

= Raiders of the Lost Ark =

Raiders of the Lost Ark ( later marketed as Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Ark ) is a 1981 American action adventure film directed by Steven Spielberg , with a screenplay written by Lawrence Kasdan , from a story by George Lucas and Philip Kaufman . It was produced by Frank Marshall for Lucasfilm Ltd . , with Lucas and Howard Kazanjian as executive producers . Starring Harrison Ford , it was the first installment in the Indiana Jones film franchise to be released , though it is the second in internal chronological order . It pits Indiana Jones ( Ford ) against a group of Nazis who are searching for the Ark of the Covenant , which Adolf Hitler believes will make his army invincible . The film co - stars Karen Allen as Indiana 's former lover , Marion Ravenwood ; Paul Freeman as Indiana 's nemesis , French archaeologist René Belloq ; John Rhys - Davies as Indiana 's sidekick , Sallah ; Ronald Lacey as Gestapo agent Arnold Toht ; and Denholm Elliott as Indiana 's colleague , Marcus Brody .

The film originated from Lucas ' desire to create a modern version of the serials of the 1930s and 1940s . Production was based at Elstree Studios , England ; but filming also took place in La Rochelle , France , Tunisia , Hawaii , and California from June to September 1980 .

Released on June 12 , 1981 , Raiders of the Lost Ark became the year 's top - grossing film and remains one of the highest - grossing films ever made . It was nominated for nine Academy Awards in 1982 , including Best Picture , and won four for Best Art Direction , Film Editing , Sound , and Visual Effects with a fifth Academy Award : a Special Achievement Award for Sound Effects Editing . The film 's critical and popular success led to three additional films , Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom ( 1984 ) , Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade ( 1989 ) , and Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull ( 2008 ) , with a fifth slated for 2019 ; the television series The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles ( 1992 ? 1996 ) , and 15 video games as of 2009 . In 1999 , the film was included in the U.S. Library of Congress ' National Film Registry as having been deemed " culturally , historically , or aesthetically significant " .

Raiders of the Lost Ark is often ranked as one of the greatest films of all time , both in the action - adventure genre , and in general . The film also ranks # 2 on Empire 's 2008 list of the 500 greatest movies of all time .

= = Plot = =

In 1936 , archaeologist Indiana Jones braves an ancient booby - trapped temple in Peru and retrieves a golden idol . He is confronted by rival archaeologist René Belloq and the indigenous Hovito people . Surrounded and outnumbered , Indy surrenders the idol to Belloq and escapes aboard a waiting floatplane .

Jones returns to his teaching position at Marshall College , where he is interviewed by two Army Intelligence agents . They inform him that the Nazis are searching for his old mentor , Abner Ravenwood , under whom Jones studied at the University of Chicago . The Nazis know that Ravenwood is the leading expert on the ancient city of Tanis in Egypt , and that he possesses the headpiece of the Staff of Ra . Jones deduces that the Nazis are searching for the Ark of the Covenant ; the Nazis believe that if they acquire the Ark their armies will become invincible . The Staff of Ra is the key to finding the Well of Souls , a secret chamber in which the Ark is buried .

The agents authorize Jones to recover the Ark to prevent the Nazis from obtaining it . He travels to Nepal and discovers that Abner has died , and the headpiece is in the possession of Ravenwood 's daughter Marion . Jones visits Marion at her tavern , where she reveals her bitter feelings toward him from a previous romantic affair . She physically rebuffs his offer to buy the headpiece , and Jones leaves . Shortly after , a group of thugs arrive with their Nazi commander , Arnold Toht . Toht threatens Marion to get the headpiece , but when Jones returns to the bar to fight the Nazis and save Marion , her bar is accidentally set on fire ; during the fight , the headpiece ends up in the fire and Toht severely burns his hand trying to take the hot headpiece , and flees the tavern screaming . Indy and Marion escape with the headpiece , and Marion decides to accompany Indy in his search for the Ark so he can repay his debt to her .

