

JOURNEY PLANET



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Introductions

By Alissa Wales

The force is with us; we are one with the force.

Welcome to our issue on *Rogue One*. I certainly enjoyed the film, and I have been reading a lot of words from people that have clearly enjoyed the film, as well. However, I know that there are some that didn't enjoy it as much as I did, and that's great, too. I love to hear other opinions and healthy debates, especially from people that are going to help me look at something in a different way and give me something to think about. I appreciate having different points of views on the same thing, and I value others' opinions. *Rogue One* running in tandem in the timeline with *Star Wars: A New Hope* was a new way for the film franchise to tell a story. I felt it was well done and the casting was spot on. My favourite characters have to be Chirrut and Baze and then K-2SO. I think the relationship between Chirrut and Baze is so lovely, such a loyal bond. And then K-2SO is just so funny and dry, a rare trait in a robot. I am pleased to have been a part of this issue that we bring to you today.

The force is with us; we are one with the force.



By Chris Garcia

I'm the odd one out—I've not seen *Rogue One*.

In fact, when James pitched this to me, he said "Chris, we should do a Rogue issue."

My mind first went to the X-Men, and thus to Rogue, one of the finest long-running characters.

I thought that was a fine idea, and when we got things cleared up, I still thought it was a good idea!

I've seen no *Star Wars* since the 2005 movie in the theatre. The reason? Two miniature zumikins that live with me, and in general, too many other franchises I love. In the words of one of those franchises that captured my attention, tv's got crazy good.

But the take away from this one—We're back!

WorldCon's done come and gone and several of the cadre known as Team Journey Planet were there and we all seemed to have a grand time. I was especially happy to get to spend time with both the co-editors of this fine issue there, and not only that, but to get to talk to so many others about what we're gonna keep bringing to y'all over the coming year!

Reading these pieces as I laid them out at lightning speed, I will say that while I doubt I'll get around to seeing it any time soon, I can tell that it must be a film of quality to achieve something as incredible as the admiration of so many wonderful folks as we have here.

Creating this issue's cover image

by Iain Clark

When I was asked to do a cover for the *Rogue One* issue my very first thought was of John Berkey's stunning painting for the original *Star Wars*, which graced the cover of the novelisation.

I was exposed to *Star Wars* at a formative age – I would have been 8 or 9 when it was first released – and I was obsessed, not just with the movie itself, but with the books and comics and art that surrounded it. I clearly remember reading the George Lucas novelisation (ghost-written by Alan Dean Foster) thirteen times in a row, although to be honest the last few times were mainly about the stubborn desire to beat my own record. There's a bit in that book about "a chilling snapping and popping of bone" when Vader strangles someone that has never left me.



The book cover is not kind to the art: flipped, details blown out, crammed in a little rectangle with a yellow banner over it. But the quality of the painting was apparent even to my young eyes. There's gothic light and shade, and the joyous scribbly detail of tiny little starfighters zipping around and blowing each other up in the margins like, well, like something a nine year old would draw. It's also not too worried about screen accuracy; Luke and Leia are pretty loose likenesses, Artoo looks six foot tall and the Death Star is Ralph McQuarrie by way of Studio Ghibli. That's part of its atmosphere.

Movie posters nowadays often take the form of a graceful photo-montage of the characters, and I don't diminish those. There's a great deal of artistry involved in producing them, and they are often stunning digital works of art. My skills, such as they are, lend themselves to something a bit more painterly and I have great affection for classic painted movie posters. I knew I couldn't do something exactly like that Berkey painting (he was a genius), but I was inspired to do something that evoked it, just a little. In the same way that *Rogue One* is entirely its own film but evokes the original *Star Wars*, just a little.

I had a fairly tight deadline so I prepared the paper (16x12" cold-pressed watercolour block) with black gesso and then sketched in acrylics directly onto that. There was no pencil work at all.

For the main figure I toyed with using Darth Vader, but I very much wanted to focus on elements that were distinctively from *Rogue One* rather than *A New Hope*, so I chose Director Orson Krennic. His bright uniform is the opposite of Vader's and works well with the darker foreground figures of Jyn Erso and Cassian Andor which are the inverse of Luke and Leia's gleaming white. It slightly amused me to have Jyn standing and Cassian crouched as so much classic *Star Wars* art is dominated by Luke bestriding the picture with Leia draped to one side. The figures are deliberately off centre to balance the huge explosion erupting from the planet's surface.

Painting by John Berkey.

Berkey's painting on the book cover.



As you can see from these early photos it took me a surprisingly long time to realise that since Krennic and the Death Star are both lit from the right, maybe that's also where the main light source in the painting should be placed. When this obvious fact finally occurred to me I flipped the shadow from the planetary explosion and redid the background with lots of dry-brushed scumbling to create nebulae and a shadow cast by the Death Star. (I know you don't get shadows in outer space but that's part of the chiaroscuro pleasure of Berkey's image.) The original background shows through in places and creates a lovely complexity to the sky that does add something I think.

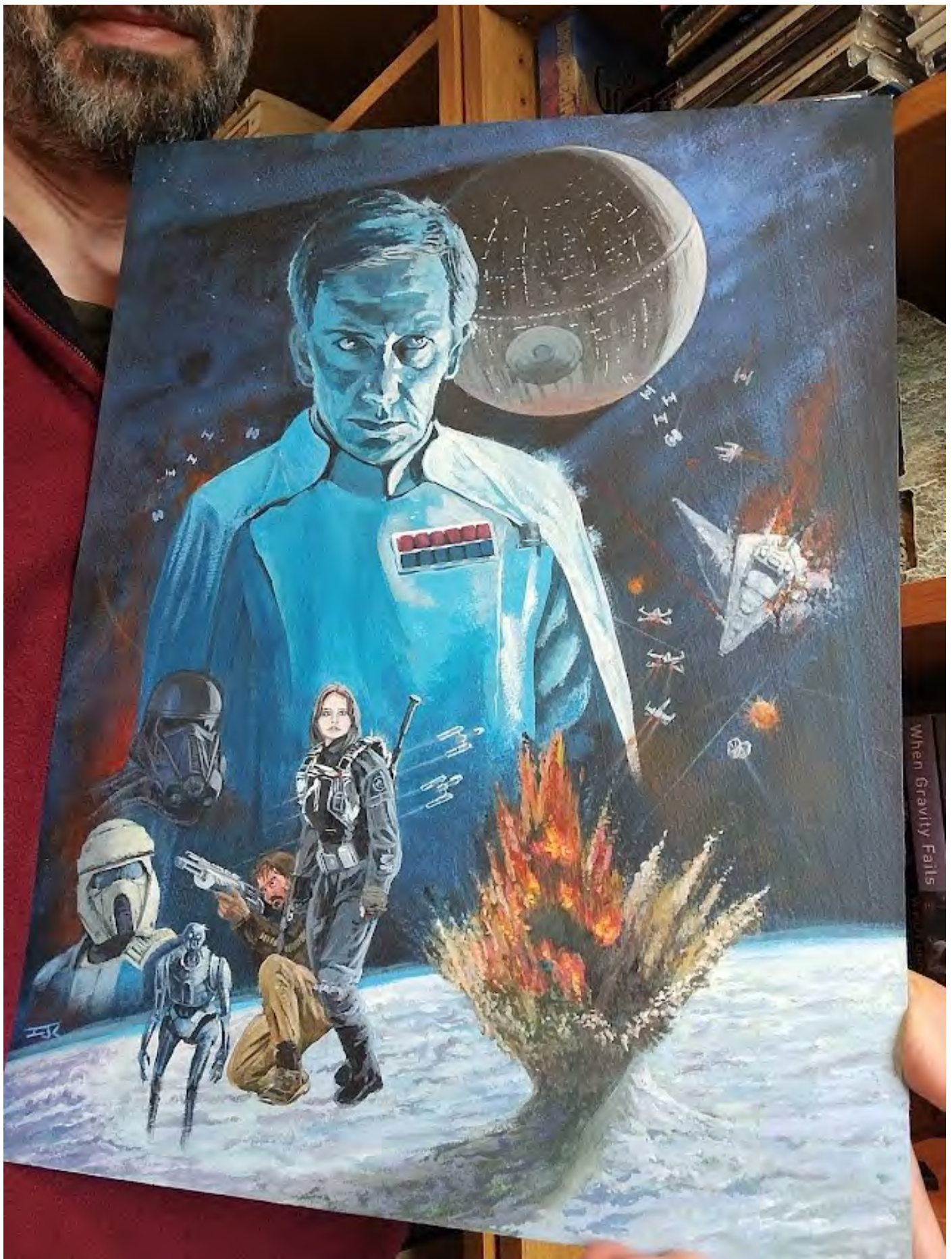
That new diagonal directionality became very important to the final composition and how your eye is led around the image. The finished piece uses the colliding Star Destroyers to create a sideways V shape that catches the curve of the Tie Fighters and directs you down along the rays of light to the explosion, where the curve of the cloud shadows, figures and troopers lead up and around to Krennic, the angular shadow of the Death Star and back down in a circular motion. Or that's the idea!

The busy little space fighters and the deep red burning glows are my most direct nod to Berkey. I always knew I'd be adding those at the end to create movement and balance but they make such a difference to how the image gels together. And my inner nine year old loves them.

I do miss the aggressive cropping on the original Berkey image where things are bleeding out of the frame, which lends it a feel of being packed to bursting. Ah well, maybe next time. Overall I'm pleased with the final painting. It had a slightly haphazard creation process and changed direction halfway through but came good in the end. And if that's not a fitting tribute to *Rogue One*, I don't know what is...



Work in Progress photos of the painting



The finished painting for scale. You can really see the texture of the paint here.

—もうひとつの、スター・ウォーズ。



すべては、ここから始まる。

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We Hear You...

A Letter of Comment on *Journey Planet 64*

We were lucky enough to get a Letter of Comment from Jerry Kaufman!

Thanks to Chuck Serface, I was able to get a copy of this issue of *Journey Planet*. I don't know much about the culture of the Phillipines, though I have neighbors from there, so I was glad to be introduced to a taste of Filipino folklore and customs. (Our neighbors, the Alcantaras, have introduced us to a taste of Filipino food at their annual holiday celebrations.)

The front and back covers make up an interesting experiment with some disquieting results. I note that nearly every face has one eye that appears inhuman. There are other details of hands, feet, and so forth that make me feel I'm peering into a dream world that's teetering on the edge of becoming a nightmare. Don't make me go there.

I can point to one instance of popular culture that draws from Filipino folk beliefs. That's an episode of *Grimm*, a fantasy tv series airing only a few years ago. "[Mommy Dearest](#)" (*Grimm*) - [Wikipedia](#). I remember it being one of the creepier episodes, worthy of *The X Files*.

I look forward to finding out where the next *JP* travels to.

Jerry

Thanks so much for the LoC, Jerry! My current experiments with AI-generated art have led to some disquieting results, and some incredible results, and an up-coming Drink Tank will have a lot of it! I thought there was so much good art in this one that we needed to print copies!

I also think that might be the only episode of GRIMM I've ever seen!

If you've got comments and/or questions—JourneyPlanet@gmail.com



On *Rogue One*

By Alissa & Andrew Wales

Rogue One was a great film. I really enjoyed it for a myriad of reasons. I saw it three times at the cinema, but what I really noticed (as I do with most films) is the casting. As I do with most films, I see someone I recognise and think of where I know them from. A lot of the people in this film I recognise from places that are familiar and personal to me. In fact, this might be a fun thing for a lot of people to do, but for dad and I, it's a bonding thing. In this last re-watch this week, my husband and I decided we really enjoy a lot of the same parts of this film, so welcome to our take on *Rogue One*.

*Hello, my name is Andrew, and I'll be interjecting occasionally, if that's okay. I'll be interjecting in italics, just so you know it's me. I've been thinking about what *Rogue One* meant to me at the time I first saw it in the cinema, and how that's developed in the intervening (nearly) six years (has it really been that long? Apparently so!)*

Felicity Jones who plays Jyn Erso I first saw in one of my favourite *Doctor Who* episodes called "The Unicorn and The Wasp" as a guest to a lawn party called Robina Redmond. The two characters could not be any more different. In fact, one could barely recognise these two characters as being played by the same person! I feel Jones did such a fantastic job in portraying these two individual parts, let alone the fact that Robina Redmond is keeping a secret, too.

