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# STAR TREK™

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S.S. LAKUL  
**NFT-7793**

CLASS: WHORFIN

IN USE: 23rd CENTURY

LENGTH: 270 METERS

MAX SPEED: WARP 4

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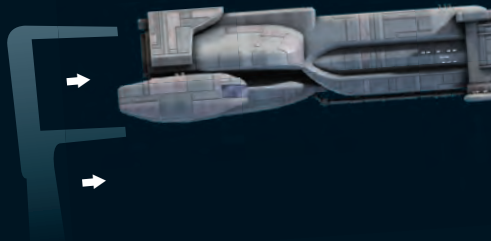
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# S.S. LAKUL NFT-7793

## SPECIFICATION



TYPE: TRANSPORT

AFFILIATION: FEDERATION

CLASS: WHORFIN

IN USE: 23rd CENTURY

LENGTH: 270 METERS (APPROX.)

CREW: 12 (+ 250 PASSENGERS)

TOP SPEED: WARP 4





FEDERATION  
**S.S. LAKUL**

The *S.S. Lakul* was a Federation vessel that was transporting El-Aurian refugees to Earth before encountering the Nexus.





◀ The *Lakul* had a barrel-shaped command section at the front, with a passenger compartment in the middle and the engines at the rear. Overall, the ship had an almost bug-like appearance with its outer shielding panels giving the impression that it was encased in a hard carapace shell.

The *S.S. Lakul* NFT-7793 was a Federation transport ship that was in operation during the late 23rd century. It was a *Whorfin*-class vessel that used an old-fashioned Yoyodyne pulse fusion propulsion system, which gave it a maximum speed of warp 4.

The *Lakul* was approximately 270 meters in length and was normally operated by a crew of 12. It could accommodate around 250 passengers on journeys that could take up to a few weeks.

### SPACE STORM

In 2293, the *Lakul* was used to transport 138 El-Aurian refugees to Earth when it was pulled into a Nexus energy distortion just three light years away from the Sol system. Its identical sister ship, the *S.S. Robert Fox*, was also trapped by the same spatial phenomenon, and it had 265 people on board. The ships sent out a distress call that was picked up by the *U.S.S. Enterprise* NCC-1701-B, which was taking its maiden voyage on a shakedown cruise just beyond Pluto.

Captain John Harriman of the *Enterprise-B* was initially reluctant to attempt a rescue mission because his ship did not have a full crew complement. It was also missing several important facilities, such as a tractor beam and photon torpedoes as they had not yet been installed. When it became clear that there was no other ship in range, Captain Harriman realized the *Enterprise-B* had to respond.

When the *Enterprise-B* came within visual range, the bridge crew saw the *Lakul* and the *Robert Fox* being flung around by huge ribbons of energy in the distortion field. They did not have the power

◀ After responding to a distress call, the main viewscreen of the *U.S.S. Enterprise* NCC-1701-B displayed images of the *Lakul* and the *Robert Fox* being shaken apart by violent torrents of energy in the Nexus, like small lifeboats in a huge storm at sea. The ships could not break free and they were battered by powerful lightning-like ribbons of energy.





▲ The *Lakul* had a boxy midsection that maximized its interior space for around 250 passengers. Two stubby warp nacelles were connected to the rear engineering section by short pylons. By the late 23rd century, the propulsion system was almost antiquated and the ship had a top speed of just warp 4.

to break free and return to normal space. Large tendrils of crackling energy were bombarding the ships, and their hulls were starting to buckle under the huge stress.

It was obvious that the two ships could not survive much longer, and Captain Harriman was uncertain of the best course of action and did not want to put his crew at risk by entering the Nexus. He tried to generate a subspace field around the *Lakul* and the *Robert Fox*, believing it might break them free, but the quantum interference was too strong for it to work. Captain Kirk, who had been invited on the *Enterprise-B*'s inaugural voyage along with Captain Montgomery Scott and Commander Pavel Chekov, knew that Harriman's idea would not succeed, but he restrained himself from intervening on another man's ship.

Harriman then tried venting plasma from the *Enterprise-B*'s warp nacelles in the hope that it

might disrupt the ribbon's hold on the ships. Again this did not work, as Kirk knew it would not. At this point, the *Robert Fox*'s hull began to collapse under the assault from the severe gravimetric distortions. A fiery tendril of energy then whipped into the ship causing it to explode.

#### TAKING ACTION

Harriman was shell-shocked by the loss of the *Robert Fox* and the terrible casualties. Reports came in that the *Lakul*'s hull integrity was down to 12 percent and was on the verge of being torn apart, which forced Harriman to turn to Kirk for advice. The veteran captain immediately ordered the *Enterprise-B* into the Nexus and within transporter range despite the danger. He knew the only way to save the people on board the *Lakul* was to transport them to the more sturdy *Enterprise-B*.



▶ Within minutes of arriving just outside the Nexus, the *Enterprise-B*'s bridge crew witnessed huge ribbons of energy striking the *S.S. Robert Fox* and tearing it apart before any of its crew could be saved.

▼ The science officer's console on the *Enterprise-B* identified the registry number given to the *S.S. Robert Fox*. Although it was a Federation ship, it had been assigned to the El-Aurian refugees.



The transporter operator had trouble locking on to the life signs aboard the *Lakul* because they were phasing in and out of the normal space-time continuum. As he tried to compensate for the strange conditions, the *Lakul*'s hull began to collapse, and another energy tendril lashed out finishing it off. The *Enterprise-B* managed to beam just 47 out of 150 people to safety.

The El-Aurian survivors were beamed directly to sickbay and they appeared to be bewildered having suffered some kind of neural shock. Among them was Guinan, who many years later would become the bartender in Ten-Forward on the *U.S.S. Enterprise* NCC-1701-D, and Tolian Soran, who was suffering from a nasty head wound. Soran's eyes were wild and crazed as he inexplicably begged to be returned to the Nexus.

Scotty suggested that issuing a resonance burst from the *Enterprise-B*'s main deflector dish might

disrupt the gravimetric field's hold of the ship, allowing it to break free of the Nexus. Kirk made the modifications in the deflector room, and the burst caused a reaction with the energy ribbon that threw the ship clear. The crew was saved, but Kirk was missing, presumed dead, after another fiery tendril tore a huge hole in the hull of the ship where he had been.

▲ Forty seven people were beamed to the *Enterprise-B* before the *Lakul* was crushed by the conditions inside the Nexus. Like the rest of the survivors, Guinan was confused and traumatized by suddenly being pulled out of the Nexus.



## DATA FEED

Dr. Tolian Soran was one of the few El-Aurians who was saved before the *Lakul* exploded inside the Nexus. He was a scientist who became obsessed with returning to the Nexus. His wife and several children had been killed nearly 30 years earlier by the Borg on his homeworld, but somehow the Nexus allowed him to be reunited with them. This was only a fantasy, but it appeared so real to him that he dedicated his life to find a way to return to the Nexus.

### THE NEXUS

The Nexus was a powerful gravimetric field of energy that traveled across the Galaxy every 39.1 years. It was like a huge devastating space storm that generated violent lightning-like strikes in the form of pure energy. Any unlucky ships that were in the vicinity of the Nexus were pulled inside and battered by the extreme conditions it generated.

