

= Tom Hooper =

Thomas George " Tom " Hooper ( born 5 October 1972 ) is a British film and television director of English and Australian background . Hooper began making short films as a teenager , and had his first professional short , Painted Faces , broadcast on Channel 4 in 1992 . At Oxford University Hooper directed plays and television commercials . After graduating , he directed episodes of Quayside , Byker Grove , EastEnders and Cold Feet .

In the 2000s , Hooper directed the major BBC costume dramas Love in a Cold Climate ( 2001 ) and Daniel Deronda ( 2002 ) , and was selected to helm the 2003 revival of ITV 's Prime Suspect series , starring Helen Mirren . Hooper made his feature film debut with Red Dust ( 2004 ) , a British drama starring Hilary Swank and Chiwetel Ejiofor , before directing Helen Mirren again in the Company Pictures / HBO Films historical drama Elizabeth I ( 2005 ) . He continued working for HBO on the television film Longford ( 2006 ) and in John Adams ( 2008 ) , a seven @-@ part serial on the life of the American president . Hooper returned to features with The Damned United ( 2009 ) , a fact @-@ based film about the English football manager Brian Clough ( played by Michael Sheen ) . The following year saw the release of the historical drama The King 's Speech ( 2010 ) , starring Colin Firth and Geoffrey Rush , which was met with critical acclaim . Hooper 's next film was Les Misérables ( 2012 ) , which featured an all @-@ star cast led by Hugh Jackman and Russell Crowe .

Hooper 's work was nominated for an Emmy Award for Outstanding Directing for Prime Suspect and John Adams , won one for Elizabeth I , and was nominated for the British Academy ( BAFTA ) TV Craft Award for Best Director for Longford . The King 's Speech won multiple awards , including Best Director wins for Hooper from the Directors Guild of America and the Academy Awards , and a Best Director nomination from BAFTA .

= = Early life = =

Tom Hooper was born in 1972 in London , England , the son of Meredith Jean ( Rooney ) and Richard Hooper . Meredith was an Australian author and academic and Richard was an English media businessman . Hooper was educated at Highgate School and Westminster School . His initial interest in drama was triggered by his English and drama teacher at Highgate , former Royal Shakespeare Company actor Roger Mortimer , who produced an annual school play .

At the age of 12 , Hooper read a book entitled How to Make Film and Television and decided he wanted to become a director . For the next year Hooper researched filmmaking from publications such as On Camera by Harris Watts . Aged 13 , he made his first film , entitled Runaway Dog , using a clockwork 16mm Bolex camera his uncle had given to him . Hooper said : " The clockwork would run out after thirty seconds , so the maximum shot length was thirty seconds . I could only afford a hundred feet of Kodachrome reversal film , which cost about twenty @-@ five [ pounds ] , and you had to send off for two weeks to be processed . I could only make silent movies , because sound was too expensive and complicated . " He slowed down the frame rate of the camera so he could maximise what little film stock he had . Hooper classified the short , about a dog which kept running away from its owner , as a comedy , and filmed it on location in Oxfordshire .

When Hooper was 14 , his film Bomber Jacket came runner @-@ up in a BBC younger filmmakers ' competition . The short starred Hooper 's brother as a boy who discovers a bomber jacket and a photograph hidden in a cupboard and learns his grandfather died in World War II . Another of Hooper 's short films , entitled Countryside , depicts a nuclear holocaust .

Hooper finished school aged 16 , then wrote the script for his first professional short film , entitled Painted Faces . He spent the next two years raising capital for the short by courting advertisement directors , whose financial dominance during the late 1980s was noticed by Hooper . Director Paul Weiland invested in the short , which provided Hooper with the equipment he needed . After two years of financing and production , Painted Faces was completed . Hooper wrote , produced , directed and edited it . It was sold to Channel 4 and broadcast on the channel 's First Frame strand in 1992 , had a screening at the 35th London Film Festival and had a limited theatrical release .

