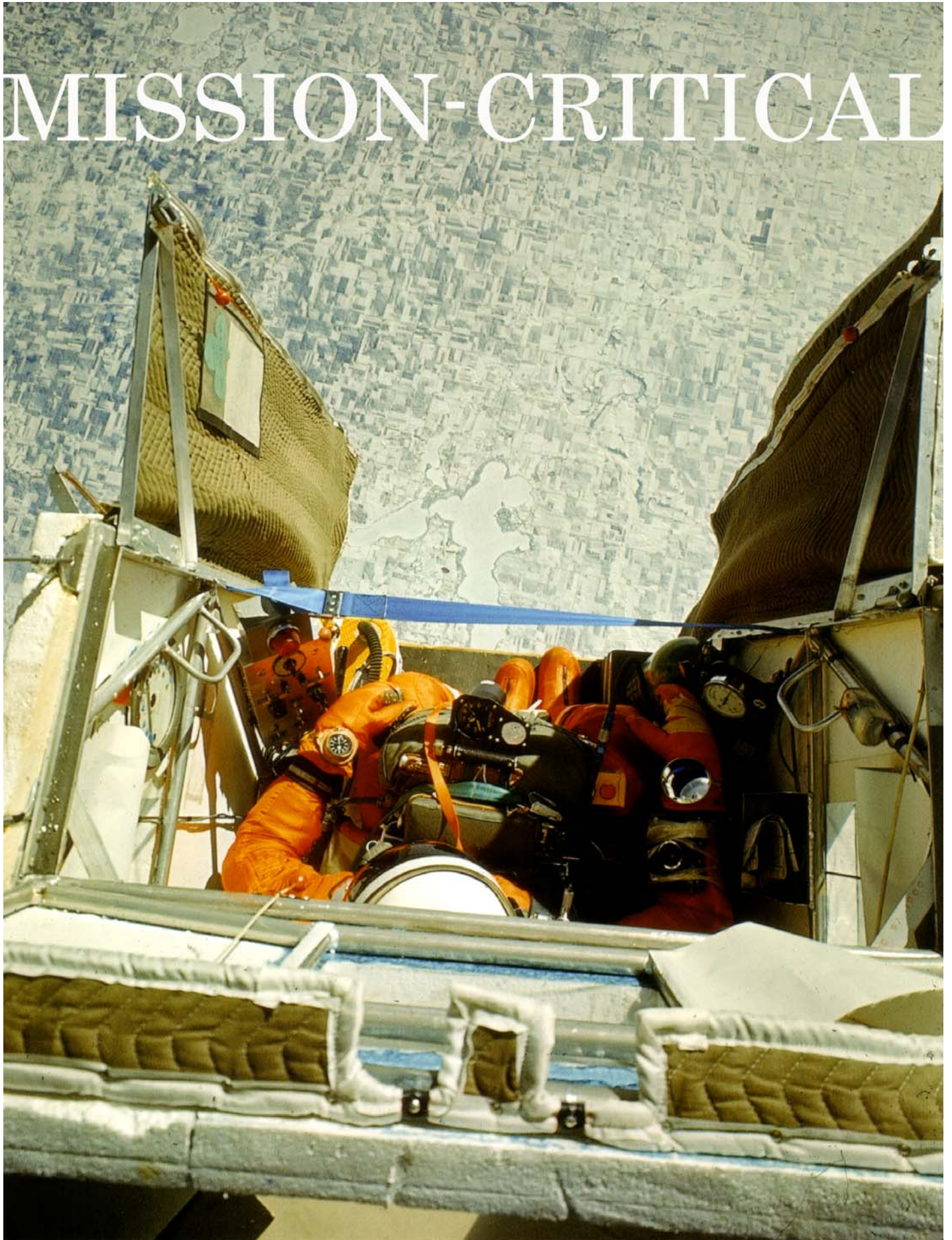


# MISSION-CRITICAL



**MISSION-CRITICAL** (adj) Any factor [personnel, equipment or procedure] deemed essential for crew survival and/or successful completion of the mission



**Foolish Earthling Productions**  
in association with  
**The Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center**  
presents

# **MISSION-CRITICAL**

*The most crucial moments are  
the ones we don't prepare for*

**MISSION-CRITICAL** takes place in the world of highly skilled, motivated people and the work that tries to kill them, day in and day out. We meet at the scariest moments of their lives, as they improvise new techniques and protocols to keep us safer in ours. There are no second chances or do-overs. Everything you see here is real.

