J-Walt
Master of the Metaverse, Spontaneous Fantasia/United States

J-Walt is an interactive designer, performer, graphic artist, music composer and VR pioneer. He has been at the forefront of interactive art and computer performance, expanding computer animation into uncharted territories for over 25 years.

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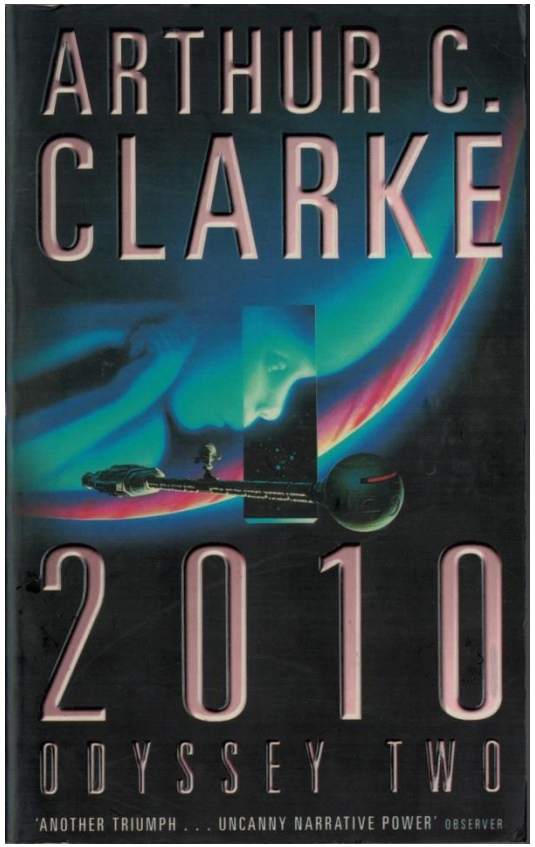
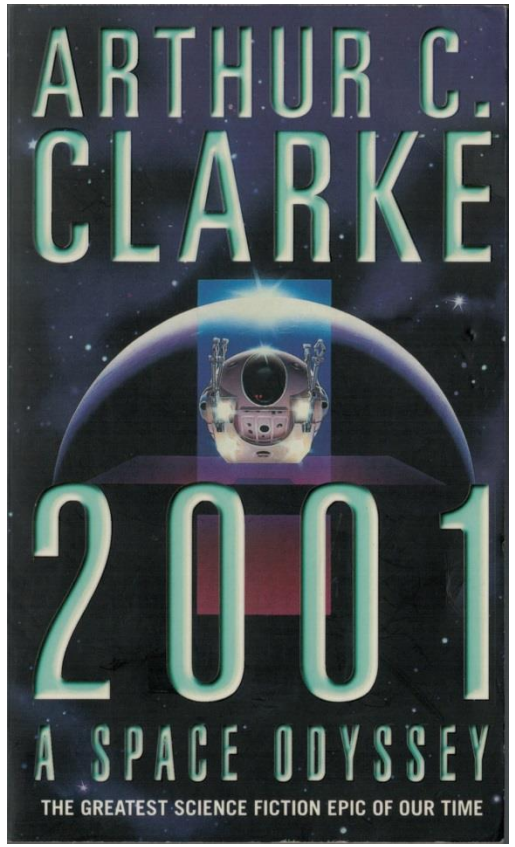
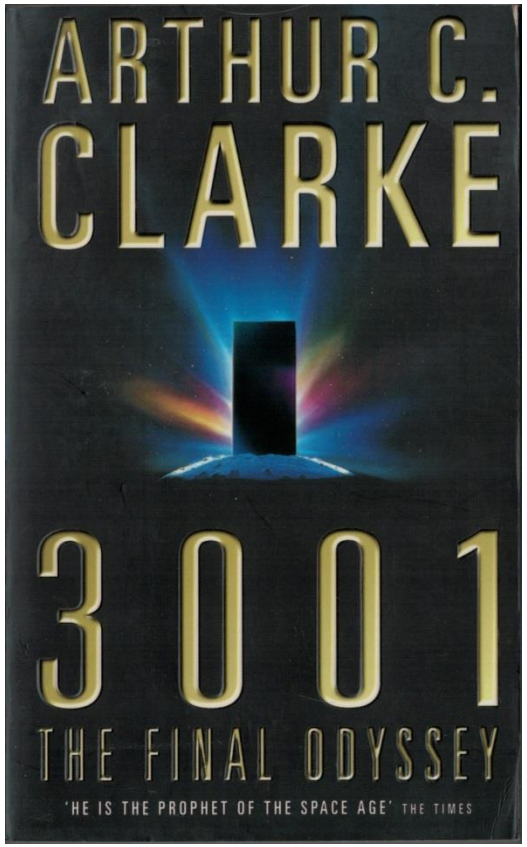
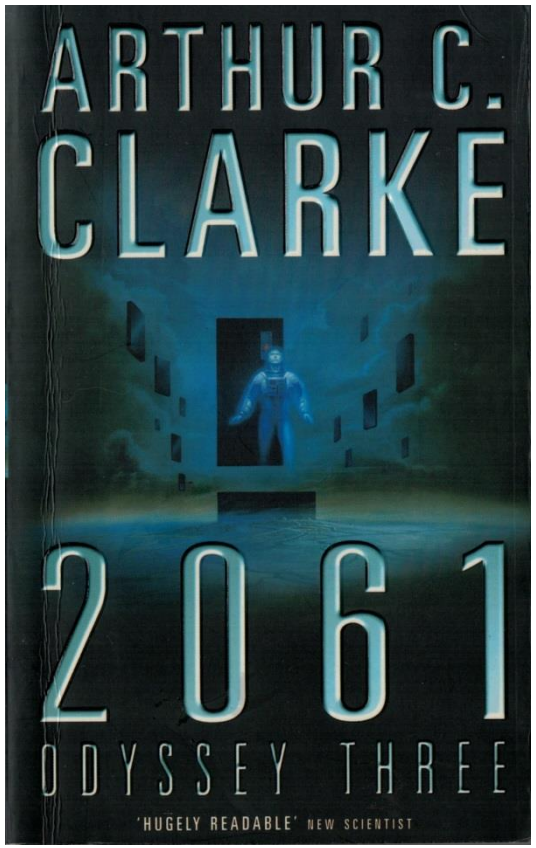
The Future

