ATARI GAMES ON XBOX ONE & PS4

# THE MOVIES, TV & GAMES MAGAZINE FOR GEEKS

RETRO
TIME
MACHINE
BACK TO
1995

COMICCON » 10 STEP SURVIVAL GUIDE

THE MANINTHE HIGH CASTLE

CREATING ALTERNATE WORLDS

DOCTOR WHO, SERIES 10

SIMON THE SORCERER

GHOST IN THE SHELL

NEW COLLECTABLES

OLD MAN LOGAN

KNIGHTMARE

EPISODE BLUFFER'S GUIDE TO...

RICK AND MORTY

>> FROM STAR BEAST TO COVENANT... A HISTORY OF THE ALIEN MOVIES









>> BEHIND THE MASK

>> ZELDA ON SWITCH

» R.C. KNIGHT RIDER K.I.T.T.



# SCARLETT JOHANSSON

# GHOST SHELL

DREAMWORKS PICTURES

 $\hbox{$\Box$/GhostInThe Shell. UK $GhostInThe ShellFilm.co.uk $GhostInThe Shell. Tumblr. com $\#GhostInThe Shell. $$ $$$ 



# IN CINEMAS MARCH 31

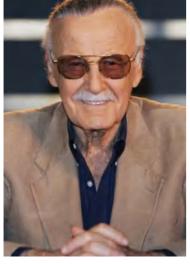
IN **IMAX**, 3D & 2D

BOX OFFICE NOW OPEN - BOOK NOW

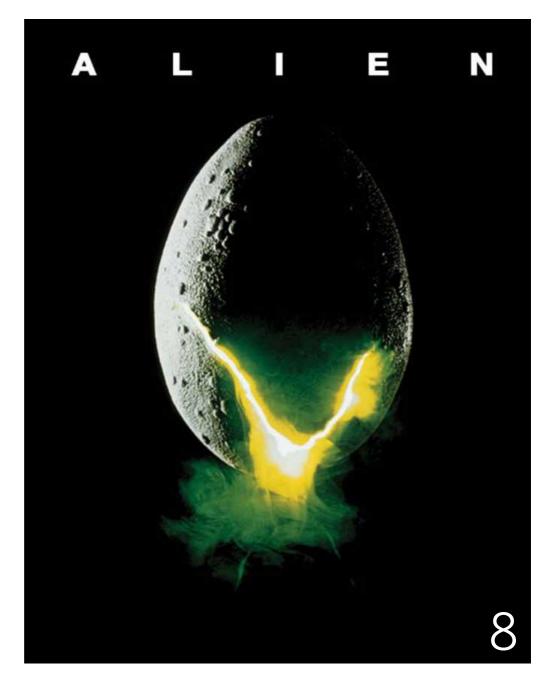








26 BBCDVD THE CURSE OF FATAL DEAT















#### **WHAT'S NEW?**

#### **STAN LEE INTERVIEW**

The Marvel comics legend talks about the new season of Lucky Man on Sky 1

#### MAKING THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE What does it take to bring an alternate world to life on screen? We talk to the SFX team

#### **52 COMIC CON SURVIVAL GUIDE** The Geeky Monkey Top Ten steps to a great

Comic Con season **58 OLD MAN LOGAN COSPLAY** 

#### It's not often an old man is flavour of the month,

but Logan has it covered

#### **BINGEBOX: STREAMING TV**

The best episodes of Fantasy, Sci-Fi, Horror and Super Heroes TV on the streaming box

#### **72 BECAUSE JAPAN**

Those Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers make a comeback this month

#### **RICK AND MORTY** 96

Our Bluffer's Guide to the 21 episodes of this rib-tickling Back to the Future riff

#### 108 WENTWORTH MILLER INTERVIEW

Prison Break is coming back to the box, we sat down with star Wentworth Miller

#### **WHAT'S RETRO?**

#### **ALIEN: FROM STAR BEAST TO COVENANT**

The Alien movie franchise has had a rocky road, but is finally back in Ridley Scott's hands

#### **26 RICHARD CURTIS ON DOCTOR WHO**

A King of comedy, but also a massive sci-fi fan, talks about his Doctor Who episodes

#### **34 TIME MACHINE: 1995**

The SEGA Saturn launches while Judge Dredd is doling out tickets on the big screen

#### **46 RETRO TOY: KNIGHT RIDER K.I.T.T.**

Taking Michael Knight's car for a spin again, complete with red lights and that voice!

#### I WAS IN STAR WARS TOO 49

Another episode of our new regular feature championing those behind the masks

#### **MEGA MACHINE: LOTUS ESPRIT**

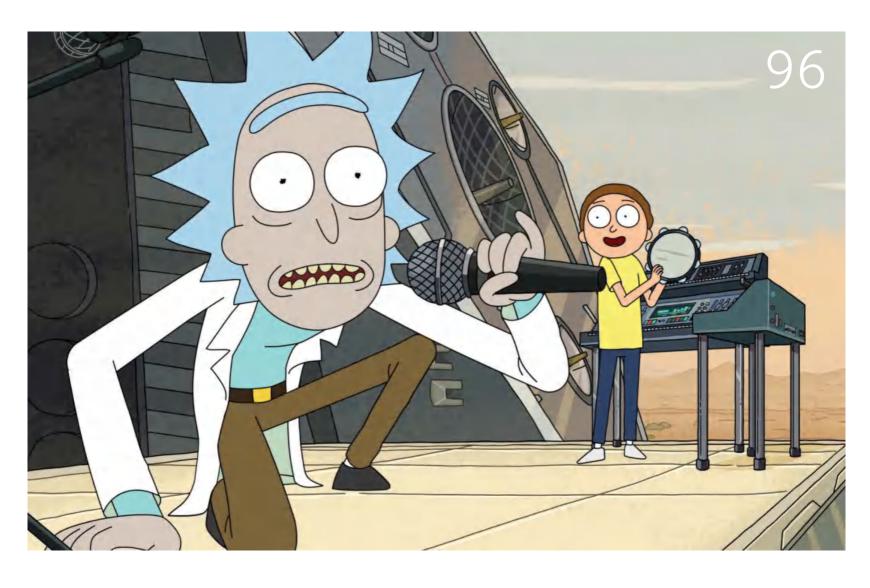
Did you know that the original sub prop was bought in New York for \$100?

#### **106 RETRO TV: KNIGHTMARE**

The 80's teatime show that was doing virtual reality before the rest of the world caught up

#### 112 RETRO GAME: SIMON THE SORCERER

Before Harry there was Simon, only he was much more sarcastic!





SUBSCRIBE NOW! Turn to page 50 for details

#### **FRONTLINE**

- 20 IN BRIEF
  - A look at the new Stranger Things
- **MAP OF GEEK** Jump into the Cortina... we're off
- **28 IABBERTALKY** 
  - Raving about John Wick
- 32 FIGHTING TALK
  - Have the X-Men movies lost their charm?

#### **EYE CANDY**

- **30 SUPERMAN: THE MOVIE** 
  - He was almost Arnie you know!
- 92 STAR WARS: REBELS
- Do you love or hate the cartoon?

#### **GEEKY COLLECTABLES**

- **76 GET THIS**
- Do you still get birthday money? Spend it!
- 94 TOP GEAR
- It's all games, games, games machines
- 110 GEEK CHIC
  - Have you tried taking it off and on again?

#### **PREVIEWS & REVIEWS**

- **READING MATTERS** 
  - Remember books? They have stories
- **COMIC CRITIQUE** 
  - Recommended comics for your collection
- **REVIEWS** 
  - Great new stuff out this month
- 88 STEAM & APPS
  - No, don't get up download

#### **BINGEBOX: STREAMING TV**

- Our recommendations of the best streaming TV...
- **DRAMA/FANTASY** 
  - Hot new drama from Sneaky Pete
- **SCIENCE FICTION** 
  - Our favourite episode of Stranger Things
- **SUPER HEROES** 
  - Legion is making it big on NOWTV
- **HORROR** 
  - Fear the Walking Dead for jump scares

#### **INTERVIEWS**

- **KATHERINE WATERSTON** 
  - Playing Daniels in the new Alien: Covenant
- **STAN LEE & JAMES NESBITT**
- Lucky Man is back on Sky 1. That's lucky!
- **26 RICHARD CURTIS** 
  - The Comic Relief boss talks Doctor Who
- **108 WENTWORTH MILLER** 
  - Has been banged up in Prison (Break) again

#### CONTRIBUTORS



#### **JEM ROBERTS**

Jem is an author, storyteller, comedy historian, performer and magazine man. with official books on Blackadder and Douglas Adams.



#### **CHRIS HALLAM**

An oversized, bearded, lumbering figure, freelance writer Chris has produced half a dozen books and tons of features and reviews in the last decade



#### **IOHN HOULIHAN**

Writer, game designer, sci-fi, fantasy and horror lover, author of the Seraph books and ex-boss of CVG - it's His Houliness Mr Houlihan



#### SEBASTIAN WILLIAMSON

While most people would turn away from a dark alleyway or eerie forest, Sebastian goes skipping on ahead with a thirst for horror, Weirdo.



#### **PAUL GANNON**

Paul occasionally dresses up as a Ghostbuster and parades around the house with the Hoover on his back. Keep Bustin' Paul



#### **CLAIRE LIM**

Music PR by day and mega geek at all other times. Claire has a penchant for anything comic books, robots, space



#### MARK NEWBOLD

Mark is a Star Wars journalist. When he's not talking or writing about Star Wars he can be found sleeping, where he'll probably be dreaming about Star Wars



#### MICHAEL CAMPBELL

Film enthusiast, horror hound, beard aficionado. Comic book junkie Michael is also an experienced professional wrestling journalist.



#### ROB BURMAN

Determined to get his family to play something other than Cluedo at Christmas, Rob is on a constant hunt to discover great board games.



#### **IONATHAN CLEMENTS**

Ionathan Clements' latest book is Christ's Samurai: The True Story of the Shimabara Rebellion, all about teenage sorcerers. Because... Japan.







facebook.com/geekymonkeymag twitter.com/thegeekymonkey search "Geeky Monkey" on SoundCloud www.geekymonkey.tv



### WELCOME...

You start out each issue of a pop culture magazine like Geeky Monkey with 116 blank pages, the day after the high of sending your last issue 'to bed' as we call it in the biz. How could we top the Tom Baker cover? Who could we interview that's as far out as Michael Beck? Then as the weeks go by the beast that is Geeky Monkey takes shape, you stop worrying whether the celebs will make your interview slots and the excitement builds again as the features take shape - you soon know you're on to another great issue!

So, I'm very proud to present our Alien issue with lead feature taking you from Star Beast (the original title for Alien) through to Ridley Scott's new Covenant. We explore the script writing hell the franchise went through, and laugh at AVP. We also get to chat with star of the new movie, Katherine Waterston, about jiggling on camera for turbulance.

We go behind the scenes on one of our favourite TV shows of recent years, The Man in the High Castle, finding out what goes into bringing an alternate reality like Nazi America to life. We have a Bluffer's Guide to off-the-wall cartoon Rick and Morty plus some wonderful retro reminiscing with the SEGA Saturn, Knightmare on TV and Simon the Sorcerer the sarcastic Harry Potter.

Hope you like the magazine. If you do, make sure all your geeky friends know about us too. We're in the best supermarkets and newsagents, or have us delivered direct at www.get-geeky.today. Enjoy!

Phots **NICK ROBERTS** 

FDITOR-IN-CHIEF



# ALEN

FROM STAR BEAST TO COVENANT A HISTORY OF THE ALIEN MOVIES

WHILE RIDLEY SCOTT ATTEMPTS TO UNDO THE TARNISHED HISTORY OF ONE OF HIS GREATEST CREATIONS WITH ALIEN: COVENANT, GEEKY MONKEY LOOKS BACK ON THE ALIEN SAGA AND WHERE IT ALL BEGAN TO GO WRONG FOR ONE OF CINEMA'S MOST TERRIFYING MONSTERS.

Words: SEBASTIAN WILLIAMSON

It's not a Chestburster – he's just fat.



ack in the summer of 1979 Ridley Scott's Alien opened here in the UK. It was released just two years after George Lucas's Star Wars exploded onto cinema screens, and was considered by many to be a sort of twisted flipside to Lucas's space yarn; something far more darker, grittier and gorier. The gamble by studio 20th Century Fox (who wanted to capitalise on the sci-fi boom after Star Wars) paid off.

It's tough to tie Alien to a single genre; it could be considered part of a plethora including haunted house,

sci-fi, outright horror and, for some, an art house movie. The reason for this is down to the fact so many people were involved in bringing the project to life, with each one claiming to have altered the course of the original script to transform it into the movie we know today.

Regardless of who did what, Alien would not have existed without the writing talents of the late Dan O'Bannon, the man responsible for crafting the first draft of Alien, which was originally titled Star Beast and written out of sheer desperation when he was broke and barely eking out an existence while living on the sofa of Alien producer, Ronald Shusett, after a job working on Dune fell apart.

"When Dune fell through, I ended up back in LA flat broke, without an apartment, without a car, with all my belongings in storage. I didn't know what to do. I moved in on a friend's sofa. His name is Ronny Shusett, and he had also had a string of very bad breaks. We decided to do something together," says O'Bannon of Star Beast's origins.

"I was more desperate than he was because I had to get off of his sofa, so we wrote a script called Alien. That script, from the moment I typed 'The End' proceeded to take on a life of its own. Everybody in town wanted it; we just couldn't believe it. Everything had fallen through for us. Nothing had ever worked. It had always gone so badly we said, 'Well, yeah, they're all yelling about it, and they all want it, but it ain't gonna work 'cause it never does. It's just a lot of baloney."

Baloney it was not, but the script that O'Bannon and Shusset wound up hocking to Hollywood was far from the version you see today. By the time the movie started shooting in Shepperton Studios the narrative had gone through a slew of alterations at the hands of producers Walter Hill and David Giler, who wanted to produce a high concept B-movie by adding the Ash subplot, punching up the dialogue and flipping the main character's gender from male to female, which would turn out to be one of the smartest moves in screenwriting history.

"The main idea David and I had was to do a slicked up, high class B-movie that, as best we could, avoided the usual cheese-ball characters and dialogue. This doesn't seem like much now, but the ▶





notion that you'd write a B-movie idea – make it to be played with the same intentions and style as high drama – that was out of the box, then. And, pretty obviously we were thinking like producers before we began to deal with it as screenwriters," says The Warriors and 48 Hours director and writer.

After killer test screenings saw ushers faint and audience members run to the back of theatres to escape the horror on-screen, Alien opened on 25 May 1979 to excellent reviews and blistering box office success, and inadvertently went on to kick-start an entire franchise that has transcended film by crossing over into books, comics, videogames and popular culture. Looking back on the movie some 20 years later, director Ridley Scott felt that he and everyone involved had gotten everything right during the shoot.

"Sometimes when you look back on a film you've made, the seams stick out like crazy, but here they just don't show."

In 2012 Scott attempted to recreate that magic with Prometheus, which he and Fox called a prequel, but not actually a direct prequel, rather something that happened to be set in the same universe as the original (whatever the hell that is). He failed. Spectacularly. And yet, if we're being fair, it's hard to point the finger directly at Scott, because the real problems with that film lay with the script.

Character motivations were extremely muddied or virtually non-existent, and the most interesting character on the page – Michael Fassbender's David – is robbed of interesting backstory, despite his actions serving as the core conflict of the film. Failings aside, Scott's motivations for making the movie were admirable.

# A XENOMORPH'S JOURNEY IN FILM

GEEKY MONKEY TAKES A LOOK AT THE EVOLUTION OF H.R. GIGER'S HORRIFYING CREATION OVER THE COURSE OF 37 YEARS AND EIGHT DIFFERENT APPEARANCES ON SCREEN...

#### [1979] ALIEN



The first appearance defined the look we've come to know today. It was skeletal, biomechanical, coloured in mute shades of black and grey, and sported a razor-sharp tail. It also had a huge head and two absolutely terrifying mouths.

#### [1986] ALIENS



In 1979 Ridley Scott and H.R. Giger gave us our first look at the Alien. In the sequel James Cameron and Stan Winston worked tirelessly to bring us the Alien Queen, which in turn offered up a tonne of interesting backstory to the monster.



"KILLER TEST SCREENINGS SAW USHERS FAINT AND AUDIENCE MEMBERS RUN TO THE BACK OF THEATRES TO ESCAPE THE HORROR ON-SCREEN"

> "Prometheus was born out of my frustration that on Alien 1 in 1979 I only did one, as I don't normally do sequels. I was amazed that in the three that followed that no one asked the question: 'Why the Alien, who made it and why?' Very basic questions," said Scott. "So I came up with the notion of Prometheus, which starts to indicate who might have made it and where it came from."

Now, just five years later, he's trying to right those wrongs by giving us our first true Alien film since the catastrophic failure that was Alien: Resurrection with Alien: Covenant, which promises to take us back to the series' horror roots and kickstart a new trilogy that will eventually lead into the 1979 film. If Scott's planning a new trilogy, what does that mean for Prometheus? Do we consider it a ▶



Ridley Scott has long wanted to return to the Alien franchise and felt his prequel Prometheus had left many questions unanswered.

#### [1992] **ALIEN 3**



In Alien 3 creature designers introduced the Dog Alien (or Bambi Burster or Runner Alien), which shares a lot of the same designs as the original monster, but instead walks on all fours and, like a dog, attacks its prey using its teeth.

#### **ALIEN: RESURRECTION**



One of the biggest design faux pas in terms of messing with the alien was The New-born, a result of genetic tampering that culminated in a pale, translucent beast with skull-shaped head, human eyes and, um, a beer gut.

#### [2004] **ALIEN VS PREDATOR**



The biggest addition to the design cannon of the infamous creature was the Pred-Alien Chestburster, which first surfaced in the comics before making its big screen appearance in the film's final shot. What a terrible film.



"CAMERON MANAGED
TO PUSH THE
SERIES INTO NEW
AND THRILLING
TERRITORIES WITHOUT
CANNIBALISING THE
ORIGINAL FILM"

standalone movie, or will it be considered cannon in a new quadrilogy once the remaining prequels arrive on screens?

Regardless, and from the looks of the trailers Fox has been dropping over the past few months, Alien: Covenant looks like a return to form for the both the director and the series itself, which hasn't had a truly great sequel since James Cameron landed the job of writing and directing Aliens after pitching a 70-page treatment (written in just three days) to the money men at Fox. Bizarrely, on the same day he landed the Aliens job, he was also hired to write the script for Rambo: First Blood Part II.

"I had gone in on the meetings, and I wound up getting the phone calls the same morning. So, I took both jobs, and I had a three-month period to write Rambo and what became Aliens," says the Terminator director. "So, what I did was I got a desk for each script. I put one in the bedroom and one in the living room, and that way, when I would move from one desk to the other, all the notes and papers and everything were right where they were supposed to be. So if I didn't know what to do next on Rambo, I'd go over here and work on Aliens for a while."

Not only did he pull off that incredible creative feat, Cameron managed to push the series into new and thrilling territories without cannibalising the original film or re-treading its story beats, he transformed star Sigourney Weaver into a full-blown action heroine, helped redefine gender roles and delivered Fox a box office behemoth that would go on to earn seven Oscar nominations, including a Best Actress nod for Weaver's turn as Ripley. Sadly for us, this is probably the moment in history where the Alien films stopped actually being

good, something that Cameron is all too keen to point out, while also questioning Scott's need to make another film in the series.

"He inspired an entire generation of filmmakers and science fiction fans with that one movie, and there have been so many films that stylistically have derived from it, including my own Aliens, which was the legitimate sequel and, I think, the proper heir to his film," says Cameron. "I don't think it's worked out terribly well. I think we've moved on beyond it. It's like, okay, we've got it; we've got the whole Freudian biomechanoid meme. I've seen it in 100 horror films since. I think both of those films stand at a certain point in time, as a reference point. Is there any validity to doing another one now? I don't know. Maybe."

Fox obviously felt otherwise which is why immediately after Aliens opened and became a smash hit Fox commissioned Brandywine Productions to come up with a new entry. That tough task fell to producers Walter Hill, David Giler (who co-wrote the original) and Gordon Carroll, who wanted to take what Cameron had done and recapture that magic without treading on the narrative beats and world lore he had laid down so brilliantly. Over the course of six years they worked on a swathe of ideas with a variety of writers, including Cyberpunk writer William Gibson, The Hitcher's Eric Red, Pitch Black's David Twohy and The Navigator's Vincent Ward.

The first idea the team hit upon was to shoot a two-part story that saw the Weyland-Yutani face-off against expatriated Earth folk who had mass produced the aliens for battle, with Michael Biehn's Corporal

### [2007] ALIENS VS. PREDATOR: REQUIEM



The only good thing about this sequel was the Pred-Alien. It shares characteristics with the Predator, such as mandibles and skin colour. It's also much stronger and can lay eggs down the throats of its unfortunate victims.

#### [2012] PROMETHEUS



The Alien doesn't appear here, at least not the version of it we came to know in the previous movies. We're just treated to glimpses of what's to come, before that final shot of the monster's earliest form.

#### [2017] ALIEN: COVENANT



It's back! After months of teasing Ridley Scott revealed the final look of the alien in the newest trailer. How close will the design be to the one first seen in Alien? Hard to tell given there's very little footage to go on right now.



Hicks taking the lead. In the first part of the fable Weaver's role would be reduced to a cameo, before she would then take the lead in the second half of the epic two-film saga. William Gibson was brought in to write the script based off Hill and Giler's treatment, which Giler ultimately felt was "a competently written screenplay but not as inventive as we wanted it to be." Giler and Hill had hoped that he would expand upon their treatment, but instead Gibson just delivered a script that followed their treatment beat for beat.

Hill and Giler then hatched new story, and along with the help of the attached director Renny Harlin, who had struck gold at the box office with A Nightmare On Elm Street 4: The Dream Master, asked Gibson to take another crack at writing the script. When he read the notes, which saw the Aliens making their way to Earth and mankind taking a trip to the Alien planet, he decided to pass, paving the way for Eric Red.

At this point the indecisiveness began to bother Sigourney Weaver and she stepped away, which meant Red was forced to cobble together another story without any Ripley. He turned in a script featuring marines facing off against the aliens in a small American town. It was rejected; Red turned on his heel and quickly exited the project before later disowning it entirely.

Enter David Twohy in 1989 who was handed Gibson's earlier draft and told to remove certain elements, including a space station, and turn it into a prison planet that was being used as a facility to test the aliens as biological weapons. Hill and Giler loved it, but Harlin felt otherwise and left the production to work on poorly received, rock 'n' roll detective flick, The Adventures of Ford Fairlane.

"For about a year we just went back and forth with these ideas, and finally we had this script of a prison ship and aliens, and I said 'I'm sorry, I can't do this'. And it was a very crazy and scary thing to do. I was 29 years old, I was dealing with a huge studio, which was my dream, and I quit," says Harlin. "But I went on to make other movies with Fox, and David Fincher ended up doing Alien 3, and of course he's now doing fantastic; but not necessarily because of Alien 3."

Twohy's idea was then torpedoed by Fox's Chairman, Joe Roth, because he felt that Weaver's character needed to be the centrepiece, and so he was roped in to work on a new script after Weaver had agreed to sign back on, insisting that her character die and also have sex with an alien. That last part never made it into the script, thankfully. Once Twohy finished the script Vincent Ward then signed on as director, but, as luck would have it, he hated Twohy's work and started to rework the Pitch Black director's script to include a wooden planet. When Fox executive Jon Landau read this version he balked, and sent a list of changes. Ward disagreed and was kicked to the kerb.

Hilariously, another writer, Larry Ferguson, was hired and - you guessed it - fired when he failed to deliver the goods in terms of ▶

#### **AVP**

AN ALIEN AND A PREDATOR WALKED INTO A ROOM...

If you thought Alien 3 and Alien: Resurrection were bad then trust us, you need to check out Alien Vs Predator and it's god awful sequel, Requiem.

While the first film was a toned down PG-13 rated snooze-fest, the second attempted to salvage the mess Paul 'Resident Evil' Anderson created back in 2004 by upping the gore considerably. Sadly, it failed and the film was critically panned, much like the first one, when it hit screens back in 2007.

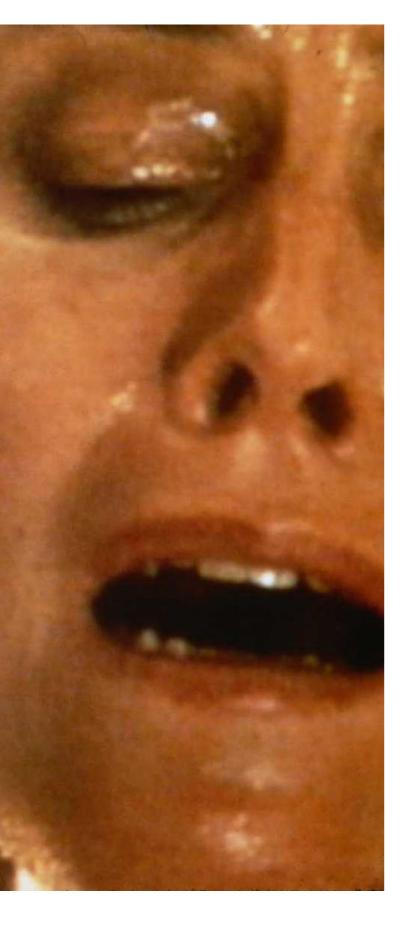
The only thing the film – and its two directors, the Strause Brothers – did right was give us the insanely cool looking, Alien/ Predator hybrid. It's a shame, because like Freddy facing off against Jason, fans had waited for years to see this battle unfurl on the big screen after first being teased by the prospect of it in the 1991 Dark Horse comic, and all they got in return for their years of patience were two turds.

Bizarrely, they both still went on to generate over three hundred million dollars combined. With box office receipts like that, don't be surprised if a reboot surfaces down the line.





"ALIEN 3 ENDED WITH RIPLEY BIRTHING AN ALIEN QUEEN AND HURLING HERSELF INTO A FIERY FURNACE"



writing the character of Ripley. At this point the production was a train wreck, with millions already spent and no script or any footage to show for it. With mere weeks away from a shoot date, and years in development hell, Hill and Giler were brought in as narrative paramedics to try to write a script around a handful of ideas that spilled over from the numerous drafts of other writers, while Fox secured a director in the form of one, David Fincher. And, well, here's what the Fight Club director had to say about that particular experience that turned him off Hollywood for years, "I had to work on it for two years, got fired off it three times, and I had to fight for every single thing. No one hated it more than me; to this day, no one hates it more than me."

Despite the fact that Alien 3 ended with Ripley birthing an alien Queen and hurling herself into a fiery furnace with her hands wrapped tightly around the bitch, Fox felt the need to resurrect her character in 1997's Alien: Resurrection, arguably the series lowest point, in spite of the fact it was written by Joss Whedon and directed by City of the Lost Children's Jean-Pierre Jeunet, after Danny Boyle passed on the project in favour of A Life Less Ordinary.

It was a disaster, and featured one of the most unintentionally hilarious moments in Alien history - Ripley's newborn, beer gut brandishing, human/Xeno baby beast being sucked screaming through a hole in a window. Even though the film was still ably crafted, it felt so far removed from the franchise thanks to a bizarre tone, casting, and obvious studio meddling in the edit room.

Whedon would go on to consider it one of the lowest points in his career - next to the cancelling of his beloved show, Firefly - when he saw the film and realised they'd altered the ending drastically and spoiled the payoffs of certain characters by casting actors like Brad Dourif and J. E. Freeman, who audiences knew would turn to villainy by the time the credits started to the roll.

"You don't ever get over it. When you are making a movie you are making something that is going to last forever, especially now with the Internet," laments Whedon. "There is always going to be a shitty 'Alien' movie out there. A shitty 'Alien' movie with my name on it." While that statement is certainly true, Whedon is forgetting the fact that the film before it was equally as dire, much like Scott's fumbled return in 2012, and the subsequent spin-offs in between.

The fact is, the Alien franchise has been floating aimlessly in space for some time now, and if Scott can't muster some magic with Alien: Covenant, it might be time to lay the late, great Dan O'Bannon's terrifying cinematic creation to rest. And yet, even after the fumbling of Prometheus, we do have high hopes for Alien: Covenant, not just because the caliber of writing appears to be much greater this time around (the script was penned by Oscar nominated scribe and Penny Dreadful creator, John Logan), but because Fox and Scott have gone out of their way to drip feed us plenty of juicy info without spoiling the >

# **Katherine Waterston**

ACTRESS, PLAYS DANIELS IN ALIEN COVENANT

Very much aware of the shadow left by Sigourney Weaver in the Alien franchise, actress Katherine Waterston chatted about taking on the role of Daniels in Alien Covenant, and working with Ridley Scott.

#### Was part of the appeal to doing Alien: Covenant the fact that this is a strong role for a woman? Ridley Scott is well known for them, from Alien to Thelma and Louise.

Yeah, people are talking a lot these days about the progress we're making, or, you know, storytelling, with great roles for women. But, maybe Ridley's not getting enough credit. He's been doing it for a very long time.

## What do you think makes this new Alien movie unique?

It's Ridley's vision, he creates complete worlds. No detail is ignored and I think that, and his focus on character. It's that combination that makes the film so scary. You really believe the environment you are in, and you really believe these are real people in a very unpleasant and dangerous situation. I think that if the world didn't feel complete, if you weren't invested in the characters, when the aliens come along to theaten them, it wouldn't be so terriying. He sets the stage so well, it's really scary when things start to go wrong.

# What can you tell us about your character in the new movie, without any spoilers, she seems quite queasy in the trailer?

I'm not sure really what I can share, except that she has really good instincts, and she has a concern, about, you know, where they are going on that ship. So, we were really rocking around in there when we shot [the scene onboard the ship]. And people had whiplash. I mean, it was really violent. So, probably, some of that is just genuine nausea. But she's also concerned about what they are doing. She's questioning leadership there a little too, I think. You always wonder, what kind of person you would be in an extreme crisis. Will you be a coward? Or will you be courageous? And I think she's just one of those people, who, if her kids were in a car that was on fire, she'd be able to lift up the car.

As an actor, did you realise you had an action hero inside you? Did you take some convincing to take on the role?



