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La La Land (film)

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La La Land is a 2016 American **musical romantic comedy-drama film** written and directed by **Damien Chazelle**. It stars **Ryan Gosling** as a **jazz** pianist and **Emma Stone** as an aspiring actress, who meet and fall in love in **Los Angeles** while pursuing their dreams. The film's title refers simultaneously to the city of Los Angeles and to the **idiom** for being out of touch with reality.

Chazelle wrote the screenplay in 2010 but did not find a studio willing to finance the production without changes to his design. Following the success of his 2014 film *Whiplash*, the project was picked up by **Summit Entertainment**. Filming took place from August to September 2015 in Los Angeles. *La La Land* premiered at the **73rd Venice International Film Festival** on August 31, 2016, and was released in the United States on December 9, 2016. It grossed \$446 million worldwide against a production budget of \$30 million.

La La Land received positive reviews, being praised for Chazelle's screenplay and direction, Gosling and Stone's performances, **Justin Hurwitz**'s musical score, and the film's musical numbers. It won in every category for which it was nominated at the **74th Golden Globe Awards**, with a record-breaking seven wins, and received 11 nominations at the **70th British Academy Film Awards**, winning five. It received 14 nominations at the **89th Academy Awards**, including **Best Picture**, tying the record for the most Oscar nominations with *All About Eve* (1950) and *Titanic* (1997). It ended up winning six: **Best Director**, **Best Actress** (Stone), **Best Cinematography**, **Best Original Score**, **Best Original Song** ("City of Stars"), and **Best Production Design**.

La La Land

Theatrical release poster

Directed by	Damien Chazelle
Produced by	Fred Berger Jordan Horowitz Gary Gilbert Marc Platt
Written by	Damien Chazelle
Starring	Ryan Gosling Emma Stone John Legend Rosemarie DeWitt
Music by	Justin Hurwitz
Cinematography	Linus Sandgren
Edited by	Tom Cross
Production companies	Summit Entertainment ^[1] Black Label Media TIK Films ^{[2][3]} Impostor Pictures Gilbert Films Marc Platt Productions
Distributed by	Summit Entertainment
Release date	August 31, 2016 (Venice Film Festival) December 9, 2016 (United States)
Running time	128 minutes ^[4]
Country	United States
Language	English
Budget	\$30 million ^[5]
Box office	\$446.1 million ^[6]

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Plot

While stuck in traffic on a Los Angeles **highway** ("**Another Day of Sun**"), Mia Dolan, an aspiring actress, has a moment of **road rage** with Sebastian Wilder, a struggling **jazz pianist**. After a bad day at work, her subsequent **audition** goes poorly when the casting director takes a call in the middle of an emotional scene. That night, Mia's roommates take her to a lavish party in the **Hollywood Hills**, where Mia hopes for a breakthrough ("Someone in the Crowd"). She walks home after her car is towed.

During a **gig** at a restaurant, Sebastian slips into a passionate **jazz improvisation** despite warnings from the owner to stick to the **setlist** of traditional Christmas songs. Mia overhears the music as she passes by ("Mia and Sebastian's Theme"). Moved, she enters the restaurant, but Sebastian is fired for his disobedience. As he storms out, Mia attempts to compliment him, but he brushes her off.

Months later, Mia runs into Sebastian at a party where he plays in a 1980s pop cover band; she teases him by requesting "**I Ran (So Far Away)**", a song he considers an insult for "a serious musician". After the gig, the two walk to their cars, lamenting each other's company despite the chemistry between them ("A Lovely Night").

The next day, Sebastian arrives at Mia's work, and she shows Sebastian around the **movie lot**, where she works as a barista, while explaining her passion for acting. Sebastian takes Mia to a **jazz club**, describing his passion for **jazz** and desire to open his own club. They warm to each other ("City of Stars"). Sebastian invites Mia to a screening of *Rebel Without a Cause*; Mia accepts, forgetting a commitment with her current boyfriend. Bored with the double date with her boyfriend, she runs to the theater and finds Sebastian as the film begins. When the projector breaks, the two conclude their evening with a romantic dance at the **Griffith Observatory** ("Planetarium").

