

Nosferatu. Revista de cine (Donostia Kultura)

Título:
ABSTRACTS

Autor/es:
Nosferatu

Citar como:
Nosferatu (2001). ABSTRACTS. Nosferatu. Revista de cine. (34).

Documento descargado de:
<http://hdl.handle.net/10251/41222>

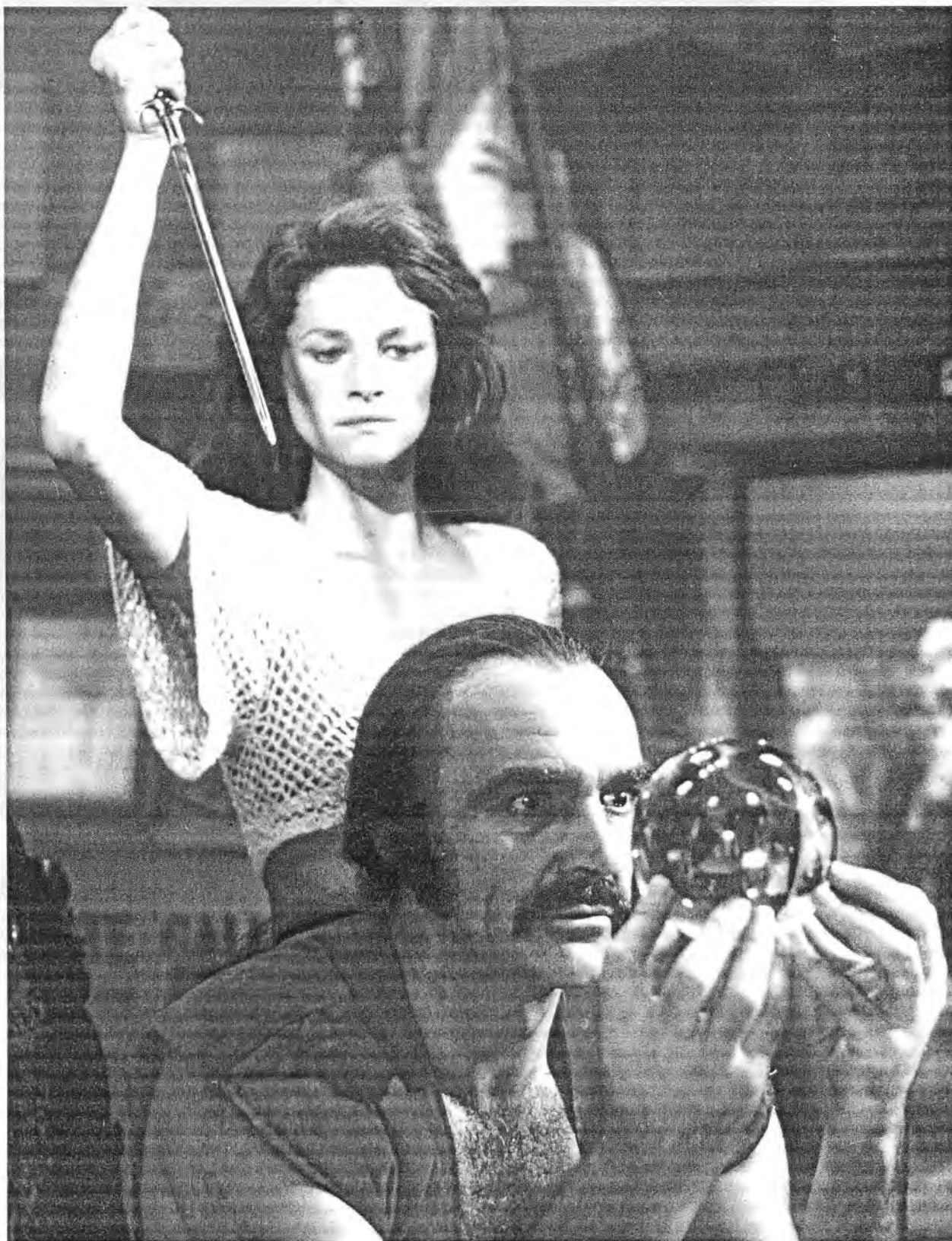
Copyright:
Reserva de todos los derechos (NO CC)

