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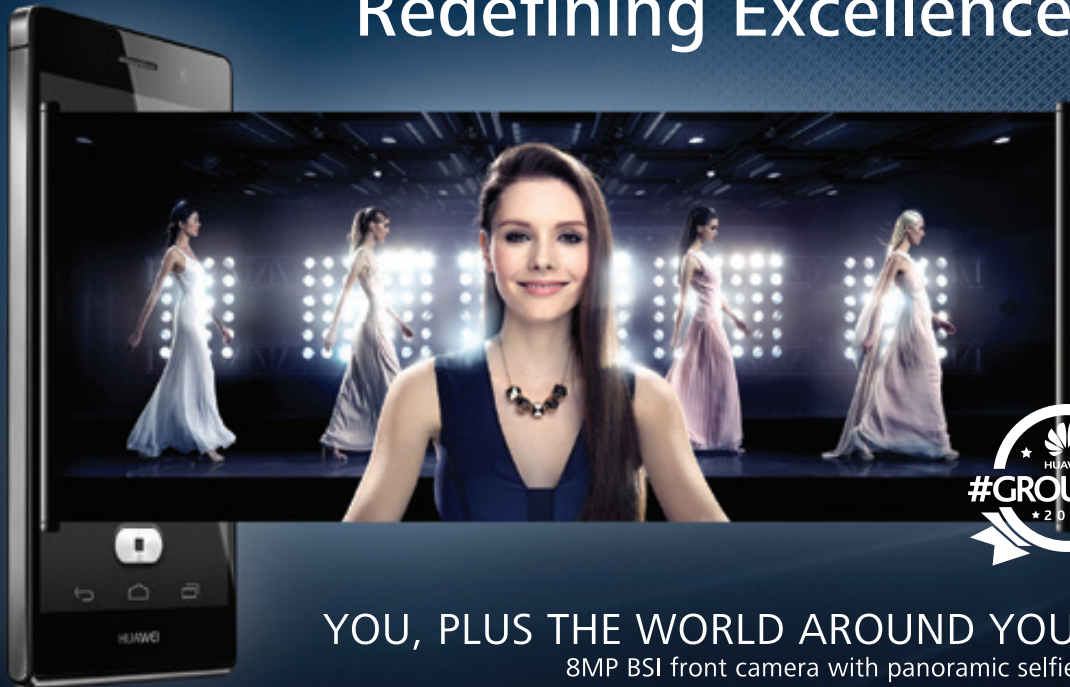
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- DJ SPEAKERS
- TOP TABLETS
- GAMESCOM
- SCIENCE!



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THIS IS A CALL TO ARMS!

There's something special about reading science-fiction. I remember the summer I tackled *1984* as a high school student, not quite grasping everything I read, but knowing that this book would make me want to find a lot more of this good stuff. Soon I became a massive Kurt Vonnegut fan, which in later years turned into an obsession with Philip K. Dick. To me, Dick remains the only writer I know of who can actually write you into a different state of consciousness (case in point *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch*).

Therefore, it gives me massive pleasure to present the first ever TechSmart/Gigabyte Science-Fiction short story competition. We are looking for local sci-fi writers who can produce captivating fiction with a local flavour. The best story is set to win an awesome Gigabyte U2440N notebook worth R10 000. Not bad for 700 words, right?

There's a few things we hope to achieve with the competition. Obviously unearthing new talent is key, especially in science-fiction, a genre that in my opinion is highly undervalued locally. I also hope this serves as a primer for all regular TechSmart followers who don't usually read sci-fi, since the best stories will be published in the magazine.

If you feel that there is a story in you, please have a look at p39 for all the information, or head over to www.techsmart.co.za. I really hope to get enthralled in your sci-fi world soon.

Enjoy the issue,

Mike Joubert
mike@techsmart.co.za



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CORRECTION

In our previous issue we incorrectly stated that the Brother J200 all-in-one's new InkBenefit colour cartridges yield 133 pages. It is in fact much more at 1300 pages per cartridge. We apologise for the mistake.

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DISCERNING STYLE AND INNOVATION!

Television has never enjoyed a more pivotal role in our lives than it does now – just look at the amount of social media that focuses on popular programming! And as television sets become design features, they're moving out of the cabinet and into our living space. Samsung's Curved UHD TV is the perfect example – the television is now a beautiful focal point in any room.

As home entertainment reaches new heights, state-of-the-art technology, design, picture quality and sound have become integral components of an incredible, unmatched broadcasting opportunity. The innovative Curved UHD TV offers the most realistic and true-to-life leisure experience available – the art of the cinema meets household comfort, in a spectacular fashion. It's the ultimate in functional design.

The lounge has become the centre of family downtime and the home cinema has replaced the TV of old. With this upgrade comes a spectacular shift in design attitude. The combination of the curve and Samsung's UHD expertise brings images to life, providing spectacular colour, breathtaking clarity and enhanced detail. The ability to automatically adjust the contrast for a greater sense of depth, and a 3D effect without the need for special glasses, adds to the appeal

of this luxury item. To maximise the advantages of curved TV, Samsung developed the optimal curvature which provides the best image excellence with a viewing distance of three to four metres. It turns your home cinema into an art gallery, a movie set or a television studio, and you feel part of the action.

When it comes to decor, colour tells a story – whether it's just a pop of colour in an otherwise neutral room, an unexpected show of statement wallpaper or a muted tone-on-tone layering of elements. Samsung's PurColour™ reproduces tones in more detail and expression – the number of shade adjustment points has been increased sevenfold.

Not only is this a statement of current leading-edge technology, it's an investment in tomorrow too. The Samsung UHD TV provides the very best in crisp picture quality; four times the resolution and pixels of Full HD, and all UHD televisions feature UHD Upscaling, which gives you greater image excellence regardless of the source material. The proprietary technology converts Full HD, HD and lower-resolution sources to near UHD picture quality. Samsung UHD TVs are the only TVs on the market that are future-ready, thanks to the Samsung UHD Evolution Kit.

Of course, it wouldn't be a Samsung TV if it didn't provide a 'smart' TV experience. The new Multilink screen allows you to split the screen in two, allowing you to review player stats, show search results or browse YouTube while catching the all-important match. And with an upgraded Quad Core processor, loading and navigation are twice as fast.

Life is all about experiences and the new Samsung Curved UHD TV is the perfect partner for a family entertainment system that delivers it all – in style.



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ABOUT THE COVER GIRL

NANCY CALLAHAN FROM SIN CITY: A DAME TO KILL FOR
Model: Mica from Spotlight Agency

Quick Facts

Like many in *Sin City*, Nancy similarly had a tough life, starting with being kidnapped at the tender age of 11 by the sadistic serial killer Roark Junior.

Before she could become another of Roark Junior's victims, she was rescued by John Hartigan – who was later framed and imprisoned for allegedly raping her.

Hartigan is not completely forgotten though, as Nancy commits to writing him a letter once a week for the eight years of his incarceration.

Nancy ultimately matures into a beautiful young woman and becomes a stripper at Kadie's Saloon (she is an exceptionally skilled dancer), until she is reunited with Hartigan, who has been released from prison.

Despite their age difference, Nancy still considers Hartigan her hero and true love; which lends her story yet more of a tragic element.

Famous NANCY CALLAHAN quotes

Nancy, Age 11: "Maybe you won't let me visit, but I'll still write to you, Hartigan. I'll sign my letters "Cordelia." That's the name of a really cool detective in books I read. I'll write to you every week... for forever."

Nancy Callahan:
"Let me stay close.
Nothing can happen to
me when I'm with you.
Please? Let me stay
close."

Marv, after seeing
Nancy covered in
scars: "Just give me a
name."

[long pause]
Nancy Callahan:
"...Roark."

John Hartigan: "Get
some sleep."
Nancy Callahan:
"Sleep with me."
John Hartigan: "No,
Nancy!" **ts**



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NEW GEAR

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Contrary to what you might think,
Pippa has other interests too.

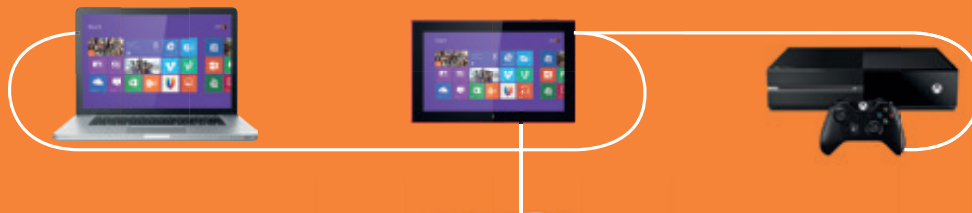
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Before the internet, people were
forced to behave stupidly in front of
only a small group of friends, writes
Deep Fried Man

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GREAT GEAR!

HENNESSEY VENOM F5

They say speed kills, but no one over at American manufacturer Hennessey got the message. Their new Venom F5 is capable of hitting top speeds of 466 km/h, and is one of the fastest production cars around.

The name Hennessey may conjure up thoughts of cognac, but this variety is a bit more high octane, with its base of operation located in Texas, USA. The Venom F5 is Hennessey's stripped down and supercharged version of the Venom GT which debuted earlier in the year.

A look under the Venom F5's bonnet will reveal a seven litre twin-turbocharged V8 engine tuned to produce an unbelievable 1043 kW of power. This yields a top speed close to 466 km/h, eclipsing the 431 km/h mark set by Bugatti Veyron Super Sport.

Not only content with fitting a powerful engine, Hennessey has also taken a scalpel to the Venom F5 and incorporated a range of aluminium and carbon fibre components to bring the overall body weight to 1300 kg.

Along with lightweight materials, Hennessey has introduced new technologies such as single-clutch paddle shift transmission and a GPS-enabled traction control, both of which will prove important while reaching 300 km/h in under 13 seconds.

The Venom F5 is set for official public debut in early 2015, with price tags said to be in the region of \$1.2 million for 2016 delivery, so it's best to phone your bank in Zurich and start moving some money around.

2015 DODGE CHARGER SRT HELLCAT

Few names are more synonymous with American muscle cars than the Dodge Charger, and the 2015 SRT Hellcat packs even more power than before to deliver one hell of a punch. Billed as the fastest and most powerful muscle car ever, it generates a staggering 527 kW courtesy of a uniquely designed 6.2 litre supercharged V8 Hemi engine. With plenty grunt and noise, the SRT Hellcat is quick as well, clocking the fastest ¼ mile (402 metres) time for any production muscle car at 11 seconds flat. Add to that a top speed of 328 km/h and there'll be very few cars capable of matching it in a straight line. No pricing as yet, but expect to shell out in excess of R1 million. **ts**



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GREAT GEAR!

DV8 SPORTS GOLF CLUBS

Forget what you think you know about lugging a full complement of golf clubs – the newest innovation from DV8 Sports shouts fore and hits luggage problems for a hole-in-one.

The DV8 Sports golf clubs are assembled using the company's patented couplers, meaning that instead of carrying 14 shafts, golfers need only carry one.

Its main innovation is enabling players to vary the lower shaft length from coupler to club head, all while ensuring each club is kept true to its regular length, weight and shaft flex.

The driver and fairway heads are securely mounted in the DV8 pack, while foam tubes protect the shaft when it is not in use.

The nifty invention enables aspiring Tiger Woods to toe a full set of clubs, weighing approximately 3.7 kg, in a compact backpack which can even accommodate an iPad for that spot of instruction on the green.

What about your personal caddy, you ask? Well, the only tip you may need to give him is to find another job. \$900 (R9 000) from www.dv8sports.com.

ZEPP GOLF SENSOR

In golf, like life, awareness of your strengths and weaknesses is key to improving your game. To this end, the Zepp golf sensor enables you to see your swing in detail, by fitting on your glove and then connecting with your smart device over Bluetooth. Additionally, you can even see your all-important hip rotation as well if you slide your device into an available pocket. Better yet, using the golf sensor enables you to keep track of your efforts with every club, and see where you are improving or on what areas you need to concentrate. Available for \$150, visit www.zepp.com/golf/ for more information. **ts**

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KEEPING TABS: 3 NEW TABLETS

SAMSUNG GALAXY TAB S 10.5

Armed with a stunningly sharp display, Samsung's Galaxy Tab S 10.5 brings to tablets what the S5 was missing in smartphones, and offers a worthy contender to Apple's iPad Air.

When the Galaxy Tab S 10.5 landed on the TechSmart review table, its dimpled plastic back cover brought back not so fond memories of the South Korean manufacturer's S5 flagship. The same, however, cannot be said of this 10" tablet, which thoroughly impressed and could well prove to be one of the best Android-powered tablets this year.



Crystal Clear

Apart from its dimpled plastic rear, Samsung has favoured a fairly simple and clean aesthetic, and, more importantly, has produced a device that evokes a certain level of premium quality, in spite of Samsung's penchant for plastic. Once a pleasing inspection of the exterior is complete, powering up the device will showcase one of the best displays found on a 10" tablet.

