The Master of All Easter Eggs

by Nick Cody

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Remember that clever hoax from 1999 convincing the entire world that Stanley Kubrick had died? The pranksters must have been betting that the uber-famous director's reclusive nature would help perpetuate their game. To this day no one knows who did it or why. Or, more accurately, loads of conspiracy theorists claimed to know but all failed to convince the general public. When one of those vloggers came out with the idea that it was Kubrick himself who launched the original announcement of death in order to promote his movie *Eyes Wide Shut*, the great director stepped forward and quashed all rumors with a live interview on CNN wherein he quoted that great line by Twain, drolly delivered: "The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated."

I ventured in an earlier video which you can link to **here** that Kubrick likely wished he'd died after bizarre ideas (is it too generous to call them theories?) surfaced in the early-to-mid 2000s claiming that he had staged the first moon landing for NASA, served the Illumanti's propaganda machine, and did other nefarious things related to the KKK, various Satanist groups, and David Bowie.

So it was perhaps not surprising at all when Kubrick fell off the map and made not one peep until 2019. Then, at the ripe old age of 91, he made a startling announcement. He had agreed to terms with Disney and would direct the latest installment of *Star Wars*! News, as you might recall, went absolutely viral. There was that one funny quote by the CEO of Disney, "I didn't know he'd been offered the job." But the constant chatter on late-night talk shows and throughout social media continued until details of their contract were finalized and publicized. As always, Kubrick demanded total artistic control. He got it. More surprisingly, he offered to write the screenplay! In other words, it was going to be a Kubrick *Star Wars*, not just some sequel in a successful franchise directed by a famous cinematic artist.

Perhaps most surprising of all, Kubrick assuaged corporate fears over the big gamble of naming him director by announcing that, unlike the previous *Star Wars* film of 2017 which was made for $250 million, he was looking at a budget closer to $80 million.

Total artistic control involved, of course, the right to bestow a title for the new film. And here's where the corporate big wigs must have gotten a little nervous. Word leaked out that Kubrick insisted it be called *Star Wars 10*. But otherwise secrecy on the set was out of this world! Actors, a relative bunch of no names playing mostly original characters, were not given scripts. So there was nothing to leak, no hard copies to smuggle out. Rumors had it that actors were given descriptions and background information for scenes and then instructed to improvise. Then they delivered a multitude of performances over such a huge emotional range that they had no idea which scenes were going to make the final cut. Devil-may-care laughter as the hero swung his light saber at the Stormtroopers locked in a fox trot? Or the one with him blinded by tears, mouth slavering, and voice all tremolo with the desire slice Darth Taters into tatters? Nobody knew. Nobody except Kubrick.

So you know the rest of the story. Monster hit of 2020 and the biggest grossing film in Kubrick's career. It wasn't long after the premiere when bloggers started what is now known as The Great Egg Hunt. It seems that the auteur wanted to put the finishing touches on a lifetime of achievement by giving viewers dump trucks full of Easter eggs. Virtually every scene has some clue or tidbit tucked into the background, some more obvious than others. *The Shining* may be a masterpiece and total mind fuck, but *Star Wars 10* sealed the deal for many fans. It's just so much fun hunting throughout this film for what the Great Hen has dropped!

In a later video I'm going to touch on the topic of character names (Lester "the Mole" Skywalker? Tricks Gumshoe?). But in this one I'm gonna explore the fascinating time signatures that Kubrick employs throughout *10*. The first example, noticed back in May by yours truly, was the scene in which Lester crawls through the tunnel to reach the recently buried body of Thud, the Wookiee slain by Phad Dhat, indomitable bounty hunter working for the Empire. At the cinema where I watched this scene with a major lump in my throat, half the audience leapt to its feet when Lester used the Force to bring Thud back to life. Thunderous applause erupted as Lester responds to Thud's Wookiee talk, "No buddy, this ain't hell. But consider this the last time I play a mole for you. And clean the dirt out of your mouth. I can barely make out what you're saying."

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Only later, when I rewatched this scene on my PC, did I notice that the time elapsed on the media player read 04:12. That's Easter Sunday in 2020! Wait, it gets crazier. At 10:01, Tricks is heard delivering the following line: "S.O.S. We are stranded on Shabubu. Repeat, we have crash landed and are now stranded on Shabubu." One, zero, zero, one? Who knew Kubrick was such a big Rush fan! Consider these lines from a song, "The Body Electric", off of their *Grace Under Pressure* album:

one-zero-zero-one-zero-zero-one, SOS
one-zero-zero-one-zero-zero-one, In Distress
(note: 1001001 is ASCII code for the letter 'I.')

And then consider the film's dialogue starting at exactly ten minutes and one second (10:01), "It's a warning!" Another character, "No, it's too distant, early. Let's not rush to judgment. It could be a distress signal. The navigator droid's body is electric. There's likely some virus or enemy within." If you needed any further proof that Kubrick is directly referencing Rush with these scenes, consider the following: *Grace Under Pressure* is the band's tenth album and contains the songs "Distant Early Warning", "The Body Electric", and "The Enemy Within."

When you start to notice such details, it's like, game on! And so the hunt began. At 08:24 (remember, that's double Easter as a time signature), Princess Pukmeh can be seen in the background, taking a break from Shakespeare and her copy of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, to peel with her long pink fingernails not one, but two hardboiled eggs!

To a lot of fans, the scene with Darth Taters using the dark side of the Force against his incompetent minion, General Trowzer (played by Jack Black), ranks up there as a favorite. I have to admit, the look on Black's face as Taters compels him to "enter" himself (bluntly, self-anal fisting, which happens off-screen of course!) was itself worth the price of admission. It's almost like General Trowzer knew what he was in for when Tater's mind control kicked in. But what a lot of people didn't catch was the precise song on the soundtrack playing during that scene. While Jack Black is blubbering, "My lord, no! Oh, ewww, oh mercy my lord!" Jack White's "High Ball Stepper" is cranked full blast! Now, we all know Kubrick was an avid chess player, so was he saying something in this scene using Black and White? Only Stan the Man

knows. But one thing is for sure: his *Star Wars 10* cements for all time his rep as the Master of All Easter Eggs. This is the CineSeekers, signing out. Peace!