

Director: Peter Hyams

By SHAWN BEHLEN
Staff Writer

The thought of being compared to Stanley Kubrick, says Director Peter Hyams, makes him "scared stiff."

But he says he went ahead and made a sequel to "2001" anyway because he thought he could make "2010" a completely different film.

"I did it because I thought there was a chance to make a film so different from '2001' that it would be difficult to compare them side by side," he says. "I don't think there's a film director around who is as good as Stanley Kubrick, so you can't go into anything thinking you could do it as good as he could. In many ways he is my idol."

"When I saw '2001,' I was 25

years old and I saw that movie and I told someone once that it was like getting a note in a bottle that said, 'Forget everything you have been told. There are no limits. You can do on film whatever you want. The only constraints you will have is your own imagination.'

"That, to me, was positively wonderful. The size of the screen was limitless. The depth was limitless. It so increased my perception of what I wanted to do."

Hyams says "2010" has given him a chance to do two of those things he has always wanted to do.

"One, it was a chance to make a film about the things I find exciting," he says. "Two, it was a chance to make a movie

that didn't aim just for the eyeball, but for the heart as well. I think so often films that are ambitious technically forget about the heart."

Hyams says a major goal of his was to not let the visual effects in "2010" take control of the film.

"The biggest problem with directing a film like this is not to be waylaid by logistics," he says. "You are in fact telling a story. A story about people. Sometimes, in a simple conversation between two people you must deal with technology that requires great concentration."

"The sets, the effects, the lights are all clothing. They are not the story. I think everyone, myself included, is long past the point where they are going

to enjoy a movie that is solely about lavish pieces of plastic floating across the screen. That's not a story."

"I think in some respects this film is the beneficiary of a good eight, nine years of technological advances. During that same time, audiences have become satiated with staring at nothing but pretty images. So, unless there is a compelling story, it doesn't matter how great the effects are."

Hyams says the fact that he wanted an aspect of emotionalism in his film was the main reason he cast Roy Scheider as Dr. Heywood Floyd.

"I wanted this film to be an emotional, personal film about people, not a series of events,"

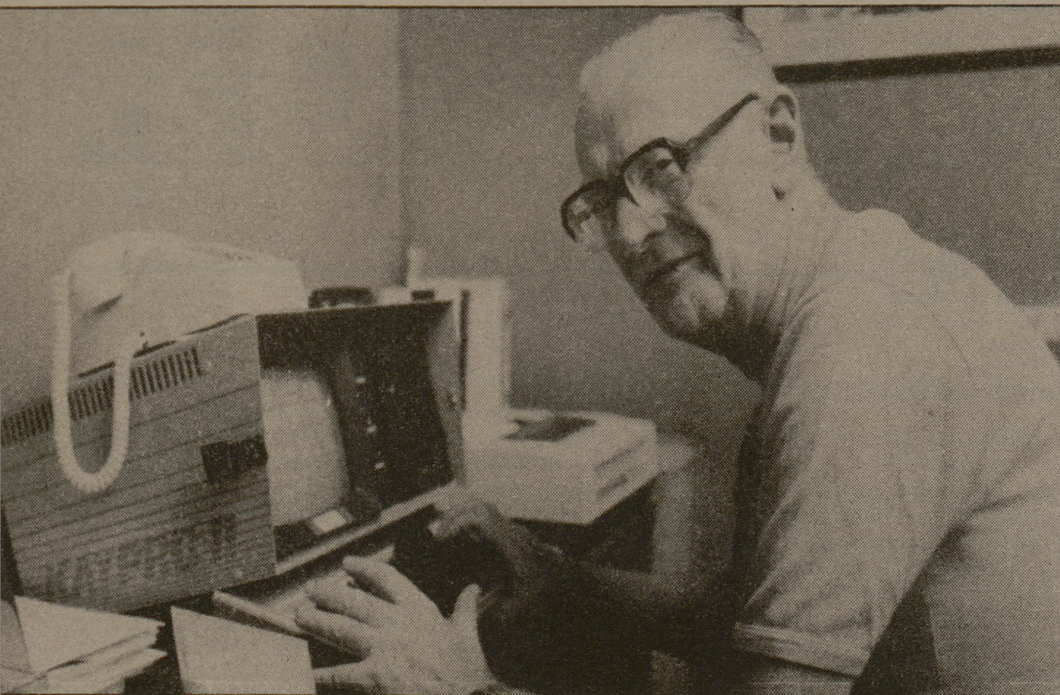
he says. "So, I felt that it was my number one priority to cast this film with the best and strongest actors so they would overpower the effects and the settings."

"Roy Scheider, to me, is one of those very rare actors who manages to be thoroughly believable. His emotions seem very close to the skin so we know what he's feeling. And he's a skillful and strong enough personality on the screen that he can dominate."

Hyams says he counted on getting the actors that were in the film from the very beginning.

"I draw before I write," he

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Novelist Arthur C. Clarke

Actor: Roy Scheider

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He usually plays the hero.

"For some particular reason, I do play a lot of those types," he says.

Scheider says he was attracted to the role of Dr. Heywood Floyd in "2010" because of a good script.

"I thought it was a movie I'd like to see," he says. "That is usually the first criteria I have for a role — would I like to see it?"

And Scheider thought the Floyd character was "fleshed out" well.

"He's the character you see the movie through," he says. "He's the man you take the journey with. He's the man who expresses the audiences'

and every man's anxieties and fears and ambitions and worries about how successful it will be, can it be pulled off, what are the mysteries out there."

"As my character went through the film in 'Jaws,' so does Floyd go through this film."

Scheider as Floyd provides the narration for the film.

"The narration was always in the script," he says. "It was molded and shifted and changed constantly, so what you heard was the end result of a lot of versions. You know, 'How much should we explain, how much should we say?'"

"For my own personal feeling — I don't know if Peter (Hyams) feels this way — we erred on the side of giving too

much information. But I would rather do that than give too little because so much of the first film left people out in space, if you'll forgive the expression. In this film we wanted to make sure we explained things."

Scheider says that he thought "2001" was dazzling, yet one of a kind.

"It was very bold, a real stroke by Kubrick," he says. "There were parts of it I thought were slow and boring, but overall it was an absolutely original and fascinating movie and certainly the kickoff for science fiction."

"But it was the kind of a film you couldn't repeat. The particular social comments, for instance, of making all the charac-

ters as bland and mundane as possible while they hurled through all these galaxies, well, you couldn't do that twice. That's a conceit that will only work once."

So, "2010" is simpler and Scheider says he thinks it will get more of an optimistic response because of that.

"I think they'll get it and I think they'll appreciate it," he says. "It's very uplifting and altruistic."

"It's a mass communicative movie. It's a movie meant to entertain. I think it has to be simple. The adventure itself is complex enough, there's plenty of excitement. You don't want to be too heavy-handed or too intellectual with the message."

That "simple" aspect of

"2010" was chosen by Director Peter Hyams, whom Scheider characterizes as paranoid.

"I think he is obsessed with conspiracies," he says. "If you look at his films, there is always a conspiracy. It's always 'them' doing something, even in this film. It's 'them' who screwed up HAL. Where was Floyd betrayed? What was the plot against the mission going on?"

"And then there's always a kind of morality in Peter's films as well. He could be accused of some of the things Arthur Miller is accused of, a preachy kind of morality in his work."

Even though Scheider liked working with Hyams and enjoyed his role as Floyd, he says

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