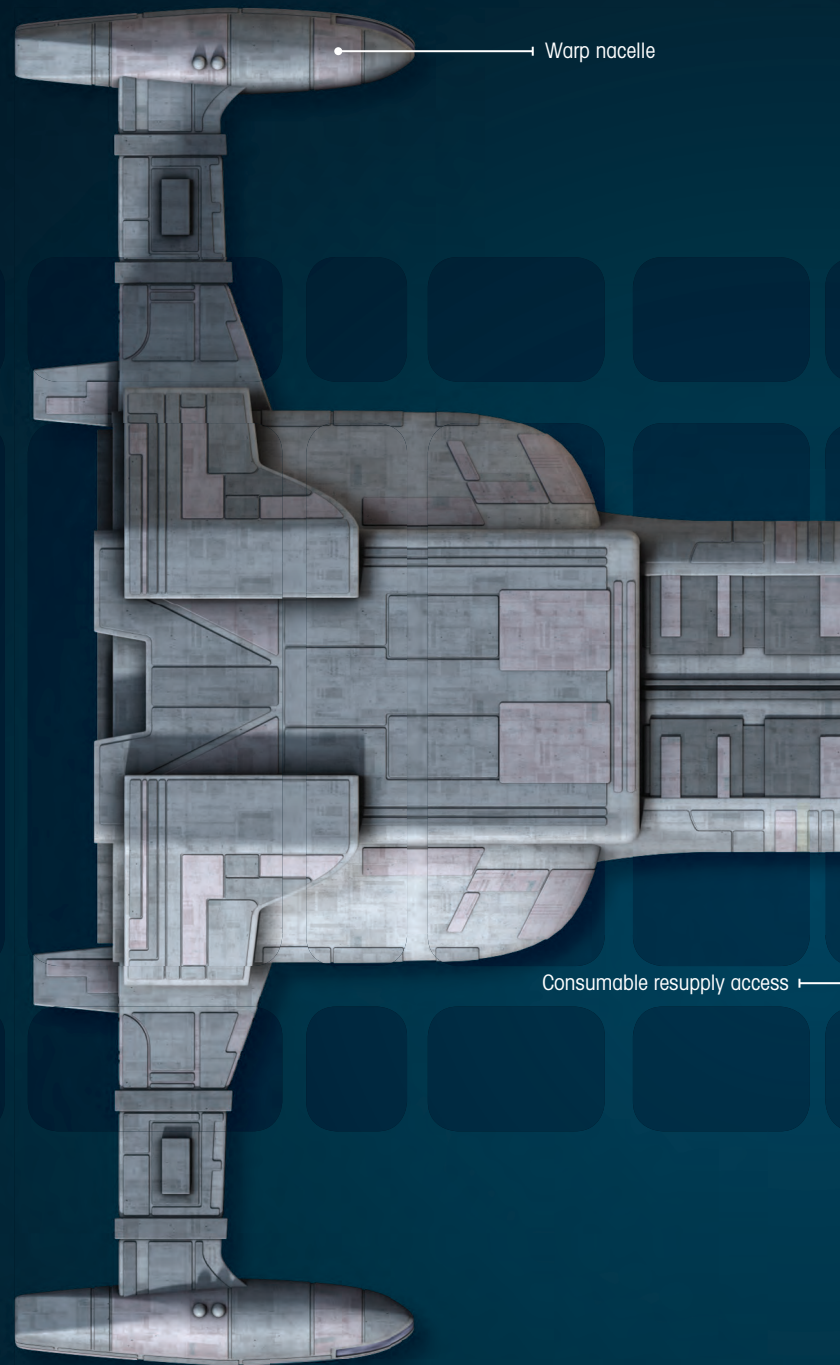
The *Lakul* and the *Robert Fox* were torn apart in just minutes by the Nexus, but the stellar phenomenon was also much more than just a space storm. This mysterious ribbon of temporal energy was a doorway to an extra-dimensional realm. Inside it, a person's thoughts and desires became reality, and time had no meaning. A person could spend just minutes inside it, but to them it felt like years as they relived the happiest moments from their lives, or put right mistakes they had made.

The Nexus had an almost narcotic effect on those who entered it. As Guinan described it, the Nexus was "like being inside joy." No one wanted to leave this personal utopian fantasy, but the rescued El-Aurians from the *Lakul* were forcibly removed when the *U.S.S. Enterprise-B* beamed them out with its transporters.

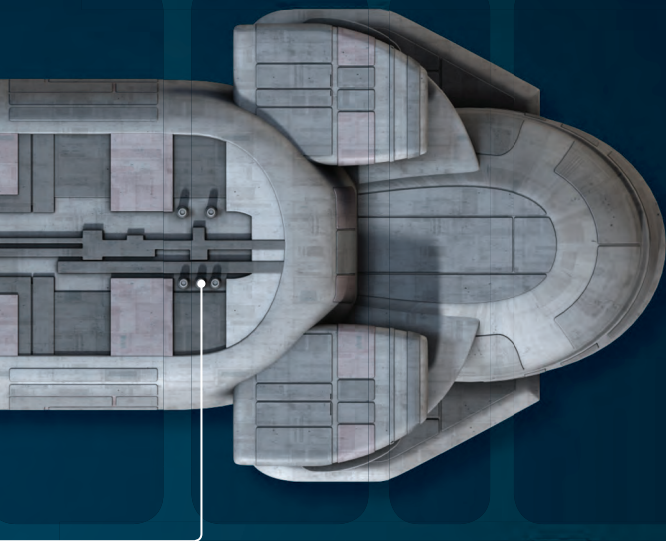
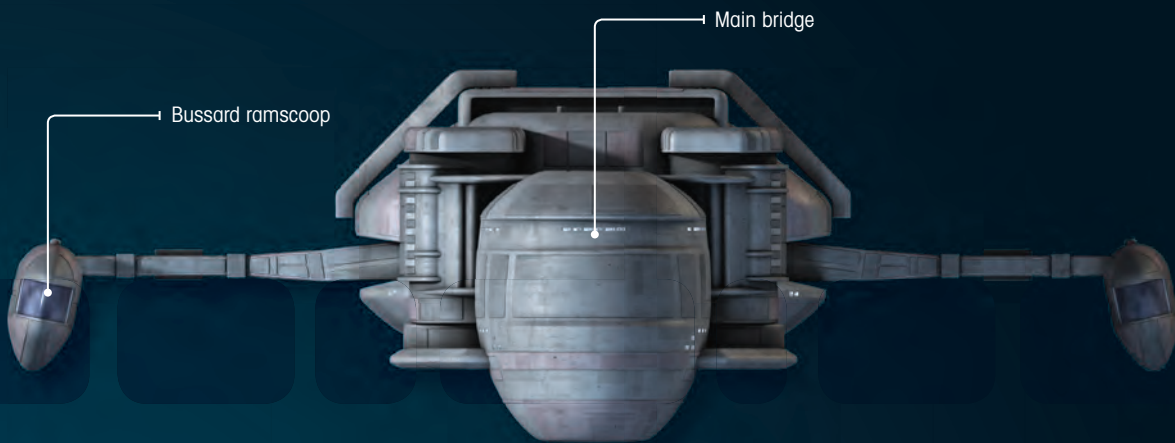
The survivors were extremely bewildered as they tried to comprehend what had happened to them. They found it difficult to cope with reality, but eventually adjusted, except for Dr. Tolian Soran. He became obsessed with returning to the Nexus, and was even willing to wipe out an entire world in order to achieve his goal.



▲ Tolian Soran felt bereft and extremely agitated when he was beamed out of the Nexus to the *Enterprise-B*. He ranted about wanting to return and could not be pacified until he was sedated.

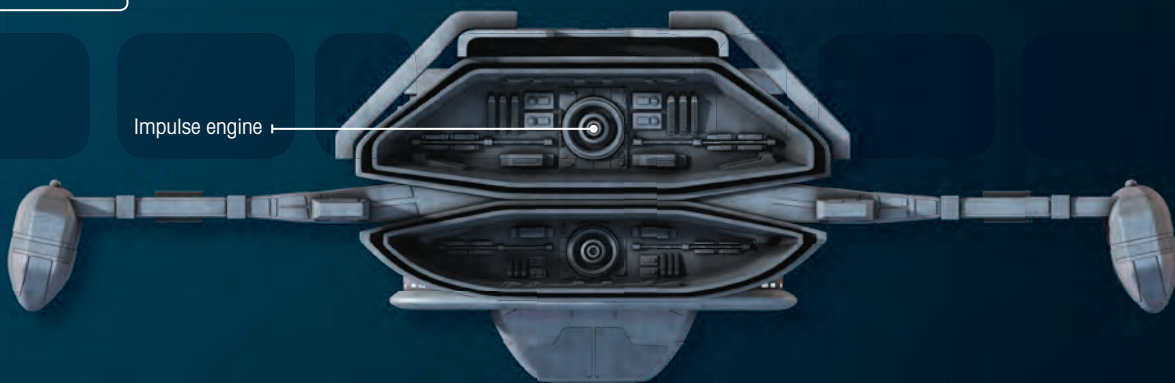






### DATA FEED

The *Lakul* was a Whorfin-class vessel. The scenic artists on the film named it for John Whorfin, a 22nd-century human whose named appeared on a monitor in *THE NEXT GENERATION* episode 'Up the Long Ladder.' He in turn was named for actor John Lithgow's character in 'The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai Across the Eighth Dimension.'



