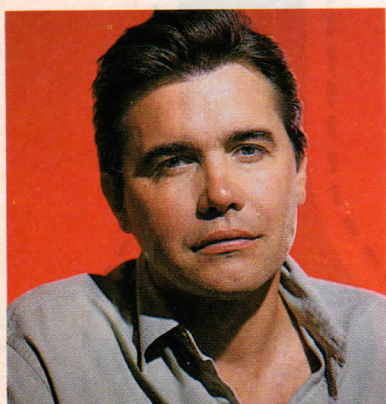


talking about it and have their parents wanting to see it just as much. I want to capture the points of view of multigenerations. I want people to come out of the theater silent, get about twenty paces, and then start discussing it." **ANDREA REED**



DIRECTOR

STEPHEN GYLLENHAAL



IF STEPHEN GYLLENHAAL were to make *Mary Poppins*, you could expect a story of child abuse and sexual frustration. Sex and violence are dominant themes in *Killing in a Small Town* and *Paris Trout*, the 43-year-old director's best-known work to date. In *Waterland*, his new film, insanity, incest, and murder come flooding back from the past to haunt the protagonist.

"Bubbling around inside all of us are strange things that modern societies like to push down," says Gyllenhaal, who definitely has a penchant for the perverse. "The more you press it down, the more dangerous it becomes. If you bring all these ugly feelings—the worst things you have done in your life—up to the light of day, the sun dries them out and they evaporate."

Gyllenhaal's no-holds-barred approach to moviemaking was shaped by his austere and highly disciplined childhood. He grew up in "a kind of medieval environment" in an isolated Pennsylvania community run on the principles of Emanuel Swedenborg, the 18th-century mystic. "This may sound bizarre," the director says, laughing, "but my work is religious."

Right up to age eighteen, Gyllenhaal had seen only two movies: *Lawrence of Arabia* and *Windjammer*. He got hooked on film when he was a sophomore at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. It was a

highly sensual experience. Fellini, Truffaut, Bergman, and the new cinema of the late '60s "transformed" him. "When movies hit, they just picked me up like a rag doll and threw me. I didn't have any control over it," he recalls. Gyllenhaal's obsession was so strong that he would hitchhike regularly to nearby Yale University and pretend to be a student so he could use the equipment to make movies.

"Two of Stephen's greatest qualities are his enthusiasm and his drive," comments actor Jeremy Irons, who plays the lead in *Waterland*. "Once he sets his mind to something, it is very difficult to stop him from getting it." Irons was very impressed with the exceptional acting and emotional impact of both *Paris Trout* and *Killing in a Small Town*. After appearing in *Waterland*, he reports that Gyllenhaal not only gets a good performance but will "push it, push it, push it," ending up with work greater than the actor even knew he was capable of.

Waterland is Gyllenhaal's second theatrical feature film. His first (*Certain Fury*, released in 1985), he admits, is "terrible." At Cannes last year, *Paris Trout* brought him international recognition and jump-started his career. It's taken Gyllenhaal a long twenty years to get where he is today. At one time, he even supported his celluloid habit by driving a taxi in New York City. He made numerous industrial films and worked constantly in television. And along the way, he's raised two children with his wife, screenwriter Naomi Foner, an Oscar nominee for *Running on Empty*.

After *Waterland*, Gyllenhaal plans to make *A Dangerous Woman*, which is scripted by his wife. And—not surprisingly—the story deals with murder and a ménage à trois! Gyllenhaal is anxious to find out how far he can go with sex in the new film. He thinks that ideally, like explicit violence, it occurs in the mind of the beholder. "The secret is to walk the audience up to the edge of something and then get their dream mechanism working. My job is to manipulate them into doing the work and get their juices flowing."

GERARD RAYMOND



PRODUCER

JANE ROSENTHAL



SURPRISE, SURPRISE! Robert De Niro, the private, press-shy acting virtuoso, in the middle of a burst of creativity—or maybe just trying to make his mortgage payments—is suddenly

every small, as the no-lon filmm ingly, Jane F Niro's At tors a their who tions, films, Dog a varyin Ros couch ter wa a prop where Olive who l At sentha colleg there tell m by el

film, havin passin schoo ary R Scors Wl ment slot a she week tellin do. S her t ing h Fiv Disne who soon said, Righ studi

JOHN ROZSALAMONIE; GROOMING: VICTOR VIDAL/CLOUTIER