

Short Review: “Alphaville” (1965) by Dr. John L. Flynn



Alphaville (aka The Strange Adventure of Lemmy Caution) (1965) French, b/w, 100min.

Director and Screenwriter: Jean-Luc Godard. Producer: Andre Michelin. Cast: Eddie Constantine, Anna Karina, Akim Tamiroff, and Howard Vernon,

Originally entitled “Tarzan Versus IBM,” Godard’s sci-fi comic book masterpiece finds Secret Agent Lemmy Caution traversing interstellar space in his brand new Ford Galaxy coupe on less than a tank of gas. Soon after his arrival in the futuristic city, he discovers that all of its inhabitants are slaves to a supercomputer, but he still tricks Alpha 60 into destroying itself with the same kind of anti-logic that the Enterprise crew used more than a dozen times on “Star Trek.” Caution then kills the film’s token mad scientist, rescues the raven-haired beauty Natasha from bad guys, and manages to get his car back to Earth for its 3000-mile oil change. The odd juxtapositions of naked women in test tubes with the comic relief of Professors Heckle and Jekyll or the gravelly-voiced, off-screen ramblings of Alpha 60 with the beautiful but deadly Aryan water ballet are the kind of non sequiturs that have made the film a cult favorite among fans.

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