



November 1, '87

PRESIDENT REAGAN ON "ALIENS"

By William L. Moore

Some would call them visionaries; others, maybe, prophets of doom. But perhaps, just perhaps, they knew something which couldn't be told, but which affected them so greatly that they felt a compelling need to at least hint at it in occasional public pronouncements. Whatever the reasons, the record is there. Its interpretation is open to anyone who chooses to give it meaning.

As early as 1945, General "Hap" Arnold was openly speaking about the possibilities of an "interstellar war" in our future. It was interesting dialog, but few at the time treated it seriously. People's minds were occupied with far more serious problems associated with cleaning up the mess caused by a recent terrestrial conflict.

Ten years later, in October of 1955, another of terrestrial warfare's greatest generals, Douglas MacArthur, was quoted by the then mayor of Naples, Italy, (Achille Lauro) as saying that "a thousand years from now, today's civilization (will) appear as obsolete as the stone age." According to Lauro (N.Y. Times, 10-8-55), MacArthur had voiced the belief to him in a private audience that "because of the developments of science, all the countries on earth will have to unite to survive and to make a common front against attack by people from other planets."

In his farewell speech before a West Point (NY) audience on July 4, 1961, MacArthur again opened the topic. "We speak now," he said, "in strange new terms of harnessing the cosmic energy, of ultimate conflict between a united human race and the sinister forces of some other planetary galaxy." Did he actually know something, or was he just rambling?

Curiously, one who is very good at rambling, President Ronald Rea-

gan, has made at least two similar pronouncements in public and one in private since the beginning of his term in 1981.

In June, 1982, following a private White House screening of Spielberg's then soon-to-be-released film "E.T.", the President quietly commented to Mr. Spielberg himself, "You know, there aren't six people in this room who know just how true that really is." Unfortunately, a press of people coming forward to congratulate him prevented Spielberg from pursuing the point further. (The source of this information is none other than Mr. Spielberg himself, who told the story to our associate, Jaime Shandera, shortly after it happened.)

On December 4, 1985, Mr. Reagan brought up the subject again, this time while addressing a group of high school students in Fallston, Maryland. Sounding very much like General MacArthur, he said, "...I couldn't help but say to (Gorbachev), just think how easy his task and mine might be... if suddenly there was a threat to this world from some other species from another planet outside in the universe. We'd forget all the little local differences... between our countries... and find out once and for all that we really are all human beings here on this earth together."

Similar thinking was repeated in a speech before the United Nations General Assembly, on September 21, 1987: "In our obsession with antagonisms of the moment," said Reagan, "we often forget how much unites all the members of humanity. Perhaps we need some outside, universal threat to make us recognize this common bond. I occasionally think how quickly our differences worldwide would vanish if we were facing an alien threat from outside this world. And yet, I ask you," he went on, "is not an alien threat already among us? What could be more alien to the universal aspirations of our peoples than war and the threat of war?"

What it all means, of course, is anybody's guess. There are some, however, who point to a still ambig-

(Concluded on page 5...)



FOCUS

November 1, '87

"Dem Bones",
Cont. from pg. 4.

don't mix?)

One day, "dem bones is gonna rise again" and we will be forced to amend our beliefs and admit that man on the American continent is much, much older than previously thought. Until then, Damn them bones and everything else I don't agree with!

- END -

WEEPING MADONNAS EXPLAINED?

According to an article in the July 4, 1987 edition of the London (England) Daily Telegraph, devotees of the religious cult of Rosa Mystica have revealed a "trade secret". It seems that because the plaster of Paris religious statues which they manufacture retain a large quantity of water, they routinely seal these statues with a coat of protective plastic. If by some chance, a hole is scratched in the plastic, water will seep out over a period of time.

Washing out any suggestion of a miraculous event; all one has to do is cut two holes in the place where the statue's eyes are, and the figure will appear to cry.

(Credit: The Gate, Vol. III, No. 3, January, 1988; via J. & C. Bord and COUD-1.)

"REAGAN...", Concluded from page 6:

uous statement made by Mr. Reagan on February 20, 1987 while speaking to a group of conservative political activists in Washington, D.C. "I learned a lesson in my former profession," said the President, "so let me give you a tip: We're saving the best stuff for the last act."

*** **

MYSTERY OBJECT FOUND IN CHROMOSOMES

In the summer of 1986, seven staff members of the Department of Medical Genetics of Churchill Hospital in Oxford, England, banded together to write a very strange letter to the respected British scientific journal Nature. The letter, printed in the "Scientific Correspondence" section of the September 25, 1986 issue (p. 300) read as follows:

SIR- The very tiny object shown below, much like a fragmented crossword in appearance, was recently found in one of our routine chromosome preparations for prenatal diagnosis following amniocentesis. But what is it?

Is it a man-made device? Packing text as binary coded information on the miniature scale (the scale bar is 10 micro-meters) would seem advantageous. Or is it a naturally occurring substance? None of the possibilities we have been able to think of would seem to be appropriate for amniotic fluid, so if anybody is able to suggest an answer to this mystery we would like to have it. We are as intrigued as we are ignorant.

(Signed) John Wolstenholme, Ian Harlow, & 5 others.

Included in the letter was this picture:



While a number of letters suggesting answers to this mystery were printed in subsequent issues of Nature, a positive identification of the substance in question has yet to be made. The most common solution offered was that the remains of a pennate diatom, a micro-organism commonly used in laboratory filters and in the production of rubber bulbs placed on the ends of glass pipettes, had somehow gotten into the amniotic fluid sample during the testing process. However, examination of a photo-micrograph of real diatom fragments which accompanied one of the letters, shows only that the silica skeletons of these primitive life forms bear some resemblance to the mystery object, but are by no means identical to it.

Other solutions offered were that the object might be a fragment of "tubular myelin" (a surfactant), or "a well-preserved area of... nuclear lamina", a substance which lines the "nucleoplasmic surface of the inner nuclear membrane which supports the interphase chromatin." In the first of these instances, comparison of the mystery object with an electron-micrograph of tubular myelin shows once again only a similarity, not an actual match-up. In the second case, the letter writer himself points out that the "average crossover space" of human lamina is four to five times larger than the mystery object.

Those who have read Budd Hopkins' Intruders may well have other questions to ask. FWP advisor Dr. Richard Neal (M.D.) is keeping an open file on the case and deserves the credit for passing the above information to FOCUS. Readers wishing to communicate further on this matter may write to him c/o this newsletter. (WLM)

ARKANSAS MUFON NEWSLETTER

Issue 010

July/August, 1988

ARKANSAS NEWS

Plans for the forthcoming fall meeting in Mena, Arkansas are continuing. It will be held the first weekend in October, on the 1st and 2nd. As last year, the meeting will be informal, and we will be able to accommodate ten persons here in Posey Hollow. Some of the members have already responded and we have reserved space for them. Any others wishing to do so can contact us.

We do request that all persons planning on attending the meeting notify us so that proper facilities and food can be arranged for. For those who will stay in motels, there are quite a few in the Mena area--all reasonably priced.

EUREKA SPRINGS UFO CONFERENCE

Plans are also being developed for an annual spring conference in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. The last one was so successful and the comments on it so favorable that a modified version of the conference will be held every Spring at the Inn of the Ozarks, in Eureka Springs.

Next years date will be April 28th and 29th, which is on a Friday and Saturday. The conference will be permitted to continue through Sunday morning as well. It will be organized and managed by the Arkansas contingent of UFO activists and MUFON members, and will be called the OZARK UFO CONFERENCE.

Discussions on the program and other arrangements and activities will take place at the fall meeting this October. Suggestions and recommendations will be solicited not only for this next conference but for future ones as well. As the arrangements become firm, you will be informed accordingly.

NEW CENTRAL REGIONS DIRECTOR

George Coyne, Michigan State Co-Director, has won the election for the position vacated by Dan Wright's appointment to the MUFON Board of Directors as Investigations Chief. George and his wife, Shirley, have done a remarkable job as Co-Directors in Michigan. George will bring all of those administrative skills, drive, and enthusiasm to his new position.

NATIONAL UFO INFORMATION WEEK

MUFON has scheduled the week of August 14 through the 21st as National UFO Information Week throughout the country. State Section Directors in and around Fort Smith, Little Rock, Fayetteville, and other urban areas, are urged to set up some form of program for disseminating information regarding UFO's and to make known their presence and readiness to answer questions regarding the phenomenon and to accept reports concerning unusual aerial activity.

1988 SYMPOSIUM

According to all reports, the MUFON Symposium held at Lincoln, Nebraska was a huge success. The theme for this years Symposium was "Abductions and the E.T. Hypothesis." However, papers were presented on diverse topics. The program was highlighted by an unprecedented 4 hour session on the Gulf Breeze case presented by Walt Andrus and Dr. Bruce Maccabee.

The Annual MUFON Award Plaque for the most outstanding contribution to UFOlogy for 1987-88 was presented to Bud Hopkins along with a check for \$250 from the Fund for UFO Research in memory of Isabel L. Davis.

The MUFON Award for Meritorious Achievement in a UFO investigation for 1987 was presented to Stan Gordon, State Director for Pennsylvania. This was for Stan's report of a Greenburg, PA sighting on September 3, 1987.

Dan Wright chaired a State Director's meeting, the first of what will become an annual event. The meeting covered a comprehensive agenda and was designed to promote greater efficiency of State organizations.

* * * * *

IS SOMETHING BREWING ON THE HORIZON?

There have been some interesting developments in recent months which, when coupled with some past official pronouncements, and other more current disclosures, raises pointed questions on the UFO enigma and governmental responses to it.

Consider this. General MacArthur, on several occasions, including his farewell speech at West Point, implied that the nations of the world would have to unite to defend earth against attack from other planets. William Moore, in his book, "The Roswell Incident," aptly demonstrated an official cover-up of what, from every shred of evidence, was a crashed UFO. Larry Fawcett and Barry Greenwood went even further to prove government complicity in a cover-up in their book, "Clear Intent."

Barry Goldwater once asked General Curtis LeMay if he could gain entry into the room that allegedly contained UFO materials. LeMay stormed at Goldwater that, "not only can't you get into it but don't you ever mention it to me again."

Special Agent Richard Doty of the Air Force, according to Linda Howe, showed her briefing papers for the President of the U.S. and offered to show her additional UFO material.

Moore, Shandera, and Dr. Friedman presented compelling and plausi-

ble evidence of MJ-12, a secret, high level group formed by Harry Truman after the UFO crash at Roswell, NM, demonstrating once again the government's deep concerns in this regard.

Now comes John Lear, son of the late Bill Lear, of Learjet and Lear Siegler fame, who was an airline pilot and had flown missions for the CIA and other federal agencies. He makes some even more startling assertions that the U.S. government has been consorting and communicating with aliens for over 20 years.

A recent magazine article on the Stealth Bomber dealt with advanced technologies employed. The article quoted one Colonel as saying, "We have things that are so far beyond the comprehension of the average aviation authority as to be really alien to our way of thinking." The article went on to say that it was rumored that some of the systems involved force-field technology and gravity drive-systems, and that "these designs were not necessarily of Earth-human origin."

In June, 1982, President Reagan, after viewing a private screening of "E.T." with Steven Spielberg, said, according to Spielberg, "there aren't six people in this room who know just how true that really is." In 1985, Mr. Reagan hypothesized on the prospects of an attack from outer space which would result in a firm alliance with the Soviets. He repeated this same thought in a speech at the United Nations and several more times recently.

The INF treaty wasn't even ratified when the President went to the USSR in June, 1988. Congress quickly ratified it and it was flown to Moscow where it was signed. The ink was hardly dry before Russian military men arrived at U.S. inspection stations and U.S. personnel arrived in the USSR. That has to rank as the fastest implementation in the history of government operations. Why the rush after 40 year of cold war? Why the lack of expected intense debate?

All of this may not be hard evidence, but it is food for thought. We may be on the threshold of a new development in the UFO puzzle.

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E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial (1982)

Directed by [Steven Spielberg](#)

Writing credits [Melissa Mathison](#)

Genre: [Family](#) / [Adventure](#) / [Fantasy](#) / [Sci-Fi](#) [\(more\)](#)

Tagline: He is afraid. He is alone. He is three million light years from home. [\(more\)](#)

Plot Outline: A group of Earth children help a stranded alien botanist return home. [\(more\)](#)

User Comments: [Sly retelling \(more\)](#)

User Rating: ★★★★★★☆☆ 7.7/10 (12255 votes)

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E.T.

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Overview

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THE DAILY DIARY OF PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN

LOCATION

CAMP DAVID, MARYLAND

DATE

JUNE 27, 1982

TIME

DAY

11:08 a.m. SUNDAY

PHONE

P = Placed

R = Rec'd

11:08

11:50

The President went horseback riding around Camp David.

2:27

2:40

R

The President talked with his Assistant for National Security Affairs, William P. Clark.

2:51

3:21

The President and the First Lady flew by Marine helicopter from Camp David to the South Grounds of the White House. For a list of passengers, see APPENDIX "A."

3:24

The President and the First Lady went to the second floor Residence.

6:20

The President and the First Lady went to the Blue Room.

The President and the First Lady hosted a private dinner and movie party. For a list of attendees, see APPENDIX "B."

The President and the First Lady greeted dinner guests.

6:59

The Presidential party went to the Red Room.

The Presidential party had dinner.

8:03

8:05

R

The President talked with Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig, Jr.

8:12

The President, the First Lady and dinner guests went to the White House Library.

8:20

The Presidential party went to the White House theatre.

8:22

10:22

The Presidential party watched the movie "E.T."

10:22

The President and the First Lady returned to the second floor Residence.

11:10

The President retired.

EJ



MARINE HELICOPTER MANIFEST

June 27, 1982

FROM: CAMP DAVID, MARYLAND
TO: SOUTH GROUNDS, THE WHITE HOUSE

The President

The First Lady

David C. Fischer, Special Assistant

Mark Weinberg, Assistant Press Secretary

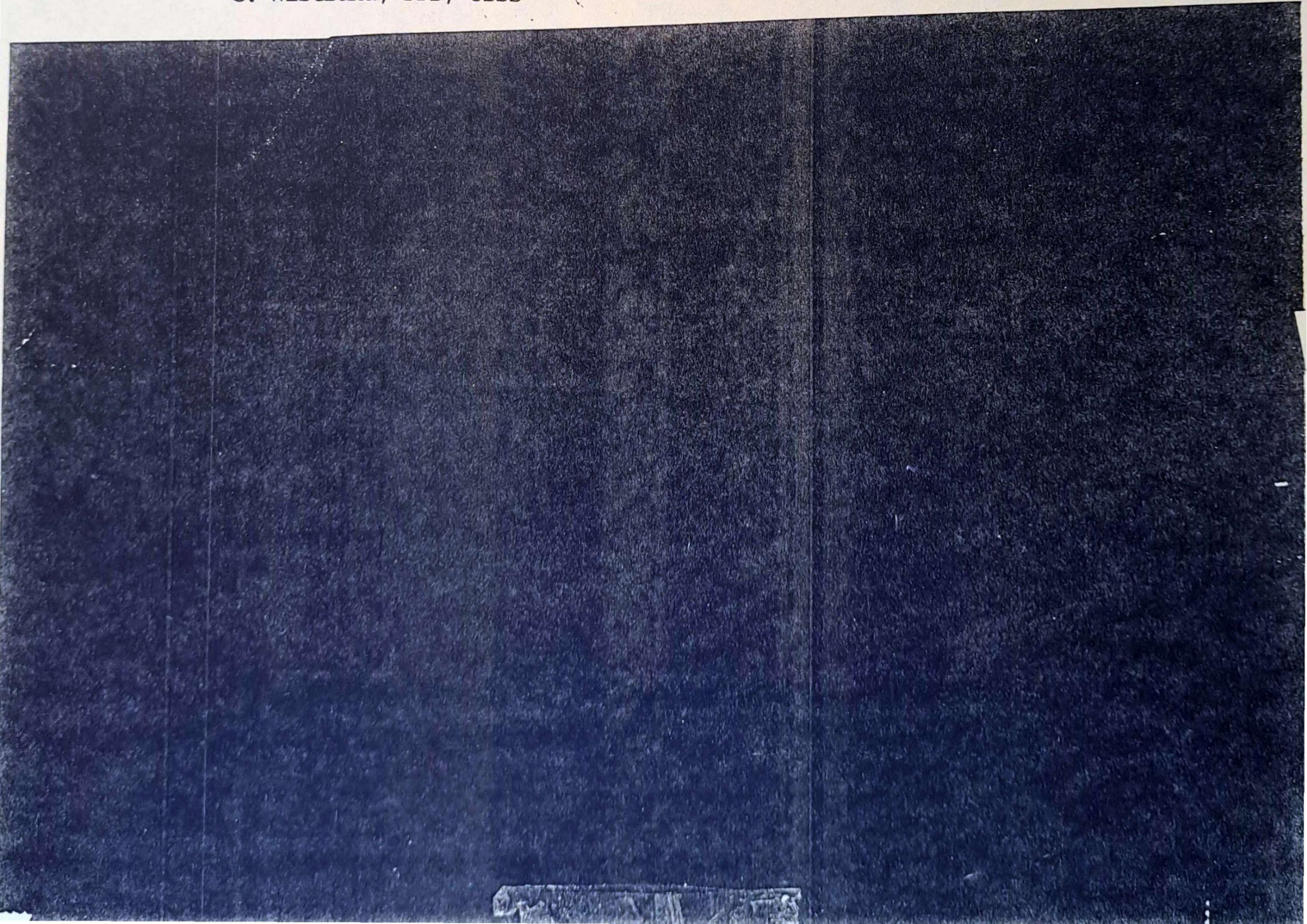
Shirley Moore, Staff Assistant, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff

Dr. Daniel Ruge, Physician

Maj. John P. Kline, Jr., Marine Corps Aide (outgoing)

Maj. Peter T. Metzger, Marine Corps Aide (incoming)

G. Wistrand, PPD, USSS



THE DAILY DIARY OF PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN

LOCATION

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

DATE

JUNE 28, 1982

TIME

DAY

8:00 a.m. MONDAY

PHONE

P = Placed
R = Rec'd

TIME	TIME	PHONE	EVENTS
8:00			The President and the First Lady had breakfast.
9:06			The President went to the Oval Office.
9:06	9:47		The President met with: James A. Baker III, Chief of Staff Edwin Meese III, Counsellor Michael K. Deaver, Deputy Chief of Staff
9:47			The President went to the Situation Room. He was accompanied by: Mr. Baker Mr. Meese Mr. Deaver
9:47	10:27		The President participated in a briefing on the U.S. Space Program with administration officials. For a list of attendees, see <u>APPENDIX "A."</u>
10:27			The President returned to the Oval Office.
10:28	10:45	P	The President talked with Earl B. Dunckel, E.B. Dunckel and Associates, Washington, D.C.
11:52	11:57	R	The President talked with Attorney General William French Smith.
12:00			The President returned to the Cabinet Room.
12:00	1:00		The President participated in a Issues Briefing luncheon. For a list of attendees, see <u>APPENDIX "B."</u>
1:00			The President returned to the Oval Office.
1:48	1:53	P	The President talked with [REDACTED]
2:17	2:35		The President met with: Clarence Pendleton, Chairman of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Mr. Meese Craig L. Fuller, Assistant for Cabinet Affairs Edwin L. Harper, Assistant for Policy Development Melvin L. Bradley, Special Assistant, Office of Policy Development
2:40			The President returned to the Cabinet Room.



