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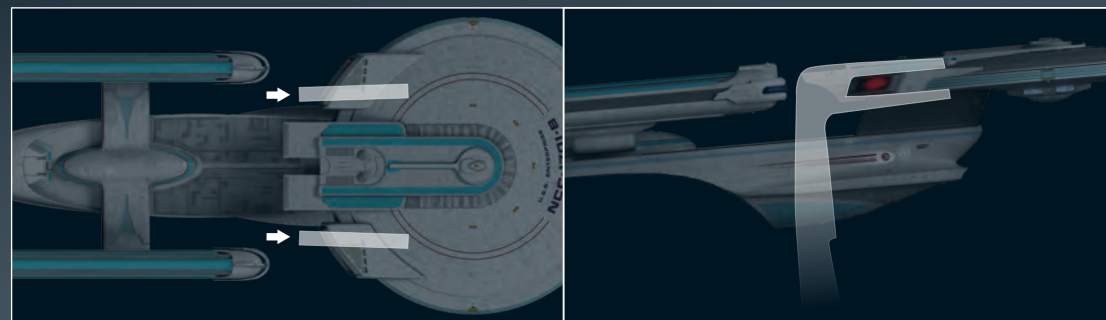
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SPECIFICATION



FIRST APPEARS:	STAR TREK GENERATIONS
CLASS:	EXCELSIOR
DESIGNED BY:	BILL GEORGE, JOHN EAVES, HERMAN ZIMMERMAN
CAPTAIN:	JOHN HARRIMAN



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A TALE OF

TWO CAPTAINS

After seven years on television *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION* made the transition to the big screen with a little help from Captain Kirk.

▲ The first *TNG* movie *STAR TREK GENERATIONS* revolved around Soran's attempt to return to the Nexus – a bizarre area outside normal space and time.

By 1992, *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION* was a massive ratings success, but it was clear that its days on TV were numbered. The cast were approaching the end of their initial six-year contracts, and Patrick Stewart had made it clear that he had no intention of staying on TV indefinitely. At the same time, there was a feeling that the cast of *THE ORIGINAL SERIES*, who had now

made six movies, were aging. In particular DeForest Kelley's health was fading. The solution seemed obvious: the *TNG* cast should head to the big screen.

During *TNG*'s sixth season Paramount Pictures executives, Sherry Lansing and John Goldwyn told executive producer Rick Berman that the studio had agreed a two-picture deal in the hopes of



◀ Producer Rick Berman wanted the movie to involve the cast of *The Original Series*. At first, the plan was to feature most of them, but in the end only Kirk played a major role, with Scotty and Chekov making cameos.

creating a movie franchise featuring the cast of *TNG*. Berman was well aware that the studio expected the new movie to equal the success of *TOS* movies and that making the leap from TV series to the big screen would be anything but straightforward. For one thing, Paramount's proposed November 18, 1994 release date left only a six month window between the end of *TNG*'s seventh season and the debut of the new movie.

BRIDGING THE CENTURIES

While the studio had envisioned a *NEXT GENERATION* movie, Berman was keen to include cast members from *TOS*, seeing it as an opportunity to 'pass the baton'. The studio readily embraced the idea, and Berman was told to contact both William Shatner and Leonard Nimoy to discover if they would be willing to come on board. Both actors expressed interest in the project and Berman turned his attention to the script.

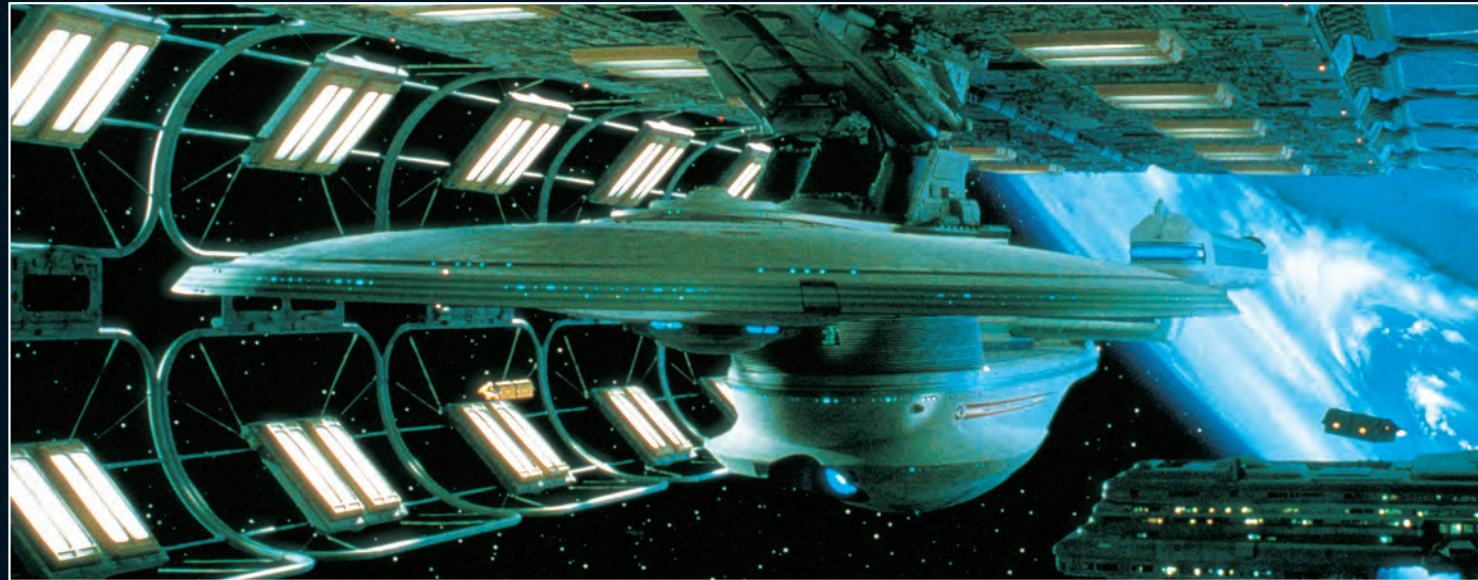
Berman and the studio decided it made sound business sense to start work on more than one script, with the idea that the best one would best filmed. Not surprisingly, Berman approached some of the best writers who had worked on *TNG*:

