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BEING BOBA FETT: DANIEL LOGAN INTERVIEWED

STAR WARS

THE OFFICIAL



WOOKIEE WONDER
**PETER
MAYHEW**
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

A New Hope

Revisiting the birth of the *Star Wars* saga!

Parallel Lives

Exploring the shared values and experiences of Padmé and Leia!

Touring Tatooine

We visit the real-world locations of the saga's most famous planet!

Greg Hildebrandt

Insider speaks with the legendary *Star Wars* artist!

+
WIN!
FANTASTIC
STAR WARS
FOOTWEAR!

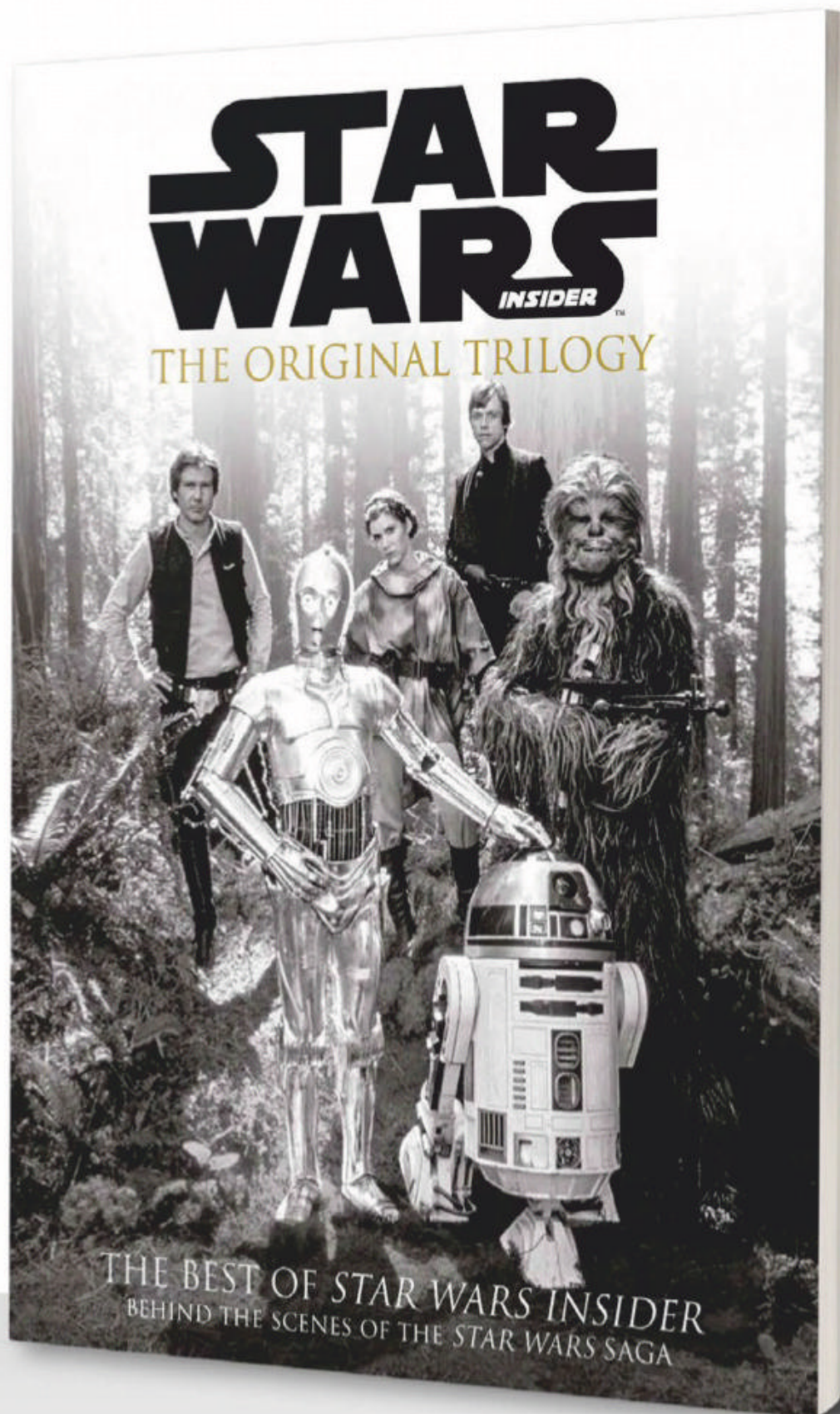
THE MAKING OF
STAR WARS:
A NEW HOPE

INTERVIEWS WITH

**GARY
KURTZ**
&
**LESLIE
DILLEY**

+ THE BEST **STAR WARS** NEWS, MERCHANDISE, REVIEWS, INTERVIEWS AND FEATURES

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WELCOME...



This is where it all began: A massive spaceship rumbles overhead, pursued by an even bigger one; a droid duo bicker while a battle rages around them, and a princess records a desperate plea for help. On a distant world, a farm boy stares longingly towards twin suns setting over a distant horizon—and an audience of millions becomes enraptured by their story. For *decades*!

My pulse quickens every time I sit down to watch *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977), our primary focus in this issue of *Star Wars Insider*. But that's nothing to do with nostalgia, or the weight of knowing where the story takes us in the sequels and prequels. It's simply because the movie is such huge fun, and remains so, some 42 years (and countless viewings) later. I still find myself chewing my knuckles in anguish as Luke's X-wing races along the Death Star trench, Vader's TIE fighter closing in, worrying whether this time—*this time*—the Force *isn't* with young Skywalker! It is. It always is. But you never know...

In this packed issue, we celebrate that great movie's 42nd anniversary in exclusive new interviews with Peter Mayhew (Chewbacca), Leslie Dilley (the original trilogy's art director), and artist Greg Hildebrandt. We also pay tribute to *A New Hope*'s late producer, Gary Kurtz, in the first of a fascinating two-part, previously unpublished interview, and take you on a tour of Tunisia's Tatooine filming locations. With young Boba Fett Daniel Logan on hand for a chat as well, the odds of you enjoying this issue are...well, we're not going to tell you the odds, but they're pretty good. May the Force be with you!

Christopher Cooper
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a galaxy far, far away....**

*Insider's look at the Skywalker saga takes in
Star Wars: A New Hope, and the world that
welcomed its fantastical, fun mythology.*



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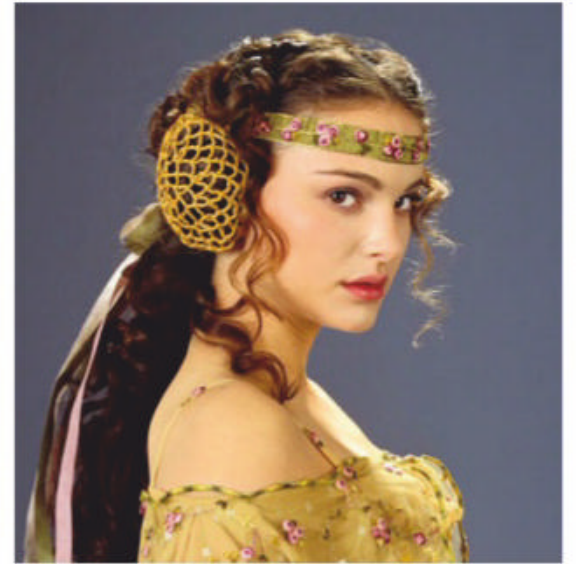
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A large, detailed image of the Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge control room. Three people are seated at a complex console with numerous buttons, levers, and screens. The background shows a view of space through a large window. The text "STAR WARS INSIDER" is at the top, and "LAUNCHPAD" is in large letters below it. Below that, a line of text reads "NEWS / BOOKS / COMICS / TOYS / GAMES / FASHION".

STAR WARS INSIDER

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May the 31st Be With You!

A glimpse of the goodies at *Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge*, and opening dates confirmed

It's official: doors open at *Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge* at California's Disneyland Resort on May 31, 2019, with the long-awaited attraction opening at Florida's Walt Disney World Resort on August 29.

The Disney Parks blog announced on March 7 that both will debut ahead of schedule, as interest has been so high from guests eager to experience the immersive *Star Wars*-themed land. To enable this early access, each *Galaxy's Edge* will open in two phases: from day one, visitors will get a chance to board the *Millennium Falcon* and take the ship on a dangerous mission in the intense "Smuggler's Run" attraction.

Phase two, launching later in the year, will see the awe-inspiring "Rise of the Resistance" ride take flight, in what has been described as one of the most epic attraction experiences in Disney Parks' history. Featuring two life-sized AT-ATs, the ride will include special appearances by BB-8, Finn (John Boyega), Poe Dameron (Oscar Issac), and Rey (Daisy Ridley).

From opening day, guests will be able to explore the sights and sounds of Batuu, with a *Star Wars*-style locale around every corner, and cast members dressed in suitably galactic attire. Stores offering unique merchandise include a Toydarian toy shop and Black Spire Outfitters, where visitors can buy in-

universe gear that wouldn't look out of place anywhere in a galaxy far, far away. You can even pick up an astromech at the local Droid Depot, and build your own custom lightsaber courtesy of Savi's Workshop. Blue and green milk will be on offer, plus other culinary delights at eateries including Docking Bay 7 Food and Cargo, serving the likes of Fried Endorian Tip-Yip and Ronto Wraps!

Guests visiting Disneyland's *Galaxy's Edge* between May 31 and June 23, 2019 will be required to make a no-cost reservation, subject to availability, to access the land. Information on how to make a reservation will be available soon via [Disneyland.com](https://www.disneyland.com) and the [Disney Parks Blog](#).



Nurture a virtual porg pet with ILMxLAB.



Porg Patrol

Mixing realities with the cute *Star Wars* critters

Following on from such immersive experiences as *Trials on Tatooine* and *Secrets of the Empire*, ILMxLAB's long-awaited *Project Porg* breaks out of VR installations so you can enjoy *Star Wars* mixed reality in the comfort of your own home.

Lucasfilm's in-house innovators have collaborated with Magic Leap, utilizing the tech company's advanced Magic Leap One mixed-reality headset (known as Lightwear) that layers computer-generated imagery and hi-fidelity audio over real-world environments. Thanks to the unit's superpowered processor

and numerous sensors, the result is the most realistic virtual pet any *Star Wars* fan could ask for—your very own porg.

Insider spoke to Susan Greenhow, the project producer at ILMxLAB, to find out more.

***Star Wars Insider:* What sparked the initial idea for Project Porg?**

Susan Greenhow: ILMxLAB had been working with Magic Leap over the course of a few years to develop a deeper understanding of how to tell stories that integrate our beloved characters in the mixed-reality medium. One of our driving ideas was creating a real connection with a character, or characters, in mixed reality. Porgs were a perfect choice, and an element of the *Star Wars* universe we were really excited to play with.

Were porgs your first choice?

We tried more than a few characters and scenarios while we were testing out ideas, but in the end we settled on porgs as a great match for the intimate spaces that best suit the Magic Leap One platform. Their size and cuteness really draw you into the experience, and help create the sense of connection we wanted to achieve.





What were the technical hurdles in transferring the porgs from the movie screen into 3-dimensional space?

Working in real-time and three-dimensional space meant that the porgs had to hold up visually wherever, and whenever, they might appear. It is a lot more challenging than having them play to camera for a set length of time, as in a shot for a movie. We also had to ensure that they had the same cute personalities and adorable behavior in mixed reality as they did in *Star Wars: The Last Jedi* (2017).

Making the porgs seem real isn't just about convincing animation. What was the process behind creating their behavioural patterns?

Getting the porgs to interact with each other and respond to the user was a real journey, and at the heart of what we aimed to achieve in our experiment. Shaping their behavior and drawing out the porgs' personalities was truly an iterative process with our partners at Magic Leap and Schell Games, and that's where we were able to really capitalize on the Magic Leap One's features. We were also able to work with Paul Kavanagh, animation supervisor on *The Last Jedi*, and the Lucasfilm Story

Group to make the porgs completely authentic. We talk about the creative journey in more detail on our YouTube channel and at ILMxLAB.com.

In terms of audience reach, mixed-reality is still very new. What do you think will drive the growth of augmented and mixed reality, and its future as an entertainment medium?

Getting hardware in the hands of fans is always the first step, but compelling experiences make devices that much more valuable. If fans can access the medium and there's compelling content that's unique, mixed reality will continue to grow. It's a unique and incredibly fun medium, and we're excited to see more people get introduced to it.

Vader Immortal, previewed at Star Wars Celebration, is ILMxLAB's next major project, but what else do you have in the pipeline?

We are always exploring new ways of storytelling in immersive entertainment. Most immediately, we have Episode I of *Vader Immortal: A Star Wars VR Series* coming to the new Oculus Quest headset this spring. You'll have to stay tuned for more!

The Empire Tunes Up

The Films In Concert experience strikes back

If John William's "Imperial March" makes the hairs on the back of your neck stand on end, then imagine the prospect of hearing it played by a live orchestra as *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) is projected on a vast, high-definition movie screen.

This September, the *Star Wars* saga returns to London's Royal Albert Hall for five screenings of the classic movie, with John Williams' iconic score performed live on stage for the first time in the U.K. by the acclaimed Philharmonia Orchestra, conducted by Dirk Brossé.

"We were delighted to host the U.K. premiere of *Star Wars: A New Hope* In Concert last year," said the Royal Albert Hall's Artistic Director Lucy Noble, adding, "We're ecstatic that *Star Wars* is coming back this year, with the most critically acclaimed and musically groundbreaking movie in the series."

Celebrating the 10th anniversary of the historic venue's Films in Concert series, a total of 499,080 movie fans have experienced a wide range of films with live music, from *Raiders of the Lost Ark* to Disney's *Fantasia*. The 500,000th ticket is set to be bought for one of *The Empire Strikes Back* concerts, and will win that lucky purchaser a special prize. Visit royalalberthall.com for tickets.



King of the Swingers

Display a droid deity with this Funko Movie Moment

You have to feel sorry for C-3PO. One moment he's on a perfectly innocent covert mission to a forest moon, and the next he's accidentally become a living god to a race of small, furry creatures with a somewhat gruesome taste in accessories. It's a moment the golden droid might prefer to forget, but the fine people at Funko aren't ready to let it go, and they've recreated the protocol droid's ascent to shining Ewok mascot with their latest *Star Wars* Movie Moments release.

Presented on a display base of logs that wouldn't look out of place in the Ewok village, "Encounter on Endor" includes a bobble-headed figure of C-3PO looking resplendent on his makeshift throne, while Ewok shaman Logray clutches Luke Skywalker's lightsaber suspiciously in his paw.

The Pop! Vinyl Movie Moment is just the latest in a growing line of *Star Wars* scenes recreated in Funko's trademark style, and is available from retail and online stores priced \$29.99.



Pop! goes the protocol droid!
In stores now.



THE LIGHT SIDE

By Jamie Cosley



Jar Jar Car Wars

Don't forget your safety belt

Drivers beware—the Gungan with the most dubious safety record in the galaxy now has his very own mode of transport, courtesy of Mattel's range of Hot Wheels *Star Wars* character cars.

Unveiled at New York Toy Fair, the paintwork on Jar Jar Binks' ride reflects his mottled salmon skin tones, while his eyes and swept-back ears become lights and tail fins, making this Jar Jar-themed jalopy look, dare we say it, kinda cool. Designed by Lindsey Lee at 1/64 scale,



the toy car matches the rest of the ever-growing series. Droids R2-Q5 and R5-D4 are also due to join the range shortly.

Hot Wheels *Star Wars* Character Cars are available in all good toy stores for a pocket money-friendly \$3.99. Check out the full range at hotwheels.mattel.com.



(Don't) use the "Fork"!

Force yourself to use lightsaber chopsticks instead

Kotobukiya's popular lightsaber chopstick Chop Saber range is back by popular demand, but this time there's a twist—at the press of a button you can make your eating utensil light up, thanks to a built-in LED.

The chopsticks measure 10" long, and there's a choice of whose weapon to use to dip into your lunchtime

bento box, with the lightsabers of Darth Vader, Yoda, Mace Windu, and Luke Skywalker on offer. Each Chop Saber has a detachable hilt to allow for cleaning without damaging the culinary implement's special light-up functionality, and the original, non-light-up Chop Sabers (made of translucent plastic) also get a re-release. Available now from \$13.99.

Timeline

Important dates in *Star Wars* history.

1922

May 27: Christopher Lee (Count Dooku) is born.

1944

May 19: Peter Mayhew, the original Chewbacca actor, is born.

1944

May 25: Puppeteer and film director Frank Oz (Yoda) is born.

1953

June 5: Kathleen Kennedy, President of Lucasfilm, is born.

1976

Apr 13: Filming begins on the cantina interior scenes for *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977) at Elstree Studios, London.

1980

May 21: *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) is released in cinemas.

1981

June 9: Natalie Portman (Padmé Amidala) is born.

1985

May 18: Marvel U.K.'s weekly *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* comic publishes its 100th issue.

1987

June 6: Young Boba Fett actor Daniel Logan is born.

1999

May 1: *Star Wars: Episode I Racer* is released for the Nintendo 64.





Celebrating the Brick

20th anniversary commemorated with five new LEGO sets

These days you can't throw a small, perfectly formed, plastic brick without hitting LEGO sets based on films, television shows, and pop culture characters. But back in April 1999, it was one film series in particular that started it all—*Star Wars*.

The first intellectual property to be licensed in LEGO Group history, the original sets based on the world's best sci-fi saga were made for *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* (1999). The rest, as they say, is history. Now, two decades and a lot of attention to detail later, LEGO are celebrating the range with special redesigned commemorative versions of their most popular models from the last 20 years.

Announced at New York Toy Fair in February, Lego revealed five commemorative sets that arrived in stores on April 1, each featuring a bonus commemorative minifigure.

The 1,007 piece Slave I replicates the curves of Boba Fett's infamous starship, and comes with five minifigures that include Fett himself, Han Solo (plus

this block of carbonite), 4-LOM, and Zuckuss. The special extra minifigure is a recreation of Princess Leia from the year 2000.

Anakin's Podracer is a smaller build, with 279 pieces and three minifigures—Anakin Skywalker, Padme Amidala, and bonus Luke Skywalker circa 1999.

As seen in *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1980), the Snowspeeder set has 309 pieces, and comes with minifigures of Luke Skywalker, a Hoth Rebel Trooper and Dak Ralter, with a commemorative minifigure of Lando Calrissian from 2003. The Clone Scout Walker comes with minifigures of Year 1999 Darth Vader, a Wookiee, a Clone Scout Trooper, and a battle droid, while the smallest of the anniversary sets, the 125 piece Imperial Dropship, comes with a shadowtrooper, three stormtrooper minifigures to help build up your army, and a special Year 2000 Han Solo minifigure.

The anniversary sets, featuring stunning retro packaging, are in toy stores now with prices ranging from \$19.99 to \$119.99.





Back to the Future

The Retro Collection is available now!

Hasbro turn back time with Retro Kenner action figures

It was like Christmas had come around again at February's New York's Toy Fair, with a huge raft of *Star Wars* products announced. And when we say it was like Christmas, we mean like our actual childhood Christmas, thanks to a new range from Hasbro.

The Retro Collection features direct replicas of the original 1978 Kenner action figure line, with classic packaging emulating the original cardbacks in exacting detail, albeit deliberately aged and bearing a large Retro Collection

logo to avoid any confusion with the vintage (and much-prized) toys they're based upon.

Leading the way are six of the original 12 figures—Darth Vader, Chewbacca, Princess Leia, Luke Skywalker, Stormtrooper, and Han Solo—all at their original 3.75 inch size, and available exclusively at Target and target.com, priced at \$9.99 each. Alongside the figures, Hasbro are also re-releasing an updated version of the classic 1977 Escape from Death Star Board Game, which comes with a brand

new Grand Moff Tarkin Retro Collection figure in the box.

If your retro vibe is more prequel than original trilogy, Hasbro had another surprise up the sleeves of its Jedi robes to commemorate the 20th anniversary of *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* (1999). Joining the 6-inch Black Series range as *Star Wars* Celebration exclusives come two special figures—Duel of the Fates Darth Maul and Obi-Wan Kenobi—on special backing cards that reproduce the original look of the packaging from 1999.

Book Club

From X-wings to TIE fighters to the *Millennium Falcon* itself, the latest *Star Wars* book releases shoot for the stars.



Discover the secrets of ILM and *Solo: A Star Wars Story*

Many Hands Made *Solo* Work

Behind the scenes of *Solo: A Star Wars Story*

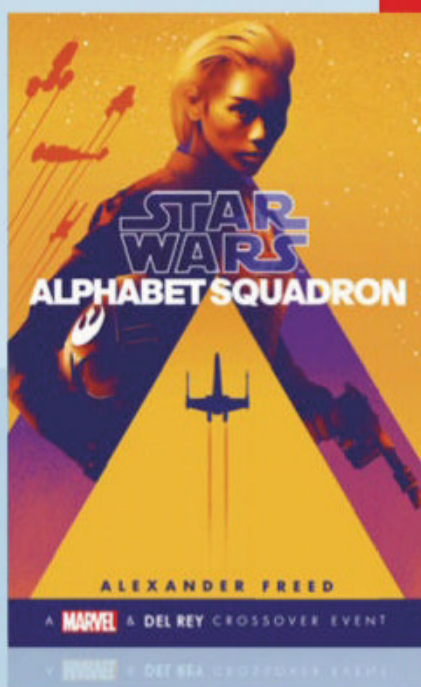
Founded by George Lucas in 1975 to create the groundbreaking effects for the original *Star Wars* movie, Industrial Light & Magic continues to achieve unparalleled success as the powerhouse behind the visual effects for many of modern cinema's most incredible blockbusters. In Abrams' *Industrial Light & Magic Presents: Making Solo: A Star Wars Story*, fans are given an unprecedented and

unique look at the company's work on the Han Solo origin movie, with a behind-the-scenes collection of art and photography providing an insider's perspective on the making of 2018's big-screen *Star Wars* story.

Writer Rob Bredow—head of ILM and co-producer and visual effects supervisor on *Solo*—was on set throughout the film's journey from script to screen, and with a stills

camera always in hand he took full advantage of this opportunity to document every phase of its production. As a result, Bredow has collected a wealth of candid images that sit alongside conceptual artwork and expert testimony from ILM staffers, telling a fascinating visual story of how a modern effects movie comes together. The 256-page book is available now.

01



02

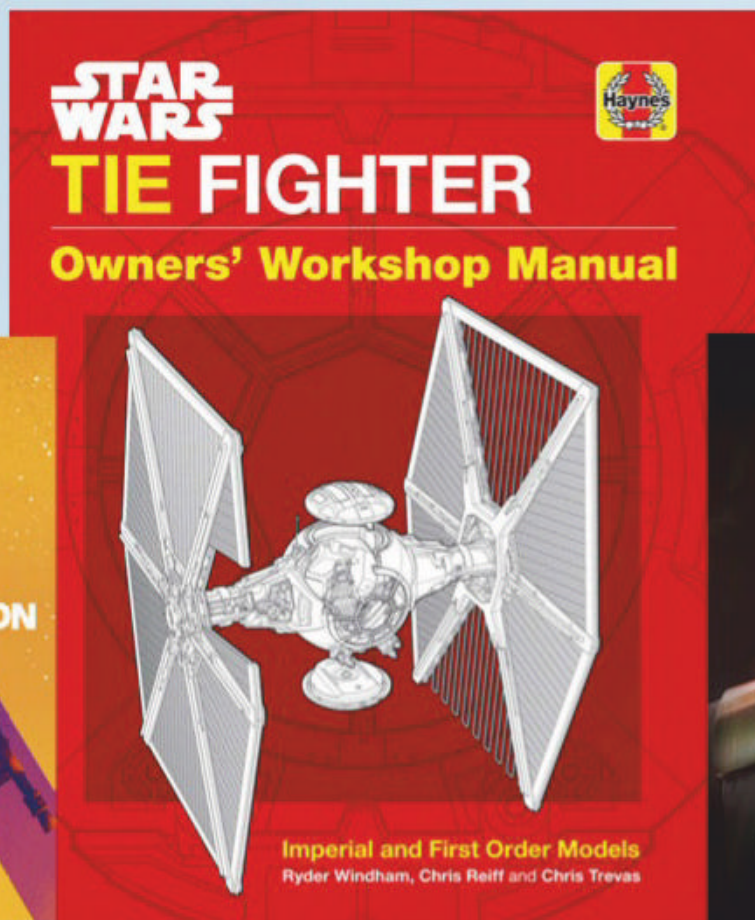
Alphabet Squadron

The June 11 release of *Star Wars: Alphabet Squadron* from Del Rey Books marks the beginning of an all-new *Star Wars* trilogy, set after the events of *Return of the Jedi*.

Written by Alexander Freed, *Alphabet Squadron* centers on a team of mismatched New Republic pilots who are ordered by General Hera Syndulla to track down Shadow Wing, a group of elite Imperial flyers. As the name implies, Alphabet Squadron is made up of a ragtag fleet of starfighters comprised of A-wings, B-wings, U-wings, X-wings, and Y-wings, with an equally varied complement of pilots at the controls.

Fans looking for the complete story should look out for Marvel Comics' *Star Wars: TIE Fighter*, a five-issue miniseries that follows the adventures of Alphabet Squadron's targets, Shadow Wing.

02



01

Star Wars: TIE Fighter Manual

Coming May 6 from Haynes Publishing, *Star Wars: TIE Fighter Manual* presents an in-depth exploration into the unforgettable movie starfighter.

The TIE fighter was the mainstay of the Imperial fleet and became the most iconic starfighter released by Sienar Fleet Systems, and the TIE's distinctive H-shaped silhouette continues to strike fear during the era of the First Order. Written by Ryder Windham, the *TIE Fighter Manual* also covers the many variants of the series, including the rides of Darth Vader and Kylo Ren.

With all-new cutaway diagrams and hundreds of illustrations and photos, this 128-page manual is the most thorough operating guide available for the pride of the Imperial Navy.

03



03

Thrawn: Treason

Since he first appeared in Timothy Zahn's 1990s *Star Wars* novels to his looming presence in the animated series *Star Wars Rebels*, Grand Admiral Thrawn has always been one of the saga's most delightfully intelligent villains. Now he's back, and as cunning as ever.

Set before the events of the *Rebels* series finale, author Timothy Zahn's latest novel—*Thrawn: Treason*—is the long-awaited follow-up *Thrawn: Alliances*, and sees the Grand Admiral cross paths with *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*'s loathsome Director Orson Krennic.

With the Death Star poised to obliterate the Empire's traditional hierarchies of power, must Thrawn turn traitor in order to save his homeworld? Find out when the novel is released on July 23rd.

Comics Roundup

This month's *Star Wars* comics offer a wealth of retro action and adventure.



The Marvel of Time Travel

Star Wars Legends: The Original Marvel Years #108

Marvel Comics was the first storyteller to extend the *Star Wars* saga beyond the films, with a comic book series that ran for 107 issues from 1977 to 1986. This May, the beloved comic takes a step back in time to extend its run by one more issue after a three-decade hiatus.

Star Wars Legends: The Original Marvel Years continues the numbering of the original run in celebration of Marvel's 80th anniversary with issue #108, and writer Matthew Rosenberg brings some of the series' favorite characters back, including Valance the bounty hunter, and Jaxxon, the smart-mouthed space bunny.

