Moonraker (1979) is the eleventh spy film in the James Bond series, and the fourth to star Roger Moore as the fictional MI6 agent James Bond. The third and final film in the series to be directed by Lewis Gilbert, it co @-@ stars Lois Chiles, Michael Lonsdale, Corinne Cléry, and Richard Kiel. Bond investigates the theft of a space shuttle, leading him to Hugo Drax, the owner of the shuttle 's manufacturing firm. Along with space scientist Dr. Holly Goodhead, Bond follows the trail from California to Venice, Rio de Janeiro, and the Amazon rainforest, and finally into outer space to prevent a plot to wipe out the world population and to re @-@ create humanity with a master race. Moonraker was intended by its creator lan Fleming to become a film even before he completed the novel in 1954, since he based it on a screenplay manuscript he had written even earlier. The film 's producers had originally intended to film For Your Eyes Only, but instead chose this title due to the rise of the science fiction genre in the wake of the Star Wars phenomenon. Budgetary issues caused the film to be primarily shot in France, with locations also in Italy, Brazil, Guatemala and the United States. The soundstages of Pinewood Studios in England, traditionally used for the series, were only used by the special effects team.

Moonraker was noted for its high production cost of \$ 34 million , almost twice as much money as predecessor The Spy Who Loved Me , and it received mixed reviews . However , the film 's visuals were praised , Derek Meddings being nominated for the Academy Award for Best Visual Effects , and it eventually became the highest @-@ grossing film of the series with \$ 210 @,@ 300 @,@ 000 worldwide , a record that stood until 1995 's GoldenEye .

= = Plot = =

A Drax Industries Moonraker space shuttle on loan to the United Kingdom is hijacked in mid @-@ air and the MI6 operative James Bond , agent 007 , is assigned to investigate . En route to England in a small charter plane , Bond is attacked by the crew and pushed out of the plane by the mercenary assassin Jaws . He survives by stealing a parachute from the pilot , whilst Jaws lands on a circus tent .

Bond proceeds to the Drax Industries shuttle @-@ manufacturing complex in California where he meets the owner of the company , Hugo Drax , and his henchman Chang . Bond also meets Dr. Holly Goodhead , an astronaut , and survives an assassination attempt via a centrifuge chamber . Bond is later aided by Drax 's personal pilot , Corinne Dufour , as he finds blueprints for a glass vial made in Venice . Bond then foils another attempt on his life , using a hunting shotgun to shoot a sniper . Upon discovering that Dufour assisted Bond 's investigations , Drax has her killed .

Bond again encounters Goodhead in Venice where he is chased through the canals by Drax 's henchmen . He discovers a secret biological laboratory , and by accidentally poisoning the scientists there , learns that the glass vials are to hold a nerve gas deadly to humans , but harmless to animals . Chang attacks Bond and is killed , but during the fight , Bond finds evidence that Drax is moving his operation to Rio de Janeiro . Rejoining Goodhead , he deduces that she is a CIA agent spying on Drax . They promise to work together , but quickly dispense with the truce . Bond has saved one of the vials he found earlier , as the only evidence of the now @-@ empty laboratory , giving it to M for analysis , who permits him to go to Rio de Janeiro under the pretence of being on leave .

In Rio Bond meets his Brazilian contact Manuela . Drax hires Jaws to finish Chang 's job of eliminating Bond . Bond meets Goodhead at the top of Sugarloaf Mountain , where they are attacked by Jaws on a cable car . After Jaws ' car crashes he is rescued from the rubble by Dolly , and the two fall in love . Bond and Goodhead are captured by henchmen , but Bond escapes and reports to an MI6 base in Brazil and learns that the toxin comes from a rare orchid indigenous to the Amazon jungle . Bond travels the Amazon River looking for Drax 's research facility and again encounters Jaws and other henchmen ; a speedboat chase develops . Bond escapes from his boat just before it hits the Iguazu Falls , and finds Drax 's base . Captured by Jaws again , Bond is taken to Drax and witnesses four Moonrakers lifting off . Drax explains that he stole the loaned Moonraker

because another in his fleet had developed a fault during assembly. Bond is reunited with Goodhead; they escape and successfully pose as pilots on the sixth shuttle. The shuttles dock with Drax 's space station, hidden from radar by a cloaking device.

