Interview Transcript Years 10 – 12: Meet the man who sang David Bowie in space

7:30, Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Interview Transcript

Meet the man who sang David Bowie in space

Broadcast: 20/08/2014, 7:30 pm Reporter: Chris Uhlmann

CHRIS UHLMANN, PRESENTER: He did things that most of us can only dream of. At the age of nine, Chris Hadfield watched Neil Armstrong walk on the Moon and decided to go to space. He graduated from test pilot to astronaut, became commander of the International Space Station and spent 146 days orbiting the Earth. And while he was there, Chris made a video cover of a David Bowie classic that scored 22 million hits on YouTube.

Chris Hadfield has done more to educate the world about the marvels of space travel than any other astronaut of his generation and I spoke with him earlier today.

Chris Hadfield, welcome to 7.30.

CHRIS HADFIELD, ASTRONAUT: Thank you very much, Chris.

CHRIS UHLMANN: Did seeing the world from space make you think differently about it?

CHRIS HADFIELD: It probably did. It's hard to tell within yourself, especially when you stay in orbit for months and months 'cause it's gradual, it shifts your perspective a little bit. But, I think in retrospect, it definitely gave me more of a collective feel about the world, almost an intimacy with the whole planet. To be asked to kind of step out on the very edge of our capability and do something, I think gives you also a responsibility and an obligation to share that experience so as many people can maybe change their own decisions and decide what they're going to do as a result, maybe get a little different perspective on the world themselves.

CHRIS UHLMANN: What did it feel like to walk in space? What does it feel like to see the Earth from space?

CHRIS HADFIELD: You would love the experience of walking in space. I've been outside the spaceship twice for a total of about 15 hours, which is 10 times around the world. Out alone in the universe and to see the world as a ball, as an amazing blue, improbable, gorgeous, spinning ball next to you and

The details of the program broadcasting the interview, interviewer and publishing date and time

Catchy title provides clear subject for the interview

Speakers' names are in capitals, and role is clearly stated (eg. CHRIS UHLMANN, PRESENTER:)

Introduction from interviewer gives background on person being interviewed, aiming to interest the audience

Greeting from interviewer to signal the start of the interview

Language can be a mix of formal and informal, depending on the interviewer and the person responding to their questions - this interview is conversational in style

Questions are **open** – require detailed answers, not one or two words

Uses present, past and future tenses

you are going through the universe with it, that's a really new perspective for us and one that I really did try and let other people see through my eyes.

CHRIS UHLMANN: And seeing the world from that distance, did it seem fragile or miraculous?

CHRIS HADFIELD: The world is tough, you know, the world has withstood huge asteroid impacts and volcanic eruptions and electromagnetic pulses. The world's been here a long time. But at the same time, it does look miraculous. It looks so just improbable that it can be there at all, and yet it's almost like looking at an exquisite jewel, like, "How can that be so beautiful and multifaceted?," and yet it's there and it's tough and it's strong, almost just begging to be appreciated.

CHRIS UHLMANN: Take us back for a moment to when you first thought that you wanted to be an astronaut.

CHRIS HADFIELD: I'd actually had the improbable background of deciding to be an astronaut when I was a kid. I watched the first two human beings walk on the Moon, Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin, the summer I turned 10. And I decided that night - and it wasn't just watching them on television, it was going outside afterwards and looking up at the Moon and seeing - trying to link what I'd seen on the television now with looking at the Moon itself and making the conscious decision at that point that, "I'm going to grow up to be something; you know, why don't I grow up to be that?"

CHRIS UHLMANN: I watched that too on the other side of the Earth from you. I never grew up to be an astronaut. Did you think of that moment when you first took your first space flight?

CHRIS HADFIELD: Sitting in the rocketship on the launch pad, it takes a while to get strapped in, but then after you're strapped in and ensconced in your seat, there's a couple of hours before you get all the hatches closed and the pressure checks and communication checks, so it's almost as if someone gave you time for reflection and introspection. And it sort of puts a little smile on your face to think that that little nine-year-old boy is right there, riding along with you, waiting for the big engines to light and get this thing going.

