



The original *U.S.S. Enterprise* on *Star Trek*.

## Movie's *U.S.S. Enterprise* starship design revealed

Last issue, *COMSTAR* revealed a photo of most of the ship's crew in the upcoming *Star Trek XI* film. Check out the photo below to see what the starship itself will look like, courtesy of *Entertainment Weekly*.

Not everyone is happy with the reworked design, but the man behind the changes is trying to quell some small fan dissent, according to the *SyFy Portal* website.

Ryan Church was reading some of the negative comments about his design on the unofficial site *TrekMovie*, and decided to defend his work.

"I'm not going to get involved in the mudslinging here, but I needed to assure you guys and gals: We've built you a fine ship," Church said, according to *TrekWeb*.

The new design was meant to take some of the best elements of the classic design from the 1960's *Star Trek* series and the later movies, *Star Trek XI* Director J.J. Abrams said.

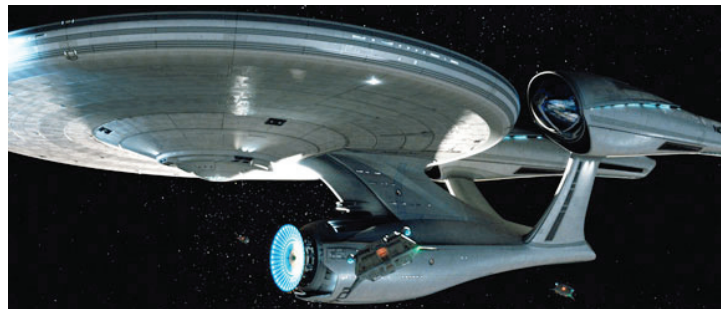
"If you're going to do *Star Trek*, there are many things you cannot change," Abrams

said. "The *Enterprise* is a visual touchstone for so many people. So if you're going to do the *Enterprise*, it better look like the *Enterprise* because otherwise, what are you doing?"

Abrams was like many fans who didn't discover all the detail and magnificence of the starship until William Shatner's Admiral Kirk and James Doohan's Scotty did a slow fly-by of the *Enterprise* in 1979's *Star Trek: The*

*Motion Picture*. Abrams wanted to revive the awe many fans felt nearly 30 years ago.

"The coolest thing about it—maybe the coolest thing in the movie—was



A first look at the *Enterprise* as provided by *Entertainment Weekly*.

when you flew around the ship," Abrams said. "You could see all the different panels that made up the ship. It was the first time I had ever seen that level of attention, that love of detail, given to the tangible, practical reality of the ship."

The first full trailer for *Star Trek XI* premiered in front of the new James Bond movie *Quantum of Solace*. The movie itself is scheduled for release in May. ■

## Get to Gaithersburg for the November meeting!

The next meeting of the *U.S.S. Chesapeake Star Trek* and Science-Fiction Club will be held on Saturday, November 22, at the Gaithersburg, Maryland, home of Chief Engineer Scott Klein.

We'll get together at 6:00 p.m. at the nearby Manhattan Pizza & Pasta restaurant in the Muddy Branch Shopping Center. Our

club meeting will start no later than 7:30 p.m.

We'll find out what fellow club members have been up to, as well as discuss the latest news about *Star Trek* and other sci-fi television shows and feature films.

Need directions to this month's meeting? Get this month's Insert, which is in our Yahoo! Group. ■

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## CAPTAIN'S LOG: "Alien Spotlight"—2

Last time around, we started looking at a comics mini-series called "Alien Spotlight," which was produced during the past year by IDW Publishing in San Diego. This project has enabled the company to tell one-issue stories about members of popular *Star Trek* alien races and characters.

The first three tales dealt with the Gorn, the Vulcans and the Andorians, but I was really curious to see what they would do with the Orions and the big *Next Generation* opponents, the Borg.

Issue #4 of the series, which was written by Scott and David Tipton and penciled by Elena Casagrande, showed Christopher Pike retired from active duty and serving as fleet captain on the space station Babel.

Obviously, this story took place before the horrific accident that put Pike in the chair that could barely move and beep only once or twice as seen in "The Menagerie." (I guess Morse code had fallen by the wayside in the *Trek* future.)