THE DAILY DIARY OF PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN

LOCATION

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

DATE

JUNE 28, 1982

TIME

DAY

2:40 p.m. MONDAY

PHONE

P = Placed

R = Rec'd

2:40	3:53		The President participated in a Cabinet Council on Legal Policy meeting. For a list of attendees, see <u>APPENDIX "C."</u>
3:53			The President returned to the Oval Office.
4:00	4:35		The President met with [REDACTED]
4:27		R	The President was telephoned by Attorney General Smith. The call was not completed.
4:38		P	The President telephoned Secretary of Labor Raymond J. Donovan. The call was not completed.
4:39	4:42	P	The President talked with Attorney General Smith.
4:47	4:49	R	The President talked with Secretary Donovan.
4:54			The President went to the White House Library.
4:54	5:17		The President taped messages for: Santa Barbara July 4th Observance July 4th Message to the Nation Statue of Liberty - Ellis Island Project
5:17			The President returned to the second floor Residence.
5:29			The President and the First Lady went to the State Floor Residence.
5:29	6:00		The President and the First Lady hosted a reception for Eureka College Scholarship Committee and Major Donors. For a list of attendees, see <u>APPENDIX "D."</u>
5:56		R	The President was telephoned by [REDACTED] The call was not completed.
6:00			The President and the First Lady returned to the second floor Residence.
6:02	6:12	P	The President talked with [REDACTED]
7:30			The President and the First Lady had dinner.
10:55			The President retired.
			EJ



APPENDIX "A"
Attendance confirmed by
Pat Rawson, NSC
All present.

BRIEFING ON THE U.S. SPACE PROGRAM POLICY
The Situation Room
June 28, 1982

PARTICIPANTS:

The President

The Vice President

Edwin Meese, III, Counsellor to the President

James A. Baker, III, Chief of Staff and Assistant to
the President

Michael K. Deaver, Deputy Chief of Staff and Assistant
to the President

Richard G. Darman, Assistant to the President and Deputy
to the Chief of Staff

William P. Clark, Assistant to the President for National
Security Affairs

Charles P. Tyson, Deputy Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs

Robert C. McFarlane, Deputy Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs

Admiral John M. Poindexter, Military Assistant to the
Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

Craig L. Fuller, Assistant to the President for Cabinet Affairs

Gilbert D. Rye, Staff Member, National Security Council

George A. Keyworth, II, Director, Office of Science and
Technology Policy



6/30/82

Thursday, July 1

9:10 am

The President and Mrs. Reagan depart
for California

12:30 pm

Lunch with Western Editors and Broadcasters
in Los Angeles (Karna Small)

Approx.
4:00 pm

To the Ranch

ON Ranch

Friday, July 2

Ranch

Saturday, July 3

Ranch

Sunday, July 4

Independence Day

10:00 am N

Attend Space Shuttle Landing at Edwards Air Force
Base

ON Ranch

Monday, July 5

and

Tuesday, July 6

Los Angeles

Wednesday, July 7

AM

Back to the Ranch to remain until 11th

Sunday, July 11

The President and Mrs. Reagan return to Washington



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White House Movies Viewed by the Reagans

2/28/81	Black Stallion
3/27/81	Tess
4/21/81	Being There
4/20/81	Short Subject
4/20/81	Breaker Morant
6/14/81	Four Seasons
7/24/81	Victory
9/5/81	The Fan
9/30/81	French Lieutenant's Woman
10/25/81	Ragtime
11/19/81	Mao to Mozart
12/8/81	Reds
1/31/82	Man of Iron
8/8/82	Stagecoach
10/24/82	Knute Rockne
1/30/83	Gandhi
2/12/83	The Sting II
8/1/87	Top Hat
9/18/88	Yankee Doodle Dandy

Camp David 1981 Movies

1/31/81	Tribute
2/14/81	Nine to Five
3/6/81	Breaking Away
3/7/81	Oh God, Book II
4/25/81	The Competition
4/26/81	Bloodline
5/8/81	The Mirror Crack'd
5/9/81	Lion of the Desert
6/5/81	Going in Style
6/6/81	The Jazz Singer
6/19/81	Superman II
6/20/81	For Your Eyes Only
7/10/81	Raiders of the Lost Ark
7/11/81	Atlantic City
7/25/81	Arthur
7/31/81	First Monday in October
8/1/81	Ffolkes
8/28/81	The Postman Always Rings Twice
8/29/81	The Fan
8/30/81	The Legend of the Lone Ranger
9/11/81	When Time Ran Out
9/12/81	Gallipoli
9/19/81	Eye of the Needle
9/25/81	That's Us in America
9/25/81	Only When I Laugh
9/26/81	On Golden Pond
10/2/81	Outland
10/3/81	Chariots of Fire
10/9/81	True Confessions
10/10/81	Continental Divide
10/11/81	Paternity
10/30/81	Rich and Famous
10/31/81	Heartland
12/11/81	Mr. Krugers Christmas
12/12/81	Absence of Malice
12/13/81	Taps
1/8/82	One Way Passage
1/9/82	Whose Life is it Anyway
1/22/82	Adam's Rib
1/23/82	Grand Hotel
2/12/82	Missing
2/13/82	Inchon
3/12/82	Shoot the Moon
3/13/82	Evil Under the Sun

3/20/82 Death Trap
4/3/82 The Awful Truth
3/19/82 Das Boot
4/17/82 Victor/Victoria

FILMS PRESIDENT AND MRS. REAGAN VIEWED AT CAMP DAVID

Chronologically Arranged

820612	Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the White House
820613	Notorious
820618	Firefox
820619	I Ought to be in Pictures
820625	Poltergeist
820626	Diner
820716	Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid
820717	Author! Author!
820723	Mid-Summer Night's Sex Comedy
820730	World According to Garp
820731	Rocky III
820814	Mr. and Mrs. Smith
821001	Who Dares When
821002	My Man Godfrey
821015	My Favorite Year
821016	Gregory's Girl
821022	Betrayal
821030	Still of the Night
821119	Honky Tonk Man
821120	Six Weeks
821210	Best Friends
821211	Sophie's Choice
830107	Tootsie
830108	Kiss Me Goodbye
830121	Verdict, The
830122	Razor's Edge
830204	Man from Snowy River
830205	Frances
830311	Year of Living Dangerously
830312	Table for Five
830318	Highroad to China
830319	Lovesick
830415	Black Stallion Returns
830415	Republic of China: Season Beacon
830416	King of Comedy
830513	Blue Thunder
830514	Max Dugan Returns
830521	Octopussy
830602	Return of the Jedi



830603	Star Chamber
830604	War Games
830617	Trading Places
830618	Bandwagon
830708	Better Late than Never
830709	Heart Like a Wheel
830716	Mr. Mom
830723	North by Northwest
830729	Zelig
830730	Twilight Zone: The Movie
830805	Some Like it Hot
830806	Spellbound
830916	Curse of the Pink Panther
830917	Grey Fox
831007	Never Say Never Again
831008	Lonely Hearts
831009	Cross Creek
831014	Romantic Comedy
831015	Star is Born
831028	Never Cry Wolf
831029	Big Chill
831104	Educating Rita
831105	Wicked Lady
831202	Yentl
831203	Terms of Endearment
831209	Running Brave
831210	Gorky Park
840106	Gunga Din
840107	To Be or Not To Be
840113	Singing in the Rain
840114	Dresser, The
840120	Funny Girl
840121	Suspicion
840203	Funny Lady
840204	Broadway Danny Rose
840224	Unfaithfully Yours
840225	Witness for the Prosecution
840309	Rear Window
840310	Scandalous
840316	Vertigo
840317	Splendor in the Grass
840330	Splash
840331	Misunderstood
840503	Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan
840504	Moscow on the Hudson



840505	Stone Boy
840511	Romancing the Stone
840512	Natural, The
840519	Bounty
840525	Champions
840526	Iceman
840527	Virginia City
840615	Way We Were
840616	Somewhere in Time
840622	Bedtime for Bonzo
840623	Star Trek III: The Search for Spock
840629	Rope, The
840630	Karate Kid
840706	Operation Petticoat
840707	Chattanooga Choo-choo
840713	Winning Team
840714	Ghostbusters
840721	Last Starfighter
840825	Night into Morning
840907	Red Dawn
840908	Phar Lap
840929	Bear, The
841006	Woman in Red
841013	Cloak and Dagger
841201	Oh God, You Devil
841207	Garbo Talks
841208	Comfort and Joy
841221	Mass Appeal
850104	Killing Fields
850105	Flamingo Kid
850111	Passage to India
850112	Soldier's Story
850201	Micki and Maude
850202	Dutch Dancing
850209	Cotton Club
850222	Witness
850223	Witness
850308	Gods Must be Crazy
850309	Purple Rose of Cairo
850419	Chisum
850420	Sylvester
850517	Lord Jim
850601	Topaz
850607	Shooting Party
850608	Big Jake



850614 George Stevens: A Film Maker's Journey
850615 Lion in Winter
850621 View to a Kill
850622 MacKenna's Gold
850705 Cocoon
850706 Pale Rider
850726 Back to the Future
850727 Falling in Love
850802 Showboat
850803 Silverado
850907 Hellcats of the Navy
850914 To Catch a Thief
850920 Man from Laramie
850921 Love is a Many Splendored Thing
851011 Glenn Miller Story
851101 Glenn Miller Story
851102 White Nights

860111 Young Sherlock Holmes
860118 Prizzi's Honor
860119 Color Purple
860201 Hannah and her Sisters
860221 Jagged Edge
860222 Chorus Line
860228 Winchester 73
860301 Iron Eagle
860307 Trip to Bountiful
860308 Guess Who's Coming to Dinner
860314 Murphy's Romance
860315 Woman of the Year
860411 Just Between Friends
860412 Money Pit
860418 Winning Team
860419 Lucas
860509 Sweet Liberty
860510 African Queen
860530 Top Gun
860531 Boy Who Could Fly
860606 Cobra
860607 Short Circuit
860613 Karate Kid II
860614 Rio Bravo
860620 Legal Eagles
860621 Ferris Bueller's Day Off
860711 Awful Truth
860712 Magnificent Seven



860725 Pirates
 860726 Room with a View
 860801 Last Days of Patton
 860802 [Name of film not listed]
 860912 Fine Mess
 860913 Tough Guys
 860919 That's Life
 860920 Rustlers Rhapsody
 860926 'Night, Mother
 860927 Courage
 861003 Ride the High Country
 861004 Marlene
 861107 Soul Man
 861108 Red River
 861114 Mission
 861121 Hasty Heart
 861205 Crocodile Dundee
 861206 Hoosiers
 861219 Crimes of the Heart
 861220 Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home

870116 Brighton Beach Memoirs
 870117 For Whom the Bell Tolls
 870213 An Affair to Remember
 870214 Radio Days
 870221 Over the Top
 870306 Along Came Jones
 870307 Billy Galvin
 870313 Children of a Lesser God
 870314 Meet Me in St. Louis
 870320 Raising Arizona
 870321 Some Kind of Wonderful
 870425 Secret of My Success
 870522 Pirate, The
 870523 Harry and the Hendersons
 870529 You Were Never Lovelier
 870530 Maltese Falcon
 870619 Roxanne
 870620 Bridges at Toko-Ri
 870626 Untouchables
 870627 Hucksters, The
 870703 Swingtime
 870704 Funny Face
 870718 Dragnet
 870725 Roman Holiday
 870807 Nadine



870808	Whistle Blower
870911	Happy New Year
870912	Ninotchka
870918	John Huston and the Dubliners
870919	My Life as a Dog
871002	Knute Rockne, All American
871003	Princess Bride
871009	Baby Boom
871010	Surrender
871023	Rooster Cogburn
871024	Dancers
871106	Whales of August
871107	Love in the Afternoon
871113	It Happened one Night
871114	Hope and Glory
880108	Broadcast News
880109	Empire of the Sun
880115	Throw Momma from the Train
880116	Last Emperor
880122	Moonstruck
880123	Dead, The
880206	Bad Day at Black Rock
880219	Yankee Doodle Dandy
880220	Treasure of Sierra Madre
880311	Shoot to Kill
880312	Switching Channels
880506	Eighteen Again
880507	Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid
880513	Follow the Fleet
880514	Searchers
880610	Crocodile Dundee II
880611	Funny Farm
880701	This is the Army
880702	Who Framed Roger Rabbit?
881008	Running on Empty
881009	Crossing Delancey
881022	That's Entertainment, Part II

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that studio was in precarious financial condition. "After *Jaws*," recalls Phillips, "the money spigots opened."

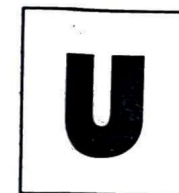
Spielberg's newfound success also brought with it a new level of anxiety, for he found that people kept asking him, "How are you going to top *Jaws*?" But, said Phillips in 1977, "Steven is a *mensch*. The only change in him is that he's stronger now and better able to get what he wants. His values are the same. He could have had his head turned by the success of *Jaws*, but all it did was give him more toys to play with. The interesting thing now is that he's still maturing as a person. He's mastered his craft. I think his films will change now as his experience deepens. In other words, he's only going to get better."

E L E V E N

WATCH THE SKIES

"IT IS GOOD TO RENEW ONE'S WONDER," SAID THE PHILOSOPHER. "SPACE TRAVEL HAS AGAIN MADE CHILDREN OF US ALL."

—RAY BRADBURY, *THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES*



UNLIKE most of the science-fiction movies Spielberg grew up watching, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* takes a benign view of human contact with extraterrestrials. The aliens in Spielberg's film don't carry ray guns or threaten to blow up the Planet Earth. They aren't fire-breathing creatures with horns and tentacles, but childlike figures with spindly limbs, large craniums, and shy, beatific smiles. They are emissaries of goodwill, communicating through a dazzling display of light and music. And they are received in similar spirit. Spielberg's optimistic vision of interplanetary contact marked a radical departure from the Cold War xenophobia that characterized most sci-fi movies in the 1950s, when fear of space aliens served as a metaphor for America's phobia about Communism.

The Jewish filmmaker who grew up thinking of himself as an "alien" in Middle America, and whose family was not far removed from its immigrant roots, gravitated toward the point of view of the outsiders in *Close Encounters*, seeing their arrival and influence in only the most positive, transforming light. Spielberg often has been accused of romanticizing suburban conformity, but *Close Encounters* paints a harsh picture of the dull, repressive midwestern community where the UFOs make their first appearance. Munici-

pal power repairman Roy Neary (Richard Dreyfuss)* yearns to escape from his Muncie, Indiana, surroundings to share the company of fellow "aliens." Roy's "whole belief structure is shattered," Spielberg commented. "... He had to go through ... I guess you could call it a 'socially dislocating awakening'; and without this cultural shock there is no way he would have been ready or capable or willing to step on that ship and leave the parameters of our astronomy."

Close Encounters and *Schindler's List* form contrasting yet complementary thematic bookends in the trajectory of Spielberg's career to date. *Schindler's List*, Spielberg's most powerful confrontation with reality, depicts the cruelty with which the world too often treats those it considers "alien," and yet, while facing this bitter fact, the film still manages to find a solitary ray of hope. *Close Encounters*, Spielberg's most spellbinding dream of the transcendence of mundane reality, celebrates the potential for universal brotherhood, while offering in its purest form what the director called "my vision, my hope and philosophy."

THE origins of *Close Encounters* trace back to Spielberg's experiences watching a wondrous meteor shower with his father as a young boy in Phoenix. The film germinated in his mind throughout his adolescence, when he absorbed vast quantities of science-fiction books, movies, and TV shows, and watched the desert skies over Camelback Mountain through his front-yard telescope.

Two seminal cinematic memories from childhood stood out in Spielberg's mind when he began work on *Close Encounters* in the 1970s. The first was the image of the mountain from the terrifying "Night on Bald Mountain" sequence in *Fantasia*. The second was a soothing memory from another Disney movie: the song "When You Wish Upon a Star," performed in *Pinocchio* by Cliff (Ukulele Ike) Edwards as Jiminy Cricket. "I pretty much hung my story on the mood the song created, the way it affected me emotionally," Spielberg said. "The mountain became the symbolic end zone of the movie, and everything danced around that."

His 1964 rough draft for *Close Encounters*, *Firelight*, seemed to vacillate on the question of whether a meeting with alien kidnappers was something to be feared or something to be welcomed. Perhaps it was Spielberg's youthful ambivalence toward his own ethnic identity, and his resulting tendency to identify more with the dominant culture, that was keeping him from fully accepting the "alien" within him. According to producer Michael Phillips,

* Spielberg originally wanted Jack Nicholson to play the lead role in *Close Encounters*, but Nicholson's schedule would have required a two-year delay in the start of production. "I wrote *Close Encounters* for a forty-five-year-old man," Spielberg said, "but Dreyfuss talked me into casting him in the film. ... Richard heard me talking about *Close Encounters* all through *Jaws*. ... He had to listen to about 155 days' worth of *Close Encounters*. He contributed ideas, and finally he said, 'Look, turkey, cast me in this thing!'"

