

Two For The See — Saw ... a review

by john blaikie

Will Jerry forget Tess and marry Gittel? Will Bell Tel and Tel sell Jerry and Gittel bathroom extensions? William Gibson's *Two for the See-Saw* isn't really that bad. Jerry has this parasite complex; Gittel never wanted to go to bed with her father; and Tess has a rich old man. All this obviously makes for interesting plot possibilities.

Jerry, a midwest, just short of middle-age lawyer, with air showing through the thin spots in his ego. He thinks his wife and her father have put him where he is and he can't make it by himself. From what we learn of him through the play, he's probably right. Gittel's a little Brooklyn broad who's picked all the wrong kinds of men. Or maybe Gibson thinks there are only wrong kinds. At any rate, in Jerry, she's missed again. He doesn't need a mistress he needs a child. He

has a difficult pregnancy.

The snake, an obvious male symbol, supplied by the local telephone company, keeps Jerry in a continuous state of arousal. Finally, re-establishing the matriarchy in his own family, he returns to his former wife, Tess, leaving Gittel and her ulcer to pick another loser.

All this sounds like pretty dull stuff but Jerry's third act revelation "love is looking at bridges with four eyes stead of two", adds a professional metaphysical touch without which the play would be a philosophical and psychological dead end — or loss.

Although, as the above indicates, the play is a psychological masterpiece, there are a few minor technical difficulties. In Act Two there are three scenes. The time of the action shifts from October to December to February. I'm not a nut on the three unities but there are no lights in the audience, and I had forgotten my flashlight, so I couldn't read the program to find out what month we were dealing with. I should have caught on, given the clues of Massey's (Gerry) constant change of costume, but for the first two-thirds of the play I was under the impression he had a

poor memory and kept picking up the wrong coat at the office. A frozen cockroach or two in the December scene would have helped but unfortunately the Playhouse operates on a limited budget. By the third act we were into May. Damned if I know what happened in April.

The split stage was a little distracting at times but necessary for the telephone comedy which wasn't necessary — or funny. Dickens would have been amazed at the number of coincidences.

I'm not panning the production, just the choice of material. Walter Massey as Jerry appeared at times inattentive but I wasn't very interested in Jerry either. Mia Anderson as Gittel was great. Her lines were delivered easily and naturally and the comic lines came off every time.

Miss Anderson swore convincingly. Mr. Massey didn't. That essentially describes the differences in the two performances.

It's a bad play, competently performed and worth seeing. With "who's afraid of Virginia Wolfe" tossed in the \$4 season ticket should be a good buy. Get one. In Fredericton you can't afford to miss the opportunity.



2001 — Beyond A Light Show

by dave dawes

By now most people have either seen Stanley Kubrick's "2001: A Space Odyssey", or have heard about it. Since it is about to arrive at the local theatre (finally), a fresh evaluation is appropriate.

The technical aspect of the film has been stressed with good reason. The meticulous design of the costumes and spaceships, the tons of specially-dyed sand used for the moon's landscape; the length of time — 5 years — in which the film was made; the \$750,000 centrifuge that was constructed for the circular interior of the spaceship; the use of infra-red film in the

climatic scene (usually referred to as the "light show"); the fact that everything — moon landscapes, ships floating in space — was all done inside a studio.

The "plot" is divided into four episodes:

- (1) In prehistoric times, a mysterious black slab appears in the middle of a desert, and somehow inspires some man-like apes to use tools.
- (2) In the year 2001, a strange magnetic object has been discovered, buried on the moon. A party is sent to investigate. The object is identical to the black slab which was

discovered by the apes. As the sun finally strikes the slab after thousands of years, it sends off an ear-piercing signal.

- (3) It is discovered that the signal has been sent to Jupiter. A ship is dispatched to discover the reason. The ship is run by a computer, known as H.A.L. 9000, which talks in a very human voice to the astronauts on board. A rather melodramatic subplot ensues, in which Hal goes haywire and attempts to sabotage the mission. His plan is foiled by Astronaut Bowman. The ship still intact, Bowman proceeds to Jupiter. Putting the ship in orbit, he leaves it in a small exploratory vehicle. He is then sent on a journey which reveals to him the meaning of the slab, and finally undergoes an incredible transformation.
- (4)

The basic theme of the film deals with the life cycle of the Universe, as exemplified by the evolution of man. In episode one, he learns to use tools. In two, he has mastered his tools and is now out to master space — in the process transforming it into a mother suburbia: this is shown in the scenes on the space station, in which many of the banalities of life on earth — e.g. Hilton hotels — are seen to be polluting space as well. The discovery of the slab on the Moon heralds another step in man's progress (but even here, banality intrudes, as the tourist-astronauts gather around the slab for a group photo). The slab sends its signal to Jupiter as an announcement that man has advanced beyond the environment of Earth. The third episode shows man struggling against his own tools

— i.e. Hal, the computer. (This is the longest episode; it is dramatically interesting but, thematically, it is relatively unimportant).

