



## DVD: Apollo 11 - The Eagle Has Landed (2004)

**Review Rating:** Very Good

**Label/Studio:** Classic Home Entertainment / MVD Visual

**Catalog #:** DVD- 5018X

**Region:** 1 (NTSC)

**Released:** April 26, 2005

**Genre:** Documentary

**Synopsis:** Documentary of Man's first landing on the moon using nothing but archival stills, film, and audio from the original mission.

**Directed by:** Robert Garofalo

**Edited by:** Michael Dunne

**Music by:** n/a

**Produced by:** Lyn Beardsall

**Cast:** Narrated by Tom Baker

**Film Length:** 92 mins.

**Colour:**

**Languages:** English Dolby and DTS 5.1, English Dolby Stereo 2.0

**Subtitles:**

**Process/Ratio:** 1.33:1

**Anamorphic DVD:** No

### Special Features :

Featurette: "Remembering Apollo 11: A Talk with Michael Collins and Jim McDivitt" (14:23)

### Comments :

Prior to getting into the events of man's first lunar landing in 1969, Robert Garofalo's doc begins with a sizeable recap of man's efforts to propel objects into the sky using pyrotechnic powders and fluids, beginning with Chinese fireworks, moving through Hitler's killer [V2 rocket program](#), and Werner von Braun's involvement with America's space program.

Narrated by Tom Baker (BBC-TV's **Dr. Who**) in a sometimes morose tenor, the remaining 80 mins. dig into NASA's determined efforts to send a man into space.

John Glenn's remarkable history-making flight in 1963 is seen via onboard cameras with sync sound, and includes footage of Glenn and the NASA technicians as the astronaut waits on the launch pad, the rocket being blasted into the sky, and Glenn's flight which made him the first man to orbit the Earth.

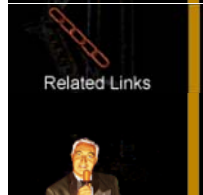
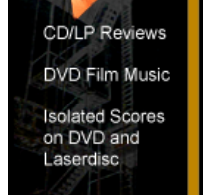
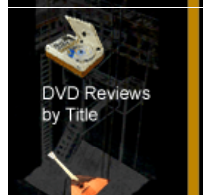
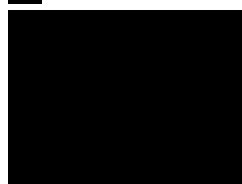
There's a nod to subsequent missions (including the ill-fated Apollo 1, where Gus Grissom, Roger Chaffey, and Ed White died in a massive capsule fire), but the final hour concentrates on the Apollo 11 crew, with ample footage of the rocket launch, stage separations from very cool vantages, docking with the lunar landing module (branded the LEM), orbiting around the moon, and the slow



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and steady route taken by astronauts Buzz Aldrin and Niel Armstrong in the LEM to land on the moon, while Michael Collins remained in the mother ship.

Seen countless times in news reports and space docs, it's still mind-blowing to watch long chunks of unedited footage as the craft glides over the pock-marked landscape and settles into the lunar sand, followed by the astronauts as they make their first footprints after peering outside through the LEM's windows. Equally moving is the astronauts' return to the mother ship, with the moon seen from canted angles as the astronauts make their flight home.

Unlike his follow-up doc, [Apollo 13 – Houston: We've Had a Problem](#), director Robert Garofalo couldn't solely rely on the archival communication recordings between astronauts and NASA technicians, but Tom Baker's connective narration does a good job in conveying the Apollo program's chronology.

The sound design enhances the footage for a stereo and two 5.1 mixes, and the music score, while a bit heavy on new age, ethereal ambient wonderment, hits the right marks a few times, particularly during the lunar landing. Garofalo's use of archival footage is quite vivid, and includes mission footage, plus some vintage NASA animation, and some fascinating test footage of early launches, space walks, mock-ups, docking tests with the LEM, splash-downs, and some fascinating footage of "the angry alligator" - an ultimately clumsy docking prototype whose petals were supposed to open in unison to allow a Gemini craft to dock, and is perhaps best-remembered by moviegoers in the prologue of first space-themed the James Bond actioner, **You Only Live Twice** (1967).

The excerpted oration by astronauts Michael Collins and Jim McDivitt is apparently taken from a 20th anniversary conference - likely around 1989 - which has both men reflecting upon their mission to the moon with great affection and wit, and a funny anecdote about how a TV camera was 'given' to them before lift-off. Each of the two astronauts uses a trio of images to illustrate their good fortune in taking stills of the landing, and of the various sites that were used for Apollo missions 11,12, 14 thru 17.

Highly engrossing.

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