

# Animation films

## ■ How they work

The basis of all animation is creating: **frame** by frame, by exact timing and choreography of both movement and sound. All movement is achieved by projecting, during every second, a certain number of frames – normally 24, each a **still** photograph **slightly** varied from the previous one – which record the successive phases of the subject’s movement before the camera.

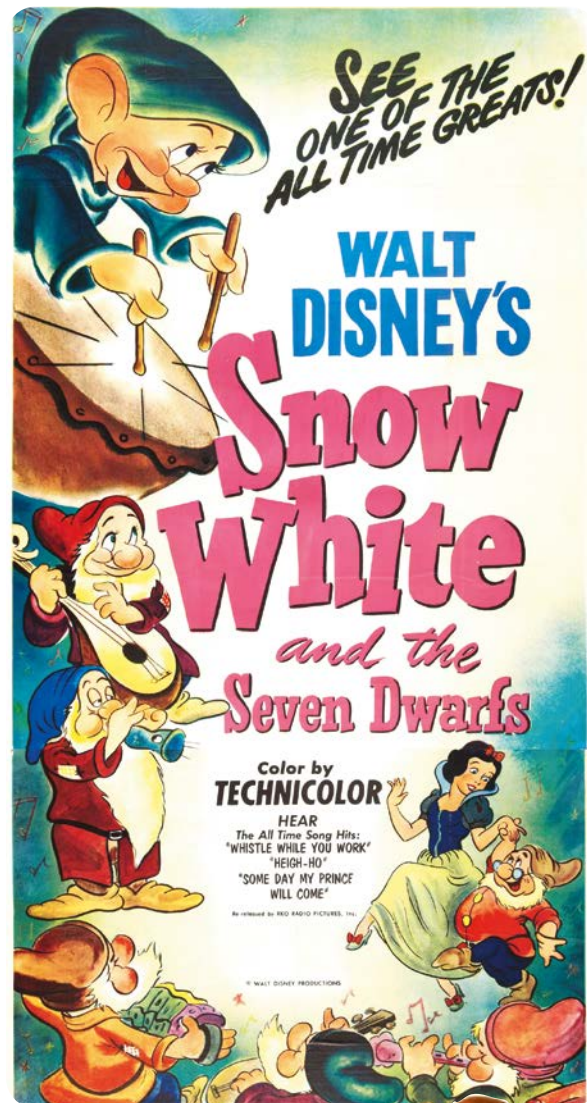
## ■ A bit of history

Animation films have contributed to the history of cinema. In the 1920s and 1930s, Warner, MGM, and Disney studios produced more and more sophisticated cartoons using traditional animation techniques which consisted in producing complex backgrounds and then imposing moving figures on them with celluloid. Walt Disney took animation to a new level by adding sound in 1928 and producing the first full length animated film in 1937, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*.

As time went by, **efforts** to **lessen** the extraordinary labour and costs of animation have taken two basic directions: simplification and computerisation. Computer-based animation, that is to say performed by a computer using graphical tools to provide visual effects, was developed and images of the object were digitised or drawings were produced by the use of drawing application or programs.

## ■ Audience and awards


Though many animation movies are primarily aimed at children, studios ensure that they are easily enjoyed by adults, too. In recent years, movies such as *Frozen*, *Toy Story 3*, and *Finding Nemo* have made more than \$400 million at the box office, becoming some of the most successful movies of all time.



Although they take years to make, that effort was often under-recognised by institutions like critics groups and the Oscars and it wasn’t until the creation of the “best animated feature” category in 2002 that the recognition finally became regular. *Shrek* was the first animated film to win an Oscar.



<b>dye:</b> <i>colore</i>	<b>pattern:</b> <i>motivo,</i>
<b>effort:</b> <i>sforzo</i>	<i>schema</i>
<b>frame:</b> <i>inquadratura</i>	<b>slightly:</b> <i>leggermente</i>
<b>to lessen:</b> <i>diminuire</i>	<b>still:</b> <i>immobile</i>

**1**  Use the text to complete the sentences below.

**A Colourful Breakthrough**

*Snow White* was the first animation film produced in Technicolor, a motion-picture process using dye-transfer techniques to produce a colour print. The movie's innovative use of story, colour, animation, sound, direction and background, among other elements, later inspired directors like Federico Fellini and Orson Welles. In fact, Welles' *Citizen Kane* features an opening shot of a castle at night with one lighted window that is strikingly similar to the first shot of the Wicked Queen's castle in *Snow White*. Disney won an honorary Academy Award for his pioneering achievement, while the music for the film, featuring *Snow White's* famous ballad, "Some Day My Prince Will Come", and other songs were also nominated for an Oscar. The studio re-released *Snow White* for the first time in 1944, during World War II; it was then released repeatedly every decade or so – a pattern that became a tradition for Disney's animated films – and for its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1987 it was restored. The American Film Institute has chosen *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* as the no. 1 animated film of all time in its listing of "America's 10 Greatest Films in 10 Classic Genres".

Adapted from: <http://www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/11/1/000276/000276.html>

1. Technicolor was a colour film process used by Walt Disney to .....
2. Famous directors ..... the movie's innovative use of story, color, animation, sound, direction and background.
3. One of Welles's masterpiece contained ..... at the beginning.
4. The animation film dealt with in the passage can be considered as a ..... achievement.
5. "Some Day My Prince Will Come" was .....
6. *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* is listed .....



**COMPUTERS AND 3D ANIMATION**

Computers really made a difference in animation films with the development of 3D animation. 3D models or characters were constructed on the computer monitor using geometrical shapes in a 3D coordinate system. Once a virtual skeleton of the character was complete, eyes, limbs, and clothes were moved on to the frames and the animation was rendered.

Pixar presented its ground-breaking form of entirely CGI-rendered animation with *Toy Story* in 1995. Using a complex system of model articulation and motion-control coding, Pixar was able to create characters with depth, charm, and personality.

Everything culminated with James Cameron's two-decades-in-the-making masterpiece, *Avatar*. It used advanced CGI and motion capture techniques, requiring 2,000 Hewlett-Packard servers, sporting 35,000 processor cores and 104 terabytes of RAM, to render the film.

Adapted from: <https://www.b2w.tv/blog/the-evolution-of-animation-a-brief-journey-through-time>

