

2001: A SPACE PODYSSEY

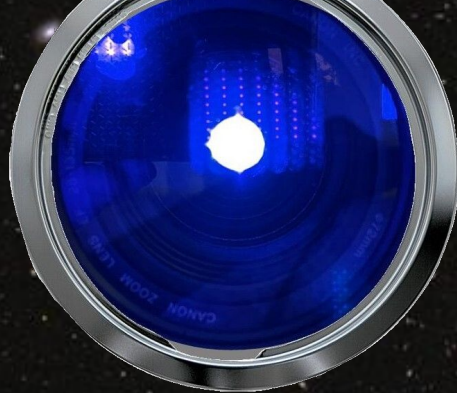
THE FANZINE



JUNE – JULY 2026

spacepodyssey.com

June - July 2026



Patreon e-Zine

PROJECT HAIL MARY

Virginia Smith takes a deep spacewalk into the Kubrick & Clarke homages, references and surprising connections to be found in this year's international sci-fi sensation, *Project Hail Mary*, and in Andy Weir's book.

Johnson & Johnson

For this special J-month double issue, it's a double feature of two big Js in the Odyssey-verse, as no one is yet calling it.

Brian Johnson

looking back at the legendary 2001 effects wizard who passed away in May

**AND a
58-year-old
kids menu!**

Howard Johnson

the hospitality phenomenon that began with ice cream in the basement and turned into a thousand hotels, in 30 countries and in space

June - July 2026



Patreon e-Zine

SPACE ODYSSEYS and **HAIL MARYS**

by Virginia Smith

Andy Weir, author of *The Martian*, is about the same age as the author of this article. So I can imagine that he might have been a similar age as I was when he first saw *2001: a Space Odyssey*.

And I guess that back then he could hardly have imagined one day writing a book which might be considered an instant science fiction classic (let alone two books!) and that this book – before it was even published – would be sold for development as a major motion picture (He did this twice as well!) which also one day might be considered a science fiction classic.

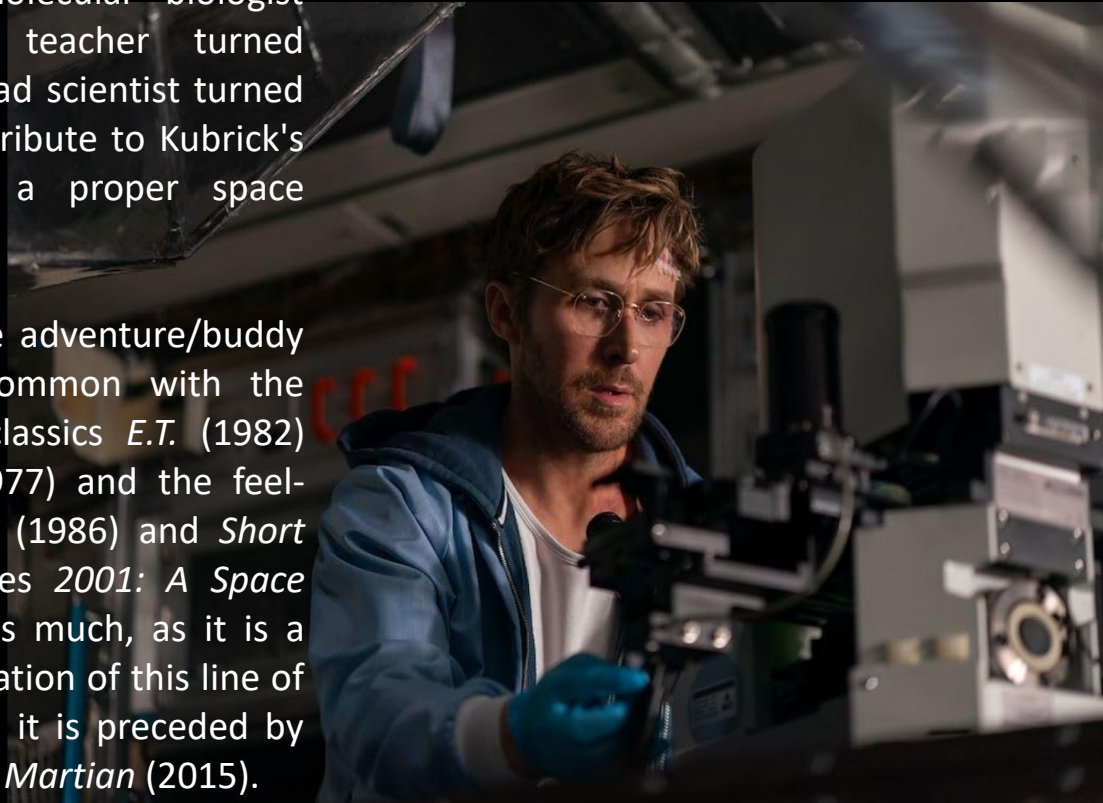
Project Hail Mary, both book and film, contain homage to a myriad sci-fi classics – including, of course, *2001* – as well as to some of the more specific Generation X favorites, making this unexpected new adventure both heartwarming “voyage home” and mind-blowing “space odyssey” all at once.

I am, however, happy to report that this proper space movie has neither space battles nor killer aliens nor a supreme alien intelligence nor time travel, unless one counts the very effective and entirely necessary use of flashbacks to drive an unlikely character arc.



Project Hail Mary (2026), directed by Phil Lord and Chris Miller and starring Ryan Gosling as a lovable molecular biologist turned middle school teacher turned international task force lead scientist turned astroNOT, is not a direct tribute to Kubrick's *Space Odyssey*, though a proper space odyssey in its own right.

In fact this populist space adventure/buddy comedy has more in common with the spooky yet big-hearted classics *E.T.* (1982) and *Close Encounters* (1977) and the feel-good fun of *Star Trek IV* (1986) and *Short Circuit* (1986), but it owes *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) at least as much, as it is a much more direct continuation of this line of scientific realism in which it is preceded by *Interstellar* (2014) and *The Martian* (2015).



The nods and tributes to *Project Hail Mary*'s heritage in Kubrick's masterpiece are far more delicate, though *Project Hail Mary* is rather the opposite of *2001* in its warm narrative and aesthetic approach.





It is similarly ground-breaking in that the directors were determined to go counter to what is considered the state of the art, in this case to hearken back to the days when Kubrick *et. al.* portrayed space on screen with practical movie magic and to lean much more heavily on in-camera effects, physical sets, and practical creatures, which were the only options back in 1968.



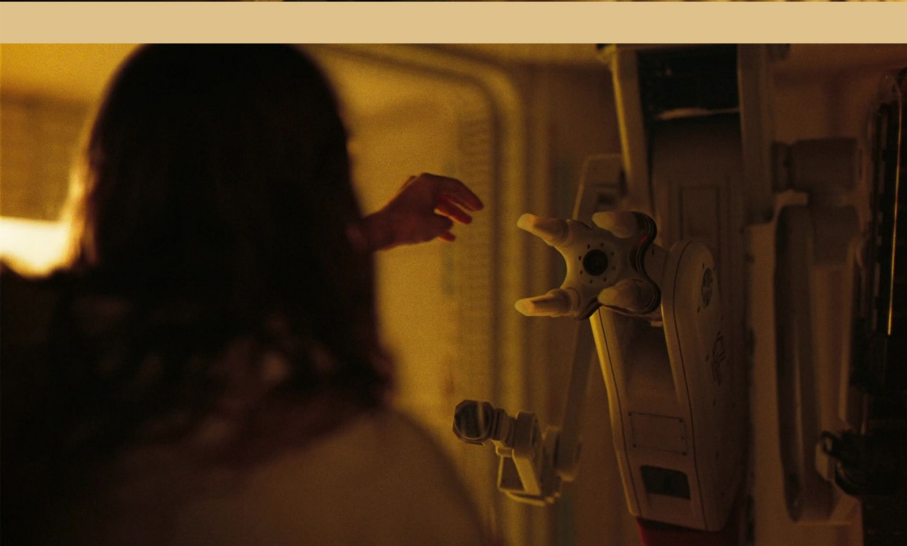
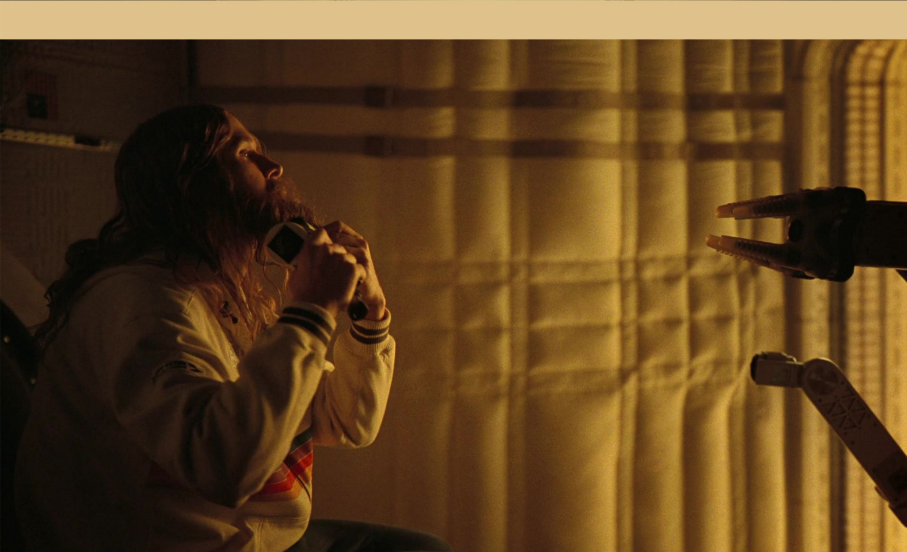
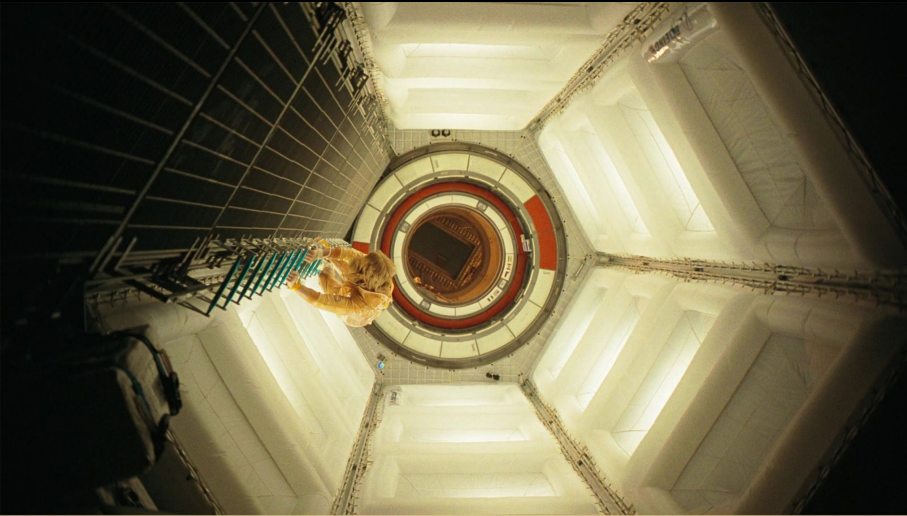
The current more common use of wall-to-wall CGI, motion capture, green screen and virtual sets have all been eschewed for a more artisanal approach, including 100% real sets, special effects, live puppetry, use of anamorphic lenses (turned on their side!), and rendering of IMAX formatted digital footage to a visibly grainy film stock by cinematographer Grieg Fraser, as well as a return to something more akin to a proper theatrical motion picture score by British film composer Daniel Pemberton.



