

## **Cutting It**

### **Main cast**



**Left to right: Angela Griffin, Lucy Gaskell,  
Amanda Holden, Ben Daniels, Sarah Parish,  
Jason Merrells, James Midgley and Sian Reeves**

## Cutting It

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**Amanda Holden, Sarah Parish,  
Jason Merrells, Ben Daniels and  
Angela Griffin star in  
Debbie Horsfield's *Cutting It***

*"I have always been interested in the mayhem of family relationships, and if you add to that the passion and power that's hairdressing, plus the havoc created by a 'blast from the past', split ends are the least of the problems!"*  
Debbie Horsfield, writer

Amanda Holden and Sarah Parish sharpen their scissors in a war of passion and peroxide, to run the best hair salon in Manchester in *Cutting It*, which transmits on BBC ONE from April 2002.

The competitive world of hairdressing provides the backdrop for this new drama series from the pen of award-winning writer, Debbie Horsfield. "Hairdressing salons are no longer the place to go to have your hair restyled; you can chill out, get a massage or go in and talk to your stylist and offload all your problems," says the writer. "There are so many human dilemmas going on a writer is never going to run out of ideas."

Allie Henshall (Sarah Parish) and husband Gavin Ferraday (Jason Merrells) are the proud proprietors of Henshall Ferraday, a successful family hairdressing business based in Manchester. Allie's sisters, Darcey (Angela Griffin) and Sydney (Siân Reeves), take care of beauty and nails. The husband-and-wife team appear to have it all – except a baby which Gavin desperately wants. As the couple celebrate the salon's 10th anniversary, Allie announces plans to expand – the business, not her waistline! Gavin is mortified. However, new arrivals in town, Mia Bevan (Amanda Holden), and her husband, Finn (Ben Daniels), have plans of their own.

Before long, the beautiful yet conniving Mia has opened a rival salon, Blade Runner, right across the road from Henshall Ferraday. And the charismatic Finn, once the love of Allie's life, is again making a play for her affection. With her business under threat from Mia and her heart under siege from Finn, Allie is forced to fight. And so begin 'The Manchester hairdressing wars'...

"My inspiration for *Cutting It* came from my twin sisters, who owned a hairdressing business some years ago on the outskirts of Manchester," says writer Debbie Horsfield, who would often visit her sisters' salon. "What surprised me more than anything is just how willing customers were to talk about their most intimate secrets. It was then I realised that this would be a fantastic format for a series."

However ex-customers of the old Radcliffe-based salon need not worry about watching their most intimate secrets played out on screen. "None of the characters were inspired by the people I met in my sisters' salon because I could never do that. The characters are an amalgam of six or seven different people that I have met – including myself," she adds candidly.

Head of BBC Drama Serials Laura Mackie says: "Debbie is really adept at taking an ordinary situation – like Allie's first love coming back into her life – and twisting it so that it becomes the driving force behind the drama.

"The world of hairdressing wars is a rich forum for her deft comic touch and distinctive emotional insights. The characters are vivid, warm and funny and we're lucky to have attracted such a great cast."

For the acclaimed writer of *Making Out*, *Born To Run*, *The Riff Raff Element* and *Sex, Chips & Rock 'n' Roll*, this will be her third workplace drama. “*Making Out* was based on a factory, then there was *Born To Run* which centred on the car industry, and now this. What I am doing is working through the jobs that I have done in the past!” laughs the Eccles-born mother of four.

With Manchester fast becoming the production capital for many new dramas on the BBC, Debbie is happy to continue the tradition of setting her dramas in the North. “I’ve only ever written about something that I have personal experience of, which is why I write about the North. It is where I grew up. It is my background. It’s what I know,” she says proudly.

Jane Tranter, Controller of Drama Commissioning adds: “*Cutting It* has all the right ingredients – love, betrayal, humour and desire, written by Debbie Horsfield on top form. Her style is unique and we’re proud that she continues to write such quality drama for BBC ONE, after the success of her other shows with us.”

The cast also includes: James Midgley as Shane; Lucy Gaskell as Ruby; Pearce Quigley as Eugene; Annette Badland as Brawdie; Bill Thomas as Tom; and Philip Martin Brown as Smedley.

Produced by Diederick Santer, the directors are Andy De Emmony and Catherine Morshead; the executive producers are Sally Haynes, Debbie Horsfield and Laura Mackie. *Cutting It* is a BBC production for BBC ONE.

For additional material, check out the BBC’s new Press Office website at [www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice](http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice) for recorded interviews with the main cast and writer Debbie Horsfield.

