

The Truman Show



Director: Peter Weir

Screenplay: Andrew Niccol

Producers: Paramount Pictures. Scott Rudin Productions

Cast: Jim Carrey, Laura Linney, Noah Emmerich, Natascha McElhone, Holland Taylor, Brian Delate, Blair Slater, Peter Krause, Heidi Schanz, Ron Taylor, Don Taylor, Ted Raymond, Judy Clayton, Fritz Dominique, Angel Schmiedt

"The Truman Show" is a 1998 North American movie directed by Peter Weir with Jim Carrey and Ed Harris. This film had three Oscar nominations: the best director, the best supporting actor (Ed Harris), and the best original screenplay.

This is a profoundly social film and, according to many movie critics, a landmark of its kind. It had as many followers as negative opinions, but always created interest.

In the Mary Shelly's movie Frankenstein, initial concerns started to arise about the new era that was beginning where man was first using technology. In the Truman Show, additional concerns are questioned. Through the television, man becomes God and is able to control and manipulate the life of another person.

The bad part is that God-director cannot realize the harm he did and believes that his actions were in benefit of the protagonist (as in his monologue at the end of the movies). He justifies his greed and thirst of prestige and hides from himself.

The protagonist, Truman Burbank (Jim Carrey), has been exposed to the cameras even before he was born not aware of it. Truman's life is filmed with thousand of hidden cameras, 24/7 and live images are transmitted all over the world. It allows Christof, executive producer, to capture Truman's real emotions and behavior under certain circumstances. Truman's home town, Seahaven, is built under an enormous dome filled with actors and the film crew. It allows Christof to control every aspect of Truman's life, including the weather. The protagonist is locked in an unreal world, in a cavern like the one in Plato's allegory.

Plato describes a cave where several prisoners live since they were born. Their necks and legs

are chained, and unable to move their heads, they always face the end of the cavern. Behind them there is wall with an aisle followed by a bonfire close to the cave's entrance. Men walk in the aisles carrying different items projecting their shadows on the back wall. The chained prisoners see the shadows as the only reality. The masters of the cave, like Truman's director, distract the prisoners with a variety of shadows to prevent them to notice their chains and wanting to break from them.

The same process is shown in the movies. Truman lives a false, pre-arranged reality where fear and stress are absent. But everything is a lie.

At some point, Truman begins to suspect. Love has an important role also. As it happens in several myths, it is the beginning of the quest. The protagonist starts questioning about what is happening. It is an Eastern belief that a disciple of life, a philosopher, is born at the moment he begins to understand the how and why things happen.

The will, one of the most spiritual qualities, is necessary to break the chains and walk out to the light, to the real world. To leave behind the familiar surroundings and home security (at a physical or psychological level) is a hard endeavor. In this way, the disciple grows overcoming his fears, and the love for Freedom, for knowledge make of him a hero. The same is describe in G. Bruno's book "De los Heróicos Furores", or even like Homer with Ulysses who overcame all kind of tests for the love to his country and his beloved Penelope. In all these examples, the characteristics of the Hero are Bravery, Patience, Perseverance, and Honesty; also, he is able to set an example by helping others.

It is not easy to leave the cavern. The same is for Truman. It is difficult to leave the movie settings created by the director. The public laugh at the protagonist who tries to avoid a man-made storm created by the director to prevent Truman to reach the wall paper that separates him from the real world.

At this point we need to ask ourselves: How many times we were afraid of facing something simple believing it was a real difficult thing? Who is the one directing our lives, the one who imposes so many needs on us (so many chains)? What makes us run after material things and never ask what is that our soul needs? What is life meaning, the essence of the human being, the secrets of the universe? Could we reach that great point in Truman's life where his search begins to with the goal to find the way out from the false wall? Could we take this step to our inner freedom? All depends on us.