Spielberg still seemed somewhat conflicted on the subject in the preliminary stages of work on *Close Encounters*: "I think my biggest contribution was to convince Steven that the aliens would be friendly. He wasn't sure that, dramatically, you could have a climax of the meeting of these two species based on the sense of wonder alone. I remember arguing a great deal, saying, 'If they were this advanced, they wouldn't come to squash us. Would we? If we found lower life on Mars, would we enslave it or would we give help to it?' But he got into it, and went beyond it, and came up with this cornucopia at the end. That's why I think *Close Encounters* is like *The Day the Earth Stood Still*." Historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr., on the other hand, questioned the innocent optimism of *Close Encounters*: "[H]ow can we be so sure that a civilization sufficiently in advance of our own to put its spaceship on Earth will regard us with any more consideration than white intruders from Europe regarded the Indians of the American continent, the blacks of Africa, or the primitive peoples of the South Pacific? ... Let us pray that the future dreamed of in this humane, attractive, brilliant movie turns out to be right."

Like *Firelight*, but on a far more sophisticated level, *Close Encounters* is an eclectic compendium of sci-fi movie motifs and archetypes. Its closest affinities are with the handful of movies that departed from the Cold War norm by depicting space aliens as relatively benign, including *The Day the Earth Stood Still* and *It Came from Outer Space*. One of Spielberg's favorite sci-fi writers, Arthur C. Clarke, also was a major influence; both Clarke's 1953 novel *Childhood's End* and his story "The Sentinel," the source of Stanley Kubrick's 1968 classic film *2001: A Space Odyssey*, deal with aliens helping earthlings reach a higher plane of spiritual evolution. Somewhat more covertly, Spielberg also drew from his favorite films in other genres. Although he credits Hal Barwood and Matthew Robbins with suggesting the plot about a kidnapped child, Spielberg evidently was inspired by the treatment of that theme and some visual elements in John Ford's Western *The Searchers*, which he watched twice while on location for *Close Encounters*. Spielberg also echoed the scenes of family tension in Frank Capra's *It's a Wonderful Life*. He has noted that the theme of "ordinary people in extraordinary circumstances" (as François Truffaut's ufologist character puts it in the film) gives *Close Encounters* affinities with both Capra and Hitchcock.

"During *Close Encounters*, Steven used to see one or two movies every night," cinematographer Vilmos Zsigmond recalls. "Every night he was watching movies and getting more ideas. They had storyboarded everything; we had four sketches to do every day. Then Steven would see a movie and we would add sketches—suddenly four sketches became five we had to do, and five became six. One day Steven was complaining to the crew, 'Gotta shoot fast.' Earl Gilbert, an old, experienced gaffer [head electrician], said, 'Steven, if you would stop watching those fucking movies every night, we would be on schedule.'"

CLOSE Encounters melds such purely fictional storytelling elements with the extensive post-World War II reports and folklore about UFO sightings. The modern "flying saucer" phenomenon dates from Spielberg's infancy, when Kenneth Arnold reported sighting nine bright saucerlike objects over the Pacific Northwest in June 1947. The possibility of visitors from other planets stimulated an extraordinary mixture of fear and anticipation, especially among baby boomer children prone to fantasizing.

Spielberg's desire to escape into otherworldly fantasy was especially acute. In his 1959 book *Flying Saucers: A Modern Myth of Things Seen in the Skies*, Carl Jung suggested that a belief in UFOs stems from "an emotional tension having its cause in a situation of collective distress or danger, or in a vital psychic need." The Cold War and collective anxieties about the dangers of nuclear war helped stimulate that tension in Spielberg's formative years. It may not have been coincidental that the widespread revival of interest in UFOs during the early 1970s occurred at a time when the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal were causing an unusually high degree of "collective distress" in the American psyche; Spielberg's 1973 pitch of *Close Encounters as dealing with "UFOs and Watergate"* suggests that such a connection existed in his mind. His family problems during adolescence and difficulties finding social acceptance among his peers also stimulated his fantasies of extraterrestrial contact. Another psychiatrist who has studied the UFO phenomenon, Kenneth Ring, noted that when a child from a dysfunctional family learns "to dissociate in response to the trauma," he is "much more likely to become sensitive to alternate realities."

Although Spielberg was careful to call himself an "agnostic" on the subject, the fact that his interest in UFOs only increased as he reached adulthood suggests that his "vital psychic need" to believe in such phenomena was still intact and undiminished. And he realized that he was not alone in having such a need: "I knew that if this film was to be popular it wouldn't be because people were afraid of the phenomena, but because the UFOs are a seductive alternative for a lot of people who no longer have faith in anything." In his *"Close Encounters of the Third Kind" Diary*, cast member Bob Balaban reported that on the night of July 22, 1976, during location shooting in Alabama, "some people thought they saw a UFO over the hangar. By the time Spielberg and the rest of us ran outside to look, the lights had disappeared." Spielberg, however, recalled initially being convinced that he had seen his first UFO that night. "When I found out later that it was only an Echo satellite," he said, "I was as depressed as I've ever been."

Soon after Spielberg finished shooting the film, John Milius took him to actor Robert Stack's duck-hunting lodge near Colusa in northern California. There had been reports for months of UFOs being sighted in the nearby buttes, and Spielberg, Stack recalls, was eager to see one. Late one night, when they were all in the cabin, Milius reported seeing a UFO outside. Spielberg stayed up the rest of the night with Milius, hoping for an encore. The caretaker on Stack's property, Bill Duffey, later told them brilliant lights

had flown over that night and "lit up the entire orchard, sixty-five to seventy acres. They hung there and dropped pieces like tinfoil." Duffey said that he had jumped into his car to pursue the UFOs, which he claimed made chugging sounds, like a washing machine. "I've done research," Spielberg replied, "and that's not the sound they're supposed to make. It should be a solid humming sound."

Continuing to hope for a sign of extraterrestrial life, Spielberg donated \$100,000 to The Planetary Society in 1985 to make possible its META (Megachannel Extraterrestrial Assay) system using a Harvard telescope to scan the skies for possible radio signals from distant civilizations. After throwing the switch while holding his infant son, Max, Spielberg said, "I just hope that there is more floating around up there than just old reruns of *The Jackie Gleason Show*."

SPIELBERG'S technical advisor on *Close Encounters* was the prominent ufologist Dr. J. Allen Hynek. For many years, Hynek was scientific consultant to the U.S. Air Force and its Project Blue Book on Unidentified Flying Objects. A professional astronomer, he initially was asked by the Air Force "to weed out obvious cases of astronomical phenomena—meteors, planets, twinkling stars, and other natural occurrences that could give rise to the flying saucer reports then being received. . . . For years I could not accept the idea that a genuine UFO phenomenon might exist, preferring to hold that it was all a craze based on hoaxes and misperceptions. As my review of UFO reports continued, and as the reports grew in number to be of statistical significance, I became concerned that the whole subject didn't evaporate as one would expect a craze or fad to do."

Considered a professional debunker by UFO believers, Hynek later admitted, "To put it bluntly, the Air Force was under orders from the Pentagon to debunk UFOs." Hynek broke with the Air Force in the late 1960s because he "could no longer, in good conscience, keep calling everything 'swamp gas.' Founding the Center for UFO Studies in Evanston, Illinois, he cautiously emerged as an agnostic, if not a true believer, on the subject of UFOs and extraterrestrial contact.

It was in his 1972 book, *The UFO Experience: A Scientific Inquiry*, that Hynek originated the term "Close Encounters." He defined Close Encounters of the First Kind as those in which "the reported UFO is seen at close range but there is no interaction with the environment (other than trauma on the part of the observer)." In Close Encounters of the Second Kind, "physical effects on both animate and inanimate material are noted." Close Encounters of the Third Kind are those in which "the presence of 'occupants' in or about the UFO is reported." People who report such encounters, he wrote, "are in no way 'special.' They are not religious fanatics; they are more apt to be policemen, businessmen, schoolteachers, and other respectable citizens."

After playing a scientist in the final sequence of *Close Encounters*, Hynek

said, "Even though the film is fiction, it's based for the most part on the known facts of the UFO mystery, and it certainly catches the flavor of the phenomenon. What impressed me was that Spielberg was under enormous pressure to produce another blockbuster after *Jaws*, and he decided to do a UFO movie. He's putting his reputation on the line."

Although Spielberg's first proposal for *Close Encounters* explicitly linked belief in UFOs with the public's loss of faith in the American political system, the political implications became less overt as the screenplay gradually evolved. The film takes only a mildly critical view of the military's use of a cover story (a phony nerve gas spillage) to evacuate a Wyoming site for the UFO rendezvous. Explaining his decision to downplay the military cover-up aspect, Spielberg told a European interviewer in 1978, "I didn't want to beat it to death because in the U.S. it's passé. We have lived through Watergate, the CIA, and people already find them redundant."

Close Encounters was filmed under conditions of extreme secrecy. Spielberg was determined to retain the element of surprise and concerned that the story might be ripped off for a quickie TV movie before he could complete his lengthy shooting and postproduction schedule. Most of the film was shot in an abandoned U.S. government dirigible hangar in Mobile, Alabama, and security was so tight that even Spielberg was denied admission to the set one day because he had forgotten to wear his plastic ID card.

The clandestine goings-on, which included a virtual blackout on press coverage, helped give rise to a strange rumor. As Balaban reported, the story went around that the film was "part of the necessary training that the human race must go through in order to accept an actual landing, and is being secretly sponsored by a government UFO agency." In fact, both NASA and the Air Force refused to cooperate with the film, fearing that it would inflame public hysteria about UFOs, just as *Jaws* had terrified people about sharks. "I really found my faith when I heard that the government was opposed to the film," Spielberg said. "If NASA took the time to write me a twenty-page letter, then I knew there must be something happening."

Even though the director had to forge ahead on his own, the rumor about the film's secret sponsorship continued to live long after its release, and Spielberg found his 1982 film *E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial* accused of being part of the same sinister plot to indoctrinate the public. The tale also circulated among ufologists that when Spielberg visited the White House to screen *E.T.*, President Ronald Reagan confided to the filmmaker, "You know, there are fewer than six people in this room who know the real story."

SPIELBERG receives sole screenplay credit for *Close Encounters*, but he was not the only writer who worked on the film. He has acknowledged Paul Schrader's early involvement in the writing, but only to disparage Schrader's work as "one of the most embarrassing screenplays ever professionally turned in to a major studio or director. . . . Actually, it was fortunate

that Paul went so far away on his own tangent, a terribly guilt-ridden story, not about UFOs at all."

"The only thing I deserve a credit for," Schrader said, "is changing Steve's mind about doing the film as a UFO Watergate. I thought it ought to be about a spiritual encounter. That idea stayed and germinated." In Schrader's draft, which the writer titled *Kingdom Come*, the protagonist whose life is transformed by an encounter with a UFO on a deserted country road was not the film's common-man hero Roy Neary, a thirtyish, lower-middle-class working stiff from Indiana. The original protagonist was a forty-five-year-old Air Force officer whose story bore an unmistakable resemblance to that of Dr. Hynek. Both Spielberg and Schrader have claimed authorship of that character.*

Spielberg said he changed the protagonist to a civilian "because I find it very hard to identify with anybody in uniform. . . . A favorite theme of mine has always been the ultimate glorification of the common man. . . . A typical guy—nothing ever happens to him. Then, all of a sudden, he encounters something extraordinary and has to change his entire life in order to measure up to the task of either defeating it or understanding it. So that was my theme in *Close Encounters*."

Schrader's account was that after he wrote his draft, he and Spielberg "had a falling-out along strictly ideological lines, which was quite an instructive disagreement—it says a lot about him and it says a lot about me. My script centered on the idea of a modern-day St. Paul, a guy named Paul Van Owen, whose job for the government is to ridicule and debunk flying saucers. But then one day, like St. Paul, he has his road to Damascus—he has an encounter. Then he goes to the government; he's going to blow the lid off the whole thing, but instead the government offer him unlimited funds to pursue contact clandestinely, so he spends the next fifteen years trying to do that. But eventually he discovers that the key to making contact isn't out there in the universe, but implanted inside him.

"About the only thing that was left of all that when Steven finally made the film was the idea of the archetypal site, the mountain that's planted in his mind, and some of the ending. What I had done was to write this character with resonances of Lear and St. Paul, a kind of Shakespearean tragic hero, and Steve just could not get behind that, and it became clear that our collaboration had to end. It came down to this. I said, 'I refuse to send off to another world, as the first example of Earth's intelligence, a man who wants to go and set up a McDonald's franchise,' and Steven said, 'That's exactly the guy I want to send.' Steven's Capra-like infatuation with the common man was diametrically opposed to my religious infatuation with the redeeming hero—I wanted a biblical character to carry the message to the outer spheres, I

* The 1977 release version of the film contains a scene with George DiCenzo playing a vestigial version of the character, an Air Force officer in charge of misleading a group of UFO witnesses (he is named Major Benchley, after *Jaws* author Peter Benchley). Spielberg eliminated the scene from the 1980 *Special Edition* of *Close Encounters*.

wanted to form missions again. Fortunately, Steven was smart enough to realize that I was an intractable character, and he was right to make the film that he was comfortable with."

When asked by *Cinefantastique* magazine interviewer Don Shay in 1978 whether anyone else besides Schrader had worked on the script, Spielberg replied, "No. There was just me." Later in the same interview, however, the director admitted that he had received help with the story from his frequent collaborators Hal Barwood and Matthew Robbins, who also play two of the returning airmen who emerge from the spaceship at the end of the film. Other writers who contributed to *Close Encounters* included John Hill, who wrote the second draft after Schrader left; David Giler; and Jerry Belson, a TV comedy writer who polished the script with Spielberg at New York's Sherry-Netherland Hotel shortly before shooting began and also on location in Mobile. Julia Phillips reported that Columbia paid for "one under-the-table rewrite after another."

Spielberg's conceptual work during preproduction began with a year of exchanging visual ideas with a production illustrator, George Jensen, who made thousands of scene drawings and color sketches as a result of those discussions. Spielberg recalled that "together we plotted seven major sequences—including the last thirty minutes of the movie, which is all phantasmagoria." After rejecting the Schrader and Hill screenplays, Spielberg wrote his own draft during the period when he was editing and promoting *Jaws*. His script, he felt, "had a pretty good structure, but I wasn't crazy about some of the characters. . . . I find writing to be the most difficult thing I've ever done. I find it much more difficult than directing, because it requires a lot of concentration and I'm not the most concentrated of people. . . . Essentially I'm not a writer and I don't enjoy writing. I'd much rather collaborate. I need fresh ideas coming to me."

However, Spielberg was so possessive about the genesis of his magnum opus that he wanted the final credit to read simply "Written and Directed by Steven Spielberg," as if sharing credit with anyone else for the story or screenplay would have diminished his own creativity in the eyes of the public, and perhaps in his own eyes as well. His need to insist on sole writing credit may have stemmed not only from the project's deeply personal nature but also from an anxiety that others involved in the film would try to appropriate credit to themselves that he felt belonged more properly to him, as he thought had happened with *Jaws*. Such anxiety tends to be an occupational hazard for directors, particularly for young directors who have had a major hit and suddenly find themselves in a position of great power. The success of *Jaws*, Spielberg admitted in 1982, initially had "a very negative effect on me. I thought it was a fluke. . . . I began believing it was some kind of freak and agreeing when people said it could never happen again. They were saying it was the timing and the climate that created the success of *Jaws* more than what I had done to make the movie a success." A typical defense

mechanism against such feelings of insecurity is to exaggerate a genuine achievement or credit into a claim of omnipotence.

Julia Phillips wrote in *You'll Never Eat Lunch in This Town Again* that Spielberg "made me pressure every writer who made a contribution to the script. When the Writers' Guild insists on an arbitration, I get Schrader and Grady [her pseudonym for one of the other writers] to back off their right to credits." (In a 1991 interview with *Los Angeles* magazine, Phillips, who had fallen out with the director during the making of *Close Encounters*, called Spielberg "the ultimate writer fucker.") Schrader recalled that "at Steven's request I withdrew from the credit arbitration, which is something I've come to regret in later years, because I had [2.5 profit-participation] points tied to credit. So I gave up maybe a couple of million dollars that way, but that's the way it happens."

Michael Phillips believes that Spielberg's sole writing credit is appropriate: "Paul Schrader wrote a different film. Paul's was a much more serious quest, a religious transformation of a doubter into a believer. It wasn't a surprise to us, because we talked it out first, and it sounded like a good idea. But when it came in, it just wasn't a Steven Spielberg film; it wasn't a joyous roller-coaster. *Close Encounters* is really Steven's script. It was a project that he had started in his childhood and had always wanted to do. He got help from his friends and colleagues here and there, but 99.9 percent is Steven Spielberg. There was not really a basis for a credit for Paul except that the first writer on a project usually gets the benefit of the doubt, but in this case, since Steven really started over, I think that it would have been wrong to put it into an arbitration. Jerry Belson made a contribution that was appreciated, but he did not in any way author the story."

While in the throes of making *Jaws*, Spielberg was sure he would never face a more difficult filmmaking experience. But he found *Close Encounters* "twice as bad—and twice as expensive, as well."

It was a two-year ordeal of trying to realize a vision of mind-boggling technical and artistic complexity, while at the same time having to coax more and more money out of financially strapped Columbia Pictures. "Poor Steven was involved in a terrible battle with the studio," cinematographer Vilmos Zsigmond recalls. "He was not used to it. It was not pleasant." At one point, when the studio refused to pay several thousand dollars for a special effect involving shattering glass, Spielberg paid for it out of his own pocket. As François Truffaut observed, "In [the] face of overwhelming hardships and innumerable complications that would, I suspect, have discouraged most directors, Steven Spielberg's perseverance and fortitude were simply amazing."

Perhaps the hardest part for a director who acknowledges being a control freak was having to shoot scenes without knowing exactly how Douglas Trumbull's elaborate visual effects would look when they were added

months later in postproduction. "The difference between *Jaws* and *Close Encounters*," Spielberg later reflected, "is that *Jaws* was a physical effects movie and *Close Encounters* was an optical-effects movie. It meant that for *Jaws* I had to shed blood six days a week—from eight in the morning to eight at night—and for *Close Encounters* I had to shed blood seven nights a week, from eight at night to eight in the morning, because of the laboratory turnover time. But the problems were exactly the same between the studio and myself, and between the cast and the script."

