



WALT DISNEY PRODUCTIONS

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PREDICTION OF ENTERTAINMENT
IN WORLD 50 YEARS FROM NOW
By Walt Disney, October 9, 1956

Greetings from the city of Los Angeles, U.S.A. and the long vanished days of 1956!
We have been asked to surmise, for this occasion, what may be the estate of the entertainment arts and industries in the world of 2006.

It has been difficult enough to predict the course of public diversion, especially the fortunes of motion pictures, television and a place called Disneyland in which we have been engaged, even a few years ahead, let alone half a century in the future. This would be a feat for another Jules Verne, an Einstein, an atomic wizard or a space engineer. I have no such powers of seership!

But of one thing I'm sure. People will need and demand amusement, refreshment, and pleasant relaxation from daily tasks and frets as much in your day as they have in ours and in all the generations of mankind into the remote past. What the exact nature and implementation of these mass entertainments may be, doesn't make much difference, it seems to me.

Humanity, as history informs us, changes very slowly in character and basic interests. People need play as much as they need toil. They never cease to be fascinated by their own powers and passions, their base or noble emotions, their faiths and struggles and triumphs against handicap -- all things that make them laugh and weep and comfort one another in love and sacrifice out of the depths of their being.

Through historical time -- and even among our aboriginal forefathers -- all the races of man have been dramatizing these eternal quests and conquests of mind and heart; in arenas, around tribal fires, in temples and theaters. The modes of entertainment have changed through the centuries; the content of public shows, very little. So we must base any prognostications on these elements.

Mindful of the phenomenal discoveries and applications of science to all our activities and institutions, it seems no mere guess that public entertainment will have become machined and powered by atomic and solar energies long before you read this capsule.

The extension of radar and other as yet untapped sources of cosmic force may well have changed the entire technique of communication, in the theatre and television fields as well as in other areas of informational broadcast.

Millions of people in massive assemblies around the world may now be viewing the same staged or natural event, scanned by some incredibly potent scope, in the same amount of time. They may even be viewing presently obscured vistas on neighboring planets as one might look at neighbors across our Los Angeles streets.

Omniscience will have drawn closer to finite senses and perceptions, for our entertainment as for our livelihood -- yours, I should say, who will read this in your 21st Century.

If our fondest hopes prevail, the world of 2006, Anno Domini, will have outlawed war and this old earth will be in such a flowering of civilization as the family of man has never seen. And that will have a profound effect upon the subject matter of the world's play time and escapist mechanisms.

In the basic human elements however, the showmen of your new day I am sure will still recognize and understand the entertainment makers of our vanished time.

Walt Disney

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