



Look for Next Gen episodes to begin airing on the Sci Fi Channel!

TNG warps to Sci Fi Channel; Quinto feels welcome in *Trek*

The Sci Fi Channel recently acquired the cable TV rights to several genre shows from the CBS library, including *Star Trek: The Next Generation*.

Next Gen reruns are scheduled to begin airing on the network on Monday, June 2.

The Sci Fi Channel has a long-standing interest in the *Star Trek* franchise. It was the first network to air both Classic *Trek* and *Star Trek: Enterprise* on its channel. In fact, *Enterprise* is still airing there. Besides airing the franchise's movies, *Star Trek: The Animated Series* ran on the Sci Fi Channel in the early 1990s.

The Next Generation has aired before, on the G4 Channel and on the Spike Channel, when that channel was called The Nashville Network (TNN).

Star Trek: The Next Generation is not the only genre program acquired by the network in the deal. The Sci Fi Channel has also acquired the rights to such shows as *Charmed*, *Highlander* and *Ghost Whisperer*, as well as *Early Edition*, *Mork and Mindy* and *Friday the Thirteenth: The Series*.

▲ Zachary Quinto, who is playing the younger Spock in the upcoming *Trek XI* film, recently said he feels welcomed by fans of the franchise.

As reported by *trekmovie.com*, Quinto said, "I have been made to be prepared for

this. I feel like for this point on, Spock will be part of my career as an actor. I don't anticipate my career to stop now that I played this role."

"I get this question a lot: 'Now that you are playing Spock, what are you going to do?'" he said. "I am going to keep doing things that excite me and challenge me and challenge my audience and excite my audience as well."

Quinto continued, "I have been so very fortunate to be warmly embraced by the sci-fi community, and now more specifically the *Star Trek* community. That means a great deal to me, but my career as an actor is not limited to that genre or realm. So I am now excited to go off and explore other territories and play other roles and do other things as well."

"We are about to go back into production on *Heroes*, and that will take up a lot of time, pretty much until *Star Trek* comes out next year," the star continued. "I will probably try and squeeze a movie or two in while the show is in production, and then try and get back on stage again."

When asked if playing Spock was "daunting," Quinto replied: "It felt so right in a weird way. Even last summer at Comic-Con when we announced I would be playing the role and there were like 6,500 people in the audience, I never felt overwhelmed." ■

We "may" return to the Whites' for our meeting

The next meeting of the *U.S.S. Chesapeake Star Trek* and Science-Fiction Club will be held on Saturday, May 17, at the Laurel, Maryland, home of Starfleet Intelligence Officer Annie White and Chief of Computer Operations John White.

We'll get together to decide what to do for dinner around 5:00 p.m., followed by our club

meeting, which will start at 7:00 p.m.

We'll discuss what fellow club members have been up to, talk about the upcoming conventions as well as discuss the latest news about *Star Trek* and other sci-fi television shows and feature films.

For directions, please check out this month's Insert. ■

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CAPTAIN'S LOG: "Klingons—Blood Will Tell"

What a year I'm having!

I went back to work following a week of recovery from having my gall bladder removed. One week later, it became difficult to get any sleep at all. I expect to return to my job starting part time the week of May 12.

My thanks to everyone who held down the fort while I was recuperating at the Hall homestead up in northeastern Pennsylvania.

In my previous column, I began reviewing *Star Trek* comics being produced by IDW Publishing, and I wasn't overwhelmed by the first *Next Generation* series, entitled "The Space Between."

But better days—and stories—were soon to come as the company put out a five-issue mini-series that focused on the Klingon point of view during *Classic Trek*.

Written by Scott and David Tipton and penciled by David Messina, the tale had a framing sequence set during the time of *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country*.

As Kahnrah, a member of the Klingon High Council, struggled with his tie-breaking vote regarding war or peace with the Federation, he explained to his granddaughter, K'ahlynn, various encounters between the two galactic powers.

The first issue dealt with the episode "Errand of Mercy" and tried to reconcile the "mean" Klingons of *Classic Trek* with their "honorable" descendants in *Next Gen* by having Kor's first officer express doubts about killing the "defenseless" Organians as a means of population control.

And just to show that the folks at IDW are big fans of *Trek*, the first part also had a variant edition in which all the text was printed in Klingonese, as translated by Marc Okrand and the Klingon Language Institute!

One of the best issues of the series was #2, in which the Klingons—now unable to confront Starfleet directly due to the Organians' involvement—turned to stealth as a way of defeating the UFP in "The Trouble With Tribbles."