"WE DID OUR FIRST READ-THROUGH IN A ROOM THAT WAS JUST SURROUNDED ON ALL SIDES BY DISTURBING IMAGES OF THE ALIENS"

Well, I don't think anyone ever has to convince any actor to work with Ridley Scott, or to be a part of something like this. I feel like I've heard actors say this all of the time, and they say it all of the time because it's true: we do find ourselves attracted to the things that we don't think we can do. I'm always looking for new challenges, and, maybe, even on some level, I'm addicted to that horrible dread that you feel at the beginning of a project where you are not sure if you will have what it takes to pull it off.

# Did you discuss the similarities of your character to Sigourney Weaver's Ripley with Ridley Scott?

We never really talked about it. I mean,

obviously I love her, and I love what she did, and there are obvious parallels. She had the good instinct about some things in the first film, and she also found her courage. That, in a way, I think is similar. But we never talked about that.

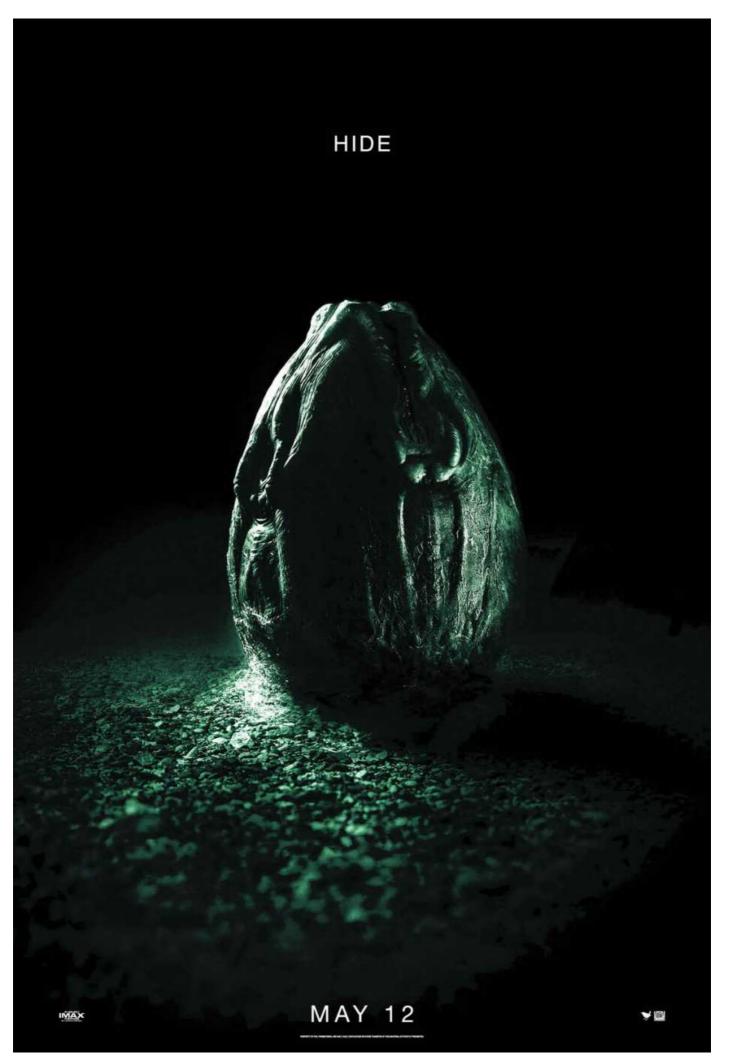
Actually the haircut was my idea, because I had this like, goofy bob from Fantastic Beasts. And Ridley kind of liked it. And I just thought, I can't be this like, goofy flawed witch in space. It just seemed really wrong to me. I'd been hanging out with Ezra Miller on that film, and I really loved his dumb haircut from that movie. So, when I got this job, I was still shooting that, and it was near the end of shooting Fantastic Beasts, and in the hair and make-up trailer they were making wigs, just in case we had to do pick-ups and people's hair had changed. So, I saw his wig in the corner, and I said, "can I just try that on?" And, so, I put that on, and I showed it to Ridley, and begged him to let me do it and he did. So I'm just ripping off Ezra. There were a couple of other ideas that I had there, but for that, I didn't really think about her, and actually, in the first film, she had that great, big curly business... yeah.

# We've heard that you don't like horror films much? How do you end up starring in one?

I can't handle scary movies at all. No, you know, I just... you don't think about having to watch it when you read a script or shoot something and it's a different – Ridley's good at freaking people out, so, yeah.

# Did you get to see what the aliens would look like when making the movie?

Yeah. We saw everything ahead of shooting and, uh, we did our first read-through in a room that was just surrounded on all sides by disturbing images of the aliens and what they can do to a person. So, yeah, I think we were all kind of green for a number of reasons at that first reading. And then we got to work with a lot of puppets and stuff, which is so useful when you're making a movie like this, so you, you know, you don't have to use your imagination, which is hard. **GM** 



#### A TRIBUTE TO BILL PAXTON

This month saw the untimely passing of one of the most varied actors in the business. Geeky Monkey takes a look at some of the Aliens star's best roles.

#### HUDSON // ALIENS



Arguably the most quotable character from Aliens, Paxton's Private Hudson is probably one of the best things about James Cameron's benchmark setting seguel. With endlessly quotable lines like "Game over, man!" everything he says in the limited amount of screen time he has in the film is pure cinematic gold.

#### CHET // WEIRD SCIENCE



Weird Science was one of John Hughes' best movies, and made all the better for Paxton's appearance as Chet, the horribly abusive, money-extorting older brother of Wyatt (Ilan Mitchell-Smith) and best friend of Anthony Michael Hall's scene stealing, Gary Wallace. Did you know the made a TV show spin-off? No, neither did we.

#### PUNK LEADER // THE TERMINATOR



Okay so it was a very small role he played back in James Cameron's seminal sci-fi flick, but damn was it a truly memorable one, and ultimately kick-started their lifelong friendship. In case you don't remember, he played the teenage blue haired loudmouth punk that taunted Arnie's naked, time travelling Terminator.

#### SIMON // TRUE LIES



True Lies was a fun movie, but felled in places by some poor acting and daft writing. Still, it did feature Paxton as Simon, the super creepy used car salesman who pretends to be a spy in a desperate attempt to woe Arnie's bored housewife, played by Iamie Lee Curtis.

#### LAMBERT // PREDATOR 2



Paxton is only one of two actors to be killed by a Terminator, Alien and - in the 1990 sequel - Predator. The other actor is Lance Henrikson. While Predator 2 wasn't a patch on the original, Paxton's goofy cop offered up plenty of chuckles in a sea of big budget mediocrity.

#### SEVEREN // NEAR DARK



Kathryn Bigelow's Near Dark is a cinematic masterpiece, the ultimate vampire noir tale and Paxton is probably the best thing in it. You simply cannot take your eyes off the man as he steamrolls through scenes, slaughtering innocents and doling out goofy gags as he guzzles his way through the entire running time.





Covenant hits many of the same story beats as Ridley Scott's original Alien, and all us sci-fi geeks couldn't be happier!

film. From creepy posters, to preview footage screenings and, more recently, a short film that serves as a mini prologue introducing the crew of the Covenant ship.

The footage - directed Scott's son, Luke - appears to show a crew consisting entirely of couples, which should make for some interesting character dynamics because these guys are lovers not fighters. The ship's captain, played by James Franco, is seen signing off and entering cryosleep. He leaves his wife Daniels, played by Katherine Waterston, to party with the rest of the crew including Billy Crudup, Danny McBride and Michael Fassbender, who will be playing duel roles in the film. What happens after that we're assuming is the moment where the Ridley Senior's flick kicks off and the crew is sent to explore a mysterious planet that may or may not be the Engineer's home world, which, despite the signs of agriculture spotted in the trailer, may no longer be inhabited thanks to some quick shots of mummified Engineers and alien ruins far in the distance.

The only thing we're certain they'll find is the titular Xenomorph, and, most likely, more than one breed judging by some of the more scary moments glimpsed in trailer. While that final shot of an Alien that looks remarkably similar to the one found in the 1979 film set fan forums alight, our eyes popped when we spotted an Alien that owes more than its fair share of debt to the one used in David Finchers' film.

Have the runner Aliens been resurrected for the first time since 1992? What other monstrous surprises has Scott got in store for us? Here's hoping all these questions and more will be answered come 19 May. GM

# THE ANIMATED PREQUEL TO TRAIN TO BUSAN



# GETTING STRANGER

NETFLIX TEASES THE SECOND SEASON OF STRANGER THINGS, COMING HALLOWEEN...



awking their sci-fi TV show idea around the networks, the Duffer Brothers were told that no-one would watch a TV show with children in the lead roles. They should make it a kids' show or a paranormal show with the cop in the lead. How wrong the suits were, Netflix picked up the rights to Stranger Things and the Duffer's created a masterpiece of TV drama and homage to the favourite movies and directors of their childhood. Steven Spielberg, John Carpenter, Stephen King, The Goonies, E.T. – the pop culture references and artistic direction of the series made it a huge hit with nostalgia-hungry viewers.

Well season two is well and truly underway, with a release planned for Halloween this year and a teaser trailer already setting geeky tongues wagging. The show regulars make a return – kids Will, Mike, Dustin, Lucas and Eleven are all making a comeback plus there are new characters introduced as the story spreads from Hawkins, Indiana. Joyce Byers (Winona Ryder) has a new boyfriend interest in old school friend Bob, much to local cop Hopper's distaste. Bob runs

the Hawkins Radio Shack. There's a Department of Energy executive charged with keeping the monstrous events of season one under wraps, an emotionally disturbed woman who is drawn to Hawkins because of the strange events and a former journalist who loves a conspiracy theory and is out to investigate exactly what went on.

With season two taking place around Halloween 1984, the show will already strike a chord with retro viewers who would have been watching the Halloween movie on VHS in the early 80s. It's a year after the events of the first season and Will Byers is struggling to shake the effects the stress of his experience had on him, Nancy is mourning the disappearance of Barb, and Eleven is also missing. The Duffer Brothers have teased that Eleven will play a big part of this season though, exporing her backstory, but apart from releasing a trailer with the episode titles in it, they are remaining tight lipped.

The second trailer has us excited though – the boys are in Ghostbusters outfits, they're back on their BMX bikes and there's a new monster on the loose! "Seven more months 'til Halloween..." **GM** 



#### PARAPPA THE RAPPER IS BACK!

All PlayStation gamers of a certain age will have fond memories of PaRappa the Rapper - the rapping dog in his red beanie hat who had to rap his way through a series of rhythm game scenes to win the love of his girlfriend, who happened to be a flower. Yes, it was crazy, with dancing onions, flea market frogs and a rush for the toilet, but this is the game that kickstarted the entire rhythm action game genre. Well Sony is on a nostalgia kick as they have brushed PaRappa off and brought the game bang up to date for the PS4, releasing on 28 March.

The new version has 4K and 1080p graphic options, now rendered in 16:9 for modern TVs (yes, this game goes way back], the soundtrack, which is one of the game's greatest assets, has been digitally remastered and while you can use the traditional controls, they have added new modes. 'Feel the Beat' makes the Dualshock 4 controller keep the beat by vibrating in time with the music and 'See the Beat' makes PaRappa's icon enlarge as you press the button, giving a visual feedback for how accurate you are. Most exciting, PaRappa The Rapper Remastered is the first of a string of remastered games Sony has planned with classics Patapon and LocoRoco hot on its heels.

#### **FACEBLOOPER**

"Happy Birthday to my big brother, Jeff. Seems like just yesterday you were changing my diapers, even though it was well over a week ago."

RYAN REYNOLDS



#### **AMERICAN GODS RELEASE**

Amazon Prime Video has announced that the long-awaited adaptation of Neil Gaiman's novel American Gods will stream on their UK video service the day after its US launch, so we get to see the show on 1 May, then weekly. It's a story of the power struggle between the old gods of mythology, who happen to be living in modernday America, and young whipper-snapper gods who value money, technology and celebrity. Starring Ian McShane, Gillian Anderson and Crispin Glover, it's a show not to miss!



#### **NEWS BITES**

#### **ANOTHER TRON?**

35 years ago Disney pushed back the boundaries of computer generated imagery with their original TRON movie starring Jeff Bridges as a coder transported into his computer. While the movie didn't set the world on fire, it was praised for its visual effects and became a cult flick among sci-fi fans. The 2010 sequel TRON: Legacy was big on special effects but low on character development and story, so it comes as a surpise that Disney is going to have another crack at it. The word on the Hollywood street is that Jared Leto is lined up to star in a new TRON reboot, not a sequel. The movie will contain some plot from an abandoned sequel titled TRON: Ascension, but take it in new direction with Leto's character known as Ares. With a TRON lightcycle ride just opened at Disneyland Shanghai, there's lots of life in TRON yet!



#### YOUTUBE TAKE ON TV

Launching Stateside in the next few months is YouTube TV. The web video service wants to take on the cable TV providers with their own TV offering. For \$35 per month up to six users can have their own TV accounts and watch more than 40 TV channels from the major US broadcasters, including the all-important (to Americans) sports channels. With YouTube Red already taking on Netflix and Amazon Prime with original shows, and YouTube 'original' allowing you to stream TV for a price, the company's offering is getting more confused by the month. No word on any UK rollout on either service just yet.



MAP OF GEEK

JUMP INTO THE GEEKY MONKEY DELOREAN AS WE TRAVEL AROUND THE UK SEEKING OUT GEEKY MOVIE AND TV FILMING LOCATIONS, THIS MONTH... CAMBRIDGESHIRE.

lisiting some places around the British Isles is so exactly like just stepping onto a film set, it's not surprising to learn they've racked up a plethora of movie credits over the years. Although its county's countryside has appeared in The Crown, Atonement and The Other Boleyn Girl, it's the city of Cambridge that has proven catnip to makers of historical and fantasy films. It's a wonder the Harry Potter series isn't one of the titles on the list, as a stroll around the crumbling Medieval colleges of Cambridge University is as close to visiting Hogwarts as you'll find south of Alnwick Castle.

Cambridge's main claim to entertainment fame is of course the Footlights club which gave us stars from Peter Cook to Emma Thompson, and if you wanted to take a chance on seeing future stars before anyone's heard of them, you could catch a show at the ADC Theatre.

But otherwise any movie tour of the city is a gauntlet of academic film titles. In The Theory of Everything, Eddie Redmayne's Stephen Hawking fell in love in the cloisters of St. John's, perhaps the most iconic of all colleges, comprising the unmistakeable Bridge of Sighs, infamous Britfilm success Chariots of Fire is set in Cambridge but partly filmed at Eton, while

Gwyneth Paltrow's Sylvia Plath biopic used her real college. The city has also been a handy stand-in for London of yore, with both The King's Speech and Cate Blanchett's Elizabeth using the city to depict very different eras.

And then there's the University's infamous history of spying – the lives of Philby, Maclean, Burgess and Blunt have been dramatised many times, more on TV than in cinema, and the 2003 BBC series Cambridge Spies, starring Toby Stephens, Rupert Penry-Jones, Tom Hollander and Sam West in the above roles is probably the most star-heavy retelling of their deception, though dozens of other spy-related films, from Page Eight to Kingsman, are packed with Cambridge references.

For all of the above, any geek worth the name has one major reason for visiting Cambridge – the infamous abandoned filming of Douglas Adams' Doctor Who episode Shada used the great writer's own college of St. John's to stand in for the fictional St. Cedd's, where Professor Chronotis' own TARDIS hid as his study. Tom Baker was fimed as the Fourth Doctor fleeing from villainous mind-robbing orbs on a bicycle all around the city centre's famous cobbles – a mental image it's impossible to shake. **GM** 







#### THE BATTLE FOR MIDDLE-EARTH CONTINUES

After winning over 50 games industry awards for Middle-earth: Shadow of Mordor back in 2015, developer Monolith Productions is back with an expanded game system, unique personal game worlds and an original story that sees the return of Talion and Celebrimbor as they go behind enemy lines to form an army powerful enough to take on the Dark Lord, Sauron. Planned for a 25 August release on Xbox One, Windows 10, PlayStation 4 and the mysterious Project Scropio (the new Xbox!), players will wield a Ring of Power to help in the collossal battle. Excitingly for game buffs, not only do your actions affect your enemies, who remember every encounter and skirmish, but every aspect of the open world including environments and other characters are affected by decisions as you play. This makes your experience unique.

#### **CLASSIC QUOTE**

GEEKY SIDE

"Me, I'm dishonest, and a dishonest man you can always trust to be dishonest. Honestly it's the honest ones you have to watch out for, you never can predict if they're going to do something incredibly stupid."

IACK SPARROW

HE MAY BE A CYBERNETIC KILLING MACHINE, BUT HE'S A REAL BOON WHEN THE TOASTER PACKS UP.



#### **NEWS BITES**

#### **LICK A SWITCH**

The things that hardware developers have to think about these days... Would you believe that Nintendo has put time into considering what the SD-card-like cartridges that power the games on their new Switch console actually taste like? They have coated the carts with a non-toxic chemical that gives them a bitter taste if kids, or stupid people, put them in their mouths. Luckily it only tastes bad, there is no smell to the chemical, otherwise it would have given a whole new meaning to the phrase "this game stinks!"



#### PLACE YOUR BETS

The moment Peter Capaldi announced he was leaving Doctor Who the geeky world went into a speculation frenzy. Would new showrunner Chris Chibnall, hot from his success with Broadchurch, replace him with the first woman Doctor? Tilda Swinton and Olivia Colman are in the running according to the loudest voices on social media, but then Olivia is in everything on TV. Then Kris Marshall's name was mentioned, and the bookies had a surge of bets being placed on the former My Family and Death in Paradise star. Bookmaker Ladbrokes got a bit spooked by this and have now stopped taking bets on Marshall ending up in the TARDIS. The fact is that Chris Chibnall, who is taking up the reins from Steven Moffat, has most of this year to decide - he doesn't take over untl 2018.

# **Stan Lee & James Nesbitt**

COMIC BOOK LEGEND AND ACTOR, PLAYING DI HARRY CLAYTON IN LUCKY MAN

Lucky Man, the story of a Murder Squad cop with a gambling addiction who is gifted an ancient bracelet that gives him endless luck, was the highest performing debut of any Sky 1 drama last year. Series two has just started, promising more action with higher stakes than ever before. James Nesbitt reprises his role as DI Harry Clayton, and the series is again created by Marvel Comics legend Stan Lee.

# What was your first reaction on watching series one of Lucky Man? What surprised you about the production?

**Stan:** The thing that surprised me the most about watching the first series of Lucky Man was how fantastic it looked. I felt like I was watching a big budget movie, all of the scenes and all of the set pieces looked wonderful.

#### You have mentioned in the past that London is the perfect setting for this series, do you feel that the vibrancy has been captured?

**Stan:** One of the things I love about the series is that it's like a travelogue of London. To me London is one of the most dramatic and beautiful cities in the world. In Lucky Man, London is like one of the characters that you tune in to watch and I find that very unique and exciting as a viewer.

# Harry Clayton is a complex character. What do you like about him?

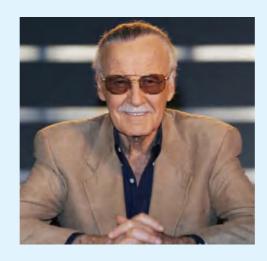
**Stan:** Harry Clayton is the perfect type of character because he is flawed. He's not perfect, he has his faults and he has his weaknesses. But despite all that, we care about him and we can relate to him and to me that makes him a strong character. I think there is a little bit of me in there somewhere also.

# You had a surprise cameo on the first series of Lucky Man, can we expect to see you return?

**Stan:** Yes. I have filmed my cameo for series two of Lucky Man. I loved it because it gave me a chance to do a little bit of acting and I actually have a line to say this time! I can't wait to see it.

# What was your favourite moment from series one of Lucky Man?

**Stan:** My favourite moment and stunt from series one of Lucky Man was that incredible speedboat chase along the Thames River with Harry Clayton behind the wheel. To me it was one of the most exciting scenes that really started the series off with a bang! Series two has some very exciting moments that I think the fans of the show will really enjoy.



"ONE OF THE THINGS I LOVE ABOUT THE SERIES IS THAT IT'S LIKE A TRAVELOGUE OF LONDON"

STAN LEE ON LUCKY MAN

### How has Harry Clayton grown from the first series of Lucky Man?

James: A lot happened at the end of series one with the use of the bracelet almost costing him the lives of his wife and daughter. When we meet Harry in series two, even though he can't get rid of the bracelet, he's trying to walk the right path and not use it. What he has been told in the past by Eve is that for every piece of good luck that comes his way, bad luck can befall someone close to him. Harry is on his own but he is trying to be a good father and separated husband, and he is trying to live to the letter of the law by not using the bracelet.

# What was your favourite Harry Clayton moment of series one?

James: There were so many, but the action scenes have been my favourite, particularly being able to ride a speedboat through the Thames Barrier. To film all over London has been fantastic and to get to see parts of London that I had never seen before, Lucky Man takes you everywhere. It's also been a fantastic opportunity to work with Stan Lee. He is across every script and well aware of all that we are doing which is just the most incredible feeling. **GM** 

Lucky Man series two is on Sky 1 now.



# CLASSIC CULT FILMS FROM ARROW VIDEO IN MARCH & APRIL



THE COMPLETE HOUSE SAGA, BROUGHT TOGETHER ON BLU-RAY FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME WITH BRAND NEW 2K RESTORATIONS, A LIMITED 60-PAGE BOOKLET, PLUS A WEALTH OF EXTRA FEATURES, COMMENTARIES, INTERVIEWS AND MUCH MORE.



THIS LIMITED BOXSET BRINGS TOGETHER ALL FIVE FILMS FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME, INCLUDING A STUNNING NEW 4K RESTORATION OF THE ORIGINAL PHANTASM, OVERSEEN BY JJ ABRAMS











# YOUR COLLECTION WOULDN'T BE COMPLETE WITHOUT THEM



FOR ALL THE LATEST INFORMATION ON UPCOMING RELEASES AND MORE VISIT:

www.arrowfilms.com













# **Richard Curtis**

WRITER, DIRECTOR, PRODUCER

Comedy legend Richard Curtis was a close friend of Douglas Adams, who put the young writer up in his Hollywood home during his first movie project, edited a Comic Relief book for him, and was once put off from telling him the real meaning of life over lunch. We recently caught up with Curtis during a particularly busy period of Red Nose Day prep, and found ourselves discussing his time-travelling adventures.

You spent your childhood in many corners of the globe, did you watch much Doctor Who when you were small? Yeah, not obsessively, but I've got all the memories I should have, my essential watching period was the chap with the lisp, Jon Pertwee, and a lot of Tom Baker, and a bit of Davison. But we used to watch it a lot, on a rainy Saturday evening or whenever. I have a pretty good grounding.

Many years ago, Rowan Atkinson pontificated about the idea of a sci-fi Blackadder set in the far future, did that idea get far, besides the 'Yet To Come' section of Blackadder's Christmas Carol? Well when I reflect on it, I think one of the things about Blackadder was that it was an attack on authority in its own way, putting a contemporary eye on history and showing how ridiculous we are, and so we'd have been at a disadvantage in the future. That's what we found tricky doing Christmas Carol, we didn't really have anything to hold on to, so you just got silliness upon silliness. There was nothing to undermine because sci-fi is in itself a confection, so I think we probably did right not to go into the future.

And so, besides the Da Vinci time-travelling shed in Blackadder Back & Forth, you never got very far with sci-fi Blackadder? We never got far with anything else, I did write several pages of a 'Birth of Christ' special which ended up in The True History of Blackadder book, so there we go.

#### So when it came to doing a comedy Doctor Who special for Comic Relief, was that Steven Moffat's idea, and were you already friends?

I think probably this might be a wife issue! Because Sue Vertue produced Red Nose Day, and my suspicion is that it might easily have been because we were talking, and we would go through every available brand, be it dead or alive, that we might parody, and my guess is that she mentioned Steven's Doctor Who love. I definitely went to their wedding and was a friend of them both, so that's my guess of how it came about.



**And of course he had no other way of writing Doctor Who at the time!** Indeed, so I think I might have played some part in the direction of his glorious career.

Once the Doctor Who spoof special, 'Curse of Fatal Death', was underway in 1999, you obviously had a million things on your plate with Red Nose Day in the offing, do you remember being much involved? I think I was only really involved in the casting, I don't think I felt it was my business to write or rewrite, though I'm sure I convinced Rowan to do it, and certainly did the same for Hugh. I remember Hugh was very amused at what he thought of as his lack of amusing contribution – he said, "Rowan's playing comedy Doctor, Joanna's female Doctor, and I'm playing dull Doctor." Which I'm sure is no criticism of Steven's writing! It's just that Hugh couldn't find a character that would get enough laughs, in his opinion.

So once Doctor Who returned as the top programme on TV there was a switching of roles – rather than Steven writing a spoof for you, you wrote a real episode for him, 'Vincent and The Doctor'. Was it quid pro quo? What a lovely thought. I can't remember how I got talked into it, except that I must have probably had a conversation with him about doing

something Doctor Who-y for Red Nose Day, he did do various small things, and I just had this idea. I remember being encouraged by the fact that Neil Gaiman, who's another friend of mine, was planning to do one, so I wouldn't be a fool on my own.

### Once you'd had the idea and pitched it, did you feel under much pressure to make it funny?

I don't know that I did – I think if there were any jokes in it I would have been glad of it, but I always think of writing being like a mixing desk - in comedy you push up the character, then you push up another slider and write jokes for a day, or plot the next day. My real inspiration on that episode was actually wanting to talk about Vincent van Gogh, because I was so traumatised every time I thought about him – in fact, I think I originally had the idea and thought of doing it in the Blackadder time travel one, I'd had the idea for a while. And then my sister had lots of battles with depression as well, so it was something I felt very passionate and serious about on that score. And of course I'd written The Girl In The Café, which was a fundamentally serious film, so I wasn't worried about being funny, because I hadn't been particularly funny in that, and we won a lot of Emmies, so no, I don't have to be funny all the time.

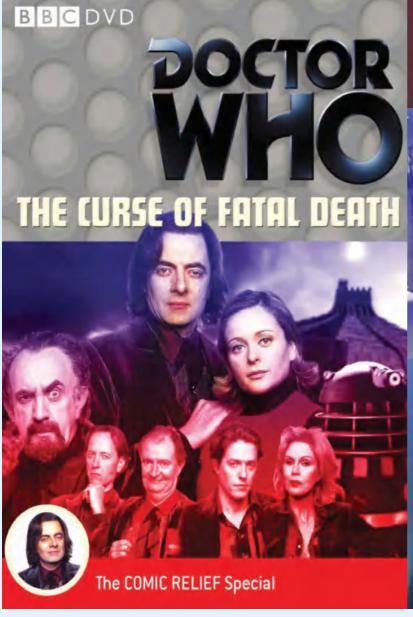
#### Since then you've made About Time, which is another comedy/sci-fi meeting, so is science fiction a genre you're comfortable with now?

It is interesting that, because I wouldn't connect myself with the genre in any way, but weirdly, when I think of my favourite writers, I've read all of Evelyn Waugh, John le Carré, Dickens – but also every word that Kurt Vonnegut ever wrote. And of course, I love Douglas' books. It is odd that I've done time travel three times now, so without knowing it, there must be something in the freedom it gives you. It may be that I'm not that interested in traditional plots, where people get murdered, and divorced, and all that sort of stuff. So it may be that with sci-fi you can sort of leap into a big plot, without it having to be all about good and evil... **GM** 

"ROWAN'S PLAYING COMEDY DOCTOR, JOANNA'S FEMALE DOCTOR, AND I'M PLAYING **DULL DOCTOR.**"

**HUGH GRANT ON HIS DOCTOR WHO** 

Richard Curtis was Executive Producer on Doctor Who: The Curse of Fatal Death. It was written by Steven Moffat and starred Rowan Atkinson, Julia Sawalha, Richard E Grant, Jim Broadbent, Hugh Grant, Joanna Lumley and Jonathan Pryce.





OUR GEEK IN RESIDENCE, CLAIRE LIM, TAKES ON A BURNING SUBJECT FROM THE GEEKIVERSE EACH ISSUE. THIS MONTH SHE RAVES...

#### "JOHN WICK IS A NEW WAVE OF ACTION MOVIE"



WITH RESIDENT GEEK, CLAIRE LIM

eo-noir revenge thriller John Wick has added its own spin to the action genre, which these days almost entirely comprises of bombastic franchises or near geriatric stars making a comeback (Taken, The Expandables). John Wick followed a different path, combining Asian cinematic fight scenes (gun-fu) and lore (like Asia's heroic bloodshed genre) plus a tight, original script that had 'franchise' written all over it from the start.

Directors Chad Stahelski and David Leitch's roots lie as stuntmen, stunt coordinators and second unit directors so their knowledge of a good action sequence combined with their influences give John Wick and Chapter 2 a signature style.

Director John Woo originally developed the gun-fu style; before gun-fu came along, action sequences using guns executed heavy, brute force filming techniques and martial arts films featured traditional styles and weapons (like swordplay). Woo's A Better Tomorrow (1986) is one of the earliest films that showcase the gunfu fighting style.

Gun-fu also often comes hand-in-hand with the aforementioned heroic bloodshed genre, where themes of brotherhood, honour, duty, redemption, violence and vengeance are explored. The main protagonist is usually an anti-hero with a narrative set in an underworld of sorts. The story of ex-hitman John Wick, coming out of retirement to seek vengeance against the villains of a seedy underworld is a perfect example of the Western take on heroic bloodshed. But before John Wick, elements of heroic bloodshed and gun-fu had already been explored in films like Robert Rodriguez's Desperado (1995) and are littered throughout modern action films from Equilibrium (2002) to Kick-Ass (2010).

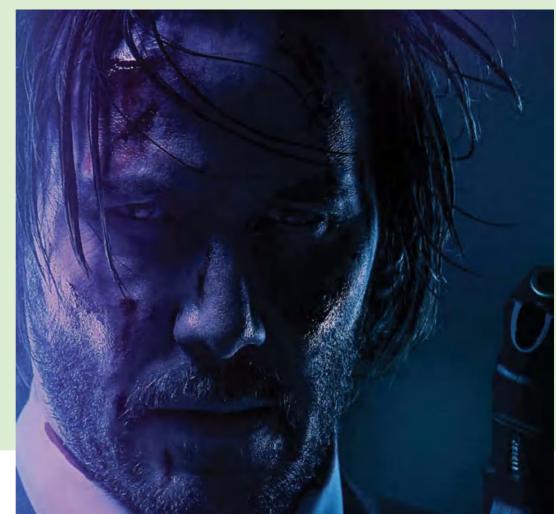
However, what sets John Wick apart is its own interpretation of the style for Western audiences. Although gun-fu and elements of heroic bloodshed have featured in Western films over the last few decades, it often feels like they're borrowed rather than fully explored. Added to this is the return of the pre-heroic bloodshed era style of action that use big budget, heavyweight action sequences – John Wick

didn't conform to this mould; the film felt like a breather between the dazzle of special effects and sluggish action sequences we're now akin to, where the narrative barely explores they grey area between good versus evil.

