

It's the End of the World as We Know It: "Children of Men" and "Freedom Writers"

Written by Mike Schulz

Wednesday, 10 January 2007 02:13

- [Buy Cheap GraphiSoft ArchiCAD 14 \(64-bit\)](#)
- [Buy OEM Rosetta Stone - Learn German \(Level 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 Set\)](#)
- [Buy OEM Adobe Photoshop Elements 12](#)
- [Download Autodesk Combustion 4](#)
- [Buy Cheap Autodesk AutoCAD Mechanical 2015 \(64-bit\)](#)
- [Buy OEM Adobe Fireworks CS6](#)
- [Discount - Adobe FreeHand MX MAC \(32-bit\)](#)
- [Buy OEM Cakewalk Sonar 8 Producer Edition](#)
- [Download The Photoshop Darkroom: Creative Digital Post-Processing](#)
- [Buy Cheap Atomix VirtualDJ Pro 7 MAC](#)
- [Discount - Autodesk AutoCAD Mechanical 2014 \(32-bit\)](#)
- [Download Microsoft Visual Studio Premium 2012 \(32 bit\)](#)
- [Buy OEM Microsoft MapPoint 2010 Europe](#)
- [Buy Word 2007 For Dummies \(en\)](#)



CHILDREN OF MEN

The year is 2027, and the world is in chaos. Scratch that: The world *is* chaos. For nearly 20 years, women have been infertile, and the planet's youngest citizen has just been murdered at the age of 18. Random bombings and guerrilla warfare have become an element of daily life - a newscast shows "the siege of Seattle" entering its 1,000th day - and internment camps are as commonplace as coffee shops. In England, refugees are routinely rounded up for deportation and execution. And it is in this hopeless, unspeakably dangerous universe that director Alfonso Cuarón, in *Children of Men*, has fashioned one of the most supremely intelligent, forceful, and exhilarating movies of recent years.

In basic form, the bulk of the film is an escape picture; an apolitical office worker (Clive Owen, magnificent) finds himself shepherding a young woman's evacuation from England - a noble cause made paramount by the woman's pregnancy - and it's filled with sequences that are almost stunningly well-directed. An ambush on a country road, in which a dozen attackers appear to morph into hundreds, is deeply unsettling for being so claustrophobic (the scene is shot almost completely from the back seat of a car), and a horrific, late-film battle between two warring factions, with shrapnel flying and buildings crumbling, rivals anything in *Saving Private*

It's the End of the World as We Know It: "Children of Men" and "Freedom Writers"

Written by Mike Schulz

Wednesday, 10 January 2007 02:13

Ryan for
terrifying, war-torn verisimilitude; for a few jaw-dropping minutes, you might find it difficult to breathe. (The brilliance of this sequence is underlined by the blood that spatters on the camera lens and s
tays
there, and you realize that Cuarón has choreographed the mêlée in what seems to be one take.)

But what lingers most are *Children of Men's* exquisite details. The TV commercials we see, almost out of the corner of our eyes, for home-suicide kits, death being marketed as a modern convenience. The throngs of animals - dogs, sheep, zebras - that wander the streets freely, their cages now being used to impound humans. The stoned grace of Michael Caine as a hippie who saw the apocalypse coming years ago and can only look at life with bemused pity.

The comic perfection of Owen racing through dilapidated edifices in flip-flops, his character having found no other shoes that fit. And the sublime humanity of the narrative, which envisions a futuristic world that's (appallingly) not much different from our own, yet one that still manages to be hopeful. Cuarón and his co-screenwriters (Timothy J. Sexton, David Arata, Mark Fergus, and Hawk Ostby) see madness all around them, yet still believe in the *possibilities* of life.

Children of Men

is a devastating, wrenching experience, but it's also a spectacularly thrilling entertainment; you leave the theatre shaken, yes, but invigorated by a great director's imagination. The hush in the audience that greeted the movie's close, as if we all needed a moment to quietly reflect on what we'd just experienced, felt both deeply satisfying and surprisingly familiar; with no disrespect intended,

Children of Men

is like

United 93

if

United 93

were actually

fun

.

