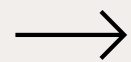


# Genre Presentation



DARCY MODICA



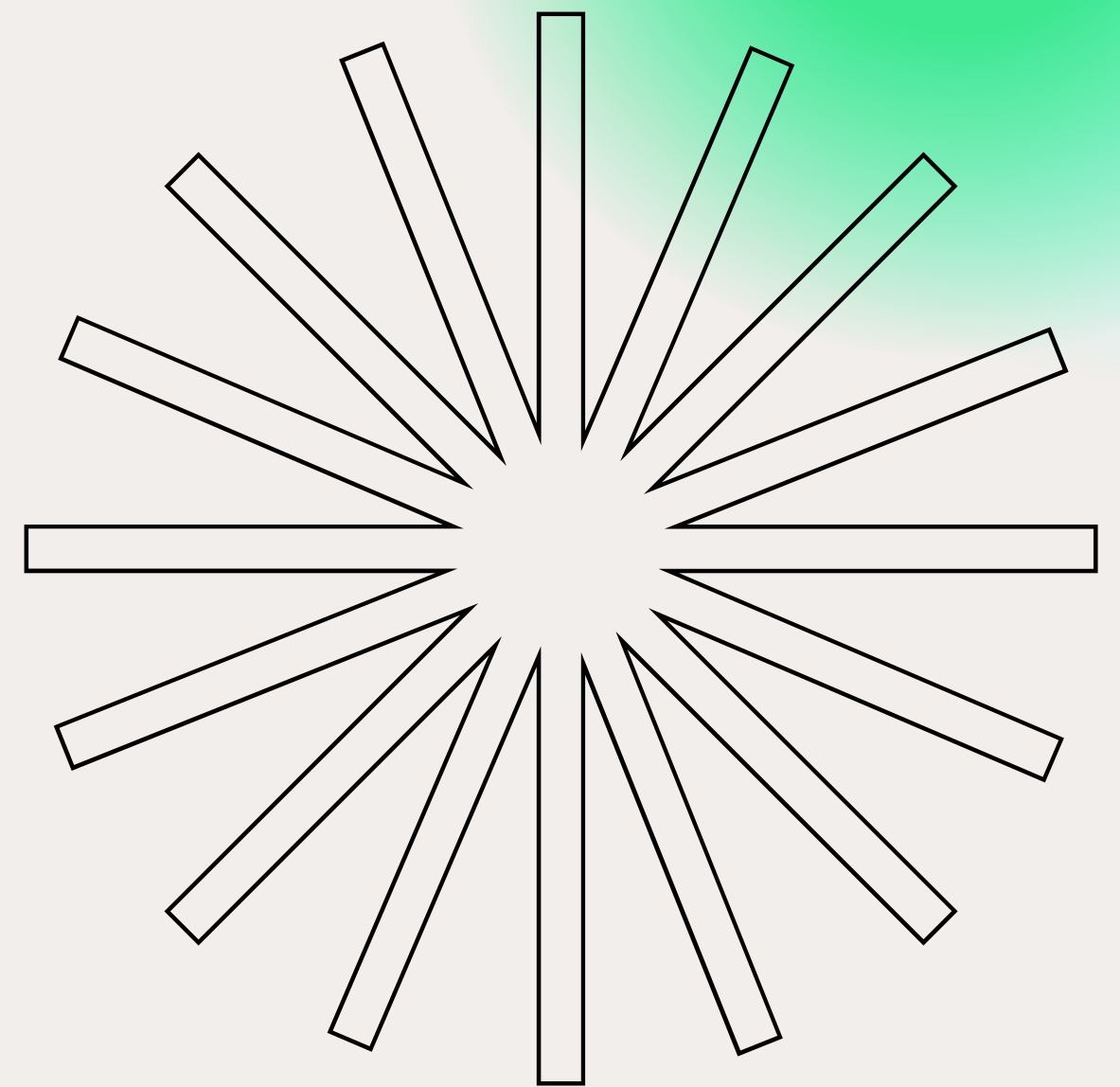
# Science Fiction Film Genre

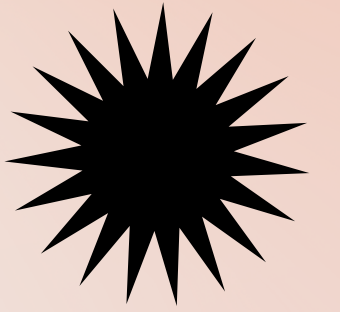
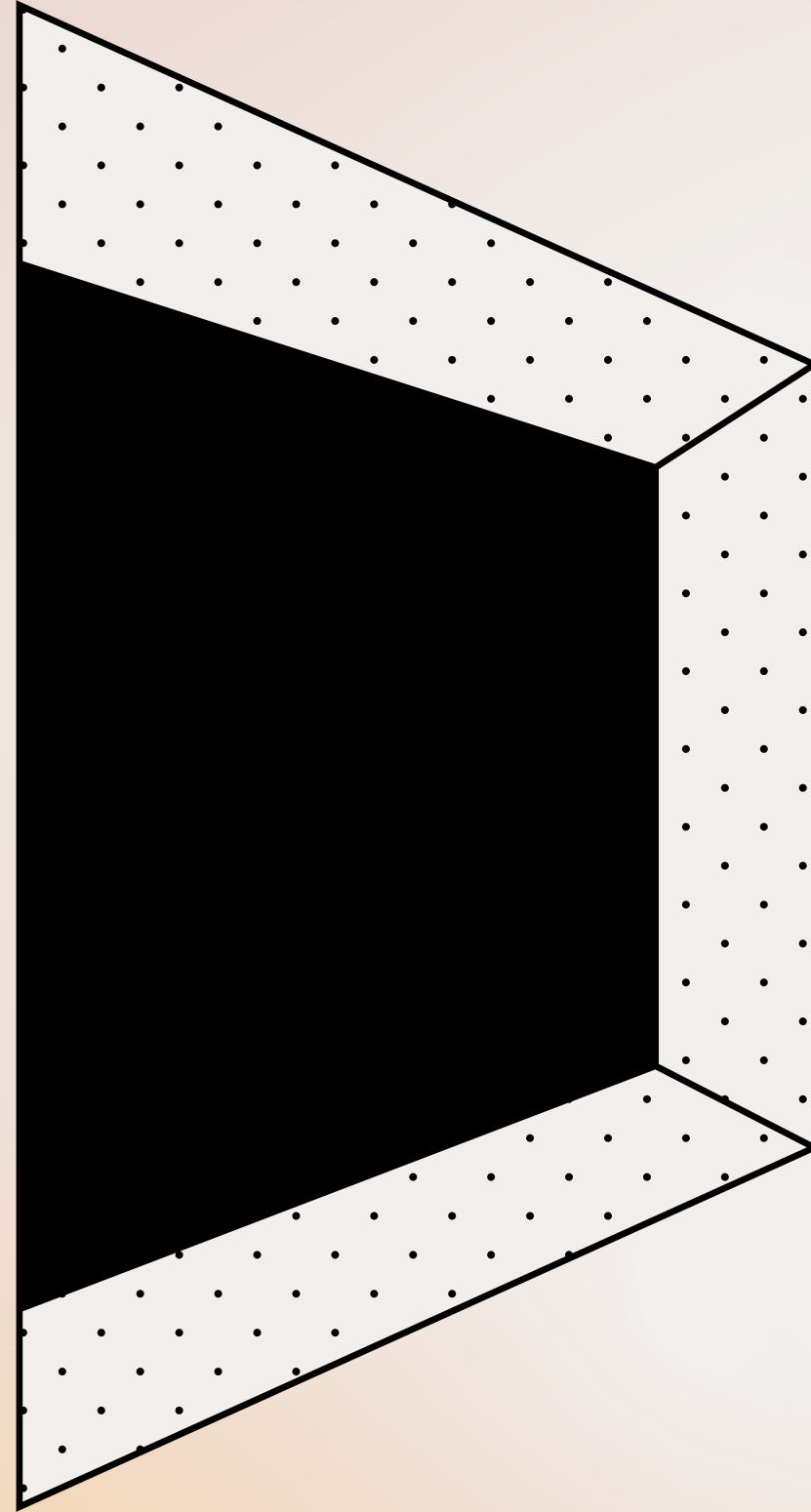
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## TODAY'S AGENDA

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- Introduction and Definition
- History (part one)
- History (part two)
- Common Mise en Scene elements
- Common Themes, Stereotypes, Iconography
- Conventions and Techniques
- Conclusion
- Works Cited





# Intro + Definition

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## BRIEF INTRODUCTION

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The ***science fiction*** genre is one of the most popular film genres of all time. It's a genre characterized by stories involving conflicts between science and technology, human nature, and social organization in futuristic or fantastical worlds, created in cinema through distinctive iconographies, images, and sounds often produced by means of special effects technology.

