

# Rune with a View



September 2010

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IFIS are the Science Fiction and Fantasy society at Royal Holloway and Bedford New College, University of London. We sporadically produce a magazine, Rune with a View, so our members can be more active. It is also a good outlet for things which we have written anyway, such as fanfiction. We hope you enjoy our efforts and that it helps you get to know some of the members and/or subjects you might want to discuss with them.

## Meet the Committee

### President



Flick Myerscough is a Music student who does not anticipate a career in performance, thus making future opportunities to write a pretentious description of herself in the third person unlikely. Dystopia seems to feature heavy in her literary leanings, whilst some of her other interests can be gathered from the article she has written for this magazine. Flick also enjoys travelling, with her photo here being the token one of herself from a recent holiday in Vienna.

### Librarian



Hi, I'm Emma, the IFIS librarian for this year and a third year physics student. My favourite sci-fi/fantasy books are The Old Kingdom Trilogy by Garth Nix and His Dark Materials by Philip Pullman. In the past year I have discovered Neil Gaiman. My favourite film is the Rocky Horror Picture Show, and I am more than a little bit obsessed with it.

### Secretary



Hi, I'm Mohamed, your secretary for 2010-2011. I did the same job last year too, so I should have some inkling of what's going on this year. I've been a Doctor Who fan since the age of 3, and a sci-fi head since about then as well. Probably. The last two years at IFIS and access to the IFIS library have opened my eyes to the wealth of written SF out there, and I've become a keen Iain (M.) Banks fan (in between History texts, naturally.) In my free time, I am an avid collector of human centipedes.

### Treasurer



I'm Mahin, not to be confused with Martin, who is the President of Gamesoc this year. My favourite IFIS moments have included the Jurassic Park marathon and the time I shaved Optimus Prime into my hair. I love Dinosaurs

## **Scott (and Fred who says “Right”) Vs. The Institute by Daniel South**

Scott felt elated as he piloted his glidercar through London that evening. Sunset was approaching and the sky was a fiery orange and the skyscrapers cast long shadows into the distance. London had kept expanding over the last century until it covered most of the south east of England. Scott always felt on a high after pulling off a job but he had just pulled off the biggest job of his life. He was so entranced by this feeling he almost glided into the next lane and collided with another car. The car screeched its horn as it sped past but was drowned out by a shout from a fog horn like voice in the back seat.

“Keep your eyes on the fucking sky”.

The voice belonged to Scott’s friend. Fred. Fred was a bus driver during the day so liked to think he knew everything about flying a glidercar. He had also been an amateur boxer ever since he was growing up so Scott liked to have him around when he was on a job.

“We’ve still got company, you know” drawled Fred from the back.

They had been being followed for about 5 sectors now and their pursuers were getting closer. Although he should have expected this as the Institute was well known for its tough security. That was why Scott was so elated, he had beaten their security. Granted they didn’t have the velociraptors anymore but it was still a tough building to break into. The Institute itself was the Institute for Impure Science, which had grown with London over the last 100 years until it played a part in the running of every section of society. There were rumours that everyone in the government was a member.

Scott was brought back to reality by the glidercar behind him crashing into him. He soon realised he had a long way to go before this job was finished. The glider car was piloted by two Mechanised Anti Human Investigatory Nemeses (MAHIN). They had replaced human guards several years previously as they were more efficient.

“I thought we lost them at the stairs” shouted Fred. Everybody knew MAHINs had trouble going down stairs.

“Bastards must have used the lift” Scott bellowed back.

“They must really love that head” said Fred.

The head in question was the item Scott and Fred had stolen. It was the head of a previous president of the institute apparently, preserved in a jar. Although Scott

couldn't see why it was so valuable, with his long hair and beard, Scott thought he looked like a hobbit, not a president. It was also missing an ear from his fight with a sabre-toothed lizard in 2016, which only added to the strange look of this preserved head.

"It's time we said goodbye to our friends" said Scott.

"Right" said Fred.

