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tech smart

ISSUE 133 > OCTOBER 2014 > ISSN 1726-3358 > THIS PREMIUM PRODUCT IS FREE > **★ FREEMIUM ★**

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PREVIEWS OF YOUR NEW
GEAR P12-15

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- DESTINY
- SCI-FI COMP
- SPORT STYLE
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ANOTHER BITE

In tech, as in life, the only constant is indeed change. You might have been top dog a while back, but you have to keep pushing to stay on top. I'm looking at Apple these days and wondering if the tide has not turned. Yes, the new iPhone 6 might take being flexible a bit too far, and yes, the Apple had to pull the iOS 8 update, but there are two other missteps specifically that indicate that the-times-they-are-a-changin'.

Firstly the new Apple Watch, featured on p8. There is no doubt that Sir Jonathan Ive will go down as one of, if not the best, industrial designers of the start of the 21 century. Somehow I'm unsure if the new Watch will take centre stage at his eventual retrospective at MOMA, looking a bit like those plastic watches once found in lucky packets. If one scrutinises the second and third generation watches the Android competition is releasing (see p13), it's clear that Apple has some catching up to do.

Maybe the best indication that Apple is starting to lose the plot is the spam it's uploaded to its users' music libraries, in the rather unfortunate choice of U2's latest album. U2? What is this, the 1990s? Talk about a bad choice in brand association.

Schadenfreude aside, Cupertino will survive and continue to prosper, with reviewers such as Stephen Fry noting that the iPhone 6 and 6 Plus are "the best and most beautiful mobile telecom technology ever yet produced." But can it continue to strut around acting as if it's untouchable? I think this cool kid just picked up its first grey hairs.

Enjoy the issue,

Mike Joubert
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ABOUT THE COVER GIRL

QUORRA FROM TRON LEGACY

Model: Maria from Spotlight Agency

Quick Facts:

While Quorra may be a program, her existence is unique, as not only was she the product of spontaneous evolution, but she is also the last of the Isomorphic Algorithm (ISOs) when we meet her.

This means she is also the only remaining survivor of The Purge, a genocidal event initiated by Clu to utterly destroy the ISO colonies.

She is deeply loyal to Kevin Flynn, who saved her from The Purge, and when he enters Tron, first rescues and then befriends Sam, Kevin's son.

Quorra gets her chance to put her learning of the Art of the Selfless into practice (taught to her by Kevin) when she allows herself to be captured in order to help the father and son escape Clu's grasp.

Quorra has an eager curiosity about the world outside, and is a particularly keen reader of Jules Verne.

While she may be naive and in her way innocent, Quorra is still a formidable fighter, employing both her light sword and identity disc to stave off Clu's Black Guards.

Famous Gamora quotes

Quorra: Your father was the creator.

Sam Flynn: Where do I find him?

Quorra: Make it there alive. And he'll find you.

Quorra: But between you and me, Jules Verne is my favourite. Do you know Jules Verne?

Sam Flynn: Sure.

Quorra [delighted]: What's he like?

Quorra: There's someone I once knew. A program named Zeus, who fought alongside the ISOs.

They say he still runs the underground, manages the dissident factions, forges data for the rogue programs. They say he can get anyone, anywhere. **ts**



GREAT GEAR

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Pippa believes it's time to put an end to exclusion.

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If the opposite of smart is simple, then he'll choose a simple watch over a smartwatch any day of the week, writes Deep Fried Man.

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GREAT GEAR!

LAND ROVER DISCOVERY SPORT HSE LUXURY

Land Rover's newly minted Discovery Sport is said to be the British manufacturer's most versatile offering to date. If it proves as popular as the Range Rover Evoque, Land Rover could soon dominate the entire Compact SUV market.



With four distinct models within the Discovery Sport range, the HSE Luxury is the most highly specced offering, making use of Land Rover's unique Terrain Response and Hill Descent Control capabilities. Added to this is Electronic Traction and Dynamic Stability Control to ensure it can expertly negotiate rugged terrain, or mount a curb in Sandton.

The exterior of this Compact SUV is certainly handsome, but the interior is equally pleasant, with a 5-plus-2 seating arrangement, a value added Meridian audio system and Land Rover's unique Heads-Up Display.

With a number of diesel and petrol engines to choose from, drivers who favour power will be highly enticed by the 2.0 litre Si4 Automatic Petrol engine, with an explosive 176 kW and handy 340 Nm of torque at their disposal. Although 0-100 km/h time in an SUV may not be a priority, the Si4 powered Discover Sport takes a relatively quick 8.2 seconds to do it.

With no local pricing confirmed at this stage, the Discovery Sport range is expected to start at R620 000 for the entry level model, and R750 000 for the model topping HSE Luxury.

2015 ROLLS-ROYCE WRAITH

Flying the flag high for British luxury, is Rolls-Royce, which debuted the 2015 iteration of its Wraith coupé, set to hit the road in the early part of 2015. Behind its iconic Pantheon grille, sits a 6.6 litre, twin turbocharged V12 engine that delivers 465 kW of power and 800 Nm of torque, reaching 100 km/h from standstill in only 4.6 seconds. The Wraith's formidable power is matched by a beautifully detailed interior, with specially handcrafted upholstery and fibre-optic lit headliner designed to resemble the night sky. As expected, all this luxury and power will come at a price, with the Rolls-Royce Wraith set at \$300 000. **ts**



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GREAT GEAR!

APPLE WATCH

It's official, with Apple debuting its first ever smartwear device, wearables are no longer a hip trend, but rather a newly disrupted sector all on its own.

Far less radical than many were expecting (some would say drab), the Apple Watch is the manufacturer's "most personal device ever", with three different models for users to choose from and up to 11 different watch faces to flip between.

Along with the standard Apple Watch, added to the mix is the fitness-focused Apple Watch Sport and fashion-forward Apple Watch Edition.

To set itself apart from the Android Wear sporting competition, Apple has designed a specialised digital crown on the side of the face. This mechanism allows wearers to scale the size of the Apple Watch's screen, as well as navigate through apps.

Sticking with the screen, Apple has opted for a Retina display with Force Touch, a new technology capable of discerning the difference between soft taps and hard presses. Other new integrations include an redesigned S1 processor and Taptic engine for in-app vibrating feedback.

With only a handful of apps built for the Apple Watch at this stage, Apple has rolled out its WatchKit API for developers to start brainstorming innovative uses for this new wearable when it releases in early 2015.

Local pricing for the Apple Watch still remains a mystery, but US residents will be paying upwards of \$350.

IPHONE 6 AND IPHONE 6 PLUS

With the Apple Watch stealing the limelight, Cupertino's larger iPhone 6 and 6 Plus smartphones might not have gotten as much attention as usual. Fitted with 4.7" (1134x750) and 5.5" (1920x1080) Retina HD screens respectively, it brings Apple closer to what other smartphone users have been used to for a while already. It's not just the display that's been given the overhaul, with both models incorporating a new A8 processor to deliver improved performance and power efficiency.

Apple also showcased its new NFC-based payment solution, Apple Pay. This mobile payment system, paired to one's Apple ID, will allow users (US only for now) to swipe either the iPhone 6 or 6 Plus over a compatible NFC reader at a number of select retailers from October onwards. Only time will tell if this was not the actual biggest news of the event. **ts**



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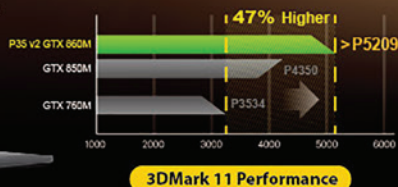
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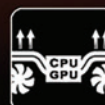
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IFA: YOUR NEW GEAR IS HERE

The IFA exhibition, held last month in Berlin, was responsible for hosting more than a few awesome product announcements. Below are some of the best reveals of the show.

SAMSUNG GALAXY NOTE 4, GALAXY NOTE EDGE AND GEAR VR

Coming as no surprise whatsoever, Samsung did indeed unveil the Galaxy Note 4. While the latest phablet does not bump its size up past the 5.7" of its predecessor, its screen resolution did jump from 1920x1080 to 2560x1440, giving a gobsmacking 515 ppi.

Everyone may have seen the Note 4 coming, but Samsung still had two surprises in store, in the form of its next-gen display sporting **Galaxy Note Edge** and virtual reality venturing **Gear VR**. The distinguishing feature of the Note Edge (5.6" quad HD and Super AMOLED display), is the curved angular

edge on its side, for quick reference to user's apps and notifications. Apart from this new information strip, the Note Edge incorporates the same chipset, RAM, memory and camera as its non-edge counterpart.

Switching things up to the virtual reality front, the Korean giant showcased the Gear VR, which works in conjunction with the Note 4 and takes advantage of its responsive quad HD Super AMOLED display (2560x1440). Developed with virtual reality specialists, Oculus, the Gear VR offers wearers a 96 degree field of view and generates a 60 fps frame rate, thanks to the Note 4. As far as apps go, Samsung has partnered with a range of content specialists to deliver immersive experiences such as Marvel's *Avengers*, bringing Tony Stark's lab to life. Both the Note Edge and Gear VR remain in the prototype phase.

ASUS ZENBOOK UX305

Proving that advances are still being made on the notebook front, Asus trotted out what it declared the world's thinnest ultrabook to date – its 13.3" **Zenbook**, with a razor thin profile

of 12.3 mm and weighing in at a mere 1.2 kg. Furthermore, the notebook boasts Intel's latest processor, the Core M; but the kicker is really the ultrabook's screen, particularly considering the screen's profile. This boasts a stunning resolution of 3200x1800 (276 ppi), although touch is not a feature.

SONY XPERIA Z3 TABLET COMPACT

Sony's presentation at IFA 2014 yielded a refreshed lineup of Xperia devices, most intriguing of which was the Japanese manufacturer's lightweight waterproof tablet offering, the 8" **Z3 Tablet Compact**. Coming in at only 270 g, and measuring

a svelte 6.4 mm thin, the Z3 Tablet Compact has the potential to shake things up within the crowded small tablet market. Beneath its 8" full HD Triluminos display (1920x1200), Sony have opted for a Qualcomm Snapdragon quad-core processor, clocked at 2.5 GHz, while it also features IP67/68 rated waterproofness and dust resistance.

PS4 REMOTE PLAY

Sony also gave gamers something to get excited about in the form of **PS4 Remote Play**, for its next-gen console users to get stuck into when it arrives in November this year. This new gaming service, exclusive to select Xperia devices at the moment, will allow users to take their experience off-console and switch things over to a smartphone or tablet.

Controls will come courtesy of the specially designed GCM10 Game Control Mount to attach to one's Xperia device and PS4 controller. Furthermore, Sony's PlayStation app can turn your Xperia smartphone or tablet into a second screen for interacting with other PS contacts, and allows the purchase of PS4 games to download.



THE IFA SMARTWATCHES:

SAMSUNG GEAR S

If there's one thing the S in the name doesn't stand for, it's shy – the Gear S is both large and conspicuous, even though its 2" Super AMOLED 360 x 480 (300 ppi) touchscreen does curve around one's wrist. In its favour though, the smartwatch can function separately from a

smartphone, thanks to the inclusion of its own SIM card slot and GPS. Samsung has also reassured that the Gear S, which runs on the Tizen OS and is only compatible with Samsung Galaxy smartphones, will offer a good two days of use before needing to be recharged.



MOTO 360

Taking an entirely different tack is the exciting Moto 360, which looks more like a conventional, rather stylish watch with a large, circular face, albeit with a 320x290 resolution (205 ppi), based on the Android Wear software. This means that it will pair with any Android smartphone, provided it has

Android 4.3. It boasts Google Now, and can deliver weather, traffic, flights and numerous app-related alerts. The 360 also offers a heart rate sensor and waterproofing up to one metre. What it cannot do though, is make calls independently. It's available Stateside for a fairly reasonable \$250.



