

Book Review: 'Elysium: The Art of the Film'

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on August 12, 2013 - 8:54pm

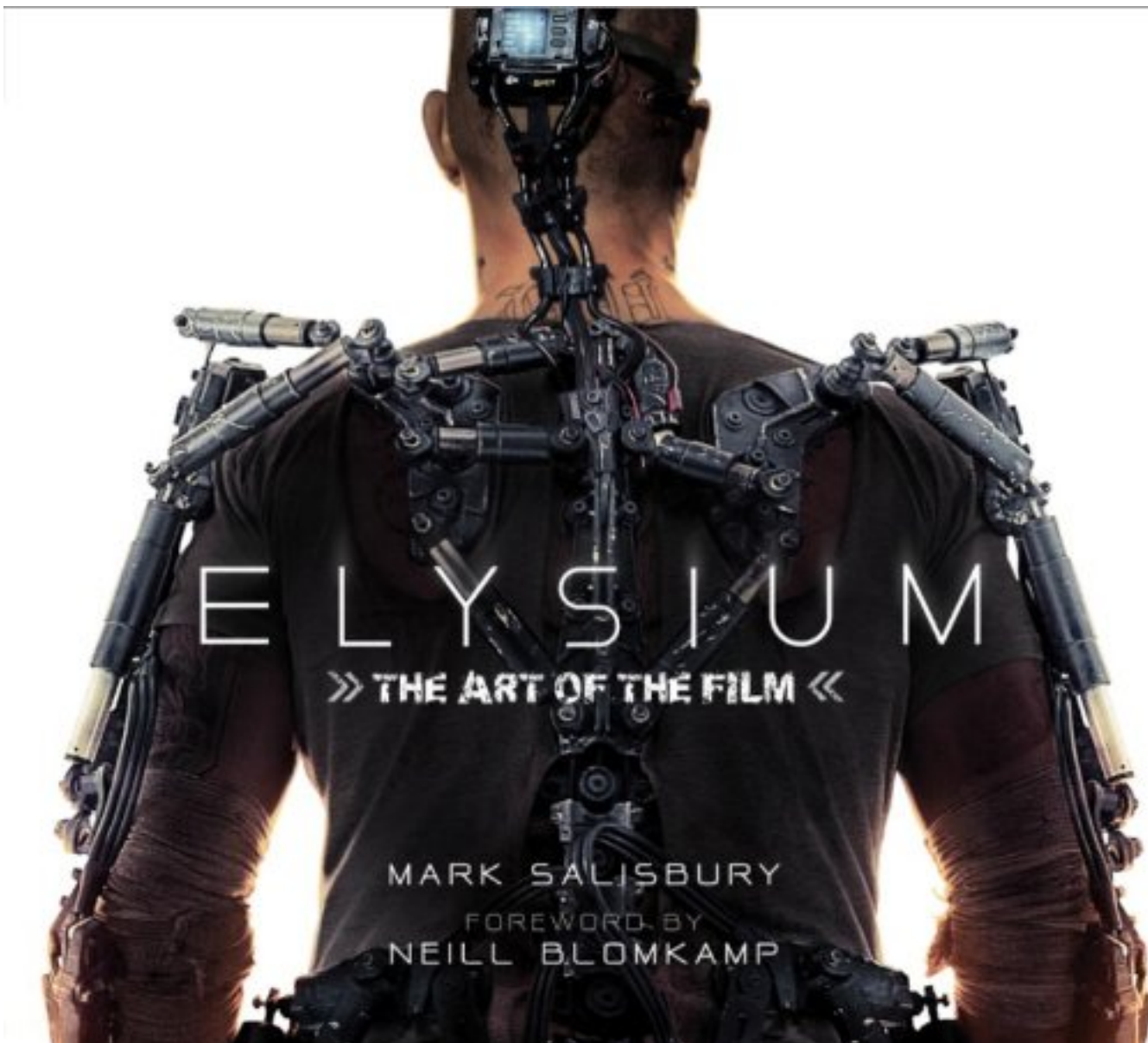
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CHICAGO – There are a lot of “Art of the Film” books released over the course of a year. They’re designed for hardcore fans or those with a lot of expendable income and no desire to feature books of actual paintings on their coffee table. Most of them are either mediocre or totally worthless. They’re cheap tie-ins designed to appease fans in a way that registers just above a Happy Meal toy but costs much more. “Elysium: The Art of the Film” is not a cheap tie-in. This is an expertly produced volume that makes one appreciate the detailed work that went into Neill Blomkamp’s #1 film more than mere propaganda.

My feelings on the Matt Damon sci-fi flick are still [pretty mixed](#) [10] but one has to admire and appreciate how much work went into its production when looking at this companion piece. The book is filled with hundreds of pieces of concept art and detailed drawings of the characters, robots, and sets that make up the film. It can be difficult to tell within the book exactly what stage most of this art was created at — did the set designer perfectly capture that concept art or was the drawing made after the film, merely to enhance the volume? I wish there was direct context; a chronology of what Blomkamp created and when, maybe even with some early drafts of the script.

However, despite an intro from the writer/director and some great accompanying text over the first few pages, “Elysium: The Art of the Film” is primarily for visual junkies. Want to see detailed versions of the many character-specific tattoos in the film? Alternate versions of the film’s exo-skeletons? Detailed drawings of the world of Elysium or nifty bits of trivia like the fact that the space mansions of the future were shot in Mexico? “Elysium: The Art of the Film” is superior to most companion books partially by the wealth of information in it but also because of the quality of that information. It doesn’t merely serve to accompany your favorite sci-fi flick of the Summer, it tries to enhance it. More “Art of the Film” books should do the same.

“Elysium: The Art of the Film” was released on August 6, 2013.



Elysium: The Art of the Film was released on August 6, 2013

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