

The Walt Disney Family Museum presents

***Mary Blair: Mid-Century Magic***

**A new retrospective of the visionary artist's celebrated contributions to Disney animation, attraction design, and American modern art**

On view May 22 – September 7, 2025

**San Francisco, April 8, 2025**—The Walt Disney Family Museum is delighted to announce *Mary Blair: Mid-Century Magic*, a special exhibition exploring the creative vision and achievements of one of Walt Disney's most imaginative and renowned designers and art directors.

On view beginning May 22, 2025, this new showcase of Blair's artwork from the museum's collection will be a reimagined return of a fan-favorite original special exhibition that debuted in 2014: *MAGIC, COLOR, FLAIR: the world of Mary Blair*. Curated by the museum's Director of Collections & Exhibitions Marina Villar-Delgado and based on the original exhibition created by award-winning animator and animation historian John Canemaker, *Mary Blair: Mid-Century Magic* presents a fresh look at Blair's inspirational career, with an expanded selection of works that highlight her later collaborations with Walt on iconic theme park and resort installations, including attractions, façades, and murals.

"Mary Blair was a fearless artist, continually exploring color and style throughout her long career. Our hope is that visitors of all ages find inspiration in her trailblazing, vibrant, and enduring work," says museum Executive Director Kirsten Komoroske.

Known for her whimsical and daring approach to art, Blair's versatility spanned multiple mediums, including watercolor, pencil and ink, collage, and ceramics. *Mary Blair: Mid-Century Magic* will feature nearly 150 artworks and historical photographs exploring her influential role in shaping the look and feel of many of Disney's animated films and theme park experiences—an artistic vision that continues to resonate today. Guests will also have the opportunity to dive deeper into the exhibition experience with hands-on Mary Blair-themed art activities or using their phones to unlock augmented reality interactives.

"Following the popularity of our 2014 special exhibition curated by historian John Canemaker, we are excited to celebrate Mary Blair's remarkable career and visual storytelling at the museum once again", says Villar-Delgado. "Blair was a powerful creative force and independent spirit who not only succeeded in a male-dominated field, but whose ingenuity and talent also made her one of the most influential concept artists of the 20th century."

Posthumously awarded the Disney Legend distinction in 1991, Blair was instrumental in introducing modernism to Walt, and, for nearly 30 years, he touted her unique creative eye and innovative use of color and form to define the aesthetic of his cinematic world. Animator, Imagineer, and Disney Legend Marc Davis—who put Mary's talents on par with French artist Henri Matisse—recalled, "She brought modern art to Walt in a way that no one else did. He was so excited about her work."

Blair became a fundamental member of Walt's production team at The Walt Disney Studios throughout the 1940s and 1950s, with her distinct artistic flair integral to the success of Disney's

postwar animated films. Her work on *The Three Caballeros* (1943) and *Saludos Amigos* (1945)—inspired by a Disney goodwill tour of South America—cemented her place as a creative leader. Her style also left an indelible mark on other beloved feature films such as *Cinderella* (1950), *Alice in Wonderland* (1951), and *Peter Pan* (1953). In the 1960s, Blair contributed to the memorable design of “it’s a small world”—originally conceived for the 1964/65 New York World’s Fair—and later oversaw the development of iconic attractions and murals for both Disneyland and Walt Disney World.

*Mary Blair: Mid-Century Magic* will be on view in the museum’s Lower Lobby and Theater Galleries from Thursday, May 22, through Sunday, September 7, 2025. Entry to the special exhibition is free with general admission, with a suggested donation of \$5 to support the museum’s initiative to present world-class original exhibitions. More information to be announced soon on an exclusive screening in the museum’s Theater, which will include a collection of rare film footage and animated film clips to accompany the artwork featured in *Mary Blair: Mid-Century Magic*.

#### 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.  
**Summer Mondays: Open Mondays beginning Memorial Day, May 26 through Labor Day, September 1.**  
Closed Mondays (prior to May 26 and from September 8 onwards) through Wednesdays and the following public holidays: January 1, Thanksgiving Day, and December 25.
- Where:** 104 Montgomery Street, The Presidio of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA 94129
- Tickets:** General admission ticket: \$25 adults; \$20 seniors & students; \$15 youth.  
*Mary Blair: Mid-Century Magic* special exhibition is free with general admission, suggested donation of \$5.  
Museum admission is free for members, children under 5, and active and retired military personnel, in addition to their spouses/dependents with valid ID.
- Contact:** 415.345.6800 | [waltdisney.org/mary-blair](https://waltdisney.org/mary-blair)
- Follow:** [facebook.com/wdfmuseum](https://facebook.com/wdfmuseum) | Instagram, Threads & X: @wdfmuseum
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