

Movie review

"2001: A Space Odyssey" has visual appeal and mythological implications

by Terry Dupuis
I have some good news for science fiction fans and for moviegoers who appreciate high-quality films. For three evenings next week, beginning Thursday, April 10th, the Pen Theatre in Penetang will be screening "2001: A Space Odyssey". For the information of those people who perhaps journeyed to Mars in the late '60's and therefore didn't hear about this movie, "2001" is director Stanley Kubrick's brilliant 1968 science-fiction epic. It was a film which was four years in the making and

cost well over \$10,000,000 to produce. However, unlike many other high-budget blockbuster, this one paid back in spades at the box office. It is very likely the most popular, the most controversial, and the most discussed movie that emerged in the late '60's. It ran for two solid years at Toronto's Glendale Theatre, and the theatre's management reported being astounded (but delighted, I'm sure), that many patrons were coming back to see it not only a second time, but a third and fourth time! Kubrick's film, "2001",

was based on a short story called "The Sentinel" by science-fiction author Arthur C. Clarke, later expanded his idea into a novel when he was sought by Kubrick to co-author the screenplay for the movie. Briefly, the film is about man's future exploration of the solar system and his discovery of extra-terrestrial intelligence. That's pretty well the plot of the movie and the main reason it was disparaged by a number of critics, since "2001" hardly has what could even be called a plot in the accustomed sense. Why, then, were so many

critics, and moviegoers so enthusiastic about sitting through a two-and-a-half hour film which was nearly plotless? I think that the main appeal of "2001: A Space Odyssey" is its visual quality. When I first saw it nearly seven years ago, I was struck by its lack of dialogue; on the whole, I would say that only about one-quarter of the film has dialogue. It occurred to me that films are mainly a visual experience. Certainly this was obviously the case during the days of silent movies. But after decades of sound in movies, we've

grown a little lazy; we tend to watch a movie with one eye closed and one ear opened, expecting the sound to carry us along and clue us in. Many people aren't so much watching a film as they are listening to it. And they won't get much from listening to Kubrick's film, because it's essentially a non-verbal experience. As well as its visual appeal, "2001" is fascinating in its mythological implications. Arthur C. Clarke has said: "2001: A Space Odyssey" is about man's past and future life in space. It's about concern with

man's hierarchy in the universe, which is probably pretty low. It's about the reactions of humanity to the discovery of higher intelligence in the universe. We set out with the deliberate intention of creating a myth. The Odyssean parallel was in our minds from the beginning, long before the film's title was chosen." Stanley Kubrick's films are few and far between, but they are always worth seeing. He has directed an anti-war film ("Paths of Glory"); a spectacle ("Spartacus"); a sex comedy ("Lolita"); and a black Cold War comedy ("Doctor Strangelove"). Since "2001: A Space Odyssey" he has directed only one film, "A Clockwork Orange", which was another highly controversial futuristic tale. It should be

most interesting to see where Kubrick goes from here. (Footnote: I think the Pen Theatre should be commended for its recent policy of screening some of the oldies but biggies of the past such as "Doctor Zhivago" and "2001". Perhaps if enough local residents expressed an interest in seeing such films, the Pen Theatre would screen them. Wouldn't it be great to see movies like "Gone With the Wind", "Ben-Hur", "My Fair Lady", "The Sound of Music", "Lawrence of Arabia" and "El Cid"? Maybe some of them have been on T.V. already, but there's no comparison between watching a good film sandwiched between commercial interruptions on a 21-inch screen and seeing it theatrically, without breaks, on a large movie screen.)



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The bookworm
by Shirley Whittington
This is the month when a lot of people are apt to get a bit wild-eyed about budgeting. Here are two books that will help you to pinch the pennies that the government leaves you with after April 30.
For \$2.95, the price of a respectable bottle of wine, you can own The Penny Pincher's Wine Guide, put together by a pair of Toronto gourmets - Gail Donner and Lucy Waverman. They say, quite rightly, that this is not a book for the wine snob. "It

Book buying while pinching pennies

is a book for the person who enjoys wine with his meals and wants the best value for his money."
The price of restaurant meals has climbed, and the writers suggest that dining at home is an attractive alternative. "If you're prepared to spend \$8 for a bottle of wine in a restaurant, why not spend it at home and have a really great bottle?"
To assist you in making your choice, there are 44 pages of "wine reviews" complete with LCBO number, name, taste characteristics and suggested food accompaniments. Our favourite house wine, for instance, (Bright's Cresta