A highlight of the story was our chance to see Gralmeth, a Klingon whose small stature kept him out of the military, undergo surgery to pass as Arne Darvin at Deep Space Station K-7 only to be betrayed by those cute little Tribbles.

There was cool continuity all around,

as a bald black guy with a goatee and lieutenant's markings on his gold shirt strolled through a corridor and we learned why Gralmeth was rejected by his people after "Trouble."

Issue #3 leaped from Tribbles to the Mugato as Klingon Commander Krell introduced Kirk's friends on the primitive planet Neural—including Tyree and his witchy woman, Nona—to flintlock "fire-sticks" as part of "A Private Little War."

"Day of the Dove" was the center of events in the fourth part, as Kang (and by extension, other Klingons) learned that cooperation with the crew of the *Enterprise* is not always a bad thing when they joined forces to expel a creature that feeds on violence and hatred.

The final issue, entitled "Losses," showed Councilman Kahnrah coming to a decision about his vote. He then had to fight his way past several assassins—including a surprising one—to cast the deciding ballot regarding Gorkon's proposal of peace with the Federation.

Now available in trade paperback form, "Blood Will Tell" is without a doubt the best *Star Trek* series so far produced by the folks at IDW.

I have to admit that I was worried at first when I heard the premise of the story. Would the comics simply give us different "camera angles" from well-known episodes and declare those the Klingons' point of view?

Instead, the Tiptons used the opportunity to flesh out several aspects of some of our favorite *Classic Trek* episodes, along with some characters we knew little or nothing about before the mini-series, by cleverly drawing on continuity from throughout the *Trek* "generations."

Artwise, Messina's work was consistently good throughout, and there were some nifty alternative covers featuring photos of the episodes featured in each story. All of those—as well as the issue in Klingonese—are included in the trade paperback, which is well worth your hard-earned quatloos.

Rating: ★ ★ ★ ★

So where did IDW go from here? Next time, we'll look at the first *Star Trek: Year Four* mini, during which a local comic-book artist makes good and Kirk and company get caught up in reality TV! ■

Captain Randy Hall



Commander Krell (right) battles a Mugato during IDW's "Klingons—Blood Will Tell" mini-series.

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Check out our club website: www.usschesapeake.org

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SCIENCE *TREK*: Galaxy wars

Imagine a billion billion grains of sand floating in FedEx Field. Nah, that's not the right scale. Try a billion billion ping-pong balls scattered inside the Earth. Still not right.

Okay, let's just go with reality or some approximation thereof. Imagine that our sun has the diameter of a grain of sand (about 0.2 millimeters). Our average size galaxy would stretch a third of the way or so to the moon.

Put another metaphorical way, if our sun were the size of a ping-pong ball, our galaxy would be about 128 million miles across. I'll say "wow" for you. That's just to give you an idea of the scale we're dealing with.

This month's column could also be titled "When galaxies collide" (tonight on Fox!). One of my favorite sites on the whole World Wide Web is Astronomy Picture of the Day (APOD ... see Web Notes for the link). Several recent pictures have shown colliding galaxies, so I figured I'd spend a few minutes of your time talking up the topic.

Stacked against the other fundamental forces of nature (strong and weak nuclear and electro-magnetic), gravity is the weakest. Yet because it operates over the greatest distance, it's perhaps the most obvious. Every definable mass attracts gravitationally every other definable mass in the entire universe. Basically.

You jump up and you come back down to earth because, well, the Earth is far more massive than you are. We have tides because the moon and the sun tug on the earth and its waters. The Earth orbits—falls around—the sun because of gravity (combined with our world's orbital velocity).

On a larger scale, our solar system orbits the center of our galaxy as do collections of stars (*aka* clusters) within and surrounding our galaxy because the collective mass of our galaxy is far greater than that of any one point outside its center.

Digression: Back to the Earth for a moment. Of course, the Earth is far bigger than its center, but because the Earth is approximately a sphere, the average of all those grains of sand, molecules of water and clumps of dirt pulling on you ends up being the center of said sphere (*aka* the Earth).

Beyond galaxies attracting each other (gravitationally, that is), there are groups of galaxies. Our Local Group (Milky Way, Andromeda and about 33 other galaxies) is

but one Group in the Local *aka* Virgo super cluster. (I'm not making this up.)