Pike called Babel "the last hurrah for used-up starship captains. You put in years in the captain's chair, and in the end, you get trotted around at diplomatic functions, introduced to aliens who barely know who you are." So much for "the glories of being 'fleet captain,'" he mused.

Things quickly perked up when Pike saw an Orion woman named Leata pull a knife on Muso, a Tellarite. After the former *Enterprise* captain broke up the scuffle, Leata tried to convince Pike into killing Muso for her.

His response was classic. "That won't work on me, lady. I've been mind-controlled by the best in the galaxy."

Eventually, there was a confrontation with Pike and Laeta versus Mosu and his thugs. During the battle, Laeta revealed that Mosu had killed her sister on Rigel II. Through a combination of Pike's Starfleet skills and Laeta's acrobatics,

Muso and his henchmen (hENCHbeings?) were captured.

When security officers arrived at the scene, Laeta disappeared in the resulting confusion. As Pike followed the group to the station's brig, he thought that "maybe these diplomatic functions aren't so bad after all. There may be hope for Babel yet."

Issue #5 began with a young girl playing with a ball outside of her home. When a female Borg approached her, she innocently asked if the creature would play with her. As you might expect, the Borg responded in the negative and injected the child with nanoprobes.

That incident was only the beginning of a new attack by the Borg, as written by Andrew Steven Harris and drawn by Shawn Murphy. Of course, it fell to the *Enterprise E* to thwart the plan.

I have to give the Borg—one of which was from Species 8472, by the way—credit for coming up with an interesting method of assault, in which they generated a burst of temporal energy that traveled *back in time* and rewrote history so that all species were assimilated.

The only ones to come up with a plan to stop the assault was—no surprise here—Captain Jean-Luc Picard and the crew of the *Enterprise E*, which tracked the Borg back to the planet where the little girl was playing.

"You are losing your past because you are acting against your nature," Picard told the Borg. "It is not in the Borg's nature to alter the universe around it."

As a result, the Borg drone withdrew her injections and told Picard that he could keep the young girl. The female told him that the Borg will yet add him to their Collective when he has transcended imperfection. She beamed away, and the young girl asked if Picard would play with her. He picked up her toys and simply said "yes."

My biggest complaint of the issue

*continued on page 6*



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# SCIENCE TREK: Brave new worlds

You would have to be brave to set foot on Fomalhaut b, or extremely foolish. The temperature hovers around 260 degrees, and the region is flooded with infrared radiation, all of which helped the Hubble telescope find the planet orbiting about 115 Astronomical Units (Earth - Sun distance = 1 AU) out from Fomalhaut, which glows about 16 times brighter than the Sun. And, Fomalhaut b is not the only planet whose discovery was announced recently.

A team led by Bruce Macintosh and Christian Marois of the Lawrence Livermore National Lab used a pair of Earth-based telescopes in 2007 to discover three planets orbiting HR 8799, a star about 130 light years from Earth. (The Livermore team spent the last year making sure they were right before announcing their findings.)

These four planets represent the first confirmed worlds spotted through direct observation. The over 300 exoplanets (planets outside our solar system) previously discovered were detected through indirect observation. That is, astronomers watched for “wobbling” stars or those whose light did not appear to vary intrinsically, but rather due to an orbiting body.

The newly discovered planets are as different as David and Patrick. Fomalhaut b is about 2 to 3 times the size of Jupiter and orbits its star about 22 times further out than Jupiter around the sun. In comparison, the three worlds around HR 8799—appropriately named HR8799b, HR8799c, and HR8799d—are about 7 to 10 times as large as Jupiter and orbit between about 24 and 68 AU away from their central star.

The stars themselves are just as different. Fomalhaut, located about 25 light years away in the constellation of Picis Austrinis as seen from Earth, is about 2.3 times as large as the sun and only about 200 million years old (a baby compared to our 4.3 billion-year-old sun). HR 8799, about 130 light years distant in Pegasus, is only 1.5 times larger than the sun and even younger, about 60 million years old. Their main similarity is their spectral class: A3V for Fomalhaut and A5V for HR 8799.

