

111

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## CAPTAIN PROTON'S ROCKET SHIP

TYPE: HOLOGRAPHIC

CREATED: 2375

LENGTH: 21 METERS

WEAPON: DESTRUCTO BEAM

# CAPTAIN PROTON'S ROCKET SHIP

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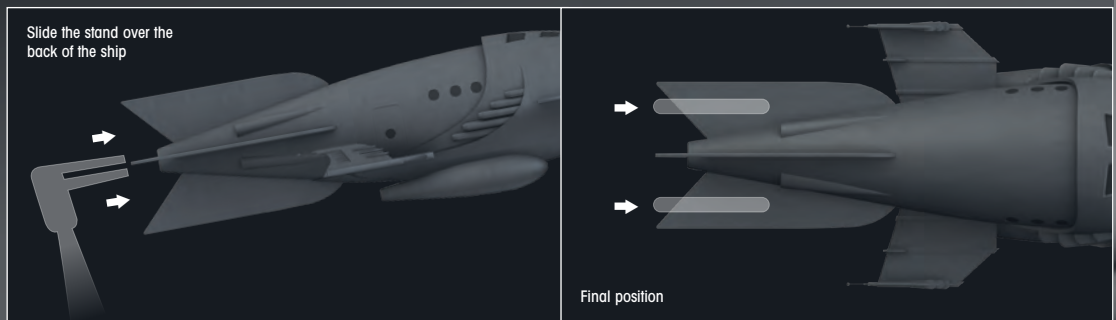
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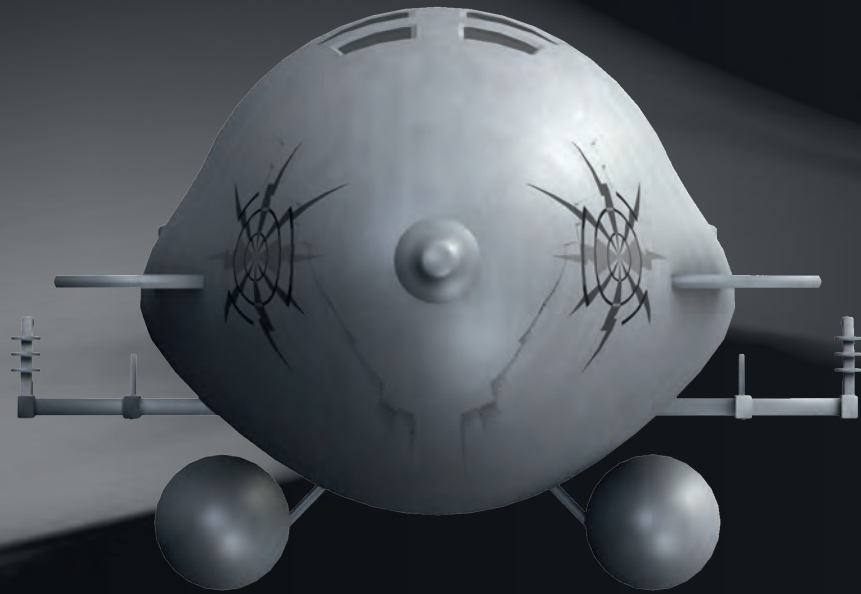
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# CAPTAIN PROTON'S ROCKET SHIP

## SPECIFICATION



CREATED BY:

TOM PARIS

TYPE:

HOLOGRAPHIC

IN OPERATION:

2375

LENGTH:

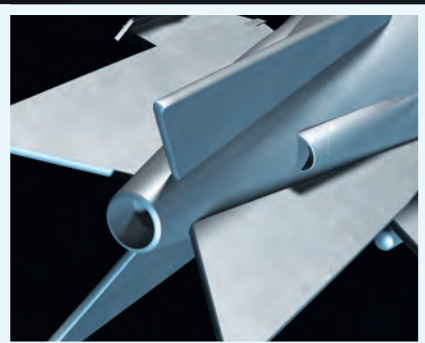
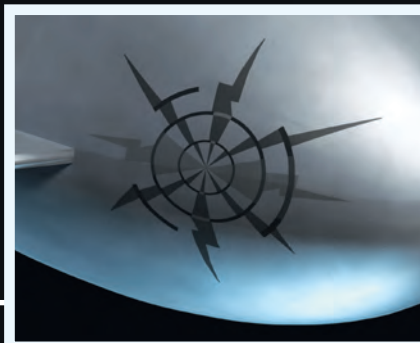
21 METERS (APPROX.)

PROPULSION:

ROCKETS

WEAPONRY:

DESTRUCTO BEAM





▼ Like many of the movie serials from the early part of the 20th century that inspired the Captain Proton hologram, the rocket ship appeared only in black and white. The zeppelin-shaped vessel featured bold, sleek lines, and it was outfitted with fins and side strakes that suggested glamor and speed.



# CAPTAIN PROTON'S **ROCKET SHIP**

Captain Proton's rocket ship was holographic, and styled as seen through the eyes of 1930s Hollywood.

**DATA FEED**

*The Adventures of Captain Proton* was a holonovel created by Tom Paris. Chapters within the novel were given titles such as 'Spell of the Spider,' 'The Web of Pain,' and 'Invaders from the Ninth Dimension.'

