

issue four february - march 2007

WAITING IN THE WINGS



Welcome to issue 4!!

Who would have thought we'd ever be saying that! Thanks to everyone who's read past editions, and if this is your first edition – thanks for joining us!! This issue brings you the usual reviews and articles as well as two more exclusive interviews – one with Adam Paul Harvey and one with Rory Jennings.

Happy reading!

-Liz & Katie xx

WitW_space

Yes folks. It's finally happened. WitW has gone online. Well, more online than it already was.

WitW used to be a magazine you downloaded from a site. Now you can get interactive! Do you have a MySpace page? Yes? Then why not friend WitW and be in on all the backstage gossip. Find out what all your favourite actors are up to and what really goes on at WitW towers! Message us with what you want to see in the next edition or leave us a comment to say how we're doing. Or use us to achieve a little more exposure for yourself and your career.

So when you've read this edition 'surf' over there and friend us. Who knows what you might learn.

WitW_space can be found at: www.myspace.com/witw_space

INTERVIEW – Rory Jennings

D.O.B?

20. 7. 1983

What was your first acting experience (professional or not)?

Kenneth Brannagh's 'Frankenstein'.

What is your favourite part you have played?

Really have enjoyed every job in different ways but 'Dr Who' and 'The Good Housekeeping Guide' were incredibly enjoyable times in Cardiff and Manchester respectively.

What is the one part that you would love to play?

Either a footballer. I can identify with Joe Cole or Dennis Wise. Or Liam Gallagher. Or if there is ever a film made about the life of Marc Bolan it would be an honour.

What influences you as an actor?

Fellow actors / writers / directors all have so much to offer and I can constantly learn from them

What is your most memorable audition?

About a year ago I came out of a casting and bumped into a great young actor called Ryan Smith, we were in 'Frankenstein' together and hadn't seen each other for ages. He is now a singer in a band called 'Mr Smith' and it was nice to catch up.

And your worst audition?

Any where they have asked me to sing.

What is the coolest thing you ever got to do because you are an actor?

Free shopping at Selfridges with a costume designer! VIP entry to clubs is never bad!

All time favourite actor?

Albert Finney – saw him in 'Art' when I was very young. I got a lasting impression.

Is there anywhere you would draw the line for a role, or would you pretty much do anything?

I'd do anything providing quality of writing is respectful of a contentious subject.

What is your favourite play?

Art

And favourite TV show?

Frasier, The Office

And film?

Goodbye Charlie Bright, A Room for Romeo Brass and Closer

What was working on Doctor Who like? Especially with Jamie Foreman playing your Dad?

It was hysterical. Plenty of corpsing! He constantly had me and Deborah Gillett in stitches with his stories. Also a top bloke as he has access to London's top clubs and gets me in VIP!

You've had come great actors play your Dad, do any stand out as best?

Alan Davies and Jamie Foreman. Both were superb. Quite different but both very helpful and supportive.

You appeared regularly on 'The Fast Show', how did that come about?

Auditioned as normal. I think it was Kate Day casting and I was very lucky! Working with Paul Whitehouse is still a massive honour for me, he was superb in 'Happiness'.

In 1998 you played Prince Harry, do you think you could play him again now you're both older and would you want to?

Would be a very big challenge but one I would be keen to undertake.

It says on your CV you play cricket, are you a batsman or a bowler?

I never really play anymore, was an all-rounder at school. I play football for an actors team twice a week as a left winger which incidentally Alan Davies also plays for.

REVIEW- Torchwood

When I was in education I was told a good way to start an essay was with a quote and then to back it up with evidence. With this in mind here is my review of BBC3's Torchwood.

'Torchwood is fan fiction.'

My back up evidence – No where else in television drama do characters change sexuality / sleep with other main characters so much as in Torchwood! Stories that no ones too concerned over so long as there is straight / gay tension between a few or all the characters.

Now, I am not saying this is a bad thing, There is some very well written fan fic out there. But it has never and will never keep critics happy. Hence the 'fan' part of the title. With this in mind I think 'Torchwood' was only ever meant for 'Doctor Who' fans.

Created by Russell T Davies, responsible for the regeneration of 'Doctor Who' with episodes written by Chris Chibnall and Noel Clarke (Mickey Smith from 'Doctor Who').

The story arc of series one is led by two phrases.

"The 21st Century is when it all changes and you gotta be ready"

And

"There's something moving in the dark and it's coming for you Jack Harkness"

Although the second one was altered throughout the show.

The story arc was well planned, with the murder of a seemingly main character in episode one which is something a 13 episode long series would rarely do. Establishing Suzie as a lead character in advertising material and then surprising everyone with episode 8!

