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LENGTH: 223 METERS

MAX SPEED: WARP 9.7

SABER CLASS

Contents

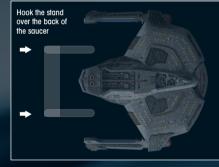
04: SABER CLASS

10: **DESIGNING THE SHIP**

12: ASSEMBLING THE BORG QUEEN

18: ON SCREEN

Stand assembly:





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Development Director

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SABER CLASS

SPECIFICATION



TYPE: LIGHT CRUISER

IN SERVICE: 24th CENTURY

LENGTH: 223 METERS (APPROX.)

CREW: 40

TOP SPEED: WARP 9.7

WEAPONRY: TYPE-10 PHASER EMITTERS,

TORPEDO LAUNCHERS









SABER CLASS

Compact and well armed, Saber-class ships were involved in battles with the Borg and the Dominion in the 24th century. with a standard crew of 40. The entire ship was a similar size to the saucer section of a *Galaxy*-class starship, while its nacelles were attached to the outer edges of the saucer via short struts rather than on extended outriggers. The nacelles were

providing them with extra shielding from enemy fire. The ship's engineering section was merged into the back of the saucer section, giving it a robust and compact appearance.

The shuttlebay entrance and exit was located on the leading edge of the saucer, just forward of the main bridge, which retained its standard position on deck 1 towards the center of the primary hull. The deflector dish was also in the usual position at the front of the engineering hull, while the impulse engines were located on the rear of the saucer.



✓ Saber-class vessels were part of the Second Fleet, a Federation Alliance force which fought in the Dominion War. This fleet comprised of numerous classes of Starfleet ships as well as Klingon vessels. The Second Fleet fought in the second Battle of Deep Space 9, and destroyed the Dominion shipyards on Torros III in Cardassian space.



- Unlike most Starfleet ships that had the shuttlebay at the rear of the engineering section, Saber-class ships featured a shuttlebay at the front of the saucer section.
- ▼ The outer hull of Saber-class vessels featured much more surface detail than many other Starfleet vessels, particularly in the area behind the main bridge.



- During the Dominion
 War, small maneuverable
 ships such as the Saber
 class and the Defiant class
 were often used to defend
 larger vessels from attack,
 allowing them to
 concentrate on breaking
 through enemy lines.
- ➤ Saber-class vessels were among the fastest in Starfleet in the late 24th century. Their nacelles were partly cowled for extra protection against enemy fire.









■ Several Saber-class ships were part of the task force that engaged the Borg cube at the Battle of Sector 001. Seen from the perspective of the viewscreen on the U.S.S. Enterprise NCC-1701-E, the Starfleet armada could be seen taking heavy losses as it assaulted the cube from all sides. The Borg were only stopped when Captain Picard coordinated the fleet's attack on a vulnerable area of the cube.

▲ The engineering hull on the Saber class had a distinctive triangular shape, while the main navigational deflector was surrounded by copper-colored panels. The surface of the hull also featured prominent escape hatches that were of a similar shape and design to those found on the Defiant class, indicating they were built around the same time.

The warp core was located near the rear of the secondary hull, with the ejection hatch clearly visible on the underside.

The design of the hull plating and escape pods on the *Saber* class was similar to that found on the *Defiant* class. This appeared to indicate that both classes were developed and constructed around the same time in the late 2360s.

Both classes of ship were designed in response to the Battle of Wolf 359 in 2367, when a Borg cube ripped through Starfleet's defenses, destroying 39 starships in a matter of minutes. While the Federation had faced threats to its security before, nothing had ever matched the magnitude of the danger presented by the Borg. In response, Starfleet developed new types of starship. While the *Defiant* class was nothing less than a warship, the *Saber* class was more of a light cruiser. It was nevertheless heavily armed

OVERVIEW

with numerous type-10 phaser emitters and two photon torpedo launchers. Its compact dimensions meant it provided less of a target, particularly in profile, while it was still capable of a top speed of warp 9.7, ensuring it could respond quickly to emergency situations.

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

The Saber class was first seen in 2371 when two of these starships were in drydock at the Utopia Planitia Fleet Yards in orbit of Mars, while the *U.S.S. Voyager* NCC-74656 was undergoing its final phases of construction.

