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SP

Genova

Michael Winterbottom

**Country:** United Kingdom**Year:** 2008**Language:** English**Runtime:** 94 minutes**Format:** Colour/35mm**Rating:** 14A**Production Company:** Revolution Films**Producer:** Andrew Eaton**Screenplay:** Laurence Coriat, Michael Winterbottom**Production Designer:** Mark Digby**Cinematographer:** Marcel Zyskind**Editor:** Paul Monaghan**Sound:** Stuart Wilson**Music:** Melissa Parmenter**Principal Cast:** Colin Firth, Perla Haney-Jardine, Willa Holland, Catherine Keener, Hope Davis**International Sales Agent:** Hanway Films

PUBLIC SCREENINGS

Sunday September 07	08:30PM	WINTER GARDEN THEATRE	+Add It
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Saturday September 13	12:00PM	RYERSON	+Add It

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Michael Winterbottom is the most protean of contemporary directors, turning his hand to political thriller, comedy, docudrama and the far reaches of the erotic. The stories vary, but what remains consistent is this English filmmaker's search for psychological truth. *Genova* pushes this pursuit forward, and into new territory.

Joe (Colin Firth) is an Englishman raising his family in the United States. One day as his wife (Hope Davis) is driving their daughters home, she becomes momentarily distracted. Disaster strikes. Left in a fog of grief, Joe decides to accept a position teaching in Italy. He hopes the change of setting will help to pull both him and his daughters from the limbo of their bereavement.

Like many teenagers, Kelly (Willa Holland) is sullen at home. In Europe, however, she is suddenly awakened to new possibilities, and strikes up a secret romance with an Italian boy. Her younger sister Mary (Perla Haney-Jardine) feels the death of their mother most acutely; in fact, the tragedy may have followed them to Italy. As he tries to keep a handle on his daughters, Joe navigates the new demands of an old friendship with a university colleague, played by the marvellous Catherine Keener. Meanwhile, the family is surrounded by Genova's gorgeous jumble of medieval, Renaissance and contemporary influences.


Genova is a mood piece, an exploration of what agonizing loss can provoke in a family. Firth is the ideal choice for the father, his restraint barely concealing a well of emotion. Holland stands out as a girl on the brink of womanhood, itching to know more but unaware of what that knowledge may bring.

The film shows shades of Nicolas Roeg's *Don't Look Now*, but it is Winterbottom's own artistic sensibility that defines *Genova*. Expert to the point of looking effortless, his approach includes agile camerawork that keeps the atmosphere constantly unsettled. This is a beautiful, slow burn of a film, made with insight, passion and grace.

Cameron Bailey



Michael Winterbottom was born in Blackburn, England. He studied English at Oxford University and film and television at Bristol University and the Polytechnic of Central London. Many of his films have screened at the Festival: his debut *Family* (94), *Butterfly Kiss* (95), *Go Now* (95), *Jude* (96), *Welcome to Sarajevo*

 (97), *Wonderland* (99), *In This World* (02), *Code 46* (03), *9 Songs* (04), *Tristram Shandy: A Cock and Bull Story* (05) and *Genova* (08). His other films include *The Claim* (00), *24 Hour Party People* (02), *The Road to Guantanamo* (06, co-director) and *A Mighty Heart* (07).



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