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**ROMULAN  
WARBIRD**  
SPECIAL ISSUE

D'DERIDEX CLASS

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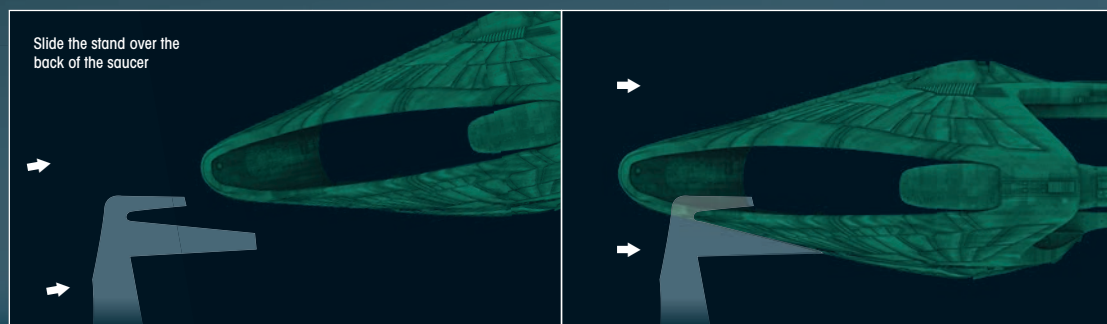
# ROMULAN WARBIRD


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# D'DERIDEX CLASS

## SPECIFICATION



FIRST APPEARS: 'THE NEUTRAL ZONE' (TNG)

LAST SEEN: 'WHAT YOU LEAVE BEHIND' (DS9)

DESIGNED BY: ANDREW PROBERT

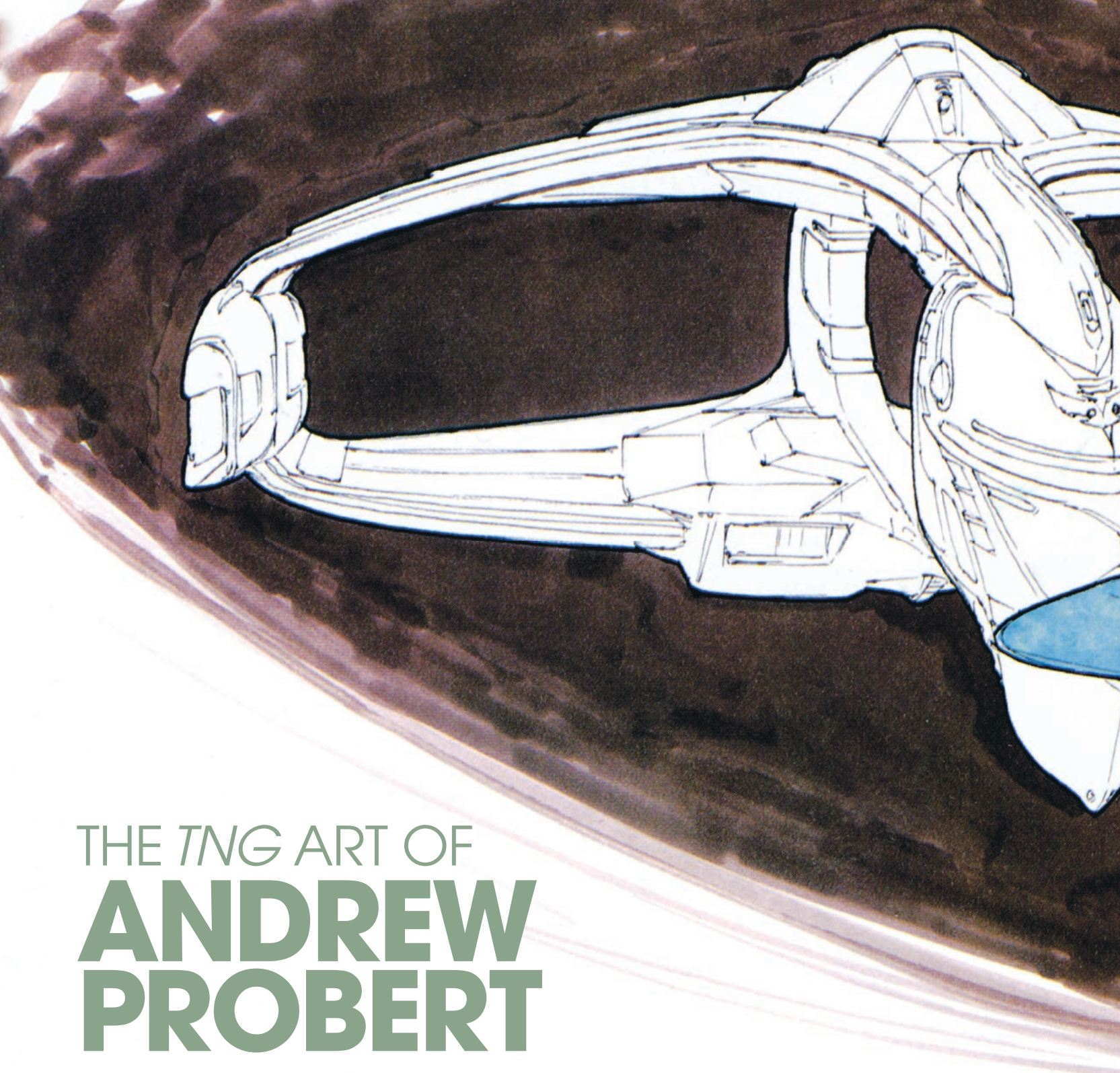




# ROMULAN WARBIRD

The D'deridex-class Warbird made up the bulk of the Romulan fleet in the 24th century





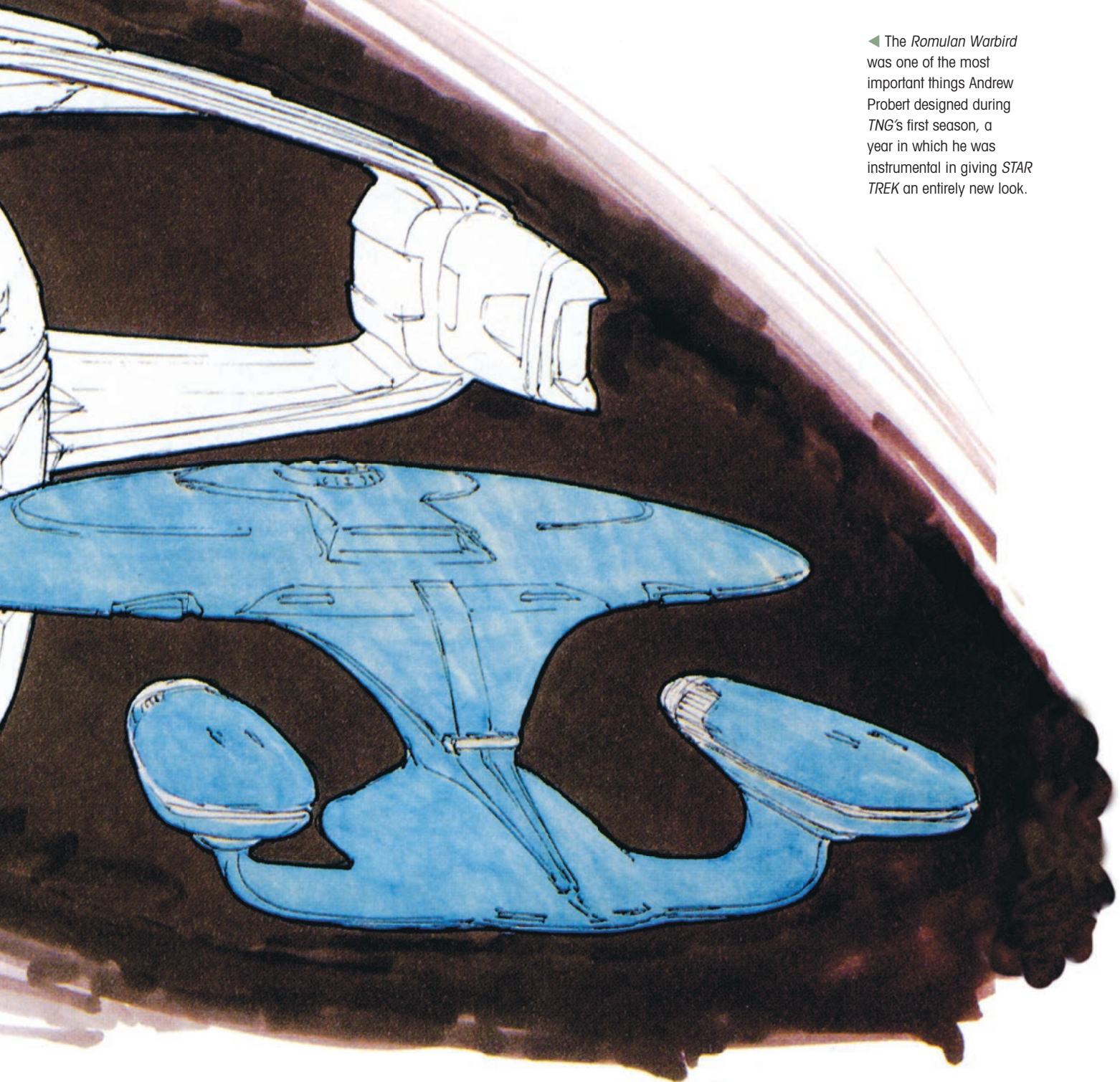
# THE *TNG* ART OF **ANDREW PROBERT**

Few people are as important to the look of *STAR TREK* as Andrew Probert who helped redesign the show in 1987.

