

Washington is out of luck

review by Daniel J. Stasiewski
a&e editor

Denzel Washington is a diamond in a garbage heap in "Out of Time." The two-time Academy Award winner treats this film with the same seriousness he does all his roles, even though the film is about as serious as a clown car. And the coincidences and lucky breaks are as unlimited as the escaping clowns.

Washington is surrounded by amateurs and hacks, allowing the veteran actor to overshadow every other cast member. The lackluster performances also make Washington's presence unnatural. The role is more suited for DMX than Denzel. It's a real tragedy to say this, but the film is probably worse off with Washington than without.

Matt Lee Whitlock (Washington) is the chief of police for a small Florida community, so having an affair with a married woman isn't the best way to hang on to the upstanding reputation he just achieved from a substantial drug bust. Whitlock's wife, Miami Homicide Detective Alex Diaz (Eva Mendes), left him after he admitted the affair, but she doesn't say a word about it, nor does she know the woman's identity.

The mistress' name is Anne Merai (Sanaa Lathan), and she's married to an ex-football player (Dean Cain) who now works as a security guard. Whitlock and Anne are hot-and-heavy every time Anne's husband is out-of-town, but one of their wonderful weekends is interrupted when Anne's doctor calls her into his office.

Anne apparently has an aggressive form of cancer attacking her most vital organs, and she doesn't have enough money to combat the disease. Whitlock decides it's a good idea to use the \$480,000 in drug money as a down payment on her life. He's almost ready to bail with Anne, when her house burns to the ground and two bodies are found inside. With his ex-wife as the lead investigator, Whitlock has to maneuver his way through the investigation so as not to put the spotlight on his own crime of stealing a half-million dollars in drug money.

During "Out of Time" the following events are used as obstacles: the staff at an insurance office is out to lunch, a turnstyle bridge allows a boat to pass by so cars can't, a gun runs out of ammo, and a car stalls. The film wears out Murphy's Law in its attempts to create suspense, but never even establishes a level of tension equivalent to getting back a bad test.

Washington's character also makes mistakes that are so simple and so unbelievable that the film just falls into place without a hint of suspense. In fact, the whole film could have been saved if the character would have just told his ex-wife what happened from the beginning and rebuilt their broken relationship, while fixing the mess together.

Unfortunately, Washington's character comes off as too simple-minded to think of a less ridiculous way out and becomes involved in a conspiracy that is so obvious it doesn't really mean anything if he succeeds or fails.

Washington, himself, is surrounded by actors who have the sex appeal of soap-opera stars and the screen presence of Pauly Shore. Cain, whose last major role was Superman in the ABC series "Lois and Clark," is better suited



Denzel Washington tracks down drug money in "Out of Time." MGM PICTURES

for the red cape and blue tights because all he has to do is smile. In "Out of Time," he wears a goatee, which makes him look like the evil Dean Cain, but he lacks the ability to create bad guy worth hating.

Mendes, however, is impressive in this film, much the same way she was impressive in "2 Fast 2 Furious." She has a talent for delivering bad lines in a way that almost makes the muddled dialogue sensible. Too bad she wasn't playing the role of the mistress, because Lathan has some of the worst moments in the film and Mendes may have made them bearable.

Washington is 20 years older than the two actresses portraying the women in his life, and he's 12 years older than the other man. The handsome, serious actor still manages to out-perform the rest of the cast, but he's out of his element in this soap-opera thriller. Director Carl Franklin knows it, undercutting Washington's acting with incessant zooming and an overall lack of confidence in the star. "Out of Time" is just a forgettable stain on Washington's great career, but it may take another film like "Malcolm X" to completely disregard this one.

"Out of Time," directed by Carl Franklin, starring Denzel Washington, Eva Mendes and Sanaa Lathan, is now playing at Tinseltown and the West Erie Plaza Cinema.

★
out of
4 stars

Williams can go back 'Home'

by Erika Jarvis
features editor

I normally pride myself on having really good taste in music. I like to listen to singer songwriters no one has heard of. So when the new Keller Williams CD "Home" came to me, I was pretty excited to check it out.

I figured I was in for a crazy ride with song titles ranging from "Butt Ass Nipple" to "Sorry from the Shower." I put in the CD, sat back, listened and read up on Williams.

Williams album "Home" is his very first solo project, totally solo. He played all of his instruments on his album in a studio located 15 minutes away from his house in Fredericksburg, Va.

With the folk/rock sound of the first track, "Love Handles," I'm thinking the rest of the CD will follow in suit. The song proclaims "if you need to get your love on, Baby you can grab on to my love handles."

The lyrics are creative and cutesy in the first few songs, and then the CD takes an unexpected turn with the track "Victory Song." Williams sings about being surrounded by Martians, and I start to think that maybe this CD isn't what I was expecting.

With a two-minute interruption, "Butt Ass Nipple" supplies the listener with some insane beats that are a bit hard to take for the full two minutes. I can only advance to the next track to ease myself of the pain.

Fortunately enough, "Butt Ass Nipple" is followed by "Dogs." While the lyrics are quite weird--"Earl is the dog, Sheeba is his girl, she is the queen of the tundra, he is the golden boy"--and I find the melody soothing, easing my headache.

This is basically how Williams' CD continues for the 15 tracks. Most of the songs



Acoustic guitarist Keller Williams performs at Forward Hall next week. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

are tolerable while others are just a little too much.

"Home" is still a great showing of Williams' musical talent. You have to give him credit for doing absolutely everything on the album.

With each song Williams takes his listener on a crazy ride with each lyric, instrument, and beat. Each track has its own uniqueness and style that mix together to make one eclectic CD. In all honesty, the mix of songs, the order of them and everything else could give the listener quite the headache. This is one CD that you can't sing along to.

