



## Into the Wild

### Sean Penn

USA, 2007  
English

148 minutes ■ Colour/35mm

Production Company: **River Road Entertainment/Paramount Vantage/Square One C.I.H./Linson Film**

Executive Producer: **John J. Kelly, Frank Hildebrand, David Blocker**

Producer: **Sean Penn, Art Linson, Bill Pohlad**

Screenplay: **Sean Penn, based on the book by Jon Krakauer**

Cinematographer: **Eric Gautier**

Editor: **Jay Cassidy**

Production Designer: **Derek Hill**

Sound: **Martin Hernandez**

Music: **Michael Brook, Kaki King, Eddie Vedder**

Principal Cast: **Emile Hirsch, Marcia Gay Harden, William Hurt, Jena Malone, Catherine Keener, Hal Holbrook**

Production: **River Road Entertainment, 1901 Avenue of the Stars, 2nd Floor, Los Angeles CA 90067 USA. T (310) 461-1492**

#### CONTACT INFORMATION

Canadian Distributor: **Paramount Vantage**  
US Distributor: **Paramount Vantage**

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Even in this year of particularly fine American cinema dealing with the politics of our age, *Into the Wild* stands apart. Instead of confronting issues like Iraq and civil liberties violations head on, director Sean Penn has stepped back to contemplate what it means to be an American – and what it means to be a human being – when civilization itself becomes a source of alienation and mistrust. This exploration, surely a reaction to the turbulent times in which we live, represents a passionate artistic entreaty of lasting power and impressive magnitude.

Penn's muse is Christopher McCandless, the young anti-hero of Jon Krakauer's non-fiction book on which the film is based. Born into wealth and privilege, McCandless tossed it all away the day he graduated college in 1990, donating all his money to OXFAM and burning his ID. He then hit the road, encountering others who chose unconventional paths, from a farmer arrested for producing drugs, to the "rubber tramps," hippie remnants committed to cruising the open road and building a free-form desert commune. This journey eventually drives McCandless to lose himself in Alaska, an ultimate test inspired by the great authors – especially Tolstoy, Thoreau and London – who battled nature and the pressures of the human soul. His end is tragic, but it does not arrive before he discovers some basic truths about the human condition.

Penn is a master visual poet; the various Americas portrayed here are spectacular and haunting. The landscape photography,

shot by Eric Gautier, brings remarkable new meaning and gravity to iconic mountains, deserts and snowdrifts. The film's performances are among the year's best. Emile Hirsch as McCandless is a revelation, gradually drawing us into a complex, frequently stubborn and naive character, who represents the self-doubt in us all. An extraordinary ensemble cast surrounds him. In particular, Catherine Keener as the hippie who sacrificed too much for her freedom, and Hal Holbrook as the simple father figure McCandless craves, are simply magnificent. But it is ultimately the quest itself, the hunger for personal and spiritual fulfillment that, at one time or another, plagues each of us, that is most inspiring and daunting in this exceptional film.

#### ■ Noah Cowan



**Sean Penn** grew up in Santa Monica, California. Since making his film debut acting in *Taps* (81), he has enjoyed an extensive and celebrated career, earning four Academy Award® nominations for best actor. Among his many acting credits are *Fast Times at*

*Ridgemont High* (82), *The Falcon and the Snowman* (85), *Colors* (88), *Carlito's Way* (93), *Dead Man Walking* (95), *The Thin Red Line* (98), *Sweet and Lowdown* (99), *I Am Sam* (01), *21 Grams* (03), *Mystic River* (03), for which he won the Academy Award, and *All The King's Men* (06). He has directed the feature films *The Indian Runner* (91), *The Crossing Guard* (95), *The Pledge* (01) and *Into the Wild* (07).