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The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy

ישראל חוגגת עם הארי פוטר

האגודה ופורטל הארי פוטר הישראלי מקיימים אירוע משותף ביום הולדת של הארי פוטר וג'יי.קיי רולינג, שיכלול הקרנה מסרטי הסדרה, חידון נושא פרסים והרצאה. האירוע יתקיים ביום ג', 31 ביולי, בבית הקולנוע "לב" שבקניון דיזנגוף סנטר בתל אביב. פרטים נוספים [בדף האירוע בפייסבוק](#).

מועדון הקריאה של חודש יולי יוקדש לספר "מלחמת הזומבים הגדולה" (יצא גם תחת השם "מלחמת העולם Z") מאת מקס ברוקס, ויתקיים מישי, 26.7.12, בשעה 20:00, ב"קפה גידי", פרישמן 20 א', תל-אביב. מנחה: עמי פומרנץ. לצורך היערכות למספר המשתתפים, יש להירשם מראש דרך הדואל של המנחה. כמו כן רצוי להביא למפגש עותק של הספר. הכניסה חופשית ואינה כרוכה בתשלום, בחברות באגודה, או בהגעה למפגשים נוספים.

כדאי גם לבקר גם [בלוח האירועים שלנו](#), שבו אפשר למצוא עוד שפע אירועים ז'אנריים, כמעט ז'אנריים ובעלי עניין. בקרו גם לפעמים [במדור הדרושים של האגודה](#). אנו מחפשים [אחראי/ת מחשוב](#) ואחראי/ת מזכירות.

כמו כן, עורך האתר ישמח לביקורות, דעות, סקירות וקטילות של ספרים, סרטים, עציצים ולוויתנים בכתובת: sf.society.site@gmail.com

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

Film Review -- by Gary Roth

Tron: Legacy, rated PG, Walt Disney Pictures (Pixar), 2010.

I was on an airplane between the USA and Israel in 2011, and there were around 100 movies to choose from during the flight. The moment I saw the word ***Tron***, pleasant/fond sci-fi memories began floating through my head from the early 1980's, and of course the sequel ***Tron: Legacy*** was what I viewed for the ensuing 2 hours and 7 minutes. ***Tron: Legacy*** was wholly shot in [3D](#), but unfortunately I did not have the benefit of an IMAX experience.

Tron: Legacy received an award for "Best Original Score" from the [Austin Film Critics Association](#). The film was also nominated for "Excellence in Production Design for a Fantasy Film" by the [Art Directors](#)

[Guild](#), and for "Sound Editing" by [The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences](#). The film made the final shortlist for the [Academy Award for Best Visual Effects](#), although it did not receive a nomination. Although the executives of Walt Disney Pictures hoped to attract a broad audience, the film primarily appealed to men: "Women appear to be more hesitant about the science-fiction sequel", wrote [Los Angeles Times](#) commentator Ben Fritz.

Michael Sheen's portrayal of Castor was particularly acclaimed by commentators, who—because of his flamboyance—drew parallels to the English singer-songwriter [David Bowie](#), as well as fictional characters

such as [A Clockwork Orange](#) (1971) lead character [Alex](#).

The film's "vibrating kaleidoscopic colors that gave the first movie its visual punch have been replaced by a monotonous palette of glassy black and blue and sunbursts of orange and yellow", according to one reviewer, whereas another wrote "This is a movie of astonishing high-end gloss, fused to a pounding Daft Punk soundtrack, populated with sleek sirens and chiseled hunks, boasting electroluminescent landscapes to make Blu-ray players weep."

A sequel is being developed, featuring Quorra, with filming to begin as early as 2014. A spin-off animated series called [Tron: Uprising](#) is under way and premiered June 7, 2012 on the [Disney XD](#) network across the [United States](#). The ten-part miniseries will aim to tell the story of what happened in the Grid between films.

The original *Tron* (1982) movie from 28 years earlier featured an energetic computer hacker named Kevin Flynn, who spent his time in the real world battling the chief executive of a computer company, and most of the movie fighting the bad guys in the digital (inside the computer) world after being transported via a computer-driven laser. The special effects in that motion picture for teenagers were stunning back then, with a multitude of unique ideas -- the sequel motion picture continues this "wow" factor, plus a lot of action-packed scenes and good-quality acting. It's interesting to note that two of the actors from the first film appear in the second one as well -- Jeff Bridges (who plays Kevin Flynn and the bad-guy CLU), and Bruce Boxleitner (who fills the roles of Tron and Alan Bradley/Flynn's partner). Steven Lisberger, who served as director of the "last" film, returned as "this" film's producer.

Some of the Internet-posted comments were positive, while some were negative; however, I don't agree with the assessment that the story was often predictable. I found myself impatiently waiting to see what would happen next, with each moment bringing more and more ingenious surprises. One criticism that I do agree with is that Tron barely appears at all in the new flick, whereas he was a central character in the old one; thus, the name of the second movie is somewhat misleading. Some felt that there was not enough emotion displayed, whereas I deem it appropriate for the hi-tech, semi-robotic world.

