

THE MUSICAL LANDSCAPES OF *ANDOR*

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE | ISSUE 235

STAR WARS INSIDER

EXCLUSIVE STAR WARS FICTION!

INTERVIEWS:

Ryan Kiera Armstrong

Skeleton Crew's Fern on the adventure of a lifetime

Robert Emms

Andor's Imperial double agent Lonni Jung

STAR WARS THE FORCE AWAKENS 10TH ANNIVERSARY



Rise of the First Order

How galactic history repeated itself

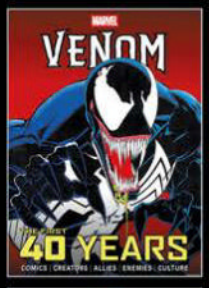
BIG IN JAPAN

REVISITING *STAR WARS* CELEBRATION 2025

© & TM 2025 Lucasfilm Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Used under authorization.















"IF YOU CAN'T STAND THE HEAT, STAY OUT OF HELL'S KITCHEN!"

DAREDEVIL
DAREDEVIL #237 (1986)



Take an in-depth look at Daredevil's greatest battles, deadliest foes, and unlikeliest allies – lavishly illustrated with stunning art!

MARVEL
© 2025 MARVEL

AVAILABLE FROM ALL GOOD BOOKSTORES & ONLINE
TITAN-COMICS.COM

TITAN MAGAZINES

A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

"Hello There!"



Can you believe it's been ten years since *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* arrived in movie theaters? In some ways it feels like only yesterday, but the characters, worlds, and concepts it introduced are now so firmly embedded in *Star Wars* mythology that it seems like they were always a part of the saga.

The movie was an outrider for a new era of *Star Wars* storytelling that has since expanded the galaxy far, far away to a previously unimaginable extent. In this issue, we're celebrating its tenth anniversary with a fascinating look behind the scenes at Industrial Light & Magic's work on one of the film's most impressive visual sequences—the *Millennium Falcon*'s escape from Jakku. We trace the rise of the First Order and the real-world inspirations director J.J. Abrams had in mind when creating the sequel trilogy's antagonistic bad guys. Plus, there's a tasty food portion of exclusive short fiction to enjoy, written by Lucasfilm's Kristin Baver, starring a young Rey.

But what of the many other *Star Wars* stories that have been told since 2015? We talk to composer Brandon Roberts about his musical score for season two of *Andor*, and actor Robert Emms reveals his thoughts on playing rebel spy Lonni Jung. *Skeleton Crew*'s Ryan Kiera Armstrong reflects on her part in the recent Disney+ show, we revisit *Star Wars* Celebration 2025, and commemorate the launch of the *Star Wars Customizable Card Game* some 30 years ago. Now that does seem like a long time ago!

May the Force be with you.



Christopher Cooper
Editor

MEET THE CONTRIBUTORS...



Tara Bennett
@TaraDBennett
Tara is a *New York Times* bestselling author, journalist, and editor, and has written numerous companion books for hit movie and television series.



Mark Newbold
@Prefect_timing
A writer for U.K. sci-fi magazine *Starburst* and a *Star Wars Insider* contributor since 2006, Mark is an Honorary Friend of the 501st Legion.



Kristin Baver
@KristinBaver
Kristin was a card-carrying *Star Wars* fan before she even had reason to own a wallet. Now she's Editor-in-Chief at StarWars.com.



Jay Stobie
@StobiesGalaxy
Writer, media consultant, and Wookiee fan, Jay is a regular *Star Wars Insider* contributor, and commentator for many sci-fi outlets.



Melissa T. Miller
@melissatruth
Scientist and science writer Melissa visits Comic-Con every year to purchase new *Star Wars* paraphernalia for her pet dog.



Brandon Wainerdi
@ActuallyBrandon
Brandon is a writer, digital strategist, and podcaster, with a prodigeous talent for crossword puzzles and a love for the *Star Wars* galaxy.

CONTACT US

Write to us
UNITED STATES
Star Wars Insider, Titan Magazines, 2819 Rosehall Lane, Aurora, IL, 60503, U.S.A.

UNITED KINGDOM
Star Wars Insider, 144 Southwark Street, London SE1 0UP, U.K.

Email us:
starwarsinsider@titanemail.com

Call us
To subscribe in the U.S. please call toll free on 800-261-6502. For U.K. and all other destinations please call 01778 392085 or +44 (0) 1778 392085

Find us
WWW.TITANMAGAZINES.COM
FACEBOOK.COM/STARWARSINSIDER
@SW_INSIDER

Star Wars Insider is also available online. To download, visit: **www.titanmagazines.com/digitial**

Visit www.starwars.com

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE
STAR WARS INSIDER
ISSUE 235

TITAN EDITORIAL
Editor / Christopher Cooper
Designer / David Colderley
Group Editor / Jake Devine
Editorial Assistant / Holly Smith
Art Director / Oz Browne

LUCASFILM
Senior Editor / Brett Rector
Editor / Jennifer Pooley
Art Director / Troy Alders
Creative Director / Michael Siglain
Asset Management / Chris Argyropoulos, Gabrielle Levenson, Bryce Pinkos, Sarah Williams, Jackey Cabrera, Shahana Alam, and Elinor De La Torre
Story Group / Leland Chee, Pablo Hidalgo, Kate Izquierdo, Matt Martin, and Emily Shkoukani
Creative Art Manager / Phil Szostak

CONTRIBUTORS
Kristin Baver, Tara Bennett, Mary Fan, Chris Kempshall, Jordan Maison, Melissa Miller, Mark Newbold, Lucas O. Seastrom, Jay Stobie, Brandon Wainerdi, and Dan Wallace.

SPECIAL THANKS TO
Lucy Goldsmith, Erich Schoeneweiss at Random House, Holly McIntosh, Joseph Taraborrelli, Andrea Towers and Jim Nausedas at Marvel Comics, Tracy Cannobbio, Lyn Cowan Chris Coxall, Amanda Gonzalez, Greg Grugsby, Ian Kintzle, Lillian Noble, and Kylie Clark at Lucasfilm. Kevin P. Pearl, Ryan Jalernpan, Eugene Paraszczuk Lyssa Hurvitz, Jenna Depellegrini, and Shana Highfield at Disney.

TITAN MAGAZINES
Senior Creative Editor / David Manley-Leach
Lead Creative Editor / Phoebe Hedges
Editors Jonathan Wilkins & Louis Yamani
Assistant Editor / Ibraheem Kazi
Designers / Dan Bura & Matt Bookman
Head of Production / Kevin Wooff
Production Manager / Jackie Flook
Production Controllers / Caterina Falqui & Kelly Fenlon
Publicity Manager / Will O'Mullane
Publicist / Julia Oprzondek
Direct Market Sales Coordinator / Bryce Walker
Digital & Marketing Manager / Jo Teather
Marketing Coordinator / Lauren Noding
Sales & Circulation Manager / Steve Tothill
Head of Rights / Iga Kaminska
Rights Executive / Mary-Beth Prindezi
Head of Creative & Business Development / Duncan Baizley
Publishing Directors / Ricky Claydon & John Dziewiatkowski
Chief Operating Officer / Andrew Sumner
Publishers / Vivian Cheung & Nick Landau

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

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

For more info on advertising contact
adinfo@titanemail.com
(USPS 003-027) (ISSN 1041-5122)

EU RP
eucomply OÜ Pärnu mnt 139b-14 11317
Tallinn, Estonia
hello@eucompliancepartner.com
+3375690241

Star Wars Insider is published six times per year (January/Feb, Mar/April, May/Jun, July/August, September/October, November/December) by Titan Magazines, a division of Titan Publishing Group Limited, 144 Southwark Street, London SE1 0UP.

Contents © 2025 Lucasfilm Ltd. & TM. All Rights Reserved, Titan Authorized User. TMN14382

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

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

© 2025 Lucasfilm Ltd. and ™
All Rights Reserved. Used Under Authorization.

STAR WARS INSIDER

CONTENTS

ISSUE 235





NEWSSTAND EDITION



COMIC STORE EXCLUSIVE



SUBSCRIBER EXCLUSIVE



FOIL EXCLUSIVE









06
Launchpad
The hottest TV, movie, publishing, and collectibles news from every sector of the *Star Wars* galaxy.

18
Garbage Won't Do
Industrial Light & Magic's Roger Guyett, Dan Lobl, and Todd Vaziri on creating the *Millennium Falcon*'s Jakku escape.

26
Interview: Robert Emms
Actor Robert Emms discusses his pivotal role as ISB traitor Lonni Jung in the hit Disney+ series, *Andor*.

32
Top Deck
We celebrate the 30th anniversary of the *Star Wars* Customizable Card Game, with designer Tom Braunlich.

38
Interview: Brandon Roberts
The composer of *Andor* season two's incredible music score reveals the journey to Mon Mothma's dance sensation.

44
Rise of the First Order
Insider explores how the First Order came to be, and the real-world inspiration behind its rise to power. .

50
Interview: Ryan Kiera Armstrong
The rising star of *Skeleton Crew* on playing the feisty, irrepressible Fern and making new friends on set.

56
Celebrate the Love
The inside story of Artists Alley and presenting a fan panel at *Star Wars* Celebration Japan 2025

72
Exclusive Fiction
Rey meets a traveler while minding Unkar Plutt's concession stand in "A Loose Connection" by Kristin Baver.

INCOMING TRANSMISSIONS

25
Prize Giveaway
Star Wars: The Force Awakens 10th Anniversary Collector's Edition.

62
A Certain Point of View
Why did Rey's parents trust Unkar Plutt with her safety?

66
Worldwide
Rey and Finn cosplay, Wookiee cookies, and your *The Force Awakens* inspired art.

80
Jedi Master's Quiz
Test your knowledge of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens.*

STAR WARS INSIDER

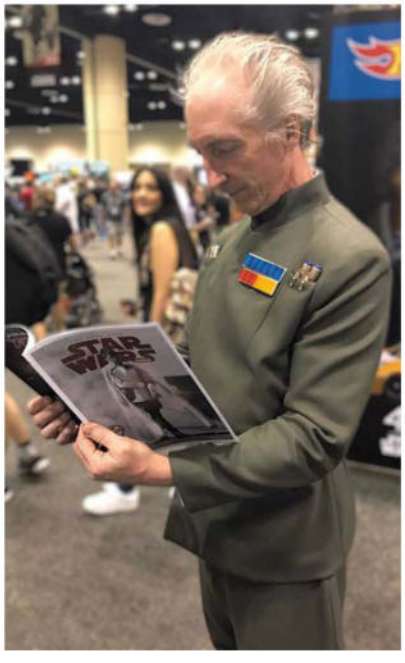
LAUNCHPAD

NEWS / BOOKS / COMICS / TOYS / GAMES / FASHION



"No one's ever really gone."

Star Wars Insider reaches the end of a Titanic run

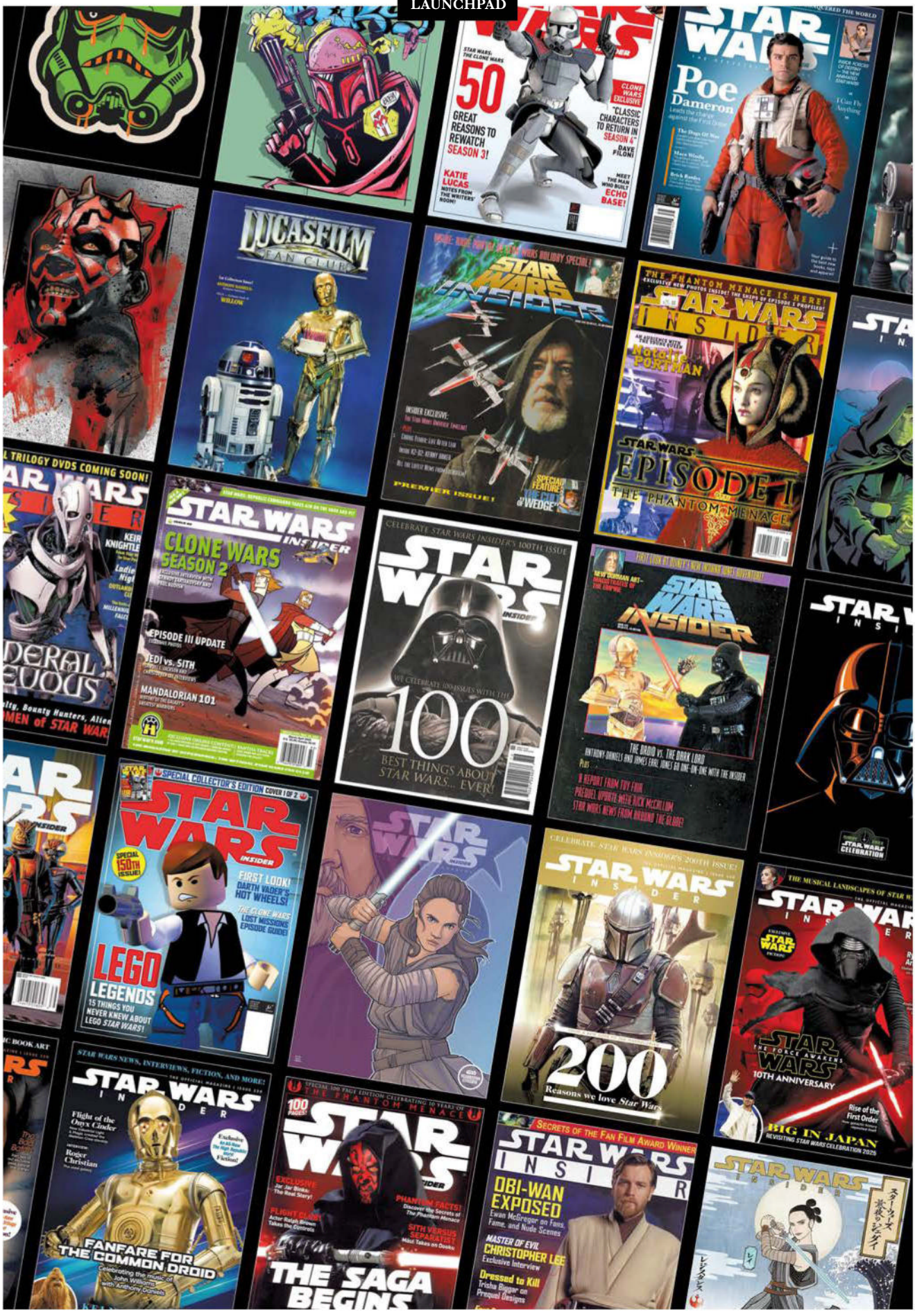


Titan Magazines are sad to confirm that issue 237 will be our final edition of *Star Wars Insider*, the long-running publication which began life as the *Lucasfilm Fan Club Magazine* in 1987.

"It's a great shame *Insider* won't be with you to commemorate the 50th anniversary of *Star Wars: A New Hope* in 2027, but we'll be there in Force spirit," says editor Christopher Cooper, who has been at the helm of *Star Wars Insider* since 2017. "What we do have lined up is a very special issue that celebrates the history of the magazine while looking forward to the bright future of the *Star Wars* galaxy. We absolutely aim to go out with a bang as big as an exploding Death Star."

Rebranded as *Star Wars Insider* in 1994 by its original editor-in-chief, Dan Madsen, the magazine has entertained fans for almost 40 years with a vibrant mix of news, in-depth features, and interviews with the stars and creators of the space fantasy saga. Several publishers have been custodians of the magazine, with Titan holding the honor since 2007's issue 93. Among the hundreds of contributors who have helped bring each issue to life over the years, actor Warwick Davis (pictured above right, beside former editor Jonathan Wilkins and Art Editor Oz Browne) guest edited issue 143, celebrating the 30th anniversary of *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi*.

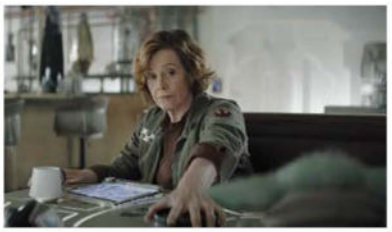
Our final issue, which goes on sale on April 28, 2026, will be a 100-page special edition packed with surprises, and will be available in an array of variant collectible covers at bookstores and at **Titan-Comics.com**.


50 GREAT REASONS TO REWATCH SEASON 3!
CLONE WARS EXCLUSIVE!
"CLASSIC CHARACTERS TO RETURN IN SEASON 4"
DAVE FILONI
KATIE LUCAS
NOTES FROM THE WRITERS' ROOM!
MEET THE MAN WHO BUILT ECHO BASE!
STAR WARS
Poe Dameron
I Can Fly Anything
LUCASFILM FAN CLUB
STAR WARS INSIDER
PREMIER ISSUE!
SPECIAL FEATURE!
THE CLONE WARS
OF WEDGE
THE PHANTOM MENACE IS HERE!
Natalie PORTMAN
STAR WARS EPISODE I
THE PHANTOM MENACE
TRILOGY DVDS COMING SOON!
KEIR KNIGHTLEY
STAR WARS INSIDER
CLONE WARS SEASON 2
EPISODE III UPDATE
JEDI vs. SITH
MANDALORIAN 101
CELEBRATE STAR WARS INSIDER'S 100TH ISSUE
100
BEST THINGS ABOUT STAR WARS... EVER!
THE DROID VS. THE DARK LORD
A REPORT FROM TOY FAIR
PREQUEL UPDATE WITH NICK MCCULLOCH
STAR WARS NEWS FROM AROUND THE GLOBE!
STAR WARS INSIDER
CELEBRATION
SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S EDITION COVER 1 OF 2
SPECIAL 150TH ISSUE!
FIRST LOOK! DARTH VADER'S HOT WHEELS!
THE CLONE WARS LOST MISSIONS EPISODE GUIDE!
LEGO LEGENDS
15 THINGS YOU NEVER KNEW ABOUT LEGO STAR WARS!
CELEBRATE STAR WARS INSIDER'S 200TH ISSUE!
STAR WARS INSIDER
200
Reasons we love Star Wars
THE MUSICAL LANDSCAPES OF STAR WARS
STAR WARS THE FORCE AWAKENS
10TH ANNIVERSARY
Rise of the First Order
BIG IN JAPAN
REVISITING STAR WARS CELEBRATION 2025
STAR WARS NEWS, INTERVIEWS, FICTION, AND MORE!
STAR WARS INSIDER
Flight of the Onyx Cinder
Roger Christian
FANFARE FOR THE COMMON DROID
Celebrating the music of John Williams with Anthony Daniels
100 PAGES!
THE PHANTOM MENACE
EXCLUSIVE
Jar Jar Binks: The Real Story!
PHANTOM FACTS!
Discover the Secrets of The Phantom Menace
FLIGHT CLUB!
Actor Ralph Brown Takes the Controls
SITH VERSUS SEPARATIST
Mace Takes on Dooku
THE SAGA BEGINS
SECRETS OF THE FAN FILM AWARD WINNER
STAR WARS INSIDER
OBI-WAN EXPOSED
Ewan McGregor on Fans, Fame, and Nude Scenes
MASTER OF EVIL
CHRISTOPHER LEE
Exclusive Interview
Dressed to Kill
Trisha Biggar on Prequel Designs
STAR WARS INSIDER

On "The Way" To Theaters

The Mandalorian and Grogu Teases May Release





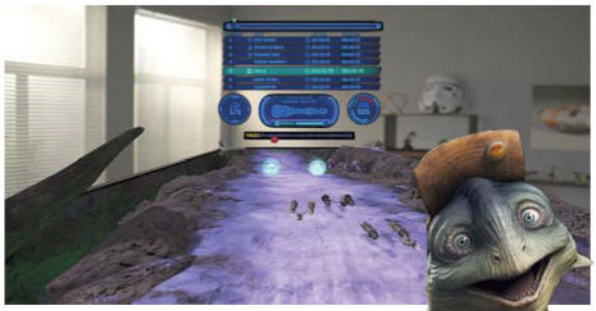


September saw the release of the thrilling teaser trailer for *Star Wars: The Mandalorian and Grogu*, filmed in IMAX and opening exclusively in theaters on May 22, 2026.

Among the surprises on display in the action-packed teaser were a new *Razor Crest* piloted by the eponymous heroes, an Amani (first seen in Jabba the Hutt's throne room in *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi*) looming in the darkness, and *Star Wars: Rebels*' Zeb Orrelios battling Imperial remnant stormtroopers. A synopsis for the movie was also released, revealing that: "The evil Empire has fallen, and Imperial warlords remain scattered throughout the galaxy. As the fledgling New Republic works to protect everything the Rebellion fought for, they have enlisted the help of legendary Mandalorian bounty hunter Din Djarin (Pedro Pascal) and Grogu."

Directed by Jon Favreau and starring Pedro Pascal as Din Djarin alongside screen legend Sigourney Weaver as Colonel Ward, the film sees the return of Academy Award-winning composer Ludwig Göransson (*Black Panther, Oppenheimer*). *The Mandalorian and Grogu* is produced by Favreau, Kathleen Kennedy, Dave Filoni, and Ian Bryce, and you can watch the teaser trailer at **StarWars.com** and on the official *Star Wars* YouTube channel.





Beyond Reality

Star Wars Mixed Reality Playset released

Imagine podracing through your own home, with your furniture taking the place of Beggar's Canyon. That's the kind of mixed reality gameplay you can expect from *Star Wars: Beyond Victory*, the latest slice of immersive entertainment to come from Industrial Light & Magic that combines virtual and mixed reality with a powerful narrative and a sparkling cast of characters.

Available exclusively on Meta Quest 3 and 3S, the Mixed Reality Playset offers three modes of play that allow you to interact with the story in unique ways. Adventure Mode features an all-new *Star Wars* storyline with a bold perspective on the saga; Arcade Mode transforms your personal space into a holotable arena where you can enjoy thrilling traditional gaming thrills; while Playset Mode opens up a sandbox galaxy of playability in which your creative imagination can be unleashed.

Star Wars: Beyond Victory - A Mixed Reality Playset is available now on **meta.com.**



Action On Set

Ahsoka moves into post-production as *Starfighter* takes flight

The second season of *Ahsoka* wrapped principal photography at the start of October, which means we are drawing ever closer to learning where the epic story will take us in Season Two. The series picks up not long after the end of the Season One, with Ahsoka, Sabine, Huyang, Shin, and Baylan stranded on Peridea, while Thrawn and Ezra have returned to the known galaxy.

The series stars Rosario Dawson (Ahsoka), Natasha Liu Bordizzo (Sabine Wren), Mary Elizabeth Winstead (Hera Syndulla), Rory McCann (below, replacing the late Ray Stevenson as Baylan Skoll), Ivanna Sakhno (Shin Hati), Eman Esfandi, (Ezra Bridger), Lars Mikkelsen (Thrawn), David Tennant (Huyang) and Hayden Christensen (Anakin Skywalker). Steve Blum reprises his role as Zeb Orrelios, also to be seen in *The Mandalorian and Grogu*.

Meanwhile, *Star Wars: Starfighter* filming is now well underway, and director Shawn Levy gave fans another sneak peek via Instagram at the movie's two leads, Ryan Gosling and Flynn Gray (above), shooting on location somewhere in the Mediterranean Sea. *Starfighter* is due to arrive in theaters in May 2027.



For the latest news on both productions, stay tuned to **StarWars.com.**

PRODUCTION DIARY

Star Wars movies and television programs from a galaxy far, far away....

NOW STREAMING

STAR WARS VISIONS ビジョンズ

Volume Three
Disney+

POST PRODUCTION

STAR WARS MAUL SHADOW LORD

Season One
Starring Sam Whitwer
Disney+

STAR WARS THE MANDALORIAN AND GROGU

Starring Pedro Pascal and Sigourney Weaver
Directed by Jon Favreau

STAR WARS AHSOKA

Season Two
Starring Rosario Dawson
Disney+

FILMING NOW

STAR WARS STARFIGHTER

Starring Ryan Gosling, Flynn Gray, and Amy Adams
Directed by Shawn Levy

An Epic Ewok

Defend the Forest Moon of Endor with the legendary Wicket W. Warrick

When the Empire established its presence on Endor's Forest Moon, it severely underestimated the heroic nature of Wicket W. Warrick and his fellow Ewoks.

Sculpted in polystone with a realistic fur texture and detailed brown and gray paint application, Sideshow Collectibles' Wicket Premium Format Figure enshrines Wicket in his triumphant glory as he poses atop a scout trooper's helmet. Gripping a spear and adorned in a brown fabric hood with black stitching, this figure evokes the thrill of the Rebel Alliance's victory at the Battle of Endor. Standing 18 inches tall, the Wicket Premium Format Figure retails for $290 on **Sideshow.com**.





THE LIGHT SIDE

By Jamie Cosley



Jabba the Hutt's Henchmen

Protect your palace with these spectacular sentries



Jabba the Hutt's illustrious entourage was filled with a host of intriguing characters, and that retinue included a trio of individuals named Barada, Nikto, and Klaatu.

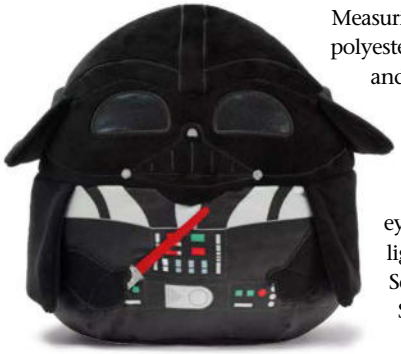
As part of its *Star Wars* Archive Collection, Regal Robot is giving fans the chance to display their love for Jabba's guardians with its Barada, Nikto, and Klaatu Scaled Mask Replicas. Developed from high-resolution 3D scans of the original prop masks used in *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi,* these replicas are cast in solid resin, color matched, and scaled to approximately 40 percent of the size of the original mask. Each numbered edition, priced at $229 per mask, is limited to 250 pieces and comes with a certificate of authenticity. Add the Barada, Nikto, and Klaatu Scaled Mask Replicas to your bounty on **RegalRobot.com**.



The Soft Side of the Force

Adopt the galaxy's most adorable Sith Lord

Darth Vader stood as one of history's most fearsome figures, fulfilling the Emperor's wishes and inflicting terror upon those who opposed him. However, the Darth Vader Squishmallows Plush—part of the *Star Wars* Squishmallows Plush Collection—shows off the softer side of the villain.



Measuring 12 inches in height, the polyester plush has detailed sculpting and embroidered features that highlight some of the most distinctive elements of Darth Vader's armor, such as a screened chest plate, glittery eyes, and an embroidered red lightsaber. The Darth Vader Squishmallows Plush is priced at $19.99 on **DisneyStore.com**.

