# 50 assets Hollywood re-used

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*It's fun to spot Hollywood saving a buck now and again by resorting to its vast archives of props, sound effects and existing films. This is neither a definitive nor a 'best of' list; it's just some 're-uses' that I happen to have come across over time, so please drop us a line if you have anything to add to it, and we'll give credit.*

## Almost everything - The 'Wilhelm Scream'

*Star Wars*' sound-wizard Ben Burtt is credited with reviving the popularity of this oft-used sound effect after he found an archive reel of effects including "Man being eaten by alligator", and grafted it onto the demise of a storm trooper that Luke Skywalker kills. Thereafter using the sound became an in-joke, permeating movie, TV and videogame production. You can hear it in *X-Men 3* (when a 'cured' mutant falls to his death), during Lightning's dream in *Cars* (2006), as the response of an innocent bystander to being pushed aside by Mr. Pink in *Reservoir Dogs* (1992), as the cry of one of the vampire victims in the initial massacre in *30 Days Of Night* (2007), after Arlene's run-in with a car in *Kill Bill* (2003) and...wow, *loads* of other places. The sound originates from the Gary Cooper western *Distant Drums* (1951), and is ascribed to singer Shep Wooley. The scream was named after the character the sound was dubbed onto in *The Charge at Feather River* (1953), and here's a popular YouTube its uses.Hollywood Lost And Found has a fairly exhaustive list of 'Wilhelms'.

## The Rocky Horror Picture Show (1975)

The nicely obsessive cosmofactory.org unearthed a re-use for Richard O'Brien's cult musical smash. The tank used for the creation of Rocky in the film was pinched from Hammer's *Revenge Of Frankenstein* (1958).





## Otherworld (US TV, 1985) - "Princess Metra"

A nice re-use was found by otherworldonline.org, who spotted blasters that had already done the rounds in Battlestar Galactica and *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* (US TV 1979). The props created for Glen A. Larson productions were to continue in circulation for many years, with *Buck Rogers*' set-dressing turning up in the likes of *Star Trek: TNG* and *Star Trek: Voyager*. For all we know they're still being re-painted and tweaked in the service of small-screen sci-fi.

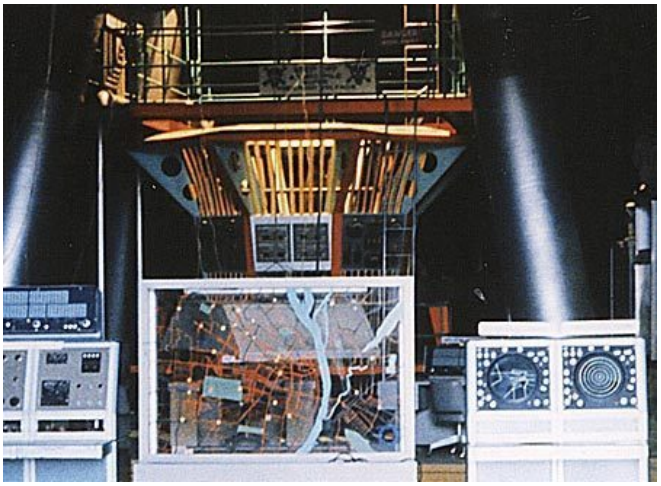


## Batman (US TV, 1966) - Bat-generator from Our Man Flint

A nice lift from 007 pastiche *Our Man Flint* (1966) was noticed by www.66batman.org. The steel construction was not only used twice in the original film (see second picture below, where it has been inverted for a new set), but appropriated by the caped crusader for his sanctum sanctorum....







The same source notes the re-use of consoles from the 1966 SF hit *Fantastic Voyage* in the Batcave, and also the re-use of a bit of *Lost In Space* tech. The post goes on to say that the prop was originally created as lab-tech in *Fantastic Voyage*, but I'm not sure the picture in the thread bears that out.






## Many, many shows - 'Castle Thunder'

If you've ever watched a cheesy old horror movie, you'll recognise Castle Thunder as an old friend. This stormy sound effect was created for *Frankenstein* (1931), and was a sound FX staple for sixty years thereafter, appearing in films such as *The Monster Squad*, *Back To The Future*, *Big Trouble In Little China*, *Lady And The Tramp*, *Escape From Alcatraz* (a notable use) and many many other films, cartoons and TV series. Again, Hollywood Lost And Found have a nice list of some of its better-known usages, and you can hear the effect there as well.



## Source: Fantastic Voyage (1966)

As an expensively-created source of original sci-fi props, *Fantastic Voyage* was to contribute to many more films and shows than just *Batman*. Here are just a few that are known, all from Irwin Allen productions...