The pair travels to Cairo , where they meet up with Indy 's friend Sallah , a skilled excavator . Sallah informs them that Belloq and the Nazis are digging for the Well of Souls with a replica of the headpiece ( created from the scar on Toht 's hand ) . They quickly realize the Nazi headpiece is incomplete and that the Nazis are digging in the wrong place . The Nazis kidnap Marion and it appears to Jones that she is killed in an exploding truck . After a confrontation with Belloq in a local bar , Indy and Sallah infiltrate the Nazi dig site and use their staff to correctly locate the Ark . Indy discovers Marion is alive , bound and gagged in a tent , but does not release her for fear of blowing his cover . Indy , Sallah , and a small group of diggers unearth the Well of Souls and acquire the Ark . Belloq and Nazi officer Colonel Dietrich arrive , seize the Ark from Jones , throwing Marion into the Well of Souls with him before sealing it back up . Jones and Marion escape to a local airstrip , where Jones has a fistfight with a Nazi mechanic and destroys the flying wing that was to transport the Ark to Berlin . The panicked Nazis remove the Ark in a truck and set off for Cairo , but Jones catches them and retakes it . He makes arrangements to take the Ark to London aboard a tramp steamer .

The next day , a Nazi U @-@ boat appears and intercepts the ship . Belloq and Dietrich seize the Ark and Marion but cannot locate Jones , who stows away aboard the boat and travels with them to an island in the Aegean Sea . Once there , Belloq plans to test the power of the Ark before presenting it to Hitler . Jones reveals himself and threatens to destroy the Ark with a panzerfaust , but Belloq calls his bluff and Jones surrenders rather than destroy such an important historical artifact . The Nazis take Indy and Marion to an area where the Ark will be opened and tie them to a post to observe . Belloq performs a ceremonial opening of the Ark , which appears to contain nothing but sand . Suddenly , angelic ghost @-@ like beings emerge from the Ark . Indy cautions Marion to keep her eyes closed and not to observe what happens next . Belloq and the others look on in astonishment as the apparitions are suddenly revealed to be angels of death . A vortex of flame forms above the Ark and shoots bolts of fiery energy into the gathered Nazi soldiers , killing them all . As Belloq , Toht and Dietrich all scream in terror , the Ark turns its fury on them : Dietrich 's head shrivels up , Toht 's face is melted off his skull and Belloq 's head explodes . Flames then engulf the remains of the doomed assembly , save for Indy and Marion , and the pillar of fire rises into the sky . The Ark 's lid is blasted high into the air before dropping back down onto the Ark and sealing it . Jones and Marion find their ropes burned off and embrace .

In Washington , D.C. , the Army Intelligence agents inform Jones and Marcus Brody that the Ark is someplace safe and will be studied by " top men " . The Ark is shown being stored in a giant government warehouse among countless similar crates .

= = Cast = =

Harrison Ford stars as Indiana Jones , an archaeology professor who often embarks on perilous adventures to obtain rare artifacts . Jones claims that he has no belief in the supernatural , only to have his skepticism challenged when he discovers the Ark . Spielberg suggested casting Ford as Jones , but Lucas objected , stating that he did not want Ford to become his " Bobby De Niro " or " that guy I put in all my movies " - a reference to Martin Scorsese , who often worked with Robert De Niro . Desiring a lesser known actor , Lucas persuaded Spielberg to help him search for a new talent . Among the actors who auditioned were Tim Matheson , Peter Coyote , John Shea , and Tom Selleck . Selleck was originally offered the role , but became unavailable for the part because of his commitment to the television series Magnum , P.I . In June 1980 , three weeks away from filming , Spielberg persuaded Lucas to cast Ford after producers Frank Marshall and Kathleen Kennedy were impressed by his performance as Han Solo in The Empire Strikes Back .

Paul Freeman as Dr. René Belloq , Jones ' nemesis . Belloq is also an archaeologist after the Ark , but he is working for the Nazis . He intends to harness the Ark 's power himself before Hitler can , but he is killed by the Ark 's supernatural powers . Spielberg cast Freeman after seeing him in Death of a Princess .

Karen Allen as Marion Ravenwood , a spirited , tough former lover of Indiana 's . She is the daughter of Abner Ravenwood , Indiana Jones ' mentor , and owns a bar in Nepal . Allen was cast after auditioning with Matheson and John Shea . Spielberg was interested in her , as he had seen

her performance in National Lampoon 's Animal House . Sean Young had previously auditioned for the part , while Debra Winger turned it down .

John Rhys @-@ Davies as Sallah , " the best digger in Cairo " , who has been hired by the Nazis to help them excavate Tanis . He is an old friend of Indiana Jones , and agrees to help him obtain the Ark , although he fears disturbing it . Spielberg initially approached Danny DeVito to play Sallah , but he could not play the part due to scheduling conflicts . Spielberg cast Rhys @-@ Davies after seeing his performance in Shogun .

