The New York Times Magazine

The Secret Lives of Color

Allie Watkinson

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Capstone - Graphic Design

Department of Art and Art History

Artist's Statement

When I was first asked, "What do I want to be when I grow up?" As a little kid, I replied that I wanted to be an artist. Over the years that answer would change. Even going into college, I started with a major in computer science. Eventually, I realized that little me was right. I wanted to create and make art. I am at my best when I'm being creative. So, I changed my degree to a B.F.A. in graphic design.

I chose to concentrate on graphic design because I enjoy communicating with an audience. I especially like communicating the right emotion to an audience. That is what I usually try to start with when making a design. What mood do I want to communicate? I like how the smallest detail, whether that be color, type, illustration, etc., can change the feeling the viewer gets when looking at the piece.

When I'm given an assignment from a client, I start with brainstorming a list of different paths I could go with for a design. I move on to sketching the best ideas on paper. Keeping the sketching faze on paper helps me stay loose and allows me to quickly explore every idea at different angles. I take my best sketches and bring them to my client to see what direction they want me to go in and I start bringing the sketches onto the computer. When I'm finalizing a design, I like to create a few different versions for the clients to choose from so they can feel satisfied with the end product.

My ultimate goal of designing, for me, is to create effective, interesting designs that are satisfying to the client and the audience that it is meant for.

| Title	Original Format
Figure 1: Stormy Day	Photoshop, 12.6 x 7.2 inches
Figure 2: Bright Day	Photoshop, 12.6 x 7.2 inches
Figure 3: Secret Lives of Color Cover	Illustrator, 9.1875 x 11.125 inches
Figure 4: Secret Lives of Color Spread	Illustrator, 18.125 x 11.125 inches
Figure 5: Secret Lives of Color Mockup	Photoshop, 15.25 x 7.647 inches
Figure 6: The AM Archives Tablet Pages	Photoshop, 44.396 x 33.653 inches
Figure 7: Nine Eras of Disney Animation Infographic Front	Illustrator, 17 x 11 inches
Figure 8: Nine Eras of Disney Animation Infographic Inside	Illustrator, 11 x 34 inches
Figure 9: Infographic Detail One	Illustrator, 11 x 8.5 inches
Figure 10: Infographic Detail Two	Illustrator, 11 x 8.5 inches
Figure 11: Infographic Detail Three	Illustrator, 11 x 8.5 inches
Figure 12: Infographic Detail Four	Illustrator, 11 x 8.5 inches

