

'Young Indy' is rich, rewarding viewing

Globe-trotting series an armchair delight

By Suzanne Gill

Once upon a time, some 40 years ago in the sleepy California farm town of Modesto, there lived a boy named George and his dog, Indiana. George loved history, and he had a complete collection of Landmark Books, a series of young readers. It's easy to imagine him engrossed in the pages of "Custer's Last Stand," "Teddy Roosevelt and the Rough Riders," "Sequoyah: Leader of the Cherokees" or "Napoleon and the Battle of Waterloo," filling his mind with tales of romance and adventure.

Easy, too, to imagine how those stories would return to fuel the creative fire of a grown-up George Lucas, Oscar-winning filmmaker and motive force behind the "Star Wars" and "Indiana Jones" sagas.

Beginning Wednesday, March 4, Lucas hopes to bring his love of history to another generation with "The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles." It is not, he says, "an action-adventure series like the features are. I've burned out on

writing action-adventure. This is more of a personal, coming-of-age kind of project.

"It's a series designed to ask questions. It will bring up subjects and introduce certain kinds of characters and make them come alive. I hope it will be helpful to young people, to introduce them to the fascination of history."

Viewers should be prepared for a few changes in Jones' own history as well. For those who make the leap, there are rich rewards to be claimed in the currency of possibilities.

Three actors star as Indiana Jones: Corey Carrier as the youngest Indy traveling the globe with his parents; Sean Patrick Flanery as the teenage Indiana; and George Hall as the 93-year-old archaeologist and adventurer looking back on his life. This oldest Indy could easily be relegated to voice-over status or dropped altogether. After all, it's "Young Indy" we've tuned in to see.

The stories take place on four continents during a period from 1906 to 1917. The two-hour pilot and 15 episodes that follow have been shot on locations from the Great

Wall of China to the pyramids of Egypt. This season, Indy will meet T.E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia), Teddy Roosevelt, Sigmund Freud, Winston Churchill, Mata Hari, Albert Schweitzer, Pancho Villa and a 14-year-old Norman Rockwell. (Lucas has 29 more story ideas already percolating.)

The project boasts top-notch writers and directors including Rosemary Ann Sisson ("Upstairs, Downstairs") and Gavin Scott ("Ragtime"); Jim O'Brien ("The Jewel in the Crown"); Simon Winchester ("Lonesome Dove"); Billie August ("Pelle the Conqueror") and Terry Jones ("Monty Python").

Vanessa Redgrave guest stars as a suffragette and Margaret Tyzack (Claudius' mother in "I, Claudius") plays young Indy's tutor.

Having done his logistical homework, Lucas makes the most of every location, shooting scenes for two or more episodes at each stop. Every penny of the \$1.5 million-per-episode budget seems to be on the screen.

The stories involving 10-year-old Indy are the most engaging, capturing the wonder of childhood at its best, a glorious gift of opportunity and a bookish boy's dream come true.

"You can't create a character," Lucas reflects, "and then not have it be your alter ego. I would like to have had a boyhood like this one. I guess I did, in part."

Fans at home will see Staley in action when Virginia and North Carolina State clash Saturday, Feb. 29, on CBS.

the nation's most complete player.

If Virginia is, as many preseason publications predicted, on a collision course for a championship-game repeat with Tennessee, it will be far from a one-woman effort. Not only does Tammi Reiss combine with Staley to give Virginia one of the nation's top backcourts, but the trio of center Melanie Wagener and 6'5" twins Heidi and Heather Burge gives the Cavaliers a dominating inside game.



Monday and Tuesday on NBC, Mel Harris and Corbin Bernsen star in the dramatic miniseries *Grass Roots*.

Virginia's Staley rules the court

By Steve Paschal

In her three years at Virginia, Dawn Staley's just about done it all. The Cavalier guard is a three-time All-American who two years ago led her school to its first final-four appearance and, last year, took them to within three points of a national championship.

Staley was already being heralded as the most exciting women's basketball player ever when she arrived on the Virginia campus in 1988. She immediately began living up to expectations, thrilling fans with her no-look passes and near-magical ball handling as much as her 18 points per game scoring average. Last year, Staley's scoring dropped by more than three points a game, but her seven assists and six steals per game made her arguably

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