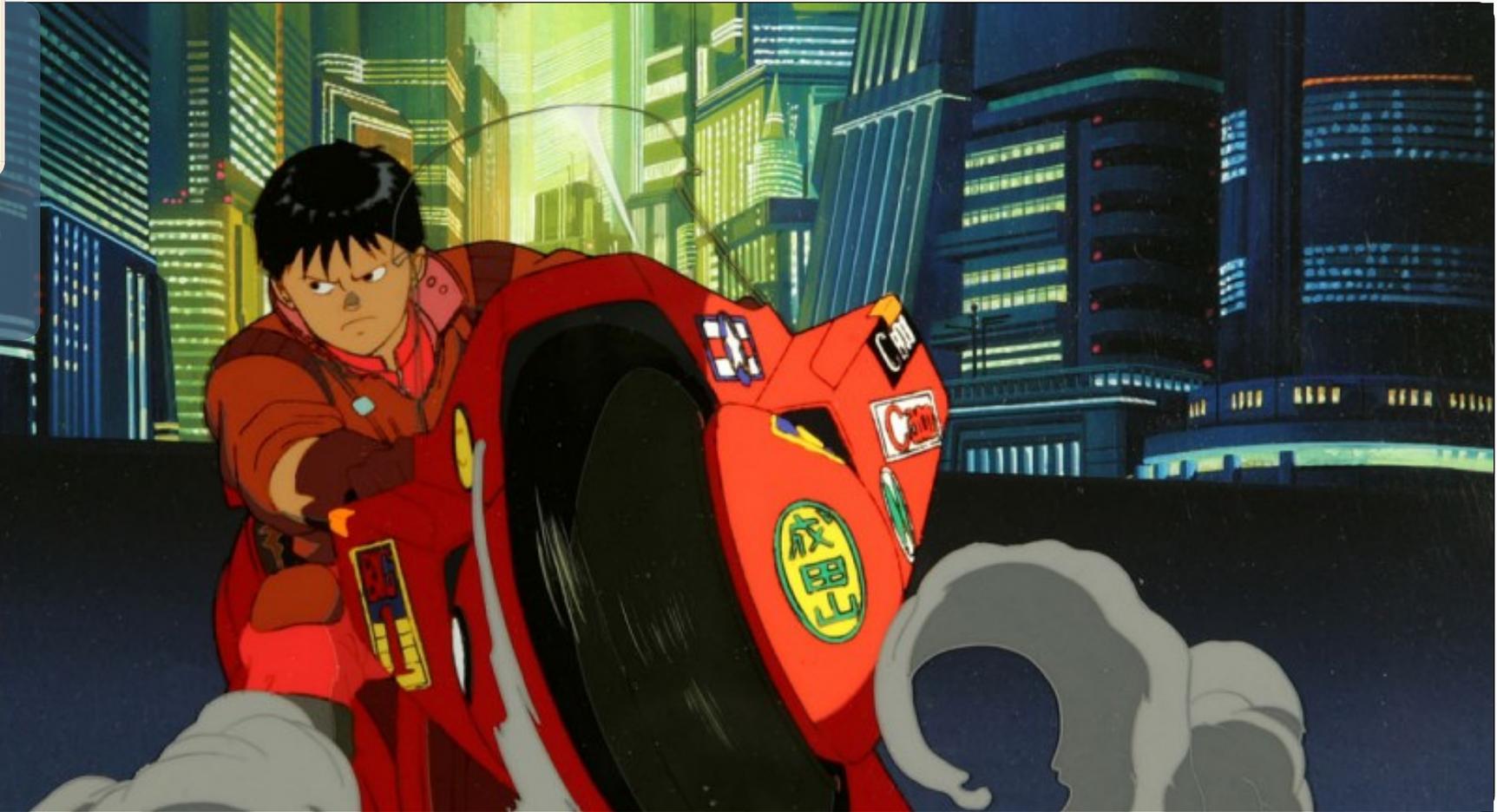


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AKIRA



Movie Details

Post Author: Matt Ho August 12, 2013 0

OUR RATING 

DIRECTOR KATSUHIRO OTOMO

WRITER K. OTOMO, IZO HASHIMOTO



2.5/5 19 votes

US BOX OFFICE \$553K

RUN TIME 2 HR. 4 MIN. RATED R

YOUR RATING

GENRE ACTION, ANIMATION, INTERNATIONAL

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STARS [Mami Koyama](#) [Mitsuo Iwata](#) [Mizuho Suzuki](#) [Nozomu Sasaki](#) [Taro Ishida](#)

SYNOPSIS

In Neo-Tokyo, a biker gang member Shima Tetsuo has his psychic abilities awakened after he gets into an accident with an Esper named Takashi. Taken by the military, Tetsuo discovers his powers and escapes, going on a rampage and releasing a powerful but dangerous psychic known as Akira. His best friend and leader of his gang Shotaro Kaneda, a young revolutionary named Kei, three espers, and Colonel Shikishima, all collide in their attempt to stop him before he attempts to destroy the entire city.

