

You're listening to imaginary Worlds, a show about how we create them and why we suspend our disbelief. I'm Eric Molinsky.

We have been living through the era of Peak TV – where there is too much out there for any one person to watch. And it seems like everybody has a favorite show that they love and can't believe it didn't get more notice.

So, we asked you to tell us about your favorite sci-fi fantasy shows or movies that you think are unsung gems. And because of the strikes in Hollywood, we're going to need some stuff to watch soon. By the way, this episode has a few spoilers as people discuss why they like these shows or movies.

The previous episode was about shows that were canceled too soon. And several listeners had suggested The Dark Crystal: Age of Resistance for that episode. The show came out on Netflix in 2019 and it was canceled after one season.

And I also considered putting it in the previous episode because I was upset when The Age of Resistance got canceled. But Dawn Fancher suggested it for this episode. She liked the show, but she thought one season was enough, and I was really curious to hear why.

The Netflix series was a prequel to the 1982 film The Dark Crystal, which was a passion project for Jim Henson. So, I should summarize the original film if you haven't seen it. The story took place on a planet called Thra. It was ruled by these repulsive vulture-like creatures called Skeksis. By the way, it's worth watching the movie alone just for the puppetry of the Skeksis which was really cool.

CLIP: SKEKSIS EATING

The Skeksis had wiped out a society of small, elvish characters called Gelflings. There are only two Gelflings left in the world.

JEN: You, Gelfling, like me?

KIRA: Yes

JEN: But I thought I was the only one.

KIRA: I thought I was.

To be honest, I thought the Gelfling heroes in the original film were kind of bland. And because of that, I never found the story in the original film as compelling as the visuals.

But the prequel takes place when the Gelflings were thriving. They have this rich culture with competing alliances. It's almost like Game of Thrones with puppets. And most of the Gelflings are slow to realize the Skeksis mean them harm.

SELADON: I heard you and that thing.

BREA: His name is Lore!

SELADON: Conspiring to end Skeksis rule. What happens to the Gelfling if the Skeksis fall? What happens to mother?

BREA: Is it mother you're worried about, or her crown?

By the way, if you're sick of CGI, this show is beautifully hand crafted. They do use CG but very subtly for added realism. That's what Dawn got into the show.

DAWN: It's such a beautiful world and there's so many little creatures and puppets. Like, like every time they, like they're walking through the wilderness and every time there's a shot of them walking somewhere, there's like two or three little critters to look at. And it's just, it was just really gorgeous.

I had a friend who, his main, he liked the show, but his main problem was he thought it was unbelievable that the Gelflings would be so, uh, naive to think that the Skeksis were really like these benevolent rulers, that it would've taken them so long to realize they're being duped. And I was like, really? You found that unrealistic, that part <laugh> really un, like, that would never happen in the real world. <laugh>.

DAWN: Uh, that's another thing I liked about it actually. Yeah. Was because it, it is it really unsettling because a lot of us grew up with the Skeksis being these clear villains, you know, like people would do impressions at parties in college, you know, like it was you just a couple words in the voice and like, you know, you know, that's a villain. So to see characters who you relate to worshipping them and saying, of course they have our best interests at heart is really off-putting. And I, I'm pretty sure that was done deliberately. It really is like, what are we accepting as normal that isn't normal? So I thought that was very nice little subtle touch that they did to really make you uncomfortable for a little bit to see people being like, oh no, of course they're great.

Yeah. So I was, I was thinking that this would be a gone too soon, but I thought it was really interesting in your email that you made the argument that it's okay, it didn't get a second season. That in fact it's not worth continuing the timeline up until this genocide, that this is actually a good spot to stop. I thought that was a really interesting idea. What, how come?