*It's me again, Andrew (did you spot the italics?). My first impression of *Rogue One* was before I'd seen any trailers or even a single frame of the movie. It's the title, or more specifically, the subtitle, "A Star Wars Story". That was genuinely exciting for me. Four words say so much. This was a movie laying its cards on the table as a tangential story, not of the Skywalker saga. Here's some people you don't really know, but you know the universe, and you might suspect it'll tie in with the existing familiar storylines. Also, doesn't it imply there'll be more movies subtitled "a Star Wars Story"? Now that's exciting! We'd been deprived of Star Wars movies for what felt like forever, and now they're going to be coming along almost annually (right?). This Disney buy-out might turn out okay!*

I believe that I first saw Alan Tudyk in *Firefly*, but really remembered him as an actor in *Dollhouse*. In *Rogue One*, he played K-2SO, and he was FANTASTIC! I mean, a robot with a dry sense of humour; what's not to love! In *Firefly* (though it's been years since I've seen it, so please do forgive me if I'm incorrect here), he played Wash who was a relatively nice pilot who looked out for his crew and first-mate/wife. He portrayed a laid-back and loyal individual on this show. In contrast, on *Dollhouse*, Tudyk played Alpha, a character who was psychotic and wanted revenge for everything he had been put through. He went through the *Dollhouse* and slashed a bunch of the 'dolls' up with a scalpel. K-2SO is a third contrast to these characters and shows great depth to Tudyk's talent. While it is a voice role, he delivers it impeccably, and much emotion is felt at his final end.

*I'm going to rewind a little bit from where Alissa is here, introducing the characters in appearance order. I promise I'm not overanalysing this movie at all (ahem), but let's look at the first shot in the movie. It's an abstract shot, the shadow of the planet Lah'mu being cast across its rings. This first clearly manifests as a triangular shape entering the frame from the top, a clear homage to the opening shot of *A New Hope* with the Star Destroyer chasing the Corellian corvette (a nod I only spotted on this rewatch) - great fan service.*

Forest Whitaker played one of my favourite characters in one of the first films I ever got a soundtrack to: *Good Morning Vietnam!* In *Rogue One*, Whitaker plays Saw Gerrera, a former Rebel turned mercenary who helped rescue Jyn Erso. In *GMV*, he portrayed Eddie Garlick, a shy guy who is sent to help show Adrian Cronauer around. He turns out to really like Adrian, helps him out as much as he can, but in the end, Adrian makes the wrong people mad and gets discharged. Saw Gerrera is nearly the opposite. A confident person, people fear him and he's made a name for himself across the galaxy. Forest Whitaker is quite an actor.

Hang on a minute, though, I know I've talked about the opening shot, but I'm going to rewind a bit (no, really). This was the first Star Wars cinematic release with no opening crawl, or opening theme of which to speak. Again, a real diversion from the mainline Skywalker saga movies. When we do hear the main theme, it's not our familiar John Williams either (although of course the Star Wars themes do make an appearance).

About three years ago, my husband introduced me to a film called *Four Lions*. This film has a lot of footage in his hometown of Sheffield, so we were able to visit some of the places where the scenes took

place. This film is the first place that I saw Riz Ahmed in anything. He played Omar, and he is trying to lead his friends but it's like herding cats. This is one of those films that I asked permission to laugh, because it's a dark comedy, and sometimes I am unsure if it's okay to laugh at certain things. But, it is a comedy, and they provide some funny material. Ahmed plays Bodhi Rook in *Rogue One*, a pilot who has defected from the Empire. He is very nervous about everything, and he really seems to want to help the Rebellion.

This was the first time we saw Darth Vader's house on Mustafar! And, weirdly, the last time until The Rise of Skywalker (please correct me if I'm wrong).

I first recognised Mads Mikkelsen in the 2006 *Casino Royale* as Le Chiffre who cried blood. James Bond goes up against Le Chiffre in a high stakes poker game and he poisons Bond. Does Bond survive? Clearly, but there are other things the Le Chiffre gets up to as well. He is a terrible man, but I guess that's why he's the villain in the film. In contrast, Mikkelsen is Jyn Erso's father, Galen Erso, an engineer who is forced to finish building the Death Star. He builds in a secret fuse that can destroy the whole thing. Again, the actor plays to completely opposing roles.

*I'm going to take this opportunity to reflect on Galen Erso's death, his last words bordering on "hey, guess what! <dies>". Of course one of the compelling aspects of *Rogue One* is that none of the main cast survive to the end credits, but come on, this was an awful death!*

Alistair Petrie is a bit different to anyone I've looked at so far. When I first watched *Rogue One*, I had not really seen anything with him in it. However, since then, we have watched the Netflix show, *Sex Education* where Petrie plays Michael Groff, a grumpy headmaster of a school where things are starting to change. I don't feel that his portrayal of General Draven is that drastically different from Mr. Groff, but a Rebel General perhaps doesn't need to be that different from a school headmaster.

*My final reflection is on the final few minutes. I can very clearly remember seeing this for the first time. I hadn't appreciate quite how closely it would mesh with *A New Hope*, but the shots inside *Tantive IV* are clear and distinctive enough to make the connection (feel the fan service rising). The recreation of the original sets look spot-on, and the result is that we really do feel we're seeing the few moments leading up to *A New Hope*. Also we see some of the earliest evidence of Vader's pure unadulterated rage, flinging bodies aside in his furious determination to retrieve the plans. For the closing shots, when we see Leia from behind (but we know who it is) the fan service goes off the chart. A surprisingly not-totally-plasticky CGI Leia turns around, and at that point I knew I was going to see need to see this movie again. Alas, the cinema was closing, so I came back the next day (my mother saw this as her first 3D movie, and honestly watching her reaction to it was almost as much fun as watching the movie itself).*

One of my favourite happenstances came in this re-watch. I knew Ian McElhinney from *Game of Thrones* as Barristan Selmy. However, since I last watched *Rogue One* where McElhinney plays General Dodonna, I have watched (and re-watched many times) *Derry Girls*. In *Derry Girls*, McElhinney portrays Joe McCool or 'Grandpa Joe' as we call him. This is what I will best remember him for and what I will always love him as, especially with that final scene.





ROGUE ONE
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***Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* or a film the producers and marketing team felt you really needed to know was part of the Star Wars franchise, despite being more of a prequel to *Star Wars: A New Hope* than the actual prequels in terms of tone and story.**

By James Mason

I'm not really a fan of prequels as narratively speaking I feel that the plot kind of paints itself into a corner as it demands due to the story having to lead itself into the timeline already established.

But I have a lot of fondness for *Rogue One* as it does pretty much succeed despite leading into Episode 4 and keeping canon intact.

The premise for *Rogue One* is a simple yet still compelling one. How the rebels got their hands on the Death Star plans and why there was a very handy flaw in the design of the planetary destroying battle station.

Being a more grounded fantastical space epic, well, as much as a film with robots, space battles and "pew pew" lasers can be. Certainly made it more of a film that folks could buy into. And keeping it fairly restrained on the whole Skywalker mythos helped it succeed in giving us more fun surprises.

Despite it being very much an episode 3.5 installment, it felt very much its own thing and somehow quite part of the saga. In keeping, on the main, to itself. *Rogue One* expanded on *Star Wars* by introducing new characters to the mix. Jyn Erso whose story it mainly was, a rebellious daughter who was orphaned by the Empire and isolated in nature because of the traumas experienced by the galaxy far far away being in turmoil and under the yolk of a fascistic regime.

Cassian Andor as a ruthless rebel agent who puts mission above all else and his hacked Empire droid K-2SO who is brilliantly voiced by Alan Tudyk. Donnie Yen who plays a blind devotee of the Jedi faith, but isn't a Jedi but as it's Donnie Yen his Chirrut could give a force user a run for their money. Chirrut is accompanied by a gruff merc character "Baze" who is the classic stick with his eccentric colleague type.

Saw Gerrera played with some aplomb by Forrest Whittaker is another welcome addition as despite his limited exposure is memorable thanks to all the interesting tics that Forrest gives to performance.

Rounding out the main players in the story are Jyn's father who thanks to the always excellent Mads Mikkelsen adds some depth to why Jyn is the way she is. And the main villain of the piece, despite there being a great cameo by Darth Vader, is Ben Mendelsohn's Orson Krennic who is basically the worst project manager in any universe. Driven by self serving needs to be part of something, and blinded to the horrors he's inflicting on the galaxy. Nothing and no-one is safe from his petty agenda.

Rogue One feels more grounded in both the story and how the film is made. Gareth Edwards who made some very impressive low budget work before being handed a huge project like this. Brought his skilful eye on getting a futuristic world that looked grounded and realistic on screen. And despite there being some behind the scenes problems that resulted in Tony Gilroy of the *Bourne* series fame to fix the end and edit of the movie. I think it was Edwards' aesthetic that made me enjoy this movie the most.

The stakes were suitably high for the newly introduced characters and we all kinda knew that they were only going to be around for the movie as there was no mention of them in the other chapters.

Having the cameos of Moff Tarkin, Vader and a Leia did firmly attach *Rogue One* to the Skywalker series but did add a bit of nice spice to the film as they didn't overpower the narrative and did add some extra detail onto their backstory. Seeing Vader's castle and just how much damage Anakin has was great to see on the screen. As was his moment to let loose. Seeing the Blockade Runner barely escape the first encounter was thrilling to watch.

Even if *Rogue One* had a bit of a tortured journey to completion. It showed a lot more care for the series as it had to fit into a jigsaw that there was no template for only where it began and how it ended and choosing to segue directly into *A New Hope* was the best call. Having it be a bit of a caper movie in getting the plans from an Imperial Repository may not be totally original but it was novel enough for *Star Wars*.

Was *Rogue One* a perfect movie? Not at all but it was perfectly entertaining and by paring back on the Skywalker Saga and no Jedi. It made the story a bit more human and being human is to be flawed and that is okay in the film having some flaws too.



A Brief Note on *Rogue One*

By Keith Perrin

LOVED IT!!

First of all, Gareth Edwards did a terrific job directing R.I.

Rogue One was a perfect revelation about the journey of Resistance Fighters obtaining Death Star plans and filling in the gap between episodes III and IV of the *Star Wars* Anthology Series. Bringing back some of the villains like Moff Tarkin, was awesome! I did want more backstory on Galen Erso, Mads Mikkelsen was BRILLIANT, and Chirrut Imwe, a character you just can't help falling in love with.

This film truly kept me on the edge of my seat and I am not ashamed to say that I have enjoyed watching it 5 times.

I didn't want the main characters to die but we knew that was the case when watching *A New Hope*, "...many have sacrificed.."

Definitely my favorite *Star Wars* installment of the entire series. The film brought a personal feel to the franchise. Passionate. Energy. A bonding took place that the 2nd series of 3 installments lacked. I'm referring to episode's 1, 2 & 3.

May The Force Be With You.



Rogue One - Jyn's war story.

By James Bacon

Rogue One feels different, is different, and is brilliant. Jyn is everything in this film. Even though it is a battle, it is her battle, her fight against the Empire, and while it is a clever piece of theatre, eked out from a simple line in a film forty years previous, we have a star that shines.

The film slides into the war film category easily. This is about a battle, a battle to get the plans that will win the war, and we see a leader of unequalled performance in any *Star Wars* film: Jyn Erso.

We first see a young Jyn running for home for all she is worth to tell her Mama that imperials are arriving, fully aware of the importance if not perhaps the consequences.

As we see the blue milk, there is no time, and Saw Garrera is contacted. We shall return to Saw. 'Whatever I do, I do to protect you,' says her Papa, but of course, she is left unprotected.

