

= Aliens (film) =

Aliens is a 1986 American military science fiction action horror film written and directed by James Cameron , produced by his then @-@ wife Gale Anne Hurd , and starring Sigourney Weaver , Carrie Henn , Michael Biehn , Paul Reiser , Lance Henriksen , William Hope , and Bill Paxton . It is the sequel to the 1979 film Alien and the second installment in the Alien franchise . The film follows Weaver 's character Ellen Ripley as she returns to the planet where her crew encountered the hostile Alien creature , this time accompanied by a unit of space marines .

Gordon Carroll , David Giler and Walter Hill of Brandywine Productions , who produced the first film and the later sequels , were executive producers of Aliens . They were interested in a follow @-@ up to Alien as soon as its 1979 release , but the new management at 20th Century Fox postponed those plans until 1983 . That year Brandywine picked Cameron to write after reading his script for The Terminator ; when that film became a hit in 1984 , Fox greenlit Aliens with Cameron as director and a budget of approximately \$ 18 million . The script was written with a war film tone influenced by the Vietnam War to contrast the horror motifs of the original Alien . It was filmed in England at Pinewood Studios and at a decommissioned power plant in Acton , London .

Aliens grossed \$ 180 million worldwide . It was nominated for seven Academy Awards , including a Best Actress nomination for Sigourney Weaver , winning both Sound Effects Editing and Visual Effects (that latter delivered to special effects supervisor John Richardson) . It won eight Saturn Awards , including Best Science Fiction Film , Best Actress for Weaver and Best Direction and Best Writing for Cameron . Aliens is considered one of the best films in its genre .

= = Plot = =

Ellen Ripley (Sigourney Weaver) is rescued after drifting through space in stasis for 57 years . She is debriefed by her employers at the Weyland @-@ Yutani Corporation over the destruction of her ship , the Nostromo ; they are skeptical of her claims that an Alien killed the ship 's crew and forced her to destroy the ship .

Zeta Reticuli , the exomoon LV @-@ 426 , where the USSCSS Nostromo encountered the alien eggs , is now home to the terraforming colony Hadleys [sic] Hope . When contact is lost with Hadleys Hope , Weyland @-@ Yutani representative Carter Burke (Paul Reiser) and Colonial Marine Lieutenant Gorman (William Hope) ask Ripley to accompany Burke and a Colonial Marine unit to investigate the disturbance . Traumatized by her encounter with the Alien , Ripley initially refuses , but she relents after experiencing recurring nightmares about the creature ; she makes Burke promise to destroy , and not capture , the Aliens . Aboard the spaceship USS Sulaco , she is introduced to the Colonial Marines and the android Bishop , toward whom Ripley is initially hostile following her experience with the traitorous android Ash aboard the Nostromo .

A dropship delivers the expedition to the surface of LV @-@ 426 , where they find the colony deserted . Inside , they find makeshift barricades and signs of a struggle , but no bodies ; two live facehuggers in containment tanks in the medical lab ; and a survivor , a traumatized young girl nicknamed Newt who used the ventilation system to evade capture or death . The crew uses the colony 's computer to locate the colonists grouped beneath the fusion powered atmosphere processing station . They head to the location , descending into corridors covered in Alien secretions .

At the center of the station , the marines find the colonists cocooned , serving as incubators for the Aliens ' offspring . When the marines kill a newborn Alien , the Aliens are roused and ambush the marines , killing and capturing several . When the inexperienced Gorman panics , Ripley takes control of their vehicle and rams it through the nest to rescue marines Hicks , Hudson , and Vasquez . Hicks orders the dropship to recover the survivors , but a stowaway Alien kills the pilots , causing it to crash . Ripley , Newt , Burke and the remaining marines barricade themselves inside the colony .

