

From Felix The Cat To Anime

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FROM FELIX THE CAT TO ANIME

? Animation technology has come a long way. Early animation involved drawing or painting stills being projected with a device known as a “magic lantern.”

? Manga is a distinct style of Japanese cartoons that started in the late 1800s. Manga has several genres, but the rendering of the human figures tends to be similar across time, artists, and genres.

? A cartoon is any drawn or painted illustration. Once a cartoon is given “life” through various technologies, then it becomes an animation.

? ‘Felix the Cat’ was created by artists Pat Sullivan and Otto Messmer in 1919. The crazy cat has since appeared in hundreds of films, shorts, and TV shows.

? For several decades, the most commonly used method for creating animated films or TV shows was by hand-drawing images on celluloid (cel) sheets. The sheets were then laid over a static background.

? Cel animation could be quite tedious, with 100,000 or more cels being required for a feature film. CGI animation began replacing cel animation in the 1990s.

? Original Scooby-Do illustrator, Iwao Takamoto, got his start as a teenage internee in a Japanese internment camp during World War II. Before illustrating Scooby-Do, Takamoto worked for Walt Disney.

? The 2019 remake of The Lion King is currently listed as the highest-grossing animated film of all time, with a worldwide gross of \$1,657,713,459.

? Walt Disney built an empire based on Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck, but what about Oswald the Lucky Rabbit? Disney created Oswald, which was a very Felixesque-looking rabbit, in 1927 and was the first of many successful characters for the animator.

? Rotoscoping is another early method of animation that involves putting images onto glass panels. The equipment used to do this is called a rotoscope, which was invented by Max Fleischer around 1915. Rotoscoping is still occasionally used.

? The 2019 version of The Lion King also takes the top spot for the most expensive animated film ever made, at a whopping \$260 billion, tying with the 2010 film, Tangled. That's a lot of pencils and erasers!

? Perhaps the most influential animated film of all time is the 1988 Japanese film, Akira. Akira was based on a dystopian cyber-punk manga series that has since influenced many books, films, and TV shows.

? The 1995 film Toy Story is generally thought to be the first "classic" animated film using CGI. After Toy Story, most animated films have used CGI.

? Before TV or even film, there were comic strips. Comic strips first became popular in American newspapers in the late 1800s and remain a staple in newspapers that still actually do print editions today.

? Animators William Hanna and Joseph Barbera first started working together at MGM in the 1930s before forming Hanna-Barbera Inc. in 1959. They went on to create The Flintstones, The Jetsons, Scooby-Do and many other successful series.

? The Looney Tunes animated short film series ran from 1930 to 1969, making characters such as Bugs Bunny, Sylvester, Daffy Duck, and Porky Pig household names. Warner Brothers revived the series on HBO Max in 2020.

? E.C. Segar was ahead of the times when he created the animated character, Popeye, in 1929. Still, Popeye is considered too "alpha" for today so good luck finding him on reruns.

? Artist Matt Furie created the Pepe the Frog character in 2005, but members of the Alt-Right used the frog as an internet meme in the 2010s. Pepe's current status is in limbo!

? According to Iwao Takamoto, he was told by his boss, William Barbera, to make Scooby-Doo a Great Dane, but instead, he decided "to go the opposite" by making him look silly.

? Broadly speaking, "anime" is any type of Japanese animation. Although the style is usually manga-based, it is much broader. In 2016, Japanese anime comprised 60% of the world's animated TV shows.