- Page 19 **MANCHESTER**  
Writer Debbie Horsfield was born in Eccles and lives in Manchester.
- Page 22 Educated at Manchester Poly, Pearce Quigley was born in Salford.
- Page 22 **WIGAN**  
Lucy Gaskell (Ruby Ferris) was brought up in this town.
- Page 15 **NUNEATON**  
Ben Daniels (Finn Bevan) was born in Nuneaton, near Coventry.
- Page 17 **LEEDS**  
Angela Griffin (Darcey Henshall) was born in Cottingley, Leeds.
- Page 21 James Midgley (Shane Ince) was born in Bradford.
- Page 10 **SOMERSET**  
Sarah Parish (Allie Henshall) was brought up in Yeovil, Somerset.
- Page 23 **CORNWALL**  
Born in Cornwall, Bill Thomas (Tom Henshall) grew up in Salisbury and the West Country
- Page 7 **HAMPSHIRE**  
Amanda Holden (Mia Bevan) was raised in Bishop's Waltham
- Page 23 **BIRMINGHAM**  
Annette Badland (Brawdie Henshall) was born in Edgbaston.
- Page 21 Siân Reeves (Sydney Henshall) was born in West Bromwich (see below also).
- Page 21 **STAFFORDSHIRE**  
Siân Reeves was born in West Bromwich, near Birmingham before her family moved to Brewood, Staffordshire. Siân's Welsh mother still has relatives living in Llanelli, Wales.
- Page 13 **ESSEX**  
Essex-born Jason Merrells (Gavin Ferraday) was brought up in Wanstead.

**Main cast**

Amanda Holden	Mia Bevan
Sarah Parish	Allie Henshall
Jason Merrells	Gavin Ferraday
Ben Daniels	Finn Bevan
Angela Griffin	Darcey Henshall
Siân Reeves	Sydney Henshall
James Midgley	Shane Ince
Lucy Gaskell	Ruby Ferris
Pearce Quigley	Eugene Eubank
Annette Badland	Brawdie Henshall
Bill Thomas	Tom Henshall

**Production team**

Executive Producers	Sally Haynes
	Debbie Horsfield
	Laura Mackie
Writer	Debbie Horsfield
Producer	Diederick Santer
Directors	Andy De Emmony (1-3)
	Catherine Morshead (4-6)
Associate Producer	Elizabeth Binns
Director of Photography	Ian Liggett
Production Designer	John Coleman
Casting Director	Andy Pryor
Costume Designer	Michael Johnson
Hair and Make-up Designer	Kathy Ducker
Script Editor	Manda Levin
Composer	Mark Hinton Stewart
Film Editors	Stephen O'Connell (1-3)
	Nick Arthurs (4-6)

## Amanda Holden plays Mia Bevan

### Amanda gossip:

**Do you confide in your hairdresser?**

Yes. My hairdresser is like my therapist. My mother loves him. He is completely trustworthy.

**Whose style do you most admire?**

I love Sharon Stone; I don't think she has ever made a fashion mistake. I think she's very classy. I also like Jennifer Aniston. She's great. Whenever I watch *Friends* I often wonder where did she get that from, that looks really good!

**Which celebrity's hair would you most like to cut?**

I would like to do something with Anna Ford's hair, because it's been like that for years! Perhaps put some layers in and some lowlights to bring out her face a bit.

**Would you face the chop for your art?**

No! A bald cap and a good make-up artist please, unless it was for Steven Spielberg!



### Did you know..?

- Amanda once played Liesl Von Trapp in a touring production of *The Sound Of Music*.

- She also appeared as a contestant on *Blind Date* in 1990.

**Place of birth:** Bishop's Waltham, Hampshire  
**Trained:** Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts in North London

**Appeared in:** *Kiss Me Kate, The Grimleys, Happy Birthday Shakespeare, Hearts And Bones*

## Amanda Holden plays Mia Bevan

*“Mia might appear to be bitchy, but she isn’t. She’s very sleek, just like her salon, Blade Runner.”*

Complicated and misunderstood? Or a conniving hairdresser from hell? Amanda Holden’s new role as the beautiful, stylish and very sassy Mia Bevan will set tongues wagging in hair salons up and down the country.

“Mia is hard-nosed so you may not warm to her instantly,” admits Amanda. “But underneath it all, she means well.”

The new stylist on the block, who’s hell-bent on winning the war to be the best hairdresser in town, might not be the cold-hearted schemer she first appears, so viewers should reserve their judgements.

“Mia’s a courageous woman because there are a lot of things that happen throughout the story which, I think, most women would find really hard to take. She does a lot of dying inside and has built a wall around herself. She puts on a brave front and, in that sense, I suppose we’re really similar,” the 30-year-old actress reveals candidly.