Processing eight ways

Internally, the Tab S does not scrimp on things either, with Samsung incorporating its own Exynos 5 Octa chipset, which pairs two quad-core processors clocked at 1.9 GHz and 1.3 GHz respectively. This octa-core setup is supported by 3 GB of RAM, as well as 16 GB or 32 GB internal memory options. As expected, this results in a fast and responsive tablet that's well suited to the multitasking rigours of work and play alike while running Android 4.4.2 (KitKat).

Other notable features include a microSD slot, an 8 MP primary camera, a Galaxy S5-esque fingerprint reader, as well as Wi-Fi and Bluetooth 4.0. It also caters for a micro-SIM, with compatibility for both 3G and 4G/LTE bands.

Premium pricing

Being a premium device and hailing from Samsung, the Tab S 10.5 naturally carries with it a premium price tag of R10 000 for the 16 GB variant. Placed on a relative par with both the Sony Xperia Z2 tablet and Apple iPad Air, from a specs and pricing perspective, it certainly gives local tablet fiends a solid performing addition to splash some cash on. [RLC]

QUICK SPECS:



Processor:

Exynos 5 Octa 5420 at 1.9 GHz and 1.3 GHz



Memory:

3 GB



Screen resolution:

2560x1600 (228 ppi pixel density)

THIS 10" TABLET THOROUGHLY IMPRESSED AND COULD WELL PROVE TO BE ONE OF THE BEST ANDROID POWERED TABLETS THIS YEAR.

The Tab S 10.5 is fitted with a 10.5" (2560x1600) Super AMOLED display that registers a rich and crisp 228 ppi pixel density that's basically on par with the Sony Z2 Tablet's 224 ppi, but a bit off the iPad Air's 264 ppi. One

could easily be forgiven for not noticing, as the Tab S offers all of the brightness and sharpness any user would want.

LENOVO YOGA TABLET 8

Lenovo's Yoga Tablet 8 is certainly distinctive, but its unique form factor is not the only thing it has going for it.

From the outset, the Yoga Tablet 8 differentiates itself from the competition, if not in function, then certainly in form. The device has a noticeable rounded wedge on the left hand side when held vertically – reminiscent of a paper magazine that has been folded over.

This, in our experience, brought two advantages in particular. Firstly, it made the tablet far easier to grip, a good thing, since the Yoga 8 has a smoothed aluminium finish on the back that otherwise could have been too smooth.

Besides adding to the tablet's grip, it serves another, more practical purpose – when turned in landscape orientation, you can flip out a handy stand, which aids in propping the tablet up to watch movies. This mitigates against having to buy a purpose built cover for the same



end. Worth noting is that its construction is very solid, and its profile at the thinnest edge is a razor thin 4 mm.

Substance and style

Beyond that, it is largely a standard Android experience, with the company opting for a clean Android as opposed to an embellished user interface. While its 8" display only offers a 1280x800 resolution (189 ppi), which falls far behind that on offer by the new Galaxy Tab 8.4, it looks sharp nonetheless. To its credit, the tablet's speakers are facing towards the user, and the audio is crisp (if lacking in bass). Nonetheless, this makes watching movies sans headphones that much more doable. Furthermore, the onboard Android 4.4 is well served by the quad-core MediaTek MT8125 processor (clocked at 1.2 GHz) and 1 GB of memory, offering largely zippy performance across the board.

THE YOGA TABLET 8 DIFFERENTIATES ITSELF FROM THE COMPETITION, IF NOT IN FUNCTION, THEN CERTAINLY IN FORM.




While its storage is a measly 16 GB, at least this can be upgraded via the microSD card slot, while connectivity is taken care of with cellular (3G) as well as Wi-Fi 802.11 b/g/n and Bluetooth 4.0.

Money talks

In some ways, the Yoga 8 has clearly made some compromises to cater for users seeking a midrange price point without offering inferior build quality, but it still all comes together admirably well, particularly if your primary usage of a 8" tablets veers towards movie watching. It is certainly a case of the sum of the parts being more than the components, and, at R3 800, it is well worth consideration. [RN]



QUICK SPECS:

	Processor: MediaTek MT8125 processor quad-core at 1.2 GHz
	Memory: 1 GB
	Screen resolution: 1280x800 (189 ppi pixel density)

ASUS FONEPAD 7

A jack of all trades, the FonePad 7 from Asus is a solid performing 7" tablet that any cost-savvy user would be happy to carry.




Asus' FonePad 7 may be a small 7" tablet, but it also carries the unique distinction of both making and receiving phone calls to give it an edge over its more lavish, high-end competitors. Compatible with 3G and 4G/LTE bands, there is very little that the FonePad 7 cannot handle, with its wallet pleasing price tag only sweetening the deal.

Tablet with benefits

It's no secret that smartphones are getting bigger, albeit slimmer and lighter, by the day. This is why the Asus FonePad 7 poses such an interesting proposition for small tablet users who want the added benefit that a GSM device delivers. Armed with a 7" IPS LCD display (800x1280) that commands an above average 216 ppi pixel density, the FonePad 7 will certainly prove a reliable resource while browsing the web or viewing online content.



QUICK SPECS:

	Processor: Intel Atom Z2560 dual-core at 1.6 GHz
	Memory: 1 GB
	Screen resolution: 800x1280 (216 ppi pixel density)

Hailing from Taiwan, Asus, as many of its Asian competitors, favoured a plastic heavy design. This means that it weighs in a relatively light 328 g and proves easy to cradle in one hand, as it measures 12 cm wide. The one downside that all that plastic brings, is a propensity to produce a fair amount of heat while taking on some heavy duty multitasking.

Crowd pleaser

Sticking with its multitasking capability, the FonePad 7 performs well across the board, and tested strongly while handling complex graphics. In terms of internal hardware, Asus has fitted an Intel Atom dual-core processor, which clocks at a respectable 1.6 GHz. The Intel chipset is supported by 1 GB of RAM and features Android's Jelly Bean



THE ASUS FONEPAD 7 WILL PROVE A WELCOME ADDITION FOR ANY USER LOOKING TO GET MAXIMUM VALUE FOR MONEY.

OS (4.2), with the ability to upgrade to KitKat (4.4.2). The user interface is well thought out and responsive, with navigation and switching between apps proving more than adequate. Added to this is Wi-Fi and Bluetooth 3.0 to take care of one's connectivity needs.

If there is one aspect where the FonePad falls shorts, it's the modest 5 MP camera which struggles noticeably in low light conditions, or when zoomed in. This is not a deal breaker, but may prove important when compared to the slightly higher-end cameras touted on larger phablets.

Cost savvy

Lying neatly on the cusp of phablet and tablet, the FonePad 7 from Asus proved quite impressive given its R2 500 price tag. With its added calling abilities, it should prove a welcome aid to any small tablet user looking to get as much bang for their buck as possible. [RLC] **ts**

CANON POWERSHOT G1X II

Not quite a DSLR, but also much more than a compact camera - the G1X II is a peculiar beast.

Canon's G1X II is a bit of a strange cat to corner. For one, unlike the G16, this compact camera will not fit in any normal sized pocket. But then again, it's not quite your regular compact camera, with its image sensor just a bit smaller than the regular APS-C sized sensors found on DSLRs. This larger sensor size does make a difference when it comes to image quality, yet larger sensors on compact cameras are nothing new – just ask the full-frame Sony RX1.

A masterful stroke

Here's the kick – the G1X II takes one of our favourite concepts – the control ring around the lens – and pushes it one step further, by simply adding yet another one. In practical terms this means you can adjust aperture on the main ring, and work some magic by fine tuning exposure compensation on the one in front (this is just one of many configurations you can play around with). From a usage perspective this works like a charm, although we would have preferred to have the second control ring also 'clickable' like the main one for better control.

THE G1X II TAKES ONE OF OUR FAVOURITE CONCEPTS – THE CONTROL RING AROUND THE LENS – AND PUSHES IT ONE STEP FURTHER.

The G1X II is also a master when dealing with low light, and we had a few moments where we were left slackjawed when looking at pictures taken with Star mode. Thanks to the Digic 6 processor, it managed to get the exposure just right.

A few points...

Although the Mark II is a vast improvement over the so-so original G1X (including better macro, now at a useable 5 cm, continuous shooting at 5 fps, Wi-Fi with NFC), there's still a few improvements we would like to see. These include an articulate power button and a playback button that's within reach of your thumb. But the one thing we would really love, is an electronic viewfinder packaged with the unit that does not cost an extra R4 000. Having said that, the benefits of a touchscreen for one-touch shooting are highly undervalued in our opinion.

At R11 000 it's pretty clear that the G1X II is far from an off-the-cuff purchase, which is a shame, since we can see a lot of photographers having a great time with it. [MJ] **ts**



SILICON POWER SKY SHARE H10 WIFI HARD DRIVE

Silicon Power's Sky Share H10 is a portable hard drive on a mission – to make it easy and convenient for users to access a terabyte of data from any mobile device. Mission accomplished.

It wouldn't be inaccurate to point out that portable hard drives are a dime a dozen nowadays, with many storage companies offering their versions of storage on the go solutions. Most of these are fine for plugging into your notebook; the problem is that for smartphone and tablet users in particular, the majority of tablets are less than accommodating of external storage in general.

That is where the Sky Share H10 excels. The drive can be easily configured to function like a Wi-Fi hotspot, avoiding the need for cables or dongles altogether. With the use of a free iOS and Android app, it allows multiple users (up to eight at a time) to stream, copy and access media stored on it with ease.

No muss, no fuss

We found pairing it with our iPad Air and our Android Nexus 7 (simultaneously) to be a cinch, and we were quickly streaming movies, photos,

THE DRIVE CAN BE EASILY CONFIGURED TO FUNCTION LIKE A WI-FI HOTSPOT, AVOIDING THE NEED FOR CABLES OR DONGLES ALTOGETHER.

music and documents alike to our tablet(s), without having to clutter up the precious onboard storage. Additionally, transferring large files from our PC to the hard drive took scant time, especially through the integrated USB 3.0.

While the drive doesn't require additional power if plugged into a USB port, the one caveat is that using it as a hotspot does tax the internal, rechargeable battery, from which one can expect a good five hours worth of streaming before you need to visit a power point. It is also quite a bit thicker than some other portable hard drives out there.

That aside though, as portable storage solutions go, the Sky Share H10 is definitely amongst the most versatile we have come across, and for this reason alone, especially if your go-to entertainment device is a tablet, is well worth a look. This privilege does come at a price though: RRP R2 900. [RN] **ts**



ACER ASPIRE S7

Acer pushes all the right buttons with its latest S7 model.

The 1.3 kg Aspire S7 has been one of the standout ultrabooks of the past few years, proving to be a beautifully crafted machine that pretty much tops anything we've ever seen from Acer by a mile. It comes as no surprise then that Acer decided not to change too much with the S7's 2014 iteration, but the changes they did make enhance its appeal so much more.

A change for good

The biggest improvement can be seen on the 13.3" touchscreen, which now stands at a crisp, luxurious 2560x1440 pixels. It's overkill for spreadsheets and Word documents, but blooms when displaying full HD movies. Acer persisted with the speakers strangely placed at the bottom of the machine, and although loud, they are often muffled and tinny. The Taiwanese manufacturer must have taken the decision that it's better not to spoil the beautiful aluminium unibody design of the panel around the backlit chiclet keyboard by placing the speakers on top.

Luckily Acer came round to a full-sized HDMI port on the side and not via an adaptor dongle like the first iteration. You'll also find two USB 3.0 ports, a converter port (for an included dongle with LAN,

VGA and USB ports) and an SD card adaptor, although the card protrudes instead of going all the way in.

Your power lies inside

As expected, the 2014 S7 comes with the latest processor; an Intel Core i7 4510U running at 2 GHz and a full 8 GB of RAM. Multitasking is no problem, while these also deal with large sized photos more ably (256 GB SSD storage provided). Ultimately the new processor did not do that much extra for battery life, and we received four hours, although granted that multitasking and a massive tab count are common for us while working.

THE CHANGES ACER MADE JUST ENHANCE THE APPEAL OF THE ASPIRE S7 SO MUCH MORE.



After spending a lot of time with the machine, there is very little to critique on the S7. It's one of the more beautiful machines available and performs without flaw, but at R19 000 you'll only see it on a few select desks. [MJ] **ts**

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PHILIPS NTRX100 DJ SPEAKER

Philips' new NTRX100 Hi-Fi speaker with DJ mixing table won't turn you into Armin van Buuren, but will certainly add a new dimension to your next house party.

The sleek sound stylings of a portable speaker or home entertainment system certainly have their place, but ask any audiophile and they will tell you that sometimes only the loud and raucous bass of large Hi-Fi will suffice for a house party. To that end, Philips has debuted its new NTRX100 speaker locally, which incorporates a unique DJ mixing table to showcase your skills, or lack thereof.

