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## Influential People in Science Fiction: Scott Trimble



Over the past few months, Astra Nova has been proud to kick off a new series in which we reach out to people who we think are influential in shaping the world of Science Fiction. We get them on the record about why they love Sci-Fi, talk about their contribution to the genre, and find out what works we can expect from them in the future.

We're really excited about our interview this week. Let me explain. We all wish we got to work on Sci-Fi movies and television shows, but few people actually get to. That is why we were thrilled to sit down with Scott Trimble, a Sci-Fi fan who is living the dream.

Scott has spent the last twelve years working in Hollywood, with an extensive resume of Sci-Fi TV shows and movies. His projects have included "Star Trek", "Star Wars", "Transformers", "Terminator", "Batman", "Iron Man" and many, many more. What's he do exactly? He's a location scout, a highly important and yet often overlooked part of film making. He's the guy who helps bring the director's vision to the screen by hunting down the right places to shoot. Finding great locations is an art of its own, it requires a creative person with an eye for what looks good on camera and the ability to think outside of the box. Scott Trimble is a veteran at it.

So you can understand why we geeked out when Scott agreed to answer a few of our questions about his experiences and insight working in the realm of science fiction.

Mr. Trimble grew up in San Rafael, California where he was surrounded by Lucasfilm Ltd., Industrial Light & Magic, and Pixar Animation. He was inspired towards movies at a young age, working on his middle school's cable access TV show at twelve and the at thirteen, working as an extra in the Elijah Wood film "Radio Flyer".

Scott continued his background work through college at U.C. Berkeley, graduating in 1999 with a degree in anthropology and archaeology, but decided to stick with the film industry. He got into location scouting, working out of San Francisco before moving to Los Angeles where he lives today.

This cool guy has seen it all, living a Sci-Fi geeks dream. Read on as we delve into his love of Sci-Fi, his experiences in Hollywood, and his thoughts on the genre's status today.

### Scott, what does Sci-Fi mean to you?

Scott: Science-fiction allows us to look towards the possibilities of the future. It represents our

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dreams of exploration, learning about the world around us, and simply seeing who and what might be out there.

Art usually imitates life, but, in the case of science-fiction, things get interesting when life imitates art — I get incredibly excited when the real world heads towards these imagined futures. At work, I was recently researching the rise of spaceports around the United States (such as New Mexico, Virginia, Oklahoma, and more) and it gave me chills... this is truly only the beginning. Companies like SpaceX and Virgin Galactic are the pioneers. Twenty or thirty years from now, flying up to space will be as commonplace as flying across the Atlantic Ocean. That's amazing to me.

As an aside, it drives me crazy when people cling too closely to the "good old days" or they say things like "I can't bring a baby into this world". Ugh. Seriously, people? I am a historian and genealogist too, so it's that more thorough understanding of our past that makes me that much more excited about the future. Our world is only getting better with time. Sure, we'll have occasional setbacks, but, for the most part, we are living longer lifespans, crime is going down, people are becoming more accepting, and technology is making our lives easier. I share that bright vision of the future that various science-fiction luminaries have expressed.

### ***You have many Sci-Fi films in your credits. What makes you gravitate toward the genre?***

**Scott:** I am an explorer at heart. If I was born a few centuries ago, I would have been on sailing ships to North America or making my way by wagon train across the continent. If I was born a few centuries in the future, I would be living on a lunar base and heading out to Mars, Titan, and Europa. Stuck instead in the early 21st century, I make my living as a location scout, discovering places that may not be new to society, but at least they'll be new to myself and to the Hollywood movies on which I work.

That's why I ended up as a location scout, but throughout my career, I've made every effort to focus on science-fiction as much as possible. It's the genre that moves me the most and originally inspired me towards even pursuing a career in the film industry. I wouldn't be completely happy unless I was living my dreams... because that's what life is all about. It's too short to not be doing what you truly love.

