

WALT DISNEY PRODUCTIONS

INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

P-157

To *Julius Rosenberg* DATE May 19, 1954
FROM HAL ADELQUIST SUBJECT _____

Attached information on current
DISNEYLAND T.V. SHOW

As a matter of fact, we're building, and a living
part of the house. **THE** calculated account
the attraction and interest of the history
of the nation.

DISNEYLAND

Best of all, it offers a completely
immediate escape... Disney's world might be
seen, in the **SHOW**.

The Disneyland Television Show will be a major
undertaking, embracing the complete production
of the Disney studio. With departments of
artists, writers and technicians have been
brought into the project, and are preparing
material as this month, and will be the
start of the first broadcast here.

We hope to bring to television the excitement,
the atmosphere of integrity and hard work, the
wealth of laughter and warm emotion, the
good program for our intelligence, the hopes
and dreams of the American family we have tried,
in some measure, to bring to the motion picture
screen.

WALT DISNEY

As a major entertainment medium, and a living force in the modern world, television commands the attention and interest of the Disney organization.

Best of all, it offers a challenge of tremendous scope...a challenge we are eager to accept, in the fullest sense.

The Disneyland Television Show will be a major undertaking, embracing the complete resources of the Disney studio. Entire departments of artists, writers and technicians have been turned into the project, and are preparing material at this moment, many months before the date of the first scheduled show.

We hope to bring to television the enthusiasm, the standards of integrity and hard work, the sensibility of laughter and human emotion, the same respect for the intelligence, the hopes and dreams of the American family we have tried, in some measure, to bring to the motion picture screen.

WALT DISNEY

THE DISNEYLAND SHOW

1.

Points of Information

- Q. What is the Disneyland show?
- A. In simple essence, the Disneyland show will be a weekly hour of entertainment, designed for a family audience.

- Q. How is it planned to attract this audience?
- A. The Disneyland Show will base itself on proven fundamentals of entertainment...music, humor, story values, nostalgia, personalities, surprise, originality, spectacle, revelation of fact, and detailed honesty of presentation, stamped with the traditional Disney hallmark of quality.

The Disney organization has been in the field of visual entertainment for almost thirty years. It has existed and continued to grow because of a single overwhelming economic factor...its consistent thoroughgoing appeal to an enormous world wide audience of every age and description.

- Q. Will this be a "Mickey Mouse" kind of show, with more appeal to children than adults?
- A. Definitely not. It is no secret to the theatrical trade... and indeed, to the general public...that Walt Disney has long since pushed his creative horizons far beyond the world of Mickey Mouse.

The Disney True-Life Adventures...among them the current "LIVING DESERT" is credited with bringing back into movie theatres the "lost audience"...namely, the mature intelligent theatregoers who many years ago, had given up the usual type of Hollywood fare.

A. (continued)

It is predicted by theatremen that Jules Verne's "TWENTY THOUSAND LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA," now being filmed by Disney, will join "GONE WITH THE WIND" and "THE ROBE" as the top box office grossers of all time.

Based on his record of diversified entertainment, Walt Disney has been named in a national poll of exhibitors conducted by the leading magazine of the trade as the "Producer of Producers" for the second straight year, being chosen over Samuel Goldwyn, Darryl Zanuck and Dore Schary.

All this, does not in any sense, mean to deprecate the hold that Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck and the rest of the cartoons exert on the affections of America's youth. Mickey and his friends will appear on the Disneyland show in direct relation to their value for the total viewing audience.

Q. Will the Disney library of film be available to the television show?

A. Yes, in moderation. A great portion of the viewing audience will be looking forward to this type of footage and it would be unrealistic to disappoint them.

The timeless nature of Disney movies has been proven over and over again at the nation's box offices. On each occasion of the re-release of "SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS," it has consistently outgrossed more than most new Hollywood "A" feature product.

Quoting from Variety, May 12, 1954: Headline "Pinocchio" on Second Reissue Outgrossing Initial Release! And from the context of the story: "...In this new outing, film is headed for domestic rentals of at least \$2,000,000 or slightly more. The first time out, in 1939, the Walt Disney entry drew \$1,700,000."

