

Genius – Review

Genius is a **stirring** drama about the **complex** friendship and transformative professional relationship between the **world-renowned** book editor Maxwell Perkins (who discovered F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway) and the larger-than-life **literary** giant Thomas Wolfe. The first film from theatre director Michael Grandage, this biopic features a performance of by Jude Law as the author and Colin Firth as Perkins.

Adapted from **biographer** A. Scott Berg's **acclaimed** 1978 portrait of Perkins, the film is an **intriguing** study of the personalities and **torturous** process behind some of the early 20th century's great **writing**.

When Scribner's **editor** Maxwell Perkins' reader **dropped** Thomas Wolfe's massive first manuscript on his desk, Perkins asked, "Is it good?" "No," said the reader, "but it's unique."

Thus **began** one of the most famous author/editor relationships of the 20th century.

That first book was titled "O Lost," and had been **rejected** by every other publisher to whom Wolfe had sent it. After deleting some 300 of the original 1100 pages, it became the autobiographical **novel** "Look Homeward, Angel." It was a bestseller in the United Kingdom and Germany, but caused quite a furor in his hometown of Asheville, North Carolina because of the **portrayal** of some family members.



Jude Law's Wolfe is having an **affair** with a married woman (theatre set designer Aline Bernstein, brilliantly played by Nicole Kidman). Firth's Perkins is a perfect mentor and buddy for the **undisciplined** writer who needs help to make his brilliance **shine**. Unfortunately, his wife Louise (Laura Linney) and five kids get extremely short **shrift** in this deal.

"Genius" isn't a perfect film, but it is the first for Grandage, so you will see many shots that could not be presented onstage: street scenes and close-ups – some of which slow

the **pace** slightly.

If you're looking for a spectacular visual experience, this isn't it. But if you're interested in writers and editors, this film is for you.