For those guessing the next step, our super cluster and others are heading toward something called "The Great Attractor." (Seriously, I'm not making this up.) Add to all of this gravitational attraction, the inherent motions of galaxies and all lesser components of the universal order.

So, what does this mean in terms of galactic collisions? Simply put, like ping-pong balls flying semi-randomly around FedEx Field, sometimes galaxies collide. What does this mean for you if it were your galaxy colliding?

Probably nothing in the short term. Galactic collisions don't just seem to take forever; they last for millions of years. It's like a marriage; two great assemblies of gas, dust, stars and magnetic fields become one. When they're over, the two galaxies have merged into one. Interacting great clouds of interstellar dust and gas have probably sparked the birth of millions or more new stars.

And the stars themselves? Much as science fiction might like, they never actually collide (or almost never, since in science we always—almost always—hedge our bets, just in case). Sure, some might get thrown out into intergalactic space (thanks again, gravity) or run through a dense cloud of dust and gas. Remember the scales up above. Stars are tiny, galaxies are BIG. Relatively. Most of a galaxy is empty space.

Wouldn't it be better for us all if the roadways were similarly disposed? For those curious about the Milky Way, we are in fact on a collision course with the Andromeda Galaxy. I wouldn't start panicking yet, though. It'll be about three billion years. ■

Web Notes

- <http://antwrp.gsfc.nasa.gov/apod/astropix.html> (One of my favorite sites ... can't say that enough);
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Local_Group (Which local group, you ask?);
- <http://hubblesite.org/newscenter/archive/releases/2008/16/image/> (A galore of galaxies colliding ... it's like astrophysical celebrity porn); and
- <http://hubblesite.org/newscenter/archive/releases/galaxy/2002/09/image/a/> (Milky Way-Andromeda ... the Great Battle ... 3 billion years in the making).

Second Officer Phil Margolies



A galaxy at war?

ART CREDITS:

startrek.com 1
idwpublishing.com 2
images.google.com

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REFLECTIONS: Is it good science fiction?

Is *Battlestar Galactica* good drama? Yes. It's VERY good drama, no question about it. But is it good science fiction? This is where the show fails, in my opinion.

Science fiction is supposed to be about wonder, about speculation and imagination. This is the root of the genre. *Galactica* is without a doubt, to me, one of the most unimaginative science-fiction shows I've ever seen. It's totally devoid of speculation and the fabled "What if?" that the genre cries out for. And as far as having a sense of wonder, *Galactica* is as closed minded as they come.

Everything seems frozen in time, including technology, fashion and especially the human condition. I know some people who love this because they don't think things or people are going to change in the next two to three hundred years.

I just tell those people to look at history. A little over a hundred years ago, there was slavery. Now, such a thought is an anathema. People evolve. The Wright brothers flew the first successful airplane on December 17, 1903. Man landed on the moon on July 20, 1969. Do the math.

Like I said, almost everything seems frozen in time. Well, except starship technology and robotics. But attitudes, culture and human development all seem stuck in the 1960s. The other exception is religion. Their religious beliefs seem to be somewhere circa 200 B.C. It's like one day, mankind just stumbled onto this technology without forethought, inspiration or epiphany.

As a matter of fact, we know almost nothing about the people of that culture. What little we've seen of them appears to be plucked right out of the 20th century. Sure, their sports are different. I mean, I don't even remember the sport they played. I just remember that Starbuck's New Caprica husband supposedly was a superstar in it. Even the media coverage seemed to be mired in the 21st century, but compared to everything else, this seems like progress.

It's not all bad, though. They have a way out of their lack of progress in certain areas. It could turn out that they're not from Earth at all, but some Earth-like planet reveling in Hodgkin's Law of Parallel Planet Development. (How's THAT for a subtle *Star Trek* ref-

erence? Now tell me what episode that's from.) I have mixed feelings about that explanation. If it's true, it would be a terrible disappointment, not to mention a colossal cheat, but it would explain everything.

This brings up a statement I've heard bandied around by a lot of television critics lately. They've been laying the claim that *Galactica* is the greatest science-fiction show ever. As I've stated on numerous occasions, I love the show, but the greatest? No. Not even close.

True, its approach has been different from pretty much every sci-fi show that has come along. This is a good thing, but sometimes, different doesn't mean better. Different is always good, but it's what you do with that difference that matters.

On the surface, *Farscape* was different in its look, make-up and dynamic. Storywise, unfortunately, after a good first two seasons, its storytelling was reduced to bargain basement cliches and extremely silly situations. This is what the critics seem to love: the silliness.