My first experience of *Project Hail Mary* was hearing a sample of the first chapter of the novel on Audible when I had completed listening to *The Martian*, Andy Weir's first best-seller from 2014, last summer. I was not sold on *Project Hail Mary* right away however. The opening description of disoriented Dr. Ryland Grace waking up in a sterile medical bay, not knowing who he is, felt a little too much like the numb, hopeless science fiction I had grown so weary of in the past 20 years – countless films large and small all trying too hard to be like *2001* meets post-modern nihilism, while missing the point of Kubrick's film entirely. (Perhaps I was spooked by the clinical setting and the scary multi-armed medical robot.)

After finding out that this book was already an upcoming film about which the buzz was very good, I tried again, and this time I kept listening. This story had humor, like *The Martian* meets something absurdist like *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, absent any philosophical messaging about futility and with a very coherent heartfelt story that sticks close to hard science and contains very little swearing. The balance was just about perfect.

The film gets to this whimsy even more quickly than the novel. The playful score and Ryan Gosling's talent for comedy balance the pathos of a man waking from a coma and finding himself alone in deep space with only two deceased fellow crew members and a talking spaceship for company. A little flashback to Dave Bowman's predicament is inevitable.



While this opening scene presents – as in *2001* – a very well-conceived utilitarian spaceship environment, the effect is unexpectedly cozy. The *Hail Mary* has a multi-armed medical robot – later dubbed Armando – as well as automated beds which regulate bio functions during the long sleepy journey from earth to the Tau Ceti system at near light speed.

However, in contrast to the centrifuge aboard the *Discovery*, the overall environment of the *Hail Mary* is dim, with warmly lit patches which change light temperature to regulate circadian rhythms, while brighter overheads wink on in the presence of a crew member. But of course I could not help but notice all the things that remind me of *2001*.

The shipboard computer Mary is not nearly as chatty as HAL (nor is the silent, but somehow earnest and likable, Armando), but she tries to be helpful and informative in a way which is both a tribute to and a send-up of our favorite onboard artificial intelligence, with shades of

Sigourney Weaver's shipboard computer in *WALL-E* (2008). When Mary sweetly asks “Would you like to go on a spacewalk Dr. Grace?” one has to hope that she has no direct control over the airlocks. (Fortunately the *Hail Mary* has no space pods!)



One of the more refreshing things about *Project Hail Mary* is that the obvious sci-fi plot devices involving having enough air or having enough food or fear of accidental depressurization or A.I. run amok are made a non-issue in favor of more character-driven story elements, which I will not spoil, though there is a brief but pivotal moment involving concern over depressurization and a space helmet - from a red spacesuit nonetheless!

Accentuating the highs and lows of its arc, *Project Hail Mary* boasts a colorful soundtrack, in addition to its masterful multi-flavored score.

And while Kubrick chose *The Blue Danube* to illuminate the slow graceful tumble of Space Station V and approaching *Orion* shuttle in earth's orbit, Lord and Miller chose the tango *El Amanecer* for their space dance as the *Hail Mary* and the alien craft - aptly called the *Blip A* after its RADAR designation - match centrifugal spin in order to dock with one another via a tunnel which is uncannily similar to the conveyance between *Leonov* and *Discovery* in 2010.

This was easily the first moment in *Project Hail Mary* which I knew at once was a nod to 2001, complete with a wink - tango vs. waltz.

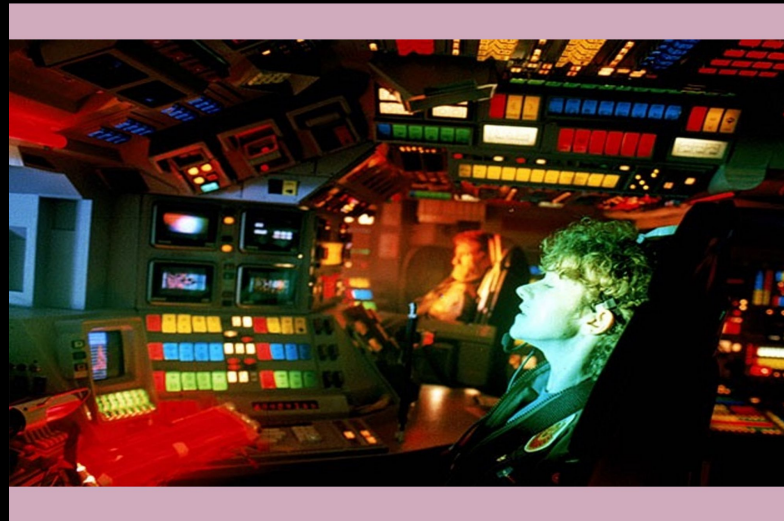


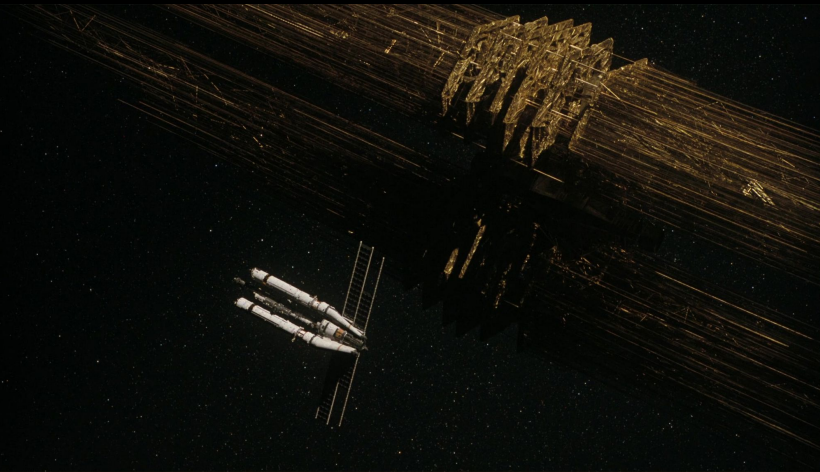
The use of the centrifuge juxtaposed with music in this film is wonderfully playful and silly considering the many versions which have come in the nearly 60 years since the release of *2001*, including the only lighthearted moment in Gosling's earlier film *First Man* (2018) – a very sober biopic on the career of astronaut Neil Armstrong. In this take on the centrifuge, the *Hail Mary* measures out a long set of cables by which the habitat module is spooled out from the fuel and propulsion section.

The habitat turns to an angle of 90 degrees and the entire ship spins so as to render gravitational pull on the entire length of the habitat from the sleeping quarters/medical bay all the way to the bridge – an unorthodox approach inspired by, but not taken verbatim from, the version described in Weir's novel, where it is explained that a cable system would allow for a feasible distance to be reached for a centrifuge to effectively create adequate gravity.

Instead of a turning Ferris wheel set, as was used in *2001*, to illustrate centrifugal force aboard *Discovery*, the *Hail Mary* was designed with sets which could actually be tuned 90 degrees. In acceleration mode the habitat of the ship has its rooms stacked with sleeping quarters at the bottom and the bridge at the top with the lab and the mental health bay in the middle levels.

In this configuration it feels rather like a 1950s science fiction rocket ship – minus Victorian furnishings and spiral staircases or pointy nosecone. (*The Hail Mary* in Weir's novel does have a pointy nosecone and command deck with slanted walls!)

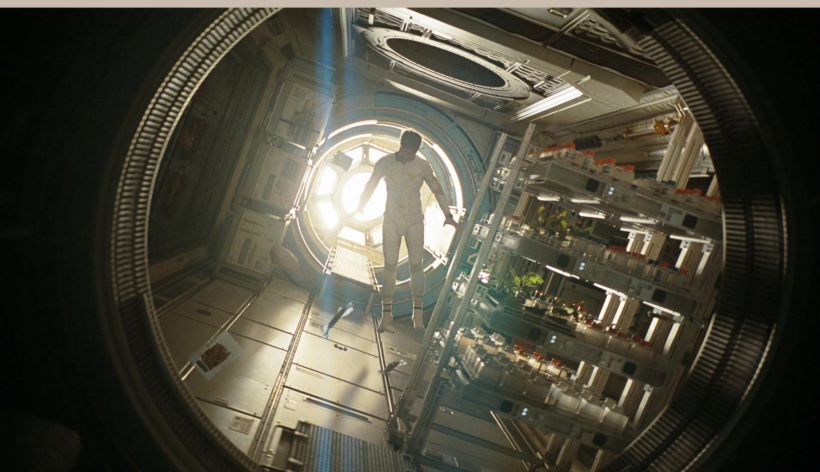




When the centrifuge is engaged, the gravity affects the long axis of the habitat and suddenly the odd vertical walkways next to the ladders make sense as they are now horizontal along the “bottom” of each room and all lab equipment is on the floor, versus being bolted to the walls.



Being that the sets were practical, they actually had to be turned on their sides on the sound stage at Shepperton studios (the first shooting location for *2001* in December 1965), while zero g effects were achieved with some ingenious rigging so that Dr. Grace could spin clumsily out of control punctuating these scenes with the air of humor and helplessness of one who has no astronaut training experiencing free-fall for the first time.



Indeed it was reported by astronauts who visited the set of *Project Hail Mary* that this was a fairly realistic portrayal of anyone's first experience in zero g.



And speaking of zero g... perhaps the most striking zero g image in *2001* is the scene aboard the Orion shuttle while Dr. Floyd sleeps as his errant pen is plucked from the air by a kind stewardess wearing Pan-Am grip shoes. It was later paid tribute to in



2010 (1984) where an attempt to recreate it with a piece of glass and double-sided tape, as in *2001*, failed.



Composited computer animation of the pen was later employed with great success. I also spotted a pen among the various stray objects floating randomly about the *Hail Mary* bridge following engine shutdown and sudden loss of gravity. No doubt this floating flotsam was all done with computers in post, a possible homage to *2001* as well as a reference to Dr. Grace's general lack of organization.



In fact the bridge itself is in some way is reminiscent of the practical visuals of *2001*, where futuristic realism aboard the *Discovery* was achieved down to the last detail, including banks of flat-screen displays, each of which was a projector running hand-animated graphic and text sequences created by Douglas Trumbull.

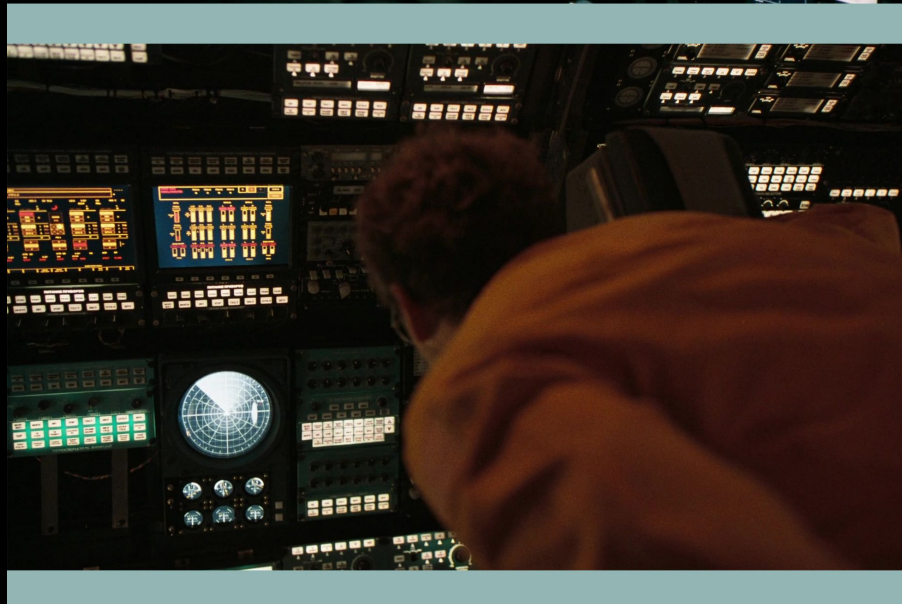


I have heard it assumed that the numerous displays on the *Hail Mary* command deck were green-screened in. However nothing could be further from the truth.

