcon, Boston hotels were manageably priced, and we were in our own city – an amazing place that we love best. We gave away all of the flamingos we'd used to bid with (literally \*thousands\* of them) before we headed for home. And hot flamingo pink is \*so\* not my best color.

But I still sigh, a little, when I think of what might have been. It was such a beautiful agreement, and the hotels were so beautiful.

And I absolutely guarantee we would NOT have had Hugo trophies with mouse ears!





# KEYS FROM THE KINGDOM: WHAT CONS CAN LEARN FROM DISNEY PARKS BY TRACY LUNQUIST

In Disney Parks lore, there are four foundational ideas that comprise what they call the “Keys to the Kingdom.” These are instilled in Disney Cast Members from day one of their Disney careers, and they drive everything that happens in a Disney park. The Keys are, in order: Safety, Courtesy, Show, and Efficiency. Safety first, because a Disney park is a place with a lot of people and a lot of ways for people to get hurt. Courtesy next, because Disney’s customer service is a worldwide standard by which all others are judged. Then Show, because that’s what people come to Disney parks to see. And lastly, Efficiency, because as long as the first three are being done as well as they can, a profit-making company always seeks to do more with less if possible.

Conrunners can learn a lot from Disney, and simply adopting Disney’s Keys would not be the worst way they could start. That being said, I would like to invite the gentle reader to consider five additional things Disney does that all cons can, and should, do — or do

better.

**Have a vision.** Walt Disney had a simple vision for his company: “Make People Happy.” In one of the great tragedies of modern times, more recent Disney leaders apparently hired overpriced consultants to write them a new mission statement, which is mealy-mouthed and investor-focused and meaningless. Your convention can learn from Walt and also from his successors’ mistake, and create an inspiring vision. Get a detailed picture in your head of what you want your con to be, do, look like, and evoke. Capture that picture in a few words, and get your con on board with it. Measure every single thing you do — every action, every invitation, every dollar you spend — on whether or not it gets you closer to that vision. Be amazed by how much easier it is to make decisions about your con and how you use your time, money and energy.



**Make an emotional connection with your audience.** There are people who love Disney. There are people who hate Disney. There are not a lot of people who shrug and say, “so what?” about Disney. For good or ill, Disney inspires strong emotional reactions. For millions of people around the world, the emotions are powerfully positive. For this reason, Disney rakes in billions of dollars in revenue every year, and millions of people visit their parks every year. A not-small percentage of those people scrape and save for many years to have that once-in-a-lifetime trip to a Disney park, and a huge number of others make a Disney pilgrimage at least once a year. Does your con inspire that kind of love and loyalty? How many of your members will give something else up to go to your con, or “wouldn’t miss it for the world”? What would it take to make that kind of emotional connection with your members? What would that look like? (Hint: see “vision”, above.)

**Give world-class customer service.** Disney parks might have every great ride, every brightly colored facade, every giant smiling furry, every bell and every whistle that Disney fans have come to adore, but if the employees were surly or incompetent, guests would not go back. The true “magic” of a Disney experience lies squarely with Cast Members and the service they provide. Even beyond the quality of the people they hire and the training they offer, they have mastered the systemic art of guest experience. From the “FastPass+” line bypass system to the latest enhancement in the “My Disney Experience” mobile app that lets you order and buy your lunch from your phone and pick it up at your convenience, Disney is constantly raising the bar on service. Your con doesn’t need expensive technology to enhance the member experience — all you need is for your staff and volunteers to be cheerful, feel valued, and know how to help your members get what they need to have a great weekend with you. Make sure your people know the answers to the frequently-asked questions, and are empowered to solve problems as they occur with as little intervention as possible from “management.” Teach them to listen and to make sure they understand the question or problem before they respond. Set up your systems to maximize fun and minimize lines and bureaucracy. Avoid the “SECURITY” model of Ops as much as possible in favor of the “troubleshooter” model. Your staff are the hosts of the party. They are there to help people have fun, not to maintain police-state order. The security guards at Disney are some of the friendliest Cast Members on

property. Remember that your registration staff and your ops team are the face of your convention. Create an expectation among your people that the face is a friendly one.

**Practice “Yes, if”.** In the Disney Company, the answer to “can we?” is not “No, because...” It is “yes, if...” This is the difference between thinking in terms of limitations and thinking in terms of possibilities. “Can we have Mark Hamill as our GoH?” Yes, if he is available and willing and we can raise enough money to pay him, and if we can figure out how to run a con ten times the size it was last year.” NOT, “no, because we can’t afford it.” “Yes, if” means honestly considering options you used to dismiss out of hand. And it can lead to your con doing thing you never believed it could do. Anything is possible. “Yes, if” gives you permission to explore whether a given thing is practical.

**Never throw anything away.** This is a little bit of a dangerous thing to say to SF fans, among whom hoarding is a very real plague. Disney never throws anything away. You can see evidence of old Disney ideas in later Disney work. “Easter eggs” in movies and park attractions reference prior movies and prior attractions. Even props, sets, and signs from finished movies and defunct attractions get kept when possible. But whereas Disney has dozens of gigantic warehouses where they can keep everything, cons generally don’t quite have that luxury. And so in the case of conrunning, what you should never throw away is an idea. Keep your notes from programming brainstorm sessions and initial concom meetings. Keep the program books from prior years’ cons. Curate an archive of the valuable knowledge you have acquired over the years. A great idea is a great idea even if you can’t use it for this year’s con. Don’t let the great ideas get away.

There you have it: five “key” takeaways from Disney that you can use in conrunning. The best part is, none of these things cost money or require exceptional technology or expertise to accomplish. And that may be the most important key of all — fundamentally, Disney magic is about treating people and ideas as the amazing treasure they are. With a clear vision, some great ideas, and some friendly people, your con can be the next best thing to a weekend in a Disney Park.



INSTANT FANZINE PART 2  
WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE DISNEY  
SONG, AND WHY?



**Helen Montgomery:** “Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious” from *Mary Poppins*. It’s Julie Andrews and Dick Van Dyke, who are brilliant. Fun to say, fun to sing, and I love the combination live action and animation sequence in the film.

**Christopher J Garcia:** Scales and Arpeggios from *Aristocats!*

**CHRIS ROSE:** “Part of Your World” from *The Little Mermaid*. I listened to that song over and over again as a heavily bullied teenager for weeks delivering papers in a grey, cold December in Grande Prairie. It hit all the buttons for me at the time. There are songs that have stuck in my head more, or been better written or performed, but when I think “Disney music” that’s the first song that ever pops into my head.

**Charlie Bernstein:** I have to second this one as the first song that always comes to mind when I think Disney. Even though the It’s a Small World I think is probably better known, this would always come to mind for me first.

**Pablo Miguel Alberto Vazquez:** Hakuna Matata! It’s just too much fun and really exemplifies the silliness that Disney songs can pull off. Also, who doesn’t want to live according to the precepts of Hakuna Matata?

**Sandra Levy:** “Davy, Davy Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier” Because I was 5. If not that “We are Siamese, if you please...” from *Lady and the Tramp* for the pure snarkiness of it.

**Sydney Krause:** “I’ll make a man out of you” – *Mulan*. The single best karaoke song to get a whole audience singing with you.

**Adam Beaton:** To this day, every time someone in a meeting or anywhere says, “Let’s get down to business,” I immediately chime in with, “TO DEFEAT...THE HUNS!!!!!!” I’ve lost and gained many a friendship with that verse.

**Don Glover:** The Gnome Mobile. It is from the first Disney movie I can recall seeing in the theater and it just makes me feel good singing it.

**Timothy Cummings:** “Poor Unfortunate Souls” from *Little Mermaid*. I love how deviously the villain displays her villainy as just a simple contractual infringement!

**Jesi Lipp:** If I can pick from a Disney musical - Endless Night from *The Lion King*. If I have to go with a movie...I’ll go with A Part of Your World. I think Jodi Benson performs it amazingly - “what d’you call ‘em? Oh, feet!” The piano motif throughout it is possibly my favorite sequence ever. It’s just a really freaking good song. Or Poor Unfortunate Souls. Or Out There.

**Dennis Dombrowski:** A Whole New World from *Aladdin*. It reminds me of when my nieces were babies. Someday when you get old you’ll understand.

**Jon Walbrun:** I wouldn’t say I had a favorite, per se, but if I were to narrow it down, the two that are the most recallable and just pop into my head unbidden would be “Whistle Stop” from *Robin Hood* and “Little Black Raincloud” from *The Adventures of Winnie The Pooh*.

**Jackie Kamlot:** It’s a Small World. The one ride at Disney World my whole family could ride together.

**Amy VanKauwenbergh:** “Room for Everyone” from *Pete’s Dragon*. Such a great message about living and letting live.

**Dan Berger:** Is it too soon to say, “The Star Wars theme?”

**Helen Montgomery** Yes. :)

**David Abzug:** The Bare Necessities, because it’s the song from them I’ve loved the longest. And it’s a lesson I REALLY need to learn.

**David Friedman:** The Tom Waits version of the dwarf marching song from *Snow White*

**Katharine Bond:** Candle on the Water from *Pete’s Dragon*. Because I used to sing it to my brother when he was a baby.

**Peter Heltzer:** The theme(?) from *Robin Hood* (Robin Hood and Little John running through the forest). *Robin Hood* was the only Disney movie I saw growing up for some unknown reason.

**Steven Silver:** “Bare Necessities,” from *The Jungle Book*. I really like and agree with the sentiment (evidence to the contrary) and Phil Harris’ voice just nails that song.

**Dave McCarty:** I Wanna Be Like You from *The Jungle Book*. The Louis Prima-ness of the film for the Louis Prima song turns an otherwise \*really catchy\* tune into a meta-masterpiece.

