

## Short Review: “The Thirteenth Floor” (1999) by Dr. John L. Flynn



**The Thirteenth Floor** (1999). Columbia Pictures, color, 100 min. Director: Josef Rusnak. Writers: Daniel Galouye (novel), Joseph Rusnak, etc. Producers: Roland Emmerich, Ute Emmerich, etc. Cast: Craig Bierko, Armin Mueller-Stahl, Gretchen Mol and Vincent D’Onofrio.

A computer genius (Mueller-Stahl) does not have time to tell his co-worker Hall (Bierko) the discovery he has made, but he leaves a letter in his virtual reality 1930’s world and then is murdered in the “real” 1990’s world. His co-worker is the prime suspect, and when the genius’s daughter arrives in town, she wants justice. Meanwhile, Hall walks the mean streets of 1930’s Los Angeles, via a simulator, seeking more facts and building a romance too. The surprise ending is not a real shocker. The film is too much centered on the virtual reality gimmick and not enough focused on the characters. D’Onofrio does his best, but the script does not give him an in-depth character. The urban settings are classic film noir in both eras. This film was completely missed at the box office because

people thought it was a cheap rip-off of “The Matrix,” when in fact the source material predates “The Matrix” by thirty years.

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