"I saw Steve more frustrated on *Close Encounters*," says production designer Joe Alves. "It was unlike *Jaws*, where he was dealing with concrete objects. You go out on the water, it gets too rough to shoot, you say, 'OK, we couldn't do it, the shark didn't work.' It's *real*. You have *things* to get upset with. The shooting of *Close Encounters* was more questionable [because of the visual effects]. It's hard for a director—you have to have a lot of confidence that the stuff's going to happen. So there was tension on the set."

"If I were Steven, I would have been terrified," Trumbull says. "I'll never be able to thank him enough for having the confidence and the patience to see it through and not panic. There was enormous pressure on the production all the time from the studio to keep moving on."

Columbia had been near collapse in the early 1970s, amassing more than \$220 million in bank debt. The First National Bank of Boston had veto power over any Columbia film budgeted at more than \$3 million. By the mid-1970s, the studio had begun a partial recovery under the leadership of Alan Hirschfeld, president and chief executive officer of Columbia Pictures Industries, and studio president David Begelman. But the studio's financial health was still marginal when Spielberg began shooting his commercially dicey sci-fi movie.

More than half of Columbia's film production funding was derived from tax-shelter sources, a short-term strategy that helped the studio remain functional but necessitated the sharing of film-rental income with outside investors. When *Close Encounter of the Third Kind* (as it was then titled) began shooting on December 29, 1975, at an air-traffic control center in Palmdale, California, the company filmed for only two days to qualify for tax-shelter provisions before resuming the following May. Budget escalations caused a string of crises during production, and further anxiety arose during the final stages of postproduction in 1977 when Begelman was suspended from his job (he was later forced to resign) for forgery and embezzlement, in one of Hollywood's most widely reported financial scandals. Although Columbia eventually laid off about \$7 million of *Close Encounters*' \$19,400,870 production cost on outside investors,* it was not journalistic hyperbole when it was

* The British entertainment conglomerate EMI, Time Inc., and a group of German tax-shelter investors. The last official budget for the film, formally agreed upon by the Phillipses and Columbia during production, was \$15,942,296. The final production cost was \$3,458,574 over that figure, and the producers' contract called for an additional penalty of the same amount to be included in the final break-even accounting figure of \$22,859,444.

said that the future of the studio was riding on the film. Shortly before the film's opening, *Variety* calculated that *Close Encounters* had to be among the top eighteen moneymakers in film history simply to break even.

"I just didn't expect to have two [blockbusters] in a row," Spielberg later admitted. "Nobody expects one mega-hit, let alone two. So I was not one of those running around saying *Close Encounters* would be a big hit. I was just running around saying, 'I hope Columbia can get their money out of it.' . . . [Columbia's executives] were too frightened to share my pessimism—they had more to lose than I did. I would just go on and direct another movie, but they would go down with the lady who holds the torch [on the Columbia logo]."

"If we knew going in that the picture was going to cost \$19 million, we wouldn't have made it, because we didn't have the money," admits John Veitch, the Columbia production executive who supervised *Close Encounters*. "No Columbia picture, at that time, had cost that kind of money."

Michael Phillips recalls that at the meeting in the fall of 1973 when they pitched the project to Begelman, "David asked Steven, 'How much will this cost?' Steven said, '\$2.7 million.' Julia and I looked at him, we didn't say anything—[but we thought,] 'How could he have the temerity to come out with the figure?' As soon as we got out the door, we said, 'What were you doing?' He said, 'I just had an instinct that that was as high a number I could mention.' . . . Then, due to the problems of getting a script developed that we really liked, we were delayed and Steven was offered the opportunity to do *Jaws*. When he came back it was a whole new ballgame. Suddenly he was a much better risk from the studio's point of view and he was given free rein to come up with the best that his imagination could conjure. . . . He was in a position for the studio to really invest, to bet the farm. They needed to; Columbia was teetering on the brink of insolvency, and here they had the hottest director in town and a subject matter that seemed a natural fit for him. So they did bet the farm."

Spielberg's wishes did not come true all at once. With the nightmarish filming of *Jaws* still fresh in his mind, Spielberg told the producers, "I never want to do a location picture again." He was thinking in terms of making *Close Encounters* in and around the Burbank Studios, which Columbia shared with Warner Bros.; the budget was set at \$4.1 million. As Spielberg's plans became more grandiose, the memory of Martha's Vineyard receded, and he became convinced that he needed to make much of the movie away from Hollywood. Convincing Columbia was not so easy.

Early in preproduction, Spielberg sent Alves "to scour America for a place that only my imagination told me existed," the mountain chosen by extraterrestrials for their landing on Earth. "Steven was off doing promotion on *Jaws*," Alves relates, "so I reported to John Veitch. He told me, 'Steven wants you to find a mountain. This is a \$4 million picture. We're going to do one day on location and the rest on the back lot.' I said, 'Are you sure?' We were starting *Close Encounters* as another small science-fiction film, like we were

starting *Jaws* as a little horror picture. We couldn't get a handle on *Close Encounters* visually—the visual effects, the scope of it. I remember John Veitch taking me to Warner Bros. Stages 15 and 16 and saying, 'This is where we're going to put the big [Box Canyon] set.' I said, 'It's not big enough.' He felt maybe we were feeling our oats from *Jaws*. He said, 'My God, they did *Camelot* on this!'"

Before principal photography began in earnest on May 16, 1976, the budget already had risen in stages to \$5.5 million, \$7 million, \$9 million, and \$11.5 million. The cost kept climbing as Spielberg gradually convinced Columbia to let him expand the scope of the movie. "We had six wrap parties on *Close Encounters*," Michael Phillips recalls. "We popped the champagne six times. Each time we thought we were finished, he would come up with a great idea that warranted going out and picking up something else. Steven always comes up with new ideas that make the movie better."

In order to find Spielberg a mountain, Alves drove through 2,700 miles of western scenery before suggesting Devil's Tower National Monument near Gillette, Wyoming. An imposing granite landmark with long jagged serrations up and down its front and back aspects, Devil's Tower closely resembles Mitchell Butte, one of the most prominent features of Monument Valley, where John Ford filmed *The Searchers* and other classic Westerns. Devil's Tower had the advantage of being less familiar to movie audiences, and perhaps more eerie in its solitary, abrupt emergence from a wooded landscape.

Alves and Spielberg considered building the Box Canyon landing site in Monument Valley before deciding it would be too difficult to control weather and lighting conditions for a special-effects movie on a remote outdoor location. Even so, Spielberg found himself facing "horrendous" technical problems shooting in the Mobile, Alabama, hangar housing the enormous Box Canyon set, which was built by Alves at a cost of \$700,000. The hangar was bigger than a football field and six times the size of Hollywood's largest soundstage. The humidity inside sometimes caused artificial clouds and drizzle during filming, and rigging the set with dozens of huge lights while choreographing the movements of two hundred extras led to seemingly endless delays and expense. Even though the scenes filmed on the set accounted for only about one-fifth of the running time, they consumed about half the shooting schedule. "That set," lamented Spielberg, "became our 'shark' on this picture."

The initially cost-conscious John Veitch eventually became Spielberg's staunch ally in what the executive remembers as "a labor of love" for both of them. Spielberg said that Veitch's "understanding of our enormous logistics" made him "sometimes a not very popular guy with the other Columbia executives." The late studio president David Begelman, despite his many failings in a tragically self-destructive career, also deserves a lion's share of the credit for enabling Spielberg to make the film he envisioned. "David was fiercely loyal to me throughout *Close Encounters*," Spielberg said after

Begelman's suicide in 1995. "When I needed something from the studio, he was there to give it. I think we had faith in each other."

The problems Columbia had in trying to budget the film, Veitch says, arose from the impossibility of predicting how much the special effects would cost, particularly in the early stages when the script was constantly being rewritten: "It was no one's fault, because we were experimenting. From the beginning, Steven always wanted to go one step further as far as visual effects were concerned, and it was time-consuming. It's not that Steven is not a dedicated individual. He was cost-conscious, but he wanted everything to be just right." But the man in charge of special effects, Douglas Trumbull, has a different perspective: "When I put in the effects budget at a fairly early phase, with my partner Richard Yurich, we estimated the effects to be about \$3 million. That news never got to upper management until much later. I have no idea what they said to upper management, but it was just too scary a number. Nobody had ever heard of a number like that for effects. It was right on—the final cost was maybe \$3.2 million or \$3.3 million."

"I think there was a lot of avoidance of facing the realities of what the movie was going to cost. Everybody was trying to make himself believe it was going to be a less expensive movie than it ultimately was. It took on a bigger and bigger scope at every turn, not just in terms of special effects but in terms of the scale of the sets and a lot of complicated production out on location. Nobody at the beginning of that movie knew what it had to look like or how ultimately to achieve the goal."

REJOINING Spielberg after passing up the opportunity to shoot *Jaws*, cinematographer Vilmos Zsigmond missed the close creative partnership he had shared with Spielberg on *The Sugarland Express*. As a result of his triumph over enormous technical odds on *Jaws*, "Steven started to know all the answers," Zsigmond felt. "He was sort of telling me things rather than discussing things." But Zsigmond was excited about working on *Close Encounters* because it "had the smell of a great movie. We fell into sandtraps not because anybody made mistakes, but because we were making things that had never been done before."

Zsigmond's conflicts with line producer Julia Phillips and with Columbia, however, almost led to his firing in the midst of the Mobile location shoot. The trouble began when he said he needed time to prelight the massive set rather than simply start filming cold. The studio was so worried about the shooting schedule that it had not allotted any time for prelighting, and it objected when Zsigmond insisted on a minimum of one day for the task. A compromise was reached in which second-unit cameraman Steven Poster spent a day shooting exterior scenes while Zsigmond stayed behind to prelight.

"It was a nightmare from that point on," Zsigmond says. "There was a lot of pressure from the studio. Nobody could even conceive how much light we needed. I never gave in to the pressure to use less light, to do things that

I knew were not right. Doug Trumbull stood behind me. He kept saying, 'Vilmos is doing the right thing. We *need* a lot of lights,' because he had to match the scenes with the special effects. Everybody was trapped into that situation. Steven stood behind me, but he was battling the studio and battling Julia Phillips. The budget kept going up. Poor Julia Phillips in her book blames me for many things. I was the scapegoat for many, many things."

After the first two months of shooting, when nervous studio executives and bankers were beginning to show up in Mobile, Phillips wanted to bring in a replacement cameraman. But, she wrote, "Steven refuses to fire Vilmos, and by now we have shot enough to have to be committed to him." Exasperated over the memory of "Vilmos fiddling with the lights on every shot" (a singularly odd complaint to make about a cinematographer), she wrote that "on a bad night, I can still see a scene being shot, with Vilmos walking into it, and telling his crew that we just need 'vun leetle inky-dinky over here.'"

"I guess she had to blame it on somebody," Zsigmond responds. "It would have been the easy solution to tell the studio to fire me. There was tension for a couple of days when this happened. They called four or five people including John A. Alonzo and Laszlo Kovacs. Most of those people were friends of mine, and they all came back to me. When I told them our problems, they all said, 'If you can't do it, nobody can.' The only one who was going to possibly take over was Ernest Laszlo. He had done *Fantastic Voyage*, and they thought he could do it. But this was 1976, and he was in Montreal. Ernest Laszlo called back and said, 'You guys crazy? I'm going to the Olympics.'"

After that, Spielberg continued to let Zsigmond "do what I had to do," and the director's support helped make *Close Encounters* a "very rewarding" creative experience. But when additional sequences and pickup shots were filmed after the company's return from Alabama, Zsigmond was not asked to shoot them. "Unfortunately, because of the studio and Julia Phillips, Steven could not hire me anymore," Zsigmond says. "He told me I was going to shoot the India sequence, and he sent me to get [inoculation] shots. I found out later that Dougie [Douglas] Slocombe was going to do the India sequence, which hurt my feelings very much." Although Zsigmond says he shot about 90 percent of the film, William A. Fraker shot the majority of the added material, notably the opening sequence of a lost squadron of World War II airplanes discovered in the Mexican desert. Fraker, Slocombe, Alonzo, and Kovacs were given prominent credit as additional directors of photography.* Phillips admitted in her book that she did "everything in my power to let the world know how [Zsigmond] sandbagged us, by the credits."

"I'm glad she wrote exactly how it was," Zsigmond comments, "because I always felt bad that they gave these people credit to diminish my credit. I don't think Steven was really that vicious to do this. I think it came mostly from the studio and Julia Phillips, because they were so mad at me. It hurt

* Frank Stanley also shot two days on the film, without credit.

my credit so badly, because some of the reviewers wrote [that *Close Encounters* was shot by] 'Vilmos Zsigmond and all the great cameramen.' They don't realize I'm the only one who got the Academy Award. That was a vindication, but it was not really a pleasant vindication. I was so bitter at the whole thing that I didn't thank 'Steven Spielberg and Julia Phillips who gave me the opportunity to do this picture'; I thanked a couple of teachers I had in Hungary, and I thanked America for giving me a new life. It was not politically correct for me [to avoid thanking the director and producer]; I never shot a picture for Steven again. But we've talked a lot since, and we've gotten together many times. I still think he's the greatest."

CONSTANT time and budget overruns during the Mobile filming and during a year of postproduction caused the beleaguered studio to become increasingly impatient with all the filmmakers, but especially with the stressed-out line producer. Because of her cocaine problem (exhaustively documented in her 1991 memoir), Julia Phillips was forced off the picture by Columbia during postproduction in the summer of 1977.

She felt "betrayed by the only partners who have mattered: Michael. Steven. Begelman." Her ex-husband* takes strong exception to that statement: "There was no conspiracy to do her in. That was complete nonsense. She had a drug problem and she was really out of it. At that point she was not helping, but she was in the way of the picture getting done. Her authority was removed. She went off to Hawaii when that happened and we didn't really communicate. Her perceptions were, at the time, not really accurate. It was a lot of pressure because it was a high-profile film with budget problems, and the press and everybody kind of rooting against it. But I don't think that's what the problem was for her. It was a serious chapter of substance abuse that made her not capable of functioning the way she would normally have functioned."

Julia Phillips claimed in a 1991 interview that cocaine "had never been a problem" for her before *Close Encounters*: "It was only after I started working with Steven. He was such a perfectionist." In her book, she attacks Spielberg as "the little prick . . . a precocious seven-year-old" with "a childish self-preoccupation." At the time of the book's publication, a spokesman for Spielberg told the press that the director was busy shooting *Hook* and would have nothing to say about *You'll Never Eat Lunch in This Town Again*. To this day, he has made no public comment about it.

SO much of the imagery of *Close Encounters* was added in postproduction that the actors had to spend most of their time staring into lights passing

* The Phillipses were divorced in 1974 but continued working together as producing partners on *Close Encounters* until her firing.

overhead, trying to imagine sights they could not see. "There's no way to work with effects," said Melinda Dillon. "... For weeks we were just sitting on a rock, shifting positions, pretending to look at the landing site and the sky. Steven would say to us, 'There's a light going by you. Oh, but there's an extraordinary light going by you.' It was a great acting exercise." François Truffaut, however, found the experience unnerving: "I never had the impression of playing a role, only of lending my carnal envelope. Spielberg had shown me the two thousand sketches of his storyboard, so I knew that what he was after was a grand cartoon strip and that I could put back in my suitcase the book by Stanislavsky that I had bought for the occasion."

Richard Dreyfuss was "very upset with several moments in his performance," Spielberg recalled, "because he feels that had he seen the effects, he might have reacted differently." Dreyfuss admitted being depressed the first time he saw the film, because "I didn't like my work. And it took me a long time to recontact that feeling in me of why I made the film. ... I didn't do it because it was a Spielberg movie, because they didn't exist as such yet, or because it was a great role. I did it because I knew that they would show that film in the Museum of Modern Art in the year 2030, that ... this movie would be potentially the most important film ever made, and I wanted desperately to be a part of that experience."

More than two hundred shots in *Close Encounters* involved special effects, and some shots contained as many as eighteen separate visual elements. Dozens of matte paintings by Matthew Yuricich rounded out the design, which also employed miniature outdoor settings for some of the Indiana and Devil's Tower landscapes. The film's night imagery was augmented with artificial stars and cloud formations, and animation was used for sequences showing the Big Dipper and a meteor appearing above Devil's Tower. Spielberg commissioned tests of computer-generated imagery (CGI), a technique then in its embryonic stages, but concluded it did not look believable enough and would be prohibitively expensive (seventeen years later, Spielberg would help pioneer the combined use of live action and CGI in *Jurassic Park*).

Admitting he had "no savvy about optical and miniaturized special effects," Spielberg interviewed various effects technicians but felt he needed "one enthusiastic, driving 'wilderness guide' who would take me where nobody else had gone before." He found that person in Douglas Trumbull, who had played a crucial role in helping Kubrick realize his vision on *2001*. "If Trumbull hadn't accepted the job," Spielberg acknowledged in his 1978 article on the filming in *American Cinematographer*, "I'd still be on the Columbia back lot trying to get a cloud to materialize from thin air."

After making his feature directing debut with the sci-fi movie *Silent Running* in 1971, Trumbull was resistant to doing special effects for another director; he was working on innovative projection systems with his Future General Corporation and had turned down an offer from George Lucas to work on *Star Wars*, which was in production at the same time as *Close*

Encounters. "I didn't have any adverse reaction to *Star Wars* per se, but I felt I was space-movie-out," Trumbull recalls. "When Steven came along, I was hunting for ways to put together 65mm camera equipment to develop the Showscan process, and that was part of the deal with Steven, to put together this 65mm facility I needed. I was very impressed with *Jaws*, and I thought, This is going to be a really interesting filmmaker to work with, and an opportunity to push the envelope."

The guiding principle of the special effects in the first two-thirds of *Close Encounters* was to bring about a seamless integration of fantasy elements into a mundane, Middle-American setting. That would help the audience accept the UFOs as real and prepare them for the rhapsodic, almost avant-garde spectacle of the last forty minutes when the mother ship lands. Spielberg's UFOs announce their presence by activating a toddler's toys, turning out the Muncie municipal light grid, vibrating a railroad crossing sign, and illuminating a McDonald's billboard. Manipulating those familiar sights and sounds makes the film's most extravagant phantasmagoria—clouds turning into strange shapes and colors, a dazzling orange light flooding through the door of a farmhouse—seem natural occurrences.