Every single display was a different make or model of off-the-shelf screen running its own set of graphics in real-time, resulting in a cobbled-together appearance where each monitor has its own unique color setting and black level. Mr. Trumbull would be proud.

And NASA would also be proud of the banks of old-school back-lit buttons nestled among the multitude of displays – just as much a nod to the *Leonov* of 2010 as to *Discovery*!

Despite the lack of space pods aboard *Hail Mary*, Dr. Grace has more than his fair share of extravehicular activity, in a soundless void, complete with true blacks (more 2010 than 2001), a grand backdrop where the Milky Way is beautifully included in a space movie, and nervous breathing as the main audio track.



However it would seem that the void itself is constrained in a rather different aspect ratio than good old Cinerama. With the advent of theater screens 50 or more feet in height and the growing popularity of the IMAX format (1.43:1) for major studio film releases, the perception of what more adequately conveys space has evolved to be more tall than wide.



In 1968 the Cinerama format was touted as the way to experience the vastness of the universe on a 2.65:1 curved screen in very select venues.

In the late 90s, to emphasize this, the comedy science fiction film *Galaxy Quest* (1999) even pulled off a transition from 1.33:1 in its opening during an episode of the fictional TV show *Galaxy Quest*, then expanding to 1.85:1 as the actual story begins, and further expanding to 2.35:1 as it becomes clear that Captain Taggart (played by Tim Allen) has indeed arrived in outer space – for real.





In *Project Hail Mary* – which was filmed for IMAX and played for several weeks in IMAX 70mm theaters around the world – the opposite approach – to both *2001* and *Galaxy Quest* – was taken.



Flashbacks to Ryland Grace's life back on earth are shown with a thick letterbox rendering 2.39:1, expressing a sense of heaviness and compression with flashes of recollection expressed via anamorphic lens flares bleeding into the letterbox during the transition to Grace's returning memories, while the scenes which take place in the present – in space – appear in the full frame IMAX (1.43:1).



And though digital IMAX for smaller theaters renders closer to 1.85:1, the change in aspect ratio is still noticeable and effective.

And, as I have been conditioned to equate a wider format with big screen majesty, *Project Hail Mary* has gotten me thinking: it can certainly be argued that a taller format causes “space” to extend further into all edges of the periphery, making it more immersive.

I can report that seeing *Project Hail Mary* in 70mm IMAX is like being in the movie! Regardless of any opinions on the the changing aesthetic trend as to what best conveys grandeur at the cinema, IMAX and others have, at very least, preserved the wonder of the great old days of the roadshow screening with premium reserved seating and the feeling that a science fiction movie can still be an event.

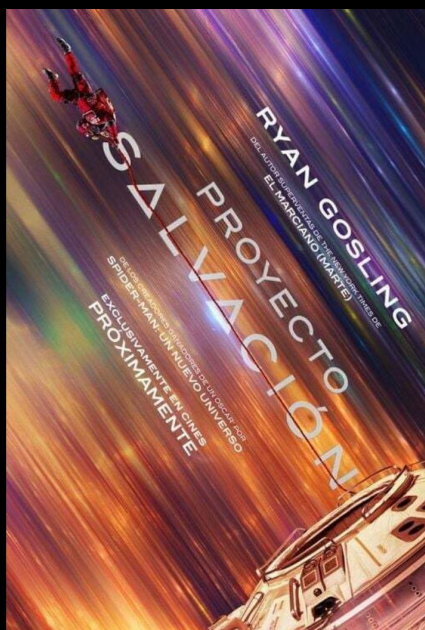


However, even in light of a solid three-month theatrical run for *Project Hail Mary* and box office numbers during the spring quarter which rival summer ticket sales, I marvel at the steady dilution of a unified pop culture since 1968 (*2001*) or 1977 (*Star Wars*) or 1982 (*E.T.*) and wonder what an event *Project Hail Mary* could have – and should have – been. I still meet people who have never heard of it!



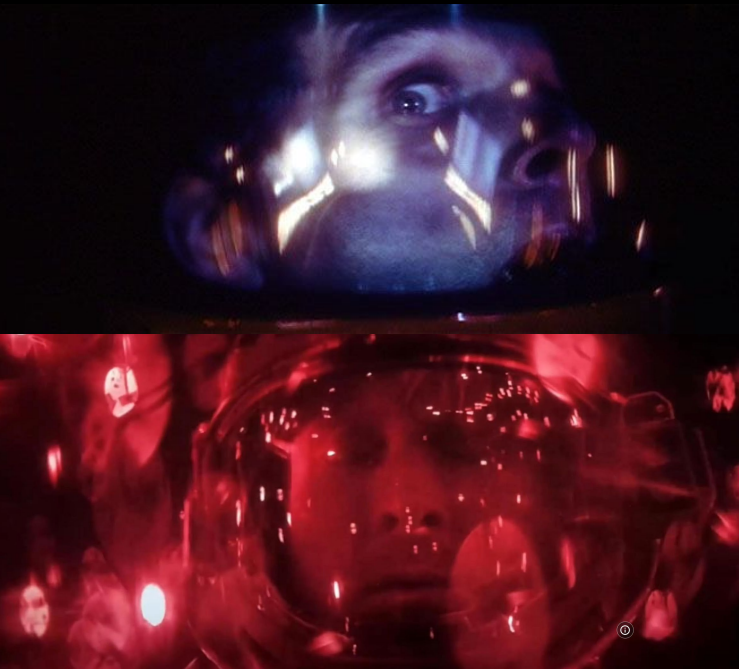
And I find it delightfully ironic that Lord and Miller's groundbreaking achievement was to turn back the clock by using practical methods tried and true from movies like *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980), *E.T.*, *2001*, or even *Galaxy Quest*.

Building a full-size spaceship set and rigging it to turn on it's end is now going forward by going backwards (I hope SK is smiling down from film director heaven right now.) or – in the spirit of Kubrick's innovative front projection method – using giant LED screens as backdrops in real time instead of compositing in computer generated backgrounds later on.

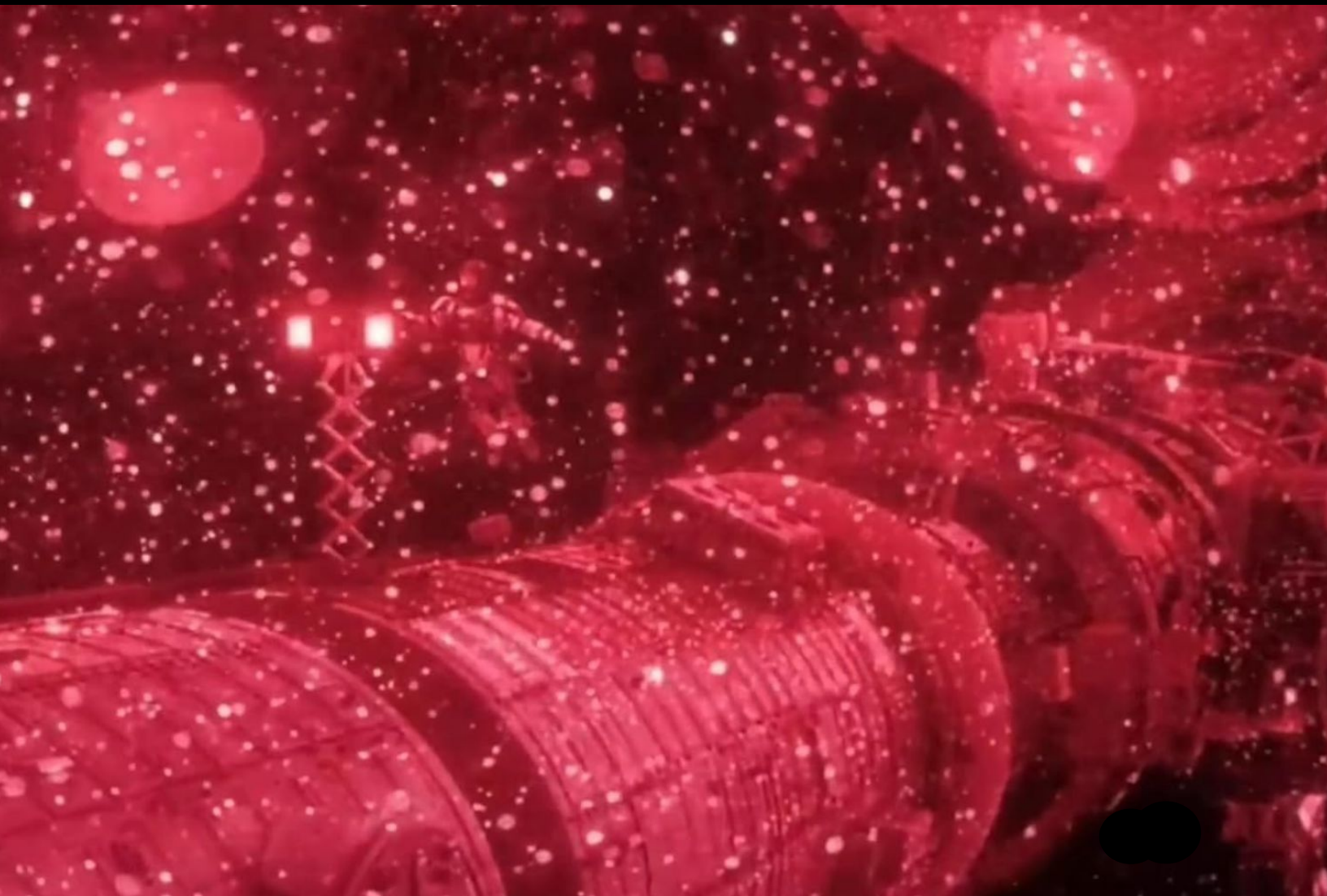


Everything from genuine flat screen displays with live graphics to a marked improvement in technology for wire work, which Ryan Gosling did plenty of in this film, is reason itself to do everything for real.