In October 1986, Andrew Probert was at home in LA watching the news when Gene Roddenberry appeared on the screen and announced that he was returning to *STAR TREK* to make a new television series. Like many fans, Probert was excited by the prospect, but he wasn't just an ordinary fan: eight years earlier he'd been part of the team that had reimagined *STAR TREK* for the

big screen. Since then he'd gone on to work on 'Battlestar Galactica,' Indiana Jones and 'Back to the Future' so he did something that almost nobody else could do, "I was on the phone to Gene Roddenberry's office immediately," he says, "telling them that I wanted to participate. I talked to Gene and he asked me to bring in my portfolio so he could see what I'd been doing since I did

◀ The *Romulan Warbird* was one of the most important things Andrew Probert designed during *TNG*'s first season, a year in which he was instrumental in giving *STAR TREK* an entirely new look.

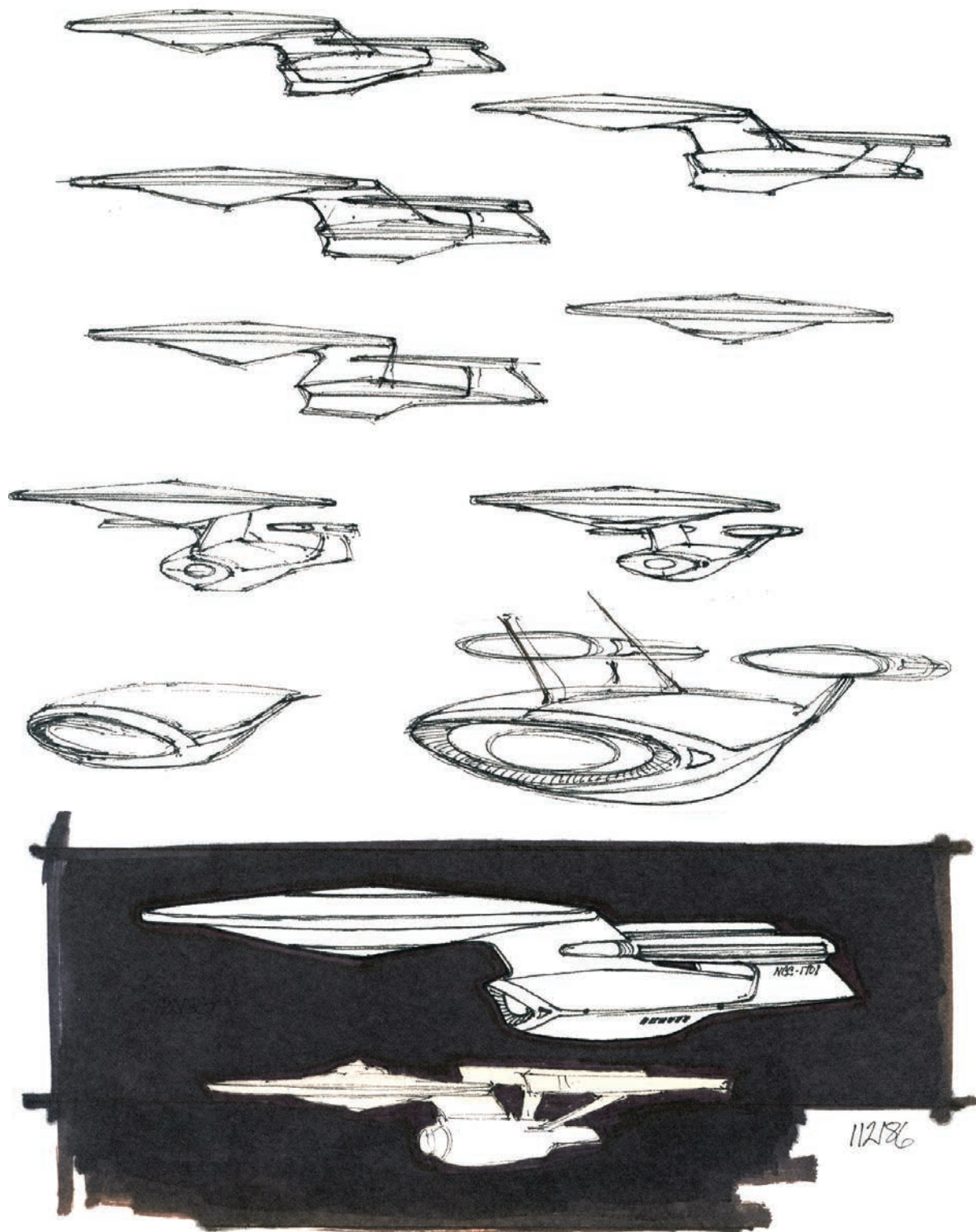


#### THE MOTION PICTURE."

A week later Probert was on the Paramount lot where he met with Roddenberry, Bob Justman and Eddie Milkis, all three of whom had been producers on the original series. He showed them his portfolio and talked about how he would approach the look of the new show. As he remembers, he left the studio feeling that things had gone well.

"When I got home," he says "I was so excited all I could think about was that I might have a shot at working on this new series and finally designing the *Enterprise* itself." Years earlier Probert had, of course, played a major role in redesigning the *Enterprise* for *STAR TREK: THE MOTION PICTURE* but back then he had been finalizing a design that other people, including Matt Jefferies and Joe

► Probert started to redesign the *Enterprise* even before he was formally offered a job on the series. He wanted the ship to look bigger and faster than its predecessor.

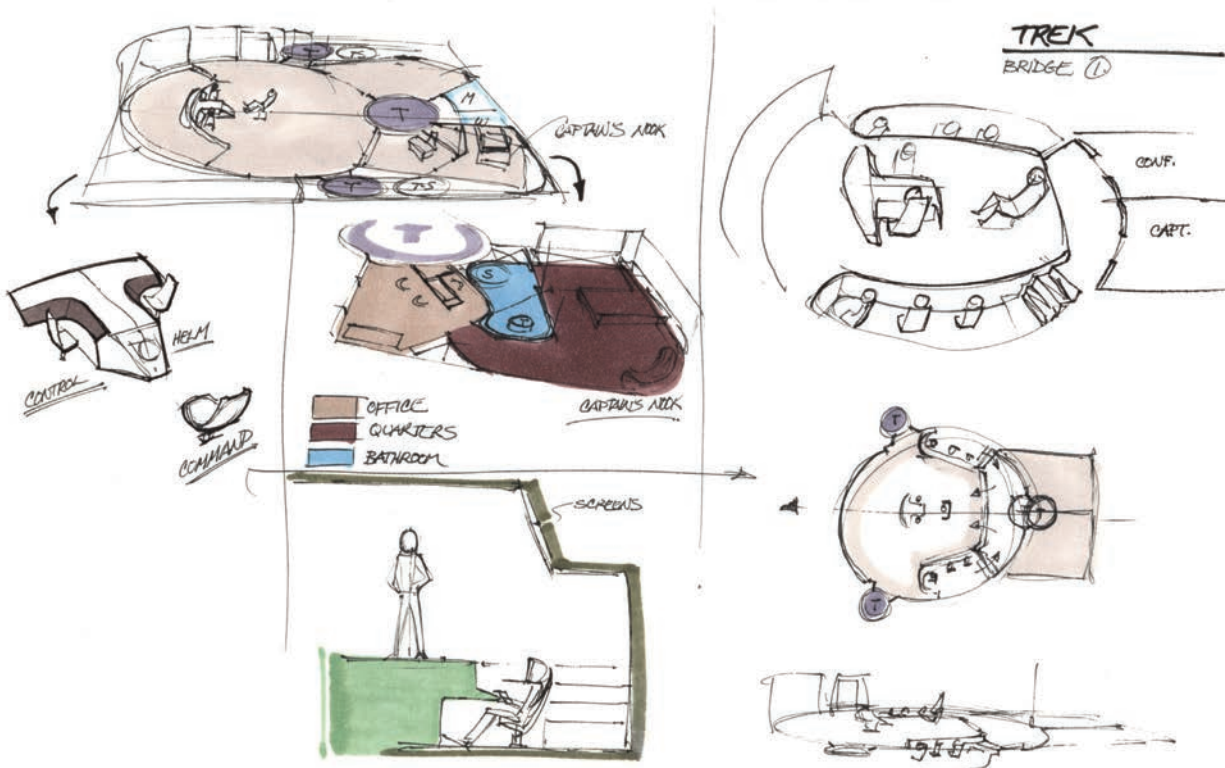


Jennings, had already worked on. Now he would have the chance to design an entirely new ship of his own. "I was satisfied with the results," Probert explains, "but it still wasn't quite what I thought this great ship should be. I was so pumped up that I started right in on a new *Enterprise*, sketching my little heart out."