Amanda is familiar with the pressures of being a popular actress constantly in the media spotlight: “I do the publicity that I am expected to do, but there’s been a lot of unwanted publicity, unwanted attention. I’m probably photographed three times a day, because I live where I do... It’s not what I want but it happens anyway,” she says.

The Hampshire-born actress, best known for her role as sexy teacher Miss Titley in *The Grimleys*, called upon her own hairdressers, Daniel Galvin, for more than her usual wash and blow dry before filming.

“I play a Southerner in a Manchester-set drama, so I insisted on training in London. I assisted my own hairdresser, Lino, for one week. I was like the junior – I picked up rollers, held hair dryers, washed hair, but didn’t do any cutting. Lino said at the end of the week that I had a job there if I wanted one,” she laughs.

Amanda’s past experience as a hairdresser in *Hearts And Bones* also stood her in good stead for her role as Mia.

“I did trim my sister’s hair when I was doing *Hearts And Bones*, she says, “I’ve always done my mum’s and grandmother’s hair – blow-drying, washing and putting rollers in. “But,” she laughs. “I’ve never cut my husband’s (Les Dennis) hair. He’ll never let me cut it!”

Amanda’s own beautiful, blonde tresses were not always as sleek and chic as they are today, she reveals.

“I once had a Princess Diana flick with a long rat’s tail. I put a normal elastic band on the end of it which I used to pull out. In the end I was left with only about three strands of hair!”

“I’ve never really had a bad experience at the hairdressers, but my mother came out of one once with a really bad perm.”

The proud owner of the very sleek, monochrome hair salon Blade Runner in *Cutting It*, Mia’s shop is a far cry from the cosy, work-a-day Henshall Ferraday salon owned by rival Allie Henshall, played by Sarah Parish, Amanda’s close friend and co-star in *Hearts And Bones*.

“I’m really fond of Sarah. We’ve been on holiday together. The funny thing is this time I’m playing a part that Sarah normally plays



and she's playing a part that I normally play!" she laughs.

Manchester is fast becoming a second home for the actress whose first television role was as a murder victim in Granada's *In Suspicious Circumstances* with Edward Woodward.

"I seem to spend most of my life there. I did something for Sky over a year ago which was shot in Manchester, and *The Grimleys* was filmed there too. This has been a particularly long time away from home. It was also difficult because we couldn't have pets in the flat we were renting, and I missed my two dogs – Nobby and Fudge."

With thoughts of returning to the theatre this year, Amanda says. "I think it's really important for an actress to feel the fear!" The star who once played Liesl Von Trapp in a touring production of *The Sound Of Music*, longs to be cast in a classic adaptation.

"I would have loved to have done *Vanity Fair*," she confesses: "I would really love to do a bonnet drama. I can ride side-saddle so I'm all prepared!"

The Mountview Theatre school graduate, whose career continues to go from strength to strength, starts work soon on her new project.

"In the next few weeks, I start filming a comedy with Harry Enfield. He plays an ageing pop star and I play his press-obsessed wife. It's going to be great." she grins.

## Sarah Parish plays Allie Henshall

### Sarah gossip:

**What's your worst hair disaster story?**

I really liked Kajagoogoo so I went in to the hairdressers and asked for a Limahl but instead I came out with a Nick Beggs! He was the bass player who looked liked a poodle.

**Whose style do you most admire?**

The willowy, classy look of Kate Beckinsale and Cate Blanchet.

**Which celebrity's hair would you most like to cut?**

Minnie Driver – I would cut it all off! She's got way too much hair!

**Lifetime ambition?**

To be happy and have a nice house in the country with kids, one day.

**What would you change about yourself if you could?**

My mouth. A mouth like Julia Roberts would be nice.



### Did you know..?

- Sarah appeared as Maria in *Nine* at the Donmar Warehouse. The play won the 1998 Olivier Award for Best New Comedy.

- Sarah and Dervla Kirwan, her co-star in *Hearts And Bones*, have their own production company, Aphra Productions.

**Place of birth:** Yeovil, Somerset

**Trained:** ALRA (Academy of Live & Recorded Art)

**Appeared in:** Film: *Parting Shots*; *Peak Practice*, *Babes In The Wood*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Hearts And Bones*

## Sarah Parish plays Allie Henshall

*She's gutsy, strong and ambitious, but will Allie allow her heart to rule her head?*

Secrets and lies can return to haunt you when you least expect it, and for Allie Henshall it's time to face up to painful events of her past – long-buried, but never forgotten.

Allie Henshall, 36, is happily married to Gavin, but appearances are not what they first seem. After 10 years of concentrating on their salon, Henshall Ferraday, Gavin is desperate to start a family, but Allie isn't ready for motherhood; in fact it terrifies her!

