

» **Movies**

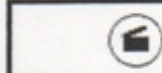
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## White Oleander

*Starring: Michelle Pfeiffer, Renee Zellweger*  
Drama | 2002



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THE ROLLING STONE REVIEW

★★

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★★★★

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Millions loved the Janet Fitch novel -- an Oprah's Book Club selection in 1999 -- and millions more may love the film version. For guys, this chick flick about teenage Astrid (newcomer Alison Lohman) suffering the evils of the foster-care system is heavy lifting. That said, Michelle Pfeiffer is sensational as Astrid's beautiful wicked witch of a mom, in jail for murdering her lover. And director Peter Kosminsky gets the likes of Renee Zellweger, Robin Wright Penn and Svetlana Efremova to act their hearts out in small roles. But the estrogen overload damn near did me in.

**PETER TRAVERS**  
(October 17, 2002)

[hairydude586](#) writes:

Rating: ★★★

**Somewhat Disagreed with the RS Review**

This is one of those movies where great acting and a strong story overpower a bad filmmaker's interpretation of the script. There were so many extraneous shots and poorly filled frames that I had to wonder if this guy had actually learned from the filmmaker's (Michael Mann, Steven Soderbergh) that he was seemingly trying so hard to emulate with his choice of camera style. Then when we find out all these tidbits in the end, we have to be suprised by them because we are not made aware of their significance. This was a story that needed to be poetically shot, but instead we get shakey realism and poorly handled plot points.

{ Oct. 22, 2002 | Post 5 of 5 }

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[scwriter](#) writes:

Rating: ★★

**Totally Agreed with the RS Review**

My negative review of this movie has nothing to do with estrogen overload. Good movies are good movies and ya know what, this isn't a well made movie. The acting is all first rate. Especially the young girl and Robin Wright Penn. But at a certain point I want more than just a series of dramatic moments. Take the Renee Zellweger portion of the film for example. One minute she seems happy, the next her husband is leaving her, and then the next she is (spoiler) killing herself. You have to build towards that kind of drama. Otherwise, it's just Renee Zellweger playing dead rather than a heart



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