

The moment of Avatar, the new frontier in film-making

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Expectations for *Avatar*, the film that will officially change the film industry, are growing. The work by James Cameron, which is in 3D, is destined to renew the public's image of art week, in a way that only the advent of sound and colour did in the past. Three-dimensional cinema has existed for some time, and over the last year, the cinema halls equipped with this instrument have more than tripled in number. So, the technology is, at least apparently, nothing new.

What's new about the film and the director

What is really new is James Cameron, the director. His last film was *Titanic*, 12 years ago, which today has made more money than any other in the history of film-making. Cameron has been working on *Avatar* for several years, and has created special 3D film cameras, which are already being used by other film directors on other sets. For *Avatar*, he also devised a filming system for the faces of the actors, which, during editing, does away with the need to call them back to the set to redo scenes, as their expressions can be modified by computer.

Just like *Titanic*, the film also has a strong story. After seeing it, Steven Spielberg admitted that he had been enchanted by the film. James Cameron is not new to making his films an event, we need only consider *Aliens*, which is almost better than the film to which it was a sequel, and the first *Terminator*, which was made with little money. *Titanic* was initially considered by everyone to be a flop, but today, it has been seen more often than any other film in the history of cinema.

3D and the audience

Avatar and 3D represent the new frontier of cinema. The physiological drop in audiences over the last five years appears to be unstoppable. However, the technological development of three-dimensional cinema projection has enabled dealing with piracy, which is increasingly widespread on the Internet. This is because "downloading" a 3D film, achieves nothing, in terms of image when the film is seen on the home television.

The technology today has evolved, since the first experiments in the 1980s. At that time, it was necessary to use more than one projector, whereas today, one is enough, and it is better if it is digital, that is, without a photographic film. In order to watch the film, all you need is a pair of special glasses, which today are light and are no longer annoying.

Over the last year, the number of 3D cinemas has increased by a factor of ten.

According to the data provided by the Italian film industry association, ANICA, at least 10% of the 3800 cinema halls in Italy are equipped to show 3D films. Takings show this to be a winning strategy; the animation film *Ice Age 3D*, which came out at the end of August, is one of the films with the highest takings in the last ten years.

The film's plot

The film tells the story of the alien world of Pandora, as seen through the eyes of Jake Sully, a former Marine who is confined to a wheelchair. Despite his mangled body, deep down, Jake is still a fighter. He has been recruited to travel light years to the human outpost on Pandora, where a number of companies are extracting a rare mineral that is the key to resolving the energy crisis on Earth. As Pandora has a toxic atmosphere, an Avatar Program has been created, in which the human "pilots" connect their consciousnesses to an avatar, a remote-controlled organic body that can survive in the lethal atmosphere. These avatars are hybrids that have been genetically developed from human DNA combined with the DNA of the natives of Pandora ... the Na'vi. Jake is reborn in his Avatar body, and he can walk again. He is given a mission to infiltrate the Na'vis, who have become the greatest obstacle to extracting the precious mineral. But a beautiful woman Na'vi, Neytiri, saves Jake's life, and this changes everything.

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