

EPISODE V

THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

GLUED DOWN







This book belongs to

Acknowledgments

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y 1980, as I was about to turn 15, it was finally time to see The Empire Strikes Back, and I so remember that day, running through the mall with my friends, going to newsstands and bookstores and seeing all of the book covers for the film that had just opened in theaters. From the Gone with the Wind inspired poster that was the book cover, to the Marvel comics adaptation, the beautiful art was everywhere, and there was nothing in the world that was as cool as that to me.

The Empire Strikes Back was a much darker film, as we began to get to know more about the characters, but with new and exciting characters, from the legendary Boba Fett to the wise Master Jedi, Yoda, who has become as iconic as Darth Vader. We got to see new fantastic worlds, with exciting new creatures, ships and vehicles, and a snow planet, a swamp planet, and a planet with a city in the clouds – it was beyond breathtaking.

It continued to fuel and inspire the creative path of so many other people all over the world. No film had ever had a sequel that delivered as this one did, and to many it will be their favorite. From the grand battle on the ice planet. Hoth, this was definitely the Empire striking back, with space battles and epic lightsaber battles that define the Star Wars saga. We dive deeper into the Force with Luke doing his Jedi training under Yoda, and we get to know more of the Galactic Empire, and we see Darth Vader's boss, Emperor Palpatine.

Another spectacular out-of-this-world tale, from the mind of George Lucas, and all of it realized and visualized by artists and designers of all kinds, defining and setting the bar on what was second to none in masterful creativity and storytelling.

The artwork that first brought this second installment to life fill the pages of this new retelling. It continues to illustrate the creativity and imagination that went into this sequel film, and again inspired audiences and is here to inspire you.

Troy Alders Art Director, Lucasfilm BONNII

THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

It is a dark time for the Rebellion. Although the Death Star has been destroyed, Imperial troops have driven the BONRebel forces from their hidden base and pursued them across the galaxy.

Evading the dreaded Imperial Starfleet, a group of freedom fighters led by Luke Skywalker has established a new secret base on the remote ice world of Hoth.

The evil lord Darth Vader, obsessed with finding young Skywalker, has dispatched thousands of remote probes into the far reaches of space....

Far out in the depths of space, the Imperial Star Destroyer drifted silently. Its vast underside released a number of small, unmanned projectiles. The probes fired their engines, blasting out across the galaxy in search of the Rebels' newest hideout. It wasn't long before one of them found its target.

Rocketing through the atmosphere of Hoth, the probe crashed into the planet's snowy surface. From the impact crater a gleaming black droid emerged, its sensors whirring.

A short distance away, the rebel hero Luke Skywalker peered through his macrobinoculars. Seated astride a two-legged creature known as a tauntaun, he used the comlink on his wrist to radio his friend Han Solo. They'd been sent out to patrol the area around the Rebels' secret base. 'There isn't enough life on this ice cube to fill a space cruiser,' Han grumbled. 'Sensors are placed. I'm going back.'



Concept art for an Imperial probe droid. RALPH McQUARRIE

Luke promised to follow, just as soon as he checked out the meteorite whose smoke trail he'd observed moments before. But before he could reach it, his tauntaun began to gabble fearfully.

There was a sudden deafening roar! Before Luke could react, a huge, white-furred paw swiped at him, knocking him unconscious. It belonged to an ice-beast called a wampa, which stood three metres tall and had huge teeth and claws. It dispatched Luke's tauntaun with a single blow. Then it began dragging Luke away through the snow.

Back at the Rebel headquarters, codenamed Echo Base, Han Solo returned from his patrol. Entering through a hangar teeming with Rebel troops, he made his way to the command centre to be greeted by the officer in charge, General Rieekan.

'General, I gotta leave,' Han stated.

Concept art for a Rebel trooper riding a tauntaun.
RALPH McQuarrie

He still owed a lot of money to the infamous gangster Jabba the Hutt and knew that he'd never be safe until the debt was paid.

Rieekan nodded regretfully.

'A death mark's not an easy thing to live with,' he said.

'You're a good fighter, Solo. I hate to lose you.'



Concept art for a Rebel trooper outside of Echo Base. RALPH McQUARRIE

From across the command centre, a young woman glanced in Han's direction. It was Princess Leia Organa, whose brave actions had helped destroy the Death Star. She followed Han into an adjoining corridor and called out his name. 'I thought you had decided to stay,' she said.

Han shook his head. A run-in with one of Jabba's henchmen on the planet Ord Mantell had reminded him how much danger he was in.

'We need you,' Leia continued.

Han turned. 'We need?' he asked. 'What about, you need?'

'I need?' Leia shot back. 'I don't know what you're talking about.'

'Come on!' Han cajoled. 'You want me to stay because of the way you feel about me'

Leia stared at him in disbelief. 'You're imagining things.'



Concept art for the headquarters of Rebel command centre, featuring portable equipment that could be carried in. RALPH MCQUARRIE

'Am I?' Han demanded. 'Then why are you following me? Afraid I was going to leave without giving you a goodbye kiss?'

Leia lost her patience. 'I'd just as soon kiss a Wookiee,' she snapped.

Han stormed back to the hangar where his fur-covered Wookiee co-

pilot Chewbacca was working to fix their battered old spaceship, the Millennium Falcon. But it wasn't long before they were interrupted by two droids: gleaming protocol unit C-3PO and his diminutive counterpart, the astromech R2-D2. They'd been sent to ask Han if he knew the whereabouts of Luke Skywalker.

Suddenly concerned, Han consulted the deck officer only to discover that Luke still hadn't returned from patrol. Then we'll have to go out on tauntauns,' he said without hesitation.

An officer looked at him in horror. 'Sir, the temperature's dropping too rapidly!'

'That's right,' Han said, leaping onto the nearest mount. 'And my friend's out in it.'



Concept art for the wampa. JOE JOHNSTON

Before anyone could stop him, Han rode out into the frozen wasteland.

In a hidden ice cave,
Luke Skywalker regained
consciousness only to
find himself hanging
upside down by his
ankles. A short distance
away, the wampa was
feasting on the bloody
remains of Luke's
tauntaun. Luke knew it
was only a matter of time
before the beast turned
its attention to him.

Looking around, he spotted his lightsaber, an energy-bladed weapon used by the Jedi. It was just out of reach. Closing



Concept art storyboard showing Luke Skywalker attempting to master the Force. RALPH McQUARRIE

his eyes, Luke summoned the power of the mystical energy field known as the Force. The saber's hilt began to tremble.