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Edit links

After more failed auditions, Mia decides, at Sebastian's suggestion, to write a **one-woman play**. Sebastian begins to perform regularly at a jazz club ("Summer Montage"), and the two move in together. Sebastian's former classmate Keith invites him to be the keyboardist in his **jazz fusion** band, where he will be offered a steady income. Although he is dismayed by the band's pop style, Sebastian signs after overhearing Mia trying to convince her mother that Sebastian is working on his career. The band finds success, but when Mia attends one of their concerts ("Start a Fire") she is disturbed, knowing Sebastian does not enjoy their music.

During the band's first tour, Mia and Sebastian get into an argument; she accuses him of abandoning his dreams, while Sebastian claims she liked him more when he was unsuccessful. Mia leaves, insulted and frustrated. Sebastian misses Mia's play due to a band **photo shoot** that he had previously forgotten. The play is a disaster; few people attend, and Mia overhears dismissive comments. Sebastian attempts to apologize to Mia for missing the play, but she is unwilling to forgive him and ends their relationship. Despondent and unable to pay the theater back, Mia moves back home to **Boulder City, Nevada**.

Sebastian receives a call from a casting director who attended Mia's play, inviting her to a film audition. Sebastian drives to Boulder City and persuades Mia to attend. The casting directors ask Mia to tell a story; she sings an ode to her aunt who inspired her to pursue acting ("**Audition (The Fools Who Dream)**"). Sebastian, confident the audition was a success, encourages Mia to devote herself to the opportunity. The two profess they will always love each other but are uncertain of their future.

Five years later, Mia is a famous actress and happily married to another man, with whom she has a daughter. One night, the couple stumble upon a jazz bar. Noticing the "Seb's" logo she had once designed, Mia realizes Sebastian has opened his club. When Sebastian notices Mia in the crowd, he plays their love theme on the piano, and the two imagine what might have been had their relationship worked perfectly ("Epilogue"). Before Mia leaves with her husband, she shares a poignant smile with Sebastian.

Cast [edit]

- Ryan Gosling** as Sebastian Wilder
- Emma Stone** as Mia Dolan
- John Legend** as Keith
- Rosemarie DeWitt** as Laura Wilder
- Finn Wittrock** as Greg Earnest
- Jessica Rothe** as Alexis
- Sonoya Mizuno** as Caitlin
- Callie Hernandez** as Tracy
- J. K. Simmons** as Bill
- Tom Everett Scott** as David
- Meagen Fay** as Mia's Mom
- Damon Gupton** as Harry
- Jason Fuchs** as Carlo
- Josh Pence** as Josh

Production [edit]

Pre-production [edit]



Damien Chazelle received many awards and nominations for writing and directing the film.

As a drummer, **Damien Chazelle** has a predilection for musical films.^[7] He wrote the screenplay for *La La Land* in 2010, when the film industry seemed out of reach for him.^[8] His idea was "to take the old musical but ground it in real life where things don't always exactly work out,"^[7] and to salute creative people who move to Los Angeles to chase their dreams.^[9] He conceived the film when he was a student at **Harvard University** with his classmate, **Justin Hurwitz**. The two explored the concept in their senior thesis through a low-budget musical about a **Boston** jazz musician, ***Guy and Madeline on a Park Bench***.^{[10][11]} Chazelle was moved by the tradition of 1920s city symphony films, such as ***Manhattan*** (1921) and ***Man With a Movie Camera*** (1929), that paid tribute to cities.^[12] After graduating, both moved to Los Angeles in 2010 and continued writing the script, but made a few modifications, such as altering the location to Los Angeles instead of Boston.^[10]

L.A., even more so than any other American city, obscures, sometimes neglects, its own history. But that can also be its own magical thing, because it's a city that reveals itself bit by bit, like an onion, if you take the time to explore it.^[12]

Rather than trying to match L.A. to the charms of **Paris** or **San Francisco**, he focused on the qualities that make the city distinctive: the traffic, the sprawl, and the skylines.^[12] The style and tone of the film were inspired by **Jacques Demy's** ***The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*** and ***The Young Girls of Rochefort***, especially the latter, which was more dance and jazz-oriented.^[13] The film also makes visual allusions to Hollywood classics such as ***Broadway Melody of 1940***, ***Singin' in the Rain***, ***The Band Wagon*** and ***An American in Paris***.^[14] About ***An American in Paris***, Chazelle commented: "That's a movie that we just pillaged. It's an awesome example of how daring some of those old musicals really were."^[15] It shares some character development and themes with Chazelle's previous musical work, ***Whiplash***; Chazelle said:

"They're both about the struggle of being an artist and reconciling your dreams with the need to be human. *La La Land* is just much less angry about it."^[16]

He said that both films reflect his own experiences as a filmmaker working his way up the Hollywood ladder.^[9] *La La Land* in particular is inspired by his experience of moving from the **East Coast** with preconceived notions of what L.A. would be like, "that it was all just strip malls



and freeways."^[12]

Chazelle was unable to produce the film for years as no studio was willing to finance an original contemporary musical, with no familiar songs. It was also a jazz musical, which *The Hollywood Reporter* called an "extinct genre". He believed that since he and Hurwitz were unknown at that time, it might have made financiers dubious about the project's potential.^{[17][10]} Chazelle found producers through friends who introduced him to **Fred Berger** and **Jordan Horowitz**. With the two producers on board, the script went to **Focus Features** at a budget of around \$1 million. The studio demanded alterations: the male lead was asked to be changed from a jazz pianist to a rock musician, the complicated opening number had to be altered, and the story's bittersweet ending needed to be dropped. Chazelle scrapped the project and moved on.^[10]

Chazelle later wrote *Whiplash*, which was an easier concept to sell and a less risky investment.^[18] After *Whiplash* was well received by critics upon its premiere at the **2014 Sundance Film Festival** in January, Chazelle continued his efforts to bring *La La Land* to the big screen.^[10] A year later, when *Whiplash* earned five Oscar nominations at the **87th Academy Awards** including **Best Picture**, and grossed nearly \$50 million worldwide off a \$3.3 million production budget, Chazelle and his project began to attract attention from studios.^[17]

Five years after Chazelle wrote the script,^[19] **Summit Entertainment** and Black Label Media, along with producer **Marc Platt**, agreed to invest in *La La Land* and distribute it. They had been impressed by the critical and commercial success of *Whiplash*.^[9] Lionsgate's Patrick Wachsberger, who had previously worked on the *Step Up* franchise, pushed Chazelle to increase the film's budget since he felt high-quality musicals could not be made cheaply.^[20]

Casting [edit]



Damien Chazelle on set directing *La La Land*. ↗

Initially, **Miles Teller** and **Emma Watson** were both set to star in the leads. Watson dropped out over a commitment to the **2017 musical adaptation of *Beauty and the Beast***, while Teller departed via long contract negotiations.^[8] Conversely, Gosling himself turned down a role as the *Beast* in *Beauty and the Beast* in favor of *La La Land*.^[21] Chazelle decided to make his characters somewhat older, with experience in struggling to make their dreams, rather than younger newcomers just arriving in Los Angeles.^[10]

Emma Stone plays Mia, a struggling actress in Los Angeles.^[17] Stone has loved musicals since she saw *Les Misérables* when she was 8 years old, saying that "bursting into song has always been a real dream of mine", and that her favorite film is the 1931 **Charlie Chaplin** romantic comedy *City Lights*.^{[17][7]} She studied **pom dancing** as a child, with a year of

ballet.^[17] She moved to Hollywood with her mother at the age of 15 to pursue a career, and struggled constantly to get an audition during her first year. When she did, she was often turned away after singing or saying just one line.^[22] Stone drew from her own experiences for her character of Mia, and some were added into the film.^[16]

She met Chazelle in 2014 while she was making her **Broadway** debut in *Cabaret*. Chazelle and Hurwitz saw her perform on a night when the actress had a cold.^{[17][23]} She met with Chazelle at Brooklyn Diner in New York City, where the director outlined his vision for the planned film.^[24] Stone gained confidence from performing in *Cabaret* to handle the demands of the film.^[24] In preparation for her role, Stone watched some of the musical movies that inspired Chazelle, including *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* and *Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers* collaborations.^[19] Stone accepted the offer because Chazelle was so passionate about the project.^[24]



