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# Calling Adiona: Embracing the Innocence of 1980's Hollywood Cinema

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**Calling Adiona:  
Embracing the Innocence of 1980's Hollywood Cinema**

By Jacob Glazier

A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for graduation with

LATIN HONORS

from the department of FILM STUDIES

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## I. ABSTRACT

The powerful bond between father and son is a force that can overcome obstacles, no matter the distance. Not even 500 miles outside Earth's atmosphere. This film will tell the story of a family torn apart by a father's departure as an astronaut in a fictionalized NASA space program. At the center of it all is a boy, James, who is coping with the aftermath of the departure of his father. His mother is distraught and lonely, doing her best to keep the family happy. Their father, hundreds of miles away from Earth, is encountering difficulties that he will need to overcome if he wants to make it back to his family alive. The film will focus on the son; whose imagination runs wild. When he is visited by a ghost of his father, he is faced with a dilemma: Is his father dead? Or will the ghost help him save his father hundreds of miles away?

The film takes place in the 1980s in the middle of the Cold War, and will pay homage to the continued tradition of many late 1970s, early 1980s films such as *E.T. the Extra Terrestrial* (Spielberg 1982), *The Goonies* (Donner 1985), *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (Spielberg 1977), and many more. A world in which the Apollo program reigned supreme, America's adventures into space are getting bolder and more daring. More than any of the technicalities of space travel, the film is a story about the innocence and freedom of a boy to dream, and against all odds the perseverance of a family to be reunited once again.

While many films have told the story of the broken family and a child experiencing supernatural phenomenon, this film will expand upon this by incorporating the difficulties associated with being an astronaut family. The beauty of the innocence of children and their ability to find truth that most adults are blinded to is a main theme from the 1980s that makes many of those blockbuster films cherished among generations today. This steadfast openness to the wonders of the world and ability to problem solve is a national mindset that has been lost in recent years, and one that this film will return to as an homage to the 1980s.

The accompanying essay will place this film in the historical context both of its fellow films set in the late 1970s and early 1980s, as well as the national mindset toward space travel. The essay will also contextualize the film within modern time as an example of the growing trend in "period pieces" that are reminiscent of the golden age of blockbusters. The film itself, as well, is a continuation of themes already told, but expands upon them to emphasize the power of love, family, and the strong curiosity of a child as a means of finding truth. Finally, the essay will review the technical aspects of the film and discuss how these are in line with the same styles of the 1980s, as well as developing new techniques that reflect a modern interpretation of old themes. The essay will rely greatly on filmic references, as well as factual contextualization provided by accounts of astronauts' wives in NASA's space program and the American attitude toward the space race. The essay will therefore deal with identity (as an individual, as a nation), family dynamics, and escapism as a means of uncovering truth in society.

## II. OVERVIEW

The power of a rocket blast can be heard from miles away. The image of a man sitting atop a rocket, strapped onto hundreds of tons of explosives waiting to explore the outer reaches of the human imagination – can be seen across the globe. My childhood was filled with dreams of space and black holes, men who discover monsters and who protect our world with bravery, curiosity, and imagination. Heroes were those who could overcome fear in the name of discovery and exploration. Growing up with science fiction films naturally fueled my desire to make one. Looking to the past for inspiration, I noticed that few works focus on the heart of the space race: the family. New shows have recently appeared, such as *The Astronaut Wives Club* (Savage 2015), which is based on the novel and explores the foundations of America's heroes. Or perhaps briefly glancing behind the curtain at the wives and children of astronauts in the film *The Right Stuff* (Kaufman 1983). Overall, the family has been overlooked. What about the wives? Or more importantly for me; what about the children?

With the rise of the blockbuster in 1970's Hollywood cinema, new filmmakers such as Spielberg, Lucas, and Coppola were reinventing this exciting approach. The power of the films of the 1970s and 1980s was not the blockbuster budget or incredible technical innovations. As Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell mention in *Film History: An Introduction*, "Lucas and Spielberg sought to recover their boyhood pleasure in movies" (485). The power of the films from that era were in the imagination, originality, and innocence they put center-stage. Films such as *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (Spielberg 1977), *The Goonies* (Donner 1985), and *E.T the Extra Terrestrial* (Spielberg 1982) all put fantasy as the root of their story and use it to investigate a more pressing matter: what drives us as humans, and how do we connect with others? These issues are the crux of my passion as a filmmaker. Relationships and interactions

are how we as a society define ourselves as human. Structuring these relationships through external forces, be it through an alien that visits a small child or the discovery of a vast cave, is what makes cinema interesting. It is how the audience is able to discover something about themselves by escaping into the complexities of fantastic worlds. In this same manner, and with this goal in mind, I arrived at the foundation of my film: *Calling Adiona*.

