

'Pan's Labyrinth' Oscar-worthy

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A&E Editor

Pan's Labyrinth is a dark, brutal and tragic movie that asks many questions about obedience and the loss of innocence. It's also one of the best films I've seen in years.

The film is set in Spain circa 1944, right after the Spanish Civil War, and focuses most of its attention on a young girl named Ofelia (Ivana Baquero).

Ofelia moves into a small country cottage with her pregnant mother, Carmen (Ariadna Gil), and her stepfather, Vidal (Sergi Lopez), who's a captain in Franco's army and has been sent to this little hovel with his soldiers to exterminate a group of revolutionaries.

As soon as they arrive, Ofelia discovers a labyrinth behind the cottage. Later that night, she follows a fairy into the labyrinth where she discovers a faun (Doug Jones).

The faun informs Ofelia she is the long-lost daughter of the King of the Underworld, and that she is to perform three dangerous tasks in

order to go back to her home world and reunite with her real father.

From here on out, writer-director Guillermo del Toro (*The Devil's Backbone*, *Hellboy*) brilliantly juxtaposes Ofelia's fantastical adventure with the harsh reality of Franco's Spain.

The acting is virtually flawless, especially by Lopez, who plays the incredibly wicked Captain Vidal. Lopez's performance was so realistic and believable that one would think he's always played a villain, but no, he's mostly been in Spanish comedies.

It really irks me that *Pan's Labyrinth* wasn't nominated for best picture at this year's Academy Awards. The six films nominated are all good, but they're mostly the same kinds of films that get nominated every year. There's the bio-pic, the pseudo-indie film, the film directed by a legendary director and a couple of others that nobody cares about.

Everyone, watch *Pan's Labyrinth* instead of the Oscars. It offers up something we haven't seen in a while: creativity.



The Faun (Doug Jones) tells Ofelia (Ivana Baquero) one of the tasks she must perform in order to reunite with her real father in Guillermo del Toro's latest film, *Pan's Labyrinth*.

Blue Man Group beats on tubes, sells out Memorial Coliseum

Laura Cameron

The Clackamas Print

"Like dropping acid and then watching the Smurfs."

So one audience member commented as he left the Blue Man Group concert Saturday

at the Memorial Coliseum. I wouldn't know, having never tried acid, but the experience certainly was overwhelming.

The same can't be said for the opening act. DJ Mike Relm was unimpressive, doing nothing more than repetitively scratching and occasionally playing

with a beatbox over the top of unmixed classic songs. Such mediocre fare, especially when played over the Charlie Brown theme song, did not do much to excite the audience.

More joy was derived from the text crawl on the screens behind the stage, encouraging the crowd to "please yell if you are paying attention" and asking various questions meant to determine if there were any "megastars" in the audience. "If you think it's a good idea to climb a palm tree after drinking an entire bottle of Jack Daniel's, please yell now," the screens instructed. "If you just yelled: congratulations. You are Keith Richards. If you did not just yell: congratulations. You are not Keith Richards."

And when Relm finally vacated the stage, the screens informed us: "Ladies and gentlemen: it is now time.

"To pee."

At which point the lights

came back up for a 15-minute intermission.

The Blue Man Group put on a fantastic show. They are very much percussion-based, but go far beyond basic drums. Using different lengths of tubing and flexible rods to make their music, they sound completely unlike any other band out there. The focus of the tour — "How to Be a Megastar" — was hilarious and guaranteed plenty of audience participation.

Most of the songs played were from their latest album, *The Complex*. Admittedly, most of the lyrics from *The Complex* are rather emo, returning often to the theme of "masks worn in public" and railing against a homogenized culture. However, they manage to avoid the whiny, teen-angst vibe, and the whole concept is later mocked in the "How to Be a Megastar Instructional Video," absolving the group of any emo wrongdoing.

The finale consisted of two very dissimilar songs. First was "Exhibit 13," a slow, quiet instrumental played to a video montage of papers that blew into the courtyard of Blue Man Group's New York studio of Sept. 11, 2001. It was mercifully devoid of patriotic browbeating or overbearing religiosity — touching tribute to a tragedy that obviously affected them closely.

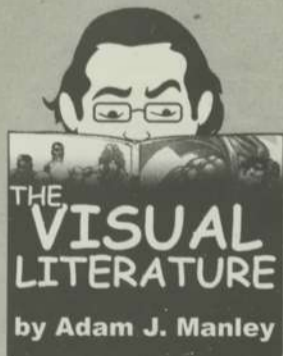
The night ended with an explosive rendition of The Who's "Teenage Wasteland." The song was perfectly suited to Blue Man Group's style and instrumentation. The strobes, black lights and paper streamers — fired out over the crowd with the message "You're all wasted" — was the perfect ending to a high-energy, highly creative show.

Blue Man Group are talented and superb performers. No wonder their show sold out — something that doubtless couldn't be said about the Blazers going on at the same time.



The Blue Man Group entertains thousands at a sold-out stadium show during their *Complex Tour*.

New 'Wonder Woman' film has fans' panties in a bunch



adapting comic books to film, costumes are a hot button for comic geeks and movie aficionados alike.

The comic geeks want a true adaptation of their favorite hero or heroine's iconic costume. Moviegoers want to see something that doesn't look like Gene Simmons and Michael Jackson tried to design costumes for the WWE's production of *Jesus Christ: Superstar*.

Vibrant, colorful costumes and underwear on the outside look gorgeous on the crisp, pen-inked page. But when translating a comic to the silver screen, the audience would be hard-pressed to believe in a gruff, tough Wolverine dressed in yellow spandex and blue briefs.

When filmmakers change the costumes for the movies, however, fans gripe. Many a pimply fan-



Internet Photo

boy threatens that even the slightest change to his idol would bring about a scenario involving torches, pitchforks and scathing blogs.

It's happening right now: one of the big comic-to-film debates on the Internet right now is over

Joss Whedon, at the helm of the upcoming *Wonder Woman* movie, and his proclamation that the iconic Amazon will not bear her signature "star-spangled panties."

For those who don't know, part of *Wonder Woman's* traditional costume includes a blue bottom with white stars arranged in patterns that vary depending on the artist. For a long time, this pattern stuck close to an almost polka-dot scheme.

No offense to Lynda Carter, *Wonder Woman* of 70s television, but it looks ridiculous on screen.

In recent years, artists discovered they could arrange them into a more pleasant, "V"-shaped formation. It makes for a much prettier picture.

Until, that is, one imagines what it would look like in 3-D

and realizes that it's nothing more than a patriotic arrow screaming, "Vagina here!"

Sure, Superman gets away with flashing his bright red underoos at the world, but he's the exception that proves the rule.

Superman is cheesy. He's intentionally cheesy. He's a symbol of the good old days, of more innocent times that never actually existed. He's a dream, an ideal. The character exudes naïveté. The fact that he puts his clothes on in the wrong order is part of that appeal.

But most comic book characters don't work in that mold, and comic fans need to face reality: for the characters they love to be loved by the movie-watching masses, the colorful pedophile outfits have to go.

No, we don't need bat-nipples. But we also don't need to feel obligated to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance to a patriotic crotch.