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## Virtual Reality and Dogs at the Orinda Theatre

By Derek Zemrak



Image provided

The film "Ready Player One" starts out with the great Van Halen song, "Jump," playing in the background. What's not to like when a movie gets you rocking at the beginning?

Based on the bestseller science fiction novel from 2011 by Ernest Cline, "Ready Player One" is directed by Oscar winner Steven Spielberg. Set in 2045, with the world in chaos and nearing collapse, people find escape in a virtual reality universe called the Oasis. This world was created by a brilliant and eccentric individual by the name of James Halliday, who is portrayed by Oscar winner Mark Rylance ("Bridge of Spies"). When Halliday passes away he leaves his fortune to the first person to find the hidden digital Easter egg located somewhere in the Oasis.

"Ready Player One" is an entertaining film that pays homage to many Hollywood classics such as "Back to the Future" (yes, there is a DeLorean in the movie), "King Kong," "The Shining" and many more. As with any virtual reality video game there is so much to see. This movie should be seen on the biggest screen possible. It is good to see Spielberg get back to the genre that made him successful.

"Ready Player One" is rated PG-13 for sequences of sci-fi action violence, bloody images, some suggestive material, partial nudity and language. It has a total running time of 2 hours and 20 minutes. Yes, a bit long to be in the Oasis.

"Isle of Dogs" is a stop-motion animated film from director Wes Anderson. As with previous Anderson films, like "Moonrise Kingdom" (2010) and "The Royal Tenenbaums" (2001), "Isle of Dogs" has that same quirky comedy style. The stop motion animation has the same feel as Anderson's 2009 Oscar-nominated film "Fantastic Mr. Fox."

This time around the movie takes place in the future and is set in the city of Megasaki, Japan where Mayor Kobayashi has ruled that dogs can no longer live in the city limits and must all be transported to Trash Island. Arika, a 12-year-old boy, is determined to save his dog, Spots. He travels to Trash Island and befriends a pack of dogs to assist him in locating Spots.

I truly enjoyed this film, but Anderson's style is not for everyone. There is a lot of Japanese in the movie, but Anderson chooses not to add subtitles, which adds to the film's quirkiness.

"Isle of Dogs" is rated PG-13 for thematic elements and violent images and has a total running time of 1 hour and 41 minutes. This movie is not for little kids.



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Reach the reporter at: [info@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:info@lamorindaweekly.com)

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