

This Is the Scariest Revelation From Bombshell Elon Musk Documentary

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Screening at the Toronto International Film Festival on September 14 following its premiere last week in Venice, *Musk* has already earned the [ire of its subject](#). Given how severely it damns him, that's hardly surprising.

Over the course of four exhaustive hours, Alex Gibney's documentary casts him as an untrustworthy and "chaotic" force for evil. He's an unrestrained narcissist. A callous con man. An insecure tyrant. And a profiteer who's cannily leveraged—to the great financial benefit of his companies and himself—the fact that modern society imagines Silicon Valley CEOs as magicians with the power to transform the present and the future.

Yet of all the revelations in the prolific director's latest, there may be none scarier than the implication by right-wing influencer Ashley St. Clair (who's the mother of one of his numerous children) that Elon Musk may have used his Starlink internet network to rig the 2024 U.S. presidential election. Oh, and that those 10,000-plus satellites are outfitted with space lasers—meaning that, if true, he's a real-life Lex Luthor with the resources to remake the world in his mad image.

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Musk does not boast the participation of Musk, who (as seen in introductory passages) has decried the documentarian as a "douche" and his non-fiction profile as a "hit piece." Consequently, Gibney operates largely from the public record, using a CGI Musk and a comprehensive database of the man's statements to guide his investigation.

With the aid of journalists and acquaintances, what he uncovers is, to a significant extent, familiar; at 235 minutes, it offers up plentiful material that informed viewers will have previously read about or seen. Nonetheless, that doesn't negate the power of this wide-ranging expose, which by its conclusion comes to feel like a horror film about a man with the potential to destroy us all.

usk's Achilles heel is the sheer wealth of its video clips, sound bites, and anecdotes, all of which Gibney struggles to mold into a streamlined narrative. The film has an information-dump quality that, despite its general chronological structure, can be overwhelming. Even so, the primary takeaways are plain as day. From his formative years as a West Coast entrepreneur, to his elevation into a cult tech figure, to his current status as an unchecked billionaire meddling in politics, reformatting Twitter in his image, and turning himself into a lucrative can't-miss brand, the Musk presented here is an egomaniac with a messiah complex a galaxy wide.

Gibney tethers *Musk* together with video game graphics that speak to Musk's belief that we're living in a simulation created by a super-advanced AI of tomorrow. Though that aesthetic device is strained, the ensuing step-by-step inquiry into Musk's life and career is sturdier.

The film begins in 1998 Silicon Valley, with Musk getting booted out of Zip2 and PayPal before using the money he earned at those start-ups to found SpaceX and invest in Tesla, which he takes over after ousting its founder, Martin Eberhard. To Gibney, these experiences are examples of his ability to fail and yet succeed, and they underscore that he's less a brilliant businessman than a canny visionary.

Elon Musk gives a tour to President-elect Donald Trump before the launch of a SpaceX Starship rocket test flight in Brownsville, Texas on November 19, 2024. / Brandon Bell / via REUTERS

Musk's greatest skill, according to *Musk*, is dreaming big and chasing his goals with single-minded determination, and Gibney finds little to knock about his SpaceX accomplishments. Still, via interviews with the likes of financial analyst Lawrence Fossi and author Cory Doctorow, he contends that Musk's fortune is at least partly the byproduct of his knack for promising the moon (or, sometimes, Mars) and convincing others to back him—no matter that those pledges are often worthless.

Be it Tesla's battery-swapping capabilities (a ruse designed to earn him lucrative Zero-Emission Vehicle regulatory credits) or the electric vehicles' self-driving features (which, in one infuriating sequence, are slammed for killing dozens), Musk knows that people bet on tantalizing innovations, and he doesn't care if the stratospheric stock prices that follow are predicated on illusory guarantees.

Along with St. Clair, Musk's first wife Justine [speaks at length about her former spouse](#) in *Musk*, painting him as a me-first creep. There's copious conversation about his bizarre obsession with having babies (St. Clair says he has "a gatling gun of sperm in his DMs"), as well as a smattering of talk about his South African childhood, with his dad Errol chiming in about his eccentricity.

While Gibney doesn't dig deep enough into the mogul's past to draw a straight line from then to now, he does suggest that Musk's fascination with procreation is related to his fears about extinction-grade calamities and ambition to colonize Mars—which is inspired by science fiction books and movies like *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* and *The Terminator*. Sitting side-by-side with his infamous Sieg Heil at Trump's second inauguration, it also can't help but seem distinctly eugenics-y.

In this NASA handout, a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket carrying the company's Dragon spacecraft for the Crew-10 mission to the International Space Station takes off at NASA's Kennedy Space Center on March 14, 2025 in Cape Canaveral, Florida. / Aubrey Gemignani/NASA via Getty Images

In its second half, *Musk* details how his takeover of Twitter was a trial run for his work in the Department of Government Efficiency, both portrayed as efforts to harness data to shape public dialogue and seize the levers of democratic power.

Such notions are made more unsettling by St. Clair's claim that Musk told her he left Trump's 2024 election-night get-together early because he already knew the results. St. Clair confesses that she didn't ask follow-up questions to this bombshell because she didn't want to be deposed about it at a later date, and Gibney doesn't corroborate her assertion.

Still, in light of the director's depiction of Musk as a veritable sociopath who tells comforting stories (he cares about the environment, free speech, and humanity's well-being) to mask his megalomaniacal avarice, the film gains an unnerving climactic punctuation.

Elon Musk is seeking a whiter world. REUTERS/Adrees Latif/File Photo / Adrees Latif / REUTERS

Musk's gravitation toward right-wing politics (spurred by anger at his transgender daughter) and AI (which he once decried) is, according to *Musk*, his means of avoiding prosecution and commandeering control. And in the documentary's copious archival interviews, his self-interest is as unmissable as his self-regard.

However, what seems to worry Gibney most is the nagging sense that Musk is off his rocker, compelled to chase fantasies, spin tall tales, and manipulate the system so he might be loved and followed by all. Well, that and the fact that—as made clear by opening and closing clips from 1936's *The Man Who Could Work Miracles*—his ascension to invincible "technoking" could spell apocalyptic doom for the very planet and people he purportedly wants to save.