

Film: Lucas Returns With 'The Jedi'

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WILL Han Solo ever fly again or is he forever doomed to remain a wall decoration in the pleasure palace of Jabba the Hutt?

Does Princess Leia do her own hair or does she pay someone to make it look that way?

Who, or perhaps what, is Salacious Crumb?

When will Luke Skywalker become a true Jedi knight?

Where does Yoda do his shopping?

Will Darth Vader sacrifice his only begotten son so that evil might triumph? And, speaking of Vader, when he takes off his mask, what is underneath? James Earl Jones? David Prowse? A cantaloupe?

All but two of these questions — plus dozens more you never thought to ask — are answered in "Return of the Jedi," the concluding film in George Lucas's phenomenally popular space-fantasy trilogy that began triumphantly with "Star Wars" (1977) but slowed down a good deal with "The Empire Strikes Back" (1980).

"Return of the Jedi," written by Lawrence Kasdan and Mr. Lucas and directed by Richard Marquand, doesn't really end the trilogy as much as it brings it to a dead stop. The film, which opens today at Loews Astor Plaza and other theaters, is by far the dimmest adventure of the lot.

All of the members of the old "Star Wars" gang are back doing what they've done before, but this time with a certain evident boredom. They include Harrison Ford (Han Solo), Carrie Fisher (Princess Leia), Mark Hamill (Luke Skywalker), the voice of James Earl Jones (the voice of Darth Vader) and Alec Guinness Ben (Obi-Wan) Kenobi, who died a picture or two back but won't get off the screen).

On hand but unseen are the people who either activate or wear the costumes representing such non-human characters as C-3PO, R2-D2, Chewbacca and Yoda.

The movie also introduces a number of new animated creatures, which are



Carrie Fisher and Harrison Ford in "Return of the Jedi."

probably already in your corner toy store and will make a mint in subsidiary rights for Lucasfilm Ltd., the "Star Wars" parent company. The most attractive of these are some small, teddy-bear-like creatures called Ewoks, which serve the functions once left to friendly pygmies in old Tarzan movies.

"Return of the Jedi" contains a number of scenes that are the space-fantasy equivalent to local color scenes in travelogues. We see Ewoks dancing; Jabba the Hutt, who looks like a rubber Buddha, as he eyes Princess Leia in a harem costume; plus other assorted creatures that are so without visual character that one remembers only isolated features — teeth, saliva, fur, toes.

The film's battle scenes might have been impressive but become tiresome because it's never certain who is zapping whom with those laser beams and neutron missiles. The narrative line is virtually nonexistent, and the running time, though only slightly more than two hours, seems longer than that of "Parsifal."

For the record, there are two moments in "Return of the Jedi" that evoke legitimate smiles. One is a chase sequence in which the Ewoks whiz around a redwood forest on jet-propelled air-sleds and the other is a single line of appropriately arch dialogue: "You're a feisty little one, but you'll soon learn respect."

"Return of the Jedi," which has been rated PG ("Parental Guidance Suggested"), contains some battles that are more busy than violent and one death scene that evokes no emotional response whatsoever.

Creatures of Long Ago

RETURN OF THE JEDI, directed by Richard Marquand; screenplay by Lawrence Kasdan and George Lucas; story by Mr. Lucas; director of photography, Alan Hume; visual consultant, Ernest McNabb; edited by Sean Barton, Marcia Lucas, Duwayne Dunham; special visual effects by Richard Edlund, Dennis Muren, Ken Ralston; production designer, Norman Reynolds; costume designers, Aggie Guerard Rodgers, Nilo Rosid-Jamero; sound design by Ben Burtt; music by John Williams; mechanical effects supervision by Kit West; makeup and creature design by Phil Tippett, Stuart Freeborn; produced by Howard Kazanjian; Mr. Lucas, executive producer; Robert Watts and Jim Bloom, coproducers; released by 20th Century-Fox Pictures. At Loews Astor Plaza, Broadway at 44th Street; 34th Street Showplace, near Second Ave.; and Orpheum, Third Ave. at 86th Street. Running time: 2 hours, 13 minutes. This film is rated PG.

Luke Skywalker	Mark Hamill
Han Solo	Harrison Ford
Princess Leia	Carrie Fisher
Lando Calrissian	Billy Dee Williams
C-3PO	Anthony Daniels
Chewbacca	Peter Mayhew
Anakin Skywalker	Sebastian Shaw
Emperor	Ian McDiarmid
Yoda	Frank Oz
Darth Vader	David Prowse
Voice of Darth Vader	James Earl Jones
Ben (Obi-Wan) Kenobi	Alec Guinness
R2-D2	Kenny Baker
Moff Jerjerrod	Michael Pennington
Admiral Piett	Kenneth Colley
Bib Fortuna	Michael Carter
Wedge	Denis Lawson
Admiral Ackbar	Tim Rose
General Madine	Dermot Crowley
Mon Mothma	Caroline Blakiston
Wicket	Warwick Davis
Paploo	Kenny Baker
Boba Fett	Jeremy Bulloch
Oola	Femi Taylor
Sy Snootles	Annie Arbogast
Fat Dancer	Claire Davenport
Teebo	Jack Purvis
Logray	Mike Edmonds
Chief Chirpa	Jane Busby
Ewok Warrior	Malcolm Dixon
Ewok Warrior	Mike Cottrell
Nicki	Nicki Reade
Stardestroyer Controller No. 1	Adam Bareham
Stardestroyer Controller No. 2	Jonathan Oliver
Stardestroyer Captain No. 1	Pip Miller
Stardestroyer Captain No. 2	Tom Mannion
Jubba Puppeteers	Toby Philpott, Mike Edmonds, David Barclay
Puppeteers	Michael McCormick, Deep Roy, Simon Williamson, Hugh Spirit, Swim Lee, Michael Quinn, Richard Robinson