

THE LOGBOOK



TRON LEGACY reviewed – page 4

JOHN BARRY, R.I.P. 1933-2011

Composer **John Barry** has died at the age of 77. His film composing credits are almost too numerous to get one's head around - the James Bond movies *From Russia With Love*, *Goldfinger*, *Thunderball*, *You Only Live Twice*, *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*, *Diamonds Are Forever*, *The Man with the Golden Gun*, *Moonraker*, *Octopussy*, *A View To A Kill*, *The Living Daylights* and an uncredited arrangement assist on *Dr. No*), *The Lion In Winter*, *Zulu*, the 1976 version of *King Kong*, *Raise The Titanic*, theLogBook.com forum favorite *The Black Hole*, *Somewhere In Time*, *The Legend of the Lone Ranger*, *Out Of Africa* (which, believe it or not, shared material with *The Black Hole*), *Dances With Wolves*, *Mercury Rising*, and, yes, *Howard The Duck* (hey, the guy had to put food on the table somehow). He won Oscars for *Born Free* (one for the score, one for the theme song), *The Lion In Winter*, *Out Of Africa*, and *Dances With Wolves*, Saturn awards for *The Black Hole* and *Somewhere In Time*, a Grammy for *Dances With Wolves*, and numerous other awards.

FIRST "BLOOD & CHROME" CASTING ANNOUNCED

The first pieces of casting news from the upcoming **Battlestar Galactica** spinoff, **Blood & Chrome**, are being announced, with Luke Pasqualino playing the

young William Adama, and Ben Cotton playing Coker, Adama's superior officer.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2	News & Editorial
3	Fan Film Review Comics Review
4	Movie Review: Tron Legacy
6	Soundtrack Review: Tron Legacy
7	Review: Doctor Who – A Christmas Carol
8	Soundtrack Reviews: Doctor Who / Star Trek V

THREE WORDS: DOCTOR. WHO. LEGO.

Character Options is kicking off a new line of Doctor Who construction toys and sets in 2011. Numerous sources have confirmed that these are 100% compatible with Lego bricks/sets/figures. Let the Star Wars - Doctor Who Lego crossover fan films begin!

2010 GENRE OSCAR NOMINATIONS ANNOUNCED

Alice In Wonderland

Art Direction, Costume Design, Visual Effects

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, Part 1

Art Direction, Visual Effects

How To Train Your Dragon

Animated Feature Film, Original Score (John Powell)

Inception

Art Direction, Cinematography, Original Score (Hans Zimmer), Best Picture, Sound Editing, Sound Mixing, Visual Effects, Original Screenplay

Iron Man 2

Visual Effects

Toy Story 3

Animated Feature Film, Original Song (Randy Newman), Best Picture, Sound Editing, Adapted Screenplay

Tron Legacy

Sound Editing

The Wolfman

Makeup

ORIGINAL 1964 TREK PITCH DOCUMENT REVEALED

An early draft of Gene Roddenberry's original *Star Trek* pitch to the TV networks has been posted online. It's so different that it's almost unrecognizable, dealing as it does with Captain Robert April, Mr. Spock, Number One and the crew of the S.S. Yorktown, using their Recon Rocket to send landing parties to alien worlds! The concept would undergo further refinement before reaching the Captain Pike stage of things (even though the basic premise of *The Cage* is on display as a "possible future storyline"), and further still before becoming the original *Trek* we all recognize. There's a link to it in theLogBook.com's Forums.

Editorial A Long Time Gone

Well, this is a bit of fun, isn't it? This little blast from the past isn't a harbinger of things to come (or, for that matter, of things to come back). It ain't gonna happen. The 'zine is dead. But immersing myself in the old days of putting it together (and the satisfaction of looking at the finished product which, even back in '94 and '95, wasn't too terrible) gave me the idea of going back one more time.

The ground rules were simple. I would give myself three hours max to put the entire issue together. That's it. No more, no less. Aside from this editorial, absolutely none of that time would be spent writing new material for the issue. Even any cutlines below the headlines would be grabbed from the blurbs on theLogBook.com's front page. News items would be ripped from the forums - and even then, they would be limited to news posts that I had written myself. The issue would, more or less, restrict itself to the sci-fi territory that the original 'zine had covered. And all the material would have to be sourced from items already published on theLogBook.com during January 2011.

