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| ***A Trip to the Moon (1902)*** |
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| *Le voyage dans la lune* (*A Trip to the Moon*) is the best-known work of special effects and film pioneer Georges Méliès (1861-1938). It is generally considered to be the first science fiction film, and was lauded for its plot and special effects upon its release. It made Méliès famous worldwide, but piratical practices, particularly in the United States, denied him his due profits. In the film, Professor Barbenfouillis (Méliès) and a group of scientists fly to the moon in a capsule shot from a cannon and encounter its crustacean inhabitants (Selenites). After a narrowly escaping the Selenites, the explorers return to Earth. The film’s first half owes much to Jules Verne’s novel *De la terre à la lune* (*From the Earth to the Moon*, 1865) while the second half derives from H. G. Wells’s novel *The First Men in the Moon* (1901). It valorises science and the idea of research/exploration as an end in itself, but also satirizes nineteenth century scientific achievements. Méliès had ties to the Symbolist movement and included symbolic scenes which comment on but do not further the plot, including the film’s most iconic image: the rocket hitting the moon in its eye. |
| Further reading:  Frazer, John (1979). *Artificially Arranged Scenes: The Films of Georges Méliès*. Boston: G. K. Hall & Company.  The film can be see on the Internet Archive at:  <http://archive.org/details/LeVoyageDansLaLun> |