There is some probability that the characters of Snow White, Peter Pan, Grumpy, Cinderella, Donald Duck and others may still live when the medium of television itself becomes obsolete.

Q. How much of this Disney library footage will be used?

A. Certainly, there will be no disposition to "lean" on this established footage, to the exclusion of developing and presenting brand new entertainment. We believe it is common knowledge that Disney, of all Hollywood producers, has been unique in his efforts to devise and create new forms of entertainment far from the beaten path. This driving creative force will find tremendous opportunities and expression in the television medium, and is indeed, one of Disney's main objectives in entering the television field.

One more point. This existent Disney footage has one particularly important advantage. It permits the Disney show to go on the air with an already proven set of entertainment values woven into the show. With this as a base, the Disney creators are free to devise and incubate new entertainment forms for the TV audience.

Q. Will there be star personalities on the show, in addition to the regular Disney characters?

A. Yes, on occasion. But stars will not be selected simply for the sake of their names, in the usual style of "Guest spots." Stars will be used in stories and unique ways, characteristic of the Disney manner of entertainment.

Q. In the event of color television gaining widespread use, will the Disneyland show be ready for such a change?

A. Color television will present no problems to Disney artists and technicians. They have been working exclusively in color since 1933, when Disney's "THREE LITTLE PIGS" touched off the color revolution in Hollywood.

- Q. Will there be a relationship between the Disneyland show and the Disney films produced for use in theatres?
- A. Yes. Both mediums will help one another. The success of Disney productions in the theatres will call additional notice to the Disney television show, and aid immeasurably in the establishment of a large viewing audience.

- Q. What is the basic format of the Disneyland show?
- A. As the earth is divided into four cardinal points of the compass, so is Disneyland...the world of Walt Disney...divided into four cardinal realms of entertainment.

For general purposes of identification, these realms are called FANTASYLAND, FRONTIERLAND, ADVENTURELAND and the WORLD OF TOMORROW.

Each week, Disneyland will present a complete show, originating from one of these cardinal realms.

To obviate the pressure induced by an hour-long weekly show, a complete and separate production crew has been assigned to each of these four realms. In actual practice, each production staff and crew will have four weeks to prepare and produce their own show.

And each show, bearing its own distinctive personality, will be presented within the framework of the overall Disneyland theme, with Walt Disney in the role of host, as the occasion demands.

Q. In some detail, will you describe each of these four types of show, emanating from their respective realms of entertainment?

A. (1) FANTASYLAND

FANTASYLAND is the boundless, timeless world of the imagination...the magic land of Peter Pan, Cinderella, Aesop, La Fontaine, Hans Christian Anderson, the Arabian Nights, Robin Hood, D'Artagnan, the Flying Carpet, of goblins, ghosts, pixies and leprachauns, of Heidi and Hiawatha and Huck Finn, of Mother Goose, Father Christmas and the Brothers Grimm...and the whole generic family of Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, Pluto and Goofy. This is the magical world of daydreams.

The following projects are in preparation for the FANTASYLAND series :

- (a) The Story of Puppets...their origin, history, famous puppet characters of the past. A visit from Bergen and McCarthy. Segue into the cartoon feature, "Mickey and the Beanstalk."
- (b) The story of Silhouettes. Musical dramatization of Silhouettes by Lichine Ballet. Introduction of new child ballet star. Segue into "BONGO" the cartoon story of a circus bear, written by Sinclair Lewis.
- (c) Doodling. Doodles of famous and historical personages. The place of doodles in our own life. Everyone can draw. Segue into Award Winning cartoon stories "THE UGLY DUCKLING" and "THE COUNTRY COUSIN."
- (d) A Flying Carpet Tour of Latin America. Carnival in Rio. The Tale of Pedro the Little Mail Plane. A unique view of Night Life in Mexico City. Famed Latin musical stars. The story titled "FOR WHOM THE BULLS TOIL."