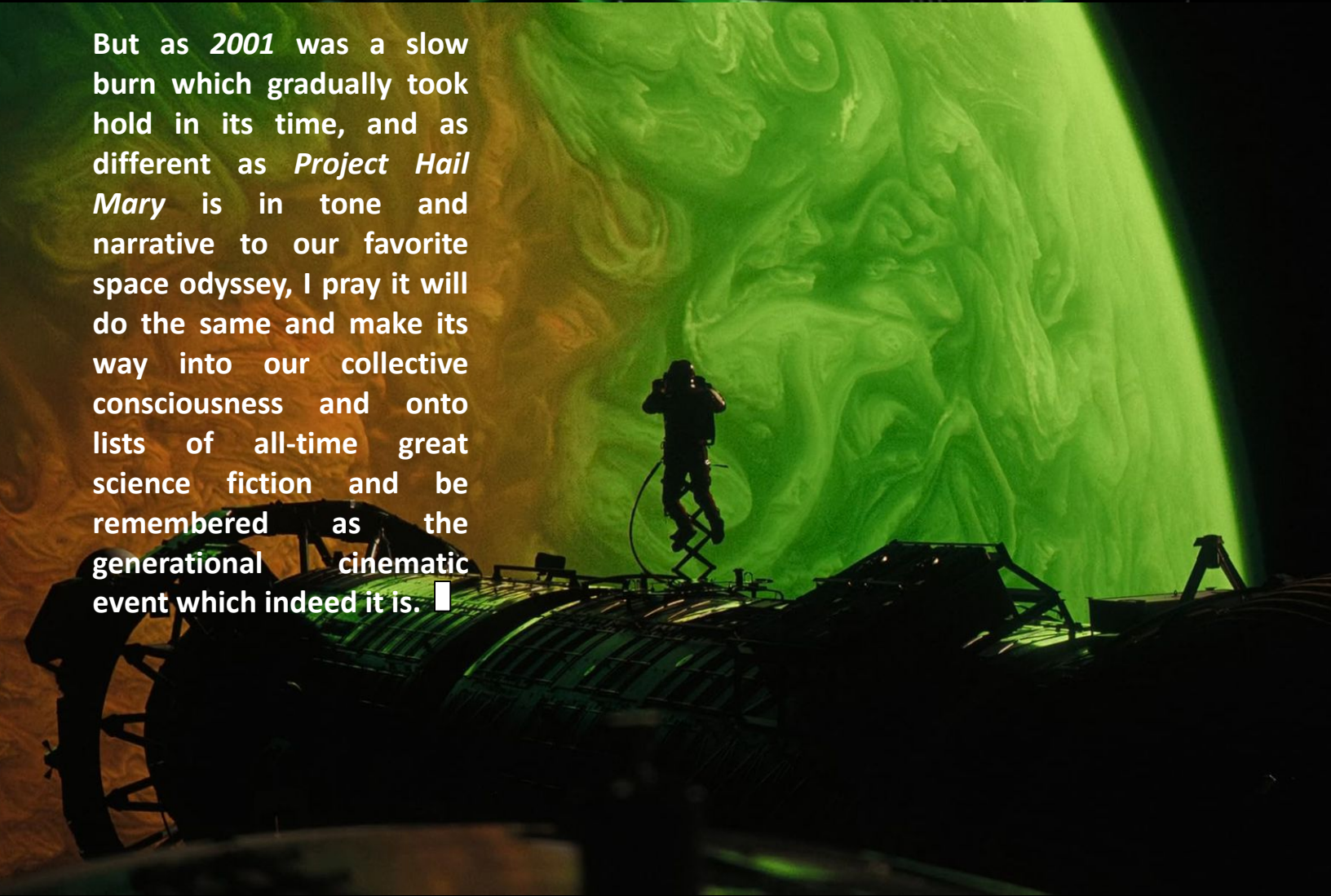


And like *2001*, it *feels* real. Kubrick took a risk and threw a Hail Mary for science fiction nearly 60 years ago, and Lord and Miller have done much the same in what I would consider a bold move to put life and heart back into a genre which has been wayward and off in the weeds of visual effects and nihilism for far too long, slogging along with low contrast, dreary, muddy cinematography and green screen effects and hyper-detailed CGI environments, which take far too much time and money to produce, considering the lack of appeal of things which are obviously not real.





Meanwhile exposition and sincerity have taken a back seat to unspectacular “spectacle” and unfulfilling storytelling.



But as *2001* was a slow burn which gradually took hold in its time, and as different as *Project Hail Mary* is in tone and narrative to our favorite space odyssey, I pray it will do the same and make its way into our collective consciousness and onto lists of all-time great science fiction and be remembered as the generational cinematic event which indeed it is. ■

June - July 2026



Patreon e-Zine

Brian Johnson

"Thunderbirds GO!"

"Sorry about this little snag, fellas."

"One more pass..."

Johnson, born June 29, 1929, began his career in the movies at Bowie (not that one) Films, as a clapper loader for the 1958 WWII drama *Dunkirk*. After his service in the RAF, Johnson returned as an assistant for his old boss, VFX veteran Les Bowie, for the post-apocalyptic cult classic *The Day The Earth Caught Fire*.

It was an auspicious calling card to break into the flagship studio of '60s horror, Hammer Films, where he was hired for monster effects work on the Herbert Lom *Phantom of the Opera*, the Peter Cushing pirate ghost story *Night Creatures*, and one of the more influential highlights of the first Hammer cycle, *Kiss of the Vampire*. (Invited to a vampire's house? Don't drink the wine.)





In the early '60s he joined the studio of special effects wizard Derek Meddings, who would remain king of the model builders and mainstay of the James Bond series until his death after *GoldenEye*.

Meddings was supervising the effects for television producer Gerry Anderson's new puppet show *Supercar*, starring everyone's favorite swinging simian, Mitch the Monkey.



Johnson continued building and flying models on follow-up series like *Fireball XL5* and *Stingray*, eventually rising to second unit director for the team's most famous "Supermarionation" project, the hit series *Thunderbirds*.





Johnson's innovations in miniature photography effects under Meddings would serve as the launch point for not only his career but a generation of burgeoning special and visual effects artists.

Stanley Kubrick was among those who recognized the groundbreaking camera and model work, and he contacted Johnson about coming aboard *Journey Beyond The Stars*.

Johnson was flattered but when he asked his producer, Anderson was less than pleased and refused to let him out of his contract.

Kubrick finally approached Anderson himself, who proceeded to downplay Johnson's talents and responsibilities on the show. Ever the chess player, Kubrick called his bluff by asking why, if Johnson was so unimportant, was he so adamant about keeping him. According to Johnson, Anderson then called him into his office and basically read him the riot act, before angrily sending him on his way.

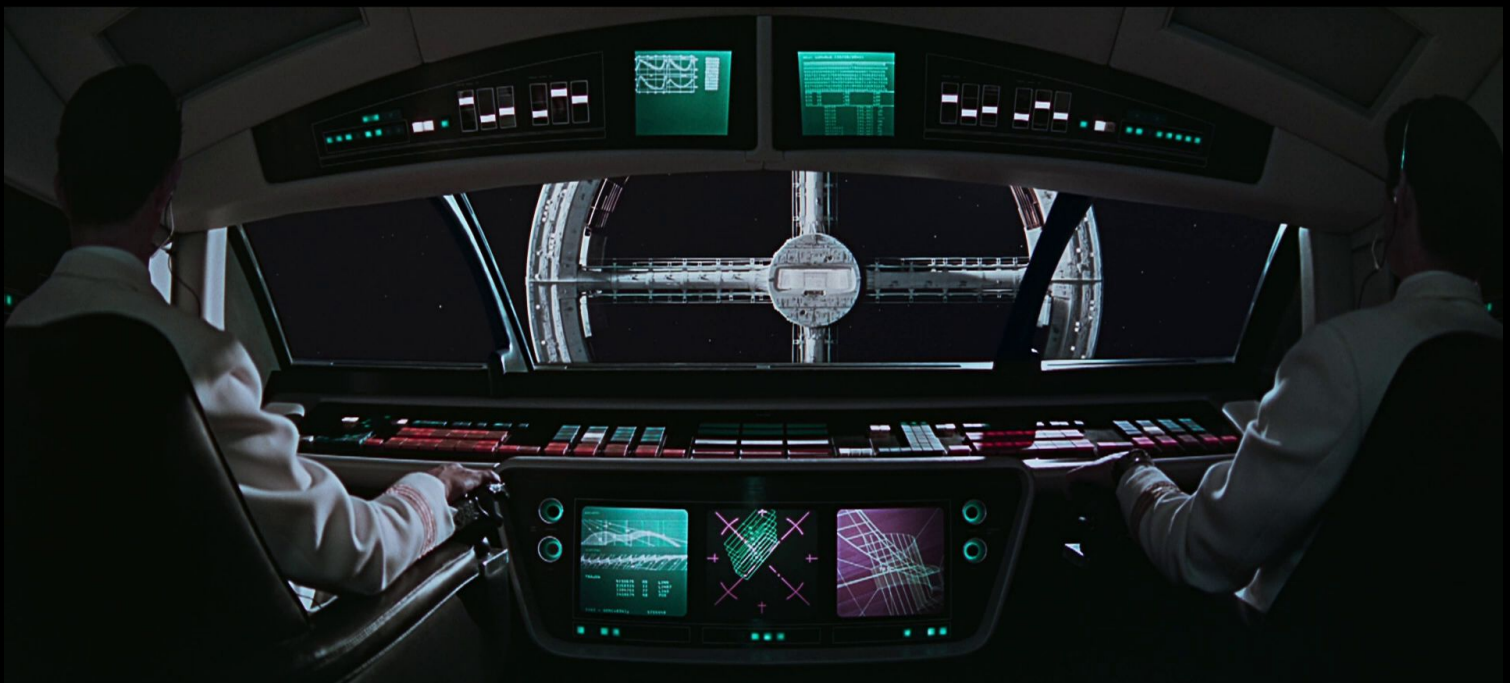


Johnson may have realized he was joining an elite squad at MGM-Borehamwood. The motley assembly of artists gathered for *A Space Odyssey* was *The Outsiders* or *Diner* of the next fifty years of visual effects, every member of the team a legend in the making:

Colin Cantwell, Conn Pederson, Douglas Trumbull, and of course Wally the Gentleman,

who – too polite to say what he really thought of SK – left early.

But *2001* would evolve into a 2 ½ year commitment for Johnson and the others, and it became a testing ground for every trick of the previous 75 years of cinema, as well as the latest cutting-edge techniques in photography, model-making and optical compositing.

