



STAR WARS: THE BAD BATCH: SEASON ONE REWATCH!

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE | ISSUE 206

STAR WARS

INSIDER

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An all-new *Star Wars*:
The High Republic story
by Cavan Scott!

**Industry,
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& Magic!**

Life in the ILM
model shop!

INTERVIEW
**Gavin
Bocquet**

"Visual effects
aren't cheap!"

Nailing the
Star Wars look
with the prequel
production designer

The Best of Boba Fett

Insider Top 10: The Fett
family's finest moments!



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DEC 2021/JAN 2022

WELCOME...



When a small white cardboard box arrived in the mailbox, addressed to me, I remember being more than a little bamboozled. I didn't often get letters when I was a kid, and definitely never ever a package. (Note to any younglings reading this: there was a time—long ago—when not everything was purchased online and delivered by courier!). What made this small box special was its contents, like a diamond sprinkled with gold dust covered in chocolate. After waiting for so long, he was finally in my possession... Boba Fett—the action figure!

I'd collected four *Star Wars* action figures (and then some, mainly stormtroopers) just like the offer printed on the back of each card had instructed, cut out the character name tags as proof of purchase (much as it pained me to wreck them), then mailed them away. I had no idea who Boba Fett was, which side he was on, why the rocket didn't move, let alone fire as promised, or even why he had a rocket in the first place. All I knew was that Boba Fett was COOL, and I was looking forward to *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) even more.

This December, the long-awaited *The Book of Boba Fett* arrives on Disney+. I'm looking forward to it just as much as I did to receiving that action figure. As a primer for the new series, along with our usual mix of interviews and features, this issue we look back at the Fett family's finest moments so far, including our infamous first glimpse of the bounty hunter, from the 1978 *Star Wars Holiday Special*.

Happy Halloween, and may the Force be with you!

Christopher Cooper
 Editor

MEET THE CONTRIBUTORS...



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 Amy is a regular contributor to *Star Wars*.com, and is the author of *Star Wars: I Love You, I Know: Lessons in Love and Friendship*.



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Star Wars Insider
 is also available online.
 To download, visit:
[www.titanmagazines.com/
 digital](http://www.titanmagazines.com/digital)

Visit www.starwars.com

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DISTRIBUTION

U.S. Newsstand / Total Publisher Services, Inc.
 John Dziewiatkowski 630-851-7683
 U.S. Newsstand Distribution /
 Curtis Circulation Company
 U.S. Bookstore Distribution / The News Group
 U.S. Direct Sales / Diamond Comic Distributors
 U.K. Distribution / Marketforce

SUBSCRIPTIONS

U.S. subscriptions / 1-800-261-6502,
 email: customerservice@titanpublishingusa.com
 Canada subscriptions / 818-487-4575
 U.K. subscriptions / 01778 392085
 email: swmag@servicehelpline.co.uk

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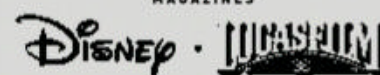
STAR WARS INSIDER NOV/DEC 2021
 (USPS 003-027) (ISSN 1041-5122)

Star Wars Insider is published eight times per year
 (January, March, April, May/June, July, August/September,
 October, November/December) by Titan Magazines,
 a division of Titan Publishing Group Limited,
 144 Southwark Street, London SE1 0UP.
 Contents © 2021 Lucasfilm Ltd. & TM. All Rights Reserved,
 Titan Authorized User. TMN14108

PUBLISHER'S U.S. AGENT
 2819 Rosehall Lane, Aurora, IL 60503. Periodicals
 Postage Paid at Aurora IL and at additional
 mailing offices.

POSTMASTER
 Send address changes to Titan Publishing,
Star Wars Insider, PO Box 147, Lincolnshire, IL 60069
 U.S. subscriptions \$49.99 per year; Canada \$64.99 and U.K. £31.99.
 U.S. edition printed by Quad.

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STAR WARS INSIDER CONTENTS

ISSUE 206 / NOV-DEC 2021

28

The Best of Boba Fett

As the galaxy awaits the Disney+ debut of *The Book of Boba Fett*, *Star Wars Insider* revisits our favorite chapters in the bounty hunter's infamous history.





Subscribe
to *Star Wars*
Insider
Page 62

NEWSSTAND
EDITION



COMIC STORE
EXCLUSIVE



SUBSCRIBER
EXCLUSIVE



06

Launchpad

Our monthly roundup of the latest movie, merch, and publishing news.

20

Magical Times

Model shop alumni reminisce about their time at Industrial Light & Magic.

28

The Fett Family's Finest

Insider's top ten moments featuring ace bounty hunters Jango and Boba Fett.

36

Misty Rosas Interview

The performance artist talks about bringing *The Mandalorian's* Kuiil to life.



42

Do You Speak Bocce?

From Binary to Shyriiwook, *Insider* asks expert linguists to analyse the viability of *Star Wars'* exotic languages.

48

The Squadrons Scribe

Star Wars: The Old Republic and *Squadrons* wordsmith Joanna Berry on writing for *Star Wars* videogames.

54

The Bad Batch Season One

We take a look back over the characters, events, and themes of the first season of the hit animated Disney+ series.



64

Justina Ireland Interview

The High Republic author discusses how wonder and hope drive her storytelling.

70

Gavin Bocquet Interview

The prequel trilogy's production designer on visualizing new *Star Wars* worlds.

76

A Certain Point of View

Why did Jango Fett stick around on Kamino? Our resident expert investigates.

90

Exclusive Fiction

Part Two of *Star Wars: The High Republic: "Past Mistakes,"* by Cavan Scott.

INCOMING TRANSMISSIONS

41

Prize Giveaway!

Win *Star Wars Insider: The Fiction Collection* Volumes 1 and 2!

80

Worldwide

Star Wars fan creativity and a shadow puppet masterclass in TK-101.

88

The *Star Wars* Archive

The behind-the-scenes images that tell the story of the making of a saga.

96

Jedi Master's Quiz

Race ahead in our test of your *Star Wars* sporting knowledge.

LAUNCHPAD

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Creature Comforts

New animated *Star Wars* series explores galactic natural history

A series of fun new *Star Wars* shorts, *Galaxy of Creatures*, recently arrived on *Star Wars Kids*, taking fans on a wildlife adventure with a *Star Wars* twist. *Insider* spoke to Lucasfilm Story Group's Matt Martin to learn more about its premise, and its adventurous droid guide.

***Star Wars Insider*: How did the concept for *Galaxy of Creatures* come about?**

Matt Martin: It originated as a pitch from our friends and partners at Eastham Studios, which is an internal Disney production group we've worked with in the past on several

other projects such as the *Star Wars Fun Facts* series on *Star Wars Kids*, and more recently the *Star Wars: The High Republic* character introduction videos. Their initial pitch focused more on pets in the *Star Wars* galaxy. Together we developed the version we have now, with our droids Aree and Cam learning about different creatures in their environments.

What was the process behind the design of 5F-RE ("Aree")?

Once we decided we wanted to have a droid as the lead in our show, we started discussing what type of droid it should be and what they would look like. We all liked the idea that

they were around the size and shape of a pit droid but I'm a bit of a droid purist and wanted to make sure that we're not using a droid designed for one purpose for a completely different purpose. With that in mind, I put together a *horribly* Photoshopped version of what I thought Aree could be like, starting with a pit droid as a base and adding elements that would feel more Safari-worthy, such as making his head shape reminiscent of a pith helmet, giving him a droid version of a backpack and macrobinoculars, et cetera. I sent that along to the team and the real artists took it from there, creating the super cute Aree design we ended up with.



Aree works for the Galactic Society of Creature Enthusiasts. Can you explain what that is, and where the idea came from?

I've always been fascinated with those "Adventure's Clubs" that were around at the turn of the 20th century, like the Adventure's Club of New York. In my head, it's a bunch of Indiana Jones-types getting together to swap stories (but they probably weren't as cool as that).

When we decided that we wanted Aree to be part of a group that researched creatures, the Adventure's Club concept came immediately to mind. So, we sort of took elements of that and elements of things like the National Geographic Society and created the Galactic Society of Creature Enthusiasts.

We rarely get to see these sorts of benevolent organizations in *Star Wars*, but obviously researching and preserving wildlife is just as important in the galaxy far, far away as it is here on Earth and that's what the GSCE is all about! This was one idea that was near and dear to my heart.

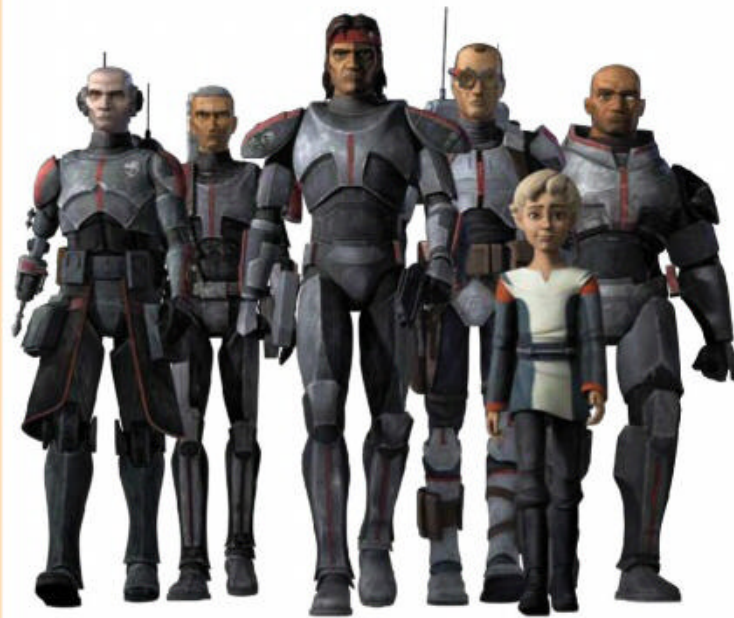
Do you have a favorite creature in the show?

I love porgs so much. They are definitely my favorite creatures in the series, but what can you expect from someone with a porg tattoo? That said, the mynock in the *Galaxy of Creatures* style is just perfect. It's so cute, and that episode has some major horror movie vibes, which I love.

WHAT IS THE GALACTIC SOCIETY OF CREATURE ENTHUSIASTS?

The Galactic Society of Creature Enthusiasts was founded during the exploration age of the High Republic by a group of like-minded scientists and adventurers interested in researching and cataloging the myriad of new species found on the frontier worlds of the Republic. Starting with a simple monthly newsletter and small dinner meetings, the group has expanded over the centuries to become one of the largest supporters of wilderness preservation and education. The Society produces a variety of educational programming on the HoloNet, as well as continuing its monthly newsletter—now with close to 5,000 issues!

For some of their most dangerous assignments, the group commissioned the construction of a series of "Safari droids" from Serv-O-Droid, Inc., built to autonomously document and interact with creatures in the wild, reporting their findings back to the Society.



The Batch Are Back

Clone Force 99 return for further adventures

Disney+ have officially confirmed that Hunter, Wrecker, Tech, Echo, Omega, and Crosshair will be returning for a second season of adventures in 2022, in an announcement that came with the two-part finale to the epic first season.

"Fans have enthusiastically embraced the action and drama of *Star Wars: The Bad Batch* (2021-present)," said Michael Paull, President of Disney+ and ESPN+, when the news was revealed, adding, "We are excited to see the *Star Wars* animated universe continue to expand on Disney+. As the dedicated streaming home for the *Star Wars* franchise, we can't wait for the second season of this fan-favorite animated series."

Dee Bradley Baker will return as the genetically enhanced ex-clone trooper squad as they continue to navigate their way through an increasingly dangerous galaxy with the help of Omega, played by Michelle Ang.

Star Wars: The Bad Batch is executive produced by Dave Filoni, Athena Portillo, Brad Rau (supervising director), Jennifer Corbett (head writer) and Carrie Beck, with Josh Rimes and Alex Spotswood as producers.



BOBA BITS

Merch Fit for Fett Fans

Make sure you're ready for the debut of *The Book of Boba Fett* on Disney+ with these fun Fett items.



Build-A-Bear Boba Fett Bear

The home of cuddlesome teddy bears has released a new version of the Boba Fett Bear you can hug as the drama unfolds. Featuring the *Star Wars* logo on his paw, you can arm your plush pal with his own stuffed blaster accessory. Available now at [buildabear.com](https://www.buildabear.com).



Boba Fett Samurai Poster Pullover Hoodie

Add some bounty hunting style to your wardrobe with the *Star Wars: Visions* Boba Fett Samurai Poster Pullover Hoodie from Fifth Sun, featuring unique art inspired by the animated Disney+ series. In stores and online now.



In Full Effect

Visit the Virtual Worlds of *The Mandalorian*

For fans fascinated by the behind-the-scenes magic that goes into the making of the hit Disney+ series *The Mandalorian* (2019-present), an in-depth look at Industrial Light & Magic's incredible StageCraft technology is available to watch at the official ILMVFX channel on YouTube.

"Filmmakers Discuss Bringing Virtual Worlds to Life for *The Mandalorian*" examines how ILM's innovative virtual production

technology is breaking new ground in high fidelity, real-time visual effects.

Featuring commentary from creator Jon Favreau, executive producer Carrie Beck, directors Dave Filoni, Bryce Dallas Howard, Taika Waititi, Rick Famuyiwa, Robert Rodriguez, and Deborah Chow, and experts from ILM including Doug Chiang, Rob Bredow, Richard Bluff, and cinematographer Greig Fraser, the short reveals how StageCraft enabled the filmmakers to bring movie-scale storytelling to the small screen. You can find out more at [ILM.com](https://www.ilm.com).

Bring On The Bricks

Spring Release for New LEGO® Game

A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far, away, LEGO *Star Wars: The Skywalker Saga* was officially announced, promising to retell the epic story that unfolded across nine monumental movies in one all-new, brick-based gaming experience.

Now confirmed to be launching in Spring 2022 and featuring the same whimsical humor that has made previous LEGO *Star Wars* videogames famously fun, the latest offering enables players to enjoy the entire Skywalker Saga in a new way. Each movie contains 5 missions,



meaning the game has 45 levels in total, with nearly 500 playable characters and gameplay that introduces new fighting combos not seen in a LEGO *Star Wars* videogame before.

LEGO *Star Wars: The Skywalker Saga* will be available for the Xbox One family of devices, including Xbox Series X; PlayStation 5; PlayStation 4; Nintendo Switch system and PC.



Tales All Told

Last Call from the Galaxy's Edge

ILMxLAB have released the final chapter in *Star Wars: Tales from the Galaxy's Edge*, the VR experience that takes fans to the planet Batuu for virtual adventures in the galaxy far, far away.

Launched on September 15, "Last Call" allows players to take on the role of a droid-repair technician turned adventurer for two new tales. Tasked by Black Spire Outpost's curmudgeonly antiquarian Dok-Ondar (voiced by Cory Rouse), players must recover

some mysterious artifacts while engaging with several familiar characters from the wider *Star Wars* galaxy along the way, including assassin droid IG-88 (voiced by actor Rhys Darby), and Hondo Ohnaka (Jim Cummings). Anthony Daniels returns as C-3PO, with Bobby Moynihan reprising his role as Seezelslak.

Star Wars: Tales from the Galaxy's Edge—Last Call is available now on Oculus Quest, priced \$9.99. You can also buy into the entire *Tales from the Galaxy's Edge* experience for \$34.99.

Vinyl Revival

Soundtrack Albums Big in Japan

Attention record collectors: Walt Disney Records are reissuing the soundtracks from the original *Star Wars* trilogy, exclusively in Japan!

John William's classic scores for *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977), *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980), and *Return of the Jedi* (1983) will be available from November 3, with each album cover featuring the original poster art from the movie, complete with titles translated into Japanese.



PRODUCTION DIARY

Our regular summary of *Star Wars* movies and television series currently filming:

IN PRODUCTION



Starring Diego Luna
as Cassian Andor
Disney+

Episode Director: Tony Gilroy
Cast Includes: Genevieve O'Reilly, Stellan Skarsgård, Denise Gough, and Kyle Soller.



Starring Ewan McGregor
as Obi-Wan Kenobi
Disney+

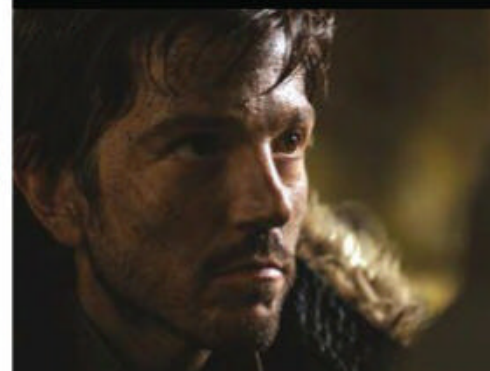
Director: Deborah Chow
Cast Includes: Hayden Christensen, Moses Ingram, Joel Edgerton, Bonnie Piesse, Kumail Nanjiani, Indira Varma, Rupert Friend, O'Shea Jackson Jr., Sung Kang, Simone Kessell and Benny Safdie.

IN POST-PRODUCTION



Starring Temuera Morrison
as Boba Fett
Disney+

Cast Includes: Ming-Na Wen as Fennec Shand



Walker Walkover!

Kotobukiya's cute take on Ewoks in action

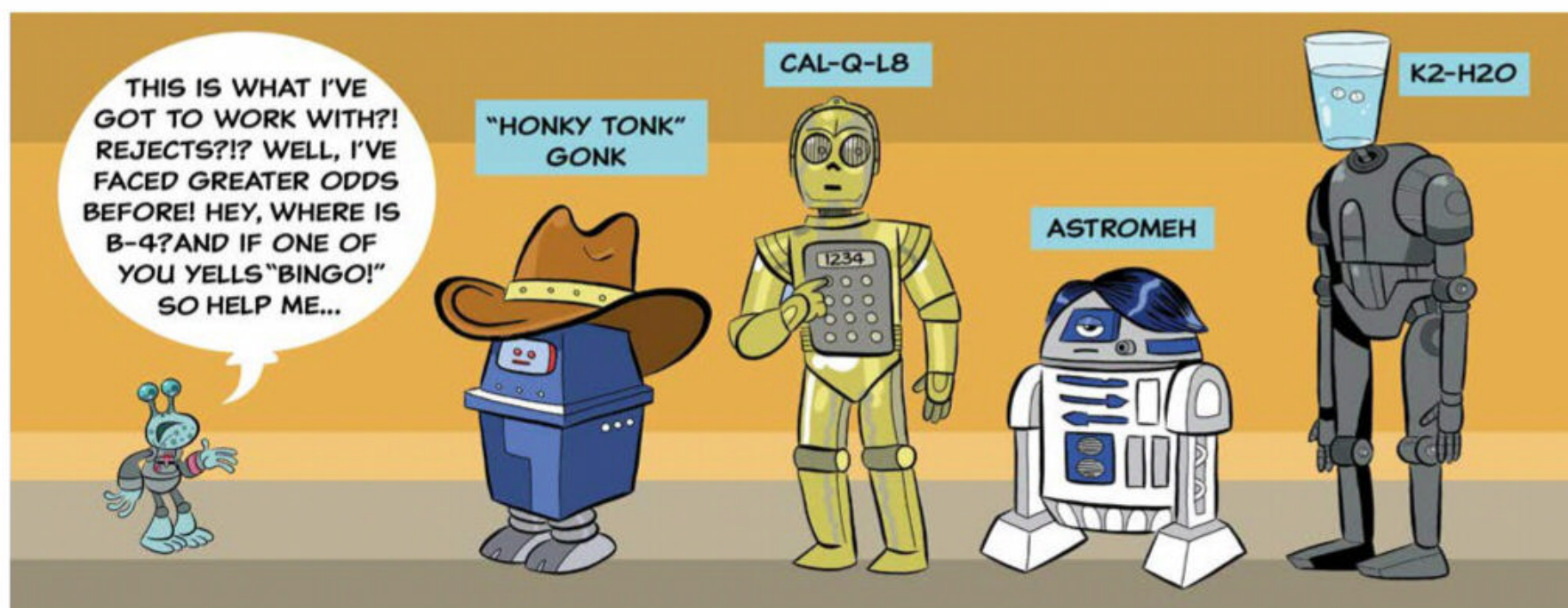
Because the Empire didn't consider the local Ewoks to be any kind of threat, there was always a flaw in Emperor Palpatine's plot to crush the Rebel Alliance at Endor. Had Palpatine foreseen Kotobukiya's wonderful new rendition of the ground battle on the Forest Moon, then perhaps he'd have realized that even the cutest of rebels would prove more than a match for Imperial might.

"Battle of Endor – Little Rebels," priced \$200 and available for pre-order at **Sideshow.com**, is the latest in Kotobukiya's ARTFX *Star Wars* Artist Series line. Designed by illustrator and inker Chifuyu Sasaki and colorist Naoko Kawano, collectively known as Gurihiru, the delightful statue depicts the valiant Ewoks bringing their furry fury to bear on an AT-ST, and comes complete with a print of the artwork upon which the statue is based.



THE LIGHT SIDE

By Jamie Cosley



A Technological Carer

Keep your pocket-friendly astromech fit and healthy

Throughout the Skywalker saga, R2-D2 proved himself to be a resilient companion and trusted ally. Now, you can carry your own little astromech sidekick around with you at all times, in the form of the *Star Wars* R2-D2 Tamagotchi, the first ever character-themed *Star Wars* virtual pet from Bandai. Pre-loaded with 19 interactive activities and a bunch of mini-games, all you have to do to keep those filthy Jawas at bay is make sure R2 is charged, clean, and fully trained. It's the least you can do for such a heroic droid! On sale in November, the R2-D2 Tamagotchi will be available in two color schemes—blue on white or white on blue—both priced \$19.99.



Hearts of Kyber

Jewelry fit for Jedi Knight, Sith Lord, or Knight of Ren

Whether you adhere to the light or the dark side of the Force, at some point you'll need a kyber crystal to power your lightsaber. If, however, you don't have the means to visit the Crystal Cave of Irum to secure one, then RockLove are about to come to your rescue with a new range of jewelry they've called the Kyber Crystal Capsule Collection.

Featuring exclusively manufactured gems set within plated brass pendants evoking the lightsaber hilt of its namesake, the series will eventually consist of eight pieces based on the colors of the blades of famous Force-wielders, with Kylo Ren, Rey, Darth Vader, and Skywalker Legacy Kyber Crystal Necklaces available now at **RockLove.com**, priced \$150.00.

The StarWars DotColumn

Fascinating features and articles from the digital vaults of StarWars.com

Add StarWars.com/Insider to your browser bookmarks to enjoy *Insider's* pick of the best of the official *Star Wars* website.



Remembering J.W. Rinzler
StarWars.com pays tribute to the writer behind the most essential books covering the making of the *Star Wars* saga.



Who's the Best?
A duo of regular StarWars.com writers make their cases for whom they think is the best new character in *Star Wars: The High Republic*.



Salacious Talk
Tony McVey tells StarWars.com about his part in creating the legendary Salacious B. Crumb for *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* (1983).

Knock, Knock. Who's There?

Premium Skywalker steps in

Cornered on Moff Gideon's ship by a platoon of dark troopers, the Mandalorian and his allies saw little hope of escaping their dire situation, until a "new hope" literally showed up to save the day!

Hot Toys have captured this momentous moment from *The Mandalorian* Season Two finale with a new addition to their premium DX series, the Luke Skywalker (Special Edition) Sixth Scale Figure. Featuring an incredible likeness of Mark Hamill's famous Jedi, the collectible comes with a light-up lightsaber, display base, and themed backdrop, along with a same-scaled Grogu to train in the ways of the Force. Priced \$285, the figure is available for pre-order at **Sideshow.com**, and is expected to ship in late 2022.



A New Soap

Be as clean and shiny as a Star Destroyer's deck plates

When Luke Skywalker and his friends escaped from the Death Star's trash compactor, it is safe to say that they would have appreciated the chance to take a shower. That being so, they would surely have reached for one of Dr. Squatch's new *Star Wars* soaps to lather up.

Dr. Squatch has produced a limited-edition box set of four natural soaps, each of which offers a nod to some of the *Star Wars* saga's most beloved characters. From Yoda's Wisdom Wash and Obi-Wan Kenobi's Only Hope Soap to Darth Vader's Dark Side Scrub and Darth Maul's Ruthless Rinse, Dr. Squatch has you covered... in bubbles! Get yours today at **DrSquatch.com**.



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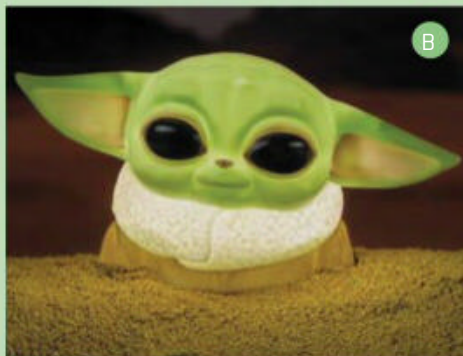
The latest bounty on which to blow your beskar



Reach Out With Your Feelings

Meditate on adding Grogu to your collection

Iron Studios have worked their magic to recreate Grogu's efforts to contact other Jedi on a temple mound on the planet Tython. This 1:4 Scale Legacy Replica **A** incorporates LED lights to illuminate the symbols on the hand-painted base and comes with interchangeable heads so you can display Grogu with his eyes opened or closed. Priced at \$520, the statue is expected to ship in July 2022, and is available to pre-order at **Sideshow.com**.



The Light Side

Illuminate your office with a Force-sensitive friend

Under Luke Skywalker's tutelage, we hope that Grogu learns to harness his Force powers for the light as effectively as Paladone, who have created The Child Desktop Light **B** to guide us lesser mortals through our daily workload as the winter evenings draw in.

Standing at 6-inches tall and designed to replicate the friendly face of Grogu, the battery-operated LED lamp is a delightful bust of the popular character by day, and a bright and beaming light at night. Available now, priced \$29.99.

Mandalorian Modeling

Piece together Din Djarin's signature look

Even among Mandalorians, Din Djarin cuts a dash in his bespoke suit of shining beskar armor. Bandai Hobby have recreated the bounty hunter's most iconic look in model-kit form, with *The Mandalorian* Beskar Armor 1/12th scale model **C**. Featuring interchangeable hands and a removable jetpack, this Mando also packs a blaster rifle, blaster pistol, beskar spear, and the Darksaber. Arriving in stores this October, priced \$37.00.



Forge Your Future

Explore The Armorer's hidden hideout

In the tunnels of Nevarro, the Armorer forged beskar into suits of formidable armor for the covert's Mandalorian inhabitants. Even after Moff Gideon's troops wiped out the underground lair's population, the Armorer remained to pick up the pieces. Now, LEGO® restores life to the cavernous enclave with the *The Armorer's Mandalorian Forge* set **D**, complete with cryo-furnace, secret tool stores, and minifigures of the Mandalorian, Paz Vizsla, and The Armorer. Available in stores now, priced \$29.99.

Book Club

The latest *Star Wars* books offer hope, Grogu, and so much more.



A Queen During Wartime

Padmé Amidala deals with the chaos of the Clone Wars in *Star Wars: Queen's Hope*

E.K. Johnston completes her hit trilogy with *Star Wars: Queen's Hope*—the final Padmé Amidala tale in the saga that began with the novels *Queen's Peril* and *Queen's Shadow*.

The peace-loving senator must face a time of war, as Padmé deals with both Count Dooku's Separatists and Chancellor Palpatine's blatant grabs for power as the galaxy reels from the Clone Wars. But Padmé also has her own secret, for her marriage to Anakin Skywalker is not sanctioned by the Jedi Code and puts them both at risk.

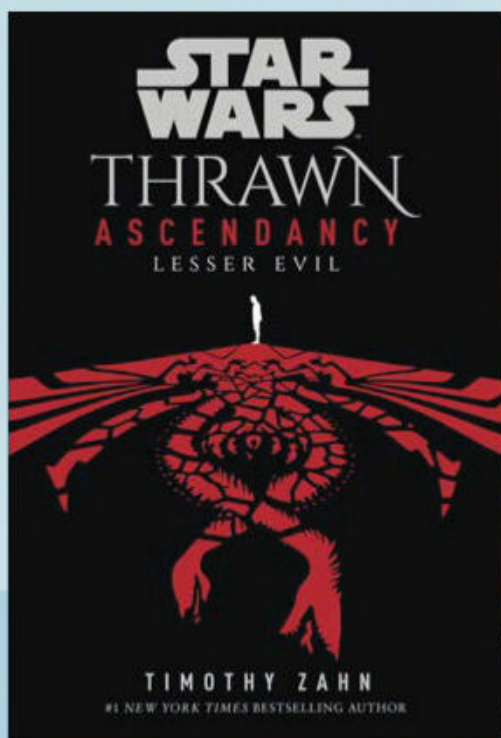
"This one was the most daunting because it's the war book," Johnston told StarWars.com. "You start to get into the actual tragedy part. She's kind of established herself as someone who has power and someone who is good at it, but in her personal life things are getting rather complicated."

As Padmé adjusts to being a wartime senator, her secret husband revels in the role of a wartime Jedi. "He's really good at fighting," says Johnston, "And he's married to the love of his life, so everything's coming up

Anakin at this point. Which makes him very interesting to write because we all know what's coming."

When Padmé departs on a classified mission, her handmaiden Sabé steps into the role of Naboo's Senator. Having a front-row seat to the machinations of the Galactic Senate horrifies Sabé, leading to a gut-wrenching decision as she realizes that she cannot fight a war this way—not even under Padmé's orders. *Star Wars: Queen's Hope* is on sale November 3.

