

## = The Truman Show =

The Truman Show is a 1998 American satirical comedy @-@ drama film directed by Peter Weir , produced by Scott Rudin , Andrew Niccol , Edward S. Feldman , and Adam Schroeder , and written by Niccol .

The film stars Jim Carrey as Truman Burbank , an orphan raised by a corporation inside a simulated television show revolving around his life , until he knows and decides to escape ; additional roles are provided by Laura Linney , Noah Emmerich , Natascha McElhone , Holland Taylor , and Ed Harris .

The Truman Show was originally a spec script by Niccol , inspired by an episode of The Twilight Zone called " Special Service " . Unlike the finished product , it was more of a science @-@ fiction thriller , with the story set in New York City . Scott Rudin purchased the script , and set up production at Paramount Pictures . Brian De Palma was to direct before Weir signed as director , making the film for \$ 60 million ? \$ 20 million less than the original estimate . Niccol rushingly rewrote the script while the crew was waiting for Carrey to sign . The majority of filming took place at Seaside , Florida , a master @-@ planned community located in the Florida Panhandle .

The film was a financial success and debuted to critical acclaim , and earned numerous nominations at the 71st Academy Awards , 56th Golden Globe Awards , 52nd British Academy Film Awards and The Saturn Awards . The Truman Show has been analyzed as a thesis on Christianity , metaphilosophy , simulated reality , existentialism and reality television .

## = = Plot = =

As told through interviews and footages used through the film , Truman Burbank is the unsuspecting star of The Truman Show , a reality television program which is broadcast live around the clock and across the globe . His entire life has taken place within a giant arcological dome in Hollywood , fashioned to create the seaside town of Seahaven , Florida , and equipped with thousands of cameras to monitor all aspects of Truman 's life . All of Seahaven 's residents are actors , otherwise going about their life to present the illusion to Truman . Creator and executive producer Christof wanted to capture Truman 's real emotion and human behavior when put in certain situations , creating the show around this .

The producers have discouraged Truman from wanting to travel beyond Seahaven by instilling him with aquaphobia through the " death " of his father in a boating accident , and by constantly broadcasting and printing messages of the dangers of traveling . Despite Christof 's controls , Truman manages to act in unexpected ways . During his college years , Truman was set to fall in love and marry Meryl , but another actress , Sylvia , caught his eye . Sylvia manages to bring Truman out of the sight of cameras long enough to warn him that he is on a show before she is taken away and off @-@ set , with the actor playing her father claiming they are returning to Fiji . Since then , while Truman went on to marry Meryl , he continues to fantasize about Sylvia , using scraps from magazines to recreate her face in secret , and seeks travel to Fiji . Outside of the show , Sylvia became part of a " Free Truman " campaign that believe that Truman is being held prisoner by Christof and demand the end of the show .

The film 's present begins during the thirtieth year of the show . Truman notices aspects of his life seems too perfect , and odd events all seem centered on him . One day , while going to work , Truman spots a disheveled man and recognizes him as his father , who had snuck back in on set , but the other actors quickly drag the man away . Despite efforts by Meryl and Truman 's best friend Marlon to reassure Truman , Truman becomes even more suspicious about his life . One day , he takes Meryl by surprise by going on an impromptu road trip , but their way is blocked by apparent emergencies created by Christof . Meryl begins to break down from the stress , and during one argument with Truman , breaks character and is later taken off the show . Truman , depressed and confused , is consoled by Marlon , and Christof uses the opportunity to re @-@ introduce Truman 's father to the show proper , hoping to bring Truman back to some emotional stability .

Truman seems to recover , but one night , the producers find Truman sleeping in his home 's

basement . They send Marlon to check on Truman , only to find Truman has disappeared through a makeshift tunnel . Marlon discovers this on camera , breaking character , and Christof orders their transmission halted ( for the first time ) while they launch a city @-@ wide search for Truman . Audiences around the world are drawn to this sudden change . They find Truman sailing out on Seahaven 's water despite his fear , and Christof restarts the broadcast as he sends a man @-@ made storm to try to capsize the boat . Christof 's bosses fear that they may be witnessing the murder of a human being on live television and warn Christof to stop , but he defends himself by stating that Truman was born on live television . Truman manages to hang on , calling out to the skies if that is the best they can do . Realizing he cannot dissuade Truman any further , Christof ends the storm .

