SCIENCE-Fiction Fanzine   **Vol. XXIX, No. 9-UPDATED; September 2017**

DON'T MISS: ICON 2017 – OCTOBER 8-10 Tel Aviv: http://2017.iconfestival.org.il/about/en/

חדשות האגודה – ספטמבר 2017 The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy

מועדון חודש ספטמבר בירושלים יעסוק בספר "דרך המלכים" מאת ברנדון סנדרסון (אופוס, 2014). המועדון יתקיים ביום שלישי, 26.9 בשעה 20:00 במסעדת "נגילה", משיח ברוכוף 5, ירושלים. מנחה: **יהושע ברנהרט**

מועדון חודש ספטמבר בת"א יעסוק בספר "מאת אן מק'קאפרי" מעוף הדרקון "מאת אן מק'קאפרי" (אופוס, 2002). המועדון יתקיים ביום חמישי, 28.9, בשעה 20:00 במסעדת "אלתרנתיב", דובנוב 10 ת"א. במקום חנייה חינם.

לחנייה חינם יש להגיע לחניון מכיוון רחוב לאונרדו דה וינצ'י 21 ולצלצל למספר שעל השער לפתיחה

כל האירועים של האגודה מופיעים ב**לוח האירועים** (שפע אירועים מעניינים, הרצאות, סדנאות, מפגשים ועוד)

לקבלת עדכונים שוטפים על מפגשי מועדון הקריאה ברחבי הארץ ניתן להצטרף ל<mark>רשימת התפוצה</mark> או ל<mark>דף האגודה בפייסבוק.</mark>

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

TO ALL OUR FRIENDS AND FAMILIES: HAPPY (JEWISH) NEW YEAR

לשנה טובה ומתוקה – א גוט, זיס, און געזונט יאר

This month's roundup:

Sorry once again! This issue is coming out with a definite and unforeseen delay – basically I'm playing 'catch-up' with lots of tasks and responsibilities I had to take care of first (if you're nice, I'll tell you about it next time ☺).

• My review of the first season of Black Mirror (2104-…) **UPDATED**
• Dr. Doron Calo is back with: SuperVolcanoes

And – as promised last issue, all about my visit with the Montreal's MONSFFA members at their annual Bar-B-Q.

– Your editor, Leybl Botwinik

Hey, we're getting some feedback from our readers – that's great!
***David Gaines*** *sent the following, about the future of Manufacturing in Space:*

To read Marisa Kendall's article online, see here:
http://www.mercurynews.com/2017/08/10/forget-china-heres-why-the-next-manufacturing-boom-could-come-from-space/

And then our other reader, R., had it out with our Dr. Calo about something he wrote concerning the Mobius loop … but I think that after duking it out, Dr. Calo came up on top ☺.

It's now time to dump some stuff that we've been collecting and that've just been gathering (star) dust:
A) For example, unless you've actually been tracking it, there are tens of movies that have been made based on comic books – not just DC's Batman, Superman, Wonder Woman, Flash, etc. or Marvel's Spiderman, Hulk, X-men, etc… many, many more. IMDb has put together 102 pics of actors playing parts originally conceived in comics. I'm pretty sure they missed some (Mask, Phantom, others?):
http://www.imdb.com/imdbpicks/comic-book-movie-stars/rg1219009280/

