

= Contagion (film) =

Contagion is a 2011 American medical thriller film directed by Steven Soderbergh . The film features an ensemble cast that includes Marion Cotillard , Bryan Cranston , Matt Damon , Laurence Fishburne , Jude Law , Gwyneth Paltrow , Kate Winslet , and Jennifer Ehle . The plot of Contagion documents the spread of a virus transmitted by fomites , attempts by medical researchers and public health officials to identify and contain the disease , the loss of social order in a pandemic , and finally the introduction of a vaccine to halt its spread . To follow several interacting plot lines , the film makes use of the multi @-@ narrative " hyperlink cinema " style , popularized in several of Soderbergh 's films .

Soderbergh and screenwriter Scott Z. Burns had collaborated on The Informant ! (2009) . Following that film 's release , Burns brought up the idea of producing a medical thriller film depicting the rapid spread of a virus , which was inspired by various pandemics such as the 2003 SARS epidemic and the 2009 flu pandemic . To devise an accurate perception of a pandemic event , Burns consulted with representatives of the World Health Organization as well as noted medical experts such as W. Ian Lipkin and Lawrence " Larry " Brilliant . Principal photography started in Hong Kong in September 2010 , and continued in Chicago , Atlanta , London , Geneva , and San Francisco until February 2011 .

Contagion premiered at the 68th Venice Film Festival in Venice , Italy on September 3 , 2011 , and went on general release on September 9 . The film was well received by critics , who praised the narratives and the performances of various actors and actresses . It was also well received by scientists , who praised its accuracy . Commercially , the film was a box office success . Budgeted at \$ 60 million , Contagion attained \$ 135 million in box office revenue during its theatrical run .

= = Plot = =

Returning from a Hong Kong business trip , Beth Emhoff (Gwyneth Paltrow) has a layover in Chicago to have sex with a former lover before returning to her family in suburban Minneapolis . She appears to have contracted a cold during her trip . Her six @-@ year @-@ old son from a previous marriage , Clark , also becomes symptomatic and is sent home from school . Beth 's condition worsens and two days later she collapses with severe seizures . Her husband , Mitch (Matt Damon) , rushes her to the hospital , but she dies of an unknown cause .

Mitch returns home and finds that Clark has also died from a similar infection . Mitch is put in isolation but seems to be immune to the disease . He is released and returns home to his teenaged daughter Jory , who had been living with Mitch 's former wife and her husband and has decided to stay with Mitch since he 's now all alone . They face decaying social order and rampant looting of stores and homes . Mitch is unsure if Jory has inherited his immunity and he struggles with the frustration of quarantine , his desire to protect his daughter and learning that his wife was cheating on him immediately prior to both her death and that of his stepson .

In Atlanta , representatives of the Department of Homeland Security meet with Dr. Ellis Cheever (Laurence Fishburne) of the CDC and express fears that the disease is a bio weapon intended to cause terror over the Thanksgiving weekend . Dr. Cheever dispatches Dr. Erin Mears (Kate Winslet) , an Epidemic Intelligence Service officer , to Minneapolis to begin investigating . Mears traces the outbreak back to Emhoff while negotiating with local bureaucrats initially reluctant to commit resources for a proper public health response to the virus . Dr. Mears later becomes infected and dies .

At the CDC , Dr. Ally Hextall (Jennifer Ehle) determines the virus is a mix of genetic material from pig and bat viruses . Work on a cure stalls because scientists cannot discover a cell culture within which to grow the newly identified Meningoencephalitis Virus One (MEV @-@ 1) .

UCSF professor Dr. Ian Sussman (Elliott Gould) violates orders from Cheever (relayed through Hextall) to destroy his samples , and identifies a usable MEV @-@ 1 cell culture using bat cells . Hextall uses the breakthrough to work on a vaccine . Other scientists determine the virus is spread by fomites , with a basic reproduction number of four when the virus mutates , with projections of

one in twelve of the population being infected , and a 25 @-@ 30 % mortality rate .

