

Television: **DOCS & TALKS** HIGHLIGHT: **FLY ME TO THE MOON**

HENRIETTA WALMARK

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What happened to the "giant leap for mankind" swell of goodwill that united the planet after an astronaut first set foot on the moon in 1969?

Like the moon, the goodwill waned. And like the inconstant moon, it's waxing again, according to this whimsical celebration of the achievement 40 years ago. Filmmaker John Curtin is playful as he draws us into his orbit of lunar miscellany. A fellow Montrealer, musician Gregory Charles, intermittently serenades the viewer with Fly Me to the Moon (In Other Words), That's Amore - "When the moon hits your eye like a big pizza pie" - and Age of Aquarius - "When the moon is in the seventh house" - as well as Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata.

Moon nuggets include the synchronicity of menstrual and lunar cycles; the moon as hunter's aid and navigational guide; its faint blue glow as trigger for Earth's largest spawning orgy; the moon's influence on the stories of H.G. Wells and Jules Verne; its association with everything from Dracula to Michael Jackson, romantic love to witchcraft; and its role in good old-fashioned lunacy.

For all its fascinating facts and fun, the film is at its best when it returns to the forgotten promise of the moon. Astronauts are training to return to the moon within the decade. A permanent lunar settlement is to be built by 2024. Private interests are egging on the private sector with multimillion-dollar prizes for lunar exploration. One businessman even envisions the moon as the ultimate solar panel.