Paris played the lead character, Captain Proton, who went on a series of intergalactic adventures where he fought villains such as Dr. Chaotica and Queen Arachnia. Proton had at his disposal a rocket ship. This faster-than-light ship featured Art Deco styling, which was the prevailing aesthetic movement at the time when many of the science-fiction serials were first created.

**RETROFUTURISTIC STYLE**

In appearance, the rocket ship had a bullet-headed front end, with a long spine emerging from its nose. On the side of the fuselage were a series of strakes, which resembled lake pipes found on automobiles, as well as round porthole windows and double winglets. The tapered rear end was adorned with large stabilizing fins, which made the ship look like a large blunt dart.

As its name suggested, the ship was powered by rockets, and when in flight it vented flames and smoke out of exhausts positioned between the rear fins. The ship was roughly the same size as the *Delta Flyer*, making it about 21 meters in length.

Captain Proton's rocket ship was equipped with a weapon known as a destructo beam. This was never seen firing, but it was powerful enough to disable Dr. Chaotica's death ray, providing the lightning shield that protected his Fortress of Doom had been shut down.

The inside of the rocket ship was filled with huge analog controls such as gauges, dials and levers, rather than the touch-sensitive consoles

Captain Proton's rocket ship was a fictional starship inspired by the look of science-fiction movie serials from the early 20th century. It was part of a holodeck adventure created by Lieutenant Tom Paris in 2375.

Paris had several interests, including the history of 20th-century Earth and generating holographic narratives. He decided to combine these pastimes by creating the *Adventures of Captain Proton* on the holodeck to stave off boredom after the *U.S.S. Voyager NCC-74656* entered a vast desolate region of space devoid of life and star systems.



◀ Captain Proton, as played by Tom Paris, was a prime example of how early 20th-century movie serials depicted science-fiction heroes. He cut a dashing figure with his leather jacket, flying goggles and ray gun. He also wore a rocket pack on his back, which allowed him to fly through the air and even space.





◀ Captain Proton was able to fly alongside his rocket ship using his rocket backpack. The fact that he could survive in the vacuum of space protected only by flight goggles did not seem to be an issue!

▶ A periscope device, similar to those used aboard submarines, was installed in the rocket ship. It allowed a view of the surrounding space as there were no forward facing windows.



▶ The controls aboard the rocket ship were operated by a series of analog switchgear, including small wheels, large levers and toggle buttons. These interfaces later provided inspiration for the controls that were built into the *Delta Flyer*.



▲ Tom Paris roped other members of the *Voyager* crew into playing parts in the Captain Proton holodeck program. Harry Kim was cast as Proton's loyal sidekick Buster Kincaid. While Kim did not always understand the finer points of the program, he seemed to appreciate the story where he was captured by the Twin Mistresses of Evil played by the real-life Delaney sisters.

that were prevalent in 24th-century Starfleet ships. Other features of the interior included a periscope to view surrounding space and an imagizer, which allowed real-time communication on a circular viewing screen. There was also an intergalactic telegram machine, which received communications on a printed strip of paper from people such as the President of Earth.

During the Captain Proton computer programs, the holoprojectors would display the action in black and white just like the original movie serials. Real people and objects entering the holodeck would also appear in monochrome.

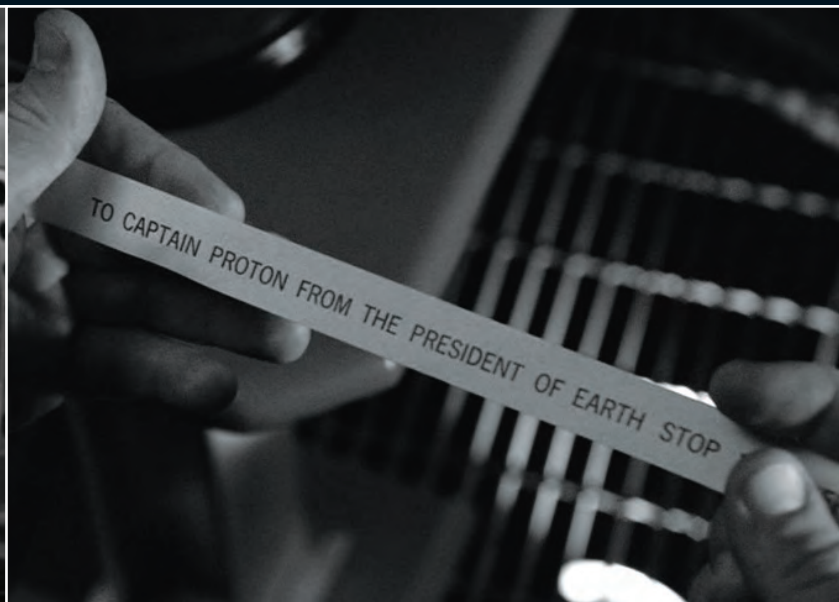
In one of Captain Proton's adventures called 'Satan's Robot Conquers the World,' Dr. Chaotica had stolen Captain Proton's rocket ship and was using it to lead his forces into battle against Earth.

Fortunately, his plans were dashed when someone pushed the rocket ship's self-destruct button, forcing him to abandon the invasion.

### TOO REAL

Reality and Captain Proton became confused during Episode 18 of Proton's adventures, 'Bride of Chaotica!', when Proton's rocket ship was struck by Chaotica's death ray, forcing him to make an emergency landing on Planet X. The Captain planned to steal uniforms from Chaotica's guards, make his way through underground caverns into the Fortress of Doom, and disable the death ray before Chaotica could destroy Earth.

