

„Dieting because of a part? Never“

Actress **Jodie Whittaker** remembers she put on weight just before shooting *Venus*. Hamburgers and ice cream did the job.

Jodie Whittaker came to the interview with her mother who saw her for the first time not only as her daughter but also an actress courted by journalists.

For a girl from London you are dressed quite warmly. Does it mean you are not a typical party girl capable of going out in December barefoot in a miniskirt?
Not any more, I grew out of it. But I also used to freeze at night in summer dresses. In this respect the London girls are pretty hard and I get goose pimples just looking at them. On the other hand, it is always cold in England so it does not matter whether you set out for a party wrapped in a scarf or without it. You will be freezing anyway.

Film stars are just people, erring people. Which, in fact, is a relief.

As far as I know you do not come from London.
I come from a village near Leeds. It was a beautiful place to grow up, very green and everybody knew each other there. But when I was about ten I decided I wanted to move to a city or rather to London. And no one could talk me out of it.

Why such a change?
The city belongs to me, I need it. I like it because it is so lively. I love the monuments, the mix of different cultures, the fact there are people from all over the planet. And the possibility to taste the food from different parts of the world – I would die for dinners from exotic restaurants. Thai food, Turkish food – every night I try something else.

You do not seem to be dieting.
Oh no, that's nonsense (*laughing*)!

Nobody ever forced you to slim down because of a part?
No, never or rather the other way round – I put on some weight because of the film *Venus* but I was not required to do so, it was my own decision. I am a sporty type, I love to exercise and when I graduated from school, I had a pretty athletic body. My part should have been a fragile girl, I doubt she would have frequented a gym. So I stopped exercising and started eating pizzas, hamburgers and ice cream.

Is there something you would never do to get a part?
Reading scripts you come upon many things that seem unacceptable. It is only up to you how you come to terms with them. Many things can be arranged but sometimes you just have to say no even if it means losing the job.

Do you mean love scenes?
That's difficult. The stories are often based on relations so in fact it is unavoidable. On the other hand it depends on what they actually want you to do. At the age of twenty eight I know how to say no but five years ago it was more difficult. Not because I could not afford it but rather because as a beginner you do not know how much you can endure.

Did you have to turn down parts?
I was lucky I never got into such situations. I have a good agent and I was always offered character parts and only rarely the „beauties“. I never had to play something I would have doubts about.

It must have helped you started playing with Peter O'Toole.
You are right, director Roger Mi-



About love scenes „Stories are often based on relations. So it is not easy to avoid love scenes,“ says Whittaker. Photo: Jan Karásek, MF DNES

BIOGRAPHY

Jodie Whittaker

Born in 1982 in Huddersfield in Great Britain. She comes to Zlín with the film *St. Trinian's 2*, a sequel to the film previously successful here. She started her acting career in TV series *Dalziel and Pascoe* and *Doctors* and first appeared in Czech cinemas with Peter O'Toole in the film *Venus*. This year she will appear in British cinemas in four new films which indicates she is on a star track.

chell gave me a chance I will always be grateful for. I met him in the last audition round and he immediately won me over. He is a great person and a real gentleman. We were sitting at the table with the producer and director and I was terrified. It helped me a lot when he came, blew a kiss in my hair and said „great job!“ Smack. (*She imitates him.*)

Did he help you a lot?
Yes, very much. He loves working with new people. And we got on together perfectly well so I could not have got a better lesson.

What did you learn about show business in those five years?
Mainly useful things. Even negative experience can be valuable. And I was lucky there was not much of it and I always turned it into something positive. Thanks to work in television I met for example Judie Dench, a great actress full of enthusiasm and drive. It was a great motivation for me. And it was fine to see I could be working full time even fifty years later.

Do you want to stay in London or do you feel lured by Hollywood?
I would go anywhere if the opportunity was interesting. I love London more than anything else but if they offer me a job in New York, why to turn it down? I have already travelled a lot, we were shooting in Jordan, South Africa, Hungary and I got to know places in Britain I had not been to before. That's what I also like about acting.

You worked with men we women are in love with. What are they like?

Smashing, of course. Or did you expect me to say something else? But seriously, it is good to see that even the men who are expected to be always perfect are just normal people. And it is even better to see they are as beautiful, pleasant and charming as on the screen. Especially Viggo Mortensen got me, we were shooting together in Hungary and I was fascinated when I saw him working so hard. And Colin Firth? I met him only few times and only on few occasions appeared in the same scene but he was always helpful and charming. I believe 99 percent of the stars are easy and pleasant people. Just happy actors.