John Wick's simple, succinct plot utilised its influences giving us a character that felt real, the filmmakers stating that they wanted him to be a "man" not an extraordinary being – a mysterious, stoic character with issues. The close quarters combat scenes in the film, as extraordinary as they are, feel believable, because of their attention to detail, filmed in a fluid style.

Performing many of his own stunts, Reeves stated he enjoyed the "connection with the character" and from a viewer's point of view, it's more involving to see the action sequences played out in this style. He spent four months learning judo, Japanese jiu-jitsu and Brazilian jiu-jitsu and trained relentlessly during this time, the filmmakers noting that his professionalism, perfectionism and humble attitude made him perfect for the role. This totally shows throughout both films.

John Wick is a modern heroic bloodshed film that utilises gun-fu in a way that Western audiences can easily digest. Unlike Woo's over the top Face/Off (1997) or his take on Mission: Impossible II (2000), where Woo's signature slomo and doves felt misplaced, when John Wick arrived, it was the perfect synergy between East and West. These are intelligent, modern action films that will hopefully herald a new wave of creativity for the genre, exploring that fun grey area between good and evil and proving action films can be modern day masterpieces of cinema too. **CL** 



# THEUK & IRELAND'S BIGGEST MODERN POPCULTURE EVENTS

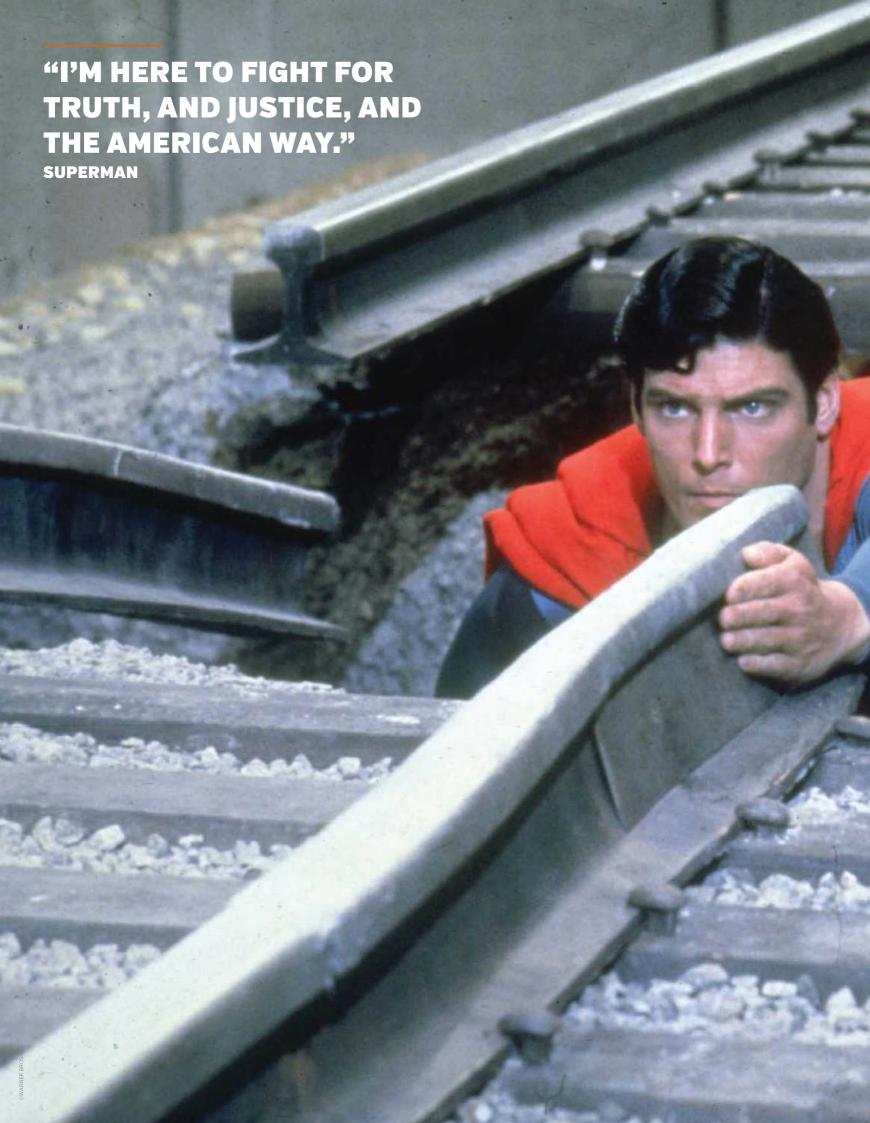


TICKETS ON SALE NOW

COMICCON COM









STAN LEE'S X-MEN HAVE HAD A TOUGH RIDE IN THEIR COMIC BOOK TO MOVIE JOURNEY. THE FOX-CREATED BIG SCREEN VERSIONS HAVE OFTEN SPLIT FANS DOWN THE MIDDLE, YOU EITHER LOVE 'EM OR HATE 'EM. WE CAPTURED TWO SUCH FANS TO DUKE IT OUT ONCE AND FOR ALL...

# FIGHTING TALK

# THE X-MEN





# ...are too much to handle on screen

SAYS CLAIRE LIM

ith the success of Hugh Jackman's last outing as mutant and X-Men stalwart Wolverine in this year's Logan, it's time to reassess the X-Men franchise. I've always loved the X-Men in comic book form but each and every film has been an utter disappointment and it's time to retire the X-Men franchise with Logan's success, leave on a high, and move on to pastures new.

2000's X-Men was the most anticipated film for me that year; I went with my immediate and extended family, all of us comic book and sci-fi fans. I couldn't wait to see my favourite characters realised on screen but I left feeling deflated – what had I just witnessed? The pacing was slow, I wasn't keen on Halle Berry's softer take on Storm or Rogue as an insecure young teen (one of the comic's sassiest and strongest characters) and the story was lacklustre.

The instalments that followed fell flat for me – boring takes on characters that have had decades of rich history and development in the comics and the focus on Wolverine was weird to me, but I went with it and watched the mess that was X-Men Origins: Wolverine (2009) and The Wolverine (2013). Then there was X-Men: First Class (2011), which was a hammy 'Austin Powers' version of the mutants that focussed on the

wrong mutant, again, this time Mystique (Jennifer Lawrence). Michael Fassbender pulled out a blinding performance as Magneto as he did again in Days of Future Past (2014) but that's down to him being a brilliant actor. The recent films (First Class, Days of Future Past and Apocalypse) are better paced, sure, but the balance is never right, with the filmmakers delving too much into the lore, or focusing too heavily on one character, or they go too far the other way into bombastic CGI territory with a threadbare plot that's flimsy at best.

Now Jackman's done with Wolverine and Patrick Stewart has followed suit with Professor X, it's time to focus on the new wave of Marvel characters like Deadpool, Marvel's gritty Netflix heroes or even the complex mutant Legion. There's a wealth of characters from the Marvel Universe to support on screen and writers can focus on the brilliance of these, but perhaps the X-Men was and always will be a little too much to handle on screen – it just doesn't work.

"I LEFT FEELING DEFLATED - WHAT HAD I JUST WITNESSED?"



# ...X marks the spot

SAYS PAUL GANNON

he X-Men movies have had more ups and downs than a rollercoaster, but it's important to remember that Bryan Singer's first X-Men movie was the epicentre for the super hero cinematic landscape we have today. Of course, we'd had Donner's Superman and Burton's Batman, but in 2000 Singer's first stab at the X-Men movies took an interesting approach to its heroes – it made them complicated.

We take it for granted now, especially in the wake of Captain America: Civil War, but it was common for audiences to recognise super heroes in one shade. Batman MUST (apparently) be a dark and brooding vigilante, whereas Superman had to be a beacon of the best of humanity. For the characters of the X-Men movies, nothing was that simple. It's easy to see Magneto as the cackling villain determined to wipe out the non-mutant population of the Earth, but his backstory and relationship with Professor X made for a more 'human' character, one we could understand the motivation of, even if we didn't like his course of action.

That's where the very best of the X-Men movies excelled, when they decided to be a character study, rather than a slam bang action adventure. It may seem contrary to their origins, but the reason why the X-Men movies are so well loved is

because they take the time to hang out with Rogue, Wolverine and Jean Grey so that the violent consequences have more of an impact. It is that emphasis on character development that made X-Men, X2, First Class and Logan stand out amongst its peers. If its lesser sequels have any faults, it's that they tried too hard to become a spectacle of special effects and cram in too many characters to appease fans and licensing agreements. Especially in Singer's latter X-Men movies, you could see he would fumble with the apocalyptic stakes and fight scenes, and made you yearn for just a little more time just 'hanging out'.

The X-Men movies were incredibly significant with those in the LGBTQ community as the films, at their best, showed the pressure of how 'being different' can ostracise people from those around them, those who deem them 'wrong' and fear anything different. With Singer at the helm, it showed that beyond the crazy mutant abilities and wacky costumes there was a very human discussion at the centre of the story. With that in mind, there should always be room for another X-Men movie, to show that we don't always aspire to be a millionaire with a kick-ass hero suit, sometimes we just want to be represented by characters who are special, no matter what those around them believe.

The early X-Men movies gave you time to hang out with a bunch of characters who were different to the 'normal' super hero.



GEEKY MONKEY TAKES YOU BACK 22 YEARS TO A SIMPLER TIME, OF BRITPOP EXCITEMENT, O.J. SIMPSON AND ROYAL ADULTERY





Clockwork Knight, Daytona USA and Panzer Dragoon kept us playing late into the night.

It's astonishing to think that when the 1990s first rolled round, it was heralded as the era of bland - pastels and beige, the arse-end of Stock Aitken Waterman, and before long, John 'Grey' Majors (©Richard Herring) in charge of everything, while John Birt reduced the BBC to a corporate machine. But by the midpoint in 1995, the decade had mutated far beyond its unpromising beginnings, and the new arrivals which had coloured the zeitgeist the comedy of Vic & Bob and Chris Morris, the movies of Quentin Tarantino, the music of... a dozen guitar bands - had proven the satirists wrong.

This was as evident in gaming as anywhere else, as

the revolutionary SNES and MegaDrive consoles gave way to the 'fifth generation', on shiny disc. The SEGA Saturn had officially launched in Japan in 1994, going head-to-head with the new Sony PlayStation, but gamers in the UK didn't get their maulers on the black plastic beauty until the summer of 1995.

It turned out to be a bit of a fail in the US, and the launch titles weren't inspiring – Daytona USA and Virtua Fighter aside – but the release of Nights Into Dreams the next year made up for all that (and made a rather beautful official strategy guide book by yours truly – Ed).

Elsewhere, 1995 was the year of Eric Cantona's flying

kick, of the first ever Bridget Jones column, the BBC's debut digital broadcast, and rogue trader Nick Leeson's demolition of Barings Bank. Phillip Pullman's Northern Lights saga began, as did the O.J. Simpson trial.

Despite all this, the defining news event of the year involved a doe-eyed sloane ranger telling interviewer Martin Bashir, "There were three people in that marriage" – by December, The Queen had ordered Charles and Diana to divorce. Mother-in-laws, eh? Just think how different things could have been had Charles and Diana settled their differences with a game of Virtua Fighter? She would have been Sarah Bryant.

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- // EBAY SET UP ITS SHOP FOR THE FIRST TIME
- // THIS YEAR'S DISNEY HIT WAS THE HISTORICALLY DODGY POCAHONTAS
- // SUPERMAN ICON
  CHRISTOPHER REEVE WAS
  PARALYSED IN A RIDING
  ACCIDENT
- // HUGH GRANT WAS ARRESTED FOR GETTING FRIENDLY WITH LADY OF THE NIGHT, DIVINE BROWN
- // TOM HANKS CLEARED UP AT THE OSCARS, THANKS TO FORREST GUMP SUCCESS
- // HIT NOVELS INCLUDED NICK HORNBY'S HIGH FIDELITY AND TERRY PRATCHETT'S MASKERAD
- // JERRY GARCIA OF THE GRATEFUL DEAD DIED, AND NEVER EVEN SAID THANK YOU
- // 20,000 YEAR OLD CAVE PAINTINGS
  WERE DISCOVERED IN FRANCE
- // JAVASCRIPT WAS FIRST LET LOOSE ON WEBSITES // THE COMIC STRIP CALVIN & HOBBES FINALLY CAME TO AN END
- // SATURN+ MAGAZINE LAUNCHED



#### **Movies & TV**

By any standard, 1995 was an embarrassment of cinematic riches, with all-time classics like The Unusual Suspects, 12 Monkeys, Se7en, Jumanji and Casino hitting the screen. Plus there was the matter of the first ever totally CG feature – a story about some toys, which showed promise...

But never mind all that, we had a new Batman movie, and after the heights of Batman Returns, with huge villains like The Riddler and Two-Face, plus the arrival of Robin, it couldn't go wrong, even with Joel Schumacher taking over the reins from Tim Burton, right? This would be the signal for Comic Book Store Guy to chime in "WRONG!", but Batman Forever has been quite unfairly maligned over the years, it's a fun pantomime. It certainly performed better than the year's other comic book adaptation, Sly Stallone's take on Judge Dredd, which proved he'd never picked up a copy of 2000 AD in his life.

Elsewhere, Michael Crichton's monkey caper Congo surprised everyone by performing well at the box office despite a critical trashing – and Piers Brosnan looked down the barrel for the first time, in GoldenEye.

# "IT'S A LIE! THE EVIDENCE HAS BEEN FALSIFIED! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! I NEVER BROKE THE LAW, I AM THE LAW!"

SYLVESTER STALLONE AS JUDGE DREDD









#### **Computer games**

In the last issue for 1982 we heralded Nintendo's Donkey Kong Jr, and 13 years later, it was Donkey Kong Country 2: Diddy's Kong Quest that kept us hooked up to our Super Nintendos more than most titles.

But despite the launch of the SEGA Saturn, consoles had not quite destroyed the world of computer gaming, and something of a last hurrah for the Amiga came along with the release of Andy Davidson's Worms, a game he casually showed to Team 17 at a computer show. Admittedly, the quirky comic violence soon spread out onto every platform from the Game Boy to the Mac, but it was originally designed as a competition entry for Amiga Format magazine – and we're glad to say, it's still a going concern in the current generation. Nice one Andy!

There was also a double-whammy of Star Wars action in gaming, with Dark Forces the first release in the Jedi Knight series, created for PC and Mac. Meanwhile, Mark Hamill joined a well established franchise – Wing Commander, with the third instalment Heart of the Tiger landing on 3DO, and follow-up The Price of Freedom not far away – with a then world-beating budget of \$12m for a videogame.

#### Music

For many, the album of the year was Alanis Morissette's Jagged Little Pill, and the release of Supergrass' debut album I Should Coco sticks in the memory, but 1995 will go down in music history above all for one piece of totally FAKE NEWS – the much-hyped rivalry between Blur and Oasis, which peaked in August with the simultaneous release of Country House and Roll With It, respectively.

Suddenly the nation was plunged into a hysterical battle of Whizzer and Chips proportions – were you backing Damon or Liam? What floated your boat, London arty tunes or swaggering Manc anthems? The bands weren't innocent of stoking the flames (wishing AIDS on a rival is never likely to chill a situation out, Noel), but were as clueless as anyone else as to how the mania had grown.

The news eventually broke that Blur's single had just nudged their way into the top spot, but Blur's victory in the phoney battle didn't stop Oasis winning the war for 90s supremacy. Perhaps Damon & Co have the last laugh though – they're still, loosely, together in 2017, while Oasis are in unappetising pieces.

# THE MAN IN THE HIGH CHSTLE

# CREATING ALTERNATE HISTORY

HOW DO YOU BRING A WORLD THAT NEVER WAS TO LIFE ON SCREEN? GEEKY MONKEY TALKS WITH THE TEAM OF DESIGNERS AND FX EXPERTS BEHIND THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE TO FIND OUT...

Words: MARK SMITH

Scouser who loves Star Trek and Pot Noodle.

ver since the show first aired on Amazon
Prime in 2015, The Man in the High
Castle has won widespread acclaim for
bringing Philip K Dick's dystopian
vision of an alternate history from the
written word to the small screen. It
depicts a world that never was, where
the Axis powers emerged victorious
from the Second World War and divided
the United States in half, with the East
Coast ruled by the Greater Nazi Reich,
and the West Coast under the yoke of
the Empire of Japan, while inbetween
lay a neutral zone made up of
impoverished and bleak rocky states.

Tasked with bringing this world to life were a team of designers and special FX experts that would have to painstakingly create a world from the ground up, a world that had to look futuristic in parts and historic in others, while still managing to remain somehow familiar. The team's efforts have seen them nominated for numerous awards, including a recent Emmy they won for the show's haunting opening title sequence.

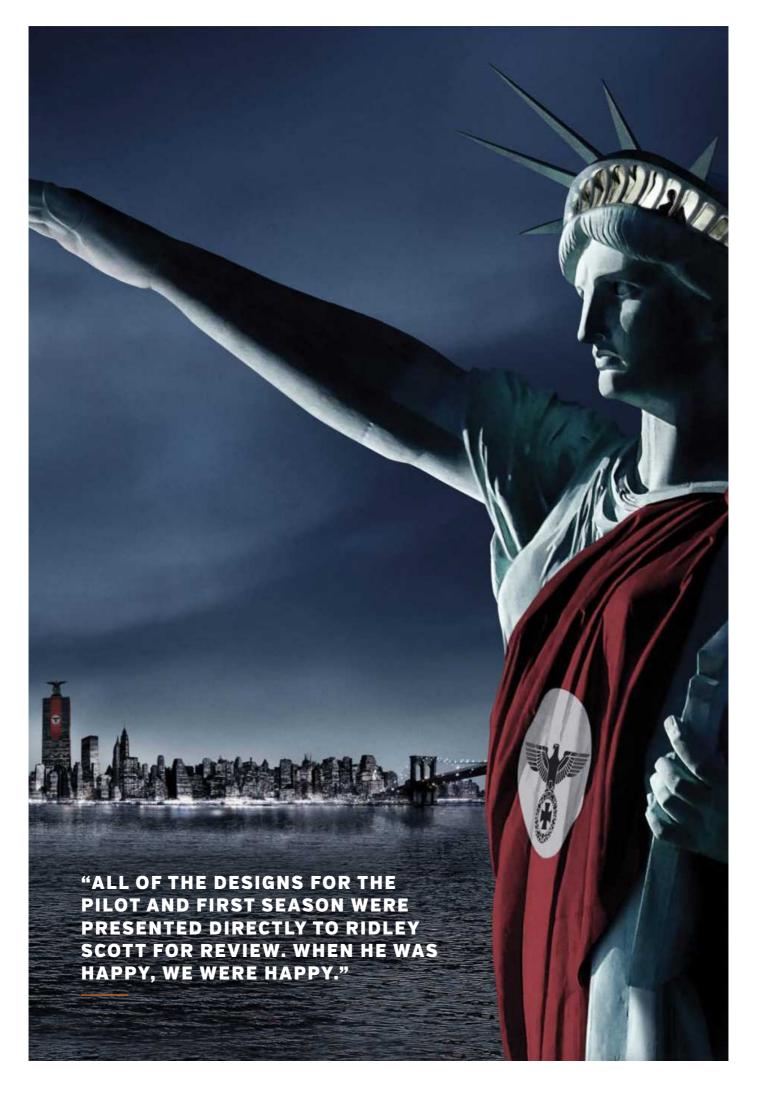
Producing work of such high standards is no mean feat, but when your designs have had to pass muster not only with a Hollywood legend – the show's executive producer Ridley Scott – but also the heirs to one of Adolf Hitler's inner circle, bringing anything less than your A game to the drawing board is not an option.

"It is the most structurally complex world I have ever worked on in terms of details and variety," says production designer Drew Boughton, whose credits include The Expendables and the fourth Pirates of the Caribbean movie. "It is also the most morally challenging in terms of day to day work, as it concerns an alternative world where the holocaust expanded and continued without interruption."

As the person responsible for the look of the show, he drew on Dick's 1962 novel and Scott's seminal dystopian masterpiece Blade Runner for inspiration.

"All of the designs for the pilot and first season were presented directly to Ridley Scott for review. When he was happy, we were happy." Boughton added.

The show called for three distinctly different tones and styles. The clinical and imposing grandeur or the Nazi territories, the vibrancy, colour and noise of the Japanese-run Pacific states, and the grey, forlorn sadness of the Neutral Zone, the buffer between the two





# "DETAILS LIKE VENTS, MOULDINGS AND WINDOW TREATMENTS WERE ADDED BY HAND, AND WE CREATED TEXTURES FOR MATERIALS SUCH AS BRICK, STONE, AND CONCRETE."

Over the page, the cast of characters, clockwise from top-left: John Smith, Joe Blake, Ed McCarthy, Gary Connell, Frank Frink, Juliana Crain, Robert Childan, Helen Smith, Nobusuke Tagomi.

great powers. Such was the team's commitment to adhering to every conceivable detail, that they sought the permission of Hitler's favourite architect and former armaments minister Albert Speer, for the use of some of his real-world designs for how a future Nazi Berlin would look.

"The Germanic dome or Volkshalle is a real thing that we essentially chose to digitally build as close to what Speer planned as possible." Boughton said. "We even asked for and received permission from the Speer estate to copy the designs. I think that Speer, like the other designers Hugo Boss, Porsche, etc, were enormously talented people at a place in time that promoted them. Sadly horrific achievements were made with their collaboration."

Boughton cites the Rocky Mountain states where Lemuel Washington and his rebel allies struggle for survival as his design highlights, but – in what is perhaps testament to his department's work – said their interpretation of Reich's influence on America left him feeling uneasy.

"I rather enjoyed the neutral zone myself as it is a version of lost America," said Boughton. "The Nazi stuff is very visceral, so when you do it, it strikes a chord no matter what. But the spaces I like to stand in are all resistance related sets or locations. Go figure, the Nazis creep me out!"

# **CREATING THE VISION**

Bringing some of the show's biggest set piece locations to life was a painstaking task for visual effects supervisor Lawson Deming and his amazing team, who were recently nominated for a Visual Effects Society award for their work on the show alongside the likes of Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them and the Star Wars movie Rogue One.

For Man in the High Castle, much of the team's work involved enhancing physical sets and locations using CGI to add extra levels of detail such as immense crowds and gargantuan structures that simply couldn't be achieved in the real world.

"For the big CGI scenes, it can be a very long and time-consuming process," said Deming. "In our big architectural build of Germania, for example, we had to construct accurate streets and sidewalks from scratch to match what is and was in Berlin, including things like the distinctive Speer lamp posts.

We included some stock 3D building elements, but many more were built from nothing but reference images. Details like vents, mouldings and window treatments were added by hand, and we created textures for materials such as brick, stone, and concrete."

He went on to say, "In 3D you have to make everything – nothing happens on its own. For example, in real life, the glass on windows is never perfectly flat, it creates a rippled reflection, and windows are all set slightly differently and may reflect in subtly different directions. But in CGI, if you want to make a surface like a window, it looks like a mirror. It's too perfect. You have to go into the computer and add that subtle bumpiness. And you have to paint weathering and drips on statues and buildings.

It's very much like building a real set except you're not even able to rely on the physical qualities of real paint, real dirt, real metal. You have to define those qualities to the computer and make sure it's able to simulate them in a way that looks convincing. So there's a lot of time spent with artists working on all the objects that appear in a scene and making sure they are physically accurate," continued Deming.

Despite their desire to make things as realistic as possible though, some compromises had to be made for the sake of the production. "With any project like this, there are going to be people who say we got it wrong, or that we weren't historically accurate. Our Reichstag, for example, is not correctly positioned relative to the Volkshalle, but creatively you have to use the historical bits as a starting point and also make sure that you're being true to the show and the narrative. Trying too hard to be historically accurate can cause its own set of problems and can be a disservice to the story."

The chance to work on the show was a dream come true for architect, lecturer and history buff Paul Rodham. A resident of  $\triangleright$ 







The CGI rendering process goes through many stages before creating the final frame for the show. These stills show the Volkshalle, a large domed building planned by Adolf Hitler



# "IT'S ALWAYS FASCINATING TO SEE HOW ARCHITECTURE REFLECTS THE SPIRIT OF THE TIMES, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER IT IS EVIL OR GOOD"

Vancouver, where much of the filming takes place, he worked as a digital set designer during his summer break from teaching, focusing mainly on the airport and monorail scenes.

"I had read the book many years ago, and when I heard about the show I thought it sounded really interesting, and definitely up my alley. I've always had an interest in military history in general, and WW2 in particular. The work could sometimes be something quite small and seemingly insignificant, like a sign or a security gate, or it can be a large set that is meant to be used throughout the series. A typical day begins at 7am and goes to 7pm at the least. You never know what might be coming next, but it's fun.

I had read Albert Speer's memoirs in university, so I was very familiar with his work. It's always fascinating to see how architecture reflects the spirit of the times, regardless of whether it is evil or good. I'm not sure if Speer's blend of classical architectural and the authoritative and totalitarian regime he designed for makes for great architecture, but you can't help but be impressed by the scale and scope of some of buildings. It certainly makes for good TV."

### **DESIGNING THE PEOPLE'S HALL**

Arguably the most stunning and dramatic locale in the show is the Volkshalle. A gigantic building that Hitler and Speer envisaged as being the centrepiece of a new Berlin and a new Thousand Year

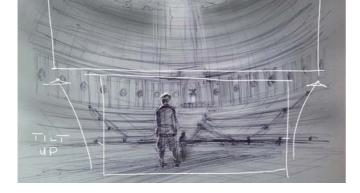
Reich, had the Nazis emerged victorious. Hitler would pour over models and designs of the hall and his idealised future Berlin for hours on end, before his dreams came crashing down with the advance of Soviet and Allied armies.

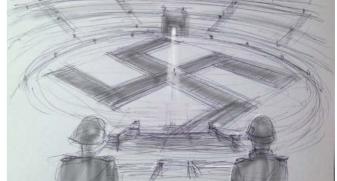
After approval was given to use Speer's designs, the team set about bringing the vast, monumental structure to life for some of season two's most iconic moments, including the scene where Rufus Sewell's Obergruppenführer Smith laps up the adulation of an ocean of 100,000 civilians and Nazi Stormtroopers when he helps suppress a coup.

"This was the most rewarding thing we did for the show and was also probably the most difficult," says Deming. "In season one it only appeared in the distance in matte paintings, but with the action that takes place in Berlin in season two it had to be realised more fully. Using references from the book on Albert Speer, we built it both inside and out in high detail.

The interior of the space was a huge challenge for a number of reasons. While we had many images of the scale models made of the exterior and fairly detailed blueprints, the inside, which was a cross between a giant stadium and a cathedral, only appeared in a single photograph in the book, and it's a fairly low detail composite image of a small model, with a crowd pasted on top of it.

The art department built a CGI model that remained fairly faithful to this image as part of their concept work, and we used that

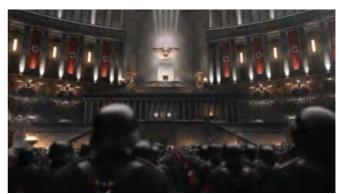












Designing the inside of the dome of the Volkshalle and the shots that would finally make it on to the screen.

model as a starting point. However, at some point in the process we realised that the space felt too stark to give an accurate sense of scale. From the floor to the top of the dome is nearly 800 feet, yet without human sized reference in the space there was no way to tell this. In addition, the ceiling was designed to look similar to the Pantheon but was about ten times bigger than the Pantheon.

A lot of people, when they saw it, felt the ceiling looked like a painting and kind-of fake, but if you look at photos of the Pantheon, they often look like paintings too. So we had this problem of a completely unbelievably giant space that was hard to even conceive of. Everything about it is working against the building's believability.

Very late in the process, we realised we had to re-design a lot of shapes and add details that were not in the original Speer model for the sake of grounding the space in some familiar sense of scale."

In the final episode there was the task of filling the space with a huge party rally in the hall, with a crowd of 100,000 fervently loyal Nazis gathered to salute the hero of the hour John Smith. Such a crowd would break pretty much any production's extras budget, so once again Deming and his team were called on to deliver.

"We built a number of digital extras that they could mix and match different parts of to create unique wardrobes and looks for each of them and then produced motion capture of actors performing the 'Sieg Heil'. They then utilised crowd simulation

software to arrange the digital extras into the group of thousands we would need for the scene. Despite the intense challenge, being able to create the moment when Smith walks out and sees the crowd assembled for the first time was the most rewarding part of the entire season for me, and its such a unique and singular creation unlike anything in television or film before it that it will probably be one of the highlights of my career."

### A DEDICATED FOLLOWER OF VOLKSFASHION

Creating the look of the characters in season two fell to the show's costume designer J. R. Hawbaker who had previously worked on projects such as Argo, The Revenant, Batman Vs Superman and Mad Men. She drew inspiration from Dick's novel and combined it with historical research as well as her own interpretation of just how the intervening years may have shaped the alternate history's fashions.

"In this show, in 1962 there's no rock 'n' roll, no Carnaby street optimistic individualism, no glittering Parisian fashion house dominance, no democratic model of consumerism," she said. "So the index of 1960s modernity could no longer be the free-spirited Mary Quant mini-skirt. A fashion of eradication and control takes its place.

I made use of a restricted palette, sparse use of whimsy, and tempered pattern - always a correlation between style, politics, ▶





Rufus Sewell stands in front of a blue screen with an extra and is transported to the interior of the Volkshalle.



Early designs for locations go through various sketching and rendering phases. Here we see the Nazi war room, the Smith family kitchen and the warehouse where Hawthorne Abendsen, the Man in the High Castle himself, keeps his films.



and identity. We had to first imagine the (alternate) years that never existed. These alternate events in history, even if not explicitly referenced in a script, still needed to be understood to have the clothing in this world feel real and visceral.

