



Science-Fiction Fanzine

Vol. XXII, No. 3; March, 2010

The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy

עולמות 2010: מדעי הקסם, 31 במרץ – 1 באפריל, ZOA ת"א

כנס "עולמות" השישי למדע בדיוני ולפנטסיה יתקיים השנה בתאריכים 31 במרץ-1 באפריל בזואה תל אביב (לשעבר בית ציוני אמריקה), ברחוב אבן גבירול 26 בתל אביב. הכנס מאורגן על ידי שלושת הארגונים המובילים בארץ בתחום המדע הבדיוני והפנטסיה: [אגודה ישראלית למדע בדיוני ולפנטסיה](#), [קהילת טולקין הישראלית](#) ו**שגרירות סאנידייל בישראל** (קהילת חובבי ג'וס וידון). השנה מוקדש הכנס לנושא "מדעי הקסם". הכנס כולל למעלה מ-80 אירועים שונים, ובהם הרצאות, דיונים, תחרויות, סדנאות מקצועיות, מופעי בידור מקוריים, הופעות מוסיקליות והקרנת סרטים וסדרות. הכנס מספק במה ליוצרים ישראלים בתחום המדע הבדיוני והפנטסיה ומציע תוכניה אטרקטיבית ומגוונת לחובבי התחום, אשר נמשכת משעות הבוקר ועד השעות הקטנות של הלילה בארבעה אולמות במקביל. כמו כן מציע הכנס למבקרי מגוון הזדמנויות למפגשים ולהיכרות עם חובבי הז'אנר בטווח רחב של גילאים ותחומי עניין, וכן יריד דוכנים מהגדולים מסוגו בישראל. עמוד התוכניה באתר עולמות www.olamot-con.org/?page_id=1136

השחקן והבמאי וולטר קניג הוא אורח הכבוד של כנס עולמות 2010

אורח הכבוד של כנס "עולמות 2010", **וולטר קניג**, הוא שחקן ובמאי מוערך מזה כמה עשורים. בין תפקידיו הבולטים: צ'נוב בסדרה **מסע בין כוכבים** המקורית ובסטר בסדרה **בבילון 5**. פרטים על אורח הכבוד באתר הכנס - http://www.olamot-con.org/?page_id=939

מועדון הקריאה

מועדון הקריאה של חודש מרץ יוקדש לספר "1984" מאת ג'ורג' אורוול. מפגשי המועדון העוסקים בספר זה יתפרסמו באתר האגודה ובמכתב החודשי. המעוניינים להנחות מועדוני קריאה בכל רחבי הארץ מוזמנים לפנות במייל למרכזת הפרויקט, ליאת שחר: liat42@gmail.com

Charles Stross - Author GoH at Icon 2010

צ'ארלס סטרוס – יהיה הסופר האורח באייקון 2010. סטרוס, סופר המד"ב הבריטי, יהיה הסופר האורח בפסטיבל אייקון 2010. סטרוס חי באדינבורו שבסקוטלנד ובין ספריו מדע-בדיוני, פנטסיה ואימה בסגנון ה. פ. לאברקאפט. (בפברואר 2010, **סייברקוזן** פרסם בקורת על *Saturn's Children* by Charles Stross (2008) <http://www.icon.org.il/2009/CharlieStrossNews> פרטים נוספים עליו ועל יצירתו בקישור הבא:

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

Have a Kosher and Happy Pesah - חג פסח כשר ושמש

Back Issues of CyberCozen: Oleg Sverdlov has put PDF copies of issues of CyberCozen going back to 1998 at his site:
<http://www.kulichki.com/antimiry/cybercozen/> Thanks, Oleg!

By Sara Beck: Movie Review: Star Trek 2009

USA, 2009. Starring Chris Pine, Zachary Quinto, Zoe Saldana, Karl Urban, Leonard Nimoy. Directed by J.J. Abrams. 122 minutes. PG-13 for sci-fi action and violence and brief sexual content.

If anyone is reading this who has neither seen the movie, nor read nor heard about its 'reboot' of the *Star Trek* universe, congratulations on your safe return from McMurdo Sound and you probably shouldn't read the next paragraphs, where there will be numerous spoilers. To you I say only: this is the best *Star Trek* movie ever. More, it is the first *Star Trek* movie that is a movie, rather than an extended episode of a TV show. Even *STII: The Wrath of Khan*, universally agreed to be the most enjoyable of the older series of ST movies (and which I loved and just re-watched), was, let's face it, a 2-hour episode of the original series. *ST:2009* is a real movie, with scope, sweep, extended background and character development, and surprises. Lots and lots of surprises. The new actors who have the tough job of embodying the familiar characters are all good, and some of them are really much better than the originals. The direction is fast, the effects are excellent, and even the music is good. I loved it. Everyone I know loved it. Get the DVD and enjoy.

