

MOVIES



Drama: George Clooney hangs on in "The Perfect Storm."

CLAUDETTE BARON

Surviving the 'Storm'

By VICTORIA DIAZ
SPECIAL WRITER

In the autumn of 1991, an enormous hurricane named Grace, a cold front from Canada, and a low-pressure system originating off the New England coast slammed into each other in the North Atlantic. Their three-way meteorological dance spawned the fiercest storm in recorded history.

It also spawned a mega-selling book by Sebastian Junger titled *The Perfect Storm*, and, from that, this movie scripted by Bill Wuttill (*Legends of the Fall*).

At the center of the drama is the crew of the Andrea Gail, a swordboat out of Gloucester, Mass. Captain Billy Tynne (George Clooney) hasn't been bringing in the catches lately. The owner of the Andrea Gail is grumbling big-time, Tynne and his crew desperately need more money than they're making, and (maybe worst of all) his chief competitor, Linda Greenlaw (Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio), is landing the swordfish right and left.

What's a fellow to do? This fellow decides to move out beyond ordinary fishing territory and head for a spot called the Flemish Cap. Here, fish abound, but it's a risky venture for several reasons, not the least of which is the monster storm bearing down on the little group.

For those of you who have never experienced stormy seas in a fishing boat, this picture most probably will not encourage you to do so. Surely, this is one of the scariest, wettest films ever made. You may feel as if you

would have brought earplugs and towels along. There is so much special effect lighting that people with photosensitive epilepsy might be well advised to avoid the production, and so much pitching and yawing that folks who tend toward mal de mer maybe should stay away, too.

Clooney seems slightly miscast as the salty captain. It's interesting to see that he's most effective when he's sappy, sleepy wet all over, a condition which appears to afford him the chance to shed his self-conscious, Dr-Ross-goes-to-sea pose.

Mastrantonio has some of the most problems, coming across most of the time like a pretty performer merely pretending to be a sea captain. Mark Wahlberg as Clooney's feisty second-in-command fares somewhat better.

Still, *The Perfect Storm* is a spectacular story and, though a bit overlong, a compelling film. Director Wolfgang Petersen (*Das Boot*) and cinematographer John Seale (*The English Patient*) bring us aboard and compel us to stay there, mesmerized by the lashing, thrashing, swirling, twirling sheer magnitude of what came to be known as the "Halloween Storm."

Together with production designer William Sandell (*Air Force One*) and the folks at Industrial Light & Magic, they bring us a cinematic experience that is truly remarkable (even though it is not always literally enjoyable).

We also find the story compelling because of the strength of its supporting cast. John C. Reil-

ly plays a flinty-eyed crewman with a soft heart. John Hawkey is irresistible as the plucky sailor who finally gets the girl. William Fichtner may set your teeth on edge as an explosive loner with the temperament of an errant blowtorch.

Diane Lane, Cherry Jones, and Rusty Schwimmer are standouts as the women in Gloucester who serve as a loving, but sometimes resentful, support crew.

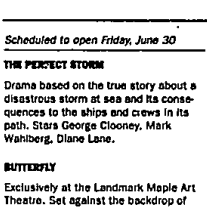
While most of this drama focuses on the Gloucester fishing boat and the men aboard, we're also shown roasting attempts involving a storm-tossed sailboat somewhere out there in the middle of the mess.

But we know little of the people aboard or of those involved directly in the rescue. At times we can barely even see them or understand what they say amid all the storm and drag. Confusion reigns and we feel lost at sea in more ways than one regarding this segment. Actually, the segment could possibly make a compelling movie in itself. Here, though, it feels something like a bit of ragged detritus sucked into the dark maelstrom.

The movie opens with a shot of Gloucester harbor, its salty charm enhanced smartly by James Horner's (*Titanic*) score. Later, however, the music lapses into a peculiar kind of overkill. The images in this film are of such power that the swelling score often threatens to take away from, rather than complementing, what we are witnessing on its supporting cast. John C. Reil-

GUIDE TO THE MOVIES

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MUSIC

Brian Setzer ready to play Pine Knob

By STEPHANIE ANGELIN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER
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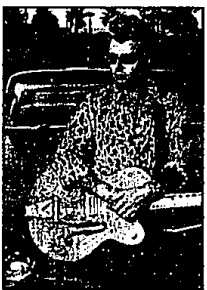
One week before he packs up his big band and heads out on the road, Brian Setzer is taking care of few last-minute details - like packing, getting his clothes dry-cleaned, oh yes, and shooting a video for the Brian Setzer Orchestra's latest single *Gettin' In The Mood*.