Figure 1: Stormy Day
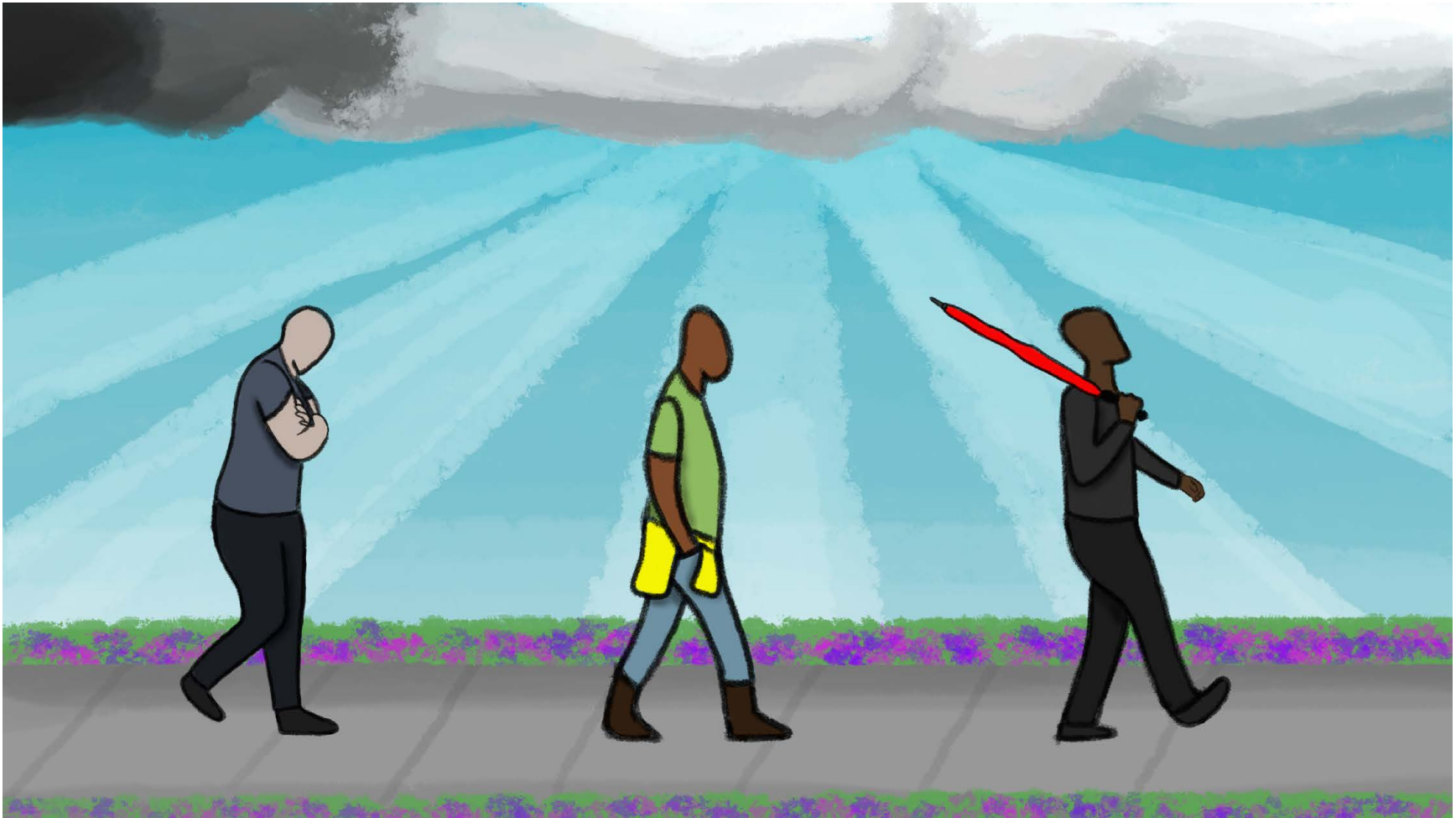
Figure 2: Bright Day

Figure 3: Secret Lives of Color Cover

Book Review

The Secret Lives of Color

Written By Kassia St. Clair

Review By Gail Obenreder

Every shade has a story

I delightedly discovered St. Clair's book late last year in the Delaware Art Museum shop, drawn to the volume's visually appealing binding (design by Britain's James Edgar) covered with dancelike, 3D-looking trompe l'oeil dots. But it soon became apparent that the content was just as enticing.

You know you're in good visual (and scholarly) hands with a book whose frontispiece quotes the great Victorian critic and artist John Ruskin: "The purest and most thoughtful minds are those which love color the most." St. Clair goes on to prove Ruskin right (as he was about artistry, if not about life itself) in her witty, urbane, and tremendously interesting deep dive into 75 colorful tales.

Some hues chosen by the author (magenta or khaki, for instance) might seem common enough to have come from a Crayola box, but she soon dismantles that sense of familiarity. You may never have heard of some other colors, like gamboge or archil or mummy. But every shade has a story, and St. Clair tells them all masterfully.

Many eager returns

The volume is also lovely to hold—perfectly sized and with an appealingly tactile cover. Each colorful profile (set in a welcoming typeface new to me, Kings Caslon) is just the right size for a quick, refreshing read. I frequently open it like a visual I Ching for a respite from, well, anything and everything.

Don't be dismayed by its 320-page length. Slightly smaller in size than most reference tomes, it includes 20 pages of end notes (to access or not as you read); the usual acknowledgements and index; and a "Glossary of Other Interesting Colors" with 123 more St. Clair favorites like "eau de nile" and "incarnadine."

