

Battlestar Galactica (miniseries)

Battlestar Galactica is a three-hour miniseries (comprising four broadcast hours) starring Edward James Olmos and Mary McDonnell, written and produced by Ronald D. Moore and directed by Michael Rymer. It was the first part of the *Battlestar Galactica* remake based on the 1978 *Battlestar Galactica* television series, and served as a backdoor pilot for the 2004 television series. The miniseries aired originally on Sci Fi in the United States starting on December 8, 2003. The two parts of the miniseries attracted 3.9 and 4.5 million viewers,^[1] making the miniseries the third-most-watched program on Syfy.^[2]

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Plot

Part 1

After a 40-year armistice in a war between the Twelve Colonies of Kobol (the homeworlds populated by humans) and the Cylons (human-created robots), the Cylons launch a surprise nuclear attack intended to exterminate the human race. Virtually all of the population of the Twelve Colonies is wiped out. Most of the Colonial military is either rendered ineffective or destroyed due to malware in the military computer network that renders it vulnerable to cyber attack. The malware was introduced by Number Six (Tricia Helfer), a Cylon in the form of a human woman, who seduced the famous scientist Dr. Gaius Baltar (James Callis) and exploited their relationship to

Battlestar Galactica



DVD cover

Genre	<u>Science fiction</u> <u>Drama</u>
Based on	A teleplay by <u>Glen A. Larson</u>
Written by	<u>Ronald D. Moore</u> <u>Glen A. Larson</u> ^[note 1]
Directed by	<u>Michael Rymer</u>
Composers	<u>Richard Gibbs</u> <u>Bear McCreary</u> (additional)
Country of origin	<u>United States</u>

gain access codes under the cover of an insider contract bid.

The Battlestar *Galactica*, a hybrid battleship/aircraft carrier in space that fought in the earlier war, is in the final stages of being decommissioned and converted to a museum when the attack occurs. During her decades of colonial service the *Galactica*'s computer systems had never been networked so the *Galactica* is unaffected by the Cylon sabotage. Its commander, William Adama (Edward James Olmos), assumes command of the few remaining elements of the human fleet. He heads for the Ragnar Anchorage, a military armory station where the *Galactica* can resupply itself with weaponry and essential supplies.

Secretary of Education Laura Roslin (Mary McDonnell) is sworn in as President of the Twelve Colonies after it is confirmed that the President and most of the government have been killed (Roslin is 43rd in the line of succession). The government starship carrying her (*Colonial One*) manages to assemble a group of surviving civilian ships.

When a Colonial Raptor shuttle from the *Galactica* lands briefly for repairs on the Twelve Colonies' capital world of Caprica, the two-person crew, Sharon Valerii (callsign "Boomer") (Grace Park) and Karl C. Agathon (callsign "Helo") (Tahmoh Penikett), offer to evacuate a small group of survivors. Helo remains on the stricken planet, giving up his seat to evacuate Baltar, whom he recognizes for his celebrity status as a scientific genius.

Part 2

The Cylons locate the human civilian fleet, and Roslin is forced to make the decision to order all of the ships capable of faster-than-light (FTL) travel to jump immediately to escape. Unfortunately this means abandoning many of the survivors who are aboard ships without FTL engines and, as Roslin and the FTL ships jump away, the Cylons launch an attack on the remaining ships.

At the Ragnar Anchorage space station, Adama is attacked by a supposed arms dealer named Leoben Conoy who claims to be simply bootlegging supplies, but who is clearly being affected by the radiation cloud surrounding Ragnar, which humans are immune to. Adama deduces that he is facing a new type of Cylon that looks, sounds, and acts human.

As the civilian fleet joins the *Galactica* at Ragnar, President Roslin appoints Dr. Baltar, who has not disclosed his suborning by the Cylons, as one of her scientific advisers to combat the Cylons. Number Six reveals herself to Baltar in hallucinatory form while attempting to direct his behavior. She suggests that she planted a microchip inside Baltar's brain while he slept, allowing her to transmit her image into his conscious mind. Responding to one of her suggestions, he is compelled to identify Aaron Doral, a public relations specialist, as a Cylon agent masquerading as a human. Despite his protests and the lack of any

Original language	English
No. of episodes	2
Production	
Executive producers	<u>David Eick</u> <u>Ronald D. Moore</u>
Producer	<u>Harvey Frand</u>
Production locations	<u>Vancouver</u> , British <u>Columbia</u>
Cinematography	<u>Joel Ransom</u>
Editor	<u>Dany Cooper</u>
Running time	180 minutes
Production company	<u>USA Cable</u> <u>Entertainment</u>
Distributor	<u>NBCUniversal</u> <u>Television</u> <u>Distribution</u>
Release	
Original network	<u>Sci Fi</u>
Original release	December 8 – December 9, 2003
Chronology	
Followed by	<u><i>Battlestar</i></u> <u><i>Galactica</i></u> (2004)
Related	<u><i>Battlestar</i></u> <u><i>Galactica</i></u> (1978)

evidence to support the accusation, Doral is left at Ragnar when the *Galactica* departs.

