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Teletoon Detour Pilot Project: News and Reviews, part II

By Mike Valiquette



I had a chance a couple of weeks back to catch all three screenings of the Teletoon Detour Pilots at the Ottawa International Animation Festival. I wrote about the first night [here](#).

So, apparently I didn't like the Wireless Family. But I did like Angora Napkin, which should come as no surprise to my friends and any regular readers. Nerdland: meh. Professionally

executed, but just didn't come together.

The second night gave us Ninjamaica, from Lenz Entertainment, Celebutard Nation, from Nelvana, and **Dunce Bucket, from Nunchuks Pilot Inc. and Fresh TV.**

Dunce Bucket was hilarious. Hands down the funniest offering of the bunch, not just of night two, but of all three screenings. The audience was in stitches. Now, this is a little hard for me to say, because Angora Napkin remains my favourite show of the lot, and I'm never not going to dream of a world where Angora Napkin is an international sensation and my daughter carries them to school on her lunchbox everyday, but consarn it! Dunce Bucket was funny. If any show goes to series it will be this one. Kind of a no-brainer.

It's a sketch show. Short skits, quick pacing, a variety of animated styles, some slick, some deliberately amateurish. Even the slower bits got funnier as the show progressed. And I have to tip my hat to Elliot Animation. They grabbed a great cross section of Toronto talent to direct, or art direct, the individual segments. There are maybe 3 or 4 names I didn't see in the credits that should be there. Well done to all involved.



Ninjamaica was stronger than I expected. Now, to be fair, my expectations were quite low. It's the kind of high-concept pitch I tend to hate.

But the finished product was stronger than it's premise, with some

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[Puny Goes Gabba For Robbert Bobbert](#)
More Yo Gabba Gabba! goodness today from Puny Entertainment. It's their second collaboration with Robbert Bobbert and The Bubble Machine, a spin-off childrens project from Apples in Stereo frontman Robert Schneider. The first was posted here back in September. Here's That's My Family... Related posts Comic-Con 2007 Wrap-up (3) Y [...]

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Don Ivan Punchatz R.I.P.
Larry Roibal alerted me this morning with this post on his blog to the death of Don Ivan Punchatz. Its always sad when a legendary illustrator pass away... but this passing is especially unfortunate when we learn that Punchatz's widow is now burdened with massive health care bills due to the artist not having [...]

@ Mayerson On Animation

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genuinely funny moments. If you hurry, it is still airing at www.thedetour.ca, but only for another day.

Celebutard Nation was largely forgettable. Pretty standard fare that got a few laughs but never really clicked.

Night 3 brought us Space Knights, from the now-defunct Fatkat Animation, Fugget About it, from 9 Story, Chinatown Cops, from Portfolio, and Drop Dead Gorgeous, produced by Cinemaria.

Space Knights was pretty solid. Maybe the best of the middle range shows. But that's a tough call. Fugget About It surprised me a bit, like Ninjamaica. It was stronger than it's premise and certainly exceeded my expectations. Chinatown

Cops had a few laughs, but I found the aesthetic distracting. Some nice moments though. With a little work it could develop realtively well. Drop Dead Gorgeous did nothing for me though. It didn't offend me the way Wireless did, but it got close. I may have dozed a bit during this 22 minute effort.



chinatown cops

So here's the big picture.

Two clear frontrunners: Angora Napkin, a true cartoon the likes of which we haven't seen come out of Canada before, and Dunce Bucket, which I grudgingly admit was the funniest show of the lot and a no-brainer for a series.

Two at the bottom: Drop Dead Gorgeous, which was just bad, and the Wireless Family, in a league of offensive terribleness all it's own.

And that leaves the pack in the middle. These shows are what I expected to see. Some laughs, varying levels of animation quality, typically Canadian in that Bob and Doug kinda way. Of these, going by audience reaction, Nerdland and Celebutard Nation came in at the bottom, Space Knights, Ninjamaica and Fugget About It at the top, and Chinatown Cops squarley in the middle. Teletoon won't break any new ground with these shows, they're animated place holders that don't distinguish themselves by being either excellent or terrible.

I will say this though, congrats to Teletoon for getting this whole project off the ground. Of ten show, there was some terrible, there was a lot of ok, and we actually got some excellent. That's amazing to me. This project is an expensive experiment, and, in my opinion, a successful one. I expected Angora Napkin to be my clear favourite. I know the creators and am familiar with the show. I walked into this with a huge bias. And it's brilliant. Just as brilliant as I expected. But we got Dunce Bucket too! And it's such a brazen entertainer! This is more than I hoped for, that's for sure.

The shows are all going to be online, go to www.thedetour.ca to see them. Like I mentioned, today's the last day for Ninjamaica, and tomorrow Angora Napkin will begin its week in the rotation. Go see these shows for yourself. Give feedback, this is what Teletoon is looking for. Speak freely and clearly.

I've got some more to say about this whole Pilot thing, but that will

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have to keep for the next post. I'll share with you my conversation with Athena Georgaklis from Teleton. C'mon back for a read.

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One Response to “Teleton Detour Pilot Project: News and Reviews, part II”



Rob.A

October 30, 2009 at 8:05 am

Great reviews Mike. Having seen all of these I have to agree with you on all counts.

#863

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