Ambitious, with no thoughts yet of having children, Sarah confesses that "Allie Henshall is very similar to me".

"I think Allie's at that age where she's wondering if she's maternal or if she's a business woman, and she thinks if she takes one year off, everything will fall apart. Also, as the story transpires, there's a much more gripping reason why Allie doesn't want to have kids.

"I can understand her dilemma a lot because when you're in your thirties, it's not like when you come into your own in your twenties, it's a very big decision to say – okay, right, I've done it all, I'll just have kids. I'd find it very difficult to get this far in my business then go off and have children, and come back when everyone's forgotten who I am. I would love to have kids by the time I'm 35/36. I'm 33 now.

Allie has her heart set on winning the National Hair Championships and expanding the business to a second site across the road. However, her dream is shattered when the vacant property is sold to Mia Bevan (Amanda Holden), one-time customer of Henshall Ferraday, now the proud owner of rival salon Blade Runner. To add to Allie's anguish, Mia is also married to Finn (Ben Daniels), the man

who was once the love of her life, the man who once left her broken-hearted, and has returned to Manchester to win her back. So what will Allie do?

"Finn and Allie were an item when she was about 17. Unable to make a commitment, Finn abandoned her in a foreign country without any money. Allie has never really forgiven him for being so spineless."

A real family leader, Allie has two younger sisters, Darcey (Angela Griffin) and Sydney (Sian Reeves), who work in her salon, and she's very protective of them. She has a very bad relationship with Brawdie (Annette Badland), who has put her down for years.

But unlike her relationship with her screen mother, Sarah's own parents took a keen interest in her ambitions to become an actress.

"They first let me on stage at the age of two in a panto," she smiles. "I just got the bug and went to dancing classes and youth theatre. They were very supportive, even though they knew it was going to be a very difficult ride," she says.

The actress, whose career took off relatively recently when she landed the part of Dawn Rudge in *Peak Practice*, for which she won an RTS Award, is best-known for her recent role as the acid-tongued Amanda in *Hearts And Bones*, in which she co-starred with Amanda Holden and partner Hugo Speer.

"Amanda and I are best mates. We see each other every week. She read the scripts way before I did, and said: 'This is good'. I then had a meeting about it and called her in Italy to tell her I'd got the part.

"I go out with Hugo Speer now. It didn't happen when we were doing *Hearts And Bones*, though. We (Amanda, Les Dennis and Hugo)

all went away on holiday together and it sort of happened then,” she laughs. We got on really, really well, and that’s always the best way to start a relationship, as good friends. He’s honest and fun to be with.”

Brought up in Yeovil, Somerset, Sarah – who first found fame in a Boddingtons TV advert – didn’t have time to be instructed in the art of hairdressing before filming began: “I didn’t do the training everyone else did. I was doing something else called *Impact* at the time, so my make-up ladies on that got me a fake dummy’s head, stuck a wig on it and I’d come in and take its ends off and give it a perm.

“I’m now very good at blow drying. I’ve taken Ben Daniels’s ends off and given the director, Andy De Emmony, a number two. I think he wanted a number four, but he got a number two!” she laughs. “It was very short, he looked like he was about to join the military.”

Fans of *Hearts And Bones* will be knocked out by Sarah’s transformation, but she found the experience of wearing hair extensions all too much and couldn’t wait to return to her usual cropped style. “I found it very difficult to blow dry myself. And when it hadn’t been washed, it looked a bit like Rod Stewart’s!”

The award-winning actress will be seen later this year starring alongside Greg Wise and Daniela Nardini in *Sirens* and the ITV drama *Impact*.

## Jason Merrells plays Gavin Ferraday

### Jason gossip:

**Whose style do you admire?**

Kate Moss is beautiful; she's never had a bad look. Steve McQueen, he's a big hero of mine.

**Whose hair would you most like to get your hands on?**

Nigella Lawson; her hair is rather luscious!

**Lifetime ambitions?**

To play a dark character in the drama *The Outsider*.



### Did you know..?

- Jason is a martial arts expert.
- He studied art at university and has sold many pieces of work.
- A theatre director, Jason was the winner of the *Manchester Evening News* Best Actor in a Supporting Role award for *Saved*

**Place of birth:** Wanstead, Essex

**Trained:** No formal training at drama school

**Appeared in:** *A Touch Of Frost*, *Casualty*, *Clocking Off*, *Fat Friends*, *Queer As Folk*

## Jason Merrells plays Gavin Ferraday

*Handsome, capable and caring, Gavin is desperate for a baby with wife Allie.*

Dependable, patient, supportive and successful, 34-year-old Gavin has all the hallmarks of an ideal husband, but will that be enough to prevent wife, Allie (Sarah Parish), from straying into the arms of ex-lover Finn Bevan (Ben Daniels)?

