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The Constant Gardener

A tale of drug companies taking advantage of aids victims in Sun-Saharan Africa, sounds like a recent concept, right? Actually, no. Master spy novelist John LeCarré published the book in the mid-eighties when big business ruining the lives of the little man was still a foreign film (and book) concept. The film, starring Ralph Fiennes and Rachel Weiss, and directed by Fernando Meirelles tells the story of a man, robbed of his wife and how he, living in Kenya, traces her work against Three Bees, a Bayer-esque drug company, to her eventual murder.

Shot entirely on location in Kenya the film opens with a series of breathtaking aerial shots of the desert and lakes in the area, and captures with almost a documentary-like intensity the horrible poverty and squalor afflicted upon the people of Kenya.

The screenplay, adapted by Jeffrey Caine, manages to stay true to the original novel while updating the technology to make it believable to the eyes of our critical century. Such as the vehicles, 2005 model Range Rovers, and the cell phones used.

Sad in a haunting, stunning way, *The Constant Gardener* seems to contour to the continent of Africa itself, scary and sad yet strikingly beautiful. **Grade: B-**

By Dan Smith