

ic plane indicates the birth of an anthropocentric (continues page 3)

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for Heidegger, to bear some essential feature that humans cannot space throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, where space seems often, as and unknown origin. There is something of this in speculations on because of its vertical axis and partly because of its perfection stones, has been considered by some as a god-like figure: partly compared to prehistorical monuments like cromlechs or standing Interesting is that the monolith, which is rather flat when evolution occurs.

of its emergence within the sapiens environment, a shift in their to them and to us as viewers. What is clear is that, from the moment of the group. How it has landed in their territory remains unknown monolith, a vertical parallelepiped standing mysteriously in front film. When waking up one day, the leader of the tribe discovers the the tribe gains power and self confidence in this first chapter of the keep away other simian tribes. Bipedalism is clearly suggested as The group struggles to survive against predators, but manages to tion of land around a pond where the community members gather: primate communities. The territory is symbolized by a small por- ght with them, and defend their piece of territory against other lands. They share the land with animals, even though they also fi- seems, some sort of migration, moving to potentially conquer other communities that fight to survive and that have started, so it ter entitled “*The Dawn of Man*”. Hominids gather in tribes: small The monolith comes into view for the first time in the chap- tural piece, one that not only occupies space, but opens it.

come from extra-terrestrial activity. I will look at it as an architec- range in the narrative, and to leave aside the idea that it might phere of the film. But I would like to concentrate on its first appea-

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PHASE 3/6—This third Codex is introduced through the pre- sentation of two important, iconic *planes*. Both of them come from cinema, not from architecture. Actually, both of them from the specific culture of science fiction cinema. The first one, raised to the iconic status of sculpture and an art piece in its own right, is well-known in the architectural world, since it stands very close to minimal art and minimalism in general. I will approach it from a point of view that emphasizes its capacity to create an origin, or a departure, in spatial maters. The second one, much less acknowledged (if ever considered) in art history and theory is, in my opinion, one of the most beautiful and rich examples of the genre, especially when regarded for its spatial qualities. It is one flat plane that has lost all of its depth, but one that nonetheless opens a new dimension onto what a plane can do in the definition of space. I will place these two examples therefore at both ends of the spectrum: the first one defines the alpha of space, the second one its omega.

The first example, Stanley Kubrick's black monolith from his film *2001: A Space Odyssey* as the first original plane, may not come as a surprise. The second plane is the *Phantom Zone*, a very particular dimension used to imprison villains in the DC comic sto- ries of *Superman*. The movie, directed by Richard Lester repro- duces this zone in the form of a flat squared mirror travelling through space.

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Kubrick's mysterious monolith generates the whole atmos- phere of the film. But I would like to concentrate on its first appea- rance in the narrative, and to leave aside the idea that it might come from extra-terrestrial activity. I will look at it as an architec- tural piece, one that not only occupies space, but opens it.

The monolith comes into view for the first time in the chap- ter entitled “*The Dawn of Man*”. Hominids gather in tribes: small communities that fight to survive and that have started, so it seems, some sort of migration, moving to potentially conquer other lands. They share the land with animals, even though they also fi- ght with them, and defend their piece of territory against other primate communities. The territory is symbolized by a small por- tion of land around a pond where the community members gather. The group struggles to survive against predators, but manages to keep away other simian tribes. Bipedalism is clearly suggested as the tribe gains power and self confidence in this first chapter of the film. When waking up one day, the leader of the tribe discovers the monolith, a vertical parallelepiped standing mysteriously in front of the group. How it has landed in their territory remains unknown to them and to us as viewers. What is clear is that, from the moment of its emergence within the sapiens environment, a shift in their evolution occurs.

Interesting is that the monolith, which is rather flat when compared to prehistorical monuments like cromlechs or standing stones, has been considered by some as a god-like figure: partly because of its vertical axis and partly because of its perfection and unknown origin. There is something of this in speculations on space throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, where space seems often, as for Heidegger, to bear some essential feature that humans cannot completely grasp.

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