### FEW SURVIVORS

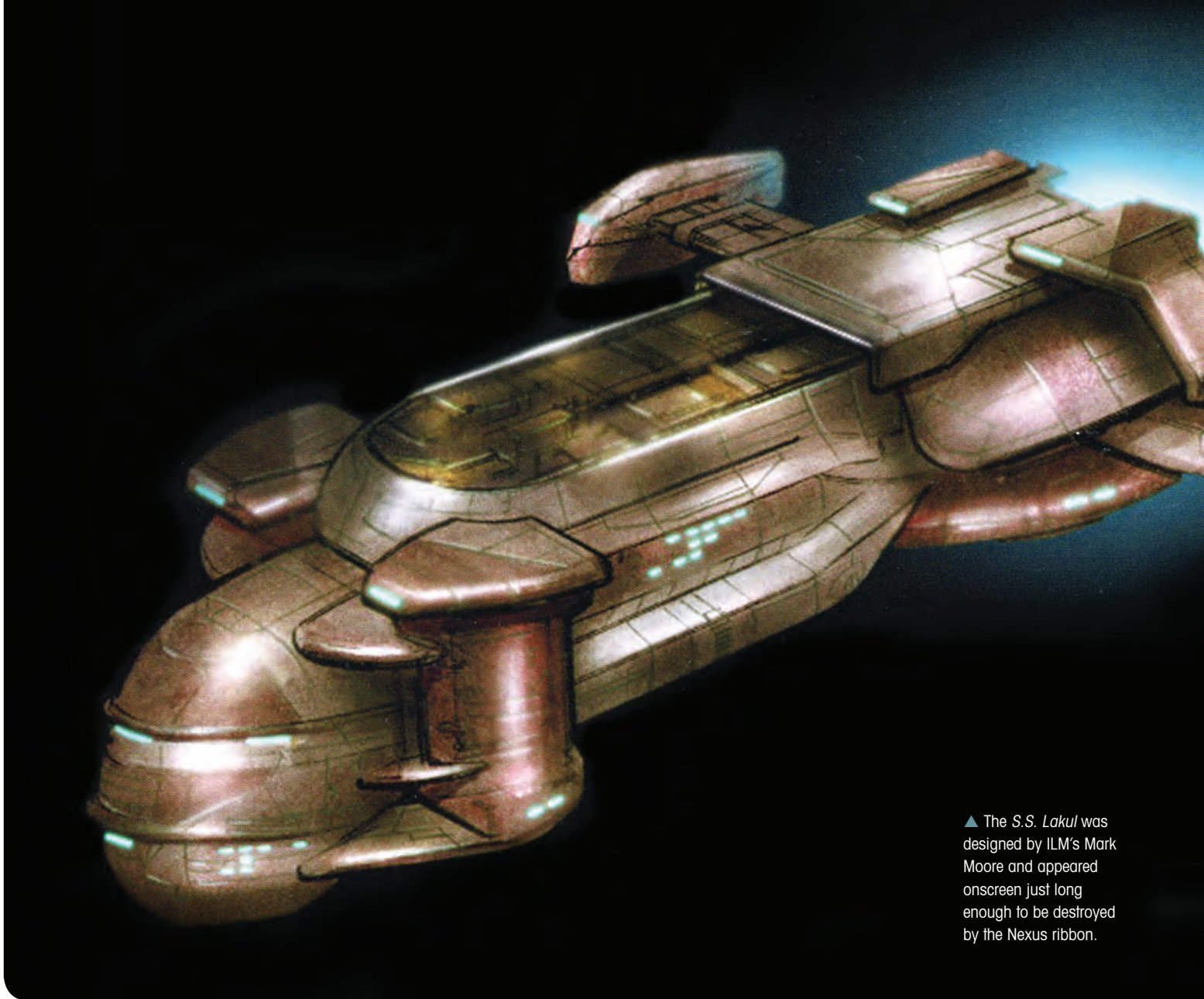
The *Enterprise-B* was able to rescue just 47 El-Aurians refugees out of a total of 386. The *Lakul* carried 150 people, while the *Robert Fox* lost all 265 people on board when it exploded.

### 100 YEAR JOURNEY

According to *THE NEXT GENERATION* episode 'Q Who,' which was set in 2365, the El-Aurians lost their homeworld to the Borg a century earlier. This meant the surviving El-Aurians were scattered throughout the Galaxy from about 2265.

### SEEN ON SCREEN

The name of the *Lakul*'s sister ship – the *Robert Fox* – was not said on screen, but its name appeared on a computer monitor. The ship was named for Ambassador Robert Fox, who appeared in *THE ORIGINAL SERIES* episode 'A Taste of Armageddon.'



▲ The *S.S. Lakul* was designed by ILM's Mark Moore and appeared onscreen just long enough to be destroyed by the Nexus ribbon.

DESIGNING THE

# S.S. LAKUL

The *Lakul* and its sister ship the *S.S. Robert Fox* were designed at ILM where they were almost an after thought.

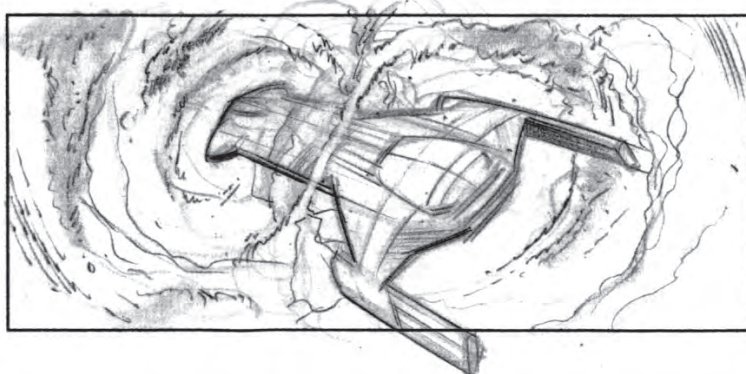
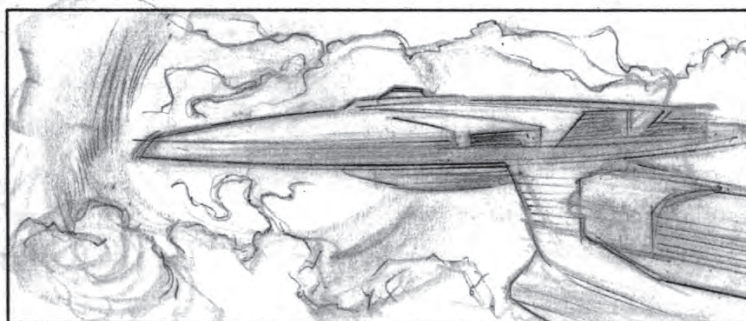
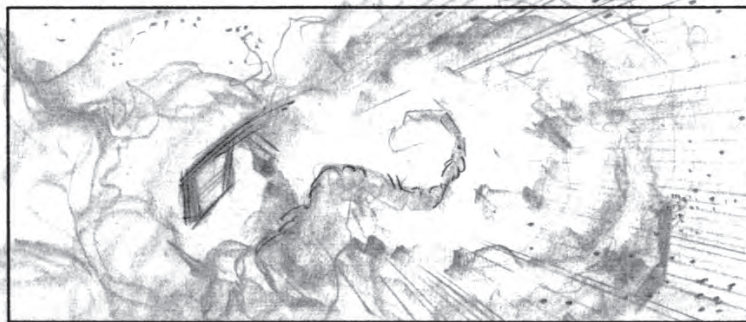
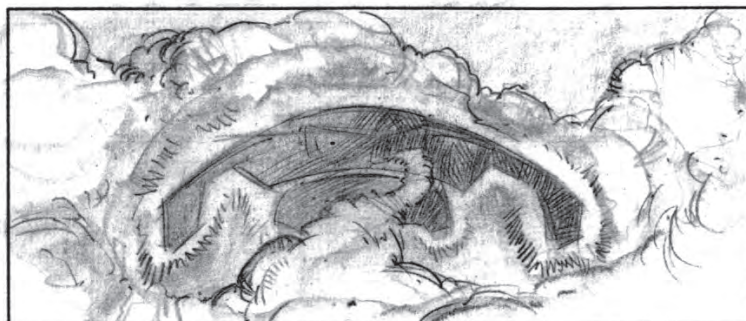
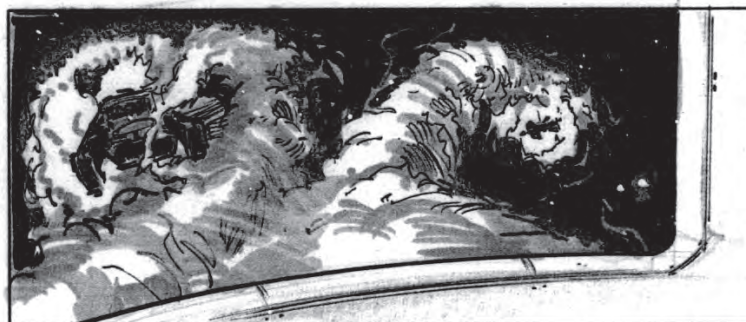
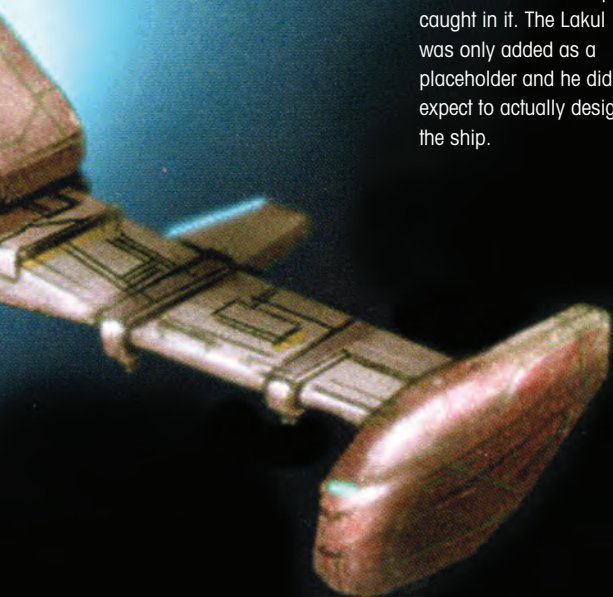
**A**s the new *Enterprise* is about to be launched, she receives a distress call: two transport ships are caught in a mysterious energy ribbon. Even though she is barely spaceworthy, the *Enterprise* responds. She is too late to save one of the ships, but manages to

