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## Tekst 13

### Ready Player One

Director: **Steven Spielberg**

Stars: **Tye Sheridan, Olivia Cooke**

Languages: **English, French, Italian, Korean**

Subtitles: **Indonesian**

**140 min / Rating: PG-13**

**Action, Adventure**

Despite a relatively near-future setting, Steven Spielberg's adaptation of the book *Ready Player One* doesn't feel like the sci-fi film that's been advertised. Much as it may dabble in next-gen technology (virtual reality), while introducing us to a brand-new world with its own rules and clans (and doing it all with the latest special effects around), this isn't *Avatar*. Instead, it's *The Goonies*. Or *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, or any one of the mid-to-late '80s films from coming-of-age maestro John Hughes.

The story, set in the year 2045, shows us that the real world is now a harsh place. The only time Wade Watts (Tye Sheridan) truly feels alive is when he escapes to the OASIS, an immersive virtual universe where most of humanity spends its days.

In the OASIS, you can go anywhere, do anything, be anyone — the only limits are your own imagination. The OASIS was created by the brilliant and eccentric James Halliday (Mark Rylance), who left his immense fortune and total control of the OASIS to the winner of a three-part contest he designed to find a worthy heir. When Wade suspects he's cracked the first challenge of the reality-bending treasure hunt, it's not long before he's hurled into a fantastical universe of discovery and danger to save the OASIS.

Although the film has its fair share of high concept sci-fi ideas, pitching it as a sci-fi movie would be inaccurate — or at least imperfect — as it's far more focused on the past than it is on the present, let alone the future. Ernest Cline's book, from which the film is adapted, is a tome indebted to the films (and games) of the '80s and early '90s, and reading it is, for some, like being engulfed by a tsunami of nostalgia. Spielberg's screenwriter, Zak Penn, has had to find simpler, more elegant puzzles for



our heroes to solve, but the pair stay true to the book by keeping its sense of adventure and love of geekery. And, unlike in some areas of our popular culture, the film/gaming geeks that populate this world aren't belittled. Loving something, and loving it with your entire being, is a boon in this place.

Sheridan, who stole the show in *Mud* a few years ago, proves he can carry a film of any stature and is ably supported by up-and-comer Olivia Cooke as another keen gamer, and Ben Mendelsohn, once again channeling his inner villain (also see: *Rogue One*, *Slow West*, *The Dark Knight Rises* and many more), this time as the CEO of Innovative Online Industries, who is out to get his hands on OASIS at any cost.

As commendable as the story and its stars are, the most impressive thing here is how superbly the 71-year-old Spielberg details how people engage with the new technology. He could easily have been wrongfooted by much that must be new to him (unless he's been a devoted gamer all this time), and yet he handles it all with the deftness and energy of a filmmaker half his age.

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