**Deb Geisler:** “Small World”...it was like fingernails on a chalkboard for my Dad. We could make him scream with less than one stanza.

**Vincent Docherty:** “The Wonderful Thing About Tiggers” from *Winnie the Pooh and the Blustery Day*. I saw it when very young and it always makes me smile. :- ) (So many good songs...)

**Jennifer Cross:** “Shadowland” from the Broadway version of *The Lion King*. It was added as an explanation for why Nala left and how she stumbled upon Timon, Pumbaa and Simba [again]. The song speaks of despair at the current state of her homeland and her determination to save it, even if it means leaving the only home she’s ever known.

**Geri Sullivan:** “My Monkey and Me” from the 1960 *Swiss Family Robinson* movie. Why? Six-year-old me completely adored it, and no doubt drove the rest of my family completely mad. Family’n’neighbor rules were that my next door neighbor Linda Jefferies and I had to wait until 8am to go over to each other’s house to play. I’ve long-since burned out all of the morning person I once was, but in those days I would rise between 6 and 6:30, then play the brief 1:34 song over, over, over, and over again until it was 8am when Linda and I could play. I have no idea why or how my family tolerated it, why they didn’t kill me or at least break the 45rpm single. We all survived the experience to adulthood, and I’m delighted to have found a copy of the 45 on eBay a few years back. Thanks to Michael Benveniste, I now have a digital version. : )

**Cary Williams:** One Jump Ahead from *Aladdin*, because the song is happy and fun like a Disney song should be but has dark undertones about what’s going on. Though We Know the Way from *Moana* is a close second, because I love the feel of the song.

**David Stein:** When You Wish Upon A Star... Cause it plays right at twilight in front of the Castle at MK WDW and it started the moment I kissed Diana on our Honeymoon and I well up every time I hear it

**Adam Beaton:** “Go the Distance” from *Hercules*. One of the best motivational songs ever made. One of the stars in my motivational playlist when I need a pick-me-up

**Lisa Michelle Garrison:** “How Far I’ll Go” from *Moana* because it speaks to my soul.

**Surya Sabhapathy:** “Everybody Wants to Be a Cat” from *The Aristocats* - it’s just a great song, and inspired an excellent cover by Psapp: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aJcyrKIJ-Lg>

**John Donat:** From *The Lion King* “He lives in you”

**Michael Lee:** Heigh Ho from *Snow White*, because it’s catchy and simple in the way of classic Disney, and it’s a good motivation song when you need to work in the days up to a trip to a Disney Park.

**Michael Benveniste:** Live action: Let’s Go Fly A Kite. Animated: When You Wish Upon a Star

**Alice Bentley:** Colors of the Wind. I didn’t enjoy the movie itself much, but I loved that song.

**Cheryl Renee Farney:** A Dream is a Wish Your Heart Makes from *Cinderella* because it’s true!

**Pam Burr:** Zip-a-Dee-Doo-Dah (my oh my what a wonderful day!) from *Song of the South*, which yes, I know is not a PC movie. However, I still love the song. It is just so uplifting and happy. Plus I remember as a little girl dancing and singing along to it whenever it played on my Disney greatest hits album. I also love the original *Fantasia*.

**Michael Finnegan:** “You Ain’t Never had A Friend Like Me” From *Aladdin*. Cuz Robin.

**Kevin Nickerson:** Grim Grinning Ghosts. Fun spooky.

**Tom Hanlon:** Belle Notte!

**Janice Gelb:** Snarky Siamese cat song from *The Lady and the Tramp*

**Katy M. Loebrich:** Circle of Life, because it’s amazing, Sleeping Beauty Waltz, because nostalgia, & Under the Sea, because it rocks (or calypso’s).



**Jeremy Jack:** I'll Make A Man Out of You, *Mulan*... it's a fun song and actually in my range so I can sing it.

**Nantale:** I am Moana, *Moana* - love how uplifting the track is.

**Jared Mitchell Dashoff:** Friend Like Me from *Aladdin* because Robin Williams.

**Michelle Rhoades:** "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf" because it is such a metaphor for the time in which it was written. It's social commentary disguised as a catchy tune just like most Mother Goose rhymes.

Michael Unger: Be Our Guest, from *Beauty and the Beast* - i love Jerry Orbach and Angela Lansbury, and this is just a big gawdy Broadway number, done with animation in a brilliant fashion; the first time Disney REALLY leveraged computer animation to show what it could really do when you put your foot on the gas!

Emma England: The Beautiful Briny Sea from *Bedknobs and Broomsticks* because it reminds me of my childhood.

**Sabine Furlong:** Part of Your World from *Little Mermaid*. Because I was so hoping that I could be part of someone's world at the time. And then I was! Happy endings do happen. (Well... for a couple of years at least!)

**Mike Gucciard:** Let It Go from **Frozen**. Such a lovely angry song.

**Kat Fin:** "Part of Your World"--I owned the VHS, and I rewound and played that song in snippets so I could write down the lyrics and memorize it (in middle school). For someone who wasn't really quite part of the world around her, and never fit in as a child/youth... it spoke to a hopeful and yet still sad place in me that needed a voice.

**Kathy Lehman:** 'A Spoonful of Sugar Helps the Medicine Go Down'. I had the *Mary Poppins* soundtrack album as a kid, and I loved it even before I had seen the movie. Once I saw the scene, I just thought it was so much fun.

**Jo Carter:** Ooo da Lally, from *Robin Hood*. A guilty childhood pleasure.

**Christopher J Garcia:** You're Welcome from *Moana*, because it's basically The Rock being The Rock in animated form. It doesn't hurt that my Little Guys will run around the house singing "You're Welcome" but with the only words to their version of the song being "You're Welcome" in a varying cadence.





# DISNEY DOES SCI-FI... LIVE! 1954 to 1999

## BY CHRIS GARCIA

I often think Disney's live-action offerings get a bit over-looked. There are a lot of them, a couple of hundred I believe, but they really represent the breadth of film for families. I've loved them ever since they came out in video stores with those gigantic clam-shell cases that were so iconic for Video Store Geeks like myself.

Disney does Sci-Fi, always has, at least since the 1950s.

The list of Disney Science Fiction is a fascinating collection of films, subgenres, influences, and filmmakers. There are some hits, some misses, some near-hits, and some iconic films that helped define the genre! I'm sticking to Sci-Fi (who knows, there may be a Disney Fantasy article someday!), and only going up through 2000, though I'll talk about that later.

Let's take a closer look at my curated collection for you.

### **20,000 Leagues Under the Sea**

The first of the live-action Disney Sci-Fi offerings, and arguably the most important. It defined Steampunk aesthetic for the next sixty years, as well as produced a damn fine movie. I write more about its importance elsewhere in this issue, but no other film speaks as directly to the importance of Disney's sci-fi significance as *20,000 Leagues*.

### **The Absent-Minded Professor**

Fred MacMurray. Man, he was an incredible actor. Yes, I know he was more-or-less a wholly-owned Disney property by the late 1950s, but if you look at his work, like *Double Indemnity*, you'll see exactly how awesome he was. He had previously starred in *The Shaggy Dog*, a lovely little Disney fantasy film (look for an episode of Fantasy Film 101 on it coming soon!)

*The Absent-Minded Professor* is about a chemistry prof who manages to invent substance that gains energy when it's struck. It's called Flubber. This film started the long line of Flubber films that have populated theatres, and the Disney Channel, pretty much ever since. The film was actually pitched to Walt by a real Princeton professor who was nicknamed Dr. Boom by attendees of the World's Fair in Brussels, which was where Walt encountered him. MacMurray, a serious actor, even met him and got his mannerisms down, which actually shows in his performance. This was also the debut of Medfield College for the Disney Cinematic Universe: the single most science fiction university on Earth!

The film includes both Ed Wynn, and his son, as well as Wally Boag, who was the incredibly long-running star of the Golden Horseshoe Review at Disneyland.



## Moon Pilot

OK, this one is pretty obscure, and it's for a good reason. It ain't very good. Still, comedy sci-fi has a place, and that's about all I will give it. It has a certain charm, of course, but it's most notable in little things outside of the film. Sally Fields is in it, briefly, as a Beatnik. The FBI hated the way they were portrayed. Walt read the story *Starfire* in the *Saturday Evening Post* (and I've heard that he tried to get their famous cover artist, Norman Rockwell, to do art for Disneyland, but can never seem to find a reference) and made the movie. I actually read the story about twenty years ago, and it's far better than the movie. The Sherman brothers did the music, which always makes me happy.

## Son of Flubber

OK, this is the Flubber movie I think of when I think of Flubber. It's not quite the same joyous expression of a film that *The Absent-minded Professor* was, but it's a lot of fun, and is that rare sequel that does nearly the same thing as the original, but somehow manages to feel different. The director, Robert Stevenson, is one of the really great Disney talents. He directed *Mary Poppins*, *Bedknobs & Broomsticks*, and the Herbie films, all of which I have a lot of love for. Paul Lynde is in it, and I'm a huge fan of his work. The effects are great, and one of the things that Disney always seems to do right is get the right people into the technical aspects. I love this movie, and while it's not my favorite Disney science fiction film, it's near the top of the pile.

## The Misadventures of Merlin Jones

Midvale College is the setting for the Merlin Jones movies, and they're a hoot, and not just for the wonderful Annette Funicello performances. Tommy Kirk, a Disney child star regular in films like *Old Yeller* and

*Swiss Family Robinson*, plays Merlin Jones, a student who has managed to create a helmet to record thoughts. Somehow, he ends up able to read minds. That leads to kooky fun, and every review of it seemed to use the word 'kooky' and it's a fine film for a teen audience. Like all of these films, it's had some problems with the way it's aged, but it's still fun. It was supposedly the first two episodes of a never-produced Merlin Jones television series (which makes sense why they would call it 'Midvale' instead of Medfield College) and it made a bunch of money, even after the critics panned it. The second half deals with hypnotism, a judge, and crime novel writing. Definitely kooky.