beam the survivors from the other ship, the *S.S. Lakul*, aboard at the last moment.

The sequence that opens *STAR TREK GENERATIONS* was designed by ILM's Mark Moore. "I started off as a storyboard artist," he remembers, "then I moved up to art director, which is what I was



► Moore's storyboards were created to show how the Nexus ribbon interacted with the ships caught in it. The Lakul was only added as a placeholder and he didn't expect to actually design the ship.



▲ ILM VFX staff. From left to right: Mark Moore, John Knoll and Bill George.

on *GENERATIONS*, so I was deep in the mix, which is where I wanted to be. Bill George and John Knoll were the supervisors. We were, of course, *STAR TREK* fans. *NEXT GENERATION* was a big thing for me."

Most of the ships and props in *GENERATIONS* were designed by the art department down at



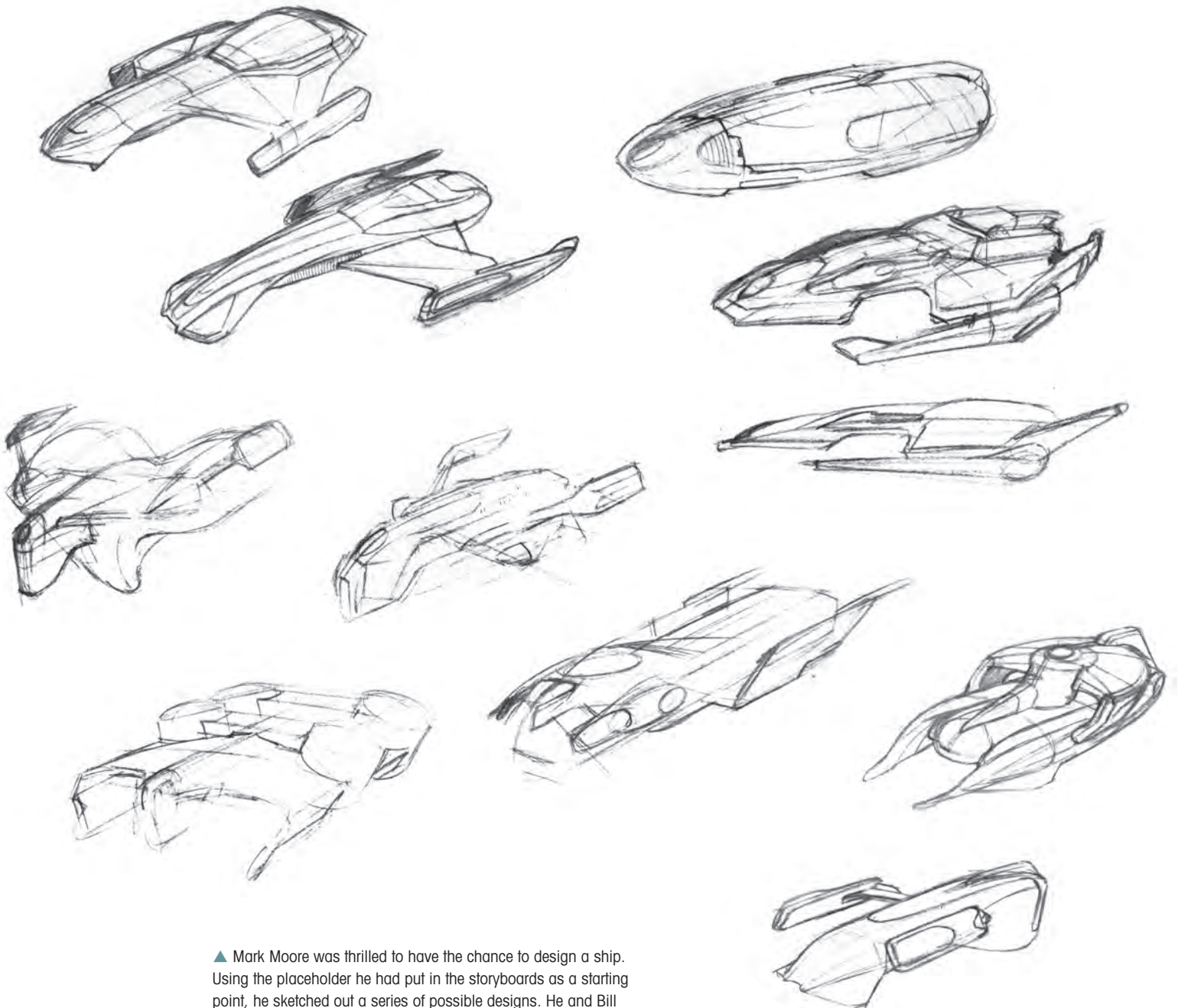
Paramount rather than ILM, but as Moore explains, the *Lakul* was an exception.

“Most of the time everything has been designed, but when it comes to visual effects, sometimes one or two things will slip through the net. When that’s a ship design, that’s great, because it’s what we all want to do. That was the case with the *Lakul*.”

