

## = Close Encounters of the Third Kind =

Close Encounters of the Third Kind is a 1977 American science fiction film , written and directed by Steven Spielberg and starring Richard Dreyfuss , François Truffaut , Melinda Dillon , Teri Garr , Bob Balaban , and Cary Guffey . It tells the story of Roy Neary , an everyday blue collar worker in Indiana , whose life changes after an encounter with an unidentified flying object ( UFO ) .

Close Encounters was a long @-@ cherished project for Spielberg . In late 1973 , he developed a deal with Columbia Pictures for a science fiction film . Though Spielberg received sole credit for the script , he was assisted by Paul Schrader , John Hill , David Giler , Hal Barwood , Matthew Robbins , and Jerry Belson , all of whom contributed to the screenplay in varying degrees . The title is derived from UFO @-@ ologist J. Allen Hynek 's classification of close encounters with aliens , in which the third kind denotes human observations of aliens or " animate beings . " Douglas Trumbull served as the visual effects supervisor , while Carlo Rambaldi designed the aliens .

Made on a production budget of \$ 18 million , Close Encounters was released in a limited number of cities on November 16 , 1977 or November 23 , 1977 before expanding into a wide release the following month . It was a critical and financial success , eventually grossing over \$ 337 million worldwide .

A Special Edition of the film , featuring additional scenes , was released theatrically in 1980 . A third cut of the film was issued on VHS and laserdisc in 1998 ( and later DVD and Blu @-@ ray ) . The film received numerous awards and nominations at the 50th Academy Awards , 32nd British Academy Film Awards , the 35th Golden Globe Awards , the Saturn Awards and has been widely acclaimed by the American Film Institute . In December 2007 , it was deemed " culturally , historically , or aesthetically significant " by the United States Library of Congress and selected for preservation in the National Film Registry .

## = = Plot = =

In the Sonoran Desert , French scientist Claude Lacombe ( François Truffaut ) and his American interpreter , mapmaker David Laughlin ( Bob Balaban ) , along with other government scientific researchers , discover Flight 19 , a squadron of Grumman TBM Avengers that went missing more than 30 years earlier . The planes are intact and operational , but there is no sign of the pilots . An old man who witnessed the event claimed " the sun came out at night , and sang to him . " They also find a lost cargo ship in the Gobi Desert named SS Cotopaxi . At an air traffic control center in Indianapolis , a controller listens as two airline flights narrowly avoid a mid @-@ air collision with an apparent unidentified flying object ( UFO ) , which neither pilot chooses to report , even when invited to do so . In Muncie , Indiana , 3 @-@ year @-@ old Barry Guiler ( Cary Guffey ) is awakened in the night when his toys start operating on their own . Fascinated , he gets out of bed and discovers something or someone ( off @-@ screen ) in the kitchen . He runs outside , forcing his mother , Jillian ( Melinda Dillon ) , to chase after him .

Investigating one of a series of large @-@ scale power outages , Indiana electrical lineman Roy Neary ( Richard Dreyfuss ) experiences a close encounter with a UFO , when it flies over his truck and lightly burns the side of his face with its bright lights . The UFO , joining a group of three other UFOs , is pursued by Neary and three police cars , but the spacecraft fly off into the night sky . Roy becomes fascinated by UFOs , much to the dismay of his wife , Ronnie ( Teri Garr ) . He also becomes increasingly obsessed with subliminal , mental images of a mountain @-@ like shape and begins to make models of it . Jillian also becomes obsessed with sketching a unique @-@ looking mountain . Soon after , she is terrorized in her home by a UFO which descends from the clouds . The presence of the UFO energy field makes every appliance in Jillian 's house malfunction and Barry is abducted by unseen beings .

