
Living Next to a Wild World - The Story of Peace

With stunning cinematography, accompanied by exceptional performances. Sean Penn pulls off what can only be described as a masterpiece. Have you ever just sat on a beach or on a mountain side somewhere, watching the world go by, as the sun sets? That feeling you get of content and admiration for the beauty of nature. Into The Wild stunningly illustrates nature at its finest. It is also, happily, a pretty good film as well. Based on the bestselling book by John Krakauer, Into the Wild tells the story of Christopher McCandless, who, after graduating from college, abandons all his possessions and donates every penny of his \$24,000 savings to charity. He leaves behind a life of comfort for a nomadic life on the road. He has only one destination in mind. Alaska. Into The Wild is a directorial triumph for otherwise mediocre director, Sean Penn. The story begins with an unhappy family which McCandless ultimately disowns - going under the pseudonym of 'Alexander Supertramp' as he traverses America - proceeding to encounter the lonely and the lost along the way, concluding in a senseless, yet thought-provoking, final sequence.

Although the film's narrative may be heart-breaking, its nature is anything but. It is imbedded with a vast, almost romanticised sense of adventure, and it communicates an untainted, natural delight in open spaces and bright sunshine. The artistic beauty shown is contradicted with a character who is selfish and hypocritical. Unable to understand the lack of peace and acceptance in modern society, he is ironically unable to forgive or accept his own family, despite their differences. Being a person of great contradictions, Penn manages to force the viewer to empathise with McCandless, showing his journey to Alaska through his interactions with the people he meets on the way, and the bonds they form over such a short amount of time. It is this film's ability to direct and perform on such a level, which sets itself apart. Emile Hirsch presents an accurate and convincing portrayal of a troubled youth, on a journey of self-discovery - only to find that it is through human interactions, one can truly be happy. However, it is Hal Holbrook who really steals the show.

Nominated for an Academy Award as Best Supporting Actor, one particular scene stands out. Towards the end of the film, Ron and Alex are in the truck, saying their final goodbyes. The audience is fortunate enough to witness a performance of genuine class and authenticity. Enough to bring grown men to tears, Hal Holbrook is the icing on top of this already stunning cake. The tragedy which engulfs the final scenes of the film, are a reflection of a man ill-prepared for a life in the unknown, contrasting with the positive journey he had undertaken to get there. Accompanied by an equally beautiful soundtrack, Into The Wild is much more than just a film. It is a celebration of life, of love, of culture, of differences... but more than anything, it is a celebration of the life of Christopher McCandless.