Jyn is rapidly inducted into war, seeing her mother slain, having to hide as her father is taken away, and even then described as an item rather than human 'They have a child, find it' says Krennic. While we see Jyn saved by Saw, one has to wonder what sort of upbringing Jyn has. Saw describes Jyn as one of his best warriors. Child soldiers are uncommon but one wonders what involvement she had with Saw's rebellion from the film. The comics and books fill in part of this, and Saw has a history from the Clone Wars and Bad Batch.

Jyn, a child soldier indoctrinated into fighting the Empire. We can only imagine how unbelievably tough that was, and the nature of her fight.

From the moment she wakes up in prison we see a confident person, with little fear, a fabulous sense of timing and the ability to dynamically deal with any situation and fight to a high standard. Taking out three rebels who are rescuing her is no mean feat.

Her composure is superb.

Jyn's strength and character are fully formed. She is the leader. Cassian, who may be a captain, has some challenges to face, and he is brutal in his determination to win the fight. We see him killing an informant who had risked himself to pass information to the rebellion, a cold hard moment that sets this film so far apart from the others from the stable.

Yet Jyn doesn't need the introduction.

Jyn continues to impress when she is being interrogated on Yavin 4. None of the authority figures unnerve her. She is more than cheeky, she is sharp. When challenged about her father, something truly unfair, she responds, 'I've never had the luxury of political opinions' and the comment 'You're all rebels aren't you' resonates and questions. Then the words of Mon Mothma who says 'Saw Garrera is an extremist. He's been fighting on his own since he broke with the rebellion. His militancy has caused the alliance a great many problems' juxtaposes what we had seen Cassian do, and then the subsequent scenes, where rescue is eschewed for assassination.

Jyn presents a challenge to what the Rebellion is and what 'rules' exist in a fight. Are the Rebellion terrorists? Is the Empire evil? It's fascinating to consider. Jyn demands answers and speaks strongly, defiant and with her head up. It is interesting how she ignores everyone and directs questions to Mon Mothman, correctly assessing in the film that MM is the most senior person in the room.



Her ability to steal a weapon, and then to be so quick in her replies to Cassian, who leaves her with it, says a lot.

On Jeddha, meeting Baze and Chirrut, we see that Chirrut is drawn to her—to the crystal around her neck, but also to her. On Jeddha, we see an accomplished and skillful fighter in action, taking out threats and imperials deftly.

With Saw, his affection and sorrow sounds hollow when she shares the abandonment, her weariness as a fighter comes across, having lost so much, although her rap sheet as Liana Hallik is not exactly that of a citizen who avoids the imperial gaze.

When she sees Galen, we see her character filled with a type of joy at the prospect that her father has been fighting all this time, that he is not preferred now to be forgotten or thought of as dead, but has not let her down, has strived to create the opportunity for success and victory that she can help deliver.

As the story moves to Eadu, her determination to save her father from Cassian places her in peril, but she gets to him despite it all, and she speaks with him, and the moment is vital. When she calls Papa, it is very moving, both lying after the Rebel assault, blast debris, the rain, the moment of loss, so moving. In proving his true loyalty, she lost him.

The loss was poignant, but not crippling to her. The rejoining and knowledge fleetingly shared that they are bonded once again in a positive way, even though so short, and with the mission in mind, the shared focus

Jyn is of course angry with Cassian, but in a controlled and tempered way, challenging him, rather than raging at him. As with so many moments, Jyn is right and the viewer finds that her position, her argument, her sense of what is right, is solid, and we see the whole ship acknowledging it.

The unevenness of the relationship between Cassian and Jyn is superb. Even as he calls her a child, she speaks like a leader. She puts him in his place; she is the leader and she challenges Cassian about his orders, which are wrong, accuses him of being like a stormtrooper, and out comes the stress and trauma. Even as he challenges her so strongly, she remains steadfast in her knowledge that he was wrong.

This is the beauty of *Rogue One*: How far will one go to defeat the enemy? What will one put at risk? Who will be asked to die? Jyn has no fear here. She is determined.

On Yavin 4, she steals her moment. She enters the meeting and speaks so strongly, and persuasively but not sufficiently for those politicians that are gathered, the council who do not support her. It is a fascinating moment, and then, despite the failure to get the support, the fight continues, and Jyn is followed by those who see her cause as the one to fight and die for. As Cassian and his band of soldiers join Jyn, they demonstrate loyalty to her, to her vision of taking the fight to the Empire, of getting the plans. Jyn is the leader here.

As *Rogue One* departs for one of the greatest *Star Wars* battles filmed, Jyn is the leader. She speaks to her troops. She is now a sergeant, the backbone of any military, the key character in so many films and stories, joining Sgt Steiner, Sgt. Rock, Sgt Apone in the vital role.

Jyn not only leads this ragtag bunch of fighters, but is the spearhead that the fleet follows, that Raddus believes in, and which generals and pilots fly for. The battle on Scariff is superb, as we see all types of fighting, on the beaches, in space and sky and in the base.

Jyn's bravery and heroism continues on Scariff. We see her and her team get the plans, beat Krennic and get the plans to the fleet.

Jyn's victory is complete, although the end is near. She will sadly not survive, but we see her success. We know that her bravery and belief has saved the Rebellion, has somehow become so important

to a larger mythology. We find a character who is now immersed into the *Star Wars* history, and to be remembered.

Jyn does not have a lonely end, as Cassian is with her, and in many regards it is a good ending, albeit one I would have like to have seen avoided, and more story given to Jyn, this amazing fighter and brilliant leader. Yet it does end, as wars do, fighting the fight, the ultimate sacrifice, the death of Jyn.

The battle was won, the war will be won, yet we lose Jyn.



One Hermit's Point of View

By Mitchell Barnes

Having grown up as a child seeing the original trilogy multiple times in the theater and at the drive-in, *Star Wars* was a huge part of my movie experience growing up in the late 1970's and into the 1980's. The films being made at the time were grim. *Star Wars* was a beacon of hope and a journey into another place where good triumphed over evil. The films not only pushed the limits of special effects, they pushed the limits of what science fiction could be. It was dramatic, fun, and taught moral lessons. They were just what the world needed.

After decades of hoping, we finally got the prequels. While there was good and bad with them, George Lucas had finally given us his complete vision. However, as the fandom only increased, the desire for more and the knowledge that there was much more left untold in a galaxy far, far away became clear to the industry. Disney took over and has been continuing the tale with some excellent work.

If I had to point to a particular movie that Disney succeeded with it would be *Rogue One*.

The story of how the Rebels got the plans for the Death Star was always a mystery. Were there Jedi involved? How did Darth Vader find out? Who were the brave Rebels responsible? That and more was given to us.

Jyn Erso and Cassian Andor were an unlikely team set upon a path of discovery and revolution. The cast of characters that joined them rounded out our needs for a variety of personalities. K-2SO, a robot who had attitude and a dry humor. Chirrut and Baze, followers of The Force who, despite not being Jedi, prove that faith has a power of its own. Bodhi, an Imperial pilot who discovered he didn't want anything to do with what the Empire was up to. Saw Gerrera, a zealous rebel who we first met in the *Clone Wars* cartoon series. Director Krennec, who's ambition for power and rank ultimately brought him his undoing. Add to that some great throwback inclusions such as Red Leader, Mon Mothma, General Dodonna, Bale Organa, Grand Moff Tarkin, Princess Leia, and the incredible hallway scene with Darth Vader, even an audio reference to General Hera Syndulla from the Rebels cartoon series. This film was made with care and intention of being faithful to the history and feel of the original films. It was the perfect preface to *A New Hope* and has become a necessity to see before watching the original trilogy.

While the the final *Skywalker Saga* trilogy by Disney did not follow the same guidelines, *Rogue One* was indeed a jewel in their efforts to continue the stories set in this universe George Lucas envisioned.

May The Force Be With You,
Always



Baze and Chirrut

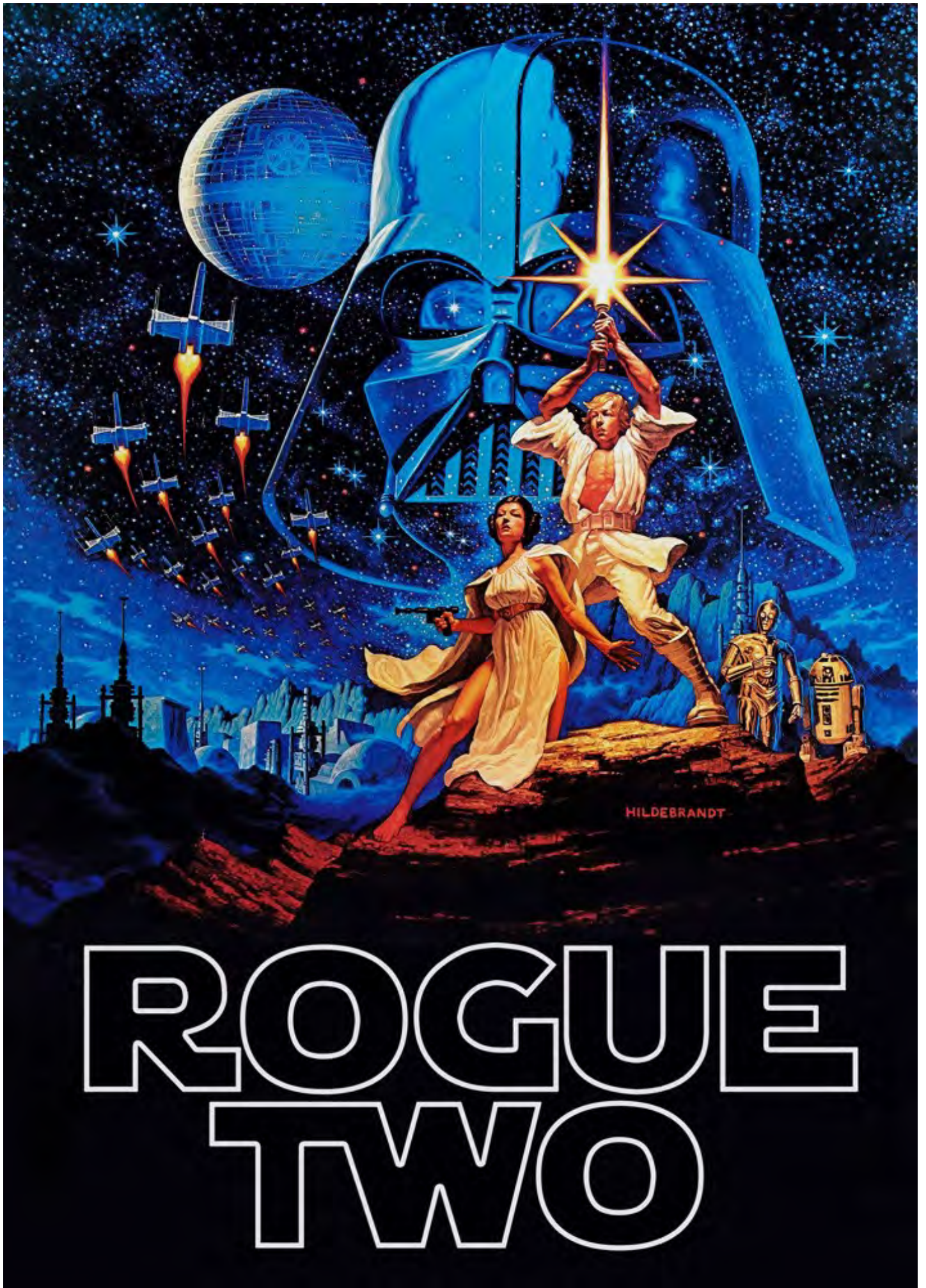
By David Ferguson

The one thing I like about a good movie is that they are often open to interpretation. Fans can come up with their own theories and, as long as the creator doesn't contradict the idea, I am happy to go along with them and often have some of my own. I knew a lot of fans had “shipped” Finn and Poe Dameron from the new trilogy but I didn't realise that so many agreed with my belief that Chirrut Îmwe (played by Donnie Yen) and Baze Malbus (played by Jian Weng) could be seen as a couple. Both characters are Guardians of the Whills. Chirrut believes in the force but Baze appears to have lost his belief and is now a warrior and mercenary. When the temple they were protecting gets looted and then destroyed, they lose their purpose and eventually join the others on their mission.