Scott pressed some buttons and activated his afterburners. His sleek glidercar burst into life and Scott was pushed back into his seat as the car sped off into the darkening city. This didn't buy him much time as the MAHINs had soon caught up in their high powered glidercars. They continued to weave between the traffic, Scott trying to concentrate in spite of Fred's back seat driving. Fred started shooting out of the back. Copper green bullets sparkled as they shot through the air and Fred guided his shots onto the target. The port side engine of the first glidercar exploded spectacularly, ripping the wing from the body. The rest of the car spiralled down the 2000 meters to the ground below. Scott and Fred didn't see the impressive crash as car met ground as they were already around the next corner and dealing with the second car. The driver of this car was much more experienced and easily dodged all of Fred's shots.

"Shit, put your foot down Scott" growled Fred.

Scott was getting desperate and more reckless in his flying. He dived towards the ground and then pulled up again just before he thought he was going to pass out. The MAHIN car behind kept up with him all the way.

"Fuck" swore Scott.

The sun had dipped below the horizon now and London was dark. All Scott could see were lights marking the positions of other glidercars, streetlights, and lights in windows. London had turned into a giant lighted dot to dot. Scott had lost his bearings and had no clue where they were, so he dived down towards the nearest building, hoping to lose them on foot. He almost missed the entrance so swung his vehicle in at the last second, this took Fred by surprise as he was leaning out to get a better shot. He fell out of the car and disappeared into the darkness. Scott landed the glidercar, jumped out and looked at his surroundings. He was in a car park. He was about to go and look for Fred when he heard their pursuers enter the car park as well. He hadn't lost them. He ran to the stair case and started to climb. He found out he had entered a department store. He dashed through cooking appliances when he saw the MAHINs searching for him. He ducked into electronics,

passing between holoboxes and plasma radios. He breathed a sigh of relief as he found the emergency exit and started to climb the fire escape. The door to the level above was locked and so was the one after that. He reached the third door and ran towards it.

SMACK!

The door swung open into his face. For a moment Scott forgot who he was and where he was and could only think of the fact that his face now felt like it was 2D. He dropped the former president's head and it rolled into a corner and rested face down. Scott recovered just in time to see a MAHIN walk through the door towards him. Scott jumped to his feet and swung at the MAHIN who easily parried the blow. Scott kicked at the robots shin but his foot only found metal and he swore in pain. The MAHIN smacked Scott in the face and his world went back before it came back into focus. Scott tried in vain to block the next blow but the robots foot swung into his crotch with shattering force. Scott collapsed to the floor as thing went black again.

"Not fair" he whispered.

He could just make out the MAHIN looming above him about to strike a deadly blow. Next thing he knew a blur that was Fred hurled into the menacing robot. The robot was good but was no match for Fred's expertise. After repeated strikes to its head, the robot crumpled to the floor in a heap of sparks and whirring noises.

"I should start charging for saving your arse" said Fred with a smile. "I would make a fortune".

"Well I don't think much of your timing" said Scott with some discomfort as Fred helped him to his feet.

Scott retrieved the president's head and placed it back in its jar, remembering to screw the lid on tight this time. He didn't want to lose the head again before he could get it to his buyer.

"C'mon, let's get out of here" Scott said to his friend as they started to walk back down the fire escape.

To be continued.....

*Daniel South was IFIS Treasurer in 2009-2010. His life outside of IFIS is rumoured to involve flying saucers.*

## Gaming at university by Dale Bancroft

It is with a heavy heart that many students leave their gaming hobbies behind them when arriving at university, swapping out a well worn Xbox or hand-built gaming rig for a stylish Mac book Pro (all the better for carrying to that latest trendy frappaccino bar to talk politics and SU gossip). Many worry that bringing their lifelong passion for games with them to university will be an irreversible social catastrophe, ruining their chances of ever making friends or passing exams. The pressure to give a sexy, fashionable first impression and keep up with social after social further squeezes out any chance to enjoy gaming a fresher might have, leading to students consigning a carefree and inspiring art to the attic – but it doesn't have to be that way.

There is no doubt that university is a fantastic time to make new relationships that will last for the rest of your life. It stands to reason that if people consider your room or house the place to be, then you're not going to be short of mates either. Although you might assume you'll just entertain your new friends with 24/7 drink and sex parties, as the term proceeds (and the giant iceberg of seminars and deadlines looms into view) these at first spontaneous activities rapidly become difficult to organise and lose their appeal.

