



# Arthur C. Clarke

**“The limits of the possible can only be defined by going beyond them into the impossible.”**

Futurist author Arthur Charles Clarke (1917-2008) predicted the world of tomorrow. Clarke made science popular and accessible with his more than 70 books of fiction and non-fiction.

Born in Somerset, England, Clarke began writing science fiction after he joined the British Interplanetary Society (BIS) in 1936, where he contributed to the BIS Bulletin.

Clarke joined the Royal Air Force during WWII. He spent his wartime service developing ground-controlled approach (GCA) radar. GCA did not see much use during the war but it proved vital to the Berlin Airlift (1948–1949) delivering supplies to the blockaded citizens of West Berlin.

In 1945, Clarke published “Extra-Terrestrial Relays – Can Rocket Stations Give World-wide Radio Coverage?” in the magazine *Wireless World*. In this visionary article, Clarke set out the principles of global communication via satellites placed in geostationary orbits.

Clarke was awarded a Fellowship at King’s College, London and obtained a degree in Physics and Mathematics in 1948. He emigrated to Sri Lanka in 1956 to pursue underwater exploration.

In 1964, Clarke collaborated with film producer Stanley Kubrick on a movie script. The result, *2001: A Space Odyssey*, was one of the most influential films ever made and won Clarke and Kubrick a Best Original Screenplay Academy Award.

Arthur Clarke was interested in the future of human race and what kind of world we would leave to future generations. Clarke’s optimism for the future made him a spokesperson for the importance of people working together to solve problems and to create a better world for all of humanity.

Among the honors accorded Clarke for his work in making science accessible are a UK Knighthood (CBE) presented by Queen Elizabeth II in 1988, Sri Lanka’s highest civilian honor, Sri Lankabhimanya (The Pride of Sri Lanka) in 2005, and naming of the geostationary orbit at 36,000 kilometers (22,000 miles) above the equator the Clarke Orbit by the International Astronomical Union.

*See renowned sculptor Rubin Peacock’s statue of Arthur C. Clarke at the National Electronics Museum.*