

《New Smurfs cartoon film makes a splash in China》

Nearly 60 years after the Smurfs first appeared in a European magazine, a new animated feature has brought the blue-skin humanoids back to the big screen.



The new animated feature *Smurf: The Lost Village*, a reboot of the Smurf franchise, has brought the blue-skin humanoids back to the big screen. Provided To China Daily

Smurf: The Lost Village, a reboot of the Smurf franchise by Sony Pictures Animation, topped China's box-office charts for animated movies after it opened on April 21.

The movie was released in the United States on April 7.

Unlike the previous two movies, *The Smurfs* in 2011 and *The Smurfs 2* in 2013, which were hybrids of live-action and animation, the latest Smurf feature is completely an animated work.

The movie centers on Smurfette and her three best friends - Brainy, Clumsy and Hefty - whose adventures lead to the discovery of a mysterious village full of female Smurfs.

In an introduction tailored for the Chinese market, its director Kelly Asbury says the movie is a homage to the original comic strips created by Belgian cartoonist Pierre Culliford, more popularly known as Peyo.

"People love (the) Smurfs. We don't want to give them something else," says Asbury, the American director known for Shrek 2 and Gnomeo & Juliet.

He says animators mimicked the style of Peyo and inserted a scarecrow and a glass jar, which appeared in the original comic strips, for diehard fans.

The eyes (of the movie characters) are joined and there is no gap between their eyes. So, when a character has an expression of surprise on its face, you will see the eyebrows move above onto the hat, says Asbury.

He also says that thanks to an international crew, most of whom grew up watching and reading the Smurf stories, staying faithful to the characters was one of their delights.

