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Tom Fordâ??s Nocturnal Animals

Description

From writer/director Tom Ford comes a haunting romantic thriller of shocking intimacy and gripping tension that explores the thin lines between love and cruelty, and revenge and redemption. Academy Award nominees Amy Adams and Jake Gyllenhaal star as a divorced couple discovering dark truths about each other and themselves in *Nocturnal Animals.*

Susan Morrow (portrayed by Ms. Adams) lives an incredibly privileged yet unfulfilled life with her husband Hutton Morrow (Armie Hammer). One weekend, as Hutton departs on one of his too-frequent business trips, Susan receives an unsolicited package that has been left in her mailbox. It is a novel, â??Nocturnal Animals,â?• written by her ex-husband Edward Sheffield (Mr. Gyllenhaal), with whom she has had no contact for years. Edwardâ??s note accompanying the manuscript encourages Susan to read the work and then to contact him during his visit to the city. Alone at night, in bed, Susan begins reading. The novel is dedicated to herâ?¦

â?¦but its content is violent and devastating, as Edward tells the tale of Tony Hastings (also portrayed by Mr. Gyllenhaal). Driving across a lonely stretch of Texas one night, Tony and his family are harassed by a trio of joyriders, and forced off the road into a confrontation initiated by the gangâ??s ringleader, the disturbingly insinuating Ray Marcus (Aaron Taylor-Johnson). Tony is all but powerless to act as his family is kidnapped and he is left stranded. When day breaks, Tony manages to reach the police for help, and laconic Lieutenant Bobby Andes (Academy Award nominee Michael Shannon) takes on the case. Andes forges a strong connection with the distraught Tony, and dedicates himself to pursuing the suspects once Tonyâ??s worst fears are realizedâ?¦

Moved by Edwardâ??s writing, Susan cannot help but reminisce over the most private moments from her own love story with the author. Trying to look within herself and beyond the glossy surface of the life and career that she has made, Susan increasingly interprets the book as a tale of revenge, a tale that forces her to re-evaluate the choices that she has made, and re-awakens a love that she feared was lost â?? as the story builds to a reckoning that will define both the novelâ??s hero and her own.

(l-r.) Academy Award nominees Jake Gyllenhaal and Michael Shannon star as Tony Hastings and B

This is a beautifully shot film. With credits being overlaid, the spectacular opening sequence, complete with confetti special effects, not only sets the tone for a splendid cinematic experience, it also provides psychological value into Amy Adamsâ?? character, Susan while illuminating the filmâ??s contextual structure and framework. Furthermore, I canâ??t say, Iâ??ve seen a better cast film. Jake Gyllenhaal continues to expand his acting repertoire as Edward. Michael Shannon turns in a powerful, tour de force performance as a cancer-striken Texas lawman. Laura Linney nails the role of aristocratic mother to Adamâ??s Susan â?? delivering a few of the filmâ??s most memorable lines. But the actor that caught my attention above and beyond was Aaron Taylor-Johnson as a wild, log-haired, maniaical, hellion leading the vicious roadside assault inside Edwardâ??s novel. In addition, Armie Hammer, Isla Fisher, Michael Sheen, Andrea Riseborough, and Karl Glusman all give compelling performances. My hat off to Francine Maisler for her casting.

For a second directorial effort, Ford makes a phenomenal leap. His first effort, *A Single Man*, starring Colin Firth, is an exceptionally solid film. Most enjoyable with considerable depth. Notwithstanding, *Nocturnal Animals* is a whole other beast â?? itâ??s powerful storytelling with strong production values encapsulated in a style that spans genres utilizing techniques in the form of cross-cutting, parallel story lines, flashbacks and real-time moments without confusion. Brilliant work!

A must see filmâ?¦

A Focus Features presentation of a Fade To Black production. A Tom Ford Film. Amy Adams, Jake Gyllenhaal. Michael Shannon, Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Isla Fisher, Karl Glusman, Armie Hammer, Laura Linney, Andrea Riseborough, Michael Sheen. Casting by Francine Maisler, CSA. Costume Designer, Arianne Phillips. Music, Abel Korzeniowski. Film Editor, Joan Sobel, ACE. Production Designer, Shane Valentino. Director of Photography, Seamus McGarvey, ASC, BSC. Co-Producer, Diane L. Sabatini. Based upon the novel Tony and Susan by Austin Wright. Produced by Tom Ford, p.g.a., Robert

Salerno, p.g.a. Screenplay by Tom Ford. Directed by Tom Ford. A Focus Features Release.

(Excerpt from Nocturnal Animals Press Notes)

Category

1. Venice International Film Festival

Tags

1. 73rd Venice International Film Festival
2. Aaron Taylor-Johnson
3. Actor
4. Amy Adams
5. Andrea Riseborough
6. Armie Hammer
7. Cinema
8. Director
9. Festival
10. Film
11. Filmmaking
12. Francine Maisler
13. Isla Fisher
14. Jake Gyllenhaal
15. Karl Glusman
16. Laura Linney
17. Michael Shannon
18. Michael Sheen
19. Nocturnal Animals
20. Producer
21. Tom Ford
22. Venice Film Festival
23. Venice International Film Festival
24. Writer

Date Created
September 2, 2016
Author
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