B) To see the following Pinterest pics you may need to log in to Facebook or Google, so just in case, I've downloaded a few samples of "Retro futurism":
https://www.pinterest.com/topics/retro-futurism/?
Here's a sampling:
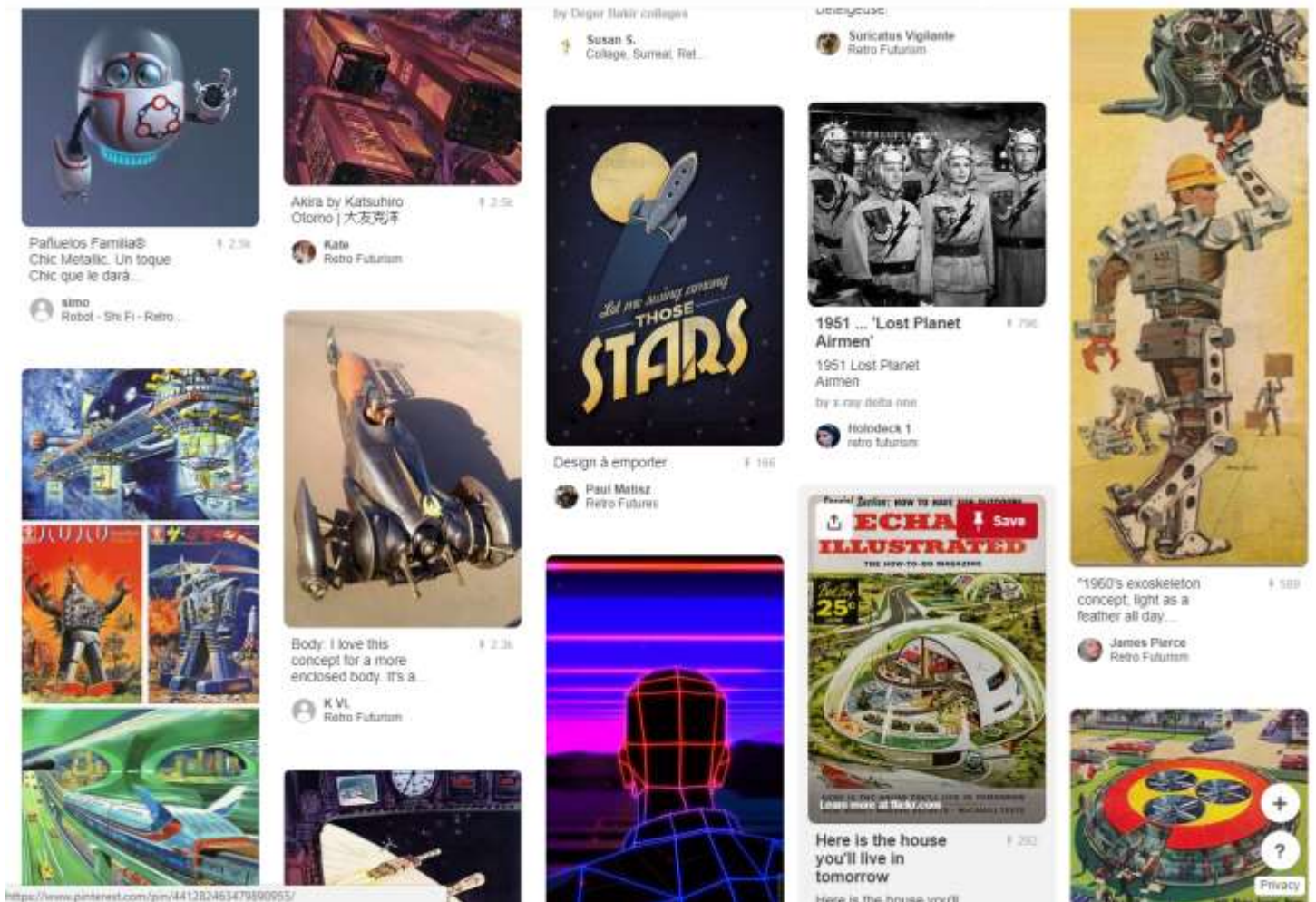
C) Geek.com has up-to-date lists of what they consider the best SF Netflix streaming on the Web. Programs and movies – old and new – I never knew existed…
Take a look here:
https://www.geek.com/movies/the-best-sci-fi-on-netflix-streaming-1670615/?

D) PCMag.com has an interesting article about your soon-to-meet robo-doctor:
https://www.pcmag.com/news/355755/the-robo-doctor-will-see-you-now?