Once on board the station, Bond and Holly disable the radar jamming cloaking device, resulting in the United States sending a platoon of Marines to intercept the now @-@ visible space station. Jaws captures Bond and Holly and brings them to Drax.

Drax plans to destroy human life by launching fifty globes containing the nerve gas into the Earth 's atmosphere . Before launching them , Drax also transported several dozen genetically perfect young men and women of varying races to the space station in the shuttles . They would live there until Earth was safe again for human life ; their descendants would be the seed for a " new master race " . Bond persuades Jaws and Dolly to switch their allegiance by getting Drax to admit that anyone not measuring up to his physical standards would be exterminated . Jaws then attacks Drax 's guards , and a laser battle ensues both inside and outside the space station . Drax 's guards and his master race are all killed . During the battle , Bond shoots Drax with a cyanide @-@ tipped dart , then pushes him into an airlock and ejects him into space .

To destroy the three already launched globes and return to Earth , Goodhead and Bond use Drax 's personal shuttle to fire lasers at the globes , while at the same time observing Jaws and Dolly escape from the disintegrating space station .

= = Cast = =

Roger Moore as James Bond: An MI6 agent assigned to look into the theft of a shuttle from the "Moonraker space programme.

Lois Chiles as Holly Goodhead: A CIA agent and astronaut who joins Bond and flies with him to Drax 's space station.

Michael Lonsdale as Hugo Drax: Main antagonist. An industrialist who plans to poison all humans on earth, then repopulate the planet from his space station.

Richard Kiel as Jaws: Drax 's replacement bodyguard after Chang is killed, afflicted by giantism and with a set of stainless steel teeth.

Corinne Cléry as Corinne Dufour : Drax 's personal pilot .

Bernard Lee as M: The head of MI6. This was Bernard Lee 's final appearance as M.

Geoffrey Keen as Frederick Gray: The British Minister of Defence.

Desmond Llewelyn as Q: MI6 's " quartermaster " who supplies Bond with multi @-@ purpose vehicles and gadgets useful for the latter 's mission.

Lois Maxwell as Miss Moneypenny: M's secretary.

Toshiro Suga as Chang: Drax's original bodyguard.

Emily Bolton as Manuela: 007 's contact in Rio.

Michael Marshall as Colonel Scott: US Space Marines commander.

Walter Gotell as General Gogol: The head of the KGB.

Blanche Ravalec as Dolly: Jaws 'girlfriend.

= = Production = =

The end credits for the previous Bond film, The Spy Who Loved Me, said, "James Bond will return in For Your Eyes Only"; however, the producers chose the novel Moonraker as the basis for the next film, following the box office success of the 1977 space @-@ themed film Star Wars. For Your Eyes Only was subsequently delayed and ended up following Moonraker in 1981.

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= = = Script = = =
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lan Fleming had originally intended the novel, published in 1955, to be made into a film even before he began writing it and was based on an original manuscript of a screenplay which had been on his mind for years. In 1955, American actor John Payne offered \$ 1 @,@ 000 for a nine @-@

month option to Moonraker , plus \$ 10 @,@ 000 if production eventually took off . The negotiations broke up the following year due to disagreements regarding Payne 's ownership of the other Bond novels . Fleming eventually settled with Rank Organisation , a British company who owned Pinewood Studios . Rank wound up not developing the film , even after Fleming contributed his own script trying to push production forward , and Fleming purchased the rights back in 1959 . Moonraker ended up being the last James Bond novel to receive a screen adaptation .

However , as with several previous Bond films , the story from Fleming 's novel is almost entirely dispensed with , and little more than the name of Hugo Drax was used in film , in favour of a film more in keeping with the era of science fiction . The 2002 Bond film Die Another Day makes further use of some ideas and character names from the novel . Tom Mankiewicz wrote a short outline for Moonraker that was mostly discarded . According to Mankiewicz , footage shot at Drax 's lairs was considerably more detailed than the edited result in the final version . The crew had shot a scene with Drax meeting his co @-@ financiers in his jungle lair and they used the same chamber room below the space shuttle launch pad that Bond and Goodhead eventually escape from . This scene was shot but later cut out . Another scene involving Bond and Goodhead in a meditation room aboard Drax 's space station , was shot but never used in the final film . However , press stills were released of the scene which featured on Topps trading cards in 1979 as was a cinema trailer which featured a close @-@ up of Jaws ' reaction after Bond punches him in the face aboard the space station , neither of which featured in the complete film . Some scenes from Mankiewicz 's script were later used in subsequent films , including the Acrostar Jet sequence used in the pre @-@ credit sequence for Octopussy , and the Eiffel Tower scene in A View to a Kill .