The point waiting to be proven here is my long-standing assertion that the site turns out more new material in a month than the 'zine did in the same amount of time. (Actually, there was at least twice as much material as I could use.) I'm doing an eight-page, black & white layout - the standard length for much of the 'zine's run - without doing anything fancier with fonts or layout than was done for the 'zine back in its heyday; even the main design elements, like the beveled, drop-shadowed breakout box, has only been updated a little bit (at a total cost of about five minutes). In addition to proving a point about the amount of cool stuff that pours out of the site in a month, it's also a point about technology: using nothing more than Microsoft Word, it's almost infinitely easier to lay out a publication of equal length and density than it was with the old DOS-based EnVision Publisher that powered the original 'zine.

If only I'd had then what I can do now.

In the meantime, don't read too much into this - it's just a bit of fun. A three-hour tour (a three-hour tour!) into the past. Hopefully you enjoy it.

- E.G.

FAN FILM REVIEW

STAR TREK: INTREPID *TRANSITIONS & LAMENTATIONS*

by Earl Green

After a number of short vignettes that advanced the story surprisingly well, Scotland-based **Star Trek: Intrepid** returns with its first full-length episode in some time, and this post-Voyager-era production quickly reminds us why it's such a welcome addition to the Trek fan film roster.

Intrepid's production quality has improved markedly since its first episode, and *Transitions and Lamentations* boasts excellent, atmospheric location shoots (the opening back-alley ambush scene would do any modern crime drama proud, give or take a phaser blast or two), much-improved computer-generated "interior" shots, and the same fascinating batch of characters whose conflicting agendas, roiling just under the surface, seem set to collide in a big way at just any moment. There's even a very nice new opening title sequence, with the cast's names "projected onto" the surface of various parts of the ship – a beautifully executed, very creative alternative to the traditional montage-of-flybys usually associated with any given Star Trek series.

Even the computer-generated sets are integrated more gracefully with the live action taking place in front of them; getting the compositing right on a fully virtual set is a bugbear of many a fan production. Intrepid seems to be using a post-production filter that flares out the light sources in each shot, overlapping telltale matte lines and helping to sell these scenes as a single image.

As usual, this little Scottish-accented corner of the Star Trek universe has a local charm of its own, with some gorgeous outside locations; there are a few dandy shots in which CGI ships are composited into the exterior scenes to great effect, but there are also a few shots where the organic-tech attackers move in a distinctly video-gamey manner. High marks go to Alan Christison, who proves that he's up to an episode focusing on his character. The backstory of Navar is fascinating enough that he's rapidly emerging as one of the show's focal points, and by the end of *Transitions* it's clear that, while the depth his loyalty to Starfleet is a bit questionable, Navar is burning some bridges and can't run for the safety of home either.

Transitions And Lamentations is a nicely nuanced episode from a fan series that seems to be in it for the long haul. The slow build of character backstories and the gradual reveal of Intrepid's arch rivals seems to indicate confidence on the part of the cast and crew that Intrepid will be around for a while.

COMICS REVIEW

TRON: BETRAYAL

Ever wonder what was going on between Tron and Tron Legacy? We thumb through the graphic novel that has the answers.

by Earl Green

In 1983, after his nearly miraculous experience on the MCP's game grid in the ENCOM mainframe, Kevin Flynn creates his own experimental computer system on a computer in the basement of his arcade. With ENCOM's systems secured from further interference by the MCP, Flynn borrows Alan Bradley's Tron security program to help keep an eye on the new system. But real world concerns – his duties as the new CEO of ENCOM, his marriage and impending fatherhood – prevent Flynn from devoting the time to the digital world that he would like. His answer is to recreate Clu, another program that originated in the MCP's system, to act as his deputy in the digital world. But Flynn, Clu and Tron are caught off-guard by a new development on the grid: the emergence of isomorphic algorithms, a new digital life form that Flynn neither created nor anticipated. Flynn sees the advanced society of the isos as a source of inspiration for the solutions to problems of the real world, but Clu sees them as the nexus of expanding disorder within "his" system and decides to take action.

Building on a flashback info-dump from the movie *Tron Legacy*, "Tron: Betrayal" is a neat piece of connecting tissue bridging the new movie and its 1982 inspiration, but frustratingly, this spinoff project suffers from a specific storytelling problem that also stuck out like a sore thumb on film.