After taking a gap year to finance Painted Faces , Hooper read English at University College , Oxford . He joined the Oxford University Dramatic Society , where he directed Kate Beckinsale in A View From the Bridge and Emily Mortimer in The Trial . Hooper also had his first paid directing work , earning £ 200 for a corporate Christmas video , and he directed his first television advertisements , including one for Sega featuring Right Said Fred . He continues to direct advertisements alongside television and film projects . In 1996 he joined the commercial production company John S. Clarke Productions and in 2001 he signed with Infinity Productions .

= = Career = =

= = = BBC and ITV productions = = =

After graduating from Oxford , Hooper directed further television commercials , intending to break into the film industry the same way Ridley Scott , Tony Scott and Hugh Hudson did . He was introduced by his father to the television producer Matthew Robinson , who mentored Hooper and gave him his first television directing work . For Robinson , Hooper directed episodes of the short @-@ lived Tyne Tees Television soap opera Quayside in 1997 , four episodes of the Children 's BBC television series Byker Grove in the same year , and his first episodes of the BBC One soap opera EastEnders in 1998 .

Hooper directed several EastEnders episodes between 1998 and 2000 , two of which were hour @-@ long specials that represented the soap when it won the British Academy Television Award for Best Soap Opera in 2000 and 2001 ; the first was the episode in which Carol Jackson ( Lindsey Coulson ) learns her daughter Bianca ( Patsy Palmer ) had an affair with her fiancé Dan Sullivan ( Craig Fairbrass ) . The Jackson episode marked the beginning of a week of episodes that lead to Palmer 's departure from the soap , and Robinson had hired Hooper to direct the key episodes of that storyline . Hooper worked 10 @-@ hour days on EastEnders , and learned to direct with speed . He was influenced in his early career by the cinematic style of American TV series such as ER , NYPD Blue and Homicide : Life on the Street and tried to work that style into his EastEnders episodes ; one scene featuring Grant Mitchell ( Ross Kemp ) involved a crane shot , which Hooper believes made him infamous among the EastEnders production crew .

In 1999 , Hooper directed two episodes of Granada Television 's comedy @-@ drama television series Cold Feet , which marked his move to bigger @-@ budget productions . There was initially concern at Granada that Hooper might be an unsuitable director for the series given his background in drama .

In 2000 , Hooper directed his first of two costume dramas for the BBC ; Love in a Cold Climate was based on Nancy Mitford 's novels The Pursuit of Love and Love in a Cold Climate . Hooper , the writer Deborah Moggach , and the producer Kate Harwood researched the period details of the production by interviewing Nancy 's sister Deborah . In 2002 , Hooper directed Daniel Deronda , adapted from George Eliot 's novel . Filming ran for 11 weeks from May to August on locations in England , Scotland and Malta . Hooper said of the production , " The thing I like about this tale is that it 's not at all your conventional costume drama ; it 's far more complex and looks at aspects of love , loss and religion . " The Guardian 's Mark Lawson said of Hooper 's two costume dramas , " he brought verve and intelligence to television 's most conservative form " .

Hooper returned to Granada the next year to direct the revival of Prime Suspect , entitled The Last Witness . The two @-@ part serial was the first Prime Suspect instalment to be made since 1995 , when star Helen Mirren quit . Hooper initially declined to direct the production because he believed the series was tired . Granada 's head of drama Andy Harries introduced Hooper to Mirren , who persuaded him to take the job by promising that he could make the serial his own way . The two @-@ part serial was broadcast on the ITV network in November 2003 . Hooper 's direction received praise from Andrew Billen in the New Statesman : " Tom Hooper proved an outstanding director , imposing a bleak , overlit hyper @-@ realism on the search for a killer in a hospital , isolating Mirren in rows of empty chairs and playing on the eyewitness / optical visual metaphors . " The serial was

also broadcast on PBS in the United States . Hooper received nominations for the British Academy Television Award for Best Drama Serial and the Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Directing for a Miniseries , Movie or Dramatic Special for his work on Prime Suspect .