The nexus ribbon was one of the major effects in the movie so it was natural for ILM to be tasked with designing it. Moore remembers spending a lot

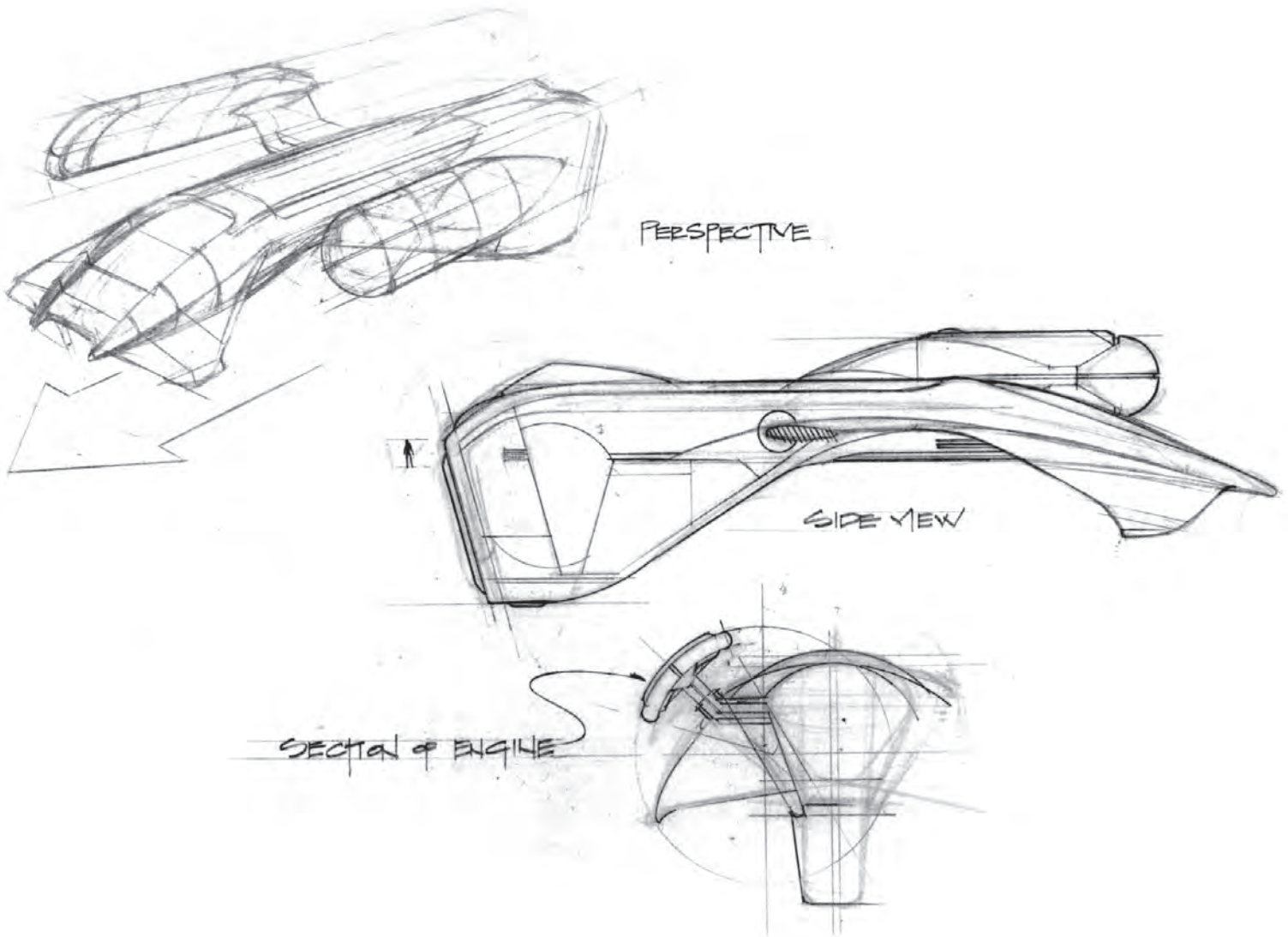
of time coming up with the look of the ribbon. As he did so, he produced storyboards, and this was where the *Lakul* first appeared. “There was a scene with the *Lakul*. I was doing storyboards so I kind of roughed a version of it in as a placeholder. I didn’t really think about it. We just had to show that there was a ship that was distressed. We were concerned about how the ribbon was going to interact with the ship.”

When ILM were ready to take the effect to the next stage, they realized that no-one had



▲ Mark Moore was thrilled to have the chance to design a ship. Using the placeholder he had put in the storyboards as a starting point, he sketched out a series of possible designs. He and Bill George both liked the version on the bottom right.





designed the ship. After a brief conversation with John Eaves and Herman Zimmerman down at Paramount, it was decided that ILM should take it on, and the job was handed to Moore. "We finished the storyboards and then before we actually built it in CG we had to decide what this ship looked like. At that point I had a little more time on my hands so I could do the whole spectrum of designs as we tried to work it out."

Moore started off by expanding on the rough sketch he'd included in the storyboards. "My first four designs were variations on that. It was a little sleeker and smaller, so after a little bit I decided I had to make it bigger and bulkier. I went from sleek to kind of bulky to very bulky.

"I was trying to keep all the designs in the *STAR TREK* universe. The nacelles are a big part of that. I maybe got hung up a little bit on that. 'Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea' was a huge influence on me as a kid. If you look at some of the drawings,

you can see the Seaview in the front."

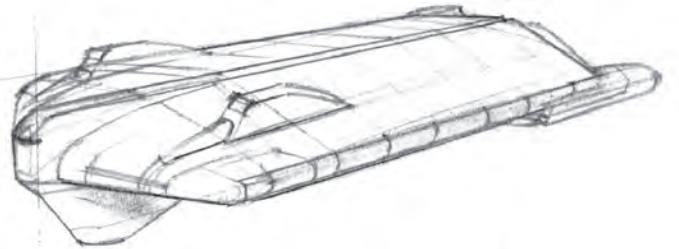
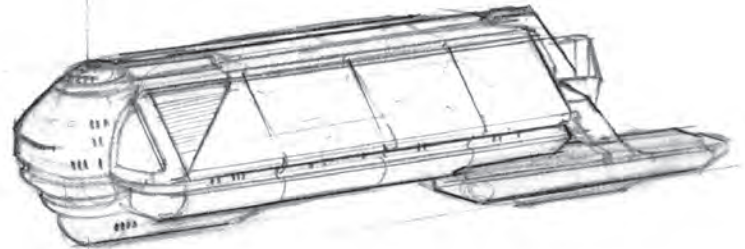
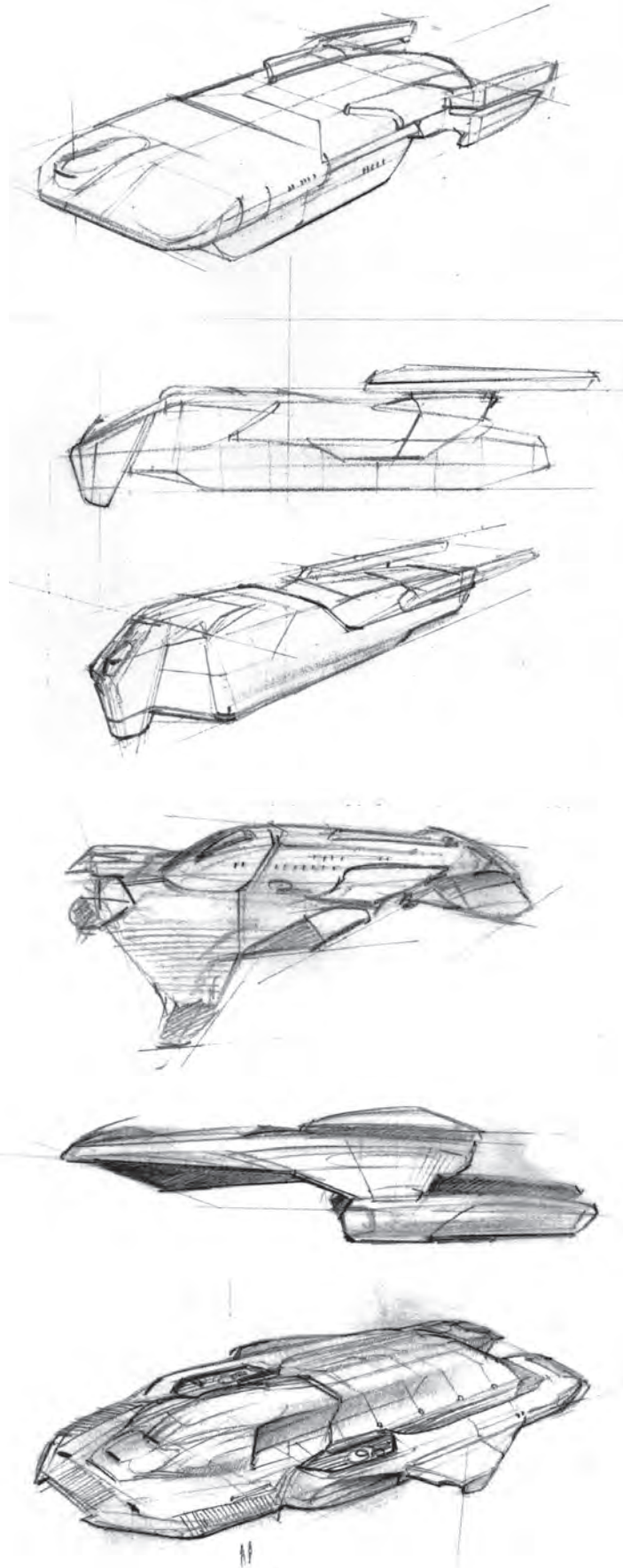
Before long, Moore had identified a shape that he and Bill George liked so he worked it up in more detail. "I liked the very front heavy feel of this design, where the nacelles balance the back. I've got my little Seaview as the rear fins, but the bulk of the ship was in the front. Bill wanted to see what the forms were, so I drew a lot of form lines to show what the shapes were doing. The nacelles have a curved inside. I thought that was a neat look."