The wampa rose to its feet, lumbering towards Luke. Just in time, the saber leapt into Luke's hand. He ignited the blue blade, cutting himself free. Then he slashed at the wampa, severing the beast's arm. The wampa howled in rage and pain as Luke fled, out into the raging snowstorm.

At Echo Base, Princess Leia received the news she had been dreading. No one had heard from either Han or Luke, and with temperatures plummeting, they had no choice but to close the shield doors. Chewbacca howled with despair as the heavy durasteel barrier slid shut. Threepio hurried away, muttering worriedly.



Concept art storyboard for Luke Skywalker's semi-conscious hallucination of Obi-Wan Kenobi.

Out on the ice plains, Luke Skywalker lay helpless in the snow. Suddenly, a shimmering vision appeared before him. It was Obi-Wan Kenobi, the Jedi Master who had taught Luke the ways of the Force, only to die at the hands of Darth Vader.

'You will go to the Dagobah system,' Obi-Wan said. 'There you will learn from Yoda, the Jedi Master who instructed me.'

Luke reached out, but the vision faded. It was replaced by the silhouette of a tauntaun, and a figure leaping down from the creature's back.

Han Solo ran to Luke's side, finding his friend already unconscious. He was about to return to his tauntaun when the beast keeled over, unable to withstand the sub-zero temperatures. Han knew what he had to do.

He dragged Luke back to the tauntaun. With trembling hands, he unclipped Luke's lightsaber from his belt. Igniting the laser sword, Han sliced at the tauntaun's belly, allowing its innards to spill out.



Concept art for the head of a tauntaun. RALPH McQUARRIE

'This may smell bad, kid,' Han said apologetically as he placed Luke inside the tauntaun's steaming belly, 'but it'll keep you warm, until I can get the shelter up.'

Early the next morning, a snowspeeder patrol was dispatched to search for the missing Rebels. A pilot named Zev Senesca picked up a transmission from Han Solo. He spotted the hastily erected shelter and swooped in to pick them up.



Concept art for Han, Leia and the medical droid waiting for Luke to heal in the Hoth sick bay. RALPH McQUARRIE

Luke was rushed to the medical bay and placed inside a bacta tank for rapid healing. Under the care of a 2-1B medical droid, Luke was soon well enough to receive visitors.

C-3PO and R2-D2 expressed their relief that Luke was on the mend. Chewie rumbled warmly, and even Han looked pleased. 'You look strong enough to pull the ears off a gundark.' He grinned.

Then he turned to Leia. 'Well, your Worship. Looks like you managed to keep me around for a little while longer.'

'I had nothing to do with it,' the Princess told him. 'General Rieekan thinks it's dangerous for any ships to leave the system until we've activated the energy field.'

'That's a good story.' Han chuckled. 'I think you just can't bear to let a gorgeous guy like me out of your sight.'

Leia scowled. 'Why, you stuck-up, half-witted, scruffy-looking nerf herder!' To prove Han wrong, she walked over to Luke and planted a kiss on his lips. Han could only watch as she strode away, leaving Luke grinning in his medcenter bed.

In the command centre, General Rieekan received word that a suspicious object had been detected. It was sending out a weak signal, possibly an Imperial code. Han and Chewbacca volunteered to investigate. They soon spotted a mysterious droid floating near the base. Han crept close with his blaster, and on his second shot, the droid self-destructed.



Concept art for the ion cannon "Rebel Big Gun Control Booth." RALPH MCQUARRIE



Concept art for Darth Vader pacing on the bridge of an Imperial Star Destroyer. RALPH MCQUARRIE

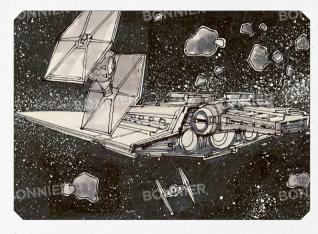
Now the Rebels knew they were in trouble. The probe droid must have been sent by the Empire. The Imperial fleet wouldn't be too far behind. It was time for the Rebels to leave.

In a distant part of the galaxy, Darth Vader stood on the bridge of his vast Star Dreadnought, the *Executor*, as the ship picked up the probe droid's signal. 'That's it,' Vader told the officer on duty, Captain Piett. 'The Rebels are there.'

A second officer named Admiral Ozzel wasn't so sure, but Vader overruled him. He ordered his military commander, General Veers, to prepare his troops for battle.

Echo Base was a hive of activity as the Rebels prepared to evacuate. Han and Chewie were working on the Falcon when Luke came to say goodbye. He received a furry hug from Chewbacca, but he had no idea what to say to Han. Once again the smuggler had saved his life, but he couldn't say when or if they'd see each other again.

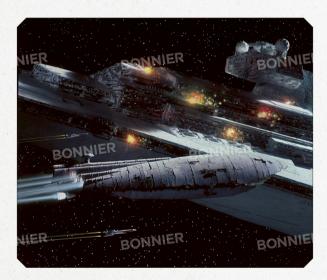
In the command centre, Rebel sensors had spotted Imperial ships approaching. Rieekan ordered all power to the shields until they could clear the base. On the *Executor*, Darth Vader was furious that his fleet had been detected so easily. 'Admiral Ozzel came out of lightspeed too close to the system,' he seethed.



Concept art for the original design of Darth Vader's Imperial Star Destroyer. NILO RODIS-JAMERO

Activating a screen on the wall, he contacted the Admiral. As Ozzel turned, Vader reached out with the Force. The Admiral began to choke, clutching at his throat. Captain Piett tried not to react as his commanding officer collapsed lifelessly to the floor. 'You are in command now, Admiral Piett,' Vader told him.

In the hangar at Echo Base, Princess Leia briefed a group of Rebel fighter pilots. It was their mission to escort the escaping transports safely out



Composite shot of the Rebel ships breaking through the Imperial blockade. TERRY CHOSTNER

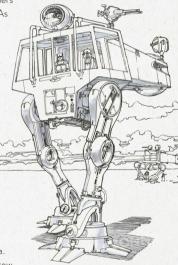
of the system. A weapon called an ion cannon would help to clear any Imperial ships out of their path.

As the first Rebel transport soared away, the ion cannon fired. An advancing Star Destroyer received several blasts, giving the Rebels the space they needed to jump to lightspeed. In the hangar, the pilots cheered.

