

# STAR TREK® II THE WRATH OF KHAN

a long awaited vengeance

by Tim Moriarty

**I**n the 1967 episode of Star Trek "Space Seed", Captain Kirk chose to banish the archvillain superman Khan to a hostile, primitive planet rather than imprisoning or executing him. After the decision was made, Mr. Spock indulged himself in a rare moment of speculation. Spock said, with a hint of displeasure, a hint of foreboding, that it would be interesting to visit that planet of exile in 100 years to see what had sprung from the seed that Kirk had planted that day.

STAR TREK: THE WRATH OF KHAN!

The title alone tells us that Khan and his colony of genetically manufactured warriors have not been satisfied to garden and whittle. It's apparent that they have big plans for the universe in general...and Captain James T. Kirk in particular.







Space Station Regula One in orbit around the mysterious planet Ceta Alpha Five. All may seem peaceful now...but there's soon to be a terrible Khan-flagration!



Left: Admiral Kirk discusses a raise with an overly-ambitious crewman. Middle: Walter Koenig, as Chekhov, has a major role in the film and at right: Adm. Kirk.



A bit of in-fighting in the Federation? The Enterprise fires on the starship Reliant ...but the barrage doesn't seem to phase-er in the least.

Whose idea was it to manipulate the Enterprise into the path of Khan for this, the second STAR TREK film? Was it Gene Roddenberry, the creator of the series and the executive consultant on this film? Was it executive producer Harve Bennett, who co-authored the story? His collaborator, Jack B. Sowards? Or was it producer Robert Sallin? All of the above? Perhaps none of the above...maybe Khan is so powerful as a character he is in full control of his own destiny.

For it is certainly true that Khan was one of the most formidable foes the crew of the Enterprise ever ran up against. And let's face it, the Enterprise has gone some places no man has gone before, and met some creatures any man would cross the galaxy to avoid. Crocodile men, space slugs, tribbles, shape-shifters...not to mention a dozen or so beings that could manipulate the minds of the crew and the workings of the ship from light years away.

Khan's appeal as a villain lay in the fact that he was *human*. Here was a menace that the audience could understand. Even the members of the crew of the Enterprise, Spock excepted, found themselves admiring Khan for his brilliant ability and ambition at the same time loathing him for his deeds.