The Saber class was next seen in 2373 during the Borg's second invasion of the Alpha Quadrant. Several Saber-class ships, including the U.S.S. Yeager NCC-61947, made up part of a fleet assembled by Vice Admiral Hayes to intercept a Borg cube at Sector 001.

Later the same year, a number of Saber-class vessels were assigned to the Second Fleet, an alliance of Federation, Klingon and later Romulan ships that fought in several crucial engagements during the Dominion War.

Saber-class ships were often used to flank larger starships, helping to draw fire and protect them as they attempted to punch through enemy lines. Some of the conflicts they were involved in included the second Battle of Deep Space 9, the raid on the Dominion's shipyards on Torros III, Operation Return and the First Battle of Chin'toka – the first Federation Alliance offensive into Cardassian territory.

In 2378, Saber-class ships were among the fleet that was hastily assembled by Admiral Paris and sent to an area less than a light year from Earth where a Borg transwarp conduit had been detected. Starfleet knew that only one race

used transwarp conduits, and that was the Borg. Fully prepared to engage whatever Borg vessels emerged from it, the fleet were shocked when first a Borg sphere emerged from the conduit only for it to explode and the *U.S.S. Voyager* NCC-74656 to materialize out of the debris. The fleet then accompanied *Voyager* back to Earth.



DATA FEED

Saber-class ships made up part of the Second Fleet when it launched an attack on the Chin'toka system. The Federation Alliance fleet had to overcome powerful automated orbital weapon platforms to gain control of this strategically vital system, which was located on the Cardassian border.

MARTIAN SHIPYARDS

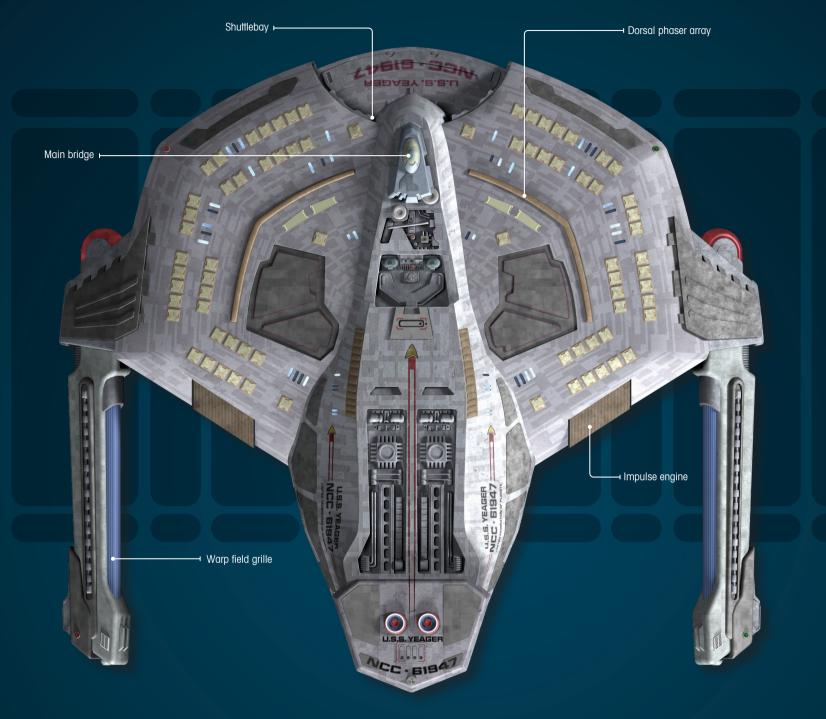
Two Saber-class vessels were undergoing construction, refitting or repairs at the Utopia Planitia Fleet Yards in 2371 at the same time as the U.S.S. Voyager NCC-74656 was entering the final stages of its construction. These facilities were positioned in synchronous orbit 16,625 kilometers above the Utopia Planitia region on Mars. The shipyards included a number of drydocks and space stations, and were one of Starfleet's largest and most important vessel construction and design facilities in the 24th century. They also included large drafting rooms for starship design, as well as several buildings on the surface of Mars. Much of the design and construction of the Galaxy class took place at these shipyards, while later Ben Sisko worked here on the development of the Defiant class.

