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29

# STAR TREK™

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JEM'HADAR  
**FIGHTER**

ATTACK FIGHTER

LAUNCHED: 24th C

LENGTH: 68 METERS

MAX SPEED: WARP 9.6

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# JEM'HADAR FIGHTER

## SPECIFICATION



OPERATED BY:	THE DOMINION
TYPE:	ATTACK FIGHTER
LAUNCHED:	24th CENTURY
LENGTH:	68.32 METERS
CREW:	42
TOP SPEED:	WARP 9.6 (observed)
WEAPONRY:	THREE POLARON BEAM EMITTERS, TORPEDO LAUNCHERS, GREEN ENERGY DISSIPATOR



JEM'HADAR  
FIGHTER

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▼ Jem'Hadar fighters were used in a variety of roles, including scouting missions, patrol duties, and leading assault forces. If a species resisted Dominion rule, or failed to comply with the demands of the Founders, Jem'Hadar fighters would be deployed to enforce their will.



# JEM'HADAR FIGHTER

Jem'Hadar fighters were small, but powerful ships used to strike fear into the hearts of the Dominion's opponents.

Jem'Hadar fighters, also known as attack ships, were compact strike vessels that were used by the Dominion to subjugate a vast number of worlds in the Gamma Quadrant. They later claimed many casualties in the Alpha Quadrant until the Federation and its allies managed to defeat the Dominion.

The fighter had a scarab beetle-like appearance, and was one of the most common frontline battle craft in the Dominion's fleet.

Each fighter was normally commanded by a single Vorta with a Jem'Hadar First as second-in-command.

Compared with many Federation vessels, the Jem'Hadar fighter was small at just 68.32 meters in length, and normally operated with a crew of around 42 soldiers. It had a mass of 2,450 metric tons, making it less than half the size of a *Defiant*-class starship.

## PACKING A PUNCH

Despite its diminutive size, the fighter had powerful offensive weapons. It had an aft weapons turret, plus three phased polaron beam weapons mounted in a fixed forward emitter array in the stubby, beak-like structure at the front of the craft. During the latter stages of the Dominion War, vessels of this class were fitted with Breen energy-dampening weapons that proved very effective for a time against the Federation and its allies.

Attack ship transporter systems were more powerful than their Alpha or Beta Quadrant equivalents: they could penetrate most defensive shields and beam Jem'Hadar troops directly through them onto enemy ships or stations.

The defenses of the attack ship were just as impressive as its weapons. They included an advanced deflector shield that could repel a tractor beam lock. However, the defecting sixth clone of Weyoun did reveal to Odo that the fighter



## DATA FEED

Military rank in the Jem'Hadar was simply denoted as the First being leader of the rest of the Jem'Hadar in his unit, followed by the Second, Third, and so on.

◀ Jem'Hadar fighters were typically commanded by a Vorta. The highest ranking Jem'Hadar, known as the First, was the equivalent of a Starfleet ship's first officer and oversaw the rest of the crew. The Vorta and the First were the only crew members who wore virtual display devices, allowing them to see outside the ship.



◀ The *U.S.S. Odyssey* was destroyed in one of Starfleet's first engagements with Jem'Hadar fighters, when one of the attacking fighters performed a kamikaze run, ramming straight into the massive *Galaxy*-class ship. This graphically showed just how far the Jem'Hadar were willing to go to defeat an enemy and made it clear that the Dominion posed a very serious threat.



◀ Starfleet were able to make a thorough examination of the salvaged Jem'Hadar fighter at Starbase 375, helping them better understand how to defeat these ships.



▶ The offensive capabilities of the Jem'Hadar fighter were better than their defensive capabilities. They were particularly vulnerable if attacked from above.



▶ The Jem'Hadar fighter that was salvaged from Torga IV was later repaired at Starbase 375. It was then used by Captain Sisko and a small skeleton crew in an undercover mission to destroy a ketraceel-white facility.



◀ Once the Cardassians had joined the Dominion, Jem'Hadar fighters were sent into the Badlands, where they proceeded to wipe out every last Maquis colony in just three days.

▶ In 2373, Sisko eventually managed to salvage a Jem'Hadar fighter that had crashed on Torga IV in what he considered "the greatest intelligence find in the last ten years."



▲ To compensate for their relatively small size, Jem'Hadar fighters were often deployed in groups of three in order to overwhelm opponents.

was vulnerable if attacked from directly above. This was because the attack ship's shields were weakest at the dorsal field junctions, located on the upper hull.

Fighters usually operated in groups of three, and their maneuverability and combined fire power were normally able to overwhelm most vessels.

#### KAMIKAZE TACTICS

The Jem'Hadar crew were also prepared to go to extreme measures to destroy their adversaries if more conventional attacks failed. In 2370, the *Galaxy*-class *U.S.S. Odyssey* NCC-71832 was destroyed while on a reconnaissance mission in the Gamma Quadrant when a Jem'Hadar fighter rammed the Starfleet vessel even though it was retreating. This was not an isolated incident, and

this type of kamikaze attack was later used to disable or destroy 15 Klingon vessels during an allied raid on Cardassian orbital weapon platforms in the Chin'toka System.

The technology on Jem'Hadar fighters was very different to that found on Federation vessels, as Starfleet personnel discovered when they encountered a crashed Jem'Hadar ship while conducting a mineral survey on Torga IV. This was the first time they had examined an attack ship at close quarters, and even technical expert Chief Miles O'Brien had trouble determining what type of warp drive it used.

