

***Big Eyes* 16.02.15 CONCA VERDE – talk by Peter Anderson (form Wikipedia)**

Big Eyes is a 2014 American [biographical drama film](#) directed by [Tim Burton](#), and starring [Amy Adams](#) and [Christoph Waltz](#). The film focuses on American artist [Margaret Keane](#) (Adams), whose work was fraudulently claimed in the 1950s and 1960s by her then-husband, [Walter Keane](#) (Waltz), and their heated divorce trial after Margaret accused Walter of stealing credit for her paintings.

The film had its world premiere in New York City on December 15, 2014.^[4] It was released theatrically on December 25, 2014, in the United States by [The Weinstein Company](#).^[5] The film was met with positive reviews and was nominated for three [Golden Globe Awards](#), with Adams winning [Best Actress](#). Adams was also nominated for a [BAFTA Award](#) for [Best Actress](#) for her performance in the film.

Reception

Big Eyes has received positive reviews, particularly for Waltz and Adams' performances, the script and Burton's direction. On [Rotten Tomatoes](#), the film holds a rating of 69%, based on 147 reviews, with an average rating of 6.6/10. The site's consensus reads, "Well-acted, thought-provoking and a refreshing change of pace for Tim Burton, *Big Eyes* works both as a biopic and as a timelessly relevant piece of social commentary".^[12] On [Metacritic](#), the film has a score of 62 out of 100, based on 40 critics, indicating "generally favorable reviews".^[13]

Plot

Artist [Margaret Keane](#)'s paintings of large-eyed waifs became phenomenally successful in the 1950s, but she received no recognition for it. Her husband, [Walter Keane](#), claiming to be the artist, became a national celebrity and talk-show fixture in the 1950s after he pioneered the [mass production](#) of inexpensive prints. Using his marketing savvy, he sold the prints cheaply in such venues as hardware stores and gas stations across the United States. Margaret generated the paintings from a locked room in their home, with Walter's contribution being his signature added to the bottom. The ruse ended their marriage, and when Margaret made it known she had created the paintings, the couple engaged in a court battle to determine proper credit.

Production

Writers [Scott Alexander and Larry Karaszewski](#) negotiated over the life rights with Margaret Keane and wrote *Big Eyes* as a [spec script](#). In October 2007, it was announced that development was moving forward with Alexander and Karaszewski directing their script and nightclub operator Andrew Meieran fully financing an under-\$20 million budget through his Bureau of Moving Pictures banner.^[6] [Kate Hudson](#) and [Thomas Haden Church](#) were set to star, and filming was to begin in June 2008, but was pushed back over prospects from a new [Screen Actors Guild](#) contract.^{[7][8]}

In September 2010, it was announced that [Tim Burton](#) had also become involved as producer for the film,^[9] and principal photography was scheduled to start in April 2012 with [Reese Witherspoon](#) and [Ryan Reynolds](#) attached to star.^[10] By 2013, Burton had taken over directing reins and *Big Eyes* was set up at [The Weinstein Company](#) with Amy Adams and Christoph Waltz starring. Filming began in July 2013.^[11]

Big Eyes is Burton's first film since [Edward Scissorhands](#) to be edited by someone other than [Chris Lebenzon](#), who had other commitments with [Maleficent](#) the same year.

Tim Burton

Timothy Walter "Tim" Burton^[1] (/ˈbɜːrtən/; born August 25, 1958) is an American [film director](#), [producer](#), [artist](#), [writer](#), and animator. He is known for his dark, gothic, macabre, and quirky horror and fantasy films such as the horror comedy fantasy [Beetlejuice](#) (1988), the romantic dark fantasy [Edward Scissorhands](#) (1990), the musical fantasy-thriller [The Nightmare Before Christmas](#) (1993), the comedy-drama biopic [Ed Wood](#) (1994), the fantasy adventure [Sleepy Hollow](#) (1999), the animated fantasy [Corpse Bride](#) (2005), the musical horror film [Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street](#) (2007), the horror comedy [Dark Shadows](#) (2012) and the animated horror comedy [Frankenweenie](#) (2012). He is also known for [blockbusters](#) such as the adventure comedy [Pee-wee's Big Adventure](#) (1985), the superhero films [Batman](#) (1989) and its first sequel [Batman Returns](#) (1992), the sci-fi film [Planet of the Apes](#) (2001), the musical adventure film [Charlie and the Chocolate Factory](#) (2005) and the fantasy film [Alice in Wonderland](#) (2010), which garnered a worldwide gross of over \$1 billion worldwide, being Burton's most successful film to date.