Back in the 'old country'

Montreal this Summer: SF and Comicon [part 1]

It seems kind of strange, when I'm back visiting in Montreal. The first time, was in February 1989 (I left Montreal during the summer of '88). I had just taken my first shaky steps as a near-immigrant (I arrived in Nov. 1988, but hadn't formally registered) – and decided to fly back home to 'settle up' with my bank, friends, and family, etc., and inform them all, that I had decided to make Israel my new home.

Mid-February in Montreal is not the best time for a visit, but probably that was for the best. It was much, much warmer in Israel, just near the end of the rainy season that they call 'Winter' (ha!) – so I was really looking forward to returning… but that's a long story in and of itself. Since then, I got married, built a family, worked in various hi-tech companies either as a programmer or technical writer, etc…

In the first 25 or so years, I had only gone back maybe 3-4 times and always for short 1-2 week visits. In the last 3 years, though, I've been visiting more often since my parents are now too elderly to make the long trip here. This last quick visit I had two opportunities to see and meet people I hadn't seen in ages, as well as to make new friends.

In October of last year – as written up in the November issue of CyberCozen – I had made my first contact with a small, but wonderful group of SF lovers, members of MonSFFA (the Montreal SF and Fantasy Association). This past July, I again made a short trip and had the wonderful opportunity to meet even more of the members, at their annual BBQ at beautiful Parc Angrignon on Montreal island.

Cathy Palmer-Lister, the ever-dynamic president and also editor of the organization's periodical WARP, was overjoyed to see me and immediately began introducing me around to the various members. They were keen on knowing what the SF scene in Israel was, and I was more than happy to indulge their curiosity – though in a very informal atmosphere. We then went off on a tangent about (Jewish) Religion, Israel, Politics, etc. All in all an entertaining afternoon. I look forward to meeting up with them at some other event, next time I'm in Montreal. What a wonderful bunch of people.

One thing I 'brought back' was that there is a mock-up of the USS enterprise not far from Montreal, just south of the border – see the short write-up and links following this article.

** For some highlights of the BBQ outing, go to Cathy's short video clip on Youtube. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aVMyussD8Eo) – I'm the fellow in the purple shirt. The Canada Geese were an added bonus.

And then, see their home-made entertaining 33 minute 'featurette' film tribute to Ed Wood and the 1950's pulp SF movies: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r8IdoFefNuQ

****

Now you can be 'there' too! At least if you live close enough or take a special trip there…

Replica of Star Trek's U.S.S. Enterprise boldly goes into Ticonderoga

Precise reconstruction of Capt. Kirk's Enterprise set energizes Ticonderoga
By Amy Biancolli – Updated 10:26 am, Monday, June 19, 2017

I'm walking through Trekker paradise, and it's endless. A long, curving passageway bends past Captain Kirk's quarters, past Mr. Spock's and around the corner into the transporter room. But it doesn't stop there. It goes on and on, straight into my youth and the brightest, liveliest corners of my 40-year obsession with a 50-year-old TV show.

This is it. The **U.S.S. Enterprise**. The Desilu set for the original run of "Star Trek," painstakingly recreated from the actual blueprints in an old supermarket in downtown Ticonderoga — and now open to the public.

"It's called the magic corridor, which goes in both directions — and totally immerses you on the ship," says **James Cawley**, the man behind this stunning and scrupulous reconstruction of the past and future both. He looks at me, one hardcore Trek fanatic at another, and understands.

"You're there," he says.

I'm there….