## The Monkey's Uncle

The sequel to *The Misadventures of Merlin Jones*, it is actually a slightly better movie, and it was a hit on the same level. Sadly, it was also the last film Kirk and Funicello did for Disney. There was way more money to be made in the Beach movies than in the Disney family, apparently. The story is about a sleep-learning system, and the structure of the film is much like the original, which allows it to play out in two segments, neither of which wears out its welcome.

The theme song is really notable in that it was sung by Funicello, but has The Beach Boys doing backup!

## The Love Bug

I'm torn as to whether or not the Herbie Movies are best described as Science Fiction or Fantasy. No matter what they're best categorized as, I adore these films. Much like *The Barefoot Executive*, it rides the line. When I was a kid, whenever it would show up on The Disney Channel, I'd watch it; when it was at Rangoon Video, I'd rent it. I love its story. Herbie, the Love Bug, is a car that may be possessed, or it may just have gained sentience, which would put it in the realm of *Short Circuit*. Still, it's one of



the most fun films ever, featured Buddy Hackett in a great role, really made Dean Jones into one of my all-time favorites, and is just a magnificent example of what you can do with a strong cast, a silly script, and the last of Walt Disney's personal genius, as he had worked on it before his death.

### **The Computer Wore Tennis Shoes**

When Patrick Swayze died, that opened up the door for Kurt Russell to become the greatest living American actor. He was already the greatest living American genre actor, and this is the first time we had proof of that!

*The Computer Wore Tennis Shoes*, which has an amazing title song, is the story of Dexter Riley, a student at Medfield college, and the leader of a group of good kids. You see, Medfield can't afford its own computer, so they convince local businessman, and under-cov-er gangster, AJ Arno, to donate an old mainframe. The classic trope where a computer is struck by lightning plays out here, and because of that, Dexter gets all the knowledge of the computer, including the secret, password-protected info that details the bets made though the Arno gang. Of course, when you become the smartest person in the world, you go on a game show, and that leads to wackiness and a kidnapping. Cesar Romero is a great villain, and the voice of cartoons, Frank Welker, makes a rare, on-screen appearance. It made decent money, and it's been re-made with Kirk Cameron as the star, but that didn't really hurt the original; Kurt Russell is, and always will be, Dexter Riley. It's an absolute blast of a sci-fi flick!

### **The 1,000,000 Dollar Duck**

This is another near-the-line science fiction film, but if Spider-man is sci-fi, so is this! The story is super-silly; I even thought so when I was a kid. To save

money, a wife has given her husband Albert some failed applesauce so he doesn't have to go out for lunch. The duck Albert is working with eats it, somehow ends up in a room full of radiation and then can lay gold-en-yolked eggs. Of course, he gets arrested for hoard-ing gold, which I never understood as a kid.

The story is silly, but Sandy Duncan and Dean Jones are really good together, and in general, it's a silly movie that is a lot of good fun.

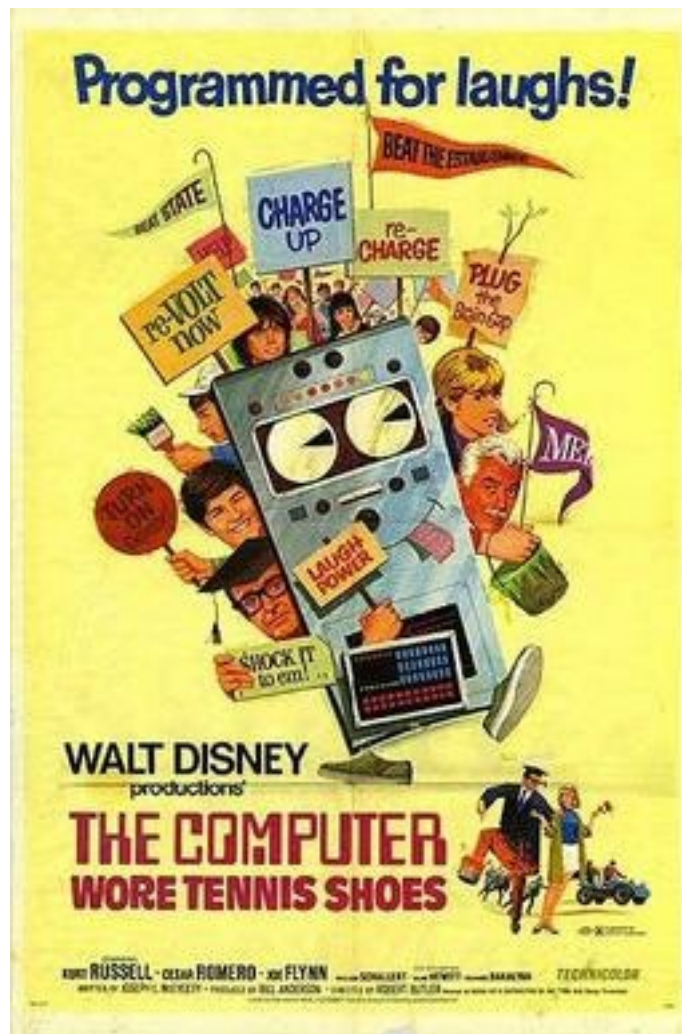
### **Now You See Him, Now You Don't**

Welcome back to Medfield College! This is the second of the Dexter Riley films, and while it's not the same level of awesome as *The Computer Wore Tennis Shoes*, it's still great fun. That's the thing about Disney Sci-Fi; it's always fun. This one brings back Cesar Romero as Arno, but also gives us Jim Backus, one of my faves of the 1960s! The story this time is that Dexter can become invisible, which leads to some fun effects work! This one shows that Disney was out of touch with the kids of the day: those Medfield kids aren't anything like those that you'd have found on the campuses of colleges around the U.S., but at the same time, Disney obviously

understood that kids grow up, and really, they're making these films as much for the adults who had grown up with the Beach movies of Annette Funicello and 1950s sitcoms.

### **Herbie Rides Again**

It's a sequel, and it does what a sequel does. No, it's not as much fun as the original, but it's still worth watching! This one is also one of the truly great San Francisco movies. There is a lot more interaction with the City in this than in the original. There's even a chase that takes Herbie up one of the Golden Gate Bridge cables! The scenery from *Herbie Rides Again* is pretty much what I think of when I think of San Francisco in the 1960s.





## The Strongest Man in the World

Dexter Riley's back again! This time, there's a mix-up and Dexter eats some super-powered cereal and becomes the strongest man in the world. It's a fun movie; silly like the rest, with the exact same formula as the original, but with Phil Silvers as the main bad guy with Romero in a secondary role. I liked it, though it was a complete re-tread, and as the end of the Dexter Riley series, it was decent send-off.

In reality, this is a slightly more complex story, as it brings ideas of corporate espionage into it, and Silvers is great. The way the film plays out is fun, even if it ain't *The Computer Wore Tennis Shoes*.

## Escape to Witch Mountain

An incredibly creepy film, to be sure, and also the reason why I read the book. I was completely turned off from it. It's just garbage compared to this lovely film about a pair of kids who turn out to be aliens. It's a great film, and one that every little goth kid should watch at least once because the theme is "we are not of you."

The mid-1970s Disney genre films were solid, though they were amid a series of weak Disney live-actioners overall.

## Herbie Goes to Monte Carlo

This is a fun movie, and Don Knotts as Wheelie Applegate (no relation to my wife...) is always fun. The real key to this movie is the appearance of Bernard Fox and Roy Kinnear, two Brits who are always good for laughs! This is the last of the better-than-decent Herbie films, and the setting is a neat twist, though I miss San Francisco.

I know I saw this in the theatre, and I would have been 2 years old. It was in theatres during the height of *Star Wars*, which probably helped it make money, as movie attendance was huge.

## Return from Witch Mountain

Bette Davis. Christopher Lee. These are the heavies for this sequel that I adore. It's a fine film; I like it at least as much as the original, and have re-watched it far more often than *Escape to Witch Mountain*. Because Bette Davis. And Christopher Lee. And one of the most underrated of all Lalo Schifrin masterfully cinematic scores.

At this point, Disney's production values were at their highest in the music arena. They were not only buying the best musical talent in the world at the time, they were also giving exposure to younger composers, and that helped Disney's 1980s animation explosion.

## The Cat from Outer Space

This one has another Schifrin score, and it's not a very good movie, though I certainly watched it often on The Disney Channel in the 1980s. The cast should have made this a much better movie. You've got Roddy McDowell, Sandy Duncan, Harry Morgan, McLean Stevenson, and Alan Young all in one movie! Still, by the later 1970s, the quality of Disney's live-action films had deteriorated. While you sometimes that great

ones, like the *Witch Mountain* movies or *The Apple Dumpling Gang*, mostly it was garbage. The difference seems to be that the best stuff was in genre, and often in the combination of crime, western or fantasy with comedy.

## Unidentified Flying Oddball

Worst. Title. Ever. It's basically *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* meets straight-up sci-fi faster-than-light time travel. It's not a very good movie, though

I always liked the score by Ron Goodman. The idea is that the kid wins a tourney using the technology of the 20th century, which I guess makes some sense.



