



Science-Fiction Fanzine

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The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy

האגודה הישראלית למדע בדיוני ולפנטסיה, בשיתוף עם בית אריאלה מרכז תרבות, שמחה להזמין למפגש הבא בסידרת ההרצאות ע"ש עמוס גפן. המפגש יתקיים בבית-אריאלה מרכז תרבות, שד' שאול המלך 25, תל-אביב, ביום רביעי 28.7.2004 בשעה 20:00 הכניסה חופשית נושא ההרצאה: על הפנטסטי, העל-טבעי והמסורף ביצירתו של וויליאם שייקספיר

*"...More strange than true: I never may believe
These antique fables, nor these fairy toys.
Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend
More than cool reason ever comprehends.
The lunatic, the lover and the poet
Are of imagination all compact..."*

(חלום ליל קיץ 5.1)

המחזות השייקספירים רצופים תופעות פלאיות: רוחות, שיקויים, פיות, מכשפים... שייקספיר אינו בוחל באף מאפיין על-טבעי לקדם את העלילה ביצירתו, ובחלקם הפנטסיה היא עמוד התווך של העלילה. מהו סוד קסמה של הפנטסיה השייקספירית? היכן אנו מוצאים אותה ומדוע אנו ממשיכים לחפש אחריה? כיצד משתמש בה המחזאי, ואיך ראו אותה בני דורו? בהרצאה נבחן את המחזות הפנטסטיים המובהקים (חלום ליל קיץ, הסערה) ואת המחזות מונעי הפנטסיה (המלט, מקבת), ננסה להבין כיצד שירתו המוטיבים הפנטסטיים את העלילה ומה היה יחס הקהל אליהם. על המרצה: איילת אלוני היא סטודנטית לתורת הספרות הכללית באוניברסיטת ת"א, חובבת ספרות מדע בדיוני ופנטסיה, ואספנית מיתולוגיות וסיפורי עמים.

פאן.קון 2004 -- Fan.Con 2004

האגודה שמחה להזמין את חובבי המד"ב והפנטסיה באשר הם לכנס פאן.קון, שייערך ב-29.7.04 יום חמישי באולם מופת שברמת גן, רח' הרצל 13 (פינת קריניצי). הכנס, המנוהל בשיתוף עם מועדון סטארבייס 972 (המועדון הישראלי לחובבי מסע בין כוכבים), חוזר השנה לאולם ממוזג ולמתכונת המשלבת הרצאות, הקרנות של סרטים וסדרות, ומגוון אירועים בשיתוף הקהל.

בין השאר יתקיימו בכנס הרצאות על השפעת המדע הבדיוני על העולם האמיתי ועל היחס למדע הבדיוני באקדמיה; יוקרנו קומדיית הפולחן Coneheads, פרקים מהסדרות מסע בין כוכבים, סטארגייט ובבילון 5, ומרתון קומי של פרקי Mystery Science Theatre ו-Tripping the Rift; תוצג אליס – אופרת רוק פוסט-פוסט-מודרניסטית שנכתבה ומבוצעת על ידי חובבים; וייערכו סדנת כתיבה, מופע סטנד-אפ, אירוע דיבייט ואירוע פילקים. פרטים נוספים: <http://icon.sf-f.org.il/fancon2004>

More Society information is available (in Hebrew) at the Society's site: <http://www.sf-f.org.il>

New SF Film (starts July 22 in Israel): *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (**שמש נצחית בראש צלול**) (2004) USA: 108 minutes, directed by Michel Gondry, screenplay by Charlie Kaufman (*Being John Malkovich, Adaptation*), Rated R (for language, some drug and sexual content)

***Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* Reviewed by Daniel Klein:**

Just as in *Malkovich* this film includes a small supernatural (and in this case sci-fi) element, which drives the plot but is not central to it.

The story is about Joel Barish (played very well by Jim Carrey) who discovers that his girlfriend Clementine Kruczynski (Kate Winslet, also good) has had all her memories of him erased and doesn't recognize him anymore. Frustrated, he turns to the psychiatrist who invented the memory erasing process, to have his own memories of Clementine erased, so as not to be burdened by longing, and regrets over the recent turn in their relationship which caused her to go through the process.

The main part of the film follows the events taking place outside and mainly inside of Joel's head, as he goes through the process. The process is carried out by means of a device mounted on the client's head while he is asleep and connected to a computer. The computer goes through, and erases specific memories, from a database created previously by scanning the client's brain waves while he is looking at objects of significance to the unwanted memories.

