STAR TREK
THE OFFICIAL STARSHIPS COLLECTION

MALON
EXPORT VESSEL

TYPE: FREIGHTER
LAUNCHED: 24th C
LENGTH: 515 METERS
CREW COMPLEMENT: 9

Stand assembly:

1. Hook the stand over the engine pods at the back.
2. Final position.
The Malon export vessel was a 24th-century freighter that operated in the Delta Quadrant. It was a large, bulky cargo vessel designed to transport toxic waste from the Malon home planet and dump it in isolated areas of space. The Malon operated export vessels of different sizes, but they were all a rusty brown color with the same general appearance. The smallest Malon tanker encountered by the U.S.S. Voyager NCC-74656 was approximately 515 meters in length and comprised several spherical storage tanks. It was described by its captain (or controller, as the Malon referred to the commanding person on board) as an export vessel, 11th gradient. This particular freighter could carry 90 million isotons of toxic waste, and was operated by a crew of nine. The largest export vessel encountered by Voyager was approximately 730 meters in length and had 42 decks. The ship consisted of numerous clusters of spherical holding tanks and could transport four trillion isotons of waste.

CARGO CONTAINMENT
The main bulk of these vessels was made up of the cargo tanks, where the waste was stored, and they were surrounded by emergency containment fields should they rupture. Failing this, the tanks could also be ejected. Should all the safety backups malfunction, an automated distress call could be initiated from the ship while the crew evacuated in escape pods. Malon export vessels were equipped with both impulse engines and warp drive, but they had not yet developed a way to purify the reactants that were a by-product of the fuel for their engines. As they traveled through space, the freighters spewed explosive bursts of contaminated antimatter, including gas, debris, and flotsam, through several exhaust nozzles located at intervals along the side of their hulls.

The export vessels were dangerous, not just because of the toxic pollutants they carried but because of the radiation on board. The crews of Malon export vessels had to wear bulky isolation suits to protect themselves from the radiation on board their ships. Despite the protection, the crews raised their voices working on these tankers, as their society had not yet found a way to safely recycle the antimatter waste produced on their home planet. Malon Prime, the Malon homeworld, was said to be a beautiful place, but its society produced huge amounts of pollution that would have choked the planet if it had not been removed by export vessels.
also because they were equipped with powerful weapons. The freighters incorporated a number of weapons towers that fired spatial charges in rapid succession. These were capable of inflicting serious damage on starships even as advanced and well-shielded as *Voyager*.

The freighters were also well protected with strong shields. One of the smaller Malon export vessels incurred only minimal damage when *Voyager* launched a full spread of photon torpedoes against it. One of the reasons the freighters had such strong shields was that they had to be able to contain their toxic cargo.

One Malon freighter also displayed the ability to use a tractor beam when it found and tried to steal one of *Voyager’s* multispatial probes. It was believed that the Malon wanted to acquire this probe as its multispatial technology had the potential to help them find new places where they could dispose of their radioactive waste.

HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS

The interior of a Malon export vessel appeared as a complicated maze of corridors filled with exposed gratings and bulkheads. The working conditions, including the control room from where the ship was run, were poor and hazardous. The crew had to wear bulky isolation suits to protect them against all the toxic compounds, but most succumbed to freighter blight that manifested as ugly-looking sores on their skin. There appeared to be no concessions to comfort, and most of the interior was dark, grimy, and cramped with conduits and bulky monitoring equipment.

The most dangerous place to work was near the storage tanks because they emitted high levels of theta radiation. Workers here were known as core laborers, and only three out of 10 were expected to survive a standard mission. They were, however, well paid, and could earn more on a two-month mission than most Malon did in a lifetime.

Malon vessels were operated from a control room. Like the rest of the interior, it was dark and appeared to be covered in grime and pollutants. The command area did not appear to take into account the comfort of the crew and was not even outfitted with chairs.

Export vessels were equipped with a safety system to treat radiation exposure, but the facilities, like the rest of the ship, appeared dark, dirty, and unclean.

As Malon export vessels traveled through space, they spewed noxious green gas from release nozzles, preventing dangerous levels from building up inside.

According to Malon legend there were monsters called the Vhaar aboard their ships. It was eventually discovered that these myths were not so far from the truth. Core workers who developed a resistance to the theta radiation could survive, but not before their flesh became severely disfigured with blisters and mutations. The resulting pain would also effectively drive them mad, and these “monsters” would attack the rest of the crew.

The smaller Malon freighter was described by its controller, or captain, as being an “export vessel, eleventh gradient.” It had a cargo capacity of 90 million isotons and was well armed and defended.
The Malon were not so unscrupulous as to dump their deadly waste in heavily populated areas of space, but neither were they principled enough to make sure their dumping grounds were entirely deserted of life. For example, Controller Emck found what he considered to be the perfect disposal site: a region of space that appeared to be devoid of any life or star systems for 2,500 light years. However, one species, the "night beings," were indigenous to this area and were being killed by the theta radiation dumped there by his export vessel.