Providing a capstone to the series seems like an impossible task, given that its lineup of iconic creators included Archie Goodwin, Roy Thomas, Howard Chaykin, Al Williamson, David Michelinie, Klaus Janson, and Jo Duffy, but Rosenberg clearly recognizes how much impact the *Star Wars* comics had on fans hungry for more stories in an era before movie spinoffs and on-demand streaming. Ultimately, issue #108 provides something for classic and modern fans alike. Featuring artwork by Giuseppe Camuncoli, Luke Ross, Kerry Gammill, and Andrea Broccardo, *with* an all-new cover by original series artist Walt Simonson.

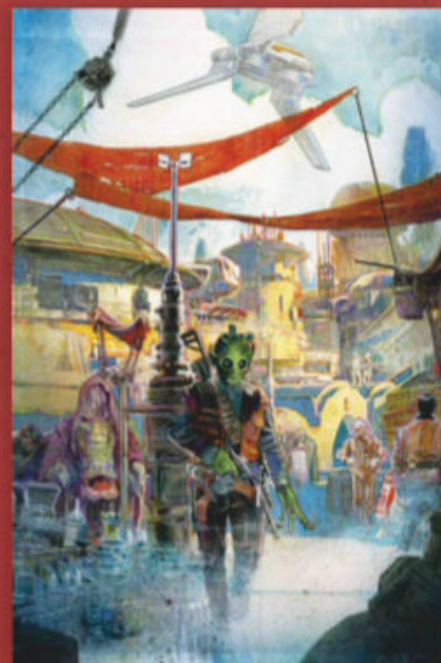
Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge #1 (of 5)

Star Wars fans have been counting down the days until *Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge* opens for business, ready to immerse themselves in their own Black Spire Outpost adventure. But for those who can't wait, or won't have an opportunity to make their way to the mysterious planet of Batuu anytime soon, a new five-part Marvel miniseries promises a sneak peek into the wonderful world of *Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge*.

The story, by writer Ethan Sacks and artist Will Sliney, takes place on the shady trading planet, which

for generations has played host to pirates, merchants, and wanderers who have ventured to the Outer Rim to settle scores or sell their treasures. But as the First Order encroaches on Batuu's territory, it becomes clear that the outpost can't stay under the radar forever. Could the key to saving Black Spire lay in a long-ago job performed by smugglers Han Solo and Chewbacca?

Issue #1 is in stores from April 24, with cover art by Rod Reis, Tommy Lee Edwards, and others. Issue #2 follows on May 22.



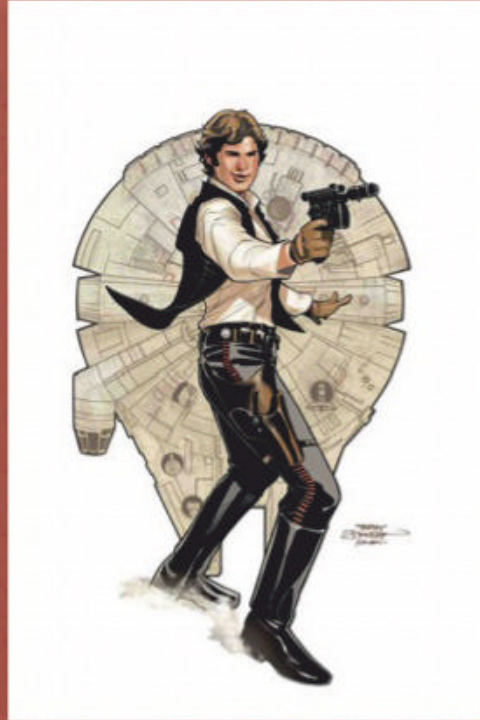
*Not final art

Star Wars: Age of Rebellion Han Solo #1 and Boba Fett #1

Writer Greg Pak offers up a double punch of original trilogy action in this dynamic duo of one-shots from Marvel's *Age of Rebellion*, starring Han Solo and his bounty hunting nemesis Boba Fett.

Featuring art by Chris Sprouse, *Age of Rebellion—Han Solo #1* (in stores on May 1) finds the Corellian scoundrel agreeing to help Luke Skywalker and his rebel comrades one last time. But will an old accomplice of Solo out-scoundrel him?

Meanwhile, in *Age of Rebellion—Boba Fett #1*, we get to the heart of the bounty hunter as he goes on the trail of a true villain. With art by Marc Laming, *Boba Fett #1* is available from May 8.



Star Wars: TIE Fighter #2 (of 5)

The Emperor is dead, but the mission of Shadow Wing goes on in the second issue of this five-part mini-series.

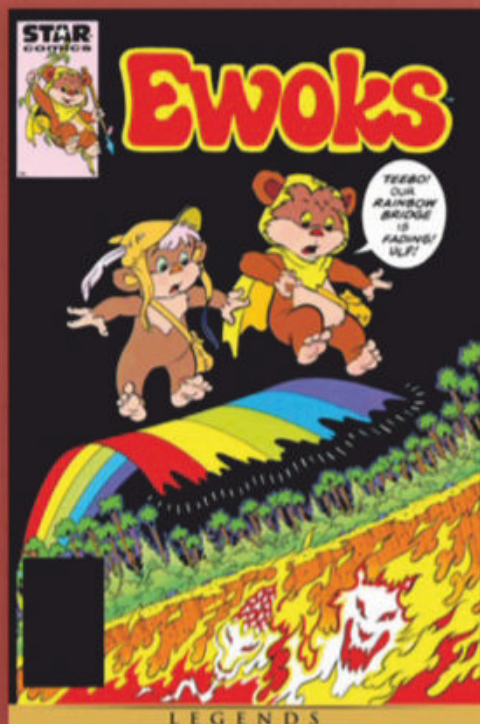
As writer Jody Houser and artist Rogê Antônio's tale continues, shock engulfs the TIE pilots of Shadow Wing when it appears they may have come under fire from their fellow Imperials. Could the dangerous influence of the traitors in the Rebellion have extended even further than they had anticipated, or might something more sinister be at work? Find out on May 15, as the elite pilots of Shadow Wing set out to investigate treason in the ranks.



Star Wars Ewoks #1

Star Wars fans can travel all the way back to the 1980s thanks to Marvel Comics' "True Believers" reprint program, and the May 1 release of *Star Wars Ewoks #1*.

Originally published by Star Comics (an imprint of Marvel) in May of 1985 as a tie-in to the animated television series of the same name, this adventure unites Ewok heroes Wicket, Teebo, and Princess Kneesaa as they venture far beyond the safe environs of Bright Tree Village on an epic quest for a cure for the deadly effects of the Nightshade thorn, hidden somewhere in the forests of Endor.



Incoming

Don't Miss These
Upcoming Releases



MAY

Star Wars #65

Marvel Comics

Writer: Kieron Gillen

Artist: Angel Unzueta

Cover Artist: Gerald Parel

Star Wars Adventures #22

IDW Comics

Writers: Elsa Charretier,
Pierrick Colinet

Artist: Elsa Charretier

Cover Artist: Elsa Charretier

Doctor Aphra #32

Marvel Comics

Writer: Si Spurrier

Artist: Wilton Santos

Cover Artist: Ashley Witter

Star Wars: Age of Republic #1

Jabba the Hutt

Marvel Comics

Writer: Greg Pak

Artist: Marc Laming

Cover Artists: Terry Dodson,
Rachel Dodson

Star Wars: Age of Republic #1

Lando Calrissian

Marvel Comics

Writer: Greg Pak

Artist: Chris Sprouse

Cover Artists: Terry Dodson,
Rachel Dodson

Star Wars Adventures

Annual 2019

IDW Comics

Writer: Cavan Scott

Artist: Mauricet

Cover Artist: Stan Sakai



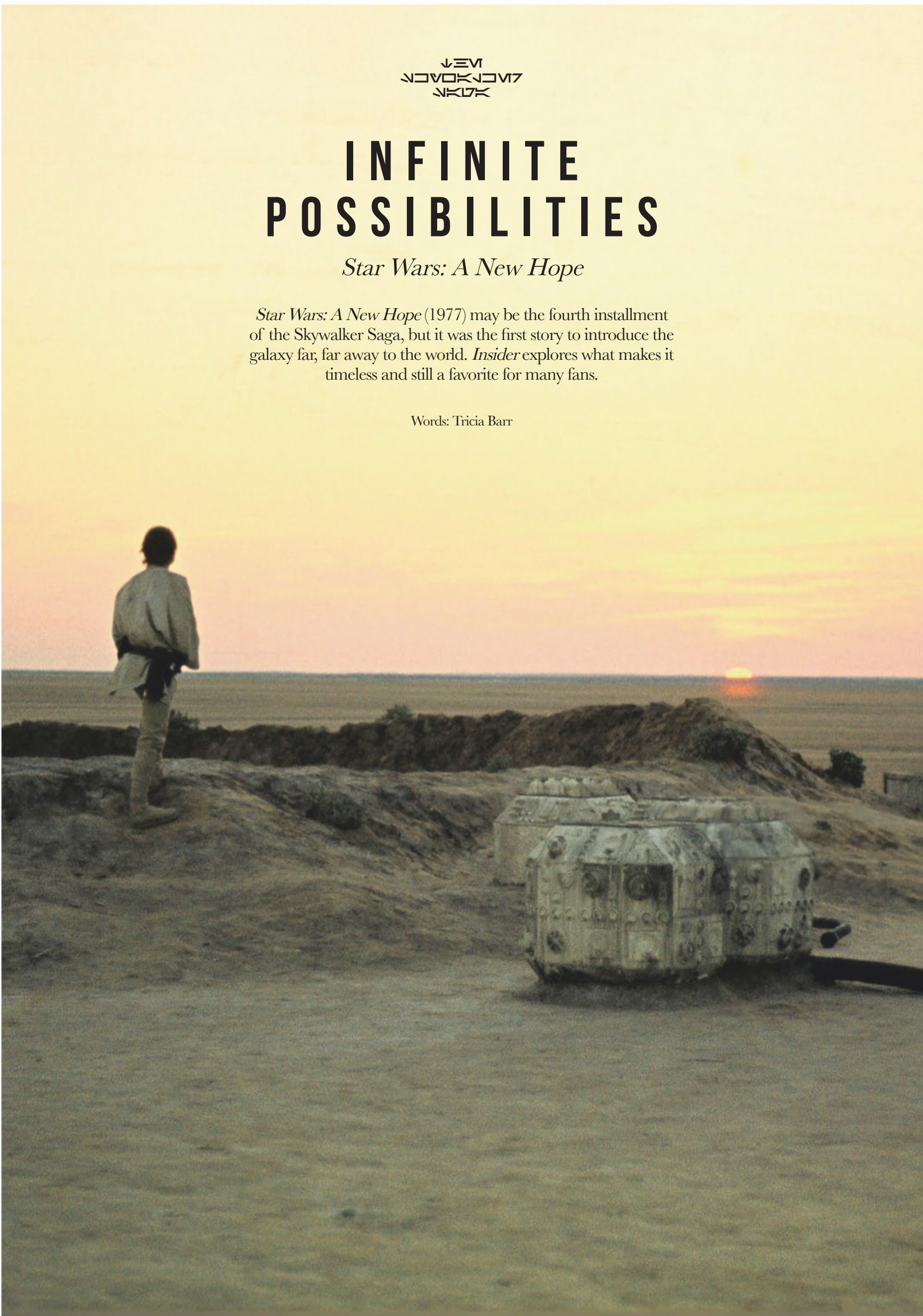
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INFINITE POSSIBILITIES

Star Wars: A New Hope

Star Wars: A New Hope (1977) may be the fourth installment of the Skywalker Saga, but it was the first story to introduce the galaxy far, far away to the world. *Insider* explores what makes it timeless and still a favorite for many fans.

Words: Tricia Barr



“*STAR WARS* WILL UNDOUBTEDLY EMERGE AS ONE OF THE TRUE CLASSICS IN THE GENRE OF SCIENCE FICTION/FANTASY FILMS. IN ANY EVENT, IT WILL BE THRILLING AUDIENCES OF ALL AGES FOR A LONG TIME TO COME.”

RON PENNINGTON, *THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER*

FACTS & FIGURES

Title / *Star Wars: A New Hope*

Episode / Four

Poster Tagline / A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away....

Theatrical Release / May 25, 1977

Run time / 121 mins

MPAA / “Rated PG”

Budget / \$11 Million

Domestic Opening Weekend / \$1,554,475

Domestic Box Office / \$460,998,007

Worldwide Box Office / \$775,398,007

Awards / Academy Awards for Best Art Direction, Best Costume Design, Best Film Editing, Best Original Score, Best Sound, and Best Visual Effects.



S

ometimes it seems like we already know everything there is to know about *Star Wars: A New Hope*.

Today, fans have access to four decades-worth of print and television interviews, behind-the-scenes documentaries, and making-of books that provide insight not just from cast and crew, but directly from George Lucas himself. The first *Star Wars* story is not some half-forgotten movie from a bygone era, and it never will be: on holiday weekends it often finds its way into TV scheduling, and of course, home entertainment makes it immediately available at a moment's whim. And yet—even now—it transpires that not all the film's secrets have been uncovered. For National Trivia Day (January 4) 2019, Luke Skywalker actor Mark Hamill shared this gem on Twitter: “Because of a record heatwave in England when we filmed the original [*Star Wars*], most of the pilots wore only the top-half of their costume, attacking the Death Star wearing shorts.” A revelation

that means we may never look at Red Squadron the same way again.

After taking an introspective look at each of the prequel trilogy movies in the last three issues of *Insider*, Episode IV heralds the origins of the franchise, with the story of a farm boy who took on the mighty Death Star and at the same time launched a movie-making juggernaut. Over the years, much has been written about how every *Star Wars* tale that followed *A New Hope* has broadened and deepened our understanding of it. Less familiar, now, is the film as a singular entity in the context in which it first existed. Back in 1977, *Star Wars* (the movie's sparse title for its initial theatrical release) became a cultural zeitgeist with the right mix of ingredients: timing, never-before-seen visuals, and a script that relied on the universal understanding of myth. Lucas' *tour de force* changed the audience and the movie industry in the process.

It's All In The Timing

Star Wars premiered amid a decade of major upheaval in the USA. Military involvement in Vietnam ended with retreat

► and acrimony, and within a year, Richard Nixon became the first president to resign the office after the stunning revelations of the Watergate scandal. Opposition to the desegregation of schools extended beyond the South to cities like Boston, and the push to codify the victories of the women's rights movement into a constitutional Equal Rights Amendment stalled short of the number of states needed for ratification. Optimism for the power of protest to change society for the better had given way to cynicism about the lengths those in power would go to keep it.

Hollywood's prestige films reflected this social consciousness. Instead of heroic figures, the protagonists were often gangsters or criminals, as in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* (1969), *The Godfather* (1972) and *The Godfather: Part II* (1974), *The Sting* (1973), *Chinatown* (1974), and *Dog Day Afternoon* (1975). Other movies highlighted the dysfunction of human relationships, from *Cabaret* (1972), *Deliverance* (1972), and *The Exorcist* (1973) to *Jaws* (1975) and *Taxi Driver* (1976). Some offered nothing less than surreal dystopia, as in *A Clockwork Orange* (1971) and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1975). There were exceptions, of course, including Lucas' coming-of-age movie *American Graffiti* (1973), but notably few of the decade's most acclaimed and financially successful films offered much in the way of aspirational escapism.

Against that movie milieu, *Star Wars* gave audiences a stark contrast. The good guys won (and they were heroes worthy of rooting for), while the bad guys lost, earning comeuppance for their arrogance. Despite the near-death escapes and long odds, hope *could* still prevail, and the movie gave audiences permission to be optimistic again, too.

Seeing is Believing

To aid in visualizing his universe, George Lucas turned to artist Ralph McQuarrie, creator of an

01



eclectic portfolio that included drawings of teeth and dental equipment, manual diagrams for aircraft manufacturer Boeing, and film posters. It was McQuarrie's illustrations of key moments in Lucas' script that helped convince 20th Century Fox to undertake the space opera. Credited with defining many of the iconic looks for the franchise, including the *Millennium Falcon*, Chewbacca, C-3PO and R2-D2, it was the artist's suggestions for Darth Vader and his samurai-infused look that cemented the Sith Lord as one of the most recognizable characters in film history. In an interview with *Star Wars Insider* #76 in 2004, McQuarrie recalled Lucas' ideas for Vader: "He wanted to have a very tall, dark, fluttering figure that had a spooky feeling, like it came in on the wind." McQuarrie's addition of a breathing apparatus stuck around long after the Imperial troops boarded the captured blockade runner, and ultimately even influenced the villain's backstory.

02



Back in 1977, *Star Wars* (the sparse title for its initial theatrical release) became a cultural zeitgeist.

The first *Star Wars* story is not some half-forgotten movie from a bygone era, and it never will be.

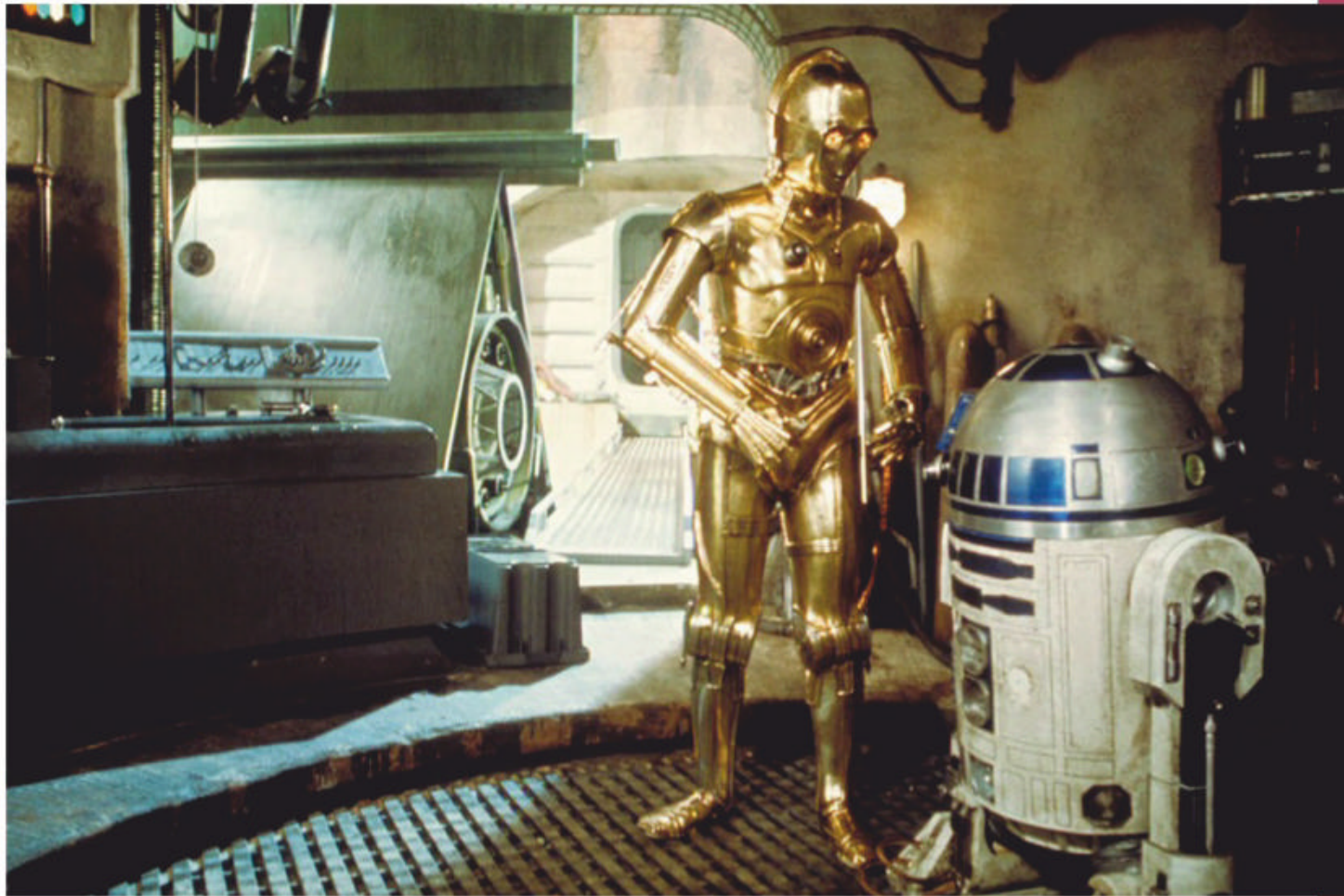
03



01 Ralph McQuarrie's samurai-infused concept art of Darth Vader.

02 The color palette used to define the Empire was kept deliberately sterile.

03 Much of the first 20 minutes of *A New Hope* is spent in the company of droids R2-D2 and C-3PO.



As concept became reality during filming, the lived-in feel of the galaxy far, far away contrasted starkly against other science-fiction films and television of the day, such as *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) and *Star Trek* (1966-1969), which depicted futuristic civilizations in pristine condition. While the interiors of the Death Star—coded with black, white, and gray—reinforced this notion of the sterile Empire, Tatooine and the rebel base appeared time-worn and in desperate need of repair. X-wings were patched together, while the droids C-3PO and R2-D2 were bumped and scraped and required basic maintenance. The movie visually delineated the haves from the have-nots, eliminating the need to explain why we should root for the underdog Rebel Alliance; instead, it clearly *showed* us, in no uncertain terms.

The Evolution of an Idea

Having directed the successful *American Graffiti*, Lucas embarked on his next project, a movie inspired by *The Hidden Fortress* (1958). The biggest parallel with Akira Kurosawa's classic is the way the adventure unfolds through the eyes of the lowliest characters. In *A New Hope's* case, this lens to the adventure is the droids. The opening crawl tells the basics of the journey: civil war and rebels versus an Empire in possession of a superweapon that must be stopped. It takes 20 minutes from the point Leia deposits the stolen Death Star plans in R2-D2 until her plea to Obi-Wan Kenobi is revealed, and much of that time is spent with the mechanical duo.

Although *A New Hope* borrows several ideas from Kurosawa, Lucas was aiming for a film in the vein of the 1936 serial *Flash Gordon*, the ►



04



NEW HOPE

Though outwardly one of the feelgood movies in the Skywalker saga films, *A New Hope* is deep into the saga's dark cycle. Evil dominates the galaxy, and Darth Vader—the Emperor's merciless enforcer—is its physical representation. The heroic yet conflicted focus of the prequel trilogy, Anakin Skywalker, is long gone. In his place, Vader is a truly terrifying reminder that any of us has the potential to become the villain of the piece.

Like many other popular stories, *Star Wars* explores the theme of the parent-child relationship. Are we beholden to our parents' desires or their status in life? Does destiny compel us to become what our parents are? In William Shakespeare's play, *The Merchant of Venice*, the character Launcelot spells this out specifically:

"The sins of the father are to be laid upon the children."

Faced with the murder of Aunt Beru and Uncle Owen at the hands of the Empire, Luke Skywalker pledges to join Obi-Wan Kenobi on his quest. In his most desperate hour, Luke finds hope in a new understanding of his father, recently revealed by Kenobi (albeit from a certain point of view). Confronted with evil, he wants to counter that darkness, to become a guardian of peace and justice who uses the Force for good.

Just like cinema audiences in 1977, Luke wasn't yet aware that the Jedi his father had been and the towering, black-clad Sith Lord were one and the same. That Darth Vader might be given a chance to turn back to the light was not even a consideration. It's a measure of how different Luke and Anakin/Vader are that, when he learned the truth, the son of Skywalker became determined to try.

Luke Skywalker's journey in *A New Hope* maps over to Campbell's monomythic structure so well that it has become a frequent example for explaining the mythic concept.

► rights to which he had tried to buy before setting his sights on creating *Star Wars*. Both *Flash Gordon* and *Buck Rogers* (1939) serials used crawls to establish where each installment began, and likewise, *A New Hope's* iconic intro and the film's *in media res* (meaning "into the middle of things") opening gives the impression that we have been dropped into the middle of the story, paving the way for the prequel trilogy two decades later. Losing out on the rights to *Flash Gordon* opened a door of infinite storytelling possibilities, and with McQuarrie's help, Lucas—to borrow a phrase from Han Solo—"imagined quite a bit."

Ultimately the original story Lucas pitched, a 13-page summary, and the final shooting script, went through several changes, as evidenced by an early version of the crawl which revealed quite a different tale:

"Until the recent GREAT REBELLION, the JEDI BENDU were the most feared warriors in the universe. For one hundred

thousand years, generations of JEDI perfected their art as the personal bodyguards of the EMPEROR. They were the chief architects of the invincible IMPERIAL SPACE FORCE, which expanded the EMPIRE across the galaxy, from the celestial equator to the farthest reaches of the GREAT RIFT.

"Now these legendary warriors are all but extinct. One by one, they have been hunted down and destroyed as enemies of the NEW EMPIRE by a ferocious and sinister rival warrior sect, THE KNIGHTS OF SITH."

Even the shooting script, *Adventures of Luke Starkiller—As Taken from the "Journal of the Whills" (Saga I): Star Wars*, called its protagonist by another name. The ideas in these many versions were often recycled into later stories, including the names Starkiller, Mace Windu, and Bendu.

The Language of Myth

The influence of Joseph Campbell's book *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* on the storytelling in *Star*

05

04 The opening of *A New Hope* drops viewers into the middle of the story.

05 Luke Skywalker dreams of adventure far beyond life on the farm.

06 Princess Leia's plea for help changes the course of Skywalker's young life.

07 The farm boy from Tatooine becomes a galactic hero.



06 07

Wars is well-documented. Campbell, a comparative literature professor, described how myths, although arising in many different cultures, boil down to universal themes that all humans understand. In the book, Campbell encapsulated the monomyth hero's journey as follows: "A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder. Fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory

is won. The hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man." Luke Skywalker's journey in *A New Hope* maps over to Campbell's monomythic structure so well that it has become a frequent example for explaining the mythic concept.

Perfectly utilizing an age-old mythic structure doesn't guarantee success—as the box office stumbles of numerous other monomyth-

based films attest—but it does explain why the audiences of 1977 found so much familiarity in a visual spectacle so unlike anything they had ever seen before.

In combination with his own ambition and vision for the film, Lucas worked in collaboration with many other brilliant people, too. From the special-effects pioneers to the many beloved actors who brought their characters to life, he asked people to do things

► that hadn't been done before, and they met the young filmmaker's passion with their own, exceeding expectations across the board. Most importantly, the iconic closing act—a showdown between a small contingent of rebel snubfighters and the Death Star and its considerable resources—would not have worked if the team of modelmakers and effects artists hadn't been able to pull off the space battle with compelling visuals. Marcia Lucas, who earned an editing Oscar for the film, recrafted the trench run sequence, overhauling the director's original idea to increase the dramatic tension, and ensured that the *Millennium Falcon's* return to the battle delivered on the emotional investment the audience had made in Luke Skywalker, Leia Organa, and Han Solo.

Now, with four decades of hindsight into one of the largest storytelling brands in the world—

It can be easy to overlook how much of the myth contained in *Star Wars* was left to the imagination of the 1977 audience.

08



not to mention several new generations of fans who have come to the franchise later, in its more fully developed state—it can be easy to overlook how much of the myth contained in *Star Wars* was left to the imagination of the 1977 audience. While the film may have dropped quite a bit of worldbuilding into the audience's lap, it didn't explain what a womp rat looked like or the rules of holochess. What were the Clone Wars? What was the Kessel Run? What events had transpired to leave a Jedi Knight like Obi-Wan Kenobi living a solitary existence

on a remote, desolate planet? And most importantly, what exactly was the Force? Many years before the availability of instant global communication, fans didn't have readily accessible resource books or myriad internet articles to parse the specifics. Conventions and fanzines reached only a small segment of the audience and creators worried less about their words being projected across the internet and occasionally spun far from their original context. Fans might discuss their theories with local friends, or make new ones while waiting in line to see the movie again at the theater, but the earliest *Star Wars* lived mostly in its followers' imaginations.