Inside Joel's head we follow his sub-conscious as it moves through a dream / reliving of his memories as they are being erased. Since the process erases the memories from the most recent to the first meeting with the person being 'erased', these scenes are set in 'Memento' style.

Mid-process Joel realizes that he has some very fond memories of Clementine that he does not want to have deleted. He changes his mind, but is trapped in his dream of disappearing memories. He tries to wake up and stop the process, but can't. Then he starts ducking with Clementine (his memory of her at any rate) into this and that memory, desperately trying to hide her in other memories that have nothing to do with her such as childhood memories, and even inside new memories that he synthesizes from existing memories that have not been erased yet.

Charlie Kaufman delivers another wonderful and esoteric story, which deals with the relation of the mind to itself and the world outside. The title is derived from the very long poem 'Eloisa to Abelard' by Alexander Pope from which I will quote the following four lines (because I feel like it):

"How happy is the blameless vestal's lot!
The world forgetting, by the world forgot.
Eternal sunshine of the spotless mind!
Each pray'r accepted, and each wish resign'd."

The musical score composed for the film by Jon Brion, which consists mainly of Melodic Piano, is beautiful and a great asset of the film in my opinion.

A friend of mine described this movie as *Vanilla Sky* on hallucinogenic drugs but I tend to disagree. I think it's a wonderful Kaufman movie, with clever plot twists, which will keep you thinking right through it.

Elijah Wood is in the movie (go LoTR obsessionists). People who enjoyed *Being John Malkovich* will enjoy this film, and so will open-minded people who like films about the mind and films that make you use your mind. Couples will enjoy this movie. This is also in my opinion, the best of Jim Carrey's 'clever-films' (*Man on the Moon*, *The Truman Show*).

I recommend this film for everyone.

***Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* Reviewed by Steve Davis:**

We enjoyed the movie. Each time the characters met, she had new color hair. I guess the money was worth it. And there is something to be said about meeting the love of your life for the first time, on multiple occasions. I guess endlessly starting afresh is a fair trade.

Alternate Film Review by Emanuel Lottem: *The Day after Tomorrow*

I read with much interest your film review of *The Day after Tomorrow* (*CyberCozen*, June 2004) (henceforward *DaT*). Having read quite a lot about it in advance, I had come with great expectations, and then came out again rather disappointed. As you say, quite correctly I think, the film is intended to convey a strong political message, using the run-of-the-mill disaster story format as a means rather than an end. In this, however, it seems to me that it fails miserably.

The reason is simple: it is science fiction, but it's not *good* science fiction. Good sf, I feel, asks us to suspend our disbelief about its fundamental premises, but from then on it must proceed in a reasonable manner, which doesn't require us to believe in sheer stupidities. Well, *DaT* would have us believe that: (a) there is ongoing global warming; (b) human activities (notably the emission of greenhouse gasses) are to a large extent responsible for it; and (c) things are nearing a cusp where a new ice age will be triggered in a matter of days: warming melts polar icecaps, meltwater disrupts the Gulf Stream and other major ocean currents, disrupted currents change climate patterns, and *presto!* – we have an ice age.

So far, so good. We all know that the jury is still out on the first two points, and that the last one is totally unbelievable within the timescale described in the film. Let it be. Let's suspend our disbelief on all of that. But from this point on, is it really unreasonable to demand that the story follow its own logic? And I don't refer to the depiction of the Vice Prez of the US of A as "singularly unable to understand simple scientific facts," as you say in your review. Veeps can be stupid, or have you already forgotten Dan Quayle? More to the point, by the time the Veep first hears about this, it's already too late for anyone – even him – to do anything about it. A small caption saying "10 Years Before" would have made sense, but it wasn't there as far as I recall.

We are told that the One Scientist Who Knew (the Dennis Quaid character) has indeed made careful preparations for the oncoming Fimbulwinter, but when the chips are down, we are asked to believe that he'd somehow overlooked the need to have a snowmobile ready, or at least a set of cross-country skis. Instead, he has Eskimo-style snowshoes. Thus we see him waddling his way like a latter-day Robert F. Scott from Philadelphia to New York City – and covering the distance in an incredibly short stretch of time.

We are also told that those who shelter at the New York Public Library (NYPL) burn books to keep warm. There must be an enormously profound message therein, although I, for my sins, have not been able to decipher it. But the simple fact is that the NYPL, like all good libraries, has a lot of wooden desks, shelves and chairs. Paper, as we all know, burns at Fahrenheit 451°; hardwood burns at 1,000°F and above. At least some of the super nerds shivering in there should have known that.

