

= Batman ( 1989 film ) =

Batman is a 1989 American superhero film directed by Tim Burton and produced by Jon Peters , based on the DC Comics character of the same name . It is the first installment of Warner Bros. ' initial Batman film series . The film stars Michael Keaton as Bruce Wayne / Batman , alongside Jack Nicholson , Kim Basinger , Robert Wuhl , Pat Hingle , Billy Dee Williams , Michael Gough , and Jack Palance . In the film , Batman is widely believed to be an urban legend until he actively goes to war with a rising criminal mastermind known as " the Joker " .

After Burton was hired as director in 1986 , Steve Englehart and Julie Hickson wrote film treatments before Sam Hamm wrote the first screenplay . Batman was not greenlit until after the success of Burton 's Beetlejuice ( 1988 ) . Numerous A @-@ list actors were considered for the role of Batman before Keaton was cast . Keaton 's casting caused a controversy since , by 1988 , he had become typecast as a comedic actor and many observers doubted he could portray a serious role . Nicholson accepted the role of the Joker under strict conditions that dictated a high salary , a portion of the box office profits and his shooting schedule . The tone and themes of the film were influenced in part by Alan Moore and Brian Bolland 's The Killing Joke and Frank Miller 's The Dark Knight Returns . The film notably invents a unique origin story for the Joker , presenting him as an organised criminal named Jack Napier . Filming took place at Pinewood Studios from October 1988 to January 1989 . The budget escalated from \$ 30 million to \$ 48 million , while the 1988 Writers Guild of America strike forced Hamm to drop out . Uncredited rewrites were performed by Warren Skaaren , Charles McKeown and Jonathan Gems .

Batman was a critical and financial success , earning over \$ 400 million in box office totals . It was the fifth @-@ highest grossing film in history at the time of its release . The film received several Saturn Award nominations and a Golden Globe nomination , and won an Academy Award . It also inspired the equally successful Batman : The Animated Series , paving the way for the DC animated universe , and has influenced Hollywood 's modern marketing and development techniques of the superhero film genre .

= = Plot = =

The mayor of Gotham City , Mayor Borg ( Lee Wallace ) orders District Attorney Harvey Dent ( Billy Dee Williams ) and Police Commissioner James " Jim " Gordon ( Pat Hingle ) to increase police activity and combat crime in preparation for the city 's bicentennial . Reporter Alexander Knox ( Robert Wuhl ) and photojournalist Vicki Vale ( Kim Basinger ) begin to investigate reports of a vigilante nicknamed " Batman " , who is targeting the city 's criminals .

Mob boss Carl Grissom ( Jack Palance ) , who has already been targeted by Dent , discovers his mistress Alicia ( Jerry Hall ) involved with his second @-@ in @-@ command , Jack Napier ( Jack Nicholson ) . With the help of corrupt police lieutenant Max Eckhardt ( William Hootkins ) , Grissom sets up Napier to be murdered during a raid at the Axis Chemicals plant . During the ensuing shootout , Napier kills Eckhardt , after which Batman suddenly appears . The two struggle , and Napier is accidentally knocked into a vat of chemical waste . Batman flees , and Napier is presumed dead .

Batman is , in actuality , Bruce Wayne ( Michael Keaton ) , a billionaire industrialist who , as a child , witnessed his parents ' murder at the hands of a young psychopathic mugger . Bruce meets and falls for Vicki at a fundraiser , and the two begin a relationship . Meanwhile , Napier survives the accident , but is horribly disfigured with chalk @-@ white skin , emerald @-@ green hair and a permanent ruby @-@ red grin . Driven insane by his reflection , Napier becomes " The Joker " , kills Grissom in revenge for his set @-@ up , and usurps his criminal empire . In addition , the Joker seeks retaliation against Batman , whom he blames for his disfigurement . During his research for information about Batman , the Joker himself also falls for Vicki .

