

'Genius' follows man's fight as a black scientist

The "Nova" (8 p.m., WFYI, WTU) presentation "Forgotten Genius" profiles Percy Julian, a giant of 20th-century chemistry.



Kevin McDonough

A story of intelligence, inspiration, hard work, discipline and perseverance, "Genius" is also a tale of cruelty, stupidity and blind intolerance.

from the late 1930s to his death in 1967. He was the sole composer of Ellington's signature "Take the 'A' Train," as well as "Lush Life," a remarkably complex and sophisticated number that Strayhorn composed as a teenager.

Born in 1899, only one generation removed from slavery, he became the first black American to receive a master's degree in chemistry.

As "Genius" makes clear, Julian's woes did not end when he left the segregated South. Institutions from Harvard University to Dupont Chemical slammed their doors in his face.

Faculty politics drove him from hospitable black institutions, including Howard and Fisk universities. Julian's brilliance and success was an affront to an American scientific and academic community that was not only casually racist but embraced theories of white racial superiority well into the 20th century.

He had to forgo a job at a firm when it became known that the factory town did not permit black residents. This was in Wisconsin, not Mississippi.

Despite publishing some of the most important papers in his field, Julian could find a job only at Glidden, a Chicago paint manufacturer.

Julian would leave Glidden with more than 100 patents, and his labs would help revolutionize medicine with synthetic steroids and processes that made cortisone widely available to arthritis sufferers.

A less-than-elegant combination of a Black History Month lesson and a primer on the history of American chemistry, "Genius" proceeds at a deliberate pace. It's at least a half-hour too long.

One hopes "Genius" might inspire a feature-film treatment of Julian's story, or perhaps a major published work.

As "Genius" makes clear, his story has fallen into obscurity since his death in 1975. No popular or scholarly biography of Percy Julian exists.

"Genius" is a flawed but inspired beginning. "Independent Lens" (10 p.m., WTIU) presents "Billy Strayhorn: Lush Life." One of the most influential if unheralded musicians of the 20th century, Strayhorn was Duke Ellington's collaborator

While Ellington was among the most celebrated artists of his time, Strayhorn remained in the shadows, and "Lush Life" examines the reasons why.

Filmmaker Robert Levi uses period footage, home movies and re-creations starring Dule Hill ("Psych").

Tonight's other highlights

- Hidden cameras plus predators equals "Dateline" (8 p.m., NBC).
• Auditions continue on "American Idol" (8 p.m., Fox, TV-G).
• Richard recuperates on "Gilmore Girls" (8 p.m., CW, TV-PG).

Cult choice

Peter Horton and Linda Hamilton star in the 1984 prairie shocker "Children of the Corn" (10:30 p.m., AMC).

Series notes

Armand Assante guest stars on "NCIS" (8 p.m., CBS, TV-PG,V). Tom Bergeron hosts "America's Funniest Home Videos" (8 p.m., ABC) ... A drugged student has a miscarriage on "Veronica Mars" (9 p.m., CW, TV-14, D, L, V).

Late night

Harry Connick Jr. and Randy Jackson appear on "Late Show With David Letterman" (11:35 p.m., CBS) ... Jay Leno hosts Penelope Cruz, Tyler Perry and James Hunter on "The Tonight Show" (11:35 p.m., NBC) ... Albert Reyes, Dominic Monaghan, Gabrielle Union and Paul Weller appear on "Jimmy Kimmel Live" (12:05 a.m., ABC).

Kevin McDonough is a TV columnist for United Features Syndicate.

TUESDAY EVENING

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Table with columns for time slots (7 PM to 11:30) and various TV channels (WTTV, WRVT, WISH, WTHR, WFYI, WNDY, WTIU, WHMB, WCLJ, WXIN, WIPX, WDTI, A&E, AMC, AP, BET, BRAVO, CNBC, CMT, CNN, COM, DISC, EI, ESPN, ESPN2, FAM, FNC, FOOD, FOXMV, FOXSM, FX, HALL, HGTV, HIST, LIFE, MSNBC, MTV, NICK, OXY, SCIFI, SPIKE, TBS, TCM, TLC, TNT, TOON, TVL, USA, VH1, WE, WGN, DISN, ENC, HBO, SHOW, MAX, TMC, STARZ) listing their respective programs.

ACCENT ON PEOPLE

The Associated Press

Singer says she was hurt when ex began dating

Jessica Simpson says she was stung when ex-husband Nick Lachey jumped back into dating after their high-profile breakup.



LACHEY



SIMPSON

"Oh, it hurt me," the 26-year-old singer-actress says in an interview in the March issue of Elle magazine, on newsstands Feb. 13.

Does she still keep in touch with the singer, who is dating MTV's Vanessa Minnillo? "Mm-hmmm," she tells the magazine.

She says she "is so happy right now," but declined to discuss her love life. "I want to tell you everything, but I have to sew my lips together," she says.

Asked whether she's in love, a grinning Simpson plays coy: "I didn't say yes."

