Issue 68

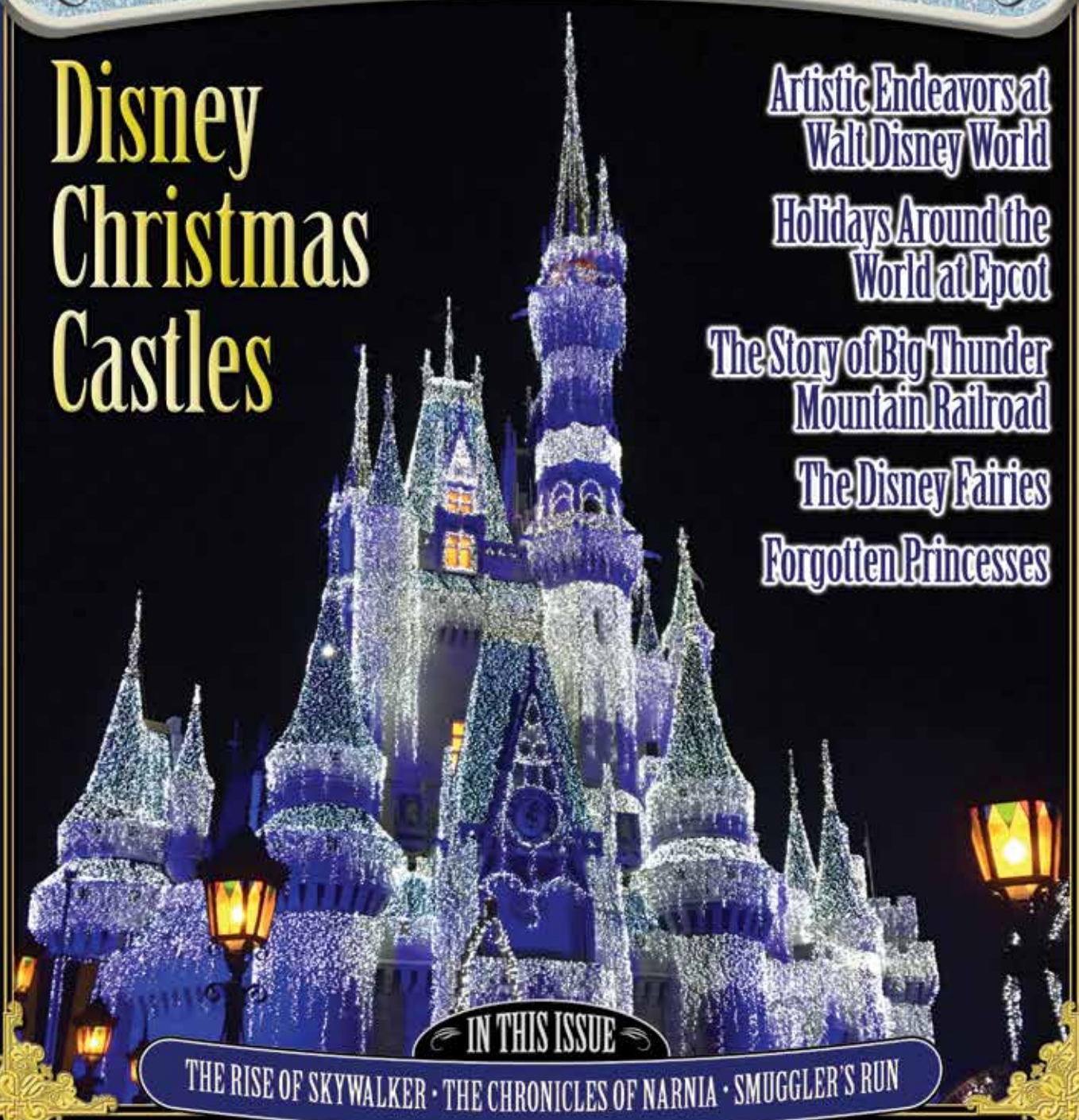
Winter 2019

MAGICAL MERRIMENT

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SHARING THE MAGIC OF WALT DISNEY WORLD

Disney Christmas Castles



Artistic Endeavors at Walt Disney World

Holidays Around the World at Epcot

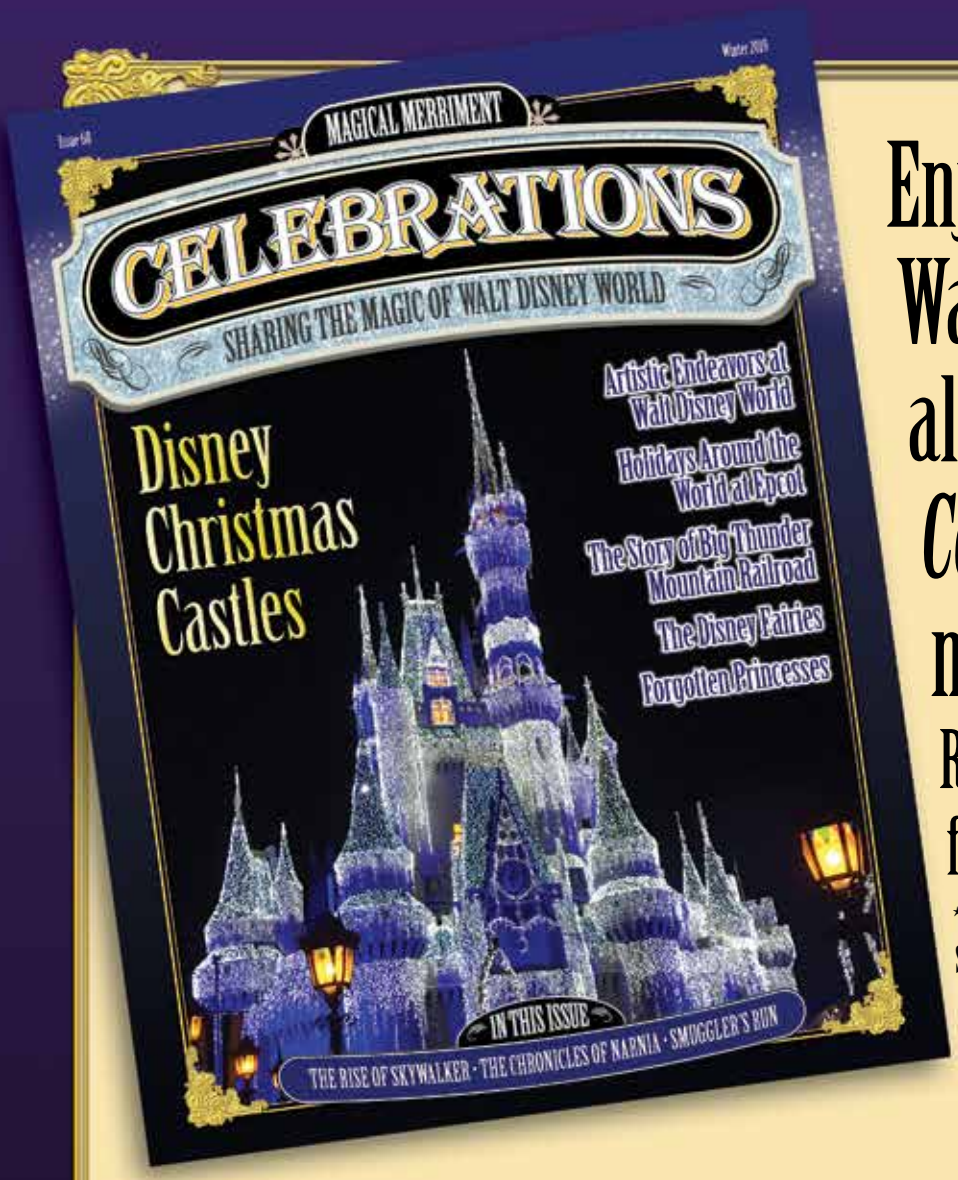
The Story of Big Thunder Mountain Railroad

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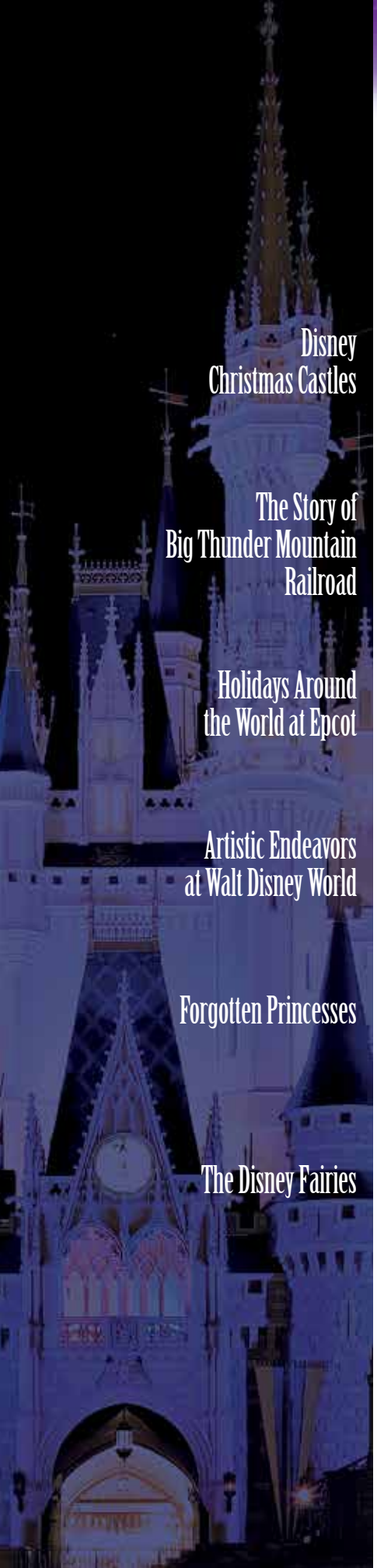
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CELEBRATIONS

DISCOVERING THE MAGIC OF WALT DISNEY WORLD

Issue 68 Winter













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The Magic World of Creativity

A day in Walt Disney World can fill you with wonderment, awe, thrills, and yes…magic, and the way it touches each and every one of us is something we will never forget. Disney has the power to trigger so many emotions, and it can just as easily bring a tear of nostalgic memory to your eye as it can bring a yelp of exhilaration. But there's something else that Disney often brings to life, and that's the creative spirit that lives in each and every one of us. The parks and resorts are filled with wondrous works of art…and by art we just don't mean paintings, but music, theater, architecture, and storytelling, just to name a few.

Not only do all of these elements add a whole new layer of magic to the Disney experience, but they can often inspire us to tap into our inner artist…or at least to imagine would it be like to bring these dreams to life. Best of all, Walt Disney World offers us plenty of opportunities to unleash our inner Rembrandts or Beethovens. As you'll see later in this issue, you can participate in "classes" and create your very own works of Disney art. You can create music with the wave of your hand at the Imagination pavilion, and even be a part of the show and show off your acting chops at Enchanted Tales With Belle or with the World Showcase Players.

Or, if you prefer, you can sit back and marvel at all of the wonderful works of art that surround you. You may not immediately think of Disney as a place to appreciate the arts, but art is everywhere to be found. At the resorts you'll find beautiful paintings, tapestries, and murals, and in the parks, take note of the amazing craftsmanship that goes into creating these different worlds that we can explore. Sure, sometimes that means an obvious painting (Haunted Mansion anyone?), but that same creativity can be seen in the architecture, signage, and even the costumes worn by Cast Members. And of course all of this was inspired by a collection of animated classics that elevated simple cartoon to a whole new art.
And who knows, a visit to Walt Disney World may even inspire you to draw your favorite character, paint a beautiful watercolor landscape, learn to play your favorite Disney song on the family piano, or even craft your own story. Inspiration can come from anywhere, so the next time you visit, open up your creative spirit and let the inner artist in you come alive!

Enjoy the magic!
Tim Foster



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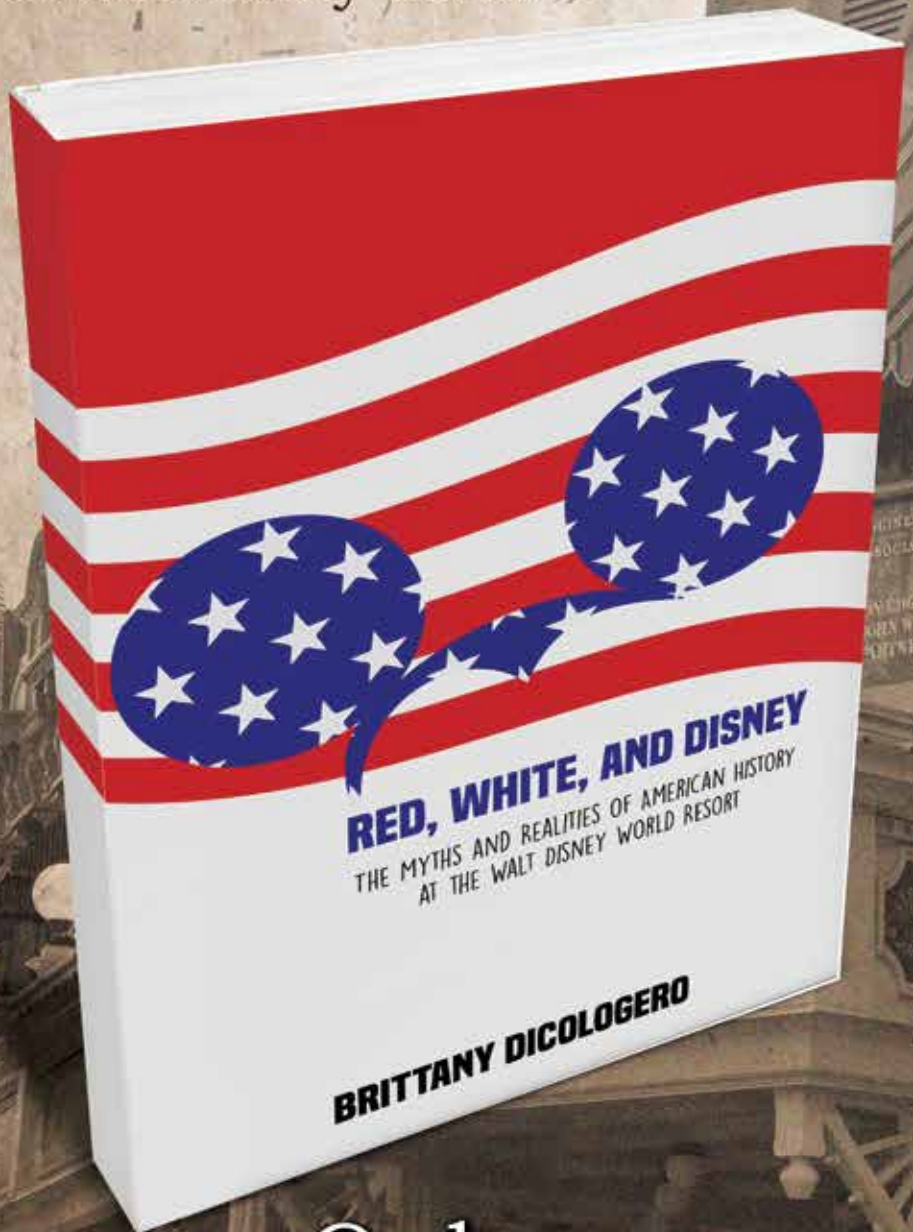
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Contributors



Brittany DiCologero is the author of Red, White, and Disney: The Myths and Realities of American History at the Walt Disney World Resort. As a graduate of St. Anselm College with a B.A. in History, she uses the skills learned in her major to research and write about Disney and to work as a freelance writer and proofreader for businesses and individuals. You can check out her blog at castlepartyblog.com



Lori Elias credits her passion for Disney to longtime friend Tara Miller, a Cast Member with the Disney Cruiseline. Lori is a Cleveland-area middle school music teacher by day, freelance writer by night, and Disney fan 24/7. She has written for a number of music publications, and is thrilled to be able to share her love of all things Disney.



Elizabeth Mastrangelo lives on the north shore of Massachusetts, where she has taught high school English for nearly twenty years. Liz works continually on writing publishable fiction, poetry, and essays, and enjoys freelance copywriting and editing. Her late-blooming yet wild passion for Walt Disney World started growing in 2014, when she and her husband introduced their daughter and son to the magic of the parks.



A certified Disney fanatic since his first trip to Disneyland in 1985, Shaun Jex continues to make regular pilgrimages to Disney parks, now in the company of his wife and two children. When he isn't busy researching Walt's magical worlds, he edits the Citizens' Advocate newspaper in Coppell, Texas. Follow the Disney Adventures of Shaun and Kara Jex on Twitter @marcelinedepot



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Britta Stephens is a Disney blogger and freelance writer living in Atlanta, GA. She's a Disneyaphile, dogmom, hairstylist and all around cool chick. Britta is well versed, knowledgeable, and slightly obsessed with all things Haunted Mansion. When she's not at Disney World, she can be found hiking with her hubby and pups, singing the opening to The Lion King to her Green House plants, and wishing she was at Disney World. She is also the proud creator of the hashtag, #firstwehauntedmansion thenwedothethings



Ian Westhoff's been a life long Disney fan for as long as he can remember, but his true passion for all things Disney began when he met his beautiful wife Elizabeth, a fellow Cast Member, while working at The Disney Store. Ian loves to spend his vacations with his wife and two beautiful princess' Lily and Holly at Disney World. When not at Disney, Ian can be found in New Jersey with his family and faithful dog Piper, as well as writing for http://toy-lines.com/

Disney News

Historic Transformation of Epcot Underway at Walt Disney World Resort



Walt Disney once said Epcot "would always be in a state of becoming" – it is a place that changes with the times. Over the next several years, the Walt Disney World Resort theme park will live up to that promise in a whole new way as it continues the biggest transformation of any Disney park in history, bringing the next generation of immersive storytelling to life through a plethora of new attractions and experiences.

Epcot will be unified with four neighborhoods that each speak to important aspects of the world and its people: World Showcase, World Celebration, World Nature and World Discovery. These neighborhoods will be filled with new experiences rooted in authenticity and innovation that take guests to new destinations, where the real is made fantastic in a celebration of curiosity, hands-on wonder and the magic of possibility.

World Showcase

World Showcase will continue to be a celebration of culture, cuisine, architecture and traditions – infused with new magic.

The United Kingdom pavilion will welcome the first attraction inspired by Mary Poppins. *(opposite)* Guests will step in time down Cherry Tree Lane past Admiral Boom's house, then enter Number 17, home of the Banks family, where their adventure will begin.

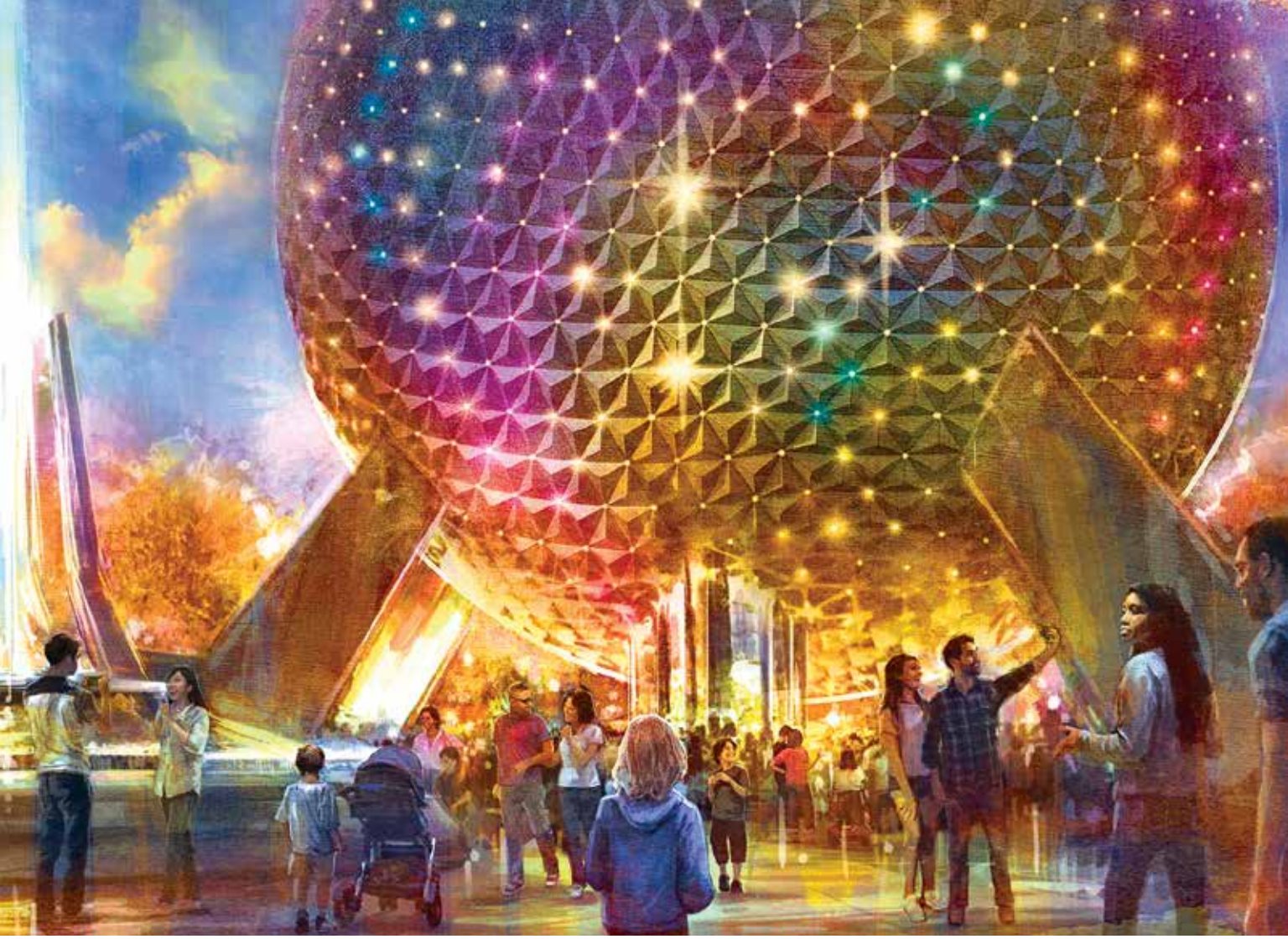
In 2020, following the limited-time run of "Epcot Forever," the new "HarmonioUS"will debut as the largest nighttime spectacular ever created for a Disney park. It will celebrate how the music of Disney inspires people the world over, carrying them away harmoniously on a stream of familiar Disney tunes reinterpreted by a diverse group of artists from around the globe. "HarmonioUS" will feature massive floating set pieces, custom-built LED panels, choreographed moving fountains, lights, pyrotechnics, lasers and more.

In summer 2020, the France pavilion will offer even more for guests to discover, including the much-anticipated attraction Remy's Ratatouille Adventure,where guests will shrink to the size of Chef Remy and race through Gusteau's restaurant on a wild adventure. Summer 2020 will also see the debut of a delicious new restaurant in the France pavilion, La Crêperie de Paris, offering both table- and quick-service options featuring a menu from celebrity chef Jérôme Bocuse.

Also in the France pavilion, the classic Impressions de France film will be joined by the new "Beauty and the Beast Sing-Along," debuting in January 2020 and directed by Don Hahn, producer of both the animated and live-action versions of this tale as old as time.

"Canada Far and Wide in Circle-Vision 360"will debut in January 2020 in the Canada pavilion with new scenes and a new story.

In the China pavilion, "Wondrous China" will take guests on a spectacular journey across the country, filmed and presented in a completely seamless 360-degree digital format.





Artwork ©Disney



World Celebration

World Celebration will offer new experiences that connect guests to one another and the world around them.

The iconic Spaceship Earth will remain a voyage through time as the journey transforms to reflect the power of storytelling to unite the human experience. New narration and an entirely new musical score will focus on the moments and ideas that define the story of humanity. Guests will follow a magical "story light" that brings the entire experience to life in dynamic ways, giving each scene energy and beauty that ties the entire journey together.

A new pavilion *(above)* will be the perfect place for live events, and the home base for Epcot's signature festivals. It will provide a stunning elevated view of the entire park and an ideal spot to witness Epcot's nighttime spectacular. This beautiful three-level structure will have one of the most remarkable architectural designs at any Disney park, featuring a plaza level, a middle expo level, and a park that sits in the sky on the top level.

Epcot's entrance plaza will be transformed with new experiences that connect guests with the world around them, welcoming them with a reimagined fountain, new pathways and sweeping green spaces that beautify the entryway. The design will pay homage to the origins of Epcot.

As guests exit Spaceship Earth, they will discover a breathtaking new view of World Showcase from Dreamers Point. World Celebration will also feature a new statue celebrating the legacy of the original dreamer, Walt Disney, plus beautiful natural environments and global design elements filled with Disney magic and surprises, including a wishing tree in an enchanted forest and a story fountain celebrating the power and music of iconic Disney storytelling.

World Nature

World Nature is dedicated to understanding and preserving the beauty, awe and balance of the natural world. It will include The Land and The Seas with Nemo & Friends pavilions.

Journey of Water, Inspired by "Moana" will be the first experience inspired by the hit Walt Disney Animation Studios film. This lush exploration trail will invite guests to meet and play with magical, living water. The water will



have a life of its own – just like Moana's friend, the ocean – and guests will learn about the importance of the natural water cycle. *(shown above)*

The Land pavilion's new film, "Awesome Planet," which showcases the beauty, diversity and dynamic story of the planet, will begin welcoming guests in January 2020.

World Discovery

In World Discovery, stories about science, technology and intergalactic adventure come to life.

Guardians of the Galaxy: Cosmic Rewind will be the first "other-world" showcase pavilion at Epcot. The adventure starts in the "Galaxarium," a planetarium-like exhibition that explores the similarities and mysteries of the formation of Earth's galaxy and Xandar. Guests will be invited to learn more about the treasures Xandar has to share – until the moment when the Guardians of the Galaxy arrive, and adventures across the cosmos ensue. The attraction will feature a new innovation from Walt Disney Imagineering – a storytelling coaster that rotates 360 degrees to focus guests on the action, including the first reverse launch on a Disney coaster.

An expansion of the Mission: SPACE pavilion, the new restaurant Space 220 will be a culinary experience featuring the celestial panorama of a space station, including daytime and nighttime views of Earth from 220 miles up. Guests will board a special elevator for a journey to a space station that is home to an incredible dining experience. Along the way, viewports will give guests real-time perspective as they travel high above the planet. Once they arrive, guests will enjoy fantastic meals and drinks while taking in views that are truly out of this world.

ThePLAY! pavilion will open in time for the 50th anniversary of Walt Disney World. In this digital metropolis, guests will discover an interactive city bursting with games, activities and experiences that connect them with friends, family and beloved Disney characters – both real and virtual – like never before. As part of this new pavilion, guests will have the chance to help legendary fashion icon Edna Mode on her quest to rid the world of uninspired style, or make a splash competing in a water-balloon fight hosted by Huey, Dewey, Louie and Webby.

Artwork ©Disney

Walt Disney Imagineering Presents the Epcot Experience: Peek into a Bright Future for the Beloved Walt Disney World Resort Theme Park



At Walt Disney World Resort, Epcot continues the biggest transformation of any Disney theme park in history, developing groundbreaking attractions, magnificent new landscapes and unforgettable entertainment spectaculars. Guests are invited to see an enticing glimpse into this bright future when they visit "Walt Disney Imagineering presents the Epcot Experience," an immersive new showcase of exciting changes on the way for this beloved theme park.

The Epcot Experience provides the first in-depth look at the park's transformation, blending cutting-edge technology and fun with personal moments to create an environment that honors everything guests love about Epcot. Located inside the Odyssey Events Pavilion – between Test Track and the Mexico pavilion – the Epcot Experience invites guests into a multi-faceted celebration of the past, present and future of the park:

360-Degree Film Presentation

Guests enter a large, circular, darkened room where they are surrounded by a seamless, 360-degree, floor-to-ceiling screen showing a continuous 12-minute film celebrating the past, present and future of Epcot.

