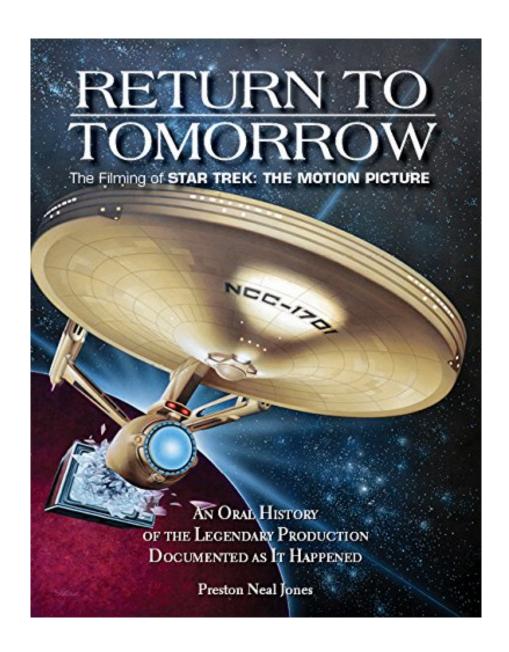


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21 of 22 people found the following review helpful. That like 10 episode scripts had been prepared By Howard L

"We now deliver you to a future that was created in the past--told as if we were in the present."

This statement from editor Lukas Kendall neatly sets the stage for a non-fiction narrative that nonetheless has all the trappings of an epic suspense novel, courtesy of author Preston Neal Jones.

The first fifty pages are devoted to what was going on behind the scenes between the cancellation of the original TV series in '69 and the film's go-ahead in '77-'78. Boy, does the first section clear up a lot of misconceptions this reader and now ardent Trekker had back then as a teenager. Who knew a ST2 series on a proposed 4th network was brewing? That like 10 episode scripts had been prepared?

It is also evident in the following two hundred pages that everyone from the producer to the director to the cast to the lowliest of support staff felt like kids again. They were all committed to something they truly believed in. They badly wanted it to come out right because hey, this is Star Trek, it's got to be done right. Forget the fans, we'll never forgive ourselves if it tanks.

"The main thing that we heard, the one constant that came from the front office was, 'Make that release date. Just make that release date. However you do it, whatever shape the film may be in, make the date. If you lose something, it's your judgment to do what you have to do. But we must not fail to make that date."

Sheer dogged bottom-line determination and then some on the part of everyone involved would be essential if they were to pull the picture off by the impossible December 7, 1979 release date. Which could have been a severe date of infamy for Paramount Pictures if not for the man behind the above-cited quote. If there is a Hero among many heroes in the picture's frenzied improvised creation, well, everyone mentioned that man, the director. Every one.

Robert Wise was pure glue. The guiding hand. The calming force. The rock.

There is a palpable sense of tension, pressure, anxiety and dread smoldering throughout the voluminous minutiae in which nothing is spared. Accordingly, there are times the reading becomes a cerebral chore what with the massive amounts of technical details alone—one of the drawbacks of an unabridged literary

roadshow--and during the [infrequent!] times when it became too much I gave the text a surface scan. And for that reason alone it was such a treat whenever the comments of Sam Nicholson and Brian Longbotham, who are credited for "Production Kinetic Lighting Effects" are interspersed. A wise piece of editing! They are a regular Rosencrantz & Guildenstern hiding in the wings, wondering what exactly did this huge expanding Paramount universe want from them.

In that vein, the scope of the 'chronicle' and the way it is arranged is impressive, for it gives context to the evolving Star Trek phenomenon in real time and beyond. And there is something for everyone be they Trekkians or Jerry Goldsmithians or movie technicians; lovers of movies and moviemakers; readers of science fiction or watchers of science fiction films; or both, any and all.

I also feel some readers will be moved to rethink unfavorable first impressions of the film when it was released.

First instincts normally tell me to go all orthodox academic i.e. match what I'm reading to the cited sequence in the film and just fast forward and rewind and pause/stop my way through and that way I can get the full benefit of what I'm reading, and THEN when I'm done with the book and parsing the film watch the whole shebang as a pièce de résistance. In consideration of real life, practicality won out. Besides, I was psyched! And that's what a good book does, no? By the five hundredth page, I simply could not resist and rewatched ST:TMP. At the time it premiered, I had unfavorable first impressions. The "Director's Edition" has restored items absent from the theatrical presentation which vexed writers, actors, and techno personnel alike.

This viewing utterly blew me away. "Return to Tomorrow – The Filming of Star Trek: The Motion Picture" is a prime contributor to my delightful about-face.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

If You Like To Look At The Pictures

By johcafra

...you won't find any. Not even a line drawing or pen-and-ink portrait. It's an "oral history" alright, with nothing but words to show for what amounts to a compilation of interviews with just about everyone who was anyone associated with the film. And yet it all works, in places with surprising insight and humility...consider what they were aiming for...while the sheer effort to conduct, collate, and convert to a comprehensive and chronological narrative all the memories and mental imagery makes the book worth the purchase price and merit a place on a "Trekkian's" bookshelf.

Reading it also has a perhaps-odd side effect: Now I wish to first re-view the original theatrical release, then its later "Director's Edition" that principally reflects Robert Wise's decades-after ability to digitally enhance and further edit and complete scenes of the film as originally intended and described in the book while not effectively hamstrung by the studio's demand to meet a release date.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

the reason it did not turn out as excellent as the intention was is because emotions got in ...

By christopher bitgood

The movie was complex in terms of the ambition it represented. However, the reason it did not turn out as excellent as the intention was is because emotions got in the way. The proof was Paramount choosing to give a ridiculous release date without conferring with those people involved in making it. Like McCoy said in the movie, "Jim your pushing, your people know their jobs!"

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