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CARETAKER'S ARRAY

SPECIAL ISSUE

AFFILIATION: NACENE

IN USE: 24TH CENTURY

LOCATION: DELTA QUADRANT

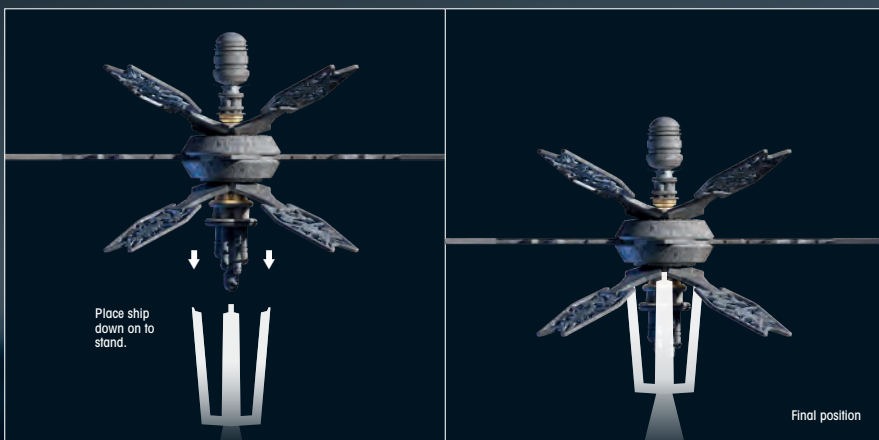
DESTROYED: 2371

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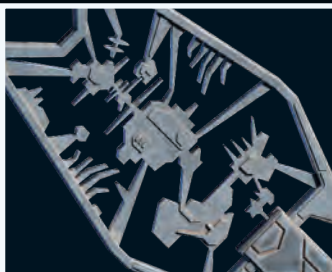
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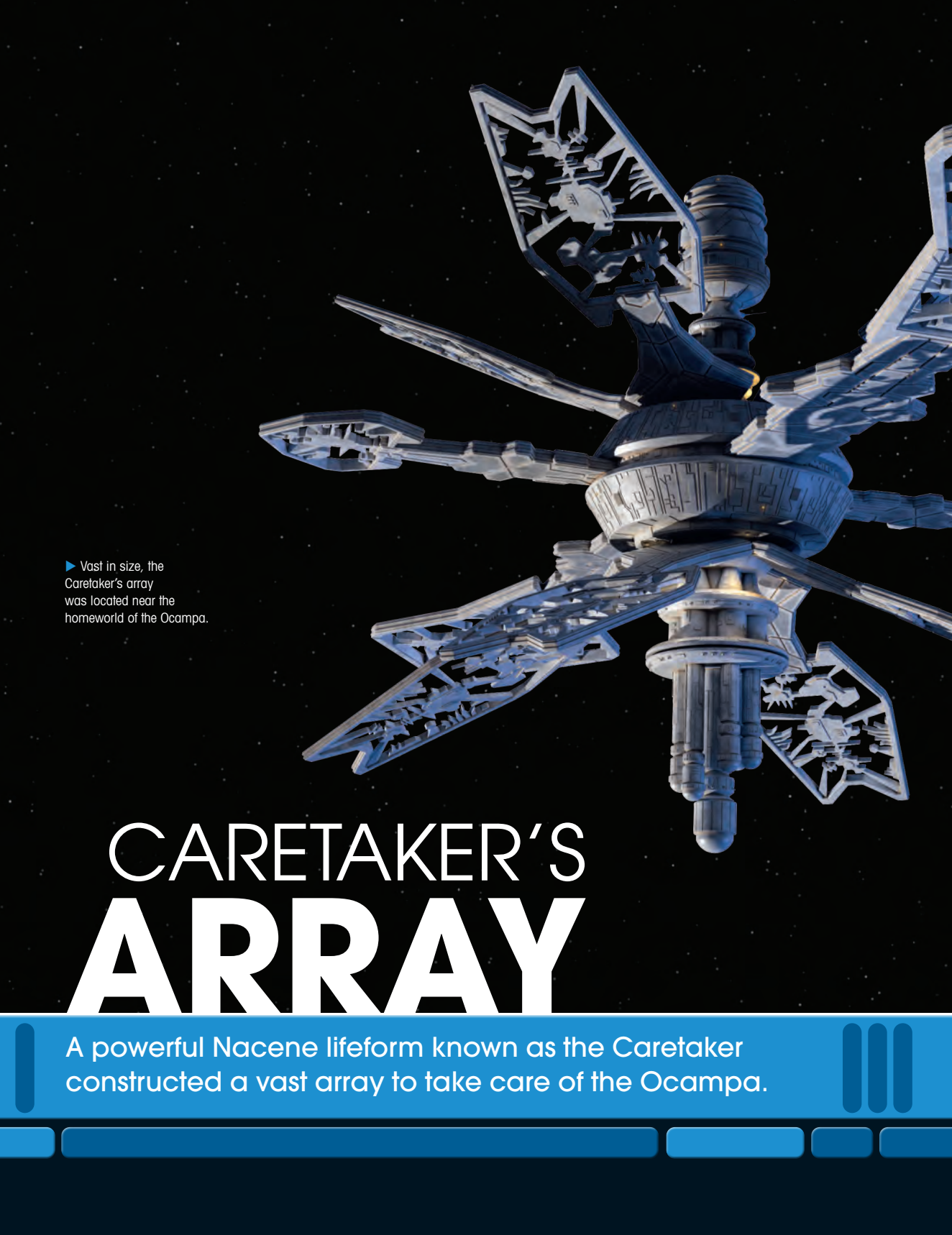
CARETAKER'S ARRAY

SPECIFICATION



NAME:	CARETAKER'S ARRAY
AFFILIATION:	NACENE
LOCATION:	DELTA QUADRANT
ACTIVE:	24TH CENTURY
DESTROYED:	STARDATE 48315.6 - 2371





► Vast in size, the Caretaker's array was located near the homeworld of the Ocampa.

