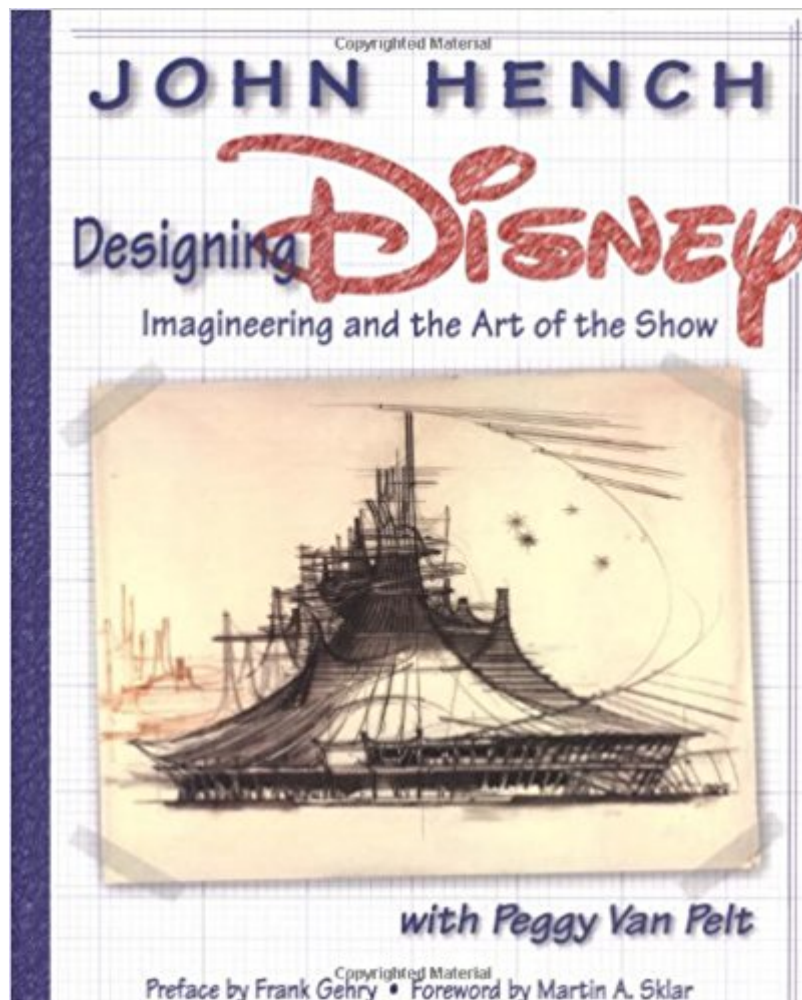




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Designing Disney: Imagineering And The Art Of The Show (A Walt Disney Imagineering Book)



