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'The Men'

Making Men Out Of Boys

Babyfather
returns to BBC TWO

Bolder, sexier and funnier, David Harewood, W

Hilary Salmon says: “Because we have a bigger canvas this time round with eight episodes, instead of four, we see each of the characters go on a rites-of-passage journey. I suppose this is the key growing up series for these guys, and in some ways marks the journey from boyhood to manhood.”

“In terms of the writing, *Babyfather 2* is going to be faster, funnier and bolder!” It was very interesting getting a group of writers together for this series. We knew Avril Russell who wrote all of the episodes for the first series, wouldn’t have the time to write all eight, so we had to expand the team.

“We did quite a trawl of writers and discovered that there was a lot more undiscovered talent who’d come through since we were working on the first series that we weren’t aware of. There was so much energy and confidence particularly among the black female writers who

Cast

Johnny
Gus
Linvall
Beres
Chantelle
Lesley
Kandii
Caroline
Pauline
Lucy
Marcia
Evelyn
Mrs Pottinger
Mr Pottinger
Mrs Lindo

REGIONAL INTEREST

BIRMINGHAM

David Harewood who plays Gus was born in Birmingham

WALSALL

Don Gilet who plays Johnny was born in Caldmore, Walsall

WOLVERHAMPTON

Billie-Claire Wright who plays Caroline was brought up in Perton, on the borders of Staffordshire and Wolverhampton

NOTTINGHAM

Avril . Russell writer of was born in Nottingham where she still lives

LEEDS

Angela Griffin who plays Chantelle was born in Cottingley, Leeds

“I would love to play a villain next. I want to be a bad guy, to explore my darker side. The time is right to play _____ in _____. I would love to do that. I want to push the boat out and to stop playing it safe. My ambition is to be successful, and I think I’ve done that by becoming a leading character in _____

“For the first time in my life I’m hungry. I’ve never been an ambitious person, but now I want the opportunity - not fame or money - but the opportunity to do good work.

The man who once described himself as the ‘classroom clown’ was more than happy to get naked in the name of art. “Filming the shower scenes in _____ where we all strip off didn’t bother me at all. Although I’d never done anything like that before on television, it didn’t faze me because I’m a bit of an exhibitionist! I was always first and probably the last one to put my clothes back on.

“In fact the girls in make-up took a vote and my butt was voted the best of the rest!

DAVID ON WOMEN AND RELATIONSHIPS

What do you think men want most in a close, intimate relationship?

Your idea of a good date?

What are the things you like most about women?

What do women want most in a close relationship?

What irritates you most about the opposite sex?

Are women better at talking openly about their problems with friends than men are?

What do you think are the subtle differences between men and women?

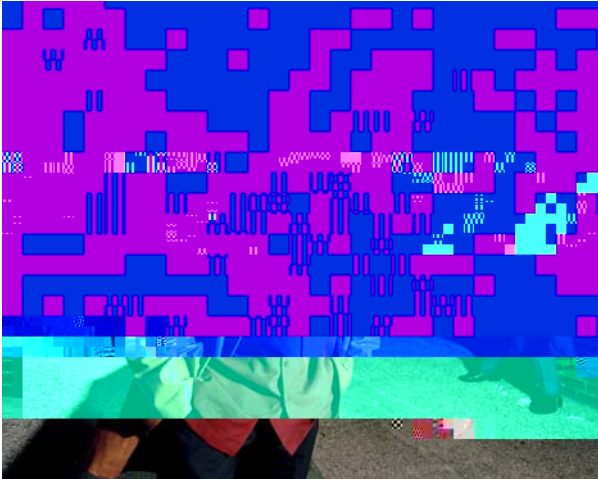
Have you ever been hurt in a relationship?

Do you believe in love at first sight?

Who would you most like to be the mother of your children, metaphorically speaking of course?

BABYFATHER 2

WIL JOHNSON PLAYS BERES



“The response to the first series of [Babyfather](#) has been phenomenal,” says Wil Johnson. “I am so proud to be involved in a drama which affirms the positive aspects of black men in this society. I feel invigorated when I walk down the street and people tell me how much they enjoyed it and how much it has empowered them. It’s for everybody, but it means that much more to black people than anybody else.”

“When the new series opens it’s a year later and Beres is at the highest point in his life. He’s found a woman that he loves more than anything in the world, more than he even loved his ex-wife.”