The success of the early years of *Star Wars* merchandise fit this mold, and was directly linked to the ways it allowed fans to continue their own adventures in a galaxy far, far away. Now, that first generation of fans who so joyfully played with their action figures as children have the opportunity to set their own imaginations loose on that world that inspired them so long ago, not just as filmmakers, but also as authors, game developers, comic creatives, and television screenwriters and directors. It turns out that the *Star Wars* universe really *is* as big as we imagined it back then. 🍌

09



08 Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill) takes on the Death Star.

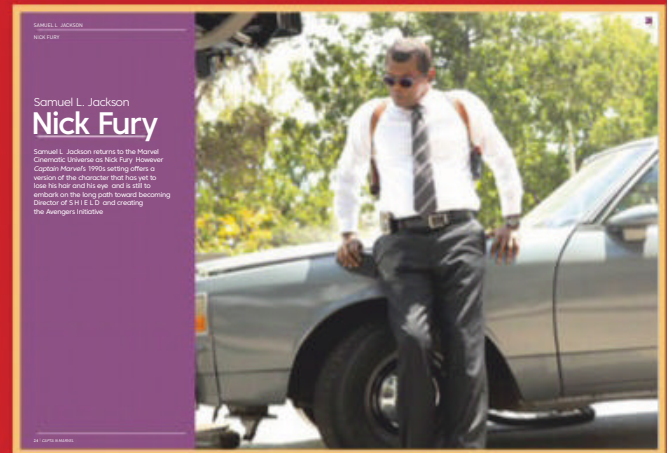
09 Audiences became emotionally invested in *A New Hope's* central trio of heroes.

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PETER MAYHEW

FANTASY FUZZBALL

The former hospital porter who found fame as a giant, furry space smuggler talks to *Star Wars Insider* about playing the galaxy's favorite fuzzball.

WORDS: MARK NEWBOLD

W

hile there may not be a real mystical energy field that puts the right people in the right

place at the right time, fate has famously played a hand in *Star Wars* casting over the years. Indeed, it was one such fortuitous incident—a photograph of 7 foot 3 inches tall Peter Mayhew, printed in a regional newspaper—that led to worldwide fame as Chewbacca the Wookiee.

It was that article, about men with big feet, that set off a chain of events that steered Mayhew away from his job as an orderly at London's King's College Hospital to the door of Andor Films, and their fantasy-adventure movie, *Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger* (1977). Cast as the towering bronze bull Minoton, the film gave the actor his first experience of working with special effects (under the legendary Ray Harryhausen). The film was a box-office success, but after production wrapped in October 1975, Mayhew returned to his day job at King's College. A year later, a galaxy far, far away pulled him into its orbit, and after an initial meeting with George Lucas, he was cast as the mighty Chewbacca in *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977).

"I was nervous when I sat down in his office," the actor recalls of that initial meeting and his first impressions of the role. "I had been recommended by a friend to do a part. When George Lucas explained *Star Wars* to me, I thought it was unbelievable. What he created was incredible. I was very excited to have been offered the opportunity."

With the full support of his friends and family, Mayhew took

"When George Lucas explained *Star Wars* to me, I thought it was unbelievable. What he created was incredible."

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02



01 Peter Mayhew on the set of *Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith* (2005).

02 Mayhew (Chewbacca) and Carrie Fisher (Leia) share an off-camera moment during the filming of *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1980).

on the role that would eventually define his professional career. However, things could have gone very differently for the actor—and quite possibly the entire franchise—had it not been for another piece of serendipitous timing. Lucas had originally ear-marked the role of Chewbacca for body builder Dave Prowse, but when the actor instead elected to portray Darth Vader (citing that audiences always remember the bad guy), it led to Mayhew's casting as the loyal Wookiee. With each actor having so memorably defined their roles, it's difficult to contemplate them filling the other's boots. "I honestly think it would have changed the

entire film," Mayhew admits, after giving the matter some careful consideration. "I can't imagine how that would've gone."

To help realize his cinematic vision, Lucas and producer Gary Kurtz brought together a crew of technicians and industry veterans, including renowned makeup supervisor Stuart Freeborn, an industry stalwart who played a pivotal part in creating Chewbacca's iconic look. "Stuart did most of the work designing and making it," the actor recalls, reminiscing about the team he worked so closely with. "He knew exactly what we were getting into. He was a master at making costumes under pressure, ▶

▶ and his wife Kay did most of the daily maintenance and grooming. I was honored to work with such a talented crew.”

With the role and costume under his bandolier, and Ben Burt (special dialogue and sound effects designer) assembling a library of Wookiee vocalizations, it was left to Mayhew to figure out how he should bring Chewbacca to life on screen. In search of inspiration for Chewie’s unique mannerisms, he took trips to the local zoo to watch the movements of apes, bears, and gorillas, and then worked closely with the film’s production crew to put his findings into practice. “The directors and producers gave me most of the direction, usually when we were rehearsing a scene,” Mayhew explains. “After that, I made a lot of choices on my own.” The end result was a memorable, engaging performance, imbued with the actor’s character and spirit now familiar to his legion of fans.

Making Wookiee

When *Star Wars* finally made its North American debut on May 25, 1977, initially in just a handful of theaters, it didn’t take long before it had captured the public’s attention and rocketed to the top of the box office. Yet despite its exploding popularity both domestically and then across the globe, for many—including some of the cast—the sudden success was unexpected. “It was very surprising,” Mayhew agrees, “I honestly didn’t know that much about the movie industry at that point. I just tried to do everything that was asked of me. At the time it was a steady pay check, and the rest is history!”

While co-stars Mark Hamill, Carrie Fisher, and Harrison Ford were catapulted into the limelight and became instant household names, Chewbacca’s all-encompassing costume afforded

“Acting in the snow was fine. Rolling in snow made me happy like a puppy.”



Mayhew relative anonymity, and the actor was able to go about his day-to-day business as normal while he considered his next career move. Despite making a couple of television appearances, it was very much business as before for Mayhew. “I just went back to work at the hospital,” he admits. “The film didn’t change things that much, but I was grateful to be able to buy a car I could fit inside!”

While *A New Hope* was still raking in dollars at the box office, Lucas had begun work on a sequel, and had made the decision to pass the directorial reins of *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) to Irvin Kershner. With new hands at the tiller, production of the highly anticipated sequel felt very different

03 Stuart Freeborn adjusts the Chewbacca mask during a costume fitting with Mayhew (seated).

04 Mayhew enjoyed his on-set camaraderie with actors Harrison Ford (Han Solo) and Mark Hamill (Luke Skywalker).

05 Makeup artist Kay Freeborn grooms Chewbacca on the Docking bay 94 set.

06 Han and Chewie escape the Death Star in *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977).

to its predecessor according to Mayhew, who had been pleased to receive the call to reprise his role.

“There was a difference in style, and everything else,” Mayhew remembers of the shoot. “It was Lucas and Gary Kurtz on *A New Hope*, and Kershner and Kurtz on *Empire*.” However, for the unassuming actor, the change in



05



06

“It wasn’t about the war for Chewie. It was about his friend, who rescued him from the Empire.”

THE MAYHEW MAGIC

As the loyal Chewbacca, Mayhew often stole the show on the big screen, but he has also notched up some equally memorable small screen adventures as the wonderful Wookiee:

In 1977 Mayhew made a cameo appearance as Chewie on the *Donnie and Marie* show, followed by a big role in 1978’s *Star Wars Holiday Special*. In February 1980 Chewie guest-starred on *The Muppet Show* alongside R2-D2, C-3PO, and Mark Hamill, busting the kind of Wookiee dance moves that only the Muppets can inspire! Chewbacca has also been seen in the comedy short *Return of the Ewok* (1982), the *Glee* episode “Extraordinary Merry Christmas” (2011), and could be seen taking a seat in the original *Star Tours* ride boarding video.

While he may have officially hung up his furry Chewbacca boots, Mayhew remains a big part of the *Star Wars* family as the official Chewbacca Consultant on *Star Wars: The Last Jedi* (2017) and *Solo: A Star Wars Story* (2018), ensuring that future generations will continue to enjoy Chewbacca with a hefty dose of Mayhew magic.

personnel resulted in an enjoyable learning curve. “I was painfully shy back then,” he reveals. “All three of my mentors taught me. I was always watching and listening. Kershner was a very hands-on teacher and was always very particular about his instructions. I followed most of them.”

The production returned to the familiar stages and corridors of Elstree Studios, but in addition, location shooting meant a trip to Norway and the remote mountain village of Finse, which doubled as ice planet Hoth. It was an opportunity Mayhew relished. “Norway was a wonderful experience, although it created lots of problems for the production, what with the transportation,

shooting, and heating,” he recalls. “Acting in the snow was fine. Rolling in snow made me happy like a puppy—but going inside with the snow-covered suit turned me into a heavy, wet mess of fur!” Another box-office hit, the success of the second *Star Wars* outing afforded a financial security that allowed the cautious Mayhew to make a significant life change. “It wasn’t until after *Empire* that I quit working at the hospital,” he reveals.

Basking in the glow of *The Empire Strikes Back*’s success, production began on *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* (1983), this time under the helm of new director Richard Marquand. The change in personnel again resulted in the shoot having another fresh

► feel. “It was a completely different production without Gary,” Mayhew shares. “Richard was an actor, and approached the filming that way. Gary had a much broader perspective on what the final picture needed to be. But really it was just great getting the gang back together.”

More Than A Co-Pilot

It’s impossible to reflect on Chewbacca’s impact upon *Star Wars* without mentioning the relationship at the heart of the character’s enduring appeal; the Wookiee’s friendship with rogue ‘fly boy’ Han Solo. It was a connection that stretched beyond celluloid, forming the basis of an enduring comradeship between two actors. “Harrison and I had a relationship like you see on the screen,” Mayhew expresses with genuine warmth. “We became good friends, and he was easy to work with. While we only see each other on rare occasions now, we will always have a special bond. *Star Wars* changed our lives forever.”

Reflecting on the Wookiee’s loyalty to Han through daring escapades, dodgy deals, and the fight against the Empire and the First Order, Mayhew reveals, “It wasn’t about the war for Chewie. It was about his friend, who rescued him from the Empire and to whom he owed a life debt. Chewie became Han’s conscience, and always wanted to do what was right.”

For many, Chewbacca was the heart and soul of the inseparable duo, and Mayhew has his own thoughts on their partnership. “In the early drafts of the story, there was just this one furry smuggler character,” he reveals. “Later, George chose to turn that into two parts, so maybe that says it all.”

After the original trilogy, Mayhew reprised his famous role in *Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith* (2005), and lent his vocal talents to *The Clone Wars* season three finale episode “Wookiee Hunt,” but it was with *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* (2015) that the actor made his swansong as the heroic Chewbacca,

07



07 Mayhew reprised his role as Chewbacca in *Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith* (2005).

08 Peter Mayhew (top right) with his *Star Wars* co-stars, (left to right) Harrison Ford, Dave Prowse, Carrie Fisher, Kenny Baker, and Mark Hamill.



08

sharing the role with newcomer Joonas Suotamo, with whom Mayhew was happy to pass on his Wookiee know-how.

More than four decades after taking a break from his day job to spend months dressed as a walking carpet, Mayhew is keen to acknowledge the people without whom none of it would have been possible. “The real heroes are the fans,” he reflects fondly. “They have kept *Star Wars* and Chewie alive for the last 40 years.” 🍌

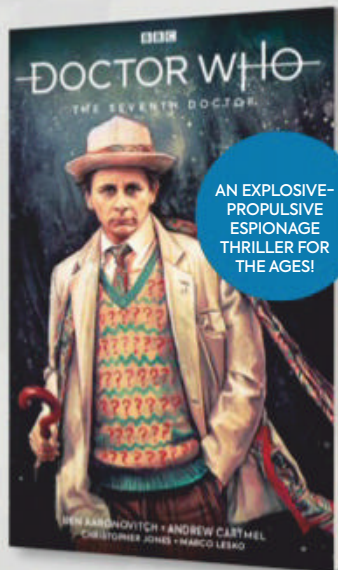
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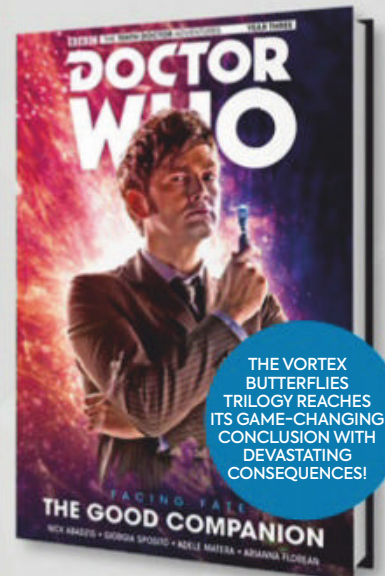
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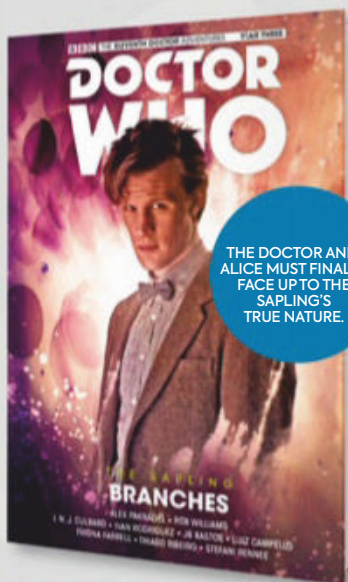
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GARY KURTZ

THE SPARK THAT LIT THE FIRE

Without the input and tenacity of Gary Kurtz, producer of *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977) and *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980), it's quite possible the movie landscape of today would be very different—and *Star Wars* merely a footnote in the annals of film history. Before his sad passing in 2018, *Insider* spoke with the award-winning producer, director, and production manager to discover just what it took to get a certain unnamed space-fantasy project off the ground.

WORDS: PAT JANKIEWICZ



G

ary Douglas Kurtz was a seasoned assistant director by the time his path crossed with that of a young filmmaker named George Lucas in the early 1970s, having already worked for a number of big-name Hollywood studios including Crown International, American International Pictures, and Paramount, across a variety of genres from westerns to horror. But it was through his collaborations with Lucas on *American Graffiti* (1973), then *Star Wars: A New Hope* and its much-loved sequel, *The Empire Strikes Back*, that he had a hand in defining popular culture.

"I promise you, that's not how we saw it," the experienced producer revealed to *Star Wars Insider*. "We didn't look at *Star Wars* as a big thing, it was just another movie.

"We originally had a two-picture deal with United Artists, but they backed out after reading the *American Graffiti* script," Kurtz recalled of those early days in his and Lucas' working relationship. "I then took it to Universal Pictures, because I had done a film named *Two-Lane Blacktop* (1971) for them and knew Lew Wasserman, the legendary talent agent and studio executive. So, we did *American Graffiti* for Universal and talked about doing *Star Wars*, which, back then, was known as our 'Unnamed Science-Fiction Project.' Lew turned it down, which he later told me was one of the biggest mistakes of his life," the producer laughed. "He told me, 'What can I say? I just don't like sci-fi!'"

"We didn't look at *Star Wars* as a big thing, it was just another movie."

Luckily for the film-making duo, not everyone shared that sentiment. "In the end, the picture wound up at Twentieth Century Fox because it was the only studio that was interested," admitted Kurtz, candidly. "If you look back carefully at the 1970s, almost all of the science-fiction movies made at the time were dour, post-apocalyptic tragedies; *Logan's Run* (1976), *Rollerball* (1975), and the various *Planet of the Apes* sequels, were all about how the world was terrible—or going to be terrible," he laughed. "No wonder science-fiction was unpopular! Nobody understood that what we were pitching with *Star Wars* was the kind of film that was a mix of the *Flash Gordon* serials from the 1930s and *Forbidden Planet* from 1956. That's how we talked about it, but the studios really didn't see it."

With their sci-fi fantasy adventure floundering before cameras had even started rolling, the prospects for the galaxy far, far away being made looked ever more distant—until salvation arrived in the form of Twentieth Century Fox head of production, Alan Ladd Jr. (known to friends as 'Laddie'). "Laddie said he was interested, but admitted that was mainly because *American Graffiti* had done so well," Kurtz recalled. Ladd would later reveal that Chewbacca was the character that finally convinced him to produce *Star Wars*, because the giant Wookiee was reminiscent of the primate leads in Fox's most popular franchise. "The *Planet of the Apes* films did very well for Fox and I think that may have persuaded them to do something else in the science-fiction area," Kurtz confirmed. "*Star Wars* is quite different from a storytelling point of view, but Fox was the only studio that had recently done well in science-fiction, so that was very lucky for us!"

Making Your Own Luck

While *Star Wars* and the sci-fi genre were altogether different beasts to the movie they had already made together, Lucas and Kurtz had

proven themselves to be bankable, as the producer recalled. "*American Graffiti* had done well," he said, "so it was much easier for Ladd to go to the board of directors and say, 'These guys made this low-budget film, it made money, and now they want to make a low-budget science-fiction film. The script is dense, convoluted, and difficult to read, but let's take a chance. The worst that could happen is we lose nine million dollars! We have these other movies that we're spending much more on and they're bound to work.'"

Despite Ladd's support, Lucas and Kurtz realized that conveying their complex vision was going to take some doing. "The team at Fox didn't really understand the script for *Star Wars* and, I have to admit, it didn't really read easily at all," the producer gamely acknowledged. "With all the funny characters, strange names, and odd things scribbled in, it took a lot of visual imagination to make any sense of it," he added. Thankfully, Lucas and Kurtz had an ace up their sleeves worthy of Lando Calrissian, in the shape of Ralph McQuarrie's exceptional concept art. "Ralph's artwork really did help," said Kurtz. "It meant we could show it to the studio and say, 'This is what we see; this is what it's going to be like.'"

KURTZ'S CAREER

Born in Los Angeles in 1940, prolific producer and director Gary Kurtz carved out a name for himself in the film industry as an assistant director and production manager during the 1960s, but was forced to put his career on hold when called up for military service in Vietnam as part of the U.S. Marine Corps.

After his return to Hollywood, Kurtz concentrated on building a career in studio pictures, and in the early 1970s began a collaboration with filmmaker George Lucas that would ultimately change his life. After working together on the cult coming-of-age movie *American Graffiti* (1973), Kurtz went on to serve as producer on both *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977) and *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980). After permanently relocating to the U.K., the producer went in search of new projects rather than returning for the final instalment of the original trilogy, and the early 1980s saw him attached to several big-name projects, including the Henson Company's *The Dark Crystal* (1982), Disney's *Return to Oz* (1985), and *Slipstream* (1989)—which featured *Star Wars*' very own Mark Hamill. Kurtz later helmed several films and TV shows, including *The Thief and the Cobbler* (1993), and *The Steal* (1995). His last project was as executive producer on the critically acclaimed film *Gangster Kittens* (2016).



01



01 Kurtz on the rebel base hangar set at Elstree Studios in London.

01 *Star Wars: A New Hope* producer Gary Kurtz on location in Tunisia.

02

Their forward thinking paid off when Ladd confirmed his studio would back the film. “Laddie said, ‘Yeah, we’ll take a chance on it,’” Kurtz revealed. “At the time, it was only an investment of eight-and-a-half million dollars—although it ended up eventually being ten—but for Fox it wound up being a really low budget film, because they had several movies that year that were going to end up with \$25-30 million dollar budgets.

“To Fox, *Star Wars* was an easy risk. They figured it would probably appeal to a hard core science-fiction audience. If it did, it would make its money back, maybe make a small profit, and that would be the end of it,” Kurtz laughed. “That’s kind of how they looked at it—a minimal risk on their part!”

However, one creative decision presented a potentially expensive problem, as Kurtz explained. “As it turned out, we made the decision to distribute the film with a Dolby

Stereo mix, so *A New Hope* became one of the first films released with a Dolby Stereo soundtrack. But none of the cinemas that *A New Hope* first opened in were set up to use the sound system, and they didn't want to spend the money upgrading, especially on a film they weren't sure about. So, Fox had to guarantee the cost of Dolby installation in those first 35 theaters."

The studio was determined to make a return on this costly outlay, and used its much-anticipated *The Other Side of Midnight* (1977) as leverage to induce theaters to pick up *A New Hope*. Kurtz recalled that, "Fox told theaters, 'If you take *Star Wars*, you'll get *The Other Side of Midnight*.'" These days, with *Star Wars* now established as one of the most successful film franchises of all time, it seems ridiculous to imagine cinemas would need incentives to

03 Gary Kurtz (right) with Sir Alec Guinness.

04 (Left to right) Mark Hamill (Luke Skywalker), Gary Kurtz, and Harrison Ford (Han Solo)...

05 Kurtz with George Lucas during a production meeting.

take the picture, but back then it was a different story. "It was quite common in those days, and all the studios did it," the producer revealed. "If they had a big, popular film coming out in the summertime, they would say, 'I've got these two little films and you've got to take them if you want the big one.' They had to do that with *Star Wars*, because the cinemas were as wary of science-fiction as the studios were."

Spreading The Word

With funding for their project finally secured, it was time to embark on the next charm offensive—but this time, it wasn't studio executives that would need to be won over. "I had this idea that we would sell the science-fiction audience on the fact that nothing like this had been made in a long time, and if we got these fans behind us, we would have a kind of 'talking wave' to inspire word of mouth," Kurtz recalled.

But to spark any level of interest in the new movie, they first had to track down those all-important fans. Nowadays, a director may drop a cryptic clue or post a couple of behind-the-scenes-images on social media and, with the click of a button, allow the viral wonder of the internet to work its magic, but back in the heady days of the mid 1970s, reaching out to fans meant only one thing: they had to hit the convention trail.

"It was amazing how many people were interested in a film they hadn't yet seen."

"Charley Lippincott was head of marketing, and he had contacts in the fan world as well," Kurtz recollected. "We did *everything* that we could think of to put the film out there, so people would know about it by the time it opened. It was a conscious effort to push all of those markets. We went to several science-fiction conventions. There was the Worldcon, regional cons, and the San Diego Comic-Con. We took statues of C-3PO and R2-D2 and a mock-up of Darth Vader with us, and all of the Ralph McQuarrie artwork. We set everything up, just to give a feeling of what the picture was going to be like, and presented it in the most upbeat, positive way that we could."

Kurtz's presentation even ran to an early teaser trailer, of sorts. "We had some slides from the live action unit of the film and set up a small slideshow. There were no visual effects in them because they weren't ready at the time, so the screening wasn't *all* that impressive," he chuckled. "But the idea was that the fans would talk it up a bit, so that by the time the film came out, there would be enough of a fan base that it would do okay. We were trying to get the image of the film embedded in peoples' minds. It was amazing how many people were interested in a film they hadn't yet seen."

5...4...3...2...1...Go!

Kurtz and his team clearly did a good job creating a buzz around the movie because, as the producer acknowledged, "The word on *Star Wars* was pretty strong by the time we got to Worldcon and Comic-

"With all the funny characters, strange names, and odd things scribbled in, it took a lot of visual imagination to make any sense of it."



03



04

Con. It was good, and knowing that the fan base was there relaxed us a bit. We figured the film would do well enough to make Fox—and us—a little bit of money.”

Star Wars may have had the convention scene under its belt, but the publicity machine didn’t stop there. “We also made a comic-book deal with Marvel Comics, with the plan that a *Star Wars* comic book would come out three months before the film,” Kurtz explained.

With the marketing front covered, attention turned to testing the finished film in front of an actual audience. “When the time came for the film to be finished and opened, we screened it in San Francisco for a select audience, and thankfully it went over well,” Kurtz recalled. “It was a cross section of people, aged from five to 85 years old. It wasn’t a cheering, ecstatic audience, but they reacted as we had expected.

“We handed out preview cards so that the audience could write down their thoughts on the movie, but only because the studio asked us to. I’ve never liked those cards because they require people to make intellectual comments about

05



an emotional experience, and I don’t think it helps much,” Kurtz said. “We knew that the audience responded well because we watched them as they watched the film. Their response validated it. The preview was just to give the studio a sense of comfort, and the film wasn’t changed in any way.

“I did get one preview card from that screening that I kept, which I still have,” Kurtz revealed with a smile. “The guy—I think he must have been probably only 16 or 17—said, ‘This is the worst film I have seen in my life since *Godzilla Vs. The Sea Monster!*’ [Laughs] I had that one framed!” 🙄

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WARS
POOZU.



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- 02 KYLO REN unisex sneakers
- 03 R2-D2 unisex sneakers
- 04 REY Brown women's boot
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The Grand Tour of Tatooine

Revisiting the *Star Wars* locations of Tunisia

WORDS: THOMAS SCHUSTER

RENOVATION TEAM: DANE BRAUN, INESS BROUK,
DOMINIK KALISZ, THOMAS SCHUSTER.
PHOTOS: DANE BRAUN, THOMAS SCHUSTER



I

n April 2018 a group of *Star Wars* fans from Austria, Germany, and Tunisia traveled to all corners of the

North African country to determine the current condition of each of its Tatooine filming locations. Austrian team member Thomas Schuster tells *Insider* about the desert road trip, and their mission to renovate the Lars Homestead set.

Star Wars Insider: How did your team first come together, and what inspired you to visit and document the Tunisian filming locations?

Thomas Schuster: I knew Dane Braun from the Rebel Legion and I was impressed by his *Star Wars* Tunisia panel at Noris Force Con 4 back in 2015. That's the fascinating phenomenon of *Star Wars*, the Rebel Legion, and the 501st Legion; they bring people together from all over the world, and together we can achieve great things, like helping sick children or saving film sets in the desert. Dane had previously done several trips with the National Office of Tunisian Tourism, and with RTL—the biggest German TV channel—which was how he discovered that the condition of the *Star Wars* filming locations was getting worse. So together we planned a trip—not a sightseeing tour—to gather as much information about the sets as possible and to provide it for free to local authorities and *Star Wars* fans worldwide. Additionally, we wanted to save the Lars Homestead, as its condition had deteriorated since the last renovation in 2012.

The date of our trip was eventually scheduled for April 2018. As our group consisted of members from Tunisia, Germany, and Austria, we planned the visit using social media, then on April 22, 2018, we all met in Frankfurt to begin the trip of a lifetime.

What initially inspired you to embark on the renovation project?

Dane Braun, our Tunisian expert, has visited the filming locations several times. Together with his friends from *Star Wars* Tunisia, he'd been part of the 2014 "Happy (We Are from Tatooine)"



01 The renovation team hard at work replastering the entrance to the Lars Homestead.

music video project to raise money to save Mos Espa. And it worked—Mos Espa was successfully excavated from a wandering sand dune. The Lars Homestead is a small filming location in the middle of Chott El Djerid, which nobody really pays attention to. The last renovation was done by fans in 2012, but since then, the dome had been vandalized and suffered damage caused by salt water during the winter months. So an urgent renovation was necessary to save the wooden structure that was first built for *Star Wars: Attack of the Clones* (2002) way back in 2000.

What state was the set in when you arrived?