Conspiracy theorist Alan Krumwiede (Jude Law) posts videos about the virus on his popular blog . In one video , he shows himself sick and later claims he recovered using a homeopathic cure derived from forsythia . In a panic , people seeking forsythia overwhelm pharmacies , spreading and accelerating the contagion as the infected come into contact with healthy people .

Krumwiede 's claims attract national attention . During a television interview he discloses that Dr. Cheever had secretly informed friends and family to leave Chicago just before the city was quarantined . Cheever is then informed the government will investigate and may charge him for leaking information . Later it is revealed Krumwiede had faked being infected by the virus in an attempt to increase profits for shareholders in companies producing and selling forsythia . Krumwiede is arrested for conspiracy and securities fraud , only to walk free when his many supporters successfully raise funds to provide for his bail .

Using an attenuated virus Dr. Hextall identifies a possible vaccine . To cut out the lengthy time it would take to obtain informed consent from infected patients , Dr. Hextall inoculates herself with the experimental vaccine and immediately visits her gravely ill father , who has been infected with MEV @-@ 1 . The doctor does not contract MEV @-@ 1 and the vaccine is declared a success .

The vaccine 's production is rapidly increased , but due to limited production , the CDC awards vaccinations by lottery based on birth date . Inoculations take place for one full year until every survivor is vaccinated . First responders , doctors and others designated by the government are declared exempt from the lottery . Dr. Cheever gives his fast @-@ tracked MEV @-@ 1 vaccination to the son of Roger (John Hawkes) , a CDC janitor who had overheard Dr. Cheever 's phone call warning his girlfriend to leave Chicago .

Dr. Leonora Orantes (Marion Cotillard) , a WHO epidemiologist , travels to Hong Kong to follow the Beth Emhoff lead . She collaborates with Sun Feng (Chin Han) and other local epidemiologists and public health officials ; they identify Emhoff as patient zero . As the virus spreads , Feng kidnaps Orantes to use her as leverage to obtain MEV @-@ 1 vaccine doses for his village . Orantes spends months living with the villagers until the vaccine is announced . Feng exchanges Orantes for the vaccine doses . Her colleague mentions that the exchanged doses were placebos and Orantes rushes away to warn them .

The death toll reached 2 @.@ 5 million in the U.S. and 26 million worldwide . Dr. Hextall places samples of MEV @-@ 1 in cryogenic storage , alongside samples of H1N1 and SARS .

The source of the virus is revealed to viewers . A bulldozer (coincidentally , operating for the company Emhoff works for) knocks down a palm tree disturbing some bats , with one finding shelter and food in a banana tree . That bat then flies over a pig pen , dropping a chunk of banana from its mouth , which is then eaten by a piglet . Chinese chefs later collect pigs from the pen and take them to a casino . A chef is called away from his preparations of a piglet , and casually wipes his hands on his apron . The chef then shakes hands with Beth Emhoff , giving her the mix of bat and pig viruses that makes her patient zero and the origin of the MEV @-@ 1 virus .

= = Cast and characterizations = =

Marion Cotillard as Dr. Leonora Orantes

Orantes ' main objective is to trace the origins of the MEV @-@ 1 pathogen . Cotillard , a fan of Soderbergh 's work , first met with the director in Los Angeles , California . The French actress was enthralled with the script because she was " very concerned about germs . I 've always been ... scared , in a way , by all of those disease [s] . So ... it was really something I was really interested . " Soderbergh said that Orantes " gets dropped into situations and has to deal with cultural as well as scientific issues that are sometimes at odds " , and notes that she has a " professional " yet stubborn , " remote " , and " dispassionate " demeanor , though " something happens to her in the course of the story that causes a significant emotional shift . "