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# History: Part One

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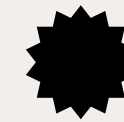
## 1900's

- Very first sci-fi film: *Trip to the Moon* by George Melies (1902)
- The special effects used in this film, paved the way for future sci-fi films
- Sci-fi films became very popular after its release



## '30s, '40s + '50s

- 30's +40's: Films were influenced by sound, dialogue, and the effects of the Great Depression and WW2
- Films were low budget, quickly produced, and short
- Honorable mention: *The Phantom Empire* (1935)
- 50's: Development of the atomic bomb, the Cold War, and anxiety about the effects of nuclear war led to a lot of films surrounding this in the sci-fi genre
- Honorable Mention: *Destination Moon* (1950), a race to the moon against the Soviets



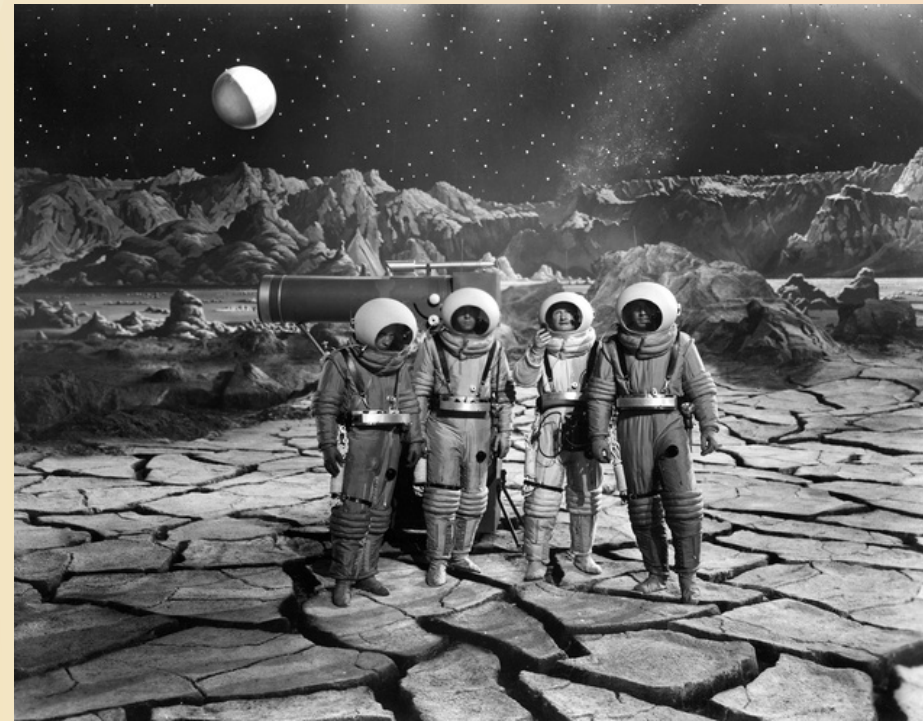
## '60s + '70s

- Not much in the early 60's because of the rise of films in the 50's, in the latter half one of the most significant sci-fi films because of its advancements in the visual effects industry was *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) by Stanley Kubrick.
- Groundbreaking realistic portrayal of space travel
- 70's: many sci-fi films still included themes of paranoia and threats against humanity
- Popular films during this time: *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), *Planet of the Apes* sequels, *Star Wars* (1977), *Superman* (1978), *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* (1979)



***Planet of the Apes (1968)***

***Destination Moon (1950)***



***The Phantom Empire (1935)***



***A Clockwork Orange (1971)***

***Trip to the Moon by George Melies (1902)***



***Star Wars (1977)***

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# History: Part Two

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## '80s

- Star Wars success skyrocketed the demand and production of other sci-fi films
- Notable success of the decade belongs to Steven Spielberg's *E.T. the Extra Terrestrial* (1982)
- The distinction between science fiction, fantasy and superhero was becoming blurred

## '90s

- Creation of the internet led to cyberpunk sci-fi sub-genre
- Very popular film during that time was *The Matrix* (1999)
- Computers also advanced special effects, software, and the production of film

## 2000s

- Sci-fi films moved on to being a tool for political commentary on materialism and political situations post 9/11
- Notable mentions: *A.I. Artificial Intelligence* (2001), *Minority Report* (2002)
- As years went on, the theatre audience began to decline because of streaming services

# Common 'Mise en Scene' elements

Sci-fi  
sci-fi – film genre  
in ge



## Costume/Makeup/Props

- Futuristic
- Shiny 'new-like'
- 'Advanced' technology
- Lots of silver, gold, metallic color schemes
- VFX Makeup (prosthetics)



## Setting (Set Design)

- Space
- Other planets, worlds, universes
- Ancient places i.e. The Pyramids
- Parallel universe
- Time travel i.e. the past or the future
- Spaceships
- Very detailed set ups