That’s all nice and good for the astronomers, I hear you say, but what about the

Earth-like worlds for us science-fiction fans? The short answer is ... working on it. As noted above, astronomers found most of the 326 known exoplanets through indirect techniques such as gravitational microlensing (basically, planet-size object crosses in front of a star, the starlight bends around the object, and we determine the size of the object by the amount the light bent). The smaller the object, the less the light is bent; the harder the bend is to detect. The same logic also applies to direct observation.

However, the sensitivity of our instruments increases constantly, so that what is not possible today may be feasible tomorrow. Hopefully, near future projects such as NASA’s planned 2009 Kepler telescope is intended to find Earth-size (if not Earth-like) planets. Maybe by this time in 2010 we’ll be talking about Earth II as science, not fiction.

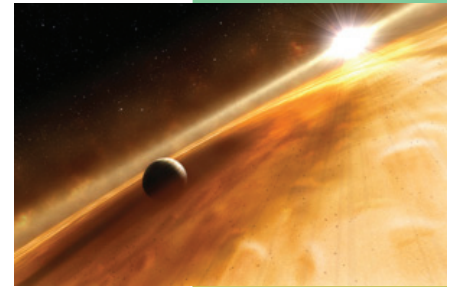
Speaking of which, now that we’ve reviewed Fomalhaut and HR 8799 in science fact, let’s look at them in science fiction. (Though surely those interested fanatics already know these fiction facts.)

Fomalhaut and its imagined planets have played roles in science-fiction stories for over 50 years from Ursula K. LeGuin’s *Rocannon’s World* to Isaac Asimov’s *Peeble in the Sky*. As for HR 8799, well until now, who’d ever heard of HR 8799, other than astronomers and Trivial Pursuit gurus? ■

## Web Notes

- <http://www.cnn.com/2008/TECH/space/11/13/new.planets/index.html> (Do I need the Fox page for balance?);
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fomalhaut> (As opposed to Infomalhaut?);
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stars\\_and\\_planetary\\_systems\\_in\\_fiction](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stars_and_planetary_systems_in_fiction) (Gotta have an SF connection.);
- <http://omnomescience.blogspot.com/2007/06/looking-for-earth-ii.html> (Maybe they should ask Annie and John.); and
- <http://astrobiology.arc.nasa.gov/palebluedot/abstracts/woolfe.html> (PBD seeks compatible world for social engagement, future relationship).

Second Officer Phil Margolies



Scientists using NASA’s Hubble telescope have taken the first visible-light snapshot of a planet orbiting another star. The planet, named Fomalhaut b, orbits its sun, Fomalhaut.

## ART CREDITS:

<a href="http://startrek.com">startrek.com</a>	1
<a href="http://ew.com">ew.com</a>	1
<a href="http://idwpublishing.com">idwpublishing.com</a>	2
<a href="http://images.google.com">images.google.com</a>	3, 4, 5,
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	6

## REFLECTIONS: *Earth's* second season revisited

As I stated before, you can imagine my shock and ecstasy when the producers killed off Boone, *Earth: Final Conflict's* MAIN character! As far as I know, it WAS the first series on television to ever do that at the end of its first season. This left everything you think you know about television up in the air because if the MAIN character isn't safe, NOBODY is! That tiny gesture opens the infinite. In other words, the possibilities, scripting-wise, are endless.

Nothing can be anticipated. Nothing can be taken for granted. Nothing can be assumed because they KILLED OFF THEIR MAIN CHARACTER! Bold moves like this can keep a show fresh. It lets the audience know that they can expect ANYTHING! I know it sounds like I'm harping on a particular incident, but I AM! It was historically significant.

Granted, the move was done out of necessity, not epiphany, but it was made nonetheless. It set a standard for the show, and that alone makes it noteworthy ... well, that and the fact that it was created by television legend Gene Roddenberry and produced after he'd been dead for several years. That alone has to be a bane of Harlan Ellison's existence.

### Season 2

Siobhan Beckett, the Irish Companion Protector, gives birth as the Resistance is saddened by the news that Boone has died. The Protector's baby is a Kimeran/Human hybrid and grows at a rapid rate. He takes the name

"Liam Kincaid" and immediately takes action as an adult.

Beckett's memory is wiped and she is sent back to the Taelons. The recovered fiancée is really a replicant of the mysterious probe, which is from another alien race known as the Jaridians. The probe replicant kills the leader of the Taelon Synod.

