

Jay-Z demonstrates greatness

★★★★
BY MARTIN PAZANIN

One of the greatest rappers of all time, Jay-Z, has made another footprint in his path to fame. But unfortunately for all his fans, and music fans in general, he has made his last footprint. Jay-Z has made it publicly clear that "The Black Album" will be his last album, and Jay-Z is hoping to go out on top. Jay-Z, also known as Shawn Carter, could not have gone out in a classier way. When his songs are played, it is easy to tell that he is just not singing for the heck of it, or for the money. The songs have sentimental value to them, and come from Shawn Carter's heart. "December 4," the second track on the CD, is Shawn's birthday. It gives listeners an inside look at Jay-Z's background. The song will take one from the day he was born, to his success and fame, and

to modern day. The other top song on "The Black Album," is "What More Can I Say?"

It is highlighted by a strange, but insightful, beginning. The song begins with one of the powerful

Russell Crowe speeches from the movie "Gladiator."

"The Black Album" was produced by many greats including Eminem, Timbaland, DJ Quik, Kanye West, and Jay-Z. There are guest appearances on the CD by Cedric the Entertainer, Johnny Legend, and Danee Doty. "The Black Album" follows "The Blueprint 2: The Gift and the Curse," released in Nov. of 2002, and "The Blueprint," released on Sept. of 2001.

The aforementioned albums are not Jay-Z's only clam to fame. He also has demonstrated his efforts on "In My Lifetime, Volume 1," released in 1997, "Volume 2: Hard Knock Life," released in 1998, "Volume 3: Life and

Times of S. Carter" and "Reasonable Doubt," released in 1999. He also has come up with "The Dynasty Roc la Familia," released in 2000, "Unplugged" in 2001, and "Blueprint 2.1" of this year. So, Jay-Z seems to be keeping himself busy.

To sum it all up, "The Black Album" has many great songs in which Jay-Z demonstrates why he has always been considered on the same level as household names such as Eminem and 50 Cent. His songs have a true meaning and it brings a smile to the face of anyone who has ever loved to listen to good hip hop music.

Any hip-hop lover, it should definitely go and pick up "The Black Album." He will forever be in a hip hop frenzy. For those listeners who don't appreciate raunchy lyrics and vulgar words, pick up the edited version.



Photo courtesy of www.rocafella.com

'Stuck on You' delights viewers with humor

★★★★
BY TIM RACETTE

'Stuck on You' is a feel-good and immature comedy about two middle-aged brothers struggling for acceptance for who they are, in spite of the fact that they are stuck together.

Bob, played by Matt Damon, and Walter Tenor (Gregg Kinnear), are small-town brothers, conjoined at the hip. They are legends excelling at sports due to their attached situation.

After growing up in their hometown of Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, the brothers decide to go to Hollywood and pursue Walters acting career. Nevertheless, they find out how unaccepted they are for their freakish disability.

The chemistry between Damon and Kinnear was unexpected, but proved to be strong and believable. Two brothers joined at the hip is not something one sees everyday in film, but for these two actors, to pull it off in a compelling manner is what keeps viewers' eyes stuck to the screen.

Things finally start to look up for Walter when the brothers encounter superstar Cher. Looking to sabotage her new television series, Cher casts Walt as her

co-star, as well as Bob, who they manage to disguise.

Instead of a flop, Walt propels the show to the top of the ratings and the brothers become instant celebrities. At the same time, Bob finds romance with a longtime cyber-pal and the brothers become divergence on whether they should stay in Hollywood or move back home.

"Stuck on You" was produced by 20th Century Fox, and written and directed by the Farrelly brothers, the same people who brought you, "Dumb and Dumber" and "There's Something About Mary."

The Farrelly brothers seem to have their own way to install their sadistic humor and offensiveness in their films; this however, was much tamer than their usual comedy.

Rated PG-13, the crude and sexual humor and some language, the Farrelly brothers deliver a crude and immature comedy. This type of film is a Farrelly brothers trademark, which is slowly wearing thin following after their last movie "Shallow Hal."

For the cast this film brought in, the film proved to be very successful. Appearing in this film are Michael Callan and Eva Mendes as well as performances by Meryl Streep, Cher, and Jay Leno.

Matt Damon has starred in such films as "Good Will Hunting" and "Saving Private Ryan." Kinnear is most noted for starring in "As Good As It Gets." At times, one cannot control the sidesplitting laughter, however, it starts to drift away in the end with the direction the film is taking.

For the most part, the two hours and eight minute "Stuck on You" is well written and directed and worth the cost of admission, despite the fact that the ending is sketchy with its abruptness.



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