

# BACK TO THE WORLD OF MAGIC

FATIMAH AKHTAR

The end of the Harry Potter Franchise meant the entertainment industry would lack the magic of the wizarding world. So, when *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, a movie based on a textbook and myths of the Harry Potter world, was announced – it was welcomed with open arms. Directed by David Yates, who also directed multiple Harry Potter movies, and written by J.K. Rowling, it seemed for the most part that this movie should be able to recreate the same magic as its predecessors. For the most part, the movie does try to do so, even if it often does not succeed.

*Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* makes for the most appropriate expansion of the Harry Potter universe than anything else in recent association to the franchise. Unlike Harry Potter which started as a textual story, *Fantastic Beasts* is created for visual storytelling, and it shows in various parts of the movie. It stays true to its roots as a part of the Harry Potter franchise, by addressing issues about discrimination and bigotry. The movie touches upon aspects of the world that the Harry Potter books couldn't.

Newt Scamander is a British magizoologist visiting New York at a time when magical creatures are feared. In the city, following certain hijinks, a few of his creatures escape his magical suitcase. What that entails is the banding of the main quintet which includes Newt, sisters, Tina and Queen Goldstein and a no-maj, Jacob

Kowlaski. The latter of the characters becomes a much needed addition to the world. Not only does he make for an entertaining character, but he also adds new dynamics as a non-magic individual in the world of magic.

There are other characters including the American aurors and people involved in an anti-magic group who play out important roles in the story. However that is more of a setback for the movie. By the second act, multiple elements and even new concepts are introduced in the movie that overshadows one another. There are too many stories playing out, and their connection to the main characters feels forced rather than organic. The movie makes it obvious that it would have done better being a full story on its own rather than an origin story.

Despite the various setbacks, it still makes for a good standalone movie outside the Harry Potter series. Although there remain enough easter eggs to enthrall any Harry Potter fan, it is still a good movie for anyone who hasn't watched any of the Harry Potter movies. (Although, why wouldn't you have watched them?) All in all, *Fantastic Beasts* is a fun and exciting film that is held back by being an origin.

*Fatimah Akhtar is a food and fiction enthusiast with a soft spot for bulldogs. Redirect all your complaints, queries, and feedbacks to her at fatimahaakhtar@gmail.com*