The immersive presentation displays archival footage going back well before Epcot opened in 1982, taking guests on a journey to present day and beyond. It showcases new pavilion icons that will integrate into the park, and previews experiences in development with vignettes featuring:

- The PLAY! pavilion
- A new vision for Spaceship Earth
- Sensational new attractions based on popular films
- The park's forthcoming nighttime spectacular, "HarmonioUS"

In the center of the room, a three-dimensional artfully designed model of Epcot appears to continuously change in time with the film, as projection-mapping technology highlights different areas of the park in special ways.

Altogether, the space uses 30 projectors to bring the experience to life and take guests along on the journey of this ambitious next chapter in Epcot's legacy.

Dimensional Photo Opportunities

Guests can have their pictures taken inside four dimensional photo locations specially designed for the Epcot Experience. Perfect for sharing on social media, these photo ops make it seem as if guests are standing atop the iconic Spaceship Earth geosphere or shrunk to the size of



Remy from Disney and Pixar's "Ratatouille," among others.

Display Cases Showcasing Special Items

Throughout the Epcot Experience, display cases feature artifacts, memorabilia and other fascinating items showcasing the past, present and future of Epcot. Pieces include:

- An Epcot park map and medallion from opening day, Oct. 1, 1982, plus a commemorative opening day park ticket
- Epcot pin sets from 1982 and present day
- Models and concept art for future Epcot experiences

The Epcot Experience also features attraction posters from throughout the park's history, plus experiences still on the horizon. Grab-and-go food and drinks are available inside, as well, along with tables and seating.

New Epcot Merchandise

The new Epcot logo unveiled at D23 Expo in August adorns a wide array of new merchandise available inside the park beginning Oct. 1, 2019, including:

- Short- and long-sleeve shirts
- Baseball cap
- Hoodie
- Tote bag
- Journal
- Water bottle
- Mickey Mouse ear hat
- And more to be announced...!

Photo ©Disney

'Minnie's Wonderful Christmastime Fireworks' Nighttime Spectacular

Minnie's Wonderful Christmastime Fireworks" is a new nighttime spectacular that will debut Nov. 8, 2019, as part of Mickey's Very Merry Christmas Party at Magic Kingdom Park at Walt Disney World Resort in Lake Buena Vista, Fla. The holiday extravaganza invites guests to experience the magic of Christmas by painting the sky with fireworks and transforming Cinderella Castle into colorful holiday scenes.



Photos ©Disney





Calendar of Events

Mickey's Very Merry Christmas Party

August 29 - November 23, 2019

Magic Kingdom

This Christmas season, get ready for a magical holiday gathering with your loved ones—and some familiar Disney faces. When Mickey celebrates the season, Magic Kingdom park lights up with excitement for Guests of all ages. Cinderella Castle shimmers. Joyful music fills the air. Disney Characters don their most festive attire. Favorite attractions take on a holiday theme. And enchanting surprises lie around almost every turn!

Event Times & Dates

Mickey's Very Merry Christmas Party takes place from 7:00 PM to midnight on the following dates in 2019:

November: 8, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21, 22 and 24

December: 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 15, 17, 19, 20 and 22

Epcot® International Festival of the Holidays – Candlelight Processional

November 29 - December 30, 2019

Epcot

Hear the stirring story of Christmas as told by a celebrity narrator, and accompanied by a choir and 50-piece orchestra.

Candlelight Narrators

Each night, a celebrity narrator tells the biblical tale of a savior born to a virgin in Bethlehem. All the while, gorgeous choral pieces are woven into the production as an orchestra and choir provide and inspirational backdrop with songs of hope and joy.

This year, the following celebrity line-up will lend their talents to the performance:

Ming-Na Wen · *November 29 through December 1*

Neil Patrick Harris · *December 2 through December 5*

Whoopi Goldberg · *December 6 and 7*

Isabella Rossellini · *December 8 through 10*

Chita Rivera · *December 11 through 12*

Gary Sinise · *December 13 through 15*

Pat Sajak · *December 16 through 18*

Warwick Davis · *December 19 through 21*

Steven Curtis Chapman · *December 22 through 24*

Edward James Olmos · *December 25 and 26*

Marlee Matlin · *December 27 and 28*

Lisa Ling · December 29 and 30

Performances are at 5:00, 6:45 and 8:15 nightly.



Photos ©Disney

"How Do I Save Money At Walt Disney World?"

Lou Mongello, Host of the Award-Winning WDWRadio show, has all the answers in his latest book:

102 Ways to Save Money for and at Walt Disney World

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- Where to stay
- Purchasing Disney theme park tickets
- Saving on Dining in and out of the parks
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Welcome to MouseViews, a special section of *Celebrations Magazine* where you'll get an insider's peek at the Walt Disney World Resort. In every issue we'll bring you a treasure trove of tips, secrets, magical moments, special insights, little known facts and a whole lot more! Whether it's a different look at a familiar attraction, a hidden secret waiting to be discovered, or a helpful piece of advice for your upcoming trip, you're sure to find lots of fun-filled information inside.

So put on your Mickey ears, set your imagination free, and get ready to discover all of those things that make Walt Disney World the most magical place on Earth.

Ready? Then here we go...!



If I Could Play Imagineer...

by Tim Foster



Tim Foster is the creator of Celebrations *magazine and the author of the Guide to the Magic book series, which includes the Guide to the Magic for Kids and the Deluxe Guide to the Magic Autograph & Sticker Book. Tim is also the creator of the www.celebrationspress.com website.*

Who puts the "Magic" in Magic Kingdom? Who puts the "pixie" in pixie dust? Who creates this wonderful place where all of our dreams can come true? Taking inspiration from that original dreamer, Walt Disney, it's Disney's Imagineers of course! Just think of how much fun it would be to come up with new experiences; new innovations; and new magic. Have you ever dreamed of becoming an Imagineer yourself? (If you have, then go for it!). But even if being in Imagineer isn't in your future, it's still fun to pretend. And, probably just like you, I've often played the game of "what if?" in my mind, imagining what it would be like if I were able to be an Imagineer…even if it was only for one day. So here are some totally random (and admittedly somewhat self-serving) things I might do, big and small, if I were holding the Disney Magic Wand. To start, let's head over to Disney's Hollywood Studios (and nope, this isn't even a Star Wars thing!):

The Tower of Terror

Oh how I love the Tower of Terror! The story, the details, the unbelievable special effects…well, everything that is except that drop. It's not that the drop isn't thrilling (and even that it's possible, thanks to an incredible feat of engineering and imaginative know-how!), it's just that it's…well…too thrilling. At least it is for me; one who has forever been plagued with a sensitive tummy. And likewise, too thrilling for the younger set. So if I got to play Imagineer I'd take a cue from Mission: SPACE and offer up a "gentler" version of the Tower of Terror. Since the elevator cars aren't just dropped but controlled (the better to mix up those drops so you never know what's coming next), I would think there's no reason why they couldn't make the drop niiiiice and slow. You'd still have the experience of rising up 13 stories and plummeting down the elevator shaft – but instead of "plummeting" it would be like a gentle return from the Twilight Zone. This could be programmed to be every other drop, or fourth drop, or whatever that case would be; but it would allow for those in the "chicken line" (and I have no shame in admitting that would include me!) to wait for that slow journey into another dimension, knowing that they won't be leaving their lunch behind. The plus is that we can all then experience the wonders that the Tower has to offer. Everyone can marvel at the masterful effects; soak up all the details in the lobby, and to see those ghosts and other Twilight Zone mysteries for themselves. This is one of Disney's greatest attractions…and having the option for a "gentler experience" would allow it to be experienced by all…much as we can all now partake in Mission: SPACE, even if we don't have the "right stuff."

The Mysteries of Space

Speaking of Mission: SPACE, the junior astronaut in me has always dreamed of this sort of attraction. I remember when Mission: SPACE was announced, my first thought was that it might be a slow, dark ride…in keeping with the other attractions in Epcot (which were more about discovery and education then wild thrills). While I do love orbiting the Earth on the Mission: SPACE Green Team, I wonder what it would be like to have an attraction that took you on a tour of the Solar System and beyond. And I'm thinking more in a Spaceship Earth or Horizons way…slow, relaxing, and more about staring in awe at the wonders that unfold around you.



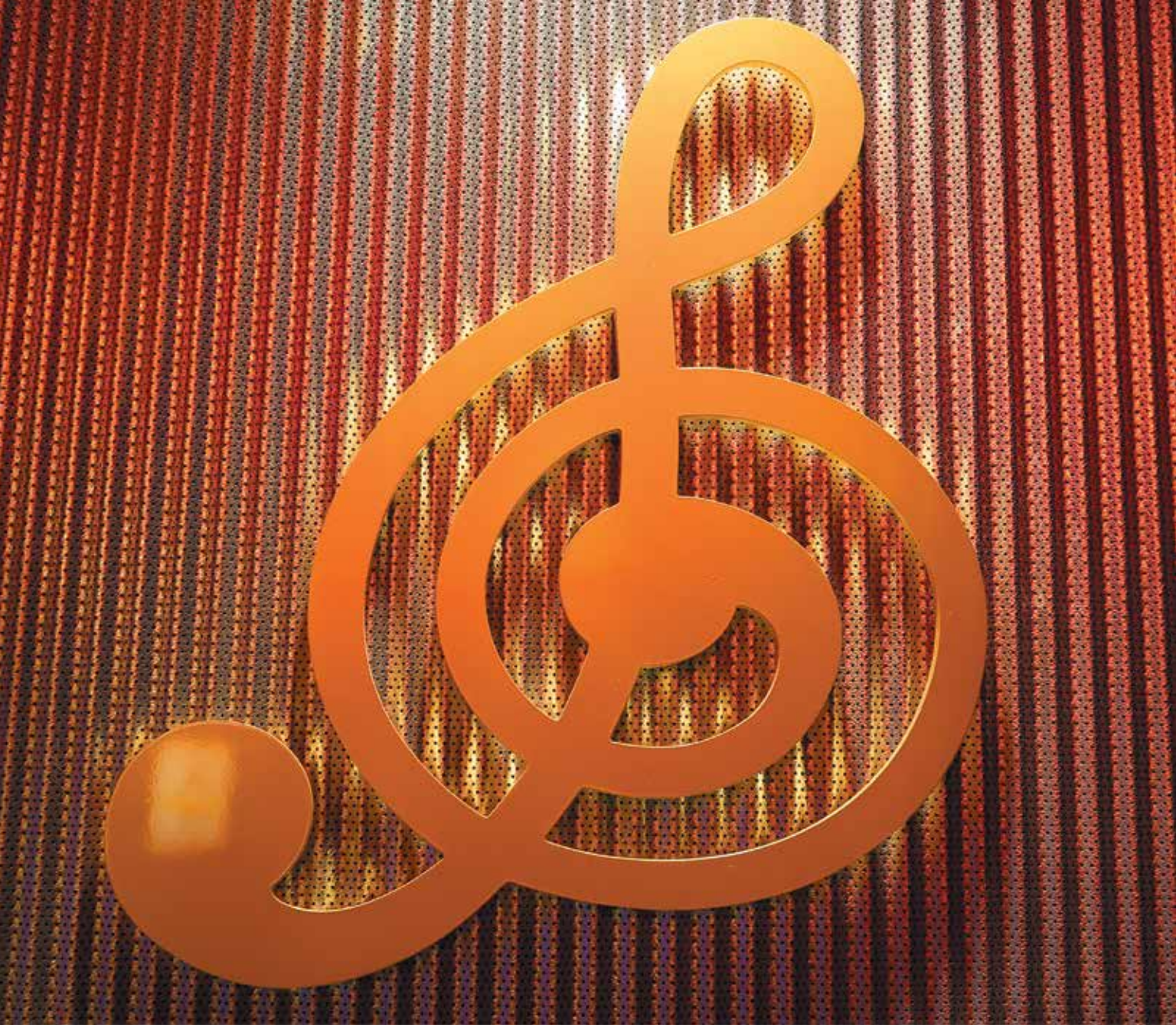
Photo ©Tim Foster



Imagine if you traced a path around Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune…and yes Pluto (you will always be a planet in my eyes). And even to destinations far, far away. To pass through colorful nebula, to gaze upon magnificent galaxies…and maybe get caught in the crushing pull of a black hole, escaping just in time (OK, we can add a bit of thrills in there). In the same way that we can explore the land, the sea, and the world of imagination, it would be great to be able to explore the far reaches of space in an educational, relaxing way. And just imagine if, as we were just starting out on our journey, we could see the Earth recede into the distance; quickly becoming a tiny blue dot in the blackness of space. That would give us a great sense of our place in the cosmos, and even reinforce the message of World Showcase; that we go on together on this little tiny rock. (And imagine if your journey was accompanied by the famed Star Tunnel music…!)

Make Mine Music

As we've talked about many times, music plays in integral role in every facet of your Disney experience. No matter where you are, whether it be a resort or park, music is always playing in the background. And that music is always authentic to where you are; whether it's the exotic rhythms in Adventureland or the cultural stylings of every World Showcase pavilion. But what if there were an attraction that celebrated music to its fullest? While the Imagination pavilion offers up an exhibit where can play virtual music with the wave of your hand, it only scratches the surface of what might be possible. The attraction could be two experiences. One part could take you on a musical journey through Disney animated history…everything from Fantasia and Peter Pan to The Lion King and…dare I say Toy Story 2 and "When She Loved Me." (*crying alert*). But the attraction could also be about the creation of music. We could explore the beauty



of music throughout the ages, from classical to modern, and the different styles of music heard throughout the world. We could take an audio journey through time and throughout the world in a style similar to Soarin' or Spaceship Earth, with stunning 3D visuals to go with the music (though make no mistake, the music would be the star!). Famous composers could be highlighted…and of course we'd have to have a segment devoted to the Sherman Brothers. And what if we had a final sequence like the scene in Ratatouille where Remy is trying to explain the wonderful world of flavors to Emile…and the flavors become swirling ribbons of color that come together in new and inventive ways. But in our case, the colors would represent music, and we could hear…and see…how different musical elements can come together to create a beautiful and emotional sound. Better still, what if the attraction were interactive, in the sense that WE could contribute to the great symphony of sound ourselves? Music is a vital part of the Disney experience, and I think it would be wonderful to have an attraction solely devoted to this universal and beautiful language.

I'll take this opportunity to stop at three (I could go on forever, and indeed, this is definitely lending itself to parts two, three, four, and beyond), but what do YOU think? If you could be an Imagineer for a day (or week, or year!), what would YOU like to do? What would you create? What magic would you make come to life? Let us know, and remember, never stop dreaming!

Photos ©Tim Foster



Hidden Mickeys in Disney's Hollywood Studios and the Magic Kingdom

by Steve Barrett



Steve Barrett is the author of the Hidden Mickeys Guide Book Series (Walt Disney World, Disneyland, and the Disney Cruise Ships) available in book stores, on Amazon, and on Kindle and other downloadable formats. The WDW and Disneyland Hidden Mickeys Guide books are also offered as iPhone and Android apps. Steve and his wife Vickie (hiddenmickeygal) are the webmasters of http://www.HiddenMickeyGuy.com and are on Twitter @hiddenmickeyguy and Facebook as Hidden Mickey Guy.

1. **Millennium Falcon: Smugglers Run:** This image, though not a Hidden Mickey, is a very cool Hidden Image. A Cast Member directed me to it: a tiny Hidden Millennium Falcon stuck on the real starship! In the photo, you can spot the nose of the Falcon poking out above a silver pipe and part of the body below the pipe. In Disney's Hollywood Studios Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge, walk up to the side of the Millennium Falcon and find this great Hidden Surprise beneath the end of the black band that's curving around the side of the cockpit.
2. **Star Tours: The Adventures Continue:** Just after you're seated for the ride, C-3PO appears on a screen at the front right of the room. A small bright classic (three-circle) Mickey is on his right forearm near his wrist.
3. **Sci-Fi Dine-In Theater Restaurant:** Watch the movie reel for Donald Duck. He's in a cartoon segment about a secretary who is kidnapped to another planet, and Donald is one of the characters who chases her. Look up from your meal, or you'll miss Donald as he sprints across the screen!
4. **Fantasmic!:** At one point in the show, animated characters in large bubbles float up the water screen. These bubbles come together at times to form classic Mickeys.
5. **Buzz Lightyear's Space Ranger Spin:** On the ride, in the very first interactive room with targets, rotate back and to the right in your vehicle as soon as you enter the room. On the first part of the lower right wall, a tiny classic Mickey with a green head and blue ears is below and between two five-point green stars.
6. **Space Mountain:** On the right side, along the last part of the exit walkway, the floor of a deep pit is covered with round metallic orbs of varying sizes. At the middle of the left wall of the pit, three orbs form an upright classic Hidden Mickey; his right ear (the viewer's left) touches the wall. Other orbs in the pit come together to resemble classic Mickeys.
7. **Big Thunder Mountain Railroad:** Near the end of the ride, a classic Mickey made of three gears, facing sideways away from the train, lies next to the right side of the train track.
8. **Mickey's PhilharMagic:** In the "Be Our Guest" portion of the movie, there is a point where you are watching Lumiere dancing on the table with other characters. The view goes to an overhead shot and there are shadows cast on the table from the candle hands of Lumiere. These shadows come together at times to form what appear to be Hidden Mickeys.
9. **Princess Fairytale Hall:** Mickey's profile is in a painting in the left-side queue. The side view of Mickey's ghostly face looking in a second-floor window is in a painting of a cottage with a water wheel in front. Find the painting on the right wall at the end of the FASTPASS+ queue. You can also spot this painting from the end of the Standby queue, just before entering to meet the Princesses.
10. **Ariel's Grotto:** As you make your last turn in the inside winding Standby queue, marvel at a side profile of Mickey etched on the rear wall near the floor. He's not far from an exit sign, and he's looking left.

Photos ©Steve Barrett


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Photographing a Disney Christmas

by Mike Billick



Mike Billick is a graphic designer and photographer with a passion and love for Disney. He was very fortunate to have two great parents who took him and his brother, every year, to Walt Disney World as kids and with that, grew what he'd like to call an obsession for all things Disney. As Mike describes, "Every corner you turn in this magical place is a memory of something special. To me, the feeling is like no other, which is why I enjoy sharing my love of Disney photography with others so they can relive all their "happy place" memories as well."

When you think of Christmas and vacation, one of the first things that comes to mind is Walt Disney World. There's no better time to visit the Most Magical Place on Earth then during the holidays. Not only are each of the four parks decorated with tons of holiday cheer, but so are the resorts. Each of the major parks features an enormous signature Christmas tree, which not only becomes their focal point during the holiday season, but also makes for a great photo to add to your Disney collection.

For photographers, Disney at Christmas is a dream come true, and for me, it's not enough to just see the decorations, I love taking pictures of them as well… as I'm sure we all do. The Magic Kingdom's Cinderella Castle Dream Lights are certainly a popular photo choice, but make no mistake; there's so much more to see and photograph beyond the Castle. If you're attending the Mickey's Very Merry Christmas Party, you're going to be in for a real treat. The party features a special firework show that can only be seen during the party, accompanied by all of your favorite holiday music. But wait, there's more! Stick around for the parade…you'll be amazed at the photos you can get of it snowing on Main Street. You can even head back into Adventureland and see some really cool snowflakes being projected onto the Pirates of the Caribbean attraction building. For another Magic Kingdom photo treat, head on over to Cinderella Castle for the show and get pictures of all your favorite characters dressed in their holiday finest.

Next up, hop on the monorail or bus and head on over to the resorts for even more holiday magic. In my opinion, if you're looking for that great holiday card to send to your family, Disney's Grand Floridian Resort and Spa is the place to be. This Victorian-style resort is home to one of the biggest – and most beautiful – trees in all of Walt Disney World. As you're taking photos of the tree, you'll soon notice the holiday aroma of the resort's iconic life-size Gingerbread House, which offers up another great photo opportunity. For more gingerbread magic, head on over to Disney's Yacht and Beach Clubs and check out the gingerbread carousel for yet another sweet display that will be sure to amaze you.

Once you're done at the resorts, take a ride over to Disney Springs. There's plenty of Christmas cheer to be found here, and my personal favorite is Christmas Tree Lane. Here you'll find over a dozen trees, each decorated in the theme of a beloved Disney movie. You'll also find another great holiday card photo spot at the Disney's Days of Christmas store. Here you'll find statues of Disney characters caroling. Just stand right next to your favorite character and smile! It's one card your friends will love to get…I know I would.

As you can see, Christmas at Walt Disney World offers so many opportunities to get into the Christmas spirit. Every corner you turn will have you singing "Deck the Halls" and "Jingle Bells" all day (and all night) long. If you're looking to get into the holiday spirit and you can't wait until December 25th, you can head down to Disney and start seeing the decorations being put up right after Halloween. It's really something to see and I recommend this to anyone who has never celebrated the holidays at Walt Disney World. Just don't forget your camera, because this is something you're going to want to remember even when the holidays are over. After all, pictures are memories that can last forever.



Photo ©Mike Billick


HAPPY HOLIDAYS



Photo ©Mike Billick


Happy Holidays



Photo ©Mike Billick


DISNEY
SPRINGS
MARY POPPINS
hello!
HOLIDAYS

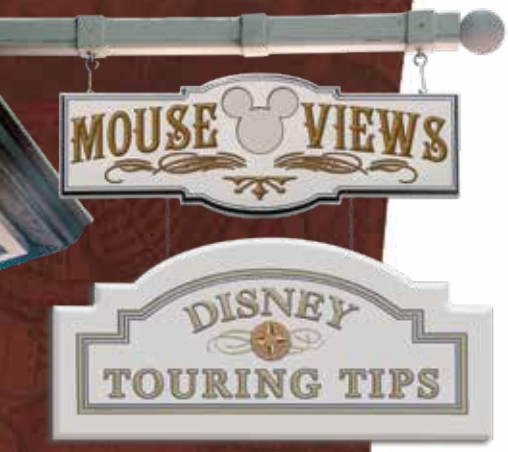


Photo ©Mike Billick


Happy
Holidays



Photo ©Mike Billick



Creating Disney Magic With a Toddler

By James Hall



James is a Vacation Planner with ConciEARS, your magical vacation concierge. Growing up in a Disney family, James has been making magical memories at Disney Parks his whole life. He wishes to share his knowledge and passion of Disney destinations to help provide the means to make your own magical memories. Contact ConciEARS for your next vacation to any of Disney's magical destinations around the planet and prepare yourself for a level of service you won't get anywhere else. Call 1-856-687-3277 or email jhall@conciears.com to kick off your next adventure!

Walt Disney World is a place filled with Disney Magic for families to make everlasting memories, but the fact is that traveling with a toddler can be somewhat stressful. Many Guests wonder how they can enjoy traveling with a little one who cannot go on thrill rides, might have a meltdown in a line, or be able to remember the trip at all. This article will help address those concerns with tips and strategies to get the most out of your Walt Disney World vacation with your little one.

Prior to your trip, it's helpful to make a list of toddler essentials that you will want to take with you. Don't worry about bringing a crib for your resort stay. Disney Resorts have cribs available for your room at no extra cost. Among the larger items you may want to pack is a stroller. If your stroller is within Disney's measurements, (must be no larger than 31 inches wide and 52 inches long), you can certainly bring it, but you can also rent a stroller at a reasonable price. Make sure your stroller folds up easily! Since you will spend a lot of time boarding busses and boats, it's best to avoid bulky strollers.

Walt Disney World allows you to bring your own snacks into the parks. You can pack your own snacks at home, or save time (and make packing a lot easier) by purchasing a box of snacks online through companies like Amazon who can deliver straight to your resort. Make sure you have a blanket or a sun blocker for your stroller. With these, your toddler can get a nap in during the day if they are a cooperative napper-on-the-go. You don't always have to go back to your hotel! This will maximize your time at the parks.

Upon arrival at the parks with your not-so-small bundle of joy, what exactly is there to do? There are many options available that will provide both you and your toddler with magical entertainment. Bear in mind that a toddler mostly likely will not want to be in line for long periods of time, so planning ahead before you start your Disney day is important. Reserving your FastPasses ahead of time will make for shorter wait times, making it easier to entertain your little one. If you want to take on the thrill rides, you can divide and conquer by taking advantage of Disney's rider swap option. Bring your whole party with your toddler to a line entrance, and a Cast Member will scan your Magic Band (in Walt Disney World) or give you a card (in Disneyland). These act like FastPasses that will allow for part of your group to go through the line, while up to three people can wait with the toddler. Once the first half of your party has finished, those waiting with the toddler can redeem the rider swap card in the FastPass line. This allows other group members to enjoy attractions that have height requirements.

Some families might not want to split up for attractions, wanting to enjoy everything together. No worries, there are plenty of toddler-friendly experiences you can share. A lot of the attractions in the parks have no height requirement at all. One of my favorite memories was taking my one-and-a-half-year-old son on The Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh. By all accounts, this was his favorite ride. He was fascinated with the colors and characters, and my wife and I treasure the moments we shared with him on that first ride.

Other than attractions, there is a plethora of wonderful shows that are geared



toward young audiences. Toddlers at any age are fascinated with anything their little eyes can see. Finding Nemo: the Musical, Lightning McQueen's Racing Academy, Festival of the Lion King, and Disney Junior – Live on Stage! are all great shows the whole family can enjoy. Take a moment to find out what your child shows interest in, and see if there are shows that match that. My son, for example, has taken an interest in playing with cars, so Lightning McQueen's Racing Academy was a great fit for him. Did you know that FastPasses can also be used to set up a time to guarantee your party seating for a show? Take advantage of this to avoid further line-waiting with a little munchkin who cannot sit or stand still for a long time. By the toddler stage, kids start developing their own personality and begin to be captivated by the magical world around them. Disney's shows do a great job of making that magic come to life in a way kids of any age can enjoy.

While seeing characters in shows is great, what about meeting them in person? Everyone wants their little ones to meet the Disney characters! If your toddlers have been introduced to Disney and express interest in specific characters, they'll probably get excited when they see a certain character on screen or as a toy. Get ready for more of that excitement as they meet their favorite characters! Keep in mind that not all children react the same once they get up close and personal with characters.

There are two good ways to strategize character meet and greets. First, meet characters first thing in the morning when the parks have just opened. Early morning lines will often take less than five minutes. Be sure to have a camera ready or your Magic Band ready for scanning. Another option is to book a character dining experience. Here you get the enjoyment of a sit-down meal with no lines. The characters come to you! If you are already planning on going to a restaurant during your vacation, this is a great way to ease into meeting Disney characters in person. Character dining experiences are located at several of the parks as well as some of the Disney hotels. These experiences range from reasonable in cost at Chef Mickey's to fairly expensive princess dining at Cinderella's Royal Table. No matter how you approach character meets, they will make for fun stories and pictures with memories that will last a lifetime!

Traveling with a toddler requires planning, patience, and a lot of backup plans. Some parents wonder why they would even take such a young child. While it may be true that a toddler might not remember all of their time at Walt Disney World, there is more to it than just their memory. Disney trips are meant to be experienced by every kid at heart! You are making family memories in the most magical place on earth that will last a lifetime.

Photo ©Disney

Buddy Baker

by Jamie Hecker



Jamie Hecker has been a lifelong fan of Disney, and is passing on his love to his sons. He and his family visit Orlando annually and always look forward to their next trip. When not in Orlando, he resides in northern Virginia with his beautiful wife Suzanne, two boys and four cats.
You can read more about his "hidden Disney" musings at myhiddendisney.blogspot.com/

Music. It's one of the true international languages that can be understood globally no matter the source. The Walt Disney Company has a myriad of musical pillars represented by notable composers and lyricists, including Frank Churchill, the Sherman Brothers, Alan Menken, and the duo of Robert Lopez and Kristen Anderson-Lopez. Add to this list the incomparable Norman D. "Buddy" Baker, who enjoyed a twenty-nine year career at Disney and penned countless classics still being performed to this day.

