

BANTHA TRACKS

JOURNAL OF THE OFFICIAL STAR WARS/LUCASFILM FAN CLUB

The Ewok Movie



Terry Chostner

Tom Smith studied film at Northwestern University and in France. After a stint in the Air Force he began producing and directing educational films. Eventually, he formed his own company and, primarily as a director, produced documentaries. By 1968 he had relocated to Los Angeles. One of the last films his company produced was a film about a journey through our solar system, which introduced him to the world of special effects. After the production on THE SOLAR SYSTEM was finished Tom went to work for Churchill Films and it was there that he received the call that resulted in his being hired as General Manager of ILM.

BT: How would you describe your role as General Manager at ILM?

TS: As General Manager it was my responsibility to make sure that ILM had work. I would select the projects that we would do and if necessary go down to Los Angeles and try to persuade people to come to us. When a new project came in I would be involved in how much work it was going to be, how much it would cost, and I would assign who would do what, and get

Tom Smith



which projects. It was very much like being a film producer, only we were producing visual effects for movies instead of producing a whole movie. Because I've worked for a long time in films I have a good general skills background: I can run a camera, edit film, etc., not well enough to make those individual things my career, but well enough to know what problems people are likely to confront.

I came to ILM during the production of *THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK* and became General Manager right after that. While I was General Manager, ILM worked on *DRAGONSLAYER*, *RAIDERS*, *ET*, *POLTERGEIST*, *STAR TREK II*, *JEDI*, *INDIANA JONES*, the third *STAR TREK* (my second), and *NEVERENDING STORY*.

During production of *RETURN OF THE JEDI* I told George Lucas I wanted to get out of special effects, that it had been really interesting for four and one-half years but I preferred to make

films. When I resigned as head of ILM George offered me the job of producer on this film, *THE EWOK MOVIE*.

BT: What can you tell us about THE EWOK MOVIE?

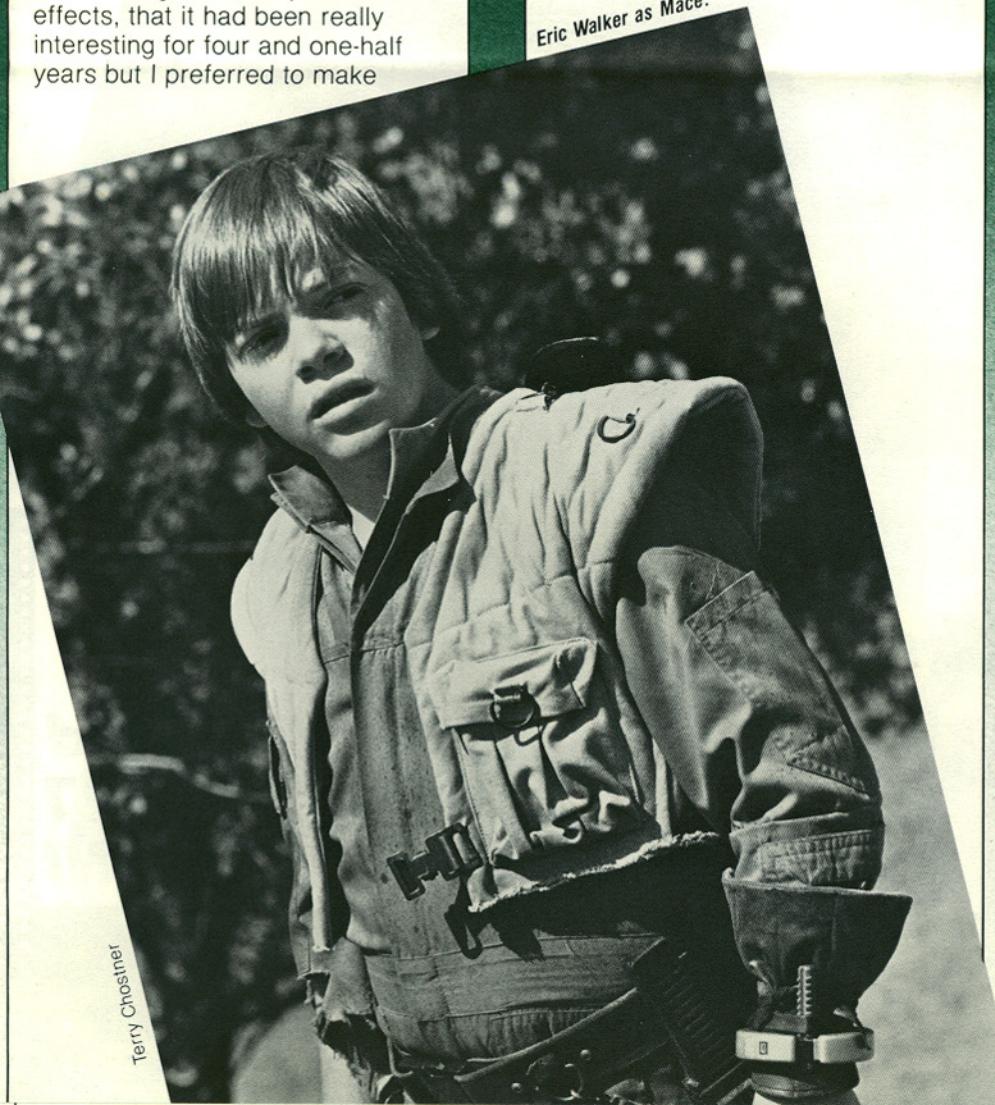
TS: *THE EWOK MOVIE* is a two-hour-long film made primarily for television. It will be shown in theaters outside of the United States. It will run on ABC television sometime between Thanksgiving and Christmas, although a date has not been pinpointed yet.