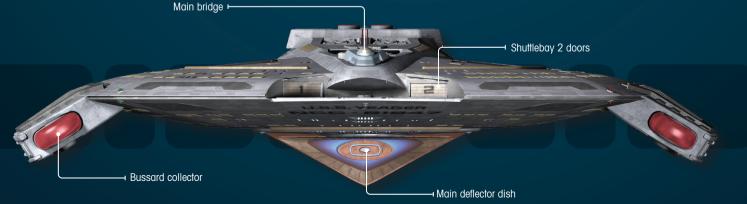


▲ The Utopia Planitia Fleet Yards in orbit of Mars featured mushroomshaped spacedocks and dozens of cage-like drydocks, which encased starships while they were being built.

DATA FEED

A human settlement known as the Utopia colony was established on Mars at least as early as 2155. Tom Paris' idea of a perfect date was to visit the hills overlooking the Utopia Planitia plains in a 1957 Chevy. The Doctor took his advice and programmed the scenario into the *U.S.S. Voyager* NCC-74656's holodeck for his date with Denara Pel.







VENTRAL VIEW



FT VIEW



FORE VIEW



VENTRAL NACELLE VIEW

LEGENDARY NAME

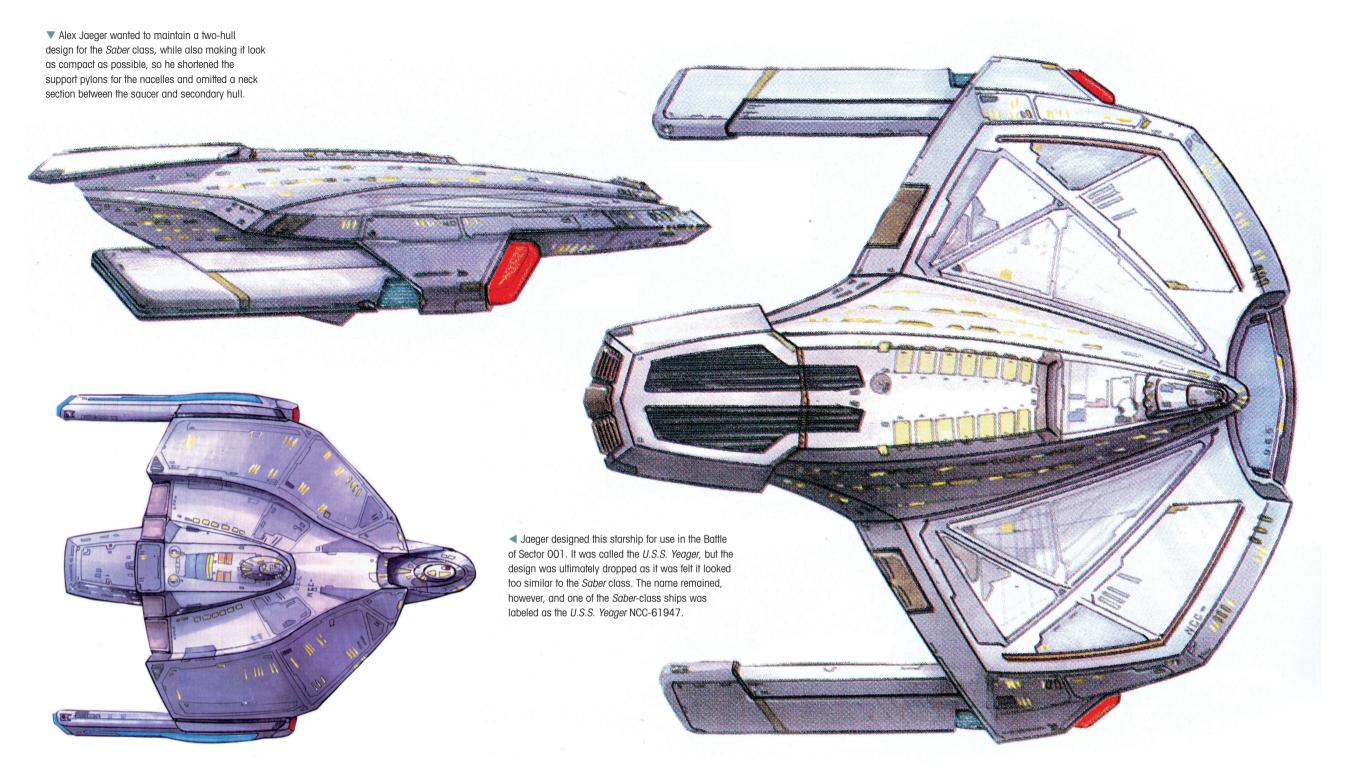
The Saber-class U.S.S. Yeager NCC-61947 was named in honor of Chuck Yeager, the US test pilot who was the first man confirmed to have broken the sound barrier on October 14, 1947 in the Bell X-1.