Ripley discovers that Burke deliberately sent the colonists to investigate the derelict spaceship where the Nostromo crew first encountered the Alien eggs , believing he could become wealthy by recovering Alien specimens for use as biological weapons . She threatens to expose him , but

Bishop informs the group of a greater danger : the power plant was damaged during the battle , and will soon detonate with the force of a 40 @-@ megaton thermonuclear weapon . He volunteers to crawl through several hundred meters of piping conduits to reach the colony 's transmitter and remotely pilot the Sulaco 's remaining dropship to the surface .

Ripley and Newt fall asleep in the medical laboratory , awakening to find themselves locked in the room with the two facehuggers , which have been released from their tanks . Ripley triggers a fire alarm to alert the marines , who rescue them and kill the creatures . Ripley accuses Burke of releasing the facehuggers so that they would impregnate her and Newt , allowing him to smuggle the Alien embryos past Earth 's quarantine , and of planning to kill the rest of the marines in hypersleep during the return trip so that no one could contradict his version of events . Before the marines can kill Burke , the electricity is cut and Aliens assault through the ceiling . Hudson , Burke , Vasquez and Gorman are all killed and Newt is captured .

Ripley and an injured Hicks reach Bishop in the second dropship , but Ripley refuses to abandon Newt . She hastily assembles a weapon and rescues Newt from the hive in the processing station , where the two encounter the Alien queen in her egg chamber . Ripley destroys the eggs , enraging the queen , who tears free from her ovipositor . Pursued by the queen , Ripley and Newt rendezvous with Bishop and Hicks on the dropship . All four escape moments before the colony is consumed by the nuclear blast .

On the Sulaco , Ripley and Bishop 's relief at their escape is interrupted when the Alien queen , stowed away on the dropship 's landing gear , tears Bishop in two . The queen advances on Newt , but Ripley clashes with her using an exosuit cargo @-@ loader and expels it through an airlock . Ripley , Newt , Hicks and the badly damaged Bishop enter hypersleep for the return to Earth .

= = Development = =

= = = Conception = = =

David Giler declared that back in 1979 Brandywine Productions were intent on " immediately making a sequel " to Alien , having the full support of 20th Century Fox president Alan Ladd , Jr .. However , that year Ladd left amidst Fox 's transition to new owners Marc Rich and Marvin Davis , and the new studio management had no interest in the sequel . Giler accused new president Norman Levy of being the one that held back the film 's production ; Levy would later declare that " It was a movie I wanted to make , " but he felt another Alien would prove too costly . In the meantime , Giler and partners Walter Hill and Gordon Carroll sued Fox regarding the disbursement of the Alien profits . By the time the lawsuit was settled , in 1983 , Fox had new executives that got interested in continuing Alien . Giler pitched the project to one of the executives as a cross between Hill 's Southern Comfort and The Magnificent Seven .

While the producers and development executive Larry Wilson sought a writer for Alien II , Wilson came across James Cameron 's screenplay for The Terminator , and passed the script to Giler feeling Cameron was apt for the job . Giler then approached Cameron , who was completing pre @-@ production of The Terminator . A fan of the original Alien , Cameron was interested in crafting a sequel and entered a self @-@ imposed seclusion to brainstorm a concept for Alien II . After four days Cameron produced an initial 45 @-@ page treatment , although the Fox management put the film on hiatus , as some disliked the pitch and they felt that Alien had not generated enough profit to warrant a sequel . A scheduling conflict with actor Arnold Schwarzenegger caused filming of The Terminator to be delayed by nine months (as Schwarzenegger was filming Conan the Destroyer) , allowing Cameron additional time to write a script for Aliens . While filming The Terminator , Cameron wrote 90 pages for Aliens , and although the script was not finished , Fox 's new president Larry Gordon was impressed and told him that if The Terminator was a success , he would be able to direct Aliens . Cameron even declared that he spent production of The Terminator thinking on which elements of that film could " make a good dry run " for the Alien sequel .