So what do people today use to keep themselves and their friends amused in an increasingly packed and inflexible timetable? Rather than obscure and arcane contraptions for loners and losers, gaming consoles today are a sleek, simple and effective way to pass time with friends and the centre of an international multimillion dollar industry specifically designed to find ways for groups of people of all ages and interests to have fun together.

There are a surprising number of consoles that seem to be designed around the idea of students living in halls together, robust technology built around the idea of a group of mates passing the time together before heading out to lectures or the SU.



Simple, intuitive and friendly games for the Nintendo Wii make it great for brief/drunken games with friends who otherwise have no interest in games.

This "pick-up-and-play" design of many new titles out today is perfect for student timetables, as the ability to briefly join an activity with friends before popping out to your next social is not to be underestimated.

When people think of social gaming today, generally the first thing that comes to mind is the Nintendo Wii – a family-friendly, little cute box that lets grandparents and 3 year

olds everywhere enjoy gaming by flailing a handheld motion sensor around to simulate bowling or driving or whatever. Whilst at first this seems the obvious choice for students wishing to game with friends, many new owners have quickly come to regret their purchase.

Beyond a couple of games based around an Italian plumber driving or bouncing his way through Nintendo's tired intellectual property, the Wii is lacking in creative or interesting choices of entertainment, babying to the lowest common denominator of the prepubescent and the unimaginative. However, this doesn't mean it should be ignored altogether, as franchises such as Super Smash Brothers and Mario Kart have proven time and again to be fantastic value for money and a great distraction. Just remember to think of them like airy sugar puffs - brief and superficial – that aren't going to provide a sustaining and interesting way to sink time.



Music games: look stupid,  
amazing fun!

If cutesy characters and bright primary colours aren't your thing, then one of the most overlooked but arguably finest example of social gaming for students is the "Band Hero" music-based game franchise found on the Playstation 3, Xbox 360 and (in a much more limited, constrained form) Wii consoles. If the idea of rocking out to your favourite guilty pleasure songs on plastic guitars, miniature drums and a microphone seems ridiculous at first, that's simply because you haven't done it yet.

Fun anytime, anywhere, and with anyone, the ability to jam, hit things or simply sing to a prodigious array of songs is simply too good to pass up. I can also say, from personal experience

involving crooning drunkenly at parties with "friends" to the early hours, that it is one of the few games I know that increases your likelihood of getting laid.

But before you jump on to Play.com and order 20 sets, the game is not the most budget- or space-friendly option for gaming students. Clunky pieces of plastic will rapidly fill up your student digs if you order the full set of 2 guitars, drums and a microphone, and owning any less than the full set is just a recipe for disappointment at parties. An eye-watering price tag and the fact that the best songs often cost extra online might also set off warning bells, and doesn't mix well with the large amounts of debt hanging over most student's heads, ready to pounce the moment they leave the sheltered bubble of higher education.



Another good choice for bringing friends together to while away the time are the array of “shoot ‘em ups”, also known as First Person Shooters, which dominate much of the Xbox 360 and Playstation 3 gaming catalogue. Both amongst the most popular and most demonised of game types, shooting based games such as the Call of Duty franchise offer a variety of ways for people to enjoy cathartic, if somewhat unimaginative, violence. However, it is the option in many of these games to work cooperatively with a friend rather than competitively against them which makes these games a real pleasure to play over the long term with a friend or room mate.

One of the best co-operative gaming experiences I have enjoyed in a long time was the co-op mode in the space-themed shooting title Halo 3. With the ability to create new game modes and maps, the title also provided an enduring, competitive and fun competitive multiplayer mode that stole many hours of my time. The latest title in the franchise, Halo: Reach, is a fantastic choice for any students interested in finding a way to spend time gaming with friends. The title’s new gimmicks (jetpacks!) combined with the adaptability of previous titles competitive modes and comedic features (like the player-launching

Gravity Hammer weapon combined with the option to increase player speed and decrease gravity in custom multiplayer maps), will likely be stealing the time of students across Founders and Kingswood halls for the next year at least.



