

STARSHIP

Written and Directed By

SHAUN CHATRATH





FILM SYNOPSIS

WHEN SPACE ENTHUSIAST JETT STUMBLES UPON A SENTIENT, FLYING OBJECT, HIS COMFORTABLE LIFE IS SHATTERED BY THE OBJECT'S URGENT, SECRET MISSION. DETERMINED TO DISCOVER ITS PURPOSE, JETT EMBARKS ON AN UNEXPECTED ODYSSEY. BUT HIS QUEST TAKES A DIZZYING, CATASTROPHIC TURN AFTER HE MEETS A POWERFUL, MYSTERIOUS ENTITY WHO SENDS JETT HURTLING FAR BEYOND THE LIMITS OF HIS KNOWN UNIVERSE.



FROM FIRST TIME DIRECTOR
SHAUN CHATRATH

DIRECTOR STATEMENT

FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER, I HAVE BEEN CAPTIVATED BY THE SILENCE OF THE STARS, ROOTED NOT IN SIGHTINGS, BUT IN THE CERTAINTY OF THE FERMI PARADOX: THE UNIVERSE IS SIMPLY TOO VAST FOR US TO BE ALONE.

MY PILGRIMAGE THROUGH UFO LORE—FROM THE LEGENDS OF ROSWELL TO THE IMPOSSIBLE PHYSICS OF THE USS NIMITZ—REVEALED NOT CLEAR ANSWERS, BUT BEAUTIFUL CONTRADICTIONS. THE SHAPES OF THE CRAFTS CHANGE, YET THEIR BEHAVIOR REMAINS HAUNTINGLY CONSISTENT MOST OF THE TIME... CAUGHT IN A PERPETUAL DANCE BETWEEN BELIEVERS AND SKEPTICS.

ULTIMATELY, I REALIZED THIS OBSESSION WAS NEVER REALLY ABOUT ALIENS; IT WAS ABOUT US. STARSHIP IS A LOVE LETTER TO THE SEARCH ITSELF. IT IS FOR THE DREAMERS WHO LIE AWAKE IN THE BLUE GLOW OF A SCREEN, CHASING INTERNET RABBIT HOLES AT 3:00 AM. THIS FILM HONORS THAT RESTLESS CURIOSITY, SUGGESTING THAT THE COURAGE OF THE QUESTION MATTERS MORE THAN THE ANSWER. THE RELENTLESS JOURNEY TOWARD KNOWLEDGE IS PRECISELY WHAT MAKES US HUMAN.



CAST

DANYEL AREFF JETT'S DAD
BRUNO CHATRATH GHOST
NAN KITaura JETT'S MOM
ZOHAIr SABIR MAAZ
ERIN NECKERS HALEY
ALLISON ELZIND KIZZY
SHAUN CHATRATH JETT

"PLAYING JETT'S FATHER WAS AN EXPLORATION OF THE QUIET STRENGTH IT TAKES TO KEEP A FAMILY MOVING FORWARD WHEN THE WORLD FEELS LIKE IT'S STANDING STILL. HE IS A MAN WHO THINKS HIS LIFE IS DEFINED BY THE MUNDANE - BURNT POTATOES, MOVING BOXES, AND MISSED OPPORTUNITIES. BUT BENEATH THAT EXHAUSTION IS A FIERCE, UNWAVERING LOVE FOR HIS SON, JETT. STARSHIP IS BEAUTIFULLY DECEPTIVE; IT INVITES YOU IN WITH THE PROMISE OF SCI-FI SPECTACLE, BUT IT STAYS WITH YOU BECAUSE OF THE GROUNDED, HUMAN CONNECTION BETWEEN FAMILY. IN THE END, MY CHARACTER LEARNS THAT EVEN WHEN THE DREAMS YOU THOUGHT YOU WANTED FADE AWAY, IT'S THE DREAMS YOU NEVER KNEW YOU HAD THAT TRULY GIVE LIFE ITS MEANING."

