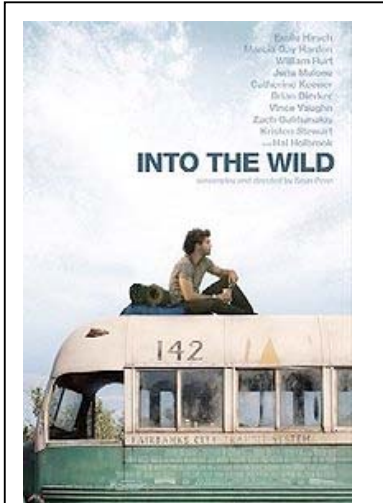




Presents

## GlenVIEWINGS: Bringing Books to the Screen *Into The Wild*

"What if I were smiling and running into your arms? Would you see then what I see now?"  
- Chris/Alex



**Director:**

Sean Penn

**Producers:**

Sean Penn

Art Linson

**Writer:**

Sean Penn

Jon Krakauer (book)

**Starring:**

Emile Hirsch

Marcia Gay Harden

William Hurt

Jena Malone

Catherine Keener

Hal Holbrook

Vince Vaughn

**Music**

Michael Brook

Kaki King

Eddie Vedder

**Cinematography**

Eric Gautier

**Editing**

Jay Cassidy

**Distributor:**

Paramount Vantage

**Release date:**

September 21, 2007

**Running time:**

148 minutes

**Budget**

US\$15,000,000

**Box Office gross**

US\$55,635,754 (US)

In attempting to unravel the enigma of Christopher McCandless, John Krakauer's bestselling book *Into The Wild* offers up a patchwork of details, testimonials and intellectual contextualization. Inspired to adapt the story into a film, writer/director Sean Penn stated that rather than being a purely cerebral experience however, he wanted his film to "grip people in the heart." Immersing the viewer in McCandless' journey, the film aims to be a more intimate, emotionally raw and visceral account of his life and death.

In the absence of Krakauer's authorial voice, Eddie Vedder's stirring and poignant music is used to add thematic depth to the events on screen, and most notably, McCandless' beloved sister, Carine, now also narrates much of the story.

However, there are also many similarities between the two works. Replicating the fractured and episodic narrative of the book, Penn crafts a kaleidoscopic visual mosaic in order to better express McCandless's mental state, and often floats text from McCandless' letters and journals across the screen,

Ultimately, the film is a tragic but joyous exaltation of life and humanity, most beautifully shown in the attempts of the people he meets along his journey to gently provide Chris with the wisdom he's so desperately seeking, and yet is so fatally unable (or unwilling) to recognize before it's too late. When fleshing out these interactions in a way that is both celebratory yet poignant, the film is not only most faithful to Krakauer's book, but also to the troubling, but inspiring, legacy of Christopher McCandless.

### Did you know?

- To replicate Chris McCandless' starvation, actor Emile Hirsch lost 41 pounds of weight.
- Jim Gallien, the Alaskan who gave Chris the rubber boots in the opening scene, plays himself in the film.
- After first becoming interested in the book, Sean Penn would wait a further 10 years to begin filming, not wishing to progress without approval from the McCandless family, who were intimately involved in the filming and editing.



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## **GlenVIEWINGS: Bringing Books to the Screen** ***Into The Wild***

**"You can't live your life on leaves and berries" - Jan Burrell**  
**"I don't know if you want to live on much more than that" - Chris/Alex**

### **Things to Explore**

- What is there to learn from Christopher McCandless' life and journey? Why are adaptations of his story so controversial?
- Writer/Director Sean Penn said: "I hope people get out of the movie what I got out of reading the story the first time I came across it." Did he succeed?
- What does the film do differently from the book, and why? What is lost, and what is gained from visualizing Jon Krakauer's telling of McCandless' story?
- To what extent does the film 'glorify' McCandless? To what extent does it condemn his actions? Which response do you find most appropriate?
- Is Chris running away from something, or on a noble quest for enlightenment?
- With which characters in the film do you most empathize?
- Does the film celebrate the power of nature, or emphasize its harshness?



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"The core of mans' spirit comes from new experiences." - Chris/Alex

### Library Resources

**1) *Into the Wild***, Jon Krakauer. The controversial book that made Christopher McCandless famous is actually a measured, compassionate and multi-faceted account of not only his fatal journey, but of other similarly single-minded adventurers, including the author himself.

Copy	Material	Location
917.98 KRA	Book	Nonfiction

**2) *Walden, the Maine woods, and collected essays & poems***, Henry David Thoreau. See if one of McCandless' main literary inspirations does the same for you!

Copy	Material	Location
818.3 THO	Book	Nonfiction

**3) *Sean Penn : his life and times***, Richard Kelly. Find out more about one of the most talented, yet controversial, actor-directors in modern cinema, two-time Academy award-winner Sean Penn.

791.43028 PENN	Book	Nonfiction
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**4) *The call of the wild and other stories***, Jack London. See if one of McCandless' main literary inspirations does the same for you!

Copy	Material	Location
YA LONDON, J	Book	Young Adult Fiction

**5) *Into the wild [sound recording (CD)] : music from the motion picture***  
Pearl Jam vocalist Eddie Vedder's original music for the film.

Copy	Material	Location
CD 781.542 INT	Compact Disc	Audio-Visual – Music

**6) *Into the wild [videorecording (DVD)]***  
Just in case you want to see it again!

Copy	Material	Location
DVD INT	DVD, Fiction	Audio-Visual - Movies



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**"If you want something in life, reach out and grab it" - Chris/Alex**

### **Online Resources**

<http://www.intothewild.com/>

The official website has a wealth of information for fans of the film, including a fantastic interactive map of Christopher's journey, and a blog.

[http://www.vantageguilds.com/itw/FinalScript\\_ITW.pdf](http://www.vantageguilds.com/itw/FinalScript_ITW.pdf)

A full copy of Sean Penn's screenplay for the film.

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0758758/>

The film's Internet Movie Database page, where it is currently ranked at #141 in the most popularly rated films of all time by users of the site.

<http://outside.away.com/outside/culture/200709/into-the-wild-movie-1.html>

An *Outside* magazine feature on the making of the film, with insight from the McCandless family and many of those who met Chris on his travels.

[http://outside.away.com/outside/features/1993/1993\\_into\\_the\\_wild\\_1.html](http://outside.away.com/outside/features/1993/1993_into_the_wild_1.html)

Jon Krakauer's original article in *Outside* magazine; to this day, it is still the most commented upon feature in the magazine's history.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TltdmA-Tn\\_E](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TltdmA-Tn_E)

A video of the real 'Magic Bus', taken in 2007. Many other videos of the bus and tributes to McCandless can also be found on the site.

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=3664608494180021532>

An in-depth discussion about the film between Charlie Rose, Sean Penn, and Eddie Vedder.

<http://abcnews.go.com/Nightline/Story?id=3680748&page=1>

An ABC *Nightline* feature on how Christopher McCandless' legacy continues to inspire many followers.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aBXTltNyhH8>

A brief clip of the original 1998 ABC *20/20* investigation into McCandless.

<http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=3346934n>

Sean Penn talks to CBS' *The Early Show* about his long wait to make the film.