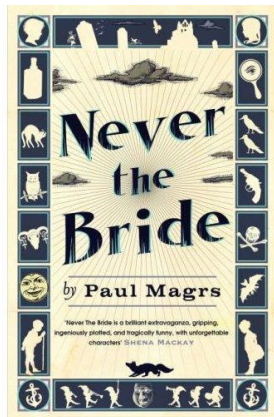
Features that can be manipulated to comedic effect in Halo games make them a great game to enjoy casually with a few friends before a night out.

Games have the unparalleled ability to transcend social, cultural and language barriers, and bring together diverse groups of open-minded people together to enjoy participating in a single activity – even if it is something as simple as rocking out to your favourite band or indulging in some pixellated, straightforward violence. I regret that I haven’t even mentioned using networked PCs, perfect for long-distance friends to game together, but otherwise often limited to the most techno-savvy of students. It is a shame that anyone wanting to enjoy an activity as peaceful and enjoyable as playing a game with friends must dispel dusty social stereotypes and overcome the leers of the ignorant and prejudiced.

*Dale Bancroft is a gaming n00b, writing hack and general fan of the IFIS society. If he wasn't so busy sucking at Starcraft, he'd come to IFIS more often.*

## **“Never the Bride” by Paul Magrs**

**Published 2006 by Headline Publishing, Review by Adam Cummins**



Brenda and Effie are two ladies of a certain age who live on the coast in Whitby. Brenda runs a bed-and-breakfast while Effie is the proprietress of a (rather dusty) antiques shop, and they like to spend their spare time going for afternoon coffee or for fish and chips at “Cod Almighty”. They also investigate mysteries. To begin with, they look into the mysterious new beauty parlour that has opened in town, which claims to be able to literally wipe decades from its costumer’s ages. And then there’s a mysterious family that comes to stay at Brenda’s B&B.

So, what is it that sets *Never the Bride* apart from any other “old lady” mystery like Miss Marple or an episode of *Murder, She Wrote*? Well,

quite a few things really. For a start, there’s Whitby itself. It isn’t quite an ordinary seaside town. It seems that, when night falls, strange things creep out from dark places and stalk the streets. Then there are the people who live there, from the grotesque Mrs. Claus, owner of the Christmas Hotel, where Christmas is celebrated 365 days a year, to Mr. Danby the smarmy manager of the Deadly Boutique with his crowd of strangely... small assistants. The strangest person of all is very possibly Brenda, a mysterious woman with no surname, no identity and no bus pass. Just what is Brenda’s uncertain “certain age”?

The name Paul Magrs may be familiar to some as the creator of *Transtemporal Adventuress Extraordinaire*, Ms. Iris Wildthyme. In *Brenda and Effie* he has created two instantly familiar, surprisingly real people. Effie, the slightly bitter, disapproving spinster who believes in Victorian values, and Brenda who “didn’t like them much the first time round”. What helps is that the whole story is told from Brenda’s point of view, and Magrs chatty first person narration instantly draws the reader in and makes the one warm to her. The reader is drawn into the various mysteries that she and Effie investigate and wants to know the outcome. They are also drawn into the mystery of Brenda herself as they try to work out her true identity, hints to which are peppered throughout

the narrative, along with details about her past.

It isn't just Brenda to whom the reader is drawn. Effie, for all her waspishness and short-temper still comes across as a loyal friend and her irascibleness is quite endearing. Even the account of a romance between an enemy soldier and a local girl during an invasion is strangely touching. Although it is given a somewhat unorthodox spin by Margs.

The five chapters make up five almost separate and self-contained mysteries, but by the end Margs has skilfully woven them together to create an overall arc. Small details in one story are shown to have a greater significance by the end. Hints are also dropped for further novels in the series, and if you've enjoyed the first volume, these are all highly recommended. The "vulgar" Hotel Miramar, run by the widowed Sheila Manchu, briefly mentioned in this volume becomes one of the main settings in the next one.

In short, *Never the Bride* is wonderful tale of the strange and the fantastic happening in an ordinary setting that turns out not to be quite so ordinary after all. With an intriguing narrator, grotesque but believable characters and an engaging set of mysteries, it is definitely worth trying.

*Adam Cummins was previously the name of the IFIS president. Adam is pleased with his current regeneration.*



Iris Wildthyme, another of Margs' creations.

