

COUCH POTATO + PARTY GRRRL: **CAN THIS MARRIAGE BE SAVED?**

girlfriends

the word on lesbian lifestyle

Quiz:
IS YOUR
GROOVE
ON

Randee, in a
silk-screened
shirt by
RIGGED,
kicks back
with Kelly

Annual
**WE LOVE
THE
NIGHTLIFE**
Issue

For Us,
By Us

**CLUB
DUDS**

Step Out in
RIGGED's
Designs, Then
Check Them On
'The L Word'

**DOPING
IN THE DARK**

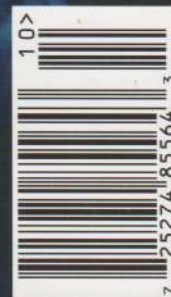
What We Don't Know
About Our Drug Habit

10 Tips
for Going
Out **Cheap**

special report:
**4 CITIES,
46 PARTIES**
Backstage at Today's
**Lesbian Club
Scene**



**EMILY SALIERS CRUISING • TRACY CHAPMAN
JODIE'S 'PLAN' • SARA GILBERT'S 'TWINS'
ST. PETERSBURG NIGHTS • 'SHOW ME'**



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October 2005 www.girlfriends.com

FILM

Captive Audience

This extended thought-piece on the so-called Stockholm syndrome is weirdly engrossing.

SHOW ME

Cassandra Nicolaou
(Wolfe, 97 minutes)

This slow-moving, character-based thriller by Canadian director Cassandra Nicolaou (*Interviews With My Next Girlfriend*) is her attempt to tread Roman Polanski's early tracks. Like him, Nicolaou rations out plot complications in the form of psychic breadcrumbs that drop from her three main characters, a violent mixture of two teen runaways and a yuppie lesbian brought together by an unexpected abduction. As a result, *Show Me* relies entirely on dialogue, compelling performances, and a strong dose of suspended disbelief. Unfortunately the film—which gets a screen release this month—comes off as somewhat over-brewed, like a psychoanalytic patient who is making up her problems and then can't stop whining about them.

The plot: two sadistic street teens with squeegees carjack new-second-homeowner Sarah Tabbott (Michelle Nolden) and tie her up in her desolate forest cabin. The kidnappers' sordid past comes to light fragment by fragment, as Sarah, who refuses food and water, is forced to pee on herself and tries to flirt her way out of her restraints. To her captors, Sarah begins to manifest fear, desire, and maternal affection, sometimes concurrently. The characters seem constantly to fiddle with knives in front of the camera, an exaggerated gesture that reads as if director Nicolaou just read an expose on self-cutting. Seventeen-year-old Jenna—played by Katharine Isabelle, who looks like she should be on *The*

OC, up until she seriously contemplates chopping Sarah's hand off—is two-parts sexually abused, one-part sexually frustrated, and one part sexually confused. She tries to give Sarah scars to match her own self-inflicted wounds, which have roots, it turns out, in the sexual goings-on with broody nineteen-year old punk Jackson (Kett Turton), her brother.

Show Me's problems lie in how it is, at turns, greatly overstated (we feel like certain details are pounded into our heads) and then understated, like in the moments we lean close, squinting and trying to piece together clues that seem cut and pasted together haphazardly. However, it is weirdly engrossing. Plus, Turton's job as Jackson is truly applaudable. He brings nuance, believability, and sympathy to a fucked-up guy who seems wildly unsafe, as if rape, explosion, or implosion is about to ensue at

every turn. Although the bruise on his face looks like makeup, we believe in his beatings, both the ones he takes and dishes out. Meanwhile, Nolden takes the stiff route to her character too often, and Isabelle overplays hers. (Granted, she's handed a "DRAMA!" role.) Of the three bears, Turton's just right.

The least engrossing element of the film is the lesbian plot twist. When, through an old home movie, Jenna discovers Sarah's "Sam" is of the Samantha variety, she figures out what we lesbian viewers have known all along and then tries to score with Sarah to see what it's like with a lady. The scenes that toy with the resulting incestuous triangles make one a little nauseated. Nicolaou should have named her characters after martyrs and murderers in ancient Greek tragedies—at least everything would have been up front. C+
—Candace Moore



Sarah (Michelle Nolden) is strangely drawn to her kidnapper's life story.

Sophie Graud courtesy of Wolfe Releasing

DVD



ELEKTRA

(Fox Home

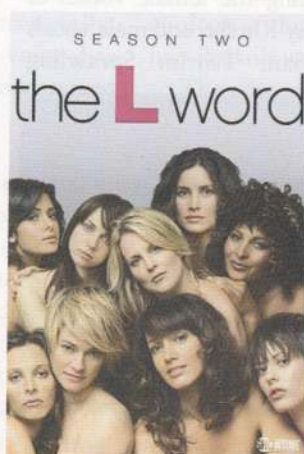
Entertainment, \$29.99)

In this *Daredevil* spinoff, Marvel Comics' obsessive-compulsive female assassin is permanently *Alias*-ized by Jennifer Garner's moist-lipped, emotionally stiff touch. Her lack of affect would be a perfect match if this film's script, graphics, and soundtrack weren't so cornball. Garner looks ridiculous slow mo-ing through the air as a world class martial artist in skimpy red outfits, and her makeup still looks Mac-counter stellar after a sweaty forest battle—not to mention an extensive tongue kiss with femme wraith Typhoid (Natassia Malthe). Elektra looks blissfully in awe while getting the life sucked out of her by a girl; yet another action-genre stab at the annoying lesbians-as-vampires trope. Special features include Garner's presentation at Comic-con for all the unabashed geeks out there. C+ —Candace Moore