*Lost in Space* "The Derelict" The spaceship that swallows the Jupiter 2 re-used the 'brain' sets from *Voyage*. A 'blood-vessel' set was also used as a conveyor tube in another episode.

*Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* "Jonah and the Whale" The inner-ear set from *Voyage* used as a mini-set for whale interior.



*The Poseidon Adventure* The rescue craft filmed but never seen in the movie was a re-rigged *Proteus*, and this unused shoot effectively killed the prop.

Raquel Welch's laser-rifle from *Voyage* is also reported to have been modified and re-used in other Allen TV productions.

## Source: Ice Station Zebra (1968)

Submarine footage from the Alex Sturges (very) cold war thriller ended up doing the rounds extensively in Hollywood and beyond...

*Assault on the Wayne* (US TV, 1971) Re-used sets and effects footage from *Zebra*.

*Gray Lady Down* (1978), *Never Say Never Again* (1983) and *Firefox* (1982) are just a few of the other movies that saved a few bucks on submarines by using those created for *Zebra*.

## The Ten Commandments (1956)

The material properties for *The Egyptian* (1954), a demi-biblical effort, were a budget-slashing boon for Cecil B. De Mille's remake of his silent classic. A few actors also had roles in both films, though *Commandments* is set 70 years after *The Egyptian*.

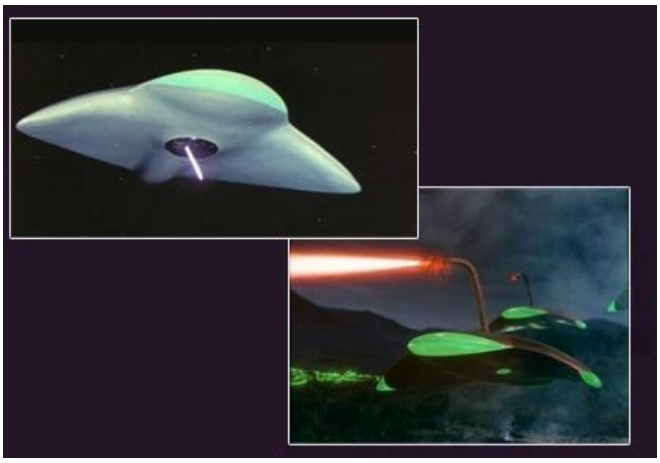


## Star Trek II; The Wrath Of Khan (1982) - Regula 1 space station

The Regula space station hosting the much sought-after Genesis Project was a revamp of the orbital space station from *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* (1979). *Thanks to Seb Patrick for pointing this one out.*

## Robinson Crusoe on Mars (1964) - The flying machines from War Of The Worlds (1953)

Byron Haskin re-used the Martian death machines from his earlier work to provide the peculiarly-moving spaceships in this under-regarded and very interesting SF outing. The craft were sprayed silver and their rays emerged not from the 'bent street lamps' of the original design but from the underside of the vessel.



## Aliens (1986) - Movements from Piranha 2

James Cameron re-cycled internal mechanisms from one of the flying piranhas in his earlier *Piranha 2: The Spawning* in order to give the 'playful' alien face-hugger in the lab a little life. It's also said that the sliding doors used in the base at LV421 and the video-phone tolling use sound effects from *The Prisoner* (UK TV, 1968).

## Independence Day (1996)

Roland Emmerich borrowed liberally from several other productions to get extra value for his alien-invasion flick: the stealth bombers use sets from *Broken Arrow*, the submarines sets from *Crimson Tide* and the White House sets from *The American President* (also used in *Mars Attacks!*). Composer David Arnold reused some of his score from Danny Cannon's *The Young Americans* (1993), and Jeff Goldblum's 'Must go faster!' line is not just repeated from *Jurassic Park*, but is actually the same piece of loop as in Spielberg's film.

## Alien (1979)

It's fairly common practice in rough-assemblies for editors to use previous scores by the film's assigned composer, but Terry Rawlings found that one of Jerry Goldsmith's motifs from *Freud* (1962) was absolutely perfect for the 're-awakening sequence' at the start of *Alien*. Ridley Scott obtained rights to use the piece in place of the section Goldsmith had scored, and the composer was generally unhappy about how his *Alien* composition was chopped about and substituted, sometimes for classical music and sometimes for sections from his own back-catalogue. The soundtrack contains many guttural pieces that are very expressive of the film's themes, but never made it into the film. The vacuum-formed corridor-panels Roger Christian created and commissioned for the Nostromo turned up in almost every space-set SF series in Britain over the next twenty years, including *Doctor Who*.

## Casablanca (1942) - Sets from Now Voyager (1942)

Bogey's most famous and celebrated work was subject to the usual strictures and penny-pinching of any other 'B'-movie filler; the train station set was a lift from *Now Voyager* and the film's opening music a re-worked version, by the composer, of Max Steiner's *The Lost Patrol* (1934).




