

Phoenix Encores

“The Appearance of Man”

A Film Written, Produced, and Directed by Daniel Pace



Story by Larry Lowe
of The Phoenix UFO Examiner



Daniel Pace

"*The Appearance of a Man*" was called to encore after a one week premier Arizona run left many Arizona UFO students wanting a second look. The psychological study has all the earmarks of a sleeper hit. A reprise screening for the local UFO community took place

October 7, 2009 in coordination with the Phoenix UFO Examiner and Phoenix MUFON.

Inspired by the March 1997 episode of UFO sightings that swept over Arizona, the award winning film concluded its 9/11 run at the Valley Art Theater in

Tempe with attendance increasing despite markedly mixed initial reviews. Delayed reaction to the subconscious impact of the film built box office to surprising levels, but many in the UFO community missed the chance to see what all the buzz is about.

Preview critical response to the film varied directly with the preconception of the reviewer. The sometimes cryptic independent production was thoughtlessly demeaned by the Arizona Republic and unflinchingly praised by the UFO Digest. In ultimate fairness, it deserved neither—although the positive remarks by the Digest come much closer to an accurate assessment of the film.

The Republic refused to review the work until pressed by Harkins management and then turned in a desultory hatchet job aimed more at dismissing the concept of unidentified lights in the sky as alien-life-that-can-not-be-visiting-us than at the film itself. The review unwittingly exemplifies the point it does not get: reflexive fear or denial of the unknown is



Daniel Pace, left discusses human origins with Maurizio Baiata.

[Photo: L Lowe]

what man must overcome if meaningful open contact with advance beings is to occur. Reviewer Kerry Lengel said in part:

"Attention aliens, angels and any other supernatural visitors:

Just park your spaceship or your inter-dimensional chariot on the White House lawn, call up CNN and say hi....rescue us from the sort of mushy-headed New Age musings that masquerade as a story in "The Appearance of a Man."

The latest example is even worse than it sounds because, although it's very, very bad, it's not bad in a fun-to-make-fun-of way that would let you improvise your own version of "Mystery Science Theater 3000." Instead, it's a ufologists' variant of "The Da Vinci Code," except without all the action and faux scholarship. That leaves little more than flat dialogue and overdone atmospherics - ominous drumbeats, ostentatious camera angles and a long sequence of surreal special effects that rip off "2001: A Space Odyssey." — The Arizona Republic

Lengel's specious call for the mythical White House landing as recompense for his inability to consider, much less accept, the premise of the film explains why said landing has yet to occur—western consensus media is ill-prepared for such an event and whatever is behind the UFO phenomenon knows it. The body politic and the consensus media in this country have yet to come to grips with

an event of the magnitude of the Phoenix Lights, so they are in no position to be asking for a formal landing on the south lawn. Implicit in Lengel's request is a comforting self-assurance that it is impossible. He might be surprised.

In another preview, UFO Digest reviewer Robert Morningstar praised the value of the film to the UFO student as well as its powerful look. It is, he wrote:

"...a most compelling work that boldly explores a unique perspective on UFOs. It is a special achievement, reflecting much research, soul searching and a profound dedication to the artistic process.

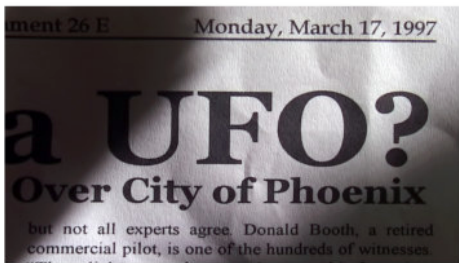
The colors, composition and intimacy of the cinematography convey true visual beauty. The images are unusually alive - vital as a storyteller, expressing much through adventurous perspectives and wordless intervals. Remarkably, the film flows with centeredness and peace, despite an ever-present intimation of a potentially frightful and awe-inspiring Unknown." — UFO Digest

The UFO community's embrace of the work is a surprise to film maker Pace, who is quick to point out that he never intended to make a UFO film, nor appeal specifically to the UFO community. In truth, the work may be more an act of religious



rebellion than alien revelation, although the two themes are intertwined as tightly as the threads of a Navaho rug.