Most of the toxic waste dumped by Malon export vessels was theta radiation, a by-product of utilizing antimatter to generate energy. Theta radiation was extremely toxic to humanoid life and short-term exposure resulted in hallucinations, fatigue and nausea, while exposure to high levels could liquefy body parts.
When word came through to senior illustrator Rick Sternbach that a Malon toxic waste tanker was required for the episode ‘Night,’ he was not aware that it would make more than one appearance. For Sternbach, it was another ‘ship of the week’ that had to be designed with some alacrity to keep to the punishing schedule. For recurring ships, Sternbach would have weeks, or even months in the case of the U.S.S. Voyager NCC-74656, to carefully think through the design, but in the case of ‘ships of the week,’ time was very much of the essence. From the preliminary script for ‘Night,’ Sternbach knew the Malon ship had to be a freighter of some kind, and he knew it was full of toxic waste. “I wanted it to look massive,” said Sternbach, “and the large spherical tanks seemed to accomplish that. I knew from the script that the tanker was dangerous and could leak, so I put some big obvious vents on it that spew out some kind of discharge. There was also a strong back to it, a structural spine, parts of which I thought could be inhabitable.”

**DETACHABLE PARTS**

From the illustrations, it looked as if the spherical waste tanks might be separate elements that could attach or detach from the central supporting spine, but this was not something that Sternbach had thought about at the time. “If people want to make the case that the lateral supports opened up so the tanks could be picked up by the spine, then terrific,” said Sternbach. “The truth is that we never had the time on the production to flesh everything out perfectly. I’d put notes on the illustrations while I was working on them if anything about the design occurred to me, but most of the time the visual effects guys were on to me to hurry up so they could start their work on the ship.”

**DESIGNING THE MALON EXPORT VESSEL**

Starting with huge spherical storage tanks, Rick Sternbach came up with a suitably industrial-looking design for a Malon freighter.

When the Malon returned later in VOYAGER’s fifth season, in the episode ‘Juggernaut,’ it gave Sternbach the opportunity to elaborate on ideas for their ship a little more. This time the Malon ship was to be a larger ‘supertanker.’ “The first tanker had three tanks,” said Sternbach, “and the supertanker had nine tanks in three groups of three, with a very similar looking structural spine holding it all together. The intent with the mega-freighter was that the tanks were the same size as the ones in the original tanker. Stylistically, the two ships were similar to show that the same race of aliens had built them, but I definitely added a few more retro elements to it.”

**ART DECO STYLE**

For inspiration, Sternbach turned to some of the streamlined train designs from the 1930s. It is perhaps more evident in his illustrations than on the final CG ship that the front was very train-like. It also had an art deco look, influenced like so much science fiction design has been from the first Superman comic books. “That
When designing the larger ‘super tanker’ for the episode ‘Juggernaut,’ Sternbach was able to add more stylistic elements. It is clear from this visualization that the front of the structural spine above the storage tanks has a look inspired by the streamlined trains from the 1930s.

Sternbach also added annotations to his illustrations, pointing out the main features of his design. This was to give the CG modelers a clearer understanding of the functional purpose behind some of the stylistic elements, such as the toxic nozzles.

Sternbach’s design was then built as a CG model at effects house Foundation Imaging by Brandon MacDougall, while the noxious vapors of green gas were added by Kevin Quattro. “Some of the stylistic elements and texture that got applied to the basic shape were done by the CG guys,” said Sternbach. “I think they added a bunch of stuff, including some defensive armament and some more pipes, and that was terrific.”

Sternbach drew up various views of the Malon export vessel so that the modelers at the visual effects house Foundation Imaging had a clear idea of how it all went together when they were creating the CG model.

Retro-styling was probably the most important thing for me,” said Sternbach. “Yes, it had to look like a big ugly tanker, but I didn’t develop a real style for the shapes until the later mega-tanker, which relied heavily on slightly streamlined and repeating parts with a good old retro feel.”

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BRANNON BRAGA became STAR TREK: VOYAGER’s showrunner at the beginning of season five after Jeri Taylor stepped down from the role. As Braga took the reins, the show developed a darker tone, with the crew experiencing their toughest year in the Delta Quadrant to that point. This was evidenced by the season’s first episode ‘Night,’ in which the Malon were introduced as polluting industrialists, and another villainous species that the crew of U.S.S. Voyager had to contend with on their way home.

Braga felt that the Malon worked well, and he was particularly happy with their appearance in ‘Juggernaut.’ “This time there was a rogue Malon freighter spinning out of control that threatened to blow up and contaminate an entire sector,” said Braga. “An away team had to board the freighter and shut it down. It was absolutely the most dank, disgusting, toxic set we’d ever done. The crew had to wear galoshes. It was a really fun, cinematic piece.”

MALON MAKEUP

The Malon also gave the makeup department run by Michael Westmore a chance to shine. “The Malon were interesting,” said Westmore, “because they hired mainly people who carried a little weight, so that made for a slothful type of individual. What was so much fun with them was that they weren’t a nice clean alien form; they had bumps and they had pimples and they were greasy. They were almost, you could say, the dregs of the universe. It was a very simple makeup and I think it was very effective; the entire thing consisted of basically a forehead and a nose.”