*Calling Adiona* is the story of the son of an astronaut in 1982 at the end of the space race era in the United States. After the launch of his father, Alan, on the spaceship Adiona, James and his family must cope with Alan's absence. After NASA loses contact with Alan's spaceship, James and his mother, Jane, deal with the aftermath of his death. However, when James is visited by a ghostly presence he begins to suspect his father might not be dead after all. The film comes out of the re-emergence of nostalgia in cinema in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with television shows and movies alike such as *Super 8* (Abrams 2011), *Stranger Things* (The Duffer Brothers 2016) and *Hidden Figures* (Melfi 2016). These works look to the past for inspiration in both their aesthetic and story-telling elements. *Calling Adiona* is a retelling of a classic story of the power of the family to stay together and reunite against all odds, reframed to highlight the significance of the underrepresented wives and children of astronauts during the space race in the United States. As mentioned, only briefly in films such as *Apollo 13* (Howard 1995) are the family of the astronauts emphasized to serve as the foundation for the brave and daring astronaut. In this film it was my goal to flip that story on its head, and give the child – James – the integral role of saving his father to twist the genre by using the unlikely hero as the driving force of this emotional journey.

### III. BACKGROUND

The space race in the United States lasted from 1957 with the Russian launch of Sputnik I, until 1969 with the Apollo 11 moon landing with Buzz Aldrin and Neil Armstrong. While the space race ends with the United States victory to the moon, innovation in space flight continued for the next 3 years until the end of the Apollo program in 1972 (“The Apollo Missions”). This time in America is characterized by the nationwide determination and fascination with space exploration. Never before had the entire country dedicated itself to the development of science, engineering, and mathematics used to pave the way for human flight into the cosmos. The unifying spirit of the nation behind aeronautics was unique, and in many ways is replicated in the science fiction films of the 1970s and 1980s. It could be argued that the optimism that permeated the US coming out of the space race embedded itself into the media and culture.

The wives and families of the astronauts during the Mercury program are documented in a book written by Lily Koppel titled *The Astronaut Wives Club* (2013). In it is a series of interviews with the wives of the astronauts and their attitudes and feelings about their military lifestyle, politics of NASA, and support systems in place. This book was the primary influence for the film *Calling Adiona*, and many elements of the interviews are found in the film. For example, the ringing of a doorbell is utilized to illustrate the tension and anxiety felt by James and Jane while Alan is gone. The tension is further emphasized by showing the anxiety around hearing the sounds of people outside the door or the sudden blaring of a siren, even when the noise was directly related to the family (Koppel). The fear that any moment might spell the end of the test pilot husband, the possibility of his death a constant in the busy life of a military wife. All of these elements along with the expectation that an astronaut’s wife must keep a brave face

and never show her concern led to a strain on the whole family and reflected the expected attitude handed down from the military (Wolfe). After all, an astronaut's wife was frequently in the limelight and of national interest during the space race, making it difficult to escape the cameras and reporters (Wolfe 201). These wives soon became accustomed to flashing cameras and reporters at their homes. According to Koppel, this meant that many astronaut wives had nerves of steel and could remain calm in just about any situation (17). In the privacy of their day to day lives, however, these nerves proved their undoing. In the film *Calling Adiona*, the family dynamic between mother and son is the pivotal relationship of the story. Using the information from *The Astronaut Wives Club* (Koppel), I wrote the character of Jane to be a strong and able woman whose attempt to remain close to her drifting son and absent husband push the household tensions to a breaking point. While many elements from the novel did not fit into the short format of the film, they served as the foundation for Jane's character.