Starfleet managed to retrieve the crashed vessel and their studies improved their understanding of it. Experts extrapolated that the fighters employed a matter-antimatter reactor as the core power

source for their warp drive, and an impulse power system for sublight travel. The ships also had a sophisticated secondary ion propulsion system that used magnetic fields to propel exhaust gases and provide thrust. Further examination revealed that these ships were capable of achieving and maintaining a velocity of warp 9.6.

In addition, a ventral impeller device was fitted to the underside of the craft, which in association with its ascent thruster could help it make a vertical takeoff. While a Jem'Hadar fighter could not perform complex battle maneuvers inside a planetary atmosphere, its impeller and thrusters allowed it to land and take off from a planetary surface. Once it had touched down, a large hatch on the belly of the ship could be lowered, allowing the troops inside to be deployed.

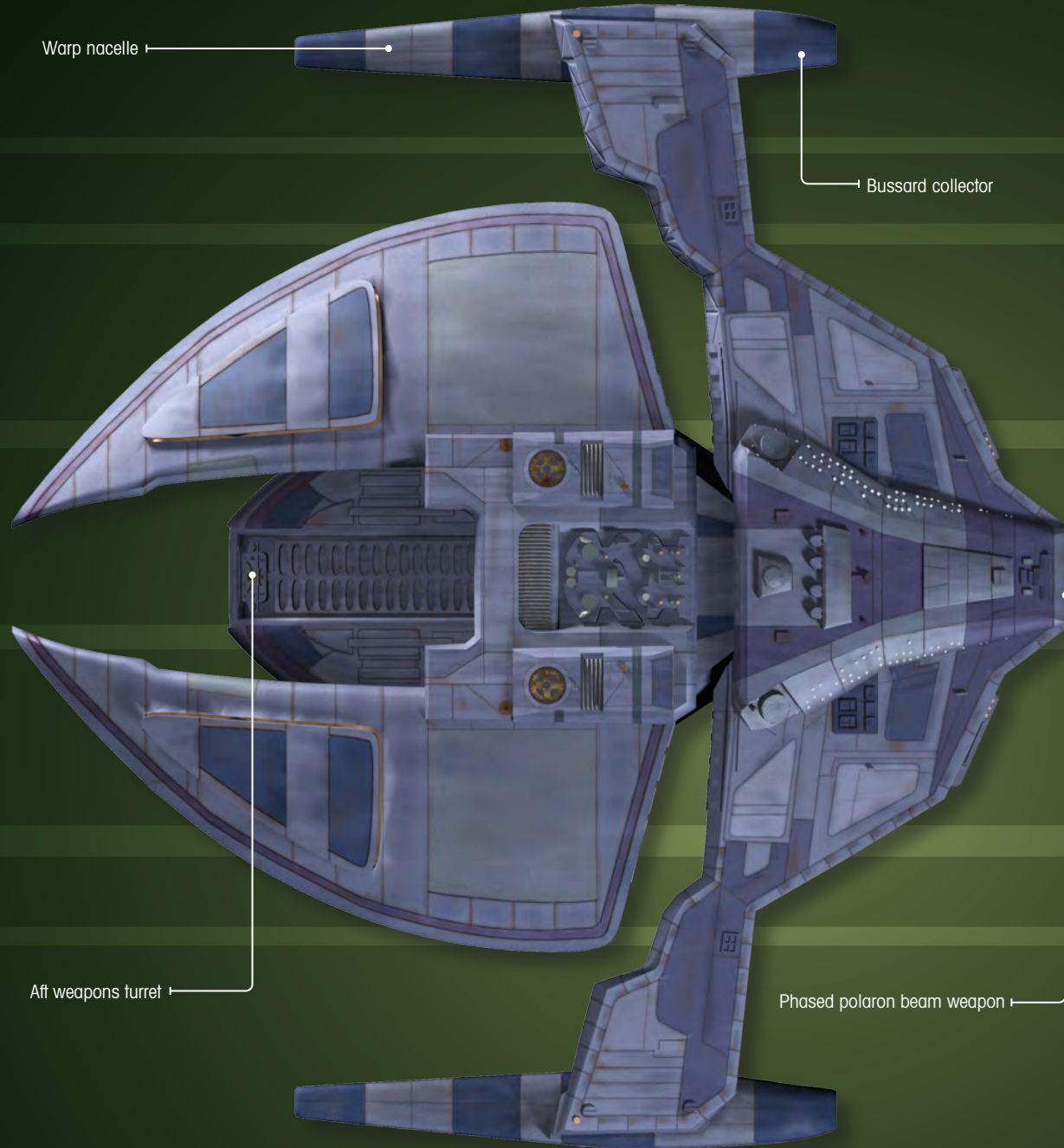
#### DATA FEED

Jem'Hadar fighters did not have viewscreens. Instead, the Vorta and Jem'Hadar First wore headset viewers that allowed them to view the space around the ship simply by turning their heads. Users of these devices claimed it was like having a viewscreen directly inside their brains. During a covert mission aboard a fighter, Captain Sisko found the experience of wearing one disconcerting and it gave him a severe headache.



