

# Neverland, Pirates and Magic at CSUEB



Peter Pan (Holly Griffin) and Tinkerbell (Corinne Leon) fly through Wendy's (Janelle Burch) window in CSUEB's department of theatre and dance's production of "Pan and Wendy."

Photos/Courtesy of the Department of Theatre and Dance

## Movie Review

### Bolt: Good Fun or Recycled Material?



Photo/Courtesy of Disney

By Devin Grigg  
Staff Writer



Disney's "Bolt" will keep adults and children entertained as it brings humor and seriousness full circle.

The movie has an all-star cast of voices, which is the key to a great animated adventure. In most animated movies the cast is not that important, however this movie has a cast that improves every scene, taking it from an average Disney film to a great one.

Bolt (John Travolta) is a prideful dog. Travolta mixes his very serious voice with well-timed comedic punches to give a great performance.

The story begins with Bolt being adopted by Penny (Miley Cyrus). Penny and Bolt are the stars of a popular television show, but Bolt has no idea he is on the show. The dog thinks that every time they are shooting a scene, he is actually fighting crime and saving Penny's life.

The story takes a turn when Bolt is lost in the city. With the help of two faithful friends, Bolt sets out on an unforgettable journey that will enthrall all children in the audience.

The parents in the audience will also be amused, with some jokes that go over children's heads. Disney has been successful because the company has been able to work with audiences young and old. Parents go to a Disney movie knowing that it is going to be a great experience for their children and also a fun time for them. Bolt brings this wide range of excitement to the screen making it a must see for children and their parents.

Bolt features different situations that are truly funny. The hamster is constantly taking on challenges that are much too large for a tiny hamster to overcome. The cat also entices comedic situations by taunting the brave dog.

The movie is not all fun and games however. There are some very serious storylines and themes, such as loyalty, which can be seen through Bolt's relationships with Penny and his two traveling companions. The movie instills long-lasting values that the kids will always remember.

Bolt is a must-see for children. They will learn a lot and gain good concepts of how to be a good person. And whoever takes a child to see this movie will have a great time, too—even if they choose not to admit it.

By Amber Myers  
Staff Writer



Babysitting and need a rest? Take your charges to see Disney's "Bolt."

Otherwise don't waste your \$10.

"Bolt" is the story of a young dog named Bolt (John Travolta) who plays a canine superhero for a TV hit series. The only problem is, he believes his life and superpowers are all real. So when he is accidentally shipped from Hollywood to New York City, Bolt teams up with a sarcastic cat named Mittens (Susie Essman) and a geeky, worshipful hamster name Rhino (Mark Walton) who help him get back to the studio.

During their journey, Bolt must come to terms with the fact that his TV life isn't real, and off camera he's just an ordinary dog.

"Bolt's" storyline mimics Jim Carrey's 1998 hit, "The Truman Show," except from a dog's point of view. Like Jim Carrey's Truman, Bolt never leaves the TV studio. His director feels if Bolt believes his stunts and powers are real, than the audience will too.

Even though Bolt and Truman are both unwitting television actors, this is where the movies' similarities end.

Unlike "The Truman Show," which takes place entirely on a closed set, Bolt is shipped to New York City where he is thrust into the outside world to bleed and experience hunger, pain and reality.

Although it's a recycled plot, Bolt's humorous attempts to use his "powers" make "Bolt" entertaining.

One of his powers is his super jump. While racing around New York City and trying to figure out where he is, Bolt leaps over several orange cones in slow motion and then suddenly collapses into a pile of concrete. Ouch! Next time, Bolt, wait till you're back on the set.

Yet, this film has redeeming qualities, including very realistic CGI. The artists have created an animated dog whose fur gets dirty, wet and wind-blown, and rivals that of real-life dogs. Because the CGI mirrors real-life, it helps audiences to accept this version of reality if only for one hour and 36 minutes.

"It was cute," said Elizabeth Myers, 23, of Concord, "but I wouldn't buy it once it came out on DVD. 'Bolt' is purely mind numbing entertainment that you watch when you're bored, tired, want a good laugh or are babysitting your younger siblings."



Captain Hook, played by Reginald White, addresses his crew of swashbuckling pirates.

Photos/Courtesy of the Department of Theatre and Dance

## Movie Review "Marley" is Family Fun



Shaggy Dog Story: The yellow lab gets the best lines in "Marley and Me."

Photo/ Courtesy of Paramount

By Amber Myers  
Staff Writer

Bring Kleenex. You are going to need it.

What sets "Marley and Me" apart from recent movie releases is not the cute Labrador puppy chewing furniture, escaping his leash at the beach to chase doves or any other comical mishaps of the "world's worst dog" (although they sure make the two hours go by quickly).

No, what separates this film is character and not action, comedy, or romance.

Throughout the film, the audience watches the two main characters grow, mature, and experience real life events such as starting a family, getting their first puppy (complete with potty training and nights of lonely howling) and reality.

"Marley and Me" is definitely a must-see, especially if you are the kind of person who prefers films that depict reality, not a overly-fictionalized version of it.

John Grogan's best-selling book "Marley and Me" centers on John Grogan (Owen Wilson), an amateur journalist who buys a Labrador puppy "on clearance" for Jen, (Jennifer Aniston) his wife for her birthday. However, what they do not anticipate is that their 12-pound bundle of fur growing into a 100-pound steamroller of massive energy, who creates mayhem and destruction wherever he goes.

Several scenes had the audience howling with laughter.

In one scene, John gives Jen a necklace. She lays it down on the ta-

ble for a second and turns to kiss her husband thank you (bad move, Jen). When she turns around the necklace is gone! Frantically, she searches for it only to discover Marley a few feet away, crouching, tail wagging, necklace dangling from his mouth. What follows is a comical attempt by John and Jen to catch Marley.

One thing about Marley that is both funny and sad is his blatant fear of thunderstorms. On one occasion John and Jen go on vacation leaving Marley with a dog-sitter. During their absence there are 11 thunderstorms, and Marley tears apart the Grogan's couch and leaves their house in utter chaos. When the Grogans returned, that dog-sitter high-tailed it out of there.

Comedy aside, "Marley and Me" also has a darker and humorless subplot involving difficult everyday decisions: career and housing issues, parenting decisions, and the decision of whether or not to keep Marley.

One of the experiences hit a little too close to home for Kathy Howard who understood the pain Jen felt when she had a miscarriage almost 10 weeks into her pregnancy.

"I could so relate to that," said Howard, 36, of Concord.

While it is refreshing for a movie to show the highs and lows of life, marriage, raising a family, a dog, and how it's not always easy, you also see the joys.

Several times throughout the movie John, coming home from work, sits and watches his family from his car while smiling. When he and Jen play basketball in the pool with their children, the love and joy shared by families shines through.

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