



Science-Fiction Fanzine

Vol. XX, No. 8; August, 2008

The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy

**כנס פנטסטי.קון 2008**

העולם התחתון ועולמנו עומדים להיפגש, בכנס פנטסטי.קון 2008 - פנטסיה מחתריתית : מעל האדמה ומתחת לה. הכנס יתקיים השנה בתאריכים 27-28/8/2008 בבית ציוני אמריקה בתל אביב. בכנס יתקיימו הקרנות, פאנלים, הרצאות ושלא פעילויות שיעסקו בפנטסיה מחתריתית; בין אם המדובר בקולנוע, בספרות, או במדיומים אחרים.

בכנס יתקיים יריד אומנים ויוצרים בשלל תחומי היצירה בנושא הפנטסיה. כנס פנטסטי.קון מציע השנה במה ליוצרים ויוצרות חדשים, ממגוון האמנויות והיצירה, שיצירתם עוסקת בפנטסיה והמדע-הבדיוני, או סופגת מהם את השראתה, לקחת חלק בשוק הקסום; להציג את עבודותיהם ולהציעה למכירה, ביריד האומנים הפנטסטי.

לקראת הכנס תתקיים תחרות קומיקס נושאת פרסים, בחסות קומיקזה. העבודות הזוכות יוצגו במוזיאון הקומיקס בחולון. פרטים נוספים באתר הכנס. לפרטים נוספים: <http://fantasy.sf-f.org.il/2008>

לשאלות, התנדבות והגשת יצירות ליריד האומנים, פנו למייל הכנס: [fantasy.con2008@gmail.com](mailto:fantasy.con2008@gmail.com)

**מועדון הקריאה**

במרכז דיון מועדון הקריאה בחודש יוני [!] יעמוד הספר "חוד הכישור" מאת רובין מקינלי, (הוצאת כתר). מועדון הקריאה בתל אביב יתקיים בתאריך ה-27.8 יום ד' המהלך כנס פנטסטי.קון 2008. מועדון קריאה נוסף העוסק בספר זה יתקיים ב-14.8 בשעה 20:30 במועדון החדש של נטור שבדרום רמת הגולן. לפרטים נוספים [naturm@netvision.net.il](mailto:naturm@netvision.net.il). השתתפות במועדון הקריאה אינה כרוכה בתשלום או בהגעה למפגשים נוספים, ופתוחה גם למי שאינם חברים באגודה. המעוניינים להנחות מועדוני קריאה נוספים בכל רחבי הארץ מוזמנים לכתוב לאחראית הפרוייקט, ליאת שחר, ולקבל סיוע, הכוונה ופרסום. [liat42@gmail.com](mailto:liat42@gmail.com) מועדון הקריאה של חודש אוגוסט יעסוק בספר "ג'הרג" מאת סטיבן בראסט (הוצאת מודן). סטיבן בראסט יתארח בפסטיבל אייקון הקרוב (בסוכות).

חוג מדע בדיוני ברחובות - SFIR - Rehovot Science Fiction Club

אין פעילות בחופשה.

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

## Movie Review by Aharon Sheer: WALL-E (E-וול) (2008)

Director: Andrew Stanton, 97 min, G-rated.

This movie was reviewed enthusiastically in July by Ted Henderson. Now that I've seen it, I'd like to give my impressions. *WALL-E* is spectacular visually, fast moving, and kept our interest to the end. The makers had fun in the second half with some quotes from

Stanley Kubrick's great sf film *2001*, bringing in a couple of musical pieces from that film (*The Blue Danube*, Also *Sprach Zarathustra*), and even providing an insane intelligent computer with a visual effect (red eye) reminiscent of *2001*'s HAL computer.

The first half of the film provides an ecological message: If we keep generating and dumping trash on the Earth, eventually the whole surface of the Earth will be covered with noxious garbage. While the time scale for such an event is much longer than mentioned in the movie (far more than 200 years), it is a genuine problem that needs to be dealt with. In Israel some good new methods have been developed for reducing trash volume, and converting trash into possibly useful building materials. These new Israeli methods are actually being used in other countries, and maybe 25 years from now they will even be tried in Israel. The eventual result, in this movie, is that mankind (that small portion which has survived) is forced to abandon Earth, and move to gigantic space stations.