Although Moore and George both liked the design, others weren't convinced and it fell out of favor, so Moore produced another round of thumbnails, as he looked for a new shape. "When that design got rejected, I was asking myself what I should do next. I'm really into the retro sci-fi stuff so I started over with a kind of thirties streamlined look. It started to feel right and I thought it was cool. I hadn't seen much of that in *STAR TREK*."

At this point Moore was promoted to creative

▲ George and Moore were both very pleased with the design they submitted to Paramount, which had the familiar *STAR TREK* nacelles but a very different sense of balance. However, the producers in LA asked them to think again.

▼ After his first attempt was rejected, Moore sketched a new series of thumbnails. This time he started to think of his design as being influenced by a 1930s aesthetic. He started to think of the ship as being a larger, more utilitarian passenger ship. Before he could finish the design, he was called away to work on other projects and the job was handed over to another concept artist, Ed Natividad.

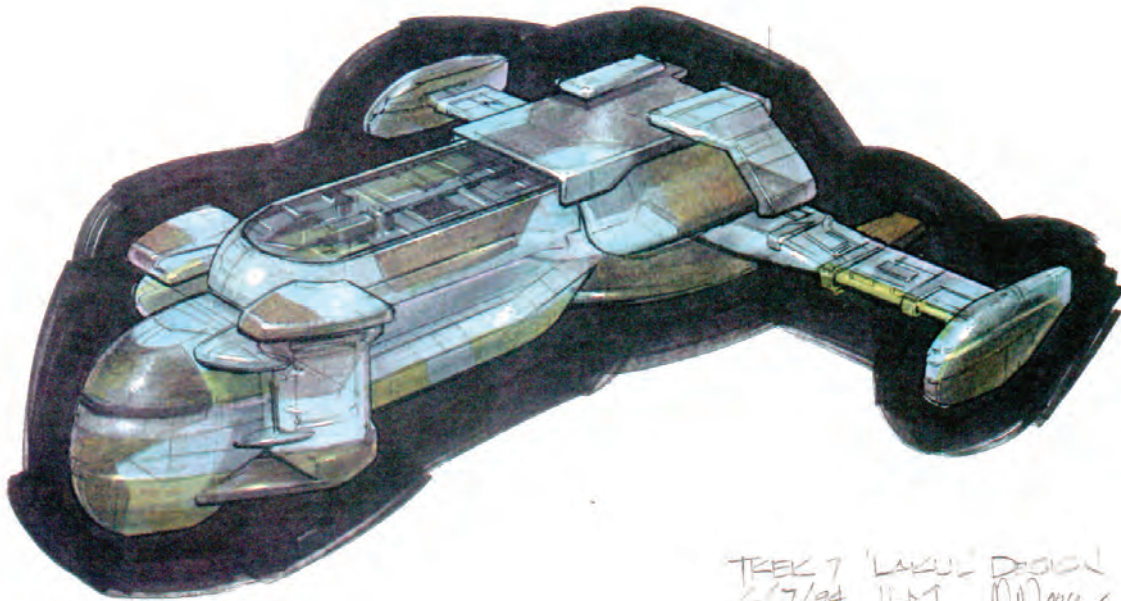


director of the ILM art department and he was pulled away from his work on *GENERATIONS*. "Life got hectic for a while," he remembers. "Whatever the reason I came back to it later and started afresh. I believe that in the meantime Bill George carried on working with Ed Natividad. He was a super talented storyboard artist who came in. They worked out the final look."

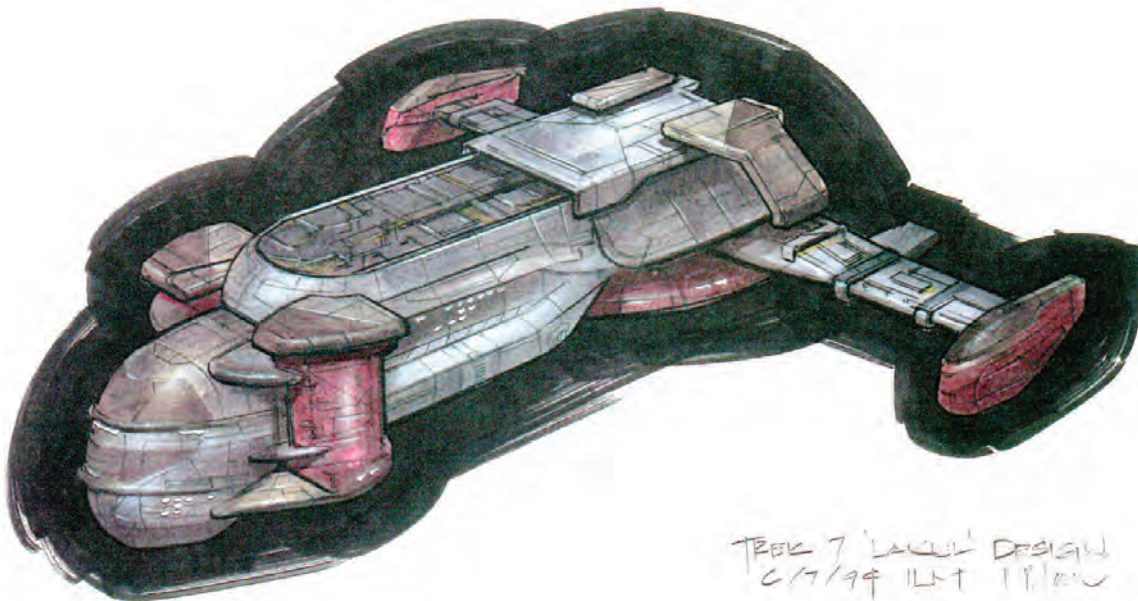
Natividad took the basic lines of Moore's new approach to the design and added twin nacelles, supported by wings at the back. When Moore returned to the project, he completed the design by producing drawings showing the model in four alternative color schemes. The model was then built in CG for its brief appearance in the film.



