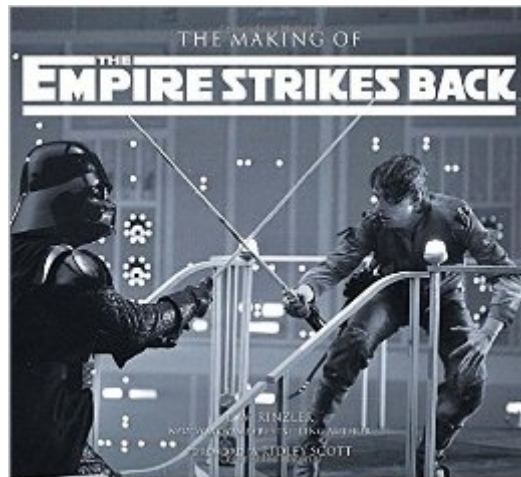


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# The Making Of Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back



## Synopsis

In this lavish thirtieth-anniversary tribute to the blockbuster film *Star Wars: Episode V The Empire Strikes Back*, *New York Times* bestselling author J. W. Rinzler draws back the curtain to reveal the intense drama and magnificent wizardry behind the hit movie—arguably the fan favorite of the *Star Wars* Saga. Following his *The Making of Star Wars*, the author has once again made use of his unlimited access to the Lucasfilm Archives and its hidden treasures of previously unpublished interviews, photos, artwork, and production mementos. The result is a comprehensive behind-the-scenes, up-close-and-personal look at the trials and triumphs, risks and close calls, inspiration, perspiration, and imagination that went into every facet of this cinematic masterpiece. Here's the inside scoop on:

- the evolution of the script, from story conference and treatment to fifth draft, as conceived, written, and rewritten by George Lucas, famed science-fiction author Leigh Brackett, and screenwriter Lawrence Kasdan
- the development of new key characters, including roguish hero Lando Calrissian, sinister bounty hunter Boba Fett, and iconic Jedi Master Yoda
- the challenges of shooting the epic ice planet battle in the frozen reaches of Norway and of conjuring up convincing creatures and craft—from tauntauns and snowspeeders to Imperial walkers
- the construction of a life-sized Millennium Falcon and the swamp planet Dagobah inside a specially built soundstage in Elstree Studios
- the technique behind master Muppeteer Frank Oz's breathing life into the breakthrough character Yoda
- the creation of the new, improved Industrial Light & Magic visual effects facility and the founding of the now-legendary Skywalker Ranch

In addition, of course, are rare on-the-scene interviews with all the major players: actors Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher, Billy Dee Williams, Anthony Daniels, Peter Mayhew, and David Prowse; director Irvin Kershner; producer Gary Kurtz; effects specialists Richard Edlund, Dennis Muren, Ken Ralston, and Phil Tippett; composer John Williams; and many others. Punctuating the epic account is a bounty of drawings, storyboards, and paintings by Ralph McQuarrie, Joe Johnston, and Ivor Beddoes, along with classic and rare production photos. An added bonus is a Foreword by acclaimed director Ridley Scott. *The Making of Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* is a fittingly glorious celebration of an undisputed space-fantasy movie milestone. Search your feelings, you know it to be true.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Length: 1:03 Mins

This book is finally out after being postponed for a few times. It's actually 362 pages, slightly thicker than the previous book, *The Making of Star Wars: The Definitive Story Behind the Original Film*, which is already a massive book. It seems that no paperback edition is available yet at the launch. Once again, I'm marveled by the amount of information packed into the book by author J.W. Rinzler. I can't even begin to imagine the amount of research and effort is needed to put everything together, after the movie was screened 30 years ago. The book details the arduous journey in the making of the film from the first story conference up to screening, and to the film awards won after that. The writing is excellent, filled with all sorts of stories and quotes. You get to read about the technical aspect of creating the movie, the little tricks used to create something believable on screen - see how they use fiber optics for lighting spaceships, painting the backgrounds, fixing up Yoda, and much more including production diaries of how they shoot. The pages are also loaded with concept art, sketches, storyboards, memos, film stills and photos. All well reproduced, very detailed. There are lots of fun stuff happening behind the scenes captured on camera. While the book is pricey, yes, it's well worth the money. With so much material, it will take more than one sitting to go through them. Definitely a "must have" for Star Wars fans. -Note that in the previous book, they took out some content from the paperback edition. Not sure if it's going to happen here again.

Having purchased the *Making of Star Wars* book when it was first released, my expectations were high for this *Empire Strikes Back* edition. But Jonathan Rinzler has again delivered an account of the making of the film that is way, way beyond anything that has been done before. The book

contains literally hundreds of photos I've never seen before, facts I have never heard, and behind-the-scenes insights that are priceless. All this is new to me even though I already have just about every Empire Strikes Back book ever published. This book focuses less on the evolution of the Star Wars universe and characters, as this was well covered in the Star Wars book, so there is more room for what I find most compelling - the story of the actual artwork creation, production and post-production. I think this book is a little stronger in that respect than the previous one. I found the sketches of Darth Vader's castle (yes) particularly fascinating. Beautifully printed, well laid out and expertly researched, this is a must-own for the serious Star Wars fan or those interested in the business and process of filmmaking in general. The cover price of \$85 is admittedly very steep, but the price (as of this writing) is more like \$50, making it well worth it. In short a massive undertaking and a beautiful book. A Making of Return of the Jedi book of similar quality is hopefully in development, and I eagerly await the results.

Let me start off by saying that The Empire Strikes Back is one of my favorite movies of all time. As I am writing this review I am about halfway through the book, but I feel somewhat compelled to write a review due to the recent passing of the director, Irvin Kershner. One of the included quotations from Kershner regarding his approach to the making of "Empire" illustrates why this movie is so well-loved by Star Wars fans, and in my opinion reflects what exactly was so frustrating to many fans about the Prequels: "The thing that you learn in directing is that when you're on the floor, no matter how complex the shooting is...you have to remain absolutely sensitive to every nuance of the behavior of the people around you. Because, ultimately, if you don't keep in mind the overall humanity, then the machine takes over and suddenly all you have are technically fine shots, technically good performances. The story's being told, but something's lacking, something mysterious, indefinable." --Irvin Kershner "Empire" had this "indefinable humanity" in spades, and the book really shows how the director was able to craft such a tale. Kershner really played with the tensions between Luke and Vader, and between Leia and Han. He (along with Frank Oz and Mark Hamill) made us all believe there is a soul underneath that puppet (Yoda). The lack of this "indefinable humanity" in the Prequels is what made me so sad about how those movies ultimately came out (but perhaps this should better be saved for another review). Back to the book: I highly highly recommend this. From the inclusion of amazing archival behind-the-scenes photos, gorgeous concept art and sketches (most notably by Ralph McQuarrie), to in-depth first-hand accounts by most of the important cast and crew, it really brings you so close to what everyone went through in the making of the movie.

I picked up this book at the local book store...started reading it and couldn't put it down. There's lots of great art, matte paintings, and model shots that I've never seen before. There's also quite a few photos of the actors and crew on set which were a lot of fun to look at. I think one of my favorite things about this book however, is the honest portrayal (and sometimes word for word transcripts) of the conversations between the Director Irvin Kershner and his cast...Hamill, Fisher and Ford. There's several pages devoted to the filming of the carbon freezing scene which is an absolutely terrific read. You really get a good understanding of the actors' personalities while seeing the struggles that the Director and Producers went through to bring this masterpiece to the screen. The book is a very good quality and seems well bound. The artwork and pictures are printed very well with good color and resolution. All in all, this is definitely a must have for Empire fans. Enjoy it.

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