

Ever since the birth of cinema, visual trickery has been considered to be the art of bringing the wildest imagining of the storyteller or director to the screen. Today, special effects and computer-enhanced imagery have created totally believable visual delight.

The 1980s & 1990 saw great leaps in visual effects through the use of the computer. One of the earliest films to make use of this new technology was 1982's *Tron*, in which the main character enters a computer system, combined a live action foreground with a background that was computer generated. But special effect movies involve more than just camera illusion. Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* is one example which broke new ground in visual effects while grounding the film in a believable setting.

Nowadays, special effects teams strive ever harder to meet audience demands for increasingly spectacular visuals. As they do, the dividing line between live action and special effects becomes harder to detect. I remember the *Lawnmower Man*, in which they have entire sequences generated by computer with no live action at all.

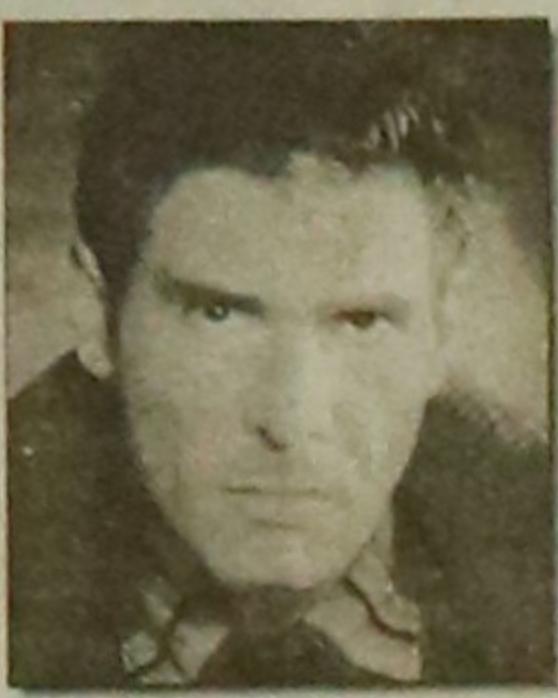
To me, sci-fi flicks with f/x are about possibilities not about probabilities. Keep in mind that they can be windows to the future, a director's vision towards it can be a generation's imagination.

*Twelve Monkeys*: Directed by Terry Gilliam (Brazil), this is a rare film not because of its top-lined performers (Brad Pitt, Bruce Willis, Madeleine Stowe) but its plot... a bald loser Willis in a futuristic underground hell hole, who is sent back to the 1990s to locate a sample of the virus which will wipe out most of humanity in our immediate future. However, as he is whipped back and forth between World War 1, 1990, 1996 and the future, he fixates not on his mission but on psychiatrist Stowe, who manages to convince him that it's all a delusion. The horrible irony is that as soon as Willis starts trying to rationalize all the sci-fi stuff as a neurosis, Stowe turns up physical evidence that suggests it's all true. Meanwhile, loony animal activist Brad Pitt, is planning a major coup of some sort, and the deadly virus is nestled in Pitt's dad's laboratory, just waiting to be set loose.

The twisted ending of this film is worth watching, as I am not

# MOVIE MAGIC

By Sohan Salek



revealing it to you... Go and watch it.

*Contact*: Since radio waves sent into space apparently keep going and going and going, what happens when we intercept alien sound signals? This question inspired the late great astro-guru Carl Sagan to write his 1985 best selling novel, *Contact*. In the film version Jodie Foster plays an Astronomer who receives the first extraterrestrial radio response from space. Matthew

McConaughey costars as an influential spiritual leader who's further enlightened by the cosmic connection. Shot in two countries and four states, *Contact* is rich in the sorts of Morphed-in-effects (one image or form is smoothly transformed into another). In this process, certain key features, such as the eyes and the nose, are used as fixed reference points. The end result is a highly convincing metamorphosis that seems to be almost magical. *T2* was the first commercially successful film to employ this technique of morphing) that takes the players into unfathomable situations. Other stars include James Woods, Tom Skerritt, Angela Bassett. Directed by Robert Zemeckis (*Forrest Gump*).

*Strange Days*: After *Point Break*, the return of two of cinema's greatest exponents of action-writer/producer-director James Cameron and director Kathryn Bigelow, looked like a dystopian vision of a self-imploding Los Angeles revolving around a device that enables the wearer to experience other people's experiences, with a cast headed by Oscar nominees Ralph Fiennes and Angela Bassett.

