



# 2012' deluges theaters

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Humanity was apparently not of impending doom hundreds of years ago by the culture, or at least that Hollywood would have believe. "2012" is a special bonanza about a nearly-ending catastrophe. Of course, as all Hollywood movies, people manage to evade the apparently inevitable. Such is the nature of entertainment. People don't want to watch a movie where everyone dies at the end. "2012" had its high and low points, but overall, I think it is worth watching, especially if you enjoy seamless special effects.

The story is that come December 21, 2012, geological events around the world will wipe out human civilization and most of the continents. A scientific explanation is given as to why the disaster is taking place, but it seems a little dubious, whatever. Some scientists see the coming and convince the world governments to prepare. A project is begun to create "arcs" that will prevent the destruction and support human and animal life until habitable land can be found. A decent overall story arc. In addition, the best parts of the movie and the best acting went to this element of the movie, which wasn't the main story.

Unfortunately, the main story follows Jackson Curtis (John Cusack), a man who finds out that his family is happening just before the world falls into the Pacific Ocean, which was a gorgeous special effects sequence by the way, and then desperately tries to save his family. The family goes through many narrow escapes on their path to the arcs, which are located in the Himalayan Mountains in China, and that simply makes my implausibility meter.

There is a certain level of implausibility that movies must have for me to stay focused on the events within. If movies do not have enough plausibility at the time, I get pulled out of the movie and feel a sense of disappointment.

Even though it looked

spectacularly awesome, I know a two engine airplane is not going to be able to take off when the earth beneath it drops off into a huge chasm suddenly, especially when it is piloted by a fellow who says he has only flown a couple of times before. The downdraft from the ground falling away will pull the plane with it, but apparently in the universe where this movie took place, the laws of physics are totally different, especially when

it comes to particle physics and fluid dynamics.

I, for some reason, don't believe Jackson Curtis can outrun cracks forming in the earth while driving a limo or the explosion of the Yellowstone Caldera while driving an R.V.

Also, the characters themselves just don't feel very compelling. Sure, they are a family trying to escape disaster, and there is something meaningful in that, but the script is weak and

the actors just didn't give me the sense that they were truly in the situation they were supposedly in. The events that happened onscreen in these sequences just didn't have much emotional resonance. I don't know if it was their lack of panic or sadness or both that really ruined that part of the movie for me, but it left me bored. I frequently found myself wishing that they would show the events happening to the side characters, or what

the disaster looked like from different points of view. The main story had too much cheese for me to digest.

I think the side characters stole the show. I was much more interested in the geophysicist Adrian Helmsley (Chiwetel Ejiofor), who helped discover the impending disaster, his father who worked on a luxury liner or the Tibetan monk who was told about what was going to happen by his brother that worked on the arc and what happened to these characters as they struggled to survive than I was in the limo driver and his kids. The script was stronger in these parts, and I felt more sympathetic towards these people. There was something compelling in the idealism of Helmsley and his struggle with the unfairness of real life. I felt more connected to the struggles of these minor characters.

Did I mention how beautiful the special effects were? ... Not enough. The arcs were gorgeous. The eruption of the Yellowstone Caldera looked spectacular. I had a deep sense of satisfaction watching two skyscrapers collapse into one another. And on top of that, the camera stayed on the action long enough to really get a sense of what was happening.

The camera shots were also quite strong. The director, Roland Emmerich, has a good sense of how to place the camera to show the audience the action. The visuals were definitely the best part of the entire movie.

The sound effects were adequate, and while not groundbreaking, the music was fitting most of the time. I generally didn't take notice of it, which was both a good and a bad thing. It didn't interfere with my attention, but it also didn't stand out to me as particularly good.

Overall, I would recommend "2012." It isn't the best movie I have seen lately, but as far as disaster movies, it ranks pretty highly. I think seeing it on the big screen is preferable to just watching it at home. At the theater, you can really see the \$200 million or so that was spent making the movie, and I don't know how well that will translate to watching at home.



All illustrations by Matthew Ostergren and Kayla Berge Clackamas Print