Matt Damon as Mitch Emhoff

Damon viewed his character as the embodiment of the " everyman " ? an individual that is seen as " one of the human faces of the supervirus " following his wife and stepson 's deaths . Soderbergh

also noted Mitch 's " common individual " lack of medical and scientific knowledge , though keeping the situation dynamic and compelling was challenging for the director , as he was concerned that Emhoff would be a one @-@ dimensional character . Soderbergh felt that Damon understood the concept and addressed the producers ' concerns . " You never catch him acting " , said Soderbergh . " There 's no vanity , no self @-@ consciousness in his performance ; it 's as if the cameras aren 't there . " Writer Scott Z. Burns sent him a copy of the script with a " read this and then go wash your hands " note attached to it . Damon recalled : " I just really want to be in this movie . It was a terrific , riveting , really fast read and really exciting and really horrifying , but managed to be really touching . "

Laurence Fishburne as Dr. Ellis Cheever

Soderbergh admired Fishburne 's ability to portray an emphatic and assertive figure in previous films . To Fishburne , Cheever was a " smart " , " competent " physician who often epitomized a " voice of reason " . Once he conferred with W. Ian Lipkin , a virologist and professor at Columbia University , the character 's complexities were nonexistent for the actor . Fishburne stated , " The personal stuff that I have as Ellis Cheever was telling my fiancée , soon @-@ to @-@ be wife , Sanaa Lathan , to get out of town , to leave , to pack up , to not talk . That 's really easy . Any human being in that situation is going to do that , I think . "

Jude Law as Alan Krumwiede

Krumwiede is an ardent conspiracy theorist who , according to Law , is the so @-@ called index patient for " what becomes a parallel epidemic of fear and panic " . " We definitely wanted him to have a messianic streak " , said Soderbergh , whom Law talked to during the character 's creating process . The two men discussed the appearances and the behaviors of a typical anti @-@ government conspiracy theorist . Producer Gregory Jacobs commented that " what 's interesting is that you 're not really sure about him . Is the government really hiding something and does the herbal remedy he 's talking about really work ? I think we all suspect at one time or another that we 're not getting the whole truth , and in that sense Krumwiede represents the audience 's point of view . "

Gwyneth Paltrow as Elizabeth " Beth " Emhoff

A " working mom " , as described by Paltrow , Elizabeth is the central figure in the detective process . Despite being among the virus ' first victims , Paltrow believed that Elizabeth was " lucky " , as she thought the disease 's survivors were being left to deal with the newly difficult conditions of everyday life , such as finding food and potable water . When on location in Hong Kong , Paltrow was instructed by Soderbergh to take photographs to be used in the film , and admitted she was apprehensive about the assignment . " I was just another tourist taking pictures " , she said , and added , " I did feel a little pressure . When Steven Soderbergh gives you a photo assignment , you had better come back with something decent . "

Kate Winslet as Dr. Erin Mears

In researching her character , Winslet traveled to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta , Georgia , where she consulted with current and former officers of the Epidemic Intelligence Service to receive insight on not only the daily life , but on the type of person qualified for the occupation . " These are people who can be sent into war zones where there 's been an outbreak of a new virus . Fear is not an option . If they feel it , they learn to push it aside . " Winslet felt that Mears was able to bring the epidemic " down to the layman 's level " so the viewer could comprehend the scope of it without the science dragging the story down .

Jennifer Ehle as Dr. Ally Hextall

Soderbergh had seen Ehle 's performance in Michael Clayton (2007) , though it was ultimately cut prior to the film 's release , and it prompted him to offer her a role in Contagion . He " had known who Jennifer was for a long time , and this didn 't take a lot of thought , honestly " .

Elliott Gould as Dr. Ian Sussman

A doctor in San Francisco , Sussman identifies a cell culture capable of growing the virus .