When we got there, the Lars Homestead was in a bad way. It looked horrible. There was a big hole on the left side of the entrance, and the whole left base had been eroded by water, so parts of the wooden dome carriers were threatening to collapse. The lower façade—which had suffered salt water damage—had been broken down, and there were also

holes in the upper façade which had been caused by visitors climbing the structure for photos.

How much planning were you able to do prior to the trip, or did you have to pull a "Han Solo" and make things up as you went along?

Dane took care of the long-term planning (as CO of the Rebel Legion Germany, he has the necessary worldwide connections), I brought the building knowledge, and Iness—our Tunisian team member—helped us with the local language and culture. Considering cultural aspects, and the fact that there was no big hardware store in Tozeur, that insight was very important during our project.

We discovered that the chicken wire substructure was rusty, so we made it a priority to fix that. After the survey visit on April 26, it took us two days to collect all the necessary materials. Then, on April 28, our team completed the renovation in one day. ▶

"It was an amazing experience to preserve this pop-culture heritage for the years to come. After our work was done, the sunset was thanks enough for our labor-intensive, sweaty mission."

Thomas Schuster

► **When approaching the renovation, did you plan for your repairs to last longer than a regular film set would?**

Based on the impressions in the ground, production designer Gavin Bocquet's team built the 2000 Lars Homestead in the exact same location as in 1976. The heart of the set is the wooden substructure, therefore our first target was to save that substructure—as it was for the 2012 renovation project. First we had to underpin the wooden base with bricks, as they won't erode as easily as wood. After that, the goal was to restore the façade, which protects the wooden substructure. We used fabric protection mats instead of chicken wire to keep it free from rust. The well-preserved façade pieces were then plastered with a new layer, and we used façade pieces and plaster to close any remaining holes.

Why do you believe it's so important to save and preserve these historic filming locations?

Firstly, because we love *Star Wars* and the original film locations; most importantly the Lars Homestead, which is the the cradle of *Star Wars*.



02 New bricks now underpin the Homestead's wooden substructure to protect it from water saturation.

Mos Espa is now secure as the Tunisian government realized its worth. It's in the hands of CDTOS (Chambre de Développement du Tourisme Oasien et Saharien) and is supported by the German GIZ (German Association for International Cooperation). Ksar Hadada and Hotel Sidi Driss are also in safe hands as the owners take care of

their pop-culture heritage and charge very low admission fees. All the other locations, like Chalmun's Cantina, Ben Kenobi's house, and the Lars Homestead are so small that only real *Star Wars* fans would travel to see them, so nobody else cares about them. Our goal is to save all those filming locations. The Lars Homestead is now well prepared for next winter and, together with our friends from Tunisia, we're currently trying to find the owner of Chalmun's Cantina in Ajim.

You've shared your experiences with other fans through a convention panel. What was their reaction, and how do you feel now, when you take stock of the road trip as a whole?

Sharing our experiences is one of our key goals, as it's the only way to inform fans and local authorities about the importance of *Star Wars* filming locations, and also highlight their brittleness and caducity. Our panel premiered at Vienna Comic Con 2018, to more than 26,000 attendees. We received great feedback from the audience, and also from Mary Franklin, the event's director.

It's impressive to see the eyes of the audience when you show them a slide of sunset over the Lars Homestead, and witness their realization that these locations exist, that you can actually visit Tatooine in real life. That's a very important step when it comes to saving all these locations for future generations.



03 The Lars Homestead team: (L to R) Dominik Kalisz, Iness Brouk, Dane Braun, and Thomas Schuster.

GALACTIC COORDINATES

Program your navicomputer and set course for the planet farthest from the bright center of the universe, as Thomas Schuster takes *Insider* on a point-by-point trip across Tatooine, via its Tunisian filming locations.

THE LARS HOMESTEAD

Chott El Djerid

Set Lars Homestead (Exterior)

Location The dome is approximately 3 kilometers from the road

GPS coordinates 33.842857, 7.778948

Description The holy grail of all *Star Wars* locations, it was in this sacred place that the first shot in *Star Wars* history was filmed on March 22, 1976. Additionally, the flat salt desert of Chott El Djerid was the setting for Luke Skywalker's view of the twin sunset of Tatooine—and you can relive it here every day (albeit with just the one sun). The giant sandcrawler set was also erected here (GPS coordinates 33.865641, 7.778789) before it was moved to Sidi Bouhrel for further scenes. In 2000, filming of *Attack of the Clones* saw a new dome rebuilt on the foundation of the old one.

Chott El Djerid's Street P16 (GPS coordinates: 33.931998, 8.471654) also affords visitors a familiar view—it's the route Luke Skywalker's landspeeder traveled through in *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977).

Condition The dome's location in the salt desert of Chott El Djerid means that it is exposed to salt water in the winter months and the hot sun during the summer. Additionally, fans climbing the dome have contributed to the destruction of the façade.



04 Tunisia might not offer a twin sunset, but its stellar *Star Wars* locations can be visited by anyone.

Matmata

Set Lars Homestead (Interior)

Location Hotel Sidi Driss in Matmata

GPS coordinates 33.542828, 9.967242

Description The famous Hole 4 of the hotel was used on April 1, 1976 for shots featured in *A New Hope*, and was renovated in 2000 for filming of *Attack of the Clones*. It's an amazing feeling to drink blue milk in the dining room beneath the ceiling's famous fresco.

Condition The hotel owner charges a half-dollar entry fee, and you can also eat or spend a night in the hotel, so the set is in good condition. Only the current color differs a little bit from the movie. In 1995, French *Star Wars* fan Philip Vanni renovated the ceiling fresco and his painting was used in shots for *Attack of the Clones*. In 2016, our friends from *Star Wars* Tunisia built a vaporator in the middle of Hole 4.



05 Hole 4 at the Hotel Sidi Driss in Matmata provided the location for the Lars Homestead interior shots.

↓EVI 7JQW7JKW7
OKN↓VNI K7VI WΔ↓ ↓Δ
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THE DUNE SEA, THE JUNDLAND WASTES, AND BEYOND

Dune De Sable

Set Escape Pod Landing Site;

Sandtroopers Search for the Droids

Location Dune De Sable, 2 kilometers away from Street P3

GPS coordinates 33.871125, 7.759225 (dune)

33.865641, 7.778789 (curve to the four-wheel-drive runway)

Description If you fancy following in the tracks of C-3PO and R2-D2, why not take a walk among the fine sands of the dramatic Dune De Sable? While you're unlikely to discover any krayt dragon bones, you'll certainly be able to imagine why George Lucas chose these colossal dunes for planet Tatooine.

Condition Over the course of the past few decades, the dunes have taken on new shapes. Sometimes you'll come across vegetation in the sand, although all traces of life disappear during the summer months when temperatures top 50 degrees centigrade. During shooting of *A New Hope* in 1976, the production team had to remove tufts of grass from the dunes whilst filming.



06 The Dune De Sable today (top), and during filming of *Star Wars: A New Hope* in 1976 (bottom).

Djerba, Fishing Hut

Set Ben Kenobi's House

Location An abandoned fishing hut on the beach at the Gulf of Gabès; 2.4 miles to the North of Ajim

GPS coordinates 33.740877, 10.734922

Description On the way from Sidi Jemour to Ajim, you'll find the abandoned fishing hut on the beach that was used as Ben Kenobi's house in *A New Hope*. In the film, George Lucas used a low camera angle to create the illusion that the hut was located in the middle of the desert. It was replaced by a digital image in the 1997 Special Edition of the *Star Wars* trilogy.

Condition The exterior of the fishing hut is quite good, with only a window added at some point in the last couple of decades. The interior shots of Ben Kenobi's house were filmed at Elstree Studios in the U.K.



07 Ben Kenobi's humble home was actually a fishing hut on the island of Djerba.



08 While the Mos Eisley Panorama Rock is instantly recognizable from *A New Hope*, the view of the spaceport itself was filmed in Death Valley in the U.S.A (see sidebar).

Sidi Bouhlel

Set The Search for R2-D2; Tusken Raider Attack; Meeting Ben Kenobi; Mos Eisley Panorama Rock; Jawas Steal R2-D2; The Sandcrawler, and others.

Location “*Star Wars* Valley,” next to the Sidi Bouhlel mosque

GPS coordinates 34.032132, 8.282715

Description No place in the world has appeared in so many *Star Wars* shots as the valley next to Sidi Bouhlel. Everywhere you look you’ll spot another scene from *A New Hope*, which filmed in this location from March 26–March 31, 1976, most notably the Mos Eisley panorama rock.

Condition With the exception of some stones that have been slightly deformed by wind and rain, the valley is in great condition—just as it was in 1976—although the ground is a few centimeters lower than back in the day, and the sandcrawler filming location is now a parking lot.

The Camel’s Neck

Set Darth Maul’s Arrival

Location Camel’s Neck, between Ong Jemel and the village of Nefta

GPS coordinates 34.016040, 7.912437

Description If you want to view the same great landscape as Darth Maul and his Sith probe droids, you’ll need a four-wheel-drive vehicle to get to Camel’s Neck. This landscape was also used for the camp shot in the movie *The English Patient* (1996).

Condition It’s in great condition. At the bottom of the rock there is a small hut for the 4x4s, but apart from that you’ll see untouched nature, with stunning outer-space rock embossments.

Ong Jmal Wind Rock Field

Set Naboo Royal Starfighter Landing Site; Qui-Gon Jinn vs. Darth Maul; Anakin’s Podracer

Location 15km in the North of Nefta, and close to Mos Espa

GPS coordinates 33.995750, 7.848382

Description A big sand dune separates Mos Espa and the wind rock field that housed the ramp of the Royal Naboo Starship, as well as the inner courtyard of Ksar Hedada (small Mos Espa Set), which played host to Anakin’s podracer. It’s easy to recall the duel between Darth Maul and Qui-Gon Jinn raging between the alien wind shapes.

Condition The wind shapes look similar to those from *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* (1999), but in recent years the elements have changed most of them. Unfortunately, the small Mos Espa Set was destroyed by a wandering dune, although you can occasionally find fragments of the façade at the end of the field.



09 Approaching Camel’s Neck.

BEYOND THE DUNE SEA

The inhospitable landscape of California’s Death Valley also provided various arid locations for both *A New Hope* and *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* (1983).



STOVEPIPE WELLS

“Well I’m not going that way!”

A short walk across the sand dunes north of Route 190 will find you following in the tracks of R2-D2, as this is where the astromech parts company with C-3PO shortly after arriving on Tatooine.



DANTE’S VIEW

“You will never find a more wretched hive of scum and villainy.”

While actors Sir Alec Guinness (Ben Kenobi) and Mark Hamill (Luke Skywalker) were filmed standing on a rocky outcrop in Sidi Bouhlel, Tunisia, the panoramic view of Mos Eisley spaceport itself was actually shot from this spot in Death Valley.



TWENTY MULE TEAM CANYON

“R2, are you sure this is the right place?”

Jabba’s Palace might not be the most welcoming of destinations, but the path towards it is easily spotted in Twenty Mule Team Canyon. Head south along the hard-baked path to take in the familiar view.



10 The Mosque Sidi Jemour served as the exterior of Tosche Station, and as the outer perimeter of Mos Eisley.

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MOS EISLEY SPACE PORT

Sidi Jemour

Sets Tosche Station; Mos Eisley Arrival

Location Mosque Sidi Jemour

GPS coordinates 33.831462, 10.748124

Description When visiting Sidi Jemour you can explore the outer wall of Mos Eisley as well as all areas of Tosche Station seen in deleted scenes from *A New Hope*. These scenes, featuring Garrick Hagon (Biggs), Anthony Forrest (Fixer), and Koo Stark (Camie), were shot on April 4, 1976, and were the last filmed in Tunisia for that film.

Condition As the mosque is still used by local people, its condition is quite good. The Tosche Station door is now protected by a new wall, but all the other filming spots of Sidi Jemour are accessible. From the mosque you'll get the same view to the turquoise sea as Mark Hamill did in 1976.



Ajim

Set Chalmun's Cantina; the Streets of Mos Eisley

Location City of Ajim on the Djerba Peninsula

GPS coordinates 33.724005, 10.750008 (Cantina exterior)
33.723675, 10.749219 (The Sandtrooper Checkpoint; the *Millennium Falcon* takes off)

Description During filming of 2-3 April, 1976, local inhabitants were hired to bring life to the streets of Mos Eisley in the form of Jawas, Tusken Raiders, pilots, and droids. An additional entrance was added to the cantina building for filming. Nowadays, you can still visit the cantina or the location of the sandtrooper checkpoint where the *Millennium Falcon* memorably took flight for the first time on the big screen.

Condition In 1976 nearly the whole city consisted of domed buildings. Nowadays, only a few of these buildings remain. The big dome at the end of the sandtrooper checkpoint still exists, as does the large garage on the other side of the street. The building used as the entrance to Chalmun's Cantina still exists, although the roof has broken down in recent years. A few years ago, *Star Wars* fans airbrushed the wall with the text "Star Wars Filming Location" to save it from bulldozers.



11 The City of Ajim provided the location for the famous Cantina entrance and the Sandtrooper Checkpoint.

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Medenine

Set Mos Espa Slave Quarters

Location Ksar Medenine, in the City Medenine

GPS coordinates 33.347530, 10.492246

Description Visit Ksar Medenine—known as Skywalker Alley—and take a walk through the slave quarters of Mos Espa to visit the residence of Anakin Skywalker, aka Darth Vader. In 1997, *The Phantom Menace* production team used the existing corn chambers of the Ksar, adding pipes and other props as set decoration. You can still see the drill holes of the 1997 set on the chamber walls.

Condition The Ksar itself is in good condition, although the doors from the set have been replaced by the local inhabitants, who still use some of the chambers as sleeping places or for storage. The skyline seen in the movie was actually a digital image, added to expand the Mos Espa vista.

Ksar Hadada

Set Mos Espa Slave Quarters; Template for Anakin's Podracer Building Area

Location Hotel Ksar Hadada

GPS coordinates 33.100163, 10.314130

Description In December 1995, David West Reynolds showed Rick McCallum the hotel Ksar Hadada, which ultimately became the upper Mos Espa slave quarters. Here, Qui-Gon Jinn talked with Shmi Skywalker about Anakin's birth. You can also find the inspiration for Anakin's podracer building area, as the original set in Ong Jmal was destroyed.



12 The Hotel Ksar Hadada.



Condition The Ksar Hadada ceased operating as a hotel in 1998, and gradually fell into disrepair until it was purchased by a new owner and renovated in 2005. The owner now charges a \$1 entry fee, which also includes a drink. The chambers on the right side are an UNESCO world cultural heritage site, while the chambers on the left have been used for film shoots. The owner takes care of them, and in addition has added small extensions, including a new archway.

Nefta

Set Mos Espa Podrace Viewing Platform

Location Antique Shop of Kamel Souilah

GPS coordinates 33.870114, 7.883794

(Kamel Souilah's shop)

33.875327, 7.893030 (inner courtyard with Mos Espa boxes)

Description Although many people have searched for the famous podracer viewing platform, we uncovered the secret of its whereabouts with the help of some local people. In 1997, Kamel Souilah worked as an extra on *The Phantom Menace*. After the shoot he purchased the "waste parts" in the desert for a small price from the local government; and then, in 1999, he sold the parts to the U.S. for \$5000. The viewing platform was cut into pieces and shipped—along with the other pieces—overseas. Kamel Souilah became the first man who could afford a satellite dish in the area of Nefta, and enjoys a good life with his family.

Condition Nowadays, big tanks and boxes are all that remain of Souilah's treasures, although he does still have a door from Mos Espa, which you can buy from him for \$1000.



13 Mos Espa was comprised of real world locations like Ksar Medenine (top) and a purpose built set at Ong Jmal.

Ong Jmal Mos Espa

Set Mos Espa

Location You can find it in Google Maps as Mos Espa, 15km north of Nefta

GPS coordinates 33.994343, 7.842749

Description Wander through the actual streets of Mos Espa, explore Watto's junkyard, or visit the cafe just like Jar Jar Binks. The biggest and best-known set, "Mos Espa" in Ong Jmal, is an amazing experience. All the buildings were purpose-built for use in *The Phantom Menace* in 1997 and *Attack of the Clones* in 2000, with the help of a Russian cargo plane, which transported 50 tons of set material to the location.

Condition Mos Espa almost suffered the same fate as the small Mos Espa set when a vast, wandering dune swept across the location, but *Star Wars* fans produced music videos and TV spots to raise the funds needed to save this amazing piece of cinematic history. The Tunisian government used the money to excavate the set buildings with mechanical diggers, and in 2016 funds from the GIZ were used to construct a toilet building with solar panel support. The town received a new coat of paint in April 2018. 🇹🇳



Cover artist interview

Karen Hallion

She's Got It Covered

Karen Hallion is the artist behind *Star Wars Insider's* exclusive Celebration 2019 covers for this issue. Having previously contributed several pieces of art to *Star Wars: Women of the Galaxy*, we asked her about her career and techniques.

WORDS: CHRISTOPHER COOPER



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***Star Wars Insider:* Was a career in illustrative art always your ambition?**

Karen Hallion: I always liked to draw but hadn't considered it as a career until I was 16 and saw *The Little Mermaid* (1989). I walked out of the theater and thought to myself "I want to do that." I had always loved Disney movies, and had dabbled in drawing, but for some reason this one really jumped out at me. I wanted to try to capture the movement, flow, and beauty that I had just seen. I went home and listened to the soundtrack on repeat while drawing Ariel over and over. I ended up going to the University of Vermont for two years and took a variety of art classes, then I put together a portfolio and transferred to Ringling School of Art and Design in Sarasota, Florida.

How did you first become involved personally and professionally with *Star Wars*?

I was four when the first movie came out, and I remember having action figures and Luke's landspeeder when I was a kid, and playing games where I was always Leia. I watched the movies a lot on VHS, so you could say I've been a lifelong fan. I've bonded with lots of people over the years through a mutual love of *Star Wars*.

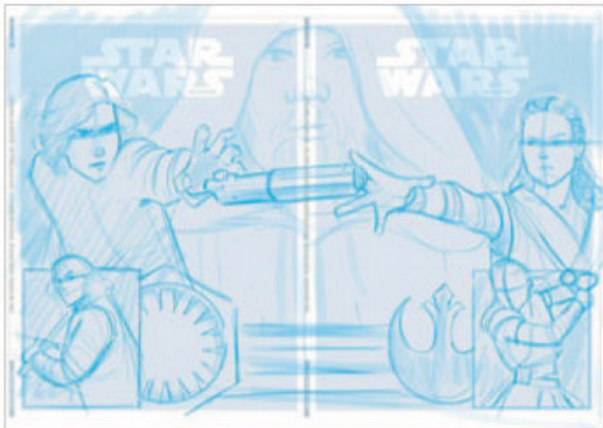
When I was in my late twenties, I had a job as an aide to a fifth grade student who couldn't participate in recess due to some physical limitations. I knew he loved *Star Wars*, so I brought in a pack of *Star Wars* Trivial Pursuit cards so we could quiz each other during recess. By the end of the year, my *Star Wars* trivia was on point, and all the kids in his class would come to hang out with us during recess to play along. He got married recently and I sent him and his wife champagne glasses with Han and Leia on them.

Professionally, my first real big *Star Wars* piece was my illustration for *Star Wars* Celebration Anaheim in 2015. Getting into Celebration was, and still is, a huge honor. It was also a very special show, personally, because I met my partner, Brandon Kenney, there. He was sitting next to me at the art show, and we have been together ever since.

Your art often has a female focus. How important was it for you to contribute to *Women of the Galaxy*?

That job was an absolute dream come true, and I still have to pinch myself sometimes that I got to do it. A *Star Wars* book focused on the female characters? Yes, please! When I was younger, we only had Leia to inspire us, but now there are so many more *Star Wars* women out there, and I was lucky enough to get to do illustrations for eight of them. The Amidala art nouveau was the one I did

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first. After Leia, Amidala is the character that I love to draw most, and I was super-excited to get to draw that gorgeous red gown and emulate her face paint.

Do you work digitally or use traditional media?

I mostly work digitally these days, using a large Wacom Cintiq tablet and Photoshop. I also like to use Copic markers to do character sketches and less complicated illustrations. I would love to go back and do some painting on wood panels again. I have a large panel waiting to have an Amidala painted on it, but I'm just not sure when I'll get a chance. I remember when I was younger, struggling to find a way of working where I was happy with the end product. I tried watercolors,

01 Karen Hallion's development sketches for *Star Wars Insider's* Celebration 2019 covers.

02 The completed artwork, which was split across two event exclusive editions of issue #189.

03 Hallion's latest work for ACME Archives, *Cloud City Nouveau* (left), and her official piece for the *Star Wars* Celebration 2019 art show, *No One is Ever Really Gone* (right).

colored pencils, oils, acrylics, and mixtures of all of the above. At one point, about 10 years ago, I spent some time painting with acrylic glazes and ink pens on wood, and I was pretty happy with that. But it wasn't until I started working with a Cintiq and Photoshop, about 8 years ago, that I really felt comfortable.

Is there a particular process you follow when starting out on a new composition?

I'll generally sketch out a composition on my Cintiq using a blue-colored pencil brush in Photoshop, very loosely and not worrying about details. Then I lower the opacity of that layer and refine the drawing on another layer on top of the original. I keep doing that until I'm happy with it, which could mean as much as 20 layers. Then I start inking, which is very relaxing for me. Once the line art is done, I fill in all the flat colors on separate layers, then tweak them until I'm happy with the color palette. After that it's all the shading, which can take a while, depending on how complicated the design is.

Has there been one piece of *Star Wars* art or an artist that has inspired you?

There have been so many that have inspired me. I love looking through concept art books for the movies, and would love to do concept art someday. I've been obsessed with Phil Noto's work lately. I love his *Solo: A Star Wars Story* poster. It's pretty great, too, that I live with a *Star Wars* artist. I got to watch Brandon bring his Celebration 2019 piece to life and it was fantastic to see. 🍷

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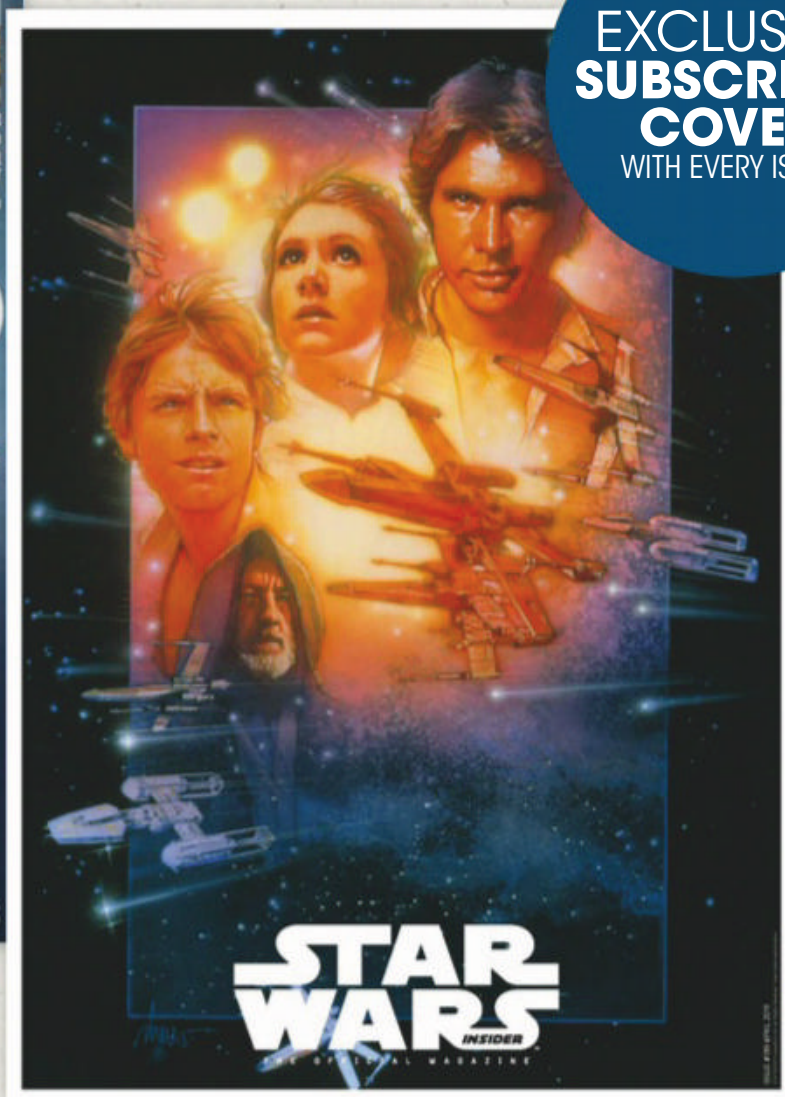


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DANIEL LOGAN BOY TROUBLE

When a 13-year-old boy was called in to audition for *Star Wars*, he had no idea who the character of Boba Fett was or how playing the role was going to change his life forever. Now 31, Daniel Logan has traveled the world attending conventions, has his own collection of bounty hunter helmets and armor, and is Boba Fett's biggest fan. *Star Wars Insider* caught up with Logan to talk about his life as the galaxy's greatest bounty hunter.

WORDS: DARREN SCOTT
PHOTOS: AARON PROCTOR & MARK MEDIANA



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hat was your very first experience of the world of *Star Wars*?

When my agent called me. She

was literally screaming, and said to me—out of breath, like she'd been running—that she'd gotten me an audition for *Star Wars*. I didn't have a clue what *Star Wars* was.

At that time I'd been booked for every job I was going for, so I said, "Well, send me the script and I'll get this one too." That's when she humbly replied, "No Daniel, you don't understand. This will change your life and your career. You're most likely not going to get this job, but I will forever be able to sell you as the kid who auditioned to be the kid who was in *Star Wars*."

That's when I did a little bit of research. Most people don't know that I was brought up in New Zealand, and we only had three TV channels. I was 13 years old,

growing up in the period between *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* (1983) and *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* (1999); there had been a 16-year gap with no *Star Wars*.

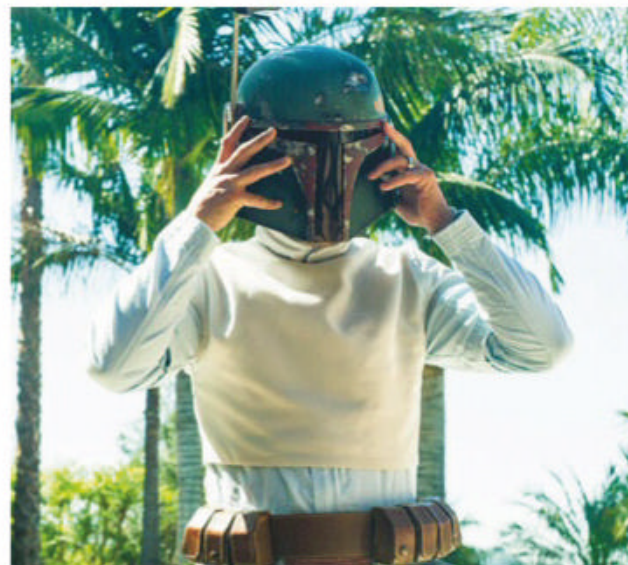
Did you know what role you were going for?

I watched *The Phantom Menace*, so I figured I might be a Jedi. The casting director, Robin Gurland, asked me a bunch of questions, one of them about what I knew of *Star Wars*. Out of everyone that auditioned, I think I was probably one of the only kids who replied that I'd never really heard of or seen *Star Wars*. That might've been the thing that helped me get the part; the fact that I was a fresh, new person with no preconceptions. That I was a clean slate.