The author—a speaker (here and in the UK), scholar, and essayist—writes for publications as varied as The Economist, Architectural Digest, Elle Decoration (the UK edition of Elle Décor), and The Times Literary Supplement. She was shortlisted for the Somerset Maugham Award (given to young British writers), and St. Clair is heard regularly on radio. Her newly published volume, The Golden Thread, posits how fabrics have changed history, and I'm reading that now. But for a palette of interesting colors backed up with sound scholarship and lightened with a dash of historical gossip, I return eagerly—and all the time—to The Secret Lives of Color.

"A mind-expanding tour of the world without leaving your paintbox. Every color has a story, and here are some of the most alluring, alarming, and thought-provoking."
—Simon Garfield
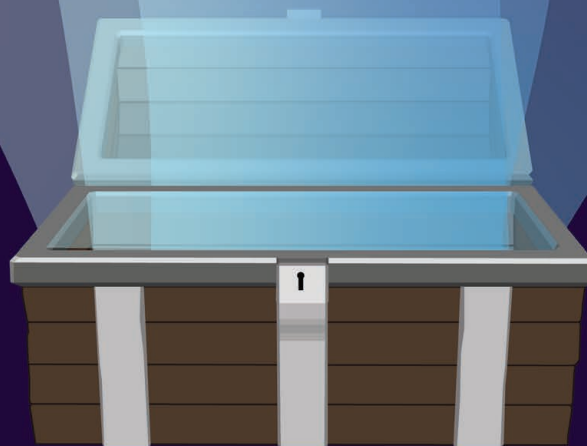
Illustrated By Allie Watkinson