Here is the story: In 1989, Kevin Flynn, a software engineer and CEO of Innovative ENCOM International, tells his 8 year-old son Sam about a new "digital divide/frontier" that he created called The Grid -- a virtual domain that exists within the ENCOM mainframe. He dreamed of what clusters of information would look like as they moved through the computer: ships, motorcycles, freeways. Together, the 3 of them built a system where all information was free and open. Flynn, whose wife died in 1985, was a video game icon, and owned his own video game arcade. He mysteriously disappears (or as his partner claimed, was merely pursuing his dream of making "the digital frontier to reshape the human condition), and the Board took control of the company from Alan Bradley, vowing to return the company to profitability. The Board had been concerned about Flynn's erratic and obsessive behavior, and even his most ardent supporters feared that he might have run away. Poor Sam is now in the care of his grandparents, and ENCOM's future will probably depend on what becomes of the little boy.

Fast forward to 19 years later: (partly from Wikipedia) Sam, now ENCOM's [primary shareholder](#), takes little interest in the company beyond playing an annual prank on the board of directors. This year's mischief boasts resourceful Sam overcoming both human and electronic security systems, although he is soon captured and released by the police. The chairman of the Board mentions that the days of no-fee/charge operating systems for the public are over, yet via Sam's trick one of the shareholders reveals on his laptop screen that access is free-of-charge! He is requested by his father's friend (who served as surrogate father until the younger Flynn reached age 12), ENCOM executive Alan Bradley, to investigate a message originating from Flynn's abandoned [Video arcade](#). There, Sam discovers a secret chamber in which he unintentionally (?) teleports himself to the Grid, a [virtual reality](#) created by his father.

Upon delivery in the new world, Sam is brought in clamp-shackles to be reclothed in white-lined Grid armory with identity-disk on back, and then enters the Disk (reminiscent of Gladiator warring) games. The identity disk contains one's thoughts, life history, etc..., and serves as a weapon, too. After succeeding in Level 1, he "illegally" bucks several levels (at the risk of being "terminated"), and then competes against a masked program called Rinzler who, having realized that Sam is a human *User* after seeing him bleed, takes him before CLU, a duplicate of Kevin Flynn, who rules the Grid. Note that combatants on Level 1 are equipped with one personal disc to fight with, whereas only Rinzler is allowed to have two (which oddly contain a white inner circle surrounded by an outer orange one). CLU misleads Sam into thinking that

he is Kevin Flynn, until after he takes Sam's disk and "reads" it. CLU nearly kills Sam in a [Light Cycle](#) match; but the latter is rescued by Quorra, an "apprentice" of Flynn's, who drives him to his father in a special vehicle outside CLU's territory in the distant Outlands Off-Grid (to where CLU's vehicles can't travel).

There, Flynn reveals to Sam that he had been working to create a "perfect" computer system and had appointed CLU (Codified Likeness Utility -- in Flynn's own image, in the new system), and Tron (a security program created by Bradley from the old system) its co-creators. Together, the 3 of them built a system where all information was free and open. During this construction, the trio discover a series of "[isomorphic algorithms](#)" (ISOs), which spontaneously came into being, bearing the potential to resolve various mysteries in [science](#), [religion](#), and [medicine](#). Flynn had wanted the ISO's to be his gift to the real world. CLU, having become corrupted, deemed them an aberration, betrayed Flynn, captured Tron, and destroyed the ISOs. Flynn could not fight CLU because the latter fed off the former's resistance (energy-wise). Meanwhile, the "[I/O portal](#)" (which can only be opened from the real world), permitting travel between the two worlds, had closed, leaving Flynn captive. Unable to prevail, CLU arranged the message sent to Alan, in order to lure Sam onto the Grid, to open the portal for a limited time. Additionally, as Flynn's 'identity disc' is the master key to the Grid and only way to go through the portal, CLU expects Sam to bring Flynn to the portal so that he may take Flynn's disc and go through the portal himself to destroy humanity. Flynn has heard rumors that programs have been strangely missing, and that there was a revolution/uprising being planned

against CLU. Flynn therefore decided not to take any action of his own and to stay away.

Kevin states that much energy is needed to operate the portal, and thus it does not stay open longer than a few hours at a time. Also, time in the digital world passes much faster -- eight hours is equal to one hour in the outside world. After the genocide of the ISO's, Flynn realizes that an ideal, perfect world where conformity / uniformity is not such a great idea; that perhaps diversity and ever-expanding possibilities are preferable goals.