## The Incredible Hulk (US TV, 1978) "Never Give a Trucker an Even Break" - Duel (1971) footage.

Rather than finding footage that suits a story, here an episode of old green-skin's adventures seems to have been written around the re-use of Steven Spielberg's classic road-movie nightmare. Spielberg himself was very displeased with this appropriation and henceforth had such used prohibited in contracts for future films.



## Back To The Future Part II (1990) - Vehicles from other movies

Careful examination will reveal a Spinner from *Blade Runner* (1982) and a StarCar from *The Last Starfighter* (1984, actually the first movie to customise a DeLorean into a sci-fi vehicle). *Part II* also utilised ariel footage from *Firefox* (1982), as well as the Oscillation Overthruster from *The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai Across the 8th Dimension* (1984), which seems to have been re-tooled as the flux capacitor.

## The Blues Brothers (1980)

The Colleen Camp playboy poster from *Apocalypse Now* (1979) (of which there is an almost identical version featuring Lynda Carter, the authenticity of which is disputed) turns up in Elwood's apartment. This spread was specially created for *Apocalypse Now* and was never a street- item.




## Damnation Alley (1978)

The missile-base destruction sequence re-used footage from *Operation Crossbow* (1965). George Peppard starred in both films.

## The Matrix (1999) - Rooftop and other sets.

Sets from *Dark City* (1998) are prominent in *The Matrix*, most notably the rooftop sets used for the first 'superjump' of Carrie Ann Moss, from where Rufus Sewell observed the aliens' replica city changing shape in his film of the year before.

## Sin City (2005) - Swords from Kill Bill (2003).

Miho (Devon Aoki) uses the exact same weaponry employed by the Crazy 88 in *Kill Bill Part 1*.

## Batman (1989) - Processor set from Aliens (1986).

Discovering that Pinewood Studios had retained the LV421 colony processor set, Tim Burton set them to use for the scene where Jack Nicholson is injured by acid.

## Cat People (1942) - The Magnificent Ambersons sets.

Val Lewton's low-budget - and now classic - horror got a boost in production values from the prestigious Orson Welles production.



## The X-Files (1993-2001) "Salvage" - The Dude's car.

The 4-door 1973 Ford Torino totalled in this *X-Files* outing was the remaining vehicle of the two used as Jeff Bridges' car in *The Big Lebowski* (1998). The other was wrecked during production of *Lebowski's* car-park fight scene.

## Muppets from Space (1999) - Sesame Street prop.

The rubber duck in this outbound Muppets outing is the same one Ernie had in *Sesame Street*.

## Beneath The Planet Of The Apes (1970) - Sets from Hello Dolly (1969).

The opulent Harmonia Gardens set from *Hello Dolly* was recycled for the first of the successful sequels to *Planet Of The Apes*, and given a post- apocalyptic make-over.

## Planet Of The Apes (2001) - Starship Troopers helmet.

Tim Burton's critically mauled remake used a revamped helmet from the Paul Verhoeven SF outing, painted black and with an added visor.



## Source: Executive Decision (1996) - Oceanic airways.

Airlines are understandably reluctant to get involved in stories featuring air-disasters or hijacking, so the fictional airline created for this Kurt Russell action thriller was re-used in *Lost*, *Code 11-14*, *Diagnosis Murder*, *Nowhere To Land* and other TV productions. Shots were taken for *Executive Decision* of a Boeing 747 with livery adjusted to reflect the make-believe airline. Ironically the same plane was actually hijacked in 1998.

## Source: Forbidden Planet (1956)

Extensive re-use of Robert Kinoshita's sleek 'Robby The Robot' suit has transcended the normal boundaries of prop-recycling: the robot has his own page at the IMDB, and it's a hell of a career. Leslie Nielson's spaceship was re-used several times over in *The Twilight Zone*, both as a model and also sections of the vast 2/3rds of full-size set created for the film.

## Carry On Cleo (1964)

This historical entry in the *Carry On* series was filmed on abandoned sets for the London leg of production on *Cleopatra*. The sets were never used for anything else besides *Cleo*, as the ill-health of star Elizabeth Taylor shut the production down for a long period, during which it moved to Cinecittà in Rome.



## They Live (1988) - PKE meters from Ghostbusters.

John Carpenter re-used Venkman and Co.'s ghost-detecting devices as communication equipment in his paranoid tale of alien invasion.



## Young Frankenstein (1974) - Props from Frankenstein (1931)

Mel Brooks sought out Kenneth Strickfaden's original lab-devices for his spoof/homage, though it might have been cheaper and easier to recreate them.

