



THE BRAND NEW TESTAMENT

BELGIUM 113 MIN

JACO VAN DORMAEL

God is real and is a mean bastard who never gets off his computer. You already know about his son, now let's hear about his daughter. This new film from Belgian director Jaco van Dormael (*Toto the Hero*, *Mr Nobody*) won't exactly win favour with the ultra-faithful, but for those who like their Bible stories with a thick coat of satire, *The Brand New Testament* is a peppy, original and (importantly) very sweet story.

It begins in the centre of the universe: a dingy flat in Brussels. God spends his day intentionally making people miserable, tapping out rules on his his outdated DOS computer and fiddling with his train set. He giggles as he makes sure the toast always falls jam-side down, or that whatever queue you are on will be the slowest. His wife (simply called the Goddess) is sweet and simple, focusing on embroidery and her baseball card collection. But 10-year-old daughter Ea (played by a fantastic young actress, Pili Groyne) is observant, gaining in powers and wants to change things. "Don't get crazy ideas like your brother," Dad grunts, but later that evening she has a conversation with "JC" and the pair devise a plan. Ea is going to get six additional disciples, and listen to them, thus creating a Brand New Testament.

Before she can do this, she must free the world from their need for her bum of a father. Sneaking into his office, she sends a text message to everyone in the world, detailing precisely how much time they have left until they die. At first people think it is a hoax, but when the 30-minute crowd all start dropping dead (and always in funny ways), they realise it's for real.

Ea then speaks to her six randomly chosen people and listens to their gospels. Some are silly (like Catherine Deneuve's, which includes her taking a gorilla from a zoo to her bed); others are touching, such as that of a sickly 10-year-old boy who wants to live out the rest of his days as a girl. There's also an angry dude who always wanted to shoot at people, and now uses the reasonable logic that if he hits them, it was meant to be.

Everyone on Earth is ultimately doomed, but this is a vision of optimism, of people being given the opportunity to help one another and doing it with tenderness. If you can get past the initial blasphemy, you'll find a highly moral film

.Jordan Hoffman, The Guardian

WRITERS: Jaco Van Dormael, Thomas Gunzig **CINEMATOGRAPHY:** Christophe Beaucarne **MUSIC:** An Pierlé
Ea Pili Groyne | Dieu Benoît Poelvoorde | Martine Catherine Deneuve | François François Damiens

VOTING FOR *The Salt of the Earth* A60 | B17 | C2 | D0 | E0 | Rating 93.35% | Attendance 95

Our next screening | **Court** | Tuesday 29 November 2016. 8.00pm

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