

Steven Spielberg: A Life in Jewish Films

Steven Spielberg is one of the most successful filmmakers in history, and his work has often explored Jewish themes. From his early films like *The Sugarland Express* and *Jaws* to his later works like *Schindler's List* and *Munich*, Spielberg has used his films to tell stories about the Jewish experience and to explore issues of identity, faith, and survival.



Steven Spielberg: A Life in Films (Jewish Lives)

by Molly Haskell

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

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Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 245 pages



Early Life and Influences

Steven Spielberg was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, on December 18, 1946. His parents, Arnold and Leah Spielberg, were both Jewish, and they raised their son in a Reform Jewish household. Spielberg has said that his Jewish upbringing had a profound impact on his life and work.

Spielberg's father was an electrical engineer, and his mother was a concert pianist. Spielberg has said that his father's love of science fiction and his

mother's love of music had a major influence on his own artistic development.

Spielberg began making films at a young age. He made his first film, *Firelight*, when he was just 12 years old. Spielberg continued to make films throughout his teenage years, and he eventually attended the University of Southern California's School of Cinematic Arts.

Early Career

Spielberg's first feature film was *The Sugarland Express* (1974). The film tells the story of a young couple who kidnap their own son after he is taken away from them by social services. *The Sugarland Express* was a critical and commercial success, and it helped to launch Spielberg's career.

Spielberg's next film was *Jaws* (1975). The film tells the story of a great white shark that terrorizes a small New England town. *Jaws* was a huge commercial success, and it is considered to be one of the greatest horror films of all time.

Later Career

Spielberg continued to make successful films throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Some of his most notable films from this period include *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981), *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* (1982), *The Color Purple* (1985), *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (1989), *Jurassic Park* (1993), and *Saving Private Ryan* (1998).

In the 21st century, Spielberg has continued to make films that explore Jewish themes. His film *Schindler's List* (1993) tells the story of Oskar Schindler, a German businessman who saved over 1,000 Jews from the

Holocaust. *Schindler's List* won seven Academy Awards, including Best Picture and Best Director.

Spielberg's film *Munich* (2005) tells the story of the Israeli government's response to the 1972 Munich Olympics massacre. *Munich* was a critical and commercial success, and it sparked a debate about the ethics of using violence to fight terrorism.

Jewish Themes in Spielberg's Films

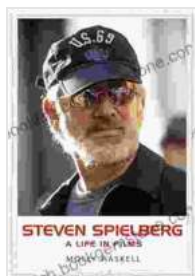
Spielberg's films often explore Jewish themes. These themes include:

- **Identity:** Spielberg's films often explore the issue of Jewish identity. His characters often struggle with their sense of belonging, and they often feel like outsiders.
- **Faith:** Spielberg's films also explore the issue of faith. His characters often question their faith in God, and they often struggle to find meaning in their lives.
- **Survival:** Spielberg's films also explore the issue of survival. His characters often face great challenges, and they often have to fight for their lives.

Spielberg's films have had a profound impact on the Jewish community. His films have helped to raise awareness of Jewish history and culture, and they have inspired many Jews to be proud of their heritage.

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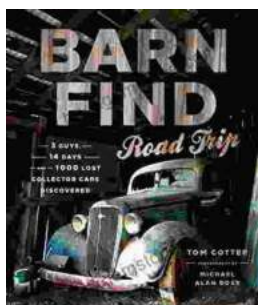


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