

ENTERTAINMENT

'Bachelor': ratings are high but chances of love are not

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A date in a horse-drawn carriage. A dress worth thousands and jewels worth millions. A handsome, romantic man by your side. Are you a princess on a date with your prince?

Possibly, but you could just be a contestant on ABC's reality romance "The Bachelor." While the show's ratings are high enough to launch it into its 12th season, the actual romantic success of the show is an utter failure with a track record of only two successful relationships. To make it worse, that statistic includes the three seasons of spin-off "The Bachelorette."

With host Chris Harrison keeping everything straight, 25 beautiful women meet a handsome, eligible bachelor. In fact, the women are so beautiful and the bachelor so successful that it's hard to understand why these people felt the need to search for love on national

television. As the series drags on, it's obvious most contestants are searching for love along with their own few minutes of fame.

The bachelor meets all 25 women on the first night as they emerge from their limousines. He gives a first impression rose after meeting every woman based solely on their few minutes of interaction, demonstrating this show's emphasis

on beauty. The rest of the initial show consists of a cocktail party in which contestants vie for the bachelor's attention. Many often make fools of themselves and occasionally one has a little too much bubbly. At the conclusion of the evening, Harrison whisks the bachelor away to a private room full of pictures of the ladies where he will deliberate and make his elimination decisions.

The show's elimination ceremonies are a reality TV classic and have found themselves at the butt of jokes on television ("House" spoofed it this season.). Generally, the bachelor cuts from 25 women to 15, to 10, to eight, to six and then individually.

The women stand in a cluster while the bachelor stands with Harrison and the roses. The bachelor calls

out a woman's name, the woman comes forward and he poses the question, "Will you accept this rose?" If she says yes, she has made it to the next round. Women have the option to decline the offer of his rose if they feel a connection is not present, an option which has been chosen occasionally. These rose ceremonies tend to be overly dramatic and predictable, despite ABC's claim of "the most shocking rose ceremony ever" every week.

Consistent with the dramatic theme of this show, the bachelor lives in his own pad while the women share a house in which the undertones are cattiness and competition. The competition heats up when certain women receive one-on-one dates rather than the less romantic group dates. One-on-one dates are the Cinderella-like dates where group dates include trips to an arcade, the beach, bowling alley, etc.

The dates are often predictable and, well, corny. Supposedly, viewers are watching people fall in love, but with the elaborate detail and fantastic setting, it just feels unreal.

As Season 10 bachelor Andy Baldwin described it, "When the fantasy wore off and the reality set in, we both realized that we weren't ready to be engaged."

Baldwin's dilemma seems to be the norm in the couple's aftermath

of this show. In each season finale, the bachelor picks an engagement ring and has the option of proposing to the winner. Sometimes the couple ends the show engaged, sometimes only with the promise of continuing their relationship and in the case of Season 11 bachelor Brad Womack, still stag. Womack genuinely shocked audiences when he broke up with both finalists in the season finale.

While this stunt truly shocked viewers, "The Bachelor" is a predictable reality show that needs to be retired. The show certainly had its success – just ask America's couple Trista and Ryan, and their baby Max, or the only other remaining couple, Byron and Mary. But as the show gets sleazier and makes feeble, futile attempts to mix it up, it only sinks lower into the Reality TV Shows to Avoid category.

"The Bachelor" has inspired its spin-offs, many of which are classless successes, most recently MTV's "A Shot at Love with Tila Tequila," but it's safe to say the hay-days of "The Bachelor" are over. While ABC may continue to drudge out season after season, and viewers may continue to tune in out of boredom, curiosity or even indulgence in a guilty pleasure, this show needs to break off the engagement with current television.



Photo courtesy of google.com

In ABC's hit show "The Bachelor", now entering its 12th season, 25 women compete for the affection of one man.

'Dead Leaves': a comic book come to life

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From Production I. G., the people who brought you FLCL (furi kuri), in association with several of the animators from Kill Bill, comes one of most bizarre and action-packed chunks of LSD-soaked animated madness the world has ever seen: Dead Leaves. This is the kind of movie that, if it had come out 10 years earlier, my mom would forbid me to see, but then my dad would take me to see it anyway – its that good.

Now, I know what you're thinking - anime is for little kids and perverts - but you've got to hear me out on this one. Watching Dead Leaves is like watching a comic book come to life. It doesn't flow like other anime, it has a style all its own, all but defying the general anime stereotypes. None of those big, watery eyes or any of that magical girl nonsense. Just straight up insanity.

The film begins with a man and

a woman who wake up naked in a field with no memory of their

pasts or their identities. "That ring around your eye makes you look

like a panda bear," remarks the man. "That retro TV on your head makes you look like an asshole," replies the woman.

