

DIRECTING AT

DISNEY

THE WALT  
DISNEY  
FAMILY  
MUSEUM

Traveling  
Exhibition



# Exhibition Overview



Based on the book *Directing at Disney: The Original Directors of Walt's Animated Films* written by Pete Docter and Don Peri, *Directing at Disney* is an exhibition from The Walt Disney Family Museum centered on prominent directors in animation who worked at The Walt Disney Studios during Walt's lifetime.

The often-unseen work of the director is crucial to the animation process: They are project managers, problem solvers, inventors, and technicians. The evolution of the role is intimately tied to the history of the animation industry. This exhibition spotlights the personalities who shaped some of Disney's most famous cartoons.

# Meet Pete Docter & Don Peri

**Pete Docter** is the Oscar®-winning director of *Monsters, Inc.* (2001), *Up* (2009), *Inside Out* (2015), and *Soul* (2020), and Chief Creative Officer at Pixar Animation Studios. Most recently, he served as the Executive Producer of Pixar's *Elemental* (2023) and *Inside Out 2* (2024).



**Don Peri** is a Disney historian and the author of *Working with Walt* and *Working with Disney*, in addition to serving as the coauthor of *Walt Disney's First Lady of Imagineering: Harriet Burns*. He has consulted for the Walt Disney Family Foundation and lectured on Disney history at many venues including Walt Disney Animation Studios, Pixar Animation Studios, The Walt Disney Company Consumer Products Division, Disneyland (for Cast Members), and The Walt Disney Family Museum.



*Those men who have worked closely with me in trying to organize and keep the studio rolling, and keep its chin above the water, should not be envied. Frankly, those fellows catch plenty of hell, and a lot of you can feel lucky that you don't have too much contact with me.*

—Walt Disney

"Those men who have worked closely with me in trying to organize and keep the studio rolling, and keep its chin above the water, should not be envied. Frankly, those fellows catch plenty of hell, and a lot of you can feel lucky that you don't have too much contact with me."  
—Walt Disney

# Exhibition Themes

## Guests will learn about:

- The lives and careers of Disney's most prominent directors
- The methods directors used to manage animators and animation
- How the role of the director evolved in tandem with technological advancements and growth of the studio



*This was so intuitive about Walt: He could put his fingers on the total theme of a picture in a story so quickly. I know it influenced me all the way through The Jungle Book (1967), to go for the personalities and not get a complicated story. And then, again this guy left so many roots in all of us; all of the pictures I did since then, I went for personality, strong characterization, strong voices that fit the character. It did make the pictures ever so much simpler to construct.*

— Wolfgang “Woolie” Reitherman, Animator and Director



# Exhibition Breakdown

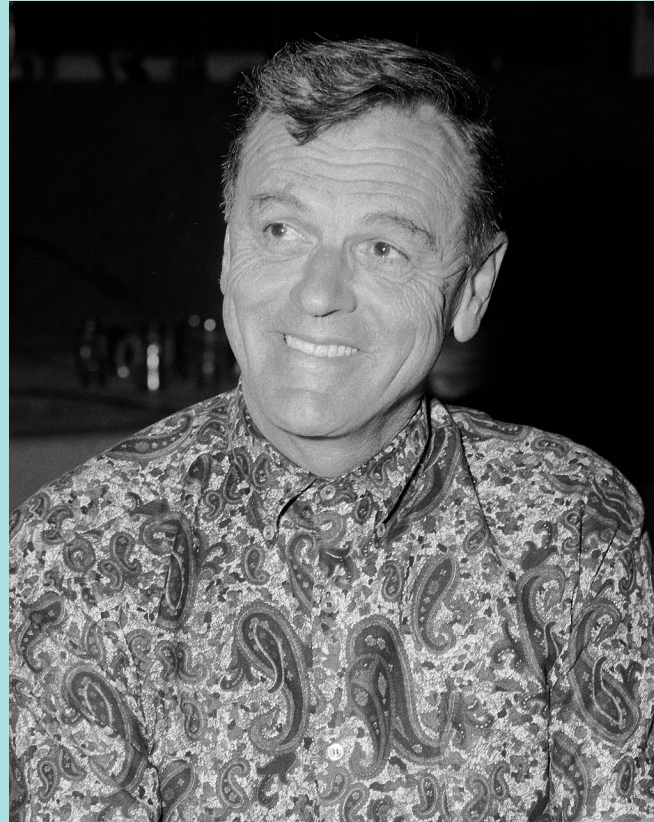
- 47 behind-the-scenes photographs at The Walt Disney Studios
- 25 pieces of studio paraphernalia including interoffice communications, letters, and meeting notes
- 14 original artworks from different stages of the animation development process, including concept art, backgrounds, and animation drawings
- 2 interactive games
- 8 video compilations of Disney cartoons by directors featured in this exhibition
- An exclusive panel video conducted by exhibition curators Pete Docter and Don Peri at the 2024 D23 Ultimate Fan Event