LG G WATCH R

Also catching the eye is the latest from LG, the G Watch R. This too runs Android Wear and looks more like a conventional watch than a tiny phone strapped to your wrist. Its 1.3" AMOLED screen slightly bests the Moto 360 at 320x320 (246 ppi), and similarly

will pair with smartphones running Android 4.3. Luckily build quality largely looks up to snuff, graced by both stainless steel and aluminium. Alas though, its availability is only slated for later this year, while its price is yet to be announced.



ASUS ZENWATCH

Similarly vying to hug your wrist is the latest from Asus, its attractive, square faced Zenwatch, running on Android Wear. This boasts a couple of nifty features that set it apart from its competition, as it can be used as a remote camera viewfinder, as well as enable users to quickly silence a paired phone by covering the watch face with their hand.

As far as styling is concerned, the Zenwatch sports a solid steel frame and leather strap, and its 1.63" 320x320 AMOLED screen won't completely overwhelm your wrist either. It has been priced at \$260 Stateside, although there is no indication as to when South African users will be able to be so armed.



SONY SMARTWATCH 3

Sony was one of the first companies to produce smartwatches and has plenty of practice, now announcing its SmartWatch 3. It sports a 1.6" LCD screen with a 320x320 resolution and similarly runs Android Wear (thus compatible with all Android 4.3 running phones). To its credit, the company has paid particular attention to battery life

– with a stated life of four days between charges, while its 420mAh lithium-polymer battery would also require just under an hour at the powerpoint. While the outlook is positive that the SmartWatch 3 will arrive in South Africa, local availability and pricing beyond its €229 (R3 200) European pricetag has not yet been confirmed. **ts**



PHOTOKINA 2014: PHOTOGRAPHY ON FIRE

For all the photography geeks and pixel peepers out there, this year's Photokina in Cologne was a bumper one. While some announcements were expected, others came from left field. Here are the hottest cameras to feed your Gear Acquisition Syndrome.



Canon EOS

7D Mark II

Finally, making many an APS-C Canon shooter happy, Canon's newest 20.2 megapixel APS-C DSLR was officially revealed. Judging by the specs, it was worth the excruciating anticipation. The EOS 7D Mark II boasts a capture rate of 10 frames per second (fps) along with a new 65-point cross-type AF system and Dual DIGIC 6 processors, indicating the camera is clearly aimed at action and sports shooters. Its ISO now ranges from ISO 100-16 000, expandable to ISO 51 200, and the 7D Mark II also supports both Compact Flash (CF) and SD cards.

Also onboard is an integrated GPS and digital compass, and a 3" non-reticulated, non-touch LCD screen. Video shooters are catered to with full HD video capture at 60p in MOV and MP4 formats, and new dedicated microphone and headphone sockets for external devices. Subject to change, its body only price is expected to be around R23 000 or R27 500 with an 18-135mm lens.



Nikon

D750

Nikon has been going full-frame crazy this year, with the D750 being its third model in 2014. As a follow up to the (very) old D700, the D750 sits comfortably between the D610 and D810.

There's a lot to get excited about, since it boasts a newly developed 24.3-MP FX-format CMOS sensor along with a 51-point AF system. This uses 15 cross-type AF sensors, 11 of which are fully functional up to f/8. Also worth noting is that the camera marks the first time that an FX-format (full frame in Nikon speak) DSLR has offered both integrated Wi-Fi and a tilting Vari-Angle 3.2" 1229K LCD, rather than a fixed screen.

Other noteworthy features include an ISO range from 100-12 800, while video is catered to as well; more specifically, the D750 can capture video in Full HD (1920x1080) at 60/30/24p. Expect it to land later this year for R32 000.



Samsung NX1

Smart Camera

Samsung also had something to debut at this year's Photokina; releasing the mirrorless NX1 flagship. The APS-C NX1 Smart camera could best be described, at least in appearance, as looking like a smaller than average DSLR sans pentaprism. It boasts a 28 -megapixel backside-illuminated CMOS sensor, ISO range up to 25 600, an OLED electronic viewfinder, and a 3" Super AMOLED touchscreen.

As always with Samsung, particular attention has been paid to its connectivity features, which include Wi-Fi, NFC and Bluetooth. Worth noting is the new 205 phase detect autofocus points and the camera's capability to capture an impressive 15 fps, not to forget the 4K video recording. Its price Stateside when it arrives a little later this year is pegged at \$1 500. (R16 500).

Leica M Edition 60

Leica's magnificent M3 is regarded as the best rangefinder (if not camera) ever made, and the German company is celebrating the 60th anniversary of the iconic M-System that it spawned with the debut of the M Edition 60. Back to basics applies here in serious measure, since there is no LCD review screen at the back of the camera. As with film, if you want to see what you shot you will have to wait. With only 600 units available, you better talk to your bank manager to have your \$19 500 ready this October.



Fujifilm X100T

Fujifilm's X100 range carries a special place in many a street photographer's heart thanks to its fixed lens, compact size and retro looks. The X100T is set to further this love affair with a new advanced hybrid viewfinder that combines the best of optical and electronic. This 16 megapixel camera with its 23mm (35mm equivalent) f2 lens is set to hit locally soon with a RRP of R15 000.



Canon PowerShot G7 X

Also unveiled at Photokina by Cannon is the newly announced, small but mighty PowerShot G7 X. Looking to compete against Sony's RX100 range, the light (304 g) camera sports a 1.0-type back-illuminated 20.2 megapixel CMOS sensor and f/1.8-2.8, 4.2x lens (24-100mm) in a compact metal body. The G7 X doesn't look like it has been spared any high-end features normally found on DSLRs, including a 31 point AF (autofocus) system which caters for Touch AF, the Digic 6 image processor, 6.5 fps, while offering full HD 60p video as well. It further sports integrated Wi-Fi and NFC.

Common settings, such as aperture and shutter speed can be adjusted using Canon's Lens Control ring while the ISO range is a respectable 100-12800. Local prices have not been confirmed, but stateside the camera is expected to cost in the region of \$700 (R7 700).



Panasonic Lumix CM1

There's no denying that smartphones have steadily encroached on the fortunes of dedicated cameras over the past years, but rather than push back against the trend, Photokina saw one manufacturer – Panasonic – show how it has wholeheartedly embraced it. Its announcement begged the question - what do you get when you cross a smartphone with a Leica lens? Probably something close to this, the company's newest offering, which boasts a 1" sensor, 20 megapixel resolution and oh yes, a f2.8 Leica lens.

Also onboard is a 4.7" screen with a 1080p resolution, a 2.3 GHz quad-core Snapdragon processor and 2 GB of memory. Harder to tell is whether the device is intended to be a capable smartphone with exceptional imaging capabilities, or a capable compact with the ability to function as a smartphone too. At present though it is only launching in France and Germany for €900 (R12 750). [RN] **ts**



MECER XPRESS 800P31C SMARTLIFE

Small 8" Android tablets are a dime a dozen these days. In the Mecer Smartlife Tablet's favour is solid build quality and a wallet friendly price tag.



For any newcomer to the small tablet scene looking for an entry-level device, the options are boundless. Throwing its hat into a rather crowded ring is Mecer, with their wallet friendly 8" 800P31C Smartlife Tablet, retailing for R1 800. At that price point, the Smartlife Tablet combines a solid array of specifications and relatively robust construction to win over those users leaning towards one of Samsung's or Asus' offerings.

Sturdily built

In spite of Mecer opting for a plastic heavy design, the Smartlife Tablet is well put together and remains sturdy even under rugged use. Measuring 12.3 cm wide, it sits well in hand and remains relatively easy to wield throughout the day. If there is one downside, the 800P31C is on the slightly heavy side, weighing in at 345 g. The 8" display (1280x800), offers 188 ppi pixel density and features Gorilla Glass protective technology. Compared to the more expensive 8" tablets, the Xpress Smartlife's screen struggles with highly detailed applications and games, but performs adequately when viewing movies and browsing the web. Internally, the Smartlife Tablet incorporates

THE MECER SMARTLIFE IS A GREAT OPTION FOR USERS IN NEED OF A WELL CONSTRUCTED 8" TABLET THAT WON'T BREAK THE BANK AT R1 800.

a number of mid-range performing components, such as a quad-core Mediatek MTK8389 processor, clocked at 1.2 GHz. Added to this is 1 GB of RAM and 8 GB worth of flash memory. As a result, the 800P31C can handle most multitasking demands, and switches between apps fluidly. Fitted with a 5 MP camera on the rear and 2 MP one upfront, the 800P31C is not a first choice imaging tool, as pictures look grainy in low light conditions, which serves as the only major drawback we found on the Smartlife Tablet.

Cost savvy

All things considered, the 3G-touting 800P31C is a great option for users in need of a well constructed 8" tablet that won't break the bank at R1 800. Along with a microSD slot for up to 32 GB and 4200 mAh battery for a full day's use, the Smartlife Tablet is indeed a good choice for the cost savvy. [RLC] **ts**

SAMSUNG GALAXY TAB 8.4

It may be a few months since its release, but Samsung's latest Galaxy Tab 8.4 is an impressive piece of kit and still holds its own.

There has been no shortage of 8" tablets this year, with users, particularly those looking for a budget-friendly offering, being spoilt for choice on both Windows and Android fronts. However, amongst these there is still the crème of the crop, and it is here that the Galaxy Tab 8.4 stands out, in more ways than one.

That little bit extra

For starters, the tablet feels considerably more solid than the Galaxy Note 8, thanks to metal accent and a nicely rubberized back, which make it comfortable to hold. In case you're wondering, that extra 0.4" does make a difference, as it gives the tablet a 16:10 aspect ratio, which is ideal when watching movies. It does though, make it a little too tall in portrait orientation, and we found ourselves more inclined to use it with both hands rather than one handed as we would a smaller 7", 7.9" or even 8.1" tablet. That being said, it is still quite portable and travel friendly; far more so than a 9.7" tablet or 10" device.

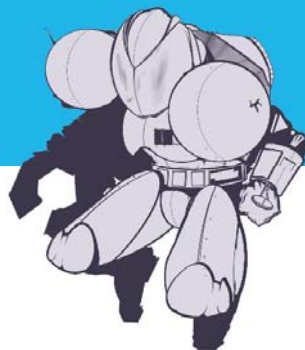
Screen test

However, where the Galaxy Tab 8.4" really shines (literally and figuratively) is in its beautiful screen, which is sharp, boasts vivid colours, deep blacks and great contrast. Helping matters is its 2560x1600 (359 ppi) resolution; and when placing the same frame of the same comic side by side with an iPad Air, we saw scant differences between the two. Furthermore, rather loud, distinct speakers made watching movies on it a pleasure.

As for its performance on Android 4.4, we found that it was largely exemplary, with transitions between webpages, the user interface and watching media all well served by the quad-core Snapdragon 800 (2.3 GHz) and 2 GB of memory. Its 16 GB storage can always be supplanted via the microSD card slot (up to 64 GB). Still, it's quite a bargain for what you get for its RRP of R3 900 from **Orange.com**. [RN] **ts**

WHERE THE GALAXY TAB 8.4" REALLY SHINES (LITERALLY AND FIGURATIVELY) IS IN ITS BEAUTIFUL SCREEN.





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CLOUDGATE PC

Is it a full fledged PC or a portable computing device that you can take anywhere? The answer is both, as the CloudGate PC defies convention.

It would be fair to say that the Android operating system has gained a healthy following on smartphones and tablets, but when it comes to PCs – and the heavy duty content creation that these are typically used for – the story is still quite different (even with Chromebooks). That though could be set to change, at least if the homegrown CloudGate PC has anything to do with it.

Small and mighty

Looking at the CloudGate, its first impressions wouldn't lend you towards describing it as a PC at all, as the device is tiny (about the size of a CD case) and lightweight (225 g). However, connecting this small box to an external keyboard and mouse (using one of the three USB 2.0 ports) and screen (via its HDMI port) gives you the Android OS (4.2 Jelly Bean) – and all of its apps – on a screen size of your choice. The real kicker is that the device can further serve up a virtualised Windows environment, with its apps, across the cloud as well using the CloudWare software.