Those who caught the film's first engagement and understand something of what inspired the script had for the most part a positive reaction, although some proponents of open contact with advanced beings were put off by violence in the film.



Open Minds Magazine editor Maurizio Baiata, among a sell-

out crowd at the opening night premiere, found the movie "a wonderful and profound film". Baiata, whose experience in the field of UFO phenomenon goes back decades, could see where Pace was going:

"[It is] a movie with no easy path to follow, unless you're really deeply involved with the issue of the alien contact and you have already realized that the complexity of "their" intervention can be traced to the beginning of mankind. This is what brings the director Daniel Pace and his excellent cast to the night of the Phoenix Lights as the trigger point of transformation. The director's no-frills magic act begins with the realization that contact

begins when even a simple light appears in the sky. When a human consciousness at the other end of that contact is fully activated, its destiny is changed forever. Even if, as several characters demonstrate, he [the contactee] does not understand why and how he is given this gift from the Stars."

– Maurizio Baiata, Open Minds Magazine

Dr. Lynne Kitei has an advantage in that she was witness to the lights in the sky that inspired the film. Her life was transformed by the amber orbs that presented themselves before, during and after the March 13, 1997 sightings wave. Her response to them is a spectrum-shifted reflection of

that of Pace's priest. While initially compelled by fear – of what others might think, not of the unknown lights—to remain anonymous, Dr. Kitei eventually published a book and a DVD inspired by her transition from skeptic to someone convinced we are not as alone as we like to think. It's worth noting that Kitei has never made the assertion that 'aliens' were involved. All she has ever tried to document is that something unknown happened that night.

“It is compelling that the still-unexplained Phoenix Lights mass UFO event has inspired others to explore the unknown, whether they experienced it or not. For over 12 years, this truly anomalous happening has left thousands with questions. The more intriguing

ones are explored in this convoluted journey into the unknown. What are reality, time, consciousness, belief systems and intent? How do these poignant energies effect each individual? Are they inter-related? Are we interconnected? There is surely a growing audience that will appreciate the challenge to our psyche presented in "The Appearance of a Man".” – Dr. Lynne Kitei, Author, The Phoenix Lights

The value of "The Appearance of a Man" is beyond mere UFO denial or advocacy, but if you want me to skip the plot synopsis and get the bottom line: See this movie if you get the chance and have the nerve. The Phoenix Lights are not the star of the film, nor even the co-

star. Fleeting glimpses, they are what Hitchcock called the McGuffin, a curious detail that serves to propel the movie, but is not what the story is really about. Given a bit of creative revision, Pace's McGuffin could as just as easily have been the Hudson Valley sightings, the events at Skinwalker ranch, the apparition at Fatima or the appearance of the angel Moroni to Joseph Smith.

“The Appearance of a Man” is about the transformation of consciousness, reflexive fear of the unknown, the unrealized nature of reality and the transcendence of time given a different cognitive framework with which to perceive it. All of which may be connected to an imminent discontinuity of history as foretold by both the

Reprinted by permission from the Phoenix UFO Examiner, ©2009 Larry D. Lowe





**2000 YEARS AGO
THEY CALLED THEM ANGELS
TODAY THEY CALL THEM
ALIENS**

**THE APPEARANCE OF A
MAN**
DECODING THE PHOENIX LIGHTS MYSTERY

WRITTEN/DIRECTED BY **DANIEL PACE**
THOMAS BASHAM
MUSIC BY **PAUL CRISTO**

PRODUCED BY **DANIEL PACE** AND **MICHAEL TASSONI**
RICHARD GLOVER ASSISTANT DIRECTOR **BILLY JEAN**
DIRECTORS OF PHOTOGRAPHY **DANIEL PACE** AND **VINCE PASCOE**

STARRING **MICHAEL TASSONI** **SLADE HALL**
CHIEF LIGHTING ENGINEER **GEOFF NANGLE**
A **XAURA FILMS** PRODUCTION



WWW.THEAPPEARANCEOFAMAN.COM

The JOURNAL of ANOMALOUS SCIENCES

ancient Mayan calendar and the latter-day drug-induced Terrence McKenna conception of Time Wave Zero—both of which rather inexplicably conclude upon the winter solstice of December 21, 2012. That discontinuity—perhaps a result of mass transformation—is foreshadowed at the film's conclusion.

