

'CLEANERS' online team-written sitcom

Public Chat **Monday 4th November 2002** A BBCi Writers Room Production

<HostMatter> Hi Tim.
<Tim Williamson> Hi Matt
<daveandy> Hi, Matt. Hi, Tim. Did you leave the rest of the team stranded in London?
<Tim Williamson> Hi dave
<Tim Williamson> dave: Think they all got home safely.
<Tim Williamson> Eventually
<daveandy> Tim: I was worried about Bazx. He had to make a 65 mile journey to the airport in the wee small hours.
<daveandy> Tim: Did everyone arrive at the right time?
<Tim Williamson> dave: yeah - pretty much. No major problems.
<HostMatter> Hi Debs.
<Tim Williamson> Hi Debs
<daveandy> Welcome, Debs.
<Debbie Giggle> Hi HostMatt Three
<Debbie Giggle> Hi Tim and Andy
<Debbie Giggle> Sorry Daveandy
<daveandy> Tim/Debs: Big question ð what's MJ really like?
<HostMatter> He's on leave at the moment - you can speak freely ;)
<Tim Williamson> Matt: Phew!
<Debbie Giggle> Daveandy: He's really lovely. The wise, indulgent Godfather that my parents never gave me.
<HostMatter> Heh... wonder what that says about ME!
<Tim Williamson> dave: He's a nice bloke.
<daveandy> Debs: That's how he comes across in the chatrooms.
<Debbie Giggle> Daveandy: He's obviously spent years knowing how to get the best from writers and I was absolutely charmed by him.
<Tim Williamson> dave: Yeah, the Sage of Sitcoms
<HostMatter> LOL
<Debbie Giggle> daveandy: But as for Matt.....
<daveandy> Tim:Debs: And how did you get on with the cast?
<Tim Williamson> dave: Fine. Although we didn't have too much time to talk to them - in fact we didn't get that much chance to talk with each other.
<Debbie Giggle> daveandy: They were very businesslike. Did what they needed to do and went on their way quite soon so we didn't have much time to chat.
<Debbie Giggle> Tim: Snap
<Tim Williamson> Debs: :)
<daveandy> Tim/Debs: Sorry about that. It would have been fun to chat to them.
<Tim Williamson> dave: Although I thought that all of them were well cast - they were all pretty much as I'd envisaged them.
<Debbie Giggle> daveandy: Yes. The schedule for the day was quite full though.
<daveandy> Tim/Debs: Another big question ð how did you get on with each other? Any surprises :_)
<HostMatter> wb Hurri.
<Hurri_> hi...
<Debbie Giggle> dave: I felt a bit shy meeting everyone actually. Even though I'd spoken online to them for hours.
<Tim Williamson> dave: We seemed to get on very well. It was as Debs says a full schedule though.
<daveandy> Tim: That sounds ominously like rewrites.
<Tim Williamson> dave: it was a strange experience - actually 'speaking' to each other!
<daveandy> Tim: Question is, are you still speaking to each other?
<Debbie Giggle> Tim: Agree. It was a strange thing.

<HostMatter> Hurri, we're talking about the online sitcom table read which happened last Wednesday.

<Tim Williamson> dave: Of course !

<Debbie Giggle> dave: Of course.

<Hurri_> right

<Debbie Giggle> dave: By the way. That's not Matt's hair in that picture you know.

<daveandy> Tim/Debs: Glad about that! Any final polishing to be done?

<HostMatter> lol!!!!

<Hurri_> I should really pay more attention to what goes on on BBCi

<daveandy> Debs: Lol! Wasn't fooled for a moment.

<HostMatter> Hurri - you can check it all out at www.bbc.co.uk/writersroom

<Debbie Giggle> dave: Yes lots still to do. Editing things back and trying to find funnier lines etc before the deadline on the 7th.

<daveandy> Tim/Debs: Sounds like you came away exhausted.