There are just too many ideas crammed in the device that enables recording on disc of one's experiences straight from the cerebral cortex, a war-ravaged LA on the brink of anarchy. The

film's focus swings from action to paranoia. The "Reality" sequences are mind-blowing and Fiennes is excellent.

*Blade Runner*: Harrison Ford stars as a futuristic Philip Marlowe, trying to find and kill the world's remaining rebel androids in 2817 LA. Directed by Ridley Scott (*Alien, Gladiator*) this 1982 outing is thought provoking and visually impressive.

*The Matrix*: The world is run by artificial intelligence but relies on the energy of humans to keep going. Larry and Andy Wachowski, actually computer illiterate, deliver a sci-fi barn-stormer. Keanu Reeves stars as an average Joe who books up with a group of Luddite terrorists (led by Laurence Fishburne and Carrie-Ann Moss) when he realizes that humanity has become victimized by evil computers. This movie got four nominations in technical categories and won all of them in Oscar 2000. Expect part II & III any time soon. Confused?

After watching these films if you're thirsty for more... watch for interactive films, in which the audience gets to choose the plot. This is still at the experimental stage, but may one day become commonplace.



## STRESS in our life

By Zahed Mannan

Did you know that stress could even shorten your life? Stress arises mainly from the psychological demands of life. As a result, physical ills it generates a vast number of hospital cases and deaths each year. Stress can also make heart attacks and cancer. People are sometimes weak in mind and lose their confidence. Even the unborn are affected. Stress on pregnant women is a cause of physical, emotional and mental damage to children in the womb.

Actually stress is a condition of strain on one's emotions, thought process, and physical condition that seems to threaten one's ability to cope with the environment. Stress on the job is desirable. In most cases, mild stress tends to stimulate performance, but high levels of stress can be bad to physical and emotional disorders and lowered effectiveness.

LIFE'S MOST 'STRESSFUL' SITUATIONS:

1. Death of spouse
2. Divorce
3. Marital separation
4. Jail term
5. Death of close family member
6. Personal injury or illness
7. Marriage
8. Fired at work
9. Marital reconciliation
10. Retirement
11. Change in health of family member
12. Pregnancy
13. Gain of new family member
14. Business readjustment

"Based on research by Drs. T. Holmes and R. H. Rahe - 'Modern Maturity'."

Problems occur especially when stress is sustained over a long period of time, because the human system is prevented. People have different tolerances of stress. Some persons can tolerate much more stress than others and feel that it will help them meet challenges. In western country like Europe and America, divorce or separation of a family is a big problem. For that reason all family members live in stress, especially the children. In many families there is conflict between husband and wife or between parents and children.

"Life is full with problems", you may agree. Stress also does damage because it creates other problems. Because of it many lose work time, increasing their monetary problems. It gives rise to violence, even in marriage. Some stress is normal in life, is not necessarily bad. Getting out of bed in the morning involves stress, as does watching an exciting game. Of course, many of the pressures on us may seem unavoidable, involving other people or circumstances in our own life. If we could better cope with stress, it might lessen other problems, such as those affecting our health.

Professor Hans Selye (University of

Montreal), one of the foremost authorities on the effects of stress, advised, "Rather than relying on drugs or other techniques, I think there's another, better way to handle stress, which involves taking a different attitude toward the various events in our lives."

Anger is another cause of stress. We all get angry at times. But we should remember, "He that is slow to anger is better than a mighty man, and he that is controlling his spirit than the one capturing a city". "Loneliness is universal", said Toronto social worker Henry Regehr. "Stop anyone on the street and say 'tell me about your loneliness' and you will story after story after story." In a poll of 52,000 persons, over 40 percent said that they "often feel lonely." Many persons try to block out loneliness with alcohol or to deaden it by compulsive eating. But the causes remain. The breakup of marriages has increased the problem. Even television seems to add to loneliness by cutting down conversation.

What can be done to help to cope with loneliness? Lonely persons are often told to "keep busy". This has some value. To cope with loneliness it is advised to produce happiness. Actively in doing good things for others produces happiness. To enjoy a happy life, he first needs something that not all have - a reason to live. Your life must have meaning if you are to be truly happy. Professor S. M. Jourard writes: "A person lives as long as he experiences his life as having meaning and value and as long as he has something to live for....As soon as meaning, value and hope vanish from a person's experience, he begins to stop living; he begins to die." By far the majority of persons agree that family life and happiness are related. In one survey, 85 percent of the men said that they "feel that family life" is very important to a happy and satisfied life."