DAWN: Well, I kind of did want more and like in rewatching it again, there was more like hints of like maybe a second season than I remembered. because you know, I watched

it a few years ago. I mean, I don't know, because I don't know what story they had, so I didn't know what, what had come up to here, but I didn't feel like some other kind of gone too soon things you do feel like there's a cliffhanger that the story is incomplete. The way they crafted this story, and maybe it was done intentionally. I don't know. It felt like that there was probably that this was a good stopping point and that if they had, you know, maybe there's more story, but there would be a number of stopping points. You know, it was kind of a story of the resistance to the Skeksis that, you know, is going to like go to this really dark place before you get to like, the original movie. But I feel like it, it told the story of like, of unity and like, you know, how they get to a place where they're going to have to go through a dark time.

But what about the idea that you're, we know that this is going to fail. We already have knowledge of the future that it's going to fail. They're all going to die. You know, that there's something about ending on an earlier point in the timeline that you feel like kind of spares us from that to some degree. Or, or makes the story about something very different. You know, makes the story about how we treat each other and how it matters to do the right thing. Even if you can't stop an apocalypse that's coming.

DAWN: I guess it's nice that it spared us. You know, I, I don't need to have all my media bathed in sadness just to make it serious. But I do think it's more, the second thing for me about why this is a good point to stop because, you know, we've got global warming. I just, my community was just devastated by floods, you know, a month ago. Even though you, you, you watch this knowing that, that they're going to like lose basically, at least temporarily, they're going to lose pretty badly. The story is still about them coming together, still about them deciding that they need to fight, that there is something to fight, and that they do want to fight for themselves and for Thra, the planet, you know, they don't know that they're doomed, right? But we do, but we're still rooting for them. We're still rooting for them even though we know they lose because how they fight and their decision to fight is important. What we do and how we work together still matters. And we still care about those characters. We still want good things to happen to them, even though we know they're not going to win in as far as saving their, their species or preventing like a ecological, you know, uh, devastation. But we still care about them, which means we should still care about ourselves <laugh>

We heard from another listener about a show that could've fallen into the category of gone too soon because it was canceled after one season. And his show he suggested was also about characters trying to stop a planet-wide extinction.

Odyssey 5 was a Canadian show from 2002 starring Peter Weller. It aired on Showtime in the U.S. The premise is that a group of astronauts were orbiting the Earth when our planet is suddenly destroyed by something mysterious.

And then an alien shows up and takes them aboard his ship. The alien appears to them in the form of a human, so as not to freak them out. He says the same thing happened to his planet. He's been going around the galaxy, trying to find survivors who can help him stop whatever is destroying these worlds.

THE SEEKER: I pick up radio signals, I follow them to their source but the source is gone, I'm always too late.

SARAH: Like this time?

THE SEEKER: Yes, and no.

The alien sends the consciousnesses of the astronauts back into their own bodies five years earlier so they can figure out how to stop this apocalypse. Mike Shaw has been thinking about the show a lot lately because it deals with A.I.

MIKE: It's interesting because they never put that forward as the premise. Like they don't talk about, or they didn't at the time because AI was total science fiction. So, the idea that AI was somehow practical and accessible and uh, you know, widely understood in the population wasn't there. So, it's not as part of the premise, but once they get back to the present or their present, which is 2002, the, the driving villain seems to be AI. And throughout the, the series, uh, there's only one season, but throughout the, the season, they come to discover that not only does AI exist, but there are different kinds of AI. And they have coalesced to a point where they, uh, are sentient and there are different entities scattered across our nascent internet. Are they the ones that destroyed us? Where did they come from? And the themes of AI that we think about today, like the issues like, uh, will it take over jobs? Can it replace humans doing things?

It's interesting because like the Matrix came out about three years earlier, and that was like, the computers got smart and killed us, you know, or turn us into batteries. This seems to be a much more subtle nuance, like a lot, it kind of reflects the, the debates that are happening now where people are like, is this good? Is this bad? Like, we don't, you know, there's different AI like, like some of it we already use. We don't realize it. We like it. And it seems to be like in that kind of murky place.

MIKE: Not only that, but it, what one thing, the series never resolves. And I will get into spoiler here because this is where it, it kind of clicks in your brain when you've learned this. When you get to the end there's a cliffhanger and there's this implication that, wait

a minute, there's a group of humans that are also working on AI. They discover the, the protagonist discovered that the AI they've been fighting against might have actually been extraterrestrial. So is AI the enemy or is alien AI the enemy and human AI is good?

