

Encanto

Encanto is a 2021 American animated musical fantasy film produced by Walt Disney Animation Studios and distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures. It was directed by Jared Bush and Byron Howard, co-directed by Charise Castro Smith, and produced by Yvett Merino and Clark Spencer, with original songs by Lin-Manuel Miranda. The screenplay was written by Castro Smith and Bush, both of whom also conceived the film's story with Howard, Miranda, Jason Hand, and Nancy Kruse. The film stars the voices of Stephanie Beatriz, María Cecilia Botero, John Leguizamo, Mauro Castillo, Jessica Darrow, Angie Cepeda, Carolina Gaitán, Diane Guerrero, and Wilmer Valderrama, with Rhenzy Feliz, Ravi Cabot-Conyers, Adassa, and Maluma in supporting roles. Encanto follows a multigenerational Colombian family, the Madrigals, led by a matriarch whose children and grandchildren—except for Mirabel Madrigal—receive magical gifts from a miracle, which they use to help the people in their rural community, called the Encanto. When Mirabel learns that the family is losing their magic, she sets out to find out why and save the family and house.

Encanto premiered at the El Capitan Theatre in Hollywood, Los Angeles, on November 3, 2021, and was released in the United States on November 24 over a 30-day theatrical run. It was also released in RealD 3D, Dolby Cinema, 2D and D-BOX formats. Although it underperformed at the box office, grossing \$256.8 million worldwide against a \$120–150 million budget, it achieved wider commercial success after its release on Disney+ on December 24, 2021. The film received acclaim for its characterization, music, animation, voice acting, emotional depth, and cultural fidelity; reviews named magic realism and transgenerational trauma as the film's core concepts. Publications have described *Encanto* as a cultural phenomenon. The film was nominated for three awards at the 94th Academy Awards, winning Best Animated Feature, and received numerous other accolades, including the Golden Globe Award for Best Animated Feature & the BAFTA Award for Best Animated Film.

The film's <u>soundtrack</u> also became a success, reaching number one on the US <u>Billboard 200</u> and UK <u>Compilation Albums</u> charts; "We Don't Talk About Bruno" and "Surface Pressure"

Encanto



Theatrical release poster

i neatrical release poster	
Directed by	Jared Bush
	Byron Howard
Screenplay by	Charise Castro Smith Jared Bush
Story by	Jared Bush
	Byron Howard
	Charise Castro
	Smith
	Jason Hand
	Nancy Kruse
	Lin-Manuel
	Miranda
Produced by	Yvett Merino
	Clark Spencer
Starring	Stephanie Beatriz
	María Cecilia
	Botero
	John Leguizamo

were its two most successful songs, with the former topping both the US <u>Billboard Hot 100</u> and <u>UK Singles Chart</u> for multiple weeks in a row.

Plot

An armed conflict forces Pedro Madrigal and "Abuela" Alma Madrigal, a young married couple, to flee their home village in <u>Colombia</u> with their infant triplets Julieta, Pepa and <u>Bruno</u>. The attackers kill Pedro, but the candle Alma is carrying becomes magical through a miracle, repelling the attackers and creating Casita, a sentient house for the Madrigal family located in Encanto, a magical realm bordered by high mountains.

50 years later, a new village thrives under the magical candle's protection, with its magic granting "gifts" to each Madrigal descendant at the age of 5, which they use to serve the villagers. However, Bruno, who was vilified and scapegoated for his gift of seeing the future, disappeared 10 years ago. Julieta's youngest daughter, 15-year-old Mirabel, did not receive a gift, and no one knows why.

In celebration of Pepa's youngest son, Antonio, being gifted the ability to communicate with animals, the Madrigals pose for a photo showing off their powers, but inadvertently exclude Mirabel from the photo. Mirabel suddenly sees Casita cracking and the candle's flame flickering, but Casita temporarily repairs itself when Mirabel attempts to show the damage to her family. After overhearing Alma praying, Mirabel resolves to restore Casita's magic. The next day, Mirabel's 19-year-old sister Luisa, who has the gift of superhuman strength, confesses to feeling overwhelmed by her near-constant obligations. Luisa then suggests that Bruno's room, located in a forbidden tower in Casita, may hold the secret to why the magic is being threatened.

Upon entering Bruno's room, Mirabel discovers a cave, and barely escapes with the pieces of a tablet of opaque emerald glass in hand. Outside, Luisa discovers that her gift is weakening. Mirabel reassembles the tablet and sees a picture of herself with Casita cracking behind her. Right after that,

	Maria Osalilla
	Mauro Castillo
	Jessica Darrow
	Angie Cepeda
	Carolina Gaitán
	Diane Guerrero
	Wilmer Valderrama
Cinematography	Nathan Warner
	(layout)
	Alessandro
	Jacomini
	Daniel Rice
	(lighting)
Edited by	Jeremy Milton
Music by	Germaine Franco
	(score)
	Lin-Manuel
	Miranda (songs)
Production	Walt Disney
companies	Pictures
	Walt Disney
	Animation Studios
Distributed by	Walt Disney Studios
	Motion Pictures
Release dates	November 3, 2021
	(El Capitan
	Theatre)
	November 24, 2021
	(United States)
Running time	102 minutes ^[1]
Country	United States
Language	English
Budget	\$120-
Dauget	[0][0]
Dauget	150 million ^{[2][3]} \$256.8 million ^{[4][5]}

Mirabel's father catches Mirabel with the reassembled tablet behind her. He warns Mirabel to keep the discovery a secret, but they are overheard by Pepa's daughter Dolores, who possesses the gift of superhuman hearing.

Later that evening, Mirabel's 21-year-old sister <u>Isabela</u>, who can make plants and flowers grow at will, is scheduled to be engaged to the Madrigals' neighbor Mariano Guzmán. Amidst Mariano's proposal, an awkward dinner, and Dolores' inability to keep the secret, everyone learns about Mirabel's discovery. Casita

begins to crack again, and everyone starts to lose control of their gifts.

