

“Film is the best way to capture an image and project that image” – Christopher Nolan

Interstellar, written and directed by Christopher Nolan (*The Dark Knight Trilogy*, *Inception*) is a thought-provoking, ambitious, and eccentric journey into the unknown. Those familiar with Nolan’s work, will immediately recognize the undeniable beauty in the cinematography and the images creating this new and diverse world, acting as the foundation for Nolan’s newest story. For those that haven’t yet seen films like *Inception*, *The Prestige*, *Memento* or even Nolan’s debut film, *Following*, may not be acutely aware of how truly different and unique the flick really looks compared to others that you see on a regular basis in the theater. The key difference being, Nolan is one of very few directors that still film his movies on actual film. In this digital age, film is unfortunately a dying art that will inevitably and sadly vanish overtime. But Christopher Nolan gives his fans and avid movie-goers alike three different ways to see his latest film, on actual film. You can view it in 70mm, 35mm, or the preferred “top of the line format” 70mm IMAX which is an image that fills the entire screen and offers almost 10 times the resolution of standard formats. To put it in simple terms, the true cinematic experience with a film like *Interstellar* is in IMAX, both for its incredible image and sound quality.

Aside from the overall look of the flick, Christopher Nolan is never one to disappoint with an iconic cast to embody his intriguing and gripping characters that fill his scripts. Along with the main characters that you see in the trailers like Matthew McConaughey, Anne Hathway, and Michael Caine, are some really familiar faces, continually popping into the film, even if you have to wait an hour and a half to see them for the first time. Some of these faces include Casey Affleck, John Lithgow, and Matt Damon, both of whom give stunning and memorable performances, greatly considering they are only small slices of the overall whole.

As the story begins, the earth is on the brink of destruction. The fate of humanity is in serious jeopardy as we discover very early on that an inexplicable catastrophic event looms in the distance. Despite the fact this apocalyptic event is never fully explored, (one of many loop holes throughout the film) Nolan nevertheless subtly alludes to its sinister presence from the get-go. Violent and raging dust storms sweep the land, destroying the crops, which undoubtedly are some of the last remaining resources in terms of survival. Cooper (Matthew McConaughey) is one of many farmers, trying desperately to do his part for humanity and contribute to the agrarian society that civilization has ultimately regressed to.

In the opening minutes of the film, McConaughey is awoken by his daughter from a dream, which briefly takes us back to his past life, before he became a farmer. We get a sense that his life had purpose and meaning back in that dream. The world’s brutal behavior has clearly taken that particular (and perhaps desirable) life away from him, the life of a NASA pilot. Cooper’s daughter, Murphy (Mackenzie Foy), an intelligent and motivated ten year old, persistently nags her father, claiming that her bedroom is haunted by a ghost. The next day, in the midst of one of the reoccurring and malicious dust storms that strike without warning, Cooper, his son, his father-in-law, and Murphy bolt home and seek immediate shelter. When Murphy runs up to her room to seal her window shut from the unrelenting gusts of dirt blowing into the house, she makes a startling discovery. Dust lingers in the air and slowly drifts downward, making prominent lines, both thick and thin as it hits her bedroom floor.

Initially, Murphy insists that it's her ghost producing the strange patterns on the floor. As Cooper examines the room, he presumably takes a more scientific approach and comes to the conclusion that it's gravitational waves revealing binary codes in the dust.

After the storm has settled, Cooper and Murphy translate the binary code on the bedroom floor into a set of numbers, which they immediately realize are coordinates. The coordinates end up leading them directly to a top secret NASA installation. Cooper is unexpectedly reunited with an old teacher of his, Professor Brand (Michael Caine) along with his daughter, Amelia Brand (Anne Hathaway). Together, they present to Cooper the knowledge of a wormhole that has apparently been created by alien intelligence out near the edge of Saturn. The wormhole has been there for the last 48 years, allowing NASA to send astronauts as part of a top secret mission known as "Lazarus" into the hole, leading them to the vast outreaches of an entirely new galaxy. On the other end of the hole, Dr. Mann (Matt Damon), the leader of the Lazarus missions along with his astute colleagues, Miller and Edmunds, have discovered three potentially habitable planets for human life, named after each of them upon discovery. The three planets, Miller, Edmunds, and Mann all orbit a black hole by the name of Gargantua, unfortunately causing severe time dilation created by gravitational pull.

After an exorbitant amount of persuasion and undeniable reluctance on Cooper's part, Professor Brand is able to recruit Cooper to pilot a mission to retrieve the data that Mann, Miller, and Edmunds surveyed while on the three potentially habitable planets. This sets a historic race against time as humanity's fate hangs in the balance for Cooper and his team, Amelia Brand (Hathaway), Romilly (David Gyasi), Doyle (Wes Bentley), and two artificially intelligent robots named TARS (voiced by Bill Irwin) and CASE (voiced by Josh Stewart). To give a little sense of how much time is manipulated beyond the wormhole, the first planet that Cooper and the team touch down on, Miller, is so close to the black hole Gargantua, that spending only one hour on the planet equates to seven years back on earth. The race against time to save mankind now becomes more evident and startling than ever. To say anymore, would be to give away the wondrous revelation of the film.

In typical Nolan fashion, *Interstellar* (much like *Inception*) demands multiple viewings. Nolan continuously proves to be a master of his craft with his undeniable prowess in storytelling. He continuously produces material that is paced incredibly well, never taking us out of the moment. Many people make it a habit of pointing out the abundance of loop holes in Nolan's material and treating it as a negative rather than seeing the purpose it truly serves. When it all boils down it, if certain things weren't left open for interpretation in the types of stories that Nolan enjoys telling, there would be no such thing as "leaving the audience wanting more" - an element that Christopher Nolan has stood by and achieved more times than I can count. It's important to be able to talk about movies after we watch them. It's a privilege to discuss the possibilities or theories behind things that we've seen transpire on the big screen. Christopher Nolan gives us that privilege and for that, I am eternally grateful.