## Space in Music: Music Drawing on the Concepts of Space and Alien Life, by Flick Myerscough

Alexander Courage composed the *Star Trek* opening titles music for the 1964 pilot. The monologue was not present in either of the pilots, but was added for the first season, aired 1966. *Star Wars*, of course, is a later franchise, with the first film released in 1977. John Williams' main theme exemplifies the style associated both with this film and composer, the opening fifth heard in the theme also found in his music for *E.T.* The third and fourth examples will come from *Jeff Wayne's Musical Version of The War Of The Worlds*: this 1978 concept album should prove an interesting comparison as, unlike the other two it is firstly an adaption from a pre-existing text, secondly is not considered under the genre of space opera and finally is conceived as a musical work, rather than as part of a film or television series. Of course, *The War of the Worlds* may still be considered multimedia because of its use of text, and even more so when its more recent stagings are considered, but its genre and interaction with other media are still entirely different to those of the other two examples under consideration.

Fanfare-like music can be found in all three of the examples under consideration. Whilst the *Star Wars* theme could be said to be similar to a fanfare in its entirety due to its grand march style, the part most fitting of the labelling as an actual fanfare is at the very opening, before the main theme begins. The use of a fanfare, as well as the slow tempo of the march, complies with conventions for the representation of nobility, an attribute that is meant to be attached to the main characters of the films. Likewise, the fanfares in the *Star Trek* opening titles belong to the first section, accompanying the monologue. Again, this transfers attributes of nobility onto the crew of the Enterprise, and also gives them importance. Furthermore, the grandiosity of the brass fanfares transfers this attribute onto the vastness of space, which could be heard in the hazy, slow-moving, parallel harmonies. To represent the immensity of space in this way is far simpler than attempting to convey it on a television screen, perhaps reflecting the connotative properties of music, compared to the denotative and definite properties of image. The connotative representation of the idea in the music also lends itself to reinterpretation following new advances in science, and also avoids issues surrounding the use of special effects, so accusations of inaccuracy or poor representation in hindsight are less of an issue.

The idea of fanfare in *The War of the Worlds* is perhaps more complex. To explore how the concept is relevant, the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary definition will be considered: it describes a fanfare as 'a loud short piece of music played usually on a trumpet and to introduce the arrival of someone important'. If a fanfare is considered thus, then the first musical motif heard (following 'and slowly, and

surely, they drew their plans against us' in the narration) can be labelled as one: this leitmotif (do I want to use the word leitmotif or shall I just call it a motif?)/it is short, loud and is continuously used to announce the arrival of the aliens (a related motif is also used, in a fanfare-like way in the song 'Brave New World', after the artillery man announces 'I'VE GOT A PLAN!!').

Whilst concepts of fanfare can be said to appear in all three examples, the same is not true of the use of electronics, including instruments and effects. The use of both is clear in *The War of the Worlds*, where Electric Guitar, Bass and keyboard are used, as well as an audible use of effects and engineering both on the instruments themselves, and on the sounds representative of the action in the story. An even greater use of electronics could be cited if the touring production is considered, bearing in mind the video backgrounds and animatronics, as well as the equivalents of the amplification, effects and mixing on the original concept album. Use of electronics is also clear in the music under consideration from *Star Trek*: the background harmony in the first section (backgrounding the brass fanfares) sounds at least partially synthesised, this relationship is then seemingly reversed in the second section, when the brass is mostly in an accompanying role, alongside an electric bass. Whilst the precise instrumentation varies throughout the theme in its various versions, it is in the second section that this is most obvious, with the inclusion of the vocal line in the first pilot and (mixed to a different volume) in the second and third season, or the use of a synthesised or orchestral melody in the first season. Technologically it is most interesting when the vocal line is used, due to the precise mixing employed. The voice as unmediated by any form of technology and therefore regarded by some as the most human of instruments, is engineered so as to sound rather like a theremin, an instrument only viable because of technology. (Of course, another layer to the juxtaposition is that the theremin can be seen from the idea that there are fewer layers of technology between the player and the sound than in other electronic instruments, and some might even say than some acoustic instruments.) The electronic, synthesised melody used for the initial ten episodes has also been known to be mistaken for a theremin. In contrast, John Williams' main theme from *Star Wars* uses no electronic instruments or effects. Parallels could possibly be drawn with the fact that the characters around which the story revolves are all human. Indeed, the setting of space has little input to the events of the film and is thus extrinsic to the storyline, even if it does contribute to genre identification. It seems that it is the story rather than the setting that Williams has chosen to interact with during his composition. Another motivation could, of course, be the wish to differentiate *Star Wars* from *Star Trek* and a request that this be partially attained through the music. However, this point could be refuted by pointing out that Williams' music for *E.T.* does not use electronics either. Whether this argument can be used against the argument of the extrinsic nature of the setting to *Star Wars* depends on whether E.T.'s alien biology is viewed as important to his character and

