I’m going to write this review in the first person, forgoing the usual third approach as, well, I may have been the only Monster Kid alive who really dug Louis Letterier’s remake of CLASH OF THE TITANS.

I know, I know, you didn’t. That’s OK. I get it. But when it comes to fantasy spectacle, I am an easy mark. When it comes to great actors slumming in silly costumes, I swoon. When monsters—CG and otherwise—show up to devil cartoonishly attractive actors decked out in robes and sandals, I clap my hands. When the fate of the world lies at the heart of a mythic quest—especially one that includes hacking off the head of a snakewoman—I high-five myself. And when beautiful maidens are chained to seaside cliffs to be offered as sexual snacks to outrageously huge aquatic reptile beasts…I mean, come on. I am 12, forever and ever.

So yes, tepid script, lackluster 3D conversion (though I did dig the 3D, in a relaxing, almost ViewMaster-like way) and a bland but serviceable Sam Worthington aside, I enjoyed CLASH OF THE TITANS. And I worship the equally hokey Harryhausen original, for slightly different, more nostalgic reasons. I like them both because they feel epic and they feature characters

who take the nonsense seriously, even if we don’t, and both sport thundering orchestral scores. I love thundering orchestral scores…

Thus, the deck was stacked in my favor that the follow-up to Letterier’s CLASH, WRATH OF THE TITANS, would happily push my sensitive peplum-weaned buttons, and I’m overjoyed to report that it did just that. In fact, WRATH improves on every technical and pacing issue of the first, not to mention giving us more melodrama and higher stakes—and most importantly, it gives us monsters. Lots of jaw-dropping, larger-than-life monsters. And in very good 3D, I might add.

WRATH drags the worthy Worthington back into the role of demigod Perseus, the son of Zeus who aced the Kraken in the first round. He’s a bit of a legend in Greece, and yet opts to not join his powerful pop (again played by the great Liam Neeson) in Olympus but instead raises his son in a seaside village, living his life as a humble fisherman. But when Zeus’ monstrous father Kronos threatens to resurrect from the underworld with the aid of Zeus’ bitter brother Hades (the equally great and returning Ralph Fiennes), Perseus must hop astride Pegasus to help stop the god-monster from destroying the universe.

Or something like that…

Once again, plot and character motivations are secondary to the CGI (and surprisingly sometimes practical) FX, and dammit, that’s where WRATH rules the roost. From the moment the underworld vomits out a rabid, Cerebus-looking, firebreathing hell dog, it’s clear that newly minted franchise director Jonathan Liebesman means business when it comes to the beasts. From there, we get a troika of 80-foot-tall club-wielding Cyclopes, various demonic wraiths, malevolent stone labyrinths and—my favorite—a squad of sword-swinging, double-backed warrior things that hack the hell out of everyone. On top of the brilliantly realized, only-vaguely-faithful-to-Greek-mythology freaks, we get a strong turn from gorgeous and intelligent actress Rosamund Pike (see FANGORIA #312 for our exclusive interview) as Queen Andromeda, now a battle-scarred (well, no real scars are visible, but you just know she has ’em somewhere) general leading a thousands-strong army. We also get some Shakespeare-lite sibling god struggles, fantastic sound design, more fire than a thousand GHOST RIDER films and, yes, sometimes alarmingly good, always sharp 3D landscapes.

All of this mayhem moves like a bullet from a gun, and even when the cynic in you starts to balk at the silly plot twists, comic-relief turns (Bill Nighy shows up in an amusing role) and tacked-on

love story, that 12-year-old child, awe-inspired by the world of movie magic, will—if you let him/her—squeal with delight at every fevered, masterfully pop-art, action-trash minute of it.