"I believe that the success of *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* comes from Steven's very special gift for giving plausibility to the extraordinary," Truffaut wrote. "If you analyze *Close Encounters*, you will find that Spielberg has taken care in shooting all the scenes of everyday life to give them a slightly fantastic aspect, while also, as a form of balance, giving the most everyday possible quality to the scenes of fantasy."

What made it possible to blend all the elements so smoothly was the innovative Electronic Motion Control System, a digital, electronic system that recorded and programmed camera motions so they could be duplicated later when matching miniature effects were composited with the live-action photography. The system allowed all the visuals to move in harmony, adding an almost subconscious sense of credibility to the many composite images in *Close Encounters*. "Our plan," explained Trumbull, "was that even though the UFOs wouldn't be shot until postproduction, any live-action scene in which they appeared had to include the apparent illumination created by them, complete with flared-out overexposure, shifting shadows, and correct color." To that end, dozens of sweltering electricians spent twelve hours a day manipulating lights from catwalks and cranes above the actors, who, Truffaut punned, felt "im-Mobilised ... everything seems to take forever."

The film's single most spectacular effect, the mother ship, did not take on final form until late in the production. It was originally conceived by Spielberg and Alves as a "horribly huge" black shape blotting out stars and emitting light from an opening in its underbelly. The massive shadows seen in the film as the mother ship passes overhead are remnants of that design. But given Spielberg's preoccupation with childhood motifs, it is fitting that the overwhelmingly large object transporting Roy Neary to a womblike state of bliss is called the mother ship and filled with childlike inhabitants. "My

first concept," Trumbull said, "was that the mother ship underbelly—this big thing that hung down from there—should look like a giant breast with a nipple." That concept reflected psychological studies of the human longing for contact with UFOs, which link the phenomenon to the recall of infantile perceptions, especially the approach (both frightening and comforting) of the mother's breast.

Spielberg's ideas for the mother ship evolved further when he visited India for location shooting (his first outside the United States) in February 1977. For six days, coming and going to a village outside Bombay, Spielberg passed a gigantic oil refinery lit by thousands of small lights and festooned with pipes, tubing, and walkways. Upon his return to Los Angeles, Spielberg had illustrator George Jensen draw a new ship from that description. "That very same night," Spielberg related, "I was up on Mulholland Drive—a little stoned—and I got on my head on the hood of my car and looked out at all the lights from the San Fernando Valley upside down. And I thought that would be incredible as the underbelly of this oil refinery from Bombay." Combining both elements into what Trumbull described as a "City of Light—like the Manhattan skyline at night," the ship for the film was designed by Ralph McQuarrie and built by Greg Jein. When shooting was completed, Spielberg took the mother ship home as a keepsake.

TRUMBULL and Kubrick experimented with concepts of alien beings for the finale of *2001*, but the tests proved too costly and time-consuming, and Kubrick finally decided not to risk losing credibility by showing aliens on screen. The film's elliptical approach befitted Kubrick's detached, cerebral view of mankind's first contact with extraterrestrials, but for the warmer, more emotional Spielberg, showing communion between humans and aliens was a *sine qua non*. "I also knew that it was the most dangerous move I could possibly make with this movie," he admitted. **Coming up with believable aliens was such a problem that the final shots of the lead alien, nicknamed "Puck," by the director, were not filmed until three weeks before the first preview.**

"The first thing I did was go in search for the perfect E.T.," Spielberg recalled. "I had the strange idea that they shouldn't be people in costume; they had done that from the dawn of time in Hollywood. So what I did was, I had a chimpanzee brought to the set. We put the chimpanzee in an E.T. suit and further complicated the test by putting rollerskates on him, because I didn't want the chimpanzee to walk simian-like, but I wanted him to glide smoothly down a ramp. You can imagine the test—a chimpanzee with a large rubber latex head and a little kind of flimsy ballenna costume and large rollerskates, disguised with a kind of dust ruffle so you couldn't see the actual wheels. We put the chimpanzee on a ramp and the first thing that happened, of course, was the chimpanzee fell and slid down the ramp—and it kept making these rather remarkable Charlie Chaplin prattfalls—the

chimpanzee was laughing like he had a great time doing this. At one point the chimpanzee did pull off his head and throw it at the crew. That was his way of telling me, 'Find another way.'

Because people who report encounters with aliens usually describe them as short, childlike creatures with spindly limbs and large heads, most of the aliens were played by six-year-old girls from children's choirs, wearing oversized heads and gloves. But Spielberg found Tom Burman's alien design a complete disaster. "He thought they looked too scary. Burman needed—and he wanted something a fiercer and more gentle-looking. Burman revised his design and Spielberg spent several days shooting scenes of aliens most of which did not wind up in the finished film. Spielberg was changing his mind drastically all the time," noted Burman, assistant General Services. "But he had guts. He'd try *anything* to see if it would work on film." At one point the camera was on a dolly mount and Spielberg went running around with it, in and out of this whole crowd of technicians, and people would be jumping away—like a subjective point of view for the aliens. And he had them open a can of [Coca-Cola] and it fizzed all over the lab, which had a lot of wild, crazy ideas."

The script called for the aliens to behave "like children let loose in a toy factory," flying through the crowd of scientists and curiously *peeking* over their shoulders. Truffaut, Hynek, and others with their long, willowy fingers, *hunched* from Jensen's production drawings, those scenes might have appeared as bizarre or frightening for a movie portraying aliens as benign. But Spielberg's biggest concern was that such extended scenes with aliens "bordered on the ridiculous" and "would destroy the credibility that I had hopefully achieved."

"Unfortunately, the aliens didn't look real," Zsigmond says. "Steven told me, 'The only way we can do this is to overexpose them, so we can hardly see them.' I overexposed two and a half stops, but the lab screwed up the dailies and printed the whole scene with nothing in it—white as hell. Julia Phillips came down to me, panicking: 'Vladimir, you ruined it. We have to shoot it again.' I was really insulted that they went to see James Watson. I said, 'Show me the dailies.' I saw from the lab information that they didn't print it right. I said, 'Tell the lab to print it eight points darker. We had to wait twenty-four hours. The next day the dailies came back, and it was just perfect. Steven said, 'Thank you.'"

After Spielberg returned to Hollywood, he turned his attention to Puck. The full-body figure was created by marionette maker Bob Baker and the upper torso and head (for close-ups) by Carlo Rambaldi, an Italian craftsman who came to Spielberg's attention with his facially expressive animatronic title character in the remake of *King Kong*. Eight people operated the cable mechanisms controlling Rambaldi's Puck. Spielberg was so pleased with the creature that "he spent a lot of time playing with it," Rambaldi recalled. "He especially liked the smile; and during the filming, it was he who operated the levers controlling it." The joyous exchange of smiles between Puck and

Truffaut, Spielberg's representative of mankind at its most humane, is the film's emotional climax. "The audience's reactions to the extraterrestrials will be largely determined by Truffaut's reactions," Bob Balaban, who played Truffaut's English interpreter, observed in his diary. "[Spielberg] wants Truffaut to think of the extraterrestrials as little children. He knows how Truffaut likes little children." The French filmmaker became so enchanted with Rambaldi's creation that each day when he arrived on the set and saw Puck, Truffaut would go over and shake the alien's hand, saying, "*Bonjour! Ça va?*"

"DIRECTING a movie with Truffaut on the set," Spielberg said, "is like having Renoir around when you're still painting by numbers."

Truffaut was one of the directors Spielberg most admired when he was breaking into the movie business. The French filmmaker left perhaps an even more lasting and pervasive imprint on Spielberg's work than had his boyhood masters Alfred Hitchcock and David Lean. While attending Cal State Long Beach, Spielberg studied such Truffaut films as *Shoot the Piano Player*, *Jules and Jim*, and *Stolen Kisses* at art theaters, drawing inspiration from their romantic lyricism, their visual *frissons*, and their graceful blend of playful humor and emotional gravity. Truffaut's celebration of the communal process of moviemaking in *Day for Night* made it "the closest to home for me of Truffaut's films," Spielberg recalled. "... *Day for Night* brought you into what Truffaut was. And he was the movies." Their deepest temperamental affinity, Spielberg felt, was their mutual fondness for "working with children, and with adults who act like children. ... There was a child inside François Truffaut. Watching him perform in his films *The Wild Child* and *Day for Night*, I saw that child. ... That was the spirit I wanted for Lacombe."

Even so, Spielberg hesitated to approach him. "I didn't want Truffaut to say no to me," he explained. "I didn't want to insult him by saying, 'I'd like you to be an actor.'" But after considering such European actors as Gérard Depardieu, Philippe Noiret, Jean-Louis Trintignant, and Lino Ventura, Spielberg finally summoned up the courage to call Truffaut at his home in Paris.

"Steven attracted me," Truffaut recalled. "I knew his work. I had confidence in him. When he called me in France and said he had written the role especially for me, I didn't think he was serious. I assumed he thought I spoke English."

Truffaut protested, "I am not an actor. I can only play myself."

"But that's what I want," Spielberg assured him.

After reading the script, Truffaut accepted an offer of \$75,000 to play a character he described as "*un savant français*." He had no particular interest in the subject matter. When asked if he believed in UFOs, Truffaut replied, "I believe in the cinema." On other occasions, he declared, "When people talk about UFOs, I tune out," and "The only close encounters I ever have are with women, children, or books." Until he arrived in Mobile, Truffaut did not

admit to Spielberg that he had ulterior motives for wanting to be in *Close Encounters*. He planned to use the experience as research for a book called *The Actor* (a project he later abandoned), and he used his spare time on location to write the screenplay for *The Man Who Loved Women*.

The endless waiting on the set of *Close Encounters* exasperated Truffaut, who felt himself losing interest and growing impatient to shoot his own movie. One day during the filming in Wyoming he exclaimed to actress Teri Garr, "It cost \$250,000 for that shot they just did with the helicopters. I could make a movie for that. *And they did two takes!*" But the experience also helped him understand why "the atmosphere becomes so passionate and intimate" for actors working on a film. With all the fussing and coddling he experienced between shots from wardrobe, hair, and makeup people, the actor becomes "like a little baby again," he mused. A more sobering discovery was that "everybody says many nasty things behind the director's back."

Truffaut was not entirely immune to that temptation. In one of the many letters he wrote from Mobile to friends in France, Truffaut reported, "Like every actor in every film ever made, I'll find myself saying, 'He never directed me, no one ever told me what to do,' and, in fact, it's both true and false. In any event, I find it very amusing to watch another director at work, and despite the huge differences (to give you an idea, his favorite French directors are [Robert] Enrico and [Claude] Lelouch), to discover all kinds of points in common, or rather reactions in common. In any case, he really isn't pretentious, he doesn't behave like the director of the most successful film in the history of the cinema (*Jaws*), he's calm (outwardly so), very even-tempered, very patient and good-humored. This film of flying saucers means a great deal to him, it's a childhood dream come true."

At first Spielberg felt "intimidated" having Truffaut in his movie. Truffaut reassured him, "I will be the easiest person you've ever worked with—either in the cast or on the crew. This actor will not have ideas. I will perform your ideas." Truffaut not only was true to his word, but often seemed to know what Spielberg wanted without being told. Sometimes Spielberg deliberately refrained from giving Truffaut any direction at all, such as in the sublime moment when Lacombe says good-bye to Puck with hand signs and "that expression on his face when he almost laughs at the gentleness of it all." Truffaut's personality also made the character "much more intense than he was originally written," Spielberg acknowledged. "He's still a man of peace ... still a man-child, but he has a great deal of cunning and enthusiasm."

Although he had warned Spielberg that he could not be asked "to laugh or cry on command like a professional actor," Truffaut found that "several times during the shooting he made me surpass myself. He directed me so as to make me come out of myself. Thanks to that, I discovered a real pleasure as an actor. I behaved like every actor in the world who, as soon as the take has been shot, turns to the director to find out if he is satisfied. And every time I achieved the result Spielberg expected, I was satisfied."

Truffaut's benign facade concealed a sly and sometimes waspish guile. He

finally let his frustration boil over in rage against Julia Phillips, telling *The New York Times*, "The picture started with a budget of \$11 million and now I think it is up to \$15 million, but that is not Spielberg's fault. It is the fault of the producer, Julia Phillips. She is incompetent. Unprofessional. You can write that. She knows I feel this way. Sometimes it was so disorganized that they had me show up and then do nothing for five days." At the behest of the furious Phillips—who seethes in her book, "Of all the dead people I know François Truffaut wins the prick award hands down"—Spielberg played the good soldier, writing a letter to the *Times* expressing his disbelief that Truffaut could have made those "rather unkind remarks." Implausibly arguing that the highly experienced and sophisticated French director must have been ignorant of the production's unique technical challenges, Spielberg went on to claim, "I've never had such constructive and consistent support from a producer as I have had from Julia Phillips, and I know that Columbia Pictures concurs." Rather than being grateful, Phillips complained that Spielberg's letter was "weaker than I would have hoped."

Truffaut expressed contrition of a sort in an interview with *The New Yorker*: "Jeanne Moreau once told me, 'On every picture, you must love everybody except the one who becomes the scapegoat.' I followed Jeanne Moreau's advice. I made Julia Phillips, the producer, my scapegoat. Every time I find something not to my liking, I say I am sure it is the fault of Julia Phillips."

WITH *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, Spielberg pulled off the remarkable feat of making a deeply personal film on a grand scale within the Hollywood studio system. Even more remarkably, he was able to communicate his personal vision to a huge worldwide audience. "This is probably the most collaborative art form in the world," he wrote in an *American Cinematographer* article paying tribute to his crew on *Close Encounters*. "There is no such thing as [an] *Auteur*. Without all these people movies simply are not made." And yet Spielberg managed to use the talents of all those people to realize the dream implanted in his mind as a boy in Phoenix when his father roused him from bed in the middle of the night to watch a meteor shower.

That incident was adapted by Spielberg for the scene of Roy Neary, fresh from his first UFO sighting, excitedly awakening his family and taking them on a (futile) nocturnal quest to share his otherworldly encounter. Spielberg's depiction of the Nearys' dysfunctional family life also is filled with echoes of his childhood experiences. Far from celebrating suburban conformity, as his detractors often accuse him of doing, Spielberg offers a bleak view of suburban life in *Close Encounters*, depicting it as a place of quiet desperation, a plastic purgatory from which Roy Neary longs to escape. Roy's unimaginative wife, Ronnie, reacts to his interest in UFOs with hostility, thinking he has gone mad. Her incomprehension and abandonment of Roy, while an under-

standable reaction under the circumstances, helps the audience sympathize with Roy's decision to leave his family behind for a new life in outer space. Along the way, Roy forms a temporary new "family" allegiance with fellow UFO believer Jillian Guiler (Melinda Dillon). The anguish Jillian experiences over the extraterrestrials' abduction of her small son, Barry (Cary Guffey), makes her kin to all the other Spielbergian mothers forcibly separated from their children, from Lou Jean Poplin in *The Sugarland Express* to the Plaszów forced-labor camp inmates in *Schindler's List*.

Ronnie, who mockingly addresses her husband as "Jiminy Cricket," is an unhappy homemaker whose emotional and intellectual horizons are bounded by the walls of her messy tract house. Spielberg's depiction of Ronnie is no mere plot expediency, but a reflection of his youthful animosity toward mother figures. In a 1990 documentary on the making of *Close Encounters*, Spielberg expressed second thoughts about his depiction of Ronnie, recalling that he cast Teri Garr after seeing her in a coffee commercial: "I said, 'A homemaker—makes great coffee!' I was young, naive, and chauvinistic. . . . She was the bad guy in the movie, in a sense. She's not really a bad guy, she's somebody who's trying to preserve her family and save her family from the kind of insanity she's assuming Dreyfuss is experiencing, and doesn't want her family to be tainted by this."

While a more emotionally mature Spielberg might have had more empathy with Ronnie, the raw pain suffusing his depiction of the Nearys' chaotic household might have been diluted as well. As played by the "alter ego" of the thirty-year-old bachelor filmmaker, Roy is a child-man unprepared for the responsibilities of marriage or fatherhood. It is not until he drives his family away by symbolically regressing to an infantile state—shaping a mountain out of mud in his living room like a toddler playing with his own waste—that Roy finds a way to escape from his oppressive surroundings. When his Disneyish dreams of "wishing upon a star" are fulfilled by his ascension into the womb of the mother ship, Roy is symbolically reborn, like the astronaut at the end of *2001*. Escorted aboard by the tiny childlike aliens to whom he seems both brother and father, Roy, in Spielberg's description, "becomes a real person. He loses his strings, his wooden joints, and . . . he makes the most important decision in the history of the world."

With Roy Neary, the "Peter Pan Syndrome" takes on cosmic dimensions. Some of the film's detractors argued that Spielberg is simply glorifying the abandonment of a family by an irresponsible father. Calling the film "a hymn to regression and emotional retardation," Stephen Farber wrote in *New West* that "if the ordinary world had some attractions, if Roy's family had a strong emotional hold on him, the ending would have been richer and more meaningful." While that argument is true enough as far as it goes—"I couldn't have made *Close Encounters* today," a more paternal Spielberg said in 1994, "because I would never leave my family"—such criticism tends to reduce the film to a mundane level of meaning and underestimates the degree to which Spielberg succeeds in convincing us that Roy's alienation is justified.

Farber himself points out that *Close Encounters* reworks an archetypal American myth defined by literary critic Leslie Fiedler as "The flight of the dreamer from the shrew—into the mountains and out of time, away from the drab duties of home and town." The existential dreariness of Roy's Middle American life, and his family's utter inability to comprehend his spiritual yearning for a more beautiful and fulfilling existence, are conveyed with considerable emotional force.

Behitting a film with so many overt and covert autobiographical overtones for its director, not only do the extraterrestrials communicate by putting on a spectacular light and music show, with François Truffaut "directing" the human response, but Roy and Jillian cope with, and compound, their alienation from society by turning to artistic expression. When Truffaut's Lacombe meets Neary, he asks, "Mr. Neary, are you an artist or a painter?" In an extended sequence derived from Schrader's original draft, Roy (following Barry's lead) obsessively sculpts a model of the mountain, an image implanted in his consciousness by the extraterrestrials (the sculpture is literally a "Play Mountain," the meaning of Spielberg's family name in German). Jillian compulsively churns out sketches and paintings of the same mysterious shape, which she and Roy later discover (via television) to be the Devil's Tower landing site.