We cannot change what others do. But we should be interested in improving our own family life, especially the relationship between husband and wife. The creator is the Originator of the family arrangement. He provides practical advice that has helped many, many couples to enjoy success in family life. Naturally, most of us love our parents. The creator even encourages us to provide them with material aid in their later years, if it is needed. But the Scriptures emphasizes that, upon marrying, your mate becomes your closest relative. Your husband or wife becomes the first one to love, care for and consult.

To live a happy life it is necessary to reduce stress and find out a real meaningful life, find satisfaction from all jobs and be active in doing good deeds for others.

## ACCIDENT leading to MURDER



By Md. Rifaat Newaz

"Ricardo Zaccaria, a prominent businessman of the country, was found dead in his office. The autopsy showed a bullet wound and an estimated time of murder to be around a week earlier. His office was locked and his body stashed...." Another murder! What was happening to the country? I was about to turn the page when they gave my flight call. I slowly got up and slung my off-white coat in the crook of my arm. I was tired from all the marketing I did. I picked up my briefcase containing some of my belongings and \$365000, which I had got from my dealings with Benedulito Cerraulo.

Benedulito Cerraulo is the head of the largest Mafia gang in whole of Argentina. His wife Suze' has had a major road accident and he had applied for an insurance refund. As an investigator, I had to search ulterior of what is known so, so I went and searched the possessions found by the police after I had gone through the car, a white Ferrari Testrossa. I found a ring there, a gold ring with an R embossed in it. I was astonished.

I wrote a report that it was an accident for sure. I was walking out when I heard Benedulito screaming "I thought you would take her brain injury into consideration." I headed for the hotel "Paradise" the place where Suze' was last seen. I went to the Hotel casino to play. I intentionally lost to get my name into the credit book. For if I had shown my ID they would have shown me a fake book, a standard practice in most casinos. While entering my name I saw quite a number of entries in the name of Suze' who must have been an inveterate gambler. It totaled to around 1 million dollars and a person called Ricardo has paid all.

With a little research on the dark sides I also learned that Suze' and Benedulito had a fight over Suze's going out with Ricardo that night. I also learned that his arch rival Ricardo had sabotaged Benedulito's latest walks on the dark side. And by using my credentials on the hotel porter I found that Suze' had left with a man that night. And that man was driving the car.

I went to talk with Mr. Cerraulo. I told him all that I knew. I also added that it must have been Ricardo that night and he must have tried to kill Suze'. He was quite calm, and I felt awkward. Mr. Cerraulo readily paid me \$370000 for my silence, he did not want this information to be known, as it would be bad for his reputation. I was surprised and happy at the same time.

I had wanted to take a vacation for a long time and so I decided to take it now that I had money. As I walked toward the boarding terminal, a guard pulled out a gun and pointed it at me. At this moment I remembered the obituary of Ricardo I had read today. I understood that the man with Suze' was Ricardo and that he was shot when he was driving the car. Benedulito had tried to murder his own wife as she was telling all his plans to Ricardo. I saw a blink of light at the end of the barrel and all went blank.

### NEWS FLASH:

Ayon Newaz, insurance investigator of ALICO was shot dead as he tried to escape from the country with a stolen \$370000 from Mr. Cerraulo's Safe. His Body is being retained in the police morgue.

## LIFE WITHOUT RHYME

By Diya

A song without music  
A clock without time  
A fire without flames  
Is life without Rhyme.  
Before and beyond us  
In years of heartbreak  
and laughter  
In hearts and history's pages  
Live rhymes ever after.  
While heartaches  
and betrayal  
Encourage distrust  
Rhymes give us reason  
To love and to last.

## Through the window

By Sabrina F. Ahmad

Looking out my window at the world below,  
I see carnivals and street fights - so many sights  
Traffic snarls and trees in a row.  
The breeze, pregnant with smells, comes wafting in,  
Bringing in the scent of deodorant, the aromas from a  
restaurant,  
And the stench from a nearby dustbin.  
It's a busy, busy world, with so much to hear  
The haggling housewives, the clashing sound of butchers'  
knives  
Muffled prayers... and curses uttered loud and clear.  
I wish and wish, but I know I wish in vain  
I wish I could be a part of them...  
But how could I? I am just a lace curtain