**COMMAND CENTER**

The interior of a Jem'Hadar fighter was sparse. There were no cargo areas, no food replicators, and no infirmary. The command center did not even feature chairs, as the Jem'Hadar had no need for comfort. Instead of a captain's chair, there was a central position with the other stations pointing inward. The systems on board a Jem'Hadar fighter were very different to those on a Starfleet ship. When a salvaged fighter was used on an undercover mission to destroy a Ketracel-white facility, it took Captain Sisko and a small crew two full weeks of training to learn how to operate the unfamiliar controls on the ship.

**DATA FEED**

The Battle of the Omarion Nebula in 2371 was the first major engagement between forces of the Alpha and Beta Quadrants and the Dominion. A combined Romulan/Cardassian fleet launched a preemptive strike on the Founders' homeworld, but 150 Jem'Hadar fighters were lying in wait and completely destroyed the invading force.

**ALIEN TECHNOLOGY**

When Chief O'Brien first examined a Jem'Hadar fighter, he found it had no EPS conduits, no microfusion initiators, and no power converters. He could not even determine what kind of warp drive it had.

**BREEN WEAPONS**

Breen engineers installed energy dampening weapons aboard Jem'Hadar fighters at the Cardassian Kelvas repair facility in 2375.

**SHIP SIZE**

According to a note in the script for the *DEEP SPACE NINE* episode 'The Jem'Hadar', the fighter was approximately the same size as a Klingon *Bird-of-Prey*, which would have made it 139 meters in length. The '*DEEP SPACE NINE* Technical Manual' states that the length of the fighter is 68.32 meters.



## DEVELOPING THE

# JEM'HADAR

▲ The writers set up the Vorta, and more especially the Jem'Hadar, as genetically engineered slave races, designed to carry out the Founders' wishes.

▲ The Founders maintained their control over the Jem'Hadar by addicting them to a substance known as ketracel-white. They were, in effect, born to be drug addicts.

The Jem'Hadar were conceived as being a vicious group of warriors who would make up one part of the villainous trinity known as the Dominion. With skins like rhinoceroses and an extreme propensity for violence, they were to be the muscle behind the Dominion, the ones who would implement the will of the Founders.

Apart from their threatening appearance, one of the ways the writers made the Jem'Hadar even more terrifying was to have them addicted to ketracel-white. This demonstrated that even the Founders barely had them under control and the only way to ensure their loyalty was to make them dependent on the white. Without a steady supply, the Jem'Hadar suffered withdrawal symptoms and

their circulatory systems began to shut down. Psychologically, they became uncontrollably violent, attacking enemies, then their Vorta overseers, and finally each other.

### DEFINED BY ADDICTION

The Jem'Hadar were certainly compelling and frightening villains, but over the course of the series the audience never really got to know any individual members of the species. This was because all Jem'Hadar were basically the same, as *STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE* showrunner and executive producer Ira Steven Behr explained. "The Jem'Hadar weren't about personality," said Behr. "We didn't want to do the whole honor thing

– the whole Klingon thing – with them. In a way they were more like the Borg. They were stripped of their humanity. Not because they were machines, but because the drug was their *raison d'être*.

"We came to view them as junkies. We came to view them as slaves, as people who were almost not worthy of a name because there wasn't much personality difference between them."

While all Jem'Hadar were basically the same, it was important to Behr and the rest of the writers that they never lost the ability to evoke real fear. Previous *STAR TREK* villains, such as the Klingons or the Borg, had become less threatening once more was understood about them. As Behr said, "Part of

the problem we kept running into was that you'd have these really badass villains and the writers would go to the default position. This was to dig down and find out who these villains were and why they were doing what they were doing. You can understand your enemy to death and this time we did not want to do that."

### BEYOND REDEMPTION

This stance led to episodes like 'The Abandoned,' where an infant Jem'Hadar was brought aboard *Deep Space 9*. Odo attempted to raise him to be something other than a ruthless soldier of the Dominion, but to no avail. He could not be taught

▲ The Jem'Hadar remained extremely violent and aggressive throughout the series. The writers felt it was important that they did not lose the ability to strike fear into the hearts of their enemies.

## INTERNAL BALANCES

Giving the Vorta control of the ketracel-white was part of the plan to give the Dominion an internal structure that would prevent anyone from overthrowing the Founders. The idea was that the Jem'Hadar were totally immune to the Vorta's charms, so if the Vorta ever tried to take over, the Jem'Hadar would kill them all. If the Jem'Hadar ever rebelled, the Vorta would cut off the supply of white and the Jem'Hadar would die.





▲ As long as the Jem'Hadar had an adequate supply of ketracel-white, they had no other desires beyond their need to fight.

► The episode 'Hippocratic Oath' saw Dr. Bashir try to cure the Jem'Hadar of their addiction, but to no avail. They remained enslaved to the drug and never sought to evolve beyond the purpose for which they had been created.



empathy and was nothing more than a genetically programmed killing machine.

This episode demonstrated that the Jem'Hadar could not be reasoned with and could not be turned from what they had been bred to do. On another level, it also provided a metaphorical study of racial tension and gang culture. Avery Brooks, who played Captain Sisko, directed 'The Abandoned,' and was quoted as saying that this was, "a story about a society that is responsible for the creation of a generation of young men



who are feared, who are addicted, who are potential killers."

#### NO CHOICE

Behr agreed with this assessment. He said, "Society has spent the last one hundred years – maybe two hundred years – providing drugs for the poorer elements in society. They give them drugs and then scream bloody murder when all this crime is allegedly being committed by people who use them. They are funneled down this path where they're condemned, or viewed in a way that was created for them. It's hypocrisy. But at the same time you don't want them coming and carving you up into tiny little pieces."