Michael Piller, Maurice Hurley, and the writing team of Ronald D. Moore and Brannon Braga and asked them to come up with ideas. However, Piller, who was widely credited with turning *TNG* into a success, was less than impressed with what he saw as an attempt to pit the writers against each other and made it clear he had no interest in being involved. Hurley, Braga and Moore had no such concerns and while Hurley began work on a treatment for one movie, Moore and Braga teamed up to work on the other.

Faced with the daunting prospect of writing their very first feature film, Moore and Braga prepared by watching all six *TOS* movies, paying particular attention to *THE WRATH OF KHAN* and *THE VOYAGE HOME* with a view to learning how *TOS* had translated to the big screen as well as getting a feel for the action sequences. However, it became apparent that writing a movie would require a different set of skills than a TV series.

A MOVIE FOR EVERYONE

The studio had also made it clear that no one should assume that the audience for the movie would necessarily know anything about the TV series it was based on. Therefore the writers



▲ The movie opens with Kirk attending the launch of the *Enterprise-B*. A display in the *Enterprise-D* established it was an *Excelsior*-class ship, but John Eaves gave it a subtle redesign.

▼ The film had emotional arcs for Picard (left) who was confronting the death of his family, and Data (right), who had installed his emotion chip and struggled with the consequences.

needed to avoid ideas based on stories from previous episodes and ensure that the movie had a broad appeal. The much larger budget meant they could now explore stories incorporating much more action than had previously been possible.

The two young writers were determined that jeopardy would be provided in the form of a strong villain. They toyed with a number of possible ideas. The first involved somehow pitting the crew of the *Enterprise-D* and the *Enterprise-A* against each other. But it proved impossible to come up with a good reason why the crews would fight one another, while at the same time ensuring that both sides remained sympathetic and heroic, so the

idea was dropped. They dismissed the possibility of a time travel story, while at the same time rejecting any story set in the 24th century, when *THE ORIGINAL SERIES* crew would be over a century old. It was Berman who came up with the solution. He put forward an idea involving a 23rd-century mystery, which is then picked up nearly eight decades later in the 24th century and would somehow lead to a meeting between the two captains in a place where time had no meaning. This eventually led Moore and Braga to come up with the idea of the Nexus – a region that exists outside normal time and space, where a person's desires become reality.

Meanwhile, Hurley also relished the chance to put both Shatner and Patrick Stewart together, highlighting the differences in their captaining styles. His story treatment centered around the *Enterprise-D* encountering a destructive inter-dimensional phenomenon, which leads Picard to re-create Captain Kirk in the ship's holodeck.

In early 1993, both treatments were submitted to the studio who decided to proceed with Moore and Braga's effort. After spending a few weeks going over the story in more detail with Berman, the two writers opted to turn the break at the end of *TNG*'s sixth season into a month-long working holiday and headed to Hawaii.

During this period, Braga and Moore's story began to take shape. As well as including members of the original cast, Moore and Braga also wanted Guinan to play a significant role. It had been established that she was very old so she could logically provide a bridge between the two crews. The script also featured a sequence where the *Enterprise* would be destroyed, but most importantly of all the script would feature the death of Kirk. By June 1 they had a 130-page first draft of their screenplay.

STAR INPUT

At this point Shatner and Stewart were called on to give their input. Berman and his writers were very aware that if the actors had a problem with

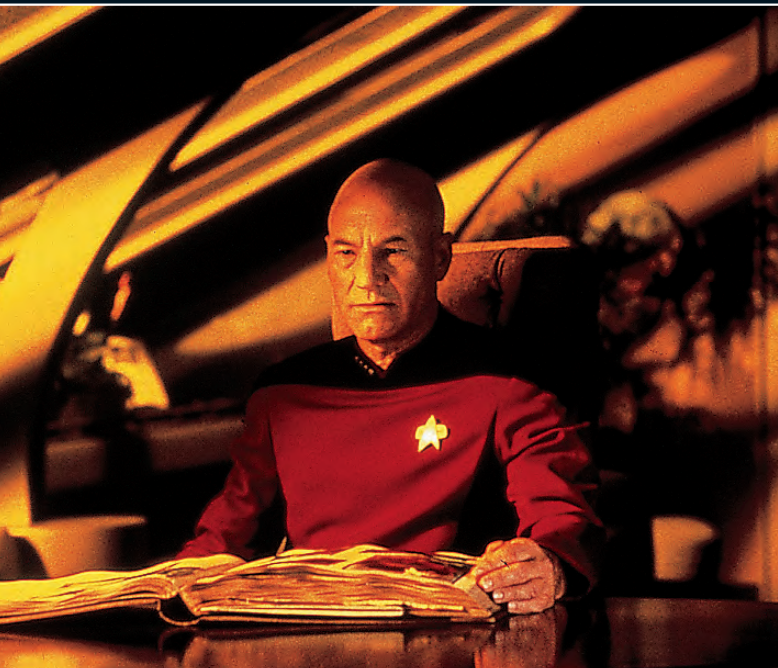
the story they could simply decide to walk away from the project. Shatner had reservations about any story using time travel as a device and was not convinced that his character was integral to the story. He also wanted Kirk to have a more meaningful story, to experience angst and to even question his decision to have devoted his life to Starfleet. Stewart was also keen for Picard have a B-story which was personal, private, intense and emotional.

