

Pete Rock still rollin' out beats

Pete Rock

With Dj Twist and J Soul, Dragon Fli Empire, Freshly Squeezed and Unkle Sam

Saturday, 10 March at 9pm
Starlite Room

RENATO PAGNANI
Arts & Entertainment Staff

To be bestowed the nickname “Soul Brother #1,” you’ve got to be special. Sure, Pete Rock—born Peter Philips—might have first dubbed *himself* a soul brother back in 1991, but the moniker stuck as the New York legend demonstrated his seminal talent at crafting beats for some of hip-hop’s finest in the early ’90s. Throughout his decade-long career, Pete Rock has been looked up to by rappers ranging from Nas to Jim Jones for one-of-a-kind songscapes.

To this day, Rock’s trademark horn-infused beats—a style that merges hip-hop with jazzier, more organic sounds, such as those found on the 1992 classic *Mecca and the Soul Brother*—are often emulated by lesser producers but never duplicated. Since his last album, *Soul Survivor 2*, Pete has stayed busy by producing albums for hip-hop heavyweights like Ghostface Killah, who ended up with three of Rock’s beats on his critically acclaimed *Fishscale* album last year.

“[Working with Ghostface] was cool,” Rock says over the phone from California. “It was a classic collaboration, with the way I make music and the way he loves soul.”

Besides making beats for other emcees, Pete Rock has been eager to put out another solo disc that features him doing just as much rapping as other rappers. Last month, he began preliminary work for his next album, tentatively entitled *New York’s Finest*, but Rock hesitates calling it a New York-centric *Soul Survivor*.

“I’m talking more about myself as New York’s finest,” Rock says. “Like, I have Slum Village on there and they’re



from Detroit. It’s not a New York based album; it’s more New York than anyone else, but it’s open to anyone.”

Last month also marked the one-year anniversary of the untimely passing of James “J Dilla” Yancey, a founding member of Slum Village before he left to pursue a solo career in 2002.

“I have lots of [stories about Dilla],” Rock says. “Basically, he always invited me out to Detroit and I’d play music with him and stuff like that. That’s how we met. He let me stay in his house while he was out doing what he was doing. It was just a good feeling, you know, that he invited me to Detroit like that. Then he came to visit me in New York and we’d ride around in my truck playing music and stuff.”

But Pete acknowledges that not all

producers in hip-hop get along as well as he and J Dilla did. With the recent feud between juggernauts Timbaland and Scott Storch spawning thinly veiled diss tracks disguised as singles (“Give It To Me,” the lead single from Timbo’s upcoming *Shock Value*) and attempts at rapping from Storch himself, it’s safe to say that conflict in hip-hop, also known as “beef,” isn’t strictly relegated to rappers anymore.

“It comes with the territory,” Rock explains. “Producers having problems with each other is nothing new. It’s all music—rap, whatever. It’s all good though, it just makes it more exciting. Show off your talent. As for Storch rapping on his song, everybody’s rapping right now, know what I’m saying? This is the game now.”

Breaking and Entering your heart

New Jude Law flick dawdles down lover’s lane and oozes with cheesy emotion

Breaking and Entering

Directed by Anthony Minghella
Starring Jude Law, Juliette Binoche and Robin Wright Penn
Opens Friday, 9 March
Empire Theatres

JOEL TIEDEMANN
Arts & Entertainment Staff

If you haven’t seen the trailer for *Breaking and Entering* yet, the title may lead you to assume the film’s a blood-spilling, cop-chasing drama filled with nothing but Jay-Z and Linkin Park-collaborated music. However, this is definitely not the case. The only blood you’ll see spilling is from the hearts of the modern-day Romeo and Juliet who plaster their emotions onto the big screen.

The script, written by Academy-award-winning director Anthony Minghella, follows several twists and turns as it analyses the complications money can create. The story revolves around two young, successful architects charged with revitalizing London’s derelict district of King’s Cross. Engrossed in their project, the men set up a state-of-the-art office in a dilapidated part of town, but after several break-ins by a local gang of thieves, Will (Jude Law) ends up chasing one of the juvenile bandits to his home where he lives with his mother, Amira (Juliette Binoche), a

Bosnian refugee.

Although Will has been living with his beautiful girlfriend of ten years, he soon finds himself involved in complex romantic adventure with Amira, and his home life begins to disintegrate before his eyes. To make things more complicated, Amira discovers that Will is a victim of her son’s thievery and becomes skeptical of the motives behind their relationship. For the remainder of the film, Will struggles with deciding whether or not to turn Amira’s son in to the authorities while trying to put the pieces of his own crumbling home life back together.

For the majority of the film, the acting is quite respectable; each character’s situation is realistic and palatable. Even the complex accents that some actors were required to use were presented fluidly and consistently throughout the movie. Despite this fact, though, the overall flow of *Breaking and Entering* was very unappealing. Scenes were stitched together in a seemingly haphazard manner and in many instances the movie didn’t feel as though it was going anywhere.

Although *Breaking and Entering* wasn’t a particularly long film, there were several occasions where it seemed to simply drag on. In terms of content, the script dealt with a fairly deep subject matter that undoubtedly

toys with the audience’s emotions. Almost every character is, at one point or another, put into an unfortunate situation that’s sure to garner some amount of empathy from viewers. With this degree of emotional involvement, one would be prone to conclude that the entire feature would be comparatively captivating.

This, however, isn’t the case. The overall storyline ends up being rather lacklustre and the awkward pacing does nothing to help the film’s cause. *Breaking and Entering* does progress sluggishly for the most part but, thankfully, some humorous scenes are added in, ones that will leave most viewers in stitches. These comedic interludes provide some spunk to the dawdling pace and ensure that the audience remains somewhat aware.

If you are one to enjoy an unhurried, deeply emotional spectacle, then *Breaking and Entering* will probably be your ticket. If, however, you prefer a more rapid plot progression that contains some substance, your box-office pick may be more effectively made elsewhere. *Breaking and Entering* touches on some deep subject matter and takes an emotional look at various lifestyles within London’s ghetto, but in the end, it lacks the adequate pacing and conviction to keep audiences thoroughly engaged.



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