

# Cheap Seats and Sticky Floors

## Theron's *Monster* performance Oscar-worthy

By **MATT MOSLEY**  
*Film Reviewer*

Patty Jenkins' *Monster* is the best film of 2003. It may seem premature to make such a statement considering I've yet to see, Errol Morris' *The Fog of War* and the final installment of the "Lord of the Bore" trilogy, "The Return of the Geeks", but I feel there won't be another film that can match the power, the introspection, and the downright ferocity of *Monster*. In a year where "performance" outweighed "story" by about 200 pounds, and "story" outweighed "structure" by infinity, Patty Jenkins evens the scales creating a film that clicks on all levels.

It's the story of America's first "high-profile" female serial killer (a statement which is actually debatable), Aileen Wuornos. She was a prostitute who murdered seven men, some under grisly circumstances, and was executed by the state of Florida in 2002 after spending ten years on death row. Wuornos' case has been told and retold for years by A&E biographies, made for TV movies, and two documentaries by acclaimed filmmaker Nick Broomfield, but *Monster* seems to be the tale that should finally put the case to rest.

The highlight of the film is Charlize Theron, the most feminine of feminine actors (or so I thought), who transforms to the point where she is completely unrecognizable. I'm reminded of Willem DaFoe in *Shadow of the Vampire*, but it's not really the makeup that sells the performance. It's attitude. She walks like a truck driver and talks like Willie Nelson. Her performance is nothing less than outstanding, and she should be remembered come Oscar time.

As great as Theron is in the film, I believe she has over shadowed, at least in the press, the performance by Christina Ricci who plays Wuornos' lesbian lover. *Monster* marks Ricci's best performance to date. In a film with such high emotions and difficult situations, the two compliment one another perfectly and provide a deeper understanding of

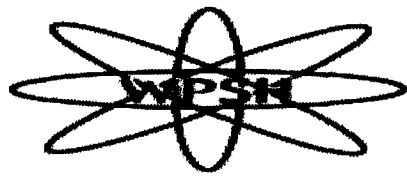
who Wuornos actually was.

Technically, Wuornos was a serial killer. A serial killer, as defined by scholars and the FBI, is a person who kills three or more people with a cooling off period between each incident. The difference between Wuornos and most killers lies in her motive. Most killers murder because of compulsion, whether it be sexual, in the case of Ted Bundy, or power and game playing, like David Berkowitz. Wuornos' case is unique, and that is what makes *Monster* transcend the category of "performance piece."

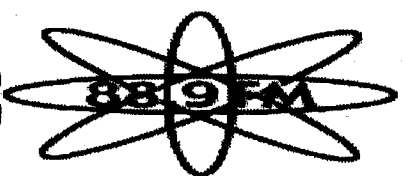
The film portrays Wuornos as a person struggling to survive, both physically and mentally. The relationship between Theron and Ricci seems to be the catalyst. The film is a love story at heart. We see Wuornos' as someone who will do anything to retain the love she had finally found after many years of dead emotions from her hard-living, tough existence. The film does not make excuses, but rather puts the viewer into a mode of understanding. Wuornos has to make choices, the cornerstone of any screenplay, and it's the choices she makes that decide her fate. Jenkins' paints Wuornos as being someone who didn't kill by compulsion, but as a lost soul killing for revenge, financial stability, and most of all to prevent emotional death. Whether all of that is true or just a liberal slant, I'm not really sure, but it does make for one hell of a movie.



Charlize Theron playing a serial-killer role in the new movie "Monster."



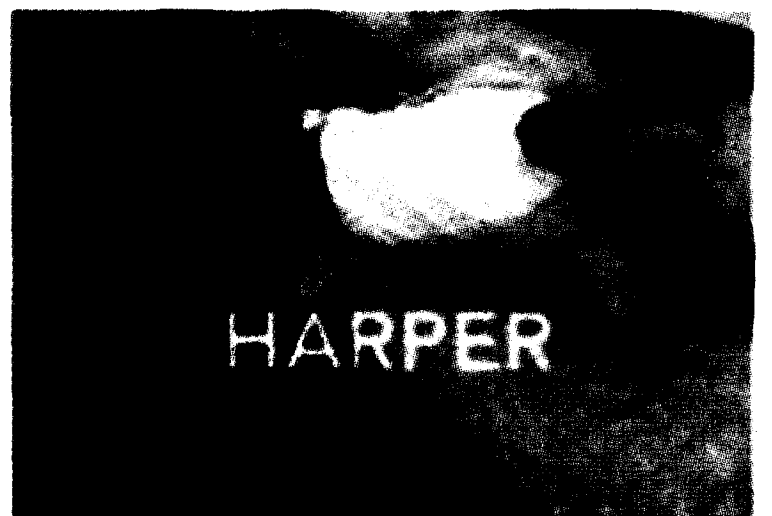
# SEE DEEZ REVIEWS



WPSH The Reactor  
 Radio Club

Ben Harper's, *Diamonds On The Inside*, is a CD that must be owned by all; well except those obsessed with the teenage pop music, or those who are inspired by the lyrics of Snoop D O double G. But for everyone else, this album will sure turn your CD collection from a mere B- to, I'd say about an A-. With songs like *With My Own Two Hands*, and *Diamonds On The Inside*, any individual can get into the mellow groove of Harper's semi-reggae/semi-rock style. And for those who are not in the mood to chill, then just turn to track number 7 and *Bring The Funk*. And Harper has not forgotten all you religious inspired music listeners because *When She Believes*, and *Picture of Jesus* will surely do you just.

The greatest part about this album is that Harper does not overflow his listeners with too much reggae. It's not thrown in our faces, but there is a hint of it behind his soft and strain sounding voice. Track number 2, *When It's Good*, is a perfect example. The only thing I didn't like about this album was the introduction to *When She Believes*. It sounds almost carnival like and the first sentence is really cheesy. "The Good Lord is such a good lord, with a good mother too." But I can let that slide because the rest of the album is simply mind blowing. Ben Harper's *Diamonds On The Inside* is a great reminder that the world has not gotten lost in the pop/punk world, and it's refreshing to know that great artists are still wandering this planet.



REVIEWED BY:	MICHELLI O'MALLY
ARTIST/GROUP:	BEN HARPER
ALBUM TITLE:	DIAMONDS ON THE INSIDE
LABEL:	VIRGIN RECORDS
RELEASE DATE:	MARCH 7, 2003
GENRE:	Rock
OVERALL RATING:	*****

WPSH THE REACTOR WPSH THE REACTOR WPSH

THE KEY HORRIBLE \*  
 I HEARD WORSE \*  
 BURROW OR STEAL IT, DON'T BUY IT  
 I WOULD PROBABLY BUY \*  
 UPENDOUS \*\*\*