

About Mad Max Fury Road (George Miller) / William Brown



WILLIAM BROWN / *Mad Ma(r)x: The Furious Return*

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Should it be a surprise that a film as full of sound and fury as *Mad Max: Fury Road* should ultimately signify nothing? What is more, we all know that hell hath no fury like a woman scorned. Indeed, the Furies were themselves female deities of vengeance – like Furiosa and her followers in *Mad Max: Fury Road*. Vengeance itself is an exercise in return: to revisit the site of trauma in an attempt not just to allay, but also to prolong the system of insult that creates it. And so to see a film in which fury is a road that does not necessarily lead nowhere, but which leads out into the desert and then back to where it began, is in some senses only logical: like the *Mad Max* cycle, it is an exercise in grunting, alinguistic return. MM, the millennial fear that surrounded 2000 AD: this is a comic book fear that has not gone away in the fifteen years since the millennium, but the comic nature of which is now clear for all to see, since what at first is tragedy returns as farce. This is the nature of cliché: to repeat until we laugh at the arbitrary and meaningless nature of that which purports to say much, but which in reality says nothing (the cliché that is the return as farce of that which at first seems tragic). What is nothing? Nothing by definition is not, and so nothing demands a new temporality, beyond ‘is’, and in the realm of becoming. But what can become if there is only return, repetition, remake (masquerading, like Hardy/Bane in a mask, as sequel, going along the road like Hardy/Locke to a somewhere that in fact is nowhere except now here)? The desert, the land of nothing: since it is nothing, the desert is not really real, since reality demands not nothing, but something, otherwise reality does not exist. The desert structures the road and vice versa. The desert is what we deserve: it is vengeance. *Mad Max: Fury Road* says nothing. As such it makes nothing its structuring principle, the very destiny not of mankind but of mancruel, which in assigning value to things tries to make something, but which must always comically, farcically return to the nothing that is. Maximum madness: it is the threat, nay the promise, of nothing that keeps us hoping that the something that vainly we try to create might yet become something better, something real, something, God damn it, that might scream as loudly as the void and thereby will itself into existence. An idiot’s game, speaking grunting idiolects. Mmmm mmmm mmmm. To be: that is not a question, but a tragedy. Not to be: this is farce. Let Max, Furiosia and all of us tragically strut and fret our hours upon the stage. This furious road to nowhere, it tells us that the witness of here and now is comically all that there is. Language requires memory; it, too, is repetition, return. In the here and now, there is no speech, just comic grunts. Should we take this seriously? More seriously than anything else, for the grunt of the here and now, that which makes somewhere out of nowhere, which makes of the desert a place since we are with it, it is our only furious hope in the face of the nothing of death. Return, return, return. Comedy, farce, it is not only all that we have, but it is the invention both of having and of we in face of a repetitive all, or whole, that is death itself. Human fury: to fury is to be human, to give ourselves a road. Without it, we return comically, farcically, once again, to nothing.