



Steven Spielberg

Early Years

- Born in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1946
 - Best Qualities from his parents
 - Father – Engineer
 - Mother – Concert Pianist
- Family Moved to Arizona before he was 10.
- Jewish Family. Grandparents immigrated from the Ukraine around 1900.
 - Spielberg also said he suffered from acts of anti-Semitic prejudice and bullying: "In high school, I got smacked and kicked around. Two bloody noses. It was horrible."



Teenage Years



- ▶ In his early teens Spielberg started to make films with his sister.
 - ▶ Used to show them at his house and charge admission and sell popcorn.
- ▶ At 16 he shot a film called *Firelight* about aliens invading a small town.
 - ▶ The film was 140 minutes long
 - ▶ Would later become *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*
 - ▶ Cost \$500 to make.
- ▶ The film was screened at the local movie theater in Scottsdale Arizona
 - ▶ Movie made back the money it cost to film.

Failed Film Student

- ▶ Parents divorced before his senior year. Moved to California to attend his senior year. Stayed after graduation.
- ▶ Spielberg applied to several film schools including USC.
 - ▶ He was denied due to his C average in school
- ▶ Attended Long Beach State
- ▶ “Internship” at Universal
- ▶ *Amblin*



Early Career



- ▶ At 22 was offered a 7-year contract with Universal.
 - ▶ Youngest ever to be offered a long-term deal
- ▶ Started directing television shows like *Night Gallery*, *Columbo*, *Marcus Welby M.D.*
- ▶ First success was 1971 *Duel*
 - ▶ Telefilm about a traveling salesman harassed by a truck driver
- ▶ *The Sugarland Express*
 - ▶ Failed financially but Spielberg impressed studio heads.

Jaws

- Universal acquired the rights to the Peter Benchley best seller *Jaws*.
- Gave the film to Spielberg
- Many issues with filming. Went over budget.
- Came out in the summer of 1975.
- Went on to become the highest grossing film of all time (later broken).
 - \$470 million for a film with a 9 million budget (cost 12).
- Summer Blockbuster



Close Encounters



- *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* was released in 1977.
- Spielberg's first academy award nomination for Best Director.
- Financial and critical success.

Raiders of the Lost Ark

- In 1981 Spielberg directed *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.
- Film based on cliffhangers
- Nominated for Best Picture, and Spielberg received his 2nd Best Director nomination.
- 3 sequels and a television show



E.T.



- ▶ A year later, Spielberg returned to the science fiction genre with *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial*. It was the story of a young boy and the alien he befriends, who was accidentally left behind by his companions and is attempting to return home.
- ▶ *E.T.* went on to become the top-grossing film of all time.
 - ▶ Has made over 1 billion dollars
- ▶ It was also nominated for nine Academy Awards including Best Picture and Best Director.

The Color Purple

- ▶ Spielberg was criticized for not being able to make a “serious” film.
- ▶ 1984 *the Color Purple*
 - ▶ 11 Academy Award Nominations
 - ▶ He was not nominated
 - ▶ Film did not win 1 award
 - ▶ Spike Lee calls this the most blatant example of racism in the history of Hollywood.



“Down Period”



- For about a decade Spielberg did not repeat the successes of his first decade as a film maker.
- Ugly Divorce
- Highlights:
 - *Empire of the Sun*
 - *Hook*
 - *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*
- People thought he was losing his touch

1993 is a Good Year

- 2 films that would establish him as the most important director in Hollywood
 - *Jurassic Park*
 - 914 million.
 - Changed CGI effects forever
 - *Schindler's List*
 - 12 Academy Awards nominations
 - Best Picture
 - Best Director (finally!)



Movie Mogul



- In 1994 Spielberg became a movie mogul opening his own studio called Dreamworks.
 - Jeffrey Katzenberg
 - David Geffin
- Studio has made Spielberg one of the richest men in Hollywood.

Saving Private Ryan

- In 1998 Spielberg won Best Director for his World War 2 film *Saving Private Ryan*.
- In total Spielberg has been nominated 7 times for Best Director, winning 2 times.



Family Life



- Married 2 times to Amy Irving (1985-1989). Kate Capshaw (1991-Today)
- He has 6 Children, 1 with Amy Irving, 3 with Kate Capshaw, and 2 adopted with Capshaw.

Greatest of All Time?

- ▶ In 2005 Empire Magazine named Spielberg the Greatest Director of All Time. One of many publications to do so.
 - ▶ IMDB
 - ▶ The Top Tens
- ▶ His Impact on modern film is hard to quantify.
- ▶ Very definitely in the conversation.