The finale, as all good sci fi finales should left many citizens dead and our protagonists in peril. The solution to the problem? Well that had been established as far back as episode one. Once again showing Davies and his team know how to get a good story told.

The cast are excellent, all attractive and sexually active with every one of all sexes which is part of the shows appeal. No one is labelled, and in that sense the show is breaking boundaries, no labels means to prejudices. Even the quiet ones turn around and surprise you more than once in the case of Ianto Jones (Gareth David Lloyd).

I am looking forward to series two, even if there were a few duff episodes but out of 13 that's not bad. Now I am off to read the internet fan fic of the fan fic show, which potential writers should probably do too because as long as the fans watch it the critics have very little power!

-Katie

PROFILE – Stephen Wight



Stephen trained at the Drama Centre and graduated in 2001. Whilst there was involved in 'As You Like It', 'Tartuffe', 'The Merchant of Venice', 'Anatol', and 'Filumena'. He has appeared in 'Sing your Heart Out for the Lads' as Jason at the National Theatre 'Cool Hand Luke' and as Jock in 'The Straits', 'The Trestle at Pope Lick Creek' as Dalton which he was nominated Best Studio performance at the 2005 Manchester Evening News Awards. He was also Cobweb in the RSC production of 'A Midsummer Nights Dream' in 2002. Also, to Celebrate the Royal Court's fifty years he appeared in 'Skyvers' and 'Class Enemy'.

On television he has appeared in 'The Bill', 'Hex', 'Casualty' and 'A Touch of Frost'. Recently he appeared alongside David Jason in 'Diamond Geezer' the sequel to which is due for release on ITV1 soon. He appeared as Charles in BBC1's costume drama 'Fingersmith' which was nominated for best drama serial at the BAFTAs 2006.

On screen he has appeared in Michael Bassett's British horror film 'Wilderness' as thug and criminal 'Steve' and has completed filming 'Highlander: The Source' playing Reggie.

-Stephen is currently appearing in 'Don Juan in Soho' at the Donmar Warehouse

REVIEW - Ghosts

Gate Theatre, London
January 2007

As you take your seat in the tiny 70-seat theatre, Niamh Cusack's character Mrs Alving is already on stage, lost in thought, peering through the window of the wooden cabin in which the drama of Ibsen's '*Ghosts*' is set.

The play is very emotional and tragic; dealing with incest, love, euthanasia and syphilis.

Niamh Cusack is nothing short of astounding in her role as the mother who is initially awkward in her attempts to try and reconcile with her son after his years abroad, and later overcome with grief when she realises the reason for his return. She has done all she can to prevent her son Oswald becoming the man she married, but in the end it was all done in vain – Oswald has inherited syphilis from his father. Christian Coulson (our man of focus!) is great in his role as Oswald, painfully portraying a desperate need of his mother's love during his last days of life. The character is completely different to his other roles to date and he is utterly convincing as this bohemian artist. His last scene with Cusack is suitable heart-wrenching and true emotion is exuded.

Sarah Smart (our woman of focus!) is fabulous as the maid, Regine, (who we later find out to be Coulson's half-sister) who is learning French in order to elope with Oswald. She effectively exudes the provocative sexuality and flakyness of the character and creates much-needed moments of humour in an otherwise rather heavy and depressing play. This girl needs to do more there if this is the stuff she comes out with during her first professional attempt!

The other two cast members were excellent too, Finbar Lynch as Pastor Manders who had great chemistry with his off-stage wife Cusack, and also Paul Copley as Regine's drunk (though not-paternal) father, Engstrand.

A solid hour and a half later, Mrs Alving is back at in the same position in which she started. A striking ending to a beautifully tragic play.

-Liz

INTERVIEW – Adam Paul Harvey

What's your D.O.B? 7. 7. 1984

Nickname: Harvey

How did you first get into acting?

When I was 14 I joined 'Jackie Palmer Agency' based in High Wycombe. They put me on their books and I started auditioning

What was your first acting experience (professional or not)?

I played 'the Doctor' in a playschool performance of 'Miss Molly had a Dolly'!!! First pro thing was a Nintendo 64 advert.

What is your favourite part you have played?

David Copeland in a BBC Drama called 'The London Bomber'. It was so tough to do. And also Ralph in 'Bedtime'.

What is the one part that you would love to play?

Pinky in Graham Greene's 'Brighton Rock'

What influences you as an actor?

Watching the public – You learn so much by just studying people and what they do.

What is your most memorable audition?

Being offered the role of Nathan Boothe in the audition – pretty cool.

