

A ROBERT REDFORD FILM

"Redford has triumphed yet again...(Brad) Pitt
now has a one-way ticket to superstardom"

Gary Leboff, Today

"An authentic American masterpiece"

Hugo Davenport, The Daily Telegraph

"Utterly absorbing...you'll be caught
hook, line and sinker"

Colette Maude, Time Out

A
RIVER
RUNS
THROUGH
IT PG



AN ALLIED FILMMAKERS RELEASE



WOKING'S NEW CINEMA CLUB



A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT PG

Robert Redford
USA 1992

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER Jake Eberts PRODUCERS Robert Redford, Patrick Markey SCREENPLAY Richard Friedenberg, based on the story by Norman Maclean DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY Philippe Rousselot MUSIC Mark Isham CAST Craig Sheffer (Norman Maclean), Brad Pitt (Paul Maclean), Tom Skerritt (Reverend Maclean), Brenda Blethyn (Mrs Maclean), Emily Lloyd (Jessie Burns), Edie McClurg (Mrs Burns), Stephen Shellen (Neal Burns), Vann Gravage (Young Paul).

"In our family, there was no clear line between religion and fly fishing."

The above is the first line from the autobiographical novella "A River Runs Through It" by Norman Maclean and this is repeated by Robert Redford, tonight's film's director/narrator as he recalls this moving story of a family coping with the trials and tribulations of life in small-town America. "The story ties religion, family and fishing together in an unusual and poetic fashion. It contains a deep understanding of the complexities of family life" was the overview from Redford who adds a lovely tranquil feel to the film to underscore the tensions of the relationships. His directorial debut "Ordinary People" also dealt with a family unable to help or communicate with each other. "I would probably go a step further and say that this film and the story is about being unable to help someone you love until it's too late."

First published in 1976, "A River Runs Through It" was written by Norman Maclean in his eighth decade after his retirement as a professor of English at the University of Chicago. This intensely personal, elegiac memoir had been carried within him for more than 40 years and is reflection of the "real rough, rugged world, full of bastards" Maclean experienced. His parents, Scots Presbyterians, had travelled from the Hebrides to Canada, and is finally settled in Montana. Here Maclean, his father and brother built a remote cabin in 1922 and this was where most of the novel was written in his later years. The slim volume did not find favour with the publishers Maclean submitted it to, one rejection letter pointed out, "These stories have trees in them." However, the University of Chicago published it in 1976, it received excellent reviews and is now in its 19th printing.

The film's story is set in Montana between 1910 and 1935. Norman and Paul Maclean are brothers devoted to each other and their family, but the rough and tumble wilderness that they all inhabit make the expression of feelings impossible. Only in the harmony of fly fishing on the Big Blackfoot River do the three men of the family come together. The differences between the two brothers become apparent by the time they are teenagers. Norman, the eldest, takes after his father, a scholarly Presbyterian Minister, and finds Shakespeare, Wordsworth and biblical poetry stimulating. Norman will become an English professor.

Paul is cut from a different cloth. Handsome, daring and with a love of life he becomes a newspaperman after finding out that you could not (then) become a professional fly fisherman. His story is one of light and shadow, like the hazy light that reflects through the dark trees on the banks of Big Blackfoot River. This zest for life leads him to excessive drinking, gambling, fist-fights and jail. Help is needed and rejected by Paul, who makes his family suffer as they find it impossible to help him or stop his downward slide.

The cast of the film do excellent justice to the book's characters. **Craig Sheffer** stars as Norman Maclean and had been interested in film since making his own Super 8 shorts at the age of fifteen. He has appeared in day-time soaps and made his film debut in "**That Was Then, This Is Now**" in 1985. Other film parts include a boxer in "**Split Decisions**", Clive Barker's "**Nightbreed**" and a number of independent productions.

Brad Pitt plays Paul Maclean. Pitt was born in Oklahoma and majored in journalism in Missouri. He moved to Los Angeles to study graphic design but ended up studying acting instead. His film credits include a charming hitchhiker in "**Thelma & Louise**", a rockabilly musician in "**Johnny Suede**" and a serial killer in "**Kalifornia**". **Tom Skerritt** plays the Reverend Maclean. Skerritt first met Redford when making "**War Hunt**" in 1962. Since then he has had a wide and varied array of movie and television parts such as "**M*A*S*H**", "**Alien**", "**Top Gun**" and "**Steel Magnolias**". He had acclaimed performances in five episodes of television's "**Cheers**" and has a desire to continue his career as a director.