**MOVIE REVIEW**

# A.I. IS THE NEW HUMAN

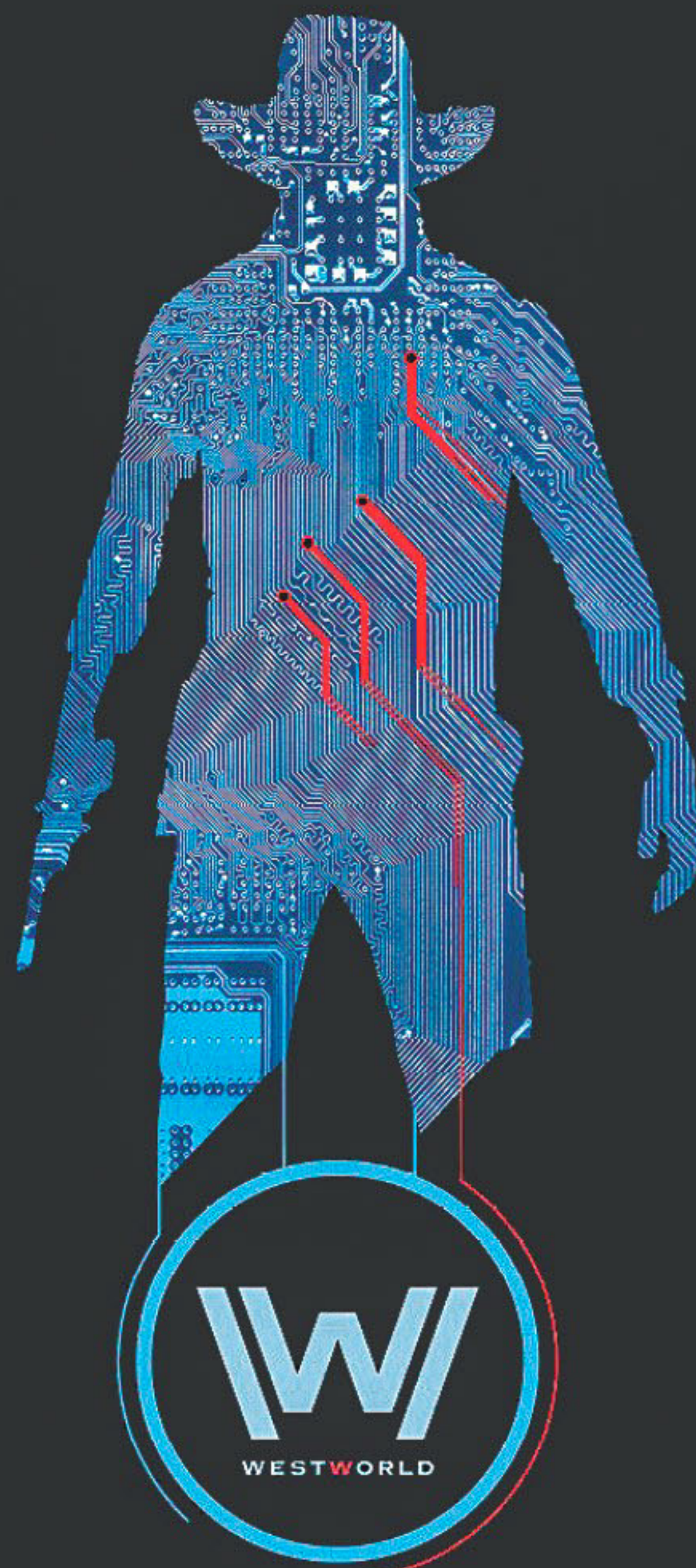
**TV SHOW REVIEW**

FATIUL HUQ SUJOY

To everyone who's into science fiction and thriller, if you want to indulge in some top class existential crisis, *Westworld* is the series for you. HBO is deservedly back in our screens with this extended adaptation of the 1973 film of the same name and hopes to stay in our thoughts and online banter with its engaging and clever narrative.

*Westworld* is set in a futuristic world where mankind has fully mastered the mechanisms of artificial intelligence. Their technology has enabled them to create human automatons with mannerism and physicality so close to that of a real man that one can hardly distinguish them.

So what do they do with this extraordinary leap of science and technology? They make a wild-west themed park for the rich folk. Sounds a bit silly but we can assume that the automatons are vastly used in the outside world as well since we're not shown anything other than the park and the headquarters of Delos, the



organization that runs it.

The park's rules are simple. There are different storylines distributed throughout the many towns and outskirts of the vast landscape of *Westworld*. Each storyline has designated hosts (the automatons). Hosts are programmed to live according to the storyline as an actual human being. They cannot kill or brutally hurt guests (the real humans who visit). After the end of each storyline the hosts are taken back at HQ where they're mended, revamped and their memories are erased for the new storyline.

Problems arise as hosts begin to malfunction for unknown reasons and start to remember fragments of their past storylines. Newer mysteries are added as the plot progresses and the presence of unknown hostile forces within the park come to light. But the problem with stacking up too many mysteries is that they rely too much on the execution of the finale. And that tends to ruin the show with unresolved mysteries and plot holes, too many red herrings and disappointing endings. But then

again, fan theories are always fun to ponder with and the internet is full of *Westworld* theories right now.

Other than the excellent cinematography and an amazing ensemble of cast members, the show excels mostly at storytelling. With Jonathan Nolan writing the show (the guy who has worked on *Memento*, *The Prestige*, *The Dark Knight*, *Interstellar*, and *Person of Interest*), you are confirmed to have a story that tests your intelligence. Unless you up your concentration to the max you'll probably get lost in the multiple plots progressing in parallel, each with its set of character developments, complex dialogues and undecipherable mysteries.

Also, you can relate to the hosts and suspect the legitimacy of your own existence.

*Fatiul Huq Sujoy is a tired soul (mostly because of his frail body) who's patiently waiting for Hagrid to appear and tell him, "Ye're a saiyan, lord commander." Suggest him places to travel and food-ventures to take at fb.com/SyedSujoy*