For example, we conceptualised entire fictional military campaigns in South America for the introduction of something as seemingly simple as a new medal on Himmler's uniform. For what I called the 'Frankfurt Silhouette' (designed for Juliana's assimilation to the Reich: a green jumper derived from nationalist dirndl pride) I went to a meeting pitching Hitler would have nationalised fashion and relocated the industry from a bombed Paris to Frankfurt where nationalist control and government officials controlled the tastes and direction of the Volk's fashion.

In-keeping with the Nazi ideology, their society's clothing had designs that revealed its obsession with perfect physical specimen and the use of uncompromising mathematical tailoring in their uniforms, as well as the Nazis' view of a woman's place in society, with an onus on dresses that emphasized fitness and demure femininity.

There are almost no pants on women and the trends reflected government policies of industry, such as Helen Smith's use of aprons in the home and details of nationalist hereditary rights. Joe's suits in Berlin have influences from Alpine walking suits and military details. I designed Juliana's film noir green jumper as a sleek update on nationalistic dirndl pride."

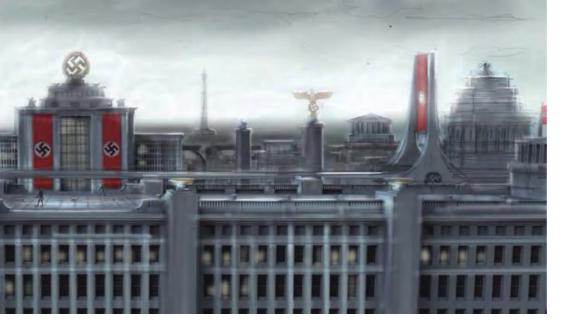
### AN EASTERN FLAVOUR

When it came to designing for the Japanese, Hawbaker binged on the films of directors for that era to gain some insights. She said, "I immersed myself in the Japanese directors of the 40s-60s. I spent three weekends on a Yasujirō Ozu bender. After one of these benders I excitedly ran to Joel (actor Joel dela Fuente who plays Inspector Kido) on set and told him we needed to change his pants! They were flat front slacks (a cultural staple in early-mid 1960s menswear) but I eagerly told him there wasn't one man in any of the Ozu films who didn't wear pleat-front pants because it was a kneeling culture – they needed the extra room for kneeling.

Although we never saw Inspector Kido kneel on camera during season two, his clothes needed to implicitly say that this character knelt throughout the day."

One seemingly innocuous costume design that caused great debate was of a Japanese librarian from a scene where Trade Minister Tagomi goes to research forbidden texts in Japanese-occupied San Francisco.

"The script only called for a Librarian working in a traditionally western American library. A Japanese-American actor was cast and I put together a fairly traditional librarian with 1960s sensibility with slacks, button-front shirt and a cardigan. I then altered the cardigan to have a kimono-style closure instead of traditional western





While Hitler's palace is realised in a sketch above, the details of Nicole Dörmer's costume are sketched out, right.





buttons. However, I wanted to push the influence of Japanese dominance over American iconography more deeply, and so also fit a kimono, obi and haori with himo.

Now, in our own history, the use of the kimono by professional society was in decline after Japan opened up to Victorian-era commerce and fell under the influence of western commercial business opportunities and, hence, western fashion. So knowing this, I called upon our two Japanese consultants, Yoshi Kawasaki and Hitomi Haram, for their perspectives on re-introducing the professional kimono. What followed was a vibrant dialogue.

One adamantly advised that the kimono looked wrong because our own history showed the decline of the kimono outside of the home by turn of the century. The other was intrigued by the introduction as it might signify a return to traditional Japanese values. I then presented the photos and the consultant's arguments to showrunner Frank Spotnitz and supervising director Dan Percival and we all agreed with a smile, 'Well, if we have even the Japanese consultants debating then we must be doing something right!"

### FINDING THE CHARACTERS

After the designs were finalised, then came the fun part says Hawbaker - putting the characters in costume. "We come together in a fitting room to fall down the rabbit hole together and hash out

ideas; sometimes different, sometimes similar points of view on the character. We philosophise, we psycho-analyse the breadcrumb trail given on the page, we search for these figures of the imagination together. Clothes are moving on and off the hangers, hats on rotation, an array of tailors, drapers and assistants coming in and out of the room to finesse lines of silhouette, pattern or colour.

We micro-focus over the choice of a tie, the mood of an earring, or delight in adding a run to a stocking. And then it happens, somewhere between the clothing scattered throughout the room and the mercurial thoughts bouncing off the walls, we look up and find the character staring back at us in the mirror. And that moment is what all the other elements of the day are working toward. It's the essence of costume design."

### THE FUTURE

It was revealed in January that The Man In The High Castle has been commissioned by Amazon Studios to return for a third season, and although details are still thin on the ground, the design team are promising more surprises.

Deming said, "It's very early in the season three process right now, but I already know we will have more visual effects and more scope, including new places and new things that haven't been seen on the show before." GM

# READING MATTERS

Words: JOHN HOULIHAN

Author of the Seraph books and ex-Editor-in-Chief of CVG.com

A CHARISMATIC STAR WARS VILLAIN, POWERFUL ANCIENT MAGIC AND A DOUBLE HELPING OF GALAXY-SPANNING SPACE OPERA MAKE UP THIS MONTH'S MATTERS...

# **STAR WARS: THRAWN**

TIMOTHY ZAHN



Grand Admiral Thrawn is one of the most iconic, ruthless and fascinating of all Star Wars villains, first appearing in Zahn's classic Heir to the Empire, and continuing his infamy in Dark Force Rising, The Last Command, and beyond. Yet how did this cunning and deadly warrior-strategist ascend the ranks of imperial power? Zahn's opus is here to tell you in a compelling

study of Thrawn's inexorable rise, as he confides in his protégée Eli Vanto the secrets of warfare, leadership and victory. Yet as Thrawn finally realises his dream of becoming an admiral, how will he handle an uprising that threatens not only the grip of the Empire itself, but his further long-term ambitions to seize power?

"HOW DID THIS CUNNING AND DEADLY WARRIOR-STRATEGIST ASCEND THE RANKS OF IMPERIAL POWER?"

# **CHALK**

PAUL CORNELL



Cornell is a prolific writer and has made his mark on everything from Doctor Who to Batman and Robin, although fiction fans will probably know him best for his excellent Shadow Police and Witches of Lychford series. Chalk, however, is a standalone novel and firmly rooted in the Eighties at the height of Thatcherism. Andrew Waggoner is a loser, perpetually bullied by a gang led by the brutal Drake, he

does his best to keep his head down, until he is pushed beyond endurance by an act of unspeakable cruelty. Something dies in Waggoner on that day and is reborn beneath the shadow of an ancient chalk horse, and his revenge is both shocking and satisfying in this visceral tale of ancient magic and modern despair.

"THE BEGINNING OF ANOTHER TAUT, POLISHED, SCI-FI SERIES FROM SCALZI"

# THE COLLAPSING EMPIRE

IOHN SCALZI



Scalzi has been called "the most entertaining, accessible writer working in science fiction today" and "one of the slickest writers sci-fi has ever produced," so when the Hugo nominee releases the first part of a new space opera it's always worth your attention. Mankind has built a new stellar empire, the Interdependency, spread across the stars after the discovery of the Flow, an

extradimensional field that makes faster than light travel possible. But now the Flow is shifting, threatening to cut off myriad worlds and a scientist, a starship captain, and the Interdependency's Emperox must struggle to salvage what they can from a civilisation on the verge of being torn apart. The beginning of another taut, polished, sci-fi series from Scalzi.

# **INFINITY ENGINE**

NEAL ASHER



The third book in Asher's Transformation trilogy promises to bring the saga to a suitably epic conclusion. The net closes in on rogue AI Penny Royal who is pursued by powerful swarm AI Brockle, Meanwhile, Thorvald Spear struggles to stay alive in a damaged war factory, as a remnant from a long lost race re-emerges. As humans, AIs and prador converge on the edge of

a black hole, expect a suitably explosive finale to this entertaining saga.

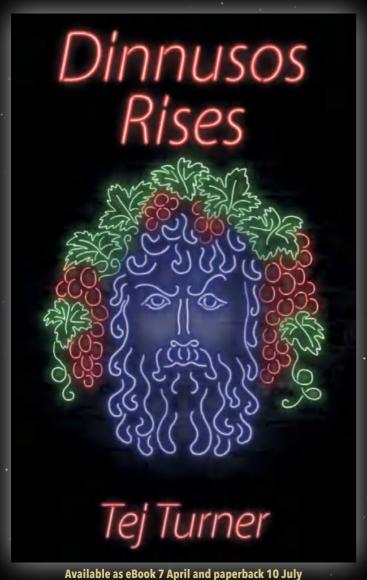
# **SCIENCE FICTION / FANTASY**

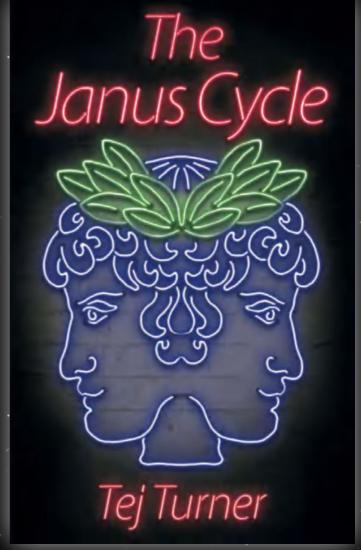
Independent publisher of Speculative Fiction

# Gritty, sexy, surreal, urban fantasy...

# First, The Janus Cycle

The Janus nightclub, a subcultural hub for the alienated, strange and disillusioned. A story unfolds, told through the eyes of eight distinct narrators, to whom a strange girl briefly appears and reappears, warning them that their individual journeys are going to collide in a cataclysmic event. Is she a cynical mischief-maker, or a time-traveller trying to prevent an impending disaster?





Already available as eBook and paperback

# Now, Dinnusos Rises

Dinnusos is the new refuge for urban bohemians. Once again eight voices, some we know, some new, each with their own story to tell. When supposedly mythological beings enter the mortal realm, stirring up chaos as they sow the seeds of militancy, everyone goes crazy. Our narrators are destined to cross paths in a surreal sequence of events which will change their lives forever.



**Elsewhen Press** 

Paperbacks available online and from good bookshops eBooks available on Kindle, iTunes, Kobo, Google Play

MICHAEL KNIGHT WAS THE COOLEST DUDE OF THE 80S WITH HIS CURLY HAIR DO, LEATHER JACKETS AND EVIL TWIN! BUT HE WAS NOTHING WITHOUT HIS KNIGHT INDUSTRIES TWO THOUSAND CAR. OR K.I.T.T FOR SHORT, TIME TO RELIVE SATURDAY TEATIMES

IN THE 80S WITH A REMOTE CONTROLLED K.I.T.T.





# REMEMBERING...

# KNIGHT RIDER RC K.I.T.T.



# WHAT THE HELL IS THE KNIGHT RIDER RC K.I.T.T.?

While this cool Knight Rider remote controlled car may look like it was the number one toy for Christmas 1982, it is in fact only ten years old! The longevity of the Knight Rider brand is incredible, with many kids of the 80s now old enough to splash out on nostalgia pieces to relive their childhood Saturday teatimes. It's a 1:15 scale replica of Michael Knight's famous car, the GM Pontiac Firebird. Coming complete with a remote control, branded with Knight Rider, that gives full control over the car's movements, plus a Turbo mode for those important speed boosts and a sound button to make the car chirp, "I am K.I.T.T., who you may regard as the voice of the Knight Two Thousand."

# WHY DID YOU WANT IT?

Because Knight Rider was an incredible TV show, and as a kid your paper round money didn't stretch to remote controlled cars. You were lucky if you found a Knight Rider poster in a copy of Look In! magazine. You can pay as much as you want for die-cast models of classic TV and movie vehicles like K.I.T.T. - the most expensive we've seen was £500 - so even when new at £70, this remote controlled version from Hitari is actually a bit of a bargain. These days, second hand you can get them much cheaper though. Of course, the important thing with any Knight Rider model is that it has to have the lights and sounds.

# IS IT AS AWESOME AS YOU REMEMBER?

This car certainly looks awesome - it's got the slick black Pontiac style that made the TV show so cool, the headlights shine bright when driving forward and go even brighter in Turbo mode, then there's the all-important red sensor light on the front, scanning the area for hostile bad guys and making its amazing 'cylon' sound effect. There's one thing that lets it down, and that's the fact the car only says one line, "I am K.I.T.T., who you may regard as the voice of the Knight Two Thousand." This wears thin very quickly. Where's "Be careful, Michael!"? or "Engaging Turbo Boost"?

# **CAN I GET ONE?**

You can pick up an RC K.I.T.T. quite cheaply these days, back in 2007 when it launched they were the geek present of the moment, so there are a lot of them out there. Expect to pay between £15 and £30 for one in good condition with everything working. Being a remote controlled car, it has quite a tough build with good front bumpers, so it can take a few knocks without breaking.





"THERE'S THE ALL-IMPORTANT RED SENSOR LIGHT ON THE FRONT, **SCANNING THE AREA FOR HOSTILE BAD GUYS**"



The look of K.I.T.T. still holds up well today, if only we could say the same for Michael Knight's pink shirt, chest hair and curly mop!

# **COMIC CRITIQUE**

GEEKY MONKEY IS WILLING TO GO DEEP INTO THE JUNGLE OF COMIC STORES IN ORDER TO GIVE YOU READERS THE LOW DOWN ON SEVERAL KEY BOOKS OUT THIS MONTH...

# Old Man Logan #16-18

STORY, JEFF LEMIRE // ART, ANDREA SORRENTINO // PUBLISHER, MARVEL COMICS





The thing about Marvel's current Logan series is that it feels both invigoratingly fresh but also nostalgic and respectful. The most recent arc 'Return to the Wastelands' is a new peak, well-crafted and utilising the wider Marvel universe in exciting ways. Even if Lemire's story wasn't great, the artwork is bloody marvellous. This genuinely astounds with its epic scope, and knack for imagery.

\*\*\*

# **Super Sons #1**

STORY, PETER TOMASI // ART, JORGE JIMENEZ // PUBLISHER, DC COMICS





Some older readers may well turn their noses up the thought of Super Sons, a title charting the adventures of Damian (Robin), and Jon (the son of Clark Kent). But it would be unfair to dismiss the title as being kiddie-fare. In some regards it's old fashioned, but it's the pulsing sense of fun and brilliantly realised grasp on the characters that make it a joy for everyone.

**00000** 

# **Justice League of America #1**

STORY, STEVE ORLANDO // ART, IVAN REIS // PUBLISHER, DC COMICS





Featuring the likes of Lobo and Vixen, this is one of the more peculiar line-ups the League have had. Reis' artwork is at times beautiful, but it isn't enough to save this from being yet another League misfire. Still... this is only the first issue, and if the line-up settles, readers could be in for something unusual rather than a goof-ball retread of overly familiar tropes.

# **Forever War #1**

STORY, JOE HALDEMAN // ART, MARVANO // PUBLISHER, TITAN COMICS





This intriguing effort from Titan is a serialised reprint of a classic 1988 graphic novel, based on Haldeman's own sci-fi novel. A War-in-Space musing of numerous themes, with heavy allegories and subtext, this isn't a light read, but certainly resonates. Marvano's artwork also retains considerable power, and will appeal to fans of 2000AD or Heavy Metal.

00000

# I WAS IN STAR WARS TOO!

# **NEIMOIDIAN GUARD**

A NEW FEATURE WHERE WE CHAMPION THE ACTORS AND SPECIAL FX ARTISTS BEHIND THE MASK, THIS MONTH IT'S THE TRADE FEDERATION STARSHIP GUARDS...

ACTOR, VARIOUS // FIRST APPEARED IN, STAR WARS: EPISODE III - REVENGE OF THE SITH // YEAR, 2005

erving the Confederacy of Independent Systems during the Clone Wars, Gap Nox was captain in the Neimoidian Gunnery Battalion in their fight against the Republic. Distinguishing himself in the Battle of Moorja he became the bodyguard of Trade Federation Viceroy Nute Gunray and accompanied him to the lava planet of Mustafar where the Separatist Council convened after the conclusion of the Clone Wars. Nox was on guard when the freshly-anointed sith lord Darth Vader arrived under the instruction of the new emperor Palpatine, a long-time ally of the Separatist Alliance. As instructed Vader executed everyone in the room, including Captain Nox.

Appearing for the first time in 2005's Revenge of the Sith, the character was initially an unnamed and uncredited Neimoidian guard. Creature Designer Dave Elsey, winner of the Best Make-up Oscar for The Wolfman in 2010 and nominated for his make-up work on Revenge of the Sith, was behind the construction of the guard. "I couldn't tell you now who was in the costume, but I do remember making them of course. It was a foam latex slip over mask. It was static, as opposed to the more complicated versions for the main Neimoidians, which had computer controlled full lip syncing heads. This version was very comfortable to wear, and light, which was good, because the armor was hot and heavy."

The character found its voice in 2005's Revenge of the Sith videogame, performed by legendary voice actor Tom Kane. Best known for voicing Master Yoda in all six seasons of Star Wars: The Clone Wars and in episodes of Star Wars Rebels, Kane gave the character the distinctly familiar Neimoidian tones. Later Neimoidian guards would be performed in episodes of The Clone Wars by Matt Lanter, now the star of NBC's Timeless and then the voice of Anakin Skywalker.

It would be another nine years before the Neimoidian Guards gained names. Fame Drimal and Gap Nox were christened in an article titled The Devious Neimoidians in Star Wars Insider 147 in January 2014. Authors Tim Veekhoven, Kevin Beentjes, Sander de Lange as well as the Keeper of the Holocron at Lucasfilm Leland Chee named many of the previously nameless Neimoidian characters in a series in the Insider which focuses on all of the background characters who received little love and attention – much like this article. **GM** 



"THIS VERSION WAS VERY COMFORTABLE TO WEAR, AND LIGHT, WHICH WAS GOOD" DAVE ELSEY, CREATURE DESIGNER



# SUBSCRIBE TODAY & RECEIVE A FREE OPERATION AVALANCHE DVD



RECEIVE GEEKY MONKEY MAGAZINE DIRECT TO YOUR DOOR AT NO EXTRA COST

SAVE UP TO 32% OFF THE COVER PRICE – PAY JUST £2.92 PER ISSUE!

# **SPECIAL OFFER**

TAKE OUT A UK 12 ISSUE SUBSCRIPTION FOR £35 AND RECEIVE A FREE COPY OF **OPERATION AVALANCHE** ON DVD\*



1967: the height of the Cold War. The CIA suspects there is a Russian mole inside NASA, sabotaging the Apollo program. They send two young agents on a mission to go undercover, posing as documentary filmmakers, there to capture NASA's race to the moon. The real mission – use their access and technology to hunt down the leak. But what they discover is far more shocking than soviet spies... Their government may be hiding a secret about Apollo that could define the decade, and the White House will stop at nothing to silence anyone who learns it. From writer/director/producer and star Matt Johnson (The Dirties) comes this tense sci-fi thriller investigating the greatest conspiracy theory of them all –

LIONSGATE UK PRESENTS OPERATION AVALANCHE ON DIGITAL DOWNLOAD AND DVD – AVAILABLE NOW

the idea that NASA faked the moon landing. Boles

Back issues available at... www.get-geeky.today









6 ISSUES ONLY £18 12 ISSUES ONLY £35

# 3 EASY WAYS TO SUBSCRIBE...

1. www.get-geeky.today 2. 0845 330 6540

Fill in the form, pay by cheque or postal order made payable to Uncooked Media Ltd and post it to Geeky Monkey Subs, Select Publisher Services, PO Box 6337, Bournemouth, BH19EH

# SUBSCRIPTION FORM

YES! I'd like to subscribe to GEEKY MONKEY and save money.
This subscription is: $\square$ For me $\square$ A gift for someone <sup>†</sup>
YOUR DETAILS Mr Mrs Miss Ms
First name Surname
Address
Postcode Email
Daytime phone Mobile
†If giving GEEKY MONKEY as a gift, please complete both the recipient's and your own details (abov
GIFT RECIPIENT'S DETAILS ONLY Mr Mrs Miss Ms
First name Surname
Address
Postcode
PAYMENT OPTIONS
1. DIRECT DEBIT PAYMENT £8.99 every 3 issues (UK only) Instruction to your bank or building society to pay by Direct Debit  Please fill in the form and send to:  Geeky Monkey Subs,  Service user number 8 3 8 7 7  Select Publisher Services Ltd,  PO Box 6337, Bournemouth, BH19EH
Name and full postal address of your bank or building society:
To: The Manager Bank/building society
Address
Postcode
Name(s) of account holder(s)
Branch sort code Account number Official use only)
Instruction to your bank or building society Please pay Select Publisher Services Ltd Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instructio subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instructio may remain with Select Publisher Services Ltd and, if so, details will be passed electronically to m bank/building society.
Signature Date
Banks and building societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions for some types of account
SUBSCRIPTION PRICING WHEN PAYING BY CHEQUE OR CREDIT/DEBIT CARD  6 ISSUES UK £18 12 ISSUES UK £35 Europe £50 Rest of world £70
2. CHEQUE
l enclose a cheque for (made payable to Uncooked Media Ltd)
3. CREDIT/DEBIT CARD Visa MasterCard Maestro Switch
Card Number
Expiry date Valid from (if shown)
Issue number (if shown) Security number (last 3 digits on the back of the card)
Signature Date
I would like my subscription to begin from issue (month + year)
RETURN THIS FORM TO:

Please tick this box if you DO NOT want to receive any other information from Select Publisher Services Ltd.

Please tick this box if you DO NOT want to receive any

other information from other companies

# THE COMIC CONSURVIVAL GUIDE

GEEKY MONKEY GIVES YOU THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO PREPARING, PLANNING AND GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR CONVENTION EXPERIENCE THIS YEAR

Words: RUSSELL SHEATH

A die hard GIJOE fan, Russ writes about all forms of film, TV, comics and pop culture.

# PRE-PLANNING: BEFORE THE SHOW

Convention going can be serious business, demanding of planning and logistics to equal a raid on the Imperial Base on Scarif. Planning your trip is essential, not only as a cosplayer or exhibitor, but also as a guest, to make sure you have the best possible time during the event.

Even the most seasoned convention veteran will tell you that to get the most from your Con experience you should plan ahead. From event timings to ensuring that you are aware of requirements for collecting badges and passes – it's always worth making sure you turn up well prepared and well informed. Here are Geeky Monkey's handy pre-show tips...

CON TIP

01

# PROS & CONS...

BECOMING A CON PRO

It may sound obvious, but doing your homework on everything the Comic Con has to offer will make sure your much anticipated trip goes smoothly from the get-go. With big numbers attending many conventions, queuing systems for entrance or for specific events, panels and signings are the norm and with indoor space at a premium, some queues are held in the outdoor space at events. With some Cons having strict rules on the collection of passes, you should also check with the convention's website for ID and pass collection requirements. Want to beat the crowds? For some events an 'early bird' pass may be an essential purchase, especially if you want to beat the rush to that con-exclusive merch or ticketed panel. Also, where the Con is being held will depend on the must-have essential accessories you should take with you, from comfortable shoes to warm clothes if standing in queues for a long time.

CON TIP



# NEVER, EVER FEED HIM AFTER MIDNIGHT...

KNOW THE RULES

With so many convention goers attending events, safety and welfare is essential to convention organisers and it's always worth checking out the rules of the Con before attending. Spent months perfecting your screen-accurate Punisher or Deadpool cosplay? You may want to check out the conventions regulations on replica weapons and imitation firearms. Those hours spent crafting your lovingly created Kazar cosplay might not meet the organizer's requirements for costumes at family friendly events – so it's always worth scoping out the rules for cosplay before attending.





**CON TIP** 

03

# I GUESS SHE DON'T LIKE THE CORNBREAD EITHER...

ACILITIES

With thousands of people all in the same space, facilities are going to be under pressure.

Making your life easier with a little preparation can go a long way and, as a starter, a survival kit of hand sanitiser, tissues and other essential items can be a life saver. More on this in the 'Gear Up' section.



CON TIP

# I LOVE IT WHEN A PLAN COMES TOGETHER...

Knowing who is attending the Comic Con and who you want to see in order of preference, especially if you want to get those 'grail' items signed, is essential in your convention planning. Social media is great for keeping up to date with your favourite celebs and creators, and also the first place the organisers will turn to when announcing a change in the day's schedule. Knowing attendees' schedules is a must, especially for ticketed events where you may need to beat the crowds to ensure your place in line or at a panel. Remember, there are 100s of other geeks out there wanting the same as you! Some creators, artists and writers put limitations on how many items they will sign or, in some cases, may charge for signatures on items not purchased from their own booth. If you have a complete run of dozens of comics that you intend to haul into the convention for signing by your favourite creator, please spare a thought for your fellow fans who have to stand in line behind you and be warned that the creator may limit the number of comics they will sign, with or without charge.

Got it? OK! Now you have done your preparation - what about the essential equipment you will need to make the most of your day? Read on over the page.



### FOR YOUR COMIC CON DIARY...

#### BIRMINGHAM COMIC CON

EDGBASTON STADIUM // SATURDAY 29 APRIL THECOMICFESTIVAL.COM



You will find two floors of comic, film and TV fun at Edgbaston Stadium this April. The second largest venue of its kind in the UK is to play host to the third Birmingham Comic Con (formerly

the Comics Festival) on Saturday 29 April. Taking place within the ground's exhibition hall, with the capacity to cater to over 5,000 visitors, the event promises to encompass an international spectrum of the comic book and film world with special quests, writers, artists and publishers from across Europe, the USA and Great Britain - some rarely witnessed at conventions before and others that will be making their UK debut. With over 100 traders scheduled to attend with a diverse range of merchandise, publications, rare books, original art, plus the latest titles hot of the press, alongside convention exclusives, collectors and fans of all ages will find something to put a smile on all their faces.

There will be a whole lot more to do besides, including panels and talks, exhibits, photo opportunities, plus some extra special surprises thrown in for good measure! With cosplayers expected in full regalia the cosplay competition for the best outfits is always a winner and is open to all ages, with several categories to make sure kids aren't left out of having any of the fun! The Birmingham Comic Con 2017 will be a day not to be missed.

# STOKE CON TRENT

STAFFORDSHIRE UNIVERSITY // SUNDAY 9 APRIL STOKECONTRENT.CO.UK



Taking place at the LRV building at Staffordshire University is the Stoke Con Trent event. There are some great guests lined up including Ian McElhinney from Game of

Thrones, Doug Naylor from Red Dwarf, Sophie Aldred from Doctor Who and Toby Philpott, the puppeteer who helped to bring Jabba The Hutt to life! Plus there will be comic artists. cosplay, autograph sessions and the usual mix of great geeky merchandise stalls. Adult tickets are £14.

# FOLKESTONE FILM, TV & COMIC CON

THE LEAS CLIFF HALL, FOLKESTONE // SUNDAY 7 MAY PLANETFOLKESTONE.CO.UK



The team at Planet Folkestone is busy preparing their event planned to be a celebration of TV, films and comics with guest signers, traders, props and costumers. The

Folkestone Film, TV & Comic Con 2017 will be raising funds for the Help for Heroes charity, with adult tickets priced at £8, or £20 for a family of four. On the all-important guest list are Chris Barrie and Norman Lovett from Red Dwarf, Jacqueline Pearce and Jan Chappell of Blake's 7, Hugo Myatt of Knightmare (see page 106 for more on him) and a host of actors from the Star Wars franchise. Roaming around the event you are also likely to catch The All Star Blues Brothers rocking it on stage, and get to see a full size TARDIS, Imperial Dalek and K-9!



# **ALANA WAFFLES' COSPLAY FOUR HOT TIPS**

Hey guys, Alana Waffles here and I've attended Cons across the US and Canada in cosplay and as a guest of some fan favourite artists and creators such as J. Scott Campbell. Here is my guide to a successful cosplay...

# 1. // REPAIR KIT

Having a hot glue gun and extra paint at the hotel room is always a smart plan and you can go a step further and carry a small bag of things to the Con with you. I recommend a small tube of superglue, some bobby pins, safety pins, and hot glue sticks with a lighter to activate the glue, as a basic set-up for your bag.

### 2. // COMFY SHOES

These will save you on a long Con day and trust me, it's not worth it to wear platformed heels to be 'character accurate' if you can't walk in them. The closer the Con is to a place you can change outfits/shoes, the more you can risk some lessthen-fun footwear. Just know that when it comes to shoes, function does trump form.

### 3. // KNOW YOUR SCHEDULE

Do you want a photo with the creator of the character you are cosplaying or are you appearing alongside a creator or artist in a professional capacity? Perhaps you have photoshoots? You should keep your schedule handy to make sure you have the best possible Con. Even anticipating that people will stop you for photos as you are going from one end of a Con to the other when dressed as a Disney princess is key to seeing all the things you want to in a day and ensuring you keep to your schedule.

### 4. // KNOW YOUR LIMITS

It's okay to say no to photos or want to change into your civilian clothes early. Cosplay should always be about a fun way to show your love for something. So have fun, stay safe and remember that there's always another Con just around the corner to show off your cosplay awesomeness.

# LOCK AND LOAD: HAVING THE RIGHT GEAR

Like a military operation, you should ensure that you have all the essential equipment needed to battle through the cosplaying hordes and amassed fandom at the show. So gear up, fill enough pouches to make a Rob Liefeld drawing jealous and get ready for the Con of your life...

**CON TIP** 

# WHAT'S IN YOUR BACKPACK...

We all know that plastic supermarket bags won't survive the weight of a stack of back issues, so if you want to avoid the hell of hauling your convention stash in your arms, then a good backpack is essential convention gear for hauling your precious items safely.



# **DOWN THE TUBES...**

GET A POSTER TUBE

It's impossible to escape a Con without a stack of free posters or random paraphernalia and carrying it all is a tough task as you wonder the convention hall. One solution is to invest in an artist's poster tube with a sling attachment for easy carriage, or maybe even construct a home made B.A. Baracus-style tube. You can't go wrong with a tube to ensure your swag stays in mint condition.

CON TIP

I HAVE THE POWER...
STAY CONNECTED WITH A
POWER BANK

Don't rely on the convention floor offering or allowing access to electrical sockets for charging of essential items like cameras, tablets and phones. A power bank is a must-have accessory to ensure that your essential electronics don't let you down.