“He’s got happiness and contentment and all he wants to do is take it that one step further and cement the relationship by getting married. Life’s absolutely fantastic but then it starts to take an unexpected turn. Beres suffers a major health scare later on in the series, which has a profound effect on his life and those around him. It’s much more poignant, because for the first time in his life, Beres is unable to talk to the other guys about it.”

Although his personal relationship in the series takes a downward turn, things could not be far more removed in real life. “I got married last year and I’m very happy indeed,” he says with a glint in his eye.

“Since the last series of [Babyfather](#), I did a short film called [The Last](#) in which I play an assassin – and I’m in a movie, [The Last](#) comes out on general release next year. It’s a great role about a guy who’s in love with this woman who leaves him and he wants her back.”

Currently filming the third series of [Babyfather](#), Wil relishes the opportunity to play other roles: “There are two other short films in the pipeline which I hope to squeeze in next year. In one I play a love genie who gives this guy advice about women and in the other, [The Last](#) I play a vigilante. It’s great because as well as doing the long-running stuff, I get a chance to branch off and do something totally different. It also keeps the whole work scenario fresh and interesting.”

BABYFATHER 2

FRASER JAMES PLAYS LINVALL

“Linvall is the classic bachelor: he is the one out of all of them who is still trying to keep in touch with his youth. We find him in a relationship with a much younger girl at the start of the series, a very gorgeous younger girl,” says Fraser James. He is trying to get ahead with his photography, while also balancing the new-found responsibilities of being a father to 15-year-old Eric,” he says. “Eric is not living with Linvall, but has a key and is free to turn up whenever he feels. However, Eric has been known to let himself in at the most delicate of moments!

“Eric is like a lot of people when you give him power he abuses it,” continues Fraser. “He invites his friends round to Linvall’s place and things get a bit raucous. Eric is a typical teenager - an adult’s opinion doesn’t mean anything to him; he’s just going to do what he wants to do. All you can hope is that he’s not going to get into trouble.”

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The set was absolutely packed on the day the guys

BABYFATHER 2

And if Don found himself in that situation? “I would be pretty cut up. If I was in a long-standing relationship with someone and I found out they were having an affair - well, just the thought of it is pretty devastating.”

Don’s career to date has developed methodically, he says: “Things have happened organically; my career has been quite measured and paced, and I’m happy with the way things have gone for me.” The quality of work has gone up a notch or two since the first series of . Don played the lead role in a critically acclaimed production of Ben Johnson’s in London’s Riverside Theatre. He says it was a daunting experience: “It’s just a matter of rising to the challenge, which is why I’m in this business. I would like to do an action movie or a sitcom next. The sky’s still the limit for me. I want to do all those things I’ve enjoyed watching on the telly and in theatre.

In terms of opportunities for black actors, Don believes that “the door has opened a little bit wider, but it hasn’t been flung open, because I don’t think things are going to change as rapidly as that. It’s

What do you think are the subtle differences between men and women?

Women are more rooted to the ground. Sometimes I tend to have my head in the clouds.

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BABYFATHER 2

ANGELA GRIFFIN PLAYS CHANTELLE

Angela, who first burst onto our screens almost

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BABYFATHER 2

She has a sense of justice and she would get involved in other people's affairs, which happens in the series.

“From a personal point of view, if I knew something was going on behind my friend's back, I would ask her partner to tell her, and if he didn't, I would find a way of telling her myself unless it's a friend who knows but chooses to ignore what's going on. But if I knew she thought her relationship was based on integrity and honesty, then I think she would have the right to know.”

DIANE ON MEN AND RELATIONSHIPS

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BABYFATHER 2

CAROLINE CHIKEZIE PLAYS KANDII

BABYFATHER 2

BILLIE-CLAIRE WRIGHT PLAYS CAROLINE



“Caroline is spending a lot more time with Beres whom she represented in the first series when Beres went to court to gain custody of his daughter, Lara,” explains Billie Claire Wright. Unexpectedly, he proposes to her, but is he really the person she wants to settle down with? Beres has all the right qualities - he’s loyal, caring and loving. But Caroline is very ambitious. Do they get married in the end? Well, you’ll just have to wait and see.”

“The reaction to the first series of _____ was amazing, it really had an impact,” says Billie. I was stopped by a lot of young people in the street. I lived in Tottenham, which as a large black population, and I was recognised all the time.”