As the Cylons blockade Ragnar, the *Galactica* and its fleet of Vipers engage the Cylon fleet in order to allow the civilian fleet to escape by "jumping" to a distant, unexplored area outside of their star system. The *Galactica* and the colonial fleet make good their escape. Adama then attempts to lift the morale of the surviving humans by announcing plans to reach a legendary thirteenth colony called "Earth", whose existence and location have been closely guarded military secrets. Roslin is skeptical and later confronts Adama and makes him admit that Earth is simply an ancient myth.



Caprica under bombardment during the Cylon attack.

Returning to his quarters, Adama finds an anonymous note has been left for him stating "There are only 12 Cylon models." On Ragnar, Doral clearly appears to be suffering from radiation poisoning that has been shown to affect only Cylons. His identity as a Cylon is confirmed when a group of Cylons, including the metallic Cylon Centurions and several humanoid Cylons consisting of multiple copies of the Number Six, Doral, and Leoben models, come to retrieve Doral. In a twist ending, one of the group appears to be Boomer, indicating that her counterpart on the *Galactica* is a Cylon as well.

Cast

Actor	Role	Notes
<u>Edward James Olmos</u>	Commander <u>William Adama</u>	Commander of the <u>Battlestar <i>Galactica</i></u>
<u>Mary McDonnell</u>	<u>Laura Roslin</u>	President after the destruction of the Twelve Colonies
<u>Katee Sackhoff</u>	Lieutenant <u>Kara "Starbuck" Thrace</u>	Colonial Viper pilot
<u>Jamie Bamber</u>	Captain <u>Lee "Apollo" Adama</u>	Colonial Viper pilot
<u>James Callis</u>	Dr. <u>Gaius Baltar</u>	Scientist and defense researcher
<u>Tricia Helfer</u>	<u>Number Six</u>	Cylon
<u>Callum Keith Rennie</u>	<u>Leoben Conoy</u>	Cylon posing as a human arms dealer
<u>Grace Park</u>	Lieutenant Junior Grade <u>Sharon "Boomer" Valerii</u>	<u>Colonial Raptor</u> pilot teamed with Helo, Cylon
<u>Michael Hogan</u>	Colonel <u>Saul Tigh</u>	<u>Executive officer</u> of the <u>Battlestar <i>Galactica</i></u>
<u>Matthew Bennett</u>	<u>Aaron Doral</u>	Cylon posing as a public relations agent
<u>Paul Campbell</u>	<u>Billy Keikeya</u>	President Roslin's aide
<u>Aaron Douglas</u>	Chief Petty Officer <u>Galen Tyrol</u>	In charge of maintenance of Colonial Vipers and Colonial Raptors
<u>Lorena Gale</u>	Elosha	Priestess
<u>Kandyse McClure</u>	Petty Officer <u>Anastasia "Dee" Dualla</u>	Communications officer on the <u>Battlestar <i>Galactica</i></u>
<u>Connor Widdows</u>	<u>Boxey</u>	Young boy who survives the Holocaust on Caprica
<u>Alessandro Juliani</u>	Lieutenant <u>Felix Gaeta</u>	Tactical officer on the <u>Battlestar <i>Galactica</i></u>
<u>Nicki Clyne</u>	Specialist <u>Cally</u>	Repairs Colonial Vipers and <u>Colonial Raptors</u> under Chief Tyrol
<u>Tahmoh Penikett</u>	Lieutenant <u>Karl "Helo" Agathon</u>	<u>Electronic countermeasures</u> officer teamed with Boomer
<u>Alonso Oyarzun</u>	Socinus	One of Tyrol's deck hands
<u>Ty Olsson</u>	Lt. <u>Aaron Kelly</u>	The <u>LSO</u> on <i>Galactica</i>
<u>Lymari Nadal</u>	Giana	Gemonese woman rescued from the nuclear attacks

Production

Development

None of the previous attempts to remake or continue the story of *Battlestar Galactica* by Tom DeSanto, Bryan Singer, and original series star Richard Hatch, were successful. From the mid-1990s onwards, actor Richard Hatch (Captain Apollo from the original version of the series) made numerous efforts to revive the series, including co-writing several novels and a comic book series, and even went as far as to produce a proof-of-concept trailer called *The Second Coming*. Hatch's campaign was based on the continuation of the original series, set several years after the final episode. DeSanto and Singer's planned version, which actually went into pre-production before being delayed and then scrapped following the events of the 9/11 terrorist attacks of 2001, was also a continuation, set some 25 years after the original series. Both versions ignored the events that occurred in *Galactica 1980*.