But on the surface of Hoth, Rebel soldiers had detected something approaching. As they hurried to dig defensive trenches, they heard what sounded like giant footsteps. Soon they saw a line of vast machines: armoured transports on huge, towering legs.

As the Imperial walkers neared Echo Base, a squadron of two-man snowspeeders scrambled to repel the attack. Codenamed Rogue Group, they were led by none other than Luke Skywalker.

The speeders opened fire, but their blaster shots had little effect on the walkers' heavy armour. Luke had an idea. 'Rogue Group, use your harpoons and tow cables,' he ordered. 'Go for the legs. It might be our only chance of stopping them.'



Concept art for a scout walker. JOE JOHNSTON

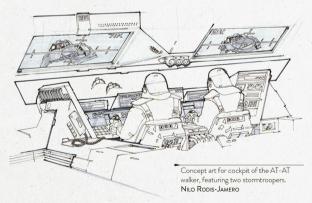
Suddenly, a blast from one of the walkers struck his speeder. Turning, he saw to his horror that his tail gunner Dak had been killed. He could no longer fire his

> harpoon, but he could offer covering fire as another pilot, Wedge Antilles, started his attack run.

Wedge's tail gunner fired a magnetic harpoon, hitting the leg of one walker. With the attached tow cable, their snowspeeder circled several times, trapping the walker's legs. 'Detach cable,' Wedge called before flying

Concept art for the Rebel's snowspeeders. RALPH McQUARRIE clear of the armoured vehicle. When

the walker tried to take a step, the cable tightened and the great machine crashed to the ground, allowing the snowspeeders to swoop in and blast it to pieces.



But Rogue Group's celebrations were short-lived. As the Imperial assault continued, Zev's ship was shot down and Luke took another blast, sending his speeder spiralling to the ground. He barely escaped before a walker's metal foot crashed down, flattening his ship into the snow.

Inside Echo Base, the Rebels hurried to complete the evacuation. One of the few ships remaining was the Millennium Falcon, which still needed last-minute repairs. Leaving Chewbacca to fix the ship, Han headed to the command centre, where he found Princess Leia still at her post.

'You've got your clearance to leave,' she told Han curtly.

'Don't worry, I'll leave,' he shot back. 'First I'm going to get you to your ship.'

'Your Highness, we must take this last transport,' Threepio agreed. 'It's our only hope.'



Concept art for the docking bay of the Rebel base on Hoth, featuring Rebel troops running. RALPH McQUARRIE

On the surface, General Veers targeted the Rebels' shield generator with maximum firepower. As Echo Base took more hits, the ground shook violently and tunnels began to collapse.

Han and Leia ran to catch the last transport, but soon found their way blocked by fallen ice. All Han could do was radio the Rebels and tell them to take off. Leia would join him on the Falcon.

As the Imperial walkers approached the base, Luke used a magnetic harpoon to attach himself to the underside of one of the vast machines. Using his lightsaber, he cut open a hatch in the walker's belly and tossed an explosive charge inside. Then he dropped back to the snow. Moments later, the walker's cockpit exploded and it toppled sideways, gushing smoke.

In the main hangar, Han tried desperately to get the Millennium Falcon off the ground as a platoon of snowtroopers fired at the ship. 'This bucket of bolts is never going to get us past that blockade!' Leia protested.

'This baby's got a few surprises left in her, sweetheart,' Han assured her, using the ship's guns to repel the troopers.

'Punch it,' he told Chewie, and the Falcon roared into life, soaring from the hangar. Darth Vader arrived just in time to see the ship leave. He knew

that capturing the *Millennium Falcon* was his best hope of finding Luke Skywalker.

Out on the plains of Hoth, Luke also saw the Falcon depart. He strode to his X-wing fighter, where R2-D2 was waiting for him. As they blasted out of Hoth's atmosphere, Artoo began to beep questioningly. 'There's nothing wrong, Artoo,' Luke reassured the little droid. 'I'm just setting a new course. We're not going to regroup with the others. We're going to the Dagobah system.'



Concept art for Luke crawling out of his snowspeeder after being shot down. RALPH McQUARRIE

While Luke's small fighter had no trouble slipping past the Imperial blockade, the *Millennium Falcon* was not so lucky. Under heavy fire from four pursuing TIE fighters, the old freighter was about to be pinned down by a group of enclosing Star Destroyers. A series of evasive manoeuvres forced the Destroyers into a near-collision, but the TIE fighters were still closing in. Han knew it was time to make the jump to lightspeed.

But when he tried to activate the hyperdrive, nothing happened. Threepio informed them that the mechanism had been damaged.

As Han and Chewie struggled to fix the hyperdrive, they felt something strike the ship. Outside the cockpit, they saw a vast expanse of tumbling rocks: an asteroid field.

To Princes Leia's shock, Han told Chewie to take the Falcon deeper into the asteroids. 'They'd be crazy to follow us, wouldn't they?' he reasoned as huge boulders spiralled past the ship, slamming into two of the pursuing TIE fighters.

The hail of rocks grew heavier, until even Han started to look worried. 'We're going to get pulverised if we stay out here much longer,' Leia argued, and Han could only agree.

He piloted the Falcon towards one of the larger asteroids. They skimmed over the surface and down into a canyon, forcing the last two TIE fighters into an explosive collision. Then Han gestured up ahead. 'There,' he said. 'That looks pretty good.'



Concept art for the Millennium Falcon flying in space. RALPH McQUARRIE

The Falcon arced gracefully over the asteroid's surface and then dropped, vanishing into a large, cylindrical cave. 'I hope you know what you're doing,' Leia murmured as they were swallowed by the darkness.

Meanwhile, Luke Skywalker piloted his X-wing towards the surface of Dagobah, descending through a dense curtain of cloud. The sensors had picked up massive life readings, but no signs of civilisation. Luke's ship crashed through a wall of foliage, then splashed down into a pool of dark water.

Fog covered the ground and strange animal calls sounded in the gloom as Luke climbed from the cockpit. The X-wing shuddered in the bubbling swamp, sending Artoo toppling into the water.

At first the little droid seemed unharmed, using his periscope to navigate to land. He didn't notice a dark shape breaking the surface behind him. As



Concept art for Luke and his X-wing in a bog on Dagobah, featuring R2-D2. RALPH McQUARRIE

Luke scrambled onto the bank, the unseen creature advanced on Artoo. Luke drew his blaster, but it was too late. Artoo had been swallowed by a dragonsnake.