The Joker begins to terrorize the city , first by lacing hygiene products with a deadly chemical known as " Smilex " , which causes victims to laugh to death when used in certain combinations . The Joker then sets a trap at the Gotham Museum of Art for Vicki , and he and his henchmen

vandalize works of art . Batman arrives and rescues Vicki , and the pair escape in the Batmobile . Batman gives information about Smilex to Vicki so she can warn the city via Gotham newspapers about the poisoned products .

Bruce meets with Vicki at her apartment , prepared to tell her that he is Batman . They are interrupted by the Joker , who asks Bruce , " Have you ever danced with the devil by the pale moonlight ? " before shooting him . Bruce , who was wearing body armour , escapes , and recollects that the young mugger who killed his parents had asked him the same question ; he realizes that the mugger was none other than the Joker himself . Vicki suddenly appears in the Batcave , having been let in by Bruce 's butler , Alfred Pennyworth ( Michael Gough ) . After avouching himself to Vicki , Bruce ? as Batman ? leaves to destroy the Axis Chemical plant . Meanwhile , the Joker lures the townspeople to a night time parade with a promise to give away \$ 20 million in cash . After doing so , however , he attacks them with Smilex gas , spewing it from his giant parade balloons . Batman arrives on the scene and saves Gotham City from the attack using the Batwing . In his frustration , Joker kills his henchman Bob , then takes out a grenade launcher ( disguised as a clown gun ) and shoots at the Batwing , causing it to crash .

The Joker kidnaps Vicki and takes her to the top of a cathedral , where he forces her to dance with him . Batman , having survived the accident , pursues the two , and at the top of the dusty edifice , he and the Joker confront each other in single combat . When the Joker attempts an escape via a helicopter , Batman grapples the Joker 's leg to a heavy stone sculpture , causing him to fall to his death .

Commissioner Gordon unveils the Bat @-@ Signal along with a note from Batman read by Harvey Dent , promising to defend Gotham whenever crime strikes again . Vicki is escorted to the Wayne Manor by Alfred , who informs her that Bruce will be late , and she responds that she isn 't surprised . The movie ends with Batman staring at the bat @-@ signal .

= = Cast = =

= = Themes = =

When discussing the central theme of Batman , director Tim Burton explained , " the whole film and mythology of the character is a complete duel of the freaks . It 's a fight between two disturbed people " , adding that " The Joker is such a great character because there 's a complete freedom to him . Any character who operates on the outside of society and is deemed a freak and an outcast then has the freedom to do what they want ... They are the darker sides of freedom . Insanity is in some scary way the most freedom you can have , because you 're not bound by the laws of society " .

Burton saw Bruce Wayne as the bearer of a double identity , exposing one while hiding the reality from the world . Burton biographer Ken Hanke wrote that Bruce Wayne , struggling with his alter @-@ ego as Batman , is depicted as an antihero . Hanke felt that Batman has to push the boundaries of civil justice to deal with certain criminals , such as the Joker . Kim Newman theorized that " Burton and the writers saw Batman and the Joker as a dramatic antithesis , and the film deals with their intertwined origins and fates to an even greater extent " .

A visual motif is present in the scene of Batman 's first major act of vigilantism at Axis Chemicals , wherein he is carefully framed so that the single word AXIS , in gigantic red neon letters , looms over him , comparing his acts to those of the totalitarian governments of World War II and thus implying that the dangers of these actions include the transformation of Jack Napier into the Joker . Batman also conveys trademarks found in 1930s pulp magazines , notably the design of Gotham City stylized with Art Deco design . Richard Corliss , writing for Time , observed that Gotham 's design was a reference to films such as Metropolis ( 1927 ) and The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari ( 1920 ) . " Gotham City , despite being shot on a studio backlot " , he continued , " is literally another character in the script . It has the demeaning presence of German Expressionism and fascist architecture , staring down at the citizens . " Hanke further addressed the notions of Batman being a period piece ,

in that " The citizens , cops , people and the black @-@ and @-@ white television looks like it takes place in 1939 " ; but later said : " Had the filmmakers made Vicki Vale a femme fatale rather than a damsel in distress , this could have made Batman as a homage and tribute to classic film noir . " Portions of the climax pay homage to Vertigo .