Additionally, doing content creation work on it is quite a bit more approachable than on a small dedicated screen of a tablet.

Although the device sports a capable quad-core 1.6 GHz processor and boasts 8 GB of solid state storage internally, everything one does is meant to be stored on the cloud. This means that unlike on a tablet or notebook with a dedicated hard drive, if it gets stolen or goes missing, one's data need not be lost or compromised. That being said, there is an SD card slot on the small, inconspicuous box as well, along with an Ethernet port for connecting to a wired network. However, we found it more elegant to just use the built-in Wi-Fi as we would on an Android tablet; within seconds of entering our Gmail password we were up and running.

A mini revolution?

Does the CloudGate PC herald a revolution of the PC space? Well, it sits very neatly alongside cloud-centred Chromebooks; and the CloudGate PC offers a viable, valuable, adaptable and affordable computing alternative in an increasingly cloud dominated world. It has an RRP of R2 000 from www.cloudgate.co.za. [RN] **ts**

THE CLOUDGATE PC OFFERS A VIABLE, VALUABLE AND AFFORDABLE COMPUTING ALTERNATIVE IN AN INCREASINGLY CLOUD DOMINATED WORLD.



ASUS TRANSFORMER PAD

A good hybrid tablet can be a great aid while doing some multitasking on the fly, and as such, we had high hopes for Asus' Transformer Pad.



We love lightweight and easy to use tablets here at TechSmart, but we also hold a particular fondness for ultrabooks, which lend themselves to higher levels of multitasking. For those that want a little of both however, a good tablet hybrid is always worth considering, and that's where Asus' Transformer Pad is aiming to find its niche.

Getting the job done

Featuring a 10.1" HD IPS display (1280x800), it retains enough crispness and clarity to make viewing content enjoyable, but struggles slightly with more graphically demanding games. Weighing in at 555 g, the Transformer Pad is no featherweight, that being said though, the weight distribution within the tablet itself is well balanced and shows no propensity to topple over when the keypad is attached in notebook mode.

Handling the workload is an Intel Atom Z2560 dual-core processor, clocked at 1.6 GHz and 1 GB of RAM. This may not seem high compared to other 10" tablets, but the Transformer Pad proved more than capable of coping with the multitasking demands we asked of it. Also included is Android 4.4 (KitKat) and Asus' own Zen user interface, which responded well and provided

A GOOD TABLET HYBRID IS ALWAYS WORTH CONSIDERING, AND THAT'S WHERE ASUS' TRANSFORMER PAD IS AIMING TO FIND ITS NICHE.

a pleasant tablet experience, although there are quite a few Asus branded apps and software which can become distracting.

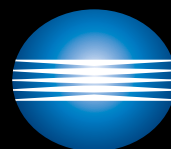
Jekyll and Hyde

Now we get to the one area that the Transformer Pad falls short, its detachable keypad, and more specifically the trackpad, which does not deliver the desired degree of responsiveness that a user really needs. Whether it was the speed of cursor movement, or clicking the trackpad itself, this niggling aspect became exacerbated given prolonged use.

Set to retail for roughly R3 500 (keypad included), the Asus Transformer Pad delivers a solid overall experience for an entry level device. That experience however, is hampered somewhat by the lack of response from its trackpad, and for that reason an otherwise productive piece of tech becomes limiting. In notebook mode, the Asus Transformer Pad is less than ideal, but sans keypad in pure tablet mode, is still well worth considering. RRP (R3 500) [RLC] **ts**

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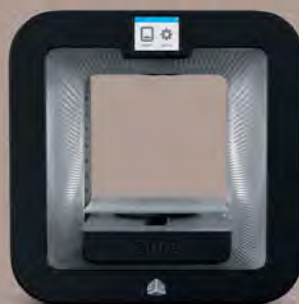
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FUJIFILM X30

While the flagship X-T1 and the X100 range usually get all the attention, Fujifilm's X30 is worthy of more than just a glance.



The X30 is pretty much a hassle-free camera since not only is the 12 MP compact a handy size (smaller in volume than the Canon G1 X II) but it comes with a zoom lens of 28-112mm (35 mm equivalent) with quite a speedy f2.0-f2.8 aperture. While 112mm is not the strongest zoom out there, it helps with framing, and in our opinion it's also better than being stuck with no zoom as with the Fujifilm X100 series or Nikon Coolpix A. This zoom also operates manually which makes it faster to use than the Canon G or Sony RX100 series. Keep

in mind though that it does not contain the larger APS-C sized sensor found on many DSLRs (and some compacts), rather the 2/3"-type X-Trans CMOS II.

It's got the look

Fujifilm has worked wonders with its retro design, but its X100 series still takes the cake with its classic rangefinder looks. When picked up the X30 sits comfortably in hand, while there are no problems with fingers accidentally hitting a button. We did have to

MOST IMPORTANTLY, OUR GENERAL EXPERIENCE WITH THE X30 HIT ALL THE RIGHT NOTES.

get used to the electronic viewfinder being placed a bit more to the centre, but our biggest gripe is with the cheapish feel of the buttons at the back, which is exacerbated by the back dial that is made from plastic and doesn't feel durable. Maybe not as important but still a bit of an irritation is the way the camera starts – by unlocking the lens. It's not the speediest method available, especially if you want to preserve battery life and need to unlock/lock often. Talking of which, battery life is an improvement on the X20, and we received in the region of 450 shots.

All eyes open

With both an electronic viewfinder (a solid 2 300 k resolution) and 3" tiltable LCD screen at the back, you are covered for most shooting situations. Most importantly, our general experience with the X30 hit all the right notes, while providing above average results. It retails for R7 000. [MJ] **ts**

ACER ASPIRE Z3-615 ALL-IN-ONE

The PC is not quite dead yet as Acer's Z3 All-in-One proves.



Let's be honest, there was much to hate about the traditional PC tower. Those old beige boxes were more than an eyesore, proving cumbersome to move, noisy, and if you were searching for a USB port at the back you might as well try disentangling the Gordian Knot with your eyes closed. While the PC has fallen out of favour, it can still play an important role in many households. Even more so now, since the evolution of the PC has taken it on a particularly pleasing-to-the-eye path.

Going all in

Case in point Acer's Aspire Z3-615 All-in-One. While the all-in-one design of incorporating

the brains of the PC behind the screen is nothing new (Apple released the iMac G3 in '98, which incidentally saved the company from the financial doldrums), the past few years' machines are generally thinner and more robust than before.

The Z3's most appealing aspect is arguably its 23" full HD touchscreen. It's bright and well saturated, and works just as well for spreadsheets as for movies. While we've come to the conclusion that a touchscreen on a notebook is about as useful as a printer that can also butter your toast, the case is slightly different on a desktop. For one, it's more open for interaction, so you have to try Fresh Paint, Microsoft's glorious painting/drawing

THE Z3'S MOST APPEALING ASPECT IS ARGUABLY ITS 23" FULL HD TOUCHSCREEN.

program, while a number of downloadable games will keep the family busy.

What's in?

We were surprised to find an Intel Pentium dual-core processor (2.60 GHz) onboard our unit, since performance was generally on par with some of the first i5 machines we tested. The 8 GB of RAM present certainly helped, while it could have been even zippier with an SSD drive inside. Alas, not at this price point, instead a 500 GB hard drive took care of storage.

If this machine is set to become a bit of an entertainment hub, you're in luck since sound quality was above average, while also proficiently loud so there's no need for secondary speakers.

We would have been even happier if the machine came with a better quality keyboard and mouse; instead the rather average plastic models do little to inspire and doesn't match the general look and feel of the Z3. If you can look past this, and we recommend you do, the Acer Z3 should suit your home well. R11 000 for the Core i3 model. [MJ] **ts**

ASTRAPHOBE LIGHTNING PROTECTION SYSTEM

With summer on its way, so too are the Highveld's famed lightning storms, which makes a lightning surge protection system that much more worth investing in.

The South African made Astraphobe DSL lightning protection system's purpose, like its design, is simple – to protect your valuable internet and telephone connected hardware from lightning surges. These the company pointed out, and our own bitter experience has born out, can quite easily and quite literally in a flash, devastate ill prepared hardware that is connected to an ADSL line struck by lightning.

Shelter from the storm

The actual device itself reminded us of a Wii – essentially a thick white box (but not overly large) with just two connections – one to receive the phone line and the second for your Ethernet connection. Thus, setting it up could not be simpler, as it is simply a matter of plugging the device into a wall socket and then inserting the telephone and Ethernet cables.

The Astraphobe essentially sits between a user's phoneline and their internet connected devices, which could include the likes of routers, PCs, consoles, TVs and storage devices connected to the network. Its added extra is that the unit is not simply a surge

protector though; it also houses a storm detection system, and thus when an approaching storm is detected (up to 40 km away), it automatically disconnects the ADSL line if need be and reconnects it when the storm has passed. The unit displays whether the conditions are clear, whether a storm is detected and how far away it is, and, should the line need to be disconnected, how long before it will automatically reconnect.

One strike, you're out

Thankfully we were not graced with a sudden lightning storm while reviewing the unit, nor could we coordinate a lightning strike to fully test Jacstech's assertions. Nonetheless, considering that we are quite used to unplugging our DSL router and phone line entirely when storms roll in, we could easily see how this would offer a more convenient alternative, particularly when away from our office while a lightning storm decided to make a sudden appearance.

It also should be noted that it will likely be more applicable to those in particularly lightning prone areas. It has a RRP of R1 400 and is available from www.kalahari.net. [RN] **ts**



THE ASTRAPHOBE DSL IS NOT SIMPLY A SURGE PROTECTOR THOUGH; IT ALSO HOUSES A STORM DETECTION SYSTEM.

STRONGLY RECOMMENDED!

STUART PONTON – TECHSMART DESIGN MAGICIAN



I recently got a new iPhone so I immediately started downloading a bunch of games. So far one has stood out, Two Dots. Highly addictive, beautifully designed, a lot of fun and the game map is mesmerizing.

Scrolling up you can view your journey ahead. The quirky animations sync to the Jazz line and change to suit the environment. The game is a Candy Crush styled puzzle and can be downloaded from the App Store.

John Butler has been blowing my mind ever since I first heard of him. This man does things on a guitar that Robert Johnson would be proud of. He is an American-born Australian singer, songwriter, record label owner, producer and multi-instrumentalist musician. Get his latest album *Tin Shed Tales* on iTunes for R90.



STEPHEN "SPRING" ASPELING

MOVIE FUNDI AND ALL-ROUND GOOD GUY



The Game of Thrones 2nd Edition board game (R900) will appeal to both fans of the TV series and strategy board game enthusiasts, immersing you in George R. R. Martin's medieval world. The map of Westeros

board, the attack cards, the playing pieces and tokens have been beautifully designed and crafted, swathing the game in a dark and epic majesty.

Each player governs one of the six noble Houses, using diplomacy, strategy and a little luck to control enough strongholds to win the game. However, you'll need to keep your wits - accumulating power, bidding on influence tracks, mustering troops, defending the kingdom against the Wildlings, using the Iron Throne to control politics, having foresight with the Messenger Raven and deciding the fate of battles when you control the Valyrian Steel Blade.



PIPPA TSHABALALA – GAMING COLUMNIST AND GEEK GIRL EXTRAORDINAIRE



It sounds completely weird, but *Zombie Pin-up* is actually a thing. It's exactly what it sounds like - pretty 50s style pin-up girls, but they're zombies. You'll see a bit of decay, some blood, perhaps some brains, but it's oddly

appealing, and get the sense that if a girl looking like that wanted to eat your brains, well it couldn't be all bad. [ghastly zombie pin up girl - Rob Sacchetto, bit.ly/1wYQNdl]

I love Lauren Beukes' writing - from her science fiction to her graphic novel work, and the fact that she's a local writer just makes her all the more appealing. In fact she's released a new title called *Broken Monsters*, which even horror guru Stephen King calls "scary as hell and hypnotic". I think that's a win all round! **ts**



MSI GS60 2PE GHOST PRO

If you are looking for a notebook that looks like an ultrabook, performs like a desktop and can handle some serious gaming, then look no further than MSI's GS60 Ghost Pro.