The film is a Lucasfilm/Korty Films production. John Korty is providing the actors, the directing staff, himself, and the extras. Lucasfilm is providing the story, production staff and script. George

Lucas is the executive producer; John Korty the director; I am the producer; Joe Johnston the production designer; John C. Nutt the editor. The music will be based on John Williams' music but he is unavailable to direct it. George Lucas wrote the story and Bob Carrau wrote the script based on George's story.

We began working on it in April and here it is June and we are filming—a very fast production schedule. We have the advantage of having talented people available who have worked together before. We had our choice of the best people from ILM, who came on this project and worked in an area they hadn't worked in very much before—a total film production. There has been a tremendous amount of enthusiasm on the part of these people. We're all having fun making a complete movie, rather than just the special effects. Joe Johnston, who has been attending USC and was the art director at ILM for many years, is the production designer. He is a genius. In anything concerning *STAR WARS* or the work of George

Eric Walker as Mace.



Terry Chosmer





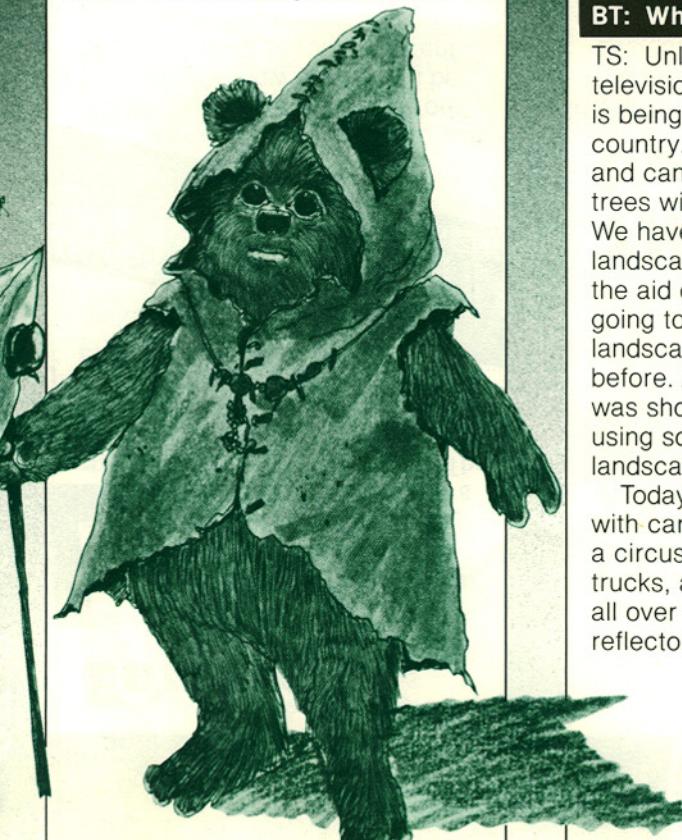
Lucas I think he knows more about the look of things than any other human being. Joe wrote a book on the Ewoks, so he's been thinking a lot about them. We're also profiting from the fact that Ewoks are already established, and we have their costumes. There are very few television films that come close to the production value that there will be in this movie.