Truman continues to sail until his boat punctures the wall of the dome , to his surprise . Exploring the wall , he finds an exit door . Christof , speaking directly to Truman through a speaker system , tries to convince him to stay by stating that there 's " no more truth " out in the real world and that by staying in his artificial world , he would have nothing to fear . Truman considers this , then says his catchphrase , " In case I don 't see you ... good afternoon , good evening , and good night " , takes a bow , and leaves via the door . The audiences celebrate , and Sylvia races to go meet Truman . Christof 's supervisors end the show for the last time , much to Christof 's dismay , as audiences now start looking for something else to watch .

= = Cast = =

Jim Carrey as Truman Burbank : Chosen out of six unwanted pregnancies and the first child to be legally adopted by a corporation , he is unaware that his daily life is broadcast continuously around the world . He has a job in the insurance business and a lovely wife , but he eventually notices that his environment is not what it seems to be . Robin Williams was considered for the role , but Weir cast Carrey after seeing him in Ace Ventura : Pet Detective because Carrey 's performance reminded him of Charlie Chaplin . Carrey took the opportunity to proclaim himself as a dramatic actor , rather than being typecast in comedic roles . Carrey , who was then normally paid \$ 20 million per film , agreed to do The Truman Show for \$ 12 million . Carrey and Weir initially found working together on set difficult ( Carrey 's contract gave him the power to demand rewrites ) , but Weir was impressed with Carrey 's improvisational skills , and the two became more interactive . The scene in which Truman declares " this planet Trumania of the Burbank galaxy " to the bathroom mirror was Carrey 's idea .

Laura Linney as Hannah Gill playing Meryl Burbank , Truman 's wife , a nurse at the local hospital . Since the show relies on product placement for revenue , Meryl regularly shows off various items she has recently " purchased , " one of the many oddities that makes Truman question his life . Her role is essentially to act the part of Truman 's wife and ultimately to have a child by him , despite her reluctance to accomplish either . Linney explains that Gill " was a child actress who never made it , and now she 's really ambitious . Mostly she 's into negotiating her contract . Every time she sleeps with Truman she gets an extra \$ 10 @, @ 000 . " Linney heavily studied Sears catalogs from the 1950s to develop her character 's poses .

Ed Harris as Christof : The creator of The Truman Show . Christof remains dedicated to the program at all costs , often overseeing and directing its course in person ( rather than through aides ) , but at the climax / resolution , he speaks to Truman over a loudspeaker , revealing the nature of Truman 's situation . Dennis Hopper was originally cast in the role , but he left in April 1997 ( during filming ) over " creative differences . " Harris was a last @-@ minute replacement . A number of other actors had turned down the role after Hopper 's departure . Harris had an idea of making Christof a hunchback , but Weir did not like the idea .

Noah Emmerich as Louis Coltrane playing Marlon , Truman 's best friend since early childhood . Marlon is a vending machine operator for the company Goodies , who promises Truman he would never lie to him , despite the latest events in Truman 's life . Emmerich has said , " My character is in a lot of pain . He feels really guilty about deceiving Truman . He 's had a serious drug addiction for many years . Been in and out of rehab . " His name is an amalgam of two jazz musicians , Louis

Armstrong and John Coltrane , and in one scene he plays trumpet .

Natascha McElhone as Sylvia playing Lauren Garland ( Truman 's college schoolmate ) : Sylvia was hired to play a background extra , a fellow student at Truman 's college , named Lauren . She became romantically involved with Truman and tried to reveal to him the truth about his life , but was thrown out of the show before she could do so . She then becomes a protester against The Truman Show , urging Christof to release its lead .