From here on, I assume you have seen the movie. What follows is the reactions and thoughts of an old Trek-watcher (if never an actual trekker) and some of the more interesting points raised in discussions I've had or read. It isn't going to be even close to complete, there are many fascinating topics I could go on about for many pages, but just covering the high points is going to take a while. So here goes.

This was the first ST movie to be called just *Star Trek*. It was referred to at first as *Star Trek 2009* to distinguish it from the I-really-don't-remember how many movies from the Original Series and Next Generation casts, but it is now standard fan-speak to call the movie, and the universe it creates, the *Reboot*. *Star Trek* as a franchise was feeling old, worn out, and what is worse than all --

predictable. So reboot it! Start everything from the beginning with no assumptions. For an old Trek-watcher, the first viewing of the movie was a complete mental shakeup: everything I knew about the Trek universe was turned upside down. It's wonderful what you can do with a little time travel.

The first big shift was the character of James Kirk. Instead of the golden boy with the charmed life, he is an obnoxious little git with great natural gifts, severe personality defects, and no sense. Instead of being a romantic charmer for whom women (of all species) swoon, he is your basic jerk. The first time we see him as an adult, he grabs the breasts of a woman he has just started up with in a bar, she flings him off and halfway across the room. And then the mental shakeup: the woman giving him the well-earned shove is Lt. Uhura. Huh? Uhura is supposed to adore/respect/follow Kirk. It was this scene that first says, this is not the old Trek. The next shakeup is that Kirk and Spock, the Damon and Pythias of SF and probably of modern culture, can't stand each other. Another 'thing we all knew' tossed aside. The viewer gets the message that nothing here will be predictable, nothing can be taken for granted. And the interest perks up.

Kirk's flawed personality in this universe is presumably and understandably the result of his having grown up without his father, who was among the first victims of the time-traveling villain Nero. It isn't so clear why Spock, who isn't directly affected by Nero until well into the movie, would be so much more edgier and complex than the original series Spock, but it creates a more interesting character; Zachary Quinto does a great job with him, and I'm not complaining. The BIG surprise with this Spock -- if you haven't seen the movie this is your last chance to stop reading, MAJOR spoiler coming -- is of course the

romantic relationship with Uhura. This subverts the original *Star Trek* on many levels at once. First, that a woman turns down Jim Kirk in favour of Spock. Second, of the two (Kirk and Spock), Spock is actually the more emotionally available. Part of the character shift: the old Kirk was a womanizer, but he was a romantic; it is impossible to think of him responding to "I love you Jim" with "that's weird", as this Kirk does. The person who comes closest to saying "I love you" in this movie is Spock. Really.

Now a paragraph or three on the Uhura-Spock love story, which has gotten a lot of heated discussion among fans. I was delighted to see Uhura finally in a romance. Uhura was a very important character to me 40 years ago. Everyone knows Whoopie Goldberg's line that Uhura was the first black woman on TV who wasn't a maid. Well, she was also as far as I remember the first woman who wasn't a housewife, nurse or secretary. Instead she was doing cool things on a starship. I loved it! What she *wasn't* doing in the original series was having a romance, any romance, with anyone. Everyone else of the major characters got to snuggle with someone in the 3 years of the original show, but not her. One woman on the bridge crew, and a bright, beautiful woman at that, and no one ever made a pass at her? Give me a break. It was perfectly obvious even to the 13-year old me that the reason was her color; they had no other black characters for her, and of course she couldn't, in those days, make out with one of the white guys.

So times have changed, she gets a guy, who can object? When race and sex are involved, nothing is obvious or simple; there were loud objections that Uhura had been degraded to Just A Girlfriend. The resulting debate went on all summer on many of the SF internet sites. My response to the Just A Girlfriend argument was, what movie did

you see? (My second response was wondering if a woman has to be a nun to be respected). But the whole question became so heated that a black woman who posts under the name rawles at livejournal felt it necessary to write an essay that has become famous among fans. The title is "Nyota Uhura is not a White Girl" and is on her site (warning, strong language). The money quotes, somewhat edited:

"Nyota Uhura is a black girl and there is no angle from which her actually being allowed to have consensual sexuality, being desired, and being loved (in addition to having her job and intellect, no less) is a fundamental downgrade from what she had before. In *TOS*, her being there at all was a massive step forward. Her mere presence in *STXI* puts her on par with that, and that standard, as indicated earlier, is not one that is often met even now.

"OMG A BLACK GIRL! Zoe Saldana is a major character in a summer action sci-fi blockbuster. OMG A BLACK GIRL! She is ambitious and intelligent and clever without being a caricature. OMG A BLACK GIRL! She is not forced into asexuality by the inexplicable disinterest of every male character. OMG A BLACK GIRL! She is one half of the principle romance. OMG A BLACK GIRL! She is in love with and desired, romanced, and loved by one of the most iconic figures, not just in all of nerd-dom, but in all of popular culture. Goggle adjustments may be in order. Just saying."

