



SILVERSCREEN
PRIMARY
EDUCATION

The History of Science Fiction Cinema

By Adam Pepper

**Session 8:
1980s – 1990s
Action Stars, Pulp
Throwbacks & Franchise
Fun!**



Welcome to Session 8 of this 'History of Science Fiction Cinema'!

Over ten weeks, we will journey through space and time to uncover the secrets behind some of the greatest science fiction stories, movies, directors and characters as we try to uncover what science fiction really is, and where it blurs with our reality today.

Session 8:

After the monumental success of 'Jaws' and 'Star Wars' and the emerging audiences for darker sci-fi movies like 'Alien' and 'Bladerunner', the 1980s inevitably has its science fiction output influenced by the burgeoning emergence of the action star!

After the huge success of 'The Terminator', 'Rocky' and 'Rambo: First Blood', stars like Stallone, Schwarzenegger, Van Damme, Norris and Seagal become the huge box-office draws throughout the 80s, as Reagan's America hits its full stride!

As special effects, developed on films like '2001', 'Star Wars' and 'Alien', can now be replicated to varying degrees of success, the science fiction action movie can begin to explode, branch out and chase new ground. And with a plethora of skilled directors like Cameron, Scott and Spielberg still chasing aliens, all looks well.

This week sees us examine the value of some of these offerings, while also beginning to spot the clues in the changing tech which will bring us further sci-fi game changers as we head deeper into the 90s!

Useful information for Session 8:

Arnold Schwarzenegger

Arnold Alois Schwarzenegger (born July 30, 1947) is an Austrian and American actor, businessman, filmmaker, former politician, and former professional bodybuilder known for his roles in high-profile action movies. He served as the 38th governor of California from 2003 to 2011 and was among *Time's* 100 most influential people in the world in 2004 and 2007.

Schwarzenegger began lifting weights at age 15 and won the Mr. Universe title aged 20, and subsequently the Mr. Olympia title seven times. He is widely regarded as one of the greatest bodybuilders of all time, and has written many books and articles about it. The Arnold Sports Festival, considered the second-most important bodybuilding event after Mr. Olympia, is named after him.

He appeared in the bodybuilding documentary *Pumping Iron* (1977). After retiring from bodybuilding, he gained worldwide fame as a Hollywood action star, with his breakthrough in the sword and sorcery epic *Conan the Barbarian* (1982), a box-office hit with a sequel in 1984.

After playing the title character in the science fiction film *The Terminator* (1984), he starred in *Terminator 2: Judgment Day* (1991) and three other sequels. His other successful action films included *Commando* (1985), *The Running Man* (1987), *Predator* (1987), *Total Recall* (1990), and *True Lies* (1994), in addition to comedy films such as *Twins* (1988), *Kindergarten Cop* (1990) and *Jingle All the Way* (1996).

He is the founder of the film production company Oak Productions.

Robert Zemeckis

Robert Lee Zemeckis (born May 14, 1952) is an American film director, producer, and screenwriter.

He first came to public attention as the director of the action-adventure romantic comedy *Romancing the Stone* (1984), the science-fiction comedy *Back to the Future* trilogy (1985–1990), and the live-action/animated comedy *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* (1988). He subsequently directed the satirical black comedy *Death Becomes Her* (1992) and then diversified into more dramatic fare, including *Forrest Gump* (1994), for which he won the Academy Award for Best Director. The film also won the Best Picture.

Zemeckis is regarded as an innovator in visual effects. His exploration of state-of-the-art special effects includes the early use of computer graphics inserted into live-action footage in *Back to the Future Part II* (1989) and *Forrest Gump*, the insertion of hand-drawn animation into live-action footage in *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*, and the performance capture techniques seen in *The Polar Express* (2004), *Beowulf* (2007), *A Christmas Carol* (2009), and *Welcome to Marwen* (2018).

He is known for his collaboration with composer Alan Silvestri, with whom he has worked since *Romancing the Stone*. David Thomson wrote that "no other contemporary director has used special effects to more dramatic and narrative purpose."



Films to look out for:

Moonraker (1979)

Flash Gordon (1980)

Star Trek II: The Wrath Of Khan (1982)

Ghostbusters (1984)

Dune (1984)

Back To The Future (1985)

Aliens (1986)

The Running Man (1987)

The Predator (1987)

Akira (1988)

The Abyss (1989)

Ghostbusters II (1989)

Batman (1989)

Terminator 2: Judgement Day (1991)

Forthcoming Sessions:

- 1990s Part 2 – Dinosaurs, meteorites, 'Welcome To Earth!' Bullet Time & 'Get Your Ass To Mars!'
- 2000s – Worlds of Wonder