There were further efforts by the *Deep Space 9* crew to understand and help the Jem'Hadar in episodes such as 'Hippocratic Oath' and 'To the Death,' but the writers stood by their initial premise for this species. The Jem'Hadar were irredeemable and beyond help. In fact, the more the crew discovered about the Jem'Hadar, the more frightening they became.

In 'To the Death,' we learned that they were bred in birthing chambers, there were no females, and their accelerated growth cycle meant they

were ready to fight just three days after being hatched. They had no need to sleep, eat, or engage in any kind of recreational activity. Their average lifespans were extremely short as they were deployed in battle so frequently that no Jem'Hadar had ever reached the age of thirty.

#### OUT OF CONTROL

It also became apparent during this episode that the Founders' ability to control the Jem'Hadar was not as total as first thought. Although they were genetically engineered to revere the Founders as gods, this engineering was not flawless. Thus, when a group of Jem'Hadar rebelled on Vandros IV, Dominion experts nervously predicted that if they gathered support from other Jem'Hadar units, they could take over the entire Dominion in a year.

According to writer and co-producer Robert Hewitt Wolfe, 'To the Death' was written specifically to give the Jem'Hadar more depth and reinforce just how dangerous they were. "Our intention was to show that the more you learned about them, the less you wanted to be around them," said Wolfe. "If you met a Borg on a one-on-one basis, they were kind of cuddly, and when you got to know the Klingons, they were not



◀ Some Jem'Hadar, such as Ika'ika who spared Worf's life at Internment Camp 371, appeared to have a measure of decency. He was, however, only interested in opponents who could provide him with a decent fight.

◀ [Middle picture] The Jem'Hadar only had a purpose as soldiers. It remained unclear what would happen to them once the Dominion War was over.

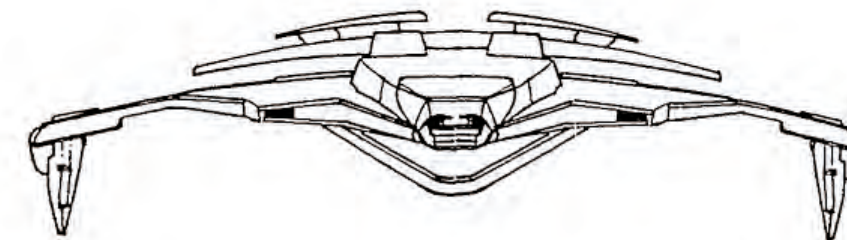
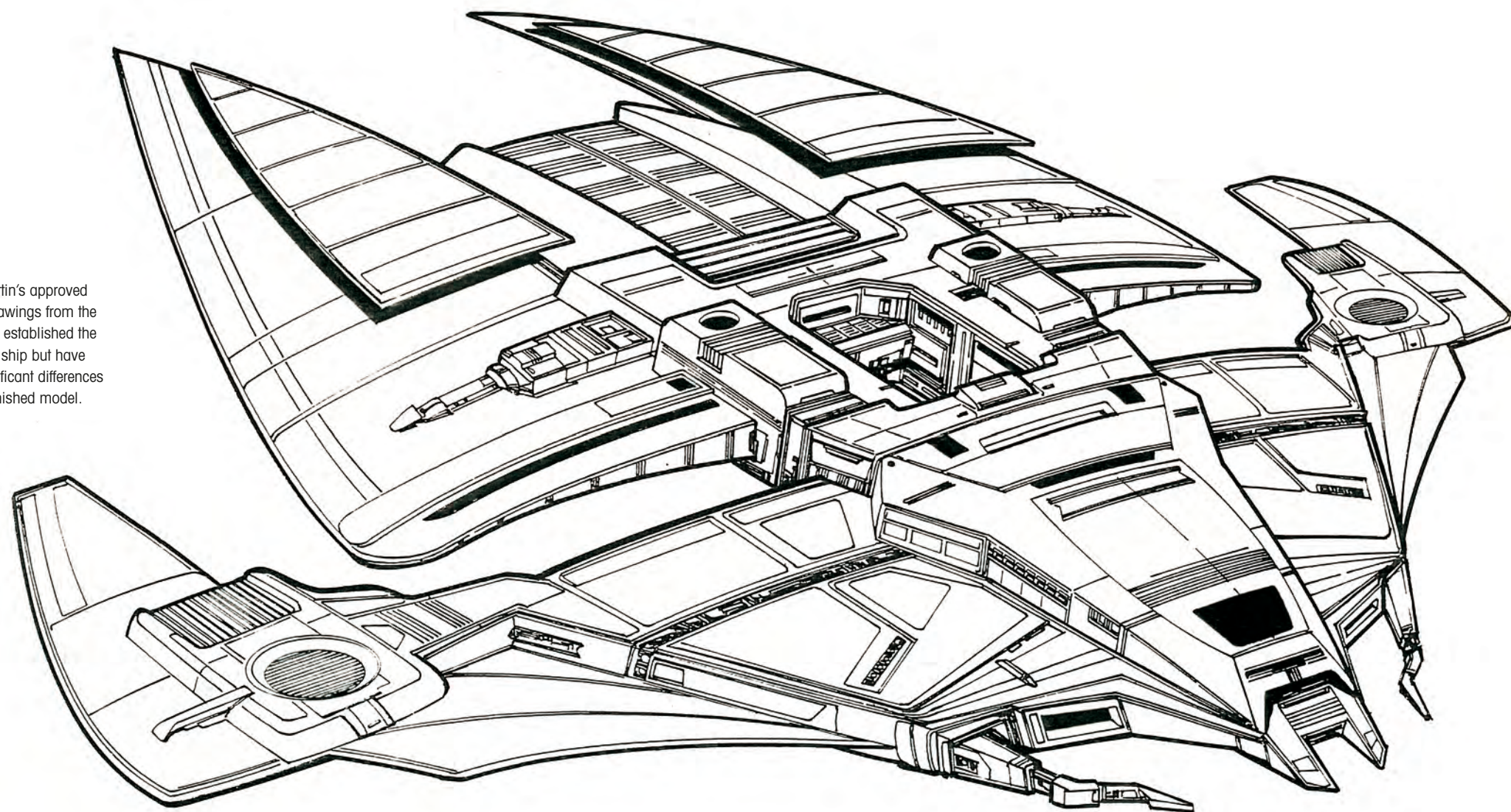
so scary any more. But the Jem'Hadar, when you really got to know them, were damn scary guys."

