

Here's Kino Ken's review of the dvd / blu-ray combo set *Le grand méchant renard et autres contes (The Big Bad Fox and Other Tales)*, an LVCA May, 2024 donation to the Hugh Stoupe Library of the Heritage Methodist Church of Ligonier, Pennsylvania.

17 of a possible 20 points = a minor classic

France / Belgium 2017 color 83 minutes  
subtitled / dubbed in English feature animation fantasy  
Folivari / Panique! / Studio Canal / Teletoon + / Canal + / Shelter Prod /  
Radio Télévision Belge Francophone (RTBF) / OUFTivi / VOO / BE TV  
Producers: Damien Brunner, Didier Brunner, Philippe Logie, Thibaut Ruby,  
Vincent Tavier

Key: \*indicates outstanding technical achievement or performance  
(j) designates a juvenile performer

**Points:**

- 1 Direction: Patrick Imbert (“Un bébé à livrer” and “Le Noël parfait” episodes”) and Benjamin Renner (“Le grand méchant Renard” episode)
- 2 Editing: Benjamin Massoubre\*
- 1 Animation Camera
- 1 Lighting Colorist: Aurélie Laument
- 1 Animation: Patrick Imbert (Supervision),  
Thomas Charra and Sébastien Rouxel (Key), Mathieu Chaptel,  
Michael Crouzat, Kherveen Dabýllal, Gaëlle Thierry  
Character Animation: Marco Nguyen  
Special Visual Effects: Thibaut Couwenbergh (Supervision),  
Anais Basso, Barthelemy Beaux, François Crèvecoeur,  
Véronique Dessard, Gaël Durant, Morgan Hardy, Clément Liégeois
- 1 Backgrounds: Zaza and Zyk
- 2 Screenplay: Benjamin Renner (“Un bébé à livrer” and “Le grand méchant Renard” episodes) and Patrick Imbert (“Le Noël parfait” episode)

- 2 Music: Robert Marcel Lepage
  - 2 Sound
    - Sound Editing: Sabrina Calmels and Valène Leroy
    - Sound Recording: Piste Rouge, Rémi Seznec, Nick Taylor  
(English Cast Recording)
    - Sound Mixing: Emmanuel de Boissieu, Geoff Strasser
    - Voices Casting: Céline Ronté, Michelle Jones (English adaptation)
  - 2 Voice Acting
  - 2 Creativity
- 17 total points

**Voices Cast: A. French Language Version**

Guillaume Darnault (Fox), Damien Witecka (Pork = Pig), Kamel Abdessadok (Bunny), Antoine Schoumsky (Duck), Céline Ronté (Chicken), Violette Samama (Pauline, the baby girl), Jules Bienvenu (Alex), Augustin Jahn-Sani (Evan), Boris Rehlinger (Wolf), Guillaume Bouchède (Dog), Magali Rosenzweig (Hen), Elise Noiraud (Hen), Jean-Loup Horwitz (Santa Claus), Christophe Lemoine (Stork), Bernard Larmande (Bird), Michel Scotto di Carlo (Co-pilot), Sylvie Gentry (Cashier), Yves Yan (Tarsier), Thierry Jahn (Dad / Little Son), Mathilde Nepveu (j), Camielle Nepveu (j), Christophe Groulx (j), Adam Groulx (j) (Choir of chicks), Sébastien Leblanc (Toad)

**B. English Language Dubbed Version**

Saadaf Amin (Little Son), Bill Bailey (Duck), Tallulah Conabeare (Evan), Adrian Edmondson (Bunny), Justin Edwards\* (Pork = Pig), Matthew Goode\* (Wolf), Celia Imrie\* (Chicken), Phil Jupitus\* (Dog), Marcel McCalla (Santa Claus), Alexander Molony (Alex), Giles New\* (Fox), Louie-Loveday O'Brien (Pauline), Phil Whelans (Stork)

Much of the production team that created *Ernest & Celestine* stayed together to make a second hilarious feature animation, *Le grand méchant renard et autres contes* (*The Big Bad Fox and Other Tales*). However, the story structure this time is significantly different. Instead of a single narrative arc, the newer film is comprised of three episodes. In chronological order, they are the titular segment, then “Un bébé à livrer” (“A Baby to Deliver”), and finally “Le Noël parfait” (“The Perfect Christmas”).

Benjamin Renner directed the first of these, with the latter two being the work of creative partner Patrick Imbert.