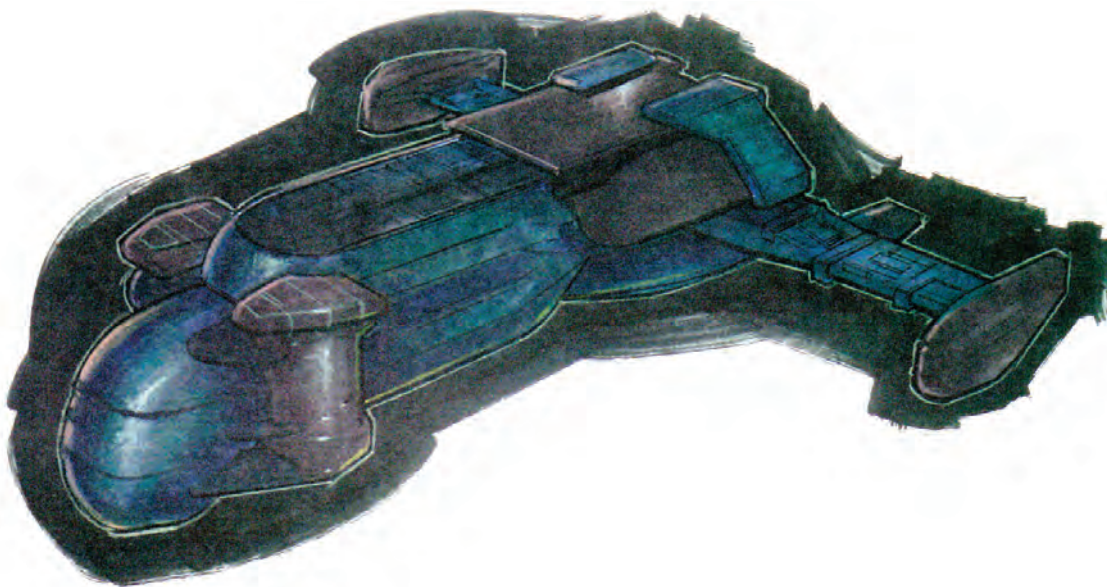
◀ Moore returned to the project in time to finish off the design of the *Lakul*. He took Natividad's finished design and produced a series of alternative color schemes. The one on the opening spreads was chosen and built in CG.



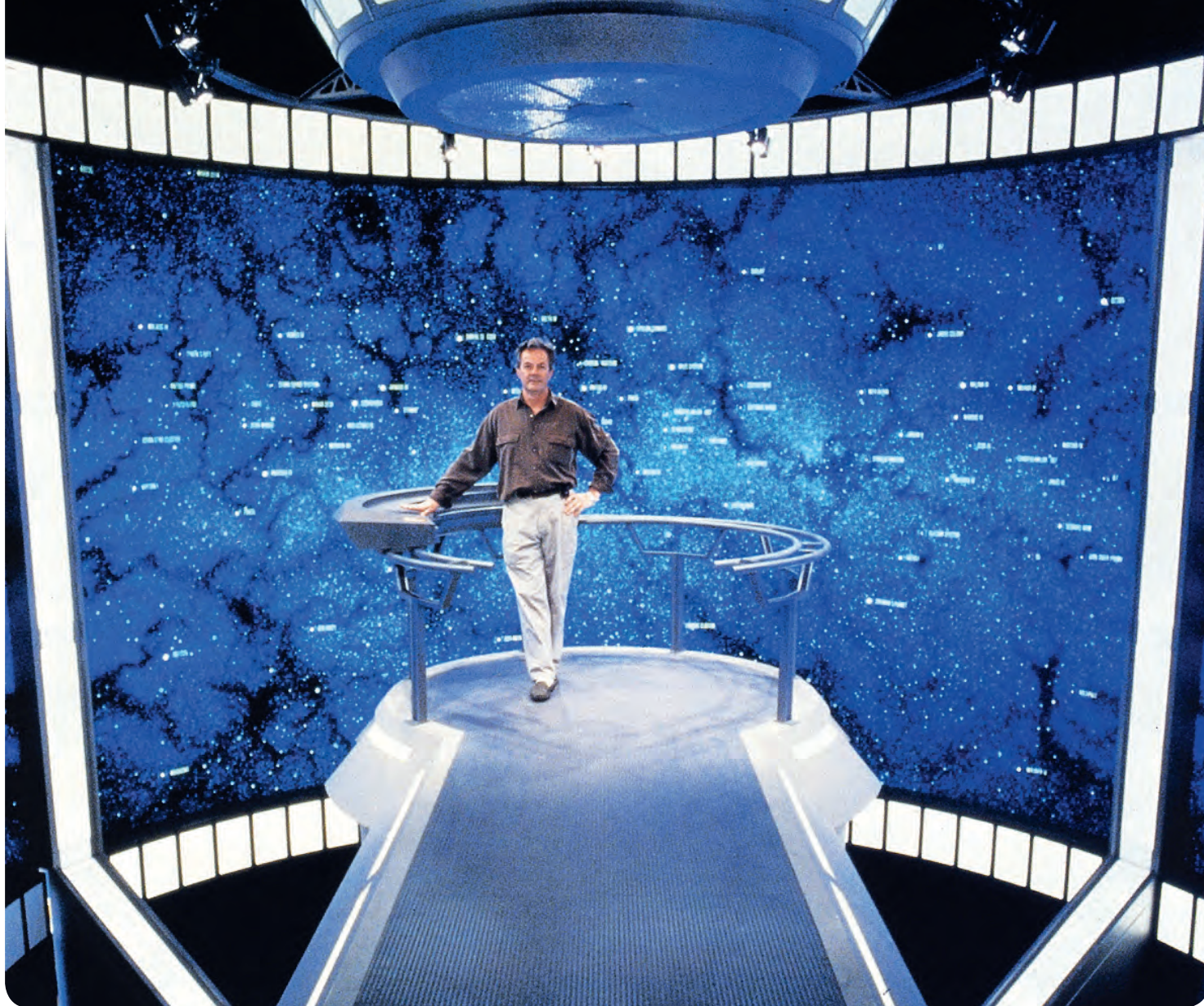
TRIK 7 'LAKUL' DESIGN  
6/7/94 ILT Moore



TRIK 7 'LAKUL' DESIGN  
6/7/94 ILT Moore







## STAR TREK: GENERATIONS

# STELLAR CARTOGRAPHY

Esteemed *STAR TREK* production designer Herman Zimmerman talked about the hugely impressive cartography set built for *GENERATIONS*.

▲ Herman Zimmerman was an art director and production designer on *STAR TREK* from the first season of *TNG* through to the end of *ENTERPRISE*. Here, he is pictured on the stellar cartography set he designed.

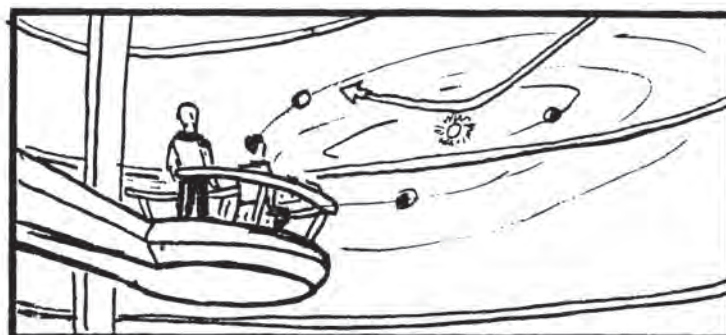
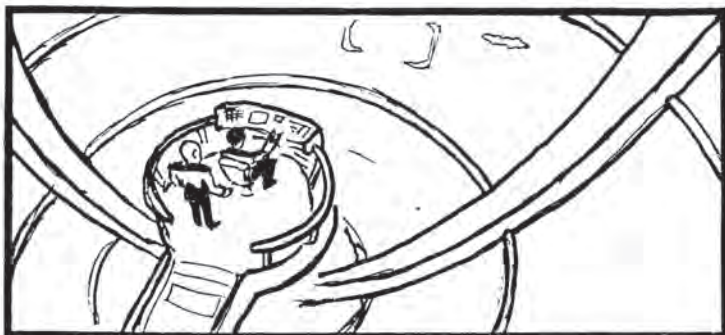
One of the most important scenes in *STAR TREK GENERATIONS* took place in the stellar cartography laboratory on the *U.S.S. Enterprise NCC-1701-D*.

"Stellar cartography as it was written was just a little room on the ship," said production designer Herman Zimmerman. "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 was the pivotal point in the movie. 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."

"It would have been nice if we could have put it into a sphere," he continues, "but the logistics of doing that on our budget were not practical. "In order to do it, we would have had to have





▲ The extensive use of visual effects used on this scene required some very careful planning. *STAR TREK*'s visual effects producer Dan Curry sketched out some storyboards to show exactly how they envisaged the scene. Importantly, they explained where the camera would be positioned and how Picard and Data would enter the room to operate the console as graphics for the star system came up on the cylindrical walls.

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 design, with a circular control platform suspended in the middle. "We cantilevered the tongue that entered the center of stellar cartography," said Zimmerman "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."