Ronald Lacey as Major Arnold Toht , an interrogator for the Gestapo , who tries to torture Marion Ravenwood for the headpiece of the Staff of Ra . He is killed by the Ark 's supernatural powers . Lacey was cast as he reminded Spielberg of Peter Lorre . Spielberg had originally offered the role to Roman Polanski , who was intrigued at the opportunity to work with Spielberg but decided to turn down the role because he wouldn 't be able to make the trip to Tunisia . Klaus Kinski was also offered the role , but he hated the script , calling it " moronically shitty " .

Denholm Elliott as Dr. Marcus Brody , a museum curator , who buys the artifacts Indiana obtains for display in his museum . The U.S. government agents approach him with regard to the Ark 's recovery , and he sets up a meeting between them and Indiana Jones . Spielberg hired Elliott as he was a big fan of the actor , who had performed in some of his favorite British and American films .

Wolf Kahler as Colonel Dietrich , a ruthless Nazi officer leading the operation to secure the Ark . He is killed by the Ark 's supernatural powers .

Alfred Molina , in his film debut , as Satipo , one of Jones ' guides through the South American jungle . He betrays Jones and steals the golden idol , but is killed by traps before he can leave the temple .

George Harris as Simon Katanga , captain of the Bantu Wind .

Anthony Higgins as Major Gbler , Dietrich 's right @-@ hand @-@ man .

Vic Tablian as Barranca and the Monkey Man

Don Fellows as Colonel Musgrove

William Hootkins as Major Eaton

Producer Frank Marshall played a pilot in the airplane fight sequence . The stunt team was ill , so he took the role instead . The result was three days in a hot cockpit , which he joked was over " 140 degrees " . Pat Roach plays the Nazi mechanic with whom Jones brawls in this sequence , as well as a massive sherpa who battles Jones in Marion 's bar . He had the rare opportunity to be killed twice in one film . Special @-@ effects supervisor Dennis Muren made a cameo as a Nazi spy on the seaplane Jones takes from San Francisco to Manila .

= = Production = =

= = = Development = = =

In 1973 , George Lucas wrote The Adventures of Indiana Smith . Like Star Wars , which he also wrote , it was an opportunity to create a modern version of the film serials of the 1930s and 1940s . Lucas discussed the concept with Philip Kaufman , who worked with him for several weeks and came up with the Ark of the Covenant as the plot device . Kaufman was told about the Ark by his dentist when he was a child . The project stalled when Clint Eastwood hired Kaufman to direct The Outlaw Josey Wales . Lucas shelved the idea , deciding to concentrate on his outer space adventure that would become Star Wars . In late May 1977 , Lucas was in Hawaii , trying to escape the enormous success of Star Wars . Friend and colleague Steven Spielberg was also there , on vacation from work on Close Encounters of the Third Kind . While building a sand castle at the Mauna Kea Beach Hotel , Spielberg expressed an interest in directing a James Bond film . Lucas convinced his friend Spielberg that he had conceived a character " better than James Bond " and explained the concept of Raiders of the Lost Ark . Spielberg loved it , calling it " a James Bond film without the hardware " , although he told Lucas that the surname ' Smith ' was not right for the character . Lucas replied , " OK . What about ' Jones ' ? " Indiana was the name of Lucas ' Alaskan

Malamute , whose habit of riding in the passenger seat as Lucas drove was also the inspiration for Star Wars ' Chewbacca . Spielberg was at first reluctant to sign on , as Lucas had told him that he would want Spielberg for an entire trilogy , and Spielberg did not want to work on two more scripts . Lucas told him , however , that he already had the next two movies written , so Spielberg agreed . But when the time came for the first sequel , it was revealed that Lucas had nothing written for either sequel .

The following year , Lucas focused on developing Raiders and the Star Wars sequel The Empire Strikes Back , during which Lawrence Kasdan and Frank Marshall joined the project as screenwriter and producer respectively . Between January 23 ? 27 , 1978 , for nine hours a day , Lucas , Kasdan , and Spielberg discussed the story and visual ideas . Spielberg came up with Jones being chased by a boulder , which was inspired by Carl Barks ' Uncle Scrooge comic " The Seven Cities of Cibola " . Lucas later acknowledged that the idea for the idol mechanism in the opening scene and deadly traps later in the film were inspired by several Uncle Scrooge comics . Lucas came up with a submarine , a monkey giving the Hitler salute , and Marion punching Jones in Nepal . Kasdan used a 100 @-@ page transcript of their conversations for his first script draft , which he worked on for six months . Ultimately , some of their ideas were too grand and had to be cut : a mine chase , an escape in Shanghai using a rolling gong as a shield , and a jump from an airplane in a raft , all of which made it into the prequel , Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom .

