

Dune: Part Two is a 2024 American epic science fiction film directed and produced by Denis Villeneuve, who co-wrote the screenplay with Jon Spaihts. The sequel to *Dune* (2021), it is the second of a two-part adaptation of the 1965 novel *Dune* by Frank Herbert. It follows Paul Atreides as he unites with the Fremen people of the desert planet Arrakis to wage war against House Harkonnen. Timothée Chalamet, Zendaya, Rebecca Ferguson, Josh Brolin, Dave Bautista, Stellan Skarsgård, Charlotte Rampling, and Javier Bardem reprise their roles from the first film, with Austin Butler, Florence Pugh, Christopher Walken, Léa Seydoux, and Souheila Yacoub joining the ensemble cast.

Development began after Legendary Entertainment acquired film and television rights for the *Dune* franchise in 2016. Villeneuve signed on as director in 2017, intending to make a two-part adaptation of the novel due to its complexity. Production contracts were only secured for the first film, with the second film having to be greenlit based on the first's success. After the critical and commercial success of the first film, Legendary green-lit *Dune: Part Two* in October 2021. Principal photography took place in Budapest, Italy, Jordan, and Abu Dhabi between July and December 2022.

After being delayed from an original November 2023 release date due to the 2023 Hollywood labor disputes, the film premiered at the Odeon Luxe Leicester Square, London, on February 15, 2024, and was released in the United States on March 1. The film has received praise from critics and has grossed over \$711.8 million worldwide, making it the highest-grossing film of 2024. A sequel based on Herbert's 1969 novel *Dune Messiah* is in development.

Plot

Following the destruction of House Atreides by House Harkonnen,^[a] Princess Irulan, the daughter of Padishah Emperor Shaddam IV, secretly journals her distaste over how her father betrayed the Atreides. On Arrakis, Stilgar's Fremen troops, including Paul Atreides and his pregnant Bene Gesserit mother, Lady Jessica, overcome a Harkonnen patrol. When Jessica and

Dune: Part Two



Theatrical release poster

Directed by Denis Villeneuve

Screenplay by Denis Villeneuve
Jon Spaihts

Based on *Dune*
by Frank Herbert

Produced by Mary Parent
Cale Boyter
Patrick McCormick
Tanya Lapointe
Denis Villeneuve

Starring Timothée Chalamet
Zendaya
Rebecca Ferguson
Josh Brolin
Austin Butler
Florence Pugh
Dave Bautista

Paul reach Sietch Tabr, some Fremen suspect they are spies, while Stilgar and others see signs of the prophecy that a mother and son from the "Outer World" will bring prosperity to Arrakis.

Stilgar tells Jessica that Sietch Tabr's Reverend Mother is dying and that Jessica must succeed her by drinking the Water of Life—a poison fatal for males and untrained women. Jessica transmutes and survives the poison, inheriting the memories of all the past Reverend Mothers. The liquid also prematurely awakens the mind of her unborn daughter, Alia, allowing Jessica to communicate with her; they agree to focus on convincing the more skeptical northern Fremen of the prophecy. Chani and her friend, Shishakli, correctly believe the prophecy was fabricated to manipulate the Fremen, but begins to respect Paul after he declares that he only intends to fight alongside the Fremen, not to rule them.

Paul and Chani fall in love as Paul immerses himself in Fremen culture: learning their language, becoming a Fedaykin fighter, riding a sandworm, and raiding Harkonnen spice operations. Paul adopts the Fremen names "Usul" and "Muad'Dib". Due to the continuing spice raids, Baron Vladimir Harkonnen replaces his nephew, Rabban, as Arrakis's ruler with his more cunning yet psychotic younger nephew, Feyd-Rautha. Lady Margot Fenring, a Bene Gesserit, is sent to evaluate Feyd-Rautha as a prospective Kwisatz Haderach and secure his genetic lineage.

Jessica travels south to unite with Fremen fundamentalists who believe most strongly in the prophecy. Paul remains in the north, fearful that his visions of an apocalyptic holy war will come to pass if he goes south as a messiah. During another raid on a spice harvester, Paul reunites with Gurney Halleck, who leads Paul to the hidden atomic stockpile of House Atreides. Feyd-Rautha unleashes a devastating attack on the northern Fremen, destroying Sietch Tabr, killing Shishakli, and forcing Paul and the survivors to journey south. Upon arrival, Paul drinks the Water of Life and falls into a coma. This angers Chani, but she is compelled by Jessica to mix her tears with the liquid, which awakens him. Now possessing clairvoyance across space and time, Paul sees an adult Alia on water-filled Arrakis. He also sees a singular path to victory among all possible futures, and that Jessica is the Baron's daughter.

