In his 35-year career, director Abel Ferrara has explored everything from a driller killer and a female vigilante to body snatchers and an addiction to blood. In his latest film, 4:44 THE LAST DAY ON EARTH (opening in limited release today from IFC Films), he tackles no less than the apocalypse itself—but in an intimate, rather than bombastic, manner. Fango spoke to this unique filmmaker about 4:44, what became of his take on DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE, etc.

4:44 posits that Al Gore was right: Global warming has doomed our planet, which will see its demise at 4:44 in the morning EST. The film's focus is on New York City dwellers Cisco (Willem Dafoe) and his artist girlfriend Skye (Shanyn Leigh) as they spend their final night together, while the reactions of others to the impending catastrophe—from calm to suicidal—are seen in the margins.

FANGORIA: You've engaged any number of genre subjects and dark themes in the past, but this is the first time you've taken on the end of the world. What inspired you to tackle that subject now?

ABEL FERRARA: I don't know; maybe I'm getting old [*laughs*]. Maybe it's 2012, and all the shit that's happening—volcanoes that strand people all over f**kin' Europe, an earthquake in Chile that almost actually puts the Earth off its axis…I guess there's something in the air, you know what I mean?

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[redacted] episodic one [redacted]