Burton has worked repeatedly with [Johnny Depp](#), who has become a close friend of Burton since their first film together. He has also worked with musician [Danny Elfman](#), who has composed scores for all but two of the films Burton has directed. Actress [Helena Bonham Carter](#), Burton's former [domestic partner](#), has appeared in many of his films. He also wrote and illustrated the poetry book [The Melancholy Death of Oyster Boy & Other Stories](#), published in 1997, and a compilation of his drawings, sketches and other artwork, entitled *The Art of Tim Burton*, was released in 2009.

Lana Del Rey

Lana Del Rey's song "Big Eyes" was nominated as Best Song for Critic's Choice Awards on 15 January 2015. Two new songs by Lana Del Rey, "Big Eyes" and "I Can Fly", feature in [Tim Burton's](#) 2014 [biographical](#) film [Big Eyes](#), which focuses on the American artist [Margaret Keane](#). "Big Eyes" was co-written by Daniel Heath, while "I Can Fly" was co-written by [Rick Nowels](#). She was nominated

Elizabeth Woolridge Grant (born June 21, 1985),^[6] known by her stage name **Lana Del Rey**, and former stage name "Lizzy Grant" is an American [singer-songwriter](#). Del Rey started songwriting at the age of 18^[6] and signed her first recording contract with 5 Points Records in 2007,^[7] releasing her first digital album [Lana Del Rey](#) in January 2010. Del Rey bought herself out of the contract with 5 Points Records in April 2010.^{[7][8]} She signed a joint contract with [Interscope](#), [Polydor](#), and Stranger Records in July 2011.^[8]

Del Rey released her second studio album [Born to Die](#) in January 2012. It debuted at number two on the U.S. [Billboard 200](#), and was the fifth best-selling album of 2012. A remix of its fifth single "[Summertime Sadness](#)", produced by [Cedric Gervais](#), became her highest-charting track on the U.S. [Billboard Hot 100](#) after peaking at number six in the country. Del Rey released her third [extended play](#) [Paradise](#) that November; three of its tracks were featured in her [short film](#) [Tropicico](#), which was premiered in December. Her third studio album [Ultraviolence](#) was released in June 2014 and debuted as number one on the [Billboard 200](#). In December 2014, she announced she will be headlining a tour with [Courtney Love](#) in Summer 2015.^[9]

Del Rey's music has been noted for its cinematic sound and its references to various aspects of pop culture, particularly that of the [1950s](#) and [1960s Americana](#). The singer has described herself as a "gangsta [Nancy Sinatra](#)". Musically, she draws influence from what she deems to be the masters of each genre, including [Elvis Presley](#), [Amy Winehouse](#), [Janis Joplin](#), [Nirvana](#),^{[10][11]} [Eminem](#), [Bruce Springsteen](#), and [Britney Spears](#),^[12] as well as from [poetry](#) and [film noir](#).^[13]

Musical style

She has been described as a "self-styled gangsta [Nancy Sinatra](#)" and "[Lolita](#) lost in the [hood](#)"^[127] and her music has been noted for its cinematic sound and its references to various aspects of pop culture, particularly that of 1950s and '60s [Americana](#).^{[128][129][130][131][132][133][134]} [Rolling Stone](#) noted that Del Rey enjoys playing the role of [lounging singer](#).^[135] Del Rey has also been called "a [torch singer](#) of the [internet era](#)"^[136] and "the anti-[Gaga](#)."^[136] Born Lizzy Grant, Del Rey has attributed her work to various stage names including Lana Rey Del Mar,^[137] Sparkle Jump Rope Queen,^[138] and May Jailer.^[139] Settling on Lana Del Rey, the singer claims she selected the name because it was beautiful. First mention of the name Lana Del Rey came from her [Spanish-speaking Cuban](#) friends. Following in the shadow of artists like [Prince](#) and [David Bowie](#), Del Rey chose her musical identity because it "reminded [her] of the glamour of the seaside. It sounded gorgeous coming off the tip of the tongue."^{[140][141]}