La digitalización de este artículo se enmarca dentro del proyecto "Estudio y análisis para el desarrollo de una red de conocimiento sobre estudios fílmicos a través de plataformas web 2.0", financiado por el Plan Nacional de I+D+i del Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad del Gobierno de España (código HAR2010-18648), con el apoyo de Biblioteca y Documentación Científica y del Área de Sistemas de Información y Comunicaciones (ASIC) del Vicerrectorado de las Tecnologías de la Información y de las Comunicaciones de la Universitat Politècnica de València.

Entidades colaboradoras:



donostiakultura.com



E
S
J
A
r
d
s
i
A
a
t
T
p
e
F
b
c
i
c

S
F
F
A

A
G
(l
a
r
c
c
a
r
(l
e
t
e
r
h
p
w
c

T
D
G

Tl
N.
th
L:
ep
tir
ur
be
th
se
D:
M
L:
Hi
an
un
no
th
ho
thi
10
Be
atc

SC
(A
Ra

We
in

ZARDOS

EUROPE GOES TO THE MOON, OR ASTRONAUTS SPEAK GERMAN TOO

José María Latorre

A number of European cinema's earlier fictions already replicated travel to the Moon: Méliès made his *Le voyage dans la Lune* in 1902, Segundo de Chomón shot a film similarly entitled in 1903, and Zecca and Velle went on to film *Amant de la Lune* in 1905. But it wasn't until 1964 that another highly influential work recreated yet another voyage to the Earth's satellite: Nathan Juran's *First Men in the Moon*. This said, despite a number of other films on the subject produced in Italy, Britain or Eastern bloc countries, the film eventually registered in the annals of film history is Fritz Lang's *Frau im Mond* (1928). This film, undeservedly underestimated by a vast sector of reviewers, is not only a delicious homage to cinematographic serials, but acts as a socio-political metaphor-cum-reflection on a variety of scientific subjects.

SCIENCE FICTION IN THE REPUBLIC OF WEIMAR. FROM INDIVIDUAL SPLIT TO COLLECTIVE FRACTURE

Antonio Santamarina

After outlining the historical and cinematographic setting of German science fiction during the Republic of Weimar (1919-1933), the author takes a look at the genre's first antecedents, highlighting two aspects which would become quite common in later fiction work: doubles and mediums. He then analyses the films of the genre at the height of expressionism (1919-1924), establishing a connection between the movement's characteristically extreme subjectivism and the political and moral crisis in which Germany was entrenched, and with the subjects and characters that dominated the fiction work of the period. To the rhythm of the new climate in the country as of 1924, the author points out the changes that took place in pictures of this type, with dialogues that leave the split "self" behind and reflect the contradictory reality of the changing times.

THE DARKNESS OF SCIENCE, THE SCIENCE OF DARKNESS: DR. MABUSE

Carlos Aguilar

The character of Doctor Mabuse was created by journalist Norbert Jacques, French by birth and German by adoption, while the first three films starring this evildoer were directed by Fritz Lang. The first of these, *Dr. Mabuse* (1921), split into two episodes, is a socio-political allegory on the Germany of the time, riddled with misery and corruption, inflation and unemployment, not to mention a generous helping of fanatical behaviour. Descendent of the horrifying serials on acts of crime, the film moreover reflects Lang's enthusiasm for the esoteric, secret societies and underground lodges. Instalment number two, *Das Testament des Dr. Mabuse / Le testament des Dr. Mabuse* (1933), also a masterpiece, was likewise produced by Lang on commission by the distributors of his previous movie. Here the action takes place in a different context, in quite another Germany: by now under Nazi control. The story unfolds in an oppressive atmosphere where no-one is safe from no-one knows exactly who or what. Nazi authorities prohibited the film and destroyed both copies and negatives. Fortunately, however, a "security print" saved the film for posterity. Almost thirty years later, Lang resuscitated the villainous doctor in *Die 1000 Augen des Dr. Mabuse* (1960), a spy story set in the Berlin of the 60's based on a tale of political fiction, a fable on atomic danger and parable on the Cold War.