THE STAR WARS DOT COLUMN

From the desk of StarWars.com Editor-in-Chief Kristin Baver



With Life Day behind us, we're closing out 2025 with other holidays in mind. I'm talking, of course, about our Earth-bound winter holidays as well as my personal favorite: New *Star Wars* Movie Day coming in just a few short months. *The Mandalorian and Grogu* will be here on May 22nd 2026, but first on StarWars.com...

Santa Yoda and Other Holiday Cards

I received my first Lucasfilm holiday card in 2016, a beautiful pop-up illustration by legendary artist Doug Chiang featuring R2-D2, BB-8, and newcomer K-2SO. But the tradition dates back to 1978 when Ralph McQuarrie first imagined Artoo and C-3PO out on a shopping trip. McQuarrie added his whimsical take on the holiday assignment—including two different pieces that reimagined Yoda as Santa Claus—many more times over the years, and the tradition is still going strong.



A Wreath fit for a Wookiee



Holiday décor meets your favorite fandom with a Wookiee-themed wreath. On StarWars.com you can learn how to DIY a fur-covered wreath, a fuzzy piece of seasonal swag that says "All are welcome, but remember it's not wise to upset a Wookiee." It's a craft that perfectly complements a floor-length red robe.

Is it 2026 Yet?

As we look ahead to the new year, I don't have to remind you that for the first time since 2019 it will be a year with a new *Star Wars* film in theaters. StarWars.com will be reporting on all the latest *The Mandalorian and Grogu* news in the lead up to the world premiere and beyond. Plus, you can catch up on our previous coverage of the Disney+ series *The Mandalorian*, and Din Djarin and Grogu's special appearance in *The Book of Boba Fett*, too!



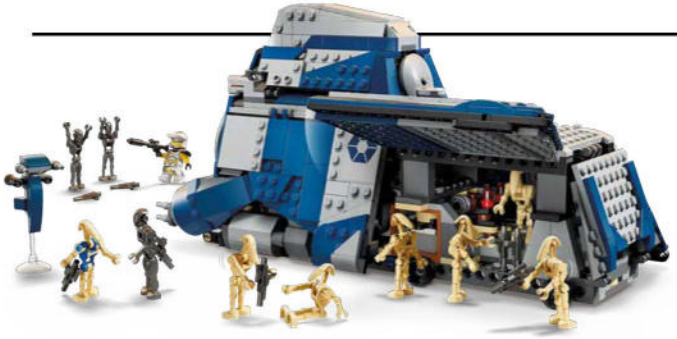
Rebuilding the Death Star

That's no moon… it's a LEGO® space station!



The technological terror known as the Death Star was a culmination of the Empire's might, designed to strike fear into every system that the Emperor sought to control. The new LEGO® *Star Wars* Death Star set turns this massive battle station into a most impressive master build, as the gargantuan creation measures over 27 1/2 inches in height and 31 inches wide, with a depth of over 10 1/2 inches.

Packed with iconic Death Star locales that range from Leia's prison block cell and the trash compactor to the hangar bay (complete with Imperial shuttle!) and Emperor Palpatine's throne room. Equipped with 36 LEGO *Star Wars* minifigures and two buildable droid figures, this immense set offers endless opportunities for your imagination and is perfect for display or play. The 9023-piece Death Star set can be acquired on **LEGO.com** for $999.99.



Battle of the Bricks

Recreate iconic Clone Wars engagements with LEGO® *Star Wars*



The conflict between the Republic and Separatists wrought unimaginable havoc upon the galaxy, as clone troopers and battle droids squared off in a struggle that ultimately resulted in the creation of the Galactic Empire. The brand-new LEGO® *Star Wars* 813-piece Republic Juggernaut set lets you command the Clone Wars action, complete with front and rear opening cockpits, an elevating observation post, a turret stud shooter, five LEGO *Star Wars* minifigures, and three buildable battle droids. You can also join the Separatists with the 976-piece Battle of Felucia Separatist MTT set, which features an operational droid deployment rack, two stud shooters, a STAP speeder, two LEGO *Star Wars* minifigures, and 10 droid figures. To purchase the 6 1/2-inch tall Republic Juggernaut ($159.99) or the 5 1/2-inch tall Battle of Felucia Separatist MTT ($159.99), set a course to **LEGO.com**.



It's Time for Tano

Get set for cooler weather with this Ahsoka-inspired ensemble

From her days as Anakin Skywalker's Padawan to her adventures on the path to Peridea, Ahsoka Tano's allegiance to justice left an indelible mark on the galaxy—as did her signature style!

Her Universe's Ahsoka Tano Color-Block Hoodie, designed by 2024 Her Universe Fashion Show Audience Winner, Candice Miller, embraces the former Jedi's distinctive look by incorporating Ahsoka's lekku pattern into its hood and embroidering her Fulcrum symbol onto its sleeves. Adorned with pockets, an O-ring zipper pull, and burgundy and gray color-blocking, this 52% cotton and 48% polyester blend zip-up hoodie will keep you cozy. Available exclusively on **HerUniverse.com**, the Ahsoka Tano Color-Block Hoodie retails for $64.90.



Buckets and Blades

Roleplay as your favorite characters with these Hasbro must-haves



Whether you wish to side with the Empire by donning a shoretrooper helmet or choose the Rebel Alliance by taking up a Jedi's Lightsaber, Hasbro has you covered with its adult and kids ranges of roleplay items!

Hasbro's The Black Series Shoretrooper Electronic Helmet (priced $109.99) features voice-changing technology, a sculpted interior, and an adjustable interior band that fits most head sizes. If you prefer a Padawan's path, the Power Crystal Lightsaber comes with 10 colored kyber crystals that allow you to cycle between 7 unique blade colors and over 50 combinations of glowing crystals. The extendable light-up blade comes with sound effects and the toy is compatible with the entire Lightsaber Forge line, offering a wide range of customization opportunities. Both are available now at **HasbroPulse.com**.



"More Machine Now Than Man."

Relive the epic duel on Jabiim from *Star Wars: Obi-Wan Kenobi*

Set on distracting Darth Vader following the Empire's attack on Jabiim, Obi-Wan Kenobi confronted his former apprentice in a daring duel which convinced the Jedi Master that Anakin Skywalker was no more. Hasbro's The Black Series Darth Vader (Duel's End) captures the Sith Lord in this profound and dramatic moment.



The action figure is perfect for dynamic posing or in-box displays, boasting exquisite features and details. The Darth Vader (Duel's End) action figure can be purchased on **HasbroPulse.com**, along with an array of other exciting vehicles and accessories.

A Hopeful Tote

Go rogue with this rebellious bag

The *Ghost*'s crew brought hope to a galaxy besieged by the Emperor's harsh rule, helping to spark the Rebel Alliance that eventually toppled the brutal authoritarian regime.

Her Universe's *Star Wars Rebels* Group Tote Bag sports a breathtaking print of Ezra Bridger and his allies on its front, as well as bungee cinch ties on the sides, a magnetic closure, and shoulder straps. The 100% cotton tote bag measures approximately 15 inches by 13 1/2 inches, supplying ample space to store your rebel gear… or perhaps just some meiloorun fruit for later. Head over to **HerUniverse.com**, where you can pick up your own *Star Wars Rebels* Group Tote Bag for $39.90.



Book Club

Galactic art and *The Acolyte* make their mark in the latest *Star Wars* releases



Designing a Galaxy

The Art of a Lucasfilm Legend

The visual language of *Star Wars* remains one of its most powerful elements, and Academy Award-winning artist and designer Doug Chiang—who now serves as Lucasfilm's senior vice president and executive design director—has played an integral role in shaping the saga since leaving his indelible mark on *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace.*

Now, his iconic career and art is catalogued in *Doug Chiang: The Cinematic Legacy* (Vol. I) and *The Star Wars Legacy* (Vol. II), a two-volume deluxe reference book written by Alexandre Poncet and Gilles Penso. The *Star Wars Legacy* volume of the set chronicles Chiang's breathtaking contributions to the galaxy far, far away, beginning with his early work on the Naboo N-1 Starfighter and the Boonta Eve Podracers before documenting the countless ships, droids, and creatures he devised for *Attack of the Clones, The Force Awakens, The Mandalorian,* and beyond.

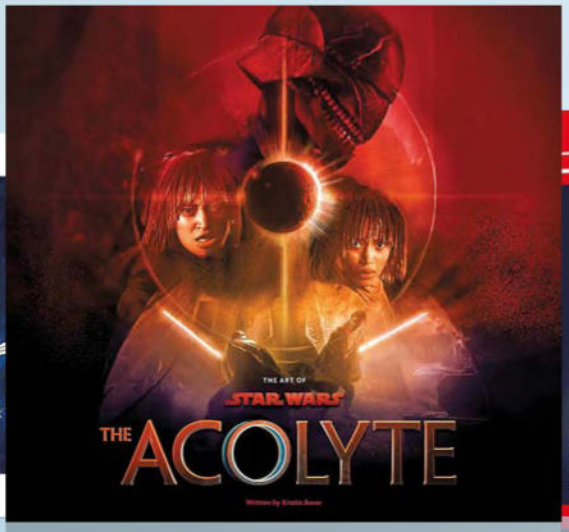
The Cinematic Legacy focuses on Chiang's pre-Lucasfilm work, touching on his student films and commercial work, as well as his time at Industrial Light & Magic which found him creating even more designs that became pop culture staples for *Back to the Future Part II, Alien 3, Terminator 2: Judgment Day, Death Becomes Her, Spawn, The Mask, Jumanji,* and many more. Chiang's visual effects work from his time at ImageMovers Digital—during which he received credits on *The Polar Express, Beowulf,* and *War of the Worlds*—and his devotion to his personal passion project, *Robota*, are also covered in the companion volume.

From collaborating with George Lucas on *Star Wars* to pairing with celebrated directors Steven Spielberg, Robert Zemeckis, James Cameron, and Lana and Lilly Wachowskis, Chiang's five-decade career is perfectly captured in *Doug Chiang: The Cinematic Legacy,* an 800-page deluxe slipcase boxset from publisher Abrams Books, on sale December 2.

01



02



03



01

Star Wars: The Official Funko Pop! Coloring Book

Combine your creative flair with your love for the fan-favorite *Star Wars* Funko POP! toys to explore the galaxy far, far away in an all-new way, with the first officially licensed *Star Wars* Funko POP! coloring book!

This fun-filled instalment from publisher Insight Editions, on sale December 23, allows you to color your way through the original trilogy in a book bursting with illustrations of Luke Skywalker, Leia Organa, Darth Vader, the *Millennium Falcon*, Tatooine, and much more. Made for fans of all ages, this interactive coloring book is the ideal companion for a *Star Wars* marathon on family movie night.

02

The Art of Star Wars: The Acolyte

Arriving January 13, 2026 from Abrams Books, *The Art of Star Wars: The Acolyte* is the official behind-the-scenes companion to the thrilling Disney+ series.

Penned by acclaimed *Star Wars* author Kristin Baver, the book explores the drama's High Republic setting through production art, character and vehicle designs, planet concepts, storyboards, and an assortment of other work created during production. Interviews with key creatives from the live-action series reveal how the stage was set for Jedi Master Sol's investigation into a vergence in the Force.

03

Star Wars: Ahsoka: Rebel Jedi

Your Young ones will love learning all about Ahsoka Tano and her intrepid allies—and evil foes—in this upcoming entry to the DK Super Readers book series that both entertains and educates!

This Level 3 non-fiction reader is brimming with fun facts, brilliant color images, simple vocabulary, and a challenging quiz that tests age-appropriate literary analysis. While reading about Ahsoka's daring adventures and her role in the Clone Wars, this book will channel every young fan's love for *Star Wars* into a confidence-building learning experience. DK's *Ahsoka: Rebel Jedi* by author Matt Jones goes on sale January 6, 2026.

Comics Roundup

Clone Wars capers and Darth Vader's legacy entertain in the latest *Star Wars* comics

The Batch are Back in Action!

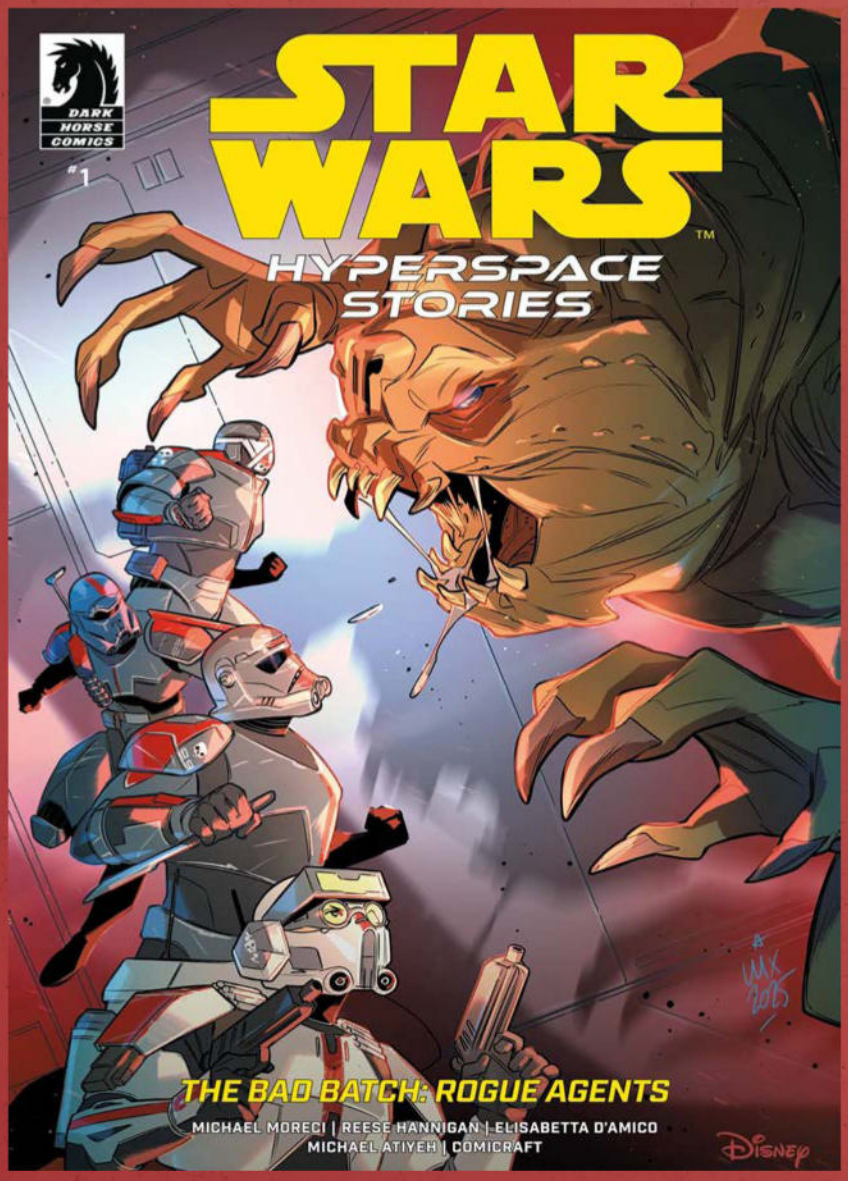
Dark Horse Comics' new Clone Wars-era miniseries

In the first issue of this comic book miniseries adventure, Clone Force 99—also known as the Bad Batch—are still serving the Republic during the Clone Wars, the conflict in which they aimed to foil the Separatists and their legions of battle droids, long before the rise of the Galactic Empire.

Written by Michael Moreci and illustrated by Reese Hannigan, Elisabetta D'Amico, and Michael Atiyeh (the creative team behind *The Bad Batch—Ghost Agents*), *Hyperspace Stories: The Bad Batch—Rogue Agents* #1 follows the clones as they seek out a Separatist scientist who has developed a dangerous invention. There's only one problem, and it's a major hurdle to contend with—both the scientist and his invention have gone missing!

Clone Force 99 picks up his trail, paying a visit to the scientist's abandoned laboratory only to discover that they are not the only party in pursuit of the elusive Separatist operative and his devastating device. Can Hunter, Wrecker, Crosshair, and Tech reach the scientist first and prevent his invention from falling into the wrong hands? If one thing's for certain, any mission involving the Bad Batch is likely to cause chaos, as the unorthodox clones blaze their own path to achieve their goal of protecting the Republic.

Whether you're a fan of *The Clone Wars*, *The Bad Batch*, or *Star Wars* stories in general, this instalment kicks off an exciting new miniseries that will inspire your imagination and provide fresh insight into the histories of the beloved clones that make up Clone Force 99. *Hyperspace Stories: The Bad Batch—Rogue Agents* #1 is on sale December 17.







Star Wars: Legacy of Vader #11

Mayhem on Mustafar! Issue #11 of Marvel's ongoing *Legacy of Vader* series finds Kylo Ren struggling for his survival in the deadly depths of Vader's Castle. As Vaneé's maniacal machinations come together, Kylo Ren must don his grandfather's helmet and endure the ultimate test. Will Darth Vader's grandson persevere through these trials and escape the lava-filled world of Mustafar?

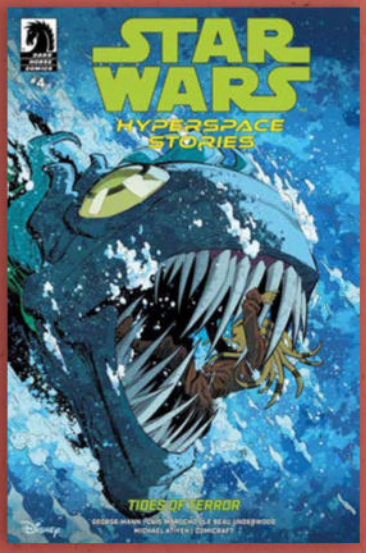
Written by Charles Soule with art by Luke Ross, this issue is brimming with exhilaration and intrigue. Featuring multiple variant covers, *Legacy of Vader* #11 is available from Marvel Comics on December 3.



Hyperspace Stories: Tides of Terror #4 (of 4)

Distress in the deep sea! In the *Hyperspace Stories: Tides of Terror* series finale, a startling discovery about the cause of the disaster sends Jedi Master Kit Fisto to the sea floor on a desperate mission to rescue those trapped on the sinking Axil Research Station. Facing off with the formidable xorfin, Fisto must maintain his resolve to have any hope of saving the remaining researchers.

Written by George Mann with illustrations by Luis Morocho, Le Beau Underwood, and Michael Atiyeh, this fear-inducing finale makes waves and takes you to new depths. Dark Horse Comics' *Hyperspace Stories: Tides of Terror* #4 is on sale January 7, 2026.



Boba Fett: Black, White & Red #4 (of 4)

Marvel Comics' four-part miniseries concludes with a thrilling standalone story, as Boba Fett hunts for a ruthless murderer of a member of the Tarkin family! Events are about to become chaotic when the arrival of violent bounty hunter Raslin Grace threatens to halt Fett's hunt dead in its tracks. Written by Alyssa Wong with evocative three-color art by Sara Pichelli, issue #4 features cover art by Ken Lashley. Variant covers by Klaus Janson and Luke Ross will also be available when the book arrives in stores on December 31.



Incoming

Don't Miss These Upcoming Releases

DECEMBER

***Han Solo: Hunt for the Falcon* #4**
Marvel Comics
Writer: Rodney Barnes
Artist & Cover Artist: Ramon Rosanas

***Jedi Knights* #10**
Marvel Comics
Writer: Marc Guggenheim
Artist & Cover Artist: Madibek Musabekov

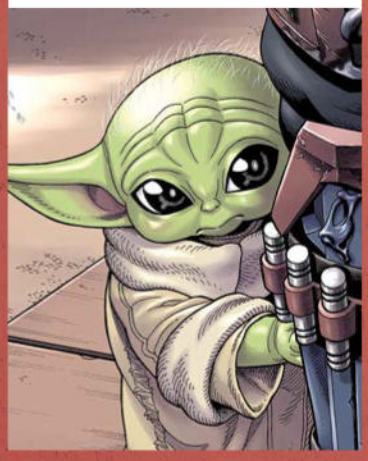
***Star Wars* #8**
Marvel Comics
Writer: Alex Segura
Artist: Pete Woods
Cover Artist: Phil Noto

JANUARY

***Hyperspace Stories: The Bad Batch—Rogue Agents* #2**
Dark Horse Comics
Writer: Michael Moreci
Artists: Reese Hannigan
Cover Artist: Valeria Favoccia

***Han Solo: Hunt for the Falcon* #4**
Marvel Comics
Writer: Rodney Barnes
Artist & Cover Artist: Ramon Rosanas

***The Mandalorian: The Manga* Vol.3**
Viz Media
Adapted by: Yusuke Osawa
Artist & Cover Artist: Yusuke Osawa



GARBAGE WON'T DO

Industrial Light & Magic's Roger Guyett, Dan Lobl, and Todd Vaziri recall the making of the *Millennium Falcon*'s thrilling Jakku escape sequence for *Star Wars: The Force Awakens.*

WORDS: LUCAS O. SEASTROM



In late November of 2014, audiences were reintroduced to the *Star Wars* galaxy with the teaser trailer of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens,* now celebrating its 10th anniversary. Many fans will recall the cryptic, bite-sized shots that comprised the trailer: a stormtrooper (sans helmet) rising up in front of a barren landscape, a young woman taking off on a speeder, X-wings in flight mere feet above a lake, and a hooded figure with a distinctive red lightsaber.

The trailer's conclusion, however, felt entirely familiar: with a blast of the classic *Star Wars* fanfare score, the *Millennium Falcon* soared into a blue sky, rolled over backwards, and raced across a desert as a pair of TIE fighters blasted laser bolts from the opposite direction. *Star Wars* was back, and its most iconic starship was up to its old, action-packed tricks.

For the visual effects team at Industrial Light & Magic (ILM), completing that iconic shot for the trailer was like "jumping right into the deep end and doing the hardest stuff first," as CG supervisor Dan Lobl explains. Shot "fc0193," as it was known ("fc" standing for "*Falcon*

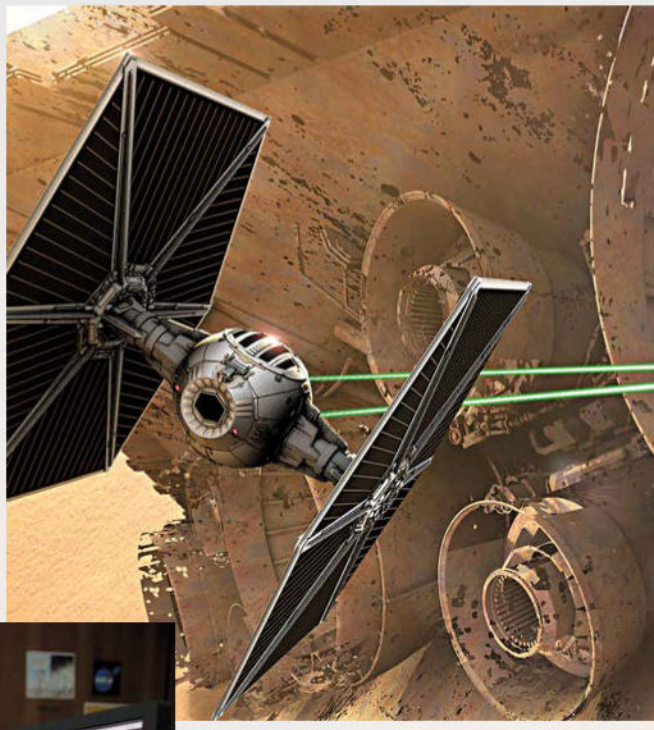


01 Concept art by Doug Chiang.

chase"), went into production weeks if not months in advance of the remainder of the sequence, when Rey (Daisy Ridley) and Finn (John Boyega) escape the planet Jakku aboard a ship endearingly described as "garbage," and are pursued by TIE fighters across the desert and *inside* the wreck of an Imperial Star Destroyer.

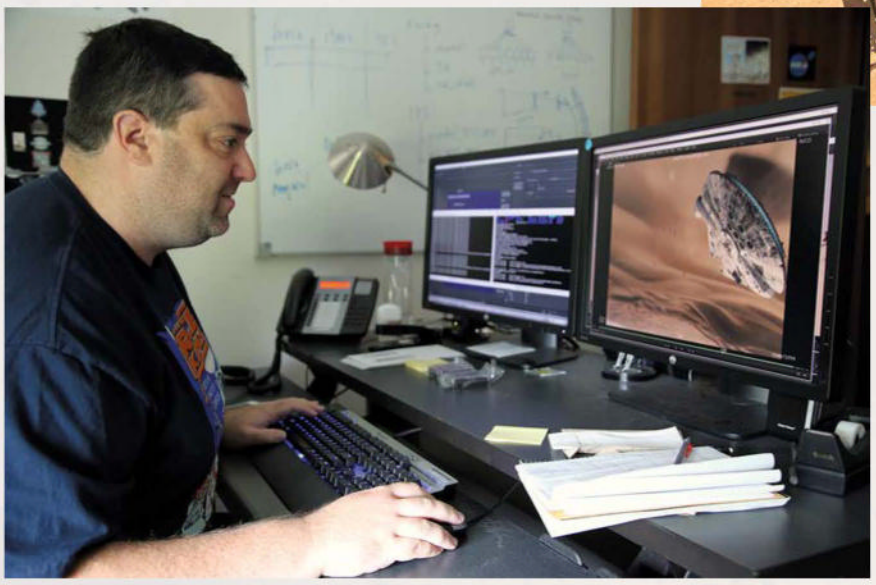
"The expectation of the audience was enormous," recalls production visual effects supervisor Roger Guyett. "We're fans ourselves. We wanted to deliver something that was fun and exciting for the teaser. My biggest concern was determining how much of the desert we would see, because we didn't have much of the environment built at that time. The choreography needed to be dynamic enough but also not overly rushed. When you present a shot on its own as opposed to in a sequence, it plays very differently."

03



02 Dan Lobl at work on the *Millennium Falcon* chase sequence.

03 Concept art by Doug Chiang.



02

Capturing Sunlight

Before *The Force Awakens,* Guyett had partnered with Abrams on films like *Mission Impossible III* (2006) and *Star Trek* (2009), including as second unit director in addition to his work as effects supervisor. In the same dual roles on the new *Star Wars* entry, Guyett was present on the live-action set, including the Jakku location shoot in the desert outside of Abu Dhabi, capital of the United Arab Emirates.

