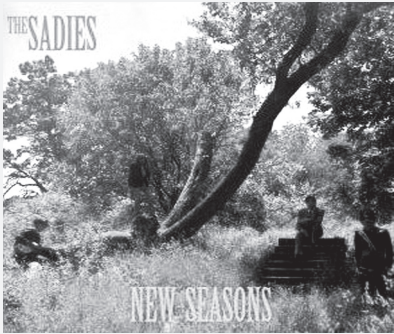


CJSR
CHARTS

FOR THE WEEK ENDING
TUESDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER



1. THE SADIES

New Seasons
Outside

2. THE WEAKERTHANS

Reunion Tour
Anti-

3. SHARON JONES AND THE
DAP-KINGS

100 Days, 100 Nights
Daptone

4. LES SAVY FAV

Let's Stay Friends
French Kiss

5. JENNY OMNICHORD

Cities of Gifts & Ghosts
Independent

6. JAPANHER

Skuffed Up My Huff
We Are Busy Bodies

7. WE ARE WOLVES

Total Magique
Dare to Care

8. THURSTON MOORE

Trees Outside the Academy
Ecstatic Peace!

9. DIETZCHE V AND THE
ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN

Macho 2003-2007
Pop Echo

10. THE WHEAT POOL

Township
Shameless

Feast of Love goes right to heart, skimps on details

filmreview

Feast of Love

Now Playing
Directed by Robert Benton
Starring Greg Kinnear, Morgan Freeman, and
Radha Mitchell

ELIZABETH VAIL
Arts & Entertainment Staff

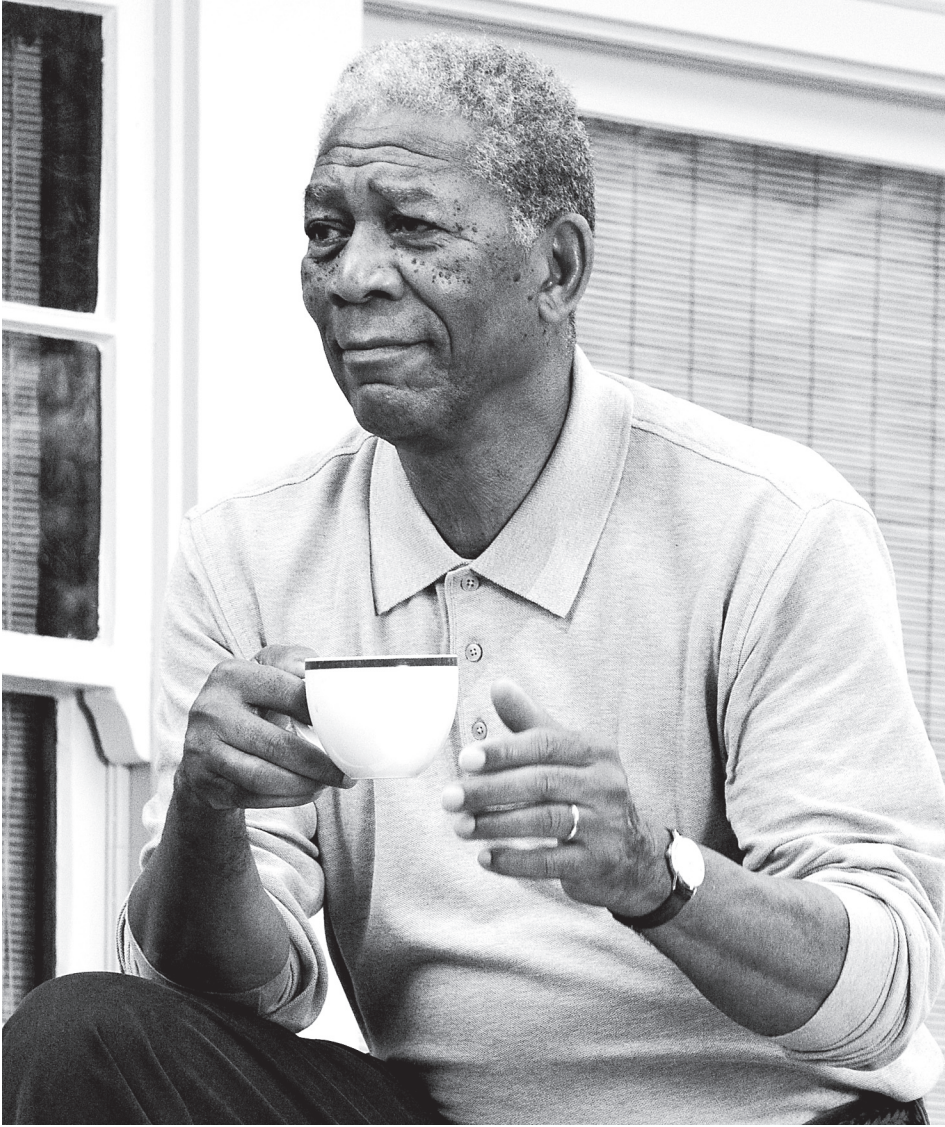
Feast of Love is a multi-plotted tale about a community of various people, all connected in some way or another, who experience different brushes, pokes, and drive-by shootings with love. Sound familiar?