Based on what Roddenberry had told him,

Probert had some very definite ideas. "Knowing that the new series was to be at least a hundred years hence (which later got changed to 85 years), I felt that the new *Enterprise* would be faster and probably sleeker. The saucer had, since its inception, been the main section, so I made it larger in proportion to the secondary hull. The warp nacelles were always to the rear but above the



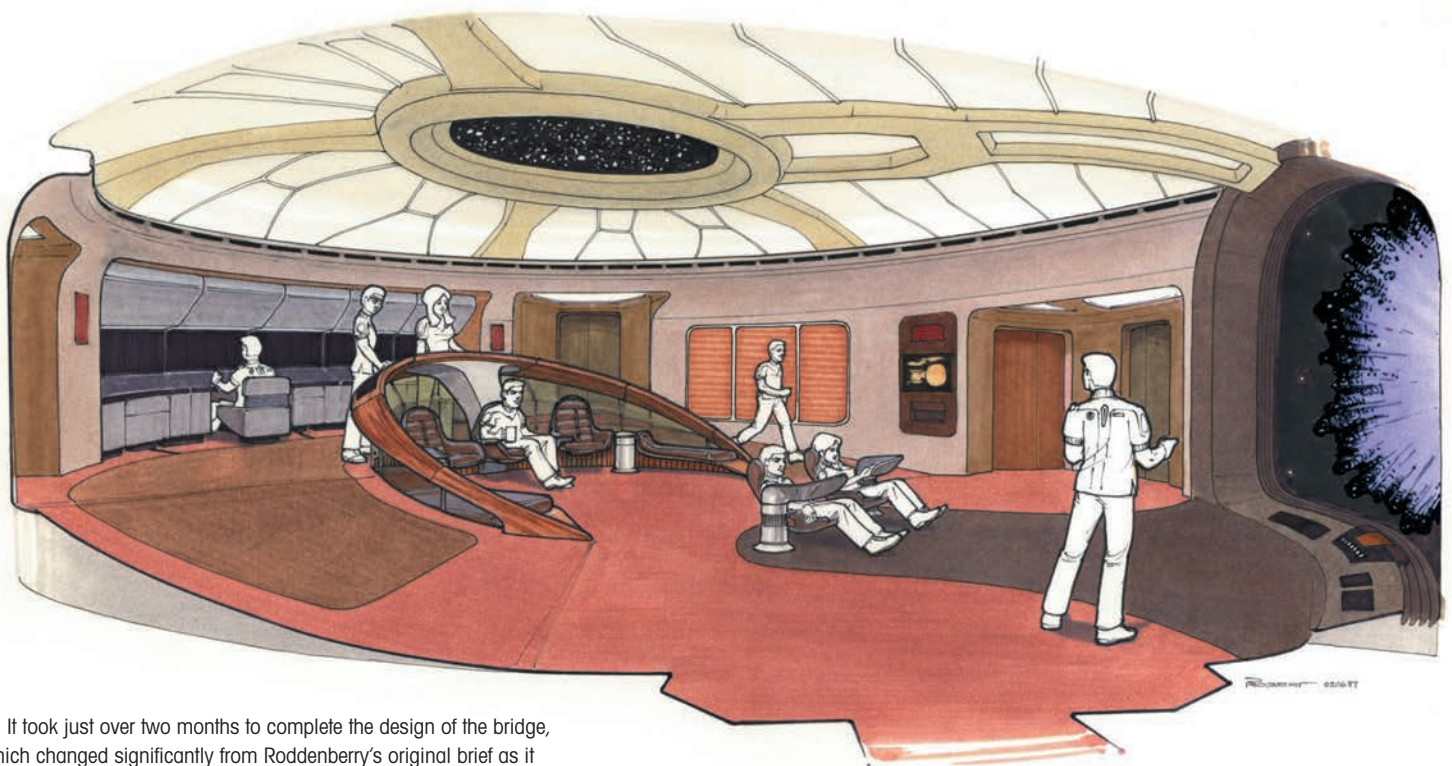


◀ Probert's first official job was to design a new bridge. Roddenberry told him he wanted the design to be simpler than the original version and that everything could be controlled by the captain and two officers.

saucer rim, which visually seemed to give them equal importance and was above the ship's center of mass. Both of these seem to be a negative point, which I hoped to remedy by lowering them to a position between the two hull sections. The struts holding the saucer and warp

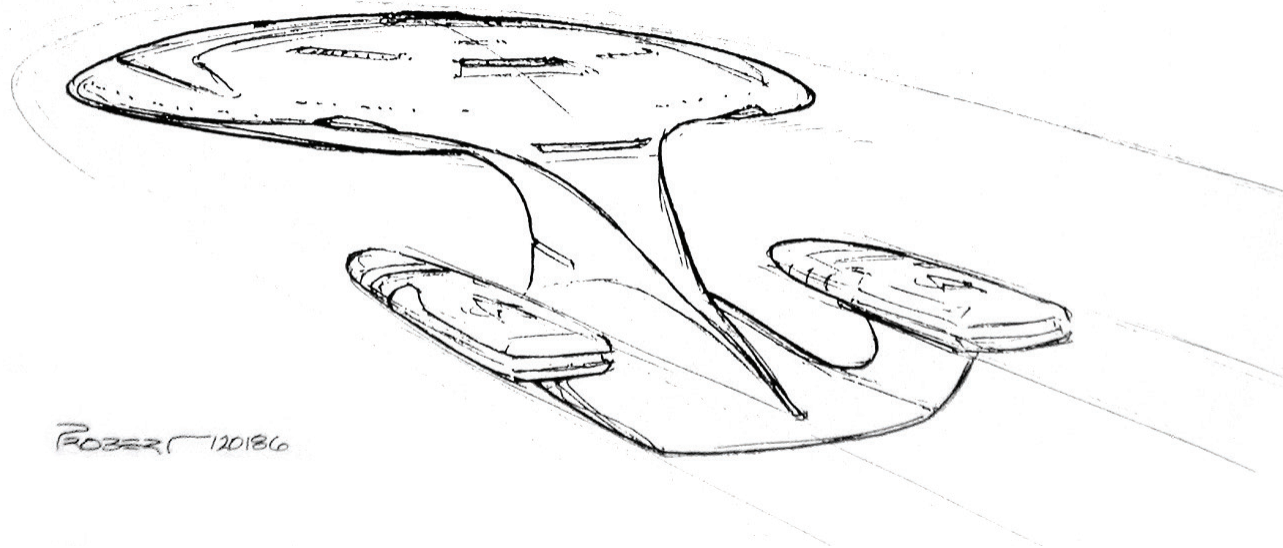
engines were slanted in opposite directions – the neck was going forward, and the engines were going back – I slanted them all forward, to give the overall design a feeling of aggressive forward movement, like a lunging cat.”

Before long Probert was formally offered a job



▲ It took just over two months to complete the design of the bridge, which changed significantly from Roddenberry's original brief as it evolved to meet the needs of the stories he wanted to tell.

► While Probert was working on the design of the bridge he kept some of the drawings showing his ideas for the exterior pinned up around his workspace. The design was appeared when David Gerrold took this drawing into a meeting and presented it to the producers.



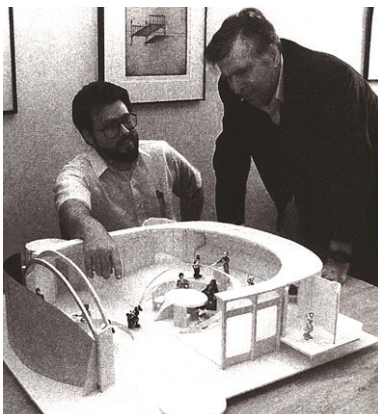
on the *TNG* staff. "I was the fifth person to be hired on the show," he smiles, "that was pretty cool." At this point Roddenberry still hadn't hired a production designer or a makeup artist, so Probert was given a very wide-ranging brief that saw him working on everything from alien creatures to props to spaceships and their interiors. "My perception of my position," he says, "was that I was sort of a creative consultant. My role was to just put out ideas. If they wanted to incorporate them, great; if they didn't then there's another idea down the road."

He reported to work on December 2nd. He was handed a copy of the writer's bible and settled down in an outer office. Before long he met David

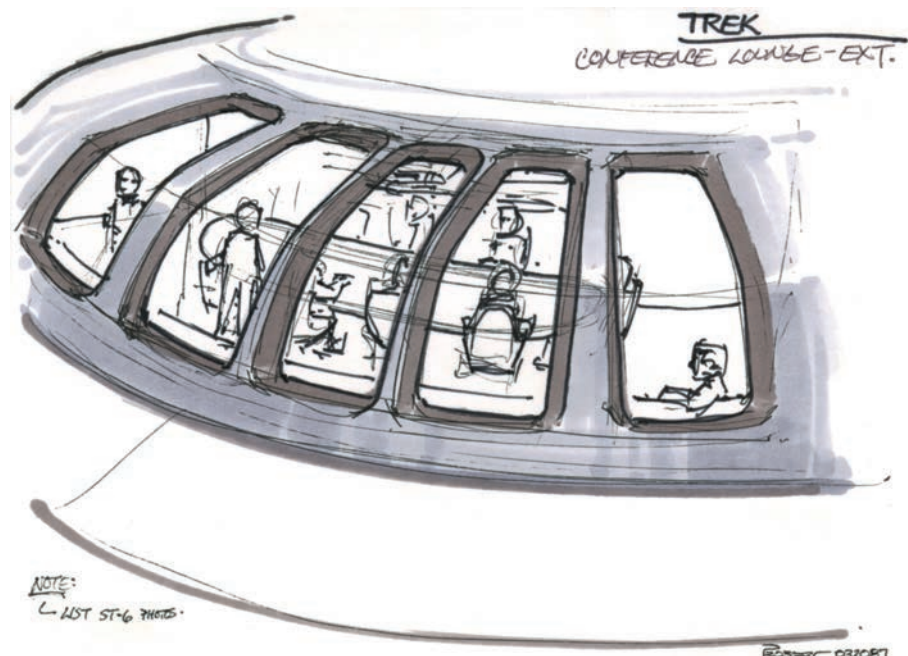
Gerrold, who was part of the writing staff and had done a lot of work on the bible, before heading off to a meeting with the producers.