Lacombe and Laughlin ? along with a group of United Nations experts ? continue to investigate increasing UFO activity and strange , related occurrences . Witnesses in Dharamsala , India report that the UFOs make distinctive sounds : a five @-@ tone musical phrase in a major scale . Scientists broadcast the phrase to outer space , but are mystified by the response : a seemingly

meaningless series of numbers ( 104 44 30 40 36 10 ) repeated over and over until Laughlin , with his background in cartography , recognizes it as a set of geographical coordinates ( this is actually a goof ; those coordinates are near Ft . Collins , Colorado ... if the 40 had been a 44 , the coordinates would have been plot @-@ correct ) . The coordinates point to Devils Tower near Moorcroft , Wyoming . Lacombe and the U.S. military converge on Wyoming . The United States Army evacuates the area , planting false reports in the media that a train wreck has spilled a toxic nerve gas , all the while preparing a secret landing zone for the UFOs and their occupants .

Meanwhile , Roy 's increasingly erratic behavior causes Ronnie to leave him , taking their three children with her . When a despairing Roy inadvertently sees a television news program about the train wreck near Devils Tower , he realizes the mental image of a mountain plaguing him is real . Jillian sees the same broadcast , and she and Roy , as well as others with similar visions and experiences , travel to the site in spite of the public warnings about nerve gas .

While most of the civilians who are drawn to the site are apprehended by the Army , Roy and Jillian persist and make it to the site just as dozens of UFOs appear in the night sky . The government specialists at the site begin to communicate with the UFOs by use of light and sound on a large electrical billboard . Following this , an enormous mother ship lands at the site , releasing animals and over a dozen long @-@ missing adults and children , all from different past eras . Among these returned abductees include the missing pilots from Flight 19 and sailors from the Cotopaxi , all of whom have strangely not aged since their abductions . Barry is also returned and reunited with a relieved Jillian . The government officials decide to include Roy in a group of people whom they have selected to be potential visitors to the mothership , and hastily prepare him . As the aliens finally emerge from the mothership , they select only Roy to join them on their travels . As Roy enters the mothership , one of the aliens pauses for a few moments with the humans . Lacombe uses Curwen hand signs that correspond to the five @-@ note alien tonal phrase . The alien replies with the same gestures , smiles , and returns to its ship , which ascends into the galaxy .

= = Cast = =

Richard Dreyfuss as Roy Neary , an electrical lineman in Indiana who encounters and forms an obsession with unidentified flying objects . Steve McQueen was Spielberg 's first choice . Although McQueen was impressed with the script , he felt he was not right for the role as he was unable to cry on cue . Dustin Hoffman , Al Pacino and Gene Hackman turned down the part as well . Jack Nicholson turned it down because of scheduling conflicts . Spielberg explained when filming Jaws , " Dreyfuss talked me into casting him . He listened to about 155 days ' worth of Close Encounters . He even contributed ideas . " Dreyfuss reflected , " I launched myself into a campaign to get the part . I would walk by Steve 's office and say stuff like ' Al Pacino has no sense of humor ' or ' Jack Nicholson is too crazy ' . I eventually convinced him to cast me . "

François Truffaut as Claude Lacombe , a French government scientist in charge of UFO @-@ related activities in the United States . Gérard Depardieu , Philippe Noiret , Jean @-@ Louis Trintignant and Lino Ventura were considered for the role . During filming , Truffaut used his free time to write the script for The Man Who Loved Women . He also worked on a novel titled The Actor , a project he abandoned .

Melinda Dillon as Jillian Guiler , Barry 's mother . She forms a similar obsession to Roy 's , and the two become friends . Teri Garr wanted to portray Jillian , but was cast as Ronnie . Hal Ashby , who worked with Dillon on Bound for Glory , suggested her for the part to Spielberg . Dillon was cast three days before filming began .

Teri Garr as Veronica " Ronnie " Neary , Roy 's wife . Amy Irving also auditioned for the role .

Cary Guffey as Barry Guiler , Jillian 's young child abducted in the middle of the film . Spielberg conducted a series of method acting techniques to help Guffey , who was cast when he was just three years old .

Bob Balaban as David Laughlin , Lacombe 's assistant and English @-@ French interpreter . They meet for the first time in the Sonoran Desert at the beginning of the film . His former position as a cartographer allows him to interpret the alien signals as coordinates leading to the meeting at Devils

Tower .

Josef Sommer as Larry Butler , a man who meets Roy and Jillian in Wyoming and attempts to scale Devils Tower with them .

