

SUN SHOWBIZ



Tomorrow in your Sun ...

Kevin Williamson talks to Zoe Saldana about being offered — and getting off — in the spy adventure, *The Losers*.

Taking Spock

Nimoy feels it's time to say goodbye to his Star Trek alter-ego and retire from acting

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Just when he thinks he's out, they beam him back in.

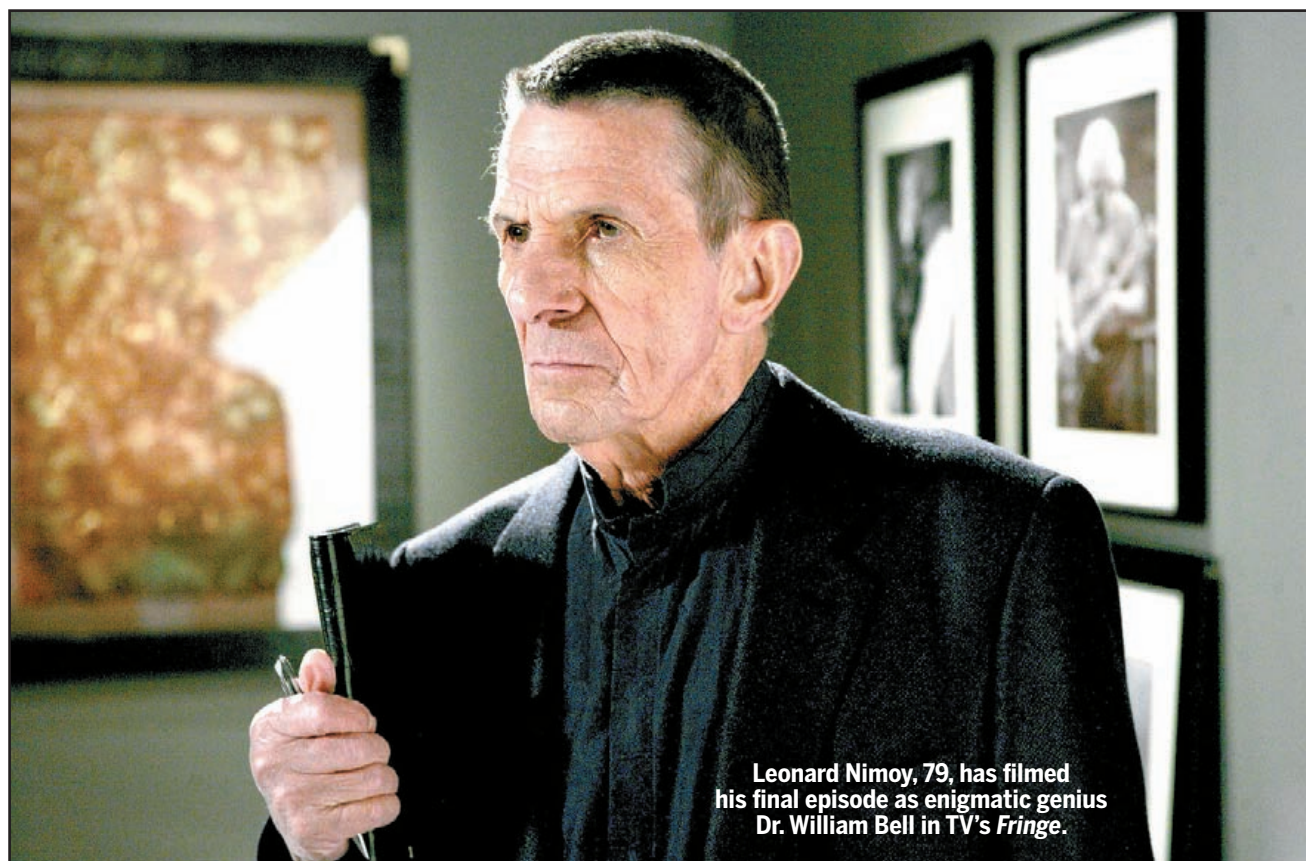
How else to describe Leonard Nimoy's enduring, at times conflicted relationship with Star Trek, the franchise that's defined his career for more than four decades — regardless of how many times he swore it off or believed it was finished?