Chin Han as Sun Feng

Han spoke of his character 's development : " He starts off as a button @-@ down , serious ... government official , and then as the movie progresses ... you find out a different side of him and his

secret agenda . "

Bryan Cranston as Rear Admiral Lyle Haggerty , United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps

John Hawkes as Roger , CDC custodian and acquaintance of Dr. Cheever

Anna Jacoby @-@ Heron as Jory Emhoff , daughter of Mitch Emoff

Josie Ho as Li Fai 's sister

Sanaa Lathan as Aubrey Cheever , fiancée of Dr. Cheever

Demetri Martin as Dr. David Eisenberg , CDC colleague of Dr. Hextall

Armin Rohde as Damian Leopold , a WHO official

Enrico Colantoni as Dennis French , a Department of Homeland Security official

Larry Clarke as Dave , a Minnesota health official working with Dr. Mears

Monique Gabriela Curnen as Lorraine Vasquez , a print journalist in San Francisco

Amr Waked as Rafik

Matt Motyka as Minnesota Body Burial Worker

= = Production = =

= = = Conception and writing = = =

Concerted efforts to devise Contagion coincided with Burns ' collaboration with Soderbergh in The Informant ! (2009) . The duo had initially planned to create a biographical film on Leni Riefenstahl , a trailblazer in German cinema during the 1930s and a figure in the rise of the Nazi Party . Soderbergh later contacted Burns to cancel the project , as he thought that a film about Riefenstahl would struggle to attract an audience . Intrigued with the field of transmission , Burns suggested that they instead create a film that centered on a pandemic situation ? " an interesting thriller version of a pandemic movie " . His main objective was to construct a medical thriller that " really felt like what could happen " .

Burns consulted with Lawrence " Larry " Brilliant , renowned for his work in eradicating smallpox , to develop an accurate perception of a pandemic event . He had seen one of Brilliant 's TED presentations , which he was fascinated by , and realized that " the point of view of people within that field isn 't ' If this is going to happen ' , it 's ' When is this going to happen ? ' " Brilliant introduced Burns to another specialist , W. Ian Lipkin . With the aid of these physicians , the producers were able to obtain additional perspectives from representatives of the World Health Organization . Burns also met with the author of The Coming Plague , Laurie Garrett . Her 1995 book helped Burns consider a variety of potential plots for the film . He wanted to feature an official from the CDC , and ultimately decided to use an epidemiologist , since that role requires interacting with people while tracking the disease .

Although he had done research on pandemics six months prior to the 2009 flu pandemic , the outbreak was " really helpful " to his studies , because it provided a glimpse of the societal apparatus following the onset stages of a pandemic . To him , it was not solely the virus itself that one had to be concerned about , but how society handles the situation . " I saw them come to life " , Burns said , " and I saw issues about , ' Well , do you close the schools and if you close the schools , then who stays home with the kids ? And will everyone keep their kids at home ? ' Things happening online , which is where the Jude Law character came from , that there 's going to be information that comes out online where people want to be ahead of the curve , so some people will write things about anti @-@ virals or different treatment protocols , and so there 's always going to be an information and that information also has sort of a viral pulse . "

= = = Filming = = =

In conjunction with overseeing the directing process , Soderbergh functioned as a cinematographer for Contagion . The film was wholly shot using Red Digital Cinema Camera Company 's RED One

MX digital camera , which uses ambient light and has a 4.5K image resolution . Since he hoped for the premise to be authentic and " as realistic as possible " , Soderbergh opted not to film in the studio . " There 's , to me , nothing more satisfying occasionally than making someplace look like someplace else on film and having nobody know the difference . " For choosing cities , Soderbergh felt that they couldn 't " go anywhere where one of our characters hasn 't been " , since he wanted to portray an " epic " , yet " intimate " scenario . He explained ,

We can 't cut to a city or a group of extras that we 've never been to that we don 't know personally . That was our rule . And that 's a pretty significant rule to adhere to in a movie in which you 're trying to give a sense of something that 's happening on a large scale , but we felt that all of the elements that we had issues with prior , when we see any kind of disaster film , we 're centered around that idea .

