Review “The Hunger Games”

The Hunger Games is a science fiction movie directed by Gary Ross released on March 12, 2012. It is based on the Hunger Games trilogy written by Suzann Collins published between 2008 and 2010. The movie is set in the future in North America after an unknown apocalyptic event. It is about twenty-four teenagers fighting in an area until death, which is broadcasted live on television in the whole country of Panem. Moreover the area is under the control of the government and with this ritual they remind the citizens of their (rebellious) past.

Jennifer Lawrence plays Katniss Everdeen and Josh Hutcherson plays Peeta Mellark who fight for District 12 in the Hunger Games. They build up a love story to have a better chance to survive, but only one tribute can win the games....

I would recommend this movie to everybody. The story reminds us of a future that really can happen to us. There are lots of similarities to a dystopian world, in fact there is a totalitarian state, which controls and observes everyone everywhere. Furthermore a gap is shown between rich and poor, a wealthy and not wealthy community. Because of these facts, everyone should see this movie so that this does not happen to us in our future.

Anna
Review “The Giver”

The movie "The Giver", which is based on the novel "The Giver" written by Louis Lowry in 1994, is a story which is set in the future in the year 2048. The people there are living in a community where everyone is equal. Most of the people are assigned to a job, so they don’t have the freedom to decide. These jobs are decided about by the Council of Elders during a ceremony. The Council of Elders observes the community. There are cameras everywhere and the Council of Elders is watching every step. There is only one person who stands above the Council of Elders; the “Giver” – he is living at the border of the community. He is the only person who remembers the past.

The Community developed after a huge world war. After this the Community decided to forget the pain. But if you want to forget the pain you have to forget every kind of emotions as well, also the good ones. Therefore they take drugs every day, so they don’t remember their feelings and their history. They set up a border behind which they could get back their memories. The “Giver” is the only member of the community who is getting near the border and the only one who is able to pass on the memories to the next “Giver”.

The story begins with the ceremony, when the Council of Elders assigns the jobs to the young people of the community.

The protagonist is Jonas. He is chosen to be the next receiver of the memories. First he gets all the good thoughts and emotions of the past in his education. He learns about the colours and the feelings and their names.

But one day he receives the memories of people murdering and dying. He cannot bear it. He realizes the dystopian aspects in their world and decides that everyone should have the memories of the past. Jonas decides to go past the border. After a dangerous journey he arrives at the border, releasing memories and colours back into the community.

In my opinion "The Giver" is a very good choice to show the utopian and dystopian aspects and also their connection. Furthermore, the movie is exciting and gets you thinking. Watch it!

Katharina
Review “Avatar”

The story unfolds on a planet called ‘Pandora’ in the year 2154. Jake Sully, a former US marine is sent to Pandora on a special mission after his twin brother’s death. A military unit from earth has set up a base in Pandora for the sole purpose of obtaining a rare mineral called ‘Unobtanium’, but there’s a problem. Pandora is inhabited by an indigenous alien race called Na’vi and they don’t want to negotiate with the Sky People from Earth. Therefore, the military creates ‘Avatars’ who basically are Human-Na’vi hybrids to mingle with the Na’vis. What happens when an ‘Avatar’ turns against his fellow human beings forms the rest of this ‘once in a lifetime experience’.

It’s the kind of film which makes you wonder how far human imagination can reach. ‘Avatar’, no matter which language you watch the film in, underlines the fact that great cinema transcends all boundaries of geography, language and culture. The movie takes you to another world.

All in all, I really enjoyed watching it and I can recommend to everybody to watch this movie.

Katrin
Review “1984“ (directed by Michael Radford)

This film is not a feel-good movie at all. When you cried in “Titanic” this is not a film you should watch. 1984, based on the novel by George Orwell written in 1949, is more than a drama or an apocalyptic movie. It precisely shows the dystopia of a world without hope, peace and joy. The protagonist, the typical anti-hero Winston Smith (John Hurt), lives and works in the capital city of Oceania, a communist state. In this state, ruled by the Party, everyone lives under the control of Big Brother.

The film shows with touching pictures how the people suffer from control and punishment, even torture. The viewers accompany Winston in his hopeless fight against this observation and the power of the Inner Party (represented by the high-ranking member O’Brian (Richard Burton). With the help of his girl-friend Julia (Suzanna Hamilton) he escapes the system for a little while but without noticing that Big Brother is watching them all the time.

All in all the film shows in a very authentic way how people react under total control. However it is not easy to follow the plot without having read the novel before. Especially in our days where observing states and the increasing influences of social networks are big topics the novel is a real “must read” and the film a good addition.

My suggestion is: do not just watch the movie because the pictures can be very disturbing and confusing. If you watch it, watch it after reading the novel.

Lennart
Review “Divergent”

The novel “Divergent” written by Veronica Roth was published in 2011 and is a New York Times bestseller.

The story is set in the future and takes place in Chicago. The city is still destroyed by past wars and a lot of people died during the wars. The protagonist is Beatrice Prior. She is 16 years old and has a brother of her age.

In the society she lives in, the kids must choose among 5 predetermined factions, when they are 16.