Hey Mr. DJ

Armed with two mixing decks, each with its own inputs for a 3.5 mm headphone jack, USB port or NFC enabled Bluetooth connection, the NTRX100 can be paired with a plethora of music playing devices. Added to this, is a crossfader for switching between each mixing deck, along with two microphone and one headphone inputs. If you're standing behind the NTRX100, the independent decks are able to rotate a full 180 degrees to face the DJ, but controls like volume, mic and headphone inputs and sound mode buttons face away from its user. This may take some time to orientate to, and impedes the desired speed required for any would be DJ.

Measuring 70.4 cm wide and weighing in at 14.5 kg, the NTRX100 generates 380 watts of total speaker output and has enough presence to take

AS A POWERFUL HI-FI SPEAKER THE NTRX100 SHINES, BUT FALLS SHORT OF THE INTRICACY AND SPEED DJS REQUIRE.

centre stage within a room. Housed within its dual bass reflex speaker setup, is a 2" tweeter and 5.25" subwoofer, which is paired with four digital sound control modes and an NX bass amplifier to add some oomph.

Lacking intricacy

As a powerful Hi-Fi speaker the NTRX100 shines, not to mention the strobelight-esque effect integrated into the front speaker units. For mixing it performs admirably, but falls well short of the intricacy and speed that DJs would require, compared to entry-level stand-alone decks from Numark or Pioneer. If, however, a booming Hi-Fi speaker with a few enhancements to keep your party going is what you're after, the NTRX100 is certainly worth a listen. RRP: R5 500. [RLC] **ts**



BLACKBERRY Z3

BlackBerry's new entry-level Z3 smartphone marks a solid effort to woo back some of the local customers it has lost over the years.

Designed to reignite BlackBerry's local entry-level smartphone presence and win over some former BB users, the Z3, priced at a good R3 000, has a tall order to live up to. Pushing that to the side however, if you're looking for a solid performing and well constructed device without having to break the bank, the Z3 is certainly worth a look.

Bang for buck

First off, it features a 5" (540x960) display, which is quite generous in entry-level terms. With 220 ppi pixel density, the screen is far from class leading, but provides enough brightness and sharpness to make everyday use pleasant. On the rear, one will find a 5 megapixel camera encased in a textured plastic back cover. The camera itself is adequate enough, and takes decent images in good light conditions. Conversely it struggles when shooting in darker indoor conditions and renders grainy images in zoom.

Internally, BlackBerry has opted for a 1.2 GHz dual-core Snapdragon 400 processor, with 1.5 GB

THE BLACKBERRY Z3 IS ONE OF THE BEST ENTRY-LEVEL SMARTPHONES CURRENTLY AVAILABLE IN SA

of RAM for a device capable of handling quick switching between web browsing, app usage and messaging. Fitted with 8 GB worth of internal memory, it also has a microSD slot for up to 32 GB of additional space. From a hardware perspective the Z3 performs well, our only sticking point is BlackBerry's 10.2.1 OS, which could take some time to get use to. An example of this, is the lack of a conventional back button, instead forcing users to swipe up from the bottom of the screen instead to exit an application.

Right track

Flagship it's not, but the BlackBerry Z3 is one of the best entry-level smartphones available in SA. Whether it can revive BlackBerry's local reputation still remains to be seen, but if the Canadian manufacturer can design more offerings like the Z3, it will certainly be on the right track. [RLC] **ts**





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HI-TEC ALTITUDE PRO RGS

With spring swiftly approaching, it's high time to haul out a good pair of hiking boots. Don't have ones? Hi-tec's Altitude Pro RGS should be on your feet.

The top of the range Altitude Pro RGS from Hi-tec look like they mean business, but it is really when they are put through their paces that we found they proved most impressive. As the company's flagship hiking boot, the shoe is also packed with technology. For starters, they are fully waterproof, and further boast an abrasion resistant (and very tough) heel and toe cap. This meant that the likelihood of painfully stubbing your toe is reduced close to zero.

However, the boot's highlight feature is its Vibram Rolling Gait System (RGS), which is, according to the company, intended to keep hikers' movement fluid, and thus reduce ankle strain and fatigue. Our experience is that we had to check a couple of times that we were actually wearing boots, because walking in them felt far more comfortable than we anticipated for shoes of this ilk.

Hold on tight

Additionally, we found that the grip of these boots is simply outstanding, never wavering no matter how smooth or slippery the surface. One of the key elements we look for in a good hiking boot in anticipation of plenty of uneven and varying terrain, is comfort, and even more importantly, solid ankle

THE ALTITUDE PRO OFFERS A SOLID, OUTSTANDING PAIR OF REASONS TO LEAVE THE MEMORY OF WINTER FAR BEHIND.

support, especially as a twisted (or worse) ankle on a hike is no laughing matter. We found that the Altitude Pro ticks both boxes beautifully well, holding our feet steadily in place irrespective of how much we clambered.

Additionally, and quite surprisingly for these kind of boots, the Altitude Pro was not as heavy as we expected it to be. It also enabled us to employ our blister-battle strategy – doubling up our socks with a hiking pair over a thinner, normal layer – without feeling like we had run afoul of the Sopranos and found ourselves being weighted down with cement shoes.

In short, the Altitude Pro RGS offers a solid, outstanding pair of reasons to leave the memory of winter far behind, and go, quite literally, take a hike. RRP: R2 200. [RN] **ts**



TOMTOM RUNNER CARDIO

The sport watch market is currently more saturated than a marathon runner's shorts. TomTom's new Runner Cardio with built-in heart rate sensor aims to make decision time easier.

As fitness-focused wearables remain in vogue, people want a device that's both intuitive and informative. That's where TomTom's new Runner Cardio sports watch comes into play, armed with its new built-in heart rate sensor.

Running with purpose

When it comes to sports watch design, function reigns over form. The Runner Cardio is no different, as each aspect of its design is driven by a specific purpose. Most important of which is the new built-in heart rate function, housing three green LED lights that measure the wearer's capillaries for an accurate reading. As the heart rate sensor is light based, it necessitates securing the Runner Cardio quite tightly so no natural light enters. This can be uncomfortable at times, but certainly beats the hassle of a heart rate chest strap.

IF DEALING WITH STRAPS LEAVES YOU IN A COLD SWEAT, THE RUNNER CARDIO IS A WORTHY FITNESS COMPANION.

The large navigation button ensures pressing and scrolling is far easier to manage while running. The strap itself, with perforated holes for fastening, is

also removable, should you wish to wash it or favour a new colour palette, sold separately for R400.

Beat your best

Added too is a range helpful modes to assist in any sweat-inducing endeavours. Chief among these is the running mode, which pulls up information like average pace, calories burned and distance covered. Integral to this is the ability to 'race' against yourself, as users are able to track their distance, speed and time compared to previous runs.

As far as pricing goes, the standard Runner Cardio will set you back R3 800. That price tag may scare many would be users away, considering the previous iteration cost R2 700 with the heart rate strap. If, however, the thought of dealing with straps leaves you in a cold sweat, the TomTom Runner Cardio is a worthy fitness companion. [RLC] **ts**

The TomTom was received as a seeding unit.



NESCAFÉ DOLCE GUSTO MINI ME

It's always fun testing one of these hot new capsule coffee machines in the office, and having put the larger Circolo machine through its paces, the new Mini Me landed just in time.

If there ever was a machine made for the bachelor, it's the Mini Me, looking less like a small Austin Powers and more like a little Wall-E. The reason we believe this is for a number of reasons. Firstly its size, which, true to its name, does not take up a lot of space, fitting snugly between your toaster and microwave.

Quick to the draw

It's also quick to the draw, with the water being ready to use between 20-30 seconds. You'll get three cups from its 800 ml water capacity, but here's the clincher – it does not have to be boring coffee all the time. The Dolce Gusto system's ace up its sleeve is the large number of flavours at its disposal, including americano, cappuccino, chococino, mocha and even tea or cold drinks. Having worked our way through a number of these, some definitely taste better than others, with the latte macchiato coming out as a firm favourite. The majority of these also don't need any milk, so gone are those 'oh-damn' drives to the garage.

It's in the pod

The Dolce Gusto's trick to how it can make all these different types of drinks lies in its capsules, since for the majority of drinks you need to pop in two or more pods. For example, your cappuccino requires both a 'milk' capsule, and a coffee one. The whole process is quick and easy, although getting the cup adjustment tray to fit to the right height so that the coffee doesn't splash is sometimes difficult. This is barely a complaint though – the Mini Me is 99% hassle-free.

THE DOLCE GUSTO SYSTEM'S ACE UP ITS SLEEVE IS THE LARGE NUMBER OF FLAVOURS AT ITS DISPOSAL.

Where the Circolo machine costs R2 500, the Mini Me is a more affordable R1 650. The capsules come in at around R80 per box (16 pods), which differs in the amount of servings on offer. The americano box offers 16 servings since only one pod is needed, while the cappuccino box only offers eight servings (two pods needed for one cup). [MJ] **ts**



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MSI GT70 2PE DOMINATOR PRO

Gaming notebooks are largely expected to be the Godzillas of the PC world, and the MSI GT70 2PE Dominator Pro happily obliges.

While thinner and lighter has become vogue in notebook circles, every so often it is reassuring to see a gaming machine that departs from convention to claim the honour of being unabashedly monstrous by comparison. The 17.3" GT70 2PE Dominator Pro machine, which sports a brushed aluminium finish, is both thick (55 mm) and solid, and particularly designed for long gaming sessions. This profile though is not without good cause, as it allows better airflow from the back and sides.

More than a name

Along with a name that is quite a formidable mouthful, the GT70 2PE Dominator Pro's specs do in fact smell as sweet. The components onboard include the high-end quad-core Intel Core i7-4810MQ (up to 3.8 GHz) CPU, and a superb graphics card in the form of the Nvidia GeForce GTX 880M with a significant 8 GB of dedicated memory. As for system memory, users will find 8 GB, which can be upgraded to a whopping 32 GB to ensure everything runs smoothly and that the Dominator Pro chews through general tasks for breakfast.

As for the always-important screen, the Dominator Pro sports a 17.3" Full HD (1920x1080) anti-glare screen with LED backlight. This offers wide horizontal viewing angles, vibrant colours and an anti-glare coating to keep distractions to the bare minimum.

Steel yourself

Additionally users can either enjoy the default capacious 1 TB hard drive, or instead opt for three MSATA SSD's which support Super Raid. Along for the ride is the versatile SteelSeries keyboard. This enables users to customise the multi-colour backlighting to their hearts' content, as well as customise each key to their liking, to suit their individual play style. Gamers can freely choose any key as a launch application button, and take advantage of virtually unlimited keypress macro creation capabilities. Anything you can do on a mouse or a keyboard can be programmed along with specific event timing. You can even program mouse events into keyboard macros. Along with an SD slot and Blu-ray drive, the Dominator Pro further offers a plethora of ports. These include two USB 2.0 ports and three USB 3.0 ports, HDMI VGA and a DisplayPort, which enables users to connect three monitors simultaneously.

No one trick pony

Not only is this a superb gaming notebook, but thanks to the combination of the powerful processor and the monstrous graphics card, more intensive tasks such as video and photo editing will



EVERY SO OFTEN IT IS REASSURING TO SEE A GAMING MACHINE THAT DEPARTS FROM CONVENTION TO CLAIM THE HONOUR OF BEING UNABASHEDLY MONSTROUS BY COMPARISON.

be handled well within the Dominator Pro's ambit. The MSI GT70 is fully expected to live up to its name, dominate the market and provide performance that can exceed those of many desktop gaming PCs. According to Evetech, users can expect stable 60 fps on games like BF4 and Bioshock Infinite. Additionally, the Nvidia Kepler GPU should further reassure players of an excellent gameplay experience for years to come.

To sweeten the deal the notebook comes with a few free extras, the likes of the Steelseries Kinzu V2 gaming mouse, MSI gaming backpack, 16 GB Sandisk flash drive, as well as a MSI Gaming mouse pad. It is available from Evetech for R24 000 by visiting www.evetech.co.za or calling 010-786-0044. **ts**



QUICK SPECS

	CPU: Intel Core i7 4810MQ @ 3.8 GHz
	Graphics: GeForce GTX 880M 8 GB
	Screen: 17.3" Full HD Anti-glare
	Memory: 8 GB 1600 MHz DDR RAM

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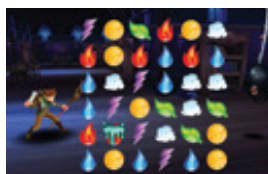
RYAN — HEAD JOURNALIST



Currently occupying an inordinate amount of my gaming attention is the addictive mobile (iOS) puzzle-RPG game, *Spellfall*. The free-to-play game uses creative tile matches to defeat a host of varied enemies, boasts terrific animations,

and has an array of useful power ups, armour and weapons. Its story is pretty decent as well.