[Read more here: http://www.timesunion.com/tuplus-sample/article/Replica-of-Star-Trek-s-U-S-S-Enterprise-boldly-9127095.php#photo-10719680 – including 24 pics!]
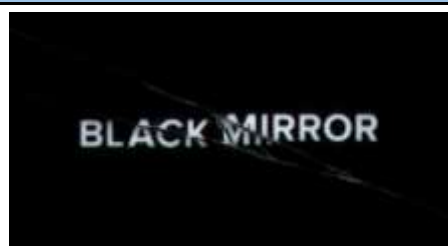
The Black Mirror (season 1) TV series

REVIEWED by Leybl Botwinik

Review is now ready – Read on!
You are still welcome to see MonSFFA's Warp99 and earlier issues at:
http://www.monsffa.ca/?p=5612

A colleague at work recommended I watch the Netflix TV series "Black Mirror". After checking on IMDb to see what it was about, I noticed that it was to begin its 4th season (which is a good sign). Of course, I didn't know what to expect, except for the following:

1) It wasn't a TV series with a main actor or storyline – but rather a series of non-continuous and non-connected 45-50 minute stories. I was told it was like the "Twilight Zone".
2) Each season had an increasing number of 'episodes' (1st season: 3, 2nd:4, 3rd: 6, this year's 4th: 6?).
3) The blurb on IMDb said that the series episodes would show the 'dark side' of life and technology – which seemed rather strange, since technology is, basically neutral. Except in the cases where some AI is involved, technology has no 'dark side'.

… but I decided to investigate, and these are my observations.

The first episode "**The National Anthem**" takes place in the 'present' world, as we know it – with the kidnapping of a member of the British Royal family – the very popular young princess who is known and admired/loved for her social activism. Of course, the entire British security system goes into high alert and every means of technology and manpower is galvanized in an effort to locate the victim and the perpetrator.

Due to the sensitivity of the event itself – and particularly of the 'ransom demands' – the government decides to clamp down and silence the media in an attempt to keep the public ignorant. This is not (only) because the kidnapping is of such a high profile person, but rather because of the extremely harsh ultimatum and demands of the kidnappers: they want the Prime Minister to fornicate with a pig on public TV – or else they will execute the girl.

The 'dark side' of technology in the story is the fact that somehow, the story leaks out to the public over the Internet, and within minutes to hours, thousands and then millions of people know what is happening and the PM is in a dilemma whether to carry out the disgusting act or not – and risk the death of the very popular princess (and of course, his own career) – if he doesn't.

Every technological effort is used to try to track down the kidnappers, but to no avail, and the PM is in a desperate situation, vis-à-vis public opinion. In a way, the story is funny (or at least 'entertaining') – especially the parts where people on the street are interviewed about what they think the PM should do.

All-in-all, though, the "technology" angle is rather weak. The story could have been leaked and spread by a rogue media outlet, by word-of mouth, leaflets, what not. The only difference, is the speed in which the news got spread, and how fast the public in both the UK and internationally react

(and the government needs to make a rather quick decision, as time is running out).

This episode didn't really 'grab me'. It also had some 'holes' and inconsistencies in the storyline. Still, I decided to try the next episode to see if that story would be more interesting.

In fact, the second episode "**Fifteen Million Merits**" was indeed more interesting. It takes place in a future society with a strange focal point. In this future, we find young people sitting on what look like exercise cycles with monitors in front of them. As they pedal, they accumulate merit points. They do this for hours, day in and day out. These points are then used as credits for everything from food to clothes, etc. Apparently, society needs the electric energy they are generating, and this is how people make a living.

As they are pedaling, they can select (and pay for) the scene in front of them, such as an animated bike ride through the countryside, or video-game with shooting of monsters, etc. One girl has a virtual violin on the monitor and is "playing" it as she pedals.

Every once in a while, an ad for a 'show' (like 'American Idol') displays inviting spinners to try out and maybe 'escape' their spinning like the girl in the ad did, or worse, a request to view pornographic content. The catch is, if you reject the pornography, you are debited for NOT watching (I think watching is free, or at least 'cheap').

In any case, the lives of these young people is basically one of 'slavery' – where the perpetual pedaling and accumulation of credit points must go on indefinitely until you collapse, apparently – or have accumulated enough credits to 'retire'.