CHRIS UHLMANN: Now you are an engineer, a test pilot, an astronaut, a pretty decent musician.

CHRIS HADFIELD: Thanks.

CHRIS UHLMANN: For the rest of us mere mortals, is there anything you're bad at?

Contains a variety of long and short sentences

Relevant subject specific vocabulary adds to authenticity of responses (eg. asteroid, Buzz Aldrin, space flight)

Contractions are used in the answers of the person being interviewed

Interviewer responds to aspect of response (eg. discussing first astronauts on the moon)

Statement made by interviewer – appropriate instead of question

Use of humour encouraged by interviewer using

CHRIS HADFIELD: I'm not a very good dancer.

CHRIS UHLMANN: (Laughs) There are very few people who are good dancers! Give us some more hope!

Reaction in brackets adds to meaning

'mere mortals'

CHRIS HADFIELD: (Laughs) I try not to do things that I'm bad at and I try and work hard at the things that I really love and there's a lot of things in the world to continue to try and get better at, so I just focus on that.

CHRIS UHLMANN: Having seen the Earth from space and seen the universe beyond it, can it all be defined by science or only by poetry or perhaps even faith?

Question relating to expert opinion of interview subject

CHRIS HADFIELD: What we're doing in exploring the solar system is teaching us a lot and it's technically really interesting and it's important, both politically and economically and technologically. But to me, the fact that so many people watched that music version of Space Oddity that I did, to me, that really shows the importance, if you want to actually communicate, the importance of art. I mean, science, technology, engineering, math - they drive the economy, but we're people, we're not machines and washing machines and robots. We're humans. And to share the wonder and experience of what's going on, that is expressed through art, through music and through writing and through poetry and to try and get to the very essence of what's important. And we're at that stage of space exploration now where the space station allows us to start to do that.

CHRIS UHLMANN: And when you were there, did you get the sense that there was more perhaps than you could define with science?

CHRIS HADFIELD: Oh, always. You know, no matter how elegant mathematics is, it will never be able to describe the complexity of life or the origins of it. That's the beauty of it. Trying to understand the wonders of it all. Explain a rainbow to somebody or explain a sunrise to somebody even as mechanical and methodical and scientific as you get, the actual event itself will always supersede it.

CHRIS UHLMANN: And what do you see when you look at the night sky now?

CHRIS HADFIELD: It makes me smile. I have a familiarity - maybe someone who's climbed the Matterhorn, when they walk around and look up at the Matterhorn, they somehow try and link up in their mind the normal two dimensional existence and the fact that they've stood on the top. And when I stand outside and watch the space station go over or any of the satellites, it's not even a wistfulness, it's just an incredible privilege to have - to have been

one of the first to leave the planet and to see the world that way and to start understanding how we can go even further. I just - I feel a great sense of luck and delight in looking up.

CHRIS UHLMANN: Finally, there's one question that all of us want answered: is there life out there?

Use of the word 'finally' signals the conclusion of the interview

CHRIS HADFIELD: Within the last 10 years, we have started to see planets around other stars and we've seen so many of them that now we can actually figure out how many planets there are. And in our galaxy alone, our best guess is there is about 20 billion Earth-like planets in our galaxy and we think there are about 200 billion galaxies. So, to think we're the only life in the universe is just sort of a myopic arrogance. But to think that life is travelling all the way through the universe and whizzing around the world and sneaking around and hiding and not revealing themselves, that we're so vastly important, that's just another form of arrogance, I think. I'm sure there's life out there. Statistically, there has to be. But our job is to try and find it.

CHRIS UHLMANN: Chris Hadfield, thank you.

CHRIS HADFIELD: Thank you very much, Chris. Nice to join you.

CHRIS UHLMANN: And nice to end on a note of hope - that most enduring human trait.

Formal thank you provided signals close of interview

Comment from interviewer sums up theme of interview

From: 7:30, <u>Meet the man who sang David Bowie in space</u>, Retrieved 01/09/14, http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/content/2014/s4071360.htm