Special effects supervisor Chris Courbold's team was responsible for rigging explosives for the chase's preceding sequence, when Rey and Finn attempt to evade the First Order TIE fighters on the ground. Guyett worked with Courbold to ensure the pyrotechnics had a touch of flare, rigging each explosion with an initial flash effect that simulated the impact of a TIE's green laser bolts.

Once airborne in the *Falcon*, coverage of Rey inside the cockpit was shot on a gimbal platform on the exterior backlot at Pinewood Studios in the United Kingdom. Guyett insisted the production use natural light as opposed to capturing the scene artificially on a soundstage. "Lighting is something that you carry through the whole film," he explains. "I felt strongly that we should try to shoot everything in the right

Guyett is keen to add that the shot was indelibly the product of director J.J. Abrams' imagination. "That shot was what *he* wanted to see as a fan. That was a driving force across the movie, what he wanted to see if he was sitting in the audience. You could come up with a million metaphors about the *Falcon* shooting up into the sky. There's tremendous aspiration. We see key elements of *Star Wars* in that shot."

Abrams himself would comment in an audio commentary for *The Force Awakens* that "this chase is kind of a *Star Wars* wish fulfillment for these characters and for the audience, that you get to fly in, or in their case, you get to *fly* and pilot and fire from, not just one of the great ships from *Star Wars*, but from one of the great ships from movie history."



light with the real intensity of the sun."

Lead artist Todd Vaziri, who worked as a visual effects compositor on the sequence, adds that "as humans we know the difference between an actor pretending to react to a ship's movement on a stationary set and an actual set that's on a moving gimbal. That goes for the lighting as well." Such consistency proved essential for such a frenetic sequence of rapid cuts between live-action and visual effects.

"We start the sequence in daylight and we cut to a lot of cockpit shots. Sometimes they're blasted by sunlight and sometimes they're in shadow," Vaziri continues. "Maintaining a realistic exposure balance between shadow and broad daylight while ensuring you can still see all of the detail is the key. In photography, if certain surfaces are blasted by sunlight, it's hard to maintain detail in those super-hot areas ▶

04 The *Millennium Falcon* dives towards the wreckage of a Super Star Destroyer's engine.

05 Concept art by Doug Chiang.

"The expectation of the audience was enormous."

Roger Guyett, Production Visual Effects Supervisor

04



05



06



"With its energy, excitement, and controlled chaos, the sequence always felt like a car chase." Todd Vaziri, Lead artist



TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK

As the lead protagonists of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens,* Rey and Finn were the focal point that carried the audience through the new *Star Wars* adventure. For Guyett, their early interaction in the *Falcon* chase was not only a prime example of *Star Wars* action and excitement, but a crucial storytelling moment as well. "There's a wonderful innocence between those two characters," he says. "They've really only just met and come together, but it feels very '*Star Wars*-y' in the way they work as a team. And with BB-8 doing his sort of R2-D2 thing, there's great humor in it."

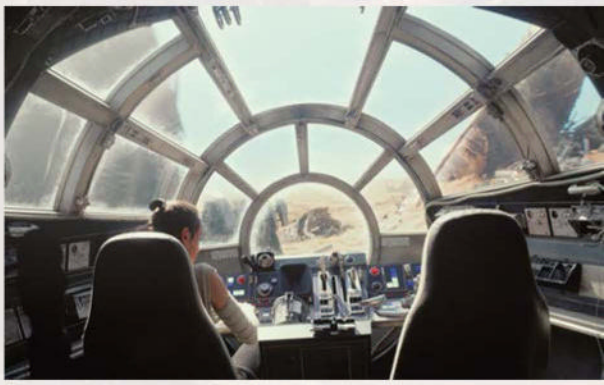
and see into the shadows at the same time. For the all-CG shots, we had to keep that realistic exposure balance while still telling the story."

When pick-up shots with Daisy Ridley were required during post-production, Guyett even arranged to have the *Falcon*'s cockpit mocked up as a "weird, green screen structure," as he puts it, on the roof of Abrams' own Bad Robot offices in Los Angeles, once again to capture that all-important natural light.

Not a Piece of Junk

The Force Awakens was an unusual visual effects project in that many of its digital assets were crafted for continued use over multiple films, not least of which was the *Falcon* itself. As Lobl explains, "making a movie involves a lot of smoke and mirrors. You build certain things based on the need for the camera to see them in a given shot. But if you have many years' worth of upcoming work, you plan and build things with more lasting effect, more integrity, and depth than you would do otherwise."

A critical step in building the revived *Falcon* was capturing the original five-foot miniature from the classic trilogy in high resolution at remarkably precise detail. This raw data would serve any future need in a given shot. "We didn't know what we might see in close-up at some future point, for example," says Lobl. Collaborating with CG supervisor Polly Ing, Lobl and team were chiefly responsible for determining the look of the CG elements in the chase sequence.



07

"It's about finding the surfacing characteristics of the different parts of the ships," Lobl says. "We work very closely with the modelers and the painters. The modelers will create a metal vent, the painters will give it color and texture, and then I'll dial it in so that it has the right level of reflectiveness. We work together as a team to achieve all of those little characteristics to make it appear like real-world material."

During one visit to ILM's San Francisco headquarters, J.J. Abrams and his son stopped by Lobl's office. "I asked, 'Do you want to see the *Falcon*?' He immediately said, 'Yes!' and he came around to look. J.J. went straight into filmmaker mode and he gave some notes about little adjustments to make. Working with him was always like that. He constantly asks how we can make things better." Abrams himself would later note that "every time I see these [completed] shots, I'm reminded of the very early untextured, rough renders of all of these visual effects shots, and it just makes me grateful to each of the artists who made them come to life and look so photoreal."

08



Mapping Coordinates

The Jakku chase sequence is emblematic of George Lucas' original brief to ILM for *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977). 50 years ago in 1975, the filmmaker sat down with visual effects supervisor John Dykstra, explaining his vision for dynamic visuals of dogfights between spaceships, shots that felt handheld, as if they came right out of a World War II documentary. ILM's original crew accomplished as much in 1977, albeit under the era's technological limitations.

"By the time we came to this film, new technology allowed us to create shots that otherwise would not have been possible," notes Guyett. "We were traveling at great speeds and covering a lot of ground. We could simulate dust and debris effects, or the blowing tarp off the ship, all kinds of remarkable CG work. For the environments, we weren't just operating from a live-action reference plate, which we did shoot, but if you want to build a really dynamic sequence, you need the fully-CG environments. In earlier days, you were often limited to the plate. We had so much new confidence in how we could recreate the desert and design the best shots."

Lobl elaborates, explaining how the digimatte team, led by environment supervisors Carlos Munoz, Susumu Yukuhiro, and Dave Folger, built a huge desert landscape, some 25 or 30 miles in length, and packed with sandy terrain and a graveyard of crashed and decaying Imperial starships. "We could load a huge amount of assets into a scene," says Lobl. "You could zoom out and see the layout of this chase and the path that the *Falcon* and TIE fighters take. You could actually location scout within this digital region."

Guyett worked closely with animation supervisor Paul Kavanagh to define the movement characteristics and various maneuvers of the respective starships, as well as the precise motions of the camera in each shot. "With its energy, excitement, and controlled chaos, the sequence always felt like a car chase," adds Vaziri, who composited one especially bold shot: a backwards view towards the *Falcon* and a pursuing TIE as they weave between the massive wreckage. An especially long 1500mm lens was utilized, creating a striking sense of condensed space over a large distance while the camera rocks about, trying to keep the ships in frame.

"All of this was captured by what I interpreted as another spaceship that is hovering along," notes Vaziri. "It's kind of like if you're watching a car chase that's photographed by another car in front. It's moving just as fast and trying to avoid the same obstacles." Because of the focal length, the shot realistically had a very shallow depth of ▶

06 Finn (John Boyega) targets a pursuing TIE fighter thanks to Rey's piloting skills.

07 Rey (Daisy Ridley) at the controls of the *Millennium Falcon*.

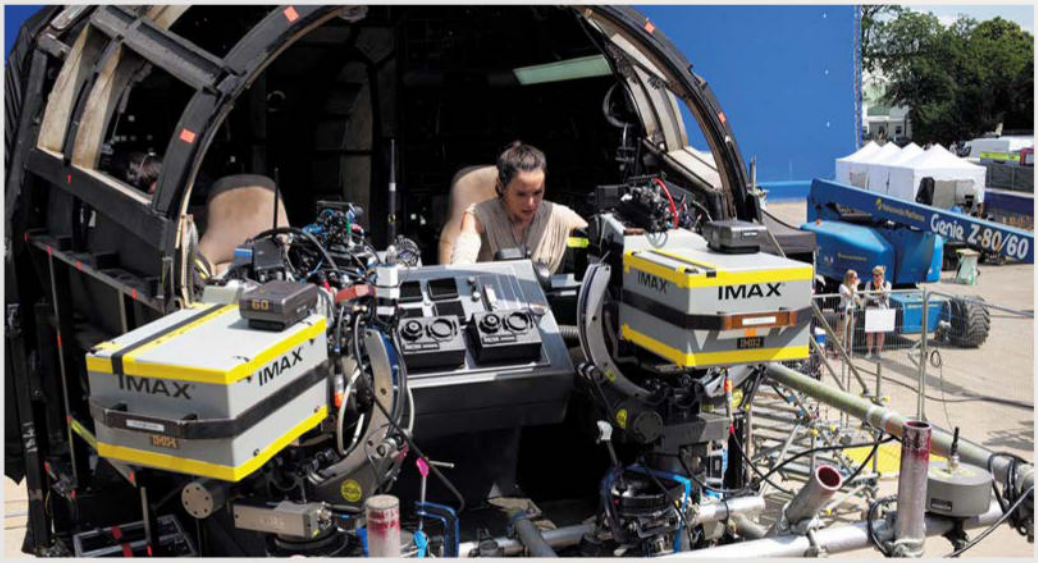
08 Animators finessed each TIE fighter blaster bolt to evoke classic poster art from the original trilogy.

09 The chase through Jakku's starship graveyard.

09



10



10 Daisy Ridley as Rey in the *Millennium Falcon* cockpit set during shooting of live action footage for the chase sequence.

> "There was a feeling of reverence amongst all of us who worked on the film." Dan Lobl, CG Supervisor

field, making it "impossible" to capture both ships in focus. But with ILM's toolset, Vaziri was able to keep both the *Falcon* and TIE sharp in specific frames, helping the audience to maintain a clear understanding of the action. He even placed a small figure of Rey inside the *Falcon* cockpit in those select moments.

Attention to detail didn't stop there. While adding atmospheric effects like heat ripple, dust, and blowing debris, Vaziri and his fellow compositors also made a point to finesse the TIE's green blaster bolts (initially created by the animation team) to evoke the iconic positioning first seen in classic *Star Wars* posters and promotional graphics. "We wanted fans to be able to pause on any frame and have it feel like those posters," he says.

11 A First Order TIE fighter fires on the *Millennium Falcon*.



11

Throughout their work on the sequence, artists like Vaziri and Lobl studied films like *Lethal Weapon* (1987) for its real-world desert cinematography, while films like *Bullitt* (1968) and *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981) provided useful chase references.

The *Star Wars* Legacy

"There was a feeling of reverence amongst all of us who worked on the film," says Dan Lobl. "Most of us in the group that came together to rebuild the *Falcon* had been kids when the original trilogy was released, and we'd all read as much as we could about all of the work involved in designing and constructing the ship. The reverence went as far as our modelers working to track down the original model kits to find which individual piece went onto the *Falcon* miniature. At times, we went deeper, adding new kinds of detail. The ship already had so much history that we had this rich context from which we could imagine new things."

Vaziri too, found a connection to childhood dreams, as the sequence allowed him to work alongside digital artist Paul Huston, who'd started at ILM as a modelmaker on *A New Hope*. Reading a magazine about the making of *Star Wars: Return of Jedi* (1983) back in the early 1980s, young Vaziri discovered a photo of Huston animating an AT-ST and was astonished to realize that visual effects artistry could form someone's career. "It was an incredible privilege to work with Paul on *Star Wars* years later," Vaziri says. "That's one of the things about ILM. People work here for decades, and they share their knowledge and passion with the next generation."

"As a sequence, the chase is one of my favorite pieces of work that I was involved with," Guyett concludes. "We had a lot of fun making it. I'm immensely proud of our work. It brings back a lot of happy memories."



3 Signed Copies to Give Away!

Every Generation Has a Story

Win Titan's *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* 10th Anniversary Special Edition!

Fans embraced *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* when the movie opened in theaters around the globe in December 2015, flocking to their local multiplexes to delight in the adventures of heroes old and new.

As always, *Star Wars Insider* was on hand to cover every aspect of the new episode, from the creation of BB-8 to interviews with the cast and crew. To commemorate ten years since the movie's release, Titan Comics have crafted *Star Wars: The Force Awakens: The 10th Anniversary Special Edition*, exploring how the much-loved space fantasy returned to cinema screens with the first episode of a new trilogy that would bring the Skywalker Saga to an epic conclusion.

The deluxe special edition documents the behind-the-scenes story of *The Force Awakens*, with unique access to stars including Daisy Ridley, John Boyega, Oscar Isaac, Adam Driver, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher, director J.J. Abrams, and more. Packed with incredible production photos and original concept art, it's a not-to-be-missed look back at the making of the movie.

To be in with a chance of winning a copy, just send us the correct answer to the following *Star Wars* trivia question:

Which star system did the First Order destroy with the Starkiller superweapon?
A. The Lando system
B. The Hosnian system
C. The Hoth system

Send your answer via email to **insidercomp@titanemail.com** or our usual postal address (see 'Contact Us' on page 3), marked "TFA SPECIAL" by February 28, 2026. Terms and conditions are available at titanmagazines.com

May the Force be with you!

www.titan-comics.com

© and TM 2025 Lucasfilm Ltd. All Rights Reserved.

ROBERT EMMS INSIDE MAN

As an Imperial Security Bureau supervisor, double agent Lonni Jung lived life on knife's edge as he passed secrets to rebellious mastermind Luthen Rael. Actor Robert Emms discusses his pivotal role in the hit Disney+ series, *Andor*.

WORDS: MARK NEWBOLD

Robert Emms has carved out a busy career in film, theater, and television, from the lead role in the West End production of *War Horse* to playing David Lyons in Steven Spielberg's 2011 cinematic adaptation. Appearances in *Kick Ass 2* (2013) and the role of the unfortunate Jack—eaten by the Mosasaurus in the opening minutes of *Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom* (2018)—raised his profile. The 2019 miniseries *Chernobyl* saw Emms play the role of Soviet nuclear engineer Leonid Toptunov, working with fellow *Andor* alumni Stellan Skarsgård (Luthen Rael) and executive producer Sanne Wohlenberg. *Insider* asked the actor how the opportunity to join the cast of the Disney+ series came his way?

"I got a call from my agent to read for an untitled Disney project that they knew was a spin-off from *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*," explains Emms. "I went in and met Tony Gilroy and the casting director, Nina Gold, and did some dummy scenes. I didn't know who the character was other than he was an Imperial Security Bureau (ISB) agent with a twist. I didn't hear anything for a long time, and a while later I was at an awards dinner sat next to Sanne Wohlenberg (Executive Producer of both seasons of *Andor*). She mentioned that I was in the mix for something, but they weren't sure what was happening because of this COVID thing that was going around. Three days later we were all locked down, and I thought OK, so that's that."

It seemed that the opportunity had passed, but the Force works in mysterious ways and months after that initial approach, the project came back into view when production on season one of *Andor* started up again. "I got a call from Tony Gilroy, and he said they'd



01 Robert Emms as ISB supervisor Lonni Jung.

"OFTEN THE GENIUS OF THE WRITING IN ANDOR WASN'T WHAT YOU SAW. BUT WHAT YOU DIDN'T SEE."



02



03

love me to do it. Tony described Lonni's journey to me and said I could have a think about it."

It may seem incredible that any actor might hesitate to take a role in a *Star Wars* project, especially one led by the two-time Academy Award nominated writer and director Gilroy, but Emms wanted to be sure the role of ISB Supervisor Jung was the right fit for him.

"I really wanted to be in *Star Wars,* especially this one, because *Rogue One* was my favorite of the recent films, but I was feeling a bit confused," Emms continues. "As soon as you say yes, that's your chance. You're never going to be in it as a different character, so it had to be something that was juicy and interesting enough for me to bring into my life. It's always really important for me that there's something special in a role. When I played the scenes out, especially with Stellan, it felt like the right thing."



04

02 Emms as Lonni Jung during filming of *Andor* Season 1.

03 Jung was revealed as a rebel spy in Season 1, Episode 10, "One Way Out."

04 Deep in the underlevels of Coruscant, Jung meets with Luthen Rael (Stellan Skarsgård).

Hidden Meaning

An element of *Andor* that Emms admires was how it succeeded in conveying information not shown onscreen, a facet of the writing process that the actor appreciated.

"Often the genius of the writing in *Andor* wasn't what you saw, but what you didn't see that got the gears turning. The fact something was being said, or wasn't being said, where there's some kind of implicit thing between characters, that can be more effective to an audience," Emms elaborates. "There are great scenes in great films where you don't see an important event happening. You



05

by Lonni. Me and Jacob (Jacob James Beswick, who played Heert) thought there was some kind of flirty thing there, which enabled Lonni to use Heert. It was very subtle; most people probably wouldn't even pick up on it. It was an interesting challenge. Some of the language of the ISB officers is heightened because it's of its own style, it's not completely naturalistic, so that was interesting to play."

The Life of Spies

A scene that has earned a place in *Star Wars* folklore was the nail-bitingly tense encounter at Davo Sculdun's party on Coruscant, where Kleya Marki (Elizabeth Dulau) physically maneuvered

"I THINK HEERT WAS A LITTLE BIT SPELLBOUND BY LONNI."

hear it, or you have an inkling about it, and sometimes that's far more effective than showing it. Shakespeare had messengers that came on stage and described what has happened in a battle or with this person or that person. It's often more effective than watching it happen, it's more effective to hear someone talk about it, because it sparks your imagination and you create those pictures and themes in your head. I think that takes it to another level. I love how Tony and Dan Gilroy, Beau Willimon, and Tom Bissell did that as writers."

Season 2 of *Andor* saw the character of Supervisor Lonni Jung become an even more integral part of the story as events counted down to the battles of Scarif and Yavin. There was room to focus on the interpersonal relationships Jung cultivated in order to leak

05 Supervisor Avril Heert (Jacob James Beswick, left) unwittingly trusted his ISB colleague.

06 Supervisor Lonni Jung had been secretly working as a double agent for Luthen Rael for years.



06

information to Luthen Rael. This included Supervisor Heert, Dedra Meero's former aide in the first season who had been promoted within the ranks of the ISB. How does Emms see the balance of relationships within this elite Imperial organization?

"Heert was playing Dedra, but Lonni was manipulating Heert by giving him the information he needed," Emms explains. "I think Heert was a little bit spellbound

Supervisor Jung to shield her from the view of Director Krennic (Ben Mendelsohn) as she struggled to remove a listening device from Sculdun's art collection. Emms remembers the scene well, and the real-world challenges of filming it.

"That scene was amazing. Elizabeth was fantastic. It was also the first time Lonni saw Luthen Rael in his other persona, so he was like, 'Hang on a minute, what the hell are you wearing?' I'd had ▶

COVID two weeks before we shot that scene. We'd done a rehearsal, and Ben Mendelsohn had flown into town to do it, so we were all there. But then I felt very ill and by the time we came to shoot it, they had to push it back two weeks. We eventually got there, and it was really good."

Little is known of Lonni Jung's life outside of his role in the ISB and his undercover work for the rebellion. What we did learn was that he was married with a daughter. Would the actor have enjoyed investigating that side of Jung's complex world of intrigue and duplicity?

"If the show had gone on for five years as it was originally conceived, then maybe they would have explored more of that relationship. I would have loved to have explored more of Lonni Jung's life for sure," answers Emms. Given that the series opted to alter course and cover the events of the rebellion's rise in two rather than five seasons, Emms had few concerns that, as a result, the story would be truncated or rushed.

"I was initially worried that because they were moving everything along so quickly, it might feel very sequential and episodic, but weirdly it was the opposite. The way they structured the show with the three-episodes-per-year arc made them feel more like films," suggests Emms. He also admired another facet of the plot. "I love the element of extremism. There are extremists within those rebel cells, and then you have the Empire which is extreme in its own way. I enjoyed those parts; I thought that was very real."

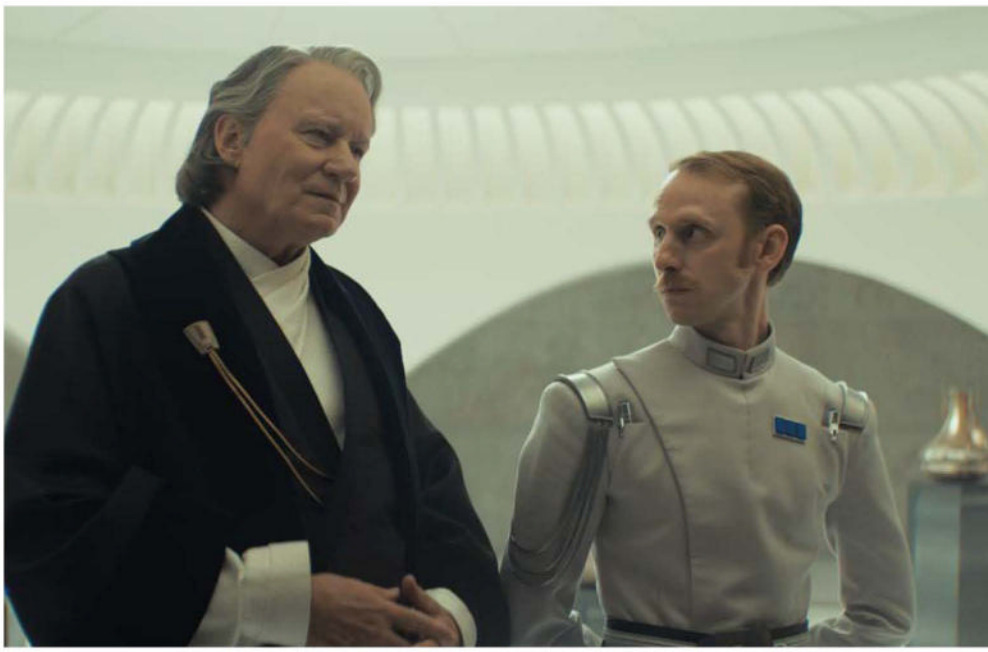
The contraction to two seasons brought the story of Cassian Andor and the growing rebellion to a satisfying conclusion, much to Emm's delight. "I think it's better when you finish on a high," he says. "Could it get better? It might, but it might also fade off a bit. What happened was they came up with this amazing second season and smashed it. It was a great place to end the story, so I don't think you missed those other seasons."

07 Jung was surprised to encounter Luthen Rael at Davo Sculden's party on Coruscant.

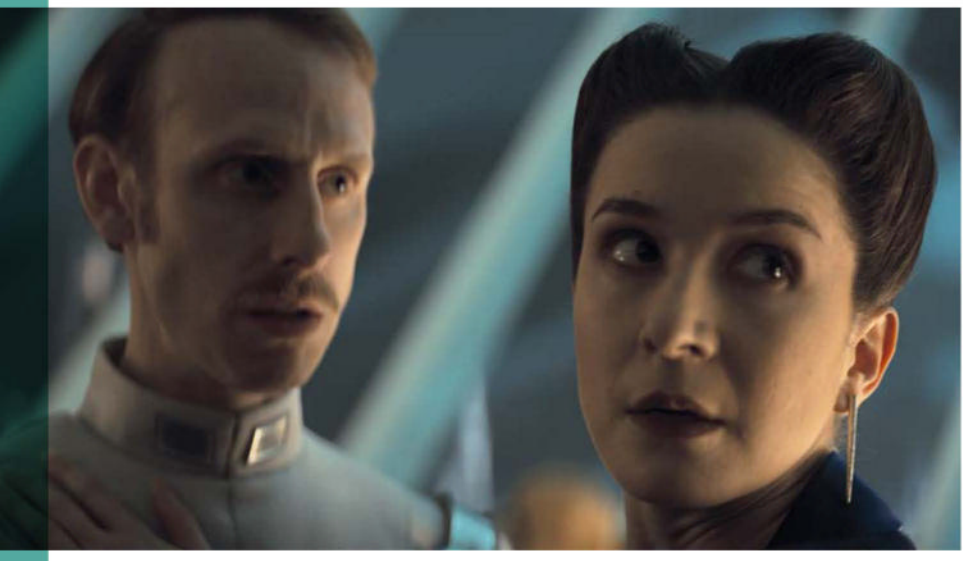
08 Kleya Marki (Elizabeth Dulau, left) used Jung as cover while she retrieved a listening device from Sculden's gallery.

One Way Out

As the second season of *Andor* forged on, it became apparent that Supervisor Jung had been sitting on key information for a number of months, something that frustrated Luthen Rael. As an actor, Emms was keen to put across other emotions.



07



08

"In Episode 4, 'Ever Been To Ghorman?' I wanted to convey the feeling of Lonni being afraid and desperate, but that there was also part of him that enjoyed this relationship with Rael, because it was his only connection to the outside world. He'd been holding information about Dedra Meero secretly running Ghorman for three months," says Emms. "I also found there was part of him that was quite lonely. All the other rebels were members of groups, but he was out there on his own. He couldn't write these secrets down because there'd be a paper trail, so three months was a long time to keep all that



09

"HIS DEATH FELT TRUTHFUL TO THE STORY AND TO HIS FATE."

information in his head. It's what Lonni lived for, to give Luthen this information. It was like the cup started to overflow, so telling Luthen everything was a relief." As the season continued, ever more secrets began to spill out. "Ultimately it all fed into the same manipulation, the same information that he was getting about Krennic and the Death Star."

Lonni Jung met his fate at the hands of Luthen Rael on a Coruscant plaza bench in the tenth episode, 'Make It Stop.' Just as Rael burned his own life to make a sunrise that he knew he'd never see, Jung also paid the ultimate price, denied a future with his wife and child after risking everything as a double agent at the heart of the Empire for half a decade. Having played Lonni for the duration of the show, how did Emms feel about his character's demise?

