

Entertainment

Film News
Serenity



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About this script

Please note that this is not a word for word transcript of the programme as broadcast. In the recording and editing process changes may have been made which may not be reflected here.

Callum: Hello, I’m Callum Robertson, and this is Entertainment. In the programme today we’ll be hearing lots of language from the world of film, and listening to an interview with the director Joss Whedon about his latest movie called ‘Serenity’. ‘Serenity’ has been described by critics as ‘a blockbuster’ – a very good film – because it’s full of action and emotion. And it’s certainly an unusual movie – it’s billed, or advertised, as a ‘sci-fi western’. In other words, it mixes two genres, or types, of film: science fiction and western. And I think we really have to imagine space ships full of cowboys!

Here’s the first part of our interview with Joss Whedon. See if you can catch what he especially loves about science fiction movies.

JOSS WHEDON

There’s something in science fiction that I love very much that I’ve missed of late which is a sort of gritty-ness – the reality of what it must be like to be up in a small community, or a small ship. So I had a perfectly disparate set of elements: I had people who were actual size and a story that was larger than life, and when you put those two together, I think you get the most exciting kind of film making.

Callum: Joss Whedon says he loves the ‘gritty-ness’ of science fiction movies – how they look at the difficult and unpleasant side of situations. And he’s extremely

interested in imagining what it's really like to be part of a small crew inside a space ship! He says he has many 'disparate', or different, 'elements' for the film - he had 'actual size' characters, and 'a story', or plot, that was larger than life' - it was very funny and exciting. Let's listen again.

JOSS WHEDON

There's something in science fiction that I love very much that I've missed of late which is a sort of gritty-ness – the reality of what it must be like to be up in a small community, or a small ship. So I had a perfectly disparate set of elements: I had people who were actual size and a story that was larger than life, and when you put those two together, I think you get the most exciting kind of film making.

Callum: The story of 'Serenity' is set 500 years in the future and it revolves around the crew of a space ship with the same name - 'Serenity'. After ending up on the losing side of an inter-galactic war, the captain of Serenity, Mal, is prepared to take on any job no matter how dishonest!

In the next part of our interview, director Joss Whedon explains why, even though the idea of a 'sci-fi western' might seem silly or embarrassing, these two types of film are actually about the same thing – 'frontier life'. After all, in American cowboy and Indian films, 'the frontier' is an area of land where people have never lived before. And in the world of sci-fi, space is often referred to as 'the final frontier'.

As you listen, try to catch how Joss Whedon describes the ‘age’, or time of history, we are living in now.

JOSS WHEDON

Well, you know, a lot of people hear the term ‘science fiction western’ and they cringe – they think there’s going to be big hats and it’s going to be hokey and what exciting about frontier life is the physicality of it and that’s something that we’re losing in the internet age. So to me, the western and science fiction actually belong together, and to say ‘sci-fi western’ is, in some ways, redundant.

Callum: So Joss Whedon says we’re living in ‘the internet age’. And we’re losing sight of the ‘physicality’, the real objects that are part of life whether you’re a cowboy or space traveller! He says that a lot of people ‘cringe’ – they feel embarrassed - by the ‘term’, or description, ‘science fiction western’. He says people think there’ll be ‘big hats’ (well, cowboys do wear large hats called Stetsons) and it’ll be ‘hokey’ – it’ll be totally unbelievable. Let’s listen again.

JOSS WHEDON

Well, you know, a lot of people hear the term ‘science fiction western’ and they cringe – they think there’s going to be big hats and it’s going to be hokey and what exciting about frontier life is the physicality of it and that’s something that we’re losing in the internet age. So to me, the western and science fiction actually belong together, and to say ‘sci-fi western’ is, in some ways, redundant.

Callum: And finally, to end our Entertainment programme today, here again is some of the language used by director Joss Whedon.

‘a science fiction western’

‘gritty-ness’

‘disparate’

‘larger than life’

‘to make you cringe’

‘to be hokey’

‘frontier’

‘physicality’

and

‘the internet age’.

There’ll be more ‘Entertainment’ language and news next time!