

‘Shrek the Third’ is Foxy Flirt Between Kid’s Play, Adult Wit

Submitted by [HollywoodChicago.com](http://www.hollywoodchicago.com) [1] on May 18, 2007 - 1:41am

- [Amy Sedaris](#) [2]
- [Antonio Banderas](#) [3]
- [Aron Warner](#) [4]
- [Cameron Diaz](#) [5]
- [Chris Miller](#) [6]
- [Eddie Murphy](#) [7]
- [Julie Andrews](#) [8]
- [Justin Timberlake](#) [9]
- [Mike Myers](#) [10]
- [Movie Review](#) [11]
- [Raman Hui](#) [12]
- [Rupert Everett](#) [13]
- [Shrek the Third](#) [14]



CHICAGO – To thwart his fate of being royally screwed (“mommy, what does that mean?”), the ornery ogre who smells like the shallow end of a swamp has unwavering resolve to crown someone else as proxy for his kingdom’s recently croaked king.

“Shrek the Third,” which vigilantly flirts with the grey matter between child’s play and adult humor, creates curious questions for children while bringing back beloved characters for another joyride in Far Far Away.



Shrek begrudgingly submits to a royal primping as he prepares to stand in with Fiona as the king and queen of Far Far Away due to King Harold’s illness.

Image courtesy of DreamWorks Animation

In the eyes of the filmmakers, they never had to lead the irascible Shrek anywhere. They view the series to be a natural progression of a normal man’s life. This time around, he’s faced with the finery and lumber of adulthood. Initially freaked by the notion of fathering ogres, he comes around.

The stories are designed to be clear and mimic real life. In the first, Shrek gets married. In the second, he meets the parents. In the third, he learns to be a dad. All three follow the trend of bucking what Shrek thinks about himself.

“In the first film, he didn’t think he was worthy of falling in love,” Mike Myers said in the film’s production notes. “In the second, he didn’t think he was worthy of being a husband. Now he’s struggling with worthiness because he’s afraid of being a king and a father. You really have to rely on yourself and not listen to what people think about you.”

These CGI films, of course, are designed to crack grins and play to youthful fantasies and imagination. The unanimous funniest moment in the film was when Gingy – the gingerbread character you can’t help but love – reveals that he’s not one tough cookie. He’s so petrified he poops a gumdrop. It was a simply jocular moment.



Gingy stands up to a line of questioning in “Shrek the Third”.

Image courtesy of DreamWorks Animation

While such witty and light-hearted scenes define the Shrek franchise, the third humble fairy tale lacks as much as the other two packed in. With a strong sequel that majestically followed the first, the third – while certainly an entertaining, feel-good film – is the weaker of the bunch.

Shrek – played by Mike Myers and viewed by the actor as a family reunion – is reluctantly persistent to scout Artie – played by Justin Timberlake – as new king. Picked for his “malice, melodrama and comic timing,” according to producer Aron Warner, Rupert Everett as Prince Charming erringly vies to be king and challenges the Shrek and Artie duo.

Just as Timberlake’s selection took some convincing, his character’s likability takes some growing. Warner added: “He’s got a great soul and he brings that to Artie. Even when Artie says stuff that isn’t necessarily likeable, you can tell he’s just a teenager trying to use this kind of language to ... cover up his own insecurity.”



Justin Timberlake voices Artie in “Shrek the Third”.

Image courtesy of Saeed Adyani

Eddie Murphy as Donkey – again always having Shrek’s back – is described by director Chris Miller as “an endless stream of funny” while Antonio Banderas as Puss in Boots “sings, dances and coughs up hairballs with gusto,” according to Warner.

While author and comedian Amy Sedaris was also wary about playing Cinderella because it seemed astray for her, she warmed up to the idea of being involved in a “Saturday Night Live” girly gang.

“No one’s ever asked me to play a princess before. I thought it would be challenging. Once I heard who the other princesses were going to be, I couldn’t pass it up,” Sedaris said. “With TV and film, it’s always ‘bring it back, pull it back and make it smaller’. I never hear that with animation. ‘Can you go bigger?’ [It’s] my dream to hear that. ‘Bigger’ and ‘one take’ are my two favorite phrases.”

In addition, the film features a massive, gold-plated voice cast including Cameron Diaz (Princess Fiona), Julie Andrews (the queen), John Cleese (the king), Eric Idle (Merlin), John Krasinski (Lancelot), Ian McShane (Captain Hook), Cheri Oteri (Sleeping Beauty), Amy Poehler (Snow White), Maya Rudolph (Rapunzel), Regis Philbin (Mable) and Larry King (Doris).

In total, the film utilized a catalog of nearly 5,000 characters. All approved by the directors and art directors, many were “digital extras” that may have been way off in the background and relatively unnoticed.

As for the tech of Shrek, the creative team aimed for dazzle in the details. Down to the tiny bits of fur on the Three Blind Mice to the individual strands of hair in Merlin’s beard and Fiona’s hair, DreamWorks Animation advanced already advanced systems to push the envelope and bring alive what started as pencil sketches.

“Going into each new film, we will have a list of tools and techniques we want to improve,” said effects supervisor Matt Baer. “The tricky part is deciding which improvements will have the biggest impact.”



John Krasinski voices Lancelot in “Shrek the Third”.

Photo courtesy of Kelvin Jones

While DL145 HP ProLiant servers, HP xw9300 workstations powered by AMD Opteron processors and HP nx6125 notebooks based on AMD Turion 64 X2 dual-core mobile technology likely sound like gibberish to most people, such raw computing power afforded the ability to render incredibly detailed characters at a faster pace.

When Shrek winces, you can now see the wrinkles in his nose. The project couldn’t realize such specificity its first two times around. Special effects veteran Arnauld Lamolette depicts No. 3 as the “difference between drawing and sculpting”. The film also exploited new hair simulation tools for more realistic motion and collisions with geometry.

“You can really feel the material of the fabric in Fiona’s dress,” said co-director Raman Hui. “It’s a little bit shinier when it’s facing the light. I swear you can feel the texture of it. You can feel the softness.”

When Donkey and Puss in Boots drink a potion and switch bodies, the animators were challenged with transferring their personalities. Puss had to move like a cat in a donkey’s body and Donkey had to awkwardly exist in a cat’s hide.

“Most of the environments in this film are even larger and more detailed,” said art director Peter Zaslav. “Of course, we [also] exaggerated things. We put carvings into the wall and even created a medieval vending machine. If you look closely, you’ll spot several clever little jokes. It’s always fun to infuse contemporary humor into a medieval world.”

Prior to the third film, Shrek has raked in \$1.4 billion in box-office receipts and divvied out 90 million DVDs. For the 2007 holiday season, “Shrek the Halls” will appear on ABC. In 2008, the saga will evolve into “Shrek: The Musical” on Broadway.

© 2007 Adam Fendelman, HollywoodChicago.com



[15]

By [ADAM FENDELMAN](#) [16]
Editor-in-Chief
HollywoodChicago.com
adam@hollywoodchicago.com [15]

Source URL (retrieved on Apr 25 2024 - 3:38am): <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/2007/05/shrek-third-is-foxy-flirt-between-kids.html>

Links:

- [1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/hollywoodchicagocom>
- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/amy-sedaris>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/antonio-banderas>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/aron-warner>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/cameron-diaz>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/chris-miller>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/eddie-murphy>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/julie-andrews>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/justin-timberlake>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/mike-myers>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/labels/review.html>

- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/raman-hui>
- [13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/ruPERT-everett>
- [14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/shrek-the-third>
- [15] <mailto:adam@hollywoodchicago.com>
- [16] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#ADAM>