



## The Making of Life of Pi: A Film, a Journey

*Jean-Christophe Castelli*

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The 3-D motion picture version of Yann Martel's Man Booker Prize-winning bestseller *Life of Pi* is the most ambitious film project to date from Academy Award-winning director Ang Lee (*Brokeback Mountain*; *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*). *The Making of Life of Pi: A Film, A Journey* is a beautifully illustrated, graphically compelling, behind-the-scenes look at the creation of a film that is destined to be a classic. Written by John Christophe-Castelli, with a foreword by Yann Martel and an introduction by Ang Lee, *The Making of Life of Pi* is a must-have volume for every true film buff, offering entertaining text and breathtaking visuals, while providing a fascinating close-up look at the unique approach to filmmaking of one of today's most influential directors.

## **The Making of Life of Pi: A Film, a Journey Details**

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## From Reader Review The Making of Life of Pi: A Film, a Journey for online ebook

### Wakako Tsujimoto says

LIFE OF PI, written by YANN MAREL, this book's genre is fiction. Only one lifeboat survived the sinking of the Japanese freighter heart of the Pacific Ocean. The boat crammed five survivors: Orange - an orangutan, hyena, a zebra, a tiger named Richard Parker and Pi Patel, an Indian boy was 16. This little boat is the main setting, whose power could light a reader faith in God, as one of the heroes.

PI has a big courage and curiosity. I really admire him in these points. I can see it by his childhood. Since he was a child, he believe relationship between person and animal even if tiger. Some sufferings happened to him, but he is still positive and he never given up his life.

In the story, I see there are really good relationship between PI and the tiger. First time, PI was afraid of the lion, but through the survival life, PI will strongly believe the Lion and I think the Lion also trust him as a good partner. The survival life and their relationship made PI strong.

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### Jake Madigan says

Life of Pi is a novel about a boy from India, whose family decides to move their zoo to Canada. During their journey, the boat that is transporting his family sinks due to a severe storm. Pi thinks he is the only survivor but he is quite wrong. Pi climbs onto a lifeboat and the next morning wakes up to a surprise. Living on the lifeboat with him is a large bengal tiger. Pi understands if he does not train the tiger, it will eat him. Pi and "Richard Parker", begin to become comfortable together as the training continues. Pi understands they will most likely not survive, but he will not give up. They soon run out of food, but they come upon a very strange island. They are able to gather food and water that they will need for the rest of the journey. Finally after months drifting at sea, they land on the beaches of Mexico. Richard Parker takes off immediately and Pi is heartbroken.

In my opinion I think the author is trying to say that any relationship, even between a human and a tiger. The author is able to develop the main character Pi very well. In the beginning, Pi is portrayed as a very weak character, but as the book progresses, he begins to grow as a character and become mentally strong. I really liked the contrast between the character, man versus beast, yet they never fight, because Pi is able to display dominance towards Richard Parker. I did notice however that the book at times became difficult to understand. The author did not do a good job explaining the man eating island that Pi and Richard Parker landed on. I would say the plot of this book is entertaining, because I felt like I couldn't stop reading it. I would say the only real weakness of this book is that it can be confusing so it is not really for younger kids. Overall I really liked this book. It caught my interest immediately as I picked it up. I would recommend it for kids in high school or older because of the somewhat confusing plot. It may be a confusing plot, but if you are good reader this is the book for you.

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### 04chrystalb says

Life of Pi

"Lions and tigers and bears oh my!" In this book it's more like, "henna and tiger and zebra oh my!" This is

from the trilling book “Life of Pi written by Yann Martel” is a very entertaining book that is well written. It is about a boy named Piscine Molitor Patel but he told everyone to call him Pi. His family lives in India where they own a zoo, but they want to start a new life in Canada so they go on a ship taking them there. The ship sinks and Pi is stuck on a lifeboat with some of the zoo animals but they are very dangerous. The book goes on to tell you about his vogue in the ocean. It is very descriptive and detailed which brings the book to life. It is great for young adults and even interesting for adults. Some may say at that there are parts are disturbing were you don’t want the book to “come to life” but even in the “disturbing” parts make the story unique.

