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(Future) FILM FEATURE

TAKING A CHANCE

Victor D. Infante interviews Amber Benson

Before all the hullabaloo began about BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER moving to UPN, and the subsequent furor over the titular character's apparent demise (yeah, right) the Internet was alight with discussion over Amber Benson's new independent film, CHANCE. More to the point, fans were abuzz about the fact that she was funding it out of pocket, with a little help from her fans. Little Willow, who runs the Amber Benson fan site THE ESSENCE OF AMBER soon after began promoting the movie before it was even filmed which fed fan interest even further. Shortly after the film finished shooting, Ms. Benson spared a few minutes to talk to the Independent Review Site about it.



Victor Infante: I guess it's best to get the Buffy stuff out of the way. Is it true you're going to be a series regular on the show next season, with your name in the credits and everything? How do you feel about that?

Amber Benson: At this point, I'm still a recurring character in the Buffyverse, but someday I hope to ascend to the opening credits stratosphere. I just hope they'd use the kiss from the body in my opening stuff. Hehe.

VI: Tell me a little bit about CHANCE. What possessed you to write, direct, produce and star in your own independent movie?

AB: I am completely and utterly insane. That's all I can come up with. Or at least I was when I decided to do all this. Yipes, I didn't realize how much work was involved. I just have had this amazing love affair with the cinema since I was a little kid. I remember sitting in the air-conditioned darkness watching THE MAN WITH ONE RED SHOE The or ET or just anything I could get into the theater for. Movies always have and will hopefully always continue to rock my world. And the story for Chance really comes from my own sense of trying to figure out who I am and what I want to do in this life. It's

sort of a twenty-something girlie coming of age.

VI: Where did the fundraising idea come from? Has it gotten much support?

AB: My mother and my good friends Jen and Beth actually came up with the idea. And thank God they did 'cause we wouldn't have been able to do this thing without the love and support of the Internet community. I feel so blessed to be surrounded by such warm feeling from the Buffy fanbase. They're SO amazing.

VI: Does it ever feel like you've taken on a bit too much?

AB: You know what? These last few weeks have been some of the happiest of my whole life. I wouldn't trade it for anything. Even though the agony is tough, man, it's all about the ecstasy of a dream fulfilled.

VI: What's been the best part of taking on this project? How about the worst? Have you learned anything in the process?

AB: I've learned that you HAVE to trust your gut. It will always steer you to safe waters. The best part of the whole shoot was being surrounded by a huge group of people I love dearly who's one goal was to make sure that I got out of this whole thing intact. I am so lucky to have such good friends. The worst part was lack of sleep.



VI: The movie features, in addition to yourself, Andy Hallet and James Marsters. Have you gotten much support from the Buffy cast and crew? Is there anyone else involved?

AB: I work with a bunch of amazing people at Buffy. They have been super supportive of me doing this from the get go. Anything they could do to help, all I had to do was ask. It was amazing. And I owe them all a debt of gratitude. And working with James and Andy was amazing. They are both such phenomenal actors. Everyone on set was teasing me that I wrote the script so that I could be surrounded by hotties all day long.

VI: Who are some of the non-Buffy actors that are involved?

AB: Christine Estabrook is on THE NICKI SHOW. She plays my mother in the movie.

She is an exquisite human being and actor. So is Tressa Difiglia. She played my lesbian love interest. She rocked. And David Fury, one of the producer/writers on Buffy acted for me. My friends Patrick Beller and Ray Woods and Cathy Doe and Lara Rhodes and Jeff Ricketts and Shamus Murphy and Rupert Cole and Nate Barlow and Jamie Linn all came in and just kicked ass. I was surrounded by love and talent each and every day.



VI: On a side note, can you tell me a little bit about the comic book you did with Christopher Golden, *WILLOW AND TARA: BLESSED WANNABES*, on Dark Horse Comics. Is that something you'd like to do more of?

AB: I loved working with Chris. We had a blast doing the comic book. It's like making a little movie, but on paper. I'm doing another piece for a slayer compilation that Joss Whedon is working on. It should be super cool, too.

VI: Okay. You act, you're putting together an independent film and you've co-written a comic book. Are there any other art forms you're looking to explore?

AB: The art of sleeping. hehe.

VI: What are you going to do when *CHANCE* is finished?

AB: Cry. 'Cause it's been such an amazing roller coaster of a ride.



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At the time of this writing, CHANCE is still in post-production, and has not been confirmed for distribution or Indie film festival screenings. A new fundraising campaign has begun to cover post-production costs, featuring on-line auctions of scripts and other memorabilia autographed by Benson, Marsters and the other cast members.

For further information on the on-line auctions or to see photos from the film, visit the Chance web site.