

## Movie Review: Shrek The Third

Written by {ga=mitch}

Sunday, May 20 2007 7:00 PM -

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In 2001, a new movie came out that in my opinion raised the standard for animated films. "Shrek" was not only dazzling visually and technically, it had a story that appealed to all viewers. Mitch also felt the second one was a pretty good film, but the latest effort, which was released this past weekend ... well, Mitch has some other thoughts on it. Mitch reviews Shrek The Third.



In 2001, a new movie came out that in my opinion raised the standard for animated films. "Shrek" was not only dazzling visually and technically, it had a story that appealed to all viewers. I remember laughing hysterically and the sheer audacity of seeing a princess singing along with a little bird...who explodes due to the shrill note from Fiona...a scene that is immediately followed by one showing them cooking eggs. I remember laughing, and then rewinding it three different times to view it again. This was something completely original, completely different, and completely entertaining.

Unfortunately, none of those words following "completely" can be used in describing the latest incarnation; "Shrek the Third", a total sell-out by everyone involved that wanders around aimlessly for 93 minutes until stalling out in one of the worst endings ever seen. I expect a bit of a come down for most sequels ("Spider-Man 2" and "X-Men 2" being the exceptions). Indeed, 2004's "Shrek 2" was not as good as the first one, but at least they took it in a different direction, dealing with Shrek's new in-laws, and brought in a fantastic new character in Antonio Banderas' sublime Puss-N-Boots. This time? I've seen better writing

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during the Anthony Michael Hall days on Saturday Night Live. And the new character? A callow teenaged King Arthur, voiced by Justin Timberlake (which should have been the first signal that this wasn't going to be any good) who whines more than AJ Soprano.

EIGHT different people are giving screenwriting credits...and it shows. It seems that each one of them was assigned one particular area to develop, and then the parts were just thrown together with Scotch tape and bailing wire to try to keep them from falling apart...usually in the form of having Shrek yell or do something gross.

It starts with Shrek and Fiona dealing with the death of Fiona's father, the Frog King, in a scene that drags out for almost ten minutes as they have John Cleese go through a William Shatner level of overacting, "dying" and waking back up twice before finally croaking. And then in possibly the stupidest scene ever, he's sent off in a Foot Locker box while a chorus of frogs sing Paul McCartney's "Live and Let Die". Singing frogs may have been funny in "Meet the Robinsons"...but not here.

Of course, Shrek doesn't want the responsibilities of being the King of Far, Far, Away, so he's off on a mini-adventure with Puss and Donkey to find cousin Arthur...who predictably turns out to be a nerdy teen being picked on by all the cool kids. Back at the castle, a now pregnant Fiona is having a baby shower with spoiled princesses Snow White, Rapunzel, Cinderella, and Sleeping Beauty when Prince Charming leads an army of fairy tale villains to storm the castle and take over.

The worst part of all of this film is that there was so much potential wasted. Eric Idle as Merlin could have been brilliant...but instead they make him into a neurotic, bumbling, no pants wearing Dr. Phil. Likewise the "girl power" bits advertised in the trailers; where the princesses stop their normal habit of sitting around waiting to be rescued and take action themselves, is terribly

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underdeveloped.

Even Michael Myers seems bored with it all, while Eddie Murphy exhibits very little of the spastic charm that made Donkey one of the best movie sidekicks ever. Antonio Banderas gives it a valiant effort, but since he has probably half the spoken lines as does Justin Timberlake, possibly the worst actor on the planet, there's not much the suave Antonio can do.

Are there a few funny moments? Yes, and you've already seen most of them in the trailers. Will the kids enjoy this? Yes, but probably only the ones between six and twelve. Any younger, and they will be bored during all the long scenes of excessive talking. Any older, and they'll recognize how poorly this one stacks up to the first two.

But I doubt the studio heads will care...this franchise has become a total cash cow for Dreamworks, and they'll keep milking it for all the millions they can get. I would just like to hope that creative head Steven Spielberg and Michael Myers take a good look at this film, and vow to go back to the anarchic fun of the original.

My Rating: Jeff Garcia (One Football).

### Rating Key.

*Otto Graham*: Over 4 Footballs. HOF quality movie

*Bernie Kosar*: 4 Footballs. Excellent

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*Brian Sipe*: 3 ½ Footballs. Very Good

*Frank Ryan*: 3 Footballs. Good

*Bill Nelsen*: 2 ½ Footballs. OK. Well worth seeing.

*Kelly Holcomb*: 2 Footballs. Disappointingly inconsistent but some bright spots.

*Tim Couch*: 1 ½ Footballs. Poor. Had potential, but lack of support led to an overall stinker.

*Jeff Garcia*: 1 Football. Horrible. All hype; no performance.

*Mike Phipps*: ½ Football. “We gave away Paul Warfield for THIS?” level of garbage.

*Spergon Wynn*: No Footballs. UberSuckitude personified.