

# The Outer Limits

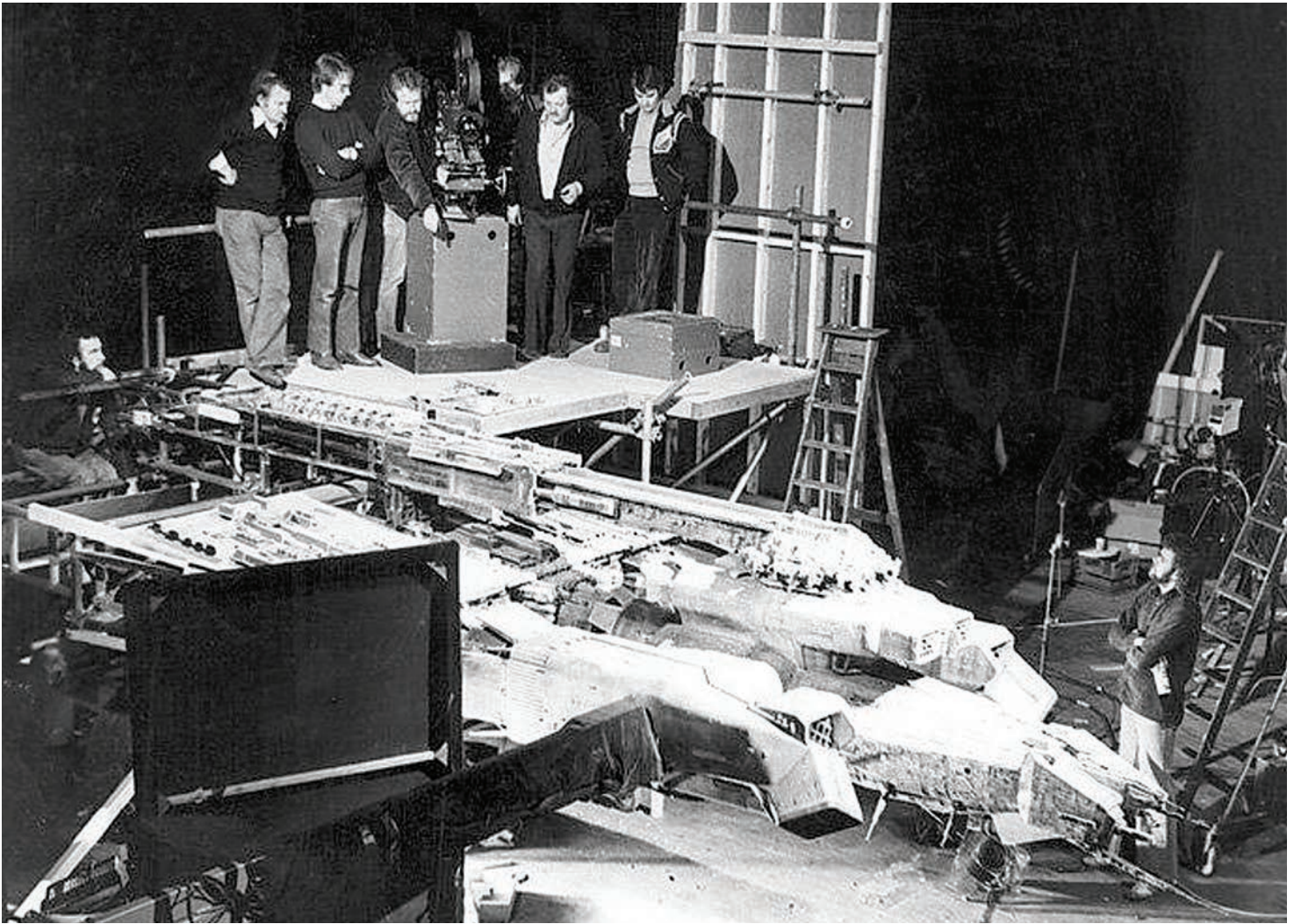
Starting with the silent era to modern CGI, space travel and aliens have always been a new frontier for directors to explore. As these behind-the-scenes shots show, the only limitation is the filmmaker's imagination.