Amidst the chaos, Mirabel follows a group of rats carrying the pieces of the tablet and discovers a secret passage behind a portrait, where she finds Bruno. Bruno reveals he never left the house, and that the vision he had alternates between Mirabel saving Casita and destroying it, leading him to believe she is the key to the fate of Casita's magic. Not wanting Mirabel to be hurt, he broke the vision's tablet (the same one which Mirabel reassembled earlier) and isolated himself. At Mirabel's insistence, Bruno reluctantly conjures another vision that at first resembles the previous one, but then depicts Mirabel embracing Isabela, with whom Mirabel has a strained relationship, and strengthening the candle.

Mirabel reluctantly apologizes to Isabela, who angrily confesses she does not want to marry Mariano and is burdened by her image of perfection. After accidentally creating a cactus (which she finds beautiful despite it being asymmetrical), Isabela realizes that she does not need to be perfect. Mirabel then helps Isabela use her powers more freely and they embrace. However, when Mirabel attempts to explain her findings to Alma, she lashes out at Mirabel, accusing her of causing the family's misfortunes out of spite for not having a gift. Finally fed up with her grandmother's treatment of her, Mirabel calls out Alma for her unreasonable expectations, saying that no one is good enough for her and that she is the reason for the miracle's fading. The ensuing argument creates a fissure that splits the nearby mountain and demolishes Casita as the candle extinguishes, leaving the Madrigals powerless. A heartbroken Mirabel runs away from the family, who scramble to find her.

Several hours later, Alma finds a tearful Mirabel sitting beside the river where Pedro was killed. Alma realizes she was so determined to preserve the magic, she ignored how her expectations were harming the family. She expresses remorse for her actions, reconciles with Mirabel, and reunites with Bruno. The three return to the village and assemble the other Madrigals to rebuild Casita, with the townsfolk joining in. Mirabel installs a new doorknob to the main door, restoring the family's gifts and reviving Casita. She and Bruno then join the family for another photo.

Voice cast

- Stephanie Beatriz as Mirabel Madrigal: the 15-year-old [6][7] protagonist who, unlike her family, does not have a special gift. Director Jared Bush described her as "imperfect and weird and quirky, but also deeply emotional and incredibly empathetic". [8]
 - Noemi Josefina Flores voices a 5-year-old Mirabel.
- María Cecilia Botero as "Abuela" Alma Madrigal: Mirabel's 75-year-old grandmother and the family matriarch. [8] In the film, her full name is not given and she is simply called Abuela, which is grandmother in Spanish. [7]
 - Olga Merediz provides Abuela's singing voice. [9] Botero reprises her role in the <u>Spanish</u> <u>dub</u> of the film, [10][11] while Yaneth Waldman provides her singing voice in that version.
- John Leguizamo as <u>Bruno Madrigal</u>: Mirabel's 50-year-old ostracized uncle who has the ability to <u>see the future</u>. [12] Bruno also has two other personalities, Hernando and Jorge.



Stephanie Beatriz voices Mirabel Madrigal.

■ Mauro Castillo as Félix Madrigal: Mirabel's uncle and Pepa's husband. Bush stated that Félix is "just there to have a good time!". [8] Castillo reprises his role in the Spanish dub of the

film.[10][11]

- <u>Jessica Darrow</u> as Luisa Madrigal: Mirabel's second oldest sister, who is 19, has <u>superhuman strength</u> and is the tallest of the family. Co-writer <u>Charise Castro Smith</u> described Luisa as someone who "[carries] all the burdens and never [complains]".
- Angie Cepeda as Julieta Madrigal: Mirabel's 50-year-old mother and Agustín's wife who can heal people with her cooking. Cepeda reprises her role in the Spanish and Italian dubs of the film. [10][11][14]
- Carolina Gaitán as Pepa Madrigal: Mirabel's 50-year-old aunt and Félix's wife whose mood controls the weather. She often creates rain and storms due to her strong emotions. [8] Gaitán reprises her role in the Spanish dub of the film. [10][11]
- <u>Diane Guerrero</u> as <u>Isabela Madrigal</u>: Mirabel's oldest sister who is 21 and can make flowers and other plants bloom anywhere. Director <u>Byron Howard</u> described her as "perfect" and "a success". [8]
- Wilmer Valderrama as Agustín Madrigal: Mirabel's father and Julieta's husband who Bush described as "accident-prone" as seen when he had different accidents revolving around him getting attacked by bees. [8][6]
- Rhenzy Feliz as Camilo Madrigal: Pepa and Félix's 15-year-old son, Dolores and Antonio's brother, and Mirabel's cousin who can shapeshift. Castro Smith stated that Camilo is someone who "doesn't quite know who they are yet".
- Ravi Cabot-Conyers as Antonio Madrigal: Pepa and Félix's 5-year-old son, Dolores and Camilo's brother, and Mirabel's cousin who gained the ability to talk to and understand the animals. He looks up to Mirabel and considers her a big sister. 8
- Adassa as Dolores Madrigal: Pepa and Félix's 21-year-old daughter, Camilo and Antonio's sister, and Mirabel's cousin who has superhuman hearing. [8][13]
- Maluma as Mariano Guzman: Isabela's fiancé and Dolores' new boyfriend. [15][16] Maluma reprises his role in the Spanish dub of the film. [10]

Additionally, Rose Portillo voices Señora Guzman, Mariano's mother and the Madrigal family's neighbor; Alyssa Bella Candiani, Noemi Josefina Flores, Paisley Herrera, Brooklyn Skylar Rodriguez, and Ezra Rudulph voice the town kids; Juan Castano voices Osvaldo, a donkey delivery man who Bruno predicted would grow a gut which came true; Sarah-Nicole Robles voices Señora Ozma, a townsperson who once asked Luisa to reroute the river; Hector Elias voices Old Arturo, a townsperson who asks Alma about their fellow townspeople becoming anxious about the fading magic; Alan Tudyk provides the vocal effects of Pico, a toucan who Bush described as "clueless"; and animator Jorge E. Ruiz Cano voices the Tiple Maestro, an unseen tiple player who can be heard asking where he put his tiple when helping to set up for Antonio's ceremony and is later heard informing Luisa that the donkeys got out again.