Figure 4: Secret Lives of Color Spread

Figure 5: Secret Lives of Color Mockup

Figure 6: The AM Archives Tablet Pages

Figure 7: Nine Eras of Disney Animation Infographic Front

SILENT ERA
In the 1920s Walter Disney created the "Alice Comedies" which was a series of shorts where a real girl "Alice" becomes fas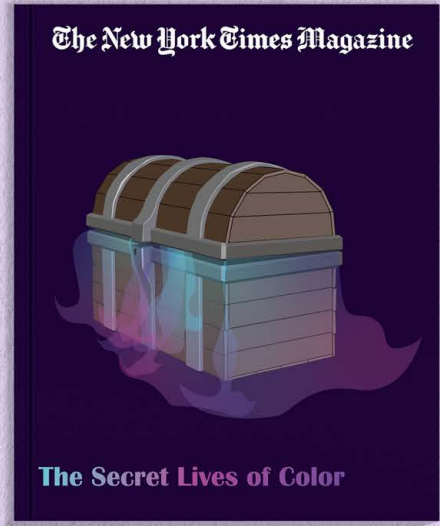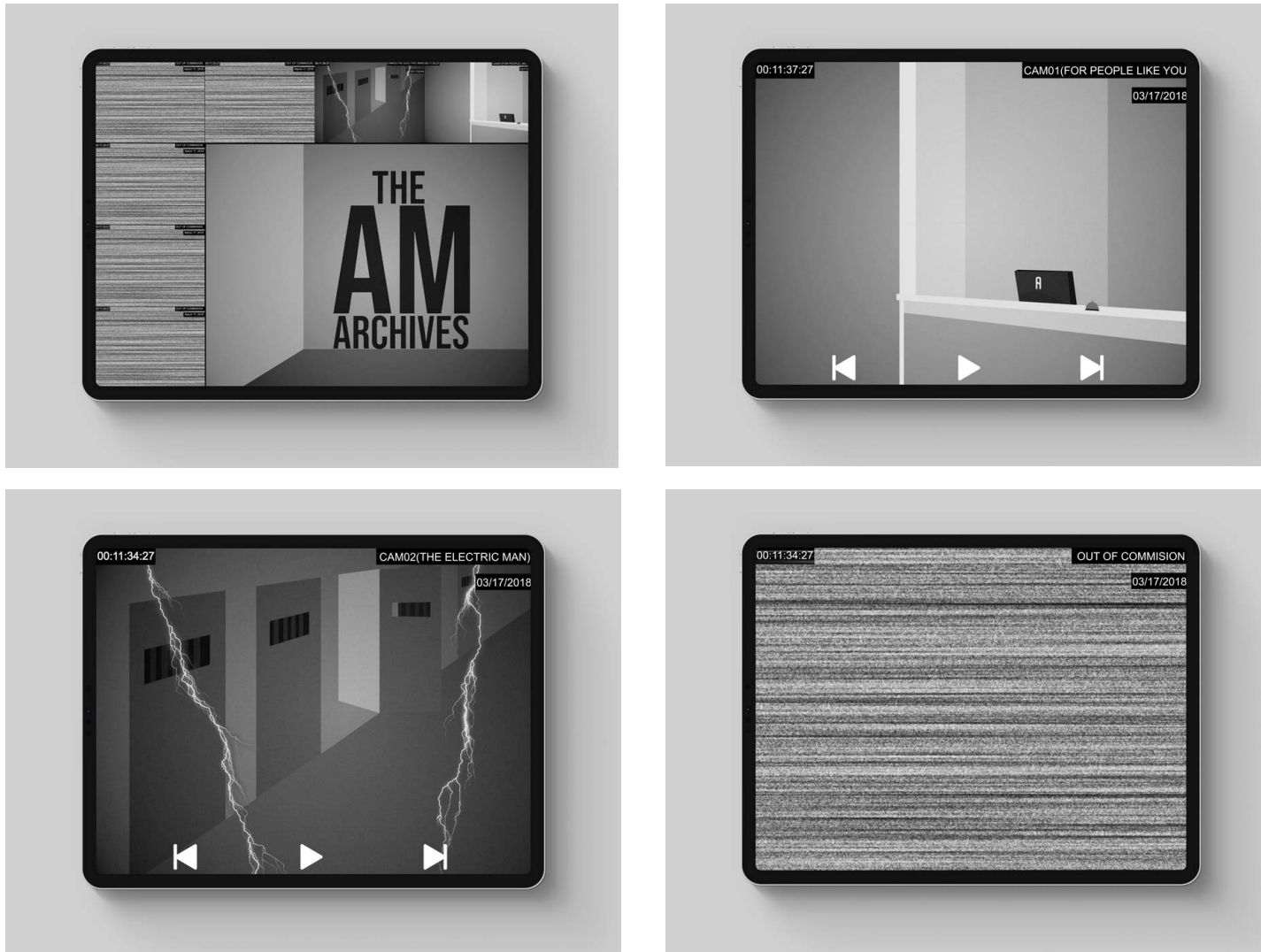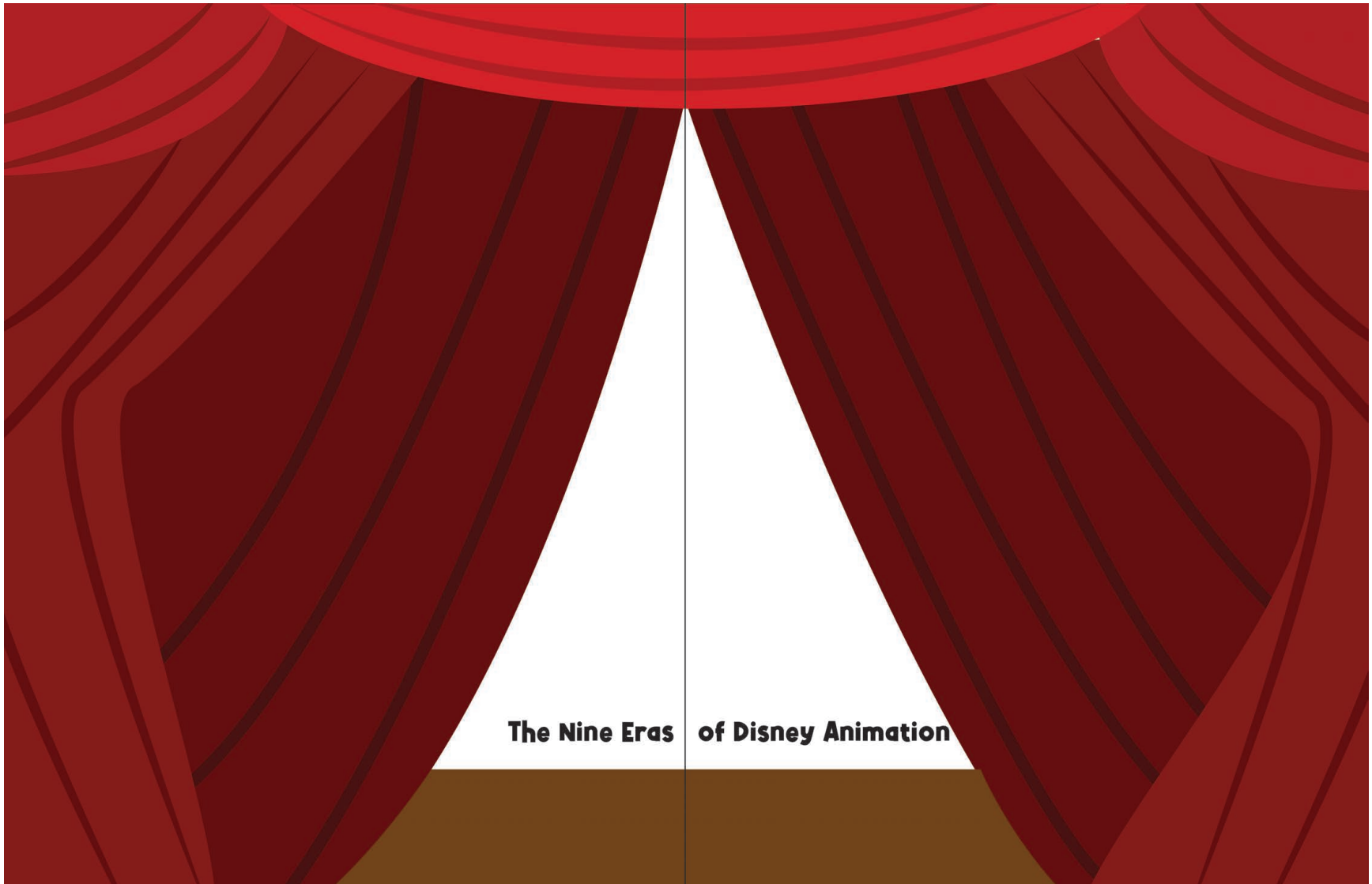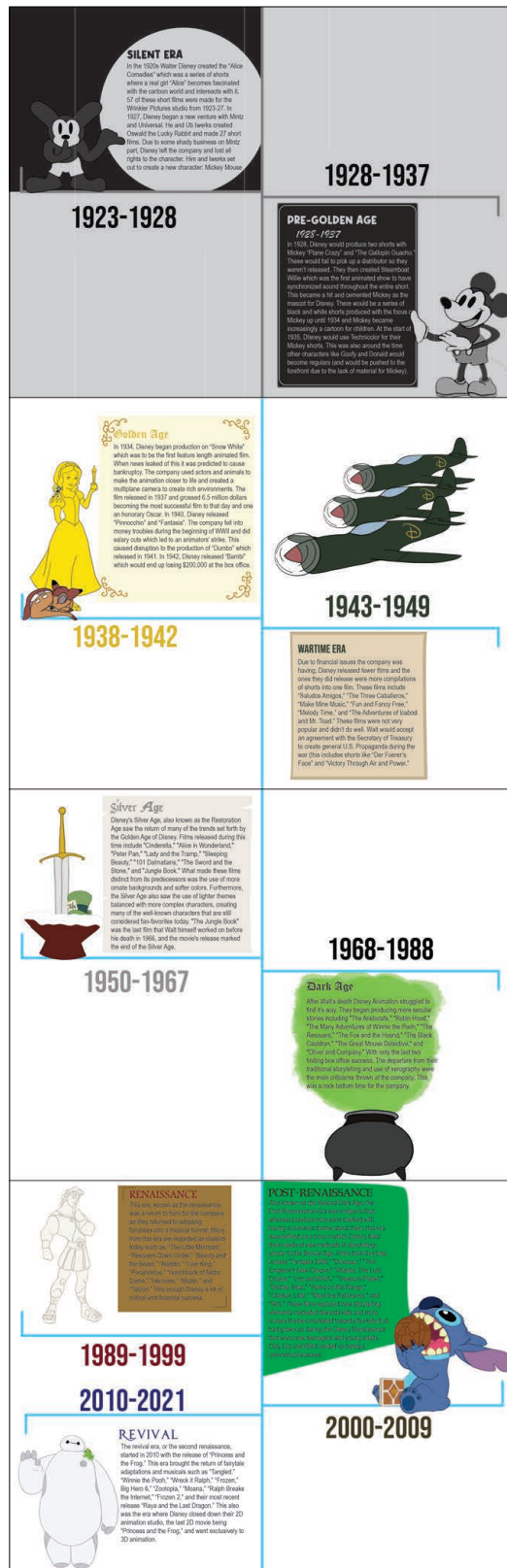cinated with the cartoon world and interacts with it. 57 of these short films were made for the Winkler Pictures studio from 1923-27. In 1927, Disney began a new venture with Mintz and Universal. He and Ub Iwerks created Oswald the Lucky Rabbit and made 27 short films. Due to some shady business on Mintz part, Disney left the company and lost all rights to the character. Him and Iwerks set out to create a new character: Mickey Mouse.

