



THE WRESTLER

Spring
Season
2009

Release: 2008

Country: USA

Cert (UK): 15

Runtime: 109 mins

Directors: Darren Aronofsky

Cast: Evan Rachel Wood, Marisa Tomei, Mark Margolis, Mickey Rourke, Todd Barry, Wass Stevens

"If it was a comedy, this would star Will Ferrell in a beefcake fat-suit with other wiseacre comics playing his various wrestler comrade-opponents, looking on blankly while Will attempts his delusional comeback in the ring. But it's deadly serious, and Mickey Rourke- famously once a contender in the marginally more credible world of boxing - is sublimely cast. Something about this gutsy, heartfelt drama from screenwriter Robert D Siegel and director Darren Aronofsky alchemises Rourke's conceit into a terrifically engaging, likable and even vulnerable performance.

Happily for them both, Aronofsky appears to have caught the 52-year-old Rourke at just the right time with just the right role. This film won the Golden Lion at last year's Venice film festival, and it's an exhilarating victory for the director after his dreadfully limp and overblown fantasy *The Fountain*. And for all his grotesque



appearance in the film, Rourke plays something he has not been much known for in his acting career: a human being." Peter Bradshaw, *The Guardian*

'Randy "Ram" Robinson (Mickey Rourke) is at the bottom of the pile in a disreputable subculture and it takes considerable talent to make an audience believe in his professional pride and to respect him as a figure with a tragic dimension. Yet Aronofsky, Siegel and the 52-year-old Rourke succeed.' Philip French, *The Observer*

The Wrestler: A film to give cliché a good name: 'We've eaten this kind of corn a thousand times before,' says Xan Brooks of Darren Aronofsky's sporting drama. 'But The Wrestler makes it taste like filet mignon.'