Spielberg and Lucas disagreed on the character : although Spielberg saw him as a Bondian playboy , Lucas felt the character 's academic and adventurer elements made him complex enough . Spielberg had a darker vision of Jones , interpreting him as an alcoholic similar to Humphrey Bogart 's character Fred C. Dobbs in The Treasure of the Sierra Madre ( 1948 ) . This characterization fell away during the later drafts , though elements survive in Jones 's reaction when he believes Marion to be dead . Costume designer Deborah Nadoolman credits Secret of the Incas ( 1954 ) , starring Charlton Heston , as an influence on the development of the character , noting that the crew watched the film together several times . Nadoolman based the look of Ford 's costume on that of Heston 's , and observed that Indiana is a " kinder and gentler " Harry Steele .

Initially , the film was rejected by every major studio in Hollywood , mostly due to the \$ 20 million budget and the deal Lucas was offering . Eventually Paramount agreed to finance the film , with Lucas negotiating a five @-@ picture deal . By April 1980 , Kasdan 's fifth draft was produced , and production was getting ready to shoot at Elstree Studios , with Lucas trying to keep costs down . With four illustrators , Raiders of the Lost Ark was Spielberg 's most storyboarded film of his career to date , further helping the film economically . He and Lucas agreed on a tight schedule to keep costs down and to follow the " quick and dirty " feel of the old Saturday matinée serials . Special effects were done using puppets , miniature models , animation , and camera trickery . " We didn 't do 30 or 40 takes ; usually only four . It was like silent film--shoot only what you need , no waste " , Spielberg said . " Had I had more time and money , it would have turned out a pretentious movie . "

= = = Filming = = =

Principal photography began on June 23 , 1980 , at La Rochelle , France , with scenes involving the Nazi submarine , which had been rented from the production of Das Boot . The U @-@ boat pen was a real one from World War II . The crew moved to Elstree Studios for the Well of Souls scenes , the opening sequence temple interiors and Marion Ravenwood 's bar . The Well of Souls scene required 7 @,@ 000 snakes . The only venomous snakes were the cobras , but one crew member was bitten on set by a python . The bulk of the snakes numbers were made up with giant but harmless legless lizards known as Scheltopusiks ( Pseudopus apodus ) which occur from the Balkan Peninsula of southeastern Europe to Central Asia . Growing to 1 @.@ 3 m they are the largest legless lizards in the world and are often mistaken for snakes despite some very obvious differences such as the presence of eyelids and external ear openings , which are both absent from all snakes , and a notched rather than forked tongue . In the finished film , during the scene in which Indiana comes face @-@ to @-@ face with the cobra , a reflection in glass screen that protected Ford from the snake was seen , an issue that was corrected in the 2003 digitally @-@ enhanced re

@-@ release . Unlike Indiana , neither Ford nor Spielberg has a fear of snakes , but Spielberg said that seeing all the snakes on the set writhing around made him " want to puke " .

The opening scene in the Peruvian jungle was filmed on the island of Kauai , one of the islands of Hawaii , to where Spielberg would return for Jurassic Park . The " temple " location is on the Huleia River , on the Kipu Ranch , south from Kaumualii Highway on the east coast , just south of Lihue , the island 's main town . Kipu is a working cattle ranch , not generally open to the public . The Peruvian section ( but actually filmed in Hawaii ) featured live tarantulas of a Mexican species ( Brachypelma ) on Harrison Ford and Alfred Molina , and are harmless to humans , and in fact of a species which are commonly kept as exotic pets . A fiberglass boulder 22 feet ( 7 m ) in diameter was made for the scene where Indiana escapes from the temple ; Spielberg was so impressed by production designer Norman Reynolds ' realization of his idea that he gave the boulder a more prominent role in the film and told Reynolds to let the boulder roll another 50 feet ( 15 m ) .