Paris was forced to play the role for real, however, to end a war between the holographic Chaotica and a race of unwitting photonic life



► Two photonic aliens, who took human form, mistakenly believed that the Captain Proton holodeck program was real. The species became involved in a war with Dr. Chaotica, which only ended after Captain Proton's rocket ship managed to destroy his death ray.



▲ Captain Proton could receive messages from the Earth government on his rocket ship via a telegram. A machine printed out the communication on a strip of paper, with each sentence concluding with the word "stop." It appeared that audiences from the early 20th century accepted that telegrams would still be used on starships.

forms, who believed that the Proton program was real and that Chaotica was attacking them. Paris and Ensign Kim managed to destroy the death ray after Captain Kathryn Janeway – in the guise of Arachnia, Queen of the Spider People – disabled the lightning shield that protected Chaotica's fortress. This robbed the fictional scientist of his protection, and the rocket ship was able to destroy the death ray and stop the photonic bloodshed.

This sober intrusion of 24th-century reality into a world where the good guys were not supposed to die proved too much for Paris. He wanted simple escapism, but playing the hero versus killer robots, mad scientists and death rays suddenly did not seem so appealing. He decided to delete the program and leave behind the joys of fighting fictional evil alien invaders.

## DATA FEED

**Dr. Chaotica was the prime villain in the Captain Proton universe. The insane scientist was a true megalomaniac, who was bent on domination of the cosmos with the aid of his army of minions and his powerful death ray.**

**The most common target of Chaotica's nefarious schemes was Earth. However, he reckoned without the intervention of Captain Proton, who regularly thwarted his diabolical plans.**





### QUEEN ARACHNIA

Arachnia, Queen of the Spider People, was a pouting villainess in the finest melodramatic tradition. Her feminine wiles had the males of many species hanging on her every word, and her pheromones could put any man completely under her spell.

Arachnia was pursued by one evil genius in particular: Dr. Chaotica, who was desperate to arrange a connubial partnership. Arachnia, however, was not interested in ruling by his side, and pandered to his megalomaniacal ego merely in order to gain power for herself.

When the Captain Proton hologram threatened the lives of a photonic-based species, Captain Janeway reluctantly agreed to play Queen Arachnia in order to distract Dr. Chaotica. At first, Janeway was uncomfortable in the role, but she soon threw herself into the part. She released her bottled pheromones on Lonzak, Dr. Chaotica's head guard, which forced him to do her bidding. She then had him lower the lightning shield that protected the Fortress of Doom, allowing Captain Proton's rocket ship to destroy Chaotica's death ray with its destructo beam.



▲ Captain Janeway had to play the part of Queen Arachnia in order to get inside Dr. Chaotica's Fortress of doom and disable his lightning shield. This allowed Captain Proton to destroy the death ray.

