

Film Review: Eye-Popping 3D, Same Story in ‘Star Wars: Episode 1 – The Phantom Menace’ Rerelease

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on February 10, 2012 - 11:42pm

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CHICAGO – Jar Jar Binks is back, and George Lucas has him in 3D. Yes, the re-release of 1999’s “Star Wars: Episode 1 – The Phantom Menace,” takes advantage of the new 3D technology. However, it can’t change the story or the now 13-year outrage regarding this weird take on the Stars Wars legacy. Were we ever that young and that angry?



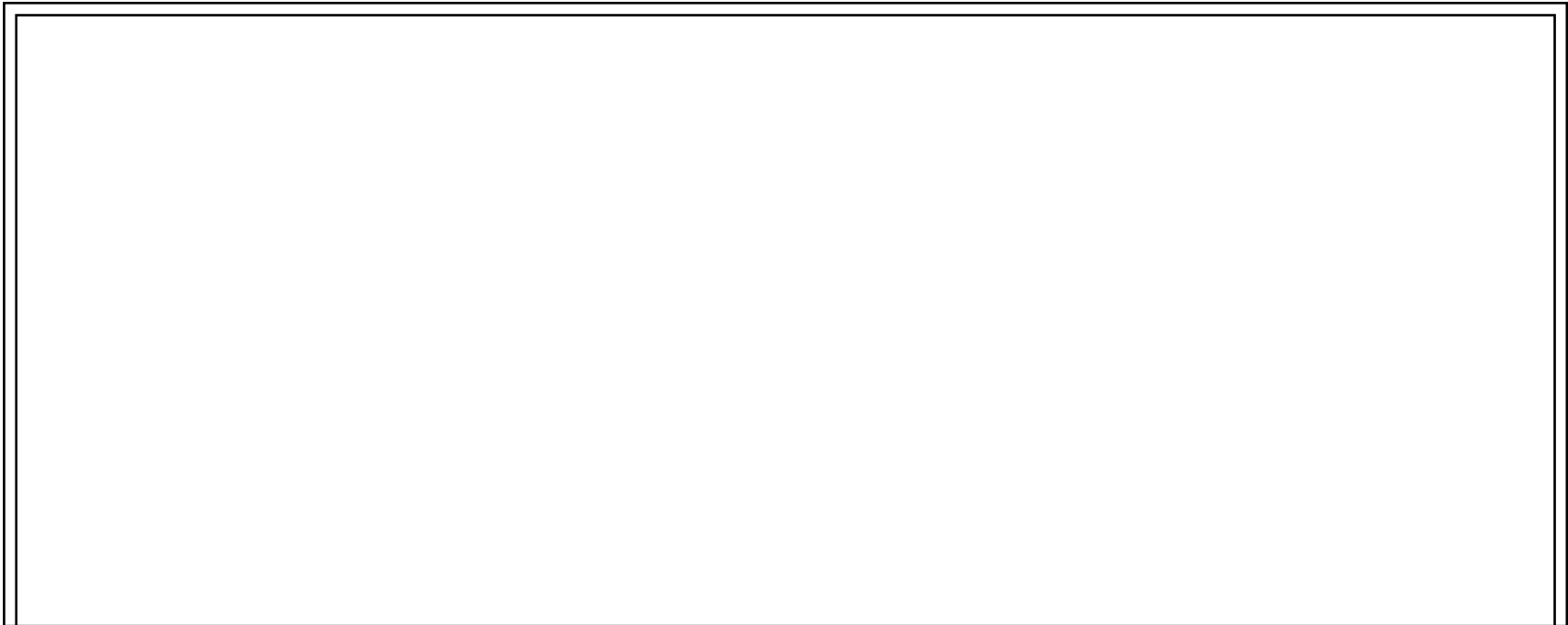
It was interesting revisiting the film and its controversy, since it was probably the most anticipated release of the 1990s. The simplicity and clean lines of the narrative in first series of films – actually the middle series, which again caused some consternation – gave way to a film about blockades and trade wars, with an introduction of the most hated character in cinema in the last 25 years, and that’s even taking in the entire Adam Sandler’s oeuvre. Jar Jar Binks, actually the whole bizarre Gungan tribe, is still obnoxious and completely out of place.

As the famous credit crawl states, “Turmoil has engulfed the Galactic Republic. The taxation of trade routes to outlying star systems is being disputed.” Quite a introduction to a whole new myth involving the stories and characters of the 1977-1983 Star Wars films. The trade routes are being blockaded around the planet Naboo, ruled by Queen Amidala (Natalie Portman), and her Supreme Chancellor (Terrence Stamp) has dispatched two Jedi knights, Qui-Gon Jinn (Liam Neeson) and his apprentice Obi-Wan Kenobi (Ewan McGregor), to negotiate with the Trade Federation. However, the evil Darth Sidious orders an army to kill the Knights and invade Naboo with an army of battle robot droids.

Qui-Gon and Obi-Wan escape to Naboo, encountering Jar Jar Binks (voice of Ahmed Best), who leads them to his underwater home of Otoh Gunga. From there they escape to the surface, and end up rescuing Queen Amidala and taking her to the planet Tatooine. There they encounter a slave child named Anakin Skywalker (Jake Lloyd), who has a strong aura of The Force, and through a series of events is set free. The child will lead them, with his prototype C-3PO droid (Anthony Daniels) and the addition of R2-D2 (Kenny Baker), another loyal mechanical companion. The origin of the rest of the legend is on course.

“Star Wars: Episode 1 –The Phantom Menace” in 3D opens everywhere on February 10th. Featuring Liam Neeson, Ewan McGregor, Natalie Portman, Ray Park, Terence Stamp, Samuel L. Jackson and Frank Oz. Written and directed by George Lucas. Rated “PG-13”

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Liam Neeson, Jake Lloyd and Ewan McGregor in ‘Star Wars: Episode 1 – The Phantom Menace’
Photo credit: Twentieth Century Fox

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