Following the success of The Terminator , Cameron and producing partner Gale Anne Hurd were

given approval to direct and produce the sequel to Alien , scheduled for a 1986 release . Cameron was enticed by the opportunity to create a new world and opted not to follow the same formula as Alien , but to create a worthy combat sequel focusing " more on terror , less on horror " . Sigourney Weaver , who played Ripley in Alien , had doubts about the project , but after meeting Cameron she expressed interest in revisiting her character . 20th Century Fox , however , refused to sign a contract with Weaver over a payment dispute and asked Cameron to write a story excluding Ripley . He refused on the grounds that Fox had indicated that Weaver had signed on when he began writing the script . With Cameron 's persistence , Fox signed the contract and Weaver obtained a salary of \$ 1 million , a sum 30 times what she was paid for the first film (and equivalent to \$ 2 @, @ 200 @, @ 000 in present @-@ day terms) . Weaver nicknamed her role in the Alien sequel " Rambolina " , referring to John Rambo of the Rambo series , and stated that she approached the role as akin to the titular role in Henry V or women warriors in Chinese classical literature .

Cameron drew inspiration for the Aliens story from the Vietnam War , a situation in which a technologically superior force was mired in a hostile foreign environment : " Their training and technology are inappropriate for the specifics , and that can be seen as analogous to the inability of superior American firepower to conquer the unseen enemy in Vietnam : a lot of firepower and very little wisdom , and it didn 't work . " The attitude of the space marines was influenced by the Vietnam War ; they are portrayed as cocky and confident of their inevitable victory , but when they find themselves facing a less technologically advanced but more determined enemy , the outcome is not what they expect . Cameron listed Robert A. Heinlein 's novel Starship Troopers as a major influence that led to the incorporation of various themes and phrases , such as the terms " the drop " and " bug hunt " , as well as the cargo @-@ loader exoskeleton .

= = = Casting = = =

Cameron opted to hire actors who had , or could imitate , American accents . After over 3 @, @ 000 individuals in the United Kingdom were unsuccessfully auditioned , American actors were chosen instead , including three who had previously worked with Cameron on The Terminator ; Lance Henriksen , Bill Paxton , and Michael Biehn . Actors who played Marines were asked to read Starship Troopers and undergo military training , which included running , lifting weights , learning salutes , marches , deployments , and maneuvers , for two weeks . Cameron wanted the Marines to train together so that they would form bonds that would show on @-@ screen . Sigourney Weaver , William Hope , and Paul Reiser were absent from training because of other obligations , but Cameron felt that this suited their characters as " outsiders " in the film .

Main cast :

Sigourney Weaver as Ellen Ripley :

A former warrant officer , and the sole survivor of an Alien attack on her ship , the Nostromo . Weaver reprised her role from Alien . She received a Saturn Award for best actress for her performance and was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Actress , her first Academy Award nomination .

Michael Biehn as Corporal Dwayne Hicks :

One of the Colonial Marines ' squad leaders ; he was hastily cast a week after filming had commenced , and thus was not present for the military training that the other actors playing marines went through James Remar was originally cast as Hicks but left the project over creative differences with Cameron . In an interview on episode # 128 of the Sidebar podcast , Remar stated that he was replaced due to being fired after he was busted due to the possession of drugs .

Paul Reiser as Carter J. Burke :

A representative from the Weyland @-@ Yutani Corporation , sent to investigate LV @-@ 426 .

Lance Henriksen as Bishop :

An android serving as the executive officer aboard the Sulaco .

Carrie Henn as Rebecca " Newt " Jorden :

A young girl , who is the only survivor of the colony on LV @-@ 426 . According to the casting director , Newt was the most difficult role to cast : Schoolchildren were auditioned , but many of

them had acted in commercials and were accustomed to smiling after saying their lines . Henn was chosen out of 500 children for the role , although she had no previous acting experience . She received a Saturn Award for Best Performance by a Younger Actor , but chose not to pursue an acting career , and became a teacher .

Bill Paxton as Private Hudson :

The Marine team 's technician . He received a Saturn Award for best supporting actor .