Hmm.

MIKE: You know, they even meet, uh, what they call a sentient, an AI, that that gives itself form and they meet one and he's like goofy and funny and it's a comedic episode, but he's like a good guy and he's an ally.

So it came out in 2002, right?

MIKE: Yeah.

Post 9/11 sci-fi is really interesting too because it deals with some really heavy stuff in a way that people were having trouble sort of like trying to grapple with a lot of like really dark, big ideas, uh, world shattering ideas, you know, Fringe, um, I think 28 Days Later, you know, in the Walking Dead. I just think that people are going to look back and see a kind of interesting introspective weight to that kind of early 2000 sci-fi.

MIKE: Not only that, so it's interesting you say that because the other show that I think about when I hear post 9/11 as I think of Battlestar Galactica.

Right.

MIKE: Because that was super heavy on the post nine 11 stuff. Like it hits you over the head with it. This show came out about the same time. And what's fascinating is that if you watch this show Odyssey Five, and if you're watching Battlestar Galactica, at the same time, you will actually hear musical echoes.

Hmm.

MIKE: And it is heavy on like the oboe and the strings that it sounds eerily similar to Battlestar Galactica.

But do you find now that when you try to recommend the show to people, they look at you like, uh, if it's so great, how come I never heard of it <laugh>

MIKE: <laugh>? Well, uh, so I think one of the things that you had said when you had talked about this show is that how we've been in this era of peak TV and now with the writers and, uh, actors strike, there's going to be not much produced. Just the idea of being in peak TV. People know that there's stuff they haven't heard of before.

Hmm.

MIKE: So I actually maintain like a list on a site where I have a list of all my shows that I recommend to people. I call it, oh my God, you haven't seen this exclamation point. And I just share that. And there's like 50 or 60 shows on there. I always tell myself, when I retire, I'll have all this show to watch <laugh> all this TV to watch till I die! <laugh>

BREAK

There are also classic shows many of us haven't watched yet. Like if you've never seen *Twin Peaks*, if it came out before you were born, it's going to be new for you.

Toon Van de Poot wrote to us from Belgium to recommend a classic comedy: *Spaced*. The show was created by Simon Pegg, who went on to star and co-write the movies *Shaun of the Dead*, *Hot Fuzz* and *The World's End*.

Spaced ran from 1999 to 2001 in the UK. It was a cult hit back then. I was introduced to it by friends who worked in the animation industry with me because the show was all about being a geek.

Simon Pegg is playing a character called Tim, who lives an unglamorous life in middle class London. He and his roommate have all sorts of mundane things going on – dealing with relationships, jobs, friends, annoying neighbors.

BRIAN: Can I borrow a tea bag?

TIM: Only if you bring it back. You can have a tea bag, Brian. You can't borrow one.

Because their lives are so unexciting, the characters often space out and imagine that they're in a movie, a TV shows or a video game. When Tone first discovered the show, he totally related to it.

TONE: That sort of thing where your life is really mundane. You have a, you have a job, you have an apartment that's actually quite expensive to pay on your own and that sort of thing. But in the little things of your life, you start, you inject all the stuff that you learn from, from geek culture or from references. There's an episode where they, uh, where their dog has been abducted by a vivisection lab, and they break into it. It's, it's a whole heist movie episode thing, which in itself is already a nice reference. Every one of their friends gets a, gets a code name like, like you do in Heist movie. Uh, they're named after Star Wars characters.

TIM: Sound off, Luke, Chewie, Leia, Jabba.

DAISY: Is Jabba the princess?

EVERYONE: Yes.

TOON: Like, today, I think today everybody would know that Leia is the princess book, but in the '90s, knowing who the princess is in Star, Wars was a pretty nerdy thing to be <laugh>.

Yeah. And like you're saying too, is when you love these, this particular genre, this, the stuff that you love, it's always, uh, the end of the universe or life or death in every movie, in every episode. And the stakes are so low in your life that there's a part of you that kind of wants to live in that other world. But, you know, it's almost frustrating because you, if you have an active imagination, you feel like you're almost halfway there, but you know, you'll never get there.