Lance Henriksen as Robert , Lacombe 's assistant

Roberts Blossom as Farmer , a radical who claims to have seen Bigfoot .

J. Allen Hynek and Stanton T. Friedman make cameo appearances in the closing scene . Spielberg 's friends Hal Barwood and Matthew Robbins cameo as two World War II pilots returning from the mother ship . Real @-@ life ARP technician Phil Dodds cameos as the operator of the ARP 2500 synthesizer communicating with the alien ship . Musician Jerry Garcia also makes an appearance in the crowd scene . Carl Weathers appeared as a soldier in the film .

= = Production = =

= = = Development = = =

The film 's origins can be traced to director Steven Spielberg 's youth , when he and his father watched a meteor shower in New Jersey . As a teenager , Spielberg completed the full @-@ length science fiction film Firelight . Many scenes from Firelight would be incorporated in Close Encounters on a shot @-@ for @-@ shot basis . In 1970 he wrote a short story called Experiences about a lovers ' lane in a Midwestern United States farming community and the " light show " a group of teenagers see in the night sky . In late 1973 , during post @-@ production on The Sugarland Express , Spielberg developed a deal with Columbia Pictures for a science fiction film . 20th Century Fox previously turned down the offer . Julia and Michael Phillips instantly signed on as producers .

He first considered doing a documentary or a low @-@ budget feature film about people who believed in UFOs . Spielberg decided " a film that depended on state of the art technology couldn 't be made for \$ 2 @.@ 5 million . " Borrowing a phrase from the ending of The Thing from Another World , he retitled the film Watch the Skies , rewriting the premise concerning Project Blue Book and pitching the concept to Willard Huyck and Gloria Katz . Katz remembered " It had flying saucers from outer space landing on Robertson Boulevard [ in West Hollywood , California ] . I go , ' Steve , that 's the worst idea I ever heard . " Spielberg brought Paul Schrader to write the script in December 1973 with principal photography to begin in late @-@ 1974 . However , Spielberg started work on Jaws in 1974 , pushing Watch the Skies back .

With the financial and critical success of Jaws , Spielberg earned a vast amount of creative control from Columbia , including the right to make the film any way he wanted . Schrader turned in his script , which Spielberg called , " one of the most embarrassing screenplays ever professionally turned in to a major film studio or director . It was a terribly guilt @-@ ridden story not about UFOs at all . " Titled Kingdom Come , the script 's protagonist was a 45 @-@ year @-@ old Air Force Officer named Paul Van Owen who worked with Project Blue Book . " [ His ] job for the government is to ridicule and debunk flying saucers . " Schrader continued . " One day he has an encounter . He goes to the government , threatening to blow the lid off to the public . Instead , he and the government spend 15 years trying to make contact . " Spielberg and Schrader experienced creative differences , hiring John Hill to rewrite . At one point the main character was a police officer . Spielberg " [ found ] it hard to identify with men in uniform . I wanted to have Mr. Everyday Regular Fella . " Spielberg rejected the Schrader / Hill script during post @-@ production on Jaws . He reflected , " they wanted to make it like a James Bond adventure . "

David Giler performed a rewrite ; Hal Barwood and Matthew Robbins , friends of Spielberg , suggested the plot device of a kidnapped child . Spielberg then began to write the script . The song " When You Wish upon a Star " from Pinocchio influenced Spielberg 's writing style . " I hung my story on the mood the song created , the way it affected me personally . " Jerry Belson and Spielberg wrote the shooting script together . In the end , Spielberg was given solo writing credit . During pre @-@ production , the title was changed from Kingdom Come to Close Encounters of the Third Kind . J. Allen Hynek , who worked with the United States Air Force on Project Blue Book , was hired as a

scientific consultant . Hynek felt " 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 . Spielberg was under enormous pressure to make another blockbuster after Jaws , but he decided to make a UFO movie . He put his career on the line . " USAF and NASA declined to cooperate on the film . In fact , NASA reportedly sent a 20 @-@ page letter to Spielberg , telling him that releasing the film was dangerous . In an interview , he said : " I really found my faith when I heard that the Government was opposed to the film . If NASA took the time to write me a 20 @-@ page letter , then I knew there must be something happening . "

= = = Filming = = =

Principal photography began on May 16 , 1976 , though an Associated Press report in August 1975 had suggested filming would start in late 1975 . Spielberg did not want to do any location shooting because of his negative experience on Jaws and wanted to shoot Close Encounters entirely on sound stages , but eventually dropped the idea .

