

INTO THE WONDERWOODS/ ANGELO DANS LA FORÊT MYSTÉRIEUSE

Original version: French/ English subtitles



Directors: *Vincent Paronnaud & Alexis Ducord*

Release Date (France): *October 23, 2024*

Genre: *Adventure, Animation, Family, Fantasy*

Countries of origin: *France, Luxemburg*

Run Time: *81 min.*

AGE APPROPRIATENESS: OPINIONS

In the Forest is a funny film full of twists and turns to enjoy with the family and from 7 years old. A first-degree reading will take the youngest on board while the societal criticism, clichés, references, thumbing of the nose and notes of humor will seduce the older ones.

<https://guide.benshi.fr/films/angelo-dans-la-foret-mysterieuse/2311#:~:text=Angelo%20dans%20la%20for%C3%AAt%20myst%C3%A9rieuse%20est%20un%20film%20dr%C3%B4le%20et,humour%20s%C3%A9duiront%20les%20plus%20grands.>



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RECOMMENDED FROM 6 YEARS OF AGE – Allociné

Into the Wonderwoods is aimed at a family audience and is suitable for viewers aged of 6 and above. *European Animation Journal*

SYNOPSIS

Angelo, a ten-year-old boy, lives with his father, mother, and two siblings. The family drives to see Angelo's beloved but ailing grandmother— but at a rest stop, Angelo is accidentally left behind. From there, Angelo convinces himself to venture into the forest to find his family. In the titular woods, he encounters a variety of spectacular talking creatures, including a squirrel, Fabrice, who wishes to fly; Franky, a fast-talking frog with a caterpillar friend; a fluffy cloud with anger management issues; Zaza, a young ogre girl who takes a liking to Angelo, and Goouh, who takes the form of a very large but friendly bipedal grass monster. To get to his grandmother, Angelo must join them to battle a villain, Ultra, who seeks to destroy the forest to find the Spring of Life.

From *Variety*

REVIEWS

Fantastical with a side order of sci-fi, 'Into the Wonderwoods' is playful, fun, and humorous (even for adults) while sometimes bordering on too chaotic: There's just no way the audience ever knows what will be thrown at them next, which makes the story exciting but also messy. Angelo's trek eventually collides with the mission of "The Resistance" against Ultra, whom he is introduced to via Zaza — who, in a bizarre turn, declares her love for him upon their first encounter. But the majority of the narrative divorces the boy from the eventual climactic fight against the supervillain, through which Angelo otherwise makes his way through this magical forest, which consists also of a heat- scorched valley and even a snow-covered landscape.

Zippy Frames – Olivia Popp

The **animation style** is the most impressive element of *Angelo dans la Forêt Mystérieuse*. (...) the most touching element of the film is **Angelo's relationship with his family** and, more specifically his grandmother (...)

Overall, *Angelo dans la Forêt Mystérieuse* is a perfect film for kids that is **both visually impressive and moving in its final moments**.

High on films - Debanjan Dhar

Into the Wonderwoods transports viewers to a vibrantly animated fantasy realm (...) While its visual craft dazzles, a tighter focus on character-driven depth over scattered subplots could have elevated this adventure to classic status.

Gazettely -Shahrbanoo Golmohamadi

DETAILS

LANGUAGE

Angelo is a little boy full of imagination who will have to defend himself against strange and sometimes aggressive beings, hence the use of threatening language

Je mettrai des coups de poing dans le nez à tous ceux qui se mettent au travers de ma route

(Angelo) – I'll punch hard on the nose anyone who dares to get in my way

Je vais te détruire Je vais tout faire péter/Je vais te couper en petits morceaux/tu vas leur f..tre la trouille –

I will destroy you and I'll smash you to smithereens/I'll cut you in pieces/And you the gross toad you are going to scare them

The language is colloquial with a rude word "shit!" that Angelo's dad shouts to get the children to stop making noise.

C'est dégueu Ça va pas la tête? When Zaza kisses Angelo -Gross! What's wrong with you!