TOON: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And it's, it's only when I was like 20 or something, I didn't have that imagination that I think Spaced is one of the reasons that I started to develop that sort of thing to insert, you know, like Scotty references or Star Wars references in everyday life situations.

Tone had another recommendation -- the movie, Erik the Viking from 1989. It's not exactly Monty Python, but it's Python adjacent. Terry Jones wrote, directed and appears in it. John Cleese is also in it, but the main actor is Tim Robbins.

It's about a Viking who just isn't pillaging and fighting. He doesn't see the point. So, he goes on a quest to ask the gods to end the age of Ragnarok.

THORFINN: Nobody's ever crossed the rainbow bridge to Asgard.

ERIK: We'd be the first!

TIM: You mean we'd be dead?

ERIK: No, we'd be the first living men to set foot in the halls of the gods.

At one point in the movie, the characters go to an island called Hy-Brasil.

TOON: And the thing with Hy-Brasil is it's enchanted. If, if a drop of blood is spilled on the island, it sinks beneath the waves. Very interesting climate change metaphor, I think, uh, of course that happens the islands, because there's Vikings on the island. Murder happens and the island starts sinking. And the inhabitants of the island to where, uh, they're all at, they're very nice to each other all the time. <laugh>, because they, they can't kill each other. <laugh>. They, they have to avoid any possibility of violence.

ERIK: But how do you take revenge?

THORFINN: How do you punish people?

TIM: How do you defend yourselves?

KING: We don't have to! We're all so terribly nice to each other!

TOON: But then the island starts sinking, and the inhabitants of the islands don't believe it's sinking. They just keep saying, no, no, no, no, no, no. We have all we have, we have things in place that, that this cannot happen.

KING: It can't happen.

ERIK: But it is, look!

KING: I already appointed the chancellor to a committee. In the meantime, I suggest we have a sing song!

TOON: All up to the point where they're, they're all underwater and they're all gone.

Do you find it hard to convince people to watch Spaced or Erik the Viking?

TOON: Yeah, because they're old. Today, uh, being a geek is really mainstream with the MCU and like, Star Wars and, and everything. But it's, it's the easy part. You know, it's not the watching the really weird movie that's old and that Right. Uh, that's strange. And that doesn't fit with sort of commercial, commercially produced content of today. You have to feel a bit like an outcast to enjoy it. I mean, I don't want to exaggerate, but you do have to have this feeling of being not normal to empathize with the characters in, in that sort of content. And Erik, the Viking is an, he's an outsider in this violence ruled Viking world. Similarly, Tim in Spaced is, is a bit of an outsider in, in the adult world.

You're talking about the other stuff too, that's, um, more accessible and those things. The fantasy is you're one of the Avengers, you're one of the Jedi, you know, it's a little, it's different.

TOON: Yeah, true. Yeah. Yeah. You're, you're, you're the hero. You're the, the big, shiny, famous person. <laugh>.

But some movies that are supposed to appeal to people who want to imagine themselves as the big shiny famous person – they don't always work out either.

Drew Meyer is a podcaster – I've actually been on his Doctor Who show several times before. He wrote to us about one of his favorite films: John Carter from 2012. It's about a young Civil War veteran in the 19th century who gets transported to Mars, which has futuristic spaceships, a feisty princess, armies at war, and aliens of all shapes and sizes.

JOHN: I beg your pardon, if you could kindly stand behind me, this might get dangerous.

SFX: FIGHTING

The movie was based on the classic series by Edgar Rice Burroughs from the early 20th century. In fact, the John Carter books were some of the first science

fiction books ever. When Drew was a kid, he loved the books and the comics as well. But the movie?

DREW: It was the single biggest financial bomb in movie history.

No, it was that big?!

DREW: Yes.

Wow.

DREW: Yeah. Yeah. Almost \$300 million loss.

Wow. You got to go big or go home. I guess <laugh>.

DREW: Personally, I think the movie's financial failure sort of informed a lot of the negative reviews that we, we got around the movie.

