

Global Watch Weekly Report

A Weekly Global Watch Media Publication (www.globalreport2010.com)

April 25th, 2014

SINGULARITY MEETS HOLLYWOOD

J O H N N Y D E P P



WHAT IF A
NEW INTELLIGENCE
WAS BORN?

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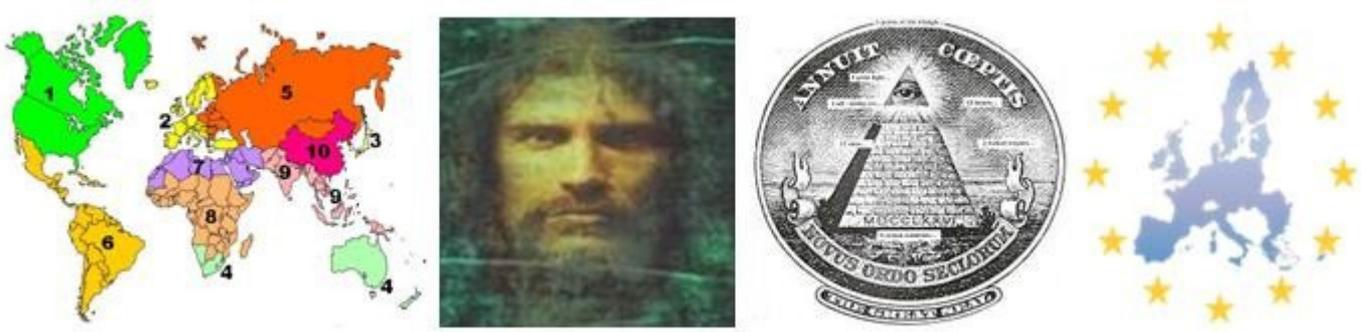
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Global Watch Weekly Report

Welcome to the Global Watch Weekly Report

We have spent some time in the past warning about the Global 2045 initiative formerly known as Russia 2045 and how we believe this is a coming fulfilment of a prophetic and biblical event known as the “*image of the beast*”.

The latest movie to be released from Hollywood called *Transcendence* is simply a media attempt to raise the stakes concerning the ethical and scientific debate regarding attempts to create a real avatar. It is no doubt a movie that Global 2045 adherents will see as a big media contribution to their present technological plans.

Transcendence may be the first science fiction movie to present the Singularity in its current popular imagination—the Singularity of Ray Kurzweil.

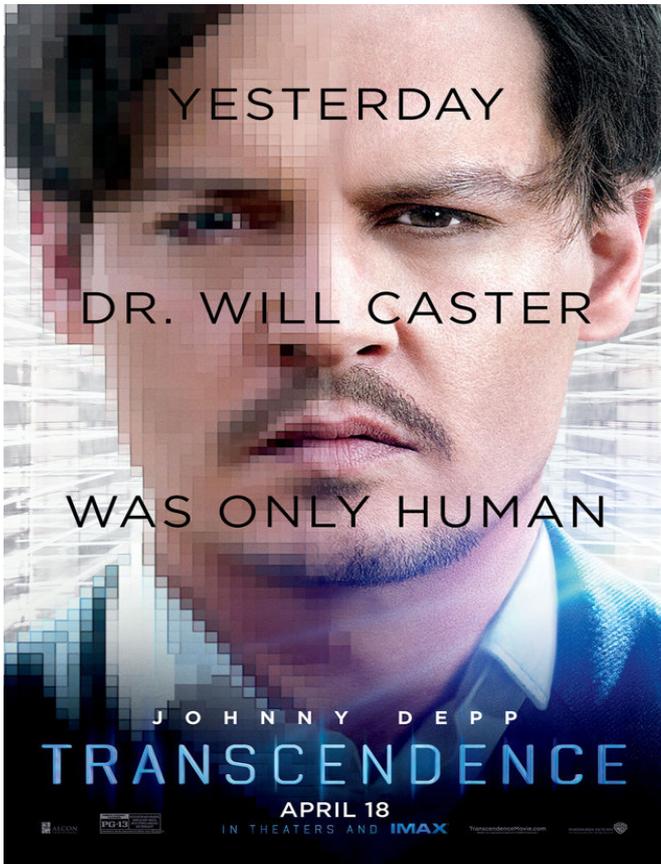
In this weeks edition of the Global Watch Weekly we take a look at an interesting article which examines the messages conveyed in *Transcendence*.

Enjoy

Rema Marketing Team

SINGULARITY MEETS HOLLYWOOD

THE SINGULARITY has hit the mainstream with the film *Transcendence* starring Johnny Depp and Rebecca Hall.