MOMENT OF LOSS

Taking these concerns into account, Braga and Moore wrote a story arc where Picard learns that his brother has died of a heart attack. However, Stewart argued that his brother's death needed to be as tragic and horrible as possible. As a result, the script was altered so he burned to death. Data too was given a story arc, in which he finally used his emotion chip, which had been established in the TV series. Both Braga and Moore hoped it would not only add a much-needed comic element to the film but allow the character to evolve.

But while Shatner, Stewart and Spiner were pleased with the direction of the script, Nimoy was not convinced and requested a full rewrite. Berman declined and Nimoy stepped away from the project completely. Other *TOS* cast members, such as DeForest Kelley and James Doohan, also

▼ Kirk (left) was in the Nexus where he was living the kind of life he had missed out on as a Starfleet captain. Soran (right) was desperate to return to the Nexus because, like Picard, he had lost his family.





► The series had established that Guinan was very old and had mysterious abilities. This meant that she could have lived in both Kirk's and Picard's time. *GENERATIONS* would state for the first time that she was an El-Aurian and implied that her abilities were somehow connected to her time in the Nexus.



► Soran was intended to be a relatable villain, who was motivated by the terrible loss he had suffered. Moore saw the film as being about mortality, with Soran's inability to accept his loss paralleling Picard's grief over his brother's death.

expressed disquiet at what they saw as their characters making no more than cameo appearances in a movie which, for the most part, focused solely on the *TNG* cast.

Following further talks only Shatner, Doohan and Walter Koenig agreed to go forward. Stewart was

particularly disappointed at this turn of events, as he had argued for the inclusion of as many *TOS* cast members as possible, which he felt would provide the opportunity to present something intense and dramatic. Ironically, members of the *TNG* cast were also taken aback by the size of their roles, some of which shrank drastically as the script went through the rewriting process.

By now Berman and the studio had concentrated their efforts on finding a right director. Initially the studio had made it clear they preferred a big name to help the production and Nimoy was approached with an offer, but given his concerns about the script, he had chosen to pass. Undeterred, Berman decided to look a little closer to home. British director David Carson had previously directed episodes of *TNG*, including the popular 'Yesterday's Enterprise'. Carson had also directed the \$12 million dollar premiere episode of *DS9*, which had also been widely praised. Berman felt confident that Carson was easily capable of handling a feature film. Carson was concerned that the budget wasn't big enough and in order to keep some of the more spectacular effects sequences, agreed to truncate the shooting schedule from 70 days to 50.

COMPLEX VILLAIN

Carson began adding his input to the rewriting process, which now centered on the character of Soran, the villain of the story. Moore and Braga were determined to craft a multidimensional character who would be a worthy adversary for both Picard and for Kirk, and whom the audience could sympathize with, while also being appalled by his actions.

Braga and Moore decided to give Soran a tragic backstory where he had lost his planet and his family after an attack by the Borg. His grief had driven him mad. At the beginning of the film, he and a group of El-Aurian refugees, including Guinan, had briefly been in the Nexus, where all their desires were fulfilled and they could be with their loved ones. The *Enterprise-B* would 'rescue' them, leaving Soran determined to return at any price.

Carson auditioned actors from America and Europe for the role, before finally settling on British actor Malcolm McDowell, who had famously



starred in Stanley Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange*. Meanwhile, work continued apace on costumes, make up and production design. As season seven of *TNG* was still being filmed, it made financial sense for production designer Herman Zimmerman to simply freshen up the existing sets rather than build new ones. It was the same with the bridge of

the *Enterprise-B*, which was adapted from the *Enterprise* bridge that had been used in *STAR TREK V* and *STAR TREK VI*.

Carson wanted to treat the scenes on the *Enterprise-B* and its crew as more of a period piece to make it clear to audiences that over a hundred years separated one ship from the other.



◀ Berman and his writers decided to feature *STAR TREK*'s most popular villains – the Klingons. They brought in Lursa and B'Etor, Duras's sisters, who had last been seen on *DS9*.

◀ One of the major effects sequences featured a battle between the *Enterprise-D* and a Klingon bird-of-prey. This is the first time that a ship's shields had ever been shown in a movie, and ILM had to completely redesign the way the effect was made. The shot of the Klingon bird-of-prey being destroyed was borrowed from *STAR TREK VI*.

► One of the most expensive and complicated scenes involved Worf's promotion aboard a holographic version of a sailing ship called the *Enterprise*. The sequence involved digitally removing part of the plank, making it look as if Worf was nearer the end than he was.