William Hope as Lieutenant Gorman

The Marines ' inexperienced commanding officer

Ricco Ross as Private Frost :

A member of the Colonial Marines .

Al Matthews as Sergeant Apone :

One of the Marines ' commanding officers . Matthews attributed his casting to his military experience

Also featured are Jenette Goldstein as Private Vasquez (she received a Saturn Award for best supporting actress) , Mark Rolston as Private Drake , Colette Hiller as Corporal Ferro , Daniel Kash as Private Spunkmeyer , Cynthia Dale Scott as Corporal Dietrich , the Marines ' corpsman , Tip Tipping as Private Crowe , and Trevor Steedman as Private Wierzbowski . Paul Maxwell portrays Van Leuwen , the head of the review board that revokes Ripley 's flight license , and Carl Toop portrays the Aliens and Alien Queen .

= = = Filming = = =

Aliens was filmed over ten months on a budget of \$ 18 million at Pinewood Studios in England . Cameron , bound by a low budget and a deadline , found it difficult to adjust to what Paxton called the " really indentured " working practices of the British crew , such as the tea breaks that brought production to a halt . The crew were admirers of Ridley Scott , and many of them believed Cameron was too young and inexperienced to direct , despite Cameron 's attempts to show them his previous film , The Terminator , which had not yet been released in the UK . They mocked producer Gale Anne Hurd , insisting that she was only receiving the producer credit because she was married to Cameron . Cameron clashed with the original director of photography , Dick Bush , when Bush started production saying the schedule couldn 't be met , and when he insisted on lighting the Alien nest set brightly ; Cameron insisted on a dark , foreboding nest , relying on the lights from the Marines ' armor . After Bush was fired , the crew walked out . Hurd managed to coax the team back to work and Adrian Biddle was hired as Bush 's replacement .

Some scenes of the Alien nest were shot at the decommissioned Acton Lane Power Station in Acton , London . The crew thought it was a perfect place to film because of its grilled walkways and numerous corridors , but had to spend money to remove asbestos from the station . The Atmosphere Processor set was not dismantled after filming , and was reused in 1989 as the Axis Chemicals set for Batman (1989) .

= = = Music = = =

Music composer James Horner felt he was not given enough time to create a musical score . Horner arrived in England and expected the film to be " locked " so he could write the score in six weeks , which he thought was a sufficient amount of time . Horner , however , discovered that filming and editing were still taking place , and he was unable to view the film . He visited the sets and editing rooms for three weeks and found that editor Ray Lovejoy was barely keeping up with the workload for reasons of time restrictions . Horner believed Cameron was preoccupied with sound effects , citing that Cameron spent two days with the sound engineer creating the sounds for the pulse rifles . He also complained that he was given an outdated recording studio ; the score was recorded with the London Symphony Orchestra at Abbey Road Studios , a 30 @-@ year @-@ old studio that was barely able to patch in synthesizers or use the electronic equipment that Horner required .

Six weeks from theatrical release , no dubbing had taken place and the score had not been written , as Horner was unable to view the completed film . The final cue for the scene in which Ripley battles the Alien queen was written overnight . Cameron completely reworked the scene , leaving Horner to rewrite the music . As Gale Hurd did not have much music production experience , she and Cameron denied Horner 's request to push the film back four weeks so he could finish the score . Horner felt that , given more time , he could get the score to 100 % of his satisfaction , rather than the 80 % he estimated he had been able to achieve . The score was recorded in roughly four days . Despite his troubles , Horner received an Academy Award nomination (his first) for Best Original Score .

Horner stated that tensions between himself and Cameron were so high during post @-@ production that he assumed they would never work together again . Horner believed that Cameron 's film schedules were too short and stressful . The two parted ways until 1997 when Cameron , impressed with Horner 's score for Braveheart , asked him to compose the score for Titanic .