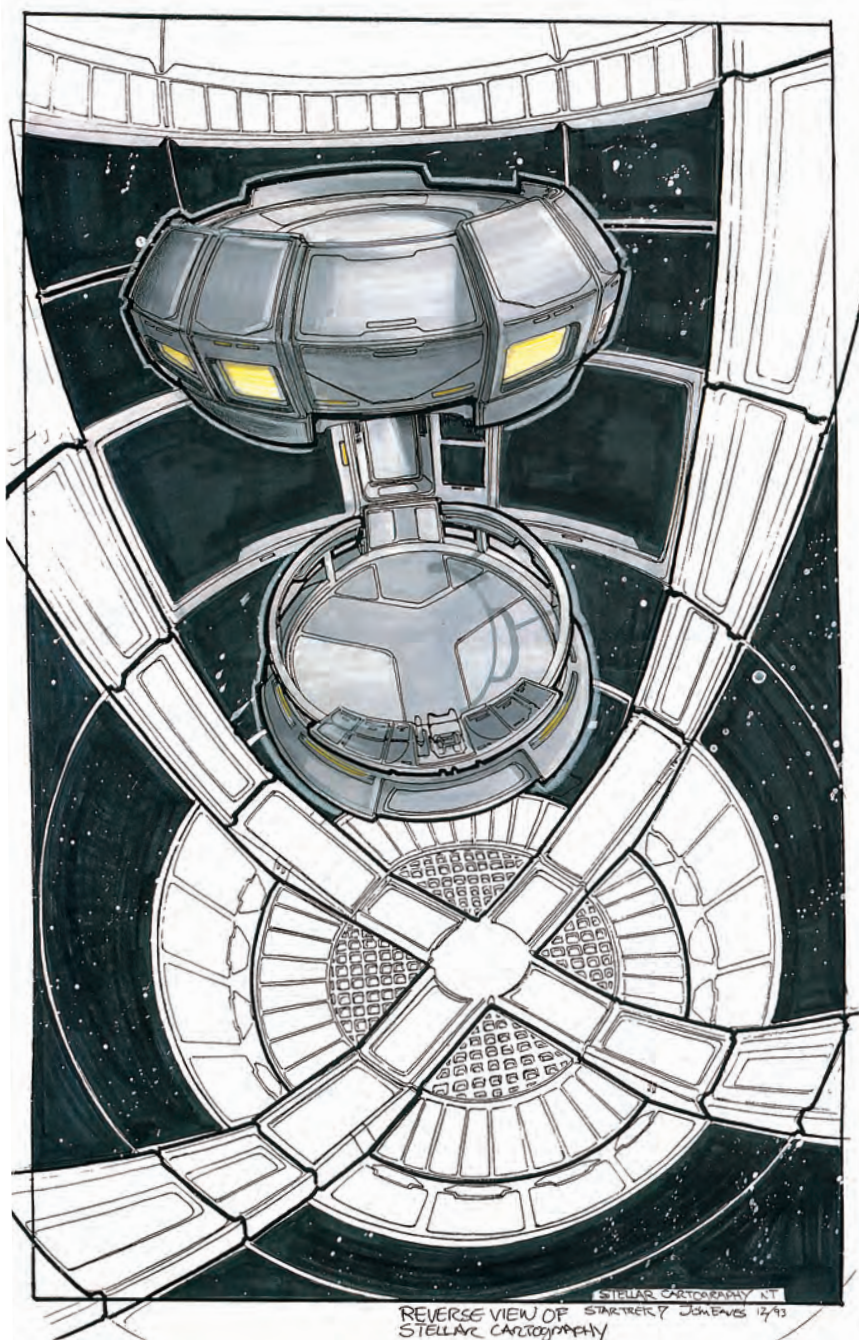
### HIGH POINT

Parts of the walls were made up of a series of translites (panels with artwork on them that glowed when they were lit from behind).

"What you saw on the screen implied a good deal more than what was really there," said Zimmerman. "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."

The completed set was one of Zimmerman's favorites, and it accomplished exactly what he had set out to do. "Stellar cartography in my mind and, I think, in the director's mind was one of the high points of the film."

► Zimmerman worked with illustrator John Eaves to come up with the stellar cartography room loosely based on Griffith Park's Laserium in Los Angeles. Eaves drew up the ideas with this concept illustration.





# ON SCREEN



## TRIVIA

Jenette Goldstein played the science officer on the *U.S.S. Enterprise NCC-1701-B*, who reported that the *Lakul* was one of two ships transporting El-Aurians refugees to Earth. Goldstein had earlier played the part of Private Vasquez in the movie 'Aliens.' Vasquez partly inspired the creation of Natasha Yar, the security chief on the *U.S.S. Enterprise NCC-1701-D*, and Goldstein auditioned for the role when the character was called Macha Hernandez.



With his role as Captain John Harriman of the *U.S.S. Enterprise NCC-1701-B*, Alan Ruck is now one of eleven captains who have commanded an *Enterprise*: Ruck is perhaps best known for playing Cameron Frye, a high school student, in 'Ferris Bueller's Day Off.' He was 29 years old when he portrayed that character.



Only five El-Aurians have been named throughout *STAR TREK*: Guinan, her uncle Terkim, Tolian Soran, his wife Leandra, and Martus Mazur. The latter was a con artist, who appeared in the *DEEP SPACE NINE* episode 'Rivals.'

**FIRST APPEARANCE:** STAR TREK GENERATIONS

**MOVIE APPEARANCE:** STAR TREK GENERATIONS

**DESIGNED BY:** Bill George & Rob Coleman

### KEY APPEARANCE

#### STAR TREK GENERATIONS

After *THE NEXT GENERATION*'s final TV episode, 'All Good Things ...' was filmed, the cast had just a ten-day break before they returned to shoot *GENERATIONS*. It was a very tight schedule as the studio did not want to waste *TNG*'s popularity and high ratings.

Two experienced *TNG* writers – Ronald Moore and Brannon Braga – had less than six months to finalize the script and it was a tough assignment. The story had to include a changing of the guard with the crew of *THE ORIGINAL SERIES* passing the torch on to *TNG*. They threw everything at the script, which included some high

concept, philosophical ideas that they had become renowned for in their TV scripts. It dealt with the afterlife in the form of the Nexus, and how Kirk, Picard and Soran reacted differently to it.

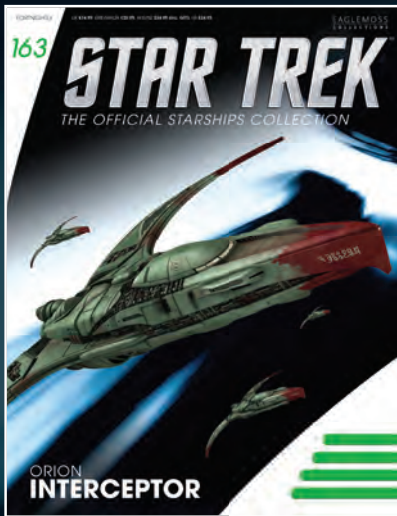
The movie had to be filmed quickly to keep it to a strict budget. The only major new set built for the movie was the stellar cartography lab, while all the existing TV sets were reused.

There was also just about no new ships created for *GENERATIONS*. Existing studio models were reused, apart from the creation of the CG models of the *Lakul* and the *Robert Fox*. Despite these restrictions, the movie was a success and the *TNG* cast began a new and exciting *STAR TREK* movie franchise.



COMING IN ISSUE 163

# ORION INTERCEPTOR



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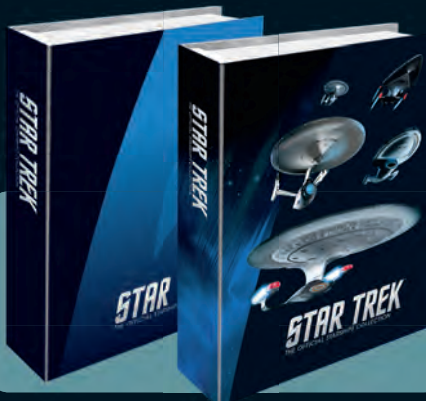
## Inside your magazine

- In-depth profile of the **Orion Interceptor**, a 22nd-century vessel used by the infamous green-skinned aliens
- How illustrator **John Eaves** came up with a design used by the **Orion** smugglers
- A look behind the scenes of the fourth season of **STAR TREK: ENTERPRISE**

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