

= Hulk (film) =

Hulk is a 2003 American superhero film based on the fictional Marvel Comics character of the same name . Ang Lee directed the film , which stars Eric Bana as Dr. Bruce Banner , as well as Jennifer Connelly , Sam Elliott , Josh Lucas , and Nick Nolte . The film explores the origins of Bruce Banner , who after a lab accident involving gamma radiation finds himself able to turn into a huge green @-@ skinned monster whenever he gets angry , while he is pursued by the United States military and comes into a conflict with his father .

Development for the film started as far back as 1990 . The film was at one point to be directed by Joe Johnston and then Jonathan Hensleigh . More scripts had been written by Hensleigh , John Turman , Michael France , Zak Penn , J. J. Abrams , Scott Alexander and Larry Karaszewski , Michael Tolkin , and David Hayter before Ang Lee and James Schamus ' involvement . Hulk was shot mostly in California , primarily in the San Francisco Bay Area .

Hulk grossed over \$ 245 million worldwide , higher than its \$ 137 million budget , and received mixed to positive reactions from critics . Many praised the writing , acting , character development , the action sequences and the musical score by Danny Elfman , while some criticized its outdated CGI , editing and dark story elements . A reboot , titled The Incredible Hulk , was released on June 13 , 2008 as the second film of Marvel Cinematic Universe .

= = Plot = =

Scientist David Banner introduces the idea of creating super soldiers by introducing modified DNA sequences extracted from various animals to strengthen the human cellular response , making them effectively impervious to any weaponized agent , but General Thaddeus Ross denies him permission to use human subjects . Banner subsequently conducts the experiments on himself . After the birth of his son Bruce , he finds that his son may have inherited the effects and seeks a cure , but is stopped in the process . Bruce remembers nothing of the incident after a traumatic event , and has been raised by the Krenzlers . Years later , Bruce is a geneticist working with his ex @-@ girlfriend Betty Ross , within the Berkeley Biotechnology Institute on nanomed research . The pair hope to achieve instantenous cell repair by using low level Gamma radiation exposure to activate the nanomeds once they are introduced into a living organism . During routine maintenance of their appropriated Gammaspectrometer , a circuit shorts and triggers the experiment 's program sequence . Unable to prevent the machine from firing , Bruce throws himself in front of his colleague to shield him and is exposed to incredibly toxic levels of Gamma Radiation .

Betty visits Bruce in the hospital and remarks that he should be dead , but Bruce feels great . A new janitor at the lab claims that he is Bruce 's biological father , of whom Bruce has no recollection . When under extreme stress , Bruce transforms into the Hulk who destroys the laboratory , though he has no memory of the incident . General Ross suspects Bruce of collaborating with his father but then deduces Bruce has repressed memories . He orders Bruce to be put under house arrest . Through a phone call with his father , Bruce learns that the radiation unleashed something that was already in his DNA , and that David Banner plans to have Betty killed by his dogs , which now have similar powers to the Hulk (thanks to David mutating them with gamma radiation) , and he is attacked by Major Glenn Talbot , leading to a transformation into the Hulk . The Hulk seriously injures Talbot before leaping to save Betty from the dogs . The Hulk kills David 's dogs and changes back into Bruce before being captured by the military the next morning .

Kept at a secret desert base , Bruce is kept under observation while Talbot intends to weaponize the Hulk 's powers . David Banner tries to recreate Bruce 's failed experiment , but instead of turning into another Hulk he finds himself able to absorb any materials and energy he touches , and hands himself over to the military after telling Betty that he murdered his wife in front of the child Bruce . Bruce has a nightmare about the event which leads to a more powerful transformation of the Hulk . Talbot is killed in an explosion of his own making . The Hulk escapes the base and rampages his way across the desert to San Francisco , battling army forces sent after him . When Betty calms him into his human form , General Ross realizes that the Hulk cannot be controlled and that Bruce

should be executed .