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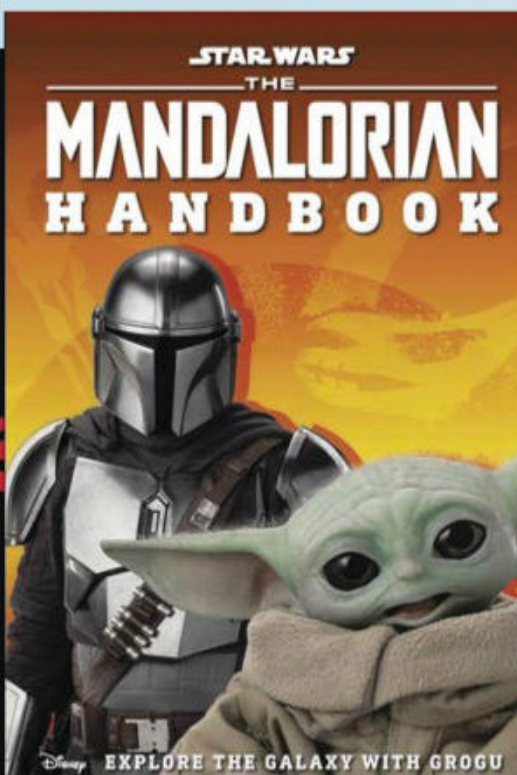
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Thrawn Ascendancy: Lesser Evil

Available November 17, the epic finale to bestselling author Timothy Zahn's *Star Wars: Thrawn Ascendancy* trilogy sees the fate of the venerable Chiss Ascendancy hanging in the balance for the first time in millennia!

Led by the Nine Ruling Families, the Chiss Ascendancy has been an oasis of calm amid the untamed wilds of the galaxy's Unknown Regions. But a cunning foe has weakened the bonds of trust among the Ruling Families, tipping the political balance toward civil war. Thrawn must delve into the dark secret surrounding the First Family's ascension, but is he willing to sacrifice the only home that he's ever known?

02



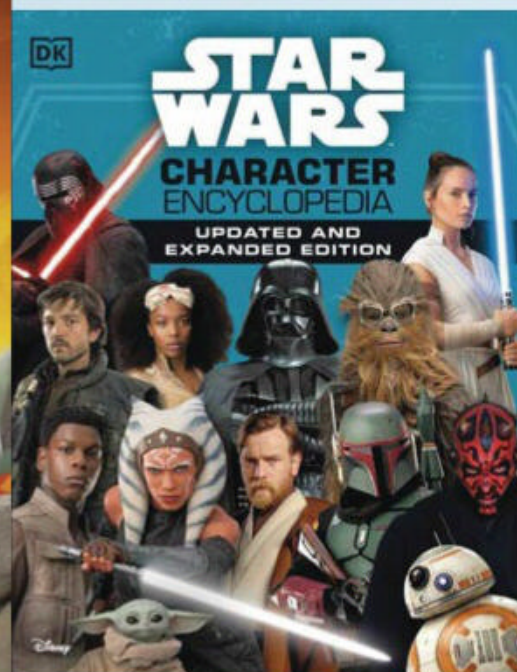
02

Star Wars: The Mandalorian Handbook

The subtitle "Explore the Galaxy with Grogu" tells you everything that you need to know about this young reader reference book from DK Publishing!

Star Wars: The Mandalorian Handbook is packed with facts from the smash hit Disney+ series *The Mandalorian* (2019-onwards). Join Din Djarin and his young charge Grogu—plus adventuring companions Boba Fett and Ahsoka Tano—on a tour across the galaxy as they encounter weird creatures, difficult droids, and ravenous monsters while staying one step ahead of villains hot on the trail of the *Razor Crest*. *Star Wars: The Mandalorian Handbook* is on sale on November 03.

03



03

Star Wars Character Encyclopedia: Updated and Expanded

Want to know the secrets of the mysterious Knights of Ren or curious as to how tall Grogu is? The answers to these and hundreds of other questions are packed into *Star Wars Character Encyclopedia: Updated and Expanded*, the definitive guide to more than 275 heroes, villains, aliens, and droids that populate the *Star Wars* saga.

Newly revised to encompass *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker* (2019) and both seasons of *The Mandalorian*, this illuminating volume is written by a team of *Star Wars* experts and comes with enough information to satisfy die-hard fans of all ages. In stores on November 3.

Comics Roundup

It's all about rogues and rebels in this month's *Star Wars* comics

Crimson Dawn Rises

Qi'ra tightens her grip on the underworld in *Star Wars: Crimson Reign*

Crimson Dawn—one of the galaxy's most ruthless crime syndicates—was introduced to audiences in *Solo: A Star Wars Story* (2018), with Maul pulling the strings behind the scenes. The organization seemed poised to seize control of the entire galactic underworld when Han's former love Qi'ra took control of the villainous cabal, and a new Marvel miniseries takes a deep dive into how things have changed several years into Qi'ra's ascendancy.

Star Wars: Crimson Reign is a five-issue limited series by writer Charles Soule and artist Steven Cummings, which continues the nefarious tale of Crimson Dawn as revealed in 2021's crossover event *War of the Bounty Hunters*. During that saga, Qi'ra emerged as the surprisingly powerful head of the remnants of Crimson Dawn and succeeded in capturing Han Solo's carbonite slab from the bounty hunter Boba Fett.

But this bold move on Qi'ra's part was just the beginning. As *Crimson Reign* begins, we'll see how her plans for criminal domination go far beyond what anyone expected, including rival syndicates who discover they are vulnerable to takeover by her newly ascendant mob.

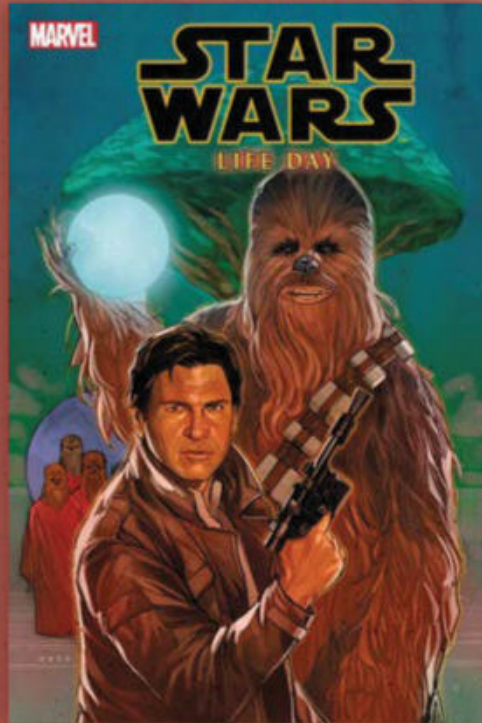
Featuring the return of beloved characters as well as shocking twists in a saga that will reach from the underworld's darkest depths to the glittering spires of Coruscant's Imperial Palace, *Crimson Reign* is an outlaw adventure unlike any that has come before! Featuring a cover by Leinil Francis Yu, issue #1 of *Star Wars: Crimson Reign* is available in comic stores on November 3.



Star Wars: Life Day

The Wookiee ceremony of Life Day (first introduced in 1978's *Star Wars Holiday Special*) is the perfect seasonal celebration for *Star Wars* fans. And you won't have to visit Kashyyyk this November to take part in the festivities, thanks to the four unique tales presented in Marvel's *Star Wars: Life Day* one-shot.

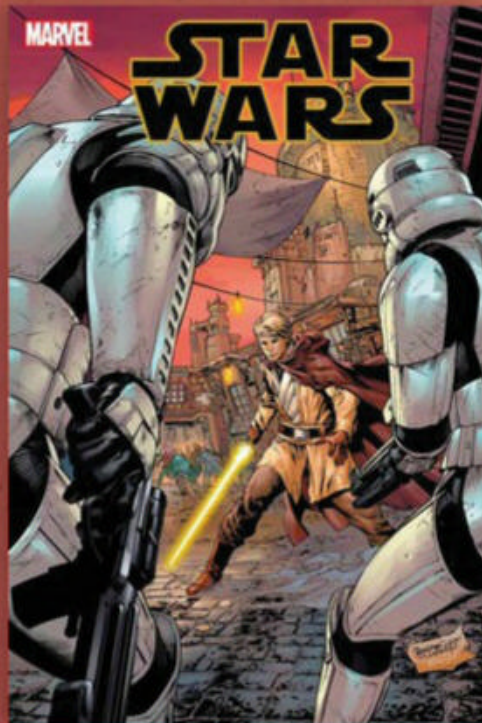
Featuring the writing talents of Cavan Scott, Justina Ireland, Jody Houser, and Steve Orlando, the issue collects festive tales from across the galaxy as presented by Han Solo and Chewbacca. With art by Ivan Fiorelli and a cover by Phil Noto, *Star Wars: Life Day* hits stores November 17.



Star Wars #19

In the latest issue of Marvel's ongoing *Star Wars* series, written by Charles Soule and featuring art by Marco Castiello and a cover by Carlo Pagulayan, Luke Skywalker must grapple with the implications of Vader's chilling words: "The Force is with you, young Skywalker, but you are not a Jedi yet."

As Luke sets out to find someone who can help complete his training and give him the tools he needs to defeat the Dark Lord of the Sith, the question is—who can he turn to uncover the Jedi legacy that he so desperately needs? *Star Wars* #19 is on sale November 3.



Star Wars Adventures Annual 2021

In this special one-shot from IDW, Cavan Scott and artist Arianna Florean tell the tale of Han Solo and Chewbacca's desperate attempt to win the favor of Jabba the Hutt—by gifting the galactic gangster an adorable pet Hoojib! But this floppy-eared critter hides a terrible secret.

A second story by Chip Zdarsky and Jason Loo follows a group of kids who get in over their heads on Cloud City when they find a rare coin belonging to Lando Calrissian. IDW's *Star Wars Adventures Annual 2021* is on sale November 24.



Incoming

Don't Miss These
Upcoming Releases



NOVEMBER

Bounty Hunters #18

Marvel Comics

Writer: Ethan Sachs

Artist: Ramon Bachs

Cover Artist:

Giuseppe Camuncoli

Darth Vader #18

Marvel Comics

Writer: Greg Pak

Artist: Leonard Kirk

Cover Artist: Aaron Kuder

Star Wars Adventures #9

IDW Comics

Writers: Michael Moreci

and Vita Ayala

Artists: Michael Avon Oeming and

Devaun Dowdy

Cover Artist:

Francesco Francavilla

Doctor Aphra #16

Marvel Comics

Writer: Alyssa Wong

Artist: Minkyu Jung

Cover Artist:

Sara Pichelli

DECEMBER

Star Wars #20

Marvel Comics

Writer: Charles Soule

Artist: Marco Castiello

Cover Artist:

Carlo Pagulayan





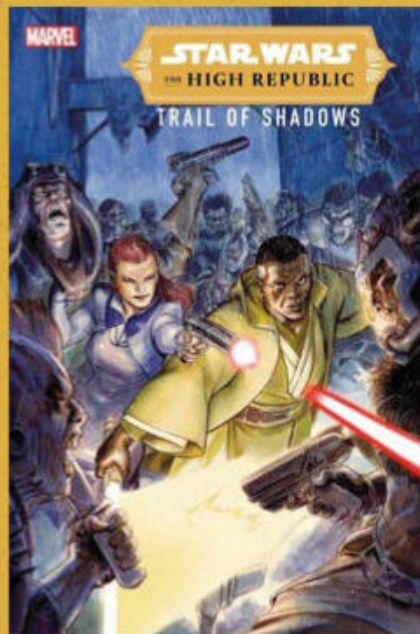
Luminous Lore

Shining a light on *Star Wars: The High Republic*.

Trail of Shadows #2

With his investigation running up against several dead ends, Jedi Master Emerick Caphtor is sent to Coruscant at the behest of Chancellor Lina Soh, in the second installment of Daniel José Older's *The High Republic* mini-series. There, he must infiltrate the criminal underworld that riddles the capital world of the Republic.

Partnered with private eye Sian Holt, Caphtor discovers that she is pursuing a personal vendetta that could compromise his duty to the Republic, and the clock is ticking. With art by Dave Wachter and a cover by David Lopez, *The High Republic: Trial of Shadows #2* is on sale November 3.



The High Republic Adventures #10

Daniel José Older takes fans back to Takodana—the location of Maz Kanata's castle we first experienced in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* (2015)—in issue #10 of *The High Republic Adventures* from IDW.

When the Nihil attack a Jedi temple, the heroic group of Padawans find themselves outnumbered, overwhelmed, and with their backs against the wall. However, one of their number has yet to show their true potential. Will their lethal predicament be the catalyst that leads to a revelation? Featuring a cover by Harvey Tolibao and art by Toni Bruno, *The High Republic Adventures #10* is in stores November 3.



The High Republic #11

In issue #11 of *The High Republic*, Keeve Trennis attempts to come to terms with her experiences on the Nihil base, and Sskeer's future is in doubt when his secret is finally revealed. Meanwhile, Marshal Avar Kriss becomes ever more determined to track down Louna Dee and bring the Tempest Runner to justice, but will her plans face opposition from Stellan Gios and the Jedi Council? As the anarchistic Nihil unleash a terror without name upon the Jedi, the ancient order prepare themselves for war. Written by Cavan Scott, with art by Georges Jeanty and a cover by Phil Noto, *The High Republic #11* is on sale November 3.



Republic Roundup

AVAILABLE NOW

Light of the Jedi

Writer: Charles Soule
Del Rey, Adult novel

A Test of Courage

Writer: Justina Ireland
Disney Lucasfilm Press, Middle grade novel

The Great Jedi Rescue

Writer: Cavan Scott
Artist: Petur Antonsson
Disney Lucasfilm Press, 8x8 storybook

Into the Dark

Writer: Claudia Gray
Disney Lucasfilm Press, Young adult novel

The Rising Storm

Writer: Cavan Scott
Del Rey, Adult novel

Race to Crashpoint Tower

Writer: Daniel José Older
Disney Lucasfilm Press, Middle grade novel

Out of the Shadows

Writer: Justina Ireland
Disney Lucasfilm Press, Young adult novel

Tempest Runner

Writer: Cavan Scott
Del Rey, Audio original novel

The Edge of Balance Vol. 1

Writers: Justina Ireland
and Shima Shinya
Artist: Mizuki Sakakibara
Viz, 13+ Manga

Showdown at the Fair

Writer: George Mann
Artist: Petur Antonsson
Disney Lucasfilm Press, 8x8 storybook

COMING JANUARY 2022

The Fallen Star

Writer: Claudia Gray
Del Rey, Adult novel

Midnight Horizon

Writer: Daniel José Older
Disney Lucasfilm Press, Young adult novel

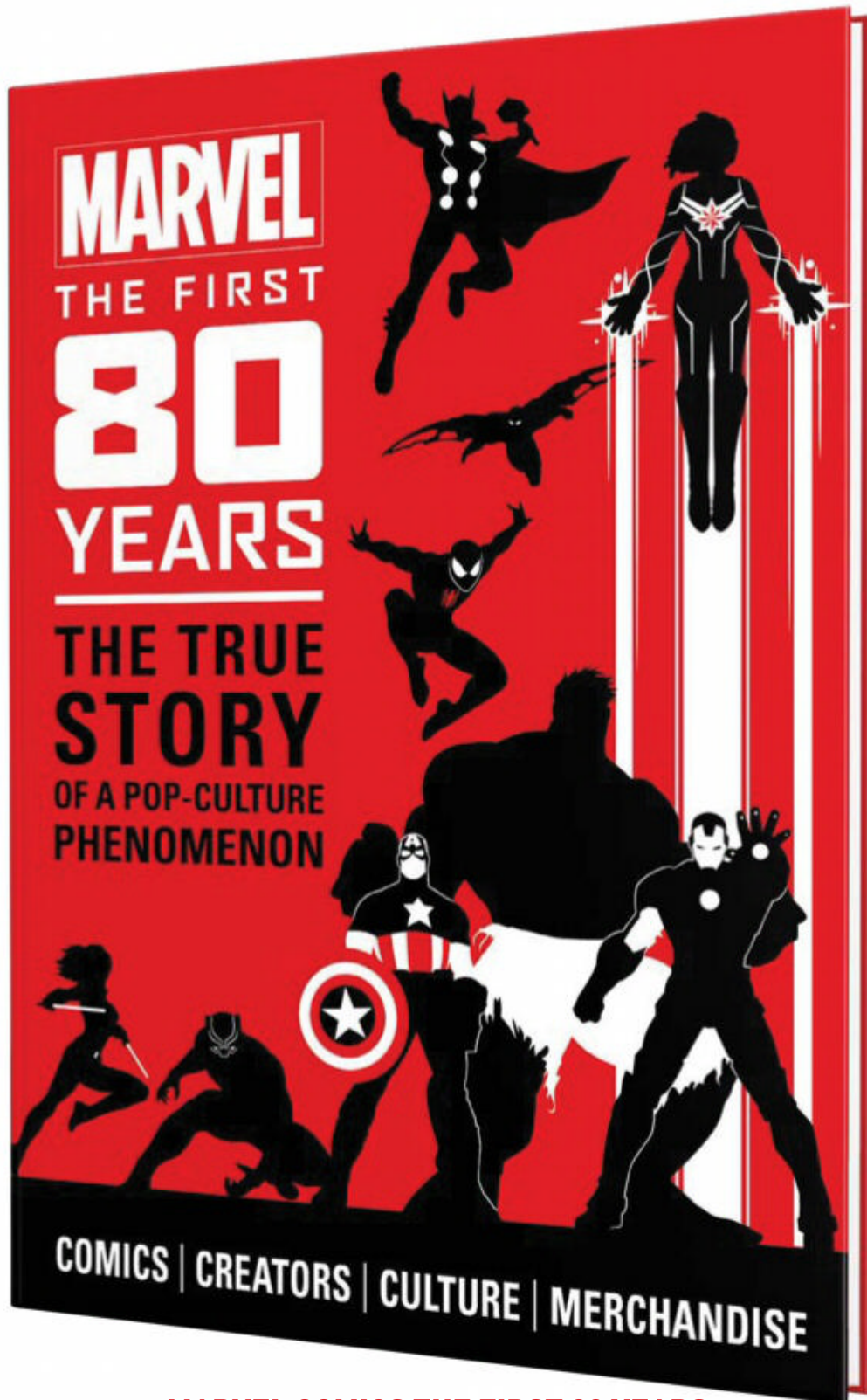
Mission to Disaster

Writer: Justina Ireland
Disney Lucasfilm Press, Middle grade novel

Eye of the Storm #1

Writer: Charles Soule
Marvel Comics miniseries

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ALSO AVAILABLE



THE ULTIMATE COMPANIONS TO MARVEL STUDIOS' BLOCKBUSTER MOVIES!



01 Don Bies (far left) and members of the model shop crew with the fleet of R2-D2s they built for *Star Wars: Attack of the Clones* (2002).

Industry, Laughter, & Magical Times

In conversation with model shop alumni of the most special of effects companies in the galaxy:
Industrial Light & Magic

WORDS: MELISSA T. MILLER

Industrial Light & Magic is only a few years younger than Lucasfilm itself, which

celebrates its 50th anniversary this December. Founded by George Lucas in 1975, ILM has blazed a trail in visual effects thanks to the efforts of the innovative artists and technicians who have enjoyed careers there. *Insider* gathered together nine former employees to reminisce over old times, the culture and perks of working there, and being friends with the late, great Grant Imahara.

Star Wars Insider: Were you Star Wars fans before working at ILM?

Carol Bauman: *Star Wars* is the reason I became interested in visual effects as a career. I was going to “serious” film school in New York when *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) came out. While the rest of my classmates were sitting in coffee houses all dressed in black, I was

blowing my limited budget on repeat showings of the film.

Fon Davis: When we first started working at ILM, fans of *Star Wars* were kind of frowned upon in that culture. We had this little secret society of people within the model shop and within ILM that were fans.

Adam Savage: I found fast friends in you guys really early. We formed a small cadre within ILM that deeply loved the franchise for itself, in addition to professionally.

Kim Smith: I know of at least one person that did not get a job in the model shop because they were too much of a fan. I think it probably made them nervous that they wouldn’t get any work done.

John Goodson: I don’t think I ever hid my affection for any of it. I didn’t care what other people thought.

Don Bies: We had the R2 Builders Group at ILM, started in 2000.

AS: Romeo Delta! The secret R2 group.

DB: The idea was we were going to make our own R2-D2 but we couldn’t use the molds. We were going to make everything from



02

► scratch. Being model makers, we all made patterns. Adam, I think you were the first one to actually complete your R2.

AS: Yeah, between *MythBusters* seasons two and three, I think, way back in 2005.

DB: My last interaction with Grant Imahara was when he finished his R2, a few weeks before he passed away, and he sent me a picture. It was somehow appropriate that was our last communication.

Being at the Archives, I basically had the keys to the candy store at Skywalker Ranch. A lot of people would come and want a tour, so we got to know a lot of people. That's where I first met Grant. I found out he was an electrical engineer and thought, "Hey, R2 could always use upgrading." We had twelve R2-D2s in the Archives, but there was only one that was still in good shape, and we would take out for appearances. It had this 1981 technology in it, and I was constantly mending it. In the mid 1990s I asked Grant, "Do you think you can fix this up?" And he did. We hit it off really well, and had a lot of fun, especially those late days and weekends at the Ranch, just laughing and telling stories.

FD: Everyone there was a nerd, but to be a fan of *Star Wars* was a different kind of nerd than to be an engineer or a mathematician or a builder. I was a huge fan growing up, but at ILM no one knew that except for a couple of people.

CB: When I was applying for work in the industry, I didn't let on what *Star Wars* meant to me. It wasn't until the prequels were in development that it became okay to acknowledge that yes, I'm a *Star Wars* nerd!

KS: I think everybody is a nerd now.

02 The ILM Bodyparts Club included staff who had appeared as extras in a *Star Wars* movie.

03 The model shop crew prepare the Dex's Diner miniature.

04 Grant Imahara played C-3PO in an automobile commercial.

05 Don Bies wore the Boba Fett armor for the *Return of the Jedi* Special Edition (1996).



03

Did any of you get the chance to be extras in the films?

DB: We had a yearbook at ILM. In the 1990s they started doing clubs like a high-school yearbook. They had the ILM Body Parts Club, which was all the people who had been a hand or an elbow or something in a film. I think everybody got a chance to be in a film because they needed extras. Sometimes you happened to be standing in the right place at the right time and you could fit in the costume. That's how I got to be Boba Fett.

Nelson Hall: I was a human wipe for the *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977) Special Edition. There was this lift that was picking up R2-D2 and dropping him in the back of the X-wing. A few frames had to be cut to eliminate a line of dialogue, which created an unnatural skip in R2's progress. So, I dressed up in a technician's suit with hoses wrapped over my

shoulder and walked across screen so they could cover that little maneuver with R2 unnoticed.

DB: Nelson and I were stormtroopers in the Special Edition shot when Han Solo turns the corner. There were four other people so we're like every sixth stormtrooper. And then we put on Imperial officer costumes and we're like every sixth of those too.

FD: In the Special Edition, Tony and I were in the Coruscant celebration scene three times. The camera pans over a huge crowd, but they only had enough extras for a third of it, so we each stood in different places to create a big enough crowd.

Melanie Walas: I saw myself on screen! They shot a bunch of people at ILM in costume to be in the background of the podrace scene.

KS: The only time I was ever on camera was in a crowd of people in one of the arena scenes in *Star Wars: Attack of the Clones* (2002). ►



REMEMBERING GRANT IMAHARA

What's clear from all the former-ILMers at *Insider's* roundtable chat, each of them had huge respect and affection for their late colleague, Grant Imahara, who sadly passed away at the age of 49 in 2020. Here they share some ILM memories of their friend:

Fon Davis: Grant was always first to volunteer to do favors for people, especially if it involved making something cool. Everything I know about electronics I learned from Grant and Jon Foreman. Those guys taught me the proper way to do everything.

Nelson Hall: He came to ILM from THX in 1996, and he was a huge success. Everybody loved Grant. He fit right in, and had an incredible work ethic—super productive, and funny and entertaining. We were getting busy, the Special Editions were on deck, and that was it, he was there to stay, at least until *MythBusters* came along.

Don Bies: He came back a few times on the breaks from *MythBusters* to help us on a couple of projects when we were really up against the wall. We were devastated when he left ILM.

Tony Preciado: When Grant and I started in 1996, we knew *Star Wars* was coming up. We hadn't been put on a show yet, but we were in the building so we knew it could happen. Grant said, "We're going to work on *Star Wars*!" It was at that moment that he and I became friends.

Adam Savage: Grant exemplified a really important part of film work, that you have to be super adaptive, you've got to be able to improvise.





06

- ▶ I don't think I ever looked for myself. We all got the chance to dress up for that one.

Tony Preciado: I got totally done up as a Jedi for the fight in the Geonosis arena. I had that moment where it hit me, "I'm going to be a Jedi Knight in *Star Wars*!" We did several shots, but when they selected the ones they were going to use I don't think I was in view. At least I got to dress up as a Jedi and swing around a lightsaber for a while.

KS: John [Goodson] got to stand in for Samuel L. Jackson.

JG: I was the right size to fit his costume. It was over the shoulder from behind. I think he's talking to Yoda. I was basically a mannequin.

AS: I was going to be Jango Fett's hand for a shot, but just as we were about to film the VFX supervisor asked me to build something that took me away from the soundstage.

When you weren't building secret R2s, or dressing up to be in background shots, what was it like working at ILM?

DB: The old question of, "How many people worked at ILM? About half."

KS: It's the place where you learn teamwork. If you can't be part of a

07

06 All hands on deck during construction of the *Invisible Hand's* hangar bay for *Revenge of the Sith* (2005).

07 ILM staffers in *Star Wars* costume.



INDUSTRIAL
MAGICIANS

CAROL BAUMAN

Model and creature
maker, 1993-2006
Currently a designer
at TraumaFX Solutions

DON BIES

Puppeteer and model
maker, 1987-2004
R2-D2 operator and
head of the prequel's
Droid Department,
archivist, and personal
appearance coordinator
at Lucasfilm

FON DAVIS

Model maker, 1996-2006
Creative director of
Fonco Studios, which
recently made models
for *The Mandalorian*
(2019-present)

JOHN GOODSON

Model maker and digital
artist, 1988-2019
ILM contractor making
practical models, including
the *Razor Crest* and the
Imperial light cruiser for
The Mandalorian

NELSON HALL

Model maker and model
shop assistant manager,
1988-2006
Archivist and personal
appearance coordinator
at Lucasfilm



08



09

08 Adding detail to large miniature sets was a long and laborious process, but it allowed time for the model shop crew to bond.

09 Fon Davis and Tony Preciado were pressed into service as extras in the *Return of the Jedi* Special Edition Coruscant celebration scene.

team in the model shop, you can't be there. We had to be cooperative in every way, including sometimes physically climbing on top of each other to fix something. There would literally be five of us crammed underneath a model, doing something that had to be done.

TP: Carol and I did all night shoots together for the arena set for *Attack of the Clones*. She made everything easy because she had all the answers.

CB: I hadn't really worked with you that much before. We tried to make it as fun as it could be. It was a good group of people.

TP: No complaints from me. I couldn't believe that I was one of the stage-support people on one of the coolest *Star Wars* sets you could

imagine. It was three o'clock in the morning, we were on this big arena set, with broken up droids and actual *Star Wars* action figures that we had to position on set like there were battle-damaged and take tempera paint and put in blast marks everywhere.

FD: For the 1996 Olympics, they needed footage of the Olympic Village, but they hadn't built it yet, so ILM created a miniature. There were probably 600 lights and they all had to be installed from beneath the set, which was maybe only two to three feet off the ground. Grant and I were tasked with crawling underneath this miniature and wiring hundreds of lights. We had both just started at ILM, and we had a lot in common, so we just

THE MODERN MODEL



10



11



12

Despite the rise of computer-generated effects, there's still a place for physical models in the *Star Wars* galaxy. *Insider* asked Roger Guyett, VFX supervisor on *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker* (2019), and ILM executive creative director John Knoll how they incorporate the old methods into modern movies.

Star Wars Insider: The sequel trilogy and *The Mandalorian* (2019-present) made use of practical effects and models alongside modern techniques like 3D printing. How does the legacy of ILM's previous work help in achieving shots such as the sandcrawler in *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker* (2019)?

Roger Guyett: We wanted to incorporate some practical effects within the movie to bookend all the incredible VFX work that the *Star Wars* franchise has created. When we decided to use a practical model of the sandcrawler we were very inspired by the original movies and wanted to

10 Visual effects supervisor John Knoll (left) and modelmaker John Goodson (right).

11 Filming the sandcrawler miniature built for *The Rise of Skywalker* (2019).

12 ILM's physical model of the *Razor Crest*.

pay homage to *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977). In fact, the miniature model of the sandcrawler we built was based on the original plans from that movie. Although using practical miniature effects is not a common approach in today's VFX movies, the quality of that technique can still be very high if you design the shots correctly. We are always striving for the best possible result, regardless of technique.

John Knoll: Practical effects and miniatures are in our DNA, so that experience absolutely influences how we look at things, regardless of the technique ultimately employed. A good example of this is the digital kitbash library we built on *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* (2016). We scanned hundreds of parts from vintage plastic model kits—the same ones that were used to detail miniatures on the original trilogy. We then built CG models of these parts and had them available for our modelers when they were building ships. This allowed our digital modelers to work in much the same way as our physical counterparts did back in the day.

When shooting motion control shots of the *Razor Crest*, did modern tools make the task any easier?