“Bright red plastic dishes filled with water,” this is fantastic proof of how descriptive and colorful this book is. Can’t you see the popping bright red dish filled with brilliant blue water because of how it is described? I think without all these descriptive details the book would be way more dull and flat. Bright red, can’t you see it glistening in the sun? In this book it doesn’t only describes many mysterious sounds that we wouldn’t be able to hear without the way it was written.

Yann Martel is very good at describing sound which just makes this book even more real. On page 97 he wrote, “The ship sank. It made a sound like a monstrous metallic burp. Things bubbled at the surface and then vanished. Everything was screaming: the sea, the wind, my heart”, it is described so well it feels like you’re actually there! He even has more sound effects like again on page 97 he uses “TREEEEEE! TREEEEEE! TREEEEEE!” as the sound of the whistle, and he doesn’t even stop there. He uses the feelings that Pi felt on his adventure.

“And even if I hadn’t fallen over, my legs had no strength legs in them. But my will was strong. I was determined to move forward. I crawled, dragged myself, weakly leapfrogged to the tree”, with this writing you just get transfixed and can feel even the pain that Martel describes here. You feel the pain of the feelings in your legs. You may be thinking that it would hurt to read the book then, but it doesn’t it just puts you in a whole new world and it also paints a very vivid picture. But he doesn’t just talk about pain to paint a picture. On page 280 he described the teeth wrapped in leaves as “and it came to light, an unspeakable pearl at the heart of a green oyster”. Isn’t that just the perfect thing to describe it? The leafs as “a green oyster” and instead of saying the middle he says, “heart”, and for the tooth “an unspeakable pearl” just all of it together paints the perfect image of what is happening. And when he first gets to the island in the middle of the Pacific he describes the green of the trees like they just pop right out of the book. Some people say that’s not very good for something’s.

On page 281 is a perfect example of why you wouldn’t want it to pop out of the book when he talks about the island being carnivorous and the sharp pain of the chemical process. Though, if Martel didn’t add these little things, then the story wouldn’t be as shocking and surprising. Another example that of something you wouldn’t want to be able to sense is on page 256 where he says, “I will further confess that, driven by the extremity of my need and the madness to which it pushed me, I ate some of his flesh”. Some people are absolutely disgusted by the thought of this, but it helps you feel the hunger of what he was going through and how hard it was.

Others might say that that isn’t the only thing bad in this book. They might say that the first part of it is so boring that how could you get past it? Well, the answer is clear, it’s not boring it is detailed and it’s setting you up for what is going to happen later in the book. If you didn’t read a book because the beginning was “boring”, then you wouldn’t read a lot of the popular books like Harry Potter, the Hunger Games, the Host and so many more. Almost all books have a “boring” part at the beginning because you need back ground information on whatever is happening. For example; you wouldn’t get why they called him Pi or why he knows so much about animals and you wouldn’t feel the pain he feels when you hear about his family. It doesn’t just give important information you need it because it sets up the feelings, settings, and characters. Life of this book is very interesting, entertaining and extremely good about using details to make this book come to life. Even though there are some disturbing scenes with the all the details they all help prove very important points that need to be set. This book has very good senses like sight, feel and taste. If you read it, it may feel like it’s going slow at the beginning but it has to have it as many good books do its sets up many

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important things you need to know later in the book. Through this book you go on the marvels adventure with Pi where you feel like you are actually in his shoes.

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### **Sean Becker says**

Life of Pi was an incredible book because it contains so much imagery and so much detail that helps the reader connect to the plot. In addition, even though the author is not American, he used really great phrases, word choice, and syntax. One example of how the author put his words together seamlessly was solely in the introduction to the book. While describing the beginning of the journey, Martel noted that “When you've suffered a great deal in life, each additional pain is both unbearable and trifling” (Martel 4). By saying this, the author set the tone for the entire book in addition to writing the introduction in the same tone he used to write the entire book. This tone makes readers feel like they are the main character, and makes his struggles feel like they are the reader's struggles. Another strong example of this is when Pi had just found the huge tiger named Parker and he said, “You might think I lost all hope at that point. I did. And as a result I perked up and felt much better. We see that in sports all the time, don't we? The tennis challenger starts strong but soon loses confidence in his playing. The champion racks up his games. But in the final set, when the challenger has nothing left to lose, he becomes relaxed again, insouciant, daring” (Martel 176). By describing all of this, Martel helps and forces us understand and connect to the story. Even though not everybody plays tennis, we all understand the point Martel is trying to get across because everybody has been in a situation that was similar to that of the tennis situation. These are just two short examples out of the entire book which shows how Martel helps his readers connect to his writing and makes this book so gratifying.