I've also finally gotten round to picking up the final book in A.G. Riddle's *Origin Mystery* trilogy, *The Atlantis World*, released a few months ago. Its predecessors were complex but gripping stories, but are easy to recommend to readers of action/sci-fi fare. While the second book left things on a cliffhanger, Riddle's storytelling prowess has clearly progressed from one book to the next.



MIKE — EDITOR



Enthralling to say the least, presenter Dan Carlin's *Hardcore History* podcast (www.dancarlin.com) has a fascinating way of turning what could be simple, boring history lessons, into a tense audiobook experience. And

when he says it's hardcore, he means it, tackling for example the bloody conquests of the Mongols, religious lunacy in Münster, and the carnage of the First World War.

Having gone on a bit of a comic binge recently, the best title I've come across is *Scalped*, written by Jason Aaron. Complex with awesome characters, it follows the modern problems stemming from the murder of two FBI agents on an Indian reservation in the 60s. Forget superheroes, *Scalped*'s dream-like narrative and strong drawings (done by R. M. Guéra) had me wishing it would never end.



ROBIN-LEIGH — JOURNALIST



Like most anime fans, I was keen to see the final film from acclaimed writer/director Hayao Miyazaki, *The Wind Rises*. The film follows the journey of a young aeronautical engineer as he deals with the socio-economic turmoil

of 1920s Japan. Beautifully crafted and well written, any true fan of anime owes it to themselves to watch *The Wind Rises* when it releases in local stores on 29 September.

One of the more popular manga to anime crossovers in recent years is *Attack on Titan*, whose visceral style in both paper and screen form makes for an engaging experience. A prequel to the manga hit stores recently, entitled *Attack on Titan: No Regrets Vol 1*, chronicling the lives of two polar opposite characters within the series, Erwin and Levi. With highly evocative illustrations, this manga prequel serves as a nice distraction while season two of the TV series is being finished. **ts**

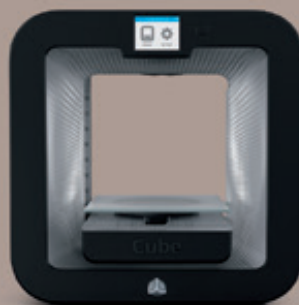


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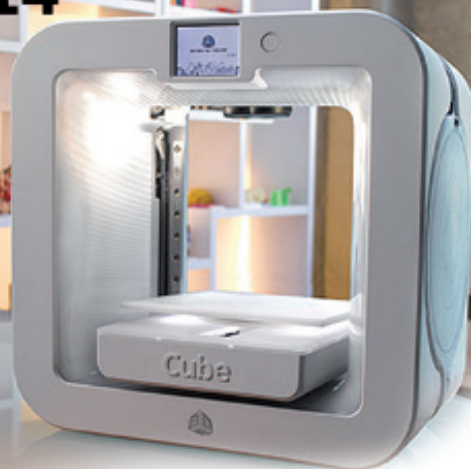
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ALSO IN THE OFFICE

ASUS TRANSFORMER PAD



The Transformer Pad from Asus is a tablet hybrid in name, but not in nature. Featuring a 10" HD display (1280x800), it performs well as a business focused tablet thanks to its dual-core 1.6 GHz Intel Atom processor and Asus designed Zen UI. Snapping on its purpose built chiclet keyboard yields a completely different experience altogether, with the responsiveness of the trackpad and keys less than ideal. The Asus Transformer Pad is however competitively priced, and will set you back R5 500.

SAMSUNG GALAXY GRAND NEO



Released in the early part of 2014, the Galaxy Grand Neo is Samsung's light version of the S4, integrating a host of lower-end specifications throughout. These include a dual-core 1.2 GHz chipset and 1 GB of RAM, along with a choice of either 8 GB or 16 GB internal memory options. Luckily, it still retains a large 5.01" display albeit with a modest 480x800 pixels and 185 ppi pixel density. If a flagship's R9 000 cost proves a little too rich for your blood, then the Grand Neo's estimated R3 500 price tag might be the ticket for fans of the Galaxy's design.

FITBUG ORB



The Fitbug Orb is a wearable fitness and sleep tracker designed to help its users in living a healthier lifestyle. It can be worn on one's wrist or clipped onto any moving part of your body to measure daily movement and calculate how active the wearer has been throughout the day. Accompanying the Orb, is a dedicated companion app named KiKi to act a personal digital coach to inform its wearer of statistics like calories burned, weight lost, as well as reminders to be more active. Priced at R900, the Fitbug Orb is an affordable alternative for any cost-savvy users looking to get fit.

NOREVE TRADITION B LEATHER CASE



If you're looking for a suave case for your newly bought Huawei P7 (amongst others) then French company Noreve's Tradition B Perpétuelle leather solution might be up your alley. Two things stand out - it provides pockets for your credit cards and slips while you also have a handy little fold-out stand to view the P7 in portrait mode. The case does add to the size of the phone though. €46, only online at www.noreve.com. Case was provided as seeding unit.

THE LAST OF US REMASTERED (PS4)



If you missed the superb The Last of Us on the PS3, then the newly released and remastered version for the PS4 is simply unmissable. Granted, the story remains the same (strong and emotionally wrenching as ever), but the graphics are vastly improved, and the game now boasts 60 fps at 1080p. Also worth noting is that the remastered edition brings with it all the multiplayer DLC content, along with Ellie and Riley's chapter, Left Behind. A no-brainer purchase at R600.

LOGITECH G402 HYPERION FURY GAMING MOUSE



This corded gaming mouse balances sleek, comfortable ergonomics, with light weight (144 g) design and a raft of features. These include eight programmable buttons, on the fly switching from 250 dpi up to 4000 dpi and most importantly, a 1 millisecond report rate, to keep lag at bay. Furthermore, the mouse can achieve tracking speeds exceeding 500 IPS (inches per second) thanks to Logitech's Fusion Engine hybrid sensor, which has led to the company billing it as its fastest FPS gaming mouse to date. \$60, although a local price is still to be confirmed. **ts**

TOP 4 PHABLETS

Serving up the best that a smartphone and tablet can offer, phablets are on the up (and cutting into tablet sales). Here our top 4 choices.

Samsung Galaxy Note 3 **R9 000**

As the reigning king of phablets, the Galaxy Note 3 earns a rightful place on our list. Featuring a stunning 5.7" (1080x1920) Super AMOLED display, the power of the Note 3 lies not with its internal hardware, but rather its intuitive S Pen. It's this stylus that separates the Note 3 from the competition, particularly for its ability to extend both functionality and in-device features. From annotating images and documents, to viewing videos while news feeds run in the background, there is very little that the Note 3 cannot handle.

It's not just a one trick pony either, with Samsung incorporating a quad-core 2.3 GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon 800 processor and 3 GB of RAM for masterful levels of performance. Added to the mix is 16-, 32- or 64 GB built-in memory options, along with a 13 MP primary camera and 3200 mAh battery that'll last a full day.



LG G Flex **R10 000**

If Samsung's 5.7" screen and simple design won't cut it, then the LG G Flex may be a phablet more to your liking. Not only does this phablet feature a 6" (720x1280) curved P-OLED screen, but the back cover can heal itself from surface scratches. It may not include an innovative stylus, but the G Flex is certainly no slouch in the performance department, with LG favouring the high-end device industry standard quad-core Snapdragon 800 processor, clocked at 2.26 GHz. This is complemented by 2 GB of RAM and 32 GB worth of internal memory, making the G Flex as good a phablet experience as there is on the market today.

It may cost R1 000 more than the Note 3, but that buys more real estate on which to play, as well as a larger 3500 mAh battery to offer a little more than one day's use.

Hisense Infinity Maxe X1 **R5 000**

Hisense may not be a major player within the local phablet market, but its recently unveiled Infinity Maxe X1 is no less deserving of one's consideration, particularly given its R5 000 price tag. Simply because it retails for half the price of the Note 3 and G Flex, does not mean Hisense has scrimped on the hardware. First and most notably, the Infinity Maxe X1 is fitted with a 6.8" full HD display that verges on tablet territory.

Added to the sizeable display, we find a quad-core 2.3 GHz Snapdragon 800 processor, 2 GB of RAM, 16 GB worth of memory and a 13 MP rear mounted camera, placing the Maxe X1 on par with LG's G Flex. In terms of value for money, there is no better option for users who value technical specs over flashy brands, not to mention a great display for viewing videos or browsing the web.



Nokia Lumia 1320 **R5 000**

Rounding up the list is one of the last mobile devices released by Nokia prior to their acquisition by Microsoft. It's also the cheaper variant of Nokia's other phablet offering, the Lumia 1520, with both devices sporting a 6" display. Although cheaper, the Lumia 1320 still delivers a solid Windows Phone 8 experience, part in thanks to its 245 ppi pixel density (720x1280).

Of the phablets listed, the Lumia 1320 ranks lowest in terms of specs, but still performs well, with Nokia opting for the dual-core 1.7 GHz Snapdragon 400 processor and 1 GB of RAM. Added to this is a respectable 5 MP camera, 8 GB of internal memory and 3400 mAh battery for at least 10 hours worth of life under heavy use. If you're a lover of Windows Phone and value for money, the Lumia 1320 is the phablet you want. [RLC] **ts**

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NAVIGATING *Neverland*

Making sense of dreams is almost as nebulous as the dreams themselves. But it seems science is slowly getting the hang of navigating the twists and turns of the sleeping mind. Linda Pretorius investigates.

The dream machine

Last year, a team of scientists reported that they used brain scans of sleepers to predict dream content. Study participants were woken up just as they started to drift off and asked to describe what they were dreaming about. After about 200 recordings for each participant, the researchers compared the activity patterns to those seen while the participants viewed similar images when awake. Then, by looking at brain activity patterns as participants fell asleep again during the next round, they predicted what images were likely being seen. Turns out they were right about 60% of the time.

1953: The start of dream research.

Dreaming of doing

It seems our brains do the same thing in dreams as while awake. Lucid dreamers were asked to dream about clenching their fists while brain scans were recorded. Areas in the sensorimotor cortex, which is responsible for generating the instructions that allow performing a movement, became highly active. Scans taken when the subjects clenched their fists while awake showed the same activation patterns. This suggests that our brains don't just watch images passively in our dreams, but actively participate in the actions we see.

90 minutes: The average length of a complete sleep cycle.

Taking control

Scientists think they might be one step closer to understanding how we can take control of our dreams. During a lucid dream, the prefrontal cortex becomes quite active while in REM (Rapid Eye Movement) sleep. This shows up as a specific 40 Hz wave on an EEG. Scientists stimulated the prefrontal cortex of sleeping volunteers with brief electrical pulses and asked them to rate their awareness of dreaming after each session. Subjects reported a marked increase in being aware of dreaming and controlling the storyline when 40 Hz pulses were used. The results may be useful in treating mental disorders such as schizophrenia and post-traumatic stress disorder.

20%: The proportion of REM sleep in our total sleep.

Stop the clock

It seems the dreaming brain takes a while to get its moves together. Scientists compared the time it took lucid dreamers to complete a mental activity such as counting in their dreams and in real life. They then asked them to do two physical activities of different complexity, also while dreaming and while awake. The mental tasks were performed in the same time in both states, but the physical activities took quite a bit longer during a dream than in real life, regardless of task complexity. This might be either because the brain gets no muscle feedback or because of slower neural processing during REM sleep.

40%: The relative amount of extra time needed to perform a set of squats in a dream. **ts**

Wake-up calls

The more you wake up during the night, the higher the chance that you'll remember what you dreamt about. According to a recent study, people who can often recall their dreams in the morning also tend to wake up often during their sleep. When looking at brain scans, scientists saw increased activity in brain areas that tune in to external stimuli in high dream recallers compared with low dream recallers. This suggests that being sensitive to outside stimuli allows the brain to wake up easily, which, in turn, allows a dream memory to be formed.

5.2: The average number of times per week high dream recallers remembered their dreams in the morning.