The hero of this movie is an intelligent trash compactor, named WALL-E, still doing its job 800 years after mankind has left Earth, still collecting and compacting trash. He gets the energy to operate from solar panels. WALL-E is sentient, and has discovered that part of the trash it collects includes spare parts for itself. So WALL-E actually can repair itself as its various parts wear out, or are damaged, and thus has been able to extend its lifespan enormously.

The second half of the movie takes place on one of the space ships filled with humans. Here mankind has been converted into many thousands of couch potatoes, people who spend their entire lives lying on comfortable couches and

watching television (or computer screens?). They are well-fed but get no physical exercise at all, and have become fat and motionless. If problems occur and they fall out of their couches, they are too fat and weak to stand on their feet and return to their couches. Fortunately there are robots to help them.

WALL-E has found a growing green plant, a sign that Earth has finally recovered the ability to have things grow. Still another sign of that recovery is a healthy cockroach. WALL-E manages to get to the space station, and the station's captain is smart enough to decide that the existence of a living green plant on Earth means that humans can go back to Earth. But here comes the big defect of this movie. We are told that the humans in the space station have lost most of their bone mass. Not only are they physically incapable of standing up, if they went back to Earth they would be helpless in Earth's gravity. With such a loss of bone mass, they could not do anything at all. Yet the movie has a silly ending in which these helpless human beings are supposed to go back to Earth and become farmers! The captain doesn't realize this, and while the ship's "HAL" computer tries to persuade him that his idea of returning to Earth is ridiculous (and the computer is clearly right), the captain leads a rebellion, and actually lands his spaceship on Earth. Out come the human passengers, who start farming. Except for this scientifically absurd ending, this film is entertaining. I wonder what the kids think of it.

*Advertisement*

***Hewa Trilogy***, a science fiction trilogy by Israeli author Robert Smallman, 2008. "We won't bite you! Communicate with dinosaurs? Great apes and prehistoric birds?" Available from Amazon

***Star Trek* book review by Gary Roth:**

***Burning Dreams, Celebrating 40 Years of Star Trek*** by Margaret Wander Bonanno (2006), 352 pages (not including 2 pages of Afterward)

This is a unique book -- featuring the little-known Captain Christopher Pike, the *Enterprise* captain who preceded James T.

Kirk, from childhood through his adult demise. Ironically, the author mentions that the actor who portrayed the Star Trek

officer also died tragically and at a young age. The reader becomes acquainted with a heroic, self-sacrificing figure who finds difficult twists and turns throughout his life, often ordering others to leave dangerous situations but himself delving ever deeper into potentially fatal conditions. This enjoyable novel frequently jumps back and forth from one time period to another, and from one setting to another, yet the constant change only adds to the suspense!

Young Pike's family space-travels from Earth to Elysium to help the fledgling planet become self-sufficient. On board the space ship are his mother Willa, stepfather Heston Prescott, 6 horses and several dozen frozen horse embryos. They encounter Newworlder family Jonday, who despise anything not "natural", preferring old fashioned cellular phones over comm units, etc. Upon arriving planetside, Heston becomes obsessed with his mission to treat Elysium's tectonic plates to eliminate volcanic activity. Willa helped with planning and development, and met Prescott on a deep-sea project on Earth. Eventually the Newworlders sabotage the Prescott ranch, leading to a major fire which kills Pike's mother.

A farmhand named Charlie, who took care of the family's horses, takes care of Chris when they escape back to Earth. It turns out that Charlie is Christopher's biological father, and could not marry Willa due to his irregular service in Starfleet. Charlie's wife Hobelia informs the young Pike that Charlie was a hero, having absorbed a laser blast meant for his commander, stopping a warp-core breach, transporting a landing party during red-alert, etc. Inspired, Chris attends Starfleet Academy and excels, despite his perfectionist tendencies and retests to improve his scores.

Eventually Chris is assigned as a first officer to a ship whose captain did not graduate from the Academy. The trigger-happy captain ensnares the crew into a sticky snafu, reluctantly forcing Pike to relieve his superior of duty; in short, a mutiny. Charlie is on board and supports his son, along with others. Ultimately, Chris is promoted to command rank, and his former captain retires.

