



WALL•E

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**Directed by:** Andrew Stanton

**Screenplay by:** Andrew Stanton and Jim Reardon

**Original Story by:** Andrew Stanton and Pete Docter

**Original score composed & conducted by:** Thomas Newman

**Voice Cast:** Ben Burtt, Elissa Knight, Jeff Garlin, Fred Willard, John Ratzenberger, Kathy Najimy, Sigourney Weaver

**Rating:** G

**Running Time:** 98 minutes

## Screen Savor Movie Review: Wall•E

Opening June 27

Various theaters

By Kimberly Gadette

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Borrowing from another sci-fi creation, Pixar/Disney has gone "where no man has gone before." A brilliant feat soaring yet sobering whimsy, [Wall•E](#) isn't so much about rebirth as it is about birth itself.

Rather than a biblical Adam, the human spark of life is borne within a solar-powered, trash-compacting machine named "Wall•E" (Waste Allocation Load Lifter Earth-Class). His match is a droid as well, a laser-gun toting prok named "EVE" (Extra-terrestrial Vegetation Evaluator). As for the actual humans? Akin to robots, every last one.

Though it's not compulsory, a working knowledge of *2001*, *Star Wars*, *Blade Runner*, *An Inconvenient Truth* and I'm not kidding, *Hello, Dolly*, will enhance the movie-viewing pleasure. Children may love the varied robots' anti-chases and the wondrous worlds that the filmmakers have created — but at its heart, this film is an adult-based allegory. Perhaps, like a cautionary amusement park sign, there should be a directive stating that one should be 36 inches tall" in order to take full advantage of this particular ride.

And so the ride begins as we zoom in on a desolate Earth, the strains of *Hello, Dolly's* "Put On Your Sunday Clothes" as accompaniment. We hear a tinny voice singing, "Out there...there's a world outside of Yonkers...way out the beyond this hick town, Barnaby, there's a slick town, Barnaby..." And what a hick town Earth has become. Tower-cubed, compacted trash substitute for skyscrapers as we discover that the industrious [Wall•E](#) has been doing his thing — "working to dig you out," per the BnL (Big n Large) corporate slogan — for nearly a millennium.

More than merely operating on automatic pilot, it turns out that [Wall•E](#) has inadvertently benefited from on-the-job training. With his binocular eyes wide open, discarded human objects sharpen his curiosity; violent windstorms increase his survival skills; and a pet cockroach necessitates his interpersonal communication. When probe-an-EVE shows up to search for self-sustaining life, he can barely keep his binoculars in his head. Beautiful and bright

yet remote, EVE's obviously "the one." And [Wall•E](#) instantaneously morphs from lonely guy to amorous suitor.

He follows her, jumping aboard her transport. Where planet Earth is awash in gritty dust and rust, outer space is a twinkling wonder, taken from the '50s NASA imaginings and Disneyland's Tomorrowland. The transport lands on a candy-colored luxury cruise ship floating in outer space, acting as host to thousands of infantile humans. The ship cradles them in high-tech lounge chairs as they scoot along, chattering into headsets, monitors positioned directly in front of the faces. Because of the population's 700-year relocation into space, human muscles have atrophied to the point that walking is fairly impossible. However, their digestive systems are in tip-top shape, due to the parades of plump pastel billboards that pummel them with directives to Eat! Buy! Try a meal in-a-cup!

Like the billboards, writer/director Andrew Stanton blares his message loud and clear: Convenience and comfort above all else isn't life affirming. It's barely all.

Augmenting the stellar visual is Thomas Newman's rich soundtrack, underscoring the action perfectly, while sound/character voice designer Ben Burtt (creator of R2-D2's sounds) lends his stunning expertise to the whole, as well as personally providing [Wall•E's](#) "bot-ty language." With a nod to her first starring role on a spaceship (*Alien*), Sigourney Weaver voices the cruise ship's computer in a marvelous homage to *2001's* Hal. John Ratzenberger continues his unbreakable string of contributions to the Pixar/Disney ventures, making his ninth appearance as a friendly but confused cruise ship passenger. And Jeff Garlin's captain, warm, innocent and personable, makes a great foil for the ship's computer, determined to ultimately, literally, stand his ground.

Like a well-oiled, high-end robot, each frame works in perfect accord with the others — but rather than a coldly functional operation, this film is a spectacular testament to the life force that beats within us all, no matter how isolated or lost it might become along the way.

Andrew Stanton has already received the Best Animated Film Oscar for *Finding Nemo* — yet with this encore, it looks like he's bound for even more global

**Groundbreaking news:** [Wall•E](#) puts the "extra" back in terrestrial.