= = Production = =

= = = Development = = =

In the late 1970s , Batman 's popularity was waning . CBS was interested in producing a Batman in Outer Space film . Producers Michael Uslan and Benjamin Melniker purchased the film rights of Batman from DC Comics on October 3 , 1979 . It was Uslan 's wish " to make the definitive , dark , serious version of Batman , the way Bob Kane and Bill Finger had envisioned him in 1939 . A creature of the night ; stalking criminals in the shadows . " Richard Maibaum was approached to write a script with Guy Hamilton to direct , but the two turned down the offer . Uslan was unsuccessful with pitching Batman to various movie studios because they wanted the film to be similar to the campy 1960s TV series . Columbia Pictures and United Artists were among those to turn down the film .

A disappointed Uslan then wrote a script titled Return of the Batman to give the film industry a better idea of his vision for the film . Uslan later compared its dark tone to that of The Dark Knight Returns , which his script pre @-@ dated by six years . In November 1979 , producers Jon Peters and Peter Guber joined the project . The four producers felt it was best to pattern the film 's development after that of Superman ( 1978 ) . Uslan , Melniker and Guber pitched Batman to Universal Pictures , but the studio turned it down . Though no movie studios were yet involved , the project was publicly announced with a budget of \$ 15 million in July 1980 at the Comic Art Convention in New York . Warner Bros. decided to accept Batman .

Tom Mankiewicz completed a script titled The Batman in June 1983 , focusing on Batman and Dick Grayson 's origins , with the Joker and Rupert Thorne as villains , and Silver St. Cloud as the romantic interest . Mankiewicz took inspiration from the limited series Batman : Strange Apparitions ( ISBN 1 @-@ 56389 @-@ 500 @-@ 5 ) , written by Steve Englehart . Comic book artist Marshall Rogers , who worked with Englehart on Strange Apparitions , was hired for concept art . The Batman was then announced in late 1983 for a mid @-@ 1985 release date on a budget of \$ 20 million . Originally , Mankiewicz had wanted an unknown actor for Batman , William Holden for James Gordon , David Niven as Alfred Pennyworth , and Peter O 'Toole as the Penguin , whom Mankiewicz wanted to portray as a mobster with low body temperature . Holden died in 1981 and Niven in 1983 , so this would never come to pass . A number of filmmakers were attached to Mankiewicz ' script , including Ivan Reitman and Joe Dante . Reitman wanted to cast Bill Murray as Batman and Eddie Murphy as Robin . Nine rewrites were performed by nine separate writers . Most of them were based on Strange Apparitions . However , it was Mankiewicz 's script that was still being used to guide the project .

After the financial success of Pee @-@ wee 's Big Adventure ( 1985 ) , Warner Bros. hired Tim Burton to direct Batman . Burton had then @-@ girlfriend Julie Hickson write a new 30 @-@ page film treatment , feeling the previous script by Mankiewicz was campy . The success of The Dark Knight Returns and Batman : The Killing Joke rekindled Warner Bros. ' interest in a film adaptation . Burton was initially not a comic book fan , but he was impressed by the dark and serious tone found in both The Dark Knight Returns and The Killing Joke . Warner Bros. enlisted the aid of Steve Englehart to write a new treatment in March 1986 . It included the Joker and Rupert Thorne as the main villains , with a cameo appearance by the Penguin . Silver St. Cloud and Dick Grayson were key supporting roles . It followed the similar storyline from Englehart 's own Strange Apparitions ( ISBN 1 @-@ 56389 @-@ 500 @-@ 5 ) . Warner Bros. was impressed , but Englehart felt there were too many characters . He removed the Penguin and Dick Grayson in his second treatment , finishing in May 1986 .

Burton approached Sam Hamm , a comic book fan , to write the screenplay . Hamm decided not to use an origin story , feeling that flashbacks would be more suitable and that " unlocking the mystery " would become part of the storyline . He reasoned , " You totally destroy your credibility if you show the literal process by which Bruce Wayne becomes Batman . " Hamm replaced Silver St. Cloud with Vicki Vale and Rupert Thorne with his own creation , Carl Grissom . He completed his script in October 1986 , which demoted Dick Grayson to a cameo rather than a supporting character . One scene in Hamm 's script had a young James Gordon on duty the night of the murder of Bruce Wayne 's parents . When Hamm 's script was rewritten , the scene was deleted reducing it in an only photo in the Gotham Globe but retaken to Batman Begins .