Actor says he fired gun at son in self-defense

Ryan O'Neal says his weekend arrest came after he fired a gun in self-defense to prevent his son from whacking him with a fireplace poker.



O'NEAL

The actor told the Los Angeles Times that he arrived at his Malibu home Saturday night with a group of friends, including his former girlfriend Farrah Fawcett.

O'Neal's son Griffin, 42, who has a history of alcohol and drug problems, was visiting.

O'Neal said Griffin grabbed a fireplace poker, started swinging it and grazed him four or five times.

He "aimed at my head, I ducked, he hit his own girlfriend in the head," O'Neal, 65, told the newspaper.

He was released on a \$50,000 bond.

The early opinion: It's too soon to give up on 'Lost'

By TERRY MORROW THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

It's far too soon to say if "Lost" (returning 10 p.m., Wednesday, ABC) has returned to form. But judging only by the opener, it's safe to assume that giving up on "Lost" might not be a good idea at this point.

Sure the island adventure has been one grand tease for over a year now, but this 2007 opener proves that "Lost" is more than just the big central mystery.

This is an inspired hour of television, showcasing the show's best and meatiest characters — Jack, Kate and Sawyer.

It's dangerous, fast, thrilling and elusive. "Lost" is trying to please its alienated fans, but the 2007 opener doesn't provide answers to the mysteries they are impatient to find answers to.

So if "Lost" is too coy for you, this return, which launches 16 consecutive new episodes, will not be satisfying. However, that doesn't mean this isn't one heck of a roller-coaster ride in every other respect.

In fact, "Lost" is back in fine form, a high-octane ride, quickly paced and just as engaging as a character study. (This week's flashback involves Juliet, the wayward nurse who is among those villainous Others. This will only prove to be a wise move if the rumored Jack/Juliet romance develops later in the series.)

If "Lost" is going to tease us, it is at least doing it with great style, as evidenced in Wednesday's opener.

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Evangeline Lilly and Josh Holloway star as Kate and Sawyer on ABC's "Lost." The series returns at 10 p.m. Wednesday.

Picking up at the exact point it left us in the fall, Jack (Matthew Fox) is trying to hold Ben and the Others at bay in the operating room, and hoping Kate (Evangeline Lilly) and Sawyer (Josh Holloway, who has carved out one of TV's greatest anti-heroes ever) can escape their captors.

But it doesn't take long until he learns his plot is backfiring: Kate and Sawyer have nowhere to go.

As "Lost" hours go, this is one of the better ones, if only for the chance to see movement occur. There's also indication that last fall's sticking-with-The-Others-too-long story will shift focus, delivering us back to the island and our favorite castaways.

If you have stayed with "Lost" for this long, you might as well stay for the rest of the ride. Giving up now would only mean you've

wasted several hours on a story that has yet to be fully realized. Yes, it can be frustrating, but "Lost" is, apparently, willing to give us a thrill here and there to appease us.

And that's more than almost any series is willing to do this far into its run.

Canary Creek Cinemas 8. 1/8 Mile West of Applebee's on Mallory Parkway. Showtimes for Monday-Thursday: BECAUSE I SAID SO (PG-13), THE MESSENGER (PG-13), EPIC MOVIE (PG-13), DREAMGIRLS (PG-13), FREEDOM WRITERS (PG-13), THE DEPARTED (R), STOMP THE YARD (PG-13), NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM (PG).

AMC Advanced Ticketing at amctheatres.com or (317) 884-1780. AMC Best Picture Showcase Feb. 24th, 5 Oscar nominees. \$30. A.M.Cinema - All seats \$5 before noon on Sat., Sun., & holidays - denoted by (). AMC Select - Special films for select tastes. GREENWOOD PARK 14 Madison Ave and Fry Road. BECAUSE I SAID SO (PG-13), THE MESSENGERS (PG-13), BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE (PG-13), CATCH AND RELEASE (PG-13), EPIC MOVIE (PG-13), SMOKIN' ACES (R), THE HITCHER (R), FREEDOM WRITERS (PG-13), STOMP THE YARD (PG-13), NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM (PG), THE PURSUIT OF HAPPYNES (PG-13).

SHOW PLACE 16 Movies with Magic 7 & 1-800-FANDANGO 1598#. 4:00-5:00, 7:00-9:40. \$4 All Shows before NOON Friday, Saturday, Sunday & Holidays. Showtimes for February 5-8: BECAUSE I SAID SO (PG-13), THE MESSENGERS (PG-13), BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE (PG-13), CATCH AND RELEASE (PG-13), EPIC MOVIE (PG-13), NOTES ON A SCANDAL (R), PAN'S LABYRINTH (R), SMOKIN' ACES (R), THE QUEEN (PG-13), STOMP THE YARD (PG-13), DREAMGIRLS (PG-13), NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM (PG), WE ARE MARSHALL (PG), THE PURSUIT OF HAPPYNES (PG-13), FREEDOM WRITERS (PG-13).