THE L WORD: THE COMPLETE SECOND SEASON

(Showtime, \$69.99)

You can make snap judgments about a lady based on which season of Showtime's lesbian super series she prefers. On season two, the writers deepen the characters that needed it, such as Shane (we love your attempts to



cry), Tina (perhaps the first pregnant lesbian to get head by an heiress in the Chateau Marmont's pool), and Jenny (who needed an overhaul, but got a haircut instead). The super-cute romance between comedy duo Dana and Alice also advances. What went wrong? Ivan inexplicably went from a comfy genderqueer to a guy with bad music taste who is ashamed of his genitals. Alas, this lesbian soap still hits the spot. A — Candace Moore

GARBO—THE SIGNATURE COLLECTION

(Warner Home Video, \$99.92)

Released to commemorate Greta Garbo's one-hundredth birthday, this treasure chest is the most comprehensive collection of the legendary bisexual actress's films to grace DVD. Compiling all her great performances, from the early silents (1926-1928) to *Ninotchka* (1939), this set takes the Garbo lover through both the racy pre- and stauncher post-



Hays code eras, plus the period somewhere in between, which includes the fabulous bio pic *Queen Christina*, in which Garbo, as the seventeenth century Swedish queen, passes as a man and kisses her lady in waiting. Special features include the TCM documentary *Garbo* and nine minutes from the lost film *The Divine Woman* (1928). A —Candace Moore

FILM PREVIEW



Flying Solo

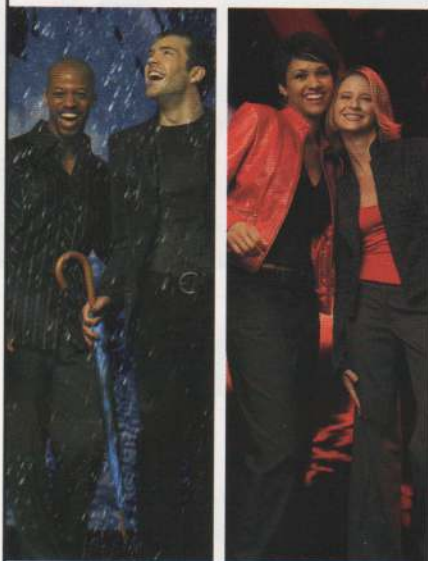
Icon Jodie Foster is under pressure again.

by Candace Moore

Why does it seem that Jodie Foster is typecast as the gutsy, pissed-off single mom in gimmicky thrillers lately? Last it was David Fincher's claustrophobic *Panic Room*. This fall in Robert Schwentke's *Flightplan*, she negotiates the finite floor plan of an airliner. Foster plays Kyle Pratt, a recent widow whose six-year-old daughter disappears while the cavernous 474—which Pratt happens to have designed—soars from Berlin to New York. When the crew (including fine actor Peter Sarsgaard as an air marshal) insists Pratt's daughter was never on board, psychological turbulence ensues.

Flightplan aspires to Hitchcockian tension and may find its life-vest in Jodie's exceptional ability to render a woman pushed to her limits. It seems bound to continue the intense-single-gal itinerary actress seems to prefer. Whenever the studios try to give Foster a straight love interest (was it last with Yun-Fat Chow?), the whole thing feels akin to asexual amnesia (*Is that you*, *Sommersby*?). Long gone are the days when Foster's deep-voiced, deadpan tomboy, circa *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore*, read as a baby dyke whose head no one dared mess with.

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INSIDE GIRLFRIENDS



Associate Publisher Ralph Hyman horseshoes around with sales coordinator Heather Catalinich at Pride in San Fran this year.

After all those nights in lesbian bars, and all the thigh-slappingly fun conversations, ex-girlfriend confrontations, drag entertainment, hot go-go girl grinding, and that flying bar stool, I should get a permanent, all-access hand stamp in the shape of a purple heart.

Jaded as I may be, I was still intrigued when copy chief Laurie Koh proposed we organize this issue around the theme of lesbian nightlife. She'd just finished a cover story for our local alternative weekly on the dyke after-hours scene here in San Francisco, so we proposed to several of our favorite writers around the country that they do the same for their towns. The result is our special report starting with Miami on page 31.

I was amazed by the consistency of its message: today's nightlife has become club-oriented (gone are the days of the full-time lesbian bar), diverse (note the rise of black and Latina parties, plus the infusion of hip-hop and salsa into previously "house only" playlists), and more reflective of its surrounding mainstream culture.

Don't miss, either, assistant editor Stefani Barber's update on the trends—at least as far as we can tell, considering the lack of research—on drugs in the lesbian nightlife scene. Finally, I'm sure you'll love Sarah Baley's rich photos of the lesbian-oriented Rigged couture, set in one of New York City's most cutting edge nightclubs. They capture the great gender-bent spirit of the clothing line, as well as the feel of New York's always avant-garde position when it comes to how we live it up after the sun goes down.

Cheers,

girlfriends

the word on lesbian lifestyle

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