PRODUCTION BASE

According to the
'STAR TREK: DEEP
SPACE NINE Technical
Manual,' the production
base for Saber-class
starships was the
Advanced Starship
Design Bureau
Integration Section,
Spacedock 1, Earth.

MAJOR BATTLES

Some of the conflicts that Saber-class ships were involved in during the Dominion War included the Battle of Torros III, the Battle of the Tyra System, Operation Return, the Battle of Chin'toka and the Battle of Cardassia.



SABER CLASS

Visual effects art director Alex Jaeger discusses his design for the *Saber*-class ship that first appeared in *STAR TREK: FIRST CONTACT*.

lex Jaeger initially came up with about a dozen new Starfleet ship designs for the opening battle sequence in STAR TREK: FIRST CONTACT. These concepts were slowly whittled down as the producers chose their favorite four designs, which were named the Akira, the Steamrunner, the Norway and the Saber.

"The goal with all of these ships was to make them look completely different from the *Enterprise*," said Jaeger. "We were introducing the *U.S.S. Enterprise* NCC-1701-E in that film and the producers didn't want people going, 'Wait, which one's the *Enterprise*?'

"The Saber was probably the most used and easily identifiable ship of the four," continued Jaeger. "It was designed as a smaller ship and supposed to be about the size of the Enterprise's saucer. It was based on the idea of compacting an existing formation and getting rid of all the

struts, necks and fins. The nacelles trailed off the edges of the saucer so that they could be put at the outermost edges of the ship without using struts. The secondary hull was then merged with the saucer to form this tight, but sturdy-looking craft. This ship had a shuttlebay in the notch at the front of the saucer, while the impulse engines were at the aft of the saucer. The deflector dish was in its usual place, as were the phaser strips. I chose to use textures from the *Reliant* and *Defiant* models for this ship, giving it an older appearance as if it had been around for a while."

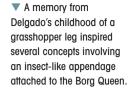
ALTERNATE DESIGN

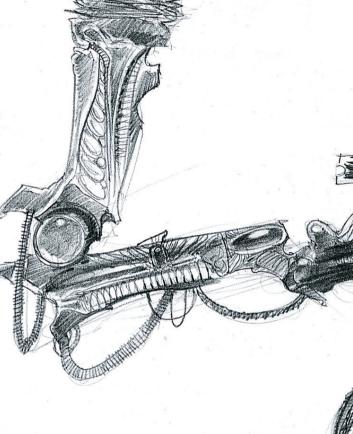
Jaeger also designed another ship that was called the *U.S.S. Yeager* NCC-61947. It was named for Chuck Yeager and the year he broke the sound barrier – 1947.

