

# Jaws: Celebrating 50 Years [B1]

Si celebra il 50° anniversario del leggendario squalo con trecento zanne seghettate che terrorizzò milioni di spettatori e inaugurò il genere dei blockbuster estivi. Ripercorriamo alcuni curiosi antefatti della travagliata produzione di Steven Spielberg.

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You're gonna need a bigger boat." It's been fifty years since audiences first heard this famous line in the film **Jaws**, one of the most iconic quotes in the history of cinema. **Released** in 1975, **Jaws** went on to become a cultural phenomenon, and the line would become a popular American **catchphrase**, used when someone is faced with a situation that is much more **challenging** or complex than they initially anticipated.

## MALFUNCTIONING SHARKS

Directed by Steven Spielberg, **Jaws** is based on a novel by Peter Benchley and **stars** Martin Brody as a police chief, Richard Dreyfuss as a marine biologist, and Robert Shaw as a professional shark hunter. Together, the three men hunt a man-eating great white shark that has been attacking people at a beach community on the fictional Amity Island.

## BAD WEATHER

Mostly filmed on and off the island of Martha's Vineyard in Massachusetts, the film was marred by bad weather, causing it **to go over budget** and **over schedule**. Also, its three \$150,000 animatronic sharks often malfunctioned, and so Spielberg had to mostly suggest **rather than** show the shark, which he did **to great effect**.

## BRUCE THE SHARK

**Nevertheless**, the problematic shark had such a presence on the film set that **crew members** named it Bruce, after Steven Spielberg's lawyer, Bruce

Ramer. The great white in the film was 25 feet long [7.62m] — a shark of that size would have **weighed** 4.9 tons in real life. In reality, however, the largest great white shark ever recorded was only 19.7ft [6m] long as measured in Ledge Point, Western Australia, when **caught** in 1987.

## HUGE SUCCESS

The film **thrilled** and terrified audiences worldwide, although the shark actually 'only' kills five people, including — spoiler alert — Quint, Robert Shaw's character, and one dog. Made for less than \$9 million, it made over \$470 million, making it the **highest-grossing** film of all time — until the release of Star Wars two years later. It won three Academy Awards, including one for John Williams' brilliant **soundtrack** and inspired three sequels, with an **overall kill count** of thirty people.

## THE ORIGINAL SUMMER BLOCKBUSTER

Today, **Jaws** is considered the prototypical summer **blockbuster**, characterised as a simple-concept, high-budget and high-grossing film. It had an exceptionally wide release, was accompanied by an exceptionally extensive marketing campaign, and attracted an exceptionally large audience for a film at that time. Realising the success of the formula, film studios began replicating it every summer, and so the summer **blockbuster** was born.

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# Glossary

- **stars** = avere come protagonista
- **caught** = catturare, pescare
- **thrilled** = entusiasmare
- **soundtrack** = colonna sonora
- **weighed** = pesare
- **Released** = uscire
- **catchphrase** = motto
- **to great effect** = con grande efficacia
- **crew members** = membri della produzione
- **Jaws** = mascelle
- **challenging** = difficile
- **Nevertheless** = ciò nonostante
- **overall** = totale
- **kill count** = numero totale di morti
- **blockbuster** = successo commerciale
- **to go over budget** = sforare il budget
- **over schedule** = andare oltre la scadenza
- **rather than** = invece di
- **highest-grossing** = con il maggior incasso