Production

Development

During a November 2016 publicity tour for \underline{Moana} , Miranda revealed that early-stage work had begun on an animated project that $\underline{John\ Lasseter}$, then the chief creative officer of Disney Animation, had presented to him and Howard. Howard and Bush subsequently revealed that after finishing $\underline{Zootopia}$ (2016), they knew they wanted their next project to be a musical which turned into a Latin-American musical after Miranda came on board. Howard and Bush had already worked on buddy films "where two

characters go out into the world and learn about each other" and wanted to try something "completely different". The three men discussed their common experience of having large extended families, and decided to make a musical film about a large extended family with a dozen main characters. [21][22]

During the five years it took to develop the film, Howard and Bush's "true north" was the theme of perspective, "about how you see the other people in your family and how you're seen". [21] They began by brainstorming ideas on a whiteboard. [23] Early on, they made "three important discoveries" about families which became the basis of the film's story: "1) *most* of us don't feel truly seen by our families, 2) *most* of us carry burdens we never let our families see, and 3) *most* of us are oblivious that nearly *all of us*, especially within our own families, feel the exact same way". [24]:8 In turn, it was Miranda who suggested that the "vibrant, broad spectrum" of Latin-American music could "best capture" the complexity of family relationships. [24]:8



Lin-Manuel Miranda in 2019

Early in development, the production team spoke with many therapists and psychologists. All were asked who would be treated best by the parents in a four-person family; every answer differed. Bush concluded: "It's about how you perceive yourself in the family." [25] The crew also consulted family members and Disney Animation people. [26]

Howard and Bush started to discuss <u>Latin-American culture</u> at length with Juan Rendon and Natalie Osma, who had previously worked with them on the making-of documentary *Imagining Zootopia*. Rendon and Osma both happened to be from Colombia and repeatedly drew upon their personal experiences with <u>Colombian culture</u> in their discussions, which caused Howard, Bush, and Miranda to focus their research on that country. Rendon and Osma became the first two of several cultural experts hired by Disney Animation as consultants on the film, who collectively formed what Disney called the "Colombian Cultural Trust". [21][27]

In 2018, Rendon and Osma accompanied Howard, Bush, and Miranda on a research trip to Colombia. During their two weeks in the country, they met with architects, chefs, and artisans to immerse themselves in the country's culture. They also visited the Gabriel García Márquez foundation. They visited big cities like Bogotá and Cartagena, but they found inspiration in small towns such as Salento (terrain) and Barichara (architecture). Bush noticed that "every town we went to had a very specific personality", because of how the country's mountainous terrain divides and isolates them.

According to Disney fan club publication *Disney twenty-three*, this isolation became the key to placing the Madrigals' residence in a "remote 'encanto'—that is, a place that's 'charmed', or spiritually blessed, a domain where magic and reality merge". [21] As Colombian tourist guide Alejandra Espinosa Uribe explained, Colombians are surrounded by "sacred lands that feel magical, and we coexist with them, not questioning their existence". [24]: 30

In Barichara, they befriended Espinosa Uribe, who showed them around the town, and later hired her to consult on the film's historical and cultural authenticity. Espinosa Uribe was an inspiration for several aspects of the film's protagonist Mirabel, including her curly black hair, large eyeglasses, and gestures. The design of Mirabel's skirt was inspired by traditional skirts woven in the Vélez area.

The final version of the film is deliberately vague as to the timeframe in which it is set, but drew inspiration from early 20th-century Colombia. After exploring the 1950s, the directors decided to shift the look of the film to the early 1900s and to use a "folkloric Colombian aesthetic". At the beginning of the 20th century, the country endured the Thousand Days' War, which resulted in the populations of entire villages fleeing to save themselves as depicted in the film.

Writing

As the film steadily became more complex, with an entire family to develop, multiple songs, and a rich cultural setting with a deep tradition of magical realism, Howard and Bush realized they needed a second screenwriter to help write the screenplay. They selected Charise Castro Smith for her strong background in magical realism and experience with handling "real-world family dynamics". Bush described her as a "godsend", as she provided "a foundation of heart, vulnerability and authenticity". Castro Smith sought to create a distinct, imperfect, and completely human character in Mirabel, one that spoke to the lives of many Latinas while also being relatable to viewers globally.

From working on *Moana*, Miranda knew that film's protagonist, <u>Moana</u>, originally had eight brothers before they were removed to streamline the film's plot. As Miranda had expected from that experience, Disney Animation initially resisted moving forward with a dozen main characters for *Encanto*. Miranda deliberately wrote the film's opening number, "The Family Madrigal", to prove to Disney Animation that it was possible to efficiently introduce such a large family and its internal dynamics to the audience. Because of the film's 90-minute runtime, the filmmakers struggled to make the center family feel genuine, fleshed out, and human, and to give them arcs.

