

The Walt Disney Family Museum presents

Disney Cats & Dogs

**The Walt Disney Animation Research Library and Disney Japan's special exhibition,
which first debuted in Tokyo, Japan,
travels to The Walt Disney Family Museum this Spring
Open June 24, 2023 – January 14, 2024**

San Francisco, May 17, 2023—The Walt Disney Family Museum is honored to host *Disney Cats & Dogs*, a traveling exhibition originally presented in 2021 by the Walt Disney Animation Research Library, Walt Disney Archives, and Disney Japan at Matsuya Ginza—the historic department store in Tokyo—before traveling to additional destinations in Japan. In conjunction with this year's celebration of The Walt Disney Company's 100th anniversary, this unique and exciting exhibition will be on view for the first time in the United States from Saturday, June 24, 2023 through Sunday, January 14, 2024.

Disney Cats & Dogs explores the evolution and innovation of Walt Disney Animation Studios' animal-inspired animation and storytelling through the decades, and the massive undertaking involved in bringing their iconic cats and dogs to life on screen. From loveable main characters like Mickey Mouse's best pal Pluto, Lady and Tramp from *Lady and the Tramp* (1955), Pongo and Perdita from *One Hundred and One Dalmatians*, Duchess from *The Aristocats* (1970), and Oliver from *Oliver & Company* (1988), to supporting sidekicks such as Lucifer from *Cinderella* (1950) and Percy from *Pocahontas* (1995), Walt Disney's love for animals and proclivity for starring cats and dogs in his films has led to their endearing portrayals and prominence in Disney's animated and live-action films to this day.

This extensive collection of over 300 archival reproduction concept sketches, paintings, model sheets, animation drawings, posters, photographs, digital artworks, and final film sequences highlight the true-to-life design and movements of Disney's speaking and non-verbal cats and dogs, perfectly paired with their charismatic personalities and quirks that make them such memorable characters.

Walt was once quoted as reflecting, "Animals have personalities like people, and must be studied." By 1930, he had supported an animation training program for his artists to better understand both human and animal anatomy, with live animals often brought into the Studios for the artists to observe and sketch up close. As evidenced in *Bambi* (1942), Walt's artists were able to successfully bring their cast of animal characters to the big screen with realistic movements and mannerisms, while also elevating their individuality and attitudes, ultimately solidifying them as some of Disney's most beloved animated characters for generations to come.

This exhibition also gives visitors an insight into Walt's love of animals with archival photographs, quotes, and personal stories on display. Walt's family cared for many cats and dogs throughout his life, and he often found inspiration for sequences in his films from these animal friends. Even in the early days of the Disney Brothers Cartoon Studio—known today as The Walt Disney Company—Walt would create roles for his Uncle Robert Disney's German Shepherd, Peggy. Her live-action debut in the Alice Comedies in 1924 marked the first appearance of a real-life Disney dog, and she quickly became a fan favorite.

"Serving both as best friends and heroes of the story, cats and dogs have played a key role in the success of certain Disney films," says Executive Director of The Walt Disney Family Museum, Kirsten Komoroske. "I am excited to expand the museum's collaborative relationship with the Walt Disney Animation Research Library and Walt Disney Archives—as well as our new partnership with Disney Japan—by bringing this whimsical and vibrant exhibition to San Francisco."

The wide array of drawings, paintings, photographs, and posters on view in *Disney Cats & Dogs* have been provided by the Walt Disney Animation Research Library (ARL) and Walt Disney Archives. The Animation Research

Library works to conserve the heritage of the Walt Disney Animation Studios, and the Walt Disney Archives conserves the heritage of The Walt Disney Company. Both serve as resources to the Company for creative inspiration, research, brand enhancement, and product development. Most importantly, the ARL carefully stores, digitizes, and archives works of art related to Disney animation so that they can be studied and appreciated by future generations.

Many of the delicate works that were sourced for this exhibition—such as original watercolor paintings and pastel illustrations from as early as the 1930s—are at risk of being damaged if removed from storage. While the appreciation of original art is undeniably valuable, there are significant benefits to engaging with reproductions in certain contexts, such as interactive elements within gallery spaces. By utilizing professional-grade reproductions in *Disney Cats & Dogs*, we can provide visitors with a broader and more inclusive range of educational and creative activities without the risk of damaging irreplaceable masterpieces. This approach also allows museum guests the opportunity to see unique details of these historic artworks up close.

Family-friendly interactives and public programs offered throughout the run of the exhibition will include a pet portrait drawing station, rotating activities with the museum's Studio Team, community events with local shelters and organizations, and monthly screenings of films showcased in *Disney Cats & Dogs*.

The Museum Store will have imported exhibition merchandise from Disney Japan, created especially for this exhibition.

Disney Cats & Dogs will open to the public in The Walt Disney Family Museum's Diane Disney Miller Exhibition Hall from Saturday, June 24, 2023 through Sunday, January 14, 2024.

ABOUT THE WALT DISNEY FAMILY MUSEUM

The Walt Disney Family Museum presents the fascinating story and achievements of Walt Disney, the man who raised animation to the level of fine art, transformed the film industry, tirelessly pursued innovation, and created a global, yet distinctively American legacy. Opened in October 2009, the 40,000-square-foot facility features innovative technology alongside a vast collection of historic materials and artifacts that bring Disney's achievements to life. Early drawings and animation, movies, music, listening stations, a spectacular model of Disneyland, and much more are presented in a myriad of interactive galleries. The museum is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located in the scenic Presidio of San Francisco.

Hours: Open Thursday through Sunday: 10am to 5:30pm, last gallery entry at 4:30pm. Closed Mondays through Wednesdays and the following public holidays: January 1, Thanksgiving Day, and December 25.

Where: The Presidio of San Francisco, 104 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, CA 94129

Tickets: Main Museum ticket: \$25 adults; \$20 seniors & students; \$15 youth.

Disney Cats & Dogs Special Exhibition with main museum ticket: \$5 add-on for all.

Disney Cats & Dogs Special Exhibition stand-alone ticket: \$15 adults; \$10 seniors, students & youth.

Museum admission and special exhibition admission is free for members, children under 5, and active and retired military personnel, as well as their spouses/dependents with valid ID.

Contact: 415.345.6800 | waltdisney.org/cats-and-dogs

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