Silence descended. Luke peered into the murk. With a screeching wail, Artoo was spat out, rocketing through the air and crashing through the

foliage. Luke ran over, tipping Artoo upright. Then he sank down beside the droid. 'Artoo, what are we doing here?' he wondered hopelessly.



Concept art for the alien swamp creatures found on Dagobah.

RALPH McQUARRIE

On the Executor, Admiral Piett entered Darth Vader's chamber and witnessed a sight few others had seen: the briefest glimpse of a scar-covered skull, before Vader's imposing helmet slid into place. The Dark Lord turned to hear the Admiral's report.



Concept art for Yoda, based on the original brief by George Lucas. JOE JOHNSTON

Piett was reluctant to send more ships into the asteroid field after the Millennium Falcon, but Vader was adamant. 'I want that ship, not excuses.'

As night fell over Dagobah, Luke finished setting up camp. Suddenly, he felt a strange, watchful presence. He turned around, pointing his blaster at a small, greenskinned creature dressed in tattered robes.

'Away put your weapon!' the creature croaked. 'I mean you no harm!'

The creature hobbled into the camp, rifling through Luke's stores. He seemed fascinated by a small torch, but when Artoo tried to retrieve it, the creature whacked him with his walking stick. 'Mine!' he shouted. 'Mine! Mine!'



Luke lost his patience, telling the creature he'd come a long way to find a Jedi Master. At this, the creature gave a gasp. 'Yoda,' he said. 'You seek Yoda.'

Luke crouched. 'You know him?' he asked in disbelief.

The creature nodded, 'Take

you to him, I will,' he promised, shuffling away between the trees. Leaving Artoo to watch the camp, Luke reluctantly followed.

Concept art for Yoda. RALPH McQUARRIE

On the Millennium Falcon, the crew worked hard to fix the hyperdrive. In a secluded corridor, Leia was soldering when Han stepped in behind her and attempted to help. Leia shrugged him off, but deep down she knew she was developing feelings for the brash smuggler. Under Han's questioning, she grudgingly admitted that she liked him – but only when he wasn't acting like a scoundrel.

Han smiled, gently taking hold of her hands. 'You like me because I'm a scoundrel,' he said. 'There aren't enough scoundrels in your life.'

He leaned in for a kiss, and Leia kissed him back. But their passionate moment was short-lived, as Han was interrupted by a tap on the shoulder.

It was C-3PO, with an update on the repairs. Han thanked the droid sarcastically, and when he turned back, Leia had slipped away.

On the Executor, Darth Vader knelt before a holographic communication from his master, Emperor Palpatine, the supreme ruler of the galaxy. The Emperor had detected a disturbance in the Force and surmised that their new enemy, Luke Skywalker, was the offspring of Anakin Skywalker, a powerful Jedi.

'How is that possible?' Vader asked.

'Search your feelings, Lord Vader. You will know it to be true. He could destroy us,' the Emperor warned. 'The son of Skywalker must not become a Jedi.'

'If he could be turned,' Darth Vader suggested, 'he would become a powerful ally.'

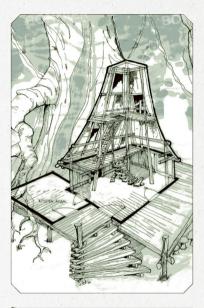
The Emperor agreed. Vader promised, 'He will join us or die, Master.'



Concept art for Darth Vader communicating with a hologram of the Emperor. RALPH McQUARRIE

In a tiny mud hut deep in the swamps of Dagobah, Luke Skywalker peppered his host with questions about Yoda. The ancient creature urged patience, offering Luke a bowl of stew and insisting that it wouldn't take long to reach the Jedi Master, But Luke couldn't sit still. 'We're wasting our time!' he snapped.

Yoda sighed, turning to the wall. 'I cannot teach him,' he said, seemingly to himself. 'The boy has no patience.'



Concept art for Yoda's home on Dagobah.

NORMAN REYNOLDS

'He will learn patience,' a voice replied, and Luke looked up in surprise. It was the voice of Obi-Wan Kenobi.

The little creature shook his head. 'Much anger in him. Like his father.'

'Yoda?' Luke realised. 'I am ready. I can be a Jedi.'

'Ready, are you? What know you of ready?' Yoda demanded. 'For 800 years have I trained Jedi. My own counsel will I keep on who is to be trained. A Jedi must have the deepest commitment. The most serious mind.'

He sighed. 'This one, a long time have I watched,' he went on. 'All his life has he looked away to the future, to the horizon. Never his mind on where he was. What he was doing. Adventure. Excitement. A Jedi craves not these things.'

Luke faced the aged warrior. 'I won't fail you,' he promised. 'I'm not afraid.'

Yoda's eyes narrowed. 'You will be,' he said ominously. 'You will be.'

In the cockpit of the *Millennium Falcon*, Princess Leia was lost in thought, listening to the distant boom of TIE bombers moving through the asteroid field. Suddenly, she saw a shape pass by, and a sticky sucker attached itself to the viewport.

She leapt up, hurrying to tell Han. He grabbed a breathing mask and set out to investigate. Leia and Chewie followed, descending the *Falcon*'s ramp into the interior of the cave. Fog covered the surface, and the ground was unusually soft and damp.

'I have a bad feeling about this,' Leia muttered.

There was a screech overhead, and Han fired his blaster. It was a mynock, a winged scavenger species known to attach themselves to starships.



A whole flock of the creatures screeched past, tangling in Chewie's fur. When the Wookiee fired his bowcaster, the entire cave shook. To confirm his unwelcome suspicion, Han fired his blaster into the ground. Again, the cave shuddered violently, almost throwing them off their feet as they staggered back to the *Falcon*.

'Let's get out of here!' Han cried. As the Falcon lifted off, they saw the tunnel collapsing ahead of them, huge stalactites and stalagmites seemingly coming together to block their escape. Han tipped the Falcon on its side and they slid through, right between the teeth of the giant space slug in whose belly they'd unwittingly been hiding. The massive creature snapped at the fleeing spacecraft, then retreated into its lair.



Concept art for the space slug creature, exogorth. JOE JOHNSTON

On Dagobah, Luke's Jedi training had begun. For hours, he had undergone a series of punishing tasks, clambering up vines, swinging across fetid pools of water, leaping over roots and jogging through filthy bogs, all the while carrying Yoda on his back.