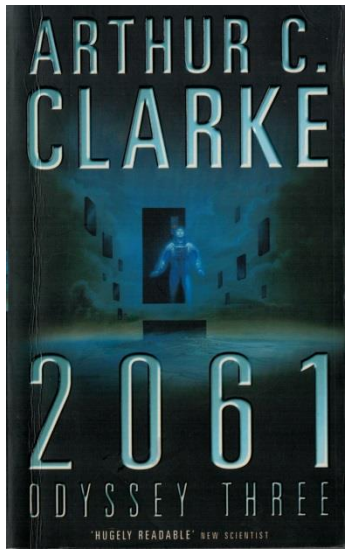








Arthur C. Clarke



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BY THE SAME AUTHOR

2001 A Space Odyssey
2010 Odyssey Two
3001 Final Odyssey
Islands in the Sky
Prelude to Space
Against the Fall of Night
The Sands of Mars
Childhood's End
Expeditions to Earth
Earthlight
Reach for Tomorrow
The City and the Stars
Tales from the 'White Hart'
The Deep Range
The Other Side of the Sky
A Fall of Moondust
Tales of Ten Worlds
Dolphin Island
Glide Path
The Lion of Comarre
The Nine Billion Names of God
The Lost Worlds of 2001
The Wind From the Sun
Rendezvous with Rama
Imperial Earth
The Fountains of Paradise
1984: Spring
The Sentinel
The Songs of Distant Earth
Cradle (with Gentry Lee)
Rama II (with Gentry Lee)
Trigger (with Michael Kube-McDowell)
Greeting, Carbon Based Bipeds

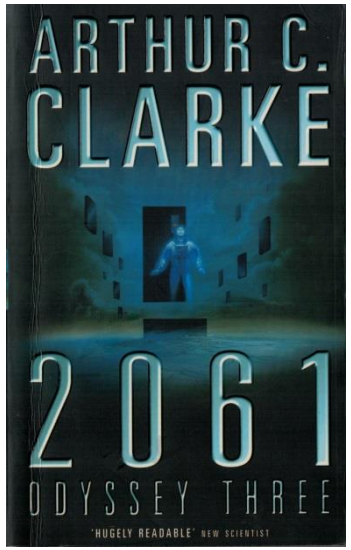
Voyager

ARTHUR C. CLARKE

2061

Odyssey Three

HarperCollins*Publishers*



Numbers one and two were free. Number three cost a million sols. Number four was two million. Number five was four million, and so on. The fact that, in theory, there were no capitalists in the People's Republic was cheerfully ignored.