Stabilizing fin

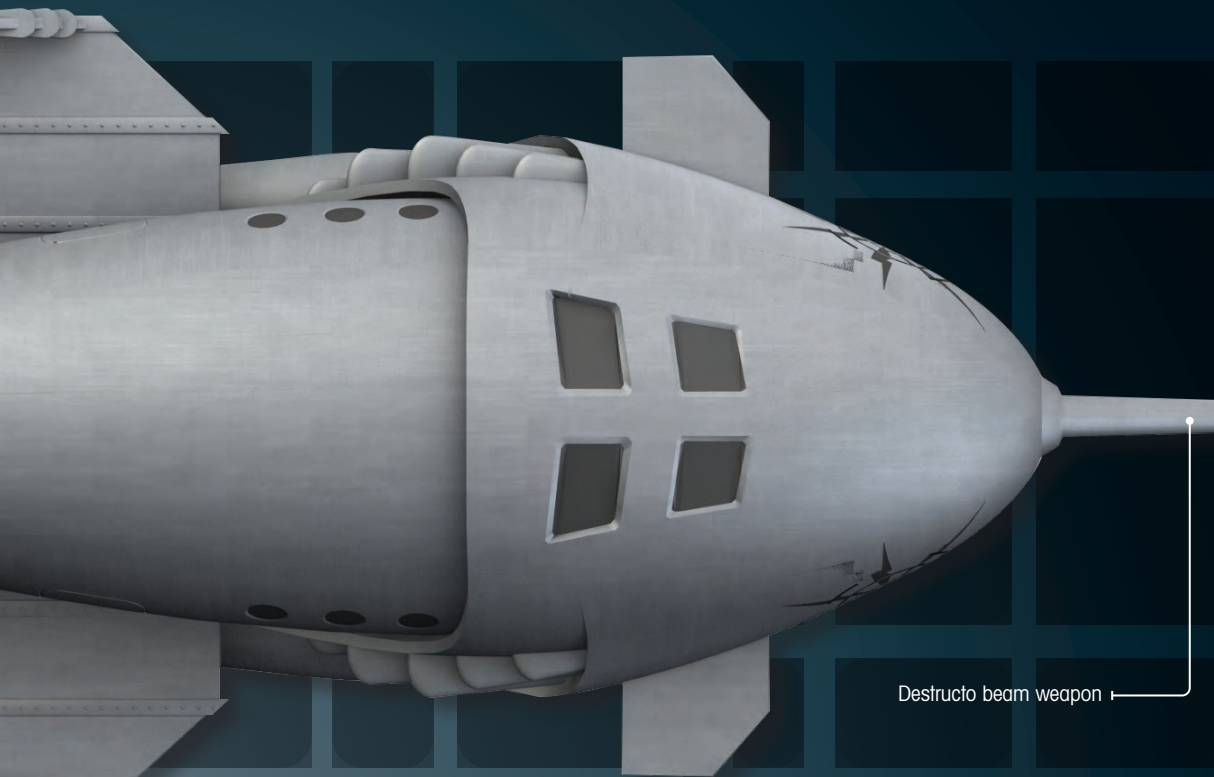
Winglet

### DATA FEED

Captain Proton's secretary Constance Goodheart accompanied him on his adventures. She was usually captured by Dr. Chaotica or by some other diabolical villain, and her biggest asset was her ability to let loose a piercing scream at the first sight of danger.

Entry hatch

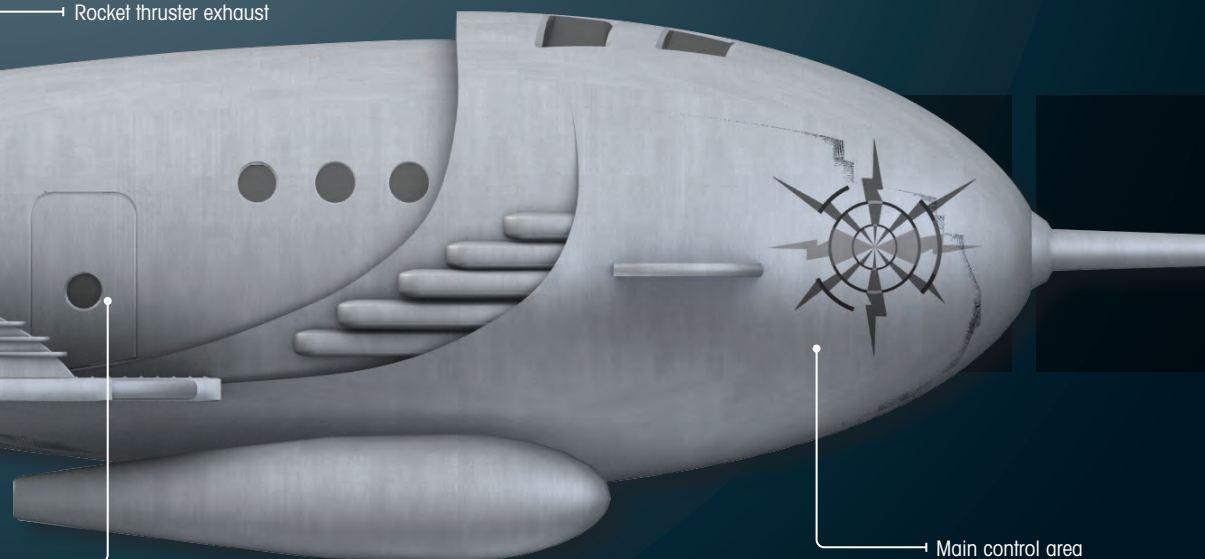




Destructo beam weapon



Rocket thruster exhaust



Main control area

#### ENTERPRISE MOVIES

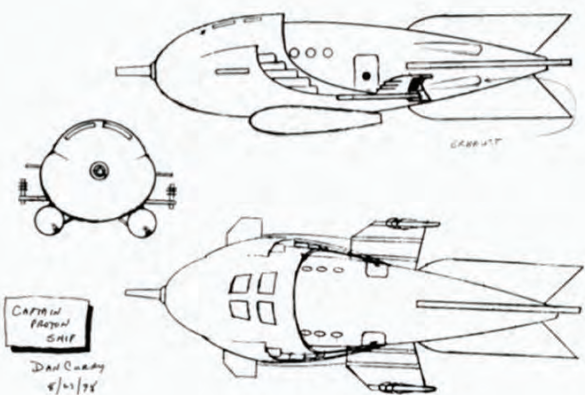
'The Bride of Chaotica' was listed among many films that were held in *Enterprise NX-01's* database. Other films on the list included 'Dixon Hill and the Black Orchid,' a reference to one of Captain Picard's favorite holograms.

#### NAME INSPIRATION

Harry Kim's character, Buster Kincaid, was named for actor and athlete Buster Crabbe, who played both Flash Gordon and Buck Rogers, inspirations for Captain Proton.

#### MOUNTING PROBLEM

The *Voyager* crew were suffering from low morale due to the monotony of traveling through a lifeless area of space when Tom Paris created the Captain Proton holonovel. Various facilities went offline during this period, and according to Neelix the ship was down to just four functioning lavatories for a crew of 150.



▲ Dan Curry drew this illustration when he was asked to design Captain Proton's rocket ship. It featured similar elements to the rocket ship used by Flash Gordon in the 1930s, such as the tail fins and nose spike, but was not exactly the same.



## DESIGNING CAPTAIN PROTON'S ROCKET SHIP

Visual effects producer Dan Curry designed Captain Proton's vessel based on his recollection of Flash Gordon's rocket ship from the 1930s.

The cast and crew of *STAR TREK: VOYAGER* had an absolute blast creating *The Adventures of Captain Proton* holodeck program. From the inflated language and funny

gags to the period props and effects, they had great fun putting together a comic romp that was a homage to *Flash Gordon* and other science-fiction serials of its ilk.