To which I say, amen*.

Since I am a physicist people always ask me about the science in SF movies. I averted my eyes and put my fingers in my ears for the 50 seconds in which Leonard Nimoy (Old Spock) explains the red matter, and it really didn't hurt after that. I admire Nimoy for being able to read those lines without cracking up. The Bad Astronomy internet site goes into more detail, but also agrees that it doesn't really

affect one's enjoyment of the movie.

The new *Star Trek* universe is in an interesting state at the end of the movie (which is to say, the beginning of the next movies, there obviously being sequels in the works). The Enterprise has been launched with the crew we know -- but not really, it's been rebooted. This crew is much younger and less experienced than their counterparts in the original universe. The 'big three' -- Kirk, Spock and McCoy -- are all, in this universe, somewhat damaged people. They are not the supremely competent, mature, reliable characters of the original series; they are immature, emotionally wounded, and a

little too tightly wound. And now we have Uhura shaping up to be at least as important a character as McCoy. The 'big three' of the old Star Trek fit nicely the archetypes of id, ego and superego; will the new *Star Trek* give us the Four Temperaments? And are we going to see new characters -- or lose some of the familiar ones? The greatest mental shakeup of this new universe is the realization that a character (or a planet) that lived to old age in the original universe, can be killed in this universe today. That I can speculate about these questions -- and that I can look forward so eagerly to the next movie -- shows how well the reboot has worked.

*I note that Steve Barnes, a respected black SF writer who has written for the *Star Trek* franchise, didn't like the Spock-Uhura romance because he wants to see a black guy get the bright, beautiful black woman for a change. I can see his point of view (certainly much more than I can see that of the Just A Girlfriend crowd), but don't share it. Your mileage, as always, may vary.

Artwork by Miriam Ben-Loulu (August 1993)



Short Book Review by Aharon Sheer

Cyber Way by Alan Dean Foster (1990), 306 pages.

The only book by Foster (born 1946) that I read before was his novelization of the movie *Alien*. I see he also did a novelization of one of my favorite movies,

The Last Starfighter, as well as many other movies. This book was great fun, although a little silly. The plot is based on Navaho sand-painting, and ends with a

one-page bibliography of the subject. His main character, Vernon Moody, is supposedly from Mississippi, but for some reason Foster does not know that “y’all” is the PLURAL of “you” but thinks that it simply means the same as “you”. We Israelis, speaking a language with both a singular and a plural version of the word “you” are not likely to make such a mistake. Moody is a very clever detective, who solves problems by working hard and learning as much as possible. This makes him more successful than more flashy colorful detectives. In this novel someone has destroyed a very rare Navaho sand-painting in a private collection, after first trying to buy the work, and has in the process killed both the wealthy owner of the painting and a servant. Moody’s job to find the killer and bring him to justice requires going to Navajo country (near which author Foster lives today). Moody, as a southerner from Mississippi living and working in Florida, finds the scenery and people of New Mexico, especially the Navahos of late 21st century, when this story takes place, strange and difficult to comprehend, although, as a big heavy man who loves eating, he finds Navaho food much to his liking. A good bit of the humor of the book is Moody’s response to cultural shock.

The silly part of the book is that Navaho sand-painting was and is strongly influenced by aliens with a very advanced technology who apparently visited and communicated with the Navahos hundreds of years ago. It seems that portions of such paintings, when properly input into a modern computer, can call up powerful aliens. The fractal pattern derived from

the painting is the key to all of this. Hmmm.

By the killer’s destroying the sand-painting, some crucial evidence has been lost. But there is a picture of it:

“‘Kettrick had an old-fashioned still camera. You remember those; the kind that printed two-D images on paper?...’

“Moody examined the image. It showed a painting some six feet square composed of brightly colored, intricately rendered symbols and designs. Some resembled highly stylized human beings, others looked like plants.... Colored sand on wood.” [p. 29]

When Moody gets to New Mexico, he teams up with Ooljee, a local Navaho detective. They get into a department pickup truck.

“Once clear of commercial traffic he entered their destination into the dash. The onboard navigation unit confirmed the entry and they began to accelerate. Ooljee let go of the wheel and relaxed. Beneath their feet, the ROM laser tracked the guide strip laminated to the pavement, coordinating speed and direction with all the vehicles ahead and behind. Unless Ooljee altered the entry manually, they would travel the rest of the way into Ganado on automatic.” [p. 50]

This vehicle and its system (which Foster described in 1990) are located on a Navaho reservation. It seems that the future described in this book is still a long way ahead of us.

Although the ending was silly, overall this was a fun book to read. Makes me want to read more books by Foster.

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