

BRAINSTORM (1983) dir. by Douglas Trumbull

Yes, we found two films based around advanced communications devices.

THE MT VOID

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As the average non-science-fiction fan what science fiction is about and you will probably get a list like "monsters, death rays, aliens, flying saucers, interplanetary warfare." Of course, you and I know differently. Well, T_h_i_s_I_s_l_a_n_d_E_a_r_t_h is the film they are thinking of. It has all that and more. And it features the do-everything communications device, the Interociter. Universal Pictures was competing with MGM to see which studio could make the more popular science fiction film. MGM made F_o_r_b_i_d_d_e_n_P_l_a_n_e_t and

Universal made T_h_i_s_I_s_l_a_n_d_E_a_r_t_h, basing it on the novel by Raymond

F. Jones. I wouldn't call it really thought-provoking science fiction, but it really is the greatest whiz-bang sci-fi film of the pre-S_t_a_r-W_a_r_s era. If you have never seen it, you really should.

Now, if you want science fiction--as opposed to sci-fi--you cannot do a whole lot better than the first 70 minutes or so of B_r_a_i_n_s_t_o_r_m. The film is about a device that can reproduce in one mind exact mental images from someone else's mind. What starts out looking like an amusing toy with applications in the entertainment industry becomes more and more significant as time goes on, until it becomes obvious that it will transform humanity into something else. This device is more versatile and more important than the laser. And the film does a very good job of showing what the industrial research community is really like. (As an aside, there is even some discussion of room temperature super-conductors about five years before that topic would make world-wide headlines.) Due at least in part to the death of Natalie Wood, this film founders in the last third, but I would still contend it is the best science fiction film of the 1980s.

2. This year's Nebula nominees are as follows:

- Novel:

- Poul Anderson, *B_o_a_t_o_f_a_M_i_l_l_i_o_n_Y_e_a_r_s* (Tor)
- Orson Scott Card, *P_r_e_n_t_i_c_e_A_l_v_i_n* (Tor)
- John Kessel, *G_o_o_d_N_e_w_s_F_r_o_m_O_u_t_e_r_S_p_a_c_e* (Tor)
- Mike Resnick, *I_v_o_r_y:A_L_e_g_e_n_d_o_f_P_a_s_t_a_n_d_F_u_t_u_r_e* (Tor)
- Elizabeth Ann Scarborough, *T_h_e_H_e_a_l_e_r's_W_a_r* (Doubleday/Foundation)
- Jane Yolen, *S_i_s_t_e_r_L_i_g_h_t,S_i_s_t_e_r_D_a_r_k*

- Novellas:

- Lois McMaster Bujold, "The Mountains of Mourning" (*A_n_a_l_o_g,B_o_r_d_e_r_s_o_f_I_n_f_i_n_i_t_y*)
- John Crowley, "Great Works of Time" (*N_o_v_e_l_t_y*)
- George Alec Effinger, "Marid Changes his Mind" (*A_s_i_m_o_v's*)
- Megan Lindholm, "A Touch of Lavender" (*A_s_i_m_o_v's*)
- Judith Moffett, "Tiny Tango" (*A_s_i_m_o_v's*)
- Howard Waldrop, "A Dozen Tough Jobs" (Zeising Brothers)

- Novelettes:

- Greg Bear, "Sisters" (*T_a_n_g_e_n_t_s*)
- Megan Lindholm, "Silver Lady and the Fortyish Man" (*A_s_i_m_o_v's*)
- Mike Resnick, "For I Have Touched the Sky" (*F&S_F*)
- Kristine Kathryn Rusch, "Fast Cars" (*A_s_i_m_o_v's*)
- Robert Silverberg, "Enter A Soldier. Later: Enter Another" (*A_s_i_m_o_v's,T_i_m_e_g_a_t_e*)
- Connie Willis, "At the Rialto" (*O_m_n_i,T_h_e_M_i_c_r_o_v_e_r_s_e*)

- Short Stories:

- Mary Aldridge, "The Adinkra Cloth" (*M_a_r_i_o_n_Z_i_m_m_e_r_B_r_a_d_l_e_y's_F_a_n_t_a_s_y_M_a_g_a_z_i_n_e*)
- Michael Bishop, "The Ommatidium Miniatures" (*T_h_e_M_i_c_r_o_v_e_r_s_e*)

- Orson Scott Card, "Lost Boys" (_ F & _ S _ F)
- Suzy McKee Charnas, "Boobs" (_ A _ s _ i _ m _ o _ v' _ s)
- Geoffrey A. Landis, "Ripples in the Dirac Sea" (_ A _ s _ i _ m _ o _ v' _ s)
- Bruce Sterling, "Dori Bangs" (_ A _ s _ i _ m _ o _ v' _ s)

Mark Leeper
MT 3D-441 957-5619
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Restriction of free thought and free speech is the most dangerous of all subversions. It is the one un-American act that could most easily defeat us.

-- William O. Douglas

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