role in the story, or whether the same basic narrative could be maintained with a non-alien.

Spoken word appears, once again, in the music under consideration from *Star Trek* and in *Jeff Wayne's Musical Version of the War of the Worlds*, but not *Star Wars*. Perhaps, here, a reflection on the nature of each example is worthwhile, as this may cause the use of spoken word to be deemed more or less appropriate by the composer. Firstly, in its original form as a concept album, *The War of the Worlds* had no images, unlike the other two examples under consideration. In fact, the full title, *Jeff Wayne's Musical Version of the War of the Worlds*, somewhat gives away the intended nature, that is a musical version of a pre-existing text. So, why the speech, rather than singing? This question can easily be dealt with by considering other concept albums of the time, as well as stage musicals, both of which can involve spoken word. For an example of the former, indeed an example released the year before *The War of the Worlds*, see *Consequences*, by Godley and Creme. The use of spoken word is equally not unheard of in television opening sequences, with other examples including Gerry Anderson's *Stingray* (1964-65, "Stand by for action! We are about to launch *Stingray*! Anything can happen in the next half hour!"). As a title sequence is repeated with each show, and does not contribute to the drama of each episode, the use of spoken word cannot be said to undermine traditional Hollywood underscoring, with music as a servant art to the film. The spoken word can set the scene in a more denotative and exact way whilst the music sets the mood. In a way, the role of the spoken word in these two examples has some similarities to the rolling text at the opening of *Star Wars*, detailing the story so far, which is onscreen at the time the music under consideration is heard. To hear the text spoken, in this context, would lessen the grandeur of the music, meaning it could not interact in the same way with the iconic on screen word setting, resulting in an entirely different sequence.

Melodic contours in each of the examples under consideration are an area worth contrasting, and extracts from the music from *Star Wars* and *Star Trek* are shown in figures 1 and 2. Both open with aspirational upward leaps, but proceed differently; the *Star Trek* melody in descending phrases, lending grace and smoothness to the flight of the enterprise as it is seen crossing the screen; the *Star Wars* theme containing more leaps, sounding more war-like.

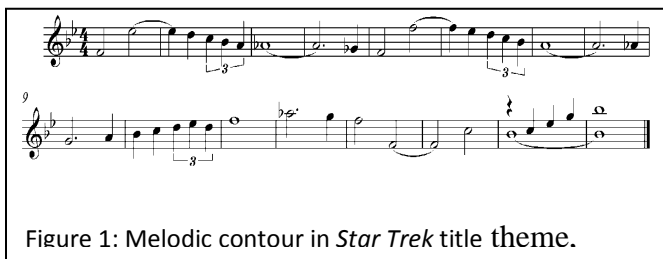


Figure 1: Melodic contour in *Star Trek* title theme.



Figure 2: Melodic contour of opening material in *Star Wars* theme.

As Jeff Wayne's *Musical Version of the War of the Worlds* is longer than both the other examples, there is not space to note all of its melodic contours. However, melodic shape is used to great effect in a motif that is first heard in 'Horsell Common and the Heat Ray'. This is shown in figure 3. The use of semitone lends tension to the opening of this song even before the narration begins.



Figure 3: 'Horsell Common and the Heat Ray' bass motif.