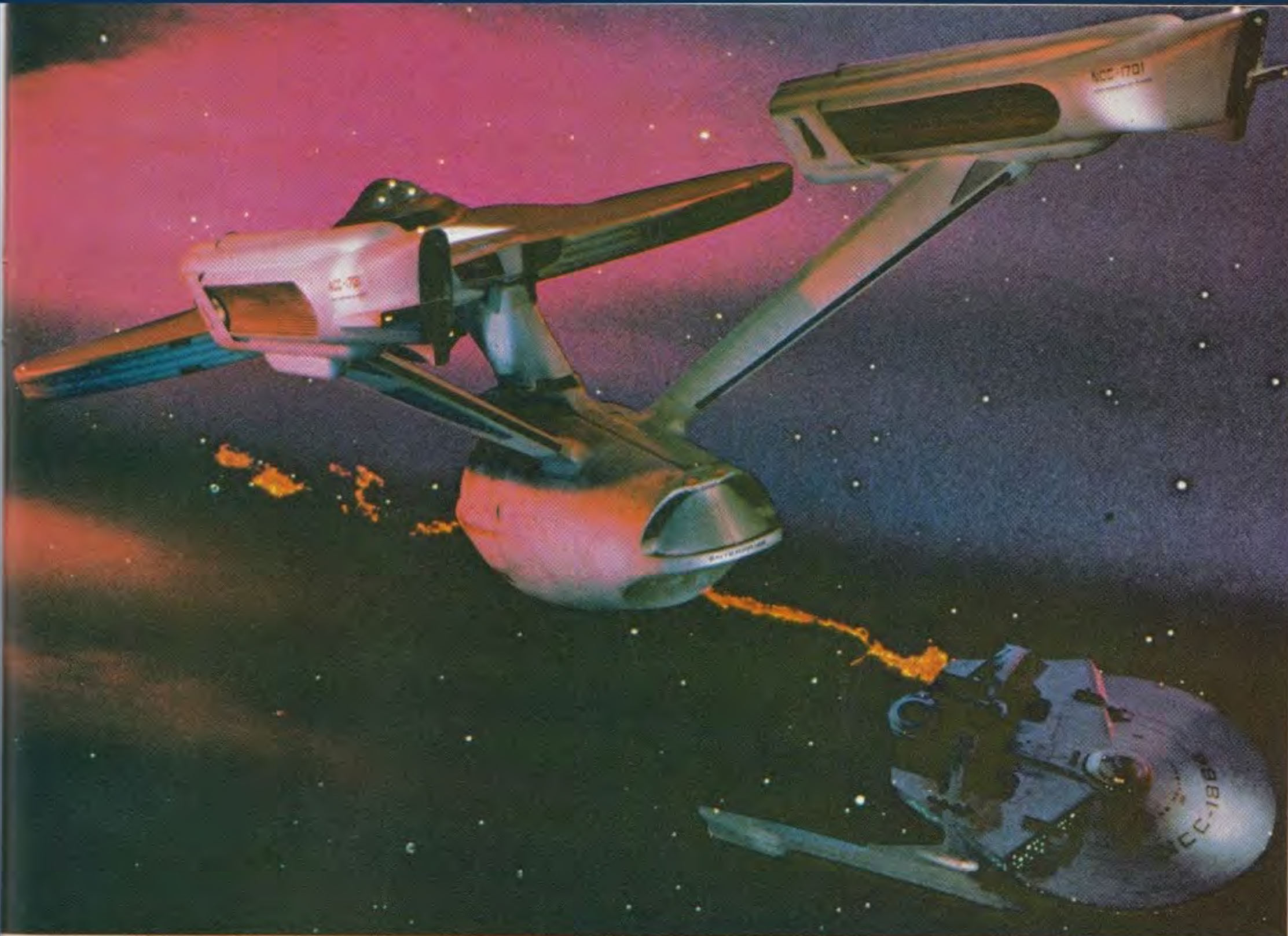
Illogical, said Spock.

FM readers who have seen "Space Seed" (and with most of you it won't be a question of *if* you've seen it but rather *how many times?*) will remember that the Enterprise, while cruising the final frontier one day, came across the ship the Botany Bay drifting aimlessly in space. All of the people aboard, hundreds of them, were in suspended animation.

The first to be awakened was a powerful, handsome, charismatic man who gave his name simply as Khan. Arrogantly, Khan refused to answer any questions put to him by Kirk concerning his identity, the identities of his shipmates, or how they came to be adrift. All records of the ship had apparently been lost.

But dogged Spock found the answers buried deep in his computer banks. Khan and his crew had been petty dictators and tyrants on





The Reliant and the Enterprise fight on. Will fans be pleased at the spectacular, tradition-breaking battles in space?

Earth in the 1990's.

Selectively bred for intelligence and superior physical ability, these "supermen" had fomented war after war in their lust for power ("Superior ability breeds superior ambition" Spock reminded Kirk). When the combined forces of earth at last were able to overthrow the tyrants, they fled the planet in their ship the Botany Bay. When he was taken out of his sleep cell later, Khan told his followers, "It is not a world we must conquer...it is a universe."

Khan eventually took control of the Enterprise and threatened to put each member of the bridge crew to death, starting with the Captain, unless they agreed to join with him in his dream of galactic domination. And, in the end, it became a one-on-one battle between Kirk and Khan, with the Enterprise in danger of exploding at any moment. Khan crushed Kirk's phaser in his fist and proceeded to toss Kirk about like a cardboard box, until Kirk managed to bash

Khan senseless with a heavy-metal rod.

It was then that Kirk chose to banish Khan and his fellow supermen to the primitive planet...then that Spock offered his dire speculation...then that Khan referred to a line from Dante: "It is better to rule in hell than to serve in heaven."

It was a rousing show, full of terrific interplay between the show's regulars, and a commanding performance by Ricardo Montalban as Khan. The scenes between Khan and Kirk were masterfully realized. Khan, arrogant as he was, saw in Kirk a formidable adversary ("Excellent, excellent" Khan would say when Kirk outwitted him), while Kirk was torn between admiration and contempt for this gifted yet power-mad despot.