Norman Dale Baker was born January 4, 1918 in Springfield Missouri. Nicknames typically have a fascinating origin story. For Baker, the nickname "Buddy" was bestowed upon him as an infant. His sister was excited to have a baby brother but couldn't quite pronounce the word brother. Instead, it came across as "buddy." A simple family anecdote was born and it stuck with him for his lifetime. Music was clearly a part of his DNA when he began piano lessons at the tender age of four. Several years later he switched to the trumpet. Music was his muse. He attended Southwest Baptist College and got a degree in music. At the age of twenty, Baker relocated to Los Angeles where he worked as a musician and musical arranger during the heyday of the Big Band era. His highlights at this time included working for the Bob Hope radio show and working alongside Big Band leader Stan Kenton.

At the request of fellow composer and Disney Legend George Bruns, Baker joined Disney in 1954 to help out with the musical score for the *Davy Crockett* series for the nascent television industry. Bruns had penned the wildly popular "Ballad of Davy Crockett," but it was up to Baker to score the background music. It was meant to be a temporary assignment, but fate moved Baker in another direction. "I came to Disney to help out for two weeks, and I ended up staying 29 years." During that span of nearly three decades, Baker wrote scores for dozens of television shows, feature films, documentaries and theme park attractions.

Baker next pivoted to music for *The Mickey Mouse Club* show. The original iteration of this show ran on ABC from 1955 to 1959. Baker would go on to compose music for hundreds of television episodes, Disney live-action and animation feature films and theme park attractions. His television highlights include *Zorro* and the various versions of Disney's television anthology series including *Walt Disney Presents* and *Walt Disney's Wonderful World of Color*.

When asked about his favorite works, Baker cited the theatrical short *Donald in Mathmagic Land*. He found the technical aspect of the material fascinating and was thrilled to be a part of its production, which highlighted mathematics through the course of human history to an unsuspecting Donald Duck.

Baker's work for Disney's films are wide and varied. It includes the light family comedies *The Apple Dumpling Gang* and its sequel, *The Apple Dumpling Rides Again*, and *The Shaggy D.A.* He reached one of many career pinnacles when he was nominated for an Oscar for his score for *Napoleon and Samantha*. His film score repertoire also includes the True-Life Adventures nature series.

Baker was equally deft at composing musical scores for animation films. Highlights include all the Winnie the Pooh featurettes, including *Winnie the Pooh and the Blustery Day*. For the musical element featuring Heffalumps and Woozles, Baker knew the music needed to be equally outlandish. Richard Sherman suggested he

add a kazoo to the instrument mix and that's exactly what Baker did to give it an edge of silliness. Baker rounded out his animation scores with the 1981 release of The Fox and the Hound.

These accomplishments alone are worthy of an illustrious musical career with Disney, but Baker had more to add. Television shows are broadcast, and films are screened at theaters, but eventually return to the vault. Theme park attractions, however, run continuously and the those that are deemed classics can last decades. It's here that Baker shines. Originally created for the UNICEF Pavilion at the 1964-65 New York World's Fair, "it's a small world" was a late addition by WED Industries, the precursor to Walt Disney Imagineering, to the fair's pavilions. Richard and Robert Sherman composed the title song for the now-classic boat ride, but the original intent was to feature children's songs from around the world as the boats with Guests traveled by. Baker succinctly summed up this troubling idea: "(it was) like putting five marching bands in a gymnasium and trying to figure out what tune they're playing!" Baker created the ideal solution by arranging the classic Sherman brothers score into one-minute intervals, with each iteration scored to the musical styles of the country or culture in the scene. The attraction and its instantly recognizable song have been entertaining Guests around the world now for over fifty years at Disney parks around the globe.



The flip side, thematically, to "it's a small world" is The Haunted Mansion. Baker wrote Grim Grinning Ghosts for this classic attraction, with lyrics by X Atencio. The alliterative name comes from the William Shakespeare poem Venus and Adonis.

Baker's other notable musical works for Disneyland and Walt Disney World include The Hall of Presidents, the infectious Swisskapolka from the Swiss Family Treehouse, and shuttered attractions such as the Mickey Mouse Review and If You Had Wings. He also scored the music for the bicentennial celebration America Sings, hosted in Disneyland's former Carousel of Progress show building.

But it was Disney's ambitious EPCOT Center, as it was known on opening day October 1, 1982, that Baker's work really shines. Given the size and scope of the new park, Baker was named Musical Directory of WED Enterprises. Epcot had nine shows with musical arrangements. Baker noted "I did five of them myself." he wrote the infectious Kitchen Kabaret show for The Land pavilion, the original Universe of Energy score, and the Wonders of China film in the Circle-Vision 360 theater. Two of Baker's original arrangements are still in use today, for the Impressions de France film and The American Adventure history show.

Baker selected notable works of French composers such as Claude Debussy, Maurice Ravel, and Jacques Offenbach. He culled through their work to find the best examples of classical French music to match the scenes from the film and composed the film's arrangement to match precisely the tone of the film. Baker himself added original music to the score. Of the films original 49 scenes, Baker composed the music for 22 of them. The final composition was recorded in London with the 100-piece Royal Philharmonic Orchestra lending an austere tone to the finished product. For The American Adventure, its unique blend of film, changing sets, Audio-Animatronic characters and original and composed songs make this a must see attraction. In addition to the writing the overall music score for the show, he composed the individual song "New World Bound."

Like many other Disney Legends, Baker had the opportunity to work directly with Walt. His experience mirrors what most others encountered – Walt knew to trust his hand-picked employees and allow them to bring out their best. Recalls Baker, "During the (time) I worked at the Studio, Walt never came to a recording. He had confidence in me and in everybody else. He trusted his people. He also knew what kind of music worked."

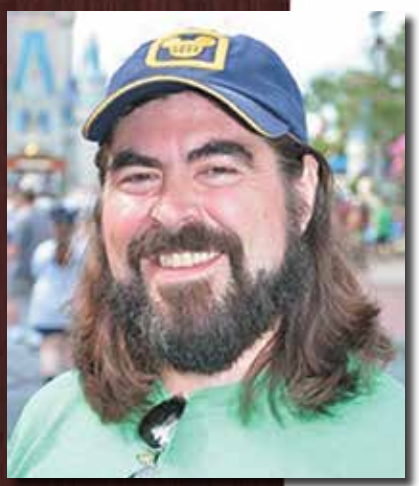
For his decades of service to the Walt Disney Company, Buddy Baker was named a Disney Legend in 1998. He passed away four years later on July 26, 2002 at the age of 84.

Photo ©Disney



Docking Bay 7 Food and Cargo

By Erik Johnson



Erik is the Communications Conciear with CONCIEARS, your magical vacation concierge. When he is not in his mountain fortress in Colorado, you can find him in Orlando or Anaheim, enjoying an amazing meal and running a race to burn off said meal. Contact CONCIEARS for your next vacation to any of Disney's magical destinations around the planet and prepare yourself for a level of service you won't get anywhere else. Call 1-856-687-3277 or email service@conciears.com to kick off your next adventure!

The thriving outpost of Black Spire is a hotbed of activity. All sorts of heroes and scum pass through the port on the Outer Rim planet of Batuu. Some come seeking to dominate the local trade, whether by guile or by force. Some come to mount an increasing resistance against oppression. Some seek to purchase from collectors like the Scavengers or Dok Ondar in his Den of Antiquities. Every traveler has their own reason for visiting, but all need to eat at some time or another.

When you travel from Grand Avenue or Toy Story Land in Disney's Hollywood Studios, you are bound to be awestruck by the sights in front of you. So much so that you might find yourself staying longer in Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge than you intended. While there are a few options for purchasing food in the new land, there is only one quick service restaurant with an extensive menu. Don't let the quick service label fool you, though. Docking Bay 7 Food and Cargo has some serious chops when it comes to its exotic meals. Disney's chefs pulled out all the stops to transform common foods like chicken and ribs into alien dishes that satisfy.

The establishment itself suggests that the entrepreneurs of Batuu converted a probably-still-operational docking operation into a grill. The restaurant does not have the flair of a turning a spit under a pod racer engine, but it does have a spaceship on the roof that you can clearly see as you approach. Inside, a cargo container dangles from the ceiling. Wires web around, powering the types of grimy, old devices that you are used to seeing in the Star Wars universe. The walls may have shifted and cracked, but are probably still solid enough. Or did the grime and rust you glimpse in a few places cause more structural damage than you think?

Take a chance and head into the building and a pleasant denizen will greet you with, "Bright suns," or, "Rising moons," depending on the time of day. The Cast Members are great about handing you a menu and answering questions on the exotic fare. They stay in character as they describe the tastes of the dishes available. If you have any dietary restrictions, mention it now. The cast will help you access one of the chefs who will prepare your meal to whatever specifications are necessary for your needs. And they will still probably stay in character while they do so!

If you have visited any of Disney World's quick service restaurants in the past, you will be familiar with the process. Order at the counter and step up, awaiting your tray of delicious food. Here at Docking Bay 7, there are a few pleasant details to surprise you. Instead of seeing chefs in the kitchen, you see a conveyor belt rolling your food out. Did a droid make this in back or a person? You'll never know! While you wait, look around at the mish-mosh of hanging lamps and lanterns overhead. This is not Disney perfection, but the result of scrappers attaching whatever they can to the ceiling. Even the drink taps look authentic, made from knobs and handles from ship controls including a flightstick.

Sit inside or outside! There is plenty of seating. Inside, you will find beaten metal tables surrounded by a motley collection of metal chairs and shipping drums fashioned into stools. Revel in the sounds of an operational spaceport as you dine. If you head into the courtyard, you will find a calmer atmosphere where you can rest in the shade as you watch people file into shops. Local music plays overhead as lanterns sway in the trees. Enjoy your moment of calm before you head back into the milieu. Regardless if you spent the morning piloting a starship or just shopping, you earned this moment.



Skip the lines and show up to Hollywood Studios early! Docking Bay 7 has breakfast prepared for you. Why eat a traditional breakfast when you can get a Bright Suns Morning? Enjoy a cheesy egg bite, spicy pork sausage, and for the extra effect, purple potatoes. You could also select the Rising Moons Overnight Oats. Instead of the usual dried fruits you might expect on a meal like this, get dragon fruit boba sprinkled over your breakfast. The bursts of sweet, tropical flavor will reinforce your belief that Disney has transported you off-world. Your kids can partake in oats as well or pick a Youngling Breakfast, complete with scrambled eggs, purple potatoes, and fruit.

The lunch and dinner menus are one and the same. This is where the Disney chefs created something truly incredible! Beef pot roast is transformed through spices and kale into the Braised Shaak Roast. Chicken becomes the rare, imported Tip-Yip, bred by the Ewoks of Endor. You can enjoy these fowl on the Tip-Yip Salad with mixed greens, quinoa, and pumpkin seeds or fried with potato/vegetable mash. The Smoked Kaadu Ribs are standard pork ribs, bumped up to exotic proportions. Sticky sauce coats the generous portion that comes with coleslaw and a blueberry corn muffin. If you want to avoid meat, go with the Felucian Garden Spread with plant proteins, hummus, and tomato-cucumber relish. The kids can enjoy a shrimp salad or the Taste of Takodana. This meal of black bean hummus, nuts, vegetables, and multigrain crisps is sure to make the adults in the party sneak a few bites!

Desserts are few, but they look amazing. You can choose between the Batuu-bon, a piece of chocolate cake with white chocolate mousse and coffee custard or the Oi-Oi Puff, a raspberry crème puff sculpted over with passion fruit mousse. If you want something sweet without the cake, try out the non-alcoholic beverages offered by the restaurant. The Sour Sarlacc blends limeade with raspberry, mango, and some spice for a Mandolorian-eating kick. The Moof Juice is more tropical with fruit punch, orange, pineapple, and chipotle spices. Traditional soft drinks and (not blue) milk are on the menu as well. The restaurant also offers some alcoholic concoctions and a beer.

Regardless of your preference, Docking Bay 7 is sure to meet your needs. And why not? The menu is designed to satiate those brave folks standing in the face of the First Order, stealing supplies with the help of a Wookie and a nefarious pirate. What's that? You've been on a Smugglers Run with Hondo Ohnaka's too? Then tuck in! You deserve it.

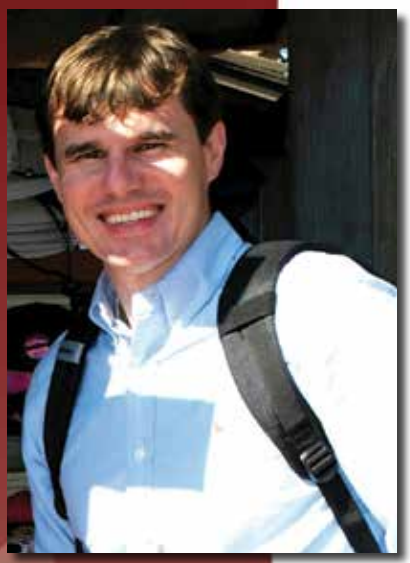
Docking Bay 7 Food and Cargo does not accept reservations. Meals there do count as quick service credits and several of the food options count as snack credits for those using the Disney Dining Plan.

Photo ©Disney



The Merriest Windows on Earth

By Chris Smith



Christopher E. Smith is a corporate attorney, author and Disney historian living with his wife and four children in historic Mooresville, AL. Chris is fascinated by the history of Disney and has written multiple books on historical Disney subjects. You can follow him on twitter @csmithdisney and visit his website, chrissmithbooks.com for more information.

Christmas is a very special time at Walt Disney World. All of the parks are decked out from head to toe in their finest holiday decorations that transform the Florida landscape into a winter wonderland (notwithstanding the understandably warm temperatures). Jaw-dropping Christmas trees decorate the parks and resort hotels, wreaths hang from windows, toy soldiers march in parades, poinsettias sprout from the landscaping, and the smell of holiday goodies permeate through the air.

Some of my favorite Christmas details can be found in the windows of the buildings on Main Street, U.S.A. No, I'm not talking about the tributes to Disney Imagineers and executives that are located on the second and third story windows of the Main Street buildings (although I encourage all Guests to take time to enjoy those also). Instead, I'm talking about the windows that are on the first floor of the Main Street structures that take on a new life (and décor) during the holiday season. These gorgeous windows effectively capture the Christmas spirit, but often go unnoticed even though thousands of Guests walk by them every single day. If you are in the mood for Christmas secrets, grab a gingerbread cookie, a hot cup of cocoa, and join me as I go to Main Street, U.S.A. in search of Christmas windows!

Mickey's Christmas Carol Dioramas

Mickey's Christmas Carol is a 1983 Disney animated film that provides a joyful and family-friendly retelling of Charles Dickens' famous novel A Christmas Carol. In the Disney version, Scrooge McDuck plays the starring role of Ebenezer Scrooge, a greedy businessman who has no time or patience for the Christmas holiday. Mickey Mouse plays the role of Bob Cratchit, Scrooge's hard working and very poor employee. As is the case with the original Dickens' version, Mickey's Christmas Carol recounts the story of three ghosts visiting Ebenezer Scrooge on Christmas Eve to show him the true importance and joy of Christmas by looking at moments from the past, present and future. Through that journey, Scrooge transforms from a greedy miser into a generous philanthropist who holds Christmas very close to his heart.

During the Christmas holidays, a series of windows for the Emporium on Main Street, U.S.A. are beautifully transformed into dioramas that portray scenes from Mickey's Christmas Carol. A few of the highlights include:

- Ebenezer Scrooge sits behind a desk starring through his spectacles. The desk is covered with bags of money and stacks of golden coins. Legal documents (no doubt loan paperwork with high interest rates) are stacked in all corners of the room.
- Bob Cratchit sits atop a chair at his desk at the offices of Scrooge & Marley. Bob is wrapped tightly with a coat and scarf and holds a writing quill in his hand. Although Bob is freezing because Scrooge won't allow him to add coal to the office stove, Cratchit still smiles at the presence of Scrooge's nephew Fred, played by none other than Donald Duck in the film.
- Perhaps the funniest window displays the Ghost of Christmas Present, played by Willie the Giant in the film, having a feast inside of Scrooge's bedroom. Scrooge nervously peeks out from the drapes covering his bed. The Ghost, who fills most of the room thanks to his enormous size, holds a turkey leg as a true Christmas feast of ham, turkey fruit, and pies surround him.



- Another window displays perhaps the scariest scene of Mickey's Christmas Carol. The Ghost of Christmas Future (played by Pete in the film) shows Scrooge his own grave, revealing what will become of the miser if Scrooge does not change his ways. Scrooge hangs on perilously to one of the grave's dirt walls as he stares down into flames.
- At the conclusion of Mickey's Christmas Carol, Scrooge visits the Cratchit home with a bag full of Christmas toys and treats. The scene is depicted on window in Main Street with Scrooge, who is wearing a coat, scarf, and top hat, alongside Bob's son Tiny Tim. Scrooge holds Tim with his right hand and a toy drumstick with his left. A toy drum sits directly in front of Scrooge. The rest of the Cratchit family surrounds Scrooge as the children open presents and Bob and his wife embrace.

Yuletide Shop Windows

In addition to the windows paying tribute to Mickey's Christmas Carol, the shops on Main Street, U.S.A. also get into the yuletide fun. Because these windows vary from year to year, Guests can always count on some good Christmas surprises. You never know when the Sensational Six or other beloved Disney characters just might pop up. These windows highlight Disney products of all shapes and sizes that can be found in the shops on Main Street, U.S.A. Guests might see Disney bags and purses surrounded by poinsettias and Christmas gift boxes. Other windows might be filled with large green and red bows and even a few Disney-inspired nutcrackers.

The windows usually include at least one with Mickey Mouse dressed as Santa Claus and Minnie Mouse dressed as Mrs. Claus, with numerous Mickey/Minnie Claus plush dolls surrounding them.

The windows for the Main Street Confectionery are filled with Christmas goodies and a tree decorated with, not surprisingly, candy canes and treats. Guests might even see a window with the stars from the Toy Story film franchise advertising different Disney Christmas gift ideas.

The Christmas windows on Main Street, U.S.A. are great details that can help put even the biggest Scrooge into the holiday spirit. So the next time you are on Main Street make sure you take time to look at the wonderful Christmas windows. And in the words of Tiny Tim, "God bless us, everyone!"

Photo ©Tim Foster





Photos ©Tim Foster



A Disneyland Christmas

By J Darling



J Darling is a California native and life long Disney fan. Her parents first took her to Disneyland when she was 2 years old. According to them, her eyes just popped out of her head, and apparently they never went back in. Outside of her Disney fandom, J is a singer, songwriter, blogger, and theatrical actress. You can find her music at www.jdarlingmusic.com and on Myspace at www.jdarlingmusicmyspace.com. Her blogs are available at www.jjourneybook.blogspot.com.

Once the ghostly ghouls of Halloween have crept back to their crypts, the Christmas season gets underway at Disneyland! The changes start as soon as Guests stroll under the archways of the Railroad Station at the conclusion of the Halloween season, with the festivities officially beginning on November 8th and lasting through January 6th, 2020.

During the morning hours, usually starting in late November, handcrafted Disneyland Candy Canes are available at the Candy Palace on Main Street (and at Trolley Treats in Disney California Adventure Park across the esplanade). These pulled sugar masterpieces are a fan favorite and sell out quickly each day. But the early morning cooking is enough to pump that sugary sweetness of vanilla, peppermint, and candy into the air. Candy canes are just one of the many treats awaiting Guests on Main Street U.S.A.

The best place to get Disneyland-specific holiday treats is the Jolly Holiday bakery at the end of Main Street. 2018's line up boasted a Santa hat shaped (and iced) macaron with peppermint filling. If peppermint is a seasonal "must-have" for you, this is the treat to eat! On the chocolaty side of things, the Jolly Holiday Bakery offered the Holiday Brownie. It's a cupcake-shaped brownie (complete with tiny chocolate chips on top) that's topped with white chocolate mousse icing, red and green sprinkles, and an edible Christmas tree with gifts underneath! The intricate decorations even include bulb sprinkles on the tree and a star on top. But if peppermint or chocolate don't scream "holiday" enough for you, the Eggnog Latte Cheesecake will. Similar to flan, the cheesecake round is topped with white chocolate foam and sprinkled with nutmeg. It's like a chewable version of the beloved beverage. There are other seasonal favorites available at the bakery, and this is a great stop on any Guest's holiday travels.

One of the biggest differences between the Magic Kingdom's holiday celebration and Disneyland Park's celebration is that you don't need a separate party ticket to enjoy the holiday parade or the decorations after dark. Over 70,000 lights deck the halls of Main Street U.S.A., and the 60-foot Christmas tree in Town Square is decorated with over 2,000 handmade ornaments. Best of all, Main Street travelers will see flurries of 'snow' several times a night.

Since Guests don't have to buy a ticket to Mickey's Very Merry Christmas Party, everyone who visits can stick around for the holiday fireworks show. "Believe… In Holiday Magic" has been lighting up the skies over Main Street and Sleeping Beauty Castle since the year 2000 (give or take a year or two when Disneyland ran "Remember…Dreams Come True" in celebration of Disneyland's 50th and 60th anniversaries). The nearly 14-minute long show has evolved over the years to include projection-mapping technology. This has been a huge blessing to Disneyland fans, as the often-unforgiving winds would sometimes cause the fireworks to be canceled. With the addition of the projection mapping technology, the show still goes on, but with a lower level of pyrotechnics. (The projections can also be viewed from Frontierland/New Orleans Square at the Rivers of America on water screens, and from Fantasyland facing the façade of "it's a small world.")



Another Main Street yuletide treat is the holiday favorite "A Christmas Fantasy" parade. The parade touches the heart of the child in every one of us as life-size toy soldiers march down the street playing their trumpets, and exaggerated reindeer dance to the theme song. Classic character duos, like Minnie and Mickey, Chip 'n' Dale, and Donald and Daisy wave to the crowds from their holiday perches. The Princesses get into the act as well, and recent classics have joined the parade. Frozen sisters Elsa and Anna bring a few friends to the parade. After all, what would snow on Main Street be without Olaf? And what would a parade that ends with Santa be without the toys? Woody, Buzz, and the Toy Story gang drop in to play as well. Of course, the whole thing ends with the big man in red, Santa himself, rolling down the street wishing everyone Happy Holidays.

Main Street U.S.A. is a treasure trove of dazzling holiday delights. From the 2,000 feet of garland to the 7,400 feet of ribbon, the sheer scale of Main Street's holiday spirit is impressive. And of course it's no surprise that the end of Main Street U.S.A. may very well be the most photographed location in the park – especially at night during the holidays.

And that is just the beginning of any holiday season adventure in Disneyland park. Each land has its own unique decor (though it's said the residents of Batuu don't celebrate the season).

While Walt Disney World in Florida has more resorts, more parks, and well, more lights, Disneyland Park brings the holidays home with all the warmth of a homemade holiday – and all the magic of pixie dust.

Photo © Disney



Photo © Disney




The
North Pole



Photos © Disney


FEATURED ATTRACTION
STAR WARS
MILLENNIUM FALCON
SMUGGLERS RUN
by Chris Smith

Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge officially opened at Disney's Hollywood Studios on August 29, 2019 and, with it, one of the most highly anticipated attractions in the history of Walt Disney World: Millennium Falcon: Smugglers Run. The attraction gives Star Wars fans the opportunity to actually board the fastest "hunk of junk" in the galaxy. Ever since *Star Wars: Episode IV- A New Hope* premiered in 1977, fans around the world have wanted to see and experience the Falcon in person. Thanks to Disney, the opportunity to make that dream come true no longer lies "a long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away", but instead in an actual theme park. I've got a really bad good feeling about this…

The Backstory

The backstory for Smugglers Run centers on Hondo Ohnaka, a character from *The Clone Wars* and *Star Wars Rebels* animated television series. Hondo is a space pirate "Shipping and Logistics Coordinator" with whom Chewbacca has brokered a deal. In order to fund necessary repairs to the Falcon (which understandably has years of wear and tear), Chewbacca has agreed to lend the Millennium Falcon to Hondo for some completely legal, above board, non-suspicious cargo transportation work. The attraction allows Guests to step inside this story by becoming smugglers with Hondo's company, Ohnaka Transport Solutions.

The Crew Positions

Guests are divided into groups of six. Each member of that group is then divided into three different roles: pilots, gunners, and engineers. Those roles are important because Millennium Flacon: Smugglers Run is perhaps the most interactive attraction at Walt Disney World. Unlike Mission: SPACE in Epcot, the actions that you take in your role on the Falcon directly influences the attraction experience. In terms of actual responsibilities during the attraction, the crew positions are broken down as follows:

- Pilots are, not surprisingly, responsible for actually flying the Falcon. The pilot on the left-hand side of the cockpit moves the ship left and right, the pilot on the right-hand side moves the ship up and down. Note that the pilot on the right-hand side of the cockpit is the person who gets to "punch" the Falcon into lightspeed.
- Gunners fire the Falcon's canons at different objects.
- Engineers have the least responsibility of the three crew positions and simply press different buttons when instructed in order to fix problems with the Falcon during flight and, on one occasion, to fire a harpoon.

A Queue That is Out of this World

Smugglers Run has one of the most immersive and well themed queues in all of Walt Disney World. The queue begins as soon as you first see the stunning appearance of the Millennium Falcon. For many Star Wars fans, seeing a full-size Falcon is a life long dream come true. It is difficult to adequately describe in words just how incredibly detailed the ship is, but you will be convinced that you have literally stepped into the Star Wars universe and boarded the actual Millennium Falcon. The Falcon sits at the base of a rocky mountain range. A busy ship repair facility has been constructed into the base of that mountain, and the aesthetic of the Falcon and the mountain creates a jaw-dropping visual experience.

This Disney World version of the Falcon is not the sparkling, pristine ship reflected in the 2018 film *Solo: A Star Wars Story.* Instead, this Falcon shows the wear and tear from years of battles and adventures. In addition to the striking visuals, other effects such as smoke billowing from the Falcon and the sounds of crewmembers attempting to start the Falcon's engines add even more authenticity to the experience.

The initial portion of the attraction's queue leads you around the Falcon, providing great opportunities to take pictures of the ship from a variety of different angles. You then enter the corridors of a busy ship repair facility that has been carved directly into the mountainous rock. Hundreds of props including mechanical tools, boxes, spare parts, droids, pilot suits, and other vessels (some of which are leaking oil and fuel) further immerse you into the experience. Pay close attention to the sounds in the queue, as the background noise includes chatter amongst mechanics as they go about their daily work.

Photos © Disney

You eventually reach a second-story catwalk that includes windows that look out onto the top of the Millennium Falcon. After passing through a few hallways and doors, you eventually reach the first pre-show holding area. This is where you meet Hondo Ohnaka. Hondo is the most impressive Audio-Animatronic character this side of the Shaman of Songs character from the Na'vi River Journey. Hondo stands on an upper level walkway while a droid sits on the lower level. A large video screen behind Hondo provides views into the space hangar. Hondo moves fluidly and convincingly while providing the following narration:

Hello…Hello my friends. I am Hondo Ohnaka and this is Ohnaka Transport Solutions. Today, I am offering the opportunity of a lifetime! I need flight crews to transport this valuable merchandise across the galaxy. Pilots to navigate, engineers to operate the ship, and gunners to defend the shipments. And that is where you come in.

[Droid below Hondo makes noise as the Millennium Falcon lands in the background]

Ah ha…the Millennium Falcon. [Well known] for some very fast, and very profitable expeditions.

[Chewbacca appears]

Chewbacca my fine furry friend. Yes, yes, as we agreed, you let us use the ship, we'll give you the supplies you need. It's a win win. You help the Resistance, I get all the profits.

[Chewbacca groans]

What? The First Order will never know that we where there. OK…time to go…so…bye bye.

We better go before he changes his mind. Move along my friends. Listen carefully and remember, the better you work together, the more you earn! Your lives and my profit depend on it!

Actor Jim Cummings, who is most famous for providing the voices of Winnie the Pooh and Tigger, voices Hondo Ohnaka. After receiving Hondo's instructions, you walk down another corridor where a Cast Member provides a color-coded card that gives Guests with their "ship operation credentials." In reality, these cards are used to sort Guests into their respective "roles" for the attraction:

- Pilot (two per crew): Responsible for operating landing gear, hyperspace jumps, and boosters.
- Gunner (two per crew): Responsible for operating blasters and firing missiles.
- Flight Engineer (two per crew): Responsible for systems repair, life support, and tow cables.