Filming took place in Burbank , California ; Devils Tower National Monument in Wyoming ; two abandoned World War II airship hangars at the former Brookley Air Force Base in Mobile , Alabama ; and the Louisville and Nashville Railroad depot in Bay Minette . The home where Barry was abducted is located outside the town of Fairhope , Alabama . Roy Neary 's home is at Carlisle Drive East in Mobile . The UFOs fly through the former toll booth at the Vincent Thomas Bridge , San Pedro , California . The Gobi Desert sequence was photographed at the Dumont Dunes , California , and the Dharmasala @-@ India exteriors were filmed at the small village of Hal near Khalapur , 35 miles ( 56 km ) outside Bombay , India . The hangars in Alabama were six times larger than the biggest sound stage in the world . Various technical and budgetary problems occurred during filming . Spielberg called Close Encounters " twice as bad and twice as expensive [ as Jaws ] " .

Matters worsened when Columbia Pictures experienced financial difficulties . Spielberg estimated the film would cost \$ 2 @.@ 7 million to make in his original 1973 pitch to Columbia , but the final budget came to \$ 19 @.@ 4 million . Columbia studio executive John Veich remembered , " If we knew it was going to cost that much , we wouldn 't have greenlighted it because we didn 't have the money . " Spielberg hired Joe Alves , his collaborator on Jaws , as production designer . In addition the 1976 Atlantic hurricane season brought tropical storms to Alabama . A large portion of the sound stage in Alabama was damaged because of a lightning strike . Columbia raised \$ 7 million from three sources : Time Inc . , EMI , and German tax shelters .

Cinematographer Vilmos Zsigmond said that , during the time of shooting for the film , Spielberg got more ideas by watching movies every night which in turn extended the production schedule because he was continually adding new scenes to be filmed . Zsigmond previously turned down the chance to work on Jaws . In her 1991 book You 'll Never Eat Lunch in This Town Again , producer Julia Phillips wrote highly profane remarks about Spielberg , Zsigmond , and Truffaut , because she was fired during post @-@ production due to a cocaine addiction . Phillips blamed it on Spielberg being a perfectionist .

= = = Visual effects = = =

Douglas Trumbull was the visual effects supervisor , while Carlo Rambaldi designed the aliens . Trumbull joked that the visual effects budget , at \$ 3 @.@ 3 million , could have been used to produce an additional film . His work helped lead to advances in motion control photography . The mother ship was designed by Ralph McQuarrie and built by Greg Jein . The look of the ship was inspired by an oil refinery Spielberg saw at night in India . Instead of the metallic hardware look used in Star Wars , the emphasis was on a more luminescent look for the UFOs . One of the UFO models was an oxygen mask with lights attached to it , used because of its irregular shape . As a subtle in @-@ joke , Dennis Muren ( who had just finished working on Star Wars ) put a small R2 @-@ D2 model onto the underside of the mothership . The model of the mothership is now on display in the Smithsonian Institution 's Air and Space Museum Udvar @-@ Hazy Annex at Washington Dulles

Airport in Chantilly , Virginia .

Since Close Encounters was filmed anamorphically , the visual effects sequences were shot in 70 mm film to better conform with the 35 mm film used for the rest of the movie . A test reel using computer @-@ generated imagery was used for the UFOs , but Spielberg found it would be too expensive and ineffective since CGI was in its infancy in the mid @-@ 1970s .

The small aliens in the final scenes were played by local girls in Mobile , Alabama . That decision was requested by Spielberg because he felt " girls move more gracefully than boys . " Puppetry was attempted for the aliens , but the idea failed . However , Rambaldi successfully used puppetry to depict two of the aliens , the first being a marionette ( for the tall alien that is the first to be seen emerging from the mothership ) and an articulated puppet for the alien that communicates via hand signals with Lacombe near the end of the film .