On the surface—which is to say as it appears to the analytical left-brain aspects of the mind—the film suffers from several defects endemic to independent production. A modest budget presumably precluded special effects that would have increased continuity. The spontaneous self-healing that occurs in the desert is implied rather than depicted, for example. Budget or no budget, Pace admittedly left more to the imagination than he explained visually—his goal was to inspire thought and discussion, not to preach gospel. He is not a UFO experimenter and this is not a UFO film.

The lack of commercial formula induced by studio management leaves writer/director/producer Pace free to indulge his vision to the limits of his ability and budget—and the limits of the ability of the audience to maintain focus. I saw one bewildered patron simply get up and walk out of

the theater in mid-movie, unable to handle the protracted prelude to the film's unexpectedly uplifting conclusion. The film can be starkly inexplicable at times and it is by no means an action packed roller coaster of a good ride. But then, neither is a close encounter of the third kind.

The impact of the movie takes place in the subconscious, intuitive right-brain nuance of the psyche, where the true genius of the work is revealed: Daniel Pace has crafted an experience equivalent to a true UFO encounter that can be had for the price of a movie ticket in the comparative safety of the movie theater, where we knowingly suspend disbelief, relying on the implied safety belt that we will regain disbelief upon emerging from the darkness into the light and our comfortable reality.

If you truly experience this film, chances are you will not emerge into the same reality from which you entered the theater. The challenge to the psyche mirrors that of seeing a mile-wide V-shaped craft floating overhead in abject silence—minus the UFO witnesses' personal conviction that the object observed is really real.

It is thirty minutes in before the protagonist's mentor asks the question that drives the film and sets the plot, such as it is, truly

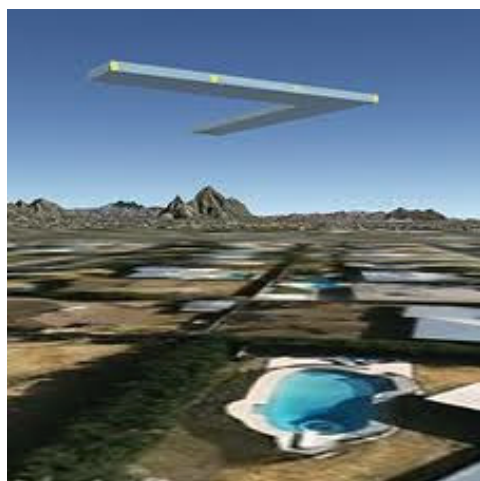
in motion. "What do we know of the reality around us that we cannot see?" asks Father Daniel, noting that radio, television and cell phone calls fill the air around us on a daily basis and yet are invisible until detectors are used to translate them into sight and sound we can perceive.

What else remains unseen, immeasurable and unknown by science? Can it be that consciousness itself is one of the unrealized forces that are the missing factors in the search for unified field theory? Can it be a force that manipulates 'reality' directly? If so, can we learn to do so by revising our belief systems? If we did, would we be less human and more like God? Or would we be more truly human if we were more god-like?

Pace, raised a Catholic in Argentina, of full-blood Italian lineage, is determined to put doctrinaire religion in perspective in a world which includes evident miracles such as reported in March of 1997. The movie's protagonist is a pragmatic activist priest committed to ends regardless of means and bound more by his own unwavering code of ethics than the political expediencies of his ecumenical upper management.

When Father Michael, played by Michael Tassoni, starts to

have visions in the wake of his unrealized direct encounter with whatever force presented the Phoenix Lights, he begins to transcend the limitations of consensual humanity and becomes closer to the advanced being who wanders amid the interwoven plot-lines to appear—depending upon how much of the subtext you get at any point—as human, alien or angel



of God. As this process unfolds, Father Michael succumbs to fear of the unknown and lashes out before realizing the altered reality he now lives in is a by-product of enhanced consciousness—the 'gift from the stars' to which Baiata refers. Eventually his psychic skills, not unlike those attributed to religious entities, get him kicked out of the church he was determined to serve.

The cast is rounded out by supporting characters connected only by the appearance of the man-angel and a box that holds the secrets of time.