Singer-songwriter **John Legend** has a supporting role in the film and also was an executive producer. ↗

Ryan Gosling plays Sebastian, a jazz pianist.^[17] Like Stone, Gosling drew from his own experiences as an aspiring artist. One incident was used for Mia. Gosling was performing a crying scene in an audition and the casting director took a phone call during it, talking about her lunch plans while he was emoting.^{[17][22][25]} Chazelle met with Gosling at a bar near the latter's home in **Hollywood Hills**, when Gosling was about to begin filming for *The Big Short*.^[10]

Chazelle cast the two immediately after Summit bought the film.^[9] He said the two "feel like the closest thing that we have right now to an old Hollywood couple" as akin to **Spencer Tracy** and **Katharine Hepburn**, **Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers**, **Humphrey Bogart** and **Lauren Bacall**, and **Myrna Loy** and **William Powell**.^[16] The film marked the third collaboration between Gosling and Stone, following *Crazy, Stupid, Love* (2011) and *Gangster Squad* (2013).^[26] Chazelle asked the two about their audition disasters when they were both trying to make it.^[22] Both learned how to sing and dance for the film's six original tunes.^[10]

The rest of the cast – **J. K. Simmons**, **Sonoya Mizuno**, **Jessica Rothe**, **Callie Hernandez**, **Finn Wittrock**, **Rosemarie DeWitt**, **John Legend**, **Jason Fuchs**, **Meagan Fay** – were announced between

July and August 2015.^{[27][28][29][30][31][32]} Legend plays Keith, a long-time friend of Sebastian.^[17]

The film was choreographed by **Mandy Moore**. Rehearsals took place at a production office in **Atwater Village, Los Angeles** over the span of three to four months, beginning in May 2015. Gosling practiced piano in one room, Stone worked with Moore in another, and costume designer **Mary Zophres** had her own corner of the complex.^{[17][10]} Gosling, with no previous experience, had to learn how to play the piano, as no hand models were used.^[33] Moore emphasised working on emotion rather than technique, which Stone said was key when they filmed the Prius car scene.^[17] To help his cast and crew get their creative mode flowing, Chazelle held screenings



Top to bottom: **Damien Chazelle** directing **Emma Stone** and **Ryan Gosling** on the set of *La La Land*.



Ryan Gosling learned **tap dancing** and **piano** for his role. ↗

on the soundstages every Friday night of classical films that had inspired him for the film, including *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*, *Singin' in the Rain*, *Top Hat*, and *Boogie Nights*.^[10]

Filming [edit]

From the beginning, Chazelle wanted the film's musical numbers to be filmed "head to toe" and performed in a single take, like those of the 1930s works of *Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers*.^[24] He also wanted the film to emulate the widescreen, CinemaScope look of 1950s musicals such as *It's Always Fair Weather*. Consequently, the movie was shot on celluloid film (not digitally) with Panavision equipment in a widescreen format, but not true CinemaScope as that technology is no longer available.^{[34][35][36][37]}



The *Judge Harry Pregerson Interchange* (left) where the opening scene was filmed, and the *Griffith Observatory*, where Ryan Gosling's and Emma Stone's characters float into the stars.

Chazelle wanted Los Angeles to be the primary setting for his film, commenting that "there is something very poetic about the city I think, about a city that is built by people with these unrealistic dreams and people who kind of just put it all on the line for that."^[7] *Principal photography* on the film officially began in the city on August 10, 2015,^[38] and filming took place in more than 60 locations both in and near Los Angeles, including the *Angels Flight* trolley in downtown, houses in the *Hollywood Hills*, the *Colorado Street Bridge*, the *Rialto Theatre* in *South Pasadena*, the *Warner Bros.* studio lot, the *Grand Central Market*, *Hermosa Beach's* Lighthouse Cafe, *Chateau Marmont Hotel*, and the *Watts Towers*, with many scenes shot in one take. It took 40 days to complete shooting, finishing in mid-September 2015.^{[10][39][40]}

