

ARMAGEDDON TIME

United States (2022) 114 minutes

Director: James Gray

Cast: Banks Repeta (Paul Graff)
Jaylin Webb (Johnny Davis)
Anne Hathaway (Esther Graff)
Jeremy Strong (Irving Graff)
Anthony Hopkins (Grandpa Aaron Rabinowitz)



Screening 27th March 2024 at Swindon Art Centre

Synopsis

A 12-year-old boy grows up in an American neighbourhood with dreams of becoming an artist. His father does not approve but he finds solace in the encouraging words of his grandfather and the friendship with his classmate keeps him happy. As time moves on in his life's journey, the good, bad and indifferent experiences continue to educate and fascinate him.

Reviews



The family scenes, all jostling banter and suffocating love, are terrific. Anne Hathaway is a frazzled mother whose status on the school PTA is not quite the power-play Paul believes it to be; Anthony Hopkins dispatches twinkly wisdom as a much-loved grandpa; Jeremy Strong is the disciplinarian dad with a whiplash temper. Pre-teen drama is amplified by robust and fairly obvious musical choices, but more interesting is the sound design: the city is everywhere, grumbling and fractious, the sound of a short fuse burning out. A brief, felt moment of silence allows Hopkins's potent final line to land like a punch.

Wendy Ide, The Guardian

At its heart, *Armageddon Time* is about Paul and Johnny's friendship and how that friendship tragically changes. It's here that things get a little tricky: some might see Johnny as a regrettable stereotype, the Black character who suffers grievously so that his white friend can learn a hard-hitting lesson. But I think that reading may be too easy, partly because the film is all about the limitations of Paul's perspective, and partly because Director James Gray has no interest in dispensing reassurance or uplift. He's made an angry, despairing movie about one boy's disillusionment with the injustice of the world and his own silent complicity with it. What makes *Armageddon Time* so powerful is that Gray reserves his harshest anger for himself.

Justin Chang, National Public Radio

Film Facts

- The film premiered at the Cannes Film Festival 2022.
- The title comes from a song by *The Clash*, entitled *Armagideon Time*, which is heard several times throughout the film.

swindonfilm.org.uk