One is a Vietnam veteran who lives ceaselessly in his own past and is forced to make a crucial decision between the path of chance and the path of choice. Having elected to take the path of choice, he finally confronts the past he cannot recover. Another lost human soul is an amoral thief who steals Pandora's Box from a dying man, only to be visited by his ghost before committing a particularly gruesome suicide. Another is the box itself, which contains the long hidden prophecy of events which unfold as foretold. Buried in the finale is the complete text of the Coptic version of the book of Thomas, for reasons I'll leave you to determine for yourself.

The conclusion involves the kind of mind-blowing impossibility of time manipulation known only to investigators who dig deeply into the nuances of UFO cases which are difficult to get witnesses to recount and are seldom published. The image of the fetus, for the record, was not a stylistic homage to Stanley Kubrick's 2001, which it predictably invokes, but the symbol of the ex-priest's return to his mortal origin, signifying the question posed earlier by the enigmatic angel/alien: "Do you remember what you looked like before you were born?"

And that is the heart of it. The film forces the engaged viewer

to consider that they may be energetic consciousness trapped in an illusion of 3-D reality. Depending upon how firm in the certainty of physical existence you are when you walk into the theater, you will walk out subconsciously disquieted by the possibility that reality is but the dream we live within while awake, and that any sufficiently advanced being, call it spiritual or alien, might walk among us unrealized, performing everyday miracles.

The secret of the movie is hidden in plain sight. The title can be found in the words of Daniel 8:15: 'And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as *the appearance of a man.*' Give or take the wording of various versions, this passage presents the ability of God to project itself into our reality as an ordinary human.

If you were an ordinary human living 2000 years ago, an alien entity with that ability would be indistinguishable from God. From such events religions can grow. If aliens have been doing such things for over two millennia, is it not reasonable to consider them, then, not so much alien as part of our natural environment? In so doing, we'd have to admit that, at least in part, the supernatural is actually the natural and that 'reality'

[Continued on Page 83]

“The Mayan Prophecy” [Continued from Page 33]

bodies overhead. The background is our Milky Way as it will appear with the Sun in perfect alignment with the center of our galaxy, and what planets will be in frame as they align over the ancient ruins of Chichen Itza—a beautiful celestial show of cosmic proportions and mathematical precision.

In this rendering, take notice the Sun rising over the temple at the top of the Kukulcan Pyramid as the planets Mercury and Venus lead it to the total eclipse with our galactic core at the top of the pyramid. It is a matutine (a star or planet that rises before the Sun in the morning) task that announces the prophetic return of the god Quetzalcoatl (or Kukulcan in Maya,) as the new cycle begins the 'Golden Age' according to the Mayan Prophecy (marking the end of its calendar as prophecy). The Mayans believed it to be their Lord Pakal Ahau preparing mankind for the coming of new consciousness.

This author believes, and I'm going to borrow a line from the movie, *2001 A Space Odyssey*, "Something wonderful is going to happen." Just what it is, I have no idea. But what I do know, like any child that has been reprimanded by a parent, we're not going to like it, even though in the long-run it will be for our own good. 🙄

“The Appearance of a Man” [Continued from Page 43]

includes things the western secular mind considers unreal. The distinction between alien, ghost and god then blurs into what Paul Von Ward calls an 'advanced being', lacking only consensual acceptance of academia, the body politic and the media to be accepted as a part of our reality that we can deal with.

It's the denial that keeps the phenomenon 'unknown'. The knowable is as clear as the trail of evidence that leads all the way back to the bible. The unknowing is as clear as the opening line of Lengel's review.

“*The Appearance of a Man*” joins “*Solaris*” (the George Clooney/Steven Soderbergh version) and “*The Lathe of Heaven*” (the James Cann/Philip Hass version) in forcing the viewer to confront threatening questions about what constitutes human reality in the first place and how we can know if we are in it or not.

“*The Appearance of a Man*” is more challenging than entertaining, to be sure. That the movie succeeds so admirably in capturing the enigmatic ambiguity of the phenomenon it springs from is a remarkable achievement. This is all the more so because, in the end, Pace suggests that whatever is behind the sorely misunderstood UFO phenomenon is simply a wondrous and marginally perceived aspect of a natural occurrence – a form of consciousness in effect since the inception of mankind. 🙄

