

“Transformers: The Last Knight”

By Helen Lutz

When my husband and I were first married, and again when our girls were little, we had the opportunity to live in Tokyo. Experiencing a different culture opens our eyes to all sorts of new sights, sounds and tastes. One of the fascinating Japanese arts is that of origami. My friend Eiko would teach me (or try to teach me) how to transform a single sheet of paper into a beautiful bird or star or even kitty cat. It was amazing to watch some of the ladies who had mastered the art as they created remarkable designs. It’s fun to watch things as they transform from one state to another – I’m not talking about ice. However, tiny pellets can turn into sponge animals when immersed in water; and really small squares turn into towels when they get wet. Years ago we even gave away small white bricks which resembled cocaine for the movie “Traffic” which turned into movie t-shirts when washed – pretty cool.



So, it’s no wonder that it’s fun to watch interesting cars, trucks, and airplanes as they transform into alien creatures in the “Transformers” movies. The latest “Transformers” to unfold on the big screen is “Transformers: The Last Knight.” Mankind has decided that having the Transformers living among us might not be such a good idea and hunt them thinking that they should be exterminated forcing the Transformers into hiding. Cade Yeager (Mark Wahlberg) understands the Transformers and uses his skills as a mechanic to help keep them running and hidden. After all, there are good Transformers and bad Transformers otherwise known as Decepticons.

“Transformers” movies have been fun and even a little silly as these giant machines make friends, hide from parents and help save humanity. However, in “Transformers: The Last Knight” the story takes a darker turn. The Transformers planet has been destroyed and the Decepticons, led by the evil space sorceress Quintessa (Gemma Chan), plan to drain our beautiful blue marble of all life to restore their planet to its prior glory; bad idea.

Where the other comic book Transformer movies had story lines (sort of), “Transformers: The Last Knight” meanders. We learn that Transformers were around during the time of King Arthur and were used by Merlin (Stanley Tucci) as a source of his magic. The Transformers were around during the Nazi reign of terror during World War II and a Transformer clock is what actually killed Hitler. All of this is unveiled by none other than one of the Transformer keepers of secrets Sir Edmund Burton (Anthony Hopkins). If all this sounds a little weird, it is. Instead of keeping the Transformers lighthearted and funny, Director Michael Bay chooses to go dark causing them to lose their “spark.” It’s hard to tell the good guys from the bad guys and whether one of the all time heroes Optimus Prime (voiced by Peter Cullen) is a good guy or a good guy gone bad.

“Transformers: The Last Knight” wanders throughout the story leaving us scratching our heads and wondering what’s the point? It loses any charm its predecessors may have offered. If watching great big machines as they transform from one machine into another with personality (I use the term loosely), then you’ll probably enjoy all the special effects, who cares about characters anyway. On a scale of one to four Hart Beats I give “Transformers: The Last Knight” ... ONE AND 1/2 HARTS, the story goes in too many directions verging sometimes on the offensive – it’s not a good mixture of fact with fiction.