JK: I used to shoot miniatures with motion control cameras, so it is a method I know well. We weren't shy about using newer technology where it made more sense, though. I shot with a digital still camera because the quality was better than film and I could see the results immediately. When we were shooting the reveal shot of the light cruiser, I would shoot a test, load it up on a high-resolution monitor, and then John Goodson and I would study it to make a list of areas that could benefit from extra detailing. John would work on those areas of the model, and then I'd repeat the process until we were both happy.

How fluid is the line between practical and digital models in today's effects world, where both techniques might be used in conjunction?

RG: Extremely fluid! The digital tools give you great opportunities to not only deal with both practical and digital elements but also blur the line between them. For example, match-moving and scanning tools allow you to accurately create representations of any real practical element. Those elements can be augmented or accounted for in a digital scene so, for example, you could cast a shadow from a real object onto a digital object.

JK: We originally built the *Razor Crest* miniature at Jon Favreau's request since he felt something didn't look exactly right with our CG model. After we had built the miniature and shot a number of elements, we reworked the CG model to better match things we really liked about the miniature photography. In that way, the miniature improved the CG even though it appeared in a limited number of shots.

It's not inexpensive to build and shoot a miniature, but sometimes it's worth it. When Jon Favreau wants a miniature in the show, we're happy to oblige!



13

► sat under there for a week, wiring lights and getting to know each other. We have been friends ever since.

KS: The glue that holds together the members of the model shop, and the greater ILM diaspora, is unchanging. We are always there for each other—for births, disasters, weddings, funerals, fires—whatever happens.

FD: My experience at ILM really shaped everything about the culture that we try to foster at Fonco Studios. Grant and I wanted to recreate everything we thought was special about ILM.

DB: I feel so lucky to have been involved in some of the stuff that we worked on.

What are some of your fondest memories from your time at ILM?

CB: Grant and I traveled the world with the Energizer bunny. He was the main electrical guy on that. We went together to these exotic locales and had a lot of fun doing it.

NH: Don and I traveled domestically and abroad to support exhibitions, and Don, Grant, and I traveled to locations around the world



14

13 Nelson Hall worked on the maquette of Joh Yowza, the singer added to Max Rebo's band for the *Return of the Jedi* Special Edition.

14 Grant Imahara (far left) and Fon Davis (far right) as Yin and Yang at an ILM costume party.

for *Star Wars* character appearances and commercials.

DB: ILM always had a Halloween party and they started out casual. People would dress up, there was a lot of creativity there. Some would get elaborate.

NH: I had come up with the idea of the Main Street Electrical Parade from Disneyland. I approached Grant about it. He wired it all, we used the same kind of batteries we used for R2-D2. Grant was Pete's Dragon, I was riding in the train. We won second prize.

AS: Always the bridesmaid.

TP: We started a superhero party where superheroes and supervillains alike could attend. As long as you were at the party, a truce was called. And if anyone demonstrated their superpower, they would win a trophy. It was a lot of fun.

FD: The night before one of the parties, Grant and I were working late at ILM, as we often did. I said, "Maybe we should do something together. Why don't we go as Yin and Yang?" We laser cut a shield that was a yin and yang symbol and each of us had one half of it with a handle on the back. The costumes weren't that extravagant but because of the theatrics of it, we did actually win that year.

MW: I was always jealous of Grant, because I would spend all this time on my costumes and inevitably he would win.

AS: I felt like a full-grown adult when I was working at ILM, and I now look back and I'm like, "I was so not an adult."

NH: We worked with you Adam, we can vouch for the fact that you were not an adult. 🐼

INDUSTRIAL MAGICIANS

GRANT IMAHARA
Model maker, 1992-2005
Former co-host of *MythBusters* and *White Rabbit Project*.
Consulted with Walt Disney Imagineering, and had a workshop at Fonco Studios

TONY PRECIADO
Model maker, 1996-2003
Currently fabrication manager at Laika working on stop-motion animated features

ADAM SAVAGE
Model maker, 1998-2003
Former co-host of *MythBusters*, host of *Tested*, and creative director of SiliCon

KIM SMITH
Model maker and digital artist, 1988-2007
Worked at Tippett Studios, now retired

MELANIE WALAS
Model shop and digital painter, 1996-2018
Still working as a painter in the industry



The Fett Family's Finest



With the premiere of *The Book of Boba Fett* on Disney+ approaching as quickly as the *Millennium Falcon* made the Kessel Run, now seems like an excellent time to reflect on the jaw-dropping *Star Wars* scenes featuring Jango Fett and his clone son Boba. As *Insider* looks back at the Fett family's finest scenes, there's only one rule: no disintegrations.

WORDS: JAY STOBIE

10

A Special Introduction

■ The original 1978 *Star Wars Holiday Special* is infamous for many of its creative choices, but one of the attributes we can all agree on was its blisteringly entertaining introduction of bounty hunter Boba Fett.

Learning that the *Millennium Falcon* had crash-landed on a moon,



Luke Skywalker tracked down the ship, worried for the safety of his friends Han Solo and Chewbacca, only to find himself in dangerous water as he was menaced by a creature that had emerged from the inky depths. Out of nowhere an enigmatic armored figure appeared and drove the beast away, saving Luke from certain death. This was our first exciting encounter with Boba Fett, who claimed to be a friend but was actually in league with Darth Vader. With a plan to share the location of the rebel's new base with the Empire, audiences immediately recognized Fett as a bad guy—but fell in love with the cool-looking character anyway.



09

“Boba, is your father here?”

■ An innocent question from Taun We to a tousle-haired young boy on Kamino alerted audiences to the lad's true identity, as we were reintroduced to Boba Fett in *Star Wars: Attack of the Clones* (2002).

In that same scene we would quickly go on to learn that while the boy considered Jango Fett to be his father, he was actually

a genetic donor and Boba was his clone! The true magic of this breakout scene, however, came from the tense verbal stand-off between Obi-Wan Kenobi and Jango. As Kenobi attempted to subtly quiz Jango on his involvement with several assassination attempts on Senator Amidala and the origins of the clone army, the palpable friction between the pair built up in thrilling fashion, with every loaded verbal exchange as sharp as a parry between lightsabers. Jango kept his cool under the Jedi's scrutinous glare while Boba sneakily concealed the bounty hunter's Mandalorian armor from Kenobi, and the elder Fett stole the scene with his classic line: “I’m just a simple man trying to make my way in the universe.”

BONUS FETT
BOBA BLASTS KENOBI

Most kids would love to drive their parents' car, but Boba Fett was living the dream when he powered up Jango's ship while his father and Kenobi fought on Kamino. Not only did he prepare the starship for its getaway and pilot it during takeoff, Boba even had the chance to fire the vessel's cannons at the pesky Jedi.

08

Messing
with Mace

■ Having already fended off Kenobi on Kamino, Jango Fett was soon trading blows with another Jedi in the Geonosis arena. Jango struck the first blow with his armor's built-in flamethrower, setting Mace Windu's robes alight in the process, but the Jedi Master adeptly blocked Jango's blaster fire as he charged the bounty hunter down and decapitated him with his violet blade.

Boba bore witness to his father's death and, after the battle had moved beyond the arena, the sorrowful boy took a moment to cradle Jango's helmet lovingly to his forehead. As tragic as it was iconic, this brief mourning period signified the moment that Boba Fett inherited his father's signature armor.

07

Clone Wars
Caper

■ In search of vengeance over Jango's death, Boba snuck aboard the Jedi cruiser *Endurance* so that he could plant a bomb in Mace Windu's quarters. When that failed, Boba hid among a group of clone cadets and sabotaged the vessel, causing it to crash down onto a planetary surface. Windu and Anakin Skywalker searched for survivors, only to find Jango's helmet on the bridge. Upon discovering this evidence, Windu surmised that Boba was behind the attack—just before the booby-trapped helmet nearly



killed the two Jedi! Later, Aurra Sing pressured Boba to execute Republic hostages, but the young clone hesitated and revealed a glimpse of the honor that we later saw when he assisted Din Djarin in rescuing Grogu in *The Mandalorian* (2019-present).



06

Tracking is His Trade

■ We all give Han Solo credit for the brilliant tactics he employed in escaping the Imperial fleet by disguising the *Millennium Falcon* as just another piece of junk in a Star Destroyer's ejected garbage, but we should also give Boba his due for anticipating Solo's ploy. He was also able to extrapolate the *Falcon's* eventual destination of Bespin, thus helping Darth Vader and his stormtroopers arrive there first to spring a trap to capture the rebels.

As ingenious as the Corellian's plan was, we think Fett's own feat has gone shamelessly underappreciated. The discovery of Solo's destination set a series of events in motion that had huge repercussions for the ensuing Galactic Civil War. Imprisoning Luke Skywalker's friends lured the young Jedi to confront Vader before he was ready; freezing Solo in carbonite set the stage for a visit to Jabba the Hutt's palace; and double-crossing Lando Calrissian propelled the former smuggler into joining the Rebel Alliance's cause. As a result, young Skywalker learned Vader's true identity and felt the good in him, Jabba's criminal organization was busted wide open, and Calrissian led the assault that ultimately destroyed the second Death Star. Wait, doesn't that make Boba Fett the savior of the galaxy...?!

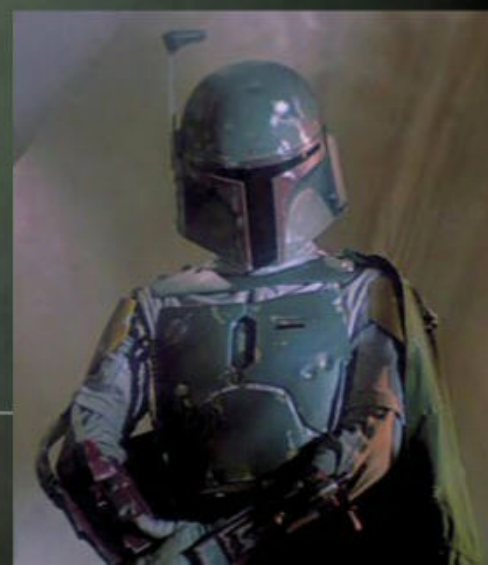


05

Bounty Hunter Bylaws

■ Disguised as the bounty hunter Boushh, Leia Organa brought a captive Chewbacca before Jabba the Hutt to collect the price on the Wookiee's head and gain a foothold within the palace. In typical fashion for one in Boushh's profession, Leia negotiated a higher price for her quarry than the Hutt had originally offered, with the help of a thermal

detonator. After things had settled down and the Max Rebo Band were striking up another tune, Boushh and Boba Fett exchanged a knowing glance, with the latter giving a nod of approval for the former's ruthlessness. It was a subtle moment, but Boba clearly respected Boushh's desire to squeeze Jabba for as many credits as possible.





BONUS FETT WE KNOW THAT LOOK

Having retrieved Boba Fett's armor from Cobb Vanth, the Mandalorian and Grogu set out across the Tatooine desert to return to the *Razor Crest*, but they weren't the only ones with an interest in the battered beskar. Watching from afar, a cloaked man turned away from the sunset, his scarred face recognizable as that of a man who had evidently escaped a sarlacc pit—Boba Fett!

04

A Familiar Face

■ Hoping to infiltrate an Imperial facility on Morak to uncover information about Moff Gideon's whereabouts, the Mandalorian encountered a significant roadblock when he learned that the terminal storing the data required a user to remove their helmet and have their

face scanned. Mando asked Boba Fett if he could complete the task, and in a rare display of dry humor, Fett alluded to his clone heritage and replied, "Let's just say they might recognize my face."

Although Fett never entered the compound, he nevertheless provided the Imperials with plenty of clues as to his true identity. In addition to flying his father's personal starship and using it as a getaway vehicle for the operation, Boba pulled a maneuver he'd picked up from his dad to destroy a squadron of TIE fighters that pursued his vessel, detonating a distinctive sounding seismic charge that wiped out the vehicles. Like father, like son.



03

Clashing with Koska

■ More clone humor popped up when Fett and Mando attempted to enlist Bo-Katan Kryze and Koska Reeves in their quest to rescue Grogu, as Kryze recognized Fett's voice to be the same as those of the clone troopers she knew during the struggle between the Republic and the Separatists. The situation flared up, prompting Koska and Boba to engage in hand-to-hand combat—combat that also incorporated the grappling hooks, jetpacks, and flamethrowers built into their Mandalorian armor!



02

Reunited

■ Surrounded by stormtroopers from the Imperial Remnant, Mando and Fennec Shand appeared to be in quite the tough spot. Suddenly, an explosive charge fell from the sky and disoriented Moff Gideon's forces. A lone trooper heard a sound behind him, and as he turned he cast his eyes upon one of the galaxy's most frightening sites—a fully armored Boba Fett.

Fett had already dispatched quite a few stormtroopers with the Tusken gaffi stick he'd obtained on Tatooine, but being reunited with his armor turned the bounty hunter into an unstoppable, one-person army. Drawing his blaster and firing off explosive projectiles, Boba tore through Gideon's landing party with ease. As two Imperial transports attempted to flee, Fett launched a missile from his jetpack and brought down both vessels in a massive fireball. To top it off, Fett earned extra cool points by glancing at Mando and Fennec as the ships exploded behind him. Boba Fett was back.





01

Taking the Throne

■ Having served Jabba the Hutt loyally for decades, surviving the vile gangster's vicious ire on a daily basis, Bib Fortuna suddenly found himself occupying the fallen Hutt's throne one day after Jabba's sudden death. Having

evidently grown accustomed to the good life over the subsequent years, he probably thought things couldn't get any better—until Fennec Shand turned up, blasted his guards, and left him defenseless. And things were about to get worse. A whole lot of Boba Fett worse.

Having ended Fortuna's career permanently in an unexpected post-credits scene at the end of *The Mandalorian's* second season, Boba made himself comfortable on the newly vacant throne, and Fett fans rejoiced at the prospect of an entire series based on the

exploits of the character we'd first met as a cartoon in 1978, or as a mail-away Kenner action figure in 1979, or in a certain classic scene from *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1980)! However your love affair with the galaxy's greatest bounty hunter began, Fett has remained an enormously popular character from the very beginning (and he's had a few of those). With so many fine moments in the Fett family history so far, we look forward to discovering many more when the first page of *The Book of Boba Fett* opens in December 2021. 🍷

GOING IN FOR THE



KUIIL

Star Wars Insider gets under the Ugnaught's skin with performance artist Misty Rosas.

WORDS: AMY RICHAU

02

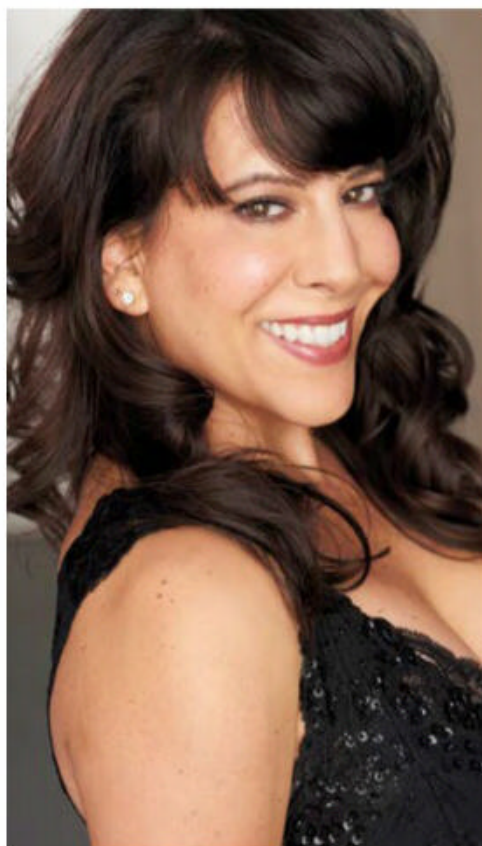
Portraying a non-human character inside a creature suit wasn't a new experience for Misty Rosas, but becoming part of the first live-action *Star Wars* TV series was an unexpected dream come true. *Star Wars Insider* recently spoke to the versatile performer about the team of people who helped bring Ugnaught hermit Kuiil and the "Frog Lady" to life in *The Mandalorian*'s first two seasons.

You've done a lot of work as a stunt double and creature performer. How did you get into the business?

I took my first gymnastics class when I was two and a half years old. I absolutely loved it, and gymnastics became my life for the next 18 years. Eventually I was cast in a role for the movie *Congo* (1995) because of my gymnastics ability, and I did all of the stunt work for the gorilla character Amy in that movie.

What was your introduction to the *Star Wars* saga?

Star Wars: A New Hope (1977). I was very young, three to be exact,



but I remember the feeling of excitement and anticipation. My whole family packed into the car, and we traveled 26 miles down the Ortega Highway, that's Highway 47, to the drive-in theater in San Juan Capistrano, California. The experience alone was epic! The visual images, the music, and the special effects. It felt BIG! It felt larger than life and I loved it! In fact, I was out in Hollywood one night in the summer of 2018, and

I remember saying out loud to my friends, "I want to work on a *Star Wars* production!" And then a few months later I did!

When you went up for the part of Kuiil, did you have any inkling that you were auditioning for a *Star Wars* project?

I knew nothing. I had a cold-read audition with Sarah Finn Casting. I was equal parts excited and nervous. I didn't get the script until I got there, and I had no idea what I was auditioning for. Which was a good thing!

When my agent sent over my deal memo, and I saw that it was *Star Wars*, it took my breath away. I instantly had tears in my eyes. 2018 had been a tough year for me by that point, and I was so excited and overwhelmed.

How would you describe the character of Kuiil to someone who hasn't seen the show?

Kuiil is very wise. He is humble. He is a skilled craftsman, an engineer, a vapor farmer. He's always building something or fixing something else. He is a Lone Ranger. He doesn't talk much, and he doesn't like chatter. He just wants peace and quiet to return to his valley.

What were you told about Kuiil by the show's creator, Jon Favreau?

Jon Favreau wrote the scripts, and he is brilliant! I understood Kuiil quite well from the dialogue.

Dave Filoni was my first director on the show, and it was tremendously helpful to sit down with him and break down our first script. He told me about the plight of the Ugnaughts, and how they were enslaved by the Empire and forced into labor. Kuiil endured a lifetime of indentured servitude in order to win back his freedom. His life had not been easy, but his wisdom and humbleness was born of that life experience.

01 The taciturn Ugnaught Kuiil.

02 Performance artist Misty Rosas.

► **Bringing Kuiil to life was a team effort, with Nick Nolte providing the voice, and Legacy Effects artists controlling the animatronics. Can you talk a bit about how you all worked together?**

I was very fortunate to have Nick Nolte's dialogue on set. During rehearsal I would say all of Kuiil's lines, then I would get suited up. I wore an earpiece so I could hear the dialogue. There were speakers on set so the other actors could hear Kuiil's dialogue. After rehearsal I would then coordinate the timing of the dialogue with my puppeteering team. We would discuss and plan subtle, physical cues that I would give them during a scene so they would know when I'd want to say certain lines. It was a very complicated and challenging process.

Our first couple of takes didn't always go very well, but once we all got into a flow, the "mind meld" would manifest and we'd magically co-coordinate and fuse into a single being. It really took four individuals to bring Kuiil to life.

How long did it take for you to get into the Kuiil costume?

First thing in the morning, it took about 30 minutes to get me ready. Wardrobe first, then the contact lenses, the earpiece, then the head, and lastly the makeup around my eyes. The phenomenal team of artists at Legacy Effects designed and built the suit: Jason B. Matthews, David Covarrubias, Rodrick Khachatoorian, and Connie Grayson Criswell. The vest, backpack, and head were all one piece. All of the wires and mechanics that brought the facial expressions to life were packed inside the backpack. Once that piece went on, they had to tighten the head so that the skin around my eyes looked seamless, and then Jason would blend the makeup on my eyelids and under my eyes. My puppeteers controlled the eyebrows and the mouth movement. Kuiil's eyes

03



04



03 Rosas recalls spending more than seven hours in a blurring saddle on one day.

04 Director Deborah Chow on set with Rosas as Kuiil.

05 Kuiil's makeup being touched up for a shot.

06 Antics on Arvala 7.

05





are mine, with full eye contacts lenses, of course.

It must have taken a while to figure out how to be expressive under all the makeup?

I had a couple weeks of rehearsal with the directors, not in costume, and I went to Legacy Effects to work with my team a couple of times while they were working hard to finish building the suit.

As a suit performer, I really work to bring the soul to life from the inside out, with an energy coming from inside the suit, the heart of the character, if you will! I was fortunate to have my own eyes for this. I believe that there is a certain depth and a truth that is very much expressed through the eyes alone. And then Nick Nolte's beautiful delivery of Kuiil's dialogue is so rich that it made my job easy. Also, I felt such an affinity with Kuiil that there wasn't much acting involved. I literally poured the emotions of my life experience into this role.



06

How long would you typically be on-set in the Kuiil costume? Given all the technology involved, could it get uncomfortable?

I carried the main weight of the costume on my shoulders. It was very, *very* intense! In between takes my team would blow cool air into Kuiil's mouth using a small, portable fan to give me oxygen and push out the carbon dioxide, and to keep me as cool as possible. I believe I'd usually work for about 90 minutes at a time. There was one crazy, intense day that I was on the blurr for seven and a half hours.

Sadly, Kuiil met a heroic end in Season One. When did you learn that there was a role for you in Season Two?

Not until about a month or maybe two months before we started shooting.

How was the experience of playing the Frog Lady different to Kuiil? What were the new challenges in that costume?

In my animatronic Frog Lady head I was totally blind. That was a challenge. But fortunately, I've worked blind before in an animatronic head, so it was what it was. I had two puppeteers working on Frog Lady with me, my

"I FELT SUCH AN AFFINITY WITH KUIIL THAT THERE WASN'T MUCH ACTING INVOLVED. I LITERALLY POURED THE EMOTIONS OF MY LIFE EXPERIENCE INTO THIS ROLE."

friends Dawn Dininger and TaMara Carlson Woodward. One would operate her mouth movements, while the other controlled those little glands on the side of Frog Lady's head, which started moving a little bit faster anytime she was nervous. And then my friends at Industrial Light & Magic added her little blinks in.

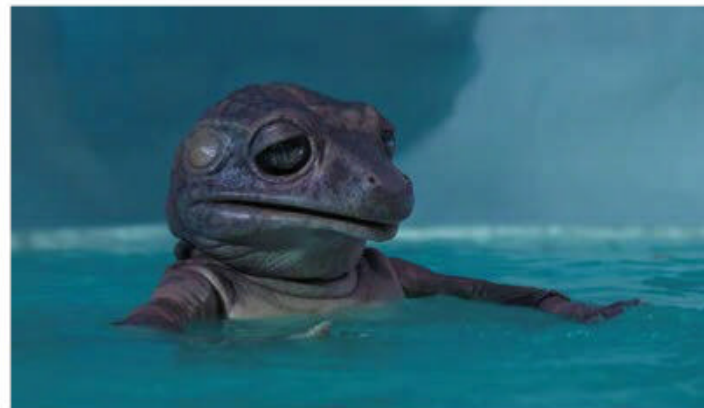
I'm fascinated that you were essentially blind during all of your scenes as the Frog Lady. Can you explain more about how that works?

Working blind is a technique I learned way back on *Congo*, where I was fortunate enough to have had three months to learn how to do it. You have to get really familiar with the set, block the scene, and count your steps—I have to count *all* of them. You are able to see a teeny, tiny bit if there's a gap in a costume, so I will deliberately go at an angle, stop, ▶

07



08



07 The animatronic Frog Lady head meant Rosas was performing the character "blind".

08 The toughest day on set for Rosas was Frog Lady's pond scene.

09 The Frog Lady (Misty Rosas).



INSIDE OUT

Despite spending most of her time on set ensconced beneath silicone masks and animatronics, Misty Rosas was able to appreciate the many other groundbreaking technologies employed on *The Mandalorian*, especially the Volume.

"Deborah Chow, the director, brought me over to show me the StageCraft setup. It wasn't up and running at that point, it was just this big dome, and she tried to explain it all to me," says Rosas of her first experience of the part digital, part practical studio space. "Once you get in there, there's no having to use your imagination," she adds. "You're there. Everything is there. Those screens make everything feel like you are in that moment."

"IN MY ANIMATRONIC FROG LADY HEAD I WAS TOTALLY BLIND. THAT WAS A CHALLENGE."

► look around. On *Congo*, I knew I had one big moment where my puppeteer opened my character's mouth, so I skewed my eyes as far over as I could to see where my spot was, then it was just, like, "Go!"

What kind of research do you do for these roles?

For Kuiil, I did have a look at the Ugnaughts in *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1980), but they were on screen for such a short amount of time. It's more about the dialogue for me, and it was all there in the script. There's also a way that I carry my body for a male character as opposed to a female character.

What was the Frog Lady's most challenging scene?

I'd have to say that was the pond in Chapter 10, "The Passenger." Being in the water and then being in water *in a suit*. Strangely, because I couldn't see the water I couldn't *feel* the water, if that makes sense. That suit was super

tight around my neck, so they cut out a bigger hole for me, which helped. That was a long, long day in the water.

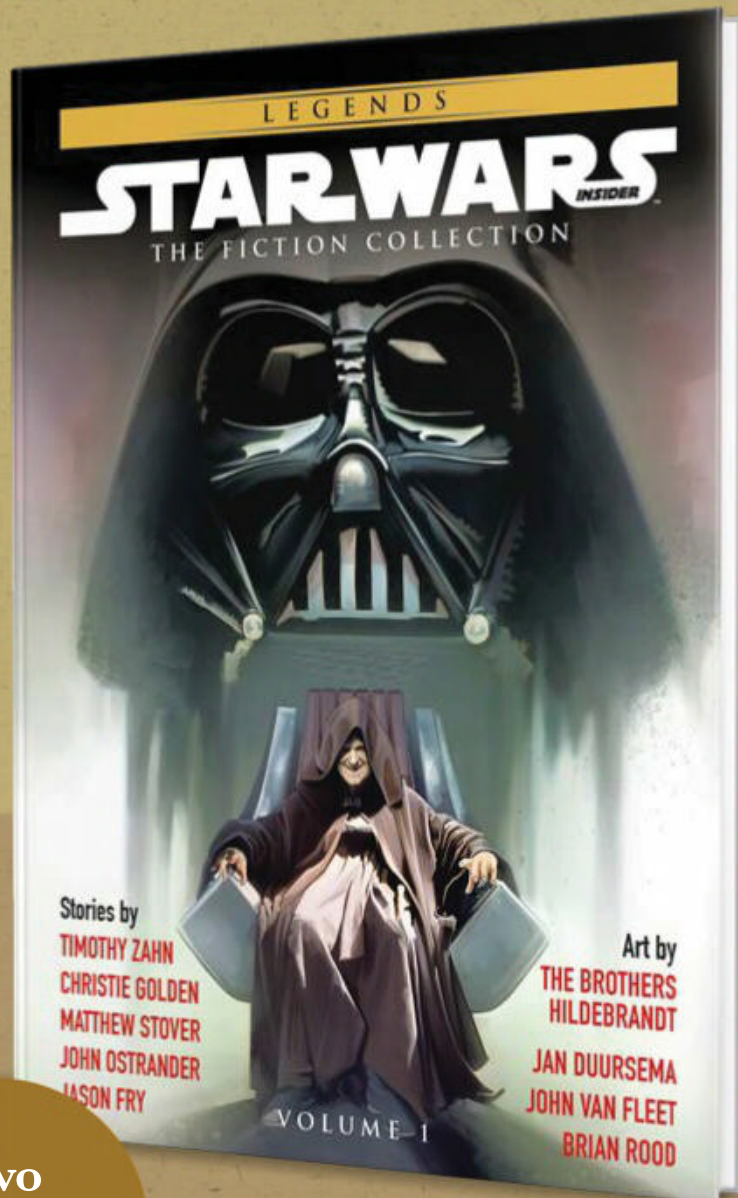
Are there any other characters or creatures you'd like to play?

I really want to be a Jawa! I was originally cast to play the Jawa Elder in *The Mandalorian*, but Kuiil was in all of the same scenes, so sadly I guess I'll have to wait for some other opportunity.

And I love Yoda. He's my favorite character, along with Obi-Wan Kenobi, and the Jedi, who always resonated with me as a little kid, I suspect because I was a gymnast and Luke Skywalker was doing handstands and stuff. I was like, "Ooh, I can do that, too!" I would love to be a Jedi Master, a teacher—I'd love to be one of Grogu's Jedi Master teachers. 🐸



09



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sets to give
away!

A Galaxy of Stories

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There are many things to love about *Star Wars*, from its epic space battles to the stunningly realized worlds, creatures, and characters of the saga, but at the heart of it all are the stories. *Star Wars Insider* has been home to an astonishing array of short fiction set in the galaxy far, far away, and now many of these great tales have been compiled into two incredible volumes, two sets of which we're giving away this issue!