You are then directed into another waiting area that provides one of the best photo opportunities in Walt Disney World: the Falcon's main hold (i.e., the place on the ship that includes the famous hologram game board). Stepping into this area is yet another dream come true experience for fans of the Star Wars films. You are free to explore this area and take pictures until your group is called to board. After receiving the boarding call, you are taken to another holding area where you stand on emblems in the floor that are labeled for each of the crew positions. Hondo provides a few last minute instructions via a video screen:

Welcome, welcome, right this way. Come closer. Come closer. Ah! A brand new flight crew. Good luck to you all, you might need it. Today's flight takes you to the planet of Corellia. You will be intercepting a First Order trading shipment of coaxium. Gunners, you clear the path. Pilots, line up behind the train. And engineers, you harpoon that precious cargo. And as we always say here at Ohnaka Transport Solutions, get out of here and go make Hondo some money! Hahaha!

Following those wise words of wisdom, you finally step inside the cockpit of the Millennium Falcon. The walls are lined with electronic panels filled with hundreds of flashing lights, buttons, and levers. A large screen in front of the cockpit matches that of the Falcon from the Star Wars films. Three rows of two seats each flow from the front of the cockpit to the back.

The Attraction Experience

Guests ride in a simulated cockpit for the Millennium Falcon that includes six seats. Each seat includes a comfortable padded seat and a tall padded back. Guests must fly the Falcon and intercept a First Order shipment of coaxium, a fuel that makes space travel possible, and return that precious cargo to Hondo. That is of course easier said than done. During the attraction, you will hear and follow instructions from Hondo, battle TIE fighters, and chase the train carrying the coaxium (although the actual attraction experience will vary from Guest to Guest). The cockpit moves about during the experience to very convincingly simulate the feeling of actual flight.

The best seat on Millennium Falcon: Smugglers Run really depends on how much responsibility you want during the attraction. If your dream has always been to fly the Falcon, then the pilot position is where you want to be. The pilot seats are also closest to the windows/screens for the attraction, so views are not obstructed. However, Pilots do have the most responsibility during the attraction and, at least for first time riders, flying the Falcon can take a little getting used to. If you don't want the "pressure" involved

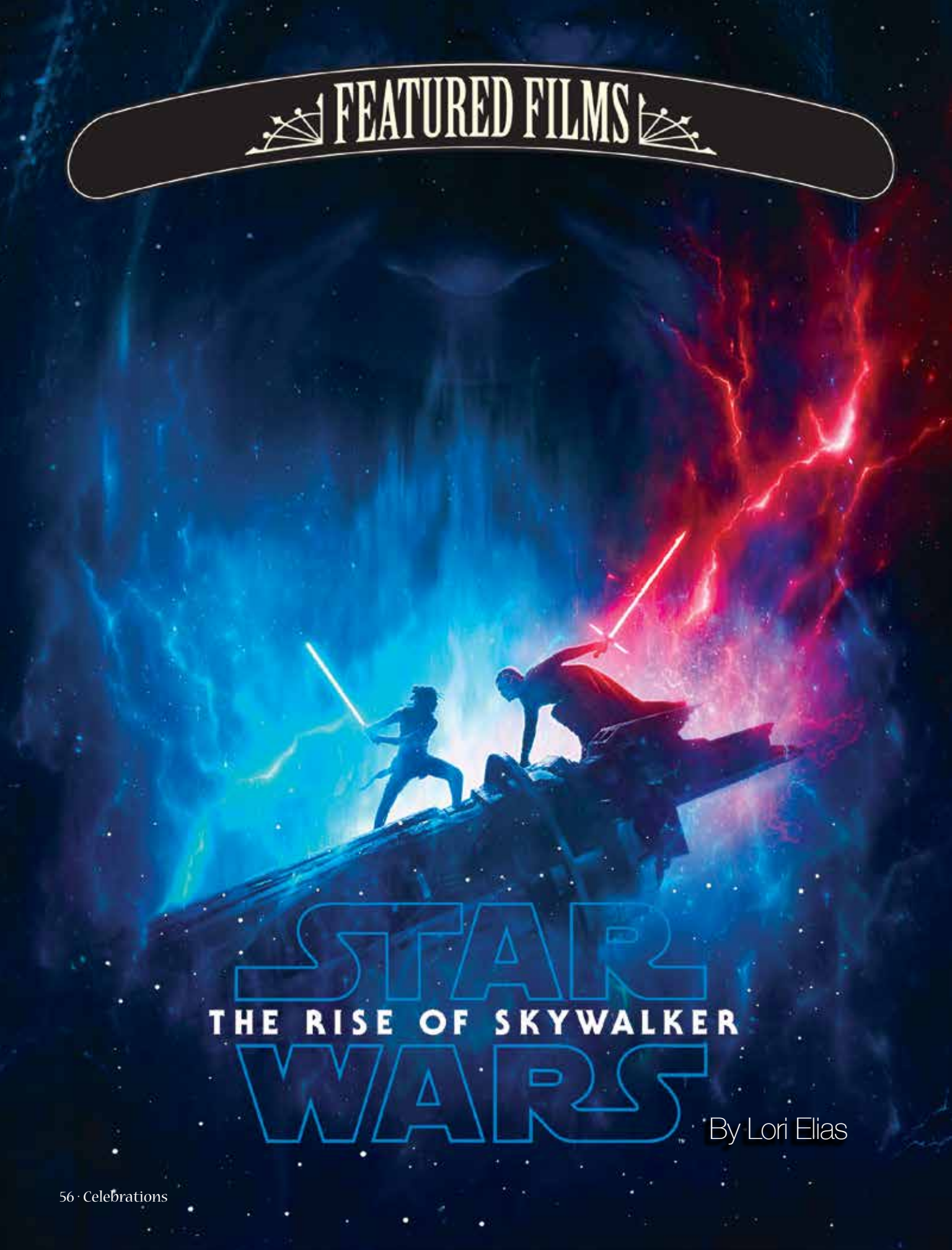


with piloting the Falcon, then gunners or engineer are better options. While those positions do require you to press buttons at different points during the attraction, the responsibility of doing so is much less important as compared to the pilot position. Different lighting effects around the buttons and levers clue you in on what you should be doing during the attraction.

In all, Smugglers Run is a very fun attraction. Star Wars fans will undoubtedly love the opportunity to fly the Millennium Falcon and will absolutely soak up all of the details in the attraction's queue. When Star Wars: Rise of the Resistance opens on December 5, 2019, that attraction will undoubtedly be the most popular attraction in Walt Disney World. Until then, Millennium Falcon: Smugglers Run will carry that title. Unfortunately, Smugglers Run is not currently eligible for FastPass+ reservations. As such, the attraction should be your top priority when visiting the Studios. Smugglers Run does include a single rider option that can drastically cut down on wait times if you don't mind experiencing the attraction with strangers. Expect long lines, so try to pack your patience. Actually, scratch that. Do. Or do not. There is no try.

Photo ©Erik Johnson

FEATURED FILMS



By Lori Elias

A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away…" It was indeed a long time ago – 42 years, to be exact – when those words first crawled across screens around the world (but in our own galaxy, of course). It is almost inconceivable that this multi-generational epic is about to come to an end, but end it will this December, culminating with *The Rise of Skywalker*, written by J. J. Abrams and Chris Terrio, directed by Abrams, and, for the ninth and final time, a musical score by John Williams.

In 1977, George Lucas first introduced film-goers to the farm boy of Tatooine, the princess of Alderaan (who tragically watched her home be destroyed by her own father), and the renegade smuggler and his furry friend. Over the next six years we laughed at Princess Leia's sarcasm, cheered at her romance with Han Solo, reveled in the wisdom of Yoda and Obi-Wan Kenobi, bopped along with the Cantina Band, gasped at Darth Vader's revelation to Luke, grimaced at Jabba the Hutt, and joyfully danced with the Ewoks in the forest moon of Endor.



Then in 1999 fans were given a new trilogy, one that took us back in time to the moment that a noble Jedi knight named Qui-Gon Jinn met a ragtag young boy named Anakin Skywalker. That scrappy lad was introduced to the lovely Queen Amidala, and we saw his relationships develop with a Padawan named Obi-Wan and a Jedi Master named Yoda, which ultimately set a chain of events in motion that would change the universe forever.

Finally in 2015 the final trilogy was released. General Leia Organa and her husband, Han Solo, faced new dangers, thanks to their own son Ben, who had rejected the Jedi training by his uncle Luke in order to continue the legacy of his grandfather, Darth Vader, with tragic results. But all was not lost: a new trio of freedom fighters emerged to lead the Resistance and finally put an end to the First Order: Rey, Finn and Poe Dameron. And it is their story that will bring the saga to its undoubtedly thrilling conclusion.

Like all good franchise movies – unless it is the conclusion, of course – the penultimate film, *The Last Jedi*, left many questions for Star Wars fans, which have only intensified with the release of trailers for the upcoming movie. First and foremost on most fans' minds is the role Leia will play in this film. Disney Legend Carrie Fisher sadly passed away on the last day of 2016, but had filmed scenes which will be included in *The Rise of Skywalker* – moments that are certain to be fraught with emotions for audiences.

There are a number of questions regarding Rey's background – will we find out the identity of her parents? Kylo had told her that they were "filthy junk traders" who "sold (her) off for drinking money," and are buried in a pauper's grave on Jakku. But was this just a red herring? Is she actually part Solo? Part Skywalker? Or, in a Luke/Vader-esque twist, part Palpatine? (His ominous laugh at the end of the trailer was quite unexpected, putting all fans' plot predictions into overdrive.)

Is Rey a Jedi – or will she become one in the near future? It seemed that Luke was the so-called "last Jedi" of the previous film, but she clearly has the strength and experience with the Force to merit the title. She is also in possession of the sacred Jedi texts, which, unbeknownst to Luke, she had taken with her on the Millennium Falcon before he could destroy them with the Great Tree. There are implications which can be made of Yoda's comment as the tree burned: "Wisdom they held, but that li-

Artwork © Disney



brary contained nothing that the girl Rey does not already possess." Did Yoda know that Rey had salvaged the books? Or was he referring to Rey's skills as a warrior?

What of the connection between Rey and Kylo Ren? Will Rey, and perhaps his family's influence from beyond the cosmic grave, bring Kylo back to the Light side of the Force? Or will Kylo lure Rey to the Dark side? (The trailer's image of Rey with a red lightsaber set minds swirling and social media aflame with theories of her ultimate destiny. Could she possibly be a Sith, rather than a Jedi?)

And certainly there are those wondering about romance. Will a relationship between Rey and Kylo affect the outcome of either character? Is it Finn who will win Rey's heart? Or is her outlook more like that of Elphaba, *Wicked's* witch of the west: "And if I'm flyin' solo/At least I'm flyin' free"?

How will Luke and the long-missed Lando Calrissian figure into the story, since Mark Hamill has confirmed that he will appear in the final film as a Force ghost? Why does Maz Kanata have Luke's lightsaber? Will the Resistance be able to regroup and vanquish the First Order?

Regardless of who wins the battles in *The Rise of Skywalker*, it is inevitable that the universe is on the brink of a new era: will the galaxies fall once and for all to the horrors of the Dark side, or will the Light side triumph over evil? And perhaps the two most basic questions that are reported to be answered: first, what exactly is the Force, and second, who is the "Skywalker" named in the title?

Whether he be a ghost or in the flesh, there is one Skywalker Star Wars fans are grateful to have for one final glimpse: Disney Legend Mark Hamill, in the role that skyrocketed him to stardom. As stated, it will be both gratifying and heartbreaking to see Carrie Fisher, also a Disney Legend, in her final film performance. Anthony Daniels returns as plucky C-3PO, with Jimmy Vee as R2-D2. And devotees of the franchise are overjoyed to once again see Billy Dee Williams as the randy Lando Calrissian and Ian McDiarmid as the treacherous Emperor Palpatine.

All of the principal performers from the previous segments of the trilogy are returning to reprise their roles: Adam Driver as Kylo Ren, Daisy Ridley as Rey, John Boyega as Finn and Oscar Isaac as Poe Dameron. Lupita Nyong'o is back as Maz Kanata, Domhnall Gleeson as General Hux, Richard E. Grant as Allegiant General Pryde, Kelly Marie Tran as Rose Tico, Joonas Suotamo as Chewbacca and Greg Grunberg as Temmin "Snap" Wexley. So is Billie Lourd, daughter of Carrie Fisher, reprising her role of Lieutenant Connix. Two new characters will also be introduced: Jannah, played by Naomi Ackie, who will use her prowess with a bow and arrow to join Finn in his fight against the First Order; and Zorii Bliss, a smuggler from the planet Kijimi who has a past with Poe

Artwork ©Disney



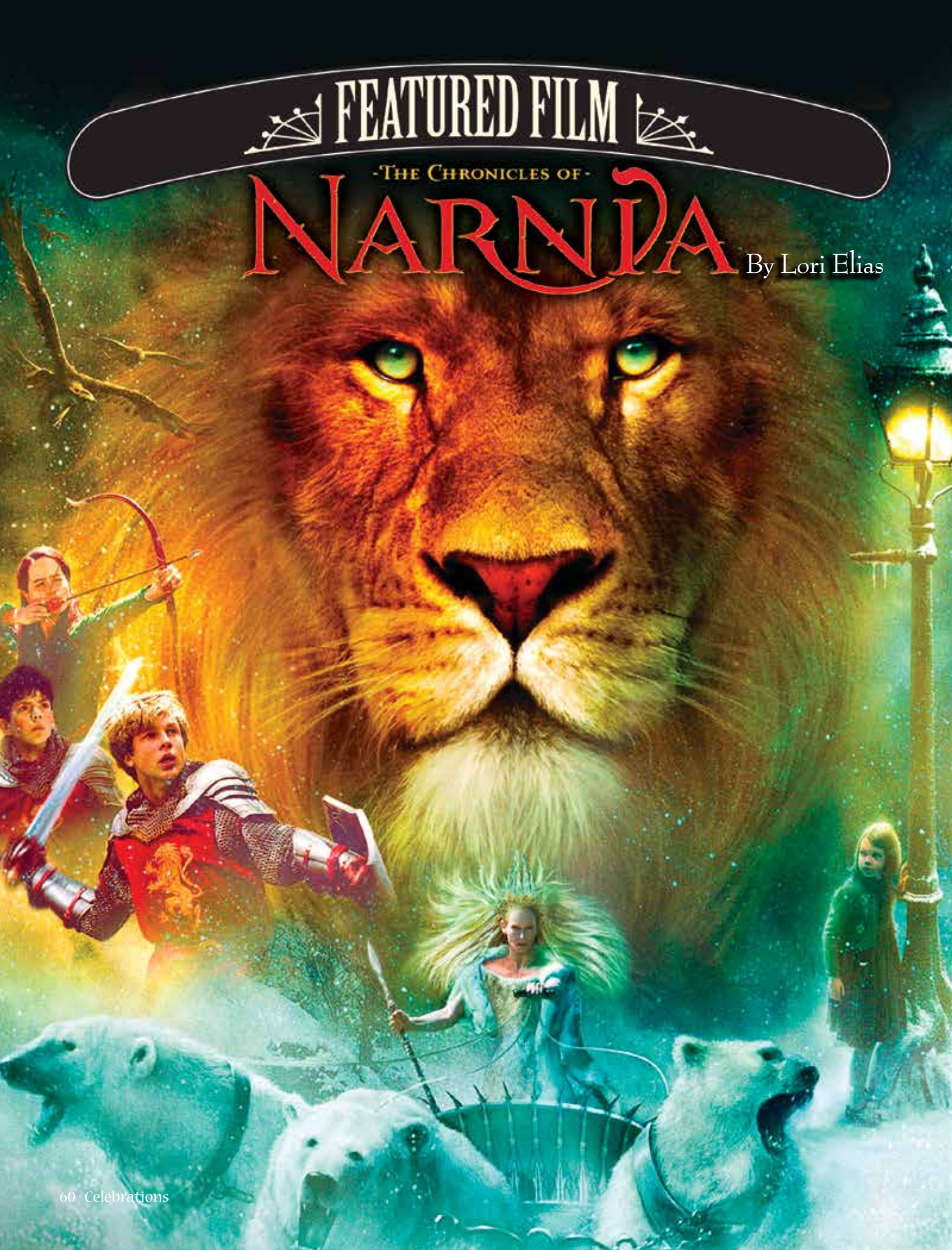
Dameron. Zorii is portrayed by Keri Russell, best known for playing the title role in the television series *Felicity*.

As a franchise, the Star Wars trilogies to date have earned thirty Academy Award nominations, with seven victories. (2016's *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* netted another three nominations.) As far as box office receipts go, it is second only to the Marvel Cinematic Universe in the highest-grossing franchises of all time ($18.2 billion and 9.3 billion, respectively), and it is hardly a fair comparison, as the MCU boasts 28 films – so far – as opposed to Star Wars' twelve (and soon to be thirteen). It certainly has one of the most recognized soundtrack themes ever recorded, and has launched some of the most elaborate enhancements and additions to Disneyland and Walt Disney World in recent memory.

"Your journey nears its end." So says Palpatine in the film's trailer. It is difficult to process that the story is finally concluding, but as Luke Skywalker says in same trailer, "No one is ever really gone." The legacy that Star Wars has left not only on its fans but on popular culture is not going anywhere for a very long time.

The Rise of Skywalker Fascinating Facts

- The entire story had to be reworked after Carrie Fisher's passing, as it was originally intended that she would have a much larger role in the final movie. The creative team was able to use previously-filmed footage to keep her in the film.
- Anthony Daniels (C3PO) is the only actor to appear in all nine episodes of the franchise. In addition, C3PO and R2-D2 are the only characters to have a part in each of the nine films, though R2 has been played by different actors: Kenny Baker in the first two trilogies, and Jimmy Vee in the final three films, following Baker's death in 2016.
- During a concert in which he conducted Cleveland Orchestra in 2018, John Williams admitted that Rey is his favorite character in the Star Wars franchise, and that he is also quite fond of actress Daisy Ridley; in fact, when he was asked to score *The Last Jedi*, he first made sure that Rey (and Daisy) would be returning! (He also revealed at the performance that when he composed *A New Hope*, he was under the impression that Luke and Leia would be love interests, which explains the romantic melody of "Luke and Leia's Theme.")
- Adam Driver and Keri Russell played opposite each other in the 2019 Broadway revival of Lanford Wilson's *Burn This*. Driver received a Tony nomination for his work.
- Russell has also worked with director J. J. Abrams on the series *Felicity*, as well as the film *Mission: Impossible III* (2006).
- The 36 years between Lando Calrissian's appearance in *Return of the Jedi* and his return in *The Rise of Skywalker* is the longest amount of time between role reprisals in film history.



By Lori Elias

Though not technically Christmas movies, Disney initiated a sadly all-too-brief but financially successful holiday franchise with *The Chronicles of Narnia* in 2005. While C. S. Lewis's beloved young adult series encompassed seven books, Disney released only two films: *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* in 2005 and *Prince Caspian* in 2008. Both films were directed by Andrew Adamson, with musical scoring by Harry Gregson-Williams.

The first film was released in early December, capitalizing on the lucrative period between Thanksgiving and Christmas, allowing the momentum to carry it through the holiday season. Its sequel was released in May, also a good time to get a jumpstart on the summer blockbuster season. A third film, *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader,* was released by Fox and Walden Media after being declined by Disney, in hopes of extending the franchise, and returned to the December release. (This film did not fare as well at the box office as the earlier movies; whether it was a bit of burnout, the fact that the movie's plotlines varied significantly from the book, or some viewers felt that it simply did not have the "Disney magic" of its predecessors is a matter for debate.)

Christmas does play a subtle yet significant "supporting role" in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe.* After young Lucy Pevensie slips into the titular wardrobe during a game of hide-and-seek with her brothers, Peter and Edmund, and sister, Susan, she finds herself transported to a snow-covered forest. She soon learns from a faun named Mr. Tumnus that the evil White Witch has crowned herself Queen of Narnia, and has turned her realm into a land where it is "always winter, never Christmas," which means all of the cold, ice, snow, and grey skies without any of the joy, delicious food, good will…not to mention presents!…of the holiday.

But unfortunately for the witch, Lucy returns to Narnia with her siblings, destined to unwittingly fulfill a prophecy stating that when humans were to ascend to the throne of Narnia, it would be a new golden age for the land. Their arrival also signals the long-awaited return of the lion Aslan, the son of the Emperor- Over-the-Sea, and the True King of Narnia, which is even better news for the Narnians:

Wrong will be right, when Aslan comes in sight,
At the sound of his roar, sorrows will be no more,
When he bares his teeth, winter meets its death,
And when he shakes his mane, we shall have spring again.

As Aslan moves throughout Narnia, the witch's power weakens, as does her icy grip over the country. Snow gives way to grass and flowers, turning the once snow-covered land with a symphony of color. (This may seem a bit in reverse to many readers and viewers, as in the northern hemisphere Christmas falls, as the English carol says, "in the bleak midwinter," but Lewis wanted to portray the image of new life and restoration, which is best illustrated by spring.)

Though spring has come to Narnia, Christmas is long overdue, and not even an entirely new world in another dimension can stop Santa Claus (or Father Christmas, to the English-born Pevensie children)! He meets up with the siblings – save Edmund, who for a time had been taken in by the White Witch's false flattery, as well as a plentiful amount of Turkish delight – to give them gifts they will need in the inevitable battle for Narnia. "These are your presents," he tells them, "and they are tools, not toys. The time to use them is perhaps near at hand." Peter, the future High King, receives a sword and shield. For Susan, a bow and quiver of arrows, along with a horn which, when blown, will bring help. Lucy receives a small dagger, since it is Father Christmas's hope that she will not join in the fighting, and a cordial which will heal any illness or wound; it would later save Edmund's life after he returns to the side of the good Narnians and helps to defeat the White Witch.

The Pevensies would indeed be crowned kings and queens, as it was prophesized, reigning over Narnia for many years until one day, while hunting a mysterious white stag, they stumbled into the wardrobe and back into the country home of Professor Digory Kirke, with whom they have been waiting out World War II, safe from the bombings over their native London. Oddly, it is as though no time as passed since their game – they return at exactly the same time and ages as they were when they first entered Narnia. They share their surreal adventures with the professor, and he is oddly not at all surprised by their tales. Perhaps he knows more about the wardrobe in his spare room than he is letting on?

The Pevensies would return to Narnia in *Prince Caspian* a year later in our time, where they would discover that 1300 years had passed in Narnia, and the country once again in trouble. The now-ancient kings and queens would join the prince in his fight against his evil Uncle Miraz, who had murdered his own brother Caspian IX, the rightful heir to the throne, and usurped the crown. After Miraz is deposed and Caspian takes his place as King of Narnia, the Pevensies are once again sent back to their – and our – world. Peter and Susan learn that they are never to return, though the door, both metaphorical and literal, is still open for

Artwork ©Disney

Edmund and Lucy (and return they would in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader,* where they would reunite with Caspian accompanied by their cousin, Eustace Clarence Scrubb).

The core of the cast starred in both films. Oscar nominee Liam Neeson (*Schindler's List*) was the perfect choice for the regal voice of Aslan. Neeson has long made a career out of playing noble, respected characters: not only his Academy Award-nominated turn as Oskar Schindler, who saved 1200 Jewish people from the Holocaust, but also the title roles in *Rob Roy* (1995) and *Michael Collins* (1996), sympathetic widower Daniel in *Love Actually* (2003), mighty Zeus in *Clash of the Titans* (2010), and Qui-Gon Jinn in the Star Wars franchise…not to mention Bryan Mills, an operative with a "very particular set of skills" in the *Taken* movies!

Tilda Swinton had been known primarily for roles in ensemble films such as *Vanilla Sky* (2001) and *Adaptation* (2002) when she was tapped to wear the fur-lined robes of Jadis, the White Witch. The Narnia films proved to be a bit of a star-making turn for her, and she has gone on to a number of significant roles, perhaps most notably to Disney and Marvel fans as The Ancient One in *Dr. Strange* (2016) and *Avengers: Endgame* (2019), as well an Academy Award for her portrayal of Karen Crowder in *Michael Clayton* (2008).

So that takes care of the lion and the witch…now what about the wardrobe? Its owner, Professor Kirke, was portrayed by Jim Broadbent, whose film career reaches back almost 50 years. His roles and the films in which he plays them have become progressively more prominent as his career has progressed, with relatively recent blockbusters such as the title character's father in *Bridget Jones's Diary* and its sequels, Harold Zidler in *Moulin Rouge!* (2001) and Boss Tweed in *Gangs of New York* (2002).

Lucy, the first child through the wardrobe, was played by Georgie Henley, who celebrated her ninth birthday while filming the first movie. After taking time off from acting to pursue her education and a degree in English from Clare College, the University of Cambridge, Henley is currently starring as Margaret "Meg" Tudor in *The Spanish Princess,* a STARZ drama about Catherine of Aragorn, the first wife of King Henry VIII.

Her brother Edmund, the traitor-turned-hero, was played by Skandar Keynes. Following the release of the third Narnia film, Keynes, whose maternal heritage includes Lebanese, Persian and Turkish ancestry, opted to focus on his studies, majoring in Arabic and Middle Eastern History at Penbroke College, Cambridge, and earning a degree in Middle Eastern Studies. He is now working as an economist and political advisor.

High King Peter was the first major role for William Mosely, who has gone on to a steady film career, primarily in Europe. His most prominent role on this side of the pond has been Prince Liam in the E! television series *The Royals.*

Anna Popplewell has had perhaps the most visible post-Narnia career of the Pevensie children. After starring as Susan in the Narnia films, Popplewell went on to the mini-series *Halo 4: Forward Unto Dawn* (2012) and the CW series *Reign*, a drama centering around the tragic life of Mary, Queen of Scots.

As for the characters on the other side of the door, some had already had active film careers, while for others the Narnia films proved to be a springboard into newfound fame. James McAvoy had already appeared in the acclaimed 2001 series *Band of Brothers* and the 2004 film *Wimbledon* (starring future Marvel hero Paul Bettany) when he earned the role of the faun Mr. Tumnus, Lucy's first friend in Narnia.

Ben Barnes held the title role in Prince Caspian. He had been known primarily in his native United Kingdom, but since this film (as well as *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*), has gone on to another title role, *Dorian Gray* (2009); *Alejandro in The Big Wedding*.

Peter Dinklage was a familiar face but not yet a household name when he took the role of Trumpkin, reluctant ally to the returning royalty who had been summoned to assist Prince Caspian. He too has gone on to a number of successful characters, though perhaps none quite so recognized as those of Dr. Boliver Trask in *X-Men: Days of Future Past* (2014) and the sardonic Tyrion Lannister in *Game of Thrones,* a role which has garnered him three Emmy Awards.

Warwick Davis had already enjoyed some star turns before taking on the role of Nikabrik, including Wicket in *Return of the Jedi* (1983) and the title roles in *Willow* (1988) and the *Leprechaun* franchise. He has actually appeared in several Star Wars films, though in different roles: Wald in *The Phantom Menace* (1999), Wollivan in *The Force Awakens* (2015), Weeteef Cyubee in *Rogue One* (2016), Wodibin in *The Last Jedi* (2017) and Weazel in *Solo* (2018). He is undoubtedly best recognized by younger viewers for Professor Flitwick in the Harry Potter films.

The two Narnia movies merited special attractions at Disney's Hollywood Studios. Housed at Mickey Avenue, "Journey into Narnia: Creating The Lion, the Witch and Wardrobe" allowed Guests to pass through a wardrobe door

Artwork ©Disney



and stand at the lamppost in snowy Narnia, accompanied by the same music Harry Gregson-Williams created for Lucy's first entrance into the magical land. After a warning from the White Witch, Guests were treated to scenes from the film. As Guests continued through the attraction, the snowy forest gave way to spring-like greenery, followed by an exhibit of props and costumes from the movie.

It was followed a few years later by "Journey into Narnia: Prince Caspian." This time Guests walked through the entrance to Aslan's How, as portrayed in the movie. A welcome by director Andrew Adamson was the prologue to a behind-the-scenes experience, with Guests finding themselves inside the heart of Aslan's How, alongside the cracked Stone Table as portrayed in the film. Once again, a collection of props and costumes were on display.