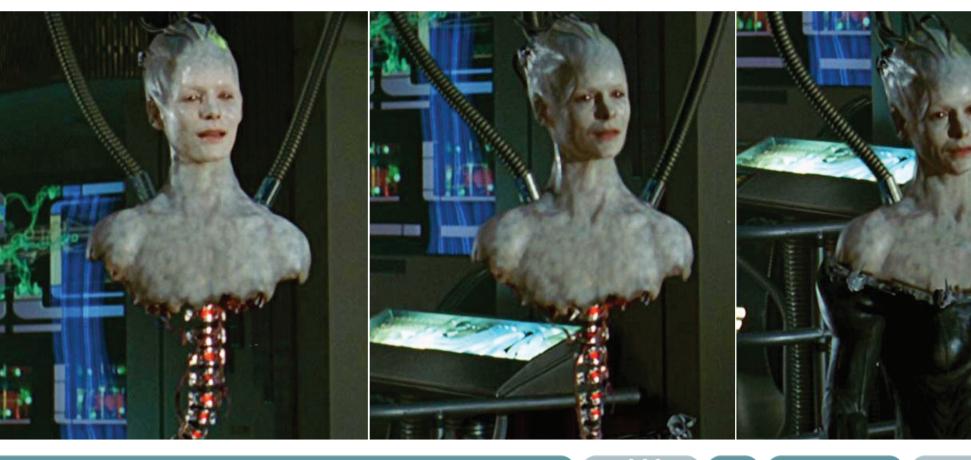
"The Yeager was a ship designed to separate in time of battle," said Jaeger. "It had a sort of compact *U.S.S. Grissom* formation with the saucer and hull as two visibly separate pieces. The neat thing with the *Yeager* was the profile of the battle section. Even though it looked like the nacelles were attached to the saucer, they were in fact attached via struts from the secondary hull, and the saucer merely rested on top of them."

This design was dropped at the last minute because it was considered too similar to the *Saber* class, but the 'Yeager' name was kept and used on one of the *Saber*-class ships in the film.

The design was built as a CG model, but only at a very low resolution as there was not the time to create a detailed high-resolution version. A year later, the producers of STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE wanted to use the CG Saber-class model in the show, but due to software differences it had to be largely rebuilt. This gave the CG modelers the opportunity to create a higher resolution model of the Saber class, and it first appeared in the episode 'Call to Arms.'







ASSEMBLING THE

BORG QUEEN

▲The final sequence of the Borg Queen's dramatic entrance in STAR TREK: FIRST CONTACT was arrived at after dozens of illustrations from three different concept artists. Even then, the visual effects team had to work out how the concept could be turned into reality when filming the sequence.

but when Ronald D. Moore and

Brannon Braga wrote FIRST CONTACT,

they had no idea how impressive the

of the script, the Queen's body didn't

snap together. Instead, she floated

above Data, suspended by dozens

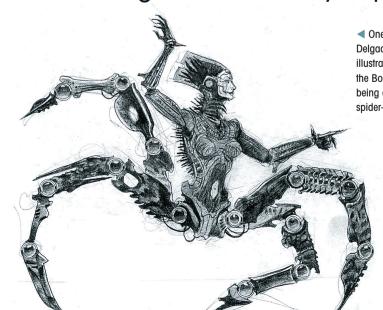
of cables.

scene would be. In fact, in early versions

The art department on *STAR TREK: FIRST CONTACT* reveal some of the concepts they came up with for the Borg Queen assembly sequence.

t's certainly the most memorable shot in STAR TREK: FIRST CONTACT: maybe in the entire history of STAR TREK. The Borg Queen's head floats down from the shadows, supported by two cables, before dropping into her waiting body. Clamps extend from her cybernetic chest and latch into the flesh around her shoulders, pulling everything together. Finally, she sighs, relishing the sensation of physicality.

Once you've seen the movie, it's difficult to imagine it happening any other way,



■ One of Ricardo Delgado's concept illustrations envisaged the Borg Queen's body being carried on elaborate spider-like legs.

The job of translating this image to the screen was given to Herman Zimmerman's art department.

One of the first people Zimmerman asked to look at the effect (and the Queen herself) was illustrator Ricardo Delgado. The idea that the Borg were a unified people with a single, female

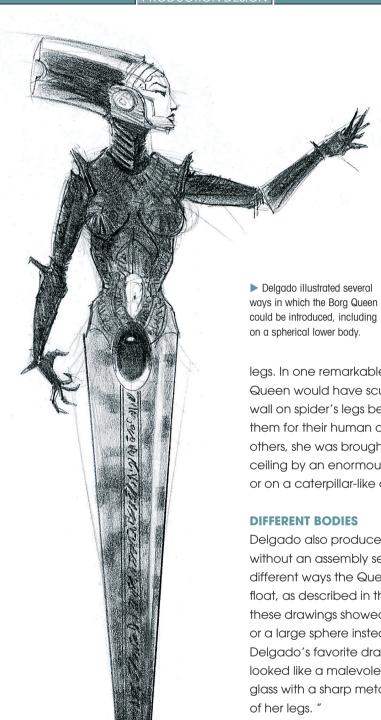
leader made him think of the ancient Egyptians, and his drawings of the Borg Queen were a combination of the Egyptian ruler Nefertiti and the bride of Frankenstein from the Universal horror movie of the same name.