CARETAKER'S ARRAY

A powerful Nacene lifeform known as the Caretaker constructed a vast array to take care of the Ocampa.



The Nacene originated in an unknown galaxy, an advanced race able to traverse subspace and explore the universe. When a Nacene expedition arrived in the Delta Quadrant, the race's technology caused catastrophic damage to the homeworld of the short-lived Ocampan race. Two Nacene remained behind to care for the Ocampan, constructing a vast array in nearby space from where they could watch over their charges. After 500 generations, only one Nacene remained behind – this guardian became known as 'the Caretaker.'

THE ARRAY

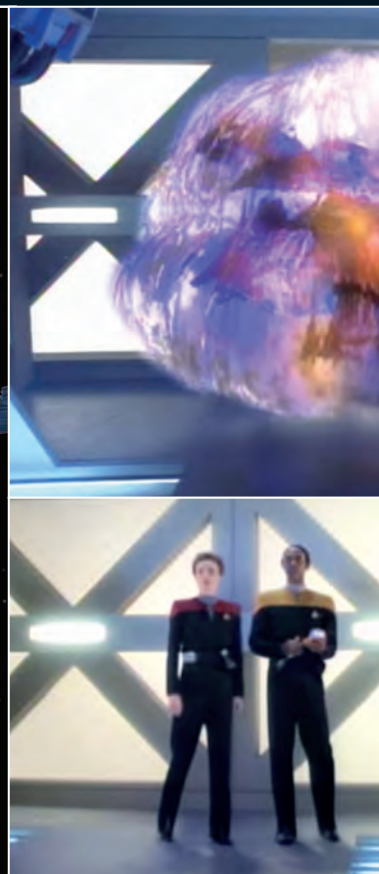
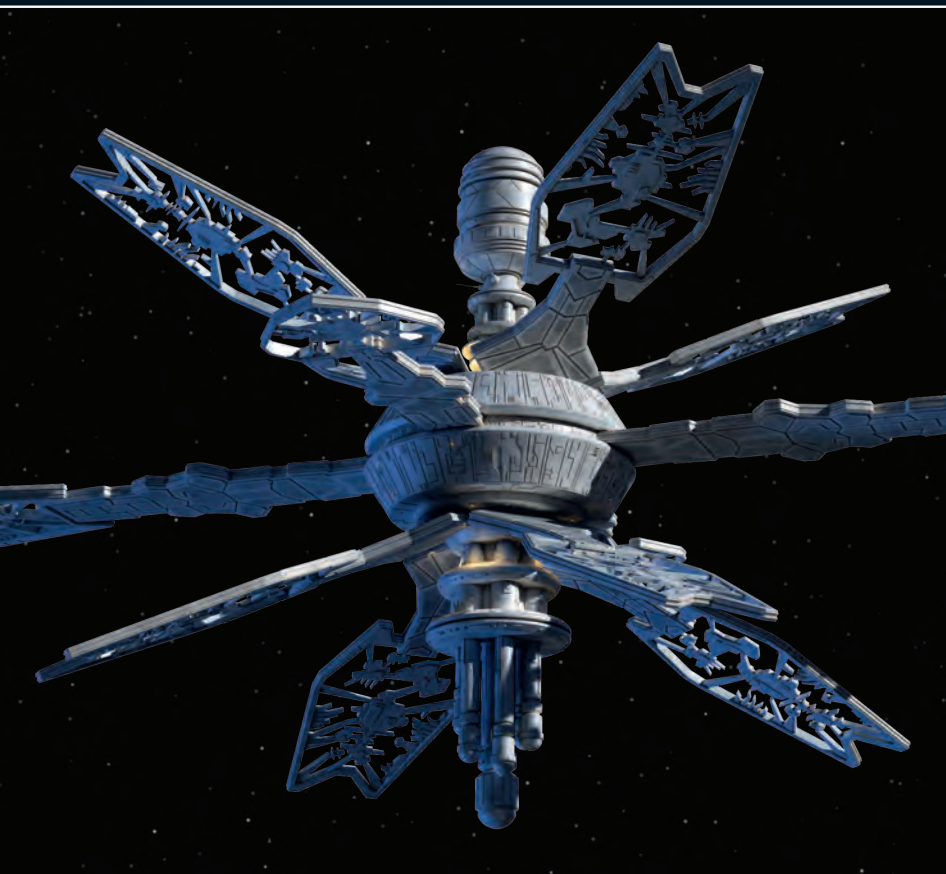
A sporocystian lifeform, the Nacene were thought to be non-corporeal entities, in part energy based with underlying crystalline elements. Their technology was highly advanced, the array constructed by the Caretaker and its mate Suspiria standing as an intricate feat of engineering.

The array was vast, its diameter and height stretching for kilometers. Ranged around a tall, cylindrical central hub, the array's structure comprised a network of angled sprues radiating out above and below the central hub.

Powered by tetryonic reactors, the lower tip of the central cylinder formed an emitter to transmit radiant energy bursts – these were directed at the Ocampan homeworld. Within was a battery of advanced technology, from sophisticated



◀ The very first thing the crew of the starship *Voyager* saw on their arrival in the Delta Quadrant was an alien array, which they learned was constructed by a being called the Caretaker.



▲ The array transmitted power to the subterranean Ocampa city.

holographic projectors to full-spectrum medical and research facilities. From within, the Caretaker took on the debt that could not be repaid.

SUSPIRIA DEPARTS

Using the array's advanced systems, the Nacene opened up a chasm, leading the Ocampa beneath the surface of their ravaged world. Here, a subterranean city was established where the Ocampa thrived for 500 generations. Regular food was provided and the city powered by regular bursts of energy transmitted from the array.

