

'Mad Max: Fury Road' is out of its mind

George Miller's action-packed DVD offers fascinating insights

Lane Fortenberry
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His name is Max — and he's a man of few words.

Writer/director George Miller has brought his apocalyptic franchise back from the wasteland for a "revisiting" — he refuses to call this a reboot or sequel. "Mad Max: Fury Road" is filled with gorgeous, chaotic action, all shot in a spectacular fashion.

Fiery vehicle chases? Check. Lightning-filled sandstorms? Check. Deranged war boy playing a guitar with flamethrower attached? Um, check.

We mustn't question the madness — we must just accept it. One may get a dry throat and need water watching the film — I'll pass on the scarce, worshipped breast milk though.

Max Rockatansky (Tom Hardy) has visions of his murdered family as he seeks ultimate redemption. He wants to go home, but there's a problem

— he doesn't have one.

The movie opens with Max being chased through a post-apocalyptic desert and captured. He is taken to Immortan Joe's citadel, where Joe (Hugh Keays-Byrne), viscously rules by controlling the only supply of water. Max is hooked up to be a living blood bank for the War Boys, Joe's psychotic army.

Max is chained to Nux's (Nicholas Hoult) car, as the War Boys chase after the rebel, Imperator Furiosa (Charlize Theron). She's on the run for stealing the five wives of her boss Immortan Joe (Hugh Keays-Byrne). Her plan is to take the women — the "breeders" — in search of the "green place." This is home to water, fruit, plants and grass — a sharp contrast to the apocalyptic desert where they live — and a better life.

After Max escapes — and after a few early scuffles — he and Furiosa form an uneasy alliance, more a case of "the enemy of my enemy is my friend" than true friendship.

Eventually, Max, Furiosa and the wives, along with a reformed War Boy, Nux, decide to turn around and take down the psychotic empire that's after them.

If it was wild when Furiosa turned left, it gets a whole lot wilder when they turn around.



Tom Hardy plays Max Rockatansky in "Mad Max: Fury Road"

Courtesy Image

The movie itself is worth the cost of the DVD/Blu-ray, but the special features are really what set it apart from the rest. The insight is important to truly understand why this film boasts a 97 percent, certified fresh rating from Rotten Tomatoes.

The most fascinating thing about the film is the stunts, which use real stuntmen. The production crew even brought members of Cirque du Soleil to help out. There were many mo-

ments on set when George Miller was quite concerned about potential injuries from blowing cars up or pole dancers (not that kind of pole dancer) mounted on moving vehicles.

"Fury Road" was created entirely from storyboards, 3,500 panels of them in fact. The crew decided the deserts of Africa were the best place to shoot, for there were several chases involved that covered many miles and they needed that environ-

ment.

The conditions were tough on the cast because it was extremely cold when they began the eight-month-long production. The actors said it was isolating and seemed to make them a little crazier.

In one special feature, Hardy says he had lunch with Mel Gibson, the original Max, who passed the torch.

There's an underlying feminist stance throughout the whole movie, which is covered in a special feature with the five wives and Furiosa. Miller wanted to create a powerful woman who had great beauty but was also a warrior, to stand against Max. The five wives are worshipped because they breed Joe's babies. Hardy said it is very much Furiosa's movie and Max is just along for the ride as a companion.

There is a special feature included that is dedicated to the 140 vehicles created for the movie, with many different makes and models. Military trucks were used as the foundation due to their bulky, strong bodies. The crew covers the most important vehicle in the movie, the War Rig, in depth. Miller refers to it as the most important character other than the humans.

Expect the film to hang around during award season, because there has never been an action movie like this — it will kick your ass. To paraphrase the War Boys cry, "Fury Road" is "perfect in every way."

The DVD/Blu-ray is on sale now.



Charlize Theron plays Imperator Furiosa in "Mad Max: Fury Road"

Courtesy Image

LU's new wifi to increase security

Sharinna Byrd
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As the demand for online curriculum increases, Lamar University has upgraded the

campus Wi-Fi. The school has partnered with wireless vendor Ruckus to increase coverage and make the system more secure.

"We used to have Cisco, and

now we have a company called Ruckus," Patrick Stewart, director of IT computing infrastructure information, said. "Ruckus is really big in venues. They're able to get a lot of

people on less equipment. It's essential."

With the improved wireless network, students, faculty and staff will have Wi-Fi coverage no matter where they are on campus. Lamar's two previous networks, LU Big Red and Cardinal, were not secure. Now, there is only one network. Everyone affiliated with Lamar can either connect to Join LU or LU Secure. Guests can also connect to the Wi-Fi with temporary LEA accounts.

Lamar cannot access student information, and only things that are prohibited on campus are blocked.

"So we're not watching your traffic or your data," Stewart said. "But, what we are watching for is those illegal applications that go out and download the latest movie or the latest music that's pirated and copyrighted. If you try to download that, that traffic gives a very unique signature and our security equipment will see that signature and stop the traffic. As far as what's on your phone or the traffic you're moving back and forward, we don't watch that — that's not what we do."

Users will be allowed to connect up to five devices.

Stewart said that the new system has a way of protecting one's data through encryption.

"So, that's been the largest change that we have in our new wireless system," he said. "Everything is now encrypted and secured."

Stewart said that users might find the batteries on their cellular devices may run down quicker.

"At first there wasn't an encryption," he said. "Now we have encryption, so it drains your battery as you move through wireless access points."

However, Stewart said the university is in the process of working on the battery drainage issue.

"We're starting to try and tweak it because it's new for us as well," he said. "We're doing everything we can to make the user experience better because we don't want to impact students' data, we don't want to impact students' battery life, we don't want to impact the students' experience at all. We want students to have the best experience they could possibly have, but keep them safe."

For more information, call Stewart at 880-2279, or visit <https://wifi.lamar.edu>.

1. Go to wireless setting and connect to "Join LU"
2. Open web browser and type Lamar.edu (The page should say "Welcome to the Lamar Wireless Network")
3. Tap "continue" at the bottom of the page.
4. Tap the "Term & Conditions policy box" and then tap "start"
5. Choose "Guest" or "Students, Faculty, or Staff"
6. Type in your LEA username and password and continue
7. Tap "Step 1" and go to Google play or Amazon to install the app "XpressConnect."
8. Once the app is installed, go back into your web browser and tap "Step 2." Your device should automatically configure. Tap "continue" then "done."

Each user can have up to 5 devices connected to lamar's wi-fi. Onboarding allows you to only follow this procedure once, unless you get a new device. If you have any questions or concerns, contact Patrick Stewart at 409-880-2279.