"Initially I thought 'Oh damn, there goes the spin-off'," laughs Emms. "I would have liked to see Lonni survive and thrive in his own life, but his death felt truthful to the story and to his fate. You could feel that's what was happening to him; he was stuck and running out of oxygen. He felt trapped at the end of the first season and had pressure from his home life. By the second season he'd gained momentum by gathering as much information as possible to strategically place himself in a position where he could bargain with Luthen and get out.

"Deep down he knew he was between a rock and a hard place. As much as he felt like he had this trump card, there was only one way out for him. He believed in the cause, he believed in what he's doing, so he couldn't have not passed that information on to Luthen. For him it was a leap in the dark, just to see what would happen, and unfortunately for him the worst happened."

09 Lonni Jung met his end at the hands of Luthen Rael after sharing intel on the Empire's new superweapon.

That the information given to Rael by Lonni Jung sat at the very heart of the events that followed in *Rogue One* and culminated in *Star Wars: A New Hope* is not lost on Emms.

"It's amazing to think that if that information hadn't been passed on, Luke Skywalker wouldn't have destroyed the Death Star. The whole thing wouldn't have happened had my character not said all that stuff. That's kind of mind-blowing, and I just love that, so it felt like a responsibility, to do that justice."

TOP DECK

Insider speaks with Tom Braunlich, one of the creatives behind the _Star Wars Customizable Card Game_, to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the popular collectible's release.

WORDS: JORDAN MAISON

The 1990s saw a boom in the world of tabletop card games. _Yu-Gi-Oh!_, _Super Deck!_, _BattleTech_, and many others were chasing the juggernaut of _Magic: The Gathering_ (released in 1993). Only one game came close: the _Star Wars Customizable Card Game_. Alongside a wealth of books and comics reviving excitement in the franchise, the game's high quality design and immersive gameplay garnered a dedicated following.

Thanks to its unique approach, Decipher's CCG would form the standard by which all future _Star Wars_ card games would be held. Even decades after the final set was released, it retains an active playerbase that continues to hold annual tournaments.

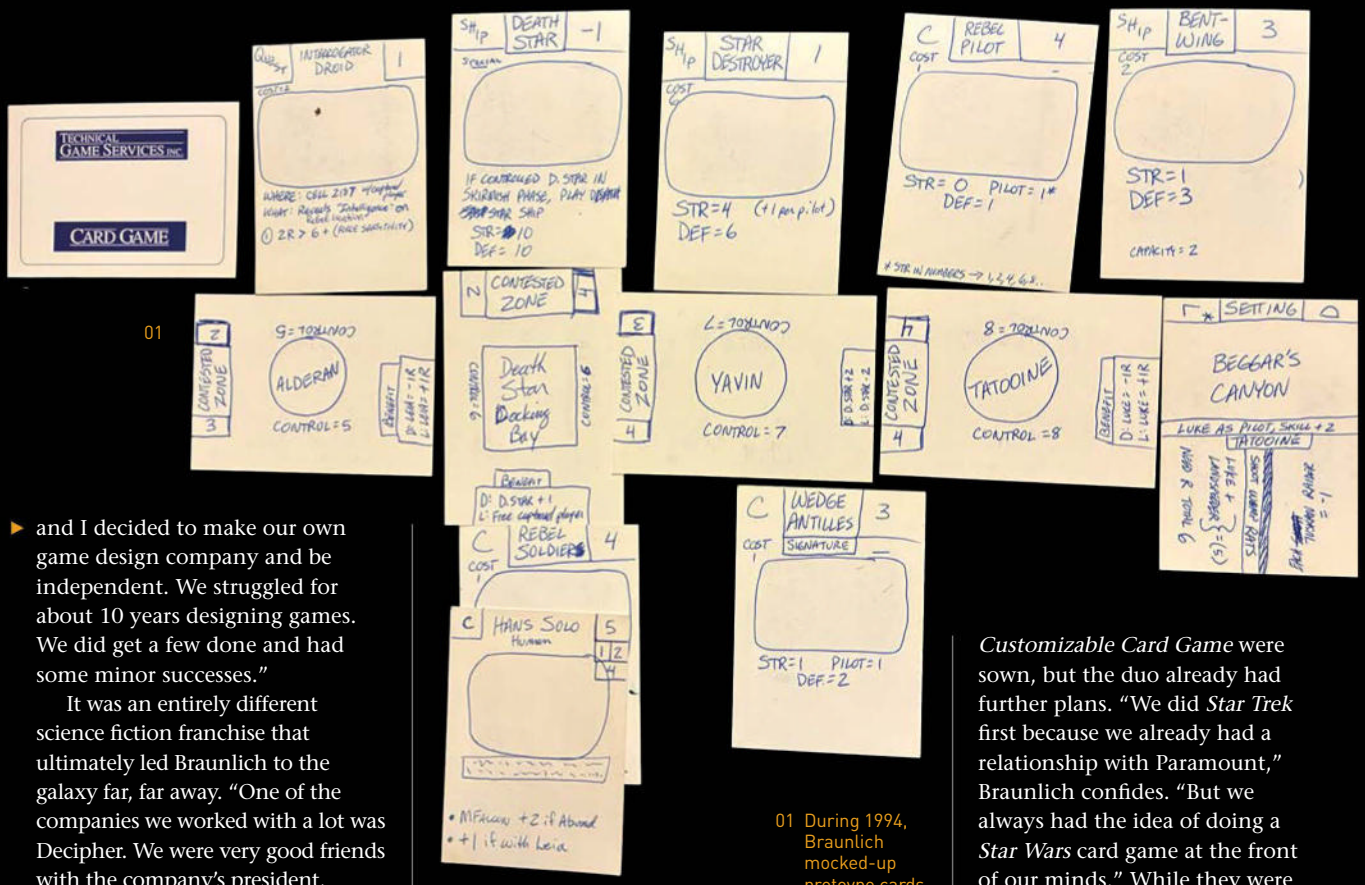
This year, the _Star Wars CCG_ turns thirty. To celebrate the landmark anniversary, _Star Wars_ _Insider_ sat down with one of the game's creators, Tom Braunlich, to discuss the whirlwind development of the seminal game.

The Road to _Star Wars_

Tom Braunlich's love of gaming started early with chess, thanks to the famous "Match of the Century" between Boris Spassky and Bobby Fischer. His professional journey into gaming began in college, where he studied journalism at Oklahoma State University. "It was kind of by accident that I got into the game business," Braunlich reveals. "There was a new game company, Pente, that came out of the college campus and Gary Gabrel asked me to write a strategy book for it. Later on, I joined the company while still going to school."

By 1982, _Pente_ was the number one adult board game in the country, and the company was sold to Parker Bros. "After _Pente_ was sold, Rollie Tesh ▸


AT-AT Cannon
VEHICLE WEAPON
Use 2 Force to deploy on your AT-AT. May target a starfighter (use 3 as defense value), character, creature, or vehicle at same or adjacent site using 2 Force. Draw destiny. Add 1 if targeting a character or creature, 2 if a vehicle. Target hit if total destiny > defense value.
•Luke Skywalker
Son of Anakin Skywalker. Student of Obi-Wan Kenobi. Honed piloting skills while bullseyeing womp rats in Beggar's Canyon aboard T-16 skyhopper.
POWER 3
ABILITY 4
FORCE-SENSITIVE
DARK JEDI



01

and I decided to make our own game design company and be independent. We struggled for about 10 years designing games. We did get a few done and had some minor successes."

It was an entirely different science fiction franchise that ultimately led Braunlich to the galaxy far, far away. "One of the companies we worked with a lot was Decipher. We were very good friends with the company's president, Warren Holland, and we designed a *Star Trek* VCR board game for them. Then *Magic: The Gathering* came out. Rollie and I were based in Seattle at the time, and we heard about it pretty early on.

"We had dinner with Richard Garfield, who created *Magic: The Gathering,* and learned what they were doing. Rollie in particular thought this was going to be a big, new genre of board game. Our idea was to leverage our relationship with Paramount to do a licensed version of such a game."

From this meeting, the seeds of the *Star Trek: Customizable Card Game* were sown, but the duo already had further plans. "We did *Star Trek* first because we already had a relationship with Paramount," Braunlich confides. "But we always had the idea of doing a *Star Wars* card game at the front of our minds." While they were hard at work developing the *Star Trek* card game, Decipher made the connections to Lucasfilm and tasked Braunlich and his team to work on a *Star Wars* CCG.

01 During 1994, Braunlich mocked-up protoype cards for the game.

02 Examples of how the final cards looked.



02

"I wanted the game to feel like you were using the Force in a good versus evil situation. That was our goal."

Always on the Move

Crafting two different games in a relatively new genre was no simple feat. With the *Star Trek* card game launching in 1994 and the *Star Wars Customizable Card Game* following the year after, Braunlich referred to this development period as his "lost years." At one point he "went to do some work at Decipher's headquarters in Virginia and never came back!"

"Rollie and I were given two or three months to come up with a basic design for the game. We got together with another game designer, Richard Borg, who lived down in Florida, and went and stayed at his house for a couple of weeks, to brainstorm ideas for how the *Star Wars* game would work."

First and foremost, Braunlich wanted the CCG to capture the essence of *Star Wars,* or its "flavor," as he likes to put it. "I wanted the game to feel like you were using the Force in a good versus evil situation. That was our goal. We thought of a lot of different ways such things could work, but the key breakthrough was the idea of the 'Force deck.' Your draw deck was your Force at the same time, so it was pulling double duty. Instead of having tokens to represent how much Force you accumulate, it was the deck itself. There's also an element of fate in *Star Wars,* so we built in this concept of the 'Destiny Number' on the card. It's a balancing factor.

"Little things like that, we were trying to build into the basic design of the game. That's just the beginning of the design of anything like this. We had to be cognizant of how the game was going to grow. We use the term ecosystem. All these cards interact with each other the same way the jungle has all kinds of prey and predators. If you introduce a new card into that system, it's like an invasive animal. We knew they were going to introduce new sets every six months or so, and we had to try and anticipate what those could be."



04



03

03 Cards displayed abilities alongside lore facts.

04 The reverse of each card had a dark or light-side design.

"We always had the idea of doing a *Star Wars* card game at the front of our minds."

Capturing the Flavor

Making a card game feel like *Star Wars* goes beyond the core mechanics. They had to ensure every card fit both the gameplay and the galaxy George Lucas had created. To help, they enlisted the aid of a *Star Wars* super-fan (and fellow game designer) Jerry Darcy to craft the initial 1,000 cards. "Jerry, who *really* knew *Star Wars,* was very valuable," says Braunlich, keen to always emphasize the team effort behind the game. "He was our arbiter of what was logical for the galaxy.

"We went through the movies with a fine-tooth comb looking for potential cards. We'd take a low-resolution frame grab, enter it into a gigantic spreadsheet, and write up ideas on what the card would ▸

THE NAME OF THE GAME

In the nascent days of the Expanded Universe (Legends), before the prequel trilogy opened up the galaxy, a majority of background characters went unnamed. Action figures like "Walrus Man" and "Hammerhead" were more descriptors than anything.

"At that time, they were just creatures stuck in the background to populate the cantina," says Tom Braunlich. "We wanted to make all of them come to life, so we consulted with Lucasfilm to propose official names and lore for all these anonymous characters and things. Of course, not everything that we proposed eventually stuck and Lucasfilm would come back with something else."

It wasn't just background characters that benefited from expanded lore introduced by the CCG. To flesh out a game featuring over 1,000 cards, the designers had to come up with information for every weapon, piece of equipment, and vehicle featured on a card that didn't already have any. Some have become core elements of *Star Wars* lore, popping up in new fiction over the decades since—a testament to the enduring impact of the hard work put into crafting the CCG.

05

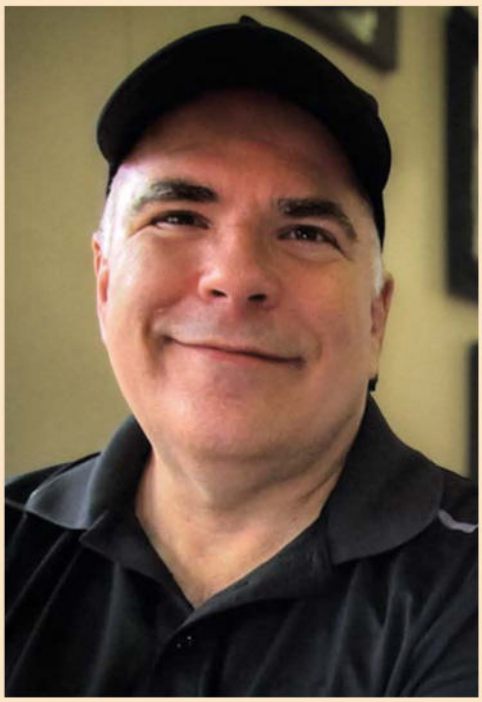


do. Several times a week we would meet at my house. I'd cleared one of my walls and hooked a projector up to my laptop computer. We'd sit around on couches and chairs, and one by one look at these cards and brainstorm. We would do that for hours and hours, sometimes until three in the morning."

Lucasfilm was, of course, heavily involved in the process, and gave the team unprecedented access to the archives at Skywalker Ranch. It was an opportunity that Decipher didn't waste. "Decipher was very keen on making the cards as beautiful as possible," explains Braunlich. "They knew collectors were going to want the cards, and weren't satisfied with the imagery they were getting from a regular copy of the movie. They acquired a first generation print and bought a $70,000 piece of equipment to take super-high quality images of each frame."

05 Dark side cards had a sleek look, while the Rebel cards had a used aesthetic.

06 The *SW:CCG* designer Tom Braunlich.



06

They also went above and beyond to make sure the smallest details added to the aesthetic. "One of my favorite things, which I'm convinced is one reason why it's still popular, is that even the backs of the cards had a lot of thought put into them," Braunlich says. "The Dark Side cards are very sleek and smooth and metallic, just like the Empire is. But the Rebel cards, they're all beat up!

"That was what I loved about working with Decipher. They were absolutely committed to quality, which did lead to us being late in some of our release dates," Braunlich admits, ruefully. "We couldn't quite meet them all the time because we were putting quality first."

"The original *Star Wars CCG* manages to live on thanks to a dedicated base of fans known as The Players Committee."

No One's Ever Really Gone

Within a year of its launch in 1995, the *Star Wars CCG* became the second bestselling card game on the market, just behind *Magic: The Gathering*. With a steady stream of regular expansions and popular annual tournaments, it was a force to be reckoned with in the gaming community.

Its almost instant connection with fans was a bit of a surprise, albeit a welcome one, to Braunlich. "What was really cool were the things players accepted as absolutely natural, as if the Maker himself had designed it. Whereas, in reality, Rollie and I had argued for *days* over exactly how it would work. Sometimes we would literally be yelling at each other. But that's one of the fun things about being a game designer. Your thing gets out there and people accept it. It becomes part of the culture."

Despite impressive success and a *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* spin-off entitled Young Jedi Collectible Card Game (designed to help bridge younger players to the more complex gameplay of the original), Decipher's reign was ultimately short-lived. After Hasbro purchased *Wizards of the Coast,* Decipher lost their bid to continue making *Star Wars* games. And yet, the original *Star Wars CCG* manages to live on thanks to a dedicated base of fans known as The Players Committee.



09

07 The Young Jedi Collectible Card Game was released to appeal to younger fans of the hobby.

08 Young Jedi was based on characters from *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace.*

09 The Bowcaster card.



07



08

Since 2001, the Committee has ardently kept the game alive by releasing new "virtual card packs" that players could print themselves and add to their current decks. Over the years, they've also updated the rules to keep up with modern gaming trends, increased accessibility with virtual play/game tables, and continue to hold annual championships.

"They took over the game," Braunlich says fondly of their efforts, "cleaned up some of the spurious rules and made the existing cards work. The Players Committee has done a wonderful job in keeping the game alive. I still get contacted by people who find out I'm here and occasionally they'll ask me a question about something, or want me to autograph cards, and that's nice."

Despite the chaos of those "lost years," developing the *Star Wars CCG* is still an experience Braunlich looks back on with fondness. Even in his "semi-retirement," he confides he still thinks about the new *Star Wars* media he enjoys in terms of the game. "When the sequel trilogy and *The Mandalorian* came out, I would think to myself 'Oh, if only we're making a card game for that. That would be so cool!' That's how I look at *Star Wars,* as a story full of possible cards."

REBEL ROUSER

THE MUSIC OF *ANDOR* SEASON 2

When young Brandon Roberts first saw *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back,* he was bewitched by composer John Williams' incredible score. Little did he know that fate would someday have him creating original music for a galaxy, far, far away himself.

WORDS: TARA BENNETT

After graduating from USC's Scoring for Motion Pictures & Television program, Brandon Roberts first made his mark in the industry scoring indie films. He was mentored by prolific composer Marco Beltrami, and they collaborated on film and television scores for genre projects such as Jordan Peele's 2019 reboot of *The Twilight Zone,* the thriller *Underwater* (2020), and the 2018 documentary feature, *Free Solo,* for which they won the Creative Arts Emmy Award for Outstanding Music Composition for a Documentary Series or Special (Original Score).

But it wasn't until during post production of the second season of *Andor* that Brandon was given his shot at contributing to the *Star Wars* galaxy when he was hired to take over the composing role from Nicholas Britell.

> "A LOT OF PEOPLE TOOK A CHANCE ON ME, WHICH I'M VERY GRATEFUL FOR."

"When I got involved, it was a pinch me and wake up moment," Roberts told *Star Wars Insider.* "But I won't lie, it was a bit intimidating. Chronologically speaking, my work is sandwiched between John Williams' prequel scores, then Nicholas Britell's brilliant score for *Andor*'s first season, then mine, then onto Michael Giacchino's amazing *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* (2016), and then back to Williams for *A New Hope.* Somewhere in there, I was supposed to not fumble the ball, so I was a little intimidated. But for something like that, you put the fear behind you, and you just jump in, and you do the work."

By all assessments, Roberts more than stepped up to the occasion, creating hours of stirring, emotional, and memorable musical cues throughout the twelve episodes of season two. His score earned a 2025 Creative Arts Emmy nomination for Outstanding Music Composition for a Series (Original Dramatic Score), and a place in the musical legacy of the *Star Wars* galaxy. ▸

01



01 Diego Luna as Cassian Andor.



02

***Star Wars Insider*: Composing jobs usually come through recommendations, so do you know who passed your name to *Andor* creator Tony Gilroy?**

Brandon Roberts: This was definitely attributable to one person in terms of the recommendation, and that's the music editor on *Andor*, John Finklea. He works with Nicholas Britell a lot, and he worked on season one and season two of *Andor*. When Nicholas had to depart the project, [John] recommended me to Tony Gilroy. He played him some of my stuff and Tony said, "Okay, this guy could work." I had a videocall with Tony and his brother, John Gilroy, who is one of the editors on the show. They seemed to like me. I didn't put my foot in my mouth too badly, and no one said "No!" A lot of people took a chance on me, which I'm very grateful for.

02 Composer Brandon Roberts.

03 "One Year Later" was the first complete episode Roberts scored for the series.

How did you prepare to match what Britell did with the first season, and then create everything new that Gilroy needed for season two?

I tried to really do my research and study Britell's palette from his season. But then I had to go on and do my own thing and expand on everything in season two. I took all my cues from Tony. He was very clear on what needed to be new material or expanded upon, and what needed new themes. For example, right at the beginning, he said we needed a Yavin theme and a theme for Mina-Rau. Then he explained the big things that had to be tackled first, because they would be threads that would weave through a lot of the season. We also talked a lot about making sure we included nods to Britell's themes from season one, so whenever that was appropriate, whenever we thought it would be a really heroic moment to bring such a theme in, we always did so.

We also needed some large-scale musical arcs, as the series was structured across four, three-episode chunks. Each three-episode arc had its own vibe, expanding the

03





"WHEN IT FINALLY GETS TO THE FULL MON MOTHMA RAVE DANCE, IT WAS ALMOST CATHARTIC."

world musically as the characters and the plot became more epic, and the stakes got higher. It was intended to complement the level of drama as the story unfolded. A lot was dictated by Tony's vision for the whole season.

One musical moment that created an online buzz came in Episode 3, "Harvest," when Mon Mothma danced at her daughter's wedding reception to an upbeat remix of a tune first heard in season one. How did you set about matching a complex sequence of overlapping plots against that thumping music?

We took this remixed version of Nicholas Britell's "Niamos" and cut back and forth between score and "source" (known as "diegetic," where the same music is heard by both the audience and characters within a scene). I'm sure it wasn't the first time that had been done in *Star Wars*, but the degree to which we did it was very intense and very deliberate, with John (Finklea)'s editing and Tony's view of how the whole thing would work. The sleight of hand was key, because we had to come "out of score" and sometimes pre-lapping the source to cut back to the wedding with a vibe. I was very conscious of the tempos, of the keys, of how we're going to segue from one thing to the next, and when we were going to do it. On the editing front, John Gilroy and John Finklea had to be cognizant of exactly the beat we were on. It was the back and forth that was the trickiest. When it finally gets to the full Mon Mothma rave dance, it was almost cathartic, because we could finally have this piece of music play in its entirety.

And we didn't just do that once. We decided to do it twice, at least conceptually. There's a sequence during the heist in Episode 6, "What a Festive Evening," that does the same thing. I would argue the heist ▸

04



05

04 Mon Mothma letting her hair down in Episode 3, "Harvest."

05 Themes for Mina-Rau and Yavin 4 were among the early cues to be tackled by Roberts.

was even more complicated, because we were cutting back and forth between the Coruscant gala and the Ghorman heist. And that was actually the first cue I tackled, and I definitely jumped in with both feet. It's very cool when you see the back and forth, it makes everything very intense. We tried to musically structure it so that all the tempos and keys matched, so it felt more organic than if it had been hard cuts to random tempos.

Did you see every episode before you began scoring, or did you see them one by one?
I got to watch the whole arc, so I had an idea of everything that was going to be needed, musically. Britell had already written the fourth episode, "Ever Been to Ghorman?" and half of both Episode 5, "I Have Friends Everywhere," and Episode 6, "What A Festive Evening." Those were written and recorded first, and then we jumped back to Episode 1, "One Year Later." But having seen everything in advance, I had the arc in my head and knew what the musical requirements were going to be.

"Who Are You?" is epic in every way. Was it also the most challenging to score?
I'd definitely say Episode 8 was the most challenging, and that's because of the emotional requirements. It was almost a feature film in itself. We had the visual scale of everything that was happening, but we also had the emotional scale of everything going on with a lot of our characters and a lot of things to wrap up.

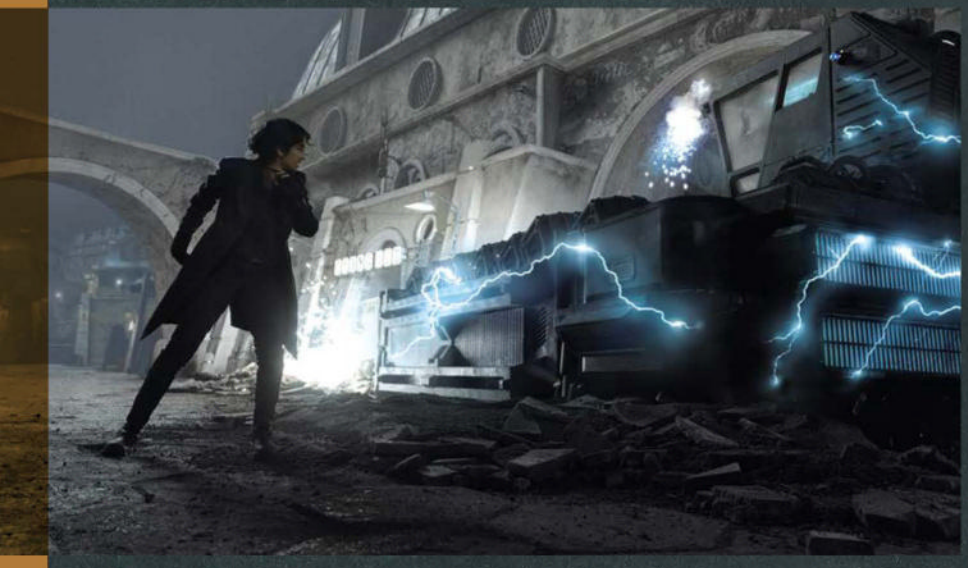
06 Roberts says the score for Episode 8, "Who Are You?" was the most challenging.

07 The Ghorman heist was the first music cue Roberts composed for the series.



06

"WHEN YOU HAVE MATERIAL THAT HAS BEEN WRITTEN AND PERFORMED THAT WELL, SOMETIMES PULLING BACK THE MUSIC IS THE BEST CHOICE."



07

BANG THE DRUM

Brandon Roberts reveals a musical epiphany he had while recording the music cues for episodes 11 and 12 of *Andor* Season 2.

"For most of my musical life, I've been snare drum averse. Not for any particular reason. I'd just avoided snare drums," Roberts explains. "Then we had these scenes in 'Who Else Knows?' and 'Jedha, Kyber, Erso,' where the Imperials are closing in on Cassian, Melshi, and Kleya as they hide out in Luthen Rael's Coruscant safe house, and I had to lean way into snare drums."

The idea came from music editor John Finklea. "I think it was John who suggested this growing threat almost had a pulse, so we thought maybe we could capture that using snare drums," the composer continues. "We brought in all these percussionists, each using all these different snare drums, but one of those percussionists had access to *the* snare drum—the actual instrument that was used on the original *Star Wars: A New Hope* recording sessions. That snare became a huge part of the sound for the second half of Episode 11 and the first part of Episode 12. I geeked out and went onto the studio floor to have him play it in front of me. It was very cool, and I can say the music for the Empire finally had me falling in love with snare drums."

With the character of Dedra Meero, who goes through a lot in that episode, how did you score the journey of her fall from grace with Syril Karn and the Imperial Security Bureau?
The performances from Denise Gough and Kyle Soller are so strong and so powerful whenever they're on screen together. For the pivotal scene between Dedra and Syril where everything that



08



09

has happened leads to their final moment together, their goodbye, the music had to be very minimal. I brought in hints of Syril's theme from season one, but I scaled everything back because those performances were so strong. When you have material that has been written and performed that well, sometimes pulling back the music is the best choice. That can be difficult from an ego standpoint, but when you see it play on screen, it just doesn't need anything else. It just needs gentle support and that's it. And then a lot of the scenes that deal with Dedra afterwards, the score was very dissonant, with lots of tension. She had nothing left, so I tried to complement that idea of her world crumbling around her, musically.