= = = Film debut and HBO works = = =

Hooper made his debut as a feature film director with the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission drama *Red Dust* ( 2004 ) , which stars Hilary Swank , Chiwetel Ejiofor and Jamie Bartlett . The film was not widely seen , which Hooper attributed to media coverage of torture during the Iraq War : " When I started making it you could watch the movie with a wonderful sense of ' we 'd never do it in our own country ? they 're the horrible people but it 's not us . ' By the time the film came out ( there were ) these revelations that the Americans were torturing , the British were torturing . The film became a lot more uncomfortable for the very audiences it was designed to target . I have learned that sadly the theatrical audience does not run to see films that are openly issue led . " The premiere of the film in the United Kingdom came on BBC Two in 2005 , making it eligible for the BAFTA Television Awards ; it was nominated in the Best Single Drama category at the 2006 ceremony .

In 2005 , Hooper was asked by Helen Mirren to direct the Company Pictures / HBO Films two @-@ part serial *Elizabeth I* , in which she was starring . The serial won Hooper his first Emmy Award , for Outstanding Directing for a Miniseries , Movie or Dramatic Special . In January 2006 , Hooper commenced filming the Granada / HBO television film *Longford* . The film dramatises the failed efforts of Lord Longford ( played by Jim Broadbent ) to secure the release from prison of Moors murderer Myra Hindley ( played by Samantha Morton ) . Hooper first met with the writer Peter Morgan about the production in 2005 and the film was broadcast on Channel 4 in October 2006 . Seb Morton @-@ Clark for the Financial Times called *Longford* one of the most accomplished television dramas of 2006 , and praised the writer and director : " Morgan and director Tom Hooper wove a seamless narrative about obsession ? and not just that of the misguided philanthropist for the incarcerated Hindley or even that that existed between the sadistic lovers themselves . More significantly , by using chunks of original television footage , they painted a stark picture of the zealotry of a vengeful nation and its press over the supposed embodiment of evil . " Hooper 's continued successes led him to be ranked at number four in the Directors category of Broadcast magazine 's annual Hot 100 . The following year he was nominated for the British Academy Television Craft Award for Best Director for *Longford* .

*Elizabeth I* and *Longford* led directly to Hooper being selected by Tom Hanks to direct the epic miniseries *John Adams* for Playtone and HBO . Hooper had been working on a biographical film with Joan Didion about Katharine Graham , publisher of *The Washington Post* , since 2006 when he was asked by Hanks to helm the programme . The miniseries , starring Paul Giamatti as John Adams , was based on David McCullough 's Adams biography and was Hooper 's first wholly American production . He was surprised to learn that the American Revolutionary War was not a well @-@ documented period in film and television ; Abigail Adams actress Laura Linney told him that , for her generation , the musical *1776* was the most well @-@ known depiction of the era . He worked on the miniseries for a total of 16 months ; principal photography lasted 110 days on locations in the United States , France , England and Hungary and he controlled a \$ 100 million budget . The Boston Globe 's Matthew Gilbert complimented Hooper 's style of direction in the first two episodes " *Join or Die* " and " *Independence* " :

Director Tom Hooper lets his actors shine , as he did so marvelously in Helen Mirren 's *Elizabeth I* and the child @-@ killer drama *Longford* , but he complements them , too , with this kind of immediate point of view . And when he does give us panoramic shots from afar ? of the Adams farm in Braintree , for example ? they 're askew , to keep us out of the classroom mode . At the end of episode 2 [ ... ] Hooper showcases all his directorial strength with one bold choice . When the long @-@ fretting Congress finally decides to break with Britain , he refrains from using any visual or aural tweaks . Upon the announcement , " The resolution carries , " the scene remains perfectly silent for one long moment . The terror of responsibility hangs heavily in the room , while a victorious

soundtrack surely would have chased it away .