= = Design = =

Early concept art was created by Syd Mead , who had previously worked on Blade Runner , 2010 and Tron . One of the original designs for the spaceship Sulaco was spherical , but it was redesigned as the ship would be out of frame due to the film 's aspect ratio . Cameron showed Mead his own concept art and the final result was described as " rocket gun that carries stuff " . Concept artists were asked to incorporate subliminal acknowledgments to the Vietnam War , which included designing the dropship as a combination of a F @-@ 4 Phantom II and AH @-@ 1 Cobra .

British Airways was re @-@ equipping several of its aircraft tug tractors , and the crew managed to purchase a 635 hp Hunslet ATT 77 tug to use as the armored personnel carrier . It initially weighed 70 short tons (64 @,@ 000 kg) , and although the crew removed 35 short tons (32 @,@ 000 kg) of lead ballast , the power station floor had to be reinforced to support the weight . The crew used many " junk " items in the set designs , such as Ripley 's toilet , which came from a Boeing 707 . Lockers , helicopter engines , and vending machines were used as set elements in the opening hypersleep scene . Production designer Peter Lamont was asked to reduce the cost of several scenes , including the not @-@ yet @-@ filmed space marine hypersleep sequence . Gale Hurd wanted to cut the scene altogether , but Lamont and Cameron felt it was important to the sequence of the film . To save on cost , only four hypersleep chambers were created and a mirror was used to create the illusion that there were twelve in the scene . Instead of using hydraulics , the chambers were opened and closed by wires operated by puppeteers .

Weapons used by the space marines were based on real , fully functional weapons . British armorers used guns they found to be the most reliable when firing blanks and those which looked futuristic . The ' pulse rifles ' were created from a Thompson SMG , with an attached forend of a Franchi SPAS @-@ 12 shotgun and a Remington 12 Gauge Model 870P receiver with barrel . The ' smart guns ' carried by Vasquez and Drake were based on the German MG @-@ 42 machine gun and were maneuvered with Steadicam @-@ like harnesses created using old motorcycle parts . The crew found flamethrowers the most difficult weapon to create and use , as they were the heaviest and most dangerous .

Aside from the Alien Queen , designed by Cameron himself , the Aliens still took inspiration off H. R. Giger 's designs for the original . The only change was removing the translucent dome that gave the creature 's head its sleek shape in Alien , exposing the ridged , spined cranium beneath . Cameron felt the dome was too fragile for the practical effects , and also felt that the cranium design was more visually interesting without it .

= = = Visual effects = = =

Brothers Robert and Dennis Skotak were hired to supervise the visual effects , having previously worked with Cameron on several Roger Corman movies . Two stages were used to construct the colony on LV @-@ 426 , using miniature models that were on average six feet tall and three feet

wide . Filming the miniatures was difficult because of the weather ; the wind would blow over the props , although it proved helpful to give the effect of weather on the planet . Cameron used these miniatures and several effects to make scenes look larger than they really were , including rear projection , mirrors , beam splitters , camera splits and foreground miniatures . Due to budget limits , Cameron said he had to pay for the robotic arm used to cut into Ripley 's shuttle in the opening scene . Practical effects supervisor John Richardson (who won a special effects Oscar for his part in the film) declared his biggest challenge was creating the forklift Power Loader exoskeletons , which required only three months of work and had Cameron complaining about visual details during construction . The model could not stand on its own , requiring either wires dangling from the shoulders or a pole through the back attached to a crane . While Sigourney Weaver was inside the power loader model , a stunt man standing behind it would move the arms and legs .

The Alien suits were made more flexible and durable than the ones used in *Alien* , to expand on the creatures ' movements and allow them to crawl and jump . Dancers , gymnasts , and stunt men were hired to portray the Aliens . Various 8 feet (2 @. @ 4 m) tall mannequins were also created to make Aliens that stood in inhuman poses , and could have their bodies exploded to simulate gunshot wounds . Stan Winston 's team created fully articulated Facehuggers that could move their fingers ; these were moved by wires hidden on the scenery or the actors ' clothing . The one that walked towards Ripley had a mechanism akin to a pull toy , with pulleys that moved the fingers , and its jump combined three models shot separately : the walking Facehugger , a stationary model dangling on a table leg , and another model being pulled towards the camera .