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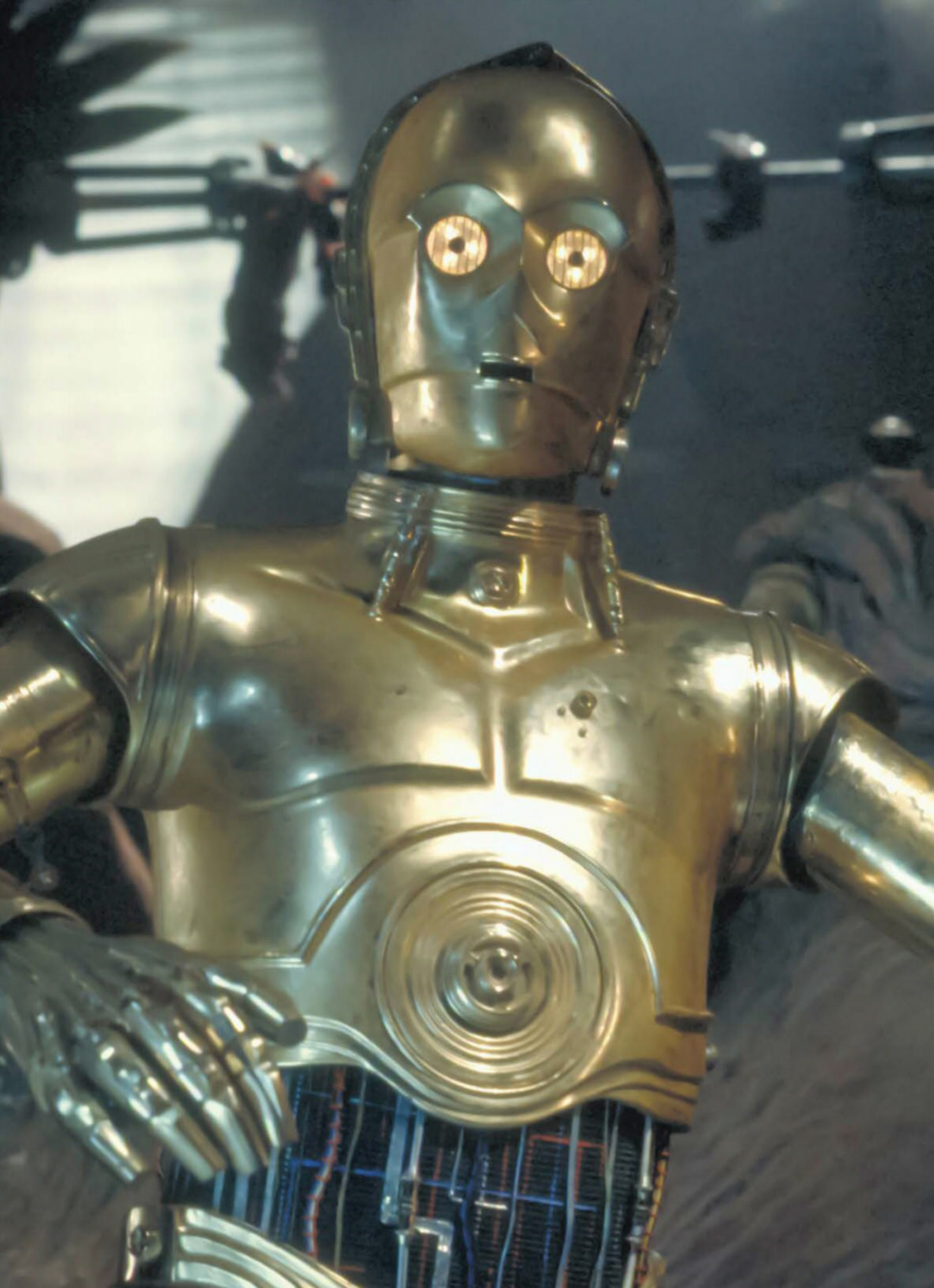
What is the name of the journal recording the history of the galaxy far, far away?

- A) Journal of the Starwhales
- B) Journal of the Whills
- C) Journal of Wilhuff Tarkin

Send your answer via email to insidercomp@titanemail.com or our usual postal address (see 'Contact Us' on page 3), marked "FICTION COLLECTION" by December 6, 2021. Terms and conditions are available at titanmagazines.com
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“Do You Speak Bocce?”

From Wookiee barks to Ubese repetitions and Tusken Raider hand gestures, *Insider* asks expert linguists to analyze the viability of *Star Wars* languages and speaks to puppeteer Brian Herring about how BB-8's beeps were translated from script to screen.

WORDS: MELISSA T. MILLER



wen Lars once demanded of protocol droid C-3PO, “Do you speak Bocce?”

Unlike our gold-plated friend, it probably isn’t “a second language” to you, just like any of the seven million other forms of communication he is fluent in.

The diversity of alien species in the galaxy far, far away is represented in the number of languages we see and hear onscreen. Galactic Basic may be the standard (and luckily for us a close analog of English!), but there are many others. What is known of the more than 6,000 languages spoken here on Earth is that they are rooted in the complexities of the human mind. “I always get interested in language in sci-fi,” says Kathryn Davidson, a linguistics professor at Harvard. “What if you’re not human but have the same communication needs, what would your language look like?” she asks.

David Peterson answers this question for a living. He is a conlang (constructed languages) expert who began his professional career by creating Dothraki for *Game of Thrones* (2011-2019). He has since produced Dark Elvish for *Thor: The Dark World* (2013) and Kumandran for *Raya and the Last Dragon* (2021), among many others. “The idea is to create a language that looks and sounds as much like a natural language as possible,” he says. “What I do is create an older stage of the language and then evolve it forward as if it had been used for thousands of years. The goal is if you were to give it to a linguist, they wouldn’t be able to tell if it was created or just a natural language they’d never come across. Unless the vocabulary tipped them off—you’re probably not talking about dragons a lot in a natural language.”

Productions that include alien languages sometimes hire linguistic consultants and dialect coaches, although many don’t. ►

► Some *Star Wars* languages hold up to our experts' scrutiny, while others are deemed little more than cool-sounding gibberish. Ubese, which Leia spoke as a bounty hunter in *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* (1983), falls into the latter category. It doesn't take an expert to understand that the repetition of the same three sounds can only have so many meanings. "She says the same thing twice and it's got different subtitles. How could that possibly work?" exclaims Peterson.

Languages on both ends of this spectrum have become cultural touchstones, including Dothraki and *Star Trek's* Klingon. And while perhaps no one has said their wedding vows in Jawaese, *Star Wars* languages are iconic. "Something I've appreciated more and more is how specific the aesthetic of *Star Wars* is and how good newer productions are at matching that," says Peterson. "When it comes to languages you have to match that aesthetic in terms of sound. The stuff Ben Burtt did helped to shape the sound of *Star Wars* and that was really important." Burtt is a sound designer who worked on numerous *Star Wars* films after *A New Hope* (1977). Among his many contributions was Huttese, developed from an ancient Incan dialect with linguist Larry Ward in the film's post-production phase. Ward then provided the voices for Greedo and Jabba as they spoke the newly created language. Both characters were filmed speaking English, and if you watch carefully, you might note that Jabba's mouth matches the English subtitles rather than Huttese.

On the Page

Whether languages are in the first draft of the script or come together later in the process changes with the creative team. Over the decades, what is in the script and what happens on set has fluctuated. Peter Mayhew often spoke English, giving the other actors

01



02



01 Sometimes actions (or a thermal detonator) speak louder than words.

02 Chewbacca didn't need to speak Basic to get his message across.

03 Brian Herring "beeped" as BB-8 on the set of *The Force Awakens* (2015).

04 There are many different species at Jabba's palace, each speaking in varying dialects.

something to respond to. Joonas Suotamo made barking noises when he took over the role of Chewbacca, knowing that his sounds would be replaced in post-production.

Puppeteer Brian Herring reports that Rian Johnson wrote English dialogue for Chewbacca in the script for *Star Wars: The Last Jedi* (2017), while BB-8's was instead outlined in the scene description. This includes the famous line, "I've got a bad feeling about this," which was never written down in the script. Herring provided an on-set soundtrack for BB-8 that he refers to as "beeping at Daisy Ridley."

"The first day I met her, she said, 'Are you going to make the noises on-set so I've got something to react to?'" says Herring. "There are entire cuts of that movie with me just beeping away. It's obviously a man making stupid noises, which

constantly amused Anthony Daniels." Daniels had spent the previous movies talking to a mute on-set R2-D2, which he told Herring was a tricky acting challenge.

Not knowing exactly what BB-8 would sound like when *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* (2015) started filming wasn't a deterrent. "I was going to do R2-D2 noises, but they asked me not to whistle because it peaked out all the microphones," remembers Herring. "Matthew Wood and his team at Skywalker Sound were responsible for replacing all my stuff in post, and it wasn't until I saw the movie that I knew what BB-8 sounded like. From *The Last Jedi* onwards, I changed what I did to sound like it would in the film." By the time *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker* (2019) filmed, Herring was delivering some of BB-8's lines in English. "That worked



03

“I was going to do R2-D2 noises, but they asked me not to whistle because it peaked out all the microphones.”

Brian Herring
BB-8 puppeteer

DO YOU SPEAK BOCCE?

really well, and we wished we’d done that earlier on,” he laments.

An extra challenge arises when characters speak an alien language or puppets have to form the right mouth movements. Dialect coaches are brought in to help actors and puppeteers alike. “When anyone had to do alien languages, the late, great Andrew Jack would write it out for them,” says Herring. “They were written out phonetically, and the puppeteers on set would then perform those lines. That way the lip sync matched. Andrew replaced a lot of those voices himself. He was a treasure trove of insight into the created languages.” Jack worked on the four *Star Wars* films between 2015-2018, and sadly passed away in 2020 from COVID-19.

Lost in Translation

A hallmark of *Star Wars* are the conversations where each character is speaking in a different language, but they completely understand

each other. Sometimes that includes a mix of English and subtitled alien languages, while many are understood only through context. Most notably, Wookiee and Binary (an astromech’s beeps and whistles) are never subtitled, as there’s rarely any doubt as to what is being said. Leaving audiences to infer everything some of the main characters said was a bold choice when George Lucas made it decades ago but has become a memorable trademark of *Star Wars*. “It’s such a great gag that you have these full-on conversations happening where humans are perfectly understanding droids, and they’re getting nuance from it and reacting to it. It’s wonderful,” says Peterson.

Droids can clearly communicate with one another, whether they speak sassy Basic like L3-37 or sassy Binary like R2-D2. BB-8 communicated using a later generation of Binary (and could

04



YODA

Interesting sentence structure, Yoda has. Glean from that any insights, should we?

While English and Galactic Basic are generally ordered subject-verb-object (e.g. I love *Star Wars*), Yoda speaks mostly in object-subject-verb (*Star Wars*, he loves). “The linguistic explanation would be that his own language has a similar syntax, and he’s simply fitting Basic into his own framework,” says Peterson. If that’s true, what might the structure be when (and if) Grogu eventually speaks his first words?



- also do an uncanny impression of an MSE-6 repair droid), and Poe's translation of BB-8's beeps in *The Last Jedi* provided a rare insight into how Binary might be constructed, although his understanding may have been partly speculative. Was the line, "Finn naked, leaking bag" a direct translation or was Poe merely a non-native speaker who didn't have a full grasp of the language?

What our linguistic experts can explain is Han and Chewbacca's communication style, with each speaking their own native language despite spending years together. "We know that comprehension is easier than production when adults learn a second language," Davidson says. Perhaps the remedial Shyriiwook (sometimes known as Wookieespeak) that Han showcased in *Solo: A Star Wars Story* (2018)—"You and I freedom make by secret battle of pretend!"—was enough to convince Chewie to insist his new friend didn't use it more often.

Biology is another component. Chewie wasn't able to form the sounds to speak Basic but could understand it. "It's easy to believe that something like that could happen," says Peterson. "Not being able to speak a language doesn't necessarily mean that you can't understand it fluently."

Davidson agrees. "You would presume that if they spent that much time talking to each other they would create their own language," she says. "That happens all the time where people have the same biology. That Han and Chewie don't speak a common language therefore seems to be due to their differing language production systems."

Or perhaps there's an even easier answer. "It can get a little tiresome to have extended scenes of subtitles when most of the movie doesn't," suggests Peterson. "There is an art to it. That balance is one of the things that *Star Wars* always does really well."



05

A Sign of Character

Huttese was spoken widely on Tatooine (and almost always subtitled); Greedo and Watto both spoke it, as did Anakin. Functionally, on a planet ruled by the Hutts, business, and perhaps even survival relied on knowing the language. It's noteworthy that the Jawas and Tusken Raiders, both native to the planet, are never shown speaking either Basic or Huttese. While never subtitled, it's clear that Jawas and humans were capable of understanding each other. Tusken Raiders' communication was explored in *The Mandalorian* (2019-present) and included both spoken and signed forms.

There are more than 300 signed languages on Earth. "Sign language can be used as a lingua franca, meaning languages people use to communicate when they don't share a common tongue," says Davidson. "That totally fits the situation in *The Mandalorian*. He's going all over the place, knowing

lots of lingua francas would be a useful skill. That a sign language is used as one is a known fact on Earth." Plains Indian Sign Language was used as a lingua franca by Native American tribes who spoke different languages, as well as with Europeans.

As with spoken language, biological differences would also determine how functional gestures are in connecting species. For instance, the one used in *The Mandalorian* required at least two arms and a number of digits on each hand that not all species possess. While Mando had the ability to use the sandpeople's spoken language, at least passably enough not to be attacked by their pet massiffs, he seemed to know that signing was the better bet.

The gestures are a conlang of their own and were created by Troy Kotsur, who then taught the signs to the actors. He even played Tusken Raider Scout #1, signing with Mando as he requests permission to traverse their lands.

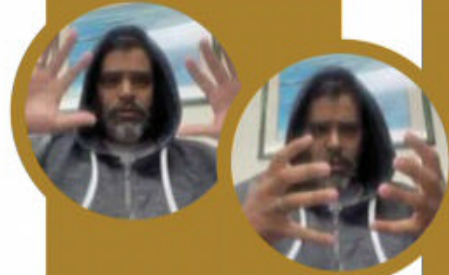
05 In *The Mandalorian* (2019-present), Din Djarin spoke with Tusken Raiders using sign language.

06 The Jawas have never been heard speaking anything other than Jawaese.

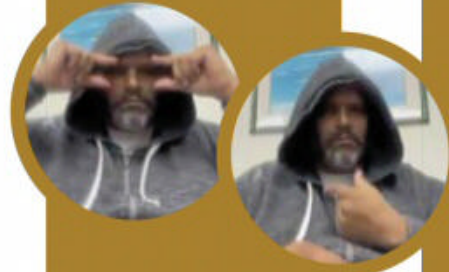
07 If you spent most of your time with droids, it would make sense to learn their Binary language.

SIGNS

Michael Gonzalez is a deaf *Star Wars* fan who has been using his knowledge of American Sign Language (ASL) to create signs for specific terms and character names from the saga for *Insider*. "There are a many linguistic factors to be considered," explains Michael. "I am still trying to figure out how to express some of them in ASL and have been discussing them with friends. It's a work in progress."



LIGHT SIDE



MANDALORIAN

"There was a lot of respect for the fact that they asked a deaf person to get involved in the creation of that sign language," says Davidson.

So, what does it say about a character if they take the time and energy to learn multiple languages? C-3PO's main programming is to communicate, and yet when he translates, it is often stilted, awkward, and abrupt. "That could just be his personality!" says Peterson.

Din Djarin's ability to speak many languages is likely functional. He lives by a code and has learned enough to make his way safely across the galaxy. Not being able to speak to the "Frog Lady" was one of the only times he came up short. Thankfully, she was eventually able to communicate via a repurposed droid.

For some characters, their knowledge of multiple languages could have a simpler explanation. Though Luke got by on the context of R2-D2's inflections for many years, it's clear that Rey actually knew what BB-8 and other droids were saying. "Rey seemed to be able to speak with everybody," remarks Herring, "If you're born on a desert planet and you don't have a lot of friends, you'd learn to speak to the droids." As throughout human history, the use of languages in *Star Wars* has evolved over vast swathes of time, with additions and adaptations for reasons both practical and poetic. 🌌

06


"Sign language can be used as a lingua franca, meaning languages people use to communicate when they don't share a common tongue."

Kathryn Davidson

Linguistics Professor, Harvard University

07





THE SQUADRONS SCRIBE

Crafting characters, dialogue, and storylines for *Star Wars* videogames is a unique role for a writer, as *Insider* learned from *Star Wars: The Old Republic* and *Squadrons* wordsmith Joanna Berry.

WORDS: AMY RICHAU

Games writer Joanna Berry has helped bring characters to life for the online role-playing game *Star Wars: The Old Republic* (SWTOR) and the space-combat simulator *Star Wars: Squadrons*. As we approach the MMORPG's 10th anniversary, Berry reflects on why the game is still going strong, and how a fan-favorite Imperial became a part of *Squadrons*.

***Star Wars Insider:* How did you originally become a writer for videogames?**

Joanna Berry: I've always been a writer, and I've always liked games, but I never really made a conscious decision to bring those two things together. However, there was a specific moment after I'd played the original *Mass Effect* game when I was realized I didn't just want to experience it. I wanted to make it, creatively. I love stories, and I love novels and

I love TV, but that was the kind of work I wanted to do.

The first game you wrote for was *Star Wars: The Old Republic*. What was your background in writing before you got that job?

I'd just finished a master's degree in creative writing, and a short story of mine had been broadcast on BBC Radio 4. And that was about it. I really jumped in at the deep end.



How would you describe SWTOR to people who have never played it, and what was your involvement with the game?

SWTOR is an MMORPG—that’s an acronym for massively multiplayer online role-playing game. It’s set in the *Star Wars* galaxy about 4,000 years before the Battle of Yavin. There are eight character classes, each of which has their own story, and you travel to various worlds where you meet numerous companion characters. So, it’s basically like a regular RPG, but it’s online, and it’s pretty huge. And it’s a hell of a game for your first outing into writing for games.

The project was well underway when I came aboard, and I worked with Rebecca Harwick on the Jedi

Consular story. I was what’s called a “class writer,” which meant that I was the point of contact for a specific character class, in this case, the Jedi Consular—their storyline, their character, their companions, their romances, and anything else that touched that character.

A writer will generally fit well with one faction or another, so if you are good at writing Imperial quests then you’d be given lots of Imperial quests. But there was so much work to be done that sometimes it would be all hands-on deck, if suddenly we needed 1,000 Republic quests

“IT’S A HELL OF A GAME FOR YOUR FIRST OUTING INTO WRITING FOR GAMES.”

then everyone would be writing them. In terms of systems, I was most responsible for wrangling the Codex and Datacrons.

Can you explain what a Codex and a Datacron are?

The Codex is an encyclopedia of everything—who the characters are, where a planet is, what this creature is, the basic concepts that you’ll need to understand the galaxy that you’re in. Basically, the encyclopedic backstory. The Datacrons relate galactic history, summarizing the entire history of the *Star Wars* galaxy up to that point, in 180 characters at a time. That was really fun, working out what was important and how to break it down to describe this history in an in-universe kind of way. ►



01

► **When it came to the Jedi Consular storyline, were you given any kind of parameters about where it could go, or what should happen?**

The parameters were not strictly set, other than I guess those that we set for ourselves. Every story in SWTOR has to work together, so you can't write one that involves, say, blowing up Hutta, because it's an MMO and that planet is always going to be there.

It's all about coordination. Whenever we were pitching ideas, we always had this question, "Is this something that the Jedi Knight should be doing?" Or, "Is this something that the Consular specifically could do in their life, in their sphere of influence?" We always had to question how those two classes were different.

Which character did you enjoy writing for the most?

Tharan Cedrax was really fun to write for. Jamie Elman's

performance was just lovely, and as soon as I heard his voice, I felt like I almost didn't need to write the character, just dictate.

And the spy character Zenith, too. He was really fun, and very terse. I had this idea that he'd spent years only able to communicate in snatches of radio-like conversation, so his speech pattern was very, very clipped. Troy Baker did an amazing job. There's a line where he got really angry and just yelled. I wasn't ready for Troy to just slam it down. I nearly lost my headphones. It was fantastic.

2021 is the 10th anniversary of SWTOR, and it's still going strong. Why do you think fans are still drawn to it?

I think because they get to explore the *Star Wars* galaxy, but they also get a story. It has these huge—and they are *huge*!—planets to walk around and discover what's out there. But you also get the chance

01 A Trandoshan mercenary unit called the Warstalkers from *Star Wars: The Old Republic*.

02 Trandoshan rebel pilot Frisk from *Star Wars: Squadrons*.

03 In *Squadrons*, players see the war from both sides—rebel and Imperial.

04 Berry found the Imperial forces were interesting to write for.





02 to have these big heroic storylines at the same time. It has the best of both worlds. I think it's also done a pretty good job of staying relevant in terms of where *Star Wars* is now. It doesn't feel dated.

How did you become involved in *Star Wars: Squadrons*?

I had just come off *Mass Effect Andromeda*, and we were looking at what the studio was going to do next, which included maybe a *Star Wars* space-combat game. We didn't know exactly what it was going to be at that time. There was a lot of wacky brainstorming, which was really fun. We got some really interesting characters from concept art.

I was the initial writer on the game, and I conceived the campaign and characters, and created documentation. I wrote about half of the missions and a bunch of the social space conversations, but we (myself and my co-writers, Mitch Dyer and Walt Williams) all did

03

multiple passes on those, so it's muddled as to who did what. The characters I worked on more than others were Shen, Frisk, Lindon, Terisa, Sol, LT-514, but we all pitched in and I had a final pass over the dialogue.

I also helped out with the marketing copy for the CG short film, "Hunted," and gave voice notes on the script.

Can you explain what you mean by "documentation"?

Every character in a game has their own documentation covering their backstory details, their personality, vital statistics, what they look like, how they stand, how they walk, even their relationships to other characters, if it's relevant. For example, how does Terisa feel about Shen, or Grey, or Sol? How would they fight, if they do fight? Just the general arc and speech patterns, things like that. Those are given to the actors, the animators, cinematics, and anyone who needs to know who these characters are and what they're about.

Were there characters you were excited to have been a part of creating?

It's actually really interesting to write the Imperials. I like Trandoshans, probably from writing Qyzen Fess for *SWTOR*, so I wanted to have a Trandoshan scoundrel in *Squadrons*.

Because of the nature of the game, our characters needed to be very vibrant. They needed to feel full and fleshed out and have very distinct voices. If you can only hear Keo in the cockpit you need to know exactly who that person is, so they all had to be very strongly drawn.

We generally also looked for balance. You couldn't have a whole squadron full of Gunnys. But you couldn't have a whole

"THERE WAS A LOT OF WACKY BRAINSTORMING, WHICH WAS REALLY FUN."



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05

- squadron of Frisks either. We had to keep it balanced.

Whose idea was it for Rae Sloane to appear in the game?

That was a discussion between us, the leadership team, and Lucasfilm, about what characters we loved, and which characters were around in that time period. And which characters that we could integrate safely without stepping on the toes of any other storytelling. So, it seemed right to bring in Sloane because of where she was at the time, and what she was doing, and everybody loves her. There was also a chance to see her on screen; seeing her rendered in a more realistic iteration was really exciting.

Did you pitch the idea of doing the Squadrons short stories, published on the game's official website?

I had previously written stories for SWTOR that we didn't use, so I thought, "Hey, this is something that might be fun to do as part of the push for Squadrons." There were characters I just wanted to write more about. I really enjoyed Shen and Vonreg's dynamic. We obviously didn't have a huge amount of time to explore character stuff in the game itself, so putting that into the short story *Count to Three*, and getting to hear



06

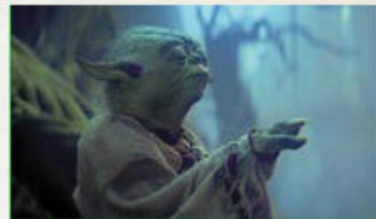
their interior monologue, was a lot of fun.

What kind of qualities and skills do you think a games writer needs?

Probably the biggest ones are communication and collaboration, because if you can't communicate your ideas to people, and you can't collaborate with people, you're just not going to get very far. Humility is a big one, just being conscious of what your role is and where you fit in with everyone else. And consciousness of player agency and what the players experience.

05 Imperial officer Rae Sloane was voiced by Dionne Audain in *Squadrons*.

06 Berry cast TIE fighter pilot Shen as a protagonist in her short story *Count to Three*, available on the official *Squadrons* website.



FOR THE LOVE OF STAR WARS

"My first encounters with *Star Wars* must have been *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980), and then *Return of the Jedi* (1983)" says Joanna Berry, who would grow up to help create *Star Wars* stories professionally. "I watched those films over and over again as a kid," she remembers, fondly.

The writer, who has had a hand in crafting several memorable moments for MMORPG *Star Wars: The Old Republic* and *Star Wars: Squadrons*, has a few favorite scenes of her own from the movie saga, but one in particular stands out: "The Dagobah scene, specifically when Yoda is talking to Luke Skywalker and raises his X-wing fighter from the swamp," she says. "That, for me, is the quintessential *Star Wars* moment."

It's easier if you think of the whole game as an experience that the player is having, and narrative being integral to that.

What types of *Star Wars* games do you most like to play yourself?

I like single-player games, so I'm hoping there's going to be more of those. That would be pretty fun. 🕹️

NEXT ISSUE: *Star Wars Insider* goes behind the scenes of *Star Wars: The Old Republic* to take an in-depth look at the decade-long history of the MMORPG.

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STAR WARS THE BAD BATCH

Season One Companion



As the Empire rose from the ashes of the fallen Republic, a former elite military unit became a band of mercenaries with a new mission: survival! *Insider* tracks the progress of *The Bad Batch* in the hit Disney+ animated series.

WORDS: KRISTIN BAVER

T

hey call themselves the Bad Batch: a specialist squad of augmented clone troopers

deployed during the Clone Wars when the Republic had a problem that neither the regs (that's regular clone troopers to you!) nor the Jedi generals could resolve. Hunter, Crosshair, Wrecker, and Tech—designated Clone Force 99—followed orders but were never much for following the rules. When the galactic conflict came to a sudden and startling end, shortly after former ARC trooper Echo joined their ranks, the Bad Batch found themselves out on their own, and enemies of the Empire.

First introduced in the final season of *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* (2008-2014, 2020), the on-screen debut of the Bad Batch was the realization of a storyline envisioned by George Lucas and Dave Filoni during the animated series' original run that acted as a de facto pilot for the new animated spinoff series which debuted in 2021. Helmed by Filoni, acting as creator and executive producer, *Star Wars: The Bad Batch* followed the squad in the post-Order 66 galaxy, guided by head writer and executive producer Jennifer Corbett, and supervising director Brad Rau. But far from being an extension of the beloved Emmy-winning series that introduced these characters, the first season of *The Bad Batch* subverted expectations, allowing Clone Force 99 to evolve in a changing galaxy, and introduced Omega, a different kind of clone sister who quickly became the heart and moral compass of the ragtag crew.

With further misadventures for the beleaguered Bad Batch on their way in the second season, arriving on Disney+ in 2022, *Insider* looks back at the events that drew us towards the devastating Season One finale.



EPISODE 1

Aftermath

Writers: Jennifer Corbett and Dave Filoni

Directors: Steward Lee, Saul Ruiz, and Nathaniel Villanueva

First Airdate: May 4, 2021

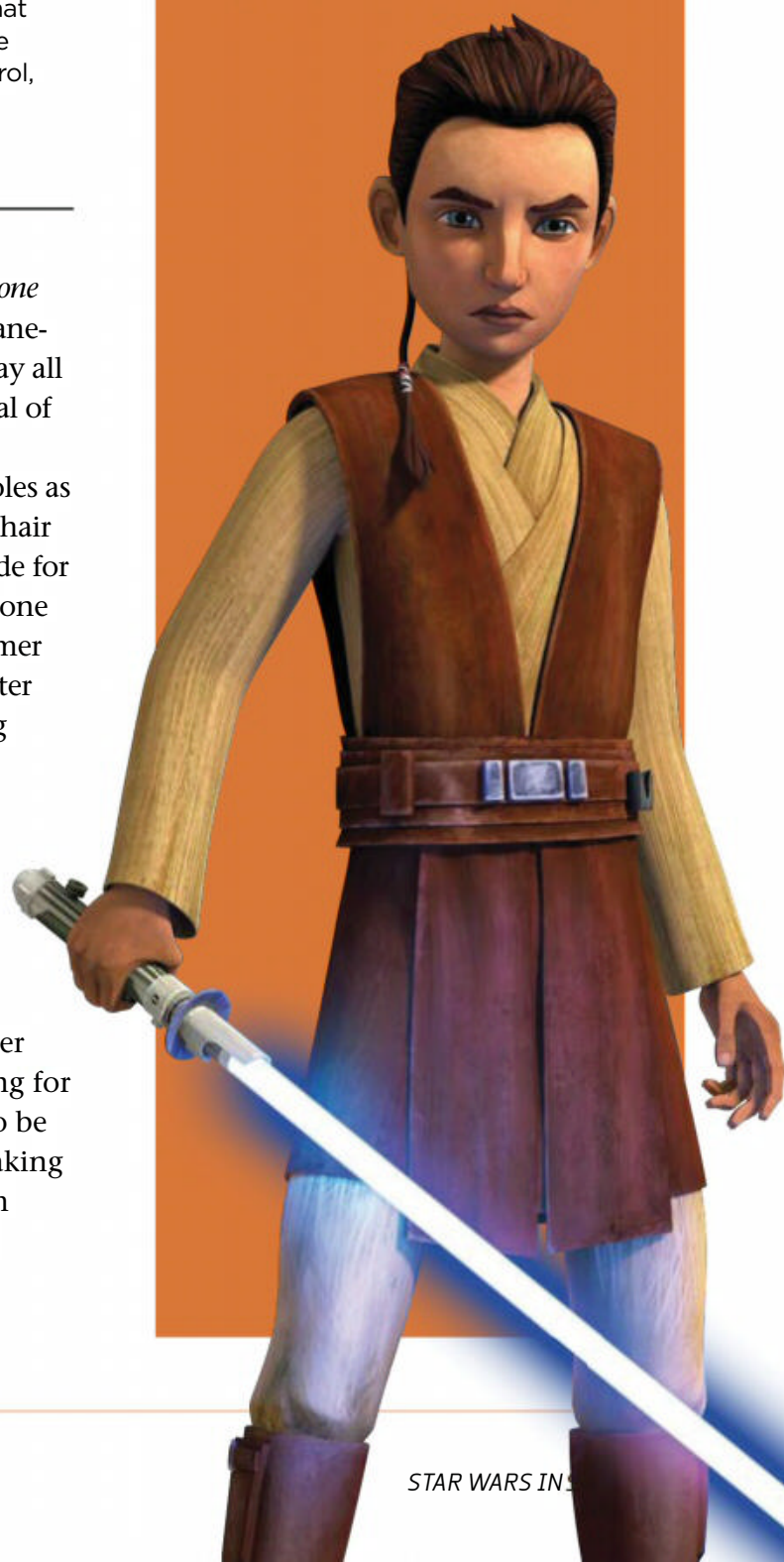
Clone Force 99 touch down on Kaller to help Jedi Master Depa Billaba in what becomes one of the final battles of the Clone Wars. As the Empire takes control, the Bad Batch is forced to come to terms with the changing galaxy and their allegiance to a fallen Republic.