Instead of being asked to work on the *Enterprise's* exterior, Roddenberry asked him to focus on the bridge. "After all, they said, the writers would find it easier to write if they had a design to write to. So off I went, bible and drawing pad in hand to a small quiet office in which to work."

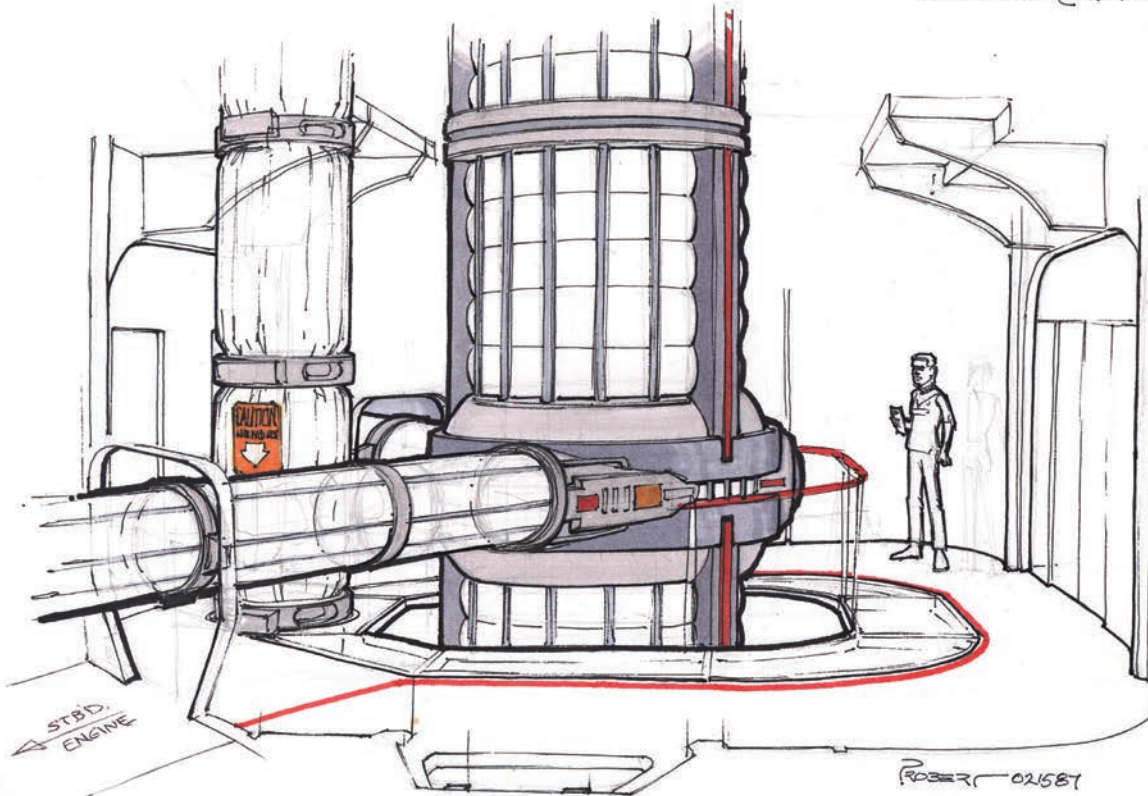
The brief Probert was given for the bridge showed just how different and how ambitious the new *STAR TREK* was going to be. "It was described as being almost totally automated, combining features of a briefing room, ward room, and information retrieval area, with less emphasis on



▲ The art department build a study model to show Roddenberry what the bridge would look like. On this version there was a still a meeting area in the middle. This would eventually be moved to an observation lounge at the back of deck 1.



**TREK**  
ENGINE CORE (STBD. SIDE)

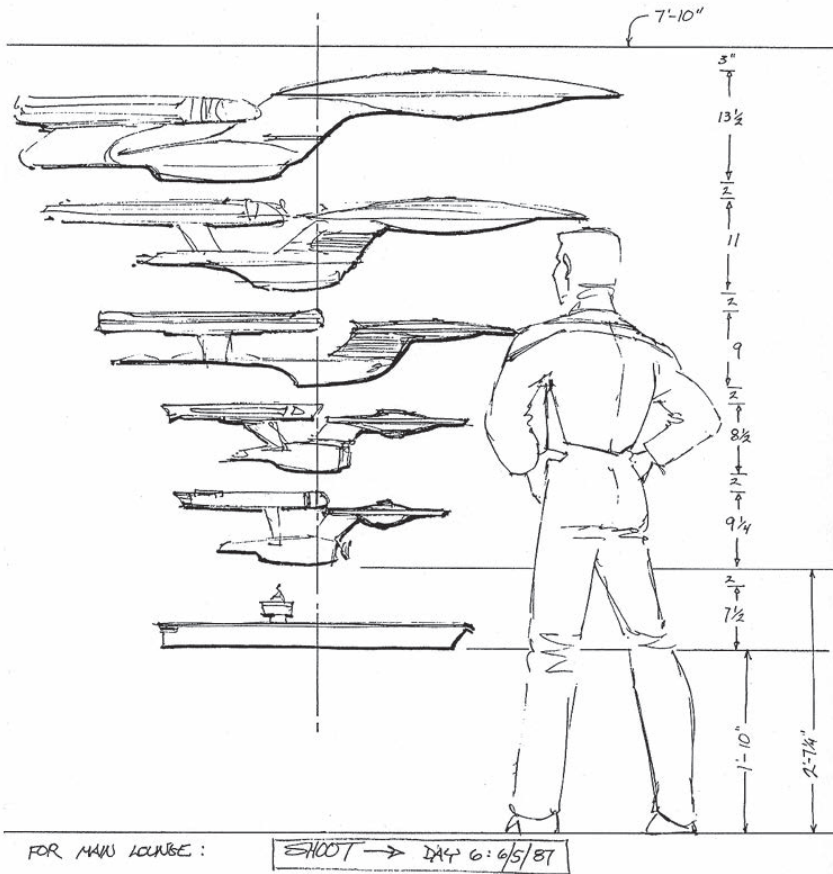


◀ The new *Enterprise* interiors had to follow the layout of the existing sets that had been built for the movies, but all the elements in them could be completely redesigned. Probert and Zimmerman came up with this design for the warp core.

**TREK**  
HOLODECK PORTAL

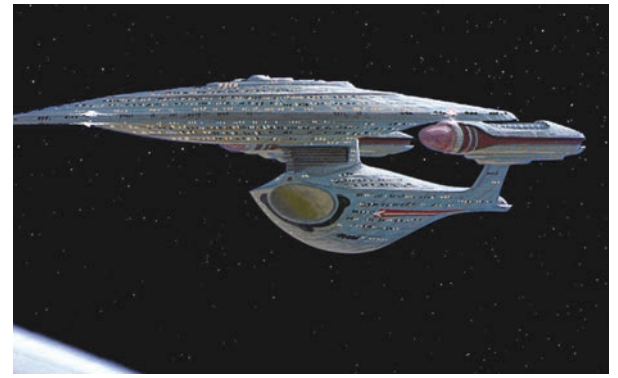


▲ The holodeck was something new. The idea was that an arch could appear in any environment that the computer created so it was designed to be a free-standing item that could be taken on to any set or location.



▲ This early sketch for the display in the observation lounge shows the evolution of the *Enterprise*.

the mechanics of operating the ship. Gene wanted it to be very large and spacious. He wanted the viewscreen to dominate the front of the bridge like it never had before, and he wanted the instrumentality to be at a minimum so that it was obvious that the entire ship was controlled by just the conn and ops positions. Gene's original idea was that it was no longer necessary for a lot of bridge personnel to sit 'hunched over consoles'

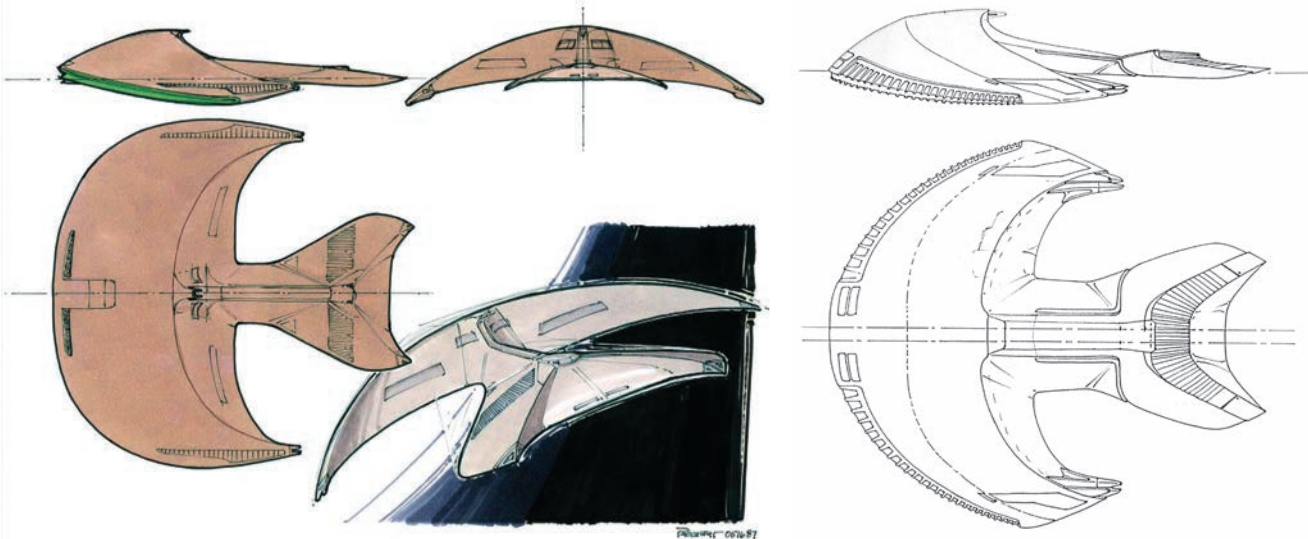


▲ Probert's concept for the *Enterprise-C* was designed to be a hybrid of the *Excelsior* and *Galaxy* classes, but it only ever appeared as part of a display in the observation lounge.