Monsieur se la pète grave - Mr. Blow Your Own Trumpet

... voulait me bouffer à propos de l'ogre (about the ogre) -...wanted to swallow me

La technologie c'est mon dada - Technology 's my bag

...le crapaud dégueulasse ... - The gross toad

Je suis complètement paumé – I am completely lost

J'ai la patate – I feel like a fiddle

In the family, the grandma affectionately calls Angelo, her little rascal (*petite crapule*), while the older brother teases him wickedly, giving him the nickname of slaphead (*crâne d'œuf*) that stays with him. Angelo is deemed a bad brat (*sale gosse*) but he takes his revenge on his big brother calling him Doofus (*gros débile*)

Angelo meets characters expressing strong emotions such as Ultra or the cloud who express anger or the toad who presents him with the valley of Despair with the spelling mistake in French (*désespoir-e*). The cloud tries to practice some anger management:

J'apprends à maîtriser ma colère – I am learning to channel my anger

In the search for the Grail (symbol of spiritual salvation in the Middle Ages) and the quest for the source with this saving elixir, the film takes on a more serious dimension about life

and death. The call for resistance is vital to save the forest. Ultra threatens to take away our freedom, destroy our habitat and exterminate us.

On a more modern level, Angelo's father is hostile to technology (hates GPS) and Artificial Intelligence that seems to have an identity crisis.

VIOLENCE

As an adventurer, Angelo must fight enemies. Then he becomes the hero of an action film that looks more like a comic book. Angelo's alter ego can overcome all obstacles such as torrents, rivers, wild animals strangely resembling his family such as the tiger, the baby of the family who is teething.

Angelo refers to Kung Fu to fight.

The pace of the action sequences in different animation styles is very fast, which led to this remark by Benshi (review) "... feature film without dead time".

Ultra has robot soldiers who must eliminate all his opponents and will capture Angelo. He mistreats them, totally disrespects them, he kicks the little robots to get rid of them.

Ultra does not hesitate to cause explosions that endanger the entire forest and its inhabitants.

The cloud shows violent anger when it triggers a thunderstorm to extinguish the forest fire.

The idea of predation dominates the forest: the toad swallows the bee, the ogre sniffs his prey and swallows one despite having become a real estate agent, the evil genius of the marsh threatens...

NUDITY

N/A

SEXUAL ACTIVITY

Zaza (both elf and ogre's daughter) likes Angelo. She kisses him and is protective.

Angelo doesn't like girls' stuff.

Sexual innuendo? the mutant squirrel wishes he had another body like that of a flying bird.

PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT/ MESSAGES

• The themes

Drawing its references from the world of fairy tales, but also steeped in contemporary issues - **ecology, the question of gender, individualism versus the collective** - the film is written as a coming-of-age story. For young Angelo, it is a question of following the **little light** or, as his grandmother still says, the **little voice deep inside him** to get around or face obstacles.

<https://guide.benshi.fr/films/angelo-dans-la-foret-mysterieuse/2311>

The family: Angelo and his Granny are true accomplices. They play cards together, watch movies (which Angelo is forbidden), eat candies.

His grandmother gives him advice to follow the little inner voice, his instinct to act.

His Granny's illness forces Angelo to fight harder by sacrificing himself to find the elixir of life.

Life, death: sadness overcomes the family at the beginning of the film when Angelo's mother learns of grandma's illness. Angelo is not fooled. He immediately asks if she has cancer.

The quest for the Grail and the source of life gives Angelo's adventures a spiritual note.. The forest is the mirror of life full of uncertainty and the unknown.

Gender codes:

-the cloud gets angry with Angelo because he feels judged by him when he brings up the subject of his sadness:

Tu trouves ça nulles les histoires de princesses? *You think stories like that suck?*

-Although Angelo is not judgmental, we know that as a little boy he doesn't like a girl touching him. When Zaza kisses him, he exclaims: *Gross. What's wrong with you? C'est dégueu. Ça va pas la tête?*

-The story of the squirrel who wants to fly like a bird is reminiscent of a being desiring to change into a different body.

