

Hidden Figures – Review

Hidden Figures is the story of a team of female African-American mathematicians who served a vital role in NASA during the early years of the U.S. space program.

The three brilliant women NASA - Katherine Johnson (Taraji P. Henson), Dorothy Vaughan (Octavia Spencer) and Mary Jackson (Janelle Monáe) - serve as the brains behind one of the greatest operations in history: the **launch** of astronaut John Glenn (Glen Powell) into **orbit**, a stunning achievement that **restored** the nation's confidence, turned around the Space Race and **galvanized** the world.



The film takes us back to 1961, when racial **segregation** and workplace **sexism** were widely accepted facts of life and the word “computer” referred to a person, not a **machine**. Though a gigantic IBM mainframe computer does appear in the movie — big **enough** to fill a room and probably less powerful than the phone in your pocket — the most important computers are three African-American women who work at NASA headquarters. **Assigned** to data entry jobs and denied **recognition** or promotion, they would go on to play **crucial** roles in the American space program.

Henson, Spencer, and Monáe's **stellar** performances propel this feel-good biographical drama that teaches audiences about a little-known aspect of NASA's history



Hidden Figures makes a **fascinating** and **timely** companion to *Loving*, Jeff Nichols's film about the Virginia couple who challenged their state's **law** against interracial marriage, which was struck down by the Supreme Court in 1967. The two movies take place in the same **state** in the same era, and focus on the quiet dramas that move history forward. They can fill you with **outrage** at the persistence of **injustice** and gratitude toward those who had the **grit** to stand up against it.

The film inspires as it entertains and is the rare true story-based historical drama that succeeds at being as inspirational and feel-good as it aspires to be.