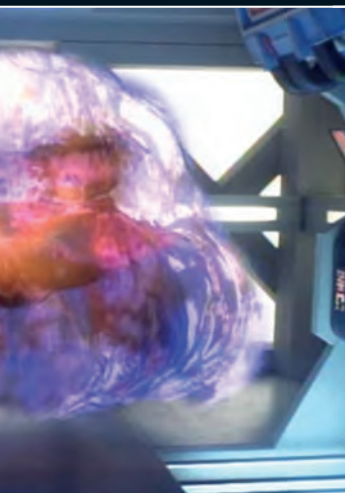
The Nacene that became the Caretaker and Suspiria watched over the Ocampa,

until Suspiria grew restless. Around the 21st century, she departed the array with 300 Ocampa, leaving her mate as the lone guardian of those left behind.

DEATH OF THE CARETAKER

Two centuries later, the Caretaker was dying. Without a mate, its death would leave the Ocampa alone. Desperate, the Caretaker pulled ships lightyears across the galaxy in the hope of finding a compatible lifeform. One such ship was the starship *Voyager*.

While searching for a Maquis ship in the badlands, *Voyager* was pulled 75,000 lightyears across space to the Delta Quadrant. Transported to the array, Captain



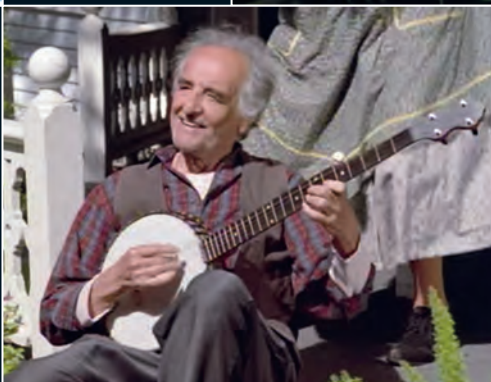
► After becoming aware of its existence, the Kazon arrived at the array to plunder its technology. *Voyager* prepared to engage them in battle.

◀ The Caretaker was a Nacene, a sporycystian lifeform that arrived with others of its kind in the Delta Quadrant. After damaging the Ocampan homeworld, the Caretaker and one other remained.



◀ Janeway and Tuvok beamed to the array to plead with the Caretaker to help send *Voyager* home to the Alpha Quadrant.

► The Caretaker appeared in the form of a genial old man to make the Starfleet crew more comfortable.



Janeway's crew found themselves in a bizarre recreation of an Earth farm, the Caretaker appearing as a banjo-playing old man.

After an invasive medical examination, the *Voyager* crew was returned to the ship, apart from Ensign Kim who was transported to the Ocampan homeworld with Maquis operative B'Elanna Torres. After allying with Chakotay's Maquis cell, Janeway realized the Caretaker was dying – and their way home along with it.

After recovering Kim and Torres, *Voyager*'s presence brought the brutal Kazon to the array. To prevent Nacene technology falling into their hands, Janeway destroyed the array, stranding Starfleet and Maquis crews 75,000 lightyears from Federation space...

