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Steven Spielberg : a biography. By Natalie Miller

One of the most influential celebrities in the history of film, Steven Spielberg is perhaps Hollywood's best known director and one of the wealthiest film makers in the world.

1. How it all started

Steven Spielberg was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, on December 18, 1946. His mother was a restaurateur and concert pianist, his father was a computer engineer, and he had three sisters. He showed keen interest in photography and cinema from a very early age and, by the time he was 13, he had already shot a 40-minute film and had actually won a prize for it!
In 1963, at age 16, Steven wrote and directed his first independent movie, a 140-minute science fiction adventure called *Firelight*. While he was a student at California State University, Long Beach, Spielberg made a short film which attracted the attention of Universal Studios. Though he was only 22, the studio signed him a long-term deal as a director. Six years later, he reached world fame with *Jaws* which was an enormous hit and made him the youngest multi-millionaire in America. However it was *Close Encounter of the Third Kind* (1977), a unique and original UFO story, which established Spielberg as one of the rising stars in the world of cinema.

2.Piling up hits

By the early 90s, with instant classics such as *ET, the Extra-Terrestrial* (1982), the *Indiana Jones* series, *The Colour Purple* (1985), and the *Jurassic Park* series, Spielberg had become not only kids' but also grown-ups' favorite director. However he had not won one single Academy Award for Best Director or Best picture though he had had seven nominations. He eventually got both for *Schindler's List* in 1993. After this highly acclaimed film on Holocaust, Spielberg went on addressing issues such as war in *Saving Private Ryan* (Oscar for Best Director) in 1998 and terrorism in *Munich* in 2005.

3. More than a director

Spielberg has always been interested in more than just directing. In the late 70s, he co-founded a production company, Amblin Entertainment, which was responsible for such hits as *Gremlins*, the *Back to the Future* series and *Men in Black I and II*. Then, in the mid 90s, he helped found the production company Dreamworks, which released such hits as *Amistad*, *Shreck* and *Catch me If You Can*. Besides his work as a director and producer, he also wrote the stories behind some major films.
With all of this to Spielberg's credit, it's no wonder the he is regarded as one of the greatest figures in entertainment.

"Being a movie -maker means you get to live many, many lifetimes. It's the same reason audiences go to movies, I think." S. Spielberg

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