The opening pre-credits sequence was the first to be shot,^[10] and was filmed on a closed-off portion of two carpool direct connector ramps of the *Judge Harry Pregerson Interchange*, connecting the *I-105 Carpool Lane* to the *I-110 Express Lanes*, leading to Downtown Los Angeles. It was filmed in a span of two days, and required over 100 dancers.^{[9][41]} For this particular scene, Chazelle wanted to give a sense of how vast the city is.^[12] The scene was originally planned for a stretch of ground-level highway, until Chazelle decided to shoot it in the 105–110 interchange, which arcs 100 feet (30 m) in the air. Production designer David Wasco said, "I thought somebody was going to fall off and get killed." Not every portion of the highway was blocked.^[10] Chazelle compared the scene to the *yellow brick road* leading to the *Emerald City* in *The Wizard of Oz* (1939).^[10]



The *Angels Flight* (pictured), which was shut down for about four years, including at the time of the filming, was re-opened for a single day exclusively for the film to shoot a scene.

Chazelle scouted for "old L.A." locations that were in ruins, or were perhaps razed. One such example was the use of the *Angels Flight* trolley, built in 1901. The *funicular* had been closed in 2013 after a derailment. Attempts were made to repair and re-open the railway, but to no avail. However, the production team was able to secure permission to use it for a day. Chazelle and his crew then arranged to have it run for shooting (it was re-opened to the public in 2017).^[12] Mia works at a coffee shop on the *Warner Bros.* studio lot; Chazelle considered studio lots to be "monuments" of Hollywood. Production designer Wasco created numerous fake old *film posters*. Chazelle occasionally created names for them, deciding to use the title of his first feature, *Guy and Madeline on a Park Bench* (2009) for one poster, which reimagines it as a 1930s musical.^[12]

The six-minute-long Prius car scene had to be completed during the brief "magic hour" moment at sunset. It took eight takes and two days to shoot it.^[17] When *Ryan Gosling* and *Emma Stone* finally nailed it, "everybody just exploded," Stone said.^[24] Since Gosling and

Stone were not primarily dancers, the two made a number of mistakes, especially during long uninterrupted single-take musical numbers. However, Chazelle was very sympathetic towards them, understanding their lack of experience and not minding their errors.^[19] While shooting Sebastian and Mia's first dance together, Stone stumbled over the back of a bench, but picked right up and kept on going with the scene.^[19]

The fight scene during the romantic dinner that Gosling's character Sebastian prepared for Mia (Emma Stone) was one of the scenes that was re-written more than any other. Gosling and Stone also helped create the dialogue of the scene to get it to be one of the more realistic scenes in a film filled with fantasy and fantastical elements.^[42]

Chazelle spent nearly a year editing the film with editor *Tom Cross*, as the two were primarily concerned with getting the tone just right.^[10]

Music [edit]

*Main article: *La La Land* (soundtrack)*

The songs and *score* for *La La Land* were composed and orchestrated by *Justin Hurwitz*, Chazelle's *Harvard University* classmate, who also worked on his two prior films.^[17] The lyrics were written by *Pasek and Paul*,^[24] except for "Start a Fire", which was written by *John Legend*, Hurwitz, *Marius De Vries* and *Angelique Cinelu*.^[43]

A soundtrack album was released on December 9, 2016, by *Interscope Records*, featuring selections from Hurwitz's score and songs performed by the cast.^[43]

Release [edit]

La La Land had its world premiere as the *Venice Film Festival's* opening night film on August 31, 2016.^{[44][45]} The film also screened at the *Telluride Film Festival*,^[46] the *Toronto International Film Festival*, beginning September 12, 2016,^[47] the *BFI London Film Festival*,^[48] the *Middleburg Film Festival* in late October 2016, the *Virginia Film Festival*, held at the University of Virginia on November 6, 2016, and the *AFI Fest* on November 15, 2016.^[49]

The film was originally set for a July 15, 2016, release;^[50] however, in March 2016, it was announced the film would be given a *limited*

[release](#) starting December 2, 2016, before expanding on December 16, 2016.^[51] Chazelle stated that the change was because he felt that the release date was not right for the context of the film, and because he wanted to have a slow rollout beginning with the early fall film festivals.^[16] The film was later pushed back a week to December 9, 2016 with the [wide release](#) still being planned for December 16, 2016.^[52] Lionsgate opened the film in five locations on December 9, 2016 and expanded it to about 200 theaters on December 16, 2016 before going nationwide on December 25, 2016. The film went fully wide on January 6, 2017,^[40] with a release into select [IMAX](#) theaters a week later.^[53]