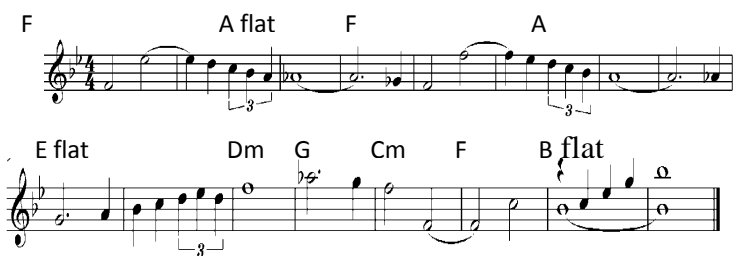
Finally, consideration can be given to the harmony of each of the examples. Once again, the length of *The War of the Worlds* makes it impossible to cover its entirety in the space available, so the fanfare like opening will be returned to. The chord progression indicated is regarded as 'functional' meaning that each chord sounds like it wants to resolve to the next one, creating a clear sense of the key (listen to the passage, which is easy to find as it is the very beginning, if you want to confirm this to yourself). These harmonies and very progression dominate the opening song, 'The Eve of the War', indeed there are no others until 70 seconds in, and recur



Figure 4: 'The Eve of the War', opening bass line with chordal harmonies labelled.

The *Star Wars* harmonies are also functional, and remain so throughout the music composed for the film. The music from *Star Trek*, however, offers more variety and interest. In its first section, the parallel movement of the harmonies dispels a sense of key, which is only formally established (by a perfect cadence) at the very end of the piece, indeed the only time a B flat chord, the tonic, is heard. However, when the key is finally established, it is done in a highly functional way, with the preceding chord progression, Dm-G-Cm-F flat, as a circle of fifths, creating a strong harmonic drive towards the final cadence and formal establishment of key. In this way, the theme from *Star Trek* can be viewed as an end-based structure as it works towards the final

achievement of a clear tonality. The process of finding this tonality, and the gradual move from less to more functional harmony (with the middle contained chromaticisms both in melody and harmony) can also be seen as defining the structure, if one wishes to use a processive, rather than events based model. This consideration of the harmonies in the *Star Trek* theme again leads to the idea that the functionality of those the the *Star Wars* theme may be for a deliberate mark of difference. The counterargument employed before, regarding Williams other compositions, particularly E.T. can be once again deployed, but does address the idea that style of compositional was probably a considerationb in the employment of Williams as composer for *Star Wars*.



The image shows a musical score for the second section of the *Star Trek* theme. It consists of two staves of music in 4/4 time, written in B-flat major (two flats). The melody is written on a treble clef staff. The harmony is indicated by chords written above the staff. The chords are: F (first measure), A flat (second measure), F (third measure), A (fourth measure), E flat (fifth measure), Dm (sixth measure), G (seventh measure), Cm (eighth measure), F (ninth measure), and B flat (tenth measure). The melody features a triplet of eighth notes in the second measure and another triplet of eighth notes in the sixth measure. The piece ends with a double bar line after the tenth measure.

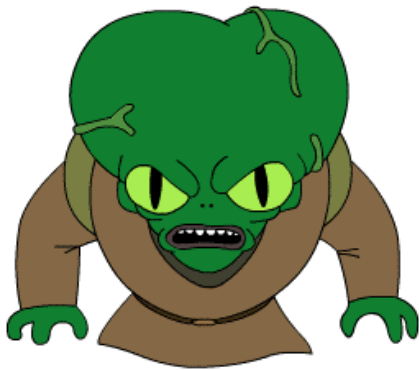
Figure 5: *Star Trek* theme, second section melody, with harmonies labelled.

Through engaging with these compositions in different ways, I have found levels of correlation and similarity between them, but by no means at a level which suggests to me that there is one set of compositional conventions associated with space or aliens. Furthermore, several of the similarities, at least in the case of the examples from film and television, could be equally ascribed to the conventions employed when composing for these media. I would suggest that to a degree, the differences between the examples can be attributed to how little we know about space and the possibility of alien life, and to the huge variety of thoughts, theories, opinions and ideas surrounding these concepts. In the cases considered, differences can also be attributed to the different approaches of the composers, not only due to the media they were interacting with, but also their own opinions and views – for example, it would seem that, not being a science fiction fan, Alexander Courage did not approach his *Star Trek* composition entirely seriously, describing it as (to conclude) "marvellous malarkey music."