The Jedi Master warned Luke about the dark side of the Force – how seductive it was, and how easy it could be to give oneself over to anger, just as Obi-Wan's apprentice Darth Vader had. 'A Jedi uses the Force for knowledge and defence,' Yoda instructed. 'Never for attack.'

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Concept art for Luke carrying Yoda on his back on Dagobah. RALPH McQUARRIE

He climbed down, perching on a rock as Luke shivered, overtaken by a sudden sense of unease. 'There's something not right here,' he said. 'I feel cold.'

Yoda gestured to a dark opening between the roots of a great tree. He told Luke that it was a place of evil, strong with the dark side. And Luke would have to go inside.

'What's in there?' he asked doubtfully.

'Only what you take with you,' Yoda replied.

Luke approached the cave. Yoda urged him to leave his weapons behind but Luke didn't listen, buckling on his belt as he descended into the shadows. Then, he saw something impossible. From a stone tunnel emerged the unmistakable form of Darth Vader.

Luke ignited his lightsaber, and Vader did the same. Moving slowly, as though in a dream, Luke parried the Dark Lord's blow, then lunged in for the attack. His laser sword severed Vader's head from his shoulders, sending it tumbling into the dirt.

Luke looked down in amazement. In a shower of sparks, Vader's helmet split open, revealing the face beneath. Luke clutched his lightsaber. The face was his own. On the bridge of the Executor, Imperial officers muttered in disgust. In an effort to track down the Millennium Falcon, Darth Vader had gathered a motley group of bounty hunters, some of the most feared and loathed creatures in the galaxy. Among them were notorious villains like the scaly reptilian Bossk, the assassin droid IG-88, the insectoid Zuckuss and the infamous Mandalorian warrior, Boba Fett.

Vader offered a substantial reward, and each of the mercenaries was determined to claim the prize. But just then, word came that an Imperial ship had caught sight of the Falcon and was already in pursuit.



Concept art for Boba Fett with fellow bounty hunters on Cloud City. RALPH McQUARRIE

The Millennium Falcon emerged from the asteroid field, right into the path of a massive Star Destroyer. Once again, Han gave the order to jump to lightspeed, but once again, the hyperdrive failed. As blasts from the Star Destroyer rocked the ship, Threepio announced that the main rear deflector shield was now inoperative. Han had no choice but to turn the Falcon around and move into attack position.

On the Star Destroyer's bridge, the commanding officer, Captain Needa, watched in disbelief as the *Millennium Falcon* rocketed towards them. But as it passed overhead, the *Falcon* suddenly vanished from the Star Destroyer's scopes. The ship was gone.

On Dagobah, Luke was deep in concentration, balancing on one hand as he kept a small boulder suspended with the power of the Force. Yoda

perched on the sole of Luke's foot, offering his young apprentice the benefit of his wisdom.

Suddenly Artoo began to beep worriedly, breaking Luke's focus and sending Yoda tumbling. Ever since they'd crash-landed on Dagobah, Luke's X-wing had been sinking deeper into the swamp. Now it was almost submerged.



Concept art for Yoda's house, featuring Yoda and R2-D2.
NORMAN REYNOLDS

'We'll never get it out now,' Luke complained.

'So certain are you,' Yoda told him. 'Always with you it cannot be done. Hear you nothing that I say?'

Luke turned to the X-wing. 'All right,' he said sceptically. 'I'll give it a try.'

'No!' Yoda ordered. 'Try not. Do. Or do not. There is no try.'

Raising his hand, Luke reached out with the Force, silently willing his ship to rise from the water. Yoda watched wide-eyed as the fighter's wing rose slowly from the murk. But then Luke lost his concentration.

'I can't,' he said. 'It's too big.'



Concept art for the head of an aging Yoda.

RALPH McQUARRIE

'Size matters not,' Yoda told him. 'Look at me. Judge me by my size, do you? Hmm? And well you should not, for my ally is the Force, and a powerful ally it is. Life creates it, makes it grow. Its energy surrounds us, and binds us. Luminous beings are we, not this crude matter.'

Luke walked away, sinking to the ground in despair. He didn't see the old Jedi Master closing his eyes and reaching out. The waters of the swamp began to stir, and Artoo let out a startled beep as the X-wing lifted smoothly into the air, guided to dry land by an unseen power.

Luke hurried over, touching the hull of his ship in amazement. 'I don't believe it,' he told Yoda.

The little Jedi Master nodded. 'That is why you fail.'



Concept art storyboard for Yoda guiding Luke's X-wing to land on Dagobah. JOE JOHNSTON

On the Executor, Darth Vader stood over Captain Needa as the officer breathed his last. Then he turned to Admiral Piett, demanding an update on the missing Falcon. There had been no further sign of the ship, but Vader was not ready to give up the search. He ordered Piett to calculate every possible destination where the ship could be headed. 'Don't fail me again, Admiral,' he warned.

Little did they know that the Millennium Falcon hadn't escaped at all. The freighter clung to the back of the Star Destroyer's command tower, unseen by the rest of the fleet. Han was waiting for the larger ship to dump its garbage, then he'd detach the docking clamps and hide among the refuse.

'Then we gotta find a safe port somewhere around here,' he told Princess Leia. 'Any ideas?' Suddenly Han spotted something. 'This is interesting. Lando.'

Leia frowned. 'Lando system?'

'Lando's not a system, he's a man,' Solo explained. 'Lando Calrissian. He's a card player, gambler, scoundrel. You'd like him.'

'Can you trust him?' Leia asked.

'No,' Han admitted. 'But he's got no love for the Empire, I can tell you that. Here we go. Chewie, stand by. Detach.'

The Falcon dropped silently, tumbling to join the floating Imperial refuse. They waited until the fleet had gone to lightspeed. Then Han fired up the thrusters, piloting the Falcon away.

He didn't notice the small stealth craft pursuing them.



Concept art for Boba Fett's starship. NILO RODIS-JAMERO



Concept art for Yoda preparing food at his stove for Luke. RALPH MCQUARRIE

On Dagobah, Luke diligently continued his Jedi training as Yoda explained, 'Through the Force, things you will see. Other places. The future. The past. Old friends long gone.'

Luke reached out with his feelings, channelling the power of the Force. Suddenly, he felt a wave of horror pass through him. 'Han? Leia!'

His focus broke and he fell to the ground. He told Yoda about the vision he'd seen, of a city in the clouds and his friends in pain. 'Will they die?' Luke asked fearfully.

Yoda frowned. 'Difficult to see,' he admitted. 'Always in motion is the future.'