The young, free and single actress believes the industry is not only tough for women, but is even tougher for a black woman. “Although it’s fabulous to see more black actresses on screen, it still feels very restrictive. I have been disappointed by the roles I have been offered since _____. In order to get better as an actress one needs to get consistent work. I don’t think there’s one person to blame, but I do think it’s a serious cause for concern.”

“In the first series,” confesses Wright, “there was hardly any sex, but they’ve made up for it this time! It’s really saucy. Before _____ I’d never done a sex scene, not even a kissing scene – but I have plenty of experience now!

“One of the funniest things to happen on set was filming my sex scene with Beres (Wil Johnson). Wil and I were really going for it with the sound effects! We came out to rousing applause from the whole crew, all of whom were standing outside the closed set. Apparently we could be heard two streets down,” she says laughing.

BILLIE ON MEN AND RELATIONSHIPS

BABYFATHER 2

PETRA LETANG PLAYS PAULINE



“Pauline is a lot more grown up and independent than she was in the first series. Her hairstyles and makeup are more sophisticated and, most importantly, she’s a mum now,” says Petra Letang. “Now it’s Johnny who seems to be chasing her, because he wants to have a lot to do with their child. Of course, deep down she would like Johnny to be there and to live happily ever after with her, but she knows that’s not going to happen. She is aware that preventing Johnny from having access to his son Tarjan is really affecting him. Pauline’s going to play on that to try

PETRA ON MEN AND RELATIONSHIPS

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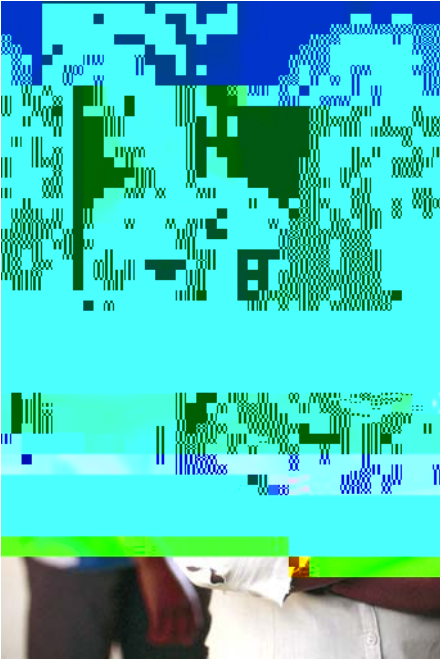
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BABYFATHER 2

EVELYN DUAH PLAYS MARCIA



“It’s been almost a year since we last saw Marcia and Linvall together,” says Evelyn Duah. “Things haven’t quite worked out, and the only interaction they have now is with regard to Eric, their son. Marcia believes a woman can’t teach a boy to be a man, so she’s hoping that Linvall will be a role model. But a year on, he has forsaken that promise and it has been left up to Marcia to pick up the pieces again.”

A slow year in terms of acting work, meant that Evelyn was able to immerse herself in her other great love – teaching. “I have been teaching drama and choreography for seven years at the Anna Scher Theatre. I started out as a young professional at the Anna Scher Theatre, so it’s quite ironic that I now teach the young professional group.

“I do enjoy teaching: it gives me the opportunity to give something back and perhaps be an inspiration. It’s not necessary for them all to become actors, because I think this business is a hard path to follow and can be incredibly deflating. I have had a tiny input into some of the rising stars you see on our screens in dramas such as _____, _____ - there’s so many,” she says proudly.

“I’ve been fortunate to have taught all over the world. Through my teaching, I have been able to work with so many people, from all kinds of backgrounds. I have found it fascinating because it has helped to keep my creative energy alive.”

With some sadness, Evelyn recalls one of the most traumatic events which touched her life last year. “After filming the first series of _____, I took a group of young professionals from the Anna Scher Theatre School to America. We were there on September 11, literally 20 miles away from the Pentagon where the plane crashed. It was so awful.”

EVELYN ON MEN AND RELATIONSHIPS

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MONA HAMMOND PLAYS MILLIE POTTINGER

A mother who only wants health and happiness for her son should be applauded. But there is a fine line between being supportive and being interfering! Chantelle's mother-in-law is every wife's nightmare - nothing is quite good enough for her only son, Gus, and Millie seizes every opportunity to let him know as much. Is Millie simply being overly protective or is she still coming to terms with the fact that Chantelle is her husband's illegitimate daughter? The journey for the Pottinger family in series two is a roller-coaster of emotions, a roller-coaster which ends abruptly by episode seven.