In March 2004 an Internet hoax stated rumours about a lost 1956 version of Moonraker by Orson Welles , and a James Bond web site repeated it on April Fool 's Day in 2004 as a hoax . Supposedly , this recently discovered lost film was 40 minutes of raw footage with Dirk Bogarde as Bond , Welles as Drax , and Peter Lorre as Drax 's henchman .

= = = Novelization = = =

The screenplay of Moonraker differed so much from Ian Fleming 's novel that Eon Productions authorised the film 's screenwriter, Christopher Wood to write a novelisation; this would be his second Bond novelisation. It was named James Bond and Moonraker to avoid confusion with Fleming 's original novel Moonraker. It was published in 1979, with the film 's release.

= = = Casting = =

Initially , the chief villain , Hugo Drax , was to be played by British actor James Mason , but once the decision was made that the film would be an Anglo @-@ French co @-@ production under the 1965 ? 79 film treaty , French actor Michael Lonsdale was cast as Drax and Corinne Cléry was chosen for the part of Corinne Dufour , to comply with qualifying criteria of the agreement . American actress Lois Chiles had originally been offered the role of Anya Amasova in The Spy Who Loved Me (1977) , but had turned down the part when she decided to take temporary retirement . Chiles was cast as Holly Goodhead by chance , when she was given the seat next to Lewis Gilbert on a flight and he believed she would be ideal for the role as the CIA scientist . Drax 's henchman Chang , played by Japanese aikido instructor Toshiro Suga , was recommended for the role by executive producer Michael G. Wilson , who was one of his pupils . Wilson , continuing a tradition he started in the film Goldfinger , has a small cameo role in Moonraker : he appears twice , first as a tourist outside the Venini Glass shop and museum in Venice , then at the end of the film as a technician in the US Navy control room .

The Jaws character , played by Richard Kiel , makes a return , although in Moonraker the role is played more for comedic effect than in The Spy Who Loved Me . Jaws was intended to be a villain against Bond to the bitter end , but director Lewis Gilbert stated on the DVD documentary that he received so much fan mail from small children saying " Why can 't Jaws be a goodie not a baddie " , that as a result he was persuaded to make Jaws gradually become Bond 's ally at the end of the film

Diminutive French actress Blanche Ravalec , who had recently begun her career with minor roles in French films such as Michel Lang 's Holiday Hotel (1978) and Claude Sautet 's Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film nominee , A Simple Story (1978), was cast as the bespectacled Dolly , the girlfriend of Jaws . Originally , the producers were dubious about whether the audience would accept the height difference between them , and only made their decision once they were informed by Richard Kiel that his real @-@ life wife was of the same height . Lois Maxwell 's 22 @-@ year @-@ old daughter , Melinda Maxwell , was also cast as one of the "perfect " human specimens from Drax 's master race .

= = = Filming = = =

Production began on 14 August 1978 . The main shooting was switched from the usual 007 Stage at the Pinewood Studios to France , due to high taxation in England at the time . Only the cable car interiors and space battle exteriors were filmed at Pinewood . The massive sets designed by Ken Adam were the largest ever constructed in France and required more than 222 @,@ 000 man @-@ hours to construct (roughly 1000 hours by each of the crew on average) . They were shot at three of France 's largest film studios in Épinay and Boulogne @-@ Billancourt . 220 technicians used 100 tonnes of metal , two tonnes of nails and 10 @,@ 000 feet of wood to build the three @-@ story space station set at Eponay Studios . The elaborate space set for Moonraker holds the world record for having the largest number of zero gravity wires in one scene . The Venetian glass museum and fight between Bond and Chang was shot at Boulogne Studios in a building which had once been a World War II Luftwaffe aircraft factory during Germany 's occupation of France . The scene in the Venice glass museum and warehouse holds the record for the largest amount of break @-@ away sugar glass used in a single scene .