The artwork, first off, is so impressive that it takes one a moment to even notice any story issues. There are times when I almost miss old-school coloring, but this is *Tron* – you practically *need* the ability to do a diffuse glow around the characters' digital world body armor circuitry to do it justice and make it look anything like the filmed source material. The book is dazzlingly colorful, and really, it *should* be. The artwork hits it out of the park without dead-on likenesses of the main characters. Liberties have to be taken to differentiate Flynn from Clu, and it doesn't distract me that we're not getting photorealistic images of Jeff Bridges in the process. (There are enough people arguing that even the movie doesn't accomplish this perfectly, so I figure the comic gets a free pass.) But even Flynn undergoes a transformation, from cocksure pioneer of a new world to haggard single parent, in the course of the story.

continued on page 6

MOVIE REVIEW:

TRON LEGACY

By Earl Green

An unexpected surprise from beginning to end, *Tron Legacy* is a far better movie than I was expecting – and bear in mind that this comes from a huge fan of the original who was predisposed to like whatever Disney finally followed the 1982 original up with.

For years, the basic concept behind *Tron* has been revisited and expanded upon under different names – names like *The Matrix* and *Reboot* and others. In 2003, with the release of the video game *Tron 2.0*, we finally had a sequel, although it was really one for the fans only. *Tron 2.0* did modestly well, with the emphasis on “modest”; we knew there wasn’t a *Tron 3.0* waiting in the wings. But we also didn’t know a movie was in the works until the 2008 San Diego Comic Con, when a short but splashy trailer introduced us to the concept of an older, grizzled Flynn still on the game grid, and a miraculously (and digitally) de-aged version of him stalking the grid in a very un-Flynn-like manner. At the time, we knew only three things: the universe of *Tron* looked awesome in the age of CGI, the movie was going to be called *TR2N*, and we needed to see the whole two-hour thing in about two hours or the anticipation was going to kill us where we stood.

The funny thing is, it was only the rapturous response of the Comic Con audience that guaranteed that *Tron Legacy* would go into full production – the trailer was essentially a stand-alone test that could’ve wound up being the only follow-up to *Tron* that we’d ever see. The thunderous applause pretty much bought the movie its ticket to being made. (Thank you, Comic Con audience of 2008.)

Seeing the original 1982 movie right before heading to the theater *isn’t* required. Much like the modern-day version of *Doctor Who*, *Tron Legacy* uses the basic premise, iconography and the major mythology points of *Tron*, but it’s the stuff everyone who’s ever heard of the original knows about: if you get sucked into the computer world, you find yourself covered with glowing armor and a disc which doubles as your ID card and a weapon. Thanks in no small part to the fact that the games based on the 1982 movie are more popular (and perhaps better-loved) than the movie itself, the audience already knows how light cycles work... and that’s all one really needs to know going in. Even then, the light cycle concept is fairly self-explanatory, and the rest is covered

in a flashback info-dump covering Flynn’s activity between the original movie and the new one. (That same flashback is also the basis of a comic book, *Tron: Betrayal*, the new *Tron Evolution* video game, and an upcoming all-CGI animated TV series, *Tron: Uprising* – score one for multimedia synergy, the real name of Disney’s game.)

One thing that’s very obvious from even the preview trailers is that *Tron Legacy* takes place in a darker, less day-glo world than *Tron*. This is handily explained away in the story, and it doesn’t “break the universe”. Both visions of the world of *Tron* are compatible.

One of the movie’s biggest conceits hangs on the ability to convincingly show Clu as a younger Flynn. Shaved clean and filmed in much the same way as the actors playing the Pandora natives in *Avatar*, Jeff Bridges provides both vocal performances, but is digitally de-aged as Clu (and, in a very few flashbacks, as a younger Flynn). For the most part, the effect is convincing enough; the only times that the effect crashes into the uncanny valley with no survivors is in a few select moments of the movie’s opening flashbacks, and in a shot much later in which an overhead camera crash-zooms in on Clu. Considering the decidedly unreal nature of the world in which much of *Tron Legacy* takes place, the effect is acceptable just about everywhere else. A second actor is de-aged for some computer world flashbacks, and the effect is actually much better when his character appears – take a look at the cast list, keep in mind who appeared in 1982’s *Tron*, and it won’t take you much effort to guess who it is.