Warner Bros. was less willing to move forward on development , despite their enthusiasm for Hamm 's script , which Batman co @-@ creator Bob Kane greeted with positive feedback . Hamm 's script was then bootlegged at various comic book stores in the United States . Batman was finally given the greenlight to commence pre @-@ production in April 1988 , after the success of Burton 's Beetlejuice ( 1988 ) . When comic book fans found out about Burton directing the film with Michael Keaton starring in the lead role , controversy arose over the tone and direction Batman was going in . Hamm explained , " They hear Tim Burton 's name and they think of Pee @-@ wee 's Big Adventure . They hear Keaton 's name and they think of any number of Michael Keaton comedies . You think of the 1960s version of Batman , and it was the complete opposite of our film . We tried to market it with a typical dark and serious tone , but the fans didn 't believe us . " To combat negative reports on the film 's production , Kane was hired as creative consultant .

= = = Casting = = =

Parallel to the Superman casting , a who 's who of Hollywood top stars were considered for the role of Batman , including Mel Gibson , Kevin Costner , Charlie Sheen , Tom Selleck , Bill Murray , Harrison Ford and Dennis Quaid . Burton was pressured by Warner Bros. to cast an obvious action movie star , and had approached Pierce Brosnan , but he had no interest in playing a comic book character . Burton was originally interested in casting an unknown actor , and offered Ray Liotta a chance to audition after having completed Something Wild , but Liotta declined , a decision he regrets . Willem Dafoe , who was falsely reported to be considered for the Joker , had actually been considered for Batman early in development . Producer Jon Peters suggested Michael Keaton , arguing he had the right " edgy , tormented quality " after having seen his dramatic performance in Clean and Sober . Having directed Keaton in Beetlejuice , Burton agreed .

Keaton 's casting caused a controversy among comic book fans , with 50 @,@ 000 protest letters sent to Warner Bros. offices . Bob Kane , Sam Hamm and Michael Uslan also heavily questioned the casting . " Obviously there was a negative response from the comic book people . I think they thought we were going to make it like the 1960s TV series , and make it campy , because they thought of Michael Keaton from Mr. Mom and Night Shift and stuff like that . " Keaton studied The Dark Knight Returns for inspiration .

Brad Dourif , Tim Curry , David Bowie , John Lithgow and James Woods were considered for the Joker . Burton wanted to cast Brad Dourif , but the studio refused . Robin Williams lobbied hard for the part . Jack Nicholson had been producer Michael Uslan 's and Bob Kane 's choice since 1980 . Peters approached Nicholson as far back as 1986 , during filming of The Witches of Eastwick . Nicholson had what was known as an " off @-@ the @-@ clock " agreement . His contract specified the number of hours he was entitled to have off each day , from the time he left the set to the time he reported back for filming , as well as being off for Los Angeles Lakers home games . Nicholson demanded to have all of his scenes shot in a three @-@ week block , but the schedule lapsed into 106 days . He received a \$ 6 million salary , as well as a large percentage of the box office gross estimated between \$ 60 million to \$ 90 million .

Sean Young was originally cast as Vicki Vale , but was injured in a horse @-@ riding accident prior to commencement of filming . Young 's departure necessitated an urgent search for an actress who , besides being right for the part , could commit to the film at very short notice . Peters suggested Kim Basinger : she was able to join the production immediately and was cast . As a fan of Michael

