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# The Art of Monsters, Inc.

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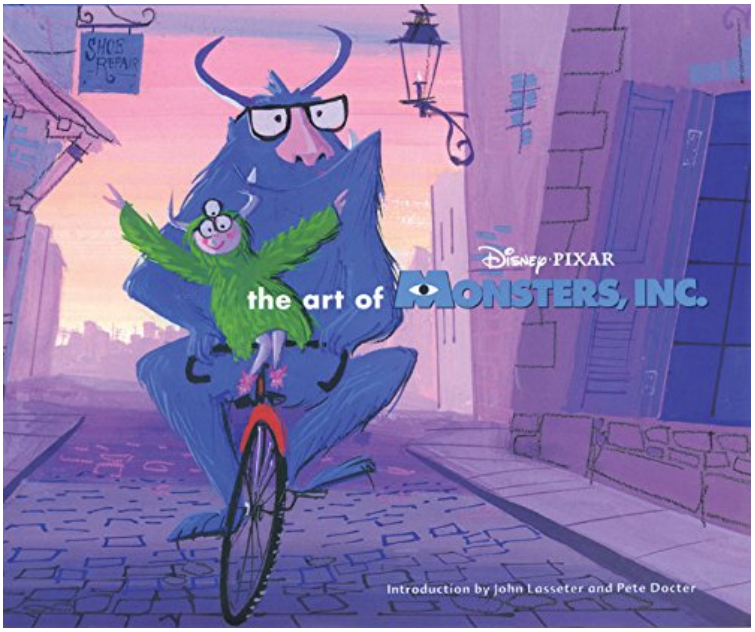


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**From Chronicle Books : The Art of Monsters, Inc.** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Art of Monsters, Inc.:

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The Art of Monsters, Inc. opens the door into Pixar's colorful archives of concept art and to the endearing story of Monsters, Inc. Since the very first bedtime, children around the world have known that once their parents tuck them into bed and shut off the light, monsters lie waiting behind closet doors, ready to emerge. But what they don't realize is that these monsters scare children because they have to. It's their job. This superb film from Pixar Studios, the people who brought you Toy Story, A Bug's Life, and Toy Story 2, reveals the truth about monsters with the brilliant techniques that have earned them their reputation as a ground-breaking animation studio. This incredible body of artwork was commissioned from the top artists, illustrators, and animators in the industry and from it the ultimate visual approach of the film was defined. From sketches scribbled on napkins and quickly inked marker drawings, to finished oil paintings and fabulous pastel color scripts, this behind-the-scenes artwork reveals the elaborate creative

process behind a blockbuster film.

What a treat! Pixar's Monsters, Inc. was, as far as I'm concerned, the best animated feature released this year. This art book, published by Chronicle (not Disney -- how odd?), is the only "making of" tie-in created for the film and a delightful visual companion to the movie. This book is a wonderful collection of preliminary inspirational artwork created for the film. Most of the pieces selected contain characters and concepts that bare no relation to the monsters and mayhem in the final product. But by allowing us to see all the hard (but funny) creative work that goes into the visual decision making, the filmmakers shed some light on the secrets of creating classic animation; they add to our knowledge of the development process and garner our respect for the enormous talent at large within Pixar. Inspirational art is a vital component of every great animated film but average moviegoers never get to see any of it. As John Lasseter and Pete Docter point out in their intro, "Once the film is completed, the inspirational artwork is filed away in the archives, never to be seen by the general public." What makes this book so enjoyable is the array of talent Pixar assembled for inspiration. The paintings, sketches and layouts, done in pastels, markers, acrylics, gouache, pencils and mixed media presented here, are just plain fun to look at. Many of the artists were given a few details about the settings or the characters, and were then allowed to let their imaginations run free. The artists themselves are amazing. Some of my favorite pieces are from Lane Smith, J. Otto Siebold and Oscar Grillo. Stealing the show however, are striking works from Geefwee Boedoe, Ricky Nierva, Lou Romano and Dominique Louis. Though famed for their landmark work with computer graphics, this book reminds me that Pixar is first and foremost a "cartoon studio" the finest in the world, at this point in the 21st Century. Dominique Louis' painting of Sulley's apartment exterior, showing a street filled with sinister looking brownstones, or Harley Jessup's grand concepts for the Monsters Inc. factory, are filled with tiny details that can't be written. The inherent humor of these design defy a literal, verbal description and the wit in the color and line cannot be produced in a word processing program. (Yes, even color has wit as amply demonstrated in Tia Kratter's color studies of Sullivan's fur and Dominique Louis' color script thumbnails.) It's joyous to see a variety of professional cartoonists letting loose with a free reign to create creatures that defy logic and all sense of human comprehension.The secret of Pixar's success (only one of their secrets, I might add) is that they aren't out to use the computer to recreate reality. They know the computer can already do that. They are trying to make authentic, honest-to-goodness, animated cartoons that tell great stories and touch the heart. Walt Disney accomplished that goal in the 20th Century. Lasseter and his crew are the heir apparent. They understand what makes great, appealing characters and what it takes to bring them to life. This book gives us an over the shoulder peek, with some spectacular artwork that deserves to seen, admired and kept. Animation World MagazineAbout the AuthorJohn Lasseter is Pixar Animation Studios's executive vice-president of creative and the director of Toy Story, A Bug's Life, and Toy Story 2. He most recently served as the executive producer of Monsters, Inc. and Finding Nemo, and is currently executive producer of The Incredibles.Pete Docter has been with Pixar Animation Studios since 1990. He is the director of Monsters, Inc.