

Brand complacency according to George Lucas

The recent release of the latest brand builder in the Star Wars saga was greeted with a variety of reactions. There were those in the film critics camp that slammed the "stilted script" and the "wooden dialogue". They also took George to task on his obsession with computer generated gimmickry.

 By [Richard Clarke](#) 3 Jul 2002

Ranged against them are the aficionados that raved about the battle scenes and special effects. The scene where Yoda fights in a lightsabre duel is going to also become the hallowed stuff that 'the force' legend is made of.

For me the chase through the asteroid belt is the seminal moment in a movie made specifically for a target audience that Lucas believes he understands intimately.

Lucas freely admits that he set out to make enough money to be free of studios that would chop and change and demand a more commercial type of movie.

One can argue that as a billionaire he is not overly concerned about the success or failure of this latest venture as he is not about to get fired if it bombs.

However there seems to be a depth to the understanding and connection he has with his armies of Star Wars aficionados. He says he has made this movie for them and not to impress the critics who demand some abstract level of pure movie art.

His fans will go to see this probably more than twice and the debates that spring up in their camp are the ones that will interest him as they are 'the force' that drives the Star Wars and George Lucas brands.

For this writer, as a relative newcomer to the saga, the movie portrays an increasing arrogance and a presumption on the part of Lucas that he can do what he wants with the brands that he has created.

Chat to Star Wars freaks and they will wax ever more lyrical into the depths of the philosophy and indeed the gospel according to George.

None of them it seems have considered that George himself cares nothing about whether the movies are attended or not. He is also unconcerned about making new converts.

This nonchalance is double-edged as it builds the cause into an ever more elitist and seemingly chosen few. The aficionados have inherited his arrogance and have no patience with those who cannot divine the connections between the generations as the story unfolds both backwards and forwards.

One insightful Star Wars groupie told me that George understands his target market and the brand is safe from being commercialised and therefore too widespread and diluted.

For this writer there is nothing insightful or brilliant about George Lucas. He takes the brands that he has created totally for granted. There is no incentive for him to be creative at all anymore as 'the force' are

diehards that would give him a standing ovation even if he had Yoda get up and fart instead of pulling out a lightsabre.

Furthermore, George has never figured out how to give the women meaningful roles and instead assigns them to the margins either dressed like colour blind chameleons or as scantily clad as possible without resorting to nudity.

At some stage the wheels have to come off this personal brand juggernaut with a self styled emperor at the helm.

ABOUT RICHARD CLARKE

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