## Lighting Principles

- Cool dark and dreary
- Under saturated and exposed
- Muted tones
- Metallic, shiny, gleaming
- Leans on being very artificial because most settings are in space



## Staging

- In early years: lots of close ups and extreme close ups to set up the scene without having to rely on big sets
- With advancements in visual effects moved onto wider shots
- Characters performance usually lean towards the hero complex
- Someone is always 'saving the day'

Minority Report (2002)

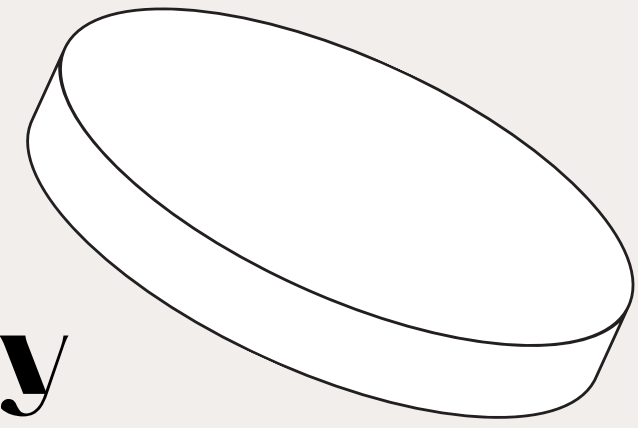


Star Wars  
(1977)



Alien (1979)

# Common Themes, Stereotypes, Iconography



## Themes

- Exploration/colonization of other planets/space
- Space travel
- First contact with aliens
- Time travel
- A.I. Takeover
- End of humanity/Post-apocalyptic
- Humanity vs. technology
- Good vs. evil
- Justice

## Stereotypes

For the genre:

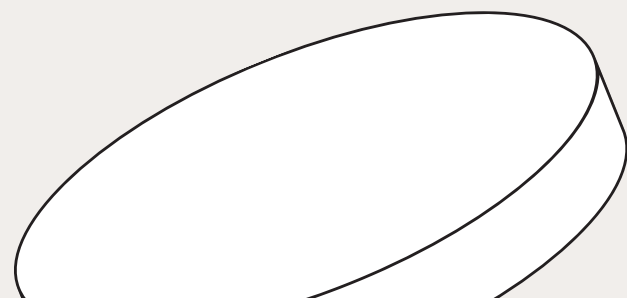
- "Nerdy"
- Always about aliens
- Only for boys or young children

In the movies themselves:

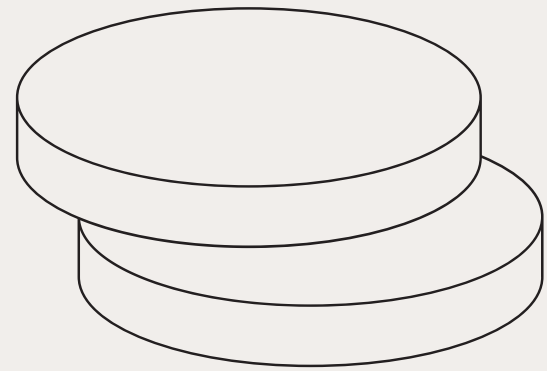
- Robots
- Alien Invasion
- Interstellar Travel
- Time travel
- Bodily Transformation
- Parallel Universe
- Immortality
- Post - Apocalyptic Worlds
- God-like Aliens

## Iconography

- Space
- Planets
- Spaceships
- Robots
- high-tech gadgets
- holograms
- weapons of mass destruction
- teleportation
- time travel
- Androids
- "Heroes"
- Side kicks







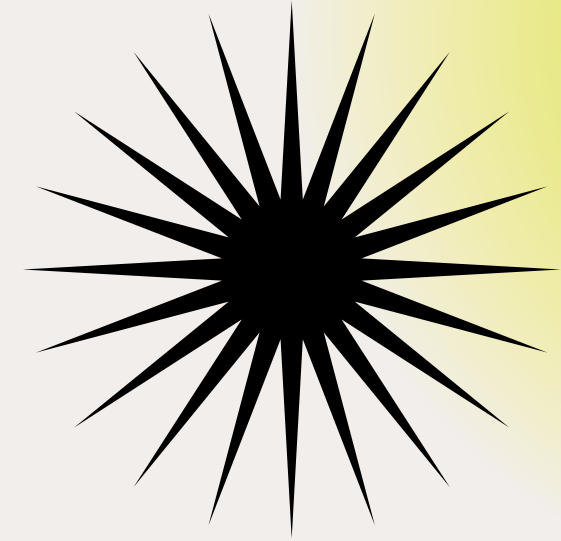
# Conventions + Techniques

## Conventions

- Time travel
- Teleportation
- Space travel
- Mind control, telepathy, telekinesis
- Aliens, extraterrestrial lifeforms, mutants
- Interplanetary warfare
- Parallel universes
- Fictional worlds
- Alternative histories
- Speculative technology
- Super intelligent computers and robots