In 2002, Universal Pictures (the legal rights holder to *Battlestar Galactica*), instead opted for a remake rather than a sequel. David Eick approached Ronald D. Moore about a new four-hour *Battlestar Galactica* miniseries for Universal. Moore developed the miniseries with Eick, writing the scripts and updating the old series, also developing a backstory that could work for a regular weekly series, should the miniseries be successful. At the same time, Moore was approached by HBO about running a new television series, *Carnivàle*. While Moore worked on the first year of *Carnivàle*, Eick ran the day-to-day production of the *Battlestar Galactica* miniseries in Canada. *Battlestar Galactica* aired in 2003 and became the highest-rated miniseries on cable that year, and the best ratings that year for any show on Sci-Fi. After *Carnivàle* reached the end of its first season and the Sci-Fi Channel ordered a thirteen-episode weekly series of *Battlestar Galactica*, Moore left *Carnivàle* to assume a full-time executive producer role on *Battlestar Galactica*.^[3]

Filming

The special effects of the miniseries were created by Zoic Studios, who previously worked on the *Firefly* television series. In the opening minutes of Part 1, as the character of Laura Roslin sits in her doctor's office, a *Firefly* class ship is seen flying above the city. However, the ship does not appear in the Season 2 episode "Epiphanies" in which Roslin reflects on her wait in the doctor's office.

The regular series also contains effects by Atmosphere Studios,^[4] Enigma Animation Productions and the production's own effects team.^[5] Executive producer Ronald D. Moore said the outer space battles were created and rendered to look like a Discovery Channel crew was actually shooting footage.^[6] Filming took place in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Music

The soundtrack for the miniseries was largely scored by Richard Gibbs.

Reception

Critical response

On Rotten Tomatoes the mini series has an approval rating of 83% based on reviews from 12 critics.^[7]

Brian Lowry of *Variety* wrote: *Battlestar Galactica* takes a while to find its directional heading and build up steam, but once it does, this proves to be a surprisingly engrossing odyssey."^[8] Ned Martel of *The New York Times* wrote: "The project might all be an exploitative departure from the *Battlestar Galactica* brand name, but it's hard not to like where the spacemen (and spacemen) are going."^[9] Sonia Saraiya of *The A.V. Club* reviewing the mini series in 2014 gave it a grade of A-.^[10]

Awards

Wins

- [2003 Visual Effects Society Awards](#) – Outstanding Visual Effects in a Television Miniseries, Movie or a Special
- [2003 Saturn Awards](#) – Best Television Presentation

Nominations

- [2003 Visual Effects Society Awards](#) – Outstanding Compositing in a Televised Program, Music Video or Commercial
- [2003 Visual Effects Society Awards](#) – Outstanding Models and Miniatures in a Televised Program, Music Video or Commercial
- [2004 Emmy Awards](#) – Outstanding Single-Camera Picture Editing for a Miniseries, Movie or a Special (Miniseries, Night 1)
- [2004 Emmy Awards](#) – Outstanding Sound Editing for a Miniseries, Movie or a Special (Miniseries, Night 2)
- [2004 Emmy Awards](#) – Outstanding Special Visual Effects for a Miniseries, Movie or a Special (Miniseries, Night 1)
- [2003 Saturn Awards](#) – [Best Supporting Actress on Television, Katee Sackhoff](#)

Novelization

In 2005, [Tor Books](#) published *Battlestar Galactica* (the miniseries), by [Jeffrey A. Carver](#)—a novelization of the 2003 miniseries. The book incorporates deleted scenes and gives background information not seen on screen.^[11]

Notes

1. Credited with the pseudonym "Christopher Eric James".

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2. "NBC Spotlights Sci Fi Channel Miniseries Hit 'Battlestar Galactica' in Special Presentation on Saturday, January 8" (<http://www.thefutoncritic.com/news.aspx?id=20041206nbc04>) (Press release). NBC. December 6, 2004. Retrieved November 11, 2007 – via [The Futon Critic](#).
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8. Lowry, Brian (December 4, 2003). "Battlestar Galactica" (<https://variety.com/2003/tv/reviews/battlestar-galactica-4-1200537629/>). *Variety*.
9. Martel, Ned (December 8, 2003). "TELEVISION REVIEW; The Cylons Are Back and Humanity Is in Deep Trouble" (<https://www.nytimes.com/2003/12/08/arts/television-review-the-cylons-are-back-and-humanity-is-in-deep-trouble.html>). *The New York Times*.
10. Sonia Saraiya (2014). "Battlestar Galactica: Miniseries, Part 1" (<https://tv.avclub.com/battlestar-galactica-miniseries-part-1-1798181242>). *The A.V. Club*.
11. Carver, Jeffrey A.; Larson, Glen A. (December 27, 2005). *Battlestar Galactica*. ISBN 0765315416.

External links

- [Official website \(http://www.syfy.com/battlestar/\)](http://www.syfy.com/battlestar/)
- [Battlestar Galactica \(https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0314979/\)](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0314979/) at IMDb
- [Miniseries, Night 1 \(https://en.battlestarwikiclone.org/wiki/Miniseries,_Night_1\)](https://en.battlestarwikiclone.org/wiki/Miniseries,_Night_1) and [Miniseries, Night 2 \(https://en.battlestarwikiclone.org/wiki/Miniseries,_Night_2\)](https://en.battlestarwikiclone.org/wiki/Miniseries,_Night_2) at the Battlestar Wiki



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