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# The Making of Star Wars: The Definitive Story Behind the Original Film

J.W. Rinzler

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**J.W. Rinzler : The Making of Star Wars: The Definitive Story Behind the Original Film** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Making of Star Wars: The Definitive Story Behind the Original Film:

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After the 1973 success of *American Graffiti*, filmmaker George Lucas made the fateful decision to pursue a longtime dream project: a space fantasy movie unlike any ever produced. Lucas envisioned a swashbuckling SF saga inspired by the Flash Gordon serials, classic American westerns, the epic cinema of Japanese auteur Akira Kurosawa, and mythological heroes. Its original title: *The Star Wars*. The rest is history, and how it was made is a story as entertaining and exciting as the movie that has enthralled millions for thirty years—a story that has never been told as it was meant to be. Until now. Using his unprecedented access to the Lucasfilm Archives and its trove of never-before-published lost interviews, photos, production notes, factoids, and anecdotes, *Star Wars* scholar J. W. Rinzler hurtles readers back in time for a one-of-a-kind behind-the-scenes look at the nearly decade-long quest of George Lucas and his key collaborators to make the little movie that became a phenomenon. For the first time, it's all here: the evolution of the now-classic story and characters including Annikin Starkiller and a huge green-skinned monster with no nose and large gills named Han Solo; excerpts from George Lucas's numerous, ever-morphing script drafts; the birth of Industrial Light & Magic, the special-effects company that revolutionized Hollywood filmmaking; the studio-hopping and budget battles that nearly scuttled the entire project; the directors' early casting saga, which might have led to a film spoken mostly in Japanese including the intensive auditions that won the cast members their roles and made them legends; the grueling, nearly catastrophic location shoot in Tunisia and the subsequent breakneck dash at Elstree Studios in London; the whos-who of young film rebels who pitched in to help including Francis Ford Coppola, Steven Spielberg, and Brian DePalma. But perhaps most exciting, and rarest of all, are the interviews conducted before and during production and immediately after the release of *Star Wars* in which George Lucas, Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher, Sir Alec Guinness, Anthony Daniels, composer John Williams, effects masters Dennis Muren, Richard Edlund, and John Dykstra, Phil Tippett, Rick Baker, legendary production designer John Barry, and a host of others share their fascinating tales from the trenches and candid opinions of the film that would ultimately change their lives. No matter how you view the spectrum of this thirty-year phenomenon, *The Making of Star Wars* stands as a crucial document rich in fascination and revelation of a genuine cinematic and cultural touchstone.

"A book like this simply blows everything else out of the water...For *Star Wars* fans, this truly will be the Holy Grail, and even obsessives who think they know everything about the movie should prepare to be astounded. As a 30th anniversary tribute, this could not be bettered." *Film* "Majestic...truly indispensable" *Total Film* "terrific behind-the-scenes study...a detailed, sensible but compelling account of the film's creation, minus the hype...Combining the access of an authorized account with the edge of great storytelling, the making of a 30-year-old movie has never felt more alive" *Empire* About the Author J. W. Rinzler, former executive editor at Lucasfilm Ltd., is the author of the New York Times bestseller *The Making of Star Wars* and London Times bestseller *The Complete Making of Indiana Jones*, as well as the #1 NY Times Bestselling graphic novel, adapted from George Lucas's original rough draft, "*The Star Wars*." He also directed the animated short "*Riddle of the Black Cat*." He lives on the northern California coast. Follow him on Twitter @jwrinzler or visit his website: [jwrinzler.com](http://jwrinzler.com).