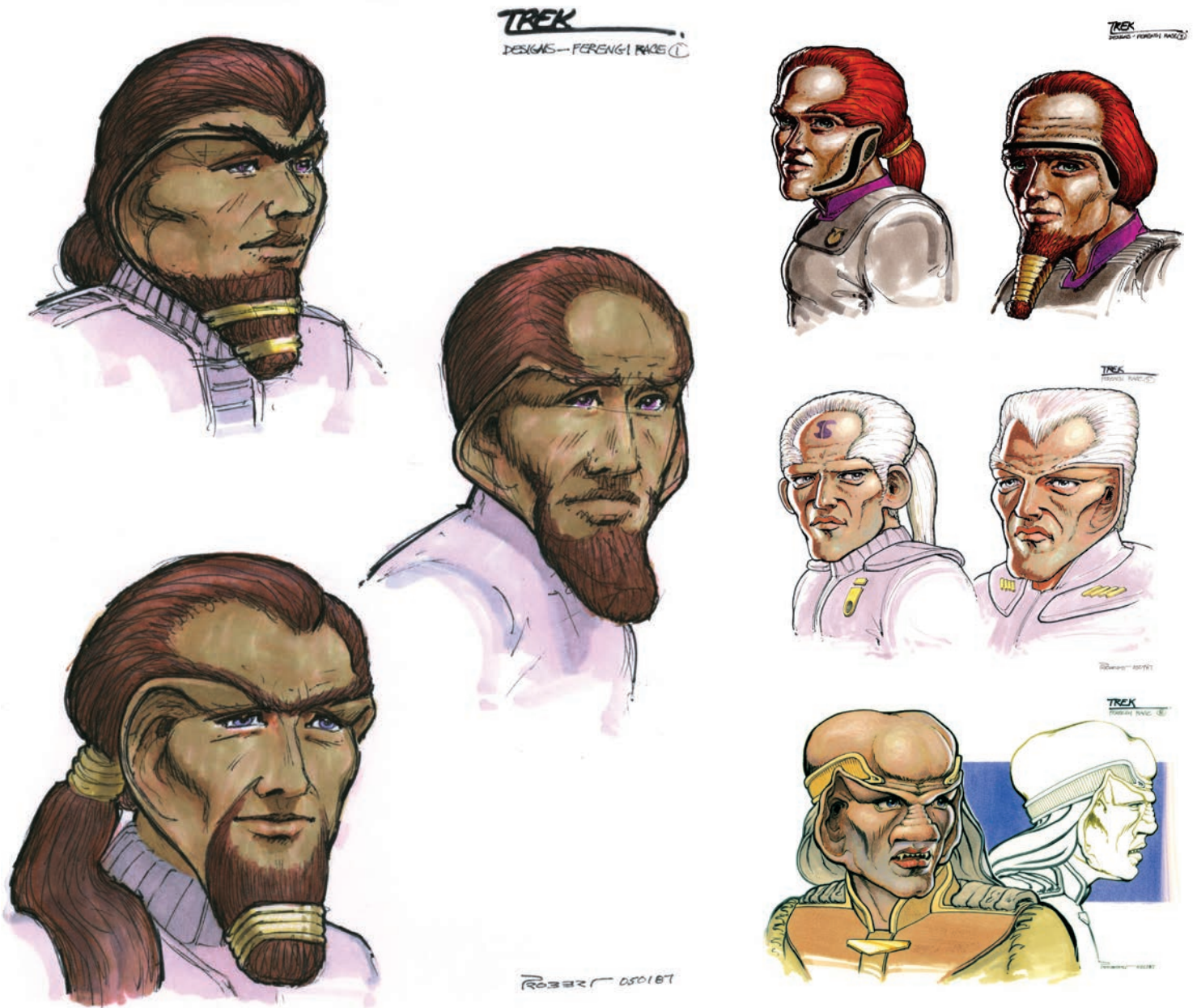
as he put it. When someone needed access to a system, they touched an area that activated a terminal. Then they tell it what's required. 'All right,' I thought, 'no more toggle switches.'

At this early stage, Probert already knew that the captain would have some kind of office or "nook" off the side of the bridge. Other elements of the bridge would go through major changes. At one point Probert suggested that the transporter room could actually be at the back of the bridge. At first Roddenberry warmed to the idea before rejecting it because he wanted people to have an opportunity to talk about their mission on their way to the transporter in the turbolift.

The bridge gained - and lost - a meeting table and an upper storey before the design was finalized. As Probert was working on the bridge, he started to think what it would look like from the outside. He originally suggested that it should be in



◀ Probert played a major role in designing the Ferengi. He wanted their ship, which their creator Herb Wright described as looking like a horseshoe crab, to be as aggressive as possible and designed it for boarding.



the middle of the ship where it would be protected from enemy attacks, but Roddenberry insisted that it should be on the top of the saucer, where the audience could easily identify it.

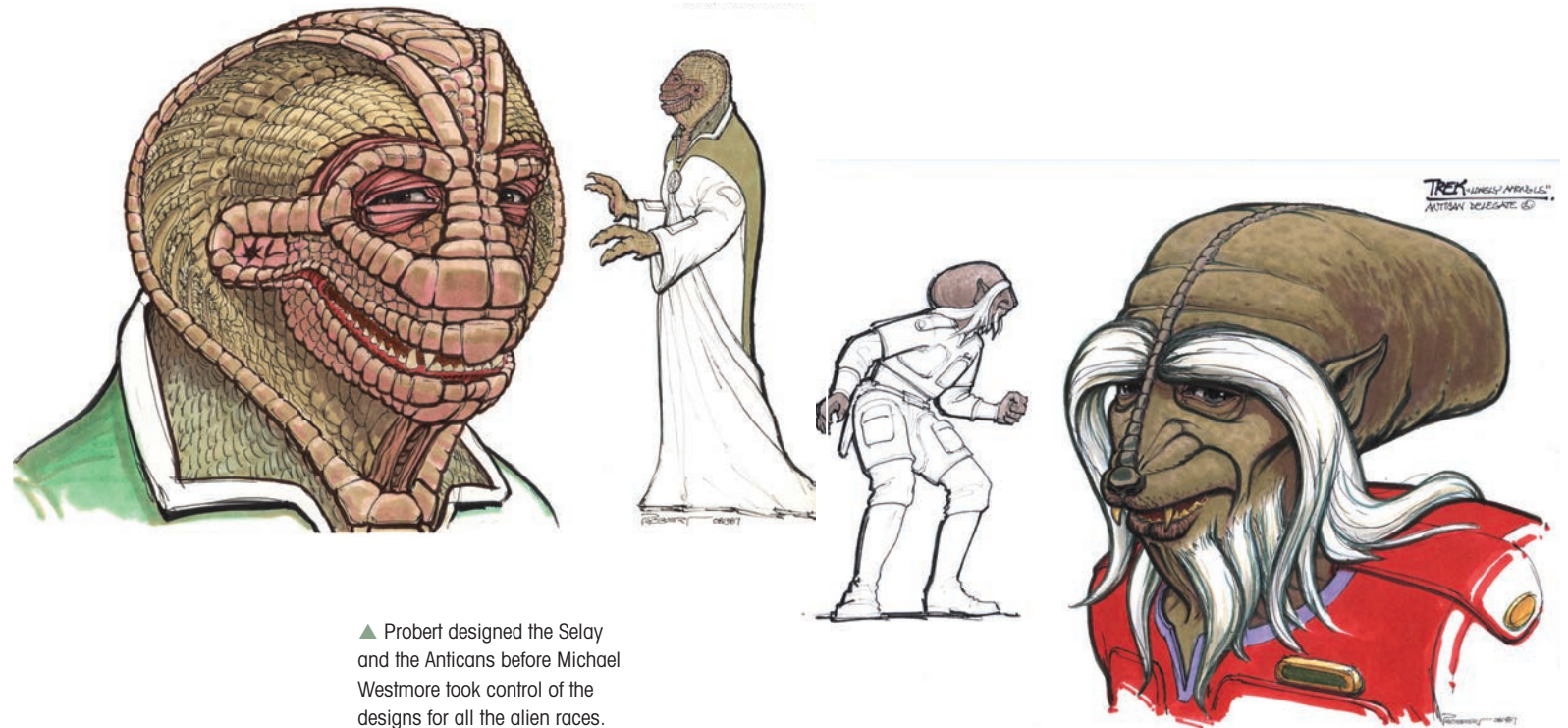
"I tacked one of my little sketches of the exterior up on the wall as a reference. One day, David Gerrold walked in and said, 'Hey, is that the new ship?' Of course, I hadn't shown it to anybody. I said, 'I don't know.' He pulled it off the wall and continued on to his meeting with Gene and the other producers. He held the drawing up and said, 'What do you guys think of this?' and they all liked it. He came back and slapped it on my table and said, 'Yep, that's the new ship.' I was flabbergasted."