Gough 's work in various Hammer Film Productions , Burton cast Gough as Bruce Wayne 's butler , Alfred Pennyworth . Robert Wuhl was cast as reporter Alexander Knox . His character was originally supposed to die by the Joker 's poison gas in the climax , but the filmmakers " liked [ my ] character so much , " Wuhl said , " that they decided to let me live . " Burton chose Billy Dee Williams as Harvey Dent because he wanted to include the villain Two @-@ Face in a future film using the concept of an African @-@ American Two @-@ Face for the black and white concept , but Tommy Lee Jones was later cast in the role for Batman Forever , which disappointed Williams . Nicholson convinced the filmmakers to cast Tracey Walter as the Joker 's henchman , Bob ; in real life , Nicholson and Walter are close friends . Kiefer Sutherland was considered as Robin before the character was deleted from the shooting script . The rest of the cast included Pat Hingle as Commissioner Gordon , Jerry Hall as Alicia Hunt , Lee Wallace as Mayor Borg , William Hootkins as Lt. Max Eckhardt , and Jack Palance as crime boss Carl Grissom .

= = = Filming = = =

The filmmakers considered filming Batman entirely on the Warner Bros. backlot in Burbank , California , but media interest in the film made them change the location . It was shot at Pinewood Studios in England from October 1988 to January 1989 . 18 sound stages were used , almost the entirety of Pinewood 's 95 @-@ acre backlot . Locations included Knebworth House and Hatfield House doubling for Wayne Manor , plus Acton Lane Power Station and Little Barford Power Station . The original production budget escalated from \$ 30 million to \$ 48 million . Filming was highly secretive . The unit publicist was offered and refused £ 10 @,@ 000 for the first pictures of Jack Nicholson as the Joker . The police were later called in when two reels of footage ( about 20 minutes ' worth ) were stolen . With various problems during filming , Burton called it " torture . The worst period of my life ! " .

Hamm was not allowed to perform rewrites during the 1988 Writers Guild of America strike . Jonathan Gems , Warren Skaaren and Charles McKeown rewrote the script during filming . Hamm criticized the rewrites , but blamed the changes on Warner Bros. Burton explained , " I don 't understand why that became such a problem . We started out with a script that everyone liked , although we recognized it needed a little work . " Dick Grayson appeared in the shooting script but was deleted , as the filmmakers felt he was irrelevant to the plot . Bob Kane supported this decision .

Keaton , who called himself a " logic freak " , was concerned that Batman 's secret identity would in reality be fairly easy to uncover , and discussed ideas with Burton to better disguise the character , including the use of contact lenses . Ultimately , Keaton decided to perform Batman 's voice at a lower register than when he was portraying Bruce Wayne , which became a hallmark of the film version of the character , with Christian Bale later using the same technique .

Originally in the climax , the Joker was to kill Vicki Vale , sending Batman into a vengeful fury . Jon Peters reworked the climax without telling Burton and commissioned production designer Anton Furst to create a 38 @-@ foot ( 12 m ) model of the cathedral . This cost \$ 100 @,@ 000 when the film was already well over budget . Burton disliked the idea , having no clue how the scene would end : " Here were Jack Nicholson and Kim Basinger walking up this cathedral , and halfway up Jack turns around and says , ' Why am I walking up all these stairs ? Where am I going ? ' ' We 'll talk about it when you get to the top ! ' I had to tell him that I didn 't know . " .

= = = Design = = =

Burton was impressed with Anton Furst 's designs in The Company of Wolves , and previously failed to hire Furst as production designer for Beetlejuice . Furst had been too committed on High Spirits , a choice he later regretted . Furst enjoyed working with Burton . " I don 't think I 've ever felt so naturally in tune with a director " , he said . " Conceptually , spiritually , visually , or artistically . There was never any problem because we never fought over anything . Texture , attitude and feelings are what Burton is a master at . " .

Furst and the art department deliberately mixed clashing architectural styles to " make Gotham City the ugliest and bleakest metropolis imaginable " . Furst continued , " [ W ] e imagined what New York City might have become without a planning commission . A city run by crime , with a riot of architectural styles . An essay in ugliness . As if hell erupted through the pavement and kept on going " . The 1985 film Brazil by Terry Gilliam was also a notable influence upon the film 's production design , as both Burton and Furst studied it as a reference . Derek Meddings served as the visual effects supervisor , while Keith Short helped construct the newly created 1989 Batmobile , adding two Browning machine guns . On designing the Batmobile , Furst explained , " We looked at jet aircraft components , we looked at war machines , we looked at all sorts of things . In the end , we went into pure expressionism , taking the Salt Flat Racers of the 30s and the Sting Ray macho machines of the 50s " . The car was built upon a Chevrolet Impala when previous development with a Jaguar and Ford Mustang failed .