08 Roberts kept his score minimal for Syril and Dedra's final scene together.

09 The *Andor finale* score was designed to neatly segue into the music of *Rogue One*.

10 Dedra Meero's sorry fate.

In the finale, you had the unique task of walking Cassian out of *Andor* and into the film, *Rogue One*. How did you achieve that?

The biggest part of the ending, in addition to acknowledging Britell's theme and having that beautiful build, was also about changing the score's palette to be more orchestral. We stripped out a lot of the electronics. We leaned towards what Giacchino did from an orchestral standpoint for *Rogue One*, so that the handoff doesn't feel too abrasive moving from an electronic, hybrid score into the traditional orchestrated score of that movie. We kept that change at the forefront of our minds so that, stylistically, it would feel like the handoff could occur. That was our linchpin.



10



RISE OF THE FIRST ORDER

Released ten years ago this month, *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* unleashed a new reign of terror upon the galaxy far, far away. *Insider* explores how the First Order came to be, and the real-world inspiration behind its rise to power.

WORDS: CHRIS KEMPSHALL

"The sinister First Order has risen from the ashes of the Empire." With these words in the opening crawl of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens,* audiences were introduced to the new antagonists of the sequel trilogy. Within moments, stormtroopers in white armor had landed on the planet Jakku, guns blazing, led by Kylo Ren in his Darth Vader-inspired face mask. From this starting point, it was clear that the First Order had been heavily influenced by the fallen Galactic Empire. But were there also real-world inspirations behind the new villains? How did director J.J. Abrams conceive of this successor to the Empire of old? And how did this manifest itself on screen across the three sequel movies?

By exploring the origins and historical background of the First Order, we can see how it both mirrored and moved away from the Galactic Empire that was its predecessor.

What if...?

The teaser trailer for *The Force Awakens* debuted at the end of November 2014, leaving fans with a long wait before they would learn more about the film's plot, its main characters, and its new villains when it released in December 2015. Speaking to *Time Magazine* in August 2015, director J.J. Abrams teased information on how the concept of the First Order came into being: "That all came out of conversations about what would have happened if the Nazis all went to Argentina [following World War II] but then started working together again. What could be born of that? Could the First Order exist as a group that actually admired the Empire? Could the work of The Empire be seen as unfulfilled? And could Vader be a martyr? Could there be a need to see through what didn't get done?"

Abrams clearly drew important conceptual links between the First Order and the Nazis, but what is the historical background that he is referencing?

The Nazi Party emerged in Germany after the First World War and embraced the ideology of fascism. They believed that the power of Germany was embodied by their leader, Adolf Hitler, and that the destiny of the nation could only be achieved through violence and the elimination of their enemies. They mobilized themselves around outrage at the way the First World War ended with Germany's defeat and rallied around a mix of antisemitism and hatred of communism. Throughout the 1920s, the Nazis expanded their political party through violence, attempted coups, and targeted elections until Adolf Hitler was appointed Chancellor in 1933, thereby seizing complete power over Germany. Over the next six years, they launched various genocidal activities before aggressively expanding their borders and triggering the Second World War in 1939. They were eventually defeated by the allied forces in 1945.

"IT IS FROM THIS TRAIL OF HISTORICAL EVENTS ON OUR WORLD THAT ABRAMS APPEARS TO HAVE DRAWN INSPIRATION FOR THE FIRST ORDER'S RISE TO POWER IN THE STAR WARS GALAXY."

The Nazis organized themselves—and then Germany—under the effective rule of the military, with the armed forces holding a great deal of power and answering directly to Hitler. Propaganda was used to mobilize the support ▸

of civilians, and the infamous flag of the black swastika on a red and white background was raised across Germany as Hitler gave impassioned speeches espousing violence and death to his enemies at places like Nuremberg. In time, the swastika would rise over other European capitals as the Nazis launched their invasions at the start of the Second World and conquered their neighbors.

It is from this trail of historical events on our world that Abrams appears to have drawn inspiration for the First Order's rise to power in the *Star Wars* galaxy, and this influence becomes increasingly apparent onscreen as *The Force Awakens* unfolds. Before the enormous Starkiller Base weapon fired at Hosnian Prime to destroy the New Republic, General Armitage Hux took

01



01 General Hux (Domhnall Gleeson) unleashes the hideous power of the First Order's superweapon.

02 The massed army of the First Order on Starkiller Base.

to the stage to address a vast army of loyal soldiers. Flanked by red and black banners that bore the symbol of the regime, he angrily railed against the opposing government as one that "acquiesces to disorder" and "lies to the galaxy." At the culmination of this speech, the gathered stormtroopers and personnel raised their left arms in a unified salute, mirroring the "heil Hitler" salute of the Nazis (usually done with the right arm). The parallels to Nazi rallies in the lead up to the Second World War were unsettling and clearly not coincidental.

General Hux, like Adolf Hitler, appeared to have been radicalized by the ideology emerging from defeat in a previous war. He angrily outlined the perceived failures and weaknesses of nearby democracies and promised death and destruction to these enemies. As the massive weapon fired into the sky to commit a mass genocide, Hux watched on with tears of admiration in his eyes. The construction of this scene goes a long way towards informing the audience that the First Order, and particularly people like Hux, were driven by a form of

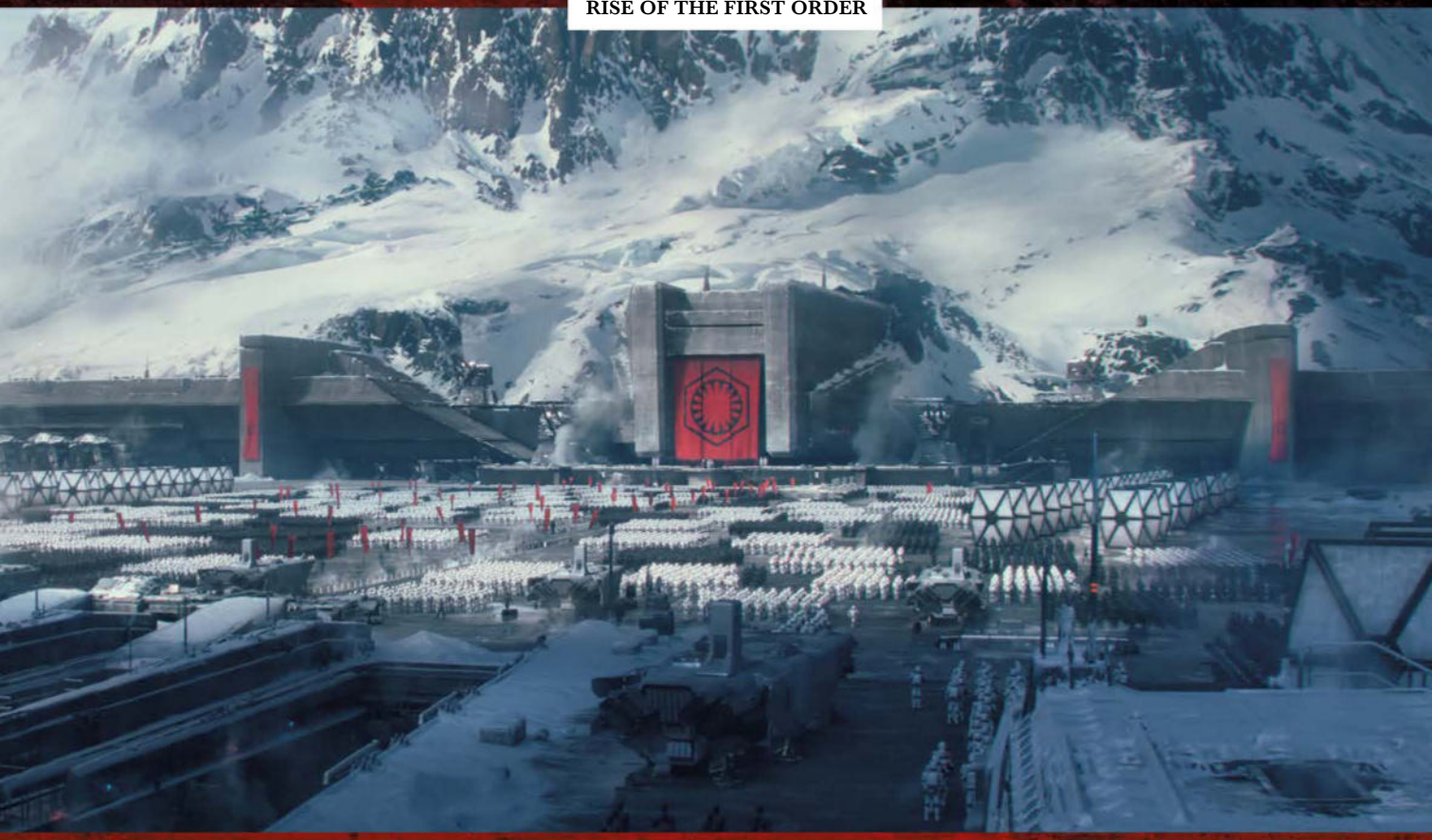


02

"FOR THE FIRST ORDER, IT APPEARS THAT THE BEST GALACTIC EMPIRE WAS ONE THEY COULD INVENT THEMSELVES AS BOTH JUSTIFICATION AND INSPIRATION."

ideology that bears all the hallmarks of Nazi rage. The use of imposing state symbols, the violent oratory, the prevalence of the military — all of these together allowed Abrams to draw his historical comparisons on screen.

But there are additional elements that can be taken from this moment to help us construct an understanding of what the First Order was attempting to do. Whilst at the end of *Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith*, Emperor Palpatine outlined how his new Galactic Empire would create a "safe and secure society," he does not spend much time ranting from his lectern. In fact, much of the Empire's actual ideology



and system of beliefs were largely implied in the original trilogy, while much of the wider worldbuilding surrounding the Empire has since come via shows such as *Star Wars: Rebels* and *Andor*, or from the pages of books and graphic novels. So, if the First Order really was inspired by the Empire, how did that work?

An Empire Imagined

The Galactic Empire appears to hold a strange place within the First Order as a source for their own ideology, but also as a symbol of failure. As a result, the First Order picked over the corpse of the Empire to retrieve anything of use and rapidly discarded or lost interest in the rest. The Empire may have provided a vision for the First Order to draw from, but it was also too weak to effectively implement its plans. Why would the First Order feel like they had anything to learn from such a state? Would the Nazis in Argentina—following J.J. Abrams' conceptual starting point—have felt like they had much to learn from Germany? Would their children have thought so? In many ways, for the First Order, it appears that the best Galactic Empire was one they could invent themselves as both justification and inspiration.

Whilst the First Order drew upon the technology of the Empire—with updated TIE fighters, Star Destroyers, and Stormtroopers—there was more to their relationship than just physical weaponry. Some leaders like Hux appeared to have been radicalized through something akin to Imperial ideology but taken it even further, fueled with the rage of defeat. However, by *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker*, Hux was proven to be motivated more by his own personal ambitions. There is much historical precedence for this as well. Military officers and leading governmental figures in Nazi Germany were often competing against each other for favor, whilst also being deeply corrupt. This conflict between ideology and individual glory meant Hux eventually betrayed the state for his own ends.



03

Kylo Ren meanwhile had a very different relationship with the old Empire. He effectively worshipped one of the leading symbols of ▸

03 First Order stormtroopers searching for BB-8 on Jakku.



04

FROM THE ASHES OF DEFEAT

How the First Order was born from the embers of the Empire

5 ABY

Following years of fighting after the Battle of Endor, the last vestiges of Imperial forces were finally defeated at the Battle of Jakku. Remnants of the fleet fled to the galaxy's Unknown Regions.

21 ABY



While the New Republic struggled to bring order to the galaxy after years of warfare, the Imperial Remnant reorganized in secrecy as the First Order, commanded by former Imperials Rae Sloane and Brendol Hux.

29 ABY



A coalition of systems formally seceded from the New Republic and joined the First Order, now led by Supreme Leader Snoke, which had recently emerged as a political force opposing the existing government. A galactic Cold War descended.

34 ABY

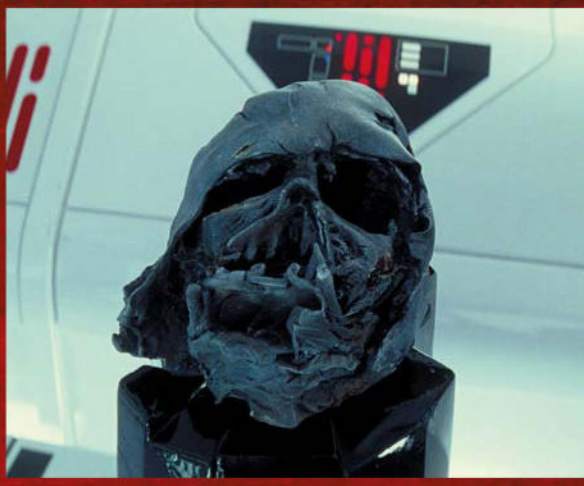


The First Order launched a devastating attack on the New Republic's capital, Hosnian Prime, from its powerful superweapon, Starkiller Base. Only the Resistance, led by General Leia Organa, stood in the way of the First Order's total domination of the galaxy.

the Imperial state—Darth Vader, represented by the melted remains of his mask. Kylo Ren's grandfather was important to him in the same way that the past holds importance to fascist regimes like the Nazis. Such regimes often seek to invoke memories of a glorious history and idealized way of life that had been stolen from them, despite the fact that it never truly existed. Kylo Ren looks at Vader's helmet in the same way, imposing a nobility and worthiness onto the dark lord's actions that had never been true during his lifetime. Kylo Ren decided that Vader's actions must have been justified and uses this false construction to inspire his own actions.

Neo-Imperialism

The 2021 DK reference book, *Star Wars: Battles that Changed the Galaxy*, refers to the First Order as an example of "neo-Imperialism," where surviving officers of the Empire such as Brendol Hux (Armitage's father) and Rae Sloan had escaped into the Unknown Regions and helped produce the new successor state. Whilst they had provided a foundation of Imperial ideology and structure, it seems that the leadership of the First Order was repeatedly in flux before Snoke took control. The Supreme Leader had a tremendous grasp of the Force and, with Kylo Ren acting as his apprentice, was able to provide a figurehead for the new state. Even



05

"IT SEEMS THAT THE LEADERSHIP OF THE FIRST ORDER WAS REPEATEDLY IN FLUX BEFORE SNOKE TOOK CONTROL."

following his death in *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*, power passed to Kylo Ren based largely on his abilities with the dark side.

All of which created a curious circumstance in *The Rise of Skywalker* when Kylo Ren briefed the assembled officers of the First Order about Palpatine's return. Whilst old Imperial loyalists such as General Pryde were quick to see the potential in this, younger officers seemed more skeptical. One wonders aloud: "This fleet. What

is it? A gift? What is *he* asking for in return?" It is hard to imagine anyone who had served under Emperor Palpatine speaking of him in such dismissive terms. But this First Order officer does exactly that. Why?

The answer is probably one of chronology. At the beginning of *The Force Awakens,* thirty years had passed since the fall of the Empire. Many with the First Order had not been alive at that point, and had no personal memories towards the Empire or, importantly, towards the Emperor himself. Sheev Palpatine, the most important figure in the galaxy, was largely irrelevant to these young recruits. He was little more than a character from a history book. One who had ruled and then failed. He had nothing to offer them and commanded no loyalty from them. The vision of the Empire that the First Order had constructed had rendered the Emperor irrelevant.

It is through this point that we can see the underlying element of J.J. Abrams' consideration of the origins of the First Order being exiled Nazis. He defines them by their ideology rather than any nationality or state. It was the ideology that the remnants of the Empire took with them out into the distant corners of the galaxy. The ideas and ideals of Imperialism rather than the actual framework or figureheads of that fallen regime. They honed it and refined it and passed it onto their children and other unwilling and unwitting soldiers that—as seen in *Star Wars Resistance*—they kidnapped and pressed into service. That idea may have required a dark side Force user to serve as a focal point, but there was no requirement that the person be Palpatine. Snoke or Kylo Ren would serve just as well, possibly even better as they were not tainted by the failures of the Empire.

In *The Last Jedi,* Kylo Ren told Rey to "Let the past die. Kill it if you have to." It was an appeal for her to join him and abandon her friends. But it also served as a useful insight into the kind of mindset that must have powered the First Order. It may have emerged from the ruins of the Empire but bore it no allegiance. It took what was necessary from what came before and shunned or ignored the rest, leaving it to decay in the sands of Jakku whilst the First Order remade itself around the core ideals of Imperialism and then unleashed terror upon a complacent galaxy.

04 Kylo Ren, Master of the Knights of Ren.

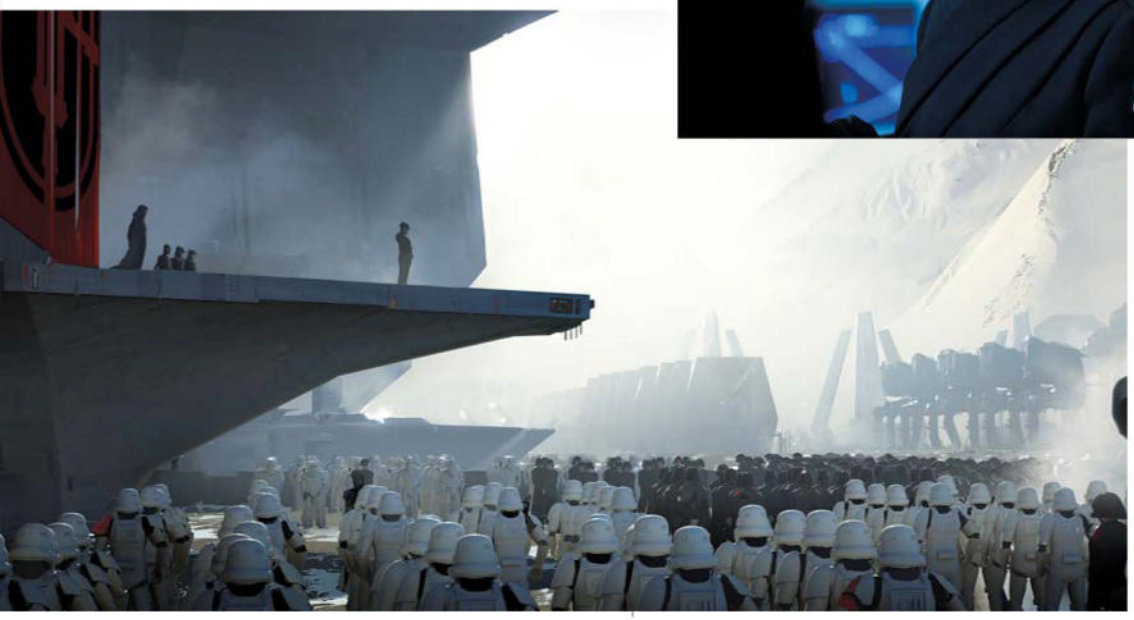
05 The melted mask of Darth Vader held a deep symbolic meaning for Kylo Ren.



06



07



08

06 First Order stormtroopers opening fire on Jakku villagers.

07 Allegiant General Pryde (Richard E. Grant).

08 Starkiller Base concept art by Kevin Jenkins.



01 Ryan Kiera Armstrong as Fern.

AYE, RYAN KIERA ARMSTRONG CAPTAIN

Rising star Ryan Kiera Armstrong talks to *Insider* about her experiences playing *Star Wars: Skeleton Crew*'s feisty, irrepressible Fern.

WORDS: BRANDON WAINERDI

"Everywhere we went, even the worst places, there were good people too," Fern, the self-proclaimed captain of the *Onyx Cinder,* told her mother in the series finale of *Star Wars: Skeleton Crew.* The character's positive outlook—following an adventure that took Fern and her classmates to the darkest corners of the galaxy, pitting them against a motley assortment of dubious characters—matches that of the ebullient young actor.

While many *Star Wars* fans first encountered Ryan Kiera Armstrong in *Skeleton Crew*, the young actor was far from a newcomer to films and television, having sunk her teeth into a variety of previous roles, including serious work in genre projects including *American Horror Story: Double Feature* in 2021, and Stephen King's *Firestarter* in 2022 (taking on the role of Charlie McGee originated by Drew Barrymore in 1984). When *Star Wars Insider* spoke with Armstrong, she was in Tulsa, Oklahoma, preparing for her next role (the pilot for FX's *The Lowdown*, a new show also starring Ethan Hawke), and has since been cast as the lead in a reboot of the popular 1990s TV series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer.*

Armstrong notes that one of the most exciting things about her burgeoning career has been the opportunity to "play so many different kinds of roles, to explore whole new sides of yourself as completely different people." She has also been fortunate to act alongside top class Hollywood talent including Zac Efron, Nicolas Cage, and, of course, *Skeleton Crew*'s Jude Law.

In addition to the acting bug, Armstrong also shares her love of a galaxy far, far away with her father, veteran Canadian actor Dean Armstrong. "I've always been a big fan of *Star Wars,*" she says, "It was one of those movies that my dad passed on to me, and that we still share together as fans. He has always been 'fangirling' about it, even more than me. And, as a franchise, it's so much fun. It brings people together, and truly never gets old. It's one of those timeless, timeless things."

> "I have always been a fan of *Star Wars,* so I really think I must have manifested this."

"They were all such legends," she enthuses. "There are so many people that I've met and worked with that have been acting for their entire lives. I am always just watching them and having conversations with them and listening to them tell these stories. It's a huge privilege as an actor." Such learning experiences shone through in her performance as Fern, adding a sense of maturity to her young *Star Wars* character.

The Saga Begins

To secure the role of Fern, Armstrong went through an audition process that took place quite some time before production began in earnest, as Armstrong remembers. "I actually auditioned for *Skeleton Crew* in December 2021, which feels like a long time ago to me now. I was ▶

02 Armstrong saw Fern as a cross between Han Solo and Leia Organa.

03 The skeleton crew.



02

03

"We became like a little family, all working on this job together, which was really wonderful."

11 years old, and did a self-tape audition. Somehow, I already knew it was for *Star Wars*," she explains. "Just a couple of weeks later, I went on a Zoom call with Jon Watts, the showrunner and co-creator of the series, which I was told was going to be just some kind of chemistry read. The real reason for the call was so he could tell me that I'd gotten the job, but I was so caught up in the audition that I didn't understand!"

She continues: "He was like, 'Well, we would love to see you later this year. We would love to work with you.' And I questioningly said, 'That's great?' I was just so nervous and in my own head that I had no idea what he was really saying. I got off the call, and then my dad, who had been off camera, listening to the conversation, said 'Congratulations!' But even then, I *still* didn't realize I had got the job. Like I said, I have always been a fan of *Star Wars*, so I really think I must have manifested this."

Galactic Inspiration

After winning the role, the next step was working hand-in-hand with Watts and Christopher Ford [the other showrunner and co-creator of *Skeleton Crew*] to shape her performance. "Jon and Chris are such legends," Armstrong says, "and the collaborative process with this amazing group of people was really special. They actually gave us a lot of creative freedom, which was really great. I was able to be a

kid *and* live in the *Star Wars* galaxy every single day of the shoot."

For the character of Fern, Armstrong drew from her love of the *Star Wars* movies and took inspiration from two of its primary heroes. "I know it sounds funny, but I saw Fern as being a cross between Han Solo and Leia Organa," she says. "Fern was the perfect balance of the two—Leia was, of course, a princess, but she was not afraid to go onto the battlefield herself. She was this huge presence that so many people still look up to, especially girls like me. And then Han was this swashbuckling captain with a sense of humor. I really see both of them in Fern, and it was really fun to play with that balance."

With Fern becoming more defined in the actor's mind, Armstrong could concentrate on getting to know her castmates, especially the three young actors comprising the "Crew" itself: Kyriana Kratter (KB), Ravi Cabot-Conyers (Wim), and Robert Timothy Smith (Neel). It was essential that the four of them could portray a growing friendship, especially as the show progressed. "The showrunners definitely wanted there to be a feeling of familiarity between everyone," Armstrong recalls.

"There were actually a couple of weeks before production, where we would meet up for activities with each other. We would have movie nights at the studio, with bean bags thrown around, and we would play videogames together, or watch things that had inspired *Skeleton Crew*. We definitely took a lot from that. I've always been a fan of both *E.T. the Extra Terrestrial* (1982) and *The Goonies* (1985), and it had always been one of my biggest dreams to work with other kids and do that kind of ensemble job. We became like a little family, all working on this job together, which was really wonderful." ▶



04

04 The new friends search for a crashed ship on At Attin.

05 Showrunner Jon Watts (right) on set with Armstrong and Kyriana Kratter (left).

05



CAREER NOTES

Born in 2010, Ryan Kiera Armstrong's first screen break came with a recurring role in the Canadian TV period drama *Anne with an E* (2017-2019). Following a role in the TV miniseries *The Truth About the Harry Quebert Affair* (2018), the actor made her debut on the big screen in *The Art of Racing in the Rain* (2019), and later had a minor role as Young Antonia in the Marvel Studios movie *Black Widow* (2021).

Armstrong can currently be seen starring alongside Ethan Hawke in the FX series *The Lowdown*, and has filmed a pilot episode for Hulu's reboot of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer.*



06

Hands-on Experience

The series was filmed mostly in Los Angeles, California, at Manhattan Beach Studios, using the same stellar blend of practical effects and virtual sets employed by *Star Wars: The Mandalorian.* "It was really, really cool, I must say," confirms Armstrong. "It was rather incredible interacting with the physical elements and amazing props on the set. Like, our ship was 'real'—it was this huge set built inside this big studio, and it all felt very real, so we were able to give very raw reactions the whole time. We hadn't been allowed to see stuff like our sets and certain props until the first day of shooting, so a lot of what audiences saw on screen were our true responses to this world."

Shooting utilized Industrial Light & Magic's state-of-the-art StageCraft technology, which Armstrong enjoyed interacting with. "I really liked working within The Volume," she says. "We got to do so much on that virtual stage. It was so interesting, because I didn't know how much would be 'real' and how much would be added in post-production. The staging was a mixture of digital and practical set pieces, and it all looked so realistic. When we were on set, it was almost impossible to tell, even in person, where the LED screens ended and the physical set began. There were a couple of times people walked straight into an LED display thinking that the set kept on going. It was such a gift to work with, as an actor, because you got to immediately react to these fantastical things."