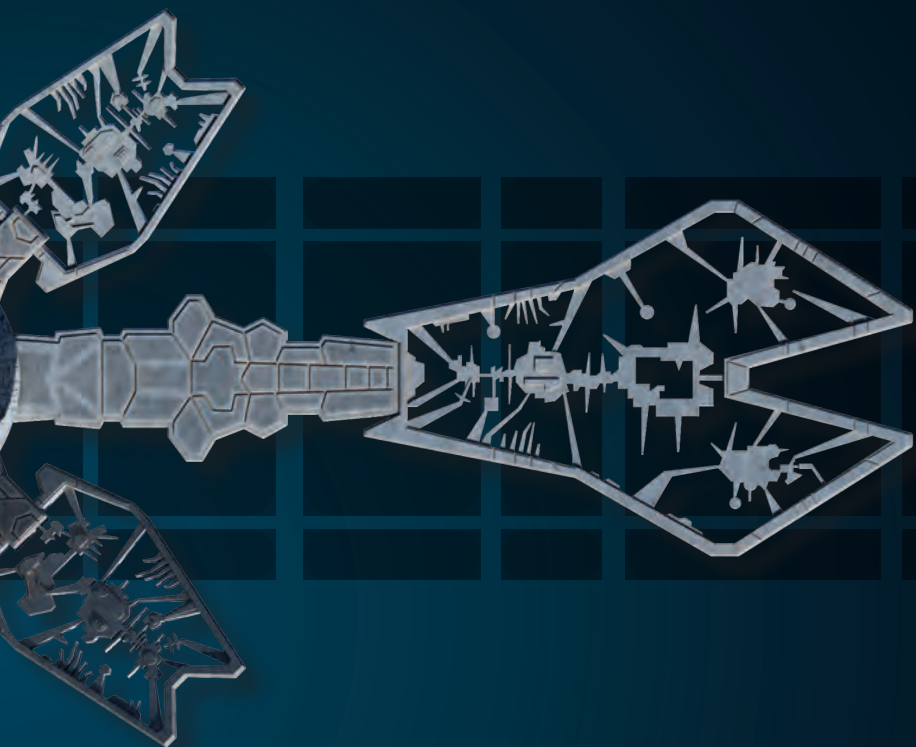


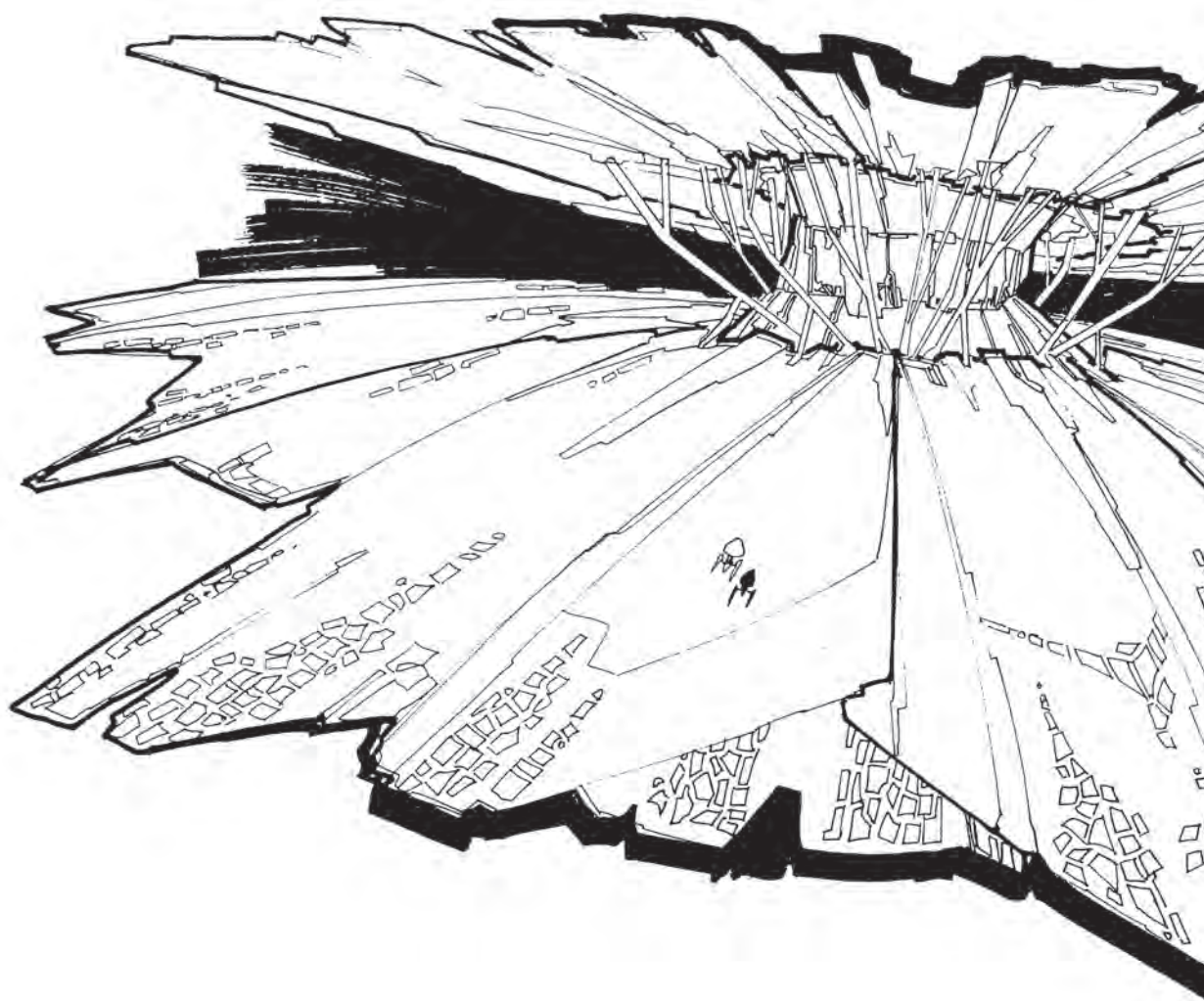
SUSPIRIA

Leaving the Caretaker behind, the Nacene known as Suspiria took 300 Ocampan with her on a voyage of discovery. Building a brand new array for the Ocampan to live on, Suspiria helped her charges develop their powerful psychic abilities.

In 2372, *Voyager* encountered Suspiria on its journey through the Delta Quadrant. The Ocampan leader Tanis attempted to persuade Kes to join them on the array to pursue her own psychic abilities. Suspiria plotted revenge on Janeway and her crew for killing her mate, but the plan was halted by Kes turning on Tanis. Suspiria returned to the realm of space known as Exosia.