Sources:

Dream machine
bit.ly/1f17SZW

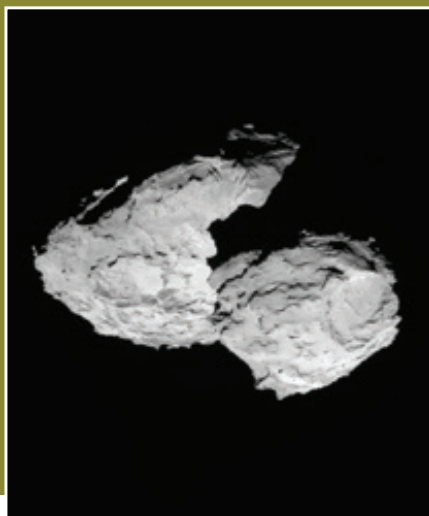
Dreaming of doing
bit.ly/1qSV2D8

Taking control
n.pr/1jxSdj4

Stop the clock
bit.ly/tfaild

Wake-up calls
bit.ly/1dD2lsJ

SCIENCE

PIC OF
THE
MONTH

Space geeks, like us, rejoiced last month as the European Space Agency's Rosetta space craft finally arrived at its destination – the Comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko. This will be mankind's first attempt at a controlled touch-down on a comet, with five potential landing sites identified when going to print. The Philae lander, sent from the Rosetta orbiter, is set to make contact with Comet 67P on 11 November. The Rosetta's journey started way back in March 2004, with it travelling 6.5 billion kilometres to arrive at its destination. Surprisingly the comet (4 km in length) is only 400 million kilometres away from Earth, between Jupiter and Mars

Images credit: ESA/Rosetta/NAVCAM

SMART ANSWERS

LIFE IS FULL OF QUESTIONS THAT NEED SMART ANSWERS. WE CAN HELP.



NERVE CELL IMPLANTS

Image: Shutterstock

Can we cure neurodegenerative diseases? It seems we might be a step closer.

How so? According to a recent study lab-grown nerve cells have successfully been integrated into live brain tissue in mice. After six months, the grafted cells had formed functional connections with the host cells and showed normal activity.

Why was the graft not rejected?

Neuroscientists reprogrammed skin cells from the host to become neuronal stem cells. This means that the host's brain tissue recognised the grafted cells as coming from its own body, and so accepted the graft as familiar.

Any clinical applications? Possibly, yes. Parkinson's disease develops because dopamine-producing brain cells die. If new, implanted cells can be spurred into producing dopamine, the supply of this neurotransmitter can be reset to the right levels.

Source: bit.ly/1ufwLHh



STICKY GECKO FEET

Image: Björn Christian Törissen, CC BY-SA 3.0

How do geckos stay put while upside down? It's all thanks to physics. Scientists previously showed that geckos have tiny bristle-like hairs under their feet. Molecular forces create a strong attraction between the hair and the surface, which maximises the contact surface.

But what if they need to get unstuck?

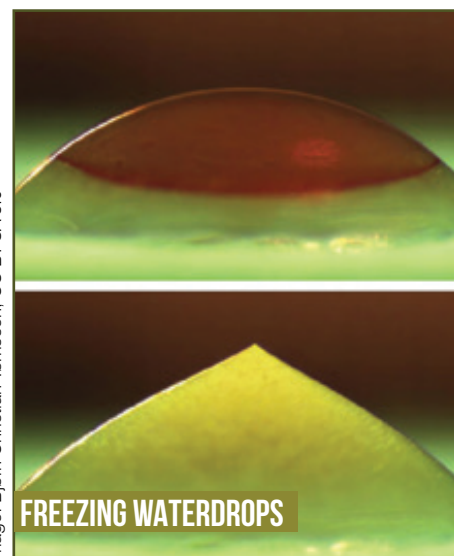
That's where a new study comes in. Scientists proofed that by merely changing the angle of the hairs relative to the surface, geckos can switch between sticky and non-sticky mode.

Does the switch take a lot of energy?

No. In fact, adhesion absorbs energy. But switching to non-sticky mode recovers that energy.

What's next? The findings can be useful for developing dry adhesives, which could improve the way robots climb over rough terrain or in extreme environments.

Source: bit.ly/1zAc1LD



FREEZING WATERDROPS

Image: University of Twente

How does a waterdrop freeze? From the bottom up.

Why is this interesting? The shape of the drop changes from rounded to conical as freezing progresses.

What happens? Real-time video images of the process show that the just-frozen surface is always at a 90° angle to the still-liquid surface.

But why the shape change? Water expands when it freezes, so ice takes up more space than water. To keep the angle at 90°, the freeze front becomes concave as freezing progresses. The only way the ice crystals can fit themselves into this arrangement is by pushing upwards. Combine an inward curve and an upward push, and you get a pointy tip.

What's next? The new insight will help to explain the effects of ice forming on aircraft wings. **ts**

Source: bit.ly/XrZBte, <http://vimeo.com/102231964>

TOP 4 Electric Cars

As more automotive companies throw their weight behind cleaner energy and electric cars, we detail some of the best in the industry today.



Tesla Model S

Any follower of the tech world will be all too aware of the many endeavours of Elon Musk and his work with Tesla Motors. The Model S represents the Electric Car manufacturer's offering within the saloon market and serves as the base on which Musk hopes to build his automotive revolution. In order to meet those lofty aims, Tesla has incorporated a rear wheel drive system and 60 kW microprocessor controlled lithium-ion battery designed to deliver an immense 392 kilometres from one charge.

To maximise performance from the Model S' 60 kW engine, Tesla has made the body as lightweight and strong as possible, with the use of aluminium and boron steel elements throughout. Added to this, the Model S features plenty of the modern car enhancements, including eight individual airbags, keyless car entry and traction control to name a few. When placed side by side to any luxury German saloon, the Tesla Model S is certainly on par from a features perspective.

With no official word on whether or not Tesla will make its way to local shores, the Model S's pricing starts from \$70 000 (R750 000) stateside for the standard 60 kW version.

→ QUICK SPECS:

Engine: Tesla 60 kW electric motor **0-100 km/h:** 5.4 seconds **Top Speed:** 200 km/h
Driving Range: 392 kilometres **Battery Charge Time:** 10 hours **Cost:** \$70 000 (R750 000)



2014 Nissan Leaf

In the local electric car landscape, the Nissan Leaf carries the unique advantage of being the first vehicle to get its foot - or is that battery - in the door, and therefore sets the benchmark for how all other competitors will be measured. For the most part it has performed well locally, with the majority of its appeal linked to the value for money proposition it presents.

R446 000 is quite the initial investment, but the return cannot be argued with, as the Leaf will only cost drivers R1 500 to maintain (excluding electricity costs) over a six year span. The petrol equivalent however will cost almost R400 000 to fill up on fossil fuels alone during the same period, according to Nissan.

Billed more as a jack of all trades within the current range of Electric Car offerings, the Nissan Leaf will be most appealing to those with young families who primarily use their car for shuttling between school, work and home. To that end the Nissan Leaf's modest 80 kW battery powered engine yields a driving range of 195 kilometres from a full charge. Charging itself takes roughly seven hours, not to mention its 5-star NCAP safety rating and zero emission advantage.

→ QUICK SPECS:

Engine: QU-Kai 80 kW electric AC motor **0-100 km/h:** 11.5 seconds
Top Speed: 144 km/h **Driving Range:** 195 kilometres
Battery Charge Time: Seven hours **Cost:** R446 000

→ QUICK SPECS:

Engine: QU-Kai 80 kW electric AC motor **0-100 km/h:** 11.5 seconds
Top Speed: 144 km/h **Driving Range:** 195 km
Battery Charge Time: Seven hours **Cost:** R446 000



BMW i3

Set for a local release in September, the BMW i3 is the next electric car to make our list and certainly looks the most intriguing. From the black band that runs from bonnet to boot, to the strips of lightning blue scattered across its body, there are plenty of design intricacies to fix onlookers' gaze.

Although a compact four-seater, the BMW i3's interior feels quite spacious, with the Bavarian manufacturer taking full advantage of the additional space afforded by placing the engine in the floor. Adding to BMW's sustainable initiative, is the use of recycled products and natural materials for the trim and seating of the i3.

In terms of performance, BMW has designed a unique zero emission eDrive system which is married with a lithium-ion high voltage battery to produce 125 kW of power. Although a modest figure, BMW has tuned the engine to produce 250 Nm of torque which helps the i3 register a 0-100 km/h time of 7.2 seconds. If the Germans' take on the electric car looks appealing, you can expect to pay in the region of R475 000 for the i3.

→ QUICK SPECS:

Engine: BMW eDrive 125 kW electric motor **0-100 km/h:** 7.2 seconds
Top Speed: 150 km/h **Driving Range:** 190 kilometres
Battery Charge Time: Eight hours **Cost:** R475 000



→ QUICK SPECS:

Engine: 372 kW Twin sequential axial motor **0-100 km/h:** 3.4 seconds
Top Speed: 190 km/h **Driving Range:** 160 kilometres
Battery Charge Time: 5 hours **Cost:** POA

Renovo Coupe

Just because electric cars produce zero emissions, does not mean they can't produce a little wheelspin smoke, and the recently unveiled Renovo Coupe is testament to that. Founded in 2010, Renovo is a small manufacturer aiming to make a thrilling electric supercar a reality. To that end, the Renovo Coupe carries with it a blistering 0-100 km/h time of 3.4 seconds and top speed of 194 km/h, thanks to a twin sequential axial motor that generates 372 kW. That rapid acceleration is down to a uniquely designed engine system that delivers 100% of available power in 37 milliseconds.

Although quick in a straight line, the Renovo Coupe does not have fantastic range, with a listed output of roughly 160 kilometres from a full charge. With long distance travelling out of the question, at least the Renovo Coupe will look good sitting in your garage, with a design that bares a striking resemblance to Ford's iconic Shelby GT. The reason for that is no accident, as Shelby in fact provided the body for the Renovo Coupe.

If you're interested in a retro-styled electric car that goes like the clappers, Renovo are currently taking orders with pricing available on application for delivery during late 2015. [RLC] **ts**



spring style

by Mynhardt van Pletsen

It is the time of year when everyone seems to come out of acute hibernation, and find their own selves again. So it is with you and your sense of style - gone are the days of bulky layers and burdensome outer garments. It is time to wake that sucker up, and introduce yourself anew to the world.

Our early warm weather collection is designed to subtly prepare you for the blistering heat that is to come, without jumping the gun on summer. While some basic layering might still occur, the gist of this month's style section is to help you navigate the sometimes slippery slope of the in-between season. Dressing appropriately for spring is more difficult than it seems, and needs a well-experienced sense of style.

Luckily, you are not alone - we're here to hold your proverbial hand through the confusing seasonal changes ahead.



R650

Grey cargo short.
Aca Joe.



FROM TOP TO BOTTOM

The whole idea of spring has to do with sun, sea and summery feel. So, it's time to get those lower-body guns some serious vitamin D dope, and it's just your luck that the once revered cargo short pant is back in style. Get it in grey or khaki [or both], and pair it with a collection of graphic t-shirts. If you're finding it hard to choose between all the different t-shirt designs, remember that musical references and band tee's always stay in fashion, and looks the business too. Layer it with a washed out denim shirt to keep the chill out during late afternoon early evening braai sessions.

The recently launched Freewaters shoe range has the triple benefit of looking awesome, being made of pure bodega hemp [don't even think smoking it], and can double up as your social investment strategy for the quarter. Use them to dress your casual spring ensemble either down or up - depending on whether you're kicking it with your significant other or her parents, respectively. Don't like those? Adidas's classic Stan Smith series is back in store after its 2012 omittance.

Black snapback
baseball cap.
Cotton On.

R99



BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE

The stripped down style of spring allows you to gain some extra manpoints with the right accessories. Use some restraint though, nothing looks as cheap as a bro who believes every protruding limb is a potential mantelpiece for yet another shiny accessory. Be confident with an all black snapback cap (not worn back to front please), some subtle leathery beads, and a sexy scent to remind yourself (and those wandering close enough) that you're as fresh as the turn of the season. **ts**



R100

Various beaded and leather wristbands. Markhams.



Freewaters bodega hemp sneakers. Crocs Store.

R1265

Faded denim shirt. Levi Store.

R400



R300 for two

Collection of graphic t-shirts. Cotton On.

Adidas Stan Smith sneakers. Adidas Originals Store.

R1000



CK One Eau De Toilette 100ml. Woolworths.

R770



KNIGHT OF THE OLD CODE

This year celebrates the 75th anniversary of one of the world's most enduring superheroes, Batman. Comic book guru Moray Rhoda believes that The Dark Knight is probably more relevant in today's morally ambiguous world than he has ever been before.

Originally created for DC Comics in 1939 by artist Bob Kane and writer Bill Finger to satisfy the public demand for more superhero fare after the huge success of Superman, Batman is the antithesis of the Man of Steel. Here is a hero with no superpowers that uses superb deductive abilities, technology, intellect, supreme fighting skills and the ability to instill fear in the criminal ranks as his crime fighting weapons. Even his clothes are different – gone are the bright red and blue of Superman, instead Batman sports dark, sombre colours plus a generally grimmer outlook on life.

I am the night

What makes Batman different from any other hero is the fact that any one of us could be him. Of course achieving it would take an almost psychopathic amount of determination, time, fighting skill, strength, indomitable will and an inexhaustible supply of money (and good medical insurance). There are probably better ways to deal with the trauma of witnessing the murder of one's parents at an impressionable age than conducting serial nocturnal assaults on the criminal underground, while masquerading as a billionaire industrialist playboy by day. At his core though, Batman is defined by this early trauma.