The spinning wheels and monotonous repetitiveness reminded me of scenes in Charlie Chaplin's monumental film: "*Modern Times*", as well as a Yiddish song "*dem milner's trern*" [the Tears of the Miller], of how the wheels (of life) turn endlessly, and the years pass by, and with them – all the tragedies of his life.
(To hear the song and see a translation: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EwSvcv-8DT8**).

In order to break out of this 'rat race' spinning, one can try out for the 'show' – but that requires paying a very large amount of credits to enter. Our hero hears a girl singing in the washroom during a break and is impressed by her (falls in love?), and so he motivates her to try out – and uses up almost all of his 15 million credits to buy her way in to the audition. The judges, like her, but don't need any more good singers, so they offer her another way out of her 'cycle': to play a singer in pornographic scenes. i.e. give up her innocence in order to escape her mundane existence.

The 'audience' (thousands of caricatures – each representing a Spinner, including some of her co-Spinners) pressures her to accept – and she does – making our hero very upset and angry (credit-broken + heart-broken). So much so, that he tries to get in to the audition as well, but needs to recuperate the necessary 15 million credits through an intense regime of non-stop pedaling and skimping on food, etc.

There are many unclear points, such as: is the spinning being carried out by everyone in society – or only by those not otherwise employed, like students and youth – or unemployable (e.g. if you can't get any other job). – We only see a handful of young people in a room of the size of a typical exercise room (20-30 bike stands and monitors).

Where are the small kids, where are the elderly? What happens to those who are physically incapable of pedaling for hours on end? Is this the 'life' in only one country or across the world…? Etc. Unfortunately, the storyline played to a similar tune of 'public opinion/social pressure', as did the first episode of Black Mirror.

The third episode "**The Entire History of You**" starts to pick up on 'real' ethical issues regarding use of and or exploitation of technology. Imagine, that in our near future everyone has an implant where you can record everything you hear and see. The episode begins with our hero, **Liam** being interviewed for a job.

After leaving the interview and on the way to the airport, he rewinds the scenes several times, to better understand what he experienced. Not a bad idea: being under pressure and nervous, he may have forgotten some of the key moments of his interview – and in addition, he can learn from his mistakes, or how to improve and sharpen his interview skills next time. He can also study the several people who were there, so if he does get called back, he will be better prepared to face

them. When meeting 3-on-1, just remembering names and getting titles straight can be significant. He does the rewinding and replay with a small thumb-size ball-mouse, and 'sees' the images in his head.

At the airport, security control asks **Liam** to rewind about a week's worth of scenes (that he experienced) that are fast-forwarded by the security officer and play the images into his monitor screen. Thus, in a few moments, the security team can verify that the passenger has not packed any suspicious objects in his baggage, or met with suspicious people (during in the replay, the security system quickly identifies people against a database of, say, wanted criminals or terrorists).

What a relief, he doesn't have to remove his belt and shoes, be interrogated if he packed his own bags … given any presents, etc… (though I'm sure that determined terrorists/criminals will know how to work their way around this). So far, so good…

Now come the more ethical concerns regarding the use and/or misuse of the technology. As with the security system, **Liam** begins to replay his experiences – even to the extreme (again and again and again…). In fact, there is even a scene where both he and his wife make love, and then during the after-snuggle (instead of 'being with each other') they are both absorbed in replaying the sex-scene, so as to redouble their orgasmic experience – chilling: a form of voyeurism, like those who film themselves making love… In fact, such voyeuristic experiences are actually mentioned during the dinner gathering of some friends upon his return from the interview that was out of town.

Anyway, to make a long story short, **Liam** becomes very suspicious of how his wife and one of her male friends (apparently a past lover) are carrying on. He suspects that they may be flirting – and maybe more. He begins a sort of investigation via the replaying of memories and confronts his wife with exact quotes and scenes, trying to piece together a 'case' against her, that she may not have told him the whole truth about her past and particularly her relationship with this former lover. She, of course, gets very upset of his reminding her of every detail and quote and even physical comportment – e.g. how she sat, and looked and laughed at this man's jokes, but not at his, etc… (kind of reminds me of my wife's keen memory when it comes to bringing up my past 'faults' and 'mistakes' during an argument … ☹ …).