The crew worked hard to develop *Encanto* upon instantly identifiable family <u>archetypes</u>. The team focused on pushing past the archetypes and showing that family members are more complicated than the "masks" imposed on them. [19] Each member of the Madrigal family is inspired by a common family archetype if it were exaggerated and made magical; for example, Isabela and Luisa are based on that of the golden child and rock, respectively. [30] Bush explained that this method prevented each gift from feeling arbitrary, instead being prescribed by emotions and personality. [24]: 26

Like most Disney Animation films, *Encanto* went through "many different versions" in its development, as various story ideas were explored and discarded. [24]: 17 The ideas discarded along the way include: a young modern-day woman is transported by a magical doorknob to another world; [24]: 17 Agustín was the family patriarch who discovered Encanto and personally built Casita there; [24]: 17 the film would have been expressly set in the 1950s and featured cosmopolitan and modern fashions, [24]: 22 as well as motor vehicles and a trip to the big city where Alma had originally come from; [24]: 146 Casita was an extension of only Alma's personality, rather than the entire family; [24]: 41 the film would have followed the story of multiple generations and Casita over a 100-year timespan; [24]: 49 Mirabel was desperately trying to find her magical gift, rather than merely expressing frustration with not being granted one; [24]: 71 the colors of Mirabel's world as seen from her perspective would have reflected her emotional state as she narrated the first two acts, and then changed over to more realistic colors when the film shifted to Alma's point of view in the third act; [24]: 76 Luisa's room would have been made out of stone and appeared "boring" to reflect her sense of responsibility, but would have concealed a "secret exit" to a hidden room similar to a "theme park" where she could have fun; [24]: 94 and Isabela at one point had a "dorky" suitor named Bubo who came from the big city. [24]: 153

After the film's release, Bush revealed via Twitter several more ideas which had been discussed and set aside: Alma gave birth to the triplets at the river, at the moment of Pedro's death; Isabela and Mirabel's mutual hostility culminated in a fistfight; and Mirabel celebrated her quinceañera. [23] According to Howard, as the plot evolved over several years, "the core of the whole film" was always the relationship between Mirabel and Alma. [21][24]: 116

Casting

Disney cast several actors with Colombian heritage, including <u>Stephanie Beatriz</u>, whose father is Colombian; <u>John Leguizamo</u>, who was born in <u>Bogotá</u>; and <u>Wilmer Valderrama</u>, who spent his childhood in Colombia, where his mother is from. [31]

Though no obvious roles which he could voice existed, due to the Madrigals' Colombian nationality and Mirabel's lack of an animal sidekick, <u>Alan Tudyk</u>—considered Disney's "good luck charm"—makes a <u>cameo</u> as Pico, a toucan. [32][33] When he first came into the recording studio, Tudyk informed the crew that their <u>scratch vocals</u> for Pico were not actually those of toucans, but instead were parrots. He spent many hours doing imitations of various toucans. The team would speak to him in English, and Tudyk would respond using toucan noises. [34]

Design

Encanto was the "hardest film" to date for heads of animation Renato dos Anjos and Kira Lehtomaki because they were asked to fully develop a dozen characters, as opposed to other animated films which primarily feature two or three characters out of a large cast. [35] Accordingly, the characters required a degree of complexity that Disney Animation had previously never achieved. [36] Journalist Edna Liliana Valencia Murillo was the Afro-Caribbean consultant and contributed greatly towards Félix, Dolores, and Antonio's designs. [37] According to Howard, certain characters' Afro-Latin hairstyles were essential. [38] Neysa and Lorelay Bové, the costume design lead and associate production designer respectively, hoped to represent the film's various communities well. Neysa requested Colombian consultants, which included an anthropologist and botanist. [37]

Instead of fabrics similar to <u>neoprene</u> that are often depicted in films, the characters' costumes are generally loose. The clothes are meant to appear as though they are from Colombia. The designers emphasized embroidery, texture, and movement; each costume—except Isabela's—is asymmetric, with a handmade feeling. In *Encanto*, personalities and family ties are represented through color. For example, Pepa and Félix's side of the family wear warm tones of orange, yellow, and red—an homage to his Caribbean ancestry. [24]:29

By contrast, Julieta and Agustín's side wear cool tones of blues, purples, and greens. Alma "sits in the middle", with darker hues, such as purple, black, and brown. [24]:29 Each Madrigal has a symbol on their clothing that denotes their gift, such as barbells on Luisa's skirt and Pepa's sun earrings. Due to her lack of a gift, Mirabel has symbols of the other family members' gifts embroidered across her skirt, [39] in addition to her face and name. [40]

The residents of the *Encanto* dress in neutral tones; thus, the main family are distinguished by their vivid colors. [24]:29 They needed to be distinctive while not standing out, which visual development artist Jin Kim said occasionally made them harder to design than the main cast. [24]:148 Disney used simple silhouettes for

the villagers' clothes to make them seem and feel similar to typical residents from the Colombian coffee region. They incorporated depictions of the <u>Sombrero vueltiao</u> from the <u>Zenú</u> Indigenous Community and the Sombrero Aguadeño from the Aguadas Community. [24]:149

Animation



Quindío, Cocora Valley and Barichara in Santander were some of the places that the Encanto production team visited in Colombia to develop the film.

The animators were challenged by the directors to make Mirabel distinctively different from all prior Disney heroines; she had to be both capable and imperfect, but not merely just clumsy. The Casita was inspired not only by traditional Colombian homes but films in which houses come alive, especially $\underline{Beetlejuice}$ (1988).