## Dear Morbo

"Pathetic Earthlings! It is I, Morbo, news monster extraordinaire and dominator of the nine galaxies! It transpires that once again you puny flesh-bags require someone to listen to your miserable mewlings and despatch sage advice on how to deal with your personal problems and/or plans for universal domination. Let us delve into the sub-ethanet inbox and hear from our first spineless correspondent..."



Twit woo-hoo?

"Dear Morbo,

*I am an active man, I eat well, and I have a beautiful partner. However, I've been having some trouble in the downstairs department. I don't know if it's Nixon's third term, or the threat of nuclear war or whatever, but I've been feeling so helpless and impotent of late. There is one thing that still excites me, however: getting in to fights and dressing up in fetish gear*

*(the usual stuff, you know, like a cape, spandex suit and pointy owl ears.)*

*Is there any way I can get my sex life back to normal?"*

Morbo says: "Morbo finds your lack of manliness laughable, and your sickening perversion oddly intriguing. Morbo can recommend some powerful aphrodisiacs, such as the much consumed 'Human Horn. 'Morbo has no such need for these things, however, and is a prolific breeder, with innumerable nightmarish spawn across the galaxy, waiting to conquer your doomed planet."

## Eleventh Heaven

"Dear Morbo,

*Recently, my life's been in turmoil. I bumped into my long lost family (sort of), made up with my old schoolmate (we'd been through a bit of a rough patch for the past 700 years or so) and to top it all off I had to spend Christmas on my own (under the weather too, I might add!) I just don't feel like the man I was. In fact, I don't think I am..."*

Morbo says: "Change is an unavoidable part of life. One of my hideous wives has undergone her sex change rotation 16 times in the past solar cycle, and Morbo's gender swap is long overdue. A positive outlook on your new life will help. Try changing your wardrobe (according to

Intergalactic Tatler, bow ties are in this millennium.) Morbo's mother also finds that comfort food can help, and suggests the old Earth recipe of fish fingers and custard. I WILL DESTROY YOU!

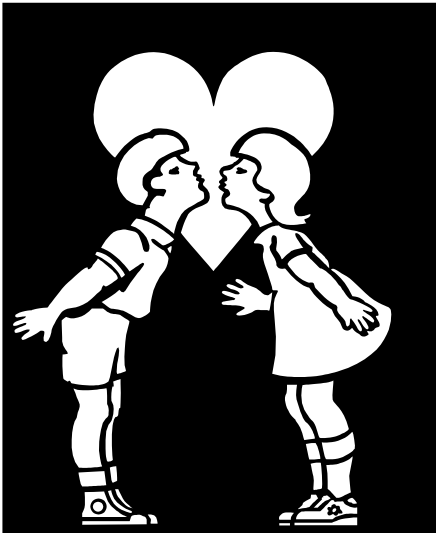
Naïve schoolgirl seeks sparkly vampire and/or werewolf for pointless, soppy franchise that goes on and on for ever and gets exponentially more and more popular for some bloody reason. (Is this right? Ed.)



### Morbo's Lonely Hearts

Purple tentacular universe on the other side of black hole w/GSOH and paranoid sensibilities WLTM genuine universe for tentacle violation/ long-term relationship. No robots. Box no 8120 Yevo.

Young Jedi knight/rebellion hero seeks sexy Force sensitive for companionship, maybe more? DNA test required. I've already been down the incest road. Box no 1410 Yavin IV.





## **IFIS Film Schedule:**

Week 1 - 28th September - Avatar

Week 2 - 5th October - Wrath of Khan

Week 3 - 12th October - The Lost Boys

Week 4 - 19th October - Firefly

Week 5 - 26th October - Moon

Week 6 - 2nd November - Coraline

Week 7 - 9th November - Total Recall

Week 8 - 16th November - The Neverending Story

Week 9 - 23rd November - Doctor Who: The Seeds of Doom

Week 10 - 30th November - Tron

Week 11 - 7th December - IFIS Christmas Event

Movie marathons and more to be announced.

Also, we go down to the Al Ma Ma Ta in Egham on Thursday evenings for a purely social meet. On the thirtieth of September, Flick will be waiting near the clock tower on main campus at 2000 for anyone who wants to walk down in a group.