



## BORDERLINES FILM FESTIVAL

### **THE END (15)**

Director: Joshua Oppenheimer

Starring: Tilda Swinton, George MacKay, Moses Ingram, Michael Shannon

Denmark/Germany/Ireland/Italy/UK/Sweden, 2024, 2 hours 28 minutes, English

From Academy Award-nominated documentary director Joshua Oppenheimer (*The Act of Killing*, *The Look of Silence*), comes a deeply affecting musical that acts as cautionary tale about the end of the world. Twenty-five years after the environmental collapse of the Earth, leaving it uninhabitable, Mother, Father and Son are confined to their palatial bunker, where they struggle to maintain hope and any sense of normalcy by clinging to the rituals of daily life. The routine life they have created for themselves is completely upended by the arrival of a stranger.

The film shows off a star-studded cast, with performances from "Academy Award winner Tilda Swinton (*Michael Clayton*), Academy Award nominee Michael Shannon (*Nocturnal Animals*, *Revolutionary Road*), George MacKay (*1917*) and Moses Ingram (*Lady in the Lake*, *The Queen's Gambit*)."

#### Director's Statement (from production notes)

Other species may have brought about their own extinction, but I can't imagine they saw it coming. They never discussed it, fretted over it, planned in detail how it might be avoided—and then did nothing. Imagine how foolish we would appear to them. We see the abyss ahead of us, we know we are racing toward it, yet we do not change course...

Some, of limitless means, believe they can afford to give up on collective solutions and decide, instead, to save themselves. They think it is too late for the human ship to correct its course, but having enjoyed such power and privilege, why should they go down with everyone else? They will survive the apocalypse alone with their families, cut off from the broader human family. They tell themselves they can live on, in complete isolation, and still remain human. Their humanity is self-contained. And why not? Our economy is based on this same idea – that the isolated and self-interested individual is the fundamental unit of being.

*The End* explores the logical conclusion of this self-deception: a family holed up in a bunker years after everyone else has perished, enjoying every comfort, a last flicker of human consciousness surrounded by the artifacts of a vanished species, desperately telling themselves that they are happy and good, and thus all is well...

I want my films to be mirrors. I try to invite, cajole, sometimes even force viewers to acknowledge their most urgent truths. This inevitably requires confronting our self-deceptions, exploring their sometimes terrible consequences. Our ability to lie to ourselves is probably the tragic flaw that makes us human. And it will surely be the one that destroys our species—unless we stop and find the courage to recognize our lies for what they are.

Notes compiled by Angharad Evans and Jo Comino