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Movies & TV

'Shrek Forever After' review

A fairy tale franchise, now running on fumes

By Geoff Berkshire

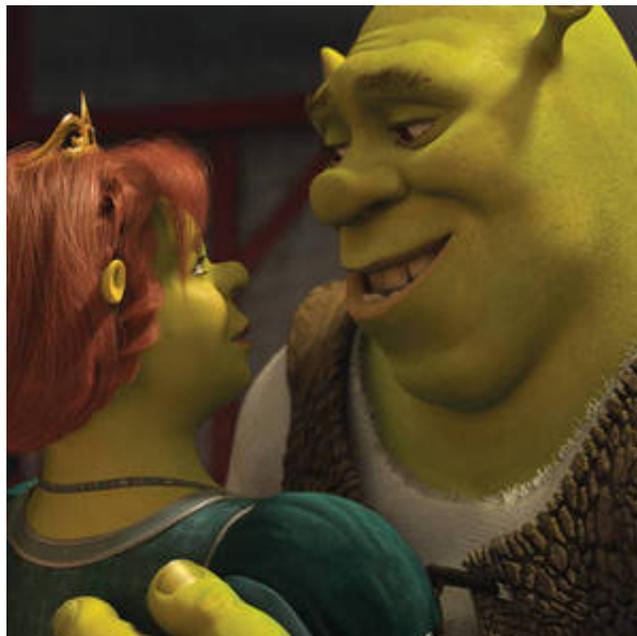
★★★★★ (6 ratings) [Be the first to review](#)

It's mid-life crisis time for giant green ogre Shrek (Mike Myers). He's happily married with children to Fiona (Cameron Diaz) and still friends with Donkey (Eddie Murphy) and Puss In Boots (Antonio Banderas), but misses the days when he was a fearsome monster instead of a local celebrity in the fairy tale land of Far Far Away. Legendary trickster Rumpelstiltskin (Walt Dohrn) gives Shrek a chance to revisit his prime, but the deal also resets everything Shrek has achieved and leaves him trapped in a not-so-desirable alternate reality.

The buzz: Billed as "The Final Chapter" in its ad campaign, "Shrek Forever After" promises to close off what was starting to feel like a neverending franchise. That plus the addition of 3D visuals could lure back even those disappointed by the limp "Shrek the Third."

The verdict: No wonder DreamWorks Animation scrapped plans for "Shrek 5" and opted to end things here. Little more than Shrek's "It's a Wonderful Life," this latest installment is closer to a middling TV special than a blockbuster movie. What started out as an irreverent spin on classic fairy tales has dwindled into what the haters claimed the franchise was all along: a lazy collection of pop culture references and easy musical montages. The jokes are wan, the 3D underwhelming, the voiceovers largely uninspired (though Banderas still has fun with scene-stealing Puss, soon to star in his own spin-off, and Diaz gives Fiona even more spunk than usual in the alternate reality). "Shrek Forever After" is the kind of commercially mandated, creatively bankrupt effort that makes you realize why so many animated sequels go straight to DVD.

Did you know? The character design for Rumpelstiltskin was inspired by a caricature of the film's art director, Max Boas. Think he was flattered or insulted?



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