

## ‘Mad Max: Fury Road’ is All Kinds of Awesome

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on May 15, 2015 - 8:00am

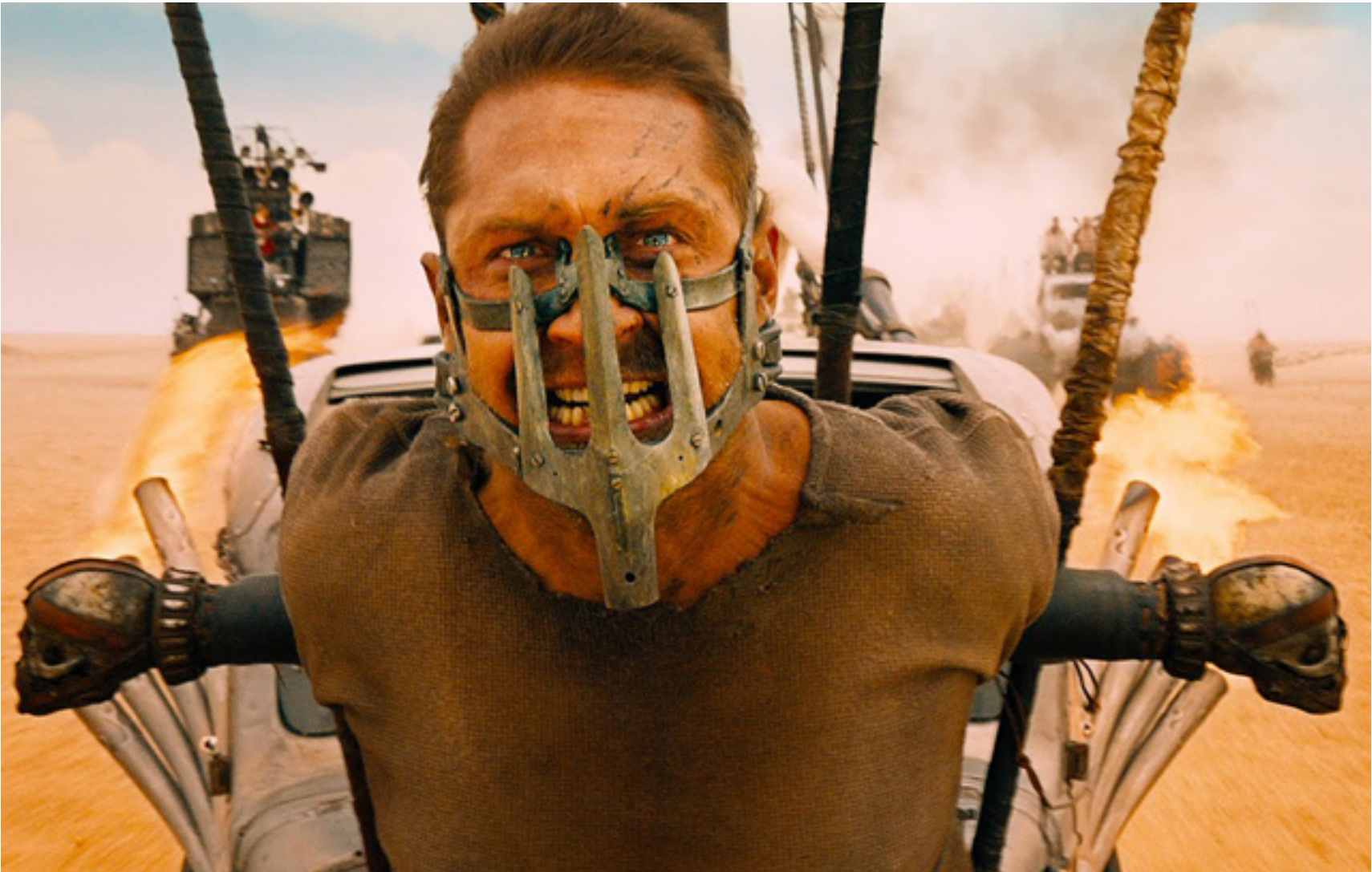
- [Brendan McCarthy](#) [2]
- [Charlize Theron](#) [3]
- [George Miller](#) [4]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [5]
- [Hugh Keays-Byrne](#) [6]
- [Josh Helman](#) [7]
- [Mad Max: Fury Road](#) [8]
- [Movie Review](#) [9]
- [Nathan Jones](#) [10]
- [Nicholas Hoult](#) [11]
- [Nick Lathouris](#) [12]
- [Riley Keough](#) [13]
- [Rosie Huntington-Whiteley](#) [14]
- [Spike Walters](#) [15]
- [Tom Hardy](#) [16]
- [Warner Brothers](#) [17]
- [Zoe Kravitz](#) [18]