And thus, the names Retro and Pandy seem to stick. And so, the Bonnie and Clyde type duo decide to go on a mini rampage through down town Tokyo for food, clothing and transportation. The cops are quickly called in and a high-speed chase and gunfight ensue. At one point during this sequence, Retro has a very impressive and very impossible

fight scene on top of moving cop cars. Eventually they are captured and sent to a prison called Dead Leaves, located on the half destroyed moon. There they meet the other prisoners, who all seem to be strange, half-robotic clones. They also meet the two chief prison guards; two extra badass clones called 666 and 777. 666 and 777 are great characters, they really steal the show.

So, Pandy and Retro get locked in a holding cell together. Retro starts going stir crazy until he realizes that he's locked in a room with a woman and pounces on her. "How are we supposed to do it with all these straps?!" Pandy demands. "Some people pay good money to get tied up like this!" replies Retro, and the lovemaking begins. Apparently they're sex is so great that it blows open the locked door and causes them to lose their restraints. Once freed, they realize all of the other prisoners and orchestrate a mass prison break. After some insane gunfights and epic battles with 666 and 777, they

discover the secret work being carried out at the facility. Over the course of the film, we discover that Pandy and Retro were spies working for the facility and the crazed warden is trying to get revenge on Pandy by recreating a deranged fairy tale she remembers from her childhood.

In the finale, Pandy has Retro's child, who comes out with twin machine guns and blows the warden away. A giant worm (part of the demented fairy tale) begins consuming the station until the mutant baby sacrifices himself so that his two parents can live. The film ends with Pandy and Retro crashing in the middle of downtown Tokyo in their escape pod, crushing a bystander below. The end.

Dead Leaves goes so fast that there is hardly enough time to catch your breath. It is just non-stop ultra violence. Now I'm not condoning the use of psychedelic drugs, but if you should happen to be on one while watching this movie it couldn't hurt.



Photo courtesy of Production I.G.

"Dead Leaves", a full-length anime motion picture, aims to avoid typical anime stereotypes and be a very psychedelic experience.

Zelda joke causes online turmoil

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This year's April Fools Day will live in infamy. On that day the deafening sound of fanboy hearts breaking could be heard across the country (it was especially loud on the internet). At the root of this chaos is one of the most elaborate April fools jokes ever; The Legend of Zelda movie trailer created by ign.com. Reactions to the prank ranged from congratulations to angry boycotts and petitions demanding an apology.

What made this particular joke so convincing (and effective) was the surprising amount of effort put into it. The trailer actually looks like people who know what they are doing as opposed to overweight fanboys flailing around with fake swords in what almost resembles combat made it. The lighting, camera work, and the orchestral music, was enough to make even the most cynical person believe

that the trailer could be real even if it was only for a moment. The only chink in this façade's armor

is the sub-par makeup effects for the series' main villain Ganon (and to a lesser extent the sub-ILM quality CGI).

The trailer is a collaboration of 'ign' and independent production company Rainfall Films. Director Sam Balcomb was tasked with creating a truly epic trailer for the fake Legend of Zelda movie with little money and a mere three months to do it. The project was a huge undertaking for

the small production company with intensive special effects work and orchestral music.

love for those who worked on it since many of them are longtime Zelda fans. The filmmakers prove

is surprisingly accurate to the game. The visual style is heavily inspired by the most recent Zelda game Twilight Princess with its somewhat dark atmosphere and epic look. The costumes are very detailed and stay true to the art from the games and even the music is true to form. Despite the attention to detail, the Internet community and especially longtime fans of the series have dissected every small aspect of the trailer. It can be assumed that if a true Zelda movie was to be made it would face more scrutiny than any video game based movie before it.

Within an hour of the trailer's release the internet was set ablaze with talk of the hoax as the trailer was dissected by fans of the series. It was not long before many gaming websites

started seeing message board debates about whether or not Zelda could actually be brought to the big screen. Many people argued that it could not translate to film, citing the fact that the main character Link is completely mute throughout the entire series. Others claimed that the story's epic size would require a budget higher than any other film to date. The most significant fact is that Nintendo may not want to sell the movie rights for one of its most popular series; after the abomination that was the Super Mario Brothers movie, it is understandable. On the contrary, The Legend of Zelda could fill the fantasy epic void left after the Lord of the Rings series ended. The success of that trilogy would definitely make Zelda an easy sell to film studios.

Whether or not a true Legend of Zelda movie ever materializes remains to be seen. The fake trailer has stirred up serious debate on the subject and shows that the Zelda franchise's possible move to the big screen would not go unnoticed.



Photo courtesy of ign.

As an April Fook's Day joke by online movie site ign.com, a false Zelda traier was released, causing mixed reactions from the online community.

The trailer became a labor of

to have an in depth knowledge of the source material as the trailer