- DANYEL AREFF

"PLAYING KIZZY WAS SUCH AN EXCITING EXPERIENCE. HER SASSY ATTITUDE, SHARP HUMOR, AND ADVENTUROUS SPIRIT FELT DEEPLY CONNECTED TO ASPECTS OF MYSELF. WHILE KIZZY IS BOLD AND UNAPOLOGETICALLY FIERCE, SHE ALSO HAS A SOFT SIDE, ESPECIALLY FOR HER FRIENDS, AND SHE'S ALWAYS THERE WHEN THEY NEED HER MOST. THOUGH TOUGH ON THE OUTSIDE, AS THE MOVIE PROGRESSES, KIZZY LEARNS TO OPEN UP, LEARNING HOW TO EMBRACE VULNERABILITY AND TRUST IN HER FRIENDSHIPS."

- ALLISON ELZIND

"PLAYING MAAZ SHOWCASE'S THE VALUE OF FRIENDSHIP IN A WORLD WHERE PEOPLE ARE CONSTANTLY STRUGGLING TO ACHIEVE THEIR SUCCESS, WHILE MAKING MISTAKES AND GROWING STRONGER ALONG THE WAY. MAAZ DOES NOT THINK OFTEN ABOUT HIS FUTURE, WHICH IS WHY HE STRUGGLES TO UNDERSTAND WHAT HE WANTS IN LIFE. HE IS A GOOD FRIEND AND WILL SUPPORT OTHERS; TAKING ON OBSTACLES NO MATTER THE DEGREE, HELPING THOSE IN NEED. STARSHIP DELIVERS AN AMAZING DEPICTION OF NOT ONLY KNOWLEDGE BEYOND OUR UNDERSTANDING, BUT ALSO THE STRUGGLES OF LIFE WHICH BECOME EASIER WITH THE HELP OF THOSE AROUND YOU SUCH AS FRIENDS AND FAMILY, ALLOWING YOU TO NEVER GIVE UP. MAAZ REALIZES THAT EVEN THOUGH HE DOES NOT KNOW HIS FUTURE THERE IS SO MUCH MORE HE CAN STILL LEARN IN ORDER TO GROW, AND EVENTUALLY HE'LL FIGURE IT OUT."

- ZOHAIr SABIR

VINTAGE DREAMS

I DID NOT WANT
STARSHIP TO
SIMPLY MIRROR
THE LITERAL
REALITY OF
CLASSIC CINEMA;
I WANTED IT TO
INHABIT ITS
GHOST. MY GOAL
WAS TO CAPTURE
THE TEXTURE OF
DREAMS AND
THE WARM,
IMPERFECT
GRAININESS OF
MEMORY—TO
EVOKE HOW
THOSE FILMS
FELT IN THE
DARK, RATHER
THAN JUST HOW
THEY LOOKED.

—

SHAUN CHATRATH



THE LENS MOST OF
STARSHIP WAS
SHOT ON.
A VINTAGE 58MM
HELIOS 44-2



MUSICAL COMPOSERS



FARISS RYAN

FARISS RYAN IS A MULTIDISCIPLINARY MUSIC ARTIST, COMPOSER, AND CREATIVE COLLABORATOR WHOSE WORK SPANS FILM, LIVE PERFORMANCE, AND RECORDED MUSIC. PRIOR TO THE RELEASE OF STARSHIP, FARISS CONTRIBUTED MUSIC AND CREATIVE WORK TO THE AWARD-WINNING SHORT FILM COMPLEXITY, CREATED ALONGSIDE POET BRANDON LEAKE AND DIRECTOR CLEVE BROWN III. HE ALSO WORKED ON BRANDON LEAKE'S: A FAMILY AFFAIR, THE FIRST-EVER SPOKEN-WORD POETRY SPECIAL AIRED ON THE CW NETWORK.

IN 2021, FARISS PREMIERED ORIGINAL MUSIC FOR INSOMNIA, A ONE-MAN SPOKEN-WORD PLAY WRITTEN AND PERFORMED BY AMERICA'S GOT TALENT SEASON 15 WINNER BRANDON LEAKE. THE PRODUCTION WAS PRESENTED AT THE NEVADA MUSEUM OF ART AND BLENDED POETRY, PERFORMANCE ART, AND NARRATIVE STORYTELLING, WITH FARISS'S COMPOSITIONS UNDERSCORING THE DEPTH OF THE WORK.