Paul meets with the southern Fremen war council, galvanizing the crowd by demonstrating his ability to discern their deepest thoughts. He declares himself the Lisan al Gaib and sends a challenge to Shaddam, who arrives on Arrakis with Irulan and the Sardaukar. As Shaddam chastises the Harkonnens for their failures, the Fremen launch an offensive, using atomics and sandworms to overpower the Sardaukar. Paul executes the Baron and captures Shaddam and his entourage. Meanwhile, Gurney leads an assault on Arrakeen where he intercepts and kills a fleeing Rabban.

Paul challenges Shaddam for the throne and, to Chani's dismay, demands to marry Irulan. Previously summoned by the Baron, the Great Houses arrive in orbit—Paul threatens to destroy the spice fields with atomics if they intervene. Feyd-Rautha volunteers to be Shaddam's champion, but Paul kills him in a duel.

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| | <u>Christopher Walken</u> <u>Léa Seydoux</u> <u>Stellan Skarsgård</u> <u>Charlotte Rampling</u> <u>Javier Bardem</u> |
| Cinematography | <u>Greig Fraser</u> |
| Edited by | <u>Joe Walker</u> |
| Music by | <u>Hans Zimmer</u> |
| Production company | <u>Legendary Pictures</u> |
| Distributed by | <u>Warner Bros. Pictures</u> |
| Release dates | February 6, 2024 (<u>Auditorio Nacional</u>) March 1, 2024 (United States) |
| Running time | 166 minutes ^[1] |
| Country | United States |
| Language | English |
| Budget | \$190 million ^[2] |
| Box office | \$711.8 million ^{[3][4]} |

Irulan agrees to Paul's request for marriage on the condition that her father lives. Shaddam reluctantly surrenders, kneeling, and kisses Paul's signet ring. When the Great Houses reject Paul's ascendancy, he orders the Fremen to attack the orbiting fleet. As Stilgar leads the Fremen onto the captured Sardaukar ships, Jessica and Alia reflect on the beginning of Paul's holy war. Chani refuses to bow to Paul and departs alone on a sandworm.

Cast

- Timothée Chalamet as Paul Atreides, the exiled Duke of House Atreides who sides with the Fremen to overthrow the tyrannical House Harkonnen
- Zendaya as Chani, a young and rebellious Fremen warrior who is Paul's love interest^[5]
- Rebecca Ferguson as Lady Jessica, Paul's Bene Gesserit mother and concubine to Paul's late father and predecessor, Leto Atreides
- Josh Brolin as Gurney Halleck, the former military leader of House Atreides and Paul's mentor
- Austin Butler as Feyd-Rautha, Baron Vladimir Harkonnen's youngest nephew and heir ("na-Baron") to House Harkonnen
- Florence Pugh as Princess Irulan, the Emperor's daughter
- Dave Bautista as Beast Rabban, nephew of Baron Vladimir Harkonnen and older brother of Feyd-Rautha
- Christopher Walken as Emperor Shaddam IV, the Padishah Emperor of the Known Universe and head of House Corrino
- Léa Seydoux as Lady Margot Fenring, a Bene Gesserit and close friend of the Emperor
- Souheila Yacoub as Shishakli, a Fremen warrior and Chani's friend
- Stellan Skarsgård as Baron Vladimir Harkonnen, head of House Harkonnen and former steward of Arrakis, enemy to the Atreides, uncle of Feyd-Rautha and Glossu Rabban, and later revealed to be Lady Jessica's father and thus, Paul's grandfather.
- Charlotte Rampling as Reverend Mother Mohiam, a Bene Gesserit Reverend Mother and the Emperor's Truthsayer
- Javier Bardem as Stilgar, leader of the Fremen tribe at Sietch Tabr

Anya Taylor-Joy makes an uncredited cameo appearance as Alia Atreides, Paul's unborn sister who appears in his visions as well as communicating to Jessica while in her womb.^{[6][7]} Babs Olusanmokin and Roger Yuan reprise their roles from the first film as Jamis and Lieutenant Lanville, respectively. Stephen McKinley Henderson filmed scenes reprising his role as Thufir Hawat, while Tim Blake Nelson filmed scenes as an undisclosed character,^{[8][9]} but their scenes were not included in the final cut. Both were given a "Special Thanks" credit by Villeneuve.^[10]

Production

Development

In November 2016, Legendary Pictures obtained the film and TV rights for the Dune franchise, based on the eponymous 1965 novel by Frank Herbert.^[11] Vice chair of worldwide production for Legendary Mary Parent began discussing with Denis Villeneuve about directing a film adaptation, quickly hiring him after realizing his passion for *Dune*.^[12] In February 2018, Villeneuve was confirmed to be hired as director, and intended to adapt the novel as a two-part film series.^{[13][14]} Villeneuve ultimately secured a two-film deal with Warner Bros. Pictures, in the same style as the two-part adaption of Stephen King's *It* in 2017 and