Brenda Blethyn stars as the Reverend's wife. She had her drama training in Guildford and joined the National Theatre in 1975. Her film parts have won her several awards and nominations as best actress for "**Benefactors**" and "**Steaming**". Another English actress, **Emily Lloyd**, plays Jessie Burns, the outspoken young woman who attracts the attention of Norman Maclean on his return from college. Best known for her lead role in "**Wish You Were Here**" and with **Kiefer Sutherland** in "**Chicago Joe & The Showgirl**", she comes from a long family line of thespians.



A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT

Hollywood had chased Maclean for a while to adapt his successful book into a film, but he declined all offers till he met Robert Redford. Maclean came to Sundance (Redford's independent film institute) in the early 1980's and trust was the big factor in the project happening. A final agreement was reached in 1988 and work on the script began. Redford is president of the Sundance Institute, founded in 1980, and wanted to achieve two things with its opening; provide an opportunity for talented independent film-makers to find work and to explore the human aspects of movies, like character and emotion, that can be lost in the technology and pressure of high finance movie making. Sundance now sponsors the United States Film Festival and this is an important showcase for independent American cinema. "Sex, Lies and Videotape" is among the films that have premiered at this event, now called the Sundance Film Festival. Redford is an ardent environmentalist and this formed part of the motivation behind his making of this film. He saw developers build on land from his childhood as he grew up and "this movie captures some of what we lost, it may help to save such rivers as the Blackfoot."



At the conclusion of both the book and the film, the elderly Maclean looks back on the lives and deaths of people he has loved, and says: "Eventually, all things merge into one, and a river runs through it. The river was cut by the world's great flood and runs over the rocks from the basement of time. On some of the rocks are timeless raindrops. Under the rocks are the words, and some of the words are theirs."

"I am haunted by waters."

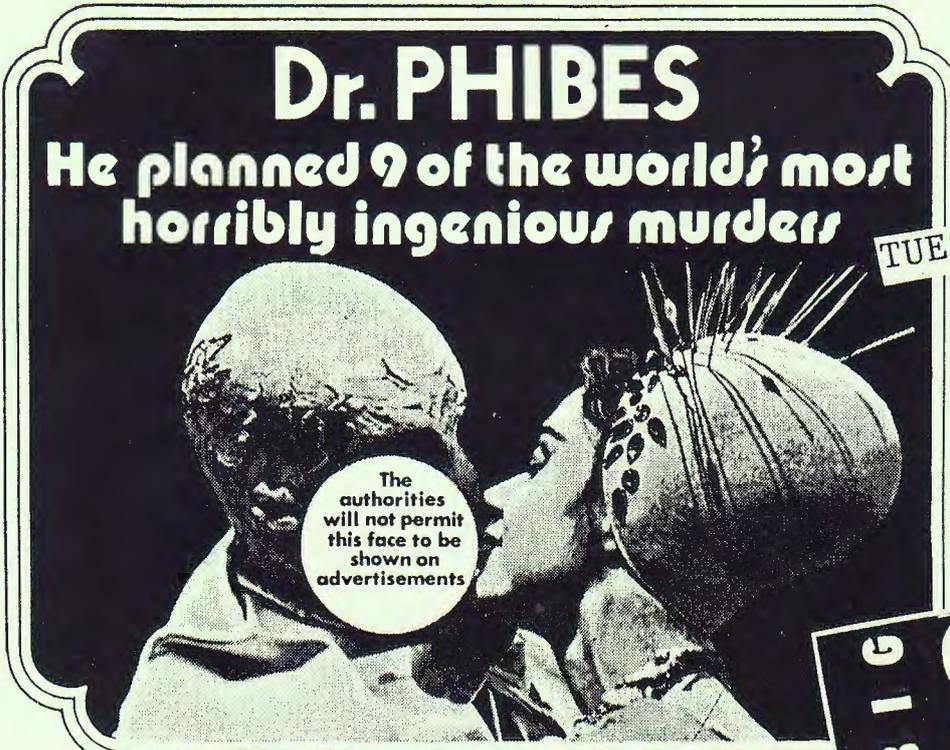
KERRY POTTER.

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The king of camp horror, Vincent Price, is at it again with great style. Stalking amid gothic backdrops, he plays a mad doctor out to polish off a surgical team he believes did in his wife. (Dir: Robert Fuest, 93 mins.) (Great Britain, 1971)

PERFORMANCE ENDS 10.50 p.m.