= = = Post @-@ production = = =

Close Encounters is the first collaboration between film editor Michael Kahn and Spielberg . Their working relationship has continued for the rest of Spielberg 's films . Spielberg stated that no film he has ever made since has been as hard to edit as the last 25 minutes of Close Encounters and he and Kahn would go through thousands of feet of footage just to find the right shots for the end sequence . When Kahn and Spielberg completed the first cut of the film , Spielberg was dissatisfied , feeling " there wasn 't enough wow @-@ ness " .

Pick @-@ ups were commissioned but cinematographer Vilmos Zsigmond could not participate due to other commitments . John A. Alonzo , László Kovács , and Douglas Slocombe worked on the pick @-@ ups .

Lacombe was originally to find Flight 19 hidden in the Amazon Rainforest , but the idea was changed to the Sonoran Desert . Composer John Williams wrote over 300 examples of the iconic five @-@ tone motif before Spielberg chose the one used in the film . Spielberg called Williams ' work " When You Wish upon a Star meets science fiction " . Spielberg wanted to have " When You Wish upon a Star " in the closing credits , but was denied permission ( though the song 's signature melody can be heard briefly just before Roy Neary turns to board the mothership ) . He also took 7 @-@ 5 minutes out from the preview .

Post @-@ production was completed by June 1977 , too late for the film to be released as a ' summer blockbuster ' which might have been just as well , as Star Wars opened that summer .

= = Soundtrack = =

The score was composed , conducted and produced by John Williams , who had previously won an Academy Award for his work on Spielberg 's Jaws . Much like his two @-@ note Jaws theme , the " five @-@ tone " motif for Close Encounters has since become ingrained in popular culture ( the five tones are used by scientists to communicate with the visiting spaceship as a mathematical language as well as being incorporated into the film 's signature theme ) . The score was recorded at Warner Bros. Scoring studios in Burbank , California .

Williams was nominated for two Academy Awards in 1978 , one for his score to Star Wars and one for his score to Close Encounters . He won for Star Wars , though he later won two Grammy Awards in 1979 for his Close Encounters score ( one for Best Original Film Score and one for Best Instrumental Composition for " Theme from Close Encounters " ) .

The soundtrack album was released on vinyl album ( with a gatefold sleeve ) , 8 @-@ track tape and audio cassette by Arista Records in 1977 , with a total running time of 41 minutes ( it was later released on compact disc in 1990 ) . The soundtrack album was a commercial success , peaking at # 17 on the US Billboard album chart in February 1978 and was certified Gold by the RIAA for 500 @-@ 000 copies shipped . It also peaked at # 40 in the UK album charts .

Although not included on the original soundtrack album , a 7 " single of a disco treatment of the five @-@ note motif , titled , " Theme from Close Encounters of the Third Kind " , was included with the album as a free bonus item . Despite being a giveaway , Billboard chart rules at that time allowed

the single itself to chart , and it peaked at # 13 on the US Billboard Hot 100 in March 1978 . The single was later added as a bonus track to the cassette .

Following the release of the " Collector 's Edition " of the film in 1998 , a new expanded soundtrack was released on compact disc by Arista . The " Collectors Edition Soundtrack " was made using 20 @-@ bit digital remastering from the original tapes , and contained 26 tracks totalling 77 minutes of music . The CD also came with extensive liner notes including an interview with Williams . Cues were given new titles , and it also contained previously unreleased material , as well as material that was recorded but never used in the film .

= = = 1977 original album = = =

? 1978 reissue - bonus track ( cassette ) , free bonus 7 " single ( vinyl album ) .

= = = 1998 Collector 's Edition = = =

= = Themes = =

Film critic Charlene Engel observed *Close Encounters* " suggests that humankind has reached the point where it is ready to enter the community of the cosmos . While it is a computer which makes the final musical conversation with the alien guests possible , the characteristics bringing Neary to make his way to Devils Tower have little to do with technical expertise or computer literacy . These are virtues taught in schools that will be evolved in the 21st century . " The film also evokes typical science fiction archetypes and motifs . The film portrays new technologies as a natural and expected outcome of human development and indication of health and growth .