Well, what did you think of it?

DREW: I loved it. I absolutely adored it. I absolutely adored it.

What did you love about it?

DREW: I, uh, okay, so here's the thing. Part of what I loved about his nostalgia, of seeing something that I loved in both literary form and in a graphic novel form on the big screen being realized with modern technology, I, I thought the voice acting was great. I thought most of the acting real people was great. I thought the world building was fantastic. I thought the designs were fun. I think the realization of the Martians, they're supposed to be like 15 feet tall and the, you know, massive, forearmed creatures. And, and yeah, I know that they're like eight or nine feet and the actors had to be on stilts. But I think the realization of that is truly spectacular, just that the world, uh, a giant city on mechanical legs barreling down the desert on its way to mine more <laugh> resources from the dying planet. I mean, all of this stuff is so imaginative. It was a romp. It felt pulpy and it was exciting. Let's face it, the biggest change they made from the books for the movie series is people are wearing clothing, which is not the case in the original book. So, I, you know, I think that was probably a smart choice on Disney's part.

Nobody was wearing clothing?

DREW: Yeah. It's a lot of naked folks in in the books. Yeah.

<laugh>. So, okay, so somebody's listening, they're like, oh, well maybe, this was misunderstood. Maybe I will see, I'll watch it on Disney Plus. Do you think it definitely holds up for somebody coming in cold not knowing anything about John Carter?

DREW: Uh, I think folks coming in just listening to this, give it a chance. You don't have to know anything about it. Just know that there's going to be a lot of fancy names. You don't really need to worry about that. The plot might be a little, little confusing, but again, just sit back and enjoy the ride. Like, think of it as a big suburb blockbuster popcorn film. There you go.

You know, I think that one of the problems is like, I know people who had never seen Star Wars as a kid, and they decided to finally watch it. And because Star

Wars has been stripped mined by everybody else, when they watch Star Wars, it seems like the most derivative movie they've ever seen in their life. Because everything they've seen in Star Wars, they've seen somebody else do it since Star Wars. Does John Carter have a similar problem? Because it influenced so many things, it almost feels like it's derivative of the things that it actually influenced.

DREW: That is 100% exactly accurate. Yeah, I think the, the, the directing job was originally offered Bob Zemeckis is like, nah. Now Lucas has already stripped everything he needed to out of this film.

<laugh>

DREW: Um, you know, they've got, they've got master characters called Jeddaks that are running around in this desert planet, uh, with large howling bestial characters and, you know, dark lords who had control people's minds and can shoot lightning. And, I mean, all of this stuff was taken from these books. It was inspired by like these little kids reading science fiction at a young age. You know, everybody read this. It was a hugely, hugely popular pulp science fiction story. I like these films that people don't seem to love. I don't know if it's capitalism or what it is that people just assume that the quality of a film is how much money it made. Listen, you and I both like films that didn't make much money. There are movies that are just aren't out there for everybody.

BREAK

To me, the fact that John Carter was a flop and the planned franchise never happened actually makes it more interesting. These days, I've been feeling franchise fatigue. I'm hungry for something new, something weird, something that swings for the fences. Sarah Harker wrote in to recommend a show that might fit that description.

Centaurworld is an animated series on Netflix. The main character is a warhorse who gets separated from the warrior who is riding her.

RIDER: No!

The horse – whose name is just horse -- seems to be falling off a cliff. But she snatches a magical medallion in her mouth which transports her to the world of centaurs. Her initial goal is to reunite with her rider.

SARAH: But it's her learning how to be dependent upon a community, but it's horse also telling that herd that they are, they do not have to be so isolationist in their community that they can go out and explore and see how the world has changed.

So what, how would you describe the tone of the show? Because I think it's interesting that like on it's got, it seems like it has like really has like over the top humor. It has lots of sincerity to it, but then it could also deal with like dark weighty themes. Is that right?

SARAH: <affirmative>, I would say it is a lighthearted deep dive into trauma and culture. And it is about change and growth and community. And there's also like a whole song about being in completely anxious and your coping skill is to breathe in a bag.