The scenes set in Egypt were filmed in Tunisia , and the canyon where Indiana threatens to blow up the Ark was shot in Sidi Bouhlel , just outside Tozeur . The canyon location had been used for the Tatooine scenes from 1977 's Star Wars ( many of the location crew members were the same for both films ) where R2 @-@ D2 was attacked by Jawas . The Tanis scenes were filmed in nearby Sedala , a harsh place due to heat and disease . Several cast and crew members fell ill and Rhys @-@ Davies defecated in his costume during one shot . Spielberg averted disease by eating only canned foods from England , but did not like the area and quickly condensed the scheduled six @-@ week shoot to four @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half weeks . Much was improvised : the scene where Marion puts on her dress and attempts to leave Belloq 's tent was improvised as was the entire plane fight . During that scene 's shooting , a wheel went over Ford 's knee and tore his left leg 's cruciate ligament , but he refused local medical help and simply put ice on it .

The fight scenes in the town were filmed in Kairouan , while Ford was suffering from dysentery . Stuntman Terry Richards had practiced for weeks with his sword to create the scripted fight scene , choreographing a fight between the swordsman and Jones 's whip . However , after filming the initial shots of the scene , after lunch due to Ford 's dysentery , Ford and Spielberg agreed to cut the scene down to a gunshot , with Ford saying to Spielberg " Let 's just shoot the sucker " . It was later voted in a No.5 on Playboy magazine 's list of best all time scenes . Most of the truck chase was shot by second unit director Michael D. Moore following Spielberg 's storyboards , including Indiana being dragged by the truck ( performed by stuntman Terry Leonard ) , in tribute to a famous Yakima Canutt stunt . Spielberg then filmed all the shots with Ford himself in and around the truck cab . Lucas directed a few other second unit shots , in particular the monkey giving the Nazi salute .

The interior staircase set in Washington , D.C. was filmed in San Francisco 's City Hall . The University of the Pacific 's campus in Stockton , California , stood in for the exterior of the college where Jones works , while his classroom and the hall where he meets the American intelligence agents was filmed at the Royal Masonic School for Girls in Rickmansworth , Hertfordshire , England , which was again used in The Last Crusade . His home exteriors were filmed in San Rafael , California . Opening sequence exteriors were filmed in Kauai , Hawaii , with Spielberg wrapping in September in 73 days , finishing under schedule in contrast to his previous film , 1941 . The Washington , D.C. coda , although it appeared in the script 's early drafts , was not included in early edits but was added later when it was realized that there was no resolution to Jones 's relationship with Marion . Shots of the Douglas DC @-@ 3 Jones flies on to Nepal were taken from Lost Horizon , and a street scene was from a shot in The Hindenburg . Filming of Jones boarding a Boeing Clipper flying @-@ boat was complicated by the lack of a surviving aircraft . Eventually , a post @-@ war British Short Solent flying @-@ boat formerly owned by Howard Hughes was located in California and substituted .

= = = Visual effects and sound design = = =

The special visual effects for Raiders were provided by Industrial Light & Magic and include : a matte shot to establish the Pan Am flying boat in the water and miniature work to show the plane taking off and flying , superimposed over a map ; animation effects for the beam in the Tanis map

room ; and a miniature car and passengers superimposed over a matte painting for a shot of a Nazi car being forced off a cliff . The bulk of effects shots were featured in the climactic sequence wherein the Ark of the Covenant ( which was designed by Brian Muir and Keith Short ) is opened and God 's wrath is unleashed . This sequence featured animation , a woman to portray a beautiful spirit 's face , rod puppet spirits moved through water to convey a sense of floating , a matte painting of the island , and cloud tank effects to portray clouds . The melting of Toht 's head was done by exposing a gelatine and plaster model of Ronald Lacey 's head to a heat lamp with an under cranked camera , while Dietrich 's crushed head was a hollow model from which air was withdrawn . When the film was originally submitted to the Motion Picture Association of America , it received an R rating because of the scene in which Belloq 's head explodes . The filmmakers were able to receive a PG rating when they added a veil of fire over the exploding head scene . ( PG @-@ 13 rating was not created until 1984 . ) The firestorm that cleanses the canyon at the finish was a miniature canyon filmed upside down .