Luke began to gather his possessions. 'I've got to go to them.'

'Decide you must how to serve them best,' Yoda told him. 'If you leave now, help them you could. But you would destroy all for which they have fought and suffered.'

Light years away, Luke's vision was already coming true. The Millennium Falcon soared towards Cloud City, a mining colony suspended above the gas planet Bespin. Flanked by a pair of twin-pod cloud cars, the Falcon was granted permission to land. But when Han lowered the ramp, they found the landing platform deserted. 'I don't like this,' Leia said.



Concept art for Cloud City, featuring cloud cars and flying beasts in the sky. RALPH McQUARRIE

With a hiss, a set of doors opened, and a cloaked figure strode towards them, accompanied by his guards. Lando Calrissian frowned as he spotted his old partner in crime, Han Solo. 'Why, you slimy, double-crossing, nogood swindler,' he growled. 'You've got a lot of guts coming here, after what you pulled.'

Then his face broke into a grin, and he laughed, pulling Han in for an embrace. 'How you doing, you old pirate? So good to see you!'

C-3PO watched with relief. 'Well, he seems very friendly.'

But Leia wasn't convinced. She eyed Lando as he reached for her hand, kissing her fingers. 'All right, you old smoothie,' Han cautioned. He knew his friend's reputation.

As they made their way through Cloud City, Lando told them all about the challenges of running a successful mining operation. 'You sound like a businessman.' Han laughed. 'A responsible leader. Who'd have thought that, huh?'

Threepio lagged behind when he heard a familiar beeping through an open door. 'That sounds like an Artoo unit in there,' he said, stepping through. But when a voice demanded to know who he was, Threepio backed up in surprise. Before he could explain, a blaster shot rang out and the golden droid was blown to pieces.

On Dagobah, Luke had readied his X-wing and was preparing to leave. Yoda beseeched the young man to stay and complete his training, but Luke was convinced that Han and Leia would die if he didn't help them. 'Master Yoda, I promise to return and finish what I've begun,' he said. 'You have my word.'

'Luke,' another voice called. The shimmering form of Obi-Wan Kenobi had appeared beside Yoda. 'I don't want to lose you to the Emperor, the way I lost Vader.'

'You won't,' Luke swore. Then he boarded his X-wing and fired up the engines.



Concept art for Luke Skywalker, Yoda and the ghost of Obi-Wan on Dagobah with the X-wing. RALPH McQUARRIE

Yoda and Obi-Wan watched regretfully as the ship blasted free of Dagobah's atmosphere. 'That boy is our last hope,' Kenobi said.

'No,' Yoda reminded him. 'There is another.'

Down in the furnace-lit depths of Cloud City, Chewbacca searched for C-3PO. The Wookiee was rifling through a scrap pile when he came across the golden droid's torso – and nearby, his detached head. Bellowing at the Ugnaught workers, Chewie gathered up all the pieces he could find.

Back in the guest quarters, Han and Leia were dismayed when Chewie showed them Threepio's sad state – the droid's parts collected in a crate. Just then, Lando entered, smiling appreciatively at Leia. 'You look absolutely beautiful,' he told her. 'You truly belong here with us, among the clouds. Would you join me for a little refreshment? Everyone's invited, of course.'



Concept art for Leia, Han Solo and Chewbacca – holding C-3PO – in Cloud City.

RALPH McQUARRIE

As they made their way through the bustling corridors, Lando explained that although his operation was small, he'd been afraid that sooner or later the Empire would notice and close it down. 'But things have developed that'll ensure security,' he said. 'I've just made a deal that'll keep the Empire out of here forever.'

BONNIER BONNIER

Concept art for Darth Vader and Lando Calrissian with Leia, Han Solo and Chewbacca in Vader's dining room on Cloud City. RAIPH MCQUARRIE

He touched a button, and a door opened onto a white room with a long dining table. At the far end, a dark figure rose to his feet – it was Darth Vader. Han drew his blaster and fired, but Darth Vader simply raised a hand, deflecting the laser bolts. From an alcove stepped the bounty hunter, Boba Fett.

Vader beckoned. 'We would be honoured if you would join us.'

Chewbacca was taken to a cell, where a piercing alarm was agony to his sensitive Wookiee ears. When the alarm finally switched off, Chewie worried about Han and the Princess. Powerless to do anything else, he got to work repairing C-3PO.

In another part of Cloud City,
Darth Vader watched with a pitiless
gaze as Han Solo was strapped
to a sparking electronic device.
He emerged from the chamber,
engaging Boba Fett. He promised
the bounty hunter could take
Solo to Jabba the Hutt once Luke
Skywalker was in Imperial custody.
Leia and Chewbacca would have
to remain in Cloud City, as
Lando's prisoners.

'That was never a condition of our agreement,' Lando protested. 'Nor was giving Han to this bounty hunter.'

Vader turned on him. 'Perhaps you think you're being treated unfairly?'

Lando gulped. He
couldn't defy the Dark
Lord. But as he walked
away, Lando leaned closer
to his aide, Lobot. This deal is
getting worse all the time,' he muttered.

Back in the cell, Chewbacca had reattached C-3PO's head to his body. As Chewie continued tinkering, the droid's optical sensors reactivated and he realised his head was the wrong way round. 'What have you done?' Threepio wailed. 'I'm backwards!'

The door slid open, and stormtroopers brought in Han, who collapsed to the floor. As Chewie helped Han to a bench, guards shoved Leia into the cell. She knelt beside Han, gently stroking his hair. 'Why are they doing this?' she asked weakly.



A costume concept for Lando Calrissian. RALPH McQUARRIE

Han couldn't answer. 'They never even asked me any questions.'

Two guards entered, followed closely by Lando Calrissian. He told them he was sorry, but insisted he'd had no choice – he couldn't jeopardize the entire population of Cloud City. 'Vader doesn't want you at all,' he explained. 'He's after somebody called Skywalker.'

Finally, Han and Leia understood. Vader was using them as bait to lure Luke into his trap. Lunging to his feet, Han punched Lando square on the jaw. Chewie roared as the guards drew their blasters, but Lando ordered them to stand down. He apologised again, then marched from the cell.



A costume concept for Lobot's headgear. RALPH MCQUARRIE

As Luke's X-wing approached Cloud City, Darth Vader instructed his men to allow the craft to land. He planned to subject Luke to a process known as carbon freezing, keeping him in suspended animation until he could be delivered to the Emperor. But the process was risky, so Vader decided to test it first – on Han Solo.

