

Robert Williams

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Artifact 8



Le Voyage dans la Lune

Created by Georges Méliès in 1902, “Le Voyage dans la Lune” (also known as “A Trip to the Moon” in English) was a groundbreaking silent film that is known today as one of the most all-time influential films that paved the way for modern filmmaking.

The film is about a group of astronomers, led by Professor Barbenfouillis (played by Méliès), who had built a bullet-shaped spaceship for the purpose of traveling to the moon. They enter the spaceship and are launched into space from a giant cannon. As they travel through

space, one can see the moon with a human face appear closer. The ship then crashes into the moon's eye in one of the most famous scenes in film history.



On the moon, they explore the terrain, which involved a cave with a river and giant mushrooms. They encounter aliens and are taken captive by them. The astronomers then break free by attacking the aliens with their umbrellas, making them explode. In a courageous act, the professor picks up the alien king and flips it to the ground before escaping with his men. When they make it to their ship, the other astronomers climb in as the professor fights the aliens off with serious moves before jumping onto a rope and pulling the ship off of the cliff. Right before the ship begins its descent to earth, an alien jumps onto the outside and rides down. On earth the astronomers are celebrated and the alien is captured.

At first, Méliès struggled to sell the film. At one point, he decided to allow his film to be shown at a fair for free. The crowd loved it so much on the first showing which led to the theatre

being filled for hours. After this, he was able to sell the film. “Le Voyage dans la Lune” went on to become a worldwide sensation. Méliès’ work has been extremely influential in that its focus on storytelling and reality-bending science fiction as well as special effects and camera tricks have inspired filmmaking as we know it today.

My impression of the film is that is pretty easy to watch as its running time is less than fifteen minutes. It may not seem like much now, but considering the time it was made in, I can understand its sensation. Also, it is kind of spooky to watch a movie made over a hundred years ago with uncredited actors who have long passed.

Here is a link to the film’s Wikipedia page:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Trip_to_the_Moon#Legacy

The film can be found on YouTube. I do not have a link to a specific video, because there are many in different forms, such as remastered and colorized versions and also ones that have an English narration.