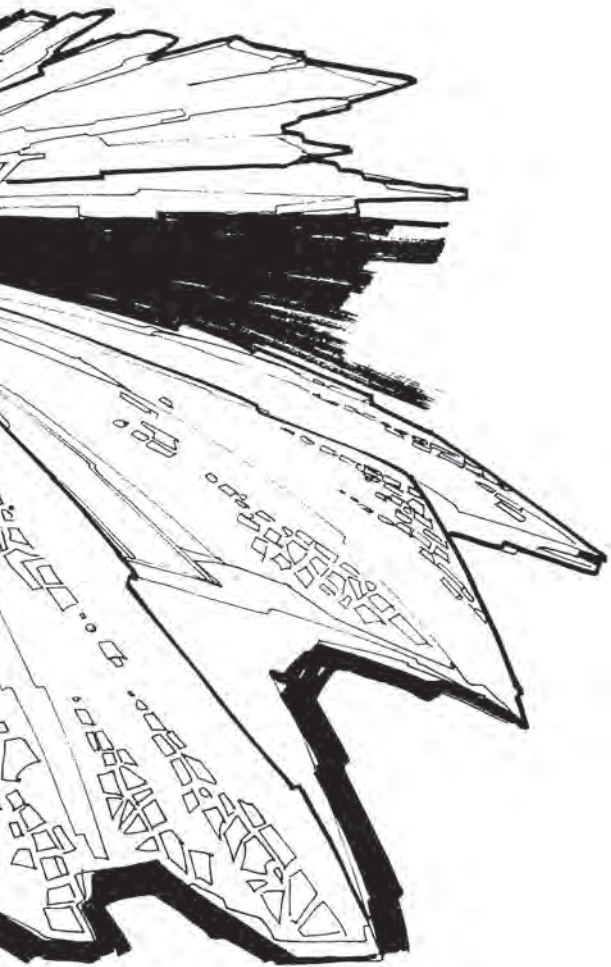




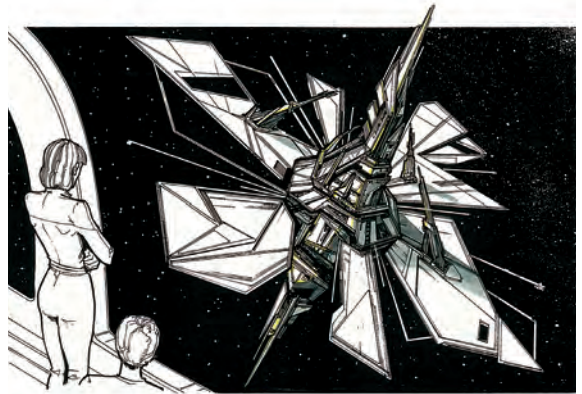


Designing the
ARRAY

Arriving at a final design for the Caretaker's array was a team effort for VOYAGER's VFX and art departments.



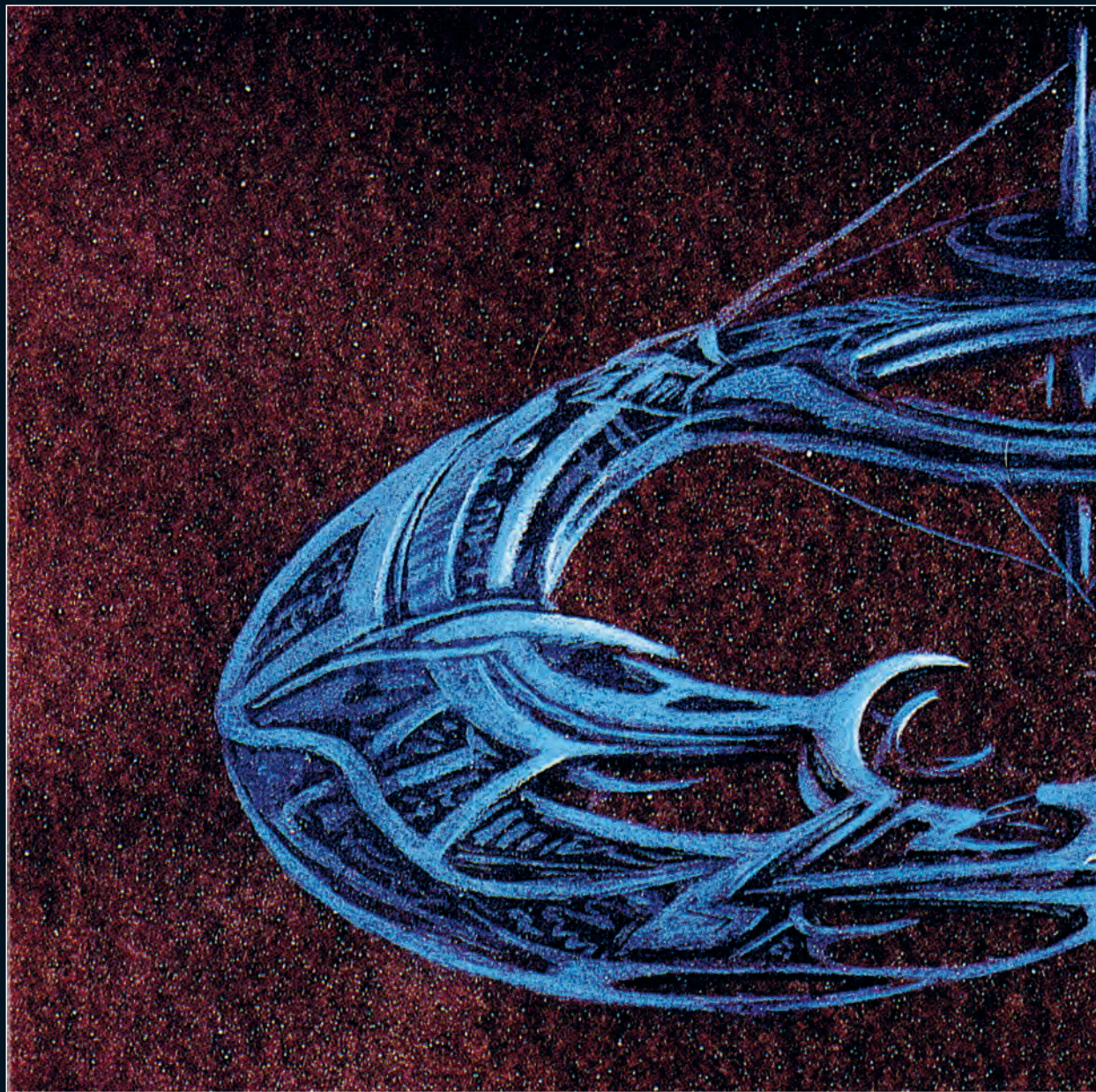
▲ Production illustrator Jim Martin took this pass at a concept for the Caretaker's array – note the vast size of the array in relation to *Voyager*.



