

JULY 2022

GOTHAM & THE CITY

“THE CITY IS ANGY, SCARRED LIKE ME”

Toward the beginning of the film, Batman’s voice is heard saying of the city of Gotham: “It’s a powderkeg. And the Riddler is the match.”

Gotham is simmering and quickly descending into chaos while crime rates skyrocket. It also becomes clear that the city’s leadership is overrun with corruption. By the interaction between the two mayoral candidates, viewers understand that the city needs a real change (pun intended).

Selina (Catwoman) refers to the city’s elite as “rich, white men,” and by doing this she effectively anchors their world into our racialized reality. That simple statement gives us the ability to juxtapose Gotham over Baltimore, or any other city.

It allows us to ask certain questions about our cities: who’s in whose pockets? Who holds power, and why?

It forces us to wonder about hope for our cities too. Is there any hope for cities drowning in violence and despair?

There are so many in our cities who have hope. Like Selina, some believe certain cities like Baltimore are too far gone. But there are many others who decide to set aside their weapons of vengeance and get their hands dirty working with the community to help people find the “good life” for themselves.

- EVANA UPSHAW

