

Washington in wrong role this 'Time' Leaves rustle; Jet blazes riffs

BY JACKIE RANDELL
STAFF WRITER

Denzel Washington is on fire. He's a \$20 million man, and he recently added an Oscar to his résumé for 2001's "Training Day." But all the flashy smiles, rippling biceps and tongue-in-cheek one-liners that characterize his performances can't save *Out of Time* from mediocrity.

To be fair, the premise has potential.

Matt Whitlock (Washington) is chief of police of Banyan Key, Fla., and has been framed for a double homicide. All evidence points to him — the victims are the woman with whom he's having an affair, Anne Merai Harrison (Sanaa Lathan), and her husband, Chris Harrison (Dean Cain).

To top things off, Whitlock's soon-to-be ex-wife, Alex Diaz-Whitlock (Eva Mendes of "2 Fast 2 Furious" fame), is the detective on the case.

But the execution is bungled — no pun intended.

The movie starts slowly. Whitlock responds to a suspicious "burglary call" from Anne Merai, and the next thing you know, they're in bed fulfilling a role-play fantasy that adds nothing to the film but empty Hollywood sex appeal.

Anne's suspecting husband, played by the hunky Cain, is an abusive ex-NFL football player

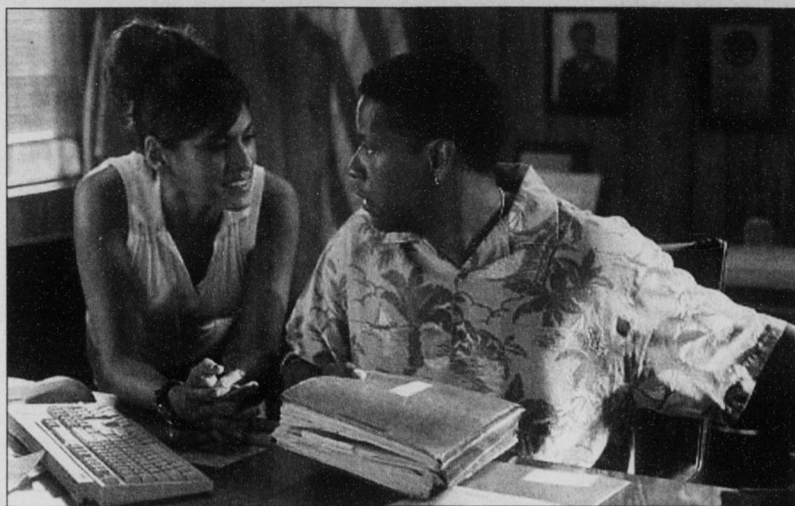


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Denzel Washington, with Eva Mendes, plays another "John Q"-caliber character as detective Matt Whitlock in the weak "Out of Time." The star's success is hampered thanks to clichéd writing and poor plot execution.

MOVIE REVIEW OUT OF TIME

★★

and Whitlock's nemesis.

Superman just can't pull off the villainous role.

It's so bad that if one of his scenes doesn't make it onto "Ripley's Believe it Or Not!" it will

be one of the greatest missed opportunities for situational irony of the year.

Luckily, Alex Carter does a great job playing Dr. Cabbot, giving the movie a much-needed lift.

Cabbot is the highlight of the movie as a bumbling medical examiner and friend to Whitlock who always appears just in time to save his companion.

At one point he tells an aloof cop, "You're like the love child of Barney Fife and Joe Friday."

Now that's funny. Mendes does a good job juggling the conflict of interest beset upon her character — the man with whom she is still in love increasingly is the main suspect in her homicide case.

She's attractive, though, and

Hollywood loves eye candy, so we forgive her unoriginal dilemma.

All silicone aside, the movie's tragic flaw is in its writing. After a steamy scene with Whitlock, Anne Merai sighs, "You still love her, don't you?"

How about some wine with that cheese?

No actor, not even Denzel Washington, can produce a good movie if they don't have a script to work with.

If Washington wants to cement himself in the Hollywood hall of fame, he needs another great movie — soon.

Right now, it looks like he's running "Out of Time."

Contact the A&E Editor
at artsdesk@unc.edu.

The Leaves BREATHE

★★★

"Suppose I give you all my luck/And still it won't go right/Cause you don't hear me," The Leaves wonder in the first lines of "Suppose."