Traditionally, ultrabooks and thin notebooks have sacrificed their graphics oomph in favour of necessarily being lighter, thinner or just more portable. This is not the case at all with MSI's GS60 Ghost Pro offering as this 19 mm thin notebook appears to have made no compromises whatsoever on performance. For example, the 1.9 kg GS60 boasts top of the line specs, including a powerful fourth generation (Haswell) i7 4700HQ CPU, a generous 16 GB of memory, and both a 128 GB SSD for fast booting and a 1 TB hard drive for media storage.

Perhaps most notable is the inclusion of the beastly Nvidia GTX 870 3 GB graphics card. It is this that is credited for some admirable performance on a number of the demanding games, including Tomb Raider, Crysis 3, Watch Dogs and Bioshock: Infinite, all of which put graphics cards under some stress.

Play without compromise

In tests, according to Evetech, each one played at a resolution of 1920x1080p, with the graphics settings strictly on the highest available (Ultra or Very High). The results spoke for themselves, with Bioshock: Infinite delivering an average of 35-40 fps. Watch Dogs and Crysis 3, both of which are even more demanding, returned about 30 fps but Tomb Raider exceeded the 50/55 average fps. In case you are concerned that you would be squinting at a small 13" screen in the heat of the action, worry no more – the GS60 Ghost Pro boasts a 15.6" screen with a full HD resolution (1920x1080) and anti-glare coating.

The notebook's Matrix Display caters for up to two external displays to either expand one's gaming experience, or perform multi tasking. While it may be aimed at gamers, it should be noted that the GS60 can ably deal with demanding graphics intensive applications as well.

As for online gaming and entertainment, the GS60 has you covered – it sports Killer E2200 Game Networking for smarter, faster, networking for all online entertainment, while XSplit Gamecaster enables players to record their gaming moments and broadcast live gameplay sessions to the likes of Twitch, YouTube and UStream.

Light of your life

The GS60 Ghost Pro further boasts a few other notable features, including its lauded SteelSeries backlit keyboard and the SteelSeries Engine. As on the larger MSI notebook counterparts, users can similarly customise every key to their specific requirements. Furthermore, users can choose from more than 1 000 colour combinations and five different scenario modes for their keyboard.



MSI'S GS60 FITS RIGHT IN: IN A NUTSHELL, IT'S THIN, POWERFUL AND A JOY TO USE.

Additionally, taking into account that the machine is expected to be placed under load, its double ventilation cooling system has been designed to be quiet. Users can also look forward to clean and clear sound thanks to the onboard Dynaudio sound system.

MSI's GS60 Ghost Pro plays to a specific niche: gamers who want the power of a full-fledged gaming PC without sacrificing portability or aesthetics. It's a small subset of the notebook market, but MSI's GS60 fits right in: In a nutshell, it's thin, powerful and a joy to use. The MSI GS60 2PE Ghost Pro is available now from **Evetech.co.za** for R25 000, including free delivery across South Africa. **ts**

QUICK SPECS

	CPU: Intel Core i7 4700HQ CPU
	Graphics: Nvidia GTX 870 3 GB
	Screen: 15.6" (1920x1080p)
	Memory: 16 GB

2-BAY NAS MEDIA SERVER ENCLOSURE TN-200

Having plenty of media content in a household is one thing, but being able to seamlessly access and share it is quite another. Enter the 2-Bay NAS Media Server from TRENDnet.



As the name indicated, TRENDnet's 2-Bay NAS Media Server Enclosure, model TN-200, is aimed at being the entertainment and storage hub of a digital network, and enables DLNA certified Smart TVs, media players, and game consoles to automatically find and play multiple HD videos and music simultaneously. For audiophiles, it also offers an iTunes server, which enables users to share a massive iTunes library across their network, while a Gigabit Ethernet port ensures and maintains a high speed connection.

Space to spare

Most critical in a media server is how much space it can actually accommodate, and the TN-200 certainly delivers. It accepts two 3.5" SATA I/II hard drives (sold separately) for a total storage capacity of up to 8 TB. In case that is not enough, additional storage can be also added using the convenient USB shareport. Furthermore, the TN-200 takes into account the need for ease of use, offering an intuitive setup wizard to ensure users are up and running quickly and with minimal fuss.

The media server additionally offers some advanced features, including DLNA and remote access. The former enables users to use a DLNA app on their tablet or smartphone and thus streams movies and music contained on the TN-200, even offering simultaneous HD streams to different devices. The latter, meanwhile, enables users to safely share their content over the internet using an FTP server, or alternatively create login profiles with restricted remote access.

By your schedule

Taking into account the need for energy saving and being environmentally aware, the TN-200 can be programmed to hibernate when idle, and can be set to automatically turn off at specific times and according to a weekly schedule when not in use.

In a similar vein, it can similarly be programmed to start scheduled downloads from a website, BitTorrent, or an FTP site when it is most convenient. The unit is currently available from Incredible Connection. **ts**

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WHY GO SMART?

Despite the smartphone taking over the function of telling the hour of day, plus smartwatches' arrival on the scene, there seems to be a fresh awareness of the traditional timepieces of yore. So whether your tastes gravitate more towards digital or analogue, there is a wristwatch to suit your adventurous, business savvy, casual and/or sporty inclination.

1



1.

The Garmin Fenix 2 is the epitome of form and function rolled into one. Never before has there been such a salivate-inducing piece of kit that came across our radar. Don't wear this one if you're not prepared to give a detailed account of how you scaled Kili with just your slops and, of course, your watch. R6 500, Due South.

2



2.

If business style is more your scene, demand just the right amount of attention with the subtle TW Steel. For people who, for most of the time, already know what time it is. R3 450. Déonne le Roux.

3



3.

For those of us who make a habit of bumping into things, or being crushed by wrecking balls, the Casio G-shock range will stand the test of time. With its reasonably indestructible housing, if one watch is going to outlive the smartwatch revolution, our money is on this one (GA-200SH-1A). R2 500, Edgars.

4.

If you're no stranger to oversized watches, or truly believe that bigger is better, then the Diesel DZ4210 is pure awesomeness. Take out this baby to undo man-sized time-keeping problems. R3 300, Edgars.

4



5.

No watch collection is complete without an appearance from the Swatch regiment. Rubbery, youthy and easy to wear, these watches will confirm your status as a child of the nineties. Pair the Twice Again White with snow jeans and a step cut, if you dare. R1 250, Swatch Store.

5



CANON SA PHOTOBOKS TAKE YOUR MEMORIES TO THE NEXT LEVEL

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Comp ends 31 Oct 2014

Sometimes the cloud or your hard-drive just doesn't cut it, and you need a better way of presenting your photos. That's where Canon SA's new online Photobooks platform comes into play, offering both professional photographers and amateurs alike a service to design and create their own unique photo books, which Canon SA will print and deliver in just three working days.

Bringing your work to life

The Photobook industry as a whole has really taken off in recent years, especially given people's penchant for creating personalised albums on social media platforms like Instagram. Canon SA's new offering takes that idea, and elevates it to a much higher level, with the added benefit of having a more tangible product to keep at the end of the whole photobooking process.

The defining feature of Canon SA Photobooks is its class leading advanced imaging technology, designed to produce high-end quality images catered to the preference and purpose of the photographer,

making it a one-of-a-kind service for local Canon users to take advantage of.

Online and offline

Added to this, is the ability to use Canon SA's photobooking software online, as well as downloading it for use from one's desktop, depending on whichever option meets your needs. Once you're done creating a unique looking photobook, it's simply a matter of uploading it to Canon's dedicated site, and they handle the rest. Your options are not only limited to photobooks, with Canon listing canvas prints, posters and calendars as options also available for selection.

For a little more added incentive, people who order Canon SA's Photobooks online before 31 December 2014, will qualify for a 20% discount on their final purchase. Along with this, Canon SA will bundle discount vouchers with some of their PIXMA printers, digital and EOS cameras. For more info on Canon SA's Photobooks software, visit www.csaphotobooks.co.za today. **ts**

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WE DELIVER

MATERIAL SHAPE-SHIFTERS

At TechSmart, we love things that make us think. So materials that change their properties on cue are right up our alley. Here are a few that are really switched on.

Handy Andy

Oil and water don't mix, yet it's darn difficult to separate the two. But here's a smart solution: scientists recently developed a coating material that loves water but hates oil. When applied to a wire mesh, the coating turns the mesh into an efficient oil-water strainer that lets water drip through but keeps oil behind. Afterwards the oily layer can be tipped off into a separate container without fuss. The material can come in really handy in cleaning up large-scale oil spills.

Gap stop

Plastic that fixes scratches can be found on the LG's G Flex's cover, but scientists recently developed a type of plastic that patches itself up after major damage, even with a hole running through it. The material consists of a network of superthin tubes filled with liquid patch materials. When damage occurs, two adjoining tubes pump out their contents, which mix to form a gel that quickly closes the gap. This allows more liquid patch solution to seep into the nearby cracks before setting. The gel eventually hardens into a polymer that is as hard as the original plastic. Check out the video at bit.ly/1yQt3aJ

Bio-bone

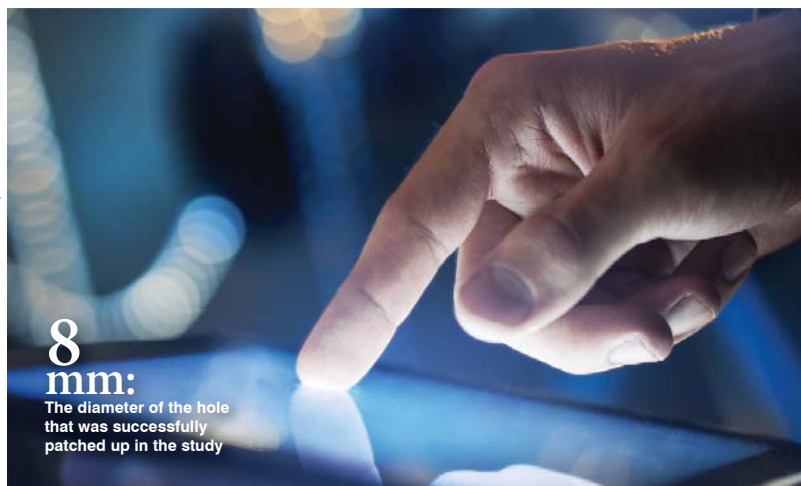
Scientists recently developed a self-fitting sponge-like material that can be used to fill bone gaps due to injuries or birth defects. At 60 °C the material is soft and malleable and can mould perfectly into the required space. At body temperature, however, it becomes a stiff scaffold that supports growth of new bone cells. The material gradually degrades as new bone forms, allowing the space to be filled seamlessly by the patient's own bone tissue. The technique may be especially useful for correcting facial bone defects.

A new eye (for a) phone

Scientists recently reported ditching the hefty mechanical aperture stop traditionally used in cameras for a lightweight glass equivalent. The new stop consists of a thin electrode sandwiched between two glass slides coated with an electrochromic film. By simply switching a small current on or off, the glass can be toggled between transparent and opaque – in virtually the blink of an eye. The use of such smart-glass irises may prove particularly useful in next-generation smartphone cameras.

