

# 'Lemon Sisters' pleasing tale of three women's friendship

By Julie Naughton  
Senior Reporter

"The Lemon Sisters," a bitter-sweet comedy about three friends, bears more than a passing resemblance to "Beaches."

Both films are about friends who meet on the boardwalk in Atlantic City. "Under the Boardwalk," both films show little girls that like to hang out under the boardwalk.

However, while "Beaches" is a commercial, widely appealing tear-jerker of a movie, "The Lemon Sisters" is an artsy, beautifully-crafted, appealing film about friendship.

The women that call themselves the Lemon Sisters are Eloise (Diane Keaton), Franki (Carol Kane) and Nola (Kathryn Grody), three women that have grown up together in New Jersey. Eloise's father and Nola's mother even had businesses right next to each other on the boardwalk. Nola and Eloise lived across the street from each other growing up, and still live across the street from each other as adults. Franki moved to Atlantic City as a young girl and lived on another block, but became a close friend of the other girls.

The three started calling themselves the Lemon sisters after losing their quarters on a boardwalk carnival game as young girls; the proprietor gave the three girls lemons as consolation prizes. Being creative youngsters, they decided to become Lemon sisters rather than blood sisters in a secret ritual under the boardwalk.

Some 20 years after the Lemon

sisters ritual, the women are still together, meeting every Monday night. But instead of trading secrets, as they did as children, they sing at an Italian nightclub.

Nola is the sensible Lemon sister, who grows up to marry and have three children in the same house she grew up in. Eloise is the dreamer, running her father's TV museum on the boardwalk, collecting weird Greco-Roman statues, and sometimes retreating to a fantasy world. Franki is the airhead, loyal to her friends but not always living in the real world. The three are

## movie REVIEW

closer to each other than to anyone else in the world. They dream of opening their own nightclub, but instead of focusing the film on the women's desire to open their own club, the film focuses on the friendship and the underlying emotions between the women.

The scenes of the women as young girls are all done in black and white; the scenes of the women in present-day are done in color. Rather than relying on the characters to "tell" the audience what happened in past days, the film shows the past events. The scenes from the past are intertwined in the present-day scenes, creating a beautifully crafted and leisurely moving film.

Aidan Quinn appears as Franki's love interest/manager, Frankie; Ruben Blades is C.W., Eloise's boyfriend; Elliott Gould is Nola's husband.

The only major complaint about this film: when the women sing together, the music is lip-synched. The lip-synching, particularly in the close-up scenes, is completely off; it's impossible to believe, even for a moment, that any of these women are singing. Carol Kane, in her solo numbers, does her own singing, but some of her cracked notes make the audience wish that she had let someone lip-synch for her.

Keaton is delightful as the eccentric Eloise, and Grody provides the needed balance with her portrayal of Nola. Kane has fun with her role, and is hilarious as airheaded Franki. The men in the film play second-string to the women, but still are a welcomed part of the film. Blades, as C.W., is incredibly charismatic and immediately likeable; Gould is funny as Nola's always-worried husband, who tries to make his fortune in taffy rabbits he calls "Taffits;" Quinn is appealing as the slimy-but-cute dude that tries to manage Franki's career.

"The Lemon Sisters" is not a film with a shocking beginning, a breathless middle or a surprising finish. Instead, it's a film that leisurely tells the story of three women and some of the events that have happened in their lives. It is a well-paced, pleasant film devoid of violence, gore or even much cursing.

"The Lemon Sisters" is playing at the Cinema 1 & 2, 201 N. 13th St.



# Annihilator's ingenuity fills LP

By Michael Deeds  
Senior Editor

Annihilator  
"Never, Neverland"  
Roadracer Records

Annihilator is a schizophrenic explorer, prodding guitars into unknown territories at breakneck speeds. This intelligent force chugs along with a vengeance, then stops and smells a daffodil. Then it takes off again like a shot. Then it stops. Then it goes. Then it stops. Then it goes.

Annihilator is a prime example of the ingenuity that keeps music exciting. A sort of Rush meets Metallica, these guys fiddle with twin guitar harmonies over thick, quick rhythms and top-notch drums.

Widely dynamic and constantly changing, "Never, Neverland" is an exercise in technical guitar playing; acoustic beauty floats about, only to be thrashed instantly by raging tones and constant herky-jerk tempo changes.

Quite a few bands like Pantera and Queensryche are using their brains and musical knowledge to boost the

innate power of metal. But Annihilator is a little different; these Canadian wizards are destined to carve a deep niche in the metal world.

Founder and lead guitarist Jeff Waters simply rips over the intense backing of rhythm guitarist Dave Davis and bass player Wayne Darley. Drum-



mer Ray Hartmann should make Metallica's Lars Ulrich sit up and take notice. And Coburn Pharr (ex-Omen, Agent Steel) has the vocal power to match the band lick for lick.

The title track, "Never, Neverland" is a prime example of what these guys are about -- it opens acoustically and it leaves acoustically. But packed between these sweet strings is a powerful and complex metal sandwich.

Pharr howls about fairly typical "intelligent metal" topics -- pollution, drunken-driving, macaroni and cheese -- but his stylings are admirable. He can growl with the best of them, but more often he relies on melody and finesse, which makes the contrasts even more intense.

"Stonewall," the band's first video, is the ecologically conscious piece. And though the whale-saving bandwagon is getting a little full these days, everybody means well. But lyrics aside, this tune stands on its own as top-notch work. Again, Waters and Pharr toss out a melodic mosh, and though these guys don't create a happy sound, they steer clear of the tuned-down, devil chord changes that make a lot of bands sound a lot alike.

Other tunes like "Sixes and Sevens" and "Imperiled Eyes" are adrenaline-fueled marches filled with staccato rhythms and squealing leads. Undoubtedly, "Never, Neverland" is a guitarist's album. Waters is a man to admire.

But anybody who likes music to be invigorating and a little original will eat this stuff up.



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