Echoing its animated predecessor, *The Bad Batch* opened in full *The Clone Wars* style, complete with a Tom Kane-narrated prologue, only to burn away all that had come before with the reveal of the new series' logo.

Dee Bradley Baker reprised his roles as Hunter, Tech, Echo, Wrecker, Crosshair (whose defection to the Empire made for a shocking twist) and every other clone in the identical army, while newcomer Michelle Ang connected her character of Omega to the clones' roots, using her native New Zealand accent in an homage to Temuera Morrison, who originated the clone roles in live-action and continued the legacy as Boba Fett in *The Mandalorian* (2019-present). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and scheduling conflicts, Ang and Baker met only once during the recording for this episode. Many sessions had to be conducted remotely, with Ang making a makeshift studio in her bedroom closet with old mattresses to help buffer the sound quality.

CLONE FORCE CAMEOS

The episode included cameos from Freddie Prinze Jr., reprising the role of Caleb Dume in a time before he became Kanan Jarrus of *Star Wars Rebels*, Ian McDiarmid as Darth Sidious, Andrew Kashino as Onderon rebel Saw Gerrera, and Stephen Stanton as Admiral Tarkin.





EPISODE 2

Cut and Run

Writer: Gursimran Sandhu

Director: Steward Lee

First Airdate: May 7, 2021

After escaping from Kamino with Omega aboard their shuttle, the *Marauder*, Hunter, Wrecker, Echo, and Tech head to Saleucami, where the clone Cut Lawquane, once a deserter of the Grand Army of the Republic, is a lifeline to a different kind of existence.

This episode highlighted the Empire's regime in a largely unexplored time period in *Star Wars* lore, adding intel about the creation of chain codes and introducing Vice Admiral Rampart. Baker once again voiced Cut Lawquane, who previously served as a foil for Captain Rex in Season Two of *The Clone Wars*. This time, the father of two shone a spotlight on how woefully unprepared Hunter was for caring for a young child. The story humanized the hardened soldier, who was ultimately willing to give up Omega so that the girl could have a better life with parents who understood the needs of a youngster. Instead, Omega chose her own path among her brothers in the Bad Batch.



WHO IS CUT LAWQUANE?

Cut Lawquane was unique among clones, representing what freewill meant for a soldier who was willing to leave the service for which he was created. Cut eked out a humble existence as a simple farmer on Saleucami, married to Suu, a Twi'lek with whom he raised their two children, Jek and Shaeeah. Undetected thanks to Captain Rex's failure to report him for defecting, nowhere was truly safe from the Empire, and Cut was forced to flee with his family using fabricated chain codes.

EPISODE 3

Replacements

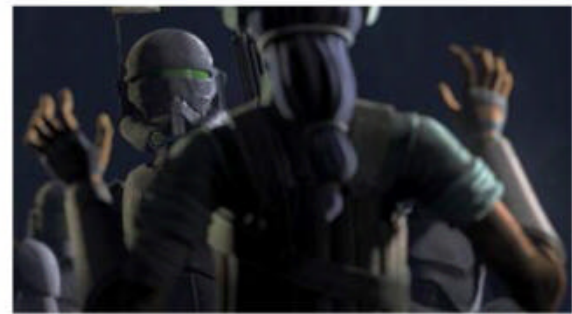
Writer: Matt Michnovetz

Director: Nathaniel Villanueva

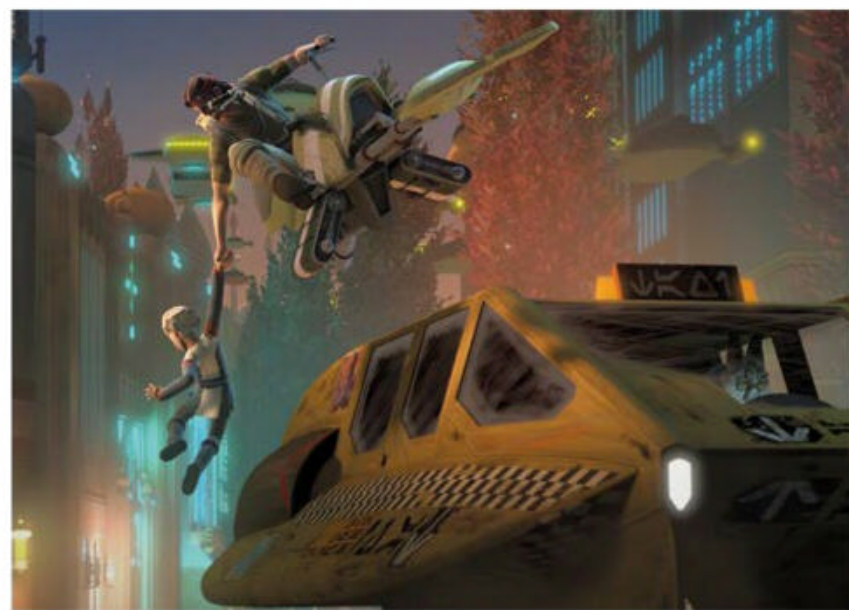
First Airdate: May 14, 2021

On the Ordo Moon, Omega conquers her fears to fend off a native creature and retrieve a much-needed part for the ship.

Meanwhile, the Empire is gathering replacements for the clone army, with Rampart creating an Elite Squad of conscripted soldiers led by Crosshair.



The premise of this episode hinted at the future of the stormtrooper army, connecting the prequel-era clones to the unidentical white-armored soldiers of the original trilogy era, and expanded on the meaning of Project War-Mantle, first mentioned in *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* (2016) when Jyn Erso was searching for the codename of the Death Star plans.



EPISODE 4

Cornered

Writer: Christian Taylor

Director: Saul Ruiz

First Airdate: May 21, 2021

While making a stop on Pantora for repairs and rations, the Bad Batch discovers it's not just the Empire that's hunting them.

Ming-Na Wen reprised her role as a younger version of the shrewd rogue Fennec Shand, the character she portrays in *The Mandalorian* and *The Book of Boba Fett*, debuting on Disney+ this December.

The cast also included *Saturday Night Live* alums Bobby Moynihan and Taran Killam, as the trader and depot manager respectively, along with a handful of other background roles. The episode made several subtle connections to other *Star Wars* storytelling, such as the tooka cats which have been seen in both *The Clone Wars* and *Star Wars Rebels* (2014-2018); a cart of voorpaks, previously seen in *Star Wars Resistance*; and a clone trooper doll that bore a striking similarity to "Stormie," the stormtrooper doll owned by a young Jyn Erso seen in the opening scenes of *Rogue One*.

EPISODE 5

Rampage

Writer: Tamara Becher-Wilkinson

Director: Steward Lee

First Airdate: May 28, 2021

On Ord Mantell, Clone Force 99 finds steady work with the mysterious Cid in exchange for intel and credits.

Series regular Cid—a Trandoshan who once aided the Jedi—arrived in this episode, played by Rhea Perlman. Evoking the same sharp-tongued wit as the role she originated on *Cheers* (1982-1993), as pint-sized server Carla Tortelli, Perlman infused her new character with a distinct personality marked by her refusal to bother learning the names of the members of Clone Force 99. Instead, she gave each one a shorthand nickname.

The episode also included a cameo appearance by series supervising sound editor Matthew Wood, voicing Bib Fortuna. Wood took up the role for *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* (1999), and more recently donned the lekku for *The Mandalorian* end-credit scene which teased the upcoming series *The Book of Boba Fett*.



EPISODE 6

Decommissioned

Writer: Amanda Rose Muñoz

Director: Nathaniel Villanueva

First Airdate: June 4, 2021

Sent to a droid decommissioning facility on Corellia, the Batch must battle a pair of familiar scavengers for the rights to a valuable Separatist tactical droid.

The episode included nods to *Star Wars: Attack of the Clones* (2002), with a droid decommissioning facility similar in feel to the battle droid factory on Geonosis; *Solo: A Star Wars Story* (2018), which first took us to Han Solo's homeworld of Corellia; and *The Clone Wars*' final season, with the reintroduction of Trace and Rafa Martez. Brigitte Kali and Elizabeth Rodriguez once again voiced the Martez sisters, who appeared to have learned something from their run-in with Ahsoka Tano, and achieved their dreams of traveling among the stars. Matthew Wood was back once again, this time to reprise the voices of the battle droids.



EPISODE 7

Battle Scars

Writer: Jennifer Corbett

Director: Saul Ruiz

First Airdate: June 11, 2021

Captain Rex must convince the Bad Batch that they're not immune to the Empire's control and that they're a danger to everyone around them.

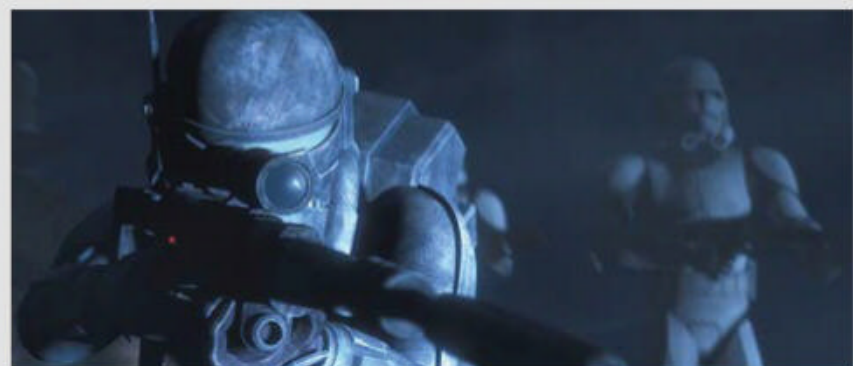
Paying off an earlier hint that Wrecker's headaches betrayed the existence of a deadly inhibitor chip, the time bomb in the Bad Batch bruiser's brain nearly got Omega and his brothers killed. To deliver this terrifying intel, Corbett brought back Captain Rex, who experienced his own near-fatal mishap with the inhibitor chip during the execution of

Order 66. While the Bad Batch ultimately had their chips removed aboard a scrapped Jedi cruiser, the episode raised an important question about Crosshair's continued involvement with the Empire. The setting also connected the series to the videogame *Star Wars Jedi: Fallen Order*, where the planet of Bracca first appeared.



WHO IS CAPTAIN REX?

A first-generation clone among the original soldiers commissioned a decade before the onset of the Clone Wars, Captain Rex served the Republic faithfully, often taking his orders from Anakin Skywalker and Ahsoka Tano. Loyal to a fault, Rex nearly killed Tano in the execution of Order 66, but was freed from the inhibitor chip's mind-control by Ahsoka's astromech friends. Rex continues to serve the Republic ideals from the shadows, part of a slowly gestating rebellion.



EPISODE 8

Reunion

Writer: Christian Taylor

Director: Steward Lee

First Airdate: June 18, 2021

On Bracca, the Empire catches up with Clone Force 99, with their old friend Crosshair on the trail and out for revenge against the brothers who left him behind.

A stark end-credit composition from Kevin Kiner differentiates this episode from those that came before it, in a mid-season cliffhanger that ended with the Bad Batch failing in their mission to protect Omega. The episode also introduced yet another individual hunting the Batch: the bounty hunter Cad Bane. Having originally appeared in several episodes of *The Clone Wars*, with a design based on actor Lee Van Cleef's character in *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly* (1966), Bane was once again voiced by Corey Burton, joined by his ever-present droid sidekick, Todo 360, voiced by Seth Green.

EPISODE 9

Bounty Lost

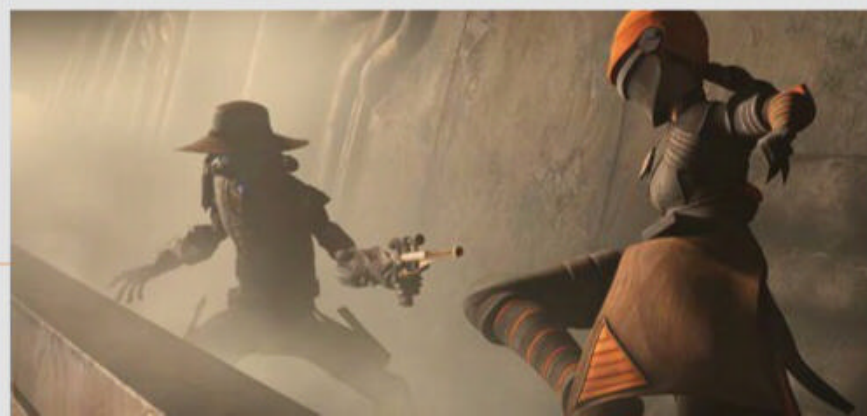
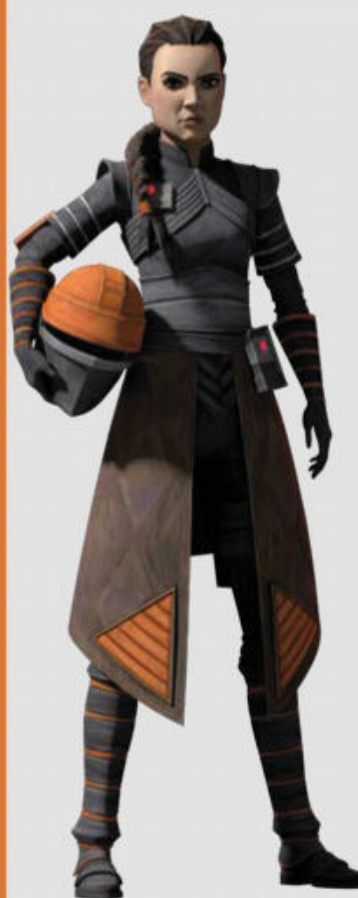
Writer: Matt Michnovetz

Directors: Nathaniel Villanueva and Brad Rau

First Airdate: June 25, 2021

Cad Bane and Fennec Shand battle it out for possession of Omega, with the Batch closing in to save their own.

This episode saw the return of Ming-Na Wen as Fennec Shand, and featured a western-inspired shootout with Bane. In a surprising twist, Fennec was ultimately revealed to be working for Nala Se while Bane had been hired by a different Kaminoan faction led by Lama Su, exposing the fracturing of the Kaminoan business empire as the Imperial regime cut ties with the cloners. Rena Owen reprised the role of Taun We, a character she originated in motion capture for *Attack of the Clones*.





EPISODE 10

Common Ground

Writer: Gursimran Sandhu

Director: Saul Ruiz

First Airdate: July 2, 2021

A mission to Raxus calls for rendering aid to an unlikely ally—Separatist senator Avi Singh. Meanwhile, Omega is left behind with Cid, helping the child to understand her unique talent for strategic thinking.

“Common Ground” marked the beginning of what Brad Rau has referred to as a political trilogy of episodes that examines how the Empire’s tyrannical rule changed the former core of the Separatist regime, the Republic world of Ryloth, and the galaxy’s criminal underworld.



EPISODE 11

Devil’s Deal

Writer: Tamara Becher-Wilkinson

Director: Steward Lee

First Airdate: July 9, 2021

Clone Force 99 travels to Ryloth to supply weapons to the natives the Republic once fought to protect during the war.

Reprising her role as Hera Syndulla in her younger days, Vanessa Marshall made a surprise return in her fan-favorite *Star Wars Rebels* role. Set on Ryloth, the episode also reunited fans with Hera’s father, Cham Syndulla, voiced by Robin Atkin Downes. Ferelith Young played Eleni Syndulla,

a character previously only glimpsed in a stained glass family portrait in the *Rebels* episode “Hera’s Heroes.” The credits list Hera’s faithful droid Chopper “as himself,” although Dave Filoni has previously been named as C1-10P’s voice talent.

The plot for this episode had direct ties with storylines from both *Rebels* and *The Clone Wars*, setting up the complicated and strained relationship Hera had with her father in later years. In Season One of *The Clone Wars*, the Ryloth arc introduced Cham’s freedom fighters and his quest to halt the Separatist invasion of his homeworld with help from Republic clone troopers.

EPISODE 12

Rescue on Ryloth

Writer: Jennifer Corbett

Director: Nathaniel Villanueva

First Airdate: July 16, 2021

With nowhere else to turn, a young Hera Syndulla calls upon Clone Force 99 to free her family from Imperial imprisonment.

“Rescue on Ryloth” examined Clone Captain Howser’s crisis of conscience as the Empire forced the former Republic trooper to turn against the people of Ryloth he had sworn to protect. Proving that the inhibitor chip could only control their actions so far, Howser ultimately put away his weapon to lead a revolt, in stark contrast to the blind following of orders that unfolded during Order 66.



EPISODE 13

Infested

Writer: Amanda Rose Muñoz

Director: Saul Ruiz

First Airdate: July 23, 2021

Cid runs into trouble with an opportunistic Devaronian, but Clone Force 99 helps to reclaim ownership of her parlor and outwit the Pyke Syndicate.

In contrast to the Empire's hold on former Republic and Separatist worlds, the criminal underworld is seen to be thriving unfettered, with opportunists stepping into the breach amid the chaos. In an attempt to dethrone Cid from her parlor and her lucrative business dealings on Ord Mantell, one such operator—Roland Durand (voiced by Tom Taylorson), is thwarted by the Bad Batch. The Pykes' involvement suggested tethers to Maul and the rest of the criminal underworld, as seen in *Solo*, *The Clone Wars*, and several books and comics.



EPISODE 14

War-Mantle

Writer: Damani Johnson

Director: Steward Lee

First Airdate: July 30, 2021

On the planet Daro, the clone called Gregor sends out a call for help after being captured by the Imperial troopers he was tasked with training.

Voiced once again by Dee Bradley Baker, this episode saw the return of clone trooper

Gregor, the clone commando who first appeared in *The Clone Wars* Season Five episode "Missing in Action." The plot owes its roots to the *Republic Commando* novels, which first explored the idea of clones training stormtroopers. There was also a videogame by the same name. The design of the early TK armor seen in the episode took inspiration from original *Star Wars* concept artist Ralph McQuarrie, with details inspired by his initial paintings for *A New Hope* (1977).



WHO IS GREGOR?

Once an elite commando, Gregor was presumed lost after the Battle of Sarrish. Stranded on the world of Abafar after a shuttle crash that also robbed him of his memory, Gregor spent part of the Clone Wars working as a dishwasher at a diner, his identity a mystery until he reclaimed his armor and helped Colonel Meebur Gascon and the D-Squad escape. At the dawn of the Empire, Gregor was forced to help train the clone army's replacements, calling upon his old friend Captain Rex to help him escape Imperial captivity and later living out his retirement hunting for jooopa on the salty plains of Seelos.

EPISODE 15

Return to Kamino

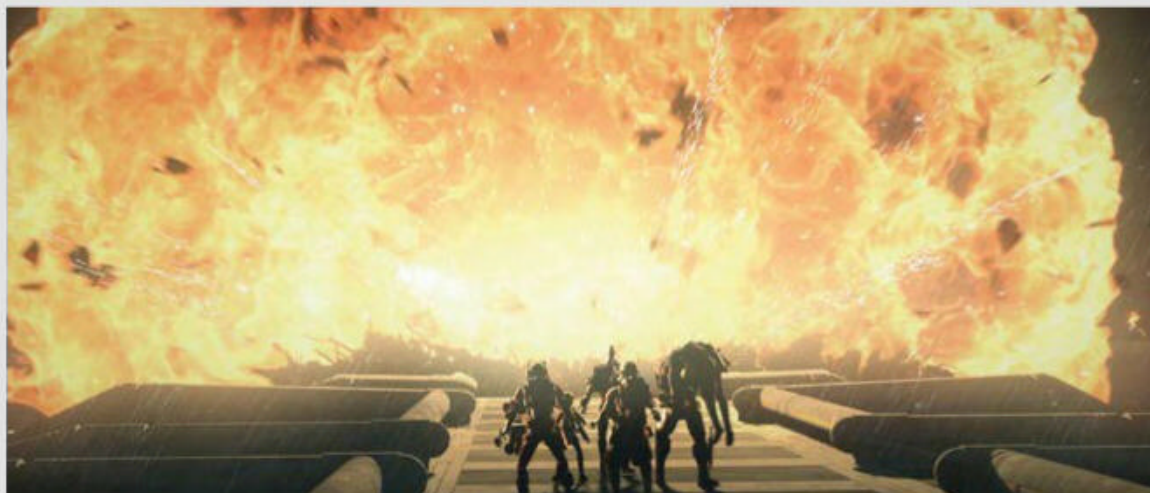
Writer: Matt Michnovetz

Director: Nathaniel Villanueva

First Airdate: August 6, 2021

After Hunter is captured by the Empire, the Bad Batch returns to their homeworld of Kamino to save their leader and confront their former brother, Crosshair.

After a season of speculation, the episode included a revelation when Crosshair revealed that his inhibitor chip had been removed, meaning his actions in league with the Empire had been a willful choice on his part. In the final moments, an Imperial bombardment unleashed an aerial assault on Kamino, as the series continued to take a darker turn. In a decisive end to the Republic era, the Kaminoan cloning facilities were not only shut down, but razed in their entirety. A suitably somber score from composer Kevin Kiner capped off the first half of the season finale.



EPISODE 16

Kamino Lost

Writer: Jennifer Corbett

Director: Saul Ruiz

First Airdate: August 13, 2021

Tipoca City falls under the might of the Empire, and Clone Force 99 must join forces with Crosshair to survive.

The second part of the season finale was a turning point in the series. With the destruction of Tipoca City, there could be no going back to the galaxy of the Republic as the clones knew it. There was no going back for Crosshair either, even after saving Omega's life and witnessing the Empire's destruction he refused to side with his brothers.

An epilogue set at a mysterious Imperial base hinted at connections to live-action *Star Wars* and beyond. The scientist greeting Nala Se was wearing a uniform that appeared similar to that of Dr. Pershing in *The Mandalorian*. Additionally, concept art for the episode confirmed the name of the facility as "Mount Tantiss," once known as a storehouse for the Emperor's dark-side artifacts in Legends storytelling. 🗿

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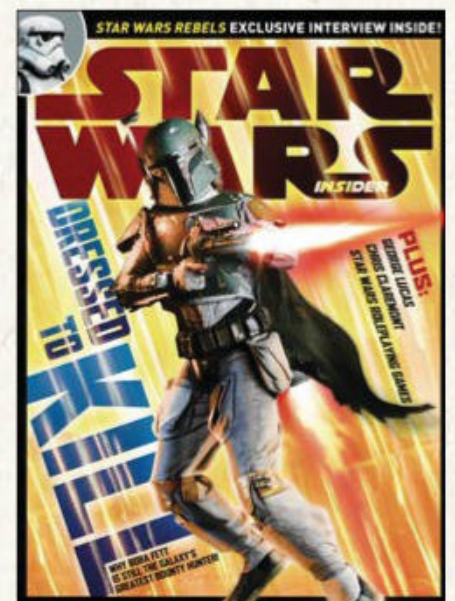
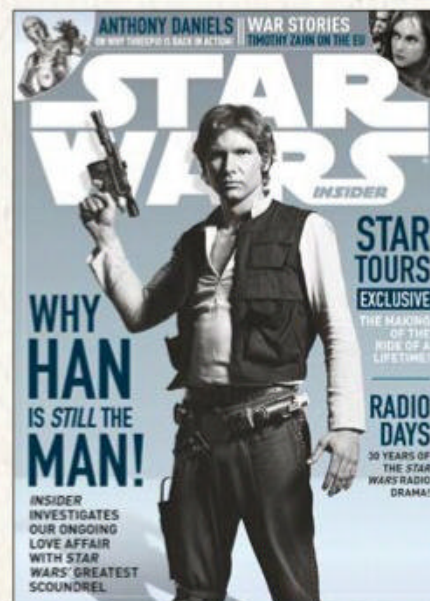
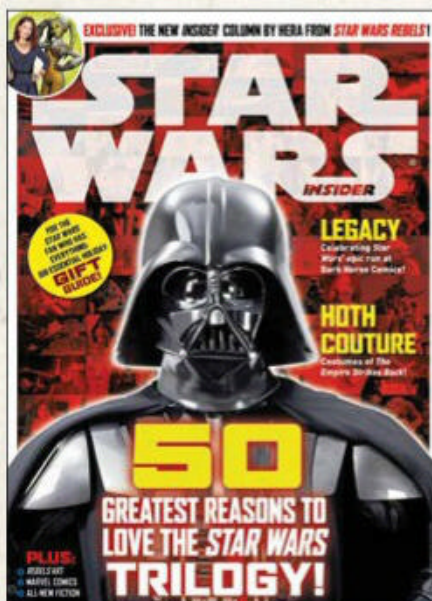
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JUSTINA'S LUCK

The *High Republic* author Justina Ireland talks to *Insider* about the wonder and hope that drives *Star Wars* storytelling.

WORDS: AMY RICHAU



ustina Ireland wrote two middle grade novels (*Lando's Luck* and *Spark of the Resistance*)

before diving into a new era of *Star Wars* as one of the five authors leading *The High Republic* publishing initiative. Ireland spoke to *Insider* about her journey to *Star Wars*, co-writing her first manga, and the character from *The High Republic* saga that she identifies with the most.

***Star Wars Insider*: What do you think makes for a great *Star Wars* book?**

Justina Ireland: People always ask me what makes a *Star Wars* book a good *Star Wars* book, and I could answer in a million different ways. But the truth is that, for me, *Star Wars* has always been able to maintain a sense of wonder and brightness that we don't always see in a lot of other major media. It's this idea that even though things are terrible and bleak, everything

will work out. There's a sense of hope and the possibility of better things that I think is so very endemic to *Star Wars*. That feeling is what makes a good *Star Wars* book for me.

Can you name some of your favorite *Star Wars* books?

I always have a new favorite *Star Wars* book, whether it be a kid's book like *Star Wars: Creatures Big and Small* (by Calliope Glass and Caitlin Kennedy, illustrated by the amazing Katie Cook) or Zoraida Cordova's *Crash of Fate*. I don't read a lot of adult books, *Star Wars* or otherwise (I have no patience for navel gazing, and a slow pace isn't something I dig), but I did like Alexander Freed's *Alphabet Squadron*.

Can you tell us about your writing career, and how it led to your first *Star Wars* book, *Lando's Luck*?

Writing careers really all begin the same way: by writing. That is it! There is no special recipe or magic process. I wrote a lot of

► other books and then I wrote *Dread Nation*, which hit the *New York Times* Bestseller list and generated a lot of buzz. Jen Heddle at Lucasfilm Publishing reached out to my agent at the time and asked if I would like to write a *Star Wars* book. A few weeks later I was working on *Lando's Luck*.

The question I hear most often is how people can get to write *Star Wars*. That's easy: write your own stuff first, get pretty good in your field, and then go after *Star Wars*. That sounds hard, but it wouldn't be a dream if it didn't require some work.

The planet Hynestia has been mentioned in a couple of *The High Republic* books. Might we learn more about Forsythia Jin and Rinetta Gan, the Hynestia royal family from *Lando's Luck*?

I hope so! I'd love to revisit both of them, but it's also a very big galaxy with lots of people to meet, so we'll have to wait and see. But Hynestia is name checked in a few places in the books I write, so I do expect at some point I'll reuse it. Who doesn't love a frozen planet with underground caverns full of monstrous lizards?

***Lando's Luck* and *Spark of the Resistance* were your tie-in novels for the films *Solo: A Star Wars Story* (2018) and *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker* (2019) respectively. Were you aware of what other comics and books in the "Journey to" publishing programs were doing?**

For tie-in novels it's usually more about Lucasfilm giving me the pitch and listing where it falls in the larger overarching storytelling, but only in the vaguest terms. It's a bit like playing fill in the blanks: if you ask if you can use "X" character or the other and get told "No," you can sort of figure out what the other storytelling is. So yes and no: you might know what

02 Ireland's *Jabba the Hutt* one-shot for Marvel Comics. Cover art by Mahmud Asrar and Matthew Wilson.

03 *Lando's Luck* was part of the *Flight of the Falcon* publishing initiative. Art by Annie Wu.

04 Phil Noto's cover art for *Spark of the Resistance*.

other storytelling is happening but not the nitty gritty. That might sound hard, but writing is hard! The challenge is what makes it fun.