SONG: BREATHE IN A BAG

Yeah. Centaurworld is a musical -- like, the whole series.

SARAH: The other thing I'll warn you is that I watched this show in 2021 and I still turn to my partner and go, guess which Centaurworld song stuck in my head? Hmm. Some of them are very simple, but there's also these beautiful layers. They do a great job with light motifs in it. There's a bunch of Broadway actors in it because it was made during Covid and they couldn't be on Broadway, so they just did this weird show.

SONG: WELCOME TO CENTAURWORLD

Another other thing that Sarah like about Centaurworld is that it tells a complete story.

SARAH: It stops. Like it comes to a natural conclusion. They didn't drag it out. It feels like they understood that Netflix was only going to give them two or three seasons, so they didn't in two seasons. The characters are wildly different but make this beautiful ensemble. There's like one song where everyone's like, we don't know where food comes from in Centaurworld. because the issue is, you can't just go eat grass. The grass is grass, tars leaves or leaf tars. Like everything is a centaur.

SONG: WHERE DOES FOOD COME FROM?

SARAH: There's a character called Comfortable Doug, who's the, at the admission of the show, the most sexual attractive character you've ever met.

SONG: COMFORTABLE DOUG

SARAH: And he has a song about becoming himself, becoming comfortable. Doug, um, you know, I used to be called Comfortable Doug because that's my name, but now I am comfortable Doug and all of you can be comfortable too. And the one of the lines of the

song is like, I've never found a husband or a wife. And it's just very casual about like, like sexuality is never explicitly discussed. Not like, ooh, I but identify as bisexual, which I do. But like, characters are casually queer. Like one of the characters is coded as being trans. Again, these conversations don't really come up in the show because it's about war and trauma and musicals and becoming comfortable with yourself and being willing to embrace who you are. It is such a good show that I like, was so hesitant to watch. And then because it was 2021 and there was a huge surge, a lot of my friends ended up getting covid. So I'd like write them cards, like saying, Hey, feel better. Here's some like my media recommendations. If you would like something to do while you're stuck in your room for two weeks. And, also, Centaurworld, please join me in hell, please join me in like, just being like, breathe in a bag. Breathe in a bag.

She's right, I have not been able to get these songs out of my head. I've been around the house today singing, I'm comfortable Doug, I'm comfortable Doug...

So far, we've heard from people who are fans. But what happens when you work on a film or show that gets lost in the flood of content?

Kaitlyn Martin works in stop-motion animation. She was very proud of the work her team did on the animated film Wendell and Wild. The movie is on Netflix. It was directed by Henry Sellick, who famously did the Nightmare Before of Christmas and Coraline, and it featured the voices of Key and Peele.

WILD: We are Wendell.

WENDELL: And Wild, your personal demons.

KAT: Who?

WENDELL: You can summon us to the land of the living.

KAT: Why would I do that?

WILD: Because you can summon us to do whatever you want

KAT: Huh. The only thing I want is my parents, and they're dead.

WENDELL: Uh huh. Conference. We can't raise the dead!

WILD: Well, we do know how to lie.

WENDELL: Oh! I like that plan!

KAITLYN: My previous experience before joining Wendell and Wild was only in pre-production. So, when I got to join Wendell and Wild, it was the full momentum of, you know, we have 35 stages running at the same time and this is what it looks like to have camera team and the ADs and lighting and scenic. Everybody just kind of like mad little ants running around and, uh, getting it across the finish line. As we got towards the end of the shoot, they tagged me in as Puppet Wrangler, which is a person, part of the team

who helps move puppets from the fabricators. So, they're doing costume hair, uh, a tensioning the armatures to make sure everything functions well and then getting it into the hands of the animators for the shots.

So, when you were working on the film, was there a lot of excitement among the crew of like, given the talent involved that you were working on this film?

KAITLYN: Oh yeah, it was huge. There were folks who were part of the crew who had worked with Henry during Nightmare, some folks who had been there since Coralline. So, there were some people who have been part of Henry's team since the beginning of his career and his work, and there was a lot of history there. We had folks on our team who were fresh out of undergrad, so this was, you know, their first film out of school. Lot of passion, lot of excitement around getting it off the ground.

