

Australian Animation: An International History

Australian animation has a rich and fascinating history that spans over a century. From its humble beginnings in the early 20th century, the industry has grown into a global powerhouse, producing some of the most iconic and beloved animated films and television shows. In this article, we will explore the key milestones, influential figures, and international collaborations that have shaped the development of Australian animation.



Australian Animation: An International History

by Mark Gibney

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The Early Years: 1907-1945

The first known Australian animated film was produced in 1907 by the Melbourne studio of Ernest Higgins. However, it was not until the 1920s that the Australian animation industry began to take off. During this time, a number of talented animators emerged, including Norman McLaren, Yoram Gross, and Ralph Bakshi. McLaren, in particular, was a pioneer in the field of experimental animation, and his work had a major influence on the development of the medium around the world.



The Golden Age: 1945-1970

The post-World War II period was a golden age for Australian animation. During this time, a number of Australian animators found success working for major American studios, such as Hanna-Barbera and Nelvana. Hanna-Barbera was responsible for producing some of the most popular animated television shows of the era, including "Scooby-Doo", "The Flintstones", and "The Jetsons". Nelvana, on the other hand, was a Canadian studio that produced a number of groundbreaking animated films, such as "The Secret of NIMH" and "Rock & Rule".



Hanna-Barbera, American animation studio

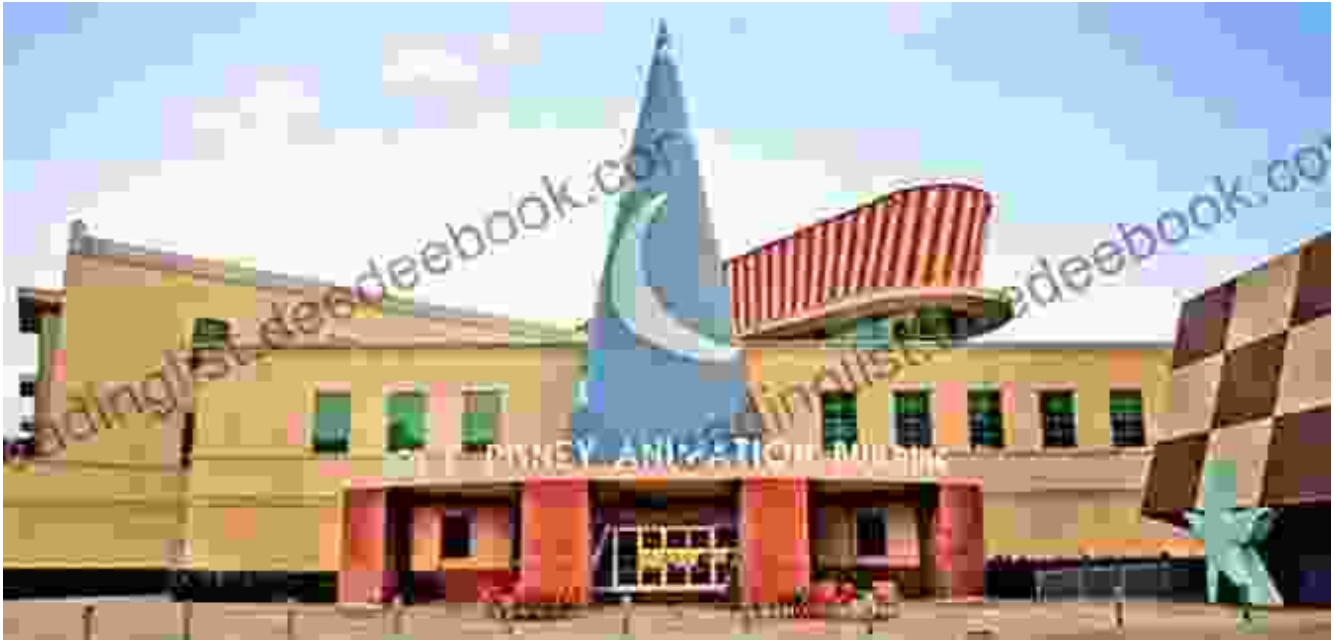
The 1970s and 1980s: A Time of Transition

The 1970s and 1980s were a time of transition for the Australian animation industry. The rise of new technologies, such as computers and video recorders, led to a decline in the demand for traditional cel animation. As a result, many Australian animators began to experiment with new techniques, such as digital animation and stop-motion animation.



The 1990s and Beyond: A Global Success

In the 1990s, the Australian animation industry began to experience a resurgence. A number of Australian animators found success working for major American studios, such as Disney and Pixar. Disney was responsible for producing some of the most successful animated films of all time, such as "The Lion King", "Beauty and the Beast", and "Frozen". Pixar, on the other hand, is known for its innovative use of computer animation, and its films have won numerous Academy Awards.



Disney, a major American animation studio

Today, the Australian animation industry is a global success story. Australian animators have won numerous awards, including Academy Awards, BAFTA Awards, and Golden Globes. The industry is also a major economic contributor, generating billions of dollars in revenue each year. The future of Australian animation looks bright, as new technologies and new markets continue to emerge.

References

- Australian animation on Wikipedia
- Australia's Animation Industry: A Global Success Story on Australia Council website
- Australian Animation Set for Growth on Screen Australia website



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