**CON TIP** 

PHONE HOME!

BE SMART...
HAVE A PHONE AND CAMERA

Whether on your phone or a more progressional setup, a camera is a must have Con accessory to let you keep and share your memories. A smartphone is a great way to stay on top of the Con goings on, keep aware of social media and any changes in schedule that may occur, and to make your pals jealous with your social media selfies with that 80s star.

**CON TIP** 

09

# I NEED YOUR CLOTHES, YOUR BOOTS AND YOUR MOTORCYCLE...

FOOD AND DRINK

Convention going is exhausting work. The queues for food vendors can be long and it's not unusual for them to sell out of food or for the prices to be exorbitant. If you don't want to leave the convention location to find food (thousands of others may also have the same idea) it's a good idea to take food and drink with you to keep your energy up and to avoid missing any of the fun.



CON TIP

10

# SHOW ME THE MONEY...

TAKE CASH

While some vendors offer all sorts of payment options, some may not and many still prefer the feel of cold hard cash. Ensure that you stock up with enough cash before the Con and don't assume there will be an ATM on site or that it won't run out of currency. For large purchases it may be worth planning ahead and communicating with the vendor prior to the show, so you aren't risking carrying large amounts of currency on your person.

# ENJOY YOURSELF!

OUR HANDY GUIDE TO THE UPCOMING COMIC CON SEASON WILL SET YOU ON A PATH TO CONVENTION SUCCESS. WITHOUT A DOUBT COMIC CONS ARE A GREAT WAY TO MEET AND BE AMONGST LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE AND ENJOY GEEKDOM IN ALL ITS WONDER, SO GET OUT THERE, STRAP ON A BACKPACK, LOAD UP YOUR POSTER TUBE AND HAVE AN AWESOME TIME. REMEMBER TO TELL EVERYONE YOU'RE A GEEKY MONKEY READER!



"I'M THE BEST AT WHAT I DO..."



REAL NAME JAMES HOWLETT, AKA LOGAN // FIRST APPEARANCE (AS LOGAN) WOLVERINE #66 (JUNE 2008)





# **DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS**

Gruff Canadian, nature-loving, retractable claws, a deteriorating healing factor, string of impressive mutton-chops and/or sideburn combos, and a fine sense of smell. He's an all-round cantankerous loner haunted by his past but with wonderfully untamed hair. Doesn't like The Hulk much.

### WHERE IS HE NOW?

Logan surfaced within current X-Men continuity back to his old tricks, creeping around Jean Grey. Afraid of joining the X-Men as he was aware of the potential consequences, Logan required some convincing. He's also been strutting his stuff in the extremely welldrawn Old Man Logan Series. April sees the latest big comic book relaunch of the X-titles, with Logan figuring prominently in X-Men: Gold. In addition to his solo title, the hairy one will be popping up in Weapon X - a book that will pit him against yet more shady, militant, pseudo-scientific threats, alongside old rival, Sabretooth.

# OLD MAN LOGAN

WITH HIS FIRST MAJOR CINEMATIC TREATISE IN THE **BOOKS. THIS INCARNATION OF 'WOLVERINE' IS A** DIFFERENT ANIMAL IN HIS OWN RIGHT.

Words: MICHAEL CAMPBELL

ew comic book characters have the broad appeal of Canadian mutant wild-man Wolverine, nor the incredible potential for stories that cover such a vast period of time and themes. With his healing factor, tortured past and enthusiasm for cigars, he's been a main focal point of X-Men lore for over four decades, the title character in three feature films, and also appeared in all six X-Men movies.

Whilst the character with the claws debuted in 1974 thanks largely to Len Wein, it wasn't until 34 years later that an alternate version with genuine impact manifested. Courtesy of Mark Millar, the gruff, hirsute Logan was portrayed as a broken individual, haunted by regret in a bleak alternative future. Within this landscape supervillians now controlled the US, with their heroic counterparts either deceased or defeated, and the Hulk had become an incest-loving hillbilly landlord. Yep.

In a visceral, devastating twist, it turned out that our chum Logan had been deceived by illusionist Mysterio into believing the X-Mansion was being attacked by an onslaught of bad guys. Protecting the young 'uns in residence, "Wolvie" butchered the lot 'o them, only to discover Mysterio's ploy - he had just been tricked into murdering the entire X-Men line-up.

Wolverine was always an enormously popular figure, but Millar's incarnation brought whole new levels to Logan's tragic past. It's no exaggeration to note that this is one of the darkest but most compelling Marvel tales to emerge in decades. In this reality, Old Man Logan became a somewhat broken, older incarnation, trying to make ends meet, looking after his family. He was immediately sympathetic and noble, but most importantly, he was still defiantly, distinctly, Wolverine.

The cataclysmic events of Secret Wars in 2015 enabled the Logan of his timeline (Earth, 807128) to enter into current Marvel continuity. Subsequent X-titles have seen the somewhat middle-aged Logan recruited by a younger version of old flame Jean Grey (herself holidaying from a different time), to reluctantly shack up with the X-Men once more. The pages of Extraordinary X-Men have seen the characteristics of the Wolverine that fans know and love, wrapped up in a thoughtful, but convincing, package while the Wolverine mantle itself has been taken up by Laura Kinney (X-23 - a clone of Logan).

In a sense, the current depiction of Logan is probably how many of us always envisioned him. He's very much an archetypal Clint Eastwood character, boasting a rich tapestry of mysteries, past encounters with very familiar Marvel faces, and the capability of horrific violence.

On the big screen, the film adaption, Logan, is currently occupying screens to a much better response than previous efforts in the franchise, in no small part due to Millar and artist Steve McNiven's ground-breaking Old Man Logan run. It's also notable for being the final portrayal of Logan by the excellent Hugh Jackman. But while Hollywood may have to revert to the female variation of Wolverine in future entries, we've a feeling there'll be a lot more of him to come on the printed page. GM





# **MEGA MACHINE**

# LOTUS ESPRIT

EVER SINCE IT ROARED ONTO THE BIG SCREEN IN 1977'S THE SPY WHO LOVED ME, THE ICONIC WHITE LOTUS ESPRIT S1 HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR OF JAMES BOND'S MANY SUPERCARS

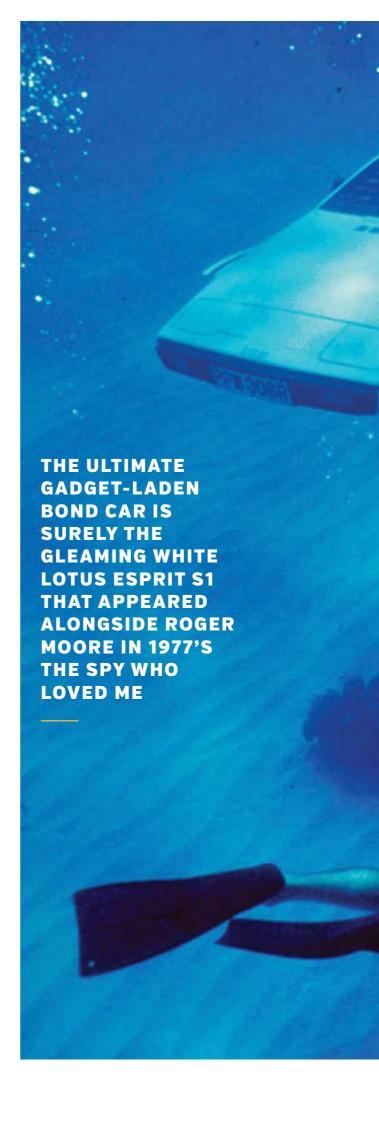
t's a dream every driver has had at one time or another. You're stuck in a traffic jam, or behind a slow-moving caravan, and in your imagination your thumbs reach for the firing buttons and blam! The obstruction is blown to smithereens by your car's hidden missiles or machine guns. Of course there's only one driver who actually has those hidden weapons in his car: James Bond 007. Ever since Goldfinger introduced us to the legendary Aston Martin DB5, with its ejector seat and hidden machine guns, no Bond movie has been complete without a tricked-out spy car, and a long-suffering Q begging his nemesis to pay attention as he explains what all the latest gadgets do.

It goes without saying that the DB5 is a timeless classic, but the ultimate gadget-laden Bond car is surely the gleaming white Lotus Esprit S1 that appeared alongside Roger Moore in 1977's The Spy Who Loved Me. Not only did it sport the usual array of weapons and gadgets, it also had one unique party trick: at the flick of a switch it could turn into a deadly two-man submersible. The scene in which Bond, pursued by a villainous henchwoman in an attack helicopter, drives the car off the end of a pier and into the sea, only to amaze his Russian counterpart as the car undergoes its transformation into a submarine, is surely one of the most memorable in the entire film series.

The success of the scene is down to the genius of legendary production designer Ken Adam, who worked on every James Bond film from 1962 to 1979, and more than anyone is responsible for Bond's amazing gadgets. It was he who came up with the idea for the submersible Lotus.

The sequence in which the road-going car turned into a submarine was achieved with a combination of full-sized props and miniatures. First, for the dive into the sea, a full-sized rolling chassis was fired off the pier using a compressed air cannon. For the underwater scenes the empty fibreglass bodyshell of another Esprit was turned into an actual working submersible piloted by two ex-US Navy SEAL divers wearing SCUBA gear. For other underwater scenes miniature models were used, with the bubbles provided by Alka Seltzer tablets! Finally, one of the six road-going cars that Lotus provided for the production was sealed to make it waterproof, and was used for the scene where Bond and Amasova drove out of the sea to the bemusement of a beach full of holidaymakers.

The adventures of the Lotus-based submarine after filming was completed were almost as amazing as its on-screen antics. It was taken on a promotional tour to advertise the film, but afterwards it was placed in a storage locker in New York and basically forgotten. The locker was paid up for 10 years, and at the end of that time the contents were sold at auction for just \$100, with the buyer not knowing the contents of the locker until after the sale. The new owners, no doubt delighted by their find, exhibited the car at shows for the next 25 years. The exterior was restored, and in 2013 it was bought at auction by none other than tech entrepreneur Elon Musk, of SpaceX and Tesla Motors fame, for £550,000. True to form, Musk has stated his intention to use a Tesla electric drive train to turn the car into an actual road-going submarine. He really does have all the best toys! **GM** 







# **THE BIG BANG**

Apart from its ability to turn into a submarine, Bond's Lotus Esprit (affectionately known as "Wet Nellie") also sports an impressive arsenal of weapons. To evade a road pursuit by Jaws (in a lowly Ford Cortina) it has a pair of cement sprayers hidden under the rear bumper to blind the pursuing driver. It's even more deadly underwater, with small high-explosive torpedoes firing out of the pop-up headlight  $\,$ housings, a black dye slick to blind divers, and small mines to finish them off. It also has a powerful surface-to-air missile to  $take\ care\ of\ any\ airborne\ threats.$ 



# CEENT ONKEY DIG TAL "TRY THE FREE SAMPLE ISSUE BY SEARCHING FOR "GEEKY MONKEY" IN YOUR APP STORE



# UK Conclave April 1st & 2nd 2017

Edgbaston Stadium, Birmingham B5 7QU

For the first time in the UK together



# UKCQUÇME

Presents

# The WARRIORS



# Guests

David Harris - COCHISE, Dorsey Wright - CLEON, Terry Michos - VERMIN , Thomas Waites - FOX, Brian Tyler - SNOW, Deborah Van Valkenburgh - MERCY, And Michael Beck - SWAN



Exhibits, traders, cosplay, panels



@UKConclave



@UKConclave



WWW.UKCONCLAVE.COM

# DON'T MISS



# [THE BIG ONE]

# **Doctor Who, Series 10**

// PREMIERE DATE, 15 APRIL // STUDIO, BBC // WRITER & EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, STEVEN MOFFAT // STARRING, PETER CAPALDI, PEARL MACKIE

ho should be the new Doctor Who? At the time of writing, the issue remains unresolved. Perhaps the answer lies in the notion of a 'Guest Doctor' who regenerates into a new Time Lord (or Time Lady) at the end of every episode? This would enable a larger pool of actors to have a crack at the role including less obvious choices such as Ed Balls, Miriam Margoles or Su Pollard. Okay, perhaps not.

In truth, with the Doctor not scheduled to change until Christmas anyway (when series showrunner Steven Moffat is also scheduled to regenerate into, or at least be replaced by, Chris 'Broadchurch' Chibnall), series ten offers a welcome final opportunity to savour Peter Capaldi's portrayal of the Doctor in all its glory.

It will also provide us with our first real opportunity to see the Doctor's new sidekick Bill Potts, played by Pearl Mackie, in action. Mackie, who was named as the Doctor's new companion a full year ago, has until now only appeared as Pearl briefly in a special scene broadcast during Match of the Day.

The series will also see the return of Matt Lucas's character Nardole, already a familiar face (as if he wasn't already anyway), from his appearances in the last two Doctor Who Christmas Specials. Another comedy legend, Michelle Gomez will also return to reprise her role as Missy.

There will, as usual, be lots of surprises in store. One big name lined up to appear is Poirot star Sir David Suchet who will be seen in episode four as 'the Landlord'. Other names confirmed include Ralf Little, Mina Anwar and Justin Salinger while Mark Gatiss, Toby Whitehouse, Frank Cottrell-Boyce, Mike Bartlett, Rona Munro and Sarah Dollard will be among the writers.

The trailers for series ten promise great things, particularly of series newcomer Pearl Mackie's character Bill. "The first time

# "THE RETURN OF TOM BAKER ERA ANDROIDS, THE MOVELLANS, LAST SEEN IN 1979"

you meet him, he's funny," says Pearl of the Doctor in one. "The second time, he's amazing. The third time you realise he's the most dangerous man in the universe." She makes the Doctor sound a bit like Jeremy Corbyn. Other trailers hint at exciting thrills such as Emoji robots, the Daleks (of course) and the return of Tom Baker era androids, the Movellans, last seen in 1979.

Series ten will crown a generally successful run for Capaldi's Twelfth Doctor, who like his two immediate predecessors Matt Smith and David Tennant will have notched up three series at the helm of the TARDIS. Capaldi, perhaps surprisingly, has suggested one-time Rising Damp and Harry Potter star Frances de la Tour as a possible successor. With an unbroken record of white male Doctors stretching back to 1963, it is easy to see why there is currently a lot of pressure to cast the first female and/or ethnic minority actor in the role with Olivia Colman, Tilda Swinton, Richard Ayoade, Hayley Atwell and Kris Marshall all being suggested for the role, amongst many others.

With ratings slipping and Doctor Who spin-off series Class already apparently in danger of cancellation, such a progressive move seems likely to provide the longest running science fiction series of all with a much-needed boost as it moves into the 2020s. **GM** 

The first episode of series ten will air on BBC One, 15 April.











# A month of big screen blockbusters...

host In The Shell has been nearly 30 years in the making, and not without its fair share of controversy, namely the supposed whitewashing of the cast, which director, Rupert Evans, has staunchly defended since the first trailer dropped last year. Just in case you've been living under a rock for three decades, Ghost In The Shell stars Scarlett Johansson as a cyber-counterterrorist member tasked with battling an enemy trying to sabotage Hanka Robotics artificial intelligence technology in the distant future.

Next up is the big screen reboot of Saban's Power Rangers series, which appears to be following the same road travelled by Hasbro's Transformers and GI Joe adaptations, and aiming for a more edgier tone than that of the original (and goofy) kids small screen show. However, don't expect it to be too dark, because that's not what director Dean Israelite found when he read the script – penned by X-Men: First Class and Thor writers, Ashley Miller and Zack Stentz - before signing on. "I read the script and was really surprised by it and thought there was a really cool, contemporary, mature but still playful, buoyant and a fun take on the material, and was updated in a really interesting way." While most of the Rangers are unknowns, there's still some heavyweight talent attached, which Lionsgate hopes will kick-start a new franchise for them. Elizabeth Banks is playing the film's villain, Rita Repulsa, whilst Bryan Cranston has signed on to star as Zordon, the creator of the Power Rangers.

Another great one to watch out for this month is Life, the deep space terror tale from the writers of Deadpool that follows a crew aboard the International Space Station who capture a space probe returning from Mars with a sample inside, and, well... you can pretty much guess what happens from that point on. We have reasonably high hopes for it due to the calibre of talent in front of the camera. **GM** 

### **COPS 'N' ROBBERS**

From 1977 to 1983 Frank 'Ponch' Poncherello and Jon Baker ruled the small screen as highway patrolmen in the much-loved Saturday evening TV series, CHiPS. Now, like Baywatch and 21 Jump Street, the series is getting a big screen reboot, but with a raunchy comical twist, and starring Dax Shepard and Michael Pena. The two middleaged California Highway Patrol officers started out their shift much like any other, but are soon in a situation with a sadistic ex-cop who is causing havoc throughout the city. The movie opens on 24 March from Warner Bros Pictures.



### 24 March

- \* CHiPS
  // WARNER BROS
- ★ Life
  // SONY PICTURES
- \* Power Rangers
- \* The Lost City of Z
  // STUDIOCANAL

# 31 March

- \* Free Fire
- // STUDIOCANAL
- \* Ghost in the Shell
  // PARAMOUNT PICTURES
- \* Man Down
  // LIONSGATE

# 6 April

- \* Mad to be Normal // GSP
- \* Aftermath
  // SIGNATURE
- \* City of Tiny Lights

# 14 April

- \* Fast and Furious 8
  // UNIVERSAL PICTURES
- \* Get Out
  // UNIVERSAL PICTURES

# 21 April

\* Rules Don't Apply
// 20TH CENTURY FOX

# // GAMES





# Have you made the Switch?

hances are that if you've upgraded from a Wii-U to the Switch then you'll already own a copy of Mario Kart 8. With that being so, you may be asking yourself whether or not you actually need a copy of Mario Kart 8 Deluxe when its released on the 28 April. The answer, of course, is a resounding yes – for many reasons. For a start (and this should go without saying) MK8D on Switch enables you to race while disconnected from your TV, for a good three hours without a recharge - woo! That in itself wouldn't quite justify the game's full-price, but then again we're not simply talking about a mobile port of a three year-old Wii U game here. At least not quite. Deluxe also features brand new Battle Mode arenas, including Urchin Underpass and one based on third-person-inker Splatoon, as well as Battle Stadium and the return of Bob-omn Blast. Then you need to consider classic Battle Courses last seen on the SNES and GameCube that will be returning. The whole show will now render at 1080p when played on a TV, and it also includes all MK8 DLC ever released. It's the definitive version, and you know you need it.

If you've got a PS4 and love Square Enix RPGs, classic Disney, and especially both at exactly the same time, then you'll seriously want to consider picking up Kingdom Hearts HD 1.5 & 2.5 Remix. This HD remastered compilation contains six utterly gorgeous Kingdom Hearts role-playing adventures, now all in one place and all in high definition and could quite possibly be all the Kingdom Hearts you'll ever need.

Only ever released on consoles in Japan, The Silver Case finally coming to PS4 in the West as an HD remaster. Set in modern day Japan (well, 1999), the game is a murder mystery and concerns two detectives who are part of the 'High-degree Murder Division'. They find themselves investigating bizare deaths that have been linked to serial killer Kamui Uehara, who's meant to be quite dead. GM

# THE FIRE FADES

These days games are often like cakes sold with a few slices missing. Slices that are then offered at a later date, as DLC. Well there's a way to avoid such craziness, and that's to wait for the Game of the Year Edition when you can get the game and all of its content for much less money, as long as you're patient. Dark Souls III: The Fire Fades includes the main utterly punishing and beautifully miserable event as well as Ashes of Ariadel and The Ringed City which, if bought separately would have cost you over £20 extra and is released on the 21st of April.



# 31 March

\* Kingdom Hearts HD 1.5 and 2.5 Remix [PS4] // SQUARE ENIX

### 4 April

- \* Persona 5 [PS3, PS4] // DEEP SILVER
- \* Sniper: Ghost Warrior 3 [PS4, XB1, PC] // DEEP SILVER

# 21 April

- \* Dark Souls 3 The Fire Fades [PS4, XB1, PC] // BANDAI NAMCO
- \* Syberia 3 [PS4, XB1, PC] // POURF
- \* The Silver Case [PS4] // NIS AMERICA

### 28 April

- \* Mario Kart 8 Deluxe [SW] / NINTENDO
- \* Constructor [PS4] // SYSTEM 3
- \* Dragon Quest Heroes II [PS4] // KOCH INTERNATIONAL







# A prequel without equal...

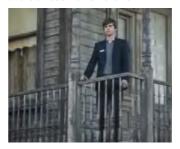
ow did Jimmy McGill become Saul Goodman? The answer to this intriguing question forms the basis for Better Call Saul. Now approaching its third season, it is probably one of the most successful examples of a TV spinoff there has ever been. Interestingly, a knowledge of Saul's background – as the absolutely corrupt lawyer, one of the most interesting characters in one of the century's most acclaimed US dramas to date Breaking Bad – is not essential to enjoying Better Call Saul, though it can help.

Having flashed back to the Jimmy McGill's earlier career as a relatively straight small-time attorney at the start of the show, by the start of season three, Jimmy is heavily engaged in the corrupt activities which ultimately precipitate his moral downfall, fighting wars on several fronts notably with his brother Chuck while continuing to enjoy a burgeoning romance with Kim Wexler. As ever, the series seems likely to be boosted immeasurably by Bob Odenkirk's brilliant central performance. But will any more characters from Breaking Bad by making an appearance? Well there's one Gus Fring...

Living in a small town is not always easy, particularly if you are plagued by noisy neighbours, an erratic bus service or perhaps occasional bouts of demonic possession. It is this last affliction which blights the life of Kyle Barnes and which served as the basis for the first season of Outcast. Based on a comic by Robert Kirkman, creator of The Walking Dead, along with Paul Azaceta, the second season of Outcast was commissioned even before the first season had been aired last year. Just as well then that judging by the trailer, the second season of this Fox original series promises to be every bit as darkly sinister as the first. Not exactly Stranger Things, but nevertheless capturing a loyal following, with the appetite for supernatural drama as strong as ever Outcast can surely be counted on to deliver some great TV this month. **GM** 

### MURDER IN THE FIRST

We live in an age of prequels. Whether its Star Wars or Muppet Babies, nothing is deemed to add merit to a production so much as setting it a few years before its predecessor. This is not to knock Bates Motel, however, which aided and abetted by onetime British child star Freddie Highmore as Norman Bates has undeniably enhanced the Psycho franchise. This promises to be the last season of the show, however, with showrunner Carlton Cuse reportedly intending to produce a full scale big screen remake of the 1960 Hitchcock classic, with singer Rhianna presumably leaving her umbrella to one side as she steps into the shower as the luckless Marion Crane.



### **Streaming**

- \* Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency // NETFLIX
- \* The Man in the High Castle, Season 2

// AMAZON PRIME

# 30 March

\* Chicago Justice
// UNIVERSAL CHANNEL

# **April**

\* iZombie, Season 3

# 3 April

\* Outcast, Season 2
// FOX UK

### 11 April

- \* Better Caul Saul, Season 3
  // NETFLIX
- \* Bates Motel, Season 5
  // UNIVERSAL CHANNEL

### 13 April

\* Guerrilla, Season 1
// SKY ATLANTIC

### 15 April

\* Doctor Who, Series 10
// BBC ONE



PRE-ORDER FROM.

amazon.co.uk

Free Super Saver Delivery and Unlimited One-Day Delivery with Amazon Prime are available

# BINGERUX

THE NEW GEEKY MONKEY GUIDE TO WATCHING TV YOUR WAY. WE'VE CHOSEN THE TOP EPISODES OF STREAMING TV AVAILABLE FOR YOU TO WATCH WHEN YOU WANT. WHERE YOU WANT, ON THE TOP STREAMING TV SERVICES...

# **DRAMA/FANTASY**

# \* PLEASE LIKE ME

SEASON 4, EPISODE 4 // "DEGUSTATION"

Australian Josh Thomas's brilliant comedy drama is rarely better than when it is set over an awkward meal, and this episode in which Josh treats his divorced parents (David Roberts and one-time Home and Away actress Debra Lawrance) is no exception. One of Amazon Prime's finest series.



# **\*HOUSE OF CARDS**

SEASON 3, EPISODE 1 / "CHAPTER 27"

Frank Underwood finally gets what he wants in this episode, becoming President. He promptly celebrates by launching a drone strike and taking a wee on his dad's grave. Charming. Although evil as ever, Kevin Spacey's fictional Commander-In-Chief seems preferable to today's real life alternative.



amazon

# **\*SNEAKY PETE**

SEASON 1, EPISODE 1 / "PILOT"

A familiar face from countless TV and film appearances over the years, the always excellent Giovanni Ribisi finally gets a major starring role in this new show from David Shore and Bryan Cranston. Ribisi plays a small-time con artist who attempts to assume a fellow convict's identity on being released from jail. The show has already been confirmed for a second season on Amazon Prime.



# **SCIENCE FICTION**

# \*STRANGER THINGS

SEASON 1, EPISODE 8 // "THE UPSIDE DOWN"

With the hype already building for Stranger Things' second series, out Halloween this year, watching it all over again will leave you with even more questions than before. The final episode of the first season is intriguing, explosive and the perfect season finale for last year's most talked about show. The fact the boys are wearing Ghostbusters outfits in the trailer for season two fills us with glee!



# \*FREOUENCY

SEASON 1, EPISODE 11 / "NEGATIVE COPY"

How handy would it be if you could contact your dead dad via your ham radio? That's the basic premise for Frequency. Detective Raimy Sullivan has spent 11 episodes trying to capture the Nightingale killer, responsible for her Mother's death. Frustrating but addictive viewing!



# \* BLACK MIRROR

SEASON 3, EPISODE 1 / "NOSEDIVE"

Charlie Brooker's Black Mirror has highs and lows but we loved the first episode of season three, 'Nosedive'. It forces us to question how we use social media as we live in a world where your social status is the main steer of everyday life. A thought provoking start to the series starring Bryce Dallas Howard.





amazon

Hands up if you watch regular TV these days? No, we don't include 24 hour news, TV viewing habits have changed dramatically in a few short years to the point where you can watch any show, almost from any time, at the touch of a button. Our BINGEBOX pages will champion the best in streaming TV every month, this month let's focus on Amazon Prime Video.

Amazon has some great exclusives to tempt you to sign up for their Prime service, which also includes free delivery on goods. There's The Grand Tour, showing the Top Gear team how it should be done, Lucifer, The Man in the High Castle, Into the Badlands, Goliath, Preacher and our personal favourite Mr Robot. To be honest, it would be worth the fee for Mr Robot alone, a sensational TV series.



# **SUPER HEROES**

### \* FLASH GORDON

SEASON 1, EPISODE 1 / "MAROONED ON MONGO!"

The first episode of the 1996 cartoon of Flash Gordon sets the tone. It's a ridiculous, over the top 90s interpretation of Flash Gordon, who is more 'dude bro' than heroic saviour of the universe, but after a few episodes you'll find yourself addicted to the bombastic dialogue and over-the-top adventures.



# \*MARVEL'S JESSICA JONES

SEASON 1, EPISODE 6 / "AKA YOU'RE A WINNER"

Around halfway through the first season and Kilgrave (David Tennant) is stepping it up, really sticking the knife in where it hurts as he purchases Jessica's childhood home. His obsession with lones becomes clear as the season ups the action and drama, one of Netflix's finest super hero outings to date.



# \* LEGION

SEASON 1, EPISODE 1 / "CHAPTER 1"

Legion is already one of the most talked about shows this year and an interesting take on one of Marvel's most complex mutants - David Haller (Dan Stevens, he of Downtown Abbey fame). The first episode, clocking in at just over an hour, is a topsy-turvey ride from the visuals to the plot with an exhilarating action sequence at the end that makes for top class viewing.



# **HORROR**

### \*FEAR THE WALKING DEAD

SEASON 2. EPISODE 1 / "MONSTER"

This first episode of the second season of Fear The Walking Dead might be a little flat on character, but it knows how to shake things as up thanks to a kick-ass opening escape sequence, before switching to a more claustrophobic setting as we follow the survivors aboard the Abigail boat, battling the high seas in search of salvation as the military bomb Los Angeles.



# \* CRAZYHEAD

SEASON 1, EPISODE 2 // "A PINE FRESH SCENT"

Bizarrely, you can't stream the first episode of E4's superbly crafted new show, but don't let that deter you, because Crazyheads - a supernatural comedy drama charting the exploits of two ass kicking demon hunting best friends - is one of the best shows on the small screen right now.



### \*ASH VS EVIL DEAD

SEASON 2, EPISODE 10 / "SECOND COMING"

The second season of Ash Vs Evil Dead really did a fantastic job of fleshing out Bruce Campbell's rather one dimensional demon slayer, Ash, and in this season finale the show's creators have gone above and beyond the call of duty to deliver some of the best gore gags and chainsaw duels the series has ever seen.







**Words: JONATHAN CLEMENTS** Jonathan is the author of Anime: A History and Modern Japan: All That Matters



# Go, Go, Power Rangers

JONATHAN CLEMENTS IS FREE. NOW TO CONQUER EARTH...

When astronauts accidentally free evil sorceress Rita Repulsa from 10,000 years of stasis, she resolves to take over the world. Only five (er... six) "teenagers with attitude" can hold her and her monsters back, suiting up as the Power Rangers to save the planet.

With a little bit of Thunderbirds and a little bit of Battle of the Planets, Japanese toy companies tried to find a winning combination that would maximise the potential of an action-packed kids' show that would sell action figures. They first hit on the magic formula in 1975, when Masked Rider creator Shotaro Ishinomori brain-stormed Secret Battle Team Go Ranger, a bunch of super-powered, colour coded heroes who came accompanied by a toy line of matching vehicles. Thereafter, there was a "sentai" (Battle Team) show every year, each with a different unifying theme, everything from playing cards to Egyptian gods, and in the case of the 1979 Battlefever J, dance steps - including a Russian cossack and a disco-themed all-American girl.

There were a few experiments with Ishinomori's template, but it was soon relatively fixed. A five-strong battle team would pilot signature vehicles that combines into a super-vehicle, all the better to encourage parents to buy the whole set. They would fight a series of crazy monsters-of-the-week, and there would usually be a "shock" discovery halfway through when one of the baddies switched sides. As for the toys, the uniforms would change just enough each season to make last year's models seem like old hat. The moulds at the toy factory would make a slight adjustment to helmet design or giveaway weapons, and last year's Red Ranger simply would not do.

