

little mermaid ii return to the sea

little mermaid ii return to the sea is a direct-to-video sequel to the beloved Disney classic, *The Little Mermaid*. Released in 2000, this animated film continues the enchanting underwater adventures by focusing on Ariel's daughter, Melody. The story explores themes of identity, family, and belonging, all while delivering captivating music and vibrant animation. As a follow-up to the original, *Little Mermaid II Return to the Sea* expands the underwater world and introduces new characters and challenges. This article delves into the plot, characters, production details, and reception of *Little Mermaid II Return to the Sea*. Additionally, it provides insights into its legacy and place within the Disney sequel franchise.

- Plot Summary of *Little Mermaid II Return to the Sea*
- Main Characters and Voice Cast
- Production and Animation
- Music and Soundtrack
- Reception and Criticism
- Legacy and Impact

Plot Summary of *Little Mermaid II Return to the Sea*

Little Mermaid II Return to the Sea picks up years after the events of the original film, focusing on Melody, the daughter of Ariel and Prince Eric. Unlike her mother, Melody is torn between the human world and the mysterious ocean realm. The story unfolds as Melody's curiosity about the sea leads her into danger and new discoveries. The main conflict arises from a villainous sea witch named Morgana, Ursula's sister, who seeks to take control of the ocean. The film explores Melody's struggle to find her true identity and reconcile her dual heritage.

Storyline and Themes

The central narrative revolves around Melody's yearning to explore the sea despite her parents' warnings. Themes of self-discovery, courage, and the importance of family are woven throughout the storyline. Melody's journey highlights the challenges of growing up and embracing one's unique qualities. The film also emphasizes the power of forgiveness and understanding, particularly in Melody's interactions with other characters in the underwater kingdom.

Key Plot Events

- Melody's fascination with the ocean and her secret visits to the shore
- The introduction of Morgana as the new antagonist
- Melody's transformation into a mermaid and her underwater adventures
- The climactic battle between Morgana and Melody
- Reconciliation between land and sea worlds

Main Characters and Voice Cast

The sequel introduces a blend of returning favorites and new characters, enriching the Little Mermaid universe. The voice cast includes talented actors who bring depth and personality to their roles. Understanding these characters helps appreciate the film's narrative and emotional impact.

Primary Characters

- **Melody:** The protagonist, daughter of Ariel and Eric, eager to explore her mermaid heritage.
- **Ariel:** The former mermaid princess, now queen and Melody's protective mother.
- **Prince Eric:** Melody's father and king, cautious about the sea's dangers.
- **Morgana:** The villainous sea witch and Ursula's sister, seeking revenge and power.
- **Flounder and Sebastian:** Supporting characters providing guidance and comic relief.

Voice Actors

Jodi Benson reprises her role as Ariel, bringing continuity to the character. Tara Strong voices Melody, delivering a performance full of youthful energy. Pat Carroll returns as Ursula, appearing briefly, while Susan Egan voices Morgana, adding a menacing tone to the antagonist. The voice cast collectively enhances the storytelling with expressive and memorable performances.

Production and Animation

Little Mermaid II Return to the Sea was produced by DisneyToon Studios as part of Disney's direct-to-video sequel series. The production aimed to maintain the charm of the original while adapting to a different format and budget. Despite limitations, the animation quality sought to replicate the vibrant underwater environment and character designs.

Animation Style and Techniques

The animation combines traditional 2D hand-drawn techniques with digital enhancements typical of late 1990s and early 2000s productions. The underwater scenes feature fluid movements and colorful backgrounds that reflect the oceanic setting. Character animation focuses on expressive facial features and dynamic action sequences, especially during musical numbers and confrontations.

Creative Team

The film was directed by Jim Kammerud and Brian Smith, who worked to balance originality with respect for the source material. The screenplay was written by Brian Smith, with contributions from other Disney creatives. The production team included experienced animators and musicians dedicated to preserving the spirit of the original Little Mermaid while developing a new story.

Music and Soundtrack

Music plays a critical role in Little Mermaid II Return to the Sea, continuing the tradition of memorable songs that define the franchise. The soundtrack features original compositions that enhance the narrative and emotional tone of the film. The songs blend classical Disney musical styles with new melodies tailored to the sequel's themes.

Notable Songs

- "Down to the Sea" - An adventurous opening number introducing Melody's longing for the ocean.
- "For a Moment" - A reflective ballad expressing Melody's internal conflict.
- "If You Can Dream" - The main theme emphasizing hope and dreams.
- "The World is Changing" - A song highlighting the evolving relationships between characters.

Musical Contributors

The soundtrack was composed by Joel McNeely, with lyrics by various Disney songwriters. Vocal performances by the cast add emotional depth to the characters' journeys. The music received recognition for its ability to capture the magical essence of the underwater world and support the film's narrative flow.

Reception and Criticism

Upon release, *Little Mermaid II Return to the Sea* garnered mixed reviews from critics and audiences. While some praised its continuation of Ariel's story and musical elements, others noted the differences in production quality compared to the original theatrical release. The film's direct-to-video status influenced expectations and reception.

Critical Reviews

Critics often highlighted the film's engaging storyline and character development, especially Melody's arc. However, the animation and overall production were sometimes seen as less polished than the original. The villain Morgana was generally appreciated for adding a fresh antagonist dynamic. The music received positive comments for maintaining the Disney musical tradition.