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### **Margot says**

This book is really not necessary, but the people who made the movie felt that this was worthwhile. I disagree. I don't need to know the deep feeling between the people so engrossed in making a meaningful story become a film. Frankly, I doubt that the story is that great either, but seeing a man, on a small boat, with a docile tiger, makes me wonder at the intelligence of the man. I also, seriously wonder, as to why, the tiger is still on the boat, regardless of how far out to sea it is.

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### **Annie says**

I really enjoy reading this amazing book. Although I don't know many words in it and have to refer to the dictionary while I was reading, I can still feel Pi and experience with him. I watched the movie directed by Ahn Lee at the middle of my reading, it was so beautifully depicted, a lot of plots are cut off because of time limit though. I will definitely read it one more time later in my life. Pi's intelligence and bright mind and humor shows me a good example and I love him.

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**Kaitlyn Tulenko says**

## Life of Pi is an Arduous Journey

Have you ever thought about being stranded in an ocean? How about with an adult Bengal Tiger? It would be even harder with how young you are and the limited supplies you have. Most people would give up. Not many would survive. Would you? By reading the book, *Life of Pi*, by Yann Martel your imagination will be greatly opened and you will become thoughtful on the multiple ways someone can survive out in an ocean by this amazing work of realistic fanatical fiction.

Piscine wants to get off of the lifeboat that's in the Pacific Ocean and safely get to land. However, Piscine has no idea where land is and the Bengal Tiger limits his mobility. Therefore, while in the ocean, Piscine tried to keep himself occupied and healthy while keeping hope and praying he finds land. While on the lifeboat, Piscine thinks of what to do with the tiger: "A modest glow of hope flickered to life within me, like a candle in the night. I had a plan and it was a good one. I only needed to survive to put it into effect," (187-188).

I would recommend this book to anyone who believes in God, who needs to strengthen their relationship with God, for a group of young adults, or someone who has a wide imagination and likes to believe in the impossible. I rate this book 5 out of 5, because it truly does make you imagination grow to an outstanding state with how creatively this book is written.

## Kareman Mohammad says

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**Tae Williams says**

The life of Pi was written by Yann Martel. It is a fiction and religious book, it was created in September 2001. The main character Pi, goes through a lot of religious experiences throughout his journey in life. His family owns a zoo in India but soon have to move to Canada to help support the family. Leaving their memories and loved ones behind the set sail on a cargo ship known as the Tsimtsum to Canada. Nearly half way through their journey a massive storm collides with their ship. Many of the passengers and animals lost their lives. But Pi who was awoken by the noise of the storm went out to investigate. Passengers put him on a life boat, Pi thinking it was to save him but it was because there was a hyena on it. And to make things worse when the boat made it in to water he drifted further away from the boat and his family then watched the boat sink in front of him. Then to make things even MORE worse Richard Parker (a tiger from the zoo) manages to escape the ship and swim onto Pi's little boat Pi tried to scare him away but it was too late. Hours later Pi soon ends up on a boat with four animals! By they die off from them hurting each other, besides the tiger of course. Pi and Richard continue their journey of survival together. Since Richard is a wild animal every second on the boat with him Pi has to watch his back and defend for himself. But he finds ways to train him to let him know that he's in control. They encounter a lot of cool and strange things like the wave of flying

fish, or one night when the ocean water started glowing from little sea animals in the water, or something even more crazy when they found an island that was a carnivore! Sounds crazy right? I know could be Pi's hallucinations but who knows.... after a few more days or weeks they washed up on the shore of a Mexican beach sadly Richard left Pi as soon as they arrived. Pi was hurt since they made such a bond from the long journey he had. But Pi was rescued and sadly found out that he was the only survivor.

