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Subject: The Contender

Posted by [lon](#) on Tue, 26 Jul 2005 02:29:52 GMT

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In this trough of lack of video releases, I went back to view a show I had seen before and always wanted to get back to. Joan Allen leads an all star cast including Beau Bridges and Gary Oldman as the heavy. The Contender is a political drama made and set just after the Clinton presidency. I'm not going to talk about the plot so as not to spoil anything. What makes the picture special is Joan Allen's first leading role (so far as I know.) Go to IMDb to see a list of her extensive credits. She's done everything from Pat Nixon to Senator Lane Hanson in "The Contender." This should have been her Oscar winning performance. See the film and I think you'll agree. Gary Oldman as her adversary also delivers a devastating performance. I noted at the end that he was the producer as well. He and Tim Roth (see them together in "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead") have gone into directing and producing and both to excellent effect. But this is Joan Allen's film. Mature, careful, smart, and fastidious I suppose apply to her. And they have her in a gown or two to wear as well. In this age of political underhandedness, I think you will appreciate the message of The Contender. It is maybe one of the last films of its kind (along with The Insider) that we will see for a long time. It's much easier to make CGI monsters and chase the ring of power than to tackle the problems of the here and now. For these reasons I recommend The Contender.

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