A page from nature's book

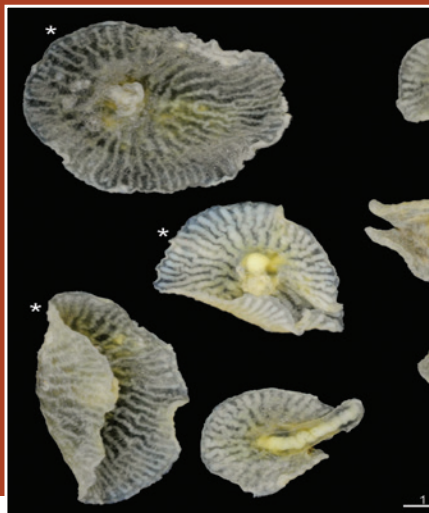
Spider silk is probably the ultimate smart material around, changing rapidly from a liquid to thin, super-strong solid fibres at ambient temperatures. A new study shows that this change is brought on by a pH gradient between one end of the silk gland and the other. The pH change also seems to affect the two ends of the silk protein molecules differently, which likely gives the final silk its amazing stability but without disrupting the delicate fibre structure. **ts**



Sources:

Handy Andy: bit.ly/RQwzRf Gap stop: bit.ly/1mJjkeE Bio-bone: bit.ly/1ldj3VA
A new eye (for a) phone: bit.ly/1s5Llsw A page from nature's book: bit.ly/1sDKbN4; bit.ly/1eZZCbK

SCIENCE

PIC OF
THE
MONTH

Showing that there's a lot of mystery still left here on Earth, how about this weird group of mushroom-like sea creatures? Collected way back in 1986 at the Australian coast, scientists have for the first time now provided it with scientific names (*Dendrogramma enigmatica* and *D. discoides*) and a genus (*Dendrogramma*). The creatures are so strange and outlandish that it might even be a separate phylum altogether.

Source: bit.ly/1r5mfTM

SMART ANSWERS

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

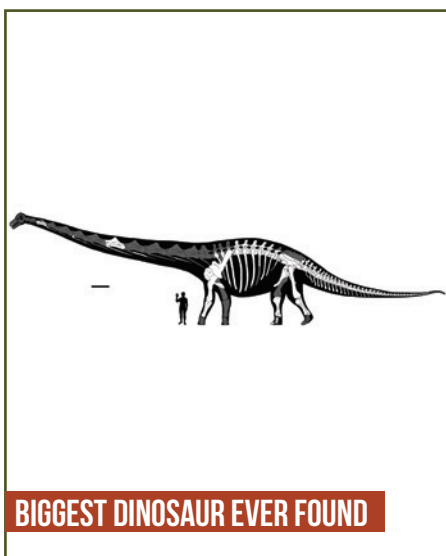


Image: Drexel University

BIGGEST DINOSAUR EVER FOUND

Was it the fearsome Tyrannosaurus rex? Nope, this creature is called *Dreadnoughtus schrani*. At 26 m long, weighing in at about 60 tonnes and sporting a weaponised tail, Dread made T.rex look like My Little Pony.

What type of dinosaur was Dread? It belonged to a group of plant eaters called titanosaurs. But because previously found fossils of very large titanosaurs are very incomplete, fairly little is known about these dinosaurs.

Why is the find significant? For starters, finding such a well-preserved and almost complete skeleton is rare. And since both a complete thigh bone and upper arm bone of this specimen were found, scientists could calculate its size reliably. Scans also revealed where the muscles attached to the bones, which can help to explain biomechanics of this type of dinosaur.

Source: bit.ly/1uY093b



Image: Microsoft

FROM BRAIN TO AIM

How can you improve your aim? Just use your head, says a new study.

Huh? Researchers compared the activation of brain areas when study participants reached either towards the absolute location of a target or towards a target located relative to a visual landmark.

And what did the results show?

It seems the brain interprets incoming information about a visual target differently based on whether the location is referenced relative to the body or relative to an external landmark. In both cases, though, the same brain areas appear to coordinate the instructions for moving towards the target.

Why is the finding useful? Knowing how the brain deals with visual target information to prepare a reaction may be useful in rehabilitation therapy in patients who suffered brain damage.

Source: bit.ly/1pPQf0q



MAKING BATTERIES LAST LONGER

Is a brief burst of charging bad? Far less than we once thought, according to a recent study.

How so? When a battery is charged, the electrodes absorb and release electrons from the surrounding electrolyte in alternating charge-discharge cycles. This may cause shrinking and swelling of the electrodes, which shortens the battery's lifespan.

So what's the trick? The study showed that if an electrode material that allows all the particles to participate in charging and discharging is used, the ions are absorbed from and then released again into the electrolyte gradually rather than rapidly. This prevents the damaging shrinking and swelling of the electrode.

What's the next step? The researchers plan to run the new battery design through thousands of charge-discharge cycles to simulate real-world performance. **ts**

Source: Stanford.io/1szcQ3e

TOP 5 BEST NEW BIKES

Whether cruising the open road on a chopper or racing around a racetrack on a superbike, travelling on two wheels has always proved more exciting than four. We round-up five of the best new motorcycles to ride off into the horizon on.

BMW S 1000 R

The BMW S 1000 R is the Bavarian manufacturer's latest addition to its motorcycle stable, and draws inspiration from its high performance roadster, the RR. As with its forebear, the S 1000 R features an aggressively styled silhouette that cuts a rather menacing figure on the road, ensuring that onlookers know the it is not to be trifled with. Not just a superbike in looks, the S 1000 R's engine too produces all the speed and savagery one expects from a premium superbike.

The well balanced S 1000 R is fitted with the modified inline 999 cc four cylinder engine found on the original RR. This reinterpretation may rev at 2 000 rpms less than the RR, but still produces a substantial 118 kW and maximum torque of 112 Nm. For responsive handling, BMW has incorporated a dynamic traction control (DTC) and automatic stability control (ASC) systems to ensure the S 1000 R stays fixed on a variety of surfaces. Being one of BMW's top performing and highly specced motorcycles, it will set would be riders back roughly R146 000, so only the hardcore need apply.


 Engine:	 Top Speed:	 Cost:
999 cc, 4-cylinder 4-stroke inline engine	200 km/h (electronically limited)	R146 000



DUCATI MONSTER 1200

Staying in the realm of roadsters, we find one of the most iconic names in the industry, Italian manufacturer Ducati and its unmistakable Monster. The newly debuted Monster 1200, adds to the fine tradition that Ducati has carved out over the years, and makes use of the newly designed Testastretta 11 DS engine. The key differentiator of this new engine, is the Dual Spark system, which integrates two individual spark plugs per cylinder to ensure performance is smoother and more responsive.

This L-Twin cylinder engine has a registered displacement of 1198.4 cc, and reaches a maximum output 100.7 kW at 8750 rpm. Added to this, is 118 Nm of torque, which means the Monster 1200 gets off the mark pretty quickly. It's also deceptively light, considering the dimensions and look of its frame, and weighs in at 209 kg. In terms of technology, Ducati has incorporated its own specially designed traction control system and a full TFT instrument panel, which automatically adjusts to various light conditions.

 Engine:	 Top Speed:	 Cost:
1198.4cc, L-Twin cylinder engine	240 km/h	R168 500





HONDA NM4

If you're the kind of rider who yearns for a motorcycle that looks a little outside the ordinary, then the limited edition NM4 from Honda may just be what you're looking for. This uniquely styled Touring bike has already drawn some comparisons to the iconic red motorcycle in *Akira*, although we rather envision this all-matte black two wheeler as being the ride of choice for Judge Dredd. This hulking Tourer weighs in at 255 kg, and as such requires a sizeable engine to get it moving. Luckily, Honda has obliged with a 670cc twin-parallel engine that produces 40.3 kW of power and 68 Nm of torque, resulting in a top speed of 180 km/h.

Not only large and powerful, the NM4 is fitted with a range of modern accessories such as an LED lit instrument display, which features 25 different colour options to choose from. Added to this, is a front mounted utility box with a 12 power socket to charge one's smartphone or GPS while cruising.



Engine:

670cc twin-parallel engine



Top Speed:

180 km/h



Cost:

\$11 000

KTM RC 390

Austrian motorcycle manufacturer, KTM has built a solid reputation over the years for their all conquering Touring bikes, many of which are the first port of call for Dakar competitors. Their new lineup of Supersport bikes therefore pose an interesting proposition, considering it's an area that KTM is not famed for. The Supersport lineup in question is KTM's RC series, with the RC 390 sitting atop the range, giving local riders a welcome addition to mull over.

Would be RC 390 riders may come to it for its looks, but they'll stay for its performance, with KTM fitting a single cylinder, 4-stroke water-cooled engine, that produces 32 kW. That may seem on the modest side, but should prove more than enough, given the RC 390 only weighs 147 kg (without fuel). Furthermore, it features a six speed, claw shifted transmission system and Wet multi-disc clutch to ensure gear changes are quick and seamless. Yet to hit local dealers, the KTM RC 390 will cost in excess of R150 000, so now is as good a time as any to start saving.



Engine:

1-cylinder, 4-stroke engine



Top Speed:

185 km/h (estimated)



Cost:

R150 000 (estimated)



HUSQVARNA FS 450

The latter half of 2014 has seen Swedish manufacturer, Husqvarna, make a welcome return to Motocross, with its newly unveiled FS 450 series. This new offering makes use of a lightweight chromium molybdenum frame and cast aluminium swing arm to bring its dry weight down to only 110.5 kg. This will certainly prove of some benefit when throwing the FS 450 into tight turns, as its WP suspension and monoshock shock absorber system work to keep you balanced while exiting the apex.

Similar to the KTM RC 390, the FS 450 features a 1-cylinder, four-stroke engine, which incorporates a water cooled system and five speed, claw shifted transmission. This setup yields a maximum power output of 45 kW at 11 500 rpm, bringing its top speed to roughly 180 km/h. Husqvarna's FS 450 is the newest motorcycle featured on this list, with the Swedish manufacturer scheduling its release for early 2015. No local pricing is detailed at this stage, but the FS 450 will cost European customers €9 990 (R138 500). [RLC] **ts**



Engine:

1-cylinder, 4-stroke engine



Top Speed:

180 km/h (estimated)



Cost:

\$138 500 (estimated)



SPORTS STYLE -

GETTING IN GEAR

With winter now behind us, the time has come to get your body primed and ready for the sun-soaked summer months. Whether you want to lose a couple centimetres from your midriff, or become a modern day Adonis, you need the right tools at your disposal in order to get the desired job done.

BEST FOOT FORWARD

Any envy inducing body is built from the ground up, and to ensure that one's foundations are rock solid, the right kind of footwear is of paramount importance. Luckily, there are a number of options out there to choose from, whether you're a road warrior or live in the weight room. For the former, a pair of lightweight and well cushioned trainers are the order of the day, and few brands do it better than New Balance. One of their best offerings, is the 880v4 (R1 500), which features a dual-layer cushioned midsole, to ensure that racking up the kilometres is easily managed. If the air-conditioned confines of a gym are more to your liking, then Nike's new Air Zoom Elite 7 (R2 000) shoes are a perfect fit. The lightest pair of Air Zoom shoes that Nike has ever produced (272 g), the Elite 7 will give some much needed spring in your step while strutting around the gym.



R2 000

Nike Air Zoom Elite 7,
Nike Store

DIGITAL EDGE

Any personal trainer will tell you that measuring one's sweat inducing efforts are an integral part of reaching goals, which makes the acquisition of a dedicated sports watch a no brainer. To this end, the Garmin Forerunner 220 (R4 300) is well worth considering for those wanting to keep accurate tabs on their exercising endeavours. Capable of tracking one's speed, distance and calories burned, it's a runner's best friend. For those wanting the added benefit of heart rate measurement, without the burden of a strap, the TomTom Multi-Sport Cardio (R4 600) is a welcome companion, thanks to its built-in heart rate sensor. Added to that, it can also take a dip in the pool, should you think yourself a Chad le Clos in the making.