HIS WORK BRIDGES SPOKEN WORD, ORCHESTRAL COMPOSITION, GOSPEL, AND SOUL, EMPHASIZING COLLABORATION, CULTURAL LEGACY, AND IMMERSIVE LIVE PERFORMANCE.

THE STARSHIP SOUNDTRACK WAS COMPOSED WITH A DESIRE TO EVOKE THE TIMELESS ORCHESTRAL STORYTELLING OF CLASSIC CINEMA. DRAWING INSPIRATION FROM THE EMOTIONAL WARMTH AND WONDER OF JOHN WILLIAMS' WORK ON E.T. AND HOME ALONE, THE SCORE LEANS INTO MELODY-DRIVEN THEMES THAT FEEL INTIMATE, HOPEFUL, AND EXPANSIVE. ADDITIONAL INFLUENCE CAME FROM THE SENSE OF AWE AND DISCOVERY FOUND IN SUPER 8, JURASSIC PARK, FIELD OF DREAMS, INCEPTION AND UP—SCORES THAT BALANCE CHILDLIKE WONDER WITH DEEP EMOTIONAL WEIGHT. THE MUSIC WAS DESIGNED TO FEEL FAMILIAR YET ENDURING, GROUNDED IN NOSTALGIA WHILE REMAINING EMOTIONALLY PRESENT.

ULTIMATELY, THE GOAL OF THE STARSHIP SOUNDTRACK IS TO CREATE A TIMELESS, IMMERSIVE SOUNDSCAPE THAT ALLOWS AUDIENCES TO FULLY LOSE THEMSELVES IN THE WORLD OF THE STORY AND THE INNER EMOTIONAL LIVES OF ITS CHARACTERS.



DANIEL MATHRE

DANIEL MATHRE IS A MULTI-INSTRUMENTALIST COMPOSER, PRODUCER, AND RECORDING ARTIST CREATING CINEMATIC SCORES FOR FILM AND VISUAL MEDIA BASED IN ASTORIA, OREGON.

HIS WORK EXISTS IN THE QUIET SPACE BETWEEN SOUND AND STORY—SERVING EMOTION THROUGH RESTRAINT, TEXTURE, AND MELODY RATHER THAN EXCESS.

INFLUENCED BY THE EMOTIONAL SCALE OF INTERSTELLAR, THE TIMELESS STORYTELLING OF JOHN WILLIAMS, AND THE MODERN MINIMALISM OF THE NEWTON BROTHERS, HIS MUSIC IS DESIGNED TO BREATHE WITH THE PICTURE AND DEEPEN NARRATIVE IMPACT.

CREATIVE FOCUS
CINEMATIC · ORCHESTRAL ·
AMBIENT · TEXTURAL ·
HYBRID

AVAILABLE FOR FILM,
TELEVISION,
DOCUMENTARIES, AND
ARTIST-DRIVEN PROJECTS
SEEKING MUSIC THAT
SERVES STORY FIRST.