La La Land was released in the United Kingdom on January 12, 2017.^[54] The film was released in the Netherlands on December 22, 2016, and in Australia on December 26, with the rest of the territories planned for a release from mid-January 2017.^[55]

Home media [edit]

Lionsgate released *La La Land* on Digital HD on April 11, 2017, and Blu-ray, Ultra HD Blu-Ray and DVD on April 25, 2017.^[56]

Reception [edit]

Box office [edit]

La La Land grossed \$151.1 million in the United States and Canada and \$295 million in other territories for a worldwide total of \$446.1 million, against a production budget of \$30 million.^[6] *Deadline.com* calculated the net profit of the film to be \$68.25 million, when factoring together all expenses and revenues for the film, making it one of the top 20 most profitable releases of 2016.^[57]

La La Land began its theatrical release with a limited release in five theaters in Los Angeles and New York City on December 9. It made \$881,107 in its opening weekend, giving the film a per-theater average of \$176,221, the best average of the year.^{[58][59][60]} In its second week of limited release, the film expanded to 200 theaters and grossed \$4.1 million, finishing 7th at the box office. It was an increase of 366% from the previous week and good for a per-theater of \$20,510.^[61] The following week, the film had its wide expansion to 734 theaters, grossing \$5.8 million for the weekend (including \$4 million on Christmas Day and \$9.2 million over the four days), and finishing 8th at the box office.^[62] On January 6, 2017, the weekend of the [Golden Globes](#), the film expanded to 1,515 theaters and grossed \$10 million over the weekend, finishing 5th at the box office.^[63] In its 6th week of release, the film grossed \$14.5 million (a total of \$16.9 million over the four-day [MLK weekend](#)), finishing 2nd at the box office behind *Hidden Figures*.^[64] After receiving its 14 Oscar nominations, the film expanded to 3,136 theaters on January 27, 2017 (an increase of 1,271 from the week before) and grossed \$12.1 million (up 43% from its previous week's \$8.4 million).^[65] During the weekend of February 24–26 (the weekend of the Academy Awards) the film grossed \$4.6 million, exactly the same amount it grossed the previous weekend.^[66] The next week, following its six Oscar wins, the film grossed \$3 million.^[67]

Critical response [edit]



Emma Stone's performance garnered widespread acclaim and won her the [Academy Award for Best Actress](#).

La La Land was met with critical acclaim upon its release, with critics praising its screenplay, direction, performances, chemistry of Gosling and Stone, musical score and musical numbers.^{[68][69][70][71]} The [review aggregation website Rotten Tomatoes](#) gives the film an approval rating of 92% based on 373 reviews, with an [average rating](#) of 8.6/10. The site's critical consensus reads, "*La La Land* breathes new life into a bygone genre with thrillingly assured direction, powerful performances, and an irresistible excess of heart."^[72] On [Metacritic](#), which assigns a normalized rating based on reviews, the film has a score of 93 out of 100, based on 53 critics, indicating "universal acclaim".^[73] It was the third- and sixth-highest scoring film released in 2016 on each respective site.^{[74][75]} Audiences polled by [CinemaScore](#) gave the film an average grade of "A−" on an A+ to F scale.^[76]

[Peter Travers](#) of *Rolling Stone* gave *La La Land* four stars out of four, describing it as "a hot miracle" and complimenting its musical numbers, particularly the opening scene. He went on to name it his favorite movie of the year.^[77] [Michael Phillips](#) of the *Chicago Tribune* similarly lauded the opening sequence, in addition to highlighting Stone's performance, stating "she's reason enough to see *La La Land*." Despite being less enthusiastic about Gosling's dancing and the film's middle section, Phillips nevertheless gave the film four out of four stars, declaring it "the year's most seriously pleasurable entertainment".^[78]