The screenplay formation was also a dual responsibility. Renner took on the task of mapping out dialogue for “Un bébé à livrer” and “Le grand méchant Renard” while Jean Regnaud scripted “Le Noël parfait.”

Overall, the film is comprised of a three comedy skits staged by an extremely amateurish bunch of talking barnyard animals.

The principal acting role, as well as that of narrator, belongs to hapless Fox. That unfortunate, along with fussy budget pragmatist Pig (a.k.a. Pork in credits), receives the brunt of physical punishment meted out during wacky onscreen antics.

In the opening playlet, Fox has decided to raid a henhouse, one guarded by shiftless Dog and caustic-tongued Hen. He bumbles his way through palings of a fence in broad daylight, getting himself whacked by a loose board. Fox is then told by onlooker Dog he must clean up whatever mess he creates. Perhaps, too, he should consider a different line of work. Chicken robbery doesn’t appear to be his area of expertise.

Things don’t improve when Fox reaches his destination. There immovable object Hen refuses to provide him any chicks, delivering a scolding instead. Fox has to slink away, hungry as ever.

Meeting fellow poultry gourmand Wolf in the woods, he relates a tale of woe but receives little sympathy. The larger carnivore suggests a change in plans. Try egg theft instead, Mr. Wolf advises. Of course, mealtime must be postponed until baby chickens hatch and develop into fat, tasty morsels fit for boiling *a fresco*.

Following that directive, Fox returns to Hen’s territory and finds her asleep. After nearly exhausting himself trying to lift the fat fowl off a trio of treasures, he succeeds in setting paws on prey and returns unmolested to the forest with them.

However, this proves just the beginning of a series of misadventures. Baby chicks hatch, misidentify Fox as Mama and later urge him to do battle with blatantly menacing Wolf.

All ends happily, though, with chicks adapting to two “mothers” and Wolf being denied his feast.

In the second farce, lazy Stork tricks naïve Duck and Bunny into substituting as infant delivery messengers. Responsibility for getting baby Pauline to her home intact volleys back and forth between the well-intentioned but accident-prone duo of D and B and reluctant, more mature Pig. Some of the bad choices Duck and Bunny make include attempting to catapult the baby to Avignon, transport via a butcher's van and trying to pilot a plane with no prior instruction in order to retrieve China-bound cargo. At last, thinking their task completed, they deposit Pauline in front of the wrong house and must snatch her speedily away from a pleasantly astonished couple.

Yet once again order is ultimately restored as Pauline is passed safely along with regret to her true parents.

Episode three finds Duck and Bunny preparing for a visit from Père Noël. Spotting a plastic likeness of Father Christmas hanging from a roof, they resolve to rescue him and save the upcoming holiday. Instead of accomplishing this noble feat, they knock the lifeless figure loose from its fastenings. When it plunges to the ground, one part of Santa detaches itself. Oh, no. They've killed Father Christmas!

After a botched burial interrupted by questioning from curious Pig, the two simpletons determine it would now be necessary for one of them to pose as Saint Nick. The world's children must not be deprived of eagerly expected gifts. Lacking a few essentials, such as sleigh, reindeer, toy workshop, fur-lined traditional outfit and assistant elves, the double trouble twosome set out to bring Christmas cheer worldwide. There are some glitches that develop ...

With suitably hectic editing, witty dialogue, jazzy variations on Prokofiev's main theme from *Peter and the Wolf*, inspired goofy character designs and warmly unobtrusive watercolor backgrounds, this production is likely to win applause from middle school audiences wherever it is shown.

Sound recording is effective across all volume levels and voice acting is first-rate even though the performers are virtual unknowns rather than celebrities.

Hugely enjoyable despite low budget constraints, *The Big Bad Fox and Other Tales* makes fine family entertainment for both adults and teens. But children under the age of ten will probably not be able to appreciate many of the often deadpan repartees. This film was rated G by the MPAA. It contains no cursing, toilet humor, realistic violence, or sexual innuendoes.

**Bonus features include three trailers and a teaser with a total runtime of about five minutes, an interview with the directors lasting nine and one-half minutes, what turns out to be a largely autobiographical four and one-half minute Q and A with Benjamin Renner at the New York International Children's Film Festival, an English Dub Featurette lasting four and one-half minutes introducing principals of the English-Language Voices Cast and a novel fifteen-minute tour by select elementary school children of the Paris animation studio which produced this film, during which explanations are given about how the picture was made.**

**This GKids release contains a blu-ray / dvd combo pack with the same bonus features on both formats.**

**Kino Ken strongly recommends this comic gem as a delightful excursion into Zanyland.**