Inevitably, the design process wasn't as simple

as that. The producers wanted the ship to separate into two parts, something Probert hadn't considered in his original sketches, and Roddenberry wanted several adjustments to the proportions, in particular he asked Probert to shorten the nacelles, so over the months that followed Probert produced more sketches, but the basic design remained intact.

By February of 1987 Herman Zimmerman had joined the team as the production designer. Probert could have been forgiven for being nervous about having a new boss, but as he remembers, Zimmerman was open to his ideas. "A very unexpected and pleasant thing happened. Herman looked over what I had done, which was the bridge and the ship, and after we talked, he

▲ Probert also helped to design the makeup for the Ferengi, who started out with Assyrian beards before evolving into the familiar hairless aliens.



▲ Probert designed the Selay and the Anticans before Michael Westmore took control of the designs for all the alien races.

realized that I had a lot of understanding of what *STAR TREK* was about visually so he encouraged me to continue submitting my designs. Of course, everything I did was subject to his approval, but I had an unusual sort of go-ahead from the art director.”

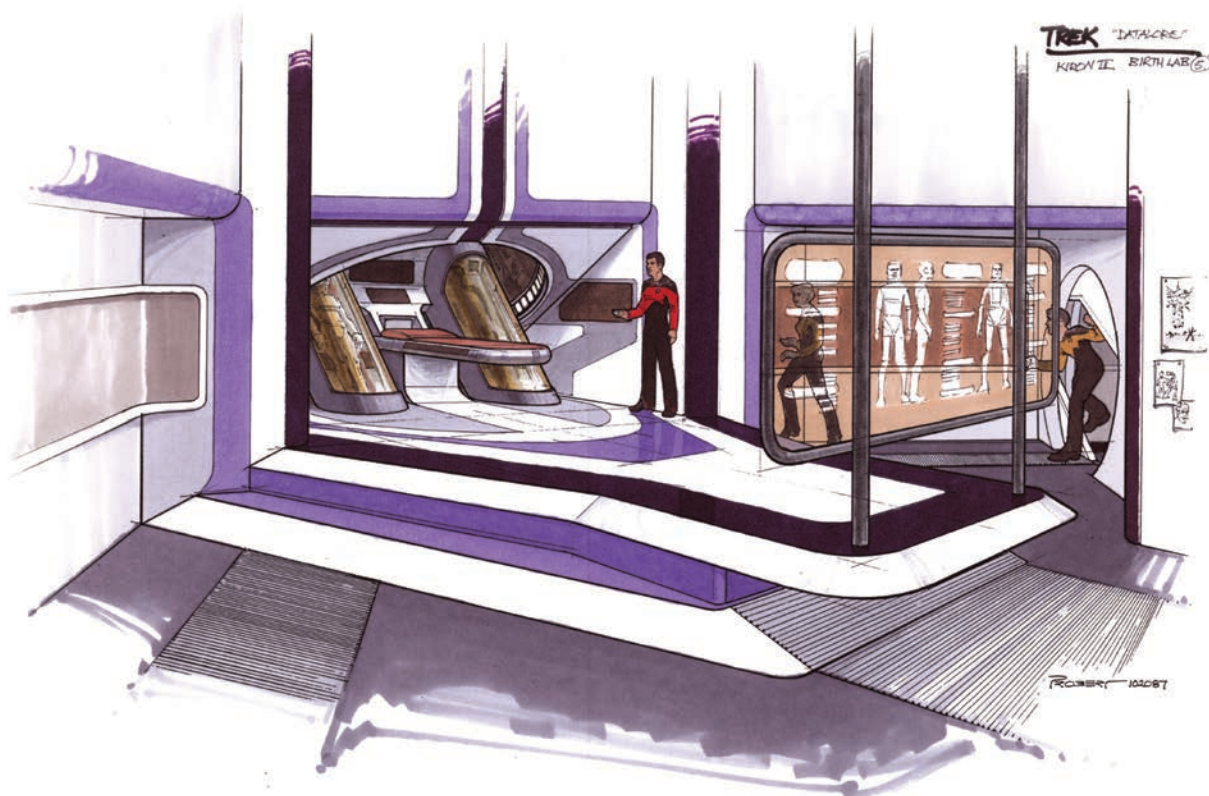
There were practical limitations to what the art department could do. Most of the *Enterprise* sets were adapted from the existing movie sets, so they had to follow the same basic layout, but Zimmerman tasked Probert with reinventing the way they looked. Throughout the process Probert was keen to emphasize *TNG*'s links with the original

series. He gives an example of suggesting that they do away with the shielding in the transporter room since it hadn't been needed in the original series. Probert also contributed designs for a new warp core, the observation lounge, and the holodeck arch.

Probert also helped to decorate the *Enterprise*, creating paintings for Picard's ready room and sickbay. One of his biggest contributions was a display in the observation lounge, that showed the design lineage of the *Enterprise*, from a 20th-century aircraft carrier to Probert's own *Galaxy*-class ship. In order to fill in the gaps he

► This sketch shows Armus from 'Skin of Evil,' which the script described as a "shroud" that rose out of a pool of blackness.





◀ Part of Probert's job was to envisage the new sets that were designed by the art department. This concept shows Dr. Soong's lab, where the landing party finds the components that they assemble to create Lore.

confirmed fan speculation that the *Enterprise-B* had been an *Excelsior*-class ship, and created a design for the unseen *Enterprise-C* which was a hybrid of the ships that came before and after it.

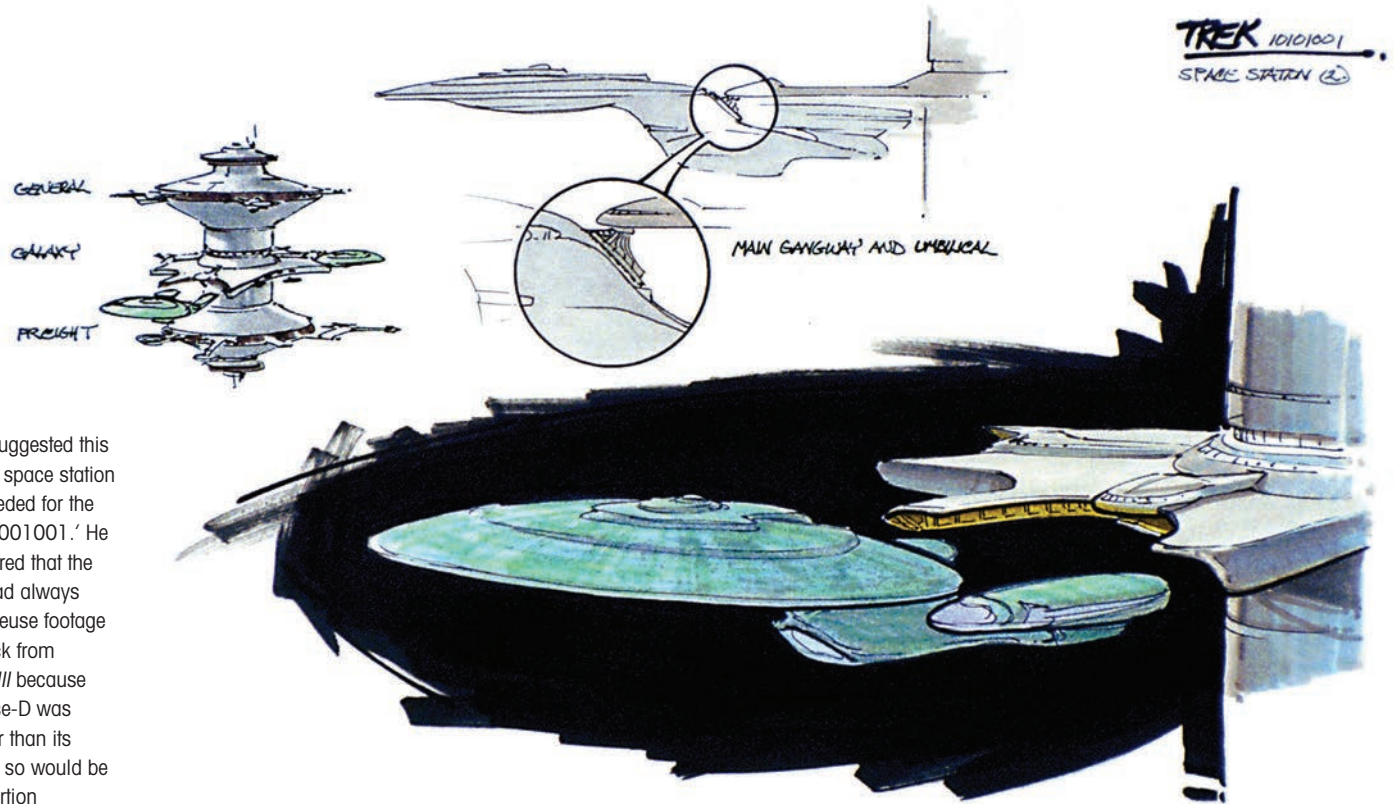
Probert also designed new shuttles for the *Enterprise*, which he wanted to reflect the curved nature of the new design. This approach proved challenging for the construction team and in the end the practical version that was built for the show looked very different. Probert also suggested an updated version of the work bee which he had designed for *STAR TREK: THE MOTION PICTURE*. Again, the design was ambitious and with the budgets being crunched, it was abandoned.

