

Spielberg signs major streaming deal with Netflix

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US director Steven Spielberg has since dismissed as false claims that he previously tried to bar Netflix from Oscars competition.

Steven Spielberg will produce multiple new films for Netflix every year, the company said Monday, in a major deal that highlights how fully

Hollywood has embraced streaming platforms.

The partnership with arguably Tinseltown's top director is a coup for Netflix at a time when competition with streaming rivals including Disney+ and HBO Max is heating up.

It also follows reports that Spielberg had been skeptical about streaming in recent years, and had even moved to bar Netflix films from Oscars eligibility—claims that the legendary "Jaws" and "Schindler's List" director has since dismissed as false.

In a joint statement about the Netflix deal, Spielberg praised "this new avenue for our films" as an "amazing opportunity to tell new stories together and reach audiences in new ways."

Spielberg also praised his close relationship with Netflix co-CEO and content chief Ted Sarandos, a former industry outsider who has risen to become one of Hollywood's top power brokers.

"We cannot wait to get to work with the Amblin team and we are honored and thrilled to be part of this chapter of Steven's cinematic history," said Sarandos.

Spielberg's Amblin Partners will continue to make content for Universal, one of Tinseltown's oldest major studios, while his upcoming "West Side Story" will be released by Disney-owned 20 Century Studios.

Monday's announcement does not specify whether Spielberg, who in recent years has produced many more films than he has directed, will personally direct any of the Netflix movies.

But the deal comes as the industry pivots from a model that insisted on lengthy, exclusive "windows" for movie theater releases, to one in which

major films often appear on streaming platforms simultaneously or very soon after they hit the big screen—or even skip theaters altogether.

That move has been accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Another production by Spielberg's Amblin, "The Trial of the Chicago 7," was intended for theatrical release by Paramount but ended up on Netflix last year while thousands of movie theaters were closed.

Monday's deal also did not say whether Spielberg's [films](#) for Netflix would also appear on the big screen first.

Other top directors who have recently joined forces with Netflix include Martin Scorsese ("The Irishman"), Spike Lee ("Da 5 Bloods") and David Fincher ("Mank").

As well as "West Side Story"—which is due in theaters in December after being delayed by the pandemic—Spielberg, 74, is currently developing a semi-autobiographical film about his childhood in the southwestern state of Arizona.

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