

'The Adventures of Tintin' Offers Thrills, Spills and Fun

by Alan Mowbray



Are you thirsty for a little adventure? How about a mysterious sunken ship? Maybe being kidnapped and loaded on to a freighter bound for ...? Want to attempt to refuel a single-engine airplane in-flight? From a bottle? And, even better—pirates.

If you answered yes, *The Adventures of Tintin* is your ticket. Based on a series of Belgian comic books from the 1940s, the story, set primarily in Europe, centers on Tintin (voiced by Jamie Bell, *King Kong*), a young journalist famous for solving crimes.

The movie begins with Tintin—his trusty and amusingly perceptive dog, Snowy, at his side—perusing a local outdoor marketplace, where he spies a stunningly detailed model of an old three-masted ship set for sale. He haggles the price, pays for the man-of-war model and takes possession. Within seconds of purchase, a man with an unscrupulous look about him named Ivanovich Sakharine (Daniel Craig—the current James Bond) appears—offering a large sum in exchange. Tintin refuses the offer, setting him up for an adventure of intrigue, danger and treasure.

From the start, Tintin pulls you in with its seemingly non-stop action. As the starting credits roll, you are entertained by little animated snippets of Tintin and Snowy in some of their comic book adventures. These are fun, but when the show really starts, you forget all about the credits.

Initially, my brain had some difficulty with the incredibly detailed animation that director Stephen Spielberg was throwing at me. *The Adventures of Tintin* is Spielberg's first stab at motion-capture filmmaking, and with "Lord of the Rings" director Peter Jackson working with him as second-unit director and producer, the film elevates the high-tech technique to a new level.

Reminiscent of the motion-capture treatment of *The Polar Express*, *The Adventures of Tintin* is a visual buffet of detail and realism with just enough tweaks to let you know it's not truly real. I actually missed some of the initial dialogue because I was concentrating so hard on the incredible realism before me on my living room screen. I actually had to start the DVD over to catch what I missed.

With a hint of Indiana Jones in its DNA, *The Adventures of Tintin* is a fun, fast-paced flick that any kid will enjoy, although some of the lines are above his or her head. You can tell that although the film garners a PG rating—for adventure action violence, some drunkenness and brief smoking—it's really geared toward the teen and above crowd in the same way that Bugs Bunny jokes mean one thing to a kid and something totally different to an adult.

The Adventures of Tintin features a very strong moral, redemptive message with clear and allegorical Christian content, including references to St. John the Evangelist, light bringing truth and good defeating evil. Bonus features: Along with the DVD and digital and UltraViolet copies, the two-disc set includes a 90-minute, 11-part making-of documentary.

Content Watch: *The Adventures of Tintin* features some mild language and scenes of stealing by a pickpocket. Capt. Haddock (Andy Serkis, "Lord of the Rings" series) is a drunk, so there is a lot of situations where his alcoholism causes problems. His drinking is never glamorized, although it does drive some

of the comedy. In fact, Tintin attempts several times to help him get sober. There is an obvious lesson on how alcohol can ruin a life.

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