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Perfect Sense

By Mark Holcomb Wednesday, Feb 1 2012

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Satisfyingly ambiguous and starkly tactile in its inquiry into where sensation ends and identity begins, David Mackenzie's rampaging-virus movie doesn't dodge genre potholes so much as it stays off that road entirely. To a fault—like its pithy title, *Perfect Sense* can be too poetic for its own good. Thankfully, the film's effective meet-cute-and-die scenario, in which a Glasgow chef (Ewan McGregor) hooks up with his epidemiologist neighbor (Eva Green) just as a pandemic flares, is not canceled out by the overly clever groaners (like the first stage of the disease being labeled S.O.S., for Severe Olfactory Syndrome). The two leads have real sizzle together, and screenwriter Kim Fupz Aakeson's conception of a multistage affliction that eradicates the five senses one by one—with a preceding, correlative behavioral outburst for each—is inspired, if indebted to Camus and José Saramago. Mackenzie's ability to find simultaneous humor and pathos in the tragedy is also notable, as in a scene where a food critic diligently samples dishes and takes notes long after his taste buds have burned away; the voiceover interludes are less successful. *Perfect Sense* beautifully captures the ache and counterintuitive thrill of "the days as we know them, the world as we imagine the world" fading away by degrees—just don't be surprised if you find yourself longing for a contagion-spawned zombie bloodbath to counter the shambling



Details

Perfect Sense
 Directed by David Mackenzie
 IFC Films
 Opens February 3

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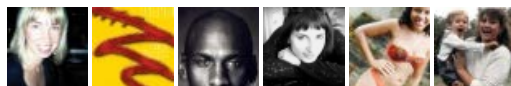
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