Once the work on the standing sets was finished, Probert spent his time concentrating on the needs of individual episodes. Before makeup supremo Michael Westmore was fully in place, Probert worked on concepts for the first aliens we would see, and he was largely responsible for the look of Selay and the Anticans from 'Lonely Among Us' and the Ferengi, who Probert remembers were designed to be *TNG*'s recurring villains. "The Ferengi were meant to be the new badasses of the universe. They were to be a combination of pirates and lawyers, who placed the value of the dollar above everything. I started out with a very dark look to them. The description was that they

would have very large ears so I was trying to come up with a look that incorporated that. Then Gene eventually said they'd totally hairless so my drawings changed to these totally bald aliens. In my final drawing I put a point on the ears and gave them sharp teeth, trying to make them look ferocious."

Probert was also called on to design the Ferengi's ship, the *Marauder*. "I wanted to have not only an obvious shape difference to the *Enterprise*, but a textural difference as well. The original description of the Ferengi ship was a horseshoe crab design with a neck that would extend. I tried to give their ship a threatening look by adding pointed areas at the front, and I had it look dirtier and a little battle-scarred. Then to support the pirate persona, and provide for future episodes, I designed an extendable boarding ramp into the underside of the ship's nose, with a clawed front that could be used on raids. The back of the ship is used for cargo storage, seeing as how the Ferengi are traders".

Even after Westmore was creating new aliens on a regular basis, Probert continued to offer up suggestions for the more extreme looking aliens. He and Rick Sternbach both worked on designs for Armus, the oil slick creature that kills Tasha Yar, and Probert produced some concepts for the Bynars,

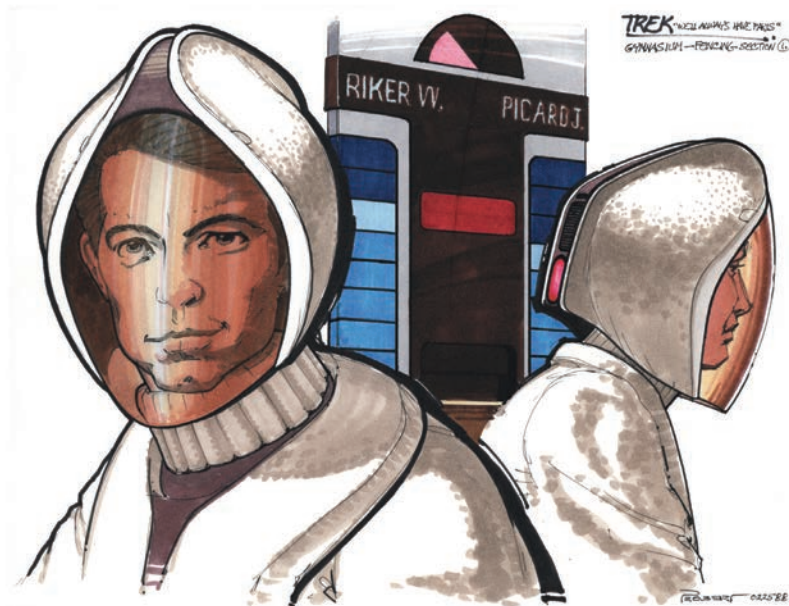


► Probert suggested this design for a space station that was needed for the episode '11001001.' He was concerned that the VFX team had always planned to reuse footage of Spacedock from *STAR TREK III* because the Enterprise-D was much bigger than its predecessor so would be out of proportion



► Probert did create this matte painting, showing the interior of the spacestation and how it docked with the Enterprise-D.





▲ Probert routinely drew concepts showing what props or various pieces of set dressing might look like. This drawing was done to show the scoreboard in a fencing match and the costumes were only added for context.



▲ This drawing was done to show one of the most gruesome moments in *TNG*'s first season. In 'Conspiracy' Remmick has been possessed by an alien parasite, when Picard and Riker turn their phasers on him, they burn away his chest to reveal a mother alien parasite inside his body.

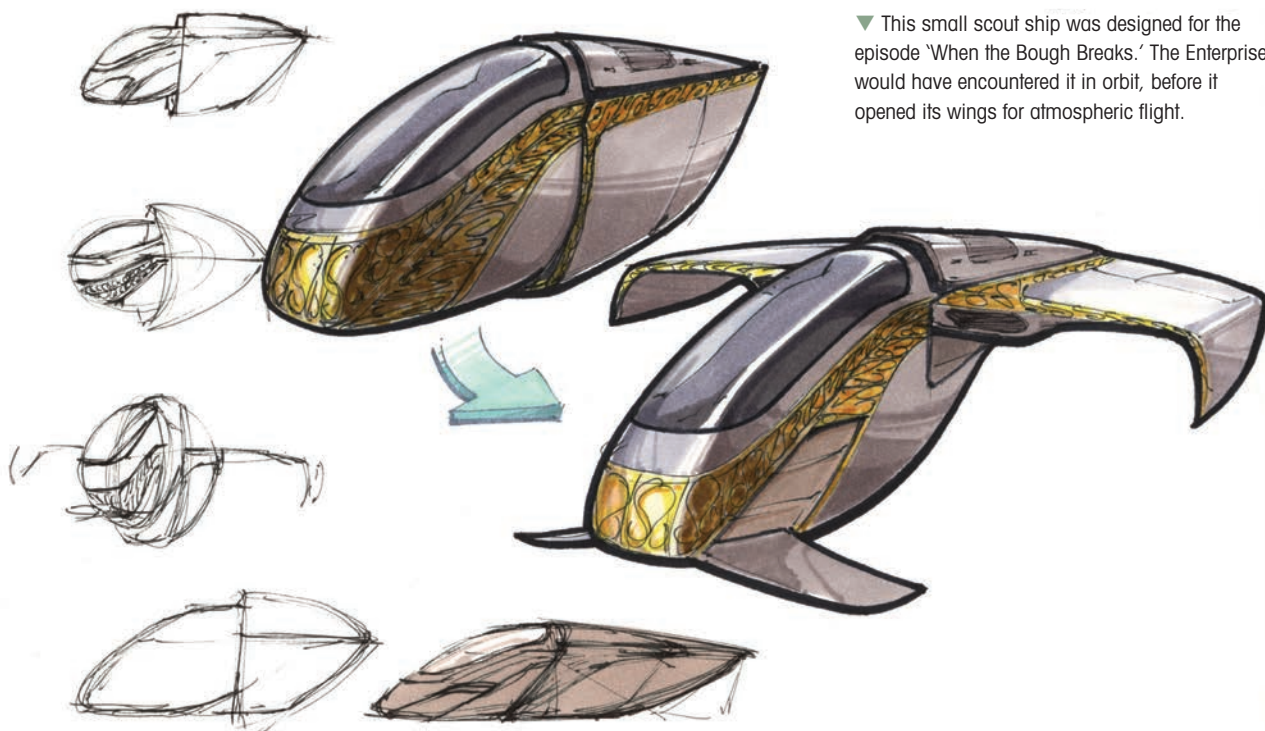
"I think I was asked to do the Bynars," he remembers. "I was certainly asked to do their equipment. The concept was that they were codependent. I think Michael suggested that their bodies would actually develop toward each other, which would give them a real asymmetrical look to their heads, which was something we hadn't seen before. He liked the ears that I put on them, but he did something different with the hair."

Probert also offered his services as a matte painter. He created the interior of spacedock for '11001001,' and, as he recalls, he also produced a matte painting for the episode 'Home Soil.' "What I did," Probert says, "was I took Herman's sets. I designed the main part of the laboratory by tracing his sets and adding other things like crew quarters and power rooms. I even added sort of a parking garage for a shuttle. I looked outside the sets and saw that there were rocky walls all around so I added that around my matte painting." Ultimately, however, the visual effects department decided to go in a different direction and reused a matte painting that Dan Curry had originally created for 'Battlestar Galactica.'

When the script called for it, Probert would illustrate the sets that the art department was designing. For example, he illustrated a version of Dr. Soong's lab from 'Datalore.' But more often he and his fellow illustrator Rick Sternbach would be called on to help design props or pieces of set dressing. "For 'We'll Always Have Paris,'" Probert explains, "there was a fencing scene. I think Herman said something like, 'Draw what the scoreboard would look like.' So I did a scoreboard and I thought while I was at it, I'd just throw out a costume idea, even though I think originally I was only asked to come up with the scoreboard."

But Probert's main focus during that first season was to design any new alien ships that we saw. The original budget didn't allow for any new ships, but Roddenberry continued to push for as many new designs as possible. As a result, Probert produced more concepts than were actually used.

