

## Film Review: 'John Dies at the End' Kills Its Own Creativity

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on February 6, 2013 - 11:23am

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CHICAGO – You're at a party. It's getting late. Chemicals have been ingested, booze has been imbibed, and conversation has been exhausted. You spot an interesting looking fella in the corner and he says he has a story to tell you. Maybe it's the rush of something different, but the first half hour of that story is fascinating, filled with potential and creative in so many ways. And then you realize not only is he making it up as he goes along but that it's getting far less interesting as he does so. An hour later you just want a ride home and the comfort of your bed. Such is the experience of Don Coscarelli's "John Dies at the End," a disappointing horror-comedy with some great ideas but no idea how to shape them into a movie.



Rating: **2.5/5.0**

Coscarelli reportedly became interested in the story by David Wong that would become this film after seeing the title on an Amazon recommendation and (correctly) noting that the title is fantastic. He probably should have read more than the title since it's the cleverest thing about the film. That's a little harsh. There are moments of creative spark in "John" (Coscarelli, the director of the "Phantasm" films and "Bubba Ho-Tep" is too visually competent a director not to find a viscerally-charged image here and there) and the opening act is actually pretty great. It's when the movie loses its hallucinogenic set-up in favor of a more traditional narrative on its way to a clear non-ending that viewers will lose interest. The movie dies long before the end.



[Read Brian Tallerico's full review of "John Dies at the End" in our reviews section.](#) [13]

David Wong (Chase Williamson) is having a weird few days. "John Dies at the End" is one of those metaphysical horror films that posits that our world is just a façade. There are not only alternate worlds filled with ugly, horrifying demons pulled from our nightmares but the way we look at space and time is simply incorrect. And there is a drug out there called "Soy Sauce" that could be the portal to a new kind of comprehension. Except it tears most people who use it apart from the inside. Except for John (Rob Mayes) and Dave. Dave has a story to tell to a reporter named Arnie (Paul Giamatti). John, you know what happened to him, and long before the end, although that doesn't mean he's gone. Yes, death is merely the beginning in a film like this one.

Where does Dave's story go? All over the map. It includes a possessed white rapper (Johnny Weston), a cop (Glynn Turman) trying to investigate why this drug is tearing everyone apart from the inside, a famous supernatural mentalist (Clancy Brown), and cameos from great horror icons like Doug Jones and Angus Scrimm (the Tall Man from the "Phantasm" movies). Heavily draped in style merged with Coscarelli's obsession with the slimy, "John Dies at the End" seems to have all of the ingredients to work. It makes it sadder that it does not.



[Continue reading for Brian Tallerico's full "John Dies at the End" review.](#) [13]

*"John Dies at the End" stars Chase Williamson, Rob Mayes, Paul Giamatti, Clancy Brown, Glynn Turman, and Doug Jones. It was directed by Don Coscarelli and will be released in Chicago on February 8, 2013. It is currently available On Demand.*



John Dies at the End  
*Photo credit: Magnolia*

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