

George Pearson - Best Newcomer

I initially joined Subcity Radio in order to write reviews for the station's music team. I had written previously for my own enjoyment, but had never found an outlet for my enthusiasm for music journalism. I quickly developed a passion for reviewing and began regularly writing two or three CD reviews a week, alongside occasional live reviews. I have included links to a couple of these reviews below.

It was from this process of reviewing that I formed the idea for my show. I found myself reviewing and developing a passion for a lot of music that was largely unknown and ignored by a wider audience because it lacked the backing of a label or large promotional company. So I teamed up with a like-minded friend, and we set about applying a similar attitude towards both music and wider pop culture. From this we created "Pop Goes The Revolution", a show designed to showcase unheard of music, theatre, art, literature and upcoming events. I was the main presenter of the show, and took sole responsibility for the show's playlist, choosing to specialise in unsigned bands from around the UK. The process of sourcing this music started initially by spending long lengths of time on sites such as MySpace finding artists, although as the year went on I developed contacts in various gig venues and cities across the country who were able to suggest bands worth sourcing. By the end of the year we had played more unsigned artists than any other show on the station.

On top of this, I worked hard to arrange an extensive series of guests for the show. Over the course of the year we had guest appearances and live acoustic sets by Glasgow bands The LaFontaines, De Jour, Nacional and Washington Irving, as well as appearances from: independent Chicago-based author, Chris Guttierrez; two artists involved in a project with Leeds-based record label Art/Goes/Pop; Gary McKenna, who runs Pivo Pivo, a popular Glasgow gig venue; and Dave Cronin, the bassist from American pop-punk band 2*Suite. We spent a great deal of time researching and sourcing bands, people and events to showcase on our show, trying to ignore what was discussed elsewhere, instead giving the listener a chance to discover something new.

Due to our success with Pop Goes The Revolution, and the natural rapport my co-presenter and me had created, we were asked by Subcity Radio to present the Breakfast Show every Tuesday morning for two hours. This was a light-entertainment show that featured an eclectic range of music and relied heavily upon on improvised chat and audience interaction. We revitalised the show by resetting the focus of the audience, dropping our appeal to the drive time listener, which was largely irrelevant for an online radio station, and instead focussing on a waking student audience. We pitched the show as a fun wake-up call designed to give people something to discuss round the breakfast table by creating popular topics of discussion and features designed for groups of people. These included our sillier features, such as a make-along arts and crafts section and a song wars feature where we asked listeners to vote on playlists created by the presenters.

Meanwhile, I also continued to work in other areas of the station. I was asked by Subcity to produce two shows. The first of these shows was "Broomhill Mix", a jazz and funk show presented by a blind man, who needed someone else to work the broadcast equipment on his behalf and ensure that the show went out to a high quality.

The second show was "Studs on Leather", a sports-based chat show. The presenters of this show were members of the news team but had not found time to be fully trained and so were unable to use the studio equipment themselves. Therefore, I had to initially produce their show for them, and later trained them so that they were able to do their show by themselves without my assistance.

Alongside my shows and reviews, I organised, recorded and edited seven interviews with bands such as Pause.Break.Riot! and Rosie & The Goldbug. When, mid-way through the year, the station's Head of Editing departed, I took over responsibility for coordinating the station's interviews and podcasts, becoming the new Head of Podcasts. In this role I ensured that all music team members recorded and edited their interviews to a high standard, and made them available on the website as podcasts.

I began regularly attending contributor meetings in order to raise awareness of some issues I'd encountered, becoming the only non core team, or ex-team member, to regularly attend the weekly meetings. Throughout this time I campaigned for better representation of the station's off-air content, suggesting new ways of showcasing and revitalising the reviews and podcasts section of the website. I have continued to do this over the summer, and the web team are now incorporating a number of my ideas into the new website design.

I also helped out with PR for the station, and assisted in the setting up and running of events on the night. Throughout the year I poured a great deal of enthusiasm and energy into bettering the station in as many areas as possible. This led to me being involved in almost every area of the station, and consequently in June 2009 I was given the position of Head of Programming for the forthcoming year. The whole year was a great learning experience, and I look forward to learning more and continuing my expanding role at Subcity. Over the next year I hope to see the range of programming increase on Subcity with the inclusion of documentaries, radio plays and other musical genres, as well as better training which will allow shows to create higher quality shows with a tighter focus.

Here's some of the content I produced this year:

Shows:

www.subcity.org/shows/popgoestherevolution

www.subcity.org/shows/thebreakfastshow

www.subcity.org/shows/broomhillmix

Reviews:

www.subcity.org/forum/viewtopic.php?f=11&t=9632
www.subcity.org/forum/viewtopic.php?f=11&t=10235

Interviews:

<http://www.subcity.org/podcasts.php?id=233>

<http://www.subcity.org/podcasts.php?id=230>