Will the Narnia movies ever resume? It seems quite doubtful at this point, especially as the actors and actresses playing the Pevensies have become too old to reprise their characters. But who can tell for sure? Or in the words of Professor Kirke, "Yes, of course you'll get back to Narnia again, someday…But don't go trying to use the same route twice. Indeed, don't try to get there at all. It'll happen when you're not looking for it."

The Chronicles of Narnia Fascinating Facts

- The films were released in the order the books were written and published. If the books and films were released in order of when the saga's events occurred, the order would be *The Magician's Nephew; The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe; The Horse and His Boy; Prince Caspian; The Voyage of the Dawn Treader; The Silver Chair;* and *The Last Battle*, and indeed, there are sets of the books that have been published in this sequence.
- Aslan was created through computer-generated imagery (CGI). Each frame required about 5.2 million individual hairs, and approximately ten hours of work.
- The voice of the radio announcer at the beginning of the film is C. S. Lewis's stepson Douglas Gresham, who had given his sought-after approval of the film after seeing a demo reel of Disney's plans for the film.
- Lucy screams the first time she spots Tumnus the faun. This was authentic: Georgie Henley had not yet seen James McAvoy in his costume and her reaction was genuine.
- When the Pevensie children return to England while hunting the white stag, they have aged into adulthood in Narnian years. Older Lucy is portrayed by Henley's older sister, Rachel.



Christmas Castles of Disney

Photo © Mike Billick





Photo © Lisa Mahan

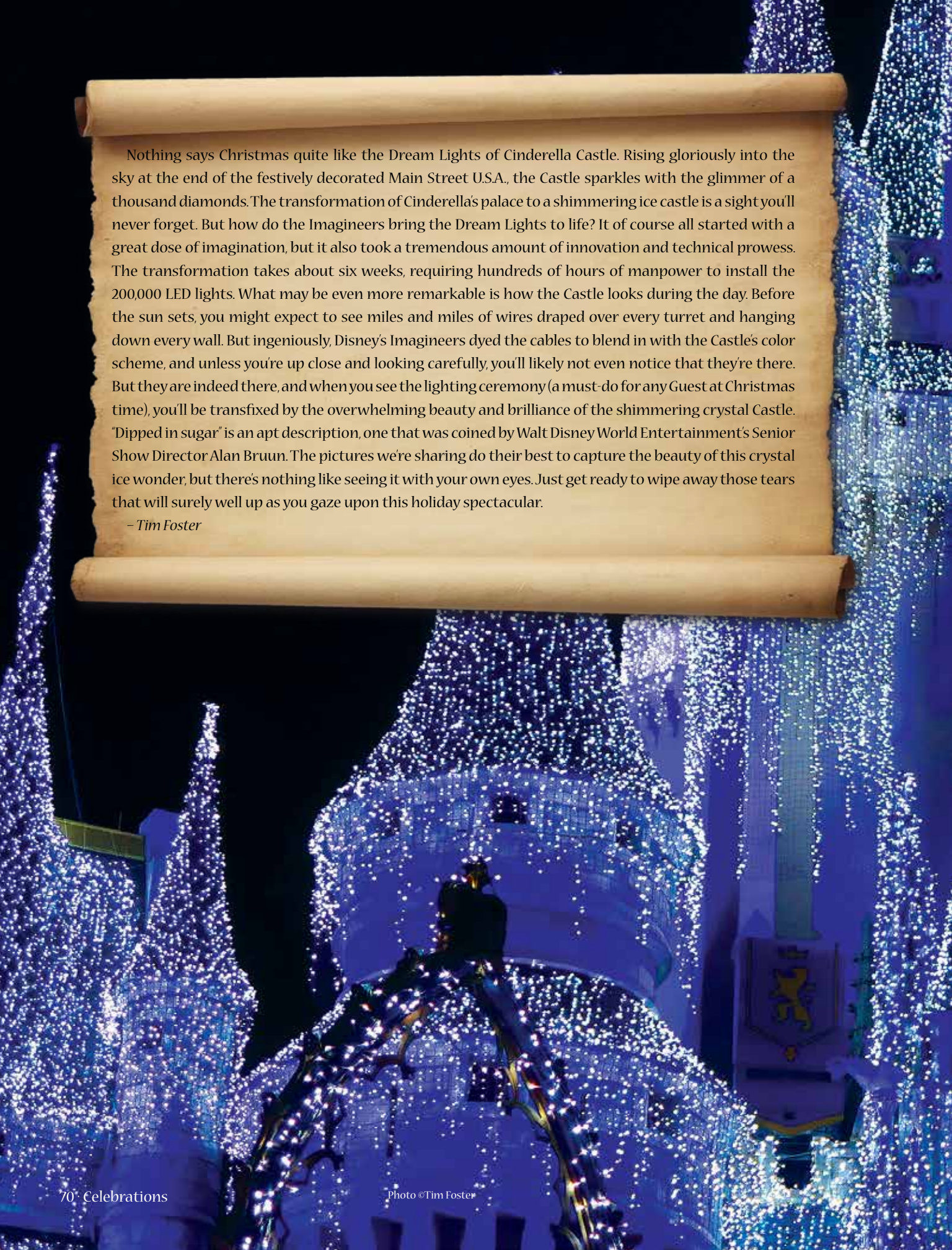


Photo © Tim Foster





Photos © Tim Foster

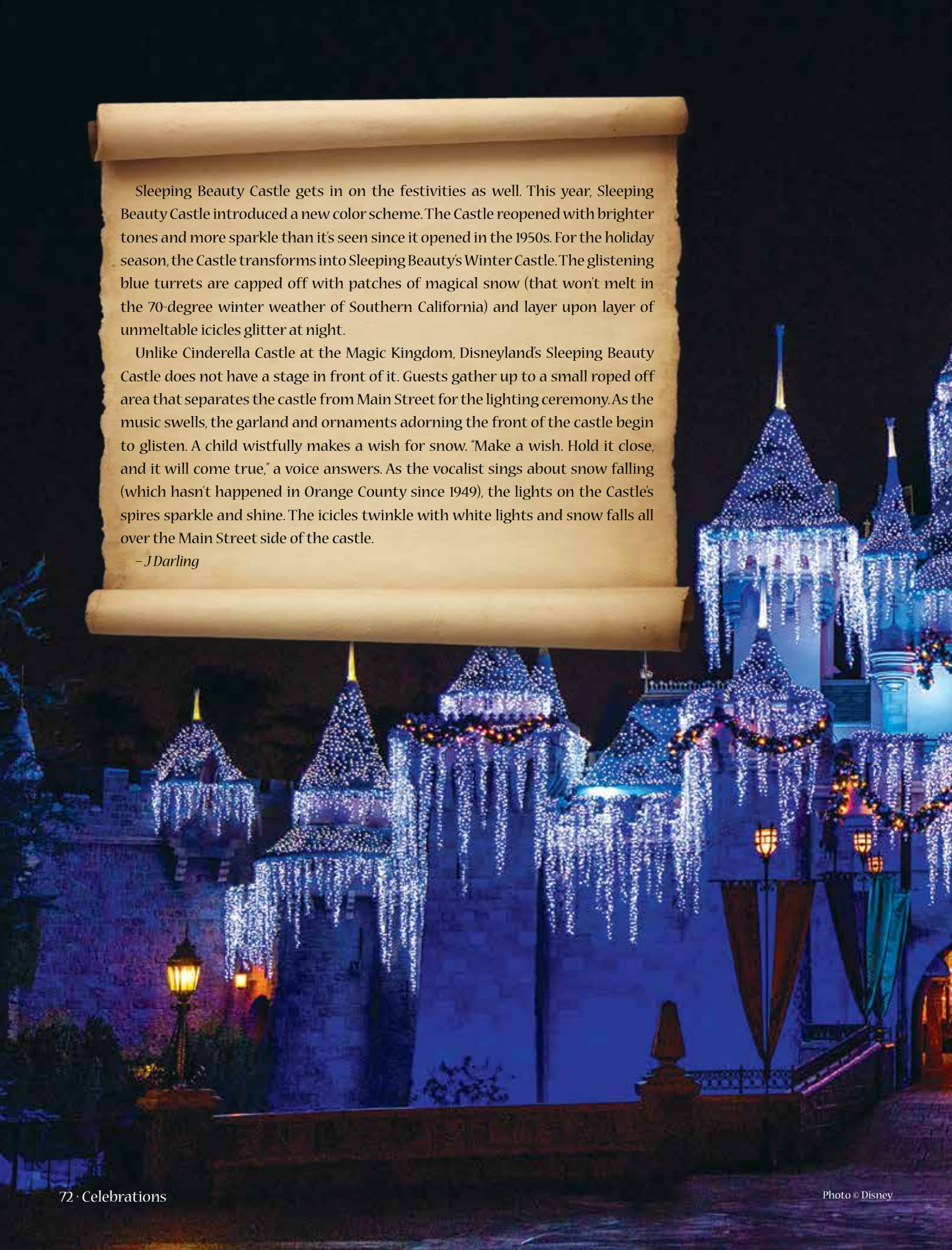


Nothing says Christmas quite like the Dream Lights of Cinderella Castle. Rising gloriously into the sky at the end of the festively decorated Main Street U.S.A., the Castle sparkles with the glimmer of a thousand diamonds. The transformation of Cinderella's palace to a shimmering ice castle is a sight you'll never forget. But how do the Imagineers bring the Dream Lights to life? It of course all started with a great dose of imagination, but it also took a tremendous amount of innovation and technical prowess. The transformation takes about six weeks, requiring hundreds of hours of manpower to install the 200,000 LED lights. What may be even more remarkable is how the Castle looks during the day. Before the sun sets, you might expect to see miles and miles of wires draped over every turret and hanging down every wall. But ingeniously, Disney's Imagineers dyed the cables to blend in with the Castle's color scheme, and unless you're up close and looking carefully, you'll likely not even notice that they're there. But they are indeed there, and when you see the lighting ceremony (a must-do for any Guest at Christmas time), you'll be transfixed by the overwhelming beauty and brilliance of the shimmering crystal Castle. "Dipped in sugar" is an apt description, one that was coined by Walt Disney World Entertainment's Senior Show Director Alan Bruun. The pictures we're sharing do their best to capture the beauty of this crystal ice wonder, but there's nothing like seeing it with your own eyes. Just get ready to wipe away those tears that will surely well up as you gaze upon this holiday spectacular.

– Tim Foster

Photo ©Tim Foster





Sleeping Beauty Castle gets in on the festivities as well. This year, Sleeping Beauty Castle introduced a new color scheme. The Castle reopened with brighter tones and more sparkle than it's seen since it opened in the 1950s. For the holiday season, the Castle transforms into Sleeping Beauty's Winter Castle. The glistening blue turrets are capped off with patches of magical snow (that won't melt in the 70-degree winter weather of Southern California) and layer upon layer of unmeltable icicles glitter at night.

Unlike Cinderella Castle at the Magic Kingdom, Disneyland's Sleeping Beauty Castle does not have a stage in front of it. Guests gather up to a small roped off area that separates the castle from Main Street for the lighting ceremony. As the music swells, the garland and ornaments adorning the front of the castle begin to glisten. A child wistfully makes a wish for snow. "Make a wish. Hold it close, and it will come true," a voice answers. As the vocalist sings about snow falling (which hasn't happened in Orange County since 1949), the lights on the Castle's spires sparkle and shine. The icicles twinkle with white lights and snow falls all over the Main Street side of the castle.

– J Darling

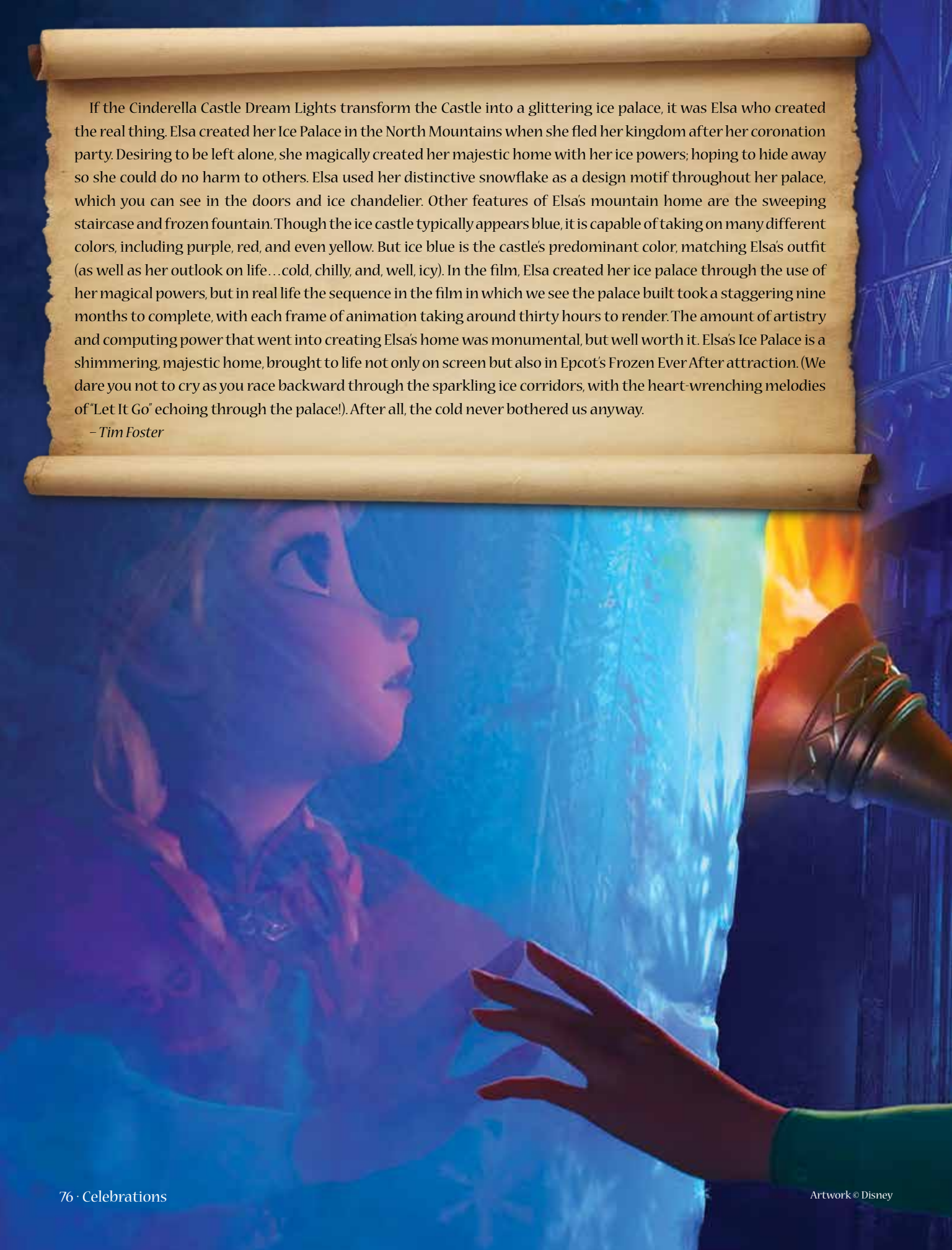
Photo © Disney





Photo © Disney





If the Cinderella Castle Dream Lights transform the Castle into a glittering ice palace, it was Elsa who created the real thing. Elsa created her Ice Palace in the North Mountains when she fled her kingdom after her coronation party. Desiring to be left alone, she magically created her majestic home with her ice powers; hoping to hide away so she could do no harm to others. Elsa used her distinctive snowflake as a design motif throughout her palace, which you can see in the doors and ice chandelier. Other features of Elsa's mountain home are the sweeping staircase and frozen fountain. Though the ice castle typically appears blue, it is capable of taking on many different colors, including purple, red, and even yellow. But ice blue is the castle's predominant color, matching Elsa's outfit (as well as her outlook on life…cold, chilly, and, well, icy). In the film, Elsa created her ice palace through the use of her magical powers, but in real life the sequence in the film in which we see the palace built took a staggering nine months to complete, with each frame of animation taking around thirty hours to render. The amount of artistry and computing power that went into creating Elsa's home was monumental, but well worth it. Elsa's Ice Palace is a shimmering, majestic home, brought to life not only on screen but also in Epcot's Frozen Ever After attraction. (We dare you not to cry as you race backward through the sparkling ice corridors, with the heart-wrenching melodies of "Let It Go" echoing through the palace!). After all, the cold never bothered us anyway.

– Tim Foster

Artwork © Disney







Artwork © Disney



Big Thunder Mountain Railroad:

The Story Behind the Wildest Ride in the West

by Elizabeth Mastrangelo

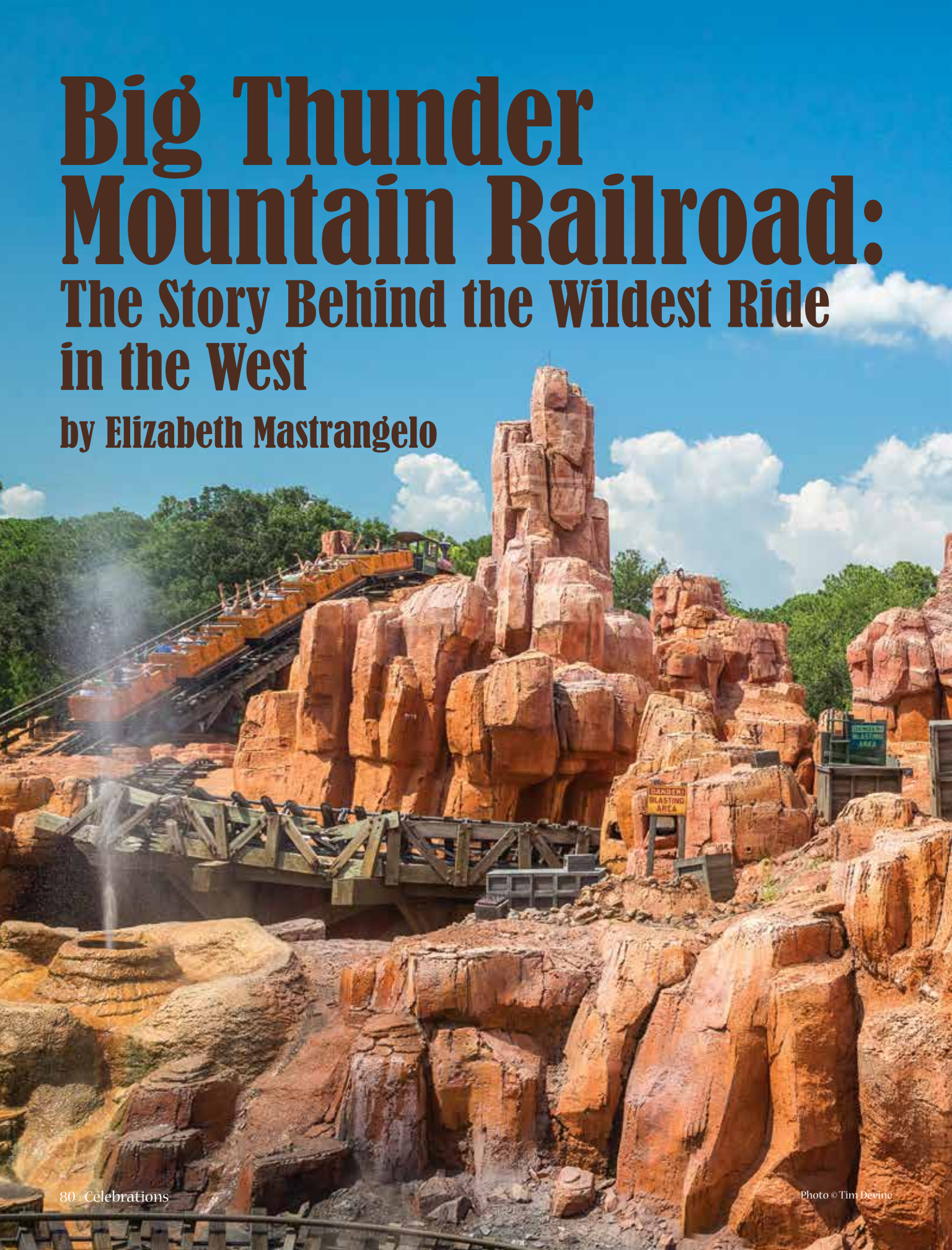


Photo © Tim Devine


DANGER
BLASTING
AREA



Photo © Tim Devine

Amongst the craggy formations of Big Thunder Mountain, the whimsical creativity of Walt Disney World Imagineers and the unforgiving isolation of the 19th-century American frontier fuse into a raucous ride that crosses the boundaries of time. We know that Walt Disney World is forever enchanting us, causing us to question whether a division truly exists between the real and the imagined. But Big Thunder Mountain Railroad may actually represent the realities of Westward expansion in the United States more authentically than Little House on the Prairie and John Wayne.

As American books and films have typically idealized the icons of sallow-faced cowboys trudging into the sunset, saloon brawls over cheated card games, lumbering wagons packed with children and photo albums, and idyllic Main Street mom-and-pop stores; the result has been that the settling of the American frontier has been perhaps the most misunderstood time in history. Western movies glamorize the heroism of strong men – sheriffs, cowboys, and bounty hunters – who correct ill-behaving citizens or renegades that have ridden into town to disturb the peace. These law-enforcing heroes gallop across the plains to wrangle the wilderness and to establish order. In order to clear the way for human advancement, these leaders and their followers must take over the landscape. Cowboys must mine from it precious natural resources, demand from it fertile soil, and clear rocks and trees from it to subdue the earth into passable and productive terrain. What Western films do not convey is the right of the wilderness to fight back against these arrogant efforts by humans.

We must remember that the frontier is a live entity that existed long before people traversed it. Those who try too hard to tame the frontier will encounter difficulty – a flash blizzard in June that kills an entire spring garden; a windstorm that knocks down a homestead; a coyote that devours a farm's only hen.

There's Gold in Them Thar Hills

One of the most invasive acts that a man might impose upon the frontier is panning for gold, having paid no homage to the land in return. The story of Big Thunder Mountain Railroad in Frontierland at the Magic Kingdom begins in the Southwestern town of Tumbleweed, a settlement that has driven its stakes and burrowed its drills into the mountain to create shafts for gold-hunting. Now, even the name of this natural structure, Big Thunder, should have indicated to miners the magnitude of its power, the potential to send out rumbling growls of displeasure at anyone or anything who dares to dig too deep. Thunder is Mother Nature's signal to us that lightning has struck (Is something or someone up there disgruntled?) and the air around us is heating up with no chance to expand. The pressure that builds causes the air to ripple outward in bursts, booming like little explosions. You think you're going to get rich quick with your dynamite? the mountain demands of its intruders. I'll show you what it really means to explode!

Unfortunately for the original miners that descended upon this frontier in the Magic Kingdom, Big Thunder Mountain was the site of an ancient Native American burial ground. This backstory gives us the first clue to the extent of the miners' offense. The apprehension of Natives' land by overzealous American explorers continues to burden our country's history. Historically, Americans have equated land ownership with status and wealth, and have paid little attention to the importance of preserving the purity of a land and its people. Back in the colonial era, private ownership rather than a communal sharing of land strengthened a family's competitiveness, and thus their determination to plant more and to toil harder to ensure their own survival. The Homestead Act of 1862 granted Americans the opportunity to claim up to 160 acres of public land, as long as they could cultivate it, maintain residence on it for five years, and ultimately show evidence of its improvement. In presenting the Homestead Act, President Abraham Lincoln declared that the American government should "give everyone an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life." While "unfettered" may have suggested the absence of written rules imposed by the government, it certainly did not mean protection from the unspoken rules of Mother Nature! If homesteaders did not farm with careful planning, or if they burned through their canned goods well before their next trip to the store, or if they failed to chop enough wood for winter...then they fell victim to the temperamental moods of the frontier. Pioneers may have benefited from a "fair" chance in starting with a blank slate of Western territory just like the next people in line at the claims office, but from that point, countless variables such as weather, soil fertility, illness, and wild animals complicated their dream of land ownership and independence.

The first Big Thunder Mountain miners took the risk of agitating the graves of Native Americans and stirring up angry spirits who wished to sleep. But a warning that

did not tangibly appear before a man's eyes could not be a cause for concern, right? What these miners did see was the glinting of gold, the shining promise of a prosperous future. According to the official backstory, "Though the mountain 'thundered' when anyone inspected it, [miners] took ore trains deep down in the caverns. They removed the gold and celebrated with poker games and parlor girls." Instead of honoring the natural state of the land, these miners carved out its insides and indulged in fleeting, material delights, rewarding themselves for their ability to turn greed into profit. Big Thunder Mountain has spoken out aggressively against these infractions ever since, with louder, more visible, more destructive forces, including a flash flood, an avalanche, and of course, runaway trains!

These threats from the mountain do not faze Barnabas T. Bullion, the founder and operator of the Big Thunder Mining Company, who continues to discover new veins of gold, digging new shafts every day. Barnabas T. Bullion's name suggests the irony of his situation. While "Barnabas" means "son of consolation" or "son of comfort" – perhaps in the way that someone needs a pick-me-up after losing something precious? – "Bullion," of course, refers to the state of gold in bulk, and therefore a state of great wealth. At once, we hear the story of loss and gain in Bullion's name. What are the consequences of this level of avarice? Sure, as a one-man show, Bullion is cackling in satisfaction over his stacks of gold, but at what cost? The settlement at Big Thunder Mountain is deserted, haunted, and falling apart. Are these circumstances markers of success on the frontier?

As Guests of the Magic Kingdom, we get to enjoy "this here... wildest ride in the wilderness" because we are willing to give ourselves over to the passionate, driving spirit of untamed American land. While we revel in a runaway mining train's rattling, climbing, hopping, and plummeting through the mountainous land it calls home, Bullion remains trapped in the portrait that hangs in the rafters of the Big Thunder Mountain Mining Company. His right eye betrays what could be a touch of fright at the influence of the mountain's natural forces, wide open and wary. A part of him might acknowledge the fiasco that he has created. On the other hand, his left eye squints mischievously, delivering the glare of a shrewd businessman. Though, according to legend, any "unfortunate soul who attempts to mine [the mountain's] riches is destined to fail," Barnabas T. Bullion refuses to surrender to the laws of Nature, encapsulating himself in his own faulty American Dream. Because we Guests of Frontierland respect Big Thunder Mountain's birthright over Bullion's, we come away from the attraction with our own fortune – the excitement of experiencing the American West without actually having to live through its hardships!

Making Our Way Through the Mountain

The Big Thunder Mountain queue does not simply entertain. It tells a story of the tension between the ongoing human desire for bigger and better, the revolutionary and individualistic spirit of Americanism, and our nation's need for conservation and preservation. If we mistreat our land, we will have nothing to build upon. First, the queue asks patrons to trudge up a winding pathway in order to enter the mining company headquarters, implying that we cannot simply stroll into the headquarters; we must invest in a trek that leaves us short-breathed. That is, we must cater to the land, rather than expect man-made conveniences to make our journey comfortable. Once inside the mining office, we spot indications of both the lure and peril of pioneer adventure. A sign for The Big Thunder Boarding House suggests that the magnate in charge will provide cozy quarters for miners to rest their tired bodies at the end of the day. The paymaster window and shelves stocked with bars of twinkling gold might mesmerize us with the promise of billionaire – or "Bullionaire" – status. A wood-burning stove supplies warmth, the illusion of a homey hearth.

But then we take note of the presence of explosives all around us. Boxes of Quake City blasting caps labeled DANGEROUS. Crates of dynamite stored on the beams above our heads. A shed of ammunition. And finally, curious blasting machines that line a wall of windows overlooking Big Thunder Mountain. All right, fine – who doesn't like the thrill of blowing something up, especially from a safe distance? Barnabas T. Bullion knows what he is doing, idealizing his empire by inviting us to participate in the fun of destruction. All a Guest has to do is crank up the pressure in the blasting box and push down on a plunger to instigate a snap and a "pow" and a burst of smoke somewhere on the mountain. It's too easy, giving into the urge to cause a reaction, to carve out a space where we have been! We can understand the satisfaction that homesteaders must have felt, plowing the way for civilization on the plains. It's tempting to make our mark.