Drax 's mansion , set in California , was actually filmed at the Château de Vaux @-@ le @-@ Vicomte , about 55 kilometres (34 mi) southeast of Paris , for the exteriors and Grand Salon . The remaining interiors , including some of the scenes with Corinne Defour and the drawing room , were filmed at the Château de Guermantes .

Much of the film was shot in the cities of London , Paris , Venice , Palmdale , California , Port St. Lucie , Florida , and Rio de Janeiro . The production team had considered India and Nepal as a location in the film but on arriving at those places to investigate , they found that it was inconceivable to write them into the script , particularly with time restrictions to do so . They decided on Rio de Janeiro , Brazil , relatively early on , a city that Cubby Broccoli had visited on holiday , and a team was sent to that city in early 1978 to capture initial footage from the Carnival festival , which featured in the film .

At the Rio de Janeiro location , many months later , Roger Moore arrived several days later than scheduled for shooting due to recurrent health problems and an attack of kidney stones that he had suffered while in France . After arriving in Rio de Janeiro , Moore was immediately whisked off the plane and went straight to hair and make @-@ up work , before re @-@ boarding the plane , to film the sequence with him arriving as James Bond in the film . Sugarloaf Mountain was a prominent location in the film , and during filming of the cable car sequence in which Bond and Goodhead are attacked by Jaws during mid @-@ air transportation high above Rio de Janeiro , the stuntman Richard Graydon slipped and narrowly avoided falling to his death . For the scene in which Jaws bites into the steel tramway cable with his teeth , the cable was actually made of liquorice , although Richard Kiel was still required to use his steel dentures .

Iguazu Falls was a natural location depicted in the film , although as stated by " Q " in the film , the falls were intended to be located somewhere in the upper basin of the Amazon River rather than where the falls are actually located in the south of Brazil . The second unit had originally planned on sending an actual boat over the falls . However , on attempting to release it , the boat became firmly embedded on rocks near the edge . Despite a dangerous attempt by helicopter and rope ladder to retrieve it , the plan had to be abandoned , forcing the second unit to use a miniature at Pinewood instead . The exterior of Drax 's pyramid headquarters in the Amazon rain forest near the falls was

actually filmed at the Tikal Mayan ruins in Guatemala . The interior of the pyramid , however , was designed by Ken Adam at a French studio , in which he purposefully used a shiny coating to make the walls look plastic and false . All of the space centre scenes were shot at the Vehicle Assembly Building of the Kennedy Space Center , Florida , although some of the earlier scenes of the Moonraker assembly plant had been filmed on location at the Rockwell International manufacturing plant in Palmdale , California .

The early scene involving Bond and Jaws in which Bond is pushed out of the aircraft without a parachute took weeks of planning and preparation . The skydiving sequence was coordinated by Don Calvedt under the supervision of second unit director John Glen . As Calvedt and skydiving champion B.J. Worth developed the equipment for the scene , which included a 1 @-@ inch @-@ thick (25 mm) parachute pack that could be concealed beneath the suit to give the impression of the missing parachute , and equipment to prevent the freefalling cameraman from suffering whiplash while opening his parachute , they brought in stuntman Jake Lombard to test it all . Lombard eventually played Bond in the scene , with Worth as the pilot from which Bond takes a parachute , and Ron Luginbill as Jaws . Both Lombard and Worth would become regular members of the stunt team for aerial sequences in later Bond films . When the stuntmen opened their parachutes at the end of every shoot , custom @-@ sewn velcro costume seams would separate to allow the hidden parachutes to open . The skydiver cinematographer used a lightweight Panavision camera , bought from an old pawn shop in Paris , which he had adapted , and attached to his helmet to shoot the entire sequence . The scene took a total of 88 skydives by the stuntmen to be completed . The only scenes shot in studio were close @-@ ups of Roger Moore and Richard Kiel .

Since NASA 's Space Shuttle program had not been launched, Derek Meddings and his miniatures team had to create the rocket launch footage without any reference. Shuttle models attached to bottle rockets and signal flares were used for take @-@ off, and the smoke trail was created with salt that fell from the models. The space scenes were done by rewinding the camera after an element was shot, enabling other elements to be superimposed in the film stock, with the space battle needing up to forty rewinds to incorporate everything.