06 Filming on the ILM StageCraft volume.

07 Jod Na Nawood (Jude Law) only had his own self-interest at heart.



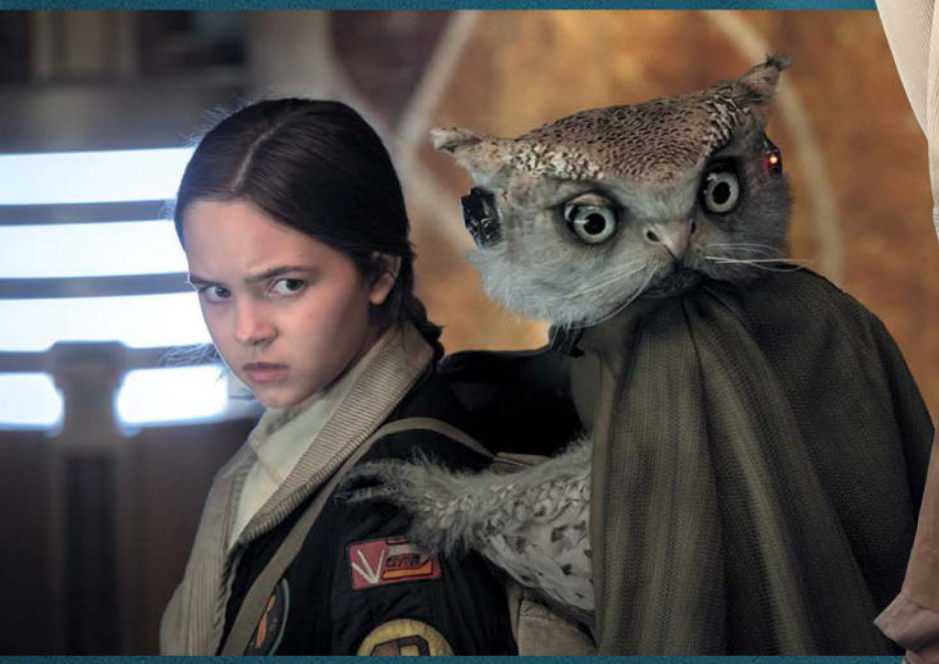
07

I Ain't Heard of No "Act" Attin

While the dastardly Jod was a treacherous ally on screen, actor Jude Law was something of a mentor figure to the young cast.

"Jude has been doing this since he was really young, so he was always looking out for us, which was really sweet. He always made us feel safe," says Armstrong. "When I was acting with him, it made my

"Jude has been doing this since he was really young, so he was always looking out for us, which was really sweet. He always made us feel safe."



08



09

work so much better, because he gave me so much to play with, so many variations and options. It was a really exciting position to be in."

Even on the highly technical set of the *Onyx Cinder*, in the middle of a heavy production schedule, the kids still found time to be kids. "One day, we got into trouble with the hair and makeup team, who we really loved so much," Armstrong confesses. "Ravi Cabot-Conyers (who played Wim) and I made mustaches with the tape used as T-markers [crosses placed on the studio floor so that actors know where to stand in a shot]. We were sticking this stuff all over our faces but when we pulled it off it removed our makeup, made our hair go frizzy, or took some hair with it, and the makeup team were like, 'You guys cannot be doing this anymore.' So, we had to stop."

Now, looking back on the making of the Disney+ show, Armstrong is reflective about the entire experience. "I shot *Skeleton Crew* when I was 12 to 13 years old, which is a huge time of change in your life as a person," she recalls. "In some ways I was going through the same kind of things as Fern. At the start of the show, she didn't really know who she was or how she fitted into At Attin society, which had so many expectations of her. That's what made her feel so real to me. I was finding out who I was as I was learning who Fern was. We were going through this journey together."

08 Fern (Armstrong) with Kh'ymm (voiced by Alia Shawkat).

09 School was not the adventurous Fern's favorite place to be.

Celebrate the Love



01

01 Melissa T. Miller with Nubs from *Star Wars: Young Jedi Adventures.*

Insider looks back at _Star Wars_ Celebration Japan 2025 through the lens of a fan panel host and the creativity of Artist Alley.

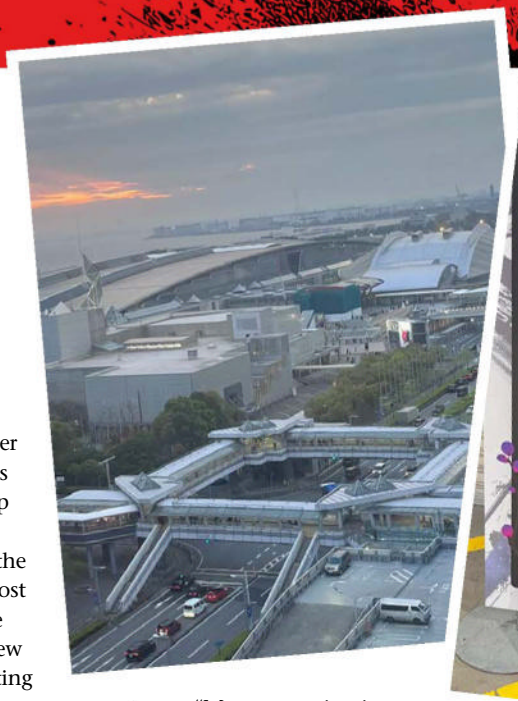
CONTRIBUTORS: CHRISTOPHER COOPER, MELISSA T. MILLER, AND MARK NEWBOLD

***Star Wars* Celebration has been a focal point for the fandom since 1999, with the 2025 event in Japan being one of the biggest ever. Attendees from all over the world flocked to the Makuhari-Messe Convention Center in Chiba, Tokyo to attend panels, make friends, meet saga legends, enjoy Artist Alley, and lose themselves in the closest that planet Earth can get to the galaxy far, far away.**

For many, just being at Celebration is enough, but some also like to get involved by participating in the convention itself, devising and hosting panels that take place on fan stages dotted around the event's exhibition halls. One such panel host is longtime *Insider* contributor Melissa T. Miller, who combines her passions for science and *Star Wars* into panels that look at the saga from alternative points of view.

"You wouldn't know it from meeting me now, but I was a shy kid and didn't fully accept

02



03



my geekiness until college," says Miller. "But I've been a *Star Wars* fan since birth, growing up with the original trilogy action figures and Saturday morning cartoons. So, if there's *anything* I can talk about for an hour, it's *Star Wars*!

"I've been to three Celebrations—Anaheim, London, and Japan—and organized panels at each of them," Miller recounts. "Most have involved scientists sharing how their fields of study overlap with the *Star Wars* galaxy, and I've also run a few with folks who work behind the scenes on the movies and TV shows. Most of the panels I ran this year were on the University Stage, which consistently drew a capacity crowd. That can be intimidating as a host, but I frame it as a positive—if we've got a couple of hundred *Star Wars* fans eager to take a deep dive with us, they want the panel to be great and therefore want us to succeed. Celebration audiences are the best I've ever experienced, and the panel's enthusiasm is always mirrored back at us by the crowd."

All About The Science

A graduate of UC San Diego, Miller has traveled the world's oceans as a chemist on scientific research missions. More recently, she has worked as a consultant, writer, and podcaster, focusing on science, technology and pop culture.

"My true passion is science communication, especially using the *Star Wars* framework to talk about real-life topics, from astronomy to zoology," Miller explains. "At Celebration Japan, I joined four other scientists on the 'Science of *Revenge of the Sith*' panel to discuss everything from whether Jedi robes were fireproof to the geology of Utapau. My favorite part comes afterwards, when a few audience members stick around to speculate on questions I'd never even considered. *Star Wars* storytelling is so vast that once you start thinking about the evolution of life on Kashyyyk, or how lightsabers work, it's easy to get carried away."

02 The huge *Star Wars* Celebration Japan 2025 venue.

03 The *Revenge of the Sith* science panel was a sell-out event.

04 (Left to right) Panelists Gabriel-Philip Santos, Melissa Miller, James Floyd, Dr. Kazuo Tanaka, Dr. Takafumi Maruishi, and Dr. Yukie Nagai.

04



"If there's anything I can talk about for an hour, it's Star Wars!"



05

05 Former ILM model maker Fon Davis (right) with Melissa Miller.

06 The *Star Wars* LIVE! Stage at Celebration Japan 2025.

"Celebration audiences are the best I've ever experienced."

Putting on a panel requires time, energy, and commitment. After all, carrying a laptop, power supplies, and other gear around while negotiating the panel schedule is a different proposition to simply attending and having fun.

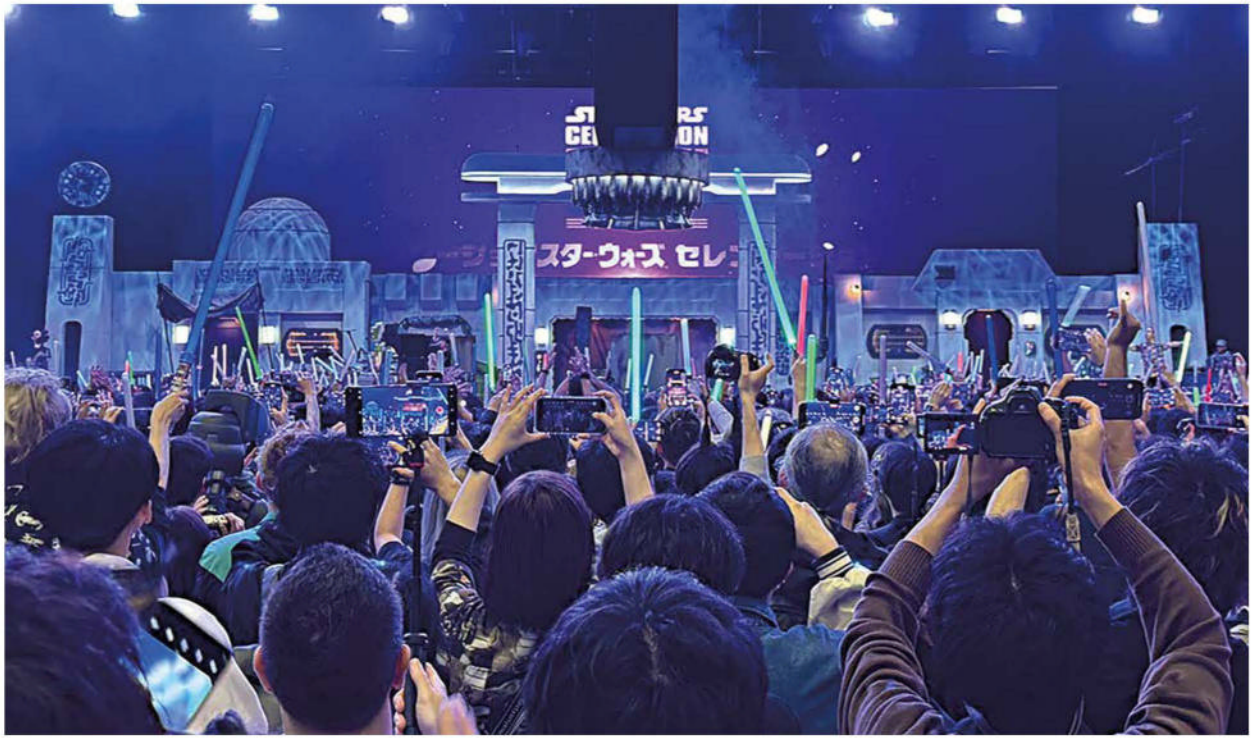
"There's usually 30 minutes or so between panels, and sometimes you need every minute of that to set up, especially if you have technical issues," says Miller. "Every Celebration I've worked at has been held somewhere different, so you also have to find the right room! But I always make sure to participate in all the aspects of Celebration that I can. In Japan, I managed to spend some time in the big panel rooms, get some photo ops, do some shopping, and hang out at the live stage."

Among the connections Miller has made through her panels and podcasts, from fellow science nerds to authors and actors, she has also involved people who have worked directly on *Star Wars* projects. Such luminaries include former Industrial Light & Magic modelmaker Fon Davis, BB-8 puppeteer Brian Herring, and concept and creature artist Jake Lunt Davies.

"Fon has amazing stories and photographs from his days working on the Special Editions and the prequel trilogy," says Miller. "He's also one of the founding members of the Grant Imahara STEAM Foundation, which runs science, technology, engineering, and math activity rooms at Celebration. If you've seen *Light & Magic* Season Two, you'll know that Fon's journey to a career in film was nontraditional. I love helping him share that with convention audiences, so people know that there are many paths and it's never too late, or even too early, to pursue that dream."

Given her positive experiences, what advice would Miller offer others thinking of following her lead and pitching a Celebration fan panel? "A cool idea and a few enthusiastic experts isn't all you need, but it is a great start," she answers. "I look forward to seeing some new faces hosting fan panels in Los Angeles at *Star Wars* Celebration 2027!"

06



The Art of Japan

***Star Wars* Celebration Japan saw the return of Artist Alley, an area dedicated to art inspired by the saga. Twenty artists gathered for the weekend to meet fans and discuss their creations, and *Star Wars Insider* spoke with several whose creations reflected the host nation.**



Hidetaka Tenjin
A NEW HOPE

"I've often dreamt of what *Star Wars* might have been like if Toshiro Mifune had accepted the original offer to play Obi-Wan Kenobi, and this artwork explores that alternate possibility," Hidetaka Tenjin said of his piece. "Since *Star Wars* incorporates elements from Akira Kurosawa's samurai films, I wondered if the reverse could also work; what if *Star Wars* had been created as a Japanese period drama? That idea became the foundation for this piece."



Brad Hudson
THE DAIMYO OF MOS ESPA

"I really enjoyed *The Book of Boba Fett*, so I toyed with the idea of doing an illustration based on that," explained Brad Hudson. "I'd started the sketch of Boba Fett and I wanted to include Cad Bane and Krrsantan, so I worked those two elements together and realized that if the piece was going to be on show in Japan, I wanted to have a reference to manga, so I incorporated the Japanese text."

Tomoko Taniguchi

LOVE IN THE GALAXY

"My childhood dream was to draw Shojo manga style *Star Wars,*" said Tomoko Taniguchi. "Shojo manga equals love, beauty, and cuteness. At that time not many people imagined this style matched the *Star Wars* galaxy. Decades later, my dream came true. I have drawn more than 800 *Star Wars* sketch cards. Using brush pens, watercolor, and color inks, I gathered my favorite pieces for this poster."





Tsuneo Sanda

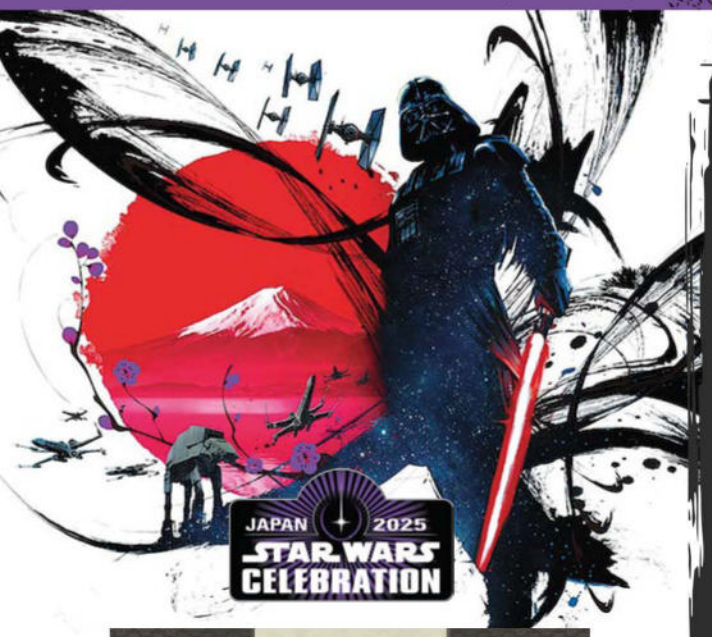
ANAKIN'S PATH

"I was thinking of a piece that had never been done before with Anakin Skywalker. I wanted to focus on his changing eyes. Eyes, unlike words, respond directly to joy, anger, sadness, and happiness, so his eyes were essential to the artwork," explained Tsuneo Sanda. "Anakin couldn't truly trust Yoda, Obi-Wan Kenobi, or even his beloved Padmé because he lived his life only thinking about gaining absolute power, so it made sense that he betrayed the Emperor and saved his son Luke in *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi.*"

THE ANIME AND MANGA PAVILION

In addition to Artist Alley, another area of the show floor was occupied by the Anime and Manga Pavilion, highlighting the incredible art of *Star Wars: Visions.* Displays of production art and models (including T0-B1, pictured right), and areas focused on different episodes of the animation anthology, it was a serene, peaceful, and beautiful area of the convention that offered solace from the hustle and bustle of the main halls.







Akinobu Hara
ROSHO

"I chose Plo Koon because he is a character that fits well in Japanese art," said Akinobu Hara. "There are several Clone Wars figures of Plo-Koon, but the one I drew is his costume first seen in Season 3. I have a strong attention to detail, so I researched every nook and cranny and brushed up the design in my own way to reinterpret the anime design in a live-action style. It was also fun to add elements that can be seen if you look closely, such as the Wolfpack motif and the leaves of the Great Tree."

Mathilde Machuel
THE FORCE SERENITY AND HARMONY

"I wanted to pay tribute to the deep and poetic connections between *Star Wars* and traditional Japanese culture by blending their symbols in the ukiyo-e tradition to explore themes of balance, spiritual connection, and harmony—shared values between Japanese culture and the *Star Wars* mythos," Mathilde Machuel revealed. "Ahsoka Tano is depicted as a kokeshi doll adorned with sakura blossoms. Behind her, a kamon (family crest) combines the sakura flower with the Fulcrum symbol set against a rising sun as soft kumo (clouds) drift across the sky.

Grogu has a playful expression, like a Jizō statue. His kimono bears the asanoha (hemp leaf) pattern, symbolizing strength and growth. A small Arges frog sits on his head, a symbol of protection and safe return, and on his belly is the word "fuku," meaning good fortune and happiness. The purrgil are reimagined as koi fish and the Loth-cat appears as a maneki-neko, the Japanese lucky cat, raising one paw to welcome good fortune.

On the right, a vertical cartouche features the title "The Force" in Aurebesh, flanked by the kanji for "serenity" (静寂) and "harmony" (調和). Several red seals inspired by hanko stamps punctuate the composition—Ahsoka's Fulcrum symbol, Grogu's tiny handprint, and a small convor—serving as narrative details and personal marks of identity."



A CERTAIN POINT OF VIEW

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



Concept art by Matt Allsopp

"Why would Rey's parents entrust their daughter to someone as disreputable as Unkar Plutt?"
Hannah Clark, London, United Kingdom

Given what we observed about Unkar Plutt's demeanor in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, this is an excellent question to consider. Hiding Rey on Jakku, particularly in the hands of Plutt, was never going to be a perfect situation for Rey's mother and father, Miramir and Dathan. When confronted by the choice of allowing Emperor Palpatine to capture Rey or leaving her on Jakku, they clearly felt the latter would be the better alternative. Also, their circumstances did not leave them with a multitude of options or the luxury of time to find somewhere else.

Ochi of Bestoon was hot on their tail and caught up with Rey's parents not long after they'd left Rey behind on the desert world. Before Ochi killed Miramir, Rey's mother insisted that her daughter was no longer on Jakku. The relic hunter clearly believed her enough to not investigate that trail any further. Having discovered Aki-Aki beads in Miramir and Dathan's possession, Ochi incorrectly deduced he would find his prey on Pasaana instead.

A flashback in *The Force Awakens* revealed that Rey had been in Unkar Plutt's clutches as she watched her parents depart Jakku, and it's fair to wonder why Rey's parents thought selling their daughter into indentured servitude was the best

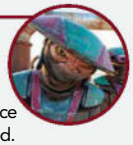
Desert Dwellers

Lor San Tekka



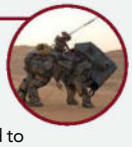
A friend to General Leia Organa, Lor San Tekka was a key figure in the search for Luke Skywalker. A follower of the Church of the Force, Lor San Tekka supplied Poe Dameron with a segment of a map to Skywalker's location before being struck down in a confrontation with Kylo Ren on Jakku.

Constable Zuvio



As the leader of Niima Outpost's militia, Constable Zuvio did his best to watch over Jakku's largest settlement and offered some semblance of law and order to the wayward world. He paid particular attention to guarding the starships at Niima's landing field, though he did not prevent Rey from procuring the *Millennium Falcon*.

Teedos



With the term Teedo referring to both individual members of the species and their species as a whole, Teedos traverse Jakku's deserts on their trusty uggabeast mounts. A Teedo attempted to capture BB-8 as the droid wandered the sands alone, but Rey heard the commotion and saved her future friend from the Teedo's machinations.

course of action, even if they intended to retrieve her at some point. To truly understand the weight of their decision, we must reflect on why Jakku held so much appeal as a refuge, and how Unkar Plutt became such a key figure there.

The galaxy's perception of Jakku played a key role—what kind of parent would want to have their child raised on such a dangerous and desolate place? Even Luke Skywalker conceded that the Inner Rim world was "pretty much nowhere" in *Star Wars: The Last Jedi.*

Situated much closer to Coruscant and the Core than the more distant worlds of the Outer Rim, Jakku was nevertheless considered ▶



Happabore



As a sparsely populated planet, Jakku's most recognizable inhabitants were not always sentient beings. While also found elsewhere in the galaxy, happabores were well-suited to tolerate the heat. In dire need of water, Finn competed with a local happabore for a refreshing drink upon his arrival at Niima Outpost.

Steelpeckers

In a society based on scavenging, steelpeckers were incredibly suited to thriving on Jakku. Attracted to metal, the avians feasted upon the wreckage that was strewn across the planet, providing intriguing natural counterparts to the sentient scavengers who also called Jakku home.





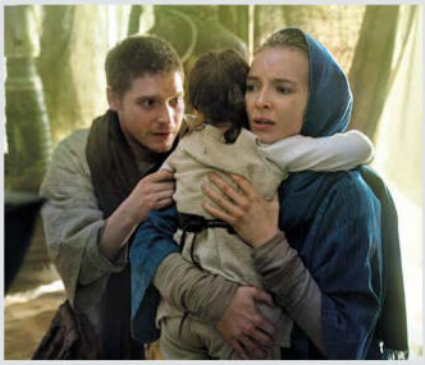
remote and unremarkable. However, Emperor Palpatine had selected the desert planet as a site for his Contingency plan, intending to gather the Empire's remaining Star Destroyers in orbit as a lure for the New Republic fleet. At the Battle of Jakku, only Imperial Admiral Rae Sloane's intervention prevented Gallius Rax from utilizing the tools at his disposal to destroy the planet, and the New Republic's ships along with it. Yet the planet did not come out of the conflict unscathed, as an armada's worth of Imperial and New Republic ships—ranging from starfighters to the Super Star Destroyer *Ravager*—crashed into the surface.

Scavenger Society

Those fields of wreckage played a pivotal role in shaping the society in which Rey would grow up, with scavengers descending upon the remnants of war to strip them of valuable materials and any sellable parts that remained intact. Even with this new stream of income, estimates still put Jakku's population at less than 25,000 inhabitants, a paltry sum when compared to Coruscant's 1 trillion souls or even Tatooine's 200,000. In fact, the barren Niima Outpost ranked as Jakku's largest settlement. With scavenging as Jakku's main industry and a low planetary population, Unkar Plutt reigned over Niima Outpost by offering food portions in exchange for scavenged goods.

By controlling the job market and Jakku's *de facto* capital, Unkar Plutt managed to graduate from being a junk dealer to what was essentially a junk boss. A nearly uninhabited world so shrouded in anonymity that a single battle could alter the trajectory of its entire economy and allow a relatively minor scoundrel like Unkar Plutt to ascend to power? In the minds of Rey's parents, those factors made Jakku the perfect location where Rey could disappear and evade Emperor Palpatine's devious minions.

Of course, Miramir and Dathan's hopes that the situation would be temporary and they could soon return to their daughter seemed to demonstrate that they had no intention of leaving Rey with Unkar Plutt on a long-term basis. As things turned out, Rey spent her formative years largely fending for herself, despite having been initially left in Plutt's custody. With limited options and the Emperor's hunter close behind them, Rey's parents determined that secreting Rey away on Jakku was their best course of action at the time.



JAKKU'S JOURNEY

30 BSW4:
As part of his long-term Contingency plan in the event of his death, then-Chancellor Palpatine ordered the construction of a massive Observatory on Jakku. This site would become a focal point during the Battle of Jakku, as Gallius Rax attempted to destroy the planet and the fleets skirmishing above it.

5 ASW4:
The New Republic prevailed over the Galactic Empire at the Battle of Jakku, a fierce clash that caused heavy casualties on both sides. The Imperial remnants fled to regroup in the Unknown Regions.

5 ASW4:
Niima the Hutt began to scavenge the wreckage that had crashed into Jakku's surface. Eventually known as the Graveyard of Ships, these fields would sustain an industrious generation of scavengers.

21 ASW4:
On the run from Emperor Palpatine's agents, Miramir and Dathan elected to leave their daughter Rey on Jakku rather than allow her grandfather to capture her. Ochi of Bestoon caught up with Rey's parents soon after they departed.

34 ASW4:
Resistance pilot Poe Dameron traveled to Jakku to meet with Lor San Tekka, who provided a map to Luke Skywalker's whereabouts just before the First Order arrived to seize the data.

34 ASW4:
After finding BB-8 and meeting ex-stormtrooper Finn on Jakku, Rey became a target of First Order forces as they sought to recover the map to Skywalker. Rey stole the *Millennium Falcon* from Unkar Plutt's junkyard and escaped.



Catastrophic Contingency

Constructed decades before the Battle of Jakku as part of the Emperor's plan known as "the Contingency," Jakku Observatory housed Sith artifacts and a replica of the Emperor's yacht, the *Imperialis*, the latter of which was utilized by Brendol Hux to travel to the Unknown Regions where he began to forge the First Order.

Following the Emperor's plan, Gallius Rax intended to implode Jakku's core with a borehole and seismic waves, detonating the planet and wiping out the Imperial and Rebel fleets. In order to save her forces above, Imperial Admiral Rae Sloane shot Rax and sealed the borehole before fleeing to the Unknown Regions herself.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?

Send your in-galaxy queries to starwarsinsider@titanemail.com with the subject header, "A Certain Point of View."

SAVE 50% OFF *STAR WARS* FICTION COLLECTIONS

HURRY! LIMITED STOCK!



FROM JUST $6.49!

Fill your shelves with these must-read short fiction collections from fan-favorite authors including: **Justina Ireland, George Mann, John Ostrrander, Cavan Scott, Charles Soule, Timothy Zahn** and more!