## The Black Hole

*The Black Hole* is considered one of the least accurate science fiction films ever. I loved it as a kid, and there's a lot to enjoy about it if you ignore the plot. There's the fact that it was PG rated, a Disney first, and that they used computer-controlled camera to achieve a very distinct look to the film. The credits featured a long-for-the-time computer animated sequence. The cast was great, including a strong turn from Anthony Perkins, but it often seemed like they were phoning it in, as it was obviously an attempt to cash in on *Star Wars*. Still, the overture to the film is great, the score by John Berry wonderful, and the box office was good, which is nice because it was the most expensive Disney film ever up until that point.

## Herbie Goes Bananas

Nope. Not good. With no members of the original team, the heart is gone. The novelization of *Herbie Goes Bananas* is actually worth reading, though.

The Disney company was having issues at the time, especially in animation, but what's amazing is that the live-action fare they were featuring managed to improve greatly from the late 1970s. Movies like *The Devil and Max Devlin*, *Popeye*, *Dragonslayer*, and *The Watcher in the Woods* were all really strong, and it showed that Disney was understanding an older, more mature audience. Sadly, *Herbie Goes Bananas* was not one of those films...

## Condorman

Disney does superheroes! This is a bad film, and it's not so much Michael Crawford's fault. It's really taking great source material, Robert Sheckley's *The Game of X*, and fiddling with it and still expecting it to be strong, not to mention that the production values were weak, at best.

There are moments, of course, and it's something of a cult fave these days. The novelization, by Disney house novelist Joe Claro, is a much better piece of work, and the comic book that came out about the same time was stronger, too.

Still, it's awful and more or less destroyed Crawford's career as a film star.

Perhaps the thing that lives on the longest from Condorman is the Henry Mancini score. It's not nearly his best, but it does show Mancini's full understanding of how his scores interact with the film itself. Seek it out, because it's really good!

## Tron

I can say a lot about *Tron*, and I frequently have. The big thing about *Tron* is that it showed what was possible with computer graphics, and John Lasseter has said that without *Tron*, there would have been no *Toy Story*. I totally agree with that, especially as without *Tron*, there would be no Pixar. The film was a visual marvel, a stunning piece of filmmaking, and while it didn't exactly set the world on fire at the box office, the critics loved it. When Roger Ebert did his Underappreciated Film Festival, he opened with *Tron*.

It did win a technical Oscar for the invention of Perlin Noise, which helped early CGI imagery to break out of a serious rut. The score, by Wendy Carlos, is also amazing, and while the novelization is pretty much garbage, the *Art of Tron* book is an all-time classic book the look of science fiction on film.

## Return to Oz

OK, it's more of a fantasy, but like the original books, it's difficult to say there isn't considerable science fiction content.

Still, it's also a work of pure garbage. Completely disrespectful to the source material, at the same time not nearly as artful, and kinda dull. It misunderstood its audience, and not just in the marketing. It was too scary for kids, and too dumb for adults. With *Something Wicked This Way Comes* still on my mind, released just a bit prior, it just didn't live up to Disney live-action standards of the 1980s.

## Flight of the Navigator

Another important part of the story of computer animation, *Flight of the Navigator* is a much better film than I expected, and Howard Hesseman is a genius!!! The film that obviously inspired Anish Kapoor's Cloud Gate in Chicago, it's a lovely, well-made, and well-told film that feels as if the studio put a lot of thought and money behind it. Funny thing is, it was a considerable step back from most of the Disney productions of the time as far as budget goes, so its hit status was a big boon for the company that was in its darkest hours.

## Honey, I Shrank the Kids

A special effects film from a company that has always done strong special effects. Rick Moranis goes into full Absent-Minded Professor mode (which suits his style, really), and plays a scientist who has invented a shrink ray that tiny-fies his family. They have an adventure, and things work out in the end.



This is a theme park ride waiting to happen, and when they finally did do a *Honey, I Shrank the Audience* attraction to replace *Captain Eo*, it was a major hit too. I always liked the combination of science fiction, action, adventure, comedy, and drama in this one.

### **The Rocketeer**

This is AWESOME!!!! It's a visual feast, an absolute blast as far as a story goes, has Jennifer Connelly at the peak of her prowess, features Terry O'Quinn as Howard Hughes, and has what I consider to be James Horner's best score. It's a masterpiece, blending styles and era in much the same way that *20,000 Leagues* did in the 1950s. It still feels 100% fresh, with all the elements seeming so much more contemporary than you'd expect for a film made more than 25 years ago. Also, the explosion of the Hollywoodland sign is a great bit for a Hollywood history junky like myself!

### **Honey, I Blew Up the Kid**

A decent sequel, though at the same time, it's a basic effects film at a time when they were getting to be commonplace. *Honey, I Shrank the Kids* was something of a revelation, but this just feels like a retread. The effects, and a baby playing Godzilla, more or less, is kinda fun though.

### **A Kid in King Arthur's Court**

The tagline was "Joust Do It." From there, it got worse...

### **RocketMan**

Harlan Williams was briefly a big star, and he was a funny guy. This is a story about Fred, a software engineer, who ends up becoming an astronaut. The film is terrible, and it's basically a lame combination of bits and pieces of every other science fiction film of the 1950s through 70s.

### **Flubber**

Robin Williams ain't Fred MacMurray. He's good in the role as the Absent-Minded Professor, but really this is a film that is made by an amazing cast that includes Edie McClurg, Clancy Brown, Marcia Gay Harden, Christopher McDonald, and Wil Wheaton. The story is very familiar, but the updating is just about the best of these Disney re-makes. It's very impressive the way they made it both respectful to the original and made a movie that felt of the time. Yes, I know the critics hated it, but it's better than they give it credit for.

### **My Favorite Martian**

It's a bad movie. It was a bad TV series, but this is even worse. Disney's live-action division is in the midst of a tailspin in the 1990s, largely because the attention of the studio was on their thriving animation division. While every animation was making big money, many of the live-action flicks just died on the screen. It's a shame, as they were doing really impressive stuff visually. This was terrible, and it was largely the fault of the way they treated the script.

### **Inspector Gadget**

Let's be clear – I love *Inspector Gadget* the cartoon. The Big Screen version was awful. Just flat-out awful. The problem is, of course, the script, but the cast also didn't help at all by taking their roles less than whole-heartedly. They were trying to make up for it by having a bevy of computer effects, but alas, it did not at all manage to make up for it. The budget, 90 million, was big, and it did make the production budget back, but not with the addition of things like promotional costs. The fact that Dabney Coleman and Rupert Everett couldn't save this film says how bad it was.



After 2000, the number of science fiction films produced by Hollywood in total exploded, but oddly, the Disney brand didn't exactly follow. When they made sci-fi, they tended towards re-makes, like *Herbie: Fully Loaded* or *Race to Witch Mountain*, or sci-fi adventure pieces like *National Treasure*. The one big hit as far as I'm concerned was *Sky High*, about a superhero high school!

While many of the Disney science fiction offerings were great, part of the loss of Disney as a driving sci-fi force was the fact that they had spun off so many different companies, like Touchstone and Miramax, that dealt with the serious adult material. Since Disney was the family brand, and as science fiction that worked in the 21st century tended towards the more adult (and since Marvel and Star Wars were already their own cinematic universes when they bought 'em), the Disney world of science fiction started to fade. Luckily, the company has been releasing new Blu-Ray and streaming versions of the classics, which are worth looking at again!



## ON MARS AND BEYOND (ADAPTED FROM AN EPISODE OF 52 EPISODES TO SCIENCE FICTION FILM LITERACY) By CHRIS GARCÍA

One thing I am always interested in doing is establishing the importance of the educational film to the history of science fiction film. It's actually got a huge impact for a bunch of different reasons. One, science is an important part of science fiction, and by having that aspect represented in a way that is accessible to fans of Sci-Fi, it allows for easier absorption. The second part is the explosion of educational film in television leading to the increasing number of science fiction authors, filmmakers, and all sorts of different things from the late 50s into the 60s, and certainly into the 70s and beyond.

What's fascinating, and not at all surprising, is probably the best educational films were made by Disney. They made a bunch for classroom use, of course, but really it was the *Tomorrowland* series, as a part of their ABC Program *Disneyland*, that really started to change everything.

One of the reasons for that was the *Man In Space* series.

This was a three-episode series shown over a couple of years. Directed by Disney Legend Ward Kimball, the first one dealt with going into space, the second about going to the moon, and the last one was all about Mars.

*Mars and Beyond* is easily Disney's best. Period. I consider this to be equal to any of their animated features for a number of different reasons, one of which being that there's so much animation in it. It's not entirely animated, but it's largely animated, and it presents not just the ideas of what it takes to get us on to Mars, but what it will take to get us moving towards that goal. The animation of potential life that could be found on Mars is great, inspired by everything from 19th century anatomy, botany, and biology texts, to the covers of pulp science fiction magazines. It's really just fascinat-



ing what sort of conjectures they have about creatures we might encounter, some with these giant folding and rolling / un-rolling wings, weird plants, and all these other sort of concepts that blend recognizable elements with the far-out and wacky, while never going too far into the realm of silly. It all feels believable, but at the same time, super-strange.

But that's not the important part of this series. Remember, this is a television episode and I'll explain why this matters to film history in a second. It matters to science fiction history because of a segment in which they discuss pulp science fiction, more or less; more accurately, they talk about the magazine science fiction that was out at the time. It is a brutal, kind of an anti-patriarchy send-up of what's going on in science fiction stories, but also in the editorial process, and business world in general. And it's brilliant. It really is.

Basically the idea is there's this great thinking scientist who spends his entire time just thinking while his secretary goes out into the field, gets kidnapped, and taken to Mars. She has these adventures and is chased, shot at, eventually overcomes the evil, and gets back to her job as the scientist says, "there is no evidence for there being life on Mars." Then he is obliterated by an Alien from Mars. It's brutal to how perfectly it sends up the science fiction of the 50's, and the animation style is amazing. You can see the influence of that style on years and years. Anyone who remembers the No-neck Joe series of short films that were favored on the Spike and Mike Festival of Animation, that's really what this is about. If you look at that, it's so obvious how influential that art style is.