Some later episodes such as 'By Inferno's Light,' 'Rocks and Shoals,' and 'One Little Ship' depicted a few individual Jem'Hadar as having a certain nobility. They were prepared to stick to their ideals even if it meant death. They certainly had more integrity than the Vorta, but these attributes were merely a result of their genetic programming and they never evolved beyond it.

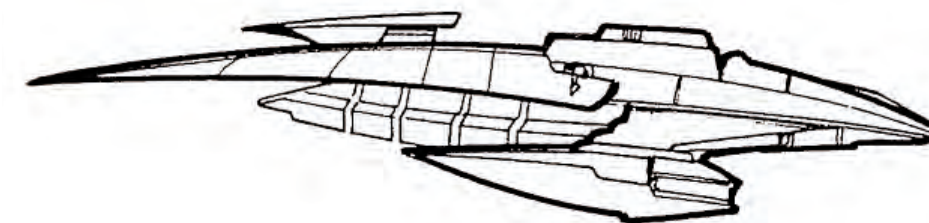
There was to be no redemption for the Jem'Hadar, and they remained merciless killing machines until the end. This was possible because the Jem'Hadar worked as part of the greater whole of the Dominion. "I think all of those Dominion races worked because they were part of something bigger," said Behr. "If it was just the Jem'Hadar, without the Founders, it would have been very difficult."

In the end, the fate of the Jem'Hadar remained unclear. "There were things that we left open for the audience to decide," said Behr. "I'm a big fan of allowing the audience to figure it out. No story ends. Those characters are still in place somewhere. In an alternate universe, in Benny Russell's land, who knows what's going on."

► Jim Martin's approved concept drawings from the Jem'Hadar established the look of the ship but have some significant differences from the finished model.



JEM'HADAR SHIP  
MARTIN



## DESIGNING THE

# JEM'HADAR FIGHTER

**D**EEP SPACE NINE's showrunner, Ira Steven Behr, told everyone he wanted Sisko and his crew to find something really scary on the other side of the wormhole. The Jem'Hadar and their ships would be tough, uncompromising and technologically superior to the Federation.

The Dominion would also be an ongoing threat, so everything about them, including their ships, got a little

more attention than usual. In the art department, production designer Herman Zimmerman had his concept artist Jim Martin explore several different designs for the Jem'Hadar fighter before they finally settled on a distinctive bug-like look. The brief they were given by the writing department was that the Jem'Hadar's technology should be noticeably different from anything we had seen before but not so strange that

it wasn't recognizable. Among Martin's rejected approaches to the new ship were some startlingly organic and angular drawings that show he was pushing the edges of what was possible before they settled on the final distinctively insect-like design.

Martin's drawings were handed on to VFX supervisor Gary Hutzel who had the task of turning them into a physical model. As he recalls, when he started

work, he had no idea that the ship would go on to appear in 30 different episodes. "Only Rick Berman and the writing staff knew the future use of a ship. The visual effects people were just told that there were potentially going to be a lot of clashes with these guys and that we might need multiple ships. I know there were a lot of illustrations. If I'd known how many that would have been a dead giveaway that it was



going to be an important ship."