2019.^[15] In January 2019, Joe Walker was confirmed as the film's editor.^[16] Other crew included Brad Riker as supervising art director, Patrice Vermette as production designer, Paul Lambert as visual effects supervisor, Gerd Nefzer as special effects supervisor, and Thomas Struthers as stunt coordinator.^[17]

Dune: Part Two was produced by Villeneuve, Mary Parent, and Cale Boyter, with Tanya Lapointe, Brian Herbert, Byron Merritt, Kim Herbert, Thomas Tull, Jon Spaihts, Richard P. Rubinstein, John Harrison, and Herbert W. Gain serving as executive producers and Kevin J. Anderson as creative consultant.^[18] Legendary CEO Joshua Grode confirmed in April 2019 that they plan to make a sequel, adding that "there's a logical place to stop the [first] movie before the book is over".^[19]



Denis Villeneuve returned to direct and co-write *Dune: Part Two*.

In December 2020, Villeneuve stated that due to Warner Bros.' plan to release the film in theaters and on HBO Max simultaneously, the first film could underperform financially, resulting in cancellation of the planned sequel.^[20] In an IMAX screening of the first film's first ten minutes, the title logo read *Dune: Part One*, lending credence to plans for the sequel.^[21] In August 2021, Villeneuve spoke more confidently about the chances of a sequel film, iterating his excitement to work with Timothée Chalamet and Zendaya again,^[22] while stating Chani would have a bigger role in the sequel.^[23] Warner Bros. assured Villeneuve a sequel would be greenlit as long as the film performed well on HBO Max.^[24] Just days prior to the first film's release, Warner Bros. CEO Ann Sarnoff stated, "Will we have a sequel to *Dune*? If you watch the movie you see how it ends. I think you pretty much know the answer to that."^[25]

On October 26, 2021, Legendary officially greenlit *Dune: Part Two*, with a spokesperson for the company stating, "We would not have gotten to this point without the extraordinary vision of Denis and the amazing work of his talented crew, the writers, our stellar cast, our partners at Warner Bros., and of course the fans! Here's to more *Dune*."^[26] Production work had occurred back-to-back with the first film, as Villeneuve and his wife Lapointe immediately took a flight to Budapest in order to begin pre-production work.^[27] A key point of negotiation prior to greenlighting the sequel was assuring that the sequel would have an exclusive window where it would only be shown theatrically, with Legendary and Warner Bros. agreeing to give *Dune: Part Two* a 45-day window before it would be available through other channels. Villeneuve said this theatrical exclusivity was a "non-negotiable condition", and that "the theatrical experience is at the very heart of the cinematic language for me".^[28] With *Dune: Part Two* being greenlit, Villeneuve said that his primary concern was to complete the filming as soon as possible, with the earliest he expected to start in the last quarter of 2022. He noted that production would be expedited by the work already done for the first film.^[28]

Writing

Eric Roth was hired to co-write the screenplay in April 2017 for the *Dune* films,^[29] and Jon Spaihts was later confirmed to be co-writing the script alongside Roth and Villeneuve.^[30] *Game of Thrones* language creator David Peterson was confirmed to be developing languages for the film in April 2019.^[31] Villeneuve and Peterson had created the Chakobsa language, which was used by actors on set.^[32] In November 2019, Spaihts stepped down as show-runner for *Dune: Prophecy* to focus on *Dune: Part Two*.^[33] In June 2020, Greig Fraser said, "It's a fully formed story in itself with places to go. It's a fully standalone epic film that people will get a lot out of when they see it".^[34]



(Left to right) Timothée Chalamet, Zendaya, and Rebecca Ferguson returned as Paul Atreides, Chani, and Lady Jessica, respectively.

Between the release of *Dune* and the confirmation of *Dune: Part Two*, Villeneuve started working the script in a way that production could begin immediately once the film was greenlit.^[35] By February 2021, Roth created a full treatment for the sequel,^[36] with writing beginning that August.^[37] He confirmed that Feyd-Rautha would appear in the film, and stated he will be a "very important character".^[38] In March 2022, Villeneuve had mostly finished writing the screenplay.^[39] Craig Mazin and Roth wrote additional literary material for the film.^[40]

Villeneuve stated that the film would continue directly from the first, and specifically described it as being the "second part".^[41] He described the film as being an "epic war movie", adding that while the first film was more "contemplative", the second would feature more action.^[42] Villeneuve sought to anchor the movie to the characters, primarily Paul and Chani. With the two featured in an "epic love story" between them, Villeneuve described them as the "epicenter of the story". Zendaya initially found difficulty in creating dialogue, commenting that "It was funny trying to figure out in this futuristic space talk, like, how do they flirt?" Chalamet also added that Paul would be heavily influenced by Chani, serving as his "moral compass". Paul becomes deeply embedded in Fremen culture, developing a closer bond with Stilgar, who becomes his surrogate father figure and mentor, while tensions emerge between Chani and Lady Jessica, as Chani is aware that Jessica's schemes negatively impact the Fremen.^[41]