Scenes involving the Alien queen were the most difficult to film , according to production staff . A life @-@ sized mock @-@ up was created by Stan Winston 's company in the United States to see how it would operate . Once the testing was complete , the crew working on the queen flew to England and began work creating the final version . Standing at 14 feet (4 @. @ 3 m) tall , it was operated using a mixture of puppeteers , control rods , hydraulics , cables , and a crane above to support it . Two puppeteers were inside the suit operating its arms , and sixteen were required to move it . All sequences involving the full size queen were filmed in @-@ camera with no post @-@ production manipulation . Additionally , a miniature alien queen was used for certain shots .

= = Release = =

= = = Box office = = =

Eagerly anticipated by fans following the success of *Alien* , *Aliens* was released in North America on July 18 , 1986 , and August 29 in the United Kingdom . In North America , the film opened in 1 @, @ 437 theaters with an average opening gross of \$ 6 @, @ 995 and a weekend gross of \$ 10 @, @ 052 @, @ 042 . It was number one at the North American box office for four consecutive weeks , grossing \$ 85 @. @ 1 million . *Aliens* was the seventh highest @-@ grossing film of 1986 in North America . The film 's worldwide total gross has been stated as high as \$ 180 million , making *Aliens* one of the highest grossing R @-@ rated films at the time .

= = = Critical reception = = =

Aliens recieved universal critical acclaim . Test and pre @-@ screenings were unable to take place for *Aliens* due to the film not being completed until its week of release . Once it was released in cinemas , critical reaction was generally positive to very positive . Critic Roger Ebert gave the film 3 @. @ 5 stars out of 4 and called it " painfully and unremittingly intense " and a " superb example of filmmaking craft . " He also stated " when I walked out of the theater , there were knots in my stomach from the film 's roller @-@ coaster ride of violence . " Walter Goodman of The New York Times said it was a " flaming , flashing , crashing , crackling blow- ' em @-@ up show that keeps you popping from your seat despite your better instincts and the basically conventional scare tactics . " Time magazine featured the film on the cover of its July 28 , 1986 , issue , calling it the " summer

's scariest movie ". Time reviewer Richard Schickel declared the film " a sequel that exceeds its predecessor in the reach of its appeal while giving Weaver new emotional dimensions to explore . " The selection of Aliens for a Time cover was attributed to the successful reception of the film , as well as its novel example of a science fiction action heroine . Echoing Time 's assessment , Dave Kehr of The Chicago Reader called the film " one sequel that surpasses the original . " Gene Siskel gave the film a negative review , describing Aliens as " one extremely violent , protracted attack on the senses " and that " toward the end , the film resorts to placing a young girl in jeopardy in a pathetic attempt to pander to who knows what audience . Some people have praised the technical excellence of Aliens . Well , the Eiffel Tower is technically impressive , but I wouldn 't want to watch it fall apart on people for two hours . "

Reviews of the film have remained mostly positive over the years . In a 1997 interview , Weaver stated that Aliens " made the first Alien look like a cucumber sandwich . " In a 2000 review , film critic James Berardinelli said " When it comes to the logical marriage of action , adventure , and science fiction , few films are as effective or accomplished as Aliens . " Austin Chronicle contributor Marjorie Baumgarten labeled the film in 2002 as " a non @-@ stop action fest . " In 2016 , James Charisma of Playboy ranked the film number six on a list of 15 Sequels That Are Way Better Than The Originals . Based on 48 reviews , the film holds a " Certified Fresh " rating of 98 % on Rotten Tomatoes with an average critic score of 8 @. @ 8 out of 10 . It also holds a score of 87 out of 100 (" universal acclaim ") on the other major review aggregator , Metacritic . Aliens was also featured in Empire Magazine 's 500 Greatest films of All Time poll at number 30 , and in Empire 's recent 301 Greatest Films of All Time poll at number 19 .

