

Glasgow Film Festival 2015 – Monsters: Dark Continent (Tom Green, 2015)



When *Monsters* was released almost five years ago, it received such high praise that Warner Brothers practically gave director Gareth Edwards the opportunity to succeed it with the 2014 *Godzilla* reboot. But as the production on that was running, he acted (apparently rather loosely) as the Executive Producer on his debut's sequel. Unfortunately, *Monsters: Dark Continent* lacks every ounce of intellect and skill that made the original *Monsters* so great.

Ten years after an outbreak of rogue alien inhabitation began, 'Infected Zones' are now found all over the world. In the Middle East, a different kind of conflict is growing. A group of young soldiers are assigned to deal with a terrorist insurgency; all whilst avoiding attacks from the behemoths destroying the city.

The real issue with *Monsters: Dark Continent* is that it thinks it's life affirming. It attempts to be a film about personal struggle and reliance on others and instead winds up being a testosterone fueled train wreck. This is a film about military brotherhood fighting against a Middle East insurgency, and occasionally spotting some extraterrestrial beasts from a distance. As a result, it ends up being more Islamophobic than 'monster-phobic', giving the viewer an opportunity to sympathise with the species we should consider the enemy.

On the surface of the dry, blistered action that overpowers *Dark Continent* is a visual coat that stops the film from becoming an absolute disaster. Cinematographer Christopher Ross (who has previously worked with director Tom Green on

Misfits) is put out of his comfort zone in huge barren landscapes bathed in deep orange and blues. Paired with Seb Barker at the visual effects helm, Dark Continent almost rivals Seamus McGarvey's stunning work on Godzilla.

Moments of gracious cinematography and impressive visual effects are incapable of salvaging Dark Continent from being a distasteful piece of work. Undercooked and morally questionable; Edwards' impressive original has been succeeded by something preposterous – and it's a bloody monster movie.



Monsters: Dark Continent plays at Glasgow Film Festival on Thursday 19th and Friday 20th February. Tickets can be purchased [here](#).