The production team learned in their research that music, dance, and rhythm are core elements of everyday life in Colombia. [41] As a result, *Encanto* was the first Disney Animation film to have choreographers involved in the development process from start to finish, meaning they worked closely with the production team to develop songs, characters, and story. [35][41]

This is in contrast to older films where the story was already in place by the time a choreographer was hired to consult on specific scenes. [41] For *Encanto*, Disney Animation initially hired African-American choreographer <u>Jamal Sims</u>, who insisted on immediately hiring Colombian-American dancer Kai Martinez as the film's animation reference consultant. [35][41] They worked together with a team of dancers to prepare choreography reference footage for each scene, and then gave feedback to the animators on scenes as they were animated. [35][41] They developed different dance styles for different characters; Luisa's style is reggaeton, while Mirabel's style is <u>Cali salsa</u>. [41]

For selection and animation of the plants and flowers that Isabela could make grow, the production team consulted with Colombian botanist Felipe Zapata. His advice allowed appropriate plants to be selected and then shown in accurate detail. The river of <u>jacarandas</u> and <u>strangler figs</u> and the cascade of <u>sundew</u> that Isabela produces are all based on this input. Plants in the background scenery are also realistic. These included the iconic, but now vulnerable <u>wax palm</u> and dramatic <u>Cecropia</u> trees. Economically important plants, like coffee, also appear. [42]

Over 800 people, 108 of them animators, were involved in the production of *Encanto*. Disney Animation was planning to send many of its animators to Colombia starting on March 15, 2020, in preparation for the film's transition from development to production. This second research trip had to be cancelled after the onset of the <u>COVID-19 pandemic</u>. The studio's animators ended up having to <u>work remotely</u> with the Colombian Cultural Trust; for example, Espinosa Uribe gave the animators a <u>virtual tour</u> of Colombia with the help of her cell phone. Diane Guerrero sent the studio's designers photographs of Colombian food taken by her relatives in Colombia.

On June 22, 2020, Miranda confirmed on <u>Good Morning America</u> that he and Bush were working on an animated Disney film set in Colombia, with Bush and Byron Howard directing, and Charise Castro Smith co-directing. [44]

On June 18, 2020, the tentative title was revealed to be *Encanto*. The project was also confirmed to be the film Miranda was involved in, and it was reported to be about a girl in a magical family. On December 10, 2020, the project was officially confirmed at a Disney Investor Day meeting, where a clip was shown, a fall 2021 release was announced, and magical realism was referenced. According to Bush, development of the film's script wrapped in August 2021, and production on the film wrapped a month later. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many crew members worked together remotely for over a year and did not meet each other in person until Disney put on a socially distanced outdoor screening of the final version of the film.

Cinematography

Encanto is the first Disney Animation film since $\underline{Tangled}$ (2010) to employ a tall \underline{frame} , a decision made to "get closer to the characters". This \underline{layout} was supplemented by $\underline{romantic}$ lighting. $\underline{[24]}$: 168 According to Howard, $\underline{romantic}$ (meaning heightened in spirit) is the film's key word in terms of the approach towards cinematography and lighting. The latter was also inspired by magical realism, due to the genre's heavy influence on the writing and characters. $\underline{[38]}$

The directors aimed to use the film's optics to portray strong emotions. Alessandro Jacomini and Daniel Rice—directors of cinematography and lighting respectively—stated this use "would amplify, exaggerate, and distort perception, which is very in line with Mirabel's point of view as a narrator". Her feelings of being left out were also shown using emotive lighting. The directors frequently reminded the crew of the emotional subtext of every scene as well as the intricacies of the individual parts. That subtext was applied by Warner, Jacomini, and Rice in elaborate sequences, such as the song "Surface Pressure". [24]: 168

Soundtrack

In June 2020, Miranda publicly revealed that he had begun to write the film's music, which would have eight original songs in both Spanish and English. After the film's premiere, he disclosed that he had been writing songs for the film from the very beginning. On September 8, 2021, Germaine Franco, co-composer of the songs for \underline{Coco} (2017), began to score the film.

<u>Encanto</u> was released on November 19, 2021. A huge commercial success alike the film, the soundtrack reached number one on the US <u>Billboard</u> 200, becoming the first Disney soundtrack since that of *Frozen II* (2019) to top the chart. The track "We Don't Talk About Bruno" broke various records and became one of Disney's most successful songs of all time. It topped the US <u>Billboard Hot 100</u> and the <u>UK Singles Chart</u>, and marked Disney's first number-one song on the former in the 21st century and its first-ever on the latter, making *Encanto* the first Disney film to produce a number-one song and a number-one album.

Release

Marketing

The first look of the film was shown on December 10, 2020, during Disney's Investor Day. [53] The teaser trailer was released on July 8, 2021, [54] which garnered acclaim from internet users due to Luisa's physical appearance, especially her muscles; she was dubbed the "Buff Lady". [55][56] The official trailer was released on September 29, 2021. [57] For its opening weekend at the box office, Disney spent \$14 million on television advertisements to promote the film, generating 1.26 billion impressions. *Deadline Hollywood* said the marketing failed to distinguish the film from other Disney properties, causing audience members to believe that it would be similar to *Coco*. [58] /Film was critical of Disney's merchandising, most of which featured Mirabel and Isabela. Many members of the Madrigal family could only be bought in more costly merchandise of the entire family. Since Isabela is considered the perfect and beautiful sister, the website stated the merchandise reinforces the idea that beauty is the most effective marketing tactic for young girls. [55]

Theatrical

Disney held the film's world premiere at the El Capitan Theatre in Hollywood, Los Angeles, on November 3, 2021, [59] and also held a Colombia premiere at the Teatro Colón in Bogotá, Colombia on November 23, 2021. [60] The film was theatrically released in the United States on November 24. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it had an exclusive 30-day theatrical run before being released on Disney+ on December 24. [61] The film was paired with the short film Far from the Tree. [62][63] Encanto was released in China on January 7, 2022. [64] On February 16, 2022, the film was re-released in cinemas after its success on Disney+ and Academy Award nominations. [65] As part of Disney's 100th anniversary, Encanto was re-released in Helios theaters across Poland on October 28, 2023. [66]

Home media

Encanto was released on Disney+ on December 24, 2021, and was released by <u>Walt Disney Studios Home Entertainment</u> on <u>DVD</u>, <u>Blu-ray</u>, and <u>Ultra HD Blu-ray</u> on February 8, 2022. Bonus features include "Let's Talk About Bruno", "Our Casita", "Journey to Colombia", "Familia Lo Es Todo", "A Journey Through Music", and a sing-along version of the movie. [67] The short film *Far from the Tree* was also released alongside the film on streaming and on physical media. [68]

Since its Disney+ release, *Encanto* has consistently topped <u>Nielsen's</u> weekly streaming chart, most recently with 1.224 billion total minutes of viewing. Nielsen estimated that *Encanto* was the most-watched film of 2022 with 27.4 billion minutes viewed; approximately 269 million complete showings. It was more than double the second-place film on the end of year list *Turning Red* (11.43 billion minutes).

