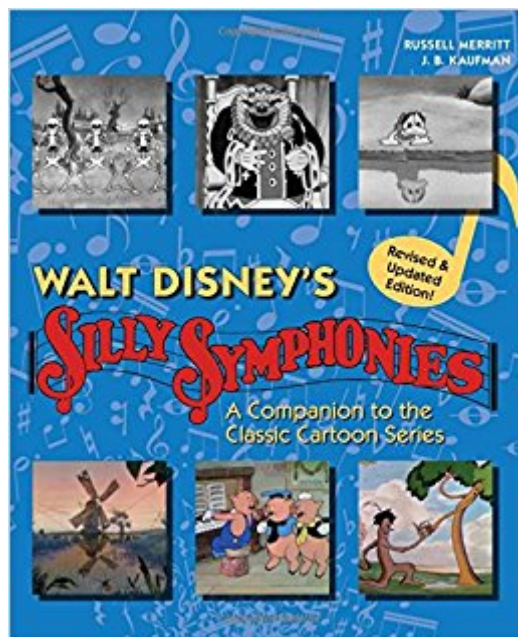




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# Walt Disney's Silly Symphonies: A Companion To The Classic Cartoon Series



## Synopsis

Launched by Walt Disney in 1929 as a "musical novelty" series to complement his recent success with Mickey Mouse, the Silly Symphonies soon became much more. This line of delightfully innovative, animated cartoons ran for ten years and produced such classics as Three Little Pigs, The Tortoise and the Hare, Music Land, and The Old Mill. Silly Symphonies won every Academy Award. From the authors of the prize-winning *Walt in Wonderland: The Silent Films of Walt Disney*, this richly illustrated volume is a complete history of the Silly Symphonies including detailed entries for all the Symphonies along with a lengthy critical analysis and production history of the series.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 272 pages

Publisher: Disney Editions; Rev Upd edition (September 27, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1484751329

ISBN-13: 978-1484751329

Product Dimensions: 9.8 x 1 x 11.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 9 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #284,260 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #69 in [Books > Arts & Photography > Drawing > Cartooning > Anime & Cartoons](#) #103 in [Books > Humor & Entertainment > Movies > Industry](#) #156 in [Books > Humor & Entertainment > Movies > Video > Reference](#)

## Customer Reviews

"... we could jump straight into the lavishly illustrated pages of this coffee-table book...each and every day!" -- Ramin Zahed, *Animation Magazine*, July 2007 --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Merritt and Kaufman's *Silly Symphonies* is a must-have reference for everyone, from Disney aficionados to aspiring animators, anyone interested in animation history. . . . the book is a necessity, a first-class piece of research." --Jerry Beck of *Cartoonbrew.com* --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Several years ago, Disney historians JB Kaufman and Russel Merritt gave us a very thoroughly

researched book on the groundbreaking Silly Symphonies. Unfortunately, it didn't reach many Disney enthusiasts as it dropped out of print quickly and was impossible to obtain at a reasonable price. Fortunately we got a rerelease with new information added. Kaufman has said that most of the revisions are more details for the earliest shorts. Looking at it again, the strengths of this guide are the exhaustive technical details relating to each short in the series (production dates, release dates, video availability, exhaustive production credits) There are also production notes for each film. There's an appendix on Unproduced Silly Symphonies, music and books. The only things that could have made this edition better would be more illustrations, especially in the section on the unproduced Silly Symphonies and more details on story development of each film. Either way this volume is highly recommended for Disney enthusiasts. Hopefully Kaufman will write about the Mickey Mouse shorts in the future.

One of my favorite Disney Silly Symphonies is The Old Mill. It is the epitome of the exploration, experimentation, and inventiveness leading up to Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs and the Golden Age of Disney animation. From start to finish of all seventy-five Silly Symphony shorts, you'll be able to see the relentless and unabashed development of the animation art form. Beginning with the B&W Skeleton Dance through the final, Academy Award winning, The Ugly Duckling in full color this profusely illustrated tome is the go-to reference for these shorts. Russell Merritt and J.B. Kaufman are the authorities on this wonderful cartoon series and this book is a must have for any student of Disney animation.

I bought this because of a very positive review on Jerry Beck's cartoon website and it definitely lived up to the hype. A thorough film by film trip through all the Silly Symphony cartoons with nice frame blow ups and original poster art, every single detail you might want to know about each short and beautifully presented. If you love vintage Disney, this book is a must!

excellent title and service from the supplier. i have other disney titles and this is just as excellent. definitive on its subject

great coverage of these cartoons. nice book.

Excellent book

This is an excellent book; no doubt about it. The authors did an outstanding job researching and compiling the data that went into this fine volume. And therefore, the authors, and ONLY the authors deserve to be fully compensated for their work, research, and contribution to the historical legacy of Disney's golden period. However, this book needs to be kept in print and out of the hands of price gougers. I'm so glad that I have my copy and I would certainly buy more to give as gifts if this book was back in print. But NO WAY in hell will I pay those ridiculous prices that gougers are trying to get for this book (and YOU, the consumer, shouldn't either!). I paid about \$30 for this book when it first came out... brand spanking new (and that's the price that YOU should pay as well). So give the royal finger to the price gougers and support the authors; demand the publisher to put this book back in print!

Only half-remembered today (and almost impossible to see except for a few titles until, at last, they were released on DVD in the "Walt Disney Treasures" series), the Silly Symphonies shorts were at the forefront of Disney's art in the 1930s, the place where his best animators experimented and pushed the field until, finally, he was ready to expand the Silly Symphonies' lavish, dark fairy-tale universe into feature films like Snow White and Pinocchio. As the authors, who wrote the equally groundbreaking Walt in Wonderland about Disney's pre-Mickey career, point out, the series' importance in the 1930s was far more widely recognized, as it won the Oscar for best animated short every single year during the decade-- sometimes with only other Silly Symphonies for competition. This groundbreaking history sets out the importance of the Silly Symphonies as a laboratory of Disney's art. Usually this is seen in terms of technical achievement-- from the revolutionary marriage of animation and music in the charmingly crude Skeleton Dance, to the introduction of Technicolor in Flowers and Trees, to the sleek use of the multiplane camera for 3-D effects in The Old Mill. But the authors also make the case that it was crucial in the development of Disney's almost preternatural understanding of child psychology; long before Bambi struck toddlers with all the force of King Lear, shorts such as The Flying Mouse and The Ugly Duckling had already mined that territory. A lengthy essay on the history and importance of the series is followed by an amazing film-by-film history which serves as a perfect companion for adults watching the series today; and the text is liberally illustrated with stills, posters, production drawings and more. This is likely stand for all time as the definitive work on one of the most important, yet neglected, series of films in cinema-- not just animation-- history.

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