



Science-Fiction Fanzine

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The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy

אייקון 2005

החגיגה השנתית של חובבי המדע הבדיוני, הפנטסיה ומשחקי התפקידים בארץ. הפסטיבל מתקיים זו השנה התשיעית בסינמטק ת"א ובאולמות אשכול-פיס הסמוכים לו בתאריכים 18 - 20 באוקטובר, חול המועד סוכות. הנושא הנבחר לפסטיבל השנה הוא "אשליות", תחום המאכלס את יצירות הז'אנר לאורכן ורוחבן.
הפסטיבל מארח השנה את סופר הפנטסיה **טים פאוורס (שערי אנוביס, הזמנות אחרונה)**.

חוג מדע בדיוני ברחובות - SFIR - Rehovot Science Fiction Club

פעילויות התא מתקיימות בימי א' בשעה 20:00 בפקולטה לחקלאות ברחובות, חדר 2, בבניין ליד הבריכה. הפעילויות ללא תשלום.

חוג המד"ב ברחובות (SFIR) יצא לפגרת קיץ.

מידע נוסף ניתן לקבל באתר התא (<http://sfir.tk/>) או בדוא"ל sfir42@yahoo.com.

סדרת הרצאה + סרט

בעמוד זה: http://www.sf-f.org.il/story_776 תוכלו למצוא פרטים על סדרת ההרצאות+סרט "יקומים בדיוניים בעולם הקולנוע" של **גיא חסון** בסינמטק ת"א. הפגישות תתקיימנה בשבתות.

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

החג שמח - Happy Succoth

Letter to the Editor

Aharon -

With respect to Eli Eshed's Survey of Israeli SF & F in '04 in the July issue of *CyberCozen*, I knew about the Hasidic movies. Note that some of the movies are also sub-titled or dubbed into English, French, and/or Yiddish. Most of the movies are originally in Hebrew, but I've seen several in Yiddish original as well.

Leybl Botwinik

Ed. Note: Leybl wrote sf in Yiddish in his younger days.

STAR TREK Book Review -- Submitted by Gary Roth
***Star Trek Deep Space Nine: Antimatter* by John Vornholt (1994), 276 pgs.**

This was my first exposure to *Deep Space Nine* in print, and it was pleasurable, despite my limited knowledge of the television series. The Bajoran shipyard is assigned to build a new starship in order to revitalize the planet's war-ravished economy (the Cardassians once ruled over Bajor). Commander Sisco's job is to make sure that a shipment of antimatter safely reaches the nearby shipyards, but a band of hijackers captures the valuable cargo and disappears through the nearby famous wormhole into largely unknown territory.

Second-in-command of the space station Deep Space Nine, Bajoran Major Kira attempts to mediate a political dispute on the planet, and takes responsibility for DS9's functions while Sisco, the beautiful Lt. Dax, and "Constable" Odo infiltrate the various foreign hijackers on a planet called Eco, whose natives are actually intelligent insects. The Ecocids belong to various hives, each with its own hive mind. These beings have set up a most interesting system of commerce, stripping visitors of their weapons in exchange for local currency, which can be used towards a wide variety of goods, including clothing. While hospitable and helpful on the surface, the Ecocids can be lying, conniving, and deceitful, much like the visiting humans, Bajorans, and Ferengi.

Quark's Place is a common focal point on DS9, serving food, drink and rumors to its customers. The reader learns a lot about the eat-drink-and-be-merry lifestyle of the Ferengi, the savagery and disgustingness of the Cardassians, the history of the once-peaceful Bajorans, how Klingon renegades are used as hired space attackers, and how the hero Star Fleet commander must invent a fictitious story and improvise with both alien and Federation spaceships/personnel to save the day.

I personally don't care for novels in which womanizing, trickery, violence and partying are glorified, but there are enough personal interest side trips to keep the reader sympathizing with not only the good guys, but the bad as well. Focus is placed on Sisco's motherless son, who is at risk for losing his father as well. One of the unique features of the book is the shapeshifter, Odo, whose job is to capture the Eco queen bee. En route to this goal, he morphs into a lowly cleaning man, a bee, a serpent, and finally a humanoid. The security chief also turns himself into a pair of scoops, a hammer, and a liquid puddle.

Women play quite a few significant roles throughout, whether on Bajor, DS9, or out in space. In fact, many play the role of officer, while others spend time and energy influencing the decisions of the men in charge. One episode features a bloody fight between a crazed, jealous female lover and the semi-reincarnated Trill named Dax (whose former life was as a playboy). Double-crossing is the repeating, continuous theme for only non-females, however.