When you meet them for the first time do you feel like a fan or an actress?

I admire so many people so if I behaved like that I would never get a part, I would just stare at them and keep my mouth shut. (*laughing*) If I want to make use of the opportunity and learn from them as much as possible, I have to forget I am standing next to my idol. He is just a colleague. It would not help to follow him and scream I am his fan. And after all they are just people. Which is a great relief.

In many of your films you are blond but you came to Zlín as a brunette.

I have dark hair now because of a job but most of my career has been „blond“.

Which colour makes you feel better?

I like being blond. When you have dark hair, people expect clever answers from you, which is tiring. Being a blond is relaxing. (*laughing*)

Are you romantic? The British are experts when it comes to romantic comedies.

All girls are romantic, not just British ones. And our guys? It is true the British men are cynical, they are not very good at emotions. But in fact I do not have personal experience with them. I married an American. **Tereza Spáčilová**

The poster boy: I would like to make a film again

He became well known thanks to the film *Boys, Boys (Páni kluci)*. And this film also got him on this year's festival posters. „Lately I have been feeling I miss the camera,“ he says.

He stood up in heavy rain and held out his hand with an umbrella exactly the same as the freckled boy in a handcar on the poster hanging at every Zlín street corner. The same roguish smile and just a few wrinkles around his eyes the past 35 years added to his face.

Michael Dymek, the naughty rascal Tomáš from the film classics for children *„Boys, Boys“*, as if completed with this gesture his Zlín „dějvu“. The last time he was in Zlín he came as a child film star in „Fly the Bird, Fly“ directed by Jiří Hanibal. Even after all those years people in the streets recognise him, especially here in Zlín. He came with his fa-

mily. They do know how famous their father is even though little Michael's favourite actor in „Boys, Boys“ is the handcar. Would he like to make films like his father? He does not know yet...

Dancing instead of acting

„I certainly did not expect the film to be that successful,“ Michael Dymek returns to the film that turned an ordinary pupil into a child film star of 1970's. The schoolboy was suddenly about to meet scores of famous actors such as Mr. Sommer with whom he played in other films too. „It was great to be addressed by the grown up actors, colleague“

and treated as an equal. I loved shooting the railway scenes in Zubrnice and I plan to take the children there this summer,“ he says.

Even though everybody expected after the films such as „Red Indians from Větrov“, „Fly the Bird, Fly“ or „Krakonoš and Skiers“ Michael to continue in acting career, he decided to study the dance conservatory, the special folklore class. „People may think we went around dressed in folk costumes and danced folk dances all the time but in fact we were trained like musical actors nowadays. „We had to learn just about everything – folk dances, classical dances as well as modern



Michael Dymek in front of „his“ poster Photo: MF DNES

dance and we were even expected to do acrobatics,“ he tells me over a cup of coffee we took before he had to leave for a press conference with director Jiří Hanibal.

But not „Boys“ thirty years later

One of his classmates was Michal Hess and if you look up on YouTube the clip *Disobedient Plimsolls* (Lucie Bílá), you may recognise Michael as a member of UNO group break dancing in the background.

The rest of the family arrived at our table in Moskva Hotel and Michael's wife Ivana could share with us her memories from the times she met her husband. „I remember

a pleasant boy who came to our ballet lessons and he took place at the bar next to me. And he stayed there until today,“ she smiles. She recalls also more serious moments: she knew for example they would not be returning home from their trip to Germany in 1988 and she had to say good-bye to her family in Czechoslovakia only in writing. „We knew just one thing – we wanted to be together, have a family and raise our children in freedom,“ Michael explains. Then came almost ten years in Germany, the career in a company selling electric material and finally return to the Czech Republic. **Jan Dušek**

DNES festival zlin

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- 1 Univerzita Tomáše Bati (akreditace, informace)
- 2 Velké kino (prodej vstupenek)
- 3 Zlaté jablko, obchodní a zábavní centrum
- 4 Univerzitní centrum
- 5 Zámek Zlín
- 6 Radnice - Magistrát města Zlín
- 7 Krajský úřad Zlínského kraje
- 8 Letní kino
- 9 Vlakové nádraží
- 10 Hlavní autobusové nádraží

» Čtete zitra



O Festivalových minutách Jak vzniká pravidelné zpravodajství České televize s tváří Josefa Poláška.



Domalovánko Prohlédněte si plátno, na němž v průběhu festivalu vznikl unikátní obrázek. Malovali mimo jiné režiséři Jasný, Janák i Vorlíček.