= = = Interpretation and analysis = = =

Philosopher Stephen Mulhall has remarked that the four Alien films represent an artistic rendering of the difficulties faced by the woman 's " voice " to have itself heard in a masculinist society , as Ripley continually encounters males who try to silence her and to force her to submit to their desires . Mulhall sees this depicted in several events in Aliens , particularly the inquest scene in which Ripley 's explanation for the deaths and destruction of the Nostromo , as well as her attempts to warn the board members of the Alien danger , are met with officious disdain . However , Mulhall believes that Ripley 's relationship with Hicks illustrates that Aliens " is devoted ... to the possibility of modes of masculinity that seek not to stifle but rather to accommodate the female voice , and modes of femininity that can acknowledge and incorporate something more or other of masculinity than our worst nightmares of it . "

Several movie academics , including Barbara Creed , have remarked on the color and lighting symbolism in the Alien franchise , which offsets white , strongly lit environments (spaceships , corporate offices) against darker , dirtier , " corrupted " settings (derelict alien ship , abandoned industrial facilities) . These black touches contrast or even attempt to take over the purity of the white elements . Others , such as Kile M. Ortigo of Emory University , agree with this interpretation and point to the Sulaco with its " sterilized , white interior " as representing this element in the second film of the franchise .

While some claim that the shape of the Sulaco was based on a submarine , the design has most often been described as a " gun in space " resembling the rifles used in the movie . Author Roz Kaveney called the opening shot of the ship traveling through space " fetishistic " and " shark @-@ like " , " an image of brutal strength and ingenious efficiency " ? while the militarized interior of the Sulaco (designed by Ron Cobb) is contrasted to the organic interior of the Nostromo in the first movie (also designed by Cobb) . David McIntee noted the homage the scene pays to the opening tour through the Nostromo in Alien .

The android character Bishop has been the subject of literary and philosophical analysis as a high @-@ profile fictional android conforming to science fiction author Isaac Asimov 's Three Laws of Robotics and as a model of a compliant , potentially self @-@ aware machine . His portrayal has been studied by writers for the University of Texas Press for its implications relating to how humans deal with the presence of an " Other " , as Ripley treats them with fear and suspicion after the

android Ash tried to kill her in the original Alien movie , and a form of " hi @-@ tech racism and android apartheid " is present throughout the series . This is seen as part of a larger trend of technophobia in films prior to the 1990s , with Bishop 's role being particularly significant as he proves his worth at the end of the film , thus confounding Ripley 's expectations .

= = = Accolades = = =

Aliens was nominated for seven Academy Awards including Best Music , Best Sound , Best Film Editing , and Best Art Direction / Set Decoration . It won two awards for Sound Effects Editing and Visual Effects . Sigourney Weaver received her first Academy Award nomination for Best Actress , and although she did not win , it was considered a landmark nomination for an actress to be considered for a science fiction / horror film , a genre which was given little recognition by AMPAS in 1986 .

Aliens received four BAFTA award nominations and won in the category of Visual Effects . It won eight Saturn Awards in the film categories of actress (Sigourney Weaver) , supporting actor (Bill Paxton) , supporting actress (Jenette Goldstein) , performance by a younger actor (Carrie Henn) , direction (James Cameron) , writing (James Cameron) , special effects (Stan Winston and the L.A. Effects Group) , and science fiction film .