• Highlighted character traits

Courage/Heroism: Angelo is an energetic adventurer. On many adventures, he does not panic. For example, covered in red ants, it does not try to chase them away.

He manages to dialogue with the angry cloud as if nothing had happened.

Wickedness: Ultra seeks absolute power and can't stand to be challenged. He is destructive of both the forest and his own robot soldiers.

Notes inspired from the film press kit – To learn more

<https://le-pacte.com/storage/uploads/2ea57fd3-7a1d-444e-a248-cdf939ac84f9/DPG---ANGELO.pdf>

• Between fairy tales and strange creatures

In Angelo's visit of the mysterious forest, fairy tale characters appear in the dialogues as with the cloud saddened by the imprisonment of the princesses in the towers. They also materialize with the ogre or even his daughter Zaza, half elf, half vampire.

But other creatures intrude into the story: an army of red ants, a squirrel who dreams of flying, a big green man named Goouh, a toad from another era, a cloud capable of divine wrath and evil figures: the hideous Ultra and his soldiers or the vile genius of the swamps...

The flowers that grow thanks to Goouh, the path he traces for Angelo to direct him are both poetic and visually beautiful

Translated from this article in Allociné

UNE AVENTURE PLEINE D'HUMOUR ET DE POÉSIE POUR TOUTE LA FAMILLE

https://www.allocine.fr/article/fichearticle_gen_carticle=1000109716.html

What they will love –Giant of grass and flowers, plump firefly, aristocratic toad or terrifying ogre... In this fabulous journey full of twists and turns, Angelo, who is a curious and imaginative little boy, will meet many fantastic animals and creatures, each one funnier than the last (...)The scent of freedom that emanates from this film will undoubtedly stimulate budding adventurers.

What can worry them -Some fantastic creatures could sometimes scare the little ones with particularly well-done chase scenes. However, it will not take long for them to tame these amazing characters. These are indeed much more likely to make young spectators laugh than to scare them. The question of the death of a loved one is also introduced with Angelo's grandmother who has a serious illness. The little boy will do everything to find the "source of life" to save his Granny. This subtly initiated theme will allow the youngest to apprehend this complex subject with gentleness.

What they will keep deep inside them

Angelo in the Mysterious Forest is above all a crazy adventure comedy at a child's level. The theme of imagination is addressed a lot through the adventures that the little hero goes through. To get by, he constantly calls on his inventiveness. A principle on the need to dream that is very important in this enchanted feature film

The tender relationship between Angelo and his Granny is also central. This great stage of life, which consists in understanding that grandparents are not eternal, takes on softer proportions in this film. This allows young viewers to identify with Angelo to better understand a passage in life that can sometimes be difficult to overcome.

FILM PHOTOS

Angelo in the kitchen imagining he is this big, muscled adventurer



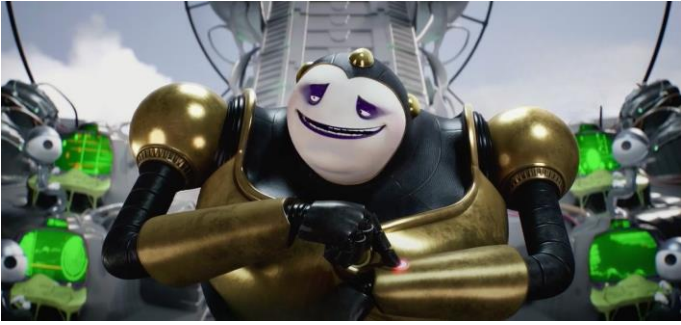


Angelo's family on their way to visit Granny:
The baby brother, the older teen brother, the dad who is driving and the mom



Angelo with his Granny: they are accomplices

THE CREATURES INTO THE WONDERWOODS



The wicked general Ultra



Angelo in the hands of Goouh
The ogre who became a real estate agent

Zaza, the ogre's daughter, likes Angelo



The squirrel who wanted to be a flying bird