REVIEW

Ask anyone what sparked their interest in anime, and I guarantee *Akira* will be immediately named, or at least listed among other favorites that include *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, *Ghost in the Shell*, and *Gundam*. Even if you've never seen it, Katsuhiro Otomo's cult-classic is one you've either at least

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U.S Box Office

Weekend Box Office for 8/9/2013

Elysium	\$29,807,393
We're the Millers	\$26,419,396
Disney Planes	\$22,232,291
Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters	\$14,401,054
2 Guns	\$11,249,145

Source: *The Numbers* - Movie Box Office

heard of, or recognize through the iconic image of Kaneda with his red motorcycle. *Akira* to this day is widely considered as one of the most influential animated films of all time, and there is good reason why it retains its acclaim 25 years after its release.

To state the obvious, the animation is *amazing*. I've got nothing against what we see in modern animated flicks, but with the exception of Hayao Miyazaki's Studio Ghibli, production studios rarely make them like this anymore, especially when you take into consideration that *Akira* was completely hand drawn.

In fact, assuming the information on IMDB is accurate, the film's record-breaking statistics speak for themselves: 2,212 shots, 160,000 pictures, and 327 different colors, 50 of which were exclusively created for the visuals. Back then, Otomo set the bar high simply because he wasn't lazy. With the tedious work involved, the team was able to achieve unbelievably fluid animation that easily rivals just about anything that's been released today. Whether it's the action sequences, or something as simple as a cape flowing in the wind, the movements onscreen are hardly choppy.

The artistry itself is incredible. The world of *Akira* has a cluttered aesthetic that perfectly complements the state of urban disarray a futuristic Tokyo has become: littered with pedestrians and filled with an abundance of skyscrapers that look like they could reach the sky. Otomo's stunning imagery is both sublime and impressively massive in scale. Perhaps what's most striking is the clear evidence of relentless dedication from the artists to get everything right. Pause at any scene and you'll find that anything, be it buildings, machinery, or even something as trivial as album covers in a jukebox, is insanely detailed and meticulously drawn. The artists really don't skimp on anything when it comes to the fine points, especially with the opening image of the city prior to the war. Even if you're not a fan of *Akira*, the artwork is something you can appreciate.

Like the visuals, the story of *Akira* is larger than life, with its amalgamation of sci-fi and cyberpunk in a dystopian future where Tokyo is now renamed Neo-Tokyo, post-World War III. Otomo dives into the various problems society has endured since then, with themes of political corruption, youth rebellion, terrorism and biker gang violence that run amok in the tumultuous setting where disorder is barely



terrorism and biker gang violence that run amok in the tumultuous setting where disorder is barely controllable.

At the center of it all is a secret government research studying psychic children, which becomes the focus of the narrative as details of The Doctor and Colonel Shikishima's project involving Akira and Tetsuo emerge. From this point, the film keeps viewers suspended with a mystery surrounding the titular character that raises several questions: Who is he? What is he? What was his role in the war? Why is he locked up?

Look at what they abandoned in their panic, they were afraid! They were too scared, so they hid it away from the public. – Colonel Shikishima

As the answers are slowly revealed, we're simultaneously kept entertained with intense hi-octane action. To say Tetsuo wreaks havoc is a *serious* understatement. It is pure apocalyptic violence filled with gunfire, countless explosions, and raging riots that continuously escalates as Neo-Tokyo descends into utter chaos. This film frighteningly demonstrates the ramifications of carelessness when containment is no longer within the grasp of

highly detailed and complex. If the film is as good as the hype, it's about *Akira* though, it's that it misses several subplots and details from the original material. It's an inevitable argument from passionate readers, which is expected and understandable. However, that's always the case for film adaptations given the time constraints writers and directors have to work with. I won't deny that there were certain things I would've loved to learn more about in detail, but if something's lacking for me, then that's what the manga is for, right?

VERDICT

Akira is an instant classic everyone should watch at least once, especially considering its widespread influence. Otomo's film is wildly imaginative, original, and thought-provoking, with thrilling sequences that are spectacular to watch. Warner Bros. has desperately tried to resuscitate their live action remake that has been shut down for production once again, which is a sign of relief for many. Here's hoping it stays that way considering what Otomo has already impressively delivered with the manga



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