'Fantastic Voyage'—a waste of time

By David Grove

'Fantastic Voyage' is a science-fiction movie with a different plot. In it, a scientist, Dr. Benes, who happens to be the sole holder of the secret for the control of the induced miniaturization of objects (which is greatly desired by both international political camps), has a blood clot in a vital area of his redblooded brain. The only way to reach it is to shrink the eminent brain surgeon, Arthur Kennedy, to microscopic size. Inject him into the good doctor's neck, let him travel in a submarine through the blood stream to the brain, and there have him shoot the offending clot to smithereens with a laser beam.

One hour Elementary!

But the catch is that the miniaturizing effect lasts for but one hour, after which all particles revert to normal size. Radio operator Stephen Boyd, the submarine's designer, a circulatory expert, and last, but not least-officer-wise head, Raquel Welch, the surgeon's trusted 'technician' accompany him on his journey.

Aside from a series of incredible special effects the film has little to recommend it. Although it may not seem possible, sodium sets in rather quickly. There are simply too many views of red corpuscles whizzing by the craft, too many people getting caught in bunches of nerves, and too much pecting up and down by the director or of the project back in the control room. To top off these molestations of boredom, the plotting becomes further bogged down in the sort of good-guy-turned-saboteur approach. Whereas what was looking for a wooden Indian for his lead role, he made a fine choice in Mr. Boyd, who is complemented perfectly in this respect by Miss Welch, the philosophy put into Mr. Kennedy's mouth by the writers drops like no man lead bricks. Undoubtedly, much of the film would have been better played tongue-in-cheek, but then again, Boyd is probably funnier the way he is. If you don't immediately become fascinated by the visual effects, I would advise taking your leave.

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