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Bambi (DVD) Review

By Britt Gillette

Nominated for three Academy Awards, including Best Music – Scoring of a Dramatic or Comedy

Picture, Bambi is a true animated classic of the silver screen. Long before the public's introduction to Aladdin, The Lion King, or Finding Nemo, Walt Disney single-handedly conjured the full-length animated feature film out of nothing and into an enduring, well-respected genre – creating one family classic after another, starting with Snow White (1937) then Pinocchio (1940), Fantasia (1940), and Dumbo (1941) before creating this gem in 1942. Directed by David Hand, a longtime Disney animator and supervising director of Snow White And The Seven Dwarfs, Bambi is a masterpiece of color, motion, and the beauty of life. Its relative simplicity harkens to a time long past when such movies focused on symbolism, emotional breadth, and challenging the boundaries of artistic creativity, instead of catering to a perceived audience demographic. The result is a truly remarkable and memorable family experience...

Bambi begins with the forest birth of a young fawn (Bambi) who comes into the world surrounded by an anxious crowd of admirers. Hailed as the "great prince of the forest," Bambi is thrust into an exotic world of animal and plant life, complete with all the highs and lows experienced in the world of reality. One of the film's most powerful scenes (and the one most often referenced in regard to Bambi) is when the dreaded "man" (i.e. a band of hunters) enters the forest and kills Bambi's mother. Although the scene takes place off camera, Disney manages to convey all the emotional trauma of the event in the brevity of a few bold and powerful brushstrokes.

As Bambi seeks to recover from his mother's death, he must learn to grow from a fumbling fawn into a fearless buck. The charming scenes of Bambi stumbling across a frozen pond are soon overshadowed by the power of his maturation into a formidable leader. Assisting him on his journey is a parade of unique personalities, the most notable of whom is a rabbit named Thumper. Thumper's vocal velocity and eagerness to befriend Bambi threaten steal the show, but the growing deer never loses his deserved spotlight. Throw in a skunk named Flower and a beautiful doe named Faline (Bambi's love interest), and the film comes together in its own right, creating a combination of tragedy and triumph all ages can enjoy...

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In stark contrast to its contemporary peers, Bambi is a refreshing exit from today's highly commercial animated features. Although Thumper provides the necessary comic relief, the film is more than just a deluge of juvenile one-liners – and boasts absolutely zero fart jokes. Instead, Bambi wraps a timeless story of a life's journey to adulthood in the majesty that is mother nature. Its ingenious illustration of a forest teeming with wildlife and the dangers encountered by its inhabitants is truly awe-inspiring. In short, Bambi has all the makings of a tinsel-town classic – one that should make today's Disney creations utterly green with envy...

Britt Gillette is author of The DVD Report (

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), a blog where you can find

more reviews like this one.

Recordable DVD formats explained

By Kenny Hemphill

Recordable DVD formats explained by Kenny Hemphill

Picking your way through the ton of information available on recordable DVD formats can be a nightmare. To help you out, we've done our best to distill it into this summary.

There are five recordable versions of DVD; DVD-R for General, DVD-R for Authoring, DVD-RAM, DVD-RW, and DVD+RW. None of the formats is fully compatible with the other although there are drives which will read, and in some cases write to more than one format.

DVD-R for General and DVD-R for Authoring are essentially DVD versions of CD-R. And DVD-RW is a DVD version of CD-RW. All three formats can be read in standard DVD-ROM drives and in most DVD video players. The difference between DVD-R for General and DVD-R for Authoring is that DVD-R for General is a format intended for widespread consumer use and doesn't support 'professional' features such as piracy protection or duplication in mass duplicators. The Pioneer DVD-RW drive which is the most popular PC device for writing to DVD uses the DVD for General format. And as the case with CD, DVD-RW is essentially the same as DVD-R except that it can be erased and written to again and again.

DVD-RAM is slightly different as it is a sector based disc which mounts on the desktop of a PC when inserted into a drive. Files can then be copied to it in the same way as any other mounted media. Some single-sided DVD-RAM discs can be removed from their caddy and inserted in a DVD-ROM drive which will then be able to read the content of the disc.

There are DVD video recorders which use the DVD-RAM format. This enables them to pull off clever tricks like timeshifting - where you can watch the beginning of a programme you have recorded while

you are still recording the end on the same disc.

DVD+RW is the newest format and not supported by the DVD Forum, the body which sets the standards for DVD. However, it is supported by some of the biggest electronics and computer manufacturers, and is therefore likely to stick around.

It is also the format used by Philips in its DVD video recorders. Despite not being authorised by the DVD Forum, DVD+RW is claimed by its supporter to be compatible with more DVD video players than DVD-R and DVD+RW writers are found in PCs from quite a few manufacturers.

Kenny Hemphill is the editor and publisher of

The HDTV Tuner



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