POWERFUL IMAGE

In the version of the script that Delgado saw, the Queen had a body with no legs. This image sparked an instant response from him, and he suggested that the absent legs could be waiting for her on the ground. He recalled how his initial thumbnail sketches were inspired by a childhood memory.

"I remember one time when I was a kid I found this grasshopper leg," said Delgado, "There was just this weird alien quality to seeing this beautiful piece of nature sitting there. It really stayed with me, and I thought it would be neat to see these two beautiful female legs just folded up, almost looking like grasshopper legs. They don't have any energy until the Queen needs them. They'd come to life in a sensuous way and attach themselves to the woman."

Delgado went on to produce some drawings showing several different possibilities for how the Queen's body could be brought down to her waiting



▲ Delgado's favorite

concept featured the Borg Queen's torso mounted

on a metallic spike. All

the illustrations were

influenced by ancient Egyptian imagery.

legs. In one remarkable concept, the Queen would have scuttled down the wall on spider's legs before exchanging them for their human counterparts. In others, she was brought down from the ceiling by an enormous, organic throne or on a caterpillar-like appendage.

DIFFERENT BODIES

Delgado also produced drawings without an assembly sequence, showing different ways the Queen's body could float, as described in the script. Some of these drawings showed her with a sickle or a large sphere instead of legs. In Delgado's favorite drawing, the Queen looked like a malevolent champagne glass with a sharp metallic spike in place of her legs. "

Eventually, the producers decided that the Queen's body would be assembled, but not in the way Delgado had suggested. Instead of her torso snapping into her legs, her head and shoulders would be lowered into a waiting body.

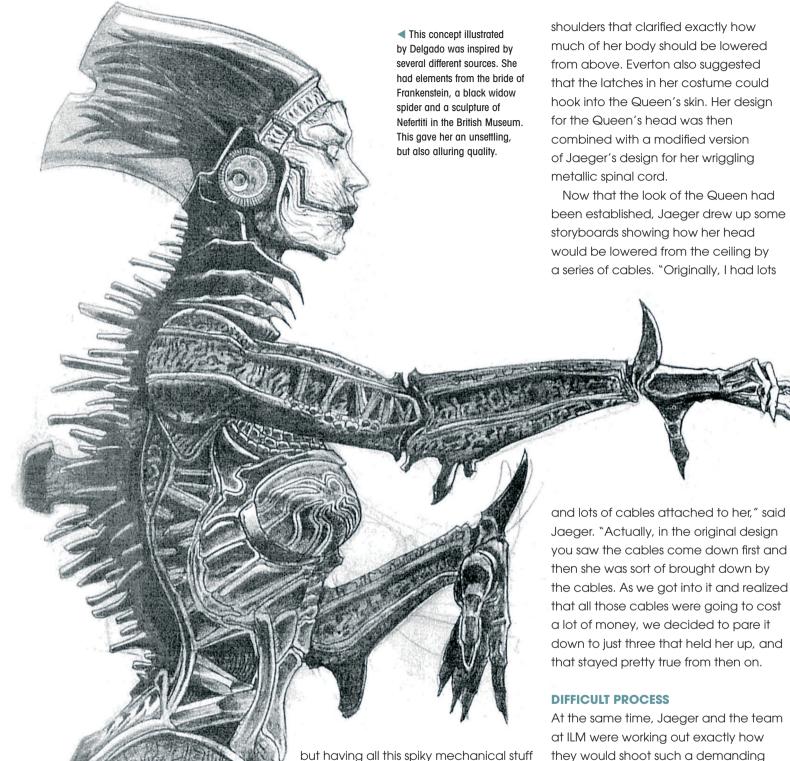
Delgado had other commitments that restricted the amount of time he could devote to FIRST CONTACT, so the next pass at the assembly sequence was taken by a different illustrator – John Eaves. His very mechanical drawings

provided a stark contrast to Delgado's organic approach. "I did a drawing of this gal with a body and this heavily tubed rig with a head floating down," said Eaves. "It was made up of two rings that fit inside each other. There was a little zig-zag split in the middle; when her head and body came together, those two rings would have opened up and she'd have stepped out. That one was really fun; Herman (Zimmerman) liked it, but it was too heavy and, at that time, they weren't sure how they were going to do the effect. They told me to tone it down and get rid of the framework. I did another drawing that was a little bit more what they were looking for; it had four real heavy cables."