Ben Burtt , the sound effects supervisor , made extensive use of traditional foley work in yet another of the production 's throwbacks to days of the Republic serials . He selected a .30 @-@ 30 Winchester rifle for the sound of Jones ' pistol . Sound effects artists struck leather jackets and baseball gloves with a baseball bat to create a variety of punching noises and body blows . For the snakes in the Well of Souls sequence , fingers running through cheese casserole and sponges sliding over cement were used for the slithering noises . The sliding lid on a toilet cistern provided the sound for the opening of the Ark , and the sound of the boulder in the opening is a car rolling down a gravel driveway in neutral . Burtt also used , as he did in many of his films , the ubiquitous Wilhelm scream when a Nazi falls from a truck . In addition to his use of such time @-@ honored foley work , Burtt also demonstrated the modern expertise honed during his award @-@ winning work on Star Wars . He employed a synthesizer for the sounds of the Ark , and mixed dolphins ' and sea lions ' screams for those of the spirits within .

= = = Music = = =

John Williams composed the score for Raiders of the Lost Ark , which was the only score in the series performed by the London Symphony Orchestra , the same orchestra that performed the scores for the Star Wars saga . The score most notably features the well @-@ known " Raiders March " . This piece came to symbolize Indiana Jones and was later used in the scores for the other three films . Williams originally wrote two different candidates for Jones 's theme , but Spielberg enjoyed them so much that he insisted that both be used together in what became the " Raiders March " . The alternately eerie and apocalyptic theme for the Ark of the Covenant is also heard frequently in the score , with a more romantic melody representing Marion and , more broadly , her relationship with Jones . The score as a whole received an Oscar nomination for Best Original Score , but lost to the score to Chariots of Fire composed by Vangelis .

= = Release = =

= = = Merchandise = = =

The only video game based exclusively on the film is Raiders of the Lost Ark , released in 1982 by Atari for their Atari 2600 console . The first third of the video game Indiana Jones ' Greatest Adventures , released in 1994 by JVC for Nintendo 's Super Nintendo Entertainment System , is based entirely on the film . Several of the film 's sequences are reproduced ( the boulder run and the showdown with the Cairo Swordsman among them ) ; however , several inconsistencies with the film are present in the game , such as Nazi soldiers and bats being present in the Well of Souls sequence , for example . The game was developed by LucasArts and Factor 5 . In the 1999 game Indiana Jones and the Infernal Machine , a bonus level brings Jones back to the Peruvian temple of the film 's opening scene . In 2008 , to coincide with the release of Kingdom of the Crystal Skull ,

Lego released the Lego Indiana Jones line ? which included building sets based on Raiders of the Lost Ark ? and LucasArts published a video game based on the toyline , Lego Indiana Jones : The Original Adventures , which was developed by Traveller 's Tales .

Marvel Comics published a comic book adaptation of the film by writer Walt Simonson and artists John Buscema and Klaus Janson . It was published as Marvel Super Special # 18 and as a three @-@ issue limited series . This was followed with the comic book series The Further Adventures of Indiana Jones which was published monthly from January 1983 through March 1986 .

In 1981 , Kenner released a 12 @-@ inch ( 30 cm ) doll of Indiana Jones , and the following year they released nine action figures of the film 's characters , three playsets , as well as toys of the Nazi truck and Jones ' horse . They also released a board game . In 1984 , miniature metal versions of the characters were released for a role playing game , The Adventures of Indiana Jones , and in 1995 Micro Machines released die @-@ cast toys of the film 's vehicles . Hasbro released action figures based on the film , ranging from 3 to 12 inches ( 7 @.@ 6 to 30 @.@ 5 cm ) , to coincide with Kingdom of the Crystal Skull on May 1 , 2008 . Later in 2008 , and in 2011 , two high @-@ end sixth scale ( 1 : 6 ) collectible action figures were released by Sideshow Collectibles , and Hot Toys , Ltd. respectively . A novelization by Ryder Windham was released in April 2008 by Scholastic to tie in with the release of Kingdom of the Crystal Skull . A previous novelization by Scottish author Campbell Armstrong ( under the pseudonym Campbell Black ) was concurrently released with the film in 1981 . A book about the making of the film was also released , written by Derek Taylor .

= = = Home media = = =

The film was released on VHS , Betamax and VideoDisc in pan and scan only , and on laserdisc in both pan and scan and widescreen . For its 1999 VHS re @-@ issue , the film was remastered in THX and made available in widescreen . The outer package was retitled Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Ark for consistency with the film 's prequel and sequel . The subsequent DVD release in 2003 features this title as well . The title in the film itself remains unchanged , even in the restored DVD print . In the DVD , two subtle digital revisions were added . First , a connecting rod from the giant boulder to an offscreen guidance track in the opening scene was removed from behind the running Harrison Ford ; second , a reflection in the glass partition separating Ford from the cobra in the Well of Souls was removed . Shortly before the theatrical release of " Kingdom of the Crystal Skull " , Raiders ( along with The Temple of Doom and The Last Crusade ) was re @-@ released on DVD with additional extra features not included on the previous set on May 13 , 2008 . The film was released on Blu @-@ ray Disc in September 2012 . Previously , only Kingdom of the Crystal Skull had been available on Blu @-@ ray .