Costume designer Bob Ringwood turned down the chance to work on Licence to Kill in favor of Batman . Ringwood found it difficult designing the Batsuit because " the image of Batman in the comics is this huge , big six @-@ foot @-@ four hunk with a dimpled chin . Michael Keaton is a guy with average build " , he stated . " The problem was to make somebody who was average @-@ sized and ordinary @-@ looking into this bigger @-@ than @-@ life creature . " Burton commented , " Michael is a bit claustrophobic , which made it worse for him . The costume put him in a dark , Batman @-@ like mood though , so he was able to use it to his advantage " . Burton 's idea was to use an all @-@ black suit , and was met with positive feedback by Bob Kane . Jon Peters wanted to use a Nike product placement with the Batsuit . Ringwood studied over 200 comic book issues for inspiration . 28 sculpted latex designs were created ; 25 different cape looks and 6 different heads were made , accumulating a total cost of \$ 250 @,@ 000 . Comic book fans initially expressed negative feedback against the Batsuit . Burton opted not to use tights , spandex , or underpants as seen in the comic book , feeling it was not intimidating . Prosthetic makeup designer Nick Dudman used acrylic @-@ based makeup paint called PAX for Nicholson 's chalk @-@ white face . Part of Nicholson 's contract was approval over the makeup designer .

= = = Music = = =

Burton hired Danny Elfman , his collaborator on Pee @-@ wee 's Big Adventure and Beetlejuice , to compose the music score . For inspiration , Elfman was given The Dark Knight Returns . Elfman was worried , as he had never worked on a production this large in budget and scale . In addition , producer Jon Peters was skeptical of hiring Elfman , but was later convinced when he heard the opening number . Peters and Peter Guber wanted Prince to write music for the Joker and Michael Jackson to do the romance songs . Elfman would then combine the style of Prince and Jackson 's songs together for the entire film score .

Burton protested the ideas , citing " my movies aren 't commercial like Top Gun . " Elfman enlisted the help of Oingo Boingo lead guitarist Steve Bartek and Shirley Walker to arrange the compositions for the orchestra . Elfman was later displeased with the audio mixing of his film score . " Batman was done in England by technicians who didn 't care , and the non @-@ caring showed , " he stated . " I 'm not putting down England because they 've done gorgeous dubs there , but this particular crew elected not to . " Batman was one of the first films to spawn two soundtracks . One of them featured songs written by Prince while the other showcased Elfman 's score . Both were successful , and compilations of Elfman 's opening credits were used in the title sequence theme for Batman : The Animated Series , also composed by Shirley Walker .

= = Marketing = =

Production designer Anton Furst designed the poster , which he called " evocative but ubiquitous . Only featuring the Bat @-@ Symbol . Not too much and not too little " . Earlier designs " had the word ' Batman ' spelled in RoboCop or Conan the Barbarian @-@ type font " . Jon Peters unified all the film 's tie @-@ ins , even turning down \$ 6 million from General Motors to build the Batmobile

because the car company would not relinquish creative control .

During production , Peters read in The Wall Street Journal that comic book fans were unsatisfied with the casting of Michael Keaton . In response , Peters rushed the first film trailer that played in thousands of theaters during Christmas . It was simply an assemblage of scenes without music , but happened to create enormous anticipation for the film . DC Comics allowed screenwriter Sam Hamm to write his own comic book miniseries . Hamm 's stories were collected in the graphic novel Batman : Blind Justice ( ISBN 978 @-@ 1563890475 ) . Denys Cowan and Dick Giordano illustrated the artwork . Blind Justice tells the story of Bruce Wayne trying to solve a series of murders connected to Wayne Enterprises . It also marks the first appearance of Henri Ducard , who was later used in the rebooted Batman Begins , albeit as an alias for the more notable Ra 's al Ghul .