The story was very interesting, and reminded me of Robin William's movie "The Final Cut" with a similar idea (see my write-up in the December 2014 issue of CyberCozen). In that story, everything was also recorded, but no one knew what, until the person died, then an edited clip would be shown at the funeral, and the family would get a copy of the edited film. The 'Cutter' – as supreme film editor – would then destroy the rest of the years of memories (including anything he/she wanted to censor). In this one, the individual has full control of what to see, and what to expose/show, including the possibility to selectively erase scenes.

****

In general, I enjoyed the three episodes of the first season, and I look forward to continuing on to the next seasons'. The stories are not so much 'Twilight Zone' as much as 'Dangerous Visions' (Harlan Ellison's collection of short stories exploring dark and 'at-the-edge' visions of possible future events, or use/misuse of technology or trends – as well as ground-breaking moments dealing with sexuality issues. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dangerous_Visions or reviews at: https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/600349.Dangerous_Visions).

Sheer* Science: Don't blow your top: SuperVolcanoes!!!

(* In memory of Aharon Sheer (ז״ל) – Founding Editor)

– Prepared by: Doron Calo, PhD   (**our CC Sheer Science editor ☺)**

Natural disaster seem to be all around us these days: floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis, heat waves. Is it the end of the world as we know it? Could be. Especially since there's another devastating danger, seldom discussed in the news, brewing literally under our feet.

Enter the supervolcano: a huge chamber of extremely hot plasma, building up pressure and eventually erupting with a force strong enough to take whole continents down. You've probably heard of one of the most (in)famous supervolcanoes: it's also known as Yellowstone National Park.

Ever wondered where all those neat geysers come from? That's right, from a tremendously huge chunk of molten rock underneath the surface, much larger than your usual cone-shaped regular volcano. This monstrosity usually erupts once every 700,000 years, releasing red-hot magma to flow and cover the landscape, and spewing toxic fumes to choke the atmosphere. This kind of

catastrophic event will devastate the climate of the entire planet for centuries, with permanent clouds blocking the sun and a shattered atmosphere that will kill the world's agriculture and cause global starvation.

Although this kind of hell isn't expected to become real any time soon, it's horrible enough to merit the consideration of a possible preventive strategy. This has been taken up by NASA, who realized that supervolcanoes pose a much greater threat to Earth than an asteroid impact. When a supervolcano gets hot enough, its huge magma repositories will spill over and nothing will be able to stand in its way. However, the good folks over at NASA actually came up with a miracle solution – although a very ambitious and expensive one – but which may also be able to cover its own costs!

The crazy plan sounds like something out of a Hollywood blockbuster: NASA found that a supervolcano will have to be cooled down about 35% in order for the magma to solidify and become less likely to erupt. This could be achieved by punching a 10-kilometer hole straight down on top of the supervolcano and pumping in water using high pressure.

After reducing some of the heat, the water will then reformulate. In addition to cooling the magma and preventing the end of the world, the whole project could function as a geothermal powerplant, using the difference in water temperature to generate electricity.

This certainly sounds cool (pun intended), but it will have to be carefully planned: the hole will have to be drilled very precisely. Every small mistake could do the exact opposite of the intended plan, triggering an eruption instead of preventing it.

Apocalypse Management is a tricky business – no doubt about it!

Links:

NASA's ambitious plan to save Earth from a supervolcano:

http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20170817-nasas-ambitious-plan-to-save-earth-from-a-supervolcano

NASA study proposes way to prevent Yellowstone super volcano from destroying United States

http://www.news.com.au/technology/science/nasa-study-proposes-way-to-prevent-yellowstone-super-volcano-from-destroying-united-states/

__We'd love to hear your thoughts on any of the above subjects and we may publish some of them!__