TomTom
Multi-Sport Cardio,
Totalsports

R4 300



IN THE ZONE

Anyone who has frequented their local gym after work, knows just how busy they can get, with the pounding of shoes on the treadmill or trainers shouting at their wincing clients, adding up to a rather raucous atmosphere. In order to shut out all that white noise, a good pair of earphones will be like manna from heaven. One of the top tier options out there is Bose's Sport Headphone with in-ear tips to ensure they stay in place. Another sweat-resistant pair is Sennheiser's Adidas-branded OCX 685i earphones (R1 200), which wrap around one's ear to remain secured. Ultimately convenience is key, so why not go for a pair of wireless headphones, like the Jabra Sport Wireless+ (R1 540)? [RLC] **S**

R1 540

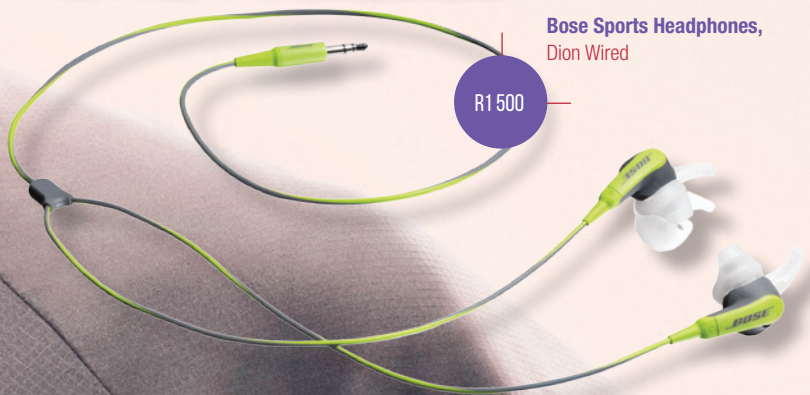
Jabra Sport Wireless+
takealot.com





New Balance 880v4,
Sportsmans Warehouse

R1 500



Bose Sports Headphones,
Dion Wired

R1 500

Nike Tech Windrunner,
The Cross Trainer

R1 800



Garmin Forerunner 220,
Case Union Mart

R4 300



Adidas Climachill Shirt,
Adidas Store

R500



Puma Shorts,
Sportsmans Warehouse

R500



Sennheiser OCX 685i,
takealot.com

R1 200



HOW TO SPEAK COMICS 101

Comics have a language of their own which has become almost universal, and just about everyone on earth knows *Kaboom! Whoosh! or Bang!* Some other terms aren't as accessible though, so here's a handy guide on how to speak comic book.

COMIC CREATORS



Most professional comics are created by entire teams of artists who divide the comic creation process. Simplest to understand would be the writer, who writes the actual comic script, and the penciller who does the initial art. From this point on, it would still need inking, colour work and lettering, so what exactly do these other people do?

Inkers aren't tracers as is popularly believed, but in fact a good inker will enhance any penciller's work by completing the pencils, adding line weight and sometimes a tighter finish on the pencil lines. The colourist adds more than just colour, but further improves the story by adding mood, tone and atmosphere as well as any special lighting effects. The letterer adds speech balloons (dialogue boxes) and sound effects as well as caption or explanation boxes, either by hand or using a computer.

CONTINUITY



Continuity refers to the history of comic book characters and the universes they inhabit, and is the biggest bone of contention within comic book circles and the one thing that splits the comic book dabbler from the diehard fan. It tracks the first appearance, powers, adventures and lives of individual characters in order to ensure that there is a level of consistency within stories and to avoid contradictions or discrepancies in new tales. Writers must adhere to characters' continuity, or at least have a good explanation to deflate possible uproar from fans.

GRAPHIC NOVELS



The term came into use to explain any single narrative, book length, self-contained story, done in the comic book medium usually published on an independent schedule. This was used mainly to distinguish it from the monthly neverending comics produced by companies like DC and Marvel. Graphic Novel has become a kind of collective noun for any longer format story put together as a square bound book with a spine and is often confused with a Trade Paperback (TPB, see below). Therefore, it is also often referred to as an OGN (original graphic novel) to indicate that it contains completely new material. Art Spiegelman's *Maus* is arguably the most well-known graphic novel.

TRADE PAPERBACKS



Monthly comics are often collected together to tell a complete story, so a story that spans six monthly issues might be put in one book and bound together in a similar format to graphic novels. Trade paperbacks can also collect different stories unified by theme, in an anthology format.

VARIANT COVERS



In the 1990s there was an international comic book speculator boom. Non-comic fans realised that real money could be made from buying and storing comics to be sold decades down the line and would buy multiple issues of the same comic book. Realising that they had been handed a license to print money, comic book companies in the US immediately started printing comic books with multiple covers. The books would contain the same story within, but would have covers drawn by different prominent artists to mark "important events" within the comic. Eventually the speculator market disappeared, but in recent times variant covers are making a comeback, with especially Comic Convention Exclusives being highly sought collector's items. **ts**



The Comic Book Guys

If you haven't started reading *Gofu*, do yourself a favour and pick it up ASAP. You will be astounded by what Deon de Lange has achieved. We asked him a few pertinent questions.

DEON DE LANGE



TechSmart (TS): Please provide a brief description of yourself and the work/titles you've been responsible for.

Deon de Lange (DL): I am a full time freelance comic artist and illustrator based in Durban, South Africa. Most of the work I do is for international clientele. In early 2013 I did a small comic for 133 Art called *One Nation: Safe House*. I self-published *Gofu* in September 2013 as an experimental comic project. It sold well enough that I decided to turn it into a 6 part mini-series. *Gofu Part 2* came out in May 2014 and I continue to work on the rest. In April 2014 I launched my first webcomic, *Tomica* (www.uocomics.com/tomica), with writer, David Covas Lourenco. *Tomica* comes out weekly in a comic strip format and we are now publishing it as a quarterly print edition as well. Issue #1 launched at Open Book Comics Fest 2014.

TS: Favourite comic book artist?

DL: Frank Cho (*Liberty Meadows*, *Hulk*). This guy is in my opinion just the best artist in the business right now, and he's surprisingly underrated. I love his work because we share a lot of the same influences. The old comic greats like Al Williamson, Frank Frazetta, Berni Wrightson and Wally Wood can be seen in his work. Frank Cho is also an absolute master of anatomy. His is not a carbon copy of the comic art of others, but rather has a classical art influence that really inspires me to continue to look beyond comics for inspiration.

TS: Favourite character as a kid?

DL: I was obsessed with Asterix as a kid. I used to draw him over and over and I remember making an entire Gaul village with many characters out of plasticine.

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

DL: *The Avengers*. There are much better titles to choose to work on, I think, especially European books, but I think *The Avengers* is a very challenging comic to draw. Few artists have the ability to deal with team books very well, and I think it would be a wonderful challenge. Plus...it's *The Avengers*.

TS: Any advice for young talent?

DL: Create your own stories and characters. There's more to comics than superheroes. Value your own work. Don't work for free, you will always regret it. Support fellow young talent.

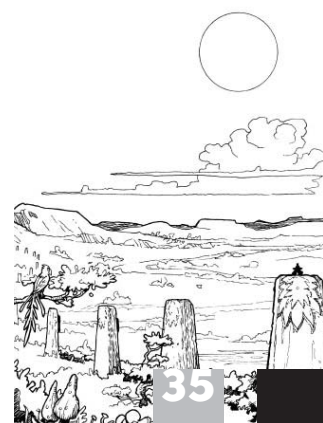
TS: What would be the next step in your comic book career?

DL: *Unknown Origins* is my baby. It is a big sci-fi comic project that I have been developing since school days. *Gofu* and *Tomica* are actually spin-offs from this story, even though I published them first, as a way to learn how to do comics. So the next step is to take the leap and do *Unknown Origins* as a full-blown colour sci-fi comic.

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

DL: I'd love to do some work for the big publishers, it would be a valuable learning experience. But I really see myself developing my own creator-owned projects. My main goal is to develop the world of *Unknown Origins* and tell my own stories in such a way that I can be an independent creator, making a living off my own creations. **ts**

All images courtesy of Deon de Lange. Visit www.deondelange.com for more.



TOP 5 HORRORS

In anticipation of a haunting Halloween, movie fundi Spling finds the Horrors that will make you wish you never looked.

THE SHINING (1980)

The Shining is an iconic and epic horror tour-de-force by Stanley Kubrick, starring Jack Nicholson and loosely based on Stephen King's fictional masterpiece. We're immersed in the haunted Overlook Hotel as a struggling writer loses his mind and his son's "little friend" starts to glow brighter.

At almost two-and-a-half hours, you can easily feel trapped by the icy blizzard, experiencing an alcoholic father's degeneration into an axe murderer as the hotel's darkest secrets seep through the floor. Kubrick gets inside our heads, affecting us with Indian motifs, nightmarish visuals and a dizzyingly maniacal performance from Jack Nicholson.

Scariest scene? Whenever the Grady twins appear.

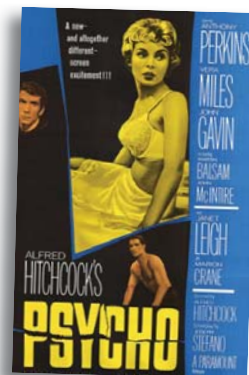


PSYCHO (1960)

Alfred Hitchcock, the Master of Suspense, delivered a game-changing horror masterpiece in *Psycho*, starring Janet Leigh, Vera Miles and Anthony Perkins as Norman Bates. After a Phoenix secretary steals \$40 000 and goes on the run, nothing can prepare you for the slasher horror and psychological thriller in waiting.

The black-and-white touchstone has aged well and to Hitchcock's credit, it doesn't rely on much action or blood to deliver chilling suspense and disturbing drama. *Psycho*, Norman Bates and the Bates Motel have become entrenched in pop culture and who will forget that shrill soundtrack and nerve-shattering shower scene?

Scariest scene? The feminine silhouette emerges from the shower curtain.



Don't WING it, SPLING it!

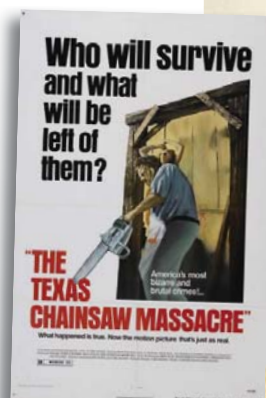
For awesome movie news and insightful reviews visit: spring.co.za | springmovies.mobi | spring.mobi



THE TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE (1974)

The Texas Chain Saw Massacre is a gory low budget slasher that revolutionised the horror genre. The controversial film popularised 'Leatherface', an iconic madman based on murderer and body snatcher Ed Gein, known for his chainsaw and mask, two hugely influential horror accessories.

The story follows five friends who fall prey to a family of cannibals and a chainsaw-wielding killer. While said to be based on a true story, *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* is a fictional 'grisly work of art'. This marketing angle sold the grainy snuff film feel and scared up a viral campaign upon its release



Scariest scene? Moments after Kirk enters an apparently deserted house.



THE EXORCIST (1973)

William Friedkin's shocking landmark film adaptation, *The Exorcist* still reviles audiences today with its mix of grotesque psychological horror and drama. The unsettling experience of watching the film and reports of on-set accidents have turned it into one of the most discussed and notorious horrors ever.

The Oscar-winning (Writing Adapted Screenplay, Best Sound Mixing) horror's subversive tone makes it seem innately evil, playing mind games with its audience as we bear witness to a realistic demon possession and exorcism. Strong performances from Max von Sydow, Ellen Burstyn and a career-defining turn from Linda Blair have cemented this vile horror as one of the greatest.

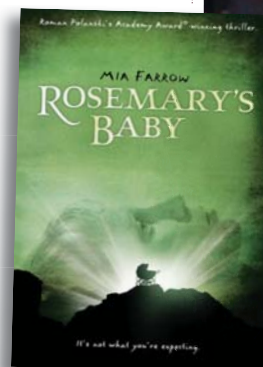


Scariest scene? Too many to mention, but Regan's 180 degree head-spin and the crab walk scene qualify.

ROSEMARY'S BABY (1968)

Just like David Lynch's *Eraserhead* plays with paternal fears, Roman Polanski's Oscar-winning horror steeped itself in the spine-tingling mystery surrounding the prospect of motherhood. The simple premise of giving birth to Satan's spawn has been treated with great subtlety and creeping distress in Polanski's masterpiece.