Principal photography started in Hong Kong in September 2010 , and continued for approximately two weeks . Soderbergh was originally hoping to also film in mainland China , though Moviefone journalist David Ehrlich believed that permission from the Chinese government was unlikely to be forthcoming . Although producers also intended to establish a filming location in one of the many casinos in Macau , the Jumbo Floating Restaurant in Hong Kong 's Aberdeen Harbour was used instead for the casino setting , as filming within the vicinity of a gambling establishment is prohibited by law . To move the equipment for the casino scenes to the on @-@ the @-@ water location , producers hired a number of locals to carry out the task , as they were accustomed to " using sampans like trucks " . Additional locations included the Hong Kong International Airport , InterContinental Hong Kong , and the Princess Margaret Hospital .

Principal photography relocated in the following month to Chicago , Illinois , which served as the nexus for production . Much of the cityscape and its surrounding suburbs were used to emulate Minneapolis , Minnesota , and Atlanta , Georgia , in addition to serving as backdrop for Chicago itself . Since principal photography occurred during the winter months , snowfall was a prerequisite in simulating a " persistent coldness " that encompassed " a hypersensitive kind of glare " . Within the city limits , filming locations were installed at the Shedd Aquarium , O 'Hare International Airport , and the Midway Airport . Arguably the largest sets were at the General Jones Armory , which was converted into an infirmary , and a major location shoot occurred in Waukegan , where a portion of the Amstutz Expressway was used to simulate the Dan Ryan Expressway . Production also took place at Sherman Hospital in Elgin and Central Elementary School in Wilmette , and also in Downtown Western Springs , where the grocery store scene was filmed .

Filming moved once again in January 2011 to the Druid Hills quadrant of Atlanta , which contains the headquarters of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention . The restricted nature of the CDC campus meant that producers were only allowed to shoot exterior scenes of the area , as well as within the parking garage and reception area for the CDC 's museum onsite . Principal photography then proceeded into Atlanta 's central business district and Decatur , before advancing to London , Geneva , and lastly San Francisco , California , in the ensuing month . The San Francisco Film Commission charged filmmakers \$ 300 per day for production within the city limits . In the North Beach and Potrero Hill sections of the city , production designer Howard Cummings scattered trash and discarded clothing on the ground to depict the rapid decline of civilization . For the Civic Center set , over 2 @, @ 000 extras were sought for in background roles ; actors who were a part of the Screen Actors Guild were paid \$ 139 per day , while nonunion workers received \$ 64 per day for their work . Other filming locations were established at Golden Gate Park , Chinatown , and Candlestick Park ; it cost \$ 60 @, @ 000 to rent the football stadium for six days .

= = = Soundtrack = = =

Cliff Martinez composed the film 's soundtrack , which was his first score for Soderbergh since *Solaris* in 2002 . Given that the pacing of the music was one of Soderbergh 's biggest concerns , Martinez needed to maintain a brisk pace throughout the soundtrack , while also conveying fear and hope within the music . " I tried to create the sound of anxiety . And at key , strategic moments I tried to use the music to conjure up the sense of tragedy and loss . " Martinez incorporated orchestral

elements , and fused them with the predominantly electronic sounds of the score . He noted that the " sound palette for Contagion came by way of combining three very different approaches Steven went through as he was cutting the film . " Martinez received a rough cut for the film in October 2010 , which contained music that was imbued with elements of The French Connection (1971) and Marathon Man (1976) . He " loved " those two soundtracks , and composed a few pieces in their style . A few months later , he acquired a new cut , which included music influenced by German electronic group Tangerine Dream . Toward the end , Soderbergh changed again and used contemporary soundtrack music that was " more energetic and more rhythmic " . Ultimately , Martinez used aspects of all three approaches : " I reasoned that combining them would not only be effective but would give the score a style all its own . "