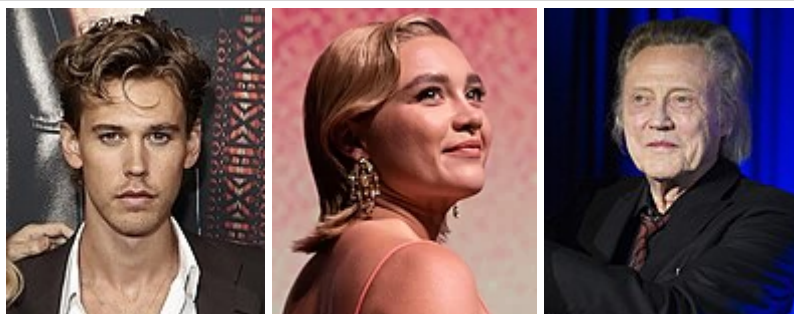
The script ultimately conveys Chani as a nonbeliever of the prophecy and intended for its structure to first convey their romantic relationship from Paul's perspective, and eventually pivot to Chani's perspective as the audience realizes Paul's desire for power and insidious nature.^[43] He focused on Herbert's original intention to depict Paul as an antihero in *Dune* to becoming an eventual villain, and wrote the script with that in mind while also considering his future plans regarding *Dune Messiah*, particularly by modifying Chani's characterization as he felt that she eventually "disappeared in Paul's shadows" in the book.^{[44][45]} Feeling he had the "benefit of time" in doing so, Villeneuve decided to use all the elements of Paul's character arc and "play them a bit differently" in order to establish his eventual transformation into a villainous figure and becoming "what he was trying to fight against".^[43] He expanded the role of Chani and Lady Jessica from the novel, and interpreted Chani as being a critique of power.^[32]

When envisioning the sandworm sequence, Villeneuve primarily relied upon his own drawings and storyboards, as he felt the book did not contain adequate descriptions. He later cited it as being one of his favorite scenes in the film.^[46] When writing Paul's character arc, he considered Paul as transforming from a "humble" figure to a "dark messianic figure", and took inspiration from Katsuhiro Otomo's *Akira* (1988) when designing the storyboards.^[47] Villeneuve felt the film's ending was more "tragic" than that of the book, feeling that it adequately resolved Paul's storyline across the *Dune* films while setting up his character arc for a potential third film based on *Dune Messiah* (1969).^[48]

Following the first film, Baron Vladimir Harkonnen is described as being heavily debilitated and reliant upon being submerged in fluids, while focusing on choosing an heir: Glossu "Beast" Rabban or Feyd-Rautha, both his nephews. Rabban was regarded as being a bad strategist, while Feyd-Rautha is shown to be clever, cunning, and charismatic.^[41] Actor Austin Butler felt Feyd-Rautha's character served as "flip sides of the same coin" to Paul, as both had been involved in the Bene Gesserit's genetic breeding program. Butler opined that Feyd-Rautha's upbringing on Giedi Prime and self-care for his body explained his arrogance. Meanwhile, Villeneuve noted his psychopathic personality and brutality similar to that of an animal, contrasted with his "code of honors" and reverence for fighters.^[49]

Lady Jessica is heavily traumatized by the death of Duke Leto, being compared to Paul as a "survivor" and strategizing to realize the ambitions of the Bene Gesserit, who aim to fulfill their prophecy to maximize human potential, disregarding morality and ethics. There is additional focus on the political aspect, with Princess Irulan fearing that her father, Emperor Shaddam IV, will lose his throne due to his loss of influence over warring factions.^[41] During the sequence of Paul's consumption of the Water of Life, Villeneuve deliberately altered the timeframe to depict an adult Alia for a dramatic effect, and to highlight Alia's unique birth. He and Spaihts decided to "compress" the time for both the sequence and Lady Jessica's pregnancy in order to establish more narrative tension. He added that Lady Jessica's conversations with an embryonic Alia was unique, as he felt it was "fresh and original to have a character who is powerful and still a pregnant woman" while also conveying how others perceive Alia as an "abomination".^[7] Like Chani and Lady Jessica, Villeneuve further developed Princess Irulan's character and motivations from the novel, with actress Florence Pugh noting her reserved nature and intelligence.^[32]

Casting



(Left to right) Austin Butler, Florence Pugh, and Christopher Walken joined the cast as Feyd-Rautha, Princess Irulan, and Shaddam IV, respectively.

