

Blu-Ray Review: Cartoon Network Offers ‘Venture Bros.,’ ‘Firebreather’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on April 5, 2011 - 11:34am

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CHICAGO – My love for “Venture Bros.” is well-documented. It’s one of the funnier cartoons of the last decade and I recently complained about the half-season released only on DVD. I apologize. Now that the whole recent season is available on Blu-ray all is right with the world. And Cartoon Network has released another animated adventure to piggy back on one of their best shows in the intriguing “Firebreather.”



Blu-Ray Rating: **3.5/5.0**

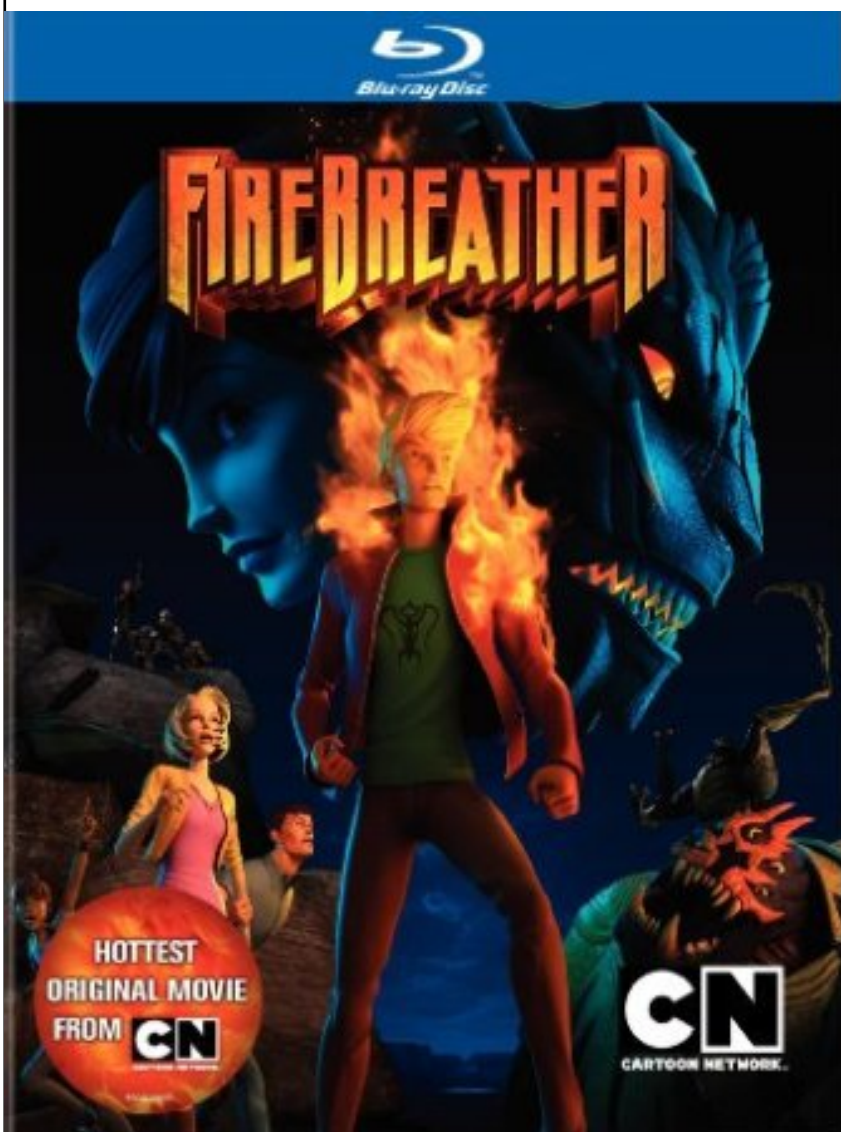
“Venture Bros.” lost a bit of pop culture steam through the one thing that can really kill a show — lack of new episodes. This collection features episodes that started airing in October of 2009 and only 55 episodes have been produced overall since the program premiered in 2003. There’s a fine line between overexposure and painful absence. I wish the “Venture Bros.” team would produce more episodes (and was happy to hear that there will be at least two more seasons).



Venture Bros. Season 4 was released on Blu-ray on March 29, 2011

Photo credit: Warner Bros.

The two-part season (which aired 8 episodes in the fall of 2009 and then 8 more in the fall of 2010) is still damn funny. They open with the gang divided after the departure of the hilarious Brock. Dr. Venture is forced to deal with a new, bumbling bodyguard named Sergeant Hatred while The Monarch returns as the primary villain of this half of the season. An episode featuring the memorable Captain Sunshine is particularly memorable. The program is still great, but the writing overall feels down a little bit. It hasn't jumped the shark but season four isn't as strong as two or three and the brilliance of the similar "Archer" (another spy satire) may take a little air out of this balloon. It's still well-worth a purchase for fans of adult animation and quality writing.



Firebreather was released on DVD and Blu-Ray on March 29, 2011

Photo credit: Warner Bros.

And the Blu-ray release is pretty strong with striking 1080p colors on one of the best-looking animated programs of the last several years. Fans will also be happy about commentary tracks and nearly half-an-hour of deleted scenes. WB & Adult Swim know how to treat their loyal fans. It sucks that some will have bought the half-a-season released on DVD last October and basically have wasted their money, but that's the only minor complaint about this release. WB should have just waited for the full season instead of milking a few more cents last fall.

"Firebreather" isn't as clever as "Venture Bros." but it's aimed at a different audience. This is "Cartoon Network," not "Adult Swim," and there's a definite difference. Having said that, for what it is, "Firebreather" is pretty fun. It's visually striking, well-voiced, and reasonably entertaining for its roughly-an-hour running time. It could have been a bit smarter in its dialogue and plotting but the action is what truly works and that's what its target audience will care about most.

Based on the comic book created by Phil Hester and Andy Kuhn for Image Comics, "Firebreather" is about Duncan Rosenblatt, the new kid at school who also happens to be half-Kaiju, a race of hundred foot tall monsters who've been in conflict with humanity for control of the planet. What if the new guy in your class was more than just a gawky loser? "Firebreather" comes from the classic nerd-turns-hero school of comics and it's pretty well-done, especially when it turns on the action. The dialogue is weak, but the animated original (that originally aired last November on Cartoon Network) is solidly entertaining for its brief running time. Unlike "Venture Bros.," you may not be screaming for more, but you won't be disappointed you watched it.

"The Venture Bros. Season 4" and "Firebreather" were released on Blu-ray on March 29th, 2011 by Warner Bros.



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Source URL (retrieved on Apr 17 2024 - 10:34am):

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