Against his father's wishes, Sam returns to CLU's territory to find Zuse, a program who can provide safe passage to the I/O portal, and who fought alongside the ISO's. At the [End of Line Club](#), its owner Castor reveals himself to be Zuse (who had to reinvent himself after the purge of the ISO's), then betrays Sam to CLU's guards. Kevin and Quorra decide to follow the son, unbeknown to the latter. In the resulting fight, Flynn rescues his son, Quorra is injured, and Zuse gains possession of Flynn's disc. Zuse attempts to bargain with CLU for the disc; but CLU simply takes the disc and destroys the club. Flynn and Sam stow away aboard a "solar sailer" transport program, where Flynn restores Quorra and reveals her to be the last surviving ISO (thanks to his protection). Shortly thereafter, the transport stops inside a large warship where Flynn, Sam, and Quorra discover that the transport contains inactive programs, scheduled for rectification (to be reprogrammed or repurposed) to serve CLU and go through the portal to the real world.

Aboard the warship, Quorra is captured and Flynn recognizes Rinzler as Tron, reprogrammed by CLU, due to his fighting style, while CLU announces his desire to invade the material world. Sam then reclaims

Flynn's disc and rescues Quorra, whereupon CLU, Rinzler and several guards pursue the protagonists in Light Jets. Upon making eye contact with Flynn, Rinzler remembers his past and collides with CLU's Light Jet; but CLU uses Tron's spare baton to escape while Tron falls into the Sea of Simulation, where the colored lights on his armor change from CLU's orange to Tron's original blue-and-white. CLU later confronts the protagonists at the I/O portal, where Flynn absorbs/reintegrates him and dies in the process. Moments later the digital world becomes wiped out from this new union. Quorra, having traded discs with Flynn, gives Flynn's disc to Sam and they escape to the real world.

In Flynn's arcade, Sam [backs up](#) the system, and having deactivated it asks a waiting Alan to take control of ENCOM, naming him chairman of the board. Quorra meets Sam outside, and the two depart on his motorcycle, Sam intending to show Quorra a [sunrise en route](#).

The good guys in the digital world wear white-lined outfits, whereas the bad guys sport clothing with orange lines. At the End of Line Club the white-liners get along with the orange-liners, or at least for a while.

The older Flynn has a likeable, down-to-earth dialogue style, and employs unique terms such as genetic algorithms, quantum teleportation, root code/digital DNA, and biodigital jazz. He has "user" powers in the digital world that the program-people do not possess, but we hear more about them than we actually get to see them in action.

It becomes obvious that Kevin does not want to leave the digital environment and return to the real world. He makes clear that he needs to right the wrongs caused by CLU by staying, despite Sam's desire to bring his father back with him.

Kevin Flynn appears considerably older than his former self in Tron; he has grown a beard that contains both black and gray. As CLU, however, he looks like he did years earlier. Rather than utilizing makeup tactics, such as the ones used in [A Beautiful Mind](#), to give Jeff Bridges a younger appearance, the character of CLU was completely computer generated.

One of the female characters is Gem, one of four programs known as Sirens. The Sirens operate the Grid's game armory, equipping combatants with the armor needed to compete in the games, while also reporting to Castor. Gem was undoubtedly tipped off by city border guards to "pickup" Sam when he arrived from the Outlands Off-Grid in his quest to find Zuse. She brought him to the End of Line Club, where Castor/Zuse stalled for time in order for CLU's attackers to come and fight.

Regarding Quorra, Flynn refers to her as his "apprentice" and has imparted volumes of information to her regarding the world outside of the Grid, which she longs to experience.

She is shown to have a love of human literature, particularly the writings of [Jules Verne](#), and to play [Go](#) with Flynn.

Tron: Legacy is imbued with several references to religious themes, particularly those relating to [Christianity](#) and [Buddhism](#). Quorra was inspired by the historical [Catholic](#) figure [Joan of Arc](#). "She's this unlikely warrior, very strong but compassionate, and completely led by selflessness. Also, she thinks she's in touch with some higher power and has one foot in another world." Since she epitomizes the concept of [androgyny](#), producers conceived Quorra from an androgynous perspective, notably giving her a short haircut. Regarding Light Cycles, a new vehicle appears called a "Light Runner," a two-seat version of the light cycle. It is said to be very fast, and has the unique ability to go off The Grid on its own power. We also get a glimpse at Kevin Flynn's own cycle, a "Second Generation Light Cycle" designed in 1989 by Flynn and is "still the fastest thing on The Grid."

Quote of the Month: The Pros (and Cons) of Plugging In By [Jake Yeston](#)

The adage out of sight, out of mind has some resonance as the first big crop of plug-in hybrid cars hits the road in the United States. People see and sometimes smell gasoline; plugging a car into a socket may make it seem like the energy is conjured from the ether. Of course, power plants actually bear the burden, and Peterson *et al.* are among the growing number of researchers gauging the implications. They have examined the net effect on carbon, nitrogen, and sulfur emissions of replacing a fraction of the cars in a number of Eastern and Midwestern U.S. states with plug-in hybrids. They modeled several different scenarios, such as when cars were charged and whether carbon dioxide emissions were priced or captured and sequestered. For a 10% hybrid fleet scenario, they found significant reductions in CO₂ emissions across the board, and NO_x reductions in most cases. The principal drawback was an increase in sulfur dioxide emissions as demand for coal combustion rose.

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