



To Infinity and Beyond!: The Story of Pixar Animation Studios

*Karen Paik (Foreword) , Leslie Iwerks (Contributor) , John Lasseter (Foreword) , Ed Catmull (Foreword) ,
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In 1986, gifted animator John Lasseter, technology guru Ed Catmull, and visionary Steve Jobs founded Pixar Animation Studios. Their goal: create a computer animated feature, despite predictions that it could never be done. An unprecedented catalog of blockbuster films later, the studio is honoring its history in this deluxe volume. From its fledgling days under George Lucas to ten demanding years creating *Toy Story* to the merger with Disney, each milestone is vibrantly detailed. Interviews with Pixar directors, producers, animators, voice talent, and industry insiders, as well as concept art, storyboards, and snapshots illuminate a history that is both definitive and enthralling.

To Infinity and Beyond!: The Story of Pixar Animation Studios Details

Date : Published November 1st 2007 by Chronicle Books

ISBN : 9780811850124

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Format : Hardcover 304 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Business, Art, Biography, History

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Andres says

Ok my five is clearly biased. I love anything Pixar. This book had a great in depth overview of the company. If you liked the parts of Pixar's in Steve Jobs' biography and wanted more then this book is for you.

Michael says

A superb book; rich in both visual and historical information from the origins of Pixar, right through to their merger with Disney.

A must read for Pixar and Disney fans!

Arlette Sjerp says

This is the first time that I give a five star rating to a non-fiction book. I thought I would never do that because non-fiction would not be able to grab me like a novel. However, it did: I really had a hard time putting this book down (though not literally, considering its size and weight :-). I guess you have to really be interested in Pixar to have the same experience, but I loved reading about the birth and growth of the company and all its films (up to and including *Cars*). It really reminded me of Walt Disney's story: him wanting to make an animated feature-length film and everybody telling him he couldn't do that. So it's a nice sort of full-circle feeling that Pixar ended up being bought by Disney.

This is also the first of my large, hardcover Disney books that I actually read cover to cover. I definitely want to give the others a serious try now!

Krysta says

5 stars are not enough for this book. It's a fantastic and incredible journey through the history of Pixar and CG animation.

Tarah Mason says

This book is incredibly interesting and full of amazing info. I wish they made another one, so I could learn about the movies after *Cars*.

Claudia says

What a fantastic book! I find it lies somewhere between *A Pixar Story* and *The Pixar Touch* in terms of critical analysis and tone. It frankly discusses the road-bumps Pixar has faced on the road to success, while still painting the company in an overall positive light. Considering how familiar with *A Pixar Story* I am (I've seen it at least 5 times) a good majority of the quotes supplied by actual Pixarians (as well as other figures who were involved in Pixar's creation) were familiar to me. It felt almost like an adaptation of the documentary for the page instead of the screen. That's not a bad thing, though; the book expands upon a lot of things that the documentary only touched upon, and I'm grateful for that.

My only criticism (if you can even call it that) is that they only chronicle the company's history through Disney's acquisition of Pixar in 2006. I would love a behind the scenes look at the company that carries on through at least *WALL-E*, though even further would be better. It's understandable, though, considering this was a look back at their first two decades as a company. Maybe we'll get a continuation for their 30th anniversary.

Overall, a great read and a fascinating look into my favourite company in the world. It left me itching to go back and watch their filmography for the millionth time (short films, too), or at least to go rewatch *A Pixar Story* XD You can never get too much Pixar.

Mary says

I enjoyed this book, although it took me almost forever to finish it. It is difficult to just curl up in bed with this large tome--I found that I had to sit at a table with it. The layout is gorgeous and the artwork is lovely to see. And while the story of the company is really quite fascinating, I was really tired of the constant quoted love fest by the last page. I had to take a very long break from the book in the middle of it for that very reason. I would have enjoyed the text more if it had more about the business philosophy and less just about patting each other on the back for a good directorial job.

Dana says

After reading Steve Jobs biography, I was craving more Pixar! And this book definitely delivers. I'm a fan of all things Pixar and this was a great behind the scenes look at the making of some of my favorite movies. The size of the book was cumbersome, but the beautiful artwork definitely was deserving of the oversized format.

Tim Evanson says

This book covers the history of Pixar Animation from its founding to the year 2007. It covers the making of just seven films: *Toy Story*, *A Bug's Life*, *Toy Story 2*, *Monsters, Inc.*, *Finding Nemo*, *The Incredibles*, and *Cars*. It **does not** cover the great successes of *WALL-E* or *Up* nor the problems Pixar has faced as it turned into a sequel factory under Disney ownership.

This is not a book about the animation process, per se, nor a book about how Pixar functions internally. It's a history of the studio, much like a history of MGM or Warner Bros. would be. While there is some discussion of the technical problems Pixar faced, particularly in the opening chapters as the company works out the problems with its RenderMan software, this is more of a history of the making of films.

The prose style here is breezy and engaging, and yet still manages to convey a great deal of detail. The opening chapters are something of mini-biographies of people like Ed Catmull, Alvy Ray Smith, and John Lasseter. There are good summaries of the importance of discoveries like the alpha channel, particle effects, other CG animation tools. These sections omit real technical discussions and any "how we did it" in favor of phrases like "eventually, they discovered that". This allows the story to move forward while still giving a nod of the head to the computing teams that made CGI possible.

Much of the middle part of the book focuses on the role that George Lucas and Steve Job played in Pixar's history. This is a management story, not an animation story. There is a good discussion of how Pixar under Jobs initially tried to be a computer company, selling its own brand of PC -- and failed miserably at it.

It's the sale of Pixar's hardware division in 1990 that allowed the studio to really focus on films, and this story constitutes the mid to latter half of the book. There's a great deal of focus on directors and screenwriters like John Lasseter, Pete Docter, Andrew Stanton, Joe Ranft, and Brad Bird, and how Pixar's intense, long process of storytelling worked to "get the story right". The book makes it seem as if Pixar found a magic potion that allows it to craft great stories. Anyone seeing Pixar films after 2010 might find that the potion has lost its potency. But if you can look past the conclusionary tone, this is a great history (at least) of the studio's working processes.

The latter half of the book also focuses on problems of character design, and some of the animation problems encountered during the animation process (like how to depict underwater scenes in a visual way, or how to make hair look realistic). But there is a great deal of discussion about how each of Pixar's films came together, and the accidents, timeline problems, production issues, staff problems, and even the occasional serendipitous semi-miracle helped bring these seven films to the silver screen.

The book contains a whopping large amount of historic photographs and a images from Pixar productions. Few of these take up a full page, but that's not really what a person will want to read this book for.

Jen says

This was interesting! The pictures/artwork are FANTASTIC and I wished I could have framed some of them. Worth a look!

Tracey says

Xmas gift 2007
