New American

Written by **Elanor Bonta** on May 23, 2023

Super Mario Bros. Movie Surprises Viewers

Due to seemingly odd casting choices — notably Chris Pratt for the voice of Mario — *The Super Mario Bros. Movie* was initially considered a meme movie to mock. But after it went from trailer to theater release, minds were changed.

The attention to detail was admirable, whether the in-depth animation or the comedic Mario franchise references. And there were several nuances, such as canonically explaining that the full names of the brothers are Mario Mario and Luigi Mario. The movie made sense when connecting the real world — where Mario is a plumber and has a family — and the fantasy world of talking mushrooms and dinosaur turtles.

The movie gave a backstory and expanded past the intended audience of children, families, and fans of the franchise by establishing characters, the character's internal conflicts, and the relationships between the characters. The movie was well-made and, of course, especially appealed to children.
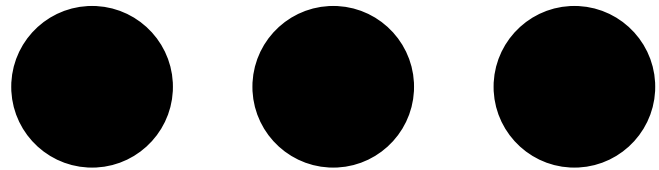
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The movie was funny — the jokes told always hit, and the humorous scenes always made me laugh, even if they could be silly. The movie had an established plot, great characters, and everything a movie would need. Not only did kids find amusement, but adults did, too.

The reviews were off the charts: The critics on Rotten Tomatoes were not fans, giving a 59-percent rating, but the audience rated it a whopping 96 percent. On Google Reviews, the consensus was 4.7 out of 5.

Carla Yasis, on Google Reviews, said, "*The Super Mario Bros. Movie* was the best movie I've ever seen." And Ailed Andrade agreed: "Watching the Mario movie as a fan was truly an ethereal experience."

Another indication of how well-received the movie was is the fact that it is the "highest-grossing video game movie of all time and is 2023's biggest movie so far," according to Gamespot.

Surprisingly, with its success, the critics did not enjoy the film as much. According to CBR, the pacing was too fast, it was predictable, and it lacked heart, among other things — all of which I disagree with or were intentionally done. The pacing was quick, yes, but the movie was intended not to waste time and still outdid itself plot-wise. Predictability? Sure — it was made for children, so that hardly matters. And lacking heart seems like something that cannot be judged by people who did not produce the film.

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Before watching the film, I was admittedly skeptical about the cast; there were so many big names, such as Jack Black (the voice of Bowser) and Anya Taylor-Joy (the voice of Princess Peach). All of these people were famous actors, but they had no previous experience as voice actors.

Surprisingly, I have no complaints about the voice acting in the film. Anya Taylor-Joy was a perfect fit, and Chris Pratt did not do too poorly as Mario. And although I never imagined Jack Black could voice Bowser, he did an exceptional job at doing so.

The animation was smooth, colorful, and vibrant; the world and atmosphere built by it were beautiful, and there were apparent contrasts of color schemes in the real versus fantasy world. Despite what critics claim, much heart went into the production of this quality movie.

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