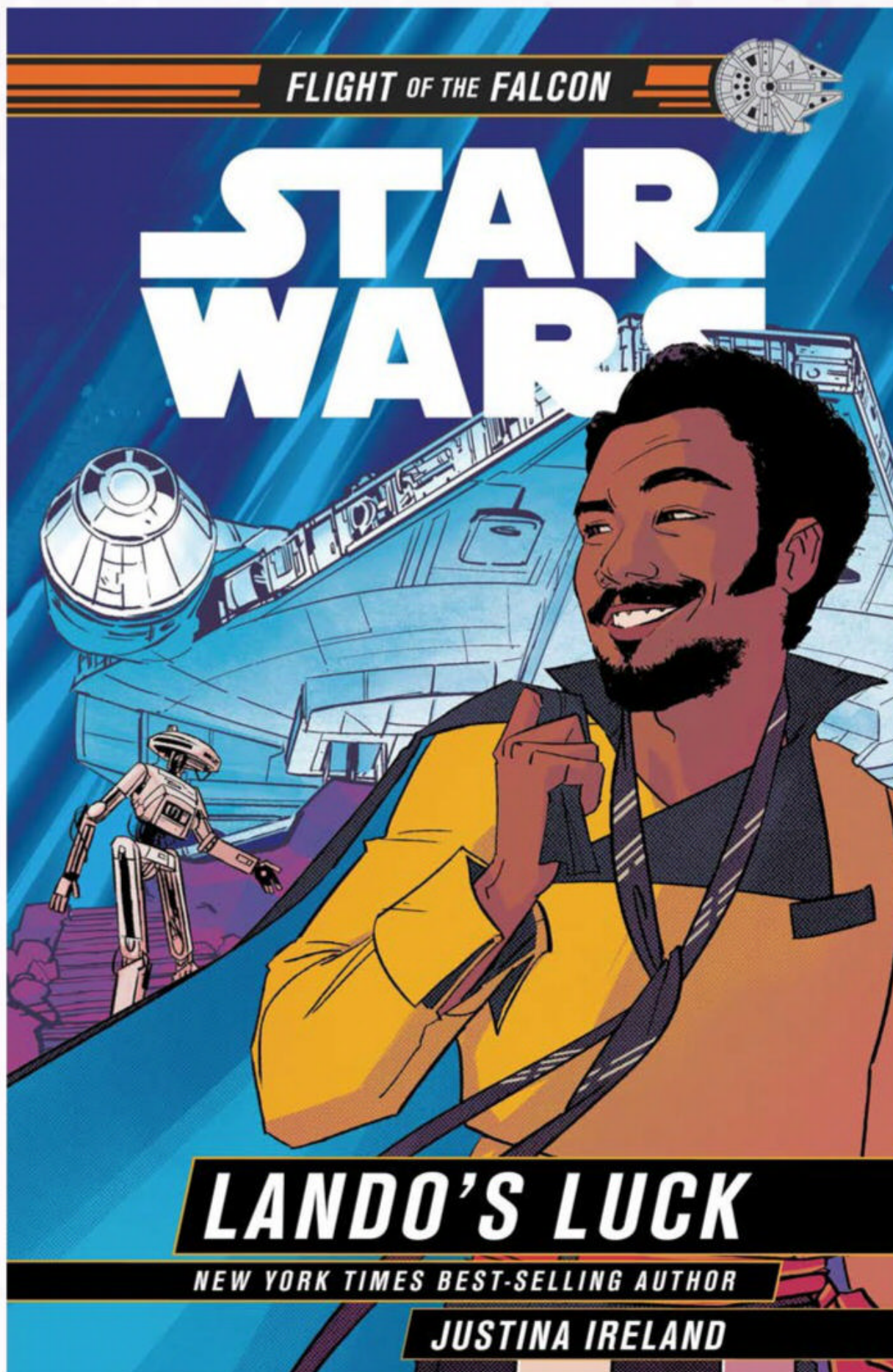
Did you know what was going to happen in *Solo* or *The Rise of Skywalker* when you were writing each of those novels?

For *Lando's Luck* I got to read all but the last two pages of the *Solo* script, but for *Spark* I got nothing (Laughs)! What I *did* know was that I was not allowed to have Rey fix or use Luke's broken lightsaber, so I pretty much worked out that was going to figure into the film's story somehow. Like

"PEOPLE ALWAYS ASK ME WHAT MAKES A STAR WARS BOOK A GOOD STAR WARS BOOK, AND I COULD ANSWER IN A MILLION DIFFERENT WAYS."

I said, it's more about seeing the things that are obviously missing and being able to extrapolate the story points from that.





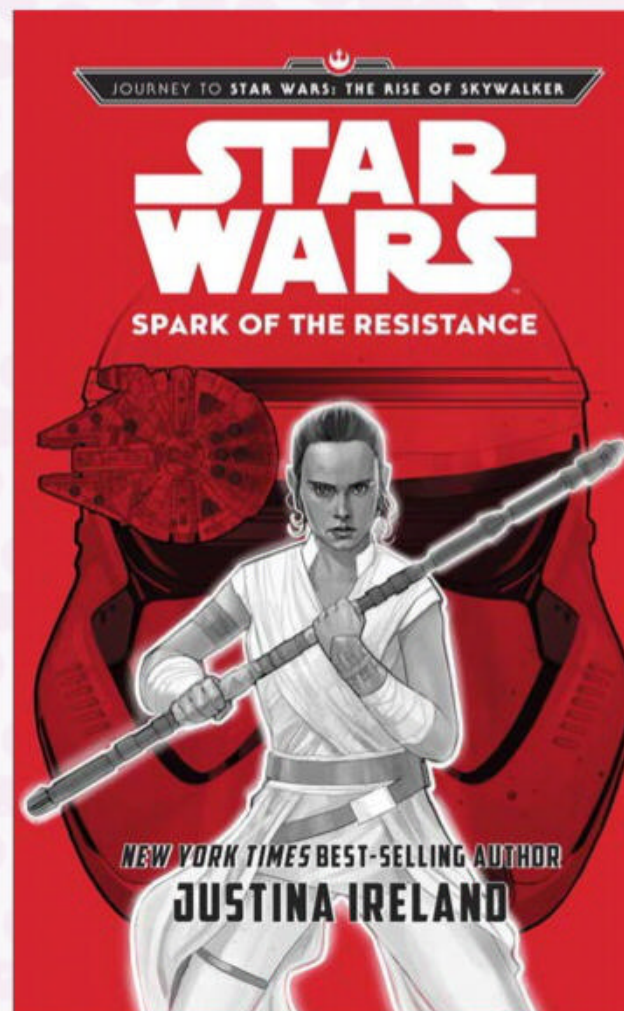
03

***The High Republic* is such a massive and collaborative publishing endeavor. How do you describe it to people who perhaps aren't big fans of *Star Wars*?**

Honestly, I don't. I'm pretty terrible at promoting my work to people because it's honestly my least favorite part of the job. If I

do say anything, it's usually just to regurgitate something the publicity team has come up with.

I don't want to convince people to read my books! Publicists, like Lyssa Hurvitz, are excellent at doing that sort of thing. Why would I try to improve upon the experts? Let me write books and hang out with my imaginary friends. ▶



04

JUSTINA IRELAND'S *STAR WARS*

Lando's Luck
Disney Lucasfilm Press (2018)

Spark of the Resistance
Disney Lucasfilm Press (2019)

The High Republic: A Test of Courage
Disney Lucasfilm Press (2021)

The High Republic: Out of the Shadows
Disney Lucasfilm Press (2021)

The High Republic: The Edge of Balance
Co-written with Shima Shinya, art by Mizuki Sakakibara
Viz Media (2021)

War of the Bounty Hunters: Jabba the Hutt #1
Marvel Comics (2021)

"Starlight: Hidden Danger"
Star Wars Insider #203 and #204
(2021)

The High Republic: Mission to Disaster
Disney Lucasfilm Press (2022)

► **Of all the new characters created for *The High Republic*, do you have a personal favorite?**

Avon Starros is hands down my favorite, because I was a smart kid (nowhere near as smart as Avon!) who had a lot of trouble connecting with others because I liked books and stories and facts more than shoes and whatever was popular that week. So, she has a lot of space in my heart because I know there's probably a kid out there who is just like I was, and I hope they find each other.

How do the five writers, as a group, decide which characters will appear in which books?

The best part of this initiative is that we are all writing what we want to! I wanted to write middle grade and young adult novels, and I did. We all know the big events that are going to happen at the highest level, so it's about crafting a story that pushes that overall narrative forward.

I talk to the other writers, Cavan Scott, Daniel José Older, Claudia Gray, and Charles Soule, nearly every day. It's vitally important to make sure that we're on the same page, because even though we have editors and Story Group on hand, there is a *lot* of worldbuilding and big set pieces, and if we don't bring in the right character at the right moment it can totally ruin later storytelling. It really is a group project, in all of the best and worst ways that group projects exist.

Many of the Jedi in *The High Republic* stories are quite different to those we'd recognize from the prequels, more willing to challenge the Order. Have your opinions about the Jedi and the Force been changed in any way?

I was a kid when I saw *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* (1983). I think I saw it in the theater, but I was so small I'm not really sure, and it wasn't until later that I really sort of

understood the idea of the Jedi. But it was all kind of vague and fluid in my mind, even after reading a few of the novels from the early 1990s, which were always sort of confusing because I'd obviously missed something.

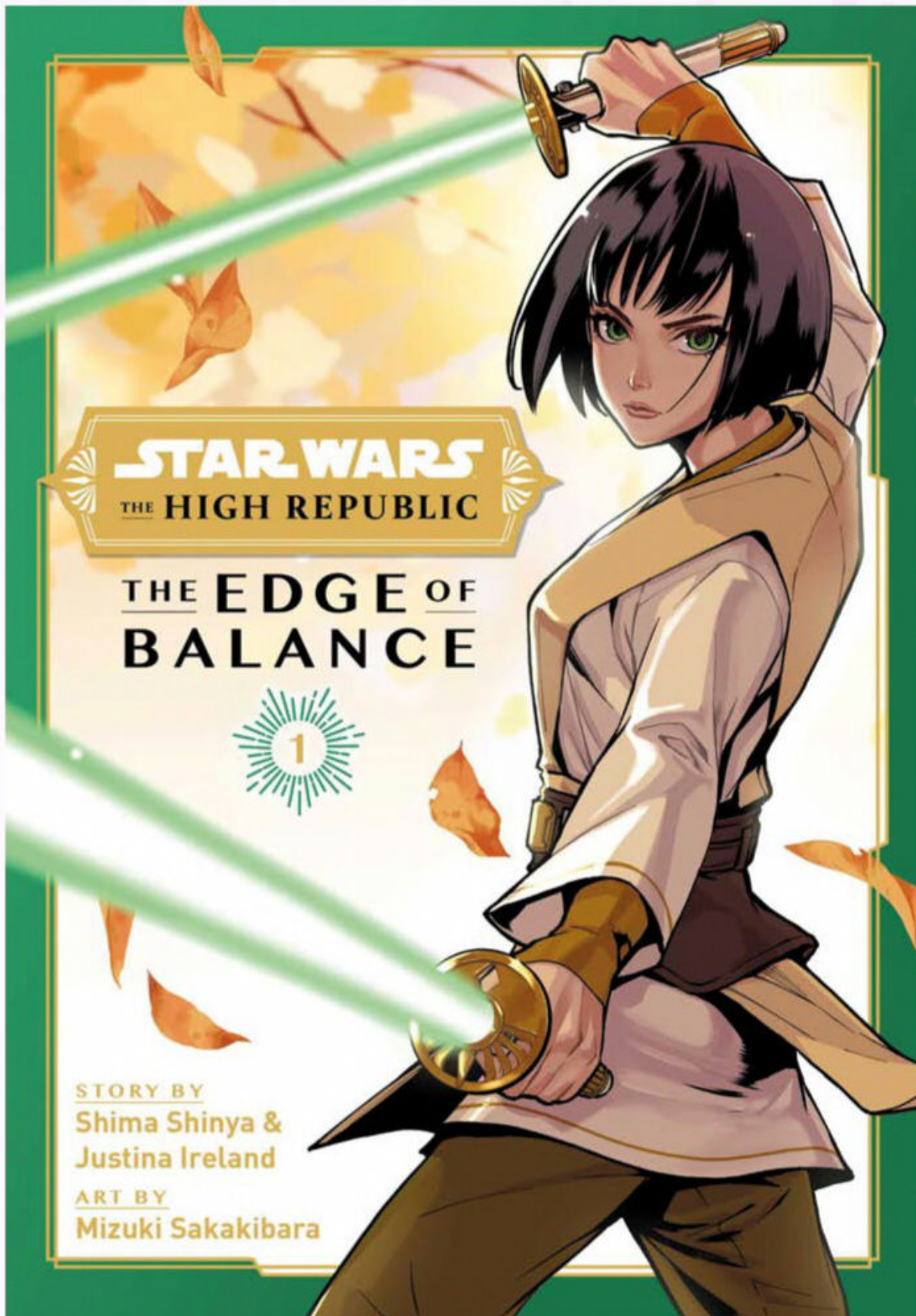
It really wasn't until *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* (1999) as an adult that I think a lot of the previous storytelling I'd seen clicked. And honestly, I was kind of aghast at the Jedi we saw in those

movies. How are you going to take Anakin but just leave Shmi languishing in slavery?! I will *never* be over that. So, when it came time to work on *The High Republic* we all said, "Okay, what would *heroic* Jedi look like? Those who are at their height and not in decline?"

I think we've all done a really great job at taking the Jedi that we've seen in the films and making them live up to the



05



05 Cover art for *Out of the Shadows* by Ario Anindito and Grzegorz Krysiński

06 *The Edge of Balance* is Ireland's first foray into manga comics, co-written with Shima Shinya. Art by Mizuki Sakakibara.

One of your upcoming *The High Republic* projects is the manga volume, *The Edge of Balance* you've written with Shima Shinya. What excites you about that story?

The art! We'll also get to spend some time with Jedi in a temple outpost, so that's also great. But sequential art is seriously one of my favorite things, and it's cool to see that develop.

Was this your first time writing manga, and what was it like collaborating with a new author and illustrator on a project for *The High Republic*?

This is my first manga, and it was a lot of fun. Shima honestly did a lot of the writing, I just made sure everything fit in with the rest of our storytelling. It's hard to bring someone into a world that is in flux, so I tried to take their vision and ideas and help the story flow with what the galaxy was like at the time. It's a fun book, and I'm glad we got a chance to work together.

Are there any *Star Wars* characters you haven't had a chance to write yet, but you would love the opportunity to tell stories about?

Mace Windu. I bring this up every time someone asks, and at some point we are going to get my dude a proper character arc. Someone caught that man as he fell, and I know there's a story there. I would love to be the person to tell it! 🍷

"SEQUENTIAL ART IS SERIOUSLY ONE OF MY FAVORITE THINGS, AND IT'S COOL TO SEE THAT DEVELOP."

myth that Obi-Wan Kenobi shared with Luke Skywalker in *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977).

These are selfless people who put the livelihood and overall peace of the galaxy first, and

that's been a lot of fun. They aren't superheroes, they are people with a shared ideology trying to do the best they can to be tolerant and to help the galaxy as much as they're able. But even within a shared ideology people disagree, and that's okay! That's how we progress, even if it can be difficult. And I think we could all use more progress in our lives.

06

A LONGER TIME AGO

Insider revisits the prequel era with
production designer Gavin Bocquet.

WORDS: BRANDON WAINERDI



D

uring the making of the *Star Wars* prequel trilogy, production designer Gavin Bocquet (above)

faced a seemingly insurmountable challenge: how to create new worlds for the saga including Naboo, Coruscant, and Mustafar, while also faithfully recreating familiar locales like the Lars homestead on Tatooine and the white corridors of Bail Antille's blockade runner?

Now, more than 20 years later, *Star Wars Insider* spoke to Bocquet to reexamine his iconic work for the saga which, surprisingly, began many years earlier on *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* (1983).

***Star War Insider:* Growing up, what inspired you to pursue a design career?**

Gavin Bocquet: Initially, the film that really inspired me was *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968). I was about 16 at the time, and it pushed me toward things that were fantastical and imaginary.

I was always interested in art and design at school, but when I was growing up film and television careers weren't a possibility unless you knew somebody, or if your family was already in the industry. So, I ended up going to art school and learning three-dimensional product design at the Royal College of Art.

► **How did you get your first break into film design?**

Stuart Craig, who later became the production designer for the *Harry Potter* movies, had attended the Royal College ten years before me, and one day he put up a hand-written note on our notice board asking for help designing props for an upcoming science-fiction film. That was literally in the last three weeks of my course. Stuart was the art director on *Saturn 3* (1980), and he thought that a product designer would be a good fit for that sort of work. I went down, had an interview, and thankfully got the job. Officially, I was credited as “Space Equipment Divisor,” because I wasn’t in the union.

After *Saturn 3*, I continued to work with Stuart, and we did *The Elephant Man* (1980) and Mel Brooks’ *History of the World: Part 1* (1981) together. Then Stuart was hired to do *Gandhi* (1982), but I was too junior to go with him to India, so he put me in touch with Norman Reynolds, who had just started work on *Return of the Jedi*.

On *Jedi*, you’re credited as a set draftsman. What did that role entail?

I was tasked with dressing certain pieces for sets, like the weaponry on Jabba’s sail barge. But back in those days we weren’t allowed to touch anything in the prop room, because of union rules. You had to point at something, the prop men would pick it up, and we would then have to ask, “Can you put this here? Can you put that there?”

The first thing I really worked on was the speeder bike. Fred Hole

(the assistant art director) had drawn it as a basic carcass, and it was my task to go out to the local shops to find “greeblies” to build it all out. The front nose cone of that bike was actually just a curtain finial from a hardware shop down the street from the studio.

Around a decade later you worked on *The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles* (1992-1993). How did that come about?

I was working on a show called *Yellowthread Street* (1990), which

was canceled after one season, so I went to work for Steven Soderbergh on *Kafka* (1991). While the film was not enormously successful, every producer and director in the industry saw it and was familiar with it, because of how big Soderbergh’s first feature film, *Sex, Lies, and Videotape* (1989), had been.

So, when I heard that Lucasfilm were doing *The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles*, I called Robert Watts, asking, “Are you involved in this?” He said, “No, but Rick McCallum is.”

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“THE FIRST THING I REALLY WORKED ON WAS THE SPEEDER BIKE... THE FRONT NOSE CONE OF THAT BIKE WAS ACTUALLY JUST A CURTAIN FINIAL FROM A HARDWARE SHOP DOWN THE STREET FROM THE STUDIO.”



GAVIN BOCQUET'S FANTASTICAL WORLDS

Beyond the galaxy far, far away, Gavin Bocquet has had a hand in creating an array of imaginary worlds in hit fantasy films and TV series:

- *Stardust* (2007)
- *Gulliver's Travels* (2010)
- *Jack the Giant Slayer* (2013)
- *Warcraft: The Beginning* (2016)
- *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* (2016)
- *The Dark Crystal: Age of Resistance* (2019)
- *Jingle Jangle: A Christmas Journey* (2019)

03

After doing some research, I eventually discovered that Rick only lived one block away from me in London, literally on the next street along. I learned this about a week before the Christmas holidays, but undeterred I went around to his house and put a note through his letterbox, saying, "Hi, I'm Gavin. I've done *Kafka*, I've worked on *Yellowthread Street*, which was a multi-episodic and international television series, et cetera," and then I didn't hear back from him. Probably because it was Christmas! So, I thought, "Oh, well, that's nothing." Then, after the holiday, I got a letter back simply saying, "Come and meet us." And there I was, meeting with Rick and George Lucas.

How did your experience with *Young Indy* prepare you for what was to come with the prequels?

George was definitely interested in new digital technology and wanted to make sure he understood it before potentially launching into the prequel trilogy. Both George and Rick realized that, if they could get a single digital effect shot down to about \$4,000, they could have three or four of those shots in each episode of *Young Indy*.

From my point of view, educationally it was all just fantastic. We had so many talented directors and writers coming in every week—

01 Sets for *The Phantom Menace* (1999) were designed with visual effects expansion in mind.

02 Prequel designs, such as the queen's Royal Starship, eschewed the used look of the original trilogy.

03 Concept art for the Theed Palace on Naboo.

Terry Jones, Nicolas Roeg, Frank Darabont, and Joe Johnston, for instance—and we were traveling the world, filming at an incredible pace. We had to learn very quickly to go with the flow to make the best possible episode, and that served us very well in the years to come.

The crew from *Young Indy*, including Trisha Biggar, David Tattersall, Martin Smith, and yourself, then moved onto the prequels. What are your memories of pre-production on *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* (1999)?

There was this understanding among the core team that George had been building up to *Star Wars*. ▶



- He knew that it was coming, that it was in the plans. And he was experimenting on *Young Indy*.

It was actually quite funny to be at the Ranch in the very early days of prequel pre-production. We were all just so excited to be working on it, but incredibly nervous. I was with Doug Chiang, pulling up some of the old drawings from the previous films, and suddenly one of my drawings from *Jedi* came out. It was a nice connection to make.

How much of a challenge was it to establish a brand new yet familiar visual tone for the prequels?

We were building a world that didn't include *anything* from before, apart from R2-D2, C-3PO, and the Emperor, up to a point. None of the hardware was used and dirty, and nothing was really the same, so that was quite a challenge, although we mostly

"I WAS WITH DOUG CHIANG, PULLING UP SOME OF THE OLD DRAWINGS FROM THE PREVIOUS FILMS, AND SUDDENLY ONE OF MY DRAWINGS FROM *JEDI* CAME OUT. IT WAS A NICE CONNECTION TO MAKE."

didn't realize that at the time. There was no huge philosophy about it, apart from trying to keep up the amazing quality that had come before. We had a great group of people around us, and George trusted us to do our jobs.

Building physical sets for *The Phantom Menace* that were to be enhanced by visual effects must have been an interesting task for you and your team.

You're always designing more than you build, and here it was a decision on *how much* you build. It often goes understated just how much of the prequels sets were physical. Visual effects

aren't cheap, so we were always very careful in what we suggested, especially for *The Phantom Menace*. Where should we build that theoretical line? Where does the physical stop and the effects take over? Of course, with John Knoll and everybody at Industrial Light & Magic, that development was made easier.

Really, we just needed three colored markers on a storyboard to map out the whole process: this is real, this is creature effects, and this is background. It is brilliant technology, but the application of it is essentially just the same as people used to do with glass paintings and foreground miniatures.

You were part of the location scouting team with Rick McCallum. What makes a real-world location a good fit for a *Star Wars* location?

Whenever possible, George wanted his other worlds to be based on something in our world, because

04 The Plaza D'Espana in Seville, Spain, doubled for Naboo in *Attack of the Clones* (2002).

05



06

it adds integrity for the audience. And if you tweak it just a bit, from the ice fields of Norway to the lush forests in California, it makes it feel grounded and real.

We knew from the beginning that we wanted some sort of classical architecture for Naboo. I spent six weeks touring Spain, Portugal, France, and Italy, looking at monasteries and castles. Rick's initial intention for the Theed Royal Palace was to actually use the Vatican, but even the influence of Rick McCallum and George Lucas couldn't get us in (*laughs*).

We also went back to Tunisia to scout for Tatooine. Everywhere we went, we literally found old bits of *Star Wars*: doors and windows from the 1977 set that had been turned into chicken runs and fencing. And when we went out onto the salt flats, where the Lars homestead was, the crater rim was still there.

But it's intrinsic to *Star Wars* to stumble across ideas which

conceptually come from the location. It's never just sitting with a piece of paper and drawing something. For instance, the quarters where Anakin and Shmi lived were basically grain stores that we found, and they just felt like a really interesting shape to make into dwellings.

I always say to my concept team, the more you can go out into the world and experience things, the more you can build your mental library. Locations often suggest things to you that you wouldn't necessarily have thought of without seeing them in person.

Did the groundbreaking use of high-definition digital cameras on *Star Wars: Attack of the Clones* (2002) impact on your team's design choices?

I think our initial concern was over the level of detail. For instance, we built an additional marble alcove in the Lake Como location for a

05 The Lars homestead in *Attack of the Clones* used the same crater from *A New Hope* (1977).

06 Grain stores in Tozeur, Tunisia, were dressed as Mos Espa's slave Quarters for *The Phantom Menace*.

scene with Anakin and Padmé, and our marble columns needed to match the rest of the set. As usual, we made fake marble by dipping paper in oil and water to recreate the swirly shapes, and then pasted it onto the columns. At a certain point there was an obvious gap in the paper. On film, no one would ever have seen that joint, but on digital they could. The advantage was that now we had a digital monitor on set, we could see *exactly* what the audience would see on screen.

For *Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith* (2005), you had to recreate certain sets from the original trilogy. Was that daunting?

Certain things were called for in the scripts, like the Lars homestead and the blockade runner, and our challenge was to make them believable, if a little "newer." We really didn't know until the films were out whether we'd hit the mark, or if the fans were going to react well to our work. You're always living on a bit of a prayer because you put your heart and soul into the job, but you never quite know whether it's going to live up to what people imagine. It was never frightening when I was actually on the job, only when other people said, "Oh, that's a big thing you're doing."

You remain a busy production designer. Where do you draw inspiration from now, after all these years creating new and fantastical worlds?

It seems a funny thing to say, because clearly I must enjoy doing it, but I sometimes wonder myself why my work has been "pigeonholed," for lack of a better word, into these fantastical films.

What I really enjoy is working with other creative people. When I'm giving out instructions or sharing ideas, or reference materials, or models to my concept team to play with, the work that they come *back* with is always just inspirational in itself. 🙌

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A CERTAIN POINT OF VIEW

Our resident *Star Wars* expert, Jay Stobie, consults his library of holocrons and ancient Jedi texts to answer your questions about the events, people, and places of the galaxy far, far away....



“Since the Kaminoans had already used Jango Fett’s genetic material to create clones, why did they need him to stick around and live on the planet?”

Andrea Haroulas, U.S.

Although he clearly “made his way in the universe” by taking bounties and traveling as far into the interior as Coruscant, Jango Fett *did* seem to be quite at home on Kamino. In fact, Lama Su even pointed out that the Kaminoans kept Jango close by, even as the clone army’s ranks exceeded one million units. The simple answer is that having the bounty hunter on

hand allowed the cloners to maintain a regular source of the original host’s genetic material, as the samples they had already taken would gradually degrade over time.

The Catch in Cloning

When Dexter Jettster described Kamino to Obi-Wan Kenobi, he emphasized the Kaminoans’ reputation for being talented cloners, so it is safe to assume that their methods were some of the most advanced in the galaxy at the time. Rather than simply replicating Jango’s genetic structure, the Kaminoans had the ability to modify it to

Classified on Kamino

Lama Su

As the Prime Minister of Kamino, Lama Su aided the Republic by allowing clones to be created on his homeworld, both before and after the Clone Wars began. Once the Empire asserted its control of the galaxy, Lama Su hoped to gain favor with the Imperials by making a superior line of clones.



Taun We

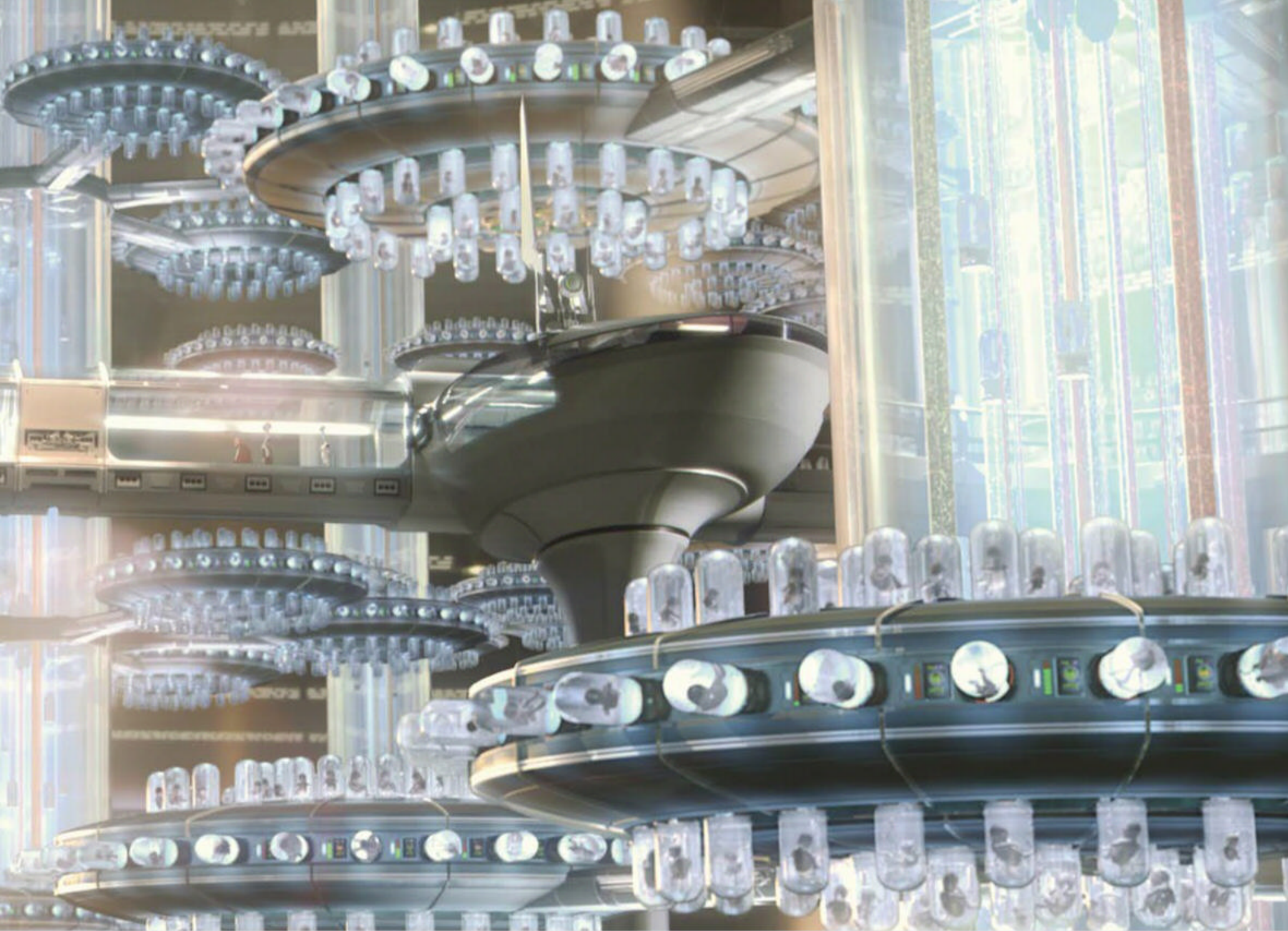
As an aide to Lama Su, Taun We welcomed Obi-Wan Kenobi to Kamino and unveiled the army that the Kaminoans had grown for the Republic. Taun We, much like the prime minister himself, aimed to impress the new Galactic Empire by providing improved clones grown from Omega’s genetic material.