If you have some extra strength Tylenol, are 21 and have a taste for eclectic folk rock, then I suggest you check out Keller Williams. He will be playing at Forward Hall on Tuesday at 9 p.m. You can also get an idea of what Keller Williams' music is like if you check him out at KellerWilliams.net.

Tickets for Keller Williams' performance at Forward Hall are \$13.50 in advance and \$15.00 at the door. For more information call 455-8231.

★
out of
4 stars

Source Awards must overcome rocky past

commentary by Olivia Page
staff writer

Drama has been at the center of previous Source Magazine Music Awards and in a press conference, co-founder Ray Benzino, who is also a rapper, has declared that this year's awards may be the last, if problems persist.

Often called "The Super Bowl of Hip-Hop Generation" for being the oldest and most prestigious awards for urban music, the event is a way to get the urban music scene more honors. The Source Magazine will celebrate its 15 year anniversary with the 2003 awards televised Nov. 11 on BET at 8 p.m. The awards will be given out on Thursday.

Fearing conflict, the awards were not held last year.

In 2000, the show was unfortunately top of the media scene, as police abruptly ended the awards mid-show and UPN aired the edited version, due to an onstage altercation that ended with three men being treated for stabbed wounds.

The show's television home of UPN saw their ratings soared dramatically when it aired the awards.

The history of the Awards is full of "beef" among rappers. A flare up between Tupac Shakur and A Tribe called Quest overshadowed the first awards.

The second award show showcased a segment of the "East Coast vs. West Coast" confrontation that divided the two groups, an ongoing argument to this day. Suge Knight, Snoop Doggy Dogg(now called Snoop Dogg), and Death Row verbally attacked Sean "Puffy" Combs and the East Coast rappers on stage.

Basically the Awards are a cloud of controversy and BET takes a tremendous risk by airing the awards. Benzino, CEO of Source magazine has a rivalry with Eminem and depicts him on the song "Pull your skirt up." Eminem has come out with "The Sauce" and "Nail in the Coffin" as a rebuttal to the "Beef." This feud is costly to the credibility of the magazine because Eminem's "Eminem Show," the best selling album of 2002, is not up for any honors when the eligibility of the awards are June 2 of last year to May 31 of this year.

50 Cent chances are both big and slim at winning an award. Topping Billboard charts with "Get Rich or Die Trying" fans will patiently wait to see if he wins over the war of the beef with CEO Benzino or will he clash with a loss. Benzino has beef with Eminem, D-12 and 50 Cent.

50 Cent's hits include "In Da Club" and "21 Questions."

50 Cent is likely to take awards for

the Album of the Year, Breakthrough artist of the Year and Single of the Year with "In Da Club." 50 Cent has recently raked in three awards at the recent 2003 Mobo Awards as Best Album, Best Single and Best Hip-Hop Act.

Jay-Z's collaborations with Beyonce, "Crazy in Love," and Pharrell's "Frontin'" have topped Billboard charts, and "Blue Print 2" has proven record sales. Jay-Z may get Artist of the Year, knowing that the candidates are Nelly; Baby, a.k.a. "The Birdman;" LL Cool J; and Ja Rule, who hasn't had many hits this year or last except for collaborations. Since XXL magazine has labeled him as "The Number One Biter," tensions may rise as the announcement of Lyricist of the Year will definitely be a feud between the two most dominant in the category, Jay-Z and Nas.

Nas looks like a good contender for Lyricist of the Year. This is a touchy subject between the two rival songs between Nas and Jay-Z that is being brought up again, regardless the whole controversy is old. Nas' "Stillmatic" hits include "Got yourself a Gun," and "One Mic," while "The Lost Tapes" has "Made You Look," and "God's Son" has "I Can."

R. Kelly looks like a good contender for R&B artist of the Year-Male, despite the statutory rape allegations against him. The hits he is recognized for this period are for "Ignition," "Thoia Thong," and the "Step in the name of Love rmx."

Sean Paul leads the prediction in the newly introduced Dance Hall/Reggae Album of the Year. "Gimme the Light" has succeeded in the charts with "Get Busy" and "Like Glue." He also has collaborated with Beyonce in "Baby Boy." Sean Paul is hot on the mainstream airwaves unlike his opponents, Beenie Man, Buju Banton and Elephant Man.

Album of the Year-Female and Single of the Year-Female are up for grabs with Eve, Lil' Kim, and Missy Elliot competing, while Floetry and/or Aaliyah look like recipients of the Best R&B Artist of the Year- Female. United Kingdom's Floetry album "Floetic" is in good standing on the charts, and Aaliyah's "I Care for You" has been on the charts.

Refrain from checking out who won, because the televised version will include a pioneer tribute, distinguishing 30 pioneers of hip hop, confirmed performances by Ja Rule, Fabulous, Nelly and Murphey Lee along with appearances by the Rev. Al Sharpton, Roy Jones Jr., Mike Tyson, Ricky Williams and Afeni Shakur. A sense of shakiness may erupt since Ja Rule is performing and 50 Cent may be present. The two rappers are rivals. If anything, do not miss the televised awards. There just might be a fight between Ja Rule and 50 Cent.

International Film Series 'The Princess and the Warrior'



SONY PICTURE CLASSICS

A nurse at a psychiatric hospital has a life changing experience after a tear-eyed man saves her life. With fantastic cinematography and purposefully ambiguous direction, this film develops an honest and unyielding concern for its characters as philosophical questions about fate and love begin to surface.--DJS

"The Princess and the Warrior," directed by Tom Twkwer and starring Franka Potente and Benno Furmann, is showing as part of the International Film Series, Monday at 7 p.m. in Reed 117.