

Blu-ray Review: Thrilling, Satisfying ‘Rise of the Planet of the Apes’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on December 29, 2011 - 12:17pm

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CHICAGO – Have a gift card burning a hole in your wallet? Want a new movie? There are few better options for new release Blu-rays than Fox’s stellar reboot, “Rise of the Planet of the Apes,” one of the most surprising critical and commercial smashes of 2011. The special features are extensive and impressive and the movie holds up remarkably on repeat viewing. Expertly directed by Rupart Wyatt, who perfectly choreographs amazing cinematography and effects work,and featuring a landmark mo-cap performance from Andy Serkis, this isn’t just a must-see, it’s a must-own.



After Tim Burton’s sterile “Planet of the Apes” in 2001, who would have guessed that we would get an entry in the same franchise that not only works creatively but, on a filmmaking level, is the best of the entire series? The 1968 original will always have the pop culture influence that makes it the sentimental favorite, but “Rise” is a better film overall. It is pure summer entertainment, expertly paced to an inevitable climax and never less than satisfying. Don’t just rent it. Buy it.



Rise of the Planet of the Apes
Photo credit: Fox

Perfectly meshing with the mythology (complete with beautiful in-references that only real fans will catch) that technically began with the 1963 novel by Pierre Boulle but really took off with the Charlton Heston sci-fi classic “Planet of the Apes” in 1968, this prequel attempts to answer some of the questions presented by the beloved twist ending of the original film. How did Earth become overrun by talking apes? Where did it all begin?



Rise of the Planet of the Apes was released on Blu-ray and DVD on
December 13th, 2011

Photo credit: Fox

It turns out that the end of humanity started in San Francisco. That's where our story begins with a scientist named Will Rodman (James Franco) working on a cure for Alzheimer's Disease (which afflicts his father played well by John Lithgow) by experimenting on apes. The first test backfires horribly but leads to an offspring that Will rescues from the facility and raises as his own pet/child named Caesar (played in an amazing bit of motion capture by Andy Serkis, who did the same thing for Gollum in "The Lord of the Rings" and deserves Oscar consideration for his work here).

It turns out that the impact of his experimentation can be felt even more strongly in the next generation and Caesar is not your average ape. He not only learns sign language but develops an incredible range of human emotion, expressions, and needs. When his protective animal nature gets the best of him, Caesar is forced into an ape habitat, ripped from his family and those he thought loved him. Of course, Caesar is too smart for his captors and the final act of "Rise of the Planet of the Apes" becomes the action movie the burning Golden Gate Bridge promises from the back of the Blu-ray case.

The Blu-ray transfer for "Rise of the Planet of the Apes" is near-perfect, especially the English 5.1 DTS-HD Master Audio track. This is a movie that should be played loud, especially the final act, and the audio has been expertly mixed here. It's also loaded with special features, including 11 deleted scenes, a breakdown of Serkis' mo-cap work, and even a commentary track. One couldn't ask for more and Fox could have easily held back bonus material for a double dip before the theatrical run of the inevitable sequel. An "Ultimate Edition" will probably be released then but this one will be hard to top.

Special Features:

- o 11 Deleted Scenes
- o The Genius Of Andy Serkis
- o Scene Breakdown
- o A New Generation Of Apes
- o Breaking Motion Capture Boundaries
- o The Great Apes
- o Mythology Of The Apes
- o Composing The Score with Patrick Doyle
- o Audio Commentaries by Director and Writers
- o Character Concept Art Gallery
- o BD Live Enabled
- o Digital Copy Of Feature Film

"Rise of the Planet of the Apes" stars Andy Serkis, James Franco, Freida Pinto, Brian Cox, Tom Felton, Tyler Labine, and John Lithgow. It was written by Amanda Silver & Rick Jaffa and directed by Rupert Wyatt. It is rated PG-13 and was released on Blu-ray and DVD on December 13th, 2011.

By [BRIAN TALLERICO](#) [17]

Content Director

HollywoodChicago.com

brian@hollywoodchicago.com [16]



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