= = Themes = =

Steven Soderbergh was motivated to make an " ultra @-@ realistic " film about the public health and scientific response to a pandemic . The movie touches on a variety of themes , including the factors which drive mass panic and collapse of social order , the scientific process for characterizing and containing a novel pathogen , balancing personal motives against professional responsibilities and rules in the face of an existential threat , the limitations and consequences of public health responses , and the pervasiveness of interpersonal connections which can serve as vectors to spread disease . Soderbergh acknowledged the salience of these post @-@ apocalyptic themes is heightened by reactions to the September 11 attacks and Hurricane Katrina . The movie was intended to realistically convey the " intense " and " unnerving " social and scientific reactions to a pandemic . The recent real @-@ life epidemics such as the 2003 SARS epidemic and the 2009 flu pandemic have been inspirations and influences in the film . The chain of contagion involving bats and pigs is reminiscent of the trail of the Nipah virus that originated in Malaysia in 1997 , which similarly involved the disturbance of a bat colony by deforestation .

The film presents examples of crowd psychology and collective behavior which can lead to mass hysteria and the loss of social order . The bafflement , outrage , and helplessness associated with the lack of information , combined with new media such as blogs , allow conspiracy theorists like Krumwiede to spread disinformation and fear , which become dangerous contagions themselves . Dr. Cheever must balance the need for full disclosure but avoid a panic and allow the time to characterize and respond to an unknown virus . The movie indirectly critiques the greed , selfishness , and hypocrisy of isolated acts in contemporary culture and the unintended consequences they can have in the context of a pandemic . For example , the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends social distancing by forcibly isolating the healthy to limit the spread of the disease , which stands in stark opposition to contemporary demands for social networking . Responding to the pandemic presents a paradox , as the contagiousness and lethality of the virus instills deep distrust of others but surviving and limiting the spread of the disease also requires individuals to work together .

Against this existential threat and fraying social order , the film also explores how individual characters bend or break existing rules for both selfish and selfless reasons . Dr. Hextall violates protocols by testing a potential vaccine on herself , Dr. Sussman continues experiments on a cell line despite orders to destroy his samples , Dr. Cheever notifies his fiancé to leave the city before a public quarantine is imposed , Sun Feng kidnaps Dr. Orantes to secure vaccine supplies for his village , Dr. Mears continues her containment work despite contracting the virus , and Krumwiede is paid to use his blog to peddle snake oil cures so as to drive demand and profit for investors in Alternative Medicine . Soderbergh repeatedly uses the cinematographic style of lingering and focusing on the items and objects which are touched by the infected and become vectors (fomites) to infect other people . These objects link characters together and reinforce the multi @-@ narrative hyperlink cinema style which Soderbergh developed in Traffic (2000) and Syriana (2005) , which he produced .

The story also highlights examples of political cronyism (a plane to evacuate Dr. Mears from Minneapolis is instead diverted to evacuate a Congressman) , platitudes and rigid thinking (public

health officials consider postponing the closing of shopping malls until after the Thanksgiving shopping season) , federal responders trying to navigate 50 separate state @-@ level public health policies , and the heroism of Federal bureaucrats . Soderbergh does not use type @-@ cast pharmaceutical executives or politicians as villains , but instead portrays bloggers such as Krumwiede in a negative light . Social media plays a role in Krumwiede 's accusations against Dr. Cheever and in Emhoff 's daughter 's attempts to carry on a relationship with her boyfriend through text messaging . Other responses in the movie , such as Emhoff 's appropriating a shotgun from a friend 's abandoned house to protect his home from looters , imposition of federal quarantines and curfews , the allocation of vaccines by lottery , inadequate federal preparation and responses , and use of bar @-@ coded wristbands to identify the inoculated highlight the complex tensions between freedom and order in responding to a pandemic . Soderbergh uses Emhoff to illustrate the micro @-@ effects of macro @-@ level decisions .