For 'When the Bough Breaks,' he designed a small scout ship. "It was going to be a ship that would fly in space," he explains, "and then unfold to fly in an atmosphere. Obviously, that never got built." Another ship he designed that never saw



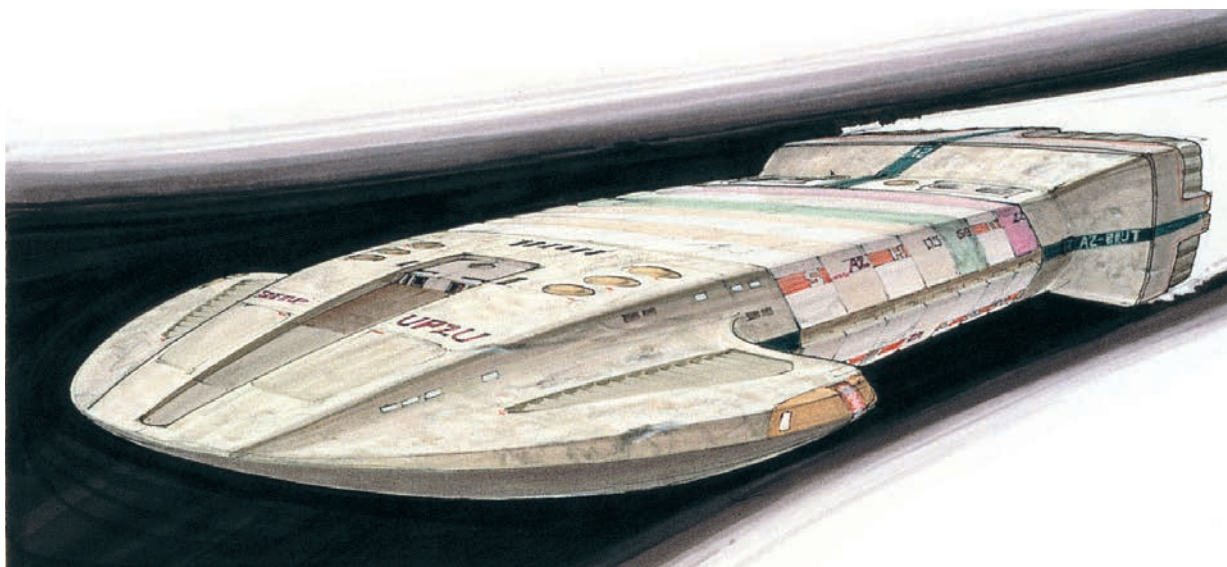
▼ This small scout ship was designed for the episode 'When the Bough Breaks.' The Enterprise would have encountered it in orbit, before it opened its wings for atmospheric flight.

the light of day was a generic freighter that would have appeared toward the end of the season.

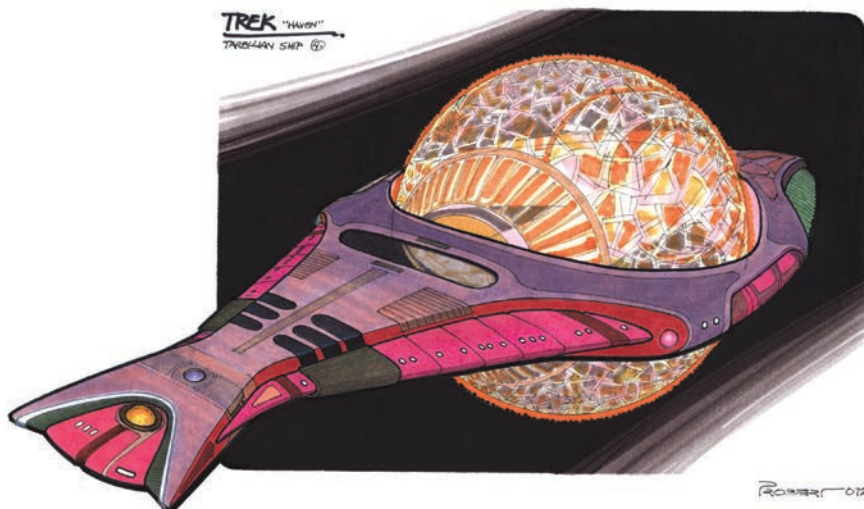
As Probert explains, whenever he designed a ship, he says he based it on certain principles. "In my ship designs the engines are nearly always parallel. Early on in *STAR TREK*, Gene stated the edict that Starfleet ships have engines that are codependent. There are always two engines; there's never one; there are never three. I took that a bit further in assuming that, just as all planes had two propellers, most of the ships in *STAR TREK* had two engines that could see one another – there was nothing in between. On the ships I designed

while I was on the show – the shuttlecraft, the Ferengi *Marauder*, and the Romulan warbird – the engines could see each other."

There was a notable exception to this rule that Probert was very pleased with. "A ship I'm particularly proud of is the one with the power source in the middle from 'Haven.' It started out with an idea that this was an alien culture that had gone in a totally different direction in their power development. I didn't want to do yet another ship with an engine out the back. Originally, I had this kind of energy ball that a ship would attach itself to and somehow use to pull itself.



► This freighter was designed in February, 1988 toward the end of the first season.



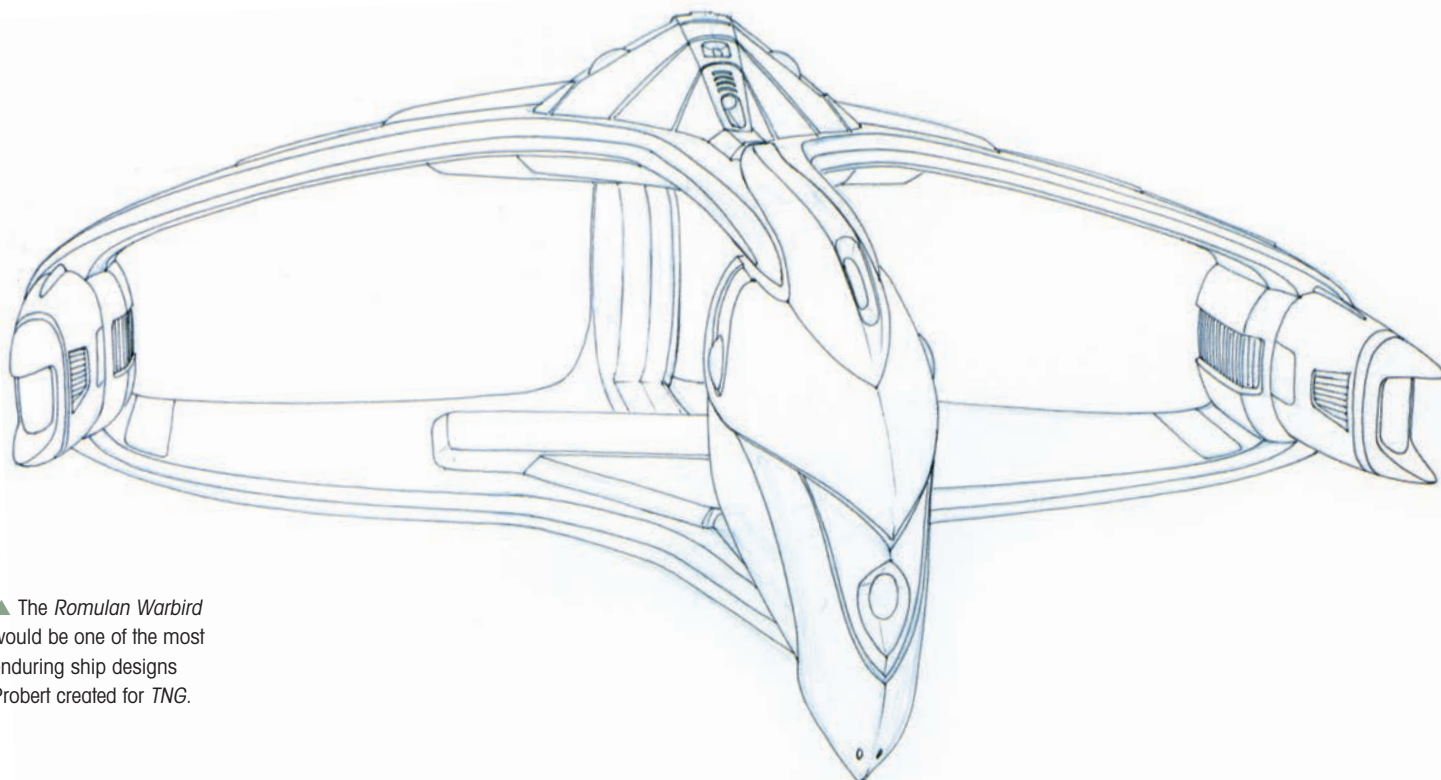
"I went to Gene and said, 'I've hit sort of a block here. I don't know what to do. I don't want to have yet another engine at the back, and I've got this idea of the engine pulling the ship, but that's not quite working. What do you think we should do?' He said, 'Just put it in the middle.' I said, 'What do you mean?' He said, 'Put the ship around it and have it work that way.'"

The last ship Probert designed for *TNG* appeared in the final episode of the season, the crew of *Enterprise* encounter the Romulans, who have been in isolation for decades. When they decloak,

their ship, the *Warbird*, dwarfs the *Enterprise*.

Probert initially suggested that it could have a vertical design with the nacelles at the top and the bottom but the producers felt this was too radical a departure and told him to give it a more conventional 'horizontal' layout. The revised design had Egyptian influences and for the first time associated the color green with the Romulans. The Romulan Warbird turned out to be his last piece of work on the TV show and, fittingly, it has gone on to become one of the most enduring designs in the history of *STAR TREK*.

▲ When Probert wanted to develop a different kind of propulsion system for the episode 'Haven,' Roddenbery suggested he put the ship's power source in the middle of the vessel.



▲ The Romulan Warbird would be one of the most enduring ship designs Probert created for *TNG*.

# STAR TREK™