Reception

Box office

Encanto grossed \$96.1 million in the United States and Canada, and \$160.4 million in other territories, for a worldwide total of \$256.5 million. [4][5] *Encanto* was 2021's highest grossing animated film before it was surpassed by Sing 2. Factoring in both the film's production budget and marketing expenses, along with the theaters' share of revenues, *Encanto* was estimated to need to gross at least \$300 million worldwide to break-even. Nevertheless, the film went viral over the 2021 holiday season and achieved wider commercial success after its digital release to Disney+ on December 24, 2021. [74][75][76]

In the United States and Canada, it was released alongside <u>House of Gucci</u> and <u>Resident Evil: Welcome to Raccoon City</u>, and originally projected to gross \$35–40 million from 3,980 theaters in its five-day opening weekend. It opened nationwide on Wednesday, November 24, 2021 (the day before American Thanksgiving), and made \$7.5 million on its first day, including \$1.5 million from Tuesday night previews. It went on to make \$40.6 million in its first five days. Of the 3.7 million moviegoers who saw it, 52% were Latino and Hispanic, 51% were families, and 62% were female. Though its five-day opening gross was lower than Pixar's <u>The Good Dinosaur</u> (2015) (\$55.4 million), which failed at the box office in 2015, *Encanto* had the best opening weekend for an animated film during the COVID-19 pandemic. [79]

In its second weekend, it made \$13.1 million, less than the second weekend results of *The Good Dinosaur* (\$15.3 million) and $\underline{Tangled}$ (2010) (\$21.6 million) but higher than $\underline{The\ Princess\ and\ the\ Frog}$ (2009) (\$12.1 million). [80][81] It went on to finish in second place in its third and fourth weekends, earning \$10 million and \$6.5 million respectively. [82][83] In its fifth weekend, it made \$1.8 million and dropped to ninth place at the box office. [84][85] In its sixth weekend, it finished in tenth place with \$1.08 million. [86] It dropped out of the box office top ten in its seventh weekend, finishing eleventh with \$613,501.

Outside of the U.S. and Canada, it made \$29.3 million from 47 markets in its opening weekend. The top countries in its first five days were France (\$3.5 million), Colombia (\$2.6 million), the United Kingdom (\$2.4 million), Korea (\$2.2 million) and Italy (\$2.1 million). It earned \$20.7 million in its second weekend and \$13.6 million in its third. [90][91] In its fourth weekend, it became Colombia's second highest-grossing animated film of all time. In its fifth weekend, it crossed the \$100 million mark outside the U.S. and Canada. It earned \$3.5 million in its sixth weekend, \$5.8 million in its seventh, and \$3.6 million in its eighth. As of January 9, 2022, its largest markets are France (\$18.5 million), Colombia (\$10.2 million), the U.K. (\$8.8 million), Spain (\$7.3 million), and Japan (\$6.6 million).

Critical response

Encanto received critical acclaim. News channel <u>CNBC</u> reported reviewers considered it among Walt Disney Animation's best films. On the <u>review aggregator</u> website <u>Rotten Tomatoes</u>, 92% of 212 critics' reviews are positive, with an average rating of 7.5/10. The website's consensus reads, "Encanto's setting and cultural perspective are new for Disney, but the end result is the same – enchanting, beautifully animated fun for the whole family." Metacritic, which uses a weighted average, assigned the film a score of 75 out of 100 based on 41 critics, indicating "generally favorable" reviews. Audiences polled by <u>CinemaScore</u> gave the film an average grade of "A" on an A+ to F scale, while those at <u>PostTrak</u> gave it an 88% positive score, with 70% saying they would definitely recommend it.

[T]he general consensus on *Encanto* is that, if you tend to enjoy most modern Disney movies, you'll probably enjoy *Encanto*, as it has a lot in common with them. However, you might just find something truly special within that tried and true formula.

Dirk Libbey, <u>CinemaBlend</u> writer^[97]

The film's animation, which journalists considered beautiful, [106] was a source of plaudits. [102] <u>RogerEbert.com</u> critic Monica Castillo thought the musical sequences and characters' rooms allowed animation more artistic and abstract than that of previous Disney films. [107] Writing for <u>Good Morning America</u>, <u>Peter Travers</u> deemed the visuals of *Encanto* miraculous, [108] while Shreemayee Das of *Firstpost* described the animation as having spellbinding intricacy. [109] <u>Variety</u>'s Owen Gleiberman gave acclaim,

saying "*Encanto* has been visualized with a vivacious naturalistic glow (swirling flower petals, eye-candy pastels) that, at moments, is nearly psychedelic". David Rooney from *The Hollywood Reporter* highlighted the film's colors and the designs of the costumes, natural settings, and Casita for particular praise. For *IndieWire*, Kristen Lopez lauded the visuals as stunning and life-like. *IGN*'s Andrea Towers called the animation beautiful. The *Daily Telegraph* film critic Robbie Collin was particularly amazed: "*Encanto*'s animation is dazzling in all sorts of ways, with technical effects and flights of creative fancy that would have been unimaginable even a year ago, particularly during the musical numbers." [113]

