

[SEARCH BLOG](#)[FLAG BLOG](#)[FOLLOW BLOG](#)Next Blog»[sal1mineo@hotmail](mailto:sal1mineo@hotmail.com)

# POPSURFING.COM

SURFING THE WAVES OF POPULAR CULTURE  
BY MICHAEL GILTZ & FRIENDS

FRIDAY, MAY 05, 2006

## Surfing Through "Down In The Valley"

This faux Western starring Edward Norton opens today in limited release. Below is the complete text of my initial reaction to the film when I saw it at Cannes last year. I'm actually heading for London Next Friday and then Cannes the following week where I'll be blogging less regularly but more glamorously from the best film festival in the world. Peter sallet -- the composer of the film -- stumbled on my piece and was friendly enough to send along an email thanking me and letting me know about an upcoming album. He's a real talent, as is most everyone connected to this worthy if flawed project. And now, my piece:

Down in the Valley \*\* 1/2 -- Can you like a movie that doesn't work? That's certainly how I feel about this modern western (of sorts), starring Edward Norton as a drifter/cowboy who shows up in LA and charms the pants of Evan Rachel Wood. Writer/director David Jacobson echoes all sorts of films -- "Midnight Cowboy" and "Taxi Driver" most prominently -- and Norton is just terrific as the aw-shucks cowboy that you can't quite decide if he's a nutso or for real. Actually, everyone is good, including Rory Culkin as Wood's timid little brother and David Morse as their quick-tempered dad who hasn't a clue about how to rein in the stubborn Wood. Much too much plot (Norton's dad is an Hasidic jew? Oy.) and cut the way too soft ending scene. As for the scene where Norton stands in front of a mirror wearing his holster and gun, talking to himself in tough guy mode: my friend Stephen said it well, "You can't do that. Robert DeNiro owns the copyright to that and you're infringing." Truly, it's a no-win move, even with someone as talented as Norton. (And sadly, the earlier part of the scene, where he goofs around on his own and has a mock shoot-out with bad guys like an eight year old kid, tells us everything we know and is much better.) Despite it's flaws, this is a distinctive film and Norton was right to champion it and the director.



FAVORITE LINKS

[Americablog](#)

[Five O'Clock Lightning baseball blog](#)

[Deep Pop -- Lori Lakin's Blog](#)

[The Back Page -- Jason Page on ESPN Radio](#)

[Cine-Blog -- George Robinson's Blog](#)

[Documents On Art & Cinema - Daryl Chin's Blog](#)

[Brucie G's Wondrous Blog Of Adventure and Mystery -- Bruce Greenspan's Blog](#)



---

BLOG ARCHIVE

▼ [2009 \(17\)](#)

▼ [July \(3\)](#)

[1939 -- The Greatest Year For Movies](#)

[Swimming Bans Those Hi-Tech Suits!](#)

[Best Movies Of The Year -- The Master List](#)

▶ [June \(3\)](#)

▶ [May \(1\)](#)

▶ [March \(2\)](#)

▶ [February \(1\)](#)

▶ [January \(7\)](#)

▶ [2008 \(86\)](#)

▶ [2007 \(781\)](#)

▶ [2006 \(2412\)](#)

▶ [2005 \(5\)](#)



---

CONTRIBUTORS

[Michael in New York](#)

[Aaron](#)