Setting Off on a Runaway Adventure

As the screeching of brakes and the hissing of steam signal our proximity to the train, we must remind ourselves that

Photos © Garry Rollins





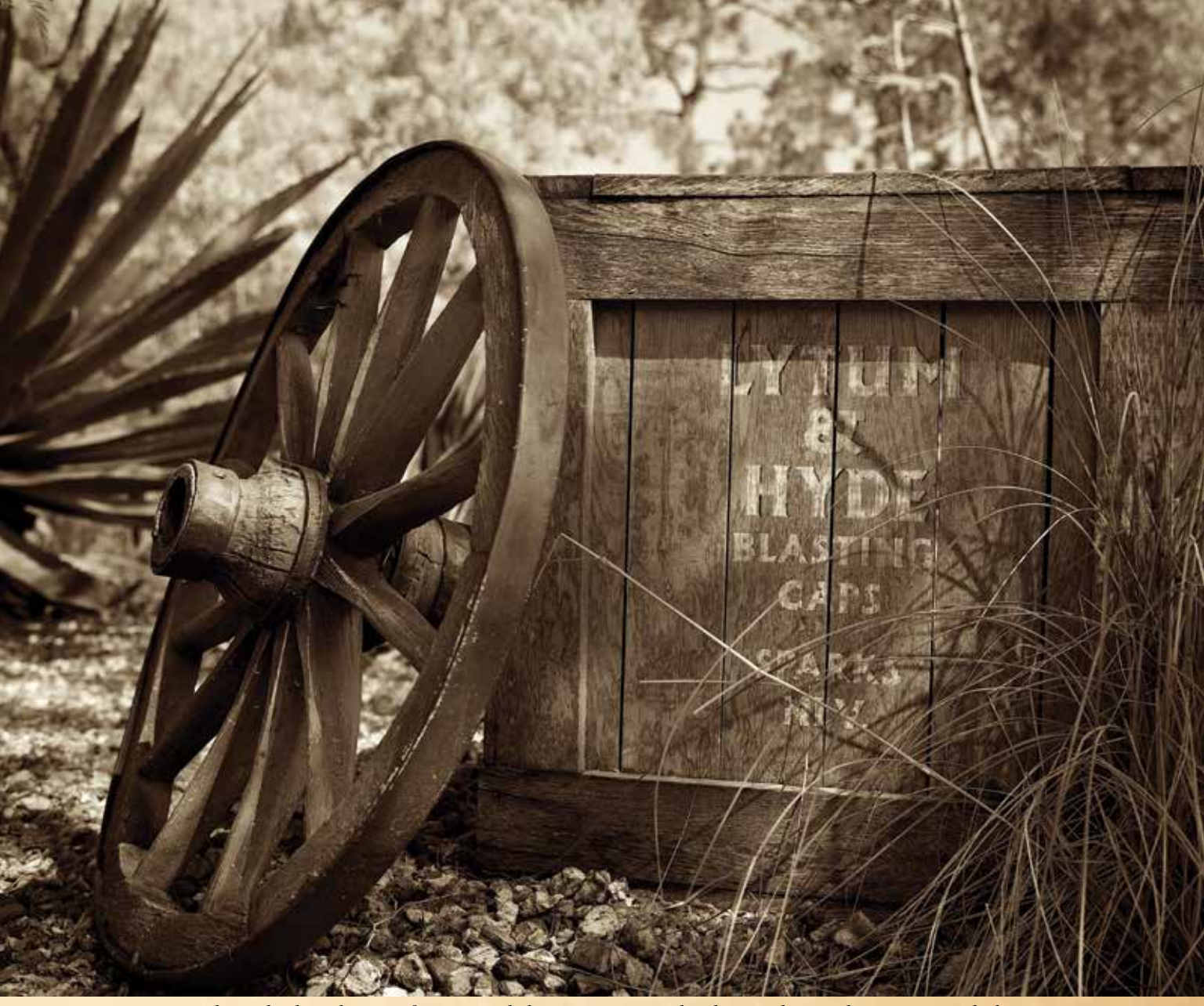
Walt Disney Imagineers have been telling the true story of the American frontier for years. Walt Disney himself loved the animals and the vegetation of the wild, their gentle and ferocious beauty, and the dynamics of the prairie, the desert, and the jungle. He strived to educate young people across the country with his True-Life Adventure series, and touted his commitment to realistic portrayals of American terrain and the stories it told: "We did not succumb to the alluring temptations to make villains or saints of the creatures portrayed in our films. We have maintained a sensitive regard for the wisdom of nature's design and have attempted to hold a mirror to the out-of-doors rather than to interpret its functioning by man's standards." Similarly, Big Thunder Mountain gives us a narrative of one of the most influential eras in American history, driven by a non-human protagonist: the frontier. As Guests, we are privileged to act as reverent observers as the train, the engine of the narrative, pulls us alongside, under, and above natural land formations. We are less likely to feel like the controlling force in this narrative than in other Magic Kingdom attractions, as nobody could possibly mistake Big Thunder Mountain for a secondary character.

Every detail of this setting entices our senses and builds on our understanding of Big Thunder's self-sufficiency and authority. The cool, sweet, musty smell of weathered wood and soil immerse us in the mining underworld, and our piling into refurbished ore carts only tucks us into the storyline more deeply. It seems appropriate that the attraction propels us through a dark tunnel almost immediately, as we associate enclosed spaces, as black as night, with mining life. Clacking up the first hill, we pass through a hollow in which stalagmites and stalactites form an adventure course for creatures that have laid down their roots in the haven of the mountain. From here, the train continues on to Tumbleweed, the town's very name referencing its lack of liveliness and fertility. These dry, wiry tangles scampering across arid plains are yet another romanticized emblem of the Western frontier. Officially named Russian thistle, tumbleweed can annoy the inhabitants of the Southwest, proving a nuisance to farmers who want to till their land, bunching up to overwhelm patches of land with their prickly webs, and spreading their seeds so they continue to grow. Interestingly, the tumbleweed plant is also flammable! The town's name only enhances our attention to Big Thunder Mountain's potential for explosiveness if someone makes the wrong move.

Our runaway mine train takes us through plenty of evidence of Big Thunder Mountain's intolerance for any shenanigans. Out of all of the creatures that call this mountain their home, only a couple are visibly human. While on our ride, we duck under an onslaught of neon bats, wave to dangling possums, smile back at smirking donkeys, cower under buzzards, and gaze up at perched mountain goats. (Speaking of goats, the next time you ride try out this dizzying trick: as you pass by the goats, turn your head so you continue to look straight at them. You'll have to twist around a bit as your train gently curves to the left before taking a big plunge…but if you're able to keep your eyes on the goats…well, you'll experience a dizzying sensation that only the hardiest of cowboys can handle! OK, it's not quite that bad, but it is a lot of fun!) Imagineers want us to giggle good-naturedly at these friendly, caricatured critters, but that's because we get the joke: toying with the sanctity of the land is no laughing matter!

These characters roam freely over the land in the way that Barnabas T. Bullion thinks he reigns over his coal mining company, but with authentic, rather than covetous, access to the frontier. We might find the sight of Professor Cumulus Isobar's doggedly scooping water from his wagon to be humorous, too. The Professor has moved into the town of Tumbleweed, seeking work – that is, seeking a few overly trusting souls. He has supposedly convinced the townspeople of Tumbleweed of his gift for summoning rain in order to combat the drought of the plains, and has profited from their ignorance. His appeals to the rain gods have left his abode and supplies drenched, while the animals native to the plains stay dry on high ground.

Clearly, the land refuses to accept the Professor's gestures...because his intentions are self-serving, unnatural, and unwelcome. A letter of complaint hanging in the queue of the attraction addressed to the Professor gives us an early clue that he has lurked and swindled in this town before. A dissatisfied customer named "E.Z. Marks" (who lives on "Gullible Way," of course) claims that the Professor sold him a faulty elixir: "I regret to inform you that the 'miracle cure' that you prescribed for me is nothing of the sort and my bunions have returned with a vengeance." No con man can get away with such brazen trickery, especially if Big Thunder Mountain has anything to say (or rumble) about it! Continuously ornery about these violations of the frontier, the mountain unleashes an earthquake and an avalanche that just misses our runaway train.



Our passing through the ribcage of a T-Rex skeleton just before our journey ends feels emblematic of just how long Earth has been here – much longer than we humans have been walking the planet. Big Thunder Mountain Railroad does not mince the message that we are fodder for forces that dwarf us, both in size and dignity. Walt Disney World Imagineers designed this attraction after Monument Valley on the Utah-Arizona border, a region that provides the most enduring image of the American West. The fiery, rugged, majestic buttes and mesas of the valley star in numerous Western and popular films, including Stagecoach, Rio Grande, and Forrest Gump. Stately and... well, perfect, they just might be the most distinguished and impressive characters of all. How fortunate we are, as Guests of the Magic Kingdom, that Big Thunder Mountain Railroad enables us to travel to a time and place that needs no technology, no human brainpower or hubris, to exist.

According to Frank Gruber, pulp fiction writer, there are seven main plots for Western films. One is the "empire story," which focuses on an enterprising young man who builds some kind of lucrative empire from the ground up. Though he seems to devise his empire from the mountain top down, Barnabas T. Bullion certainly aligns with this description. A protagonist to cheer for, no? Not so fast. Let us also consider the "revenge story," a tale that frequently includes an aggrieved character's pursuit of the person or entity that has antagonized him. This plot may also experiment with the qualities of a traditional mystery...events occur that logic cannot explain. In the Big Thunder Mountain Railroad attraction, these two plots, and these two strong-willed main characters, duel one another for dominance. But we harbor no doubt that the wronged party wins.

Photo © Garry Rollins



Christmas Around the World at Epcot

by Britta Stephens

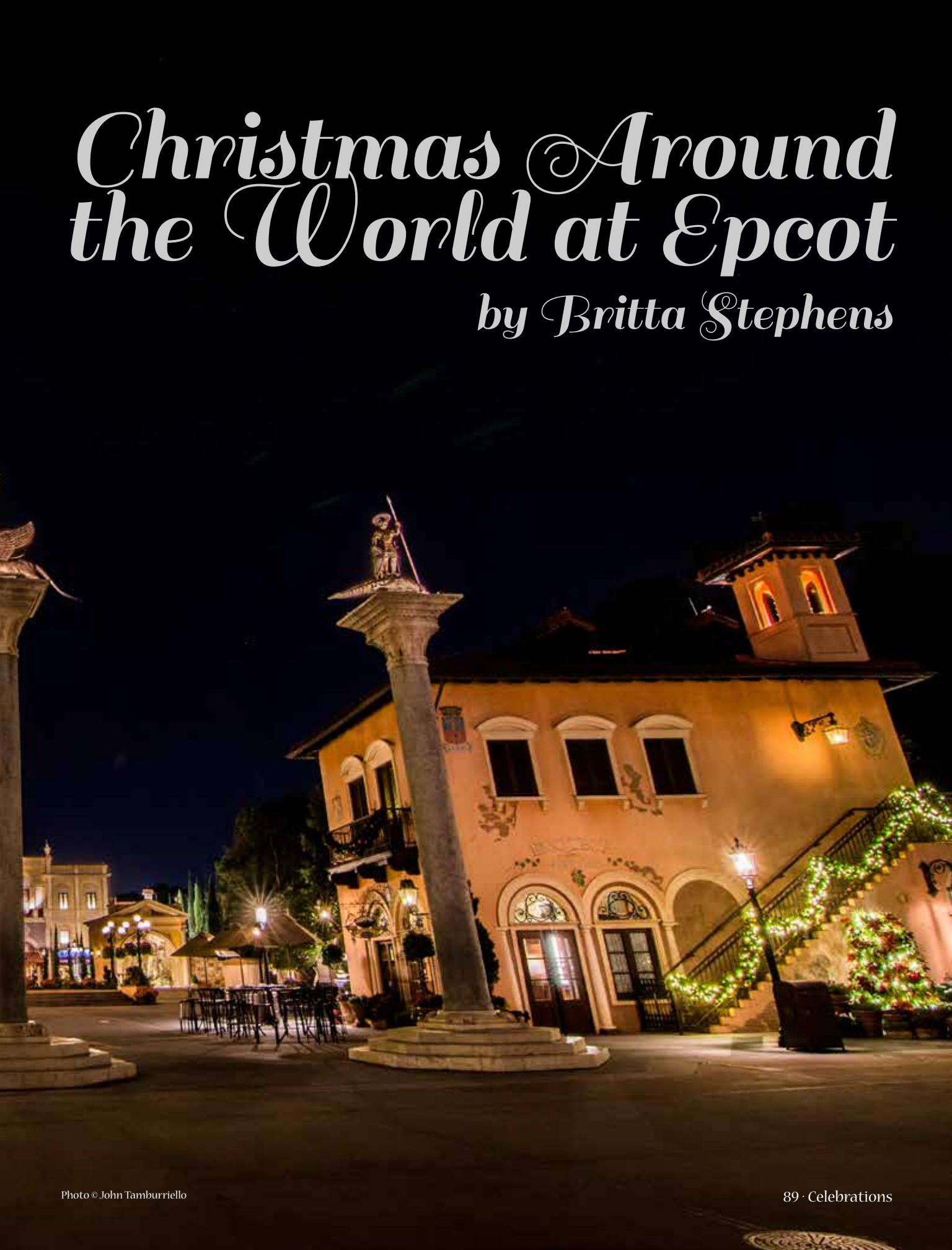


Photo © John Tamburriello



Traditions have the ability to inspire and educate. Every generation before us has their own, which shapes who we are and carries on for generations to come. This is the magic which surrounds Epcot's Festival of the Holidays, as you will get to experience everything from a Lunar New Year celebration to the holiday tales of Père Noël, La Befana, and Sigrid the Storyteller. Whether you grew up making homemade tortillas with your abuela, hand-rolling ravioli on Christmas Eve with your Italian family, or patiently awaiting your household's decadent Canadian butter tarts, the Festival of the Holidays pays homage to the traditions we have grown to love for generations. As you make your way around the world (showcase), be sure to check out each pavilion's storyteller. Who knows? You may even find inspirations for future traditions for you and yours as we explore Epcot during the holidays!

¡Feliz Navidad!

Mexican culture is synonymous with colorful, vibrant celebrations, and one form of this is the mariachi band – a cohesive unit of musicians who capture both tradition and culture in a blend of both folk and new sounds. This year's Mariachi Cobre is called Los Posadas. Dancers and musicians are dressed in festive attire, surrounded by wreaths adorned with native colors, typically white with red trim. While you will see the spirit of La Navidad throughout the pavilion itself, you will truly feel it when the twenty-minute show of Los Posadas merges sight with sound, culminating in a show which will warm your heart. And, of course, it wouldn't be a Disney show if there wasn't a little Guest interaction! In some instances, a child may be chosen from the crowd to break the pinata followed by an invitation to follow the lead dancer around the pavilion and danza!

Norway: Land of Gnomes and Trolls

There is something incredibly magical about Norway and Christmas, one you can glimpse in Frozen a dozen times over! In the cities of this beautiful country, Christmas is celebrated in a traditional way (not unlike what you might find in your own hometown), though the snowy countryside lends it an air of winter serenity. Cities close up shop at noon on Christmas Eve to allow folks to go home and visit with their families. But human Norwegians are not the only ones who get to celebrate with extra comforts; in this country, farmers give their beloved animal companions extra oats and barley for the occasion!

You will learn about this, and more, from Sigrid the Storyteller in Epcot's Norway pavilion. She will tell you how

Photos © Tim Foster





gifts are brought by small gnomes, called nisse, and that the celebration lasts three days! You will hear Sigrid speak about Julinessian, an often-mischievous elf who brings presents for families and children, interweaving the spirit of the holidays into a story which will not only educate, but entertain you in what has consistently been one of the best holiday performances at Epcot. She may even warn you: don't even think about leaving milk and cookies out for Julinessian, he much more prefers a steaming bowl of Christmas porridge topped off with butter!

Ushering in the Lunar New Year

While Christmas isn't celebrated in China as it is elsewhere, the Lunar New Year has been celebrated for over 2000 years throughout the country. This celebration consists of gift giving in the form of passing out money in red envelopes, red being a symbol of good luck and new beginnings. It is a new start. A wishing of luck for the new year. Epcot fast forwards through time to present this festival during their celebration, since the celebration in China actually takes place at the end of January and is also known as the Spring Festival. By sharing the traditions of this celebration during the Christmas season, Epcot gives Guests a glimpse into one of the most important Chinese celebrations...a time to celebrate with your family and ancestors alike.

It is considered an honor to be a lion dancer for the festivities. In Chinese culture, the lion represents courage, triumph, reassurance, and aspiration. Since this is how you want to go into the New Year, even seeing these magnificent dancers can bring good luck, which is why Epcot has brought them to the China pavilion during the holidays. Be sure to pay attention to the lion's mannerisms, too! Dressed in the color of good luck, this red lion drives away evil spirits and negativity with its motions and gestures, and even bows to the crowd to let them know he is pleased!

Fröhliche Weihnachten!

With so many of our beloved Christmas traditions originating in Europe, it is no surprise that Christmas and Germany are often synonymous. The first ever Christmas tree was created by Martin Luther in the 16th century. As told by the gleeful storyteller in the Germany pavilion, Luther was on a stroll in the woods looking for inspiration for his Christmas Eve sermon when he looked upon a fir

Photo ©Tim Foster

tree, gleaming with snow. The snow-capped tree reminded him of the Star that guided the wise men to the Christ child on Christmas Eve. He chopped it down and brought it home, adorning it with candles. These decorations later evolved to candies and nuts, which are usually found on traditional German Christmas trees. The advent calendar, a 24-day almanac filled with a different goodie or toy for each day, is another beloved German tradition that we have come to enjoy in the United States. However, the sweetest Christmas story hailing from the land of lederhosen and bratwurst is the Nutcracker. A little girl named Clara receives a nutcracker for Christmas and hopes and prays for the figurine to come to life. As she dreams that night, she is taken away by the Nutcracker to a land of sweets filled with beautiful dancers and holiday dreams come true.

Holiday cooking and baking is a big part of the Christmas season in Germany, and the Germany pavilion markets are packed to the gills with sweet and savory treats throughout the holiday season! These markets, as well as pavilion's courtyard, are decorated beautifully, filling your heart with traditional Christmas cheer.

Buon Natale!

Italy may be known for homemade pasta and city-streets of water, but this beautiful country is also home to many tried-and-true Christmas traditions. One of these is fasting on Christmas Eve, followed by a large feast after midnight mass. St. Francis of Assisi is credited with inventing the very first nativity scene. Probably the most popular fable is one of La Befana, the friendly witch (found weaving her stories in the Italy pavilion in Epcot) who is likened to the American Santa Claus.

According to legend, La Befana was approached by the wisemen who were seeking out gesu bambino (the Christ child), but not believing them, she refused to help. She also rejected a shepherd who asked her the same favor. Later that night, when the birth of the Christ child was revealed to be factual, she searched for the manger where the babe lay. Much to her dismay, he was nowhere to be found. On the eve of the epiphany, January 5th, La Befana is said to grace the homes of children leaving toys and treats for the good children and coal for the mischievous ones. On the same night she also wanders the city in search of gesu bambino to bestow upon him her own child's toys. Be sure to visit Italy if you want the chance to hear this story straight from La Befana's mouth!

American Holiday Celebrations

Christmas in America is holly and jolly, and Christmas traditions in America are much like the country itself; a mixture of international traditions. From eggnog to A Christmas Carol (as told by either Mickey or the Muppets!), American holiday celebrations are made up of a myriad of regional customs. America was founded to be a melting pot of cultures, so it is no surprise to find a Japanese custom observed by many Hawaiians (placing kadomatsu outside their homes), New Orleans residents enjoying Christmas Eve Reveillon dinners in the tradition of France, and belsnickel observed in some Canadian communities.

America is not strictly about Christmas, though; you will find celebrations of Jewish culture with Hanukkah – including some traditional snacks in a cart located near the heart of the pavilion – and Kwanzaa, to honor African heritage in African-American culture. Hanukkah is also known as the Festival of Lights, and is celebrated for eight nights in December. In the American Adventure pavilion, you will learn more about the lights and what they mean, as well as see just how deeply moving these traditions are for those of the Jewish faith. Kwanzaa, also part of the American pavilion, celebrates seven principles: unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, and faith. While looking out for the storytellers and singers for Christmas and Hanukkah, keep an eye out for this very special storyteller to learn about how this highly regarded celebration is at the core of holiday values.

O-Shogatsu

When you approach a new beginning, you always hope and wish for good luck. Japan celebrates this philosophy with the telling of the story of the Daruma doll. You may have already seen this doll in shops in the Japan pavilion, but did you know that, while the design may change, it has always been rich in symbolism for the New Year? To have one is to have good luck, and it will encourage you to persevere and reach your goals. Known as O-Shogatsu, the Japanese New Year starts off on the first of January, and is a time of reflection. As you share wonderful meals with your family and friends, you think about your goals and hopes for the next year. The daruma doll is how you visualize these goals. Most daruma dolls are given without pupils painted in their eyes. It is your job to paint the first pupil, as if you are keeping one eye on your goal. When you have achieved this



by the end of the year, you paint the other pupil.

In the Japan pavilion, you will not only hear this story told by a storyteller in traditional attire, you'll also be a short distance to the Mitsukoshi Department Store, where you can find your own. Whether you head towards the water, or to the back of the pavilion, there will be traditional food in both directions. Be sure to stop by the back of the Japan pavilion to pick up your own Daruma doll!

Holiday Festivities in Morocco

The tradition of Ramadan represents Allah giving his holy testament, the Quran, to the Muslim people. The entire month of Ramadan includes special traditions like fasting from dusk to dawn and sacred prayers. When the fast is broken, the festival of Eid-al-fitr begins. Lasting for three days, this celebration includes all of the delicious foods that have been withheld throughout the month like ketupat, a rice dumpling wrapped in palm leaves, and pala cookies.

This year, Epcot is welcoming a new storyteller to the Morocco pavilion! When you think about festivals and traditions of holidays gone past, you think about celebrating with family and friends. You think of the happiest of times and the love and laughter you shared. Morocco embraces the spirit of the holiday season, and this can be seen in the decorations and joie de vivre of the Moroccan pavilion. Stop by and listen to the live band, hear stories of Moroccan holidays and traditions come to life, and enjoy the festival spirit permeating throughout every square inch of the pavilion. This is also a prime spot to grab some traditional African food, as their shows tout how holidays spice up your life, and they serve incredible dishes such as grilled lamb kefta kebabs, a confit of chermoula chicken and warm Sfenj, which are Moroccan donuts!

Joyeux Noël!

In what is by far the sweetest of the Epcot holiday shows, the France pavilion at Epcot presents Père Noël to you in the form of a storyteller sharing a letter from a young child as he explains his own Christmas traditions. In France, it is not uncommon to decorate your tree just days before the holiday to prepare for Christmas day. Le Réveillon (a feast that is attended after mass on Christmas Eve) is so popular that some restaurants offer Le Réveillon specials on their dinner menu. One of the most beloved Christian symbols of the Christmas season, the nativity, has been given new light by France. Santons (little saints) can be included in the nativity but they may not necessarily represent actual saints. They typically represent townsfolk or upstanding people in the community. Candles are also placed around the nativity scene.

Who is Père Noël? One of three of the most popularized versions of what Americans know as Santa Claus, Père Noël leaves gifts for good children. However, there is a twist that may sound familiar! Children leave their shoes by the fire at

Photos © Tim Foster



night, filled with treats for Père Noël's donkey, Gui (French for Mistletoe). After Père Noël takes the gifts, he leaves small trinkets, money, or candy in the now empty shoes.

Father Christmas

In the United Kingdom, the home of Charles Dickens (who popularized Christmas as the world knows it today), you'll find a very familiar version of the holidays. Dressed in a long, flowing outfit of satin and a holly crown, Father Christmas gives you a glimpse into the history of holiday traditions. He will talk about the Christmas carols we know and love today that began in the UK including 'Deck the Halls' and 'Here We Come A-Wassailing.' We can also thank the UK for the annual exchange of Christmas cards! In London, there is a colossal Christmas tree which is a yearly gift from the city of Oslo in Norway. It is brought to Trafalgar square and decorated for the season. In Northern Ireland, candles are set in windows to let wanderers that they are welcome, and in Scotland, festivities last throughout the new year!

Canadian Holiday Voyageurs

America's neighbor to the north is no stranger to celebrating the holiday season in grand style. Very much like America, Canadians like to decorate their homes with lights, hang stockings by the tree, and create elaborate holiday meals. One of the most beloved holiday festivals in the Inuit communities is called Sinck Tuck, which marries old and new traditions. This includes gift giving and carol singing, but may also include actors going door to door inquiring about the children's behavior. The children reply by singing carols! The festivities also include dancing in stunning traditional garb and, like any good holiday, ends in a giant feast!

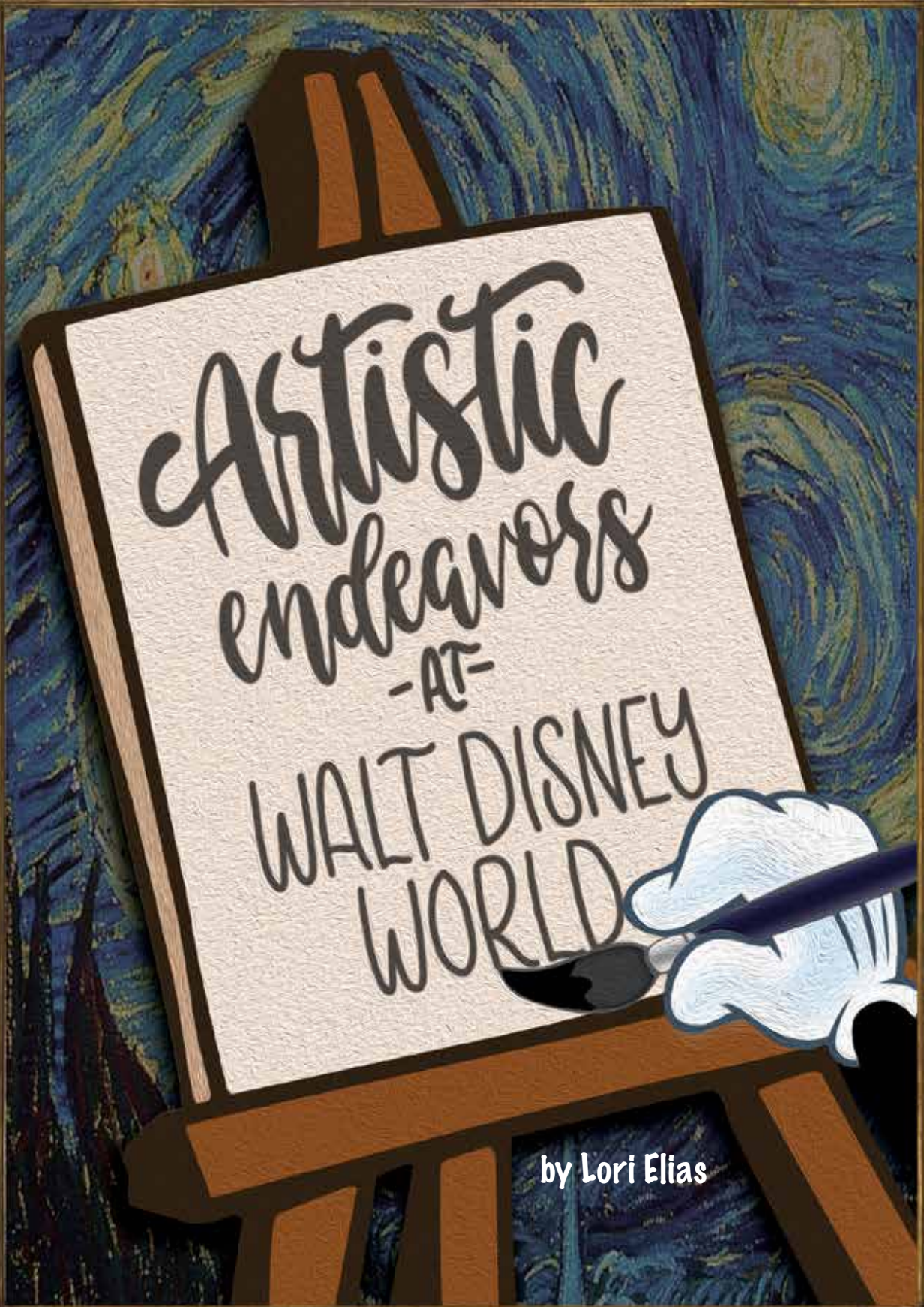
In the Canada pavilion, stop by and listen to the Canadian Holiday Voyageurs as they tell stories and sing songs of traditional holiday customs, some of which tie back to the oldest of Christmas traditions, while others travel across the border into America. Because of Canada's rich diversity, many of the rituals date back to Europe, and in particular, France. In some districts of Canada, instead of awaiting Père Noël or Santa, Belsnicklers (hairy, mean little creatures) threaten to visit the homes of naughty children just before Christmas and beat them if they misbehave. Think of it as a darker elf on the shelf!

