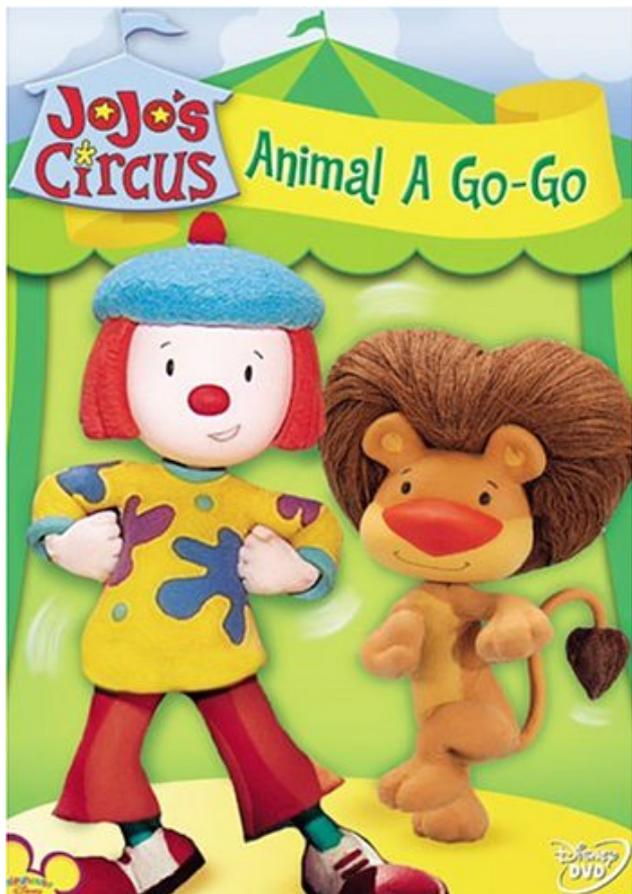


## JoJo's Circus: Animal A Go-Go DVD Review

Written by Marc Spess

Thursday, 14 June 2012 23:35 - Last Updated Friday, 15 June 2012 00:19

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If you have small children then you've probably come across this DVD in the Wal Mart bargain bin of videos, or have seen JoJo's Circus on Disney's Playhouse (now Disney Jr) TV station.

I have to admit that I used to watch this show for inspiration for a short time when I was studying foam latex puppet making techniques. The puppets are simple, clean, colorful and for the most part smooth. It is what you'd expect for a Disney production.

The DVD itself has a lot of morally based, nonsensical themes like dancing with snakes and wiggling from side to side and sliding. All done with JoJo showing the audience what to do through songs. You get the idea that the creators want kids to move around instead of sitting around as couch potatoes. Her friends and family all work together to solve different problems or explore different things. Then at the end of the short sections you are asked what you learned. Over-all it is geared towards pre-schoolers in the 3-4 year range.

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Now for the stories. What I can say is my 3 1/2 year old son (as of the time of writing this) LOVES this DVD! In fact he requests "Animal A Go-Go" DVD the most out of about 25 that we brought for him. And no, I'm not wishfully making this up because of my bias towards stop motion.

Animation over-all is very nice. It is smooth, well timed and fairly lively. If you like a lot of fast moves however like the characters in the old TV show Bump in the Night, these don't fit into that category. The animation is tame, deliberate and careful. That's about the only way I can describe it. I think the reason for this is that kids can't follow fast editing cuts and too many things happening at once. So in a way this is a good thing. If JoJo asks a question there is a pause and time is given for the child to think a moment.

{youtube}8FXDL4vtWFQ{/youtube}

There are some technical aspects of the DVD that reveal different problems that were solved for different reasons. One scene shows JoJo pulling her hair back to reveal her ears. But if you look at her in other scenes her hair is firmly attached to her head. So it must have taken one of the fabricators some time to make a special head just for the single scene. If those kinds of things interest you as an animator it is a good way to try and understand how to get around issues such as those. If you're intuitive enough.

The mouths on the puppets from what I understand were digitally added in a computer program. I don't know why the studio planned it this way, but it works well. It is not distracting at all, and the minimal CG effects such as flowing water in the water bath look marginally good. There is even one point where JoJo demonstrates how to brush your teeth. The toothbrush seems to dissolve into her mouth somehow and you can tell they tried their best to make it look natural.

Finally the DVD also includes some bonus games for kids to play. My DVD player has a broken remote control so I wasn't able to fully watch this part. I did notice when it loaded up after pressing the play button on the machine that they created JoJo in a computer. Yup, a CG JoJo takes you through some kind of dance moves. That is the only negative I could find on this DVD and highly recommend you buy a copy, especially if you have kids.

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Currently you can buy this DVD [on Amazon.com here](#) .