It's not that hard to imagine. With their debut album, *Breathe*, it becomes difficult to separate their sound from the bands they starkly resemble — namely, the ubiquitous Coldplay and Radiohead.

The similarities could be some wonderful musical coincidence if the group didn't count these two bands among their favorites, along with The Beatles and Pink Floyd.

No points for originality here.

The Leaves were right about the luck part, though. Not only did the band just complete an extensive headlining tour through Europe — occasionally teaming up with acts such as Supergrass, Travis, The Coral and The Strokes — but DreamWorks Records also picked up its album for a domestic release. Not bad for a bunch of freshmen.

Hailing from Reykjavik, Iceland, band members Arnar Gudjonsson, Bjarni Grimsson, Hallur Hallsson and Arnar Olafsson were not blessed with an abundance of vowels.

But unlike Bjork, the band doesn't need a swan dress to make a lasting impression — the boyhood friends achieve success in other ways.

The album makes melancholy

triumphant instead of trite. It stands out with gentle guitar and lingering melodies that offer a subdued beauty without the pop fragility of Coldplay or the angry opulence of Radiohead.

Though *Breathe* begins with the less-than-stellar "I Go Down," a plodding track in which lead singer Gudjonsson whines "I go down/All the time/All the way/So alive," it is quickly redeemed by the charming sounds of "Sunday Lover."

Gudjonsson sings, "I wanted to take a little more/I wanted to say that I was lost/... I hope that we can be friends again/We need each other" in a way that makes it witty and somehow soothing all at once.

An elegant piano gait carries the title track, while "Race" finds the band sustaining a strong and inviting dialogue between the guitar and drums.

There's also the mesmerizing "We," in which Gudjonsson sings with a looming innocence just to turn it around a moment later with a procession of angered vocals that give the brokenhearted message a degree of credibility.

While the band has a bit more growing to do to achieve a distinctive style, it's clear these Nordic crooners deserve the luck they've had.

By Lauren Streib

Jet

GET BORN

★★★★

If Jet were called The Jet, this would be so much easier.

One then could guiltlessly lump its brand of garage rock together with other "The" bands — The Hives, The Libertines, The Strokes, The Yeah Yeah Yeahs.

After all, Jet did ride in on the coattails of the widely acclaimed "The" band The Vines.

And the group does have a style reminiscent of past great "The" groups including The Who, The Rolling Stones and even The Beatles.

But Jet offers so much more than its contemporaries — far surpassing the boundaries set by bands that paved its way.

Put simply, *Get Born* is proof that leading articles are overrated.

The album has loud electric guitars. It has tambourines and clapping. Some of the songs even start out with a bit of unscripted banter.

Producer Dave Sardy, who worked with fringe artists such as the poppy Dandy Warhols and the grating Marilyn Manson, effectively mixes these elements to give the album a pleasantly raw style.

The real meat and potatoes of *Get Born*, though, are cooked.

For a song with lyrics such as, "This won't be played on your radio tonight," "Radio Song" boasts very radio-friendly production. Harmonious vocals accented by fading electric guitars punctuate its powerful piano work.

The song's musical complexity separates it from a lot of the more brazen selections on the album and places Jet in a technical category of its own among garage rock bands.

Band members wear their hearts on their sleeves again in "Come Around Again" — a song with solid lyrical foundations.

Who wouldn't be moved after listening to someone pine, "I'm sad when I'm all alone" and "I'm lost but I'm at home?"

Simple, but powerful nonetheless.

For a bit of complexity, turn up "Lazy Gun," an intriguing number that borders on being political: "Lazy gun messed up my television fun/Shoot the shotgun but the war is never won." Who knows what that could be about?

Jet's ability to balance simplicity and complexity in both lyrics and melody makes *Get Born* fascinating.

More emotional numbers such as "Come Around Again" and "Timothy" pair nicely with the unbridled rants featured in most of the songs.

Thunderous drumbeats and a barrage of lyrics about "sticking it to the man" in songs such as "Get Me Outta Here" ensure that the album remains firmly anchored in the stormy harbors of rock 'n' roll.

The bulk of *Get Born* is bold, brash and even a little boisterous — with a few heartfelt tracks thrown in for refinement. Alliteration aside, the album is awesome.

By Jim Walsh

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