Han and the others were marched into the carbon freezing chamber. Chewbacca carried C-3PO's parts in a cargo net strapped to his back. The partially assembled droid complained and nattered during the tense proceedings.

When Vader gave the order to place Han into the carbon freezing device, Chewbacca gave a roar, knocking several stormtroopers off their feet. Han reached for his friend, urging him to save his strength. This time, they were outnumbered. But their chance would come again. For now, it was the Wookiee's responsibility to watch over the Princess.

Leia looked up at Han, deep emotion in her eyes. When he leaned in to kiss her, she returned his kiss. Then a pair of stormtroopers stepped in, dragging Han back.

'I love you,' Leia called out.

'I know,' Han replied.



Concept art for Han Solo in custody on Cloud City, featuring Darth Vader and his guards. RALPH McQUARRIE

Then the platform he was standing on began to descend. Dense clouds erupted from the carbon freezing machine, enveloping Han

in a shroud of steam. Chewie gave a howl of despair. Leia turned her face away.

Then a giant claw lowered, latching onto a slab of black carbonite. As it dropped to the floor. Leia saw the frozen outline of Han Solo, his mouth open in a wordless cry. He was still alive, and in perfect hibernation.

Concept art for the carbon freezing chamber. NORMAN REYNOLDS

'He's all yours, bounty hunter,' Vader said, 'Reset the chamber for Skywalker.'

The Dark Lord then ordered Lando to deliver Leia and Chewbacca to his ship. 'I'm altering the deal,' he told Calrissian. 'Pray I don't alter it any further.'

Luke and Artoo entered Cloud City, only to find its white corridors curiously empty. Suddenly, a blaster shot rang out. Taking cover, Luke saw a platoon of stormtroopers. With them were Leia, Chewie and Lando.

'Luke, don't!' Leia cried. 'It's a trap!' Then a door slid shut and they were gone.

As Luke tried to follow, he soon realised that Leia was right. One door cut him off from R2-D2, while a rising hatchway led him directly into the carbon freezing chamber. There he found a familiar figure waiting for him.

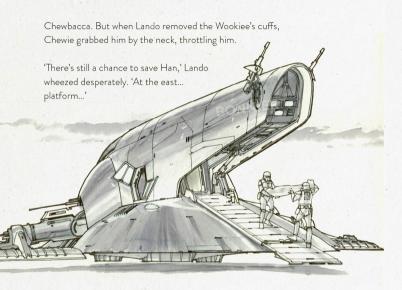
'The Force is with you, young Skywalker,' Darth Vader said, his voice echoing through the chamber. 'But you are not a Jedi yet.'

As he approached, Luke drew his lightsaber, and Vader did the same. Luke struck first but Vader blocked easily, throwing Luke off his feet. Luke soon recovered and rejoined the fight.

Elsewhere in Cloud City, Lando had sprung a trap of his own. Led by Lobot, his guards disarmed the stormtroopers surrounding Leia and



Concept art for Luke in the freezing plant on Cloud City. RALPH McQUARRIE



Concept art for two stormtroopers carrying Han aboard Boba Fett's starship. JOE JOHNSTON

On Leia's order, Chewbacca released his grip. When they arrived at the landing platform, they saw Boba Fett's ship already lifting off. Leia fired at the departing craft, but it was no use. Han was gone.

In the carbon freezing chamber, Darth Vader had Luke cornered. When the young Jedi missed his step and tumbled into the carbon freezer, Vader thought his work was done. Luke quickly leapt free, retrieving his lightsaber and igniting it. 'Impressive,' Vader admitted. 'Most impressive. Obi-Wan has taught you well. You have controlled your fear. Now, release your anger. Only your hatred can destroy me.'

Luke attacked again, taking Vader by surprise and driving the Dark Lord down. Moving in pursuit, Luke found himself in a passage beneath the freezing chamber, where a circular window looked out over Cloud City's central air shaft.

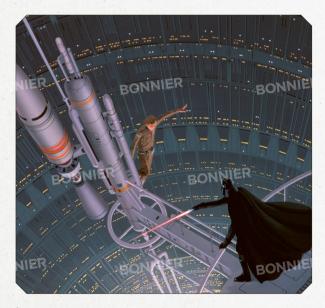
Using the Force, Vader lifted a steel container and sent it hurtling towards Luke. More heavy objects followed, slamming painfully into Luke and then past him to the window, shattering the glass. A



fierce wind tore through the passage, dragging Luke through the broken window. Exhausted, he managed to cling to a metal gantry. Below him was nothing but a sheer drop.

Knowing Cloud City was no longer safe, Lando made an announcement, telling his people to evacuate before more Imperial troops arrived. Citizens crowded the corridors, carrying whatever they could. Lando led Leia and the others to the Millennium Falcon's landing platform, and R2-D2 provided a cloud of smoke to cover their escape. Under heavy fire from pursuing stormtroopers, they fled to the ship, lifting off into the skies above Bespin.

Meanwhile, Luke had clawed his way up onto the metal gantry only to come face to face with Darth Vader. Their lightsabers clashed but now Luke was bruised and weary, his blows weakening as Vader drove him back. Finally, he stumbled, toppling back as Vader loomed over him. 'You are beaten,' the Dark Lord said. 'It is useless to resist. Don't let yourself be destroyed as Obi-Wan did.'



Concept art for Luke Skywalker's battle with Vader in Cloud City on Bespin. RALPH McQUARRIE

With a last effort of will, Luke rose up and kept fighting, but a savage blow from Vader ended the battle, severing Luke's hand and sending his lightsaber tumbling into the air shaft. Luke screamed, clutching his cauterised wound. Vader faced him, reaching out a gloved hand. He urged Luke to join him, and together they could bring order to the galaxy.

'I'll never join you!' Luke cried.

'If you only knew the power of the dark side!' Vader insisted. 'Obi-Wan never told you what happened to your father.'

'He told me enough,' Luke rasped defiantly. 'He told me you killed him.'

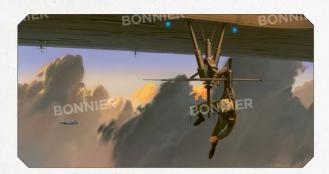
'No,' Vader said. 'I am your father.'

Luke shook his head. It couldn't be possible. Vader urged the young Jedi to search his feelings, to recognise the truth. 'Join me,' he repeated, 'and together we can rule the galaxy as father and son.'