Producers Haim Saban and Shuki Levy struggled for years to find a way to transport the franchise over to America. They finally struck gold with 1992's Dinosaur Battle Team Zyu Ranger, when they realised that they only had to keep the fights and monsters. The original Japanese heroes were thrown out, and replaced with all-new footage of all-American teens off-duty in everytown Angel Grove, chosen by the enigmatic Zordon to defend the Earth from the cackling Rita Repulsa.

"Oh... kids, y'know, they're really funny," Pink Ranger Amy Jo Johnson once told me. "But I mean Power Rangers







has got everything that they look for in a show. It's got dinosaurs, monsters, real kids they can relate to, bright colours." Although it's easy to overlook today, it was also worthily inclusive, with the WASPy leads accompanied by a black colleague and even Vietnamese girl Trini (although famously her boobs disappeared when she transformed, as her counterpart in the Japanese original was played by a man).

Despite its square-jawed genuflections towards love and peace, Power Rangers was also a fighting show, and inevitably there were tears at bedtime when toddlers in the Midwest tried to imitate a flying kick against a Putty Patroller. And yet, for an entire global generation of sixyear-olds. Power Rangers was a veritable religion. It's difficult to comprehend, a generation later, just how deep an impact it had on its young audiences. Most traumatic to many youngsters was the sudden disappearance of the Green Ranger, a figure who started as a bad guy, but then became arguably the biggest hero of the original line-up.

"Oh yeah!" remembered Amy Jo Johnson, "I mean, first season the Green Ranger leaves but the kids went mad, so they bring him back. I mean, we had mothers calling up saying 'My little boy won't come out of his room.' God!"

The problem was managed out of existence by finding new reasons to splice the former Green Ranger back into the show. Actor Jason David Frank came back as the White Ranger, two different Red Rangers and a Black Ranger in later series.

Power Rangers and its Japanese counterparts have become increasingly hybridised in later seasons, with the Japanese actively contributing to the American (and in more recent years, New Zealand-shot) footage, swapping stuntmen and planning ahead for integrating characters. This year's Power Rangers Ninja Steel is a respray of a Japanese original from two years ago. If you want to know what Power Rangers will look like in two years' time, then Space Battle Team Kyu Ranger is running on Japanese telly at this very moment. GM

Mighty Morphin Power Rangers, the original series, is released this April by Manga Entertainment.



| IN ASSOCIATION WITH | |

# Japan ' Journeys

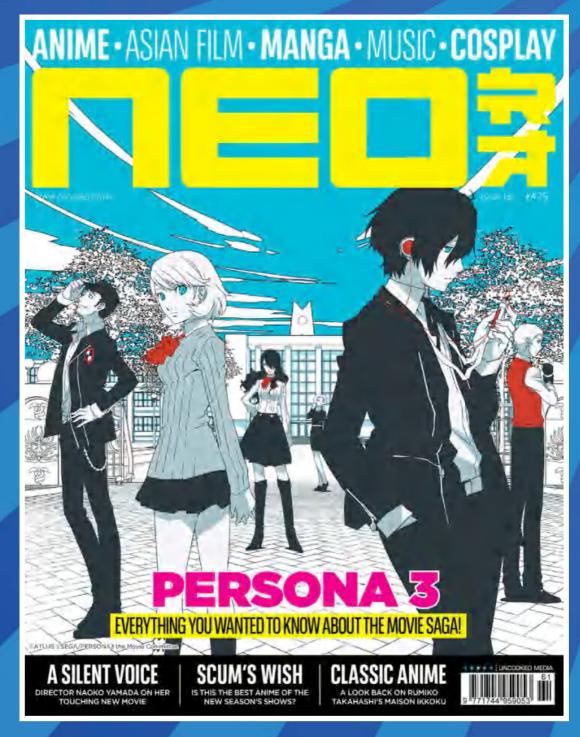
### WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Whatever happened to the original Power Rangers line-up? Red Ranger Austin St John became a paramedic; Yellow Ranger Thuy Trang died in a car crash in 2001; Black Ranger Walter Emanuel Jones successfully made the transition into grown-up acting, as did Pink Ranger Amy Jo Johnson. Blue Ranger David Yost gradually drifted behind the scenes, as a producer and licence manager. Green Ranger Jason David Frank made it big in Mixed Martial Arts, but once confided in me that this was only possible because of his canny investment of his Ranger wages in real estate. Among the bad guys, "Bulk" Paul Schrier was the last of the original cast to leave the show, also sneaking behind the camera to direct. "Skull" Paul Narvy now teaches acting at Concordia University.

SEE THE WONDERS OF JAPAN FOR YOURSELF WITH JAPAN MANGA TOURS ARRANGED BY JAPAN JOURNEYS

020 7766 5267

# THE UK'S BEST MAGAZINE FOR ASIAN POP CULTURE



ANIME, MANGA, MOVIES, GAMES, MUSIC, COSPLAY AND MORE!

**EVERY FOUR WEEKS** 

£4.75 AT TESCO, ASDA, WHSMITHS AND INDEPENDENT SHOPS



### **GET THIS**

DO NOT PASS GO, DO NOT TRAVEL BACK TO RENAISSANCE ITALY, JUST GET STUCK INTO THIS MONTH'S GEEKY COLLECTABLES...

### **Game Boy Heat Change Mug**

£9.99 // FIREBOX.COM

We'll be pitilessly honest with you - not all of the items we feature in Geeky Monkey send us reaching immediately for our credit cards (and not just because we don't need to, because Cookies). This beautiful piece of kitchenware, however, is already ordered - one of the finest game consoles in history, filled with coffee? It's like they read our minds. This admittedly dinky little mug has been designed with full Nintendo approval with the facia of the Game Boy, but even better, when you put hot beverages in it, either side reveals different screens from 1989's Super Mario Land - the title screen, and Mario saving Daisy. Mushroom Cup-a-Soup for supper!





### **Pokémon Snorlax Bean Bag Chair**

£123 // THINKGEEK.COM

How has it taken so long for giant Pokémon chairs to be a thing? From the very first time this beautiful big fat sod of a pocket monster blocked our way on the Game Boy adventure, part of us just wanted to jump on its big old belly and let it snooze away as we got comfy. And there's nothing dirty about that at all. It's pricey, yes, but oh so cosy. Luckily you haven't got to catch 'em all - there's only one.



### **Pac-Man Wind-Ups**

£15 // EPICGIFTABLES.COM

For a tenner and a half, this officially licensed package contains a wind-up Blinky the Ghost and of course, the eponymous yellow greedyguts to go with it. All you need to do now is cover your dining table with Tic-Tacs, wind the pair up and watch them go! Sadly, neither will actually eat the Tic-tacs, and you have to supply the sound effects yourself. And yes, we do. A great item!



### **Gremlins Lunchbox**

£11 // THINKGEEK.COM

Okay, so it's a long time since we actually used a lunchbox - but we'll start taking packed lunches everywhere to justify having this shipped over from the US. It's your very own Mogwai crate! It should go without saying that if you buy this, you will have to be very respectful, and of course, never put sandwiches in it after midnight or it turns into a green slimy briefcase.



### **LEGO DC Super Hero Girls Bumblebee Helicopter**

£12 // IWANTONEOFTHOSE.COM

DC has not had the most successful history in presenting empowered women characters, and it's not likely that this franchise will do much to redress the balance - the addition of the world 'Girls' says it all really. At least it's not from Mattel, the company that gave us 'Math class is tough!' Barbie. Nonetheless, this LEGO teen school spin-off is part of the DC universe, one in which Wonder Woman, Poison Ivy, Catwoman et al were pals at school, when none of them had yet developed criminal psychopathy. This set only includes the model for Bumblebee, but you do also get her chopper, which once made, also shoots out Kryptomites - the crystal critters created by Lena Luthor.



### **Star Trek Pin Mate Playset**

£62 // AMAZON.CO.UK

There are so many different flavours of figurine on the market, from Pop Vinyl to wobbly head figures, it's hard to keep up. Pin Mates are basically extremely simple wooden peg people, of the kind almost anyone could make themselves with basic skills. The same could actually be said of this playset, into which you can place the Kirk, Spock and Nurse Chapel dolls. But would you have the time? No, so pay up.



### **Beauty & The Beast Mrs Potts Teapot**

£41 // THINKGEEK.COM

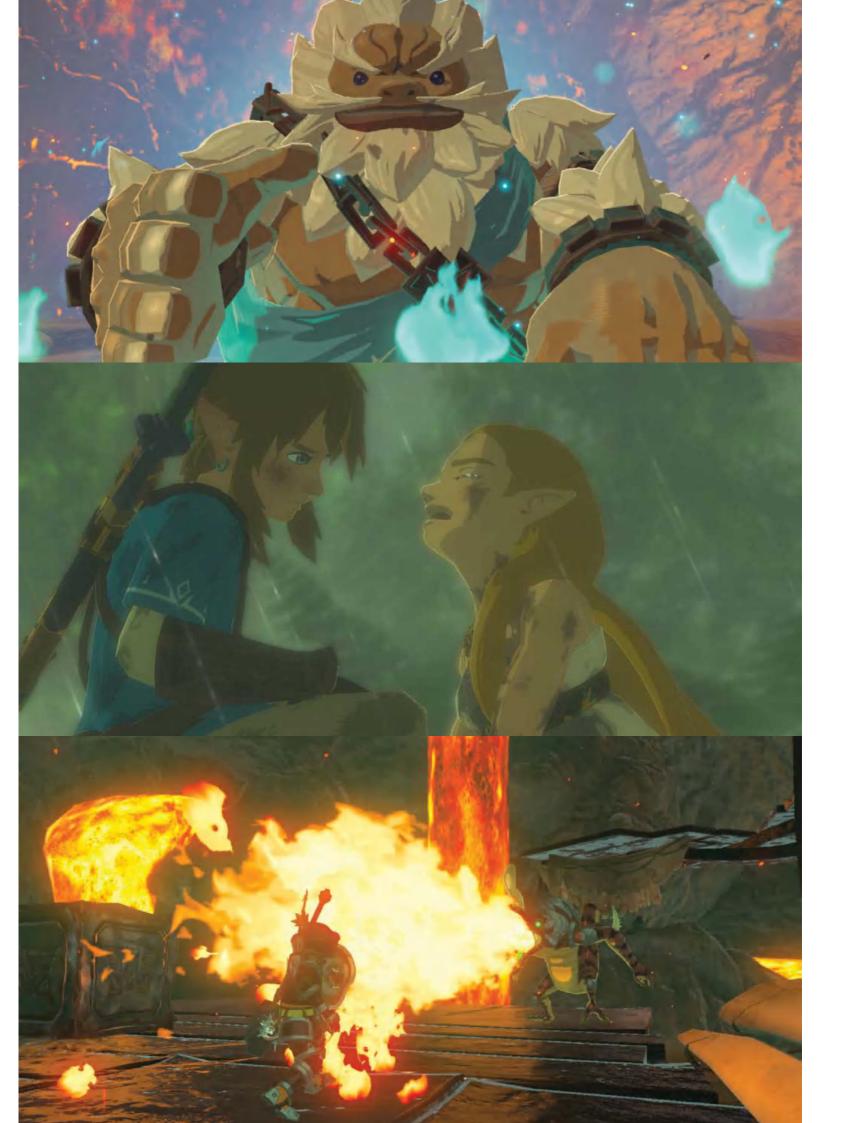
We don't usually include Disney merchandise too often, but if you had to have any one teapot which references popular culture, it surely has to be this ceramic beauty. Of course, this Mrs Potts is the classic Angela Lansbury model, and we've not heard word of any Emma Thompson teapots on sale just yet, but when we do, we're sold. We'll even chip a teacup to create her crippled crockery son.



### **Assassin's Creed Monopoly**

£13 // GAME.CO.UK

We're a funny bunch, us gamers. A company invents a game of incredible depth, spanning centuries and combining mind-blowing timetravel theory with visceral action and bloody combat... and we turn it into a board game. Despite what the box says, there's no 'parkour action' here, just lots of pretty gold-effect figurines to take on a journey through time. Playing this would be a test of your AC fandom.



With a gaming history going back to 1987 in the UK, can the Zelda franchise launch a new way forward for Nintendo after 30 years?





**GAME** 

# The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild

£48 // SWITCH, WIIU // STUDIO, NINTENDO

hen the original Legend Of Zelda game was released in 1986, Nintendo visionary Shigeru Miyamoto was nervous. Narratively driven games were considered common practice at this time, so when Miyamoto designed the first Zelda game with no tutorial or preamble, it was considered risky. Players were just dropped into a perilous open world with only their wits to survive with. The latest instalment of the franchise has been cited as a return to Zelda's roots. The last decade of entries have prioritised stories with larger scopes over free exploration, resulting in a streak of games deemed too linear by fans. Breath of the Wild makes good on the promise of the most open, open-world game Nintendo has ever made. This new version of Hyrule, set 100 years after the Calamity Ganon corrupted its world, is vast, stunning beyond belief and wants you dead.

Casuals beware, this is the hardest Zelda game in 25 years. Link finds himself waking after a century-long slumber having lost all of his memories. The first five hours has you exploring a raised plateau where you get to grips with the combat mechanics, the uses of your Sheikah Slate, and realising your mission: to break Calamity Ganon's hold on Hyrule Castle. All the skills and items you need to complete the game are given to you in this early period.

From there, the world is yours to explore however you choose. Open world games often employ the "you can go anywhere you see" tagline but few ever give as much a reason to explore beyond what your quest-log instructs you to as Breath of the Wild. The landscape – from blossoming vistas to arid deserts – is full of mystery and glimmering features that justify hundreds of hours of exploration. Adventuring is enhanced by the flawless traversal mechanics. Stamina permitting, you can climb any dry surface, swim in all bodies

### "THIS HYRULE INSPIRES CURIOSITY, PERSEVERANCE AND TAKING MOMENTS

of water and paraglide between peaks. Although you'll scale Sheikah Towers to reveal map locations, you'll rely mainly on reaching high ground to figure out your next waypoint. But the promise of new weapons, dozens of mini-dungeon shrines or just wandering NPCs that might hold the clues to start your next adventure, teaches you to investigate beyond the typical structure of open-world games and view Hyrule as an immersive and alive world.

When it comes to combat, the strength of the enemies combined with the fact that your weapons have limited durabilities means that you will constantly be outmatched. Every Bokoblin encounter feels tense and forces you to be inventive with your inventory and environment. It's often punishing but each death comes with a lesson. Between being kicked off cliff edges by goats or baiting enemies toward metal objects in a thunderstorm, there are thousands of imaginative ways to use Hyrule's weather and physics systems to make combat a battle of tactics over brute strength.

The narrative itself has tonnes of heart and how the story unfolds as a retrospective makes your relationships with the few major characters feel earnest. But above all, this Hyrule inspires curiosity, perseverance and taking moments to appreciate natural beauty. It's a game full of gorgeous settings, challenging adversaries and encourages you to adventure in the truest sense of the word. **GM** 



### [PODCAST]

### The X-Files Podcast

LENGTH, 60 MINS // WEEKLY // URL, LIBERTYSTREETGEEK.NET/CATEGORY/X-FILES/

Dean Louis Martin and Josh Effengee are the presenters of The X-Files Podcast and two of the team behind Liberty Street Geek. Laced with profanity and lots of smart humour, the pair spark well off each other while considering carefully selected episodes. They hop from season-to-season and back again, taking turns to pick a favourite or pivotal episode to discuss. Instalments covered in the early shows include Beyond the Sea, Home, and Jose Chung's From Outer Space – all fan favourites. They've also done the controversial second movie, I Want to Believe, and all six episodes of the revival. The episodes feature clips from the show illustrating the host's points and acting as a reminder of plot. Dean and Josh are particularly strong on examining the characters of the leads, Mulder and Scully. They're not beyond taking the show to task for its occasional missteps either, while celebrating what it did right. As long as you don't mind the salty language, this is a fun exploration of a show many fans grew up with. 88888



### [BOOK

# Monty Python's Flying Circus: Hidden Treasures

£30 // AUTHOR, ADRIAN BESLEY // PUBLISHER, CARLTON BOOKS

One of the by-products of Monty Python's farewell-ish run at the O2 two years ago, besides the paying off of Terry Jones' mortgage, was the instant dating of each of the four billion books which had already been written about the comedy troupe – including their own official autobiography.

Scribblers will keep scribbling about Python from a dozen angles, but – although fully backed up by the Python commercial arm, i.e. Eric Idle – Besley doesn't really aim to offer anything definitive, and as the hack author of The Biggest Book of YouTube Videos Ever, nobody expected him to.

The text here is serviceable doggerel to go with the popular gimmick of providing facsimiles that fall out of the book every time you turn the page – posters, tickets, and so on. It's a concept which has worked well with cheap unofficial Beatles books and the like, and for die-hard Python-heads, it works just as well here. A gift not to wrinkle your nose at.



### [FILM] A Cure For Wellness

STARRING, DANE DEHAAN, JASON ISAACS // STUDIO, 20TH CENTURY FOX

Gore Verbinski's visually stunning psychological horror A Cure For Wellness, set in a mysterious 'wellness centre' in the Swiss Alps is an overly ambitious film of two halves. Lockhart (Dane DeHaan) is sent to the centre to retrieve his company's CEO Roland Pembroke. When Lockhart breaks his leg and is forced to stay, he slowly uncovers some dark secrets. A beautiful first half is mired by a cacophony of horror pastiches and uncomfortable moments like a Grimm fairy tale that's just plain grim.



### [GAME]

### **Torment: Tides of Numenera**

£45 // PS4, XB1, PC PUBLISHER, KOCH INTERNATIONAL

This game is ambitious, insanely ambitious. In this thematic sequel of sorts to Planescape: Torment, you're thrust into a lushly crafted, isometric world set one billion years into the future. While the attention to detail in terms of lore is astounding, one of the more intriguing hooks is the ability to forgo fisticuffs in favour of turn-based crisis chatter as you use characters to try to talk enemies out of attacking. Trust us, you're unlikely to find a more intriguing RPG in 2017.

00000



### [BLU-RAY]

### **Justice League Dark**

£13 // STARRING, MATT RYAN, CAMILLA LUDDINGTON // STUDIO, WARNER HOME VIDEO

Although DC's live action movies have been hit or miss with critics, when it comes to the animated series they're pretty much on the money. When supernatural forces are on the attack, the Justice League's Batman looks to John Constantine to gather a team of supernatural heroes. Justice League Dark is the fun alternative to the Justice League and the animated movie hits all the marks – a great introduction to those new to the dark super heroes and an enjoyable watch for DC stalwarts.



Premiering at the Venice Film Festival back in September and starring Amy Adams, Jeremy Renner and Forest Whitaker, Arrival brings aliens down to Earth once again.

### [BLU-RAY]

### Arrival

£15 // STARRING, AMY ADAMS, JEREMY RENNER, FOREST WHITAKER // STUDIO, PARAMOUNT PICTURES

One of the most talked about sci-fi films last year. Arrival is another notch on director Denis Villeneuve's belt. The film brings about the return of 'intelligent sci-fi' that doesn't assume its audience is stupid enough to linger on the question "are we alone in the universe?" Louise Banks is a linguist whose own story flits between flashes of jigsaw like memories.

When 12 space craft come to Earth, stationed at random points around the globe, she is asked by U.S. Colonel Weber to join physicist Ian Donnelly to make contact with the extraterrestrial visitors and figure out what they want. The science behind the fiction seems water tight; why would we ever presume to understand an alien race's entire language? It's through strange symbols that an understanding is formed and the purpose of their 'mission' puts a sideward slant on the film's third act.

Villeneuve's skill for executing a complicated, soulsearching story is wonderfully displayed here but with all the hype around the film, it feels like an elaborate way to reach a somewhat M Night Shyamalan-style plot twist nearing the end. Arrival certainly wows in terms of style but when it's stripped of its pretty parts, it feels a little like a film that pertains to be a lot smarter than it is.

00000



### **[AUDIO DRAMA]**

### The Invisible Man

£15 // STARRING, JOHN HURT, BLAKE RITSON // STUDIO. BIG FINISH PRODUCTIONS

When an actor is as hard-working as the late Sir John Hurt certainly was, it's inevitable that their sudden loss is going to leave a lot of threads hanging, and posthumous projects to be released in an unexpected light. Big Finish had been very lucky to earn Hurt's warm approval, resulting in precious further adventures for the War Doctor, and here he headlines one of the company's standalone adaptations.

It's a perfect marriage, one of the most recognisable, enticing voices we ever had, playing the most famous character never seen in sci-fi history. Divorced from the need to have cigarettes hanging in mid-air and all the usual SFX clichés, HG Wells' original tale of Griffin, a scientist driven mad by his own ambition, unfolds to the listener with greater clarity than ever before. As ever, it's impossible to fault the trademark Big Finish flawless audio production.

Sir John is the only star in a very capable cast, and communicates Griffin's growing mania and thirst for revenge against all visible humanity with every granule of greatness we always expected from his gravelly tones - to the very end, he never disappointed.

The download and CD also come with a special sneak listen to their next Wells audio movie, The First Men In The Moon, featuring Nigel Planer – and more importantly, a full audio celebration of John Hurt's incredible career.

\*\*\*





Guerrilla Games' first attempt at a role playing adventure appears to be a total triumph!





[GAME]

### Horizon: Zero Dawn

£44 // PS4 // PUBLISHER, SONY

ne of the best things Guerrilla Games' latest game does is how quickly it establishes its premise from the outset, begging you to solve it, and still manages to keep things moving along in terms of narrative beats throughout its 40 plus hours of gameplay. So, what are the big mysteries driving the plot of Horizon: Zero Dawn forward? Where did the hulking machines that resemble dinosaurs and ancient beasts that inhabit this seemingly primitive world originate from, and why was the game's lead character, Aloy, cast out of the Nora tribe at birth?

These are brilliant hooks, and proof that Guerrilla sure can weave a good tale, despite a few hurdles here and there, namely chunks of clunky dialogue and a few predictable twists and turns culled from the Hero's Journey handbook. Still, don't let that detract from what is one of the year's biggest achievements, especially considering the team is so synonymous with first person shooters.

Slick scribbling skills aside, the game is absolutely gorgeous to ogle as you traverse luscious landscapes, climb massive mountains and watch from afar as a roster of robotic beasts roam the world begging to be hunted. And that's where combat comes into play, and boy is it a lot of fun. Sure, a lot of the mechanics feel like they've been cribbed from the likes of The Witcher and Tomb Raider, but don't let that put you off, because Horizon: Zero Dawn does it so much better.

# "IF YOU HAPPEN TO HAVE A PLAYSTATION 4 PRO AND A 4K TV, THEN YOU ARE IN FOR A TREAT"

The hunt is spectacular, and because Aloy is utterly outmatched by some of the much larger 'boss beasts' so to speak, you're going to have to use your smarts to succeed. The key to winning is, aptly, Guerrilla warfare; lay traps, use the environment to remain hidden and when they're triggered, lash out with an attack from the plethora of kick-ass weaponry Aloy has to hand, and then disappear before repeating the process until the mechanical monster has been felled.

Oh, and if you happen to have a PlayStation 4 Pro and a 4K TV, then you are in for a treat, because Horizon: Zero Dawn is THE game to beat in terms of visual fidelity on home console right now. Never has a game looked so damn good, and if there's one title on the shelf that Sony can use as a showcase to try and persuade gamers to make the leap to Pro, it's this. Bravo, Guerrilla. Bravo.

00000





# Logan

STARRING, HUGH JACKMAN, PATRICK STEWART, RICHARD E. GRANT // STUDIO, 20TH CENTURY FOX

After 17 years as Wolverine, Hugh Jackman dons his adamantium claws one last time in Logan. Joined by Patrick Stewart once again as Charles Xavier, the film is set in the not so distant future, in the year 2029 - a very different take to the vibrancy of First Class, Days of Future Past and Apocalypse and the 'slow burn' feel of the first two X-Men films of the franchise.

Not quite the mutant he once was, Wolverine's regenerative healing powers are fading and his scarred, battleworn body is evidence of the long life he's led. Now based in an unknown location with Charles (who is now very old and suffering from a neurodegenerative disease) and mutant Caliban (Stephen Merchant), he's a chauffeur, taking odd jobs in the city. Stumbling across a girl called Laura (Dafne Keen), with similar abilities to Logan, everything changes and Logan must step up as the mutant du jour one last time.

Keen's performance as Laura and her relationship with Logan are central to the film, not the fact we're finally seeing Wolverine in all his violent, brutal sweary glory (although that's pretty awesome too). It's with director James Mangold's superb character driven story that we finally get the X-Men film we've been so desperately waiting for, an exhilarating end to Jackman's reign as Wolverine.

\*\*\*



### [DVD] King Kong

£8 // STARRING, FAY WRAY // STUDIO, WARNER HOME VIDEO

2017 is a big year for the world's favourite 50-feet-tall gorilla. And so, WB has seen fit to take Merian C Cooper's 1933 original and glue it into a digital versatile disc. There's absolutely nothing in this release which makes it worthwhile, no documentaries looking at the many iterations of Kong - it's just those 100 minutes of mono celluloid, back on the shelves. It's cheaper than paying the £9.99 it would cost to watch the film on YouTube right now, though you could buy a previously released DVD for 1p. \*\*\*



### [BLU-RAY] **Fright Night**

£15 // STARRING, CHRIS SARANDON // STUDIO, EUREKA

Fright Night is arguably one of the finest horrors ever to come out of the 80s; a brilliant blend of comedy, horror and killer special effects that still ooze style even today, and with the release of this jazzed up special edition the film has never looked or sounded better thanks to a 4K digital restoration. Extras include memorabilia from Tom Holland's personal collection, a two hour documentary, plus the original electronic press kit, which should sate even the hungriest of Fright Night fans. 00000



### **Roque One: A Star Wars Story** - The Official Mission Debrief

// PUBLISHER, TITAN

There's no author credit for this ultimate guide to the latest entry in the Star Wars saga, because it's a compendium of items cut and pasted from the official magazine, covering every imaginable aspect of the film's production. Jedi-crazed non-subscribers will be glad to have one catch-all history of the first ever standalone (for the moment) Star Wars movie, and it's been stylishly designed and compiled - just be warned that if you buy the mag, and buy this, you may be in danger of drowning in cash. **& & & & & &** 



Row, row, row your boat, gently down the stream. Then... rape, pillage and burn down villages.



### [BLU-RAY]

### Vikings, Season 4 Volume 2

£40 // STARRING, TRAVIS FIMMEL, CLIVE STANDEN // STUDIO, 20TH CENTURY FOX

The first season or two of Vikings really made the demanding modern telly audiences put time aside to enjoy the tight scripts, well filmed action and splattering of historical context as we followed the story of Viking Ragnar Lothbrok, played by Travis Fimmel.

A History channel show, filming on location in Ireland, Vikings has picked up quite a following. Now we're on to the second part of season four though, there have been instances through three and four where you feel the writers have been eeking things out a bit too much, hopping over anticipated battles presumably to save costs and instead relying on eye candy to keep the viewers interested.

Episodes can feel too much like a soap opera for many fans, but the quality of the acting is still high, and as long as you put out of your mind any thoughts of historical accuracy, it's a series that can still be enjoyed.

The big spoiler (but you could see this one coming from a season ago) is that Ragnar dies a horrible death in this second part of season four. We won't give it away, but half way through the tone of the show changes and becomes all about avenging this once might Viking warrior. For many, £40 may be a bit steep, you can catch it on Amazon Prime instead.



[BLU-RAY]

### **Terrahawks: Volume 3**

£20 // STARRING, DENISE BRYER, WINDSOR DAVIES // STUDIO, NETWORK

A whole generation of kids scarred by the horrific antics of the villainous Zelda in Gerry Anderson's last great creation will be glad to know that this completes the series' releases on blu-ray, not least so they can revisit the show and realise what idiots they were for fearing Zelda's rubber-faced machinations. With a set-up heavily reminiscent of Thunderbirds, the Terrahawks are an Earth-based crew with flashy vehicle who protect the planet from extraterrestrial forces. Replacing Supermarionation with Supermacronation (i.e. Muppet-style hand puppetry), Terrahawks also dispensed with Thunderbirds' often quite bland do-gooder style with a decidedly tongue-in-cheek approach, not least thanks to Windsor Davies' presence as the spherical Zeroid Major Zero. This final run was never intended to provide any closure for Terrahwaks, but the series has recently been kickstarted back into action thanks to those audio salvage heroes, Big Finish, so there's no reason to let the struggle to save Earth end here. **88888** 



### [GAME]

### **For Honor**

£42 // PS4, XB1, PC // PUBLISHER, UBISOFT

For Honor isn't your typical hack n' slash game. It's got more in common with classic beat-'em-ups than, say, the button bashing of Dynasty Warriors. There's a deep, extremely complex battle system here that's tucked away underneath game mechanics that might appear simplistic upon first glance.

With 12 heroes to choose from, as well as a multitude of different character classes, there's a lot to get to grips with if you're willing to invest the time in this superbly crafted third person period action opus. Yes, there's a narrative at play, but it's more of an elongated tutorial. If you want to experience For Honor at its best, be sure to whizz through the single player stuff and get online.

It's loaded with a wealth of thrilling modes, including Elimination and Skirmish, and, quite frankly, the one-on-one or two-on-two brawls you'll find yourself in with other players are some of the most thrilling gaming moments of the year so far.

**00000** 



### **Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon:** Wildlands

£44 // XB1, PS4, PC // PUBLISHER, UBISOFT

For the first time Ghost Recon is breaking away from the formula it has so brilliantly perfected, and stepping into the realm of open world videogames. It's a huge gamble for Ubisoft, and the developers run the risk of becoming yet another in a long line of games that followed the template set by Grand Theft Auto and failed quite miserably.

Luckily for the team behind Wildlands, it hasn't failed. The game is absolutely huge, so huge in fact that we've poured hours upon hours into this tenth instalment in the series and still feel like we've barely scratched the surface of the Bolivia set opus that pits you against an powerful drug cartel known as Santa Blanca.

The map's enormous, the narrative thrilling and the side quests - of which there are many - pack just as much of a punch as the main campaign. Mix in online co-op, and you've got one of the most feature packed games of the year so far.

