



# Behind Jacob's Ladder

by Stuart Irvine

Following up on 1990's high-grossing film, *Ghost*, Bruce Joel's screenplay for *Jacob's Ladder* is even more deserving of critical attention.

*Jacob's Ladder* tells the story of Jacob Singer, a postman and Vietnam vet who is experiencing bizarre hallucinations.

Jacob sees demons everywhere he goes, and as the events become even more terrifying, he starts doubting his sanity. Rather than give in to this "insanity", Jacob begins searching for an answer.

During this search, he comes across other vets from his platoon suffering from similar nightmarish hallucinations.

*Jacob's Ladder* was directed by Adrian Lyne, who has made a killing with "style over substance" films in his career (namely *Flashdance* and *9 1/2 Weeks*.)

With *Fatal Attraction* Lyne suggested to the movie-going world that he would be leaving that brand of filmmaking to those who do it well, like Tony (Revenge, *Days of Thunder*) Scott.

*Jacob's Ladder* has made Lyne's separation complete. It is a multi-textured psychological thriller that begs its audience to pay attention. Movies that expect the audience to think are few and far between and it's an added pleasure when one of those movies is this good.


As Jacob Singer, Tim Robbins gives a tough yet tender performance, one that Adrian Lyne needed for the film.

"He's got huge vulnerability and intelligence," Lyne explained. "And he brings a certain lightness to the part, which provides a balance to the darkness of the piece."

Robbins, best known for his comic roles in *Bull Durham*, *Erik the Viking*, and this summer's clunker *Cadillac Man*, jumped at the chance to play the beleaguered Jacob.

"Emotionally, physically and psychologically it was the most demanding role I've ever played," Robbins said. "The movie is about his escape from his personal heart of darkness and the effort to transcend this terrifying experience. It's a psychological thriller of a kind that I don't think we've ever seen."





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