Despite the anger that drives him, Batman strives to dispense justice and not revenge. He lives according to a rigid code whereby criminals in Gotham are dealt with in a clinical, brutally efficient, but always non-lethal manner. This is the exact opposite of his arch nemesis, The Joker, who kills and maims as he pleases, but somehow cannot (does not want to?) kill the Batman.



Come here Robin

Batman could be the biggest danger to the citizens of Gotham, but it is his code and his humanity that make him a force of good instead. The 1950s reading public understood this and was less repulsed by the character's initial remorseless marring of criminals than they were by the allegations of homosexuality between Batman and his ward Robin.

AT HIS CORE THOUGH, BATMAN IS DEFINED BY THIS EARLY TRAUMA.

Psychologist (and true comic book villain) Fredric Wertham's book *Seduction of the Innocent* came closer to destroying Batman than The Joker ever did, and resulted in the creation of the infamous Comics Code Authority (Wertham's critique on comics has been completely discredited since).

A man for the people

This highlights another reason why Batman is such an enduring character: adaptability. Batman is many things to many people. To mainstream fandom he is a symbol of justice above all. To others he embodies the resilience of the human spirit and the courage to always stand for what is right. Being a symbol of triumph over adversity to people who need to find the will and the strength of conviction to fight for who they are despite society's judgment is in fact quite fitting. After all, he is the goddamn Batman.

As Raymond Chandler put it, "If there were enough like him, the world would be a very safe place to live in, without becoming too dull to be worth living in." **ts**



BATMAN

The Comic Book Guys

SEAN IZAAKSE

As TechSmart readers might know, there is a blooming comic book creation scene in SA. In this ongoing series we feature some of the new local talent, starting with Sean Izaakse.



TechSmart (TS): Give us a rundown of yourself.

Sean Izaakse (**SI**): I have been working as a freelance illustrator and comic artist for the past four years and have worked on the *Pathfinder* comics published by Dynamite Entertainment, contributed artwork to various RPG's like *Mutants & Masterminds* by Green Ronin Publishing. I'm also the co-creator and artist on a creator-owned series called *Stray* which is being published by Action Lab Entertainment and coming out in 2015.

TS: If you could choose any series (current or past) to work on, which would it be?

SI: Very tough choice. I don't think I could choose just one. My dream titles would be *Spider-man*, *Daredevil*, *Captain America*, *Nightwing*, *Robin* and of course *The Avengers*.

TS: Favourite comic book artist?

SI: Again, I have a few. I'll narrow it to my two biggest influences, Stuart Immonen and Alan Davis. Both have very clean styles and you can follow their storytelling easily. Immonen also has the amazing ability to change his style to fit whatever book he's working on. So his art always looks fresh and new. I try to take that with me to whatever books I work on.

TS: Favourite writer?

SI: Mark Waid. He really gets into the mind of the characters he writes, and finds that thing that makes them unique and what you can empathise and connect with on personal levels and then puts them through these amazing adventures. Pretty sure he was a superhero in an alternate reality.

TS: Favourite publisher?

SI: I grew up as a DC Comics kid, but as an adult my comics mostly consist of buying more Marvel stuff on a monthly basis.

TS: Favourite character as a kid?

SI: Dick Grayson. The first Robin who eventually became Nightwing. He was my POV character growing up and reading comics.

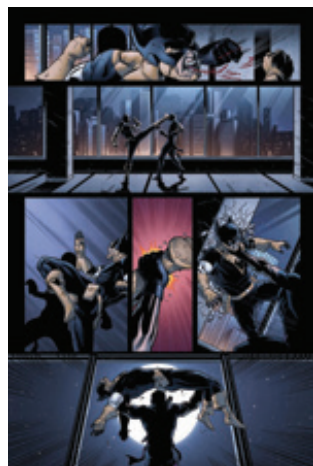
TS: What would be the next step in your comic book career?

SI: Well, I'm really excited to see what everyone thinks about our creator owned book, *Stray*, coming out next year. There are a couple of great writers I'd like to work with on something that I'm going to try and line-up after *Stray*. And there's at least one book at every publisher I would like to work on at some point. In between the creator owned work. I have many stories to tell and I can't wait to share them with everyone.

TS: Do you have an end-goal in sight, for example, eventually working for Marvel, DC, Dark Horse?

SI: I would love to do work for Marvel, DC, Dark Horse and Image. They have such great works and characters I've grown up with and who have influenced me throughout my life, and would love to be a part of that and have my little stamp in their history. Fingers crossed I get the chance. But I suppose my end-goal is to tell stories that people enjoy and create characters and worlds that people love, plus to keep doing that as long as possible. **ts**

All images courtesy of Sean Izaakse. Go to <http://sean-izaakse.deviantart.com> for more.



Top 5 VILLAINS



With so many villains we love to hate, movie fundi Spling goes to the dark side in search of the top 5 best ones.

THE JOKER, THE DARK KNIGHT

Jack Nicholson was born to play The Joker in *Batman*. To beat the Hollywood jester at his own game may have ultimately cost him his life, but Heath Ledger immortalised an indelible performance as The Joker in *The Dark Knight*. He silenced critics, upset Jack Nicholson, stole the show, won an Oscar and established a cult legacy with one performance.

The maniacal smirk, the psychotic smarts, the devil-may-care attitude and the complete embodiment of a master villain entrenched itself in pop culture. Be sure, there will never be a better Joker.

Best line: "Do you wanna know why I use a knife? Guns are too quick. You can't savour all the... little... emotions. In... you see, in their last moments, people show you who they really are. So in a way, I know your friends better than you ever did."

Close but no cigar: Col. Hans Landa in *Inglourious Basterds*, Alex Forrest in *Fatal Attraction*, Lord Voldemort in the *Harry Potter* series, John Doe in *Seven*, Pinhead in *Hellraiser*.

Don't WING it, SPLING it!

For awesome movie news and insightful reviews visit: spling.co.za | splingmovies.mobi | spling.mobi





HANNIBAL LECTER, THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS

Anthony Hopkins is the personification of evil as Dr. Hannibal Lecter. His blood-curdling performance won him an Oscar, despite appearing on-screen for only 16 minutes. As one of the greatest living actors, this career-defining performance as a psychotic cannibalistic serial killer captured the imagination and casts the boogeyman, as he would call it, into film history.

Hopkins conveys a 'pure psychopath' through dead cold eyes, a slithering tongue and a controlled lunacy. The paradoxical role presents an intellectually brilliant and refined gentleman, who has cultivated a savage taste for human flesh and a penchant for killing the ill-mannered.

Best line: "I do wish we could chat longer, but... I'm having an old friend for dinner. Bye."

EMPEROR PALPATINE/DARTH SIDIOUS, STAR WARS

While Darth Vader is the most iconic *Star Wars* villain, he is subservient to pure prime evil in the form of Darth Sidious. Ian McDiarmid's weathered features and treacherous voice add considerable menace to the shadowy and omniscient grandmaster of the Galactic Empire.

While thought to be Senator Palpatine of Naboo, a trustworthy public servant of the people, he turns out to be a megalomaniac Sith Lord. Darth Sidious is evil to the core, representing the most despicable and poisonous aspects of political tyranny. He was responsible for Vader's crossing over to the dark side of the Force, and attempted assassination.

Best line: "You are fulfilling your destiny, Anakin. Become my apprentice. Learn to use the dark side of the Force."



FREDDY KRUEGER, A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET

As the nightmarish and vengeful spirit of a child molester and killer who was burned alive, Freddy Krueger embodies the scum of the earth. He's a terrifying character who can move between reality and dreams, making his power immeasurable across all states of consciousness as he preys on the fears of his victims.

Robert Englund has become synonymous with Krueger, bringing infamy to the brown fedora, striped shirt and leather claw. Wes Craven's dark inspiration for the villain came from a school bully, a disfigured homeless man who frightened him and the song *Dream Weaver* by Gary Wright.

Best line: "When I was alive, I might have been a little naughty, but after they killed me, I became something much, much worse. The stuff nightmares are made of."

IT, IT

"IT" is an inter-dimensional demonic entity and shape-shifting creature of unknown origin that preys on humans in the town of Derry every three decades. Assumes the form of a middle-aged clown named Pennywise the Dancing Clown, played quite deviously by the man with a Cheshire cat grin, Tim Curry. Yet, to the unrestrained eye, he is perceived as a giant spider.

It is, of course, none other than the master of horror, Stephen King, who concocted this childhood nightmare that continues to haunt the characters (and audiences) into adulthood. By feeding off imagination and preying on fears and phobias, IT is able to manipulate its form, but if there is one thing that remains true, it's that after watching *It*, you'll never look at a clown the same way again.

Best line: "I'll kill you all! Ha Ha! I'll drive you crazy and I'll kill you all! I'm every nightmare you've ever had! I am your worst dream come true! I'M EVERYTHING YOU EVER WERE AFRAID OF!" **ts**



NEW

CINEMA RELEASES



The Giver (12 September)

John Lennon's song *Imagine* could be the theme for the perfect future as imagined in the film adaptation of Lois Lowry's book, *The Giver*. While everyone

is peacefully numb, a young man is chosen to experience and learn the true pain and pleasure of the 'real' world.

The Giver introduces newcomer, Brenton Thwaites, and stars Meryl Streep, Jeff Bridges and Katie Holmes, who you may have spotted in South Africa during filming. Director, Phillip Noyce, is best known for political espionage thrillers and social dramas. In *The Giver*, he delves into science-fiction with a film that echoes thought-provoking social thrillers *Gattaca* and *In Time*.



Before I Go to Sleep (12 September)

Nicole Kidman and Colin Firth have played a married couple haunted by traumatic memories twice: in *Railway Man* and now *Before I Go to Sleep*. While

Railway Man was a powerful post-war drama, *Before I Go to Sleep* is a mystery thriller that immediately conjures up films such as *Blink*, *Memento*, *Side Effects* and *Groundhog Day*.

We follow a woman struggling with amnesia, trying to piece together memories in an effort to discover the true identity of her assailant. It's bound to be a sleek psychological thriller full of twists-and-turns as her mind continually resets and trust wears thin.



I Origins (19 September)

Writer-director Mike Cahill has a thing for intriguing sci-fi drama with a touch of romance, and Brit Marling. Or, at least that's how it appears from his last two endeavours, *Another Earth* and

I Origins. His new film sees a molecular biologist and his laboratory partner discover something about the human eye that could change society forever.

I Origins stars the elemental Michael Pitt, enchanting Astrid Bergès-Frisbey and of course the ever-present Brit Marling (amazing in *Sound of My Voice*). From the outset, it seems to encompass themes from *The Number 23*, style itself on *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* and features Radiohead on the cool electronica soundtrack.



The Equalizer (26 September)

If you enjoyed Denzel Washington's approach in *Man on Fire*, then there's a good chance you'll dig *The Equalizer*. He plays another no-nonsense character and while

he doesn't own a spandex outfit or cape, he's taking back tomorrow as a former black ops operative turned citizen enforcer.

Chloe Grace Moretz does a little enforcing herself, echoing her iconic role as Hit Girl in *Kick-Ass*. Naturally he gets in too deep, ticks off some Russian mobsters and risks being unmasked as the invisible vigilante. It's bound to be action-packed and hard-hitting in the hands of *Training Day* and *Olympus Has Fallen*'s Antoine Fuqua.



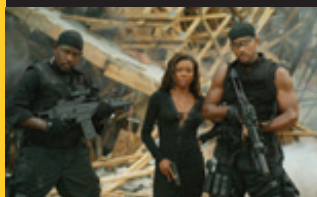
The Maze Runner (26 September)

As if *The Hunger Games* wasn't enough to digest, another post-apocalyptic series is hitting the big screen. *The Maze Runner*, a novel by James Dashner, has spawned a

no-name sci-fi actioner about teenagers having their minds erased and being relocated to a dangerous maze – think *The Shining* meets *Tomb Raider*.

The deadly do-or-die booby traps are reminiscent of *The Cube* and if the prospect of getting squashed to death doesn't register, there are predators. While promising, it all looks very *Hunger Games* on a budget, so let's hope young Dylan O'Brien, Kaya Scodelario and Will Poulter are able to a-maze us.

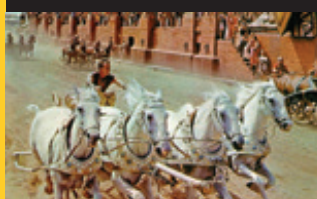
MOVIE NEWS



Three bad boys for Bad Boys 3?

While Michael Bay continues to assault our senses with the *Transformers* juggernaut franchise, many hark back to the time of *Bad Boys*, one of his more agreeable action films.

