

'Melania' Documentary Director Says 'Divine Intervention' Brought Him to the Surprise Hit Project

Veteran film director Brett Ratner said "divine intervention" brought him to the new "Melania" documentary.

The film focuses on the 20 days in January 2025 leading up to Donald Trump being sworn in a second time as president, from First Lady Melania Trump's perspective.

"Melania" surprised industry experts by taking in over \$7 million during its opening weekend, more than doubling some estimates going into the weekend.

MELANIA, the film, exclusively in theaters worldwide on January 30th, 2026.

— MELANIA TRUMP (@MELANIATRUMP) December 17, 2025

Film distributor Amazon MGM announced it is adding 200 more theaters after the documentary netted an additional \$1 million in box office sales Monday.

Ratner — best known for helming feature movies like "Rush Hour" and "X-Men: The Last Stand" — told Fox News in an interview published Wednesday that God was responsible for bringing him on board the first lady's documentary.

Regarding the opening weekend success, he said, "I mean, the validation was undeniable, but honestly, I felt like I won just when Melania called me and asked me to direct the film.

When I saw the president for the first time, and after I was hired, I said to him, 'You know, that bullet that missed you, I think was a divine intervention,'" Ratner began. "He said, 'Yeah, I think you're right.'"

"You know what my divine intervention was?" he then asked President Trump. "Your wife hiring me to direct this documentary."

"That was my divine intervention. So, for me, I gotta pinch myself. I mean, the access that they gave me, the opportunity that they gave me, was just beyond my wildest imagination. So, I already felt like I won," Ratner told Fox.

The director noted that "documentaries don't normally come out in theaters, around the world. And that's exactly why she wanted to hire me. Because I said, 'You know, Melania ... there are many great documentary filmmakers," offering, for example, Ken Burns.



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"But she said, 'I don't want a documentary filmmaker, I want a feature filmmaker who makes movies for the big screen.' And that's why I was so excited about this. Because she was thinking big," Ratner recounted.

Melania told The Hollywood Reporter via an emailed statement why she decided to undertake the project in the first place.

"I believe the Americans and people all over the world should witness the incredible amount of planning and work required when shifting from private citizen to first lady," she said, adding. "I take pride in every detail."

For Ratner, directing the film was a chance at redemption after multiple sexual harassment allegations in 2017 during the height of the "Me Too" movement sidelined him in the

industry, according to The Hollywood Reporter. He denied wrongdoing and was never criminally charged.

The documentary gives audiences a behind-the-scenes look at the inaugural preparations, with the first lady jetting between Trump Tower, Mar-a-Lago, and the Blair House, where the first couple spent the night before returning across the street to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

It has a sleek feel to it, with interesting cinematography and catchy music, drawing heavily from 80s pop and even a brief sampling of Elvis' version of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic."

President Trump appears sparingly until the latter part of the film, with the inaugural events themselves.

The documentary has a very patriotic feeling throughout and gives audiences a chance to relive the excitement of Trump's victory and celebrate America's ongoing experiment in liberty.

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