# **MISSION-CRITICAL**

## *What Killed Apollo 13?*

Would it surprise you to know that most of the common tools, services and conveniences in our lives arrived with a body count? It's not something we like to think about as we ease ourselves into the morning traffic flow, but the cold facts are that all technologies go through an extended 'experimental' phase, meaning everything in our world today that works well went through a long period in which it didn't – often with fatal results. And when it comes to cutting-edge aerospace technology, that experimental phase *never* ends.

**MISSION-CRITICAL** recreates the most exciting moments of the most dangerous missions ever flown – from flight test and space exploration to clandestine espionage assignments in wars both hot and cold, to recently-declassified battlefield exploits. Using the latest revelations and state-of-the-art CGI and visual effects technology, the series will forensically analyze compelling mysteries – some recent, others unsolved for decades - every one of them the result of, essentially, a time bomb, patiently waiting, sometimes for years, before it detonated.

### **MISSION-CRITICAL – PILOT**

On April 13<sup>th</sup>, 1970, a crucial oxygen tank exploded aboard the lunar-bound Apollo 13. This catastrophic event occurred when the spacecraft was nearly 200,000 miles away from home, heading in the wrong direction.

The pilot episode of **MISSION-CRITICAL** will examine the Apollo 13 explosion and unprecedented deep-space rescue using CGI and newly available forensic evidence to see how the accident, like most failures in high-tech systems, originated years before the ill-fated mission had even been scheduled.





### **A CHAIN IS ONLY AS STRONG AS ITS WEAKEST LINK --**

Failure of the Teflon insulation on this tiny O<sub>2</sub> tank heater circuit was responsible for the explosion aboard Apollo 13, with near-instantaneous loss of the Command Module's oxygen and power. The same flaw could have caused the loss of earlier flights including Apollo 11, had the order come to fire up that circuit on NASA's first lunar landing mission, as it did on Apollo 13 months later.

The crew's unlikely survival was a testament to their own resourcefulness, not to mention the hundreds of dedicated flight controllers, engineers and fellow astronauts who spent the next four days designing new procedures to keep the men alive and allow the disabled craft to limp home. Few others in similar circumstances have been so fortunate.



Apollo 13 astronauts **Jim Lovell** and **Fred Haise**, Flight Director **Gene Kranz** and Flight Controller **Sy (EECOM) Liebergot** guide us through the launch, on-board explosion and highly improvised rescue of Apollo 13.

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## **MISSION-CRITICAL**

music by  
**John Herberman**

production designed by  
**Ron Miller**

produced by  
**Shirley Gulliford & Michael Lennick**

written and directed by  
**Michael Lennick**

Future **MISSION-CRITICAL** stories include:

**FLIGHT TEST** – The post-WWII Golden Age when supersonic jets began to replace propeller driven fighters – and a test pilot's daily odds of dying were one in four. Featuring **Chuck Yeager** and the Edwards AFB fighter jocks.

**SPACEWALK** – The early Soviet and American EVAs were far scarier than we saw on TV. Alexei Leonov's suit inflated to the point that he couldn't fit back through the airlock, while Gene Cernan's Gemini co-pilot Tom Stafford seriously considered cutting the Cernan adrift to save himself. Featuring **Gene Cernan, Tom Stafford** and **Alexei Leonov**.

**TRAINING DAY** – Today's pilots and astronauts train in computer-driven simulators, but in the glory days of the Space Race many remarkable flying machines were hand-built to emulate the deadly conditions in space and on the lunar surface. As a result numerous astronauts, including **Neil Armstrong**, came within moments of death on any typical day at work.

*and many more*

Foolish Earthling Productions' past projects include *Rocket Science* (Discovery Channel), *Dr. Teller's Very Large Bomb* (PBS), *The Land of Space and Time* (currently in post-production) and *The Highest Step In The World* (Discovery Channel), which won top prizes at two international film festivals.

*"Michael Lennick's Discovery Channel series Rocket Science is the principal reference I use when people ask about the space program."*

*-- Gene Kranz / Apollo 13 Flight Director*