Well, hark no more. Martin Lawrence announced he's collaborating with Bay for *Bad Boys 3*, which could "potentially re-team" him with Will Smith. Although, let's get real... can it really continue to be *Bad Boys* if they don't keep the Bay, Lawrence and Smith triple threat?



Hollywood continues the Bible epic binge...

Producers of *The Bible*, Mark Burnett and Roma Downey, will be overseeing MGM's adaptation of Lew Wallace's 1880 novel, *Ben Hur: A Tale of the Christ*. It was originally

adapted into *Ben-Hur* with Charlton Heston in 1959 and it seems that 50-odd years are a long enough wait for a remake. Producers are reportedly courting Tom Hiddleston (*The Avengers*) to play Judah Ben-Hur to harness some extra charm and a couple of million fans too. **ts**

KNOW YOUR ANIME

NEW RELEASES

With summer coming to an end in Japan, there are plenty of new anime series making their way onto televisions across the island nation. We take a look at some of the latest anime currently doing the rounds that are well worth investing some quality time in



SWORD ART ONLINE II

A-1 Pictures

In what is expected to be one of the most anticipated anime sequels, *Sword Art Online II* follows the storyline from the Elfheim Arc of the original MMORPG-style series. This time round, we are teleported into the Gun Gale Online Arc of the story where our hero Kirito investigates the link between in-game deaths that coincide with those in the real world. Viewers are in for a treat as we meet new characters like Sinon, a girl with a dark past, as well as seeing how some of the other series regulars have fared since we last saw them.

ZANKYŌ NO TERROR (Terror in Resonance)

MAPPA

If anime set in an alternate Earth is your thing, *Zankyō no Terror* is a new series worth keeping an eye out for. The series kicks off as parts of Tokyo are decimated by a terrorist attack, with the only clue being a rather weird video that's uploaded to the internet. Paranoia ensues, as the public and the police have their hands full trying to understand why the attacks took place, as well as fearing a follow-up attack. The criminals responsible for this are two boys who call themselves 'Sphinx' and the terrorist attack itself is just the beginning of a complex and compelling story.



TOKYO GHOUL

Pierrot

Joining the ranks of dark fantasy, *Tokyo Ghoul* centres around a young man named Ken Kaneki, a college bookworm that meets a girl at a cafe and becomes close friends, not knowing that she is in fact a ghoul, and that humans flesh is a ghoul's primary food source. When a part of her gets transplanted into Kaneki following an accident, he becomes a ghoul himself and trapped in a dark sinister secret world where the rule is eat or be eaten. In many ways, this series is a reinterpretation of the age old vampire mythology, as Ken deals with the need to survive as a monster.



BAKUMATSU ROCK

Studio Deen

Ready for a mix of rock and roll in an alternate history of Japan? Set in the Bakumatsu era at the end of the Shogun rule over Japan (19th century), the Tokugawa Shogunate is using Heaven's Song to brainwash the citizens of Japan and rule the country. In order to fight the Tokugawa Shogunate's reign, a group of Rock and Roll freedom fighters take up their musical instruments and battle for the freedom of Japan's people. If you prefer your anime with a heavy kick of rock and roll, *Bakumatsu Rock* is certainly for you.



TOKYO ESP

Xebec

A solid addition to the sci-fi fantasy genre is *Tokyo ESP*, a series that follows the supernatural exploits of Rinka, a poor girl who lives with her father in modern-day Tokyo. While returning home from school one day, she has a chance encounter with a flying penguin and glowing floating fish, which she then decides to chase. Suddenly the fish passes through her and in so doing, grants her otherworldly powers, such as intangibility (the power to slip through solid objects). This anime should particularly appeal to fans of series like *Bleach*. **ts**



About our contributor:

Allen Simpson is a blogger and a published poet who has a deep passion for anime. He is also co-owner of AnimeFanatika.co.za, a reliable source of information on Anime providing fans with the latest news, reviews and goings on in the industry. Sugoi!

Rachel Alberts @RachAlberts · Aug 23
A bad internet connection disturbs my inner peace.

Dean @DeanOkay · Aug 25
If practice makes perfect, explain my tweets.

Saucy Kensington @Book_Krazy · Aug 24
Hi and welcome to Procrastination Club. Ok, let's get this meeting rescheduled.

Fake @FakeMe_ · Aug 22
When's the final season of everything?

Dr Chester Missing @chestermissing · Aug 22
Can we ask the EFF to negotiate a deal where the money gets paid back to each of us directly?

Master of Sarcasm @masterofsarcasm · 4h
"I need to talk to you" is the one sentence that has the power to make you remember every bad thing you've ever done in your life

Nobody @SleazySli · 8h
Shot through the heart, and you're to blame. I'm a ghost now. Why'd you do that. Jon Bon Jovi?

Julie Snark @JulieSnark · 13h
I believe in miracles. How else would I still be alive?

Nerf Herder @TrueTorontoGirl · 13h
I suffer from WTF disorder.

Michael @Home_Halfway · 14h
The cheapest pasta you can buy will only cost you a penne. You will never get the time back that you spent reading this.

Matt Rolier @rolidiggity · Aug 22
"You're still a winner," Pinocchio whispered into his third drink. He wept as his nose grew to touch the glass.

Neil deGrasse Tyson @neiltyson · Aug 20
Knee-slapping humor to a topologist: Question: Why did the chicken cross the Möbius Strip? Answer: To get to the same side.

Mojak LeHoko @mojakleHoko · Aug 19
The phrase "If you want something done right, do it yourself" is terrible advice. Good luck with your open heart surgery.

Trevor Noah @Trevornoah · Aug 9
Spice up your day- Get a box of condoms then ask the person at the counter- "excuse me, where's the fitting room?"

Elon Musk @elonmusk · Aug 3
Hope we're not just the biological boot loader for digital superintelligence. Unfortunately, that is increasingly probable

Jake Vig @Jake_Vig · 15h
DETECTIVE: Alright tough guy, let's go over this again. According to your statement, you rocked down to Electric Avenue. Then what happened?

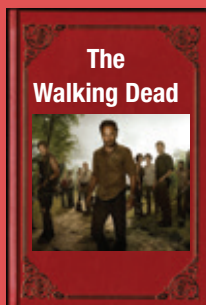
Eve O'Hara @HumanGarbageX · 19h
I got a feeling that tonight's gonna be a mediocre night.

EVIL GENIUS @That_Damn_Duck · Aug 25
How to properly use hashtags: Go to Settings > Account, scroll to the bottom of the screen and click "Deactivate account"

Ryan @RSF788 · Aug 25
I'll never be impressed by a rapper until they can flawlessly do Billy Joel's "We Didn't Start the Fire."

LESSER KNOWN WORKS OF FICTION

It's a little known fact, but many of your favourite characters in popular TV series were at one point aspiring authors. Each apparently penned their own book; a few of which did well, while others...well, let's just say you won't find them topping the bestsellers list in their worlds.



Out of the frying pan, into the fire: Waking up for the end of the world – Deputy Rick Grimes

My brother Merle: bad to the bone fragments – by Darryl Dixon

Killer mistake: Chasing my best friend's wife – Shane Walsh

Ruling with an eye - on - fist - The Governor



Knock knock! Knock knock! Knock knock: Sheldon's guide to beating OCD and mastering social interaction - Dr Sheldon Cooper

How to choose a low maintenance roommate - Leonard Hofstadter

My life in front of the camera – say cheese(cake)! - Penny

The aspiring womaniser's guide to mixology - Raj Koothrappali



How to get ahead in Westeros – Ned Stark

Hand's off approach to sibling love – Jaime Lannister

Take your paws off me or I will show you my Needlework – Arya Stark

How to tame your dragons, and fire a slavetrader or two – Daenerys Targaryen

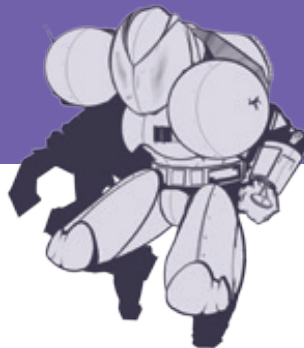


She Had Intel on Every Lovelorn Disaster - how the agency got its name and the real reason why I'm Furious - Nick Fury

Life after near death after life after death: The Alternative travel guide to Tahiti - Phil Coulson

Hack off Ward! Surviving your own bad taste in men. Skye and Melinda May

When bromances go bad - Grant Ward **ts**



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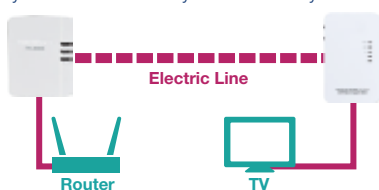
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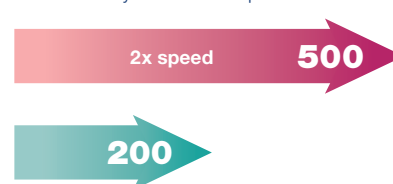
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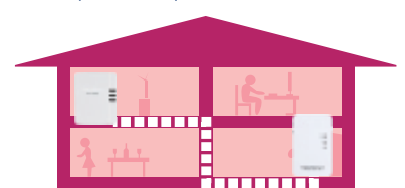
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POLL Which recent superhero movie came out tops?

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY

Guardians of the Galaxy **23%**

X-Men: Days of Future Past **23%**

Transformers: Age of Extinction **15%**

Captain America: The Winter Soldier **13%**

Man of Steel **9%**

The Amazing Spider-Man 2 **9%**

Thor: The Dark World **8%**

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Features

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Features

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Specifications:

dimensions: 30x20mm / 1.18 x 0.78" (board)

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Features

turn equipment ON and OFF from a random place via your cellular phone; applications: turn on the lights or the heating, open your gate, control animal feeders, make believe you are at home, activate a car alarm, etc.; ring detection circuit avoids phone charges; no need to open or modify your cellular or connect it with other devices; compatible with most cellular phones

Specifications:

dual operation mode: toggle ON/OFF or ON with auto turn-off timer; timer settings: 0.5s, 2s, 30s, 1 min, 5 min, 15 min, 30 min and 1 hour; NO/NC 3A relay output; power supply: 12VDC / 100mA; dimensions: 101 x 42 x 23mm / 4 x 1.7 x 0.9"

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GAMESCOM 2014 GOES FOR NEW GLORY

Besides E3, another gaming convention that causes players to perk up and listen, is Gamescom. This year, the gaming show in Cologne, Germany, delivered a healthy helping of new titles that not even an initial heaping of controversy could diminish

HOLD ONTO YOUR
WALLETS, BECAUSE IT
LOOKS LIKE THE REST
OF 2014, AND WELL INTO
2015, IS GOING TO BE AN
AMAZING TIME AHEAD
FOR GAMERS.

Gamescom 2014 started with controversy, with the announcement by Microsoft and Crystal Dynamics that **Rise of the Tomb Raider** would be an Xbox exclusive – news which caused invective, directed at both companies, to flow more freely than a quiver full of Lara's arrows fired at Solarii guards. Turns out though that the next Tomb Raider title likely won't be stranded on the Xbox One island indefinitely, as it is apparently a timed exclusive, rather than a complete abandonment of other platforms.

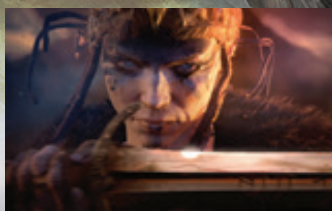


Show me the new

Beyond this storm in a teacup, there were plenty of reasons to watch out for the year ahead. Ninja Theory, the developers beyond *Heavenly Sword*, *Enslaved: Odyssey to the West* and more recently, *DMC: Devil May Cry*, used Gamescom to announce that they are working on a new IP called **Hellblade**. The studio promised that players can expect to see its trademark touch on the new game – namely "ninja-class melee gameplay, strong character stories and a unique art vision." In other words, everything that we loved about *DMC: Devil May Cry*.

Also announced was that there is a new *Silent Hill* game in the works, named **Silent Hills**. This from the formidable team-up of Hideo Kojima (*Metal Gear*) and Guillermo Del Toro (*Pacific Rim*) in the director's chair. While not much else – including a release date – is known at this point, the combination of directing talent alone is good reason to stay on the edge of your seat.

As if dealing with real estate agents wasn't scary enough already, the new releases continued with the haunted houses theme, as **Until Dawn** was resurrected from the PS3 development graveyard. The game will see eight friends (one of which will be voiced by Hayden Panettiere) apparently hunkering down in a remote mountain cabin, for a sleepover in *Alan Wake/ Cabin in the Woods* style.



Gamers gone Wild

Another new game announcement, this time coming from Michel Ansel, the man behind Rayman and Beyond Good and Evil, is **Wild**. While it's not yet clear what the game is actually about, there's no disputing that the PS4 exclusive has no shortage of ambitions. Apparently players will be able to slip into the form of any wild creature they desire. Additionally, Wild will boast an open world the size of Europe (yes, really) with its own seasons and weather (presumably not just rain) set to take place 10 000 years ago. In other words, it appears to be set in a time when men were men, or wolves, or eagles, or boars (not the kind you find at cocktail parties, the other kind).