Relationships constantly change, as old deals are broken and replaced by new ones. Older children appear in several places, and adults of all ages are utilized, too. The

bittersweet ending includes a career-ending suicide for one of the not-so-young adult officials. Size and strength are recurring ideas, and differing cultures and attitudes are stressed as well. Brief moments of humor break up the serious tone of the narrative at well-spaced intervals.

Terran historical events are recalled frequently. Examples include: the name of the newly built ship, *Hannibal*; a French dining hall in a holosuite modeled after Louis XVI; and more. Chief O'Brien provides a link between *Star Trek the Next Generation* and *DS9*, and both the Borg and Captain Jean-Luc Picard are mentioned along the way.

The bottom line: this softcover publication will be enjoyed by most sci-fi fans, whether they enjoy futuristic science more, or whether they prefer interpersonal interaction involving many kinds of races.

DVD Film Review by Aharon Sheer: *Final Cut* (2004)
Starring Robin Williams.

Directed by Omar Naim, writing credits: Omar Naim, 95 mins. Rated PG-13 for mature thematic material, some violence, sexuality and language. A joint Canada / German production.

This is a strange film. It is a psychological thriller based on an unlikely future scientific development. The psychological idea of the basis of the hero's problems is simple-minded, and the speculated societal responses to the scientific idea are not convincing. The lead character is played by Robin Williams, but it's neither one of Williams' comic heroes nor one of his society's superheroes (as in *Awakenings* where he plays the impressive neurologist Dr. Oliver Sacks). It doesn't even have a happy ending, probably because it is not an American movie -- the German side of the production no doubt insisted that the movie end badly, that being the custom in "quality" European movies.

The scientific idea is a small organic chip which can be embedded in the brain of a fetus, and which will record every sight and sound the person has during his entire life. Since no human brain can record every sight and sound, it seems unlikely that a chip will be able to do it. When a person with the chip dies

(it's expensive so most people don't have one), it's customary to edit the chip's memories (making a "final cut") and produce a two-hour film which summarizes the person's life. The film is called a "rememory", it is shown to family and friends after it has been prepared, and the balance of the dead person's 500,000 hours of recorded life information is discarded. The person who makes such an edit is called a "cutter", and Robin Williams plays the role of an expert cutter. But all the wonderful juicy secrets of these wealthy people's lives are just thrown away. Of course the family usually pays for the "final cut", and usually gets a highly edited version of the person's life showing all the good things the person did, and discarding all the things his enemies and his biographers would most like to have seen.

For some reason, which is never made fully clear, a societal (political) movement has developed of opposition to the use of such chips. The leader of this movement is a former cutter, who

supposedly got upset by all the things he saw in people's recorded lives, which were discarded, having been seen only by the cutter. The movement points out that most people are unaware of who has such chips, and therefore expose themselves unknowingly to having their actions recorded. An invasion of privacy. Even the person with the chip usually does not know he has such a chip until he is told by his parents when he reaches age 21 (the recommended age for being told – like when do you tell your child that he is adopted?). So some people respond badly to the discovery that after their death some stranger – the “cutter” – is going to know all about all their actions at a younger age. And the result is sometimes suicide, or perhaps a complete change in behavior when the person realizes that his every act is being recorded. How can you have sex knowing someone will be watching every act after you die? How can you beat your wife, or murder your worst enemy? Makes living life hard....

Robin Williams plays a character whose formative childhood incident at age 10 was enticing a new friend to do a dangerous act, and who then watched his friend die as a result. He will never be able to forget the horrible thing he did. No one knows that he was the culprit except him – a dark secret. He has become a cold, hard person, unable to establish warm relationships with people. And he has chosen to live his adult life as a cutter – a really good one – who knows how to summarize the lives of the most

evil people into a two-hour movie of praise and honor. Perhaps he sees cutting as a way of making up for the horrible crime he remembers unhappily as having committed at the age of ten. If only he could cut that memory out of himself!

We get to see how the cutter works. The software divides up the dead person's life into classes of actions: birth (the child's first view of the world often starts such a movie), early childhood (playing with mother, playing with father), school experiences (at each age), sexual acts, recreational activities, work responsibilities, aging (showing how the person saw himself in a mirror at various ages is a nice touch in a final cut). The software simplifies the cutter's work of choosing a representative selection of scenes to put in the final cut.

But what happens if there are people who want to get hold of that chip against the family's wishes, who want to expose the dead person's nefarious acts to the public eye? And what if these people are just those who oppose the whole idea of implanting these chips, and want to show the horrors that can be recorded on them? And what if the person who died was an important executive in the very company that sells these chips, and there are secrets that he may know that his company does not want anyone to know? So there is a sort of a plot here, and some suspense. It's too bad that the whole thing is so unbelievable. Perhaps it could have been done better. At least we could have had the movie end happily.

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