Q. Can you describe the nature of FRONTIERLAND?

A. (2) FRONTIERLAND

The FRONTIERLAND shows will be, in effect, a step back through the looking glass of time into the nostalgic fabulous world of America in the making. With song and story and legend, with fabled giants, and real folk heroes alike, the world of Davy Crockett, Paul Bunyan, Pecos Bill, Rip van Winkle, Uncle Remus and Johnny Appleseed will come to life in Walt Disney's richest story-telling vein. The folklore of America is a treasure house of warm-hearted, gusty entertainment, from which the FRONTIERLAND shows will draw material needs and inspiration.

Q. Will you indicate some of the shows which are now in preparation to originate in FRONTIERLAND?

- A. (a) Davy Crockett at the Alamo.
The story of the almost legendary Coonskin Congressman from Tennessee who gave up an opportunity to become President to fight and die for the young Republic of Texas.
- (b) Washington Irving.
America's first great literary name, who delighted in collecting ghost stories. Dramatization of Irving's visit to a haunted inn. A cartoon feature version of his famous tale "THE LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW."
- (c) Tales of Uncle Remus and Brer Rabbit.
A dramatization of Joel Chandler Harris, the Atlanta newspaperman, who brought the Brer Rabbit Tales to the world. His meeting with a real life Uncle Remus. Disney treatment of the Brer Rabbit tales.
- (e) Johnny Appleseed.
A musical version of the career of the frontiersman, who, with a Bible instead of a gun, found a unique way into the affections of America.

Q. Will you describe ADVENTURELAND?

A. ADVENTURELAND is the realm of the Disney True-Life Adventures...the world of Nature itself. Here is a community of life in which man has no part. The actors, the laws, the adventures and dramas found here are those of Nature herself.

From Adventureland has already come the material for the most honored series of films in motion picture history. Winner of five major Academy Awards in a row...and consistent victor at the European film festivals...among them are numbered "THE LIVING DESERT," "WATER BIRDS," "BEAVER VALLEY" and "SEAL ISLAND."

At the present moment, to maintain the constant flow of this material, there are thirty - Disney naturalist - camera teams in almost as many different parts of the world ranging from Nairobi to the Arctic Circle.

Q. Can you indicate some of the nature and wild life subjects to be represented on the Adventureland shows?

- A.
- (a) "THE VANISHING PRAIRIE." An account of the rich plains life of America before the white man came, featuring the buffalo and the prairie dog towns.
 - (b) "THE UNDERSEAS STORY." A visual narrative of fantastic underseas life, gathered from the depths of the world's oceans.
 - (c) "THE HONEY BEE." A graphic representation of the complex family and community life of the common American honey bee.
 - (d) "SECRETS OF LIFE." A microscopic exploration into the unknown worlds of Nature's most minute creatures.

Q. Will you describe the WORLD OF TOMORROW?

A. WORLD OF TOMORROW.

The Realm of the future is a subject uppermost in many minds these days. The Disney show will be a projection forward in time and space, to sample this fascinating region, in both serious and whimsical manner.

As in the Disney True-Life Adventures in Nature, where famed naturalists have joined their special knowledge to the Disney creators to create a fascinating new form of entertainment...so here, in the WORLD OF TOMORROW, will distinguished technical authorities, and experts from the field of both science-facts and science-fiction join with the Disney staff to prepare these True-Life Adventures of Science.

Q. Can you indicate some of the shows in preparation for the WORLD OF TOMORROW Series?

- A. (a) "FROM ADAM TO ATOM." Man's place in the universe, and his relation to atomic power. Dramatized vignettes of the use of atomic power in our everyday lives.
- (b) "MAN AND FLIGHT." The checkered history of Man's struggle to take to the air...with a few conjectures about future undertakings in those regions.
- (c) "THE WHEEL." How man discovered he could solve some of his most vexing problems by emulating the ways and creatures of Nature. The progress...with occasional retrogressions...in the field of transportation. Use of the wheel in man's Future.
- (d) "COMMUNICATIONS." Man's anxious...and sometimes intemperate...efforts to communicate with his fellow man, during various stages of history. From the Tower of Babel to the United Nations, and onward into the realm of the future.

FORMAT NOTE

In each Disneyland show, following the final commercial, there will be a special section, ranging from four to five minutes in length. This will constitute an entertainment unit of its own, presenting highlights from the next week's show.

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