Now for something familiar

Remember **Quantum Break**? Of course you don't. Well, Gamescom confirmed that the Xbox One time bending action title, which is envisioned as being one part action game and another part live action show, has not fallen into a black hole. The gist of the ambitious game/series is that players will need to contend with a shady corporation (aren't they always?) called Monarch, as well as a fracture in time which would wreck far more than just your next long weekend. Here's hoping we see a mashup between *Fringe* and *Alias*.

Another title that to date has offered only glimpses, and again featured at Gamescom, is **Bloodborne**. What you need to know is that it is courtesy of From Software (Dark Souls and Dark Souls 2), and thus you can fully expect a grim and spooky world and gargantuan or genuinely intimidating foes, who are apparently dedicated to spilling as much of your vital blood as possible. Highlighted at the show was the game's Regain system, in which players are encouraged to deal damage in an eye-for-an-eye approach after being struck by their enemy, and thus garner the chance to recover some of their lost health.

And something even Beta

Rounding off the show were two beta announcements; the first of these that up to four players will be able to return to Albion in **Fable Legends**, with that beta coming on the 16th of October. As if that is not enough to cause the Xbox One faithful to shout from the rooftops, the **Halo 5: Guardians** beta was slated for 29th of December, and will run until 18th January, hardly coincidentally, just in time for the holidays. Those picking up the **Halo: The Master Chief Collection** on the 11th of November will have immediate access.

So did Gamescom deliver the goods? We dare answer in the affirmative. Hold onto your wallets, because it looks like the rest of 2014, and well into 2015, is going to be an amazing time ahead for gamers. [RN] **ts**



FABLE LEGENDS



PIPPA TSHABALALA ON OTHER INTERESTS

**CONTRARY
TO WHAT YOU MIGHT
THINK, PIPPA HAS
OTHER INTERESTS TOO.**

By Pippa Tshabalala.
Photographer: Tim Hulme.
Makeup artist: Natasha Carstens.

Ben Kuchera is a videogames journalist who writes for a variety of gaming publications, amongst others the popular gaming website Polygon. Although he is sometimes considered somewhat controversial, he recently wrote an article that really struck a chord with me and one to which I can definitely relate. It was titled "Gaming is not the most important thing in my life".

I agree wholeheartedly. Gaming is not the most important thing in my life. It's an important part of it, anyone who knows me will attest, but it's simply not at the top of my priority list. How can I say this? Well, because quite honestly I have other interests. The one question that many people ask me, either via social media or when they meet me in person for the first time is, "What's your favourite game?" I really can't answer that. I have many games that I love, and a few games that were incredibly influential in my life, that I kept on coming back to over and over again. I have a game that made me realise that this is what I wanted to do as a career. But a favourite? I have a favourite right now – does that count?

It's the same reason that although I'm considered by most standards to be heavily tattooed, that I don't have any gaming tattoos. There's no one game that I love enough to get etched on to my skin for the rest of my life – and I certainly don't love a hardware brand enough to get their symbol inked on me!

I love videogames, and don't get me wrong, I play A LOT of games, but like many people who play games for anything other than the enjoyment of it (i.e. reviewing), I have other interests. For example I spend a good amount of my time reading, and I have a degree in Fine Arts so when I have time I still paint and draw. I like spending time with my friends. Some of whom are also gamers. In the real world as well as online. I know – weird right?

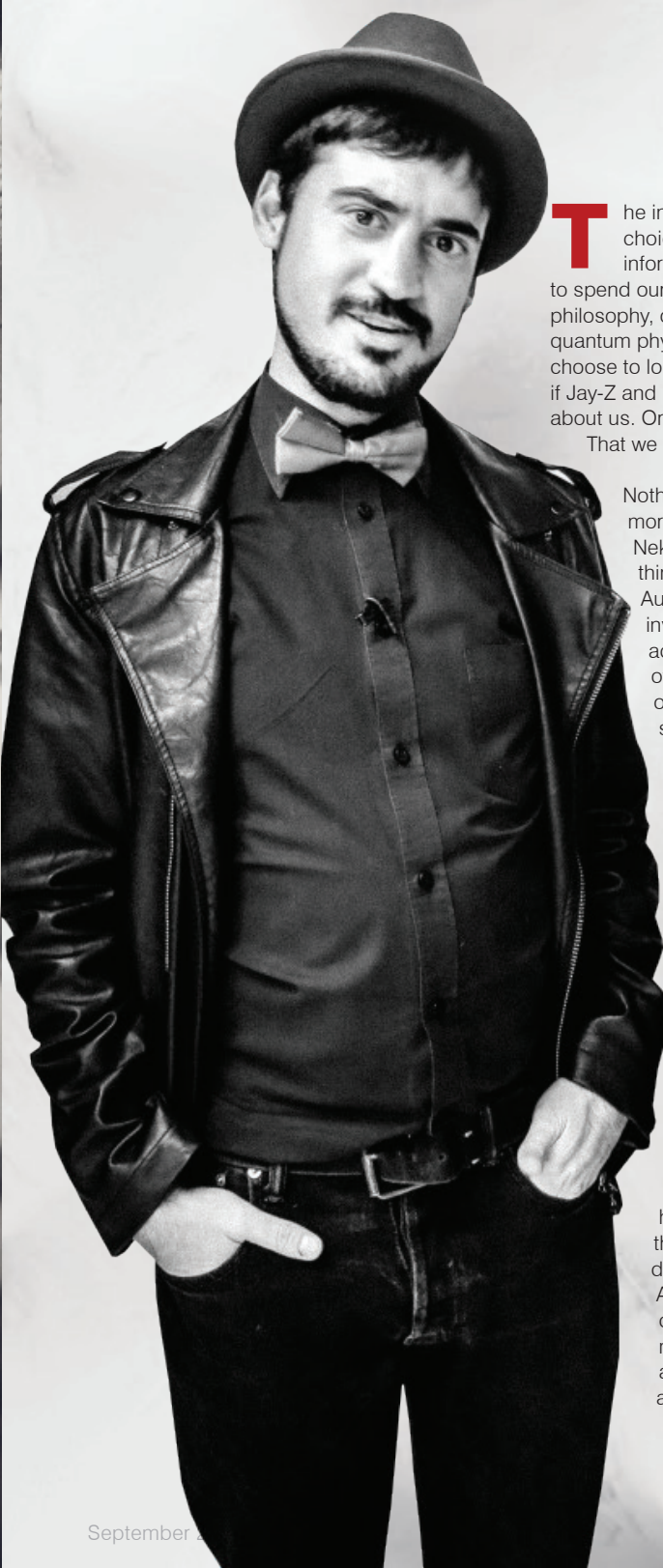
"I AGREE WHOLEHEARTEDLY. GAMING IS NOT THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN MY LIFE."

More importantly, I also have a family. That I like spending time with! *Gasp* I have a three year old son who likes nothing better than to ride his bike madly down our rather steep driveway shouting, "Faaaaaaster!" Would I rather be playing games than madly taking action shots of the look of glee on his face? Not. A. Chance.

I would rather get up early and spend an hour playing games uninterrupted before my son wakes up than take time away from him. To be fair, kids don't really allow you to indulge in things like "me time" either, but still. The games will always be there. My son's childhood won't. **ts**

THE ICE AGE

BEFORE THE INTERNET, PEOPLE WERE FORCED TO BEHAVE STUPIDLY IN FRONT OF ONLY A SMALL GROUP OF FRIENDS, WRITES DEEP FRIED MAN



The internet offers human beings a choice. It is a source of limitless information, and so we can choose to spend our time researching modern philosophy, or expanding our knowledge of quantum physics. The fact that we instead choose to look at pics of cats and check to see if Jay-Z and Beyoncé are still an item says a lot about us. Or rather, it says one thing about us - That we are stupid.

Nothing encapsulated that stupidity more than the recent rise of Nekomination. Invented, as stupid things often are, by a drunken Australian, the Nekomination involves downing alcohol, often accompanied by the performance of a life-threatening, strange or otherwise mind-numbingly asinine stunt. As you may expect, it became a huge viral success.

Now, Nekomination has been surpassed by the ice bucket challenge. Pouring a bucket of ice water over your own head is not a significantly more intelligent or sophisticated action than downing an alcoholic beverage, but somehow the ice bucket challenge comes across as far more noble than its predecessor.

First of all, it's meant to raise awareness for Lou Gehrig's disease, with those nominated having the option of performing the challenge or forfeiting and donating a hundred dollars to the ALS Association charity. Attach a charitable cause to an action, no matter how unjustifiable, and that action suddenly seems selfless and philanthropic.

Whether it's tempting hypothermia, as in this case, or growing the kind of facial hair, as with Movember, that would usually identify you as a possible threat to the wellbeing of small children, no-one can resist a dumb challenge when there's a charity involved.

And, unlike the Nekomination, which is usually taken up by those who previously had an extremely small chance of being nominated for anything other than a Darwin Award, the list of those who have succumbed to the ice bucket challenge reads like Time's 50 Most Influential People. The ice bucket challenge is, therefore, a phenomenon that opens up a variety of deep, philosophical questions.

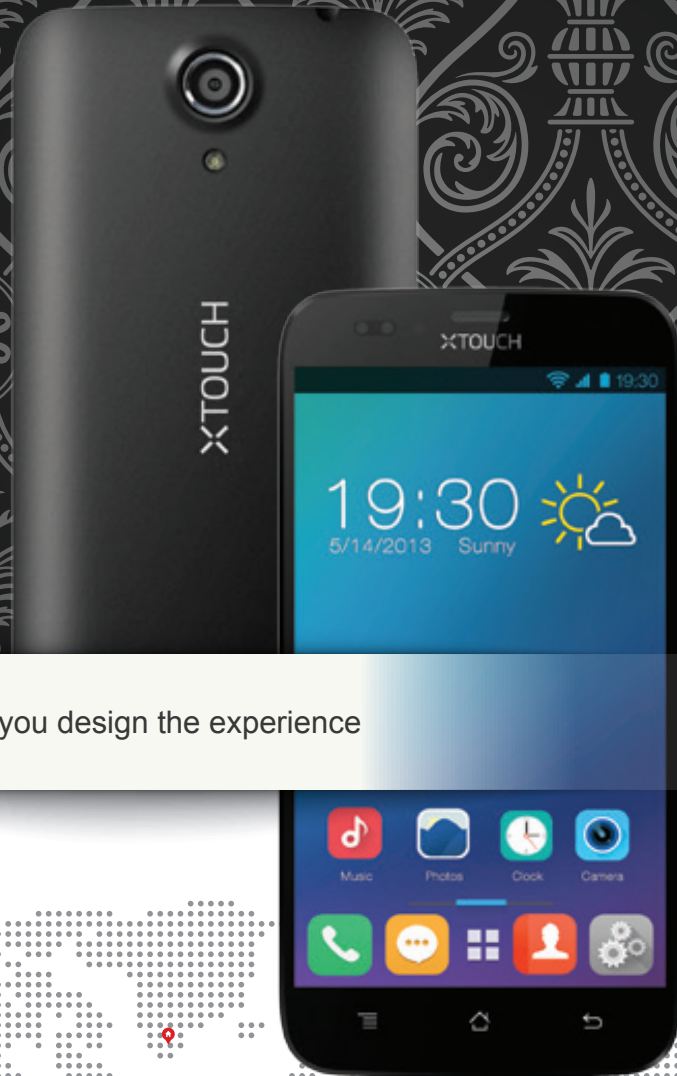
IF IT'S FOR A GOOD CAUSE, IS IT OKAY IF I STILL FIND IT REALLY, REALLY STUPID?

Your choices are donating a hundred dollars to the cause or pouring ice water over your own head. Doesn't that make you a better person if you refuse the nomination, firstly because you donate money to a good cause and secondly because you don't have to suffer the humiliation of large amounts of people watching you pour ice water over yourself? Couldn't the likes of Bill Gates, Oprah Winfrey and Justin Bieber afford to fork out the hundred bucks? And, if so, are they not maybe doing it just because they don't want to feel left out, like if you refused to join the pile-on in high school?

But the most pressing question is, where do we draw the line? If we were told that filming ourselves wearing nothing but a g-string and crocks, riding on a unicycle while drinking a glass of our own urine would help fight Ebola, would we all do it? Even Oprah Winfrey? Only time will tell. In the meanwhile, allow me to ask one final question: If it's for a good cause, is it okay if I still find it really, really stupid? Of course, I'm not blaming the internet for any of this. Human stupidity existed long before the web was popularised. It just wasn't nearly as celebrated. **ts**



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