For me, the theory began to enter my mind while listening to their old married couple style bickering. It was furthered when Chirrut wanders off to help the others. Baze wishes him luck but Chirrut tells Baze that he doesn't need luck because he has him. It was sealed by Chirrut's death scene. Again, he wanders into action, this time while chanting his mantra “I am one with the Force, and the Force is with me.” He succeeds in his mission but is struck by an explosion. He dies in Baze's lap while Baze sits there, looking devastated. Chirrut tells Baze “Look for the Force and you will always find me”. He raises his hand as if to touch Baze's cheek but it falls. Baze, as if not wanting to live without him, stands up and suicidally charges into battle, while repeating Chirrut's mantra.

Some might not accept this theory but movies have a long history of “queer-coding” (subtextually coding a character as queer) especially during times when being queer was not as acceptable as it is nowadays. We live in better times for queer characters but Hollywood is still populated by nervous executives afraid of potential backlashes from fans (some *Star Wars* fans have a history) and certain markets (like China). So things can still be ambiguous and director Gareth Edwards responded in an ambiguous fashion when asked about his intentions for the characters. He said, with a slight smile, “I don't mind people reading into it.”





Rogue One

By Ken Marsden

It was a serious *SW* movie that harked back to *TESB*, which as we all know, is the best *SW* movie. It brought back the grimy, mechanical aspect of the original trilogy. It was great to see the original Stormtrooper back in action, as well as some really cool designs for other arms of the Imperial armed forces i.e Shore Troopers, tank commander, Death Troopers, and K2-SO obviously.

The casting was great - Genevieve O'Reilly was brilliantly cast as rebel leader, Mon Mothma. She resembles uncannily her predecessor Caroline Blakiston from *ROTJ*. So too does Ian McElhinney in the role of General Dodonna resemble Alex McCrindle from 1977.

The attention to detail was clearly at the forefront and anything not quite right would immediately stand out.

With the huge advances in film making technology we got to see one of the best space battles in all *SW* movie history. It was great to see the original (and the best!) X-Wings, and Y-Wings get another run out- and with some original footage of the pilots salvaged from 1977 too! And how about the Hammer-Head Corvette scene!! It's one of those movie segments you watch again and again.

But then *Rogue One* is chock full of those segments. We are introduced to many new worlds – Lah'mu, where Galen Erso and his family are hiding out, The Ring of Kafrene, a trading outpost built on an asteroid. Wobani, an Imperial prison labour camp. Yavin IV, first seen in episode IV, is given more exposure (and incidentally filmed in the giant Cardington airship hangars near my own home in Bedford). Imperial research base on the planet Eadu. The tropical planet Scarif where everything comes to a climax. And the desert planet Jedha.

The events on Jedha are fabulous- we see, for the first time, a Star Destroyer operating in-atmosphere. We are introduced to two great characters; Chirrut Imwe and Baze Malbus- Guardians of the Whills, both magnificent fighters and with a sardonic sense of humour. And we see more of K2-SO, a standout hit of character in the *SW* universe voiced and acted by Alan Tudyk.

There is a great collection of new characters- some of whom appeared in various animated spin offs- Jyn Erso, our main protagonist who gets drawn in to the rebellion in a bid to find and destroy her own father's secret Imperial weapons project. In a welcome continuing swing towards having more female leads in sci-fi and fantasy films, Felicity Jones turns in a great performance.

We also meet Saw Gerrera (Forest Whitaker), Orson Krennic (excellently nasty performance from Ben Mendelsohn), and Cassian. Not forgetting my favourite- Edrio Two-Tubes with the best costume IMO. There are fantastic supporting roles from Riz Ahmed, Mads Mikkelsen, and of course the unmistakable voice of James Earl Jones.

We probably never imagined we'd see Peter Cushing playing the sinister Grand Moff Tarkin again, but with ILM we can never say never (if you haven't already, you need to check out *Light and Magic* on Disney). Brought back to life again using CGI and motion capture stand-in actor Guy Henry, he is as forbidding as ever. Also resurrected is the original Princess Leia, again using advanced CGI and motion capture stand-in actor Ingvild Deila.

And of course- Vader. There's not much more can be said about his return to the fight after his demise in *ROTJ*. His meeting with Krennic is deliciously evil, and his appearance in the boarding tunnel to the Blockade Runner is nothing short of thrilling.

I think one of the better things about *Rogue One* is the absence of a main theme surrounding the Force. Make no mistake, it's there alright, as we see with Chirrut Imwe, but it's a side note. This is more of a war film in the vein of *The Guns of Navarone*, or *Where Eagles Dare*; an impossible suicide mission against a deadly enemy with superior firepower.

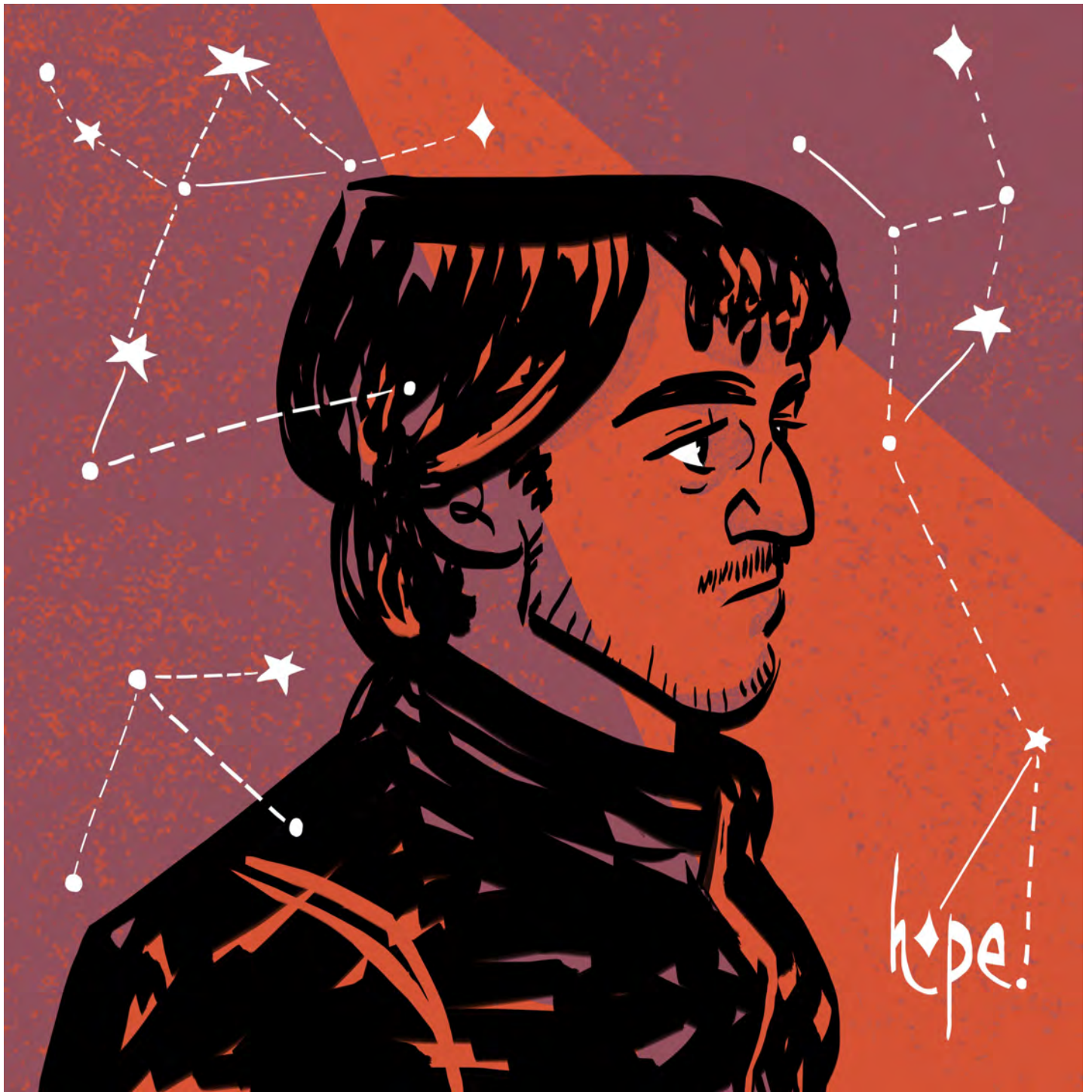
Another reason it was a success, I feel, is because it transports us back to when we all first fell in love with *Star Wars* 40 odd years ago – well, all of us of a certain vintage anyway. It expands what we loved about the originals; the look and feel of it. It's immersive and rich, and exciting and tragic. It's got something the prequels severely lack- a solidness, and a seriousness the new sequels could do with having a bit more of. There's a refreshing absence of gimmicks and unnecessary distractions (flying princesses,

space horses attacking Star Destroyers, etc). This is a film about the rebellion- a fighting film, a war film.

I think this also benefits Cassian Andor's character greatly- he's not very likeable. He doesn't crack jokes, he's not there for plaudits, and he certainly doesn't think himself a hero much less wish to be one. He fits the bill of an insurgent down to a tee. He's ready to assassinate Jyn's father- nothing personal, just business. He's an important SW character and deserves to be up there with the greats. Yet mention his name to someone only vaguely familiar with the movie and they don't know who he is. Diego Luna puts in a fabulous performance here.

At the time of shooting, the ominous news of reshoots and rewrites coming from the studio was quite scary. Were we to get another lame (Howard the) duck? We need not have worried- Gareth Edwards and his team did a great service to SW universe. *Rogue One* is my second favourite SW film after *TESB*, and I can't wait for the upcoming *Andor* series to take us back to the lower grimy levels of the rebellion against the Empire. This is *Star Wars*.





A brief note (and amazing art) from Maria Ku—

For me, *Rogue One* is an outlier among the *Star Wars* films because of its ending. Everyone dies! The bad guy, the good guys, the robot... Not to mention that its characters are genuinely morally grey: there's no "Han shot first" argument to be had here.

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Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/grrrenadine/?hl=en>

Rogue One, what might have been.

By Peppard Saltine

A *Star Wars* film made by a *Star Wars* fan who has grown up on *Star Wars* and is ready to take the franchise into a darker, (more mature, perhaps), place. A grittier approach to rebellion and resistance in a war torn galaxy far, far away.

(Edwards still says the best present Disney ever gave him was the opportunity to helm a *Star Wars* and to be part of the canon)

Behind the scenea another story is being told, (a story that will no doubt, one day become the subject of a documentary), and that story is one of production politics, the dance between money and art. Of course this dance is one that is performed on every production ever green-lit, no matter how much you care about the film, somebody has to pay for it and to that entity the whole endeavour is business. In this case it is also about the franchise, and that makes money interested more in the content of the film itself, (rather than just wanting a profitable return, they also want it to be on brand), which is absolutely detrimental to the artistic integrity of any film. Money doesn't know how to make art that's why it employs or buys artists. When that doesn't work they employ technicians.

With *Rogue One*, there was production interference quite early into primary photography. Allegedly Cassian Andor was an alien, (a Twi'Lek perhaps?), not a human, but then was changed because he was "too good looking to be an alien"? I wonder how things like this get past pre-production, but you must imagine the game being played by multiple conflicting interests, in this case my guess would be actors agent and production get into it a few days in and knowing the potential disruption to production Edwards concedes, (and chooses where to pick battles perhaps? Who knows?), but this is just the start of a path that will lead to approximately one third of the film being re-shot under the helm of Hollywood fixer Tony Gilroy, a full re-cut under his supervision and "arbitration" that will see him receive a script credit for the amount of story changes his shoot and edit will bring.

I think Gareth Edwards is great. However, he was at a serious disadvantage in this whole production. He was happy to be there. I hate the world when I say this, but being happy to be there was probably Edwards' biggest single disadvantage.