The atmosphere and attitude of pilots during the 1960s and 1970s were founded upon the book *The Right Stuff* by Tom Wolfe (1984). While most of the information in the novel did not make it into the film, the mindset of the story is founded on the national admiration for astronauts. *The Right Stuff* (Wolfe) itself was a key insight into the mindset of both the pilot and the American public, and therefore was a foundation for creating a believable 1980s American astronaut family. With brief glimpses into the lives of the families as well, the novel proved just as invaluable as *The Astronaut Wives Club* (Koppel). *Calling Adiona* presents the character of James as the emblematic American public. His love for his father and fascination with all things Air Force anchor him to his father and less his mother, which creates tension in the household. His mother, who is based on the interviews and testimonies of test pilot and astronaut wives, is strong and daring in the face of the public but weak and tenuous at the thought of losing her

husband at any moment. *The Right Stuff* (Wolfe) discusses the mindset behind the entire space race: the idea that any man who could fly a plane to its limit and pull out of danger was a man who possessed the coveted “right stuff”. An unspoken, unmentionable quality that separated the worthy from the non-worthy. This mindset fed into the creation of the first astronauts aboard the Mercury program, and in turn established astronauts as the iconic and premier American hero. James fuels this with his love of his father.

#### IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

Developing the concept for a film is a creative process. Once an idea is formed, the outline of the story and setting need to be developed and explored. For this film, I studied the genre of film that I wanted to emulate: science fiction. Looking to fellow creative filmmakers for inspiration was a key component of the creative process for this film. It involved researching the filmmaking styles of classic directors such as Steven Spielberg, George Lucas, and Richard Donner, as well as contemporaries Christopher Nolan and Denis Villeneuve, and finally looking at iconic stories and writings by novelists and mentors. Novels such as *Inherit the Stars* by James P. Hogan (1977) and *The Martian* by Andy Weir (2011) sparked my interest in space travel and astronauts. In continuation with the themes of modern filmmaking, the astronauts were the heroes and saviors of the world. They are the scientific super heroes who make a point to persevere and survive in order to return home, or even better to save home. This is perpetuated in films such as *Interstellar* (Nolan 2014) and *Apollo 13* (Howard 1995), in which the astronaut is the key focus of the story and their mission is crucial.

However, the eye-opening pieces of cinema that reminded me of the power and imagination of children were *Super 8* (Abrams 2011) and the television show *Stranger Things*

(The Duffer Brothers 2016). These two stories are nostalgic and set in the 1980s. They are a reminder that children are a powerful force with which to be reckoned. *Super 8* (Abrams 2011) especially was a testament to the imagination and openness of children as a means of achieving truth. I adopted many different elements from all of these films, as well as from the literatures of Koppel and general space background knowledge with readings of *The Right Stuff* (Wolfe), and *Packing for Mars* by Mary Roach (2010). Combining scientific and factual elements with fantasy ideas based on current science fiction shows gave me the freedom and flexibility to craft a compelling story that is not bound to the traditions of previous films.

*Calling Adiona* was first designed as a traditional science fiction film, depicting the astronaut and the lengths to which he will go to make it home to his family, a la *The Martian* (Scott 2015). By utilizing the knowledge learned from the space novels and biopics that I read, I was able to perfect my understanding of the emotional journey through which an astronaut and his family would go. The months of preparation and failed launch attempts in the 1960s and 1970s during the development of the Mercury and Apollo programs meant that astronauts (then primarily referred to as test pilots from their military training) were away from home for months at a time. They visited their wives and kids perhaps one month out of twelve, and while estranged had to pretend that they were loving and wholesome (Wolfe 92). One of the biggest tests of being an astronaut was having a perfect family life. Tests were given to the families and pilots to guarantee that they did not have any marital issues and were all-around ideal Americans (Koppel). Any issues in the family might spell problems for the image of the program and the nation. This put immense pressure on the families, particularly since the pilots were in their 20s and 30s in Florida alone and able to cruise around late at night visiting the local bars and hostels (Wolfe 133).

This psychological pressure was lessened when an astronaut was picked for the mission. The primary stress was from the training and lab requirements before a final two-man team was decided upon for one of the launches. As mentioned in *The Right Stuff* (Wolfe), to fail as a secondary in NASA meant to return to being a test pilot, where technological advances meant that the year or two years of absence might end the career of any of the astronauts not chosen to go to space. By not being one of the few chosen for space, the men whose career had been defined by having that “special quality” that marked them as the elite would quickly come to an end. The stress of being an actual astronaut, however, was not as difficult as the public might expect. With environmental conditioning and pre-exposure to every element, knob turn, and error possibility, flying to space was so easy a monkey could do it (and did). Reading through Tom Wolfe’s *The Right Stuff* was eye-opening to not only the conditions pilots went through the train for the astronaut program, but how the American mindset of the 1960s as a result of the Soviet competition in the Cold War put additional, unfathomable amounts of stress and pressure on pilots to become space men. While this stress and heroism was interesting, the story had been told time and time again: movies had been made about the trials and tribulations of astronaut life. By writing a story about the family, I was able to transfer that knowledge to the children. There have been enough stories of astronauts daring to leave Earth and return alive. Or propel out to the outer reaches of the solar system in science fiction cinema. It is easy to leave a family, to leave behind a wife and kids. What is difficult, and arguably more interesting material, is how those wives and kids deal with the same stress.