1923-1928

1928-1937

PRE-GOLDEN AGE
1928 - 1937
In 1928, Disney would produce two shorts with Mickey "Plane Crazy" and "The Gallopin Gaucho." These would fail to pick up a distributor so they weren't released. They then created Steamboat Willie which was the first animated show to have synchronized sound throughout the entire short. This became a hit and cemented Mickey as the mascot for Disney. There would be a series of black and white shorts produced with the focus on Mickey up until 1934 and Mickey became increasingly a cartoon for children. At the start of 1935, Disney would use Technicolor for their Mickey shorts. This was also around the time other characters like Goofy and Donald would become regulars (and would be pushed to the forefront due to the lack of material for Mickey).
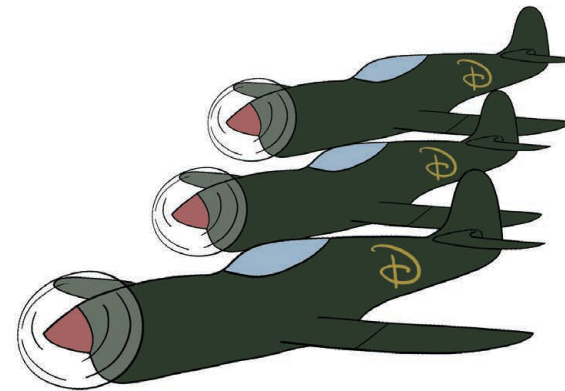
Golden Age
In 1934, Disney began production on "Snow White" which was to be the first feature length animated film. When news leaked of this it was predicted to cause bankruptcy. The company used actors and animals to make the animation closer to life and created a multiplane camera to create rich environments. The film released in 1937 and grossed 6.5 million dollars becoming the most successful film to that day and one an honorary Oscar. In 1940, Disney released "Pinocchio" and "Fantasia". The company fell into money troubles during the beginning of WWII and did salary cuts which led to an animators' strike. This caused disruption to the production of "Dumbo" which released in 1941. In 1942, Disney released "Bambi" which would end up losing $200,000 at the box office.