**& & & & & &** 



### [BLU-RAY]

### Killjoys, Season 2

£15 // DIRECTED BY, MICHELLE LOVRETTA // STUDIO, UNIVERSAL PICTURES

Explosive, action-packed Syfy drama Killjoys returned for a second season last summer and with a third planned to air later this year it's the perfect time to catch up on the series with this season two box set.

Following three space-hopping bounty hunters, the series has the same feel as shows like Orphan Black, and Killjoys shares the same producer too, so that will explain it I guess. The hectic tension and gritty feel are what both shows share and the season one finale was an edge of your seat affair - deaths, drama and action, the lot.

Season two picks up the pace, continuing the trio's galactic adventures in true Killjoys fashion and that small matter of the green plasma returns as D'avin (Luke Macfarlane) dreams his body is being pumped full of it.

As enjoyable as science fiction shows like The Expanse are, Killjoys is unabashed fun, an exciting series that puts the adventurous spirit back into the genre.

**\*\*\*\*\*** 



### **Marvel Year By Year: A Visual History**

£35 // AUTHOR. IN-HOUSE // PUBLISHER, DK

If there's one thing the team at DK do really well it's these HUGE compilation books that explore a subject year by year. Their Marvel one has just been updated and enhanced with 400 pages and two exclusive art prints - if you're looking for a birthday present for a Marvel-mad geek or just fancy a trip down memory lane yourself, this makes a great gift.

The content goes back over nearly 80 years of comic book characters from Marvel Comics, from the very first appearance of the Apache Kid when Marvel was called Timely Comics in the late 1930s, through the setting up of the Marvel Universe with 1960s comics, right up to Civil War II.

Yes, you get to see some brilliant comic book artwork throughout, some of the early covers are a joy to behold, but the authors have also sat down with the creators to give an expert commentary as Marvel's story unfolds. The book takes you on a journey that explores not just the printed page but also the evolution of the characters that you know and love.

With a foreword by Stan Lee himself, Marvel Year By Year is a must have coffee table book for any geek den. It's pricey at £35, but so well made.

**&&&&&** 

### [DVD]

# WWE: The Best of Raw & Smackdown 2016

£30 // STUDIO, FREMANTLE HOME ENTERTAINMENT

aw and to a lesser extent, Smackdown, are shows that are much maligned by sections of the 'smart' fanbase. In truth, a re-visitation of any year's output in the past reveals genuinely baffling, at times shockingly poor television. The WWE is currently blessed with one of the most athletically gifted rosters of all-time, and have enjoyed a rate of great matches that can compare favourably to any time period.

With that said, Raw in particular, can be a huge chore to sit through on a weekly basis at a mammoth three hours long. Thus, a review set like this is ideal for those with little tolerance for devoting so much time to what is often underwhelming. Within this effort, viewers are treated to a wide-ranging mash-up of material featuring a good spread of the roster.

The set offers compelling returns for Shane McMahon and Bill Goldberg, plus angles such as John Cena's comeback, the Draft that changed the landscape of the company, and an epic brawl between Triple H and Roman Reigns (itself the highlight of their dull feud). In between match-ups, there's also brief highlights covering proceedings from each month.

AJ Styles was clearly WWE's 2016 MVP, as evidenced here in blistering duels opposite Kevin Owens, Sami Zayn and Dean Ambrose. His short-lived tag combination with Chris Jericho is also featured, thanks to their last outing together, complete with a predictable, but extremely well executed, twist.

However, almost as vital, were the contributions of Becky Lynch and Charlotte, on Smackdown and Raw respectively. The duo of Charlotte/Sasha Banks title bouts included are particularly terrific. The November 18 Falls Count Anywhere tussle isn't just inventive and gripping, but a superior match to their PPV efforts. Meanwhile, the crowd response to the climax of their previous battle, is genuinely a stirring moment.

There's also a smattering of exciting multi-person tussles, including the crowning of Kevin Owens as champion and various clashes plucked from Smackdown. The usual suspects within all of these keep the standard high, Styles, Cesaro and Zayn amongst them.

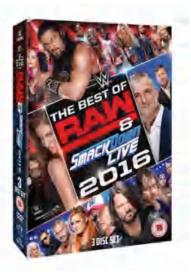
Other material, such as an average Alberto Del Rio scrap with Kalisto, or Apollo Crews versus Tyler Breeze, are much more disposable tussles, but at the very least, there's surprisingly little repetition throughout.

The best inclusion is almost inevitably the February retirement of Daniel Bryan. Simply permitted the time to say whatever he felt necessary in the midst of his injury-enforced career end, it's a reminder that the most enjoyable parts of wrestling are often the most real.

Although the lows in 2016 were quite a slog, this solid compilation gives a peek at the considerable highlights that also emerged.

**&&&&** 

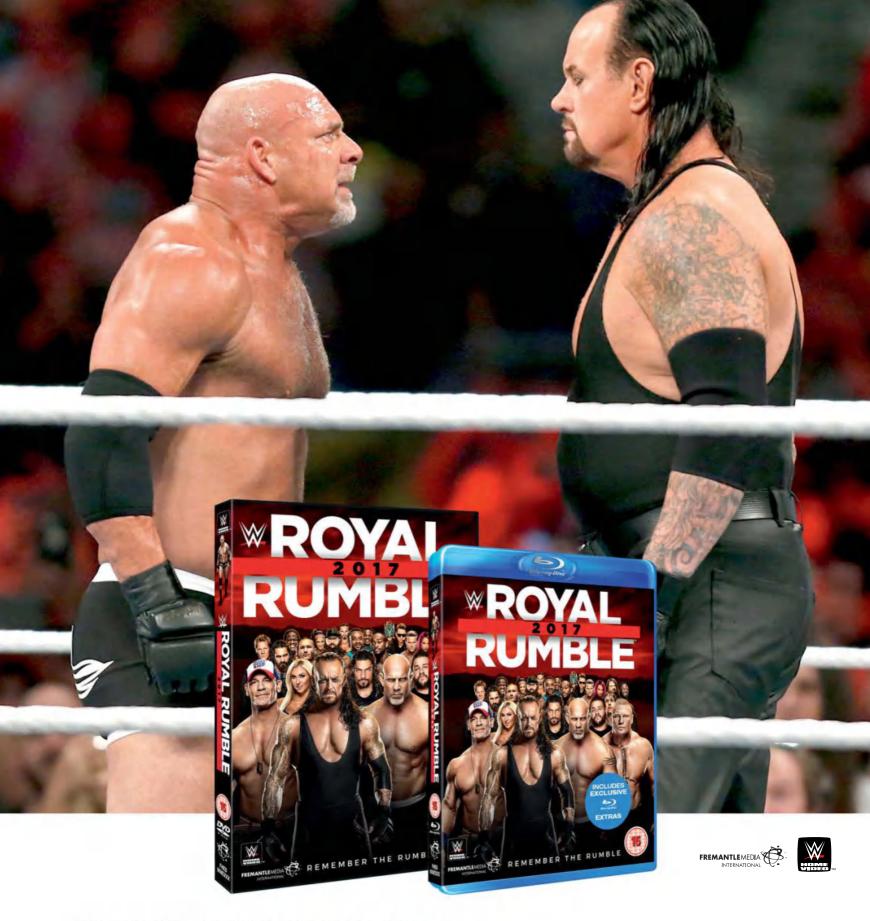
"THERE'S
ALSO A
SMATTERING
OF EXCITING
MULTIPERSON
TUSSLES,
INCLUDING
THE
CROWNING
OF KEVIN
OWENS AS
CHAMPION"











# ROYAL RUMBLE 2017 DVD & BLU-RAY AVAILABLE NOW

amazon.co.uk°

Free Super Saver Delivery and Unlimited One-Day Delivery with Amazon Prime are available on eligible orders. Terms and Conditions apply. See Amazon.co.uk for details.









Killing teenagers with cutesy graphics? Relive the slasher movies of the 80s with Slayaway Camp



### **Slayaway Camp**

iOS £2.99 // STEAM £5.99 DEVELOPER, BLUE WIZARD DIGITAL

efore we get into the nitty-gritty, a history lesson. PopCap Games was founded by Brian Fiete, John Vechey and Jason Kapalka back in the year 2000 and has been responsible for such impossibly addictive and disarmingly charming titles as Bejeweled, Peggle, Zuma and Plants VS. Zombies. But what would happen if one of the much-loved developer's founding fathers grew tired of crafting intensely playable yet decidedly cute and cuddly family-friendly affairs? What if for over a decade they had developed a rising blood lust, an insatiable thirst for excessive violence, and saw the world through a constant red mist? What if they had to get the hell out of there before something bad happened?

Well they'd leave PopCap to found Blue Wizard Digital, and be called Jason Kapalka. Because that's exactly what has happened, and Slayaway Camp is the first result. Like PopCap's offerings, it's a simple yet seductive affair. Unlike PopCap's offerings, it's awash with crimson gore and a zeal for brutal nastiness that would have earned it an 18 certificate, had reallife human beings actually been made out of Duplo bricks.

Riffing heavily off the slasher flicks of the 1980s and especially the Friday the 13th series in which another Jason also decided that they'd really like their career to be more viscerally fulfilling, Slayaway Camp puts you in the role of Skullface, and sets you but one objective – kill 'em all. Doing so couldn't (initially at least) be simpler. You just swipe in the direction of your victim, and slide up to them before murdering them in any one of of an increasingly creative number of ways.

Or at least the first, second, and third kill couldn't be simpler. From then on this tongue-in-cheek puzzler starts to get trickier as more and more ideas are added to its mix, and

# "THERE'S THE OVERALL WARMTH OF A VHS BLUR"

you find yourself avoiding cops, scaring teenagers so that they charge blindly into firepits, distracting them by making hoax phone calls, crushing them behind bookshelves, and spending credits earned for your efforts on extra kill moves.

Essentially, Slayaway Camp is about working out how to navigate a level without being caught while being a gleeful angel of death, and its superb. Stylistically, the voxel style of artwork may have been seen before – but not when mixed with this level of intoxicating nastiness. The soundtrack is mightily impressive too, evoking as it does the sound of pretty much every videonasty audio trope you might remember. Then there's the overall warmth of a VHS blur that pervades the proceedings, and the sheer number of very bad things you'll find yourself doing to mostly innocent people.

But we know they're not innocent. They've probably had sex. Or smoked a joint. Or thought about having sex, or smoking a joint, and they must all pay. Not that you need to think such things. It just really does help should you play having got right into character. You certainly don't want to be killing people for no reason. That would be insane.

Slayaway Camp, then, is a love letter to the slasher genre built out of a series of isomeric conundrums. It has a bit of that unmistakable PopCap feel to it, but it's also very much its own thing and so very much deserves to be part of your collection.

### The Warlock of Firetop Mountain

iOS £4.99 // STEAM £14.99 DEVELOPER, TIN MAN GAMES



Back in 1982 Games Workshop cofounders Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone penned the first of the Fighting Fantasy series of interactive game books and, to underline just how much times have changed, these books were

seen by the tabloid press as being harmful to children. Yep, forget sexting or cyber bullying - at one point imagination itself was considered dangerous - because one kid had a nightmare about a goblin. But we digress, The Warlock of Firetop Mountain is a reasonably accurate take on the first of the Fighting Fantasy series, and very good it is too. Instead of turning to a set page to continue your adventure you tap where you want to go on what amounts to a constantly building tabletop map. It's a bit like a very posh version of Hero Quest, with text, but for a single player, and featuring classic illustrations from the original book. Combat has been improved and the overall experience is a recommended one, though where the book's final maze was once something that could be learned and so mapped before you finally got to assassinate the titular warlock, it's now randomised every time you play, and so is quite a bit of an utter bastard.

00000





### Night in the Woods

DEVELOPER, INFINITE FALL

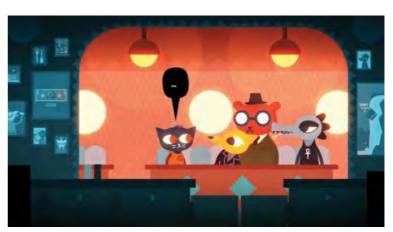


Mae has dropped out of college and returned to her once thriving mining home town of Possum Springs to live in her parent's attic. All her old friends have jobs,

and for the first few hours you, as Mae, wander around, hang out, chat, and slowly get immersed into the game's engaging world and its multi-dimensional characters. Also, Mae is a cat, her friends are all anthropomorphic animals, and there's something weird going on in them there woods.

Lasting only a few hours, this narrative-focused adventure is an absolute joy on all fronts. Mae is likeable but flawed, her friends are all worth spending time with, and thanks to some of the finest pacing you'll find in any game the overall experience is like being slowly dipped into your favourite book of film, if your favourite book or film builds slowly before getting wild at heart and crazy on top. By the time that happens, you'll actually care about what's going on and feel far more part of the story than you would had you just been dropped in a run-down town that's full of weirdness. A deeply engaging experience telling a memorable story.







### Causality

STEAM £2.99 // iOS £1.99 // ANDROID £1.99 DEVELOPER, LOJU



Time, eh? It slays king, ruins town, and beats mountains down. But it also makes a damned good puzzle mechanic, as demonstrated in this series of headscratching situations in which you must

help astronauts find exits. These guys will walk forward until they meet a tile that can be switched to alter their direction and so can easily be led to their escape. That is until things start getting tricky, and the ability to rewind time comes into play. To make things even more confusing you'll also encounter time loops and so while you'll have multiple space dudes on screen, they're all actually the same bloke. It's all very clever, and totally worth a few quid. **&&&&&** 



### **Vampire: Prelude**

iOS £4.99 // STEAM £4.94 DEVELOPER, ASMODEE DIGITAL

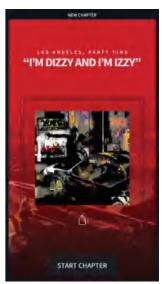


There hasn't been a decent game based on the Vampire: The Masquerade tabletop RPG since Activision published the brilliant Redemption 17 years ago, and that situation certainly isn't going to change now that Prelude has been released. It's a

text-based adventure that's mostly about you using your actual phone as an in-game phone to text chat with a friend, who is also having strange urges to drink the blood of the living. All the richness of the original RPG is only ever hinted at, and certainly deserves a more satiating treatment. Still, what rare imagery is used certainly helps underline the mood. It's just a shame the game lacks any (wait for it...) bite.

\*\*\*





### Voyageur

DEVELOPER, BRUNO DIAS

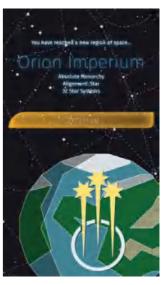


How about a procedurally generated literary science-fiction RPG in which you'll feel that you're far from home and exploring places most alien? For the most part Voyageur accomplishes what it set out to do, and so provides a very modern take on what used to be book-based adventures. Well

written, it really will make you feel part of your own organic story as you gain and lose crew members, develop your stats, and boldly go where no man has gone before. Its problem, however, is where you will find yourself going a few hours from your start will seem overly familiar as the game's algorithm comes up with repeated descriptions of what should be strange new worlds.

\*\*\*





# TAP IN TO THE BEST OF FSM









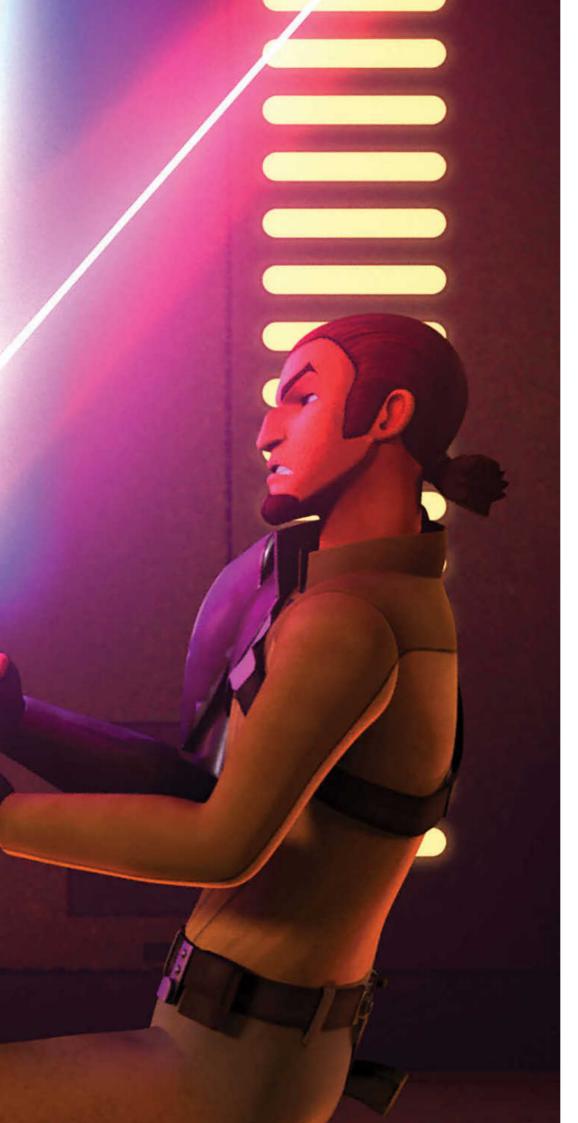
I know you've written
about how much you
love print, but downloading
FSM every month is just
so easy. I prefer doing it
this way!

- DAVID RITCHIE, OAK BROOK, ILLINOIS

- Hi-res screen brings out the best in FSM's photographs
- Many hours of relevant matches and interviews are included, exclusively to FSM's digital format
- Reading on the go has never been easier
- Immediate access to new and back issues







### STAR WARS REBELS

// 2014-PRESENT

created by

SIMON KINBERG, DAVE FILONI, CARRIE BECK

starrina

JAMES EARL JONES // DARTH VADER
TAYLOR GRAY // EZRA BRIDGER
FREDDIE PRINZE, JR. // KANAN JARRUS

Who would have thought that so much went on between the movies Revenge of the Sith and A New Hope? Last year's Rogue One: A Star Wars Story showed us the battle for the Death Star plans, but Disney XD animated series Star Wars Rebels delves much deeper into this timeline with 55 episodes and counting.

The last of the Jedi Knights are being hunted down by Imperial forces and the Galactic Empire is tightening its grip on the galaxy. This inspires a rebellion against the Empire to form, culminating in the story that we all know and love from Episode IV – A New Hope.

We asked you on Twitter, do you think that Star Wars being made into a cartoon like Rebels is a good thing, or a bad thing? Here's what you voted:

Hell yeah, love it! 63% Nope, just movies for me 37%

### TOP GEAR

# THIS MONTH OUR PICK OF FOUR NEW TECH TEMPTATIONS ALL HAVE A GAMING THEME



### **PlayStation 4 Pro Retro**

\$899 [£734] // COLORWARE.COM // AVAILABLE, NOW

Did you see the PSone coloured 20th Anniversary PS4 that Sony launched back in 2015? Well they're fetching upwards of £1,000 these days. Luckily there's another option for cash rich retro PlayStation gamers. U.S. company Colorware specialises in customising your tech and they've been working on a retro version of the PlayStation 4 Pro. As you can see, the retro grey of the original PlayStation looks great on the new machine. They've even coloured up the DualShock 4 controller to match. Under the lick of paint this is a US model console, so just make sure you can run it before parting with your credit card details.



### Nokia 3310 2017

£49 // ROKU.COM // AVAILABLE, SPRING

It's a month for retro comebacks with the return of the Nokia 3310, the classic phone that was omnipresent in the early 2000s. Nokia's hardware is now handled by tech company HMD, and at the recent Mobile World Congress event they unveiled a new take on the classic model. This is a no-nonsense phone with a mightily impressive one month stand-by time on the battery, or 22-hours of non-stop talk time! Coming in warm red, yellow, dark blue or grey, there is a basic internet browser included and yes, the classic Nokia game Snake makes a welcome return too. At £49, what's not to love?



### **Nintendo Switch**

£280 // NINTENDO.CO.UK // AVAILABLE, NOW

Yes, there was a lot of bitching about the Switch before its release, as we explored in last issue's feature, but boy is this a great machine! Nintendo always likes to go its own way, pushing the envelope of games machines, and they have really pulled it off this time. Switch is a hybrid console, taking ideas started with the WiiU and pushing them further. You can play at home in 1080p, or take your game with you to play on the go, and when that game is the quality of the new Zelda – just wow! If only Nintendo could have brought the accessories in cheaper and had more games on day one, they would have silenced their detractors.



### **Mega Drive Ultimate Portable Game Player**

£49 // FUNSTOCKRETRO.CO.UK // AVAILABLE, NOW

While we're in a retro gaming mood, Funstock Retro, the Kings of the nostalgic console, have this little marvel available now. The SEGA Mega Drive went to battle with the Super Nintendo back in the mid-90s and while you could track down a working console and buy the games from ebay, Funstock has made it much easier with 80 pre-loaded games on this handheld console, including Sonic 1 and 2, Mortal Kombat 1, 2 and 3 and gems like Decapattack and Comix Zone. To top it off, you can plug the machine into your TV for a true 90s experience, and there's an SD card slot for you to play other Mega Drive games. A snip at under £50!



WWW.GET-DRONE.TODAY







# RICKAND MORUS BLUFFER'S GUIDE

EVERY TIME IT POPS UP IN THE NEWS, WE GET EXCITED - WILL THIS BE THE SEASON 3 RELEASE DATE WE'VE ALL BEEN WAITING FOR? WELL, WHILE WE'RE WAITING, HERE'S OUR GUIDE TO ALL OF THE SANCHEZ FAMILY'S MIND-STRETCHING ADVENTURES SO FAR...

Words: JEM ROBERTS

Official biographer for Douglas Adams – who part-inspired Rick and Morty in the first place.

Il this time, and still no season three announcement for everyone's favourite depraved adult sci-fi sitcom cartoon! And even the bearded Birdperson himself, Dan Harmon, can't put his finger on what the problem is, recently letting slip that he and co-creator Justin Roiland have been fighting more than ever before about each and every episode, "We have fights all the time and then we have fights about why we're having fights," before backtracking

the very next day after Twitter went into meltdown. "I understand and we are flattered that in an information vacuum, with the show so late, any morsel of info is going to have huge weight," he Tweeted. "But the truth is not dramatic. It's quite boring. We love our show. It's a weird show that we struggle to not overthink OR underthink. As for now, they're drawing it…"

Rick and Morty emerged from the brain of veteran comedy bit-part writer/performer/animator Justin Roiland, whose greatest claim to fame was playing the horrifyingly unpleasant Lord Lemongrab in Adventure Time. When he took his twisted appropriation of Doc Brown and Marty McFly to Starburns, the company co-founded by pisstaking nerd king Dan Harmon shortly after the launch of his hit sitcom Community, Harmon was enthused enough to split the writing of the cartoon 50-50 with Roiland, and the first season of eleven 20-minute escapades hit the ground running, becoming an instant cult hit, and allowing merchandisers the world over to start licking their lips and rolling up their sleeves. There are now comics, bobble-heads, toys, leggings, clocks... the one thing there certainly isn't, is a third season ready to watch any time soon.

But we can at least prepare you for the return of the best adult cartoon of the decade with a handy guide to every currently existing episode. The punning titles of Roiland and Harmon's sci-fi comedy often make it hard to know which episode to select, so to avoid sitting through the same one for the hundredth time, here's an at-a-glance guide to the first two seasons... >









"HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT
MORTY IS LED ASTRAY BY
HIS AMORAL ALCOHOLIC
GENIUS GRANDFATHER RICK,
WHO WHISKS HIM AWAY TO
ALTERNATIVE DEIMENSION"

There's absolutely nothing subtle about the use of Doc Brown and Marty McFly as inspiration for the two heroes – but then Bob Gale was playing with the old 'Inventor and young boy' trope when he wrote Back to the Future anyway.

# **SEASON ONE**

// 2013-2014

// PILOT

High school student Morty is led astray by his amoral alcoholic genius grandfather Rick, who whisks him away to alternative deimension 35-C, where he's needed to smuggle enormous mega-tree seeds up his rectum.

// LAWNMOWER DOG
When Morty's Dad Jerry complains his dog Snuffles is stupid,
Rick designs a machine to increase the canine intelligence –
which spreads worldwide, dooming humanity. Meanwhile,
Rick's plan to increase Morty's Math grades by slipping into
his teacher's dreams Inception-style gets ever more
convoluted, resulting in a run-in with Freddy-Krueger-alike
Scary Terry.

// ANATOMY PARK
Rick has designed a theme park inside a homeless man who then dies, and so a miniaturised Morty is sent inside as part of an investigatory team, ultimately resulting in the festive spectacle of a gigantic Santa Claus bursting over America.

// M. NIGHT SHAYM-ALIENS!
Rick and Jerry find themselves trapped in a fake reality designed by aliens to kid Rick into giving up the recipe for an incredible energy source. Jerry's hopes of success in his advertising job are dashed, but Rick finally manages to beat the aliens at their own game.

// MEESEEKS AND DESTROY

Meeseeks are blue synthetic beings who exist just long enough to achieve what they were created for – but when Jerry creates one to help with his golf swing, the impossible task leads to desperate Meeseeks filling the world.

// RICK POTION #9

Morty begs Rick to invent a love potion to attract his crush Jessica at the school dance, but it binds with her flu to turn the world's population into hideous Morty-fixated mutants – our heroes only escape by fleeing to a dimension where none of this happened, replacing a dead Rick and Morty.

// RAISING GAZORPAZORP

Rick buys Morty a sex robot, who immediately becomes pregnant after use. This results in the fast-growing hybrid tearaway, Morty Jr, whose genes emanate from the planet Gazorpazorp, and who becomes a best-selling self-help author. What else?

// RIXTY MINUTES

Rick fixes the TV so it can show alternate realities, including one where Beth and Jerry never got married at all. Despite becoming much more successful in this other world, the alternate Beth and Jerry realise they're meant to be together. Morty also tells Summer about the dead alternate Morty buried in the yard.



// SOMETHING RICKED THIS WAY COMES Summer gets a job in a curiosity shop run by the Devil, who sells cursed objects, until Rick opens up a curse-lifting shop over the road. Meanwhile, Jerry's refusal to accept Pluto's demotion as a planet leads to him being taken there to face up to the truth.

// CLOSE RICK-COUNTERS OF THE RICK KIND We meet an entire federation of Ricks from alternate realities, when our Rick (Rick C137) is accused of killing other Ricks and stealing their Morties. Morty leads an uprising of alternate Morties, and Jerry makes friends with the lamest Rick of all.

// RICKSY BUSINESS With Jerry and Beth away on a Titanic-themed holiday which goes wrong when the ship fails to sink, Rick, Morty and Summer throw a wild party which soon gets out of hand. Rick's old friend Birdperson mourns the loss of his partner, and gets off with Summer's friend Tammy.

> Alcoholic genius Rick Sanchez abandoned his daughter 14 years before the first series of Rick and Morty began, and it's been suggested that episode one begins about a month after his shock return. Now he lives in the garage.





### YOU HAVE BEEN WATCHING...

### // RICK SANCHEZ (Justin Roiland)



A blue-haired, hip-flask-swigging, belching scientist genius, adventurer and general master of the universe. Lives in his daughter's garage.

### // MORTY SMITH (Justin Roiland)



Rick's mealy-mouthed, moral and easily manipulated grandson, the antithesis of a high achiever, but Rick's adventures reveal hidden depths. Some.

### // BETH SMITH (Sarah Chalke)



Rick's daughter, Morty's Mom, and a skilled horse doctor. Her talents and hopes of a better life were ruined when she met Jerry, who knocked her up as a teenager.

### // JERRY SMITH (Chris Parnell)



Beth's husband, perhaps the biggest loser in the family, and a small-minded, talentless advertising executive-come-bum who realises his wife is out of his league.

### // SUMMER SMITH (Spencey Grammer)



Morty's big sister is cooler than he is, but that's not difficult. She is still an insecure teenager, and increasingly keen to join Rick and Morty on their crazy adventures.

### // BIRDPERSON (Dan Harmon)



Perhaps Rick's greatest friend, this intergalactic hero goes way back with the scientist, and is a brave and wise adventurer, in a very silly feathered suit.

# **SEASON TWO**

// 2015

// A RICKLE IN TIME
When Beth and Jerry are unfrozen in time after six months, dimensions start to splinter for our heroes, and as multiple realities break away, 5th Dimension Testicle Monsters abduct Rick, Morty and Summer, and must be defeated. Also, Jerry and Beth fight to save a deer's life.

// NORTYNIGHT RUN
When Jerry stows away on a space adventure, Rick leaves him in a special Jerry nursery with lots of other Jerries, while he sells a weapon to an assassin to pay for a day out at amusement arcade planet Blipz & Chitz, playing real-life simulator 'Roy'. Morty tries to save the life of the assassin's target, a musical sentient fart, until the fart's motives

// AUTO EROTIC ASSIMILATION

become clearer...

Summer and Morty are disguested when Rick bumps into his ex – a hive-mind species that has assimilated an entire planet – and the lovers begin to party. Summer's determination to break Unity's hold over the planet backfires when it starts a race war. Meanwhile, Jerry and Beth discover a hideous alien chained in their basement.

// TOTAL RICKALL
The family home is plagued with parasites that take the form of close friends, manipulating memories so it seems they have always been there. A whole host of weird creatures join the Smiths in lockdown, but is Mr Poopy Butthole a parasite, or a real friend?



Rick and Morty's song Get Schwifty may have been a hit, but when he was in college, Rick was in a less successful band with Birdperson and their cat-like friend Squanchy, which was called Fleshcurtains.







# "BETH AND JERRY'S ALIEN MARRIAGE GUIDANCE CREATES MUTANT VERSIONS OF THEM BOTH"

// GET SCHWIFTY
A giant head arrives at Earth, triggering end-of-the-world cults, until it is revealed that these Cromulons only want Earth to enter an intergalactic X Factor-like competition – with the losing planets being destroyed. Can Rick and Morty's catchy hit 'Get Schwifty' save the day?

// THE RICKS MUST BE CRAZY
Rick, Morty and Summer are driving to get ice cream when
the battery fails – the battery was created by Rick out of a
mini-universe, unwittingly enslaved to provide power.
When Rick and Morty travel inside the mini-verse, they
discover one of its finest scientists has had the same idea,
and so they travel inside that mini-verse, and so on.

// BIG TROUBLE IN LITTLE SANCHEZ
Summer talks Rick into attending school as a student to
fight a vampiric gym coach, but 'Tiny Rick' soon becomes
popular, and wants to stay. Meanwhile, Beth and Jerry's
alien marriage guidance creates mutant versions of them
both, which threaten to end the world, again.