<Tim Williamson> dave: We arrived, introduced ourselves to each other and the BBC people, had a quick chat and then it was another read through, followed by a script meeting and then unfortunately some people had to shoot off. We came from far and wide!

<Hurri_> hmm...

<daveandy> Tim: You'll have to plan a reunion party for next year.

<Tim Williamson> dave: Yep, I think Matt's already working on - OnCom Reunited.

<daveandy> Tim: Excellent!

<Debbie Giggle> Daveandy: Its like Ground Force where they go back and everything's covered in weeds.

<HostMatter> da: "After they were famous" etc.

<Tim Williamson> Debs; lol

<daveandy> Tim/Debs: How was it hearing the actors speak your lines?

<Tim Williamson> dave: Excellent, it really brought the whole thing to life for me.

<Tim Williamson> And Philip Madoc IS Davies!

<Debbie Giggle> Daveandy: Wonderful. I really enjoyed it.

<daveandy> Tim/Debs: I knew you'd enjoy it and Philip Madoc is one of my all time favourite actors.

<Debbie Giggle> DA: Yep Philip Madoc was a brilliantly pedantic and verbose Davies. I can't imagine anyone doing a better job.

<daveandy> Debs: Can't wait to see it online.

<Tim Williamson> dave: Have you had a look at the third draft?

<daveandy> Tim: Yes. I really enjoyed it. Very fast paced and slick. Lots of good gags, too.

<daveandy> Tim: Still hate the machine, though :)

<Debbie Giggle> daveandy: The thing that surprised me was how much really good stuff came up so late in the process. All the stuff with Bruce Springsteen for example and a lot of good stuff in the final scene.

<Tim Williamson> dave: Thanks, mate. (and I know what you mean though).

<daveandy> Debs: That's because you'd really worked your way deep into the characters and situation.

<daveandy> Tim/Debs: It had become second nature to you.

<Debbie Giggle> daveandy: I know what the experts mean now when they say to really rework a script as much as you can before you submit it.

<daveandy> Tim/Debs: So much easier than starting with a blank page.

<HostMatter> :)

<Tim Williamson> dave: Indeed.

<daveandy> Debs: But it does help to have input in those early drafts.

<Debbie Giggle> da: I'm not sure about second nature, but it would be much easier if we were starting today - knowing what we know now.

<HostMatter> You can see her say that "live" in her interview too!

<daveandy> Matt: Interview... or evidence! :-)

<Debbie Giggle> All: Despite all appearances I was not drunk, just slightly

hyper.

<HostMatter> Keep digging, Debs.

<daveandy> Debs: I believe you.

<Debbie Giggle> All: And rather inarticulate.

<Debbie Giggle> All: Oh okay, completely nonsensical.

<daveandy> Debs: Sounds like an Oscar speech :-)

<Tim Williamson> Debs: It's okay - Matt's a whizz at editing :)

<daveandy> Tim: We shall see...

<Debbie Giggle> Tim: He'd have to be.

<HostMatter> lol

<HostMatter> "Debbie looks sheepishly into camera..."

<daveandy> Tim/Debs: How was the BBC fare? Vimto and Chewits?

<Tim Williamson> dave: They couldn't stretch to the Chewits.

<Tim Williamson> I brought my own.

<Debbie Giggle> da: The sandwiches were from the BBC's new game show "Guess the filling".

<daveandy> Tim: As a licence-payer, i should be pleased to hear that.

<HostMatter> Er... we pay 'em too, Dave!

<HostMatter> :)

<daveandy> Matt: :-)

<Tim Williamson> HM: You tease.

<Debbie Giggle> HostM: But we know your favourite police drama need we say more.

<HostMatter> Tim: I was talking about the license fee!

<Tim Williamson> HM lol

<Debbie Giggle> daveandy: So what are you working on at the moment then?

<daveandy> Debs: Stack of stuff for Airtours. Got half a radio script of my own, and part of a new short story.

<Debbie Giggle> daveandy: Are you an advertising copywriter?

<daveandy> Debs: For my sins, yes.