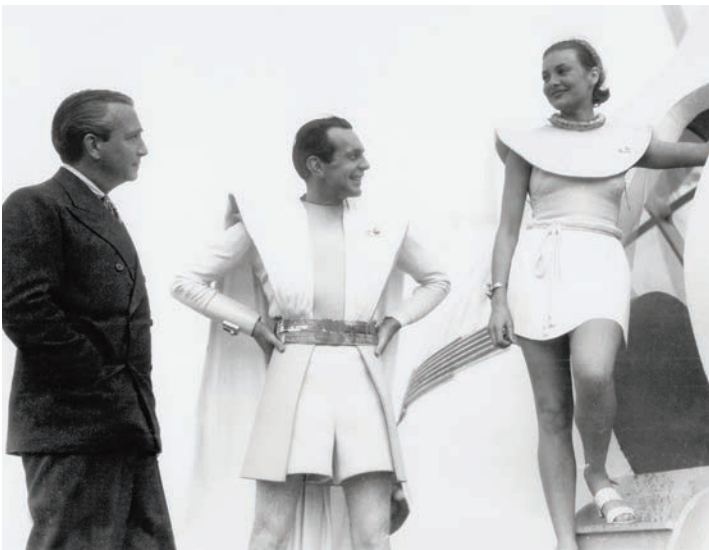
**TRUE ADVENTURE:** (opposite) Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill) lands in a bog on the planet Dagobah where he meets his Jedi master Yoda for the first time in *Star Wars: Episode V – The Empire Strikes Back* (1980), the second part of George Lucas' galactic epic, directed by Irvin Kershner (pointing). (above) Mimi Leder (center) directs Robert Duvall and Mary McCormack aboard a spacecraft on a mission to destroy a seven-mile-wide comet before it destroys the earth in *Deep Impact* (1998).



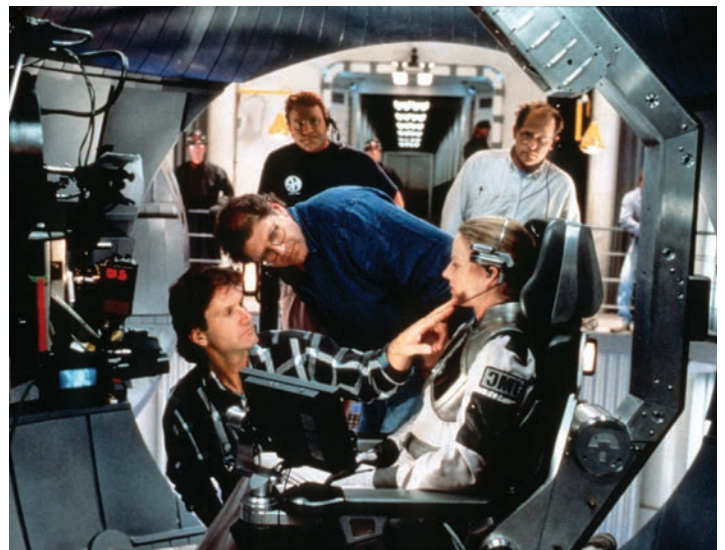




**SMALL WORLD:** Ridley Scott (center) and his team work on a model for one of the spacecrafts in *Alien* (1979). The design was partially taken from Scott's storyboards. The models were made of wood and plastic with accessories added from kits of old battleships, tanks, and World War II bombers.



**BETTER DAYS:** At the time of its release in 1936, William Cameron Menzies' *Things to Come* was considered a landmark in cinematic design. Written by H.G. Wells, it presented a world rebuilding itself after a 100-year war and planning the first flight to the moon in 2035.



**CLOSE ENCOUNTER:** Robert Zemeckis (in blue) directs Jodie Foster as a scientist chosen to be the first person to meet an extraterrestrial in *Contact* (1997), based on a novel by Carl Sagan. After exterior work in New Mexico, the production shot for five months on nine soundstages with more than 25 sets.

PHOTOS: (TOP) AICN; (BOTTOM, LEFT) BEI; (BOTTOM, RIGHT) EVERETT



**NEW GENERATION:** J.J. Abrams rebooted the *Star Trek* franchise with its 11th film in 2009. He was trying to get away from the nostalgia for earlier versions. “There’s a certain thing that you can’t really hold on to, which is the kitschy quality. That must go if it’s going to be something that you believe is real.”



**AS THE WORLD TURNS:** Stanley Kubrick directs Gary Lockwood in *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968). For interior shots inside the space-craft, Kubrick built a 30-ton rotating Ferris wheel, essentially a giant centrifuge, at a cost of \$750,000. The set was 38 feet in diameter and 10 feet wide.