Critics found the film's songs "spellbinding". [102] According to Ben Travis of *Empire*, the songs once again demonstrate Miranda's abundant skills for enchanting, wondrous melodies and lyrics. [114] For *Chicago Sun-Times* and the *Daily Herald*, respectively, Richard Roeper and Dann Gire described the music as "infectious and instantly memorable", and "emotionally distilled [and] verbally nimble"; [115][116] *The Detroit News* writer Adam Graham agreed, commenting that the songs "lift [*Encanto*] to the sky". [117] Similarly, *The Arizona Republic*'s Bill Goodykoontz regarded them as the film's peak. [118] *CNN* writer Brian Lowry shared a similar view. [119] Nevertheless, many journalists found fault with the music, such as *National Review*'s Kyle Smith, who called it "thuddingly mediocre". [120] Though he found the songs "breezy and fun", Christian Holub of *Entertainment Weekly* deemed them unmemorable. [121] Writing for *Bleeding Cool*, Kaitlyn Booth believed the music was "[no]thing particularly special" and that a lack of songs would have benefited the film. [122]

Reviewers singled out *Encanto*'s representation and diversity for particular praise. [124] Writing for The Guardian, Simran Hans found the awareness of unique generational trauma culturally displacement intriguing and surprising. [125] Despite being critical of a perceived disguise of cultural representation, Rafael Matomayor of *The New York* Observer stated that "when the film dives into the specificity of its portrayal of Colombia[,] ... it becomes an exciting, nuanced, complex magical realist adventure" that propels Disney into "a new era". [126] The Independent's Clarissa Loughgrey highlighted that the cultural specificity was more than simple aesthetic or linguistic references, commending the incorporation of magical realism

[*Encanto*] is about a lot more than just representation. The happiness portrayed in *Encanto* isn't just <u>escapism</u>, it's defiance. It's about challenging that notion that we Colombians have to be miserable forever. ... It's about the miracle of thriving when you seem almost cosmically predisposed to suffer ad infinitum. Because that's what Colombia is: a country of people trying their best to thrive in spite of themselves.

José María Luna, *Polygon* writer [123]

and various skin tones. Whelan Barzel of $\underline{\textit{Time Out}}$ summarized the film as a "genuine love letter to the diversity of Latin America".

Reviews with regards to the film's portrayal of family dynamics deemed the aspect one of its strengths. According to <u>Slant Magazine</u>'s Derek Smith, <u>Encanto</u> thrives in expressing not only the typical message of the value of family but also the concept that even the best families require much effort to stay intact. Preston Barra of <u>Denton Record-Chronicle</u> named the message of family a contributing factor to the film becoming a "must-see family event"; fellow journalist Matt Goldberg, who writes for <u>Collider</u>, commended the message of "[being] enough because family is enough". Polygon's Petrana Radulovic found the familial interactions stunningly realistic and strengthened by magical metaphors. Many critics also acclaimed <u>Encanto</u>'s emotional depth. <u>The A.V. Club</u>'s Caroline Siede lauded the depiction of intergenerational trauma. According to <u>Screen International</u> critic Tim Greierson, when the directors

concentrate on the script's underlying emotions, the film is extremely moving. [134] Writing for *CinemaBlend*, Dirk Libbey opined that every audience member would eventually cry once they discovered which character they identified with most. [135] *MovieWeb* singled out Mirabel's search for acceptance and a purpose, stating "[b]uckets of tears are going to be shed". [136]

Regarding "Disney's regular formula", *Encanto* divided reviewers; some thought that it departed from the formula well. [97] *Forbes*'s Scott Mendelson called the film "terrifically unconventional", [137] while *World* critic Collin Garbarino highlighted several aspects that he recognized as deviating from the formula; such as a lack of princesses and villains, as well as the focus on community. [138] *Vulture*'s Bilge Ebiri attributed the film's enchanting qualities to the "smaller-scale narrative". He explained that when the Madrigals' inner journey is combined with the typical "Disney spectacle", it becomes an unexpected, "downright <u>Sirkian power"</u>. [139] Others found it too similar to other Disney films. For *Pittsburgh Magazine*, Sean Collier felt the film was "just another by-the-numbers Disney flick", [140] while <u>Peter Bradshaw</u> from *The Guardian* thought that the story "wants to have its metaphorical cake and eat it", deeming it contrived. [141] /*Film*'s Josh Spiegel thought *Encanto* included a mixture of formulaic aspects from many of the previous Disney and Pixar films, and failed to make them unnoticeable. [142]

Some critics found the story unfocused. The <code>Irish Independent</code>'s Paul Whittington considered the plot "too aimless, to satisfy anyone for long". [143] Alice Forman of <code>Mashable</code> concurred and felt several parts of Mirabel's journey were arbitrary; she had a particularly negative opinion of the film's middle section, which she called tedious. [144] <code>The Globe and Mail</code> writer Aparita Bhandari asserted the internal, rather than external, source of conflict and several unanswered questions confused her, preventing her from immersing herself in the film. [145] From <code>USA Today</code>, Brian Truitt expressed his disappointment in the <code>third act</code>, which he said misses <code>Encanto</code>'s focal point. [146] David Lynch, writing for <code>KENS</code>, agreed, and stated the act was weak due to an underdeveloped relationship between Mirabel and Alma, as well as clumsy writing. [147] Multiple critics also cited the film's lack of villains as a detractor. [148][149]

Metacritic reported that *Encanto* appeared in five critic top-ten lists, including *CNN* and <u>New York Daily News</u>'s non-ranked lists, and <u>Pittsburgh Post-Gazette</u>'s ranking (ninth). The film has also appeared on several lists of the best animated films of 2021, including those by <u>Paste</u> (tenth), Rotten Tomatoes (sixth), Screen Rant (non-ranked), MovieWeb (fifth), Vulture (non-ranked), and <u>Comic Book Resources</u> (sixth). Variety, IndieWire, Gold Derby, Entertainment Weekly, The Hollywood Reporter, <u>Den of Geek</u>, and the <u>Los Angeles Times</u> named the film the most-likely to win the <u>Academy Award</u> for Best Animated Feature, which was ultimately the case.