For the scene involving the opening of the musical electronic laboratory door lock in Venice , producer Albert R. Broccoli requested special permission from director Steven Spielberg to use the five @-@ note melody from his film Close Encounters of the Third Kind (1977). In 1985, Broccoli would return the favour by fulfilling Spielberg 's request to use the James Bond theme music for a scene in his film, The Goonies (1985).

As James Bond is arriving at the scene of the pheasant shoot , a trumpet is sounded playing the first three brass notes from Also sprach Zarathustra , referencing the film 2001 : A Space Odyssey (1968) .

= = = Music = =

Moonraker was the third of three Bond films for which the theme song was performed by Shirley Bassey (following Goldfinger and Diamonds Are Forever). Kate Bush and Frank Sinatra were both considered for the vocals, before Johnny Mathis was approached and offered the opportunity. However Mathis, despite having started recording with Barry, was unable to complete the project, leaving producers to offer the song to Bassey just weeks before the premiere date in England. Bassey made the recordings with very short notice and as a result, she never regarded the song 'as her own 'as she had never had the chance to perform it in full or promote it first. The film uses two versions of the title theme song, a ballad version heard over the main titles, and a discoversion over the closing titles. Confusingly, the United Artists single release labelled the tracks on the 7 "single as "Moonraker (Main Title)" for the version used to close the film and "Moonraker (End Title)" for the track that opened the film. The song made little impact on the charts, reaching 159, partly attributed to Bassey 's failure to promote the single, given the last @-@ minute decision to quickly record it to meet the schedule.

The soundtrack of Moonraker was composed by John Barry and recorded in Paris, again, as with production, marking a turning point away from the English location at CTS Studios in London. The

score also marked a turning point in John Barry 's output, abandoning the Kentonesque brass of his earlier Bond scores and instead scoring the film with slow, rich string passages? a trend which Barry would continue in the 1980s with scores such as Out of Africa and Somewhere in Time . For Moonraker, Barry uses for the first time since Diamonds Are Forever (1971) a piece of music called "007" (on track 7), the secondary Bond theme composed by Barry which was introduced in From Russia with Love during Bond 's escape with the Lektor; some classical music pieces were also included in the film. For the scene where Bond visits Drax in his chateau, Drax plays Frédéric Chopin 's Prelude no . 15 in D @-@ flat major (op . 28) , " Raindrop " on his grand piano (although he plays in the key of D major). Tritsch @-@ Tratsch @-@ Polka by Johann Strauss II was featured during the hovercraft scene on the Piazza San Marco in Venice, and Tchaikovsky 's " Romeo and Juliet Overture " was used for the scenes in Brazil in which Jaws meets Dolly following his accident. Other passages pay homage to earlier films including Richard Strauss 's Also sprach Zarathustra (op. 30), associated with 2001: A Space Odyssey, with the hunting horn playing its distinctive first three notes, Elmer Bernstein 's theme from The Magnificent Seven when Bond appears on horseback in gaucho clothing at MI6 headquarters in Brazil, and the alien @-@ contacting theme from Close Encounters of the Third Kind as the key @-@ code for a security door as mentioned previously.

The Italian aria " Vesti la giubba " from the Ruggero Leoncavallo 's opera " I Pagliacci " , was sung in Venice , before one of the henchmen falls to his death from a building , landing and ruining a piano , resulting in Bond to quip the often misquoted line from the film Casablanca , " Play it again , Sam " . Finally in 2005 , Bassey sang the song for the first time outside James Bond on stage as part of a medley of her three Bond title songs . An instrumental strings version of the title theme was used in 2007 tourism commercials for the Dominican Republic .

= = Release and reception = =

Moonraker premiered on 26 June 1979 , in the Odeon Leicester Square , United Kingdom , grossing \$ 70 @,@ 308 @,@ 099 in the UK . Three days after the UK release , it went on general release in the US , opening in 788 cinemas . On the mainland of Europe , the most common month of release was in August 1979 , opening in the Scandinavian countries of Denmark , Finland , Norway , Iceland and Sweden between 13 and 18 August . Given that the film was produced largely in France , and it involved some notable French actors , the French premiere for the film was relatively late , released in that country on 10 October 1979 . Moonraker grossed a worldwide total of \$ 210 @,@ 300 @,@ 000 .