The movie is marvelously directed by Joseph Kosinski (I now feel much better about the news that he and *Tron Legacy* writers Eddie Kitsis and Adam Horowitz are being charged with rebooting *The Black Hole* for Disney). Some of the shots, even in 2-D, are obviously set up to achieve maximum effect when seen in 3-D, but not in a way that takes the viewer right out of the story. The script, by Lost alumni Kitsis and Horowitz, is very smart in deploying the mythology of the original movie very sparingly, and lands solidly on paydirt with the father-son material played so well by Garrett Hedlund and Jeff Bridges. There was a much-publicized late-in-the-game bit of script doctoring, supposedly done by John Lasseter of Pixar fame, that was supposedly aimed

at giving the movie more heart. If the father-son scenes result from that revision, they're fairly successful.

Bridges was a young turk of Hollywood when he starred in the original *Tron*, but he's now – as of *Crazy Heart* – a highly-respected Oscar winning actor. That he could be talked into revisiting *Tron* at all may well be the biggest surprise of the whole endeavour. It's easy to try to connect the dots between the elder Flynn's "aging hippie" personality and The Dude, but Flynn may well be the best piece of characterization in the entire movie. Most game programmers who were active in the 1970s and early '80s (the era in which Flynn was portrayed in *Tron* had more than a hint of counter-culture to them. At that time, with Cold War fears sprinkling lavish funding on Department of Defense projects (both in and out of the skunkworks), the real money for those with advanced computer programming skills was in the defense business. I've met my fair share of classic video game programmers, and those with that skill set who chose not to gravitate toward DoD contractors tended to steer clear of it because they wanted their skills to entertain people, not kill them. The hippie-fied Flynn is almost like a composite of a bunch of real people I've met who were in the game design and programming business at the time, and it rings absolutely true. Bridges' digital performance as Clu is impressive as well: the two read as wildly different characters. An Oscar for *Tron Legacy* probably won't be sitting next to Bridges' trophy for *Crazy Heart*, but honestly, a movie with two performances by Bridges is worth the price of admission.

The other standout performances come from Olivia Wilde, whose perfect combination of incredibly cute and very dangerous will tickle many a geek's fancy, and British actor Michael Sheen as the duplicitous program Castor, who runs a nightclub in the computer world where the many complications of the story come together in a painfully tight knot. Sheen gleefully dances around, twirling his cane as all hell breaks loose below him, and his character is hard to hate – it's more likely to get you chuckling "What a bastard!" to yourself. When many of the cast, like Garrett Hedlund, try to offset the unreality of the movie's setting with low-key, naturalistic performances, Sheen has an easy time grabbing the spotlight and keeping it focused on himself. Castor's a great character, one who I hope will be popping up in the various spinoff media.

The set design is incredibly impressive stuff. As opposed to the original, this movie has a surprising number of at least partially practical sets. Where *Tron*'s computer world was all sharp edges, gentle curves and squeaky-clean early computer rendering, *Tron Legacy*'s computer

world has *viscera*. The original movie's light cycles made 90-degree turns and left perfectly-shaded solid walls in their wake as a concession to the limited computing power available in 1981 and '82; this movie's light cycles turn in arcs and their light walls are vivid, electrical and liquidy – and when another vehicle slams into those walls, they don't just neatly de-rezz, but explode into a liquidy shower of debris that suggests that the victim vehicle – and its driver – has just had its guts emptied onto the arena floor in the least gentle fashion imaginable. The original movie's hand-animated circuit patterns on the cast's armor have been replaced by less trippy suits of skintight black fetish-suit armor that almost certainly rely on real-life, on-set electroluminescent wiring – it looks like Jay Maynard, the "Tron Guy," made a huge uncredited contribution to the Tron-iverse. I hope he at least got invited to the premiere.



Story-wise, once the audience takes the notion of getting sucked into the computer as a given, everything hangs together very well. If there's one major plot point that's left hazy, it's the "isomorphic algorithms" that Flynn is trying to save. We're given a vague explanation that they could wipe out disease and other human woes, and that they were to be Flynn's "gift to the world" – but *how*, exactly? And what would've been in it for these digital organisms? Most of *Tron Legacy* stands up to scrutiny and a bit of thinking-it-out; this element isn't, and the implications are troubling. It's hard to imagine a now-more-altruistic Flynn bringing the isos to our world to simply serve as lab rats, but precisely how they were to benefit humanity is left worryingly foggy. It even remains to be seen whether or not they would've been able to manifest the same abilities once deposited into the real world (to say nothing of the unanswered question of where the matter for their bodies come from – the end of the movie leaves one with the slightly uneasy feeling that Quorra's "real world" body is made up of matter that was originally Kevin Flynn).