The fourth episode is the most significant. The slab on the moon has sent a signal to Jupiter, and the intelligent forces on Jupiter are now prepared to consider man as an intelligent human being. (It is significant that Arthur Clarke, co-author of the script, believes that Juniper is the centre of the Universe). Astronaut Bowman takes a breathtaking journey through lights and across strange landscapes. He witnesses the fertilization of an egg in space. Finally he lands in a room, which resembles a hotel suite. He sees a figure nearby. It is himself, much older; suddenly he becomes this second figure. As an old man, he sits down at a table and eats. A wineglass drops to the floor, exploding through the silence. As he stoops to pick up the glass, he notices another figure lying on the bed, dying. Bowman then becomes this old man. The old man is transformed into a fetus-like creature — but a fetus with eyes wide open, staring, all-knowing.

The point of the final episode is that the intelligent forces represented by the slab have decided that man is ready for this final stage of his evolution. One man dies, and is reborn as a child of infinite wisdom.

The special effects — the final journey, the weightlessness, the ships floating in space — are impeccably produced. As Clarke has said, the next space epic, in order to be more convincing, will have to be filmed on location. The photography is excellent. The acting is very interesting — it is obvious that the director has deliberately made his human characters drab and lifeless, so

that the only character capable of genuine emotions and nervous strain is Hal the computer. A nice joke.

Kubrick also employs some basic cinematic devices (or gimmicks) for startling buildup of furious ecstasy when the ape discovers how to use a bone as a tool; frozen images convey the suspension of time during Bowman's voyage — several still shots of his face, contorted in agony, are seen during the journey. The close-up is used to convey the impact of the journey on Bowman — there are several shots of an extreme close-up of the pupil of his eye, as he stares at the terrifying and wondrous procession of images.

As a whole, this film is a supreme achievement. It is intellectually stimulating, visually dazzling, and extremely moving (I am referring to the ending in which the fetus turns its gigantic wide eyes toward the camera. For me this was a very emotional experience — partly because of the absolute beauty of the image, but also because it brought home the message of the film — that is, the meaning of the Universe is rebirth).

Two final comments: I've seen the film twice in cinerama — the process which uses a curved screen to "surround" the viewer. Many people contend that the film is dull on a flat screen. I disagree; the film is a masterpiece, and it doesn't need gimmickery to make its point.

Also, I get rather upset with people who go to this film only because of the "psychedelic" journey sequence. To them, the film is nothing but a light show, with no further significance. They are doing themselves and the film a great disservice. There are better light shows. This is a brilliant work of art with a meaning much deeper than a flashy surface.

The Weather

The weather is being brought to you today by the Trans World Airlines; the company who work for the weather, through the weather, and by the weather, for the benefit of the people.

On the world scene, Canada, the United States, and Vietnam have been experiencing varying degrees of weather, while Eurasia, South America, and the East and West Indies had little or none.

Nationally, temperatures ranged from -7 to -8 with the exception of two localities. The prevailing winds prevailed, and snow, slush, and sleet fell in all major cities, with the exception of course of Fredericton, N.B., where snow, sleet, and slush did not fall.

The Ford Motor backed Hurricane, Elizabeth, was postponed for another week due to fiscal mismanagement.

Today's high occurred at the Alnico Steel Co., where blast furnaces reached a record high of 3006 degrees F; the

low at Frigidaire where absolute zero was reached.

The forecast for tomorrow and Sunday is for slight to severe disturbances in Biafra and points East. On the Western front a new dry cleaning agency has opened on Bloor Street in Toronto.

	Lo.	Hi.
Fredericton	-3	-21
St. John	17	35
Toronto	61	63
Moscow	-36	-31
Minto	14	45

The chill factor will probably be 6.

WINDS

Light 36 west west west, North 12 and South 14 at 10, and counting.

STOCK MARKET

Ford Motor Co. closed at \$1.06 down 345 points from yesterday. Vive la revolution.