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Indiana Jones: Past and Future

In light of the recent announcement of the upcoming Indiana Jones film, currently known as *Indiana Jones Four*, I think that it is high time to review the series as a whole. At this point in time three films, as well as a spin-off series about Indy's life as a young adult, have been made, all under the direction of Steven Spielberg (*Schindler's List*, *Jurassic Park*) starring Harrison Ford (*Star Wars*, *Witness*) as archeologist turned adventurer Indiana Jones.

The first film, *Raiders Of The Lost Ark* which premiered in 1981 followed Jones on a hunt for the Ark of the Covenant, before Nazi soldiers can take the ark for themselves. The Ark supposedly housed the shards of the ten commandments. Tagged as "the ultimate hero in the ultimate adventure", *Raiders* grossed \$384,140,454 worldwide and the fictitious Indiana Jones became a world-renown figure.

Three years later Paramount released the second in the series, *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*. Set mainly in India it is the story of a village from which three stones of great magical power are stolen by a thuggee cult. As well as taken the stones the cult has kidnapped all of the children from the village and forced them into slave labor. Jones, along with a beautiful singer named Willie Scott and a preteen sidekick named Short Round (who, incidentally, has the greatest line in the film: "no time for love, Doctor Jones!") discover a mine buried under the palace of a seemingly peaceable prince where the cult resides. Following a harrowing mine-car race the film ends as Indy brings the children, en masse, back to the village.

Another five years after the debut of *Temple of Doom* Indiana reappeared with *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. Fighting against the perpetually evil Nazi archeologists, Indy follows a decades old trail left by his own father (a grail buff) not only to his father, who was taken from his home by the Nazis, but to the resting place of the grail itself. Opening with Indy as a young man in a boy scout-esque scenario and closing with Indy and Henry Jones sr. (Indiana was actually the name given to the Jones's Husky before Henry took it as a nickname) riding off into the sunset. *Last Crusade* gives a timeline of the life of a man, long awaited.

After a sixteen year sabbatical, it seems that Indy is back in a new film. While this is mostly speculation the film is supposed to utilize the cold war era Russian Army as the villains rather than the Nazis or a cult. Set to star Ford, although there is some heated debate on the web as to whether his age, 63, is a hindrance. The second George Lucas series to add a film long after the original three, *Star Wars* being the other, *Indiana Jones 4* will surely have the blockbuster quality of *The Phantom Menace* when it hits theaters in 2007.

By Dan Smith