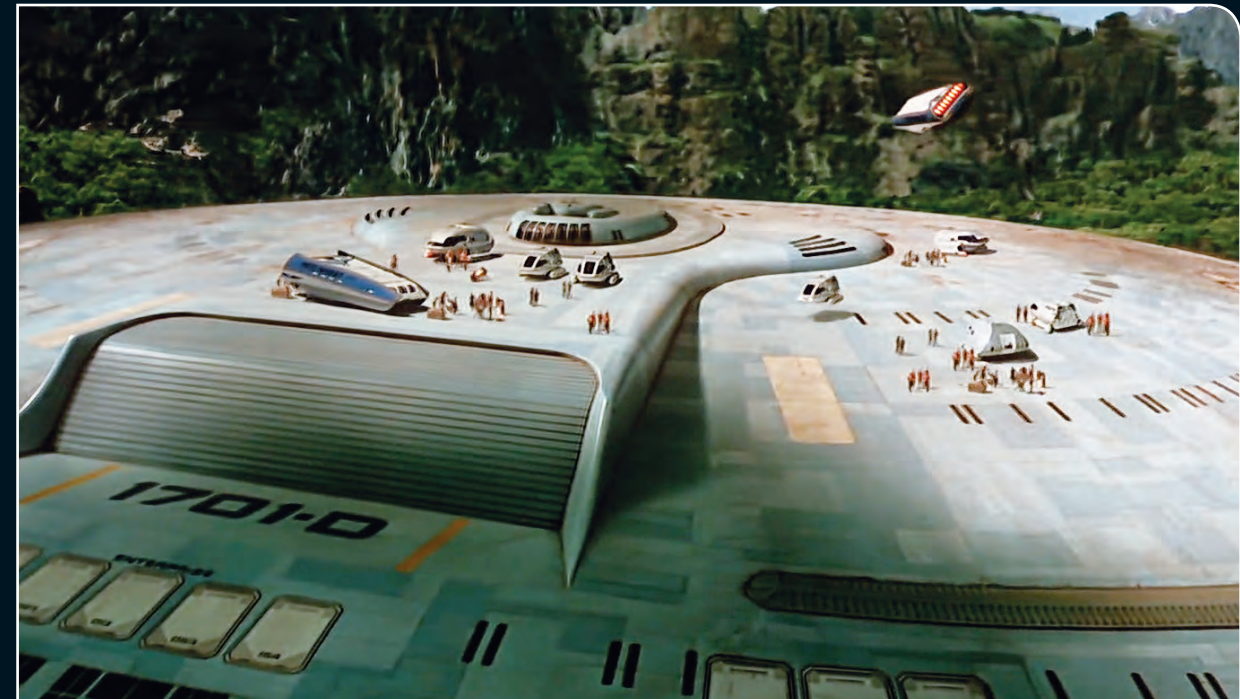
Zimmerman rebuilt the bridge making it 'a little less Buck Rodgers' but not as sleek and modern as the D. When it came to the exterior of the *Enterprise-B*, the producers considered a completely new design but according to canon it was an *Excelsior*-class ship. However, Zimmerman worked with concept artist John Eaves to make changes to the existing *Excelsior* model, which made it into subtly different ship that we had never seen before. Zimmerman did have the opportunity to design a

deflector room from scratch, as it was a location, which had never seen before. Sets from both *THE VOYAGE HOME* and *The Hunt For Red October* were also recycled.

ILM were brought into work on the visual effects, for which they refurbished the original six-foot model of the *Enterprise-D*, which they had created for *TNG*'s pilot, which had been rarely used in the intervening years.

Plans had been in place for new uniforms but

► Kirk's death was always part of the script, but it was reshot to make it more dramatic. Originally, Soran just shot Kirk in the back.



Robert Blackman's designs were ultimately abandoned and instead the cast wore a combination of uniforms from *TNG* and early episodes of *DS9*.

During this preproduction period, cast and crew were wrapping up the final episodes of the TV series. Filming was scheduled to begin as soon as work on the final season of *TNG* ended and cast members literally found themselves shooting on the set of a TV series one minute and on the set of a major motion picture the next, with barely any time to adjust.

ANOTHER ENTERPRISE

One of the major sequences in the film involved the cast celebrating Worf's promotion to lieutenant by dressing up in 19th century naval uniforms and recreating a three-mast sailing vessel in the holodeck. Not surprisingly, the studio initially balked at the idea of financing such a shoot and only agreed after petitioning from Carson. Filming took place two miles off the coast of Santa Monica and proved problematic. The rocking of the ship caused some cast members to suffer seasickness and made it difficult to maintain the required lighting. The ship was too small to accommodate the cast and crew on board at the same time, which resulted in the actors being lowered to smaller boats when they weren't needed and hauled back on deck when

they were.