BT: Does it take place after the events in JEDI?

TS: We don't know. It isn't specified. The Ewoks have been on the moon of Endor for a long time before JEDI, before the Empire came along and caused trouble. This may take place after JEDI because a little Ewok has a wooden toy that is carved to look somewhat like an Imperial two-legged walker. So if one is looking into this archeologically, one might say that the evidence shows the Imperials had been there.

BT: Who is going to be appearing in the film?

TS: We have Warrick Davis, a superb actor, playing Wicket, along with about eight or nine of



Joe Johnston

the best Ewoks who were in JEDI. We have a young boy by the name of Erik Walker playing the principal role of "Mace," and we have a little four-year-old girl, Aubree Miller, playing "Cindel." It was a very big decision to pick someone as young as Aubree to play a role in the movie. She is just perfect for the part, but the rules of California require that when you have an actor that young, they can only work three hours a day. She has a lead role in the film and so this has been a really difficult production problem, to film and work around her.

BT: How did you cast for the film?

TS: Everyone was chosen by audition, except for Warrick Davis and the Ewoks, who were chosen because of past performances. John Korty and I went to LA and auditioned people there, and up here in Marin county. Aubree was chosen because she was, by far, the most charming and appropriate person for the role.

BT: Where are you filming?

TS: Unlike most made-for-television movies, a lot of this film is being done on location in the country. We live in No. California and can film in the giant redwood trees without having to go too far. We have also found a desert landscape in Marin County. With the aid of matte paintings we are going to convert the Marin landscape into a world never seen before. A big segment of the film was shot on George Lucas' ranch using some of its interesting landscape.

Today the parking lot is filled with cars, the compound looks like a circus with the tent and catering trucks, actors and Ewoks running all over the place, cameras, lights, reflectors. Nearly a hundred



Terry Chosmer

people are actively putting together the different reality that forms the world of the Ewoks.

A full-sized, live Ewok will fly a skin-glider in this film—it's not going to be a special effect. When we were discussing the film, George Lucas said, "Oh, why don't we really fly one?" I felt that it was impossible to do, and I went



Joe Johnston



effects. The Ewok villages look a little different in our film. In JEDI we concentrated on the Ewoks that live in trees. Yet, there are also Ewoks in outskirt areas. Our Ewoks have interesting little ground-based huts that are surrounded by exotic domesticated animals. We have three monsters in this film, one very large monster, one that isn't so big and finally an insidious one about the size of a dog.

BT: Will the Ewok language be the same?

TS: It probably will be. We are still having discussions about that. We are hoping to have a language that

to see a hang-glider specialist expecting him to confirm my doubts. However, he thought it was a great idea and quite possible to do, so we're doing it.

BT: Will the film have a different look than JEDI?

TS: In some respects the film will look somewhat like JEDI, and although it won't have the hardware of STAR WARS there is a spaceship in it that plays a small role. There are also lots of special

can be learned by listening to it for two hours.

BT: Can we expect a title change?

TS: There may be a title change. We've been working with the title THE EWOK MOVIE. Another possible title is: "THE EWOKS OF ENDOR."

BT: Any final thoughts?

TS: This is a dramatic film. It is all new material, and although set in the STAR WARS universe, is not part of the STAR WARS Saga. We expect this movie will be a national event on television and feel a real obligation to deliver the traditional Lucasfilm quality. For that reason we are working hard to do a film that we can all be proud of.