Christmas traditions take on many forms around the world, and there's no better place to experience this diversity than World Showcase. To tour World Showcase is to tour the globe, and just like Santa travels around the Earth on Christmas Eve (according to some traditions anyway!), you can travel around the world on your search for the true spirit of the holidays. And who knows, you just might discover some new traditions that you and your family can take to heart!





Photo © John Tamburriello


Artistic endeavors
-AT-
WALT DISNEY WORLD
by Lori Elias

For years the Walt Disney World resort has offered Guests a myriad of entertainment experiences beyond the parks and swimming pools. From fishing excursions to rounds of golf, from archery classes to rock and holiday concerts, there is truly something for everyone.

Given Walt's penchant for creativity it should come as no surprise that one of the most recent offerings is the opportunity to explore one's aesthetic side with a host of new painting classes and similar hands-on artistic experiences, giving Guests a chance to play Disney artist for an hour or two! Of course Disney requires its employed artists to be among the highest quality in order to work in its film studios and as an Imagineer, but at the parks and resorts of Walt Disney World, anyone can tap into their inner Michelangelo, Goya, Monet or Chagall.

Art classes have actually been a part of Walt Disney World for a number of years, though a bit off the beaten path. In 1998, the drawing class Animation Academy was included among the many activities of DisneyQuest, the indoor entertainment facility that was an anchor pin of then-Downtown Disney (now Disney Springs) until 2017. For approximately twenty minutes, a Disney artist would take Guests through a seminar in sketching a beloved Disney character. Guests could then take their masterpieces home for a self-made souvenir! (A popular epilogue was having the pictures laminated upon returning home in order to be used as placemats.) This activity was so popular that it was added to the Art of Animation Building at Disney's Hollywood Studios (though it was later removed in order to accommodate the park's renovations), as well as Disney California Adventure, and the Disney parks in Tokyo (where it has also since closed) and Shanghai. The attraction remains on the west coast, as well as in Shanghai, where it has become the Marvel Comic Academy, part of the park's Marvel Universe. Animation Academy and its offshoots were and are quite popular, not only because for many Guests, creating art is an inherently fun activity, but the experience also provided a chance to sit and provide some rest for tired feet in an air-conditioned space!

The attraction's most devoted fans who had been mourning its removal have reason to rejoice: Animation Academy has returned! A new incarnation of the class, Animation Experience, has been added to Disney Animal Kingdom's Conservation Station. With an opening in the summer of 2019 to celebrate the release of *The Lion King*, Animation Experience has primarily featured the denizens of Pride Rock, including the animated versions of Simba, Timon and Pumbaa, though other Disney four-legged friends have also found their way onto Guests' sketchpads. Each class is different, and FastPass+ is available for this much-loved experience. Animal Kingdom is not the only park to give Guests the opportunity to be creative. In the spring of 2019, the Italy Pavilion began offering a paint-your-own mask activity in La Gemma Elegante, the mask boutique inside the store Il Bel Cristallo.

Those who take part in this experience join a tradition dating back to the 12th century. Painted masks were part of the cultural life of Venice, particularly during Carnevale, or the famed Carnival of Venice, which is believed to have been held in celebration of the victory of the Venice Republic over the Patriarch of Aquileia in 1162. According to tradition (and eventually, by law), Venetians could wear masks only at certain times of the year, including the time between December 26 and the end of Carnavale, which concluded just before Lent. The carnival celebrations, as well as the wearing of masks, were outlawed in 1797 by the laws of the Holy Roman Empire, though slowly the traditions began to re-emerge in the late 19th century. The Carnival was completely restored in 1979, and each year millions of visitors descend upon Venice to enjoy its events and compete for la maschera più bella – "the most beautiful mask."

One of the leading mask-making artisans in Venice is Balocoloc, a company founded in 1977 and dedicated to preserving the mask-making traditions of the city. Its owner, Silvana Martin, shared this craft and the business with her three sons, and it was one of these sons, Giorgio Iurcotta, who brought his talents to La Gemma Elegante in 2001. The beautiful masks created by Iurcotta and his staff have graced the Italy Pavilion for almost 20 years, and now Guests of Epcot get to join in on the fun, as well as becoming part of a time-honored tradition!

But in fact, one does not even have to step into a park in order to take a foray into the fine arts! Around ten years ago, out in the "real world," one- and two-hour painting classes at area pubs and eateries have become extremely popular. Disney park executives were clearly paying attention, and began offering similar sessions at a few select resorts. One of the instructors leading these classes is local professional artist Marla E. Named Seminole County's Artist of the Year in 2016, Marla's work can be viewed throughout central Florida, including Mount Dora Center for the Arts, Atlantic Center for the Arts, Osceola Center for the Arts, the University of

Artwork © Michelle Foster/Tim Foster

Central Florida, Orlando Museum of Art, Casselberry Art House, the city halls of Casselberry, Lake Mary and Maitland, The Mayor's Gallery in Orlando City Hall and Art Basel Miami, as well as in collections and galleries around the world. In addition, her pieces can be seen in the film *To Write Love on Her Arms* (2012), starring Kat Dennings and Chad Michael Murray, and the MTV series *The Inbetweeners*.

A graduate of the Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale with a degree in advertising design, Marla began her Disney classes three years ago. "I answered a very nondescript ad for an instructor to start a painting class and it turned out to be the Contemporary Resort!" she said. While she obviously had a strong background in visual art, she also had considerable background teaching inexperienced artists, much like those she would encounter in her new position. "I started teaching fun art classes in my studio about ten years ago," she explained, "from painting and sculpting, to concrete and gold-leafing (yes, together) and even 3-D printing. I teach at art centers, businesses for team building, and kids with learning disabilities." Her current teaching load at Walt Disney World includes a class for Disney Vacation Club (DVC) members, "Painting with a View," on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Top of World Lounge in the Contemporary Resort's Bay Lake Tower. Classes open to anyone are "Painting on de' Bayou," held at the Scat Cat Club at the Port Orleans French Quarter resort on Wednesday evenings and "Painting in the Vineyard" sessions at Martha's Vineyard in the Yacht & Beach Club on Friday afternoons.

The busy artist and teacher also designs the paintings her Guest-students will be creating, which typically change each month. "I create a different painting for each class, including a different painting for the Tuesday morning and Thursday afternoon classes at the Contemporary, which are DVC classes," she said. "Working with the team of each resort, we bounce ideas around – a lot of times it's seasonal, reflecting holidays, or a movie opening or Disney event or milestone, like Mickey's 90th Birthday." This means that December's painting might be a Disney-themed Christmas tree, the beginning of summer may feature Lilo on a sunny beach, and in October, the "grim, grinning ghosts" of the Haunted Mansion twirling "right down the middle of Main Street, U.S.A."!

Though an accomplished artist with international notice for her pieces, Marla greatly enjoys her work with her Walt Disney World students. "I love interacting with the Guests and taking them on a two-hour journey into creating. I try to include some fun techniques and tricks, and make it doable even if someone hasn't picked up a brush since grade school. I guide them through the process and encourage them to post their results on our famous hashtags (such as #PaintingOnDeBayou), on social media. The guests seem to get good results!" (Part of the fun is that a hallmark of Marla's classes is getting to place a personal "Hidden Mickey" somewhere in the painting!)

While for many Guests this might a one-and-done foray into the artistic realm, Marla is always delighted to see familiar faces in her classes, and is equally thrilled when the experience opens up "a whole new world" for those who spend some of their vacation time with a paintbrush in hand. "People love to create," she said. "I have a lot of repeat guests. It gives them a sense of accomplishment, and it's also it's a nice break from the heat and the lines. Plus it's an activity and a souvenir!

"When I start out each class I always ask if anyone here is an artist. Most people hesitate to raise their hand but usually their family and friends point them out. I've had a few celebrity artists take the class, (including) one of the animators for a popular comic who put his own spin on the painting. But my favorite story is this one particular guest who came back with her friends and said she took my class last year and realized she loved painting, and she's been painting ever since!"

Thanks to such an eager reception to these classes by Guests, over the past few years painting classes and other hands-on creative experiences have been springing up throughout the Walt Disney World resorts. "Wild About Painting" is held at Jambo House in the Animal Kingdom Lodge on Sundays and Wednesdays, "Canvas Painting on the Boards" at Trattoria del Forno on the Boardwalk on Tuesdays, "Colors of Coronado" at Coronado Springs on Wednesdays, "The Artists' Palette" at Saratoga Springs on Thursdays and periodic "Painting with a POP!" classes at the Pop Century resort. There is a fee and minimum age requirement for most of these sessions, and class sizes are limited. DVC members interested in "Painting with a View" should call Membership Services at 800-800-9800. Any Guests who wish to take the other classes can reserve their place by calling 407-WDW-PLAY, or visit the concierge at the respective resort.

At the time of this writing (and please do keep in mind that offerings are subject to change at any time), a number of resorts offer Mickey tie-dying, arts and crafts, and specialties such as Build-a-Button and Disney Draw-It.

Painting © Lori Elias







Guests can design a Spanish-inspired piece of stained glass art and paint wood carvings at Coronado Springs. At the Grand Floridian, one can engage in chalk art and designing one's own tumbler. Guests can venture to the Polynesian to stencil their own t-shirts, or join the animator class at Saratoga Springs.

The Boardwalk is perhaps the most artistic of the resorts, with crafts including Mickey tie-dye, Build-a-Button, wire Mickey ears, ceramic painting, designing tumblers, pearl and pixie dust necklaces, stencil tote bags and character magnets all on the docket, in addition to painting classes! For schedules and prices, Guests should check weekly and monthly schedules at the respective resorts or call 407-WDW-PLAY. These schedules and pricings can also be found online at http://www.orlandoparksnews.com/p/recreational-calendars.html.

Many of the resorts also offer seasonal make-it-and-take-it classes. Valentine's Day projects, Mardi Gras masks, Easter baskets, trick-or-treat bags, painted jack o' lanterns, holiday ornaments and champagne glasses for New Year's Eve are favorites for those celebrating various holidays at Walt Disney World. (Most of these classes require an extra fee; costs can be found either through resort schedules or at the concierge desk.)

What about those Guests who are looking at these options with delight, but fear that their lack of experience might get in their way? Just pick up that paintbrush and have some fun! After all, in an episode of *M*A*S*H* entitled "War Co-Respondent," Colonel Potter, played by Harry Morgan, shows his amateur artwork to an impressed famous journalist and political cartoonist portrayed by Jill Saint John: "I'm no Norman Rockwell," he confesses. "No need. We already have one," she graciously replies. The same goes for Guests! Painting instructor Marla concurs: "I design each class with that in mind," she said. "I don't make it too hard and I lead the class step by step, walking around to each table and making sure everyone is on the same page, from mixing colors, to what brush to use, to how to hold or move the brush. Most people don't paint on a regular basis so you're not alone, and you should definitely give it a try!"

Paintings © Lori Elias



Forgotten Princesses

by Ian Westhoff

Artwork © Disney

One of the funniest scenes in *Ralph Breaks the Internet* occurs when Vanellope meets the Disney Princesses for the first time. From the minute Vanellope "glitches" into the room, the hysterics begin as we see all of the princesses doing what they do normally. Sleeping Beauty is taking a nap (of course), Belle is reading, Rapunzel is painting, and the others are talking amongst themselves. However, once they realize that Vanellope is there, each princess wields their signature item as if Vanellope were a villain. Ariel holds a dinglehopper, Rapunzel grabs a frying pan, Else has her hand ready to blast ice, Pocahontas readies her father's staff, Cinderella breaks her glass slipper, Jasmine holds the lamp, Mulan draws her sword, Merida readies an arrow to her bow, Belle wields her book, Anna raises her fists, Moana holds her paddle at the ready, Tiana clutches a rolling pin, and last but not last, Sleeping Beauty threatens Vanellope with, what else, the needle from the spinning wheel.

Once they realize she's no threat, we're treated to clever laughs at the clichés of the Disney Princess as they explain their particular traits: some have magical hair or hands (Rapunzel and Elsa), some talk to animals (Cinderella, Pocahontas, and Jasmine), a few were poisoned or cursed (Snow White, Sleeping Beauty, and Tiana), a few were even kidnapped or enslaved (Belle and Rapunzel), and of course there was one who "made a deal with an underwater sea witch where she took your voice in exchange for a pair of human legs" (Ariel of course). They also explain how there's more to being a princess than most people realize. For example, you might be dependent on true love's kiss (Snow White), or have some Daddy issues (Jasmine), or even not have a mother (Belle, Pocahontas, Elsa, Anna, Jasmine, Cinderella, Snow White, and Ariel).

Even the cliché of singing while gazing into water gets mentioned, as they make clear that the water must be "important water" for this to work. For example, Pocahontas stares into a river, Snow White a wishing well, Moana the ocean, Mulan a horse trough, and Cinderella pensively looks at soap bubbles. And then there's the biggest of clichés...about how "all your problems get solved [when] a big strong man shows up."

It's an extremely funny scene, but it's also an important one, for it's the first time we see all the Disney Princesses together in one room on the big screen. Yes, these are the official Disney Princesses, but there are many that think that the sisterhood of Disney Princesses is missing a few members, so let's take a look at the few who seem to be forgotten or overlooked. (And a quick note here, astute viewers will note that Anna and Elsa are in this scene, though they are not a part of the official lineup, which has twelve members: Snow White, Aurora, Cinderella, Ariel, Belle, Jasmine, Pocahontas, Rapunzel, Tiana, Mulan, Merida, and Moana. Why aren't Anna and Elsa in the lineup? It was decided that the two characters were very popular in their own right, and including them could overshadow the rest of the lineup. But they are often included Disney Princess events and merchandise.)

Before we start, let's talk about Vanellope herself. In her first appearance in 2012's *Wreck-it-Ralph,* she is introduced to us as a racer. However, we later find out that she is in fact a princess, with her true identity being concealed by King Candy who erased Vanellope's code from the game. But even after the truth is discovered, Vanellope doesn't seem too impressed with the whole life of being a princess. In the end, Vanellope realizes that she's a racer at heart, and isn't interested in all the frilly trappings that go along with royalty. But you can bet her fellow racers respected her a lot more after that. However, there are plenty of other characters who are just as deserving of the title of "Disney Princess." Here are just a few:

They're All Princesses to Us

Though she's well known as part of the "Fab Five," and is nearly as popular as Mickey Mouse himself, Minnie Mouse isn't part of the official Disney Princess lineup. However, she once held the title of "Princess Minnie" in Disney's 1938 classic short *Brave Little Tailor,* which was so popular it was actually nominated for an Academy Award. Minnie would once more play a princess in the 2004 direct-to-video release of Mickey, Donald, and Goofy as *The Three Musketeers.* While Minnie has gone on to play other roles, it was *The Brave Little Tailor* and *The Three Musketeers* that secured Minnie's place in Mickey's heart as his princess. As Mickey said, "Gosh, Minnie, you've always been a princess to me."

You could argue that Minnie Mouse isn't a Disney Princess by virtue of not having any royal connection, but there is another classic character who is a princess in every way. In 1953's *Peter Pan,* we were introduced to one of Neverland's locals, Princess Tiger Lily. Though she has





a small role in the movie and doesn't have any lines to speak, it is an important scene because it shows us Tiger Lily's refusal to give into Captain Hook's demands, who wants to know where Peter Pan lives. Her actions prove that she belongs in the pantheon of Disney's Princesses for her bravery and loyalty to her friend.

1989 saw the beginning of the "Disney Renaissance," and we were introduced to a new group of Princesses who not only had wishes and dreams like their predecessors, but also determination and independence. These characters were the ones who would take matters into their own hands, and not wait around for some "big strong man to solve their problems." And oftentimes that made them the real heroes. While the title characters from this era of movies would soon be honored as true Disney Princesses, there were many other characters from this time period who never got the recognition they truly deserved.

While Ariel is the star of *The Little Mermaid,* most people forget that there were six other mermaid princesses that also lived under the sea; namely Ariel's sisters – Aquata, Andina, Arista, Attina, Adella and Alana. Though they had little screen time in *The Little Mermaid,* Ariel's sisters were more prominently featured in the animated television series *The Little Mermaid* and the prequel direct-to-DVD release of *The Little Mermaid: Ariel's Beginning*. And lest we forget, there's one more "princess" related to Ariel, her daughter Melody! Introduced in the sequel *The Little Mermaid II: Return to the Sea,* Melody is the daughter of Ariel and Prince Eric and was voiced by Tara Strong.

Another overlooked character who can make a case for inclusion in the Disney Princess lineup is Megara from *Hercules* (1997). A tough, no-nonsense heroine, Meg has a sharp wit as well as a sarcastic tone, something never before seen in a Disney Princess. Meg cuts to the chase on everything and is never one to mince her words. She is brutally honest, strong, and independent, and you can sum up Meg with these two quotes: "I'm a damsel, I'm in distress, I can handle this. Have a nice day," and "I'm a big tough girl. I can tie my on sandals and everything." Megara was voiced by Susan Egan, who played an actual Disney Princess on Broadway, Belle in Beauty in the Beast.

Another overlooked would-be princess would be Nala from 1994's *The Lion King*. Young Nala was voiced by Niketa Calame-Harris, while the older Nala was voiced by Moira Kelly. Betrothed to Simba since she was born, Nala is remembered more for being Simba's friend…flipping him over while playing, and more ominously for their meeting with the hyenas in the elephant graveyard. Nonetheless, since Simba goes on to become the true

Artwork © Disney









Lion King, Nala, who is right there by his side, deserves her own place in the Disney Princess lineup.

Another rightful princess who was left out of the official lineup is Kida from *Atlantis: The Lost Empire* (2001). Kida (whose real name is Kidagakash) can speak several languages besides her native Atlantean, including English, Italian, and French. At 4,800 years old, Kida eventually will become Queen of Atlantis. In the meantime, she spends her time trying to figure out why Atlantis is dying, and how to save her people…despite her father's demands for her to stop. Kida shares many traits of the Disney Renaissance Princesses; she has a love of learning, a grim determination of doing what is best for her people, and the courage to go out and fight for what must be done despite the odds.

A more obscure princess-candidate can be found in 1985's *The Black Cauldron*. Princess Eilonwy seems to have never been considered for inclusion in the official lineup, and part of the reason might be because of the film's relative obscurity. Ask most Disney fans about her and you'll likely be met by a quizzical "Who?"

But while Eilonwy hasn't been recruited to join the ranks of Disney's Princesses yet, she certainly should be. She is every bit as tough and independent as the other Disney Princesses, and this is most evident in here response to Taran's comment that girls wouldn't know anything about swords, "Girl? Girl? If it wasn't for this 'girl', you would still be in the Horned King's dungeon." Eilonwy's response is one which would make any princess proud, particular the more modern princesses. Eilonwy would never let a presumptuous man (or assistant pig keeper) tell her that she isn't capable of doing something.

This brings us back to *Ralph Breaks the Internet*, where the Princesses take on that very cliché. Just as Eilonwy helped free Taran, the Disney Princesses leap to the rescue as they see Ralph fall from the sky, prompting Rapunzel to exclaim, "there's a big strong man in need of rescuing." The heroines leap into action, each using their talents to help save the day while working together.

While this is another funny scene which plays on the clichés of each Disney Princess, it also shows how the Disney Princess are role models, springing into action when needed, even to save a "big strong man." Perhaps someday these forgotten princesses will join the ranks of their more famous counterparts, and perhaps sit with other Disney Princess in various meet and greets. However, in the end it doesn't matter whether a Disney Princess is well known, forgotten, or overlooked; they all share the same traits…bravery, independence, resourcefulness, and strength. Even a forgotten Disney Princess can bring inspiration to viewers, and to remind them that it's never too late to stop trying, to always believe in yourself, and to give it everything you've got.

As noted by Glen Keane in the "The Art of the Disney Princess," …that is what Disney Princesses are made of – the ability to believe that the impossible is possible." And that's what true royalty is all about.



Artwork © Disney


Disney
Fairies
by Jan Westhoff

Disney's whimsical and flitterific world of fairies has introduced us to a whole host of characters; from the good (including Tinker Bell, the Blue Fairy, and the Fairy Godmother), to the downright evil (can you say "Maleficent?"). It's a world filled with imagination, fantasy, and yes, a healthy sprinkling of pixie dust…and of course no fairy tale would be complete without, well, fairies. (Some of the time anyway.) So come along as we visit all the great fairies that Disney has brought to us over the years. Ready? Then make sure you "prove yourself brave, truthful and unselfish," say "Bibbidi-Bobbidi-Boo," and let's get started. And don't worry, we'll be back long before the clock strikes midnight and this article turns into a pumpkin!

Tinker Bell and Her Fairy Friends

No discussion of Disney fairies would be complete without mentioning the most popular fairy of all, Tinker Bell. Tink was brought to life in the 1953 classic *Peter Pan*, and she was animated by legendary animator Marc Davis. Though persistent rumors state that Marilyn Monroe served as her live-action reference model, that "role" was actually performed by Margaret Kelly, who also provided an uncredited voice for one of the mermaids. Because Tinker Bell only communicated through the use of bell chimes, Kelly and Davis had to make extensive use of pantomime to convey Tinker Bell's emotions. Since her debut in *Peter Pan,* Tink has appeared in several Disney television series, including *Walt Disney Presents, Walt Disney's Wonderful World of Color, The Wonderful World of Disney,* and she even had a small cameo amongst the Fair Folk in *The Black Cauldron.*

Tinker Bell is of course quite prominent in the parks. She's been flying over Cinderella Castle nightly since 1985, and she has her own card in the ever-popular interactive card game Sorcerers of the Magic Kingdom. Her fame reaches far beyond Florida though; she has her own star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, and even has several series of books about her and her friends in Pixie Hollow. What's that? You thought Tink was the only fairy in Neverland? Actually, there's hundreds more, each with their own special talent.

These fairies were introduced to us through a series of three books (*Fairy Dust and the Quest for the Egg, Fairy Haven and The Quest for the Wand* and finally *Fairies and the Quest for Never Land*) written by author Gail Carson Levine (who also wrote *Ella Enchanted*). The books feature the Never Fairies who live in Neverland, including several who appear throughout the *Pixie Hollow* series later published by Random House.

Of course, the most important fairy we meet is Tinker Bell, who is a pots-and-pans fairy. We also meet Beck, an animal-talent fairy, Dulcie, a baking-talent fairy, Terrance, a fairy-dust talent fairy (male fairies are referred to as Sparrow Men in the books), Vidia, a fast-flying talent fairy (originally named Invidia, Gail Carson Levine eventually removed the "In" from the beginning of her name), Rani, a water-talent fairy (who was named after the author's sister), Prilla, a main-land-clapping fairy, and finally Queen Clarion.

There are plenty of other fairies with their own special talents, including music, sewing, and even art. Just like in J.M. Barrie's Peter Pan, the Never Fairies were born from the first laugh of a new born baby. In Levine's books, the Never Fairies live in Fairy Haven. In the aforementioned Random House book series, written by different authors, their home was changed to Pixie Hollow, and has remained so to this day. The new series had each book focus on a different fairy. While some of Levine's fairies remained, new ones were introduced, including Myka, a sharp-eyed fairy scout, Fira, a light-talent fairy, Rosetta, a garden-talent fairy, Fawn, an animal-talent fairy, Silvermist, a water-talent fairy, and Lily, a garden-talent fairy.

Disney soon released the first of six animated Tink films, the aptly named *Tinker Bell* in 2008. As mentioned earlier, Tinker Bell's "voice" was strictly limited to bell chimes in the original Peter Pan. However, in the new film she was voiced by actress Mae Whitman, the only actress to ever lend her voice to the tiny but tough fairy. Whitman would go on to voice Tink for all six movies, as well as two series of shorts for the Disney Channel, an episode of *Jake and the Never Land Pirates,* and the now-defunct Disney Infinity 3.0 and Disney Infinity – Marvel Super Heroes games.

The movie series also introduced several new fairies, one of them being Tinker Bell's long-lost sister Periwinkle, who was introduced in *Tinker Bell and the Secret of the Wings.* A cast of well-known actors and Disney Channel star alumni provided the voices for the fairies throughout the series. Rosetta was voiced by Kristin Chenoweth, and later by Megan Hilty; Irridessa was

Artwork © Disney

voiced by Raven-Symoné; Silvermist was performed by Lucy Liu; Fawn was first voiced by America Ferrara, then Angela Bartys, and finally by *Zootopia's* Ginnifer Goodwin; Terance was voiced by Jesse McCartney; Vidia by Pamela Odlon, and Queen Clarion by Angelica Huston. Other fairies introduced throughout the films included Clank, Bobble, Fairy Mary, Ivy, Lilac, Lumina, Zarina the Pirate Fairy, and Nyx. Perhaps most notably, the voice of the Healing Fairy from the 2012 film *Secret of the Wings* was performed by an actual Disney Princess, Jodie Benson, who famously played the part of Ariel.

For several years, Guests could meet the many of the fairies at Pixie Hollow in the Magic Kingdom. Tink was always present, but you never knew who else would be there. The ever-changing roster included Rosetta, Iridessa, Silvermist, Fawn, Vidia, and Terance. Today, only Tinker Bell is available to greet Guests, with the rest of them having flown back to Pixie Hollow.

Tinker Bell and her friends also appeared in another series of books called *The Never Girls* by Kiki Thorpe. In this series of books, four "Clumsies" (the fairy term for "humans") named Kate, Mia, Lainey, and Gabby travel to Pixie Hollow and meet Tinker Bell, Fawn, Vidia, Prilla, Rosetta, Iridessa, Silvermist, Queen Clarion, as well as the new Never Fairies Rain and Skye.

Bibbidi-Bobbidi-Boo

If Tink is the spunkiest of the fairies, there's no doubt that the grandmother of all Disney Fairies is the one who looks upon her charge as if she were her own granddaughter, the Fairy Godmother. The Fairy Godmother first appeared in *Cinderella* (1950) and was voiced by Verna Felton, who also voiced The Queen of Hearts in *Alice in Wonderland,* as well as elephants in both *Dumbo* and *The Jungle Book*. She also provided the voice of another fairy, Flora from *Sleeping Beauty,* who will get back to in a bit. Out of all the Disney Fairies, the Fairy Godmother is the only one to have a popular catch phrase of sorts, "Bibbidi-Bobbidi-Boo," which has been sung by greats like Perry Como and inspired the ever popular Bibiddi-Bobbidi-Boutique shops in the Disney resorts. For the sequels *Cinderella II: Dreams Come True* and *Cinderella III: A Twist in Time,* she was voiced by veteran Disney voice actor Russi Taylor (the long-time voice of Minnie Mouse). Helena Bonham Carter played her in the live-action *Cinderella* movie in 2015, and for the Disney Channel movie trilogy *Descendants* she was played by Melanie Paxson. The Fairy Godmother is also represented by a card in the Sorcerers of the Magic Kingdom.

