

COLLAPSE

Director: Chris Smith
Runtime: 82 Minutes
Color. High Definition

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Synopsis.

Americans generally like to hear good news. They like to believe that a new President will right old wrongs, that clean energy will replace dirty oil, and that fresh thinking will set the economy straight. American pundits tend to restrain their pessimism and to hope for the best. But is anyone prepared for the worst?

Michael Ruppert is a different kind of American. A former Los Angeles police officer turned independent reporter, he predicted the current financial crisis in his self-published newsletter "From the Wilderness" at a time when most Wall Street and Washington analysts were still in denial. Smith has always had a feeling for outsiders in films like "American Movie" and "American Job." In "Collapse," Smith stylistically departs from his past films by interviewing Ruppert in a format that recalls the work of Errol Morris and Spalding Gray.

Sitting in a room that looks like a bunker, Ruppert recounts his career as a radical thinker and spells out the crises he sees ahead. He draws upon the same news reports and data available to any Internet user, but he applies a unique interpretation. He is especially passionate over the issue of "peak oil," the concern raised by scientists since the 1970s that the world will eventually run out of fossil fuel. While other experts debate this issue in measured tones, Ruppert doesn't hold back at sounding an alarm. He portrays a future that resembles apocalyptic science fiction. Listening to his rapid flow of opinions, the viewer is likely to question some of the rhetoric as paranoid or deluded; and to sway back and forth on what to make of the extremism. Smith lets viewers form their own judgments.

The film also serves as a portrait of a loner. Over the years, Ruppert has stood up for what he believes in spite of fierce opposition. He candidly describes the sacrifices and motivators in his life. Clearly, he believes that a dose of bad news can do some good.

Thom Powers - Toronto International Film Festival

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Crew Bios.

Chris Smith - Director

Chris Smith is an accomplished filmmaker whose previous films include American Job (1996, Sundance Film Festival), American Movie (1999, Grand Jury Prize Sundance Film Festival, Sony Pictures Classics), Home Movie (2001, Sundance Film Festival), The Yes Men (2004, United Artists) and most recently The Pool (2008). The Pool won a Special Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival and was selected as one of the Top 25 Films of 2008 by the Museum of Modern Art.

Kate Noble - Producer

Kate Noble has worked in production for the last ten years. She joined Bluemark Films in the spring of 2004 and has since worked on projects including The Yes Men, Suffering and Smiling, and The Grand Human Experiment. Before Collapse she produced the narrative feature The Pool, also with director Chris Smith.

Barry Poltermann - Editor

Barry Poltermann first collaborated with Chris Smith as editor on American Movie. He recently directed and edited the documentary feature The Life of Reilly. Barry also served as an executive producer on the documentary, Rock the Bells, which chronicles the struggle to put together the final performance of the Wu Tang Clan. Most recently he and Chris collaborated on the narrative feature, The Pool, which was edited in large part on location in India.

Didier Leplae / Joe Wong - Composers

This is the third collaboration between composers Didier Leplae and Joe Wong. Didier and Joe are also founders in their music company Noisola. See www.noisola.com for more information.