



Virginia Woolf's Genius

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Virginia Woolf's Genius

Contribution to 'Books of the Year', on Virginia Woolf, *A Writer's Diary*, ed. Leonard Woolf (London, 1953: Hogarth Press), *Sunday Times*, 20 December 1953, 6



VIRGINIA WOOLF'S *A Writer's Diary* seems to me to be a work of the highest imaginative genius, with powers of perception and description unexampled in our time.

VIRGINIA WOOLF'S GENIUS

One of his biographers reports that Nijinsky once said that the only difference between himself and other dancers lay in the fact that when he leapt in the air he did not come down immediately – as most people tended to do – but lingered in the air for an instant before descending; it was very simple – he could not see why others could not, if they wished, do the same. This capacity to leave the ground (not necessarily without much labour and even torment) seems to me a description of genius of a certain kind that, of all English writers of this century, Mrs Woolf alone possessed.

I can think of no recent work – not even E. M. Forster's *The Hill of Devi* (Arnold) – worthy to stand beside it.

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