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### **Tim says**

Life of Pi is one of my top five books I have ever read. It touches your heart with ever so much that you feel that you were with him the whole way on his journey for survival. Yann Martel described this story in such details it was like watching a movie. I feel this book would fall under the adventure, survival, and religion views. The book started out with a young Indian boy that was named after a swimming pool Piscine Molitor Patel. His nickname was Pi. His family owned a zoo in Pondicherry. He had a great knowledge on many animals. Pi was very different from other boy especially his brother Ravi. Ravi was into cricket and Pi was all about God. He practiced Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam. One day this caught up with him. All of his teachers of his faiths came to him and his parents at the same time. His parents were stunned they didn't know what to do. Pi explained that he just wanted to love god. So they agreed that wasn't a bad thing. As Pi was living his life suddenly his life changed. His father was in a financial bust. They had to sell the zoo and all the animals in it and move to Canada. When on the boat to Canada the Boat sank into the ocean leaving Pi with a Bengal tiger, a orangutan, a zebra with a broken leg, and a hyena on a life boat. I was in shock at this moment in the book and wondering what was going to happen next. The first one to go was the Zebra which was eaten by the Hyena in matter of days same goes for the orangutan. Pi had a attachment to the orangutan he used to play with it when it was only a baby. I felt sad as Pi prayed for the lost of the orangutan and the zebra as well. It was Pi's turn next but the tiger attack the hyena and killed it. As the tiger was busy Pi escaped on a raft he made out of life jackets. As he was away from the tiger he thought that he should tame it and keep it alive instead of killing it. As they survive for months Pi saw many beautiful ocean life but also was tormented by sharks and harsh storms. Then finally coming across a floating island which was made out of vegetation that seemed to be a suitable live area with fresh water and plenty of food. It was short lived, One Pi found human teeth in one of the trees. And in one of the many fresh water ponds tons of dead fish disappeared in one night. Pi discovered a island that was carnivorous. He packed up the very next day and left. After a while he reached true land Mexico. When he was in a hospital he was visited by two Japanese men who were looking for information on the lost ship that Pi Patel was on. So Piscine told them the story. They didn't believe him so he told them another story. The story without animals and each human killing one another leaving one left Pi. Which it didn't matter what story was true it had the same facts about the sinking of the ship. I believe that the whole book was a metaphor. That the tiger was Pi's survival instincts. The Author gave the reader the choice to choose which story they wanted to believe the one with god or the one without. I liked this book very much so I even think everyone else should read it.

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### **Gregory Hyun says**

Life of Pi by Yann Martel is an adventurous and heavily religious-based book preferably for adults as well as young adults. The genre falls under fiction resulting in a creative and pleasurable novel. It presents the contentiousness of religion through Pi's struggles of worshipping three faiths at the same time: Christianity, Hinduism and Islam. Having a father that works in a zoo resulted in Pi's pondering and comparison of religion to a zoo. Pi's worshipping of three faiths even aroused conflicts and disagreements between him and

his parents. One day, Pi has to leave India, his homeland, and ride a ship for weeks to Canada with his family and animals from the zoo onboard. Reluctant, Pi left a place he was most adapted to and comfortable with. As Pi and his family were well into their ship ride, they face a shipwreck killing everyone onboard except for himself, a zebra, hyena, orangutan and a 450-pound Bengal tiger. Stranded on a lifeboat with these creatures that were at first to no avail, but Pi persevered even when he was facing emotional struggles. As the story proceeds, you will see character development represented by Pi's personality unfolding. Next, the theme of this book gives a sense of persistence and current religious conflicts. Those two main components in the novel, played as a great combination accommodating an exceptional story. So, after reading this book, I strongly suggest this book to critically thinking readers who are into religion. So read this book and I assure you enjoyment to the point where you will be constantly turning the pages.

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### **Parka says**

(More pictures on my blog)

This is a beautiful movie companion to the film Life of Pi. It's a 160-page hardcover with surprisingly thick paper stock.

