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# The Making Of Star Wars: The Definitive Story Behind The Original Film



## Synopsis

After the 1973 success of *American Graffiti*, filmmaker George Lucas made the fateful decision to pursue a longtime dream project: a space fantasy movie unlike any ever produced. Lucas envisioned a swashbuckling SF saga inspired by the Flash Gordon serials classic American westerns, the epic cinema of Japanese auteur Akira Kurosawa, and mythological heroes. Its original title: *The Star Wars*. The rest is history, and how it was made is a story as entertaining and exciting as the movie that has enthralled millions for thirty years—a story that has never been told as it was meant to be. Until now. Using his unprecedented access to the Lucasfilm Archives and its trove of never-before-published interviews, photos, production notes, factoids, and anecdotes, *Star Wars* scholar J. W. Rinzler hurtles readers back in time for a one-of-a-kind behind-the-scenes look at the nearly decade-long quest of George Lucas and his key collaborators to make the movie that became a phenomenon. For the first time, it's all here: the evolution of the now-classic story and characters—including *Anakin Starkiller* and a huge green-skinned monster with no nose and large gills—named Han Solo—excerpts from George Lucas's numerous, ever-morphing script drafts—the birth of Industrial Light & Magic, the special-effects company that revolutionized Hollywood filmmaking—the studio-hopping and budget battles that nearly scuttled the entire project—the director's early casting saga, which might have led to a film spoken mostly in Japanese—including the intensive auditions that won the cast members their roles and made them legends—the grueling, nearly catastrophic location shoot in Tunisia and the subsequent breakneck dash at Elstree Studios in London—the who's who of young film rebels who pitched in to help—including Francis Ford Coppola, Steven Spielberg, and Brian DePalma. But perhaps most exciting, and rarest of all, are the interviews conducted before and during production and immediately after the release of *Star Wars*—in which George Lucas, Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher, Sir Alec Guinness, Anthony Daniels, composer John Williams, effects masters Dennis Muren, Richard Edlund, and John Dykstra, Phil Tippett, Rick Baker, legendary production designer John Barry, and a host of others share their fascinating tales from the trenches and candid opinions of the film that would ultimately change their lives. No matter how you view the spectrum of this thirty-year phenomenon, *The Making of Star Wars* stands as a crucial document—rich in fascination and revelation—of a genuine cinematic and cultural touchstone.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The Making of Star Wars: The Definitive Story Behind the Original Film (Star Wars) I was four years old when the original "Star Wars" was released, and like so many kids of that generation, that film and its two sequels defined an enormous part of my childhood. Even though I didn't know it at the time, it introduced me to the "best bits" of classical mythology, while being a visual catalyst for my imagination (and years of subsequent role-play, particularly in Upstate New York, where re-enacting ice planet Hoth after "Empire" came out was all too easy...). As I grew older (I hesitate to use the phrase "grew up," as I'm not sure it's happened yet), I came to appreciate more than just the adventure and dynamic visuals that "Star Wars" represented; it was my "gateway drug" into wanting to learn more about how movies were made. I remember all of the TV specials of that era that pulled back the curtain on the filmmaking process, particularly with regard to the original "Star Wars" trilogy, and I couldn't get enough information. That hunger became the same kind of obsession that's typically associated with "Star Wars" fans, and I absorbed every scrap of detail I could find, from Ralph McQuarrie's concept art, to model photos, to script pages, and even before the Internet made it only a matter of a few clicks to access such information, there was a wealth of it, when it came to "Star Wars." Fast forward to 2007; "Star Wars" is 30 years old, a whole separate trilogy has come and gone, and my own children are budding "Star Wars" fans for their own reasons.

Overview This is a fantastic work, which spans the origins and creation of the film and includes insights into nearly every aspect of the filmmaking process. A true archive of both information and visuals, it is, in my opinion, a book that should be in the collection of every fan of the film. Highest

recommendation. This review is broken down by the following group areas - Written Content, Visual Collateral, Presentation/Quality, and Overall Value - focuses on the perspective of the original prop hobbyist, in that sometimes we are looking for photos pertaining to real, original props and editorial content is of less interest; other times, in performing research, we may be seeking information more so than photos, etc. **Written Content (10/10)** This is, quite frankly, the most impressive and comprehensive Star Wars resource I have ever laid hands on. Whereas the legendary Star Wars Chronicles set the mark some time ago, in my opinion, in terms of visual collateral and photos, it had little by way of actual written content - just remarks about the stunning photography and images. This book matches the visual collateral in quality (though not sheer quantity) but far exceeds in the realm of pure information, narrative, background, insights, opinions, and more. You truly can't appreciate it until you begin flipping through this book - it's just astounding. If anything, the reader gains an appreciation for how impossible it seems to be that the final product is what it is, in that it was such a collaborative process that underwent constant change and alteration, and it had so much stacked against it throughout the creation of the film.

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