The film is chocked full of philosophical and ethical questions regarding the advent of Artificial Intelligence, nanotech, and mind uploading. These questions are posed throughout the film in the various characters that identify with particular positions in the debate. The viewer is taken through this psychological and philosophical journey as clear distinctions between the protagonist and antagonist are blurred as the film unfolds. But at the heart of the film was this quintessential question; What does it mean to be human? In fact, in the end, the film answers that question for you.

The film begins with everything you were told in the previews; Will Caster (Johnny Depp) and his wife Evelyn Caster (Rebecca Hall) are displayed as a loving married couple, both on the cutting edge of neural science and information technology at Berkeley California. Will Caster is seen as a celebrity in the field of artificial

intelligence who had built an A.I. system named P.I.N.N. (Physically Independent Neural Network). This A.I. would later become the foundation to which his mind would be uploaded. As Will Caster gives his enigmatic speech about his vision for A.I., a man in the front row accuses him that he is trying to “create god”. Caster responds, “Isn’t that what mankind has always done?” This questionnaire in the audience was later revealed as the Neo-Luddite terrorist from an organization called R.I.F.T. (Revolutionary Independence From Technology) and the man who shoots Caster in a homicide attempt/suicide.

The R.I.F.T. group was portrayed as an offshoot terrorist group, who attacked several A.I. facilities with, ironically, sneaky tech tactics. Along with these acts of terrorism the plan for R.I.F.T. was to murder the two leading scientists in the field, Thomas Casey, whom they successfully eliminate, and Will Caster. However, there was no clear-cut backstory as to why the group existed, other than the main antagonist in the story Bree (Kate Mara), the leader of R.I.F.T.. Her reasoning was explained about halfway through the film; *“I used to work for Thomas Casey.... When he uploaded that rhesus monkey,*



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I was actually happy for him.... One night, he invites us all to the lab for the big unveiling. Gives a speech about history, hands out champagne. You know what the computer did when he first turned it on? It screamed. The machine that thought it was a monkey never took a breath, never ate or slept. At first, I didn't know what it meant. Pain, fear, rage. Then, I finally realized... it was begging us to stop. Of course, Casey thought I was crazy. Called it a success. But I knew we had crossed a line.... It changed me forever."

On the surface, Transcendence disregarded the religious angle and didn't portray any overt propaganda against Christianity, although to the keen eye, there were definitely stabs towards the Biblical account which I will get to later. The science behind the story was perhaps the most fascinating. The bullet that hit Will Caster didn't kill him, but rather the radiation that was laced in the bullet did. As Will was dying, his wife Evelyn, and good friend Max Waters (Paul Bettany), another professor who had written about the potential dangers of these developing technologies, decided to use the breakthroughs of Thomas Casey and P.I.N.N. in an attempt to upload Will's consciousness to a supercomputer.

After Will's death, and a few attempts to refrag the data that was uploaded from Will's brain onto P.I.N.N., Evelyn gives up and decides to shut the machine down. In dramatic Hollywood fashion, it was at that moment when Evelyn turns the computer back on to wipe the hard drives when

Will appears in the supercomputer. This scene was quite riveting and the way it was portrayed brought a mix of emotions.

As a Christian who studies eschatology, my spirit was moved in all kinds of directions in this powerful scene. It's one thing to speculate on the things that Ray Kurzweil and others have talked about and discuss the various ramifications. It's another to see how it might look like when it does occur and how it might affect loved ones, in this case, Evelyn, Will's wife, who was desperately trying to save her husband. It was captivating and grabbed for me a sense of wonder in what could be the near future of technological advancement, yet at the same time, a strange uncomfortable realization that this might be the greatest feat of abomination for mankind should we achieve it.



After Will became established in the supercomputer, he quickly asks Evelyn to connect him to the internet. As R.I.F.T. became privy to what Evelyn Caster was doing, they got on the move in an attempt to stop this from happening. But it was too late. Once he was "plugged in," there was a nice CGI scene where it showed in first person, Will traveling through "the cloud" on the Internet. This was definitely mind boggling because it showed both what conceptually we are connected with daily through the internet, and displayed how a conscious mind traveling through it would have tremendous power and ability to parse out information very quickly. As Evelyn went on the run, Will instructed her where to go eventually leading her to a small town to build the infrastructure for this new A.I. system. As a means to do this, Evelyn

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What *Transcendence* paints was pretty much this exact thesis being played out on screen. Every person who was part of the network was not only healed and gained amazing powers, but were also part of Will's consciousness to where Will was even able to speak in his voice through every person who was linked in; in other words, of one mind. Furthermore, bullets did nothing to these men and women who were plugged in as the nanobots regenerated them in real time. This reminded me of Revelation 9:6 which states,

"And in those days people will seek death and will not find it. They will long to die, but death will flee from them."