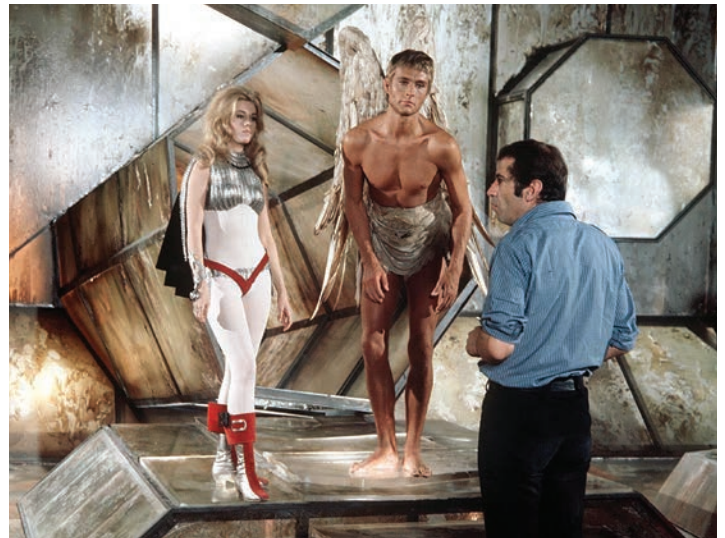
**LOST AND FOUND:** Martin Wood directs David Hewlett in an episode of the TV series *Stargate: Atlantis* (2007) in which a team of international scientists discovers the lost continent as part of an alien outpost in Antarctica. The series was shot on the *Blade: Trinity* effects stage in Vancouver.



**BLAST OFF:** Directed by Fritz Lang (third from right), the silent film *Woman in the Moon* (1929) is considered one of the first serious science fiction films and invented the countdown before the launch of a rocket. Many of the basics of space travel were presented to a mass audience for the first time.



**NEW AGE:** *2010* (1984), directed by Peter Hyams (left), was a sequel to *2001* that followed the fate of the Discovery One mission. The effects team used CGI, still in its infancy, to create the cloudy atmosphere of Jupiter and the monoliths that engulf the planet. The studio called it “digital scene simulation.”



**SCI-FI SEX:** Roger Vadim (right) directs Jane Fonda and John Phillip Law in the campy futuristic romp *Barbarella* (1968). The psychedelic patterns that form much of the special effects were created with an oil wheel projector, the same device used to do light shows for rock concerts at the time.



**FULL SIZE:** James Cameron and Sigourney Weaver are dwarfed by the mission's spacecraft, described as a "rocket gun that carries stuff," in *Aliens* (1986). Cameron was a big fan of the original *Alien*, but wanted to create a new world and a sequel that focused "more on terror, less on horror."



**PHONE HOME:** The uniqueness of Steven Spielberg's *E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial* (1982) was the creation of a cuddly, homesick alien who gets left behind on Earth accidentally. Spielberg (left) mostly shot the film in chronological order to allow his young cast to bond with E.T. and get more emotional performances.



**LOST IN SPACE:** Nicholas Meyer (left), directing Leonard Nimoy as Spock, had never seen the TV show before being hired to direct and write *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* (1982). He envisioned the film as "*Hornblower* in outer space," utilizing nautical references and a swashbuckling atmosphere.

PHOTOS: (TOP) BFI; (BOTTOM, LEFT) EVERETT; (BOTTOM, RIGHT) PHOTOFEST



**HOVERCRAFT:** The crew sets up the three Martian war machines for director Byron Haskin (right) on *The War of the Worlds* (1953). Avoiding the usual flying saucer clichés, the alien spacecrafts, made out of copper, were designed as sinister-looking, manta ray-like ships floating off the ground.



**ROCKET MAN:** Robert Wise wanted *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951) to be as realistic as possible to warn about the dangers of the Cold War. Frank Lloyd Wright contributed to the design of the spacecraft. A second unit shot in Washington, D.C., but the primary actors never left the Fox backlot.

PHOTOS: (TOP) AMPAS; (BOTTOM) AMPAS; (OPPOSITE) UNIVERSAL



**DRESSED TO KILL:** David Lynch worked on *Dune* (1984) for three-and-a-half years, shooting in the Mexican desert and in a studio in Mexico City, but he was unhappy with the result. The costumes worn by the galactic Spacing Guild were body bags found in a disused fire station dating to the early 1920s.