Of course, while Braga was the new showrunner, he was very much a veteran of the franchise. He progressed from being an intern, through writer and producer on STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION, to writer, co-executive producer and then executive producer on STAR TREK: VOYAGER. With this wealth of experience, Braga did not set out to make major changes when he took over, as he felt this had already been done. “You know, the big changes started to happen in the third season. Jeri [Taylor] and I, and Rick [Berman] sat down and said, ‘We’ve got to make this show a little more fun, it’s a bit of a downer, it’s about a bunch of people who don’t like each other, who don’t want to be here, and we’re seeing the same villains every week. Let’s reinvent the show.’

“In the third season it was improving, and then in the fourth season we made some radical changes. We added the Seven of Nine character, we got rid of a character that didn’t work – Kes – and we just made a bigger, bolder show with a more cinematic scope; less intimate, less issue-oriented, and bigger, more adventurous, and that really kicked in the previous year.”

During the fourth season, many of the storylines dealt with the newly arrived Seven of Nine and her relationships with her shipmates, especially the filthy environment created for the episode ‘Juggernaut’ made filming tough for the cast and crew, but it added a feature film-like atmosphere to the show.

Even though the prosthetics were fairly straightforward, makeup supremo Michael Westmore was particularly happy with the look his department came up with for the Malon.
for an invasion of Earth.

8472 who were training new favorites — Species show revisited one of it’s in the season (right) the bizarre aliens (left). Later of space, in inhabited by completely empty region encountered, an almost areas of space we’d ever in one of the strangest kicked off with the ship 

VOYAGER’s fifth season

deep anger and rage, and it all happened in this “that was a B’Elanna episode. She confronted her in the Malon episode ‘Juggernaut.’ “When we went aboard the Malon freighter,” said Braga, “the ship was incredibly realistic, but created entirely by visual effects.”

Private Doubts

Even though her faith in her actions was shaken, Janeway didn’t show her vulnerabilities to any of the crew. “I think she’d let her guard down too much,” said Braga. “She was always the party. I think she was a much more sociable captain than Picard was. I always thought of her that way.” B’Elanna Torres also confronted her inner conflicts in the Malon episode “Juggernaut.” “When we went aboard the Malon freighter,” said Braga, “that was a B’Elanna episode. She confronted her deep anger and rage, and it all happened in this toxic environment, which was in some ways a visual metaphor for her emotional state. It was very strong, very intense, very violent.”

Besides the ongoing development of the characters, season five also included bigger, more cinematic shows, enhanced by some stunning visual effects. For many who worked as part of STAR TREK: VOYAGER’s VFX team, the sequence of Voyager crashing into the surface of an ice world in “Timeless” was a highlight of not just this season, but any season. As story editor Bryan Fuller recalled, the first time the writing staff saw that sequence, they were just blown away. “They gave us so much more than we expected,” said Fuller. “The whole belly-flop into the atmosphere, skimming the mountainside, crashing into the surface, the plume of snow; it was absolutely startling and amazing.”

The Monean water planet in “Thirty Days” was another major achievement for the VFX department. All the exteriors of the ocean were completely computer-generated more than a year before the film. The Perfect Storm was released. It was singled out for special praise by VFX producer Dan Curry and VFX supervisor Ronald B. Moore. As Moore said, “That show was very strong, very intense, very violent.”

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It was sequences like this that helped establish the Borg as real icons of STAR TREK, and as Braga remembered, it was no easy task to come up with new aliens that stand the test of time.

Villainous Icons

“You know, creating a great new alien villain that everyone loves was hard,” said Braga. “You can count them on one hand. The Klingons and the Borg were the two most popular, and then there was the Cardassians, and I don’t know who else! I wouldn’t count the Ferengi; they became something a little more humorous, I think. On STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE, there aren’t a lot of STAR TREK villains that hit; nor should there be. The phage aliens (the Vidiians) were cool, and the Hirogen were kind of cool, but I don’t think they were aliens that people could really grab on to like they did with the Romulans or the Klingons. But I think we did some great work with the Borg, and they become really, really popular.”

Overall, Braga looked back with satisfaction on most of season 5. “We were all very pleased with the season,” said Braga. “The show had been very consistent and, you know, out of 26 episodes I’m pleased to say that I think 20 were just dynamite, high-concept shows. There were maybe six that were varying degrees of disappointing, but that’s to be expected in any season. Fortunately 20 out of 26 ain’t bad. We were very, very happy.”
ON SCREEN

TRIVIA
Ron Garza played the role of Controller Fanek in the STAR TREK: VOYAGER episode ‘Juggernaut’. He had previously appeared as Martin Benbeck, a member of the genetically engineered Earth colony on Mob IV, in the STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION episode ‘The Masterpiece Society’. He also played Ch’Pok, a Klingon advocate who tried to prosecute Worf for destroying a Klingon transport vessel in the STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE episode ‘Rules of Engagement’.


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