In the months pre @-@ dating Batman 's release in June 1989 , a popular culture phenomenon rose known as " Batmania " . Over \$ 750 million worth of merchandise was sold . Cult filmmaker and comic book writer Kevin Smith remembered : " That summer was huge . You couldn 't turn around without seeing the Bat @-@ Signal somewhere . People were cutting it into their fucking heads . It was just the summer of Batman and if you were a comic book fan it was pretty hot . " Hachette Book Group USA published a novelization , Batman written by Craig Shaw Gardner . It remained on the New York Times Best Seller list throughout June 1989 . Burton admitted he was annoyed by the publicity . David Handelman of The New York Observer categorized Batman as a high concept film . He believed " it is less movie than a corporate behemoth " .

= = Reception = =

= = = Box office = = =

Batman opened on June 23 , 1989 , grossing \$ 43 @.@ 6 million in 2 @,@ 194 theaters during its opening weekend . This broke the opening weekend record , set by Ghostbusters II one week earlier , with \$ 29 @.@ 4 million . Batman would eventually gross \$ 251 @.@ 2 million in North America and \$ 160 @.@ 15 million internationally , totaling \$ 411 @.@ 35 million . Batman was the first film to earn \$ 100 million in its first ten days of release , and was the highest grossing film based on a DC comic book until 2008 's The Dark Knight . The film 's gross is the 66th highest ever in North American ranks . Although Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade made the most money worldwide in 1989 , Batman was able to beat The Last Crusade in North America , and made a further \$ 150 million in home video sales . Box Office Mojo estimates that the film sold more than 60 million tickets in the US .

= = = Critical reaction = = =

Batman was criticized in some quarters for being too dark and too violent , but nonetheless received positive reviews . Many observed that Burton was more interested in the Joker and the art and set production design than Batman or anything else in terms of characterization and screentime . Comic book fans reacted negatively over the Joker murdering Thomas and Martha Wayne ; in the comic book , Joe Chill is responsible . Writer Sam Hamm said it was Burton 's idea to have the Joker murder Wayne 's parents . " The Writer 's Strike was going on , " Hamm said , " and Tim had the other writers do that . I also hold innocent to Alfred letting Vicki Vale into the Batcave . Fans were ticked off with that , and I agree . That would have been Alfred 's last day of employment at Wayne Manor . "

The songs written by Prince were criticized for being " too out of place " . While Burton has stated he had no problem with the Prince songs , he was less enthusiastic with their use in the film . On the film , Burton remarked , " I liked parts of it , but the whole movie is mainly boring to me . It 's OK , but it was more of a cultural phenomenon than a great movie . " Nonetheless , it received acclaim . Based on 67 reviews collected by Rotten Tomatoes , 72 % of reviewers reacted positively to Batman . Metacritic gives an aggregated score of 66 , based on 17 reviews , indicating " generally favorable

" .

Despite initial negative reactions from comics fans prior to the film 's release , Keaton 's portrayal of Batman was generally praised . James Berardinelli called the film entertaining , with the highlight being the production design . However , he concluded , " the best thing that can be said about Batman is that it led to Batman Returns , which was a far superior effort . " Variety felt " Jack Nicholson stole every scene " but still greeted the film with positive feedback . Roger Ebert was highly impressed with the production design , but claimed " Batman is a triumph of design over story , style over substance , a great @-@ looking movie with a plot you can 't care much about . " He also called the film " a depressing experience " . His reviewing partner Gene Siskel disagreed , describing the film as having a ' refreshingly adult ' approach with performances , direction and set design that ' draws you into a psychological world ' . Jonathan Rosenbaum of the Chicago Reader called it " watchable enough " .

= = = Legacy = = =

Anton Furst and Peter Young won the Academy Award for Best Art Direction , while Nicholson was nominated for the Golden Globe Award for Best Actor ( Musical or Comedy ) . The British Academy of Film and Television Arts nominated Batman in six categories ( Production Design , Visual Effects , Costume Design , Makeup , Sound and Actor in a Supporting Role for Nicholson ) , but it won none of the categories . Nicholson , Basinger , the makeup department , and costume designer Bob Ringwood all received nominations at the Saturn Awards . The film was also nominated for the Saturn Award for Best Fantasy Film and the Hugo Award for Best Dramatic Presentation .

