Andromeda – 25th Anniversary

Andromeda is a SCI-FI show from the mind of Gene Roddenberry and it is developed by Robert Hewitt Wolfe, and produced by Gene Roddenberry’s wife Majel Barret. The series follows Kevin Sorbo as Captain Dylan Hunt of the Systems Commonwealth, an intergalactic government that presided over an extended period of peace and prosperity until its destruction from a rebellion led by the warmongering Nietzcheans and parasitic Magog. The series first aired on October 2nd, 2000, and the final episode aired on May 13th, 2005. Andromeda ran for 5 seasons.

Besides Andromeda, there is another TV show from the mind of Gene Roddenberry that came to life after he passed on: Earth: Final Conflict. Both shows were created on concepts from the 1960’s and 70’s. The name Dylan Hunt had previously also been used for two other pilots created by Roddenberry: Genesis II and Planet Earth, all shared a similar dystopian post-apocalyptic premise.

Kevin Sorbo is Dylan Hunt, the man who tried to restore the Commonwealth after he had been frozen in time for 303 years, at the edge of the event horizon of a black hole. Lisa Ryder is Beka Valentine. She and her crew reluctantly join Hunt on his mission to restore the Commonwealth. Keith Hamilton Cobb is Tyr Anasazi, a Nietzchean who also joins Dylan’s crew, but he has plans of his own. Gordon Michael Woolvett is Seamus Harper, the engineer, the fix-it man, creator of Rommie. Laura Bertram is Trance Gemini, perhaps the soul of the team. Brent Stait is Rev Bem, a Magog. Trying and mostly succeeding to be different than his brothers. Telemachus Rhade, played by Steve Bacic, he joins the team in season 4. He also plays Dylan's Nietzschean first officer, Gaheris Rhade, betrays Dylan and attempts to kill him. Brandy Ledford joins the team in season 5 as Doyle, Andromeda Ascendant's second android avatar. The first avatar is of course Rommie, she is in fact the ship and an android avatar. Lexa Doig was absent during most of season 5, except for the final 5 episodes. The Ship therefore could not fly, and the crew stayed on a planet. Because of this setting, the 5th season mostly is horrible, except for the last few episodes, such a shame Andromeda’s last season was so weak.

The Commonweath:

You can compare the Systems Commonwealth with Star Trek’s Federation. It was a huge utopian civilization, spanning three major galaxies of the Local Group. It was founded by the Vedrans, the first race to discover slipstream, who initially used it to conquer the Andromeda Galaxy. After a long and bitter war of attrition with the major powers of the Triangulum Galaxy, the Vedran Empire was reorganized as the democratic Systems Commonwealth. The Commonwealth served as a peaceful intergalactic government for almost 10,000 years until the Nietzschean revolt.

Departure Wolfe / Uneven seasons:

For me, Andromeda is very uneven in terms of seasons. I really like the first two seasons, for the most part this has to do with Robert Hewlett Wolfe, who was the showrunner. But during the 2nd part of season two, Wolffe was fired and replaced by Bob Engels. The change was made to make the show more episodic in nature instead of heavy story-arc stories. Wolfe had a different idea, he wanted the stories to continue, less episodic, more returning plotlines and such. Season 3 I thought was kinda weak. Season 4 was step up from season 3 but season 5 was the worst of them all. My last rewatch was in 2017 and just skipped the first 17 episodes of season 5 because I basically found that particular storyline awful. After the show's final episode aired, Wolfe wrote and published a one-act play entitled "Coda" that explained his intended plans for the show without contradicting the aired episodes. This play is now hosted on Drive Back the Night – An Andromeda Podcast.

Physical Media:

Andromeda is not hard to come by in terms of DVD releases. It even has gotten a Blu-ray release some years ago, but be aware, this is NOT a true HD transfer. I think you best can compare it with the Farscape release in terms of transfer. The Andromeda Blu-ray set does not have any subtitles on it. I myself own a [German DVD complete Series set](https://www.amazon.de/-/nl/dp/B0071XE8HK?ref=ppx_yo2ov_dt_b_fed_asin_title). I purchased it about 13 years ago, back in 2012. I was surprised by the picture quality, in a positive way and although it is not on the outer box, it does have English Audio & English subtitles. The set is still available, if you are considering purchasing Andromeda, I can recommend this set.

Rewatch:

My last rewatch was from 2017, and in that blog I clearly sound annoyed about the viewing experience. This is for the most part because the last season, which was mostly dreadful, except for the last five episodes. I was also annoyed with the road taken, firing Wolfe was wrong in my opinion, I think we would have had a better series, not so uneven as it is now. Yes, Rommie being not there in season 5 was the reason for that storyline, but couldn’t that have been solved differently? So many options but the worst one was chosen. I am not sure if I ever will rewatch Andromeda again, seriously doubting this at the moment. Still, it is not all bad, I love Dylan Hunt’s character, well played by Kevin Sorbo. He plays his character with a lot of humor. Yes, there is also a certain smugness about him, but that too he plays very well. He and Beka were my favorite characters. If there is another rewatch, it will take a few more years, I think.

Final Word:

Andromeda really had its moments, the first two seasons are mostly good, the 4th season was also good enough. It ran for five seasons, so there definitely is a fanbase, and so the show must have been doing something good. So perhaps I must try a rewatch one more time in a few years. Happy 25th Anniversary Andromeda!