Time magazine named Aliens in their Best of ' 86 list calling it a " technically awesome blend of the horror , sci @-@ fi and service @-@ comedy genres . " In 2007 , Entertainment Weekly named Aliens as the second @-@ best action movie of all time , behind Die Hard . In a Rotten Tomatoes analysis of the top 100 science fiction films , Aliens ranks tenth among the best @-@ reviewed films of the genre . In 2004 , Aliens was ranked 35th on Bravo 's " 100 Scariest Movie Moments " for the scene in which Ripley and Newt are attacked by facehuggers ; the original Alien was ranked second for the chestburster scene . IGN ranked it third in its " Top 25 Action Films of All @-@ Time " , stating that " there won 't be an Alien movie as scary ? or exciting ? as this one made ever again . " Empire voted it the ' Greatest Film Sequel Of All Time ' .

= = = Home media = = =

Aliens was first released on VHS in 1987 , finishing as the tenth best @-@ selling title of the year . A " Special Edition " of Aliens was released in 1992 on laserdisc and VHS that restored seventeen minutes of deleted footage . These additions include a segment showing Newt 's family first encountering the derelict spacecraft on LV @-@ 426 , Ripley learning that her daughter died during the years she was in hypersleep , a scene in the operations building in which the Marines use sentry guns against the Aliens , and several extended dialogue scenes between Ripley and the Marines . These scenes had been deleted from the original theatrical release as 20th Century Fox representatives thought the film was showing " too much nothing " and spent an unnecessary amount of time building suspense .

Most of the Special Edition 's footage was first seen when the film made its broadcast television debut on CBS in 1989 , but two additional sequences concerning Burke 's transmission to the colony about the derelict , and the Jorden family 's subsequent discovery of the same , were added to the initial Laserdisc release . According to Cameron , the visual effects for the scene were incomplete , so he went back to the Skotak brothers and had them finish the sequences . All currently available versions of the Special Edition contain these scenes .

The special edition was released as part of The Alien Legacy 20th Anniversary Edition DVD box set in 1999 along with Alien , Alien 3 , and Alien : Resurrection . Both the theatrical version and the special edition were released again in 2003 as part of the Alien Quadrilogy DVD box set along with similar versions of Alien , Alien 3 , and Alien : Resurrection . A separate two @-@ disc " Special Collector 's Edition " DVD of Aliens was released on January 6 , 2004 , containing the same material as the two Aliens discs in the Quadrilogy set . Additional content in these versions included an audio commentary for the special edition featuring director James Cameron , producer Gale Hurd , special effects artists and crew members . The second disc included special features relating to pre @-@

production , production , and post @-@ production . The film was first made available on Blu @-@ Ray in the 2010 box set Alien Anthology , before receiving a stand @-@ alone release the following year . Fox will release the 30th anniversary Blu Ray of the movie on September 13 , 2016 .

= = Merchandise = =

= = = Video games = = =

Aliens : Colonial Marines is a first @-@ person shooter video game developed by Gearbox Software and published by Sega . The game is set in the Alien universe and takes place after the events of the third film in the franchise , Alien 3 (1992) . The game is the second Alien title that Sega has produced : the first being Aliens Infestation in 2011 . The game was released for the PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360 video game consoles and for Microsoft Windows on February 12 , 2013 . A Wii U version was being produced for release but was eventually canceled on April 5 , 2013 . It puts the player in the role of a United States Colonial Marine named Cpl. Christopher Winter . The player has access to iconic weapons from the Aliens movie such as the flamethrower , pulse rifle , smartgun , shotgun , pistol , and robotic sentry turrets and is mainly set in the Aliens world (LV @-@ 426) . Players are also able to use welding torches to seal doors and motion trackers to detect unseen enemies which also features in the Aliens movie .

= = = Toys = = =

In 2013 , NECA released the first wave of highly detailed human and alien action figures from the respective film . NECA 's Reel Toys worked directly with actors from the Alien franchise to release realistic figures based on select characters they portrayed in the films . NECA has released 7 @-@ inch figures based on characters such as Corporal Hicks , Private Hudson and Bishop . During winter 2014 , it was announced there would be multiple figures of Ripley , Sigourney Weaver ? s character from the Alien films . NECA worked directly with Weaver to develop these action figures , which are the first to feature her actual likeness .