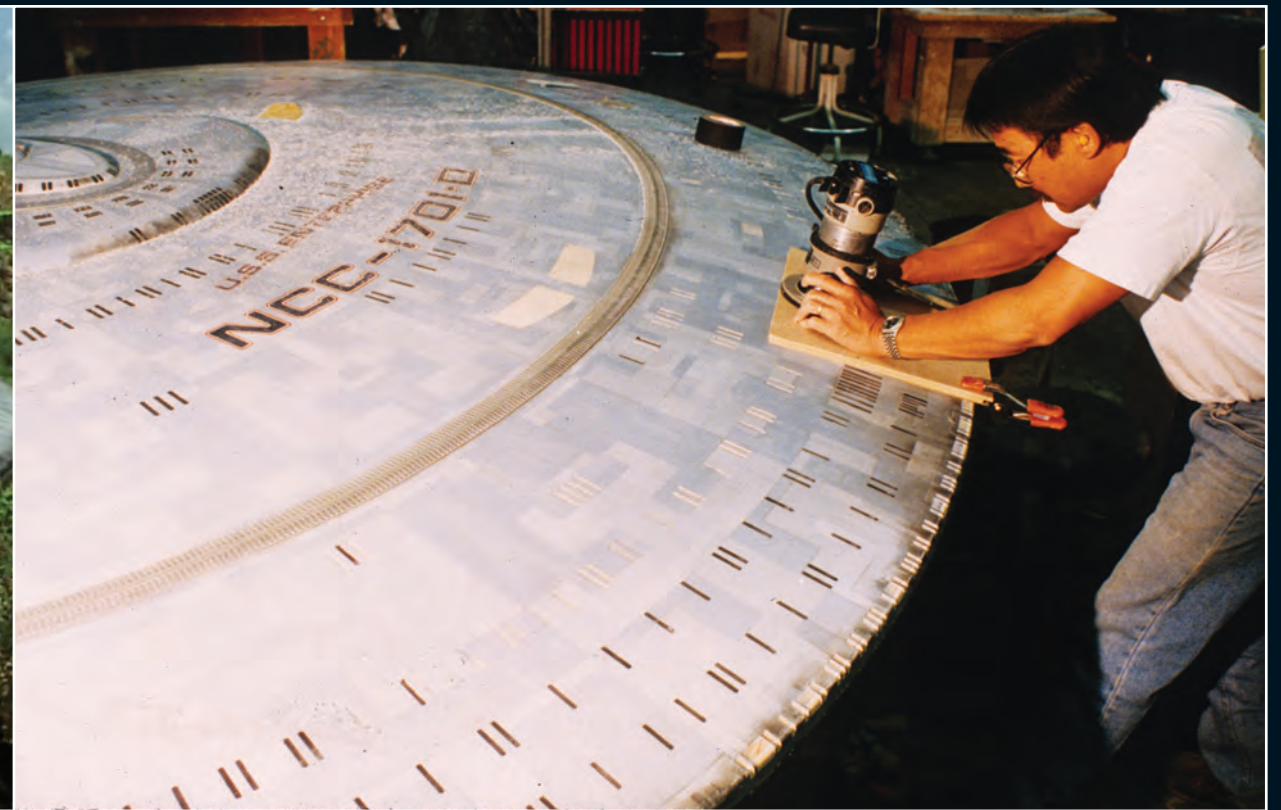
The film involved a number of other location shoots. Working on a fifty-day shooting schedule there was little room for any delays and it wasn't long before the production fell behind schedule. The pressure was on for Carson to get the schedule back on track, which against all odds he succeeded in doing. The *Enterprise-D* crash scene was one of the last to be filmed and was fittingly completed just as the remaining *TNG* sets were demolished to make way for *STAR TREK: VOYAGER*.

KIRK'S DEATH

Following a number of test screenings, it was decided that Kirk's death lacked the necessary impact and fell short of the sort of heroic death one of television's most iconic characters deserved. With little time to spare the scene was rewritten. Rather than being simply shot, Kirk would sacrifice himself by leaping across a walkway.

The film opened on November 18, 1994 in 2,659 theatres, earning a respectable \$23.1 million during the first weekend, later going on to gross \$131 million. Braga and Moore who would go on to write the sequel *FIRST CONTACT*, would later acknowledge that the film had fallen short of their vision. As Berman put it, the film was a success, but they learned a lot of lessons making it.

◀ The movie ended with the *Enterprise-D* literally in pieces, clearing the way for *TNG* to get a major reinvention in the next film.



CRASHING

THE SAUCER

Filming the *Enterprise's* crash-landing on Veridian III involved some massive 'miniatures' and a lot of ingenuity.

▲ One of the major effects in *STAR TREK GENERATIONS* involved crashing the *Enterprise's* saucer section into the surface of Veridian III. In reality, the sequence was filmed in the parking lot and an adjacent area outside ILM's offices.

Seven years after they had built the *Enterprise-D*, ILM were called upon to destroy it. After the ship is attacked by the Klingons, the warp core breaches, forcing the crew to evacuate in the saucer, which crashes into the surface of Veridian III, where it ploughs through the rainforest before tearing up the earth and finally coming to a stop.

In order to achieve the crash sequence, ILM built a massive, twelve-foot fiberglass model of the saucer, which they crashed into an eighty-foot long model of the planet's surface. The model of the saucer was built under the supervision of chief modelmaker Larry Tan. In an ideal world ILM would

have built an even larger model, but they were able to correct for some of the depth of field problems by filming at a higher film rate. The landscape model was so large that it had to be filmed outside ILM's offices. It was made on a plywood base that held it off the ground. The landscape on the surface was made of carpet that was stapled to the base, before being covered in earth and foam, some of which was sculpted to look like cliffs.

The idea of adding cliffs was suggested by John Goodson in order to make the model look as large as possible. The cliffs meant the horizon line was higher and gave the team more options for

shooting the model. To make the set look even larger, the ILM team filmed some trees against a bluescreen that were digitally added to the foreground of the shot.

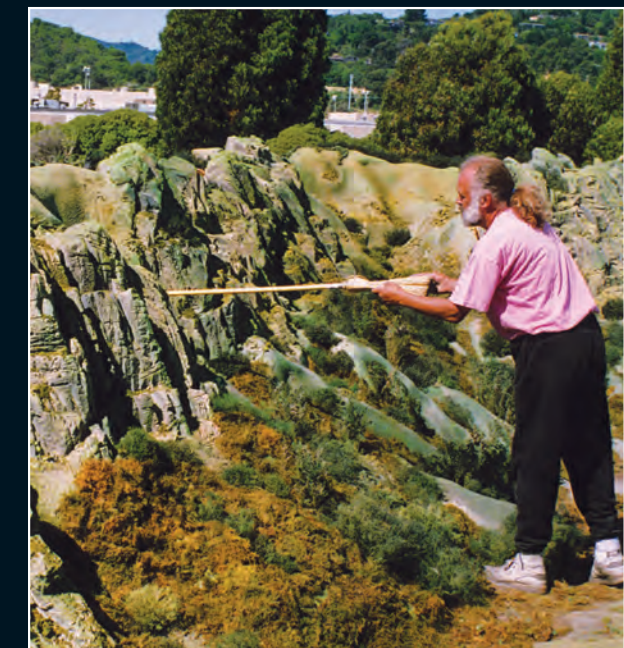
Unusually, and to ILM's VFX art director Bill George's delight, the sequence was filmed in broad daylight. It was shot by effects director of photography Kim Marks. The ground model had positions for three cameras: one camera down low in the middle of the landscape set, a second camera that was higher and off to the side and finally a camera with a longer lens that was able to film the entire crash from a distance.

