

Film Review: ‘Godzilla’ Just Goes Where He Has Gone Before

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on May 15, 2014 - 3:49pm

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CHICAGO – I did not like Godzilla. That sentence alone might make my review interesting enough to attract some initial attention. But despite that, and despite the fact that I’m a sucker for pretty much giant anything if it stomps a city, I’m holding fast to this judgment.



Rating: **2.0/5.0**

I love the redesign of Godzilla himself. In fact the special effects and creature design in the film are impeccable, and is available in 3D. Ironically I’m writing this on the day that I find out noted surrealist artist and designer of the xenomorph in Alien (1979) – H.R. Giger – has died. It’s ironic to think that the man who nailed the aesthetic of Cthulean dread for modern cinema should die just as Godzilla, an ultimate force of cinematic apocalypse, should be successfully redesigned and let loose on the cinematic landscape once again.

But this brings up my main point. All the marketing for Godzilla, ALL of it, told viewers to expect something next level, and darker. Of course the original 1954 Japanese version was just that, before American distributors gutted it and inserted footage of Raymond Burr to make it more palatable for American audience. But it’s that original version – and it’s constant shots of radiated victims, death in the rubble and theme of self sacrifice – that explains why Godzilla took on an iconic life. This was a film that was embraced by Japan, which only a few years earlier had seen the devastation of Nagasaki and Hiroshima. It is precisely because it took that devastation so seriously, that served up an apt symbol of why man will lose the fight it has picked with nature. To invoke the idea this might be a serious film, and not deliver, is a slap in the face to all of the above.

“Godzilla” opens everywhere on May 16th, in 3D, IMAX 3D and regular screenings. See local listings for screen options and show times. Featuring Bryan Cranston, Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Elizabeth Olsen, Sally Hawkins, Juliette Binoche, David Strathairn and Ken Watanabe. Screenplay by Max Borenstein. Directed by Gareth Edwards. Rated “PG-13”



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Joe (Bryan Cranston) Senses Something Coming in ‘Godzilla’
Photo credit: Warner Bros.

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