<Debbie Giggle> da: So's our Tim.

<Tim Williamson> dave; There's a lot of it about!

<daveandy> Tim: I envy (in a nice way!) your breakthrough into proper writing.

<daveandy> Tim: I shall make you my example.

<HostMatter> Call this a breakthrough? ;)

<daveandy> Matt: You bet!

<HostMatter> :)

<Tim Williamson> dave: It's certainly a nice change from writing to a strict brief - hold on... hasn't that what we've been doing ? :)

<Debbie Giggle> Tim: LOL!

<daveandy> Tim: That's exactly what attracted me to having a go.

<HostMatter> Dave, remind me - did you originally send in an audition scene?

<daveandy> Matt: Yes.

<HostMatter> Cool.

<daveandy> Matt: More 'Limp', I think.

<Tim Williamson> dave: Yeah, there are actually quite a few similarities iin this particular process, rather than working on an original piece which you can take in any direction.

<HostMatter> dave: What is? ;)

<daveandy> Matt: Well, it started out as a smile.

<daveandy> Matt: I'm a raw beginner at this new-fangled webby stuff.

<Debbie Giggle> Da: I think I've got your audition on my computer. Does it start with Julie saying "Jonny take a good hard look at this overall."

<daveandy> Debs: No, it starts with Steve saying to Julkie: Backside, office, now.

<HostMatter> Oh, I remember that one, yeah.

<daveandy> Debs: Then comes a cheap knob gag which probably zilched my chances :-)

<HostMatter> lol

<Debbie Giggle> Da: That must be a different Dave. I remember your audition though. Didn't I do a review of it at the time?

<HostMatter> Deb: Is this before or after you got on the team? ;)

<daveandy> Debs: You did, and made me feel proper professional, too.

<Debbie Giggle> HostM: All the scripts went onto Scriptreader after the deadline date but before the start of the scheme. My hands are clean. I only talk dirty. Where have I heard that before.

<HostMatter> lol

<daveandy> Debs: Don't know where you've heard that line before, but I shall certainly rip it off :-)

<HostMatter> Debbie's interview has loads of bleeps in it like on Jerry Springer.

<Debbie Giggle> Da: I nicked it off Tim :)

<Debbie Giggle> HostM: That is simply not true.

<HostMatter> ;)

<Tim Williamson> Debs: Er, my hands are clean on that one :)

<daveandy> Debs/Matt: I'm dying to see it!

<HostMatter> Dave: Interviews will be going up online as a final final ultra final thing.

<daveandy> Tim: Eh? A copywriter denying credit? Unheard of!

<daveandy> Matt: Thanks. I wouldn't miss it.

<Tim Williamson> dave: that's a thought!

<Tim Williamson> In fact they're ALL my ideas!

<Debbie Giggle> Da: He's got plenty of his own stuff to take credit for has our Tim. Its me who's forced to take credit for other peoples lines.

<daveandy> Tim/Debs: Any thoughts about developing a sitcom of your own?

<Tim Williamson> dave: yeah, one or two. but OnCom has really opened my eyes as to how much work is involved.

<daveandy> Tim: Me, too!

<Tim Williamson> dave :)

<daveandy> Tim: It all looks so easy when you flop into your armchair and tune into The Office or Dad's Army. You can't help thinking: I could do that.

<daveandy> Tim: I know better now!

<Debbie Giggle> Da: I don't have any ideas at the moment for a sitcom I'm afraid :(But I have written a sketch show. Not quite sure what to do with that though.

<HostMatter> All: And the Oncom schedule was not as tight as it would normally be if writers were doing it full time.

<daveandy> Matt: I, for one, couldn't take that sort of pressure.

<HostMatter> Deb: You wrote a sketch show all on your own?

<daveandy> Matt: Makeds me admire the team all the more.

<Debbie Giggle> HostM: Yes.

<HostMatter> Deb: Hmmmm.

<daveandy> Deb: Sketches related to a theme, or unconnected?

