Recycling Media: *Blade Runner* to Be Continued

Eminent world scientists have voted Ridley Scott’s *Blade Runner* the best science fiction film to date, topping Kubrick’s *2001: A Space Odyssey* and other sci-fi classics, such as *Star Wars* and *The Empire Strikes Back* (BBC News, 2004). Besides its recognition by scientists, *BR* has been nominated for and won many different awards throughout the years, from 1982 up to the present. Therefore, the film may be considered an *oeuvre*, a *Kunstwerk*, a work of art in its own right, complete in itself. As any work of art, *BR* is composed of elements that enable multiple readings and analyses in its polyphony. The possibility of creating a multitude of readings and different interpretations is the very essence of any work of art. The film survives as a cult movie, mentioned in film studies as a landmark of its genre. Its presence is felt in other more contemporary films, such as the *Matrix* series, and in the more recent *Elysium*. Sometimes, these references are seen as blatant imitations of *BR* themes and motifs, and some directors who try to imitate Scott are unable to depict the beauty of his film’s poetry.

*BR* has had no film sequel (or prequel) so far, which does not rule out a new *BR* by any means. Ridley Scott has been considering the idea of a sequel film, possibly entitled *Metropolis* (the same title as Fritz Lang’s film). This information about a possible title, however, only appears in a *Wikipedia* article and in a *BR* FAQ, which also mentions another script title called “Blade Runner Down”, based on Jeter’s first sequel novel *Blade Runner 2*. This project was abandoned, however, for copyright reasons. According to the FAQ site *MyBladeRunner*, Stuart Hazeldine, the author of the script, made the following comments on March 18, 1999:

> WB don’t have sequel rights, only a first-look at making a sequel. The rights reside with original producer Bud Yorkin. When my script
went out ‘the town’ loved it and offered me loads of jobs. Harrison’s manager liked it but wouldn’t give it to him unless a studio offer was behind it, and the only people in town who didn’t ‘get’ my script were the majority of execs at WB and Bud Yorkin himself. What can I say? Other studios would love a crack, but it’s these guys who hold all the cards right now. Harrison hasn’t read my script and may never read it. (Hazeldine, qtd. in MyBladeRunner, 2014)

Sequels or prequels?

The idea of a sequel to *BR* was announced again by Scott himself at the 2007 Comic-Con. *Eagle-Eye* co-writer Travis Wright was working with producer Bud Yorkin for a few years on this project, and Travis’s writing partner John Glenn was working with them but left the project in 2008 (“Blade Runner”, 2013). Glenn mentioned that “the script explores the nature of the Off-World colonies as well as what happens to the Tyrell Corporation in the wake of its founder’s death” (“Blade Runner”, 2013). Wright gives his own account in the message he sent to Peter Sciretta:

> My only intention as a writer, in pursuing this project, is to help explore some of the questions Blade Runner raises that were the fodder for endless debate among my friends for two decades now. What does it mean to be human? That’s the central question in life and the paramount question in Science Fiction. More pointedly: Is or isn’t Deckard a replicant? What happens to Rachel? What are the off world [sic] colonies like? What happens to replicants once Tyrell is killed by one of his creations? These are some of the questions we explored with Bud Yorkin for a few years and I believe are a great basis for a story many fans like me are dying to see. Working on them has been a dream (Wright, qtd. in Sciretta, 2008).

On June 4, 2009, there was an article by Brad Stone in *The New York Times* announcing that Ridley Scott and his brother Tony were working on a prequel to *Blade Runner* named *Purefold*. (Stone, 2009). This prequel, set some time before 2019, was a series of 5–10 minute shorts for the web, and possibly for television. Copyright issues, however, would not allow the series to be closely related to the film. Unfortunately, due to funding problems, on February 7, 2010 they announced that the production of the series was cancelled (“Blade Runner”, 2013; White, 2009). Reports of *BR*’s continuity kept appearing. On March 2, 2011, Charlie Anders announced in the sci-fi blog *io9* that Bud Yorkin (*BR*’s producer) was developing a sequel or prequel to the film. However, there was no