In March 2022, Pugh and Butler were reported to be in talks to star in the film as Princess Irulan and Harkonnen heir Feyd-Rautha, respectively.^{[50][51]} Butler was offered the role while having coffee with Villeneuve, without needing to audition. He trained for four months in Budapest, using a fitness regimen made by an ex-Navy SEALs member.^{[52][49]} Villeneuve described his performance as being a "cross between a psychopath killer, an Olympic sword master, a snake, and Mick Jagger" while Butler researched past cultures he felt "bred brutality" and took inspiration from various animals including sharks and snakes.^{[53][54]}

Butler said that he drew inspiration from Gary Oldman and Heath Ledger for his performance.^[55] He imitated Skarsgård's voice as the Baron, as he felt that Feyd would be influenced by the Baron due to growing up with him.^[15] In May, Christopher Walken joined the cast as Shaddam IV.^[56] In June, Léa

Seydoux entered negotiations to join the cast as Lady Margot Fenring.^[57] In July, Souheila Yacoub joined the cast as Shishakli.^[58]

In January 2023, Tim Blake Nelson was added to the cast in an undisclosed role.^[9] Attending the film's London premiere in February 2024, Anya Taylor-Joy confirmed that she had been cast in the film.^[59] Villeneuve was surprised that her role had been kept a secret for that long, noting it required "so much work to keep that secret". Her role had been revealed in a casting credit list for the film on Letterboxd.^[60]

Filming

Pre-shooting began on July 4, 2022, at the Brion tomb in Altivole, Italy for two days.^[61] Principal photography was set to begin on July 21 in Budapest, Hungary,^[61] but began earlier on July 18.^{[8][62]} The film was entirely shot using Arri Alexa LF digital cameras, with new filming locations and sets being used "to avoid repetition".^[63] In October 2022, Chalamet took a break from filming in order to attend the premiere of *Bones and All* (2022).^[64] The production team managed to shoot during the partial solar eclipse of October 25, and used the footage for the opening fight scene between Harkonnen and Fremen soldiers.^[65]

In November, production moved to Abu Dhabi, with Pugh finishing her scenes in November.^{[66][67]} Certain scenes set at dawn had to be filmed across three days to take advantage of the golden hour.^[68] A special unit of production filmed scenes with Taylor-Joy in Namibia, the driest country in sub-Saharan Africa.^[69] Filming wrapped on December 12, 2022.^[70] Due to the delays, Villeneuve was able to make a film transfer for projection using the IMAX 70 mm and conventional 70 mm film formats.^[35]

Pugh delivered Princess Irulan's opening narration during her first day of filming and for overall production.^[71] Villeneuve and cinematographer Greig Fraser filmed Feyd-Rautha's gladiator sequence with specially designed black-and-white infrared cameras. They wanted the Harkonnens to cheer and stomp rather than applaud, and designed over 30 sections for spectators in the arena.^[72] Butler spent his first week on set filming the scene, while the set had very high temperatures that caused some people to faint.^[73] He also improvised his kiss scene with the Baron.^[74]

For romantic scenes between Paul and Chani, the scenes were primarily filmed in remote locations in Jordan during the golden hour. The scenes were often filmed as quickly as possible, with only a one-hour window being available.^[41] The scene of Paul's sandworm ride was filmed practically on a production unit, separate from the main one, led by producer Tanya Lapointe and a special team. Chalamet filmed his scenes on a platform meant to imitate a portion of the sandworm, with gripping devices serving as the reference for the Fremen hooks. An industrial fan blew sand on set to emulate the desert climate.^[75] Chalamet estimated the scene took over three months to film, with individual shoots occurring over a span of 20–30 minutes. As the actual sandworm was not built and there were no reference shots, the production team designed a small portion of the worm on set and the actors had to physically visualize and imitate riding the sandworm.^{[76][77]}

Butler and Chalamet separately trained with a Kali instructor in Los Angeles for the climactic battle between Paul and Feyd-Rautha. They were excited to do the scene, and immediately began practicing once they later met in Budapest. They performed the scene by themselves, including for wide camera shots.

Chalamet delivers the monologue entirely in Chakobsa.^{[78][79]} Ferguson cited Lady Jessica undergoing the Reverend Mother process as her favorite scene, working with contortionists for the scene and comparing it to an Exorcist film.^[80]

Music

Hans Zimmer returned to compose the film's score after doing so for the previous film.^[81] Zimmer had composed over 90 minutes of music prior to the announcement of the film to help give Villeneuve inspiration when writing.^[82] Two singles were released on February 15, 2024, by WaterTower Music, titled "A Time of Quiet Between the Storms" and "Harvester Attack". The full soundtrack album was released on February 23.^[83]



Hans Zimmer returned to compose the score of *Dune: Part Two*.