Impact and response

<u>The Denver Post</u> journalist John Wenzel wrote, with *Encanto* alongside other 2021 films like <u>West Side Story</u> and <u>Being the Ricardos</u>, "Latino voices are having a moment in U.S. cinema, injecting a diverse set of cultures long ignored by TV, books, movies, video games, stage shows and news media." Pamila Avila, writing for <u>USA Today</u>, underscored that *Encanto* is Disney's first feature with an all-<u>Latin American</u> cast, capturing "the complicated tug and pull between older and younger generations in <u>Hispanic</u> families." Roughly 25% of viewership comes from Hispanic households, while 40% of viewers are between the ages of 2 and 11. [167]

<u>Billboard</u> writer Leila Cobo said, following the success of Colombian musicians like <u>Shakira</u>, <u>Maluma</u> and <u>J Balvin</u> in the U.S., Colombia is "finally seen and not just heard" via *Encanto*. Cobo praised the film for not homogenizing all of the <u>Latin American countries</u> in the manner U.S. media has generally been, instead accurately depicting the culture unique to Colombia: "from accents to outfits to minute details like the hand-painted tableware, the embroidered dresses, the food, the many colors of our skin, even the animals – including the ubiquitous <u>toucan</u> and the yellow butterflies that are synonymous with <u>García Márquez</u>." [168]

Johanna Ferreira of <u>PopSugar</u> wrote that the success of both *Encanto* and its soundtrack speaks to "not just the importance and significance of this type of representation in animated films, but also how movies like this are really changing how Latino stories are being told." She stated *Encanto* celebrates the importance of family and respect for <u>Latin American culture</u>, featuring "animated stories about Latinos written by Latinos, with characters voiced by Latinos, and a storyline that actually celebrates Latino communities rather than stereotype [Latino]." [169]

Mikael Wood of *Los Angeles Times* stated *Encanto* became "2022's first widespread cultural phenomenon", bolstered by its unique direction and music. [170] *Far Out* journalist Tyler Posen called the effect "*Encanto*-mania". [171] Various social media trends surrounding *Encanto* had "people posting videos of their children recognizing themselves for perhaps the first time in the movie's characters." [170] Luisa's physical appearance has been praised for representing muscular women—a departure from Disney's conventionally "feminine" depiction of female protagonists as "small and skinny". [172] As of January 23, 2022, the videos tagged with the hashtag "#encanto" have collectively amassed more than 11.5 billion views on TikTok. [173][174] A viral meme in early 2022, "We Don't Talk About Apple Bottom Jeans", received over 31 million views in under three months, featuring a dubbed-over version of the song "We Don't Talk About Bruno" and inspiring other parodies of the song.

The film's characters and their dynamics have fueled a discourse among <u>mental health</u> specialists, many of whom reported that their clients, especially <u>first-generation children of immigrants</u>, "see themselves reflected" in the story of *Encanto* and use the film to communicate "about things that otherwise might go unsaid." Mirabel, Isabela, Luisa, Alma and Bruno have been the most discussed characters, with Bruno being associated with <u>neurodivergent</u> family members. Speaking to <u>CNN</u>, <u>psychotherapist</u> Kadesha Adelakun stated "there are so many layers" to *Encanto*, portraying issues "many families are going through." [175][176]

Accolades

At the 94th Academy Awards, *Encanto* received nominations for Best Original Score and Best Original Song, and won Best Animated Feature. The film won three awards at the 65th Annual Grammy Awards in the visual media categories: Best Score Soundtrack, Best Compilation Soundtrack, and Best Song ("We Don't Talk About Bruno"). *Encanto*'s other nominations include nine Annie Awards (winning three), a British Academy Film Award (which it won), two Critics' Choice Movie Awards, and three Golden Globe Awards (winning one). It also won the National Board of Review Award for Best Animated Film.

Other media

Encanto at the Hollywood Bowl

Encanto at the Hollywood Bowl is a 2022 live musical hosted by <u>Lin-Manuel Miranda</u>, which includes some of the film's cast members performing the songs from the film. The stage musical was performed on November 11 and 12 at the <u>Hollywood Bowl</u>, and a filmed special of the show was released on December 28, 2022 on Disney+. [183]

Nightmares and Sueños

The upcoming <u>young adult novel</u> *Nightmares and Sueños*, written by Alex Segura, is a prequel to the film that focuses on seventeen-year-old Bruno and shows why people do not talk about him. [184] It will release on December 3, 2024. [185]

Video games

Mirabel was added to <u>Disney Dreamlight Valley</u> in a February 2023 update as one of the villagers of the titular valley, along with a small version of Casita called "Mini Casita" as her home. [186]

In the <u>world building game</u> <u>Disney Magic Kingdoms</u>, during a limited time event with a storyline set after the events of the film, Mirabel, Bruno, Isabela, Luisa and Antonio were added as playable characters, along with Casita and Isabela's Room as attractions. [187][188]

Theme park attractions

On March 21, 2024, Disney announced that a new *Encanto* stage show, *¡Celebración Encanto!* will run from June 10 through September 6, 2024, at the CommuniCore Plaza in World Celebration neighborhoods at EPCOT. [189]

Future

Jared Bush and Charise Castro Smith said they are open to a potential Disney+ series. Bush stated he would be happy to see a show about any member of the family, and Castro Smith shared that Miranda was very interested in creating a show about Dolores. Disney CEO Bob Chapek described *Encanto* as the company's latest franchise during a February 2022 earnings call.

Reference notes

- a. Attributed to multiple references: [98][99][100][101]
- b. Attributed to multiple references: [157][158][159][160][161][162][163]

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External links

- Official website (https://movies.disney.com/encanto)
- Encanto (https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2953050/) at IMDb
- Encanto (https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/encanto_2021) at Rotten Tomatoes

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