= = Reception = =

= = = Release and box office = = =

Contagion premiered on September 3 , 2011 at the 68th Venice Film Festival in Venice , Italy , and a wider release followed on September 9 . In the United States and Canada , Contagion was shown in 3 @,@ 222 theaters , of which 254 screenings occurred at IMAX venues . Various American commercial analysts anticipated that the film would have ticket sales of between \$ 20 million and \$ 25 million during its opening weekend , which it did , grossing \$ 8 million on its first day , and \$ 23.1M for the entire weekend . Of that total , ten percent (\$ 2.3M) of the gross came from IMAX screenings . By outgrossing competitor The Help (\$ 8.7M) , Contagion became the highest @-@ grossing film of the week . Demographically , the opening audience was evenly divided among gender , according to Warner Bros. , while eighty percent of spectators were of the age of 25 and over . Contagion did well the following weekend , generating a \$ 14.5M box office , but came in second to the re @-@ release of The Lion King (1994) . The third week saw the box office drop by forty percent , for a total gross of \$ 8.7M. By the fourth week , Contagion had dropped to ninth place at the box office with \$ 5M , and the number of theaters narrowed to 2 @,@ 744 . The film completed its theatrical run on December 15 , 2011 , at which point its total domestic gross was \$ 75.6M.

Contagion made its international debut in six foreign markets the same weekend as its American release , including Italy , where it achieved \$ 663 @,@ 000 from 309 theaters . The first week saw Contagion acquire \$ 2.1M from 553 establishments ? a per @-@ theater average of \$ 3 @,@ 797 . Foreign grosses for Contagion would remain relatively stagnant up until the weekend of October 14 ? 16 , 2011 , when the film expanded into several additional European markets . Out of the \$ 3.9M that was generated from 1 @,@ 100 venues during that weekend , nearly 40 % of the gross originated from Spain , where the film earned \$ 1.5M from 325 theaters . With the growing expansion of the film in seven additional markets , the weekend of October 21 ? 23 , 2011 saw Contagion take in \$ 9.8M from 2 @,@ 505 locations , increasing the international gross to \$ 22.9M. In the United Kingdom , one of the film 's significant international releases , Contagion opened in third place at the box office with \$ 2.3M from 398 theaters ; it subsequently garnered the highest debut gross of a Soderbergh film since Ocean 's Thirteen (2007) . International grosses for Contagion stand at \$ 59.8M.

= = = Critical response = = =

Contagion has received positive reviews by film commentators . Review aggregator Rotten Tomatoes sampled 237 reviewers and judged 84 % of the reviews to be positive . With a mean score of 7 / 10 , the site 's consensus stated , " Tense , tightly plotted , and bolstered by a stellar cast , Contagion is an exceptionally smart ? and scary ? disaster movie . " At Metacritic , which

assigns a normalized rating out of 100 based on the critiques from mainstream critics , the film received an average score of 70 based on 38 reviews .

The Guardian journalist Peter Bradshaw felt that Contagion blended well together as a film , although opined that Soderbergh was somewhat unsuccessful on channeling the fears , frights , and " the massive sense of loss " of " ordinary people " . To David Denby of The New Yorker , the " brilliant " film was " serious , precise , frightening , " and " emotionally enveloping " . Despite applauding Soderbergh for " hopscotching " tidily " between the intimate and international " , The Atlantic 's Christopher Orr was disappointed with the film 's detached and " clinical " disposition , which led him to conclude that Contagion should have gone with a more inflexible rationale , or a lesson " beyond ' wash your hands often and hope you 're lucky ' . " " For all the craft that went into it , Contagion is ultimately beyond good or bad , beyond criticism . It just is , " professed The Atlantic writer . Described as a " smart " and " spooky " installment , Manohla Dargis of The New York Times wrote , " Mr. Soderbergh doesn 't milk your tears as things fall apart , but a passion that can feel like cold rage is inscribed in his images of men and women isolated in the frame , in the blurred point of view of the dying and in the insistent stillness of a visual style that seems like an exhortation to look . " In regards to the story , Salon columnist Andrew O 'Hehir avouched that the " crisp " and succinct narrative matched up to the " beautifully composed " visuals of the film . Todd McCarthy of The Hollywood Reporter proclaimed that Soderbergh and Burns effectively created anxiety in the " shrewd " and " unsensationalistic " film without becoming exaggerated , a sentiment echoed by Jeanette Catsolis of NPR , who insisted that the duo " weave multiple characters into a narrative that 's complex without being confusing , and intelligent without being baffling " . Writing for The Village Voice , Karina Longworth thought that Contagion reflected the " self @-@ consciousness " and " experimentation " of some of Soderbergh 's previous efforts , such as the Ocean 's trilogy and The Girlfriend Experience (2009) .