Liam saves Da'an and is recruited to become his new Protector. Liam joins the Resistance but doesn't get along with Doors. Lili is forced to work under Sandoval but continues her double agent duties. Zo'or becomes the new Taelon leader, with Sandoval becoming his personal Protector.

Da'an realizes who and what Liam is, and the two become good friends. Da'an and Zo'or battle over each other's ideologies. Zo'or believes humans should serve the Taelons, while Da'an thinks humanity should be their equal. The Taelons prepare Earth for war with the Jaridians, who believe the humans have sided with the Taelons.

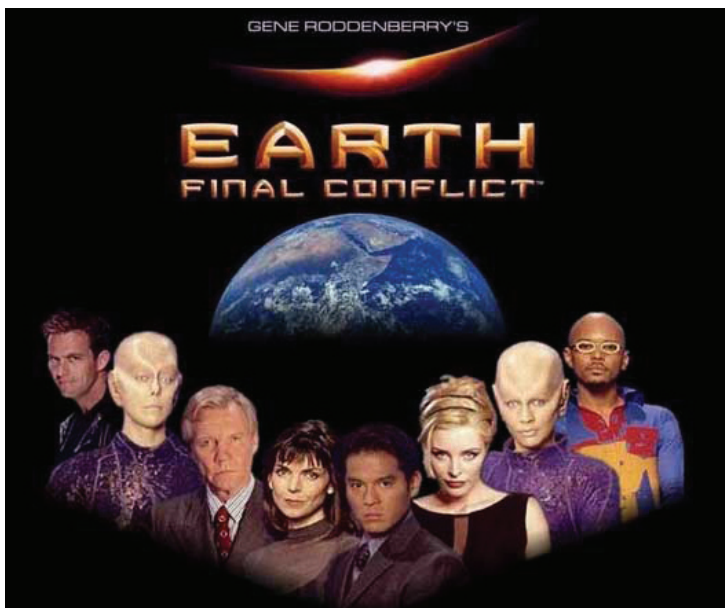
The Resistance finds out that the CVI's motivations imperative wears off after time, leaving the Protectors restored to their own wills. Liam senses that the CVI in his mother, Siobhan Beckett's, has malfunctioned, so he attempts to locate her. Beckett has to deal internally with all the wrongs she has committed while in an altered mental state.

Also concerned, Zo'or sends Sandoval to locate Beckett, but Liam locates her first. He joins his dying mother and shares with her energetically/telepathically revealing his true origin. She realizes who he is as she passes away.

Doors decides to take the Resistance above ground and runs for president. The Resistance members are pardoned in a deal Doors is able to negotiate. Former Resistance members come to Lili, and Augur concerned over humanity's protection. The Resistance is reformed under Liam's leadership. Da'an, who knows, doesn't betray Liam, yet thinks reforming the Resistance is a bad idea.

*Next month: More on Earth: Final Conflict.* ■

Conn Officer Lorenzo Heard



## WAYNE'S WORLDS: No "Batman 3?" Riiiiight!

I've been recently reading the interviews that Christopher Nolan has been giving to the press about a possible sequel to *Batman Begins* and *The Dark Knight*.

Keep in mind that "Batman 3" is already listed in *Production Weekly* as going into pre-production in February of next year. Also note that Nolan is listed as the official director, with Christian Bale, Michael Caine, Gary Oldman and Morgan Freeman all reprising their roles in the successful film series. Remember that *Production Weekly* usually gets information like this directly from Warner Bros.

So why is Christopher Nolan sounding "so sad" about the next Batman film?

"There are two things to be said," Nolan told the *L.A. Times*. "One is the emphasis on story. What's the story? Is there a story that's going to keep me emotionally invested for the couple of years that it will take to make another one? That's the overriding question."

He went on to say, "On a more superficial level, I have to ask the question: How many good third movies in a franchise can people name? At the same time, in taking on the second one, we had the challenge of trying to make a great second movie, and there haven't been too many of those either. It's all about the story really. If the story is there, everything is possible."

To me, it almost sounds like he's saying that he *can't* follow up what he's done before. It almost sounds discouraging because *Batman Begins* and *The Dark Knight* are two of my all-time favorite films.

