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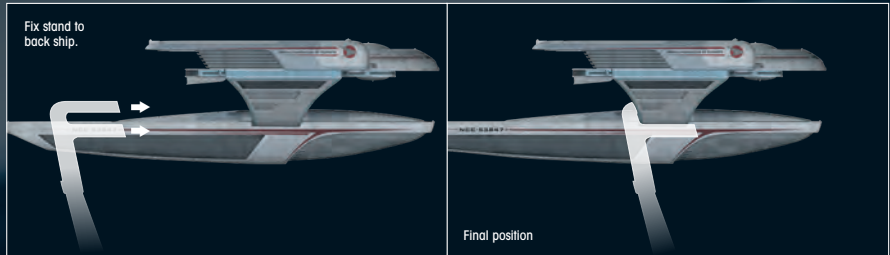
OBERTH CLASSES

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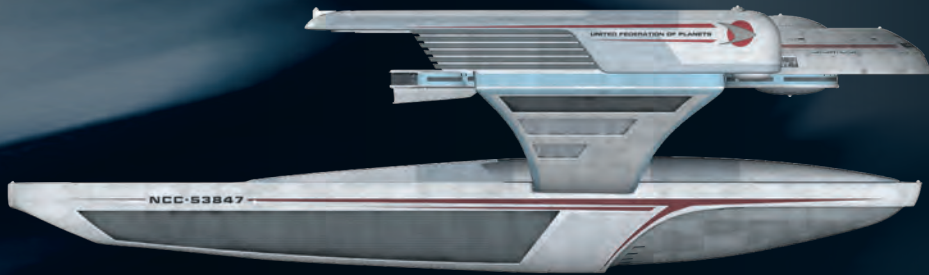
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OBERTH CLASS

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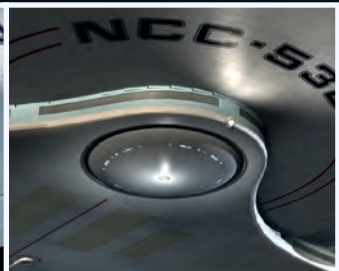
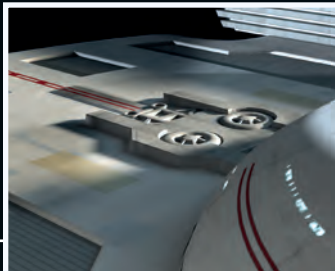
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LENGTH:

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CREW:

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OBERTH-CLASS

Starfleet used small science vessels, like the *U.S.S. Pegasus*, for nearly a hundred years.



◀ *Oberth*-class ships were relatively small vessels that were typically used for scientific research.

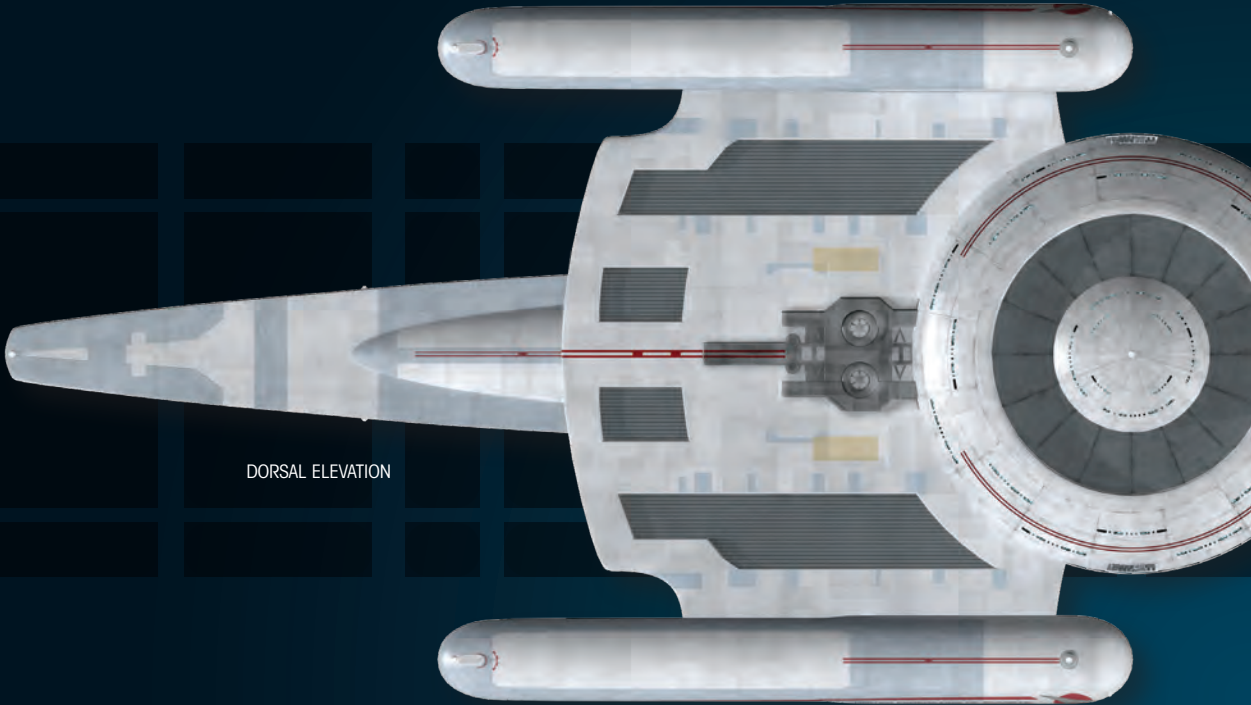
BERTH-CLASS VESSELS such as the *U.S.S. Pegasus* were relatively small ships that were typically used for scientific research. For example, in 2358 the *Pegasus* conducted illegal tests on an advanced cloaking device near the Devolin system. Almost 100 years earlier, the *U.S.S. Grissom* was sent to study the newly-formed Genesis Planet.