CREW

CAMERA AND BOOM OPERATORS

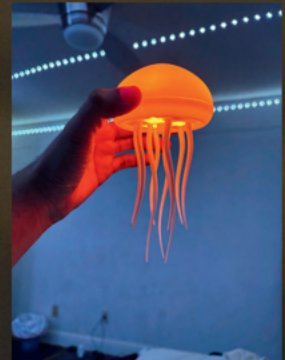
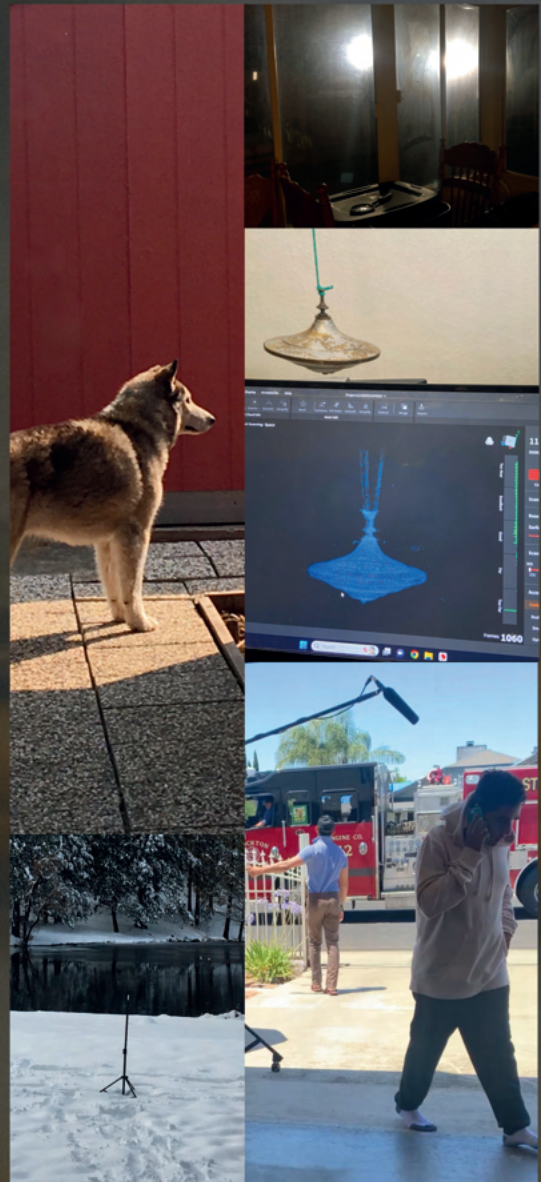
ERIK MANDUJANO
JESUS VARGAS
RAHAIMA CHOUDHRY
SHIVAM KAPOOR
AMAAN PATEL
NAREN SAREDAY
SHAUN CHATRATH

LARGE SPACESHIP CONSTRUCTOR JAGJIT CHATRATH

CINEMATOGRAPHY AND EDITING SHAUN CHATRATH

TEST FOOTAGE ASSISTANT SUPREET BHAMBRA

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT CARLOS NINO



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH ALL THE SALT?

THERE ARE TWO ANSWERS TO THIS QUESTION: THE SCIENTIFIC ANSWER AND THE THEMATIC ANSWER. THEMATICALLY, I WANTED THE SAUCER TO RUN ON HALITE, WHICH MOST PEOPLE HAVE AT THEIR DISPOSAL BUT ISN'T A DIRE NECESSITY FOR HUMANS. SCIENTIFICALLY, HIMALAYAN SALT GETS ITS PINK COLOR FROM THE COMPOUND IRON OXIDE. IRON OXIDE IS A TERMINAL ELECTRON ACCEPTOR FOR MULTIPLE BACTERIA. AN ELECTRON ACCEPTOR HELPS MICROORGANISMS ACCEPT ELECTRONS, WHICH SERVE AS THE ENERGY SOURCE, TRANSFERRED FROM ONE COMPOUND TO ANOTHER. THEREFORE, IN SIMPLEST TERMS, HIMALAYAN SALT IS AN EASY MINERAL TO TRANSFER ENERGY FROM IF, THEORETICALLY, THE SAUCER HAS AN INTERNAL REACTOR TO USE IT THIS WAY.

WHAT ARE THE DIRECTOR'S THOUGHTS AND ANY USES OF AI?