At their mutual execution , David Banner tries to taunt his son into transforming into Hulk , but fails . He then decides to " go first " and bites an electrical cable absorbing all the electricity in San Francisco . The electricity hits Bruce , triggering his own transformation . A brutal fight ensues between David and the Hulk , with David absorbing Hulk 's energy during the fight . David finds that the Hulk 's energy is too much for him to handle and he is killed by an army missile at the height of his weakness . One year later , though Bruce is presumed dead , General Ross mentions apparent Hulk sightings and Betty admits her love for Bruce . In a South American jungle , Bruce has become a doctor and is approached by rebel militants who want to take medical supplies from the poor . Bruce 's eyes turn green and a scream of the Hulk is heard .

= = Cast = =

Eric Bana as Dr. Bruce Banner / Hulk (known legally as Bruce Krenzler throughout the movie) : a gamma @-@ radiation research scientist who was exposed to a large amount of gamma radiations in an accident in his labs and after the incident . Bana was cast in October 2001 , signing for an additional two sequels . Ang Lee felt obliged to cast Bana upon seeing Chopper , and first approached the actor in July 2001 . The role was heavily pursued by other actors . Bana was also in heavy contention for Ghost Rider , but lost out to Nicolas Cage . Bana explained , " I was obsessed with the TV show . I was never a huge comic book reader when I was a kid , but was completely obsessed with the television show . " It was widely reported Billy Crudup turned down the role . Johnny Depp and Steve Buscemi were reported to be under consideration for the lead . Edward Norton , who went on to play the part in The Incredible Hulk , expressed interest in the role . Norton eventually turned down the part as he was disappointed with the script .

Mike Erwin as sixteen @-@ year @-@ old Bruce Banner

Damon James as nine @-@ year @-@ old Bruce Banner

Bailey James as five @-@ year @-@ old Bruce Banner

Michael Kronenberg as four @-@ year @-@ old Bruce Banner

David Kronenberg as two @-@ year @-@ old Bruce Banner

Jennifer Connelly as Betty Ross : Bruce 's ex @-@ girlfriend / co @-@ researcher , as well as estranged daughter of General Ross . Betty is possibly the only way for the Hulk to lead back into his transformation of Bruce . Connelly was attracted to the role by way of director Ang Lee . " He 's not talking about a guy running around in green tights and a glossy fun @-@ filled movie for kids . He 's talking along the lines of tragedy and psychodrama . I find it interesting , the green monster of rage and greed , jealousy and fear in all of us . "

Rhiannon Leigh Wryn as young Betty Ross

Sam Elliott as General Thunderbolt Ross : A four @-@ star general and estranged father of Betty . Ross was responsible for prohibiting David Banner from his lab work after learning of his dangerous experiments . Elliott felt his performance was similar to his portrayal of Basil L. Plumley in We Were Soldiers . Elliott accepted the role without reading the script , being simply too excited to work with Ang Lee . In addition Elliot also researched Hulk comic books for the part .

Todd Tesen as Young Thaddeus Ross

Josh Lucas as Major Glenn Talbot : A ruthless former soldier who offers Banner and Betty Ross an opportunity to work for him in an attempt to start an experiment on self @-@ healing soldiers .

Nick Nolte as Dr. David " Dave " Banner : The mentally unstable biological father of Bruce Banner who was also a genetics research scientist and had been locked away for several years for causing an explosion in the gamma reactor and accidentally killing his wife , Edith . Eventually he gains absorbing powers in the film , reminiscent of the comic book character Absorbing Man , one of the characters that first appeared in the early scripts of the film . He also , at one point , becomes a towering creature composed of electricity , reminiscent of Zzzax , one of the Hulk 's enemies in the comic series . Nolte agreed to participate in the film when Lee described the project as a " Greek tragedy . "

Paul Kersey as Young David Banner

Cara Buono as Edith Banner : Bruce 's biological mother whom he cannot remember . She is heard , but mostly appears in Bruce 's nightmares .

Celia Weston as Mrs. Krenzler : Bruce 's adoptive mother who cared for him after the death of Edith and David 's incarceration .

Kevin Rankin as Harper : Bruce 's colleague whom he saved from the gamma radiations .