How was your audition?

I did one audition for *Star Wars*—that was it. When Robin asked me if I had any special talents, I

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"I LOVED WHERE WE WERE GOING WITH *THE CLONE WARS*, AND I WAS A BIG FAN OF THE CARTOON BEFORE I EVEN GOT THE OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME A PART OF IT."

told her a little white lie and said I knew, professionally, how to use the Taiaha—a traditional Māori weapon which is a stick that's been carved to use in one-on-one combat. Then she insisted that I show her how to do it, without having a stick. Obviously it was *Star Wars*, so we used our imagination and creativity. She had me imagine that I was a little Darth Maul character, and I ran around a hotel room pretending I had a double-handed lightsaber, as she moved the camera around and filmed me.

Do you think that footage still exists somewhere?

I hope so! I have no clue—I've never seen it, but I'd really like to.

When you found out you were playing Boba Fett, did you go back and watch his appearances in the original *Star Wars* movies?

You know what? I didn't until George Lucas made me. He didn't tell me that Boba Fett already had a history. I only found out about it when I went to *Star Wars* Celebration for the first time and saw the fanbase, and what kind of turnout Boba Fett had. It

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was unbelievable. I had all these bodyguards, and people were trying to take pictures of me or touch me, just to get a glimpse of the new Boba Fett. It was incredible.

What was your first day on set like?

On my very first day I got measured for my wardrobe. That was pretty incredible. There's nothing like the smell of wardrobe; the fabric. I got fitted and also got my makeup test done, and that's when I met Ewan McGregor (Obi-Wan Kenobi) for the very first time. Although I should never have seen *Trainspotting* (1996) at my age, my big brothers had let me to watch it with them, so I knew who he was. When I met him, I was totally blown away. I was reciting the *Trainspotting* lines back to him in the makeup chair, and he would trip out over the fact that I'd even seen the movie, let alone remembered his lines.

Apart from that meeting, what was the first big moment that took your breath away?

When I walked into the studio and saw the Kamino set. They'd built

entire hallways, and the Jango and Boba Fett room. Just to see the scale of it all was truly incredible. But then I got to do my first scene, which was with Temuera Morrison (Jango Fett), Ewan McGregor, and Rena Owen (Taun We). I got to act with two fellow New Zealanders in the opening scene of Boba Fett's reveal. Going through that process, Ewan actually helped me a bit with my acting, specifically to enhance the part when Obi-Wan came to visit and I opened the door. George Lucas had asked me to do a face like someone suspicious had come to the house, but as a little kid you don't have suspicion—it's not really in your toolbox of emotions. So Ewan asked me to do a face like he'd done "a very smelly fart"—they were his actual words. Growing up with a whole bunch of boys, I obviously knew that face. When I did it, he said it was perfect, but when we started rolling I opened the door, looked up to do the face, but also did a nostril flare, like I was trying to smell the fart. Ewan burst out laughing, and George started laughing his



04

01 Logan with Temuera Morrison (Jango Fett) on the set of *Attack of the Clones*.

02-04 Daniel Logan tries on a replica of Boba Fett's familiar armor.

head off. I asked, "Isn't that what you wanted?" And George replied, "Yes Daniel, everything besides the nostrils." You could see my nostrils flare up and down when he replayed the shot on the monitor. It was the funniest thing.

What was it like being a youngster on the set of such a huge film?

I was so blessed. I was on the biggest film set in the world and it was truly humbling and a honor. I'd just turned 13, and when every other



LOGAN'S RUN

Born in Auckland, New Zealand in 1987, Daniel Logan was just five years old when his acting career began, after his rugby union team was scouted to appear in a TV commercial. Notching up appearances in numerous shorts and local TV shows, Logan had already amassed a number of credits by the time he won the role of the young Boba Fett in *Attack of the Clones*, for which he was nominated for a Young Artist Award for Best Performance in a Feature Film (Supporting Actor). A firm favorite on the *Star Wars* convention circuit, Logan has gone on to appear in a number of film and TV projects, including *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* TV series, in which he reprised his role as the voice of Boba. Logan now lives in California and continues to act in both film and TV.

ACTING CREDITS:

- *Underdogs Rising* (2018)
- *The Griddle House* (2018)
- *The Grindhouse Radio* (2016)
- *Sharknado 4: The 4th Awakens* (2016)
- *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* (2010-2012)
- *The Legend of Johnny Lingo* (2003)
- *TakaPu: A Gannet in the South Seas* (2003)
- *Star Wars: Attack of the Clones* (2002)
- *Falling Sparrows* (2000)
- *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys* (1999)
- *Tamatoa the Brave Warrior* (1998)
- *Shortland Street* (1992)

► kid was meant to be in school, I'd been given an opportunity to fly back and forth from New Zealand to Australia to do my filming gig. I'd film for a week and then I'd go home for a week or two, and then I'd go back for a couple of weeks. It was really cool, and I loved every moment because it allowed me to not only have a childhood, but to also get a glimpse of what it could be like to be respected as an adult—or a professional—in the industry.

What standout moments can you pick from that experience?

One of my other great memories was with Sir Christopher Lee (Count Dooku). I was a Nana's boy—when my mother wasn't on set, my Nana managed to come along, and I would do anything for her. One day she saw this huge, tall statue of a man standing in the dark of the studio, and she started tapping me, all excited. "Son, son, son! Oh my gosh, do you know who that is?" she said. I looked over and, you know, as a 13-year-old boy I hadn't really seen very much TV apart from cartoons. I replied, "What, some old man?" Then she informed me that the old man happened to be Sir Christopher Lee, and she was one of his biggest fans, so could I introduce her? Well, at that time I hadn't even introduced myself to Mr. Lee, but she asked so I had to do it. I took my Nana over—she was totally fangirling out, her cheeks were red and she was blushing—and I introduced the both of us, at which point he told me how I'd been doing such a great job; he'd seen my performance as Boba and said to keep it up. I

"I ASKED SIR CHRISTOPHER LEE, 'IS THIS YOUR FIRST MOVIE?' HE TURNED AND LAUGHED, AND IN A VERY DEEP, MANLY VOICE, REPLIED, 'MY BOY, I HAVE DONE OVER 150 FILMS.'"

replied, "Thank you very much, sir." When he asked me if it was my first film, and I replied, "Well yes, this is my first major one this year," he congratulated me. So I asked, "Is this your first movie?" He turned and laughed, and in this very deep, manly voice, replied, "My boy, I have done over 150 films." You have to remember that I was just 13 and had only done one picture a year, so in my brain I thought he was over 150 years old. I just blurted out, "Oh my gosh, you must be old!" At that point I felt like I was losing the meet-and-greet for my grandmother and needed to pull it back, so I said, "You must be 50 or 51?" With a big smile he replied and said, "My boy, you have just made my day."

What was it like working with Temuera Morrison as Jango Fett?

I loved him—and I still do, very much. When we first met he said to me, "You're going to be playing my son and I'll be playing your dad." Unfortunately, my father wasn't around when I was growing up in New Zealand, but I looked up to Tem with all of my four-foot-nothing and replied, "Okay, Dad"; he looked down at me, smiled and said, "Alright, son." Now we travel the world doing conventions

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together, and we still very much have that bond.

How did you feel on your last day of filming?

That was sad—I think it might have been the scene where I was looking out over Geonosis, after Jango's head was chopped off. After I'd done the shot, George Lucas called cut and yelled for everybody to come and say goodbye. The whole production came to a stop as everyone came over and congratulated me on my job and wished me good luck. That was just such a wonderful, wonderful cast and crew. It was one of those things where you hope it will never come to an end. When it does, you have to go back to reality.

Was it strange leaving the world of *Star Wars* and coming back to Earth?

I went back to school, and overnight I became famous. Every person and their mom knew my name. I'd walk down the driveway of our

high school and people would say, "Hey, Daniel Logan," or "There's the *Star Wars* kid!" That's when I knew life would never ever be the same. You can become very, very negative towards it, but I just got very shy, and then totally embraced it. And my mom didn't have to work for nine years! [Laughs]

That wasn't your last visit to a *Star Wars* set though?

I did go back to the set of *Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith* (2005) because I was hoping to reprise the role, but unfortunately there wasn't enough story time. I had a wonderful time with George and everyone else though. They welcomed me with open arms.

What was it like doing *The Clone Wars* animated series?

That really brought me back to life, and it really gave the fans excitement for the character again. I loved where we were going with *The Clone Wars*, and I was a big fan of the cartoon



08

"I WOULD GIVE ANYTHING TO RETURN TO THE WORLD OF *STAR WARS*."

before I even got the opportunity to become a part of it. It was amazing to see the vision of Lucasfilm and Dave Filoni for the world of *Star Wars*. I was told that George Lucas went into the storyboard room one day and said, "I want Boba Fett in *The Clone Wars*, call Daniel Logan." That's almost like God calling you to Heaven twice. I can't tell you how much love and respect I have for George and for everything he's done for me.

So you'd be up for a return to the *Star Wars* galaxy?

Oh, in a heartbeat. I would give anything to return to the world of *Star Wars*, and I'd love to play Boba Fett again. I train with Ray Park (Darth Maul), so I'm getting back into shape. All I see myself doing is acting. 🙌

05 Daniel Logan with Ewan McGregor (Obi-Wan Kenobi).

06 Logan also played Boba Fett in six episodes of *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*.

07 Logan says he would return to the role of Fett "in a heartbeat."

08 The actor in full Boba Fett regalia.

GREG HILDEBRANDT

THE ART OF LIGHT AND DARK

Star Wars Insider speaks to Greg Hildebrandt—one half of the legendary artist duo whose 1977 *Star Wars: A New Hope* poster became a cultural touchstone.

WORDS: MARK NEWBOLD





“I ALWAYS SAY I’M ETERNALLY GRATEFUL TO MEL BROOKS AND *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN* FOR GETTING US THE *STAR WARS* JOB”

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win brothers Greg and Tim Hildebrandt were in-demand fantasy artists when they were approached to paint the image that would become the very first quad poster for

the *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977) marketing campaign in the U.K.—a poster that was only in circulation for two months but became synonymous with the *Star Wars* experience. Its design was used on Kenner packaging, as poster art in countries across the world, and passed into popular culture as one of the most recognizable artworks in movie history.

Star Wars Insider: How did you become involved with *Star Wars*?

Greg Hildebrandt: Tim and I were illustrating any job we could get in New York—text books, posters, kids’ books, down to a toilet-training book in 1973, which strangely has just been reissued in Russia. We thought it was all so boring, so decided

to go after movie posters. Back in the day, you could pick up the *Yellow Pages* and look up movie-poster producers. We called the first one we landed on, a small agency in New York. We asked if we could bring our portfolio in, and the art director said, “Sure, bring it in tomorrow.”

So, we went in with a portfolio of all the stuff we’d had published. All around the room were these paintings for the Mel Brooks film, *Young Frankenstein* (1974). I said, “We’ve gotta do a poster for this,” and the art director said they were all being shipped off tomorrow morning and that there was no budget left. But Tim and I were both very enthusiastic; we said we’d do it and bring it back in the morning. They looked at us as though we were nuts, but they gave us some 8x10 glossies from the film and, on the way back to Jersey, we figured out the setup for the poster, then painted it overnight. We brought it in the next morning. It didn’t get used, but it stuck in their memory.

We were getting a worldwide reputation for fantasy art when we did a *Lord of the Rings* calendar, and then these guys called us again and said they had a science-fiction movie poster that they wanted us to do. It was the *Star Wars* job, so we went back into the city and they showed us the poster by Tom Jung. He had the basic setup all in there and I said, “So what do you want us to do?” The art director went around the corner and came back and said, “The director wants you to make it more comic book-y.”

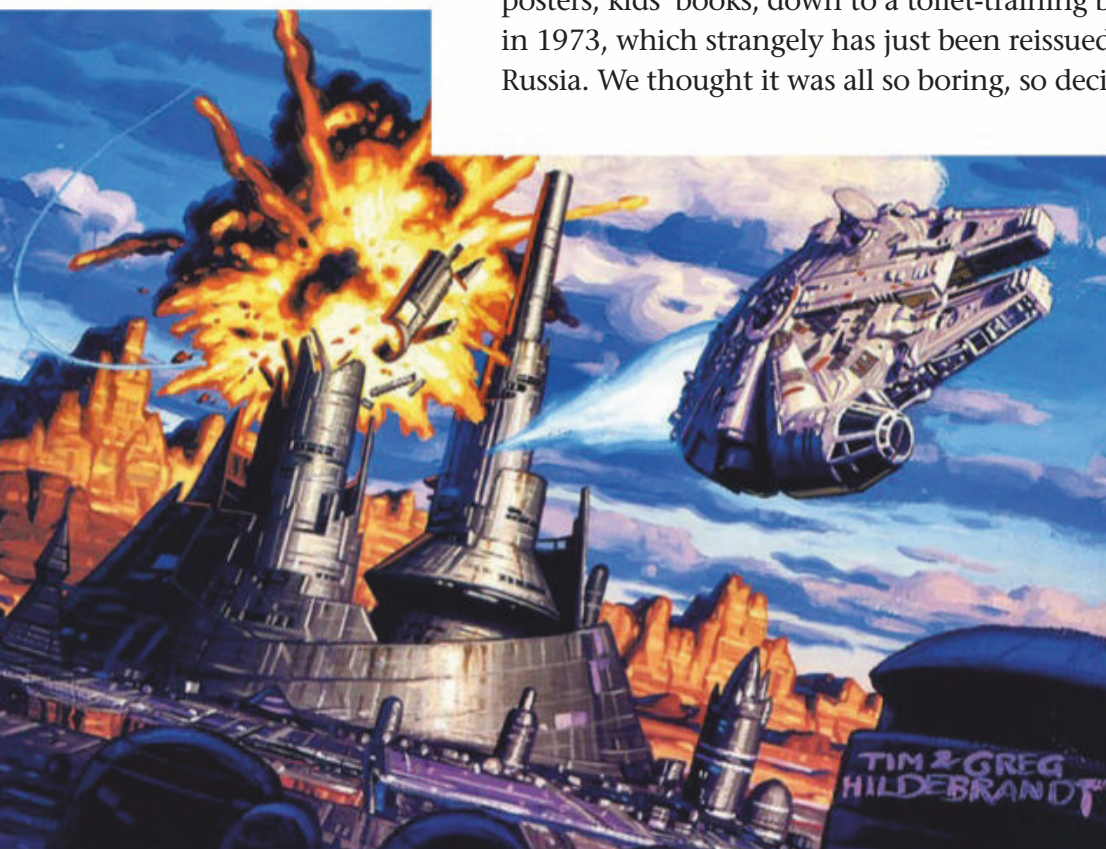
They gave us all the materials, we went back to my studio in Jersey and we did it in 36 hours. The film was coming out in a week and they needed it for advertising. It was going to be a one-sheet outside of the theater, but it ended up as a product more than anything.

When we brought the painting in, I told them that it needed some characters in the background, because the two droids weren’t in there yet. I said, “You need some figures back here, how about this big hairy guy?” They said they had to make a call, so they went around the corner again and called George Lucas, and came back and told us that he wanted us to add the two droids. They had to get the thing off to camera right away, so I told them what paint we needed and they went up the street and we painted it in the office right there.

It was a fluke. I always say I’m eternally grateful to Mel Brooks and *Young Frankenstein* for getting us the *Star Wars* job.

What do you think it is about the composition of that piece that made it so instantly iconic?

There’s that big head in the sky, the helmeted face that you don’t know who it is. I think it’s the contrast of the lighting and the color that we went for: the blue background and the very warm



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“LET’S BRING BACK PAINTED MOVIE POSTERS. PEOPLE ALL AROUND ARE SAYING THEY’D LIKE TO SEE PAINTED MOVIE POSTERS AGAIN.”

light on the heroes. We didn’t know anything about lightsabers, so we did a starlight shape with flares coming off it. I think it’s the color and contrast. That’s a big punch in the setup. The composition and positioning of the elements in the picture plane make it all work.

When you and your brother were working together, what was the process? Were your styles similar?

When we worked together, it was similar, and when we worked separately, we did our own thing. Tim could do a little of everything and so could I. On certain images, one of us might favor a certain thing and the other might then take over. We’d identify the scenes we wanted to do, then start a conversation about what we were going to show and how. A mixture of good guys and bad guys; medium shot, long shot; interior, exterior; warm light, cool light. Those were the guiding principles.

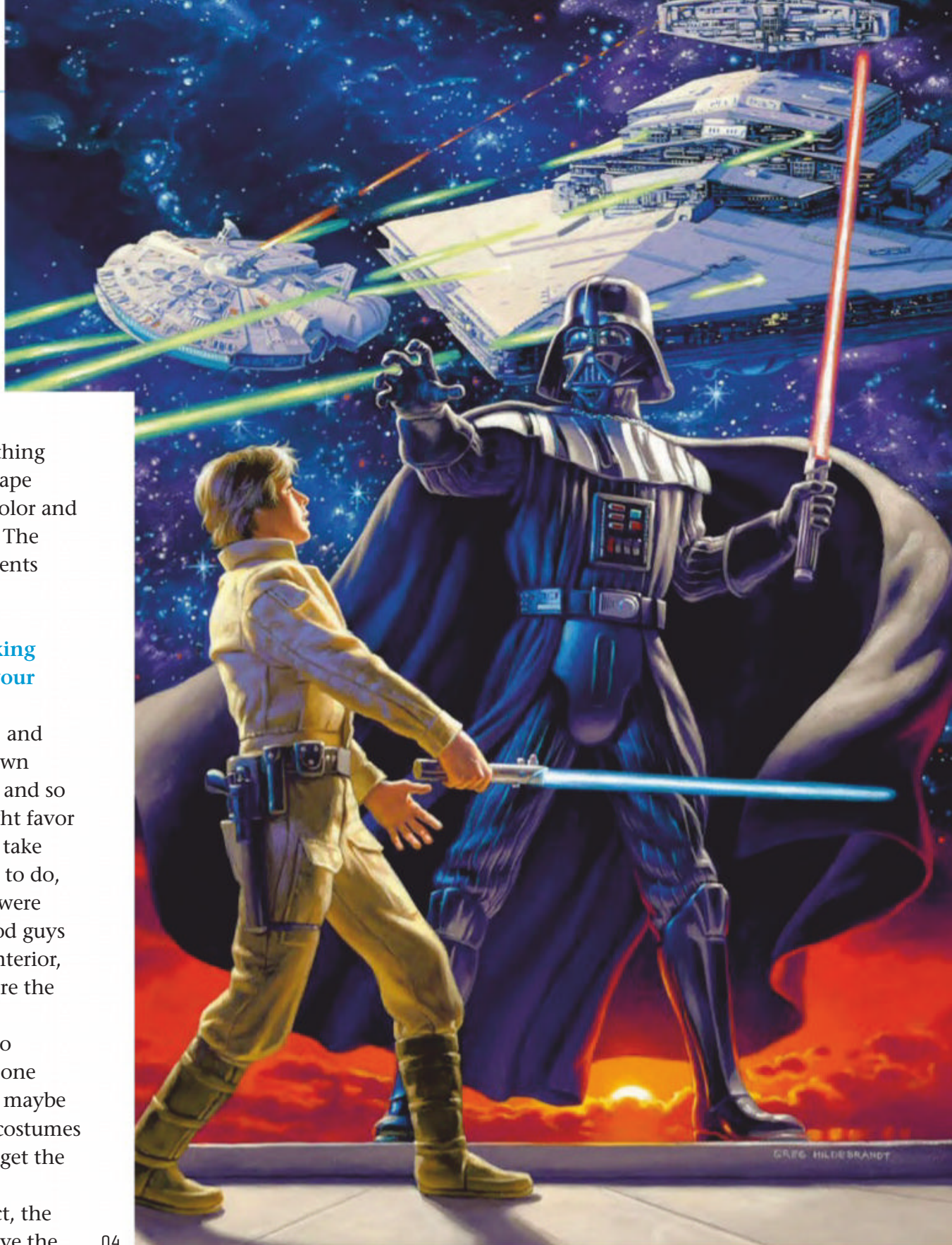
Tim would sketch some layouts, and so would I, then we’d get together and pick one or the other, or take elements from both, maybe shift the angle a little bit. Then we’d get costumes or make costumes to get poses, and then get the artwork approved.

While one of us worked on one project, the other would begin the next one. We’d have the palette in the middle and both paint at the same time, or take a break and observe what the other one was doing and be the director. That’s pretty much how we worked together. We did it our whole lives, from when we were little kids.

Stepping forward to 2018, what made you decide to redo your original quad poster?

I recently started a new series of paintings called ‘What If.’ The idea is, what if I was a professional artist back in the day and had been hired to do the posters for movies I saw as a young kid? I started with the Gill Man from *The Creature from the Black Lagoon* (1954), who was always one of my favorites, and I did the poster as if I was painting it back then. Then I did the 1933 original *King Kong*—it was a three-sheet movie poster that was 86 inches tall.

Then I thought, ‘What if I was to redo my *Star Wars* poster alone?’ Part of the challenge for me was to see if I could do it in 36 hours again. ▶



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03 Artwork for the *Shadows of the Empire* trading card collection.

04 Artwork for *Star Wars The Original Marvel Years Omnibus Volume 1*.

05 Greg Hildebrandt with his new rendition of the U.K. quad poster art.

06 Cover art for Marvel's *Captain Phasma* comic.

07 Greg and Tim Hildebrandt painted new art for Dark Horse Comics' original trilogy Special Edition adaptation releases in 1997, including this image for *The Empire Strikes Back*.

08 Cover art for *Star Wars: The Original Marvel Years Omnibus Volume 2*.

09 *Shadows of the Empire* trading card art, 1996.

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► It isn't as big as the original, it's 20x30 inches, but it still has all the components. I wanted to challenge myself, to see if I could remember all the values and colors that I used when we painted it together. Plus, there are no painted posters anymore. Movie posters have all gone digital, so let's bring back painted movie posters. People all around are saying they'd like to see painted movie posters again.

After deciding you were going to revisit the painting, were there any surprises waiting for you?

Oh yeah, the big surprise was Princess Leia's hand with the gun. I said, "Holy crap! She's only got four fingers." I wondered whether I should paint her with five fingers this time, but I thought, 'No, I'll stick with the four.' Nobody else had ever brought it up, nobody else had even noticed it.

Also, when we first did the poster, the agency told us not to worry about likenesses because

no one knew who the actors were, so we didn't really focus on making them look exact. This time I questioned whether I should make them look more like Carrie Fisher and Mark Hamill, but again, I thought, 'No, let's stick with the way we painted them before.'

There are subtle differences, it's not an exact copy. There are little adjustments here and there—composition, positioning of stars, and whatnot—but the basic composition is the same, the values, the colors, and the lighting.

The original painting was in Alan Ladd Jr.'s office for a time, and now it's owned by a French collector, so all you have as reference are prints, which may not be 100-percent accurate. How did you ensure that the colors were faithful to the ones you originally used?

I was able to look back to the colors we used back then: phthalocyanine blue, raw sienna, aquamarine, and dioxazine purple. I know those colors—I pressed the button on the computer in my head and there they were.

I painted it on a black illustration board, so the darks were already there. You're always heading towards your darkest darks; everything has to work in terms of chroma, contrast, and value against the dark. White is the 'lightest' light color in the center of the lightsaber, so you establish your darkest dark and your lightest light, and that gives you the color of your light sources. It's like a color wheel, from the lightest value down to the darkest.

That's how I work: what's the color of the light on the object? I have to understand and grasp completely what colors of light are illuminating the scene. For instance, I know there's a phthalo blue light on Darth Vader, the Death Star, and the buildings.

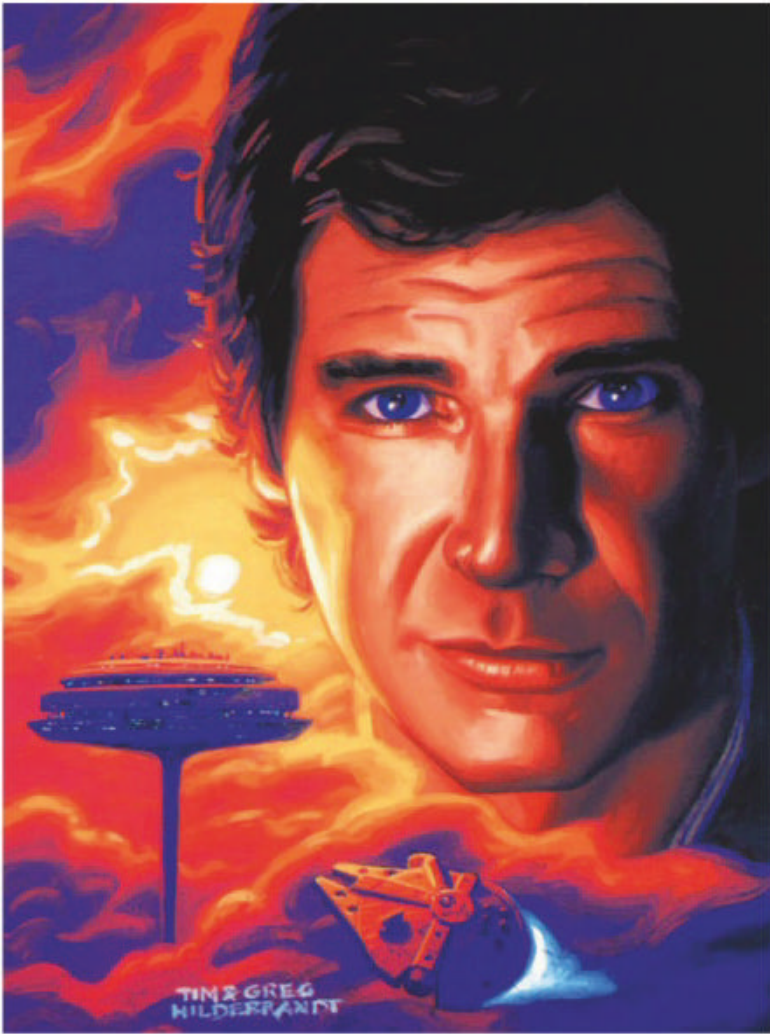
I remembered what we did. There's no guesswork, all my values are there.

In 1996, Tim and you painted the *Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire* trading card set for Topps. You'd been away from *Star Wars* for a while at that point, so what was it like coming back to the saga?

It was fun. We met this guy and he had all the costumes, props, and stormtroopers. We posed models in the costumes with the props, otherwise we wouldn't have been able to do it. It was a really tight deadline. We were shooting them out like a machine gun. There's an excitement to that. Stuff happens in painting when you're not overthinking things. We had to develop a system together, and we had to know what the palette was. It was always neat and structured, because I would use it and then he would take it home and use it.



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“THE BIG SURPRISE WAS PRINCESS LEIA’S HAND WITH THE GUN. I SAID, ‘HOLY CRAP! SHE’S ONLY GOT FOUR FINGERS.’”

After working on the trading cards, you quickly returned to *Star Wars*.

I did three covers for Dark Horse Comics, going back to the original movies [the covers for the *A New Hope*, *The Empire Strikes Back*, and *Return of the Jedi* special-edition trade paperbacks in 1997], and redoing the original comics. It was fun, I enjoyed doing them.

Recently, I did three covers for *Star Wars: The Marvel Years Omnibus* hardcover series.

And you’ve painted characters from the sequel trilogy, too.