Del Rey has stylized her musical sound as "Hollywood sadcore".^{[142][143]} [Time](#) said the solid core of her sound was "movie music",^[127] with a [fairy-dusting](#) of [harp](#) and an ominous [timpani](#), laid out over-top a [hip hop](#) vocal cadence.^[127] Her vocal style has been likened to [rap](#). Of *Born to Die*, indie music journal [Drowned in Sound](#) wrote, "She likes that whole hip hop thing though, has this whole swagger thing going that not many girls like her got," adding that it sounded like a poppier [Bond](#) soundtrack.^[144] In "[National Anthem](#)", "[Off to the Races](#),"^[144] and "Diet Mountain Dew", Del Rey employs this [alternative rapping technique](#).^[145] Under the stage name Lizzy Grant, she called her music "[Hawaiian glam metal](#)",^[38] while the work of her May Jailer project was [acoustic](#).^{[139][146][147][148]} Attributed to many genres, Del Rey's sound has been primarily linked to various forms of [rock](#), [indie](#)^[149] and [baroque pop](#)^[150] and experiments with [hip hop](#)^[151] and [trip hop](#) genres.^{[145][152][153][154]}

Lyrically, "Born to Die" was described as sad. Del Rey elaborates: "I'm not sad, I'm happy. I feel like I'm happy because I'm at peace with the way that things are... I did have a darker filter on sometimes, but that slowly lifted through doing a lot of different things. And finding true love is something that really did inspire me, lyrically. Because I felt so much the same for so much of my life and then when you find someone exciting, you don't know that you could actually feel differently than you did before. I was inspired."^[136]

Voice and timbre /tæmbəl/

Del Rey possesses an expansive [contralto vocal range](#), which spans three-plus octaves and has been described as captivating and highly [emotive](#), being able to transcend from sounding high and girlish in her [timbre](#), down to a low and [jazzy](#) sound with great ease, although both these areas of the voice can be conflicting in the contrast of their sound, initially polarizing opinion.^{[155][156][157][158]} Following the release of *Ultraviolence*, which was recorded live in single takes and lacking Pro Tools vocal editing, critics fell into favor with Del Rey's vocal ability, praising her large range, increased vocal confidence, and uniquely emotive delivery.^{[159][160][161]} When recording in the studio Del Rey is known for vocal multi-layering, which, as it has been noted, is difficult for her to replicate within a live setting, especially with the lack of backing singers to fill out the original vocal style.^[155] Stage fright has also been noted as a major contribution to Del Rey's struggles with live performances.^[162] However, journalists noted in 2014 that her live performances had increased exponentially in confidence. *Billboard Magazine* deemed the Coachella debut of West Coast to be a "star-making performance" and lauded the singer's vocal abilities.^{[163][164]} [Contemporary music critics](#) have called her voice "smoky",^[165] "gravelly",^[38] and reminiscent of [Marilyn Monroe](#).^[38]

Del Rey stated the use of her lower vocals on the tracks from *Born to Die*, claiming that "people weren't taking me very seriously, so I lowered my voice, believing that it would help me stand out. Now I sing quite low... well, for a female anyway."^{[166][167][168]} "I sing low now, but my voice used to be a lot higher. Because of the way I look, I needed something to ground the entire project. Otherwise I think people

would assume I was some airhead singer. Well, I don't think... I know. I've sung one way, and sung another, and I've seen what people are drawn to", she said on the topic.^[1]

Personal life

Del Rey stated that she suffered from [alcoholism](#) at a young age. At the age of 15,^{[15][23]} she was sent to [Kent School](#), a boarding school in Connecticut, for three years^[23] to get sober. Del Rey has been sober since 2004.^[21] In September 2012, she told [GQ](#):

“ I was a big drinker at the time. I would drink every day. I would drink alone. I thought the whole concept was so fucking cool. A great deal of what I wrote on *Born To Die* is about these wilderness years. When I write about the thing that I've lost I feel like I'm writing about alcohol because that was the first love of my life. My parents were worried, I was worried. I knew it was a problem when I liked it more than I liked doing anything else. I was like, 'I'm fucked. I am totally fucked'. Like, at first it's fine and you think you have a dark side – it's exciting – and then you realise the dark side wins every time if you decide to indulge in it. It's also a completely different way of living when you know that...a different species of person. It was the worst thing that ever happened to me.^{[188][189][190][191]}