These factions are:
- Dauntless (the brave & protectors of the city)
- Amity (the peaceful)
- Erudite (the intelligent)
- Abnegation (the selfless)
- Candor (the honest)

Furthermore there are the Factionless (those, who do not belong to any faction)

Before the teenagers are made to choose, they have to take a test which should make clear to them where they belong. The problem is that Beatrice does not have a clear result- she does not fit into any of these groups. She cannot talk to anyone about it, because the government excludes people who don’t fit into any group. On Decision Day she decides for herself and chooses the wild “Dauntless“. When she enters the group a lot of problems come up …

In my opinion it is a really good novel and also the movie is worth watching. On the one hand the novel is very exciting, because the reader does not know what will happen when Beatrice comes into the new Faction without a concrete determination. On the other hand the novel has a love story, so little girls will also be happy. At the end there is a great finale with a lot of action.

Another interesting detail is the fact that it is set in the future and at the beginning you are not sure if it is a dystopian or a utopian story. Finally, it becomes obvious, that there are many arguments and issues between the different factions, and for that reason it is also a very critical story, which deals with the problems of being an individual in a society that forces everyone to adapt to a predetermined role.

To sum up, I would highly recommend this movie/novel to everybody.

Lotte
Review "In Time"

"In Time" is an interesting dystopian science fiction film released in 2011 starring Justin Timberlake and Amanda Seyfriend, which takes place in a future society and presents a new form of a world wide economic system.

However, the film addresses many issues that already play an important role in today's world.

First, the gap between rich and poor continues to grow in our world. In the film the country has been divided into "time zones" based on the wealth of the population. Time is currency and the wealthy who live in New Greenwich are immortals while the poor who are exploited and forced to live on a few hours or days live in ghettos. They need to work hard to stay alive. Thieves steal time and the timekeepers control the society.

Another issue is the overpopulation which is a problem in our time as well as in the film. The people of New Greenwich hoard most of the time for themselves in order to live forever, while constantly increasing the cost of living in poorer districts to keep people dying. The people are genetically modified to stop aging at twenty five and after that a clock is activated with one more year for each citizen. This strategy should avoid an overpopulation of the earth. With it the economic system is kept in balance by the rich.

The film combines impressively efficiently social criticism with a futuristic basic idea with many exciting moments. One criticism, however, is that the film was not thought through to the end. It is inconceivable how a society should develop, in which all men are immortal.

To sum up it can be said that "In Time" is an advisable film with a strong message, but the director could have done much more about the end to make it even make more impressive and memorable.

Melina
Review
I, robot

Inspired by the short story by Isaac Asimov, ‘I robot’ is a movie about a world where robots take over human society. Because of the three laws robots normally do not take over world domination. The first law is that a robot may not harm a human being or through inaction allow a human being to come to harm. The second law is that a robot must obey orders given to it by a human being except where that would conflict with the first law. The third law is that a robot must protect its own existence except if that conflicts with the first or with the second law.

Confusing is therefore how a robot should have killed a human being. And why? On the other hand – should this not be the case – how did the victim die?

To sum up the film ‘I, robot’ has a surprising, ingenious and logical story. Will Smith is very good-humored and carries this film. Also the visual and technical tricks are brilliant. Everyone who is interested in science fiction and robots should not miss the film!

Philipp
Review “I am legend”

The science fiction film "I am legend" starts very excitingly. It's a sad "apocalyptic film" and a film with breathtaking but also gloomy images. The desolated New York looks very impressive. The "Night seekers" are shown in a very scary way. They are well represented as a constant threat. In this science fiction movie, Robert Neville, played by Will Smith, represents a man who has lost everything. When he moves with his dog Sam through the lonely and extinct New York looking for food and other things to survive, the film is very exciting. He personifies a man who does not give up and fight. The occasional flashbacks to his family, who died during the evacuation, are also very good and informative. I also like how in the film transports that Neville is very lonely.

The empty New York has a rather creepy and depressive impression on me. In this film there are some emotionally gripping scenes, such as the death of his wife and daughter. Funny in the movie I find that Robert frequently visits his regular stores. There he talks to the mannequins, which he has placed there. Once he even tries to talk a female mannequin into a date. In his house he watches recorded news broadcasts and takes his car and a rifle for deer hunting at Times Square. But unfortunately he is losing his prey to lions living there. The scenes were quite exciting and entertaining for me.

The film also describes exactly Neville's everyday life, for example when he takes his dog Sam into a bubble bath while Bob Marley’s soothing refrain "Everything's Gonna Be Alright" is sung to him or when he hits golf balls from the wing of a jet plane. The camera setting often stays on Robert's face, so that his loneliness, despair, incipient madness, but also his hope becomes apparent. This is simply awesome.

The "Night seekers" are not well presented in the film. They almost look like cartoon characters. Very sad I find the scene when the sheepdog Sam runs into a dark room and Robert follows him. I almost stopped breathing when Robert tiptoes through the dark building and meets a group of "Night seekers".

But the emotional climax is the scene when the dog is bitten and slowly mutates into a "night seeker" and Robert has to kill his only friend, being in tears.

In my eyes, the beginning of the film is very exciting and realistic. Will Smith, who plays Robert Neville, makes a very good figure in this film. He is an excellent actor. The ending is predictable for me and therefore not as exciting as the rest. Robert, who has probably found a counter-virus, sacrifices himself. He gives the woman Sally and her son Ethan the remedy which has rescued him from the night seekers before. With his death he allows them to escape. With this counter-Virus the woman and her son reach a colony of survivors in Vermont.

Overall, I find the film very well done, the movie is sad and exciting.

Sarah