Of course, it's directed by Ward Kimball, one of the old men that Walt Disney leaned on, and his fingerprints are all over this, particularly in the design of the theoretical Martian lifeforms. This is important is on a couple of different levels. One is that it is a film, and I want to call it a film because it really functions as a film, and I believe it had a limited release in theaters, but it relays science information via animation in a way that is natural

and coherent without losing stylistic considerations. Today, there's a lot of buzz about animated documentary films, with things like *Sticky* and Chris Landreth's *Ryan* receiving massive acclaim for being an innovative form, when Disney was doing this stuff dating back to the 1940s.

And there are actually scientists. Wernher von Braun shows up, as he was the primary adviser to the *Man in Space* series. It really worked to give people this exciting view of science and space, not so much presenting it as a stuffy thing that is distant and insignificant, though I have to admit, listening to the scientist who they pick to explain the mechanics of the trip to Mars, he sounds like the stuffiest human who ever lived.

But the explosion of content we get is so good, and at the same time, it's giving off this sense of wonder. It's not so much about the power of the science as it is science is a wonderful, magical thing. That whole speculative section of what Martian life might look like is science fiction at its core, done in a non-fiction (or at least non-narrative) form. It is something even Wells and Verne would have instantly recognized as science fiction, though they never would have called it science fiction; they would have called it science romance or scientific fantasy or something like that, but it's so evident and so poignant and so powerful, and it works in every dimension.

Now what's really fascinating about the influence of this - one, having Wernher von Braun presenting this gave it a sense of gravitas, and two, this was



shown on TV, and at that point when you only have the three networks, everything that gets on TV carried incredible weight. *Disneyland* was one of the top shows in the world at that point. There's a lot of people who give our entry into space, who give the *Man in Space* series, and in particular *Man and the Moon*, a big push as the most important aspect as to what got the public in space exploration. I can see that argument, and know that when I talked about Mars on a panel with Kim Stanley Robinson and Robert J. Sawyer years ago, both said I should find it. Of course, I later saw the Martian Life segment as a part of The Animation Show run by Mike Judge (*Beavis & Butthead*, *King of the Hill*) and Don Hertzfeldt (*Rejected*, *Billy's Balloon*), and it was so incredible projected on the Castro Theatre's giant screen.

Of course, this featured the voice of the guy who may be the patron saint of 52 *Episodes to Science Fiction Film Literacy*, Paul Frees. His lovely baritone, maybe it's bass, is definitely all over this. And why not? At this point, he was everywhere - science fiction films, natural documentaries, and commercials. He showed up in *The Thing From Another World*. His voice is so authoritative, and I think that is one of the reasons this series works so well. You have this sense of audio authority to it, Frees' voice, coupled with the presence of Wernher von Braun's credibility at the time to the public at large. When you combine all that, you really get this authoritative concept that's powerful, leaving a lasting impression on a generation of creatives.

The direct influence of this is not only in the animation style, not only in the context, but in the content. There was a huge Martian push in the early 60's in particular, and while Mars as a target of science fiction

dates back to Wells really, it sort of took over. We've seen so many great treatments of Mars. This is a far out one when we look at it today, but at that point, we largely knew that Mars wasn't quite as robust a planet to hold this sort of life, but we still had these questions. Scientists thought that it was fairly barren as early as the 1840s, but the public probably thought that wasn't quite true.

We did push along the boundaries of reality at that point, but what happened in response to stories like *Mars and Beyond* was that we started seeing a lot of people write about Mars in a more serious light, or taking it as their topic and giving it a more important sense of reality, or at least a scientific romanticism that was fostered by *Mars and Beyond*.

The best example of this happened, I think, in the 90's. Kim Stanley Robinson's *Red Mars*, *Blue Mars*, and *Green Mars* books. Really, really impressive stuff, and Robinson definitely would have been a little young to experience this in the first run, but it was shown in classroom environments for years, right up until I was in Middle School.

Disney as a creator, not just Walt Disney but the whole company, really changed science fiction without going into that realm directly too often. Things like *Mars and Beyond*, the entire *Man in Space* series, *Your Friend the Atom*, and a lot of their educational documentary short films, they went into that direction, but they weren't really pushing it as their *raison d'être*. (I love saying that.) They were giving us these small snippets.

The weird thing is, when they went full science fiction, it actually got kind of weak, but let's save that for an issue about *The Black Hole*...





# MALEFICENT: My FAVORITE Disney CHARACTER

By HELEN MONTGOMERY



At some point in my childhood, I latched on to Maleficent as my favorite Disney character. Not my favorite Disney villain, but character. I loved *Cinderella* (particularly the mice), and the dwarves in *Snow White* were fun, but none of the Disney princesses really spoke to me. The three good fairies in *Sleeping Beauty* were also interesting and could do magic (shrinking themselves, granting gifts, changing colors of objects), but did not have the same sense of power as was projected by Maleficent. As I have explained to people, my thought process was something like ‘why be a princess when I could turn into a dragon?’ and that never changed.

As I got older, my feelings on Maleficent never wavered. She was badass. She was powerful. She was smart. She was creative with her evil plans. She can teleport, show someone the future she plans for them, hurls lightning, and did I mention she could change into a dragon? She is the initiator of all the action in the film – she curses Aurora, lures Aurora to the spindle, captures Prince Philip, and only her destruction allows the Prince to get to the castle and rescue Aurora. Her only flaw is that her minions are bumbling.

She was also one of the few female villains who owned being a villain. She was the Mistress of all Evil. She says to Prince Philip, “Now shall you deal with me, O Prince, and all the powers of hell!” The embodiment of the evil sorceress. There was no waffling. She reveled in it.



Within science fiction and fantasy, and general fiction as well, there is a trope that the female villain becomes bad as a result of a trauma. (This trope is also used for heroines, but that’s a different article.) In the original *Sleeping Beauty*, there was no such back story for Maleficent. She was just evil. Done.

Then along comes 2014’s live action *Maleficent*.

No longer is Maleficent the Mistress of all Evil. She started her life as a good fairy (beautiful, innocent, pure), was drugged and mutilated by the man she liked/loved, and then went on a revenge bender. Since she wanted to be sure her curse worked, she needed to keep an eye on Aurora, who was being raised by the three pixies. As all women are wont to do (cough), she develops maternal feelings for Aurora, regrets involving her in her revenge, and ends up being Aurora’s rescuer in the end.

Sigh.

No longer is she the powerful evil sorceress. She wasn’t born bad, she was made that way because of a man. Maternal instincts save her from herself. She lost her humanity, but found it again by becoming Aurora’s fairy godmother. No longer is she the initiator of the action, but now she is reactionary instead. Even worse, at least to me, they took away one of her most powerful abilities (shapeshifting into a dragon) and gave it to... her male sidekick. Instead of her raven, Diablo, there is now a man, Diaval, who has the cool shapeshifting power. Really, Disney?

There has been a lot written on this topic (references below), but I think this sums it up:

*“Evil—actual, absolute evil—is always obliterated. Good women remain feminine and kind, and always morally understandable, as they should be, and the villainess almost always regrets the qualities that made her an outcast. By the end, she’s been absorbed into the very “happily ever after” template the retelling purported to subvert.”* – Devon Maloney, Wired.com, June 2, 2014

So disappointing.

There are good things about the movie. True love no longer has to be boy/girl, and a man is not required for happy ever after. The importance of relationships between women and girls is emphasized. Angelina Jolie had great cheekbones.

It wasn’t good enough. Maleficent deserved better.



In the meantime, I continue to love the original animated version of Maleficent. Yes, she used her powers for evil. Possibly not a great role model in that respect, I'll grant you that. But she was powerful. She was smart (in the animated version, Merryweather says about Maleficent, "She knows everything", like it's a bad thing!). In the end, she lost and was killed, but she never gave up, never gave her power away, and owned who she was.

In that respect, she was a great role model.



#### References:

*Once Upon A Dream: From Perrault's Sleeping Beauty to Disney's Maleficent.* Charles Solomon, 2014.

*How Could Disney Do This To Maleficent?* Meredith Woerner, io9.gizmodo.com, June 3, 2014.

*'Maleficent', 'Sleeping Beauty', and Rethinking Fairy Tale Rape.* Tierney Sneed, U.S. News, May 30, 2014.

*Maleficent: Once Upon a Feminist's Dream?* Jill Pantozzi, themarysue.com, June 2, 2014.

*Maleficent and the Big Problem With Disney's Fairy Tale Reboots.* Devon Malony, wired.com, June 2, 2014.

*Dumped by Her Prince, So Watch Out.* Manohla Dargis, nytimes.com, May 29, 2014.

WALT DISNEY PRESENTS THE MIGHTIEST MOTION PICTURE OF THEM ALL!

# JULES VERNE'S 20000 LEAGUES

UNDER THE SEA

By CHRIS GARCIA



I know what you're thinking. You think I'm gonna talk all about Steampunk and the aesthetics of *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, and that would be a good guess, but I'm not gonna do that for a couple of different reasons. One is that there's just so much to the 1954 version by Disney, and the fact that it was directed by Richard Fleischer, who is the son of Max Fleischer, the guy who made the Superman cartoons in the late '30s, early '40s. Richard went to work for Disney, the company that basically tried to put his father out of business, and he directed this phenomenal film.

When you watch *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, there's a lot to unpack. You have to look at it as a part of a continuum that, when I think about it, starts with the novel by Jules Verne and goes all the way up through 2003 when *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* was released. In that timeframe, we grapple with this concept of Nemo, and that's really the key to the entire thing. Captain Nemo is the key, and you have to come to grips with a lot of perceptions from the time of Verne, the time of 1954, and then the contemporary view, and it shows how it all sort of works against, and with, one another.