You are playing with the big toys now, and the people who own those toys don't care about you. Somebody told them you were the hot new kid who knows sci-fi, they didn't know what else to do so they let you play. But you can be kicked out at anytime if you don't play right, and you know that. So you try to comply, you pick your battles and just make the art, when that doesn't work you preserve your reputation and your career. What's the alternative? Fight the studio, walk or get fired, perhaps never make another big budget film?

So you can't knock Edwards for that, these are decisions that only he could make and to stay involved was probably best, (least heartbreaking?), for him. Who knows? Whenever he talks about it there certainly appears to be no animosity about the whole thing, and he credits the re-shoots with giving him the opportunity to shoot that Vader scene. After all, he had a relationship with Tony Gilroy already, (as Warner had employed Gilroy to fix Edwards previous film *Godzilla*), and that had been a positive(?) experience...

(As an aside here, I don't know how this could be the case. If someone 'fixed' my work, the next time their name was mentioned I would be leaving the production. I have never understood Edwards here, and I can only read it as a combination of wise career politics and best approach to non disclosure agreements.)

Disney always play down the re-shoots in the media, when it comes up. The usual line you will see is "re-shoots are not uncommon and most productions budget and schedule for them during pre-production", and this misleading because it is absolutely true. What it is not saying is that usually you are talking about "pick ups", and on even the biggest productions these are rarely longer than a week, often with smaller or technical crews, depending on the nature of the film, and often do not have full cast. Pick ups and re-shoots are an essential tool to the live action film maker, and should be viewed as such. In the edit sometimes certain things become apparent which were not apparent on the page or may not have come together on the shooting days, things arise which could be improved with a couple of shots here

and there or which lends for a better reading of the scene or content. That's what pick ups are for. Name a *Star Wars* film that has not done re-shoots. It does not exist.

When a film does re-shoots more than a couple of weeks it is usually a sign of serious difference in opinion between production and direction, or a change of tone required on part of production that goes deeper than simply exercising final cut privileges. (It's hard to fathom how much of this kind of thing gets past pre-production, but one must assume that high end players become involved at a certain level, see where their money is being spent and have an opinion on that. This usually happens a couple of weeks into primary photography as they start to see assembly of dailies, and the damage limitation begins. Most things get compromised upon and the ship sails on.)

So when re-shoots as significant as *Rogue One* happen, it is not uncommon to see directors leave productions. Often a director for hire finishes the film.

This is not the case with *Rogue One*, obviously. However, after primary photography, production either got cold feet on the piece of franchise art they had commissioned or they had seriously not been paying attention to what was happening. Cold feet is my guess! Ha!

I think they thought a grittier more downbeat approach to a space war film was good in theory but in seeing it in reality found it just too far outside the bounds of what money wanted for the franchise. Rebel suicide bombers in a desert city called Jedah was perhaps just too on the nose? No, because we still got that right? It was the last reel of the film that was most significantly altered from the director's cut, allegedly. We do know that there was a different set of beach scenes, from the content of the trailers, aside from that who knows? (My guess would be the whole side mission comms tower thing is Tony Gilroy and all that switch on a box in the middle of nowhere has got to be pulled for this thing to work nonsense, I could be wrong.)

Gilroy himself does not like *Star Wars*, so he doesn't care about anything canon or franchise related, he is there as an objective and trained eye, well versed in writing and directing for the screen. He is there to fix the film. Production hire him and he does their bidding, they say we have this film, you know Gareth right? Well, Gareth made this film for us and it's great, but it makes us feel icky sometimes and we see things we are not sure we understand, but we don't like them. We would like you to come round and tell Gareth he's made rubbish, and help him get it sorted.

Gilroy has said of the director's cut that it was "muddy", "in a swamp" and that the production was in "terrible terrible trouble" and that all he could do was improve on that. Maybe that is true, maybe they really did make a lot of mistakes.

Can you imagine the amount of "mistakes" it takes to get that far into production before fixing them? It basically means you green-lit a film by mistake, with the wrong director, the wrong concept, the wrong script and every step of the way following well established production standards and protocols everybody creatively involved was mistaken in their decision and approach to at least one third of the film, (if not the entire tone and approach to every element of the production), and nobody spotted any of these "mistakes" until, gazing upon Edwards directors cut they all, Edwards included, saw the errors of their ways and asked Gilroy to come dig them out of a mess of their own creation.

Anyway. That's the party line. Mistakes were made, we were all happy Tony could help us fix them. Tony repeatedly says in the press and media that he doesn't like *Star Wars* or care about the franchise and that he does not foresee a return to *Star Wars* in his career.

Three Years later Gilroy joins the production of "Andor", taking over the position of showrunner from Stephen Schiff (and somehow becoming "creator" of the show) and changes the premise radically to make it more accessible to the non *Star Wars* fan, more like a spy thriller and "with the hope that fans would be able to watch it with friends and family who are not interested in the rest of the franchise"

So that's me. I really dig on *Rogue One*, (especially first half, maybe), I wish Donnie Yen and Jiang Wen's characters had a better end to their stories and that there were more aliens in the main cast, (and the film in general), but it just might be my third favourite of the *Star Wars* cinematic films. I would love to see the director's cut, no matter how faulted or unfinished it might be. Disney have been emphatic in their response, that we will never see a release of that cut. Give it twenty years, maybe they will allow us behind that curtain. Until then we can only guess what might have been.

A REBELLION BUILT ON HOPE



Bricking It for Rogue One

Or a round up of some of the best Rogue One LEGO models
By James Shields

Since LEGO licenced *Star Wars* in 1999, there have been a lot of amazing LEGO sets on the theme, but impressive as the official sets are, they don't hold a candle to some of the ingenuity of LEGO fans. Fan creations, generally known as MOCs (for My Own Creation), capture some incredible scenes in amazing detail.

Personally, I've built a number of *Star Wars* scenes, but while I've had some ideas for *Rogue One* scenes I'd like to build, so far they have got sidelined for other projects. But I'll get around to one some day.

So in lieu of my own display, I thought it would be fun to pull together a collection of some of the best *Rogue One* models from around the web.

I've made sure to credit the builders, though some of them can be elusive, and for some I only have a username.

I'll start at the beginning of the movie, with a model by a builder who goes by the name Inthert. His model of Galen Erso on Lah'mu is titled "You're a hard man to find, Galen."





The next model is by someone who goes by the name BenBuildsLego, but I don't know much about him except he's from Chicago, and presumably is called Ben.

Many of Ben's models demonstrate that you don't need vast numbers of bricks to make amazing creations, and this one is no exception.

It's a model of the Jedha skyline complete with Star Destroyer and Saw Gerrara's hideout, and captures a surprising amount of detail for a small model.

Ben has some other excellent *Star Wars* skylines that are worth checking out.

Staying on Jedha, I had to include Boba-1980's "Ambush On Tythoni Square". There are so many amazing details in this one. It's really worth zooming in for a closer look.

ROGUE ONE

A STAR WARS STORY



While LEGO is a somewhat male dominated hobby, and LEGO Star Wars even more so, there are some amazing women builders.

I feel that no round up of *Rogue One* MOCs would be complete without Cecilie Fritzvold's larger scale model Chirrut Îmwe, about to teach some stormtroopers a lesson. I love the detail of the characters that she captured in basic LEGO bricks. I also thought the use of forced perspective by building smaller characters in the background is clever.



Next, I couldn't leave out IntegralBrick's model of Eadu, with a fantastic version of Krennic's shuttle. It's well worth watching the timelapse video of the build.

No collection of *Star Wars* scenes would be complete without space battles, and my absolute favourite from *Rogue One* is Simon Liu's model of two star destroyers crashing, complete with a tiny Hammerhead frigate. In addition to the . Well done Simon!





Of course we couldn't complete our roundup without including the Battle of Scarif. There have been quite a few versions, but my personal favourite is by RichboyJhae, built in collaboration with a friend. It's not quite the biggest version, but for me it has the best combination of detail and including the essential elements of the scene. It has a large 2 meter tall citadel, and some fantastic detail on the water and beaches..

The last model in the round up is from my friend Ben Cunningham. It show Darth Vader arriving on the rebel ship as the guards rush to get the Death Star plans away. This scene has been built a number of times, but I really like the way he lit one of his photos, as if it's entirely lit from Vader's lightsaber.

There are many other fantastic creations based on *Rogue One*, but it's never possible to include everything. I hope this gives a sample to whet your appetite. Google image search will find lots more if you are interested.



A Woman's Place?

By Phoenix

I'm a huge *Star Wars* fan. I grew up with a copy of Episode IV on VHS tape in my house, carefully recorded by someone who had bothered to pause the recording during the ad breaks so I didn't have to fast-forward them every time, and I watched it again and again as I was growing up. Episodes V and VI we didn't have at home but I saw and loved them, although the original film will always be my favourite, steeped as it is in childhood nostalgia.

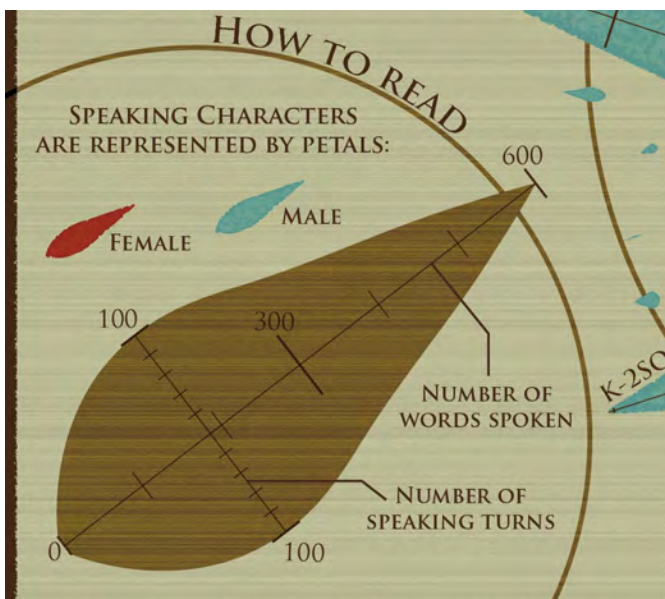


My relationship with the prequel trilogy was difficult, to say the least. I was just a few years too young to have seen any of the original trilogy at the cinema, and I was so very excited to get to see *Star Wars* on the big screen for the first time that I saw Episode I again and again. As that excitement faded, I was left with the sad realisation that I just didn't think the film was very good, which was sorely disappointing. I saw Episode II just once, but didn't like it much either, and Episode III went unwatched until I re-watched the entire story thus far, beginning to end, in the run up to the release of Episode VII. Episode III turned out to be the best of that particular crop, in my opinion, but if you can find the anti-cheese edits online they make Episodes I-III much easier to watch.

And so I approached the most recent films with considerable trepidation, wary of being over-excited and let down once more. It took a couple of viewings for me to decide I actually liked Episode VII, and I was feeling a little warmer towards this new incarnation of the franchise by the time *Rogue One* came along. There were very few female characters in the original and prequel films, always in supporting roles, and it could hardly be missed that this was the second *Star Wars* film in a row to have a female protagonist. I recall certain sections of the internet getting a bit hot and bothered about "all these women" at the time (see, eg, this article on screencrush.com [<https://screencrush.com/rogue-one-female-lead-angry-fans/>]), and given that reaction I went along to the cinema expecting, well, lots of women on screen, but even at first viewing it was pretty obvious to me that this was not a film which actually had very many women in it! A recent re-watch cemented that opinion, and I was very conscious that as well as only one of the main group of characters being female, there were also precious few women's faces in the background - from the group of Imperial engineers greeted as "gentlemen", to the band of plucky Rebels who volunteer to join Jyn, the background faces are a sea of men. The Rebel Alliance Council fares a little better, but still falls far short of anything approaching parity. Despite the main character's gender, this is very much a film dominated by men.