I did a Captain Phasma painting for a variant cover of issue two of Marvel’s *Captain Phasma* series, with the flametroopers.

Would you enjoy the chance to paint more *Star Wars* and explore the newer characters?

Yeah, it would be fun. Those characters have everything going for them, and I’ve been a science-fiction fan since I was a kid; I had read all of Edgar Rice Burroughs, Jules Verne, and H.G. Wells by the time I was 16. Now I’m 80 years old but I feel like I’m eight, and it’s all still so exciting. 🤖

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Parallel Lives

Insider examines the not-so-different lives of a mother and daughter torn apart by tragedy, but forever bound by their shared and unwavering quest for peace and justice throughout the galaxy.

WORDS: JAY STOBIE

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admé Amidala and Leia Organa both established themselves as ardent defenders of peace and

justice throughout the *Star Wars* saga, frequently employing their ingenuity and courage to save their friends and protect the galaxy's citizens from oppressive regimes. The two characters shared much more than a familial relationship though, as both mother and daughter traveled parallel paths centered upon public service, outspoken wisdom, self-reliance, dedication to duty, and insightful reflection. Dealing with everything from personal sacrifices to interplanetary conflicts, Padmé and Leia prevailed as heroic figures whose larger-than-life exploits stemmed from their reliance on noble traits that we can all aspire to attain.

For the People

As the elected Queen of Naboo, Padmé Amidala's service to her people began at a young age, and she provided steadfast leadership during an invasion that left her homeworld in the Trade Federation's clutches. In cahoots with her decoy Sabé, a troubled Padmé made the difficult decision to leave Naboo and travel to Coruscant to seek assistance from the Galactic Republic in

Star Wars: The Phantom Menace (1999). Realizing that outside aid would not swiftly materialize, the queen boldly ventured back to her besieged planet and valiantly organized a resistance that freed those under her protection from the Trade Federation's occupation. She was held in such high esteem by her people that even after her term as queen had come to an end, the request was made that she continue to represent the planet in the Galactic Senate. It was a position which Amidala gladly accepted.

Adopted by the Royal Family of Alderaan, Princess Leia Organa's lineage did not spare her from growing up in the Galactic Empire's shadow. Leia grew up to become Alderaan's representative in the Imperial Senate, but her loyalty remained bound to democratic ideals and led her to sympathize with the fledgling Rebel Alliance. She refused to simply stand by and enable the Empire to crush those battling against its tyrannical rule. Just as Padmé had done a generation before, Leia chose to risk her own safety and jumped to Scarif aboard the *Tantive IV* in *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* (2016), only evacuating the warzone once she safely

Padmé and Leia prevailed as heroic figures whose larger-than-life exploits stemmed from their reliance on noble traits that we can all aspire to attain.

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01 Padmé Amidala (Natalie Portman).

02 Princess Leia Organa (Carrie Fisher).

03 Queen Amidala of Naboo.

held in her hands the Death Star schematics that had been acquired at such cost by Jyn Erso's team. Steadfast in her beliefs, the princess' allegiance to Alderaan's population and her friends in the Rebellion continued even as the Death Star targeted her home. Unwilling to risk Alderaan's destruction or betray the rebels' location on Yavin 4, Leia unsuccessfully attempted to divert the superweapon's ire by claiming the clandestine base was on Dantooine.

Whether facing a blockade by the Trade Federation or an Imperial war machine, both Padmé and Leia refused to abandon the citizens in their care. Only the strongest leaders know when the time to ask for help arrives, and the two women showed off this fearless quality as their individual situations worsened. Padmé revealed her true identity to Boss Nass and sought the Gungans' participation in their planet's defense, while Leia dispatched R2-D2 with a message that requested Obi-Wan Kenobi finish the mission that she could no longer carry out. The ability to set aside their pride to benefit the masses substantiated the esteem that so many people held for these two remarkable women.

Speaking Truth to Power

Maintaining a headstrong attitude can be difficult, especially when

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► a deadly Trade Federation fleet surrounds your world, or the most hated person in the galaxy towers menacingly above you. However, Padmé and Leia proceeded unphased during their respective encounters with Viceroy Nute Gunray in *The Phantom Menace* and Darth Vader in *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977). The queen's confidence proved well-founded, and she defied all odds to eventually apprehend Gunray. Nor did she shy away from reprimanding her allies when necessary, including her evaluation of Qui-Gon Jinn's plan to enter a young Anakin into a podrace as "reckless," and disagreeing with Mace Windu's assessment that Count Dooku's Jedi origins prevented him from assassinating anyone. Likewise, Leia's verbal jabs extended beyond Vader and included stinging remarks about Grand Moff Tarkin's body odor, and even the stature of an armor-clad Luke Skywalker.

The mother and daughter also flouted danger by retaining their humor in trying moments. After two failed attempts on her life, Padmé preserved her capacity to laugh and joke when she and Anakin went into hiding on Naboo in *Star Wars: Attack of the Clones* (2002), and in the battle arena on Geonosis, the senator took a brief moment to tease Anakin about her decision to engage in "aggressive negotiations." As the First Order bore down on the Resistance, Leia issued a jovial statement about Han Solo's jacket in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* (2015), and relieved tension by making Luke laugh with a quip about her hair in *Star Wars: The Last Jedi* (2017). Eliciting smirks from a future Sith Lord, a skeptical smuggler, and a Jedi recluse? Now that's impressive!

Despite their prominent roles in galactic conflicts, the two women often called upon their pacifist backgrounds to seek non-violent resolutions to events. Naboo's tranquil hills and small security force instilled a distaste for bloodshed in Padmé, who worked to defeat the Senate's Military Creation

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Padmé and Leia's righteous efforts consistently sent them into perilous environments, but neither character needed to wait for a rescue.



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04 Queen Amidala defending Naboo.

05 Leia aboard the *Millennium Falcon*.

06 Leia remains a force for good in *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*.

07 Padmé on the front line at the Battle of Geonosis.



06



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Act in the belief that it would push the Separatists into a corner and instigate a full-scale civil war. Leia's upbringing on Alderaan's serene (and defenseless) surface produced a corresponding effect, from her eagerness to halt the Death Star's cataclysmic ways to her desire to defeat the First Order before it could challenge the New Republic.

Resourceful Allies

Padmé and Leia's righteous efforts consistently sent them into perilous environments, but neither character needed to wait for a rescue. The two protagonists possessed the virtue of self-reliance and, while they could count on their friends for support,

A dedication to duty clearly ran in the family, as Padmé and Leia tempered their powerful positions with kindness and compassion for the people they served.

regularly solved their own problems. By the time Anakin and Obi-Wan Kenobi began discussing their options for escape in the Geonosian battle arena, Amidala had already formulated her own method to sever the chains that imprisoned her. And although Luke, Han, and Chewbacca kicked off the assault on the Death Star's detention center, it was the princess who asserted control over their predicament, blasted a hole in some grating, and shouted the immortal line, "Into the garbage chute, flyboy!"

Correspondingly, both Padmé and Leia preferred to lead from the frontlines whenever a battle broke out, as exhibited by the queen's endeavor to recapture the Theed Royal Palace in *The Phantom Menace*, and the princess' last-minute stewardship of the Rebellion's evacuation from Hoth in *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1980). But no matter how perilous situations became, the mother and daughter pair never permitted



BAIL'S BOLDNESS

Senators Bail Organa and Padmé Amidala formed a loyal friendship based upon their mutual ideals, making the Alderaanian a natural choice to pass on those values as he and his wife raised Padmé's daughter.

Bail shared numerous attributes with Padmé and Leia, such as his inclination to endanger his own well-being for the greater good. It was the daring senator who smuggled Yoda and Obi-Wan Kenobi to Coruscant in the dying days of the Republic, who risked his safety to harbor Leia, and organized the Rebellion without concern for the perils lurking in every shadow. And, in a way, Bail's similarities to Padmé allowed the former queen to help nurture her daughter from beyond the grave.

their circumstances to hamper their spirits. During the struggle on Geonosis, when a turbulent flight sent Padmé falling from her transport into the sand below, the moment she was back on her feet the senator ordered a clone trooper to find another gunship, regroup with more soldiers, and continued with her pursuit of Count Dooku. Wounded by a stormtrooper on the forest moon of Endor, Leia kept her composure and took out the additional troopers lurking behind Han in *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* (2003). And as if that wasn't enough, years later she stood at the forefront of the battle and was

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► ready to open fire alongside Poe Dameron when a seemingly hostile First Order shuttle crashed into the Crait base—until Finn, Rose Tico, and BB-8 emerged, of course!

When necessary, these heroic women willingly placed themselves in harm's way to protect others. Padmé used herself as bait for her own assassin on Coruscant and charged to Geonosis after receiving a distress call sent by Obi-Wan. Leia demonstrated the same selfless behavior when infiltrating Jabba the Hutt's palace to save Han Solo, then by volunteering to join his command crew destined for Endor. Their gallant actions inspired their comrades and fostered hope when victory seemed elusive. The queen's capability to forge an alliance between the Naboo and the Gungans against the mighty Trade Federation paralleled General Organa's faith that the Resistance could be rebuilt in the Battle of Crait's aftermath. Grasping Rey's hand, Leia calmly assured the young woman, "We have everything we need."

Relentless Resolve

A dedication to duty clearly ran in the family, as Padmé and Leia tempered their powerful positions with kindness and compassion for the people they served and the strangers they encountered along the way. Both were also committed to equality for all sentient beings, as was showcased in their treatment of such races as the Gungans and the Ewoks. This devotion surfaced in the relationships of both women with their loved ones, as well. In a twist of fate, it was during life-and-death situations that both declared their love for the men in their lives, as Padmé divulged her affection for Anakin in the moments before their scheduled execution on Geonosis, while Leia proclaimed her feelings for Han as the Corellian prepared to be frozen in carbonite.

And yet, unlike some of those around them, love would dissuade neither of these headstrong women from performing their duty. When Anakin aimed to cease the hunt for



AMIDALA'S UPRISING?

Padmé Amidala's devotion to democracy and distaste for Sheev Palpatine's new Galactic Empire could lead one to wonder whether she might have helped Mon Mothma and Bail Organa build the Rebel Alliance, had she survived the events of *Revenge of the Sith*. Given the way she questioned the Republic's actions in the final days of the Clone War, it seems likely that involvement in the Rebellion would have been her future path. As it transpired, her daughter Leia would devote her life to following it.

Count Dooku and retreat to check on Padmé after she was knocked from their transport, Obi-Wan convinced his Padawan to focus on their mission by asking him what the senator would do if their roles were reversed. "She would do her duty," acknowledged Anakin. More than two decades later, Leia encouraged Luke to run away rather than confront Darth Vader, and claimed she wished she could leave with him. But Luke knew his sister would never abandon the rebels and gave voice to her resolve. "You've always been strong," he noted.

A Vision for the Future

Padmé and Leia treasured their personal relationships, but they also displayed uncanny foresight and a talent for seeing the bigger picture. As the Clone Wars wore on and Supreme Chancellor Palpatine continued to accumulate more political might, the Naboo senator prophetically questioned whether or not the Republic had

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Common principles and parallel experiences wove an unbreakable thread between Padmé Amidala and her daughter Leia Organa.



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transformed into the very evil it vowed to defeat. When Palpatine announced the birth of the Galactic Empire, Padmé ranked among the few senators who realized that the Emperor's corruption threatened peace and democracy. "So this is how liberty dies—with thunderous applause," she observed.

Leia's own foresight manifested through her involvement in the Rebel Alliance and the Resistance. General Organa's familiarity with the Empire's tactics during the Galactic Civil War helped guide her actions as Supreme Leader Snoke bolstered his military aspirations, and she cast off the New Republic's comforts to form the Resistance as a preemptive defense against the First Order's

08 Leia tells Luke all she remembers about her mother.

09 A princess turned general was an inspiration to the galaxy.

10 General Organa rebukes hot-head pilot Poe Dameron.

11 Padmé on her wedding day.

rising tide. The general sought to impart her wisdom upon Poe Dameron when she admonished him for proceeding without considering his deeds' broader impacts. Poe's relentless attack on the Dreadnought *Fulminatrix* severely depleted their forces, while his insurrection against Vice Admiral Amilyn Holdo aboard the *Raddus* almost ruined the Resistance's chance to escape. Referring to her protégé, Holdo, Leia spelled out the lesson for Dameron in no uncertain terms: "She was more interested in protecting the light than she was seeming like a hero."

Common principles and parallel experiences wove an unbreakable thread between Padmé Amidala and her daughter Leia Organa. Their immeasurable contributions

to equality and freedom granted them honorable accolades, but both lost so much in their struggle against the dark side. The Emperor's influence stole Anakin from Padmé, while Snoke manipulated Leia's son, Ben Solo, with his grandfather's legacy. For all of their accomplishments, they unfairly blamed themselves for the creation of Darth Vader and Kylo Ren. Interestingly, Leia summarized numerous similarities between her mother and herself when she related the few memories she retained of Padmé to Luke: "She was very beautiful. Kind, but... sad." Nevertheless, Padmé Amidala and Leia Organa's perseverance through personal suffering brought inspiration and hope to the galaxy. 🌟

STAR WARS INSIDER

JEDI MASTER'S QUIZ

Can you tell a 12-back from a 92-back? Can you spot the *other* big difference between a maroon Snaggletooth and a blue one? If so, then you must be a fan of the original Kenner *Star Wars* toys—but how much do you really know?

Compiled by Jay Stobie

“COLLECT THEM ALL!”

Test your knowledge of the galaxy's favorite line of action figures.

THE EARLY BIRD SET

1: In what year did children first begin to receive this as a gift?

- A/ 1976
- B/ 1977
- C/ 1980
- D/ 1983



2: Who was not featured on the front of the set's packaging?

- A/ Jawa
- B/ R2-D2
- C/ Sandtrooper
- D/ Tusken Raider

3: Which vehicle was pictured on the included display stand?

- A/ The sandcrawler
- B/ A Y-wing
- C/ An X-wing
- D/ A landspeeder



4: How many action figures did the Early Bird Certificate promise to each of its holders?

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

5: What season did Kenner hope to take advantage of with the Early Bird promotion?

- A/ Christmas
- B/ Halloween
- C/ Easter
- D/ Summer

THE MILLENNIUM FALCON SPACESHIP



6: What size action figures was this toy designed to accommodate?

- A/ 1 inch
- B/ 2.5 inch
- C/ 3.75 inch
- D/ 6 inch

7: Which part of the Falcon was movable for playability?

- A/ Ramp
- B/ Radar dish
- C/ Quad gun
- D/ All of the above



8: How many action figures could the toy's cockpit hold?

- A/ Two
- B/ Four
- C/ Six
- D/ Eight



9: Which term did the packaging use to describe the dejarik table?

- A/ Holographic Chess
- B/ Space Chess
- C/ Star Chess
- D/ Wookiee Chess

10: What sound did the toy produce once batteries were installed?

- A/ Battle alert
- B/ Hyperspace jump
- C/ Lightsaber ignition
- D/ Laser blast

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

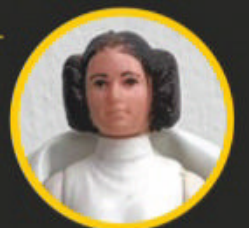
Between 1978 and 1985, how many different action figures were released of the following *Star Wars* characters?

11: Luke Skywalker

- A/ One
- B/ Three
- C/ Five
- D/ Seven

12: Princess Leia

- A/ One
- B/ Three
- C/ Five
- D/ Seven



13: Han Solo

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

14: Grand Moff Tarkin

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

15: R2-D2

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



“DO YOU SPEAK BOCCE?”

Make like a protocol droid to translate these scrambled action figure names:

- 1. HARMED HEMA
- 2. ADRIA LAMBRACK
- 3. GRANDE
- 4. TOSREKUBIC
- 5. EQWYAUÉ
- 6. CREEP FAUN
- 7. CAFÉ KAY
- 8. EPIC FAHRICH
- 9. RABBI FUTON
- 10. REDWOOD RIP



“I’M A TOYDARIAN!”

Identify which *Star Wars* characters own the in-world toys pictured below:

1.

2.

3.

4.

QUIZ 1 B, 2 C, 3 C, 4 D, 5 A, 6 C, 7 D, 8 A, 9 B, 10 A, 11 D, 12 C, 13 D, 14 A, 15 D. “DO YOU SPEAK BOCCE?” 1 Hammerhead, 2 Admiral Ackbar, 3 Dengar, 4 Biker Scout, 5 Weequay, 6 Prune Face, 7 Yak Face, 8 Chief Chirpa, 9 Bib Fortuna, 10 Power Droid. “I’M A TOYDARIAN!” 1 Luke Skywalker’s I-16, 2 Anakin Skywalker’s alien action figure, 3 Rey’s pilot doll, 4 Jyn Erso’s stormtrooper.

HOW DID YOU DO? ARE YOU MINT-IN-BOX, OR A BATTERED AND BROKEN BLISTER PACK?
0-9: Think you’re an “early bird”? The dimmest of brain worms saw you coming.
10-19: You’re good, but you’re no Yak Face.
20-29: Well done. You deserve to snag a blue Snaggletooth!

“ONLY YOU
CAN DECIDE...
YOU, AND
STAR WARS
TOYS!”

Action Figures: A *Star Wars* Story

It was the toy range that set a new bar for playability, and continues to bring the *Star Wars* experience home for millions of fans worldwide. Collector and toy expert Gus Lopez takes *Insider* on a nostalgic look back in time, at Kenner’s original line of *Star Wars* action figures, vehicles, and playsets.

WORDS: GUS LOPEZ

PHOTOS COURTESY OF HASBRO, JAKE STEVENS,
AND CHRISTOPHER COOPER

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he release of *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977) was a defining moment for many kids growing up in the 1970s, who

were blown away by the brilliant storytelling, the rich universe of characters and settings, and the groundbreaking special effects. But it was the toys made by Kenner, with their infinite playability and compulsive collectability, that had a profound impact on their day-to-day childhood experience.

Before *Star Wars*, Kenner Products was a comparatively small company with a number of moderately successful toy lines, including Play-Doh, Easy-Bake Oven, Spirograph, SSP Cars and Vans, and the *Six Million Dollar Man* and *Bionic Woman* lines.

Back then, toys based on movies were rarely seen as a good bet for manufacturers, and predicting which movies would become hits was both difficult and risky. While other companies passed on *Star Wars*, Kenner was so impressed by the early concept art and bold vision of George Lucas' space-fantasy epic that they gambled on acquiring exclusive rights to produce the film's toys. It was a gamble that paid off, although no one—not even the most enthusiastic fans within Kenner—had expected the global *Star Wars* phenomenon that followed.

In the Beginning

For many kids experiencing *Star Wars* in the summer of 1977, there was an irresistible craving for toys based on the movie. Everyone wanted to bring the adventure home and experience it

01 All 12 original *Star Wars* action figures released by Kenner in 1978.

02 Kenner licensed the U.K. and European distribution rights to British company Palitoy, whose logo replaced Kenner's on all toy packaging.

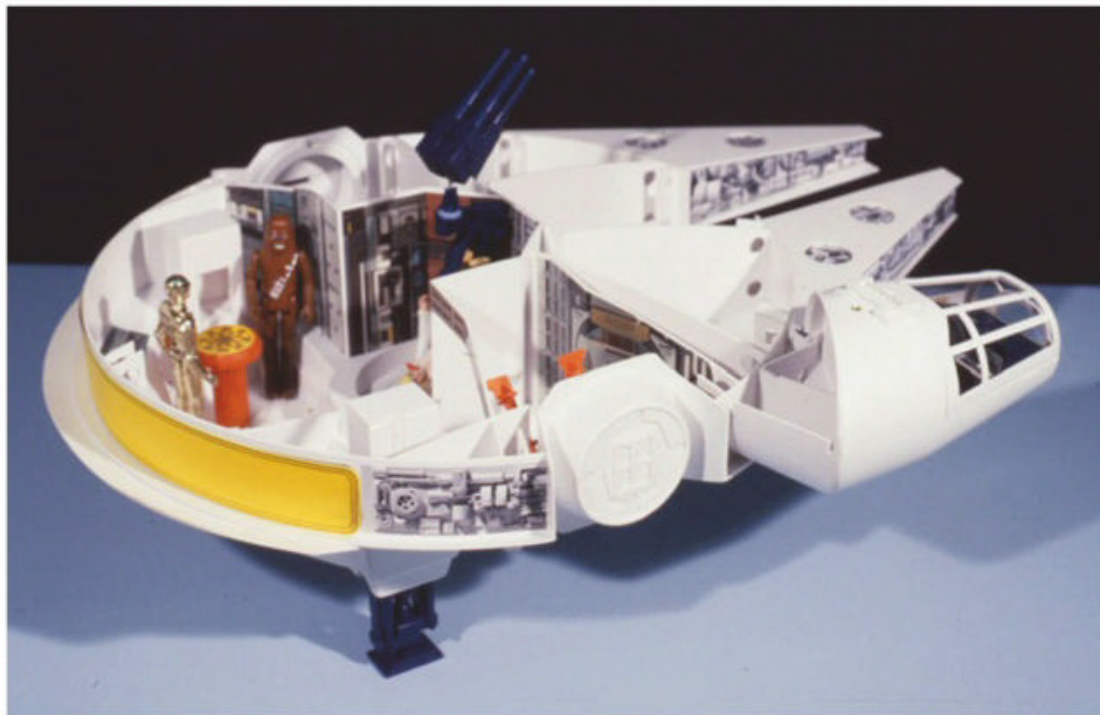
03 The impressive AT-AT vehicle.

again and again, but there were very few *Star Wars* toys available. Kenner scrambled to bring out products while the film was still playing in theaters, including jigsaw puzzles, Dip Dots art sets, and the *Star Wars: Escape from Death Star* board game, all of which were entertaining enough but lacking in true play value.

The following fall, rumors began to circulate that Kenner was creating a *Star Wars* action-figure line. Excitement was further amped when a television commercial for the first four Kenner figures aired. The toy line was not ready for release for the holiday season, but kids could obtain an Early Bird Certificate that allowed them to receive the first four figures (Luke Skywalker, Princess Leia, Chewbacca, and R2-D2) in the spring of 1978. It came with

Kenner was so impressed by the early concept art and bold vision of George Lucas' sci-fi epic that they gambled on acquiring exclusive rights to produce the film's toys.

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► a cardboard playset to display the first 12 action figures, a small catalog of Kenner's *Star Wars* products, stickers, a membership card, and a couple of cut-out cardboard photos.

Kids received the four Early Bird figures at around the time the first wave of action figures appeared in stores, which included Darth Vader, Stormtrooper, Ben (Obi-Wan) Kenobi, Han Solo, and C-3PO. Several weeks later, the final three figures—Death Squad Commander, Sand People, and Jawa—arrived at retail, and the circle was complete.

This first release of highly coveted figures was unlike anything kids had ever seen before. The figures did not have as many points of articulation as G.I. Joe or Mego action figures, and they were also smaller and less posable. However, this was Kenner's masterstroke: they had the foresight to encourage kids to "Collect them all,"

and not just the figures, but also the various ships featured in the movie that the action figures could interact with. Known as '12 Backs' to collectors today, the first wave of figures pictured all 12 action figures in the range on the back of their card packaging, along with the Landspeeder, X-wing, and TIE Fighter vehicles, and instructions on how to order an action-figure display stand, all scaled to the action figures.

The Joy of Sets

Some of the more elaborate *Star Wars* toys were released by Kenner a year into the line, and were initially exclusive to retailer Sears. The Death Star Space Station playset featured a section of the weapon that contained the trash compactor, a control room, the chasm that Luke and Leia swing across, and a laser cannon. The Cantina Adventure Set—a yellow plastic base with a cardboard cantina backdrop—

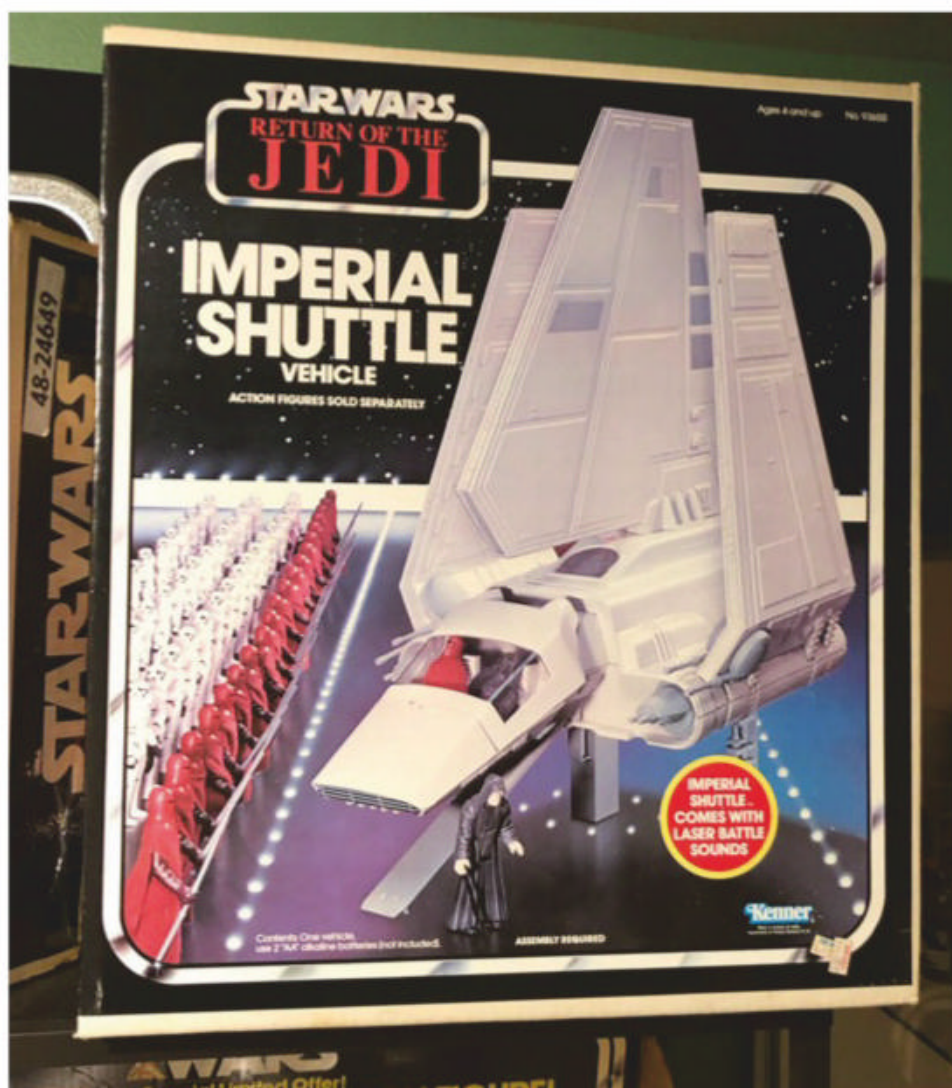
introduced four new action figures to the line: Greedo, Hammerhead, Walrus Man, and Snaggletooth, which were initially only available with the Sears exclusive playset. Eventually, Kenner would release the four cantina figures on cards along with four additional characters, but Snaggletooth was somewhat reworked from the original Sears version, with shorter legs and a red outfit.

Kenner's most amazing toy vehicle—and the most coveted—was the *Millennium Falcon* Spaceship. This massive toy, scaled to fit multiple figures in its cockpit, gunner station, and main hold, featured a retractable ramp, holographic gaming table, and even an area for lightsaber practice. It was the toy that every kid wanted, and was so popular that Hasbro rereleased it in the mid 1990s using the same molds, until a larger, updated version was released in 2008.

