



Bette Midler as The Rose, a hard-rock superstar in performance.



Bette hits highs but no low points playing 'The Rose'

Always living at extremes, hurling out a credo of "drugs, sex and rock 'n' roll" to a frenzied audience, Bette Midler plays "The Rose" (R), a rock superstar of the '60s.

Rose's life and character are loosely based on the career of mythic superstar Janis Joplin who overdosed on heroin at the age of 27. Midler's vocal range and style don't compare with Joplin's; nevertheless, she belts out rock and blues in a splashy, gut-wrenching performance that marks a sensational movie debut.

Midler carries the film. The music, unfortunately, is not always up to the fevered pitch of the performer. Some of the compositions have a disco sound that hardly matches the '60s. Midler manages to overcome this handicap. She holds back nothing in communicating the physically demanding, emotionally punishing, flat-out efforts of the hyped-up rock star.

On stage, Rose's gyrations create an interaction with her concert audience that has the frightening aspect of a sacrificial ritual.

HER PRIVATE LIFE is keyed in the same kind of desperate pitch. When she is not screaming lyrics, she is screaming in rage or in tears or in one of her out-of-control states induced by booze or drugs.

There is little relief from the crescendo pitch the film maintains; there are few contrasting moments or changes of pace. Cars, planes, voices are always screaming.

The virtuoso performance, which Midler delivers, is needed to combat the effects of the fatiguing sound track and the stereotypical situations and characters.

There is Rose's greedy manager (Alan Bates) who won't let her stop performing; there are the studs in her life, such as the chauffeur (Frederick Forest) she picks up; there is the star's unquenchable need for reassurance, for adulation, and for the solace of drugs and alcohol.

What the film doesn't do is explore the character, explain the passion for music or the source of that speedy disintegration, dig into the world of rock music and its self-destructive superstars. (Rose suggests Joplin, but others, like Jimi Hendrix and Jim Morrison, come to mind.)

Does it have to be this way? Why the race toward self-annihilation? "The Rose" doesn't ask the questions or provide the answers, but it does showcase Midler's considerable talent, and that's worth experiencing.



Belushi goes wild

"Wild Bill" Kelso (John Belushi) is determined to be the first pilot to shoot down an enemy plane over U.S. soil, in Steven Spielberg's comedy spectacular "1941." The Universal Pictures and Columbia Pictures presentation will have its first-run area release beginning Dec. 14 at metropolitan Detroit theaters.

Week in Detroit celebrates jazz

Jazz at the Crossroads: A Detroit Celebration, will be held Thursday, Dec. 6 through Sunday, Dec. 9. Concerts and workshops sponsored by the Detroit Council of the Arts will be presented by internationally acclaimed jazz artists like Slide Hampton and Ron Carter, along with nationally known Detroit musicians.

Admission to workshops is free; concerts carry nominal admission price. Tickets are available at Orchestra Hall, site of all concerts. For more information, contact Detroit Council of the Arts, 224-3482.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS
THURSDAY — DAY — Dec. 6
Location: Friends Auditorium — Detroit Public Library.

History of Black Music in Detroit, 2-3:30 p.m.

Panelists: Arthur Labrev, Herb Boyd and Harold McKinney.

Jazz Education in the schools — 4-5:30 p.m.

Panelists: Ernie Rodgers and James Tatum.

Admission: Free.

THURSDAY — EVENING
Location: Orchestra Hall — Youth Bands, 8-11 p.m.

Piano: Donald Robinson and Remus Robinson, Middle School; John Smith and Oakland University Jazz Band; Ernie Rodgers and Northwestern High Jazz Band; Nate Chillis and Murray Wright High.

Admission: Tickets available at Orchestra Hall. Series ticket permits attendance at all four concerts.

FRIDAY — DAY — Dec. 7
Location: Detroit Community Music School, 200 East Kirby at John R., 2-4 p.m.

Composing, arranging, improvisation, and horn technique: A Talk Session.

Workshop Leader is Slide Hampton. Admission Free.

FRIDAY EVENING
Location: Orchestra Hall, 8-11 p.m.

Musicians: Harold McKinney, Marcus Belgrave and Wendell Harrison.

Admission: Tickets available at Orchestra Hall. Series tickets permit attendance at all four concerts.

SATURDAY — DAY Dec. 8
Location: Detroit Raddison Cadillac, 1-2:45 p.m. From Main-Stream to Crossover.

Herb Bond (Moderator), Stanley Crouch, Billy Mitchell, Frank Foster, Harold McKinney and John Sinclair. Plus, Edna Watson, Vishnu Wood, Curtis Fuller, and Mary Jo Johnson. Admission: Free.

SATURDAY — DAY
Location: Detroit Raddison Cadillac, 3-3:15 p.m. National Endowment for the Arts and Jazz.

Aida Chapman, assistant director, NEA Music, Mural Richard Abrams, and James Jordan. Admission free.

SATURDAY — EVENING
Location: Orchestra Hall, 8-11 p.m.

Musicians: Slide Hampton and His World of Trombones. Admission: Tickets available at Orchestra Hall. Series tickets permit attendance at all four concerts.

SUNDAY — EVENING
Location: Orchestra Hall, 8-11 p.m.

Musicians: Ron Carter and Jimmy Wilkins Band. Admission: Tickets available at Orchestra Hall. Series tickets permit attendance at all four concerts.

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Troy, Michigan
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Albert Scaglione, Ph.D. — Auctioneer
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