I have long been interested in how women are immediately seen to be dominating a situation if they have the temerity to simply exist in anything even approaching a realistic number - we do, after all, make up 51% of the population, but very rarely anywhere near 51% of a hollywood cast - and yet we accept huge numbers of men on screen without batting an eyelid. Whether in the foreground or in the background, women are often largely absent in many forms of fiction, and somehow this is considered normal. A friend of mine who runs tabletop roleplaying games once decided to gender-flip every character from an off-the-shelf scenario he was running, just for interest, as a small experiment. The party were completely confounded by the absolute absence of men in the village they were visiting, to the extent that the main plot was derailed when they decided that all the men must have been killed or kidnapped by an evil sect of women, and he was forced to add in some random male characters to try and get them focusing once more on the actual scenario - something you can be sure would not have happened if it was the women who were missing, and it was a similar feeling which crept over me as I watched *Rogue One*. Where were all the women in the *Star Wars* universe? I recall reading an article long ago, which google is failing to find for me to reference, which asked screenwriters to improve the representation of women simply by actively writing parity of background faces into the script. I found myself very much wishing that the *Rogue One* writers had followed that advice and specifically stated “a group of people is present, 50% of which are female”.

As someone who enjoys data art this seemed an obvious topic to explore, and I was pleased to find a relevant data set online. Data scientist and journalist-engineer Amber Thomas had already gathered the data for *Rogue One*'s speaking characters, which she visualised using bubble charts, and you can read all about her data collection methods and see her visualisation on her blog [<https://amber.rbind.io/2017/01/07/genderfilm/>]. Although she primarily visualises the number of words spoken, she also gathered the data for number of speaking turns, and I decided to try to find a way to display both. I've been wanting to do a petal diagram for some time as the flowers they produce are pretty as well as informative, and petal length and width seemed like a good way to show these two elements. I decided to use the traditional red and blue colours common to many *Star Wars* promotional posters to represent the gender of each character, and initially had hoped to make one big flower. Unfortunately the sheer number of speaking characters combined with the huge variation between those with the most and least words made this impractical so I decided to split them, just according to my own opinion, into Rebel and Imperial forces, with a separate “Other” category for those who were clearly neither or possibly both. The characters with the highest number of words in each group make up the petals of that flower, while petals for minor characters are scattered around them like confetti, since cramming them all onto the flower proved impractical.



That took care of the speaking characters but I was still keen to find a way to show the non-speaking characters, as the lack of women in the background had such an impact on me when I was watching the film. I had neither the time nor inclination to count them myself, so I turned to IMDB's Full Cast and Crew listing [<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3748528/fullcredits>], and categorised each character listed as male or female based on the gender of the actor, as given in their IMDB profile. I'm sure this misses a large number of extras who went unlisted, but it was the best I could do in the time I had. This combined with Amber Thomas' data gave me numbers for speaking and non-speaking male and female characters, and I added a stylised pie chart, in the form of one of my favourite death-star-related images from the original films, to show those. This isn't the

most readable of pie charts, due to the stylistic choices, but the actual numbers are also given for clarity, and as this is data art I allowed myself the indulgence of prioritising making it look cool!

I have long loved Hayley Gilmore's *Women's March* poster featuring Princess Leia and declaring “A woman's place is in the resistance” [<https://www.hayleygilmore.com/work#/womensmarch/>], a slogan

ROGUE ONE

A DATA VISUALISATION

SOURCES: AMBER.RBIND.IO/2017/01/07/GENDERFILM
IMDB.COM/TITLE/TT3748528/FULLCREDITS

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PHOENIX DATA ART
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ALL CHARACTERS



12% FEMALE
7% SPEAKING
5% NON-SPEAKING

88% MALE
57% SPEAKING
31% NON-SPEAKING

GALEN ERSO

300

OTHER

LYRA ERSO

HOW TO READ

SPEAKING CHARACTERS ARE REPRESENTED BY PETALS:

FEMALE MALE

100

300

NUMBER OF WORDS SPOKEN

NUMBER OF SPEAKING TURNS

0

100



ORSON KRENNIC

300

GOV. TARKIN

DARTH VADER

IMPERIAL FORCES

CASSIAN ANDOR

1200

900

600

100

100

300

BODHI ROOK

JYN ERSO

K-2SO

CHIRRUN IMWE

SAW GERRERA

GEN. DRAVEN

MON MOTHMA

BAZE MALBUS

ADMIRAL RADDUS

REBEL ALLIANCE

A WOMAN'S PLACE IS IN THE RESISTANCE?

which resonates strongly with me and, I'm sure, with many female *Star Wars* fans. But in spite of the occasional token "strong woman", even when the lead character is female, women are clearly largely absent from the *Star Wars* films. Even though this story is clearly Jyn's, I was surprised to find that Cassian speaks more words, and has more speaking turns, than her, and so I have presented this not as an assertion, but as a question for the viewer to consider. The style of this artwork also inspired me to give a slightly rough-edged, hand-printed effect to the graphics.

I'm pretty pleased with the overall result, especially given the time constraints I was working within. I feel it adequately conveys the scarcity of women on screen, in a visually pleasing manner, with a *Star Wars* feel to it. If I can find similar data sets for the other *Star Wars* films, I might be tempted to do a whole series of them.

You can find more information about this and my other data art projects, and buy prints and products featuring my work, at phoenixdataart.com [<http://phoenixdataart.com>]. All profits from sales of the *Rogue One* data visualisation will go to the Royal British Legion Red Poppy Appeal, providing lifelong support to serving and ex-serving personnel and their families.



Ann Gry,

a fan who ran away from Corulag

When I first saw *Rogue One* I couldn't believe my eyes. Am I really watching a Disney film where characters die violently every 10-15 minutes? And the heartbreaking finale...

Indeed. It's a peculiar one. Of course, the other episodes also deal with harsh topics and have their share of fight and loss. But to this date, *Rogue One* might be my most beloved instalment in the *Star Wars* films. Not because of the action, not because of Diego Luna (a teen crush from the days of *Dirty Dancing 2*, also dealing with the rebellion, by the way), but because of its lessons on hope and freedom.

I love Jyn Erso's character, she's not a good or a bad person, rather like the rest of the bunch in *Rogue One*. They are captives of circumstances. What would happen if you are put in that situation? How far would you go? Will you stand for the idea and blindly follow orders? Would that make you any different from a stormtrooper, as Jyn would ask Cassian?

Jyn starts out kind of as a millennial – not eager to participate in those stupid politics anymore, despite growing up with idealistic parents and forming her character among the Saw's people. Even if she's not a part of the Rebellion at first, we find her as a fugitive, still rebellious by nature. Call it fate or anything else, but Jyn was meant to live the story we saw. Brilliant writing that is. And we see Jyn's good nature, she's the heart to Cassian's determination. A circumstantial leader, too. I tremendously like this fatalistic approach to the *Rogue One* story, maybe it's my cultural background speaking, but I love to brood and reflect. And this is a perfect *Star Wars* episode over which to do so.

Another aspect of the film I cherish is the relationships and nuanced emotions that we witness. The half-smile on the Senator's face when she learns the news that Jyn went to Scarif; the 'Your behaviour, Jyn Erso, is continually unexpected'. K-2SO is just a treasure of itself, of course. That attitude towards droids that was always a theme in *Star Wars* provides enormous satisfaction for me and, well, hope for humanity. I like the way little Leia talks about this in *Obi-Wan Kenobi*, too.

But back to *Rogue One*.

The relationships! Jyn and Cassian's bicker, trust, comradery and tenderness to each other, without blatant scenes, but through hints, shoulder bumps and nods. I love that it keeps us wondering: is it just excitement and adrenaline, it could have never led to anything at all if not for dire events and decisions. But their embrace at the end, ever so heartbreaking due to our understanding that you wouldn't want to be alone at the last moment, and what else could you have wished for if not for this? To die with a sense of a duty fulfilled, with a friend who shares your ideals, by your side. The ultimate embrace. Forget the 'they did it for the Chinese market with kisses prohibition' argument, they did it right!

I watched *Rogue One* again the other day, to gather my thoughts for this *Journey Planet* issue, and thought the film did not lose its actuality but rather gained it. Painfully so.

I was born and lived on Corulag until early March this year. Now in exile, I realise how little do I know of freedom myself, what is the cost of it? I never had the luxury of political opinions. Trying to gain my voice, I am still afraid. I was called naive for saying 'Stop war'. It can't be stopped, I was told. It's already happening, you take sides. I can't take sides. I can't stand for any side that supports violence or weaponry production. Yes, naive. And *Rogue One* is a harsh reminder for me that reality is quite different. I know, *Star Wars* teaching about reality? Grow up! But bear with me, I am a naive girl, a science fiction fan, borderline delusional and escaping reality, running from the Empire that is no less vicious and no less violent, in a galaxy far far away from Jedha.

I am looking forward to *Andor*. And I'm looking forward to political prisoners walking free again, and for the violence to stop. I hope to see this day coming before I witness a death ray piercing the skies and a mushroom cloud of the blast rising on the horizon.

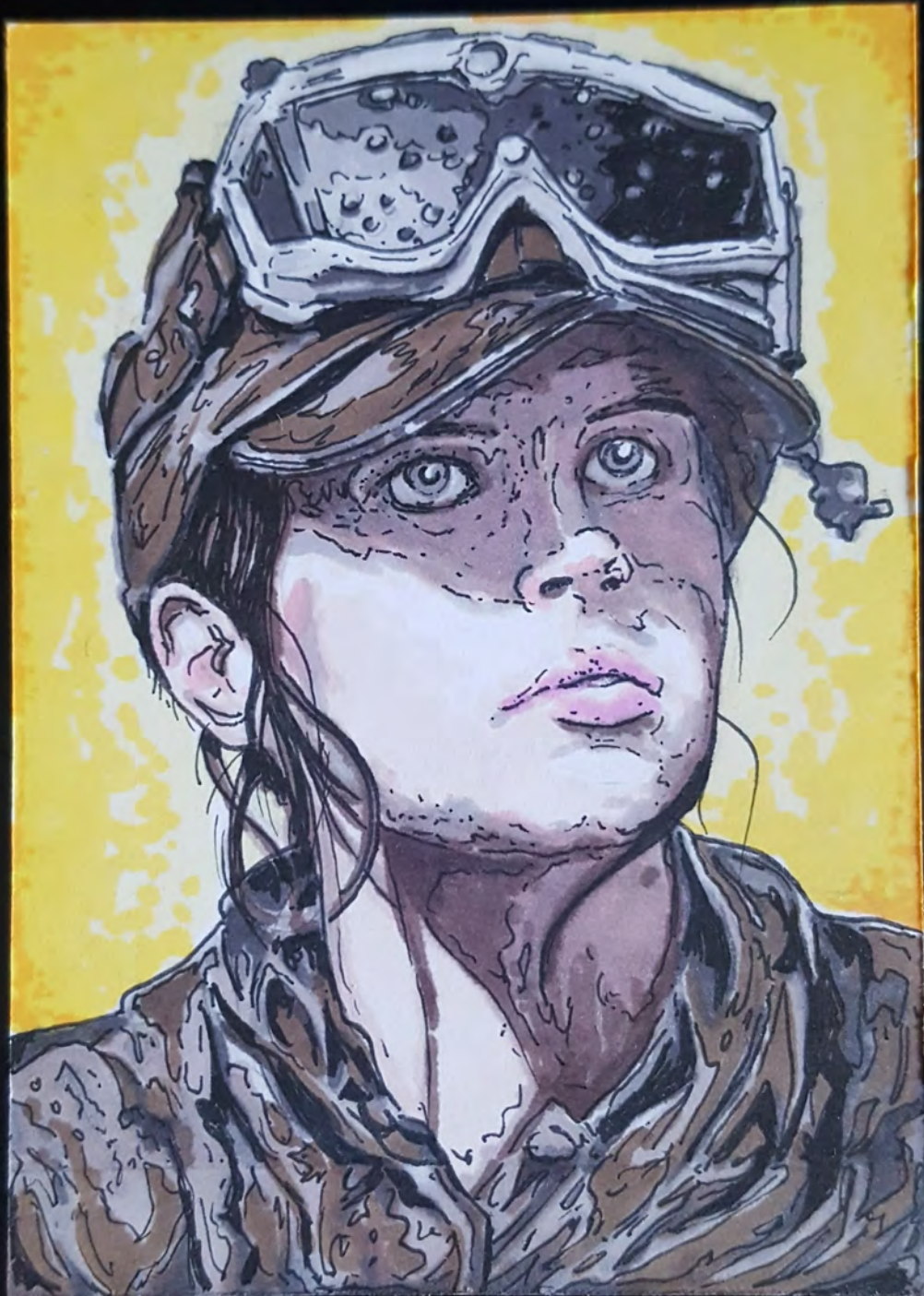
Rebellions are built on hope.