Other critics found a variety of Judeo @-@ Christian analogies . Devils Tower parallels Mount Sinai , the aliens as God and Roy Neary as Moses . Cecil B. DeMille 's *The Ten Commandments* is seen on television at the Neary household . Some found close relations between Elijah and Roy ; Elijah was taken into a " chariot of fire " , akin to Roy going in the UFO . Climbing Devils Tower behind the faltering Jillian , Neary exhorts Jillian to keep moving and not to look back , similar to Lot 's wife who looked back at Sodom and turned into a pillar of salt . Spielberg explained , " I wanted to make *Close Encounters* a very accessible story about the everyday individual who has a sighting that overturns his life , and throws it into complete upheaval as he starts to become more and more obsessed with this experience . "

Roy 's wife Ronnie attempts to hide the sunburn caused by Roy 's exposure to the UFOs and wants him to forget his encounter with them . She is embarrassed and bewildered by what has happened to him and desperately wants her ordinary life back . The expression of his lost life is seen when he is sculpting a huge model of Devils Tower in his living room , with his family deserting him . Roy 's obsession with an idea implanted by an alien intelligence , his construction of the model , and his gradual loss of contact with his wife , mimic the events in the short story " *Dulcie and Decorum* " ( 1955 ) by Damon Knight .

*Close Encounters* also studies the form of " youth spiritual yearning " . Barry Guiler , the unfearing child who refers to the UFOs and their paraphernalia as " toys " ( although that was unscripted , with the child being drawn to smile by being shown toys offstage ) , serves as a motif for childlike innocence and openness in the face of the unknown . Spielberg also compared the theme of communication as highlighting that of tolerance . " If we can talk to aliens in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* , " he said , " why not with the Reds in the Cold War ? " Sleeping is the final obstacle to overcome in the ascent of Devils Tower . Roy , Jillian Guiler and a third invitee climb the mountain pursued by government helicopters spraying sleeping gas . The third person stops to rest , is gassed , and falls into a deep sleep .

In his interview with Spielberg on *Inside the Actors Studio* , James Lipton suggested *Close Encounters* had another , more personal theme for Spielberg : " Your father was a computer engineer ; your mother was a concert pianist , and when the spaceship lands , they make music

together on the computer " , suggesting that Roy Neary 's boarding the spaceship is Spielberg 's wish to be reunited with his parents . In a 2005 interview , Spielberg stated that he made Close Encounters when he did not have children , and if he were making it today , he would never have had Neary leave his family and go on the mother ship .

= = Release = =

= = = Reception = = =

The film was originally to be released in summer 1977 , but was pushed back to November because of the various problems during production . Upon its release , Close Encounters became a box office success , grossing \$ 116 @. @ 39 million in North America and \$ 171 @. @ 7 million in foreign countries , totaling \$ 288 million . It became Columbia Pictures ' most successful film at that time . Jonathan Rosenbaum refers to the film as " the best expression of Spielberg 's benign , dreamy @-@ eyed vision . " A.D. Murphy of Variety gave a positive review but felt " Close Encounters lacks the warmth and humanity of George Lucas 's Star Wars " . Murphy found most of the film slow @-@ paced , but praised the film 's climax . Pauline Kael called it " a kid 's film in the best sense . " Jean Renoir compared Spielberg 's storytelling to Jules Verne and Georges Méliès . Ray Bradbury declared it the greatest science fiction film ever made . Based on 46 reviews collected by Rotten Tomatoes , 96 % ( " Certified Fresh " ) of the reviewers have enjoyed the film and the site 's consensus states " Close Encounters ' most iconic bits ( the theme , the mashed @-@ potato sculpture , etc . ) have been so thoroughly absorbed into the culture that it 's easy to forget that its treatment of aliens as peaceful beings rather than warmongering monsters was somewhat groundbreaking in 1977 . "