Audience Response

Fans of the original *Little Mermaid* found enjoyment in revisiting the underwater world and learning about Ariel's family. The sequel attracted a younger audience, introducing the franchise to a new generation. Despite criticisms, the film holds a nostalgic value for many viewers and remains part of Disney's popular direct-to-video sequels.

Legacy and Impact

Little Mermaid II Return to the Sea holds a distinct place in Disney's sequel catalog, representing the early era of direct-to-video follow-ups. Its contribution to expanding the *Little Mermaid* universe has influenced later adaptations and merchandise. The film reinforced the viability of continuing beloved stories beyond their original theatrical runs.

Influence on Disney Sequels

The success and challenges of Little Mermaid II informed Disney's approach to future sequels and spin-offs. It demonstrated the potential for character-driven stories centered on the next generation. Additionally, the film's music and themes set a precedent for maintaining continuity while exploring new narratives within established franchises.

Cultural and Franchise Significance

As part of the larger Little Mermaid franchise, this sequel helped sustain interest in Ariel's story and the underwater kingdom. It has been referenced in various Disney media and remains accessible through home video and streaming platforms. Little Mermaid II Return to the Sea continues to be a point of discussion among Disney enthusiasts regarding sequel quality and franchise development.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is 'The Little Mermaid II: Return to the Sea' about?

The Little Mermaid II: Return to the Sea is a direct-to-video sequel to Disney's The Little Mermaid. It follows Ariel's daughter, Melody, who longs to explore the sea despite being raised as a human on land.

When was 'The Little Mermaid II: Return to the Sea' released?

The Little Mermaid II: Return to the Sea was released on September 19, 2000.

Is 'The Little Mermaid II: Return to the Sea' considered canon to the original film?

While it is an official Disney sequel, many fans regard The Little Mermaid II as non-canon or less essential compared to the original film.

Who are the main characters in 'The Little Mermaid II: Return to the Sea'?

The main characters include Melody, Ariel, Prince Eric, Ursula's sister Morgana, and Sebastian the crab.

What is the central conflict in 'The Little Mermaid II: Return to the Sea'?

The central conflict revolves around Melody's desire to be part of the ocean world, and Morgana's plot to take over the sea by using Melody.

Who voiced the character of Melody in 'The Little Mermaid II: Return to the Sea'?

Melody was voiced by Tara Strong in the English version of the film.

Does 'The Little Mermaid II: Return to the Sea' feature songs?

Yes, the film features several original songs, continuing the musical tradition of the original movie.

How was 'The Little Mermaid II: Return to the Sea' received by critics?

The film received mixed to negative reviews, with criticism mainly focused on its animation quality and story compared to the original.

Is 'The Little Mermaid II: Return to the Sea' available on Disney+?

Yes, The Little Mermaid II: Return to the Sea is available for streaming on Disney+.

Additional Resources

1. *The Little Mermaid II: Return to the Sea - The Junior Novel*

This book is a faithful novelization of the movie "The Little Mermaid II: Return to the Sea." It follows Ariel's daughter Melody as she discovers her own connection to the ocean and battles the sea witch Morgana. The story explores themes of family, identity, and bravery as Melody embraces her destiny beneath the waves.

2. *The Little Mermaid: Ariel's Underwater Adventure*

This storybook expands on Ariel's underwater world, delving into her adventures before the events of the sequel. It introduces readers to the vibrant sea kingdom and the challenges Ariel faces balancing life between land and sea. Perfect for fans who want to explore Ariel's world in greater detail.

3. *The Sea Witch's Revenge: A Tale from the Little Mermaid Universe*

Focusing on the antagonist Morgana, this book delves into her backstory and motivations. It adds depth to her character as she seeks to claim the ocean's power for herself. The narrative offers a darker perspective within the Little Mermaid saga, highlighting the ongoing battle between good and evil.

4. *Melody's Journey: The Little Mermaid's Daughter*

This original story follows Melody's quest to find her true identity and reconcile her life on land with her mermaid heritage. Along the way, she learns about courage, friendship, and the importance of family bonds. The book is a heartfelt continuation of Ariel's legacy.

5. *The Little Mermaid: Tales from Under the Sea*

A collection of short stories centered on various characters from the Little Mermaid series, including

moments before and after the events of "Return to the Sea." These tales provide a richer understanding of the underwater world and its inhabitants, making it a great companion read.

6. *The Ocean's Magic: Adventures of Ariel and Melody*

This book highlights new adventures featuring Ariel and Melody as they explore magical parts of the ocean. It emphasizes themes of discovery, teamwork, and the wonders of the sea. Readers are treated to exciting escapades and enchanting underwater landscapes.

7. *The Little Mermaid II: Return to the Sea - The Illustrated Storybook*

An illustrated retelling of the movie's plot, this book brings the story to life with vibrant artwork. It is perfect for younger readers who enjoy visual storytelling alongside the narrative. The colorful illustrations capture key moments and emotions from the film.

8. *Underwater Kingdom: The Little Mermaid's Legacy*

This novel explores the future of the sea kingdom after the events of "Return to the Sea." It focuses on the challenges of ruling the ocean and maintaining peace among its diverse creatures. The story offers a deeper look into the responsibilities that come with leadership.

9. *The Little Mermaid: Secrets of the Sea*

A mystery adventure set in Ariel's underwater world, where Melody uncovers hidden secrets about her family and the ocean's ancient magic. The book combines elements of fantasy and suspense, making it an engaging read for fans of the series. It highlights the enduring connection between humans and the sea.

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