We're gently immersed in a gloomy, atmospheric psychological horror that teeters between reality and unreality as creepy occurrences, strange neighbours and a mysterious pregnancy haunt Rosemary's fragile state of mind. Mia Farrow is bewitching, the film leverages the power of imagination while the audience is kept uncertain, fearful and paranoid.



Scariest scene? When Rosemary's nightmarish vision finds her surrounded by a naked coven. **ts**

CLOSE BUT NO CIGAR:

Halloween, The Evil Dead, Don't Look Now, The Ring, A Nightmare on Elm Street, Mama, The Cabin in the Woods.

NEW

CINEMA RELEASES



Automata (10 October)

We're cast 30 years into the future as we journey with Jacq Vaucan, an insurance agent for a robotics corporation, whose latest case of robot manipulation will have profound consequences on life as we know it.

Antonio Banderas isn't known for science-fiction, but after playing a blend of 'Donkey' and 'Puss in Boots' in the *Expendables 3*, it seems as though anything is possible. *Automata*, may seem like an *I, Robot* clone at first glance, dealing with the minefield of ethics and robotics. However, it seems as though "visionary" Spanish writer-director, Gabe Ibáñez, is going for a *Bicentennial Man* angle.



Gone Girl (10 October)

When Neil Patrick Harris, Missi Pyle and Tyler Perry headline a movie, you have to guess it's going to be crass... and potentially funny. The last thing you would expect to be watching is a stone cold David Fincher film starring Ben Affleck.

Affleck has created his own cinema legacy as a director and the movie title echoes his breakthrough debut, *Gone Baby Gone*. However, Fincher's rabbit hole runs even deeper, reflecting key aspects from *The Game* in a dark crime mystery thriller about a husband who unwittingly becomes the focus of a media circus after his wife's disappearance.



Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (17 October)

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles love pizza... you probably didn't learn that watching *National Geographic*. If you grew up on a diet of "heroes in a half-shell", you'll probably be willing

to spend money on their latest FX-driven adventure, whether Michael Bay rocked (or ruined) your childhood memories of *Transformers*.

Surprisingly, there's a South African connection as home-grown director, Jonathan Liebesman (*Wrath of the Titans*), shows us where Megan Fox has been hiding all this time and shares some inside jokes with Will Arnett, William Fichtner and Whoopi Goldberg. Catch the *Batman Begins* wannabes as they face-off against an evil kingpin in New York City.



Snowpiercer - 17 October

Joon-ho Bong is an up-and-coming director, who is developing a reputation for thought-provoking sci-fi action adventures with a political message. His latest achievement,

Snowpiercer, is all-out art house actioner that is both intellectually and visually arresting (based on the 1982 French comic *Le Transperceneige*)

If its high calibre cast in Chris Evans, Tilda Swinton, Ed Harris, Jamie Bell and John Hurt doesn't compel you, then the story about a self-sustainable train making journeys around a frozen Earth with a strict social order just might. Imagine the politics of *The Hunger Games*, the visual spunk of *Kung Fu Hustle* with the weight of *Oldboy* all rolled into one locomotive.



Annabelle (24 October)

The Conjuring introduced us to Annabelle, a doll whose origins are explored in greater depth in the self-titled prequel, *Annabelle*. While the real rag doll that inspired the story behind *The Conjuring* wasn't

available as a prop, the novelty of toy possession horror died with a stream of underwhelming *Chucky* sequels.

While produced by James Wan, it's directed by his cinematographer, John R. Leonetti, the guy who directed *Mortal Kombat: Annihilation*. The concept of a satanic cult home invasion has great potential if you remember *The Strangers*, although the no-name cast and low budget mean it could be a dark horse or a dud.

MOVIE NEWS



No Country for Old Man Rambo?

Sylvester Stallone has been trying to stage an 80s action man revival, well, ever since the 90s. To his credit, *The Expendables* is already three movies in, and while

degenerating, it's still drawing an audience. According to the latest reports, Stallone is set to star and direct a fifth and final *Rambo* movie, aptly titled *Rambo: Last Blood*. Current speculation is that the action and ultra-violence is going down like *The A-Team* started... with a Mexican drug cartel.



Aaron Cross vs. Jason Bourne

Matt Damon probably turned his back on the Bourne series because Paul Greengrass was not interested in directing a fourth installation. Well, it's been seven years since *The Bourne*

Ultimatum and they are reportedly in early negotiations for another mission. How this will affect the Justin Lin *Bourne Legacy* sequel with Jeremy Renner, simply titled *Bourne 5*, remains to be seen. Whether it's bumped or reinvented, there's definitely room for a team-up or versus plot. **ts**

- John Coram** @GenuineJohnC · Sep 12
Does anyone actually still have a limp handshake? It's bordering on ignorance now
- Trevor Noah** @Trevornoah · Sep 10
So we waited all this time for Apple to release an Android phone and an updated iPod nano?
- Elizabeth** @Elizasoul80 · Sep 8
The best advice I can give you is to ask someone else.
- Pippa Tshabalala** @UnexpectedPippa · Sep 7
While cleaning out my study I just found a 2004 issue of **@TechSmartMag**. Funny to think that I now write for them!
- Seth MacFarlane** @SethMacFarlane · Sep 6
The doctors may have to surgically remove this thought bubble over my head with the piece of pie in it.
- Tiego Modisagae** @Tiego_Modisa · Sep 5
@TechSmartMag big ups on your mag. I've been reading for more than 5 years now & you've improved over the years.
- Rob Van Vuuren** @RobVanVuuren · Sep 15
I'm so genuinely uncool that I'm technically a hipster.
- Neil deGrasse Tyson** @neiltyson · Sep 15
If your belief system is not founded in an objective reality, you should not be making decisions that affect other people.
- Best Darth Vader** @mdarthvaderm · Sep 12
The iPhone would be much cooler if Siri had my voice.
- Cabo** @shot_of_cabo · Sep 12
Any tub is a hot tub if you throw a toaster in it.

- Terry F** @daemonic3 · Sep 12
Welcome to Condescending Club. Even an idiot would know the 1st rule. If not, you want paaaatronizing club. You know what that is, riight?
- Mark Leggett** @markleggett · Sep 12
Congratulations on being the kind of person who corrects the grammar of others, unsolicited. You're the Microsoft Word Paperclip.
- Deep Fried Man** @DeepFriedMan · 23h
Since the EFF entered parliament it has become so much of a spectacle they should be renamed the WVEFF.
- Frank** @angryassbastard · Sep 16
"There are tons of gorgeous women on the internet who'd KILL to love me!"
...is what I say to get my wife laughing hysterically.
- Mojak Lehoko** @mojaklehoko · Sep 15
You can't tell me you're eternally grateful for me doing you a favour and then offering me Oros when I come visit you.
- Matt Roller** @rolidiggity · Sep 15
The BEST way to make people nervous on an airplane is to set sheet music on your tray table and start assembling a clarinet.
- Kelly Slingers** @TheKeSling · 5h
So... this is what life is like after the ice bucket challenge
- Steve Suckington** @SteveSuckington · 9h
I wonder how many hobbies you have to suck at before you take up bird watching.
- Jake Vig** @Jake_Vig · 22h
65% of my day is spent hoping for an alien invasion.
- Revenge God Kaze** @legendarykaz · 22h
Answers will drive you crazier than questions will...

FOUR TV SERIES YOU WILL NEVER SEE

The theory of parallel universes – where things are similar yet different - is feasible and regularly explored in quantum physics, and even more reliably, in comic books and other works of fiction. The good news is that we were able to discover what some of our popular TV shows looked like in another reality. The bad (or is that good) news: You'll never see them.

1. THE BIG BONG THEORY

The show traces four stoner girls who sit around their apartment smoking weed, discussing whether the size of their joints lead to better highs, and their interaction with their next door neighbour, a highly successful neurosurgeon.

3. VILLAINS

Hopes were high for *Villains*, especially since its counterpart, something called *Heroes*, was nixed before it could even make it to one episode. Instead of giving the audience really devious and wicked superpowered characters determined to destroy the world, *Villains* instead dished up something infinitely more frightening – stories about greedy bankers, slimy hedge fund managers and corrupt politicians around the world.

2. JEANS

While parallel Earth missed out on the genius TV that is *Suits*, they did get this, a series which tracked a failed businessman who takes an over-achieving Ivy League graduate under his wing and teaches him how to go nowhere in life. Together, they sit around, ruminate about which reality shows are more pointless, and accomplish nothing at all while planning to eventually launch their social media site for slackers.

4. SO YOU THINK YOU CAN JUDGE?

This reality TV talent contest is based on a live audience voting for aspiring judges for the network's other reality based talent shows, including: *So you think you can perform open heart surgery?* *So you think you can fly commercial airplanes?* *So you think you can mow lawns?* and the network's latest: *So you think you can run a country?* In this one, the winner of that talent show will be given an unnamed country to rule over for four years. [RN] **ts**



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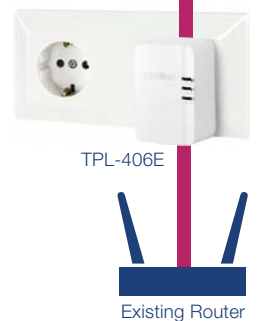


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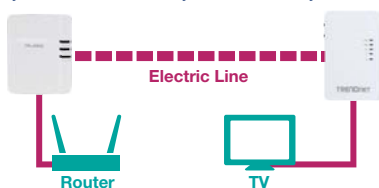
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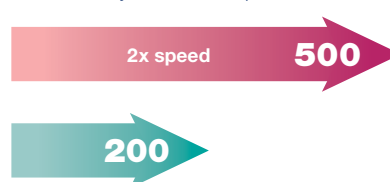
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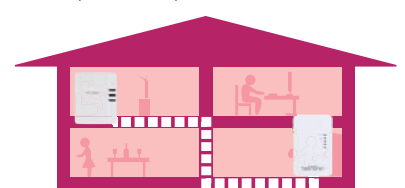
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 - output wave form: square wave signals ± 3.5 Vpp
 - single audio frequency: ± 1500 Hz
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- probe:
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R534.10

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R397.30



An electric guitar cannot be connected to just any amplifier or audio installation. This pre-amplifier has been designed for this purpose and provides you with a headphone output, allowing you to practice without disturbing others.

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low noise, headphones output: max. 2×50 mW / 32Ω ohm, housing included, power supply: 9V battery (not incl.) dimensions: $70 \times 30 \times 105$ mm

MOTION SENSOR WITH LED LIGHT

R182.60

Features

- ambient light sensor
- low power consumption
- PIR sensor technology
- 3 modes: ON, AUTO or OFF
- low battery indication

Features

- number of leds: 8
- working current: 120 mA
- standby current: $30 \sim 40$ μ A
- ambient light: < 10 lux
- auto-on time: 10 ± 2 sec.
- max. sensitivity distance: 5 m ($@ 24^\circ$ C)
- sensitivity angle: 120°
- operating temperature: $10 \sim 30^\circ$ C
- power supply: $4 \times$ AA battery (not incl., LR6C)
- dimensions: $\varnothing 11 \times 4$ cm



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Features

80 white LEDs; table clamp; optional: stand with wheels; table stand

HEADBAND MAGNIFIER with LEDLIGHT

R151.80

Features

adjust the angle of the light box upward or downward freely, you can also push the pivot left and right to adjust the LED light source, with detachable light source box and two "AAA" batteries

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- multiplying power of lens: $0.375 \times - 0.75 \times - 2.125 \times - 2.5 \times$
- material of lens: acrylic resin (protected by crack-proof rigid coating)
- size of lens: $89 \text{ mm} \times 29 \text{ mm}$ ($3.5" \times 1.14"$)
- single lens diameter: 29 mm ($1.14"$)
- power supply: $2 \times$ "AAA" batteries (LR03, not incl.)
- weight: 148 g (5.2 oz)



REMOTE CONTROL VIA MOBILE PHONE KIT

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Specifications:

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DESTINY

It's been quite some time since such a divisive game has come along, but is Destiny fated for greatness, or doomed to be considered a star that burnt when entering the atmosphere?