## Techniques

- Art Direction
- Utilizing simple VFX
- High shutter speed for intense shots
- Cool color tones (silver, metallic color schemes)
- Combining live action elements with images or models/miniatures
- Facial prosthetics
- CGI
- Slow motion/bullet time (shooting different angles same scene at once)
- Motion capture



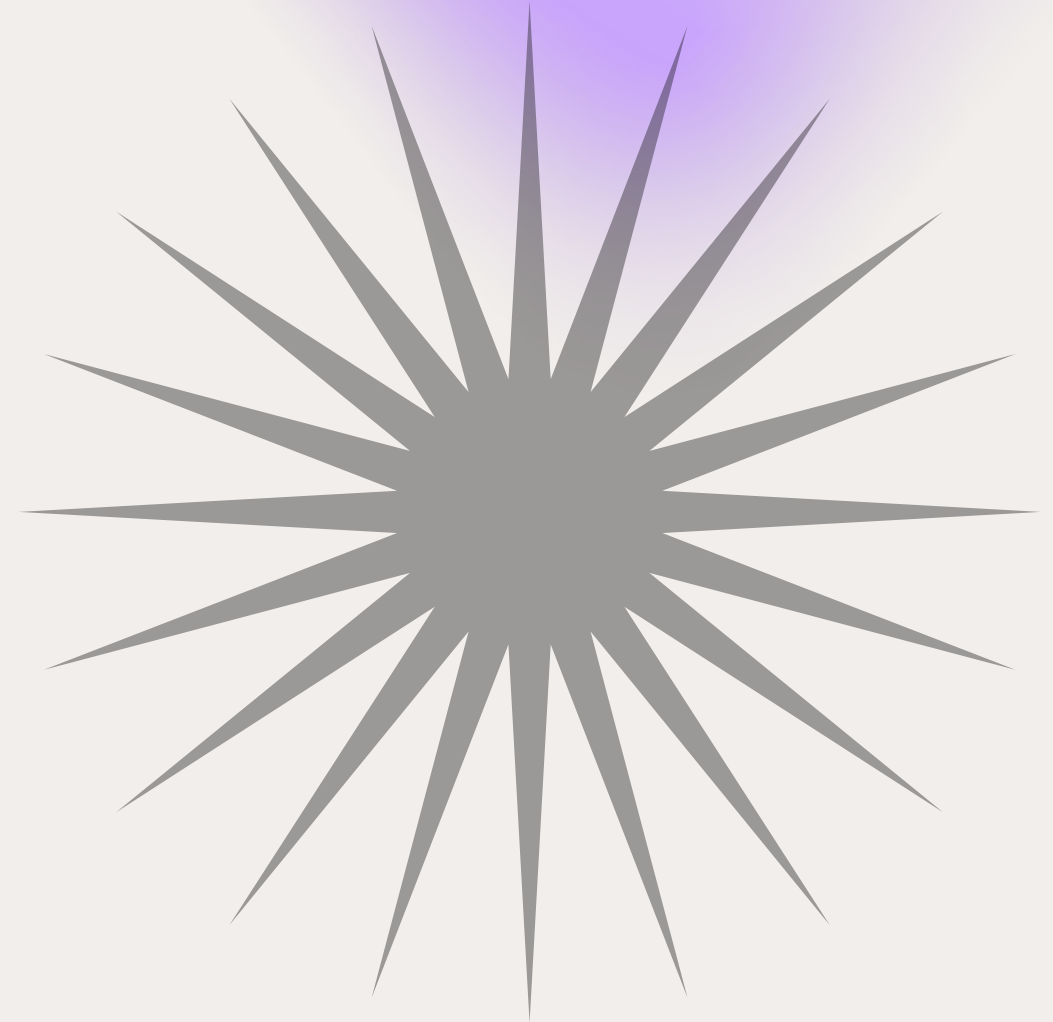
Oblivion  
(2013)

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# Conclusion

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- **The sci-fi genre has been crafted and molded for over 100 years and it's undergone lots of expanding and changing**
- **From fantastical storylines of other planets and unusual creatures to post-apocalyptic Earth**
- **Visual effects advancements have taken complex worlds and universes and made them a reality**
- **Sci-fi will only keep growing and diversify in the future**



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