

October 11, 2015

### **Mad Max: Fury Road**

Directed by: George Miller

Starring: Tom Hardy (Maximilian “Max” Rockatansky), Charlize Theron (Imperator Furiosa), Nicholas Hoult (Nux) and Hugh Keays-Byrne (Immortan Joe)

Running Time: 120 mins

“Who killed the world?”

English heartthrob Tom Hardy plays the haggard and hallucinating road warrior “Max” in George Miller’s latest instalment of the Mad Max series, *Fury Road*. Known for beating desert highway raiders with his ruthless driving, the Main Force Patrol officer has this time been captured and is being held as a blood bank for a sick war boy in the army — that is, until the Imperator Furiosa, a fearless and determined war leader played by Charlize Theron, drives a war rig off-course with Immortan Joe (Hugh Keays-Byrne)’s perfect breeders in tow. Furiosa is quickly revealed to be the new star of the show: a brave warrior on an unstoppable path, blasting her way through war parties in the endless red desert. In this two-hour long action-packed adrenaline-rush-of-a-movie, Furiosa commands a war army and battles them all in her mission to reach “the green place” — with the timely assistance of Max and Nux (Nicholas Hoult), but not until after these three tough it out in a fierce battle for control. On a quest for redemption and in search of hope for the young breeders freed from Immortan Joe’s captivity (“We are not things!”), Furiosa is — from the start — the film’s leading protagonist, demonstrating unflinching leadership, courage, and determination to succeed — with mad fighting skills, to boot.

In terms of the *Mad Max* legacy, *Fury Road* is an action flick that outruns the rest: a post-apocalyptic road movie, featuring savage chase scenes where blades, pikes, and chainsaws are

weapons for road warriors driving big rigs, wielding polecats, flamers, and guns, plenty of guns. Only this time the anti-hero is Furiosa, commanding a massive black makeshift rig extended by a 1940s Chevrolet, trailing a riotous war party trifecta: the warlords of Gas Town, and Bullet Farm, joined by the warriors of her very own citadel in blazing hot pursuit, ready to “die historical,” with live electric guitar accompaniment. The incredible action is suitably addressed by a tremendous soundtrack composed by Tom Holkenborg, a.k.a. Junkie XL.

At a time when strong women are dominating popular culture, *Mad Max* makes a bold shift with its surprising twist, favouring a female protagonist. The result is mind-bending excitement: non-stop action sequences are true to the genre’s form, and Charlize Theron is arresting and powerful in the leading role of Imperator Furiosa, a surprise turn which left many male viewers angry, if not unsettled. A mean outcry was heard from the interwebs as many male bloggers charged “feminists” with overtaking Hollywood. But in a world where the soil is too sour with salt for anything to grow, the earth dried up, and satellites that cross the night sky are the planes of silence, mother’s milk is pumped from factory wet nurses to feed sick warriors. The “world is fire and blood,” says Max in the film’s opening voiceover, and “mankind has gone rogue.” Thirty-odd years after being stolen, Furiosa returns to her birthplace, “the place of many mothers,” only to learn from Max, who says, “hope is a mistake. if you can’t fix what’s broken, you’ll go insane.” With the aide of her unlikely bedfellows, Max and Nux, and alongside the young breeders and aged vuvolini, Furiosa sets out with Max on an all-or-nothing crusade to claim redemption. When all hope is lost, and existence is reduced to the instinct to survive, George Miller gives us the tale of a woman driven by anger, and a desire to set the world to right.