I LEAN AND ADVISE TOWARDS MINIMAL USE OF AI. HOWEVER, AI HAS MANY POSITIVE USES AND WILL INEVITABLY BE A SIGNIFICANT PART OF THE FUTURE OF THE FILM INDUSTRY. WHEN I STARTED SHOOTING STARSHIP IN 2021, ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE WASN'T AS WIDELY USED. THE IDEA OF SUCH A TOOL NEVER EVEN CROSSED MY MIND; THEREFORE, I SHOT AND PLANNED STARSHIP AS IF AI WASN'T GOING TO BE A THING. FAST-FORWARD TO THE EDITING PROCESS, AND I FOUND THAT SPECIFIC AI PROGRAMS IMPROVED THE MOVIE. FOR EXAMPLE, NEAT VIDEO IS A PROGRAM THAT REMOVES NOISE FROM YOUR FOOTAGE. I ALWAYS WANTED THE SHOTS IN STARSHIP TO HAVE A CONSISTENT AMOUNT OF GRAIN, SO I USED THAT PROGRAM TO REMOVE ANY NOISE FROM THE FILM'S FOOTAGE AND THEN REAPPLIED DIGITAL GRAIN. ANOTHER PROGRAM I USED WAS ADOBE PODCAST, WHICH HELPED ENHANCE THE AUDIO, ESPECIALLY THE DIALOGUE, DISRUPTED BY WINDY FILMING DAYS. I LEARNED THAT THIS PROGRAM ENHANCES THE BASS OF THE DIALOGUE; THEREFORE, I USED A WAVES AUDIO F6 FLOATING-BAND DYNAMIC EQ TO ADJUST THE FREQUENCIES, THUS PREVENTING THE THEATRE AUDIENCE FROM LOSING THEIR HEARING. FINALLY, TOPAZ AI WAS HEAVILY USED TO UPSCALE PRACTICAL EFFECT MODELS, SOMETIMES UP TO 12K RESOLUTION, ALMOST FUNCTIONING AS AN ADDITIONAL CAMERA LENS. DOING THIS UPSCALING IS HOW I PULLED OFF THE WIND TURBINE SCENE. THE SCENE'S BACKGROUND WAS CAPTURED FROM A SIGNIFICANT DISTANCE, THEN UPSCALED SO I COULD FREELY MOVE IT TO CREATE THE ILLUSION OF DIFFERENT SHOTS. THIS SAME TRICK WAS USED THROUGHOUT THE FILM. FINALLY, USING NEAT VIDEO AND ADOBE HELPED ME BALANCE DIGITAL BANDING ISSUES CREATED BY TOPAZ UPSCALING, THUS MATCHING THE REST OF THE 32-BIT COLOR RATE OF THE FILM.

WHAT OTHER MEDIA WORKS INSPIRED STARSHIP?

MANY FILMS INSPIRED STARSHIP, ESPECIALLY THE FILMS OF STEVEN SPIELBERG, ROBERT ZEMECKIS, AND CHRISTOPHER NOLAN, AS WELL AS THE WRITINGS OF H.G. WELLS, ARTHUR C. CLARK, AND CARL SAGAN. THE ORIGINAL TWILIGHT ZONE WAS ALSO A BIG INSPIRATION. MANY PEOPLE WHO SAW THE FIRST TRAILER OF THE FILM POINTED OUT SIMILARITIES TO THE FILM BATTERIES NOT INCLUDED. TRUTHFULLY, I HAVE YET TO WATCH THAT MOVIE AS OF WRITING THIS.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS?

ADAPT AND LISTEN. FOR MANY SCENES, THE ORIGINAL IDEA I HAD WAS EITHER TOO EXPENSIVE, WE DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH TIME DURING THE FILMING DAY, AND/OR THE WEATHER WASN'T COOPERATIVE, SO MY CREW, CAST, AND I IMPROVISED. THE RESULT WAS ALWAYS BETTER THAN MY ORIGINAL IDEA. IN ADDITION, MY FRIENDS, TO WHOM I SCREENED EARLY VERSIONS OF THE FILM, ALL HAD EXCELLENT SUGGESTIONS AND IDEAS THAT SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVED MOMENTS IN STARSHIP.

IS THERE A SCENE OR MOMENT CUT FROM THE FILM YOU REALLY LIKED?