■ Mary Paterno



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EditDroid™

Lucasfilm Ltd. unveiled a new editing system called EditDroid at the National Association of Broadcasters show in Las Vegas on April 30. The result of four years of research and development work at Lucasfilm's Computer Division, EditDroid will make it faster and

**LUCASFILM'S
EditDroid™
by CONVERGENCE**

easier for film editors to edit motion pictures than ever before. For example, now editors will be able to develop several different versions of the same scene, and preview the results of their work immediately, without having to recut film. Ralph Guggenheim, Leader of the Lucasfilm design team, reports that EditDroid accomplishes its tasks through the use of several "edge-of-the-art" technologies—advanced micro-computers, sophisticated video

systems, and laser video discs. Lucasfilm, and its development and manufacturing partner, Convergence Corporation (a manufacturer of videotape editing systems) expects the first EditDroid systems to begin being used in the film and video industries by the end of the year.

THX Theater Update

The following is a current list of the theaters using the THX Sound System:

Arizona

Christown FivePlex #3, Phoenix

California

Chinese Theater, Hollywood
National Theater, Los Angeles
Galaxy #1 & 2, San Francisco
Avco Theater #1, Westwood
Coronet #1, Westwood
UA Egyptian, Westwood

Colorado

Century 21 Theater, Denver

Illinois

Yorktown Cinema #1, Lombard

Florida

Fashion Square #1, Orlando

Minnesota

Har Mar Cinema #1, Roseville

New Jersey

Essex Green Cinema #1, West Orange

Texas

Cinema 6, Amarillo

Phelan 6—#1, Beaumont

Walnut Hill Theater #3, Dallas

Northpark Theater #1, Dallas

Prestonwood Creek 5—#1 & 2,

Dallas

Skillman Theater #3, Dallas

Hulen Mall #3, Ft. Worth

Northeast 6—#1, Hurst

Towneast 6—#4, Mesquite

Las Vegas Trail #8, White Settlement

Virginia

Springfield Cinema #1, Springfield

We hope you will have the opportunity to 'hear' the difference at your local theater. If you've heard the system, we'd like your comments.

BT: When you saw Harrison do the things he does in the movie, did you want to learn how to do those things, too? For example, learn to crack the whip.

KE: Yes. I don't know how he does it but he makes a very loud crack. When we had free time, I asked him to teach me and he taught me but I just can't do it. The whip was too big and I am too small.

BT: Which scenes were the most difficult for you?

KE: I think the difficult part was when we were riding on the elephants. His back has a very large bone, and if you sit there for hours, it hurts. But riding elephants is fun, too.

BT: Which scenes did you enjoy doing the most?

KE: My favorite scene was when I was doing the karate. I loved it, I loved that part. I like doing karate. I know some karate and when I did the karate shots, they had the karate guys, who teach karate, teach me more, but I already knew some kicks. They helped me perfect some of the karate I used and I was able to do all of the karate by myself. I showed some karate kicks to Steven and he said which ones I should do and which ones he didn't want. He used three of them.

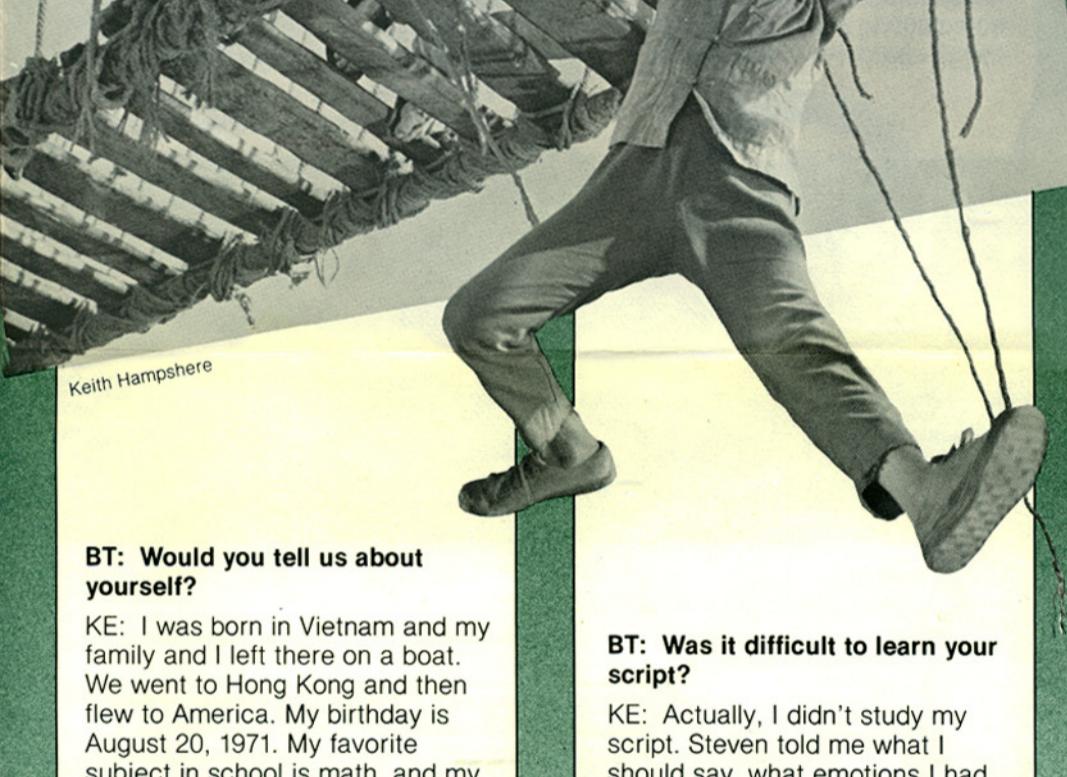
BT: What would you like to be when you grow up?