John Adams received 23 Emmy Award nominations , including another Outstanding Direction nomination for Hooper , and won 13 , the highest number for any nominee in a single year . He was also nominated for the Directors Guild of America Award for Outstanding Directorial Achievement . At the beginning of 2009 , he was profiled for The Observer 's film Hotlist .

= = = Independent feature films = = =

The wake of John Adams ' Emmy wins brought offers to Hooper from studios to direct spy and comic book films , which he declined . In November 2007 , he signed on to direct *The Damned United* , reuniting him with Peter Morgan and Andy Harries . The film was an adaptation of David Peace 's novel *The Damned Utd* , a fictional version of the 44 turbulent days English football manager Brian Clough spent as manager of Leeds United . It was originally developed by Stephen Frears for Michael Sheen to play Clough . Frears quit the project after he was unable to translate the book to film . Hooper received a copy of the script while shooting John Adams in Hungary and noticed a similarity between the " egotistical , flawed , brilliant " Adams and the " egotistical , flawed , brilliant " Clough . He was not put off by joining the project later , as Morgan 's script was in only its first draft . During pre - production , Hooper engaged in meticulous research , particularly on the locations and the football grounds of the era . He cast Timothy Spall as Clough 's assistant Peter Taylor , Colm Meaney as Don Revie and Jim Broadbent as Derby County chairman Sam Longson . During editing , it was decided to make the tone of the film lighter in order to attract audiences and to appease the real people depicted in the film . *The Damned United* was released in 2009 .

Work on Hooper 's next film , *The King 's Speech* , began in the same year . Hooper explained : " It was a stage play , and my mother who 's Australian was invited to a fringe [ theatre ] reading in London because she 's part of the Australian community . The play 's about the relationship between King George the Sixth and his Australian speech therapist . She came back and said ' you 've got to read this play , ' and I read it and it was brilliant ... " . Hooper cast Colin Firth as George VI and Geoffrey Rush as Lionel Logue and spent three weeks with the actors reading the script and rehearsing . Principal photography took place on location around the UK from November 2009 to January 2010 . During editing , Hooper continued to consult with Firth and Rush by sending them cuts of the film and listening to their feedback .

Hooper completed the final cut of the film at the end of August 2010 and presented it a few days later at the Telluride Film Festival . The film won the People 's Choice Award at the Toronto International Film Festival and Hooper won the Directors Guild of America Award for Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Motion Pictures . In February 2011 , he was presented with the Academy Award for Best Director , though lost the BAFTA Award for Best Direction to David Fincher . In comparing the two films , *Variety* 's Adam Dawtrey wrote , " Hooper 's 2009 film *The Damned United* didn 't register among awards selectors , but *King 's Speech* is a much more personal project . His Anglo - Australian parentage reflects the culture clash at the heart of the movie , and it pays off with beautifully crafted , crowd - pleasing drama . "

= = = Studio films = = =

Following the success of *The King 's Speech* during the awards season , Hooper joined the 15 - member board of governors at the British Film Institute , was invited to join the directors branch of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences , and was ranked at number 19 in *The Times* ' British Film Power 100 . In March 2009 , Hooper met with Nelson Mandela in preparation for directing a film adaptation of Mandela 's autobiography *Long Walk to Freedom* . By 2012 , however , he had left the project .

He was offered the chance to direct *Iron Man 3* for Marvel Studios but declined and instead signed on to direct *Les Misérables* for Working Title Films , which he had first heard about while discussing a different project with screenwriter William Nicholson in 2010 . Hooper had not seen the musical , so watched a performance of it in London 's West End . Adapted from the musical , the film starred

Hugh Jackman , Russell Crowe , Anne Hathaway , Amanda Seyfried , Helena Bonham Carter , Sacha Baron Cohen , and Eddie Redmayne . As the film required the actors to sing and dance , they were auditioned in front of Hooper , producers and composers . The role of Fantine was hugely contested ; Hooper said , " It was like half a dozen of the biggest female movie stars on the planet wanted to play the role " .

