

A REAL PAIN

26th
Year!

Autumn
Season
2025

Release: 2024
Cert (UK): 15
Country: USA
Language: In English
Runtime: 1 hour 30 mins
Director: Jesse Eisenberg
Written by: Jesse Eisenberg
Cinematographer: Michal Dymek
Cast: Kieran Culkin, Jess Eisenberg



Our opening film this season won an Oscar for Kieran Culkin as best supporting actor and a nomination for best screenplay for Jesse Eisenberg (who also stars). They play very different cousins - *'the charged bond between [them] is the heart of the film. Close since childhood, theirs is a loving but conflicted relationship that, for reasons which become clear, has grown increasingly fraught of late. Equally revealing is the way they relate to the world around them. David loiters, painfully self-conscious, on the periphery of conversations; Benji plunges in with abandon and emerges with shared secrets and potted life stories'* - Wendy Ide, Observer.

Culkin steals the show with his portrayal of Benji, always making fun of the moment, even though they are on a holocaust tour to remember their recently deceased Grandmother - Eisenberg's script constantly reminds us of the seriousness.

As Peter Bradshaw says in the Guardian - *'Jesse Eisenberg has just given us a masterpiece. This is an effortlessly witty, fluent and astringent comedy with a very serious overcurrent. It is a road movie which is partly about the Holocaust and about America's third-generation attempt at coming to terms with it, at confronting what their parents and grandparents found too painfully recent to revisit, or necessary to forget in order to survive. And partly it's about family, male friendship and growing older. The movie affects a cool, sauntering tonal balance, teetering between the trivial and the world-historically important, with even the title glancing at the idea of someone being annoying ... or experiencing authentic suffering.'*