The basic story is pretty simple. There are rumors that there's a sea monster and the US sends a ship to investigate. It's been so long since I've read it, and I've read at least two different translations. I should point out that Verne's work, and *20,000 Leagues* specifically, have been victims of terrible translations over the years. The problem is not so much that they were bad translators, but that Verne had a very particular style and was writing not so much undercover, but was putting concepts and layering them in a way that it becomes difficult to unpack that all and still maintain an audience without losing the science. Really there are two books that concern Nemo, the first one being *20,000 Leagues*, and the second one being *The Mysterious Island*.

*The Mysterious Island* is important because it gives us the backstory of Nemo, but *20,000 Leagues*, the book, is really hugely important. It was one of the first science fiction novels adopted into education. I remember having to read it when I was in 4th grade, and I reread it again in, I think it was in 9th grade, and that's when I realized what a bad translation this was because it really didn't make much sense, a lot of the ways that things sort of played off each other. Even the title is



mistranslated. In English, we've always called it *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. In French, the title more accurately translates as *20,000 Leagues Under the Seas*.

The original book is really an adventure visitation piece with a wonderful and smart through line. The film is similar, of course, but also different. This wasn't the first time people made this movie. Well, the first time they made this movie, but the story of *20,000 Leagues*. Méliès, I believe, shot some scenes from it. I don't think he ever made a full version. The silent version, I think from 1913, I talked about in *52 Weeks to Science Fiction Film Literacy* as well renowned for its early underwater footage. And it's a neat story. The way they did things was very stiff, of course, because it's early film, but it worked. The French did a couple of versions, I believe one in the 1920s and one in the 1940s. I believe the one in the '40s may have actually even been a short. It may have just been a segment. I've never seen it. The Russians have done at least two versions that I know of and probably more. I think the Polish Film Institute did one. I believe there were at least two different animated versions; one of them might have been Czechoslovakian. It's hard to know because some are actual adaptations, and some are undercover adaptations. Part of the reason for that is Jules Verne and the wide-scale adoption of his work. I went to the Eaton Conference years ago; it was a conference about Jules Verne, where I learned to say his name properly, apparently. There were a lot of people complaining about the adaptations of his work. And one person actually said that any of the Eastern Bloc adaptations are going to be better because they had better translations early on, which makes a little bit of sense. If you're gonna have better translations, you're gonna get a better result out of your work. That and the Eastern Bloc sensibilities, what they were trying to push at that point, politically, would have fit more with the Vernian sort of idealism that he was pushing.

The biggest and most important character of all, in all the films of it, is Nemo. Well, you could argue that it's the Nautilus because how the Nautilus is presented aesthetically is important at setting what the film means. And of course, it's a nuclear submarine and it's going under the waters and it's making huge, long trips and blah blah blah. In the 1954 version, what's really key is that design. Hugely important because it's abandoned the science. Disney does that. They will set up a scientific, science-fictional, some sort of concept, and as it goes, they realize that they need to ditch that and go for a purely aesthetic thing.

The perfect example of that is Tomorrowland, which had been more or less a hard-science attraction up until about 1990s, when things were outstripped. The realities that were happening and the future that they had been presenting didn't look like what we believed the future was, so they went back. They did the whole steampunking of Tomorrowland, and I've written about that a fair amount, most notably for Tor.com. They recast the Nautilus in this sort of Victorian-influenced but Art Nouveau concept that really would not have worked. But it's a beautiful beast, and it makes sense that that would be confused with a sea monster.

Now going back to the book, books in this case, what we learned in the second book, *The Mysterious Island*, is that Nemo is the descendant of the Tipu Sultan, who most famously rose up against the British East India Company and, if you've ever been to the V&A, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, they have Tipu's Tiger, which is a tiger which attacks a British East India Company's agent, and that was sort of the attitude there. So he was a Muslim from Mysore. (I have no idea how it's pronounced.) Yet he has always been portrayed by a white guy, up until *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, when they had an Indian actor, who is phenomenal, by the way. (He was great in *Monsoon Wedding* as the father of the bride, I believe, just spectacularly good. A really strong performance there.) In *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, he didn't have good material to work with, and yet there are a couple of cool scenes.

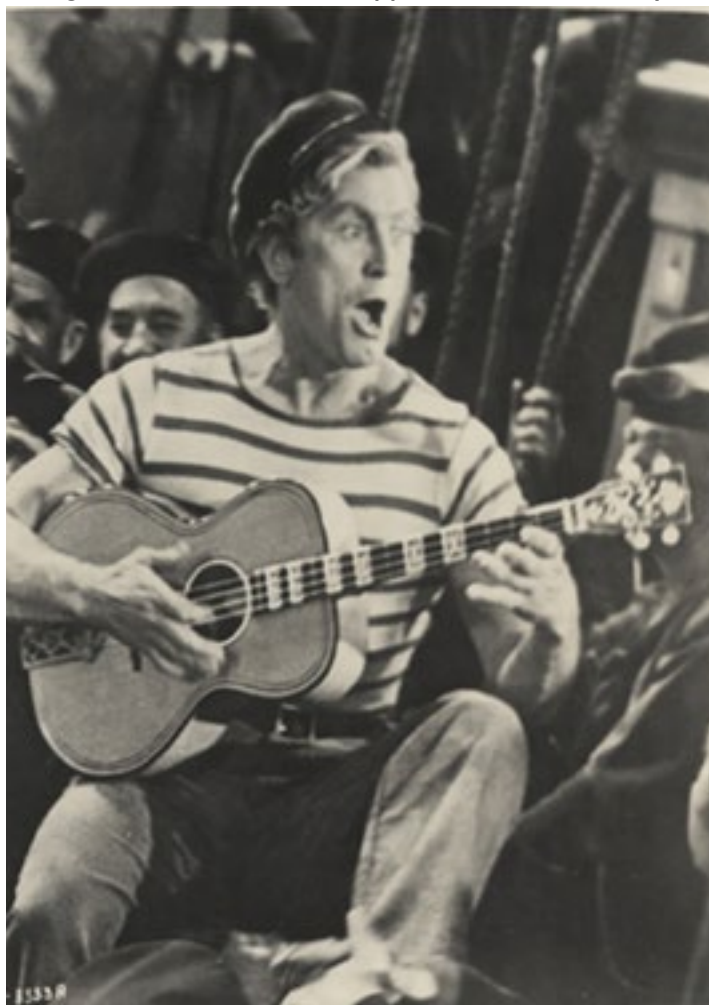
He's presented as a serious badass, and that's what we're supposed to walk away from Nemo with, is this idea that he is the toughest son of a bitch in the room, no matter what room he's in, that he's the super scientist. And in the 1954 version, having James Mason play Nemo is absolutely perfect casting if we have no idea what the backstory of Nemo is. If we have no idea about the whole Tipu Sultan and about the Muslim from Mysore connection, if none of that exists, he is perfect because every line is delivered with calculation, with precision. Everything we expect from Nemo, from the books, he hits, except for his identity, and we only learn that in *The Mysterious Island*. It's not in *20,000 Leagues*.

Also, he recasts the character of Nemo in this no less angry, but differently angry way, but it's calculated anger, and his responses are calculated. And that Nemo has informed everything that's ... Every time Nemo appears in any scenario, whether it's *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, whether it's in any of the Steampunk pastiches that have been done over the past about 10

years, James Mason's Nemo is the emotional basis, the intellectual basis, for those follow-ons. While Verne's Nemo may inform the scenario and the activity, the personification in James Mason's performance of it is what a lot of it attaches to.

There are a lot of great performances in here, two that I really want to call out. Peter Lorre, who is amazing in everything, is phenomenal, and I think part of that is because he is playing the role both straight and twisted. There is subtextual stuff going on in his performance that I have to admit I didn't see for a long time, but it's obviously there. When you realize that he is sitting in for us, he is the audience's advocate far more than any of the other characters, he is the one who is observing everything that's going on and is making the judgments. I really think he is the focal point of nothing, but he is the observation point that we can see through.

Now the other incredible performance, of course, is Kirk Douglas, who is phenomenal as Ned Land. Can't be better, the cocky harpoonist who tangles with the giant squid. He's amazing. He really pulled it off to the point where he kind of takes over the story to a degree, because it's not supposed to be his story, it's



supposed to be Nemo's, and it still is, but he does his damnedest to pull it to himself. This is the Kirk Douglas that is in the races in Spartacus and the fights, but not the interpersonal interactions. He's all the sizzle and no steak, though he does have a little bit of steak in this one. And he just looks the exact part. And his song ... What is it? Whale of a Tale? He sings that song and it's wonderful. He's great.

Aesthetically, of course, we have to talk about the Steampunk movement. The visuals for this film, brilliantly shot. Cinematography, amazing. Art direction, incredible, and the only reason that the art director couldn't win the Oscar was that he wasn't a member of their union. He 100% should have won. I believe he was the same guy who did the first pass on The Haunted Mansion ride at Disneyland, which makes sense. There are a lot of sort of theoretical ties you can see in imagery for both, especially in the early. This is textbook art direction influencing how a film is not only received, but portrayed. And when you look at the costuming from the early Steampunk conventions. The first real Steampunk convention in the US was in Sunnyvale at the Domain Hotel, not the Dominion as my wife and her friend Tofa would call it. When you looked around, what you were seeing was reflections of Verne, but more importantly, reflections of the 1954 film, because it's not just Victorian; it's Disney Victorian.