Nala Se

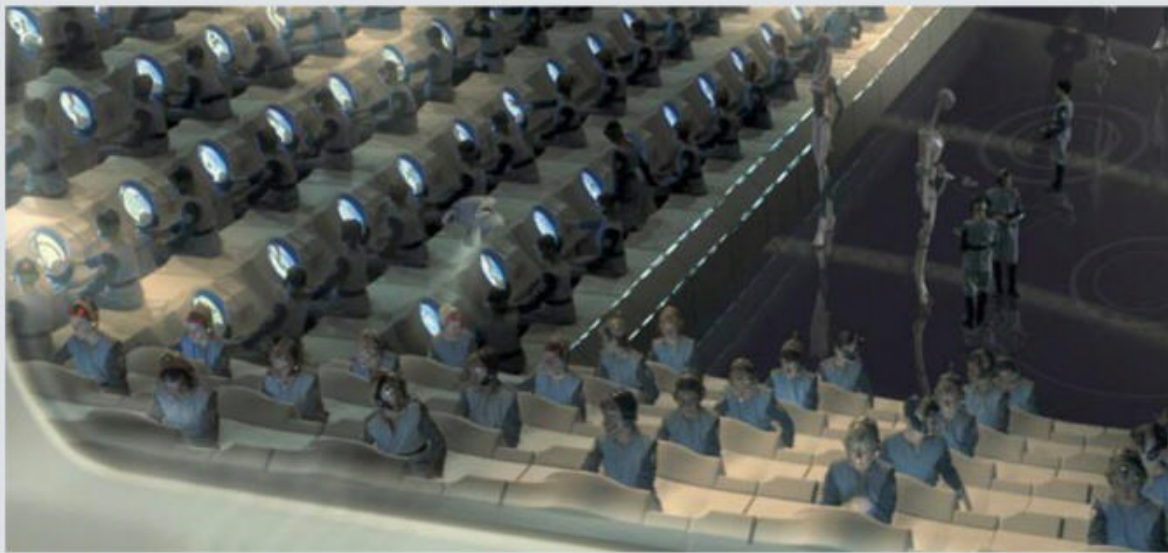
Kamino’s preeminent medical expert, Nala Se oversaw the scientific aspects of growing the clone army, and had a personal connection to Omega. The scientist also knew of the secretive inhibitor chips that ultimately made Emperor Palpatine’s decisive Order 66 possible.





make the clones less independent and more obedient than their host. Combined with growth acceleration, these traits meant that the clone troopers differed from the bounty hunter.

Nevertheless, there were obviously limits for even the best cloners. Following Jango's death, the Kaminoans no longer had access to a replenishable supply of source DNA. Boba Fett was an unaltered clone, but he had disappeared into the galaxy's murky underworld. Even units who were created directly from Jango's DNA ran the risk of having genetic defects. For example, Clone 99 experienced physical limitations that prevented him from being deployed alongside



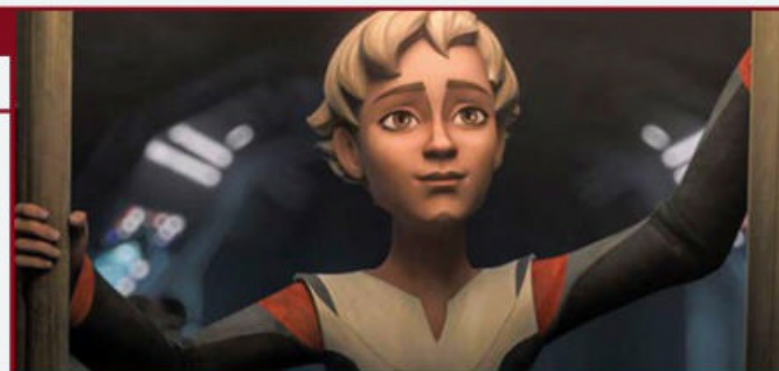
Jango Fett

An acclaimed bounty hunter, Jango Fett was the original genetic donor for the Republic's clone troopers. After Jango perished at the First Battle of Geonosis, the unaltered clone known as Boba Fett took over his "father's" business and earned a reputation as a feared bounty hunter in his own right.



Omega

Omega joined Clone Force 99 when they fled Kamino. As with Boba Fett, who was codenamed "Alpha," Omega was a pure genetic replica of Jango Fett, lacking growth acceleration and obedience modifications. Lama Su wished to capture Omega to harness Jango's raw genetic material and create improved clones for the Empire.



his clone brothers. 99 proved his true potential by overcoming his ailments and showing incredible bravery when it came time to defend his homeworld.

Also, look at the unique situation of Clone Force 99, otherwise known as the “Bad Batch.” As with their squad’s namesake, Hunter, Wrecker, Tech, and Crosshair were genetically defective clones, but the Kaminoans experimented on these “desirable mutations” and were able to produce a unit of enhanced clones. Despite the Kaminoans’ expertise, their work on the Bad Batch ended up subduing the group’s inhibitor chips to varying degrees, as demonstrated by Crosshair’s desire to follow orders and suit up for the Empire.

Technically a Twin?

This brings us to Omega, an unaltered clone of Jango Fett whose first-generation DNA represented the only readily available source of Jango’s raw genetic material outside of the elusive Boba Fett. With the Empire turning an eye toward conscription over cloning, Lama Su viewed Omega as a valuable target, intending to utilize her DNA to develop even more advanced clones and solidify the Kaminoans’ business dealings with the Empire.

As the original samples of Jango’s genetic material continued to degrade, Omega was a source of hope for the Kaminoans and their ongoing



experiments. Despite its reputation, the Kaminoans’ cloning technology was still limited by DNA degradation. Considering this information, it becomes evident that, had Jango survived, the cloners would have continued to harvest the bounty hunter’s DNA in order to further improve their clone product. Given the high-stakes and potential for great profit, it was only logical for the Kaminoans to keep their prized host as close to them as possible. 🇵🇸

THE SIFO-DYAS DECEPTION

33 BSW4 (estimate):

Jedi Master Sifo-Dyas served on the Jedi Council, where his fear that a large-scale war loomed on the horizon prompted him to argue that the Republic should create an army to defend itself.

33 BSW4 (estimate):

Sifo-Dyas’ views caused tension with the other Jedi Masters, who decided to remove him from his prestigious position on the Jedi Council.

33 BSW4 (estimate):

Unbeknownst to the Jedi or the Republic, Sifo-Dyas tasked the Kaminoans to create a clone army. Sifo-Dyas gave the Kaminoans the false impression that he was on an official assignment for the Republic.

32 BSW4:

Count Dooku had the Pyke Syndicate murder Sifo-Dyas so that he could assume control over the clone army’s development. As Darth Tyrannus, Dooku recruited Jango Fett to be the army’s genetic donor.

22 BSW4:

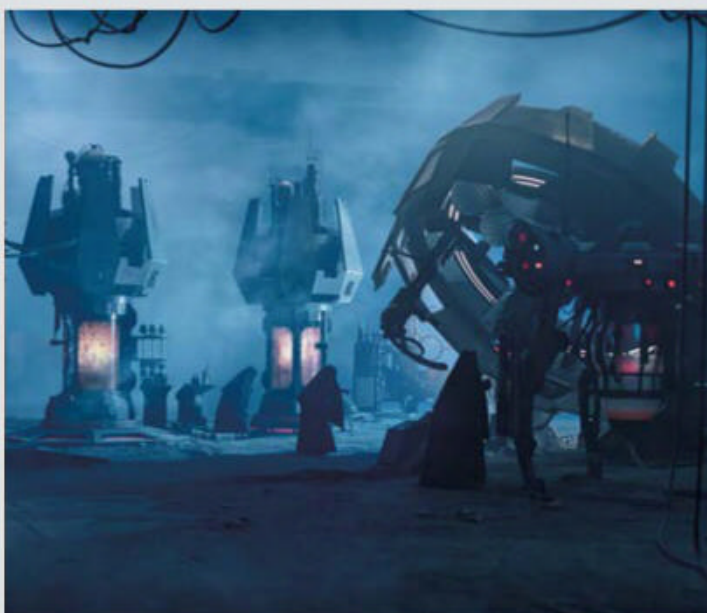
Obi-Wan Kenobi made the surprising discovery that the Kaminoans had bred a clone army for the Republic on behalf of Sifo-Dyas.

22 BSW4:

Despite its mysterious origins, the clone army was utilized by the Jedi to reinforce the rescue of Obi-Wan Kenobi on Geonosis, thus sparking the Clone Wars.

THE RISE OF STRANDCASTS

When it came to creating new lifeforms, perfection eluded even Emperor Palpatine and his Sith Eternal cultists. On Exegol, Palpatine’s decrepit clone body proved unable to harness the true depths of his power, leaving his consciousness trapped within it. The Emperor’s followers also made strandcasts, living beings that were engineered through cloning and other forms of genetic experimentation. Supreme Leader Snoke was one of a group of artificial, identical, and Force-sensitive strandcasts designed to influence and train Kylo Ren. Similarly, Palpatine had other strandcasts produced that combined his cloned tissue with donated cells, hoping to build a more stable host body for himself. This strandcast line included Rey’s father, but in this case, the experiment failed to grant the Emperor’s duplicate with the ability to use the Force.



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STAR WARS INSIDER WORLDWIDE

CELEBRATING THE SAGA



CRAFTY CHARACTERS

Sculpting the saga's
unique figures

Awestruck by *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977), Chris Munro began making drawings, writing stories, and creating backdrops and ships for his *Star Wars* action figures. Years later, Munro chose to exercise his creativity once again, learning to make head sculpts and building his own versions of characters that many might consider obscure. “I am definitely drawn to those characters which are only seen fleetingly, but who really flesh out the *Star Wars* galaxy and make it seem like a real place, filled with diversity,” reveals the creative fan.



INSIDER NEEDS YOU!

We want to hear from you! Tell us about your *Star Wars* experience. What made you want to become a fan? What have you done in the name of *Star Wars*? Tell us your *Star Wars* story by sending your photos, art, and letters here:

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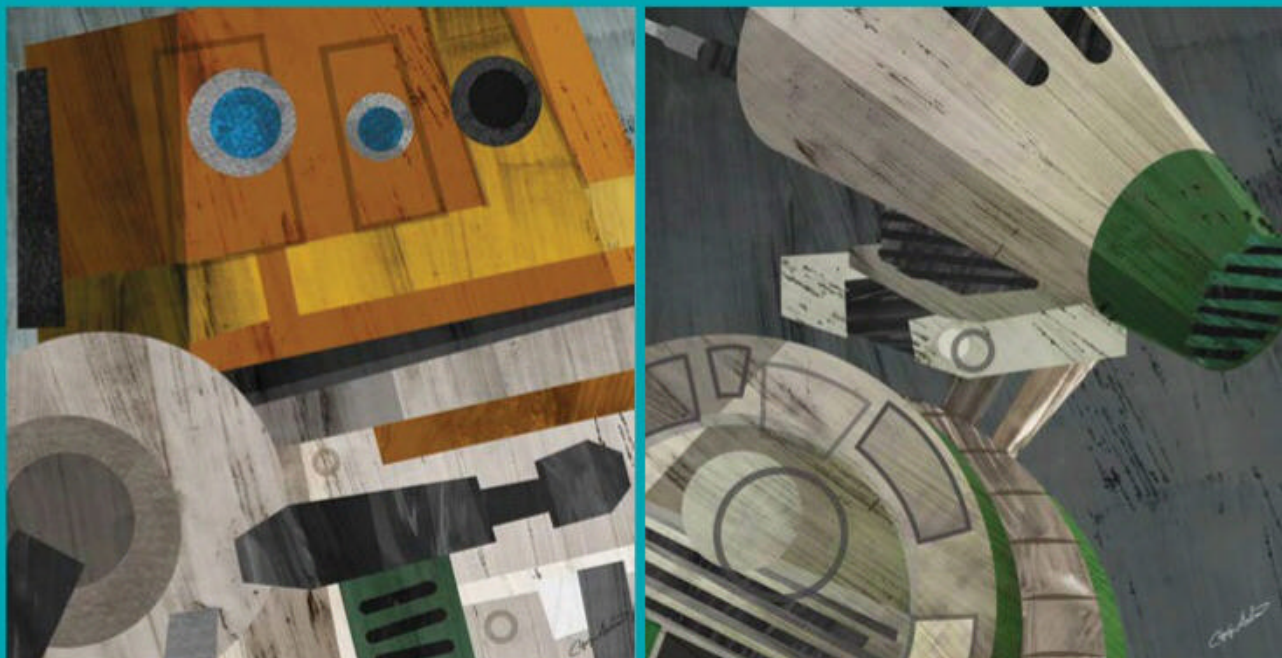
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ARTISTS' ALLEY

Talented *Star Wars* fans share their amazing drawings inspired by the galaxy far, far away....



01 "D-O" AND "CHOPPER" BY YUJI BABA

A graphic designer enchanted by droids, artist Yuji Baba harnessed his talents to put together a collage art series featuring mechanical sidekicks, including D-O and Chopper.

His digital artworks include cut-outs of practical paint brush strokes, which he uses intentionally to create an abstract feel through off-sized elements and mispositioned lines. The artist added highlights and shadows to make the images truly pop. "They create a three-dimensional feeling to the flat shape and bring life to the character," explains Yuji Baba.



02 "LUKE SKYWALKER" AND "JEDI CAMPFIRE" BY ALLISON GOSSETT

Whether depicting Luke Skywalker in a serious portrait or a fun campfire scene, artist Allison Gossett has always felt a bond with the Jedi. "There's a certain spark in Luke that has resonated with me for years, whether that be his blazing determination to do what's right, or his kind and compassionate heart," says Gossett. "It is my aim as an artist to always capture that gentle but resolute spirit of his in my work."

BOUNTY HUNTERS

Scouring the galaxy for the stars of *Star Wars*...

CRAFTSMANSHIP
KOTOBUKIYA

Meet the stars, show the evidence, win the bounty! Bounty Hunters is sponsored by Kotobukiya. Each issue's winner will receive a fantastic Kotobukiya *Star Wars* statue kit! To see more, visit www.facebook.com/kotobukiya



KATEE SACKHOFF

A bucket-list bounty for a happy Mando fan

Describing Katee Sackhoff's character Bo-Katan Kryze as "awesome," Nico knew that saying hello to the actor from *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* (2008-2014, 2020), *Star Wars Rebels* (2014-2018), and *The Mandalorian* (2019-present) would be a not-to-be-missed experience. A meet-and-greet at *Star Wars* Celebration proved just as incredible as Nico and wife Tarah had hoped, as they each considered it to be a bucket-list opportunity that had to be checked off.

Nico's partner Stellar knew the *Star Wars Resistance* cast would also be at Celebration, so she crafted Kaz Xiono and Torra Doza costumes for them both that they could wear during their photo op with the voice actors. "Meeting the cast in person was an amazing experience to share together, and they gave us a lot of love for the outfits," says Nico.



01 Nico and Tarah pose with actor Katee Sackhoff (center).

02 Nico and Stellar show off their *Star Wars Resistance* cosplay alongside Christopher Sean (Kazuda Xiono), Suzie McGrath (Tam Ryvora), Myrna Velasco (Torra Doza), and Scott Lawrence (Jarek Yeager).



PORGS AND POETRY

Looking at the lighter side of *Star Wars*

After leaving his private veterinary practice, Curtis Smith focused on his interest in *Star Wars* by building a screen-accurate Tusken Raider costume and joining the 501st Legion. "I was proud of my new costume, proud of the charity work I was doing, and proud to be representing the franchise I loved," beams Smith about his 501st membership.

Although the fan spends most of his time trooping as Darth Vader from *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1980), he also searches out the joyful elements of *Star Wars* with cosplays that range from Matt the Radar Technician to an Imperial officer riding a tauntaun.

Smith harnessed this positive energy to unveil one of his favorite costumes at *Star Wars* Celebration Chicago. The dedicated fan spent an entire year conceptualizing and constructing a project that turned

him into Luke's porg-covered island refuge on Ahch-To. "A large mottled grey rock with legs, plush mother porg with porglets on top, and screeching and flapping animatronic porgs all around," smiles the former veterinarian. "The finishing touch, a custom porg puppet ready to wave at passersby." The ensemble impressed countless fans, and even porg puppeteer Brian Herring stopped by for a photo.

Smith also poured his jovial takes on *Star Wars* into his own unique poetry, penning over 178 original poems that range from haikus to limericks. "I try to look at beloved characters and moments in the saga from a slightly off-kilter perspective and then turn my observations into poetry," says Smith. "I am very optimistic about the future of *Star Wars*, and I'm sure the years ahead will inspire many more poems and a few costumes too."



CONSTRUCTING A NEW LIGHTSABER

Bringing *Star Wars* to life with hand-made props

For Angel Fan, the *Star Wars* galaxy has been a part of her life almost as long as she's been around. "I was first introduced to it by my big sister when I was around four," she says. "As a little kid, I didn't necessarily understand what was going on in the plot, but I loved the props and costumes in particular. There were some East-meets-West elements to the aesthetic, and as an Asian American, that was a really cool thing to see."

It was while she was exploring engineering in college that Fan took her interest in *Star Wars* props to the next level. While participating in an electric racecar design competition, Fan became interested in machining and 3D modeling. Soon, she used these skills to create lifelike replicas of what she saw on screen. "The props always seemed like the most accessible part of the galaxy, like you could take a piece of it home,"

Fan explains. "Making props started as a way to learn more about machining. I also wanted to hold parts of the *Star Wars* galaxy that felt real. I wanted to make them out of metal and wires and such."

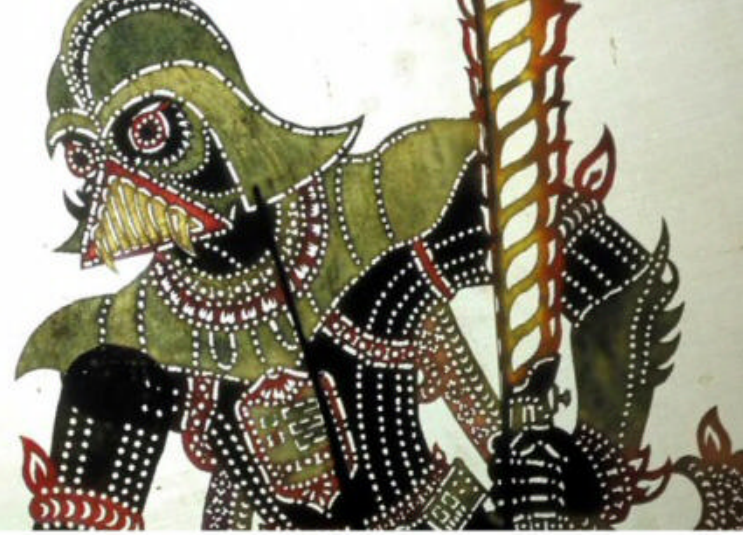
Fan started out with simple projects and leveled up with each new item she made. "I began with 3D-printed props that I painted and assembled," she says. "Then I used a machine called a lathe, which is basically a spinning tool,

to make the circular parts of Luke Skywalker's lightsaber out of metal. That one's pretty much entirely hand machined. Most recently, I made the Rey blaster, which is when I learned to use a Computer Numerical Control (CNC) machine." From hand machining to finessing details with paint, prop-making has allowed Fan to bring pieces of *Star Wars* to life while honing her engineering and artistic skills.



TK-101

HINTS, TIPS, AND IDEAS FOR CRAFTING
YOUR OWN *STAR WARS* GALAXY



SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE!

In this edition of TK-101, we take a masterclass in the art of wayang kulit—Malaysian shadow puppetry—and show you how to make a puppet of your own.

WORDS: CHRISTOPHER COOPER

TK-101 has always been a fan of puppetry and its history, from basic sock puppets to marionettes and ventriloquist dummies, all the way up to the amazing animatronic creatures of the *Star Wars* movies. There is something magical about how these inanimate objects become alive in the hands of a master puppeteer, so our interest was piqued when the *StarWars.com* series *Our Star Wars Stories* featured Tintoy Chuo, a Malaysian designer who is on mission to revive the popularity of wayang kulit, a

form of shadow puppetry practised in his country for around 500 years. What's more, we wanted to try our hands at shadow puppetry ourselves, so we asked Tintoy for a few pointers.

The Force of Fusion

"Everything started in 2012, when I became aware that wayang kulit was fast becoming a fading art in Malaysia," Tintoy tells us. "I thought that was very sad, so I decided to look for a way to revive it. I came up with this concept of combining two totally different elements—a fusion

of something very old and something very futuristic into something very distinctive. I chose *Star Wars* because I've been a big fan since 1977, and we ended up creating these incredibly unique shadow puppets."

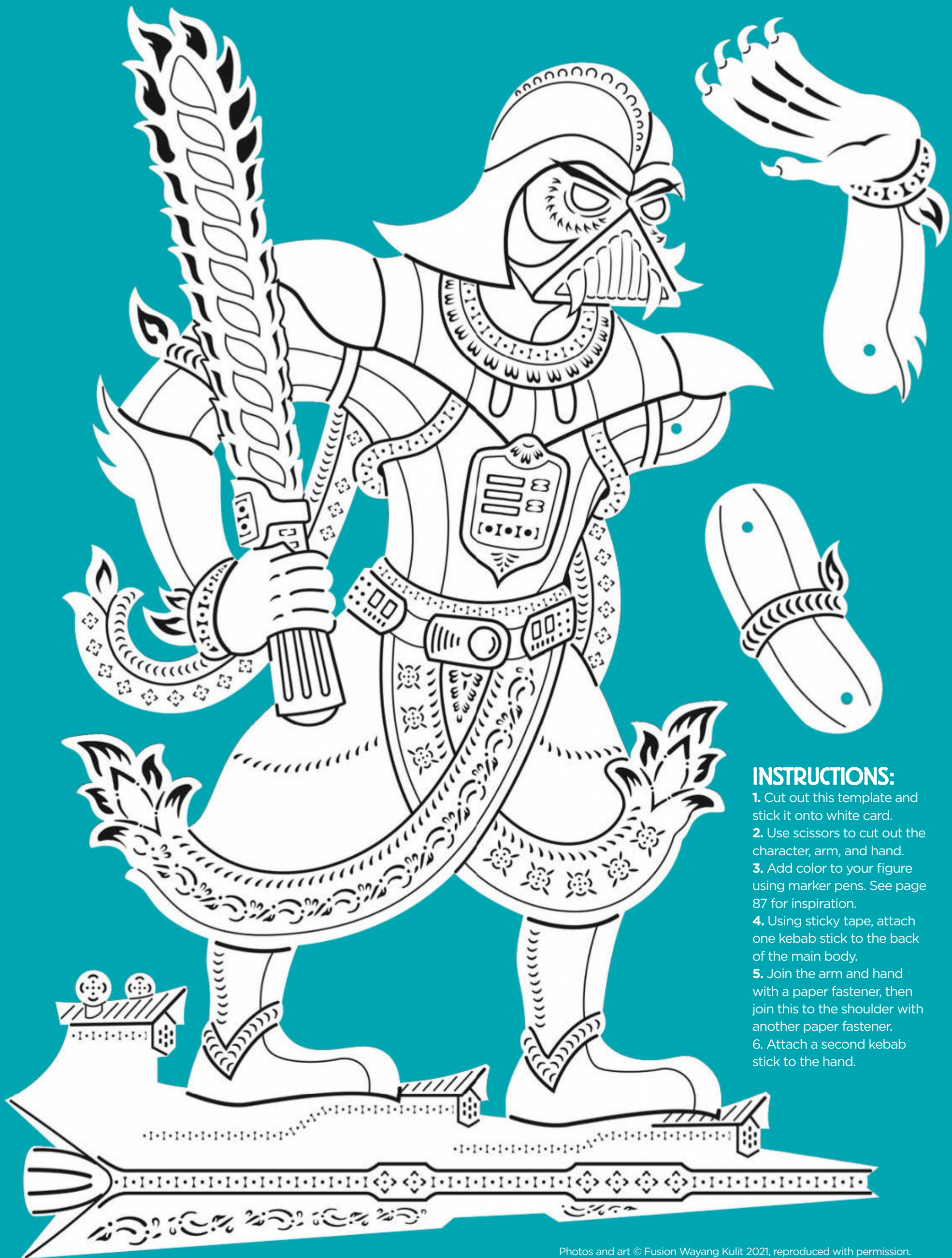
While taking inspiration from *Star Wars* was not a big problem for Tintoy, deciding which traditional wayang kulit figures a *Star Wars* character could best represent was more difficult. "The traditional side was trickier because we needed to know a bit about the identity of the shadow puppets," Tintoy explains. The form includes five dominant characters, so it was a case of identifying similar archetypes from the *Star Wars* galaxy then creating puppet designs that would blend the two together seamlessly. "We put a lot of time into the design process to make sure our figures looked traditional yet captured the *Star Wars* characters, which was actually quite difficult to start with, but we managed to nail it," adds Tintoy. "The result has been a lot of interest from young fans and old."



PASS ME THE HYDROSPANNER

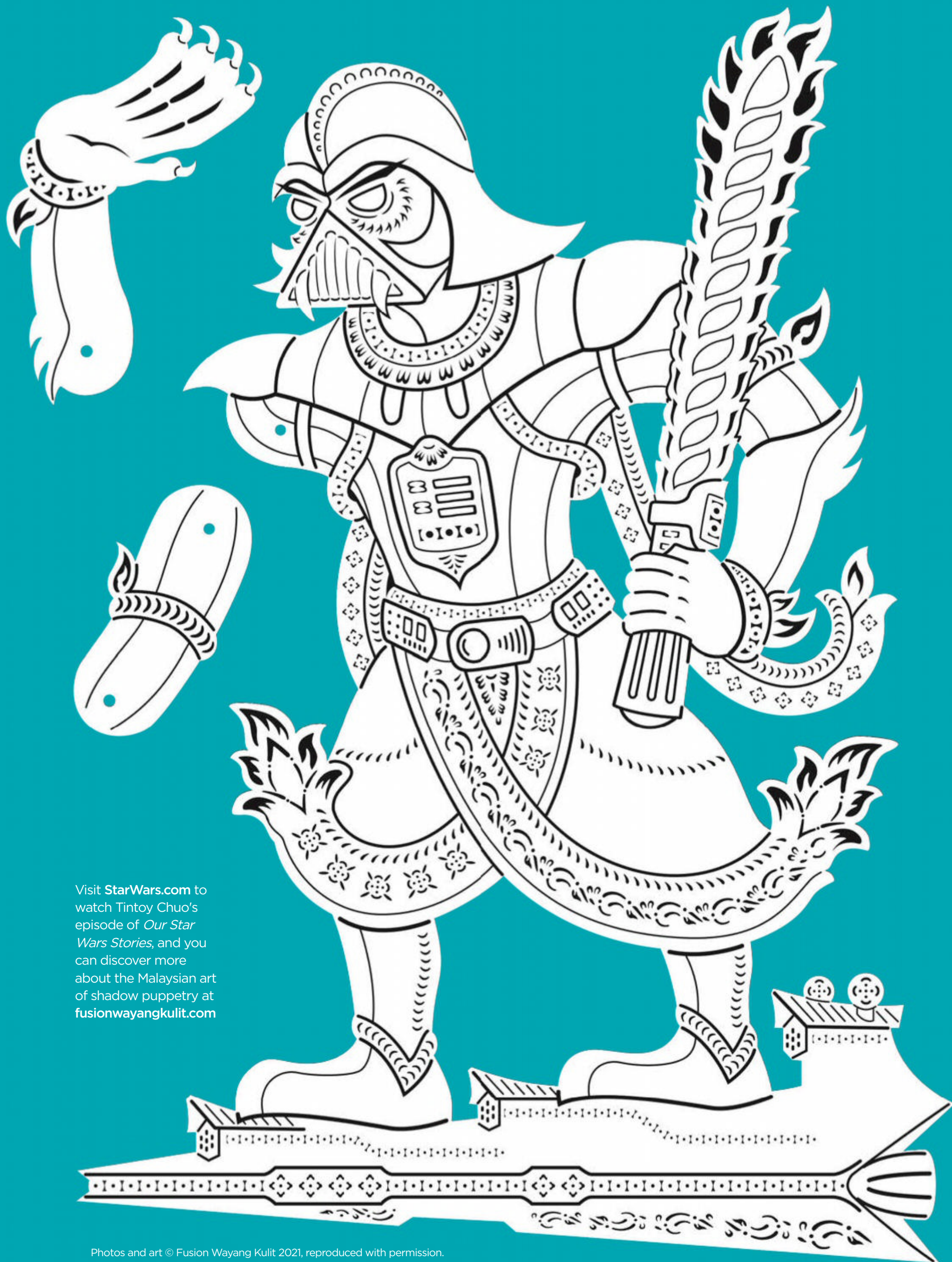
You'll need to gather a few basic materials and tools in order to make your own *Star Wars*-infused wayang kulin shadow puppet:

- Puppet template (see right)
- A sheet of clear acetate or thin cardboard, translucent if possible
- Liquid glue
- Scissors and a craft knife
- Color marker pens
- Two kebab sticks
- Two paper fasteners
- Sticky tape



INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Cut out this template and stick it onto white card.
2. Use scissors to cut out the character, arm, and hand.
3. Add color to your figure using marker pens. See page 87 for inspiration.
4. Using sticky tape, attach one kebab stick to the back of the main body.
5. Join the arm and hand with a paper fastener, then join this to the shoulder with another paper fastener.
6. Attach a second kebab stick to the hand.



