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Star Wars: The Original Radio Drama



Synopsis

When this series was first broadcast on National Public Radio in 1981, it generated the largest response in the network's history: 50,000 letters and phone calls in a single week, an audience of 750,000 per episode, and a subsequent 40-percent jump in NPR listenership. This landmark production, perhaps the most ambitious radio project ever attempted, began when Star Wars creator George Lucas donated the story rights to an NPR affiliate. Writer Brian Daley adapted the film's highly visual script to the special demands and unique possibilities of radio, creating a more richly textured tale with greater emphasis on character development. Director John Madden guided a splendid cast-including Mark Hamill and Anthony Daniels, reprising their film roles as Luke Skywalker and the persnickety robot See Threepio-through an intense 10-day dialogue recording session. Then came months of painstaking work for virtuoso sound engineer Tom Voegeli, whose brilliant blending of the actors' voices, the music, and hundreds of sound effects takes this intergalactic adventure into a realm of imagination that is beyond the reach of cinema.

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Customer Reviews

At first glance, it seems difficult to imagine Star Wars presented as a radio serial. Wouldn't the story be weakened by the loss of visuals? This remarkable production, broadcast on National Public Radio in 1981, proves that sounds convey pictures quite well on their own. John Williams's original score and sound effects from the film add drama and depth to the story, and the characters are brought to life by a talented cast including Mark Hamill and Anthony Daniels reprising their roles as Luke Skywalker and C-3PO. Though Brock Peters's Darth Vader is a bit of a disappointment

(James Earl Jones left some pretty big boots to fill), Perry King does a fine turn as Han Solo, and Ann Sachs makes a believable Princess Leia. The story itself has been greatly expanded, and listeners are treated to several new scenes, including conversations between Princess Leia and her father on Alderaan and Biggs Darklighter's confession to Luke that he had decided to join the Rebel Alliance after leaving the Imperial Space Academy. Presented in 13 episodes, this excellent radio drama is enjoyable even for those whom audiobooks usually leave cold. As series director John Madden noted during the production, "You may think you've seen the movie; wait till you hear it." (Running time: 6 hours, 6 cassettes) --C.B. Delaney --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

HighBridge Co. has issued the complete National Public Radio production of Star Wars: The Radio Drama. It consists of 13 half-hour episodes. There is a full cast, including movie performers Mark Hamill (Luke) and Anthony Daniels (C3PO). There also is music and sound effects. It clearly demonstrates that good radio drama is not dead. The series covers the same ground as the original movie; but because of the added length, there are details the movie could hope to include. In fact, it explains some things (such as individual character's motivations) that were best hinted at...in the movie. -- Indianapolis Star, June 9, 1993

More than just a radio retelling of the movie, this radio drama goes into more depth, with additional scenes that expand the story and the characters in a way that is true to the movie. Many of the scenes in the radio drama are drawn from the novelization, or may have even been filmed but later edited out of the 1977 film. The expanded scenes are not jarring or superfluous, nor are they intrusive rewrites like the "remastered" movies. The performances are strong and the production avoids the melodrama many associate with the radio shows of old. If you are a Star Wars fan, this is definitely worth a listen as an extension of the story we love. And Greedo doesn't get off a shot...

I had fond memories of this from back when it was first on, but had forgotten just how much stuff had been added in to flesh out the story when it was converted to a radio play. Although non-canon, it's a great story, with solid production values. Most of the voices are close enough to work well, although you just can't replace James Earl Jones. Having two of the original voices participate was a nice plus, especially since they were Mark Hamill and Anthony Daniels. If you enjoy radio plays and Star Wars, you should really consider checking this out.

This version of the original Star Wars movie had actually filled a lot of interesting little tidbits and added depth to the movie. The voice actors (some were the original actors) did very well (though it is jarring at first to hear someone different from the movie). I felt it really caught that original feeling of watching the movie which may be in part to the musical score as well. Overall I was pleasantly surprised.

Despite having seen the movie and read the book, this was definitely worth listening to.

I heard about these plays and bought "A New Hope" to start with. I was really impressed by all the extended and added scenes. I really enjoyed listening to them while I work on my models. Many of the characters are played by the same people from the movies, but all the voice players are really good. Because I have of course seen the movies, I don't feel it was necessary to have every scene described in great detail. The plays do focus mainly on dialogue, with a narrator now and then setting the scene, or the characters describing what they see or what they've done. I think it would be rather strange to listen to someone describe what a space battle looks like, it's a radio play, not a novel. I highly recommend these discs.

the 1st volume, a new hope is fully 2x the story of the movie with huge amounts of unexpected back story...the 2nd has quite a bit extra too...3rd not so much...it is an awesome production, Mark Hamill, Anthony Daniels (C3PO) and Billy Dee Williams are really in the cast and the other stand ins are top rank and you won't mind at all (well, after the initial shock if you're a middle age dude that saw the movies 30 times as a kid)

I listened to this originally when it aired on public radio back in the '70's because I loved the movie so much. We didn't have VCR's back then. *C* So it was fantastic to relive the movie experience and the enhancements they made for radio. I will be forever grateful to George Lucas for allowing them to do this and for the great cast. Mark Hamill and Anthony Daniels were gracious enough to do their movie roles and the other cast members did an awesome job.

Arrived in great condition. Recording quality is great. Haven't finished it yet, but it sounds great so far. It is great to hear this series again, especially with all the extra information and dialogue that it is filling in. Sound effects and music is great, just like the movies. I do wish there was a little more narration to help set the scene at certain points, and some way of telling or translating what an alien

is saying when they speak an alien language. Otherwise, it's great. I look forward to buying and listening to the rest of the series. Thanks folks!

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