What Roy considers "art," conventional society considers "madness." Spielberg knows this dilemma well, having been stigmatized as "kind of nuts" and "the strange kid on the block" for his early filmmaking activities in suburban Arizona. Roy's emotional breakdown at the family dinner table while sculpting the mountain out of mashed potatoes ("Well, I guess you've noticed there's something a little strange with Dad") is the most moving moment in Dreyfuss's performance. When the mud-streaked Roy piles together his massive artwork, alarming his neighbors and almost wrecking his own home in the process, he exhibits the frenzied, furious passion of a demented sculptor. These dark-humored scenes are so disturbing that many audience members and reviewers had a visceral reaction against watching the protagonist going "mad," a virtual taboo for a father-hero figure in mainstream American filmmaking. Spielberg caved in to that negative response by drastically abridging the scenes for his *Special Edition*. That unfortunate decision diminished the psychological impact of Roy's experience, tacitly accepting the misunderstanding that his obsession with UFOs is merely a cop-out from social responsibility, rather than a matter of overwhelming spiritual urgency.

"I used the Van Gogh analogy to Richard many times," Spielberg said in a 1978 interview. "When I justified the psychotic behavior in building the mountain in the den, I used the Van Gogh madness parallels several times. A person who is an artist—and Neary is an artist—probably all the people who wound up there are artists of some sort, even if they had no external ability, they certainly had something inside of them that made them worthy."

While the artistic impulse is falsely equated with madness, its true source,

for Spielberg, is the "naïve wonderment" of childhood, a quality represented at various levels of consciousness by Roy, Lacombe, and little Barry Guiler. Lacking the cultural conditioning that leads adults to xenophobic reactions, Barry accepts the aliens (whom, at first, only he can see) as "friends" beckoning him, like Peter Pan, to a great adventure. Spielberg underscores their kinship by casting an angelic-looking toddler whose soft, round, wide-eyed features and beatific smile give him a family resemblance to the Casper the Ghost-like aliens. "I really wanted to take a child's point of view," Spielberg said. "The uneducated innocence that allows a person to take this kind of quantum jump and go abroad, if you will. A conscientious, responsible adult human being probably wouldn't."

In the marvelous scene of Barry discovering the aliens disrupting his mother's kitchen, Spielberg evoked an extraordinarily spontaneous and affecting series of expressions from the untrained child actor. As the pyramided Barry stands in the shadowy doorway, his expression changes in a single close-up from initial trepidation to quizzical amusement and, finally, to an almost rapturous joy.

Spielberg's instinctive affinity with children manifested itself in the magical means he used to direct Cary Guffey in that scene: "I had to the left of the camera a cardboard partition, and to the right of the camera a second cardboard partition. To the left of the camera, I put Bob Westmoreland, our makeup man, in a gorilla suit—the full mask and hands and hairy body. To the right of the camera, I dressed myself up as an Easter Bunny, with the ears and the nose and the whiskers painted on my face. Cary Guffey didn't know what to expect. He didn't know what he was gonna react to. His job was to come into the kitchen, stop at the door, and just have a good time. And just as he came into the kitchen, I had the cardboard partition dropped and Bob Westmoreland was there as the gorilla. Cary froze, like a deer caught in car headlights. . . . I dropped my partition, and he looked over at me, and there was the Easter Bunny smiling at him. He was torn. He began to smile at me—he was still afraid of that thing. Then I had Bob—I said, 'Take off your head.' Bob took off his mask, and when Cary saw it was the man that put his makeup on in the morning, Cary began to laugh. Even though it was a trick, the reaction was pure and honest."

Spielberg's employment of the "child's point of view" in presenting Trumbull's luminous, multicolored space vehicles (Barry calls them "Toys") gives the audience the same awestruck feeling reported by those who claim to have experienced close encounters. One does not have to be a believer in UFOs to share Spielberg's sense of wonder about the possibility of an en-

* Spielberg was not always able to work such magic with Cary Guffey. "One time, God bless him, the little boy was tired, and we were filming at night," production executive John Veitch recalls. "He said to his mother, 'I'm not working tonight. I want to go to sleep.' Steven and all of us said to him, 'We'll give you any kind of a toy, anything you want. I don't want anything. I want to go home.' Mom: 'And he did.' We lost about \$100,000, because that was the big set with all the people and the mother ship."

counter with higher forms of life. In proposing "a seductive alternative for a lot of people who no longer have faith in anything," Spielberg countered the growing cynicism of the post-Vietnam, post-Watergate era with a myth of transcendence, expressed in the secular idiom of the modern world. Skeptical of organized religion, Spielberg expresses his hope for social harmony in a high-tech, quasi-spiritual vision of an alternate reality.

"The present world situation is calculated as never before to arouse expectations of a redeeming, supernatural event," Jung wrote in his 1959 book on flying saucers. "... We have indeed strayed far from the metaphysical certainties of the Middle Ages, but not so far that our historical and psychological background is empty of all metaphysical hope. ... It is characteristic of our time that, in contrast to its previous expressions, the archetype should now take the form of an object, a technological construction, in order to avoid the odiousness of a mythological personification. Anything that looks technological goes down without difficulty with modern man. The possibility of space travel makes the unpopular idea of a metaphysical intervention much more acceptable."

Spielberg's visual style in *Close Encounters* is characterized by shots of people gazing in wonderment at something bigger than life, in images flooded with what he calls "'God light,' shafts coming out of the sky, or out of a spaceship, or coming through a doorway." Such images would become Spielberg's cinematic signature, his way of conveying the sentiment expressed by his grandfather Fievel: "How wondrous are Thy works."

EARLY in 1977, when *Close Encounters* was still months away from completion, George Lucas showed a rough cut of *Star Wars* (without John Williams's rousing musical score) at his San Anselmo home, in northern California. The audience included executives of Twentieth Century-Fox; Gloria Katz and Willard Huyck, who had worked on the script; and several of Lucas's other filmmaker friends, among them Brian De Palma, John Milius, Hal Barwood, Matthew Robbins, and Spielberg.

"It was the first time the executives from Fox had seen it," Katz recalls. "It had no special effects; the battles were scenes from old World War II movies. Afterward, there was stunned silence. George's then-wife [Marcia] broke into tears. I told her, 'Don't cry when there are people from the studio there.' She said, 'It's the *At Long Last Love* of sci-fi.' Brian De Palma said, 'What is this shit?'"

But while Lucas, Spielberg, and the writers were driving to a restaurant after the screening, Spielberg piped up. "I liked it. I think this movie's going to make a hundred million dollars."

Lucas was pessimistic, predicting that his offbeat sci-fi epic would do about as well as an average Disney film. When *Star Wars* opened that May, Lucas escaped to the Hawaiian island of Maui to recuperate from the editing process and to avoid dealing with the anxiety of the opening. He invited

Spielberg to join him at the Mauna Kea Hotel. The two filmmakers were on the beach building a sand castle for good luck when Lucas excused himself to take a call from Los Angeles. Learning that *Star Wars* was selling out at every theater it was playing in the United States, Lucas returned in what Spielberg described as "a state of euphoria."

As they continued sculpting their sand castle, Lucas asked Spielberg what he wanted to do after *Close Encounters*. "I said I wanted to do a James Bond film," Spielberg recalled. "United Artists approached me after *Sugarland Express* and asked me to do a film for them. I said, 'Sure, give me the next James Bond film.' But they said they couldn't do that. Then George said he had a film that was even better than a James Bond. It was called *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, and it was about this archeologist-adventurer who goes searching for the Ark of the Covenant. When he mentioned that it would be like the old serials and that the guy would wear a soft fedora and carry a bullwhip, I was completely hooked. George said, 'Are you interested?' and I said, 'I want to direct it,' and he said, 'It's yours.'"

Star Wars exceeded even Spielberg's optimistic box-office prediction, passing the hundred-million mark in only three months and eventually grossing more than half a billion dollars. Spielberg's gracious advertisement in the trade press congratulating Lucas after *Star Wars* broke the box-office record of *Jaws* did not tell the whole story of his reaction. "*Star Wars* was our rival," says *Close Encounters* producer Michael Phillips. "Steven felt really upset about the fact that they were coming out ahead of us." Not only was Spielberg disappointed to see his record surpassed, he worried that *Star Wars* would steal much of *Close Encounters*' box-office potential.

Those fears were exacerbated after Columbia held sneak previews of *Close Encounters* at Dallas's Medallion Theater on October 19 and 20. Spielberg felt he needed seven more weeks of postproduction to finish the movie properly for a mid-December release, but Columbia was pushing for a November 1 opening. As a result of that pressure, Spielberg considered the initial release version a "work in progress that had never been finished." One decision he left up to the preview audiences was whether they wanted to hear Jiminy Cricket singing "When You Wish Upon a Star" under the end credits as the mother ship ascends into the heavens with Roy Neary aboard. After previewing the film both with and without the song, Spielberg realized that the song seemed to imply "everything up until the last thirty minutes was a fantasy. Audience response to it was somewhat fifty-fifty. The people who liked it didn't *love* it—they *liked* it. The people who didn't like it were *adamant*." "It diminished the film," Douglas Trumbull felt. "It was too cornball and too referential to something else that took you out of the mood that had been created for the film." Although the song had helped inspire the movie, Spielberg reluctantly excised it. But he retained two instrumental quotations of the tune in John Williams's score, and vowed as early as 1978 that he would put back the song when the movie was reissued (the 1980 *Special Edition* used an instrumental version over the end credits). While a

previously scheduled international press junket to Los Angeles and bicoastal press previews were delayed following the Dallas previews, Spielberg also trimmed the movie by seven and a half minutes.

The most dramatic fallout from those previews was a premature review by *New York* magazine financial writer William Flanagan. By offering a \$25 bribe to someone who resembled him, Flanagan made his way past security guards checking driver's license photographs of the preselected test audience. Flanagan's scathingly negative article, which hit the streets on October 31, noted that Columbia's stock had risen from \$8 to \$17 a share over the past few months in anticipation of the release of *Close Encounters*, but that the studio still seemed unusually anxious to keep the film under wraps. "I can understand all the apprehension," Flanagan wrote. "In my opinion, the picture will be a colossal flop. It lacks the dazzle, charm, wit, imagination, and broad audience appeal of *Star Wars*—the film Wall Street insists it measure up to, despite author-director Steven Spielberg's artistic protestations."

Flanagan's piece triggered panic selling on Wall Street, causing Columbia to issue a statement reaffirming its "faith in backing Steven Spielberg" and attacking Flanagan's supposed bias "because he was denied access to the film and saw it at a preview to which he was not invited. In fact, no member of the press was invited to the preview." Nevertheless, Frank Rich of *Time* magazine also managed to see the film in Dallas and ran a glowing review at the same time as Flanagan's pan. "Although the movie is not a sure blockbuster—it lacks the simplicity of effect that characterizes most all-time box-office champs—it will certainly be a big enough hit to keep Columbia's stockholders happy," wrote Rich, while failing to mention that Time Inc. was a silent investor in the movie. To the relief of Columbia, which did not criticize *Time* for jumping the review date, Rich continued, "More important, *Close Encounters* offers proof, if any were needed, that Spielberg's reputation is no accident. His new movie is richer and more ambitious than *Jaws*, and it reaches the viewer at a far more profound level than *Star Wars*."

That was enough to reverse the stock slide, although *The Hollywood Reporter* noted that "tension concerning the public's response to the film was running sufficiently high to keep director Steve Spielberg ensconced in his hotel room, unwilling to attend [November 6] screenings" for media and financial analysts at New York's Ziegfeld Theatre.

After opening on November 16, *Close Encounters* easily reached the box-office stratosphere, with its worldwide box-office gross eventually totalling almost \$270 million.* But Spielberg always regretted that his many production delays had forced him to miss the originally planned spring release date, thereby enabling *Star Wars* to beat *Close Encounters* into the marketplace.

* According to a 1994 *Forbes* magazine profile of Spielberg, while his contract for *Close Encounters* called for him to receive 17.5 percent of the profits, he "ended up with about \$5 million. Spielberg was discovering the first rule of Hollywood accounting: Even the biggest hits show very little 'profit' after overhead, interest and distribution fees are generously factored in."

Although Michael Phillips feels that by reviving the appeal of the dormant sci-fi genre, *Star Wars* may have helped *Close Encounters* at the box office, Spielberg could not help thinking that his movie would have been a bigger hit if only it had opened earlier. Nevertheless, *Close Encounters* proved that *Jaws* was no fluke. Sending Columbia profits soaring to record levels, it sealed Spielberg's commercial clout within the industry as a filmmaker with a seemingly magical box-office touch. He and Lucas now found themselves with virtually unlimited power to choose their subject matter and dictate the terms of their deals with studios. Their unprecedented levels of success would embolden them to demand a degree of independence within the Hollywood system that few filmmakers had ever been granted.

SPIELBERG received his first Oscar nomination as director of *Close Encounters*, one of eight nominations the film received. But in the impenetrable wisdom of the Academy's overall membership, Spielberg's film was not worthy of a nomination for Best Picture. Richard Dreyfuss's eminently forgettable comedy vehicle *The Goodbye Girl* (for which he won an Oscar) took what should have been the *Close Encounters* slot on the list of nominees for Best Picture, which otherwise matched up with the directing nominations. *Close Encounters* won two Oscars, for Zsigmond's cinematography and a special achievement Oscar for Frank Warner's sound effects editing. Woody Allen's *Annie Hall* was the winner for Best Picture and Director, so at least Spielberg could take the consolation that his movie was passed over for another that has become a modern classic.

Critical opinion on Spielberg, which had begun to diverge as a result of *Jaws*, was polarized further by *Close Encounters*. Some reviewers mocked Spielberg for making what Molly Haskell, in *New York* magazine, called "children's films that parents can love without shame"; her review was headlined "The Dumbest Story Ever Told." Reviewers who responded favorably to *Close Encounters* were willing to partake in what Frank Rich called "a celebration not only of children's dreams but also of the movies that help fuel those dreams." *Newsweek's* Jack Kroll compared Spielberg to Walt Disney, "with his metamorphic genius, sentimental idealism and his feeling for the technical magic of movies as a paradigm for technological utopia." But Kroll also understood the darker side of Spielberg, finding the much-maligned imagery of Roy Neary building the mountain in his den "a crazy, funny, touching scene . . . it seems to come from something deeply personal in Spielberg."

Praise for Spielberg's technical wizardry was nearly unanimous, but Charles Champlin of the *Los Angeles Times* was among those for whom this "magic set with dramatic interludes" nevertheless confirmed a suspicion that Spielberg was a director of "effects rather than characters or relationships." In the same paper, however, Ray Bradbury described *Close Encounters* as "the most important film of our time. . . . For this is a religious film, in all the

great good senses, the right senses, of that much-battered word. . . . Spielberg has made a film that can open in New Delhi, Tokyo, Berlin, Moscow, Johannesburg, Paris, London, New York, and Rio de Janeiro on the same day to mobs and throngs and crowds that will never stop coming because for the first time someone has treated all of us as if we really did belong to one race."

Perhaps the most fitting comment on *Close Encounters* came from the great filmmaker Jean Renoir. In a March 1978 letter to François Truffaut, Renoir reported from Beverly Hills, "We have finally seen *Close Encounters*. It is a very good film, and I regret it was not made in France. This type of popular science would be most appropriate for the compatriots of Jules Verne and Méliès. . . . You are excellent in it, because you're not quite real. There is more than a grain of eccentricity in this adventure. The author is a poet. In the South of France one would say he is a bit *fada*. He brings to mind the exact meaning of this word in Provence: the village *fada* is the one possessed by the fairies."

UNFORTUNATELY, Spielberg could not let go of his masterpiece. *The Special Edition of Close Encounters of the Third Kind* went before the cameras in 1979, on weekends over a nineteen-week period while he was otherwise occupied with filming *1941*. Columbia let him spend \$2 million to recut *Close Encounters* and shoot additional scenes he had been unable to film for the original version, when "certain compromises had to be made as a result of budget and schedule. . . . I've had the opportunity to see how the film plays for audiences. Film is not necessarily a dry-cement process. I have the luxury of retouching the painting."

But Columbia exacted a heavy aesthetic price. "I never really wanted to show the inside of the mother ship," Spielberg admitted in the 1990 documentary about the making of *Close Encounters*. "That was, in a way, how I got the money to fix the movie." Michael Butler was enlisted to photograph the scene of Roy Neary entering the mother ship, on a newly built set at the Burbank Studios, with added special effects by Robert Swarthe (Douglas Trumbull says he passed up the opportunity to work on the *Special Edition* because Columbia expected him to do it without pay).

Although the expanded ending was the major selling gimmick in Columbia's ad campaign—"NOW, FOR THE FIRST TIME, FILMGOERS WILL BE ABLE TO SHARE THE ULTIMATE EXPERIENCE OF BEING *INSIDE*"—the scene proved to be a terrible letdown from the phantasmagoria preceding it. Little happens except for Neary gaping around inside an essentially empty, plastic-looking environment bearing a distinct resemblance to the lobby of a Hyatt hotel. By preventing the viewer from simply imagining what happens to Neary, the ending squandered much of the film's sense of wonder and magic.

That commercial compromise alone would have been a fatal miscalculation, but Spielberg, as he later put it, also "added some *gestalt* and took out

some *kitsch* and reshaped the movie." His cuts amounted to sixteen minutes of footage. His additions included six minutes of newly shot scenes and seven minutes of footage shot for the original version but previously unseen by the public; the *Special Edition* runs three minutes shorter than the original's 135-minute length. The "*gestalt*" Spielberg added included the scene of a cargo ship, lost in the Bermuda Triangle, turning up in the Gobi Desert (photographed by Allen Daviau). Although it expands the story's geographical scope, that scene is superfluous because it serves the same function as the opening scene of airplanes turning up in the Mexican desert. What Spielberg considered "*kitsch*" was much of the heart of the story involving Roy's estrangement from his family, notably a large chunk of the mountain-building sequence. In partial compensation, Spielberg added a harrowing scene of Ronnie discovering a freaked-out Roy huddled in the bathtub under a steaming shower. He had not used it in the original because it was "so powerful, it was almost another movie." But for the 1980 edition Spielberg also cut another pivotal scene of Neary and other UFO witnesses being publicly belittled by mendacious Air Force personnel. The net effect of the changes was a diminution of Roy's personal story in favor of special effects.