"Countless times, I thought it was done," he admits on the phone from Los Angeles.

But this time, says the 79-year-old actor-director-photographer, there are no more possibilities. Spock, his pointy-eared alter-ego, will live long and prosper. But it will be without Nimoy.

"I want to get off the stage. Also, I don't think it would be fair to Zachary Quinto," he says, referring to the actor who portrayed a youthful Spock in last summer's smash *Star Trek* relaunch. "He's a terrific actor, he looks the part, and it's time to give him some space. And I'm very flattered the character will continue."

In other words, don't expect to see Nimoy in the next *Trek* sequel, scheduled for 2012. And don't expect to see him anywhere else, either. Having just shot what will be his final appearance as enigmatic genius Dr. William Bell in TV's *Fringe*, he says he's retiring from acting altogether.



Leonard Nimoy, 79, has filmed his final episode as enigmatic genius Dr. William Bell in TV's *Fringe*.

"I've been doing this professionally for 60 years," he says with a laugh. "I love the idea of going out on a positive note. I've had a great, great time."

After all, his involvement with *Fringe* was never intended to be permanent. Rather, he'd only agreed to appear in a few episodes as a

favour to J.J. Abrams, who produces *Fringe* and, of course, directed *Star Trek*.

"I was away from acting for 12 years, so I guess I was seducible," Nimoy says. "But since J.J. Abrams revived the Star Trek franchise, I felt I owed him something. And I'm glad I did it because he promised me a good story, and it was."

Also in question? How many more science-fiction conventions he has in his future. He'll be at this weekend's Calgary Comic and Entertainment Expo which "could be the last go-round for that too," he says, noting he only has a few more public appearances planned.

Not that he doesn't enjoy

them. He describes each one as "a love fest. I'm so grateful to the fans. I call these kind of experiences a victory lap ... It's like having a family meeting — a family reunion."

That goodwill mirrors how his own emotions about *Trek* have mellowed. Famously, his 1975 autobiography was entitled *I Am Not Spock*. By 1995,

when he published his second autobiography, the title had been modified to *I Am Spock*.

He explains he made peace with the iconic series during the 1980s and particularly with *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home*, which he directed. "I felt like *Star Trek IV* was my personal statement on Star Trek."

Now, typecasting be damned, he feels no regrets about donning the ears that made him famous. "Since *Star Trek* began in 1966, I've never had to worry about where the next job was."

Rather, with his acting and filmmaking career behind him, he wants to concentrate on photography, citing an exhibition he has coming up in Massachusetts. He acknowledges he was met with skepticism initially about this latest creative venture, "but I've built credibility now in the art world."

And among the general population, too. He recalls an incident in which he and Tom Hanks were approached by a young man who wanted his picture taken with Hanks. When Hanks asked who would take the photo, the man turned to the now former Mr. Spock.

"He said, 'Mr. Nimoy, you're a wonderful photographer. Would you take our picture?'"

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Naturally, Nimoy 'couldn't resist' trip to Vulcan

If Leonard Nimoy is going to be in Calgary, it only seems logical that he pays a visit to Vulcan, too.

"I couldn't resist," he says with a very un-Spock-like laugh. "I thought, 'Since I'm coming to Calgary, why not Vulcan?'"

Thus the Southern

Alberta community of about 1,900 will get its long-awaited chance to host Nimoy on Friday, ahead of his scheduled appearance at this weekend's Calgary Comic and Entertainment Expo.

Nimoy's fondness for the town is well-documented.

Vulcan generated worldwide headlines last spring when Nimoy backed its bid to host the premiere of 2009's *Star Trek* film. Ultimately, Paramount based about 300 residents of Vulcan — which has long capitalized on the fact it shares the name of Spock's

home planet — to Calgary for a private screening.

Not surprisingly, news of Nimoy's visit has again put Vulcan in the spotlight.

In addition to touring the town's *Trek* museum, Nimoy will have his iconic Vulcan salute canonized

in a handprint ceremony. He'll also be there for the unveiling of a bronze Spock bust.

What message does he plan to convey to the townsfolk?

"How wonderful it is to be home in Vulcan."

— Kevin Williamson