



Surge of Power: The Stuff of Heroes

Ariztical Entertainment // Unrated // March 24, 2006

Review by [Raymond So](#) | posted March 30, 2006

Surge of Power: The Stuff of Heroes has been marketed as "the first gay superhero movie" and as "a new high in low-budget camp," both of which will probably limit its mainstream appeal, which is a shame. First, the film is not really gay-themed, and more a comedy featuring some gay characters, similar to, say, *Will & Grace* vs. being like *Queer As Folk* where the plot is much more specific to gay life. Secondly, while the film is decidedly campy and effects are very low-budget, the cast and crew really step up and work with what they have to create an incredibly funny and appealing story.

The movie tells the tale of Gavin, a hapless corporate attorney who happens to also be a major comic book fan, debating the finer intricacies of the specific powers of his favorite superheroes with his geeky friends. While visiting a "mad" scientist's lab, the inevitable explosion occurs which results in Gavin getting "surges of power". He must then stop a magnetic super-villain who threatens Big City.

The film pays homage to all your favorite pop-culture superheroes. Gavin refers to the peculiar all-male living arrangements of "Wombat and Pigeon" who are superheroes in another city who can be summoned by a signal flashed in the sky. Sound familiar? Gavin designs his superhero costume to shoot a thick sticky "silly string"-like netting, so he can emulate "Silkworm", another rival superhero. Gavin's scientist friend conducts tests on him while he stands in a module that looks remarkably similar to the Borg regeneration chamber from *Star Trek*. Speaking of which...

One of **Surge of Power's** main selling points are the many iconic celebrities who appear in the film. There is *Star Trek's* Lt. Uhura, Nichelle Nichols, as Big City's aging superhero, Omen, who shows up to give Gavin advice on using his powers. There's Gavin's encounter with Lou Ferrigno (*The Incredible Hulk*), who Gavin tells "you could really be a superhero." There's the legendary Noel Neill (Lois Lane from *The Adventures of Superman*) as Auntie Lois, who upon witnessing a bank robbery, looks up in the sky and asks "Where's a real superhero when you need one?", then when Gavin appears and trips on his own cape, remarks "that never happened with Superman!" Also making appearances are such icons of varying degrees as Bobby Trendy (*The Anna Nicole Show*), Marty Krofft (of *Sid & Marty Krofft*, Saturday morning TV show kings), Len Wein (Creator of Wolverine), Marv Wolfman (Creator of Teen Titans), and Tadao Tomomatsu ("Mr. Shake Hands Guy" from *Banzai TV*).

Surge of Power will remind viewers of the campy comedy style of the 1960's *Batman* TV show. It is harmless, throw-away fun for those who know not to take this type of movie too seriously. Much like *Batman*, there are plenty of goofy gags, silly over-the-top acting, and low budget effects, but like that show, **Surge** manages to entertain anyone who would be into a sci-fi/fantasy comedy. Comic book fans in particular will find many references that they will appreciate, and gay viewers will find their own inside jokes, like Gavin's superhero weakness: hearing dance music makes him lose his powers. Oh no! How tragic for a gay superhero!

Surge of Power: The Stuff of Heroes is screening in Los Angeles before moving to other cities. Ariztical Entertainment will be releasing the DVD in late April, if you don't catch it on the big screen in a city near you.



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