We can only imagine how bitterly Khan seethed with wounded pride and hatred for Kirk as he struggled merely to survive on the planet he was banished to. Prior to the release of STAR TREK: THE



Dr. McCoy tends to the wounded Sulu.



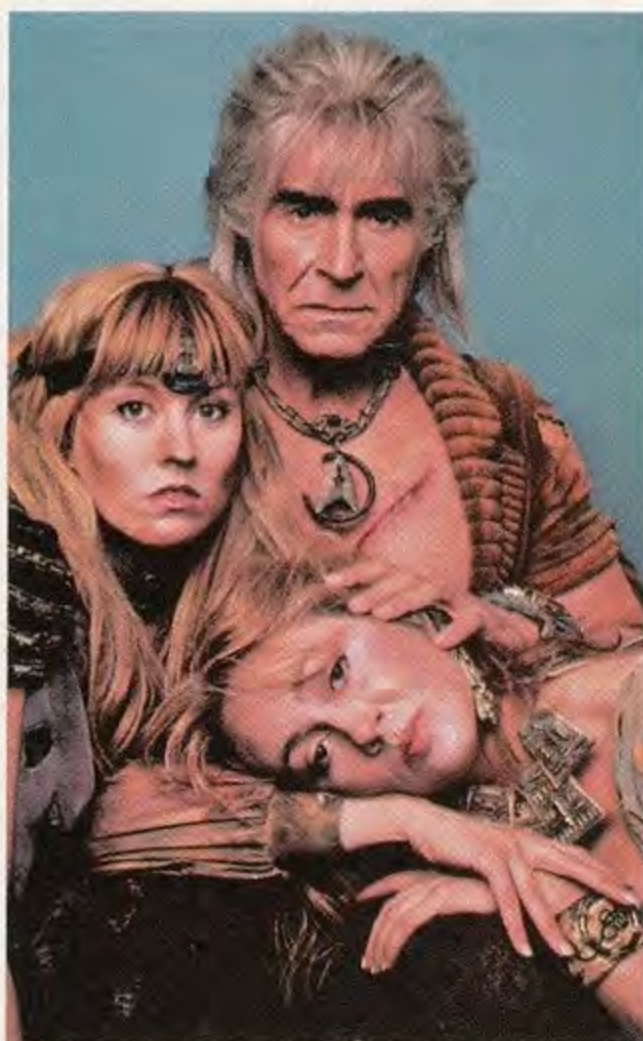


Top left: the bridge of the Reliant takes a direct hit, a new method being tested of firing federation crewmen. Top right: Captain Terrell and Chekhov experience the wrath of Khan. Bot. left: Paul Winfield as Capt. Terrell & Walter Koenig, as Chekhov are a bit shaken up. Bot. right: Starship vs. starship! The Reliant and the Enterprise.

WRATH OF KHAN, we can only imagine what form his revenge will take.

The director of STAR TREK: THE WRATH OF KHAN is Nicholas Meyer. Trekkies around the world should relax...they are in good hands with Meyer. Meyer wrote and directed the excellent TIME AFTER TIME, which starred Malcolm McDowell as HG Wells, off in pursuit of Jack the Ripper in modern-day San Francisco. Meyer also wrote the popular novel "The Seven Percent Solution", a fantasy collaboration between Sherlock Holmes and Sigmund Freud. Meyer is a man who knows how to tell a story in print or on film and who cares for the value of characterization.

But Meyer was not prepared for the complexity and frustration of dealing with a production that relied so heavily on special effects. THE WRATH OF KHAN has



Some women can't resist a Khan-man. Ricardo Montalban and friends.

been produced in a unique way: rigid and detailed storyboards were prepared for each scene in the film (nothing unique here, you say?), and then Dennis Muren and Richard Edlund of Industrial Light & Magic realized their special effects *while the live action was being filmed!* Thus, effects shots were inserted one at a time as production progressed, and post-production time was reduced considerably. As a result, THE WRATH OF KHAN will reach movie theaters much sooner than is normal for such a huge project.

Meyer has promised that STAR TREK: THE WRATH OF KHAN will be unlike any other space movie. He has said that his main interest is with the characters. And yet...a meeting of the villainous, ruthless Khan and the flamboyant Captain Kirk is bound to produce plenty of heart-stopping action.

Excellent, excellent.