= = = Reissue and home video = = =

On the final cut privilege , Spielberg was dissatisfied with the film . Columbia Pictures was experiencing financial problems , and they were depending on this film to save their company . " I wanted to have another six months to finish off this film , and release it in summer 1978 . They told me they needed this film out immediately , " Spielberg explained . " Anyway , Close Encounters was a huge financial success and I told them I wanted to make my own director 's cut . They agreed on the condition that I show the inside of the mother ship so they could have something to hang a [ reissue marketing ] campaign on . I never should have shown the inside of the mother ship . " In 1979 , Columbia gave Spielberg \$ 1 @. @ 5 million to produce what became the " Special Edition " of the film . Spielberg added seven minutes of new footage , but also deleted or shortened various existing scenes by a total of ten minutes , so that the Special Edition was three minutes shorter than the original 1977 release . The Special Edition featured several new character development scenes , the discovery of the SS Cotopaxi in the Gobi Desert , and a view of the inside of the mothership . Close Encounters of the Third Kind : The Special Edition was released in August 1980 , making a further \$ 15 @. @ 7 million , accumulating a final \$ 303 @. @ 7 million box office gross . Roger Ebert " thought the original film was an astonishing achievement , capturing the feeling of awe and wonder we have when considering the likelihood of life beyond the Earth . ... This new version ... is , quite simply , a better film ... Why didn 't Spielberg make it this good the first time ? "

The 1980 Special Edition was the version officially available on video for years , until The Criterion Collection offered both versions on LaserDisc in 1990 . This triple @-@ disc LaserDisc set also included an interactive " Making Close Encounters " documentary featuring interviews with Spielberg and other cast and crew involved with the film , as well as stills and script excerpts .

In 1998 , Spielberg recut Close Encounters again for what would become the " Collector 's Edition , " to be released on home video and laserdisc . This version of the film is a re @-@ edit of the original 1977 release with some elements of the 1980 Special Edition , but omits the mothership interior scenes which Spielberg felt should have remained a mystery . The laserdisc edition also

includes a new 101 @-@ minute documentary , The Making of Close Encounters , which was produced in 1997 and features interviews with Spielberg , the main cast and notable crew members . There have also been many other alternate versions of the film for network and syndicated television , as well as a previous LaserDisc version . Some of these even combined all released material from the 1977 and 1980 versions , but none of these versions were edited by Spielberg , who regards the " Collector 's Edition " as his definitive version of Close Encounters . The Collector 's Edition was given a limited release as part of a roadshow featuring select films to celebrate Columbia Pictures ' 75th anniversary in 1999 . It was the first and only time this version of the film has been shown theatrically .

Close Encounters was released on DVD in June 2001 as a two @-@ disc set that contained the " Collector 's Edition " . The second disc contained a wealth of extra features including the 101 @-@ minute " Making Of " documentary from 1997 , a featurette from 1977 , trailers and deleted scenes that included , among other things , the mothership interiors from the 1980 Special Edition .

Close Encounters was given a second DVD release and its first release on Blu @-@ ray Disc in November 2007 for the film 's 30th anniversary . These sets contain all three official versions of the film from 1977 , 1980 and 1998 , and a new 2007 interview with Spielberg , who talks about the film 's impact 30 years after its release . The set also includes the 1977 featurette , various trailers and the 1997 " Making Of " documentary ? though this is now split over three discs on the DVD version rather than as a single feature as with the 2001 DVD release ( on the Blu @-@ ray release , it remains all on one disc ) . In addition to these features , the 2 @-@ disc Blu @-@ ray set also included storyboard @-@ to @-@ scene comparisons , an extensive photo gallery , and a " View from Above : Editor 's Fact Track " highlighting the different scenes in each version of the movie . A single disc version has also been released on Blu @-@ ray , which is basically the first disc of the 30th anniversary edition , which contains the three versions of the film with the " View from Above " feature .

= = = Legacy = = =

Shortly after the film 's release in late 1977 , Spielberg desired to do either a sequel or prequel , before deciding against it . He explained , " The army 's knowledge and ensuing cover @-@ up is so subterranean that it would take a creative screen story , perhaps someone else making the picture and giving it the equal time it deserves . "

The film was nominated for eight Oscars at the 50th Academy Awards , including Best Director , Supporting Actress ( Melinda Dillon ) , Visual Effects , Art Direction ( Joe Alves , Daniel A. Lomino , Phil Abramson ) , Original Music Score , Film Editing , and Sound ( Robert Knudson , Robert Glass , Don MacDougall and Gene Cantamessa ) . The film 's only win was for Vilmos Zsigmond 's cinematography , although the Academy honored the film 's sound effects editing with a Special Achievement Award ( Frank Warner ) . At the 32nd British Academy Film Awards , Close Encounters won Best Production Design , and was nominated for Best Film , Direction , Screenplay , Actor in a Supporting Role ( François Truffaut ) , Music , Cinematography , Editing , and Sound .