SCIENCE FICTION IN SPAIN: THE BEING THAT (ALMOST) NEVER WAS

Ramón Freixas / Joan Bassa

We can't really speak of much of a science fiction film tradition in Spain. There has been a sprinkling of SF genre pictures,

virtually all of which have been the fruit of individual efforts rather than a consolidated effort on the part of the film industry. However, the fact of the matter is that the first science fiction films in Spain appeared quite early on, with the work of Segundo de Chomón and oddities such as *Madrid en el año 2000* (1925) and *Al Hollywood madrileño* (1927). The genre was given a shot in the arm when Jesús Franco came on the scene, with his films *L'horrible docteur Orloff* (1961), *Dans les griffes du maniaque* (1965) and *Dracula prisonnier de Frankenstein* (1972). In the Seventies a number of directors, including Juan Piquer Simón, Jorge Grau and Eugenio Martín, made their contributions, but always as random pictures. In recent years, titles such as *Acción mutante* (1992) and *La lengua asesina* (1996) have proved that science fiction films still emerge sporadically, although completely on the fringe of the miniscule domestic industry's dictates.

FANTASCIENZA: THE COMERCIAL MUTATION OF A GENRE

Ángel Sala

Traditionally, Italian cinema has paid little attention to science fiction. In fact, a large part of the more significant Italy-made science fantasy titles are actually horror films - a genre cherished by trans-Alpine filmmakers - which take place in the future or on faraway planets. Titles by Freda and Bava such as *Caltiki, il mostro immortale* (1959) and *Terróre nello spazio* (1965) are a good example. This lack of interest may very well be explained by the very landscape and history of the country, predisposing filmmakers to dig through the ruins and explore the place they live in before creating new worlds or imagining hypothetical futures. The splendour of Italian science fiction is patent in titles like *La morte viene dallo spazio* (1958) and *Il pianeta degli uomini spenti* (1961), which, along with several others, take advantage of the gold mine unearthed by US directors. This phenomenon is seen throughout the century, with a major part of Italian SF production treading on the heels of major American box office hits. In the wake of *Jaws* (1975) or *Star Wars* (1976), for example, a plethora of imitations made their way to the cinemas with names like *Star Crash* (1978) and *Tentacoli* (1977). Legendary heroes such as Maciste, killer crocodiles and sharks, secret agents, and superheroes are the stars in many of the science fiction undertakings of Italian filmmakers in the last few decades.

THE APOCALIPSIS AT TEA TIME? A BRIEF SKETCH OF BRITISH SCIENCE FICTION

Antonio José Navarro

A journey through British science fiction, which, much the same as terror films, appeared from the outset with a gothic patina lacking in major US productions. British films concentrate more on the characters and how they are affected by the fantastic events surrounding them than by the events themselves. The dramatic credibility of the story takes priority over the story's scientific reality. Films like *High Treason* (1929) and *Things to Come* (1936) show the first glimpses of the golden age of British science fiction, which was inaugurated in 1955 with *The Quatermass Experiment* and which has passed on to posterity such titles as *The Curse of Frankenstein* (1957), *Village of the Damned* (1960) and *The Day of the Triffids* (1963). In the past few decades a few films, like *Zardoz* (1974) and *Brazil* (1984), have seen to it that British science fiction, a genre whose heyday has come and gone, has not died out totally.