SCAN THE CODE TO EXPLORE THE SALE!

Sale only available for customers residing in and posting to mainland United States.
Sale price does not include shipping. Shipping costs will be calculated at checkout.
Sale ends May 31, 2026. Orders dependent on available stock.

© & TM 2026 Lucasfilm Ltd.

TITAN MAGAZINES

Disney · LUCASFILM

STAR WARS INSIDER
WORLDWIDE
CELEBRATING THE SAGA

A FORCE AWAKENED

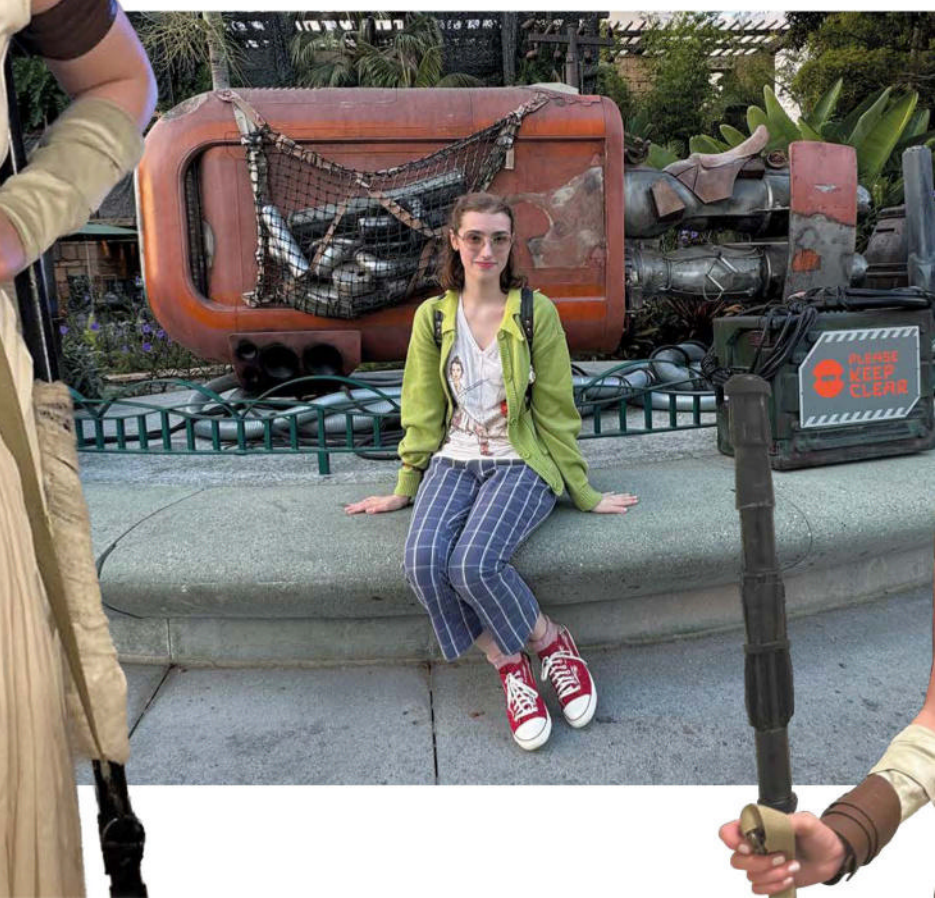
How one fan found an instant connection with Rey



For Annabelle Nash, seeing *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* for the first time was a transformative experience. "I'm now nineteen years old, the same age as Rey was in *The Force Awakens*!" the fan exclaims.

"She's my favorite fictional character ever and is extremely comforting to me as a young woman. Sometimes I can be afraid of who I am, but like Rey I know I don't need anybody to hold my hand. I love the idea of 'found family' in storytelling, and the importance of acknowledging where you come from while also choosing your own future. Biology may explain how you came to be, but only you get to decide who you'll become."

Annabelle's connection to the desert-dwelling Force-wielder was instantaneous. "Ever since I first saw Rey in the movie theater at ten years old, I immediately became obsessed with her character and the wonderful Daisy Ridley, who played her," she says. "Not only does Rey have such an inspiring story, but Daisy herself has had to stand up for herself as a young woman in the public eye. Both are graceful and kind with their words while also



INSIDER NEEDS YOU!

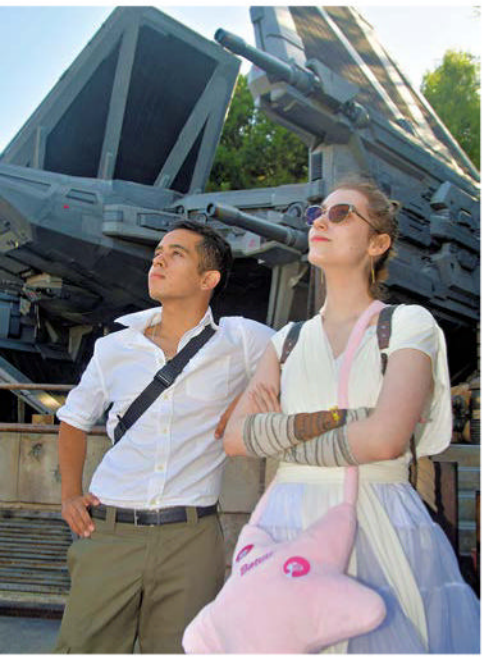
We want to hear from you! Tell us about your *Star Wars* experience. What made you want to become a fan? What have you done in the name of *Star Wars*? Tell us your *Star Wars* story by sending your photos, art, and letters here:

starwarsinsider@titanemail.com

Or via regular post:

UNITED STATES
Star Wars Worldwide,
Star Wars Insider,
Titan Magazines,
2819 Rosehall Lane,
Aurora, IL, 60503,
U.S.A.

UNITED KINGDOM
Star Wars Worldwide,
Star Wars Insider,
144 Southwark
Street, London,
SE1 0UP,
U.K.



asserting their power. Not to mention their amazing outfits!"

Much like Rey, Annabelle is talented in a multitude of ways. "I am an artist, writer, editor, and cosplayer in my free time, and *Star Wars* always serves as a big inspiration. I've been dressing up as Rey since I was twelve. It's always exciting to show my Disneybounding at Galaxy's Edge, and I would love to visit a convention one day," she remarks. "For now, I'm posting my art and costumes online and connecting with other people who also adore Rey."



ARTISTS' ALLEY

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

01 "GENERAL HUX" AND "FINN & POE" BY EVELINA MARKEVIČIŪTĖ

Evelina Markeviciute credits *Star Wars* for helping her to become "a creative person—dreaming bigger, being curious and unafraid to express my imagination." Evelina's art depicting Finn and Poe Dameron, who first met in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, was inspired "by their on-screen connection, the deep friendship and understanding they had for each other."





For General Hux, Evelina harnessed parallels between the antagonist and General Gleb Vaganov from the Broadway musical, *Anastasia*. "The drawing is meant to depict the turmoil of their respective situations."

02 "ELLO ASTY" & "MAZ KANATA" BY DEREK NOCHEFRANCA

"I remember the excitement after watching, and rewatching, *The Force Awakens* upon its release," recalls Derek Nochefranca, who has captured the likes of Maz Kanata and Resistance pilot Ello Asty in his fan art. "My head was spinning with possibilities for the future. Maz Kanata was a colorful and complex character that felt like meeting a combination of someone as wise as Yoda and an underworld smuggling friend like Lando Calrissian for the first time. I was intrigued to see how her role might expand, both into the past and the future."



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

Jacob Robinson meets ANDY SERKIS



Jacob Robinson poses with Andy Serkis, who portrayed Supreme Leader Snoke in the sequel trilogy and Kino Loy in *Andor*.

"Being a lifelong *Star Wars* fan, Andy Serkis was someone that I had to meet," says Jacob Robinson, adding, "No matter what the character, Serkis always delivers a captivating performance."

Serkis began his *Star Wars* career by playing Supreme Leader Snoke in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* before starring in *Andor* Season 1 as Cassian Andor's fellow prisoner on Narkina 5, Kino Loy. "Andy Serkis was extremely respectful," says Jacob of his meeting with the actor. "He greeted me with a handshake and even did the 'One Way Out' pose," he exclaims.

Speaking about Serkis' outstanding turn as Snoke in the sequel trilogy, Jacob says, "He was such a compelling antagonist that raised so many questions, and displayed such power over his subordinates. The fear he evoked was very similar to Darth Vader, while his ability to manipulate was comparable to Palpatine's. I couldn't think of a better actor to portray that role!"



A CELEBRATION OF *STAR WARS*
Food and friends make the saga a family affair

For Eve England, *Star Wars* has been the fandom that has remained a constant in her life. "It all started with showings of the original trilogy on TV at Christmas and having a good collection of action figures, but everything came full circle when I finally had the chance to watch a *Star Wars* movie in the cinema for the first time in 2015," Eve says. "The hype for *The Force Awakens* was phenomenal, and a bunch of us from work met up for a midnight screening on opening night."

Eve built upon the familial spirit of the *Star Wars* experience by organizing parties with a variety of saga-infused dishes. "My first foray into themed gingerbread and food started in 2013, when I hosted my first *Star Wars* Christmas Party," Eve remembers. "This event sparked my obsession with hosting themed parties," explains the baker, whose spreads of Wookiee cookies, C-3PO snacks, and TIE fighter treats are often inspired by the amazing range of *Star Wars* cookery books and recipes published on StarWars.com. "I have all of the recipe books and plenty of *Star Wars*-branded kitchenware. May the Fourth is an important holiday in our house every year," Eve adds.









Seeing *The Force Awakens* on the big screen has become a treasured memory for the fan. "It was a truly momentous event, and it was an emotional experience watching in a theater where no one knew what was coming or where the Skywalker saga would go next," Eve recalls. "There was something magically nostalgic about hearing the gorgeous John Williams score. It was a moment that confirmed for me that *Star Wars* is more like a state of being and not just a movie."



FINN-SPIRATIONAL

The Force Awakens' rogue stormtrooper ignites a fan's cosplay journey

"When I first saw *The Force Awakens*, I was immediately intrigued by Finn's attitude and his compassion to helping others, especially Rey," shares cosplayer Matteo Adams. "He represents trust, loyalty, and doing the right thing. I felt that mirrored how I care about my friends and family and always want to help others. I feel like he and I are so much alike."

Matteo traces his passion for *Star Wars* back to watching the trailer for *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* when he was 10 years old. "I thought that Darth Maul looked super cool, so I really wanted to see that movie. I fell in love with *Star Wars* when I saw it in the theater with my stepdad, and bought every VHS, played every game, collected the toys. Even when I was in school, all I could think about was *Star Wars.* My friends and teachers would call me Skywalker or Kenobi, and they would test my knowledge of the movies."

The arrival of the sequel trilogy brought with it a fresh sense of exhilaration, as well as a newfound hobby. "*The Force Awakens* introduced me into the world of cosplay and inspired me to do my Finn outfit. It is an absolute gem of a film—the characters were brilliant, the story was fantastic, and it left me cheering for more. It will always have a special place in my heart," Matteo declares.

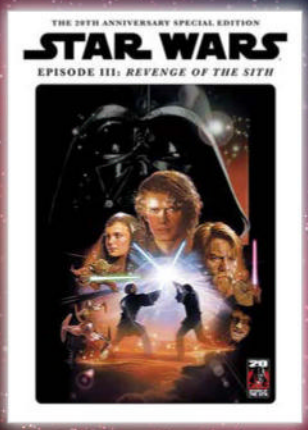




THE UNMISSABLE *STAR WARS* BOOK SALE

LIMITED TIME ONLY! LIMITED STOCK!

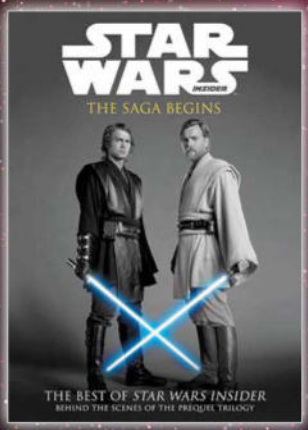


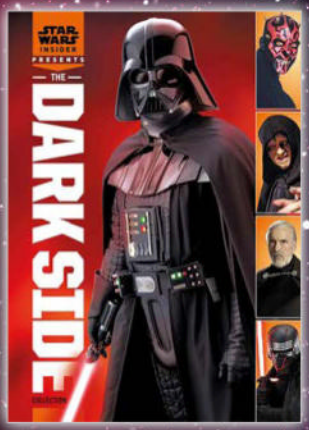




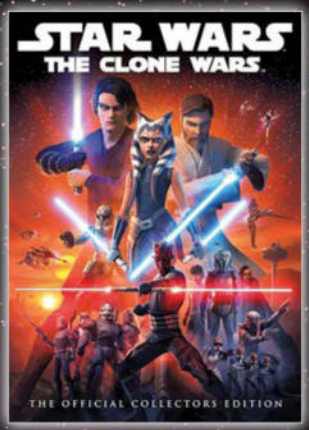


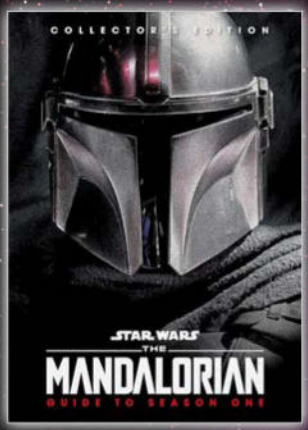
















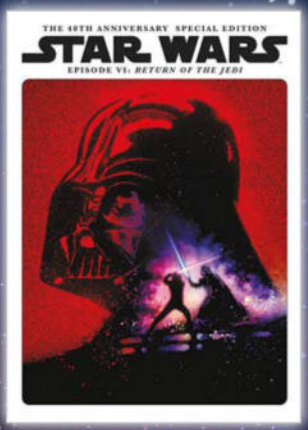
TITAN MAGAZINES

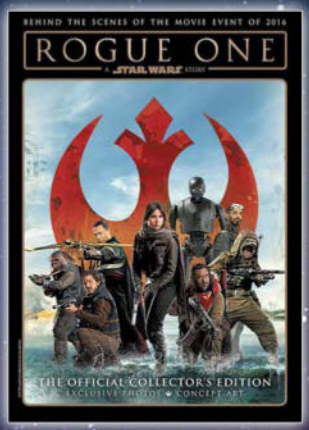
Sale only available for customers residing in and posting to mainland United States. Sale price does not include shipping. Shipping costs will be calculated at checkout. Sale ends June 30, 2026. Orders dependent on available stock.

SAVE $$$ OFF THESE MUST-READ BOOKS & COMPANIONS!

50% OFF!

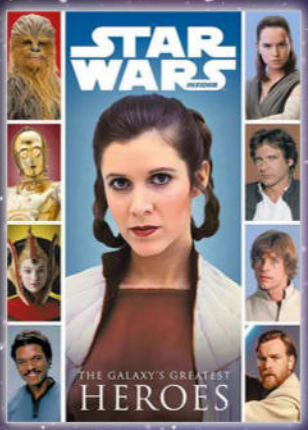
From ***Star Wars: A New Hope*** to ***The Mandalorian*** and beyond, these books are the perfect companions to your favorite movies and TV shows!









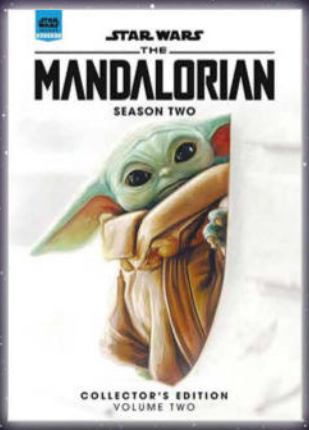




SCAN THE CODE TO SHOP THE SALE!









© & TM 2026 Lucasfilm Ltd.

Disney · LUCASFILM



STAR WARS

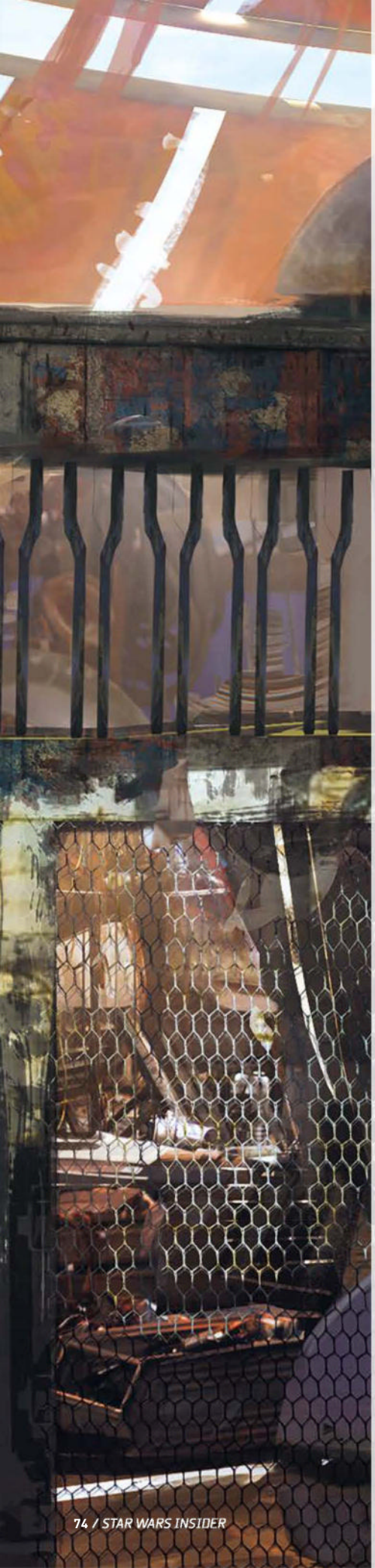
GALACTIC TALES

A LOOSE CONNECTION

BY KRISTIN BAVER

Concept art by Erik Tiemens and Yanick Dusseault





Rey's mind often played tricks on her before first light.

In the darkness, on the edge of sleep and wakefulness, the shrieking cries of the Jakku night took on other forms. Shadows appeared to claw their way towards her or stand looming over the hammock where she slumbered, their jagged shapes suggesting both friendly apparitions and hungry ripper raptors. The beautiful and the grotesque filled her unconscious mind. She was sure she dreamed of her parents, but by morning, her family had vanished, leaving behind an ache.

Rey desperately wanted to conjure her mother's face, to remember the sound of her father's laugh, even if it was only a memory growing more distant each day. She'd spent half her life among the dunes. The idea that she had ever been a child loved by the people who had raised her from birth seemed more and more like one of the stories the scavengers told to pass the time at the cleaning tables. Last night, Rey had dreamt of something new. The terror jostled her awake. Even now, hours later in the harsh light of midday, if she closed her eyes again, she could see the silhouette of a building engulfed in flames. A shattered cry. Darkness. It felt as clear as a memory, the heat warming her cheeks. But she couldn't place it. And she couldn't shake the fear.

"Hey!" Unkar Plutt towered over Rey, arms crossed in disapproval.

"Hey!" Unkar Plutt towered over Rey, arms crossed in disapproval. "Are you listening?"

"Are you listening?"

Rey's mind snapped back to the sneering Crolute before her. "Right. Yes! Sorry?"

"Repeat it back, girl."

Rey's mind routinely wandered when she was out in the dunes, where the risk was even greater than Unkar's rage. "Stay in the concession stand. Don't touch anything. Make sure the traveler knows to come back tomorrow." Unkar seemed displeased, but Rey had gotten her instructions perfect. She tried not to show her disappointment in her assignment. There would be no scavenging today.

The hours lingered as Rey sat alone behind the counter of Plutt's trading stand, the shadow of the spaceport gate crawling across the ground. She fidgeted on the stool that helped her reach the scavenged grate that passed for a window, her feet dangling. Niima Outpost was built with someone like Plutt in mind, not a 13-year-old girl. Still, she was grateful for what little protection the stand afforded.

The wind kicked up beyond the walls, gusts of sand dancing in the sunshine, and Rey slid a salvaged rebel pilot's helmet over her ears. She had told Plutt she brought it along so the visor could help keep the sand out of her eyes, and that was partially true. Waiting for his contact meant she couldn't raise the stand's fortified metal gate even though the trading post was vacant, a rarity this time of day. Word had spread that Plutt was offworld, and that meant no trading. No trading meant no rations. She expected at least one hungry scavenger to ignore the edict and come begging for a half portion. But Plutt kept anything of value locked up safely elsewhere. Rey had nothing to offer beyond a bottle of half-drunk recycled water, getting warmer with every sip.

Rey slipped her handmade pilot doll out of her satchel, positioning the faceless plaything on the countertop toward the window. Unkar's hut could be transformed into anything Rey could imagine, and for a moment, the shoddy walls around her disappeared. She and her little co-pilot were off on an adventure in a ship all their own.

Rey closed her eyes and let her imagination take over.

"Unkar! You're looking well today…" The bellowing laugh caught Rey off guard and silently she cursed herself for being so careless. It would be foolish for anyone to try breaking into Plutt's kiosk while he was away, but the desert made fools of everyone in time. She had to be ready to defend herself. Luckily, the Besalisk at the window seemed friendly, a lopsided smile exposing a row of pointy teeth.

Rey couldn't hide her disdain. The stranger had undoubtedly taken her for a child half her age. "You must be Emm'jai."

The new arrival settled two of her hands onto her hips while crossing the other two arms. Then she raised one hand to stroke her jowls, eyes narrowing. "If I am, my business is with Plutt," Emm'jai said curtly. A cloud of sand swirled around the Besalisk, the corners of her poncho flapping like a steelpecker taking flight. She began brushing the dust that had accumulated about her as she'd crossed the short distance between her ship and Plutt's building. Clearly a storm was brewing outside.

"He's not here. Come back tomorrow."

"Now, look here," Emm'jai jabbed one finger through the grate, nearly touching Rey's visor and sending her tipping backwards. "Plutt thinks I can afford to just wait around on this dust rock all day while he's off counting his credits as some Gilliand spritzes his flippers?" Emm'jai's arms spread wide in frustration, an impressive span. "At least tell me he *has* the part he promised?"

Unkar's penchant for violence was legendary around Niima Outpost. Although he was far from kind to her, Rey knew he valued her for her usefulness. Her small stature helped her squeeze into places in downed ships that usually only a Teedo could reach, and her natural skills took over from there. Still, with the stranger's outburst, she felt the early morning fear returning.

"If you know Unkar, you know his little empire is the only thing he cares about," Rey said, her voice calmer than she felt. "Come back tomorrow."

"If you know Unkar, you know his little empire is the only thing he cares about."

The message delivered, Rey pressed a switch to activate the barrier. As it slid past, snapping into place and cutting through the radiating heat, Emm'jai unleashed a torrent of colorful words from the other side.

Tap tap tap.

Rey tried to ignore the muffled protests and incessant knocking, readjusting her flight helmet.

Tap tap tap.

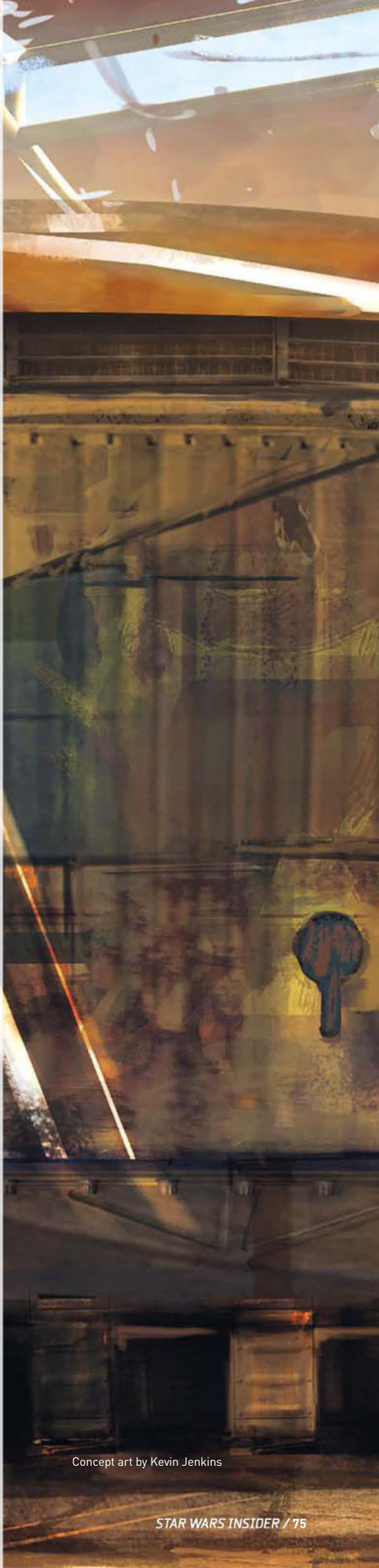
The end of a piece of string had started to come loose on her doll's tattered garments. One sharp tug and the little co-pilot's orange flight suit would unravel, undoing all her hard work.

Tap tap tap.

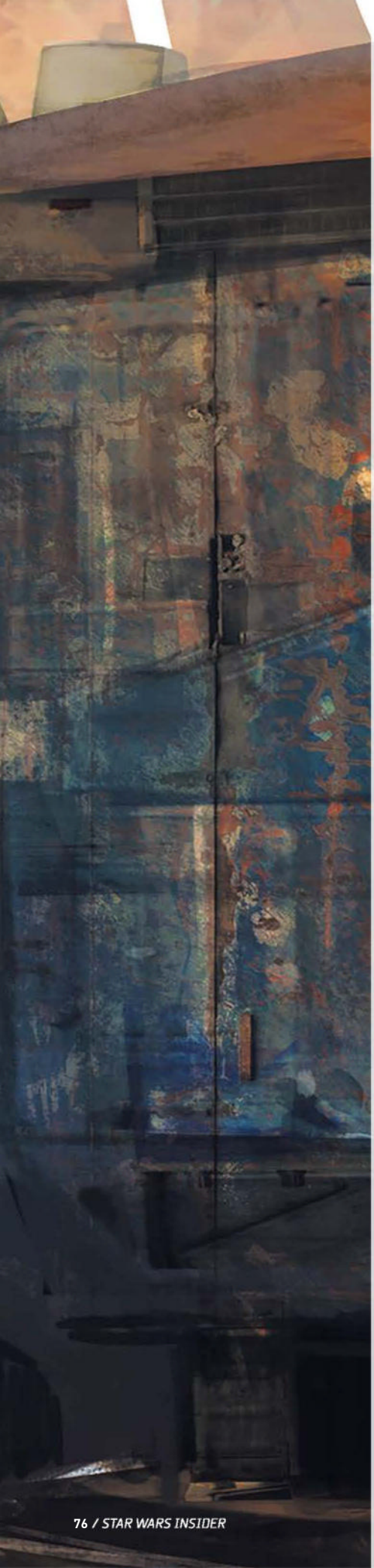
Even if she *could* ignore Unkar's guest, it was probably unwise to risk his wrath. Or Emm'jai's for that matter. As the partition retracted, Emm'jai smiled, as if she'd flipped her own internal switch and was gearing up to approach the situation with all her charms fully activated. "Listen," she cooed. "I don't want to be here anymore than you want me to be disrupting… your flight maneuvers, or whatever you're up to in there." Rey scowled. "But maybe I can at least wait for Unkar inside? I've got about half your desert in my left boot and it's not getting any better standing here."