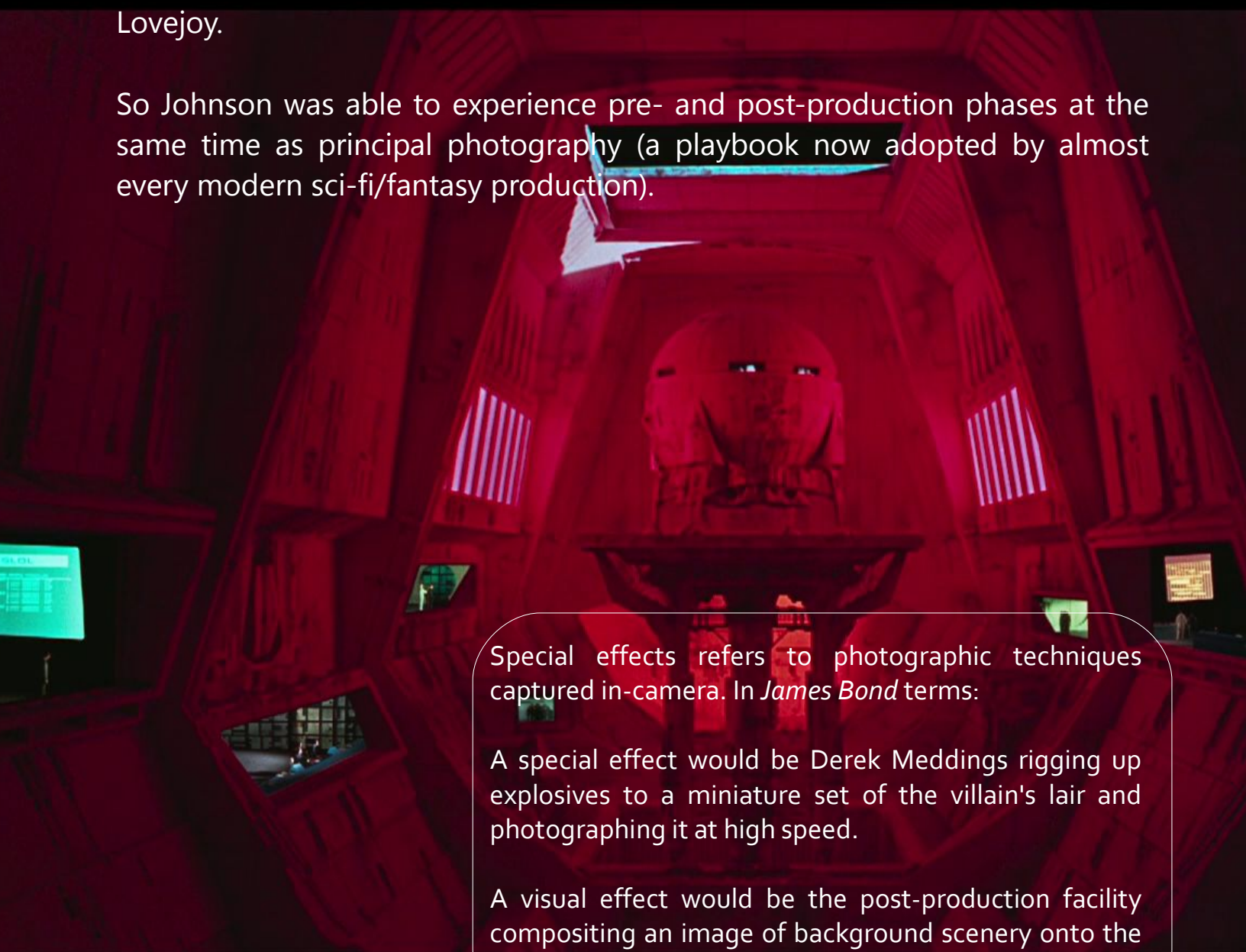




As special effects supervisor (see inset), Johnson needed to be by Kubrick's side throughout principal photography. He soon found himself in the intimidating role as *2001's* go-to problem solver on set, and the now-enviable distinction as one of only a handful (along with Tony Frewin and Christiane) to witness the entire production day-to-day.

And the experimental way this project was assembled meant that concept designers Fred Ordway and Harry Lange had their sleeves rolled up alongside Con Pederson and Wally Gentleman doing VFX shots, and cinematographer Geoffrey Unsworth was working in tandem with editor Ray Lovejoy.

So Johnson was able to experience pre- and post-production phases at the same time as principal photography (a playbook now adopted by almost every modern sci-fi/fantasy production).



Special effects refers to photographic techniques captured in-camera. In *James Bond* terms:

A special effect would be Derek Meddings rigging up explosives to a miniature set of the villain's lair and photographing it at high speed.

A visual effect would be the post-production facility compositing an image of background scenery onto the bluescreen behind it.



That unique distinction and intimate knowledge of the making of one of the most oblique motion pictures ever labeled him an invaluable resource to film researchers and SK biographers ever since.

His stories and insights can be found in every book and documentary from Jerome Agel/Agel/Agel/Agel's 1969 Making of 2001 through to the most strikingly specific details in Michael Benson's 2019 Space Odyssey.

And not just regarding his own work, but about all the other aspects of the production that he observed.

As much as has been said about Johnson's humility, the most impressive evidence in researching this article is just how many times Johnson is cited in the behind-the-scenes literature telling stories not about himself but of other crewmembers' achievements and special moments that he witnessed.





Originally assigned to building and photographing models for Clavius Base, he found himself animating still photographs matted inside the models, a technique Douglas Trumbull would carry over on projects like *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* (1979) and his own *Silent Running* (1973).

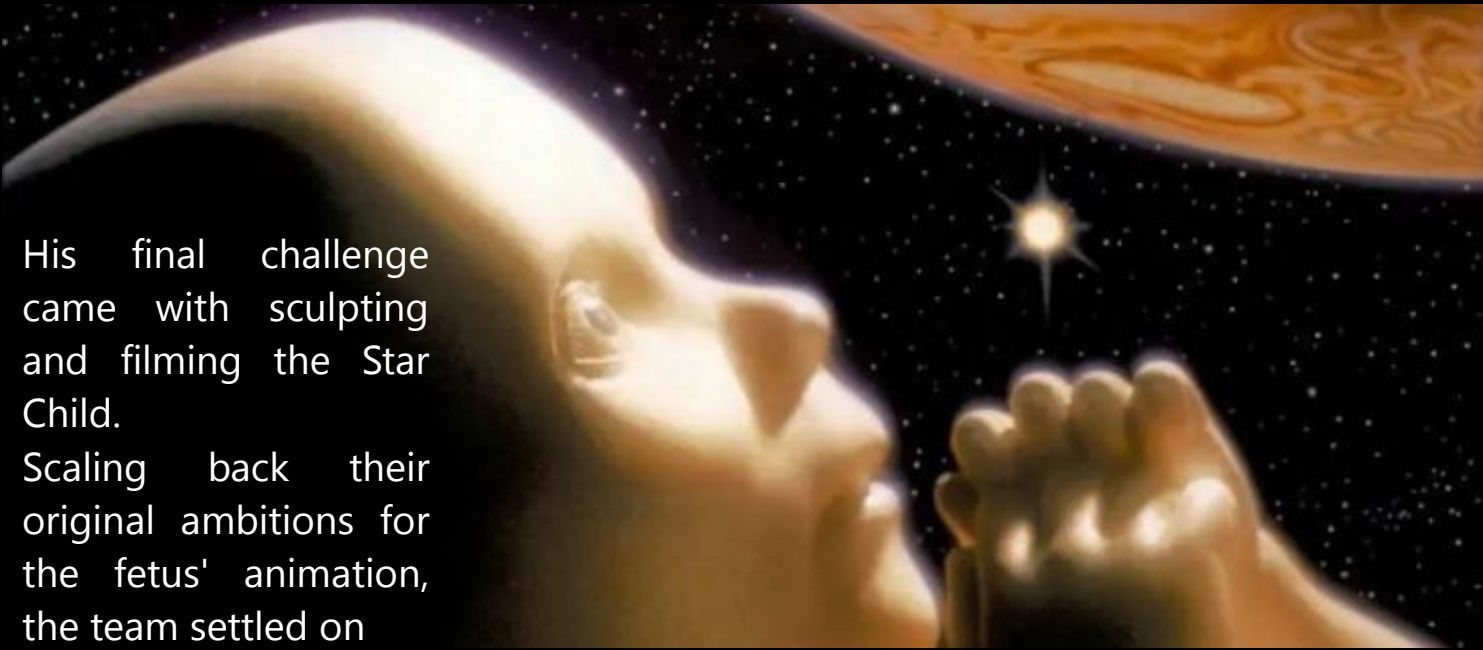
Between Johnson's & Trumbull's discerning eyes and Stanley's perfectionism, these shots remain astonishingly convincing in 4K, particularly Shuttle Orion's waltz down to the lunar landing platform and Floyd's excursion on the MoonBus / food truck.



One of the film's most memorable effects was as low-tech as plexiglass and a piece of tape: Dr. Floyd's floating pen.

When shooting Orion's flight attendant reaching over to pluck it out of the air, it was easy for Unsworth to spot through the lens that the pen had been stuck on something.

When she pulled it off the glass, there was a noticeable resistance before it popped loose. Finally Johnson worked out a method with double-sided cello tape for the actor to roll the pen into her hand as she grabbed it, making the resistance look like the product of weightlessness.



His final challenge came with sculpting and filming the Star Child.

Scaling back their original ambitions for the fetus' animation, the team settled on

more subtle articulation from the delicate armature and Johnson carefully slid glass orbs into the eye sockets for the embryo's unforgettable turn toward camera. And Liz Moore's indelible sculpture was so eerily realistic that it freaked out the crew.

Johnson and Unsworth coordinated multiple camera passes with the lens behind layers and layers of prewar gauze. It created an astonishing effect with an ethereal glow, but each shot took up to eight hours in order to expose properly.

Someone needed to stay on stage to monitor the setup, but one day the camera assistant zoned out for a few hours.



The sculpture began melting and seeping out through the eye sockets, and the assistant came back to find a blazing hot fetus crying real tears.

He ran out of the studio screaming his head off. After his puzzled crewmates came in to assess the situation, someone concluded he must be Catholic.

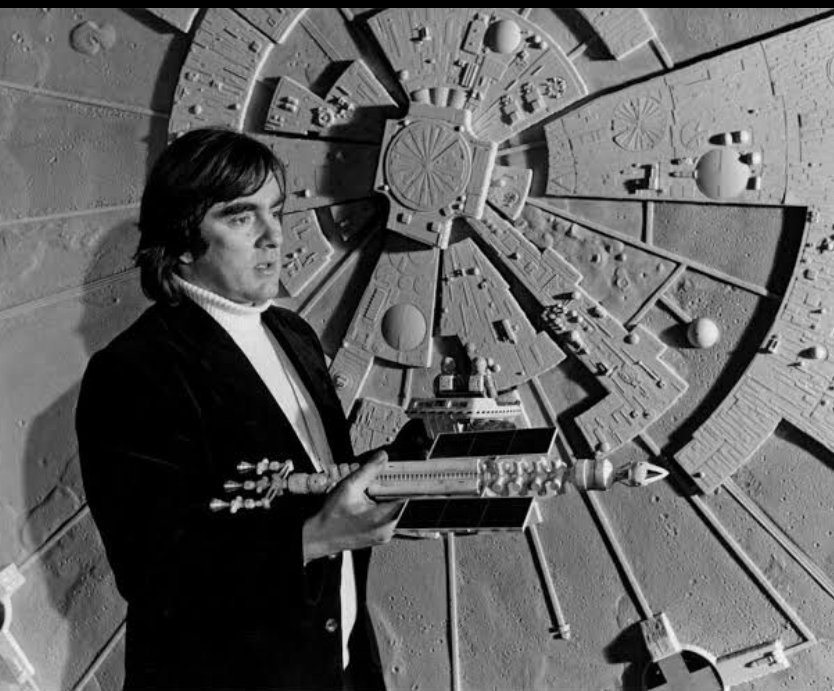


The audience reception and awards recognition of *2001* cemented Johnson's reputation in the industry.

Everything he learned on the ground making *Space Odyssey* was to come in handy on the projects to follow. And after having such a good relationship with the director, Kubrick later called him up for some uncredited help on *A Clockwork Orange*.



His rift with Gerry Anderson was short-lived and they reunited for the cult live-action series, *Space: 1999*, which takes place on Moon Base Alpha but, as author Robert Vatcher points out, it looks an awful lot like Clavius Base...