Hulk co @-@ creator / executive producer Stan Lee and former Hulk actor Lou Ferrigno made cameo appearances as security guards . Johnny Kastl and Daniel Dae Kim have small roles as soldiers .

= = Development = =

= = = Jonathan Hensleigh = = =

Producers Avi Arad and Gale Anne Hurd started the development for Hulk in 1990 , the same year the final TV movie based on the 1970s TV series aired . They set the property up at Universal Pictures in 1992 . Michael France and Stan Lee were invited into Universal 's offices in 1994 , with France writing the script . Universal 's concept was to have the Hulk battle terrorists , an idea France disliked . John Turman , a Hulk comic book fan , was brought to write the script in 1995 , getting approval from Lee . Turman wrote ten drafts and was heavily influenced by the Tales to Astonish issues , which pitted the Hulk against General Ross and the military , the Leader , Rick Jones , the atomic explosion origin from the comics , and Brian Banner as the explanation for Bruce 's inner anger . Universal had mixed feelings over Turman 's script , but nonetheless future screenwriters would use many elements .

Hurd brought her husband Jonathan Hensleigh as co @-@ producer the following year and Industrial Light & Magic was hired to use computer @-@ generated imagery to create the Hulk . Universal was courting France once more to write the script , but changed their minds when Joe Johnston became the director in April 1997 . The studio wanted Hensleigh to rewrite the script due to his successful results on Johnston 's Jumanji . France was fired before he wrote a single page , but received a buy @-@ off from Universal . Johnston dropped out of directing in July 1997 in favor of October Sky , and Hensleigh convinced Universal to make the Hulk his directing debut . Turman was brought back a second time to write two more drafts . Zak Penn then rewrote it . His script featured a fight between the Hulk and a school of sharks , as well as two scenes he eventually used for the 2008 film ; Banner realizing he is unable to have sex , and triggering a transformation by falling out of a helicopter . Hensleigh rewrote from scratch , coming up with a brand new storyline featuring Bruce Banner , who prior to the accident which will turn him into The Hulk , experimenting with gamma @-@ irradiated insect DNA on three convicts . This transforms the convicts into " insect men " that cause havoc .

Filming was set to start in December 1997 in Arizona for a summer 1999 release date , but filming was pushed back for four months . Hensleigh subsequently rewrote the script with J. J. Abrams . Scott Alexander and Larry Karaszewski were also brought on board to rewrite with Hensleigh still attached as director . In October 1997 , Hulk had entered pre @-@ production with the creation of prosthetic makeup and computer animation already under way . Gregory Sporleder was cast as " Novak " , Banner 's archenemy while Lynn " Red " Williams was cast as a convict who transforms into a combination of human , ant and beetle . In March 1998 Universal put Hulk on hiatus due to its escalating \$ 100 million budget and worries of Hensleigh directing his first film . \$ 20 million was already spent on script development , computer animation , and prosthetics work . Hensleigh immediately went to rewrite the script in order to lower the budget .

= = = Michael France = = =

Hensleigh found the rewriting process to be too difficult and dropped out , and felt he " wasted nine months in pre @-@ production " . It took another eight months for France to convince Universal and

the producers to let him try to write a script for a third time . France claimed " Someone within the Universal hierarchy wasn 't sure if this was a science fiction adventure , or a comedy , and I kept getting directions to write both . I think that at some point when I wasn 't in the room , there may have been discussions about turning it into a Jim Carrey or Adam Sandler movie . " France was writing the script on fast track from July ? September 1999 . Filming for Hulk was to start in April 2000 .

France stated his vision of the film was different from the other drafts , which based Bruce Banner on his " amiable , nerdy genius " incarnation in the 1960s . France cited inspiration from the 1980s Hulk stories which introduced Brian Banner , Bruce 's abusive father who killed his mother . His script had Banner trying to create cells with regenerative capabilities in order to prove to himself that he is not like his father . However , he has anger management issues before the Hulk is even created , which makes everything worse . The " Don 't make me angry ... " line from the TV series was made into dialogue that Banner 's father would say before beating his son . Elements such as the " Gammasphere " , Banner 's tragic romance with Ross , and the black ops made it to the final film . France turned in his final drafts in late 1999 @-@ January 2000 .