Gavin is almost too good to be true. He's very much in love with Allie and can't understand why she's so reluctant to take the obvious next step in what seems to be a very happy marriage.

"I suppose at the back of Gavin's mind he knows there's more to why Allie doesn't want to have kids," says the Essex-born actor. "He loves her and is prepared to wait and be patient. But I feel he waits too long before doing anything."

With the inner confidence that only comes from having really proved oneself (while Allie built up the salon Gavin was stylist to the Manchester pop-ocracy, jetting about collecting plaudits and silverware), Gavin has even offered to give up work and be the primary carer for their child. And if Allie has really set her heart on a second salon, he's prepared to give her all the support she needs to expand the business and have a baby.

Like Gavin, Jason would be happy to be a stay-at-home dad: "I do that anyway. I spend a lot of time taking care of my son now my wife's gone back to work. It's something I enjoy doing and why I'm happy having a break, not really working at the moment."

The arts graduate also enjoys putting brush to canvas, and is currently painting a 5ft-by-6ft abstract to go with the number of other pieces taking up space in his garage! "I hate leaving my paintings locked in a garage where no-one can see them," he says. "I've sold some pieces in the past when I exhibited in the Brighton area

where I lived. I used to exhibit more than I do and it's something I will push eventually, but there's no need to at the moment because I'm concentrating on my acting."

With *Clocking Off*, *Fat Friends* and *Queer As Folk* under his belt, the popular actor did not attend drama school before landing his first TV role in *Casualty*. "I did loads of different jobs (none of which was hairdressing) to make ends meet and was earning about 50 quid a week doing fringe theatre before *Casualty* came along.

"My character in this is very similar to the guy I played in *Clocking Off* and, to some extent, like Matt in *Casualty*. I always seem to be cast in similar roles as nice, easygoing guys. I long to play a dark character in something like *The Outsider*, a slightly more challenging role. I think as an actor it's important to stretch oneself."

The kickboxing expert will be seen later this year in BBC ONE's *The Inspector Lynley Mysteries* and the new series of *Fat Friends*.

## Ben Daniels plays Finn Bevan

### Ben gossip:

**What's the worst haircut you've ever had?**  
I wanted to have hair like Terry from *Funboy 3*, but I was given a granny bobble cut with pink dye instead.

**Whose style do you admire?**  
Kevin Spacey.

**Have you ever landed a role in a Hollywood movie?**

Yes, two. I turned down the opportunity to star both alongside Mel Gibson in *The Patriots* and Chris O'Donnell in the film *Vertical Limit*.

**Lifetime ambitions?**  
To work on stage in New York.



### Did you know..?

- In 2001, Ben was awarded the Best Supporting Actor Award at the Olivier Awards for *All My Sons*.

**Place of birth:** Nuneaton, near Coventry

**Trained:** LAMDA (London Academy Of Music and Dramatic Art)

**Appeared in:** *Soldier Soldier*, Films – *Fanny And Elvis* and *Beautiful Thing*

## Ben Daniels plays Finn Bevan

*With charisma in buckets, Finn's on a mission to win Allie Henshall back!*

Tall, blond, with steely blue eyes, 39-year-old Finn Bevan is a man on a mission: to win back the love of his life, Allie Henshall. But if he can't get her, he's quite prepared to bed as many women as possible until he does. And it's easy to see why the lovable rogue wins women over, body and soul.

"He is a bit of a sex addict," confesses Ben, with a wry smile. "Women fall for Finn because he's incredibly flattering. He admires women and isn't phoney in his appreciation of them."

"People may have mixed feelings about him. But hopefully they'll like him. Finn is a very successful businessman who comes up to Manchester from London ahead of his wife. He's quite Machiavellian. He owns three bars in London and the stylish Byzantium bar in Manchester. He's on his fourth marriage and his wives are getting relatively younger," he laughs.

"I don't think he's in love with his wife, Mia. I think he likes her. I'm not sure to what extent she's aware of this. I think their marriage is great but it's not filled with love. She's highly ambitious and Finn is the same, but Allie is the love of his life, they were very young when they first got together and now he wants her back!"

Debates will rage between women across the country – should Allie be reckless and choose Finn over dependable Gavin?

A tough businessman on screen, the Nuneaton-born actor says he couldn't cut it in the real world. "No, I'm too soft," he admits. "I'd be a terrible businessman. My parents had businesses, my mum had a children's clothes shop and my dad a grocers – they were very business-minded. You have to be ruthless to make it work and I'm a pushover."