Pulling the mindset and creativity of the children from *Super 8* (Abrams 2011), as well as the use of fantasy elements in both that film and *Interstellar* (Nolan 2014), the character arcs and plot elements came into being. The power of science fiction elements in these 1980s nostalgic

films were in their ability to convey deep human issues. Fantasy and science fiction in the television show *Stranger Things* (The Duffer Brothers 2016) is a plot device for exploring estrangement in suburban environments, connecting and coming of age for a group of teenage boys (and girl), and the revival of a dismantled community into a collaborative whole. In short, the fantasy in the television show is a vessel through which the filmmakers allow the characters to overcome personal struggle, interpersonal conflict, and touch on larger social issues that are still relevant today. Spielberg wrote *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (Spielberg 1977) as a therapeutic way of investigating the lack of communication among nations during the Cold War (Schickel 60). *Interstellar* (Nolan 2014), in the same way, uses the apocalyptic dust bowl as the impetus for former NASA pilot Cooper to fly through a wormhole in search of a new home. The moral lesson of the film, though, is in the third act where Cooper deals with the issues of being separated from his daughter. The connection he shares with her bridges all spatial distance, and Cooper realizes that family and home are at the heart of what it means to be human. His efforts to find a new home for Earth come at the cost of him losing his own family. Science fiction elements in *Interstellar* (Nolan 2014) are used as a plot device for investigating the power of the family and humanity's desire for perseverance and survival.

## V. THE STORY

In line with using fantasy and science fiction devices to drive characterization, *Calling Adiona* utilizes the science fiction elements to shed light on the power of the family unit and the difficulties of broken families. These can be seen throughout, such as the fictionalized space program Adiona, and James' father being an astronaut and away from home. Also within the film are fantasy elements such as with the notebook and his father's communication through a

ghostly presence in the house, and the radio's ability to intercept messages from the ship *Adiona* hundreds of thousands of miles away. As discussed by John Truby in his book *The Anatomy of Story* (2007), an essential element of storytelling is the Revelations Sequence, or the order in which characters learn information and how this changes their desires and motivations. This was particularly important in *Calling Adiona* with the introduction of fantasy elements. Throughout the film James is presented with different bits of information, such as NASA losing contact with his father, or the eerie voices and barking in the middle of the night, that his mother has taken his notebook, the ghostly writing in the notebook and discovery that his father is alive, and finally his mother's contribution by calling NASA and the official re-discovery of his father. All of these points within the film change how James reacts to his surroundings. His observant nature in the first half of the film is transformed as his boundaries are pushed by his mother taking his notebook and by the ghost visiting James in the night. James comes out of his shell and takes charge, yelling at his mother and finding the notebook, calling his dad, etc. As James learns this information, so does the audience, and in a classic "reversal" (Truby, 347) the audience learns that his father Alan was alive.

Understanding these revelations is key to evaluating the complex dynamics between James and his mother, Jane. They are on two separate character arcs throughout film that culminate in compromise and understanding in Jane's character. James' character starts the film curious and excited, yet longing for his father's inclusion. The notebook throughout is a symbol of their connection, and of James' eagerness to be included in the fantasy world Alan inhabits. With Alan's absence, James relies on the notebook for solace, and ignores his schoolwork. He ignores Jane and pursues his own paths, refusing to acknowledge her. This continues through Alan's death, as Jane attempts to mend the distance between them. The difficulties in their

relationship come to a climax when Jane takes James' notebook: Jane is trying to force James to come back to reality and move forward. While this may seem devious from James' viewpoint, it is an attempt by Jane to connect with her son. Taking the notebook is where their motives collide. James needs the notebook to cope with the loss of his father, and Jane needs to reunite the family. After fighting in her bedroom late at night, Jane finally gives in and trusts that James is correct about Alan. Previously she had pushed aside his radio building or left him alone in his bedroom. She had remained on the outskirts of James' life and never fully invested. However, with her calling NASA, she is accepting that James' crazy fantasy filled story of talking to Alan on the radio might be plausible. She is not accepting that the fantasy of the situation is real, rather she is taking a leap of faith and meeting James halfway. Only through working together does NASA re-establish communications with Alan, and in the end of the film the audience learns that he will be coming home. Teamwork in the household, bringing together previously opposing forces is the resolution of the film. In this way, and only through revelations compromise between seemingly opposing characters is all well again in the home.

