

Subcity Sci-Fi - Subcity Radio (University of Glasgow) Best Entertainment Show 2008

Gernsback's optimism, Tesla's insanity, the many unfulfilled dreams of the past. Jetpacks by 1991 you say? Sorry, all we have is MC Hammer in his parachute pants. Disappointing, but at least robots haven't taken over the world... yet.

Subcity Sci-Fi is an hour long show based on the qualities of old time radio (OTR) specifically looking back to what the past thought of the future in the form of radio theatre. The show would consist of either an original script incorporating elements of science fiction or an out of copyright radio play from the 1930's to the 1950's. After the play the presenters would discuss what happened and apply the play to a more modern context. There were numerous other shows which did not follow such a standard format, and we often incorporated new ideas. These included obsessive Star Trek fans taking over the station, a children's DJ toy growing sentient and performing on its own, an interview with a Clanger and future versions of the presenters travelling through time to warn the past that in the future all the treble has ran out, and as a result all music sounds like Drum n Bass.

Ciaran and I were inspired to start the show after seeing an advert in the Queen Margaret Union looking for actors for a Sci-Fi play. We thought, why not put on our own Sci-Fi play every week as a radio show? Fuelled by the lack of hoverboards, self tying Nikes, automated police officers and tyrannical computers within our own life time, we found we could help our listeners escape to such realities every week via the radio. We invented radio personas to review the plays under the names of Professor Windimire and Professor Henrington, two experts in the field of sci-fiology who often find themselves bumbling their way through the show.

Starting with an original script in Freshers' Week entitled "How Social Networking Destroyed the World" we built up a small fan base who appreciated our geeky Sci-Fi reference ridden humour. We encouraged listeners to email in with their own opinions on the nights play, and any views they had on any Sci-Fi themes in general. Through repeated email contact some of our fans actually ended up making guest appearances, and went on to become regular members of the cast. We also regularly promoted our show a few hours before it went on air by playing a DJ set at a pub quiz style event at the Queen Margaret Union. Our sets would incorporate Space Disco, Sci-Fi Techno and Chiptune as an advert for some of the styles of music heard on the show.

Cast:

Ciaran Owens as Professor Windimire
Scott Forsyth as Professor Henrington, Star trek Nerd 1
Andrew McCreadie as Professor Von Klinkerhoffen
Lewis Ross as Professor VanDerGraf, Star Trek Nerd 2
Mix-Me-DJ as itself
Orson Welles as himself