NEW APPROACH

As much as the producers were impressed with what they'd seen, they still didn't feel they'd found their effect or the look of the Borg Queen, so they brought Industrial Light & Magic's Alex Jaeger into the loop.

"They opened it up and asked me if I had any suggestions," said Jaeger. "I came up with a few, in one of which she'd got the sort of mechanical stuff coming off the back of her head. I imagined her having a seductive face



coming off of her. She's really beautiful,

but you can't touch her because you'll

hurt yourself. I guess they kind of riffed

off some of that for the final design."

it down to the producers, costume

By the time Jaeger's design made

designer Deborah Everton had finalized

the look of the Queen. Her design left

an exposed area of flesh around her

much of her body should be lowered from above. Everton also suggested that the latches in her costume could hook into the Queen's skin. Her design for the Queen's head was then combined with a modified version of Jaeger's design for her wriggling metallic spinal cord.

Now that the look of the Queen had been established, Jaeger drew up some storyboards showing how her head would be lowered from the ceiling by a series of cables. "Originally, I had lots

then she was sort of brought down by the cables. As we got into it and realized that all those cables were going to cost a lot of money, we decided to pare it down to just three that held her up, and

DIFFICULT PROCESS

At the same time, Jaeger and the team at ILM were working out exactly how they would shoot such a demanding effect. As he explained, the shot had several requirements. "She'd be talking while she was coming down, then she connected to her body and then she walked away - all in the same shot! We went through some brainstorming sessions working out how to do that."

In the end, the solution actually came from Borg design supervisor Todd Masters

▶ John Eaves envisaged a much more mechanical process for the Borg Queen's assembly with her head and torso being lowered by dozens of heavy cables.

after a meeting where the assembly sequence was being discussed. Everyone imagined that the sequence would be carried out digitally by ILM, but Masters said he saw another way of going about it. "To me, it sounded like it was a prosthetic effect with some digital sweetening," said Masters, "so we started talking early on to the producers about that. ILM had another process that they were going to try; they proposed shooting her separately on bluescreen and compositing the head onto a digital body. ILM's an amazing company, so I'm sure they would have done an amazing job, but my problem with digital effects, sometimes, is it's easy to see how it's been done. This was the opening, the introduction of the Queen, and we really thought it needed to be kind of magical. The way she came down shouldn't look like an effect. We didn't want people saying 'Oh, I see a couple of pixels out of whack."

PERFORMANCE

There was another disadvantage to ILM's approach; Alice Krige (who played the Borg Queen) would have to film her entrance weeks, even months, after the rest of the scene, so inevitably the final result wouldn't play as well as if she and Brent Spiner (Data) were on the stage together. Masters' solution overcame all of these problems.

"Our version was essentially putting Alice on a slant board with her head craned back, resting on the prosthetic neck and shoulders and a lower spine portion," said Masters. "We would digitally remove the rest of her body (which was wrapped in a blue cloth to make this possible). It was kind of a crazy idea. Everybody just looked at me and said, 'Well, why don't we test it?'"

HEAD/OCCO ASSERBLY) Mechanis for BERG Close - VoluTAVES 3/96 ILM embraced this approach, because, as Jaeger explained, they could see the huge advantages of it being more seamless. "This way it was the actress's real face the whole way down," said Jaeger. "Then, once she got into her body, we could transition to her actually in the makeup and the suit,

and we could have her walk away and continue her dialogue."

