

Hanna-Barbera

Hanna-Barbera Productions, Inc. was an American animation studio that dominated North American television animation during the second half of the 20th century. The company was originally formed in 1957 by former Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer animation directors William Hanna and Joseph Barbera and live-action director George Sidney in partnership with Columbia Pictures' Screen Gems television division as H-B Enterprises, Inc. Established after MGM shut down its animation studio and ended production of its animated short films (such as the popular Tom and Jerry series), H-B Enterprises, Inc. was renamed Hanna-Barbera Productions, Inc. in 1959.

Over the next three decades, the studio produced many successful animated shows, including The Huckleberry Hound Show, The Quick Draw McGraw Show, The Flintstones, The Yogi Bear Show, Top Cat, The Jetsons, Jonny Quest, Space Ghost, Wacky Races, Scooby-Doo, Where Are You? and The Smurfs among others. The studio also produced several feature films and cartoon shorts for theaters along with a number of specials and movies for television. While Hanna and Barbera's theatrical work awarded them seven Oscars, their television productions have earned the company eight Emmys and the duo was awarded a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. In the mid-1980s, the company's fortunes declined somewhat after the profitability of Saturday morning cartoons was eclipsed by weekday afternoon syndication.

In 1991, the company was purchased by Turner Broadcasting System, who began using much of the H-B back catalog to program the Cartoon Network the following year. Both Hanna and Barbera went into semi-retirement after Turner purchased the company, continuing to serve as ceremonial figureheads for and sporadic artistic contributors to the studio. The same year, the company was renamed H-B Production Co. then became Hanna-Barbera Cartoons, Inc. in 1994, and in October 1996, Turner merged with Time Warner.

By the time of the merger, Turner had turned Hanna-Barbera towards primarily producing new material for Cartoon Network, including the successful Cartoon Cartoons shows such as Dexter's Laboratory, Johnny Bravo, Cow and Chicken, I Am Weasel and The Powerpuff Girls. With William Hanna's death in 2001, the studio was folded into Warner Bros. Animation, and Cartoon Network Studios continued the projects for Cartoon Network output.

Joseph Barbera remained with the Warner Animation division until his death in 2006. Hanna-Barbera currently exists as an in-name-only company used to market properties and productions associated with the studio's "classic" works such as Yogi Bear, Scooby-Doo and Huckleberry Hound.

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