Filming started in February 2012 . Hooper investigated filming the feature in 3D , and performed some camera tests before deciding to film it with traditional 2D methods . He stated " [ ... ] I slightly worry with 3D that some people will physically struggle with it . If you have a certain type of eyesight it can be more demanding than watching a normal movie . " Unlike other musical films , *Les Misérables* features the actors singing live on camera , rather than miming to backing vocals . Hooper told *Los Angeles Times* that he thought there was a " slightly strange falseness " when he saw musical films where the actors sang to recordings . The actors wore wireless earpieces on set so they could sing to accompanying piano music . Hooper believed this method allowed the actors to have emotional control over their songs : " When Annie [ Hathaway , who plays Fantine ] is singing ' I Dreamed a Dream ' , if she needs to take a tenth of a second to have a thought before she sings it , or to have an emotion before she sings a line , she can take it . " The actors also performed their songs in recitative style , which Hooper likened to being immersed in a 3D film . *Les Misérables* was released in North America on 25 December 2012 , and received eight Academy Award nominations including Best Picture .

Hooper 's fifth feature film , *The Danish Girl* , was released in late 2015 . It loosely tells the story of Lili Elbe , one of the first people to undergo sex reassignment surgery , and wife Gerda Wegener . It stars Eddie Redmayne and Alicia Vikander , both of whom received Academy Award nominations . Critics were generally positive about the film .

= = Directing style = =

Hooper uses camera styles " that encode the DNA of the storytelling in some way " and will reuse and develop filming styles in successive productions . Hooper identifies research as being key to his process of directing period dramas such as *John Adams* in order to make the scenes authentic . For *The Damned United* , Hooper and director of photography Ben Smithard researched the look of the late 1960s and early 1970s through football photography books . Hooper has also been influenced by cinematographer Larry Smith , who worked with Stanley Kubrick and advised Hooper of techniques used by Kubrick . Hooper and Smith have worked together on *Cold Feet* , *Love in a Cold Climate* , *Prime Suspect* , *Red Dust* and *Elizabeth I* .

Hooper also uses uncommon framing techniques to emphasise story ; in *John Adams* , he wanted to imply American independence seemed unlikely during the Revolutionary War , so he used " a very rough camera style ? almost all hand held , wide lenses close to the actors , lots of movement , many cameras shooting at once so there was often not a settled master " point of view " , and lots of unmatching dutch tilts so the horizon lines of the frame were often being thrown off . " The America @-@ set scenes were contrasted by the scenes set in France , in which more traditional filming techniques were employed to evoke a feel of entrenched values . Similarly , in *The Damned United* , Hooper began to experiment with using wide @-@ angle lenses and putting actors in the extreme edges of the frame . He was influenced by the unusual framing from social photography of the 1970s , and he and Ben Smithard decided to adopt the framing style while scouting locations . Hooper used the same style in *The King 's Speech* , particularly in the scene where Bertie and Logue meet in Logue 's consulting room ; Colin Firth is framed to the extreme left of the picture , leaving most of the shot dominated by the rough wall behind Firth .

Another frequently used technique is Hooper 's tendency to use a variety of focal length camera lenses to distort the resulting picture . In *The Damned United* he used a 10mm lens , notably in the scene where Clough stays inside during the Derby ? Leeds match . Hooper operated the camera in this scene himself . In *The King 's Speech* , Hooper used " typically 14mm , 18mm , 21mm , 25mm and 27mm " lenses and put the camera close to the actors ' faces . Hooper said the use of this method in the first consulting room scene served to " suggest the awkwardness and tension of Logue

and Bertie 's first meeting " .

= = Filmography = =

= = Filmography by awards = =

= = = Feature films = = =

= = Awards and nominations = =