## A.P.E.X. (1994) - Damnation Alley (1978) Landmaster.

The extended vehicle for the 1978 Roger Zelazney adaptation turned up again here, and has been seen in various redressed states in other movies and TV shows.

## Firefly - "The Train Job" - Armour from Starship Troopers

Paul Verhoeven contributes to SF TV again - the alliance armour seen in this episode is from his 1997 cult actioner.

## Monty Python's Life Of Brian (1978) - Sets from Jesus of Nazareth (1977)

It may have appealed to the Pythons' perversity that such a respectful production as Franco Zeffirelli's big-budget adaptation of the New Testament would end up doing double-service for their controversial look at the political side of the church.



## Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure (1988) - Footage from War And Peace.

Napoleon's battle is lifted from King Vidor's *War and Peace* (1956).

## Twelve Monkeys (1995) - Monkey from The Andromeda Strain (1971)

A monkey's death throes from the Robert Wise SF film is inserted into a news report for Terry Gilliam's tale of apocalyptic redemption.

## Hitman (2007) - Footage from Dark Angel (USTV, 2000)

Footage in *Hitman*'s opening credits is mostly lifted from the TV show about genetically engineered assassins.

## Hope and Glory (1987) - Ariel footage from The Battle Of Britain.

Footage seen in the newsreels is taken from the 1969 Guy Hamilton film.

## Earthquake (1977) - Torn Curtain footage.

Panic-stricken extras in this huge 1970s disaster movie were provided in part from the Hitchcock cold war thriller. *Earthquake* also took shots of fire-engines from TV's *Hawaii-Five-O*.

## Citizen Kane (1941) - Footage from The Son Of Kong (1933)

The background for the Florida Everglades picnic expedition is rear-projected footage from the monster-sequel.



## King Kong (1933)

The jungle sets from another Fay Wray/Robert Armstrong pic, *The Most Dangerous Game* (1932), were re-employed to more lasting acclaim in the Willis O'Brien classic. *Bird Of Paradise* (1932) furnished many of the native huts, whilst Cecil B. DeMille's *The King of Kings* (1927) contributed heavily to the great wall in *Kong*.

## Gone With The Wind (1939)

The burning of the Atlanta depot, the first and most challenging scene of the production, involved destroying several old sets including some from *King Kong* (1933); the 'great wall' set had already been re-used in *The Garden of Allah* (1936).



## Singing In The Rain (1952)

Stanley Donen re-used sets and props from the Greta Garbo film *Flesh and the Devil* (1926), and Debbie Reynolds' car was the car from Mickey Rooney's highly successful *Andy Hardy* film series.

## From The Earth To The Moon (1958)

The atonal synthesised sounds created by Louis and Bebe Barron for *Forbidden Planet* (1956) were re-used for this RKO SF movie.

## Time Bandits (1981)

The scene depicting the demise of the Titanic is slowed-down and recoloured footage from earlier Titanic biopic *A Night To Remember* (1958).

## Prehistoric Women (aka Slave Girls, 1967)

Hammer re-used sets and props from *One Million Years BC* (1966) for this Michael Carreras-helmed sequel, and Val Guest would repeat the trick three years later for *When Dinosaurs Ruled The Earth*.

## Battlestar Galactica (US TV, 2004)

The 'Pegasus' set is from the failed John Woo pilot *The Robinsons: Lost in Space*.

## Batman (US TV, 1966)

This is worth its own mention - Glenn Ford's 1955 Lincoln Futura in *It Started with a Kiss* (1959), a proof-of-concept showcar, was remodelled as the Batmobile for the *Batman* TV series.



## Scary Movie 4 (2006)

Lampooning Spielberg's gritty re-imagining of *War Of The Worlds*, the *Scary Movie* team actually used the same 'crashed airplane' set as in his movie. ILM also loaned the team software models for the tripod scenes.

## Jurassic Park (1992)

The mesh and rigging for the CGI figure of Gennaro in *Jurassic Park* (used when he is eaten off the toilet by the T-Rex) is a slightly re-worked CGI Robert Patrick from *Terminator 2*.

## Battlestar Galactica (USTV, 1978) "War of the Gods"

The wreck of the Iblis was scavenged and rebuilt from the critically-lambasted TV production of *Brave New World*.

## Countess Dracula (1970)

Our Ingrid was swanning around some beautiful sets in this film. Such opulence was beyond the Hammer budget, but luckily the sets were

available for re-dressing from the previous year's *Anne Of A Thousand Days*.

*nb:* Doctor Who *was created specifically to generate extra value out of the BBC's historical sets, which it continues to do in the likes of* Fires Of Pompeii *(*Rome*) and others.*