Best known for her role as Blossom in _____, Mona was recently seen in C4's _____. Her TV/Theatre credits also include: _____, _____ (TV), _____, _____ and _____ (Theatre).

T-BONE WILSON PLAYS LLOYD POTTINGER

Lloyd finds himself caught in the middle of Gus and Chantelle's marriage problems; he can't help but take Chantelle's side, leaving Gus equally frustrated. Lloyd also offers Johnny some sound advice.

In the first series, long forgotten secrets threatened to tear the Pottinger marriage apart. Not only did Lloyd discover that his son Gus was the product of an illicit affair, he also discovered that Chantelle, his soon-to-be daughter-in-law, was in fact his own daughter! Chantelle had been searching for her absent father following the death of her Irish mother. Fate has a way of turning your world upside down when you least expect it.

T-Bone, who came from Britain in the '60s from Guyana, trained to be an actor at the Mountview Theatre School. His Film/TV/Theatre credits include: _____ (Film); _____, _____ (TV); _____ (Theatre).

JAY BYRD PLAYS MRS LINDO

What else is a good mother for but babysitting duties? Mrs Lindo has her arms full when friends and family exploit her time.

Mrs Lindo really loves her errant son Johnny, the young man who made two women pregnant at the same time in the first series. If only he would wise up, settle down and sort himself out! She's worried that if Johnny doesn't get his act together, his children are going to lose out. Like Jimmy Cricket, her role is to be Johnny's conscience, and she wastes no time when the opportunity arises to give him a good piece of her mind!

Jay Byrd has been concentrating on her writing for the past nine years. Born in Jamaica, her TV/Theatre/Radio credits include: _____, _____ (TV) _____ (Radio) _____ (Theatre)

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AVRIL E. RUSSELL - SCRIPT WRITER

Avril Russell trained as a film technician by Intermedia and is a self-taught writer, with over 10 years experienced in television. Born in Nottingham where she still lives, Avril's credits include , , Bill, and the first series of . Avril's career as a writer/director was kicked started by the writers' workshop launched by actor/comedian, Lenny Henry and his independent production company, Crucial Films 10 years ago. Avril says: "I've never forgotten Lenny's generosity and support and will pay him back one day."

ROY WILLIAMS - SCRIPT WRITER

Winner of the Evening Standard Most Promising Playwright award, 2001, Roy Williams is an accomplished writer whose many theatre credits include: Sing Yer Heart Out (Lyttleton Loft); Clubland (Royal Court); The Gift (Tricycle); Local Boy (Hampstead); and Starstruck (Tricycle) winner of the 31st John Whiting Award and the EMMA for best play and The No-Boys Cricket Club. Radio/TV credit to-date: Homeboys for Radio 4 and Offside, a 30-min TV drama for BBC Factual & Learning.

Roy, who has recently completed a six-month residency at the Royal Court Theatre, is currently commissioned to write new plays for The Tricycle, the Royal Court, the Polka Children's Theatre, and Nottingham Playhouse.

SHARON FOSTER - SCRIPT WRITER

is Sharon Foster's first major project for television. A talented and gifted writer, with a degree in media studies, Sharon has been a scriptwriter for 10 years and was one of 12 upcoming writers selected to take part in the Lenny Henry/Crucial Films writers' workshop 10 years ago. Inspired by writers such as David E Kelly, Debbie Horsfield, Paul Abbott and Tony Marchant, she is currently developing a film project for television. Sharon was born in Hackney, East London where she still lives. .

BABYFATHER 2

BABYFATHER WEBSITE

TOP 10 CHAT UP LINES AS SUBMITTED TO

TOP 10

1. Can I check your label to see if you were made in heaven?
2. I think there's something wrong with my eyes because I can't take my eyes off you.
3. If I had invented the alphabet, I would have put U next to I.
4. That dress looks good on you - can I talk you out of it?
5. I like my man just like my coffee, sweet, black and strong.
6. If your smile wants an audience, I'm buying a season ticket.
7. I have seen stars in the sky, but this is the first time I have seen them[a th,oj.3(one')6.1(s)8.1(y)0.6ticket.