London-based Ben nearly didn't take up the opportunity to play the dynamic Finn: "I was about to get on a plane to Croatia for a holiday when my agent said: 'I think you'd really, really like this – I'll send you a few pages over to read'. Then I met the director, Andy De Emmony, and producer Diederick Santer before taking the script on holiday to Croatia."

The actor, whose film credits includes *Fanny And Elvis*, *Beautiful Thing* and *Conspiracy* with Kenneth Branagh, recalls with some hilarity his moment of glory last year when he was taken completely by surprise: "I won the Olivier Award for Best Supporting Actor for *All My Sons* which I did at the National Theatre. I had been doing a film in Amsterdam and arrived that morning to go to the ceremony. My agent told me I hadn't won, so I enjoyed myself and got slightly drunk. When they got to my category and said: 'And the winner is, Ben Daniels,' I was stunned! I went running up on the stage and gave Sarah Brightman a kiss that was a little bit too big!" he laughs.



## Angela Griffin plays Darcey Henshall

### Angela gossip:

**Which celebrity would Darcey most like to get her hands on?**

In true Darcey style, I would like to give an all-over body massage to Eminem.

**What's the worst haircut you've ever had?**

I had nits when I was quite young so I had to have all my hair cut off into a bob. My hair was all the way down to my bum, so I was very upset.

**What would you change about yourself if you could?**

My feet; they're too big.

**Do you worry about your looks?**

Not really, there's much more important things to worry about. And it's really boring worrying about how you look. You just have to make the most of what you've got and make sure you're a nice person.

**Whose style do you admire?**

The likes of Destiny's Child. I love their hair, make-up – the whole image.



### Did you know..?

- Angela was spotted by a talent scout who visited her school, before making her television debut as Gail in Yorkshire Television's *Under The Bedclothes*
- In 1995, she was awarded the Best Newcomer Award at the National Television Awards for her role as Fiona Middleton in *Coronation Street*.
- Angela also received the Best Actress Award at the Emmas in 2000 for her outstanding performance as Jasmine in *Holby City*.

**Place of birth:** Cottingley, Leeds

**Trained:** Children's Theatre group in Leeds

**Appeared in:** *Under The Bedclothes*; *Coronation Street* from aged 16; *Holby City*, *Waking The Dead* and *Babyfather*

## Angela Griffin plays Darcey Henshall

*Elegant, streetwise and sexy, Darcey is the ultimate kept woman.*

Henshall Ferraday's resident beautician is Darcey: feisty, streetwise and sexy. Angela Griffin's new role is her most glamorous to date.

"It's been brilliant playing a glamorous character. She's had her boobs done, her stomach and legs done, everything's done. It's all about image and I've never worn so much make-up to play a character before!"

The *Coronation Street* and *Holby City* star confesses she would opt for plastic surgery: "I would consider having liposuction done, because I don't think there's anything wrong with it, but there's a danger with things going wrong. I think after I have my kids, and if gravity starts taking over, I would definitely go off and have a boob job and get it all brought back up again!"

A hairdresser, nurse, salsa teacher and now a beautician, Angela's major TV roles have all been to take care of the needs of others. However in *Cutting It*, her needs are being met by several married men, all eager to please.

Smedley Butt (Philip Martin Brown), her latest fling, has installed Darcey in a chi-chi Manchester apartment, with an array of store cards and more platinum from his jewellery shop than she knows what to do with. Darcey Henshall is very content with her status as a kept woman.

"I would love it, to have someone with loads and loads of money to look after me, but I think I would get bored," says the National TV Award-winner. "My extravagance is cars," she laughs. "I've recently bought a big 4x4 to get me up and down the motorway. I also love eating out."

"I went off to do some research for *Cutting It* which involved going to Kendals in Manchester and having an Elemis massage. The facial massage was great because it works on your five senses. The funny thing is, in *Cutting It*, they can't actually film me doing any of my massage treatments because it's always done in silence, in a room where the person's always got their kit off!" she laughs.

Like the salsa teacher in search of her father in the award-winning BBC TWO drama series *Babyfather*, issues about Darcey's parentage are a moot point as she is the only brown face in the Henshall family clan.

"Darcey's been told by her mum, Brawdie, that she's some kind of genetic throw-back from a great, great grandmother, Eunice, who came from Jamaica. But in the back of her mind she doesn't really believe that story at all." And as viewers will find out, she has good reason not to.

