

= Alien vs. Predator (film) =

Alien vs. Predator (also known as AVP or AVP : Alien vs. Predator) is a 2004 American science fiction action horror film directed by Paul W. S. Anderson and starring Sanaa Lathan , Lance Henriksen and Raoul Bova . It is the first installment of the Alien vs. Predator franchise , adapting a crossover bringing together the eponymous creatures of the Alien and Predator series , a concept which originated in a 1989 comic book . Anderson , Dan O 'Bannon and Ronald Shusett wrote the story ; and Anderson and Shane Salerno adapted the story into a screenplay . Their writing was influenced by Aztec mythology , the comic book series , and the writings of Erich von Däniken .

Set in 2004 , this film follows a group of archaeologists assembled by billionaire Charles Bishop Weyland (Henriksen) for an expedition near the Antarctic to investigate a mysterious heat signal . Weyland hopes to claim the find for himself , and his group discovers a pyramid below the surface of a whaling station . Hieroglyphs and sculptures reveal that the pyramid is a hunting ground for young Predators who kill Aliens as a rite of passage . The humans are caught in the middle of a battle between the two species and attempt to prevent the Aliens from reaching the surface .

The film was released on August 13 , 2004 in North America and received negative reviews from film critics . The film grossed over \$ 172 million at the worldwide box office . The film was followed by a sequel , Aliens vs. Predator : Requiem in 2007 .

= = Plot = =

In 2004 , a satellite detects a mysterious heat bloom beneath Bouvetøya , an island about one thousand miles off the coast of Antarctica . Wealthy industrialist Charles Bishop Weyland (Lance Henriksen) discovers through thermal imaging that there is a pyramid buried 2000 feet beneath the ice . He attempts to claim it for his multinational communications company , Weyland Industries , a subsidiary of the Weyland Corporation , and assembles a team of experts to investigate . The team includes archaeologists , linguistic experts , drillers , mercenaries , and a guide named Alexa Woods (Sanaa Lathan) .

As a Predator ship reaches Earth 's orbit , it fires a beam that creates a passage through the ice towards the source of the heat bloom . When the team arrives at the abandoned whaling station above the heat source , they find the passage and descend beneath the ice . They locate the mysterious pyramid and begin to explore it , finding evidence of a prehistoric civilization and what appears to be a sacrificial chamber filled with human skeletons with ruptured rib cages .

Meanwhile , three Predators arrive and kill all the humans on the surface . They make their way down to the pyramid and arrive just as the team unwittingly activates the structure . The Alien Queen awakes from cryogenic stasis and begins to produce eggs . When the eggs hatch , several facehuggers attach themselves to humans trapped in the sacrificial chamber . Chestbursters emerge from the humans and quickly grow into adult Aliens . Conflict erupts between the Predators , Aliens , and humans , resulting in several deaths . Two Predators are killed by an Alien , and Weyland is killed by the remaining Predator , while allowing Alexa and archaeologist Sebastian De Rosa (Raoul Bova) enough time to escape . The two witness the Predator kill a facehugger and an Alien with a shuriken before unmasking and marking himself with the blood of the facehugger . After Alexa and Sebastian leave , another facehugger attaches itself to the unmasked Predator .

Through translation of the pyramid 's hieroglyphs , Alexa and Sebastian learn that the Predators have been visiting Earth for thousands of years . It was they who taught early human civilizations how to build pyramids , and were worshiped as gods . Every 100 years they would visit Earth to take part in a rite of passage in which several humans would sacrifice themselves as hosts for the Aliens , creating the " ultimate prey " for the Predators to hunt . If overwhelmed , the Predators would activate a self @-@ destruct device to eliminate the Aliens and themselves . The two deduce that this is why the current Predators are at the pyramid , and that the heat bloom was to attract humans for the sole purpose of making new Aliens to hunt .

Alexa and Sebastian decide that the Predators must be allowed to succeed in their hunt so that the Aliens " do not reach the surface " . Unfortunately , Sebastian is captured by an Alien , leaving only

Alexa and the Predator to fight against the Aliens . The two form an alliance and use a self @-@ destruct device to destroy the pyramid and the remaining Aliens . Alexa and Scar reach the surface , where they battle the Alien Queen . They defeat the Queen by attaching its chain to a water tower and pushing her over a cliff , dragging the Queen to the ocean floor . Scar , however , is impaled through the torso by the Alien Queen 's tail and succumbs to his wounds and dies .

A Predator ship uncloaks and several Predators appear . They retrieve their fallen comrade and an elite Predator presents Alexa with one of their spear weapons in recognition of her skill as a warrior . As the Predators retreat into space , a chestbuster with a hybrid form of an Alien and a Predator erupts from Scar 's chest , beginning the events of Aliens vs. Predator : Requiem .

