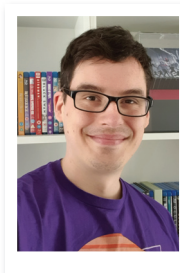




Sinners



***Sinners* is the new film from *Creed* and *Black Panther* director Ryan Coogler. It stars his frequent collaborator Michael B. Jordan as twin brothers who open a juke joint in 1930s Mississippi, only to find themselves and their guests besieged by vampires.**

Since his debut feature, *Fruitvale Station*, Coogler has been a well-regarded director, receiving multiple Oscar nominations and rave reviews. This, however, might be his best film yet. A scintillating mash-up of Southern gothic vampire horror, Al Capone-era gangster movie, and raucous celebration of black music, almost every department is firing on all cylinders.

Much of the praise must be given to writer-director Coogler, who has done the seemingly impossible in 2025 by bringing us a completely original film (not an adaptation, remake, or part of a franchise) that has been universally well received by critics and audiences alike, and has been a massive box office success. The story is incredible; gripping, thought-provoking, and highly entertaining. It plays, in a way, like an inversion of Robert Rodriguez's *From Dusk Till Dawn* - with vampires attacking a group of people running a club, rather than a club full of vampires attacking visitors - but it still manages to not seem derivative, and features a few genuine surprises.

Likewise, the film-making is excellent. Complimenting Coogler's assured, mature direction is captivating cinematography by Autumn Durald Arkapaw, and sharp editing by another regular collaborator of Coogler's, Michael Shawver. Perhaps the MVP of the production team, however, is master composer Ludwig Göransson. Coming off his Academy Award win for his epic *Oppenheimer* score, he manages to produce something even



better here. Combining traditional film orchestration with authentic Delta blues, the score is memorable and enjoyable, and the songs are both highly listenable and perfectly fitting for the scenes they belong to, with the pulse-pounding "Rocky Road to Dublin" and the incredible, era-spanning "I Lied to You" being highlights of the entire film.

The cast is fantastic from top to bottom. Michael B. Jordan delivers a genuinely impressive, powerhouse performance as twin brothers Smoke and Stack. Seamless editing and Jordan's nuanced acting make the characters seem like different people, despite their identical looks. Strong support comes from Hailee Steinfeld as Stack's love interest Mary, Wunmi Mosaku as Smoke's wife Annie, Delroy Lindo as alcoholic musician Delta Slim, and Li Jun Li and Yao as club workers Grace and Bo. Other than Jordan, the two stand-out performances are Jack O'Connell, who is magnetic as the film's primary antagonist, Remmick, and Miles Caton, who is the film's emotional heart and soul, and is captivating and entirely believable despite this being his first acting role.

There is very little to complain about with *Sinners*. The pacing could perhaps be better, and the strange blend of genres might be off-putting to some, but honestly, this is a true gem of a movie, likely to be one of the best of the year, and perhaps even a modern classic in the making.