Impressed with his work with Anderson and Kubrick, producer Gary Kurtz and young writer-director George Lucas approached Johnson about doing effects work for a new space opera. Johnson had just signed on to a second season of *Space: 1999* and had to decline, but his work left an impact on the nascent sci-fi production.



Watching *Space: 1999* TV, Lucas was dismayed to discover a spaceship on the show that looked almost identical to the one his team had designed. After an urgent meeting at Industrial Light & Magic, Lucas instructed concept designer Joe Johnston and model-maker Lorne Peterson to try an entirely different look for their Millennium Falcon: a hamburger.



After *Space: 1999*, Johnson was hired to do miniature photography on a troubled low-budget sci-fi horror called *Alien*. In the midst of that hectic effects schedule, Johnson again received a call from Gary Kurtz for the sequel to *Star Wars*.

He was up to his elbows in latex building John Hurt's false body for the infamous chestburster, but this time, Johnson was able to make arrangements to complete his *Alien* assignment and shift his focus to blaster squibs and radio controlled droids for *The Empire Strikes Back*. The result was a legendary double punch for which he won back-to-back Oscars.





He stayed busy through the 1980s with fantasies like *Dragonslayer* and *The NeverEnding Story*, and comedies like *Spies Like Us*. He even returned to the xeno-verse in 1986, contributing effects for *Aliens*, for which he won a BAFTA.

In his retirement Johnson enjoyed a role as effects maestro emeritus

for a generation, and his legacy continues in the work of modern-day model photography wizards like John Goodson and John Knoll, who continue to apply his techniques to 2026 sci-fi milestones like the practical FX emphasis in *Project Hail Mary*, the use of puppets and miniature photography in *The Mandalorian & Grogu*, and Christopher Nolan's insistence on in-camera techniques in *The Odyssey*. ■

Sources: Bizony, Piers. [The Making of Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A Space Odyssey](#). Taschen, 2015.
Benson, Michael. [Space Odyssey](#). Simon & Schuster, 2019.



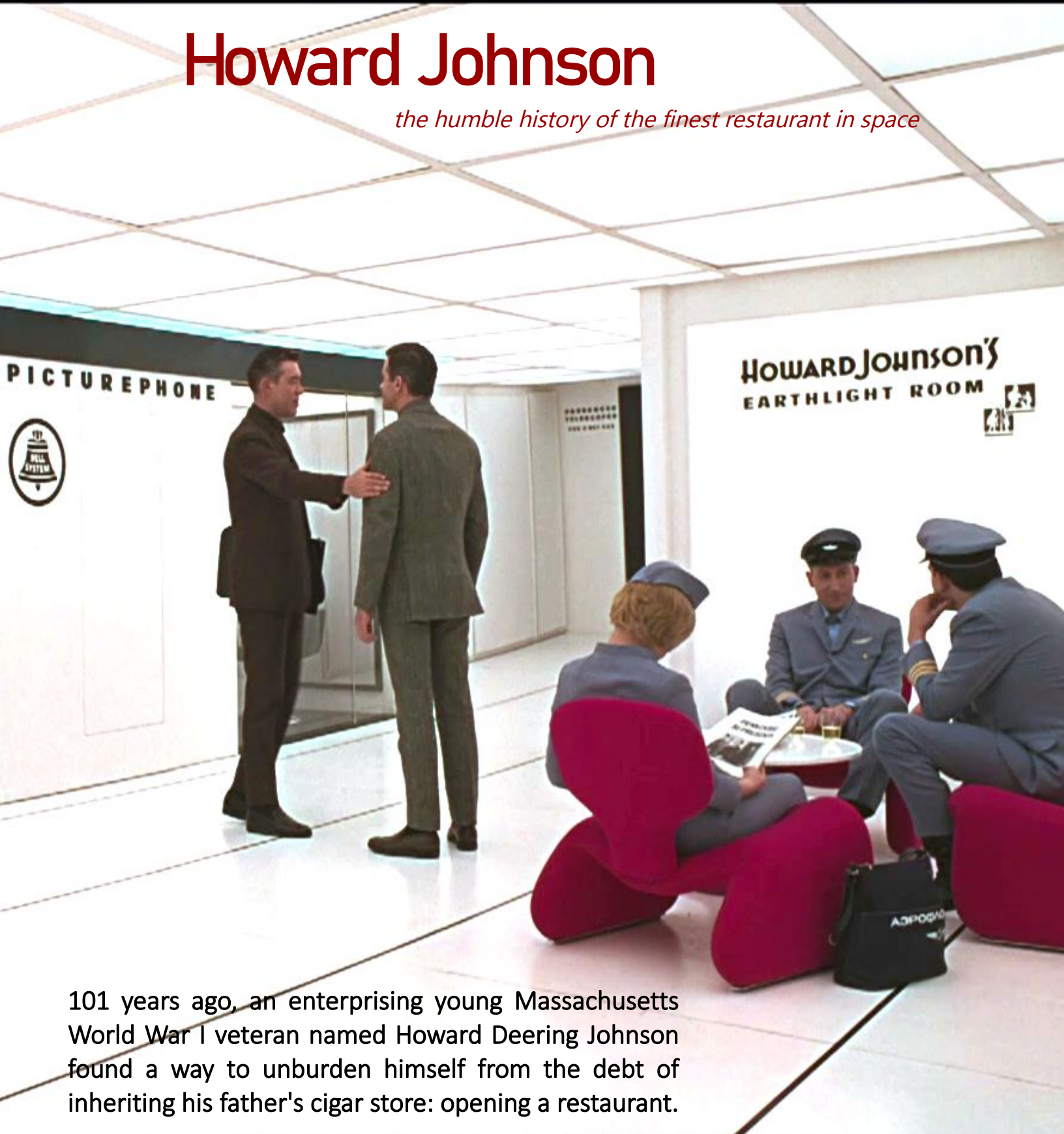
June - July 2026



Patreon E-Zine

Howard Johnson

the humble history of the finest restaurant in space



101 years ago, an enterprising young Massachusetts World War I veteran named Howard Deering Johnson found a way to unburden himself from the debt of inheriting his father's cigar store: opening a restaurant.



It began as a soda shop, where he focused on quality ice cream. A local vendor sold him a recipe which used double the butterfat and only natural flavoring. Filling his basement with hand-cranked ice cream makers, he sold the product at his store and at the local beach.

After five years, his success with dessert prompted him to expand his venues and his menus, opening up more storefronts and adding hamburgers and hot dogs. A full sit-down restaurant followed in 1929, which would eventually grow into America's largest chain of eateries, with over a thousand locations across the U.S.



In the 1950s Johnson invested heavily in the booming postwar hospitality industry, and Howard Johnson's Motor Lodge would become a staple of cross-country travel for millions of Americans, most of them conveniently located next to a Howard Johnson's Restaurant.

By the 1960s Howard Johnson's served more meals than anywhere in the U.S. outside the Army.

Landmark for Sleepy Americans"

Howard Johnson's Motor Lodges
make an overnight stop a vacation!

★ See opposite page for locations of Howard Johnson's 38 luxurious motor lodges now in operation and 12 under construction. Each motor lodge has complete restaurant facilities serving the same delicious quality meals offered by almost 600 Howard Johnson's restaurants throughout the country.

FREE: Your easy-to-follow Howard Johnson's Road Map showing motor lodge and restaurant locations. Make sure your next vacation trip will be the best one ever by sending for your copy today. Just drop a card to Howard Johnson's, 89 Beale Street, Wollaston, Mass.

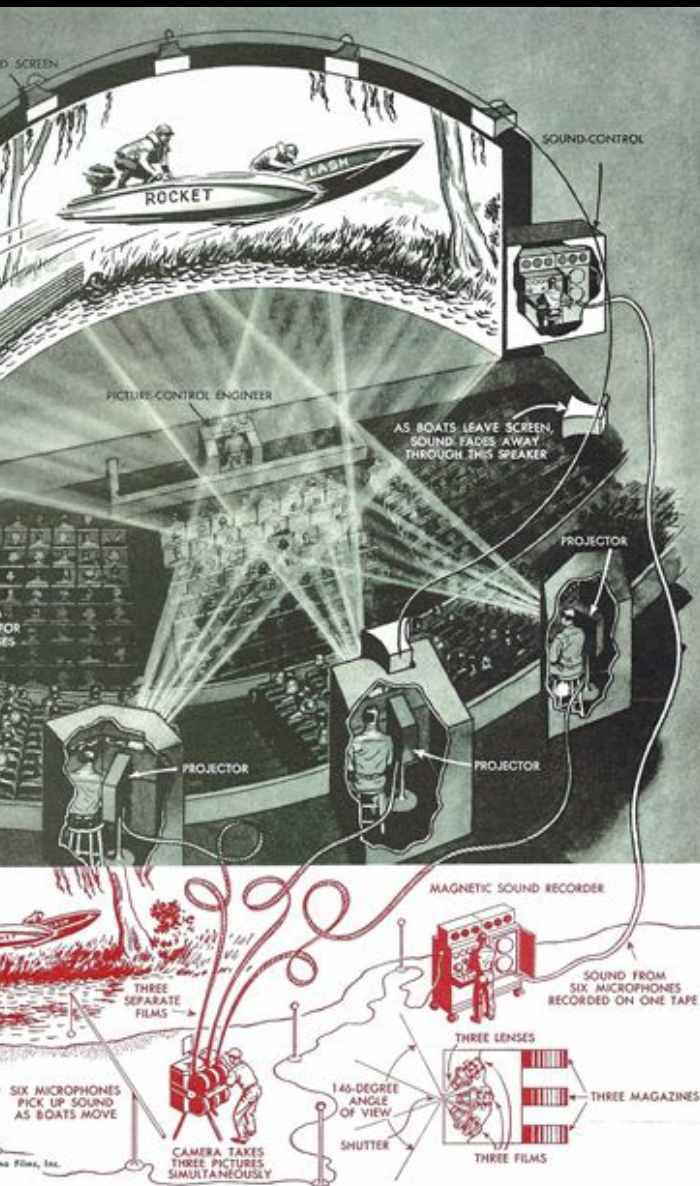
HOWARD JOHNSON'S
Restaurants • Motor Lodges Ice Cream • Candies
Take-home Frozen Foods



Summer 2026 has featured *Moana* at Subway, *Minions* at Wendy's and an entire *Mandalorian* and *Grogu* menu at Burger King, but in 1968 movie tie-ins with restaurant franchises were mostly unheard of. And it all came about in reverse of today's usual method.

Stanley Kubrick and Arthur C. Clarke were adamant about making their germinating sci-fi project as realistic as possible in its projection of modern society in the age of everyday space travel. It seemed reasonable to assume interstellar commercial investment would follow the same way the previous decade had established Route 66 into a cross-country economic thoroughfare.

So early on they branded their conceptual designs with existing companies, a bold change to the outer space genre which imbued their vision of the future with a freshness and plausible authenticity.



MGM, literally banking on large-format event pictures *2001* and *Grand Prix* to stabilize the studio's finances, was only too happy to use these commercial tie-ins as a method of promoting their tentpole release and recouping some of the expenses of an increasingly over-budget epic they were unsure how to sell to audiences.

Families who went out to eat at Howard Johnson's in 1968 and picked up a kid's menu were treated with a multi-page comic teasing some of the highlights of the film in full color, along with puzzles and games!

This was also to trick young children into thinking they could handle going to see this G-rated movie, and not run screaming out of the theater as soon as *Moonwatcher* starts to beat *One-Ear* to death with a bone.