KE: Before I made this movie, before they chose me, I thought I was going to be a doctor, but now I think I'm going to be an actor.

■ Maureen Garrett

An Interview with Ke Huy Quan

SPOTLIGHT



BT: Would you tell us about yourself?

KE: I was born in Vietnam and my family and I left there on a boat. We went to Hong Kong and then flew to America. My birthday is August 20, 1971. My favorite subject in school is math, and my favorite sport is racquetball.

BT: Did you have a lot of fun making the film?

KE: Yes, we went to Sri Lanka, London and San Francisco. We had a great time in London. The weather was cold but it was nice for me. In Sri Lanka my mother and I lived in a hotel. Sri Lanka was hot, but we were very lucky because we had a swimming pool. I can't swim very well so Harrison taught me how to swim.

BT: Since INDY was your first film, how and when were you chosen to play Short Round?

KE: I was chosen by audition. I was at Saturday school to study English. The teacher told us to go to this special place where they did all the auditions. Kathy (Kennedy) was doing the auditions and I ran in and they asked me questions and all kinds of stuff. That was in 1983, in Jan. or Feb. I'm not sure on the date. After the auditions they called me and I went to the studio, and I met Steven Spielberg and Harrison Ford. But I didn't know who they were. Steven told me and Harrison Ford to play cards—to pretend to play cards—and to pretend he was cheating. He asked me if I could get very mad when Harrison cheated and I said yes. He didn't tell me this was going to be a scene in the movie.

BT: Can you tell us about your role? Who is Short Round and what is his relationship to Indy?

KE: Short Round is almost Indy's bodyguard—and they are kind of like father and son. He is very nice. But in the movie Short Round saves Indy a lot of times and sometimes Indy saves Short Round.

BT: Was it difficult to learn your script?

KE: Actually, I didn't study my script. Steven told me what I should say, what emotions I had, what was going to happen, what everyone was going to do and what I should do. In the movie Short Round wanted to be like Indy. Whatever Indy did Short Round did, he always wanted to imitate Indiana Jones. I carried his bag, clothes, whip, gun, everything and his hat, too—sometimes I wore it. I was almost his bodyguard. In the movie, I saved Indiana Jones and he saved me. We are very good, best friends.

BT: Was there anything you did to prepare yourself for the shots? For example when you had to pretend you were 300 feet off the ground on the rope bridge? Or for the shot with the bats?

KE: I used my imagination. We did some shots on the real bridge, 300 feet above the ground, so when we shot on the small bridge I was thinking that it was the real bridge. When we shot the jungle bat scene I pretended there were bats. I don't know how they got those bats in the movie because they weren't there when we shot the scene.

BT: Was there anything that surprised you in the movie?