## Featured Directors



Wilfred Jackson



Woolie Reitherman



Ben Sharpsteen

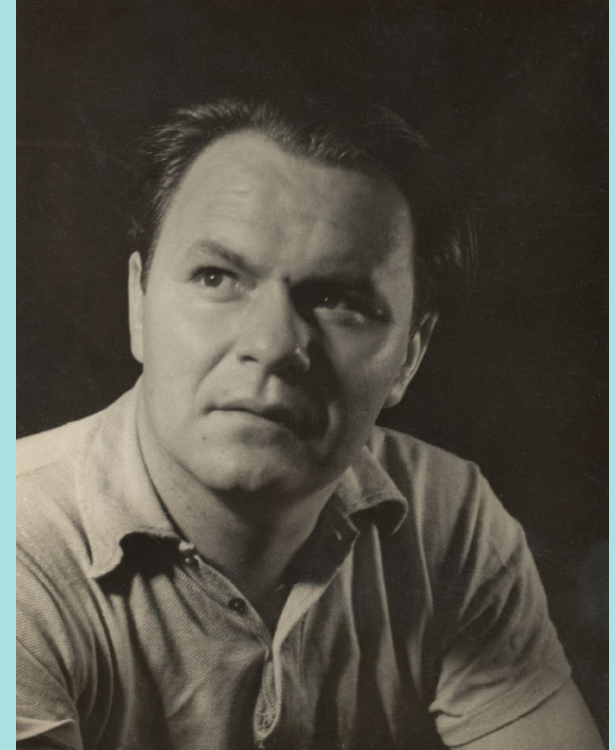
## Featured Directors



Jack King



Ham Luske



Clyde Geronimi

# Featured Directors



Dave Hand

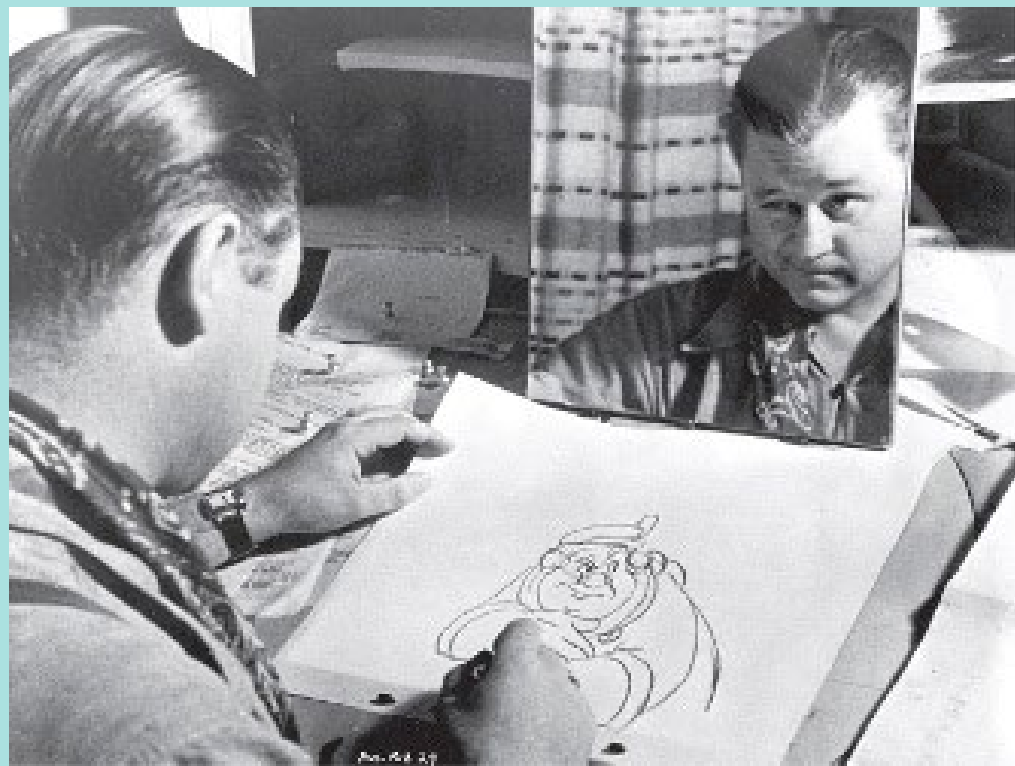


Burt Gillett



Jack Hannah

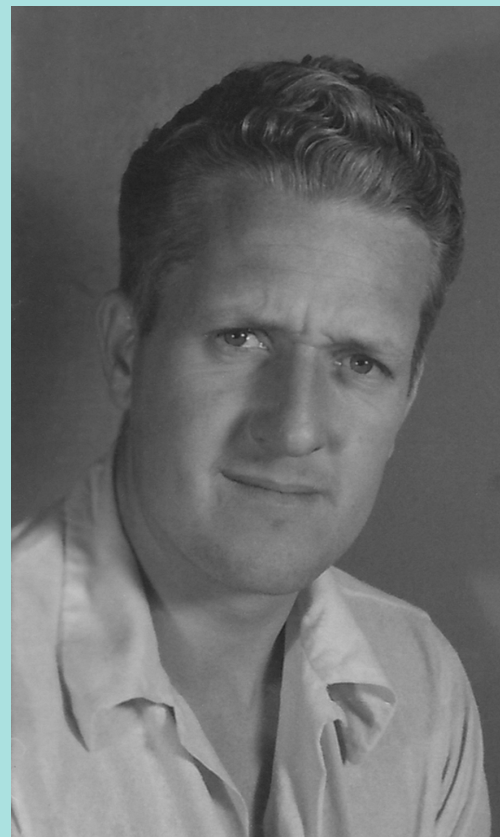
# Featured Directors



Nick Nichols



Ub Iwerks



Jack Kinney

# Featured Directors



& Walt Disney!



**Burt Gillett (CENTER) directing layout artists Charlie Philippi (FOREGROUND) and Hugh Hennesy**



**[LEFT TO RIGHT] Johnny Cannon, Walt Disney, Burt Gillett, Ub Iwerks, Wilfred Jackson, Les Clark, (seated) Jack King, and Ben Sharpsteen gathered around Carl Stalling at the piano and singing "Minnie's Yoo Hoo"**



# Interactive:

## YOU ARE THE DIRECTOR

Experience firsthand how an animation director uses timing and sound together to shape a scene. Press the button to determine how long each storyboard frame should appear on screen. Afterwards, review how the scene feels with your timing.

An interactive quiz stand. It features a large red circular sign at the top with the text 'WHO'S THE DIRECTOR?'. Below the sign is a wooden base with a tablet screen embedded in it. The screen displays the same text and some film stills. The background is a light blue wall with a red base.

WHO'S THE  
DIRECTOR?

# Interactive: WHO'S THE DIRECTOR

In this interactive quiz, test your knowledge of film and animation history by matching directors with the films they made.

For more information, please contact  
**MARINA VILLAR DELGADO**  
Director of Exhibitions and Collections  
**[mvillar@wdfmuseum.org](mailto:mvillar@wdfmuseum.org)**

THE WALT  
DISNEY  
FAMILY  
MUSEUM