Steampunk gets criticized for being Victorian fantasy, which a lot of it sort of is, but the elements of Art Nouveau, which again, I guess, is contemporary to Victorianism. Don't cloud the subject. Stick with me. Elements of Art Nouveau, particularly the French variety (which most Art Nouveau was, to be honest), all that came from this. If you look at what we would consider Steampunk ideal aesthetics prior to '54, and there is a lot of it actually, although none of it is as unified in vision as it became particularly in the 2009, '10, '11 frame, as you would see at Steampunk conventions and so forth. All that was influenced by 1954 and 20,000 Leagues. It's a phenomenal film. You should really see it. It's Disney, but it's really, really, good Disney.

It was also apparently the first science fiction film shot in CinemaScope, which I imagine it made amazing use of, but I've never seen it in big screen. When the Century 21 reopens in San Jose, God willing and the creek don't rise, I hope they'll show it on the giant screen, the way it was meant to be seen.





## INSTANT FANZINE PART 3

IF YOU LIKED DISNEY MOVIE X, THEN YOU SHOULD READ SCIENCE FICTION/FANTASY STORY Z.  
SOLVE FOR X AND Z.

(OBVIOUSLY ADAPTATIONS OF THE STORY BY DISNEY DON'T COUNT, NOR DO THE NOVELIZATIONS OF DISNEY FILMS.)

**Pablo Miguel Alberto Vazquez:** If you liked *Atlantis: The Lost Empire*, then you should read *Vril, the Power of the Coming Race* by Edward Bulwer-Lytton. If you liked *Aladdin*, then you should read *Throne of the Crescent Moon* by Saladin Ahmed (better than *Aladdin* in my opinion).

**David Stein:** *Atlantis*: read *Journey to the Center of the Earth*.

**Steven Silver:** If you liked *Mulan*, you should read Kara Dalkey's *The Nightingale*. If you liked *Robin Hood*, you should read Parke Godwin's *Sherwood*.

**Deb Geisler:** If you liked *Shipwrecked*, give Andy Weir's *The Martian* a chance.

**David Stein:** If you liked *20,000 Leagues Under The Sea*, you should read *20,000 Leagues Under The Sea*.

**Steven Silver:** HG Wells captures the feel of *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* better than Verne ever could. :)

**Pablo Miguel Alberto Vazquez:** They specifically said no obvious adaptations!

**Steven Silver:** So we can't suggest *Stranger in a Strange Land* for people who like *Lilo & Stitch*? :)

**Pablo Miguel Alberto Vazquez:** That's in no way obvious!

**David Stein:** Pablo - yeah, couldn't help myself

**David Friedman:** If you like the early movies (e.g. *Snow White*), you need to read the Brothers Grimm.

**Peter Heltzer:** If you liked any of the princess movies you should read Jim Hines' price-series starting with *The Stepsister Scheme*.

**David Friedman:** If you like the early movies (e.g. *Snow White*), you need to read the Brothers Grimm.

**Emma England:** If you like *Tangled* read Naomi Novik's *Uprooted*.

**Michelle Rhoades:** If you liked *Treasure Planet*, read *Time for the Stars* by Heinlein.

**Cheryl Renee Farney:** If you liked any Disney movie you should read the *Fables* series by Bill Willingham et al.

**Christopher J Garcia:** If you like *Snow White*, you'll love *The Snow Queen*. If you liked *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, you're gonna love *The Other Log of Phileas Fogg* by Philip Jose Farmer. If you liked *The Love Bug*, *Herbie Goes To Monte Carlo*, or *Herbie Goes Bananas*, you're gonna flip over *Killdozer*!



WORLDCON BIDDING WITH WALT  
By ADAM BEATON

CHAIRPERSON, ORLANDO IN 2015 WORLDCON BID



There are many anecdotes about Walt Disney; here's one that has always stuck with me. Walt often liked to visit Disneyland before it opened to guests. One morning Walt was walking around the park when one of the gardeners came up to him. "Walt," he said, "the guests are constantly walking through one of my flower beds. They're tearing up all the flowers! We need to put a small fence up to stop the guests from walking through." Walt's answer was immediate. "No," said Walt, "what we need to do is pave that area to make it easier for the guests to walk through. If the guests are walking through that way, it must be for a good reason."

The anecdote illustrates a great point that all of us, especially those of us in the world of convention running, can learn from. Always put your guests' - your membership's - your attendees' wishes and experience first over what you may want. In the end, you as the convention staffer only exist because of the membership. Keep them happy, and you will find everything will run much smoother. This idea, and the aforementioned anecdote, was prime in my head as Chair of the Orlando in 2015 Worldcon Bid when we made the decision to change our overall theme.

When we began, we had chosen a theme that, to some, was controversial. We knew it would generate a lot of talk, and given that many of us were not as well-known in SF/F fandom as others, we wanted to make as big of a splash as possible. However, we realized that a sizable number of people were paying more attention to our overall theme as opposed to what we called "The Orlando Manifesto" - our vision for Worldcon. We could have chosen to be the gardener in the anecdote - double-down and put up a fence. In the end, we chose to be like Walt - put the wishes of the membership ahead of our own wishes and change the theme. We found that the rest of the bidding process ran much smoother as a result.

Many of Walt's ideas found themselves in our

Orlando bid. They are ideas that can be used not only with Worldcon bids and conventions, but in your everyday life. One such idea was one of two that spurred me on to start a Worldcon bid for Orlando. When asked why he was so successful in his life, Walt explained his success in four parts: "I dream, I test my dreams against my beliefs, I dare to take risks, and I execute my vision to make those dreams come true."

In Orlando Worldcon Bid terms, the first part was our dream. We wanted to bring a Worldcon to Orlando. We wanted to show a way to run Worldcon that would not only be pleasing to members that have been coming for decades, but also be enticing to people who have never even heard of Worldcon before. Testing our dreams against our beliefs, we not only believed our dream was achievable, but fit with our beliefs that Worldcon could appeal to the wider range of fandom both new and old. Daring to actually putting together such a bid was a big risk; however, we believed enough in our dream to execute the vision and go forward with the bid. I would encourage you, whenever you are contemplating a new venture such as a Worldcon bid, to use Walt's four-part formula to help you succeed.

And what was the second of Walt's ideas that spurred on the Orlando bid? One last quote from Walt that I encourage everyone to follow: "The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing." You can spend your whole life just talking about ideas, but unless you're willing to do the work and take that first step in your journey to turn those ideas into reality, all those ideas are just talk, nothing more. We on the Orlando bid had heard quite a few people express similar ideas that were found in our Orlando Manifesto, but we hadn't found many willing to take that step from talking to doing. Combining Walt's four-part formula with wanting to stop talking and start doing, we were willing to take the risk and go for it. We weren't afraid to fail, we were afraid of what would happen if no one even bothered to try.



## INSTANT FANZINE PARTY 4

### FAVORITE DISNEY HERO/HEROINE AND FAVORITE DISNEY VILLAIN AND WHY?

**Steven Silver:** Judge Frollo would be my “favorite” villain because he strikes me as being the most evil, hypocritical, and egotistical of all the villains.

**Andrea Hawkins-Kamper:** I have thoughts around Maleficent as an answer to both questions. I just can’t pound them out on my phone.

**Edward Hooper:** Mulan, because she kicks ass with a sword. Jamie Chung played a great Mulan in *Once Upon a Time*.

**Bob Hollister:** My favorite Disney hero would be Phineas from *Phineas & Ferb*. Imaginative, smart, friendly, and kind. The total package. My favorite villain is Jafar from *Aladdin*. Partially because Jonathan Freeman is one of my favorite actors, and partially because he’s just such a ‘mustache twirling’ melodrama villain!

**Sandra Levy:** For villain it would probably Captain Hook, from the Disney animated version of *Peter Pan*. He was so unctuous, mean and my idea of ‘mustache twirling’ villain. I’ll have to think about hero/heroine a bit

**Adam Beaton:** Hero - Merida from *Brave*. She doesn’t need a prince to make her happy, stays true to herself, and her strong will and determination carry her through the movie admirably. Villain - Chernabog from *Fantasia*. The personification of Evil itself with a great sinister song.

**Janice Gelb:** Perfect illustration of tastes differing: I thought Merida was a spoiled self-centered brat :-)

**Bonnie Jones:** Well, she is a teenager!



**David Stein:** Hero - Captain Nemo. Disney creation - Mulan. Villain - Maleficent. Gantu (*Lilo and Stitch*) and Shan-Yu (*Mulan*) coming in close behind. Frolo gets huge points at the "BEST" villain, perhaps not a favorite though, he's just good at it.

**Deb Geisler:** Hero - Herbie, the Love Bug. Villain - Cruella de Vil. Because she just \*is\*.

**Tracy Lunquist:** If she doesn't scare you, no evil thing will!

**Don Glover:** Captain Jack Sparrow and MCP/Sark

**Liz Bragg:** Mulan was always my favourite Disney protagonist, because not only did she kick ass, but she was one of the first Asian heroines I saw in mainstream popular culture.

**Katharine Bond:** Heroine - Moana because she had the best songs. Villain - Ursula from Little Mermaid.

**Sabine Furlong:** Villain - Doofenschmirtz. He just had a bad upbringing. Hero - Perry the Platypus. Cause he has a hat.

**Jynell Greenfield:** Fav - Winnie the Pooh. I love his general positive outlook on life and try to model myself to that aspect. Not problem is too great to solve with the help of your friends. Villain - the wood. Pooh doesn't really have villains, but the wood offers lots of capers to get involved in and learn lessons from.