When You Wish Upon a Star

If the Fairy Godmother is considered to be the grandmother of all fairies, then the mother of all Disney Fairies would have to be the first to appear in a Disney theatrical film, the Blue Fairy from *Pinocchio*. For the Blue Fairy, Walt Disney wanted her to look beautiful, but not in the traditional "glamorous" style of the day. In the original novel by C. Collodi, the Blue Fairy was known as the "bella bambina dai capelli torchini," which means "the little girl with blue hair," who would eventually turn into the Blue Fairy. Disney did experiment with giving the character blue hair, but eventually dropped the idea. They also had several script drafts where the Blue Fairy would turn into different animals to help Pinocchio out when he was in danger, such as a fish or turtle when he was underwater. The Blue Fairy was animated by Jack Campbell, while Marjorie Belcher did some live-action tests for the character (Belcher was also the live-action model reference for Snow White). Her wings were dry-brushed on each cel, which gave them a shimmering look in the final movie. The Blue Fairy was voiced by Evelyn Venable (who was also the model for the Columbia Pictures logo…the woman holding the torch). Venerable would also provide the Blue Fairy's voice on CBS Radio's Lux Theatre Program hosted by famed director Cecil B. Demille on Christmas Day in 1939, where listeners were first introduced to Pinocchio. Though the rest of the voice cast returned for this program, it was the Blue Fairy who came to Geppetto's window to sing "When You Wish Upon a Star," not Jiminy Cricket as in the film itself.

Moving to the present day, the Blue Fairy played an important role in the ABC television series *Once Upon a Time,* where she was played by Keegan Connor Tracy. For *The House of Mouse* she was voiced by Rosalyn Landor, who also voiced her for the video game Kingdom Hearts. And just like the Fairy Godmother, the Blue Fairy is represented by a card in Sorcerers of the Magic Kingdom.

Sleeping Beauty

So we've talked about the grandmother of the fairies and the mother of the fairies…what about the doting







Artwork © Disney





aunts? Those would of course be the three fairies in *Sleeping Beauty* – Flora, Fauna and Merryweather – who were tasked with keeping Briar Rose safe from Maleficent by hiding her in a cottage in the woods. Curiously, the three good fairies were originally planned to have powers related to their names; Flora would have had control over plants, Fauna over animals, and Merryweather over the weather, though this concept didn't make it to the final film.

Each of these fairies is distinguishable by her signature color: red for Flora, blue for Merryweather, and green for Fauna. The trio of fairies has made numerous appearances throughout the Disney universe, including the Kingdom Hearts video game series, episodes of *Sofia the First*, and (as with many of their fairy cousins) the Sorcerers of the Magic Kingdom game.

So far, the fairies we've talked about have all been kind-hearted (though Tinker Bell does have her mischievous side), but that doesn't mean that all fairies are good. When you talk about evil, one of the first Disney characters to come to mind happens to be a fairy herself, the wicked Maleficent. With a name made up from a combination of the words Malice and Malevolent, it's no wonder Flora says, "Maleficent doesn't know anything about love, or kindness, or the joy of helping others. You know, sometimes I really don't think she's very happy." Maleficent, especially in her dragon form, lives up to the very meaning her name. She is pure evil, hates anything that is good, and wishes to destroy it. The only thing which "pleases" her seems to be making others suffer.

The look of Maleficent was designed by Marc Davis, who drew inspiration from a book of paintings on the middle ages. Her robe features sinister flame shapes, and her headdress has horns which were inspired by a goat. As if that weren't evil enough, the material around her face is black like the leathery skin of a bat's wing. The human form of Maleficent was animated by Davis (who also animated Sleeping Beauty herself), while her dragon form was brought to life by Ken Anderson. Eleanor Audley provided her wickedly sublime voice (as well as that of Lady Tremaine in *Cinderella* and Madame Leota in the Haunted Mansion); and also provided live-action reference for the character.

In recent years, Maleficent has resurfaced in several Disney productions. Angelina Jolie has played her twice; first in the live-action film *Maleficent* in 2014, and then its sequel, *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil* in 2019. She appeared in the Disney Channel *Descendants* movie, and appeared several times in *Once Upon a Time* (played by Kristin Bauer van Straten). As if this weren't enough, Maleficent has also been in the Dream along with Mickey stage show, the ever popular Fantasmic!, and is in the daily parade Disney's Festival of Fantasy where she appears as a steam punk-inspired dragon that breathes real fire. This metallic nightmare is 52 feet in length, 25 feet high, and features a spinning wheel in its center.

And that brings us to the end of our journey. Disney has given us several versions of fairies over the years, everything from spunky and sassy to downright evil. So the next time you're at Walt Disney World and see a fairy in the park, be sure to say "hi." Just be sure to look out for spinning wheels first…



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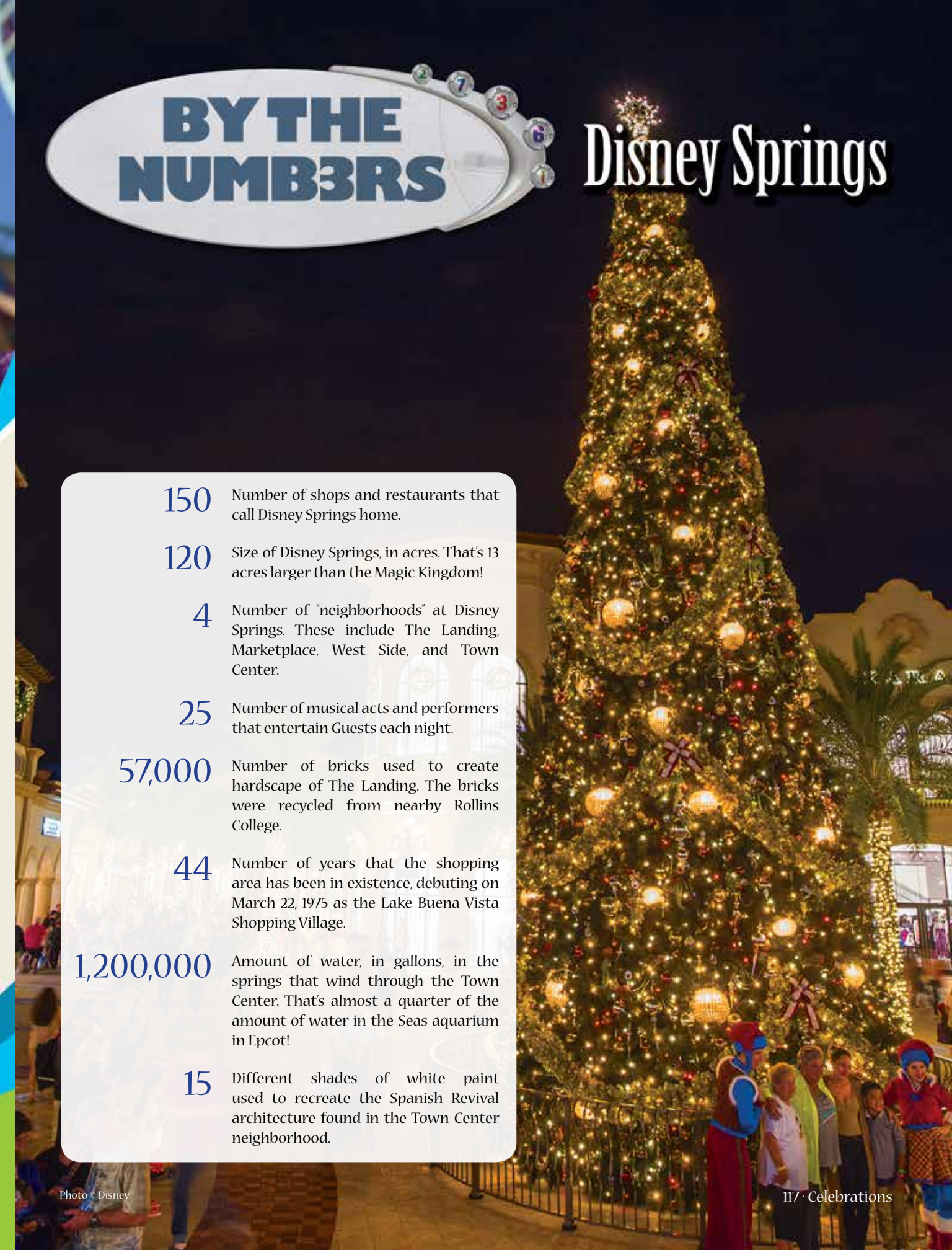
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BY THE NUMB3RS

Disney Springs



150	Number of shops and restaurants that call Disney Springs home.
120	Size of Disney Springs, in acres. That's 13 acres larger than the Magic Kingdom!
4	Number of "neighborhoods" at Disney Springs. These include The Landing, Marketplace, West Side, and Town Center.
25	Number of musical acts and performers that entertain Guests each night.
57,000	Number of bricks used to create hardscape of The Landing. The bricks were recycled from nearby Rollins College.
44	Number of years that the shopping area has been in existence, debuting on March 22, 1975 as the Lake Buena Vista Shopping Village.
1,200,000	Amount of water, in gallons, in the springs that wind through the Town Center. That's almost a quarter of the amount of water in the Seas aquarium in Epcot!
15	Different shades of white paint used to recreate the Spanish Revival architecture found in the Town Center neighborhood.

Photo © Disney

In Search Of... Duckburg Football

By Tim Foster



It was a crisp, Autumn Saturday afternoon, and I found myself enjoying a delicious lunch at the ESPN Club at Disney's BoardWalk. I never had much time for football, but on this occasion, I couldn't help but take note of team from Oregon that featured a mascot that looked suspiciously like Donald Duck! As it turns out, my eyes weren't deceiving me... the team was indeed called the Oregon Ducks, and their mascot's resemblance to Donald wasn't a coincidence. Though the team was originally known as the Webfoots, in 1947, Disney and the University of Oregon came to an agreement that allowed the school to use Donald as its sports mascot. That was pretty cool, but I was certain I had heard stories of Donald having his own football team, and I decided to get to the bottom of the story.

A quick search of my archives turned up a possible clue...an old Disney comic book. Specifically, Donald Duck #38 from November/December 1954 (a bargain at ten cents, though I suspect it's worth quite a bit more today!). Unfortunately, the football in question seemed to belong to Donald's rascally nephews, Huey, Dewey and Louie, and he seemed none too happy to be "included" in their football game. Undeterred, I set off for the parks to see if I could uncover any more clues.

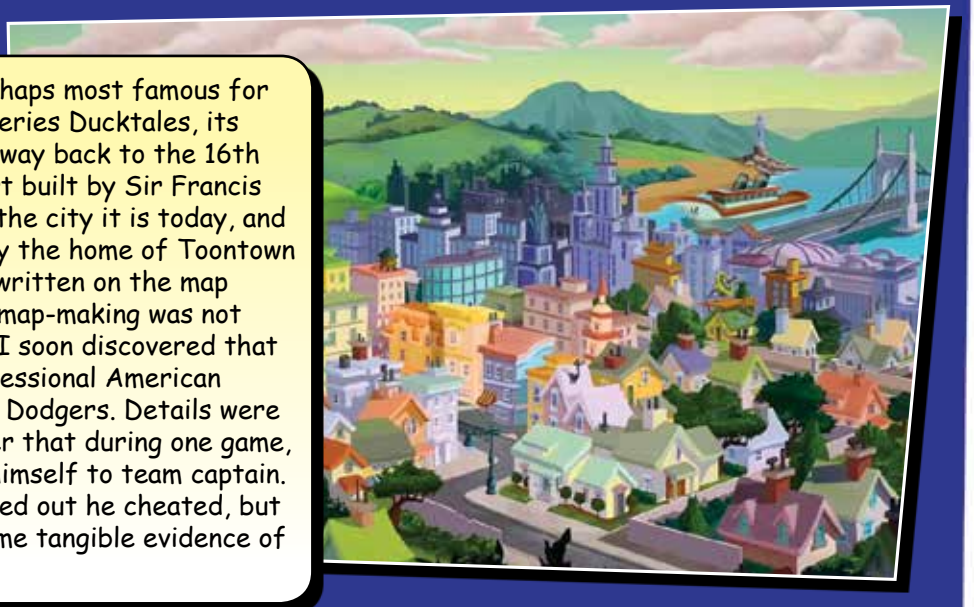




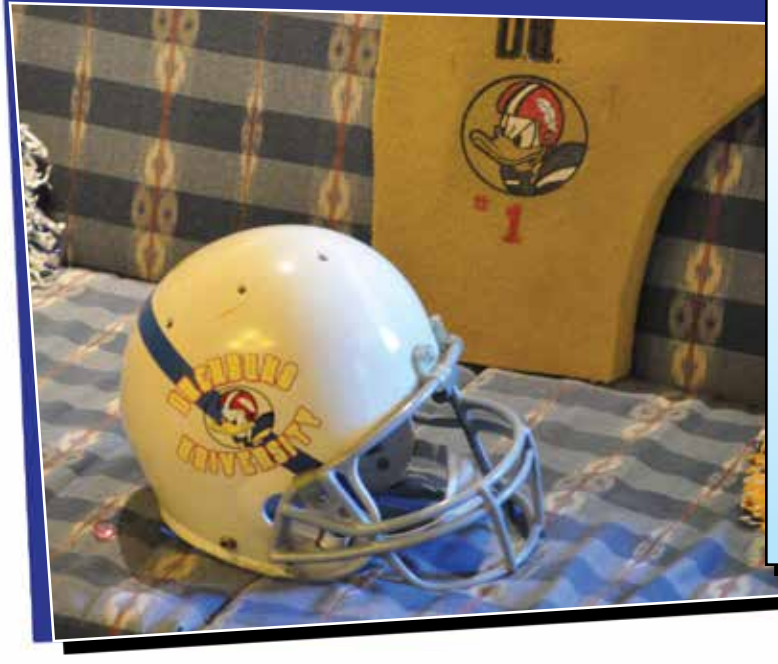
When it comes to sports and Disney, it was obvious to me that my first stop needed to be the All-Star Sports Resort. Sports paraphernalia and Disney characters are on display all throughout the resort grounds, and I was hopeful that I'd find Donald himself sporting the old pigskin. But while I did find a massive courtyard flanked by larger-than-life football helmets, when I found Donald himself it turned out he was more of a tennis fan (and evidently a hockey fan too, but that's a tale for another time).



Having failed to uncover any reference to Donald's football team in the parks, I once again returned to my archives. I remembered the existence of Donald's Boat in the old Toontown Fair at the Magic Kingdom, and though sailing was a far cry from football, perhaps I could find a connection. As it turns out, there was a giant map inside the boat, and as I examined my old photo, I discovered that there was a reference to Duckburg that was 23 miles from Toontown Fair itself. It stood to reason that a town that warranted mention on a navigational map would be large enough to have its own sports team, and I dove into my handy atlas to see what I could find out about this cartoon metropolis.



Even though Duckburg is perhaps most famous for its appearance the cartoon series Ducktales, its fictional history goes all the way back to the 16th century, in the form of a fort built by Sir Francis Drake. Over time it became the city it is today, and by some accounts it's actually the home of Toontown Fair, despite the directions written on the map in Donald's Boat (apparently map-making was not Donald's forte). Regardless, I soon discovered that Duckburg actually has a professional American Football team, the Duckburg Dodgers. Details were cryptic, though I did discover that during one game, Scrooge McDuck promoted himself to team captain. Not bad, even though it turned out he cheated, but I was still hopeful to find some tangible evidence of this gridiron dynasty.



I continued going through my photos, and as I was sorting through my pictures of Mickey's Country House, I found it at last! An actual football helmet featuring Donald Duck himself! (Along with a foam finger!). The only discrepancy in my discovery was that the football seemed to be one for the town's college, Duckburg University, rather than the pro team. But regardless, Duckburg football was Duckburg football, and I figured that was close enough! No details on how well the team did, but judging by his proficiency in other sports (as evidenced by the old comic book cover), I suspected Donald Duck's trophy room is rather sparse...



How Well Do You Know the Disney Princesses?

by Tim Foster

1. Who is the youngest Disney Princess?
a. Ariel
b. Snow White
c. Aurora
d. Merida

2. How old is she?
a. 13
b. 14
c. 15
d. 16

3. Two Princesses hold the title for "oldest Princess," who are they?
a. Cinderella and Tiana
b. Rapunzel and Pocahontas
c. Mulan and Merida
d. Belle and Jasmine

4. How old are they?
a. 18
b. 19
c. 20
d. 21

5. How many official Disney Princesses are there?
a. 10
b. 11
c. 12
d. 13

6. How many Princesses were in the original lineup?
a. 6
b. 7
c. 8
d. 9

7. Who is the most recent addition to the Disney Princess lineup?
a. Moana
b. Merida
c. Rapunzel
d. Tiana

8. What original Disney Princess was later removed from the group?
a. Giselle
b. Tinker Bell
c. Sleeping Beauty
d. Minnie Mouse

9. Who replaced her?
a. Rapunzel
b. Merida
c. Mulan
d. Tiana

10. When did the Princess Fairytale Hall open in the Magic Kingdom?
a. 2013
b. 2011
c. 2009
d. 2002

11. In what year was the Disney Princess franchise officially launched?

a. 1998
b. 1999
c. 2000
d. 2001

12. The Disney Princess lineup includes one representative from the Pixar movies, which film is she from?

a. Toy Story
b. Wreck-It Ralph
c. Brave
d. Inside-Out

13. Who was the first Disney Princess to be based on an actual person?

a. Mulan
b. Pocahontas
c. Tiana
d. Jasmine

14. Who was the first Disney Princess to be brought to life on screen through CGI?

a. Moana
b. Merida
c. Tiana
d. Rapunzel

15. Who was the first Princess to have an official coronation?

a. Merida
b. Tiana
c. Rapunzel
d. Moana

Quiz Answers

1. B	6. D	11. C
2. B	7. A	12. C
3. A	8. B	13. B
4. B	9. D	14. D
5. C	10. A	15. B

ANSWERS
KIDS KORNER (pages 122-125)

WHERE AM I?
1. Echo Lake, Hollywood Studios
2. Liberty Square, Magic Kingdom
3. Tomorrowland, Magic Kingdom
4. Dinoland U.S.A., Animal Kingdom
5. Toy Story Land, Hollywood Studios
6. Frontierland, Magic Kingdom

PIZZA PLANET
1. WALL-E
2. Monsters Inc.
3. Finding Nemo
4. Brave
5. Ratatouille
6. Coco

CHRISTMAS MATCH
#6 is the only unique image
2 & 9: The pom-pom on Mickey's hat is bigger
3 & 4: Part of the stained glass window is a different color
1 & 8: Mickey's is missing one of the jingle bells on his suspenders
5 & 7: There is an extra polka dot in Minnie's bow

BRAIN BUSTERS
The Dream Lights

FIND THE DIFFERENCE



1. The coat is longer
2. The notch is missing
3. The chair decoration is a different color
4. The wreath is gone
5. The tree is backwards
6. There are more flowers
7. There is more snow
8. The flower on the reindeer is gone
9. Santa's cane is missing
10. One of the Mickeys is bigger

BONUS QUESTION:
The Grand Floridian

WORD SCRAMBLE
1. MATTERHORN
2. SPLASH
3. EVEREST
4. THUNDER
5. FORBIDDEN (at Expedition Everest)
6. SPACE
7. KILIMANJARO (on Soarin' Around the World with the elephants)
8. MAYDAY (at Typhoon Lagoon)

MYSTERY QUEST (pages 126-127)

SECRET SYMBOLS
1. The seal on the bottom of the StoryTeller scrolls in each pavilion at World Showcase
2. Sign for the Pickle Ornament in the Christmas Shop in Germany
3. Snowflake decorations found throughout the park
4. Seashells in the costume of the Morocco storyteller

WHERE AM I?
1. Germany pavilion storyteller
2. Mexico storytellers
3. United Kingdom storyteller
4. Kwanzaa in the American Adventure
5. Mrs. Santa's chair in the American Adventure
6. The German pickle ornament
7. Japan storyteller
8. Broom of the Italy storyteller

Kids Korner

Where Am I?

In what Walt Disney World land will you find these characters?

1. Indiana Jones
2. Master Gracey
3. Uncle Orville
4. Hester
5. Mr. Potato Head
6. Big Al

Pizza Planet

The Pizza Planet truck from Toy Story really gets around! Can you figure out which Pixar movies these scenes are from?













Christmas Match

Mickey's got his Santa suit all ready for Christmas! All of these pictures have matching pairs except one, can you find the only photo that's unique?



Answers on page 121

Kids Korner

Brain Busters

What is the name of the thousands of lights that appear on Cinderella Castle at Christmas?

Find the Difference

Seems like there's been a bit of redecorating going on at one of the Walt Disney World Gingerbread Houses! Can you find the ten differences in the photos below?





_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

BONUS QUESTION: What resort is home to this larger-than-life Gingerbread House?

Word Scramble

Unscramble these Disney Mountains:

1. THNOMTERRA
2. LAPSHS
3. TREVSEE
4. DUNERHT
5. DINEDROPF
6. CAPES
7. JOMARKLIINA
8. YYAADM



Ask Maredith

Out of the four new Epcot lands that are coming to the park (World Showcase, World Celebration, World Discovery, World Nature), which are you most excited for?

Aren't the Epcot updates AWESOME?!! I'm so excited for the theming of the new lands as well as the new attractions. World Showcase is going to be even more amazing with all the newest attractions and entertainment (Hello Mary and Belle!) and Moana is finally coming to the parks in World Nature...but really, I am SO EXCITED for World Discovery with Marvel coming to the parks with Guardians of the Galaxy: Cosmic Rewind and a chance to have a dining experience that will be out of this world!!!

If you could add a fifth Epcot World, what would it be?

I really hope a fifth Epcot World will be added to celebrate the World of Arts! Journey into Imagination and new Spaceship Earth about storytelling will come close, but why not expanded it into a land with attractions and experiences? They already have a start with the Festival of Arts every year. The center piece could be a dining experience similar to the Disney Cruise's Animator's Palate, where art comes alive around you. Then you could take a ride through the a Museum where enchanted objects are having an adventure (Night of the Museum Disney + Fox!!!). Finally, a show or another attraction celebrating stage shows/dance & maybe even a pavilion celebrating the many, many, genres of music??

What's the coolest Gingerbread creation you've seen at Walt Disney World?

Oh my – those gingerbread creations are AMAZING! Everyone should go visit them.... from the house over at the Grand Floridian and the bakery at the Boardwalk. My favorite may be the castle at the Contemporary, although the Capital replica at American Adventure was pretty awesome...but the coolest HAS to be the carousel at The Beach Club – it actually SPINS!!! When you visit, make sure you check out the names of the horses...there'll be new ones every year!

MYSTERY QUEST

Discover the Secrets of Walt Disney World

Christmas in Epcot

Magical Epcot Christmas Happenings

- There's no better way to get into the Christmas spirit than by sampling holiday treats from around the world! The Epcot International Festival of the Holidays includes 12 holiday kitchens serving more than 50 bites from around the world. The Holiday Kitchens offer delectable bites inspired by holiday traditions around the world. Every holiday season brings new tastes and treats, including the L'Chaim! Kitchen, featuring traditional Hebrew dishes such as pastrami on rye, chicken and matzo ball soup, egg cream and more. Feast of the Three Kings Kitchen will offer up sofrito-marinated beef with sweet plantains and olives, as well as queso fresco-stuffed arepas topped with shrimp. Other new samplings include black forest roulade with cherry whipped cream at the Bavaria Holiday Kitchen in the Germany pavilion and hand-carved smoked ham with green beans and sweet potato casserole at the American Holiday Table in The American Adventure.

- The Candlelight Processional will be performed nearly 120 times at Epcot this holiday season. Epcot's grandest holiday tradition features the retelling of the Christmas story by a celebrity narrator backed by a 50-piece orchestra and massed choir. Performances will run three times nightly during the festival. Narrators already announced for this year include Whoopi Goldberg, Pat Sajak, Steven Curtis Chapman and Edward James Olmos. More narrators will be announced in the coming months! This is an unforgettable holiday show that will bring out that true Christmas spirit in everyone!

- Chip & Dale are gathering ornaments for their Christmas tree and you can join in the fun! To be part of Chip & Dale's Christmas Tree Spree Scavenger Hunt, you can purchase a map and stickers from select merchandise outlets and scout World Showcase locations looking for the famous chipmunks and their ornaments. Return your completed maps for a special festive surprise, courtesy of the chipmunk duo!

Secret Symbols

Can you identify these secret symbols?


1


2


3


4

Where Am I?

Can you figure out where these photos were taken?

















Only the best explorers will be able to figure this one out...

Answers on page 121

Tim & Lou's TOP 10

Ten Things You May Not Know About Daisy Duck

1. Daisy Duck made her debut in 1940 in the cartoon short *Mr. Duck Steps Out* (though there's a bit of debate on that point, which we'll get back to later!). While she didn't make nearly as many film appearances as her Disney co-stars (appearing in only 11 shorts between 1940 and 1954), she had a far greater career on television, appearing in shows ranging from *Quack Pack* and *Mickey Mouse Works* to *Disney's House of Mouse* and *Mickey and the Roadster Racers*. As far as her film roles are concerned, she always played a supporting role, save for one starring appearance, that being the 1947 cartoon *Donald's Dilemma*.
2. Daisy is Minnie Mouse's closest friend (naturally), but she's also close pals with Clarabelle Cow and Clara Cluck, at least in her comic book appearances.
3. Just as Donald Duck is the uncle of Huey, Dewey, and Louie, Daisy is the aunt of April, May, and June.
4. How exactly are the three related to Daisy? Well, it turns out that they are the daughters of Daisy's sister, who is mentioned (but not seen) in the story *Flip Decision*, which appeared in Walt Disney's Comics and Stories #149. She also has three little brothers who appeared in the animated short Donald's Diary.
5. Clarence Nash, the voice of Donald Duck, provided the voice of Daisy in her first two appearances (much as Walt Disney briefly voiced both Mickey and Minnie Mouse). But she has been voiced most often by Tress MacNeille, who took on the role in 1999. MacNeille has voiced Daisy in many television series including *Disney's House of Mouse*, *Mickey Mouse Clubhouse*, and *Mickey and the Roadster Racers*. Curiously, Daisy was also voiced by the late Russi Taylor (the long-time voice of Minnie Mouse) in *Fantasia 2000*. She had no lines though, just a scream.
6. Donna Duck? Almost…! A character named Donna Duck appeared in the 1937 cartoon short *Don Donald*. But was she an early version of Daisy? There's been some confusion on this point over the years, but according to several sources, *Don Donald* is listed as Daisy's debut. Additionally, *Don Donald* was included on the Disney-produced DVD "Best Pals: Donald and Daisy." The question seemed to be definitely settled in 1999 when Disney released a collector's pin as part of their "Countdown to the Millennium" series which read "Daisy Duck debuts as Donna Duck 1937." Despite this, if you look up Daisy's birthday, it is officially listed as June 7, 1940, when she first appeared in her now-familiar form. Whichever year you prefer though, there's no question she looks great for her age!
7. Most Disney fans are familiar with the Fab Five (Mickey, Minnie, Donald, Goofy, and Pluto), but what about poor Daisy? Not to worry, she's included in the Sensational Six, the similarly named group of classic Disney characters. But no, she's not an official Disney Princess.
8. Daisy wears a bow on her head just like her pals Minnie and Clarabelle, but unlike those two, she doesn't wear a dress per se. Instead, her feathers are ruffled in a way to create a skirt, and she wears a shirt which serves as a top.
9. And just like Minnie Mouse, Daisy's eyes are black. Usually. However, in the "Gift of the Magi" segment of *Mickey's Christmas Carol*, her eyes are actually blue! Maybe it's that Christmas spirit…
10. She may seem calm and demure on the outside, but Daisy has a superhero alter ego! Super Daisy (or "Paperinika") was featured in Italian Disney comics since the early 70s. Although Super Daisy has no superpowers, she has a host of super gadgets at her disposal to take on the bad guys.



Keepsake Image: *"Tomorrowland Holiday Memories"· Photo © Tim Foster*

Back Cover Photo © Lisa Mahan





"What is needed in addition to the creative ability is courage, courage to try new things..."
- Walt Disney