For many kids experiencing *Star Wars* in the summer of 1977, there was an irresistible craving for toys based on the movie.

Ships in Ship-shape Shape

Despite the runaway success of *A New Hope*, Kenner was surprisingly uncertain whether the toys would perform as well for the 1980 sequel,



Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back, and their initial wave of new figures included only 10 new characters. In fact, Kenner released so many toys for its action figures that there were more vehicles and playsets introduced for *The Empire Strikes Back* than actual figures. These included such delights as Darth Vader's Star Destroyer, the Hoth-based 'Imperial Attack Base' and 'Turret and Probot' playsets, a Snowspeeder, two versions of the Tauntaun—one with a belly-opening feature for those chilly Hoth nights, a Rebel Transport that doubled as a carrycase for your action-figure collection, and various small vehicles called mini-rigs—to name some of many!

The masterpiece this time was the AT-AT. Enabling kids to recreate the Battle of Hoth in the warmth of their own homes, this gigantic toy featured motorized, light-up cannons, an opening canopy for the pilot, and a door in the main bay revealing a large hold from which an army of snowtroopers could be deployed.

By the time *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* (1983) rolled around, Kenner was ready. The first wave included

Kenner's most amazing toy vehicle—and the most coveted—was the Millennium Falcon Spaceship.

04 The preliminary model for the *Millennium Falcon* toy, designed by Mark Bourdreaux.

05 The final retail *Millennium Falcon* Spaceship, desired by thousands of fans.

06 Featuring "Laser Battle Sounds," the Imperial Shuttle was the centerpiece of Kenner's *Return of the Jedi* range.



HARD TO FIND

Kenner has experimented with other *Star Wars* toy ranges besides small action figures, including a set of large 12-inch figures (see above) and die-cast metal vehicles released for *A New Hope* and *The Empire Strikes Back*. Not all of them were hits, but that, conversely, has made them hot tickets for collectors today.

The Micro Collection line of toys based on *The Empire Strikes Back* consisted of small, interlocking plastic playsets with non-posable metal figures (see below). The toys were not popular during their time, and disappeared from shelves before *Return of the Jedi* was released in 1983. Today, they are extremely popular with collectors.

Following *Return of the Jedi*, Kenner issued a line of preschool toys based on the *Ewoks* animated series, including a Fire Cart, Family Hut, Woodland Wagon, Music Box Radio, Talking Telephone, and Teaching Clock. While the preschool *Ewoks* toys did not perform well at retail, collecting interest sometimes works inversely to a toy's popularity at the time, and there's now a growing number of niche collectors attempting to assemble the complete set.



“Action figures sold seperatley!”



KENNER'S TV COMMERCIALS

Kenner created numerous television commercials for its *Star Wars* toys, making sure to inform keen fans that “Action figures sold separately!” A more fondly remembered tagline promised that, “Only you can decide. You, and *Star Wars* toys!”

Many of the early commercials featured a musical soundtrack that was entirely of its own, and—unlike the effects-dominated toy commercials of today—actually showed kids playing with the toys while demonstrating their awesome play features.

Of the more memorable TV spots, a commercial promoting the large Wampa figure had a child repeating, “Wampa-wampa-wampa!” over and over again as he menaces our heroes with the Hoth monster. Advertising the Lando Calrissian Skiff Guard disguise figure from *Return of the Jedi*, another child ecstatically hollers the memorable phrase, “Surprise! Surprise! It’s Lando in disguise!”



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07 “Battle Damaged” stickers added a new spin to existing toys for *The Empire Strikes Back*.

08 Numerous new action figures have been released as part of The Vintage Collection, on cardbacks inspired by the original Kenner toy line.

Kenner released so many toys for its action figures that there were more vehicles and playsets introduced for *The Empire Strikes Back* than actual figures.

▶ 17 new action figures, followed by 12 more in the second wave. By this point, Kenner had limited the number of new playsets to just two—Jabba the Hutt, and The Ewok Village Action Playsets—but they made up for it with a barrage of great vehicles, namely the B-wing, TIE Interceptor, Speeder Bike, Y-wing, and Battle Damaged TIE Fighter. The highlight was the Imperial Shuttle, a fantastic replica of the screen original that was so accurate it made for an excellent display piece, not forgetting the hours of play value offered by its retractable wings and many other unique features.

The Dark Times

With no new movies on the horizon after *Return of the Jedi*, interest in *Star Wars* toys began to fade as kids’ attention moved on to other franchises. Regardless, Kenner tried one last push for the movie line in 1985, with the creation of the Power of the Force series. This included some newly sculpted figures from across the trilogy, along with reissues of the most popular characters on all-new cardbacks. As an additional lure, each figure was packaged with a bonus coin that was part of a 62-coin set, but sadly the line languished on toy



store shelves and the series was short-lived. Ironically, the scarcity of this final set of vintage figures has made the Power of the Force line extremely popular among today's collectors, thanks in no small part to the strong likenesses to the characters, the coins, and the elegantly designed cards. Some characters from the line, such as Gamorrean Guard, AT-AT Driver, Nikto, and Yak Face, were only available beyond U.S. shores, as the dramatic drop in interest in *Star Wars* led to the inventory being sold overseas.

Kenner created action figures for the *Droids* and *Ewoks* animated series the following year but, as with the Power of the Force figures, they didn't

catch on and both series only survived for that initial wave. There would be no new *Star Wars* figures for another decade, but something interesting happened during those dark times. As the kids who had grown up with *Star Wars* reached adulthood, they became nostalgic about the toys of their childhood years, and many went back to rebuild or complete their sets.

Renaissance of the Jedi

By the mid-90s, *Star Wars* was experiencing a renaissance. Adult fans were networking with each other online over their love for their toys—the first generation to ever build a worldwide community devoted to

With no new movies on the horizon after *Return of the Jedi*, interest in *Star Wars* toys began to fade.

Star Wars collecting. The Timothy Zahn novels and Dark Horse Comics' *Star Wars: Dark Empire* renewed interest in original *Star Wars* stories, and with the release of the Special Editions and then the prequels, *Star Wars* was firmly back in the public eye.

Star Wars action figures made a comeback too, now branded under



► the Hasbro name, with numerous lines featuring old and new characters arriving in stores with each fresh cinematic episode. But there was something about Kenner's original run that left an insatiable desire in the hearts of collectors for silver borders and black cardbacks, and in 2004 Hasbro embraced that fan nostalgia with the Original Trilogy Collection, employing packaging reminiscent of the much-loved cardbacks from the early Kenner years. The Vintage Collection of super-articulated figures, launched in 2010, had a similarly retro Kenner packaging vibe, and proved so popular that by the time Hasbro ended that line in 2013, the series had actually outsold the entire eight-year run of the original 70s and 80s figures.

Hasbro announced it was reviving The Vintage Collection in 2018 with the launch of a crowd-funded initiative named HasLab, allowing them to create special products otherwise unrealistic for the company to produce for the general market. The first project—

At February's New York Toy Fare, Hasbro revealed The *Star Wars* Retro Collection.

again referencing the original Kenner line's packaging design—was the 3 3/4-action-figure-scale Jabba's Sail Barge, which at four-foot long became the largest *Star Wars* toy ever made. A whole new range of action figures based on characters from more recent movies joined the line too, but things got seriously retro in 2019.

At February's New York Toy Fair, Hasbro revealed The *Star Wars* Retro Collection—six 3.75-inch action figures inspired by the original 1970s sculpts, on cardbacks that could have believably been locked away and forgotten in a toy store warehouse for four decades. The line includes Luke Skywalker, Darth Vader, Princess Leia, Chewbacca, Han Solo, a Stormtrooper,



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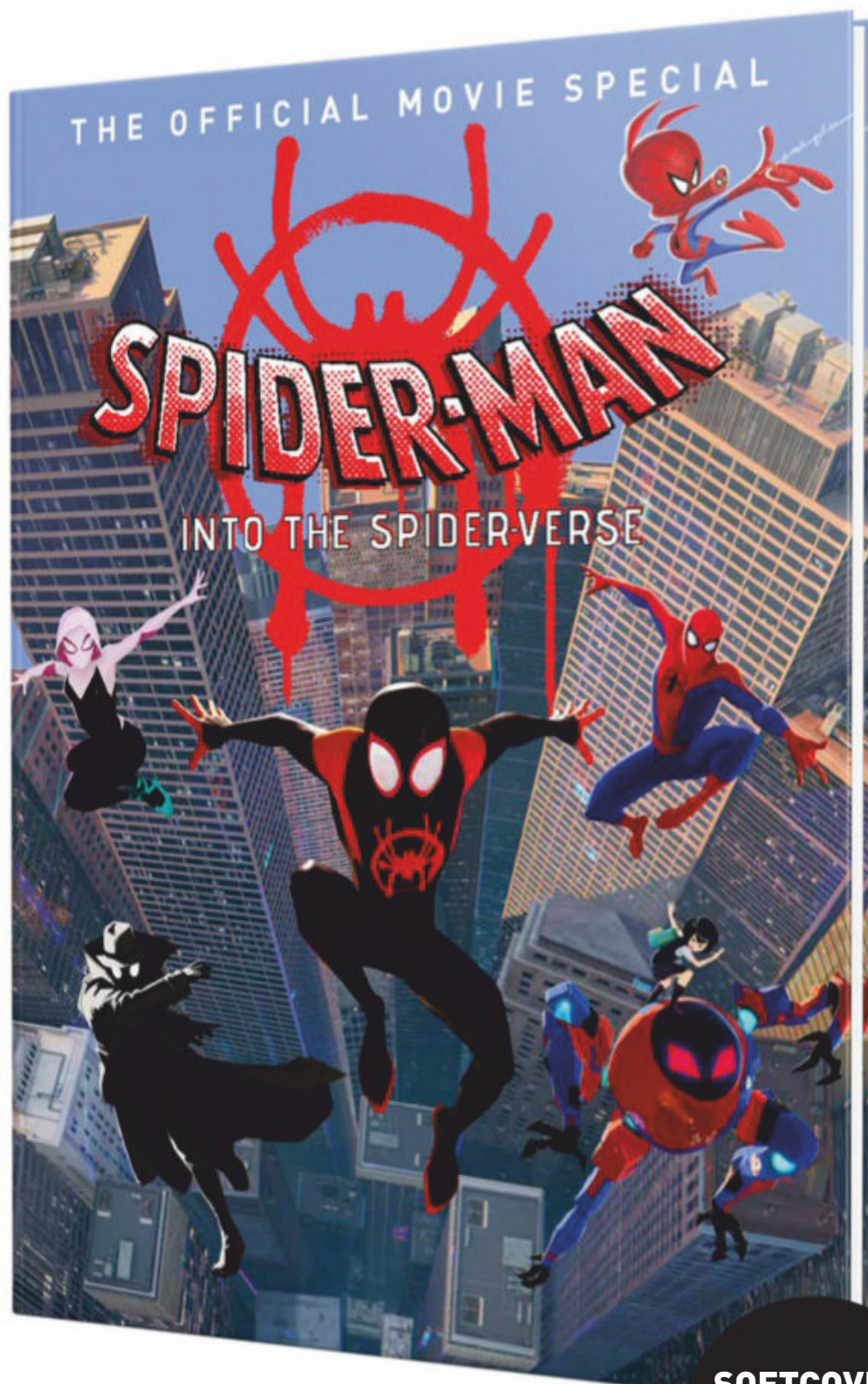
09 Hasbro's rerelease of the *Escape from the Death Star* board game includes an exclusive Grand Moff Tarkin action figure (above right).

10 The Vintage Collection's Jabba's Sail Barge toy, made possible through Hasbro's HasLabs crowdfunding initiative.

and one character who strangely never made the original run—Grand Moff Tarkin. It seems *Star Wars* action figures have truly come full circle, leaving collectors to decide whether to keep these new/old figures “mint in box,” or tear open those blister packs and invent all new space adventures, just as they did back in the day. So what will you do with yours?

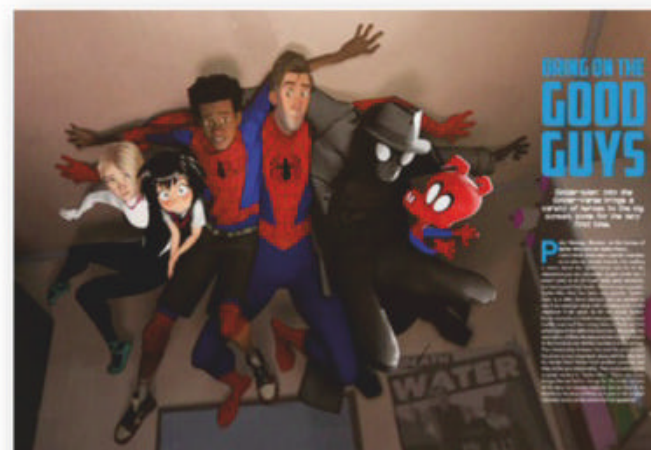
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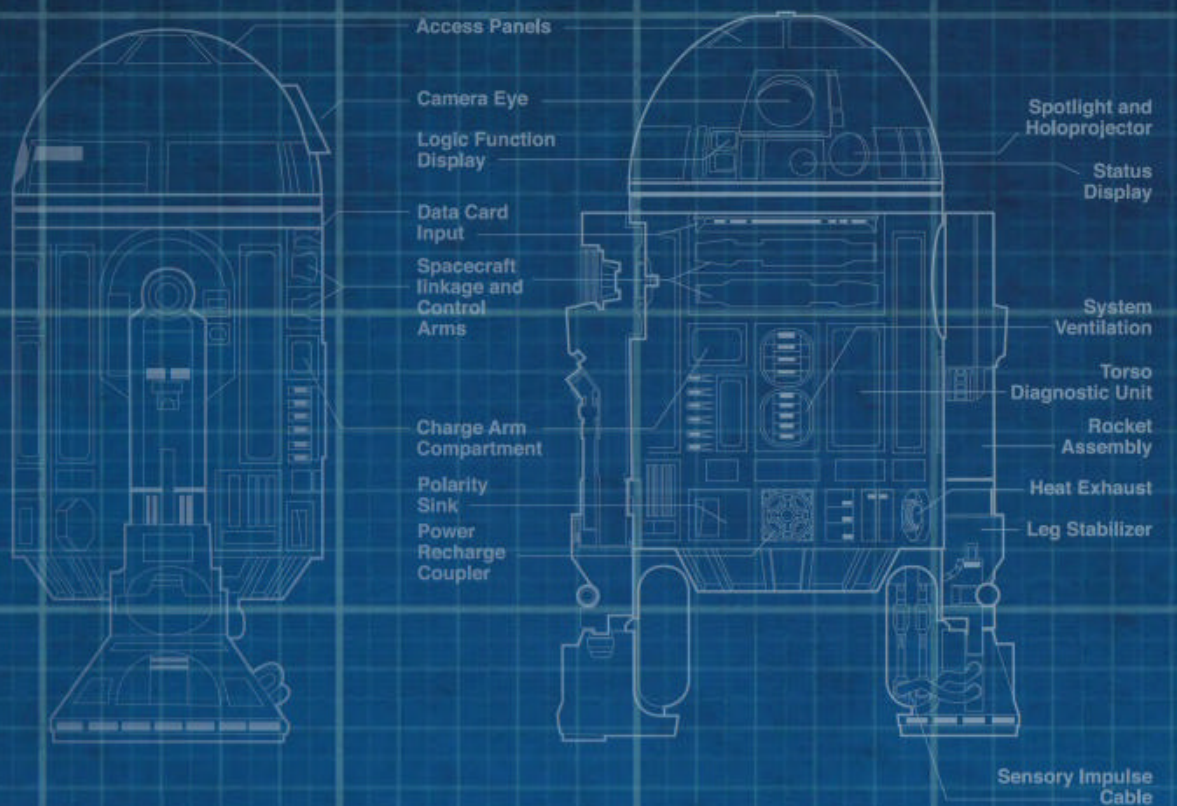


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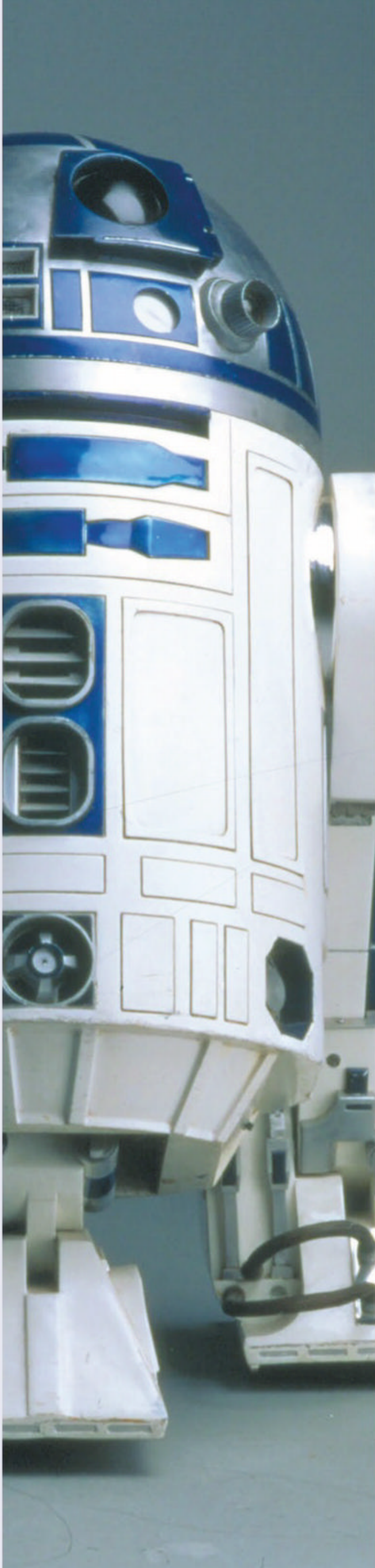


THE MAN WHO BUILT R2-D2!

LESLIE DILLEY

Turning concept sketches and designs into solid objects and real environments for a movie is the job of an art director and set decorator. Leslie Dilley, who fulfilled those roles on *Star Wars: A New Hope*, reflects on his part in creating movie history.

WORDS: PAT JANKIEWICZ



Two-time Academy Award-winning production designer and art director Leslie Dilley has overseen a great deal of onscreen destruction during his career. He's created earthquakes in Southern California for *Superman The Movie* (1978), caused traffic chaos in Piccadilly Circus for *An American Werewolf in London* (1981), facilitated an alien invasion in *Invaders From Mars* (1986), and helped destroy civilization as we know it in *Deep Impact* (1998). But it was his creative input as art director and set decorator on the original *Star Wars* film that has become instantly recognizable to generations of movie fans. In fact, the prolific art director's contribution to the iconic movie was officially recognized in 1978, when he was awarded the Best Art Decoration-Set Decoration Oscar for *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977).

Now a resident of the U.S.A., Dilley—who was born in the Rhondda Valley of South Wales, U.K. in 1941—spent his formative years learning his craft in and around London. An early apprenticeship led to him joining the art department of the prestigious Associated British Picture Corporation (which would later become EMI), where he worked as a freelance junior draughtsman during the 1960s at the legendary Elstree Studios. Little did the aspiring production designer know that, just over a decade later, he would be working at the studios again, on a project that would make cinematic history.

"*Star Wars* came my way in 1975, when I was serving as assistant art director under [production designer] John Barry on *Lucky Lady* (1975), a big Burt Reynolds movie for 20th Century Fox that we were making in Mexico," explains Dilly. "The writers on that movie were Willard Huyck and Gloria Katz, who were good friends with George Lucas, and they recommended he use John Barry for *Star Wars*. That's how it happened—John took the job, and I became the art director on the film.

"My work entailed being responsible for everything visual, everything you saw on the screen, apart from the actors," Dilley says. As such, the art director had a direct hand in creating the worn and lived-in look that has become familiar to fans of the *Star Wars* galaxy, and defines it to this day.

In The Beginning

Although *A New Hope* would break new ground in the movie-making arena, both in terms of box-office success and its influence on the sci-fi and fantasy genres, in the early days of production it was a case of all hands on deck for the handful of personnel initially drafted onto the crew, ►



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► and Dilley soon found himself heavily involved in the development of the picture. “The only production people working on the movie at the beginning were John Barry, myself, and a guy named Roger Christian, who went on to become a film director himself,” Dilley says of the film’s humble beginnings. “There was nobody else—just George Lucas, [producer] Gary Kurtz, and the three of us, and we delivered it all from scratch!”

Lucas and his band of filmmakers settled on North West London as their base of operations from which to bring their epic vision to the big screen, and it saw Dilley return to the stomping ground of his youth. “We were trying to get [the project] off the ground in a place called Lee International Film Studios on Kensal Road, London,” he recalls. “That’s where we developed R2-D2, C-3PO, and Luke Skywalker’s landspeeder. We were also joined by Norman Reynolds, who was doing C-3PO. Norman and I were co-art directors on *Star Wars*.”

Reminiscing on how Luke’s iconic vehicle came together, Dilley recalls that, “The



“Artoo was developed straight from the drawing board.”

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"I said, 'You've got this job on *Star Wars*, Kenny, and you've got to do it!' To which he replied, 'But we're on *Opportunity Knocks*!'"

landspeeder was a joint effort between all of us. We made this full-size mock-up of it, which George said was much too big. So we cut it down by a third, and that's the lovely little thing you see in the movie."

But Luke's memorable hot rod wasn't the only iconic mode of *Star Wars* transport that Dilley had a hand in creating. "I drafted the plans for the Jawa sandcrawler that you see on Tatooine, and went out to Tunisia with a construction crew to put it up," he reveals. "We put it together in this dried-up salt lake there. The sandcrawler was a really huge set: 120 feet long, 20 feet wide, and 40 feet high."

01 Leslie Dilley (left) with production designer John Barry (right).

02 Dilley's team working on the remote control R2-D2 prop.

03 Actor Kenny Baker enjoying lunch in his R2-D2 costume.

Droid Detail

Perhaps Dilley's biggest challenge was realizing the plucky little astromech droid who would go on to become one of the best-loved characters in the entire saga. "I ended up building R2-D2, which was essentially based on Ralph McQuarrie's illustrations. Artoo was developed straight from the drawing board," says Dilley. "We started out with a cardboard drum, added cardboard arms, and then tried to walk it. It took months to make the whole thing, and we actually came up with different versions of him."

Eventually, Dilley and the team came to the conclusion that the little droid would work most efficiently if he was being operated by someone inside the prop. Of the different versions created during the design and building process, Dilley explains that, "One Artoo-Detoo was built so that a small man could stand inside, and another so that he could waddle, but we could never get one where he could simply walk around in it, because there was never enough room for leg movement! The legs of the person we needed to pilot it would have to be very short."

Dilley realized he needed to find an appropriately sized actor to play the droid. "To find our Artoo-Detoo, we searched everywhere in England for little people," he says. "We brought in some actors who we thought would work, but many of them just weren't strong enough." To operate the prop manually would require an actor with a lot of stamina, as Dilley elaborates. "They had to get inside this thing and walk in it enough to make it waddle around."

After much searching, the team finally discovered their perfect R2-D2 in the form of British actor, Kenny Baker. "We eventually found Kenny, who really did a great job. Kenny had a performing partner named Jack Purvis, who was also in the movie—at that time they were working as a musical double act, playing the xylophone and drums."

For a worrying time, however, it looked as though the production team were in danger of losing their dream droid. "Kenny and Jack were on a show called *Opportunity Knocks*, which was a popular TV talent show in the U.K. at the time," remembers Dilley. "They were going through the rounds of the competition, and were really close to getting somewhere in it, and I sensed Kenny was wavering on *Star Wars*."

"I said, 'You've got this job on *Star Wars*, Kenny, and you've got to do it!' To which he replied, 'But we're on *Opportunity Knocks*!' It took a lot of persuading, but I finally got him to do this Artoo-Detoo thing."

► Dagobah Days

As technology progressed and advances enabled the R2-D2 props to be remotely controlled more reliably, by the time *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) rolled around Dilley found himself working with Baker less and less often. But, as he explains, the actor was still a pivotal part of the team, and essential in imbuing the droid with individuality. “Kenny wasn’t in every single shot—like he pretty much was on the first film—but he was very important to the character.

“For example, he did all of the stuff on the bog planet of Dagobah, where Yoda was teaching Luke Skywalker the power of the Force. In one scene, Artoo was standing on the side of the swamp, and we wanted him to be reacting to what was going on in a big way. We wanted personality in that reaction shot from this droid—this machine—and the way to do that was to put Kenny Baker inside, bringing his personal movements into it. Kenny was great for stuff like that.”

Speaking of Dagobah, if there’s one place in the galaxy to which Dilley would happily never return, it’s Yoda’s swamp planet home.

“I remember that place well, because it played host to one of my most embarrassing moments ever in the motion-picture business,” he confesses with a sheepish grin. “I was putting Artoo’s head on Kenny Baker, and polishing it up. I finished what I was doing and said, ‘You’re okay, Kenny!’, took one step backwards—and fell up to my waist into the slimy water! It was all set and ready for filming, beautiful, and so the whole crew wanted to shoot me! I have to admit, it was pretty embarrassing.”

Dilley’s time on *The Empire Strikes Back* was a bittersweet experience to some extent, as the film’s original production designer (and Dilley’s mentor) John Barry tragically passed away during filming. Norman Reynolds took over as production designer, and Dilley became

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04 Building Luke’s landspeeder at Lee International Film Studios in London.

05 The landspeeder takes shape.

06 The art department: (L-R) Roger Christian, Leslie Dilley, John Barry, Bill Welch, and Norman Reynolds.

“The whole crew wanted to shoot me!”

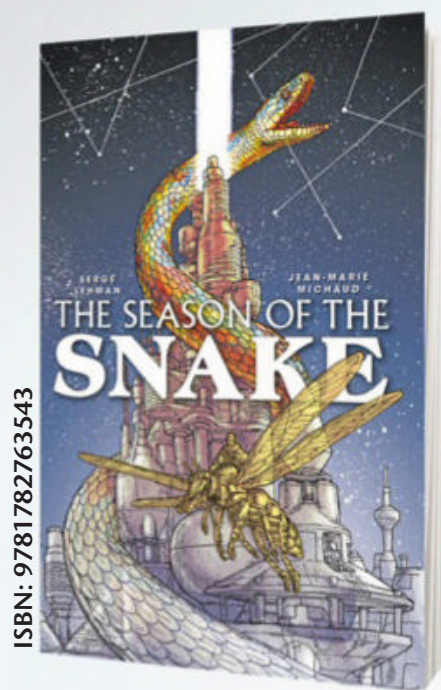
his art director. The shoot wasn’t without its challenges—but this time, it was nothing to do with budgets or uncooperative droids. “I was going to Norway to start preparing the sets for the Hoth sequences, but when they came to take me to the airport, I was so ill, I couldn’t go,” says Dilley. “I was really sick with a bad throat, and I was choking and could hardly breathe. When I finally got well, Norman said, ‘I can’t send you out there to Norway, Les. If anything happened to you, I would be in real trouble!’ So I stayed back and helped Norman out.”