KE: What we shot in front of the blue screen. It's amazing. I mean when the water was chasing us, when we shot the water wasn't there. When I saw the movies the water and all those things were chasing us, and that really surprised me.



Indiana Jones' sidekick Short Round (Ke Huy Quan).



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Maureen Garrett
Fan Club Director
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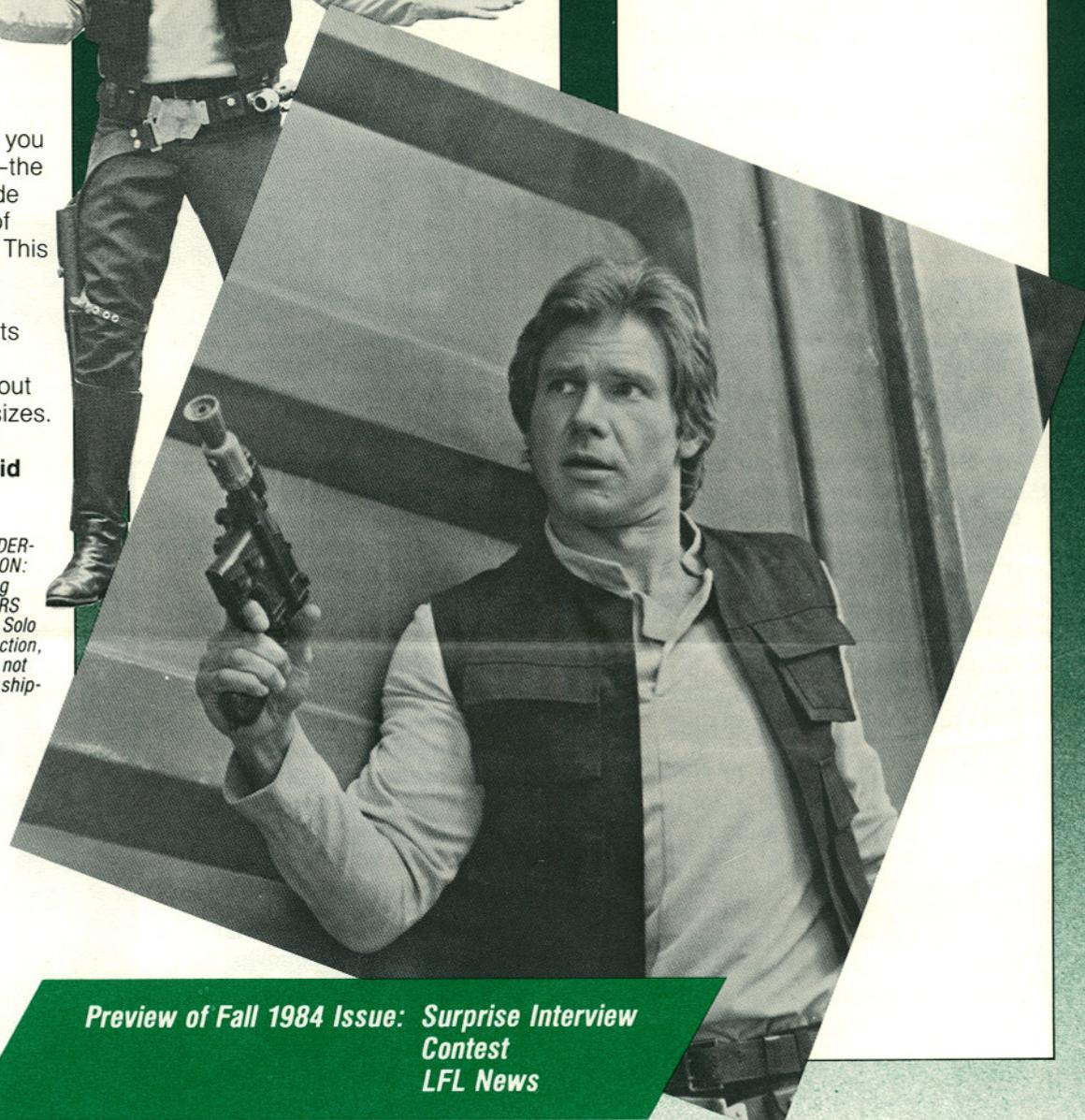
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