

Cartoon Cats You May Not Know

You may think you know every cartoon cat out there, but here's a handful of fictional felines you may not have heard of.

By Erika Sorocco

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You know Garfield and Heathcliff and Top Cat and Sylvester; the Cheshire Cat, Felix, the Aristocats, and Catbert, but hundreds more cartoon kitties exist in TV land — many of whom you may not have ever met.

Ambrose; photo: Disney Enterprises

Ambrose — "The Robber Kitten." On April 20, 1935, Walt Disney introduced the world to a mischievous kitten named Ambrose (who renames himself Butch) through the popular Silly Symphonies cartoon series. The black-and-white kitten, sick of being overprotected by his mother, runs away from home with the hopes of becoming a highwayman after being told that he will be getting a bath. When he encounters a true-life robber in the form of a dog named Dirty Bill, Ambrose tells a slew of lies about his life of crime, only to have the wits scared out of him by the rough-and-tumble pooch, sending him straight home to the arms of his beloved mother.

Banjo; photo: American Broadcasting Co.

Banjo — "Banjo the Woodpile Cat." Released in 1979, "Banjo the Woodpile Cat" was an animated film that followed the misadventures of Banjo, a rebellious feline with a penchant for being curious and getting into trouble. When Banjo is punished for purposely falling from a house to see if he has the ability to land on his feet, he runs away from the woodpile he lives in on a farm in Payson, Utah, and hitches a ride to Salt Lake City. In March 2009, a Banjo the Woodpile Cat Adventure Game was released for the iPod Touch and iPhone.

Furball; photo: Amblin Entertainment/Warner Bros. Animation

Furball — "Tiny Toon Adventures." Furball gives new meaning to the phrase "scaredy cat." The flea-ridden feline is a street cat who is terrified of everything and the perennial victim of bullies. Furball's main goal in life is to find a permanent home and an owner who will protect him from the type of danger he encounters on the street. In some instances, he manages to locate a place to stay, but only temporarily — he is typically chased back out to the streets by another family pet suffering from jealousy.

Oggy; photo: Gaumont Film Co.

Oggy — "Oggy and the Cockroaches." Oggy is France's answer to America's Garfield. Oggy, however, does not rely on a human counterpart like John to ensure that he's fed. Instead, the content, overweight blue cat can most often be found watching TV, cooking or doing housework. The only thing that prevents him from being fully satisfied in his everyday life is a trio of cockroaches — Joey, Dee Dee and Marky — who work together to make his life a living nightmare. In February 2005 an Oggy and the Cockroaches video game was released for Nintendo's Game Boy Advance.

Mittens; photo: Walt Disney Pictures

Mittens — "Bolt." Disney's 2008 film "Bolt" tells the tale of a dog who is a television star; but Mittens, a street-smart New York City alley cat is memorable as the feisty feline who serves as Bolt's sidekick on his trek back to Hollywood. Known for bullying helpless pigeons out of their grub, Mittens schools Bolt on how to survive on the streets by playing the role of a cute but needy character to get food. Along the way, she begins to reveal bits of her own past — including the fact that she was abandoned by her owners.

There is never a shortage of fictional kitties for the cat lover to indulge in; all it takes is a bit of searching.

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