

Horror blends gore, psychology adeptly

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through several well-executed psychological maneuvers and wide-eyed gore.

In recent decades, successful horror movies have blended the previously separate genres of "thrillers" and "horror" with varied results. Generally, a film is so heavy in one that it marginalizes itself. With the advent of such groundbreaking horror/thriller films as "Friday the 13th" and "Halloween," the two genres blended to create a balance of visual terror and brain-draining suspense.

Also begun by this same movement was the focus on the vulnerability of teen-age kids. Using typical risk-taking behavior such as drinking, sex and parties along with attitudes of invincibility, these films have doubled as modern-day morality plays and, ironically enough, have received the complete financial support of their subject matter.

"I Know What You Did Last Summer" is no different. The makers of this movie are well-acquainted with successful horror-film cinema. The deep oceanside photography is gray and eerie and seems to chill the entire theater. Contrasting mundane activity with gratingly awful suspense, the timing of the film's editing is impeccable and masterfully cut.

Providing the heart of the film are the characters. The director, Jim Gillespie, intentionally creates a

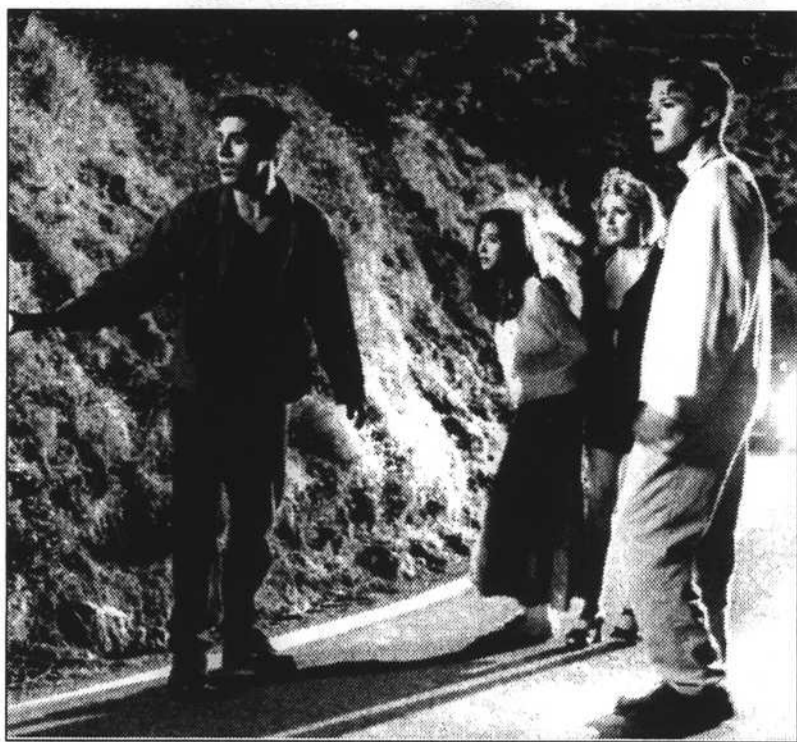


PHOTO COURTESY OF COLUMBIA PICTURES
A FRIGHTENED FOURSOME (from left, Freddie Prinze Jr., Jennifer Love Hewitt, Sarah Michelle Gellar and Ryan Phillippe) panics about what to do following a car accident in "I Know What You Did Last Summer."

character ensemble that people can relate to, but not necessarily identify with. Members of the audience are all acquainted with the jock, beauty queen, smart one and nice kid, even if they don't see themselves that way.

Because the characters are so easily identifiable, their demise is given greater impact and heavier weight.

Ultimately, the film strikes an artful and experienced balance between gore and psychology, creat-

Music

Portishead
"Portishead"
GO! Beat/London
Grade: A-

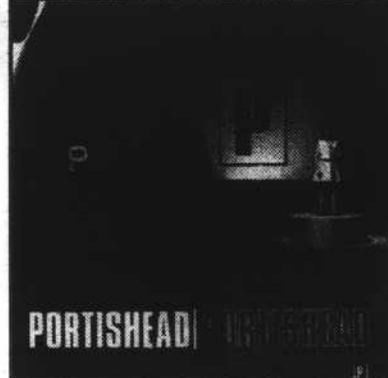
After three years of work, the pioneers of trip-hop have returned with nothing less than another disc brimming with liquefied emotion. The dichotomy created by dark, tortured lyrics and buoyant pop-jazz and fueled with heavy bass and old-school breaks exemplify Portishead and its latest self-titled release.

The band's debut, "Dummy," infused electronica with passion, creating a darker, more enigmatic genre of music now classified as "trip-hop."

The driving force behind this dynamic sound is Geoff Barrow, a 26-year-old composer who is to Portishead what Trent Reznor is to Nine Inch Nails. His vision and arrangements create the soundscapes upon which lead vocalist Beth Gibbons layers her smoldering voice.

Perhaps the most reluctant star of our time, Gibbons has an almost-mythical tendency to walk out of interviews (about 90 percent of the time). Her introverted personality carries over to her music, creating an extremely personal atmosphere, evidenced in her lyrics and vocal styling. With varied comparisons to Barbara Streisand, Edith Piaf, Janis Joplin and Billie Holiday, Gibbons sings in a manner that cannot be categorized and with sentiment that is undeniable.

Unable to stand alone, Barrow and Gibbons are accompanied on their journey by guitarist Adrian



Uteley and sound-whiz Dave McDonald. Uteley's influences range from Hendrix to James Brown to A Tribe Called Quest, adding to the diversified nature of the band. McDonald's deep understanding and effective use of sound-production techniques like delays and echoes, double-timing and drops, stem from his reggae background and also really help.

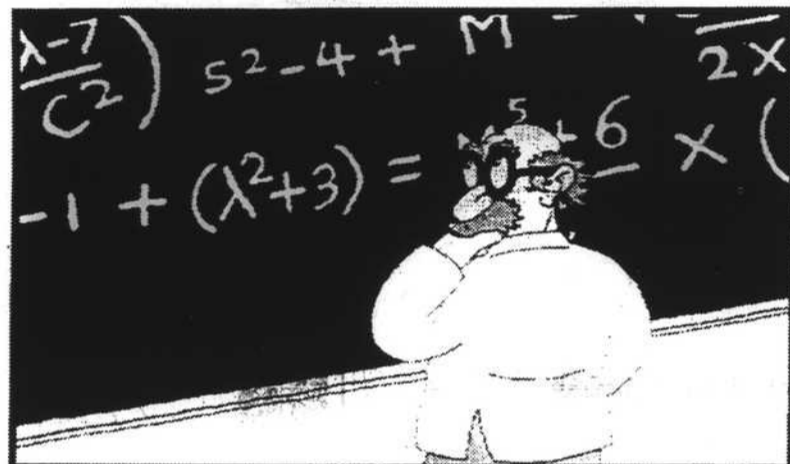
Portishead's "Portishead," while a long time in the coming, has revitalized what made the group so special from the beginning: a uniqueness that can be imitated but not duplicated.

Opening with the shady and sultry "Cowboys," the album portends an intricate, mystic pilgrimage into the psyche of a lost and desperate soul.

Gibbons' constantly ascending vocals in "All Mine" and "Undenied" display the epic nature of human feeling, which in current times has been scaled down and nicely packaged in mainstream pop for the mass public. Recent artists trivialize raw emotions for profit at the expense of their listeners, singling out Portishead's honesty.

With the advent of this sophomore album, Portishead remains true to form, while striving for new and dynamic sounds. No gift-wrap packaging necessary.

- Chris Thomas



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