Since the *Oberth*-class was in service for a century, ships were fitted with a number of different configurations, but the typical version had 13 decks, warp and impulse engines and was 120 meters long. The primary computer core was in the saucer section, with the warp core in the secondary hull. The *Pegasus* had a crew of 80.

Oberth-class ships were normally lightly armed but joined the Starfleet armadas that engaged the Borg at Wolf 359 and Sector 001. They were also part of the fleets that fought the Dominion in the 2370s.

▶ The *U.S.S. Pegasus* was used as a testbed for a variety of technologies, including an illegal cloaking device that shifted the ship out of phase with normal space, allowing it to pass through solid objects. A malfunction left it trapped in an asteroid.

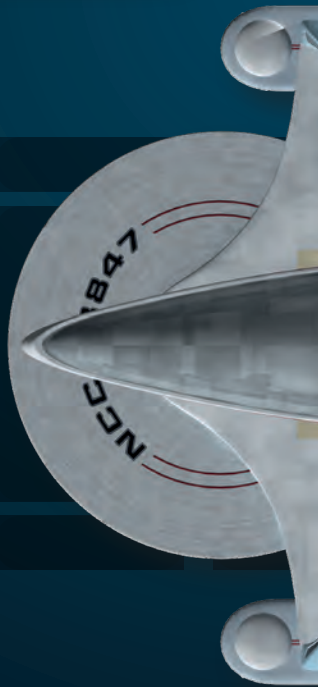


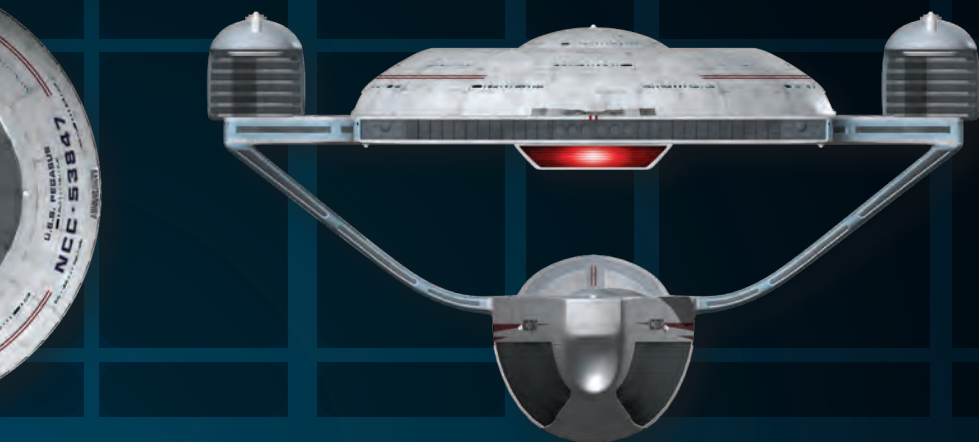


DORSAL ELEVATION

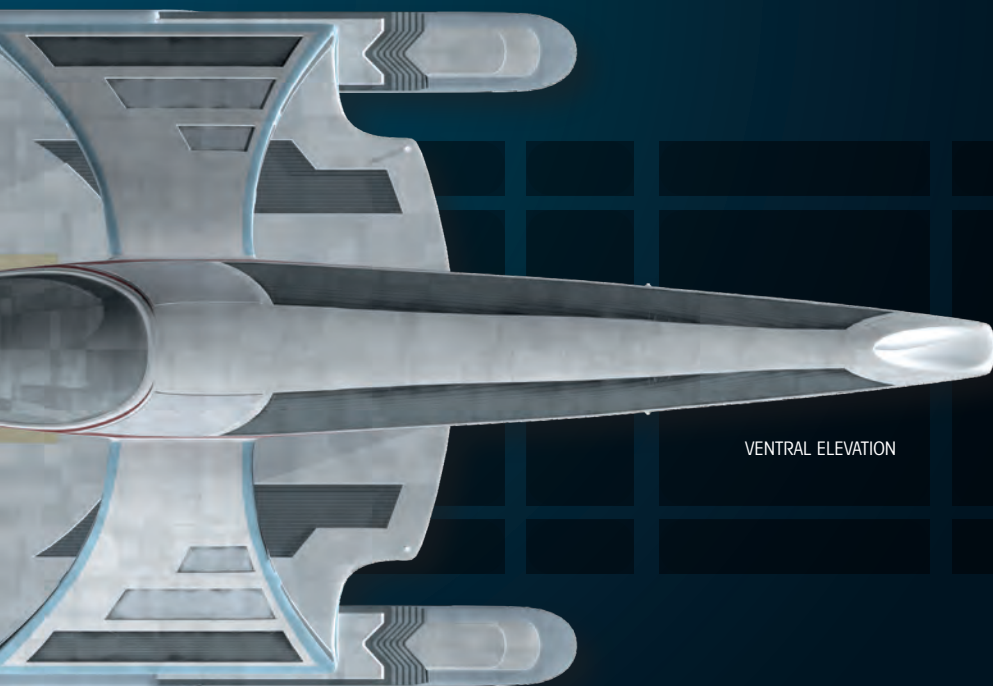


FRONT ELEVATION





AFT ELEVATION



VENTRAL ELEVATION

MOVIE DEBUT

The *Oberth*-class class made its debut in *STAR TREK III: THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK*. It was designed by ILM. The same model was used in *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION*.

NAMING

The *Oberth*-class is named for Herman Oberth, a pivotal figure in the development of rocket science. The first *Oberth*-class ship we saw, the *U.S.S. Grissom*, was named for Apollo astronaut Virgil "Gus" Grissom.



BORN AGAIN

The third movie firmly established *STAR TREK* as a franchise and saw Leonard Nimoy step up to direct.

▲ *STAR TREK III* pits Kirk and his crew against the Klingons as they attempt to rescue a regenerated Spock from the Genesis planet.

For a long time no-one expected there to be a third *STAR TREK* movie. When Hollywood entered the 1980s, sequels were unusual and franchises were even rarer, so when Paramount decided to make *STAR TREK II*, everyone involved thought that would be it. But, as the movie neared completion, and the studio brass assembled to watch the film, the mood started to change. Everyone involved was convinced that they had made a really good movie, proving that *STAR TREK* was at home on the big screen and, unlike its predecessor, they had made it for a modest budget. It made a

lot of sense to do it again. Paramount had a problem though – the movie ended with Spock’s death, and more *STAR TREK* without Spock seemed like a bad idea.

