

It's Eddie Murphy Inside Eddie Murphy in Made-For-Children Sci-Fi Comedy 'Meet Dave'

Submitted by [HollywoodChicago.com](http://www.hollywoodchicago.com) [1] on July 14, 2008 - 3:27pm

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Rating: **2.5/5.0**

CHICAGO – The longtime career of Eddie Murphy has lately taken an interesting turn.

After a meteoric career with huge box-office comedies, Murphy has steered toward more family oriented fare (“Daddy Day Care,” the “Shrek” movies, etc.) before his Oscar-nominated performance in “Dreamgirls”. After the stumble of 2007’s “Norbit,” Murphy has again returned this summer in kid-friendly mode with “Meet Dave”.



Dave (Eddie Murphy) is shocked by some unexpected micro-boogying happening atop his shoulder in “Meet Dave”.

Photo credit: 20th Century Fox

This high-concept, science-fiction comedy involves a giant robotic spaceship that plunges to New York City and is shaped like – well, Eddie Murphy. It's designed that way to walk among earthlings unobtrusively. It's controlled by a tiny crew inside the body led by ship captain Eddie Murphy.



Eddie Murphy (left) and Gabrielle Union are pursued by a rubbery object previously unknown to them in "Meet Dave".

Photo credit: 20th Century Fox

The mission is to retrieve a meteoric orb that their home planet, Nil, sent to Earth to suck up the oceans. As in what usually happens in the movie universe, the orb ends up mistakenly in the hand of a scrappy but sensitive boy (Austin Myers) who naturally lives with his widowed mother (Elizabeth Banks).

Meanwhile, the crew has to assimilate within the strange customs of New York City while keeping their outer space alien composure within the seductive world. They steer the "Dave" spaceship to hook up with the boy's mother. The race is on to find the orb before the police (or at least the "X-Files" agents) can catch up with them.

The first act of the film has several decent laughs as the crew tries to make the robotic Dave blend in.

The walk, speech and outer shell of Dave is controlled by a flight deck straight out of "Star Trek" with Murphy as the captain doing a variation of his African voice from "Coming to America". Dave the spaceship also makes several funny faces, actions and verbal gaffes while working to fit in on Earth.

Where the film falters is when it comes back to the plot and all the special effects associated with it. It is the "E.T." variation done yet again with the earnest kid actor performing his lines as if he's playing to the back row of the theater.

The strange behavior of the Dave spaceship creates no real chemistry with the mother or the boy even though they are forced through the entire story to gaze and act adoringly toward the dead-eyed alien. The subplot – involving the mutiny of the crew – is too complicated for a film of this type.

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It drags the entire story down with it. However, this did give the screenwriters an excuse to camp up the situation. The crew begins to adapt the unique cultural style of America, which apparently consists of misogyny, gay stereotypes and MySpace.

It is a kid's movie, though, and many of the younger audience members laughed along with it (especially the gay stereotypes). Like the circuits and wires inside the Dave spaceship, it's useless to try and dissect the elements too closely.

Note: If product placement is what you crave, than “Meet Dave” is the movie for you. Aside from commercials for Old Navy and Apple’s iPods, there were plugs for Google, Yahoo!, Nathan’s Famous hot dogs and most oddly the Broadway musical “A Chorus Line”. Creative financing lives indeed.

“Meet Dave,” which opened everywhere on July 11, 2008, stars Eddie Murphy, Elizabeth Banks, Gabrielle Union, Ed Helms, Austin Myers and Judah Friedlander.



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