Visual effects producer Dan Curry was delighted when he was asked to come up with a design for Captain Proton's rocket ship. "When the idea for the holodeck adventure came up, I just





◀ The design of Captain Proton's rocket ship was intended to capture the optimistic mood of one of the first outer space adventures brought to the silver screen.



▲ As visual effects producer, Dan Curry also worked on the shots of Captain Proton flying through space with his jet pack. The flames and sparks were created using industrial sparklers, and the look was deliberately designed to mimic the cheesy effects of the 1930s.

drew Flash Gordon's ship – the Buster Crabbe version – from memory," said Curry. "As I hadn't seen the ship since childhood I knew my memory would be enough to capture the spirit of the original, but not be an exact copy. I just loved that 1930s teardrop aesthetic for aerodynamics. My first sketch was accepted by the producers."

Curry's version aped the style of the original one drawn by Alex Raymond for the comic strip in the 1930s, but it did not feature the side exhausts or the wheeled landing gear. In other words, it captured its essence, without duplicating it entirely.

Senior illustrator Rick Sternbach designed Captain Proton's jet pack,

and Curry helped make the actual props, including the control unit that was worn on the chest. "The jet pack was like the original from *Commando Cody and the Lost Planet Airmen*," said Curry. "The special effects department and I came up with a flying rig for Robbie (Robert Duncan McNeill) with industrial sparklers inserted in the tubes."



# CREATING THE WEAPONRY FOR CAPTAIN PROTON

To create Captain Proton's 'early sci-fi' look, property master Alan Sims went to HMS Creative Productions with a request for them to make all the props resemble the classic movie serials from the 1930s.

▲ Tom Paris's Captain Proton holographic program was based on early science fiction TV serials, like *Flash Gordon* and *Buck Rogers*, and the props reflected their era and style.

Captain Proton, the superhero holodeck program created by Tom Paris in the style of a low-budget 1930s science fiction TV show, was a remarkably successful miniseries within the regular *STAR TREK: VOYAGER* show. It was first seen in Season Five's episode *Night* and went on to appear in *Thirty Days* before its episode-long finale in *Bride of Chaotical!*

Filmed in black and white for authenticity, Paramount's production team used early science fiction shows such as *Flash Gordon* and *Commando Cody* as their inspiration, and with the style decided on they started work on creating the retro world they required.

The inspiration may have been the classic movie serials, but the actual designs of these props had





▲ The basic designs of the guns for Captain Proton and his friends were based on a .45 handgun. Captain Proton's pistol had a blue and silver color scheme with a stylized hand grip and barrel.



▲ Each gun was given a different color scheme even though the footage was filmed in black and white. This gun was made for a holodeck character that was to be played by Tuvok, but was not used for the final show.



▲ Ensign Kim played ace reporter Buster Kincaid, Captain Proton's loyal sidekick. His gun used the same basic .45 foundation, but had a different, less elaborate barrel and was decorated in silver and red.

yet to be agreed upon. The task was given to HMS Creative Productions, who had a long-standing relationship with Paramount, via the direction of property master Alan Sims.

When Sims got the initial drafts of the first episode, which would introduce the Captain Proton characters, he went to HMS partners Mike Moore and Steve Horch to get them acquainted with the goals of the miniseries. What was most critical was coming up with designs that would translate as easily on screen as that of past science fiction classics, and so he told them about the desire to have all the props made in the likeness of the old *Flash Gordon* weapons, which gave them a strong and well-known visual palette.

### NOSTALGIC VIEWING

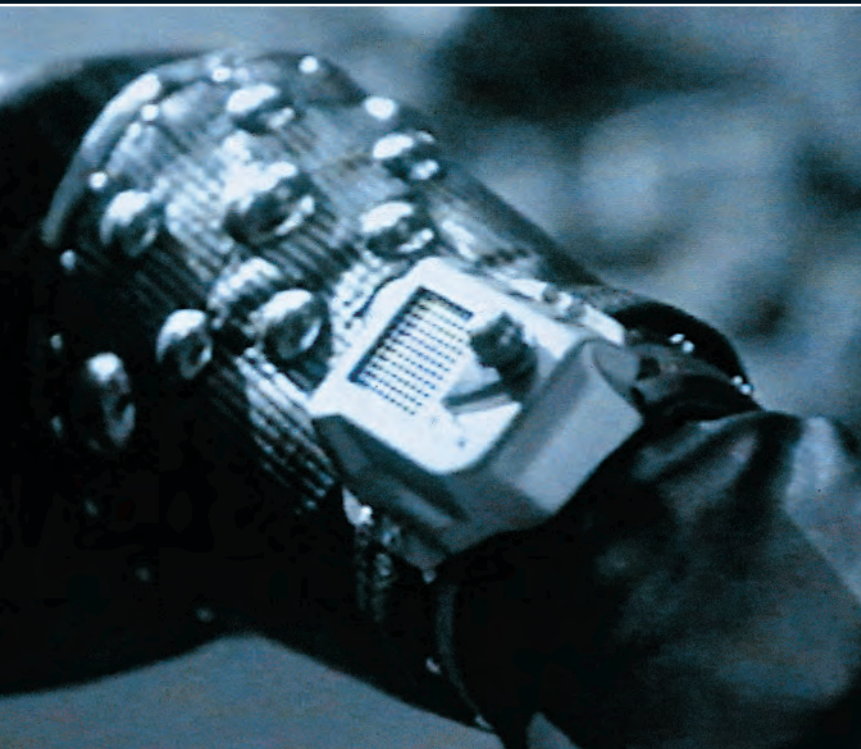
Steve Horch said, "Having grown up with these old shows, we loved all the machinery, with those big dials, knobs, and great sense of mechanical ingenuity. We wished we could have done all the set pieces, but there wasn't time. So we rented a bunch of the old serials and watched them to get ideas. One thing we noticed right off was the use of the villains' weaponry; they used to hold them up, with an underhand grip, then fire. So we thought it would be cool to try this old approach as something new. The other guns were pretty much stock, borrowing on the .45 handgun, with unique barrel designs."