The truth is, I've heard this kind of talk before. This is how contracts are negotiated in the press.

This is, after all, show *business*.

What's really taking place is that Nolan is jockeying for position to get as much money as possible from the next film. This is how Hollywood works. Fans need to get used to it.

Here are a couple of things to keep in mind:

**1. The Batman character likely has never been as popular as he is now.** His comics are among the highest-selling in DC Comics. There's a new animated show coming on the Cartoon Network called *Batman: The Brave And The Bold* in which the Caped Crusader teams up with other DC superheroes each

week. The program will air each Friday night at 8 p.m.

There are also video games and other projects being considered for the LEGO Batman. The LEGO Batman?? The tiny, square Batman?? Yup, even that version of Batman is flying high.

**2. Christopher Nolan won't walk away from a sure thing.** Will the third film make as much as *The Dark Knight*? Probably not, but even if it brings in \$400 million, that's nothing to sneeze at. Mr. Nolan would have to be dragged kicking and screaming away from another sequel, believe me.

And **3. Show me the money.** Tobey Maguire had sworn off making any more Spider-Man movies, but he's back. Harrison Ford made another Indiana Jones film. When there is money to be made, all the parties involved will eventually come to an agreement on how much money is involved. It will happen. We may never know how much is passing hands, but I assure you—it will be a lot—of money.

If there has been any animosity between Warner Bros. and Nolan, he's giving no indication of it. Nolan continues to talk cordially about Warner Bros.

"They're being extremely gracious," he said. "I have a very good relationship with the studio. They know that I really needed to go on holiday and take some time to figure what I want to do next. They've been very respectful of that, which is terrific and one of the reasons I enjoy working with Warner Bros."

Mark my words, folks ... given the past history of the "Batman" franchise, you will likely see "Batman 3" in about three years. And personally, I can't wait. ■

*Chief of Security Wayne Hall*



The Caped Crusader brings along some friends in his new show, *Batman: The Brave And The Bold*.

# COMING EVENTS

## NOVEMBER

*November 22* ..... The next meeting will be on Saturday, November 22, at the Klein residence in Gaithersburg, Maryland. We'll gather for dinner at 6 p.m. at the Manhattan Pizza & Pasta restaurant at the Muddy Branch Shopping Center. Our monthly meeting will begin at the Kleins' no later than 7 p.m.

### **CAPTAIN'S LOG: "Alien Spotlight"—2 (concluded)**

*Continued from page 2*

was Picard's ability to talk his way out of trouble for the umpteenth time. Still, it was nice to see how Admiral Janeway was doing.

The final issue featured writer/artist John Byrne's view of the Romulans as they prepared to send a cloaked Romulan Warbird into Federation space. The commander we saw in "Balance of Terror" was offered command of the "ghost ship," but he turned down the offer at first.

That decision didn't sit well with his wife and son, who had just joined the Romulan military and feared his father's actions would jeopardize his career. Also unhappy was the praetor, an incompetent boob who saw the situation as a golden opportunity to get rid of a potential rival.

Finally, the commander accepted "just one more mission," and we all know how well that turned out! Meanwhile, we learn that the praetor has a secret ally pushing for expansion of the Romulan military in hopes of pitting the forces of the Romulans and the Federa-

tion into a war that would leave both sides weakened.

Byrne's take on the Romulans proved so popular that he is now producing a follow-up series called *Romulans—The Hollow Crown*, which I'll review in an upcoming issue.

In fact, the whole series did so well that another "Alien Spotlight" is in the works that will include a Klingon story from Keith R. A. DeCandido, a Ferengi-centered issue written by Andrew W. Harris, a look at the Q through the eyes of Scott and David Tipton and contributions from James Patrick and Mike W. Barr, though which races they'll deal with has yet to be finalized. Still, IDW has said the new series will include the Tholians and the Betazoids.

This was a great mini-series, especially when we saw characters that don't often get a chance to shine. I'm really looking forward to the next round of stories.

Rating: ☆☆☆

Next time, we'll examine how the *Next Gen Enterprise* went "Intelligence Gathering"—and didn't find any. ■

*Captain Randy Hall*

### **PHASERS ON FUN: *Sev Trek***