Fortunately, as producer Harve Bennett remembered, they had left the door open to Spock returning, not, as he explained, because anyone thought there might be a sequel, but because, as it was originally written, Spock’s death had left the audience feeling miserable. “The first preview audience cried, and cried, and cried,” Bennett remembered. “There was silence at the end of the movie. They filed out. Nobody said anything, and they went their

separate ways. I remember feeling, 'Jeez, we can't do this.' And the studio certainly had concerns."

As Bennett continued, he had told *STAR TREK II*'s director Nicholas Meyer that they had to make changes. "Nick originally said 'That's the picture we set out to make, didn't we? We set out to kill Spock'. I said, 'Yes we did, but you're dealing with an icon. So why don't we do this: let's just imply, in Spock's words, that there are possibilities.'"

Despite Meyer's reservations, one of the movie's other producers, Bob Sallin, filmed a new sequence for the end of the movie that showed Spock's coffin coming to rest on the Genesis planet. "I really hated this whole idea," Meyer recalls. "I understood why they were doing it, but I hated it, because I thought, 'God, there are so many people who care so deeply about this man, and if this is just going to turn out to be one big jerk-off - if he isn't really dead - then that's sort of unforgivable.' In retrospect I think I was wrong."

When *STAR TREK II* opened, audiences responded enthusiastically and, for the first time, making more *STAR TREK* seemed like a good investment. "Within a week of the tremendous opening weekend," Bennett remembered, "I got a call from Michael Eisner. He said, 'Start writing, we're going to do *STAR TREK III*.'"

Meyer, however, was less than happy about the ending and had no interest in writing or directing a follow up. Paramount didn't have to look far for a replacement. Leonard Nimoy called Meyer and told him that he would like to direct the next movie. Meyer gave him his blessing and advised him to make it a condition for returning to the role of Spock.

TAKING THE HELM

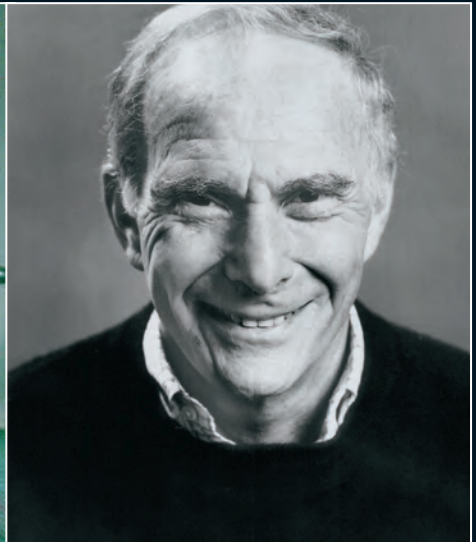
"When they contacted me," Nimoy said, "and asked me to come to the studio to talk about my involvement in *STAR TREK III*, I made the proposal that I would direct the film. The response was immediately very positive. There were some questions because Mr. Eisner, who was running the studio, was under the impression that Spock had died in *STAR TREK II* at my request, which was not true. In fact, he thought that I had insisted that it be in my contract because I wanted to be rid of Spock and *STAR TREK*. None of that was true."