Masters remembered that the test was only finished a few days before the actual scene was shot, and that, to his relief, everything worked perfectly. "Everybody loved it," said Masters. "They thought it was fantastic. The great thing about doing it that way was that Alice was really giving a great performance in the sequence. I really wanted her and Brent to have a real



for the Borg Queen had a much more overtly seductive look, which was blended with industrial, mechanical parts coming off her head and torso.

did it the other way, you wouldn't have the same connection; it wouldn't have felt as much like it was in the scene."

The final part of the effect showed the latches on the Queen's 'costume' grabbing her skin. Jaeger said that Everton had designed the hooks, but ILM had to work out how they would move. "We animated them so that they

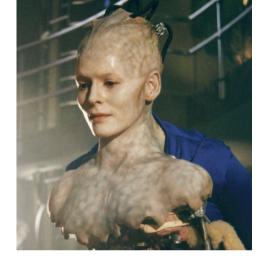


rige to lie on a board was attached to her neck

hook into the Queen

kin to complete the

embly process.



came up and grabbed the skin, and pulled her down so she's locked into the body," said Jaeger. "The skin was done with a little 3D; they had a computergenerated patch with the skin texture applied to it. They animated a little buckle and pulled into it so that when we brought the hooks down you could see the skin stretch."

TEAM EFFORT

Then, with the shot complete, they cut away to the normal footage of the Queen as she walked toward Data. The shot lasted approximately 25 seconds, but there's no question it was worth it. And everyone from Ricardo Delgado, who first suggested having the Queen's body snap together, to the animator who stretched the CG skin, was incredibly proud of the result, which set the standard for every STAR TREK movie to come.

TV APPEARANCES:

DESIGNED BY:

KEY APPEARANCES

STAR TREK: FIRST CONTACT

A Borg cube is detected entering Federation space six years after their last incursion when Captain Picard was captured and temporarily assimilated. This time Starfleet are prepared and launch a defensive fleet to intercept it. Around 30 ships, including Saber-class vessels, attack the cube, but are unable to stop it as it heads towards Earth. The U.S.S. Enterprise NCC-1701-E enters the fray, and the fleet eventually destroys the cube, just as it launches a spherical craft from its interior. It forms a temporal vortex and travels back in time, forcing Picard and his crew to follow them to preserve the past and save the future.

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE 'Tears of the Prophets'

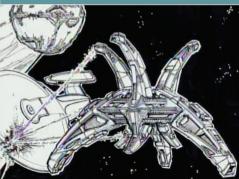
Captain Sisko is ordered to plan an invasion into Cardassian space. The Bajoran Prophets later appear to Sisko and warn him not to leave the station. Sisko nevertheless leads an Allied fleet in an attack on the Chin'toka system. This area of Cardassian space turns out to be protected by orbital weapon platforms that inflict huge losses on the Allied fleet before they manage to deactivate them. The Allies eventually win control of the system, but back on Deep Space 9 a Pah-wraith possessed Dukat mortally wounds Jadzia Dax and closes the Bajoran wormhole.

TRIVIA

Visual effects company Industrial Light & Magic, which carried out most of the special effects work on the Star Wars films, were hired to produce the huge CG sequence featuring the Battle of Sector 001 at the beginning of STAR TREK: FIRST CONTACT. As an in-joke, visual effects supervisor John Knoll inserted a small CG model of the Millennium Falcon from Star Wars into the battle. It can just about be made out in the picture below where it is located below the left warp nacelle of the Akira-class ship. heading across the front of the Borg cube.

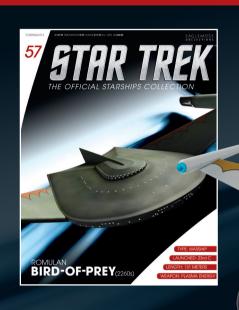


The Cardassian orbital weapon platforms seen in the STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE episode 'Tears of the Prophets' were rendered as CG models based on John Eaves' design illustration of them seen below.



The Battle of Sector 001 featured approximately 30 Starfleet ships. These included at least five Saber-class ships, five Steamrunner-class ships, three Oberth-class ships, two Akira-class ships, two Norwayclass ships, two *Miranda*-class ships and one Nebula-class ship.





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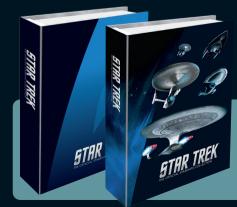
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