

‘Hotel Transylvania 3’ blurs the line between good and bad



- The characters are sharply etched out, with pointed features and wonderful detail

CHENNAI: Nothing can be compared to Japanese animation, especially the works of cinematic art created by Hayao Miyazaki (“Spirited Away,” “Princess Mononoke,” “The Wind Rises”), which is not just sharply political but also intensely emotional. In comparison, American animated films may seem somewhat plastic, though the Hotel Transylvania franchise has risen above the mundane. The latest installment, “Hotel Transylvania 3: A Monster Vacation,” from director Genndy Tartakovsky, depicts a battle between good and evil.

The plot sees Dracula (voiced by Adam Sandler), his daughter Mavis (Selena Gomez), her human husband Johnny (Andy Samberg) and the entire monster entourage go on a cruise vacation to Atlantis. On board, widowed and lonely Dracula falls head over heels in love with the director of the event, Ericka (Kathryn Hahn). However — plot twist! — she is a human being and several centuries younger. Even worse, she is the granddaughter of the legendary vampire hunter Abraham Van Helsing (Jim Gaffigan),

whose bitter enmity with Dracula dates back to the 1800s. It is liberally interspersed with humor, which comes courtesy of the Mummy, the Invisible Man and the giant puppy that Dracula's grandson smuggles aboard the ship.

Tartakovsky, who helmed all three editions of the franchise, undoubtedly employed a brilliant set of animators — the characters are sharply etched out, with pointed features and wonderful detail. The wit flows at a breathless pace, but what is lacking is a certain novelty, which one expects in an ongoing series.

One plus point is that parents will not find themselves wanting for entertainment. Dracula's romance with Ericka may be lost on children, but it will keep the adults entertained. At 97 minutes long, however, the film could have been far more fantastic.
