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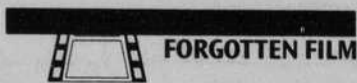
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'Tron' fights video games gone evil

■ The 1982 Disney movie's graphics were technologically advanced and still look fresh



'Tron'

Starring: Jeff Bridges, Bruce Boxleitner, David Warner, Cindy Morgan and Barnard Hughes

Disney

★★★★☆

By Mason West and Dave Depper
Oregon Daily Emerald

When we decided to review "Tron," some of our fellow Emerald employees expressed concern about whether it is actually a "forgotten film." While we do admit that there is a faction that views "Tron" regularly, it is our belief that most of you haven't seen it in a dog's age.

Dave — They even took away the "Tron" ride at Disneyland.

Mason — And they turned the Swiss Family tree house into the "Tarzan" tree house.

So to be brief, if you don't think "Tron" is forgotten enough, come up with a better selection and write to us, if you think you're so cool.

Anyway, "Tron" is Disney's 1982 spectacle foreshadowing its contributions to computer animation in full-length movies. According to "The Tron Page" (<http://www.3gcs.com/tron/>), \$4 million of the \$17 million budget went to developing the film's computer animation sequences. That was money well spent, because even now the scenes are captivating and entertaining rather than being laughably dated ... except the grid bugs.

Dave — The grid-bug sequence made me feel like I was watching Pink Floyd's "The Wall." This was not a good thing.

Mason — The green and orange tones made me think of carrots.

Honestly, those striking colors are the first tones in the film that stray from either red or blue. The visual relations between the real world and the digital world are well-crafted by repeating the same colors. The dual colors also make it much easier to figure out who is good (blue) and bad (red).

Mason — It's funny that we're a good way into our article and the reader doesn't know what the movie is about, yet.

Dave — Yeah, it's a good thing we're feature writers and can get away with such nonsense.

"Tron" is about Kevin Flynn's struggle to prove that he, not Ed Dillinger, wrote the most popular video game in the country: "Space Paranoids." Dillinger is played well by a snide David Warner and Kevin is played by a young Jeff Bridges.

Dave — Another stellar example of a movie in which the bad guy has a British accent for no reason.

Mason — Cracking good.

Dillinger stole the programs from Flynn and quickly rose to senior vice president of ENCOM software. One program he did write was the evil Master Control Program (MCP). But the MCP has taken on a life of its own and rules the digital world, keeping Sark, Dillinger's digital manifestation, as his servant.

Everything goes topsy-turvy when Flynn tries to tamper with the MCP. Using a new matter transfer program, the MCP sends Flynn into the digital world. Flynn is sent to compete in the very games that

he programmed as punishment for being a rebel program.

Mason — Just think: Every time you play a video game, innocent programs are being deleted.

Dave — I'll never play "Doom" with a clear conscience again.

In the games, Flynn encounters Tron, a program designed to monitor the system and destroy the MCP. This leads to one of the more interesting parts of the "Tron" experience. There are two heroes who are equally responsible for the success of their mission. This also creates some sexual tension with the one girl in the movie.

The music for this film is an interesting blend of classical instruments and synthesizers. At its best it is a successful marriage of past and future, but at its worst it sounds like the video game from hell. It is nice that they tried to mimic video-game music, but constant intrusion of "bleepy" computer noises in richer arrangements is a distraction from the film's intensity.

And the film needs to be intense to draw you into the digital world enough to accept lines such as these:

"This is all a mistake. I'm just a compound interest program!" — compound interest program.

"I've been stuck here for 20 microseconds." — Ram, one of the good guys.

"They haven't built a circuit that can hold you." — Yori, the girl.

"Bring in the logic probe!" — Sark.



Bryan Dixon Emerald

"Yes, I'm old. Old enough to remember the MCP when he was just a chess program." — Dumont, the I/O device guardian.

The test of time has proven this movie to be great. Granted, some parts have aged better than others, but the whole package is still appealing and priced to sell. The ideas dealt with in the film are still relevant and well-portrayed, like questions dealing with the purpose of existence. If you are feeling nostalgic, or if you have nothing better to do, you would be wise to go rent "Tron."

Dave — We're serious, this ain't no con.

Mason — It's much better than sitting on your lawn.

Dave — Make sure your VCR is on.

Mason — That's enough, we're gone.

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