



THE WALT DISNEY FAMILY MUSEUM WELCOMES VISITORS IN THE PRESIDIO OF SAN FRANCISCO

VISIONARY ARTIST, STORYTELLER & ENTREPRENEUR ENRICHED WORLD OF IMAGINATION FOR GENERATIONS

San Francisco, CA—The fascinating and inspiring story of Walt Disney, whose artistry, creativity and vision helped define 20th century American culture, has been brought to life at The Walt Disney Family Museum, which opened in the Presidio of San Francisco on October 1, 2009. The 40,000 square foot Museum illuminates Walt Disney's tremendous successes, disappointments, and unyielding optimism as he pursued innovation and excellence while entertaining and enchanting generations worldwide.

The creator of Mickey Mouse, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, Disneyland, and the global yet distinctly American company that bears his name, Disney was a risk-taker who started his first business at the age of 19 and worked tirelessly to elevate animation to an art form. He invented timeless and much beloved characters and stories that brought the fantastical to life and continue to inspire a sense of wonder. Through animated and live-action films, television programs, and theme parks, Disney created global symbols, icons, and characters that, more than 40 years after his death, are an indelible part of popular culture.

“My father has one of the most well-known names around the world, but as the Disney ‘brand’ has grown, the man has become lost,” said Walt’s daughter, Diane Disney Miller, who co-founded the Museum. “We are committed to telling the story of Walt Disney’s life, in his own words, and in the words of others who knew him well and worked with him. My father was very open, and in the many conversations and interviews that you will hear in the galleries, you learn the story of his life. It is a wonderful story, and Dad himself loved to tell it. Thanks to the amazing work of many dedicated people, we are fortunate to be able to tell it here using the tools he worked with—art, music, film and technology—to present an honest yet affectionate portrait of this amazing artist and man.”

Inside the Museum: An American Story

The stories of Disney’s life, creativity, family, and the processes and innovations he brought to his art are told through state-of-the-art exhibits in ten interactive galleries. Highlights of the Museum include:

- Original drawings that Disney made in his youth
- Drawings and cartoons from Laugh-O-gram Films, Disney’s first company
- The earliest known drawings of Mickey Mouse

- Storyboards, a Disney innovation that maps out timeless film classics
- The technically innovative Multiplane Camera that brought vibrancy and depth to his revolutionary feature film, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*
- An interactive station that allows visitors to synchronize film and music
- Disney's 26 individual Academy Awards as well as the unique *Snow White* Academy Award®, which includes a full-size Oscar® and seven miniature castings
- Gallery 9, an eye-popping 2-story gallery that features the narrow-gauge Lilly Belle train Disney built for his Hollywood home, a 14-foot diameter model of the Disneyland of Walt's imagination and dozens of video screens that showcase his television programs from the 1950s and beyond
- In addition to the galleries, the Museum contains a 114-seat screening facility, a learning center, a store, and a café.

Throughout the exhibits, visitors will find rare film clips, concept art, scripts, musical scores and cameras that Disney and his staff used in creating his characters and films. The Museum's visually exciting design incorporates drawings that come to life. This includes scenes from animated shorts and movies, over 200 monitors, and audio clips of Disney, his family and his colleagues narrating pivotal and entertaining moments in Disney's life and career. Visitors can also see hundreds of individual animation cels that reveal the labor-intensive animation process.

The exhibits pay tribute to Disney's many groundbreaking achievements and innovations, among them:

- The first film that successfully synchronized sound and animation
- The first movie soundtrack released as a consumer recording
- The first original song from a cartoon to become a national hit ("Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?")
- One of the first nature documentaries and the first to receive an Academy Award®

Disney and his family are also represented in photographs, artifacts, and home movies. Although famous for his work behind the camera for Walt Disney Productions, Disney was an avid home moviemaker throughout his life. The Walt Disney Family Museum exhibits several film clips that range from experiments with trick shots (unspilling a glass of milk) to reels that documented Disney's life at home with his wife, Lilly; his daughters, Diane and Sharon; his brother and business partner, Roy; and his brother's wife, Edna Francis.

About Walt Disney

The Museum chronicles Disney's childhood, young adulthood and his early, fitful starts at developing live and animated films, including the difficulties with his first cartoon company in Kansas City. After Laugh-O-gram Films went bankrupt in 1923, Disney took the train to California, with \$40 in his pocket. But by the end of the 1920s, Disney had

risen to international fame and recognition with the creation of the world's most famous mouse. His studio also enjoyed great financial success—and changed the animation industry—with *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937), its first feature-length animated film and a movie that peers had warned Disney against making. Yet Disney's animation studio nearly went bankrupt after the completion of *Fantasia* (1940), a film that received favorable reviews but did not win large audiences. It is now celebrated as a cinematic landmark and is notable for being the first major film released in stereophonic sound.

Throughout these decades, Disney pushed groundbreaking technological innovations that revolutionized animation and enhanced story, character development, and color, using dimensionality and original music to improve his storytelling. These innovations included synchronizing sound with animated images and the use of story boards, multiplane cameras, and optical printers. He consistently challenged himself and his employees to surpass what they had already achieved.

The Museum illuminates Disney's parallel interests in the fantastic and real. After completing the early-1940s animated masterpieces *Fantasia*, *Dumbo*, and *Bambi*, and a hiatus mandated by World War II during which the Studio produced morale-boosting films, Disney began to expand the scope of the studio's work by making live-action nature documentaries that grew out of his childhood love of the outdoors. He sent a team of naturalists to Alaska for a year to film anything they might find interesting. The result was *Seal Island*, which won the 1949 Academy Award® for best two-reel documentary.

From a very early age, Walt Disney was enchanted by the promise of technology. In addition to being an early champion of color television, stereo, and widescreen technology, he pursued his interest in transportation with the first daily-operating Monorail system in the United States and by creating the PeopleMover—an innovative tram system with no on-board motors—in Disneyland.

Toward the end of his life, Walt Disney developed groundbreaking attractions for global events, notably the 1964-65 New York World's Fair. Beginning in 1960, Walt and his key creative executives approached several American corporations with the intent of collaborating on major shows and attractions for the Fair. The result was four of the Fair's most popular attractions: the General Electric Progressland featuring Walt Disney's Carousel of Progress; the UNICEF Pavilion sponsored by Pepsi-Cola featuring, "it's a small world;" the Ford Wonder Rotunda featuring Walt Disney's Magic Skyway; and the State of Illinois Pavilion featuring *Great Moments with Mr. Lincoln* and the famous audio animatronic of the president. These attractions were later exported to Disneyland in California.

Walt Disney's work with Robert Moses on the World's Fair pavilions inspired him to develop a new paradigm, EPCOT (Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow), a

project Walt described as “a community of tomorrow that will never be completed, but will always be introducing, testing, and demonstrating new materials and new systems...a showcase to the world of the ingenuity and imagination of American free enterprise.”

The Walt Disney Family Museum, L.L.C. is owned and operated by the Walt Disney Family Foundation, a non-profit foundation, and is not a division of The Disney Company.

Tickets available at the door, or at www.waltdisney.org.

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