

Louder Than Bombs – Review

Joachim Trier's *Louder Than Bombs* - which takes its name not from The Smiths' compilation album, but from the words of American poet Elizabeth Smart - is a **slow**, thoughtful kind of film that uses its **exceptional** cast extremely well. The Scandinavian director's first English-language production **assembles** the likes of Gabriel Byrne, Jesse Eisenberg, David Strathairn and the **wonderful** Isabelle Huppert for its ensemble, and Devin Druid (of HBO mini-series *Olive Kitteridge*) plays Eisenberg's **younger** brother in an especially **promising** showing, matching his more experienced **colleagues**.

The story takes place three years after the **death** of renowned war photographer Isabelle Reed (Huppert), and deals with the **aftermath** still **wreaking havoc** on her family. Of her two sons, Jonah (Eisenberg) seems a normal, well-adjusted academic with a **newborn** child, while Conrad (Druid) is a real **oddball**, and her **widower** Gene (Byrne), a **former** actor, is having an **affair** with his colleague - Conrad's teacher (the always fantastic Amy Ryan) - at the high school where he works.



With a hypnotic, pulsing score from Ola Flottum, *Louder Than Bombs* is a rare achievement. It's as much about artistic **courage** and **dedication** to your work as it is about grief, and it asks big, difficult questions regards the nature of **selflessness**, family and importance of doing good. Huppert's character is onscreen for relatively little of its running time, but her sad, assured performance anchors the film, and makes the hurt that the

characters she has left behind feel all the more **palpable**.