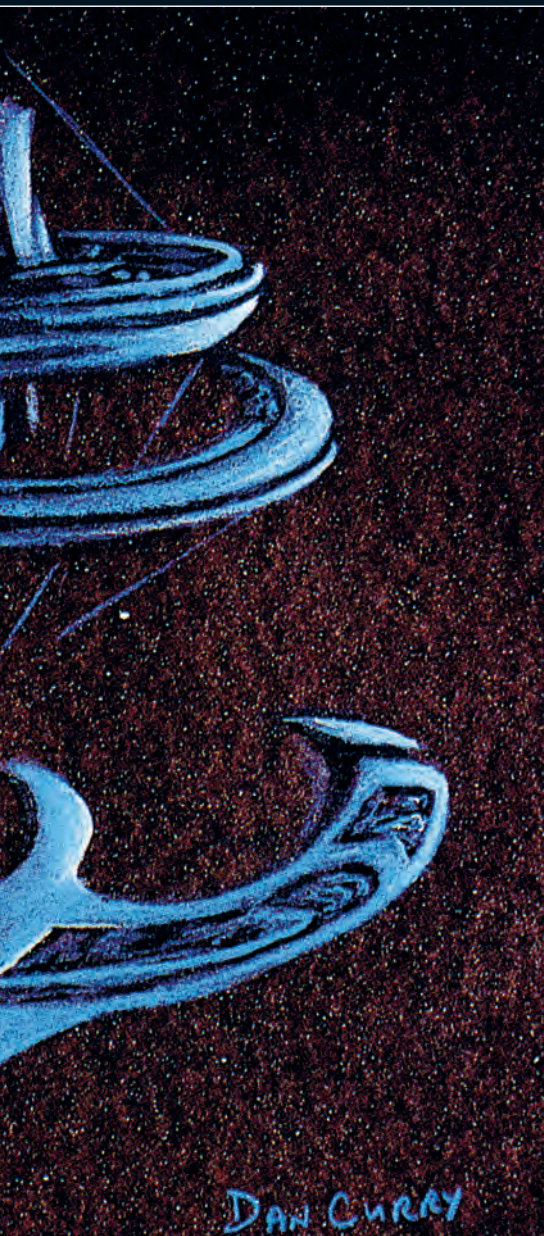
▲ Jim Martin imagined how the Caretaker's array might look when viewed from *Voyager* – the design now more closely resembles the final design.

'**Caretaker**', the feature-length pilot episode of *STAR TREK: VOYAGER* proved to be an enormous undertaking for the experienced behind-the-scenes departments that had brought both *THE NEXT GENERATION* and *DEEP SPACE NINE* to screens. *VOYAGER* required the creation of a brand-new hero ship from the ground up, new alien prosthetics, costumes and an unprecedented number of visual effects shots to give the launch a feature-film sized scale. "As always, in production, the primary enemy is time," says *STAR TREK*'s then visual effects producer Dan Curry. "And the time allotted to do things are not tethered to the reality of the challenges of production."

This was perhaps doubly true of 'Caretaker,' which put each department under enormous pressure to meet the pilot's airdate. In the midst of production, one central element required for the plot of 'Caretaker' was a new, unique alien structure encountered by *Voyager* on its arrival in the Delta Quadrant – the Caretaker's array. In an early draft of the script for 'Caretaker,' written by Michael Piller and



▲ *STAR TREK*'s visual effects producer, Dan Curry, also contributed concept designs for the array, including a sequence of four designs painted in acrylic on cardboard. This design features a more curved aesthetic than would appear on screen.



▲ Another from Dan Curry's sequence of four painted concept images of the array. This has a more constructed design, featuring an energy emitter at the front.

Jeri Taylor, the array is described as: 'a huge, eerie alien space Array... an ominous piece of space hardware... sending out pulses of energy arcing into space for reasons we cannot immediately understand... our first impression of it might be as some strange kind of weird lighthouse in space.'

CRUCIAL ELEMENT

The array was seen as such a crucial element of 'Caretaker' by *VOYAGER*'s executive producers that many team members across the art and visual effects departments worked up a wide variety of concepts. "It was all done under production designer Richard James in the art department," adds Curry. "Tim Earls probably did some concepts, and Jim Martin..."

During preproduction on *VOYAGER*, Jim Martin was serving as a production illustrator on *DEEP SPACE NINE* under Herman Zimmerman. To help alleviate the workload on 'Caretaker,' Martin was seconded to the *VOYAGER* art department to help out.

"I did a version of the array, that was fun," recalls Martin. "I did a few versions of that. It ends up being a