Another curiosity is the creative decision to completely eschew the internet as a plot point. Aside from Sam's

continued on page 6

TRON LEGACY continued from page 5

unauthorized release of ENCOM's new operating system to the web at the beginning of the movie, we don't hear about the internet again for the entire story. It's a curious thing to omit, and it puts the film in a strange sort of time warp: Flynn doesn't know what *wi-fi* is. Is this movie set 20+ years after the original, or 2 years?

Overall, however, *Tron Legacy* is good eye-popping fun, and a damn good opening gambit for reviving the *Tron* universe and turning it into a multimedia and merchandising franchise. If you ever needed a textbook case of the evolution of state-of-the-art special effects across nearly 30 years, this is it, but this time the story has heart... and this time, society in general has geeked out enough that the whole concept isn't incomprehensible to the general audience. *Tron's* time has finally come, and *Tron Legacy* is the right movie at that right time.

TRON: BETRAYAL continued from page 3

Longtime *Tron* fans will find much to groove on here: appearances by Alan Bradley and his girlfriend Lora from the first movie, plenty of center-stage action for Tron himself, and even the grid bugs put in an appearance. We also get glimpses of Sam Flynn's early life, his dad's resignation from ENCOM, and further hints at the fate of Flynn's wife (known only to be deceased from the "news report" montage at the beginning of *Tron Legacy*). "Tron: Betrayal" really fills in the blanks in a way that's consistent with both movies.

Ironically, "Betrayal"'s Achilles' heel is the same as *Tron Legacy's*: the isos. Again, what makes these new denizens of the digital world such a big deal, aside from their seemingly spontaneous creation, is left terribly vague. Indeed, the graphic novel's story handles them in such a way that they're not entirely sympathetic, with (slightly heavy-handed) mentions of terrorism along the way. That makes the vagueness even *more* troubling: what benefit was the real world supposed to get from the isos, and what was the price tag going to be for all involved?

What "Betrayal" gets wonderfully right, however, is a theme that was all over the original *Tron* and was nearly absent in *Legacy*: the metaphysical/religious angle of users-as-gods, and the uncomfortable position of Clu as being made, more or less, in the image of his creator. Not just the vague "well, the same body outline, anyway" conceit of Christianity, either: Clu is made in the exact image of the creator of the new digital world, presenting him with unique issues which eventually manifest themselves as a dangerous grab for power.

SOUNDTRACK REVIEW

TRON LEGACY

MUSIC BY DAFT PUNK

by Earl Green

One of the things announced fairly early on about *Tron Legacy* was that its music would be composed by Daft Punk. Now, I like "Robot Rock" as much as the next guy, but was this French techno/DJ duo up to composing the score for an entire film from a franchise whose fan base was very attached to the synth-orchestral sound of the original movie?

As it turns out, Daft Punk was more than up to the challenge. Just as Wendy Carlos' expansive, at times almost abstract electronic music was a perfect fit for the original *Tron*, Daft Punk nails the sound that accompanies the new movie. It's a giddy mix of synth and orchestral textures, with only a couple of tracks that hint at Daft Punk's more typical sound. It's a much more foreboding sound than Carlos' music, which did a great job of establishing *Tron's* computer world as a wondrous, almost magical setting. The new movie's setting is darker and more dangerous, and Daft Punk's music is a perfect fit for that.

The result is a soundtrack with plenty of motifs for specific characters and situations, and an album that, while it isn't necessarily in the chronological order of scenes in the movie, makes for a very satisfying listen. Helping things considerably is that the movie's rookie director (at least as far as directing for the big screen goes) trusted his rookie composers enough to dial the film's atmospheric sound mix back and let the music carry key moments. One of the best musical moments in the score is "The Game Has Changed", but its quiet, moody intro lands on an unusually quiet moment at the beginning of the showy (and otherwise noisy) light cycle competition. It's a surprising combination of scene and music, and it's incredibly effective.

The closest Daft Punk gets to sounding like Wendy Carlos may be the mostly-electronic "Son Of Flynn", which somewhat surprisingly accompanies scenes that take place in the "real" world rather than the electronic realm. Other highlights include "Nocturne" (a much more sedate take on the same basic melody as "Son Of Flynn"), the techno anthem "Derezzed", "Rinzler" and another moment where the music dominates the movie's sound mix, "Adagio For Tron". Those pieces that are mostly orchestral are surprisingly good – not a bad film scoring debut for a couple of guys whose primary output is electronic dance music.