Rating: **4.0/5.0**

CHICAGO – While “Mad Max: Fury Road” isn’t quite in the same league as director George Miller’s masterpiece “The Road Warrior,” it’s learned all the right lessons from that action classic. It’s a cinematic adrenaline machine that puts the pedal to the metal and rarely lets up.

There’s a similar post-apocalyptic setting this time around with the deserts of Namibia subbing for the Australian outback. Tom Hardy plays Max, introduced as a shaggy-haired loner eating a live lizard and living by survival instincts alone. But he’s really a supporting player in his own movie. Charlize Theron is the star of this show as a renegade one armed war general who helps a pack of women escape from an evil warlord who’s using them as his personal baby making machines.



Tom Hardy Portrays the Title Character in ‘Mad Max: Fury Road’  
*Photo credit: Warner Bros.*

From the opening chase where Max is literally held prisoner as a hood ornament on a souped up car driven by a crazy white skinned kid with a death wish, to the fiery finale “Mad Max: Fury Road” just keeps on moving and amazing its audience with “I can’t believe they actually did



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that” kinds of stunts.

When the “Fast And Furious” movies routinely defy the laws of gravity with their CGI-aided vehicular insanity, there’s something more thrilling about watching what for all intents and purposes appears to be real cars and trucks getting blown up, crashed, smashed, and destroyed in a thousand different ways. At one point Theron nearly gets hit with a motorcycle while in motion and defending her convoy from yet another band of marauding pursuers.

Hardy is a suitable replacement for series star Mel Gibson. He’s a man of few words and he might actually have fewer words of actual dialogue than Schwarzenegger did in the original “Terminator.” But he lets his expressive eyes do most of his acting – he continually has this look of “what are they going to throw at me next?” – a kind of exasperated improvisation.

Hugh Keays-Byrne, who played the heavy in the first “Mad Max” film 36 years ago, returns as the villain this time around too. He’s noticeably older, but he’s lost none of the power in his voice hidden behind the series peculiar brand of S and M inspired biker gear, and a clear plastic breast plate covered in medals.



Charlize Theron is Furiosa in 'Mad Max: Fury Road'

Photo credit: Warner Bros.

While there are hints at tortured pasts and backstories, this movie doesn’t carry along any extra baggage that would slow it down. Miller puts a penchant for vehicular mayhem to good use with one crackerjack, real world stunt sequence after another.

The film’s message of female empowerment is a nice twist, and it freshens things up without getting in the way of the stunts. If I wanted to be picky, I could make some comments about how all the women Charlize Theron is rescuing are played by fashion models in barely-there skimpy outfits which becomes increasingly impractical and ludicrous especially when everyone else is armed to the teeth. But in this case, I won’t let nitpicking ruin a good time.

*“Mad Max: Fury Road” opens everywhere on May 15th, in 3D and regular screenings. See local listings for 3D theaters. Featuring Tom Hardy, Charlize Theron, Nicholas Hoult, Hugh Keays-Byrne, Rosie Huntington-Whiteley and Zoe Kravitz. Written by George Miller, Brendan McCarthy and Nick Lathouris. Directed by George Miller. Rated “R”*



[19]

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