Nimoy had never directed a feature film before, but he had experience directing for the theater and television. He was clearly an intelligent man, who thought deeply about everything he worked on, and, importantly, Paramount knew that without him there would be no Spock, so they told him to get to work.

"I initiated the story," Nimoy recalled. "I

▼ *STAR TREK II* ends with Spock's coffin coming to rest on the Genesis Planet. The sequence was only added after preview screenings left audiences feeling depressed, and even at that point there was no expectation that there would be another movie.





▲ *STAR TREK III* was the first feature film directed by Leonard Nimoy (left). He remembered collaborating closely with Shatner, as he sought to make an ensemble film. Nimoy developed the story with producer Harve Bennett (right).

began talking about it with Harve immediately. I gave him some framework and then we worked in tandem during the story development stage. He did all the writing.” Nimoy went on to add that working out the physical action of the story wasn’t that challenging. “It’s not as though we sat down and said, ‘Well, gee, what kind of a story shall we tell with this *STAR TREK* movie?’ It was quite obvious there had been a thread laid down at the end of *STAR TREK II* that had to be picked up. It was a question of how to make that thread interesting and how to bring the audience along to follow it. The question at the end of *STAR TREK II* was, ‘What’s in that black tube that we’ve just seen land on the Genesis planet?’ Something is going to come out of it. What’s going to come out of it? Once we began dealing with that, the story that had to be told fell in place.”

Bennett agreed that there were certain basic elements they had to deal with. “You had a given – you were going to find Spock. (In the Genesis device) you had the shadow of the equivalent in the 23rd century of the hydrogen bomb. You had this massive thing for good or evil. There was the need for Kirk to do it against odds and thus, finally, the decision that Genesis

politically would have been off limits.”

Knowing that he had to incorporate these elements, Bennett sat down and produced an outline called ‘Return to Genesis’ in which Spock is reborn on the planet just as the Romulan battle lord, Kruge, takes control of the planet. Genesis is rich in dilithium, which the Romulans are trying to mine, while a reborn Spock, who doesn’t have the benefit of a logical Vulcan upbringing, brutally attacks them. The *Enterprise* is en route to Earth, having returned David and Carol Marcus to their lab. When members of the crew start to see what appears to be Spock’s ghost, Kirk takes the ship to Vulcan, where he discovers that the creation of the Genesis device has led to serious unrest that could lead to Vulcan leaving the Federation. Sarek is unhappy that Kirk hasn’t returned Spock’s body to Vulcan, asking him how he knew he wasn’t in a transcendental state.

Kirk eventually returns to Earth where he is imprisoned because of his actions with the Genesis device and his apparently insane belief in Spock’s ghost. Sulu and the rest of the crew break him out and take the *Enterprise* back to Genesis where it is attacked by a cloaked Romulan ship and Kirk orders it to self destruct,



◀ In the original outline, the reborn Spock is a vicious killer, like his Vulcan ancestors before they embraced logic.

while his crew beam down to the surface. Saavik confesses her love for Kirk, before they are rescued by the regenerated Spock. As Genesis tears itself apart, Kirk tricks his way on to the Romulan ship, which he captures. He then sets course for Earth and surrenders to the *Excelsior*. The movie ends with a restored Spock thanking Kirk for coming back for him.

Bennett acknowledged that although the outline contained the basic elements of the final movie, it lacked focus. "I had just thrown in everything including the kitchen sink here. I had Spock appearing to everybody. I had Spock being transferred in to Bones. Spock was everywhere and nowhere."

EXPERT KNOWLEDGE

In the weeks that followed, Bennett and Nimoy refined the story. As Bennett remembered, Nimoy brought a great understanding of the series with him. "I was still really not fully educated in *TREK* lore. Leonard brought that knowledge. There is no one who knows more."

One of Nimoy's suggestions was that they should replace the Romulans with the Klingons. "Our first conversations," Bennett said, "were about the Romulans vs. the Klingons. I was just looking for a heavy and in the history of *STAR*

TREK the series, Romulans seemed to be more dastardly than the Klingons. Only because there was more talk about them. So it was an error of ignorance. We changed it to Klingons and dug into what might be Klingon motivation. Leonard had a marvelous insight into what they should look like and hyping that up from the original episodes. They are not nearly so frightening in the series. We had ourselves our Nazis. We had the perfect foil who would use this device. Leonard's knowledge of how we could do it made the decision of Klingons the perfect fit."

As the two men worked on the plot, Nimoy emphasized that he wanted the film to be

▼ In Bennett's original version of the story, the protagonist is a vicious Romulan, who wants to control Genesis because of its enormous dilithium deposits.