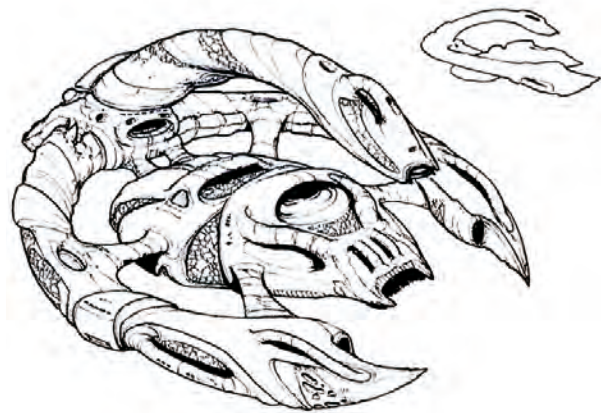
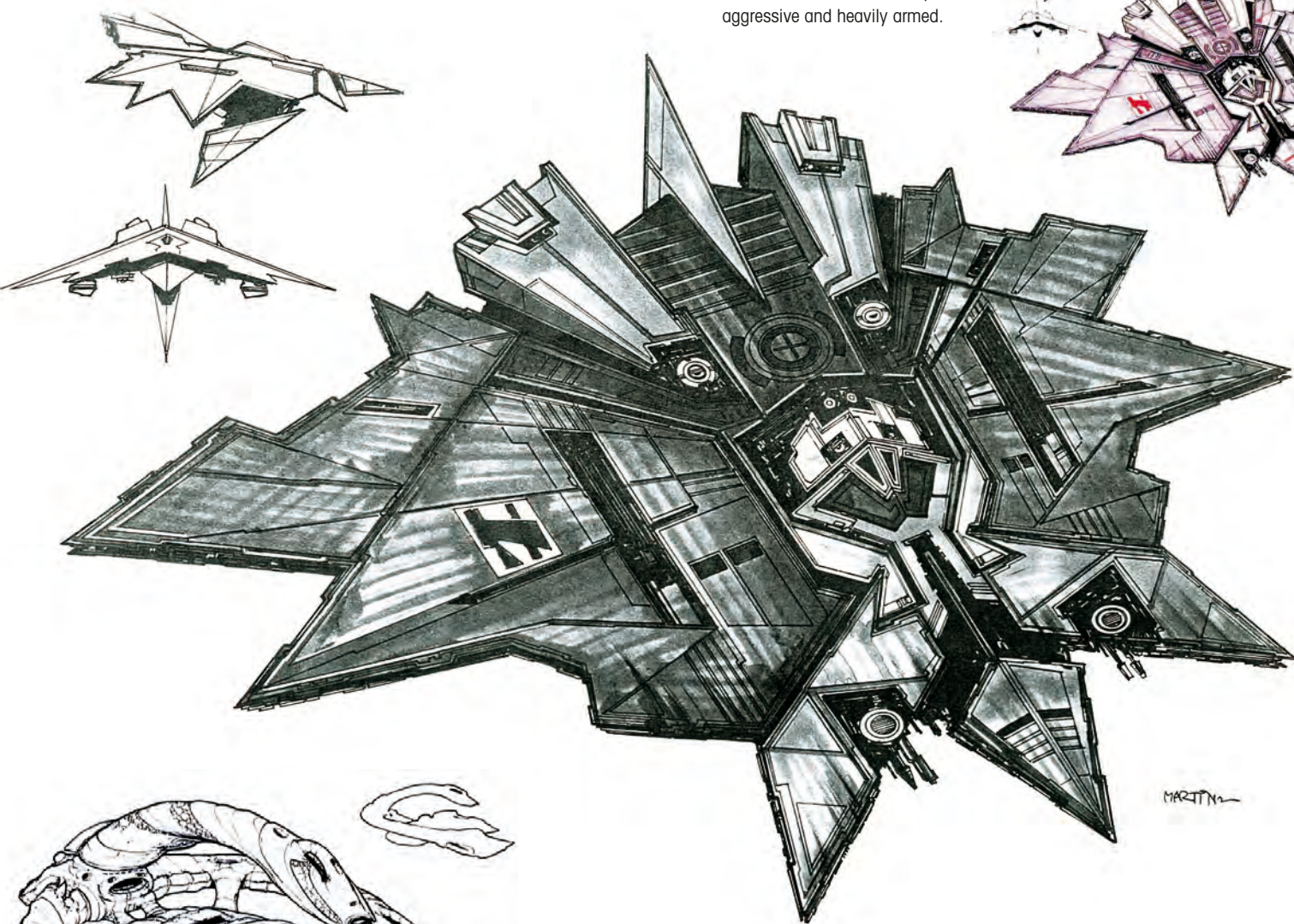
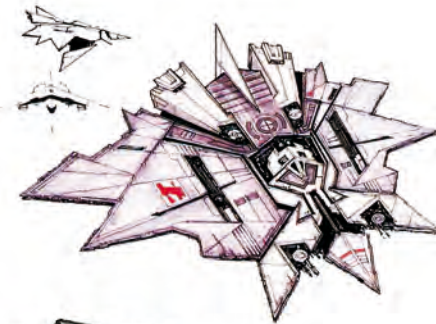
At this point all the ships were still being built as physical models and on DEEP SPACE NINE most of the work was being done by Tony Meiningner's Brazil Fabrications. Hutzel took Martin's drawings to Meiningner and together they worked out how to build the ship. As Hutzel explains, this process always involved changes, "You were going from an illustration to a 3D object. We'd

take a look at the drawings and go, 'Hmm, this element is not going to work.' So we spent an afternoon going over ideas about how we could make it shootable and talking about what the key design elements were.

"We had to decide which details were important. We had to plan a workable solution. Plus, in this case, because of the way that we were building it, we couldn't get those hard



▼► This angular design makes it clear that the Jem'Hadar ships were aggressive and heavily armed.



▲ One of Jim Martin's more alien designs for the Jem'Hadar fighter, which was considered too strange.

angles. Tony was vacuforming his ships and that had an influence on what you could do. And, anyway, when you looked at those shapes in relief they weren't that attractive. So a lot of the sharp edges and the raised triangular wings on the back were traded out for a more rounded look."

Hutzel and Meininger weren't only

looking for ways to make the ship easy to build. Part of their job was to expand on the ideas in the drawings, which didn't even show the underside.

