Natalie Portman

Titles: 1   Sources: 0   Stills: 3

Born: ?

Portman is marvellous in Luc Besson's "**LEON**" as Nathalie, a sulky, street-smart New York 12-year old whose scummy family are wiped out by lunatic narcotic detective Gary Oldman. Luckily for Nathalie, the illiterate and rather slow-witted loner next door proves to be a top-of-the-range contract killer, and she moves in on him with a purpose. The flowering of a relationship between this mismatched pair elevates "**LEON**" far above the routine hit-man genre, and her character – part over-imaginative child, part feisty single-minded woman determined to avenge the killing of her little brother – is one of the most intriguing child roles mainstream American cinema has produced since Jodie Foster's in the 1970s. Portman gobbles it up, and the pity is we saw so little of her in the subsequent few years.

One of the cinema's most bizarre and intriguing love triangles – the 12-year old girl decked out like a Lolita for the 90s, the nervy, monosyllabic contract killer, and the house-plant he nurtures like a prize racehorse.

"My, that's a BIG one!" is the line unspoken but clearly heard when Nathalie pressures Leon into teaching her the skills of his trade. The sexual chemistry between this decidedly odd couple flows entirely from the girl to the man (who at one point considers shooting her while she sleeps, to rid himself of the incumberance), and the recognition of this outraged some female audiences. A tender, affectionate relationship develops – without sex – but the girl's implicit invitation of it was decidedly "off message" in the "child abuse" obsessed 1990s.
Source: Blockbusters flier

FILMOGRAPHY

Year	Age	Title	Role
95		LEON	in lead role, as Nathalie, 12
99		STAR WARS EPISODE 1: THE PHANTOM MENACE	as Princess Amidala
		with *Jake Lloyd*	