



'The Innocents' Review: Growing Up Is Hard Enough, But Powers Can Make Things More Complicated

Posted by Murjani Rawls | May 12, 2022 | Film, Film Reviews, Reviews | 0 | ★★★★★



At a point and time during our childhoods, we wondered how it would be to have a superpower. We played with our friends, specifying which we had and the parameters everyone could operate within. Man, it was fun to pretend to fly or move things with your mind — it was all so innocent. But superpowers are subject to being molded by various aspects of human emotion. In cinema, we've been provided many instances of how this can manifest in films like *Chronicle* or the MCU/DCEU. Director Eskil Vogt places that view through the eyes of children in *The Innocents*, a slow-building horror film where pre-teen kids investigate aspects of self-discovery, nihilism, innocence, and the corrupting force of power in the wrong hands.

You're probably saying to yourself, how can kids exhibit these emotions that are considered adult in nature? Vogt places the audience in a world where children operate, which is often a blind spot to the caretakers they live with. We meet sisters Ida (Rakel Lenora Fløttum) and Anna (Alva Brynsmo Ramstad), who move to an apartment complex as their dad gets a new job. There, they meet Ben (Sam Ashraf) and Aisha (Mina Yasmin Bremseth Asheim), two other kids who enjoy the freedom of a place that's not so densely populated during the summer. Anna is autistic, which ends up with Ida taking her outside to the playground daily.

Vogt introduces us to hints of incidental darkness right from the beginning that some may brush aside. Ida steps on worms; she doesn't think Anna can understand anything, and has anxiety about the move. When she hangs out with Ben, they find out they have powers. Ben uses telekinesis to move (or hurl) objects, Aisha sees and feels other people's pain, and Anna can manipulate gravity around her. Ida's abilities become more evident as the film goes on — but each kid isn't handed these abilities through a spell or a crystal — they are a part of who they are. With that comes an excitement of wanting to expand quickly without thinking about the risk vs. reward.

After all, these four kids aren't endowed with a thoroughly developed sense of right and wrong. These powers are at the mercy of the swift changes of emotion that a child can have — which could be terrifying, especially if home situations don't cultivate a nurturing home base. *The Innocents* takes its time to reveal its subtle horror aspects, like its central narrative. Cinematographer Sturla Brandth Grøvlen interjects surrealist imagery, particularly with Aisha and how she views the world, to show a darker undercurrent. The scariest part of *The Innocents* is not necessarily what we would typically classify as a "horror" film — it's what can happen when someone with an underdeveloped sense of empathy can do with an arsenal of upgraded attributes at their disposal that should keep you up at night.

There are swaths of animal cruelty and quick decisions to injure others. As these situations pile up, the viewer will have an internal struggle within themselves because of the naivete being young comes with. The stellar acting of the cast enhances all the fast-growing up lessons these four characters are going through. Vogt enables the ensemble to be themselves while dabbling into existential questions people older than them are still investigating. *The Innocents* has a less is more approach to dealing with backstories or previous relationships that lead us to the current day. It can be a source of frustration for some, but maybe enough through small conversations and visual cues for one to deduce why a particular character has a shaky past with another.

Growing up is hard, especially when you have to figure out life's lessons on your own devices. *The Innocents* provides an interesting lesson for everybody to see — young or old alike.

Photo Credit: IFC Midnight

SHARE: f t g+ t p in v u e RATE: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

< PREVIOUS

Album Review :: State Champs "Kings Of The New Age"

NEXT >

Live Photos + Review: Olivia Rodrigo Brings Sour Tour to Atlanta

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Murjani Rawls

Journalist, Self-published author of five books, podcast host of The War Report and The Deadscreen Podcast, and photographer since 2014, Murjani "MJ" Rawls has been stretching his capabilities of his creativity and passions, Rawls has as a portfolio through many mediums including music, television, movies, and more. Operating out of the New York area, Rawls has photographed over 200+ artists spanning many genres, written over 700 articles ranging displaying his passionate aspirations to keep evolving as his years in media continue.

f t i

RELATED POSTS



Them Evils celebrate living in the moment with "Where Ya Gonna Crash Tonight?"

Jun 4, 2020



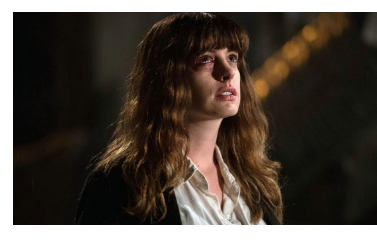
It's Steve Carell Vs. Emma Stone in first 'Battle of the Sexes' trailer

May 16, 2017



'Toni Erdmann' is a great movie buried under tedious length

Feb 6, 2017



Let's Get Physical: The best DVD and Blu-ray releases of August 1, 2017

Aug 1, 2017



TODAY'S HEADLINES

Under Avex, Yamato Releases Defining EP 'Essentials'
May 14, 2022 | Music

Movies You Can't Miss Out On
May 14, 2022 | Movies, News

Director Keith Thomas Explains How His Vision Comes To Life In Resurrecting The 1984 Cult Classic "Firestarter"

May 14, 2022 | Featured, Film, Interviews, Movies

Hoodie Allen Starts A New Pop-Punk Era With Single "Wouldn't That Be Nice"

May 14, 2022 | Featured, Interviews

Rich Furniss Links With Morsy For 'On The Moon' EP

May 14, 2022 | Music

FOLLOW US

RECENT REVIEWS

NYFF Review: 'The Tragedy of Macbeth' Is An Adaptation Fit To Hold the Weight of A Heavy Crown

SCORE: 93%

TIFF Review: 'Dashcam' Provides A Rabid Found Footage Experience With Obstacles In Front and Behind the Camera

SCORE: 40%

TIFF Review: 'Silent Night' Is A Tenebrious Christmas Comedy That Stands At the Edge of World's End

SCORE: 70%

'Dear Evan Hansen' Review: An Overall Message That Can't Fight Through the Tapping of the Glass

SCORE: 45%

'The Conjuring: The Devil Made Me Do It' Contains Scares You Know and Combines the Supernatural and Legal Worlds

SCORE: 75%

RECENT VIDEOS

NO VIDEO FOUND

Joe Occhiuti of Ice Nine Kills Lists Eight Underrated Bands From Boston

Valleyheart releases new video single and video "Scenery"



ABOUT US

Substream Magazine is a forward thinking lifestyle and media outlet that focuses on discovering and sharing the best in new music, film, pop culture, and entertainment. Since 2007, Substream has helped break artists and launch cutting edge content. Our writers and staff are located all over the world and are passionate about music and pop culture.

FOLLOW US

f t i