WELCOME TO UPTOPIA. SCIENCE FICTION IN EASTERN EUROPE

Pablo Herranz

In spite of the stereotype that Eastern European films are by definition formal, boring and made for dedicated, hard-core

filmgoers, the truth is that the countries formerly in the Soviet sphere of influence have produced films of all types: comedies, horror films, melodramas... and science fiction. This latter genre has always been well accepted by local audiences. Logically, the vast majority of sci-fi films were produced in the USSR, beginning in 1924 with *Aelita*, followed by heavyweight titles such as *Luch smerti* (1925), *Gibel sensaty* (1935), *Planeta Bur* (1962) and *Solaris* (1972). However, Hungary, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Yugoslavia have also made their 20th-century contributions to the science fiction genre. Work highlighted here includes that of Czech filmmakers Karel Zeman and Oldrich Lipsky and Polish filmmaker Piotr Szulkin, plus the Romanian film *Hyperion* (1975), and the Yugoslav film *Gosti iz galaksije* (1981), just to name a few.

KARÉL ZEMAN, THE POET OF MADMEN

Sergi Sánchez

Marionettes, which were very popular in Czechoslovakia, were banned by the Nazis during World War II. When the war was over, Karel Zeman created an animation studio in Moravia and started making his first films using marionettes. Building on the talent of the first filmmaking visionaries such as Méliès, Emile Cohl, Windsor McKay, and, most of all from Jules Verne and traditional folklore, Zeman handed down to the annals of cinema such titles as *Vynález zkázy* (1958) and *Baron prášil* (1961). Although the stars of his films are puppets, the overall quality is more surreal than childlike. Zeman was not only an animator and a filmmaker. He was a true artist.

THE FUTURE WORLDS OF NOUVELLE VAGUE

Quim Casas

At first glimpse *Nouvelle Vague* and science fiction might seem go hand in hand. However, the young French people involved in New Wave dared to take on just about anything. In the same way that Godard reinvented the musical and Truffaut the thriller, some of the movement's leading filmmakers dared to walk down the path of science fiction, adding their own particular styles to a genre which they heighten by adding some of the best loved sci-fi masterpieces. Aside from occasional contributions by Rivette or Chabrol, and the appearance of science fiction elements in their non-sci-fi films, fundamentally we can talk about four filmmakers and four films: Jean-Luc Godard with *Alphaville* (1965); Alain Resnais with *Je t'aime, je t'aime* (1968); Chris Marker with *La jetée* (1962); and Truffaut with *Fahrenheit 451* (1966).

FUTURE AMNESIA. TIME AND MEMORY IN THE WORK OF CHRIS MARKER

Antonio Weinrichter

Chris Marker is an obscure and unclassifiable filmmaker, about whom the only thing we know for sure is that he makes some rather unorthodox documentaries. The justification for including him in a science fiction magazine rests in three films that centre on time, one of the genre's major themes. His best known work -and only fiction film- is a medium-length film entitled *La jetée* (1962). It is set in a post-apocalyptic future, where the survivors decide to send a "volunteer" back in time to search for the key to survival of the human race. Marker's fixation with time runs through virtually all of his work, but most dramatically so in *Sans soleil* (1982) and *Level Five* (1997). The three films make up one of the last century's most unusual, audacious, and necessary (in order to prevent future amnesia) inroads in the world of science fiction.

PETER WATKINS. FILMS FOR EXPLORING THE FUTURE AND AWAKENING THE CONSCIENCENESS

José Ángel Alcalde

Peter Watkins, political filmmaker if there ever was one, spent his life feeling uneasy about technologically advanced

democratic societies at the end of the second millennium. Setting his pictures, the most outstanding of which is *The War Game* (1965), in the not-too-distant future, Watkins denounces the gradual concentration of power in modern society. This power inevitably leads to certain kinds of repression, manipulation and dehumanisation of citizens. The Surrey-born filmmaker sees the role of mass media as fundamental and accuses it of being a instrument used by the government for controlling and manipulating ideas. Since so many of the evils of modern society come from the public's lack of information, Watkins feels the media is a decisive tool. His films were filmed in the style of docudramas, a blend of documentary and drama common in British television.

