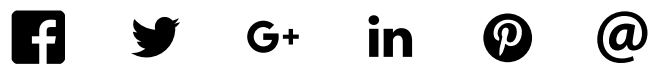


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Movie screening, discussion series of moon landing set for Saturday

- SUBMITTED 8 hrs ago



Saturday's celebration of the 50th anniversary of the first Moon landing, taking place at Western Kentucky University's Hardin Planetarium, features screenings and discussions of excellent but rare, Apollo 11-related films.

The event, which starts at 1 p.m. and continues throughout the day, will be held in the Ogden College Hall auditorium at the corner of State Street and 14th Avenue in Bowling Green. All movies are free to the public and discussion of each movie will follow its screening. It is not required that visitors attend every movie: people can drop in and out over the course of the day. Nearby parking is available free of charge.

The film Apollo 11 came to Nashville this March, including the IMAX screen, but never made it to Bowling Green. There will be one showing of Apollo 11 at 4:45 p.m. Saturday.

Apollo 11 consists of restored and rediscovered footage taken during preparation for the mission and on the trip itself, and provides a powerful sense of Apollo 11's mission from the Earth to the Moon and back again.

Richard Gelderman, Hardin Planetarium's director, was amazed at the emotion and excitement conveyed in this film. He noted as he sat in the audience that "we were all on the edge of our seats, even though we knew good and well how it was going to end."

"It felt a bit like time traveling back to 1969," said Ronn Kistler, Hardin Planetarium's coordinator, "especially with the soundtrack of communications between Mission Control and the crew."

Gelderman remembered, “The audience audibly expressed relief when Armstrong successfully landed the Lunar Module on the Moon moments before it ran out of fuel. During re-entry to the Earth’s atmosphere, there was a cheer from the audience when Armstrong reported back in after the ionization blackout.”

Three episodes of the 1998 HBO special “From the Earth to the Moon” will also be featured during Saturday’s Moon Landing Celebration film screenings and discussions.

The series commences at 1 p.m. with Spider, a presentation of on the backstory of the Lunar Modules. Gelderman provides an enthusiastic review: “This story of the Lunar Module is a magnificent, loveable tale of the creative processes, teamwork, and trial-and-error perseverance from dedicated engineers.”

After the screening of the 2019 feature, Apollo 11, at 2 p.m., the series presents a full length movie, The Dish. Gelderman recommends The Dish: “This 2001 movie is a truly wonderful, witty, though mostly unsung film that reminds us that the moon landing was a global experience.” The movie follows the true story of the three Australians responsible for making sure the Parkes radio telescope successfully received that grainy, black and white TV signal of the first moon walk. With a big smile on his face, Gelderman promised, “The soundtrack captures the time period; the acting and directing are spot on; and the feel good script will captivate you with the triumphs of good people overcoming serious obstacles.”

The series concludes with two episodes of the “From the Earth to the Moon” series.

At 3:45 p.m., Mare Tranquilitatis will be shown. Gelderman observed about this sixth episode, “It has outstanding special effects and gets the viewer involved with the story of people involved in the historic landing and moonwalk at the edge of Mare Tranquilitatis (Sea of Tranquillity).”

At 6:15, the seventh episode, That’s All There Is, concludes the film screening and discussion series. This episode captures the joyful interactions between astronauts on the otherwise anticlimactic Apollo 12 mission. Gelderman observed, “The fun these guys had, including making fun of what is was like to be the follow up act to the first footsteps on the Moon, reminds us how incredible it is that only a dozen humans have stepped onto any planet/moon other than Earth.”

The movie screening and discussing series is part of a larger daylong Moon Landing Celebration which will be taking place Saturday in and around the buildings near the Planetarium and Ogden Hall at the northeast edge of the WKU campus. For more information about ALL the events of the day, visit <https://wku.edu/go/moonlanding>.

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19

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20

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21

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22

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23

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24

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25

FRI
26

SAT
27

SUN
28