The film *Calling Adiona*, then, is about relationships and compromise. It is about love and family, about fitting in and relating with others, and mostly about trust. The backbone of the film is James and his deep curiosity. Only when his mother Jane is willing to accept the crazy truth that lies in the fantastical imagination of James does the primary conflict come to resolution. *Calling Adiona* is thematically in line with the crazy stories of the 1980's, where the lunatics and insane children are the ones who hold the truth (e.g. *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, Spielberg 1977). Once the parents, once the government, accepts what they have previously pushed off as lies and imagination, they see the greater truth. Perhaps then, truth isn't all in science and facts.

## VI. CHANGING THE GENRE

The film *Calling Adiona* fits in the emergence of nostalgia filmmaking in Hollywood feature length cinema, but shifts away thematically from the tradition of modern science fiction. The development of nostalgia filmmaking over the past decade in mainstream Hollywood has marked a transformation of the common themes of science fiction films and of films in general. For example, *Apollo 13* (Howard 1995) and *Interstellar* (Nolan 2014) are both science fiction films depicting the adventure into space and the attempt to return home. Families are the anchor, and the astronaut the hero in both cases. However, one important factor distinguishes the two: in *Apollo 13* (Howard 1995), a pre-2000 film depicting the height of the space race, salvation and success lay in space and the stars. The hero is the Apollo astronaut who is willing to go into space in the first place. Meanwhile, in *Interstellar* (Nolan 2014), success lay not in space, but in saving the Earth. This marks a change in the perception of space travel, and one that is paramount for tracking a film's historical time period. *Interstellar* (Nolan 2014) is the story of a farmer who must venture into the depths of space to find a way to save the planet Earth, which has been struck with a global dust bowl. In his efforts he finds a unique cosmic connection with his daughter, and uses this to reflect on his decision to leave the planet. In this film, in stark contrast with the mindset that dominates the space race films, true success is in saving home and returning home. This is seen in many of the recent science fiction films, such as the already mentioned *Interstellar* (Nolan 2014), *The Martian* (Scott 2015) – in which a man stranded on Earth must find his way home, and *Moon* (Jones 2009). With every movement in cinema there is a push back, a reflection and change on the traditional. With the 1970s and 1980s heyday of blockbuster films, the astronaut was the hero and successfully escaping Earth in favor of the cosmos was the definition of bravery and success. In response to these films, starting around the

2000s, films began depicting home as the true measure of success in space films. It was no longer about escaping, but about returning. These later films are marked by psychological factors and internalization of the homeward journey; meanwhile traditional space films are about the external exploration outward.

This development in science fiction film is mirrored by the development of the western film genre over time. One may argue that the two are vastly different genres, but the transition of westerns over the course of American history is a mirror of both the American attitude toward exploration and cinema's treatment of national heroes. The American western in cinema originated as the expansion of men into unknown territory. This can be seen with the earliest westerns such as *Stagecoach* (Ford 1939) and *High Noon* (Zinnemann 1952). Early western cinema was about the expansion; the power to enter new and foreign lands and tame it or fight for good. As western cinema developed, the complexity of its characters reflected the changing attitude toward expansion. Complex characters emerged such as the former bandit William Munny in *Unforgiven* (Eastwood 1992) making the western less about expansion and conquering of new lands, but about maintaining order and safety for their family. In the same way that science fiction has changed over the years in its reflection on the heyday of the space race films, western cinema has become more about maintaining the family and the distinction between right and wrong, than it is about exploration into unfamiliar territory. Contemporary western films such as *Hell or High Water* (Mackenzie 2016) deal with issues of morality more than expansion. In this same way, *Calling Adiona* fits in contemporary cinema by telling less about the bold and daring exploration into the unknown depths of space, and more about the powerful psychological ties that bind a family together.