Normally, reviewing a game is a straightforward affair. Destiny though is entirely different, as trying to form a singular review about it close past its release date is like trying to scale Everest in an afternoon. Part of the problem is that the game, at least according to Bungie's stated plans, will offer even more content a few months from now, and thus merits reconsideration. Also at the time of writing, some of the multiplayer components (such as raids) are only set to come online in the near future.

Nonetheless, Destiny is a tough game to pin down – at times it feels very much like a first person shooter, at others, a role playing game or MMO. Additionally, the hype that had been generated about it prior to its release actually hasn't helped, and meant that players' expectations were stratospheric from the outset. Do be warned though, there are times when the environments can feel empty and even hollow in their way, and this only reminds that this is neither Halo, nor is it Borderlands. That being said, as is, to our minds, Destiny is an experience of its own. But, as with every game, it poses the usual question - is Destiny worth picking up and jumping into?

A date with Destiny

The short answer is that it depends if you appreciate any of the following: space opuses, first person shooters, multiplayer action, or games with high production values that are in their own way compelling. The story is

AS FOR THE ACTION, IT QUITE QUICKLY MADE US A FAN, WITH WEAPONS THAT FEEL WEIGHTY YET FLUID AND RESULTED IN SOME TERRIFIC COMBAT.



pretty straightforward – a massive sphere named the Traveler visited Earth centuries ago and ushered in a Golden Age of interplanetary travel. Alas, this being's enemy, the Darkness, ultimately found and decimated Earth, bringing an end to peace and giving rise to the Guardians, one of which you play, charged with defending the last safe city on Earth.

To this end, you can choose from one of three classes – the tank-like warriors, or Titans; the long range solitary Hunters, or the magical Warlocks. We recommend trying all three out and seeing which most suits your playstyle. Whichever you choose, you aren't entirely alone, but instead are accompanied by a flying mech called Ghost (with Peter Dinklage doing the voice).

Fortune favours the bold

At least on PS4, Destiny is exquisitely detailed, while special mention must be made of its immersive score. As for the action, its weapons feel weighty and satisfying yet fluid and resulted in some terrific combat. Alas, the lack of pausing facility is less appreciated. There are also a few ways to play the game – solo; by joining up with two friends cooperatively to form a Fireteam and complete missions; by engaging in co-op only missions; or by engaging in competitive multiplayer. As to the latter alas, we did find ourselves losing connection to the server a couple of times.

Nonetheless, our initial recommendation would be to ignore the naysayers and if you do play it, approach the game with an open mind. There is plenty to satisfy both the (unjailed) FPS fan here and to justify making Destiny your own. RRP: £750 (PS4 version). [RN] **ts**



inFAMOUS

FIRST LIGHT

It is possibly one of the better Fetch quests we've played outside a role playing game in recent memory, as *inFamous: First Light* concentrates wholly on Fetch and her engrossing story.

While *inFamous: Second Son*'s protagonist Delsin Rowe was decent enough, that game introduced dare we say an even more relatable and likable (but still snarky) conduit – Abigail 'Fetch' Walker.

First Light serves as a prequel and takes place prior to her and Delsin's meeting, but it also stands alone. Using flashbacks, the story relates Fetch's life on the run with her brother and her mission to save him after a heist goes badly wrong. This leads up to her subsequent escape from the prison complex Curdun Cay and the ever depraved DUP.

Light her up

One of the familiarities that *First Light* shares with *Second Son* is that you can expect to see a lot of Seattle in fine detail. Beyond this, the neon powers look fantastic. At full sprint, Fetch reminded us in all the right ways of *The Flash*, whether sprinting in neon bursts, running up the sides of buildings or launching yourself into the air with a photon jump. Our particular favourite in this regard though were Lumen races, in which you have to dash through continuous neon clouds to boost Fetch forward and if successful, catch a Lumen. Persuing these, which are used to upgrade Fetch's abilities, simply never got tired.



WE FOUND THAT FIRST LIGHT'S MORE CONTAINED NATURE ACTUALLY WORKED IN ITS FAVOUR.

Fetch may be a more reticent character than Delsin, but she is still a powerhouse, whether releasing a stream of neon bolts or an explosive "singularity"; or instead using her sniper-like laser focus to take down enemies from afar.

Welcome return

We found that *First Light*'s more contained nature actually worked in its favour; throwing us right into the action from the outset. On the down side, we missed the same moral choice dynamic, and *First Light* is bite sized at four hours. Nonetheless, it's a fun return to *inFamous*: *Second Son*'s world, and ultimately posed the question: Want to play some more Fetch? Our answer remains a resounding and brightly underlined yes. RRP: R220. [RN] **ts**



PIPPA TSHABALALA

On Exclusion

By Pippa Tshabalala.

Picture courtesy of Adriaan Louw from we-are-awesome.com

A great deal has been written about #GamerGate, the current controversy raging in the videogame community. I don't have the space to go into great detail about how it all started, but in a nutshell #GamerGate touches on two major points: the treatment of women in the gaming industry and the ethics of videogame journalism.

As is always the case on the internet, people are completely calm and rational in discussing this sensitive topic. Ok, we all know that's not true. Or at least anyone who has any experience with the internet and social media knows better. Of course there has been a storm of epic proportions, primarily centering on the harassment of women in the gaming industry and the idea that the only way indie developers are getting good scores are through bribing (via a variety of ways) corrupt journalists.

Whether that's true or not, the integrity of videogame journalism has been called into question, and coupled with the misogyny that has persistently plagued the gaming industry in both gaming development as well as journalism, we find prominent female journalists such as Jenn Frank removing themselves from the industry because they can no longer deal with the constant harassment.

WE SHOULD BE UNITED IN OUR LOVE OF VIDEOGAMES, NOT EXCLUDE OTHERS BASED ON THEIR RACE OR GENDER.

This is sad because no one should have to fear for their life or their livelihood. We can, of course, immediately place this in a South African context which on so many levels is still an emerging market in the gaming arena.

Not only are we in a space that has an almost exclusively male gaming media contingent (I'm pretty sure I can count the number of South African female gaming journalists on one hand), but the gaming media is almost exclusively part of the white demographic.

And while I've written about the representation of colour and gender before, and while many tell us that we're being overly sensitive, it's a

**PIPPA
BELIEVES IT'S
TIME TO PUT AN END
TO EXCLUSION**

problem that we close our eyes to because honestly we love videogames and we all want to keep playing them.

This can't continue however, if we simply pretend that it will go away. You might think that black people don't play games, but even after The Verge has been off air for two years, I still get messages on social media from teenagers wanting to find out about the latest releases – the racial divide for that generation has fallen away, and the racial mixture of kids contacting me is incredibly varied.

At some point more people are going to sit up and say, "Hang on, this doesn't represent me". And what are you going to say - "You're being over sensitive,"?

Yeah, I don't think that's going to fly for very much longer. We should be united in our love of videogames, not exclude others based on their race or gender, and allow for much needed criticism where it's appropriate. **ts**



Nobody likes a SMARTWATCH



Apple is trying to convince you that your watch is stupid. My watch, a Swatch, made using impressive yet affordable Swiss technology, tells the time really reliably, using a complex array of springs, gears and whatever else watches have inside them.

When a person is smart, you generally would say, "that person really knows what time it is".

Well my watch really knows what time it is too, which is more than I can say for myself. In fact, it's precisely my inability to know what time it is that caused me to buy it in the first place. But according to Apple, my watch isn't smart enough. If they have their way, I would buy their Apple Watch instead, because Apple claim their watch is much smarter than mine.

Once upon a time, before smartphones, phones were kind of useless.

They couldn't tell you the weather, help you work out which way north is or double up as a torch. They had no application when it came to social networking, unless you mean in the old fashioned sense of the term 'social networking', i.e. having a conversation with another person on the phone. You couldn't spend six out of eight hours a working day playing Candy Crush on it, all the while drawing a salary from the unsuspecting company you work for. It was tough back then in the dark ages.

And yet, you could use those phones to call people and talk to them. This is something

IN THE FUTURE, WILL WE HAVE TO RECHARGE OUR WATCHES BECAUSE WE SPENT TOO MUCH TIME FACEBOOKING ON THEM?

IF THE OPPOSITE OF

**SMART IS SIMPLE,
THEN HE'LL CHOOSE
A SIMPLE WATCH
OVER A SMARTWATCH
ANY DAY OF
THE WEEK,**

writes Deep Fried Man.

that gets a bit lost in translation when it comes to today's phones. First of all, I mostly have no battery left on my phone due to using it to play Candy Crush, and then people have to leave me voicemail messages, rendering it about as smart as a landline phone in the 1980s with an answering machine. Secondly, no-one can ever hear me, and I can never hear them, because Cell C. I must confess I sometimes miss the cheap Nokia I used to have, which excelled only at making calls and playing snake.

And that's how I feel about the Apple Watch, and smartwatches in general. Am I a Luddite, someone who hates technology and wishes we could all go back to riding horse drawn carriages and sending telegrams, just because I like my watch the way it is now?

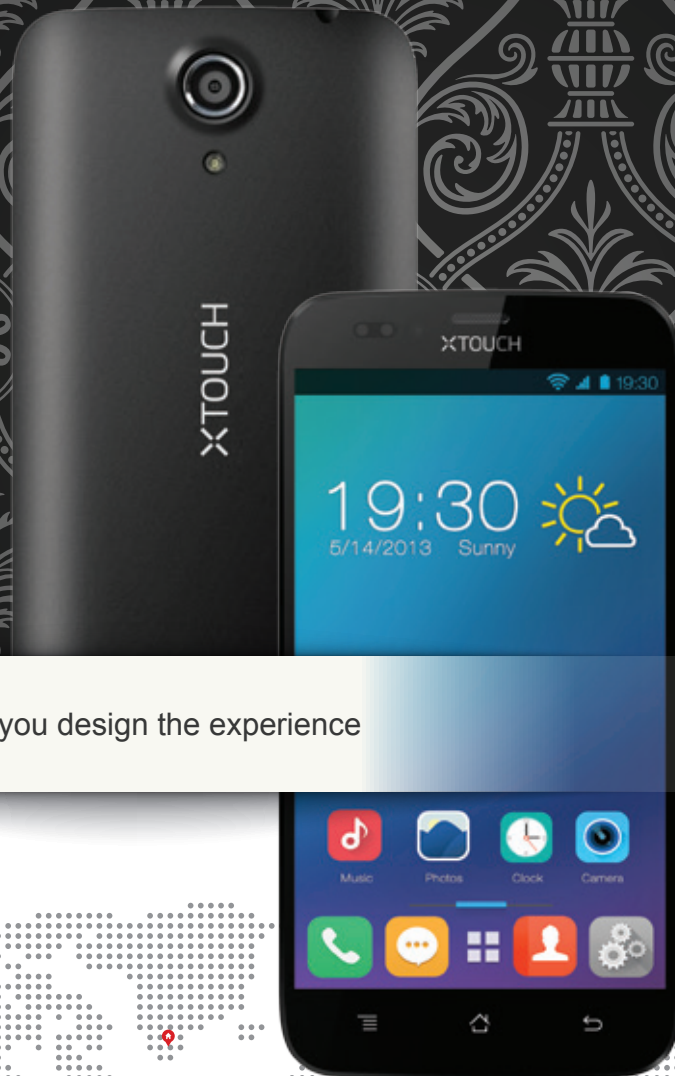
In the future, will we have to recharge our watches because we spent too much time Facebooking on them? Will we have to switch them off so that we can avoid colleagues who contact us on Sunday evenings? Will people at restaurants stop talking to each other because they are too busy playing with their watches?

My prediction is that soon, everyone will have smartphones, but most of them will have no battery power left by 2 pm each day. I, however, will keep my old, simple watch, and so people will ask me the time, and I will tell them the time. And, as they walk away, they will correctly think to themselves, 'that guy really knows what time it is'. **ts**

Photo:
GA Goodman



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