THERE ARE TWO SCENES: THE ROOFTOP SCENE AND THE MAAZ AND KIZZY CONVERSATION IN THE BACKFIELD. THE ROOFTOP SCENE WAS A VARIATION OF THE SCENE WHERE JETT IS LISTENING TO RADIO SIGNALS IN HIS BACKYARD (APPROXIMATELY 26 MIN. INTO THE MOVIE). INSTEAD, IN THIS VERSION, HE WAS ON THE ROOF. VISUALLY, IT LOOKED TERRIFIC, BUT I DECIDED TO CHANGE THIS SCENE BECAUSE, BLOCKING-WISE, IT DIDN'T MAKE SENSE FOR HIM TO BE UP THERE. THE PACING OF THE SCENE DISRUPTED THE SCENES AROUND IT. FOR THOSE SAME REASONS, I CUT ANOTHER SCENE I LIKED, WHICH WAS A CONVERSATION BETWEEN MAAZ AND KIZZY AROUND THE HOUR MARK OF THE FILM.

WHAT WAS THE GENERAL PROCESS OF BUILDING THE LARGE SPACESHIP?

MY DAD BUILT THE LARGE SPACESHIP BETWEEN 2020 AND 2021. HE BUILT THE ENTIRE SHIP'S INFRASTRUCTURE, WHILE I HANDLED THE INTERIOR WALL WRAP, ON-SCREEN MONITOR, SEATING, AND LIGHTING. THE TRICK WITH THE SHIP WAS MAKING IT "FILMMAKING READY." I NEEDED THE WINDOWS TO BE EASILY REMOVABLE FOR THE CAMERA, THE LIGHTS TO BE INTERCHANGEABLE, THE VESSEL TO CARRY THE WEIGHT OF AT LEAST TWO PEOPLE, TO BE RESILIENT TO HARSH WEATHER, AND THE SHIP TO BE EASILY MOVABLE BY ONE PERSON. IT TOOK US SOME TRIAL AND ERROR, BUT EVENTUALLY WE GOT IT.

WHAT'S A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE MADE WHEN WRITING THE SCRIPT?

IN THE ORIGINAL VERSION, WE SHOT, THERE WAS NO LASER TAG SCENE, AND WE DIDN'T MEET MAAZ TILL ABOUT HALFWAY THROUGH THE MOVIE. I FELT THE ORIGINAL VERSION WAS LACKLUSTER AND TOO CONFINED TO THE HOUSE, SO I REWROTE/RESHOT THAT ASPECT OF THE FILM.

TECHNICAL INFO.

PROJECT TYPE: FEATURE

RUNTIME: 1 HOUR 21 MINUTES 27 SECONDS

COMPLETION DATE: DECEMBER 15, 2025

PRODUCTION BUDGET: 40,000 USD

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN / FILMING: UNITED STATES

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

CAMERA(S): SONY A7RIII
DJI MAVIC 3
IPHONE 15

LEN(S): 58MM HELIOS 44-2
SONY - E PZ 18-105MM G OSS
CUSTOM BUILT MICROLENS
DJI 24MM WIDE HASSELBLAD
IPHONE 15 25MM LENS

MICROPHONE: SENNHEISER MKH-416

FILM COLOR: BLACK & WHITE AND COLOR

LIGHTING: GVM 3-LIGHTING KIT
PRACTICALS

FIRST-TIME FEATURE FILMMAKER: YES

EDITING AND COLOR PROGRAM: ADOBE CREATIVE CLOUD APPS

SCREENWRITING PROGRAM: CELTX

RESOLUTION AND FRAME RATE: 4K AND 24 FPS

AI CLEAN UP ENHANCEMENT: NEAT VIDEO
TOPAZ AI
ADOBE PODCAST



STARSHIP

SONGBIRD PICTURES PRESENTS

A FILM BY SHAUN CHATRATH "STARSHIP" DANYEL AREFF ALLISON ELZIND

NAN KITaura ZOHAIR SABIR BRUNO CHATRATH ERIN NECKERS AND SHAUN CHATRATH

MUSIC BY FARISS RYAN AND DANIEL MATHRE EDITED BY SHAUN CHATRATH ASSISTANT DIRECTOR ZOHAIR SABIR PRODUCED BY WRITTEN BY DIRECTED BY SHAUN CHATRATH

ELICIT  AUDIO



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