LUC BESSON. THE FUTURE IS MODERN

Javier G. Romero

Luc Besson is beyond a doubt the most controversial French filmmaker in recent times. He is unanimously hated by film critics, scorned for his abrupt visual style and for his excessive tendencies. But he is loved by his post-modern followers, who consider his appearance as an opportunity to break with the traditional, stagnant, self-absorbed styles of French cinema. The eight films Besson has directed so far by might be considered futuristic, in one way or another, although only two of them, *Le dernier combat* (1982) and *Le cinquième élément* (1997), are clearly science fiction. Regardless of personal opinions, it is unquestionable that titles such as *Le grand bleu* (1988), *Nikita* (1989) and *Léon* (1994) have been responsible for more ink used in the last two decades.

AN ALIEN AT MY TABLE

Isabel Androide

Science fiction films generally present women in typical roles seen time and time again over the years, both in the United States and Europe: megalomaniacs from distant planets, long-suffering laboratory assistants, dazzling beauties exposed to great dangers just waiting to be rescued at the last minute, etc. Nevertheless, we should not forget that the first science fiction novel in the history of literature, *Frankenstein or the modern Prometheus*, was written by a woman, Mary Shelley, whose mother used her writing to campaign in favour of the British women's suffrage movement. Despite such titles as *Aelita* (1924), *Frau im Mond* (1928) and *Barbarella* (1968), women have always been relegated to the background in science fiction filmmaking. As a matter of fact, there are no women in Europe today who direct films of this genre.

LITERARY ORIGINS OF EUROPEAN SCIENCE FICTION

Juan Antonio Molina Foix

Ever since 1902, when Georges Méliès made use of the work of Jules Verne, one of the great inspirations in his work, and H.G Wells to create his film *Le voyage dans la Lune*, an infinity of science fiction directors and screenwriters have turned to literature in search of plots for their fiction. Verne, Wells, Capek, Orwell, Bradbury and Lem are some of the more noteworthy names that have lent their stories to the silver screen. Such relevant titles include *Things to Come* (1936), based on a book by Wells and adapted to the screen by Wells himself; *Fahrenheit 451* (1966), based on Ray Bradbury's famous novel; the Andrei Tarkovski films *Solaris* (1972) and *Stalker* (1980), based on work by Stanislaw Lem and the Strugatski brothers; *Village of the Damned* (1960), based on a novel by John Wyndham, whose work was also used to write the screenplay for *The Day of the Triffids* (1963). Just like every other film genre, literature has been a source for a countless number of science fiction pictures.

ANIMATED MARTIANS

Joxean Muñoz

Since the early twentieth century animation films have been struggling to do away with the idea that animation is targeted only for young audiences. It's true that children are the principal consumers of cartoons, but they are not the only ones. One of the genres in which animation filmmaking has managed to make headway is science fiction. The European sci-fi animation panorama consists of isolated works, projects undertaken by kamikaze filmmakers who have set out on the adventure of making feature-length animated pictures. This is the case of Czech filmmaker Karel Zeman, Italian Bruno Bozzetto and Frenchman René Laloux, one of the essential names in European animation. Laloux, with the help of outstanding cartoon artists (Topor, Moebius and Caza, respectively), was the man responsible for three pivotal films: *La planète sauvage* (1973), *Les maîtres du temps* (1981) and *Gandahar* (1986). A smattering of titles emerged sporadically during the second half of the twentieth century, including in Spain, with recent titles such as *Megasónicos* (1997), *El ladrón de sueños* (1999) and *Juego de niños* (1999).

A VISIT FROM THE PAST TO THE CITY OF THE FUTURE

Jorge Gorostiza

When painting portraits of future societies and comparing the past with the future, science fiction cinema has always revolved around two fields: engineering (inventing new machines, space ships and other sundry contraptions), and architecture (showing different models for the city of tomorrow). Ever since its early years, science fiction films have provided us with a myriad of futuristic cities. The first of these appears in the German film *Algol* (1920), designed by painter Walter Reitmman, followed by the cities created by Paul Wegener and Fritz Lang in *Der Golem* (1920) and *Metropolis* (1926). Another cornerstone in future cities was Everytown in *Things to Come* (1936). *Fahrenheit 451* (1966), *Barbarella* (1968) and *Brazil* (1984) are just some of the many different perceptions of what cities in the distant, or not-so-distant, future might be like.