Yet this film might be a brutal reminder that there is more violence coming if anything is to change. And *Andor* is due to teach us the price of freedom and its meaning.

NOTE: Disney has suspended its business in Corulag as of March and people will not be able to legally watch *Rogue One* or *Andor* there.

The real names of countries have been changed to planets for the sake of safety of the author and your amusement, as well as to strengthen the point.

P.S. I also wish that after four enormously strong and dazzling major male-led tv shows in the *Star Wars* universe we will see a female lead who can engage us as much as Rey did in films. Humble hopes...



Rogue One The Comics

By James Bacon

Star Wars and Marvel comics have worked to bring stories to the readers, successfully since 2015. The *Star Wars*, *Darth Vader*, *Dr Aphra* comics all present stories in between and away from the main films. While Dark Horse comics produced over 800 comics in twenty-three years, we have now already had over 400 comics from Marvel, under the *Star Wars* banner, and that does not include the IDW titles, in seven years.

Rogue One was released as a film in December 2016. I was already fairly hyped, having been at Celebration Europe in June, where we got a lot of *Rogue One* feels, and hopes, and which was a fabulous convention.

The comics, the books, the merchandise, of course, flow, and as fans we can pick them up or ignore them. I have loved these extra's probably ever since I wondered what type of fighter pilot Anakin was in the Clone War, and what was the Clone War? The likes of the Radio Play that made mention of Biggs and Torsche station.

First though to the comics. Published in April 2017, this was the six issue mini series *Star Wars: Rogue One*, written by Jody Houser with art by Emilio Laiso and Oscar Bazaldua and Rachelle Rosenberg on colours. One must credit Houser and editor Heater Antos for bringing the story to comics in a very fine adaptation. Indeed, while the reckoning is that six comics is a movie, I would have loved Houser to have had eight in this instance, just to expand even more.

The standard covers are by Phil Noto, a superlative choice. His painted characters are always pitch perfect, while he has an amazing design aspect to his work, and the first issue captures all the sentiments and characters quite well. Noto's cover for issue 4, that of *Darth Vader*, is excellent, while the last issue, number six, again with a grouping of characters, is perfect, and gives the right prominence to Jyn.

There were ten variant covers for the first issue of *Rogue One*. Indeed, this may be seen by many as a way to eek out more cash from fans, but then again, for those who enjoy other artwork, or other artists, it initially offers a fine chance to have a different cover. John Taylor Christopher, who creates covers that look like the carded *Star Wars* figures, did a Jyn and Krennic as well as 3 figure mail away style covers. There was a blank sketch cover. Terry Dodson did a lovely action shot of Jyn taking down storm troopers, as the 1:25 variant, there was a Movie image variant, which was 1:15 and Joe Quinones did a group shot with K2 and a graphic of the Death Star as the 1:10 variant. Walmart had a special cover which was the movie poster. There was also a 40th anniversary of *Star Wars* cover which featured the Cantina band by Mike Mayhew.



ROGUE ONE
A **STAR WARS** STORY

The added gems that appear initially include more detail about Liana Hallik, for instance she is threatened by one of her inmates, which when one reflects on the movie, makes her stare across the cell as she wakes, so much more ominous. We see that Bodhi and Galen on Eadu have a strong connection and that Bodhi possesses a strong conviction to do the right thing. On the Ring of Kafrene we see Cassian dressed initially as an imperial.

Issue two of the comic had Baze and Chirrut by Phil Noto on the cover. There were two variants, a really lovely image of Rey by Jon McCoy which was a 1:10 variant but also concept artwork. The other variant is by Kris Anka a very colourful porthirrut, which was the 1:25 variant.

Issue number 3 has an amazing cover, featuring Galen, a Death Trooper, indicative lines of the Death Star and Krennic, Phil Noto doing a superb job. It is so very well done. This was the last issue to have a variant cover. The variant was a Duncan Fegredo Concept image, indeed of Jyn in a scene reminiscent but in a clever way of the film. Fegredo was a story board artist on the film, and I really appreciated that he did this cover.

The comic story delivers on many levels The interior art is very good, accurate and detailed, while capturing the action well. There are some heavy cuts, so some scenes are skipped, which is no doubt necessary yet there is much that adds to the story.

On Yavin 4, we see that Mon Mothma starts the conversation and offers to Jyn 'a chance for you to make a fresh start' who explained that she 'approved your extraction' and Jyn replies 'there's a bounty on your head'. There are visual flashbacks, to Saw and also we see an interesting conversation between Bail Organa and Mon Mothma. We see Jyn steal the gun that she says she found. The scenes where we see Jyn and Saw are insightful, we see him caring for her, training her and also she is at his side as a child while he argues with what one assumes are members of the Alliance. When Saw is at his end, there is a lovely moment where he says 'Steela' and there is a shot of Saw and his deceased sister Steela.

Other moments indicate the connection of Jyn, Baze asks Chirrut if they are Lackeys of the rebellion and why they follow, and Chirrut's response is lovely as he says of Jyn that its about her, and that she 'Shines'. Bodhi and Kaytoo bond over the imperial symbol and their reprogramming, We see an interesting

development of Mon Mothma as she hears the chatter about the Death Star and then speaks to Jyn. This is a nice moment of intimacy and connection, and one where Mothma does not patronise Jyn. Indeed with a level of honesty Mothma says 'I wont forget what we did to you, how much we took from you'.

We learn in the comic that Jyn was not welcome in the meeting of the council, and entered the meeting even though she was told to wait outside, and she says to bodhi 'this is a rebellion isn't it? Let's rebel' as we see her walk in and speak so strongly.

While it is good to see Cassian say, 'we believe you' once Rogue One departs there is an interesting piece with Radus who is pleased that Jyn went, recognising that this was a chance for them, and he orders his ship to be prepared.

The action flows well and the inevitable end while slightly rushed is well done, so for instance Leia's face is not seen, although we do not need it, as we know the story.

The team did a very good job here, and I admit that I would have loved a series by the same team about Jyn and her partisan years with Saw, and I expect as we get an Andor series, and not an Erso series, it may be unfortunately unlikely.



It's all in the ending

by Noelle Ameijenda

In the complex, multi-faceted universe that is *Star Wars*, *Rogue One* stands alone. While ‘*The Return of the Jedi*’ ends in a forest party for our heroes, *Rogue One* ends with a completely different party – two figures, alone on a beach, their doom approaching in a blinding flash of light.

It is a powerful, emotional moment and viewers might be wondering – where is the expected last-minute, death-defying stunt that saves our heroes? The unbelievable, bullet-dodging action that we have come to expect? No giant eagle flying in to swoop them away from the jaws of death? There is none, and our heroes go gracefully, acceptingly, into that good night, secure in the knowledge that they have succeeded in their impossible mission.

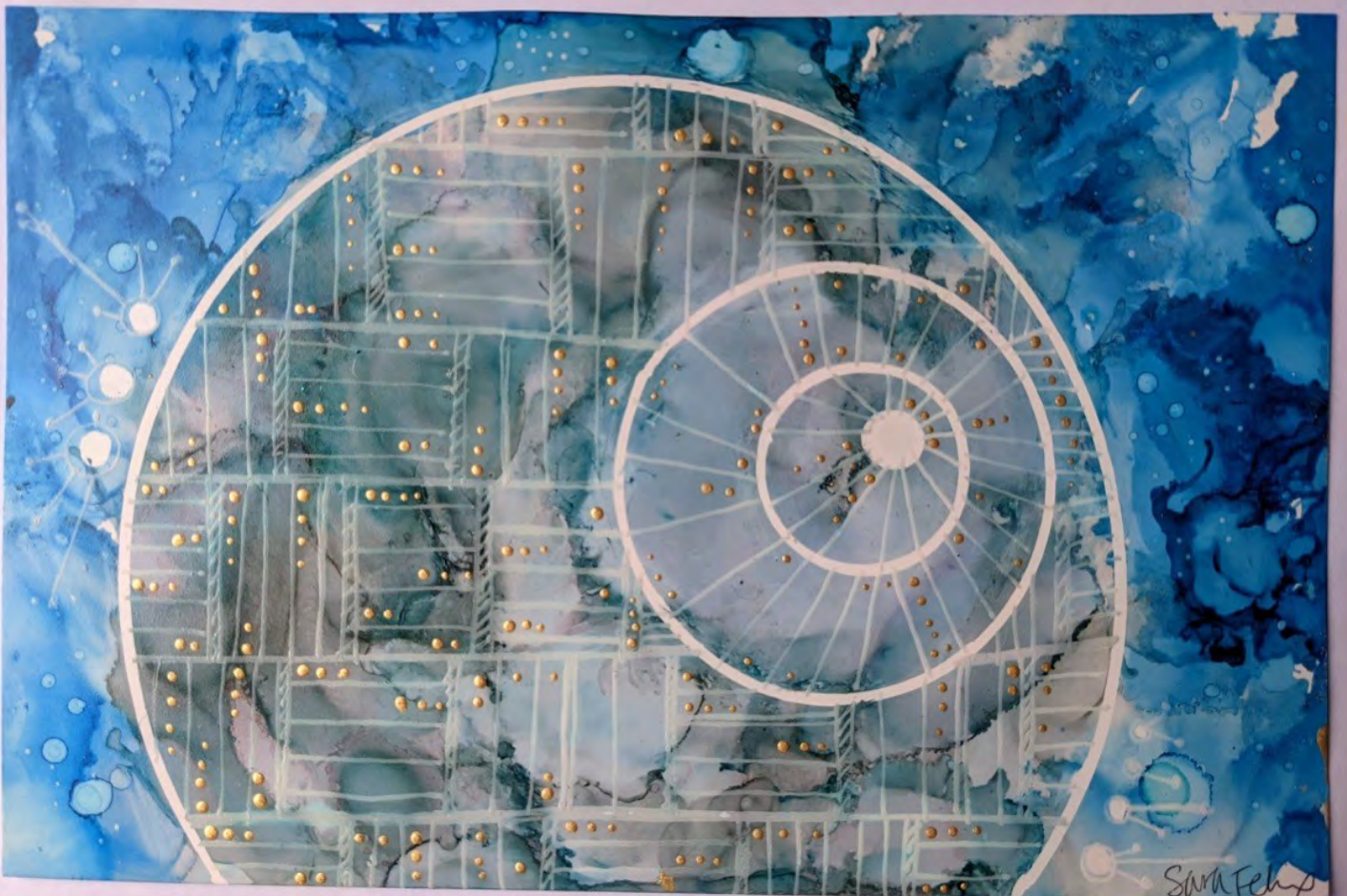
Sure, we've had many a beloved character die in *Star Wars* (the clue is in the name – its Star WARS, not Star Peace). However for me, *Rogue One* is unique, in that the main characters do not survive. This is brave. And viewers, particularly younger ones, will benefit from this hard lesson. Not everything magically works out in the end. Even in Disney.

Two memorable figures stood similarly alone on a beach near the end of ‘*Deep Impact*’ (1998), accepting their fate as the asteroid approached. Which brings me to the ending of the recent ‘*Don't Look Up*’ and the warning therein.

What do these tales teach us?

“What is it they've sent us?”

“Hope.”



Saw Gerraera

By James Bacon

Saw is a complex character. He appears in the *Clone Wars* cartoon series twenty years before *Rogue One*, and comes across as a narcissistic and arrogant if able fighter.