The menu itself contains the kind of names like "Minty Bird" and "Jicker Joobees" that used to make parents embarrassed to order for their children. And such embarrassment created a fun and effective way to force youngsters into ordering for themselves, jump-starting their reading acuity and helping them excel in school. (Maybe a stretch...)



A “Happy Clown” was maybe named for how messier kids would look wearing their food at the end of a meal, with tomato sauce on the nose and a head covered in noodles. Or maybe it was named for the multicolored dessert options – ice cream, sherbet or Jello!

Just like in the nursery rhyme, “Little Boy Blue” never ate his hamburger on a bun. But it came with a potato and vegetable to supply the energy needed to blow his horn at treacherous cattle rustlers.

Howard Johnson's

R E S T A U R A N T

HOWARD JOHNSON'S

“Tommy Tucker” supplied Thanksgiving for one: roast turkey with the ever-popular potato and vegetable. Appropriately it also comes with a roll and butter, the only food this literary character is known to have eaten. We don't think you were required to sing for this supper, but it probably helped.

“London Bridge” wouldn't have fallen down if they'd put it in a hot dog bun, like in this classic frankfurter dinner. A toasted bun, no less, and one of only two meals that come with fries: hot dogs and clams. Avoid heartburn and order separately.



Little "Jack Horner," named after the famous paleontologist, is the most elaborate option on the menu. A peanut butter and jelly sandwich with no side dish, neither a vegetable or potato, baked or fried.

This is because a peanut butter and jelly sandwich contains all major food groups, according to the USDA food pyramid.

The punalicious "Small Fry" comes with small fried clams and with matching tiny french fries. Choose your preferred dipping sauce: ice cream, sherbet or Jello.

Kids meals served with your choice of milk, chocolate milk, "orange drink" or "HoJo cola," which sounds like a Little Debbie cake but was actually Howard Johnson's proprietary soft drink.





The question remains, which of these dinners were most popular at the Space Station V restaurant? A combination of a “Small Fry” and a “Jack Horner” with HoJo cola could send you spinning toward one of the wheel's many restrooms. But thanks to the station's artificial gravity the restrooms are less complicated, with only 5 steps instead of 10.

For decades after 2001, viewers and reviewers would remark on how the premise of corporate sponsors in space seemed as “quaint” as the mod-60's aesthetic. But in the last decade, as underfunded government space programs have contracted out much of the new innovation and infrastructure to less risk-averse private companies like SpaceX, Blue and Intuitive Machines, the vision of *Space Odyssey* has become more plausible than ever.



Of course the logos have changed, as one-time industry leaders Pan-Am and Bell Telephones respectively went bankrupt and were absorbed by other companies. IBM continues to thrive but less in the public eye, focusing on commercial technology development after “Big Blue” sold its personal computing operations to Lenovo in the 2000s. And Howard Johnson's remains in business, though ironically not as a restaurant.





The Howard Johnson's Lounge at Clavius Base is Wes & Brad's one-stop shop for pizza and hot fries. (UE 4.2.6)





In 1986, the hotel brand became a different franchise from the restaurant chain, and while the lodges continued to expand the food business slowly contracted.

You can stay in one of 300 locations across 15 countries, but you'll have to dine elsewhere for a Little Boy Blue or a reasonable facsimile of HoJo cola.

The last remaining Howard Johnson's Restaurant was in Lake George, New York, and closed in 2022, just short of the centennial for a company which played a crucial role in the rise of affordable middle-class travel in the mid-twentieth century and the template for the great American vacation. ■

We present (along with everyone else on the internet since the copyright lapsed when the company reformed)
the original 1968 Howard Johnson's
 2001: A Space Odyssey
children's menu!



(continued on next page)



HOWARD
Johnson's

CHILDREN'S MENU

JUNIOR HAMBURGER

On Toasted Roll **45¢**
with French Fries **70¢**

SMALL FRY

Fried Clams
with French Fries
Roll and Butter
Ice Cream, Sherbet
or Jello and
*Beverage
95¢

THE HAPPY CLOWN

Spaghetti
Italian Style Tomato Sauce
Roll and Butter
Ice Cream, Sherbet
or Jello and
*Beverage
85¢

LONDON BRIDGE

Grilled Frankfort
In Toasted Roll
with French Fries
Ice Cream, Sherbet
or Jello and
*Beverage
80¢

JACK HORNER

Peanut Butter and
Jelly Sandwich
Ice Cream, Sherbet
or Jello and
*Beverage
65¢

TOMMY TUCKER

Sliced Roast Turkey
Potato, Vegetable
Roll and Butter
Ice Cream, Sherbet
or Jello and
*Beverage
\$1.10

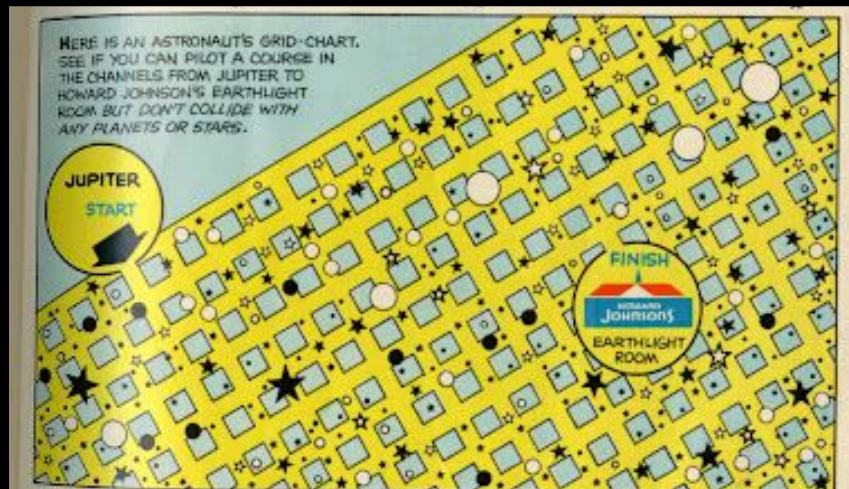
LITTLE BOY BLUE

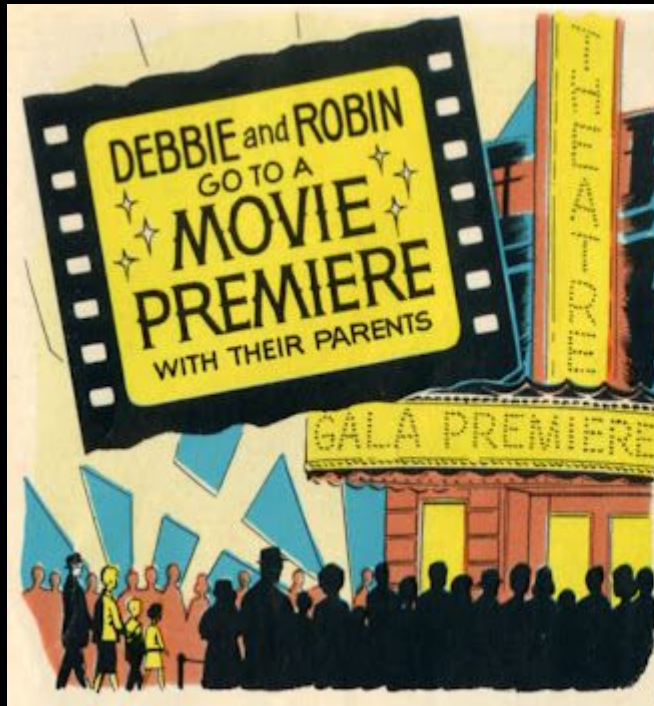
Grilled Hamburger Patty
Potato, Vegetable
Roll and Butter
Ice Cream, Sherbet
or Jello and
*Beverage
90¢

*YOUR CHOICE

Milk
Chocolate Milk
Orange Drink
Hot Chocolate
or **HOJO** Cola

FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE STRAINED BABY FOODS **25¢**





SOON THEY ARE SEATED. THE HOUSE LIGHTS DIM... THE CURTAINS PART AND WITH A FANFARE OF THRILLING MUSIC THE GIGANTIC WIDE SCREEN COMES TO LIFE...THE MOVIE "2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY BEGINS"!





THAT'S THE PAN AM ROCKET FERRY FROM KENNEDY SPACEPORT APPROACHING SPACE STATION ONE, FAR ABOVE THE EQUATOR. WHAT A TRICKY JOB TO GUIDE THE ROCKET INTO THAT DOCKING PORT. THE SPACE STATION IS 600 FEET IN DIAMETER AND REVOLVES TO CREATE ARTIFICIAL GRAVITY FOR THE PEOPLE IN IT.



©1968 AMUSE-A-MENU COMPANY, 456 LITTLE BUILDING, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02116 AND HOWARD JOHNSON'S. TEXT AND DRAWINGS APPROVED BY MGM AND STANLEY KUBRICK PRODUCTIONS, BASED ON THE CINERAMA® PRODUCTION IN SUPER PANAVISION® AND METROCOLOR.

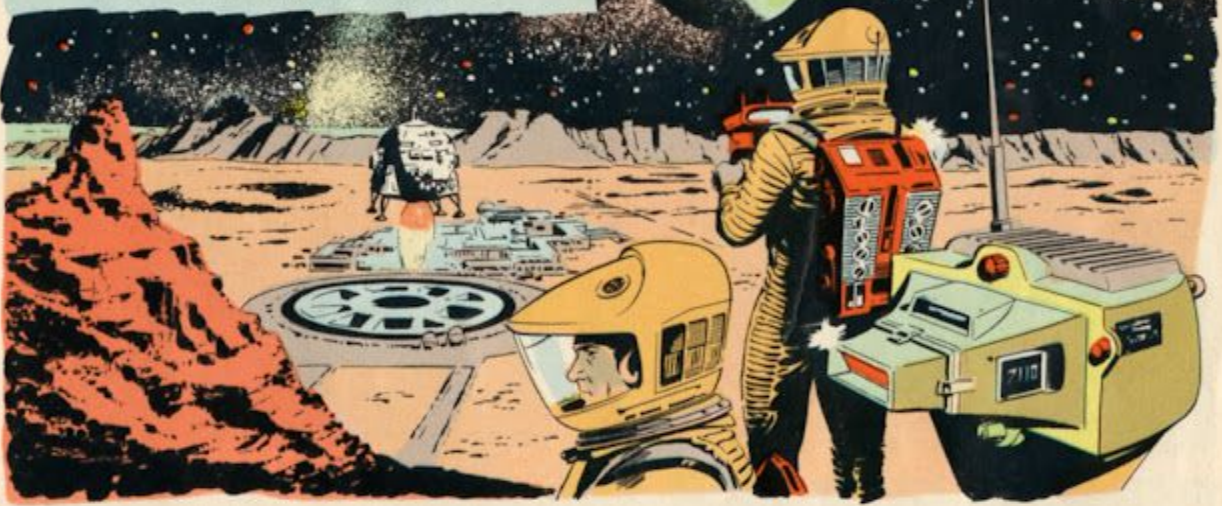


A BREATHTAKING VIEW OF EARTH AND THE STATION! EVERYTHING'S SO REAL!





