

Hellboy II: The Golden Army

First thoughts

Going into this sequel of the 2004 action flick I was skeptical to say the least. I liked the first film but I wasn't all too excited about a sequel as they tend to not be as good as their originals. What I expected was a lot of random action not backed up by any story. Well seeing this movie changed my opinion of Hellboy. The direction was good(Guillermo del Toro), the actors made the movie, the story stronger than I anticipated, and the action scenes were captivating. That being said I saw some not so great reviews from the critics at Hollywood.com, however some gave it decent reviews, the highest I saw was 3 out of 5.

What happens

The movie begins with a flashback of Hellboy's in which his "Father" tells him about the Golden Army, an unstoppable army that was so evil that a truce had to be made between humans and the woodland king to never allow the Golden army(which are robot-like creatures that can't be destroyed) to be used again. This truce is held in place by keeping three crown pieces separate, the king has one, the second one which had been lost to the humans is stolen back by Prince Nuada(Luke Goss), and the final piece is carried by Nuada's twin sister Nuala(Anna Walton). However Nuada is a very ambitious prince, and being a person of the Earth he decides that he will no longer sit by and let humanity destroy the planet. So he sets out on a mission to summon the Golden Army and wage war with humanity. His first step is stealing one of the crown pieces from an auction and killing the people with nasty little creatures that eat humans completely starting with the teeth.

Enter Hellboy a.k.a. Red (Ron Perlman) and the B.P.R.D. All the same characters from the first one are back, Liz, Abe, and the Chief. This time around we meet a new member named Johann Krauss, he is a German who is a leader in ectoplasm research(being a ghost). After discovering that the human eating bugs used by Nuada were bought on the troll market the B.P.R.D. sets out to get some answers. Here they run into Nuala whom Abe has an immediate romantic connection with, but the problem is Nuada's troll is trying to catch the princess and get her piece of the crown for Nuada. Queue Abe trying to fight for his new crush and Hellboy stepping in to have a knock-down drag out with the troll. This fight is awesome.

After the conclusion of the fight(not going to tell you how it ends) the gang runs into Nuada who sets loose a giant plant monster whom Nuala identifies as an Earth God. Hellboy defeats this monster and almost gets into a battle with the cops who are afraid of him and attempt to arrest him; seriously trying to arrest a huge red demon? Anyway after we get back to B.P.R.D. we see Abe attempt to flirt with Nuala and then Red gets him to try beer and the two go into a drunken karaoke version of "Can't Smile Without You" which is one of the funniest moments of the movie. (Subplot: Liz and Red are fighting and Liz has a surprise she can't quite tell him.) Any way Nuada finds the B.P.R.D. through the psychic link that Nuala tells us they have. After a battle between Red and Nuada the location of the Golden Army is revealed and both sides start a race to get there before the other. Once they get there the Golden Army is awoken. Queue dramatic and highly climatic battle royal.

What I thought about...

The Acting

This was a great cast. At first I thought that Goss was overplaying Nuada but then I started to like his LOTR style of acting. This guy was born to play almost human bad guys. Anna Walton is also a great fit for the role of Princess Nuala. I was actually surprised to see a relatively unknown actress in this role but she was great. Her job was to love her brother but condemn his actions and show that she had mixed feelings. Two words *nailed it*. The B.P.R.D crew had a great cast. Perlman and Blair(Red and Liz) work really well together as the "old married couple" of the film. Abe is played by a well cast Doug Jones. Jeffrey Tambor is as funny as ever, and the new guy character/friendly ghost Johan Krauss (played by multiple actors) is funny in his exchanges with Perlman.

The Direction

The direction is great, the camera always seems to be in the right place during the fights and the whole picture is tied together really well. Not an Oscar winner but I'm not ruling out an MTV award.

What the critics said

The critic reviews I read gave it a 2.5 out of 5 and one gave it a 3.5 but that was above the norm. Hollywood.com said that "They(the monsters) are fun but so outrageous they don't approach the truly haunting alternate world he created in Pan's Labyrinth." I disagree. Monsters that eat you starting with the teeth are creepy and mechanical creatures that can't die-- that is truly haunting. They also said about Nuada "He sounds like one of those dubbed actors straight out of a cheapie '50s sword and sandal epic." I think Nuada is great and actually, although maybe a little in the beginning, not cheesy at all.

Hey maybe I'm wrong but now its up to you to go see the movie.

Bottom Line

Take a date