Young Mr Tsung (that was years, of course, before King Edward gave him his KBE) never revealed if he had any target in mind; he was still a fairly poor millionaire when his fifth child was born. But he was still only forty, and when the purchase of Hong Kong did not take quite as much of his capital as he had feared, he discovered that he had a considerable amount of small change in hand.

So ran the legend – but, like many other stories about Sir Lawrence, it was hard to distinguish fact from mythology. There was certainly no truth in the persistent rumour that he had made his first fortune through the famous shoe-box-sized pirate edition of the Library of Congress. The whole Molecular Memory Module racket was an off-Earth operation, made possible by the United States' failure to sign the Lunar Treaty.

Even though Sir Lawrence was not a multi-trillionaire, the complex of corporations he had built up made him the greatest financial power on earth – no small achievement for the son of a humble video-cassette pedlar in what was still known as the New Territories. He probably never noticed the eight million for Child Number Six, or even the thirty-two for Number Eight. The sixty-four he had to advance on Number Nine attracted world publicity, and after Number Ten the bets placed on his future plans may well have exceeded the two hundred and fifty-six

million the next child would have cost him. However, at that point the Lady Jasmine, who combined the best properties of steel and silk in exquisite proportion, decided that the Tsung dynasty was adequately established.

It was quite by chance (if there is such a thing) that Sir Lawrence became personally involved in the space business. He had, of course, extensive maritime and aeronautical interests, but these were handled by his five sons and their associates. Sir Lawrence's real love was communications – newspapers (those few that were left), books, magazines (paper and electronic) and, above all, the global television networks.

Then he had bought the magnificent old Peninsular Hotel, which to a poor Chinese boy had once seemed the very symbol of wealth and power, and turned it into his residence and main office. He surrounded it by a beautiful park, by the simple expedient of pushing the huge shopping centres underground (his newly formed Laser Excavation Corporation made a fortune in the process, and set a precedent for many other cities).

One day, as he was admiring the unparalleled skyline of the city across the harbour, he decided that a further improvement was necessary. The view from the lower floors of the Peninsular had been blocked for decades by a large building looking like a squashed golfball. This, Sir Lawrence decided, would have to go.

The Director of the Hong Kong Planetarium – widely considered to be among the five best in the world – had other ideas, and very soon Sir Lawrence

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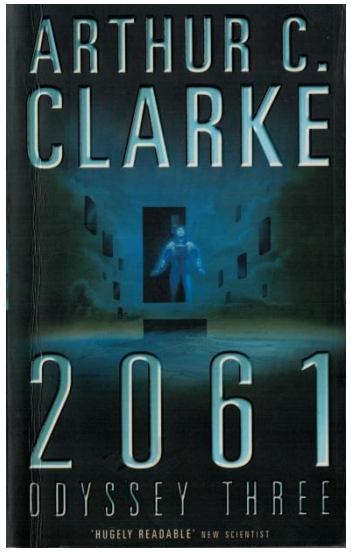

was delighted to discover someone he could not buy at any price. The two men became firm friends; but when Dr Hessenstein arranged a special presentation for Sir Lawrence's sixtieth birthday, he did not know that he would help to change the history of the Solar System.

5
Out of the Ice

More than a hundred years after Zeiss had built the first prototype in Jena in 1924, there were still a few optical planetarium projectors in use, looming dramatically over their audiences. But Hong Kong had retired its third-generation instrument decades ago, in favour of the far more versatile electronic system. The whole of the great dome was, essentially, a giant television screen, made up of thousands of separate panels, on which any conceivable image could be displayed.

The programme had opened – inevitably – with a tribute to the unknown inventor of the rocket, somewhere in China during the thirteenth century. The first five minutes were a high-speed historical survey, giving perhaps less than due credit to the Russian, German and American pioneers in order to concentrate on the career of Dr Hsue-Shen Tsien. His countrymen could be excused, in such a time and place, if they made him appear as important in the history of rocket development as Goddard, von Braun, or Koroylev. And they certainly had just grounds for indignation at his arrest on trumped-up charges in the United States when, after helping to establish the famed Jet Propulsion Laboratory and being appointed Caltech's first Goddard Professor, he decided to return to his homeland.

The launching of the first Chinese satellite by the

The Future of Fulldome – An Open Dialogue