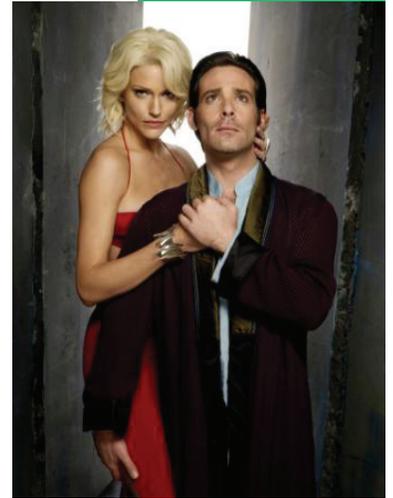
While we're on the subject of *Farscape*, I absolutely HATED the psychic connection between Crichton and Scorpius. Again, critics thought this was cute. I found it incredibly boring.

Thus my problem with the "psychic connection" between Baltar and Number Six. I never thought I would find sex, in any incarnation, boring. Baltar and Number Six have pushed me to that point. It was interesting for a short while, but then it was used too much, and the novelty was gone almost as soon as it was presented. And it was silly.

That's why the critics love it. Silly they can understand. I've always felt that television critics were always intimidated by science fiction, mainly because they don't understand it. *Galactica* is GREAT drama, but it's BAD science fiction.

There, I said it. There's no deep, penetrating examination of man and his imagination. There's NO science involved, so there's nothing to intimidate them. The genre makes most critics feel dumb, and if you dumb down the genre, critics will respond. For example, the critics loved *Firefly*, one of the dumbest sci-

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Number Six (left, obviously) and Baltar from *Battlestar Galactica*.

WAYNE'S WORLDS: Reading the next big thing?

Everyone always wants to know, what's the next big thing? When it comes to genre television and movies, you could be carrying it around with you during the day or have it next to your bed to read at night.

The premiere of *Iron Man*, which took in \$101 million, exceeded all expectations as it kicked off the summer movie season. As any comic book reader knows, Iron Man has been one of the higher-tier characters in Marvel Comics since his origin in the 1960s.

Interestingly enough, Tony Stark's alter ego has been struggling of late in comics. In recent years, he was head of his own corporation (like most of his history), but he's also been transformed into a younger version of himself, then was made the head of S.H.I.E.L.D., the biggest spy/enforcement agency in the United States. None of this has helped him sell a monthly comic, although I expect that will change as a result of this film.

(As an aside, whoever cast Robert Downey Jr., as Tony Stark was inspired since both have

faced demons having to do with substance abuse.)

Like Superman, Batman and Spider-Man before him, Iron Man has made it to the big time—with help from his fans and readers.

Also coming this summer is a movie based on the Hulk and the big-picture sequel to *Batman Begins*, one of my all-time favorite films.

This summer promises to be a big one for me as far as movie attendance goes. There are many genre-related films coming out that I am anxious to see.

Another motion picture I am counting the days down to is *The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian*. I loved C. S. Lewis' series of books as well as *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* feature film when it came out a few years back.

Notice anything similar about all those projects? They're based on comics and novels, of course!

The intermingling of "written" sci-fi with television and movie projects is a long-lived one. One of my favorites is the Sci Fi Channel's version of *The Dresden Files*, inspired by the Jim Butcher series of novels. A new series of comics penned by Butcher is out as a comic from the Dabel Brothers, by the way.

Now I know all of you are very busy people, and that reality gets in the way of science fiction sometimes. But I've also come to understand that reading is a very important activity.

I've stated many times just how much television I watch (a *lot* of it, including genre shows, crime dramas and historical programs), but if you see me at the doctor's or dentist's office or perhaps waiting for a friend at the local subway station to give him a ride, you'll find a book in my hands.

I just finished reading the latest *Dresden* novel, "Small Favor." The next on my list is the first of the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine: Terok Nor* series, "Day of the Vipers."

I know that there are comics and novels based on The CW's *Supernatural*, and paperbacks based on just about every series ever made (some of which haven't aired new episodes in years) can be picked up at the local bookstore. Novels and comics have often been the testing ground for television programs and movies. I'll be the first to admit that I've read some awful stinkers in my day, but I've already read some stories I wished had been converted to the big screen.

For example, as a *DS9* devotee, I always remember the wonderful set of "Relaunch" books that kept the spirit of the show alive. (I just wish they came out more often!)

