



Love is no cakewalk

by **Michael Perrot**

THE way to a man's heart is through his stomach. In *Eden* it is inverted – an overweight master chef seduces a woman with his cooking.

More than just delicious food, it's a story about the power of love based on a recipe of jealousy, rage, destruction, bad luck and a flawed business model.

This is German writer-director Michael Hofmann's third feature and while not so daring as his 2002 feature *Sophiiiie!*, it shows what an interesting film-maker he can be.

With its fairytale similarity to *Beauty and the Beast*, *Eden* is mix of personality, love and greed laced with unhappiness, disgruntlement and the pressures of having a disabled child.

There is a wonderful scene, when someone gets his just desserts, that is funny and poignant.

If you ever plan to start a restaurant, the business model Hofmann exposes is a good lesson.

With only three tables, booking a table takes months. The food is delicious and the wine cellar is extensive, but is also the business' vital weakness.

Gregor (Josef Ostendorf) is overweight, lonely but perceptive. A gourmet chef, he runs a small restaurant in a small German town.

He believes food can awaken the erotic impulses and revels in the sensual pleasures of his cooking.

Because of his size, he hasn't found anyone to share his love of cooking with



Leonie (Leonie Stepp), Gregor (Josef Ostendorf) and Eden (Charlotte Roche)

EDEN (M)

Directed by: Michael Hoffman

Starring: Josef Ostendorf, Charlotte Roche, Devid Striesow and Leonie Stepp

Screening: Somerville, February 11-17 and Joondalup Pines, February 18-24

him. One afternoon he has coffee at resort hotel where he meets Eden (Charlotte Roche), a waitress. Telling her to watch four men because they will leave without paying, she takes an instant dislike to him.

When this happens, her attitude changes.

Days later in a park, Gregor rescues Eden's Down syndrome little girl Leonie

(Leonie Stepp) from drowning while Eden is asleep.

Invited to Leonie's birthday party, Gregor arrives with a delicious chocolate cake he has baked. After Eden eats a piece of the cake, she's smitten and steals into his restaurant to taste more of his cooking.

They make a date for him to cook for her on the night Eden's husband Xaver (Devid Striesow) goes out on the town with his mates.

With subterfuge Xaver gets a table at Gregor's restaurant, so when Eden becomes pregnant for the first time in years, Xaver thinks Gregor has been doing more than cooking for his wife.

Full of rage and jealousy, Xaver sets out to destroy Gregor.