The song - inspired by Glenn Miller's classic *In The Mood* - is featured on the band's fourth album *Voodoo*, due in stores Aug. 1. "It's a classic," said Setzer, calling from his Malibu home June 22. "When you say swing, everybody knows it. It's a great song."

It's just what you might expect from the man who did what no one thought possible: mixed rock 'n' roll, jump blues, swing and rockabilly by fronting a 16-piece big band with his electric guitar. Eight years and four full-length albums later, he'll complete the video for *Gettin' In The Mood*, which showcases the band's all its glory along with Setzer's other passion, 1930s hot rods. He'll have to leave his beloved Ford behind when he heads Midwest for the start of the tour - which rolls into Pine Knob Music Theatre Saturday, June 1. Local boys, the Twinstin Tarantulas, will open the show which is listed *Here I Go Again Draggin' 16 Guys And A Couple Chicks Around The World Tour*.

With a new album and tour, Setzer promised the band's ready to "bump it up" a notch this time around. By adding background singers on some album and tossing in some "trash talking" hip hop beats and tape loops, *Voodoo* takes another leap to bring the sounds of 1940s swing well into the year 2000.

The challenge this time was not recording a continuation of the band's 1998 double-platinum, Grammy-winning third



Brian Setzer

album *The Dirty Boogie*. "It's always a temptation," said Setzer. "You don't want to change your sound, you just want to tweak it a little bit. If there is a criticism about swing it's that it's retro music. It's from the '40s. But there's never a feeling of deja-vu with the Brian Setzer Orchestra. No musician before him or since has dared to back a walking rockabilly guitar with a full orchestra. He's made it work since 1992.

Setzer's been intrigued by big bands since he saw Johnny Carson's talk show orchestra. "The time the Stray Cats were going to be on he asked if we wanted to use Doc's band. That's what turned the lights on. That's what really started me thinking."

Setzer first rose to fame in the early 1980s as one-third of the rockabilly band, Stray Cats. The band had early success with such top 10 hits as *Rock This Town* and *Rumble In Brighton*. Despite past success, starting over with an orchestra seemed a shaky endeavor in the beginning.

"There's no way this thing should actually work," said Setzer. "I had people tell me 'there's no way you're going to get 16

guys together' and in the beginning they were working for free."

A major challenge in the beginning was just completing the music charts for the songs. It isn't quite the same as writing a rock tune like Stray Cats' *Strut*. "It's like making a puzzle. The sax has to fit in with the trumpet. It's a job."

Audiences will see it all at Pine Knob - and even be treated to a solo performance by Setzer. "We'll basically be breaking the set down for a couple of songs," he said. He'll do a little rock "Stray Cats-style," he said, as well as a more intimate song with only his guitar to accompany him. Die-hard fans will even be treated to an older Setzer tune *I Won't Stand In Your Way*.

Speaking of changes, the rockabilly and swing-centric music Setzer's known for has come in and out of general popularity. He's seen it through the highs and lows. "You can never predict when things come and go," said Setzer. "I just do what I want and every five years I get lucky. When I started the big band, everyone thought it would flop."

With hits like *Jump, Jive An' Wail*, he proved them wrong. This time around, he's got live gigs like a rendition of Duke Ellington's *Caravan* and an original called *The Footloose Doll*. He can't wait to try them out on metro area audiences. "I'm sure I've always got an audience," he said. "Especially in Detroit, there's a core audience. I can always play."

"The only problem I have with Pine Knob is I started watching the audience (on the lawn) playing Frisbee. I lost my place."

Leave the Frisbee at home and see the Brian Setzer Orchestra with Detroit's own Twinstin Tarantulas, 7:30 p.m. Saturday, July 1, Pine Knob Music Theatre, Independence Township. Tickets: \$15-\$27.50, call (248) 377-0100 or (248) 645-6666.