Spoiled rotten from childhood, Darcey is the only Henshall sister with mother Brawdie's wholehearted approval. "She loves Darcey, but Darcey can't stand Brawdie. She's this big, fat disgusting slob of a woman who's always eating and pigging out. Darcey loves her sisters to bits; but she's trying to please everybody else, she's trying to fit in with everybody around her and what she thinks they want."

From a close-knit family, the 25-year-old's strong bond with mum, Sheila, could not be further from that of her screen mum, Brawdie. "It was great filming so close to home, it meant that I was able to go off and see my mum and friends miles more than I normally get to see them."

## Debbie Horsfield writer and executive producer

TV, theatre and songwriter, mother of four, mentor, executive producer ... Debbie Horsfield's current workload would leave most people pulling their hair out. But the acclaimed writer believes that 'being organised' is one of the keys to her success. Plus a keen eye for what an audience wants.

"Having kids has made me extremely disciplined. I have a tight structure in place. Generally, my routine is I am up at 6am and go to the gym for an hour. Then I work from 10am-1pm then 2-6pm unless I have deadlines looming."

The Newcastle university graduate has always drawn inspiration from her family: "My idea for *Cutting It* came from my twin sisters, Jeannie and Lynnitt, the same twin sisters who provided the inspiration for *Sex, Chips & Rock 'n' Roll*. They had a salon in Radcliffe, which my sister sold about 12 years ago. I never worked there, but I loved being one of the customers. I enjoyed going in on a Saturday because it was always absolutely packed. I think it was that and the fact that my sisters were involved in these hairdressing competitions which gave me the idea for *Cutting It*."

Fifteen years ago I wrote a character in a stage trilogy who was a hairdresser. But you could never do justice to the whole salon thing on stage, you just could never afford it and I'd always thought if I ever returned to doing a workplace drama after *Making Out*, a successful hairdressing salon would be just perfect for it."

*Cutting It* is Debbie's third workplace drama and she already has ideas about a fourth: "My two sisters now run a business which provides catering for the building trade and they have some fantastic stories to tell, so it's very possible that I would look at that. I once worked in a kitchen, which has a constant turnover of staff. With all that male energy combined with a

mainly female staff, you've got your *Making Out* meets *Auf Wiedersehen Pet*," she laughs. Debbie's partner, actor Martin Wenner, is a great support. She believes women can have it all – a career and kids. But, she admits: "It's a struggle sometimes, you want to give your best to your work and to the kids, you don't want to short-change either of them. I don't think there's ever an easy solution. It's worth going for it, but it's tricky."

"All four of my children are home-educated so they're always around. We see more of each other than most working parents with kids, which is great. It also has a down side, which is that I can never really switch off from them. I've got an office in the house which means I can often hear the noise," she laughs.

Four years ago, Debbie teamed up with music legend Mike Moran to write the BBC drama serial *Sex, Chips & Rock 'n' Roll*. They worked together again more recently on *Cutting It*: "Because Mike and I work so well together, when we needed an original Seventies-style song for episode three of *Cutting It* we went off and wrote one! We've also been working on a musical version of *Sex Chips & Rock 'n' Roll* for the Royal Exchange in Manchester which will be opening in June/July this year. It is not simply the stage version of the TV series, there are a lot more songs in it. Mike and I have written another 12 songs so it's a full-blown musical. I've loved it. It's been great and I am very excited."

The 47-year-old Manchester United fan confesses that writing would not be her first career choice in another life: "In my next life I would be a footballer, because I used to play football in my teens. I took it so seriously that from the ages of 12-17, I would practice dribbling for three hours every day – I was obsessed with it. The other thing I would do is singing. I don't have a very powerful singing voice and I can't actually read music, but I can write lyrics."

## Lino Carbosiero at Daniel Galvin on training Amanda Holden for *Cutting It*

From Hollywood stars to TV stars, renowned hairstylist Lino Carbosiero's impressive list of clientele reads like a roll call. With 20 years experience under his belt, he was the perfect choice to put Amanda through her paces when she embarked on a week's training for her role as Mia in *Cutting It*.

"I had to bring Amanda Holden up to speed very quickly because she only had a week. First of all we started with a head block (false model). I'd literally show her once how to put hair up and then down, and then she would do it. I know hairdressers who couldn't put hair up like that! It was actually quite funny," he smiles.

"Then she worked on real hair, first by observing. She learnt the technique of holding the scissors, then holding the comb and scissors together. There's a way of holding the hair, scissors and comb together and Amanda could do that easily. She has natural ability, an eye for detail, and was very comfortable blow-drying, shampooing, and putting rollers in. My juniors have to hold hair up for me while I work, and she did that – no problems at all – there were no airs or graces. She interacted well with the clients and just got on with job.

"She even swept the salon floor! She was my junior, so I certainly made her work; and even though she had a busy schedule she did put in a lot of time.