Among Pike's adventures, he and Spock encounter snake-like, non-native beings who land on an alien planet on a hunting mission. These serpents do not communicate with words, since they lack vocal cords (and a proper sense of hearing?). Although these reptiles also eat humans, Pike orders Spock back to the *Enterprise* but

allows himself to be captured. Spock had already deciphered enough of the serpents' sign language to allow the captain to communicate with them. These intelligent creatures investigate the tricorder and communicator that they captured, and after a number of weeks, devise a plan using a voice simulator to lure the *Enterprise's* crew to the planet and to trap them. Fortunately Pike manages to escape at the right moment and to contact his ship -- ordering it to distance itself and to strand him on the planet, but the first officer beams him aboard just in time anyway!

The reader is told about Vina and how she ended up on Talos IV. She crashlanded while crammed inside the rec room of Prof. Theo Haskins' *Columbia* spaceship, and was healed as much as possible by the Talosians, who didn't understand the Parisian's anatomy and physiology very well. Later, when the Talosians used Vina and a distress call as part of an attempt to lure Pike to the planet, they again miscalculate and Pike flees in his Federation vessel.

Pike is promoted to fleet captain, and meets the alien woman of his dreams at an ambassadorial affair. The alien's planet's culture places love above all else, so she joins Chris on Earth on the homestead with Homelia and Charlie. While they hit it off well, she refuses to marry Chris, apparently because of her ability to predict the future based on an individual's characteristics. Soon thereafter Pike is involved in a radiation disaster aboard his ship, and he runs back and forth rescuing crew members without a radiation suit (despite forbidding others to enter the contaminated area without one), and finally collapses. The damage to his body is severe, as evidenced in the famous TV show episode involving the Talosians, Commodore Mendez, Jim Kirk, and Spock. While his intellect remained intact, his ability to move or even answer "yes/no" was complete. The Talosians host Pike for the rest of his life, and along with Vina, he lives with artificial freedom of movement.

After Pike passes away, the Talosians invite Spock to come see what accomplishments were made on the planet, in addition to viewing a farewell message. Talos IV was war-ravaged, and together with the knowledge learned from his parents, Chris Pike enabled them to rebuild and to renew the planet to a new level of glory.

In all, this book fills in the gaps about the *Enterprise* captain who preceded James T. Kirk in a well-done fashion. It is well-paced, offers much variety, and gives the

reader insights that allow for an unusual closeness to the protagonist, an individual who underwent many trials and tribulations and always came through somehow, thanks

to his strong will. I highly recommend this story, and hope that this gifted author will craft other masterpieces in the future.

**Here are some memorable quotes from *Burning Dreams*:**

1. Pike worries about his reunion with Vina -- last time he was a young, vibrant captain of a space vessel, and now an invalid in a mechanized contraption similar to a wheelchair:

"How do you say hello to a woman you haven't seen in 13 years - a woman you thought you'd never see again - when ever since that time you've kept her tucked safely in your heart? ... What will she see now ... knowing what lies beneath [*the Talosian illusion*], will that satisfy either of you? It's not how she will seem to you that frightens you more than any enemy real or imagined, but how you will seem to her."

2. Later, Vina tells about her past:

"The Talosians ... exactly captured each of the scientists who were aboard *Columbia*, replicating them from the data they salvaged from the library computer, and from what I knew about each of them. ... We were heading home. Theo [*the aged scientist*] and I had asked the captain to marry us on the return voyage. ... There's something about ships named *Columbia* [*remember our fallen astronaut and disaster of years ago!*] ... Sometimes the biggest mistake we make when we're young is in thinking we have our whole lives ahead of us. If I'd have known ... You don't know how painful it was to act out the illusion they created when you beamed down that first time. To see Theo as the mature man he'd never have a chance to be, while I had to pretend to be someone he thought of as a child ..."

3. When First Officer Pike reluctantly mutinies against his commander:

"Captain, regulations clearly state that a directive from Starfleet Command overrides -

."

