## Haunting 'In the Bedroom' is one of year's best films

BY CHRISTY LEMIRE
AP ENTERTABLETH WATTER

NEW YORK (AP) - There's
been a ton of Oscar buzz for 'In
the Bedroom' and for its stars,
Slasy Spacek and Tom Wilkinson, whose performances carned
them a Special Jury Prize at this
year's Sundance Pilm Festival.

Every bit of praise they've
received is deserved.

The film is a stunning feature
debut from director Todd Field,
beat known until now as red
by family the introduces Tom
Cruise's character to a scret
world of dark orgies in 'Eyes
Wide Shut.'

Spacek - a five-time Oscar
nomince who won for 1980's
Coal Miner's Daughter' - and
Wilkinson provide an achingly
honest portrayal of parents
whose marriage nearly calpses
under the strain of their son's
murder.

Based on a short story by

under the strain of their some murder.

Based on a short story by Andre Dubus, 'In the Bedroom' accurately depicts how people grieve in different ways. It's also a fascinating exploration of the steps ordinary people take under extraordinary circumstances.

Frank Powler (Nick Stahl), an architecture student home for the summer and working as a llosterman in the small, coastal town of Camden, Maine, is having a fling with Natulie (Marisa Tomel), an older, divorced mother of two. er of two. His mother, Ruth, (Spacek) is

the local choral music teacher; his father, Matt (Wilkinson), the town doctor. Their days are long and idyllic, filled with cookouts and Little League games.

But Natalio's ex-husband, Richard (William Mapother), part of the prominent family that owns the town cannery, feels jealous and threatened by his ex-wife's new lover. After several increasingly contentious confrontations, Richard shows up at Natalio's house one day and shoots Frank to death.

Shocking as the moment is, it's not really what "In the Redroom is about. The film follows the ways in which the Feweler's seemingly strong bond disaclves after an integral part of their lives is ripped from them. Ruth wants to yell, Matt trick to connoct with her through small talk and tiny compliments. But they ond up withdrawing further and further from each other - she with mind-numbing late-night. Tv and chain-smoking, he with yard work and sleeping pills.

When they do finally speak, in an argument that is so brutally honest, it's agonizing to watch, they unleash decades of blame and resentment that perhaps thay never knew they had. The scenc has a raw intensity.

From the very beginning, though, Field's pacing provides subtle tension, even during seemingly happy moments – the rustling of wind through the

trees, breaking the silence on a lazy afternoon; Natalic's tiny shrieks that simultaneously sound frisky and frightened as her young lover chases her

sound frisky and frightened as her young lover chases her through a meadow.
Field, who co-whose the script, has created a thorough sense of place that New Englanders will appreciate; he spent time growing up in Maine, and it howe, from the reserved way the Fowlers' friends and neighbors react to Frank's murder the timiest details. Red Sox brand-casts crackle on the speakers from the AM sports radio station; a can of Moxie, a brand of sada that's popular in New Endand, is visible on a refrigerator shelf when Ruth goes for a midnight snace.

And all the accents are believable and not overdone - capecially Wilkinson's. (The British actor, who c's cut are fill monty, immersed himself in the Maine lobstering culture to prepare for the role.)
Despite the stars' strong performances, the supporting players must not be ignored. During his brief time on serven, Stahl is bright-yed, charming and magnetic. Tome, in the best work is pulpably shattered.

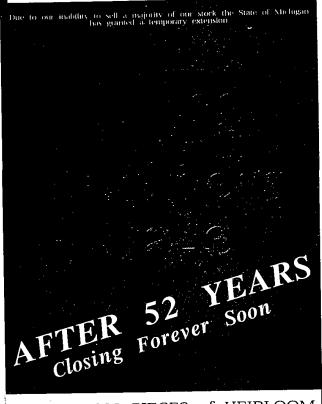
In the Bedroom' is gorgeous.

her inconsistent career, is paipa-bly shattered.

"In the Bedroom" is gorgeous.
It is haunting. It may just be the best movie of the year.
A Miramax Films release, "In the Bedroom" runs 122 minutes.

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## **COMING ATTRACTIONS**

Opened Tuesday, Dec. 25

In the BEDROOM

The story of a doctor from Maine and his wife who teaches a high school chorus group. They are farced to struggle with the girle and emotional bludgeoning that comes their way when their son becomes inched with an older woman. Sters Tom Wilkinson, Sixy Spoek, Nick Stain, Marisa Tomet, Justin Ashirothi, Karen Alten, Wildam Mapchher, Cella Westen, Wildam Allen, Wildiam Wase, Dioceted by Todd Floid.

THE SHIPPING NEWS
A struggling newspaper writer, Quoyle, returns to the small fishing fown in New-founding where his family has long lived in, with his two young daughters, after a troumatting experience with their mother. Stars Kenh Spacey, Juliane Moore, Carlo Blanchett, Dame Judi Dench, Scott

ALL
Cassius Clay (Will Smith) was a smart-talking, fast-stepping ball of fire, in the ring, and out, who lit up professional sports in the 1960's, eventually dropping his slave name and becoming Muhammad All, and rolesing to go to Violnam. Featured players include Will Smith, Michael Rost (Circado Espositio, Londe Foxx).

IMPOSTER
Based on Philip K. Dick's 1953 short story.



this futuristic croma tells of a time when Earth is at war with and alter need. The action times is the action times of the control of Species to the second of the control of Species that most children of the many scientists maspertings new weapons that could defeat the enemy. Arrested by the secret secrica and taken to the moon, Species is told be is a robot, planted on Earth by the action. When the secret secrica may be the secret secrica and taken to the moon, Species is secret on the secret secret in the secret secret secret in the secret secret

Scheduled to open Friday, Dec. 28

CHARLOTTE GRAY
This is the story of Charlotte Gray, a Scottish woman who joins the French Resistence during World War II in an effort to find
her RAF pilot tover who was shot down in

plays flamboy-ant heavy-weight champ Muhammad Ali in the new Michael Mann film bio "Ali, which opened Christmas Day.

France, Along the way, she has an affair with a French resistance fighter, Stars Cate Blanchett, Billy Chudup, Michael Gambon and Rupert Penry-Jones, Directed by Gillian Armstrong. BLACK HAWK DOWN
The story centers on the harrowing true account of a group of elite U.S. soldiers sent to Mogadishu, Somalia in October

sent to Mogadishu, Somalia in October 1993 as part of a U.N. posceleoping operation. Their mission: to obdied swent to pleutenants of a Somalian waterial or law testing to the state of a training that is tearing army at the country. The carefully planned mission goes terribly wrong, resulting in the U.S. military's single biggest firefight since Vertium. For Lund among the ensalable are Josh Hannett. Tom Stzemoto, Evan Megregor, Ron Eldad and Jerceny Precs.