I find it intriguing how books make me want to see movies and programs based on them, like *Harry Potter*. I got into these books through a friend who told me they were like the X-Men but instead of mutant powers, they used magic. I loved them from the very first book.

However, I didn't open a *Dresden Files* novel until Sci Fi picked it up as a regular series. Now I can't wait for the next book!

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The biggest movie of 2008 ... so far!

COMING EVENTS

MAY

May 17 The next meeting will be on Saturday, May 17, at the Laurel, Maryland, home of Starfleet Intelligence Officer Annie White and Chief of Computer Operations John White!

REFLECTIONS: Is it good science fiction? ... concluded

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ence-fiction shows I've ever seen.

One of the things I love about *Galactica* is, in true *Star Trek* fashion, the Cylons seem to be more human than the humans. That is a remarkable bit of irony that never seems to grow old. Another thing I love is its ability to craft both a serial AND a stand-alone episode from the same show. *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* did this to perfection, and *Battlestar Galactica* owes more than just a subtle nod to that show.

For all its scenes of jaw-dropping revelation, I've found the show very predictable of late. When Boomer shot Adama, I was elated at first, then I calmed down 'cause I KNEW

Adama wouldn't die.

It was also painfully obvious that when Roslyn was jailed, she would eventually bust out, linger for a while and return. Heck, I knew she'd be president again, not to mention lose the election in the first place. Hey, what can I say? *DS9* spoiled me, and I could see all of that coming. I even knew Baltar would end up being president. Can anyone say Kai Winn?

But with all of its faults, its lack of science and its boring episodes of late, I'd still watch *Battlestar Galactica* over 90 percent of all the science-fiction shows that have been produced. If not for Roddenberry's dream, it might have been my favorite of all time. ■

Conn Officer Lorenzo Heard

WAYNE'S WORLDS: Reading next big thing ... concluded

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The cross-pollination of comics and movies these days is happening at a frenetic pace. Look at *The Stranded*, a comic book that is a collaboration between Virgin Comics and the Sci Fi Channel. The company advertises this working relationship as "the next evolution of comic books."

Also, Marvel Comics makes no secret of its desire to hire movie scripters to write its monthly titles. (I often hear that a comic book is considered as a movie "dry run." Frank Miller's *Sin City* was directed to look exactly like the series it was inspired by.)

Why work so hard to fit this into an already full schedule? Because, honestly, I can't get enough of good stories.

I find many fans to be interested in specific characters, some of whom literally sit with stopwatches to keep accurate track of just how many seconds of on-air screen time

their favorites get, and write down the words each one says during the latest presentation.

That's not me. I love a good story and, although I have my favorite guys and gals in the shows I watch, I often continue to view a show after a beloved character has gone.

Of course, *Deep Space Nine* is a perfect example of this. Jadzia Dax died, and the creative staff seamlessly introduced an even more interesting character in her place.

I'm sure some viewers gave up because Terry Farrell was gone, but the stories actually got somewhat better because of the new character.

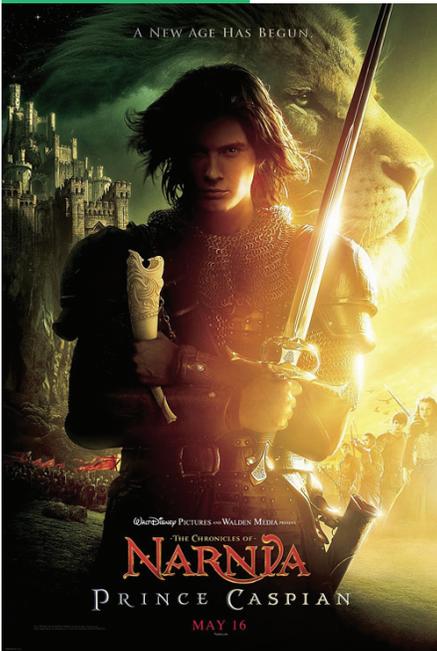
What does that mean? I wouldn't get hooked on any one character or actor. Like Michael Shanks, they may decide to leave!

My advice to you, fellow "story lover," is to look beyond the small or big screen. (Don't stop watching them, of course—you'll miss out on some great material!) But if you find a program or movie that you like, try out the written word version of it. Or maybe check out something new by an author or about a character you like. You may just find even more to love!

And you just may be on the ground floor of the next big thing! ■

Chief of Security Wayne Hall

BATTLESTAR GALACTICA



A movie I can't wait to see this summer!

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