"What directive? That message is incomplete. Garbled by static. A day late and a dollar short. It may not be a message at all."

"Sir --"

"For all we know, the Vestians could have sent that message, [*or, that*] you did, Mr. Pike. In any event, there isn't enough of it for us to be clear on Starfleet's intentions. We will proceed to exercise our own discretion in time of battle. Science Officer, resume your station. Mr. Pike, you're dismissed."

"No, sir, refusing or ignoring a direct order from Starfleet Command is a violation of regulations. On that basis I am relieving you of command."

"You're WHAT?!"

4. Spock and Pike were on a planet in the Kanes system when the snake-aliens arrived on their hunting expedition.

"In their haste to devour Dr. Chisholm, the aliens did not notice that her tricorder had fallen into the tall grass. It remained running in the clearing while they pursued and captured Lt. D'zekeo. The creatures communicate via head nods, hand gestures, and a kind of rhythmic drumming of their feet and tails on the ground. [*The*] tricorder was able to capture much of this language. Insufficient to build a communication base as yet, but I shall endeavor to capture more. If I can interface with the *Enterprise's* library computer ..."

Mendez asked Pike why he let the aliens capture him, while ordering Spock to beam back up:

"Were you out of your mind?"

"Spur of the moment decision. If Spock could get to the ship and get a handle on their language ... with what he'd learned on the planet, he could work with Number One and Mr. Grace to get around Kan'ess ship's dampening field, ask for my release -- "

"I thought I could communicate enough to convince them I was intelligent, at least too intelligent to be a between-meal snack. At best I was hoping for first contact, at least to learn enough about their technology to see if they posed a threat."

"And if they did have you for breakfast, how were you supposed to convey that information back to Starfleet?"

... "I got complacent. I didn't realize until too late that the voder I'd built for the [*alien*] Director was a two-edged sword. In my urgency to communicate, I hadn't figured on her scientists using our technology to try to lure my ship in for capture. Apparently ingesting four of my crew had given the Kan'ess a taste for human ..."

5. After Pike made the transition to fleet captain, he met a beautiful female diplomat named Siddhe, who was an Argelian Empath, and the law of Argelius is love:

"So you can't predict the future?"

"No, my greatest gift is for the past. But sometimes I can feel the touch of the future ... can tell what forces went into making you the person you are. From that I can surmise how you will face your future."

"I want you to marry me. If you say yes now, as soon as I come back from this training mission, we can --"

"No, but please don't ask me for reasons I cannot give you."

"Then give me some reason, even if it's a lie"

"Is that what you want, a lie? ... Will that satisfy you? ... Remake your life for me? No one should have to do that for the one they love. It only makes them bitter afterward. What you and I have is unmixed sweetness. Don't let's make it bitter now."

Obviously Siddhe sensed the impending disaster that was awaiting Pike in the training mission. It is too bad that Pike didn't realize what danger lay ahead, and/or that she would not tell him not to go!

### **POEM: Point of View by Miriam Ben-Loulu**

(from *CyberCozen*, April 1992)

(originally written April 1964)

**If I were looking down like G-d ...  
or Creatures from another sun ...  
I wonder what my thoughts would be  
on humankind's idea of fun.**

**I wonder if the wars make sense  
to Beings far above,  
Or do They find it hard to grasp  
our need for human love?**

**But then - what's "up" and what is "down"?  
Perhaps it's us, not Them  
That looking down, will find it hard  
to understand Its whim.**

*For Comments:* 13 Pinsky St., Rehovot 76308. Email: [asheer@netvision.net.il](mailto:asheer@netvision.net.il). Tel: Aharon Sheer 08-947-1225  
Editor: Aharon Sheer. Logo by: Miriam Ben-Loulu  
For mail delivery of *CyberCozen*, please donate 30 shekels per YEAR; For airmail to US \$15; If Aharon Sheer can hand-deliver it, 15 shekels. For **free email delivery** write to [asheer@netvision.net.il](mailto:asheer@netvision.net.il) (specify XP Word format or PDF format).  
Copyright © 2008  
.All rights reserved to specified authors and artists  
כל הזכויות שמורות למחברים וליוצרים, כפי שצוינו.