Wow. So, when the movie was released, uh, did it get the kind of attention you were hoping?

KAITLYN: It was interesting because, you know, we, no one understands how the Netflix algorithm works and so for us, we were, you know, this was the project that we'd been working on every day for many, many years and then you don't really have control over how Netflix distributes it or how their algorithm works or really what that looks like. So we, we got a very limited theatrical release, so there were some theaters that showed it in, I believe L.A., New York, a couple in Canada. And we had a local release, uh, for all the artists to get to enjoy, bring friends and family and get industry support from other stop-mo people here in Portland. But when it came to looking for it on the Netflix homepage for folks who didn't work on it and people who might not be plugged into the stop most scene, I don't know if it reached them, so we'd be like, oh, Wendell and Wild just came out and I don't know if it if it landed with that impact to people who didn't know that it was being made.

For. I think for anyone working on a movie or a TV show at any, no matter what you're doing, it, it'll be, it's going to be frustrating if a project comes out and you feel like it's not seen enough. But I feel like with stop motion animation, the word people often use is painstaking <laugh> to describe it. Um, yeah, I mean so much of it is about like putting in the time because you know there's going to be a payoff in the end. So does that feel kind of extra frustrating with something like this?

KAITLYN: Oh, I think so. And very much as a labor of love. You want as many people to see it as possible. I think Henry Sellick obviously has a huge cult following and for us to, for us to contribute to that body of work was incredible. And you also yearn for why a cult following, why can't we have the greater world, uh, championing this? Yeah. Painstaking <laugh> labor of love. <laugh>,

What have you found in terms of when you went, when you start pitching it to people, have you found like, okay, this, this actually kind of hooks them? How do you describe it?

KAITLYN: Yeah, I would describe it as it's a lot of the classic ingredients of Henry that the audience has come to know and love. It has a very specific visual style that he also developed with Pablo Lovato, who is the character designer who did the illustrated passes of passes. Jordan Peele and Keegan Michael Key as Wendell and Wild Henry wrote it in conjunction with Jordan Peele. And Kee and Peele are two of the main voice actors. So you're getting their comedic sensibilities plugged into it. And then that's paired with, uh, the protagonist Kat, who, you know, she's gone through incredible hardship in her youth that has impact how she has grown now in her teenage years. She is trying to find her direction and navigates coming of age in a very profound and grabbing life by the horns kind of way. And all of those intersect for a really wild ride. ***There's not going to be much of a fall TV. There's probably going to be hardly any bit of a Fall TV season. People when be looking for stuff to watch this is perfect for like, you know, the Halloween time. October.***

KAITLYN: Yeah, absolutely. Um, I know last year when it came out, it came out I think a week before Halloween, so we didn't get a lot of lead up into getting to get the momentum going for Halloween. But this year, yeah, absolutely. There's, there's demons, there's monsters, there's spooky, undead souls, fake blood, <laugh>, you know, all the, all the good stuff you had come to love.

One thing all these movies and shows have in common – they took creative risks. Those choices may not have always paid off in the ratings or the box office, but they still went for it. Fantasy genres have so much room for creativity if people are willing to go there. A.I. wouldn't know how.

Happy watching everyone. And take your time. It might be a while.

That's it for this week, thanks for listening. Special thanks to Dawn Fancher, Toon Van de Poot, Drew Meyer, Sarah Harker, Kaitlyn Martin and Mike Shaw – who, like me, is ordinarily from the Boston area. But unlike me, he still has the accent.

MIKE: You know what's so funny is I lived in Beijing for 11 years and the Beijing accent is the exact opposite of the Boston accent. So, we drop our Rs, they add Rs on to words.

Mmm.

MIKE: There's like actually a guy from the Boston area who moved to China to do standup, and he had this great joke, you know, uh, Boston lost all their R's and they just went to Beijing

<laugh>

In the show notes, I put a list of everything we've recommended and some of the stuff our guests recommended that I wasn't able to fit into this episode.

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