### ***Can you describe the feeling of walking onto a major Sci-Fi movie set?***

**Scott:** The very first time I had a surreal experience of being on a science-fiction set was ten years ago when I worked on "The Matrix Reloaded". I arrived at the fully-dressed location and suddenly thought to myself, wow, I am inside the frakking Matrix! (Although, really, the new "Battlestar Galactica" wasn't on TV yet, so I don't think I thought the word "frakking" at the time). How crazy cool is that?

Another memorable set experience was when I saw James T. Kirk going through the Kobayashi Maru. Granted that this was the Kirk from an alternate timeline, but, still, his solution to the problem is classic "Star Trek" and now it was finally being depicted. In the same movie, it was also moving for me to witness the filming of that now-iconic shot of Kirk pulling up on his motorcycle to view the construction of the USS Enterprise. I'd found that pivotal location on my second day on the job and now here I was — coffee in hand, leaning against my Nissan Xterra just 50 feet from the motorcycle, watching the sun rise in the distance... all as the scene finally came together.





## ***How do you feel about the current state and credibility of the Sci-Fi movie industry?***

**Scott:** Many people complain about sequels, remakes, and reboots. I personally have no problem with them whatsoever. Ever since our ancient ancestors told stories around the campfire, we have been retelling tales repeatedly. William Shakespeare is so widely regarded, but even his plays had earlier roots that go back for centuries.

Just as "Alice in Wonderland" and "The Crucible" have been performed on stage thousands of times, why can't the movies similarly be retold by new people with new visions? Sure, the studios are certainly out to make money, but just about everything in life has monetary motives anyway, and the stories will still entertain us. Sometimes, the remakes are even better than the originals, but, even if they're not, the original still exists, so why should it even matter? It's the filmmakers' prerogative to make bad movies if they so wish.

A great example is "Invasion of the Body Snatchers". The 1956 version was certainly good, but the 1978 remake was so far superior that I still to this day list it as one of the best science-fiction movies of all time. The 2007 version was horrible and it consequently bombed in the box office, but that doesn't take anything away from the 1978 movie — we just forget that the 2007 movie exists.

Besides, there are still plenty of other good, completely original science-fiction movies being made. A handful of very recent examples would include "Moon", "Sunshine", "District 9", "Super 8", "Firefly" and "Serenity", "Cloverfield", "WALL-E", and "Inception".

## ***What has been your most memorable work?***

**Scott:** By far, "Star Trek" has been the most memorable experience. I've been a Trekkie since I was 5 years old when I started watching the original "Star Trek" series with my mom. In 4th grade, I wrote a movie review of "Star Trek IV" in my classroom newsletter. When I was 10 years old, I remember the anticipation when "The Next Generation" premiered. In middle school, I went to various "Star Trek" conventions. I grew up not just watching all the movies, but watching them so many times that I had them memorized.

And now, many years later, at age 30 back in Summer 2007, I was actually working on a "Star Trek" movie! And I wasn't just working on it, but contributing to it creatively — helping to make the movie. I flew by helicopter all over California, Utah, and Alaska to look for the perfect settings, eventually finding 16 of the ones that appear on screen. I prepped all these places and more and was present throughout the shoot to make sure it all went smoothly. Also, I even had a cameo in the deleted Rura Penthe scenes... as a Klingon Prison Guard!

## ***Anything in the works we should tell our readers about?***

**Scott:** I am working on an untitled new movie, but, uh, that's about all I am allowed to say at the present time, unfortunately. I can say that I recently worked on "Super 8" and "Captain America", both of which are currently in theaters. I also scouted on "The Dark Knight Rises" which will be coming out next year. All of them were incredible experiences. I love my job!



So there you have it, folks. Honestly we can't thank Scott Trimble enough for agreeing to sit down and share his thoughts and experiences with us. While most of us love science fiction from afar, he actually gets to work on the shows and movies we love. Before we go, we'd like to encourage you to check out his website, <http://www.ststlocations.com/> (<http://www.ststlocations.com/>), and to follow him on Twitter [@stst415](http://twitter.com/%%21stst415) (<http://twitter.com/%%21stst415>). We at Astra Nova rest better at night knowing that the genre we love so much is being influenced by guys like Scott. He truly is an ***Influential Person in Science Fiction***

- Steve E. Brown