Having worked with many stellar directors including James Cameron and Steven Spielberg, Dilley—who still works as a production designer and art director in the industry at age 78—has fond memories of his involvement with the *Star Wars* saga, and of its creator. “I worked with George Lucas closely on the shooting of that movie,” he says in conclusion, “and I found him to be a terrific, friendly guy with a great eye for filming.” 🤖

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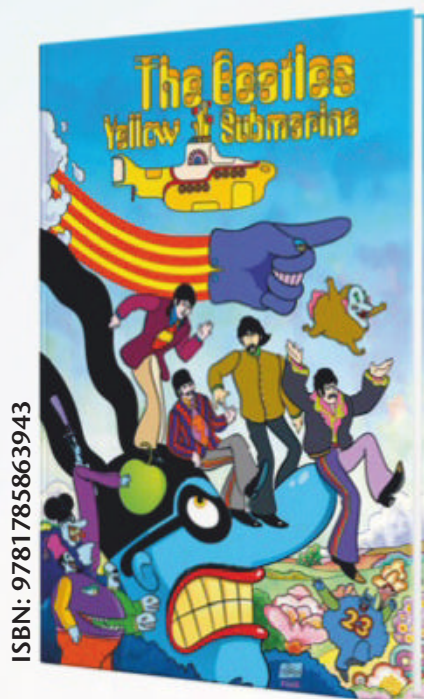


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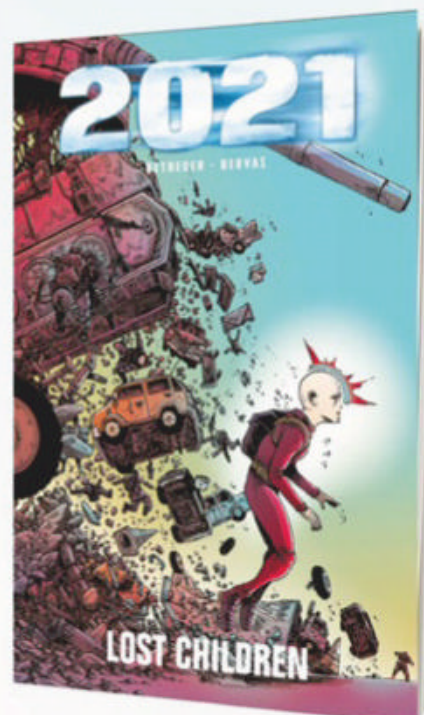


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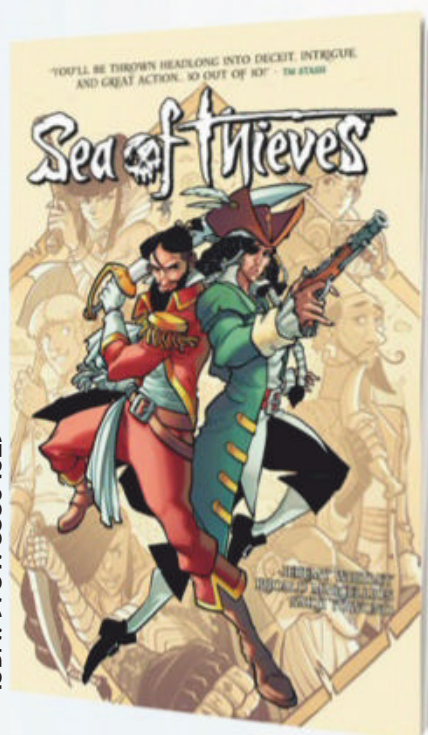


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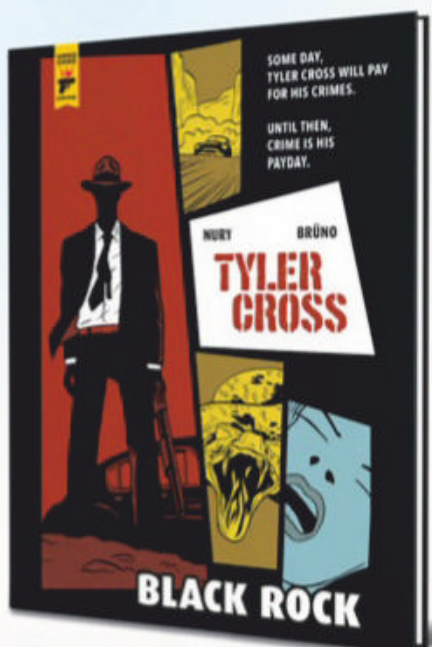


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AN ACE IN ACTION

Dressing as Poe Dameron

For *Star Wars* fan Miguel Capuchino, his attachment to the franchise began with the premiere of *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977), and has remained strong ever since. “I love the *Star Wars* stories, the characters, the battle scenes, and the creative costumes,” explains Miguel. “The story of good versus evil is simple enough to appeal to most people, but intricate enough to keep the audience interested.” Miguel also considers the saga’s ability to reflect our own society as very important. “Although it’s set ‘A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away...’ it is a timeless story and correlates with the present.”

“The vast *Star Wars* universe and huge fandom is what attracts me to cosplay,” continues Miguel. “My favorite part of cosplaying is participating in charity events.” These events benefit many organizations, including the Make-A-Wish Foundation and the Ronald McDonald House Charities of San Diego, where the Californian and his friends can bring smiles to young patients’ faces. “Seeing a child’s reaction when they meet one of their favorite characters is priceless,” he smiles.

Costuming gained an even more personal meaning for Miguel when Oscar Isaac made his debut as ace Resistance pilot Poe Dameron in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* (2015). “I was extremely excited to see a *Star Wars* character being

Photos: Sonny Meas photography



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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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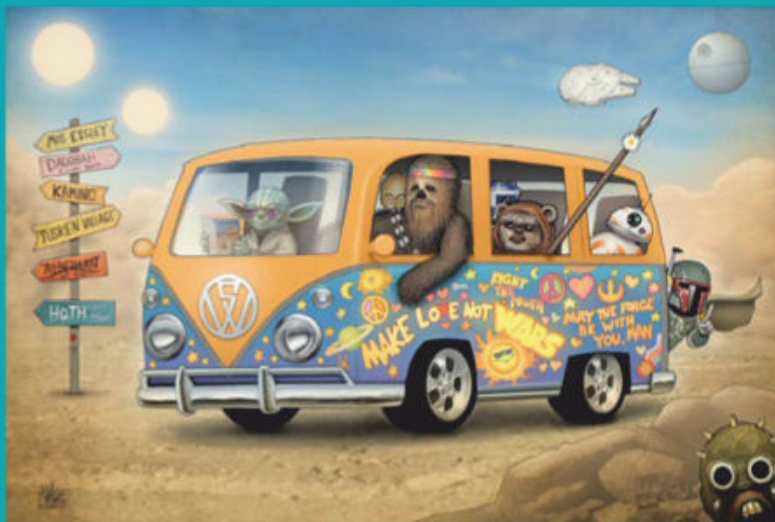
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portrayed by a fellow Latino,” he recalls. “I could also relate to his personality of not only being witty and mischievous, but also loyal and zealous; ready to go to battle anytime.” Miguel’s stunning Poe cosplay certainly gives the impression that he is just seconds away from jumping into an X-wing to face the First Order!

ARTISTS’ ALLEY

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



01. ROWDY REBELS

Drawn with a mechanical pencil, Copic Markers, colored pencils, and gel pens, Nathan Szerdy’s drawing of ‘Cowboy Ackbar’ riding a tauntaun while surrounded by banthas is the definition of unique. “I thought it’d be fun and different,” opines Nathan. “I love doing things that haven’t been done but still kinda make sense in my head.” The artist also crafted ‘In a galaxy far-out, man’—a depiction of Yoda and Chewbacca on a hippie road trip, as he felt the two would have fit right in with the counter culture of the 1960s.



02. FLOWER POWER

Fan Darth Kimie is a self-taught artist experimenting with digital media and pursuing a degree in graphic design. Created in Photoshop, her pieces focused on K-2SO and Darth Sidious are united by the inclusion of elegant flowers. The reprogrammed Imperial security droid’s quizzical look at the delicate plants stands in stark contrast to the Emperor’s menacing gaze and deceitful expression.

BOUNTY HUNTERS

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

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The Sonfield family's First Order of business at Rhode Island Comic Con was to meet Gwendoline Christie, best known for playing Captain Phasma in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* (2015) and *The Last Jedi* (2017).

With Naomi in full Phasma armor and Justin in Han Solo garb, the family initially connected with Christie during their photo opportunity with the actor. "When Gwendoline saw Naomi, her eyes lit up. It was absolutely amazing," says Justin. "She asked if we'd made the costume, and held the helmet for the picture."

Gwendoline saw the group again at her autograph table and asked about the construction of Naomi's outfit, before offering an insight into the screen-used version. "She told us how she had recently climbed a mountain," recalls Justin, "and that wearing the Phasma suit had been much harder!"

01



02



01 The Sonfield family poses with Gwendoline Christie, AKA Captain Phasma.

02 Gwendoline Christie autographed Naomi Sonfield's homemade Captain Phasma helmet.

WORLDWIDE



OPEN THE LUNCH BAY

Inspiring healthy eating with *Star Wars* art

Formerly of the United States Navy, Josh often spent his downtime debating *Star Wars* lore with his shipmates. Now it's a hobby that he shares with his wife Stacey, and their children Trystan and Ryleigh. The family has even been known to dress up as a cadre of Jedi for Halloween, with Trystan creating his own character and Ryleigh representing Dagobah's most beloved resident.

When Josh—now a chef by profession—combined his culinary talents with his love of *Star Wars* to tackle a food-related dilemma facing son Trystan, it resulted in a particularly close friendship being forged between the two. As dad Josh explains, Trystan resisted eating the healthy tangerines that were packed into his lunch each day. "If it wasn't pre-cut or peeled, it would come home again," he says. When he began putting a small slice into each tangerine so that his son could finish peeling it at school, the strategy succeeded.

Eventually, an even more brilliant idea occurred to Josh. Utilizing a marker and a chef's knife, the naval

veteran began drawing faces on the tangerines and cut out interesting designs to start the peel. "His friends thought it was hilarious," beams Josh, "and he actually ate the fruit. Success!" The endeavor expanded when the enterprising dad began decorating the brown paper bags that carried each lunch. And as Trystan grew older, he started requesting specific *Star Wars* characters and vehicles be crafted into his daily lunch pack.

"I doodle for as long as I can before the chaos of the day really begins, then snap a photo," explains Josh, who Instagrams each new creation at [@brown.paper.nerd.art](https://www.instagram.com/brown.paper.nerd.art). The tangerine lunch art has featured familiar images including BB-8, Yoda, and Han Solo's blaster, while likenesses of an X-wing, Supreme Leader Snoke, and Sebulba, have embellished the paper bags.

The daily tradition has helped cement the father and son bond, although Josh admits, "I might actually like it more than Trystan does," adding, "It's something we share, and that's what's most important to me."



ONE WITH THE FORCE

Walking down the aisle into wedded *Star Wars* bliss

Before newlyweds Pim and Justin McGuire decided to tie the knot, they knew that their relationship with *Star Wars* needed to be represented on their big day in a significant way.

"*Star Wars* has been a part of our love story from the very beginning," Pim reveals. "Our connection grew from our shared love for everything geek. We've even got matching *Star Wars* tattoos!" she adds.

Much as every Jedi must discover their own path, both Pim and Justin became enamored with *Star Wars* in unique ways. "I had seen the movies as a child, but it wasn't until later in life that I appreciated what it's all about. It's more than sci-fi. It stands for values and friendship, as well as adventure," suggests Pim. "As for Justin, he says he likes lightsabers!" And the pair don't only aspire to upholding *Star Wars*' values—they

actually spend their days helping others, with Pim working as a child mental health therapist and Justin serving in the United States Navy.

Justin's naval duties meant they couldn't plan a traditional wedding, so instead the pair decided to elope to Coronado, California on a very special date: May 4, 2018. "We thought it'd be awesome to have our anniversary on *Star Wars* day every year," explains the recent bride. "That way, every single year we would be reminded of what drew us together." For added *Star Wars* magic, they wore some recognizable headgear as they traversed the sands of the local beach. The groom's Darth Vader mask went well with his navy blue suit, while the bride's First Order stormtrooper helmet was the perfect match for her white dress.

"We had a wedding reception to honor our family and friends later," recalls Pim. "Everything from the invitations and confetti to floral arrangements and our guestbook had *Star Wars* details." While this event occurred after May the 4th, the room's midi-chlorian count was still through the roof. "The Force was definitely strong with us that day," shares Pim. 🌌



Cut To The Chase

Insider's favorite deleted scenes of the Skywalker saga, movie by movie.

WORDS: MICHAEL KOGGE

A

s George Lucas has often admitted, his talents as a filmmaker lie primarily in his skills as an editor. He sticks to his preferred running length for a picture, at around two hours, with a narrative that is constantly moving forwards.

It was this editorial philosophy he adhered to when cutting the first two *Star Wars* trilogies, where he and his editors played no favorites, willing to remove any moment that didn't significantly advance the story. J.J. Abrams and Rian Johnson continued that practice in their sequels, wishing to echo the rhythm and pace of Lucas' previous *Star Wars* films.

"The whole process of editing is about paring the film down and keeping all that is relevant, and getting rid of the material that doesn't work, for one reason or another," Lucas said in a documentary on deleted scenes that featured on the DVD home entertainment release of *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* (1999). It is a process that made for tighter films, but inadvertently created *Star Wars* myths from cut sequences and subplots that, in truth, were superfluous to the story. But myths they have become, even though they found their destiny on the cutting room floor.

Unlike Lucas, however, *Star Wars Insider* has played favorites, screening all of the available deleted scenes from the eight Skywalker saga films and selecting one from each that stands out. As in all matters of art and opinion, no doubt this will spark discussion—so let the debate begin!



01 Anakin's Fight

Star Wars: The Phantom Menace

First seen: DVD home entertainment release, 2001

■ After Anakin wins the podrace in Episode I, Lucas' shooting script describes young Anakin "rolling around on the floor, fighting," with a tyke-sized Rodian. A group of slave children stand around them, cheering them on. Anakin seems to have the upper hand, pounding a fist into his opponent's pea-green head, until Qui-Gon Jinn arrives. The sweaty boy explains that the Rodian says Anakin cheated in the podrace, but Qui-Gon tells the boy that he knows the truth and that fighting won't change the Rodian's opinion. Anakin listens to the Jedi Master and follows him away, while the brawling Rodian is lectured by Wald, a wiser member of his species who reveals the antagonist's name in his dialogue: "You better watch it, Greedo, or you're going to come to a bad end." It is advice Greedo obviously doesn't heed, as he later takes up a life of crime and ends up on the business end of Han Solo's smoking blaster in *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977).

Lucas conceived the scene as "an essay on the judicial use of power," but deemed that it didn't establish Anakin's character one way or the other. While this disappointed producer Rick McCallum, who thought that the scene revealed "a little bit of the dark side in Anakin," Lucas' decision was correct from the viewpoint of character. A tussle like this would probably be an ordinary occurrence in the hardscrabble life of a Tatooine slave boy, and therefore an unreliable indicator to Anakin's future. Anakin also doesn't



behave violently like this at any other point in the film, so the scene sticks out from the rest. Moreover, the prequel trilogy is about a good boy turning into an evil man, and the inclusion of this scene may have weakened the impact of Anakin's subsequent choices. By pledging himself to the Emperor in *Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith* (2005), Anakin makes a conscious decision to follow a dark path. It is *his* decision that dominates his destiny, not some predetermined violent tendency from his youth. Same for poor Greedo.

03 Restoring Democracy

Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith

First seen: DVD home entertainment release, 2005

■ While Obi-Wan searches for General Grievous on Utapau, Padmé and a delegation of senators petition Chancellor Palpatine to halt any further amendment to the Republic's Constitution. Palpatine assures them that democracy will be restored when the war is over. Padmé asks if a diplomatic solution is being pursued to end the war, to which the chancellor, seemingly miffed, says that she must trust him to do the right thing. Padmé departs with her delegation, casting an irked glance at the chancellor's bodyguard, her secret husband Anakin Skywalker.

Palpatine acknowledges the delegation's sincerity, but plants seeds of doubt in Anakin's mind about Padmé's loyalty, saying she is hiding something. Anakin confesses he can't sense betrayal in her, which Palpatine swiftly inverts, saying that the young man does indeed sense it, but doesn't "seem to want to admit it." As Anakin considers Palpatine's words, he falls more and more under the master manipulator's spell.

As illuminating as this encounter is, Lucas maintained that everything that wasn't central to the plot of Anakin's fall had to be cut. This scene, and others showing the gestation of the Rebel Alliance, tended to stall the story in political talk. Padmé had shown herself strong-minded and independent time and again, so the scene's elimination didn't detract from her character.



02

Padmé's Family

Star Wars: Attack of the Clones

First seen: DVD home entertainment release, 2002

■ In *Attack of the Clones* (2002), Padmé's return to her home on Naboo is a welcome relief after two foiled assassination attempts on Coruscant. She introduces her escort, Anakin Skywalker, to her family at their house, where they share a meal. Anakin and Padmé's father go for a walk afterward, while Padmé cleans up with her older sister, Sola, and her mother. Sola comments that Anakin has obvious feelings for Padmé, but the senator defends their relationship as purely professional. Later, Padmé shows Anakin her bedroom, which is decorated with holographic pictures of her time as a young legislator. He is clearly impressed—and smitten.

Lucas himself was smitten with this scene. "It went a long way to establish what Padmé's problems were," Lucas has stated. Padmé's dogged devotion to a life in public service hindered her from developing intimate personal relationships, and admitting that she liked Anakin. "When again I got very hard-nosed about the length of the film," Lucas said, "I realized that those ideas were already conveyed in a lot of the other scenes." Thus, Lucas followed the age-old advice to "kill your darlings," and pulled the family reunion.



04 Tosche Station

Star Wars: A New Hope
First seen: Blu-ray home entertainment release, 2011

■ The most sought-after and talked-about cuts in *Star Wars* cinematic history are a sequence of scenes involving Luke and his friends on Tatooine. While working with a Treadwell droid on his uncle's moisture farm, Luke glimpses a space battle in the skies above. He speeds off to Tosche Station in Anchorhead to tell his friends, although everyone dismisses his claims—except for Biggs Darklighter, who's recently returned from the Imperial Academy. Luke and Biggs take a

walk, during which Biggs confesses he's joining the Rebellion. Biggs' revelation jolts Luke, who knows he'll be stuck on Tatooine for yet another season to help his uncle on the farm. Their parting is a bittersweet moment, with Luke telling Biggs to, "take care of yourself, you'll always be the best friend I've got."

In the edit, George Lucas agonized over whether to include these scenes. While developing the screenplay, his movie buddies had insisted he introduce the hero, Luke Skywalker, at the beginning of the film. "So I did it. I wrote it, and I shot it, and I looked at it. It worked but it wasn't great," he revealed in *Star Wars: The Annotated Screenplays*. "I could not get out of my mind that, poetically speaking, I really wanted to have this clean line of the robots taking you to Luke, Luke taking you to Ben, Ben taking you to Han, Han taking you to Princess Leia... I just decided to trust my heart, and I structured the story that way because of the way I felt about it, not because it was logical."

Audiences were gripped by the movie's action-packed opening, quashing any concerns over the timing of Luke's introduction, and the scenes found a more natural home in which to add backstory in the novelization and radio drama.



CUT...! BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Deleted scenes have long been part of *Star Wars* lore. Ever since the original film premiered in May 1977, fans have argued about scenes they saw—or thought they saw—during the initial theatrical run or one of the re-releases. These scenes might revolve around Biggs Darklighter and Luke Skywalker talking about their dreams, or Han encountering Jabba the Hutt, or Chief Bast updating Darth Vader on the search for the missing droids. None of these scenes appeared in any theatrical release of the film, though some fans swore they saw them, long, long ago.

Truth be told, the fans weren't fibbing, if only from a certain point of view. Before the advent of supplemental content on laser discs and DVDs, cut material from *Star Wars* popped up in other places. The much-maligned *Star Wars Holiday Special* (1978) re-purposed some of the footage from the 1977 film, while Luke's backstory with Biggs was explored in the novelization, the children's books, the comics, and the radio drama. In fact, the *Star Wars Storybook* even featured a still photograph from the Luke and Biggs scene, which undoubtedly made such an impression that many fans were convinced they had actually seen it in the theater.

05 Wampas in the Rebel Base

Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back

First seen: Blu-ray home entertainment release, 2011

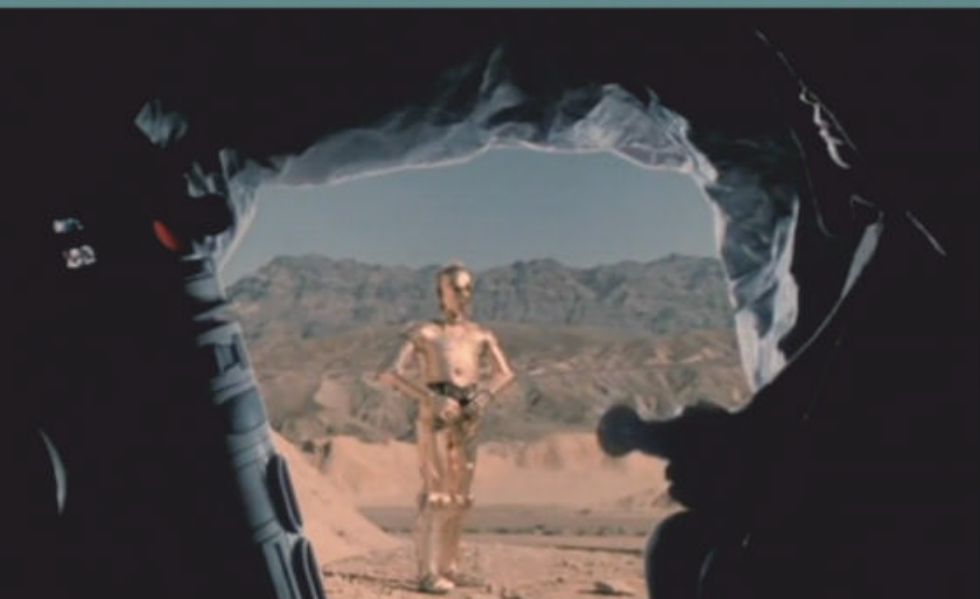


■ The wampas were originally set to play a much larger role in the narrative of *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) than the lone ice creature that took a swipe at Luke Skywalker. Director Irvin Kershner and his crew shot additional scenes of wampas attacking the rebel base on Hoth, one of which showed a wampa scraping its claw through an ice wall, while another scene pitted rebel soldiers and R2-D2 against another wampa rampaging through the base. A humorous third scene had C-3PO removing a caution sticker from a blast door, creating a trap for an unlucky pursuing snowtrooper who was

grabbed by the wampa on the other side as he unwittingly opened it.

In his book, *Once Upon a Galaxy: A Journal of the Making of The Empire Strikes Back*, unit publicist Alan Arnold shed light on why these scenes ultimately didn't make it into the movie. "The fact of the matter is that the concept didn't work. Wampas smashing through ice walls are not everyday events. Filmmakers contrive things that haven't happened before and are unlikely to happen again. It was a brave failure," he wrote. The wampa scenes didn't hold up to the other special effects in the film, and deflected attention away from the Imperial peril facing the rebels.

Also, as the set progress report noted for the wall-clawing scene, "the man inside the monster suit has been there three hours and is suffering from stomach cramps." It transpires that not even special effects could overcome some basic human frailties.



06 Luke's New Lightsaber

Star Wars: Return of the Jedi

First seen: Blu-ray home entertainment release, 2011

■ George Lucas, screenwriter Lawrence Kasdan, and director Richard Marquand had originally envisioned a slightly different opening to *Return of the Jedi* (1983) than made the final cut. After Darth Vader scolds Moff Jerjerrod for his lack of progress on the second Death Star, Vader moves into his meditation chamber, where he communes with Luke, imploring his son to "join him on the dark side of the Force." The scene cuts to a dark robed Luke inside a cave, adjusting a lightsaber. He presses the activator on the hilt and the blade ignites green. An interesting tidbit is that the lightsaber Luke holds appears to be the same prop used by actor Alec Guinness in *A New Hope*, albeit with a few alterations.

Inclusion of this scene would have diminished both the mystery of *Empire's* "I am your Father" cliffhanger, and additionally ruined the surprise and drama of Luke's entrance into Jabba the Hutt's palace. A modified version of this scene, written by John Whitman, opens the *Jedi* radio play, with Luke building his lightsaber in Obi-Wan Kenobi's hut.



07

Jakku Message

Star Wars: The Force Awakens

First seen: Blu-ray home entertainment release, 2016

■ Initially, General Leia Organa was slated to appear much earlier in *The Force Awakens* (2015)—soon after Kylo Ren captures Poe Dameron, in fact. In a scene set at the hidden Resistance base, Major Brance relays a message to the general that there's no sign of the map to Luke Skywalker, and that the Jakku village has been wiped out. He also tells Leia that Poe's X-wing was found destroyed, with blaster marks indicating it was the work of the First Order, and that Poe's droid is missing. Leia isn't convinced that BB-8 has been lost and orders that the spherical droid be found immediately.

J.J. Abrams heeded the advice of screenwriter Michael Arndt to excise this scene from the film. In effect, this delayed Leia's appearance until her reunion with Han Solo after the raid on Takodana. As Abrams noted in the 3D Blu-ray commentary track, Arndt told him, "It's a far more powerful thing to meet her through Han Solo's eyes, and also at this point in the movie, when you need a breath of fresh air, you need some uplift." The decision to delay her introduction followed Lucas' formula in *A New Hope* that one character led the story to the next, and gave Leia—like Han and Chewbacca before her—a spotlight moment so the audience could applaud the return of a beloved character from the original trilogy.



08 Defending the Caretakers

Star Wars: The Last Jedi

First seen: 4K/Blu-ray home entertainment release, 2018

■ Emerging from the mountain cave on Ahch-To, Rey sees ships landing in the Caretaker village, which Luke identifies as the inhabitants of a neighboring island on their monthly raid. He counsels Rey not to rush to save them, but that's exactly what she does, running into the village with her lightsaber raised. She quickly realizes that this isn't a violent raid, but a party. On a pier, she encounters Luke again, who chuckles at her recklessness. She berates him for not agreeing to help his friends in the Resistance when they need him most, then storms off. The scene shows how much Luke has changed since his training with Yoda, as he's actually admonishing Rey for an action that he himself would have taken as a younger man.

Writer-director Rian Johnson adored this scene, yet as the initial cut of *The Last Jedi* (2017) ran well over three hours, scenes needed to be chopped and—since Luke's conflict with Rey had already been well established—this one fell by the wayside. "This always happens in the edit. It's like suddenly you can see through the matrix and you're like, 'Oh my god, that big sequence that I love so much and I can't imagine the movie without, if we lift it out and put these two things together, it plays in a slightly different way, but it plays better,'" Johnson told an audience after a screening of the film. "You don't think about all the stuff we built on set to get the shots, you don't think about all the work the actors and the crew did, you just hit one button and it's gone and the movie's better." The scene remains in both the adult and junior novel adaptations. 🙌

The *Star Wars* Archive

Lights! Camera! Action!
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Princess Leia (Carrie Fisher) presents Han Solo (Harrison Ford) with a medal, during the filming of the final scene of *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977).

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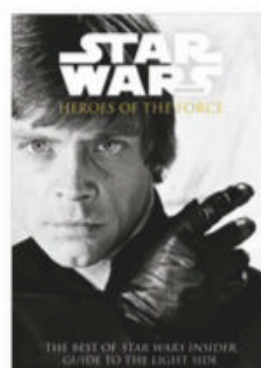
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