<Debbie Giggle> HostM: Its not my fault. I haven't got any friends.

<HostMatter> Deb: But you should be submitting to existing shows really.

<HostMatter> Deb: I only say that as you're unlikely to get your own sketch show off the ground that way.

<Debbie Giggle> HostM: I know. But seeing things on the screen isn't the only pleasurable part of writing.

<daveandy> Matt: I've read one of Deb's stage plays. It was smart, funny, and moving, too.

<HostMatter> dave: I read one/it too.

<Debbie Giggle> HostM: I might some back and steal some of the characters, or send some of them out. Not sure yet. I just enjoyed writing it.

<daveandy> Matt: Must be a chance for her on a Beeb sketch show... hint, hint.

<visitor_LoVe> hi guys

<HostMatter> dave: There's a chance for everyone - if they're good enough.

<HostMatter> Hi LoVe

<daveandy> Matt: I'll get me coat.
<HostMatter> da: lol
<Debbie Giggle> Da: They're not actually standalone sketches though because the characters would come back each week like in the Fast Show/Harry Enfield/League of Gentleman. It will probably just go in the drawer for now.
<HostMatter> Welcome mohammed
<daveandy> All: I notice in the upcoming Steve Coogan show, he has Debs: Can't you adapt them for an exiting show?
<visitor_mohammed> thank u
<HostMatter> Ah... look whose here.
<HostModern> o_0
<visitor_LoVe> i gtg..
<Debbie Giggle> Hiya HM.
<visitor_mohammed> hi
<daveandy> Debs: Whoops! Sorry about incoherentg qujestion!
<visitor_LoVe> bye..
<visitor_mohammed> hi
<visitor_emma2002> hi ppl
<HostMatter> Hi emma
<HostMatter> Um, we have five minutes left folks.
<daveandy> All: I notice in the upcoming Steve Coogan show, he has a Ukrainian girlfriend. Would be interesting to compare her to Katya.
<visitor_emma2002> hi ppl
<HostMatter> Emma, do you have a question for the writing team?
<Debbie Giggle> Da: The girl who read Katya was absolutely gorgeous.
<HostMatter> Er... obviously not.
* HostModern nods emphatically
<Tim Williamson> Debs: True
<Debbie Giggle> Da: And a very sexy voice for the sexline scenes.
<Dorothy> My, people come and go so quickly around here!
<Debbie Giggle> HostM: LOL
<HostModern> heheh- diversionary tactics there?
<daveandy> Tim/Debs: I meant in terms of how her dialogue. My Katya stuff would have been mangled English.
<HostMatter> I learned it all from you, HM! You said so yourself on my video.
<HostMatter> wb emma
<Debbie Giggle> Da: We tried very hard not to make Katya a "funny foreigner". I hope we succeeded.
<visitor_emma2002> hi ppl
<HostMatter> Emma, do you have a question for the writing team?
<Debbie Giggle> Tim: Which character did you find most difficult to write for?
<visitor_emma2002> how long does it take to write a book?
<Tim Williamson> Debs: I think it was Katya, but after the read through and having had the actor bring her to life, I think it'd be much easier now.
<HostMatter> Folks, I'm going to have to close up in a second.
<HostMatter> There's another (final) public chat next Monday.
<Debbie Giggle> Tim: I struggled all the way through trying to write lines for Jonny but as you say, hearing the lines helps.
<daveandy> All: Bye for now. I look forward to seeing how it all pans out.
<Tim Williamson> Matt: Okay
<Debbie Giggle> Da: Bye.
<Tim Williamson> dave: Thanks mate, bye
<HostMatter> dave: The very last table is on Thursday.
<Debbie Giggle> Bye Tim, Matt and HM.
<HostMatter> Closing in five...
<Tim Williamson> Debs: Bye
<HostMatter> Four...

<Tim Williamson> Cheers Matt/ HM
<HostMatter> Three...
<Tim Williamson> Byee
<HostMatter> Two...
<HostMatter> One.
<visitor_emma2002> hi ppl