

# It's a plunderful life

 By Eugene Yiga

18 Apr 2012

They've done it again. The studio that brought us brilliant animated films like [Arthur Christmas](#), *Flushed Away*, *Wallace and Gromit*, and *Chicken Run* has come out with another hit in *The Pirates! Band of Misfits*. With a story that's simple enough for kids to follow and humour that's complex enough for adults to appreciate, seeing this movie is bound to be a barrel of fun.



As the adventure begins, we meet the Pirate Captain (Hugh Grant) and his oh-so-luxuriant beard. It doesn't matter that he's not particularly good at what he does; his crew loves him anyway. (These misfits are referred to only by their amusing descriptions, like the Pirate with a Scarf, the Pirate with Gout, and the Surprisingly Curvaceous Pirate, who nobody realises is a woman in disguise.) Still, the Pirate Captain wants nothing more than to win the coveted Pirate of the Year award. Because he's lost over 20 times in a row, he calculates that his odds are now astronomically high. "Ooh, mathematics!" remarks Albino Pirate.

Unfortunately, it won't be easy. He'll have to plunder like mad to get enough treasure to compete with the other contenders. As expected, this doesn't go well. It's no wonder that he's tempted by the offer that he receives from Charles Darwin, the only person who recognises that the Pirate Captain's "big boned" parrot is actually a dodo. Taking the bird back to London could bring the Pirate Captain the fame he desperately wants, but it could also lead him right to Queen Victoria, who hates pirates with a passion. It looks like this band of misfits is about to get a lot more than they bargained for!

## Stop-motion animation with clay

Even though the movie is just under ninety minutes long, it took about five years to make. Most of it was done using stop-motion animation with clay, which makes it particularly impressive when you consider the high level of detail. It's hard not to be amazed when you're watching scenes like one with a bathtub coming down the stairs or another with an epic battle on the queen's ship. I'm still not quite sure how they managed to do those, what with multiple characters that are effectively suspended in air!

Screenwriter Gideon Defoe based on the movie on two of his children's books. (He's written a total of five so far.) The storyline isn't entirely unpredictable, but the execution is of such high standard that I can't wait to see what adventures come next!

*Rating: 4 out of 5*

*Running Time: 1 hour, 27 minutes*

*Age Restriction: PG*

## ABOUT EUGENE YIGA

Eugene graduated from the University of Cape Town with distinctions in financial accounting and classical piano. He then spent over two-and-a-half years working in branding and communications at two of South Africa's top market research companies. Eugene also spent over three-and-a-half years at an eLearning start-up, all while building his business as an award-winning writer. Visit [www.eugeneyiga.com](http://www.eugeneyiga.com), follow @eugeneyiga on Twitter, or email [hello@eugeneyiga.com](mailto:hello@eugeneyiga.com) to say, um, hello.

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