And your worst audition?

Anywhere you just know you're not right for the job.

What is the coolest thing you ever got to do because you are an actor?

Meeting great people and travelling around

Favourite actor you have ever worked with?

Most of them – there are very few I have disliked – some! – but very few.

All time favourite actor?

I know loads of people say it but Johnny Depp is amazing. I like Jude Law. Christian Slater, Tom Hanks, Al Pacino.

Is there anywhere you would draw the line for a role, or would you pretty much do anything?

As long as it was necessary then anything goes!

As an actor would you rather be in:

Comedy / Drama - both
Shakespeare / Modern - Modern
Musical / Straight - Straight
Resident / Tour - both

Favourite TV show?

Family Guy, 24, American Dad, MTV2 Documentaries, The Office, The Shield, Sopranos.

And film?

True Romance, The Crow, Amelie

How did the role Ralph in 'Bedtime' come about?

Andy Hamilton had seen me in 'Night and Day' and asked me to read for the part. I did and got it. One of the proudest moments of my time so far.

Are the cast of 'Where the Heart' is as warm and friendly as their on screen characters?

Yeah but in different way (not so soft) because we were all in the same hotel. Away from home we had to get along. We had some amazing nights out. And when I started on it I was instantly welcome.

What's been the funniest moment on set?... and the saddest?

Saddest was probably around the time Samantha Giles (Nathan's Mum) left the show. The scenes around the characters death were pretty sad. Funny would be anytime me and Andy Paul had to do rugby – We are rubbish.

How was your time on 'Night and Day'?

It was good. I wish I'd been older and been able to enjoy the social events a bit more. Also I lived 2 hours away from the studio we filmed at so I was always totally shattered from 4 hours travelling and 12 hours filming a day.

Do you ever watch the shows that you've been in?

Yes I try to watch everything back. I like to see how things turned out and try to learn from what I've done. Plus it's nice to look back and think of the fun times I've had.

Would you consider theatre roles?

I would most certainly consider theatre roles

Why did you want to be an actor?

I honestly don't know. I was always hyper as a child and always playing at being someone else so whenever the chance to do school plays came up I ended up in them....I guess it all goes back to there.

Do you have many actor friends?

I have some actor friends. There's always a few people you end up staying in touch with.

Have you ever had to go head to head with one in an audition?

Not head to head but me and friends have been up for the same parts

What do you do between acting jobs?

Between jobs I hang out with friends, paint, draw, write songs- I used to be in a band but we broke up so I'm trying to start something again.

Has there ever been a part that you were gutted you missed out on?

Yes.... but if I speak about them I cry so I won't. Lol!

In Bedtime did you get to meet any of the other actors that weren't in your scenes? And what were they like?

Yes I did...they were all very nice.

How did you go about playing David Copeland? It was terrifying to watch because it was such an intense performance. Was it disturbing to portray him?

I had to play the role of David very carefully. I was given information on his background and lifestyle and found out some things on the internet, but, info on him is quite limited so I had to try and do it going by the facts I'd been given.

And do you think that David Copeland has been your most challenging role yet?

It was hard. I was really freaked out at times (It's quite a step away from my usual self!!) I found myself becoming really moody. It was really hard to leave it all at work.....I don't mean I became an extremist or anything but it did upset me at times.

Is there any skill you would love to have on your CV?

I really want horse riding on my C.V...very useful. I've no excuse not to really as I live in the countryside and I want to be able to ride a motorbike!

Anything else the WitW readers ought to know:

I'm a very down to earth person, obsessed with music. I'm nice so feel free to write to me; or if you see me, come and have a chat.

- And if you do want to write to Adam, you can do so care of:

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REVIEW – Christmas TV

Christmas happened, if you didn't notice, and with it stream of repeats, specials and old films dragged out from the dusty recesses to which they were then returned until Christmas 2007.

I don't know if you know this but in the old days of television the film used to record programmes often got reused (not believing repeats would ever be as dominant as they are now). Nowadays, this never happens. Which is a shame.

I have chosen three one off dramas all shown on BBC1 to review. Not so much the good the bad and the ugly. But perhaps the 'enjoyable' the 'more please' and the 'what for?'

Sadly, even with a fabulous cast including Marc Warren, Sophia Myles, Stephanie Leonidas and Tom Burke. It was merely a case of "why?" Why bother doing 'Dracula' again? There's nothing new to do with the story. Maybe it could've set the story in 2006, like the BBC1 Shakespeare or Chaucer adaptations that were successful. But alas it was not to be and 'Dracula' paled into insignificance and certainly not worth a repeat next year.