= = Reception = =

= = = Box office = = =

Raiders of the Lost Ark opened at # 14 and grossed \$ 1 @,@ 673 @,@ 731 from 267 theaters ( \$ 6 @,@ 269 theater average ) during its opening weekend . In total , the IMAX release grossed \$ 3 @,@ 125 @,@ 613 domestically . The film , made on an \$ 18 million budget , grossed \$ 384 million worldwide throughout its theatrical releases . In North America , it was by some distance the highest @-@ grossing film of 1981 , and remains one of the top twenty @-@ five highest @-@ grossing films ever made when adjusted for inflation . Box Office Mojo estimates that the film sold more than 70 million tickets in the US in its initial theatrical run .

= = = Critical reception = = =

The film was subsequently nominated for nine Academy Awards , including Best Picture , in 1982 and won four ( Best Sound , Best Film Editing , Best Visual Effects , and Best Art Direction @-@ Set

Decoration ( Norman Reynolds , Leslie Dilley , and Michael D. Ford ) . It also received a Special Achievement Award for Sound Effects Editing . It won numerous other awards , including a Grammy Award and Best Picture at the People 's Choice Awards . Spielberg was also nominated for a Golden Globe Award .

The film was acclaimed by critics and audiences alike . In his review for The New York Times , Vincent Canby praised the film , calling it , " one of the most deliriously funny , ingenious and stylish American adventure movies ever made . " Roger Ebert in his review for the Chicago Sun @-@ Times wrote , " Two things , however , make Raiders of the Lost Ark more than just a technological triumph : its sense of humor and the droll style of its characters [ ... ] We find ourselves laughing in surprise , in relief , in incredulity at the movie 's ability to pile one incident upon another in an inexhaustible series of inventions . " He later added it to his list of " Great Movies " . Rolling Stone said the film was " the ultimate Saturday action matinee ? a film so funny and exciting it can be enjoyed any day of the week . " Bruce Williamson of Playboy claimed : " There 's more excitement in the first ten minutes of Raiders than any movie I have seen all year . By the time the explosive misadventures end , any movie @-@ goer worth his salt ought to be exhausted . " Stephen Klain of Variety also praised the film . Yet , making an observation that would revisit the franchise with its next film , he felt that the film was surprisingly violent and bloody for a PG @-@ rated film .

There were some dissenting voices : Sight & Sound described it as an " expensively gift @-@ wrapped Saturday afternoon pot @-@ boiler " , and New Hollywood champion Pauline Kael , who once contended that she only got " really rough " on large films that were destined to be hits but were nonetheless " atrocious " , found the film to be a " machine @-@ tooled adventure " from a pair of creators who " think just like the marketing division " . ( Lucas later named a villain , played by Raiders Nazi strongman Pat Roach , in his 1988 fantasy film Willow after Kael . ) The film is considered to be a classic of the action and adventure genres by many contemporary critics , and carries a 96 % " Certified Fresh " rating on Rotten Tomatoes , as well as a 85 % rating on Metacritic , indicating " universal acclaim " .

= = = Accolades = = =

American Film Institute

AFI 's 100 Years ... 100 Movies ? No. 60

AFI 's 100 Years ... 100 Thrills ? No. 10

AFI 's 100 Years ... 100 Heroes and Villains :

Indiana Jones ? No. 2 Hero

AFI 's 100 Years ... 100 Movie Quotes :

" Snakes ! Why did it have to be snakes ? " ? Nominated

AFI 's 100 Years of Film Scores ? Nominated

AFI 's 100 Years ... 100 Movies ( 10th Anniversary Edition ) ? No. 66

= = Impact = =

Following the success of Raiders , a prequel , The Temple of Doom , and two sequels , The Last Crusade and Kingdom of the Crystal Skull , were produced , with a third sequel set for release in 2019 . A television series , entitled The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles , was also spun off from this film , and details the character 's early years . Numerous other books , comics , and video games have also been produced .