Moonraker had a mixed reception by critics. The film has a " fresh " 60 % rating on review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes, and reviewers such as James Berardinelli praised the visual effects and stunts.

The New York Times film critic Vincent Canby called Moonraker " one of the most buoyant Bond films of all . Almost everyone connected with the movie is in top form , even Mr. Moore . Here he 's as ageless , resourceful , and graceful as the character he inhabits . " Canby subsequently said the film was , alongside Goldfinger , the best of the series .

Whilst The Globe and Mail critic Jay Scott said Moonraker was second only to Goldfinger . " In the first few minutes? before the credits? it offers more thrills than most escapist movies provide in two hours . " During the title sequence, " the excitement has gone all the way up to giddy and never comes down . " Scott admired the film 's theme song and cited with approval the film 's location work . He also singled out Ken Adam 's sets, dubbing them " high @-@ tech Piranesi . "

Frank Rich of Time felt " The result is a film that is irresistibly entertaining as only truly mindless spectacle can be . Those who have held out on Bond movies over 17 years may not be convinced by Moonraker , but everyone else will be . "

Film scholar James Monaco designated the film a " minor masterpiece " and declared it the best Bond film of them all .

However, some critics consider Moonraker one of the lesser films in the series, largely due to the extent of the plot which takes James Bond into space, some of the ploys used in the film for

comedic effect , and its extended dialogue . In November 2006 , Entertainment Weekly ranked Moonraker fourteenth among the Bond films , describing it as " by far the campiest of all 007 movies " with " one of the worst theme songs " ; while IGN listed it as eleventh , calling it outlandish and saying that despite the actors " trying what they can to ground the film in reality , the laser gun / space station finale pretty much undercuts their efforts " ; and Norman Wilner of MSN chose it as the fourth worst film of the series , considering that the film " just flat @-@ out sucks " .

Critic Nicholas Sylvain said " Moonraker seems to have more than its share of little flaws and annoyances which begin right from the opening pre @-@ credit sequence . The sheer idiocy (and impossibility) of having a fully fueled shuttle on the back of the Boeing during the trans @-@ Atlantic crossing should be evident , and later in the film , the whole Jaws @-@ falls @-@ in @-@ love and becomes a ' good guy ' routine leaves me rather cold , and provides far too much cheesy comedy moments , as does the gondola driving through the square scene . "

In his review of Moonraker in 1979, the Chicago Sun @-@ Times film critic Roger Ebert, while clearly expressing his approval of the advanced special effects and Ken Adam 's extravagant production sets, criticised the pace in which the locations of the film evolved, remarking that, " it 's so jammed with faraway places and science fiction special effects that Bond has to move at a trot just to make it into all the scenes ". Christopher Null of Filmcritic.com said of the film: " Most rational observers agree that Moonraker is without a doubt the most absurd James Bond movie, definitely of the Roger Moore era and possibly of all time". However, while he criticised the extravagance of the plot and action sequences, he believed that this added to the enjoyment of the film, and particularly approved of the remark "I think he 's attempting re @-@ entry!" by "Q" during Bond and Goodhead 's orbiting of the Earth which he described as " featuring what might be the best double entendre ever".

Reviewing Moonraker , film critic Danny Peary wrote that " The worst James Bond film to date has Roger Moore walking through the paces for his hefty paycheck and giving way to his double for a series of unimaginative action scenes and ' humorous ' chases . There 's little suspense and the humor falls flat . Not only is Jaws so pacified by love that he becomes a good guy , but the filmmakers also have the gall to set the finale in outer space and stage a battle right out of Star Wars . "

The exaggerated nature of the plot and space station sequence has seen the film parodied on numerous occasions. Of note is the Austin Powers spoof film The Spy Who Shagged Me (1999) which whilst a parody of other James Bond films, pays reference to Moonraker by Dr. Evil 's lair in space. The scene in which Drax is shot by the cyanide dart and ousted into space is parodied by Powers' ejection of Dr. Evil 's clone Mini @-@ Me into outer space in the same way.

= = = Accolades = = =

Derek Meddings , Paul Wilson and John Evans were nominated for the Academy Award for Best Visual Effects , and the film was nominated for three Saturn Awards , Best Science Fiction Film , Best Special Effects , and Best Supporting Actor (Richard Kiel) .