Rey debated the consequences of disobeying Plutt's instructions before unlocking the back door anyway. She immediately regretted her decision. With the service window's barrier back firmly in place and the exhaust fans battened down, there wasn't much space in the cramped quarters. The traveler had clearly never been behind the counter of Unkar's stand before.

"So, this is what it's like to be the junkboss of Niima," Emm'jai said, her eyes studying the dimly lit ▸



Concept art by Kevin Jenkins



surroundings. "Just between us girls, I prefer to deal with that old crook from a distance."

"I've never seen you here," Rey challenged.

"You know Unkar," Emm'jai said. "He usually sends one of his thugs to pick up cargo from wherever my ship is docked. Jakku's not exactly a regular stopover for the *Smuggler's Soul*, but I've been here a time or two."

Rey teetered on Plutt's stool while outside the stand the wind continued to howl. "Mind if I make myself at home?" Emm'jai asked, pulling the poncho over her head, grunting as she slipped an unwieldy pack off her shoulders. The Besalisk's gaze had settled on Rey, with a curious but not unkind expression. "You, uh, some kinda pilot?" Rey pulled off the helmet and set it down on the counter next to her doll. "Oh." Emm'jai's tone softened. "You're just a kid."

"I'm a scavenger," Rey corrected. "One of the best."

Emm'jai hid a smile behind one hand, feigning a cough to stifle a laugh. "You'd have to be for ol' Unkie to trust you back here with all his treasures." Rey's nose crinkled at the nickname, and the Besalisk lost the battle, a true guffaw, different from the one she had greeted the child with, erupting. "I'm Emm'jai. But you already knew that."

"Rey."

"Well, Rey. You ever heard about the dashing exploits of the smuggler Han Solo?"

Rey forgot about Plutt and the storm, listening intently as Emm'jai unspooled her tale. The stories of Solo had been passed down among smugglers and rogues, calling some of their credence into question. But Rey didn't care if they were true or not. She was utterly transfixed. Calm under pressure, with a quick wit and a quicker draw, the smuggler Emm'jai described was charming and capable, but most importantly free to do as he pleased and make his own destiny.

"Well, Rey. You ever heard about the dashing exploits of the smuggler Han Solo?"

The cleaning tables were routinely clogged with scavengers swapping stories, but their knowledge was limited to local history. Most just wanted to talk about the great battle that had effectively ended the war and brought what passed for prosperity to Jakku and a new era of peace to the Republic. Inspired by the Graveyard of Giants that loomed over their daily lives, they were stuck in the past, retreading forgotten victories.

Emm'jai's story of the scoundrel who wooed a princess was beyond anything Rey could have imagined. "And that's why you never cross a Hutt." Emm'jai took a swig of Rey's water. "Carbonite is nasty stuff. Leaves you with quite a cough. And you wake up starving!"

Rey's stomach gurgled as if in response. "You hungry, kid?"

"I have some rations…" Rey began to protest, but Emm'jai was already reaching into her pack. Carefully, she readjusted a strange pile of parts, pulling out a silvery packet. "Dried nuna?"

The smell alone had a pleasant sharpness. Rey placed a small hunk of meat on her tongue, savoring the tangy and sweet flavor. But there was something else. As she began to chew, she felt convinced she'd eaten dried nuna before, long ago. There was something familiar. A vague notion of being swaddled in a colorful blanket. Streaks of light through a window. Comfort.

"When was the last time you ate?" The feeling was lost as soon as Emm'jai spoke.

"I told you; I'm a very good scavenger. I earn plenty of rations to get by until…" Rey caught herself before she said it out loud: until my family comes back. They would still, wouldn't they? With each passing day, it felt more like a fantasy. But if the princess from Emm'jai's story

could risk her kingdom, slaying a monster to save her love and her own life, then surely Rey's family would return for her. Her parents would be back. Even Unkar said so.

Rey let the silence hang between them, Emmjai's eyes softening. "Kid," she said, clicking her tongue, "that's no way to live." A gust outside sent a piece of scrap slamming into the kiosk's metal gate, cutting Emm'jai off abruptly to Rey's relief. She didn't want Emm'jai's pity and she didn't need some stranger suggesting ways off this rock, as if she hadn't had the audacity to think about leaving the wretched world before. Rey had been waiting so long she'd started to lose track of the days, but she knew that if her family was going to find her, she needed to stay right where she was.

A small lamp in the corner of Plutt's hovel caught a glint off an oblong form perched at the mouth of Emm'jai's pack. "Is that a droid?" Rey asked.

Emm'jai beamed. "Not just any droid." Instead of lifting the droid out, Emm'jai peeled back the sides around it. What Rey had mistaken for an ancient PIP droid resting on a pile of spare parts was just the head of something else entirely. An old charging station had been refashioned as a neck of sorts, welded onto a bulky and armless metal body. Two tiny feet peeked out from what looked like a miniature Republic-era gonk droid's reused frame, adding mobility. Rey guessed that the battery plugged into its charging port was what kept the PIP hybrid functional. "This is HLE-3. Ellee. I'd introduce you, but his power supply has been malfunctioning," Emm'jai frowned.

"You came here to fix it?"

"*Him*," Emm'jai corrected. "He's a complicated hybrid. Been in my family for generations now. Those New Republic power cells overrun his circuits and then you're in for a rough ride. But Unkar has ways of finding just what I need…for a price."

"Plutt's more likely to sell you a part that will just send you limping back here," Rey scoffed. "Could I?" she asked, gesturing toward the droid but not reaching for it.

Emm'jai nodded, hesitant. "He's already deader than dead."

Rey crouched on the floor, impossibly small next to the droid, while Emm'jai took Plutt's stool. The child carefully removed the PIP from its charging port, gently setting aside the old tech. Inside the neck, which was welded haphazardly to the miniature GNK base, a mess of wiring cluttered her view. But Rey's hand was small enough to fit inside all the way up to her elbow. Emm'jai sat silently watching her trace each circuit. Rey tightened a few loose wires by feel, then her knuckles brushed against a sharp corner.

"Is that a converter?" Rey asked.

"Impressive," Emm'jai said, a look of genuine admiration in her eyes. "Unkie's latest fix." Rey couldn't hide her disgust. "Sorry. Unkar. He keeps telling me it's time to upgrade to a newer model, but he doesn't understand. Ellee is family."

Emm'jai gazed at Rey, quizically.

> *"I never took Unkar for the paternal type. Where are your parents, Rey?"*

"I never took Unkar for the paternal type." Rey could sense a difficult question was coming. "Where are your parents, Rey?"

"Traveling," Rey answered, the well-rehearsed line spilling out before she could give it a thought.

"For a long time?"

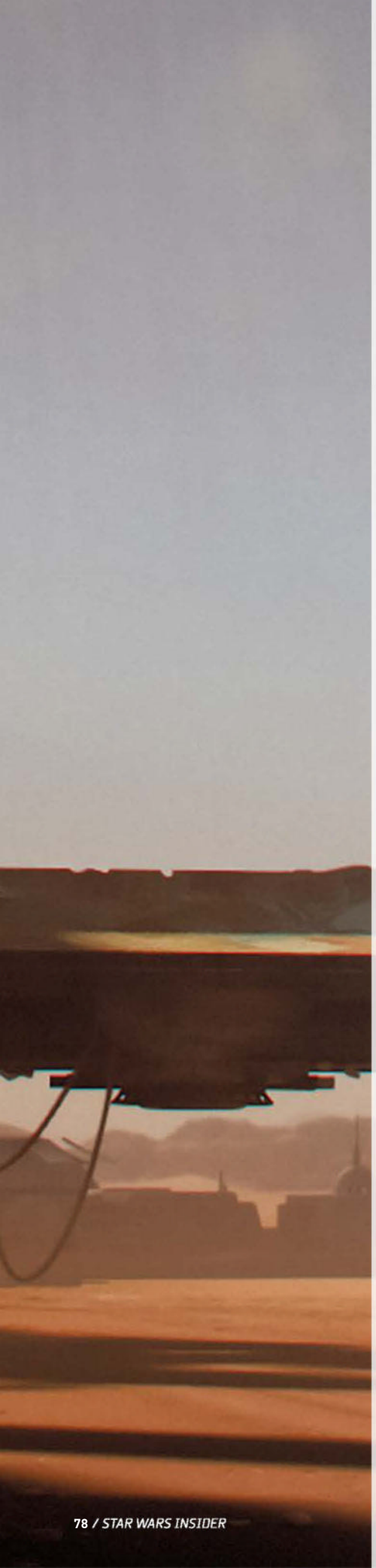
"They're clearing their debt and then…they're coming back for me." The words came out quieter and more defensive than Rey intended. Emm'jai had been kind. She had shared her food without pause. Her stories had made the hours pass by faster and far more enjoyable than most of Rey's days on Jakku. But, still, Rey didn't like her questions. Asking too many questions was dangerous.

"Is he using an Imperial converter?" Rey asked.

Emm'jai nodded. "It's all Plutt could find last time. What Ellee needs is ▸



Concept art by Kevin Jenkins



an older model, but they are getting harder and harder to come by."

Rey had traversed the remains of the Empire's greatest machines and the remnants of rebel fighters, the latter often cobbled together like the cherished droid. She didn't have the part Emm'jai needed; Unkar hadn't trusted her enough to leave such a valuable item unattended, even though Rey couldn't fathom what any of the scavengers could do with a pre-war converter even if they dared to outright steal from Unkar. Plutt was the only trader they knew.

"Maybe I can at least get him operational." Rey continued to feel her way through the web of wiring and hastily thrown-together pathways. The droid's innards had been retrofitted so many times that his system was unlike anything she'd ever scavenged. But somehow, she felt as if she could see into the heart of the droid's circuitry. Tightening a few wires here, unplugging a few there, she worked until she'd found a way to bring the converter to half its normal power. Removing her hand, Rey plugged the PIP in and pressed a button.

Somehow, she felt as if she could see into the heart of the droid's circuitry.

A clanging sound, then the battery body shook violently. Rey couldn't tell if she had fixed the droid or activated a self-destruct sequence. But then the machine calmed, and the lights on the head began to glow. Ellee chirped to life, his high-pitched beeps occasionally punctuated by a baritone "Gonk!"

Emm'jai cheered. "Welcome back, old friend!"

Suddenly, Rey was in the air.

"Ha-HA! You fixed him!" Emm'jai, hooting and hollering, had scooped her up into a hug with such vigor, Rey's feet were once more dangling off the floor.

"It's only…temporary," Rey squeaked, the air forced from her lungs by Emm'jai's embrace, her four muscled arms making it hard to breathe and harder to speak.

"Isn't everything?" Emm'jai laughed again, and together they spun around the cramped kiosk, a feeling so ridiculously giddy that even Rey had to laugh. After a few twirls, Emm'jai loosened her grip, but Rey clung on tightly, her face pressed into the folds of Emm'jai's neck.

By the time the new friends parted, the storm that had battered their shelter had subsided and the sun was setting over the dunes. Emm'jai turned the pack upside down, a piece of fruit and other snacks tumbling out, before carefully placing Ellee back inside, conserving his power. Rey tried not to eye the food too hungrily.

"Here." Emm'jai scooped the silvery nuna pouch and other packets in one massive hand, using a spare bit of cloth to wrap the fruit with another, and handed them to her. "I can't take these," Rey began to protest. "I didn't get you your part and…"

"Rey," Emm'jai said softly. "Not everything is a transaction or a tradeoff."

Rey frowned, confused.

"Trust me. It's not," Emm'jai added, unwavering. "Consider this a token of our friendship. That means there's no repayment due. And tell Unkar we'll be back tomorrow for our part."

Emm'jai waved and Ellee, oblong head glowing, chirped a goodbye as the pair set off for their ship.

Another day had passed. Rey was still alone on Jakku. But as the sun set, she felt lighter, more hopeful, than she had in recent memory. That night, she feasted on dried nuna, pretending to share with her little doll but finishing every bite herself as she related Emm'jai's tales of Han Solo to her homemade confidante.

Later, by lamplight, Rey unraveled the doll's orange flight suit and began wrapping her in the rugged fatigues of a smuggler, using the scrap of Emm'jai's fabric.

When she finally closed her eyes, Rey fell into a rare, restful, and dreamless sleep.

THE END



Concept art by Yanick Dusseault

JEDI MASTER'S QUIZ

Join us in celebrating *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*' 10th anniversary with our quiz that reveals its ties to themes from the original trilogy.

Compiled by Jay Stobie

"THERE'S BEEN AN AWAKENING."

Resist the First Order and solve these *The Force Awakens*-related questions.

REBELLIOUS ROOTS

1: Which democratic government rose to prominence following the Battle of Endor?
A/ The Chiss Ascendancy
B/ The Techno Union
C/ Black Sun
D/ The New Republic

2: From whom did Rey and Finn steal the *Millennium Falcon*?
A/ Unkar Plutt
B/ Lando Calrissian
C/ Boba Fett
D/ Dryden Vos



3: What was Han Solo's occupation when he first met Rey and Finn?
A/ Archaeologist
B/ Ambassador
C/ Carpenter
D/ Smuggler



4: Where was General Leia Organa's Resistance base located?
A/ Tatooine
B/ At Attin
C/ D'Qar
D/ Corellia



5: What vital information was stored inside R2-D2?
A/ A great recipe for Klatooinian truffles
B/ A piece of the map leading to Luke Skywalker
C/ A biography of Snoke
D/ A guide to Starkiller Base



THE ASHES OF THE EMPIRE



6: Where did Imperial loyalists reorganize their forces to become the First Order?
A/ The Deep Core
B/ Hutt Space
C/ The Unknown Regions
D/ The Fourth Dimension



7: What abandoned Imperial vehicle served as Rey's home on Jakku?
A/ AT-AT walker
B/ Light cruiser
C/ Star Destroyer
D/ TIE fighter



8: Who was the grandfather of Kylo Ren?
A/ Darth Tyranus
B/ Darth Sidious
C/ Darth Vader
D/ Darth Plagueis



9: What familiar starfighters attacked the First Order's Starkiller Base stronghold?
A/ A-wings
B/ B-wings
C/ E-wings
D/ X-wings



10: Where did Han Solo suggest Captain Phasma be thrown once she was captured?
A/ A bantha den
B/ Trash compactor
C/ A Star Destroyer brig
D/ Jabba's dungeon

THE LINEAGE OF THE FORCE



11: Where did Rey find the lightsaber that Luke Skywalker lost on Cloud City?
A/ Cobb Vanth's office
B/ Maz Kanata's castle
C/ Peli Motto's hangar
D/ Bib Fortuna's palace

12: According to Han Solo, what was the reason behind Luke Skywalker's disappearance?
A/ To look for the first Jedi temple
B/ To resurrect Obi-Wan Kenobi
C/ To become a Sith
D/ To find Padmé Amidala's family

13: Who did Luke Skywalker's old lightsaber call to?
A/ Poe Dameron
B/ Rey
C/ Kaydel Connix
D/ Bala-Tik



14: How did Rey escape from captivity on Starkiller Base?
A/ She stole Kylo Ren's shuttle
B/ She took General Hux hostage
C/ She disguised herself as a stormtrooper
D/ She used a Jedi mind trick

15: To which planet did Luke Skywalker exile himself?
A/ Cantonica
B/ Jedha
C/ Ahch-To
D/ Dantooine



"THE BELONGING YOU SEEK IS NOT BEHIND YOU... IT IS AHEAD."

Awaken the Force and find 10 key terms from *The Force Awakens* below:

B	I	L	L	N	I	N	E	N	U	M	B	M	Y
A	H	C	H	O	W	B	I	B	C	C	A	M	O
L	I	G	H	T	S	A	B	E	R	P	O	S	S
S	W	R	A	R	T	I	N	K	N	C	A	R	C
N	U	E	R	O	W	O	K	I	E	N	S	E	H
A	C	S	B	A	R	O	A	F	F	I	U	M	E
B	G	I	L	W	E	A	O	P	O	N	P	N	W
S	P	S	K	Y	A	L	A	K	I	V	E	V	B
O	R	T	A	N	H	S	K	A	I	S	R	Q	A
V	A	A	M	E	L	O	L	P	C	E	W	B	C
I	T	N	J	A	D	I	S	K	N	I	E	G	C
Z	H	C	I	A	C	Y	U	N	K	O	A	N	A
A	T	E	H	U	N	J	E	D	I	I	P	O	S
L	A	C	K	B	A	R	K	E	R	A	O	A	H
J	R	I	I	B	A	C	C	O	R	U	N	E	N



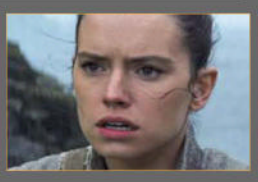
ANSWERS QUIZ:
"THERE'S BEEN AN AWAKENING."
1. D, 2. A, 3. D, 4. C, 5. B, 6. C, 7. A, 8. C, 9. D, 10. B, 11. B, 12. A, 13. B, 14. D, 15. C.
"THE BELONGING YOU SEEK IS NOT BEHIND YOU... IT IS AHEAD."
1. Nien Nunb, 2. Wookiee, 3. Ackbar, 4. Superweapon, 5. Jedi, 6. Hoth, 7. Chewbacca, 8. Rathtar, 9. Resistance, 10. Lightsaber

HOW DID YOU DO?

Were you able to connect the events of *The Force Awakens* to the original trilogy?



0-9: That's not how the Force works! Try again.



10-19: The light... it's always been there. It will guide you.



20-25: Congratulations! You're a big deal in the Resistance.

NEXT ISSUE

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE | ISSUE 236

STAR WARS INSIDER

236

Rogue One: A Star Wars Story

The ongoing legacy of the *Star Wars* prequel



Rebuild the Galaxy

Behind the scenes of the LEGO *Star Wars* animated special

Into the Nightlands

How the Dark Horse Comics mini-series was created

Exclusive Fiction

An all-new story by Lucasfilm's Phil Szostak

Interviews:

Alistair Petrie

Andor's General Draven

Sam Witwer

on the return of Maul in *Star Wars: Shadow Lord*

STAR WARS INSIDER TITAN MAGAZINES

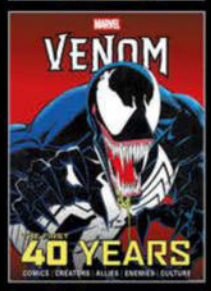
Disney · Lucasfilm

© & TM 2024 Lucasfilm Ltd.

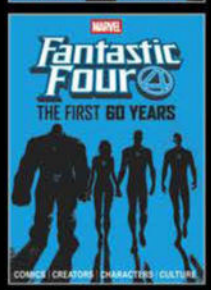
United States Postal Service
Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation
1. Publication Title: Star Wars Insider 2. Publication Number: 0003-3027
3. Filing Date: 10-1-25 4. Issue Frequency: Bi-monthly 5. Number of Issues Published Annually: 6 6. Annual Subscription Price: $39.99 7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication: 2819 Rosehall Ln. Aurora, IL 60503
Contact Person: John Dziewiatkowski 630-841-3349 8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher: 2819 Rosehall Ln. Aurora IL 60503 9. Full names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor: Publisher: Nick Landau Editor: Christopher Cooper Managing Editor: Christopher Cooper Address: 144 Southwark St., London England, SE1 0UP 10. Owner: Titan Publishing Group LLC. Nick Landau, Vivian Cheung 144 Southwark St. London, England, SE1 0UP 11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities: None. 12. Tax Status Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months, The purpose, function, and non-profit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months 13. Publication Title: Star Wars Insider 14. Issue Date for Circulation Date Below: Jan–Oct (Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months). Extent and Nature of Circulation: Paid 15. a). Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 19,301 b. (1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions: 2,597 (2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated: 0 (3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Courier Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS: 12,602 (4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS: 1,000 c. Total Paid Distribution: 16,198 d. and e. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution: 0 f. Total Distribution 16,198 g. Copies not Distributed: 5,301 h. Total: 21,499 i. Percent Paid: 100 14. Issue Date for Circulation Date Below: SEP/OCT (No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date). Extent and Nature of Circulation: Paid 15 a). Total Number of Copies (Net press run): 19,074 b. (1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions: 2,480 (2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated: 0 (3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Courier Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS: 12,452 (4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS: 0 c. Total Paid Distribution: 14,932 d. and e. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution: 0 f. Total Distribution: 14,932 g. Copies not Distributed: 4,887 h. Total: 19,819 i. Percent Paid: 100 16. Electronic Copy Circulation Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 months: a. Paid Electronic Copies: 500 b. Total Paid Print Copies + Paid Electronic Copies: 16,698 c. Total Paid Distribution + Paid Electronic Copies: 16,698 d. Percent Paid: 100% No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: a. Paid Electronic Copies: 500 b. Total Paid Print Copies + Paid Electronic Copies: 15,432 c. Total Paid Distribution + Paid Electronic Copies: 15,432 d. Percent Paid: 100% 17. Statement included in: Issue 234 (Nov/Dec) 18. Completed by: John Dziewiatkowski, Publisher



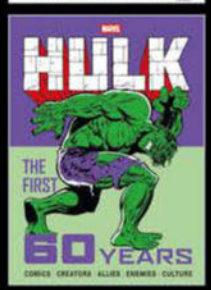






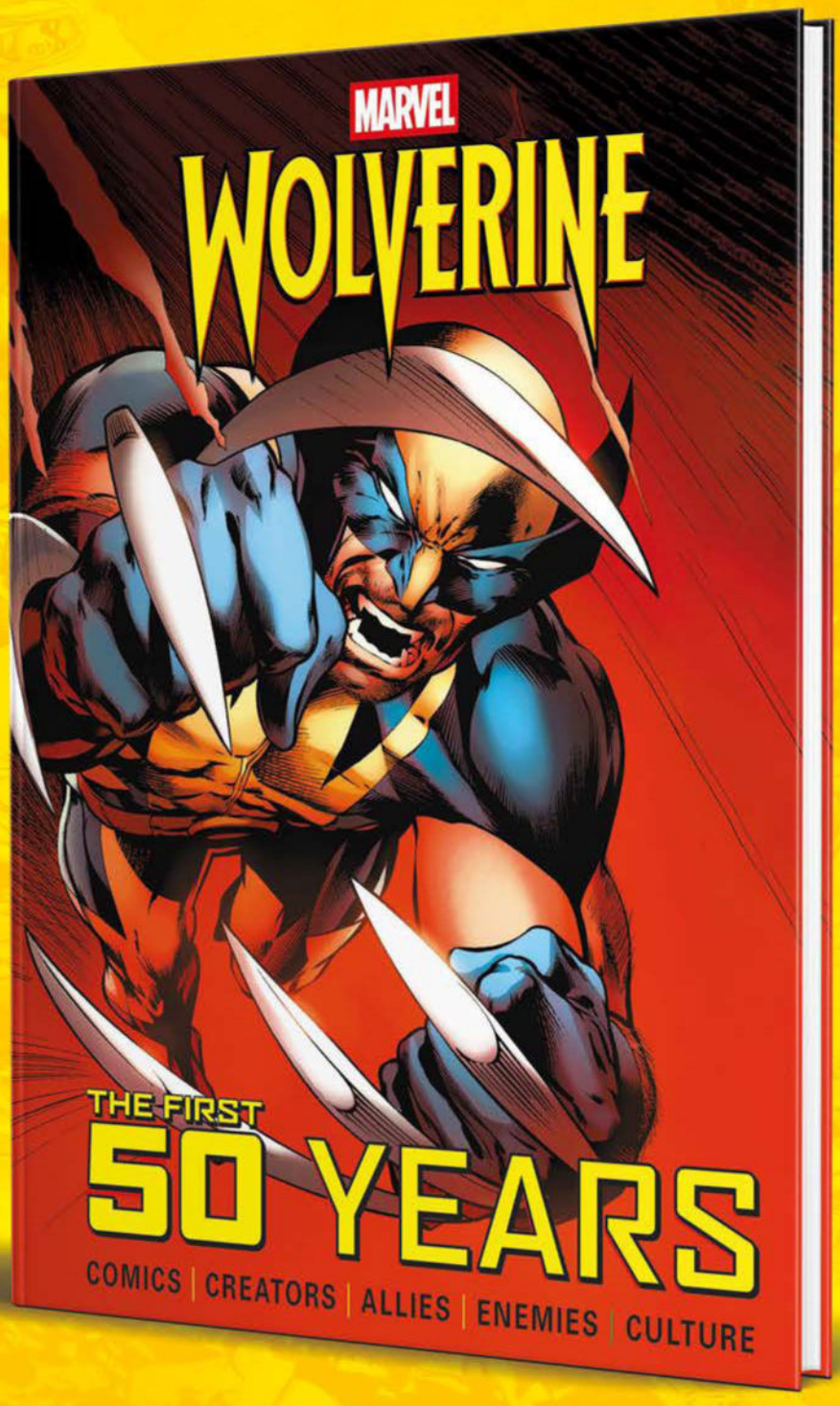






"I'M THE BEST THERE IS AT WHAT I DO, BUT WHAT I DO BEST ISN'T VERY NICE."

WOLVERINE
#1 (1982)



From Logan to Wolverine, explore the comic history of the clawed mutant and his greatest battles, deadliest foes, and unlikeliest allies – all lavishly illustrated with stunning art!

MARVEL

© 2025 MARVEL

AVAILABLE FROM ALL GOOD BOOKSTORES & ONLINE

TITAN-COMICS.COM

TITAN MAGAZINES

MARVEL STUDIOS

THE INFINITY SAGA

The complete collection!



All 22 movie books in the Infinity Saga series, published as a resized matching set!



Scan here for the full publication schedule!

TITANBOOKS.COM

MARVEL

© 2025 MARVEL