REVIEW

DOCTOR WHO

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Christmas means jingle bells, crackling fires, friends and family, and now giant flying sharks thanks to the latest Yuletide trip in the TARDIS.

by Earl Green

Rory and Amy's honeymoon takes an unexpected turn – a downward turn into the stormy atmosphere of an alien planet, as it happens. With the starship they're aboard just minutes away from a crash landing, Amy sends a distress signal to the Doctor. The TARDIS lands in the city below, where the Doctor tries to negotiate with the powerful Kazran Sardick, who has the ability to control the weather. Sardick cares nothing for the fate of anyone aboard the crashing ship, and doesn't have much regard for anyone else either. The Doctor decides to intervene, not technologically but psychologically, going into the past to change Sardick's own history beginning with his childhood. But even a youth and an adolescence spent having adventures aboard the TARDIS with the Doctor may not be enough to soften Kazran Sardick's heart.

The first **Doctor Who** Christmas special under the Steven Moffat regime is a curious beast, deriving heavily from Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" (even to the point of borrowing its title unapologetically). That Dickens doesn't get a co-writing credit is almost a shame – surely it'd be quite a publicity coup for Doctor Who to boast a writer of Dickens' caliber. Given time, that Doctor Who connection might buy him a cult following as large as Douglas Adams' fan base!

The episode has a unique look and feel, both among the other Who Christmas episodes and other episodes in general – the flying fish are a neat idea, and the foggy atmosphere and the alien planet whose seemingly human inhabitants exist in an approximation of a bygone Earth era are right out of the classic series. There are also a couple of casting coups to boot, with Michael Gambon and Katherine Jenkins raising the bar considerably. The Dickens-inspired darker tone is unusual for a Christmas episode: still more Christmassy than *The End Of Time Part 1*, but still surprisingly dark.

But it's the attempt to slavishly follow the Dickensian formula that causes some of *A Christmas Carol's* biggest problems. The ghosts of Christmas past, present and future in Dickens' opus are somewhat omniscient beings,

while the Doctor is basically attempting a last-ditch rewrite of history in order to save a ship full of people. There's some mileage in the notion of the Doctor – who is not omniscient – doing that, but instead what we get is a Doctor who basically does away with Sardick's free will entirely. The Doctor is reshaping Sardick's personal history to suit himself (admittedly with the aim of saving lives) in a way that flies in the face of everything the character stands for.

Consider: in *Enlightenment*, the fifth Doctor relies on Turlough to find the answer to his moral dilemma within himself, without any prodding or prompting, even though one of Turlough's choices could mean the Doctor's own death. And even in *Genesis Of The Daleks* and *Resurrection Of The Daleks*, the Doctor tries to persuade Davros to use his unique position to influence the evolution of the Daleks – but we never see the Doctor go into Davros' childhood to influence his development. Surely, if one is going to break the laws of time to that degree, you're going to expend that effort on the big fish – Davros, the Master, the origins of the Cybermen, etc. – rather than wasting that sort of risky endeavour on a miserable old man whose power extends no further than his own planet.

A Christmas Carol is a rare instance of a guest actor who blows Matt Smith right off the screen. There's a scene where Smith is face to face with Michael Gambon, and it's one of the few times that Smith's Doctor has looked "too young." His first season was impressive in that there wasn't anything that really drew that criticism – Smith developed a unique way of playing the Doctor as an old man in a young man's body – but the sheer depth of Gambon's performance simply outshines what Smith brings to the table for this episode.

Doctor Who's Christmas episodes have run the gamut from heavy storytelling (*The Christmas Invasion*, *The End Of Time Part 1*) to nearly-light-headed romps (*The Runaway Bride*, *Voyage Of The Damned*). The really weird thing about *A Christmas Carol* is that I can't tell what camp it belongs to.

written by Steven Moffat
directed by Toby Haynes
music by Murray Gold

Guest Cast: Arthur Darvill (Rory), Michael Gambon (Kazran Sardick / Elliot Sardick), Katherine Jenkins (Abigail), Laurence Melcher (young Kazran), Danny Horn (adult Kazran), Leo Bill (Pilot), Pooky Quesnel (Captain), Micah Balfour (Co-Pilot), Steve North (old Benjamin), Bailey Pepper (Boy / Benjamin), Tim Plester (Servant), Nick Malinowski (Eric), Laura Rogers (Isabella), Meg Wynn-Owen (old Isabella)

SOUNDTRACK REVIEWS

DOCTOR WHO: SERIES 5

MUSIC BY MURRAY GOLD

by Earl Green

Following hot on the heels of the *Series 4 – The Specials* 2-CD set, *Doctor Who: Series 5* uses much the same format – two CDs again, and as with *The Specials*, most of the music is presented as unedited individual cues instead of compilations. Most of the season’s episodes are represented here, so there’s something to keep everyone happy.

