

Ladies and Gentlemen, Brian Mulroney

Director: Matthew Rankin
 Countries of Origin: Canada
 Runtime: 1 hr 45mins
 Languages: English and French with English subtitles



Ladies and Gentlemen, Brian Mulroney is an inventive archival documentary that re-examines one of Canada's most influential political figures through a kaleidoscope of more than 80,000 pieces of archival footage. Tracing Brian Mulroney's rise to power between 1976 and 1984, director Matthew Rankin challenges both how media shapes public opinion, and how documentaries construct historical narratives.

A film that is as much about the language of cinema as it is about Canadian politics, *Ladies and Gentlemen, Brian Mulroney* radically transforms decades of news broadcasts, political advertising, and media appearances into a vibrant audiovisual collage that dissects the construction of public image — and political power. Using satire, irony, and experimental found-footage techniques, the film invites audiences to reconsider not only Brian Mulroney's legacy, but to consider how all legacies are constructed and maintained. Bold and inventive, *Ladies and Gentlemen, Brian Mulroney* offers a compelling look at the role historical archives play in our understanding of the past.

Reflect & Discuss:

1. How do choices in editing, music, humour, repetition, and the way archival clips are combined influence how we understand Brian Mulroney and this period of Canadian history? Identify a moment when a filmmaking choice or element affected your interpretation.
2. Can archival footage be considered objective evidence? What context might be missing when an image or clip is removed from its original source and placed into a new film?
3. How do politicians and the media work to construct public images? What similarities or differences do you notice between the media environment represented in the film, and the way political figures are presented today?
4. Who gets to shape our collective memory of Canadian history; the people who lived it, journalists, governments, archivists, filmmakers, or audiences? What responsibility comes with that power?



Director Profile: Matthew Rankin

Matthew Rankin was born in Winnipeg and studied Quebec history at McGill University and Université Laval. His work has been presented at TIFF, Sundance, SXSW, Annecy, the Berlinale, Cannes Critics Week and Directors' Fortnight, as well as on the Criterion Channel.

His first feature, *The Twentieth Century*, won the FIPRESCI Prize at the 2020 Berlin Film Festival, and his second feature, *Universal Language*, was awarded the 2024 Chantal Akerman audience award at Cannes and 2024 Best Canadian Discovery Award at TIFF.