Visit [StarWars.com](https://www.starwars.com) to watch Tintoy Chuo's episode of *Our Star Wars Stories*, and you can discover more about the Malaysian art of shadow puppetry at fusionwayangkulit.com



One such interested person was master puppeteer Pak Dain, the 13th accredited Tok Dalang ("Master Puppeteer") of the Kelantan Traditional Malay Shadow Play art school. Tintoy and Pak Dain became friends after the master contacted him about the project. "I told him that I had a dream. That I wanted to be able to put on a real *Star Wars*-themed shadow puppet performance," Tintoy recalled. "After talking to him for quite a while, I managed to convince him to join the dark side (*Laughs*)."

Now, the Fusion Wayang Kulit team performs around the world, bringing the amazing art of shadow puppetry to a far wider audience than ever, with a contemporary *Star Wars* twist. But what TK-101

really wants to know is, "How can we put on our very own show?"

Keeping up with Tradition

What we'll need above all is a puppet, and thanks to Tintoy's expert design skills we have a bespoke template to work with. The techniques employed by the master craftsmen who create Fusion WK's puppets have been passed down through generations, whereas TK-101 is (as usual) taking one or two shortcuts.

Traditionally, a wayang kulit character is made with leather, stretched, thinned, strengthened, and dried under the Sun for two to three days. The makers then use hammers and nails to mark out the character motifs into the leather



and to cut the outline of the puppet. Translucent ink is applied to the thinly stretched leather to add vibrant colors. TK-101 will be using a sheet of clear acetate (to let light through) or white card, and replicate the techniques of this age-old craft with scissors, a sharp knife, and marker pens. We've included instructions alongside Tintoy's interpretation of "Sangkala Vedeh" (Darth Vader) as a template so you can have a go too.

Once you've completed your puppet, it's time to put on a show. Performing in the traditional way requires what is referred to in wayang kulit as five "layers": the screen, the puppet, the light, the master puppeteer (who also narrates the story), and the musicians. All you'll need is a white sheet of cloth or paper, stretched across an empty picture frame or even a cardboard box with a hole cut in the bottom. Position a bright light behind your screen, far enough away to both fill it with light and allow you enough room to manipulate your puppet (a table lamp or flashlight will do just fine) and you'll be ready to go. You know how the story begins: "A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away..." 🌌

The *Star Wars* Archive

The behind-the-scenes
story of a galaxy far,
far away....

SHARP AS A RAZOR

As immediately iconic as any of the *Star Wars* starships that came before, the design for the *Razor Crest* was an instant hit when it was first unveiled during a special preview panel for *The Mandalorian* (2019-present) at Celebration 2019.

Designed by design supervisor Ryan Church, many shots of the vessel in flight made use of a practical miniature model captured using traditional motion control techniques, on a rig built by effects veteran John Knoll. Large exterior sections of the ship, including the cockpit, the rear access ramp, and side entrance hatches, were built as separate set pieces for filming live-action scenes on the Volume. 🤖





01 The crew film the Mandalorian at the controls of the *Razor Crest* for Chapter 12, "The Siege."

02 *Razor Crest* concept art by Doug Chiang for Chapter 1, "The Mandalorian."

03 Shooting on the Volume allowed the production to film *Razor Crest* exterior shots in any locale, from deep space to a crash site in an icy cavern.



STAR WARS
THE HIGH REPUBLIC

S T A R L I G H T
Past Mistakes

PART TWO
By Cavan Scott



Previously:

As the Republic strikes back against the Nihil, the insidious reach of the galactic anarchists is becoming ever more apparent. Arriving on Starlight Beacon under the guise of a trader, the allegiances of Vane Sarpo—a former friend and ally of Velko Jahen—are soon laid bare....



Starlight Beacon had changed so much in such a short span of time. When she had first arrived, Administrator

Velko Jahen had been taken aback by the atmosphere, everyone so confident and calm in the midst of such bustle. And then there was the excitement. You could feel it in the air. The Beacon was a fresh start, both for the galactic frontier and for a jaded veteran

"I need to know, Vane. Why do it? What did they offer you?"

The tattooed Vuman didn't answer, but the Nihil in the other cells certainly had a lot to say for themselves, jeering and shouting, one particularly scraggy Wookiee telling Velko in no uncertain terms what she would do to her if the energy fields failed. Velko wasn't worried. The guard at the door to the block had his stunstick and she had her blaster. She had made sure she was armed. The visit wasn't exactly authorized, and she was certain Security Chief Ghal Tarpfen would have a lot to say about it, but Velko wasn't taking any chances.

Still Vane remained silent. Nothing about this made sense to Velko. The thought that he might have willingly joined the Nihil was too terrible to comprehend. Vane had skirted close to various lines over the years, especially when they served together on Soika, she as a member of the Liberation Force and he as a mercenary, but he sure as hell wasn't an anarchist.

"Master Jedi," she began, cutting off her thoughts. "I just thought—"

"You just thought you would use your personal history as leverage against the prisoner."

Velko's silver cheeks burned. "No, it wasn't like that."

"Of course it was," a voice said behind her, Vane speaking up at last. He still had his back to them, but there was an edge to his voice that she'd never heard before. "I would do the same, but you're wasting your time, Vel."

She couldn't believe that. "We can help you Vane, if you help us."

"If I help you, how?" He was on his feet now. "By spilling the secrets of the Nihil? And what would you do then, Administrator? Protect me, like the Jays protected Valo? You're a joke, you and your Jedi friends." His eyes darted between the two of them. "Look at you, in all your finery. Golden robes and starched collars. You will burn. You know that, don't you? All this will come crashing down around your heads."

VELKO SWORE UNDER HER BREATH AS SHE HEARD THE HEAVY FOOTSTEPS BEHIND HER. SHE TURNED TO SEE THE IMPOSING FORM OF JEDI MASTER SSKEER.

looking for a new purpose in life. Now? Now was different. All that had been before Valo. All that had been before the Jedi had been tasked with taking down the Nihil. It was before the wings of the security tower were packed with Nihil captured as part of Operation: Counterstrike.

Now she was standing in front of a cell, looking at a man she had fought alongside back on Soika. A man she had, if not loved, cared for deeply. A man who was her prisoner. She had brought him in herself. She had clapped the binders on his wrists after discovering that he was using Starlight to run weapons for the Nihil, and she had one burning question.

"Why?"

Vane Sarpo sat with his back to her behind the energy field, his assistant Clune curled into a little orange ball, the instinctive reaction of all Peasles in moments of great peril. The small insectoid hadn't unfurled once since the smuggled blasters had been found.

"Are they paying you, is that what it is?" No response. "Do you owe them money?" Still nothing. "For void's sake, Vane, talk to me."

Someone finally spoke, but it wasn't the prisoner.

"Administrator Jahen."

Velko swore under her breath as she heard the heavy footsteps behind her. She turned to see the imposing form of Jedi Master Sskeer striding towards her, his one good hand resting on his lightsaber hilt. "This," the Trandoshan hissed, "is most... irregular."

He was rattled, she could see that immediately. Something else that had changed since coming to Starlight. Before she'd believed that Jedi were incapable of emotion, a proposition that was just plain wrong. The Jedi she'd met felt as deeply as everyone else. They were just better at controlling it. At least, the majority were. Sskeer seemed to struggle more than most, and as for Marshal Avar Kriss...

You can't help me, because you're the problem!"

All around, the imprisoned Nihil whooped in support of Vane's rant, the Wookiee shaking long matted arms above her head. What had Velko been thinking? This was useless. Vane... Vane wasn't the man she thought he was. The man he'd been. And if he wanted to rot in a Republic jail, so be it. She had work to do. Important work. Work helping bring down more men like him.

She turned on her heel, marching towards the guard at the door, pausing only when she realized that Sskeer wasn't with her. He was standing motionless outside Vane's cell.

"Master Sskeer?" she asked, but still, he didn't move. "Master Sskeer, are you coming?"

"Something isn't right," he said, ignoring the question, slitted orange eyes never leaving Vane's face. "I sense anger."

"Ha!" Vane barked, throwing up his arms in pantomime. "They weren't lying

about you Jedi, were they? The lizard can tell I'm angry. And there was me thinking he was nothing more than a stupid dewback."

"We should go," Velko said to the Trandoshan.

"Finally she gets it," Vane snorted. "Give the girl a medal for her collection. Go on. Get out. You make me sick, the lot of you. Sick to my stomach."

"I sense more than anger," Sskeer continued, his words strangely pained. "I sense shame. I sense... fear."

There was something about the way the Jedi spoke that sent a chill through Velko, that the emotions he described were all too familiar. But Jedi didn't fear, did they? Sskeer was right though. Vane was afraid, she could see it in his eyes, but of what? Being locked up for his crimes? Of the repercussions if he betrayed the Nihil. No. It was something else. *Someone* else.

Vane's eyes flicked down to Clune and widened. The Peasle was rocking in her shell, preparing to unfurl.

The guard dived for the controls as light brighter than a sun burst from Vane's cell. Burst from Vane himself.

Velko cried out, throwing a hand across her eyes, but the damage was already done. She could only pray that the effects were only temporary, that she hadn't been blinded when her former lover had... what? Exploded? Her ears rang, but she could still make out the crackle of the security guard's stunstick and the shriek of Sskeer's lightsaber. Only one thing was noticeable by its absence – the hum of the energy fields that kept the prisoners at bay.

Blinking furiously, she pulled her blaster, squeezing off a few shots at the blurry shapes that raced towards her, the Nihil dropping to the floor. She aimed and fired without seeing, relying on her training, hearing the grunts and thuds of one fallen foe before turning on the next. It was only a matter of time before her luck ran out, a Nihil avoiding her shot, the blaster knocked from her hand. She heard it skid away and lashed

"Well, this is a quite a situation."

Tiny legs skittered on the floor as a Peasle scuttled around in front of them, a Peasle holding the guard's stunstick.

"Clune?" Velko gasped in shock.

"Hello there," the tiny insectoid said. "We didn't get a chance to chat before, did we?"

"Before you curled up into a ball," she reminded her.

"Like a coward," Sskeer added.

Clune shook her segmented head. "Such prejudice, from a Jedi of all people." The Peasle skittered over to Sskeer, prodding him with the stunstick which crackled with energy. The Trandoshan roared in pain, but Clune only tutted. "I don't mind saying, I am a little disappointed. It seems most undignified."

"The guard?" Velko asked, craning to look around. "Where is he?"

"Oh, he's dead," Clune informed her. "Quite, quite dead, but not before he managed to lock the doors, those our ion burst didn't knock out, that is."

SHE REALIZED THAT THE GLOW WAS EMANATING FROM VANE SARPO HIMSELF, THE TATTOOS ON HIS FACE FLARING LIKE JAGGED LIGHTNING.

Sskeer's lightsaber ignited.

"Drop the energy field," he ordered the guard at the door.

Vane raised his arms, palms out to the azure blade. "No. Don't do that. Get out. Please, get out."

"I won't ask again," Sskeer rumbled.

Velko looked back to the panicked guard, who was obviously wondering whether he should obey the Jedi or not. That's when a light flashed from inside Vane's cell.

It all happened so fast. Velko turned, her eyes opening wide as she realized that the glow was emanating from Vane Sarpo himself, the tattoos on his face flaring like jagged lightning.

"The field," Sskeer shouted, his nostrils flaring as the block filled with nauseating aromas of burning flesh and charred ozone. "Now!"

"No," Velko yelled, screwing up her eyes against the glare. "Lockdown the block. Lockdown the entire tower," she ordered.

out blindly, her fist finding only air.

The Nihil had no problem connecting with Velko's jaw, sending a supernova of impossible colors flaring across her already muddled vision. She went down and they were on her, no matter how hard she thrashed and kicked. She was dragged up onto her knees, her arms twisted behind her, a rasped voice in her ear telling her to quit struggling. Like she had any choice. But even as her vision slowly cleared, her eyes streaming, a grin spread over her split lips. Sskeer would get them out of this. Sskeer was a Jedi. Sskeer had a lightsaber.

A lightsaber she could no longer hear.

Sskeer thudded to the deck to her right, pinned to the floor by the shaggy Wookiee who was obviously stronger than she looked. But they weren't done yet. Sskeer would use the Force. He would fling the Nihil from his back as easily as shrugging off his cloak.

Any minute now.

Any minute...

Still fighting against the Nihil who was holding her tight, Velko twisted to peer into Vane's cell. The Vuman was sprawled face down, tendrils of smoke curling from his hidden face.

"Vane's tattoos," she croaked.

"Now those were clever," Clune said, her voice full of shrill pride. "Laced with ion filaments, don't you know? Rigged to detonate at a moment's notice, thanks to this." She jangled the control bangle that was slung loosely around one of her many wrists.

"How?" Velko asked.

A smile broke across the Peasle's segmented face. "It's remarkably hard to unfurl a Peasle once they've gone into a ball."

"What about the security scans?" Sskeer said.

"Next to useless," Clune confirmed. "Peasle chitin is equally effective at blocking sensor sweeps and, well, who suspects a... how did you put it, Jedi? 'A coward?'"

"Fascinating," Velko said through gritted teeth, "but not what I meant. How did you persuade Vane to do it? To tattoo his skin. To attack Starlight?"

Clune laughed, a thin chirruping sound. "He didn't really have any choice. I told you the tattoos were clever. Not only did they hide an ion charge; they could cause excruciating pain if he didn't do what I say. I must admit, I was impressed, the way he tried to get you to leave. All that shouting and carrying on. He must have really cared for you, not wanting you to be caught up in all..." the Peasle waved the stunstick in a circle that took in the entire cell block, "...in all this. Perhaps I underestimated him. Not that it matters. The filaments were a one-time deal. I'd hoped to detonate them in the middle of the night."

"But I forced your hand," Sskeer rumbled.

"Indeed you did, which brings us back to our problem. The whole idea was to escape."

"And now you're trapped," Velko

"This is what's going to happen," Clune said, slowly swinging the blade around so it was dangerously close to Velko's face. "We're going to bargain for your life. Either they let us all go, or you'll start losing limbs." She sniggered, before glancing back to Sskeer. "More limbs in some cases."

"No," Velko said quietly.

"What's that?"

She looked Clune straight in her black eyes. "It doesn't matter what you do to me, I won't help you, and neither will the Jedi. You'll be captured and thrown back into your cell with no means to escape."

"Is that so?" the Peasle asked, bringing the glowing blade ever closer. There was no heat, but that wouldn't stop it burning as soon as the containment field touched her skin. Velko screwed up her eyes, bracing herself for the pain... pain that never came.

A blaster bolt flared out of nowhere, spinning Clune around, the lit saber

cut them down at a moment's notice. Velko had no idea if Vane had fallen on her weapon by accident, or purposely covered it with his body as he regained his strength, but it didn't matter, not now that he was smiling grimly at her, his faced badly burned.

"Clune was right," he wheezed, his eyes sparkling through the pain. "No one ever thinks to check the coward."

The guards arrived minutes later, along with Sskeer's former Padawan, Kevve Trennis, who never seemed far from her master's side. Vane was transferred to a secure wing in the medicenter, his burns dressed, and any trace of the Nihil tattoos removed from his face. Sskeer himself insisted on guarding the room, but Velko had a sneaking suspicion that he was more concerned in protecting Vane from Nihil reprisals than the Vuman making a run for it.

THE BLUE BLADE SLID MAJESTICALLY FROM THE HILT, IT'S LIGHT REFLECTED IN CLUNE'S EYES. ALL THE TIME, SSKEER FOUGHT TO STAND.

said, allowing herself a bitter grin.

"We all are, my dear. Including you, all because you ordered the lockdown. Now we have no comms and no way out of here."

"But we do have this." A broad-headed Amanin Nihil walked in front of Sskeer and Velko, holding out a very familiar weapon with his gangly arm.

"Ah yes," Clune said, taking the hilt. "The Jedi's lightsaber."

"Don't you dare..." Sskeer growled, attempting, and failing, to push himself up from beneath the Wookiee.

"Don't you dare... what?" Clune asked. "Do this?"

Velko winced as the Peasle struck Sskeer across the face with his own knuckle guard.

"Or this?"

The blue blade slid majestically from the hilt, its light reflected in Clune's eyes. All the time, Sskeer fought to stand, but was kept pinned to the floor.

flying from her hand. The second shot struck her square in the back and she went down, the dead guard's stunstick clattering to the floor.

Velko didn't look to see who had fired. She didn't have time. She brought her head back sharply, connecting with the jaw of the Nihil who was holding her. They staggered back, losing their grip and she pounced, snatching up the stunstick and bringing it around to jab it hard into the Wookiee's side. The shaggy Nihil cried out as volts flowed freely through her body, Sskeer finally able to push himself free. The saber was in his hand within seconds, Velko and the Jedi standing shoulder to shoulder, weapons bared and ready to punish any Nihil who dared attack.

But none of them even moved. Maybe it was the double-threat of saber and stunstick, or the fact that the Nihil had lost the advantage. More likely it had something to do with the blaster held in Vane Sarpo's hand, ready to

"I'm sorry," Vane said to her from his bed.

"That you got caught?" she said, trying not to smile. "Although I guess that was the general idea."

He shrugged. "Hard to spring a security block of Nihil if you're still standing in the hangar bay."

"You could have trusted me, you know? You could have told me what was happening, back in the bar."

"Could I?" He touched his cheek, flinching slightly.

"It wasn't toothache," she said, remembering him wincing at the time. "It was a warning."

He nodded. "Clune reminding me to get back to business. Which you should do too." He broke into that infuriating smile. "Especially if you're going to get me a pardon."

"Already sorted, but it wasn't me." She nodded to Sskeer standing with his broad back to them at the door.

"The old dewback has a heart?"



"The old dewback has excellent hearing too," the Trandoshan rumbled without moving.

"Then, thank you," Vane told him, before looking back at Velko. "To both of you."

"I'll check back with you later," Velko said, heading for the door. "Don't go anywhere, you hear?"

"I'll see what I can do." Vane was starting to sound more like himself, even though doubt crept into his voice as he called out: "Vel?"

She stopped, looking at him propped up in bed.

"Are you really happy here? With all

this going on? With the Nihil and the Jedi and the..."

She'd shrugged off the question last time he'd asked, sitting in Unity's. This time she didn't even hesitate, even after everything that had happened in the last few hours. Because of what happened. So what if life on the Beacon had become more difficult? Starlight was here to offer hope, to protect, to stop things like Valo happening again.

And so was she.

"Yes," she said, meaning it with all her heart. "I wouldn't be anywhere else."

THE END

STAR WARS
THE HIGH REPUBLIC

NEXT ISSUE:
An all-new story
by Justina Ireland:
"Shadows Remain,"
exclusively in
Star Wars Insider!

JEDI MASTER'S QUIZ

From Tatooine to Castilon, sporting events are a mainstay in the lives of galactic citizens. Will your *Star Wars* knowledge propel you to victory in this issue's quiz?
Compiled by Jay Stobie

"NOW *THIS* IS PODRACING!"

When it comes to competitions, are you a celebrated winner, an unlucky loser, or a nefarious cheat?

THE WINNERS

1: Other than on Tatooine, where did Qui-Gon Jinn say that podracing took place?

- A/ Naboo
- B/ Mandalore
- C/ Corellia
- D/ Malastare



2: Why did Rose Tico believe she "won" at Canto Bight's fathier races?

- A/ She took first place in a race
- B/ She freed the fathiers
- C/ She won the Fathiers Cup
- D/ She met Canto Bight's wealthy patrons

3: Which three-time winner of a racing competition on Theron visited the *Colossus*?

- A/ Marcus Speedstar
- B/ Han Solo
- C/ Poe Dameron
- D/ Kaz Xiono

4: Why did Anakin Skywalker want to enter a podrace at the time of the Blockade of Naboo?

- A/ To assist Qui-Gon Jinn with acquiring parts
- B/ To help Watto win a bet
- C/ To make enough money to leave Tatooine
- D/ To become a Jedi Knight

5: How many laps was Anakin Skywalker required to complete in that podrace?

- A/ One
- B/ Two
- C/ Three
- D/ Four



THE LOSERS



6: Why was Watto hesitant to allow Qui-Gon Jinn to enter Anakin into a podrace?

- A/ He needed Anakin to fix a speeder bike
- B/ He'd smashed up Watto's pod in a previous race
- C/ He was not much of a fan of podracing
- D/ He believed that gambling was immoral

7: Besides Anakin Skywalker, who experienced mechanical difficulties at the starting line of the podrace on Tatooine?

- A/ Sebulba
- B/ Ben Quadinaros
- C/ Gasgano
- D/ Ratts Tyerell

8: Who had a record-setting pit droid team?

- A/ Dud Bolt
- B/ Mawhonic
- C/ Ody Mandrell
- D/ Clegg Holdfast

9: Which pilot intentionally finished second during the Platform Classic?

- A/ Jarek Yeager
- B/ Griff Halloran
- C/ Torra Doza
- D/ Freya Fenris

10: How was Bo Keevil knocked out of the Platform Classic?

- A/ Keevil's racer didn't meet the competition's weight requirements
- B/ Collided with Torra Doza's racer
- C/ Keevil's racer ran out of fuel
- D/ Stun blasts from Griff Halloran's racer



THE CHEATERS

11: Which vice did Qui-Gon Jinn exploit to free Anakin Skywalker from Watto?

- A/ Jealousy
- B/ Anger
- C/ Greed
- D/ Hate

12: Why did Watto keep to his word and allow Qui-Gon to take Anakin?

- A/ He knew Anakin would become a Jedi
- B/ He wanted to free Anakin
- C/ He hoped to earn the Republic's favor
- D/ He feared the Hutts



13: The treacherous racer Sebulba was a member of which species?

- A/ Rodian
- B/ Dug
- C/ Trandoshan
- D/ Jawa



14: Who was the cruel individual that oversaw Canto Bight's fathiers?

- A/ Bargwill Tom der
- B/ Arashell Sar
- C/ Oniho Zaya
- D/ Temiri Blagg

15: Which Dragon Void Run contestant was said to be the oldest racer in the galaxy?

- A/ Loo Re Anno
- B/ Sotna Reat
- C/ Chewbacca
- D/ Delan Vook

"I ACTUALLY SAVED THE POD... MOSTLY."

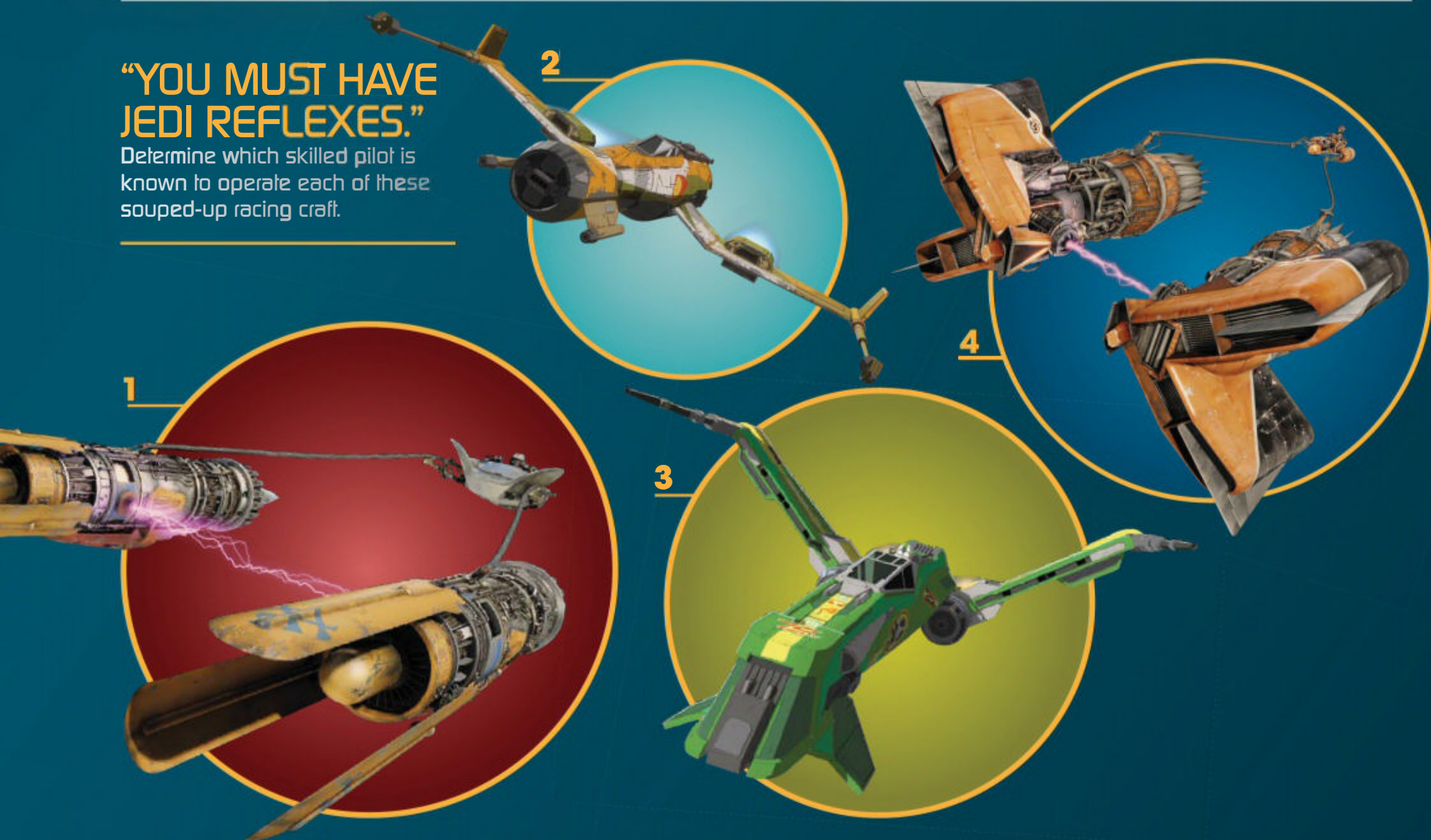
Decipher the names of these legendary sporting events:



1. THIEFAR EACRS
2. OBOANT VEE ILCASCS
3. EVIF BERSAS
4. ROMTLAPF SCLAICS
5. NORO OLINCAOL AMGES

"YOU MUST HAVE JEDI REFLEXES."

Determine which skilled pilot is known to operate each of these souped-up racing craft.



HOW DID YOU DO?

Were you able to cross the finish line and take all the rewards?

0-9: Oh no, it looks like you're having engine trouble before the race even begins.

10-19: It's working! You might actually finish the race this time.

20-24: You're so wizard! The other racers don't stand a chance.

QUIZ: 1. D, 2. B, 3. A, 4. A, 5. C, 6. B, 7. B, 8. C, 9. A, 10. D, 11. C, 12. D, 13. B, 14. A, 15. A.
"I ACTUALLY SAVED THE POD... MOSTLY." 1. Father Races, 2. Boonta Eve Classic, 3. Five Sabers, 4. Platform Classic, 5. Roon Colonial Games.
"YOU MUST HAVE JEDI REFLEXES." 1. Anakin Skywalker, 2. Kaz Xiono, 3. Hype Fazon, 4. Sebulba.

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STAR WARS

INSIDER

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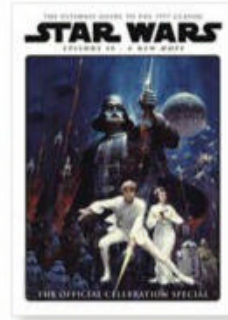
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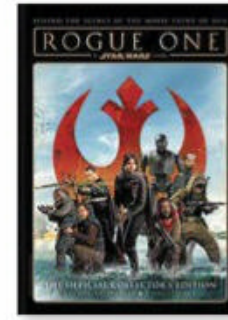
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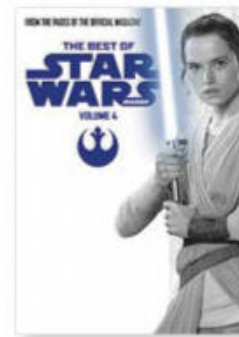
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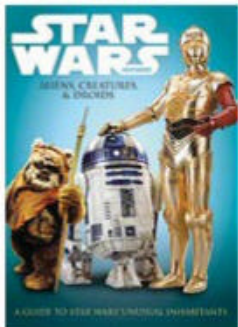
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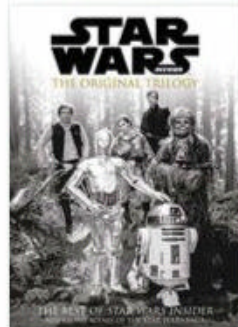
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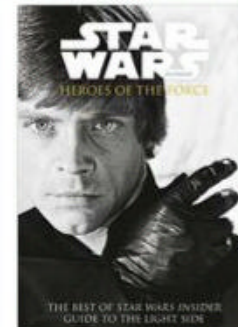
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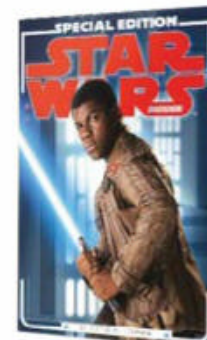
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