► Nimoy suggested that they should use the Klingons as the film's main protagonists. He felt that they had been the TV series' main villains and would be a good fit. The Klingon makeup had already been redesigned for the first movie, and *STAR TREK III* saw Marc Okrand invent a language for them.



character based. "There were some things," he said, "that I felt that I had to offer *STAR TREK* that had not been examined in the previous two films. The first movie was really about the ship; the second movie was more about the battle between Kirk and Khan, with some other touches, of course, but I really felt that there was room now for an ensemble piece about the group and what they were willing to do to help one of their own."

MAKING IT PERSONAL

Nimoy was insistent that *STAR TREK* had always been most successful when it had focused on the relationships between the characters. "You had a gold mine with these characters," he said, "you had to mine it. The series was very strong on stories about our characters, and there was a very simple, economical reason for that – the actors were paid for. No matter how many lines of dialogue you gave them, or how many scenes you gave them to play in, the price was the same. On the other hand, if you had to build more sets and create more special effects, those things were costly. So the writers

were required to write powerful character stories.. The stories were about us, about our experiences.

"*STAR TREK III* is a personal story. How can Kirk and his friends and his crew come back and possibly rescue Spock? It's a story about the people. It had a heart to it. Those were the things that I wanted to focus on: those kinds of issues about the camaraderie, about the team work, about the loyalty, which I felt had been lost in the first movie.

"It was essential that we understand that this group of people were willing to steal the ship, go against Federation orders, jeopardize their careers, and possibly their lives, because there was some outside, slim chance that Spock might be rescuable, and they did. I think the key moment is when Kirk has been instructed not to go, that Genesis is a forbidden planet. His group says to him, 'What is the word, Captain?' And he says, 'The word is no, so we're going anyway.' That was key. That harkens back to the best of the series.

He suggested that he and Bennett rewatch the original series episode 'Amok Time,' which

deals with Spock's return to Vulcan when he is gripped by *Pon Farr* – the biological need to take a mate.

"That," Bennett said, "was the clarifying event, because in 'Amok Time' all the seeds that go on in *STAR TREK III* are clarified or at least suggested. So all this stuff begins to be very rich."

The revised version of the outline not only saw the Romulans replaced with the Klingons, but eliminated the trip to Vulcan and linked Spock's rebirth to the accelerated evolution of the planet, which is tearing itself apart because David Marcus has taken shortcuts. "I don't know where the protomatter came from," Bennett mused, "not from me. I do remember when it was suggested, something clicked. Because I had thematically worried about what have we done with the Genesis device. How do you do a franchise where there is a Genesis device lurking over your head? Where in any story you then tell you must acknowledge that this thing is there and it could solve most of the problems in *STAR TREK*? You know, it's a wonderful solution for Earth today: terraform the moon and it'll take care of the population and pollution problems for a couple of centuries."

MORAL SHORTCUTS

Importantly, Bennett and Nimoy saw the creation of the Genesis device as evidence of mankind's excessive belief in their own power. "We began to feel, ironically, like we had played God with the universe," Bennett remembered. "We had done something that only nature and/or God could do: we had created life. The ultimate affront to God by man. Like his father, David had cheated. Then the rest fell in to place immediately. I knew who had to die on the planet. To me the great scene in the movie in this regard is David telling Saavik he bent the rules. She says, 'Like your father.' And he pays for it."

This revision to the story meant that Bennett and Nimoy couldn't see a sensible role for Bibi Besch, who had played Carol Marcus in *STAR*

TREK II. As Bennett explained this was one of the most difficult things that came out of the story development. "We were hard pressed to find a role for Carol because of the betrayal by David. We're focusing now on something that the son did without the knowledge of the mother. If not that, then you've got a mother and a son in collusion to trick the Federation with false science.

"Bibi Besch was very upset and wrote me a heartrending letter. I had lunch with her and said you've got to understand, this is not a failure of your performance. Quite the contrary, you've set this up for us. Actors are actors; she thought we didn't like her."

Besch wasn't the only member of the *STAR TREK II* family who didn't return for the new movie. Nimoy, Bennett and the studio wanted Kirstie Alley to return as Saavik, but they couldn't agree terms with her agent.

"We were perfectly willing to pay her more than she'd had in *STAR TREK II*," Bennett explained. "But the studio had goofed and not gotten a sequel clause. She wanted the kind of money Bones was getting. We begged her to come back, and she wanted to come back and the agent intervened, and we went on with it."

▼ Bennett and Nimoy developed the idea that Genesis was unstable because David had taken shortcuts. Thematically, he had to pay a price for his actions, so they had the Klingons kill him. This had the added benefit of increasing the emotional stakes for Kirk.





▲ When negotiations with Kirstie Alley broke down, Nimoy and Bennett cast Robin Curtis (right) in the role. Nimoy wanted her to help the adolescent Spock through his *Pon farr*, which he regarded as a very dangerous time.