= = Cast = =

= = Production = =

= = = Alien 5 and sequel = = =

Before 20th Century Fox gave Alien vs. Predator the greenlight , Aliens writer / director James Cameron had been working on a story for a fifth Alien film . Alien director Ridley Scott had talked with Cameron , stating " I think it would be a lot of fun , but the most important thing is to get the story right . " In a 2002 interview , Scott 's concept for a story was " to go back to where the alien creatures were first found and explain how they were created " ; this project eventually became Scott 's 2012 film Prometheus . On learning that Fox intended to pursue Alien vs. Predator , Cameron believed the film would " kill the validity of the franchise " and ceased work on his story , " To me , that was Frankenstein Meets Werewolf . It was Universal just taking their assets and starting to play them off against each other ... Milking it . " After viewing Alien vs. Predator , however , Cameron remarked that " it was actually pretty good . I think of the five Alien films , I 'd rate it third . I actually liked it . I actually liked it a lot . " Conversely , Ridley Scott had no interest in the Alien vs. Predator films . When asked in May 2012 if he had watched them , Scott laughed , " No . I couldn 't do that . I couldn 't quite take that step . " Director Neill Blomkamp would eventually go on to pitch his sequel to Aliens .

= = = Development = = =

The concept of Alien vs. Predator originated from the Aliens versus Predator comic book in 1989 , and was hinted at when an Alien skull appeared in a trophy case aboard the Predator ship in Predator 2 . Screenwriter Peter Briggs created the original spec screenplay in 1990 ? 1991 , which was based on the first comic series . In 1991 , he successfully pitched the concept to 20th Century Fox , who owned the film franchises , although the company did not move forward with the project until 2002 . The project was delayed chiefly because 20th Century Fox was working on Alien : Resurrection . A draft penned by James DeMonaco and Kevin Fox was rejected by producer John Davis , who hoped to give the film an original approach by setting it on Earth .

As there were six producers between the film franchises , Davis had difficulty securing the rights as the producers were worried about a film featuring the two creatures . Paul W. S. Anderson pitched Davis a story he worked on for eight years , and showed him concept art created by Randy Bowen . Impressed with Anderson 's idea , Davis thought the story was like Jaws in that it " just drew you in , it drew you in " . Anderson started to work on the film after completing the script for Resident Evil : Apocalypse , with Shane Salerno co @-@ writing . Salerno spent six months writing the shooting script , finished its development , and stayed on for revisions throughout the film 's production .

= = = Story and setting = = =

Early reports claimed the story was about humans who tried to lure Predators with Alien eggs , although the idea was scrapped . Influenced by the work of Erich von Däniken , Anderson researched von Däniken 's theories on how he believed early civilisations were able to construct massive pyramids with the help of aliens , an idea drawn from Aztec mythology . Anderson wove these ideas into Alien vs. Predator , describing a scenario in which Predators taught ancient humans to build pyramids and used Earth for rite of passage rituals every 100 years in which they would hunt Aliens . To explain how these ancient civilisations " disappeared without a trace " , Anderson came up with the idea that the Predators , if overwhelmed by the Aliens , would use their self @-@ destruct weapons to kill everything in the area . H. P. Lovecraft 's 1931 novella At the Mountains of Madness served as an inspiration for the film , and several elements of the Aliens vs. Predator comic series were included . Anderson 's initial script called for five Predators to appear in the film , although the number was later reduced to three .

As Alien vs. Predator is a sequel to the Predator films and prequel to the Alien series , Anderson was cautious of contradicting continuity in the franchises . He chose to set the film on the remote Norwegian Antarctic island of Bouvet commenting , " It 's definitely the most hostile environment on Earth and probably the closest to an Alien surface you can get . " Anderson thought that setting the film in an urban environment like New York City would break continuity with the Alien series as the protagonist , Ellen Ripley , had no knowledge the creatures existed . " You can 't have an Alien running around the city now , because it would 've been written up and everyone will know about it . So there 's nothing in this movie that contradicts anything that already exists . "

= = = Casting = = =

The first actor to be cast for Alien vs. Predator was Lance Henriksen , who played the character Bishop in Aliens and Alien 3 . Although the Alien movies are set 150 years in the future , Anderson wanted to keep continuity with the series by including a familiar actor . Henriksen plays billionaire Charles Bishop Weyland , a character that ties in with the Weyland @-@ Yutani Corporation . According to Anderson , Weyland becomes known for the discovery of the pyramid , and as a result the Weyland @-@ Yutani Corporation models the Bishop android in the Alien films after him ; " when the Bishop android is created in 150 years time , it 's created with the face of the creator . It 's kind of like Microsoft building an android in 100 years time that has the face of Bill Gates . "

Anderson opted for a European cast including Italian actor Raoul Bova , Ewen Bremner from Scotland , and English actor Colin Salmon . Producer Davis said , " There 's a truly international flavor to the cast , and gives the film a lot of character . " Several hundred actresses attended the auditions to be cast as the film 's heroine Alexa Woods . Sanaa Lathan was selected , and one week later she flew to Prague to begin filming . The filmmakers knew there would be comparisons to Alien heroine Ellen Ripley and did not want a clone of the character , but wanted to make her similar while adding something different .