The success of Batman prompted Warner Bros. Animation to create the acclaimed Batman : The Animated Series , as a result beginning the long @-@ running DC animated universe and helped establish the modern day superhero film genre . Series co @-@ creator Bruce Timm stated the television show 's Art Deco design was inspired from the film . Timm commented , " our show would never have gotten made if it hadn 't been for that first Batman movie . " Burton joked , " ever since I did Batman , it was like the first dark comic book movie . Now everyone wants to do a dark and serious superhero movie . I guess I 'm the one responsible for that trend . "

Batman initiated the original Batman film series and spawned three sequels : Batman Returns ( 1992 ) , Batman Forever ( 1995 ) and Batman & Robin ( 1997 ) ; the latter two of which were directed by Joel Schumacher instead of Burton , and replaced Keaton as Batman with Val Kilmer and George Clooney , respectively .

Producers Michael Uslan and Benjamin Melniker filed a breach of contract lawsuit in Los Angeles County Superior Court on March 26 , 1992 . Uslan and Melniker claimed to be " the victims of a sinister campaign of fraud and coercion that has cheated them out of continuing involvement in the production of Batman and its sequels . We were denied proper credits , and deprived of any financial rewards for our indispensable creative contribution to the success of Batman . " A superior court judge rejected the lawsuit . Total revenues of Batman have topped \$ 2 billion , with Uslan claiming to have " not seen a penny more than that since our net profit participation has proved worthless . " Warner Bros. offered the pair an out @-@ of @-@ court pay @-@ off , a sum described by Uslan and Melniker 's attorney as " two popcorns and two Cokes " .

Reflecting on the twentieth anniversary of its release in a retrospective article on Salon.com , film commentator Scott Mendelson noted the continuing impact that Batman has had on the motion film industry , including the increasing importance of opening weekend box office receipts ; the narrowing window between a film 's debut and its video release that caused the demise of second @-@ run movie theaters ; the accelerated acquisition of pre @-@ existing , pre @-@ sold @-@ properties for film adaptations that can be readily leveraged for merchandizing tie @-@ ins ; the primacy of the MPAA PG @-@ 13 as the target rating for film producers ; and more off @-@ beat , non @-@ traditional casting opportunities for genre films .

The American Film Institute anointed Batman the 46th greatest movie hero and the Joker the 45th greatest movie villain on AFI 's 100 Years ... 100 Heroes and Villains . In 2008 , Batman was selected by Empire magazine as number 458 of The 500 Greatest Movies of All Time .



American Film Institute lists

AFI 's 100 Years ... 100 Movies ? Nominated

AFI 's 100 Years ... 100 Thrills ? Nominated

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

The Joker ? # 45 Villain

Batman ? # 46 Hero

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

" Have you ever danced with the Devil in the pale moonlight ? " ? Nominated

AFI 's 100 Years of Film Scores ? Nominated

AFI 's 10 Top 10 ? Nominated Fantasy Film

= = = Home video = = =

Many versions of the film have been released . Included are VHS , Laserdisc , single @-@ disc DVD , special edition DVD and an anthology set . The Batman : The Motion Picture Anthology released in 2005 included 2 @-@ disc special edition DVDs of the Tim Burton / Joel Schumacher Batman films . This anthology set was re @-@ released on Blu @-@ ray on March 10 , 2009 .

On May 19 , 2009 a 20th anniversary stand @-@ alone edition was released . This stand @-@ alone version contains exactly the same special features as its anthology set ( both DVD and Blu @-@ ray ) counterparts . There are two differences : This version includes a 50 @-@ page booklet guide to the film , and a slight variation in packaging from normal Blu @-@ ray cases ( i.e. a Warner Bros. digibook ) . They both include a digital copy of the film .

The film was also included in The Tim Burton Collection DVD / Blu @-@ ray set in 2012 , alongside its sequel , Batman Returns , and several other Burton films .