// INTERDIMENSIONAL CABLE 2: TEMPTING FATE
As with 'Rixty Minutes', the family watch a series of TV shows from different dimensions, while they wait for Jerry to have an alien operation, donating his penis as a heart transplant for the universe's most belived civil rights activist - but does he want to be liked enough to go through with it? // LOOK WHO'S PURGING NOW
Rick and Morty visit a planet which is celebrating its
annual 'purge' - a day on which all crimes are legal,
allowing the populace to vent pent-up emotions. Morty is
disgusted with the idea, and tries to save an alien girl
from being killed while ending the purge - triggering a
homicidal spree of his own.

// THE WEDDING SQUANCHERS
Birdperson invites Rick to his wedding on a distant planet, and the rest of the family accidentally go along with him. However, the bride reveals herself to be a Galactic Federation agent, kills Birdperson and goes after the rest of the guests – including Rick and family. After seeking a hide-out planet, everyone's loyalty inspires Rick to turn himself in, allowing the family to return to an Earth now part of the Galactic federation and filled with alien tourists. Mr Poopy Butthole finally invites viewers to tune in to see how Rick escapes 'in a year and a half or longer'... How did he know?

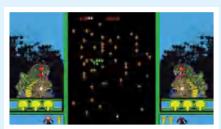
STOP PRESS! Adult Swim has just finally released a trailer for Rick and Morty season three and it's... oh, they Rick-rolled us (check out 'Rick and Morty - New Clip' on YouTube)! Oh well, if you're still impatient for season three to start, there's a number of Rick and Morty comic books to slowly savour, and if you're rich, buy a load of those toys with the big heads. None of this is as funny as the show, but it's something to spend money on while you wait. **GM** 





### **WIN! ATARI FLASHBACK CLASSICS VOL 1 & 2 GAMES**

# COMPETITION TIME!



Ahh, Centipede. We remember filling one of these arcade machines with 10ps on holiday in Clarach Bay in 1982.

It may date back to 1979, but the original arcade Asteroids still holds a lot of charm. Let the kids have a go and blow their minds!





The little known Crystal Castles was released in 1983 and starred Bentley Bear. They don't make 'em like this any more! OUR FRIENDS AT FUNSTOCK RETRO (GO ON, GOOGLE THEM) HAVE JUST GOT VOLUME 2 OF THE ATARI FLASHBACK CLASSICS IN STOCK, SO TO CELEBRATE WE'RE GIVING AWAY VOLS 1 & 2 ON PS4 AND XBOX ONE!

Each volume of Atari Flashback Classics features 50 HD remastered classic Atari games. Rarely played gems like Swordquest, Star Raiders and Missile Command along with more well known and groundbreaking classics like Pong, Asteroids and Centipede. Many of the games have been recreated with their original arcade marquee artwork as a screen surround, others are the 2600 version. The developers have added in full online play for these retro beauties with achievements, global leaderboards and social features bringing them up to scratch.

All you've got to do to win an Atari Flashback Classics game is visit Geeky Monkey on Facebook or Twitter, find the competition post, Like, Share or Comment before answering the question you will find there. Email us your answer along with this compo entry code...

GM19ASTEROIDS



facebook.com/geekymonkeymag



twitter.com/thegeekymonkey

We'll select the winners at random on 27 April. Good luck!

TERMS & CONDITIONS: Prizes subject to availability. Competition open to mainland UK and Northern Ireland residents only. Employees of Uncooked Media Ltd and their families are not eligible to enter. The competition closes at 23:59 on 26 April, entries received after that time will not be counted. Winners will be selected at random on 27 April and contacted via email. Prizes will be delivered to mainland UK and Ireland addresses only, we do not post prizes to Eire. Uncooked Media Ltd reserves the right to withdraw one or all prizes without notification. The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.



## **TABLETOP**

Words: ROB BURMAN

In a past life Rob was the editor of Tabletop Gaming magazine





# WE'VE GOT A TICKET TO RIDE, INCLUDING A KIDS' HALF FARE...

ntroducing young kids to tabletop gaming is no easy task. When you head into Toys R Us, you're basically assaulted by a range of cheap, tacky and licensed products that typically have gameplay value that can be measured in minutes, rather than hours. However, trying to introduce a five or six-year-old to the likes of Camel Up or Colt Express – despite the seemingly child-friendly components – tends to be a step too far.

Thank goodness then for **Ticket to Ride: First Journey** (Days of Wonder, £25.99), which boils the fantastic Ticket to Ride experience we're all familiar with into a game that can be played by five-year-olds and upwards. Just like the original, players are all trying to connect cities with lines of little plastic trains (just be careful the kids don't try to eat them) by collecting coloured cards. However, unlike the 'grown up version' you don't have to worry about routes that span across the entire board and, instead, the little 'uns just need to collect a couple of cards to claim the route. As introductions to the wider world of tabletop gaming, then this is a great place to start. Before you know it, they'll be flying through Twilight Imperium and taking on Pandemic like a pro.

Alongside board games, another popular pastime at the moment is the concept of escape rooms. Basically everyone has stolen the idea from those mental challenges on The Crystal Maze when contestants would be locked in a room and had to work out the clues in order to escape. In a mildly bizarre twist, the experience is now being recreated via tabletop games, courtesy of Unlock! Escape Adventures (Space Cowboys, £26.99). Designed by the brains behind the twisted but wonderful Time Stories, Unlock! is a co-operative experience in which you and some pals must piece together puzzles using the cards included with the game and a companion app. There are three scenarios in the box, and a tutorial to learn how to play. The puzzles are tough and each one lasts around an hour, so it's not bad value compared to a 'real' escape room. If you're really keen to recreate the escape room experience, just ask a pal to lock you all in a toilet for 60 minutes and you're only allowed out when you've completed the puzzles.

What's more, if all the above sounds interesting, the nice people at Space Cowboys have included a taster on the app, so you can give it a go. You can get a handle on the basic mechanics so you're ready to jump right in once you buy the game. It'll be interesting if the worlds of digital and analogue gaming continue to merge in this way.

Talking solving puzzles and mysteries, if you watch the recent series of Sherlock and thought "pffft, I could do a better job than that" (we're talking of the mystery solving here, not the script writing) then Watson & Holmes (Space Cowboys, £39.99) will be right up your (Baker) street. In the game, you and a group of players step into the shoes of a budding detective working alongside Sherlock and Watson as you travel to locations around Victorian London and speak to witnesses while piecing together the clues. Although the players are all trying to solve the same case, that doesn't mean you'll all come to the same conclusions. Plus, you can try to scupper your opponents to lead them to wrong deductions. Once you think you've nailed the suspect, you'll need to present your findings to the great detective to see if you're correct! If you present the wrong findings, everyone else continues until the case is finished. Let's just hope you're more Benedict Cumberbatch than Miss Marple. GM

### "YOU AND A GROUP OF PLAYERS STEP INTO THE SHOES OF A BUDDING DETECTIVE WORKING ALONGSIDE SHERLOCK AND WATSON"





**COMING APRIL 2017** 



### ENTER STRANGER...

Words: NATE DRAKE

Nate had the board game of Knightmare!

he weather forecast seems an unlikely source of inspiration for an adventure TV show for children. Nevertheless in the 1980s, when blue screen chroma key effects were becoming common in studios to portray the weather, Producer Tim Child was inspired. He realised that if blue screens could show isobars, they could also show a fully mapped castle complete with a sinister dungeon. Add to that four young contestants, a few hand drawings and props, as well as a sage Dungeonmaster and Knightmare was born.

The basic format of the show remained roughly the same throughout its run. One child out of a team of four was nominated as the Dungeoneer, given a knapsack and Helmet of Justice. The helmet only allowed the Dungeoneer to look directly downwards. This prevented them seeing they were standing in a blue room and forced them to rely on the guidance of their teammates, who would give instructions such as ""sidestep left," in a manner reminiscent of classic Multi-User Dungeon text games.

The Dungeoneer was further burdened by a need for Life Force which they could replenish by finding items of food. Various clue rooms were also scattered about the dungeon containing a mixture of both useful items to allow the team to progress as well as red herrings.

Initially the aim of Knightmare was simply to survive the three levels of the dungeon encountering characters such as goblins, witches and even Merlin himself who would help or hinder the Dungeoneer. Child ultimately added a quest aspect to the Dungeoneer's adventure by having them search for Tolkeinesque items such as the Shield of Justice.

Surprisingly enough for a children's show, the standard of difficulty was very high. Throughout its eight year run only eight teams managed to conquer the dungeon. As it was a children's show, the Dungeon Master Treguard (Hugo Myatt) was quick to reassure viewers that any Dungeoneers who had seemingly met a sticky end were returned safely to their own world.

In the in-game mythos, Treguard is a Saxon Knight and one of the few people to have conquered the dungeon. Later series reveal that Treguard serves the Powers That Be in opposing Lord Fear (Mark Knight) who would try to hamper Dungeoneers in their quest. Myatt ad-libbed Treguard's catchphrase "Ooh, nasty!" whenever a Dungeoneer encountered a catastrophe. His character also evolved to actively provide hints and assist the team where possible. In an interview in 2013, Myatt revealed that as the show was filmed live, he wore an earpiece so the director could feed him cues to help the team or hurry them along. ("Lifeforce is fading team!")

After reviewing two initial pilots, Children's ITV commissioned eight half hour episodes for series one. The show was an immediate success and two more series were commissioned. As technology evolved, Child introduced elements such as the Eye Shield which played pre-recorded outdoor footage and the Reach wand which could be used to interact with objects far away.

The series ran for a total of eight seasons, plus a one-off special in 2013 for YouTube's Geek Week. The declining average age of viewers ultimately led to the new CITV controller to commission Broadsword, the company behind Knightmare, to replace the show with a virtual reality series for younger kids, which failed to garner anything approaching the viewership and fanbase of Knightmare. **GM** 

Knightmare mercifully lived on in syndication. After the series run ended it was picked up by Sci-Fi and all eight seasons were re-aired. The entire series also re-ran twice on Challenge.

### "SURPRISINGLY ENOUGH FOR A CHILDREN'S SHOW, THE STANDARD OF DIFFICULTY WAS VERY HIGH"









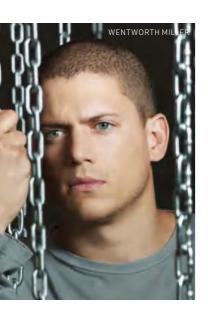






### BACKTALK

# On a (Prison) Break...



**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** 

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER [1998] // TV

**DINOTOPIA** [2002-2003]

UNDERWORLD [2003]
// MOVIE

GHOST WHISPERER [2005] // TV

**PRISON BREAK** [2005-2009] // TV

LAW & ORDER: SPECIAL VICTIMS UNIT [2009]
// TV

PRISON BREAK: THE CONSPIRACY [2010]
// VIDEOGAME

RESIDENT EVIL: AFTERLIFE
[2010]
// MOVIE

**THE FLASH** [2014-2016] // TV

**LEGENDS OF TOMORROW** [2016] // TV

SEVEN YEARS ON FROM THE SUPPOSED CONCLUSION TO PRISON BREAK FOX IS BRINGING THE SERIES BACK THIS YEAR. GEEKY MONKEY CAUGHT UP WITH STAR OF THE SHOW, **WENTWORTH MILLER**, TO INTERROGATE HIM...

rmed with a degree from America's elite Princeton University, Wentworth Miller III is perhaps better suited to working for the U.S. State Department than toiling in Hollywood. But admirers are undoubtedly grateful that acting remains his principal passion. In conversation, Miller's highly articulate observations on life betray his Ivy League education, and his deep, resonant voice adds yet another layer to his relaxed, charismatic self.

Today he's very pleased to be talking about the unexpected return of Prison Break, the highly popular Fox TV series which the network has decided to bring back for a new season of nine episodes. Even though it's been over seven years since we last saw him play convict Michael Scofield, millions of fans will welcome the prospect of seeing Miller return to a character who was supposed to be dead.

"The new series picks up five years later and Michael's sole objective is to return home to his wife and see his son whom he's never met," Miller says. "The big question is whether Michael, after all he's been through, after going down a very dark road and getting his hands very dirty, is anything like the man she first fell in love with. Will he still be recognisable? Is it impossible for him to go back to the person he once was?"

The original Prison Break enjoyed a massive cult following and Miller's cool, pansexual appeal turned him into a sex symbol in the U.S., as well as in Europe, where both gay and straight audiences lusted after him. Now 44, Miller has also been on an interesting journey of his own since Prison Break came to an end in 2009. Three years ago he put an end to years of speculation by admitting that he was gay, and last year put up a heartfelt post on Facebook in which he referred to his lifelong battles with depression.

Wentworth Miller was born in Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, prior to growing up in Brooklyn, New York. In addition to Prison Break, he was recently seen playing Captain Cold in the Sky1 super hero series, DC's Legends of Tomorrow.

### How did the reboot of Prison Break come about?

Dominic [Purcell, who played Miller's older brother in Prison Break] and I were reunited while working on an episode of The Flash together. We hadn't seen each other for five years and as soon as we sat down and started talking we both thought that there were a lot more stories left to be told. We then approached Fox and it turned out that they had also been considering bringing the series back, and a year and a half later we were back shooting.

# How do you think fans will react once Prison Break is back on the air? It's very rare for a series to be revived like this?

I think the fans are going to be pretty excited about seeing all the characters again, especially mine, since I was supposed to have died! But it all makes sense and it's fully justified. It's not going to be a dream sequence, which I think would have left people very unsatisfied.

But there are obviously lots of unanswered questions and the prison setting is a very extreme kind of environment which pushes good people, like Michael, to do horrible things if necessary. I think we all wonder what we would do under similar circumstances.

### Is it exciting to return to this kind of a character which has given you so much recognition?

It's a great privilege to have this opportunity. I'm also very pleased to be able to work with Dominic Purcell again whom I also got to work with on Legends of Tomorrow. Returning to the series also gives me a chance to explore themes of brotherhood, family, loyalty and sacrifice which I think meant a lot to audiences.

### Was it strange walking back onto the set of Prison Break and getting back into to the character of Michael again?

I didn't have any time to prepare to play Michael again. I went straight from working on Legends of Tomorrow to shooting Prison Break and I had to trust that there was still the soul of Michael somewhere inside me. But





### "I GREW UP IN A POOR AREA OF BROOKLYN, NEW YORK, AND ACTING WAS ALWAYS MY DREAM, EVEN THOUGH I HAD NO IDEA OR REAL PLAN HOW TO GET TO HOLLYWOOD"

once I was on the set, in prison, behind bars and looking at Dominic (now free) on the other side, all it took was for me to hear his voice again and I could feel myself slipping back into the role. Dominic is my touchstone and anchor and his being there helped bring me back to that world.

# The character of Michael was iconic for his incredible physique and tattoos. Did you have a say in coming up with that look for the original series?

I had been shaving my hair really short for ten years so that's why I feel it was destiny that I would eventually wind up playing a convict! And the tattoos are another big part of the character, except that it takes four hours in make-up to have them applied to my body.

# Obviously, your performance has helped turn Michael into an iconic character. What do you think are the specific qualities that make him so fascinating?

I was initially afraid that audiences would hate him, because he's very inaccessible, and it's difficult at times to like him. Of course, that's exactly what is part of his appeal to audiences...

Michael is really an anti-hero, and it's very rare that you see those kinds of characters on TV, although lately we've been seeing many more series like ours which depart from the usual formula and develop more contradictory and complex kinds of characters.

# You've recently been seen playing Captain Cold on DC's Legends of Tomorrow. How does that character compare to that of Michael?

Playing Captain Cold is a very different experience. It's lighter, livelier and more fun. Michael Scofield is a much darker personality. But in a way there are some similarities between the two characters. Michael also has a super hero quality to him and Prison Break has elements of a comic book story. Michael is someone who does extraordinary things that most people can't do, but he's also very human and relatable. Captain Cold

is a true super hero, but there's also this very human dimension to him.

### You studied at a very prestigious Ivy League school, Princeton. What made you turn to acting as a career?

I grew up in a poor area of Brooklyn, New York, and acting was always my dream, even though I had no idea or real plan how to get to Hollywood. But after graduating from Princeton I gave myself two years to make it in the business, and as things turned out it took me ten years before I got my big breakthrough with Prison Break. And I've also been able to get a chance to write something [he wrote the screenplay for the 2013 film Stoker which starred Nicole Kidman and Matthew Goode] which was a longstanding ambition of mine. So I'm pretty happy being able to fulfil many of my ambitions. I've also learned a lot about writing from working on Prison Break which is so well written and very plot driven.

### You seem to keep your distance with fame and success. Could you easily let go of the business?

I enjoy acting. I can't think of anything else that gives me that kind of buzz. But I believe that the future hopefully holds other things for me, like writing, directing and producing. That's still within the context of the business... but writing is also a very satisfying creative experience and I want to continue working in that direction.

### Do you think we will ever truly know whether Michael Scofield is a good guy or a bad guy?

Michael started out as a good man on an heroic journey. But the deeper existential question is how far you can go in the direction of darkness before you lose everything that once made you a good man. Is it possible to come back once you've crossed the line? That's the central drama of the series and why we're drawn to him. We wonder whether there's enough of his former self left. **GM** 

Seasons 1-4 of Prison Break are available to bingewatch on Netflix and Amazon Prime.

### **GEEK CHIC**

### HAVE YOU TRIED TAKING IT OFF AND ON AGAIN?







### **HOODIES**

### **Optimus Prime Costume**

With an official license from Hasbro, you can become Optimus Prime yourself in sizes up to 3XL. This great looking hoodie has kangaroo pockets and a half mask for the full trucking effect!

£58 // 80STEES.COM

### Superman: Man of Steel

This hoodie sadly doesn't come with a warning that it's not able to stop a bullet, just in case you were planning to storm a terrorist stronghold in it.

£40 // MERCHOID.COM

### Legend of Zelda Link Embroidered

There are less subtle Link hoodies out there to go to, but this rich green top, decorated with a Hylian Crest, is the smarter option, pointy hood and all.

£72 // THINKGEEK.COM







### **T-SHIRTS**

### I Love Science

The Science Council offers a variety of nicely affordable T-shirts.

£15 // SHOP.SCIENCECOUNCIL.ORG

### You Shall Not Parse

For any rubber-button-bashers, a combination of Lord of the Rings reference and Speccy-based punning. £22 // SPREADSHIRT.CO.UK

### Johnny Ball

How do you present both your maths and vintage TV interests in one? By sticking Zoe Ball's dad on your chest, of course!

### **Star Wars Stormy Night**

The Star Wars geeks are getting in on the Van Gogh action.

£17 // NERDKUNGFU.COM









### **HATS**

### **Hogwarts House Beanies**

To be honest, we're not sure it's ethical to sell a Slytherine one at all.
\$20 [£16] // HANOPOP.COM

### Get A Life cap

Mario fans will be proud to have this green titfer on their heads.

£15 // YELLOWBULLDOG.CO.UK

### Back to the Future 2015 cap

The cap Marty steals from his idiot son and hoverskates around Hill Valley in, can now be yours!

£20 // THINKGEEK.COM

### **Power Symbol Beanie**

You know how it is – sometimes you just want to turn off those that can't stop talking about the 11th Doctor Who!

£10 // SOMETHINGGEEKY.COM







### TIME

### Flux Capacitor Watch

Here's a real test of geekdom – you have to decode the light flashes to tell the time on this BTTF tie-in. Not recommended for those in a rush.

£20 // THINKGEEK.COM

### Circuit Board Watch

A perfect gift for tech geeks the world over, this stainless steel watch has all the features you want, but with a green circuit board design.

£75 // ZAZZLE.CO.UK

### **Ultimate Geek Clock**

This is an etsy creation, but you can buy it from This Is Why I'm Broke, and spend memorable minutes working out the Star Wars, Harry Potter and other sci-fi references for each hour of the day.

£20 // THISISWHYIMBROKE.COM



# DRUNKEN MASTER

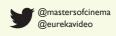
**Drunken Master**, the Original Kung-Fu Classic starring the undisputed Godfather of Martial Arts Action-Comedy **JACKIE CHAN** is released as part of The Masters of Cinema Series in a definitive Dual Format (Blu-ray & DVD) edition.

Includes over 4 hours of extra content, including an appreciation by *The Raid* director Gareth Evans.

**Available April 2017** 









### **[RETRO GAME]**

### **Simon the Sorcerer**

YEAR, 1993 // FORMAT, AMIGA/CD32/MS-DOS/RISC OS // PUBLISHER, ADVENTURE SOFT

There's no such thing as magic. Or at least so 12 year old Simon believes when an adorable pup named Chippy appears under mysterious circumstances holding a spell book in his jaws. After rummaging for the book in his attic some time later, Simon throws it contemptuously to the ground and is amazed when a magic portal appears, transporting him and Chippy to a magical world with hungry goblins, wise old owls and irate dwarfs.

The overall plot of the game is that Simon, now resplendent in purple robes and pointy hat has to rescue the good Wizard Calypso from the evil Sorceror Sordid. To do this he must learn to use the spell book by becoming a wizard. This is achieved through some careful puzzle solving and mouse work. Players click on various action commands such as 'Pick Up' and then on an object or person. Simon is aided by use of a magic postcard for loading and saving games as well as a map which can be used to transport players instantly around the gigantic number of in-game locations.

The game employed a form of copy-protection common for the time whereby each time the game runs users have to click on the corresponding symbol on a page number of the hilarious manual, forcing pirates to to use a photocopier or buy a real copy.

Simon the Sorcerer was created by the good people of British developer Adventure Soft. The original release was for MS-DOS and came across three 3.5" floppy disks. An Amiga and RISC-OS version was later released which came across a whopping nine floppy disks. Although these versions used basic 256 colour graphics, the level of detail on each screen is incredibly rich – from textures to NPCs, the game is resplendent with waterfalls, running deer and gritty textures.

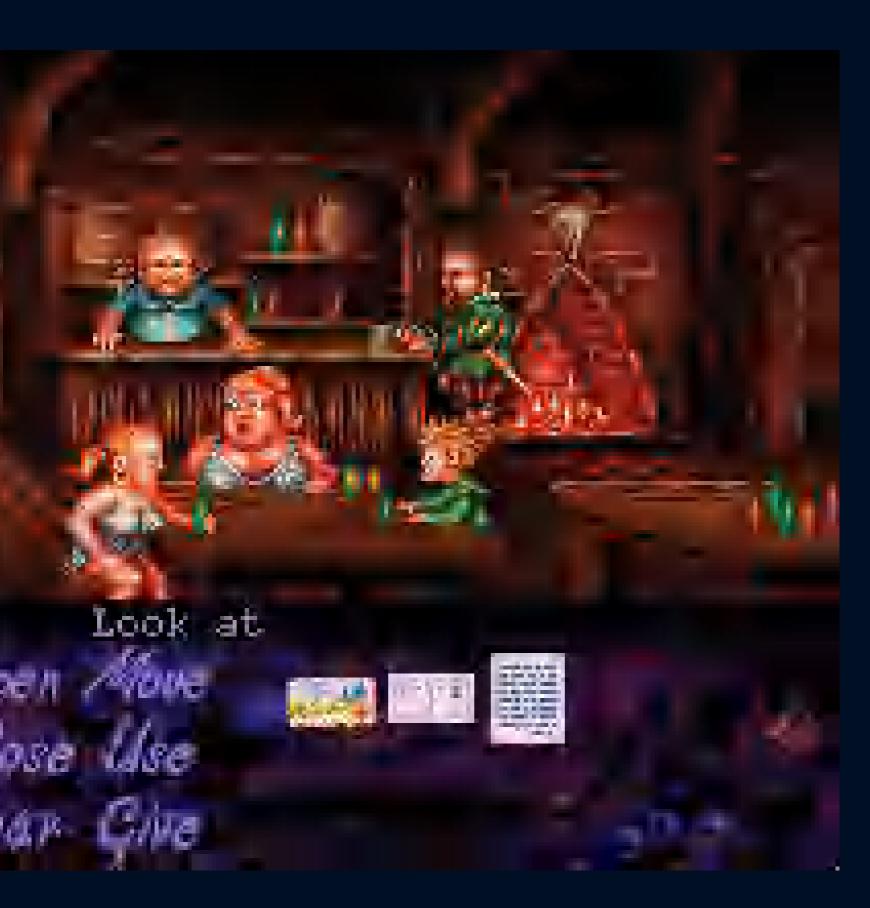
Unlike most games of the time which employed a series of beeps for backing music, the game cannot be replayed without the nostalgia-inducing tracks composed by Media Sorcery. The original version of the game used text to display in-game dialogue. When Simon was re-released on CD-ROM both for PC and Amiga CD32, a voice track was added with Chris Barrie (aka Rimmer of Red Dwarf fame) voicing the snide and sarcastic young Sorcerer. The CD version sadly did away with the subtitles although more modern iterations offer players the choice between voice and text.

In the vein of Monkey Island, Simon the Sorcerer doesn't take itself too seriously. Simon himself is not a particularly likeable person – his initial reason for retrieving the spell book is to torture Chippy. He also tries the line, "If I said you had a beautiful body, would you hold it against me?" on two Valkyries in a local tavern with predictable results. He then thinks nothing of melting an evil snowman using a pack of breath mints.

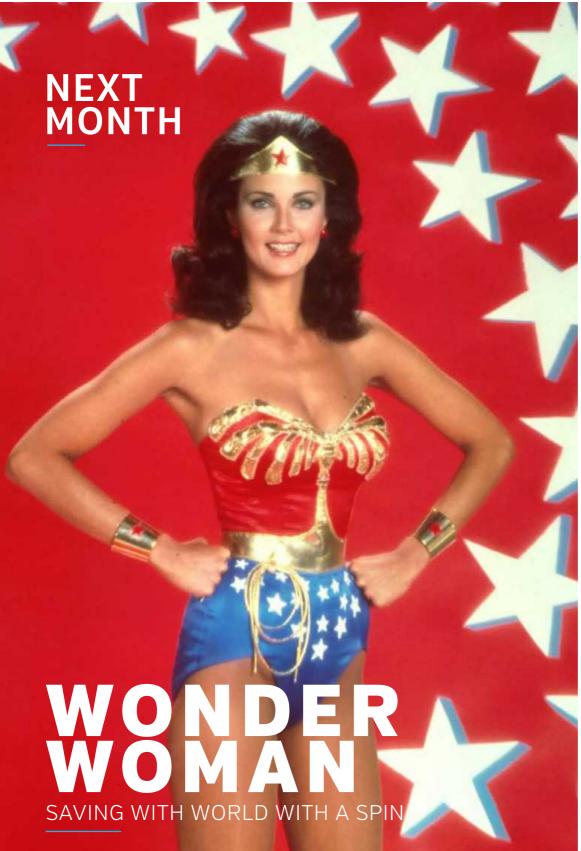
The tongue-in-cheek and unapologetically British humour of the game is also shown in Simon's sub-quests to become a Wizard, which include finding the legendary metal 'milrith', learning magic words which include 'hocus focus' and 'sausages', and paying a subscription fee for a 'Wiz Kid' starter pack.

If your appetite for swords, sorcery and silliness has been whetted, a special 20th Anniversary edition of this classic game was released in 2013 for Android and iOS – it's heartily recommended by us! **GM** 









### **ON SALE 27 APRIL**

**"THE MOVIES OF TIM BURTON "** STREAMING TV HIGHLIGHTS

// ULTRAVIOLET // THE NEW ZEALAND STORY // COMICS

// TIME MACHINE: 1992 // STAR WARS GALACTIC BATTLE

# **GEEKYMONKEY**

WWW.GEEKYMONKEY.TV

facebook.com/geekymonkeymag twitter.com/thegeekymonkey

Uncooked Media Ltd, PO Box 6337, Bournemouth, BH1 9FH 01202 586035 // www.uncookedmedia.com

### **EDITORIAL**

Edited & Designed by Nick Roberts, Monkey Creative

Contributors Rob Burman, Will Butler,

Michael Campbell, Ionathan Clements, Gareth Cowlin. Nate Drake, Paul Gannon, Chris Hallam, John Houlihan, Will Johnston, Ryan Leston, Claire Lim, Mark Newbold, Brian Robb, Jem Roberts, Russell Sheath, Cliff Smith, Mark Smith, Sebastian Williamson

### **CUSTOMER SERVICES**

+44 (0)8453 306 540

customerser vice @uncooked media.com

### **ADVERTISING**

Advertising Manager Rob Cox 01202 586035, rob@uncookedmedia.com

Marketing Co-ordinator Bianca Trent 01202 586034, bianca@uncookedmedia.com

### CIRCULATION

Circulation managed by

Select Publisher Services 01202 586848

To discuss magazine licensing or content syndication please email licensing@uncookedmedia.com

### THE BIG KAHUNAS

Editorial Director Darren Herridge wonderdaz@gmail.com

Finance Director Tim Harris tim@selectps.com

Distributed through the UK newstrade by Seymour Ltd, 0207 429 4000 2 East Poultry Avenue, London EC1A 9PT

Distributed through the UK/US specialist trade by Diamond Comic Distributors, 020 8536 5730

Printed in the UK by Precision Colour Printing, Telford, Shropshire, UK

Geeky Monkey is published monthly by Uncooked Media Ltd. All text and layout remains the copyright of Uncooked Media Ltd. Geeky Monkey is a fully independent publication and its views are not those of any company mentioned herein. All characters and artwork shown in this magazine remain © and ™ of their respective owners. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without the express written permission of the publisher. Geeky Monkey can accept no responsibility for inaccuracies or complaints arising from editorial or advertising within this magazine. All letters and emails received will be considered for publication, but we cannot provide personal replies. The publishers cannot be held responsible for unsolicited manuscripts, photographs, transparencies or artwork. Please do not call, email or write to enquire whether your unsolicited submission has been received, as our priority is the production of the magazine.

GEEKY MONKEY © 2017 Uncooked Media Ltd

COVER PHOTOS: ©TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX, ©POW! ENTERTAINMENT, ©LUCASFILM, ©NINTENDO, ©HITARI/NBCUNIVERSAL TELEVISION DISTRIBUTION

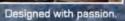














Screen printed in-house.



Sent with thanks.



PLEASE CHECK THE WEBSITE FOR DESIGN AVAILABILITY. SOME DESIGNS FEATURED MAY VARY OR MAY HAVE CHANGED SINCE THIS ADVERT DOING TO PRINT!

