

Short Review: “2001: A Space Odyssey” (1968) by Dr. John L. Flynn



2001: A Space Odyssey (1968). M-G-M, 141 min. Director and Producer: Stanley Kubrick. Screenwriters: Kubrick and Arthur C. Clarke. Based upon “The Sentinel” by: Arthur C. Clarke. Cast: Keir Dullea, Gary Lockwood, William Sylvester, Daniel Richter, and Douglas Rain (as the voice of HAL-9000).

The number one science fiction film of all time, “2001” begins with the “Dawn of Man” and his ascendance from apes thanks to the intervention of a mysterious black monolith, then ventures into the 21st century with one of the cinema’s best edited jump cuts.

Following a brief but spectacular journey to the moon, Dr. Heywood Floyd (Sylvester) leads a team of scientists to the Tycho crater where a four-million-year-old black monolith has been discovered. Before they can determine what it is and who buried it, a radio beam, aimed at Jupiter, pierces their helmets. Eighteen months later, another team is sent to Jupiter in a spaceship controlled by the perfect HAL 9000 (Rains) computer to further investigate the radio signal. But when things go terribly wrong, the alien architects who created the monolith must once again intervene in human history, and help take man

(Dullea) to the next stage in his evolutionary development. Kubrick's film is an imaginative spectacle that melds indelible images with a brilliant orchestral score to create one of the greatest achievements ever put on celluloid. Even before audiences are taken on the hallucinogenic trip through the Star Gate, they have been treated to some thought-provoking questions about the nature of man's place in the cosmos and the role of artificial intelligence. In its day, audiences flocked to see the "ultimate trip" believing Kubrick had rendered on film a drug trip; today, audiences still search for God and the meaning of life in its ambiguous metaphysical message. Not much in the babe department, but it is still a trip worth taking, again and again!

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