Next, the tsunami wave that floods NY City and freezes solid. "Good!" you said, Aharon. Have you, too, forgotten this simple science fact that is alluded to (knowingly or otherwise) by anyone using this old cliché, "the tip of the iceberg"? As water freezes, its volume expands by about 10 per cent. Every single building in the city ought to have crumbled down under this pressure – including, of course, the library. Miraculously, none did.

And so it goes on and on. Hurricanes move in a linear north-south path; Mexico opens its borders to refugees from the US in exchange for debt remission, ignoring the fact that frozen people can't collect. Helicopters fly from Tijuana to New York City with no refueling. And a whole lot more.

Nitpicking, you say? Overemphasizing trivialities to the point of ignoring a valid, important message? I think not. I am minded of another attempt to bring to our attention an equally

important message – the dangers of irresponsible gene-mongering – in Michael Crichton's *Jurassic Park*, the book and the movie. There, too, the import of the questions raised was completely lost in a ludicrous narrative that leaves us (me, at least) giggling uncomfortably. How can an intelligent person (and both Crichton and Emmerich are evidently intelligent, no doubt about that) expect us to accept such silliness?

Emmerich's message is simply too important for us not to regret the fact that it was put forward in such a ridiculous way. Whether or not the scenario he chose is valid or not, the fact remains that we are doing things to our planet that we shouldn't be doing, at least before we've understood the consequences a great deal better than we do now. Everybody should be made to understand that, and I know of no better way for getting it across than books, films and TV shows. Provided they are persuasive, rather than ridiculous.

Larry Niven, with Jerry Pournelle and Michael Flynn, used the same message and topic in their book *Fallen Angels*, in a much more intelligent way. For the sake of fair disclosure, I have translated this book into Hebrew, but on straight fees rather than royalties. Therefore I have no reservations about saying this to any reader who hasn't seen *DaT* yet: you can buy this book for the price of two movie tickets, just about, and get both better entertainment and a clearer understanding of the issues.

Short Book Review by Gal Haimovich

The Counterfeit Heinlein by Laurence M. Janifer (2001), 179 pages

"There was once something called science-fiction." With that sentence begins the story of the mystery of the counterfeit Heinlein, and featuring Janifer's most popular character: Gerald Knave, who appeared in several earlier

novels and stories by the author. Knave is a professional Survivor, actually an interstellar detective. The Era is a few hundred years after "The Clean Slate War" which eradicated much of our current society on earth. Knave is staying

in City Two on a planet called Ravenal, where humans live in harmony, more or less, with alien races. Among those races are the Berigot, humanoid bat-like people who specialize in information upload and sorting - in other words - librarians.

A man named Ping Boom, who represents Ravenal's First Files Building, a.k.a. the library, hires Knave to find a stolen manuscript. It seems that a previously unknown Heinlein manuscript, titled "The Stone Pillow", was discovered in an archeological dig back on earth. Readers who know Heinlein's "Future History" will recognize the title as one of the stories Heinlein never wrote. Indeed, a detailed analysis of radioactive isotopes confirmed this to be a counterfeit. The fake manuscript was kept at the 20th century literature exhibition for the past four years, till it was stolen.

Thus, Knave has to solve a crime that makes absolutely no sense, since who'd want to steal a worthless fake? Knave must dig into the past to learn who made the counterfeit, and find the thieves in order to save the future of the literary world. Many interesting people aid him in his investigation, including blind old Master Higsbee - the man who knows everything there is to know, young Robin Tress with her wild psi talent, the distressed detective-major Hymen Gross,

a bunch of underground sci-fi fans (pictured exactly right!) and a very knowledgeable Berigot.

The mystery that Janifer conjured in this book is comparable to any good detective story, such that with each fact that we gather, the plot thickens and the crime makes even less sense than before, right up to the logical solution at the end.

This book is recommended to sf fans in general, and Heinlein fans in particular, since the story is loaded with references to sf fandom and with much adoration to Heinlein. For example, Knave mentions now and then that of all the pre-war sf writers, Heinlein is appreciated the most, and even the Berigot like him for his saying, "What are the facts? Again and again, what are the Facts?"

Janifer, who published stories and novels from the 1950's, and was nominated for the Best Novel Hugo award in 1960, passed away in 2003. The last novel that he wrote prior to his death was *Two: A Gerald Knave Science Fiction Adventure*.

To conclude, *The Counterfeit Heinlein* is a good read, with interesting characters, a complicated puzzle and many inside jokes. I'm looking forward to reading more of Janifer's books.

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