**Joel Finkle:** Hero - Aladdin. Who doesn't want a monkey pal? And villain? Got to be Shere Khan.

**Michael Benveniste:** Hero - Jack Sparrow (1st movie only). Villain - Cruella d'Vil

**Chris Rose:** Villain - Dr. Hans Reinhardt & Maximilian, with an edge towards the latter because it was holy-shit scary as a kid and reading the gold-spine Disney book of that movie was a harrowing experience. Hero... I don't usually find Disney heroes compelling. They're there in service of the story, which can be, but in themselves they rarely interest me.

**Christopher Hensley:** I don't know about hero. By and large, I just don't connect to Disney heroes on that level. Villain is easy though. The scariest villain in the Disney Canon, Judge Doom.

**Janice Gelb:** Aside - Just wanted to say it makes me sad that Pooh is now considered a Disney character...

**Joel Finkle:** Disney has done the cartoons for decades. Their imagery is very different from Milne's.

**Deb Geisler:** When I was a kid, Pooh was a \*Sears\* character. Dad worked for Sears, which did a bunch of marketing, so we got a special advanced showing, a visit from Pooh and Eeyore, and charm bracelets. Cuz we were special.

**Janice Gelb:** Joel, yup, I know that but it still makes me sad.

**Emma England:** I grew up very near the Ashdown Forest where Pooh is from. I used to play Pooh Sticks (and have a tattoo to prove it). Disney tried to buy the forest to turn it into a Pooh theme park. It's a place of special scientific interest and the British equivalent of a National Park. It was blocked before it even started, but still they tried.

**Christopher J Garcia:** Hero - Dexter Riley or any of the Apple Dumpling Gang. Villains would be either the Principal or the Ice Cream Truck Driver from *Max Keebles Big Move*.

**John O'Halloran:** Merida. Brave, Intelligent and Self Saving. Even if a bit impulsive. Jafar. Because he's evil, he knows, and he revels in it.

**Jeremy Jack:** Hero - Baymax. Baymax is wonderful. He is just trying to heal and help... and that is the hero this world needs. Villain - The Horned King from *The Black Cauldron*. Totally, irrevocably evil intent on destroying the world. Second place to Maleficent...

**Nantale:** Hero - Moana. Focused on community above all else, striving to fix and improve her world. What we need in a leader. Villain - Ernesto de la Cruz, *Coco*. Possibly the most real-world villain we've seen from Disney.

**Cheryl Renee Farney:** Villain - Scar. He's evil through and through. Be Prepared is the best villain song in the canon. Heroine - Princess Anna. She's selfless in her love for her sister.

**Emma England:** Frolo is terrifying but I love

Ursula best. She just delicious and creepy and fun all at once. Moana and Anna are my fave heroes. Neither of them rely on being saved and they both have great personalities, are fun, fearless, clever, and put female relationships first (grandma and sister respectively).

**Tannis Baldwin:** My favorite characters aren't the hero/heroine in the movies but secondary characters. Eeyore: Some folks see him as depressed I see him as a realist. Merryweather: She always made me smile, think because she reminded me of my grandmother. Villain... hmmm, probably Ursula, just because even though she was evil there was something fun about the way she was portrayed.

**Janice Gelb:** Gotta go with Scar from *The Lion King* for pure evil, although in terms of shivers-down-the-spine scary, Shere Khan from *The Jungle Book* wins. For heroes, I'm clearly way more /d/i/s/c/e/r/n/i/n/g/ judgmental than my peers: for example, I thought Merida from *Brave* was a spoiled brat and Anna from *Frozen* was wimpy. (Don't get me started on the incredibly poor parenting in that

movie either...) I'm going with an obscure, not-pure-Disney choice: Ralph from *Wreck-It Ralph*. He shows unlikely smarts and courage, and personal growth and sacrifice.

**John Donat:** Villian - Gaston. Looks like everyone's friend, but um, no... Hero...still thinking about it.

**David Abzug:** Hero - Lilo. No one in the history of Disney has her heart, fierce belief, and ability to stand up to anything! Villain - Yzma. No villain has made me laugh so much in my life, in any film.

Bonnie Jones: The evil queen from *Snow White* scared me.

**Helen Montgomery:** Villain – Maleficent from the original *Sleeping Beauty*. I wrote a whole article about her for this issue. Hero – in the animated Disney films, probably Robin Hood. He's delightfully snarky, loyal to his friends, and trying to make things better. From live action Disney, I love *Mary Poppins*. She's got a lovely combination of realism and magic to her.







# EDITORIAL BY JAMES BACON

Disney, the cartoons and films of Walt Disney, was not as pervasive when I was a child as it is now. In Ireland when I was a child in the 70's and 80's, there was a rarity to the films and lack of merchandise. This may sound strange, but it was not for want of willing.

Film screenings seemed to have no pattern, well to me as a child. I have absolutely mixed up the knowledge of seeing an animated film and reading it in a book. Seriously, *The Fox and the Hound*, *Tod and Copper*, did I see it when I was eight? Did I see *The Rescuers* when I was four? I am truly not sure, but I had books, and even a huge poster of *The Rescuers* in my room. A unique situation to be faced with. I know *Mary Poppins*, *The Aristocats*, *Snow White*, *Winnie the Pooh*, *Jungle Book*, were all films I saw, but I am not sure of they were re-releases in the early eighties, on video, or on TV.

Clips were a big deal. TV programmes and specials at Christmas would have parts of Disney films

cut together, with real people introducing them, and so I got to see parts of films, and maybe then read the book in the Library, and so think I know the film, and indeed, have not watched it. This ranges for many films - *The Lady and the Tramp*, the spaghetti scene, I have seen many times. Part of *Sleeping Beauty*, *Song of the South* with the Zippity Do Dah song, *Dumbo's* I Can Fly - these are all very vivid, but utterly out of context as the whole film was not shown.

What I did know at the time was that the promise of a Disney Film was a double edged sword. My expectations of a cartoon would suddenly be dashed, when a Cat or Volkswagen Beetle would appear, and I would be expected to laugh, while wondering what can I do to make this dreadful time go by faster. The amount of live action Disney films, that really, I have wonderfully chosen never ever to watch again, that tainted my view of what Disney was, is unreal.

There were Disney elements, so I knew of Disneyland and Walt Disney World, and photos of these places looked so far away, delightfully fantastic and in many respects high coloured fake feeling, for instance I never realised that the trains in Disney were actual steam trains, but at that time, their paint schemes were bright reds and blues and not at all closer to the more traditional styles, and of course the shape of Victorian American train engines looked so strange compared to the engines I knew. The excitement and interest was high, and looking at books, or the piece of a book that made mention of one of the parks was always entertaining.

Some time in the late 80's and early 90's there was a sudden and huge release of the videos of the animated Disney feature films, as Disney realised or decided to cash in on the product they had. We could get compilations in video stores in the early 80's - Mickey, Sport Goofy, and there would still be clips on TV programmes, and I watched some Disney cartoons repeatedly and still love Donald Duck taking on his nephews in the greatest snowball fight ever.

Now, my brother Trevor loved Winnie the Pooh, as did my first fiancé and so I came to love the books and film, and I can probably say the words to the film, just because of repetition on the video machine. Mom and Dad were adept at finding films or things that Trevor loved and we would all buy into, and indeed, they went to Disneyland Paris and brought me back a few *Star Wars* mementos.

Even when I visited Disneyland Paris myself, although I loved some of the performances, I had not watched *Mulan*, or *Tarzan*, and therefore was somewhat unaware of these films. Indeed, I am certain there is a vast amount of Disney I have not yet seen, and I have avoided it, as I have no kids, and my nephew was not that bothered, and *Star Wars* filled that gap, as did lots of my own activities, and my niece is now nearly 4 so we will see and now *Frozen* is something that I know about. I have bought her some Disney stationary for Christmas though, although I failed or rather succeed at Bad Unkling when I sent her a first day cover of a Disney Villain, SCAR, who she immediately identified and then pointed out was not at all to her liking.

Of course, my interest in the Trains at Disney, and the trains in Disney films, and *The Great Locomotive Chase* and so are has been peaked, as one would see from a previous issue, but when it comes to the

Disney that everyone loves and likes, I am definitely a voyeuristic imposter, picking and choosing delicately items that are of interest.

The stamps fascinate me; there are over 5,000 stamps worldwide that feature a Disney character, and I did not realise that initially a state illegally used Disney images on their stamps, which Disney contested in the French courts. Subsequently Disney then set up a process for countries to use their imagery, with a specialist group to facilitate it, and furthermore then there was a collecting club where one could buy folders and subscribe (I assume) to get these worldwide stamps.

If there is one thing Disney can do, it is see money and get people to part with it. I was flabbergasted at just how slick and high a return Disney could make on stamps. The modern day stamps must be pin badges, which are such a big deal, and so collectable. Even 15 years ago at comic and film fairs there were one or two traders who existed with frames and frames of pin badges, and the interest seems to be growing with swap meets and so on.

Yet, I do feel that it has passed me by. Nicely, like a vista out of a window, a sunset where it is nice to ponder or look at, but no need to actually stand on the surface of the sun.

It is nice to read how Disney is for others, and the impact and entertainment value that people get from the machine, as one might say. I am grateful to Helen for this idea and issue and as ever to all our contributors. The art and photos and layout here is really nice, so thank you all, and it's a nice issue I feel and the cover is exceptional. Thanks to Hilary Pearlman for it.

It has been a brisk end of year, and we might just get another issue out yet. Hard to know. We do find ourselves with more ideas and good intentions than issues, which is a problem of success that one should not complain about and indeed, I do not, they will percolate and when the time is right, come forth.

I will soon be back in Ireland with Nieces and Nephew, and no doubt Disney will form some sort of presence though, be it the *Frozen* Christmas crackers or the hats, and I shall of course watch what ever the childers want to, and enjoy it more than I expected.

And now, I am sure that I recall Mickey Mouse saying 'Merry Christmas Everyone'.



