

Quintessential romantic teen actress in the late 90s comedies, Rachael Leigh Cook is known for films like "She's All That!" or "Josie and the Pussycats." A dozen years later, after various projects in film and television, the actress returns in a leading role, that of Kate Moretti in the "Perception" detective series.

Marion Olite: How did you discover the project of Perception?

Rachael Leigh Cook: I had heard about the script from my manager. He told me at the time: "This is a detective series. I know you do not like that sort of thing usually, but this is different. There are interesting characters, and I think you'd be great in the role of an FBI agent." I never thought that they would audition me for this role. In any case, I was lucky with the character of Kate. They wanted to do something different, in making it not necessarily friendly.

MO: How would you describe Kate Moretti?

RLC: This is a very ambitious young woman who moves effectively in a man's world. She needs all the advantages possible in her work. So she asks for help from her particularly brilliant former professor, played by Eric (McCormack). It is a rather complicated period of her life between a stressful divorce and demotion in her job. She therefore has a lot to prove.

MO: According to you, does it frame something more than just a friendly and professional relationship between Kate and Daniel?

RLC: There certainly was a tension between the two, but so far they have always encountered bad timing. The possibility exists, because they feel something for one another, I am sure. For the moment, they have never been able to join at the right time.

MO: Perception evokes several series, including The Mentalist. What is your point of view on this comparison?

RLC: I love The Mentalist, and actress Robin Tunney is very cool. Kenneth Biller and Michael Sussman, the creators of Perception, were the first to recognize the comparison. There is a trend for police series that is called "defective / detective shows" (these series run on a duo of an imperfect character, but also a brilliant detective.) We will not deny the similarity, and we love these series.

MO: Have other police series inspired you to find the character of Kate?

RLC: As a measure of my experience as an actress, I learned that I could not really play hard-boiled in the same way as the others. I was just ridiculous! I finally realized I had to accept who I was, what I looked like, and thus find my own way to express force. Perception has helped me grow from this point of view. I felt stronger thanks to Kate, even in my personal life.

Part 2 > Behind the scenes of Perception

MO: What scenes do you prefer to play on the set of Perception?

RLC: As an actress, my favorite moments are those concerning personal concerns of Kate, especially since the arrival on the show of Scott Wolf (at the beginning of Season 2.) He plays my ex-husband. I do not want to say too much, but this character is one of the most interesting in Season 2. He is probably one of the most detestable at first, but he then transforms into a very different person. He will help Kate when she really needs it. I loved shooting these sequences.

MO: How is filming this series?

RLC: We shoot an episode in seven days. That's a lot even if it did not air. We begin at 8 or 9 in the morning and finish around 10 or 11 in the evening. The ideal would be to do an episode in ten days. This is difficult because most of the time we are running two episodes simultaneously. When we find ourselves in the interrogation room, for example, with the whole team, we are sometimes forgetful. One wonders: "What do you know? Have you already done this or not?" It is quite disturbing, because we must constantly return to the script.

MO: Coming from the big screen, which format do you prefer, film or television?

RLC: As a plus, we have more time to work on a film, and I love the cinema. Also, that the character has a more defined trajectory, and a conclusion. In television, you never really know what path they will take, what will motivate them. It is therefore necessary to carry its own vision and proper energy, without asking too many questions. I like other aspects of television, such as the fact that it brings a certain amount of security, even if it is only an illusion!

MO: Do you see yourself continuing with Perception for several years?

RLC: For now, I'm good, and I see myself continuing. I also want to work with my husband (Daniel Gillies, known for his role as Elijah in The Vampire Diaries and The Originals.) He is an actor, but also a great writer and director. I participated in his first film, Broken Kindgom, released in 2012 on Showtime. He is a great filmmaker who pulls me up and pushes me to do different things.

MO: What are your projects besides Perception?

RLC: I had a baby recently, which currently represents my entire life! Motherhood is something new for me. For a long time, all that mattered was my career. I am glad that this is no longer the case today. We have a lot of trouble getting together as a family in the same place, as my husband works on two different series, and none in Los Angeles. So I will be very vigilant in the future ..