



# TREASURES FROM THE YALE FILM ARCHIVE

AN ONGOING SERIES OF CLASSIC AND CONTEMPORARY FILMS PRESENTED IN 35MM BY THE YALE FILM STUDY CENTER

WEDNESDAY  
JUNE 22, 2016  
7:00PM • WHITNEY  
HUMANITIES CENTER

# APOLLO 13

PRESENTED WITH SUPPORT FROM  
PAUL L. JOSKOW '70 M.PHIL., '72 PH.D.



New Haven, we have a blockbuster. Director Ron Howard's 1995 historical drama based on the star-crossed Apollo 13 moon mission was avidly embraced by audiences, earning over \$350 million at the box office and becoming the third highest-grossing film of the year. The film was celebrated for its artistry as well as its thrills, earning nine Academy Award nominations with wins for Film Editing and Sound. "APOLLO 13 unfolds with perfect immediacy, drawing viewers into the nail-biting suspense of a spellbinding true story," wrote Janet Maslin. Gene Siskel called the film a "major, rousing, thoroughly professional Hollywood entertainment that will dazzle you with its re-creations of historical events." "While the events of this motion picture may depict NASA's finest hour," claimed James Berardinelli, "the release of APOLLO 13 represents Ron Howard's."



Howard first directed the film's star, Tom Hanks, in *SPLASH* (1984), which provided Hanks's first leading role in a film, and he has since directed him in *THE DA VINCI CODE* (2006) and its sequel *ANGELS & DEMONS* (2009). Hanks was commended for his portrayal of astronaut Jim Lovell, a role that solidified his place as contemporary cinema's "American Everyman, an exemplar of boyish goodwill and moral force," in the words of Dave Kehr. Hanks was drawn to the film by his lifelong fascination with the space program, and remarked, "I've always wanted to play an astronaut. I've always wanted to shoot a vast section of a movie completely encapsulated by nothing but metal, glass, and switches, and I finally have a chance to do that. So this is real dream-come-true stuff here."

NASA granted APOLLO 13 permission to film aboard their KC-135 Zero Gravity Trainer, colloquially known as the Vomit Comet. Used to acclimate astronauts to weightlessness, the aircraft flies in large parabolic arcs, climbing and descending 10,000 feet each minute with alternating zero-g and two-g forces affecting all aboard. The eleven-person cast and crew filmed in the plane for 13 days over a four-week period, going through 612 arcs and recording just under four hours of weightless shots, none much more than 20 seconds in duration. The plane's noisy engines meant audio for these scenes had to be recorded later (note how little the actors speak while floating).

The work on the ground was no less demanding. The production needed three full-size replicas of both the command module and the lunar module, two sets for simultaneous shooting on different soundstages and one set for use on the KC-135. This project was guided by Max Ary of the Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center, who worked from the original Apollo 13 plans and drew upon his own collection of actual Apollo components. The modules needed to look as authentic as possible, but with multiple breakaway parts to allow for flexibility with lighting and camera positions. A team of 45 worked five months to construct the modules, which each contained over 1,100 toggle switches and 1,500 supplemental items like hoses and filters. Most scenes inside the ship were shot on Universal Studios stages that were frequently chilled to 34 degrees and then misted to create the conditions necessary to see the condensation of the actors' breath. Signs describing frostbite symptoms were posted on the stages' walls, and the crew worked in parkas during this 30-day portion of the shoot.

DIRECTED BY **RON HOWARD**  
SCREENPLAY BY **WILLIAM BROYLES, JR.**  
AND **AL REINERT**  
(1995) 140 MINS.

PRODUCED BY **UNIVERSAL PICTURES** AND  
**IMAGINE ENTERTAINMENT**

STARRING **TOM HANKS, BILL PAXTON,**  
**KEVIN BACON, GARY SINISE,**  
**ED HARRIS, KATHLEEN QUINLAN,**  
**XANDER BERKELEY, AND RAY MCKINNON**

**DID YOU KNOW:** RON HOWARD CAST HIS WIFE CHERYL, HIS DAUGHTER BRYCE, HIS BROTHER CLINT, AND HIS FATHER RANCE IN *APOLLO 13*. THE MOST PROMINENT ROLE FOR FAMILY, HOWEVER, WENT TO HIS MOTHER JEAN SPEEGLE HOWARD, WHO PLAYS JIM LOVELL'S MOTHER BLANCHE. HE HAD PREVIOUSLY DIRECTED JEAN IN *OLD PAINT* (HIS 8-MINUTE DIRECTING DEBUT MADE WHEN HE WAS 15), *COCOON*, *GUNG HO*, AND *THE PAPER*. THE PAIR ALSO WORKED TOGETHER ON CAMERA AS HUCK AND THE WIDOW DAVIS IN THE 1975 TV MOVIE *HUCKLEBERRY FINN*.

**NEXT UP:** TREASURES IS TAKING JULY AND AUGUST OFF. JOIN US AS WE KICK OFF THE THIRD SEASON OF **TREASURES FROM THE YALE FILM ARCHIVE** IN SEPTEMBER, WITH ANOTHER YEAR OF SPECIAL PRESERVATION PREMIERES, MODERN CLASSICS, AND WORLD CINEMA FROM THE YALE VAULTS.