But Luke refused to surrender. Instead he let go of the gantry, dropping down the seemingly endless shaft. Vader could only watch as Luke vanished from sight.

The air shaft narrowed, and Luke found himself sliding helplessly through a tunnel before plummeting through an open hatch. He clung to a slender vane high above the gas clouds as the wind lashed at him. Luke closed his eyes and reached out with the Force. 'Leia,' he whispered. 'Hear me. Leia.'

In the cockpit of the Falcon, Leia felt something pass through her. 'Luke,' she whispered.



Concept art for Luke clutching onto the weather vane. RALPH McQUARRIE

Turning to Chewbacca, she gave the order to return to Cloud City. As they sped closer, Lando spotted someone dangling from the city's underbelly. Opening the top hatch, he retrieved Luke and carried him safely back into the ship. Pursued by a trio of TIE fighters, the Falcon soared into open space.

But their troubles weren't over. As Chewie struggled to evade the fighters, Leia spotted the *Executor* moving to cut off their escape. And when Lando gave the order to jump to lightspeed, they discovered that the hyperdrive had been deactivated by Imperial forces.

On the Executor's bridge, Darth Vader received a report that the Falcon would soon be in range of their tractor beam. He could sense Luke's presence aboard the ship and was determined not to let him escape again. Luke, too, could feel the Dark Lord calling to him. He didn't know if he was strong enough to resist.

In the Falcon's hold, R2-D2 was communicating with the ship's computer. Using his robotic arm, the astromech was able to repair the fault in the hyperdrive. The ship suddenly burst into lightspeed, sending the little droid tumbling. In the cockpit, Luke and the others saw the stars blur into streaks of light.

On the bridge of the Executor, Admiral Piett watched fearfully as Darth Vader turned and marched wordlessly away.

The Rebel fleet glided through space, a majestic flotilla of fighters and attack craft – yet still no match for the might of the Empire. Aboard the Millennium Falcon, Lando and Chewbacca were preparing to leave on a mission to rescue Han Solo.

On the frigate Nebulon-B, Luke was fitted with an artificial hand. 'I'll meet you at the rendezvous point on Tatooine,' he told Lando over the comlink.

Then Luke walked over to Leia and put his arm around her shoulders. R2-D2 and C-3PO, now fully repaired and functional, joined the Jedi and the Princess. Together, they gazed out of the viewport as the *Falcon* moved away from the fleet. They had suffered many defeats at the hands of the Empire, and the battle to free the galaxy from tyranny was still far from over.



Concept art for Leia embracing Luke.
RALPH McQUARRIE

Artists



Concept art for Rebel snowspeeders surrounding an Imperial AT-AT during the Battle of Hoth .

RALPH McQUARRIE

RALPH MCQUARRIE, born in Indiana in 1929, was a legend in the field of conceptual illustration. McQuarrie produced concept paintings for E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial, the original Battlestar Galactica television series, all three films in the classic Star Wars trilogy, and the movie Cocoon, for which he won an Academy Award for Visual Effects. Prior to his career in film production, McQuarrie worked as a technical illustrator at Boeing. After partnering with young filmmaker George Lucas, he painted scenes from Lucas's second draft script that informed the design direction of the film. In doing so he helped create some of the most iconic characters in

movie history, including C-3PO, R2-D2, and Darth Vader. McQuarrie's paintings have been reproduced as collectible posters and prints, and his original artworks have appeared in museum exhibitions, including the wildly popular touring show *Star Wars: The Magic of Myth*. He passed away in 2012.

TERRY CHOSTNER joined Industrial Light & Magic in 1979 as a still photographer in the miniatures unit on The Empire Strikes Back. Other early projects included Poltergeist, Return of the Jedi, Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom, The Abyss, Terminator 2: Judgment Day, and Jurassic Park. With the emergence of computer graphics techniques, Chostner later became a matchmove and digital artist, working on films like Star Wars: Attack of the Clones, Transformers, Iron Man, and Star Trek. He passed away in 2019.

NORMAN REYNOLDS was a British production designer and art director who worked on the original Star Wars trilogy. He art directed Star Wars, for which he won his first Academy Award for Best Art Direction – a category later renamed as Best Production Design. He also worked as the production designer for The Empire Strikes Back and Return of the Jedi. Reynolds won his second Academy Award and a BAFTA Award for his work on Raiders of the Lost Ark (1981). He passed away in 2023.

DENNIS MUREN is an American visual effects artist and supervisor and nine-time Academy Award winner. Hailed as a pioneer of visual effects, he has worked with directors George Lucas, Steven Spielberg and James Cameron and lended his talents to Star Wars, E.T. the Extra Terrestrial (1982), Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom (1984) and many more films. He worked as a visual effects cameraman on Star Wars, before being promoted to visual effects director of photography for The Empire Strikes Back. He worked with Lucas as creative consultant on A Force Awakens (2015) and continues to make cinematic masterpieces.



Concept art for snowtroopers loading AT-AT walkers on Hoth. JOE JOHNSTON

JOE JOHNSTON is an award-winning film director and effects artist whose directorial career includes classics such as Honey, I Shrunk the Kids; The Rocketeer; Jumanji; October Sky; and Captain America: The First Avenger. Born in Austin, Texas, Johnston attended California State University Long Beach and the Art Center College of Design before working as a storyboard artist and special effects art director on the first Star Wars trilogy. At Lucasfilm, Johnston worked closely with George Lucas to develop designs for now-iconic vehicles and characters and wrote a children's book starring the Ewoks from Return of the Jedi. After the Star Wars trilogy wrapped, Johnston attended the University of Southern California film school as a step toward developing his own directorial skills and served as associate producer on George Lucas's 1988 film Willow. Johnston, who won an Academy Award for Best Visual Effects for his work on Raiders of the Lost Ark, has continued his moviemaking career as director of the 2013 thriller Not Safe for Work.

NILO RODIS-JAMERO is a producer and production designer who was born in the Phillipines. He worked as assistant art director of visual effects on The Empire Strikes Back, returning to the Star Wars saga as costume designer for Return of the Jedi. His filmography includes Raiders of the Lost Ark (1981), Poltergeist (1982), Star Trek III: The Search for Spock (1984) and Star Trek IV:The Voyage Home (1986). He is credited for art direction on Tim Burton's Alice in Wonderland (2010).



Concept art for Leia and Chewie firing at Boba Fett as he escapes from Cloud City.

RALPH MCQUARRIE



