

# Star Wars special effects lose force

By WILLIAM KOGUT  
of the Emerald

It has been said that the film *Star Wars* sprang from an American tradition involving lights, bells, obstacles, menace, action, technology, and thrills. *Star Wars* is pinball on the cosmic scale.

But last night's EMU-sponsored program featuring *Star Wars* animator Robert Blalack sprang from the American tradition of late starts, out-of-focus films and slides, tedious repetition and banal description. "Movie Magic: The Special Effects of *Star Wars* and Beyond" was a home movie on an auditorium scale.

*Star Wars* has now returned over \$230 million to its producers. At an admission price of one dollar per person, Blalack's performance yielded approximately \$400 at the door of the EMU ballroom.

Maybe the prospect of milking such a relatively small sum from an audience wasn't encouragement enough for Blalack to put together a first-rate program on the supreme job he and other animators did on *Star Wars*.

According to the March issue of *Atlantic* magazine, when director George Lucas created *Star Wars* he "put in all the elements that said this was go-

ing to be a hit." *Star Wars* was very deliberately manufactured.

A key element in the film's success was the special effects. Blalack vaguely explained how one frame of one six-second scene was put together. The frame involved the matting together of pieces of 24 separate shots.

Blalack dropped terms such as "optical printer," "Rotoscope," "Vistavision," "Multi-plane technique," and "Three-color-process." But he didn't take the trouble to give a coherent one-sentence definition of any of those terms.

As a technician, Blalack wasn't much of a speaker. He didn't put any elements into his talk to make it the least bit "animated."

He showed two collages of film and offered such observations as, "This is how we saw the film after shooting. No music, no dialogue...you probably remember this scene...you probably remember this scene...and, you probably remember this one, too."



"We don't care about actors," joked Robert Blalack, Academy Award winner for his work on

the special effects in the film *Star Wars*. Blalack lectured Thursday night in the EMU Ballroom.

## Commission —

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enter or live in Oregon. The law that barred slaves from the state was repealed that year, but only because a clerk in the Legislature mistakenly entered a bill intended to continue the practice on the repeal ledger.

Barnett told committee members that other discriminatory laws, such as "sundown ordinances", which ordered blacks out of town after a working day, have in effect, continued to the present day.

"It's a matter of attitude," he said. "Blacks perceive that they still don't have equality, and many whites believe they are superior — due to past laws that made it so legally."

Rep. Robert Brogoitti, R-La Grande, asked Barnett if he felt blacks are still being discriminated against.

"I'm a rancher in eastern Oregon," Brogoitti said, "and there are a number of blacks there who fit in real well. I have them working on my farm, and there's no problem at all."

Barnett responded that larger concentrations of blacks and whites intensify racial problems.

"Although blacks make up about one and one-half percent of the state's population," Barnett said, "blacks make up more than 12 percent of the population in the state penitentiary."

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