He fought against the separatists on his home planet of Onderon, who had effectively taken control and coerced the king. Stella Gerraera was his sister and Lux Bontari a politician and they formed the Rebellion on the planet and sought support from the Jedi Council, who decided not to send troops, but sent Jedi to train them, which they did. Anakin Skywalker, Ahsoka Tano and Obi-Wan Kenobi mentor and train the Onderon rebels. Relationships blossom, and one sees Stella and Lux grow close and a type of bond occur between Ashoka and Saw.

Saw assumed leadership, this does not go down well and is hinted at, and later as the group not only finds success but also wins over the populace, the rebels elect Stella as their leader. Saw is not a friendly character and is often sharp and unnecessary with Lux, and perhaps jealous of the relationship that he has, albeit only hinted at with his sister. Saw resents this decision, but goes on to support his sister.

Stella is a great character, she addresses the population and wins them over, and denounces the usurper king. One wonders if Saw listened to Stella, if it would have been better, but his character is flawed like that, and the story does not bring us to a place where he can do that. He is captured and tortured but he manages to turn a traitor general back to the rebels side which helps the fight.

Saw is quite harsh as Lux wishes to avoid civilian casualties and the fight moves into mountainous terrain. While heavy gunships are sent to attack the rebels, there is further failure from the Jedi Council to support the rebels, although we see Hondo Ohnaka and Anakin bring the rebels ground to air hand held rocket launchers, which work very well.

Saw is keen to use the launchers, and scores a direct hit, and then shoots down the last one, but it crashes where Stella and Lux are, and sends them flying off the edge of a cliff, and despite Ashoka's best efforts to save them both, Stella falls. Saw gets to her, and cradles her as she passes away, Lux and Ashoka looking on, and of course he somewhat blames himself, quite rightly, but not the story one would generally want.

We see Saw again in *Bad Batch* but it is only a short sequence and then of course we see him in *Rogue One*.

It is an unfortunate turn of events. I often feel that Stella bringing up Jyn would have been much more interesting, and we do not get to see a true challenge to Saw's narcissistic and arrogant ways. Frigging Stella doesn't achieve anything and he has no empathy for Lux and brushes off Ashoka and is just an unlikeable character.

There could have been so much more here, and Saw had great potential, as a rival, or challenger inappropriately to Steele who would have been good on the council, sometimes one wants a bit more from the storytelling and this is definitely the case here with Saw.



Rogue One Instant Fanzine

Will Sliney:

What did you like about Rogue One?

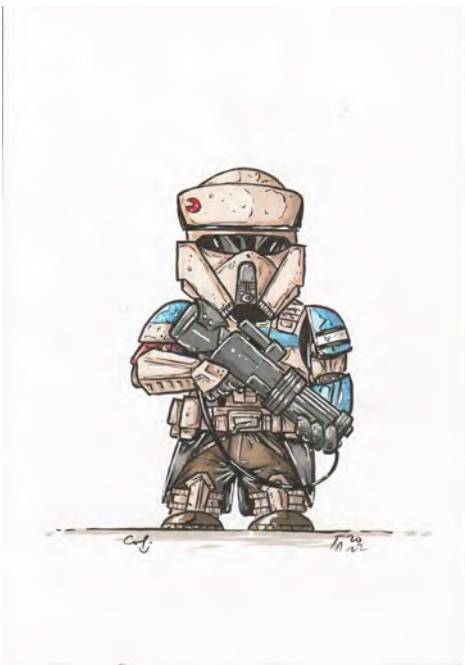
The entire cast of characters, the grounded feeling to it

What was it about Jyn Erson or Cassian Andor that felt appealing?

It was nice to witness the story of two characters not tied directly into any jedi action.

How did you feel it worked, within the overall Star Wars timeline leading to A New Hope?

Fab. That ending was incredible.



Ruairí Coleman:

What did you like about Rogue One?

Of all the recent *Star Wars* movies I think *Rogue One* is the only addition to the franchise that struck the right balance of nostalgia, action and humour, while also injecting a level of nuance that modern audiences have come to appreciate.

For instance, I thought that - for the first time on film - the Rebel Alliance felt like a real resistance organisation made of up actual factions, each with their own dynamics and motivations. It injected a whole new sense of urgency and agency into the story that I never knew a *Star Wars* film could benefit from.

What was it about Jyn Erson or Cassian Andor that felt appealing?

I just loved how none of their motivations were based in the established lore of *Star Wars*. Sure, Jyn's father is the creator of the Death Star, but Jyn's story is completely removed from Darth Vader and/or The Emperor. Yes, those mainstays of the franchise have a presence in the film, but the Sith rulers of the empire don't care a

jot for Jyn Erson or Cassian Andor, and the characters succeed regardless.

Jyn and Cassian show that you can have great characters in the *Star Wars* universe and they don't have to wield a lightsaber or fly the Millenium Falcon: they don't have to become embroiled in the Skywalker saga to influence the franchise, they just have to be compelling people that the audience can root for; and it was mission accomplished on that front with *Rogue One*.

How did you feel it worked, within the overall Star Wars timeline leading to A New Hope?

I loved how the film started out as a story about a daughter abandoned by her father, trying to escape the obligations of the rebellion, and grew into a prequel to *A New Hope* without ever sacrificing the stories of Jyn and her allies.

I was so invested in what they were doing that the scenes building towards *A New Hope* were always enjoyable, nostalgic nods to the franchise for me, but they weren't integral to the fate of Jyn and Cassian (I guess the reverse is true, actually). I never found myself wondering how it all fitted together while watching the film and, with the tragic ending, I didn't leave the cinema pondering the continuity of the grander franchise... which is a long way for me to say "I didn't notice if it worked or not!" but also a testament to what a great film *Rogue One* is on its own merits.

Victor D'Agostino II:

What did you like about *Rogue One*?

VD'A: I enjoyed that it instilled hope after tragedy on multiple levels.

What was it about Jyn Erson or Cassian Andor that felt appealing?

VD'A: Cassian fit very well. He knew jobs had to be done for the grater good. He wasn't necessarily proud of things he did to justify the means but his heart was driving him to a common goal.

How did you feel it worked, within the overall *Star Wars* timeline leading to *A New Hope*?

VD'A: The story telling had the same feel as the animated series *Rebels* but still felt like original trilogy. It had a natural feel between them.

Star Wars always feels like a used world, how did *Rogue One* relate to the real world for you?

VD'A: Great care seemed to be taken to show that era of ships and uniforms so that if you watched *Rogue One* and then *A New Hope* it feels connected. In addition the environments and planets feel in universe as well

What would you have like to see that you didn't, or had hoped for?

VD'A: My only gripe was at the end with Leia, it was obvious it was her. The CG "Deep Fake" used for her face was the only disconnect for me. I'd have just wanted the Data Card handed to her and she reply to the Rebel that it was "Hope" but have the camera shoot over shoulder to reveal that

Keith Burns

What did you like about *Rogue One*?

Keith Burns: It was the first of the *Star Wars* films that felt like a war film, beautifully shot and sat in my favorite period of the *Star Wars* films with all the hardware I could hope for. It introduced K2 who's as believable as person, he had so much character in his movement and expression. It instantly became my favorite *Star Wars* film and remains so.

What was it about Jyn Erson or Cassian Andor that felt appealing?

Keith Burns: I completely believed in them and their motives. I know it's grim but I loved that everyone died in the film, it shows the gritty brutal side of war that's hinted at in a comment by Mon Mothma in *A New Hope*. I found it very moving when Cassian and his kind volunteer for the mission to redeem themselves from all the horrible things they've done in the name of the Rebellion.



How did you feel it worked, within the overall Star Wars timeline leading to A New Hope?

Keith Burns: I was thrilled to see how it lead directly into *A New Hope*, it showed Darth Vader to be highly driven, dark as hell and at his scariest at the end. I loved that it ended with my favorite ship too, the Corellian Corvette which opens *New Hope*.



Bill Rudloff

What did you like about Rogue One?

I enjoyed the whole thing. The mix of new characters and old (with the digital resurrection of Peter Cushing and the “young” Carrie Fisher) was a fun dynamic to unfold.

What was it about Jyn Erson or Cassian Andor that felt appealing?

They both went through a lot individually and were lonely people as a result of their circumstances. But in the end they found peace within each other as the final end came their way so they weren't alone when they died.

How did you feel it worked, within the overall Star Wars timeline leading to A New Hope?

It definitely worked better than the original prequels, even though we got a little bit of references to those three films. But it being designed to be an immediate lead up to the beginning of *A New Hope* (and fleshing out the beginning of that film too) worked out very well in the end.

Star Wars always feels like a used world, how did Rogue One relate to the real world for you?

I don't usually think about that. I try and enjoy the fictional history set up within the story. I mean, we don't have snarky robots...yet!

What would you have like to see that you didn't, or had hoped for?

Well more of that directly before *A New Hope* world, which we are getting with the new *Andor* series. A Prequel to a Prequel!

Michael Shannon

What did you like about Rogue One?

I was impressed by how they took a throwaway line from *A New Hope*, and fleshed it out into a full story - with great characters.

What was it about Jyn Erson or Cassian Andor that felt appealing?

For Jyn Erso, I really liked the humor and chemistry she had with K-2SO.

How did you feel it worked, within the overall Star Wars timeline leading to A New Hope?

Much better than I expected! I wasn't a big fan of the prequel trilogy, but I liked how well this integrated with the original trilogy. The way it ended, slightly overlapping *A New Hope* was a very nice touch.

Star Wars always feels like a used world, how did Rogue One relate to the real world for you?

Overall, I thought they did a good job with making the world feel lived in. They made Jedha City, in particular, feel like it had been there for a very long time.

What would you have like to see that you didn't, or had hoped for?

I didn't really have a lot of expectations going in, since the premise seemed so flimsy (just that one throwaway line). So it really ended up exceeding my expectations.

Maybe the one thing I'd have liked to see explained better is how the Rebellion manages to get so many ships, especially fighters, and why those are so different from the Empire's. Seems like rebellions usually end up with cast-offs from the government they are fighting, unless they are supplied from an outside power. But that's really across all of the movies - and is probably explained better in one of the novels or comics.



Enditorial.

By James Bacon

This was a quick zine, started about two weeks ago, and really was from a desire to do something about *Rogue One* and especially for me, Jyn Erso before *Andor*.

It is a real bone of contention for me that we have *Andor*, but we don't have Erso. In so many respects an opportunity is lost and we miss out on a great character, and seeing more of her. I would have loved to see a child soldier, who skirts the fine line between rebel, terrorist and brutalised child, such potential to reflect on so many wrongs in our own world, lost.

I wanted us to think about *Rogue One*, and my goodness, we have had some amazing thoughts and amazing art - thank you very much to all our contributors, near and far, we are exceptionally lucky with this issue's contributions, and it is a wonderful mix of craft and care and amazing art. Thank you.

We lost a Hugo Award at Chicon 8, but had a blast. It was amazing to be with some of the *Journey Planet* finalists, and as ever we have an amazing photo.



Thanks again to Erin Underwood, Jean Martin, Sara Felix, Vanessa Applegate, Chuck Serface, Errick Nunnally, Evan Reeves and Steven H Silver. And of course to all our contributors. Ye all make *Journey Planet* amazing. I was sorry we lost, especially with two first time finalists, but so pleased and honoured to be a finalist.

Likewise I was sorry to see Sara Felix and Iain Clark lose the Fan Artist Hugo, of course part of me hoped for a tie, and they both win, but it was great to see them recognised for their amazing work.

Chicon 8 was rather good, it was a busy weekend, there was drinking and dancing and laughter, and it was busy. Glasgow 2024 won their Worldcon bid, which was exciting and I was pleased to see that our Ukrainian fannish friends making the Worldcon community more pointedly aware of the unseemly conduct of a Worldcon Guest of Honour. We had some amazing *Journey Planet* conversations, and hopefully now more issues. We have a number of issues at various stages of completion, and we have a plan to do a Robin Hood issue, which is fun as I got out the HTV-produced early eighties *Robin of Sherwood* series, with amazing music by Clannad.

As ever though, much thanks, another good issue here thanks to our contributors, and especially co-editor Alissa Wales

James



Art.

LA 2022