

Courtesy photo

Sally and Jack Skellington from "Nightmare Before Christmas" proclaim their love.

## Tim Burton's Nightmare has incredible animation

reat story telling it ain't, but Tim Burton's *The Nightmare Before Christmas* is nonetheless one of the more entertaining movies of the season.

The movie tells the tale of Jack Skellington, the Pumpkin King, who is responsible for creating Halloween. But after yet another frighteningly successful round of creeping and crawling, Jack decides doing the spooky doesn't cut it anymore. In his search for something new, Jack stumbles upon Christmastown and is immediately taken in by the holiday's cheerfulness.

Jack returns to Halloween town and tells the assembled ghastly ghouls of his discovery of Christmas and its leader, "Sandy Claws." In his quest to bring Christmas to Halloweentown, Jack decides to commandeer the holiday for his own.

Ultimately, Jack's plan is shot down in flames, literally, by a surface-to-air missile. He returns to Halloweentown in time to rescue Santa and Sally, who has a thing for the bony pumpkin head, from Oogie Boogie, the only truly evil resident of Halloweentown.

For any other movie, a plot this thin would sound its death knell. But Nightmare isn't any other movie. Rather, it is quite simply the best stop-motion animation movie ever. Nightmare takes the technique that allowed King Kong to climb the Empire State Building and Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer to lead a fat man out the fog, and creates a flowing, realistic three-dimensional world that simple animation could never hope to bring to life.



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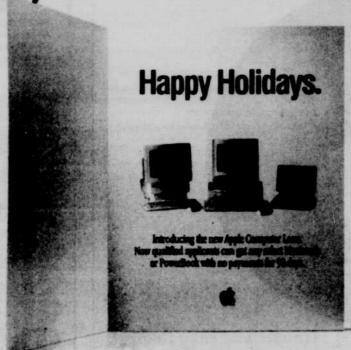
Barrel, Shock, and Lock are three characters from the delightful movie.

If ever a movie screamed for a specialeffects Oscar, this is the one. *Nightmare* is one of those rare movies where the absence of a plot may actually benefit the film, because it allows the viewer to enjoy the stellar animation unimpeded by having to follow a story line.

Great as the animation is, however, it is not the movie's strongest aspect. That honor goes to the movie's soundtrack. Scored by Danny Elfman, formerly of Oingo Boingo fame (limited as it was), the

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