EUROPEAN CINEMA AND COMICS

Asier Mensura

Science fiction films, especially in the last few decades with the huge media boom, has provided popular culture in the twentieth century with some of its most memorable and long-lasting images. Since the first images created by Méliès or Chomón, cinema has been influenced by literature, theatre, paintings, etc. In the last twenty years, one of the most important influences in science fiction around the globe has been European comics, particularly French. At the end of the Sixties, French science fiction comics reached their pinnacle of popularity with authors like Jean-Claude Mézières, Moebius and Enki Bilal, who filled their stories with new unknown universes. Films like *Alien* (1979), *Brazil* (1984) and *Le cinquième élément* (1997) are undoubtedly inspired in the aesthetics of these comics. In fact, Moebius was part of the artistic team that worked on *Alien* and, together with Mézières, on *Le cinquième élément*. Comics and science fiction films are two worlds condemned to live in unison.

CITIZEN GADGET, DARING EXHIBIT OF CONTRAPTIONS, DEVICES AND STATE-OF-THE-ART GIZMOS

Ramón Freixas / Joan Bassa

Throughout the twentieth century our lives have been filled with all types of previously unthinkable appliances and objects, many of which have gradually found a niche in our homes. In the same way, although much earlier, science fiction

films (especially B movies) have furnished us with the unimaginable gadgets, miraculous contraptions and devices with the wildest applications. Sci-fi audiences don't only want to see the inventors and dreamer-uppers of these inventions, but also the product of their arduous labour. In Europe, the most obvious example are the James Bond films, which have included all types of vehicles, watches and pens capable of doing just about any task, bizarre as it may seem. The diverse parodies or imitations of the Bond series and the Italian superhero films also provide us with some pretty unforgettable objects. However, in recent time gadgets have stepped aside, giving way to the momentum of special effects.

SCIENCE FASHION. BARBARELLAISMS: THE SCIENCE FICTION OF DINO DE LAURENTIIS

Jesús Palacios

In 1968 the appearance of *Barbarella* added a breath of fresh air to the world of science fiction. It was the same year that saw the screening of *2001: A Space Odyssey* and *The Planet of the Apes*, with their philosophical, social and political charge, together with their seriousness, coherence and traditional narrative style. *Barbarella* was just the opposite. First of all, it is a European production. It doesn't talk about major world conflicts. It's sloppily made, full of awkward transparencies, stiff mannequins playing the part of extraterrestrials, tackily painted movie sets and ridiculous explosions. But it was a huge success and became mythical icon. Why? Because it is one of the best motion pictures in the history of cinema. Its delirium, eroticism, light-heartedness and unpretentious aesthetics turned it into a fundamental point in the culture of the Sixties. The film was produced by Dino de Laurentiis, also responsible for *Flash Gordon* (1980), *Conan the Barbarian* (1982) and *Dune* (1984), all of which carried his personal mark. He never sought credibility and perfection in his films, insisting instead on complicity from the audience and their participation in aesthetic critique. His films are not for the general public. This is adult stuff, films that are there to contemplate but not to believe.

2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY. THE YEAR WE DID AWAY WITH HAL-9000

Juan Carlos Paredes

In 1968 Stanley Kubrick handed down to posterity one of the most significant and celebrated films in the history of cinema: *2001: A Space Odyssey*. With special effects which, in some aspects, have yet to be surpassed, a legendary musical score, and a monolith and computer for icons, Kubrick's film was unequalled in the science fiction genre. Its metaphysical aftermath and its uncertain ambiguous spirit leaves audiences with a feeling of confusion, mostly due to the fact that so many questions are left unanswered. *2001* would not be the same if Kubrick and Clarke had solved all of the film's mysteries for us. With its intentional lack of information, we are not allowed to discover the intellectual limits or even our own imaginative frontiers.