

= Azati Prime =

" Azati Prime " is the seventieth episode of the American science fiction television series Star Trek : Enterprise , the eighteenth of season three . The episode was written by Manny Coto from a story developed by Coto , Rick Berman and Brannon Braga . It was directed by Allan Kroeker , his second of the season . The episode featured several guest actors , including those playing members of the Xindi Council , as well as Matt Winston who reprised his role of Temporal Agent Daniels for the second time this season .

Set in the 22nd century , the series follows the adventures of the first Starfleet starship Enterprise , registration NX @-@ 01 . Season three of Enterprise features an ongoing story following an attack on Earth by previously unknown aliens called the Xindi . In this episode , the crew track a Xindi superweapon down to a planet and Captain Jonathan Archer ( Scott Bakula ) seeks to destroy the weapon in a suicide attack . He is captured , and the Enterprise is seriously damaged after an attack by four Xindi vessels .

The USS Enterprise @-@ J appeared in this episode , based on designs by Doug Drexler . The ship was from 400 years in the future from the timeframe that the series is set in , and the bridge set was created mostly using green screen . John Eaves also created several designs of aquatic Xindi vessels for this episode . " Azati Prime " received Nielsen ratings of 2 @. @ 6 / 4 percent . Critical reaction was mostly positive , with praise directed at the pacing of the episode and the plotting of the overall arc .

= = Plot = =

Enterprise approaches Azati Prime where the Xindi are constructing their superweapon . Captain Archer sends Commander Tucker and Ensign Mayweather on board a Xindi shuttle they had just captured to investigate the planet . Working their way past security , they approach the weapon , which is being built underwater . Meanwhile , Archer orders Enterprise to destroy a Xindi detection facility on the planet 's moon to prevent it from signalling the ship 's presence . The shuttle returns with scans of the weapon , and Archer designates himself to pilot a suicide mission to destroy it . The crew try to talk him out of it but he is resolute .

Archer then suddenly finds himself 400 years in the future on board the USS Enterprise @-@ J , alongside Temporal Agent Daniels . They are at the battle where the Sphere Builders ( the alien species first seen in episode " Harbinger " ) are defeated , and Daniels gives Archer an initiation medal from a Xindi who had joined Starfleet as temporal evidence . Back on his Enterprise , Archer rejects the notion of a Human @-@ Xindi détente , and leaves on the shuttle . He arrives at the superweapon construction site but finds it gone , and is rapidly captured by the Xindi Commander Dolim .

The Reptilians begin to interrogate Archer , who then asks to speak to Degra , the Primate scientist from episode Stratagem . Using Daniels ' medal , Archer tries to convince Degra that the Reptilians cannot be trusted , but Dolim arrives with armed colleagues and takes the Primates away . Meanwhile , Sub @-@ Commander T 'Pol , now in command of Enterprise , displays signs of an emotional breakdown . She also decides to go on a mission , to negotiate a peace , and reacts angrily when Tucker tries to stop her . An attack from four Xindi ships follows , and as the episode concludes , Enterprise is left severely damaged .

= = Production = =

" Azati Prime " was the first episode of Enterprise to be filmed in 2004 , starting on January 5 . Filming took eight days , concluding on January 14 . The eighth day overlapped with the production of the following episode , " Damage " . The story was developed by Manny Coto alongside Rick Berman and Brannon Braga . Coto developed it into a script , his third of the series . The director of the episode was Allan Kroeker , who also directed " The Xindi " earlier in the season as well as the final episodes of both Star Trek : Deep Space Nine and Star Trek : Voyager . The episode featured

a number of guest stars , including Smallwood , Oglesby , MacDonald and Worthy who appeared in their recurring roles on the Xindi council . Winston appeared as Daniels for the second time during season three , having made his debut in season one 's " Cold Front " .

The Xindi shuttle set had been constructed for " Hatchery " , while a new set was constructed for the bridge of the Enterprise @-@ J which consisted mostly of a green screen . The future Enterprise was designed by Doug Drexler , who drew the first design only two days prior to the production meeting for the episode . The computer generated model was created in a few hours , and Drexler later said that they would have finished it differently . He imagined that the vessel was so large that there would be universities and entire parks on board , with the turbolifts replaced by short range transporters . More than one design was created , with the final version created with elements from different designs . One of the elements incorporated into the version seen on screen was a reduction in the size of the warp nacelle supports as Drexler said that he didn 't like that they had increased in size . John Eaves also created a number of designs for aquatic Xindi vessels for use in the episode , as well as a rejected design for the superweapon .

= = Reception and home media release = =

" Azati Prime " was first aired in the United States on UPN on March 3 , 2004 . It received a 2 @. @ 6 / 4 percent share among adults . This means that it was seen by 2 @. @ 6 percent of all households , and 4 percent of all of those watching television at the time of the broadcast . Enterprise was the sixth most watched program in the timeslot , behind Smallville on The WB . It was estimated that " Azati Prime " was watched by 4 @. @ 02 million viewers , which was less than recent episodes had received .

Michelle Erica Green of TrekNation compared elements of the episode to the Star Wars franchise , such as the Xindi superweapon standing in for the Death Star . She found the pacing made the episode " engrossing " and thought that the action sequences would qualify it for technical Emmy Awards . She said that the one flaw in the episode was the characterisation of Archer and T 'Pol , as she felt that some of their actions were implausible . Jamahl Epsicokhan on his website " Jammer 's Reviews " , gave " Azati Prime " a rating of three and a half out of four . He thought it was compelling and was impressed with how elements of earlier episodes were brought together , also saying that it was " possibly the most entertaining episode of Enterprise yet this season " . Film and television critic Jordan Hoffman gave the episode four out of five , saying that the Xindi storyline was reaching a peak .

The only home media release of " Azati Prime " has been as part of the season three DVD box set , released in the United States on September 27 , 2005 . The Blu @-@ ray release of Enterprise was announced in early 2013 and season three is expected to be released in January 2014 .