Moving on to the 'enjoyable' show of Christmas 2006, 'Wind in the Willows' starring Lee Ingleby as the beautifully timid Mole, Mark Gatiss as the upright and passionate Rat, Bob Hoskins as the gruff but kindly Badger and Matt Lucas as the eccentric and mischievous Toad. The actors were freed from full costume or even full make up with the animals being suggested by clever mannerisms and fantastic wardrobe. Critics harped on about Matt Lucas as toad but by far the best performances came from Ingleby as the soft northern mole, so sensitive that he breaks down with the thought of home. But by far the best and funniest and sadly fleeting performance came in the form of Anna Maxwell Martin as the Gaoles daughter a much overlooked part in any other production but her performance was hilariously pitched, she was beautifully stupid! Most enjoyable. The show was lovely to watch, and the performances a treat. If it's on next year, catch it!

Finally, 'The Ruby in the Smoke' was the much awaited TV event of Christmas 2006. In fact the only much awaited TV event of Christmas 2006. Phillip Pullman's novel was adapted by Adrian Hodges and starred Billie Piper in the lead as Sally Lockhart, as well as starring Julie Walters, J.J. Field and Matt Smith as the lovable Jim.

Victorian teenager Sally Lockhart receives a mysterious message which leads her on a journey of exploration and danger on the mean streets of London, surrounding her father and a famous ruby. The show received a fair bit of criticism with regards to the complexity or absurdity of the plot, having not read the book I cannot say if it lost anything in translation but in its defence I followed the story completely as did everyone else I have spoken to. The performances were not overdone which is a refreshing change and the drama pitched just right for its 8pm slot. I can't wait for the next one. It was definitely worth traipsing through some of the poor Christmas TV for. A real gem, even if you'll let me be cheesy 'a ruby'!

-Katie

REVIEW – The Vortex and Cyrano de Bergerac

Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester
January 2007

The current production at the Royal Exchange is Noel Coward's 'The Vortex'. This, unlike most Exchange shows, has received national interest due to a bit of celebrity casting – Will Young. This is Young's first theatre role and I feel he pulled it off. Not amazingly, but competently. Not being familiar with the character and play I cannot compare him to past performances, but his portrayal of Nicky as a mummy's boy who becomes increasingly jealous towards his mother's new toy boy (played by Sam Heughan). Although he conveyed the childlike side of Nicky well enough, although the angry drug-addict side of him was less convincing. In no way a bad performance though.

The cast as a whole were superb, stand-out performance from Laura Rees as Nicky's fiancé Bunty. Her performance was a complete treat to watch – she's certainly on my "ones to watch" list. The set was beautiful; sparkling black and white raised in the centre and adorned with a piano, as fitted well into the compact space.

The theatre's previous production running over Christmas and New Year was 'Cyrano de Bergerac' starring Exchange favourite Ben Keaton. Before you entered the theatre itself the cast were wandering around conversing with the audience.

Ben Keaton was perfectly cast as the hero with a love of poetry, one highlight was Cyrano composing a poem whilst sword fighting. Oliver Chris gave a strong performance as love-struck Christian. And the rest of the cast worked well together to create a beautifully comic ensemble.

Again, the set was minimal yet effective – has there ever been a bad set at that theatre? I think not!

-Liz

REVIEW – Aladdin

Lowry, Salford
January 2007

I've never been to a professional pantomime before. I've seen lots of pantomimes, but never one where the performers were paid, and never one with a budget stretching to pyrotechnics and vast sets.

From the start when Abanazar (Bill Ward from 'Coronation Street') walked through the audience singing it was obvious this show was about crowd pleasing and that's what it did. It was a panto for the next generation, using Britney and Gwen Stephanie songs alongside Disney songs and the old traditional panto sing along!

Pantomimes seem to be edging away from traditional, the dame remains but the lead boy being played by a girl is fast changing. Normally I would stick with tradition but for David Flynn's superb performance of Aladdin. He played the title role and yet his name didn't make it to the poster. What a shame that a real star loses out to some soap stars.

There were some good moments, a few gags were underdone and the Lowry auditorium being so huge did not lend itself to audience participation like it might've.

One last note, the fun of panto I always think is the characters being able to improvise especially when heckled. This cast were fresh and fun and talented but ignored their audience unless the script allowed it.

-Katie

**Well, that's it for another issue! Don't forget to log onto www.myspace.com/witw_space!
And in the next issue there'll be a full report from the WitW 2007 London outing where we will be taking in such delights as 'Cabaret', 'The History Boys', 'Avenue Q' and 'Equus'.**