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The Worst Witch

UK TV serial? : 1986 : dir. Robert Young III : 68 min
prod: : scr: : dir.ph.:
[Fairuza Balk](#)
Diana Rigg; Tim Curry; Charlotte Rae

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	KBytes	Ω □ € Z ♀	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
5119	2½	1	1	- - - - -		No	Unseen



Source: Amazon.com

Amazon.com review:

“Based on Jill Murphy’s book, this charming movie is set in an English boarding school for witches - complete with orange and black school uniforms, broom-flying exercises, and potion assignments for lab. The incompetent student of the title, Mildred, is played by a

fetching young Fairuza Balk¹. Diana Rigg is the nasty head teacher, Tim Curry the (oddly) idolized Grand Wizard, and TV’s “**Facts of Life**” maven Charlotte Rae does double duty as the school’s kindly dean and her evil witch twin, who’s bent on taking over the school. Directed by Robert Young, this 68-minute video features less than state-of-the-art effects and several songs that stop the action - most bizarrely an outdoor assembly performance by Curry that turns into a weird music video. Still, preteen girls will identify with the beleaguered heroine who overcomes her wickedly snooty rival, a teacher who doesn’t believe in her, and a band of dastardly witches and, of course, saves the day. Ages 6 and up.”

– Kimberly Heinrichs

The following is a selection of *Amazon.com*’s “Customer Reviews of the Day”. (No alterations have been made for spelling or punctuation errors):

“Ever since I was a little kid, I’ve loved this movie. I would look forward to Halloween, because I knew that “**The Worst Witch**” would be on TV. Now that I’m 20 years old it’s still my favorite Halloween movie, and it’s not just me. My roommate also loves this movie, so she and I bought a copy and watch it all year round. Our favorite part is still when The Grand Wizard does his little song and dance. Also when Mildred turns Ethel Hallow into a pig! I would highly recommend this movie to anyone whether they’re 6 or 96.”

- Pat Enck & Meghan Smith, Findlay, Ohio

¹ “fetching” is an interesting choice of epithet, and one that would never be applied to a boy actor of the same age – however fetching he was.

"This movie is so clever and original! I love the part where they're in the chemistry lab trying to create something and it's this pretty bright green color 8) and the part where Mildred gets her cat (all witches have black cats, so when the girls get they're cats passed out, they all get black cats, [sic] but Mildred is left to recieve the only one that isn't black - so what does she name it? 8) Blacky of course!) but my most favorite part in the whole movie is where they're playing this game where ½ the girls wear a red banner and the other ½ wear blue and they have to hide and find each other².

I love Tim Curry's song about Halloween 8) it used to give me the creeps....but it's not scary 8) don't worry. This movie is great for kids....and it teaches a good lesson (can't tell you or it'd ruin the movie). It inspired me as a little kid and my sister and I loved it so much as kids that my sister nicknamed herself Ethel (after one of the characters, Ethel Hallow) and I named my daughter Maud (after Maud Warlock). I definately recommend this movie to anyone who has kids or that loves movies that're cute, comical, and can be learned from. This is the BEST."

- dethgirl, Ft Lauderdale, FL

"i adore this tv show...they only showed it in england once when i was really little and it set the idea of what halloween was really all about... moments to treasure is when the witches do their dance on the hill, and the grand wizards dance... "anything can happen on halloween your dog can turn into a cat" ...but it and get into the real spirit of halloween"

keely swan, Reading, UK

"I've probably seen this movie a hundred times on the Disney Channel, and it still feels great seeing it. I do admit it's one of the cheesiest, low budget Halloween films ever made...however, It has a certain may I say "Harry Potteresque" charm to it. Mildred gets dissed alot, and stepped on by one evil classmate, though she does get to change her into a pig! :) In the end, she saves the day for the Witch Academy. I like Fairuza Balk, and she really shines in this. Of course, you can't forget Tim Curry's hilarious portrayal of the grand wizard "heartthrob" and the overly corny special effects and synthesizer sounds. Get this and watch it over and over again! A cult classic!"

- Jamie, Chicago

[no listing in "Halliwell's Film Guide", "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 1996", "Speelfilm Encyclopedie", "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "The Time Out Film Guide", "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995", "Variety Movie Guide 1993", "Video Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

² Don't be alarmed by these cryptic punctuations of 8) and :) (smiley faces), or the insistent use of "i" in place of "I" – it's all part of the mysteries of cyberchatter. So is atrocious spelling, by the way.

No further information currently available. Since this is absent from all the mainstream film guides, it would seem a safe bet that it was originally a children's TV serial, though of course that's the last thing the retailers or video distributors would want you to know. If so, then the casting of Diana Rigg and Tim Curry was something of a coup. Curry clowned about again in "**HOME ALONE 2: LOST IN NEW YORK**" (92) but he also appeared, unrecognisable beneath latex prosthetics, as the incarnation of Evil in Ridley Scott's "**LEGEND**" (85). Fairuza Balk first came to notice as Dorothy in "**RETURN TO OZ**" (85) and was later seen in the obscure "**THE OUTSIDE CHANCE OF MAXIMILIAN GLICK**" (89). There's no listing for her in either "The International Motion Picture Almanac 1994" or "Virgin International Encyclopedia of Film".

See also "**THE WITCHES**" (90) from Roald Dahl's book, and subject index under **BOARDING SCHOOL / PUBLIC SCHOOL, COMEDY, SERIALISATIONS** and **WITCHES & WIZARDS**.