Following the suddenly-more-gothic-than-it-used-to-be new rendition of the theme music, *The Eleventh Hour* storms out of the gates, with Murray Gold’s music sounding very much as it did during the tenure of showrunner Russell T. Davies. But as the music from the season opener progresses, we get a very different musical picture than what we’re used to: darker, heavier with synths, and altogether more moody. Moments of traditional Gold bombast do crop up in several scores, but the brass section isn’t necessarily getting a workout with every episode.

Highlights of the first disc include the quirky “Fish Custard”, “Amy In The TARDIS”, the unnervingly abstract “Time Of The Angels”, and both tracks from *Amy’s Choice*, an episode that’s atypical both musically and in a narrative sense. Those looking for the Murray Gold sound of old won’t be let down: seek out “Down To Earth”, “Battle In The Sky” (from *Victory Of The Daleks’* silly Spitfires-in-space scene) and “The Silurians”.

Disc two kicks off with the season’s musical highlight, *Vincent And The Doctor*. I’m going to put my cards on the table and say that the track “With Love, Vincent” – accompanying a scene in which Vincent van Gogh helps the Doctor and Amy visualize the night sky as one of his paintings – is the best piece of music that anyone’s put on our TV screens in the past twelve months, with the only serious challenger to that being the music from *Lost’s Ab Aeterno* episode.

Other highlights on the second CD include “A Useful Striker” (underscoring a true oddity: a Doctor Who sports montage, from *The Lodger*), and the music heralding perhaps the quietest Doctor Who cliffhanger in the show’s storied history, “The Life and Death of Amy Pond”. Just about every note of music from the season-ending two-parter is found on this disc, from big set pieces (“Words Win Wars”) to nearly fairy-tale material (“Into The Museum”).

STAR TREK V: THE FINAL FRONTIER (Remastered)

MUSIC BY JERRY GOLDSMITH

by Earl Green

Released with little advance warning or fanfare at the end of 2010, Jerry Goldsmith’s soundtrack from *Star Trek V: The Final Frontier* is the archetypal “soundtrack that’s ripe for an expanded re-release” – it’s better music than its parent movie deserved, only a certain amount of the music has been available before (namely, a 45-minute soundtrack album that dates back to the twilight of the vinyl LP), and it pleases followers of both the Star Trek franchise and the late, great composer himself.

The previously unreleased slices of Goldsmith’s soundtrack are, partly because of obscurity and partly because of quality, much more interesting than the stuff we have heard before. What we’ve been missing out on for over 20 years is material that clarifies the development of many of the movie’s musical themes: the unstable-but-noble Sybok theme, material both uncertain and religious/epic for his quest to find God, and lots of interesting new uses of Goldsmith’s by-now well-worn *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* Enterprise and Klingon themes (remember that, when this movie was released, that material had also been quoted and/or rearranged extensively for two seasons of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*). That Goldsmith reclaims his material and puts a fresh spin on it is impressive.

There’s also much more of an adventurous, emotional feel to those themes this time around, rather than the somewhat unemotional treatment of the same material in his score for the first Star Trek movie (though that movie’s colder, more intellectual nature demanded the musical treatment that it received). If there’s one area where the music from *Star Trek V* falters even slightly, it’s some of the electronic instrumentation. Goldsmith is often hailed for his innovative use of electronics and his ability to make them part of the orchestra rather than making them sound like an oddball overdub, but by this point synths and electronic keyboards were off-the-shelf instruments with a somewhat limited palette of preset sounds. There’s an interesting synthesized “drone” for Sybok’s repeated demonstration of an ability to probe other characters’ pain, but other than that, nothing stands out like, say, Goldsmith’s use of analog synths in *Logan’s Run* or the unearthly Blaster Beam sound of *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*.