

## Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind

Directed By Michel Gondry

Starring Jim Carrey, Kate Winslet,  
Kirsten Dunst, Mark Ruffalo

*Eternal* this artistic vision was rightfully named, for the lasting impact of this beautifully crafted piece will, for any loving and/or lonely viewers, be a sweet lullaby for months following. Perfectly in tune with the confused mindset of any dreamer or realist that falls into the happenstance of love, *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* blends impossible circumstances with the realities of conviction in an effort to tear apart the perpetual 'box' entirely.

Anything but predictably sedimentary, *Sunshine* is a series of endless, random thoughts tied together in a fashion that is revelatory to the big screen. Screenwriter Charlie Kaufman was only beginning to flex his muscles when he brought audiences the brilliantly voyeuristic *Adaptation*. With *Sunshine*, Kaufman once again creates a visual tale so intriguing that it stimulates all five senses.

Jim Carrey is startlingly deep and gripping as Joel, a shy and quirky man who frets over his tendencies to fall in love with any girl who shows him attention. When he meets Clementine (Kate Winslet), the girl of his dreams, he rightfully falls in love for the first time only to discover that their seemingly perfect connection has more downs than ups. Joel's wounds over his and



*Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*

Clementine's early on break-up is doused with salt when he discovers that she has 'surgically' erased all memory of him. He contacts the same doctor that 'cured' Clementine, and attempts to have an identical procedure performed on himself. As Joel watches his memories drift away, he remembers why his heart was nabbed on day one. From deep within the cavities of his mind, he attempts to escape the clutches of his 'surgeons,' fighting to hold onto his personal sunshine.

Most revelatory about this film is the way in which it was brought to screen. As Joel and Carrey parlay from memory to present and back, the camera slides through visions as though it is truly one with this sensorial vortex of symbolic images. Carrey races from tortured man in love to two-year-old nag within minutes. Audiences will find it hard to forget an especially heart-wrenching moment when the two psyches of Joel collide, as the six-year-old version of the grown man impresses his friends while beating a bird to death. In memories that are used to hide Clementine, Joel realizes what his life has always been missing.

The intricacy doesn't stop there. Kaufman created a world overlapping that of Joel's, consisting of the team behind his memory erasure. Another perfectly scripted, interwoven plot develops around the physicality of Joel as Tom Wilkinson, Kirsten Dunst, Mark Ruffalo and Elijah Wood literally dance around a heart-wrenching love that is inconceivable to their own sadly disturbed psyches.

From the moment Clementine introduces her bright-colored hair as 'Blue Ruin,' it's clear that the depth within this film lies under a thin layer of artistic symbolism and buoyancy. At an integral moment, she lies with her soul mate on a patch of ice, just under the peak of a huge crack, avoiding the storm that has yet to invade their union. At other moments, Joel awakens to the

view of a hollow, house shaped ornament, reminiscent of his and Clementine's first meeting place. A true work of art, this piece leaves much to be interpreted by the individual admirer.

An absolutely profound experience, *Sunshine* dares its audience to question the inevitability behind the minutest of decisions, to grapple with the consequences of wishing for something that is already available in a subconscious state. The film remarkably tweaks at the notions behind those that struggle in the face of desire and impulse. *Sunshine* ultimately asks viewer's to confront the hardness of relationships, to accept the downs- but to enjoy the ups as well, because these are the exact moments that fill the holes in an eternally sunlit mind.

■ - Iris Wiener