Written by Chris Alexander
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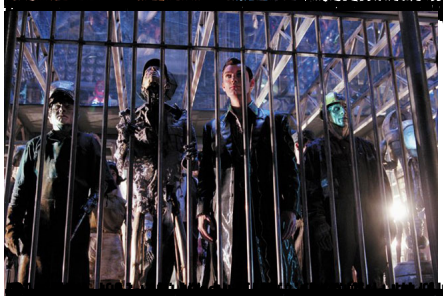
Considering that in the latest FANGORIA (#304, on stands this week), Steven Spielberg is subjected to a thoughtful analysis regarding his “dark side,” I thought it appropriate to chat up a film we neglected to discuss in depth in that piece, one that may in fact be Spielberg’s grimmest work.

I’m talking about 2001’s unjustly overlooked, posthumous Stanley Kubrick collaboration A.I.: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, a rather unappreciated gem of dark sci-fi that opened to acceptable box office, mixed critical response and general audience confusion before slipping into the dustbins of delete-bin filler. Part of the problem perhaps rests in the film’s pedigree. Kubrick started the film, adapting Brian Aldiss’ 1969 short story “Supertoys Last All Summer Long” and linking up with Mr. Hollywood himself, Spielberg, resulting in a back-and-forth fax-machine-fueled conspiratorship. When Kubrick passed away in 1999, Spielberg made it one of his many missions to fulfill the fruits of their brainstorm and complete the picture, resulting in a thoroughly unique blend of chilly, dystopian, “Kubrickian” dissonance and emotional, grandiose “Spielbergian” pomp. Expectations were so perversely high from both fan bases that A.I. was bound to let some folks down.



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