In addition to the guns, which came into being rather quickly, they had to design and construct many other props. The first one to actually go into production was the wrist communicator. After listening to the script's requirements, Horch suggested they make the communicators like



▲ Captain Proton used his ray gun to save Buster Kincaid from the Twin Mistresses of Evil, played by the Delaney twins, who were about to use the brain probe on him to turn him into their slave.





▲ Steve Horch made the wrist communicators that were used by several of the characters look similar to the ones used on *Dick Tracy*, but without the screen.



▲ The Proton wrist communicators were made by adapting the wrist tricorder/communicator that had been used by the Son'a in *STAR TREK: INSURRECTION*.

▼ HMS Creative Productions designed and made open-ended holsters to protect the guns when not in use. Each holster had a hoop at the top that allowed them to be hooked around a belt.

the old *Dick Tracy* ones, the exception being that they wouldn't have a TV-type screen – just a viewscreen with a big knob on it.

To get going on the idea, Horch took one of their Son'a wrist tricorders from the movie *STAR TREK: INSURRECTION* and quickly converted it to an old-style communicator. Alan Sims then took it to Paramount for the production team to see, and it was immediately accepted.

After the initial show-and-tell, HMS Creative Productions made another communicator, to serve as a backup or to be used for another character. The wrist strap came from an old pocketbook, in hopes of making it look like an old watch, and they were both painted dull silver, with the control knobs shortened a bit. This last modification was done in case they were to be used by actors wearing gloves.



#### THE 'PROTON' GUNS

Making the first elements, the wrist communicators, took Moore and Horch a few days of fast-paced work, but the next props, the guns, took them a bit longer – a week – to make. Knowing that they would be using a .45 handgun as the base for these props, the task of creating the main style was given to another member of the HMS team, Max Cervantes.

After devising a general assembly plan, Cervantes went into the final phases of design in very rapid succession. "Once he saw it in his mind, he basically completed it in 3-D," noted Horch. "Alan just had to OK the tip designs, suggesting that they put in a few body lines here and there on the sights."





▲ These handheld scanners were used by the photonic alien life forms to detect and analyze life forms similar to themselves. They were given a green paint scheme, and three oval red buttons were added, which when pressed actually activated the screens.

Each of the three guns was made from polyurethane resin and cast in RTV (room temperature vulcanization) rubber. Once demolded, they were painted in one of three distinct color schemes: blue and silver for Captain Proton, red and silver for Harry Kim, and red and gold for a planned Tuvok character. They were also given slightly different barrel designs.

As the trio of pistols approached completion the team started to think about how the weaponry could be stowed in order to complement the era. What that meant was holsters. But not just any holsters: more appropriately, a variation on the old western gunslinger, with pouches big enough to accommodate the elaborate barrels and a method of looping them over wide custom-built leather belts. In the end, the holsters were open-ended, allowing the pistols to be extracted and cradled easily.

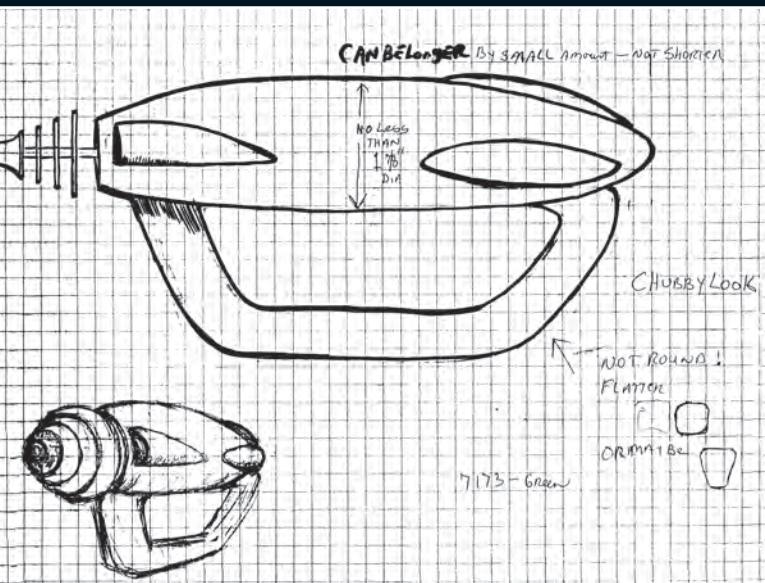
#### SCANNER PROPS

*Bride Of Chaotica!*, the final episode of the Captain Proton series, featured all the props that had already been made for the other two episodes, plus a few new pieces. Perhaps the strangest of the props to be constructed were the alien scanners, which could be seen in use as the photonic aliens attempted to analyze Chaotica and his guards. They were also called into play when the Doctor entered the holodeck posing as the President of Earth, and it is through these devices that the photonic aliens concluded that the Doctor was a photon life form just like them and thus trustworthy.