Rather than confirming critical reservations about Spielberg, as one might have thought, this change of emphasis was greeted with uncritical praise when the *Special Edition* debuted in theaters on July 31, 1980. (The public response, on the other hand, was unspectacular, and one patron actually sued Columbia, claiming that fraudulent advertising had led her to expect a new movie.) In part, the critics' response to the retooling reflected gratification that Spielberg had listened to their advice about how to downplay Roy's mental problems. But it also indicated that, even in its bastardized form, *Close Encounters* had become a consensus classic and its director a cultural icon. "What has happened is a phenomenon in the annals of film," Arthur Knight proclaimed in *The Hollywood Reporter*. "Director Steven Spielberg has taken his 1977 flawed masterpiece and, by judicious editing and addition of several scenes, has turned his work into an authentic masterpiece."

At the time Spielberg issued his *Special Edition*, Michael Phillips, who had no involvement with it, presciently raised a note of caution: "I just hope it doesn't lead to a trend in which filmmakers 'redo' their movies. That would simply be dreadful. Some filmmakers might start withholding a few minutes from the first release so they could add this material in the reissue and get people to spend their five dollars again."

That is just what has happened in recent years. The release of revised "directors' cuts" too often has become a dubious exercise in historical revisionism, undertaken largely to gratify egos and obtain additional revenues from the home-video and laserdisc market. While the restoration of such classic films as *Lawrence of Arabia*, which Spielberg helped sponsor, has been a more positive trend, the continual metamorphosis of film history *Close Encounters* helped inaugurate raises disturbing questions about the legacy filmmakers are leaving for future generations. When Columbia an-

nounced in 1980 that the original version of *Close Encounters* was being "retired" from the marketplace, Spielberg publicly objected, insisting, "There will be two versions of *Close Encounters* showing for the next one hundred years, as far as I'm concerned." Videotapes of the film in distribution today, however, are of the *Special Edition*. The original version sometimes airs on television in a pan-and-scan format, but it can be seen in its proper wide-screen aspect ratio only on the 1990 Criterion laserdisc edition. Spielberg's involvement with that third edition of the film, which includes the added scenes as a supplement, seemed a tacit admission that his original cut should be regarded as the true version.

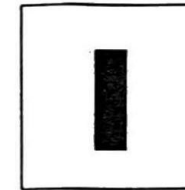
Expressing hope that the *Special Edition* would not replace the original, Pauline Kael wrote in 1980, "I want to be able to hear the true believer Roberts Blossom tell people that he has seen Bigfoot as well as flying saucers. It may not seem like a big loss, but when you remember something in a movie with pleasure and it's gone, you feel as if your memories had been mugged."

T W E L V E

" R E H A B "

IN EVERY FILMMAKER'S LIFE, A 1941 INVARIABLY COMES ALONG. I CAN SEE 1941 MORE AS A CLEANSING EXPERIENCE, THE ONE POSSIBLE WAY I CAN MAKE YOU FORGET ALL THE GOOD THINGS I'VE DONE IN MOTION PICTURES.

— STEVEN SPIELBERG, SEPTEMBER 1979



M E T a real heartbreaker last night," Spielberg told Julia Phillips while they were working on *Close Encounters*. The "heartbreaker" was Amy Irving.

The twenty-two-year-old actress, whose curly-brown-haired, shoe-eyed, high-cheekboned beauty masked an intense and fiercely ambitious nature, had recently returned to California from dramatic studies in London when she met Spielberg in 1976. The daughter of TV producer-director Jules Irving, former artistic director of New York's Repertory Theatre of Lincoln Center, and actress Priscilla Pointer, Amy was of Russian-Jewish ancestry on her father's side and Welsh-Cherokee on her mother's, but she was raised as a Christian Scientist. She was the niece of Universal TV executive producer Richard Irving, who had worked with Spielberg on *The Name of the Game*. Amy grew up on the stage in San Francisco and New York and felt somewhat alienated when she followed her parents to Hollywood. "When we were in San Francisco, Los Angeles was a dirty word to us," she admitted. "I never in a million years thought I'd ever be in television or films. I always thought I was going to be a struggling stage actress."

But with her three-year stint completed at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts, Amy found herself unexpectedly in demand in Holly-

who immediately throw their six-year-olds at me." Another unnerving price of success was having to deal with allegations that *E.T.* was plagiarized from an unproduced screenplay, *The Alien*, by the celebrated Indian director Satyajit Ray, or from the 1978 one-act play *Lokey from Maldemar* by Lisa Litchfield, who filed an unsuccessful \$750 million lawsuit. "It's the people you've never heard of who crawl out of the woodwork like cockroaches to sue you," Spielberg commented.

On June 27, 1982, Spielberg was invited to show *E.T.* at the White House to Ronald and Nancy Reagan and a handful of guests, including Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. "Nancy Reagan was crying toward the end," Spielberg reported, "and the President looked like a ten-year-old kid." On September 17, the director showed his film to the staff of the United Nations, where he was introduced by Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar and received the UN Peace Medal. And on December 9, Spielberg was presented to Queen Elizabeth II at a royal benefit premiere in London, leading *The Hollywood Reporter* to quip, "Steven Spielberg may yet be knighted."

The reflected glory of *E.T.* even made Spielberg's mother a celebrity, when the effervescent Leah appeared on *The Tonight Show* to reminisce with Johnny Carson about her son's precocious childhood. *E.T.* himself appeared on the cover of *Rolling Stone*, reading a copy of *Variety* bearing the headline THE SPACEMAN THAT SAVED H'WOOD. In 1985, Spielberg filed an indignant protest in *E.T.*'s name after the *Los Angeles Times* ran a caricature of the alien as a decadent Hollywood hipster wearing a glittering pinkie ring, with a coke spoon and razor blade dangling from his neck.

The first biographies of Spielberg appeared in the year following *E.T.*'s release: British author Tony Crawley's *The Steven Spielberg Story: The Man Behind the Movies* and Tom Collins's children's biography *Steven Spielberg: Creator of E.T.** The *E.T.* marketing blitz also spawned a book of *Letters to E.T.*, introduced by Spielberg; a novelization by the noted science-fiction writer William Kotzwinkle, *E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial in His Adventure on Earth*; and, for younger readers, Kotzwinkle's illustrated *E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial Storybook*. Each of Kotzwinkle's books sold more than a million copies.

Although Kotzwinkle wrote a 1985 sequel, *E.T.: The Book of the Green Planet*, based on a story by Spielberg, the director has staunchly resisted public and industry pressure to make a filmed sequel, feeling it "would do nothing but rob the original of its virginity." But Spielberg was tempted enough in July 1982 to write a treatment with Mathison, "E.T. II: Nocturnal

* Since then, five more children's biographies of Spielberg have been published, as well as three other adult biographies. Philip M. Taylor's *Steven Spielberg: The Man, His Movies, and Their Meaning* (1992); Frank Sanello's *Spielberg: The Man, The Movies, The Mythology* (1996); and John Baxter's *The Unauthorised Biography: Steven Spielberg* (1996).

Fears," in which Elliott and friends are kidnapped by evil extraterrestrials (perhaps refugees from *Night Skies*) and must contact *E.T.* to rescue them. Spielberg also was involved in the planning of Universal Studios' exhilarating *E.T.* ride, a \$40 million attraction that opened in 1991. A live-action sequel to the movie, preceded by a filmed introduction by Spielberg and *E.T.*, the ride whisks the audience to *E.T.*'s planet on flying bicycles.

Spielberg initially said he didn't want to "flood the market" with *E.T.* product tie-ins and that he wanted any products to be designed in the spirit of the film, but MCA/Universal eventually licensed more than two hundred products in a belated attempt to capitalize on the film's unexpected box-office performance. MCA spent more than \$2 million pursuing rip-off items, filing more than two hundred lawsuits. Perhaps the most egregious unauthorized product was a recording entitled "I Had Sex with *E.T.*" Some of the authorized products were in little better taste, ranging from *E.T.* dolls and costumes to ice cream, chocolate-flavored cereal, and women's undergarments with *E.T.*'s face stitched on the leg. Reese's Pieces, the candy Elliott uses to lure *E.T.* out of hiding, saw its business climb by 65 percent after Hershey agreed to spend \$1 million for advertising tie-ins.* But most companies selling *E.T.*-related products failed to reap the marketing bonanza of the *Star Wars* films, whose products had grossed an astonishing \$1.5 billion by 1982. An "E.T. Earth Center" toy store at Universal Studios closed after only five weeks.

The commercial exploitation of *E.T.* was so blatant and crass that it began to tarnish many people's images of the movie. "Spielberg—who had personal control over merchandising—turned his film into a toy factory, trivializing the movie almost beyond recognition," Michael Ventura observed in *L.A. Weekly*. "... Gorged with greed, he sells and sells and sells, until the name *E.T.* no longer conjures a marvelous surprise that uplifted us in a huge dark room, but a lot of dolls and bumper stickers and Michael Jackson records and games and candy bars, all sticky with sentimentality. It's as though Spielberg needs *not* to believe in these images he creates.

Nevertheless, all the huckstering failed to discourage the most remarkable aspect of the *E.T.* phenomenon, its widespread embrace as a quasi-religious parable. The spiritual dimension that was only implied in *Close Encounters* was foregrounded unmistakably in *E.T.* Stanley Kauffmann's *New Republic* review dubbed it "The Gospel According to St. Steven." English professor Al Millar, who published a pamphlet entitled *E.T.—You're More Than a Movie Star*, was among those pointing out parallels between Spielberg's creature and Jesus Christ, including the mysterious stranger's arrival in a shed, his glowing heart, power to work miracles, healing touch, spiritual teachings,

* That became a major embarrassment for another candymaker, Mars, which had turned down an opportunity to have its M&M's used in the movie. Mars thought *E.T.* was an ugly creature that would frighten children.

impression that the Holocaust is an event people recover from and get over. It's a Hollywood spin."

While these concerns are valid, it is impossible for Spielberg or any other chronicler of the Holocaust to avoid putting his own emotional imprint onto the story. Spielberg's continuing identification with Oskar Schindler has led him to see himself as the "rescuer" of the last uncollected history of the Holocaust. If that goal is "[l]audable and self-aggrandizing in equal measure," as the authors of the *Voice* article contended, Spielberg nevertheless has the resources, and the moral imperative, to attempt it. Karen Kushell, one of the project's executive producers, reported that Spielberg "almost went through the same epiphany I think Schindler does at the end of the movie, where he said, 'No, no, I want them all. I don't want to just do the Schindler survivors. I want to get everybody's stories.'"

WHEN he and his partners in DreamWorks held a press conference to announce the creation of their film, TV, music, interactive video, and consumer products company, Spielberg, in a Freudian slip, called it "our new country." Turning his *hubris* into a joke, he added, "Maybe it will be a country. Is Belize still for sale?"

The first new Hollywood studio to be planned on such a scale since Twentieth Century-Fox was founded in 1935, DreamWorks, if all goes as Spielberg envisioned, could well become "a company that will outlive us all." With their grandiose plans for reimagining the very concept of a movie studio, Spielberg and his partners could take the lumbering, financially overextended, and creatively bankrupt movie industry on a quantum jump into the next century. DreamWorks combines Spielberg's creative vision and passion for breaking the bounds of technology with Jeffrey Katzenberg's executive savvy and David Geffen's entrepreneurial flair. In their case, the old Hollywood warning about not letting the lunatics run the asylum may be meaningless, for Katzenberg brought Disney animation to record box-office heights, Geffen's record company made him a billionaire, and Spielberg has amassed a comparable fortune.

When the partnership was announced on October 12, 1994, the location of the studio facility had not yet been decided. The company did not even have a name, although the press, prompted by Katzenberg, fawningly labeled it "The Dream Team." There were, in fact, no concrete plans to discuss at the press conference, a fact that caused some skeptical head-shaking in Hollywood.

The rough sketch for the partnership had come together with remarkable alacrity. After being forced from his post as chairman of Walt Disney Studios on August 24, Katzenberg, already a partner with Spielberg in the Dive! restaurant chain, asked Spielberg, "What do you think about starting a studio from scratch?" Spielberg was immediately receptive, although he worried about leaving his longtime home at MCA. The decisive discussions among

the three partners occurred during the early morning hours of September 29 in Washington, D.C., following their attendance at a White House state dinner for Russian President Boris Yeltsin. "We're in tuxedos talking about a brand-new studio," Spielberg recalled, "and just across from us there's Yeltsin and Bill Clinton talking about disarming the world of nuclear weapons." The preliminary legal paperwork for the partnership was drawn up hurriedly during the weekend before the announcement.

"We could have built this up over a fifteen-year period," Spielberg mused. "Instead, we're trying to do it in a couple of years. After our first planning sessions, I thought about how much easier it would be to start with a single film, make it, see how it does, and if it does well, do a second picture. That's the conservative, play-it-safe side that haunts me before I fall asleep at night."

Seeming bemused at his own audacity, Spielberg told the press that he had broken two long-standing personal rules with the creation of DreamWorks. "Over the years I've had almost a religious fervor in not investing my own money in show business," he said. "... Now I can't think of a better place than this to invest in our own future." And recalling his fruitful business and personal relationships with Sid Sheinberg and Steve Ross, he noted, "Ten years ago this would have been inconceivable because I love having bosses in my life. ... I needed them. But I grew up and began to foster children and have a large family. I have five children. I felt I was ready to be the father of my own business. Or at least the co-father."

There was speculation that what the three were really after was a takeover of MCA in support of Lew Wasserman and Sheinberg, who were then embattled with the firm's Japanese owners, Matsushita. That notion was fueled by reports that the DreamWorks partners sought and received the "blessing" of Wasserman and Sheinberg before announcing their new studio. Any takeover plans the trio might have had were rendered moot by the acquisition of MCA in April 1995 by Seagram, which subsequently concluded a ten-year deal with DreamWorks to distribute its films outside North America. The eighty-two-year-old Wasserman was kicked upstairs to become chairman emeritus of MCA, and Sheinberg left to form his own production company, The Bubble Factory.

Planning its own domestic distribution operation rather than relying on the traditional Hollywood system, DreamWorks, as George Lucas observed, "has the opportunity to create a whole new distribution system that may be a vast improvement over the old one." MCA's foreign distribution of DreamWorks films excludes only South Korea, where rights are reserved for that country's One World Media Corp., which invested \$300 million in the new studio. That largesse was surpassed only by the \$500 million investment by Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen. Spielberg, Katzenberg, and Geffen each put up \$33.3 million for a combined 67 percent stake in their privately held company, with the outside investors divvying up the remaining 33 percent. DreamWorks also lined up \$1 billion in loan commitments from Chemical Bank. By using their personal leverage to retain control of the company

September 24, 1975. Pauline Kael's comments are from "Notes on Evolving Heroes, Morals, Audiences," *The New Yorker*, November 8, 1976. Jane E. Caputi's essay "Jaws as Patriarchal Myth" is from *Journal of Popular Film*, Vol. VI, No. 4, 1978.

Articles on "Jawsmania" (1975) include: "Summer of the Shark"; John Charnay and Doug Mirell, "Ripping Response to Jaws," *HR*, June 26; Peter Goldman, "Jawsmania: The Great Escape," *Newsweek*, July 28; Robert E. Dallos, "Sharks: Jaws of Fear Open on All Shores," *LAT*, July 12; and John Getze, "Jaws Swims to Top in Ocean of Publicity," *LAT*, September 28. Fidel Castro's interpretation of the film and Spielberg's response were reported by Tuchman. Ellis and McCosker commented on the film's impact in *Great White Shark*. Cleveland Amory reported on the protest against Universal souvenirs in "Sharks Have Feelings Too," *TV Guide*, November 27, 1976. Spielberg's proposal for chocolate sharks was recalled by Joan Darling.

The date on which *Jaws* turned a profit was reported to the author by Gilmore. Its box-office record was reported in "U Claims Rental Record as *Jaws* Passes *Godfather*," *DV*, September 10, 1975; see also "Star Wars Zips *Jaws* in Grosses," *LAT*, December 2, 1977, and Spielberg's advertisement congratulating George Lucas in *HR*, December 2, 1977. Alfred Hitchcock's reaction to the success of *Jaws* was reported by the author in "Hitchcock: a Defense and an Update," *Film Comment*, May-June 1979. Spielberg discussed the film's release strategy in "Ripping Response to *Jaws*." Peter Biskind discussed the "blockbuster syndrome" in his essay "Blockbuster: The Last Crusade," in Mark Crispin Miller, ed., *Seeing Through Movies*, Pantheon, 1981.

Information on Spielberg's profit percentages on *Jaws* is from the author's interviews with Zanuck and Michael Phillips; Getze's article; and Klemesrud's interview with Spielberg. His contract renegotiation was reported in "Spielberg, Universal in Four-Film Deal," *HR*, July 11, 1975; "Spielberg, Universal Sign Four-Picture Agreement," *LAT*, July 14, 1975; and Deborah Caulfield, "E.T. Gossip: The One That Got Away?" *LAT*, July 18, 1982. Sheinberg's prediction that Spielberg would win an Oscar is from Haber. Spielberg's reaction to the nominations is recorded in *TVTV Looks at the Oscars* (TVTV, KCET, Los Angeles, 1976).

Sources on *Jaws 2* include the author's interviews with the film's director, Jeannot Szwarc, and Alves, its production designer and associate producer; Ray Loynd, *The Jaws 2* Log, Dell, 1978; "Spielberg Spanks Sequels as 'Cheap, Carnival Trick'"; and Joseph McBride, "Director Avers *Jaws 2* Not a 'Rip-Off Sequel,'" *DV*, May 13, 1977 (interview with John Hancock, who later was fired from the film).

