

Christopher Nolan



Batman

Christopher Nolan, (born July 30, 1970, London, England), British film director and writer acclaimed for his noirish visual aesthetic and unconventional, often highly conceptual narratives.

Nolan was raised by an American mother and a British father, and his family spent time in both Chicago and London. As a child, he attended Haileybury, a boarding school just outside London. From a young age Nolan was interested in moviemaking and would use his father's Super-8 camera to make shorts. He was influenced by George Lucas's *Star Wars* trilogy and by the immersive dystopian films of Ridley Scott. After attending University College London, where he studied English literature, Nolan began directing corporate and industrial training videos. At the same time he was working on his first full-length release, *Following* (1998). The film centred on a writer going to dangerous lengths to find inspiration; it took Nolan 14 months to complete. On the strength of its success on the festival circuit, he and his producer wife moved to Hollywood.

Nolan's breakthrough came with the 2000 film *Memento*, a sleeper hit that he adapted from a short story written by his brother Jonathan. It used a destabilizing reverse-order story line to mirror the fractured mental state of its protagonist, a man with short-term amnesia who is trying to track down the person who murdered his wife. The film was a critical and popular success and garnered the Nolan brothers an Academy Award nomination for best original screenplay. Nolan followed up with *Insomnia* (2002), a thriller set in the Alaskan wilds, which starred Al Pacino as a compromised police detective.

In 2003 Warner Brothers enlisted Nolan to direct an installment of the Batman franchise, the first since 1997's poorly received *Batman & Robin*. Nolan's highly anticipated *Batman Begins* (2005), starring Christian Bale, focused on the superhero's origins and featured settings and tone that were grimmer and more realistic than those of previous Batman films. Hugely well received, it became a forerunner of a new trend in superhero films: a move toward realism and away from the genre's comic-book roots.

Nolan's next project was *The Prestige* (2006), a story of two warring illusionists in early 20th-century London. He then began work on a second Batman film, which he wrote with his brother Jonathan. *The Dark Knight* (2008) leaned even more heavily on the moral and structural decay of its setting, fictional Gotham City, and it revived such classic Batman villains as the Joker (played by Heath Ledger). *The Dark Knight* became one of the highest-grossing movies of all time.



Leonardo DiCaprio and Joseph Gordon-Levitt in *Inception*

The release of *Inception* (2010) marked the realization of a script Nolan had begun a decade prior. It starred Leonardo DiCaprio as a corporate spy who steals secrets via a technology that allows him to enter people's dreams. The film turns on this character's attempt to move past the boundaries of the technology in order to actually plant an idea in a dreamer's head. *Inception* was another commercial and critical hit and earned Nolan a

second Academy Award nomination for best original screenplay. His Batman series concluded with the grandiose *The Dark Knight Rises* (2012), in which the superhero's exploits were set against a backdrop of civil unrest. Nolan also helped develop the story for the Superman reboot *Man of Steel* (2013).



Matthew McConaughey in *Interstellar*

Nolan then helmed *Interstellar* (2014), which he had written with Jonathan. The sci-fi drama depicted the efforts of a group of scientists to relocate humanity from an Earth vitiated by war and famine to another planet by way of a wormhole. His next film, *Dunkirk* (2017), which he also wrote, centres on the evacuation of Allied troops from France during World War II. The action drama earned universal acclaim and was nominated for a

number of Academy Awards, including best picture. In addition, Nolan received an Oscar nod for his direction. In 2020 he wrote and directed *Tenet*, a time-bending action thriller that centres on a C.I.A. agent trying to avert a world war.

His 2023 film *Oppenheimer*, depicts J. Robert Oppenheimer's role in the development of the atomic bomb and the later security hearing over his alleged ties to communism. Nolan chose Cillian Murphy, with whom he had worked with on previous films, to play the title role.

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Citation Information

Article Title: Christopher Nolan

Website Name: Encyclopaedia Britannica

Publisher: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc.

Date Published: 26 July 2023

URL: <https://www.britannica.com><https://www.britannica.com/biography/Christopher-Nolan-British-director>

Access Date: August 08, 2023