"We only had one week, but if I had six months with her, I could have turned her into a hairdresser, quite comfortably. Marks out of 10? – I'd give her 10! I said to her at the end of the week that if she wanted a job as a junior I would gladly take her on – but I don't think it would pay her mortgage!" he laughs.

"I have been styling and cutting Amanda's hair for about four or five years now. We've been through thick and thin. I have customers that go back 20 years. You become part of their lives and they become part of yours."

### Lino's top hair tip:

"Hair is made out of protein, so get a protein-based conditioner and always moisturise your hair with that. It doesn't matter if you have the best hairstyle in the world, if your hair isn't in good condition, then it will never look right."

**Sydney Henshall (Siân Reeves)**



Sydney (34) is a woman of many neuroses. A reluctant single mother to the pubescent Calypso, Syd is terrified that her daughter has firmer breasts and a better bottom than she does. Stick-thin, Sydney exercises for England – she’s the first to succumb to any new-age health fad, from detox to pilates, millet to meringue. Her eclectic dress sense (Brawdie calls her “tripe dressed as lobster”), her dogged reliance on self-help manuals, and her paranoia about being single and getting old characterise eccentric Sydney. Funny, sweet and sometimes vulnerable, Allie and Gavin try to keep a close eye on her. Syd also works at Henshall Ferraday, where she has turned nail care into an art form.

Born in West Bromwich, near Birmingham, Siân Reeves was brought up in Brewwood, Staffordshire. Her TV credits include: *In A Land Of Plenty* and *Making Astronauts* for the BBC and *Urban Gothic* for C5. More recently, she was cast as Pauline in C4’s *Swallow*. On stage, she was Cossette in Trevor Nunn/John Caird’s *Les Miserables*; Maria in Bob Thomson’s UK tour of *West Side Story* and, more recently, Milly Dews at the RSC in Stephen Poliakoff’s *Talk Of The City*.

**Shane Ince (James Midgley)**



Shane is one of Henshall Ferraday’s premier stylists, and one of Manchester’s premier queens. Shane can pull anyone, anytime, anywhere – and he frequently does. He’s particularly fond of swiping Sydney’s potential boyfriends from under her nose. Despite being enormously competitive in the love stakes, Shane and Syd are actually really good friends, and he’s very much at the centre of the salon team. However Shane’s attitude is every man for himself, so he’s not the world’s most reliable or compassionate employee.

The 27-year-old Manchester-based actor will be known to viewers for his role as Ed Willis in Yorkshire Television’s *Emmerdale*. James’s TV credits also include *North Square*, *Always & Everyone*, *Heartbeat* and *Cold Feet*. James was brought up in Bradford.

**Ruby Ferris (Lucy Gaskell)**



Feisty, gorgeous Ruby (17) is the junior at Henshall Ferraday. She's very much one of the family, despite the endless cheek she gives to Allie, with whom she delights in playing the sulky teenager. Ruby claims to be adventurous, rebellious and promiscuous, but it's not until an intimate encounter with the least likely candidate for her heart that she comes clean about her level of experience...

Gavin and Allie are permanently on the verge of sacking Ruby, not because she's bad at her job; she's actually very bright and competent. But she can't keep her mouth shut. With the customers, she's constantly putting her foot in it, and she doesn't seem to care. And as Ruby's real reasons for antagonising Allie begin to emerge, viewers will come to understand what's eating Ruby Ferris.

Twenty-one-year-old Lucy Gaskell makes her professional acting debut as Ruby in *Cutting It*. Born in Wigan, Lucy had her heart set on becoming an actress before she won a place at the Welsh College Of Music & Drama in 1998.

**Eugene Eubank (Pearce Quigley)**



Eugene is Allie's oldest and most loyal friend. He's also madly in love with her, which she chooses not to see.

Eugene is a geeky computer whiz and the accountant for Henshall Ferraday, with a flat above the salon that is a veritable shrine to the other great love of his life – Manchester City football club. Rarely to be seen without a vintage light blue shirt, Eugene is no style guru, but he has a heart of gold. He's very protective of Allie, having stood by her through thick and thin for years.

Eugene is used to being the butt of everyone's jokes, but has his moment when a chance for romance comes out of left field...

A huge Manchester United supporter, Pearce's TV credits include: *Inspector Morse*, *Queer As Folk*, *Pie In The Sky* and *Happiness*. In theatre, Pearce has had numerous roles including that of Little Laurie in Mike Morrissey's *Cider With Rosie* and Feste/Antonio in Jonathan Petherbridge's *Twelfth Night*. Salford-born Pearce attended Manchester Poly.