Good vs. Evil Brightly Entertaining in ‘The Dark Tower’

Submitted by PatrickMcD [1] on August 4, 2017 - 1:17am

- Columbia Pictures [2]
- Dennis Haysbert [3]
- Dystopia [4]
- HollywoodChicago.com Content [5]
- Idris Elba [6]
- Imagine Entertainment [7]
- Jackie Earle Haley [8]
- Matthew McConaughey [9]
- Movie Review [10]
- Nikolaj Arcel [11]
- Novel [12]
- Patrick McDonald [13]
- Ron Howard [14]
- Stephen King [15]
- The Dark Tower [16]
- Tom Taylor [17]



Rating: **4.0/5.0**

CHICAGO – Nobody does good vs. evil archetypes like author Stephen King, and this framework is purposeful in the film adaptation of King’s “The Dark Tower.” The popular book series gets a visual kick through the rendering of director Nikolaj Arcel and Ron Howard’s Imagine Entertainment.

It will be left to the readers of the book series to gauge the film’s ultimate success, but to somebody walking in who knows nothing of the story (like me), the parallel worlds and mystical forces surrounding it was fascinating both as science fiction and blithe fantasy. With characters like “The Man in Black” and “The Gunslinger” facing off – over the ultimate power contained in a hub in the universe called The Dark Tower – it’s best to sit back while this confrontation inspires the visual wonders, that are righteously delivered in our current movie era. It’s not perfect, and I’m sure the reader purists might be itching for a fight, but “The Dark Tower” is a very entertaining way to spend a crisp 95 minutes.

The times depicted in the film is a difficult era for existence. The Man in Black (Matthew McConaughey) has perfected a method for attacking The Dark Tower, a centerpiece of protective energy in the middle of the universe, from his headquarters on the parallel Mid-Earth. He is kidnapping children around the universe, and using their brainwaves successfully as a concentrated energy beam against the foundations of the Tower.



Mid-Earthing with The Gunslinger (Idris Elba) and Jake (Tom Taylor) in ‘The Dark Tower’
Photo credit: Columbia Pictures

Meanwhile, on Keystone Earth – or as it is known to the rest of us, Planet Earth – a boy named Jake (Tom Taylor) is having visions of The Dark Tower, the Energy Beam, The Man in Black and Black’s main rival “The Gunslinger” (Idris Elba). These visions are a power that target Jake as the prime brainwave that could change the universe. The kid visionary is led to a portal, where he is about to meet all the characters on Mid-Earth, and his visions are about to become real.

This is very creative science fiction, as I experienced the story for the first time. Apparently the intricacies of the book series add more depth and complexity to the shadows of what was created for this film version, but what is presented is an intriguing step-by-step and does make sense in a surprisingly layered way… delivered with earnestness by the excellent cast.

The standouts are the two adult leads, The Man in Black by Matthew McConaughey (Editor’s Note: “All Right All Right All Right”) and The Gunslinger by Idris Elba. The ‘slinger is the ultimate badass with a revenge at the top of his motivational agenda, and of course he reluctantly teams up with Jake the Kid. Tom Taylor is also great as said Kid, having to handle a mind-blowing range of reactions and emotions, including the Keystone Earth misdiagnosis of his visions. The pacing of all this is also impressive… the story delivered the sci-fi parameters energetically without having to resort to a ton of rhetoric or exposition.



The Man in Black (Matthew McConaughey) vs. The Gunslinger in ‘The Dark Tower’
Photo credit: Columbia Pictures

There are some impressive visuals, including the portal house in Brooklyn that attacks Jake using floorboards (eww, splintery!). The drawings that the Kid renders almost serve (wink, wink) as the storyboards for the realities of Mid-Earth, and all those actualities are perceptively illustrated in cinematic form. In other words, everything works visually as created from the mind of Stephen King, which could be a good tipping point for the book lovers. Also, The Gunslinger has a poetry to his weapon-toting dance, as if in a ballet of bullets.

Let the debate begin for “The Dark Tower” book series vs. the movie, where in nine out of ten examples the book wins. The most notable, and most-aggravating-to-the-author exception involved Stephen King and his book “The Shining” vs. Stanley Kubrick’s superior film version. And hilariously, that “shine” is referenced – along with other King Easter Eggs – through the portals of the film.

“The Dark Tower” opens everywhere on August 4th. Featuring Matthew McConaughey, Idris Elba, Tom Taylor, Jackie Earle Haley and Dennis Haysbert. Screenplay adapted by Nikolaj Arcel, Akiva Goldsmith, Anders Thomas Jensen and Jeff Pinkner. Directed by Nikolaj Arcel. Rated “PG-13”

[18]

By PATRICK McDONALD [19]
Writer, Editorial Coordinator
HollywoodChicago.com
pat@hollywoodchicago.com [18]

© 2017 Patrick McDonald, HollywoodChicago.com

Source URL (retrieved on *Mar 28 2024 - 4:17pm*):
http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/27811/good-vs-evil-brightly-entertaining-in-the-dark-tower

Links:
[1] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/hankq
[2] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/columbia-pictures
[3] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/dennis-haysbert
[4] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/dystopia
[5] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/hollywoodchicagocom-content
[6] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/idris-elba
[7] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/imagine-entertainment
[8] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/jackie-earle-haley
[9] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/matthew-mccounaghey
[10] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/labels/review.html
[11] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/nikolaj-arcel
[12] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/novel
[13] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/patrick-mcdonald
[14] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/ron-howard
[15] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/stephen-king

[16] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/the-dark-tower
[17] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/tom-taylor
[18] mailto:pat@hollywoodchicago.com
[19] http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#PAT