#### PUSHING THE BUG

"The next consideration for us was, 'How far are we going to go towards making this thing look like a beetle?' And the answer," Hutzel laughs, "was 'Quite far!' We really went for the bug, including illuminating the underbelly with those stripes, which was never part of the illustrated design. That was something that Tony and I added to evoke that bug-like quality."

Once they had finished, Meininger drew up a complete set of full-sized

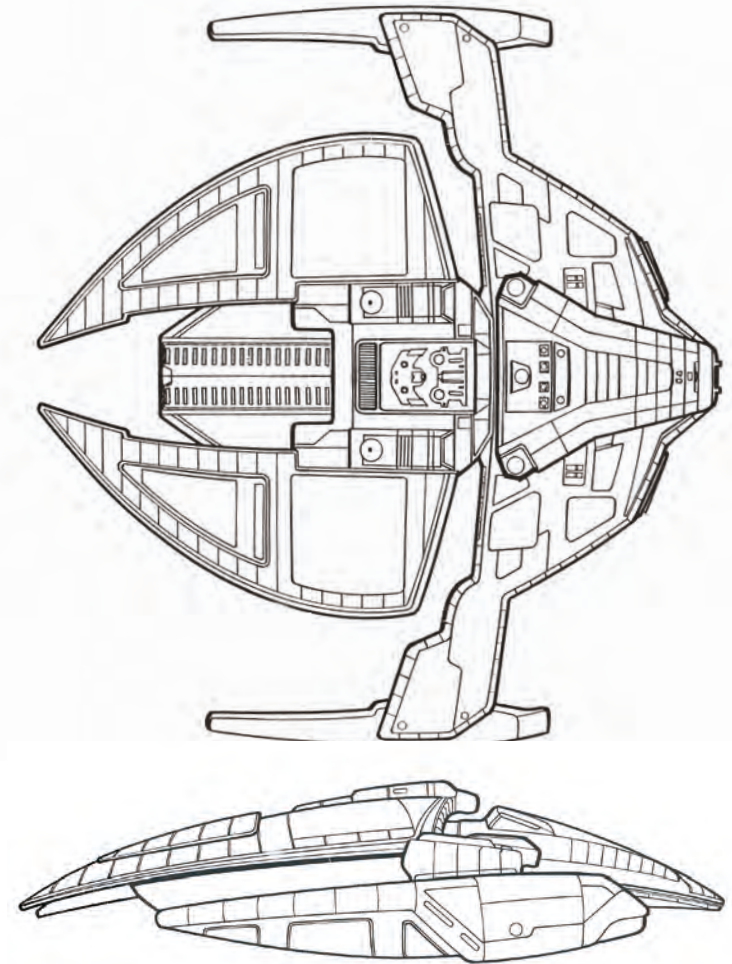
orthographic views showing the ship from every angle that would be used by his model shop. As was normal on *STAR TREK*, this final stage was left entirely to the VFX team, with Berman, Behr and the art department trusting them to turn the approved drawings into a suitable model.

Until now everything showing the design of the ship had been in black and white. Seen in person, Meininger's finished model is a startlingly strong color – a distinctive combination of blues and purples that is unlike anything seen on *STAR TREK* before. Hutzel remembers that in this case the art department requested making the ship purple. "It was specifically asked that it be purple

and we added the fuschia lighting scheme." If the ship appears rather less colorful on screen, it is because of the technical limitations of NTSC video, "Standard def color was very treacherous – it could end up a very undesirable color. We avoided that by desaturating it by about 50%."

#### UPPING THE ANTE

As Behr told *Cinefantastique* at the time, turning the Jem'Hadar fighter into such a badass ship had some unintended, but very welcome, consequences, "We said to ourselves, 'What have we just done? We came up with this unbelievably powerful enemy and we just have these shitty runabouts... We have to get a ship.'" When *DEEP SPACE NINE* returned for its third season, Sisko would have a ship of his own that was fit to fight the Jem'Hadar – the *U.S.S. Defiant* – and *STAR TREK* was ready to go to war.