This film treads the same path that *Love Actually* did before it, but attempts to do so in a darker, more mature fashion. Unfortunately, for all its grit, this hollow movie fails to accomplish half the resonance of what *Love Actually* did with its happy-holiday-season tinsel.

Greg Kinnear plays heartfelt goof Bradley, whose first wife (Selma Blair) falls in love with another woman. His second wife Diana (Radha Mitchell), meanwhile, is contemplating the unresolved feelings she has for her married lover David (Billy Burke). Oscar (Toby Hemingway), the teenage barista at Bradley's coffee shop, is passionately entangled in a relationship with New Age-y Chloe (Alexa Davalos), who fears they might be doomed from the start. And to top it all off, Morgan Freeman plays That Wise Black Guy Who Narrates, this time in the form of a college professor mourning the death of his son while clinging to his staunch wife Esther (Jane Alexander).

The film's subject matter is certainly mature—full of frequent full-frontal nudity, graphic sex scenes, foul language, and abusive drunk guys with knives—and it makes *Love Actually* look almost impossibly fluffy by comparison. However, *Love Actually* knew how to organize multiple storylines without sacrificing the greater plot, while *Feast of Love* fails at this.

While subplots like heroin addiction, home-made pornos, adultery, and homosexuality seem heavier than, say, travelling to Wisconsin for chicks, the film boasts its controversial storylines, but doesn't actually follow them through to satisfyingly controversial solutions. It's no spoiler to reveal that everyone finds love in the end, or to say that to get there, the filmmakers lop off nearly every sharp corner they started with at the



beginning of the film.


The cast, however, are about ten times too good for this sort of material, and it shows as the talented actors almost visibly struggle with their overwrought, romantic characters. Kinnear is the most successful in his portrayal of Bradley, keeping him an all-round nice guy with the wrong idea about love, rather than an oblivious idiot.

Mitchell also shines as Kinnear's adulterous second wife, creating a cunning, complicated woman out of an underwritten ice queen. But it's becoming damn near impossible these days to judge whether Morgan Freeman is even acting, or if he's perpetually on call as the same character who will spout any dithering philosophic quotations and narrations you please, as long as the cheque is in the mail.

Feast of Love does a good job of showing love, with goopy declarations, kissing, and mad humping galore, but when it comes to defining it, discussing it, or exploring it, the film falls miserably short. People fall in love without any indication of why and maintain their affection without any sort of personal communication. Bradley is expected to have hit the jackpot with Girlfriend Number Three, but the film never defines what makes her different from exes One and Two. The audience, I suppose, is just supposed to take Morgan Freeman's word for it and assume she won't run off with the first woman, man, or dog she sees.

In *Feast of the Love*, the lovers at point A find their way to point B, but the filmmakers aren't really all that concerned about how they get there.

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