

Munk-ey See, Munk-ey Do

In 1958, a struggling songwriter experimented with a recording device by speeding up the audio-track of a recording producing a squeaky, high-pitched, comical tone. Thus, Ross Bagdasarian created David Seville and the Chipmunks with the song "Witch Doctor." The unique sound was an instant sensation and led to multiple Grammy award winning albums, several cartoon series, and the 2007 live-action/CGI feature [*Alvin and the Chipmunks*](#).

In the film, Jason Lee plays Dave whose life is turned completely upside down when he becomes the reluctant guardian of the trio of talking, singing rodents (call me mean if you must but yes indeed they are rodents). Alvin (Justin Long) is the mischievous leader of the three. Simon (Matthew Gray Gubler) is the intellectual, bespecaled middle sibling. Rounding out the threesome, Theodore (pop singer Jesse McCartney) is the chubby, emotional young one. In one day, the brothers cause Dave to lose his job at an ad agency, wreck his house, and ruin his date with his ex-girlfriend. Yet, when he hears the chipmunks sing Dave thinks that his dreams of becoming a successful songwriter just fell into his lap. He writes for the group "The Chipmunk Song (Please Christmas Don't Be Late)."

Upon hearing the novelty piece, a greedy, selfish record company owner sets out to control the group. "Uncle" Ian (David Cross) lavishes the boys with fancy toys, video games, cool clothes, and almost more food than Theodore can stuff into his enormous cheeks. Eventually, the villain drives a wedge between the chipmunks and Dave which leads the brothers to walk out and move in with the slimeball. Eventually, Ian's true motivation emerges as he leads the group on a taxing tour schedule, leaving no time to be boys.

The live-action *Alvin and the Chipmunks* is fun for children and mildly entertaining for older people. Personally, I would

rather enjoy the animated adventures of Alvin, Simon, and Theodore. Also, the hip-hop version of "Witch Doctor" was just not good. However, I did enjoy the up-tempo version of "The Chipmunk Song."