In 1998 , the American Film Institute placed the film at number 60 on its top 100 films of the first century of cinema . In 2007 , AFI updated the list and placed it at number 66 . They also named it as the 10th most thrilling film , and named Indiana Jones as the second greatest hero . In 1999 , the film was deemed " culturally , historically , or aesthetically significant " by the U.S. Library of Congress and selected for preservation in the National Film Registry . Indiana Jones has become an icon , being listed as Entertainment Weekly 's third favorite action hero , while noting " some of the greatest action scenes ever filmed are strung together like pearls " in this film .



An amateur , near shot @-@ for @-@ shot remake was made by Chris Strompolos , Eric Zala , and Jayson Lamb , then children in Ocean Springs , Mississippi . It took the boys seven years to finish , from 1982 to 1989 . After production of the film , called Raiders of the Lost Ark : The Adaptation , it was shelved and forgotten until 2003 , where it was discovered by Eli Roth and acclaimed by Spielberg himself , who congratulated the boys on their hard work and said he looked forward to seeing their names on the big screen . Scott Rudin and Paramount Pictures purchased the trio 's life rights with the goal of producing a film based on their adventures making their remake .

In 2014 , film director Steven Soderbergh published an experimental black @-@ and @-@ white version of the film , with the original soundtrack and dialogue replaced by an electronic soundtrack . Soderbergh said his intention was to encourage viewers to focus on Spielberg 's extraordinary staging and editing : " This filmmaker forgot more about staging by the time he made his first feature than I know to this day . "

Assessing the film 's legacy in 1997 , Bernard Weinraub , film critic for The New York Times , which had initially reviewed the film as " deliriously funny , ingenious , and stylish " , maintained that " the decline in the traditional family G @-@ rated film , for ' general ' audiences , probably began " with the appearance of Raiders of the Lost Ark . " Whether by accident or design , " found Weinraub , " the filmmakers made a comic nonstop action film intended mostly for adults but also for children . " Eight years later , in 2005 , viewers of Channel 4 in the U.K. rated the film as the 20th @-@ best family film of all time , with Spielberg taking best over @-@ all director honors .

On Empire magazine 's list of the 500 Greatest Movies of All Time , Raiders ranked second , beaten only by The Godfather .

In conjunction with the Blu @-@ ray release , a limited one @-@ week release in IMAX theaters was announced for September 7 , 2012 . Steven Spielberg and sound designer Ben Burt supervised the format conversion . No special effects or other visual elements were altered , but the audio was enhanced for surround sound .

= = = 2012 replica mystery = = =

In December 2012 , the University of Chicago 's admissions department received a package in the mail addressed to Henry Walton Jones , Jr . , Indiana Jones ' full name . The address on the stamped package was listed for a hall that was the former home of the university 's geology and geography department . Inside the manila envelope was a detailed replica journal similar to the one Jones used in the movie , as well as postcards and pictures of Marion Ravenwood . The admissions department posted pictures of the contents on its Internet blog , looking for any information about the package . It was discovered that the package was part of a set to be shipped from Guam to Italy that had been sold on eBay . The package with the journal had fallen out in transit and a postal worker had sent it to the university , as it had a complete address and postage , which turned out to be fake . All contents were from a Guam " prop replicator " who sells them all over the world . The university will display its replica in the main lobby of the Oriental Institute .

= = = Fortress of Kuelap = = =

In the opening jungle scene , Indy retrieves the Golden Idol and the famed action of the boulder chase and pursuit by the deadly Hovitos ( fictional descendants of the Chachapoyans ) commences . An ancient structure called Kuelap may have inspired the booby @-@ trapped temple . The novelization of the film explains that Jones was looking for the Temple of the Chachapoyan Warriors in the Andes of Northern Peru . The Chachapoyans , which means ? People of the Clouds " , were an actual South American people , and have left behind scores of ruins ; most notably Kuelap , ? The Fortress of the Clouds " . The fortress of Kuelap remains with its long , high walls ( 600 meters in length , 110 meters in width , and 19 meters high ) and remnants of more than four hundred buildings . Radiocarbon dating indicates the site was constructed as early as the 6th century AD and was used throughout the pre @-@ Columbian period . Similar to the temple seen in the film , the entryway to Kuelap is long and very narrow . Archaeologists believe the entrance was designed this

way so that it could be easily defended , as only one person could fit through the entrance at a time .  
Many Chachapoyan grave sites and mummies have also been located amongst the ruins of Kuelap  
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