Brian Delate as Walter Moore playing Kirk Burbank , Truman 's father . When Truman was a boy , his character on the show was killed off to instill a fear of water in his son that would prevent Truman from leaving the set ; however , he sneaks back onto the set when Truman is an adult . This causes Truman to begin questioning his staged life , and as he tries to get away from it the writers are forced to write a plot in which Kirk had not drowned but had suffered from amnesia .

Holland Taylor as Alanis Montclair playing Angela Burbank , Truman 's mother : Christof orders that she attempt to persuade Truman to have children .

Harry Shearer ( cameo appearance ) as Mike Michaelson ( news anchor ) : Michaelson hosts TruTalk , an entertainment @-@ news program about The Truman Show that broadcasts early in the morning .

Paul Giamatti as Simeon ( control room director ) .

Peter Krause as Laurence ( Truman 's boss ) : At Truman 's office , Laurence often interrupts Truman when he talks about his dreams of moving to Fiji .

Philip Glass , who composed and performed some of the film 's soundtrack , makes a cameo appearance as the incidental keyboard player .

= = Production = =

Andrew Niccol completed a one @-@ page film treatment titled The Malcolm Show in May 1991 . The original draft was more in tone of a science fiction thriller , with the story set in New York City . Niccol stated , " I think everyone questions the authenticity of their lives at certain points . It 's like when kids ask if they 're adopted . " In the fall of 1993 , producer Scott Rudin purchased the script for slightly over \$ 1 million . Paramount Pictures instantly agreed to distribute . Part of the deal called for Niccol to have his directing debut , though Paramount felt the estimated \$ 80 million budget would be too high for him . In addition , Paramount wanted to go with an A @-@ list director , paying Niccol extra money " to step aside . " Brian De Palma was under negotiations to direct before he left United Talent Agency in March 1994 . Directors who were considered after De Palma 's departure included Tim Burton , Terry Gilliam , Barry Sonnenfeld and Steven Spielberg before Peter Weir signed on in early 1995 , following a recommendation of Niccol . Bryan Singer wanted to direct but Paramount decided to go with the more experienced Weir .

Paramount was cautious about The Truman Show which they dubbed " the most expensive art film ever made " because of its \$ 60 million budget . They wanted the film to be funnier and less dramatic . Weir also shared this vision , feeling that Niccol 's script was too dark , and declaring " where he [ Niccol ] had it depressing , I could make it light . It could convince audiences they could watch a show in this scope 24 / 7 . " Niccol wrote sixteen drafts of the script before Weir considered the script ready for filming . Later on in 1995 , Jim Carrey signed to star , but because of commitments with The Cable Guy and Liar Liar , he would not be ready to start filming for at least another year . Weir felt Carrey was perfect for the role and opted to wait for another year rather than recast the role . Niccol rewrote the script twelve times , while Weir created a fictionalized book about the show 's history . He envisioned backstories for the characters and encouraged actors to do the same .

Weir scouted locations in Eastern Florida but was unsatisfied with the landscapes . Sound stages at Universal Studios were reserved for the story 's setting of Seahaven before Weir 's wife introduced him to Seaside , Florida , a " master @-@ planned community " located in the Florida Panhandle . Pre @-@ production offices were immediately opened in Seaside , where the majority of filming took place . Other scenes were shot at Paramount Studios in Los Angeles , California . Norman Rockwell paintings and 1960s postcards were used as inspiration for the film 's design . Weir , Peter Biziou

and Dennis Gassner researched surveillance techniques for certain shots .

The overall look was influenced by television images , particularly commercials : Many shots have characters leaning into the lens with their eyeballs wide open , and the interior scenes are heavily lit , because Weir wanted to remind viewers that " in this world , everything was for sale . " Those involved in visual effects work found the film somewhat difficult to make , because 1997 was the year many visual effects companies were trying to convert to computer @-@ generated imagery . CGI was used to create the upper halves of some of the larger buildings in the film 's downtown set . Craig Barron , one of the effects supervisors , said that these digital models did not have to look as detailed and weathered as they normally would in a film because of the artificial look of the entire town , although they did imitate slight blemishes found in the physical buildings .