1938-1942

1943-1949

WARTIME ERA
Due to financial issues the company was having, Disney released fewer films and the ones they did release were more compilations of shorts into one film. These films include "Saludos Amigos," "The Three Caballeros," "Make Mine Music," "Fun and Fancy Free," "Melody Time," and "The Adventures of Icabod and Mr. Toad." These films were not very popular and didn't do well. Walt would accept an agreement with the Secretary of Treasury to create general U.S. Propaganda during the war (this includes shorts like "Der Fuerer's Face" and "Victory Through Air and Power."

Silver Age
Disney's Silver Age, also known as the Restoration Age saw the return of many of the trends set forth by the Golden Age of Disney. Films released during this time include "Cinderella," "Alice in Wonderland," "Peter Pan," "Lady and the Tramp," "Sleeping Beauty," "101 Dalmatians," "The Sword and the Stone," and "Jungle Book." What made these films distinct from its predecessors was the use of more ornate backgrounds and softer colors. Furthermore, the Silver Age also saw the use of lighter themes balanced with more complex characters, creating many of the well-known characters that are still considered fan-favorites today. "The Jungle Book" was the last film that Walt himself worked on before his death in 1966, and the movie's release marked the end of the Silver Age.

1950-1967

1968-1988

Dark Age
After Walt's death Disney Animation struggled to find it's way. They began producing more secular stories including "The Aristocats," "Robin Hood," "The Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh," "The Rescuers," "The Fox and the Hound," "The Black Cauldron," "The Great Mouse Detective," and "Oliver and Company." With only the last two finding box office success. The departure from their traditional storytelling and use of xerography were the main criticisms thrown at the company. This was a rock bottom time for the company.

RENAISSANCE
This era, known as the renaissance, was a return to form for the company as they returned to adapting fairytales into a musical format. Many from this era are regarded as classics today such as "The Little Mermaid," "Rescuers Down Under," "Beauty and the Beast," "Aladdin," "Lion King," "Pocahontas," "Hunchback of Notre Dame," "Hercules," "Mulan," and "Tarzan." Hits brought Disney a lot of critical and financial success.

POST-RENAISSANCE

1989-1999

2010-2021

2000-2009

REVIVAL
The revival era, or the second renaissance, started in 2010 with the release of "Princess and the Frog." This era brought the return of fairytale adaptations and musicals such as "Tangled," "Winnie the Pooh," "Wreck it Ralph," "Frozen," Big Hero 6," "Zootopia," "Moana," "Ralph Breaks the Internet," "Frozen 2," and their most recent release "Raya and the Last Dragon." This also was the era where Disney closed down their 2D animation studio, the last 2D movie being "Princess and the Frog," and went exclusively to 3D animation.

Figure 8: Nine Eras of Disney Animation Infographic Inside

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Figure 9: Infographic Detail One

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Figure 10: Infographic Detail Two

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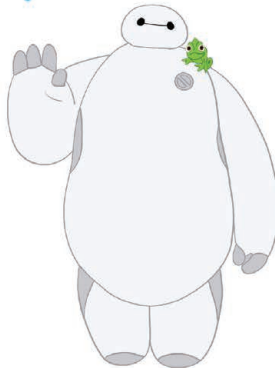**Figure 11: Infographic Detail Three**

RENAISSANCE

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POST-RENAISSANCE

Also known as the Second Dark Age, the Post-Renaissance Era was unique in that whereas previous eras were marked with having a common theme about them, this era was defined as a time in which Disney tried their hands at new methods in storytelling, similar to the Bronze Age. Films from this time include "Fantasia 2000," "Dinosaur," "The Emperor's New Groove," "Atlantis: The Lost Empire," "Lilo and Stitch," "Treasure Planet," "Brother Bear," "Home on the Range," "Chicken Little," "Meet the Robinsons," and "Bolt." These films explored new storytelling elements marketed towards kids and more mature themes marketed towards the kids that had grown up during the Disney Renaissance that were now teenagers and young adults. Only Lilo and Stitch ended up being a commercial success.

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Figure 12: Infographic Detail Four