◀ Tom Paris as Captain Proton can be seen here wearing the custom-made holster looped around his belt. The controls for his rocket backpack were worn on his chest, and were similar in style to ones used by Commando Cody in the old serials.





▲ The guns for Dr. Chaotica's soldiers needed to look very different than those of the 'good guys,' and some preliminary drawings were done. The final design of the infantry guns was inspired by a weapon HMS had seen in a *Buck Rogers* episode. They were held with an underhand grip and could be fired close to the body.

In keeping with the overall the look and theme, it was decided that these scanners should be sophisticated and sleek in appearance. Production favored the idea of using rounded surfaces, buttons, and knobs, though in discreetly different sizes. The scanners, which were originally a larger vacuum-formed body piece, were cut in half to make them sleek and easy to hold in one hand. Moore and Horch added a small screen, which was like a TV screen turned on one end, to be viewed vertically. It was made from a piece of acrylic and carried a purplish graphic underneath the surface, for backlighting. The upper side had three oval buttons, which could actually activate the screens.

The electronics for these scanner props also marked a departure in how props were

illuminated. White LEDs were used extensively to replace the duller power-hungry incandescents of previous pieces. By doing so, the white light was not only brighter but would last on stage while they were filming from three to 10 times longer, depending on use.

#### ADDING COLOR

In a final gesture, HMS chose an out-of-the-ordinary paint scheme. "They were pretty neat," claimed Horch. "We mixed up a real nice mint-green body color, with burgundy red for the buttons." Funnily enough, this was the only prop that actually made it into color on an otherwise black and white presentation. For the most part, the scanners, as well as the others props, were seldom seen in full color.



Some of the other props in the Captain Proton episodes were repurposed from items used in earlier *STAR TREK* shows. For example, Dr. Chaotica's death ray had previously been seen as the big surface cannon in the forests of Minos in *THE NEXT GENERATION* episode *The Arsenal of Freedom*. In fact, this prop was used again after its Captain Proton appearance in the *ENTERPRISE* episode *Demons*, where it was seen as a 22nd-century mining laser used on Luna. There was also Chaotica's magnificent ornate throne. This had previously been used as Minister Odala's chair in *VOYAGER*'s season three episode *Distant Origin*. In fact, the chair had originally been created for the 1993 film *Coneheads* starring Dan Aykroyd.

### MORE WEAPONS

While these were repurposed props, HMS Creative Productions continued to design and create more weapons. To have anything less exciting than Proton's gun for Chaotica's guards would have been a dismal failure with regards to style. HMS saw some early 'Buck Rogers' episodes and made use of another old concept in designing the infantry pistols. Just as in those old serials, the pistols were designed to be held against the soldier's upper chest or shoulder when firing. They even went so far as to include little round disks over the barrels, further emulating the old-style designs. To accommodate the number of characters in the episodes, five copies of the gun, along with matching holsters were produced. Each gun was painted a dull silver, and trimmed in bright metallic green.

### QUEEN ARACHNIA'S GUN

Had it not been for the secret pheromone potion, hidden in Janeway's Queen Arachnia vial, she would have had to make her escape using a small pistol. Inspired by an idea in *Men in Black*, the pistol featured a long needle barrel and sapphire-blue lit, inner power chambers. This prop was designed and made before the story was redrafted, and since the alternate escape route was decided upon and thought to be more effective, the small pistol was relegated to the 'almost' storage unit.

As a last consideration, it was thought that should Paris and Kim needed to go searching

through any underground cavernous lairs, they should be outfitted with a rugged and highly illuminescent tool.