Marketing

A teaser trailer for *Dune: Part Two* was presented during the Warner Bros. panel at CinemaCon on April 27, 2023.^{[63][42]} First-look footage of the cast in-character were released online, alongside a teaser poster, on May 2, 2023.^[84] The trailer was released to the public the following day.^[85] Variety called it "breathtaking";^[86] GQ hailed the shots of Paul riding a sandworm as "the standout sequence";^[87] and Fangoria remarked "If you're not excited for this one, we dunno what to tell you".^[88] Chalamet and Zendaya later discussed and promoted the film at a Warner Bros. presentation at CineEurope on June 21.^[89]

A second trailer was released on June 29, 2023.^[90] Chris Evangelista of Film was excited about the appearance of Christopher Walken as Emperor Shaddam IV.^[91] Ben Travis of Empire praised the "seismic" and "astounding, none-more-eye-boggling" imagery, feeling the scope to be "particularly expansive" and noted the monochromatic footage depicting Austin Butler's Feyd-Rautha while calling the footage of Christopher Walken's appearance "impactful".^[92] Joshua Rivera of Polygon opined "The trailer, simply put, rocks" and enjoyed the footage present.^[93]

The film was promoted during the December 2023 CCXP with Chalamet, Zendaya, Pugh, Butler, and Villeneuve, where over 10 minutes of footage was released.^[94] Additional footage from *Dune: Part Two* was shown during a limited IMAX theatrical re-release of Christopher Nolan's Tenet (2020), as part of Warner Bros.' celebration for the former film's release.^{[95][96]}

Warner Bros. and Legendary Pictures partnered with Xbox to provide an immersive content suite related to the film, and visual designs inspired by the film being featured on a floating controller, Xbox Series X, and a console holder. Microsoft Flight Simulator also included an expansion pack allowing players to explore Arrakis and pilot the Royal Atreides Ornithopter.^[97] In November 2023, the Sardaukar were added to Call of Duty: Modern Warfare II (2022) in a collaboration pack.^[98] A month later, Paul and Feyd-Rautha were added as playable operators to its sequel, Call of Duty: Modern Warfare III (2023), with an additional Harkonnen soldier skin being announced in March 2024.^{[99][100]} In September 2023, McFarlane Toys announced a new line of 7-inch figures modeled after characters from the sequel film.^[101] Legendary Comics will release *Dune: Part Two – The Official Movie Graphic Novel* with the help of Kickstarter in the same way the previous adaptation was published.^[102]

Research conducted by Nikolaj Mathies, CEO of Vievo Media, said the promotional campaign for the film on TikTok included 117 posts over a year leading up to its release, an increase from the first film's 108. Messages directly from the cast comprised 24% of the content, with videos featuring Zendaya and Chalamet generating significantly higher viewership. Red carpet content was prioritized to appeal to female audiences, a tactic that contributed to an estimated \$2 million increase in the opening box office. According to the marketing research company FanBox, 57% of TikTok users are female and hashtags such as #zendaya have garnered billions of views, leading the core audience for *Dune* to grow significantly, with a 67.5% increase overall from 2.6 million to 8 million and an 84% increase among "superfans".^[103]

Promotion in Japan also included a collaboration with *Mobile Suit Gundam SEED* – specifically, their *Freedom* film. The collaboration featured an alternate version of *Dune: Part Two*'s movie poster featuring Lacus Clyne (voiced by Rie Tanaka in the original and Stephanie Sheh in the English dubbed version) and Kira Yamato (Sōichirō Hoshi/Max Mittelman) in place of Chani and Paul respectively.^[104]

Popcorn bucket meme

In January 2024, images of a forthcoming *Dune*-themed popcorn bucket from AMC Theatres went viral and became an Internet meme after its sandworm-inspired design was compared to an artificial vagina.^{[105][106][107]}

Reactions to the bucket received millions of views on the social network TikTok,^[108] and jokes about it were featured on US late night television, including a musical sketch on *Saturday Night Live* with cast members Marcello Hernandez, Ayo Edebiri, Devon Walker, and Bowen Yang.^{[109][110]} The extensive online attention paid to the bucket led the media to ask much of *Dune: Part Two*'s main cast for their reactions.^[111] Denis Villeneuve said that the bucket was an "insane marketing idea"^[112] that "brought a lot of laughter and joy".^[113]

Griffin Newman in *The New York Times* chalked up the bucket's appeal to the "magic alchemy" that results from an object that so many people become "perversely fascinated" by.^[114] The product was one of several popcorn buckets AMC had designed and released alongside recent films, including character heads for *Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse* and "burn books" for *Mean Girls*.^[114]

