

Mark Whelan's Movie Picks

Jerry Maguire (1996) Director: Cameron Crowe. 139m Rated: R



Tom Cruise attests his versatility in **Jerry Maguire**; Cameron Crowe's mid-nineteen-nineties character study that initiated memorable quotations (some of which became pop-culture phenomenon) as well as breakout roles for Cuba Gooding Jr., Renee Zellweger, and Jay Mohr.

Cruise is thoroughly convincing as a sports agent that--following a crisis of conscience--writes a mission statement suggestively restructuring the philosophy and economic veracity of his firm. This admirable act results in his termination (by his own protégé no less, an amusingly villainous Mohr), his fiancée (Kelly Preston) leaving him, and his entire cliental evaporating with only a single loyalist remaining (Gooding Jr., in a crowd-pleasing, Oscar-winning performance) of whose peculiar behavior and abrasive disposition make him difficult to control.

Subsequent to his barren state, Renee Zellweger, a single mother to the especially lovable Jonathan Lipnicki, is invigorated by Cruise's nobility and attempts at developing a professional relationship with him...at no small cost.

Director, screenwriter, and producer Crowe seldom shies from sentimentality, and **Jerry Maguire** is no exception. Fortunately his knack for storytelling savvy and sharp dialogue offset the film's syrupy moments and unnecessary length.



Jerry Maguire dares to challenge its potentially cynical subject matter with sweetness allowing Cruise and company the capability to "show you the money" as well as the 'kwan.'

--Mark Whelan, April 1, 2015