= = Soundtrack = =

= = Themes = =

= = = Religious analogy = = =

Benson Y. Parkinson of the Association for Mormon Letters noted that Christof represented Jesus as an " off @-@ Christ " ( " Christ @-@ off " ) or Antichrist , comparing the megalomaniacal Hollywood producer to Lucifer . The conversation between Truman and Marlon at the bridge can be compared to one between Moses and God in the Book of Exodus .

In C.S. Lewis and Narnia for Dummies by Rich Wagner , Christof is compared with Screwtape , the eponymous character of The Screwtape Letters by C. S. Lewis .

= = = Media = = =

In 2008 , Popular Mechanics named The Truman Show as one of the 10 most prophetic science fiction films . Journalist Erik Sofge argued that the story reflects the falseness of reality television . " Truman simply lives , and the show 's popularity is its straightforward voyeurism . And , like Big Brother , Survivor , and every other reality show on the air , none of his environment is actually real . " He deemed it an eerie coincidence that Big Brother made its debut a year after the film 's release , and he also compared the film to the 2003 program The Joe Schmo Show : " Unlike Truman , Matt Gould could see the cameras , but all of the other contestants were paid actors , playing the part of various reality @-@ show stereotypes . While Matt eventually got all of the prizes in the rigged contest , the show 's central running joke was in the same existential ballpark as The Truman Show . " Weir declared , " There has always been this question : Is the audience getting dumber ? Or are we filmmakers patronizing them ? Is this what they want ? Or is this what we 're giving them ? But the public went to my film in large numbers . And that has to be encouraging . "

Ronald Bishop 's paper in the Journal of Communication Enquiry suggests The Truman Show showcased the power of the media . Truman 's life inspires audiences around the world , meaning their lives are controlled by his . Bishop commented , " In the end , the power of the media is affirmed rather than challenged . In the spirit of Antonio Gramsci 's concept of hegemony , these films and television programs co @-@ opt our enchantment ( and disenchantment ) with the media and sell it back to us . "

Simone Knox , in her essay " Reading The Truman Show inside out " argues that the film itself tries to blur the objective perspective and the show @-@ within @-@ the @-@ film . Knox also draws a floor plan of the camera angles of the first scene .

= = = Psychological and psychoanalytic interpretation = = =

An essay published in the International Journal of Psychoanalysis analyzed Truman as

[ A ] prototypical adolescent at the beginning of the movie . He feels trapped into a familial and social world to which he tries to conform while being unable to entirely identify with it , believing that he has no other choice ( other than through the fantasy of fleeing to a far @-@ way island ) . Eventually , Truman gains sufficient awareness of his condition to " leave home " ? developing a more mature and authentic identity as a man , leaving his child @-@ self behind and becoming a True @-@ man .

= = = Utopia = = =

Parallels can be drawn from Thomas More 's 1516 book Utopia , in which More describes an island with only one entrance and only one exit . Only those who belonged to this island knew how to navigate their way through the treacherous openings safely and unharmed . This situation is similar to The Truman Show because there are limited entryways into the world that Truman knows . Truman does not belong to this utopia into which he has been implanted , and childhood trauma rendered him frightened of the prospect of ever leaving this small community . Utopian models of the past tended to be full of like @-@ minded individuals who shared much in common , comparable to More 's Utopia and real @-@ life groups such as the Shakers and the Oneida Community . It is clear that the people in Truman 's world are like @-@ minded in their common effort to keep him oblivious to reality . The suburban " picket fence " appearance of the show 's set is reminiscent of the " American Dream " of the 1950s . The " American Dream " concept in Truman 's world serves as an attempt to keep him happy and ignorant .

= = Release = =

The film 's theatrical release date was originally set for August 8 , 1997 , but Paramount Pictures pushed it back to the subsequent summer . NBC purchased broadcast rights in December 1997 , roughly eight months before the film 's release . In March 2000 , Turner Broadcasting System purchased the rights and now often airs the film on TBS .

