

The best disaster movie you will never see. If you can get the Japanese cut, it has almost an extra hour, which I imagine probably gave a lot more depth to the film, just a guess. The American version I did get my hands on was pretty good on its own... This is not really a movie about saving the world so much as surviving the numerous apocalypses the world can throw at you, even after the entire world population dies at the hands of a super virus, those surviving in Arctic research stations (the virus cannot survive the cold) some 8880 men and 8 women (the scene where the women address how 1 on 1 "relationships" are going to be impossible, is one of the most genuine, poignant, and unique in the film, the apocalypse doesn't hit home till you realize there's 8000 horny scientists, crawling over each other to play Adam and Eve, those not-if-you-were-the-last-man-on-earth scenarios horribly reversed.), still have to deal with the fact that both the Russian and American automatic nuclear missile systems are still in operation, and a coming earthquake is liable to force them to launch, one of which is pointed at the Antarctic research station. So two men on foot, one Japanese and one American take a trip to DC, to turn off the machine. A lot of the save the world stuff takes place in the last 20 minutes, the rest is all death and survival. This was at the time of its release the most expensive Japanese film ever made, and it shows, as we get scenes from Germany, Japan, America, and yes the Antarctic, real submarines too. If you sat through "Outbreak", "The Day After Tomorrow", and many of the now numerous end of the world films, this won't be anything too new, there are some scenes which are undeniably cheesy (the "walk" at the end). However, because I've got a U.S. cut, and U.S. cuts, as a rule of thumb, are generally dumbed down and streamlined, sad but true. So I don't know how to give an accurate review, this movie as it is at the 108 minutes I saw it, was decent with a fair serving of 80's cheese, I have a feeling though with a little more time, this might have felt as epic and grand as it intimates in its best moments. "Virus" is also a terrible title for this film as well, which has little to do with virus, or bacteriology, it's a good global destruction movie, "The End" is a much better fitting moniker. Director would go on to later success with "Battle Royale". Note: I picked this movie up because it gets referenced a lot in Junot Diaz's "The Brief And Wonderful Life Of Oscar Wao" as the title character's favorite film, and in the right context I can see why.