The model of the saucer was filmed in different ways for different shots. For the sequence showing it from above, it was flown over the terrain on wires that were digitally removed in post-production. But for the majority of the shots it was mounted on a post that ran from the bottom of the saucer through the landscape model to connect it to a moving platform. This platform was pulled along by a truck using a series of pulleys and moved at something like 20 miles an hour. In order to stop it crashing into the camera, ILM put a mirror at the end of the track and filmed the reflection, meaning that the saucer could crash into the mirror, while the camera stayed safely out of

the way.

In addition to the large model of the saucer, ILM built a scaled-up section of the front rim, that was used for extreme close-ups of it crashing into trees.

Once the massive model had been filmed, the footage was transferred to a compositing machine called a Sabre, where clouds were added digitally and the colors of the different elements were altered so they matched.



▲ The sequence would show the saucer in unprecedented detail so ILM built a new, more detailed version of it that was twelve feet long.

◀ The surface of Veridian III was also a practical model. This 'miniature' was 80 feet long, and made of a combination of plywood, foam, earth and vegetation.

► The saucer section was mounted on a pyramid-shaped device which could be flown through the landscape model. It was powered by a series of pulleys connected to a truck.



► A concealed groove in the middle of the landscape model guaranteed that the saucer would follow a straight path. It was filmed from three different angles, with one of the cameras mounted on a track so it could follow the saucer. The cliffs on the side of the model concealed the horizon, making ILM's life much easier.



► From some angles there was no way of telling that the effect was achieved with models. The whole model shoot lasted a few seconds but it was shot at a high frame rate, meaning that when it was played back at normal speed it would be longer.



◀ At the end of the effect, the saucer crashed into the surface of the landscape model and off the end of the platform. ILM estimated that the saucer reached speeds of between 15 and 20 miles an hour.



◀ In order to show the model heading straight for the camera, ILM put a mirror at the end of the landscape model and filmed the reflection. That way they could let the model of the saucer fly off the end without damaging the camera.



◀ Another section of landscape was built for the shot that showed the front edge of the saucer coming to a rest. For this shot, ILM built an even larger model that only showed the first few meters of the saucer section.



DESIGNING STELLAR

CARTOGRAPHY

GENERATIONS showed us a part of the *Enterprise* that we had never seen before: the stellar cartography room.

▲ In the stellar cartography room Data and Picard are surrounded by what appears to be a massive animation. In order to achieve this, the art department used a combination of backlit panels, bluescreen technology and animations created at Santa Barbara Studios.

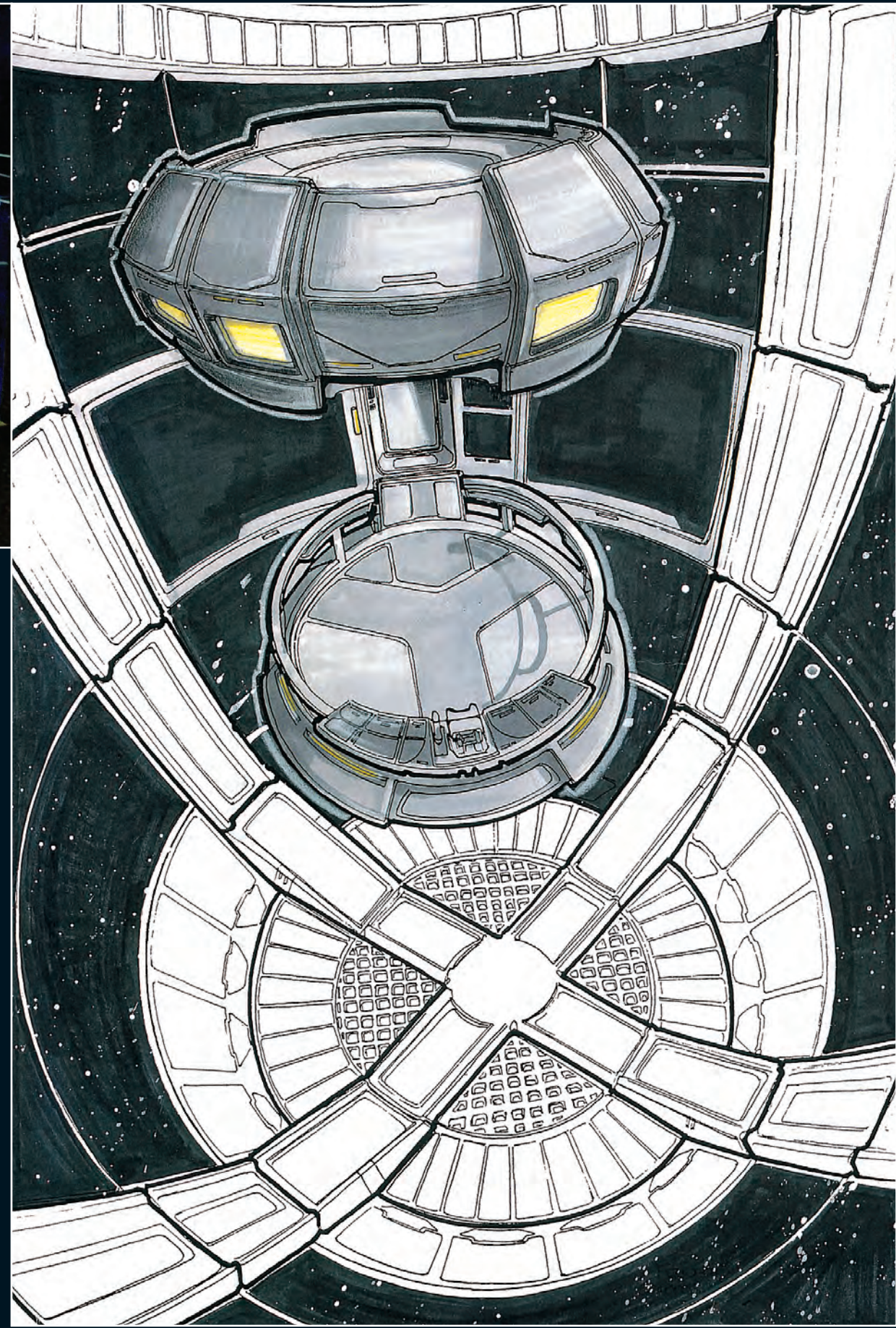
One of the most important scenes in *STAR TREK GENERATIONS* called for a major new set: the stellar cartography room. In the scene, Picard and Data work out that Soran plans to destroy a star in his obsessive attempt to return to the nexus.