11. WATCH THE SKIES (PP. 261-92)

See notes for previous chapter for material on the genesis of *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. The author interviewed the following people who worked on the film: Michael Phillips, John Veitch, Vilmos Zsigmond, Joseph Alves Jr., Douglas Trumbull, Allen Daviau, and David Giler (as well as discussing the film with François Truffaut during production); and others including Robert S. Birchard (who worked on the 1980 *Special Edition*), Robert Stack, and Bob Gale. The production of *Close Encounters* was chronicled in Balaban, with an introduction by Spielberg, "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" *Diary*; Forrest J. Ackerman, "Close Encounters of the Third Kind"; *Official Authorized Edition* (magazine), Warren Publishing Co., 1977; Durwood, ed., "Close Encounters of the Third Kind": A Document of the Film; Julia Phillips, *You'll Never Eat Lunch in This Town Again*; and *Making "Close Encounters"*, a 1990 documentary produced by Isaac Mizrahi and Morgan Holly, included in the Criterion Collection laser-disc edition (which contains both the original 1977 release version of *Close Encounters* and scenes added for the 1980 *Special Edition*).

Dell published a novelization, credited to Spielberg, in 1977, and a "Fotonovel" adaptation of the film in 1978. Screenplay extracts are included in *Making "Close En-*

counters"; the shooting script, credited to Spielberg, is dated May 12, 1976. Sources on the other writers who contributed to the screenplay include the author's interviews with Michael Phillips and Giler; Schrader's comments in Crawley and in Jackson, *Schrader on Schrader & Other Writings*; *You'll Never Eat Lunch in This Town Again*; Will Tusher, "Phillips' Close Encounters Cost on \$11 Mil Space Trip," *HR*, April 22, 1976; Shay, "Steven Spielberg on Close Encounters"; Lane Maloney, "Michael Phillips on Lucky Streak with Tyro Directors," *DV*, October 2, 1981; and the Jagger-Warhol interview with Spielberg. Julia Phillips' 1991 comment on Spielberg's relationship with writers is from Sally Ogle Davis, "Attack of the Killer Tomato," *Los Angeles, March*.

Included in the January 1978 special issue of *American Cinematographer*, "The Making of *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*," are: Spielberg, "The Unsung Heroes or Credit Where Credit Is Due"; Herb A. Lightman, "My Close Encounter with CE3K"; Lightman, "Spielberg Speaks About Close Encounters"; Alves, "Designing a World for UFO's, Extraterrestrials and Mere Mortals"; Trumbull, "Creating the Photographic Special Effects for *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*"; Frank Warner, "The Sounds of Silence and Things That Go 'Flash' in the Night"; Zsigmond, "Lights! Camera! Action! for CE3K"; and "From the Producers' Point of View." *Cinefantastique*, Fall 1978, contains Don Shay's "Steven Spielberg on Close Encounters," "Close Encounters Extraterrestrials," and "Close Encounters at Future General." *Filmmakers Newsletter*, December 1977, includes Chuck Austin, "Director Steve Spielberg"; Judith McNally, "Making Close Encounters"; and Steve Mitchell, "Special Effects: Douglas Trumbull."

Writings by Dr. J. Allen Hynek include *The UFO Experience: A Scientific Inquiry*, Regnery, 1972; foreword to Jacques and Janine Vallee, *The UFO Enigma: Challenge to Science*, Regnery, 1966; "Are Flying Saucers Real?" *The Saturday Evening Post*, December 17, 1966, reprinted in Jay David, ed., *The Flying Saucer Reader*, Signet, 1967; and "Twenty-one Years of UFO Reports," in Carl Sagan and Thornton Page, eds., *UFO's—A Scientific Debate*, Norton, 1974. Hynek was quoted on *Close Encounters* in Cook and profiled by Peter Gwynne in "The Galileo of UFOlogy," *Newsweek*, November 21, 1977.

Other books on ufology include C. G. Jung, trans. by R.F.C. Hull, *Flying Saucers: A Modern Myth of Things Seen in the Skies*, Princeton University Press, 1978 (originally published in 1959); Curtis Peebles, *Watch the Skies! A Chronicle of the Flying Saucer Myth*, Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994; C. D. B. Bryan, *Close Encounters of the Fourth Kind: Alien Abduction, UFOs, and the Conference at M.I.T.*, Knopf, 1995; Phil Cousineau, *UFOs: A Manual for the Millennium*, HarperCollins West, 1995 (which quotes Ronald Reagan's alleged comment to Spielberg). The allegation that *Close Encounters* and *E.T.* were part of a military plot to indoctrinate the public is made in Brad Steiger and Sherry Hansen Steiger, *The Rainbow Conspiracy*, Pinnacle Books, 1994. Sources on Spielberg's involvement with META include "Taking a Long Look for a Real E.T.," *LAHE*, September 30, 1985; his appearance with his son Max on the TV special *Nova*: "Is Anybody Out There?" (WGBH, Boston, 1986); and Thomas R. McDonough, *The Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence: Listening for Life in the Cosmos*, John Wiley & Sons, 1987; see also Walter Sullivan, *We Are Not Alone: The Continuing Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence* (revised edition), Plume, 1994. Ray Bradbury wrote about *Close Encounters* in his introduction to Durwood's book (first published in *LAT*, November 20, 1977, as "Opening the Beautiful Door of True Immortality") and in "The Turkey That Attacked New York"; *The Martian Chronicles* was published by Doubleday, 1950.

Additional articles on *Close Encounters* (1977) include Frank Rich, "The Aliens Are Coming!" *Time*, November 7; Jack Kroll, "The UFO's Are Coming!" *Newsweek*, November 21; Gregg Kilday, "Special Encounter on Effects," *LAT*, December 5. Melinda Dillon's comments on the filming are from "A Wedding for Dillon," *Horizon*, January 1978. Richard Dreyfuss's comments are from Durwood, "Close Encounters of the Third Kind": A Document of the Film, and from Steve Grant, "Blithe Spirit," *Time Out*, January 10—

17, 1990. The influence of *The Searchers* on *Close Encounters* was discussed in Stuart Byron, "The Searchers: Cult Movie of the New Hollywood," *New York*, March 5, 1979.

Information on the budget and production cost of *Close Encounters* is from the author's interviews with Michael Phillips, Veitch, and Trumbull; and other sources including *You'll Never Eat Lunch in This Town Again*; Will Tusher, "Encounter Budget to Top \$7 Million," *HR*, November 14, 1975; Tusher, "Phillips' *Close Encounters* Cost on \$11 Mil Space Trip," "How Close the Encounter to a Profit," *Variety*, November 9, 1977; and "From the Producers' Point of View." Spielberg's earnings on *Close Encounters* were estimated by Lane. Sources on Columbia's finances include the author's interview with A. D. Murphy; McClintock, *Indecent Exposure*; and Bernard F. Dick, "From the Brothers Cohn to Sony Corp.," in Dick, ed., *Columbia Pictures: Portrait of a Studio*, University Press of Kentucky, 1992. Spielberg's comment on David Begelman is from Brown, "Final Exposure." Information on the 1975 start date is from Phillips; "Shelter Deadlines: Possible Reasons for Odd Pic Starts," *DV*, December 31, 1975; and Shay, "Close Encounters at Future General." The title *Close Encounter of the Third Kind* is mentioned in an August 15, 1975, Columbia press release and trade press articles including "Col. Lineup Nears Peak," *HR*, March 29, 1974, and Spielberg's New *Close Encounter* First Since *Jaws*, *HR*, August 12, 1975.

The *Star Wars* screening was described to the author by Gloria Katz and Willard Huyck; see also Pollock, *Screenwriting: The Art and Forms of George Lucas*. Information on Spielberg's Hawaiian vacation with Lucas and their decision to make *Raiders of the Lost Ark* is from Pollock, Taylor, *The Making of "Raiders of the Lost Ark"*; and Champlin, *George Lucas: The Creative Impulse*.

Information on *Close Encounters* previews is from Michael Phillips, Veitch, and Trumbull; *Making "Close Encounters"*, and 1977 articles: Gregg Kilday, October 10, November 5 ("Close Encounters: Go or No-Go?"), and November 9, *LAT*; "Col Delays Press Preview of *Close Encounters*," *DV*, October 11; "Columbia Disputes Magazine's Views on *Third Kind*," *HR*, November 2; William Flanagan, "An Encounter with *Close Encounters*," *New York*, November 7, and letter to the editor, *New York*, November 21; Rich; Geri Fabrikant, "Wall Street Vigil, Col Stock Peaks with *Encounters*," *HR*, November 8, and "Col Holds Bally Rally in N.Y. for *Encounters* Launching," *Variety*, November 9. See also Shay, "Steven Spielberg on *Close Encounters*."

Julia Phillips's claim that her cocaine problem began on *Close Encounters* is from Joyce Wadler, "A Hollywood Outcast: Julia Phillips' Star Acid Dip Memoir," *People*, March 18, 1991. Spielberg's no comment reaction to her book is from Larry Rohter, "Hollywood Memoir Tells All, and Many Don't Want to Hear," *NYT*, March 14, 1991.

Close Encounters reviews (1977) include Rich; Charles Champlin, "Saucer Sorcery," *LAT*, November 18; Kroll; Stephen Farber, "Close Encounters: Smooth Takeoff, Bumpy Landing," *New West*, December 5; and Molly Haskell, "The Dumbest Story Ever Told," *New York*, December 5; also, Arthur Schlesinger Jr., "Close Encounters of a Benign Kind," *Saturday Review*, January 7, 1978. Spielberg's 1994 comment on the film is from *The Barbara Walters Special*.

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19, 1979; William Kowinski, "François Truffaut, the Man Who Loved Movies," *Rolling Stone*, June 14, 1979; and David Lees, "Checking In," *Playboy*, October 1981. Truffaut criticized Julia Phillips in James F. Clarity, "François Truffaut—A Man for All Festivals," *NYT*, September 26, 1976; Spielberg responded in a letter to the editor, October 24, and Phillips in *You'll Never Eat Lunch in This Town Again*; Truffaut made additional remarks in "Truffaut, Part V," *The New Yorker*, October 18, 1976. Jean Renoir's comment on the film is from his March 7, 1978, letter to Truffaut, in Renoir's *Letters*, ed. by Lorraine LoBianco and David Thompson, Faber and Faber, London, 1994.

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12. "REHAB" (PP. 293-322)

Sources on Amy Irving include Laurent Bouzereau, *The De Palma Cut*, Dembner Books, 1988; Phillips, *You'll Never Eat Lunch in This Town Again*; Kerry Segrave, *The Post-Feminist Hollywood Actress: Biographies and Filmographies of Stars Born After 1939*, McFarland, 1990; Cherie Burns, "Amy Irving's Enjoying a Close Encounter of Two Kinds: Love with Steven Spielberg and Stardom in *The Fury*," *People*, March 27, 1978; Roderick Mann, "An Encounter for Amy, Steve," *LAT*, March 13, 1979; "Amy Irving's Voices," *Look*, April 2, 1979; Janos; Andrea Chambers, "She's Streisand's Sweetie in *Yentl*, But Amy Irving Says Her Heart Belongs to Broadway," *People*, January 16, 1984; Stephen Farber, "Once in Love with Amy . . .," *Cosmopolitan*, March 1985; Meme Black, "Amy Irving's 'Charmed Life,'" *McCall's*, June 1985; and Cliff Jahr, "Amy Irving: Mom Is Her Real Starring Role," *Ladies' Home Journal*, March 1989. Information on Spielberg's Coldwater Canyon house is from the author's interview with Bob Gale and various articles including Klemesrud; Seligson, "Steven Spielberg: The Man Behind Columbia Pictures' \$19-Million Gamble"; and Royal, "Steven Spielberg in His Adventures on Earth."

Information on Spielberg's pirate movie project is from A. H. Weiler, "Spielberg Weighs Two Projects," *NYT*, June 9, 1974; his involvement in *The Bingo Long Traveling All-Stars and Motor Kings* is from the author's interview with Joseph Alves Jr. and from Bruce Cook, "The Saga of Bingo Long and the Traveling All-Stars," *American Film*, July-August 1976. Spielberg discussed *Magic* in his introduction to Andy Dougan, *The Actors' Director: Richard Attenborough Behind the Camera*, Mainstream Publishing Co., Edinburgh, 1994; his plans to direct a TV production of *Twelve Angry Men* were mentioned in "Dialogue on Film: Steven Spielberg."

Sources on Gale and Robert Zemeckis and their projects with Spielberg include the author's interview with Gale; the June 23, 1978, Zemeckis-Gale screenplay *After School*; Balaban, "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" *Diary*; "Steven Spielberg's 'Broker' Position as Newcomers Film at Universal," *Variety*, November 30, 1977; Ray Loynd, "Surprising Turns for Two Hit Filmmakers," *LAHE*, December 9, 1977; "Studios Cheat Us All, Sez Spielberg," *Variety*, February 22, 1978; "Spielberg Modest Cost for Universal: Actors' Maximum Age Is 14," *Variety*, March 1, 1978; "Used Cars Tells Sleazy Side; 2d 'Sale' for Young Scripters," *Variety*, November 21, 1979; Gregg Kilday, "The 1941 Campaign

IN 1962, the same year he completed *Escape to Nowhere*, Spielberg first set foot on a Hollywood soundstage.

While visiting relatives in the Los Angeles area, he managed to insinuate himself onto Stage 16 at Warner Bros. in Burbank, where a battle sequence for *PT 109* was being filmed (Spielberg himself would film part of *Jurassic Park* on that same stage thirty years later). A rah-rah adventure movie about the World War II exploits of U.S. Navy Lieutenant (i.g.) John F. Kennedy, *PT 109* starred Cliff Robertson as the future president and was directed by Leslie H. Martinson (whose Mickey Rooney comedy *The Atomic Kid* had driven Spielberg to distraction with its frequent appearances on Phoenix late-night TV).

Spielberg recalled that he "stayed on the set up until the moment when the Japanese destroyer sliced the PT boat in half." Then, to his disappointment, "They made us visitors leave."

THE stimulus for Spielberg's first feature film, *Firelight*, was an unidentified flying object he did *not* see when he was growing up in Phoenix.

Fascinated by heavenly lights ever since that night in 1957 when he and his father saw a meteor shower, Steve, like virtually every American boy growing up in the 1950s, was intrigued by reports of flying saucers and other UFOs. He longed for the real thing—the chance to see a UFO with his own eyes. So he was devastated when he missed a Boy Scout outing, "the only overnight I missed the entire year. Wouldn't you know," and his fellow Scouts came back and told him how, at midnight in the desert, they all saw "something they couldn't explain.... a blood-red orb rising up behind some sagebrush, shooting off into space. I felt so left out not being there." Patrol leader Bill Hoffman says, "One overnight Spielberg was absent out in the desert. I don't recall who did it, but the story was told to Spielberg that someone had seen a flying saucer. Spielberg was very interested. It wasn't true at all. As far as I can tell, it was a complete fabrication."

The making of *Firelight* was made possible by the prizes Steve had won for *Escape to Nowhere* in the state amateur film contest. "He won a whole bunch of stuff," his father recalls. "He won a 16mm Kodak movie camera. I said, 'Steve, I can't afford to spend money for film for 16mm. Let's swap it for an 8mm, and we'll get a good one.' So we bought a real good Bolex-H8 Deluxe, the big camera that was built on a 16mm frame, but cut for 8mm, and so you could get 400-foot reels on it. It had telephoto lenses, single-frame motion, and slow-motion, so he could make all kinds of stuff with that. And he won a whole library of books relative to filmmaking. He loved those books, but he said, 'I'm going to donate them to the school library. I don't need them. I have the feel for it.' As a gift for being that generous, I said, 'OK, we're going to up the ante.' We bought a Bolex projector, and we

also bought a sound system. It was the first sound system out for consumer use, a Bolex Sonenzet."

The Bolex Sonenzet enabled Steve for the first time to record sound directly on film. After editing his footage, he would have a laboratory put a magnetic strip on the side of the film. He then would lay the sound onto the strip, post-synching the dialogue, music, and sound effects in his living room. With the Bolex camera, he could do multiple exposures, making it possible for him to produce professional-looking visual effects. "A lot of the technique was dictated by what the camera could do," he recalled. The equipment he used for *Firelight* is "antique now, just as Lionel trains are now antiques, but I was able to use the state-of-the-art such as it existed in [1963] and still make films that were pretty sophisticated."

Steve's sixty-seven-page, fully dialogued screenplay for *Firelight* was completed in early 1963, near the end of his sophomore year in high school. He spent about six months filming it, from June through December of that year, with a cast recruited from *Guns and Dolls* and other school plays. Asked how the film was financed, Arnold said, "We paid for it." The cost was "somewhere between \$400 and \$600, and I think Steve took in about \$700 or \$800. He made a little money."

The characters in Spielberg's script are cardboard figures reminiscent of dozens of grade-B 1950s sci-fi movies, especially *Quatermass II* (1957), British writer Nigel Kneale's tale of alien invaders controlling the minds of humans (Spielberg admitted that Kneale's Hammer Films featuring Brian Donlevy's Professor Quatermass were a major influence). Much of the dialogue in *Firelight* is unintentionally comical, with overblown rhetoric and frequent malaprops (the script also contains many ludicrous spelling and grammatical errors). Everyone who saw *Firelight* agrees that Spielberg, who was making his first film with trained actors and a carefully detailed screenplay, had not yet developed into much of an actor's director. But Spielberg's innate narrative sense, his precocious flair for visual storytelling, and his already evident ability to orchestrate complex movement and character interaction (as outlined in the script) make *Firelight* a gripping, well-constructed (if overlong) yarn about a small group of scientists investigating mysterious red, white, and blue balls of moving light coming from the sky to abduct people, animals, and objects.

Set in the fictional town of Freeport, Arizona, *Firelight* focuses on scientist Tony Karcher (Robert Robyn) and his wife, Debbie (Beth Weber), whose marital problems threaten to disrupt Tony's career, and the obsessed UFO expert Howard Richards (Lucky Lohr), whose quest to prove the existence of extraterrestrial life has won only grudging support from his skeptical patrons in the Central Intelligence Agency. Among the abductees are a dog named Buster, a squad of National Guardsmen, and a small girl named Lisa (played by Nancy Spielberg), whose disappearance causes her mother (Carolyn Owen) to die from a heart attack. Lisa's abduction by an overpowering red light descending in her backyard is strikingly similar to the scene