Anderson reported in an interview that California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger was willing to reprise his role as Major Alan " Dutch " Schaeffer from Predator in a short cameo appearance if he lost the recall election on condition that the filming should take place at his residence . Schwarzenegger , however , won the election with 48 @.@ 58 % of the votes and was unavailable to participate in Alien vs. Predator . Actress Sigourney Weaver , who starred as Ellen Ripley in the Alien series , said she was happy not to be in the film , as a possible crossover was " the reason I wanted my character to die in the first place " , and thought the concept " sounded awful " .

= = = Filming and set designs = = =

Production began in late 2003 at Barrandov Studios in Prague , Czech Republic , where most of the filming took place . Production designer Richard Bridgland was in charge of sets , props and vehicles , based on early concept art Anderson had created to give a broad direction of how things would look . 25 to 30 life @-@ sized sets were constructed at Barrandov Studios , many of which were interiors of the pyramid . The pyramid 's carvings , sculptures , and hieroglyphs were

influenced by Egyptian , Cambodian , and Aztec civilisations , while the regular shifting of the pyramid 's rooms was meant to evoke a sense of claustrophobia similar to the original Alien film . According to Anderson , if he was to build the sets in Los Angeles they would have cost \$ 20 million . However , in Prague they cost \$ 2 million , an important factor when the film 's budget was less than \$ 50 million .

Third scale miniatures several meters in height were created to give the film the effect of realism , rather than relying on computer generated imagery (CGI) . For the whaling station miniatures and life @-@ sized sets , over 700 bags of artificial snow were used (roughly 15 ? 20 tons) . A 4 @.@ 5 @-@ meter miniature of an icebreaker with working lights and a mechanical moving radar was created , costing almost \$ 37 @,@ 000 and taking 10 weeks to create . Visual effects producer Arthur Windus , claimed miniatures were beneficial in the filming process : " With computer graphics , you need to spend a lot of time making it real . With a miniature , you shoot it and its there . " A scale 25 @-@ meter miniature of the whaling station was created in several months . It was designed so the model could be collapsed and then reconstructed , which proved beneficial for a six @-@ second shot which required a re @-@ shoot .

= = = Effects and creatures = = =

Special effects company Amalgamated Dynamics Incorporated (ADI) was hired for the movie , having previously worked on Alien 3 and Alien : Resurrection . Visual special effects producers Arthur Windus and John Bruno were in charge of the project , which contained 400 effects shots . ADI founders Alec Gillis , Tom Woodruff Jr . , and members of their company , began designing costumes , miniatures and effects in June 2003 . For five months the creatures were redesigned , the Predators wrist blades being extended roughly four times longer than those in the Predator films , and a larger mechanical plasma caster was created for the Scar Predator .

The basic shape of the Predator mask was kept , although technical details were added and each Predator was given a unique mask to distinguish them from each other . These masks were created using clay , which was used to form moulds to create fiberglass copies . These copies were painted to give a weathered look , which Woodruff claims " is what the Predator is all about " . A hydraulic Alien puppet was created so ADI would be able to make movements faster and give the Alien a " slimline and skeletal " appearance , rather than using an actor in a suit . The puppet required six people to run it ; one for the head and body , two for the arms , and a sixth to make sure the signals were reaching the computer . Movements were recorded in the computer so that puppeteers would be able to repeat moves that Anderson liked . The puppet was used in six shots , including the fight scene with the Predator which took one month to film .

The crew tried to keep CGI use to a minimum , as Anderson said people in suits and puppets are scarier than CGI monsters as they are " there in the frame " . Roughly 70 % of scenes were created using suits , puppets , and miniatures . The Alien queen was filmed using three variations : a 4 @.@ 8 @-@ meter practical version , a 1 @.@ 2 @-@ meter puppet , and a computer @-@ generated version . The practical version required 12 puppeteers to operate , and CGI tails were added to the Aliens and the queen as they were difficult to animate using puppetry . The queen alien 's inner @-@ mouth was automated though , and was powered by a system of hydraulics . Anderson praised Alien director Ridley Scott 's and Predator director John McTiernan 's abilities at building suspense by not showing the creatures until late in the film , something Anderson wanted to accomplish with Alien vs. Predator . " Yes , we make you wait 45 minutes , but once it goes off , from there until the end of the movie , it 's fucking relentless " .