= = = Reception = = =

The Truman Show received critical acclaim . On Rotten Tomatoes , the film has a rating of 94 % , based on 125 reviews , with an average rating of 8 @. @ 4 / 10 , with the site 's critical consensus reading , " A funny , tender , and thought @-@ provoking film , The Truman Show is all the more noteworthy for its remarkably prescient vision of runaway celebrity culture and a nation with an insatiable thirst for the private details of ordinary lives . " On Metacritic , the film has a score of 90 out of 100 , based on 30 reviews , indicating " universal acclaim " .

Giving the film a perfect four star score , Roger Ebert compared it to Forrest Gump , claiming that the film had a right balance of comedy and drama . He was also impressed with Jim Carrey 's dramatic performance . Kenneth Turan of the Los Angeles Times wrote , " The Truman Show is emotionally involving without losing the ability to raise sharp satiric questions as well as get numerous laughs . The rare film that is disturbing despite working beautifully within standard industry norms . " He would name it the best movie of 1998 . In June 2010 , Entertainment Weekly named Truman one of the 100 Greatest Characters of the Last 20 Years .

James Berardinelli liked the film 's approach of " not being the casual summer blockbuster with special effects , " and he likened Carrey 's " [ charismatic ] , understated and effective " performance to those of Tom Hanks and James Stewart . Jonathan Rosenbaum of the Chicago Reader wrote , " Undeniably provocative and reasonably entertaining , The Truman Show is one of those high @-@ concept movies whose concept is both clever and dumb . " Tom Meek of Film Threat said the film was not funny enough but still found " something rewarding in its quirky demeanor . "

= = = Accolades = = =

At the 71st Academy Awards , The Truman Show was nominated for three awards but did not win in any category . Peter Weir received the nomination for Best Director , while Ed Harris was nominated for Best Supporting Actor and Andrew Niccol was nominated for Best Original Screenplay . Many believed Carrey would be nominated for Best Actor , as well as the film itself for Best Picture , but both were not . In addition , The Truman Show earned nominations at the Golden Globe Awards for Best Motion Picture ? Drama , Weir for Best Director ? Motion Picture and Niccol for ( Screenplay ) . Jim Carrey and Ed Harris both won Golden Globes as Best Actor ? Drama and Best Supporting Actor , respectively , as did Burkhard Dallwitz and Philip Glass for Best Original Score .

At the 52nd British Academy Film Awards , Weir ( Direction ) , Niccol ( Original Screenplay ) and Dennis Gassner ( Production Design ) received awards . In addition , the film was nominated for Best Film and Best Visual Effects . Harris was nominated for Best Supporting Actor , and Peter Biziou was nominated for Best Cinematography . The Truman Show was a success at The Saturn Awards , where it won the Best Fantasy Film and the Best Writing ( Niccol ) . Carrey ( Best Actor ) , Harris ( Best Supporting Actor ) and Weir ( Direction ) also received nominations . Finally , the film won speculative fiction 's Hugo Award for Best Dramatic Presentation .

= = The Truman Show delusion = =

Joel Gold , a psychiatrist at the Bellevue Hospital Center , revealed that by 2008 , he had met five patients with schizophrenia ( and heard of another twelve ) who believed their lives were reality television shows . Gold named the syndrome " The Truman Show delusion " after the film and attributed the delusion to a world that had become hungry for publicity .

Gold stated that some patients were rendered happy by their disease , while " others were tormented . " One traveled to New York to check whether the World Trade Center had actually fallen ? believing the 9 / 11 attacks to be an elaborate plot twist in his personal storyline . Another came to climb the Statue of Liberty , believing that he would be reunited with his high @-@ school girlfriend at the top and finally be released from the show .

In August 2008 , the British Journal of Psychiatry reported similar cases in the United Kingdom . The delusion has informally been referred to as " Truman syndrome , " according to an Associated Press story from 2008 .

After hearing about the condition , writer of The Truman Show Andrew Niccol said : " You know you 've made it when you have a disease named after you . "