## VII. MAKING THE FILM

*Calling Adiona* is different from the young films of the 1980s, and even from contemporary cinema, because it is living in the in-between space of nostalgia filmmaking and modern conventions of cinema. *Calling Adiona*, as mentioned, relies heavily on both modern cinematographic techniques while paying homage to the stylistic traditions of Steven Spielberg and classic film structure. This is best exemplified by the traditional Hollywood-esque lighting in most shots of the film, employing complex lighting and high key contrast for dialogue and low key contrast for dramatic content – very much similar to the film techniques found in *E.T the Extra Terrestrial* (Spielberg 1982) and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (Spielberg 1977). The aspect ratio is also the classic 2.35:1, which is the same as almost all cinemascope 1980's films. Today, most films are 1.85:1 for theater or 16:9 to fit on television screens. By utilizing the traditional aspect ratio, *Calling Adiona* is instantly familiarizing the audience with its 1980s time period and thematic content. Stylistically it is founded on the cinematography of Bradford Young and Roger Deakins, cinematographers who made recent films such as *Arrival* (Villeneuve 2016) and *Skyfall* (Mendez 2012). However, the mise-en-scene and thematic content of the film is rooted in the best of what makes up 1970s and 1980s film. Shots such as the pull down from the stars to James sitting at his desk, or in bed, are direct references to the eerie cinematography of Bradford Young in *Arrival* (Villeneuve 2016). These contemporary references, paired with the long take and medium-shot signatures from Spielberg's filmography give *Calling Adiona* a unique seat in film history. Common in almost all of Spielberg's films is a static shot being used as both a wide and medium, possibly even close up coverage of an action depending on the camera or actor move. Utilizing camera dimensionality to make the film more dynamic without having to cut is a classic technique in 1980's blockbusters.

The dominant use of tripod and dolly shots allows the audience to remove themselves from the “filmmaker”. By minimizing the hand of the filmmaker on the image, the audience is better able to immerse themselves into the world of the film. This was a particular concern when making the film, and one used deliberately to both place the film stylistically and sell the time period of the piece. The only time throughout the film that handheld is used is when James yells at his mother for taking his notebook, the emotional climax of the film that pushes the two to their breaking point. Handheld in this instance is used to heighten the turmoil of emotions James is experiencing, and to make the dialogue more kinetic. The handheld camera is subtle, though. In line with the handheld images of Spielberg’s films *The Goonies* (Donner 1985) and *E.T the Extra-Terrestrial* (Spielberg 1982), it is used to supplement the story and increase the tension of a scene without becoming too obvious. *Calling Adiona* is specifically a science fiction film, and therefore fits into many of the plot devices and conventions of the genre, but is more importantly a coming of age film in line with many 1970s and 1980s Hollywood blockbusters. It’s stylistic conventions, too, break from the norm for blockbusters to seat the film in a unique forefront of nostalgia filmmaking in the modern day.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

My film takes place in 1982, in the middle of the Cold War and a few years past the end of the Apollo program. In the United States, the optimism that permeated the country just a decade earlier has dwindled. Love of rockets and space men has turned to fear about nuclear fallout and invaders. This may have been the reality of 1982 United States, but not in the world of *Adiona*. *Adiona* is an imagined continuation of the Apollo program, the spiritual successor that continued the bright eyed optimism of scientists and pilots alike into the 1980s. Following

this is a fearless American public, and young hopeful boy named James. In the same manner as this imagined alternate history, cinema of the 1980s curved the American enthusiasm for innovation, imagination, and the unknown. Adventure and fantasy were at the heart of films during this dark time in the country. Escapism was the method of coping with the darkness of the Cold War. At the heart of these films during the 1980s was the persistence of optimism and imagination. In *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (Spielberg 1977), the father is deemed crazy despite holding the truth, and the government determined to lock up the town to prevent the truth from being revealed. The same in *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* (Spielberg 1982), Elliot and his fellow young peers are the only ones to truly understand the significance of E.T. being an alien on Earth. The government attempts to step in the way, and are met with resistance from the youth of America. The pushback between establishment and innocence, between parents and imaginative children, are the core of 1970s and 1980s escapist science fiction. These films were designed to remind the public during a time of government upheaval that the power of family and imagination are at the heart of what make Americans strong. The innovation and belief in youth are what have continued to keep America pumping forward, a fact that cinema of the 1980s was not going to let the country forget. In the same manner for today, *Calling Adiona* is a reminder of this escapist filmmaking not to embellish the glories of past filmmaking, but to remind to public of the importance of family and imagination in similar political and economic turmoil. The spark of curiosity and innocence in the kids of the beloved blockbusters must remain alive in today's society. This film is a dive into the unknown avenues of our past. Innovation and creativity are found in accepting what is unknown and willing to trust that curiosity and exploration will lead the way.

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