The performances of multiple cast members were frequently mentioned in the reviews . Lou Lumenick of New York Post asserted that Ehle was " outstanding " , a view that was analogous to that of The Boston Globe journalist Wesley Morris , who praised not only Ehle 's performance , but the work of the " undercard " such as Cranston , Gould , and Colantoni , among others . Similarly , Peter Travers of Rolling Stone called Ehle the " best in show " . As Los Angeles Times ' Kenneth Turan summed up , " Two @-@ time Tony @-@ winning actress Jennifer Ehle comes close to stealing the picture with this quietly yet quirkily empathetic performance . " In regards to Law , The Philadelphia Inquirer 's Steven Rea stated that the actor portrayed the character with a " nutty " confidence ; Mick LaSalle from the San Francisco Chronicle agreed with Rea 's thoughts . Damon provided the film 's " relatable heart " , according to Forrest Wickman of Slate , who concluded that even with her controlled performance , Winslet " lives up to her head @-@ of @-@ the @-@ class reputation even in an unusually small role " .

The character development of multiple characters produced varying response from critics . Contrary to Mitch 's stance as the main protagonist , Michael O 'Sullivan of The Washington Post felt that Contagion " treats him with an oddly clinical detachment " . In particular Law 's character , Alan Krumwiede , attracted commentary from Roger Ebert of the Chicago Sun @-@ Times , who wrote , " The blogger subplot doesn 't interact clearly with the main story lines and functions mostly as an alarming but vague distraction . "

= = = = Scientific accuracy = = = =

Ferris Jabr of New Scientist approved of Contagion for accurately portraying the " successes and frustrations " of science . Jabr cites story elements such as " the fact that before researchers can study a virus , they need to figure out how to grow it in cell cultures in the lab , without the virus destroying all the cells " as examples of accurate depictions of science . Carl Zimmer , a science commentator , praised the film , stating , " It shows how reconstructing the course of an outbreak can provide crucial clues , such as how many people an infected person can give a virus to , how many of them get sick , and how many of them die . " He also describes a conversation with the film 's scientific consultant , W. Ian Lipkin , in which Lipkin defended the rapid generation of a vaccine in

the film . Zimmer wrote that " Lipkin and his colleagues are now capable of figuring out how to trigger immune reactions to exotic viruses from animals in a matter of weeks , not months . And once they 've created a vaccine , they don 't have to use Eisenhower @-@ era technology to manufacture it in bulk . " Paul Offit , a pediatrician and vaccination expert , stated that " typically when movies take on science , they tend to sacrifice the science in favor of drama . That wasn 't true here . " Offit appreciated the film 's usage of concepts such as R0 and fomites , as well as the fictional strain 's origins , which was based on the Nipah virus .

= = = Home media = = =

Contagion was released on DVD and Blu @-@ ray in North America on January 3 , 2012 , and in the United Kingdom on March 5 , 2012 . In its first week of release , the film topped the DVD chart with 411 @,@ 000 units sold for \$ 6 @.@ 16 million . That same week it sold 274 @,@ 000 Blu @-@ ray copies for \$ 4 @.@ 93 million , topping that chart as well . DVD sales dropped during the second week of release , with 193 @,@ 000 units sold for \$ 2 @.@ 89 million . As of early July 2012 , Contagion had sold 802 @,@ 535 copies in DVD , for \$ 12 @.@ 01 million in revenue .