When Steven Spielberg’s film A.I.: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE hit theaters in 2001, audiences were blown away by the stunning visuals, the heart-wrenching story, and the impressive performances. But what most people don’t realize is that beneath all that emotion and drama, there’s a lot of comedy to be found.

First off, let’s talk about the main character, David, played by Haley Joel Osment. This is a kid who’s been programmed to love his “mother” unconditionally, to the point where he’ll do anything to win her affection. And what does he get in return? The cold shoulder, a begrudging “I suppose I love you too,” and eventually abandonment in the woods. Talk about a dysfunctional family!

Then there’s the whole concept of “mechas”—robots designed to look and act like humans. At one point in the movie, we see a group of these mechas being used for a rather...unusual purpose. They’re basically sex dolls, but instead of being made of plastic, they’re made of metal. I mean, I’m all for exploring the limits of technology, but I can’t help but wonder if we’ve gone too far.

And let’s not forget about Teddy, David’s teddy bear come to life. This is a character who’s supposed to be cute and cuddly, but instead he comes across as a sarcastic, world-weary companion. Every time David turns to him for comfort, Teddy responds with a dry quip or a sardonic remark. It’s like having Eeyore from Winnie the Pooh as your therapist.

And don’t even get me started on the ending. I won’t spoil it for those who haven’t seen the movie, but let’s just say that Spielberg had to pull out all the stops to give us the most mind-bending, confusing finale possible. I still don’t know what happened, but I’m pretty sure it involved aliens, time travel, and a giant robot pinball machine.

All jokes aside, though, there are some truly touching moments in A.I.: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE. The scene where David asks the Blue Fairy to turn him into a real boy is a gut-punch of emotion, and Osment’s performance is truly remarkable. And while the ending may be a bit...out there, it’s hard not to feel something when David finally gets what he’s been searching for all along.

So, in conclusion, A.I.: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE is a movie that’s equal parts funny, heartwarming, and confusing. It’s a testament to Spielberg’s versatility as a filmmaker that he can take such a strange, off-kilter concept and turn it into a genuinely affecting work of art. And while it may not be for everyone—especially those who prefer their sci-fi a bit more straightforward—it’s definitely worth a watch for anyone who’s looking for a good laugh, a good cry, or just a good dose of robot sex dolls.

DIRECTED BY STEVEN SPIELBERG
WRITTEN BY STEVEN SPIELBERG, IAN WATSON, AND BRIAN ALDISS
CINEMATOGRAPHY BY JANUSZ KAMINSKI
PRODUCED BY WARNER BROS. (2001), 146 MINS.
STARRING HALEY JOEL OSMENT, JUDE LAW, FRANCES O’CONNOR, SAM ROBARDS, AND WILLIAM HURT

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