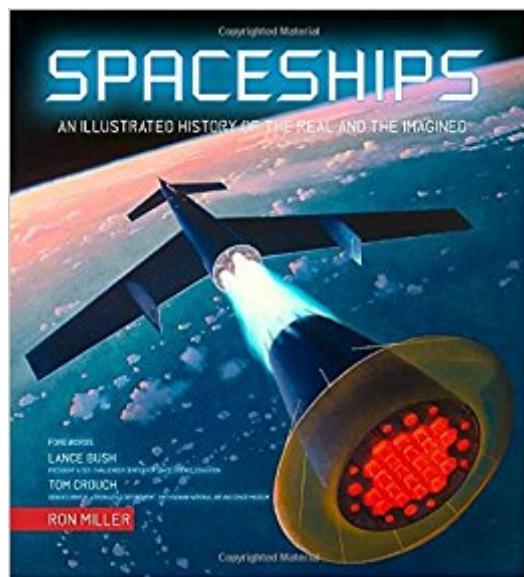


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# Spaceships: An Illustrated History Of The Real And The Imagined



## Synopsis

How have actual spaceships influenced the design of fictional ones like the Millenium Falcon and the Starship Enterprise? Did a fiction series in Collier's magazine really inspire us to create real-life space stations like Mir and the ISS? How have our depictions of space travel developed as the reality of space travel changed? In his new book *Spaceships: An Illustrated History of the Real and the Imagined*, Ron Miller shows that when it comes to manned spacecraft, art actually does imitate life and, even more bizarrely, life imitates art. In fact, astronautics owes its origins to art. Long before engineers and scientists took the possibility of spaceflight seriously, virtually all of its aspects had been explored in art and literature. Miller takes readers on a visual journey through the history of the spaceship both in our collective imagination and in reality. The vivid illustrations trace the spaceship through its conception, engineering, and building, from the practical origins of spaceflight in the wartime V-2 rocket to future Mars programs. They also chart, in exquisite detail, the ubiquity of spaceships in the golden age of space travel (1950s and '60s) plus their broad influence in popular art, television, film, and literature. *Spaceships* reminds us of the romance of manned space travel as it has been, as we imagined it could be, and as it may be in the future.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

BOOKLISTSpace really is our final frontier, and mankind has been figuring out how to get there for a long, long time. With this new book, Smithsonian has published a heavily illustrated (the only pages without illustrations are the index!) compendium of all things related to human space flight.

Combining actual history with speculation and viewing it from a very international perspective, Miller's book does an excellent job of presenting the topic from our collective imagination (Star Trek, Star Wars, and Buck Rogers) as well as from reality (Apollo, Mir Space Station, and the space shuttle). It will be enjoyed equally by history buffs, science-fiction fans, and scientists. **CHOICE** Miller's new work is a beautiful picture book of real spacecraft, spacecraft currently under development, and other spacecraft that have been imagined or presented in literature, film, and other forms of art. The book follows a chronological order with development—beginning with the “dreamers,”—dating back to Copernicus and Galileo, and continuing all the way through future missions that have yet to take flight. Along with real spacecraft, Miller mixes in imaginary visions conceived by the likes of Jules Verne, Walt Disney, and Gene Roddenberry. The book includes many obscure drawings, photographs, and sketches from a wide variety of individuals; these show how the visionaries that created these images helped influence the scientists and engineers who play significant roles in developing actual spacecraft. Overall, this book is appropriate for a general audience, especially those individuals interested in spaceships. This book has the potential to influence the next generation of rocket scientists.

RON MILLER is an artist and author who specializes in writing and illustrating books on astronomy, astronautics, and science fiction. He has served on the faculty at the International Space University, as contributing editor for Air & Space/Smithsonian magazine, and as art director for the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum's Albert Einstein Planetarium.

This book would be excellent but for the font type and background colors. I am minimally visually impaired. I say minimally because I rarely have any problems at all. But most pages of this text use a faint intensity small font on a dark color background. Really..... I thought it was just me so I had my two daughters and my son take a look, they all three have excellent vision. They remarked that it was essentially unreadable because of the font and color choices. So, I persevered, I used a huge magnifying device, and bright light. It usually takes me about a day to read a book like this. This took me a week!! **HOWEVER** it was worth it. The authors have written a excellent little history of spacecraft, real and imagined! What a **GREAT** literary effort! It was fun and entertaining, and even for an old science and science fiction hack like me, I actually learned a lot about the history of "Spaceships." It is **UNFORTUNATE** that the authors have their work ruined by poor layout and non-textual editing errors!

Ron Miller's book is really a treat; not only is it packed with clear images (where possible) the new digital artwork for some of the spaceships adds a modern view of the subjects. The text isn't just secondary to the pictures and greatly adds to the enjoyment of the book. As a model builder, I found the book to be a good companion to Jack Hagerty and Jon Rogers "The Spaceship Handbook", which has excellent dimensional drawings for many of the spaceships but maybe lacks the range and depth of images in "Spaceships: An Illustrated History of the Real and the Imagined". "Spaceships" is also a good companion to Ron Miller's encyclopedic "the Dream Machines". The only drawback to this new book is that some of the text is hard to read - small text on faint gray lines - at times it feels like a Captcha. I received a copy of the book in exchange for a picture of one of my models on page 99. I bought a second copy to give as a gift.

I would really like to have given this book five stars, because it is visually spectacular and loaded with wonderful information. Unfortunately it is physically difficult to read in places (small light print on a colored background), and it contains a surprising number of errors. My copy came with an errata sheet, but they still missed a few (e.g. Redstone was not an ICBM and Salute was not simply two Soyuz vehicles joined together). That said, I still greatly enjoyed the book and certainly do not regret my purchase.

I highly recommend this book if you love spaceships! This book was a Christmas gift from my wife. The book is hefty with a gorgeous cover and the best interior design I've seen for this type of book. It is packed with information and crystal clear photos and illustrations. But it is far more than a pretty coffee table book. The history of spaceships covered in its chapters ranges from vehicles from fiction of old to today's governmental and commercial space vehicles. It even covers future Mars craft. The text manages to stay as interesting as the images, which is quite a feat. It is full of fascinating facts and history, providing a feel for the people who developed these craft. The book's text creates a tapestry that somehow pulls it all together. I'm looking forward to spending time with it over my holidays. Fabulous book for the price, too!

Love this stuff, since I grew up in the space age of the 50's. Excellent price for the size, content and quality. And they helpfully included an errata sheet. Ron Miller fires another one into orbit! One big improvement for future printings: The text portions use a font with very thin lines, and the background color of the paper stock has blue streaky lines running across it. This makes the print hard to read, especially for those of us without eagle eyes. I strongly recommend switching to plain

white paper stock for future printings.

Great book! Well documented and interesting... My dad was a aerospace engineer in the early 60's and space travel has always been an interest to me. When I was young I used to draw rocketships and love Chesley Bonestell space illustrations... leading to becoming an art professor at a major university in California.

Another top quality book from Ron Miller. Many pictures and stories I never new about. The quality of the printing and binding is very good to.

This book is not only filled with interesting facts and images it is also beautiful and visually stunning. A really outstanding addition to my collection of space exploration materials.

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