And the military power of Will's A.I. regime echoes very much Revelation 13:4 where it states, *"Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?"*

The tension throughout the film was the question of whether or not this A.I. version of Will Caster was actually the same Will Caster that lived in the flesh before his physical "death." His wife Evelyn, who started this entire project with such enthusiasm, goes through a series of experiences that slowly lead her away from this possibility. In one scene, an old friend Joseph Tagger (Morgan Freeman) who visits the new facility leaves Evelyn a note that says, "Run Away From This Place." The last straw for Evelyn was when she felt violated because Will was able to measure her heart rate, bodily changes, and chemical interactions of her brain and thus her emotions.

Perhaps the most fictional element of the film was that to stop Will from becoming stronger, the U.S. Government and the F.B.I. decided to team up with R.I.F.T.. We all know that the governments and the political powers would want full access and control over these developments from the get go, and it would be more likely that they would adopt such advancement, not try to stop it. But getting back to the story, in the process of trying to figure out how to destroy Will, they confront Evelyn and determine that the only way they can stop him is if they can implant a

virus into the system. The consequence would be that the entire internet and the global grid would go down. This was the only option since Will was becoming so powerful that he was even able to control rain through the nanobots who were released into the air from their underground bunker. Evelyn volunteered herself as the way to get the virus into the system since she was the only one Will trusted. She is injected herself with the virus and made her way back towards the facility.

When she returns to the facility, she is confronted by the physical Will Caster, regenerated by the nanobots. "I've found a way back..." he states, as the techno-fleshy Will Caster reveals to Evelyn his secret research that he had been conducting throughout the film. Evelyn is taken aback. But as the impatient military struck forceful attacks, Evelyn gets hit and Will takes her inside to the lab. This is where the arch of the story and the agenda of the film is revealed. Dying from a mortal wound to her side, Evelyn determines that this A.I. really was Will. Evelyn concludes full of emotion, "...it really is you..." to which Will responds, "It always was." As the last wish of his dying wife, Will touches her blood which was contaminated with the virus and they both "die."

Now the interesting part of this was that first, the answer to "what does it mean to be human" according to the film was, consciousness. Although Will wasn't fully flesh and blood, even after he had regenerated himself via nanotechnology, it was his mind that survived in the supercomputer and thus, the essence of Will Caster. Second, Will willingly committed suicide as the A.I. to display his humanity. Even though he was living in a machine, this was the way the film displayed that his humanity remained intact.

Third, it was his touching Evelyn's blood that caused the virus to spread. This was a little bit too obvious in the anti-messianic symbolism. What Will had been working for all along was Evelyn's dream of healing the world and making the earth a better place; something Evelyn states early in the film during her speech.

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In hindsight, there was an overt environmentalist twist to it all where through the use of technology, we would be able to heal the planet. But it was also interesting that at the very end of the film, they showed the nanobots still in existence post-internet apocalypse suggesting that Will and Evelyn Caster survived through these nanoparticles and that one day they would return. In other words, it touted that immortality was achieved and that Will and Evelyn lived on, even within a drop of water. This was overt monism (all if one) mixed in with all kinds of eastern philosophical notions.

CONCLUSION

Ultimately, the film is a slap in the face of those of us who hold onto a supernatural worldview because it was displaying that mankind will evolve and will prevail through only through the advancement of science and technology.

A mantra that kept repeating as the technologies continued to develop in the film was “...they will fear things they don't understand...”. The underlying message was that although the road will be difficult, humanity will achieve all the things that “religion” promised but could not deliver. Healing the planet, healing people, and achieving immortality are all aspects that God promises us through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Yet, it was through science and technology, that such things were achieved in the film, even making blood the culprit to stop the continued developments; imagery that I

perceived as another slap in the face of the core Christian message, that the blood would only hinder such developments.

Despite these subtle undertones, I give the film a B+. *Transcendence* was visually stunning, and the performances by Depp and Hall were exceptional. But I thought the entirety of the story could have flowed a little bit better. As typical Hollywood, the film was carried on the back of a basic love story. But I thought they could have used cleverer ways to explain not just the singularity, but the philosophical and ethical debate behind it. For example, there were a couple times when the military actions made no sense. If this was truly a sort of techno-issue in real life, I doubt they would just start bombing the place. But nevertheless, the topic was displayed well enough to spark a conversation, especially for the discerning.

Christians who view this film should not push it aside as another science fiction, or swallow the wonders of emerging technologies, but really investigate the ramifications of what was being shown and even start investigating what the Bible has to say about it.

It is my firm belief that God revealed to us that the end times “beast system” will involve something similar to what was displayed in the film, and the only way to really solve the problem is to believe in Jesus Christ who loved you, and died for your sins, only to rise again. No injection of nanobots into your brain is necessary.