The book looks behind the scenes at the film making process. There are stories on how filming is done in India and Taiwan, scouting and looking for locations, how the wave pool was created, when and how the computer graphics are used, the animals, etc.

The more interesting section is on filming in India where it's so busy and there's this huge difference in culture. There aren't much written about Taiwan, the country itself, but there's a lot on the wave pool that was built at an old deserted airport provided by the government.

Interestingly, Ang Lee is not one who uses storyboards for film-making, so there aren't a lot of art in the book. He likes to go with the flow, so to speak. There are plenty of photos on set and on their scouting trips.

Nice movie companion for the film.

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### **Chandan Patel says**

I have always wanted to become the director of a famous cinema. I've always wondered how they film some of the effects that are placed in the films and how to professionally direct a film. The book, Making of Life of Pi, A Film, A Journey, made me feel as though I was on set with the crew making the film. It helped me understand how a professional hit movie is produced and created.

This book broke down all of the details and elements of making the movie. From finding actors, to making a wave tank, the book included every important detail of what the director, Ang Lee, was thinking while he was directing this film. This book described how Lee envisioned parts of the scene such as how Lee wanted the ocean to have a personality, and have it reflect Pi's feelings.

The pictures that were scattered throughout this book gave the reading a better understanding of how this

movie was created. There were pictures of the warehouse and wave tank where most of the filming was done, and even pictures of the computer screen that the editors of the film were looking at. Pictures of the animations and scenes in the movie were also placed in the book. Without these pictures, the book would have been harder to understand.

The organization of this book was also well done. It was organized from the beginning when Ang Lee was approached with the book, *Life of Pi*, to pre-production, to post-production.

What I found interesting though, was that the actor of Pi, Suraj Sharma, had no acting experience and didn't even know how to swim, which is a major skill needed for the role of Pi but he slowly evolved into the personality of Pi. He grew skinnier, and learned how to swim, and overall became a professional actor.

Another interesting fact I learned about the movie, was that Lee wanted to incorporate the concept of 3D filming. He thought about how it could give the audience a better experience with Richard Parker, the tiger. He also didn't want the whole movie to be incorporated with 3D filming. He didn't want the audience to get used to the 3D effect so that viewers won't expect the major 3D effect when it hits. I liked how the whole tech crew and film crew all adapted to the 3D concept when they had no idea how to professionally film in 3D.

This book truly inspires me to become a movie director or even an editor. After reading this book, I understood how some of the scenes of the movie were shot and edited, and what the procedures were to create this major film. This helps me understand what it would be like in the real world if I do become a professional director. If you want to be a director, or even if you're just a huge fan of the movie, *Life Of Pi*, I recommend that you read this book.

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### **Ashlyn Nelson says**

*Life of Pi* is a fantasy with lots of adventures, and excitement in it and fantasy. It's really fun to use your imagination to imagine if you were finding fierce pirates or wanting to be a princess. But no until you read *Life of Pi*!

It all started out Pi Patel a Tamil boy who is from Pondicherry, India. And his Father who is a zoo keeper at the world's largest zoo in India. Pi is very into learning about his religions, and living it. A famous quote from *Life of Pi* is "If Christ spent an anguished night in prayer, if He burst out from the cross 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' Then his father insists that he moves the animals to Canada.

Pi boards the huge ship filled with exotic life of animals all around him, it would be a long journey to Canada. But when you think things are perfect, just then the ship hits a huge wave and then the boat is shipwrecked. When Dawn breaks there were not many survivors, so then Pi is stranded on a lifeboat in the middle of nowhere with a zebra, orangutan, hyena, and a Bengal tiger named Richard Parker. And surviving 227 days shipwrecked and seemed like they lost everything they had. They have to overcome cold nights, the blistering heat, and harsh storms, and dehydration. They form the bond of friendship, and loyalty, and relying on each other for protection and warmth. But can Pi and the animals survive and relying on their instinct for guidance?

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## **Oceana says**

This book is about a young man called Pi, who survived a shipwreck and had to spend months on a lifeboat with a tiger named Richard Parker. The story was very thrilling and breathtaking as Pi and Richard Parker went through different adventures and having new experiences.

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