Roja) is characterised as a medium sweet wine with a grapey flavour, sweet in the mouth, but dry going down. Other wines are noted as having a "foxy" taste. The writers explain that this means a particular pungency found in Eastern Canadian wines, so there's a word to throw around at your next dinner party.
Beware Jordan Valley red medium dry. It is "foxy, unpleasant, fruity, harsh,

undistinguished and has a raw aftertaste."
Included in the Penny Pincher's wine guide are a number of excellent recipes and menus for insecure hostesses. You can find out how to construct a "Relatively Easy Brunch", a "Posh Picnic," or a "Super Stew."
It's a pleasant and easily portable book and it would make a nice hostess gift, providing you don't read it at the table.
The Super Shopper, a guide to the best shopping in Toronto, was compiled by Toronto Life columnist Anne Apor. It could make your next trip to the city less harrowing. Shops are listed according to their specialties - cheese, recycled clothing, pin ball machines or whatever - and each establishment rates a paragraph or two about its atmosphere and exactly what one can expect to find there. Phone numbers, addresses and hours of business are also included.
There's an index at the front, laid out alphabetically in print about half the size of what you'll find in the phone book, so wear your glasses.

A set of maps in the back of the book will show you how to enjoy a series of walking tours in various colourful sections of the city. For \$2.95, this handy little book will pay for itself in one city weekend, I should think.
And now, the bad news. Max Braithwaite's A Privilege and A Pleasure has been out in hard cover for some time. It's a pleasant novel about life in a small Ontario town. There are fine moments of satire as the new preacher brings the spirit of the seventies into the community, and shakes people out of their hypocrisy and smugness.
Paperbacks has brought out a paperback edition of the book, and has seen fit to deface the cover with the most tasteless nude photograph since last summer's streaker shots.
The paperback edition is an insult to Max Braithwaite and an affront to readers. If you like Braithwaite, buy the hard cover or get the book out of the library. Don't buy the paperback.
Publishers should be told that good writers don't need a display of pubic hair to sell their books.

Air Fare Celsius is here



Commercial-free radio is here at last. As of April 1, the CBC will no longer carry commercials, except advertisements for itself. More music will be programmed, so you'll have a little more time to figure out those Celsius readings on the weather report.
Mathematical conversion is pointless, if we are to think metric, but if you insist, you can change Celsius readings to Fahrenheit by multiplying by 1.8 and adding 32.
It's much easier to remember that zero Celsius is freezing, at 10 degrees Celsius, you'll need a coat, and at 20 degrees Celsius, you'd can send the kids off to school without sweaters. If it gets up to 30 degrees Celsius, you might consider taking them for a swim after school and if it zooms to 35 degrees Celsius, reach for the lemonade and the electric fan. We're into a heat wave.

Leacock returns
Leacock's returning to the CBC on Sunday night as part of the Performance series at 9 p.m. Donald Harron (whose alter ego, Charlie Farqueson appeared in our Huronia Mall last winter) adapted Leacock's "The Yahi Bahi Society of Mrs. Rasselyster Brown" for television. Norman Campbell has directed it and the result is a delightful spoof of the mores and foibles of the idle rich in a small Ontario town during the carefree era just prior to the Great War. If that small town bears any resemblance to Orillia, we may be on the brink of another great war.

Harbour club holds dance on March 29

The Harbour Lights Snowmobile Club held its annual dinner and dance Saturday, March 29, at the Royal Canadian Legion, Victoria Harbour. The Club was served a delicious roast beef dinner by the legion auxiliary. A few words were given by Mrs. Pearl Bressette and president Larry Bourgeois, and a toast was given to the executive and particularly to Pearl Bressette and family who worked so hard to organize two very successful outings by the snowmobile club.

Correction

Some confusion has arisen over the picture of the Penetanguishene Town Hall in last week's historical feature entitled, "The Birth of a Municipality." The picture of the municipal office was of the one on Robert Street West before a fire in the mid-50's forced renovations. The original town office, as mentioned in the feature story, was located on Simcoe Street.
Also in last week's article we have learned that the correct spelling of the name of the first Reeve of Penetanguishene is Dr. Phillip Spohn, not Dr. Phillip Spohn.

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