

In the Bedroom

Marisa Tomei and Nick Stahl discuss working with director Todd Field and their roles as Natalie and Frank

By Lizette Resendez
THE BATTALION

Marisa Tomei, star of *In the Bedroom*, had no idea what she was getting into.

"I didn't really think it was going to be as much of a challenge as it was when I got there," Tomei said. "I would do a scene where it was emotional and would require a lot of concentration and think, 'Okay, that's out of the way, the hard scene is out of the way,' but the next day there would be another hard scene. I didn't really realize how much I immersed myself in that world."

While the Academy award-winning actress has had plenty of practice preparing for roles in major movies such as *My Cousin Vinny*, *What Women Want* and *Untamed Heart*, Tomei had to spend time with a woman from Maine who was similar to her character, Natalie, in background and personality. Tomei spent several days learning new habits, speech and body language.

"I didn't have anything or anyone to really draw from personally," Tomei said. "I had asked [Director Todd Field] if there was someone that he knew, if he could find somebody who might be similar to my character's background... he found someone who was willing to befriend me."

Tomei's co-star, Nick Stahl, last seen opposite Katie Holmes

in *Disturbing Behavior*, also spent days at sea as a fisherman to prepare for his role as Frank. While he grew a deep respect for the way of life, he admits it was grueling work.

"[Fishing] is a really different world," Stahl said. "I came away with a real respect for the profession. It's a really tough job, kind of a lonely job as well. I had really done nothing like that before."

Stahl started acting as a child and has had to adjust with changes in roles as he matured, while juggling a normal boy's life and acting.

"It was difficult at times. You have a certain set of roles that you're up for as a kid, but as you age, it really changes," Stahl said.

"When I was 14, I didn't work for almost two years. It's an awkward age to begin with."

Despite Tomei and Stahl's combined experience in film, they both said working with director Todd Field was rewarding.

"I'd say it's exciting to work with someone who has no preconceived ideas, with a lot of fresh energy, clean point of view, ready to express himself or herself," Tomei said. "I only had the script, which I thought was really good, and a couple of conversations with Todd which showed that we approached work the same way."

Stahl said he was not only drawn to the film by Todd Field, but also by the script.

"Todd Field did an amazing job

but it was more the story as a whole that was kind of the dominating force in wanting to do [the movie]," Stahl said. "If people don't want to go to a film to experience emotion, I guess they should just go see the newest teen flick out. [*In the Bedroom*] really attempts to make a statement, which is more than a lot of films that I've seen attempt to do."

While the film's full plot was a secret, *In the Bedroom* won the Special Jury Prize at the 2001 Sundance Film Festival and several nominations for Best Film by numerous film associations, including the 2002 Golden Globes.

In the Bedroom gave Tomei a chance to work with Sissy Spacek, one of her favorite actresses, as well as an entire cast of experienced actors.

"I was blown away (by each actor)," Tomei said. "It was like a certain trust that we had with each other. We knew we all cared very much about our craft."

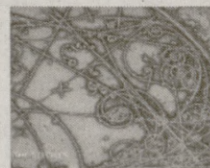
Spacek, who plays Frank's emotionally-charged mother, has also been nominated for several awards.

Spacek was voted Best Actress by the 2001 American Film Institute, 2001 Los Angeles Film Critics Association, 2001 New York Film Critics Circle and 2002 Broadcast Film Critics Association.



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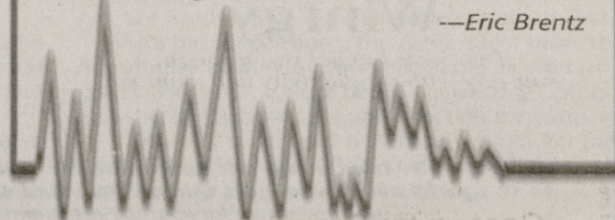
The Strokes
Is This It
RCA Records

The sound of a music box grinding to a halt is the suitable introduction to the ragged splendor offered up in The Strokes' latest release, *Is This It*. In an age where the sole intent of many bands is to sound more enraged than the previous brooding blokes, the resulting avalanche of mundane, pseudo 'heavy' pulp is a far cry from authentic dissonance. It is refreshing to see a band that captures the crazed energy of the night craved by bored masses looking for kicks.

Is This It is not an album to be dissected or scrutinized to the nth degree, like Bob Dylan's *Blonde on Blonde* or Jimi Hendrix's opus *Electric Ladyland*. In fact, intense concentration would sacrifice The Strokes' best contribution to the rock world: the honest feeling of worn-out insomnia rising out of the ashes of late night revelries. Every time the music begins to lull in tired exhaustion, vocalist Julian Casablancas, seemingly on the verge of collapse, and the band kick in with maddened, gnarled guitars and driving rhythms in an attempt to choke the last bit of life out of the rapidly dying night.

The Strokes' sound will surely be affixed with catchy critical descriptions, something to the effect of a punk-inspired energy with pop sensibilities. Oh, how the mainstream loves its pop sensibilities and other clichéd rhetoric. The bottom line is that songs like "The Modern Age," "Someday" and "Last Nite" tickle the same brain sectors that inspire hazy, late night, early morning acts of foolishness. (Grade: A-)

—Eric Brentz



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