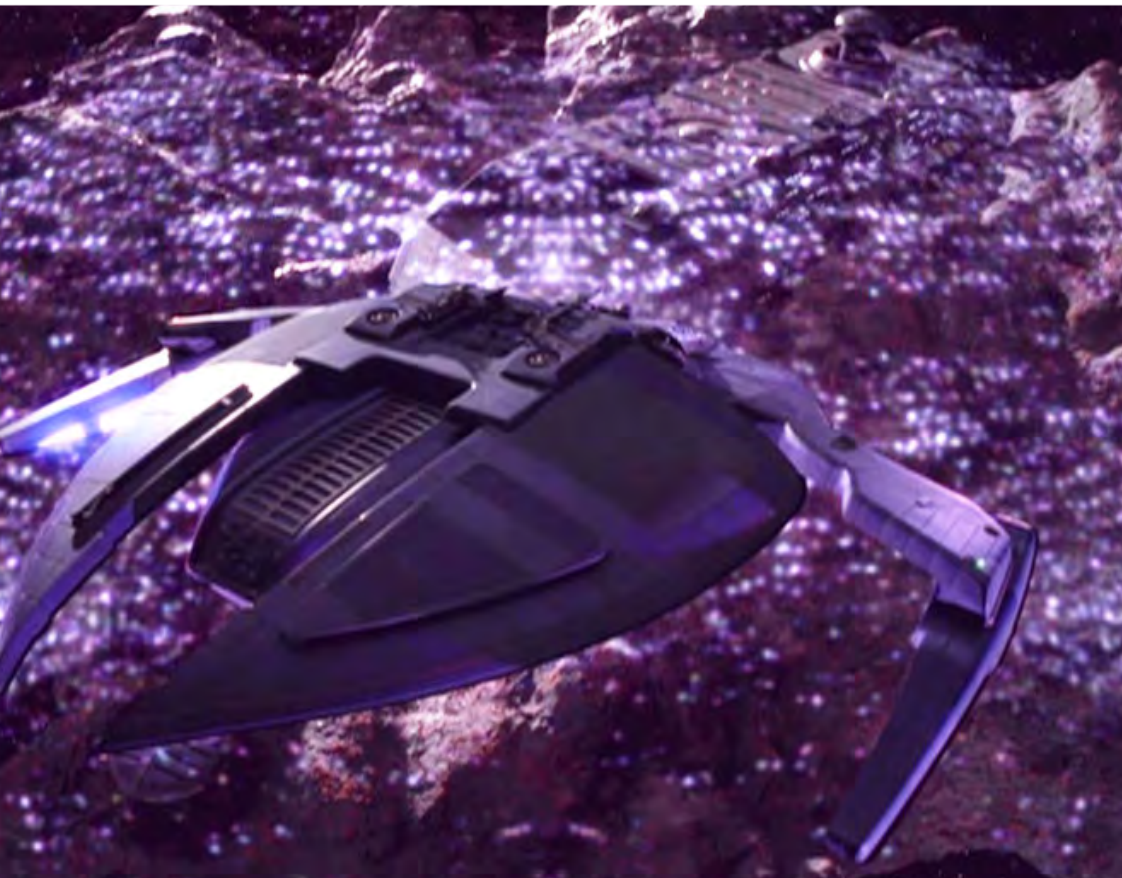


◀ These drawings were created after Hutzel and Meininger had made their alterations to Martin's original concept and show a more rounded design, and exactly where the nacelles would glow.



◀ One of the original studio models produced by Meininger's model shop. The unusually vibrant paint scheme was toned down on screen.

# ON SCREEN



## TRIVIA

The full scale mock-up of the crashed Jem'Hadar fighter featured in the episode 'The Ship' was designed by John Eaves. These scenes were filmed on location at Soledad Canyon, a gravel pit north of Los Angeles. During filming, the temperatures became much hotter than anticipated, reaching as high as 51°C (124°F). Talking about the sweltering conditions, director Kim Friedman said, "I felt sorry for the actors. The rest of us were wearing shorts and almost nothing, and we couldn't stand it."



Ika't'ika was the only named Jem'Hadar to appear in more than one episode of *STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE*. He was the 'First' in charge of Dominion Internment Camp 371 and was responsible for injuring General Martok's eye in one of their fights.



When creating the look of the Jem'Hadar, makeup supervisor Michael Westmore said he based their design on a rhinoceros skin. He also incorporated elements of dinosaurs into their appearance, adding horns inspired by a triceratops on top of their heads.

TV APPEARANCE:	STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE
FIRST APPEARANCE:	'THE JEM'HADAR' (DS9)
FINAL APPEARANCE:	'WHAT YOU LEAVE BEHIND' (DS9)
DESIGNED BY:	Jim Martin

### KEY APPEARANCES

#### STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE 'THE SHIP'

An away team led by Captain Sisko is conducting a mineral survey on Torga IV in the Gamma Quadrant when they witness a Jem'Hadar fighter crash into the surface. Upon investigation, they discover that the ship is intact, but the crew is dead. Sisko decides to salvage the ship as a potentially invaluable aid to Starfleet intelligence. As they begin work, another Jem'Hadar ship arrives and destroys the away team's orbiting Runabout. It soon becomes clear that the Jem'Hadar desperately want something aboard the crashed ship.

#### STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE 'A TIME TO STAND'

Several months after *Deep Space 9* was surrendered to the Dominion, the Federation is losing the war. Reacting to the demoralizing defeats, Admiral Ross orders Captain Sisko and a small crew on a highly dangerous mission that if successful would neutralize a large part of the formidable Jem'Hadar army. They are assigned to the salvaged Jem'Hadar fighter they recovered several months earlier and told to sneak behind enemy lines in order to destroy the main ketracel-white production facility in the Alpha Quadrant.

COMING IN ISSUE 30

# NAUSICAAAN RAIDER

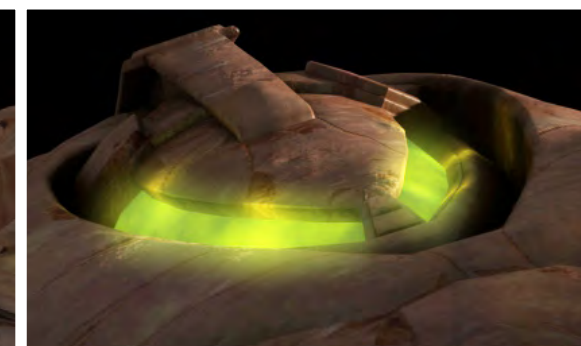


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## Inside your magazine

- In-depth profile of the *Nausicaan raider*, the small 22nd-century vessels used by Nausicaan pirates
- How the *Nausicaan raider* was designed and created
- A look at the special effects on the first season of *ENTERPRISE*



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