

A topic consistently exploited in cinema is science fiction. Interstellar journeys, distant galaxies, discoveries and dangers, along with technological progress, unusual characters and situations—all these, as well as many other factors, contribute greatly to the popularity of books and films about outer space. One of the most famous (and loved) films on this subject is “Star Trek”—a TV show and a number of movies telling the story of the spaceship Enterprise and its crew, led by captain James Tiberius Kirk. In 2013, another movie of this franchise has been released—“Star Trek Into Darkness,” directed by J.J. Abrams, famous for his work with visual effects.

Personally, I am more enthusiastic about “Star Wars,” but I admit to the epic scales of the story developed in numerous “Star Trek” episodes. This time, we are told the story of a conflict between captain Kirk and Co., and the main protagonist Khan, aka John Harrison in the new film (played by Benedict Cumberbatch). The cast is all new: Chris Pine, Zachary Quinto, Simon Pegg, Karl Urban, Zoe Saldana, Alice Eve, and others. The film’s premier took place in Singapore, on April 23, 2013; it has become the most financially successful movie in the entire franchise.

To avoid saying too much about the movie’s plot, I will only sketch out the red line of the story. Khan—a genetically improved human—is awakened from cryo sleep by admiral Marcus, who plans to use him as a weapon against Klingons. Khan manages to escape, commits several terror acts, kills a number of members of the Star Fleet council, and escapes to planet Chronos. Captain Kirk and his crew chase Khan and take him captive. Marcus threatens to destroy the Enterprise if its crew does not extradite the criminal to him. Kirk wants Khan to be committed for justice, so he refuses. After a conflict between Kirk and Marcus, the latter is killed by Khan, who is then frozen in a cryo chamber along with his crew.

For me—especially considering I am not a “Star Trek” fan—it is yet another Hollywood blockbuster: shiny, noisy, but in no way original or intriguing. I do not know whether this film would be interesting to watch if there was no “Star Trek” name mentioned in its title. The actors’ performances are standard—except Benedict Cumberbatch’s and Zachary Quinto’s performances, other actors are not outstanding. Especially annoying for me was captain Kirk—a typical handsome, unconvincing and insipid character because of his absolute positiveness. Other protagonists looked just according to Hollywood movie clichés: good-looking, young, and flawless.

What truly disappointed me was a number of logical mistakes; an attentive viewer would possibly find these mistakes ruining the atmosphere to the ground. The council of the highest authorities of the Star Fleet is not protected, so the antagonist is able to attack and kill many of them. If I was a super-criminal, I would feel literally obliged to use this chance for assault! Why is the Star Fleet admiral’s daughter personally sent to disarm explosive stuff? Why use spaceships if you can teleport to any planet? Why expect romantic feelings from commander Spock if everybody knows that Volcanians have no emotions? Finally, after all captain Kirk’s flaws (for instance, military actions against the Star Fleet admiral and cooperating with Khan—oops, a spoiler!) he still remains the captain of Enterprise?! “Star Trek Into Darkness” is a typical Hollywood blockbuster, which exploits a popular franchise. Though, unlike the original, it has nothing to offer to its audience, except another portion of amazing visual effects and the performance of Benedict Cumberbatch (which is

the movie's greatest merit). Considering all this, I would recommend to watch the new "Star Trek" in company, with a huge bucket of popcorn, and only once—in the cinema.