Originally, the script only called for something relatively modest, but production designer Herman Zimmerman had other ideas. "Stellar cartography as it was written was just a little room on the ship. I convinced Mr. Berman and the director (David Carson) that it ought to be a dynamic set rather than just a video screen on a wall because it's the pivotal point in the movie. It's the point at which Data and Picard figure out what Soran is really intending to do, and it is also a poignant moment

between Picard and Data. I just felt it needed a better stage, if you will, for the scene to play out on. It was a lot of money and a big set, and it was spectacularly difficult to film in that large round room, but given how it worked out it was the right thing to do."

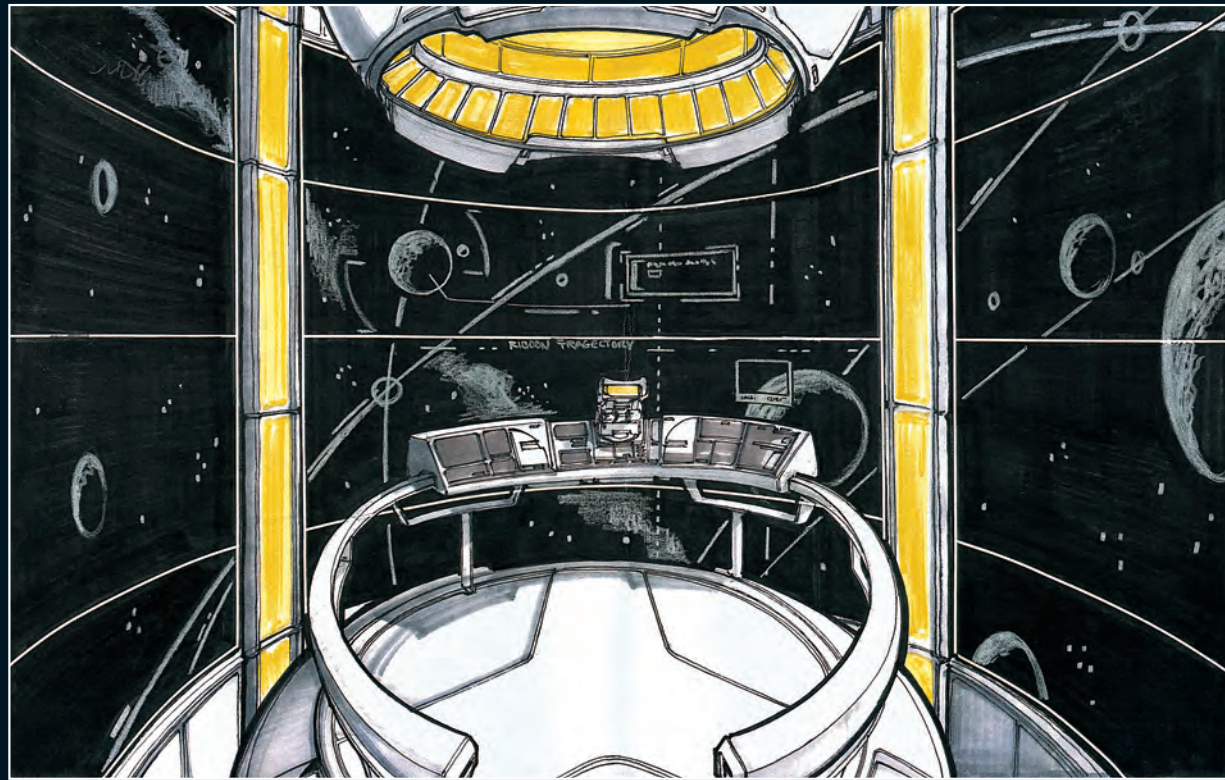
One of the first ideas the art department came up with was putting stellar cartography into a spherical room, but Zimmerman soon realised that this was too ambitious. "The logistics of doing that on our budget were not practical. In order to do it, we would have had to have probably - I'm guessing - 60 projectors on the outside of a very fragile dome, and then we'd have to figure out a way to put actors into it."