= = = Ang Lee = = =

Michael Tolkin and David Hayter rewrote the script afterwards , despite positive response from the producers over France 's script . Tolkin was brought in January 2000 , while Hayter was brought in September of that year . Hayter 's draft featured The Leader , Zzzax , and the Absorbing Man as the villains , who are depicted as colleagues of Banner and get caught in the same accident that creates the Hulk . Director Ang Lee and his producing partner James Schamus became involved with the film in January 20 , 2001 . Lee was dissatisfied with Hayter 's script , and commissioned Schamus for a rewrite , merging Banner 's father with the Absorbing Man . Lee cited influences from King Kong , Frankenstein , Jekyll and Hyde , Beauty and the Beast , Faust , and Greek mythology for his interpretation of the story . Schamus said he had found the storyline that introduced Brian Banner , thus allowing Lee to write a drama that again explored father @-@ son themes .

Schamus was still rewriting the script in October 2001 . In early 2002 , as filming was underway , Michael France read all the scripts for the Writers Guild of America , to determine who would get final credit . France criticized Schamus and Hayter for claiming they were aiming to make Banner a deeper character , and was saddened they had denigrated his and Turman 's work in interviews . Schamus elected to get solo credit . France felt , " James Schamus did a significant amount of work on the screenplay . For example , he brought in the Hulk dogs from the comics and he made the decision to use Banner 's father as a real character in the present . But he used quite a lot of elements from John Turman 's scripts and quite a lot from mine , and that 's why we were credited . " France , Turman and Schamus received final credit . A theatrical release date for June 20 , 2003 was announced in December 2002 , with the film 's title as The Hulk .

= = Production = =

= = = Filming = = =

Filming began on March 18 , 2002 in Arizona , and moved on April 19 to the San Francisco Bay Area . This included Advanced Light Source , Lawrence Berkeley labs , Oakland , Treasure Island military base , and the sequoia forests of Porterville , before several weeks in the Utah and Californian deserts . Filming then moved to the Universal backlot in Los Angeles , using Stage 12 for the water tank scene , before finishing in the first week of August . Filming of Hulk constituted hiring 3 @,@ 000 local workers , generating over \$ 10 million into the local economy . Mychael Danna , who previously collaborated with Lee on Ride with the Devil and The Ice Storm , was set to compose the film score before dropping out . Danny Elfman was then hired .

Eric Bana commented that the shoot was , " Ridiculously serious ... a silent set , morbid in a lot of

ways . " Lee told him that he was shooting a Greek tragedy : he would be making a " whole other movie " about the Hulk at Industrial Light & Magic . An example of Lee 's art house approach to the film was taking Bana to watch a bare @-@ knuckle boxing match . Visual effects supervisor Dennis Muren was on the set every day . One of the many visual images in the film that presented an acting challenge for Bana was a split screen technique employed by Lee to cinematically mimic the panels of a comic book page . This required many more takes of individual scenes than normal . Sound design was completed at Skywalker Sound . Muren and other ILM animators used previous technology from Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets (for the Dobby character) to create the Hulk with computer @-@ generated imagery . Other software used included PowerAnimator , Softimage XSI , and RenderMan Interface Specification . ILM started computer animation work in 2001 , and completed in May 2003 , just one month before the film 's release . Lee provided some motion capture work in post @-@ production .

= = Music = =

= = = Soundtrack = = =

The musical score for Hulk was composed by Danny Elfman , who scored Spider @-@ Man the previous year . Frequent Ang Lee collaborator , Mychael Danna , was the original composer for the film . However , Danna 's score was rejected by studio executives for its non @-@ traditional approach , which featured Japanese taiko , African drumming , and Arabic singing . Elfman was then approached by Universal 's president of film music , Kathy Nelson . With 37 days to compose over two hours of music , Elfman agreed out of respect to Lee . While instructing to retain much of the character of Danna 's score , Lee pushed Elfman to write material that did not sound like his previous superhero scores . " They did leave some of my music in the movie , " said Danna , " so the Arabic singing and some of the drumming is mine . What happened is that they panicked , they brought in Danny and he heard what I 've been doing and I guess he liked it . "

A soundtrack album was released on June 17 , 2003 by Decca Records . It features the song " Set Me Free " by Velvet Revolver , which is played during the film 's end credits .

