

## Blu-ray Review: 'Perfect Sense' Offers Drab Yet Touching Metaphor for Death

Submitted by [mattmovieman](#) [1] on May 31, 2012 - 8:51am

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CHICAGO – For a film that promises steamy scenes between two stars who share a fearlessness for performing in the nude, “Perfect Sense” is a doozy of a downer. It’s a fine showcase for the oft-underutilized talents of Ewan McGregor and Eva Green, but the plot is one slow descent toward doom that leaves viewers with very little to contemplate besides the sickening tragedy of death.

This curious little drama by David Mackenzie (“Young Adam”) is, in many ways, the drab underside of Lorene Scafaria’s upcoming apocalyptic comedy, “Seeking a Friend for the End of the World.” Both films explore the romance that blossoms between two strangers just as life on Earth is drawing to a close. It’s an intriguing concept, but Mackenzie does little more than follow the premise toward its inevitable conclusion. Since the characters are powerless to prevent the obstacles that lead to their undoing, there’s little suspense or drama, just an ever-deepening well of despair.



Blu-ray Rating: **2.5/5.0**

As the film opens, a virus is sweeping around the globe that kills off mankind’s sensory perceptions, one by one. Each attack of the virus is preceded by an irrational burst of impulsive feeling—extreme sadness, hunger, rage, etc. The characters are well aware of these warning signs, and yet they are helpless when succumbing to them. One wishes that the protagonists would at least find ways, however feeble and ineffective, to combat the virus and attempt to awaken each other out of their trance. I naively suspected that chef Michael (McGregor) and scientist Susan (Green) would combat their overpowering emotions through sex. You know it’s the end times when sharing a bed with either of these people would inspire anything other than elation.

There are moments when Mackenzie attempts to portray how the human spirit continues to press on even in the worst of circumstances, and at its best, “Perfect Sense” recalls similar passages in Cormac McCarthy’s masterpiece, “The Road.” Susan and Michael are both flawed people who may have found lifelong happiness with one another, but the sudden catastrophe has left them with little to do but grasp at each other in the darkness. Joy passes by all too fleetingly, but lingers long enough for viewers to appreciate Green’s sharp wit, such as when she dryly utters, “Oh dear,” as Michael makes a failed attempt at tossing her a lighter. Here’s hoping producers finally realize that Green’s luminous screen presence is on par with her more famous peers like Emily Blunt.



Perfect Sense was released on Blu-ray and DVD on May 22, 2012.

Photo credit: IFC Films

Both stars are easy on the eyes but they can only intermittently sustain audience interest during the film's sluggish 92-minute running time. Green solemnly narrates throughout the film to the point of distraction, while skimming over many of the story's most interesting aspects. When all of mankind loses its sense of smell, they are surprised to find that it is easily forgotten, thus allowing their remaining senses to become increasingly heightened and cherished. Yet instead of finding cinematic techniques to convey the characters' altered senses, Mackenzie merely cuts to glib montages of various humans sharing similar experiences in order to give his picture a more sprawling scope. These montages interrupt the intimate narrative rather than enhance it. When the characters start losing their hearing, it appears as if Mackenzie will play out the rest of the picture in silence, but he quickly loses his nerve and resorts back to his brooding score and narration.

It's impossible to not be moved by McGregor and Green's beautifully conveyed heartache and sense of loss, but this film ultimately doesn't have anything interesting to say about the human spirit. As a metaphor for the natural decline of one's life in light of its impending demise, the film is sad and touching but also dull and repellant. Perhaps the only scene guaranteed to resonate in viewer's minds is the nauseating hunger montage where humans are struck with the impulse to ravenously devour everything in sight. One woman munches on her lipstick while a guy grabs a live rabbit out of a cage in order to feast upon it. The reaction one has to this undeniably potent scene is indicative of the film's overall effect: with the apocalypse staring you in the face, sometimes all you can do is wince. And yet the characters insist that life goes on, and indeed it does...until, alas, it doesn't.

"Perfect Sense" is presented in 1080p High Definition (with a 2.35:1 aspect ratio), accompanied by English and Spanish subtitles, and includes a so-called "featurette" that has a shorter running time than the theatrical trailer. This is one of the rare cases where a disc with no extras would've been an improvement.

*'Perfect Sense' is released by IFC Films and stars Ewan McGregor, Eva Green, Connie Nielsen, Stephen Dillane and Ewen Bremner. It was written by Kim Fupz Aakeson and directed by David Mackenzie. It was released on May 22, 2012. It is rated R.*



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