Synopsis

Designing Disney sets into history and puts into context the extraordinary contributions of John Hench, who, at the age of 94, still comes into his office at Imagineering each day. His principles of theme park design, character design, and use of color have made him a legendary figure, not only for Disney fans but also for students and aficionados of architecture, engineering, and design. Designing Disney reveals the magic behind John's great discoveries and documents his groundbreaking work in several key areas, including the values, attitudes, aesthetics, and logic that went into the original design concepts for Disney theme parks. Hench details the essence and various meanings of colors and how they work in the parks, and lets the reader in on how and why of the Disney character's inherent popularity-their timeless human traits, archetypal shapes and gestures that suggest their qualities graphically, and their emotional resonance in our lives.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The late John Hench, a true Disney legend, came into his office at Imagineering each day, well into his ninety-fifth year. Although he passed away in 2004, his legacy continues to play an integral role in the design of Disney theme parks and attractions-just as he himself did more than fifty years ago when Walt enlisted him as one of his closest colleagues and confidants. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Firstly, how fortunate for all those who understand the amazing implications of Walt Disney's transition from filmmaker to Town Planner that John Hench decided to write this much-needed and much-requested book just before his death. What's so strange about other reviews and Frank Gehry's preface is nowhere is it observed without John Hench "Tomorrowland" might have been an embarrassing overreach - causing much mirth from Hollywood rivals expecting Walt to fall flat on his face. It's clear from his sketches in this book and other Disneyland publications the only WED man with "a handle" on modernity was John Hench. Without him "Space Mountain" would not have its iconic spaceship form. Without him Disney's contribution to the 1964 New York World's Fair would never have produced the spin-offs which they then used to update a large section of "Tomorrowland". But nothing about the original "Tomorrowland" was behind the times. John Hench's designs are still valid interpretation of future forms of travel and curvy architecture. Added to which they provided the spark for Walt's imagination to move onto the creation of EPCOT. Much as I appreciate Michael Eisner launching the "Disney Decade" (providing jobs for so many of us) it has to be said his architectural taste was lamentable. His preference for a "nothing style" called "Post-Modern" set a trend which had dire consequences for the entire Disney Company. If the boss has no belief in the Future then all of Walt's plans for creating Experimental Communities in Florida become null and void. The modern township of "Celebration" gets Cape Cod cottages etc. "Tomorrowland 2011" is cancelled and its rocket ships are replaced by a Jules Verne "Orbitron". The thin edge of the wedge leading to all of "Tomorrowland" being given a destructive irrelevant Jules Verne "makeover". It goes without saying I never met a cartoonist who didn't wonder what Walt would have thought of this French invasion. But these orders were coming from above. Thankfully the orderers have now all retired and with a cartoonist John Lasseter in place at Disney HQ America can now reclaim "Tomorrowland". First move - obtain a NASA spaceship to allow young guests to go inside - as they do in Airforce One at the Reagan Library. This might appear to be a personal digression but as I spent several hours talking to John Hench I've a feeling he would not object to my revealing one confidence. The cruelest of all the cuts he lamented was the "People Mover". Because it was his and Walt's brainchild, based on a method of moving steel bars they saw in Detroit. The double irony being their driverless method of safely moving people from place to place is now used in airports around the globe. PS Ironically "Rocket Rods" bit the dust after only 2 years! Leaving nothing! Ditto Walt Disney's plans for EPCOT were exactly what America needed to keep up with the Future. All the new housing technologies the President is now forced to implement on a Governmental level would have been in place had Walt Disney's EPCOT ideals been pursued by those he trusted to keep the Disney Company ahead with the support of private sector investors.

The method he used to make all his groundbreaking projects get done fast. Because John Hench was an incredibly discrete gentleman none of his misgivings as to how different WED would have been if Walt lived another 20 years found a place in this book. Nevertheless I think every fan inwardly knows it's almost criminal to turn one's back on Walt Disney's version of the "American Way". Which, in his case, was to be constantly forging forward with NEW IDEAS AND NEW DREAMS.

To read this book is to be inside the mind of a genius. John Hench was a brilliant man who's insights to how the Disney look is created makes for a great read. This will appeal to Disney fans as well as artists who are looking to study they hows and whys of color, structure, and setting the right mood. It was fun to read this and then visit a Disney park to see how these ideas were applied.

Worth buying just for the stunning concept artwork and architectural sketches. The book is an informative and entertaining read perfect for fans of Disney Imagineering and/or Disney themeparks. The book details key elements of themepark design and explains how they were implemented to create Disneyland's rides, attractions, architecture, cast member uniforms ect.

Delivered as advertised.

This book showcases color pictures of original sketches of Disneyland in its inception. The author shows the changes in the Mickey Mouse cartoon character (and others) and the costumed characters who walk the Park today. There's also interesting information regarding problems facing the Imagineers (and their solutions) back in the early days of Disneyland - while Walt was still alive.

This was completely what I wanted to know about how Disneyland was created and with straight forwardness and less personal stories.

One of the very best books about the design philosophy of Disney Imagineering, written by a Disney Legend. John Hench, whose work at Imagineering included work on signature attractions like the Cinderella Castles at Orlando and Tokyo, Space Mountain, and many others, records here his thoughts on design, theming, and the audience relationship. Seldom have I felt so much as if I were being given a personal glimpse of an artist's self-understanding. The book is a joy to read.

Have you noticed that Disney always hides the best drawings and layouts from the public, and only shows us some generic renderings? Not that this book is bad, but I expected more insights and secrets revealed... After all, John Hench must have zillions of masterpieces of his own, but the book does not even mention a site for further reading...

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