Track listing

= = Release = =

= = = Marketing = = =

Universal Pictures spent \$ 2 @.@ 1 million to market the film in a 30 @-@ second television spot during Super Bowl XXXVII on January 26 , 2003 . And a 70 @-@ second teaser trailer was attached to Spider @-@ Man on May 3 , 2002 . Just weeks before the film 's release , a number of workprints were leaked on the Internet . The visual and special effects were already being criticized , despite the fact that it was not the final editing cut of the film .

= = = Home media = = =

Hulk was released on VHS and DVD on October 28 , 2003 . The film earned \$ 61 @.@ 2 million in DVD sales during 2003 . Hulk was released on HD DVD format on December 12 , 2006 and it was later released on Blu @-@ ray on September 16 , 2008 .

= = Reception = =

= = = Critical response = = =

Hulk received mixed reviews from critics . Rotten Tomatoes calculated a 61 % approval rating out of 227 reviews . The website 's critical consensus reads , " While Ang Lee 's ambitious film earns marks for style and an attempt at dramatic depth , there 's ultimately too much talking and not enough smashing . " By comparison Metacritic collected an average score of 54 based on 40 reviews . Roger Ebert gave a positive review , explaining , " Ang Lee is trying to actually deal with the issues in the story of the Hulk , instead of simply cutting to brainless visual effects . " Ebert also liked how the Hulk 's movements resembled King Kong . Although Peter Travers of Rolling Stone felt Hulk should have been shorter , he heavily praised the action sequences , especially the climax and cliffhanger . Paul Clinton of CNN believed the cast gave strong performances , but in an otherwise positive review , heavily criticized the computer @-@ generated imagery , calling the Hulk " a ticked @-@ off version of Shrek " .

Conversely , Mick LaSalle of the San Francisco Chronicle considered " the film is more thoughtful and pleasing to the eye than any blockbuster in recent memory , but its epic length comes without an epic reward . " Ty Burr of The Boston Globe felt " Jennifer Connelly reprises her stand @-@ by @-@ your @-@ messed @-@ up @-@ scientist turn from A Beautiful Mind . " Lisa Schwarzbaum of Entertainment Weekly stated , " a big @-@ budget comic @-@ book adaptation has rarely felt so humorless and intellectually defensive about its own pulpy roots . "

== = Box office == =

Hulk was released on June 20 , 2003 , earning \$ 62 @. @ 1 million in its opening weekend , which made it the 16th highest ever opener at the time . With a second weekend drop of 70 % , it was the first opener above \$ 20 million to drop over 65 % . The film went on to gross \$ 132 @, @ 177 @, @ 234 in North America on an estimated budget of \$ 137 @, @ 000 @, @ 000 , and made \$ 113 @, @ 183 @, @ 246 in foreign countries , coming to a worldwide total of \$ 245 @, @ 360 @, @ 480 . With a final North American gross of \$ 132 @. @ 2 million it became the largest opener not to earn \$ 150 million .

== = Accolades == =

Connelly and Danny Elfman received nominations at the 30th Saturn Awards with Best Actress and Best Music . The film was nominated for Best Science Fiction Film but lost out to another film based on Marvel characters , X2 . Dennis Muren , Michael Lantieri and the special effects crew were nominated for Best Special Effects .

== = Reboot == =

After the mixed reception of Hulk , Marvel Studios reacquired the rights to the character , and writer Zak Penn began work on a sequel titled The Incredible Hulk . However , Edward Norton rewrote Penn 's script after he signed on to star , retelling the origin story in flashbacks and revelations , which pleased director Louis Leterrier in establishing the film as a reboot . Leterrier acknowledged that the only remaining similarity between the two films was Bruce hiding in South America