THERE IT IS—THE LUNAR COLONY! THE ARIES IS ABOUT TO LAND. ITS RETROROCKETS SET IT DOWN AS GENTLY AS A FEATHER! THE LUNAR COLONY IS INSIDE THE 150-MILE-WIDE CRATER, CALLED CLAVIUS. THE RESEARCH STATION IS IN A SMALL CITY FAR UNDERGROUND.

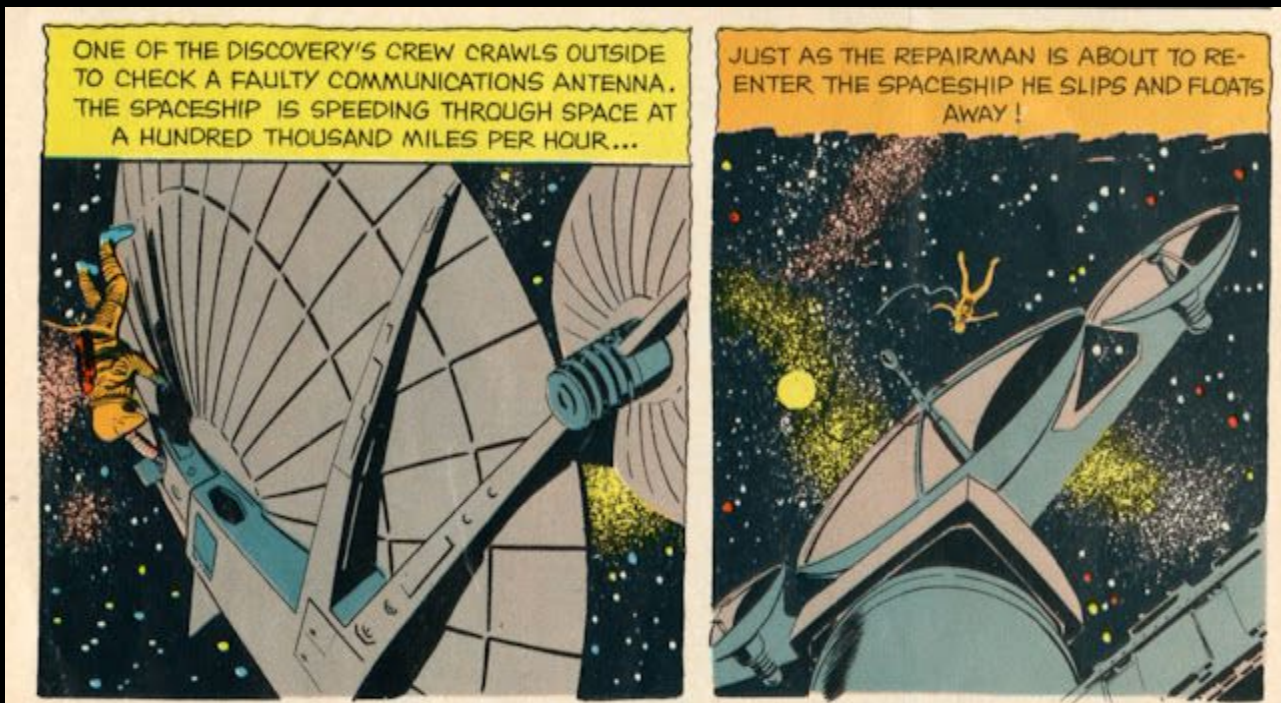


THE MOONBUS TAKES PASSENGERS AND CARGO TO OTHER STATIONS ON THE MOON.



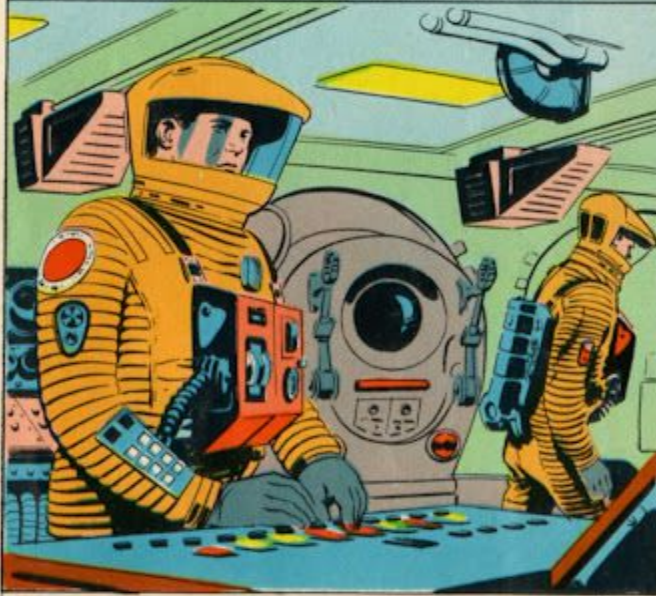
THE STARS AND THE MILKY WAY ARE VERY BRIGHT BECAUSE THERE'S NO ATMOSPHERE IN SPACE TO DIM THEM.







ON BOARD, ALARMS RING OUT AND ONE OF THE RESCUE PODS IS QUICKLY LAUNCHED.



BY NOW THE VICTIM HAS DRIFTED FAR FROM THE SPACESHIP INTO THE COLD BLACKNESS.



TUNING IN ON THE SPACEMAN'S AUTOMATIC BEEPER, THE RESCUE POD SPEEDS DIRECTLY TO HIM. MECHANICAL CLAWS REACH OUT AND FIRMLY-BUT GENTLY-GRASP HIM...



BUT WILL IT GET HIM BACK SAFELY TO THE DISCOVERY IN TIME?

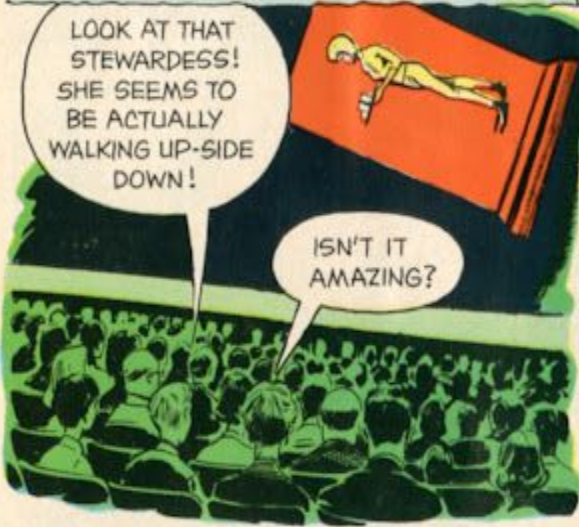




DEBBIE AND ROBIN WATCH GOGGLE-EYED AS THE AMAZING MOVIE ROLLS ON. THE REALISM OF THE SCENES OF LIFE ABOARD THE SPACE-SHIP ARE TRULY ASTOUNDING.

LOOK AT THAT STEWARDESS! SHE SEEMS TO BE ACTUALLY WALKING UP-SIDE DOWN!

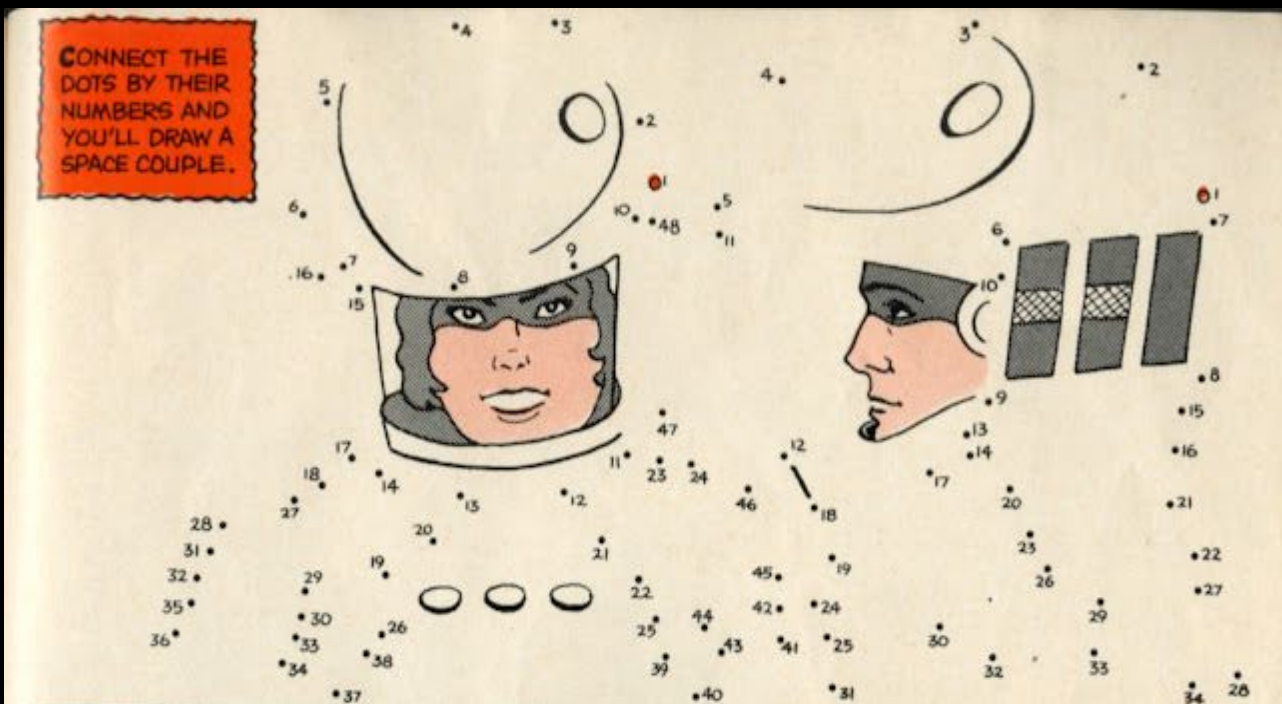
ISN'T IT AMAZING?



THE "ARTIFICIAL GRAVITY" CAUSED BY THE GIANT DRUM'S SLOW ROTATION GIVES THE DISCOVERY'S CREW A FEELING OF NORMAL WEIGHT. THIS PREVENTS THEIR MUSCLES FROM BECOMING SOFT AND FLABBY DURING THE LONG VOYAGE. THE ENTIRE MOVIE OF THIS SPACE ODYSSEY IS CRAMMED WITH THE MOST REMARKABLE SCENES EVER CREATED. SPACE ENGINEERS AND SCIENTISTS PROVIDED THE MOST EXACTING AND AUTHENTIC DETAILS EVER FILMED.



JUPITER AS SEEN FROM ONE OF ITS 12 MOONS ABOUT 115,000 MILES AWAY.





HERE'S MY 50¢—PLEASE **RUSH** THE
45 RPM RECORD TO ME ON WHICH **HOJO, THE HAPPY
CLOWN** SINGS "HAPPY BIRTHDAY" ON ONE SIDE AND
"SING-A-LONG" SONGS ON THE OTHER.

NAME (TYPEWRITE OR PRINT CLEARLY PLEASE)

HOUSE NUMBER STREET

CITY AND STATE

ZIP CODE

MAIL TO
HOJO, THE HAPPY CLOWN
ROOM 456, 80 BOYLSTON ST., BOSTON, MASS. 02116
AND ENCLOSE 50¢ IN CHECK OR POSTAL MONEY
ORDER FOR **EACH RECORD**. DO NOT SEND STAMPS
OR COIN. SATISFACTION GUARANTEED.









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email spacepodyssey2001@gmail.com

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- Brad & Wés