Two months after *Dune: Part Two*'s release, AMC's chief content officer stated that "we would have never created [the bucket] knowing it would be celebrated or mocked", but added that they would continue to create collectible popcorn buckets for other films.^[115] At that time, the *Dune* popcorn buckets were being resold for as high as \$175.^[112]

Release

Theatrical

Dune: Part Two was originally scheduled to be released on October 20, 2023,^[116] but was delayed to November 17, 2023,^[117] before moving forward two weeks to November 3, 2023, to adjust to changes in release schedules from other studios.^[118] It was later postponed by over four months to March 15, 2024, due to the 2023 Hollywood labor disputes.^[119] After the strikes were resolved, the film moved once more up two weeks to March 1, 2024.^[120]

Following the success of *Oppenheimer* (2023) in the format, *Dune: Part Two* was released in the IMAX 15-perforation 70 mm format to twelve venues worldwide,^[121] and in standard 5-perforation 70mm format to 38 venues worldwide.^[122]

A red carpet event was hosted in the *Auditorio Nacional* in Mexico City on February 6, 2024.^[123] *Dune: Part Two*'s world premiere was held at *Odeon Luxe Leicester Square* in London on February 15.^{[124][125]}

On January 16, 2024, the film was shown to a dying man in a palliative care home in the Canadian city of *Saguenay*, in Denis Villeneuve's native province of *Quebec*.^{[126][127]} The man had expressed a wish to see *Dune: Part Two* before his death. Josée Gagnon, the cofounder of a company aiming to accompany people at the end of life, relayed his wish to Villeneuve and Tanya Lapointe, his partner and one of the film's producers, through a viral call-out on *Facebook*. According to Gagnon, Villeneuve and Lapointe "were very touched".^[128] The pair initially offered to invite the man to see *Dune: Part Two* in *Los Angeles* or *Montreal*, but since he was too weak to travel, Villeneuve eventually decided to send one of his assistants directly to Saguenay with his private laptop.^{[126][128]} The film was screened in a room of the care facility, where everyone was required to hand in their cellphones and sign *waivers*.^[128] The man was in too much pain to watch the entire film and stopped halfway through.^[127] He eventually died on January 25.^[129] This act, which the *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation* referred to as the actual "world premiere" of the film, was publicly disclosed after its theatrical release.^{[130][126]}

Home media

The film was released *digitally* on April 16, 2024, and *Blu-ray*, *DVD* and *Ultra HD Blu-ray* on May 14, 2024, by *Warner Bros. Home Entertainment*.^[131] *Dune: Part Two* became available to stream on *Max* on May 21, 2024.^[132]

Reception

Box office

As of May 20, 2024, *Dune: Part Two* has grossed \$282.1 million in the United States and Canada and \$429.7 million in other territories, for a worldwide total of \$711.8 million.^{[3][4]} *The Hollywood Reporter* had estimated that the film would *break-even* after grossing around \$500 million.^[133] The film made over \$145 million in IMAX alone globally.^[134]

Domestic

In the United States and Canada, the film's advanced ticket sales surpassed those of *Oppenheimer* (2023), and it was projected to gross \$65–80 million from 4,050 theaters in its opening weekend.^[135] The film made \$32.2 million on its first day, including \$12 million from previews on February 25 and 29; IMAX screenings made up \$4.5 million (38%) of the early totals.^[136] It went on to debut to \$82.5 million,^[137] doubling the first film's \$41 million opening weekend; IMAX screenings made up \$18.5 million (23%) of the total, a record for a March release.^{[136][138]} According to Jeff Goldstein, president of domestic distribution at Warner Bros.,^[139] it was "much higher than any of us could predict", especially for "a genre that is a hard nut to crack".^[140] In its second weekend the film made \$46 million (a 44% drop), finishing second behind newcomer *Kung Fu Panda 4*. It also surpassed the entire domestic gross of the first film

(\$108 million) in just seven days.^[141] The film made \$28.5 million in its third weekend and \$17.6 million in its fourth, remaining in second both times.^{[142][143]} It also became Timothée Chalamet's highest-grossing film of all time, surpassing *Wonka*.^[144]

Other territories

Outside the US and Canada, the film was expected to gross \$85–90 million from 71 markets in its opening weekend.^[135] It grossed \$100.02 million in the first three days.^[145] In its second weekend, the sci-fi epic added \$81 million from 72 international markets, including a \$20 million opening in China.^[146] *Dune: Part Two* continued to hold well, grossing \$51.2 million and \$30.7 million in its third and fourth weekends respectively.^{[147][148]} As of April 14, 2024, the highest grossing markets were the United Kingdom (\$48.1 million), China (\$48.1 million), France (\$41.8 million), Germany (\$38.7 million), and Australia (\$22 million).^[149]

