

**STAR  
WARS**

# MEMORIES



**STAR WARS**  
**EPISODE I**  
**THE PHANTOM MENACE**

And so they came, like children under the beguiling of the Pied Piper called George Lucas. And they came, and they came. We had seen fan lines like these before for STAR WARS, and the many blockbusters it had spawned it is wake, but certainly not in any way, shape or form like this. This was the big one-the **second coming** of STAR WARS, if you want to become quasi-religious about it. Like an unbelievable drought in the desert, there had been no STAR WARS films for sixteen years and this, now - May 1999- was the ultimate fan celebration for so many dedicated fans, not only from the US but from all around the world. **CONT'D.....**





And yet, for all their love and dedication to such pleasurable film enjoyments, they were ridiculed by non fans, they were teased and poked at and made fun of by far more buffoon-like and talent-less people, like newscasters (normally dressed up as Princess Leia- and looking terrible!!). They were treated with disdain by local law officials and the average Joe's on the streets, but ,with this love, this total love for STAR WARS, you couldn't have got more devoted fans, most on the whole resolutely normal- decent hardworking people who just wanted to celebrate the magical return of a Saga they had loved since they were children and now wanted to re-celebrate in all it's returning goodness. And let's also think about all the amazing money they made for charities across the country-the ill children that may not have seen and enjoyed the film series that was made for them if those fans hadn't done such exemplary work. As the cinema tickets poured out into the clutches of the breathless with excitement fans getting ready for the 12.01am first ever screening, and before the rancour that the film got a short time after it's worldwide general release, lets just hope that, for the original two hours and eleven minutes or so that it was on in that first amazing return, that the majority of fans at that opening, so dedicated and hoping to re-ignite an experience to match the original start to their love affair with STAR WARS, actually ended up *liking* THE PHANTOM MENACE!!



Opposite left: Darth Vader decides to join in the fun with a few neck snapping tricks. Above: the age of the STAR WARS Internet revolution has begun!! Starting May 1999, STAR WARS now owns the world and all life as we know it!!



*THE ELECTRIC FIRST NIGHT!!* The dream that many STAR WARS fans thought would never become a reality finally *has*. THE PHANTOM MENACE-the most eagerly anticipated film of all time-and the return of Lucas to the directors chair-is met with joyous exaltation by fans. The sold out seating of the Mann's Chinese Theatre (above) and at Northpoint, San Francisco soon gives way to fans young and old, all breathless with anticipation at what new excitement Lucas and co. brings, as the familiar TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX and LUCASFILM logos appear on the projector screen. This is the dawn of a new era.





Despite mixed fortunes critically, STAR WARS fans flocked to the Westwood Cinema in Los Angeles, on 16th May 1999, for the US premiere of EPISODE ONE, where all the main American stars of the film came out in *Force*, with lots of additional celebrity support, to celebrate the return of everyone's favourite space fantasy saga.



Above: George Lucas is swamped by the media frenzy. Above top and opposite left: Jake Lloyd dresses to impress. Opposite far left: Natalie Portman dazzles. Above far left top: Liam Neeson and Natalie. Above far top left middle: Mr and Mrs Samuel L. Jackson sporting some magnificent EPISODE ONE ware.