Close Encounters lost the Hugo Award for Best Dramatic Presentation to Star Wars , but was successful at the Saturn Awards . There , the film tied with Star Wars for Direction and Music , but won Best Writing . Richard Dreyfuss , Melinda Dillon and the visual effects department received nominations . Close Encounters was nominated for Best Science Fiction Film . The film received four more nominations at the 35th Golden Globe Awards .

When asked in 1990 to select a single " master image " that summed up his film career , Spielberg chose the shot of Barry opening his living room door to see the blazing orange light from the UFO . " That was beautiful but awful light , just like fire coming through the doorway . [ Barry 's ] very small , and it 's a very large door , and there 's a lot of promise or danger outside that door . " In 2007 , Close Encounters was deemed " culturally , historically , or aesthetically significant " by the United States Library of Congress , and was added to the National Film Registry for preservation . In American Film Institute polls , Close Encounters has been voted the 64th greatest film of all time , 31st most heart @-@ pounding , and 58th most inspiring . Additionally , the film was nominated for



the top 10 science fiction films in AFI 's 10 Top 10 and the tenth anniversary edition of the 100 Movies list . The score by John Williams was nominated for AFI 's 100 Years of Film Scores .

Alongside Star Wars and Superman , Close Encounters led to the reemergence of science fiction films . In 1985 Spielberg donated \$ 100 @,@ 000 to the Planetary Society for Megachannel ExtraTerrestrial Assay . In the 1979 James Bond film Moonraker the five @-@ note sequence is heard when a scientist punches the combination into an electronic door lock . In the South Park episode " Imaginationland " , a government scientist uses the five @-@ note sequence to try to open a portal . In " Over Logging " , a government scientist uses the five @-@ note sequence to try to get the central Internet router working . The " mashed potato " sculpture was parodied in the film UHF , the film Canadian Bacon , an episode of Spaced , an episode of The X @-@ Files , an episode of That ' 70s Show , and an episode of The Simpsons . It was satirized in the 200th issue of Mad Magazine , July 1978 , by Stan Hart and Mort Drucker as Clod Encounters of the Absurd Kind .

In 1977 , Saturday Night Live had Dreyfuss as a guest host and spoofed the film as Cone Encounters of the Third Kind featuring the recurring characters the Coneheads .

The 1980 short Closet Cases of the Nerd Kind spoofs the entire film ( in condensed form ) .

In 2007 , Muse have used one of the communications melodies to open their most popular live track , titled " Knights of Cydonia "

In 2011 , ABC aired a primetime special , Best in Film : The Greatest Movies of Our Time that counted down the best movies chosen by fans based on results of a poll conducted by ABC and People . Close Encounters of the Third Kind was selected as the # 5 Best Sci @-@ Fi Film .

In the 2012 Deadmau5 album Album Title Goes Here , track no . 9 , titled " Closer , " features the five @-@ note sequence as the basis for the song 's opening and main melodic motif .

In 2013 , the TV Show Futurama spoofed the note sequence and Devil 's Tower sequence in episode " Games of Tones " .

In the Homestar Runner cartoon " The House That Gave Sucky Tricks , " the King of Town dresses up as the mashed potato sculpture of Devil 's Tower .

American Film Institute Lists

AFI 's 100 Years ... 100 Movies - # 64

AFI 's 100 Years ... 100 Thrills - # 31

AFI 's 100 Years of Film Scores - Nominated

AFI 's 100 Years ... 100 Cheers - # 58

AFI 's 100 Years ... 100 Movies ( 10th Anniversary Edition ) - Nominated

AFI 's 10 Top 10 - Nominated Science Fiction Film