Critical response

The film "largely received rave reviews from critics",^{[150][151][152]} and was praised for its visual effects and cast performances. Some reviews considered it one of the best science fiction films of all time.^{[153][154]} On the review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes, 92% of 428 critics' reviews are positive, with an average rating of 8.3/10. The website's consensus reads: "Visually thrilling and narratively epic, *Dune: Part Two* continues Denis Villeneuve's adaptation of the beloved sci-fi series in spectacular form."^[155] Metacritic, which uses a weighted average, assigned the film a score of 79 out of 100, based on 62 critics, indicating "generally favorable" reviews.^[156] Audiences polled by CinemaScore gave the film an average grade of "A" on an A+ to F scale, up from the first film's "A-," while those polled by PostTrak gave it a 94% overall positive score, with 80% saying they would definitely recommend it.^{[157][136]}

Richard Roeper, writing for the *Chicago Sun-Times*, gave the film three stars out of four, praising the technical and narrative aspects, saying, "Even as we marvel at the stunning and immersive and Oscar-level cinematography, editing, score, visual effects, production design and sound in Denis Villeneuve's *Dune: Part Two*, we're reminded at every turn that this is an absolutely bat-bleep [*sic*] crazy story."^[158]

Filmmaker Steven Spielberg praised the film, calling it "one of the most brilliant science fiction films I have ever seen," while further noting that "it's also filled with deeply, deeply drawn characters ... Yet the dialogue is very sparse when you look at it proportionately to the running time of the film. It's such cinema. The shots are so painterly, yet there's not an angle or single setup that's pretentious."^{[159][160]}

Other reviews were more mixed in their judgement. In *The Hollywood Reporter*, Lovia Gyarkye praised the film's technical aspects and performances, but found it failed to fully adapt the book's nuance on themes such as imperialism.^[161] Nicholas Barber wrote for the BBC that the film is "one of the most jaw-droppingly weird pieces of art-house psychedelia ever to come from a major studio", finding the film's grand scale made up for its issues.^[162] At the more negative end, Noah Berlatsky writing for CNN judged that the film had failed to "present an effective anti-colonial vision" by still being centred around Paul's destiny despite an increased voice of opposition from Chani.^[163]

Some commentators have criticised the film for failing to adequately deal with the original book's Middle East and North Africa (MENA) influences or otherwise incorporate enough representation from the region.^[164] Furvah Shah, writing for the UK edition of *Cosmopolitan*, said she "felt frustrated as a Muslim viewer", criticising the film for a lack of MENA casting amongst the leads despite the use of the region's

culture and superficial use of Islam.^[165] *The New Arab*'s Hannah Flint also criticized the use of Arab and Islamic cultural items and lack of MENA casting, though did praise that of Swiss-Tunisian actress *Souheila Yacoub* as a "win for Arab representation".^[166] Steven D. Greydanus, in *U.S. Catholic*, gives a contrasting view of the film's religious inspirations, noting that the film draws from a number of Abrahamic religions for the purpose of critiquing faith itself, while also noting the "spiritualization of ecological concerns" through the Fremen.^[167]

Accolades

The trailer for *Dune: Part Two* received nominations for Best Fantasy Adventure and the Don LaFontaine Award for Best Voice Over at the 2023 *Golden Trailer Awards*.^{[168][169]} The film was nominated for Most Anticipated Film at the *6th Hollywood Critics Association Midseason Film Awards*.^[170]

Future

Villeneuve has repeatedly expressed interest in making a third film based on *Dune Messiah*, the second novel in the series, adding that the possibility for the film depended on the success of *Dune: Part Two*.^{[171][172][173]} Spaihts also reiterated in March 2022 that Villeneuve had plans for a third film as well as the television spin-off series *Dune: Prophecy*.^[174] In August 2023, Villeneuve said the third film would serve as the conclusion of a trilogy.^[175] Villeneuve began developing a script for the third film in 2023.^[176] In February 2024, Villeneuve said the script was "almost finished" but also said he "[does not] want to rush it", citing Hollywood's tendency of focusing on release dates over a film's overall quality,^[177] and adding, "I want to make sure that if we go back there a third time I want it to be good and I want it to be even better than *Part Two*".^[27] Villeneuve also considered waiting a few years for Chalamet to grow older, given that *Dune Messiah* is set 12 years after the events of the original book.^[178]

Ahead of *Dune: Part Two*'s release, Zimmer revealed he was already writing music for a third film after Villeneuve came in and "wordlessly" put a copy of *Dune Messiah* on his desk.^[179] In April 2024, it was reported that Villeneuve and Legendary had officially begun development on the third film.^{[180][181]} Villeneuve has said that *Messiah* would be his final *Dune* film.^[182]

See also

- List of films featuring eclipses

Notes

- a. As depicted in *Dune* (2021)

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