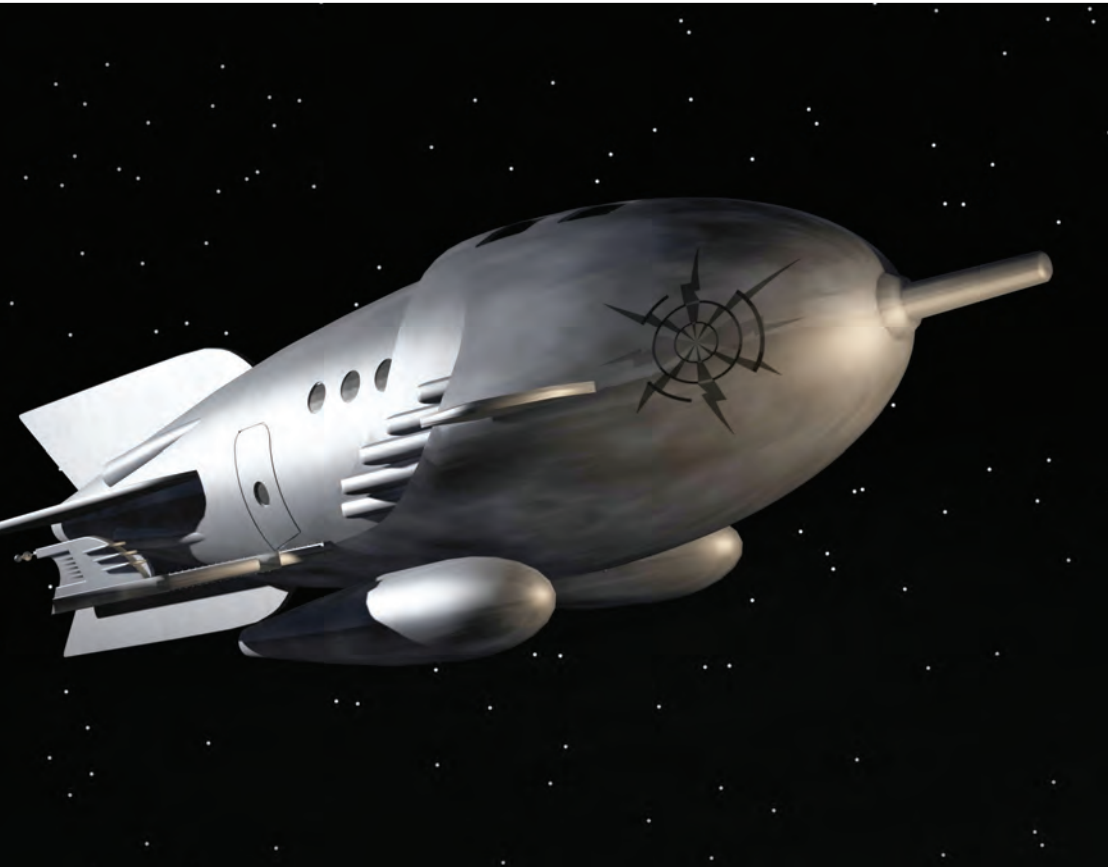
Given the mandate of providing these props within the design style, HMS purchased some standard highly-polished chrome-handled flashlights, and encased them in clear acrylic tubes. Each of these had a series of four rings at the rear, and one major disk at the front: just different enough to pass as a valued tool from the classic era.

Overall, HMS came up with some unique designs that were still readily recognizable as early American classic science fiction. They took a lot of care over creating props that were simple and effective, and even went to the trouble of creating the perfect color scheme – despite the fact that they only ever appeared in old-time black and white!



◀ Although they were never used, HMS made these illuminators out of flashlights in case Paris and Kim were seen entering the underground caves beneath Chaotica's Fortress of Doom.

# ON SCREEN



## TRIVIA

The man inside the Satan's Robot costume in the *STAR TREK: VOYAGER* episodes *Night, Bride of Chaotica!* and *Shattered* was Tarik Ergin. He was a regular background actor in all seven seasons of *VOYAGER*, as well as playing Lieutenant Ayala in the first and last episodes of *VOYAGER*. The Satan's Robot costume was sold in 2007 at the 'It's a Wrap!' auction on eBay for \$4,658. Captain Janeway's Arachnia costume was put up for sale at Christie's '40 Years of *STAR TREK: The Collection*' auction and fetched \$4,560.



Actor Nicholas Worth, who played Dr. Chaotica's bumbling head of defense Lonzak, also appeared in two episodes of *DEEP SPACE NINE*. In *In Progress*, he portrayed a Lissepian captain, and in *A Simple Investigation*, he played a Finnean named Sorm.



The plot for *Bride of Chaotica!* was written in such a way as to keep as much action as possible off *Voyager's* bridge. This was because a fire had caused damage to the set, and the bridge scenes for the episode were actually shot weeks later after the fire damage had been repaired.

- FIRST APPEARANCE:** BRIDE OF CHAOTICA! (VOY)
- TV APPEARANCE:** STAR TREK: VOYAGER
- DESIGNED BY:** Dan Curry

### KEY APPEARANCES

#### **STAR TREK: VOYAGER** *Bride of Chaotica!*

Tom Paris and Harry Kim are running the Captain Proton holodeck program when the *U.S.S. Voyager* NCC-74656 gets caught in a layer of subspace. This causes the ship's systems to malfunction and the holodeck cannot be shut off.

Weapons fire is detected on the holodeck, and upon investigation it is found that a race of photonic aliens native to subspace have mistaken the holodeck for reality. Worse, these aliens have become involved in a war with Dr. Chaotica and his army of evil.

In order to help these aliens, Paris suggests letting the holodeck story play

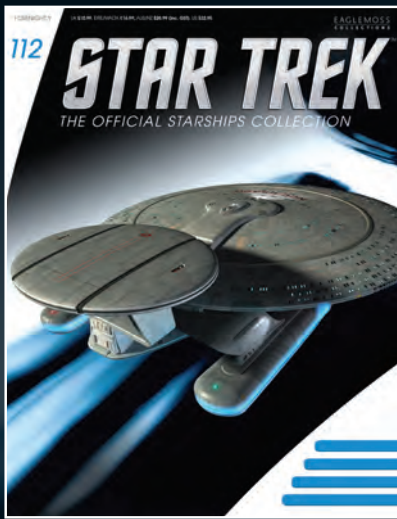
out. He convinces a reluctant Captain Janeway to play the part of Queen Arachnia, as it will allow her to infiltrate Chaotica's Fortress of Doom. Once there, she can disable the lightning shield, allowing Captain Proton's rocket ship to destroy Chaotica's death ray.

Not everything goes to plan and Janeway as Arachnia is captured. Luckily, she has a pheromone love potion, which she uses on Lonzak, Chaotica's henchman, and he frees her. She then forces Chaotica to lower his lightning shield, and Captain Proton's rocket ship destroys the death ray. The photonic aliens retreat, which frees *Voyager* from subspace.



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