Space: Above and Beyond – 30th Anniversary

Space: Above and beyond is an American SCI-FI TV series that aired on the FOX channel. The pilot premiered on September 24th, 1995, and the final episode aired on June 2nd, 1996. It ended on a big mother f\*cker cliff-hanger! Space: Above and Beyond (aka S:AAB) was created by Glen Morgan and James Wong, you most likely know from The X-Files. They had planned a 5-season story but due to low ratings it got cancelled after only one season unfortunately.

It was nominated for two Emmy Awards and one Saturn Award, ranked last in IGN's top 50 Sci-Fi TV Shows, it was described as "yet another sci-fi show that went before its time. S:AAB is set in the years 2063-2064, it focusses on the “Wildcards”, members of the United States Marine Corps 58th Squadron of the Space Aviator Cavalry. The were also called the 58th on numerous occasions. They were stationed on a space carrier called the U.S.S. Saratoga. They were pilots but when needed they also were sent in as infantry. Their ships were called “Hammerheads” and they were fighting an invading force of extraterrestrials.

S:AAB had a stellar cast: Morgan Weisser is Lt. Nathan West; Kristen Cloke is Lt. Shane Vansen; Rodney Rowland is Lt. Cooper Hawkes aka Coop. He was also an invitro, born at the age of 18, also called Tank, more as an insult. Joel de la Fuente is Lt. Paul Wang; Lanei Chapman is Lt. Vanessa Damphousse; James Morrison is Lt. Col. Tyrus Cassius 'T.C.' McQueen. Like Coop, McQueen is also an invitro. McQueen is commands the 58th. Tucker Smallwood is Commodore Ross, McQueen’s commander.

Doug Hutchison is Elroy-EL, he was a recurring character in only 3 episodes, but he made quite an impression as a Silicate, an AI rebel. You might also remember Hutchison from the X-Files from the episodes “Squeeze” & “Tooms”, or from the movie “The Green Mile”. Of course, he did many more things. Another obvious guest star was David Duchovny, the star of the TV series The X-Files. Like Hutchison, Duchovny was also a Silicate.

I remember back in the day that I was very excited about S:AAB, it was during the 90’s insane SCI-FI boost! It aired during Babylon 5; Star Trek: DS9, Star Trek: Voyager and The X-Files to name a few. S:AAB used more or less the same kind of CGI as Babylon 5 did and at the time, this looked very cool. Even nowadays I still don’t mind the CGI in Babylon 5 and S:AAB. Oh yes, of course I want to see this updated on a Blu-ray release that most likely will never ever arrive unfortunately. S:AAB is different than shows like Babylon 5 or Star Trek, first of all it is much closer or our timeline, but further more, S:AAB is much more gritty, fighting not only in space but also on various planets in hand to hand combat. Yes, this occasionally also happened on DS9 but in S:AAB this happened regularly. If there is a show you can compare S:AAB with, there is only one in my opinion: the reimagined Battlestar Galactica from Ronald D. Moore.

Like Babylon 5, S:AAB was also a very story-arc TV show, almost no filler episodes, every episode revolved around the war, the actual war but also the political schemes, the lies, the secrets about the relationship between the Chigs and the most powerful people of our planet. S:AAB became more and more interesting, slowly we began to find things out, for instance, our Earth Government already knew this planet that was colonized, was from another race, they had intelligence that the rest of the human race didn’t have and so, they let it happen, knowing the most likely consequence of war with an alien race.

I would love to see a reboot, or a continuation of S:AAB, there have been rumors apparently, dated back two years. So far, nothing happened, and you know what, if it has the same kind of result as the current Star Trek, Star Wars and Dr. Who, than please don’t bother, then leave it be. Yes, it should be updated to the current times, but it needs to be about the stories and not about the current political agenda.

The Finale:

The final episode of the series ends in a cliffhanger, with T. C. McQueen badly injured and most of the major cast apparently killed or missing in action, with only Cooper Hawkes and Nathan West left. Yet, with Earth in a much stronger strategic position, there is hope, despite the losses and sacrifices. These closing elements of the plot were written at a point when the producers knew that the show was likely to be canceled. Why do you want to do this to your fans? If you almost certainly know it will be cancelled? I know why of course, to still get a renewal, but this almost never happens, certainly not back in the day.

Physical Media:

Space: Above & Beyond was first released in North America back in 2005. I purchased it almost immediately because it has always been one of my favorite shows from the 90’s. Recently I did a Top 10 of the [90’s](https://scifitvshows.jouwweb.nl/blogs/my-top-10-favorite-sci-fi-tv-shows-of-the-90-s) and S:AAB sit at number 9. What is strange about the DVD set, on certain pressings features a distorted image of the Babylon 5 space station, which is unrelated to S:AAB, but it is on the discs' title screens. On my copy this is also visible. In Germany the complete series was released in 2011 under the name: Space 2063. In 2012 the UK also got this release, although they seem to be lacking English subs.

Comics, Books & Magazines:

Space: Above and Beyond did get another leash on life in the form of Comics. Three issues were released under the name Space: Above and Beyond, from Topps Comics. Two issues have been released on the name Space: Above and Beyond The Gauntlet. Besides Comic books, there also were SAA:B books released. On Amazon and Ebay you can still find some. SAA:B also had a short lived magazine release, from Titan. Only 4 issues have been released, after the show was cancelled, in 1997, so Titan must have known that they would not be releasing many issues. Still, it is interesting to know that it was not just the TV show itself.

Final Word:

It’s been too long already, my [last rewatch](https://scifitvshows.jouwweb.nl/blogs/blogs-archive-2013-2017/space-above-and-beyond-rewatch) dates back to 2017! Eight years is way too long, I need to do another rewatch, I hope and can do this within the next two years. No, it is not all perfect but still, this is a very strong show which deserved more than just one season. And certainly, a reboot under the right conditions, I would cheer for, with updated special effects this could be something to look forward to...but no political agenda please. Anyway, HAPPY 30th Anniversary to Space: Above and Beyond!