[A. O. Scott](#) of *The New York Times* praised the film, stating that it "succeeds both as a fizzy fantasy and a hard-headed fable, a romantic comedy and a showbiz melodrama, a work of sublime artifice and touching authenticity".^[79] [Peter Bradshaw](#) of *The Guardian* awarded the film five out of five stars, describing it as "a sun-drenched musical masterpiece."^[80] Tom Charity of *Sight & Sound* stated, "Chazelle has crafted that rare thing, a genuinely romantic comedy, and as well, a rhapsody in blue, red, yellow and green."^[81] Diana Dabrowska of *Cinema Scope* wrote, "*La La Land* may look like the world that we dream about, but it also understands the cruelty that can come out of (or undermine) those dreams; it's shot in [CinemaScope](#), and yet it's still an intimate masterpiece."^[82]

Writing for *The Boston Globe* in December 2016, Ty Burr summarized the effectiveness of the film to relate to audiences stating: "...the movie traffics in the bittersweet happiness of treasuring things that are vanishing, like the unrealized future imagined in the climatic dance number, or those inky, star-filled dance floors that go on forever in old movies, or Hollywood musicals themselves. Or jazz: Sebastian has an early moment at a nightclub where he passionately sticks up for the music he loves. "It's dying on the vine," he says. "And the world says 'Let it die. It had its time.' Well, not on my watch." In that scene, he speaks for the director. By the end of "La La Land," he's speaking for all of us."^[83]

The film has been criticized for its treatment of race and jazz. Kelly Lawler of *USA Today* noted that Gosling's character has been referred to as a "[white savior](#)" by some critics, due to "his quest (and eventual success) to save the traditionally black musical genre from extinction, seemingly the only person who can accomplish such a goal."^[84] The sentiment was also expressed by Ruby Lott-

Lavigna of *Wired*,^[85] Anna Silman of *New York*^[86] and Ira Madison III of *MTV News*.^[87] *Rex Reed* of the *New York Observer* also takes aim at the film's intention to emulate the MGM musical classics, noting that "the old-fashioned screenplay, by the ambitious writer-director Damien Chazelle, reeks of mothballs", and that "the movie sags badly in the middle, like a worn-out mattress that needs new springs".^[88] The *South China Morning Post* said that the film is a little dull, that the two leads' singing and dancing aren't exceptional, and that Sebastian is a jazz snob and Mia's character lacks depth.^[89]

Accolades [edit]

Main article: List of accolades received by La La Land

At the **89th Academy Awards**, *La La Land* received a leading six awards, including **Best Director**, **Best Actress** (for Stone), **Best Cinematography**, **Best Original Score**, **Best Original Song** ("City of Stars") and **Best Production Design**.^[90] The film received a total of 14 nominations, tying records for most nominations by a single film with *All About Eve* (1950) and *Titanic* (1997). Its other nominations included **Best Picture**, **Best Actor** (for Gosling), **Best Original Screenplay**, **Best Film Editing**, **Best Costume Design**, a second nomination for **Best Original Song** ("Audition"), **Best Sound Editing** and **Best Sound Mixing**.^[91] During the ceremony, *Faye Dunaway* announced that *La La Land* had won Best Picture, reading it from the incorrect card *Warren Beatty* held, which was actually for the Best Actress award that Stone had just won. It took the show's crew more than two minutes and nearly three whole speeches to rectify the mistake; the actual winner was *Moonlight*.^{[92][93]}

At the **74th Golden Globe Awards**, *La La Land* received a leading seven nominations.^[94] The film won in all seven categories for which it was nominated, setting a historic record for the most Golden Globes won by a single film, namely **Best Motion Picture – Musical or Comedy**, **Best Director**, **Best Actor – Comedy or Musical** for Gosling, **Best Actress – Comedy or Musical** for Stone, **Best Screenplay**, **Best Original Score** and **Best Original Song** ("City of Stars").^[95]

La La Land received eleven nominations at the **70th British Academy Film Awards**, more than any other film of 2016.^[96] The film won in the categories of **Best Film**, **Best Director**, **Best Actress in a Leading Role** for Stone, **Best Cinematography** and **Best Film Music**.^[97]



Hurwitz, Chazelle and Stone at the 2016 Mill Valley Film Festival.

See also [edit]

- Second weekend in box office performance § Second-weekend increase

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- La La Land's Choreographer Explains the Freeway Dance Scene[?]



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