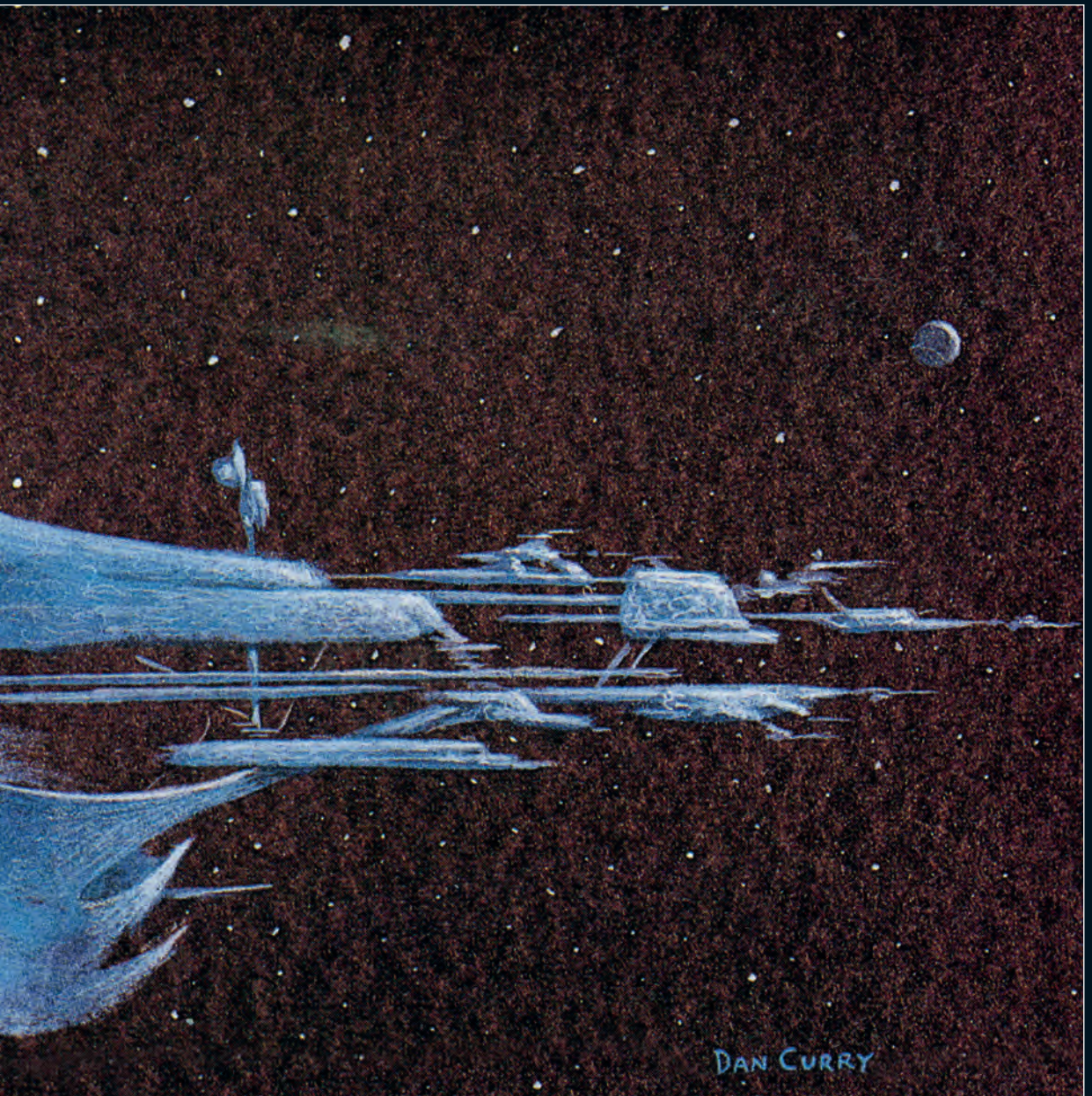


▲ A further image from the Dan Curry sequence, combining the curved aesthetic with the constructed look of the array.

hybrid, two that I did end up being a mixed version of that. I look back on those designs and definitely see my tendencies at the time to really want to panel it up. Do a lot of paneling and strip bracing. That was in my design toolkit back then. I think they maybe took the arm pedals from one and mixed it up with the verticality of the other.”

While other members of the art department were working up concepts for the Caretaker’s array, Dan Curry also provided a variety of concept art for the structure. Although *STAR TREK*’s visual effects producer, as an experienced artist across different media, Curry frequently contributed concept art. “They were little acrylic paintings, on cardboard” Curry says of the sequence of four concepts he initially produced. Within the structure of the concepts were nautical elements resembling the prow of a sailing ship. “Spaceships are nautical, in a way. That’s why we have so many nautical traditions on the *Enterprise* and other ships. Concept art is the old adage of throwing a lot of a stuff onto a wall and hoping some of it will stick.”

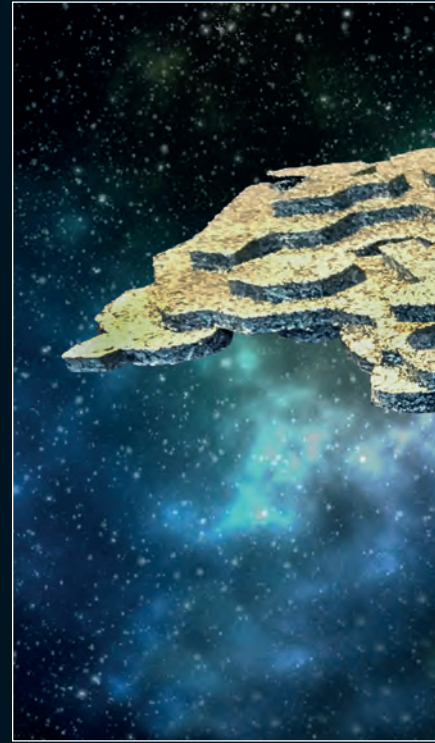
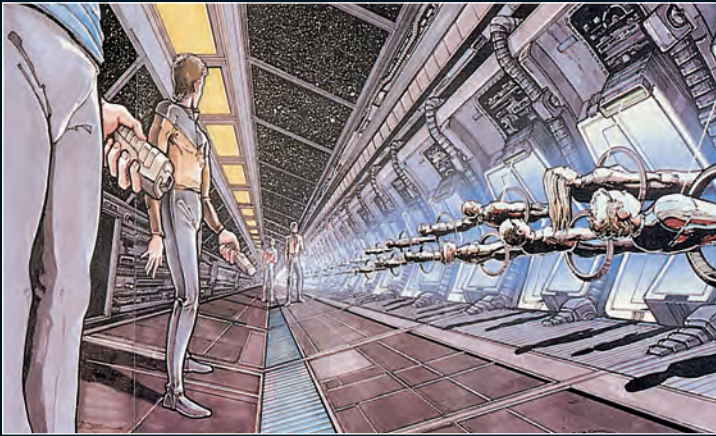




▲ In this final image from Dan Curry's sequence of concepts, there is a definite nautical look to the design, featuring a forward section resembling the prow of a ship.

► Dan Curry adopted a different medium for further array concepts, using foam core board to build a 3D design that emphasized the alien nature of the Naacene.

▼ During his work on the *VOYAGER* pilot, Jim Martin stepped inside to create concepts for the array interiors – here he imagined the look of the chamber in which crew were held in suspended animation.



FOAM CORAL

In addition to the four concept paintings, Curry also developed a contrasting design that he constructed from foam core board. "It would not have been as layered as I did here, like a relief map in foam core," Curry outlines this design. "I thought of it like this giant, organic coral reef." However, the design was ultimately rejected. "One of the things (executive producer) Rick Berman didn't like about that is that he felt the curves were too much like the curves on the *Deep Space 9* space station. And I didn't see it. I was imagining that it would create an energy field that would form within the circle and that it could shoot out." 25 years later, Curry still has that original foam core model in his office. "I still like it as a piece of art," he laughs.