= = = Music = = =

Austrian composer Harald Kloser was hired to create the film 's score . After completing the score for The Day After Tomorrow , Kloser was chosen by Anderson as he is a fan of the franchises . It was recorded in London , and was primarily orchestral as Anderson commented , " this is a terrifying movie and it needs a terrifying , classic movie score to go with it ; at the same time it 's got huge

action so it needs that kind of proper orchestral support . "

The score was released on 31 August 2004 , and received mixed reviews . James Christopher Monger of Allmusic thought Kloser introduced electronic elements well , and called " Alien vs. Predator Main Theme a particularly striking and serves as a continuous creative source for the composer to dip his baton in . " Mike Brennan of Soundtrack , however , said it " lacks the ingenuity of the previous trilogy and the Predator scores , which all shared a strong sense of rhythm in place of thematic content . Kloser throws in some interesting percussion cues (" Antarctica " and " Down the Tunnel ") , but more as a sound effect than a consistent motif . " John Fallon of JoBlo.com compared it to character development in the film , " too generic to completely engage or leave a permanent impression . "

= = Reception = =

= = = Box office = = =

Alien vs. Predator was released in North America on August 13 , 2004 in 3 @, @ 395 theatres . The film grossed \$ 38 @. @ 2 million over its opening weekend for an average of \$ 11 @, @ 278 per theatre , and was number one at the box office . The film spent 16 weeks in cinemas and made \$ 80 @, @ 281 @, @ 096 in North America . It grossed \$ 9 million in the United Kingdom , \$ 16 million in Japan , and \$ 8 million in Germany and totalled \$ 92 @, @ 262 @, @ 423 at the international box office . This brought the film 's worldwide gross to \$ 172 @, @ 543 @, @ 519 , making it the highest @-@ grossing film in either the Predator or Alien franchises (excluding Prometheus , which grossed over \$ 403 million worldwide) . It ranks second behind Aliens at the domestic box office , and fifth behind the first three Alien films and the first Predator , when adjusted for inflation .

= = = Critical response = = =

The film received negative reviews from critics , but reception from fans were more positive . On Rotten Tomatoes the film has a rating of 21 % , based on 141 reviews , with the site 's critical consensus reading , " Gore without scares and cardboard cut @-@ out characters making this clash of the monsters a dull seat . " On Metacritic the film has a score of 29 out of 100 , based on 21 critics , indicating " generally unfavorable reviews " . Chief criticisms of the film included its dialogue , a PG @-@ 13 rating , the " fast @-@ paced editing " during fight sequences , and lighting . However , special effects and set designs received praise .

Rick Kisonak of Film Threat praised the film stating , " For a big dumb production about a movie monster smackdown , Alien vs. Predator is a surprisingly good time " . Ian Grey of the Orlando Weekly felt , " Anderson clearly relished making this wonderful , utterly silly film ; his heart shows in every drip of slime . " Staci Layne Wilson of Horror.com called it " a pretty movie to look at with its grandiose sets and top notch creature FX , but it 's a lot like Anderson 's previous works in that it 's all facade and no foundation . " Gary Dowell of The Dallas Morning News called the film , " a transparent attempt to jumpstart two run @-@ down franchises " . Ed Halter of The Village Voice described the film 's lighting for fight sequences as , " black @-@ on @-@ black @-@ in @-@ blackness " , while Ty Burr of The Boston Globe felt the lighting " left the audience in the dark " .

= = Home media releases = =

Alien vs. Predator was released on DVD in North America on 25 January 2005 . The DVD contained two audio commentaries . The first featured Paul W. S. Anderson , Lance Henriksen , and Sanaa Lathan , while the second included special effects supervisor John Bruno and ADI founders Alec Gillis and Tom Woodruff . A 25 @-@ minute " Making of " featurette and a Dark Horse AVP comic cover gallery were included in the special features along with three deleted scenes from the film . On release , Alien vs. Predator debuted at number 1 on the Top DVD Sales and Top Video

Rental charts in North America .

A two @-@ disc " Extreme Edition " was released on 7 March 2005 , featuring behind the scenes footage of the conception , pre @-@ production , production , post @-@ production , and licensing of the film . An " Unrated Edition " was released on 22 November 2005 , containing the same special features as the Extreme Edition as well as an extra eight minutes of footage in the film . John J. Puccio of DVD Town remarked that the extra footage contained " a few more shots of blood , gore , guts , and slime to spice things up ... and tiny bits of connecting matter to help us follow the story line better , but none of it amounts to much . " The film was released on Blu @-@ ray Disc in North America on 23 January 2007 .

= = Sequel = =

A sequel , Aliens vs. Predator : Requiem , was released in December 2007 . Directed by brothers Greg and Colin Strause , the story continues from the conclusion of Alien vs. Predator . The film was panned , and despite having a worldwide theatrical gross of nearly \$ 130 million , the film grossed less than its predecessor .