

Film Review: 'The Dark Knight Rises' Gives Fans Epic Conclusion to Beloved Trilogy

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on July 19, 2012 - 1:03pm

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CHICAGO – With “The Dark Knight Rises”, Christopher Nolan epically follows through on most of the themes he set up in “Batman Begins” and “The Dark Knight” with amazing technical skill and an ambitious sense of scope. No one can deny the effort and intensity of this closing chapter of the most acclaimed superhero saga in the history of film. However, while this level of artistic integrity is rare in Hollywood blockbusters, it doesn't always lead to a perfect final product. There is a fine line between epic majesty and self-indulgent bloat and “The Dark Knight Rises” crosses it at times. There is quite possibly a 5-star masterpiece within this film but a few of Nolan's mistakes as a filmmaker counterbalance some of the many smart ones he has made along the production process of the entire trilogy.



Rating: **4.0/5.0**

“The Dark Knight Rises” plays with many of the same themes as the two films that came before it, most notably the role of an icon in the public eye and how image can mean as much as action. The image of the Batman can mean more to the people of a city like Gotham than what Bruce Wayne (Christian Bale) actually does behind that mask. Conversely, a powerful anti-authority image can rally a population to anarchy. Ra's Al Ghul in “Batman Begins,” The Joker in “The Dark Knight,” and Bane in “The Dark Knight Rises” – on many levels, these villains are cut from the same mold. They inspire people to follow them into the darkness through fear, intimidation, and control.



[Read Brian Tallerico's full review of "The Dark Knight Rises" in our reviews section.](#)

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We meet Bane, the big bad of “TDKR,” in a powerfully conceived opening sequence involving a plane hijacking. If The Joker was a symbol of chaos, Bane (Tom Hardy) is a symbol of brute force. He speaks through a Darth Vader-esque mask that we learn is basically keeping his face together after beatings he endured in a legendary prison, from which he was reportedly the only person to ever escape. He was born in Hell and he has emerged from it to bring pain to the citizens of Gotham. As conceived, Bane should be a powerful force of nature, an impending storm that sweeps over the film. As realized, he is less than that largely due to a series of poor design decisions (including his muffled audio and cartoonish accent) but also because he's simply too talkative. With Bane, Nolan falls victim to monologue-ing. Bane would have been a significantly more powerful villain with half of the dialogue. He should have been an imposing figure instead of a talkative madman and it's a major tonal mistake.



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“The Dark Knight Rises” stars Christian Bale, Anne Hathaway, Tom Hardy, Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Marion Cotillard, Michael Caine, Morgan Freeman, Matthew Modine, and Gary Oldman. It was written by Jonathan Nolan & Christopher Nolan and directed by Christopher Nolan. It is released on July 20, 2012 and is rated PG-13.



The Dark Knight Rises

Photo credit: Warner Bros. Pictures

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