Without Alley, Nimoy and Bennett had to consider what to do about her character. "There were several things we thought about," Bennett continued. "One was that Saavik didn't have to appear at all. But having to have someone in the crew to provide Vulcan knowledge ultimately decided us that she had to be in the story. Then, of course, we hit upon the *Pon farr* and the accelerated lifespan and therefore the accelerated sexuality and the danger thereof. In 'Amok Time' there's a lot of danger involved in *Pon farr* and this exploding time for a Vulcan every seven years. We took that almost literally and that's very much in the picture. The pain and the suffering and the soothing and all that stuff."

For his part, Nimoy wanted Saavik and Spock to become intimate as she helps Spock through his *Pon farr*. "It was clear to us," Nimoy said, "that we wanted to continue the Saavik idea because of her potential relationship with Spock." He was happy to cast Robin Curtis. "I was looking for an actress who could fill this slot and I thought that Robin did it very well. She had a sense of containment, while at the same time there was an inner light going on. I was sorry that we had to lose Kirstie Alley, but I thought it worked out quite well."

As Bennett remembered, Curtis's strengths as an actor were only part of the reason that Saavik's role was changing. "The whole concept of what Saavik would be doing in this script became different. She was contented to be half-Romulan, and half-Vulcan in *STAR TREK II*, but actually in *STAR TREK III* she is much more Vulcan. Part of that is because that's what she could play. Most of it was because of a meeting with Bill Shatner."

As Bennett explains, once he had completed a draft of the script, he and Nimoy presented it to Shatner. Just as he had on *STAR TREK II*, Shatner had some serious reservations that centered on protecting Kirk's role and making sure he instigated things rather than reacted to them. Shatner arranged a meeting that he came to with his lawyer and another associate. "Bill said, 'I can't do this. I can't do this.' We said, 'Well, let's talk about it, come on. Tell us what you don't like from page one. Let's go.' So we got into the first three or four changes and Bill said, 'You guys can leave, we're going to work this out.' What it simply was, was Bill was afraid that he was not the center of action, that he was being reduced to a passive role because so many other elements in this story were triggering decisive action. That meeting,

probably more than any other single factor, determined the final shape of the script. Bill had numerous good points and several that we stood firm on.

"Bill's one of my favorites of all time. He's a delicious man, but he is a matinee idol. He said, 'You know that beautiful scene that you wrote with Bones and Spock? I should be in that scene.' Leonard and I said, 'No you shouldn't. The poignancy of this scene is that he's given his katra to Bones, who of all people was his comedic, if nothing else, adversary throughout the series. They were always fighting, and it was always a question of passion vs. logic. So here is a wonderful opportunity for Bones to tell Spock how he really feels about him. And that's the beauty of the scene.' Bill said, 'Hmm, well, OK, let's go on to the next one.' That was the kind of meeting it was. I cannot then tell you exactly what we changed. I do know that things like, 'You Klingon bastard, you killed my son,' highlights of that kind, came out of that meeting and of centering Kirk as the dynamic of the script. By focusing on Bill's notes, we also did ourselves a great service. Everybody was happy and the script was the better for it."

The last major piece of casting saw Christopher Lloyd installed as the now-Klingon Kruge. Nimoy remembers that he had to put in a strong case for him since at the time he was best known for his role as Jim in the TV series 'Taxi.' "Christopher Lloyd I think is a brilliant

actor and I can't say enough about him. There was some concern at the studio that he was limited to what he had done on 'Taxi,' where he was so successful in playing that strange exotic, character. Could he be this commanding authority figure that Kruge had to be? I thought he did it brilliantly. He's a chameleon."

DOUBLE DUTY

Nimoy was relieved that one person who didn't feature heavily in the final version of the script was Spock. "I'm not on screen that much. Doing both roles – directing and the performance of Spock – is quite a chore, particularly because of the makeup issue. The makeup is a two-hour commitment. If the director has to be at work at 7am, I would have to deliver myself to the makeup chair at 5am, because the makeup had to be done before I started working. There was no way during the course of the day when I could get to the makeup department. It had to be done first and gotten out of the way. So it added two hours to what was always a very long day anyway. On *STAR TREK III* it was a big help not to have to deal with it."

Nimoy remembered that there was one scene where being in the movie made it difficult for him to direct. "The major scene where I could not watch the acting was the scene with DeForest Kelley. Spock's



◀ Shatner gave detailed notes on the script which strengthened Kirk's role, putting him at the center of the action and increasing the drama. Bennett remembered these notes lead directly to the scene where Kirk collapses after David is killed.



▲ The tight budget meant that Nimoy could only afford relatively small sets, but he made the restrictions work for him, and felt that any budgetary constraints were less important than the story.

unconscious and McCoy's talking to him. I could trust DeForest Kelley. He was such a great professional I could be sure his performance was there."

Even if Nimoy spent most of his time behind the camera, he said that Spock had a major role in the movie. "Although Spock was absent physically, he was also very much a presence in the film because the story was about saving, rescuing Spock. Then, of course, there were the young Spocks all along in the story so there really was a Spock presence."