In the end, Zimmerman settled on a cylindrical



◀ Zimmerman felt that the scene in the stellar cartography room called for something dramatic, so he created a massive set that surrounded the actors with stars.

► The weight of the translites meant that Zimmerman couldn't create a continuous display; instead the walls had to be divided by a series of wide beams, which supported the structure.



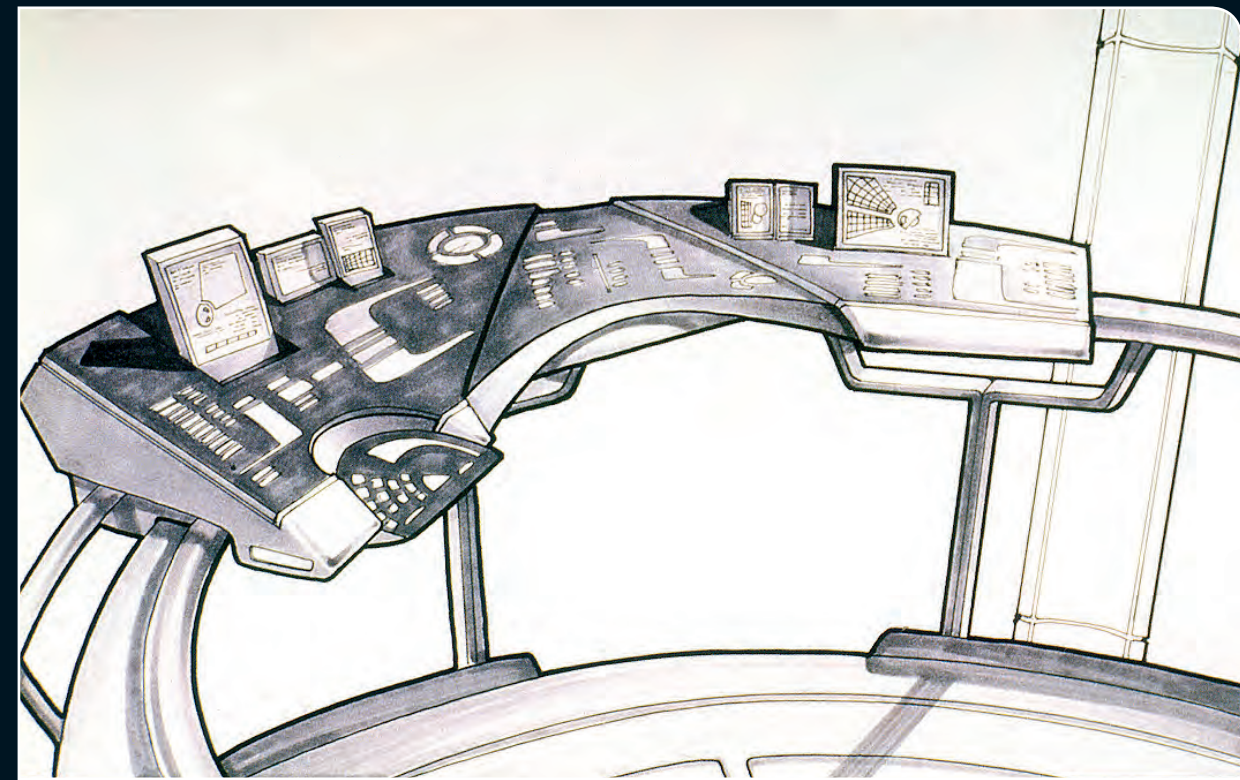
design, with a platform suspended in the middle. The central platform where Data and Picard stood and the 'bridge' that led to it posed some particularly difficult problems. "We cantilevered the tongue that entered the center of stellar cartography. That in itself was an engineering feat because for every foot you actually saw there were probably three feet behind it that were helping to balance the weight and stop it

becoming like a swimming pool springboard."

Picard and Data were surrounded by a display showing the nearby star systems that was animated to show the path of the Nexus. Parts of the walls were made up of a series of translites (panels with artwork on them that glow when they are lit from behind). Constructing them was straightforward, but making them work was another matter. "Lighting them was more of a problem than making them," Zimmerman explains. "Getting them in the right positions in relation to the lights, and getting the right diffusion between the lights and the backlit material was just an engineering problem that had to be solved. The director of photography solved it with enormous banks of soft lights, and it all worked fine."

Although the translites were ideal for many shots, they couldn't be used when an animation was needed. As a result the set had to be built so that the translites could be taken down and replaced with the bluescreens that are used by the visual effects department. "In point of fact," Zimmerman says, "what you see on the screen is maybe about 25 percent translite, and the rest was bluescreen material. The stars and stuff were added in post-production. It was the only way you could do it and get the actors in front of the moving artwork. The set was rigged with curved pipes so that the

▼ Zimmerman standing on the set. The translites are placed behind him.



◀ John Eaves produced this sketch showing what the control console would look like.

translites and the bluescreen could both be pre-hung. One was raised and the other was lowered as we needed them for shots."

By making clever use of the translites and the bluescreens, the team was able to create the illusion that there was a lot of activity. "What you see on the screen implies a good deal more than what was really there. The wide shots were all of

the translites, and the close-up shots basically involved only one panel of the four panels that were around the perimeter of the set at a time. Those panels were 18 feet high and 30 feet long each, so you could get a lot of information inside that space, and you could manipulate it in the computer to produce the movement on the screen that was there in the picture."



◀ This cardboard study model shows the entire set, in a way that couldn't be shown on screen.

STAR TREK™