Through weeks of designs and abandoned directions, a final design for the array was arrived at, combining elements produced by various artists, including Jim Martin. "Credit to the model shop," says Martin, "they put in their own design thoughts that made it so much better. They were so good at that."

"We lovingly called it the Casablanca ceiling fan," Curry recalls the nickname for the final miniature.

As part of his work on the pilot, Martin also mapped out concepts for the interior of the array, including the large chamber with members of the crew held in suspended animation. "That interior illustration at the time was really fun for me. It was all ink and marker. It was a little more ambitious than probably the budget of the show would have been able to do for the final set. You always want to start with the big ideas."



With a final design approved, a shooting model was built in the workshops of Greg Jein. The model measured 36x19x19 inches. This was in contrast with the hero shooting miniature of *Voyager* which was five feet – 60 inches – long.

"Thank god the guys at Image G were really great with the math," laughs Curry. Image G were long-time providers of motion-control photography to the *STAR TREK* franchise, and during work on 'Caretaker,' the *VOYAGER* VFX team were practically living at the Image G facilities. In 'Caretaker,' *Voyager* is dwarfed by the sheer size of the array, yet the shooting model of the station was far smaller than the *Voyager* shooting model. "Early on, *Voyager* docks at Deep Space 9," Curry explains working with different scales of models to achieve contrasting sizes. "The *Voyager*

model was around five feet long and *Deep space 9* is six feet in diameter. So we had to shoot the *Voyager* model from very far away and scale the camera moves so that it matched the camera moves on *Deep Space 9*. And the same was true of the of the Caretaker array. The math was very complicated."

EXPLOSIVE FINALE

In the final act of 'Caretaker,' a tense battle takes place between *Voyager* and the Kazon, with Captain Janeway taking the ultimate decision to destroy the array to keep it from falling into Kazon hands. In the pre-CGI days of *STAR TREK*, this required the destruction of a physical model. "When we blew stuff up like that we always made a second model because we had the moulds," says Curry. "When we shot explosion stuff



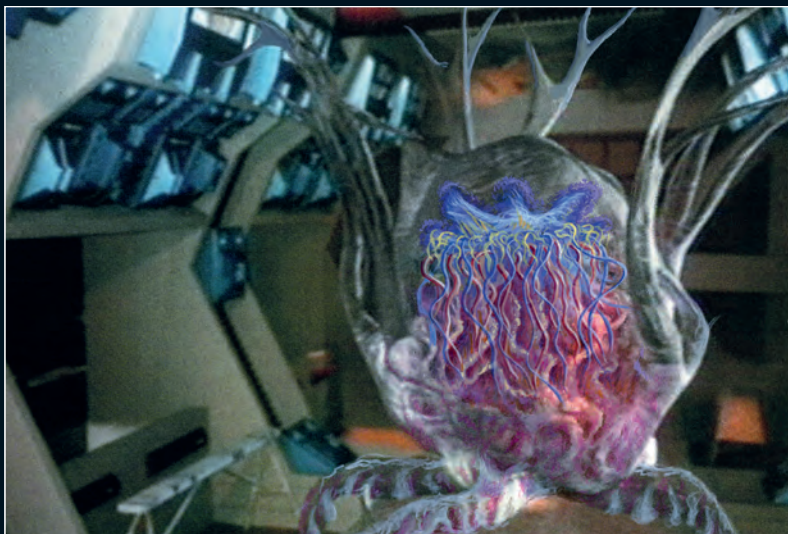
like that, so it looks like it happens in zero gravity, you shoot straight up." Mounted on the ceiling on Stage 16 at Paramount, the destruction of the array was shot from beneath using a high-speed camera at 360 frames per second. "That way all the ejector comes out symmetrically from the source, so it doesn't arc down with gravity. You have to find ways to make gravity your friend."

Although one model of the Caretaker's array was destroyed to achieve the final dramatic moments of 'Caretaker,' the main shooting model survived. It was sold in 2006 as part of Christie's '40 Years of *STAR TREK*' auction, where it achieved a final bid of \$7,800.

Dan Curry recalls the production of 'Caretaker' as one of the most challenging undertakings in his years on *STAR TREK*. "I always liked to make it possible for the model builders and the CG guys to inject their own creativity and add a feeling of support," he sums up. "Then everybody feels some degree of creative ownership in what's happening. I know that from early in my career when I had the opportunity to design, I cared more about it and put more of myself and more energy into it. Being in a leadership position, I remembered that and I always tried to make sure everybody was heading toward a common goal, but they had some degree of freedom."



▲ Curry's foam core model shot from a different angle. The design was ultimately rejected as executive producer Rick Berman felt the curved struts resembled *Deep Space 9*.



GOO CREATURE

Alongside the array exterior and interiors, one final element of the Caretaker's story was the Nacene creature itself, seen in the closing minutes of 'Caretaker' when it shows its true form to Captain Janeway and Tuvok. Dan Curry worked on various concepts for the Nacene, providing four different digital concepts with painted elements. These concepts were labeled 'goo creature' and went through multiple iterations. The final concept as seen on-screen included the transparent nature of the creature, but not the alien tendrils seen in Curry's concepts.

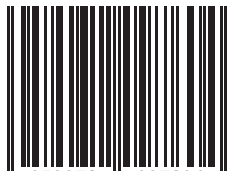
"VOYAGER was a hybrid show," says Curry. "It was mostly not CGI. It was primarily physical models, mostly shot at Image G. We started to bring CGI in for different purposes." One purpose served by CGI on 'Caretaker' was the realization of the Nacene creature. "You could have done it without CGI, but it would not have been as good, because I really wanted that degree of transparency."



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