Stepping up to direct changed Nimoy's relationship with the rest of the cast, and he remembered that they were obviously wary about how it might work out. "I was quite surprised to discover that I was sort of on trial with the regular cast. They really weren't quite sure what to expect. Did I know how to do the job? And, if so, what did this portend for them? What was my relationship going to be with them? One of your own kind of steps out of line and becomes the boss, so to speak. There was some concern about that, we got past that, but there was a testing period."

The studio also displayed some nerves about putting a major feature film in the hands of an inexperienced director and Nimoy recalled that he was frequently called on to explain his choices, "I was," Nimoy said, "being asked to describe, explain and justify every little thing that I had in mind, and it took an enormous amount of energy."

His biggest challenges, however, related to the budget. *STAR TREK: THE MOTION PICTURE* had been enormously expensive. As a result, *STAR TREK II* had been brought in on an incredibly tight budget. As Nimoy explained, "The studio belief was that the third in a series of films will do 25% less business than the second in the series. I was quite convinced that that would not be the case and it turned out not to be. But that was the formula that they were projecting and therefore the budget was extremely tight,"

The area where this manifested itself most obviously was in set construction. "We did not have grand budgets for sets," Nimoy recalled. "Some of the sets were extremely restrictive and underdeveloped, resulting in a very confined atmosphere, but in some ways that worked for us. The bridge of the Klingon ship was extremely confined, for example. The foliage exterior of the planet was extremely limited - where we find Spock's tube.

"The set piece where Kirk and crew are fighting. Where Christopher Lloyd is on a piece of precipice that breaks away, if you look

closely, when it breaks away, you can actually see where the pre-fabrication of the broken piece is. It's so obvious to me. We tried to cover it with a burst of computer-generated flame but the fact is that we were always up against very limited budgets."

Nimoy was confident he could work around the budget limitations and get everything he could from every set and scene. When he talked to his department heads, he emphasized that he wanted the film to have an intensity and an epic scope. "I wanted it operatic. The emotions should be very large; the atmospheric conditions, the circumstances, should be very grand; the music should be grand. Fire and storm, snow and wind. Operatic. With the camera man, with the special effects people, with the performances, large, large issues, life and death, loyalty, salvation, resurrection."

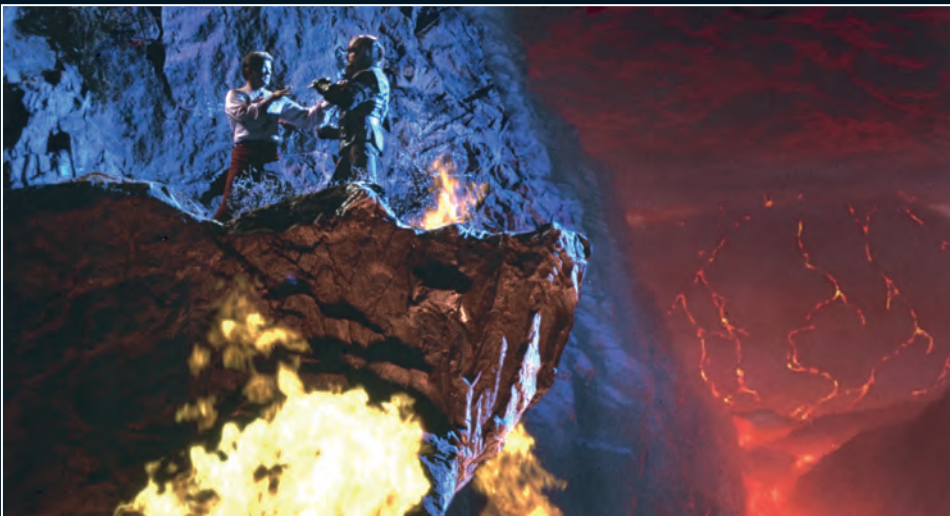
EMOTIONAL SHOCK

No sequence in the film was more dramatic than the destruction of the *Enterprise*. Nimoy and Bennett wanted a moment that would surprise people and stir their emotions. To Bennett's frustration, the element of surprise was taken away when Paramount's marketing department decided to make it a feature of the trailer "The death of the *Enterprise* was

widely publicized," he remembered. "After all we went through previously with the death of Spock, we were asked about a week before the picture to come to marketing to see the trailer and the trailer starts with BOOOM! The death of *Enterprise*. I said, 'Oh great! Guys, we've worked so hard, why are you doing this?'" But trailer makers take the most exciting scenes, string them together and that's their trailer. I couldn't get them to change it."

The *Enterprise*'s destruction was one of several shots contributed by ILM, who returned to produce the effects for a second time. Nimoy could have been forgiven for being daunted by the prospect of dealing with visual effects on his first directorial outing, but in this case, his experience as an actor stood him in good stead.

"I had been involved with science fiction and special effects films long before I even got into the *STAR TREK* world. I started acting in science fiction as early as the early 1950s, so I was very familiar with the genre. We had very talented people at Industrial Light Magic. I got them involved very early, as soon as we had a script. We had lengthy meetings with them to discuss various ideas - how to create certain effects. A wonderful exchange of ideas took place. We discussed concepts and each meeting brought



◀ Nimoy was always unhappy that you could see the physical joint where part of the rock face collapses. It was covered with flame, but he could never forget that it was there.



