



AI (Artificial Intelligence) (2001)

Author: James Murkett

Director: Stephen Spielberg

Screenplay: Steven Spielberg (plus the late Stanley Kubrick)

Starring: Haley Joel Osment, Jude Law, Frances O' Connor, Sam Robards, William Hurt

Summary

In a future where rising sea levels have caused population migration, pregnancy is licensed and humans ('orgas', short for organics) are increasingly dependent upon robots ('mechas', short for mechanics). At a board meeting of Cybertronics, a leading mecha production firm, Professor Hobby (Hurt) suggests a new stage in mecha evolution: the development of a 'perfect simulacrum' of a human, a mecha capable of love. A family is chosen to test 'David' (Osment) - Monica (O'Connor) and Henry (Robards) Swinton - whose own son Martin is critically ill.

David's quest to become a 'real boy' so that 'mommy will love me' echoes Pinocchio. It takes him to a Flesh Fair where enraged orgas burn and destroy mechas for pleasure, to Rouge City where sensual experiences are readily available and eventually to a submerged Manhattan ('the end of the world'). 'Teddy' (a mechanical teddy bear) and Gigolo Joe (Law) - a mecha who exists solely to provide sexual pleasure for females clients - accompany David on these adventures.

Vocabulary

Forebears (antepasados) *make a peep* (echar un vistazo), *limb* (extremidades), *to imprint* (grabar), *conundrum* (enigma), *yearn* (anhelar), *mourn* (lamentar, llorar) *to pee* (hacer "pis"), *flesh* (carne), *shanty town* (suburbio, zona marginal), *peril* (peligro), *tryouts* (pruebas), *girder* (viga), *to poke* (dar un toque), *smooth operator* (mago, alguien que se las sabe todas) *to tuck in* (arropar)

1. MARK TRUE OR FALSE. CORRECT THE FALSE ONES

- a _____ In the not-so-far future the polar ice caps have melted.
- b _____ The resulting raise of the ocean waters has drowned some of the coastal cities of the world.
- c _____ The human race has withdrawn to the interior of the continents.
- d _____ Human race keeps advancing reaching to the point of creating realistic robots.
- e _____ Humans are called Mechas.
- f _____ They are created to obey rules.
- g _____ One of the Mecha-producing companies builds Martin.
- h _____ Martin is an artificial kid which is the first to have real feelings especially a never-ending love for his mother.

i _____ Monica is the woman who adopted him as a substitute for her real son.

j _____ David remains in cryo-stasis stricken by an incurable disease.

K _____ Martin is living happily with Monica and her husband but when their real son returns home after a cure is discovered his life changes dramatically.

2. QUESTIONS

- 1 What separates humans from machines? How does David embody this?
- 2 'I am, I was' (Gigolo Joe's last words). What does this say about existence?
- 3 'the one big thing we can't program is love. Love is untranslatable' (Jude Law). What is true love? Are we capable of truly loving a machine? Is David capable of truly loving?
- 4 What does *A.I.* say about the nature of family? How does it portray the mother and child relationship? Where does this leave Henry?
- 5 Is David treated as a commodity? What warning does this raise about treating our children as commodities?
- 6 'The message perhaps is that if we do create artificial life, we will be responsible for them, we will be their gods' (Jude Law). Do we have a responsibility towards technology we create?
- 7 Why are Mechas excluded? Do you think there is a reference to the Holocaust? Why? Is there significance in the name 'David'?
- 8 What does *A.I.* say about the desire to be better than we are? Why does David desire this?
- 9 Is David aware that he is a machine and not human? Does his view change during the film?
- 10 What are the references to Pinocchio in the film? Who or what does the Blue Fairy symbolise?
- 11 Does David become human at the end of the film? What evidence is there?
- 12 David is rejected for being Mecha. What people today are rejected by society?
- 13 Do you like the ending? Why?