▲ ILM made study models of all the ships they designed for the movie. This is modelmaker Bill George's first pass at the *U.S.S. Grissom*.

forth a different kind of result or dealt with a different kind of problem. Some dealt with matte shots that were needed to establish large landscapes that we were not able to accomplish physically on stage. I had meetings with them to discuss the creation of the Klingon bird-of-prey where I actually demonstrated with my arms how the wings should be. Within half

an hour, somebody from their model shop brought me a manifestation of what I had described, then we made modifications on that."

Before *STAR TREK III*, the only bird-of-prey we had ever seen was a Romulan ship. The name and the idea behind the design was a hangover from Bennett's earlier outlines. "We wanted to use it," Bennett explained, "because it was so susceptible to design. It looked like what it was – a bird of prey. I always bow to Leonard on these things, he is after all the senior historian of the franchise in addition to being director of the picture. I think in effect Leonard said, 'The hell with it.' And I said, OK and it became consistent with the Klingons who would steal the best from anybody. They had probably captured a bird-of-prey, said 'This is good. We'll use it and we'll modify it.'"

ILM also designed three other new ships for the movie: a small freighter known as the *Merchantman*, the *U.S.S. Excelsior* and the *Oberth-class U.S.S. Grissom*, which the Klingons destroy in orbit around the Genesis planet. They also designed the giant spacedock that the *Enterprise* enters when it returns from the Mutara Nebula.

Nimoy remembered that editing the movie was a relatively painless process, and the only major changes involved the structure of the sequence in which the crew steal the *Enterprise*.

"Everything that we had shot worked quite well, except that in the original, as I recall, the adventures of the group entering the ship and

► The destruction of the *Enterprise* was the key emotional moment of the film and it was something that Bennett wanted to surprise the audience.





getting ready to leave was done in short staccato bursts, then we would cut away to other parts of the plot that were going on simultaneously so there was a lot of cross cutting going on. I felt that interrupted the flow of it, the joy of watching these guys deciding to steal the ship and take it out and run away with it. We just glued some pieces together and told more of one story in a chunk then more of the other, as opposed to what was on the page.”

Once the movie had been edited together, Paramount arranged test screenings and Nimoy and Bennett got to see their work with an audience. Nimoy remembers being thrilled by the response, which was everything he had hoped for. “The most exciting moment for me in the previews was the moment when Kirk finally has beaten Kruge on the burning planet, he picks up Spock and they are both standing, and he is holding Spock with one arm around him. He calls up to the ship imitating Kruge demanding that he be beamed up. There’s an effects shot where the beaming effect takes place and Kirk and Spock start to disintegrate. As that happens, the very ground they have been standing on crumbles and starts to burn in a burst of flame. The audience broke into cheers and applause. It was that last moment of

narrow escape. And that told me that they had been with us for the story and they had been relieved. It was quite thrilling actually.”

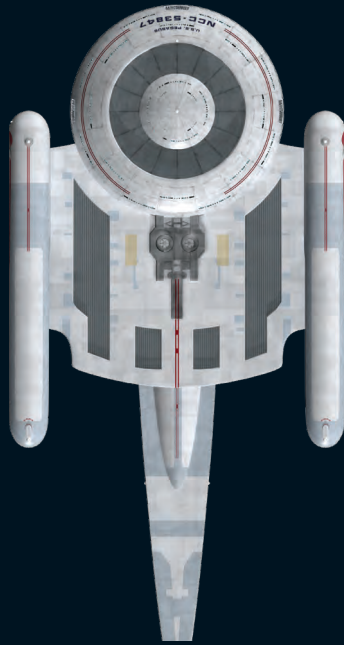
The success of *STAR TREK III* was key to *STAR TREK*’s survival. The studio had imagined that both the previous films would have been *STAR TREK*’s last outing. This time, Paramount didn’t even wait for the film’s release before they decided to make another *STAR TREK* movie.

“About ten days before the picture opened,” Nimoy remembered, “Jeffrey Katzenberg, who was my key contact at the studio, called me to his office and said, ‘We’d like you to direct the next movie.’ And, I said, ‘You know I’m excited about doing that.’ I felt that the studio had a bit of a choke hold on me on *STAR TREK III*. I was being very closely supervised. I said, ‘I can’t have that, I can’t have that choke hold.’ He said to me, I’ll never forget the words, ‘The training wheels are off. We want your vision. Give us your *STAR TREK*.’”

Nimoy already had some ideas about what that would involve. “At the end of *STAR TREK III* we had left Spock alive, but there was very little consciousness operating. He’d managed to eke out a few words, ‘Jim, your name is Jim.’ But that wasn’t the Spock we’d come to know and enjoy...”

▲ The Grissom is the science vessel that has been assigned to study the Genesis planet and is destroyed by the Klingons. The model was reused in several episodes of TNG.

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